

NR listed 5/14/91

CW0116

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Clarke-Harrell-Burson House other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 603 Parkview not for publication N/A city, town Van Buren vicinity N/A state Arkansas code AR county Crawford code AR 033 zip code 72596

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public ownership and building/site/structure/object categories. Resource counts: Contributing (4, 1, 5), Noncontributing (buildings, sites, objects, Total).

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: Catherine A. Buford Date: 4-2-91 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. Signature of commenting or other official Date State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register. determined eligible for the National Register. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/Single Dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)
Greek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)
foundation Stone
walls Wood/Weatherboard
roof Asphalt
other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Summary

The Clarke-Harrell-Burson House is a single story, braced frame residential building designed in the vernacular Greek Revival that was typical throughout Arkansas in the first half of the nineteenth century. Its design includes the common floor plan for this style: a central hallway flanked by two large, identical rooms, with an intersecting gable roof ell projecting from the back of one room and a small, enclosed shed room on the back of the other (originally there was also the typical open gallery that ran around the back of the house and down the side of the ell; this has since been enclosed). Two brick chimneys rise through the combination gable/hipped roof in the main, western section of the house.

Elaboration

The Clarke-Harrell-Burson House is a single story, braced frame residential building designed in the vernacular Greek Revival that was typical throughout Arkansas in the first half of the nineteenth century. Its design includes the common floor plan for this style: a central hallway flanked by two large, identical rooms, with an intersecting gable roof ell projecting from the back of one room and a small, enclosed shed room on the back of the other (originally there was also the typical open gallery that ran around the back of the house and down the side of the ell; this has since been enclosed). Two brick chimneys rise through the combination gable/hipped roof (the northern end is gabled while the roof ends in a hip to the south) in the main, western section of the house. The roof is covered with asphalt shingle, the walls are weatherboarded and the entire structure rests upon a continuous stone foundation.

The western or front elevation is symmetrically-arranged around the central, pedimented porch. The projecting, gable roof porch is supported by two flaring wood box columns and two attached pilasters, all of which are now supported upon a concrete deck (the original wood deck was replaced in the relatively recent past). The pediment is recessed behind restrained box cornice trim and filled with horizontal boards. The ceiling of the porch is constructed of board-and-batten. The entrance below consists of a single broad, pegged door that is surrounded by half-sidelights and a transom. The wall to either side of the entrance is sheathed with flush plank to the edge of the porch roof. Two large, six-over-six wood sash windows flank each side of the porch, though they are currently covered with tinted storm windows (scheduled to be removed).

The northern elevation is fenestrated with but one large six-over-six wood sash window to the west and a smaller six-over-six wood sash window to the east, in the shed roof room. The southern elevation is lighted with four large six-over-six wood sash windows, as its wall is continued by the rear ell.

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The eastern elevation consists largely of the back of a later rear porch (c. 1930) that is lighted with a row of six-over-six wood sash windows on all sides. It is accessed via a single-leaf door placed toward the north.

The significant exterior details are minimal, consisting solely of the large six-over-six wood sash windows and the projecting, pedimented front porch. Otherwise the design features little detail, a characteristic typical of rural Greek Revival designs during this period.

The interior features one original fireplace mantel (in the southern room), though the mantel in the northern room is historic. Original pegged wood doors and original wood window and door trim also survive in places. The original 12-foot plaster ceilings and the plaster walls have also been preserved.

The only exterior alterations of note are the addition of the small, shed roof room on the rear of the house (scheduled to be removed), the replacement of the wood porch deck with a concrete deck, and the enclosure of the original open gallery on the north side of the rear ell to create a kitchen. Inside, the original rear entry to the central hall (that matched the form of the front entry) was removed and filled when the gallery was enclosed.

To the rear or east of the house are several associated outbuildings and structures included in the nomination. The original kitchen, although in an advanced state of disrepair, still stands directly behind the house. The kitchen is a gable roof, wood frame structure clad with weatherboard, the roof of which is covered with tin sheets over the original cedar shakes. Two doors with six window panes each in the western and southern elevations provide access. A later shed was attached to the rear of the kitchen. To the northwest of the kitchen stands a small frame gable roof building that was used to store equipment and to milk cows. An older dug well lined with stone is located within. Southwest of the kitchen lies a goldfish pond constructed of stone in a style similar to that of the dug well. A shed roof WPA-constructed privy is located to the rear of the detached kitchen. The privy features cypress construction with a poured concrete base.

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Summary

Criteria B, C, and D, local significance

The Clarke-Harrell-Burson House is being nominated under Criteria B, C, and D with local significance. This house is significant under Criterion B for its association with George W. Clarke, editor of the Arkansas *Intelligencer*. Under Criterion C, this house is notable as an excellent example of a 19th century vernacular Greek Revival house. The structure is further distinguished as the first frame and weatherboard house built in Logtown, a community at that time of log homes exclusively. The house and surrounding property is also eligible under Criterion D as a relatively intact example of a small subsistence farmstead associated with the occupation of all three of the families that have owned the property since the buildings were constructed.

