

# **EDIFICE OF ORDER**

## **San Antonio City Halls and Jails 1731-1915**

by

**Farrell L. Tucker**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The following is a socio-historical examination of municipal buildings in the City of San Antonio. This is not a study in architectural history, but rather an exploration of the political, social and economic circumstances surrounding the construction and implementation of the various public structures that have served the corporate body in its administration of social order and justice. This exploration was conducted in the hope and anticipation of achieving a clearer understanding of the earlier inhabitants.

The report is divided into four sections, each one is an examination of the successive municipal buildings and jails erected by the citizens from the beginning of the municipality in 1731 to the centralization of police administration in 1915, followed by a conclusion. Many of the structures, now destroyed, were photographed before being demolished. The photographic appendix, in data format, is arranged to coincide with each section.

### **CASA REAL**

The first municipal building in what would become the City of San Antonio was provided for in the allotment of land for the *casa real* or "Royal House" of the *Villa of San Fernando* in the orders of the Marques de Casafuerte, Viceroy of New Spain to Don

Juan Bustillo Zavallos, Governor of the province of Texas, dated 28 November 1730.

The layout of the *villa* would be in accordance with the *Cartilla de Particion* derived from the regulations contained in the *Nueva Recopilacion de las Leyes de las Indias* (The Laws of the Indies) of 1681. The detailed instructions, among other items, mandated the laying out of a main plaza, a block for a church, a priest's house and municipal buildings (*casa reales*).<sup>1</sup>

The 15 families of Canary Islanders who would found the new villa arrived at the *presidio de san antonio de bexar* on March 9, 1731, having traveled overland from Vera Cruz. The *presidio*, a partially enclosed military reservation of stone and adobe with a number of *jacales* (huts) surrounding it, had been home to a military and dependent population since 1718. The population had now grown to between 242-310 individuals.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the families of the soldiers there were various artisans and service providers living in the immediate area of the *presidio* supporting the *mission san antonio de valero* and other nearby missions.<sup>3</sup>

On July 2, 1731, each of the newly arrived families gathered a cartload of stones and ten stakes. The starting point of the survey was to be what would become the main door of the church. A sundial and a 50-vara (one vara=2.759 feet) chain was used to lay out the site of the church, the main plaza, and the lot for the *casa real*.<sup>4</sup> By July 7, 1731, the survey of individual lots, fields and municipal lands had been completed. The *villa of san fernando* extended 1,093 varas in each cardinal direction from the front door of its

---

<sup>1</sup> Ester Macmillan (ed.), *San Antonio in the Eighteenth Century* (San Antonio, 1976), 84-85.

<sup>2</sup> Jesus Francisco de la Teja, "Land and Society in 18th Century San Antonio de Bexar" (unpublished Ph.D. diss. UT Austin, 1988), 75.

<sup>3</sup> Macmillan (ed.), *San Antonio in the Eighteenth Century*, 73-83.

<sup>4</sup> Frederick C. Chabot, *With the Makers of San Antonio* (San Antonio, 1937), 91.

church.<sup>5</sup> The members of the *cabildo*(city council), including Vincente Alvarez Travieso, the *alguacil mayor*(chief marshal), were appointed for life on 1 August 1731.<sup>6</sup>

The new *villa* had been authorized by the viceroy to be cited east of the *presidio* the distance of a gunshot, notwithstanding the regulations in the Laws of the Indies which mandated a five league minimum between settlements.<sup>7</sup> The actual site was somewhat closer as present day San Antonio reflects in the single city block distance between Main and Military Plazas. While protection from hostile tribes was almost certainly the reason, the location brought the *presidio* and its original surrounding inhabitants inside the legal boundaries of the *villa of san fernando* which by virtue of its charter had the rights, privileges and powers of a *ciudad*(city).<sup>8</sup> This was the seed of much dissension between the military and provincial governments based at the *presidio* and the municipal authorities of the *villa*.

The municipal buildings would not become a physical reality for some years. On May 2, 1735 an order of arrest directed to the *alguacil* specifically states that the prisoners should be imprisoned in the guardroom of the *presidio* "since there is no jail in the said villa."<sup>9</sup> It was 1742 before a contract would be let to Manuel de Carajal for the hauling of stone and the construction of the *casa real*. In 1749 the *villa* was borrowing funds for the roofing and whitewashing of the structure.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Macmillian, *San Antonio*, 86.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>8</sup> Chabot, *With the Makers*, 139.

<sup>9</sup> *Bexar Archives*, 1735.

<sup>10</sup> Frederick C. Chabot, *San Antonio and Its Beginnings* (San Antonio, 1931), 105.

When the Baron de Ripperda assumed his duties as governor in 1770, he found the *presidio* buildings to be in a miserable condition and established residence in the *casa real*<sup>11</sup> as did his successor, Don Joseph Antonio Curbello.<sup>12</sup> Ripperda also mandated that the people of the *villa* would “volunteer” to reconstruct and repair the barracks and jail of the *presidio*. This order was refused and appealed by the city council. The resistance to this order and the continued friction between the governor and city council eventually led the viceroy to intervene.<sup>13</sup>

The antagonism between the *presidio* and the municipality was an old story. The lands and living places of those persons who had settled around the *presidio* prior to the arrival of the canary island families and the establishment of the *villa* were annexed by the *villa*'s establishment. Some persons among this group would not defer to the authority of the city council or its members. On August 13, 1743, a declaration of Joseph de Urrutia, Captain(for life) of the *presidio*, acknowledges this attitude and clearly states that all the prior settlers must establish citizenship in the *villa* and consider themselves under its jurisdiction.<sup>14</sup> This particular action did not save Captain Urrutia from the wrath of the municipal fathers, however, as the archives reflect a series of slanderous complaints and counter complaints between the Captain and the *cabildo*.<sup>15</sup>

Part of the problem may have been that as part of the settlement package, the canary island settlers, almost all being farmers or laborers, had received titles as landed

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 31

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>13</sup> Bexar Archives, 1772-1773.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 1743.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 1743.

noblemen and knights of Castile.<sup>16</sup> A September 23, 1778 entry in the *archivo general y historico* in Mexico City indicates that the settlers held an exaggerated perception of their own importance.<sup>17</sup> El Caballero Teodoro de Croix, a provincial commandant general stated, "The officers of *san fernando* form a most ridiculous *cabildo* because of the ignorance of all. They do many absurd and shameful things and are quarrelsome."<sup>18</sup>

Fr. Juan Augustin Morfi, after an inspection trip in the 1770's, was somewhat more blunt in his description of the islanders, "these preeminences who scorn cultivation of the land and depend on the Indians of the nearby mission for their food. They look upon orderly administration and the prosecution of the law as persecution."<sup>19</sup> He further stated that the illiterate citizens "live in wretched poverty to this day because of their laziness, trifling ways and lack of steadiness."<sup>20</sup> On one occasion in October 1772, the *cabildo* itself was suspended. The municipal officials did not regain their *varas*(batons of office)for several months and even then continued to argue with provincial authorities.<sup>21</sup>

The *cabildo* was, after all, in a difficult situation. It was the lowest rung on the royal ladder. The orders passed downward from king to viceroy to provincial governor to the *cabildo*. The members had to administer and "zone" all lands for lots, houses, orchards, and grazing lands, including home and business improvements. The *cabildo* processed all occupational licenses, performed the examinations of all prospective immigrants and due to its extended authority as a *Ciudad* and provincial capital, examined

---

<sup>16</sup> Macmillian, *San Antonio*, 84.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>20</sup> Lewis F. Fisher, *Saving San Antonio* (Lubbock, 1996), 21

<sup>21</sup> Macmillian, *San Antonio*, 92.

and tried all civil and criminal cases that occurred in the province. The *alguacil mayor* executed warrants, seized property, and acted as peace officer and enforcement arm of the *cabildo*.<sup>22</sup> Many times within the empire the *cabildo* had two peace officers, the second titled the *alguacil-mayor del campo* to handle the rural areas, however, due to the proximity of the presidio and its soldiers it had been decided that one municipal officer was sufficient.<sup>23</sup>

By 1779 the municipal structures were again “in such a deplorable condition that it was necessary to issue a decree for their reconstruction.”<sup>24</sup> At least one of the structures had been destroyed by 1783. A resolution was passed that year for its rebuilding.<sup>25</sup>

During the month of February 1783, the *cabildo* requested permission of the provincial governor to be allowed to petition the Lord Commandant General for funds to finance the building of a municipal jail suitable for the incarceration of both males and females. Within this request, the *cabildo* states that because the former governor, the Baron de Ripperda had occupied the “royal houses”, the *cabildo* had designated the jail as its council chambers which, in turn, had apparently left no suitable place for male or female prisoners to be imprisoned. The point is made several times that, “women, therefore, cannot be imprisoned and are necessarily being released to commit other excesses”.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 90-91.

<sup>23</sup> Gilbert R. Cruz, “A Cabildo in Texas under the Spanish Bourbons” (unpublished Masters Thesis, St. Mary’s Univ, 1970), 6.

<sup>24</sup> Chabot, *Beginnings*, 106.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> *Bexar Archives*, 1783.

