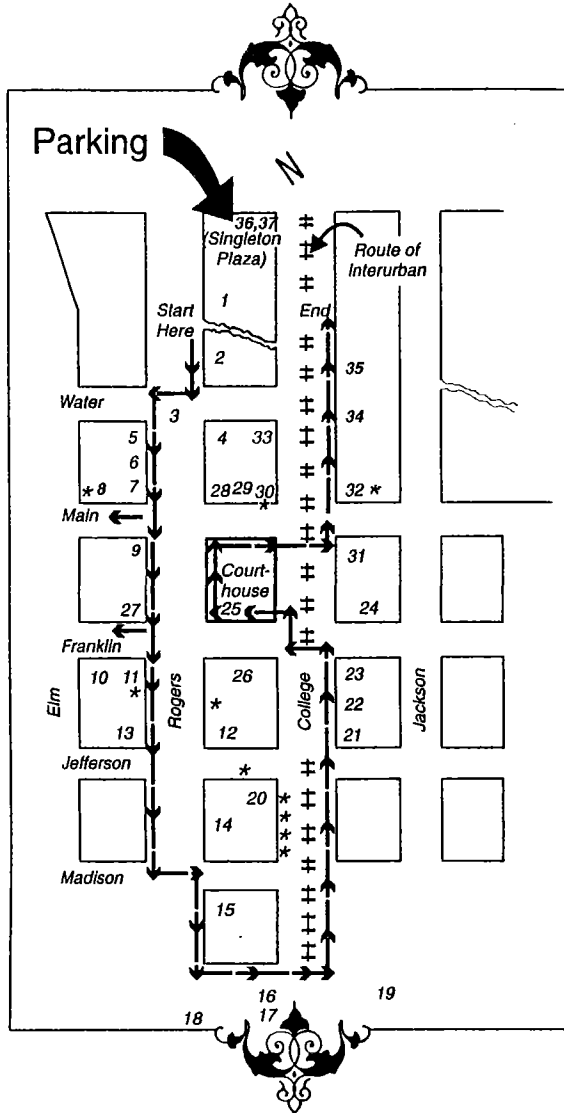


# HISTORIC WAXAHACHIE INC.'S DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR



LOCATE THE OLD ELLIS COUNTY JAIL (2) AT THE CORNER OF N. ROGERS AND WATER ST. AND PARK IN THE ADJOINING SINGLETON PLAZA (1) TO BEGIN YOUR TOUR.

\* HISTORIC WAXAHACHIE PICTORIAL MARKERS

The Waxahachie Courthouse Square and its immediate vicinity contain one of the finest concentrations of turn-of-the-century commercial architecture in the State. Our downtown is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and dotted with Texas Historical Medallions. It evolved because the crisscrossing of several rail lines in the 1870's and 80's gave cotton farmers in the productive blacklands around Waxahachie a convenient means of shipping their crops to market. With their newly acquired wealth these farmers and their families demanded quality goods and services. The mercantile trade responded and a thriving town sprang up where a few years before there had been only native grasslands.

As you take this walking tour, picture yourself in the midst of a bustling street scene of 1900. The newly completed Ellis County Courthouse is the hub of the downtown and its lawn is dotted with groups discussing the current price of cotton. Small boys dart around the gaslights, and buggies and wagons line the brick and wood-block paved streets.

Your tour will be more enjoyable if you keep several things in mind:

**LOOK UP.** These buildings were designed to be viewed by a person on foot or in an open carriage. Vision overhead was not hampered by automobile roofs so builders devoted great attention to the rooflines, and cornices were lavished with detail.

**STEP BACK.** It is impossible to view tall buildings from their front sidewalks. One of the best ways to see the entire Square is by walking around the sidewalk bordering the Courthouse lawn.

**LOOK BEYOND THE ALTERATIONS.** Lower levels were often changed in an attempt to "modernize" for business purposes. Learn to see beyond these changes and find the original spirit of the architecture.

**INSPECT CLOSELY.** Where a building has escaped remodeling at street level, inspect the high quality of carpentry (entry doors, windows framing) and the skilled masonry work. You will be intrigued by the beauty of the sandstone carving and the intricate metal cornices.

- AS YOU TAKE OUR TOUR, YOU WILL NOTICE THESE ABBREVIATIONS:
- NRD - NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES DISTRICT. This designates buildings contributing to a district honored by the U. S. Department of the Interior as being of national historic architectural significance.
  - THM - TEXAS HISTORIC MEDALLION. This designates those structures honored for statewide significance by the Texas Historical Commission.
  - HW - HISTORIC WAXAHACHIE. This designates structures recognized by Historic Waxahachie, Inc. as especially worthy of preservation.
  - THB - TEXAS HISTORIC BRIDGE.
  - \* HISTORIC WAXAHACHIE SPONSORED PICTORIAL MARKERS. \* on the map.