Elaboration

The Clarke-Harrell-Burson House is locally believed to have been constructed in 1841-1842. In 1840 the land on which the house stands was granted to John B. Powell from the United States. The next available property deed reveals that in 1855 Reverend John Harrell purchased Lot 3, containing ten acres, and a fractional portion of Lot 6 of Powell's original land from James and Patience Woosley for \$1800. Although a few newspaper articles attribute the building of the house to Harrell, the *History of Crawford County, Arkansas* by Miss Clara B. Eno states that the house was built for George W. Clarke, the editor of the Arkansas *Intelligencer*. An article in the *Van Buren Press Argus* ascribes to this version as well. Harrell's purchase price of \$1800, a princely sum at that time for less than twenty acres of land, appears to establish the prior existence of a house on the property despite the lack of conclusive property titles attributing ownership to Clarke.

George Washington Clarke was born in the District of Columbia in 1812. At age twenty, he came to Arkansas and became an associate editor of the *Van Buren, Arkansas Intelligencer* in July 1843. The *Arkansas Intelligencer* was the first newspaper in Arkansas to be published west of Little Rock. It was established by Francis M. Van Horne and Thomas Sterne with the first copy being issued on January 22, 1842. In March of 1844 Clarke became the sole proprietor and editor of the paper. Previously, the *Intelligencer* had been politically neutral, but under Clarke's control the newspaper advocated the Democratic party's political philosophy. Thomas Sterne responded to this political change in his old paper by founding the *Western Frontier Whig* in May of 1844. A heated editorial war ensued between Clarke and Sterne's partner and chief editor, John S. Logan.

In addition to their political differences, the two rival editors' personalities were likewise at different poles. Clarke was described as being brilliant, impulsive, and forceful, whereas Logan was seen as calm, imperturbable, and self-possessed. The personality dissimilarity

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coupled with an intense political rivalry eventually culminated in an incident described by Judge Jesse Turner which went beyond simple editorial bashing. Clarke initiated the conflict by referring to Logan as "Big Mush," the name of a certain comical Indian chief. Logan responded by labeling Clarke with the equally devastating insult of "Toady." The Rubicon had been crossed and honor could now only be satisfied with blood. A duel with rifles at sixty paces was decided upon. Two shots were exchanged on the "field of honor" near Fort Smith, but the smell of powder and bad marksmanship led to a rather sudden reconciliation.

The bitter editorial war was soon over as the *Western Frontier Whig* moved to Victoria, Texas sometime in 1845. Also, in April of 1845 Clarke left the *Intelligencer* for two years. He resumed ownership on March 21, 1847 and continued his editorial duties until 1853 when he received an appointment as Indian Agent for the Pottowatomie Indians in the Kansas Territory. Besides being an editor, Clarke was elected to the Arkansas State Senate in 1850. It was in the Senate that he first took an active interest in the affairs of the Indian Territories. Although the biography of the irrepressible Clarke extends until December 19, 1880, only the ten year period from 1843 to 1853 is relevant for the purposes of this nomination. Despite the lack of conclusive records, one can assume that Clarke resided in his frame house in Logtown throughout his *Intelligencer* years up until his Indian Agent appointment.

As previously mentioned, the Reverend John Harrell purchased the Clarke home in 1855. Born in North Carolina in 1806, John Harrell was licensed to preach at age seventeen. After being transferred to the Missouri conference in 1831, he became a charter member of the Arkansas conference when it was formed at Batesville in 1836. In 1845, Harrell was a delegate to the Louisville convention where the Methodist Episcopal Church, South was organized. Aside from being elected a bishop or general secretary, the greatest honor that a Methodist preacher can attain is to be elected a delegate. Reverend Harrell served in this capacity eight times, three times from Arkansas and five times from the Indian Territory conference, each time being the first man elected. Harrell was transferred to the Indian Territory in 1850.

According to *Goodspeed's History of Northwest Arkansas*, Reverend Harrell was among the first of the Methodist Church representatives to work in the Van Buren/Fort Smith area arriving there about 1836-1837. For many years he filled different positions of circuit and station preacher and presiding elder. From 1850 to 1854 Harrell was in charge of the Fort Coffee School; from 1854-55 he was presiding elder of the Choctaw District and for seven years (1855-62) of the Cherokee District. Harrell was Superintendent of Army Missions for the next three years, and the Presiding Elder of the Cherokee District the following year 1865-1866. From 1866 to 1869 he served as Superintendent of Missions of the Indian Mission conference which entailed traveling from one district to another throughout the Indian Territory. In 1869 Harrell limited himself to Presiding Elder of the Choctaw District. The next year he became Superintendent of Asbury Manual Labor School at Asbury Mission.

