

*Narrative:* The Bartlett Historic District consists of a two block area of early 20th Century commercial row buildings. Of the district's 34 buildings, 30 are regarded as contributing to the historical and architectural integrity of the area, 4 are compatible and none are considered intrusive (see "Definitions of Categories" below and the individual classifications later in this section). The district is comprised of mostly one-story red brick buildings constructed in the early 1900s; however, a number of early to mid-1920s structures stand within the boundaries. The district's linear, east-west orientation is centered along E. Clark and is bounded on the east by State Highway 95 and on the west by the railroad tracks. Evie Street dissects the district, and the boundaries extend one block north and one-half block south along Evie to include virtually all of Bartlett's commercial buildings.

Looking west from Highway 95, the buildings' similarity in scale, materials, style and composition is revealed. All but four of the structures are one-story; the exceptions are two-story. Brick construction is utilized by every building) however, three (#14 at 119 N. Evie, #15 at 148 E. Clark, and #29 at 114-118 S. Evie) have been stuccoed. About 25% of the buildings within the district have been painted on the exterior. The Bartlett National Bank #7, perhaps the most noteworthy and unique building, exhibits elements associated with Beaux Art Classicism and represents the nearest example to an academic "style" of any structure in the commercial area. The remaining structures demonstrate common elements and, if not a truly defined "style," are nevertheless characteristic of small town, early 20th Century Texas commercial architecture. This vernacular architecture incorporated a 3 bay front with a central entrance flanked on either side with large display windows. 2 to 4 vertical light transoms pierced each bay. Brick parapets with varying degrees of ornamentation and detail capped the buildings. A common element of the larger buildings included subdividing the structure into either two or three sets of the 3 bay storefront. Remarkably consistent throughout the district, this 3 bay scheme varied tremendously from building to building. The commercial row of buildings (#16,17,18 & 19) provide good illustrations of the numerous interpretations upon this simple theme.

Over the years, the majority of the structures have undergone alterations, remodelings, and "modernizations," but the exterior changes, for the most part, have been minimal and do not adversely affect the buildings' original character. The most common alterations include the installation of new entrances and display windows, boarding up the transoms and removing the original awnings. Likewise, the interiors have not escaped the owners' and occupants' desires to "upgrade" their buildings. Ceilings have been lowered; new lights installed, paneling applied to the walls; and the original fixtures replaced. Presumably, most of these alterations are reversible.

The red brick paving of E. Clark is another significant element of the district. Visually linking the predominately red masonry construction on either side of the street, the brick paving is typical of the type of street surface employed during the first two decades of this century in Texas.

Individual listings by address. Numbers assigned to the buildings correspond to the

accompanying map. The following format was used: Map # Address: Historic name, if known (Present occupant). present use; classification.

#1 244 E. Clark: (Gersbach-Wacker Co. Building). vacant; contributing. This massive red brick structure contains the largest square footage of any building within the district and encompasses about one-quarter of the 200 block of E. Clark. Although all of the original front openings have been boarded up, old sketches of the structure reveal large display windows and transoms and an awning extending across the south (front) and east facades. The building's name written with raised plaster letters appears on the parapet.

#2 234 E. Clark: (Keller's Deluxe Cleaners). commercial; contributing. The simple, one-story building, constructed of dark purple bricks, exhibits a three bay front which includes a central entrance with large display windows on either side.

#3 230-228, 226 E. Clark: (This-That Shop). commercial, vacant; contributing. Containing two separate shops, this one-story building displays fine masonry work in the structure's upper half. Six slightly recessed panels of a rust colored and rough surfaced brick highlight this section. Each of the building's six bays are capped with corbelled dentils and simple, unadorned brick cornice.

#4 222 E. Clark: (Bartlett Food Lockers). commercial, contributing. The one-story brick building is pierced with six, still operable, two vertical light transoms across the front. The building lacks ornate detailing, but the stretcher and header bonding incorporated in the building's top half constitute a subtle, yet significant aspect of the building's appearance. The street level openings have been rearranged.

#5 220 E. Clark: (Bartlett Barber Shop). commercial; contributing. Exhibiting the common 3 bay front facade, this one-story structure displays another fine example of the skilled masonry work in the three panels of the upper portion of the building. Another noteworthy feature is the entrance which is set at 45 degree angles to the front, thus forming a "V." Broad 2 vertical light transoms cap each bay.

#6 218 E. Clark. vacant; contributing. This one-story 6 bay structure with segmented arched openings retains its original doors and windows. The roof has recently collapsed, thereby threatening the building's safety. However, the front facade remains intact.

#7 200-210 E. Clark: (Old Bartlett National Bank Building). vacant; contributing. The Old Bartlett National Bank Building stands as the most architecturally significant structure within the district. The one-story, creme-colored brick edifice displays elements characteristic of Beaux-Arts Classicism. The most prominent features include the plaster eagles "perched" on the south and west facades; brick dentils and cornice; and brick pilasters with Ionic capitals.

#8 116 N. Evie: vacant; compatible. Because of the many major alterations, this

small, one-story commercial building is classified as compatible. The original brick walls have been stuccoed and all of the original openings, with the exception of a 4/4, segmented arched first floor window, have been replaced. Particularly inappropriate is a shingled awning which detracts from the historical character of the building.