The archives do not indicate if the council received the funds, however, Chabot states that the jail was completed in 1791, that it adjoined the patio or corral of the *casa real* and that it faced south onto *carcel*(jail or prison) street.<sup>27</sup>

The buildings apparently continued to serve the city throughout the remaining years of Spanish control and the period of Mexican rule with little fanfare. By the early 1800's the *villa*, and its outlying area is almost never referred to by its legal name. The *villa*, the *presidio*, the *mission san antonio de valero* and the surrounding collection of *jacales* are collectively known as *san antonio de bejar* or just "bejar", sometimes "bexar".

The fortunes of the city begin a downward spiral. First there is the 1811 local insurrection of Juan Bautista de las Casas and the resulting Royalist suppression. Then the 1813 capture of the city by the mercenary "Republican Army of the North" and the subsequent massacre of provincial and city officials by the mercenaries. The counter-revolutionary excesses of Royalist authorities after retaking the city, combined with the usual Indian depredations almost depopulate the town by 1816.<sup>28</sup> A fire destroys San Fernando Church in 1818 and a major flood occurs in July 1819.<sup>29</sup> San Fernando is rebuilt only to burn again in 1828. It would not be rebuilt until 1841.<sup>30</sup> All of these events however, were minor compared to the maelstrom that would occur. Its harbinger, one Moses Austin, an anglo immigrant and would-be *impresario* arrived in *san antonio de bejar* in December 1820, requesting a colonization permit. There would be many in Mexico City that would regret that it was granted.

---

<sup>27</sup> Chabot, *Beginnings*, 106.

<sup>28</sup> Pearson Newcomb, *The Alamo City*(San Antonio, 1926), 9-10.

<sup>29</sup> Edward W. Heusinger, *A Chronology of Events in San Antonio*(San Antonio, 1951), 14.

<sup>30</sup> Chabot, *Beginnings*, 104

By December 1835, members of the Anglo-American immigrant population of the Mexican Department of Texas, initially brought in by Austin and his son Stephen, having grown in numbers and audacity, assault and take "bexar". This is not a new experience for the city and the counter-revolutionary response is anticipated. It arrives in March of 1836 with the army of President/General Santa Anna. The city is once again the scene of a bloody counter-revolutionary suppression with the fall of the Alamo<sup>31</sup> Within a few weeks however, Santa Anna is defeated at San Jacinto and a new Republic of Texas is declared.<sup>32</sup>

Bexar County was created by "An act organizing the Inferior Courts" by the Congress of the Republic of Texas, approved on December 22, 1836.<sup>33</sup> The initial incorporation of San Antonio as the "Town of Bexar" was by an Act of Congress, approved January 5, 1837.<sup>34</sup> The duly elected officers of the Court in and for the County of Bexar met in the old *casa real* as did the city officials of the Town of Bexar, the new county seat. The town meetings were held in both Spanish and English. The Mayor, J. W. Smith was the sole "anglo" member of the council, all the others being Hispanic.

The Act of Congress approved December 14, 1837 "hereby declared (the citizens) a body politic and corporate by the name and title of 'The City of San Antonio'."<sup>35</sup> The new City of San Antonio is the county seat of Bexar County, an area of land so vast that more than 120 counties would be made from it and that for a time, stretched from the Rio Grande to just short of the Canadian border. The old municipal building was still

---

<sup>31</sup> Fisher, *Saving San Antonio*, 24

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.

<sup>33</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 19.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

functioning, now under its third national flag. It was nearing the end of its usefulness, but the old council house still had a few more prominent parts to play in San Antonio history.

The years following the establishment of the Republic of Texas were harsh ones for the young city. On March 19, 1840, a group of Commanche Indians ride into town. A meeting is held inside the *casa real* concerning a release or exchange of prisoners. The Commanche were supposed to have brought all their white captives in exchange for various goods and other incentives. Upon learning that only two captives were present, out of the expected 200, it is decided by the Texan forces that a certain number of Indians will be made hostage until the others bring in their captives.<sup>36</sup> As the translation is completed and the Commanches realize that they are to be made prisoners, combat erupts inside the *casa real*. The Commanche, Texan forces and townspeople, fighting hand-to-hand, spill out onto Main Plaza. The fight continues for some hours, with participants taking positions in various houses and buildings around the plaza. When the fighting is over, a number of Indians, perhaps as many as forty are dead, along with seven citizens.<sup>37</sup> The number of dead on each side would lend support to Fisher's statement that "...Texan soldiers, angry that only two white captives were returned instead of the two hundred promised, killed most of the chiefs and their families in a massacre that began inside the Council House on Main Plaza and spread to the rest of the town."<sup>38</sup>

The city's fortunes were not to improve. The Republic of Mexico did not recognize the Republic of Texas. On March 5, 1842, the city is taken by General Raphael

---

<sup>36</sup> Newcomb, *The Alamo City*, 16.

<sup>37</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 20.

<sup>38</sup> Fisher, *Saving San Antonio*, 24.

Vasquez and held for two days, while the Mexican flag flies over the *casa real*.<sup>39</sup> The 4th Judicial District minute books for March 7, 1842 indicate, "Court was not opened in consequence of the occupation of the town by General Raphael Vasquez and a detachment of the public enemy."<sup>40</sup>

Six months later, on September 11, 1842, Adrian Woll, an Irish mercenary and commissioned Mexican General, beats off a hastily gathered defense force and takes the city with a force of some 1,200 men.<sup>41</sup> General Woll had waited outside of town so as to catch the District Court as it began its session in the old *casa real*.<sup>42</sup> Woll left the city with the 4th Judicial District Court judge, the court clerk and over fifty other prisoners. They were taken to Castle Perote in Mexico. He also ransacked the *casa real* and made off with the official public records which contained the original boundary notes and individual lot claims of the city.<sup>43</sup> The city and county governments will neither elect officers or meet regularly until 1844.<sup>44</sup>

Shortly after the annexation of Texas on December 29, 1845 came the Mexican War and San Antonio became a supply depot for United States forces operating to the south. The US Army had placed a detachment in the old barracks of the *presidio* and the depot in the ruins of the Alamo.<sup>45</sup> The city population is at a low ebb, possibly as low as 800 citizens,<sup>46</sup> from as many as 5,000 just a few years before<sup>47</sup>. Future president

---

<sup>39</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 21.

<sup>40</sup> Elton Cude, *The Wild and Free Dukedom of Bexar* (San Antonio, 1976), 6-7.

<sup>41</sup> Fisher, *Saving San Antonio*, 24.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>43</sup> Fisher, *Saving San Antonio*, 19.

<sup>44</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 22.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>46</sup> Fisher, *Saving San Antonio*, 25

<sup>47</sup> Broussard, *San Antonio During the Texas Republic*

Rutherford B. Hayes, after passing through on horseback stated that San Antonio was an, "old, ruined Spanish town."<sup>48</sup>

The old municipal buildings continued to be used by city and county authorities. In 1842 it was proposed and carried before the city council "that the city jail on Calabosa street be repaired, and that the mayor was requested to take charge of the key until some arrangement could be effected whereby the county was to furnish a lock with two keys so the city and county authorities could have access to the jail."<sup>49</sup> In 1844 a committee recommended to Mayor Edward Dwyer that a new court house and jail be constructed and that the old *casa real* be converted into a public school. The plan was approved, however, the new court house and jail were not completed until 1852 and other schools had already been started. There is no evidence that the public school portion of the plan was initiated.<sup>50</sup>

The minutes of the city council meeting of 22 November 1848 and 23 October 1849 indicate that the construction of the new joint city hall/county court house will incorporate "rock and material from public buildings".<sup>51</sup> Which buildings are not specified, however, there would appear to be no reference to the *casa real* after this period. James states that in 1855 Enoch Jones erected the first three story building in San Antonio on the site formerly occupied by the *casa real*.<sup>52</sup> By the 1880's photographic evidence reflects no adobe structures on the east side of Main Plaza.<sup>53</sup> The Sanborn map of July 1885 indicates

---

<sup>48</sup> Fisher, *Saving San Antonio*, 25

<sup>49</sup> Vinton Lee James, *Frontier and Pioneer Recollections of Early Days in San Antonio and West Texas* (San Antonio, 1938), 144.

<sup>50</sup> Newcomb, *The Alamo City*, 31.

<sup>51</sup> *City Council Journal*, City of San Antonio, Texas. 1848 & 1849.

<sup>52</sup> James, *Frontier and Pioneer Recollections*, 144.

<sup>53</sup> The Institute of Texas Cultures, photographic collection, 89-108 & 1229-F.

that the entire east side of Main Plaza between Market and Commerce streets is commercial buildings.<sup>54</sup>

The exact dimensions of the structure(s) making up the *casa reales* are unknown. Almost certainly the *casa real* and jail consisted of two buildings of one story, composed of stone, wood and adobe. They would have been situated at the corner of present day Market Street and Main Plaza(indicated by a State Historical Marker). The larger council building would have faced West opening onto Main Plaza with the jail to the South, separated by a patio and a corral. The jail building would have faced South, opening onto *carcel* street, later known as *calle de calebozo* or calebosa street and still later as Market street. A 1749 description of the *casa real* is of "a square stone building. On it's south side was a patio for gatherings on special occasions and a corral for the horses of city officials and guests."<sup>55</sup>

Barnes however, states that the jail, a one story structure, was across an alley from and in the rear of the "court house" and that the court house was a two story structure.<sup>56</sup> It would seem doubtful that the *casa real* was a two story building. The first two story structure on Main Plaza and in the city, was proposed in 1776, by Father Pedro Fuentes as an added story to his home.<sup>57</sup> He eventually received permission to build the addition, after much paperwork and painstaking investigation, in October of 1780.<sup>58</sup>

Fisher states that other than the church, three substantial buildings were constructed during the Spanish period and that all were flat roofed, one-story, plastered

---

<sup>54</sup> The Sanborn Maps, UTSA, 1885.