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Under his leadership the school buildings, which had previously burned, were rebuilt. In 1871-1872 Harrell was Presiding Elder of the Creek District, and he filled the same position at the Cherokee District from 1873-1876.

In 1876 Reverend Harrell and his wife, Eliza Williams Harrell, moved to Asbury, Oklahoma after he was again appointed Superintendent of Asbury Manual Labor School. Mrs. Harrell died later that year in November. Reverend Harrell lived only a month longer. Despite Harrell's twenty-six years of service in the Indian Territory, the family maintained their home in Clarke's old house in Logtown until their final migration in 1876. Because of this Harrell remained involved in affairs east of the border. Earlier, in 1853, Harrell was instrumental in raising the funds for a new Methodist church in Fort Smith. The chapel was named after Harrell, and he became the church's first pastor. The residents of Van Buren, just down the hill from Logtown, were probably more familiar with another member of the Harrell family. One of their three daughters, Miss Lucetta, taught a little private school in Van Buren.

After the Harrell's moved to Oklahoma in 1876, the next available property deed discloses that Edmund F. Burson purchased the land and home from Philemia De Witt in 1887. A Union soldier during the Civil War, Dr. Burson came from Illinois in 1887 and practiced dentistry in Van Buren until his retirement in 1905. The house has remained in the family ever since and is now owned by Douglas Gautier.

The Clarke-Harrell-Burson House is also significant under Criterion C as the finest example in the area of a 19th century vernacular Greek Revival house. This house also has the distinction of being the first braced frame and weatherboard house in Logtown, a community of log houses. Logtown was an old settlement dating from the arrival of the widow Powell in 1828. Among the first settlers were Dr. Collins and his family. It is believed that he built the first house there as the community was known as Collinsville for a short time. However, due to his unpopularity the name was changed to Logtown on account of the concentration of log houses there. The settlement was renamed City Heights in the early 1900's and is now a part of Van Buren.

Under Criterion D, the site with its associated outbuildings and structures - an original detached kitchen, a dug well lined with stone and later covered by a small shed which was used to milk the cows, a WPA-constructed privy, and a goldfish pond constructed of stone - possesses great potential to reveal further information concerning 19th and early 20th century rural/small town farmsteads in Van Buren and, more specifically, the historic settlement of Logtown. The fact that such smaller farmsteads existed in communities of all sizes throughout Arkansas is well-known; however, a relatively small number of such have survived with a substantial number of significant original outbuilding and structures intact. These intact farmsteads are of potentially great archeological value through their preservation of both the plan and evolution of the farmstead, thereby providing a record of the occupation and use of

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the site during its extensive period of significance. In particular, the Clarke-Harrell-Burson House and its surrounding property retain the potential to reveal further information about the adaptation of a native Easterner to the demands of frontier living on the edge of the Indian Territory in the early nineteenth century; about his social and commercial interactions with the Indians, and which tribes; about the evolution of the farm over time and the concomitant introduction of new farming technology; and lastly, about the true extent of the change in the fundamental character of the farm from the nineteenth century to the twentieth century. Such landscape features as the original kitchen and the stone-lined well are typical of farmsteads for which subsistence and food processing was the primary emphasis, while the later, stone-lined decorative fish pound reveals a concern with decorative landscaping and adapting the natural environment for more recreational and aesthetic purposes. The surrounding site that connects these resources (which appears to contain an intact midden with no disturbance of any kind) retains the potential to reveal substantial information about these questions for which there is no other known surviving documentation.

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Bibliography

Deed Abstracts. Personal files of Douglas Gautier, Van Buren, Arkansas.

Williams, R.L. "Rev. John Harrell." *Chronicles of Oklahoma.* vol. XI. Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society. pp. 743-745.

Eno, Miss Clara B. *History of Crawford County, Arkansas.* Van Buren, Arkansas: The *Press-Argus*, 1949. pp. 82-83, 306-307, 375-377.

The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northwestern Arkansas: History of Crawford County, pp. 482-602.
History of Sebastian County, pp. 790-792.
Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889.

History Commission, Research Project #79-007, George W. Clarke.

Personal Interview with Lisa and Cora Gautier, 10/11/90.

Press-Argus. Van Buren. May 15, 1952.

Southwest Times Record. Fort Smith. April 14, 1928, p.12.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Communications
Architecture
Archeology/Historic - Non-Aboriginal

Period of Significance

c.1841-1905

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Rural American

Significant Person

Clarke, George W.

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one

UTM References

A

1	5	3	7	7	1	2	0	3	9	2	3	3	7	5
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B

Zone		Easting						Northing						

C

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D

Zone		Easting						Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description Beginning at the point formed by the intersection of a line running along the eastern edge of State Route 59 with a perpendicular line running along the northern edge of Parkview Street, proceed easterly along said line to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running along the eastern elevation of the privy; thence proceed northerly along said line to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running along the northern elevation of the wellhouse; thence proceed westerly along said line to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line See continuation sheet running along the eastern edge of State Route 59; thence proceed southerly along said line to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

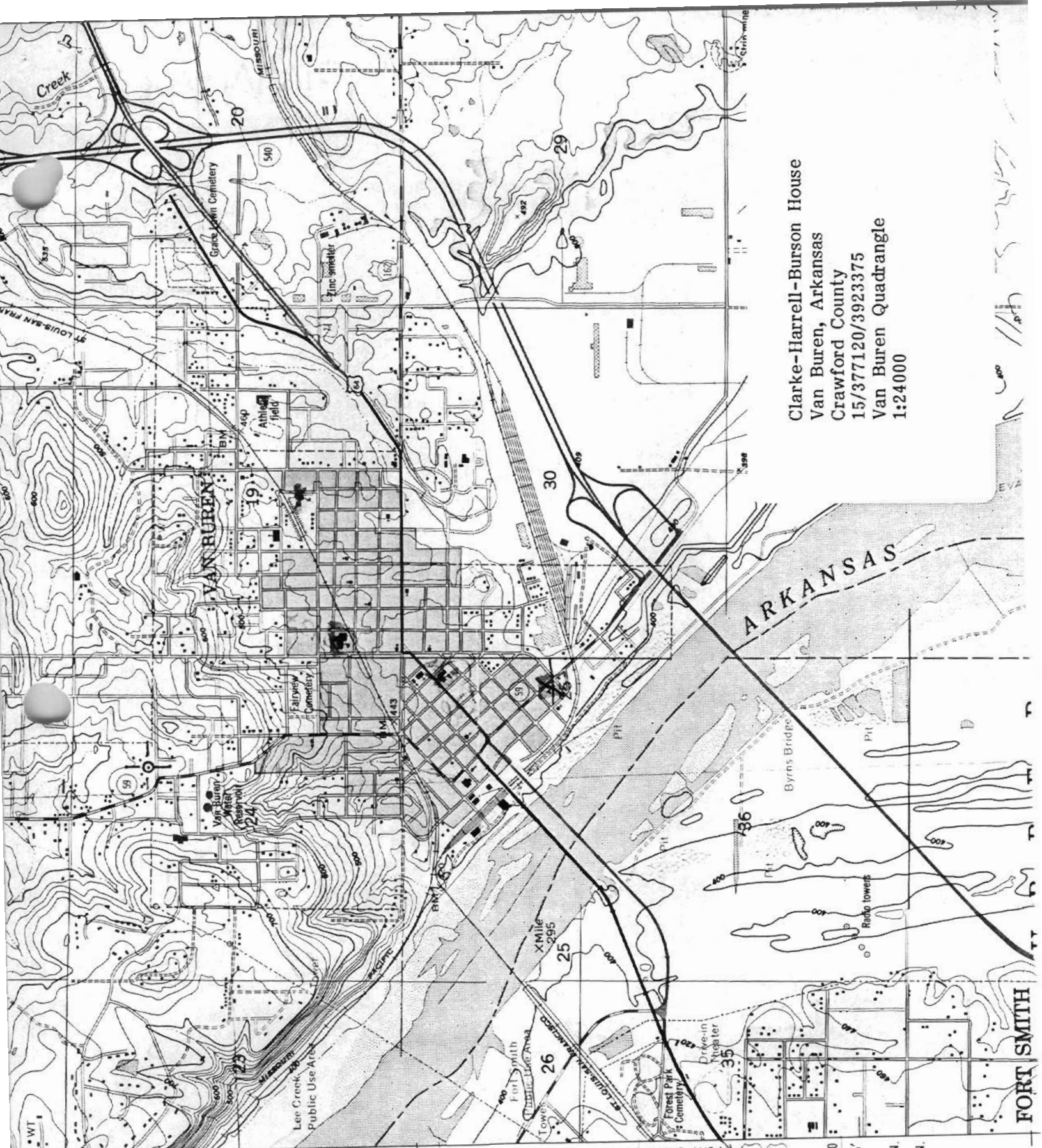
This boundary includes all the property historically associated with this resource.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Patrick Zollner, National Register Historian
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 3/11/91
street & number 225 East Markham, Suite 300 telephone (501) 324-9346
city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201





Clarke-Harrell-Burson House
 Van Buren, Arkansas
 Crawford County
 15/377120/3923375
 Van Buren Quadrangle
 1:24000

3974

3973

7154 IV NW
(FORT SMITH)
3972

FORT SMITH 3.9 MI.

71 64

3920

25'

T. 9 N.

T. 8 N.

FORT SMITH

