

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NR Listed: 1-08-03

### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

#### 1. Name of Property

historic name Crossett Post Office  
other names/site number Paul Sullins Library, AS0094

#### 2. Location

street & number 125 Main Street  not for publication  
city or town Crossett  vicinity  
state Arkansas code AR county Ashley code 003 zip code 71635

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination   
request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic  
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets   
does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  
 nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
Catherine Matthews 11/20/02  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional  
comments.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____

Crossett Post Office  
Name of Property

Ashley County, Arkansas  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT / post office  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement / International Style  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Greek Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Modern Movement / Art Deco  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
\_\_\_\_\_  
walls Stucco  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof Metal and asphalt  
\_\_\_\_\_  
other Marble, Limestone, Granite, Terrazzo  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**SEE ATTACHED CONTINUATION SHEET**

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- Criteria A, B, C, and D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture, Politics/government, Education

Period of Significance

1939-1952

Significant Dates

1939

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Federal Works Agency Public Buildings Administration, J.O. Boyd Construction Co.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE ATTACHED CONTINUATION SHEET

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>596925</u>	<u>3666429</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>

3	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

4	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>
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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

ALL that parcel of land situate, lying and being in the City of Crossett, County of Ashley, State of Arkansas, being part of the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 19, Township 18 south, Range 8 west, and more particularly described as follows: The beginning point of said parcel lies south 6° 50' east 1037.50 feet from the section corner common to Sections 17, 18, 19, and 20 of Township 18 south, Range 8 west, which point is the line common to said Sections 19 and 20, and south 84° 20' west 669 feet from said point to a 6" x 6" x 36" concrete monument located at the intersection of the alley as now located between First and Second Street of said City, County, and State, and the north line of Rock Island Avenue as now located. Thence on a course along the north line of Rock Island Avenue south 75° 38' west of a distance of 165.95 feet to a 6" x 6" x 36" concrete monument which point marks the northeast corner of the intersection of Rock Island Avenue aforesaid and First Street. Thence on a course along the easterly side of First Street, north 14° west a distance of 120 feet to a 6" x 6" x 36" concrete monument. Thence on a course parallel with the northerly line of Rock Island Avenue north 75° 38' east a distance of 165.95 feet to a 6" x 6" x 36" concrete monument located on the west side of the above-mentioned alley. Thence on a course along the west side of said alley south 14° east a distance of 120 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary contains all the property historically associated with this resource that retains its integrity.



Crossett Post Office  
Name of Property

Ashley County, Arkansas  
County and State

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Cherub Alford/Grant Writer  
organization Crossett Economic Development Foundation date 9/21/02  
street & number 400 Main Street, Suite 107 telephone (870)364-8745  
city or town Crossett state AR zip code 71635

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Crossett  
street & number P.O. Box 560 telephone (870)364-4825  
city or town Crossett state AR zip code 71635

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

### SUMMARY

The Crossett Post Office was a building far ahead of its time. Constructed in 1939-40 as a WPA project, the structure of the building, a basic square with a small "T" on the rear of the building that served as a loading dock, holds true to other post offices of that era. However, the design elements and style of the building were not typical. This one-story stucco building with a full basement is a combination of International Style and Art Deco with classical references through Greek Revival. The building is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Main and Second Streets in the historic downtown district of Crossett. Though the interior of the building has changed over the years for functional purposes, the exterior is in excellent condition and appears almost the same as it did at the time of construction.

### ELABORATION

The front, or west side, of the building is the main entrance, which is constructed of light green stucco walls with limestone coping around the base of the building. The front sidewalk leads to granite steps flanked by two limestone abutments. The front of the left abutment contains a 1964 plaque from the Crossett Rotary Club. The front of the right abutment contains a 1968 plaque commemorating the opening of the library. On top of both abutments sits a lamp post to greet visitors. Iron handrails line either side of the steps. The doorway is encased by glazed red marble with the words "Crossett Arkansas" across the top. The original double glass doors were replaced by a single glass door for safety and accessibility. The center of the façade of the building is covered by 65 tinted window panes measuring 25" x 18" with metal window grids. The front entrance is surrounded by these windows. Centered above the windows and directly below the pediment, the words "Paul Sullins Public Library" appear in metal letters on the frieze. These are the same type of letters that replaced the original "Crossett Arkansas Post Office." The name of the building was changed in 1968 when the public library moved into the building. A simple copper ornament decorates the pediment. There are also two copper cornices that flank the pediment. Left of the front steps is the limestone cornerstone. The cornerstone indicates that the building was a WPA project built in 1939, by supervising architect Louis A. Simon. When the building was originally built, a flagpole stood to the north of the front sidewalk. The flagpole was replaced in 1976 with a memorial to the war dead.

As you progress around the exterior of the building the same light green stucco, limestone coping, and large windows with limestone window sills and marble accent appear. On the south side of the building, is the exterior entrance to the basement. There are concrete steps leading down to double metal doors with small glass windows in each. The exterior door leads to a large basement that is divided into different rooms. The basement has been used mainly for storage over the years. It also served as an official Civil Defense Shelter.

