

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Faulkner Co. - Greenbrier  
Merritt House  
139 N. Broadview  
NR 9/28/05

# 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 Merritt House

other names/site number FA1317

## 2. Location

street & number 139 North Broadview (U.S. Highway 65 South)

not for publication

city or town Greenbrier

vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Faulkner code 045 zip code 72058

## 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 Maclean*

7/28/05

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:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Merritt House  
Name of Property

Faulkner 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	1	buildings
	0	0	sites
	0	0	structures
	0	0	objects
	1	1	Total

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

Mixed Masonry Buildings of Silas Owens, Sr., 1938-1955

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

**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)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements:  
Craftsman  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
walls STONE: Sandstone  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof ASPHALT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
other BRICK  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

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.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
[X] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

LOCAL

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c. 1948

Significant Dates

c. 1948

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder

Silas Owens, Sr., mason

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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:

- [X] State Historic Preservation Office
Other State Agency
Federal Agency
Local Government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Merritt House  
Name of Property

Faulkner County, Arkansas  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than one

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>555705</u>	<u>3901194</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Beth Wiedower  
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date May 19, 2005  
street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street telephone 501/324-9880  
city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201

**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 Larry and Shirley Merritt  
street & number 650 Milam Drive telephone 501/327-0932  
city or town Conway state Arkansas zip code 72032

**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 circa 1948 Merritt House in Greenbrier is an example of rock veneer applied by local Faulkner County mason Silas Owens, Sr. The one-story residence exhibits Craftsman style details and is a representative illustration of Mixed Masonry veneer applied to frame structures.

### ELABORATION

The Merritt House is located at 139 North Broadview/ US Highway 65 South in Greenbrier. The house has an irregular plan on a cast concrete foundation and is an example of mixed masonry veneer applied over an existing wood frame structure. The house features a gable and gable on hip roof covered with composition shingles. An attached garage is original to the house, but a secondary free-standing two-story garage was constructed circa 1990 by Silas Owens, Sr.'s son, Silas Owens, Jr., to the southwest of the house. The original fenestration has been replaced with vinyl windows, but the size and massing remain as they were initially.

The front, eastern façade features a dominant front gabled porch with a wide arched entrance, demonstrative of the Craftsman influence. The poured concrete porch floor leads to a single-leaf front door flanked by full-length sidelights. The paneled door includes two lights in the upper panels. Immediately to the north of the entry is the house's chimney, rising through the gabled porch roof and accented with cream brick at the corners. From the porch, the front façade steps back to a second gable face containing a bay window with three six-over-six, double-hung windows. Rectangular louvers surrounded by Owens' signature three-three brick pattern are located in each gable eave.

The northern elevation of the Merritt House includes from east to west a pair of double-hung six-over-six pane windows, a smaller single six-over-six window, and two more pairs of double-hung, six-over-six configuration windows. A northern-facing cross-gable intersects the main gable above the eastern-most pair of windows.

The rear, western elevation is dominated by a shed roof extension of the house's gabled roof covering a cast concrete patio. From north to south, the fenestration consists of a single double-hung six-over-six window adjacent to the covered patio. Under the shed roof, a smaller, single six-over-six and a pair of double-hung twelve pane windows are sheltered from the elements. Two more individual double-hung six-over-six windows line the rear elevation to the south of the patio in the attached garage. It is on this portion of the rear elevation that Owens' signature herringbone pattern is most visible in the coursing of the rocks. The roofline of the garage is a wide gable running east to west with square, cream brick surrounded louvers just below the apex of each gable.

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The focus of the southern elevation is the protruding one-car attached garage, original to the Merritt House, which contains two double-hung, six-over-six windows. The southern elevation continues east recessing to the exterior wall of the house. A flat roof covers the walkway from the driveway to a secondary entrance and rests on a single metal post. Under the flat roof is a small six-over-six window on the southern wall. This wall also features a pair of double-hung twelve pane windows directly under the cross-gable and rectangular louver. At the eastern end of the southern elevation, the gabled front porch is open.

The southern end of the front, eastern façade features an attached garage recessed substantially from the front porch and the main entrance to the house. The garage has one bay with a synthetic solid garage door and a double-hung six-over-six window directly to the north of the bay. The flat roof supported by a single metal post is also visible on the front façade, as is an original cream brick trimmed arch leading to a secondary entrance. The doorway is recessed behind the arch, providing a covered entry.

### Integrity

The Merritt House is a fine example of Silas Owens, Sr.'s, craftsmanship and detailing as one of Faulkner County's most identifiable masons. The arched entries, cream colored brick trim around windows and doors, and the herringbone pattern in the stone veneer are prominent features of the house and characteristic of Owens' work. The Merritt House retains integrity because of its unaltered architectural style and retention of the original fenestration size and massing.

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### Criterion C: Architecture, Local Significance

#### SUMMARY

Constructed in 1948, the Merritt House in Greenbrier is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C with local significance as a good example of a Minimal Traditional style Mixed Masonry residence featuring Craftsman-influenced details. The house was veneered in cut sandstone by Faulkner County mason Silas Owens, Sr., and includes the herringbone pattern of laid stone and cream brick door and window surrounds that are distinctive of Owens' work. The nomination is being submitted under the multiple property context statement, "A Storm Couldn't Tear Them Down: The Mixed Masonry Buildings of Silas Owens, Sr., 1938-1955."

#### ELABORATION

Billy Merritt commissioned Silas Owens, Sr., to build a Mixed Masonry residence for his family on US Highway 65 South in Greenbrier. Mr. Merritt was the second generation Merritt to hire Owens – both his father and his uncle were proud owners of Mixed Masonry houses rocked by the master craftsman from Faulkner County. In fact, many of the cut stones used in Billy Merritt's house were pulled from his father's house up the road when it was demolished in the mid-1940s. The remaining rocks were quarried at Batesville Mountain, according to Mr. Merritt's son, Larry Merritt, who is the present owner of the family home. Mr. Merritt also hauled stone from various other locations in the vicinity of Greenbrier.

The younger Merritt remembers the day Silas Owens, Sr., arrived with a crew of four men to cover the wood frame structure with cut stone veneer. The veneer was added over the clapboard exterior to provide stability and less maintenance. Larry Merritt, who was nine years old at the time, remembers Owens as the first black man he had seen.

Both Billy Merritt and his son Larry worked for Arkansas Power and Light. The elder was a lineman in Faulkner County soon after electricity was made available to the rural parts of the county. Unlike many Mixed Masonry homeowners in Central Arkansas, this branch of the Merritt family did not depend on farming for their livelihood. Billy Merritt traveled around the county and region in his position with AP&L.

Currently, the Merritt House is used as a rental property. Larry Merritt retains ownership of the property, although he and his wife reside in Conway. An addition was made to the property circa 1990 in the form of a two-story, gambrel roof garage and apartment. Fittingly, the masonry exterior was laid by Silas Owens, Jr., son of the original mason, in a similar pattern and configuration as that done by his father. The garage building is a non-contributing structure on the Merritt property.

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### Statement of Significance

The Merritt House, located in Greenbrier, is a fine example of the Mixed Masonry craftsmanship of Silas Owens, Sr., in Faulkner County. Owens also constructed several other Mixed Masonries for the Merritt family in the vicinity. The structure is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** with **local significance** because of its characteristic Owens' construction. Cream brick window and door surrounds, wide arched porches, and the distinct herringbone pattern found in the stone coursing signify the Merritt House as the work of Silas Owens, Sr. The fact that the stone on the Merritt House was taken in part from another earlier residence built by Owens strengthens its significance. The Merritt House is being submitted under the multiple property context "A Storm Couldn't Tear Them Down: The Mixed Masonry Buildings of Silas Owens, Sr., 1938-1955."



Merritt House

Name of Property

Faulkner County, Arkansas

County and State

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

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## Bibliography

Merritt, Larry and Shirley. Conway, Arkansas. Son and daughter-in-law of Billy Merritt. Telephone interview with author, 19 May 2005.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

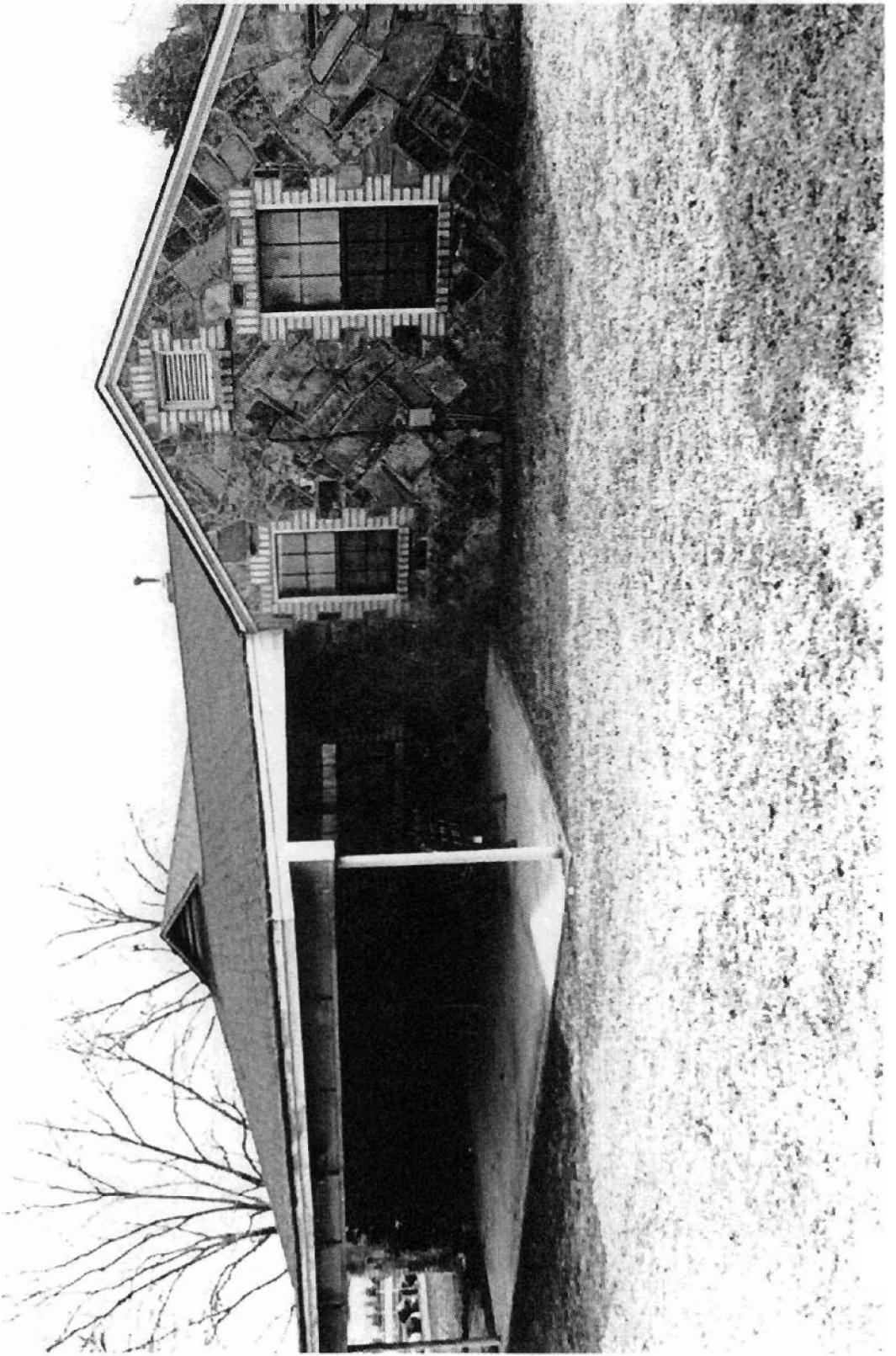
Section number 10 Page 1

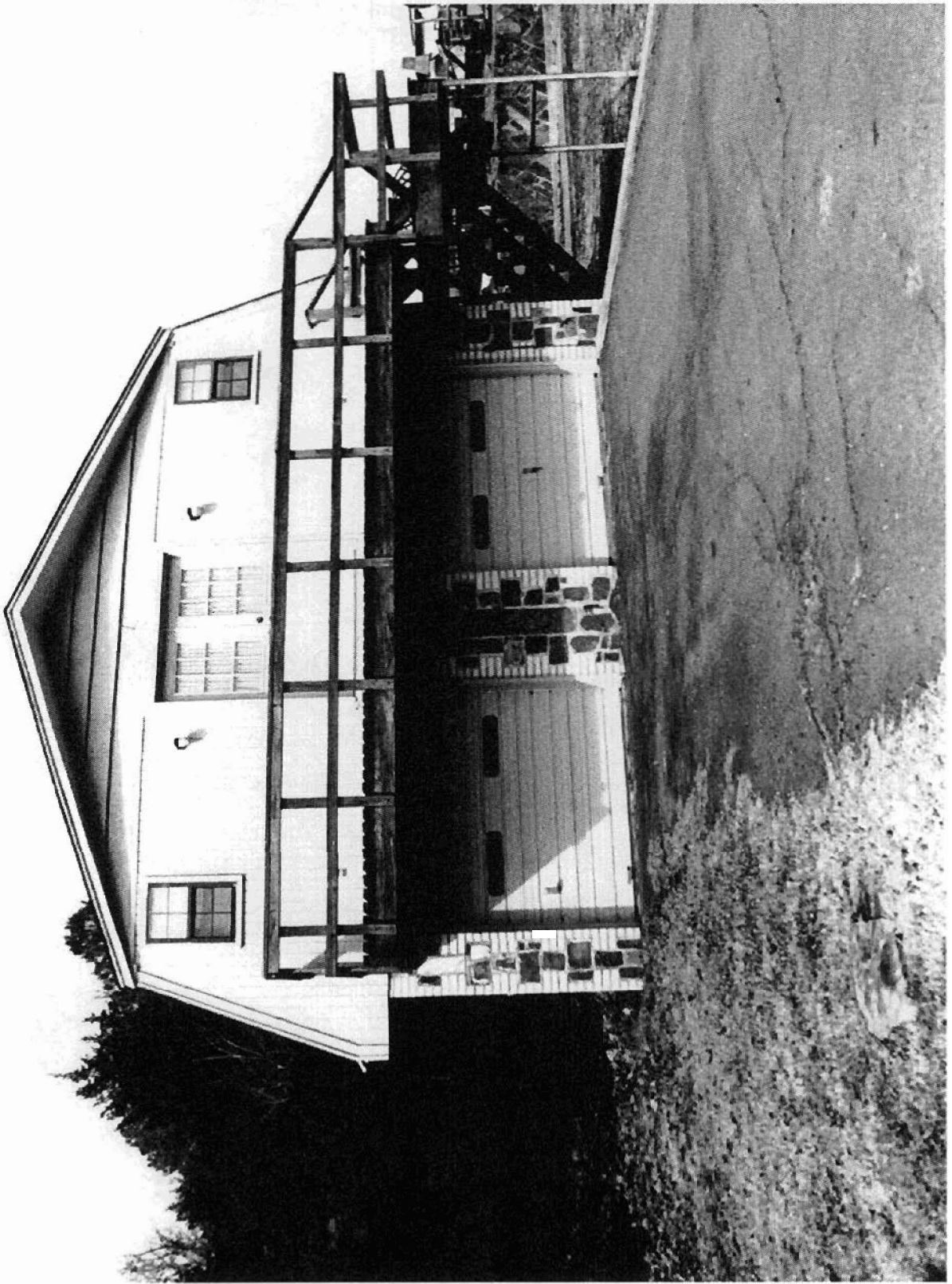
### Verbal Boundary Description

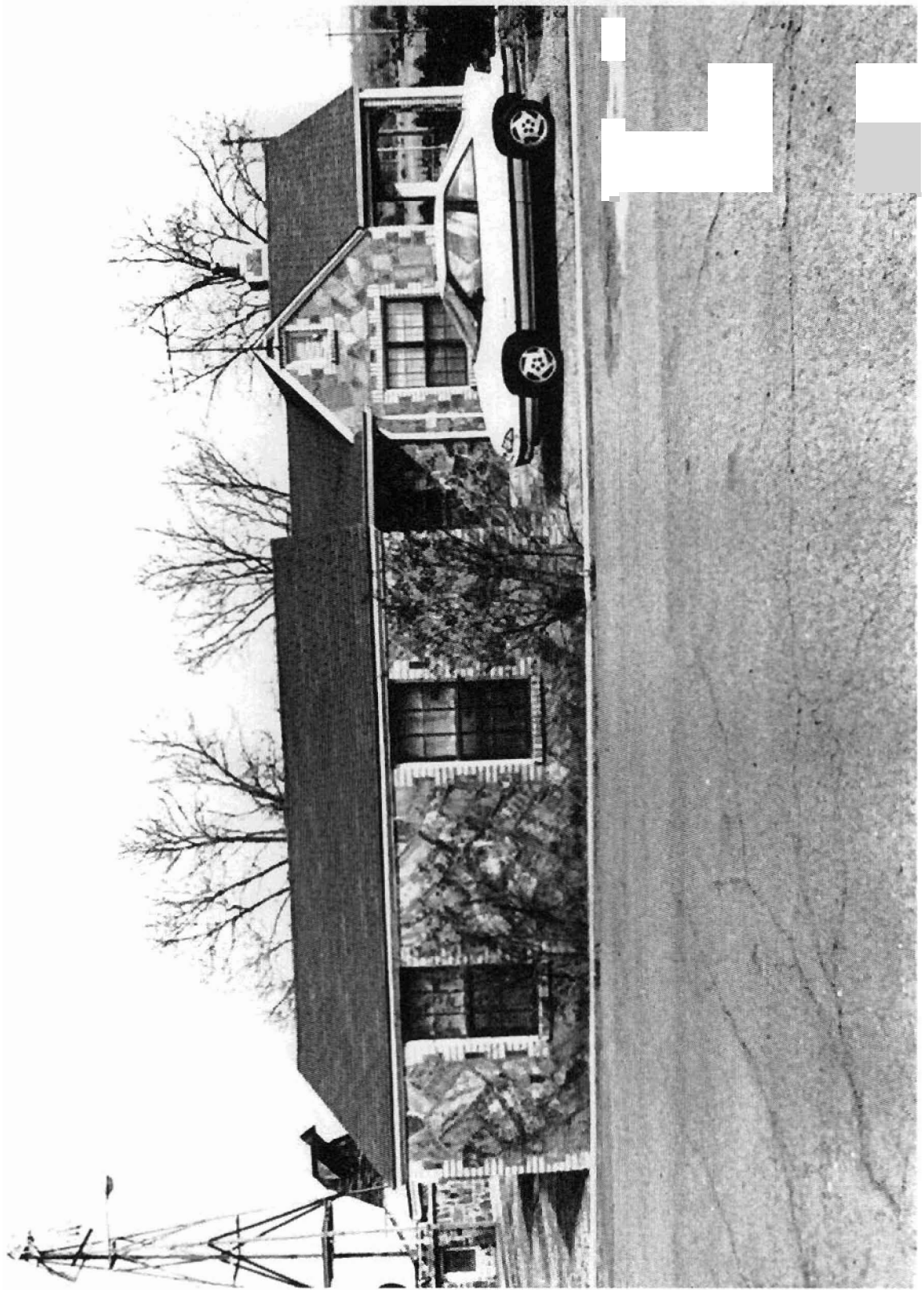
From the northwest corner of the intersection of U.S. Highway 65 South and Oak Hill Road, proceed north approximately 701 feet to the point of beginning. From the point of beginning, continue 124 feet north, then 165 feet westerly. From the northwest corner of the property, advance south 124 feet, then 165 feet easterly back to the point of beginning.

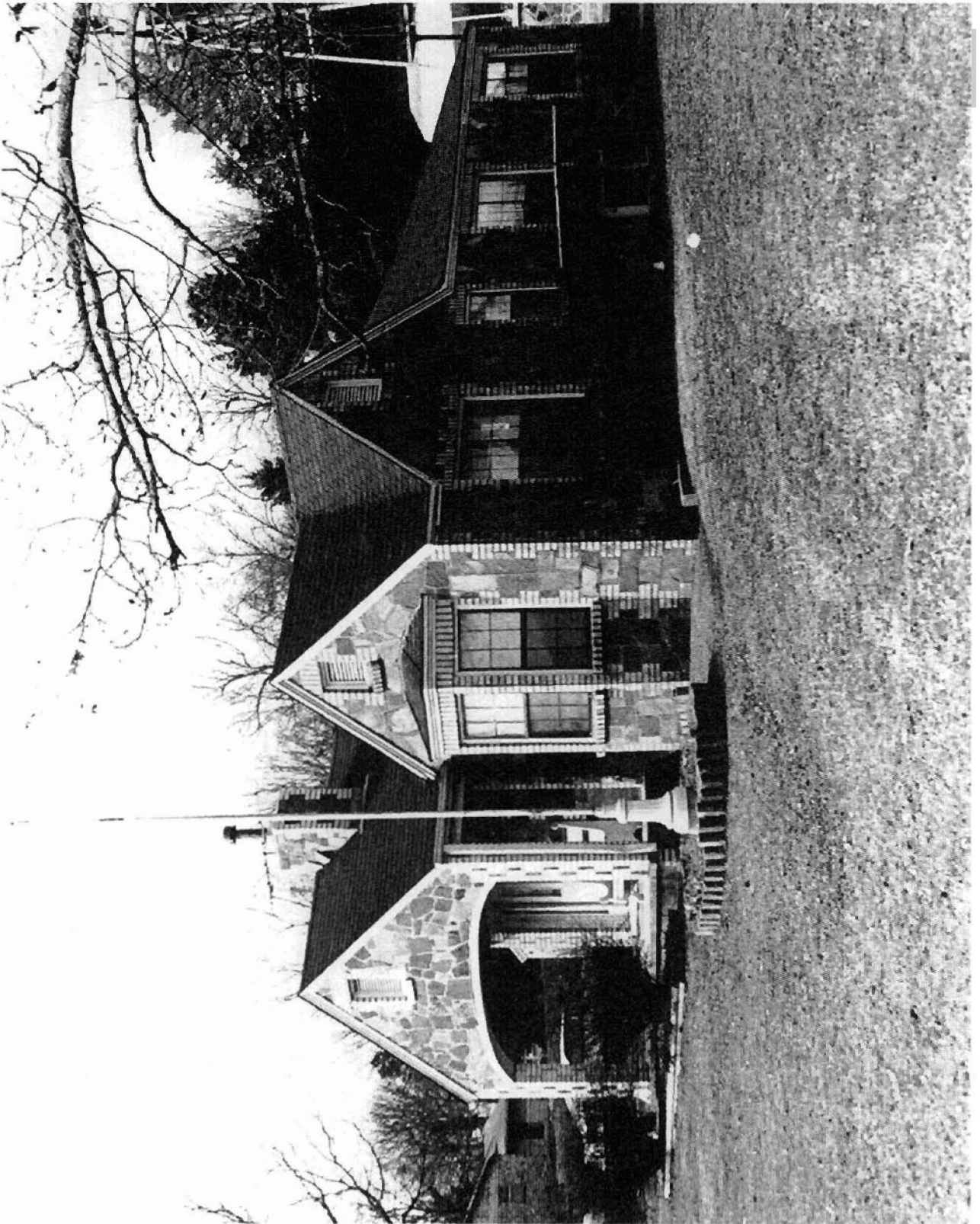
### Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Merritt House.





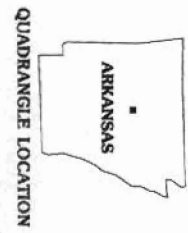
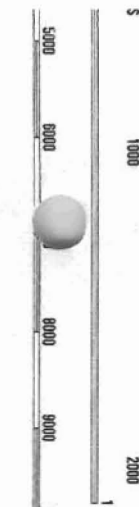
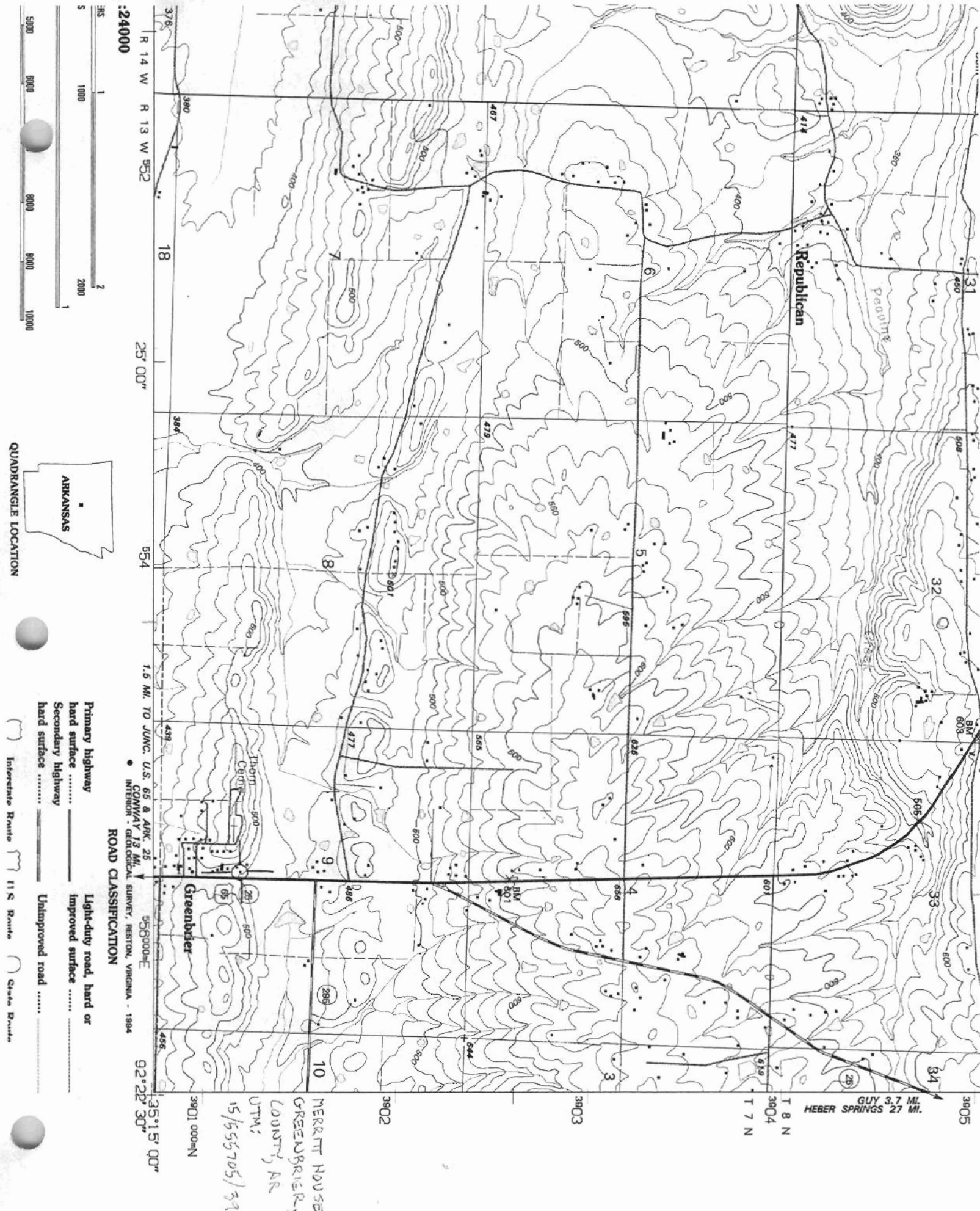












- ROAD CLASSIFICATION**
- Primary highway
  - hard surface .....
  - Secondary highway
  - hard surface .....
  - Light-duty road, hard or improved surface .....
  - Unimproved road .....

1.5 MI. TO JUNC. U.S. 65 & ARK. 25  
 CONWAY 13 MI.  
 INTERIOR - GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA - 1994

3901 000mN  
 35°15' 00"  
 92°22' 30"

HERITT HOUSE  
 GREENBRIER, FRANKS  
 COUNTY, AR  
 UTM:  
 15/555705/3901174

3905  
 T 8 N  
 3904  
 T 7 N  
 GUY 3.7 MI.  
 HEBER SPRINGS 27 MI.