

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only
received
date entered

MAY 31 1983

1. Name

historic J. J. Rackley Building

and/or common Blazer Building

2. Location

street & number 118 South Chadbourne

N/A not for publication

city, town San Angelo

N/A vicinity of

state Texas

code 048

county Tom Green

code 451

3. Classification

Category

☐ district
☒ building(s)
☐ structure
☐ site
☐ object

Ownership

☐ public
☒ private
☐ both
Public Acquisition
☐ N/A in process
☐ being considered

Status

☐ occupied
☐ unoccupied
☒ work in progress
Accessible
☐ yes: restricted
☒ yes: unrestricted
☐ no

Present Use

☒ agriculture
☒ commercial
☐ educational
☐ entertainment
☐ government
☐ industrial
☐ military
☐ museum
☐ park
☐ private residence
☐ religious
☐ scientific
☐ transportation
☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Dr. W. B. Robertson

street & number P.O. Box 850

city, town Ozona

N/A vicinity of

state Texas 76943

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Tom Green County Courthouse

street & number

city, town San Angelo

state Texas 76902

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Texas Historical Commission Survey has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date July 1978

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Texas Historical Commission

city, town Austin

state Texas

7. Description

Condition

☒ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The J.J. Rackley Building is a two-story masonry commercial building located in the business district of San Angelo. The structure reflects the popularity of the Italianate style in Texas, with segmentally arched window openings and elaborate metal cornice. The building is one of three late 19th-century commercial buildings forming a row along South Chadbourne Street.

The J.J. Rackley Building is characteristic of late 19th-century commercial buildings in Texas, showing the clear influence of the Italianate style in its design. The building is rectangular in plan, and is sited in the middle of the block adjacent to two other stone buildings of similar age. The roof is flat. The street facade, facing southwest, is approximately 25 feet in width, and is divided into four bays. The first floor front contains three large display windows and the main entrance bay, which features a pair of slightly recessed wooden doors with upper panels of glass. Above these openings are four slightly inset panels in the stuccoed surface of the wall.

The second-floor is more elaborately detailed, with four segmentally arched openings containing double-hung sashes with two-over-two lights. These openings feature cast-stone sills, and lintels with simple keystones. The openings are separated by simple, stuccoed brick pilasters. The building is topped by an elaborate metal entablature whose corners are supported by large brackets with finials above them. The individual piers of the second story are capped by rather flat metal moldings. Each of the segments of the cornice contains two small metal brackets. The frieze area is decorated by molded rectangular panels with a roundel in the center. The south elevation of the building is broken only by four square-headed window openings on the second floor. The east elevation, technically the rear of the structure, has two large, segmentally arched window openings on the first-floor level, and three similarly arched openings on the second floor, two for windows and one for the door that leads onto the rear fire escape. A stuccoed masonry wall serves to screen the rear patio from the adjacent parking lot.

Over the years, the building was subjected to a number of alterations, the great majority of which were corrected in the renovation work carried out in 1980. The original first-floor front, which had been completely lost, was rebuilt in a simplified manner, returning the plane of the first-floor wall to that of the second. An applied stucco front was removed from the second floor, thus exposing the original windows. The front was restuccoed so as to prevent damage from the weather and conceal the damage done to the underlying masonry. The metal entablature was restored, although the parapet element was not. This renovation work has resulted in a uniform appearance for a building that had been adversely altered, allowing it, once again, to make a positive contribution to the blockface.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates ca. 1890/ca. 1900 **Builder/Architect** Unknown/Oscar Ruffini

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The J.J. Rackley Building is an important reminder of the character of San Angelo's late 19th-century commercial district. Recently rehabilitated, the building is representative of the work of the architect Oscar Ruffini, whose work in San Angelo included the demolished Tom Green County Courthouse and Jail of 1884. The Rackley Building is part of a row of three commercial buildings designed or renovated by Ruffini, which make a strong visual contribution to the streetscape.

Commercial buildings in late 19th-century San Angelo were designed in the highly popular Italianate style, and were usually of one or two stories in height. The use of arched window and door openings and elaborate cornices characterizes these modest structures, and these features are also found on the Rackley Building, which was built by J.J. Rackley between 1888 and 1894. The two structures adjoining the Rackley Building to the north feature similar detailing, since the three were all designed by the same San Angelo architect, Oscar Ruffini.

Ruffini's connection with the Rackley Building is documented in an agreement between Ruffini, whose one-story office building stood adjoining the Rackley Building to the south, and Chris and George Hagelstein, early owners of the Rackley Building. In 1899 the three men agreed to share the south, common wall of the Rackley Building in return for Ruffini's assistance in rehabilitating that structure. Signed in February of 1899, this agreement strongly suggests that the Hagelstein's were interested in improving the appearance of their building with Ruffini's help. Period newspaper illustrations show a large parapet bearing the Hagelstein name, which was surely an addition to the original design. That Ruffini was responsible for the building's present front, added about 1900, is supported by the similarity of the present building to its neighbors to the north, both of which are two-story structures known to be designed by Oscar Ruffini.

