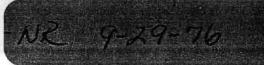


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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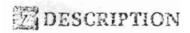
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Little River County Courthouse is a two storey brick structure topped with an impressive octagonal dome. Constructed in 1907, the red brick building has a square floor plan with the dome rising from the center of the hipped roof.

The northeast facade features a two storey portico with the brick pediment rising above the roofline. The pediment displays a semi-circular arch trimmed in white. Projecting about six feet from the facade, the porch is semi-enclosed with ell-shape brick columns on either end. Set into the porch opening are two round, tapering columns with Ionic capitals. The porch shelters the center bay of the facade and covers the primary entrance to the courthouse.

This symmetrical structure is surrounded by a water table at the base and a dentiled cornice over brick corbelling just below the roofline. In contrast to the dark red brick, these and other architectural details are worked in white.

All windows have cast stone lugsills; window heads on the second storey are set in rectangular frames, while those on the ground floor feature simple padis-nts. The three secondary entries have similar pediaents above. Along with the main entry, the center bay, second-storey windows on both the front and rear elevations have wide transoms with a lattice-like design. Somewhat like the facade, the center bay on the rear elevation rises slightly higher than the flanking bays.

The center of the building is covered with a hip roof which flattens out around the edges. Set into the hip roof is a massive octagonal dome covered with silver-colored tiles. At the base of the segmental dome each side has a horizontally set rectangular window filled with small square lights.

Though the dome dominates the structure, several smaller features add an interesting touch to the courthouse. The dentiled cornice, pediment covered doors and windows and Ionic capitaled columns give the building a classical flavor.

Set in the center of a tree shaded city block, the building rests near the railroad tracks which were responsible for Ashdown's origin. As the city's most architecturally significant structure, the Little River County Courthouse is also the most prominent landmark in the county.



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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The largest number of architecturally significant public buildings in Arkansas are the courthouses scattered over the state's seventy-five counties. As the center of local politics, the county courthouse is often the largest and most costly building in the county. The Little River County Courthouse in Ashdown is one of the most significant local landmarks in this area of southwest Arkansas.

Named for the water-way which marks its northern boundary, Little River County was organized on March 5, 1867, from portions of Hempstead and Sevier Counties. The first county court was held at the William Freeman House (now destroyed), located about ten miles northeast of Richmond. The Following year the county seat was moved to Rocky Comfort near the western edge of the county.

Following a vote of the people in 1880, the county seat was moved to Richmond and housed in a structure containing four office rooms on the ground floor and a large courtroom above. In 1882 the courthouse burned, and for a time vacant buildings and even the school were used to house county offices and sessions of court. Eventually the citizens of Richmond donated enough money to construct a new courthouse.

When the railroads came to Little River County in the 1890's new towns sprang up. The most prominent railroad town was Ashdown, which developed where the Peytonville-Richmond Road crossed the Texarkana-Fort Smith Railroad. Within a few years the residents of Ashdown were petitioning to have the county seat moved to their new community; however, at the same time the Rocky Comfort community was petitioning for the return of the county seat.

Several elections were held, and for a time Richmond prevented either Ashdown or Rocky Comfort from becoming the new county seat. On April 29, 1903, the Arkansas Gazette carried the following note on the struggle for the county seat:

Texarkana, April 28.—The celebrated Little River County seat contest case was called for trial here today before Judge Smith of Camden, sitting as special judge. The testimony, which is mostly in the shape of depositions, is very voluminous, and the trial will in all probability occupy several days. The fight is between Rocky Comfort and Ashdown, both of which are represented by a great array of the best legal talent in the state. Each wants to be the county seat. *

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE one

Rocky Comfort was again declared the county seat, but a few years later another election was held. Ashdown was then declared the winner, and in 1906 County Judge T. B. Arnett ordered the records moved to the Mizell-Locke Building located west of the railroad tracks. In 1907 a permanent courthouse was constructed, thus helping to insure Ashdown's claim to be the county seat.

Architect Sidney Stewart designed this two-storey brick courthouse. The building has a square floor plan with entrances on all four elevations. Rising from the center of the hipped roof is the structure's most striking feature, an octagonal dome rising a full-storey above the roofline. Other features, including the Ionic-capital columns on the east and south elevations, pediments over first floor doors and windows and dentils around the cornice, give a classical touch to the simple architectural style.

Constructed in 1907, the present courtbouse has boused the county seat longer than any other building. As the largest and most significant structure in Ashdown, the courthouse is also an architectural and historic landmark in Little River County. It rests on its original tree-shaded site, the court square at Ashdown.

* Arkansas Gazette, April 29, 1903.

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· MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Arkansas Gazette, April 29, 1903.

Beasley, Bill. "History of Little River County." Unpublished manuscript on file with Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 1976.

