

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 Foster House
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 420 S. Spruce St.
city, town Hope
state Arkansas code AR county Hempstead code AR 057 zip code 71801

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked)
Category of Property: building(s) (checked)
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0, Total 1
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: Carolyn H. Byrd
Date: 4-29-91
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

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:)
Signature of the Keeper
Date of Action

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)

Other: Foursquare

Prairie School

Craftsman

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Wood Trim

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Summary

The Foster House is a two-and-one-half story, brick masonry residence designed in the traditional American plan known as the "foursquare," but with Prairie style and Craftsman influences. Its solid, massive aspect is relieved only by two single story, hipped roof porches on the eastern and southern elevations and a single, central gable roof dormer on the eastern elevation.

Elaboration

The Foster House is a two-and-one-half story, brick masonry residential structure designed within the American vernacular idiom known as the "foursquare" house, but with distinct Craftsman and Prairie style influences. As implied by the name, the plan of the main block of the house is essentially square; a low, single story, hipped roof room is attached to the southwest corner of the main block and south of a two-story, hipped roof ell projecting from the main block's northwest corner. Furthermore, an open, single story hipped roof porch extends across the full length of the eastern or front facade, and a smaller, single story hipped roof porte cochere is attached to the center of the southern elevation. A total of three chimneys -- all brick -- project from the hipped roof of the main block: two from the southern roof slope, placed symmetrically along the elevation, and the other from the northern slope, placed centrally. The roof surfaces throughout are covered with asphalt shingles, the walls are dark red brick with wood friezes and brackets beneath the cornice, and the entire structure is supported on a continuous brick foundation faced with concrete.

The eastern or front facade is symmetrically divided into three bays on both of the main floors, with a central, single-leaf entry on the first floor and a central gabled dormer projecting from the slope of the hipped roof. On the first floor, the central entry is flanked by two pair of four-over-one wood sash windows and sheltered by the projecting hipped roof porch, which is supported by four brick columns and two brick wall pilasters resting on a concrete floor. The second floor is lighted by three symmetrically-placed pairs of four-over-one wood sash windows, and the dormer above is lighted with two fixed seven-pane Prairie style windows.

The southern elevation is asymmetrical, with three larger seven-over-one wood sash windows placed irregularly across the second story, along with a smaller window of identical sash configuration. The first floor is accessed via a central, single-leaf entrance with a transom that is flanked to the east by a small pair of multi-pane casement windows and to the west by a taller seven-over-one wood sash window. To the east, a pair of tall, seven-over-one casement windows lights the wall near the eastern elevation; to the west, near the single story room at the rear, is another large seven-over-one wood sash window. The single-story hipped roof porte cochere is supported on two brick columns and two wall pilasters and placed over the central

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

entrance and immediately flanking windows. The northern elevation is also asymmetrically organized. On the first floor, a single grouping to the east consists of two smaller seven-over-one wood sash windows flanking a central, larger window of identical sash configuration. In the center, a pair of seven-pane casement windows to the east of center is balanced by a larger pair of seven-over-one wood sash windows to the west. The story is finished by a single seven-over-one wood sash window to the west. The second story is lighted by a single seven-over-one wood sash window to the east, a smaller wood sash window of identical pane configuration toward the center, a pair of seven-over-one wood sash windows toward the western elevation and two pair of ten-pane casement windows (for the sun porch within) finishing the elevation.

The western elevation consists of another gabled dormer in the center of the roof slope, directly opposite that on the eastern elevation, set above the short hipped roof ell and single story room. The single story room is lighted by two symmetrically-placed seven-over-one wood sash windows, and the wall of the main block above is lighted by a single, asymmetrically-placed wood sash window of identical configuration. The second story of the projecting ell is blank toward the south and lighted by four pair of ten-pane casement windows to the north. The first story below is accessed via a single-leaf entry that is surmounted by a long, horizontal transom that also extends over the horizontal pane windows to the south.

