

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



691

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Robinson Bank Building
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: N/A

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 213 W. Main Street
CITY OR TOWN: Palestine VICINITY: N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION: N/A
STATE: Texas CODE: TX COUNTY: Anderson CODE: 001 ZIP CODE: 75801

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Curtis J. Russell
Signature of certifying official

5-5-98
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain) :

ton
Signature of the Keeper
Edson H. Beall
Date of Action
6-11-98

5. CLASSIFICATION

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY: Private

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY: Building

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING
	1	0 BUILDINGS
	0	0 SITES
	0	0 STRUCTURES
	0	0 OBJECTS
	1	0 TOTAL

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER: 0

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: Historic and Architectural Resources of Palestine, Texas

6. FUNCTION OR USE

HISTORIC FUNCTIONS: COMMERCE/financial institution

CURRENT FUNCTIONS: VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late Victorian: Romanesque Revival

MATERIALS: FOUNDATION CONCRETE
WALLS BRICK
ROOF ASPHALT
OTHER N/A

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-6)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 5

Robinson Bank Building
Palestine, Anderson County, Texas

The Robinson Bank Building at 215 W. Main is a brick commercial building, classified as a 1-part commercial block. Located near the center of Palestine's historic downtown, the 1-story building features Romanesque Revival detailing and a rectangular plan with load-bearing masonry construction. Because it shares party walls with adjoining properties to the east and west, the south elevation is the building's only public exposure. This 3-bay facade displays elaborate and finely crafted brickwork. Distinctive architectural elements include the large round archway which marks the primary entrance and the stepped, 3-part parapet with corbeling. The building remains in good condition and has changed little since its original construction, thus retaining its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to a high degree.

The Robinson Bank Building sits on relatively level land, just above street grade. The building occupies a narrow commercial lot in the middle of the 200 block of W. Main within the downtown area. A concrete sidewalk extends across the front of the building and there are no plantings or vegetation on the property. The building's footprint, like most commercial property in downtown Palestine, is rectangular and the brick walls are load-bearing. The parapet obscures the roof type and roofing materials, but most commercial properties in downtown Palestine have flat or slightly inclined roofs covered with built-up tar and gravel.

The front of the building faces south onto W. Main Street and exhibits ornate Romanesque Revival detailing. The large round-arch opening dominates the south elevation and defines the middle bay of the facade's 3-part configuration. The arch features a large keystone and red bricks that contrast with the buff-colored brick walls. Under the arch, two doors flanked by fixed transoms and capped with a fanlight provide primary access into the building. A large masonry pier with stucco finish divides this central bay into two sections. The outer bays, on either side of the entrance, are virtually identical. Each has a set-back panel with stucco finish at the base, a single display window, and a large multi-light transom. A flat arch with a keystone caps each of these openings. The parapet consists of both red- and buff-colored brick and features a 3-part stepped composition. Brick piers with corbeled bases define the central portion above the round arch, while a decorative garland band extends across the mid-section of this bay, and corbeled brickwork caps the top. The outer portions of the parapet also feature corbeled brick and brick piers at each end. A metal and neon sign extends from the facade in the westernmost bay.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 6

Robinson Bank Building
Palestine, Anderson County, Texas

Although the building is currently not in use, it is in good condition and retains many of its original architectural features. Exterior alterations have been confined largely to the entrance and the base of the building. The original doors have been replaced, and a layer of stucco has been applied over the original exterior finish. The sign protruding from the front of the building is not original; however, it is an important physical feature and has gained significance in its own right. The sign identifies one of the property's varied functions and also provides insight into the historic signage of commercial properties.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