<sup>55</sup> Macmillian, *San Antonio*, 133.

<sup>56</sup> Charles Merritt Barnes, *Combats and Conquests of Immortal Heroes* (San Antonio, 1910), 65.

<sup>57</sup> Macmillian, *San Antonio*, 134.

<sup>58</sup> *Bexar Archives*, 1780.

stone residences. This was in addition to “an unimposing government building, the *casa real* (which) faced the east side of Main Plaza.”<sup>59</sup> While it is possible that a two story municipal structure could have been built during the 1791 construction of the jail there is no indication that any such construction was undertaken and Barnes does not indicated his sources.

The Spanish and Mexican periods were past. Although their legacy would always remain as a part of the city, the old municipal administration and its structures were to disappear as the new German/Irish/French/Hispanic corporation began to prosper. The prosperity was short-lived however, as the old cycle of revolution and counter-revolution would once again arrive in San Antonio. The period of brief prosperity that the city did enjoy can be symbolized by the construction of, and the municipal administrations which occupied, the joint City & County structure, erected on Military Plaza and known, in its own time, as “The Bat Cave”.

### THE BAT CAVE

By 1848, San Antonio had achieved some stability. A weekly newspaper, the *Western Texan* is being published, the Alamo Lodge No 44, A. F. & A. M. was organized in December of 1847, and there is a three story building on Main Plaza.<sup>60</sup>The Federal Census of 1850 reflects a total population of almost 3,500 persons.<sup>61</sup>By 1861 the city will have 8,000 inhabitants and will have become a city predominately populated by urban German intellectuals, with German supplanting Spanish as the dominant language.<sup>62</sup> That

---

<sup>59</sup> Fisher, *Saving San Antonio*, 19.

<sup>60</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 22-23.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>62</sup> Fisher, *Saving San Antonio*, 25.

is not to say that other peoples did not find a place within the city structure, the populations concentrated within enclaves at all points of the compass, Hispanic to the near west of downtown, Germans to the east and then south, Anglo-Americans to the north and then east, Irish to the northeast, Italians to the northwest, blacks to the eastern edge and towards the end of the century, Chinese in the near west.<sup>63</sup> Everett states that “only in frontier San Antonio did such a conglomerate group of diverse nationalities settle in a single community.”<sup>64</sup>

On 22 November 1848, the journals of the city council meetings reflect that city land is to be sold to finance the construction of a new city/county government building.<sup>65</sup> The entries of 24 January, 20 September and 23 October, 1849 indicate that the two parcels to be surveyed and sold at public auction are located West of San Pedro Creek and East of the San Antonio River. Payment will be allowed in three installments of one third each year with the second and third installments to be at an interest rate of 10% each year.<sup>66</sup> James states that the city sold 108 acres situated at the head of the San Antonio River to finance the project.<sup>67</sup>

The city buildings facing the east side of the plaza(possibly the *casa real* although Military Plaza is specified)) are to be sold.<sup>68</sup> In April some city lots “on the San Pedro” have been sold and \$516.92 realized.<sup>69</sup> An entry of 23 October states that the new

---

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Donald E. Everett, *The Flavor of Its Past, 1845-1898* (San Antonio, 1975), 10.

<sup>65</sup> *Council Journal*, 1848.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 1848.

<sup>67</sup> James, *Frontier and Pioneer Recollections*, 123.

<sup>68</sup> *Council Journal*, 1849.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

building is to be built incorporating material from old buildings.<sup>70</sup> On 15 December, five lots on the east side of the plaza have sold for \$6,980 and \$10,000 is expected by the end of the year.<sup>71</sup> The ordinance (JB-45) to actually sell the lots however, does not appear until 13 February 1850.<sup>72</sup>

There is a notation in the 1850 minutes that the contractor Thomas Whitehead is to use “sound post oak if live oak cannot be procured for the joists in the second floor” and that \$150 extra would be paid for “casing the 26 openings with 2” planks of oak”.<sup>73</sup> On 16 October three lower door locks are being procured for the jail.<sup>74</sup> Heusinger states that construction began on September 6, 1850.<sup>75</sup> Chabot also states that construction began in September of 1850 and that the courthouse and jail were built on the ruins of the old *cuartel* or military barracks of the original *presidio*.<sup>76</sup> As the barracks was a structure running east to west, it would seem that the jail was the building constructed on its site. Ramsdell, however, states that the architect, one John Fries “revamped” the old guardhouse of the *presidio* as a jail, with the courthouse being on the ruins of another (unspecified) Spanish structure.<sup>77</sup> No architect is mentioned in the city council minutes.

On 11 January 1851, there are contract problems. The contract is not being complied with as to: (1) “small stones over the windows”, (2) “light lintels over the doors”

---

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 1850.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 24.

<sup>76</sup> Chabot, *Beginnings*, 107.

<sup>77</sup> Charles Ramsdell, *San Antonio, A Historical and Pictorial Guide* (Austin, 1959), 117.

and (3) “the substitution of cypress shingles for cedar”. The third item causes a deduction of \$40 in payment to the contractor.<sup>78</sup>

On July 24, 1851 a city contract is offered to bidders for “building a wall around the jail, unknown in length, unknown in breadth and twelve feet high and a two story house at the east end. The house to be 50’ from North to South and 25’ in the clear from East to West.”<sup>79</sup>

The minutes are written as if the jail is an existing structure. If the jail was constructed out of the existing rock and on the base of the old *presidio* barracks, then it would seem logical that it would, of necessity, have been erected first. The minutes speak of this 2 story structure as a “house for the jailer”. The dimensions of the “house for the jailer” would seem to be those of the court house and as can be seen from the photographs only one structure is at the east end of the jail. It may have been that the municipal authorities were sending a message to the county commissioners that the use of the structure at the east end of the jail, was in the hands of the city council and as a reaction to the commissioners having recently ordered the Sheriff to maintain a “jail book” and begin discriminating between “city” and “county” prisoners as to their respective costs of upkeep.<sup>80</sup>

The Commissioners had been in a huff, if not a rage, since the municipal authorities sold the *casa real* out from under them. The District and County courts have had to meet in citizen’s homes. Justo Travieso, a local resident, was paid \$50 for the use of his house

---

<sup>78</sup> *Council Journal*, 1851.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Commissioner’s Court Minutes*, Office of the County Clerk, Bexar County, Texas. 1850.

by the District Court for the Fall Session of 1850.<sup>81</sup> On June 8, 1850, there is a presentation to the Commissioners' Court of a joint resolution by the Mayor and City Council for action on building the courthouse and jail which would seem to have been an olive branch.

On Monday, August 19, 1850 there is a suit brought against the city by the county because the county administration has no place to meet.<sup>82</sup> The county commissioners are definitely of the opinion that it is the responsibility of the municipal authorities to provide the county with suitable accommodations. On Tuesday, August 20, following an examination the county "finds no good cause for litigation, but the interests of both parties require them to act in unison in the speedy erection of a jail and court house."<sup>83</sup> This would seem somewhat ungrateful on the part of the county authorities as the municipal authorities are providing two rooms for the county administration. One for the county clerk and the other for a jail.<sup>84</sup>

The problem that the Commissioners court had was that they had little taxing authority at this time and the country was insolvent. A resolution of the Commissioners' Court dated February 18, 1851 states,

"Resolved-that whereas the corporate authorities of the City of San Antonio have sold the building formerly occupied by the District Court for Bexar County, the County Court deems it the duty of said corporate authority to furnish suitable building for said court until the erection of a court house as provided by law. 2nd resolved-that the Chief

---

<sup>81</sup> *Commissioner's Court Minutes*, 1850.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

Justice be requested to present the foregoing resolution to the city council and represent to said council the impoverished state of the county treasury and urge the propriety of the city council furnishing said buildings.”<sup>85</sup>

The exact “move in” date of the new building is unknown. The city journals for the meeting of August 20, 1852 carries the first notation of a meeting being held in “city hall”.<sup>86</sup> An equal if not better gauge is that of the Commissioners Court of Bexar County. The Commissioners court minutes, for the opening of each and every meeting, since October 30, 1850, carry the beginning notation “met in special(or regular)session at the clerk’s office of said county, there being no court house.”<sup>87</sup> This notation is present for the meeting of July 8, 1852, but not for August 16, 1852.<sup>88</sup> The evidence would seem compelling that at some point between July 8, 1852 and August 16, 1852, San Antonio’s new city hall and Bexar County’s new court house was open for business.

The name “Bat Cave” is somewhat illusive. Almost all sources agree that the name comes from the fact that thousands of bats inhabited the structure, however, exactly which structure is not so clear. James, born on Commerce street in 1858, states that the “Old Bat Cave” was the name for the jail.<sup>89</sup> Sturmberg, however, who published almost twenty years prior to James clearly states that, “...there was the old court house, the bat-cave of fond memories. Next to the bat cave stood the jail.”<sup>90</sup> Herff states that the court house and jail were, “contemptuously’ dubbed: The Bat Cave.”<sup>91</sup> In a San Antonio

---

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 1851.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 1852.

<sup>87</sup> *Commissioner’s Court Minutes*, 1850, 1851, 1852.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 1852.

