

NR Listed: 5-30-03

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 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 J.C. Berry's Dry Goods Store

other names/site number Rex Hotel, Morris Hotel, MR0010

2. Location

street & number 331 Old South Main Street

not for publication

city or town Yellville

vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Marion code 089 zip code 72687

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.)

Cathi Matthews
Signature of certifying official/Title

4/4/03
Date

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:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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:)

J.C. Berry's Dry Goods Store
Name of Property

Marion 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	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: hotel
COMMERCE: restaurant
COMMERCE: department store

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

20TH CENTURY: commercial style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestone
walls STONE: limestone
METAL: tin
roof OTHER: composition roll
other

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.
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)

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1903-1951

Significant Dates

c. 1903 (built)

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State Agency
Federal Agency
Local Government
University
Other

Name of repository:

J.C. Berry's Dry Goods Store
Name of Property

Marion County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>528630</u>	<u>4008735</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

A part of the Northwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section Nine (9), Township eighteen (18) North, Range Sixteen (16) West, Marion County, Arkansas, located on the south side of the public square in the town of Yellville.

Boundary Justification

This boundary contains all the property associated with J.C Berry's Good's Store that contain its historic integrity.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Edited by Wendy S. Perkins, National Register Historian
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 18 February 2003
street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street telephone 501-324-9874
city or town Little Rock state AR 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 Russell Podgorny & Deborah Mitchell
street & number 2121 MC 4026 telephone 870-427-3292
city or town Everton state AR zip code 72633

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

SUMMARY

The J. C. Berry's Dry Goods Store, also known as the Rex Hotel and Morris Hotel, located at the corner of Main and Berry Streets in Yellville, Arkansas, is a two-story limestone with Italianate influenced metal elements building constructed c.1903 and designed in the 20th Century Commercial style. Located across the street from the Marion County Courthouse, the J.C. Berry's Dry Goods Store is one of the most visible structures in downtown Yellville. Rows of tall, narrow windows with molded flat ionic columns on both sides, and bracketed cornices reflect the Italianate influences found on this 20th Century Commercial style structure. The composition shingle roll shed roof and limestone walls rest upon a continuous limestone foundation.

ELABORATION

Constructed on the southeast corner of the town square, the J.C. Berry's Dry Goods Store, also known as the Rex Hotel and Morris Hotel, is a two story limestone building designed in the 20th Century Commercial style. The building also has metal Italianate influence elements such as garlands, fleurs-de-lis, stylized florals and medallions. With approximately ten thousand square feet under its composition shingle roll shed roof, the building also has a basement. The building is rectangular in shape, and fits neatly into the end of the block with an alley behind and the county courthouse in front. The exterior maintains most of its original design integrity. The prominent corner location was no doubt a selective feature. Accessibility on three sides makes the building convenient for its visitors. Easy access to the main floor showroom and later dining room was no doubt a plus as well. In addition, the corner location allowed plenty of room outside for horses, wagons, carriages, loading and unloading.

Constructed on the southeast corner of the town square, the J.C. Berry Dry Goods Store took full advantage of available sunlight. In pre-electric Yellville, the morning sun would cast light into four ports in the east elevation sidewalk that illuminated and ventilated the basement. Large expanses of glass allowed for display of goods. The rear of the store has a walk-out basement extending below grade about twelve feet wide into a well. This feature provided an entrance to the basement facilities. This walk-out has since been covered by a shed roof addition.

The main roof is of composition roll roofing and is bounded by parapet on three sides sloping toward the rear of the building. The parapet is covered with a metal cornice encrusted with fleur-de-lis and pronounced numerous corbel repetitions. Below the corbels, the frieze is decorated with garlands and below the garlands, horizontal banding, then medallions, more banding and an architrave that segues with engaged pilasters above the Corinthian capitals in line with the tops of the upper floor windows. Between the eighteen windows on the upper floor are double engaged columns with a stylized floral motif. The column motifs continue on the first story as single engaged columns. Encrusted at the base of each column on the ground level is "Mesker Bros. St. Louis." The corner roof finials and the marquee type sign are gone. The original continuous pressed metal corrugated awning skirts the two street sides and makes a protective shelter. The sheathing and awning have no doubt greatly contributed to the present state of preservation of the building.

