

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received MAR 17 1983

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections**1. Name**

historic Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls, Administration Building

and/or common Mary Allen College

2. Location

street & number 803 N. 4th St. (U.S. 287 North) N/A not for publication

city, town Crockett N/A vicinity of

state Texas code 048 county Houston code 225

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Stowe Lumber Co., Inc.; Earl Stowe, President

street & number P. O. Box 1166

city, town Crockett N/A vicinity of state Texas 75835

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Houston County Courthouse

street & number Public Square

city, town Crockett state Texas

6. Representation in Existing Surveystitle Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate 1) 1972 2) June 1981 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☒ localdepository for survey records 1) 1972 - Texas Historical Commission
2) June 1981 - Houston Co. Historical Commission

city, town 1) Austin 2) Crockett state Texas

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Prominently sited on the crest of a hill one mile north of the town square of Crockett, Texas, the Administration Building of the Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls is an important example of a French Second Empire style institutional building. The symmetrically designed structure features a mansard roof and a projecting tower which highlights the main entrance. The building is ornamented by cast-iron work on the exterior and a handsome central staircase on the interior.

The Administration Building of the Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls is generally rectangular in form, with two small additions to the rear, or north, facade. The building is four stories high, and the topmost floor formed by the mansard roof is, without question, the most distinguishing feature of the Second Empire style. The north and south elevations are seven bays wide, while the east and west elevations are each three bays wide. The building is of brick masonry construction, with external and internal bearing walls 18 in. thick and partition walls 8 in. thick. Continuous footings form the foundations. The south, east, and west elevations are faced with brick laid in common bond, while the north elevation is finished with a coat of stucco. The south elevation is dominated by the centrally located tower which defines the main entrance bay. The building is capped by a steep and straight-sided mansard roof.

There are presently two porches, one framing the main entrance on the south elevation, and another centered on a secondary entrance on the east elevation. Both are supported by slender, turned wooden posts. The porch on the south facade is the more intact of the two, with four posts supporting the second floor balcony. An openwork frieze of decorative woodwork combines with the turned posts to create a rather light entry porch on this substantial structure. The balcony above is enclosed by a crude balustrade consisting of square balusters and newel posts. The porch on the east elevation is generally similar, although it does not feature the second story balcony. Of special note are the turned pilasters attached to the exterior walls at the point where the porches join the main mass of the building.

Four doorways provide access to the interior of the building, each centrally located on four elevations. The main entrance is sited at the base of the central tower on the south facade. This double doorway features a pair of solid, four-panel doors and a simple, single-lite transom without sidelights. The opening is spanned by a decorative cast-iron lintel. The other three doors are all single doors, with the east and north doors featuring four panels of glass in their upper sections. The east and west doors also have single-lite transoms, and their openings are spanned by cast-iron lintels.

United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1

As was characteristic of the French Second Empire style, the fenestration of the building varies from floor to floor in terms of detailing and the form of the opening used. The window openings of the first floor are square headed, with cast-iron lintels occurring above the windows on the east and west elevations. The first-floor windows on the south elevation are paired versions of the standard sash with two-over-two lights used on all the structure's windows. On the second floor, the windows are set within segmentally arched openings. On the south, east, and west elevations, these window openings are capped by decorative cast-iron hood moldings, while the more simplified openings on the north elevation only feature rather simple stucco bands above the window openings.

The window openings of the third floor are set in round-arch openings, with cast-iron hood moldings applied on the south, east, and west elevations. Stucco moldings were again used on the north elevation. The fourth floor, formed by the mansard roof, is broken by windows only on the north elevation, which are set in segmentally arched openings. The central window bay on the north elevation is set slightly below the horizontal line formed by the other openings of each floor. This offset bay reflects the presence of a central staircase against the north wall of the building, thus necessitating windows on the stair landings.

The tower, sited above the main entrance, features much larger openings than those seen on the remainder of the structure. At the level of the second-floor balcony there is a broad, segmentally arched opening which frames double doors, the upper sections of which are comprised of two panes of glass. This opening is capped by a cast-iron hood molding. The window openings of the third and fourth stages of the tower are identical, and feature a pair of round-arch windows grouped under a cast-iron hood molding.

As noted earlier, the structure has a mansard roof which wraps around the south, east, and west elevations. The slope of the first stage of the roof is so steep that it appears almost vertical. This stage of the roof still retains its original wooden dentiled cornice. The upper stage of the roof is nearly flat and is not readily visible from ground level. The lower section is sheathed in fibreglass shingles, while the upper is covered by a standing-seam metal roof. Two stuccoed chimneys are present on the north elevation.