Significant exterior details of note include the variety of multi-pane windows that punctuate the exterior elevations throughout. Especially noteworthy are the seven-over-one Prairie style windows, with their geometric symmetry and thin, delicate muntins. The shallow brackets that decorate the overhanging eaves throughout prefigure the exposed rafters that would become a signature of the Craftsman style, and knee braces -- also a Craftsman feature -- ornament both roof dormers, which are finished with delicately panelled vergeboards. Finally, the geometric decorative brick panelling employed at the tops of the brick columns, pilasters and chimneys echoes the geometry of the windows and further reflects the Prairie style influences and its debt to Japanese architecture.

This geometric theme is carried over to the interior also. In addition to the geometry lent the interior also by the geometric windows, such features as the main brick fireplace on the first floor are designed with the same eye toward the geometric patterning of the brick in both horizontal and diagonal arrangements. Most noteworthy of all, however, is the balustrade that ornaments the main, quarter-turn staircase to the second floor. The newel posts each feature applied geometric stick decoration near the top, surmounted by a wood cap that is both rounded and beveled on four sides. The balustrade between the newels consists of thin pieces of wood jig-sawn to form a delicate, vertical rhythm around the first landing and up the staircase itself. An original wood bench in front of the staircase on the first floor provides a transition from the floor to the staircase that is both visually satisfying and functional. The stairs themselves are constructed of stained wood and feature treads that project slightly from

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

the supporting risers. Other interior features of note include a number of multi-pane French doors between rooms and simpler, wood panel doors on the second floor.

The Foster House is in a remarkable state of preservation and has been changed only slightly over the past seventy-four years. The current owner is in the process of restoring much of the original plaster and other finishes within, and plans include only slight modifications to the floor plan on the second floor.

The nomination also includes the original single story, hipped roof brick garage building just to the west of the residence.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1**Summary**

Criterion C, local significance

The Foster House is eligible under Criterion C with local significance as the best extant example in this neighborhood of Hope of a foursquare plan residence with Prairie style and Craftsman influences. Such details as the panelled vergeboards on the gabled dormer, the geometric brick detailing at the tops of the brick columns and the four-over-one wood sash windows distinguish this design as one of the few examples of the style that was created by Frank Lloyd Wright and spread throughout the country by his students.

Elaboration

The Foster House was designed in 1917 by the Texarkana firm of Witt, Siebert and Halsey and completed in 1918. It was commissioned by Leonidas Alston Foster, a prominent businessman in Hope and the surrounding vicinity who, along with his wife Elizabeth Walker Foster, could trace his family's roots from Virginia and South Carolina. Mr. Foster's family had been among the earliest to purchase and clear prized Red River bottomlands in Lafayette, Miller and Hempstead counties in the years before and after the Civil War, and these investments later served Foster well.

Hope, in addition to becoming a regional transportation hub with the arrival of several intersecting railroad lines after the Civil War, also became a regional cotton processing and marketing center in southwest Arkansas. The importance of this crop to the entire county was evidenced by the large number of cotton gins that dotted the countryside throughout during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Lee Foster (as he was called locally), between his own agricultural land holdings and his dealings as a prominent Hope cotton broker, prospered sufficiently to become one of the driving forces behind the chartering of the Citizens National Bank of Hope, of which he also became one of the directors. Lee and Liza Foster remained active in the Hope community throughout their lives, and in a variety of arenas. Lee Foster was instrumental in securing the location of the University of Arkansas Experiment Station east of Hope. He also served the First Presbyterian Church as one of its elders, and his wife was active in virtually all phases of church activity. They were both also known to be both socially and politically active in Hope and Hempstead County, though neither ever held any known political office.

