

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: Willett House

Other Name/Site Number: UN0150

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2. Location

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Street & Number: 6563 Mount Holly Road

Not for Publication: N/A

City/Town: Lisbon

Vicinity: N/A

State: AR

County: Union

Code: AR

Zip Code: 71762

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>6</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>6</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. Sater _____ August 8, 1995
Signature of certifying official 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

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6. Function or Use

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Historic: Domestic Sub: Agriculture/Subsistence

Current : Domestic Sub: _____

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

Craftsman

Materials: foundation Brick roof Asphalt
walls Wood other Brick

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

Summary

Located at 6563 Mt. Holly Road approximately one-and-one-half miles east of Lisbon, the Willett House was constructed in 1926 in the Craftsman style. The nomination also includes a potato house, a feed house, a smokehouse, a barn and a small outbuilding.

Elaboration

The Willett House is a one-story frame residence designed in the Craftsman style. The L-shaped plan is composed of two intersecting gable roof components, and sheathed in simple-drop novelty siding. Two interior brick chimneys are located on the roof ridge of the central portion of the house.

The northern elevation is symmetrical in arrangement, with a wide hipped roof one-story porch supported by six battered wood columns on brick piers across the front, and three on each side. This porch wraps around three full sides of the structure, but was enclosed on the east elevation to create another living area for the family. The porch columns feature false decorative battens on each side which elevate this house above typical vernacular Craftsman construction. Other Craftsman elements on the house are the exposed rafter ends under the eaves, the four-over-one double-hung windows on all the elevations, and the triangular knee brackets which appear under the eaves on the three gable ends.

The northern elevation features two large gabled dormers which are symmetrically arranged on the facade and dominate the roof-line. Although the

dormers were original to the construction, the original windows were replaced with two-over-two double-hung windows. The owner plans to replace these windows with double-hung four-over-one windows as restoration on the property continues. On the first level of this elevation, a single-leaf, fully glazed multi-light door with sidelights is located at the center of the northern elevation. A stoop with five steps flanked by a low brick balustrade leads one up to this central entrance. A pair of windows are located on either side of the first floor of this elevation, and another single-leaf door with a single window on either side provides access to the porch enclosure on the east end of this elevation. All of the windows described here are double-hung four-over-one windows, and the windows are of the same configuration elsewhere on the Willett house unless stated otherwise.

The eastern elevation is dominated by the enclosed porch which is covered in novelty siding to match the remainder of the house. The walls of this enclosure span the width between the three columns which support the southernmost portion of the porch on this elevation. The porch was enclosed in 1927 after the Willett family spent their first winter in the house. This area is lit by one group of three windows, as well as a set of windows separated by a single-leaf door. A single window is located in the center of the gable above, and lights the attic space within.

The southern elevation is dominated by the protruding gable end of the ell, which contains a small enclosed shed addition with a single center window which protrudes out from this portion of the house. This elevation also features an enclosed shed roof addition with two windows on the south side of the main section of the house, which is connected to a recently restored screened sleeping porch off of the east side of the ell.

Unlike the eastern elevation, the western elevation has an open porch. The only entrance on the east elevation is a single-leaf entrance door which one reaches by way of a concrete stoop and simple hand-rail off the porch. There are two windows to the north of this door, and one window to the south of the entrance under the porch roof. Similar to the eastern side of the main section of the structure, the gable contains a single window in the center of the gable at the attic level. The ell extension of this elevation is punctuated by five windows, three are together in one unit, and the other two are placed side-by-side on the southern end near the enclosed shed.

The interior of the Willett House is largely original. The house features double beaded board paneling throughout most of the interior as well as the original wood floors. The original mantels on the west end of the interior have recently been restored. The house features fourteen foot ceilings in sections which helped to keep the house cool in the summer.

There are a total of five outbuildings on the property, at least two of which pre-date the present house. Perhaps the most significant outbuilding is the barn, which was constructed in the early 1900's. Located to the southeast of the main house, the barn is the largest of the outbuildings. It is built in the double crib form with a combination of square and half notching at the corners. The barn features an open central passage, and side sheds. The barn rests on one foot sills, and the logs are approximately nine inches in width. Each crib is approximately fourteen feet in width and twelve feet in depth, with a passage between the two pens of approximately ten feet. The sheds on either side of the cribs are supported by wood posts, as well as a single cantilever at the east and west ends. The cantilevered beam was hewn out of

a single log and expands the entire width of the east side of the structure. The cantilevered beam on the west side of the barn is missing the northernmost portion. The barn is a very remarkable remaining example of an Arkansas outbuilding from the early Twentieth Century due to the cantilevers, the high level of construction, and the present condition of the building.