#9 122 N. Evie. vacant; contributing. Segmented arches crown the openings of this simple, one-story brick building. Displaying a 3 bay front, this building is more Victorian in its massing than the other structures within the district.

#10 130 N. Evie: (TV Repair Service). commercial; compatible. This one-story building is constructed of red brick and is highlighted with a cornice comprised of bricks set at 45 degree angles. 2/2 vertical sash windows with segmented arches pierce the south elevation. A metal gabled roof was recently added to the roof and adversely affects the building's historical integrity.

#11 134 N. Evie: vacant; contributing. Blue tile has been attached to the street level of this simple one-story, 3 bay building.

#12 142 N. Evie: (Hill Ford). commercial; compatible. This spacious, one-story, tan brick building was constructed ca. 1930 and reflects the scale and material of the district.

#13 129 N. Evie: (Bartlett Feed and Supply). commercial; contributing. Capped with corbelled brick dentils, this one-story brick building has been remodeled to accommodate the present business.

#14 119 N. Evie: (Sage Insurance). commercial; compatible. Segmented arched openings pierce this one-story stuccoed building.

#15 148 E. Clark: (Daude's Grocery). commercial; compatible. Situated at the northwest corner of E. Clark and N. Evie Streets, this structure is distinguished by its front entrance which is set at a 45 degree angle to the south and east facades. Little of the original fabric remains visible because of the present stucco finish.

#16 142-144 E. Clark. vacant; contributing. Cast iron piers divide the 3 bays of this one-story brick building. A recessed panel with checkered brick detailing and corbelled brick string courses are featured in the upper portion of the building.

#17 140 E. Clark. vacant; contributing. Similar to the preceding building, this structure is highlighted with a brick parapet with rounded corners. The roof has recently collapsed, but workers are presently removing the debris and avoiding damaging the front facade.

#18 138 E. Clark. vacant; contributing. This one-story brick building also remains in deteriorated condition. Its cast iron piers, identical to those of 142-144 E. Clark, divide the front into 3 bays; however, the upper portion of the building has been

removed. The interior is also being cleared of trash and other debris.

#19 126-134 E. Clark: (Zelenvitz Jewelry and Centennial Club). commercial; contributing. The largest building in this section of the block, the structure displays ornate masonry work. Brick pilasters with molded capitals divide the parapet into 3 sections. The lower half has been subdivided into 6 bays. The western portion has been altered somewhat-- a new entrance and display windows, and the transoms have been enclosed-- while the eastern half remains relatively unchanged.

#20 116 E. Clark: Walton Building (The Village Shop). commercial; contributing. Constructed in 1903, the Walton Building presents one of the most impressive parapets of the district. The elaborate parapet incorporates two sets of stone cornices with brick dentils. The building has been recently rehabilitated with some of the brick painted yellow. Although the lower portion (street level) has been modernized and an inappropriate awning has been installed, the Walton Building does serve as an example of a successful rehabilitation effort in Bartlett.

#21 E. Clark: (Western Auto). commercial; contributing. Much of the masonry work displayed in the Walton Building is continued in this adjacent building. Two cast iron pilasters are utilized in the structure, and a steeply pitched gable in the parapet distinguishes the one-story masonry structure. The street level has been moderately altered with the installation of plate glass display windows and entrance.

#22 106 E. Clark; (Western Auto Annex). commercial; contributing. Similar to 110 E. Clark, this structure is highlighted with numerous brick string courses throughout the parapet. The exterior has been painted white.

#23 101-119 E. Clark: (Speed Wash, Slim's Grocery, vacant, vacant, City Cafe). commercial and vacant; contributing. This one-half block included a row of five, one-story brick buildings which were originally identical to one another when completed in 1904. Various occupants through the years have resulted in a varying degree alterations. However each structure maintains most of its original character. Perhaps the most noteworthy features of these structures are the semi-circular parapets extending from the simple brick cornice. The first and fourth (from west to east) buildings no longer retain their parapets. The remaining parapets display the initials "JWJ" and the date "1904."

#24 125-139 E. Clark: (Wolf Hardware, Senior Citizens' Center, Henry's Variety Store, L&M Drugs and Gifts). commercial; contributing. Another row of similar structures, these buildings were built after a devastating fire in 1925 destroyed the buildings previously occupying this site. The present structures are one-story and built of red brick. Each structure displays a 3 bay front with transoms demonstrating the continued popularity of this vernacular architectural form (discussed in the narrative) through the mid 1920s.

#25 141 E. Clark: (City Lounge). Commercial; contributing. Another example of the

mid 1920s commercial building, the one-story structure utilized a checkered brick pattern in its upper half. The street level has been completely remodeled

#26 145 E. Clark: (Offices of Marvin Lenz, Attorney). commercial; contributing. This building represents one of the few two-story structures within the district. Its exterior demonstrates two different periods of construction. The east (S. Evie) elevation retains its original early 1900s facade with segmented arched second floor windows, brick piers, and an elaborate brick cornice. The front (E. Clark) elevation was remodeled in the 1920s and displays detailing similar to buildings #24 and #25.