- A** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH EVENTS THAT HAVE MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE BROAD PATTERNS OF OUR HISTORY.
- B** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIVES OF PERSONS SIGNIFICANT IN OUR PAST.
- C** PROPERTY EMBODIES THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TYPE, PERIOD, OR METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION OR REPRESENTS THE WORK OF A MASTER, OR POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUE, OR REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT AND DISTINGUISHABLE ENTITY WHOSE COMPONENTS LACK INDIVIDUAL DISTINCTION.
- D** PROPERTY HAS YIELDED, OR IS LIKELY TO YIELD, INFORMATION IMPORTANT IN PREHISTORY OR HISTORY.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS: N/A

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture; Commerce

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1890

SIGNIFICANT DATES: 1890

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Unknown

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (see continuation sheets 8-7 through 8-8)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY See bibliographic references for the associated historic context, *Community and Regional Development in Palestine, Texas: 1846-1945*.

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 7

Robinson Bank Building
Palestine, Anderson County, Texas

The Robinson Bank Building is a tangible link to the rapid commercial expansion created by the entrance of the railroad into Palestine in the late 19th century. Since its construction in 1890, the Robinson Bank Building has housed numerous businesses, but the most significant was the Robinson Bank, an early banking institution in Palestine. The Robinson Bank, which operated under various names throughout its existence, occupied the building until the operation merged with the Royall National Bank in 1937. The building is an outstanding example of a Romanesque Revival commercial building and is nominated to the National Register within the context of *Community and Regional Development in Palestine: 1846-1945*. The building is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Commerce and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Palestine remained a relatively small community in East Texas throughout the middle of the 19th century; however, the International & Great Northern Railroad spurred tremendous growth and prosperity after extending its line through Palestine in 1872. As commerce and trade expanded, entrepreneurs started new businesses to accommodate this growth and began to construct buildings in New Town, which soon developed into Palestine's primary commercial center. The Robinson Bank Building exemplifies this trend.

Although the building on W. Main Street dates to 1890, Dr. James Isaac Bonner and William Brice Robinson founded the institution responsible for its construction about a decade earlier. Around 1880, Bonner and Robinson opened a public banking facility in nearby Palestine. According to one source, the Moody family of Galveston encouraged them to open a banking house. "It was under their guidance that the Bonner and Robinson Bank was organized. . . .The Moodys felt very strongly that the railroad center needed the banking facility" (Thornton n.d.:147). Originally, the bank was called Bonner & Robinson, Bankers, and Dealers in Exchange, and occupied a building in Palestine's bustling downtown.

The business flourished and in 1890 new construction began on the Romanesque Revival building on Main Street (the original location of the bank is not known). At first, Robinson was the principal manager of the bank. Following the death of Bonner around 1900, Robinson's younger brothers (G.S. Robinson and Z. Lee Robinson) and sister (Margaret Robinson Boulware) came to Palestine from their native South Carolina to assist with the bank's operation. At this point, each became an officer of the bank and they renamed the institution Robinson Brothers, Bankers.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 8

Robinson Bank Building
Palestine, Anderson County, Texas

Z. Lee Robinson assumed control of the bank after his brother and bank co-founder William Robinson died on April 25, 1905. G.S. Robinson II, William Robinson's grandson, served as manager. Around 1920 the name changed to Robinson Guaranty State Bank & Trust Company, and eight years later it changed again, this time to Robinson State Bank & Trust Company. Throughout the period in which the building housed a banking operation, the business' moniker has always included the Robinson name. For this reason, the building is simply called the Robinson Bank Building.

On December 30, 1937, the bank merged with Royall National Bank, which Nathaniel R. Royall founded in Palestine in 1904. Z. Lee Robinson and Guy Thornwell Robinson, son of W.B. Robinson, became officers of Royall National Bank, which today is one of the largest banks in the city. All banking operations were moved from the Romanesque Revival building on Main Street and a variety of businesses have since occupied the space. The best known business was the Rushing Jewelry Store, which placed the existing, prominent neon sign on the facade.