<sup>89</sup> James, *Frontier and Pioneer Recollections*, 42.

<sup>90</sup> Robert Sturmberg, *History of San Antonio and of the Early Days in Texas* (San Antonio, 1920), 115.

<sup>91</sup> Herff, *A foreword*, 26-A.

*Express* article Herff, who was an eyewitness to the lynching of Bill Augustine on Military Plaza in 1861, states that the night before his hanging, Augustine was arrested by Chief of Police Bill Lyons who, "locked him in the Bat Cave."<sup>92</sup> Finally, there is this account, "thousands of bats made their homes between the roof and the whitewashed canvas ceiling of the courthouse. It was necessary, whenever court was convened, to drive the bats out by using two long poles and a cross piece of timber, which was bumped against the canvas ceiling."<sup>93</sup>

There is considerable photographic evidence from various angles of the outside of the structures. Photography can be misleading, however. While the courthouse front and edges would appear to be made of rectangular, well-cut rock, Herff states that in 1866, a John Friess Sr., Jules Poignsard and an individual with the last name of Schmidt<sup>94</sup>, were responsible for a facade of French cement, in imitation of square stones, which was applied to the court house as the outer wall was then falling into decay.<sup>95</sup>

Little is known of the inside. The upper floor of the main building was allocated to the county, the lower to the city.<sup>96</sup> During the trial of Bill Augustine, the jury of twelve men cannot be seated because eight of the chairs had been borrowed for a dance at San Pedro Park<sup>97</sup> Herff also states that, "In the center of the room stood a long table, about six feet wide and 12 feet long, covered with a green smooth cloth like a billiard table.

---

<sup>92</sup> Donald E. Everett, *San Antonio Legacy* ( San Antonio), 29.

<sup>93</sup> Sylvia Ann Santos, *Courthouses of Bexar County* (San Antonio, 1979), 3.

<sup>94</sup> Most likely Joseph Schmidt, a local builder who constructed the first St. Mary's Catholic Church and other buildings and residences in San Antonio.

<sup>95</sup> C. Adelbert Herff, "A foreword or forerunner and The Vigilantes in San Antonio in the Early Sixties" (manuscript donation, Univ of Texas, 1946), 26-A.

<sup>96</sup> Santos, *Courthouses*, 2.

<sup>97</sup> Everett, *San Antonio Legacy*, 29-30.

Later on I figured out that after court was held some lively gambling would be indulged in.”<sup>98</sup> James remembers, as a boy, attending the funeral ceremony of a Confederate soldier in “the front hall” of the “bat cave”.<sup>99</sup>

The jail building had four cells, two on the ground floor, with dirt floors and two on the second floor which were somewhat better, being dry and sunny.<sup>100</sup> The construction of the jail building, being on the ruins of the old Spanish structures was rough and the stones could easily be pried away.<sup>101</sup> Although the twelve foot wall enclosing the jail had pieces of broken glass set along the top to discourage climbing, many prisoners did escape.<sup>102</sup>

Apparently the “Bat Cave” did not long suffice as an effective administrative structure. When the French building, a massive stone edifice at the southeast corner of Main Plaza, is completed in August 1858,<sup>103</sup> the city council relocates to the new office building.<sup>104</sup> Also in 1858-59 a new Market house is constructed on Market (formerly *carcel*) street, just east of the site of the old *casa real*. The market building, was designed by John Fries and David Russi and built by John Campbell, in Greek Revival style.<sup>105</sup> The market contained a one room municipal jail.<sup>106</sup> By 1867, police headquarters is at the Market House.<sup>107</sup> The 1885 Sanborn map clearly delineates the Market House, with its

---

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>99</sup> James, *Frontier and Pioneer Recollections*, 39.

<sup>100</sup> *The San Antonio Express*, September 28, 1867, p. 4.

<sup>101</sup> Santos, *Courthouses*, 3.

<sup>102</sup> *The Express*, Sept. 28, 1867, p.4.

<sup>103</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 27.

<sup>104</sup> Santos, *Courthouses*, 3.

<sup>105</sup> Chabot, *Beginnings*, 107.

<sup>106</sup> James, *Frontier and Pioneer Recollections*, 41.

<sup>107</sup> *The Express*, November 18, 1867.

open center atrium, however, no interior detail is indicated.<sup>108</sup> In 1859, an additional market house is constructed in the south-center of Alamo Plaza. Stall or room No. 7 of the Alamo Beef Market, as it was known, was designated as a police office.<sup>109</sup> The city saw a need for a decentralized police force as early as 1859.

The period of prosperity was drawing to a close. Texas seceded in 1861 and war came. The United States forces left and San Antonio, which had voted against secession, became a Confederate supply and transshipment point.<sup>110</sup> During the war economic inflation and privation was the norm. Shoes (pegged brogans) went to 50\$ a pair, better shoes cost over \$100 and coffee was \$10 per pound.<sup>111</sup> One marker of the rate of inflation can be seen in the pay rates of the police. In January of 1863 the Chief Marshal's salary was raised to \$120 per month and a policeman's to \$80.<sup>112</sup> In 1850 the Marshal's salary had been \$20 per month.<sup>113</sup> In 1898 a patrolman's salary would be \$65 per month.<sup>114</sup>

However, little could be done against the marked inflation and crime. Theft, prostitution and gambling became rampant, in addition to the internecine warfare of the period.<sup>115</sup> The citizens persevered under martial law, declared in November, 1862<sup>116</sup> and through the horrors of the vigilante movement<sup>117</sup> that emerged and dominated the city and

---

<sup>108</sup> Sanborn map, 1885.

<sup>109</sup> *The Express*, December 31, 1867.

<sup>110</sup> Sturmberg, *History of San Antonio*, 120.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 122

<sup>112</sup> *Council Journal*, 1862.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 1850.

<sup>114</sup> *Annual Message of Hon. Bryan Callaghan, Mayor of the City of San Antonio and Reports of City Officers for Fiscal Year Ending June, 1898* (San Antonio, 1898), 217.

<sup>115</sup> Louis Council Ellsworth, "San Antonio During the Civil War" (unpublished Master's thesis. UT, 1938), 101-106.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>117</sup> Farrell L. Tucker, "Triumph of Justice: An Examination of Extra-Legal Activity in San Antonio 1857-1884" (unpublished manuscript, 1998), 14.

surrounding area until the end of the war.<sup>118</sup>The city then braced itself for the second half of that familiar cycle of insurrection and counter-revolutionary suppression.

The US Army arrived in San Antonio in July 1865. The elected mayor, J.H. Lyons and the city council being Confederates, a new mayor and city council are appointed by the Provisional Governor in August.<sup>119</sup>The legislature of the State of Texas then reinstates J.H. Lyons and the council in August 1866. Lyons is reelected in December 1866 and begins a new term January 1, 1867. The Commanding Officer of the 3rd US Cavalry establishes headquarters in San Antonio, removes Lyons and appoints W.C.A. Thielepape as Mayor in November 1867. Thielepape will function as an appointed Mayor until March 1872 when a political storm will erupt concerning the repurchase of a portion of the land sold to finance the "Bat Cave." Another reconstruction mayor will be appointed by the Provisional Governor to quiet the problem.<sup>120</sup> San Antonio will return to electing her own mayor and council in November 1872.<sup>121</sup>

On April 13, 1868 the county designated the French building as the County Courthouse. During reconstruction both the city and county administrations apparently moved into and out of several different buildings, several times<sup>122</sup> and one is tempted to conclude, perhaps quietly and at night.

Reconstruction was not the bloody suppression of the past and the city begins to gain ground economically with a population growth by 1870 of 12, 256 or 48% over

---

<sup>118</sup> Ellsworth, *San Antonio During the Civil War*, 108.

<sup>119</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 30.

<sup>120</sup> James, *Frontier and Pioneer Recollections*, 123.

<sup>121</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 79.

<sup>122</sup> Santos, *Courthouses*, 3.

1860.<sup>123</sup> New streets are opened, mills and hotels are constructed and by 1872 the new San Antonio Board of Trade is advancing the city as a health resort and commercial center.<sup>124</sup>

On October 3, 1872, Bexar County officially declares the former Masonic building on Soledad Street as the new courthouse. The city administration apparently returns to the French building on May 10, 1879.<sup>125</sup> At some point after 1883 the city administration occupies offices in the modern Kampmann office building, at the corner of Commerce and Soledad.<sup>126</sup> It is the first four story building in the city and the first to have an elevator.

Bexar county received the keys to a new 86 prisoner jail at 120 Camaron Street on October 10, 1878 at a total cost of \$34,838.<sup>127</sup> The old "Bat Cave" was left to the municipal Recorders' (police) Court, the housing of city prisoners and city police headquarters.<sup>128</sup>

At some point the city police begin to operate a sub-station built onto the side of the Alamo chapel.<sup>129</sup> The Alamo Meat Market building on Alamo Plaza, which had a small police office inside was relocated in the early 1880's to South Alamo, Water and Lavaca Streets.<sup>130</sup> It was then designated as the 4th Ward Market.<sup>131</sup> With the Menger Hotel and Grand Opera House on Alamo Plaza, a continual police presence was probably thought necessary.

---

<sup>123</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 34.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>126</sup> Santos, *Courthouses*, 3

<sup>127</sup> Mary Carolyn Hollers Jutson, "An English Architect in Texas: Alfred Giles 1853-1920" (unpublished Master's Thesis, UT, 1970), 202.