The loading dock and back door are on the east side of the building. The loading dock has a metal handrail and opens onto a concrete platform. The back door of the building is also handicapped accessible.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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The main, front section of the building has a metal gable roof, while the back of the building has a flat, built-up roof.

During the change from the post office to library, there were many interior changes made; however, the one area that has remained basically the same is the vestibule. The vestibule is semi-circular in shape and surrounded by metal and glass walls. The bottom trim on the walls is bronze. The original glass panes were plain glass, but in the 70's were changed to stained glass with a morning glory design to honor a Methodist deaconess who was hired by the Crossett Company to teach the early workers to read and write. The floor of the vestibule is terrazzo. There are two doors on either side of the vestibule leading into the main room of the building.



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

### SUMMARY

The Crossett Post Office located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Main and Second Streets in Crossett, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** with **local significance** for its unique blend of Art Deco, Greek Revival, and International architectural styles in Crossett. It is also being nominated to the National Register under **Criterion A** for local association with federal postal operations and WPA construction in the growing town of Crossett, Ashley County.

### ELABORATION

The history of Crossett, Arkansas, is a unique one indeed. In 1899, a young lumberman, E. W. "Cap" Gates, persuaded one of his relatives, C. W. Gates, and two Iowa investors, Dr. J. W. Watzek and E. S. Crossett, to purchase 47,000 acres of virgin timberland in southern Arkansas and northern Louisiana.

With the new landowners' blessings, "Cap" Gates supervised the construction of a sawmill and a small town nearby. Residences for employees, a church, a school, and a large company store were built, and E.W. Gates was appointed to serve as manager of the newly formed Crossett Lumber Company and the company-run town. E.W. Gates had grand visions for the future of Crossett.

At the turn of the century, company-owned sawmill towns were common. This meant that the company owned "everything." Employees worked for the company, lived in a company house, shopped at the company store, sent their children to company owned schools, and received company scrip as pay. Until 1946, in Crossett, every business and building in town, except the café, pressing shop (laundry and dry-cleaning store) and post office were company owned and operated. In 1946, due to the increasing size of the town, a new development plan was established and private homes were sold to company employees.

According to local historian, Rev. J.W. Buckner, "Company officials possessed overwhelming control over the destiny of the workers and the town." Due to this extreme control the Crossett Lumber Company officials were able to keep out much of the "riff-raff" that was usually associated with other company towns. Crossett Lumber Company's control has been attributed to the lack of transportation and the isolated location.

Because of his influential position in the company, "Cap" Gates was also influential in town. E.W. Gates did not want Crossett to become just another cheap, unsightly sawmill town with shotgun houses, narrow streets and poor facilities. E.W. Gates planned the town with wide streets, playgrounds, schools, churches, and provided modern facilities for the citizens. Buckner described Gates as having "a broader vision than any other sawmill man of the area in 1898. After all, he had been associated with men who did things in a big way and were used to broad plans."

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

In the late 1930s, the United States Treasury Department announced plans to build a new post office building in Crossett, Arkansas. The structural plans for this building were met with the same "broad vision." The Crossett Lumber Company promptly donated the land, which was the former site of the Club House and Natatorium. The company wanted the post office to reflect new progressive ideas, which would represent Crossett as a progressive city.

When construction was completed in 1940, Crossett reveled in the addition of the "pleasing green" stucco building that was designed using a combination of Art Deco, Greek Revival, and International architectural styles. The Post Office provided both convenience and an economic boost for Crossett. More importantly than that, however, this building was a symbol of pride for the citizens of Crossett. This pride was articulated in an article in *Forest Echoes*, a magazine published monthly by Crossett-Watzek-Gates Industries and devoted to the interests of their employees, announcing the plans to build the Post Office. The author described the decision as "indicative of recognition by those in authority that we have a permanent city," as opposed to the many company towns that became ghost towns once the company decided to move on.

The \$70,000 Crossett Post Office was finished and dedicated in August 1940. The building continued to house the post office until 1968, when plans were made to build a new post office. Chairman of the Crossett Public Library Board, Paul Sullins, entered into negotiations with the Post Office Department in hopes of purchasing the building to become the fourth home of the Crossett Public Library. The US Government sold the old post office facilities to the library board for \$1. The library board decided to honor Sullins for his work in securing the building for them by naming the new library the Paul Sullins Public Library. The library remained in the building until August 2002, when it was moved a new, larger facility.

### SIGNIFICANCE

To the citizens of Crossett, Arkansas, in 1940, the building of the new Crossett Post Office signified the belief held by federal government that Crossett was not your typical short-lived company town. However, citizens of Crossett did not realize what a delightful structure they were getting. To the average citizen at the time, the design elements of this building may have been nice, but few realized just how innovative this building really was. In terms of design, this is a building built decades ahead of its time. The Crossett Post Office was, and still is, a jewel hidden in a small town in Southeast Arkansas.

