

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet Santa Fe County Courthouse Item number 1-3, 7

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SR1279

Santa Fe County, Santa Fe
County Courthouses of New Mexico

1. Name: Santa Fe County Courthouse
(County Courthouses of New Mexico)

2. Location: 102 Grant Avenue
Santa Fe, New Mexico

3. Owner: Santa Fe County Commission
Santa Fe County Courthouse
Box 276
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

6. Located in National Register Santa Fe Historic District, July 23, 1973; State Register of Cultural Properties File #260, Santa Fe Historic District.

7. Description: The 1939 Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style Santa Fe County Courthouse is a two story, rectangular building with painted wood detailing. Situated on an urban roadside, this building was designed by John Gaw Meem and constructed with Public Works Administration era funding.

This flat roofed courthouse is a typical Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style design, with a front portal detailed with carved beams and corbels and a split cedar ceiling. Fenestration is 15-over-15 double hung wood sash with carved wood floral motif and geometric design lintels, and carved wood spiral design post framing. Wooden canales project from the north and south sides. The main entrance is centrally located beneath the east facing portal and is deeply recessed into the masonry wall. The six light wood panel double doors have three light wood panel sidelights. Two four light transoms are screened with carved wooden spindles. A heavy wooden lintel and painted wainscot frame the door at top and bottom. Flooring in the portal area is flagstone. A sensitively designed addition was added at the rear of the building in 1975.

The interior is detailed with brick floors, plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling with painted, boxed beams. Main beams have intricate, Spanish motif, low relief carving. Hanging light fixtures are Spanish motif stamped tin with bare bulbs. Interior carved wooden balcony railings are heavy and squat, in a stacked block design.

The second floor courtroom is accessed through heavily carved wooden doors. The 20' ceiling has elaborately carved beams and corbels, and herringbone pattern decking. Three sides of the courtroom have painted 5' wainscot, while on the fourth side behind the judge's bench, the wainscot is wood paneling. The courtroom furniture is wooden. Acoustic tile has been added to large portions of the walls to reduce noise. The jail is a

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separate structure located off the site.

There is handicap access in both portions of the structure. The building remains in good condition with minor remodeling in the form of the 1975 addition at the rear of the structure. The interior has been cut up into small offices.

8. Significance: The 1939 Santa Fe County Courthouse is exceptionally significant architecturally for its association with John Gaw Meem, and exceptionally significant historically for its association with the Public Works Administration era of courthouse funding.

Santa Fe County was created in 1852 as one of the original seven New Mexico Counties. The boundaries were adjusted in 1882 and again in 1903. The county seat has been Santa Fe since 1852, but the original courthouse has not been architecturally surveyed. The second county courthouse is believed to have been a c.1880 Victorian Romanesque Style masonry structure designed by Kirchner and Kirchner. This structure burned in 1907, and was rebuilt in 1910 in Classical Greek Style. It served as the courthouse until the late 1930's, when it was purchased by the Dendahl family who later remodeled it into the existing Territorial Revival Style structure.

In 1939 Santa Fe County received Public Works Administration funding to build a new courthouse, and hired architect John Gaw Meem. The Public Works Administration was a federal response to the Depression to employ architects and laborers. This program resulted in the construction of many public buildings throughout the United States. PWA structures created a 1930's building stock in New Mexico which displays regional architectural interpretations and are a valuable historic and functional resource.

John Gaw Meem had a remarkable 60 year professional career as an architect in New Mexico. He is responsible for redesigning and combining Pueblo Style and Spanish Colonial Style architecture into what is today known as the Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style. Because of this, the Santa Fe County Courthouse has exceptional significance for its association with Meem, and as a good example of his manipulation of Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style.

9. Major Bibliographical References:

Beck, Warren A. and Ynez Haas. Historical Atlas of New Mexico. Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1969.