<sup>128</sup> Cude, *Wild and Free*, 24.

<sup>129</sup> Daughters of the Republic of Texas, Photographic collection.

<sup>130</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 27-28.

<sup>131</sup> 1890 *Annual Message*, Statement "E", p.n.

The photographic evidence indicates only the outside of the station, however, the interior office space would seem not have extended into the interior of the chapel. A modern day examination of the Alamo chapel indicates that a building simply attached to the exterior wall would not have been more than about four to six feet deep and about 20 feet wide.

The Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio railway reaches San Antonio in 1877.<sup>132</sup> City fortunes take a sharp upward turn. By 1880, the city population is 20,550, a 67% growth rate over the previous decade.<sup>133</sup> The municipal fathers make a number of civic improvements and by 1887, following a bond election on April 30, under the administration of Bryan Callaghan, \$150,000 worth of 5% bonds were issued to build the first city hall since 1852.

### NEW CITY HALL

The new city hall building was to dominate Military Plaza. It was to be sited in the center with all other buildings, including the old "Bat Cave", to be removed. It was recognized at the time that the erection of such an edifice would destroy the "chili queens", the produce market and other entrepreneurs that inhabited the plaza and an injunction was filed to prevent the construction of the building. The State Supreme Court ruled for the city and a way of life and unique ambiance was lost.<sup>134</sup>

Otto Kramer, an architect with experience in New York, Chicago and St. Louis, received acceptance of his design shortly after its initial presentation to the city council in

---

<sup>132</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 36.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>134</sup> Saldana & Associates Architects, *City Hall Facades Repairs and Restoration, Schematic Design Phase Report, November 24, 1992* (San Antonio, 1992), 2.

May of 1888.<sup>135</sup> Ed Braden submitted an astonishingly low bid of \$120,000 and construction began in August 1888 or at least the authorization for construction was given. On April 2, 1889, the *Express* takes notice that there is not even a foundation after seven months.<sup>136</sup>

Braden had to quarry the huge stone slabs at a site it was necessary for him to purchase, near Boerne, Texas. The slabs were then lifted by steam derrick onto railroad cars, transported to the yards in San Antonio, off loaded and moved to Military Plaza. Once on site, the slabs had to be hoisted by special derricks previously used in the construction of the State Capitol building in Austin.<sup>137</sup> This was in addition to the 86 pink granite Corinthian columns which came from quarries located near Frederickburg which upon arrival had to be erected, cut, carved and polished by the stone mason, Frank Teich for an additional \$2,975.<sup>138</sup>

Saldana states that the original cost estimate increased to \$200,000 and that the city had to take over the completion of the building.<sup>139</sup> If there was financial trouble in the wind, The Mayor's Annual Message of 1890 indicates no such overage or problems. There is a notation of \$6,000 in "extras," half of which was paid to polish the granite columns.<sup>140</sup>

The 1890 report of Otto Kramer, city architect, indicates that the rockwork, brickwork, woodwork and ironwork of foundation, basement and first floor are

---

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>136</sup> *The Express*, 2 April, 1889, p.4

<sup>137</sup> Saldana, *City Hall Facades*, 4.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>140</sup> 1890 *Annual Message*, 81.

completed. The second floor is to be completed by the end of April and the entire building under roof by July. The whole building will be completed by January 1891.<sup>141</sup>

In August of 1891, city officials begin moving into the new City Hall, although construction was not completed and the first city council meeting will not be held in the council chamber until 1 February 1892, the Odd Fellows having met there the night before.<sup>142</sup> At some point during the construction, the old "Bat Cave" was demolished.<sup>143</sup>

As can be seen from the photographs, the new building was magnificent. The structure consisted of a basement and three floors with a 120' by 180' "footprint" and a 135' clock tower and observatory. The four corners of the roof were turreted with mansard roofs on the North elevation and conical on the South. It was built in the French Renaissance Second Empire style and constructed of native smooth-cut limestone on a rusticated base. Aedicule window openings, entablature courses, balustrades and mouldings were of hand-carved limestone. 86 Texas pink polished granite Corinthian columns lined the entrance porticos and balconies. Smaller granite columns supported the double window arches throughout the exterior of the building.<sup>144</sup>

The basement was designed as the city jail and the building's mechanical rooms. The floor was intentionally labyrinthine and cavernous with narrow corridors among massive stone columns and arches. The cells were all located on the South side of the basement.

---

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>142</sup> Saldana, *City Hall Facades*, 3.

<sup>143</sup> Clinton M.M. McKenzie, *The 1995 Plaza de Armas Archaeological Monitoring Project San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas* (San Antonio, 1995), 10.

<sup>144</sup> Saldana, *City Hall Facades*, 3.

The ground floor was dedicated to the Police Headquarters and the Recorders' Court of approximately 40 by 80 feet. The second floor was occupied by the Mayors' offices and council chamber. The third floor contained other city offices such as the city attorney, engineer, etc. The walls were covered in varnished pine. The common area floors were checkered black and white 12' square marble pieces. The octagonal rotunda in the center of the lobby extended from the basement level to the dome on the roof which allowed sunlight down through the building to the basement. The railings and columns at each level surrounding the rotunda were made of cast iron as were the two stairways connecting all levels. The floors in the council chamber, courtroom and other interior spaces were smooth red pine.<sup>145</sup>

The police department that moved into the new City Hall in 1891-92 was composed of a Chief Marshal, two Assistant Marshals, thirty-four foot patrolmen, four mounted officers and one city detective. This force was to patrol and protect a city of thirty-six square miles and almost 40,000 persons.<sup>146</sup>

The growth of San Antonio was rapid and constant. The Federal Censuses indicate a city on the move:

1860 - 8,235

1870 - 12,256 additional 4,021 or 48%.

1880 - 20,550 additional 8294 or 67%

1890 - 37,673 additional 17, 123 or 83%

1900 - 53,321 additional 15,648 or 41%

---

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

<sup>146</sup> 1890 *Annual Message*, 167.

1910 - 96,614 additional 43, 293 or 81%

1920 - 161, 379 additional 64, 765 or 67%

By 1920, easily within one lifetime and positively within the memories of several local writers who were born prior to the 1860 census, San Antonio had grown by more than 153,000 persons or almost 2,000 per cent from that "old ruined Spanish town" into a modern American city.

At the turn of the century to handle this population increase and to patrol the various new "additions" that were springing up as entrepreneurs purchased and subdivided the outlying areas, the city expanded the decentralized patrol concept that had been in use for almost 50 years. The city was divided into foot patrol areas, known as "patrol beats." These beats radiated outward from the downtown area, with the extreme edge of the footpatrol beat touching a mounted police substation. The four sub-stations were occupied by two mounted officers. One patrolled while the other remained in the station, with hourly rotations. Each station was equipped with its own holding cell and a "belt telephone" from police headquarters at City Hall on Military Plaza where two mounted officers were always on duty.<sup>147</sup> By 1910, the system has expanded to six sub-stations and the City Marshal(ex officio Chief of Police)states that the system of Sub Police Stations is a great benefit to the public.<sup>148</sup>

What is not so evident from this diagram of efficiency is the firestorm surrounding the operations of the police force at the turn of the century. Bryan Callaghan or "King Bryan" as he was known had been a political force in the city since the early 1880's. A

---

<sup>147</sup> 1901 *Annual Message*, 39-44.

<sup>148</sup> 1910 *Annual Message*, 268.

consummate Irish politician, speaking German, French and Spanish, neither the German or Hispanic wards could be induced to vote against him.<sup>149</sup> In the 27 years between 1885 and 1912 when he died in office, Bryan Callaghan was Mayor of the City of San Antonio a total of 204 months or 17 years, when not Mayor he was the County Judge of Bexar County for eight years.<sup>150</sup>

In 1905, following the passage of a new city charter while Callaghan was not mayor, the reform movement attempted to initiate a fire and police civil service commission as provided for in the charter. Upon his election Callaghan fired the commissioners, the police chief and every member of the force that supported the commission. The police chief locked himself in the Police Headquarters and refused to recognize the special police force appointed by Callaghan to replace his officers. The fire chief dismissed all the fire personnel loyal to Callaghan.<sup>151</sup> When state court decisions went against him, Callaghan refused to pay personnel appointed by the commissioners while continuing to pay his appointees. In 1907 a citizen's committee appointed by Callaghan petitioned the state legislature to remove Section 34(a) from the charter. In April of 1907, the charter revision legislation passed and civil service ceased in San Antonio, not to be seen again for almost 50 years.<sup>152</sup>

With the death of Bryan Callaghan in 1912, a new political environment evolved. In 1914 a reform city charter established a commission form of government.<sup>153</sup> The

---

<sup>149</sup> Frank Bushick, *Glamorous Days* (San Antonio, 1934), 82-86.

<sup>150</sup> Heusinger, *A Chronology*, 80.

<sup>151</sup> Stacy R. Lester, "Bryan Callaghan Versus the Reformers: 1905-1912" (unpublished Masters Thesis, Trinity Univ, 1976), 10-14.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-20.