The Crossett Post Office is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under both **Criterion A** for its association with federal postal operations and with WPA construction and **Criterion C** for its unique blend of International Style and Art Deco with classical references through Greek Revival architectural styles in Crossett.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Buckner, John W., *Cap Gates's Tent City* (Little Rock, AR: Rose Publishing, 1983).

Buckner, John W., *Wilderness Lady: A History of Crossett, Arkansas* (Little Rock, AR: Rose Publishing, 1979).

*Forest Echoes*, Sept. 1939

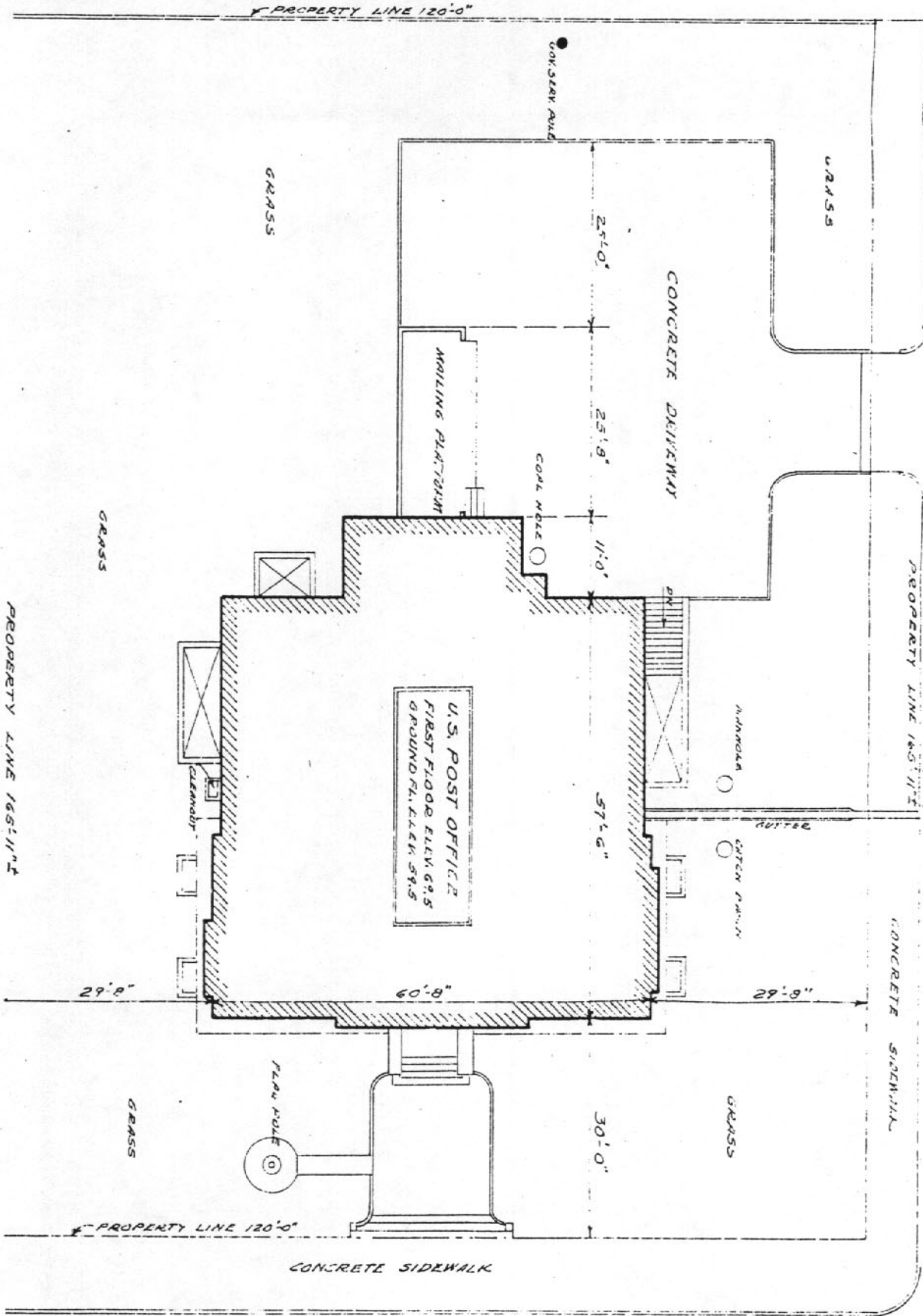
*Forest Echoes*, July-Aug. 1940

Journal documenting the construction of the building

Original blue prints, receipts, letters, etc.