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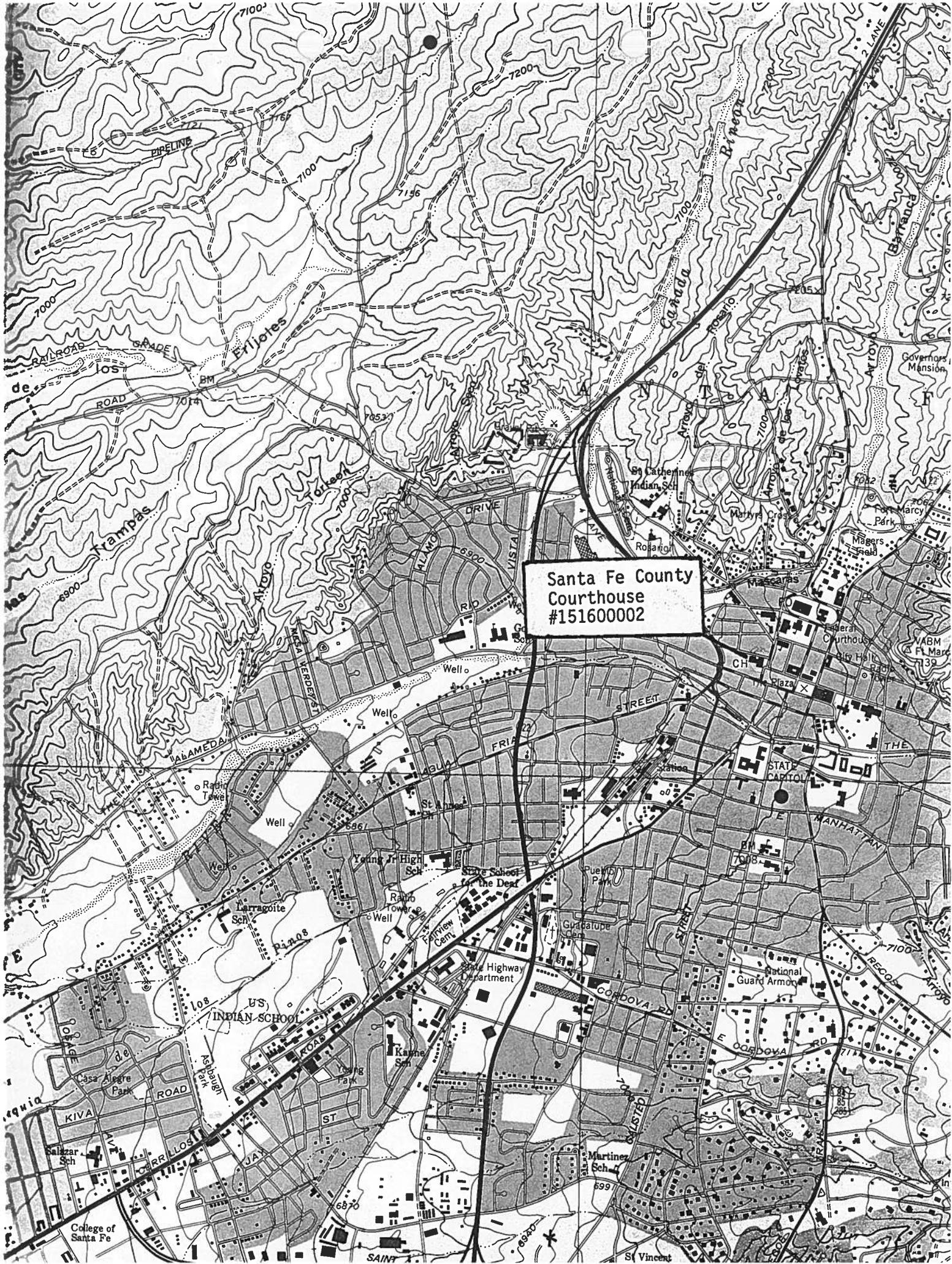
Bunting, Bainbridge. John Gaw Meem, Southwestern Architect. Albuquerque,
University of New Mexico Press, 1983.

10. Geographical Data: The nominated property consists of Lots 1 and 2, Block
11, of the Kings Official Map of the City of Santa Fe.

Quadrangle Name: Santa Fe
Quadrangle Scale: 7.5 minute

UTM References:
Zone 13 Easting 414900 Northing 3949630

Acreage:
Approximately one acre.



Santa Fe County
Courthouse
#151600002