North Elevation

The front façade of the building faces north. The building's Italianate influenced metal façade gives it a unique appearance in downtown Yellville. Two sets of inset diagonal double doors at opposite ends open into the main floor. A single door located on the right, adjacent to the western diagonal entrance, leads upstairs to the second story rooms. Each door is topped with a transom. The main floor is fenestrated with six stationary windows, each topped with a transom made either of glass or wood. The metal awning bisects the main and second floors. The second floor is fenestrated with six double hung windows.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

East Elevation

The east elevation is very similar in style as the north elevation. Moving north to south of the east elevation, the main floor is fenestrated with fourteen stationary windows, each topped with a transom, a single door leading into the main floor, two nine-over-one windows, and a single door leading to the second floor. A historic photo shows no visible exterior entrance on the east elevation. More than likely, this rear stairwell was accessible from the interior only. A stationary window was removed to add this exterior door and side window. At this corner on the east elevation the use of faceted limestone breaks from the metal sheathing. The metal awning bisects the main and second floors. The second story is fenestrated with twelve double hung windows. The Italianate influenced metal façade covers most of the east elevation except at the second single door, where undressed limestone is found.

South Elevation

The rear of the building faces south. Faceted limestone is found above the windows and the entrance to the basement. The five upper story arched limestone windows were replaced with aluminum casements and partially bricked in. This alteration occurred in the early 1980s. The wall was more than likely stuccoed at the same time. A shed addition covers the entire length of the main floor. The shed addition was constructed after 1960. It is a wood sided, frame constructed addition, roofed with asphalt shingles. The addition has a double swinging garage type door bulkhead opening onto a ramp that leads down into the basement. It obscures the arched openings that originally appointed the rear elevation, main floor and basement.

West Elevation

The west elevation is comprised of undressed limestone and mortar. Allowing for the future addition of an adjacent structure notches were made for second story floor joists. "S" shaped metal tensioners are found in two courses along the west side at the second story ceiling and floor joist levels. Remnants of a mural are located just above the first floor. A single window is located on this elevation.

Basement

The basement is essentially one large room with a partition wall added about midway. Drywall has been attached to part of the ceiling and walls and is crumbling. The floor is concrete. Atop short piers are large wooden columns measuring from 38-42 inches in diameter. A stairway was cut through from the basement to the main floor after 1952 and then later covered over but not removed. The original design did not provide access from the basement to the main floor except by an exterior below grade door on the east side and from the rear. The basement was connected only via the dumbwaiter (no longer in place) to the first floor during hotel days. This utility supplied the dining room with kitchen fare.

Interior

The interior central staircase connecting the main floor and the second story has been demolished. After 1960, a dropped acoustical ceiling and partition walls were installed on the main floor to allow for "modernization." The original pressed metal ceiling is still largely intact but obscured by the added elements. Electricity and plumbing have been added at various times and there are now three restrooms on the first floor, one in the shed addition, and two on the second floor. The original pine floor of rough sawn one by two inch strips turned on edge has various overlays of linoleum. A series of iron Mesker columns bisect the length of the building along a central axis. The original floor plan consisted of one large room for the entire main floor. In 1914, with the transformation from goods store to hotel, living quarters for the proprietor were partitioned off in the northwest corner.

Wooden rope twist molding is intact around the large picture windows as is most of the door molding and baseboards. An unfortunate recent loss was that of an etched glass upper door panel. It was very Victorian in feel; a sweet cameo generic female portrait, classical urn, and stylized flora. A duplicate counterpart does survive upstairs.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

The second story contains twelve rooms. A suite of three rooms, across the north elevation, interconnect with doors. Five more rooms run along the east elevation. Two rooms are centrally located, surrounded by hallways. One hallway toward the rear has been closed-in from each end to create two bathrooms. Of the two central rooms, one is believed to have been the landing area for the central staircase that no longer exists. The entrance to this room contains the surviving etched glass paneled door. The remaining two rooms are toward the rear. One of these would have been a guest room and the other larger one, a parlor type lobby arrangement at the top of the rear stairway entrance and leading to two lateral parallel hallways.

Five original second story window panes are broken. However, thirty-one remain, but in need of new putty. The wooden window casements are in remarkably good condition owing to the fact that the exterior metal sheathing covered the sills and eliminated water damage and subsequent rot. The rear elevation windows, without the protection of the sheathing, are long gone, lost to the elements and neglect.

Also in very good condition is a distinctive metal ceiling that simulates bead board and if not original is most likely very early to the building. This treatment is prominent in the hallways and the front entrance stairwell. In eight of the second story rooms the ceiling has been dropped a couple feet to accommodate electricity. Wooden bead board is found in the parlor and rear large guest room. Most of the doors and moldings are intact.

In the 1960s, the second floor was converted into three apartments. Yet, the original configuration was altered very little. Three kitchen sinks and cabinet units were installed. At some time, oak flooring was laid over the original pine. Water damage has occurred from roof leaks but this is mostly confined to the southernmost quarter of the building around the roof access opening. Ventilation turbines have been added and may be contributory to water damage. Although recovered in August 2002, the roof is still not tight.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

SUMMARY

The J.C. Berry Dry Goods Store, also known as the Rex Hotel and Morris Hotel, located at 331 Old South Main Street in Yellville, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** with local significance for its association with the development of Yellville. It is also being nominated under **Criterion C** as an excellent example of a 20th Century Commercial style building with Italianate influenced elements.

ELABORATION

Yellville, originally called Shawnee Town, was incorporated in 1872. According to local legend, a Shawnee Indian village may have been located on Crooked Creek when Marion County was established in 1836. After the Civil War, nearby natural resources were discovered and then exploited by investors, causing a population and economic boom in Yellville.

From 1890 to 1892, state geologist Dr. John C. Braner, located a rich and vast zinc field in Marion County, called the Buffalo and Rush Creek District. By 1897, the mining boom had hit Marion County. This high grade ore, used widely in a large variety of industrial applications, was a much needed resource for the growing nation. Shortly later, lead ore, also in great demand, was discovered in Marion County. The ore was mined and shipped via two main routes: the stagecoach route to Rush and Yellville from West Plains, Missouri, and from Eureka Springs, Arkansas, and on the "military road" from Memphis, Tennessee, to Fayetteville, Arkansas. However, by the early 1920s, the mining business became unprofitable, and the Depression came shortly afterward.

Three of the area's most influential and long standing pioneer families were united by marriage, the Berrys, Laytons, and Cowdreys. The influence and assets of these familial groups was substantial. In the ranks of relations were notable doctors, financiers, Civil War soldiers and officers, merchants, and sawmill operators. James H. (J.H.) Berry was the Governor of Arkansas and later a U.S. Senator. His daughter Virginia Berry, sister to J.C. Berry, married U.S. Congressman J.C. Floyd. Floyd's son was the proprietor of the Rex Hotel some short years later. J.S. Cowdrey was born and raised in Yellville. He entered the mercantile business in 1869 as a clerk. In 1871, he entered into partnership in the mercantile business with J.H. Berry, continuing in business under this partnership until 1881. In 1885, Cowdrey formed a partnership in the same line of business with A.S. Layton until 1890 when he bought Layton's interest and continued the business in his own name. In 1904, Cowdrey added his son and the Bond brothers to the business changed the name of the firm to J.S. Cowdrey Merchantile Company. J.S. Cowdrey was J.C. Berry's brother-in-law. A.S. Layton is Cowdrey's father-in-law.

J.C. "Cam" Berry was the first born son of merchant pioneer, J.H. Berry. J.H. Berry moved to Yellville in 1851, and established a mercantile business hauling merchandise and goods from St. Louis, Missouri, by oxen to Yellville. He took frontier treasures like furs, beeswax, and medicines to St. Louis and became quite profitable. J.C. Berry, born and raised in Yellville, and having learned the trade business from his father, inherited J.H. Berry's company in 1896. J.C. Berry later married the daughter of another well-to-do pioneer family, Miss Edna Layton.

On 31 August 1903, Sue Layton, mother of Edna Layton Berry, sold to J.C. Berry 1/3 interest of the lot on which the J.C. Berry's Dry Good Store was built. The appraised value of 1/3 interest was \$416.66. Layton sold it to J.C. Berry for \$366.66. It is not now known how the other interests were held. Many records were lost and damaged in a courthouse fire in 1943.

J.H. Berry's trade business went from St. Louis and Yellville. The materials to construct the J.C. Berry's Dry Goods Store were brought to Yellville via this trade route. The metal façade was pressed by Mesker Bros. Ironworks of St. Louis. Mesker Bros. Ironworks provided a ready-to-assemble kit that could be installed by any builder. The facade was pressed in sections and then joined to resemble cast iron; a much more costly method. They made various patterns available before their business ended with a foundry fire.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

The J.C. Berry's Dry Good Store was the only distinctively dry good and clothing store in Yellville during the early 1900s. In addition to his store, J.C. Berry ran a first-class millinery and dress-making department. In 1904, he conducted \$25,000 worth of business.

In 1912, The Park Hotel of Yellville burned down. Later that year, Rex Floyd opened the Rex Hotel inside his uncle's old dry goods store. The new hotel had a large lobby and dining room. Food was delivered from the basement kitchen via a dumbwaiter. Family style meals were served and reportedly the guest rooms were usually filled, double occupancy. The hotel hosted social and cultural events of all sorts.

While visiting his father in Washington, DC, Rex Floyd met is wife Hattie. In 1916, Rex and Hattie had a son, Rector H. Floyd, Jr. The Floyds lived in Yellville, but shortly returned to Washington. After the Floyds left for Washington, J.C. Berry and his wife operated the hotel for several years. Due to Mrs. Berry's ill health, family members helped with running the hotel. Susequent hotel operators included Mr. and Mrs. Scott Teagarden, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Linton and lastly, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Morris.

J.C. and Edna Berry retained ownership until November 1927, when the property was conveyed to Vance Holt. Vance and Mamie Holt conveyed it to Citizens Bank in July 1929. Citizens Bank was closed for liquidation in December 1930. Bank Commissioner, Walter E. Taylor in charge of the administration of Citizens Bank's affairs, conveyed in April, 1932, the Rex Hotel property to Henry and Jane Morris who operated it as long as it was a hotel.

In 1952, a sale to Park and Thelma Gaines signaled the end of the hotel. In subsequent years, a long list of tenants followed such as an attorney's office, doctor's office, furniture store, clothing store, restaurant, beauty shop, pool hall, liquor store, Welfare Department office, other government agencies overflowed from the courthouse, antique store, lingerie shop, thrift store, and residential apartments, a car dealership, insurance office, photographer's studio, and real-estate office.

Today, the J.C. Berry's Dry Goods Store in Yellville is a living reminder of the economic growth and development of Marion County's county seat. Also, as the only 20th Century Commercial style building with Italianate influenced elements in downtown Yellville, the J.C. Berry's Dry Goods Store represents a rare architectural find in the hills of Arkansas.

Statement of Significance

The J.C. Berry Dry Goods Store, also known as the Rex Hotel and Morris Hotel, located at 331 Old South Main Street in Yellville, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** with local significance for its association with the development of Yellville. It is also being nominated under **Criterion C** as an excellent example of a 20th Century Commercial style building with Italianate influenced elements.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Bibliography

Abstract of Title #NAA-5779, North Arkansas Abstract and Title Co., Inc.; #NAA-5696, North Arkansas Abstract and Title Co., Inc., P.O. Box 250, Yellville, AR

Berry, Earl. *History of Marion County*. International Graphics Industries: Little Rock, Arkansas, 1977.

Berry, Fred. Oral History Interview.

Burnes, Marian & Lester. *Early Days of Marion County, Arkansas*. Dogwood Printing: Ozark, Mo.

Fair, James R., Jr. *The North Arkansas Line*. Howell-North Books: San Diego, California, 1969.

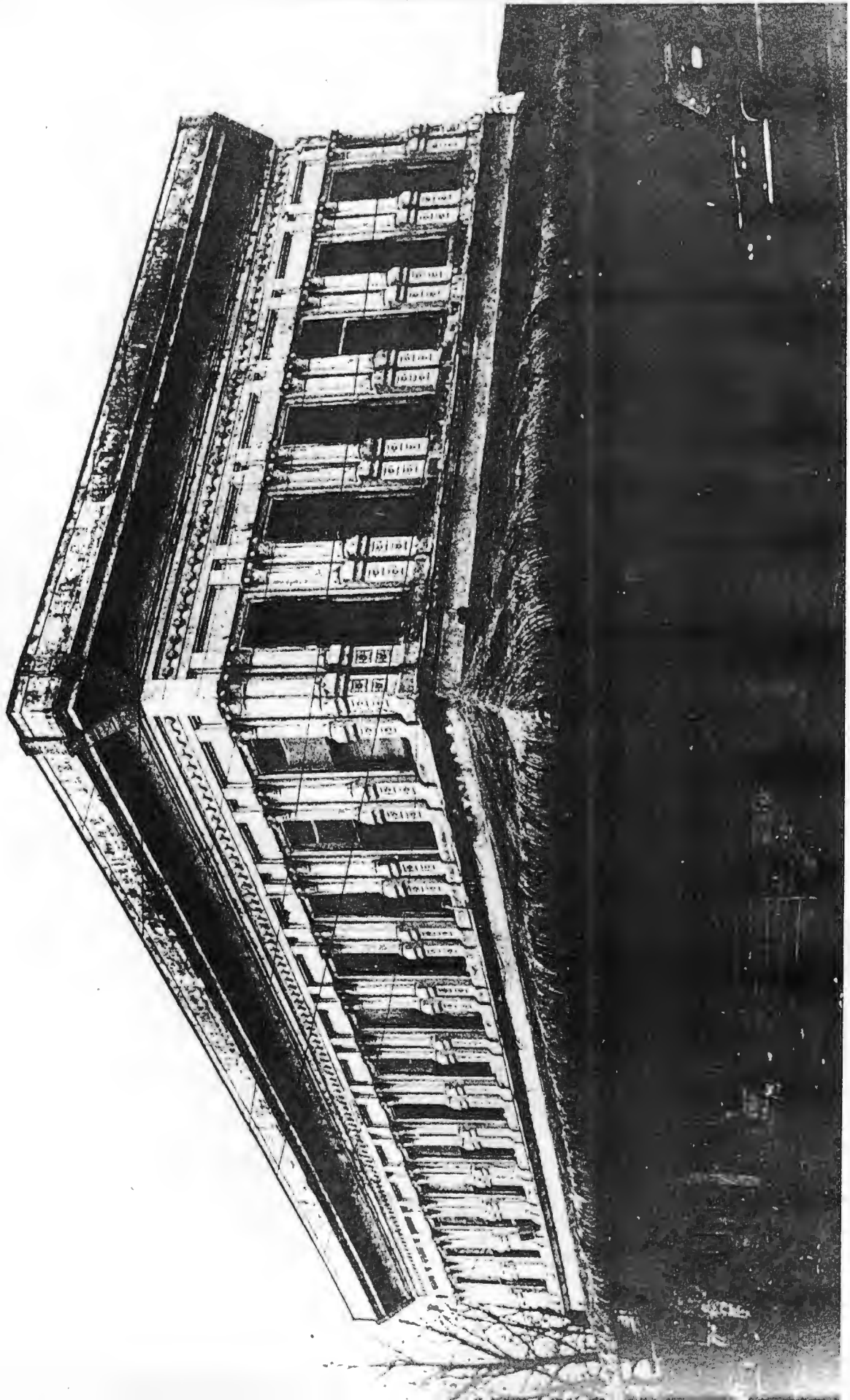
The Mountain Echo, May 1973

Roberts, Vicky. Oral History Interview. January 2003.

Simpson, Pamela H. *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture III: Substitute Gimcrackery -Ornamental Architectural Materials 1870-1930*. University of Missouri Press, 1989.

Wyse, Tom. Oral History Interview. March, April and June 2002.

The Yellville Republican, March 17, 1905



W.C. Berry's Dry Goods Store

Madison County, Arkansas

Wendy Perkins

21 January 2003

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

North East Arkansas - Looking Southwest

#1



JC Bemy's Dry Goods Store
MARION COUNTY, ARKANSAS

WENDY PERKINS

21 JANUARY 2003

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

NORTH-WEST CORNER elevation - looking southeast

#2

J.C. BERRY'S DRY GOODS STORE
YELVILLE, MARION COUNTY, ARKANSAS
15/528630/4008735