BEGIN YOUR TOUR BY WALKING SOUTH ON ROGERS ST. TOWARDS THE SQUARE.

## (1) SINGLETON PLAZA

This plaza and landscaped waterway were dedicated in 1974 to the memory of Col. M. E. Singleton, a prominent early businessman.

## (2) OLD ELLIS COUNTY JAIL (1888) NRD THM HW

A standing-seam metal-roofed turret caps a rounded bay; brick dentil molding and metal cornices accent the roofline. Although the unusual "squirrel-cage" revolving cellblock has been removed, several cells, created from huge hand-hewn sandstone bricks, remain. Iron hand and foot manacles are still imbedded in the dungeon walls.

## (3) BRICK INTERSECTION

Precise brick paving comes to a point exactly in the center of this intersection. It is the only large portion of the original brick streets still visible. Early paving in most Texas towns was often of brick. Paving on Waxahachie's Square was originally wood-block to quiet the noise of horses hooves and wagon wheels.

**NOTE: THE GREEN "HISTORIC TOUR" SIGN YOU SEE AT THIS INTERSECTION REFERS TO THE HISTORIC WAXAHACHIE "DRIVING TOUR."**

## (4) 114 N. ROGERS (c. 1900)

Look up at the delicate pediment accented with color. Victorian commercial buildings were often painted in several different colors to point out the architectural features.

## (5) 109 N. ROGERS (1893) NRD HW

After restoration, this building now reveals the original cast iron columns and dated (1893) cast iron threshold. (See Brass Marker)

## (6) OLD SPALDING BUILDING 105 TO 107 N. ROGERS (c. 1895) NRD HW

You will notice an elaborate brick cornice and frieze above the awning, as well as original cast iron columns. The name "Spalding" is written in tile on the front step of 107 N. Rogers as this was the location of the family's furniture store and mortuary. (The combination of these two businesses may at first seem unusual but was really quite typical because the local cabinetmaker/furniture dealer also made coffins and was one of the few people in town with a wagon large enough to carry them).

## (7) OLD CITIZENS NATIONAL BANK 200 W. MAIN AT N.W. CORNER OF ROGERS (c. 1895) NRD

This massive Romanesque building's columns are capped by carved stone capitals. Look up for the small stone balcony. This style is characterized by strong arches and square towers. The tower on this building was removed many years ago. The third floor is a large open meeting room.

Look to your left at the intricate brick work on the side of the FIRST PENN BUILDING (28) on the corner. This building once had fanciful turrets similar to those of the Old Citizen's Bank (7).

**NOTE THE BUILDINGS ON THE NORTH SIDE OF MAIN STREET.**

## (8) 208-210 W. MAIN (c. 1895) NRD HW \*

One metal finial remains atop the outstanding white cornice. Do not miss the cast iron columns with Eastlake style detailing on the lower facade of one of the buildings.

## (27) BEST VIEWPOINT IS FURTHER ALONG ON THE TOUR.

## (9) 100 S. ROGERS (c. 1910) NRD

This multicolor brick commercial building has a fortress like parapet, paired windows and original awnings held by decorative hooks.

CONTINUE SOUTH TO FRANKLIN STREET - WALK DOWN TO WEST FRANKLIN.

## (10) C.W. GIBSON AND E.S. CAMPBELL BUILDINGS 209-215 W. FRANKLIN ST. (1902) NRD HW

Fanciful brickwork and a rhythmic cornice tie these nearly identical buildings. Note the facade and wooden doors. 215 W. Franklin rehabilitated in 2006.

## (11) OLD JOHN G. WILLIAMS BUILDING 200 S. ROGERS (1887) NRD HW \*

This building was the Jolesch and Chaska clothing store at the turn of the century and Marchman's Department Store. Note the fabulous turret.

CONTINUE SOUTH DOWN ROGERS STREET. \* EAST SIDE OF THE BLOCK.

## (12) OLD WOODMEN OF THE WORLD LODGE 217 S. ROGERS (c. 1890) NRD

This brick commercial structure exemplifies the scale and style of small-town mercantile establishments. The second stories were often used for offices, meeting halls and storage.

## (13) I.O.O.F. 208-214 S. ROGERS (c. 1895) NRD HW

Notice the impressive central staircase leading to the I.O.O.F. (Oddfellows) meeting hall. At the corner, cross Jefferson St., and look at the side of the building. Find the delicate sandstone carvings and closely inspect the masterful brickwork of this Romanesque structure. Note the two types of arches above the windows.