It then seems only fitting that the Foster family would desire not only a spacious and imposing residence for themselves and their four children, but also one of the most up-to-date and architecturally sophisticated. Such national architectural publications as *The Western Architect* publicized the early work of the Prairie school architects, the most talented of which was Frank Lloyd Wright, though the work of such other contemporaries as Walter Burley Griffin and Barry Byrne was also innovative and worthy of note. Such periodicals

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

had fully embraced the evolving Prairie style by the first few years of the second decade of the twentieth century and reproduced both photographs and drawings for a growing national audience. Thus it is not surprising to detect the influence of this new American style in the architectural designs of such trained architectural firms as Witt, Siebert and Halsey of Texarkana, Arkansas, which were surely keeping a close eye on their contemporaries to try and anticipate the next shift in popular American taste.

However, it is also not surprising that such a firm would adapt this style and certain of its decorative features to more traditional and familiar residential building types given the relatively unsophisticated tastes and conservative attitude that characterized the bulk of their clientele. Witt, Siebert and Halsey manifested this same design synthesis in other contemporaneous residential commissions in Hope, most notably the R.M. Briant residence. This design also displays the tendency to combine essentially conservative and traditional floor plans with more "modern" ornament and details to enhance the status of the design, and that of the owner thereby. Though more simple than the Briant House, the Foster House nevertheless exhibits this same tendency through its abundance of Prairie school-inspired ornament, details and lighting applied to a "foursquare" plan that maximizes the usefulness of all the included square footage.

It is for these reasons that the Foster House stands as the finest example in its neighborhood of this particular type of house design, and hence is eligible under Criterion C with local significance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Bibliography

A Commemorative History of Hope, Arkansas, 1875-1975, (Hope, Arkansas, 1974).

Prairie School Architecture, Studies from "The Western Architect," edited and introduced by H. Allen Brooks, (Toronto, 1975), pp. ix-xviii.

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)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1917

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Bullder

Witt, Siebert and Halsey

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

See continuation sheet

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

Acres of property Less than one

UTM References

A

1	5
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4	4	5	8	2	0
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3	7	2	5	1	5	0
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B

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C

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D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 4 - 9, Block 20, Brookwood Addition to the City Hope, Arkansas

