

52-04-6040-61

NR 6-24-71

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

Arkansas	
COUNTY:	
Ouachita	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
McCollum-Chidester House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
926 Washington Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN:
Camden

STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05 COUNTY: Ouachita CODE: 103

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	_____	_____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Ouachita County Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:
926 Washington Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Camden STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Ouachita County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Camden STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Arkansas Landmark Commission

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Arkansas Commemorative Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
Old State House - 300 West Markham

CITY OR TOWN: Little Rock STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER: DATE: FOR NPS USE ONLY

7: DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built in 1847 by Peter McCollum, this home was sold to Colonel John T. Chidester around 1857.

The plan is rectangular with smaller wings on the East and West wing of the main house. The main house is one and one-half stories.

Of wood frame construction, the house is raised on brick piers with pierced brick underpinning between the perimeter piers. The structure is finished with horizontal, beveled siding.

A veranda which extends the width of the main house, is supported by massive columns that reach to the underside of the cornice. The flat architrave and frieze are recessed slightly behind the column face. The columns, with moulded bases, rest on square pedestals.

The roofs of both smaller wings and of the main house are gabled with plain, close rakes.

The main windows are double hung sash, with a pattern of 9 x 9 lights, and have flat surrounds with corner blocks. They are shuttered with louvered blinds.

The entrance doors are double with glass lights, with moulded surrounds and within a moulded architrave containing sidelights and transom. The light refractions caused by the variations in thickness of this glass add an interesting visual effect.

The two main chimneys are stucco covered brick and are outside ended. One is offset left, the other is offset right.

The scale and visual strength of this home are impressive. The rooms have 12 foot high ceilings and the main house is over twenty feet high from ridge to ground.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)			
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	losophy	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	itarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			
<p>The McCollum-Chidester house is one of the finest and best preserved examples of ante-bellum architecture in Arkansas.</p> <p>Although the Greek Revival style appeared to predominate Arkansas architecture in the second quarter of the 19th Century, this home was a refreshing departure from the rule. It is more characteristic of plantation homes found in Southern Maryland and Virginia in the late 1700's and early 1800's. The strength of its columns, its surprising scale and its quiet symmetry create an atmosphere of beauty and dignity.</p> <p>John T. Chidester was born in New York City on December 1, 1818. He moved to Georgia when a young man and became engaged in carrying the mail overland. After operating mail stage lines in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, Chidester moved to Camden, Arkansas in 1857. Since his business required his presence in Washington, D. C. frequently, he became acquainted with such prominent political figures as Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, and Daniel Webster.</p> <p>During the Civil War Chidester continued to carry on his business, or business of some sort. There is no proof that he ever served in the Confederate Army, in fact, his obituary and the <u>Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies</u> imply that he did not serve in any military capacity.</p> <p>In the Spring of 1863, Chidester was engaged in an attempt to effect an exchange of Confederate cotton for Federal provisions and supplies. Several Arkansas members of the Confederate Congress approached Secretary of War James A. Seddon in Richmond about the matter. On March 12, 1863 Seddon signified his approval of the plan in a letter to General E. Kirby Smith, even though such</p>			
(continued)			

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(Continuation Sheet)

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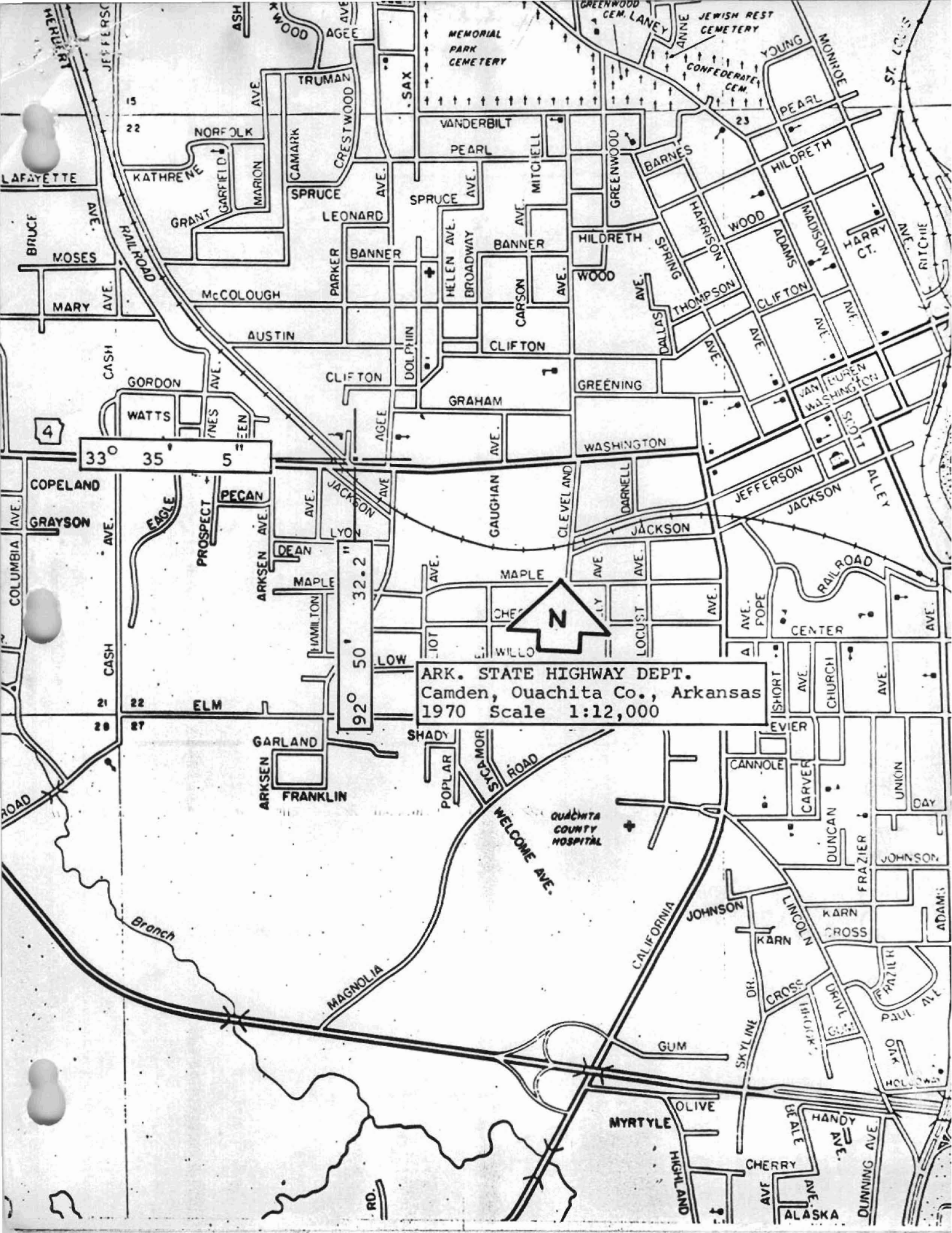
(Number all entries)