Two smaller additions were made to the north elevation of the structure, one at each end of the facade. The smaller of the two, at the northeast corner, served as a connecting link to another seminary building which was destroyed by fire in February of 1912. This former corridor is matched on the northwest corner by a larger and, apparently, much later one-story addition with no distinguishing features.

EXP. 10/31/84

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

3/17/83

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

The interior plans for each of the four floors are virtually identical. A central corridor follows the center line of the east-west axis of the building, opening onto rooms to both sides. Each floor has 12 rooms. The staircase is the dominant interior feature, and is set opposite the entrance tower on the north side of the structure. The staircase alternates single and double sections as it rises through the building. The design of the stair is highlighted by a rather flat handrail supported by turned balusters. The adjacent walls are wainscotted in beaded boards to a height of approximately five feet. The overall character of the interior is one of spartan simplicity, with very plain, beveled baseboards and simple four-panel, solid doors serving as the only enrichment in the rooms. No original lighting fixtures remain, but a large number of original rim locks and doorknobs survive. The interior walls are of brick covered with plaster, and the original ceilings are of plaster over wood lath.

The structure has suffered from deterioration and alterations, largely brought about by damage inflicted by Hurricane Carla in 1962. The fifth-floor section of the central tower, which was of masonry construction, as well as the mansard roofed final stage, were both destroyed by the hurricane. After this damage, the tower was cut down and capped at the level of the roofline. Twelve dormers with pedimented elements, which were regularly spaced on the face of the mansard, are also absent. One of the openings for these missing dormers can be seen on the west end of the building where the later shingle roof has partially failed. The original cornice at the eaveline has also been removed. The window openings of the ground floor of the south elevation were modified many years ago and doubled in size. The sash type was not changed, and another window with two-over-two lights was installed alongside the original single unit. The existing balcony railing above the main entrance is a replacement for an earlier series of panels with cutout quatrefoil designs. Eight of the original ten chimneys have been taken down and sealed off at roof level, and were probably casualties of Hurricane Carla.

While it would seem that the structure has been stripped of a significant quantity of detailing, it must be noted that excellent early 20th-century photographs clearly illustrate the original character of the building, and would be invaluable in any restoration program in the future. The structure is vacant at the present time. While there are openings in the roof and missing window panes which will admit water to the interior, there is little indication that the structure is in structural jeopardy. A report prepared for the Texas Historical Commission by Austin architect Joe Freeman, in September of 1982, notes that there is no significant structural damage, and that restoration could be accomplished without the use of any extraordinary measures.

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

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

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received

3/17/83

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 3

There are three smaller structures on the Seminary site: two frame outbuildings and a brick-masonry fountain. The larger of the two was originally the dairy barn for the school, while the smaller outbuilding contains a single room which was used for storage purposes. The brick fountain was erected by the class of 1937 in memory of Lucille L. Smith, the wife of college president Byrd Smith.

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 checked="" 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 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 1886 Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Constructed in 1886, the Administration Building of the Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls stands in one of the oldest structures in the town of Crockett, as well as in Houston County. It is a visible reminder of the united efforts of the Presbyterians toward the education of black girls and women in a predominantly rural, East Texas county. The structure is an important survival in terms of institutional architecture in the state, where buildings in the Second Empire style were once features of many college campuses. The structure reflects the growth and decline of black education in the area. It evolved from an all-white to an all-black administration, from a female seminary to a coeducational junior college, to a four-year coeducational college. Then it closed and was sold off to meet debts arising from lawsuits.

Architecturally, the Administration Building of Mary Allen Seminary represents an uncommon survival of a Second Empire educational building in Texas. During the 1870s and 1880s, the style was particularly popular on college campuses around the state, with Second Empire buildings being erected on the campus of Texas A & M in 1871-74, and at Baylor University in 1886. The Texas A & M Main Hall was destroyed by fire in 1912, while the mansard roofs of the Main Building at Baylor were removed in later remodelings. The first site of Trinity University, near Tehuacana, features a more elaborate Second Empire building erected in 1871, fortunately still intact and being renovated. The simplicity of the design of the Mary Allen building reflects the character of the structures at Texas A & M and Baylor, with rather simple brickwork highlighted by decorative lintels and arched windows. Unfortunately, no documentation has been found which names either a builder or architect for this structure. While the building has suffered from hurricane damage and neglect, restoration could readily be achieved using the turn-of-the-century photographs of the Seminary which survive in good condition.