A Survey of Arkansas Courthouses. Compiled by the National Society of Colonial Dames of America in the State of Arkansas. Mrs. W. G. McDonald, Chairman, Historical Activities Committee. Arkansas Room, Little Rock Public Library.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA	
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FORM PREPARED BY	
NAME / TITLE	
Dianna Kirk, Historian	
ORGANIZATION	DATE
Arkansas Historic Preservation Pr	
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
300 West Markham	(501) 371-1639
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
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NATIONAL STATE	LOCAL X
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National	Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665).
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criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service	
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DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESER ATTEST:	VATION DATE
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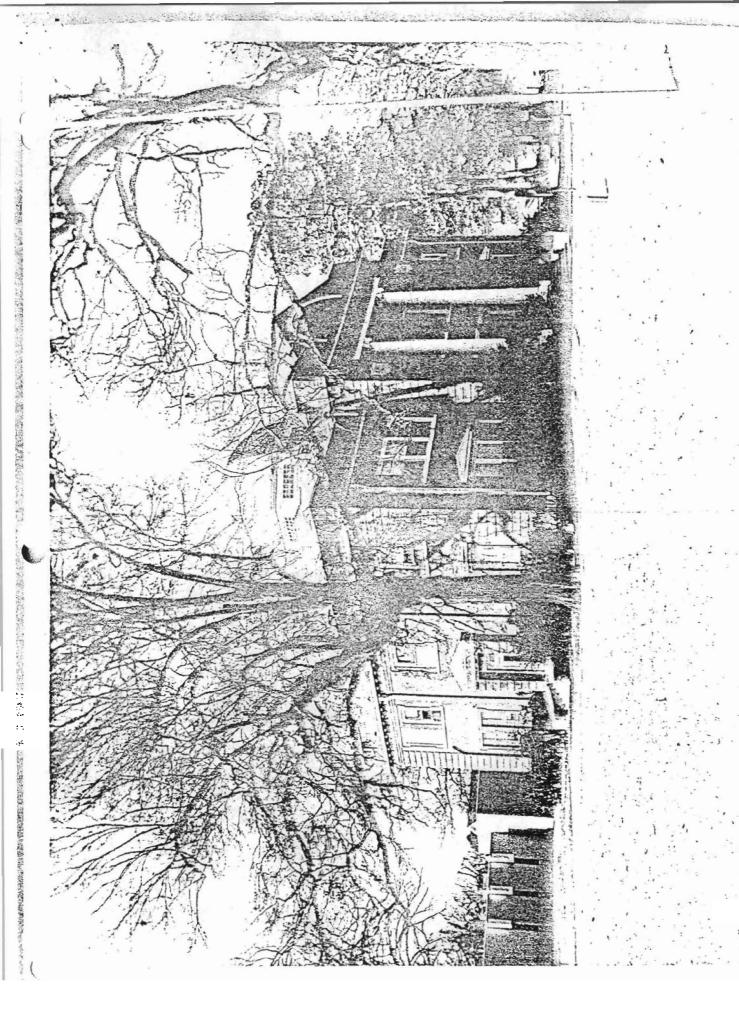
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ITEM NUMBER 9

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Works Progress Administration: Federal Writer's Project Manuscript, Little River County, circa 1940. Archives, Arkansas History Commission.



Form No. 10-301a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

NAME

HISTORIC

Little River County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

VICINITY OF

STATE

COUNTY Little River

PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Ashdown

CITY, TOWN

DATE OF PHOTO January, 1976

NEGATIVE FILED AT Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

Dianna Kirk

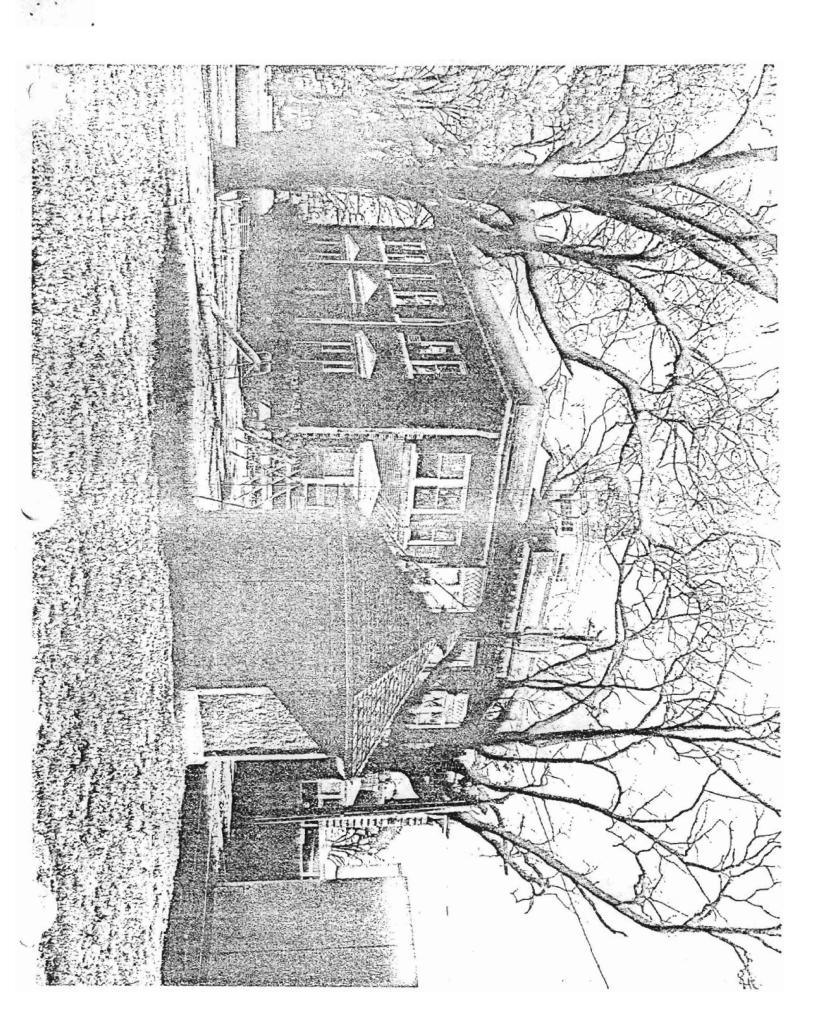
IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW. DIRECTION. FTC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET Southeast elevation and northeast facade, viewed from the east