The Robinson Bank Building is one of Palestine's most intact historic commercial buildings and a noteworthy example of a 1-part commercial block. As one of the best-preserved buildings in the downtown area, the Robinson Bank Building displays superb craftsmanship and maintains its historic character to an unusually high degree. The round arched entrance and corbeled brick parapet exemplify the Romanesque Revival style. This architectural expression gained considerable popularity in Palestine and other downtown areas in Texas during the late 19th century, and the Robinson Bank Building gains significance as the city's premier commercial example of the Romanesque Revival style.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF PROPERTY: less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

	Zone	Northing	Easting
	15	250640	3516920

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Palatine Original Town Site; Block: 167; Lot: 7.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Boundaries are those historically associated with the property.

11. FORM PREPARED BY (with assistance from Amber Degn, THC Historian)

NAME/TITLE: David Moore (Project Director), Matt Goebel (Historian)

ORGANIZATION: Hardy-Heck-Moore & Associates **DATE:** February 1994/March 1998

STREET & NUMBER: 1414 West Sixth Street **TELEPHONE:** (512) 478-8014

CITY OR TOWN: Austin **STATE:** TX **ZIP CODE:** 78703

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

CONTINUATION SHEETS

MAPS N/A

PHOTOGRAPHS PHOTO 1: Matt Goebel - Photographer; February 1994; Original negatives on file with the Texas Historical Commission; View of south elevation, camera facing northwest.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS N/A

PROPERTY OWNER

NAME: Cathryn P. Williams

STREET & NUMBER: P.O. Box 96 **TELEPHONE:** N/A

CITY OR TOWN: Palestine **STATE:** TX **ZIP CODE:** 75801

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Robinson Bank Building

MULTIPLE NAME: Palestine, Texas MPS

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Anderson

DATE RECEIVED: 5/15/98 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/26/98
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/11/98 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/29/98
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 98000691

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 6.11.98 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register.

