Dist. 16, Rep. Richard C. White

Form 10-300 (July 1969)

1. NAME

CITY OR TOWN:

El Paso

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:

CITY OR TOWN:

Austin

STREET AND NUMBER:

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

108 W. 15th Street

Texas State Historical Survey

Texas State Historical Survey Committee

1964

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

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NAIL REC

☐ Federal

(See continuation sheet #1)

E-4

Texas

ENTRY NUMBER

MAR I 6 1972

El Paso

FOR NPS USE ONLY

DATE

CODE

141

ACCESSIBLE

TO THE PUBLIC

Yes:

Comments

CODE

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CODE

048

CODE

048

Local

COUNTY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

10

FOR

NPS

USE

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☐ No

X Restricted

Unrestricted

. DESCRIPTION								
		(Check One)						
CONDITION	☐ Excellent	Good	☐ Fair	☐ De	eteriorated	Ruins	☐ Unexposed	
CONDITION		(Check Or	ne)			(Che	ck One)	
	☐ Alte	red	X Unaltered	1		☐ Moved	X Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present mission church at Socorro was built after the 1829 flood which changed the course of the Rio Grande and destroyed the mission and the pueblo (this date given in Binion, An Introduction to El Paso Landmarks). The present church was probably constructed during the next decade. The Historic American Buildings Survey records the date 1840 in their measured drawings done in 1936.

The structure, which is of adobe covered with whitewashed adobe plaster, is nearly H-shaped in plan, and is 117 feet long, 72 feet wide on the entrance (south) facade, and 67 feet wide at the transept. The foyer is flanked by the baptistry on the east and a mortuary chapel on the west. These three elements combine to make up the long, flat south facade of the church.

The south facade has a central doorway with statuary niches flanking the entranceway and appearing on center above it. A stepped parapet surmounts the front wall and supports an espadana or wall belfry. Similar stepped parapets terminate the east and west end of this facade. The effect of these stepped elements capping the wall is similar to abstract Indian geometric designs used to decorate domestic articles.

There is a choir balcony above the foyer containing a finely carved turned balustrade. The finest feature of the mission church are the finely painted and decorated vigas or beams which support the ceiling. These beams, which measure roughly 8 by 10 inches, were salvaged from the eighteenth century Socorro mission and reused. Above the beams, the ceiling is made up of round saplings, 12 to 2 inches in diameter, laid in a herring bone pattern. The decorative pattern generally consists of three sticks stained black, then five white, then three black, etc. The beams themselves are decorated in geometric patterns with red, black and yellow staining.

The transept or crucero is 60 feet wide on the interior and the width of the east and west transepts are 15 feet, 9 inches, and 15 feet, 11 inches respectively. With the exception of the vigas, little of the original interior woodwork remains. The segmental arch which separates the sanctuary from the nave is also not contemporaneous with the circa 1840 structure.

The entrances into the transept and the large transept windows have unusual architectural details and frames with flanking fillsters and flared decorative lintels which also incorporate NAThe semicircular head of the apertures. These (continued)

(See continuation sheet #2)

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

#1

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Historic American Buildings Survey 1936 Federal Library of Congress Washington DC 008



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #2

STATE	
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(Number all entries)

7. (contd.)

decorative frames on the two doors and two windows were originally of whitewashed adobe. These have in recent years been replaced with concrete frames which more or less follow the same design.

Adjacent to the transept and flanking the sanctuary are the east and west sanctuaries. These chambers are differentiated from the principal spaces of the church by a considerable reduction in ceiling height. The baptistry and mortuary chapel, being subsidiary spaces, also have lower ceilings.

The walls of the structure vary considerably in width. The wall between the foyer and baptistry is 5 feet, 6 inches, wide, and the wall on the east side of the sacristy is 2 feet, 10 inches, wide. Generally, however, the nave and transept walls are about 4 feet thick and are covered on the interior and exterior with adobe plaster, whitewashed.



SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One of More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	☐ 16th Century	X 18th Century	20th Century
☐ 15th Century	17th Century	X 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable	le and Known) 1682,	1840	
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Che	ck One or More as Appropr	riate)	
Abor iginal	☐ Education	☐ Political	Urbon Planning
☐ Prehistoric	☐ Engineering	Religion/Phi-	Other (Specify)
★ Historic	☐ Industry	losophy	and the same with
☐ Agriculture	☐ Invention	☐ Science	WEDELACO .
	☐ Landscape	☐ Sculpture	DEC 28 1971
☐ Art	Architecture	Social/Human-	ES BELL
☐ Commerce	☐ Literature	itarian	NATIONAL
☐ Communications	☐ Military	☐ Theater	REGISTEN S
Conservation	☐ Music	Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Nuestra Señora de la Concepcion del Socorro was founded in the spring of 1682 as the third pueblo in the resettlement of the New Mexico Indians who fled with the Spanish during the Pope Uprising (Pueblo Revolt). The pueblo and mission at Socorro were founded to serve the displaced Piro, Tano and Jemez Indians of New Mexico. Architecturally, Socorro and Ysleta are displaced New Mexican missions, much the same as the Indian population which they served. The massing, materials and use of native decorative elements in these mission churches, particularly Socorro, show a strong kinship to the architectural traditions which evolved in the seventeenth century in Spanish New Mexico. The history of these missions was also, for a century and a half after their establishment, more closely related to New Mexico than Texas.

Franciscan missionaries established the Socorro pueblo and mission on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande, seven and a half leagues south of Ysleta. Because of an uprising among the Indians in 1683, the original site was abandoned and a location one league from Ysleta was choosen. This closer site was selected to allow a degree of protection for the Spanish missionary in charge.

In 1760 Bishop Tamaron visited Socorro, as well as the other missions in the El Paso del Norte area, and left the following account: "From Isleta to Socorro was about one league east. This mission and pueblo, like the others, was near the river and had its resident missionary. There were 46 Zuma families with 182 persons living in the pueblo. A small settlement called Tuburcio, made up entirely of Spaniards, formed part of the mission. There were 82 families with 424 persons in Tuburcio. The mission church was 36 varas long (one vara = 33.33 inches) and seven wide, with a transept 14 3/4 varas from end to end" (Our Catholic Heritage, p.235).

According to Bishop Tamaron's description, the original church at Socorro was somewhat larger than the mission at Ysleta, the nave was about 5 to 6 feet wider, and the transept (see continuation sheet #3)

December 16, 1971

Date

1972

MAR 9

Date

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #3

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8. (contd.)

was more than 15 feet wider than at Ysleta. This church was destroyed by flood in the first decades of the nineteenth century. According to local tradition, the mission, which was rebuilt about ½ mile from the flooded site, on the location of a legendary miracle, was similar to the destroyed structure and the new church reused some of the old materials. The third site of Socorro mission occupies the location where a miracle concerning the transport of a Spanish statue of Saint Michael is reported to have occured.

"According to the legend, Indians were taking the statue to a mission in New Mexico. But the heavy wheels of the cart creaked to a halt in the sandy soil of the El Paso lower Valley.. the phenomenon was finally explained as a sign from heaven that the statue of Saint Michael should remain where it was, and a small chapel was built to protect it " (Binion, An Introduction to El Paso.): This same statue of Saint Michael is on the altar in the west transept.

The present church was constructed circa 1840 and, excluding the replacement of windows, doors and some interior decoration, the fabric of the structure is basically unchanged. The Socorro Mission has served the surrounding community since its establishment in 1682 and continues to be an active religious institution.

Recorded Texas Historic Landmark - 1964.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #4

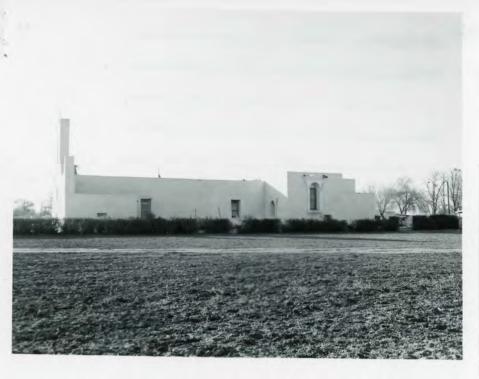
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Webb, Walter P., ed. 1952. <u>Handbook of Texas</u>. Vol. I. Austin: Texas State Historical Association.

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EDITOR of 2/14/72
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Registry Entry 5-2-72 Annual Edition Entry
MAR 1 6 1972 Card MAR 1 6 1972
Richard C. White



March 16, 19

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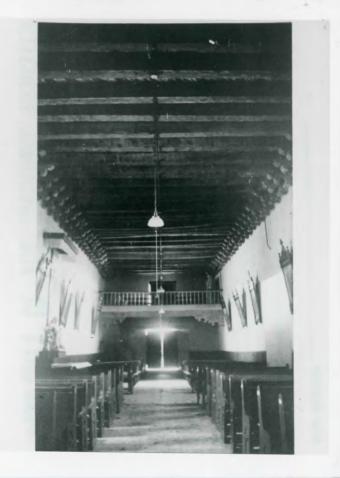
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

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١.	NAME			+ W	
	соммон:	Socorro Mission		(911/19)	_
	AND/OR HISTORIC:	Mission Nuestra S	enora de la	Concepcion del	Pueblo d
2.	LOCATION		_		Socorro
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		Socorro		9 3	1 20/
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	PHOTO CREDIT:	Texas State Histor:	ical Survey	Committee	
		November, 1970			
	NEGATIVE FILED AT	Texas State Histor:	ical Survey	Committee	
*****		108 W. 15th Street			
4.	IDENTIFICATION				
	DESCRIBE VIEW, D	RECTION, ETC.			
		East facade, showing	ng low-ceili	ng baptistry an	d east
	1.3	transept.			



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

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WHK	

1.	NAME MAR 1 6 1972
	COMMON: Socorro Mission
-	AND/OR HISTORIC: Mission Nuestra Senora de la Concepcion del Pueblo de
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	Moon Road and FM 258, north of cemetery
	Socorro
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3.	PHOTO REFERENCE
	PHOTO CREDIT: Historic American Buildings Survey DATE OF PHOTO: 1936
-00	NEGATIVE FILED AT: Texas State Historical Survey Committee 108 W. 15th Street, Austin, Texas 78711
4.	IDENTIFICATION
	Interior view, looking toward main entrance



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

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FOR NPS USE ONLY

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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4. IDENTIFICATION			
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Dr. Interior	view, looking to	oward main altar	



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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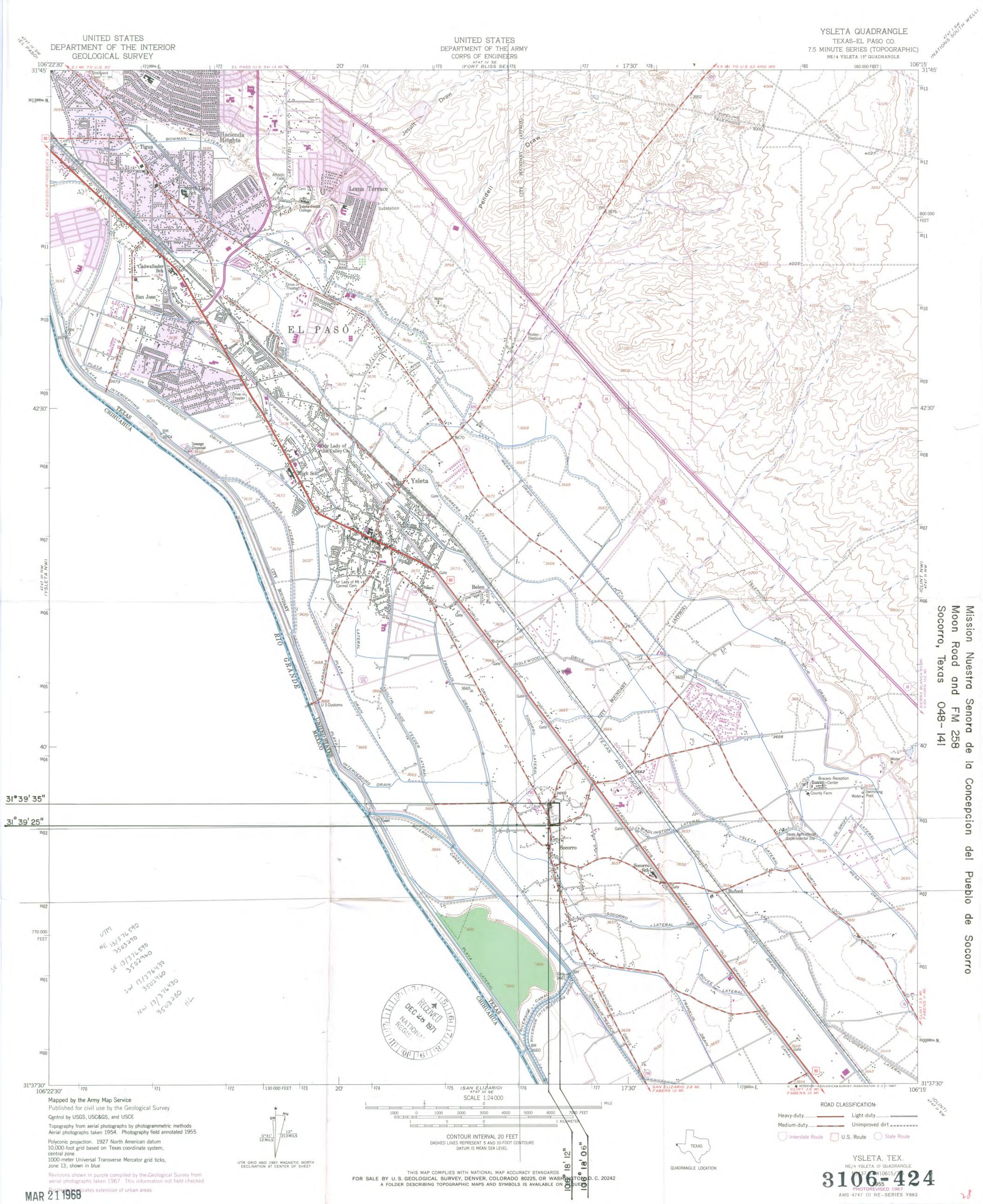
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DESC	RUBE VIEW DIRECTION, ETC.			
Mar	270			
	Detail of arc	chitectural fra	me of transept	doorway

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

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(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)		ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
1. NAME			MAR 1 6 197	2
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AND/OR HISTOR	Mission Nuestra	Senora de la	Concepcion del P	ueblo de
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ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE

TEXAS

Date Entered MAR 1 6 1972

Name

Location

Northgate Site (41 EP 6)

El Paso

El Paso County

El Paso County

Socorro Mission

Socorro

First Mational Bank of San Antonio

San Antonio Bexar County

Also Notified

Hon. John G. Tower

Hon. Lloyd M. Bentsen, Jr.

Hon. Richard C. White

Hon. Henry B. Gonzales

Director, Southwest Region

HR NRowland:mm 3/13/72

State Liaison Officer Mr. Trustt Latimer Executive Director Texas State Historical Survey Committee Post Office Box 12276 Capitol Station Austin, Texas 78711