PUBLIC ALLEY

PROPERTY LINE 120'-0"

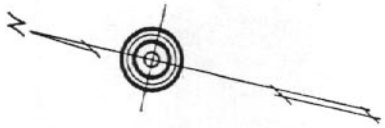


ROCK ISLAND AVENUE

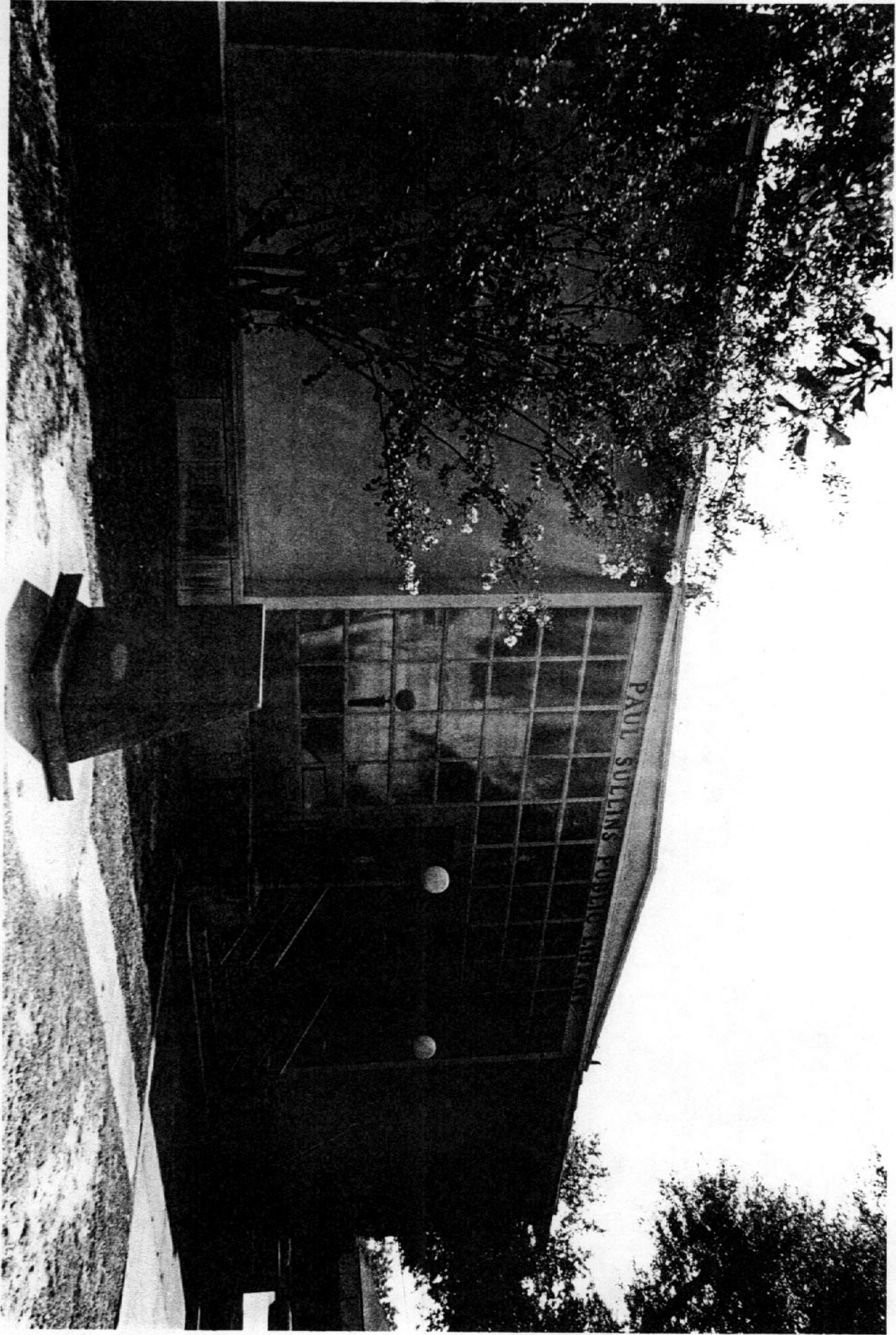
CONCRETE SIDEWALK

FIRST STREET

CROSSETT POST OFFICE  
ASHLEY COUNTY, ARKANSAS