## (14) 301-315 S. ROGERS ST. (c. 1895) NRD HW

These brick buildings on each side of the street are typical of early 20th century commercial architecture. Notice the arches over the windows and the original awnings on several buildings.

## (15) OLD FEDERAL BUILDING 410 S. ROGERS (c. 1914) NRD HW

The original section of this building with 4 columns, was designed by the G.S.A. and first used for federal offices and the Post Office. It is now used as the Waxahachie City Hall. Restrained in detail, the building exemplifies the primary principles of the Neo-Classical style: heavy columns of the Greek order, linteled door and window openings, pilasters in low relief, and low-pitched hipped roof. The bronze lamp posts are original.

## (16) ROCK ISLAND PASSENGER DEPOT (c. 1900) NRD HW

An octagonal telegrapher's turret dominates this structure built in the manner of Henry Hobson Richardson. The Richardsonian style is characterized by massive forms, contrasting colors in the masonry construction, and strong arches.

## (17) MISSOURI-KANSAS-TEXAS DEPOT (c. 1908) NRD HW

Much simpler in overall form than the Rock Island Depot, this passenger station is also built of buff brick with red brick wainscoting. A square telegrapher's bay protrudes through the roof in the form of a dormer. Of significant interest is the herringbone pattern brick paving. Railroad buffs will recall this line as the route of the "Katy Flyer" and the "Texas Special".

**(18) ROGERS STREET IRON BRIDGE (1889) NRD THM HW THB**

This bridge is perhaps the most unique engineering feature in the historic district. Manufactured by the Wrought Iron Bridge Company in Canton, Ohio, it was shipped by rail to Waxahachie and assembled on the site.

*TURN LEFT BETWEEN THE DEPOTS THEN LEFT (NORTH) ON COLLEGE ST.*

*(Note the brick street in this depot area)*

**(19) OLD ROCK ISLAND FREIGHT DEPOT (c. 1900) NRD**

This frame structure is highlighted by carpenter-gothic brackets and bargeboard.

*4 PICTORIAL MARKERS IN THE 300 BLOCK OF SOUTH COLLEGE ST. \* \* \* \**

**(20) OLD MOORE HARDWARE 105 W. JEFFERSON (1913) NRD HW \***

This building on the corner retains its decorative metal cornice and original awnings. The windows above these awnings provide soft natural lighting for the interior. Notice the curb cuts, on the north side, to move Model As into the building. Adjoining the hardware store to the south was the Shelton Opera House \*, a center of cultural and social activities until it burned early in the century.

**(21) 209-215 S. COLLEGE (c. 1895) NRD HW**

Some of these one story Victorian commercial buildings still have their original cast iron columns and awnings.

**(22) HANCOCK BUILDING 205 S. COLLEGE (1890) NRD HW**

A typical commercial building with a virtually original facade, arched windows and elaborate cast iron columns.

**(23) OLD MASONIC LODGE HALL 201 S. COLLEGE (1889) NRD THM HW**

The most elaborate example of the High Victorian Italianate Style in Waxahachie is now the ELLIS COUNTY MUSEUM. This building was designed to accommodate a mercantile establishment on the ground floor, various professional offices on the second floor, and a magnificent and spacious Masonic Meeting Hall on the third floor. The impressive back staircase (around the corner at the rear of the building) was designed to provide direct access to the second floor and remains unaltered.

If time permits, tour the museum to view the many exhibits depicting Ellis County's history.

*LOOK TO THE EAST.*

**(24) 111 E. FRANKLIN (c. 1890) NRD HW**

This store to your right at the alley remains virtually unchanged, including the unusual circular design in the stonework. This building was built by a prominent African American businessman, T. J. Frierson.

**(25) ELLIS COUNTY COURTHOUSE (1895) NRD THM HW**

This is the fourth courthouse to occupy this site and was designed by J. Riely Gordon in the Romanesque style. A central tower forms the stairwell around which the various county offices radiate from four levels. The exterior is of pink granite with windows and other openings trimmed in red sandstone. The courthouse was completely restored from 1999-2002 under the direction of the Texas Historic Commission.

The carved faces at the four entrances are the subject of a favorite local legend. An extensive gray slate roof of steep pitch follows the various undulations of the exterior walls. The massive clock tower, with working clock, is a landmark which can be seen for miles.

*NOW CROSS OVER TO THE COURTHOUSE AND CIRCLE IT CLOCKWISE TO VIEW THE ENTIRE SQUARE.*

You may wish to read the inscriptions on the bronze statue of Richard Ellis and the Confederate monument.

**(26) BLOCK 100 W. FRANKLIN STREET (SOUTH SIDE OF SQUARE) NRD**

This block of brick commercial buildings dates from approximately 1900-1925. Despite the fact that these buildings are of a slightly later date than most others on the Square you will notice that the original builders were careful to maintain the same setback, scale and window placement that prevails on the rest of the Square. Note the detailed brickwork on the frieze of the central building and the original lower facades on some buildings.

