

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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Historic Name: Cotton Exchange Building, Old

Other Name/Site Number:

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2. Location

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Street & Number: 305 E. Commerce

Not for Publication: N/A

City/Town: Nacogdoches

State: TX County: Nacogdoches

Code: 347 Zip Code: 75961

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
1	_____ Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Nacogdoches Multiple-Property Nominatio

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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):

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: Commerce/Trade Sub: Business
Current : Commerce/Trade Sub: Business

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Other: Two-Part Commercial Block

Other Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: foundation	Brick
walls	Brick
roof	Unknown
other	_____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

X  See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: ca. 1891 ca. 1900

Significant Dates: ca. 1891 ca. 1900

Significant Person(s): Not Applicable

Cultural Affiliation: Not Applicable

Architect/Builder: Rulfs, Dietrich A. W.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X  See continuation sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Historic Context List of References.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A	_____	_____	B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	D	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:

Addition: City of Nacogdoches  
 Block: 8  
 Lot: 3

Boundary Justification:

Property includes area historically associated with buildings being nominated.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Ed Galloway/Research Assistant  
 Organization: Hardy-Heck-Moore  
 Street & Number: 2112 Rio Grande  
 City or Town: Austin

Date: June 1990  
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The Cotton Exchange Building is a massive 2-story commercial building with a rectangular plan. Its brick, load-bearing walls rest on a brick foundation. The building occupies a corner, and noteworthy architectural detailing, such as segmental-arched hoodmolds and inset brick panels in the parapet, are seen on the front (south) and west elevations. The building is in the central business district where many similarly detailed and contemporaneous buildings stand.

The Cotton Exchange Building was built in two phases. When first completed in 1891, the structure was only a single story; however a second floor and a rear addition were added by 1900, according to Sanborn maps. In its present configuration, the building is classified as a two-part commercial block with two distinct vertical divisions. Unlike most local examples of this building type, this structure has first-floor openings that are long and narrow where double-hung windows were installed.

The building has two storefronts which face south onto Commerce Street and each has a three-bay first floor. The western half of the building has a single-door entrance in the westernmost bay, and the other openings have double-hung windows. The eastern storefront, on the other hand, has a central double-door entrance and flanking windows. The second floor of each storefront differs slightly; however both have segmental-arched windows with hoodmolds. The western storefront has a 3-bay configuration, while its counterpart to the east has a 3-bay pattern. Both have inset panels with corbeled brickwork in

the parapet, but the eastern storefront has a segmental-arched motif in the central bay. The east elevation displays much of the same type of detailing as that seen on the front (south) wall.

The building has been altered over the years. Sanborn maps revealed that the structure has undergone major modifications since its initial construction. The building was first depicted in 1891 as a 1-story structure with a partition wall that divided the building into two stores. By 1906, however, significant additions were in place. A second floor was built and a rear extension was added to the north. The second floor was shown to be completely open unlike the first floor which remained partitioned. Although these changes dramatically altered the structure's original appearance, they are well over 50 years and are considered to be vital to the building's historic character. Other non-historic changes are on the first floor of the western storefront where the original opening has been partially enclosed and a modern door has been installed. These changes detract from the building's character. In addition, some of the bricks used in the parapet appear to be replacements but the brick patterns are repeated.

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The Old Cotton Exchange Building is one of the few non-retail commercial buildings in Nacogdoches. With its masonry construction and segmental-arched windows, the building is a good local example of late 19th-century commercial architecture and is nominated to the National Register under Criterion C for its architectural merits. It housed the local cotton exchange which helped local farmers market their cotton. Profits realized from the cultivation of cotton contributed to the local economy which spurred development in the community. Therefore, the Old Cotton Exchange Building is related to *Community Planning and Development in Nacogdoches: 1830-1940*.

Although cotton had been grown locally since at least the middle of the 19th century, its growers were hampered by poor transportation systems that were expensive and unreliable. The arrival of the railroad, however, afforded new opportunities for these farmers and they soon began to harvest significantly greater amounts of the good. As local cotton production increased, the need for a central clearing-house for cotton-related business arose and the Cotton Exchange Building consequently was erected by 1890. It was built in the downtown area where most business transactions occurred but faced onto Commerce Street one block north of Main Street. While most of the retail stores and shops were located around the Principal Square and along E. Main Street, Commerce Street attracted many of the non-retail businesses such as warehouses, wagon yards and livery stables. Local architect and builder, Dietrich A. W. Rulfs, reportedly designed this

structure, which was only a single story when originally built. By 1900 the second story was added.

Only minor alterations detract from the building's historic character and integrity and it remains one of the premier examples of late 19th-century commercial architecture in Nacogdoches. Although the city at one time boasted many similarly detailed buildings in the downtown, most have been razed or have been so severely altered that their integrity has been compromised.



