

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE NR 4-11-77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED CV-001

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Cleveland County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Main and Magnolia

CITY, TOWN Rison

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Fourth

STATE Arkansas

VICINITY OF  
CODE 05

COUNTY Cleveland  
CODE 025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Cleveland County (Raymond J. Sipes, County Judge)

STREET & NUMBER Main and Magnolia

CITY, TOWN Rison

STATE Arkansas

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Circuit Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER Cleveland County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN Rison

STATE Arkansas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Constructed in 1911 at a cost of \$65,000 , the Cleveland County Courthouse is a two-story brick structure with a full basement. Basically rectangular in shape, the building measures 100' by 70'.

The Cleveland County Courthouse is topped by a hip roof of tile composition. The four corners of the central wings are marked by quoins. A denticulated cornice extends around the entire building. Windows are double-hung sash and faced with limestone keystones. A limestone water table encircles the structure.

Centered atop the Cleveland County Courthouse is a twenty-foot high clock tower into which is set a four-faced clock. The tower utilizes arched louvered openings below the clock face and an arched cornice above, supported by Tuscan pilasters. The octagonal shaped roof is capped by a small cupola with finial.

The facade (north elevation) is distinguished by a three-bay wide, two story projection. This projection features a parapet and denticulated cornice. Brick quoins mark the corners of the projection. Four Tuscan brick pilasters separate the bays of the projection. Second-story windows are double-hung sash with double-hung sash sidelights and a three-sectioned transom. First-floor windows are flanked by sidelights and feature flush limestone keystones, and label stops. The entry door is marked by a one-story flat roofed portico. Tuscan columns of limestone support the portico. Other features of note on the portico include a denticulated cornice pilasters and feature a transom repeating the star motif in the balustrade.

East and west elevations again with brick quoins and denticulated cornice are each marked by a small centered labeled bay which extends from the hip roof. The double side-entry doors have nine lights each. First-floor windows are flat arched with gauged brick and limestone keystones. A pair of double-hung windows with a star-patterned transom is found at the second-story level.

The south elevation features a three-bay projection similar to that on the north elevation, but without an entry door. Also lacking are the gauged brick flat arches and limestone keystones on all the windows along with the quoins on the central projection.

Noteworthy details of the interior include brightly colored, patterned ceramic floor tiles, marble wainscoting and pressed tin ceilings in an ornamental designs. Only minor interior alterations have taken place in the structure.

As the most architecturally and politically important structure in the county, the Cleveland County Courthouse is a significant historical structure.

# SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE-- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1911      BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The largest number of architecturally significant public buildings in Arkansas are the courthouses scattered over the state's seventy-five counties. A structural symbol of American government, the county courthouse serves as the center of local political activity. Often the largest and most costly buildings in the county, the courthouse is almost always a source of pride to the citizens who financed and make use of its facilities.

Cleveland County, located in southeast Arkansas, covers 534 square miles. The elevation of the county is almost entirely below 250 feet. Primarily a rural county, the major industry is lumbering and wood products.

Cleveland County was created in 1873 at a time when, near the end of the Reconstruction Era, boundaries for nine new Arkansas counties were drawn.

The dominance of Republican influence at the time resulted in the county being named Dorsey in honor of Stephen W. Dorsey, a Republican senator from Arkansas who entered congress that year. The county seat was established at Toledo and a building constructed to serve as the courthouse.

On March 5, 1885, Dorsey was renamed by an Act of the General Assembly in honor of Grover Cleveland. Portions of Lincoln, Jefferson, Dallas, and Bradley counties were integrated in the new county.

In 1889 the Toledo courthouse and the records within burned. At once there developed a strong movement to move the county seat to a different location which would be more desirable. An election was held to determine the new location, but the outcome was indecisive. In a second election held on August 17, 1889, Rison was chosen as the new county seat. In 1892 a frame courthouse was constructed at a cost of \$8,000.

In 1911 the present Cleveland County Courthouse was constructed at a cost of \$65,000. The architecturally significant structure is two-stories high and of brick construction. The building is basically rectangular in shape and measures 100' by 70'. Distinguishing features of the structure include brick quoins, denticulated cornices, Tuscan pilasters and limestone keystones on first-floor windows. Rising from the center of the hip roof is the structures most distinguishing feature, an octagonal dome which reaches twenty feet above the roofline.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

Constructed in 1911, the Cleveland County courthouse is the county's most architecturally significant building. This combined with the building's political significance make the courthouse the most significant structure in Cleveland County.

# MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

A Survey of Arkansas Courthouses. compiled by the National Society of Colonial Dames of America in the state of Arkansas, Mrs. W.G. McDonald, chairperson, Historical Activities committee. Arkansas Room, Little Rock Public Library. Herndon, Dallas. Centennial History of Arkansas. Little Rock: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1922.  
 Works Project Administration "Cleveland County". 1941 Archives Arkansas History Commission.

# GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre  
 UTM REFERENCES

A	15	575350	3757730	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: Sandra Taylor, Historian  
 ORGANIZATION: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program DATE: 9-14-76  
 STREET & NUMBER: 300 West Markham TELEPHONE: (501) 371-1639  
 CITY OR TOWN: Little Rock STATE: Arkansas

# STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Anne Bentley*

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Cleveland County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Rison VICINITY OF COUNTY Cleveland STATE Ark.