<sup>153</sup> Bushick, *Glamorous Days*, 92.

seriousness of San Antonio politics can be glimpsed in that the political architect of the 1914 reform charter, Selig Deutschman, a local attorney, was physically beaten so badly during a later campaign that he died of his injuries.<sup>154</sup>

### CENTRAL FIRE AND POLICE STATION

On 13 October 1914, the proposals were opened and the firm of Wright and Saunders were the lowest bidders to construct a new Central Fire and Police Station at the corner of Market and St. Mary's Streets.<sup>155</sup> The building, designed by Emmett T. Jackson, a city building inspector, was completed in May 1915 at a total cost of \$85,000.<sup>156</sup> The building was a basement and three story concrete and brick edifice. It opened onto both Market and St. Mary's Streets with two personnel entrances and four vehicle doors for the fire apparatus.

The first floor (west side) contained the offices for the Chief of police, the Captains, the Sergeants, the Detective Bureau and the police matron. The first floor (east side) contained the fire engines and fire department equipment. The second floor contained the recorders' court, the offices of the Recorder, Fire and Police Commissioner, the Fire Chief, the humane society and the dormitories for the firemen. The third floor was the fire alarm office and the city jail with kitchen facilities. An adjoining structure was the police garage and stable.<sup>157</sup> Two elevators serviced the building. One was public, the other was operated by the police. The basement had a police roll-call room, locker room and storage facilities.

---

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> *Council Journals*, 1914.

<sup>156</sup> *The Express*, April, 4, 1915.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

With the construction of the Central Fire and Police Station the sub-station system is abandoned as well as the jail in the basement of City Hall. The old "keystone cops" hats and uniforms were exchanged for smart new tailored uniforms with marine collars and naval caps. The automobile was considered capable of the rapid response that was a primary reason for the sub-station system. The department initiated an "emergency car" response system, consisting of a driver, side-rider(who cranked the siren)and machine-gunner.<sup>158</sup>

The sub-station system will be revived in the late 1970's when a sub-station is opened at Culebra and Loop 410. Since that time five additional sub-stations have opened although none of these stations have holding cells as did the old stations.

### CONCLUSION

The erection and use of the municipal buildings of the city is the story of the city itself. They can be viewed as the markers of progress from its adobe beginnings on a Texas riverbank to the concrete and steel of this century. Public buildings were considered exactly that, property of the public. Two noticeable occurrences are that Bob Augustine's jury cannot be seated because the chairs had not been returned from a Mexican dance at San Pedro Park in 1861 and in 1892, the Odd Fellows met inside the council chamber before the city council had even moved in. Such a feeling of collective ownership and right of access is no longer present in our metropolitan society.

The early citizens were constantly striving to improve their positions and always concerned with the upkeep and replacement of the public edifice. City Hall was obviously

---

<sup>158</sup> David Bradshaw to Farrell Tucker, 10 May, 1980.

more than just an efficient or necessary structure. In the 1860's three of the most prominent architects and contractors of the period combine to put an acceptable face on the crumbling City Hall. That being said, it is interesting that for more than twenty years the city council moved into each new modern office building built in the city, leaving the police, city court and jail to a decaying structure that was never more than adequate.

It is interesting that frontier people living in close proximity to each other while geographically isolated from their respective "civilizations" almost immediately find a need for a structure in which to incarcerate their own. It is also interesting to note that at no time, no matter how destitute, was there an occasion where the meetings of social administration and justice ever met in the largest building available, the church. Apparently the laws of God and of man demand separate structures.

The introduction of the sub-station system in the policing of the city indicates not only a perceived need for rapid police response, but the continuation of a neighborhood police system familiar for almost 50 years. Its abandonment for the impersonal "emergency car" response system would seem to indicate that the reform powered commission form of government was more interested in a perception of efficiency rather than neighborhood protection. Residential areas would never again have a local patrol officer familiar with their individual neighborhood.

A socio-historical examination of a city's social and economic activity from the perspective of its public buildings is fruitful ground and further excavation is recommended.

## REFERENCES

### Primary

*Annual Message of Hon. Bryan Callaghan Mayor of the City of San Antonio and Reports of City Officers for Fiscal Year Ending February 28, 1890.* San Antonio, 1890.

*Annual Message of Hon. Bryan Callaghan Mayor of the City of San Antonio and Reports of City Officers for Fiscal Year Ending June, 1898.* San Antonio, 1898.

*Annual Message of Bryan Callaghan Mayor of the City of San Antonio and Review of Reports of City Officers for Fiscal Year Ending May 31, 1910.* San Antonio, 1910.

*Annual Message of Marshall Hicks Mayor of the City of San Antonio and Review of Reports of City Officers for Fiscal Year Ending June, 1901.* San Antonio, 1901.

*Bexar Archives*(W.P.A. translation), U.T.S.A.

Bradshaw, David(oldest living S.A.P.D. Officer). Personal interview, May 1980.

*Daughters of the Republic of Texas.* Photograph Collection

*Journal of the City Council.* City of San Antonio, 1850-1915

*Minutes of Commissioners Court.* Bexar County Texas, 1850-1852.

*Sanborn Map Collection,* U.T.S.A.

*San Antonio Express.* 1867, 1897, 1900, 1915.

### Secondary

Allsopp, Bruce. *The Study of Architectural History.* New York, 1970.

Barnes, Charles M. *Combats and Conquests of Immortal Heroes.* San Antonio, 1910.

Banfield, Edward C. *The Unheavenly City Revisted.* Boston, 1974.

Broussard, Ray F. "San Antonio During the Texas Republic". *Southwestern Studies, Monograph #18.* El Paso, 1967.

Bushick, Frank. *Glamorous Days.* San Antonio, 1934.

- Chabot, Frederick C. *San Antonio and Its Beginnings*. San Antonio, 1931.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *With the Makers of San Antonio*. San Antonio, 1937.
- Cruz, Gilbert R. "A Cabildo in Texas under the Spanish Bourbons"(unpublished Masters Thesis, St. Mary's Univ.), San Antonio, 1970
- Cude, Elton. *The Wild and Free Dukedom of Bexar*. San Antonio, 1976.
- Ellsworth, Lois C. "San Antonio During the Civil War" (unpublished Master's thesis. UT), Austin, 1938.
- Everett, Donald E. *The Flavor of Its Past, 1845-1898*. San Antonio, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *San Antonio Legacy*, San Antonio, 1975.
- Fisher, Lewis F. *Saving San Antonio*, Lubbock, 1996.
- Herff, Charles A. *A Foreword or Forerunner and The Vigilantes in San Antonio in the Early Sixties*. San Antonio, 1946,
- Heusinger, Edward W. *A Chronology of Events in San Antonio*. San Antonio, 1951.
- James, Vinton L. *Frontier and Pioneer Recollections of Early Days in San Antonio and West Texas*. San Antonio, 1938.
- Jutson, Mary C. H. "An English Architect in Texas: Alfred Giles 1853-1920" (unpublished Master's Thesis, UT), Austin, 1970.
- Lester, Stacy R. "Bryan Callaghan Versus the Reformers: 1905-1912" (unpublished Masters Thesis, Trinity Univ), San Antonio 1976.
- Macmillan, Esther(Ed.). *San Antonio in the Eighteenth Century*. San Antonio, 1976.
- McKenzie, Clinton M.M. *The 1995 Plaza De Armas Archaeological Monitoring Project San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas*. Report submitted to the Department of Antiquities Protection, Texas Historical Commission, Texas Antiquities Permit No. 1498, Archaeology Program, St Mary's Univ, San Antonio, 1995
- Monkkonen, Eric H. *Police in urban America 1860-1920*. Cambridge, 1981.
- Newcomb, Pearson. *The Alamo City*, San Antonio.
- Prassel, Frank Richard. *The Western Peace Officer*. Norman, 1972.

Ramsdell, Charles. *San Antonio, A Historical and Pictorial Guide*. Austin, 1959.

Saldana & Associates Architects. *City Hall Facades Repairs and Restoration*. San Antonio, 1992.

Santos, Sylvia A. *Courthouses of Bexar County*, San Antonio, 1979.

Staff, San Antonio Public Library, *A chronology of Historic San Antonio*. San Antonio, 1998.

Sturmberg, Robert (Compiler), *History of San Antonio and of the Early Days in Texas*. San Antonio, 1920

Teja, de la, Jesus Francisco, "Land and Society in 18th Century San Antonio de Bexar" (unpublished Ph.D. diss. UT), Austin, 1988,

Tucker, Farrell L. "Triumph of Justice: An Examination of Extra-Legal Activity in San Antonio 1857-1884" (unpublished manuscript), San Antonio, 1998.

## CASA REAL

There are no known photographs of the Casa Real.

In these two views of Main Plaza taken in the early 1880's, it can clearly be seen that the old Casa Real and jail are gone. They would have stood on the lots now occupied by commercial buildings, from the three story structure marked **L. FRANK**, South(right) to the corner, just past the **Tivoli Theater**.

89-108

Coast St



Main Plaza, San Antonio, Texas, when the Kampmann building was in course of construction, in 1884. Photo by Hardesty, who sold his negatives to A.A.Brack, veteran San Antonio photographer since the eighties.



## THE BAT CAVE

A Northwest view providing a particularly good examination of the jail and the rough stone construction. The old buildings are in the process of being demolished at this point in time as the outbuilding at the top of the side stairs on the main building is missing and at the far right edge of the photograph can be seen a corner mark scraped into the ground where the new city hall foundation is being prepared.