During the 19th century, several institutions of higher learning were established in Texas for the education of the state's black population. Virtually all of them were founded by religious denominations, and Mary Allen Seminary was no exception. The Seminary was established in 1886 by the Board of Missions for Freedmen of the Presbyterian Church, which had its headquarters in Pittsburgh. Credit for attracting the interest of the Board must be given to the Reverend Samuel Fisher Tenney of the Presbyterian Church of Crockett. Rev. Tenney had personally contacted the Reverend Richard Allen, Secretary of the Board of Freedmen, who came to Crockett in 1880 with his wife

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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

Mary to consider a location for the Seminary. Crockett was selected after Rev. Allen had surveyed the state, and the Board of Freedmen authorized the construction of the Seminary early in 1886, with classes beginning later in the year. The Board chose Dr. J.B. Smith as the first president of the Seminary. Before the Seminary opened, Rev. Allen's wife Mary died, and it was determined that the institution be named in her honor in recognition of her interest in its creation.

Dr. Smith served as President of the Seminary until his death in 1910, and was succeeded by Dr. H.P.V. Bogue. In February of 1912, the Seminary's principal dormitory, Grace McMillan Hall, was destroyed by fire. A replacement structure was erected shortly thereafter, and the Seminary continued operations. Dr. Bogue left the institution in 1918 after the death of his wife, and was succeeded by Dr. A.E. Hubbard. By the time Hubbard left Mary Allen in 1924, enrollment had declined to only 35 students, and the future of the Seminary was doubtful.

Byrd R. Smith of Greensboro, North Carolina, was named to succeed Hubbard as President of the Seminary. The first Negro to hold the post, Smith's appointment brought about a major change in the administration of the institution, which up to that time had been staffed by whites. Enrollment rose to 134 students, all of whom were boarders. In 1933 Smith had the status of the Seminary raised to that of a coeducational junior college, accredited by the State Department of Education. This certification enabled the graduates of Mary Allen to receive teacher's certificates and to teach anywhere in the state. President Smith's death in early 1941, and the outbreak of World War II resulted in major reduction in enrollment, and in July of 1943 the college was sold to a group of Crockett businessmen. In November of 1944 it was in turn sold to the General Baptist Convention of Texas.

Dr. S.R. Prince was named to serve as the first Baptist president, and in 1945 the school became a four year, coeducational college. In 1950 a 24-bed hospital was built with partial funding from the Ford Foundation, in addition to a new dormitory for male students. Mary Allen College lost its state accreditation in 1953 as a result of a scandal alleging the sale of academic degrees. Rev. Jodie C. Sanford attempted to regain certification in 1959, but failed. The school's physical plant suffered damage from Hurricane Carla in 1962, when the Administration Building lost the top section of its tower. Then, in the summer of 1970 fire destroyed the two-story McMillan Hall. After years of declining enrollment and insufficient funds to maintain the campus buildings, the Missionary General Baptist Convention sold the site to the Stowe Lumber Company, in February of 1978, ending the 92-year history of the institution.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 10 acres

Quadrangle name Crockett, Texas

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	5
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3	6	5	8	8	0
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3	4	6	8	3	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Part of AE Gossett Original Survey, Abst. #423; Lots #246 and 260 of City of Crockett, Block 2, Plat of said City.

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Eliza H. Bishop, Chairman

organization Houston County Historical Commission date _____

street & number 629 N. 4th Street telephone (713) 544-3269

city or town Crockett state Texas

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national X 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 3/11/83

For NPS use only

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

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

Bishop, Eliza, Houston County History. Heritage Publishers, Tulsa, OK., 1980.

Bishop, Eliza, Resumé for a Historical Marker Application, submitted to the Texas Historical Commission, April 10, 1981.

Johnson, Mrs. Odetta Blake, "History of Mary Allen," 1936. On file, Houston County Historical Commission, Crockett.

Smith, Dr. B.R., "History of Mary Allen Junior College, " 1933. On file, Houston County Historical Commission, Crockett.

Tenney, Miss Emma, "History of First Presbyterian Church at Crockett," 1930. On file, Houston County Historical Commission, Crockett.

Houston County Deed Records: Volumes 51, 60, 199, 220, 228, 231, 334, 560, 602.