Oscar Ruffini and his brother Frederick Ruffini were natives of Cleveland, Ohio, born of immigrant parents. The two Ruffinis moved to Texas, F.E. to Austin and Oscar to San Angelo, and both practiced architecture here. Oscar's work included the Tom Green County Courthouse and Jail, built in 1884 and unfortunately demolished. Perhaps his best surviving work is the Sutton County Courthouse in Sonora, built in 1891–1893. F.E. Ruffini died in 1885, but his brother died in 1957, age 98.

The Rackley Building was, as indicated above, constructed between 1888 and 1894 by J.J. Rackley. In 1896 it was acquired by Chris and George Hagelstein, who operated

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

their hardware store there until 1908. From 1928 to 1936 the building housed the popular City Cafe, operated by George Athanas. Serving as the home of a variety of commercial establishments, the building was acquired by the city of San Angelo in 1979, with the intention of demolishing it for a parking lot. Fortunately, this was averted by the efforts of "Historic San Angelo", a newly formed preservation group. The property was sold by the city to the present owner, who undertook the renovation of the structure. The building stands today somewhat more isolated than it did when first built, as the city of San Angelo demolished the smaller buildings to the south of it for a surface parking lot. Its two older neighbors to the north are happily still standing, and the three structures form an attractive, late 19th-century row of commercial buildings.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Barbutti, Ron, architect, to Sandra Dreyer. Interviews, August 19, 1980;
December 27, 1980.

Eckert, Vick, contractor, to Sandra Dreyer. Interview, November 1980
(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name San Angelo South, Texas

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	4	3	6	3	6	2	0	3	4	8	1	4	6	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The north twenty-five (n.25) feet of lot no. twenty-one (21) and the south twenty-five (S.25) feet of the north seventy-five (N.75) feet of west thirty (W.30) of lot no. two (2) all in block no. seven (7), of the Main Part of the City of San Angelo, Tom Green County, Texas being a part of Survey No. 323 in the name of John Braun.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sandra Dietz Dreyer

organization Historic San Angelo date December 27, 1980

street & number P.O. Box 2237 telephone 653-2991

city or town San Angelo state Texas 76902

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 6 May 1983

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Melores Byrum
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 6/30/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet

Item number 9

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Miles, Susan, San Angelo historian, to Sandra Dreyer. Interview, April 1979.

San Angelo City Directories, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1913, 1914-15, 1917, 1918,
1927-28, 1936, 1937, 1939, 1942, 1944, 1946, 1949, 1952, 1954, 1957.

San Angelo Standard Times: April 29, 1949; April 29, 1954; January 19, 1957;
January 20, 1957; July 4, 1976, February 12, 1979; August 14 & 15, 1979;
September 17, 1979; October 5, 1979; October 15, 1979; March 14, 1980;
November 24, 1980.

The Rackley Building, Abstract of Title, Tom Green County Courthouse, San Angelo.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Rackley, J.J., Building
Tom Green County
TEXAS

Working No. 5-31-83
Fed. Reg. Date: 2-7-84
Date Due: 6/30/83 — 7/15/83
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 6/30/83
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Entered in the National Register
Federal Agency: _____

☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☐ technical corrections cited below
☐ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Address of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

USGS References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

Title _____

Date _____

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



J. J. Rackley Building
118 South Chadbourne, San Angelo,
Tom Green County, Texas

Photo: 1981, photographer unknown; from 35mm
slide on file with the Texas Historical Commission,
Austin

Southwest (front) elevation, looking northeast
Photo 1 of 3



J. J. Rackley Building

118 South Chadbourne, San Angelo, Tom Green County,
Texas

Photo: 1981, photographer unknown; from 35mm
slide on file with the Texas Historical Commission,
Austin