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

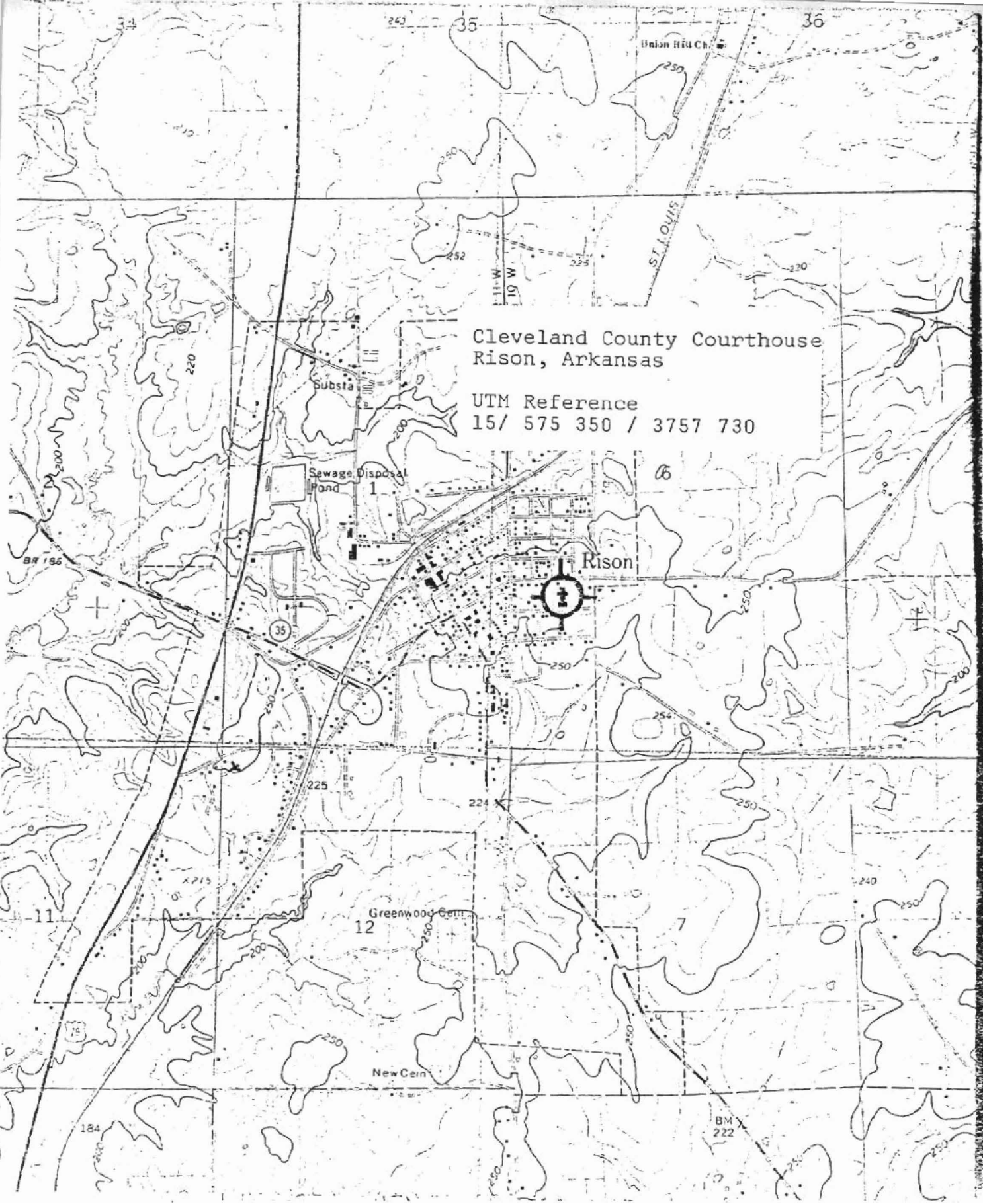
SOURCE United States Geological Survey

SCALE 1:24000 DATE 1970

**4 REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES



Cleveland County Courthouse  
Rison, Arkansas

UTM Reference  
15/ 575 350 / 3757 730







"THE OLD STATE HOUSE" 300 WEST MARKHAM . LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201  
 TELEPHONE - 501 371-1639

PROPERTY OWNER'S APPROVAL

I, Raymond J. Sipes, am the legal  
 owner of the Courthouse - Glenwood Co.  
 located at Main & Magnolia St Resonant.

I hereby acknowledge that I have been fully informed and understand the significance of having the aforementioned property placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

I hereby approve the inclusion of the aforementioned property on the National Register of Historic Places.

Raymond J. Sipes  
 Owner  
4/12/76  
 Date

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

**1** NAME

HISTORIC Cleveland County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

**2** LOCATION

CITY, TOWN Rison VICINITY OF COUNTY Cleveland STATE Ark.

**3** PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Sandra Taylor

DATE OF PHOTO July, 1976

NEGATIVE FILED AT AHPP

**4** IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET  
West Elevation, viewed from the west

PHOTO NO.  
4

INT: 2983-75