Houston County Deeds of Trust: Volumes 47, 171. Crockett, Texas.

Houston County Third Judicial District Court Civil Records: Volumes Z, 5
Also Civil Case Docket Sheets in the District Clerk's Office, Crockett, Texas.

Newspaper Articles: Crockett Courier, July 1, 1937; Houston Chronicle, Jan. 21, 1959 and Dec. 9, 1971; Houston Post, Feb. 8, 1959; Crockett Democrat, August 12, 1959.

Oral Interviews conducted by Eliza Bishop, Crockett, Texas: Charles Carter, Jr., Crockett attorney, present City Attorney; J.B. Sallas, Crockett attorney, former State Legislator and Mayor of Crockett; Mrs. Agnes Rhoder, teacher, Bible lecturer; Prof. Selmus Curtis, Crockett school administrator; Prof. I.T. Williams, retired vocational agriculture teacher, now City of Crockett administrative assistant; Mrs. Sarah B. Gary, Seminary graduate; Mrs. Mary Etta Jackson Hunter, Mary Allen College graduate; Mrs. Daisy Pender, Seminary student; Earl Stowe, Lumber Company president and present owner.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Crockett, Texas: May 1891; October 1896; June 1907; March 1912; April 1925; Barker Center, Austin.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls,
Administration Building,
Houston County
TEXAS

Working No. MAR 17 1983

Fed. Reg. Date:

Date Due: 4/14/83 - 5/1/83

Action: ☒ ACCEPT
☒ RETURN 3/30/83
☐ REJECT

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 _____ Area 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

Average of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Since property nominated is "10 or more acres", please provide 3 or more UTM reference points encompassing property

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 *Melores Byers*

Date *3/30/83*

Phone: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
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<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
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2) June 1981 - Houston Co. Historical Commission

city, town 1) Austin 2) Crockett state Texas

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated			
	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins			
	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Prominently sited on the crest of a hill one mile north of the town square of Crockett, Texas, the Administration Building of the Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls is an important example of a French Second Empire style institutional building. The symmetrically designed structure features a mansard roof and a projecting tower which highlights the main entrance. The building is ornamented by cast-iron work on the exterior and a handsome central staircase on the interior.

The Administration Building of the Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls is generally rectangular in form, with two small additions to the rear, or north, facade. The building is four stories high, and the topmost floor formed by the mansard roof is, without question, the most distinguishing feature of the Second Empire style. The north and south elevations are seven bays wide, while the east and west elevations are each three bays wide. The building is of brick masonry construction, with external and internal bearing walls 18 in. thick and partition walls 8 in. thick. Continuous footings form the foundations. The south, east, and west elevations are faced with brick laid in common bond, while the north elevation is finished with a coat of stucco. The south elevation is dominated by the centrally located tower which defines the main entrance bay. The building is capped by a steep and straight-sided mansard roof.

There are presently two porches, one framing the main entrance on the south elevation, and another centered on a secondary entrance on the east elevation. Both are supported by slender, turned wooden posts. The porch on the south facade is the more intact of the two, with four posts supporting the second floor balcony. An openwork frieze of decorative woodwork combines with the turned posts to create a rather light entry porch on this substantial structure. The balcony above is enclosed by a crude balustrade consisting of square balusters and newel posts. The porch on the east elevation is generally similar, although it does not feature the second story balcony. Of special note are the turned pilasters attached to the exterior walls at the point where the porches join the main mass of the building.

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As was characteristic of the French Second Empire style, the fenestration of the building varies from floor to floor in terms of detailing and the form of the opening used. The window openings of the first floor are square headed, with cast-iron lintels occurring above the windows on the east and west elevations. The first-floor windows on the south elevation are paired versions of the standard sash with two-over-two lights used on all the structure's windows. On the second floor, the windows are set within segmentally arched openings. On the south, east, and west elevations, these window openings are capped by decorative cast-iron hood moldings, while the more simplified openings on the north elevation only feature rather simple stucco bands above the window openings.

The window openings of the third floor are set in round-arch openings, with cast-iron hood moldings applied on the south, east, and west elevations. Stucco moldings were again used on the north elevation. The fourth floor, formed by the mansard roof, is broken by windows only on the north elevation, which are set in segmentally arched openings. The central window bay on the north elevation is set slightly below the horizontal line formed by the other openings of each floor. This offset bay reflects the presence of a central staircase against the north wall of the building, thus necessitating windows on the stair landings.

The tower, sited above the main entrance, features much larger openings than those seen on the remainder of the structure. At the level of the second-floor balcony there is a broad, segmentally arched opening which frames double doors, the upper sections of which are comprised of two panes of glass. This opening is capped by a cast-iron hood molding. The window openings of the third and fourth stages of the tower are identical, and feature a pair of round-arch windows grouped under a cast-iron hood molding.

As noted earlier, the structure has a mansard roof which wraps around the south, east, and west elevations. The slope of the first stage of the roof is so steep that it appears almost vertical. This stage of the roof still retains its original wooden dentiled cornice. The upper stage of the roof is nearly flat and is not readily visible from ground level. The lower section is sheathed in fibreglass shingles, while the upper is covered by a standing-seam metal roof. Two stuccoed chimneys are present on the north elevation.

Two smaller additions were made to the north elevation of the structure, one at each end of the facade. The smaller of the two, at the northeast corner, served as a connecting link to another seminary building which was destroyed by fire in February of 1912. This former corridor is matched on the northwest corner by a larger and, apparently, much later one-story addition with no distinguishing features.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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3/17/83

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

The interior plans for each of the four floors are virtually identical. A central corridor follows the center line of the east-west axis of the building, opening onto rooms to both sides. Each floor has 12 rooms. The staircase is the dominant interior feature, and is set opposite the entrance tower on the north side of the structure. The staircase alternates single and double sections as it rises through the building. The design of the stair is highlighted by a rather flat handrail supported by turned balusters. The adjacent walls are wainscotted in beaded boards to a height of approximately five feet. The overall character of the interior is one of spartan simplicity, with very plain, beveled baseboards and simple four-panel, solid doors serving as the only enrichment in the rooms. No original lighting fixtures remain, but a large number of original rim locks and doorknobs survive. The interior walls are of brick covered with plaster, and the original ceilings are of plaster over wood lath.

The structure has suffered from deterioration and alterations, largely brought about by damage inflicted by Hurricane Carla in 1962. The fifth-floor section of the central tower, which was of masonry construction, as well as the mansard roofed final stage, were both destroyed by the hurricane. After this damage, the tower was cut down and capped at the level of the roofline. Twelve dormers with pedimented elements, which were regularly spaced on the face of the mansard, are also absent. One of the openings for these missing dormers can be seen on the west end of the building where the later shingle roof has partially failed. The original cornice at the eaveline has also been removed. The window openings of the ground floor of the south elevation were modified many years ago and doubled in size. The sash type was not changed, and another window with two-over-two lights was installed alongside the original single unit. The existing balcony railing above the main entrance is a replacement for an earlier series of panels with cutout quatrefoil designs. Eight of the original ten chimneys have been taken down and sealed off at roof level, and were probably casualties of Hurricane Carla.

While it would seem that the structure has been stripped of a significant quantity of detailing, it must be noted that excellent early 20th-century photographs clearly illustrate the original character of the building, and would be invaluable in any restoration program in the future. The structure is vacant at the present time. While there are openings in the roof and missing window panes which will admit water to the interior, there is little indication that the structure is in structural jeopardy. A report prepared for the Texas Historical Commission by Austin architect Joe Freeman, in September of 1982, notes that there is no significant structural damage, and that restoration could be accomplished without the use of any extraordinary measures.

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

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

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3/17/83

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 3

There are three smaller structures on the Seminary site: two frame outbuildings and a brick-masonry fountain. The larger of the two was originally the dairy barn for the school, while the smaller outbuilding contains a single room which was used for storage purposes. The brick fountain was erected by the class of 1937 in memory of Lucille L. Smith, the wife of college president Byrd Smith.

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 checked="" 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 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	1886	Builder/Architect	Unknown
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Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Constructed in 1886, the Administration Building of the Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls stands in one of the oldest structures in the town of Crockett, as well as in Houston County. It is a visible reminder of the united efforts of the Presbyterians toward the education of black girls and women in a predominantly rural, East Texas county. The structure is an important survival in terms of institutional architecture in the state, where buildings in the Second Empire style were once features of many college campuses. The structure reflects the growth and decline of black education in the area. It evolved from an all-white to an all-black administration, from a female seminary to a coeducational junior college, to a four-year coeducational college. Then it closed and was sold off to meet debts arising from lawsuits.

Architecturally, the Administration Building of Mary Allen Seminary represents an uncommon survival of a Second Empire educational building in Texas. During the 1870s and 1880s, the style was particularly popular on college campuses around the state, with Second Empire buildings being erected on the campus of Texas A & M in 1871–74, and at Baylor University in 1886. The Texas A & M Main Hall was destroyed by fire in 1912, while the mansard roofs of the Main Building at Baylor were removed in later remodelings. The first site of Trinity University, near Tehuacana, features a more elaborate Second Empire building erected in 1871, fortunately still intact and being renovated. The simplicity of the design of the Mary Allen building reflects the character of the structures at Texas A & M and Baylor, with rather simple brickwork highlighted by decorative lintels and arched windows. Unfortunately, no documentation has been found which names either a builder or architect for this structure. While the building has suffered from hurricane damage and neglect, restoration could readily be achieved using the turn-of-the-century photographs of the Seminary which survive in good condition.

During the 19th century, several institutions of higher learning were established in Texas for the education of the state's black population. Virtually all of them were founded by religious denominations, and Mary Allen Seminary was no exception. The Seminary was established in 1886 by the Board of Missions for Freedmen of the Presbyterian Church, which had its headquarters in Pittsburgh. Credit for attracting the interest of the Board must be given to the Reverend Samuel Fisher Tenney of the Presbyterian Church of Crockett. Rev. Tenney had personally contacted the Reverend Richard Allen, Secretary of the Board of Freedmen, who came to Crockett in 1880 with his wife

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 13 acres

Quadrangle name Crockett, Texas

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	5
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2	6	5	6	2	0
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3	4	6	8	3	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

1	5
---	---

2	6	5	9	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	4	6	8	4	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

C

1	5
---	---

2	6	5	6	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	4	6	8	2	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

D

1	5
---	---

2	6	5	9	7	0
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3	4	6	8	3	0	0
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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

Part of AE Gossett Original Survey, Abst. #423; Lots #246 and 260 of City of Crockett, Block 2, Plat of said City.

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Eliza H. Bishop, Chairman

organization Houston County Historical Commission date

street & number 629 N. 4th Street telephone (713) 544-3269

city or town Crockett state Texas

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 3/11/83

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 5/12/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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

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received 3/17/83

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

Mary to consider a location for the Seminary. Crockett was selected after Rev. Allen had surveyed the state, and the Board of Freedmen authorized the construction of the Seminary early in 1886, with classes beginning later in the year. The Board chose Dr. J.B. Smith as the first president of the Seminary. Before the Seminary opened, Rev. Allen's wife Mary died, and it was determined that the institution be named in her honor in recognition of her interest in its creation.

Dr. Smith served as President of the Seminary until his death in 1910, and was succeeded by Dr. H.P.V. Bogue. In February of 1912, the Seminary's principal dormitory, Grace McMillan Hall, was destroyed by fire. A replacement structure was erected shortly thereafter, and the Seminary continued operations. Dr. Bogue left the institution in 1918 after the death of his wife, and was succeeded by Dr. A.E. Hubbard. By the time Hubbard left Mary Allen in 1924, enrollment had declined to only 35 students, and the future of the Seminary was doubtful.

Byrd R. Smith of Greensboro, North Carolina, was named to succeed Hubbard as President of the Seminary. The first Negro to hold the post, Smith's appointment brought about a major change in the administration of the institution, which up to that time had been staffed by whites. Enrollment rose to 134 students, all of whom were boarders. In 1933 Smith had the status of the Seminary raised to that of a coeducational junior college, accredited by the State Department of Education. This certification enabled the graduates of Mary Allen to receive teacher's certificates and to teach anywhere in the state. President Smith's death in early 1941, and the outbreak of World War II resulted in major reduction in enrollment, and in July of 1943 the college was sold to a group of Crockett businessmen. In November of 1944 it was in turn sold to the General Baptist Convention of Texas.

Dr. S.R. Prince was named to serve as the first Baptist president, and in 1945 the school became a four year, coeducational college. In 1950 a 24-bed hospital was built with partial funding from the Ford Foundation, in addition to a new dormitory for male students. Mary Allen College lost its state accreditation in 1953 as a result of a scandal alleging the sale of academic degrees. Rev. Jodie C. Sanford attempted to regain certification in 1959, but failed. The school's physical plant suffered damage from Hurricane Carla in 1962, when the Administration Building lost the top section of its tower. Then, in the summer of 1970 fire destroyed the two-story McMillan Hall. After years of declining enrollment and insufficient funds to maintain the campus buildings, the Missionary General Baptist Convention sold the site to the Stowe Lumber Company, in February of 1978, ending the 92-year history of the institution.

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

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

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Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

Bishop, Eliza, Houston County History. Heritage Publishers, Tulsa, OK., 1980.

Bishop, Eliza, Resumé for a Historical Marker Application, submitted to the Texas Historical Commission, April 10, 1981.

Johnson, Mrs. Odetta Blake, "History of Mary Allen," 1936. On file, Houston County Historical Commission, Crockett.

Smith, Dr. B.R., "History of Mary Allen Junior College, " 1933. On file, Houston County Historical Commission, Crockett.

Tenney, Miss Emma, "History of First Presbyterian Church at Crockett," 1930. On file, Houston County Historical Commission, Crockett.

Houston County Deed Records: Volumes 51, 60, 199, 220, 228, 231, 334, 560, 602.

Houston County Deeds of Trust: Volumes 47, 171. Crockett, Texas.

Houston County Third Judicial District Court Civil Records: Volumes Z, 5
Also Civil Case Docket Sheets in the District Clerk's Office, Crockett, Texas.

Newspaper Articles: Crockett Courier, July 1, 1937; Houston Chronicle, Jan. 21, 1959 and Dec. 9, 1971; Houston Post, Feb. 8, 1959; Crockett Democrat, August 12, 1959.

Oral Interviews conducted by Eliza Bishop, Crockett, Texas: Charles Carter, Jr., Crockett attorney, present City Attorney; J.B. Sallas, Crockett attorney, former State Legislator and Mayor of Crockett; Mrs. Agnes Rhoder, teacher, Bible lecturer; Prof. Selmus Curtis, Crockett school administrator; Prof. I.T. Williams, retired vocational agriculture teacher, now City of Crockett administrative assistant; Mrs. Sarah B. Gary, Seminary graduate; Mrs. Mary Etta Jackson Hunter, Mary Allen College graduate; Mrs. Daisy Pender, Seminary student; Earl Stowe, Lumber Company president and present owner.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Crockett, Texas: May 1891; October 1896; June 1907; March 1912; April 1925; Barker Center, Austin.

Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls, Administration Building
TX, Houston

Working No. March 17, 1983
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/7/84
Date Due: 6/9/83
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 5/12/83
☐ 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 _____ Area 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 _____

USIT 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



Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls
803 N. 4th St., Crockett, Houston
County, Texas

Photograph: ca. 1950, on file with
Eliza Bishop, Crockett
View of front facade with tower, looking
northwest
Photo 1 of 5

2/17/50

from Eliza B. Bishop
Print - Crockett, TX

MARY ALLEN SEMINARY
ADMINISTRATION - 1950
Crockett, TX.



Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls
803 N. 4th St., Crockett, Houston
County, Texas

Photograph: July 1982, by Peter Maxson,
on file, Texas Historical Commission
View of front (south) and west facades,
looking northeast

Photo 2 of 5

3/11/87



Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls
803 N. 4th St., Crockett, Houston
County, Texas

Photograph: July 1982, by Peter Maxson,
on file, Texas Historical Commission
View of entrance on front (south) facade,
looking north

Photo 3 of 5



Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls
803 N. 4th St., Crockett, Houston
County, Texas

Photograph: July 1982, by Peter Maxson,
on file, Texas Historical Commission
View of northeast corner, looking southwest
Photo 4 of 5