JAMES A FARLEY  
POSTMASTER GENERAL

JOHN M. CARMODY  
FEDERAL WORKS ADMINISTRATOR

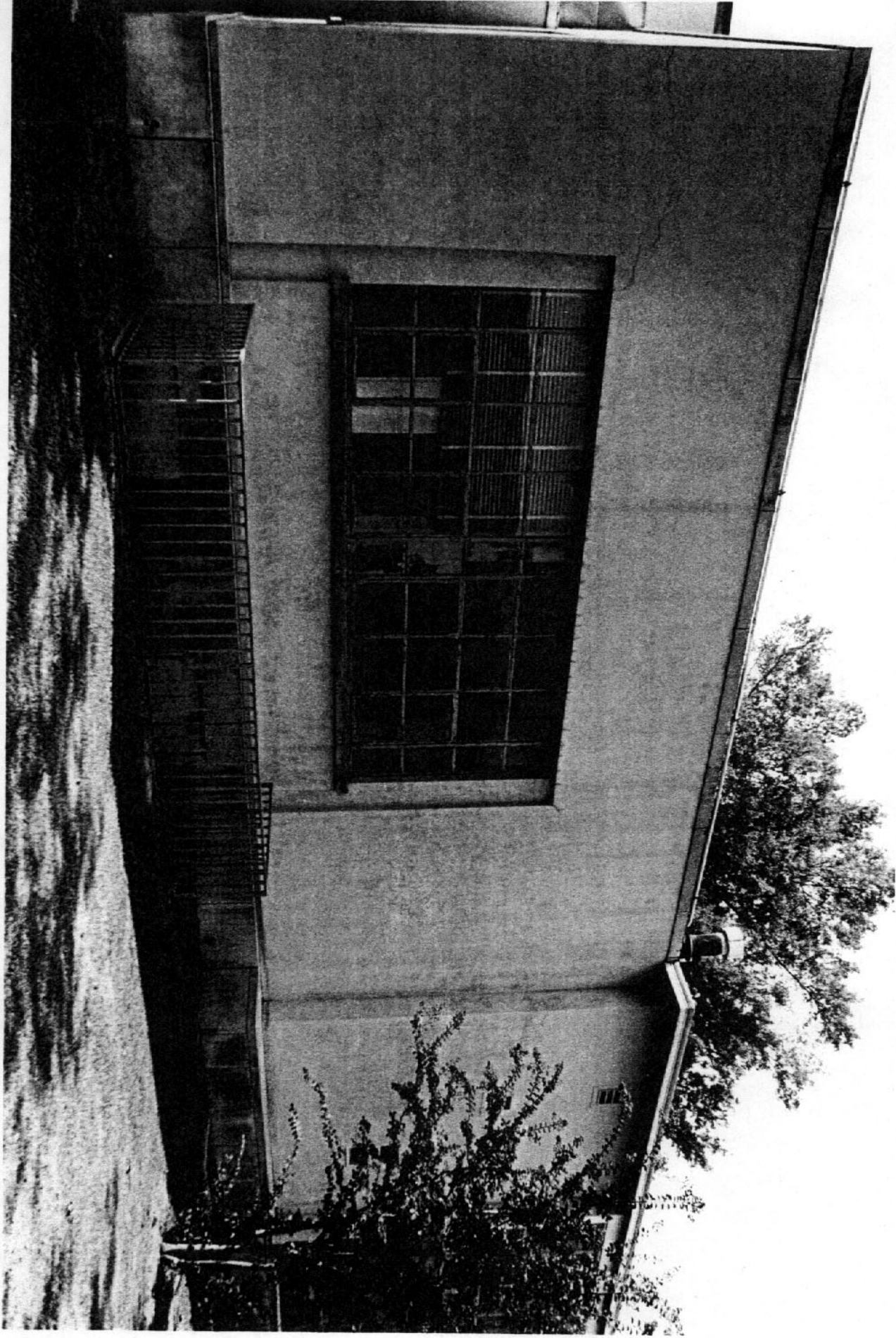
W. ENGLEBERT REYNOLDS  
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS

LOUIS A. SIMON  
SUPERVISING ARCHITECT

NEAL A. MELICK  
SUPERVISING ENGINEER

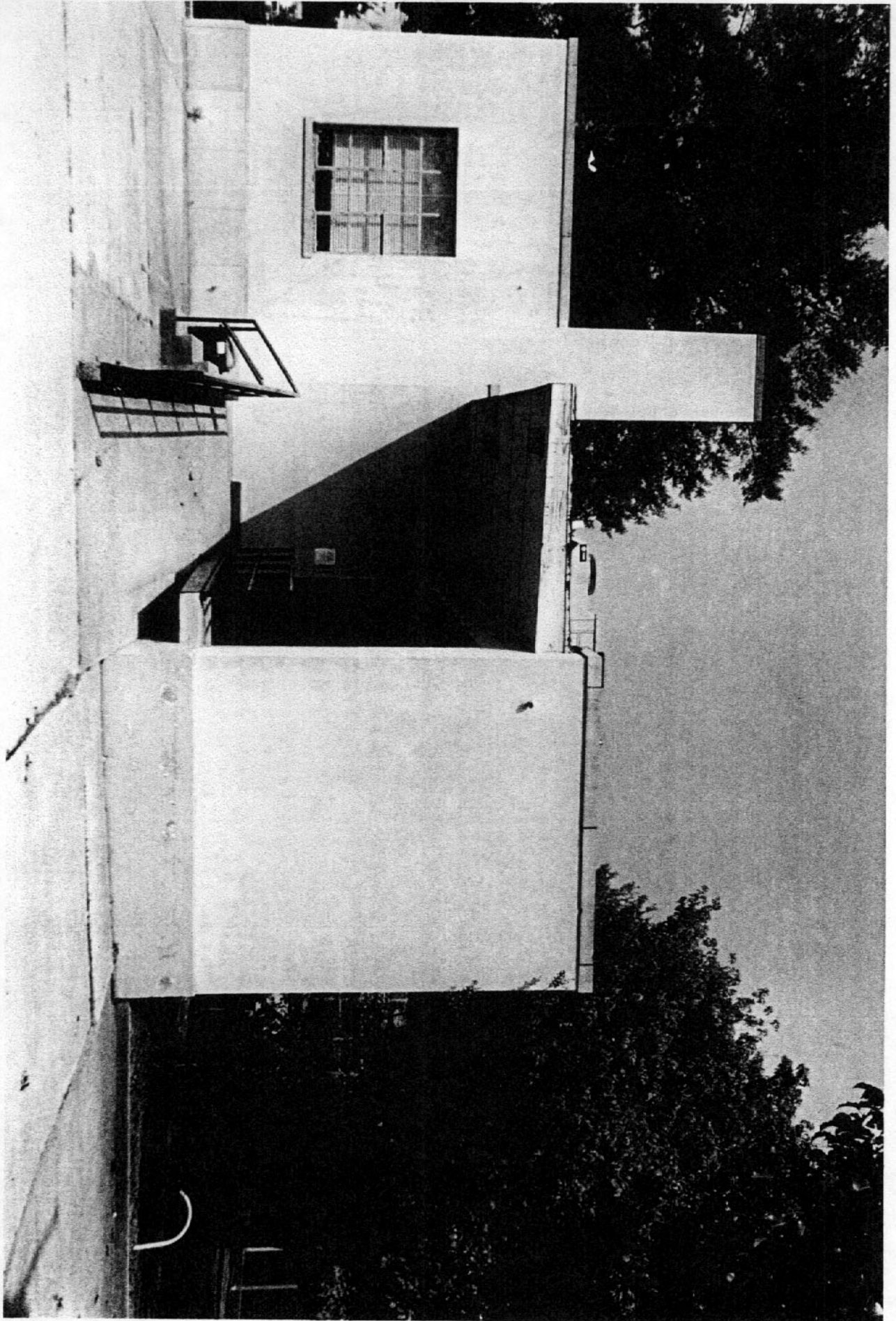
1930



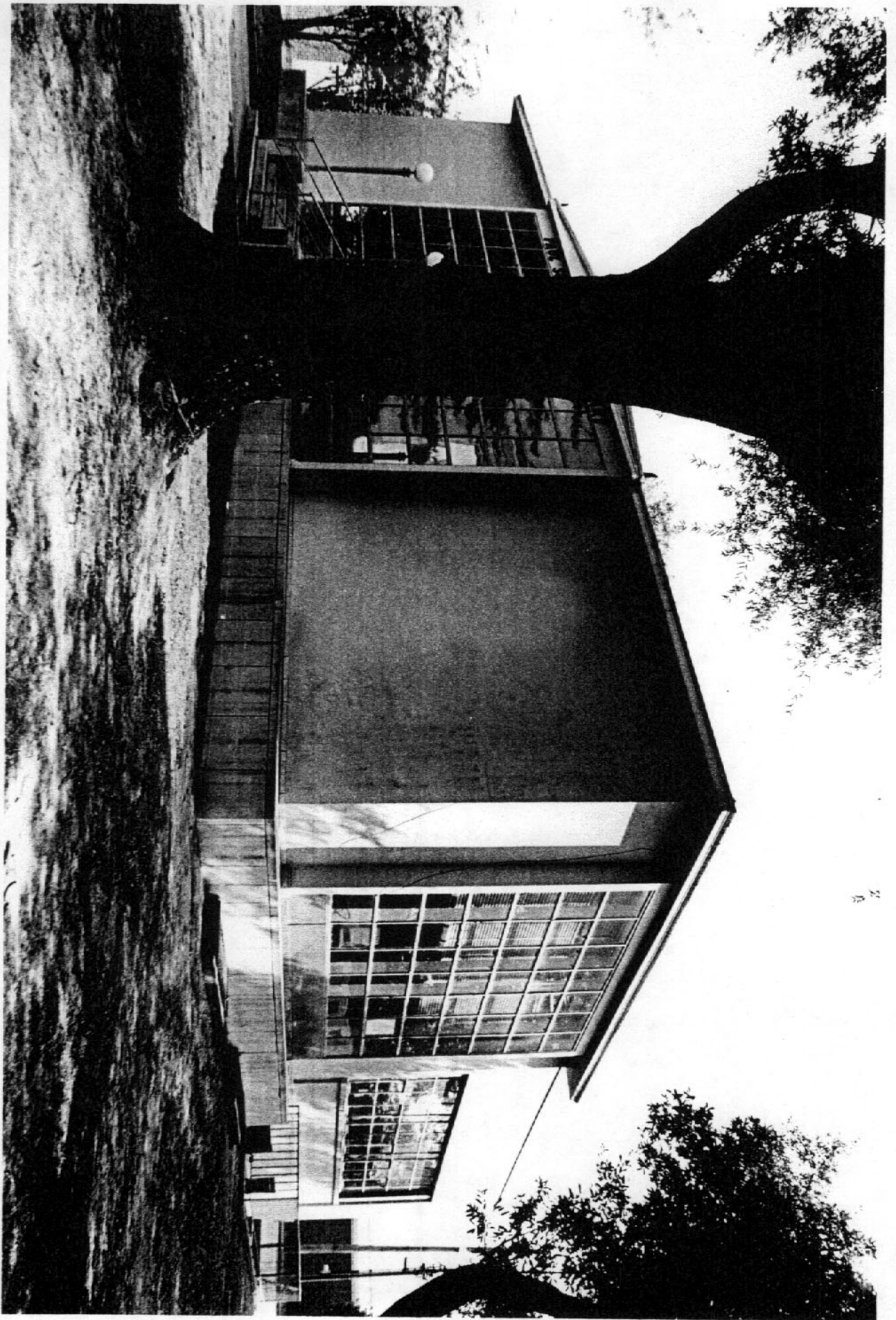


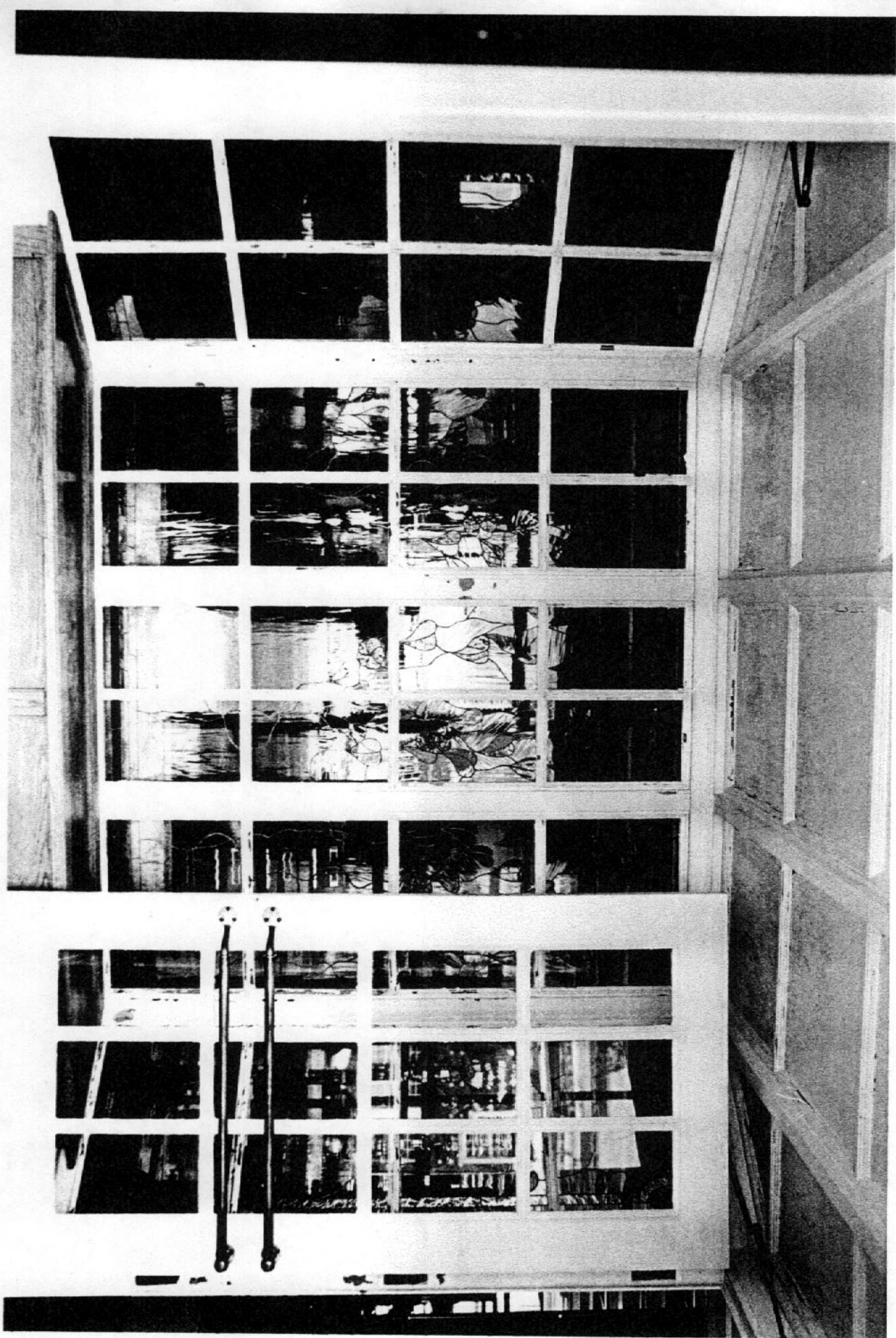




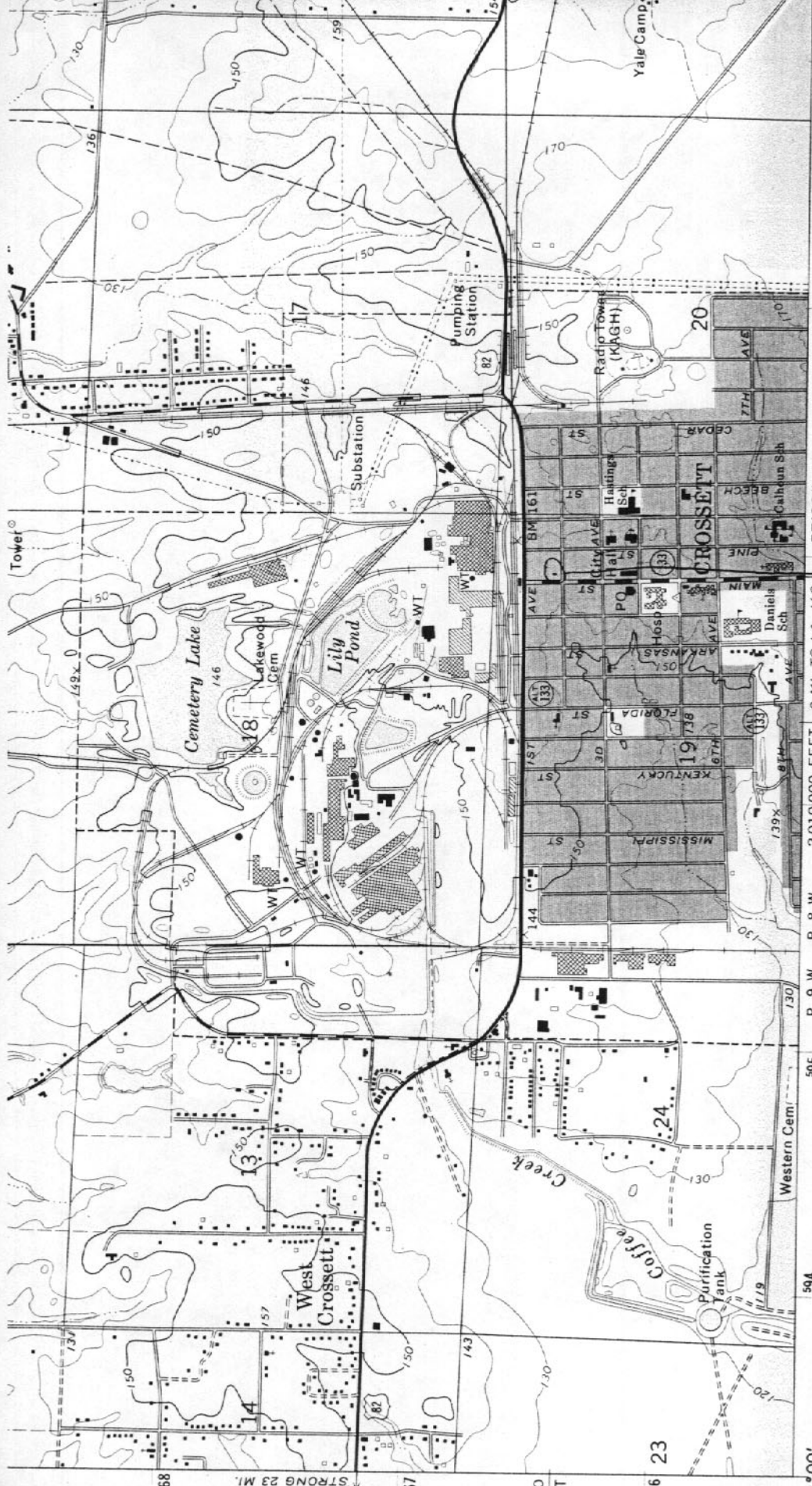












33° 07' 30" 92° 00' 1:62,500 (FELSENTHAL 1950 II)

170 000 FEET

3668 EL DORADO 41 MI. STRONG 23 MI. 3667

3666 23

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

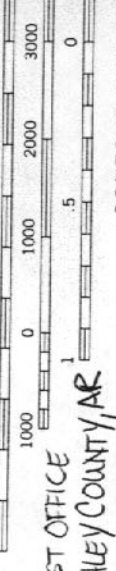
Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1972. Field checked 1973

Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Arkansas coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic) 1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue. 1927 North American datum

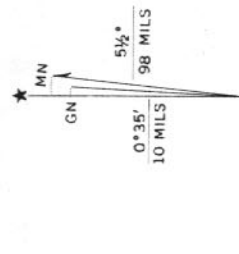
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown  
 Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

(CROSSETT SO 7650 III SW SCALE 1:24)



CONTOUR INTERVAL  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL

CROSSETT POST OFFICE  
 CROSSETT, ASHLEY COUNTY, AR  
 UTM REFERENCE:  
 15/596925/3666429



UTM GRID AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL AND BY THE ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND