

book copy  
OMB No. 1024-0018  
NR LISTED 9/22/95

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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Historic Name Franklin County Courthouse

Other Name/Site Number: FR 0020

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2. Location

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Street & Number: 211 West Commercial

Not for Publication: N/A

City/Town: Ozark

Vicinity: N/A

State: AR

County: Franklin

Code: AR 047

Zip Code: 72949

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: Public

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
_____	<u>3</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	Total

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

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**  
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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Cathryn A. Slatu  
Signature of certifying official

August 14, 1995  
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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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**5. National Park Service Certification**  
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I, hereby certify that this 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 Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date  
of Action

Bristow Hotel  
Name of Property

Franklin County, Arkansas  
County and State

part of Lot Three (3) Block Thirteen (13) described as beginning at the Northwest Corner of the Ozark Hotel, running thence North two feet; thence East 11 feet and six inches; thence South two feet to the wall of the Ozark Hotel, said exception containing approximately 23 square feet.

Boundary Justification: This boundary contains all the property historically associated with the Bristow Hotel that retains its historic integrity.

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11. Form Prepared By  
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Name/Title: Randy Jeffery, National Register/Survey Coordinator

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: 10/26/98

Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St.

Telephone: (501) 324-9880

City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201

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6. Function or Use

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Historic: Government Sub: Courthouse  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Current : Government Sub: Courthouse  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

Other: Classical Moderne  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials: foundation Concrete roof Asphalt  
walls Brick other Stone  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

Summary

The Franklin County Courthouse at 211 W. Commercial Street in Ozark is a two-story brick building that was originally constructed in 1904 in a dual-towered, Italian Renaissance-style design. After a fire severely damaged the building in 1944, the courthouse was rebuilt with flat roofs, shortened towers, and a minimum of detail.

Elaboration

Situated in the center of a city block at 211 West Commercial in Ozark, the Franklin County Courthouse was originally constructed in 1904-05 as a two-story brick structure measuring sixty-four feet by eighty-two feet with a 114 feet tall clock tower on the northwest corner and a smaller, eighty-four feet-high tower with an open arched arcade on the northeast corner. The courthouse rested upon a full basement and was covered by a large hipped roof with dormers and several projecting brick chimneys. Both towers were also capped with hipped roofs. Based on a colorized postcard and from oral interviews, it has been determined that the courthouse had a distinct polychromed effect with brown brick on the first story arranged in horizontal belts, perhaps to resemble stone, while the second story was clad with a traditional red brick.

Noted Little Rock architect, Frank Gibb, designed the building in a classical vein with significant Italian Renaissance style influence, which is seen largely in the numerous arched windows on the front elevation and two towers. The main entrance on the north elevation featured a one-story, projecting-

gable porch with a classical pediment supported by two columns. Five large arched windows lighted the second story on this elevation. The courthouse also contained identical double-leaf door entrances on the east and west elevations which lacked the projecting gable roof of the front elevation, but were nevertheless adorned with a mid-story pediment over a pair of staircase windows. Fenestration for the courthouse was provided by one-over-one, double-hung windows.

On Monday, January 10, 1944, the courthouse was extensively damaged by a fire, which completely gutted the second story destroyed the roof. The first story remained essentially intact except for some damage to the Circuit Clerk's office. On February 21, 1944, T. Ewing Shelton, an architect from Fayetteville, was hired to reconstruct the courthouse, and Tom Eads, also of Fayetteville, was employed as the contractor.

The "new" courthouse was completed in September, 1945, and was greatly changed from the original design. The first-story brick remained, but the upper floor was faced with new, buff-colored brick. Flat roofs behind concrete parapets appeared in place of the steeply pitched hipped roofs on both the main section and the towers, and the chimneys disappeared. The clocktower was shortened to just above the clock face, and the pair of long, arched windows on the northern and western sides were supplanted with rectangular glass-block windows. The northeast tower was shortened to just a few feet above the main roofline and lost the open arcade.

On the front elevation, the projecting-gable porch was removed, and the second-story arched windows were replaced with rectangular, multi-pane windows. The pedimented entrances on the western and eastern elevations were removed and replaced with a pair of windows on the first story. The mid-level staircase windows were filled, and the windows re-positioned to the second story proper. Other than the front entrance, the courthouse can be entered through an unadorned single-leaf door on the rear, or southern, elevation.

The interior was remodeled on both floors and lacks any distinctive ornamentation other than marble wainscoting in the halls.

Since the 1944-1945 reconstruction, the courthouse has undergone a few alterations. In May, 1983, the 1944 multiple-pane windows were replaced due to deterioration with aluminum-frame windows at a cost of \$10,528.83. In the same year, the exterior brick was sandblasted and a clearcoat applied. A new roof was added in January of 1984, and in October, 1985, a new boiler was installed. A wheelchair access ramp was constructed by the Cass Job Corp in November, 1986.

Although the courtyard is outlined by a c. 1905 eighteen-inch high concrete wall forming an octagon, the grounds are nonetheless referred to as the "square." Within the square are four noncontributing resources. In 1991, the Ozark Rotary Club erected a gazebo on the southeast corner of the lawn that somewhat replicates a historic structure of similar size that was once located on the west side of the courthosue. Also in 1991, the Veterans Memorial on the front lawn was expanded with the addition of a Civil War monument, bringing the total number of monuments to three.

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**8. Statement of Significance**  
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certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Local

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: 1904-1945

Significant Dates: 1944

Significant Person(s): N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Gibb, Frank. (1904 construction)  
Shelton, T. Ewing. (1944 construction)  
Eads, Tom. (1944 contractor)

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

**Summary**

The Franklin County Courthouse in Ozark is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance for its depiction of 1940's architectural trends.

**Elaboration**

Franklin County was created in 1837 from part of Crawford County. The town of Ozark was laid out in the same year by David Walker, Archibald Yell, and William Hale. In March, 1838 the first county court was held in a small log school house that was lacking both windows and doors. During the 1839-40 county court term, construction of a new courthouse was authorized and James W. Pendleton appointed building commissioner. Specifications for the new courthouse, which was to be positioned on the northwest corner of the square, called for a twenty feet-square, single-story, frame structure with three fifteen-light windows (each pane measuring eight by ten inches), one door, and a stone chimney. A bid of \$400 by county treasurer, D. L. Bourland, was accepted. A later vote by the court substituted a stove for the chimney.

By the late 1840's, the population growth of the county necessitated a new and larger courthouse. Kendall Webb designed the new courthouse and a bid of \$2,450 was accepted in October, 1848. The new two-story brick building in

the center of the square was apparently completed by the July, 1851 term for it is recorded that Webb refused to accept the new building until exterior stairs were added to the second story. According to *The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northwestern Arkansas*, the courthouse was once occupied during Civil War by Federal troops, who "cut port-holes through the brick walls" for use as a fortification. Later, the Union troops decamped and the Confederates captured their supplies and burned the building.

The third county courthouse was similar to its predecessor, although about four feet longer on each elevation, and utilized two sides of the old foundation. This courthouse was authorized in 1869, and an initial bid of \$9,700 escalated to \$13,000 by the time of completion. The third courthouse served the county until 1904 when Judge Mansfield successfully lobbied for a new courthouse. The building commission headed by J. T. Greer obtained the services of noted Little Rock architect, Frank W. Gibb, in May, 1904 and hired Edward L. Koonce of Warren as the contractor a month later. Interestingly, Gibb also designed the current Franklin County Courthouse for the southern district seat in Charleston in 1923 (NR 10/18/76).

By August 1904, the existing courthouse had been demolished and the new foundation excavated. Gibb designed an elegant, Italian Renaissance-inspired, two-story brick courthouse with an imposing clock tower and a shorter tower with an open arched arcade. The new structure was officially completed on July 7, 1905. Franklin County paid for the courthouse by issuing \$60,300 in county script.

Unfortunately, on Monday, January 10, 1944 during a freezing rain, the courthouse was extensively damaged by a fire believed to have initiated from a flue serving the stove in the Farm Security Administration office. While the second story was completely gutted and the roof destroyed, the ground floor remained essentially intact except for some damage to the Circuit Clerk's office. The clocktower piece continued to maintain time with only a brief interruption, even though the faces eventually burned. Most of the county records were saved due to the quick response of the county employees and volunteers. The local boy and girl scouts were cited for their assistance in removing library books in the basement.

Following the fire, court offices were relocated to the Arcade Building next to the Bank of Ozark. On February 21, 1944, T. Ewing Shelton, an architect from Fayetteville, was employed by the county to prepare plans, specifications and estimates of reconstruction costs. Franklin County Judge N. L. Mayner approved the initial repair work on March 20th, and Tom Eads of Fayetteville was hired as contractor. A much more extensive reconstruction followed, and the "new" courthouse opened for business in September, 1945.

The reconstruction essentially stripped the formerly exuberant Italian Renaissance-style detail from the structure and remodeled the building to reflect a more streamlined and severe aesthetic. The resulting hybrid was reminiscent of the WPA-constructed, Classical Moderne-styled courthouses of the 1930's, yet its appearance also reflected the current architectural trend in Arkansas toward International-style simplicity. As such, the Franklin County Courthouse in Ozark is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance.

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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ae, Freddy. "Franklin County Courthouse History." April 15, 1992, and other information submitted for National Register application.

The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northwestern Arkansas. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889.

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
X Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property: Approximately one

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
A 15 425020 3927100 B
C D

Verbal Boundary Description:

Courthouse Square bounded by Commercial (U.S. Hwy. 64), 3rd St., Main St., and 2nd St.

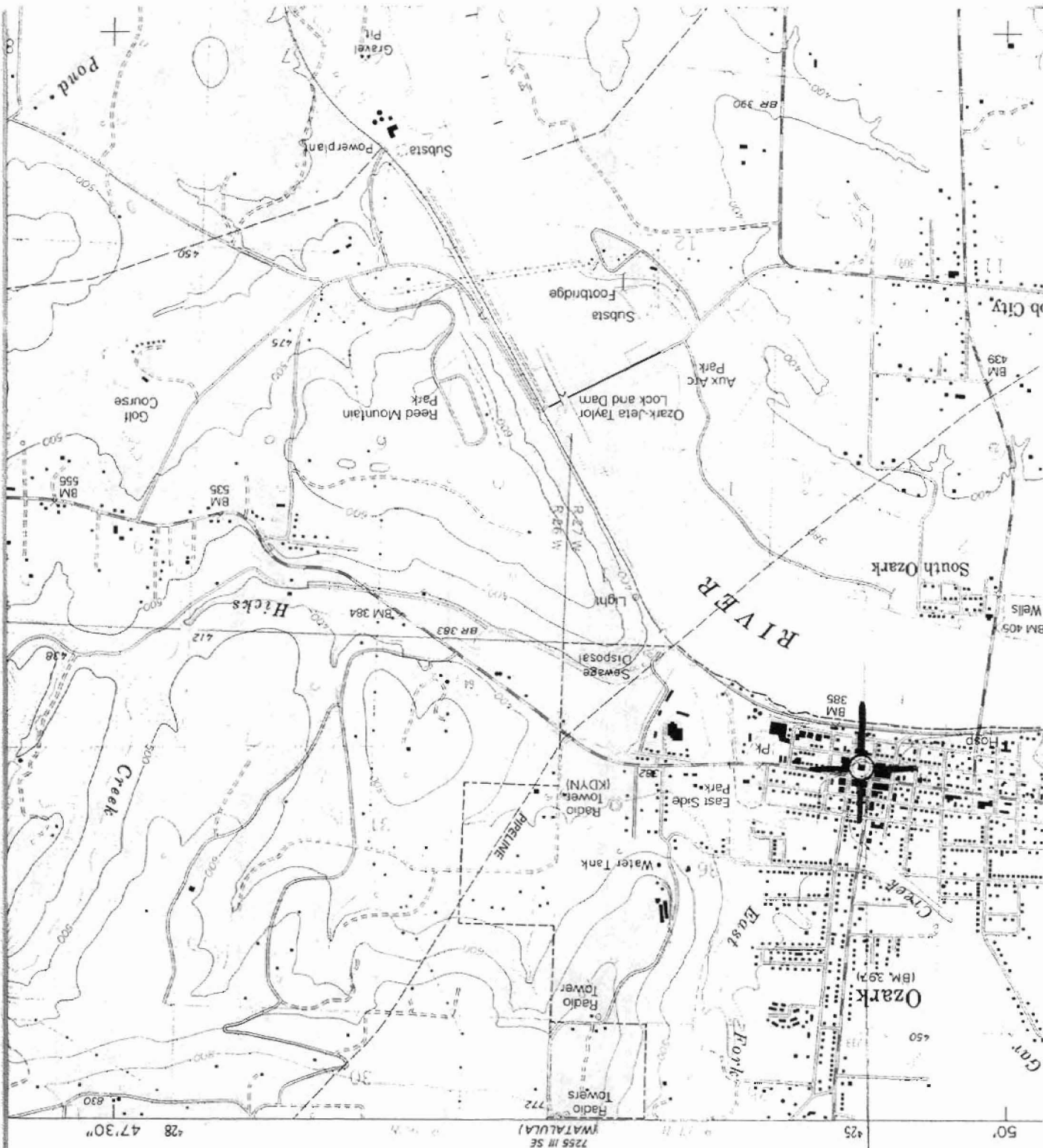
Boundary Justification:

This boundary includes the historic courthouse, the contributing concrete wall, the noncontributing gazebo, the three noncontributing war memorials, and all of the property historically associated with this resource that retains its integrity.



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11. Form Prepared By  
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Name/Title: Patrick Zollner, Architectural Historian  
Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: August 14, 1995  
Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St. Telephone: (501) 324-9880  
City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201



Franklin Co. Courthouse  
 Ozark, Arkansas  
 UTM: 15/425020/3927100