#27 130 S. Evie; vacant; contributing. A simple brick building built during the 1920s and presently converted into a garage.

#28 126 S. Evie: (Auto Parts). Commercial; contributing. This two-story building was constructed in the early 1900s. Four segmented arched 1/1 windows pierce the second floor, and an elaborate exterior cast iron stair provides access to the top level from the alley.

#29 114-118 S. Evie: residential; contributing. A small two-story, stuccoed brick commercial structure with a double gallery (not original). Segmented arched openings on both floors.

#30 201-205 E. Clark: (Leatherman Drug Co. Building) vacant; contributing. This massive two-story tan brick building occupies the SE corner of E. Clark and S. Evie. The corner entrance, set at a 45 degree angle to the streets, is marked by two round arches mutually supported by a simple, round column. This column rests upon a base engraved with the name "E.G. Haeber." A brick string course divides the two floors. The second story 1/1 windows are capped with round arches. Currently being stabilized.

#31-32 211-215, 221-225 E. Clark: (vacant, Bill's Dollar Store, Robertson Realty). commercial and vacant; contributing. Exhibiting similar detailing, these two buildings were erected about 1907. 211-215 is a 6 bay structure in deteriorated condition, while the larger, 9 bay building at 221 E. Clark is still utilized for commercial purposes and remains in good condition. Both buildings display a 3 section parapet with small decorative brick piers. Large, two light transoms pierce each bay.

#33 229-231 E. Clark: (Linda's Flea Market, Isaac Insurance). commercial; contributing. Large two vertical light transoms cap each of the six bays. Diamond shaped motifs incorporated into the building's upper portion.

#34 233-239 E. Clark: (Cook's Paint Store). commercial; contributing. Painted white, this one-story masonry building displays a "Mission" style parapet. Cast iron piers divide the structure into 9 bays, and brick corner piers with molded brick capitals terminate a simple cornice supported by corbelled brick dentils.

The Bartlett Historic District stands as a cohesive grouping of early 1900s commercial buildings and reflects the town's prosperity achieved during the early 20th Century as a cotton shipping center in central Texas. Presenting a remarkably intact main street, the district includes the core of the city's past and present commercial activities within a well-defined boundary. Particularly noteworthy is the high percentage of contributing structures within the district -- 88%. Although many of the buildings remain in fair condition, few have been significantly altered. Renewed interest in this area is demonstrated with the recent rehabilitation of the Walton Building (#20).

Anglo settlement of the Bartlett area began during the mid 19th Century, and a small community had developed by 1880. Two landowners, John T. Bartlett and J. Edward Pietzsch, were particularly active in promoting others to settle in the region. When the MKT railroad planned to construct a line through the area in 1882, the two men recognized the opportunity for the establishment of a new town and hired a surveyor to lay out a new townsite. The new city was named after Bartlett, and the streets were named in honor of various family members.

The nearby farmlands proved to be particularly well suited for cotton; thus the need for a regional distribution center was satisfied with the establishment of Bartlett. In fact, cotton has continued to be the dominant factor in Bartlett's economy. The town was incorporated in 1890 with a population of approximately 300. The commercial area originally developed west of the railroad tracks and the residential area on the east side; but by the 1890s, the trend was reversed, and the present commercial district began to take form.

As the demand for cotton continued to grow through the early 1900s, Bartlett's future seemed brighter and brighter. Advertisements for the Bartlett Cotton Exchange appeared in the local newspaper as early as 1904. One of the more prominent businessmen in the city, E.M. Wilson sold his interest in a prosperous hardware store (located in building #32 and later known as Stokes-Blair Hardware) and entered the cotton business. In 1927 he opened an office in the Houston Cotton Exchange Building (listed on the National Register 5-6-71).

The turn of the century signaled Bartlett's first major construction boom as most of the buildings within the present district were erected. No new or innovative styles or construction techniques were utilized by these new buildings; however the structures remain as good examples of Texas vernacular commercial architecture of that period. The Old Bartlett National Bank Building (#7), the Leatherman Drug Store (#30) and the Wilson Building (#32) are a few of the more significant structures built in the city during the early 1900s. Old photographs of the commercial area reveal a great deal of activity along E. Clark. Activity in Bartlett slowed during the 1910s, but prosperity soon returned following the conclusion of World War I. By 1920 Texas supplied almost 20% of the world's cotton, and Bartlett contributed its share. The city's population numbered over 1,700 at this time, and a new construction boom hit. Although minor compared to the early 1900 period, this phase did change the

character of the commercial area. Eight buildings within the district were built during the 1920s.

#### Definition of Categories

All structures within the district are listed above and are classified as contributing or compatible. Contributing structures comprise the majority of the sites and are vital to the historical nature of the district. Compatible structures include significantly altered historic buildings in which most of the original detailing or character has been lost. Building #10 could be reclassified if the metal gable roof is removed and a more historically appropriate roof installed. The only building less than 50 years old within the district is the Hill Ford (#12), but was included because of its close ties with the district.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY ON FILE IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER.**