## THE BAT CAVE

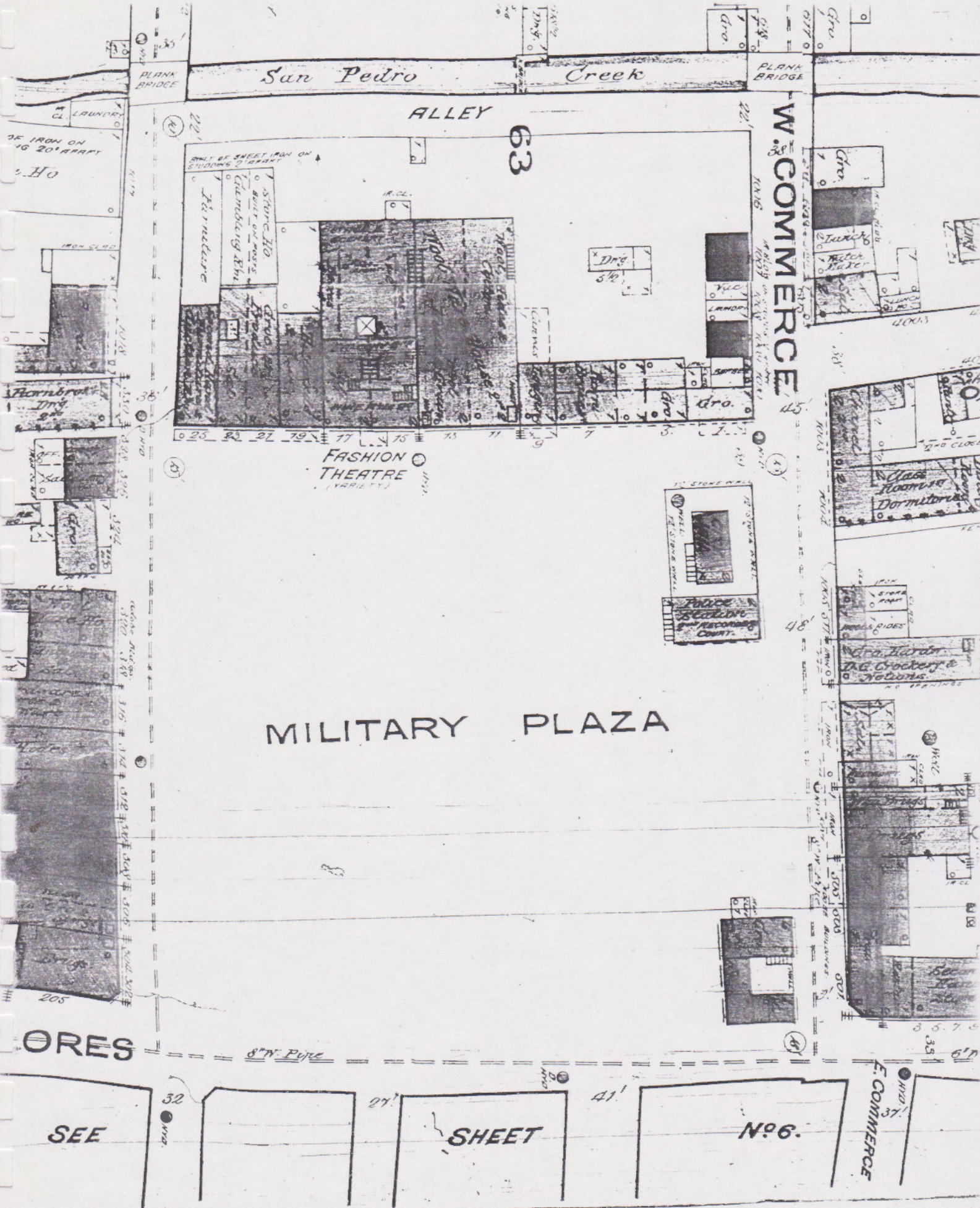
This front view was probably taken the same day as the previous photograph. The ground scraping for the new city hall foundation can clearly be seen in the foreground. The shutters have been removed and are piled up along the front of the building. The 1866 façade can clearly be seen as contrasting with the rough stone of the rear of the building.



COTTON WOOD HID  
PECANS  
H. FRANKEL

## THE BAT CAVE

1888 Sanborn map extraction. The second floor of the main building is being used as the Recorder's Court, the first as police headquarters. The city has taken over the jail. The 12 foot stone wall is clearly indicated.



MILITARY PLAZA

W. COMMERCE

San Pedro Creek

ALLEY

63

FASHION THEATRE (VARIETY)

Police Station

Class Room & Dormitory

Vera Hardin Dr. Crocker & Nelson

ORES

8th N. POPE

SEE

SHEET

No. 6.

E. COMMERCE

## THE BAT CAVE

View looking NNW. The south side of the main building can be seen. The box at the top of the stairs, just outside the door, is most likely a privy. It can be seen that the 1866 façade did not extend far past the front face of the building. This photograph was originally a stereograph.

TEXAS SCENERY.



## CITY HALL

View looking East. Under construction. The outside columns at each level were polished Pink granite. The detail of the ornate limestone outworks can be seen along the top and between the second and third floors.



## **CITY HALL**

View looking West. The mansard roofs on the north turrets were also observation platforms as well as the center octagonal observation deck just under the clock.