Oblique view of southwest and southeast elevations,
looking north

Photo 2 of 3



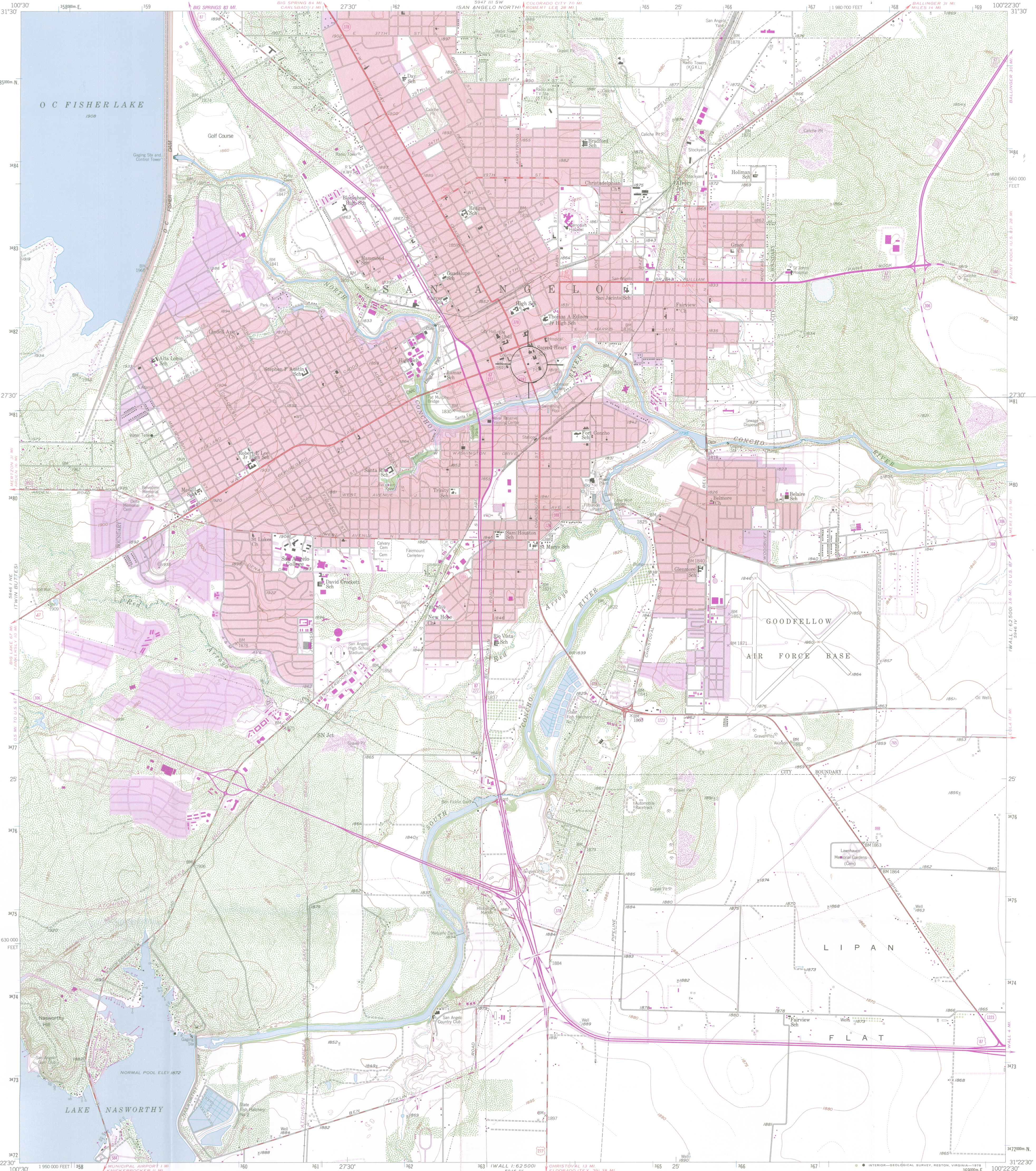
J. J. Rackley Building

118 South Chadbourne, San Angelo, Tom Green County,
Texas

Photo: 1981, photographer unknown; from 35mm
slide on file with the Texas Historical Commission,
Austin

Northeast (rear) elevation with rear patio,
looking west

Photo 3 of 3



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA and USCE

Topography from aerial photographs by A-8 plotter and by
planetable surveys 1957. Aerial photographs taken 1954

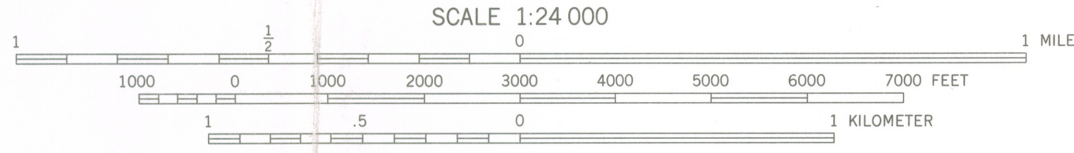
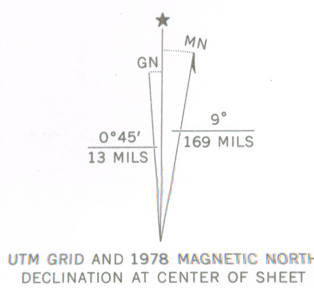
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system, central zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 14, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Areas covered by dashed light-blue pattern are
subject to controlled inundation

Revision shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1971 and 1975. Map edited 1978
This information not field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DASHED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty _____ Light-duty _____
Medium-duty _____ Unimproved dirt _____
U.S. Route _____ State Route _____

SAN ANGELO SOUTH, TEX.
NW/4 WALL 15 QUADRANGLE
N3122.5-W10022.5/7.5

1957
PHOTOREVISED 1971 AND 1978
AMS 5946 IV NW - SERIES V882

3100-133