See continuation sheet

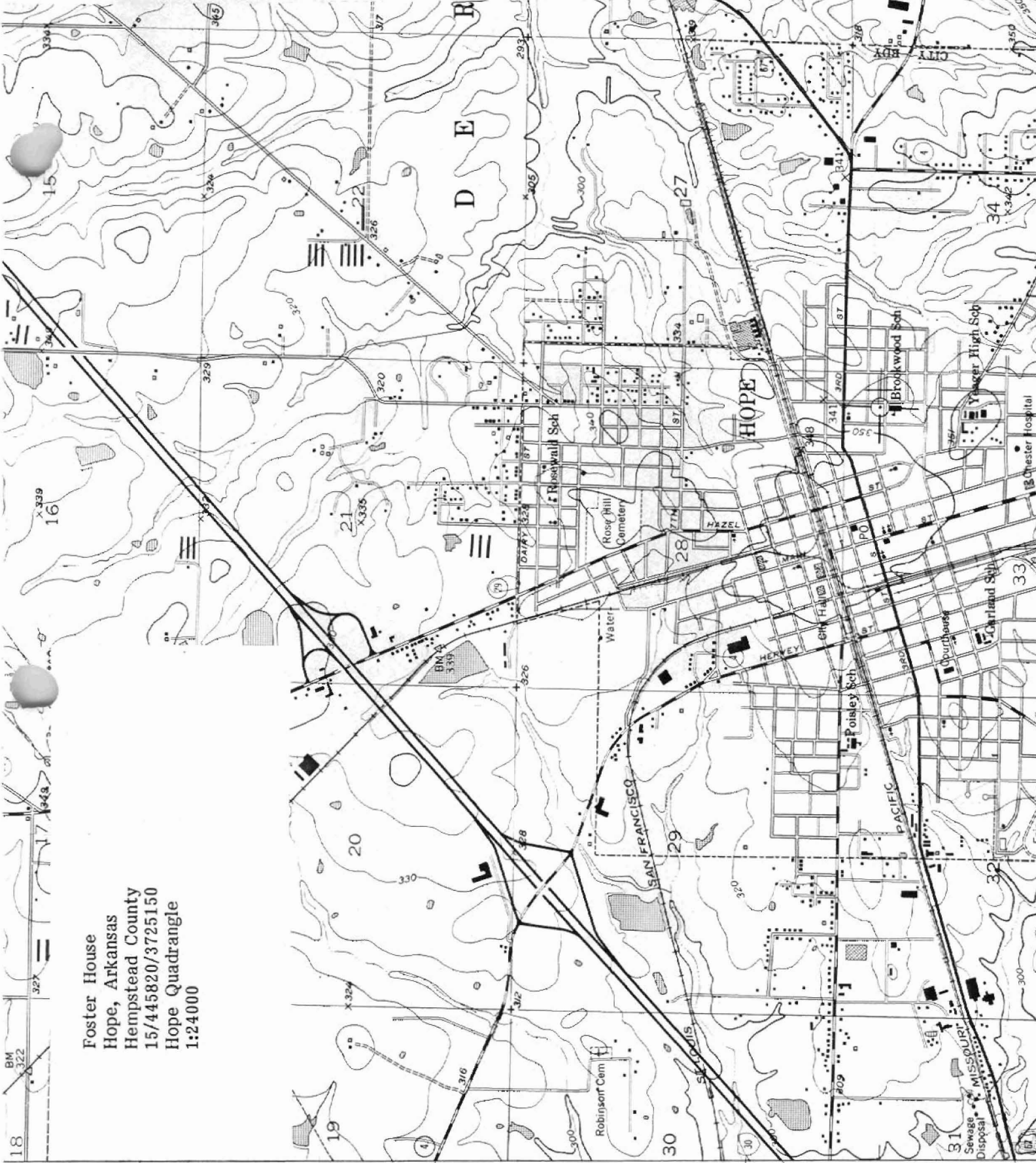
Boundary Justification

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

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ken Stov, Architectural Historian
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 4/9/91
street & number 225 East Markham, Suite 300 telephone (501) 324-9346
city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201



Foster House
 Hope, Arkansas
 Hempstead County
 15/445820/3725150
 Hope Quadrangle
 1:24000

18 BM 322 327 343 329 339 349 326 317 320 326 334 341 348 350 357 367 374 376 380 386 390 396 400 406 410 416 420 426 430 436 440 446 450 456 460 466 470 476 480 486 490 496 500 506 510 516 520 526 530 536 540 546 550 556 560 566 570 576 580 586 590 596 600 606 610 616 620 626 630 636 640 646 650 656 660 666 670 676 680 686 690 696 700 706 710 716 720 726 730 736 740 746 750 756 760 766 770 776 780 786 790 796 800 806 810 816 820 826 830 836 840 846 850 856 860 866 870 876 880 886 890 896 900 906 910 916 920 926 930 936 940 946 950 956 960 966 970 976 980 986 990 996 1000

19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34

7251 II NW NASHVILLE 26 MI. (SHEPPARD) WASHINGTON 73 MI. 3729

TEXARKANA 31 MI. 40' 3726 FULTON (VIA U.S. 67) 12 MI. 3725

Sewage Disposal MISSOURI COURTHOUSE CHESTER HOSPITAL FAIR PARK

ROBINSON CEM. POINSEY SCH. CHESTER HOSP. GARLAND SCH. BROOKWOOD SCH. YREAV. HIGH SCH.

ROSY HILL CEM. HAZEL ST. HEWLEY ST. CHESTER ST. PACIFIC ST. SAN FRANCISCO ST. ST. LOUIS ST.

300 320 340 360 380 400 420 440 460 480 500 520 540 560 580 600 620 640 660 680 700 720 740 760 780 800 820 840 860 880 900 920 940 960 980 1000