3/17/87



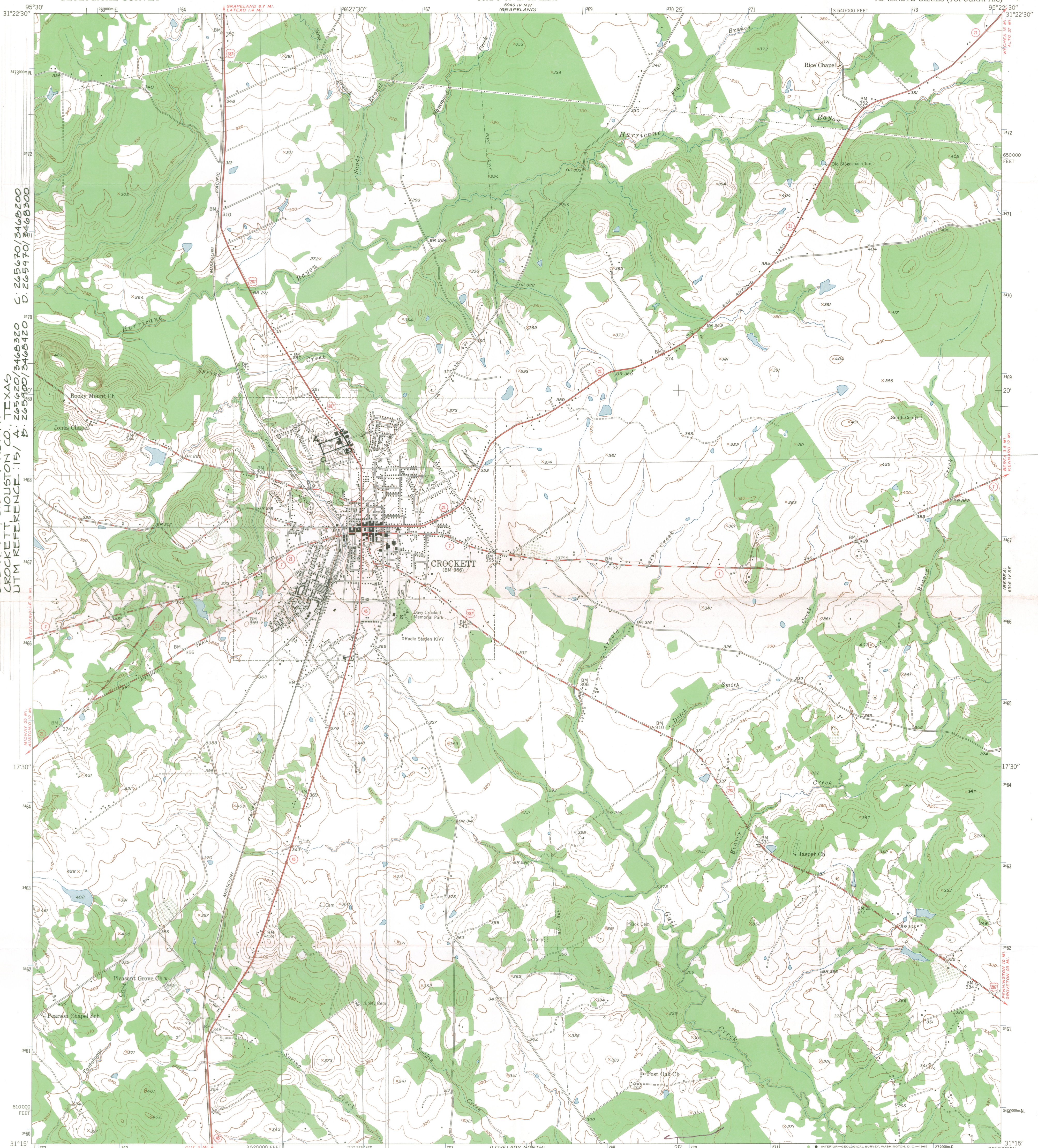
Mary Allen Seminary for Colored Girls
803 N. 4th St., Crockett, Houston
County, Texas

Photograph: July 1982, by Peter Maxson,
on file, Texas Historical Commission
View of north facade looking south
Photo 5 of 5

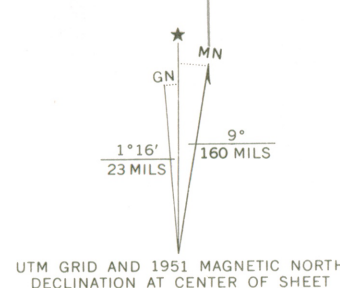
8/17/82

6946 IV NE
(CROCKETT)

MARY ALLEN SEMINARY FOR COLORED GIRLS
803 N. 4TH, U.S. 287 NORTH
CROCKETT, HOUSTON CO., TEXAS
UTM REFERENCE: 15/ A: 265670/3468200
D: 265970/3468300
C: 265670/3468200
D: 265970/3468300



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Culture and drainage in part compiled from
aerial photographs taken 1947
Topography by plane-table methods 1949-1950
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 15, shown in blue



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225 OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
HARD-SURFACE ALL WEATHER ROADS DRY WEATHER ROADS
Heavy-duty 2 LANE 16 LANE Improved dirt
Medium-duty 2 LANE 16 LANE Unimproved dirt
Loose-surface, graded, or narrow hard-surface
U. S. Route State Route

CROCKETT, TEX.
N3115-W9522.5/7.5
1950

AUG171970

3195-132

24