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PHOTO NO.

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENC. OSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

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HISTORIC

Little River County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

VICINITY OF

STATE

COUNTY Little River

DATE OF PHOTO January, 1976

PHOTO REFERENCE

Ashdown

CITY, TOWN

РНОТО СЯЕДИТ Dianna Kirk

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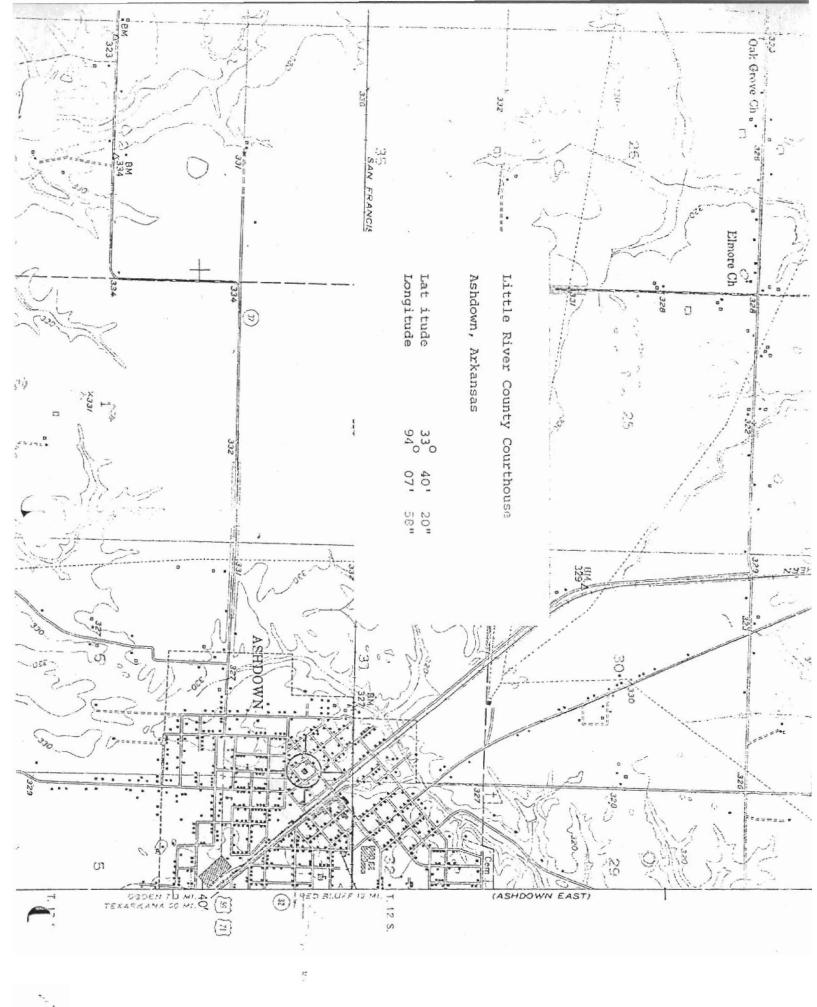
DENTIFICATION

Northwest and southwest elevations, viewed from the west DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING MAINE & STREET

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Form No. 10-301 (Rev. 10-74)

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

HISTORIC

Little River County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Ashdown

VICINITY DE

Little River COUNTY

Arkansas STATE

MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE U.S.G.S., Ashdown West Quadrangle

SCALE

1:24,000

DATE 1950

REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

2. NORTH ARROW 1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES

3. UTM REFERENCES

INT: 3464-75