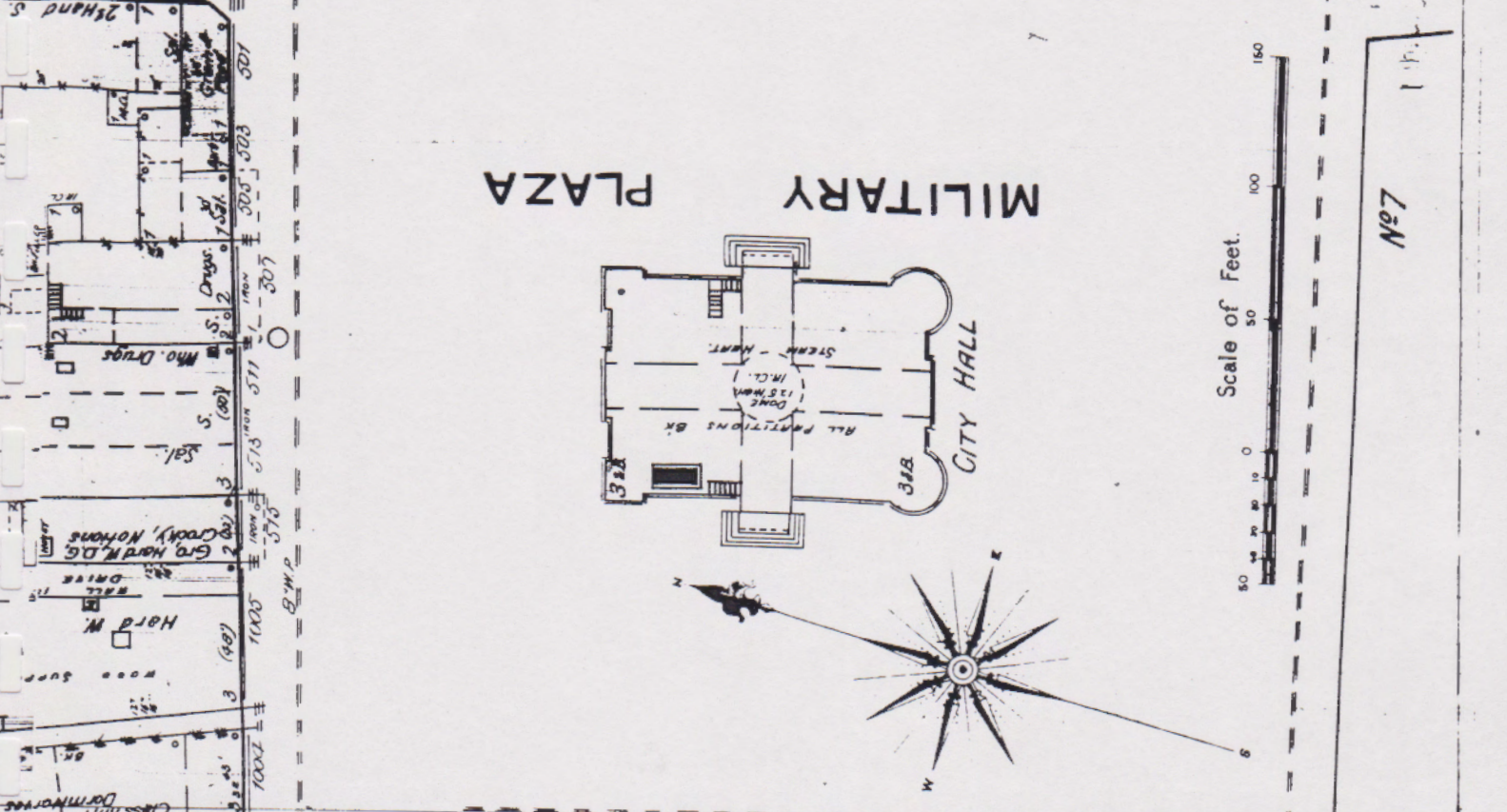


## CITY HALL

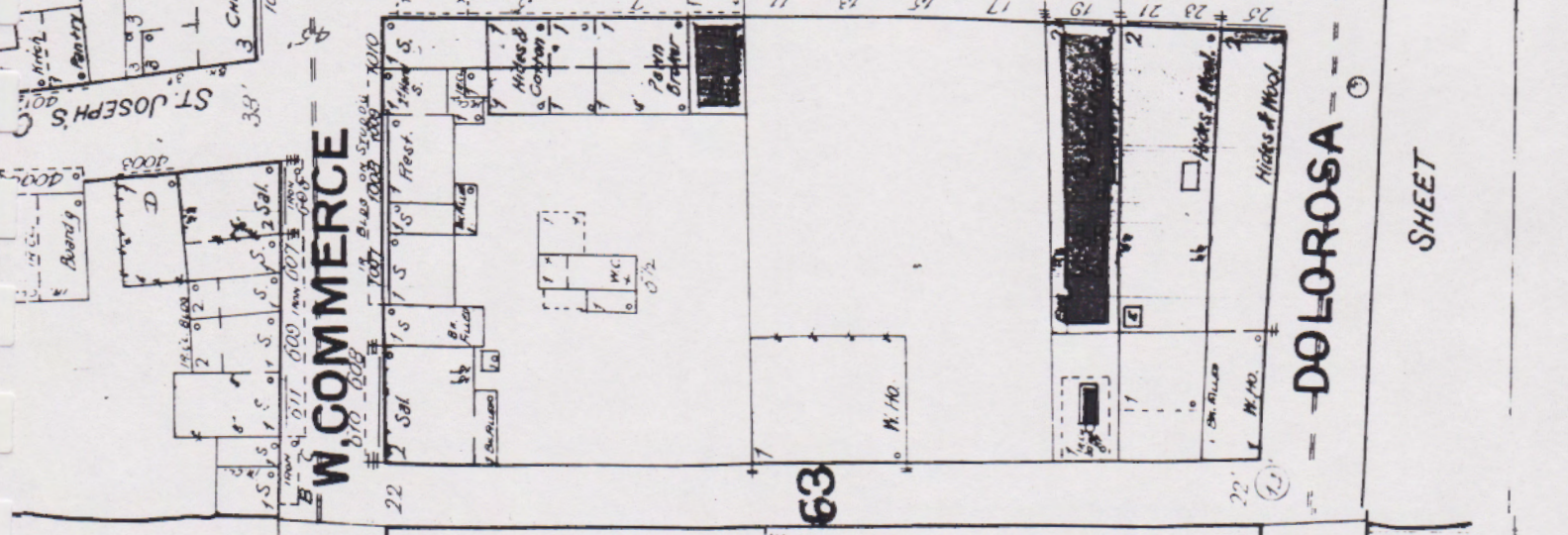
1892 Sanborn map extraction. All other buildings on the plaza have been razed.

SEE SHEET No. 8 SEE SHEET No. 7

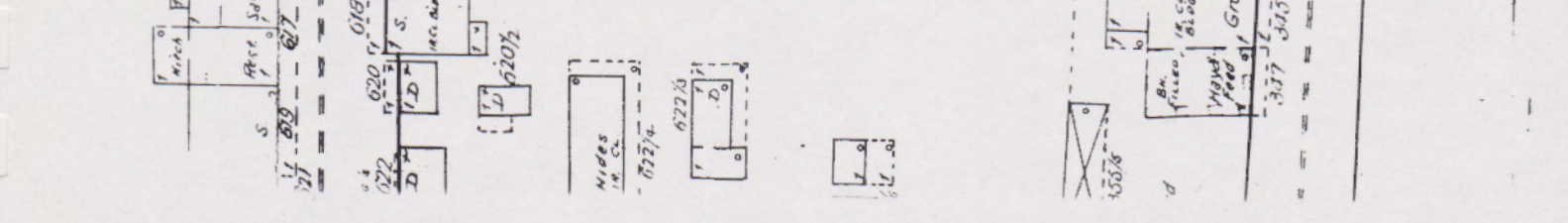
E. COMMERCE ST. B.M.P. 18



15



PLANN BRIDGE 22



PLANN BRIDGE 22

## **POLICE SUB-STATIONS**

A view of Alamo Plaza in the early 1880's. The terminus of the street railway can be seen at left with the Alamo Meat Market in the foreground. The market will soon be torn down. One of the stalls was used as a police office until the construction of the Alamo station, which can be seen (with the double doors) in the side of the Alamo Chapel.



## **POLICE SUB-STATIONS**

Three views of the station built into the Alamo Chapel.







## **POLICE SUB-STATION**

1885 Sanborn map extraction. The "police station" is clearly indicated in the side of the Alamo Chapel.



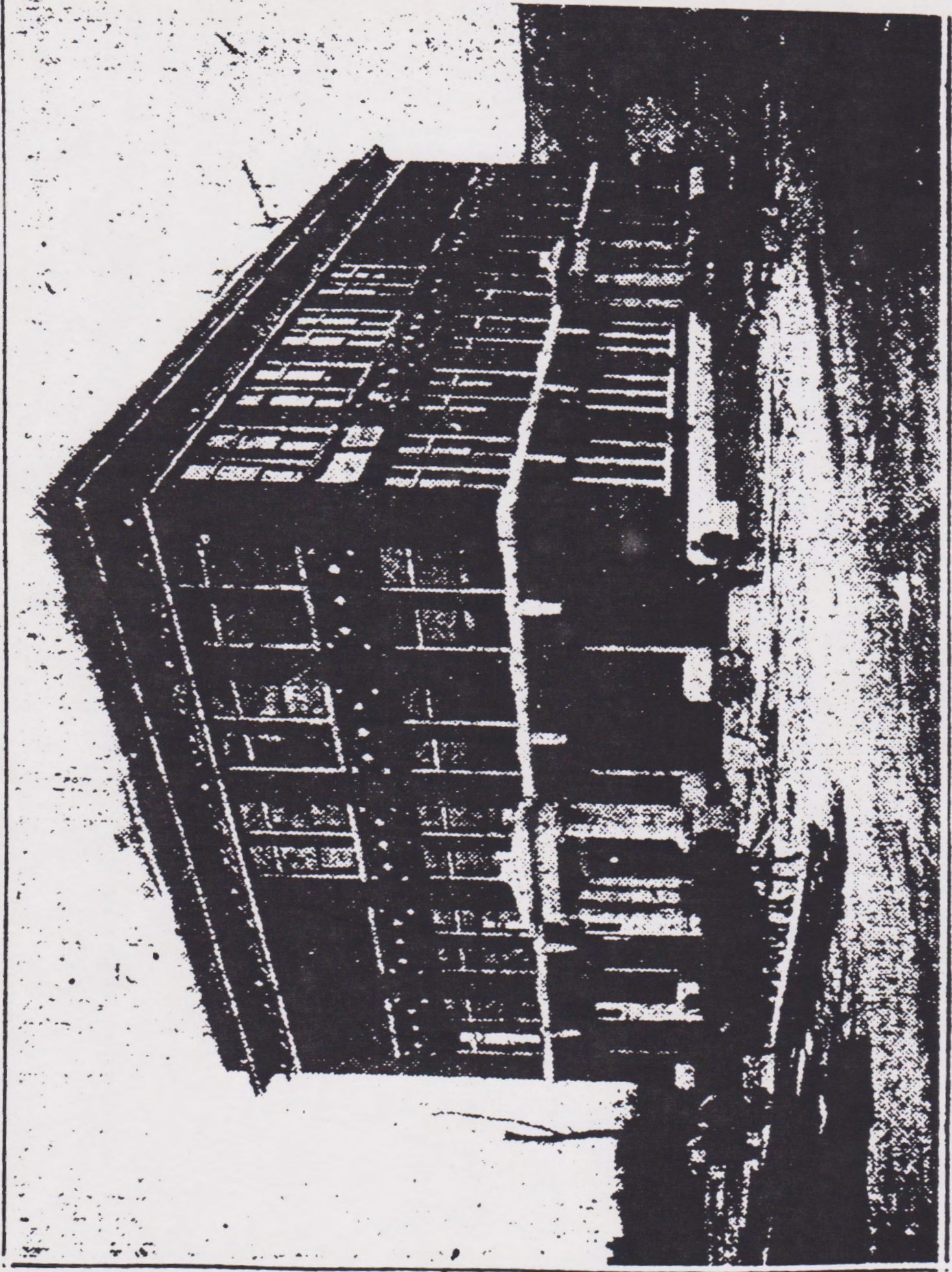
## **THE COUNTY JAIL**

The Bexar County Jail on Camaron Street, built in 1879. The building experienced several renovations and is still owned by the county.



**CENTRAL FIRE AND POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

1915 newspaper photograph of building under construction.



Control Pipe

and the other side of the street.

5

AR-

ed  
ted  
the  
me  
or-  
an-  
en.  
to  
in  
ted  
of  
end  
of  
her  
ave.  
re-  
rlo-

**BRYAN CALLAGHAN**

"King Bryan" and some of his friends just after an election victory. The "king" stands second from right.

1229-L



1229

## PHOTOGRAPHIC BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Main Plaza - Institute of Texan Cultures.
- Main Plaza - Institute of Texan Cultures.
- Bat Cave, Rear View - L.B. Tucker Collection.
- Bat Cave, Front View - Daughter's of the Republic of Texas.
- Bat Cave, NNW View - Daughter's of the Republic of Texas.
- City Hall, View looking East - Institute of Texan Cultures.
- City Hall, View looking West - Institute of Texan Cultures.
- Police Sub-Station & Alamo Meat Market - Institute of Texan Cultures.
- Police Sub-Station - Daughter's of the Republic of Texas.
- Police Sub-Station - Daughter's of the Republic of Texas.
- Police Sub-Station - Daughter's of the Republic of Texas.
- Sanborn map extractions - University of Texas at San Antonio.