**(27) OLD CITIZENS NATIONAL BANK (c. 1905) 114 S. ROGERS ST. (WEST SIDE OF SQUARE) NRD HW**

Originally a bank, this white sandstone office uses a detailed fanlight over its entrance as part of its Neo-Classical style. Upper facades on the other buildings on the west side of the Square are relatively unaltered.

*PROCEED TO THE CORNER OF MAIN AND ELM.*

**(28) FIRST PENN BUILDING 114 W. MAIN (NORTH SIDE OF SQUARE) (1894) NRD**

This is an excellent example of the Romanesque Commercial style with rounded arches and stone quoins along the lower corners. It was originally capped by a turret. At this corner you will have your best view of another Romanesque building on the Square (7).

**(29) 104-108 W. MAIN (c. 1894) NRD HW**

This combines two separate Victorian buildings. The building on the left is dominated by four arched windows while the next building shares similar brick designs. Look closely to see the brick sunburst effect above each of the nine arched windows.

**(30) 100 W. MAIN NRD**

This also exhibits fine brickwork, unusual windows and faces in the applied decoration.

**(31) SECOND PENN BUILDING 101 S. COLLEGE ST. (EAST SIDE OF SQUARE) (1912) NRD**

Built in 1912 after a major fire at the Rogers Hotel jumped Main Street and destroyed the IOOF Lodge on the site, this restrained building, compared to many on the Square, reflects the new ideas of Louis Sullivan, an architect who advocated the use of large windows and simplicity in his Commercial style. The upper facades of the buildings remaining in this row are still Victorian in character.

**(32) ROGERS HOTEL 100 E. MAIN (1912) NRD HW \***

Waxahachie's founder, Emory W. Rogers, built a log cabin here in 1846. As early as 1856 there was a hotel on this site. The present building, by noted architect C. D. Hill, was built after a major fire in

1911 destroyed an earlier hotel built after an 1882 fire. The hotel, of dark mottled brick and Bedford stone, consists of twin four-story towers with an open well between and a two story Annex wing. A roof garden provided the hotel guests with a panoramic view of the town and a place to sleep before the days of air conditioning. In the basement was a natorium supplied with water piped from the nearby Hot Well.

Of interest is the fact that several major league baseball teams lived here while training in Waxahachie, including the Detroit Tigers in 1916-17-18 with Ty Cobb, the Cincinnati Reds in 1919, the Chicago White Sox in 1921, and Buffalo Bisons in 1948-49.

*LEAVE THE SQUARE GOING NORTH UP COLLEGE STREET (INTERURBAN ROUTE).*

**(33) 109-115 NORTH COLLEGE (c. 1890) NRD HW**

This is a charming commercial block.

**(34) 116 NORTH COLLEGE**

This was the depot for the interurban electric railway system from Dallas to Waco. It stopped running in December of 1948.

**(35) 210 N. COLLEGE (c. 1890) NRD HW**

Some of the turn-of-the-century commercial buildings in this block were two stories in front, but three and four stories in the rear.

**(36) THE CALABOOSE (ORIGINALLY IN 200 BLOCK OF N. JACKSON ) (c. 1885) HW**

Note the log cabin-type construction techniques (dovetailed corners). It was effective as a jail since it is of solid wood construction and even resisted inmates' attempts to burn their way out.

The CALABOOSE was used to house "drinkers" suffering the effects of free-flowing liquor, especially during the First Monday trade days. With forty-odd saloons at one time in the town's history, the CALABOOSE was well used.

**(37) OLD WYATT LAW & REAL ESTATE OFFICE (ORIGINALLY AT 206 E. MAIN) (c. 1860) NRD HW**

This well-proportioned Greek Revival style frame building is one of the oldest in the district. It once housed "Ferris & Getzendaner Attorneys-At-Law and Bankers", which became Citizens National Bank.

*THIS CONCLUDES HISTORIC WAXAHACHIE INC'S DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR. YOU MAY WISH TO TAKE HISTORIC WAXAHACHIE INC'S DRIVING TOUR OF LOCAL HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURAL STYLES THROUGHOUT THE CITY. MAPS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND MANY DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS, OR SIMPLY FOLLOW THE GREENIBROWN HISTORIC TOUR DIRECTIONAL SIGNS.*

Special thanks to the local historians who contributed their knowledge. Text by Keith Beers, Becky Kauffman and Penny Redington. Ellis County Courthouse drawing courtesy of Michael Hargrove.

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## HISTORIC WAXAHACHIE INC.'S

### DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR