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



MIDWESTERN
LOANS

RUSHING

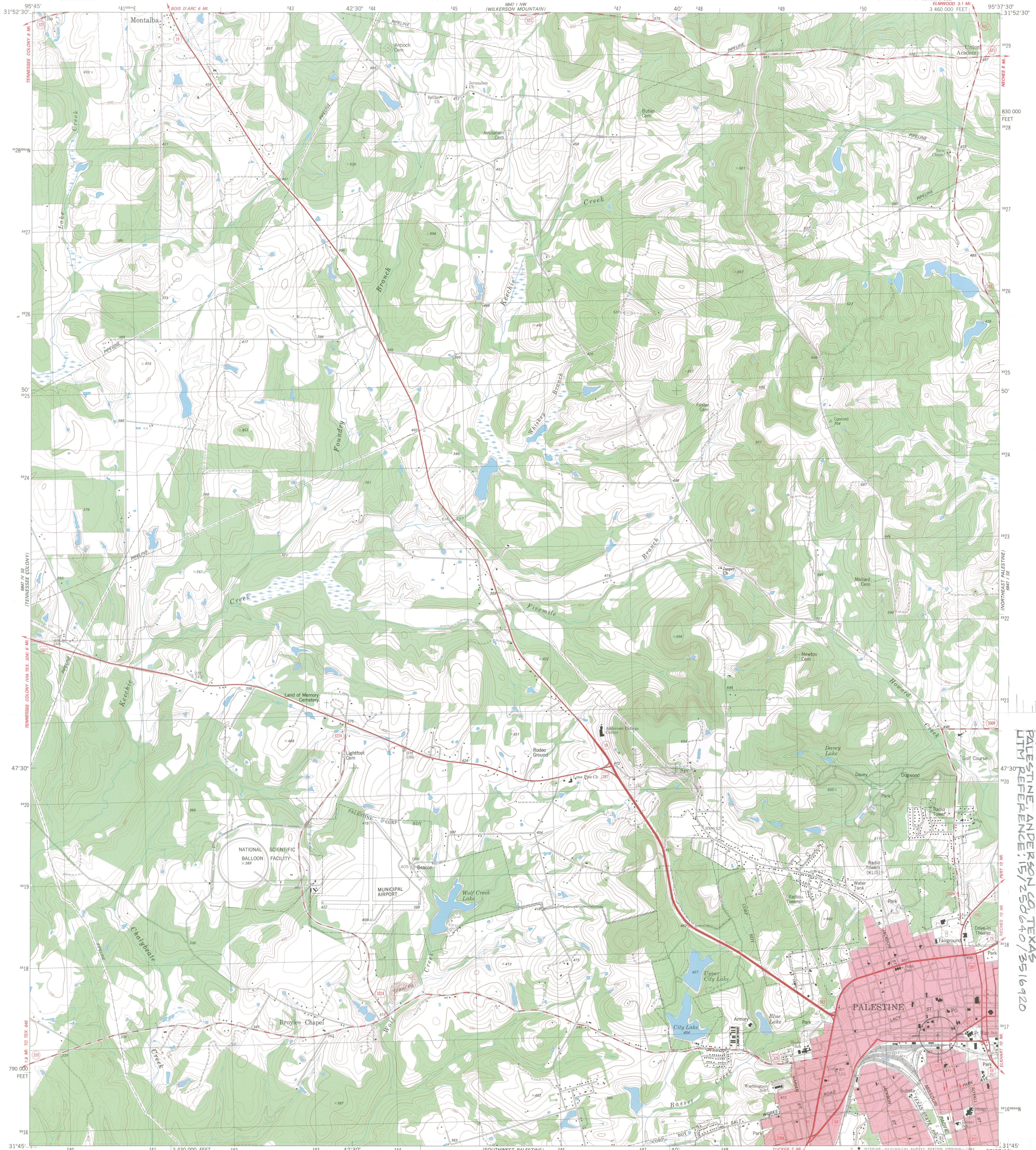
JEWELERS
MORE LUCKY FOREVER
DIAMOND RINGS

FABRICS

STREET
HANDICAP

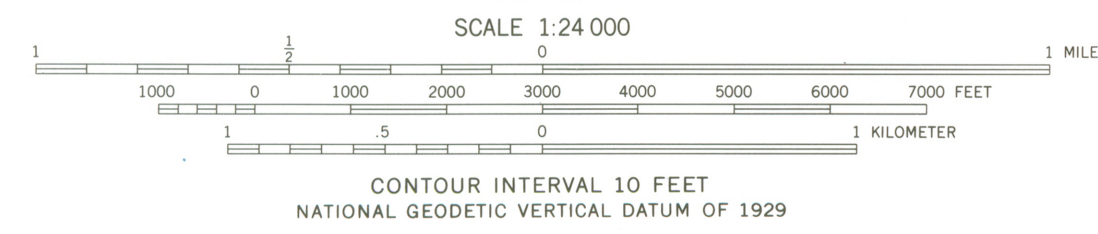
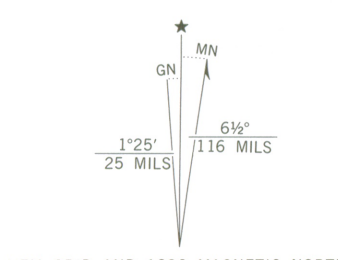
HANDICAP

ROBINSON BANK BUILDING
213 W. MAIN STREET
PALESTINE, ANDERSON CO., TEXAS
PHOTOGRAPH 1 of 1



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1976. Field checked 1977. Map edited 1982
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Texas coordinate system, central zone (Lambert conformal conic) 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15 1927 North American datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 14 meters south and 23 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
State Route	

FERGUSON MAP COMPANY
610 WEST SUNSET ROAD
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78216
3145-W9537.5/7.5
1982
DMA 6847 1 SW-SERIES 982

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

ROBINSON BANK BUILDING
213 W MAIN STREET
PALESTINE, ANDERSON CO TEXAS
UTM REFERENCE: 15/250640/3516920