8. SIGNIFICANCE, continued

trading with the enemy was ordinarily forbidden. Chidester was described as "reliable, loyal, and of adequate means, having peculiar facilities, from his position as a former planter on the river and his past connections and business, to accomplish successfully the ends proposed." Chidester, as the official contractor, stood to make a handsome profit from this deal with the Yankees.

Very soon after the end of war Chidester secured permission from General Orme, U.S. Treasury Agent in Memphis, to collect Confederate cotton in the Camden area for delivery to Federal authorities. One-fourth of the cotton in pounds, or a fourth of its value when sold, was to go to Chidester for his services. Brigadier-General G. F. McGinnis, in command at Camden, regarded Chidester and his kind as thieves and swindlers. On June 9, 1865 McGinnis wrote to Colonel John Levering, Assistant Adjutant General of the Department of Arkansas, that "Chidester . . . is quite notorious as a former Government mail contractor in this country. I presume you have heard of him. If not, the Attorney-General can give you all the information in regard to him. I think the whole thing is wrong, and in Chidester's case I have determined that he shall not touch a bale of Government cotton . . . The appointment of these outsiders is a regular swindle. Chidester tells me that he can make \$100,000 out of it in sixty days."

Chidester secured his fattest government contract in 1878 when he became president and general manager of the Arkansas, Texas and Pacific Mail Company. Some 300 men, 2000 horses, 60 Concord coaches and a cavalry detachment were required to carry the mails from Ft. Worth, Texas, to Ft. Yuma, Arizona Territory, a distance of over 1500 miles. Out of this operation came the famous Star Route Fraud cases in 1881, a scandal which almost wrecked the administration of President Garfield and carried over into the Arthur era. Apparently Chidester did not figure as one of the principals in the defense, but his obituary refers to him as the "Star Router". He died in Camden on March 6, 1892.



ARK. STATE HIGHWAY DEPT.
Camden, Ouachita Co., Arkansas
1970 Scale 1:12,000



33° 35' 5"
92° 50' 32.2"

MEMORIAL PARK CEMETERY
GREENWOOD CEM. LANEY
JEWISH REST CEMETERY
CONFEDERATE CEM.

QUACHITA COUNTY HOSPITAL

Branch

RD.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

American Guide Series, Arkansas, A Guide to the State,
New York: Hastings House, 1941.

Camden News, December 21, 1937.

Ferguson, John L., "A Biographical Sketch of Colonel John
T. Chidester," Arkansas History Commission, MS.

(see continuation sheet)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		33° 35' 5"	92° 50' 32.2"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Staff

ORGANIZATION: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program DATE: 3-12-71

STREET AND NUMBER:
1023 West Third Street

CITY OR TOWN: Little Rock STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name George M. Reynolds
George M. Reynolds

Title State Liaison Officer

Date March 12, 1971

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES, Continued

Packer, Trena, "Chidester House at Camden", State Parks,
Recreation and Travel Commission, MS, Little Rock,
1969.

Historic Camden, (Pamphlet)
Ouachita County Historical Society.

Form 10-301
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: McCollum-Chidester House
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 926 Washington Street, N.W.
CITY OR TOWN: Camden
STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05 COUNTY: Ouachita CODE: 103

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE: Arkansas Highway Department
SCALE: 1: 12,000
DATE: 1970

4. REQUIREMENTS

- TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. Property boundaries where required.
 2. North arrow.
 3. Latitude and longitude reference.