The feed house is located a few hundred feet on the west side of the barn. The feed house is the only portion of the original house remaining today. The feed house is a small box-constructed rectangular structure covered in vertical flush boards with open side sheds. At one time the feed house served as the detached kitchen for the Willetts previous house. After the current house was constructed in 1926, the kitchen became a storage house for hay and feed for the cows and pigs on the farm.

There are three other outbuildings which are located closer to the house. They are the potato house, the smokehouse, and a small utility building. Of these three structures, the potato house is sited the furthest south. This building has a gable roof and is covered in simple-drop novelty siding. The potato house was used for the storage of the sweet potato crop which was one of the main crops grown on the farm. The other main crops on the farm were corn and cotton. The smokehouse is also a simple gabled box-constructed structure which also has studs which were added later. As with all the other outbuildings with the exception of the utility shed, the smokehouse has a corrugated metal roof. The smokehouse is sheathed in flush wide vertical board. Closest to the house, the utility building has a gable roof with composition shingle roofing material. It is newer than the other outbuildings, and is covered in a flush horizontal wood siding.

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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: Locally.

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1926

Significant Dates: N/A

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

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

Summary

The Willett House is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance. The dwelling is significant as a fine and virtually unchanged example of the Craftsman style of architecture which was popular in Arkansas from about 1915 until the early 1940's. The outbuildings remain as excellent examples of vernacular farmstead construction.

Elaboration

Scott Willett was the grandson of William M. Willett (b. 1828--d. 1897) and Mary Willett (b. 1829--d. 1929) who moved to the area from Bienville Parish, Louisiana. He married Corrinne Murphy in 1913. Scott and Corrinne Willett built the house in 1926 at a cost of \$8,000 to replace an earlier structure which was built around 1915-1917. This earlier structure was torn down when the new house was completed, and the materials were used to build sharecropper houses on the property which included approximately 300 acres about one-and-one-half miles outside the small community of Lisbon, Union County. Mr. Bob Willett currently owns approximately twenty five and one-half acres of the original farm, and of this acreage approximately five acres are being nominated.

In 1890, Lisbon was " ... a small village situated about the center of Van Buren Township. The business interests are mainly conducted by Graham Bros. who have a large general store, and a good steam cotton gin. James Graham is postmaster. There is also a church and a public school here. The surrounding country is a little above the average, and in the neighborhood are large tracts of valuable timbered land." (Goodspeed, p. 829)

Scott and Corrinne Willett built the present house in 1926 with monies they earned from oil leases. The oil was discovered on lands Corrinne had inherited from her parents, Henry O. Murphy and Ella Holloway Murphy. Corrinne's property was located three miles away in the Dumas community. The Willett family still own this property today. The Willett House by was built by George Dunn, a carpenter from El Dorado. He oversaw the project and was assisted by other men in the community. Scott Willett and his brother Frank Willett are known to have helped with the construction of the project, and a Mr. Crain from El Dorado did the brickwork on the house.

Scott and Corrinne Willett had six children who were all raised in the present Willett House: James Murphy Willett, Murry Hugh Willett, Albertine Willett Meek, Arthur Max Willett, John Henry Willett, and Randolph Scott Willett. The Willett family were a prominent farm family in the area, and

Corrinne and Scott were involved in a variety of community activities. Mrs. Corrinne Willett was involved in various ladies groups including the Home Demonstration Club, and hosted gatherings for the ladies of the community at the Willett home. Mr. Scott Willett was a Justice of the Peace and served on the local school board as well.

The Willett House remains as one of the best examples of Craftsman/vernacular farmhouse construction in Union County. The site is especially noteworthy due to the fact that excellent examples of farm outbuildings remain on the property, and is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Bibliography

Information provided by Mr. Bob Willett, May 1995.

The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas.
(Easley, South Carolina: Southern Historical Press, 1978.) Reprinted from the original 1890 edition.

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 -- Specify Repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 5

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>519300</u>	<u>3680960</u>	B	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
C	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	D	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at the intersection of the southern edge of Mount Holly Road (County Road 11) and a line formed by, yet ten feet from, the western elevation of the barn, proceed south along said line to a point formed by the intersection of said line and a line formed by, yet ten feet from, the rear, or southern, elevation of the potatohouse; thence proceed easterly along said line to the intersection of said line and a line formed by, yet ten feet from, the eastern elevation of the potatohouse; thence proceed northeasterly along said line to its intersection with the southern edge of County Road 11; thence proceed northwesterly along said road to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

This boundary includes the historic house, barn, potatohouse, feedhouse, smokehouse and utility shed, and property historically associated with this resource that retain historic integrity.

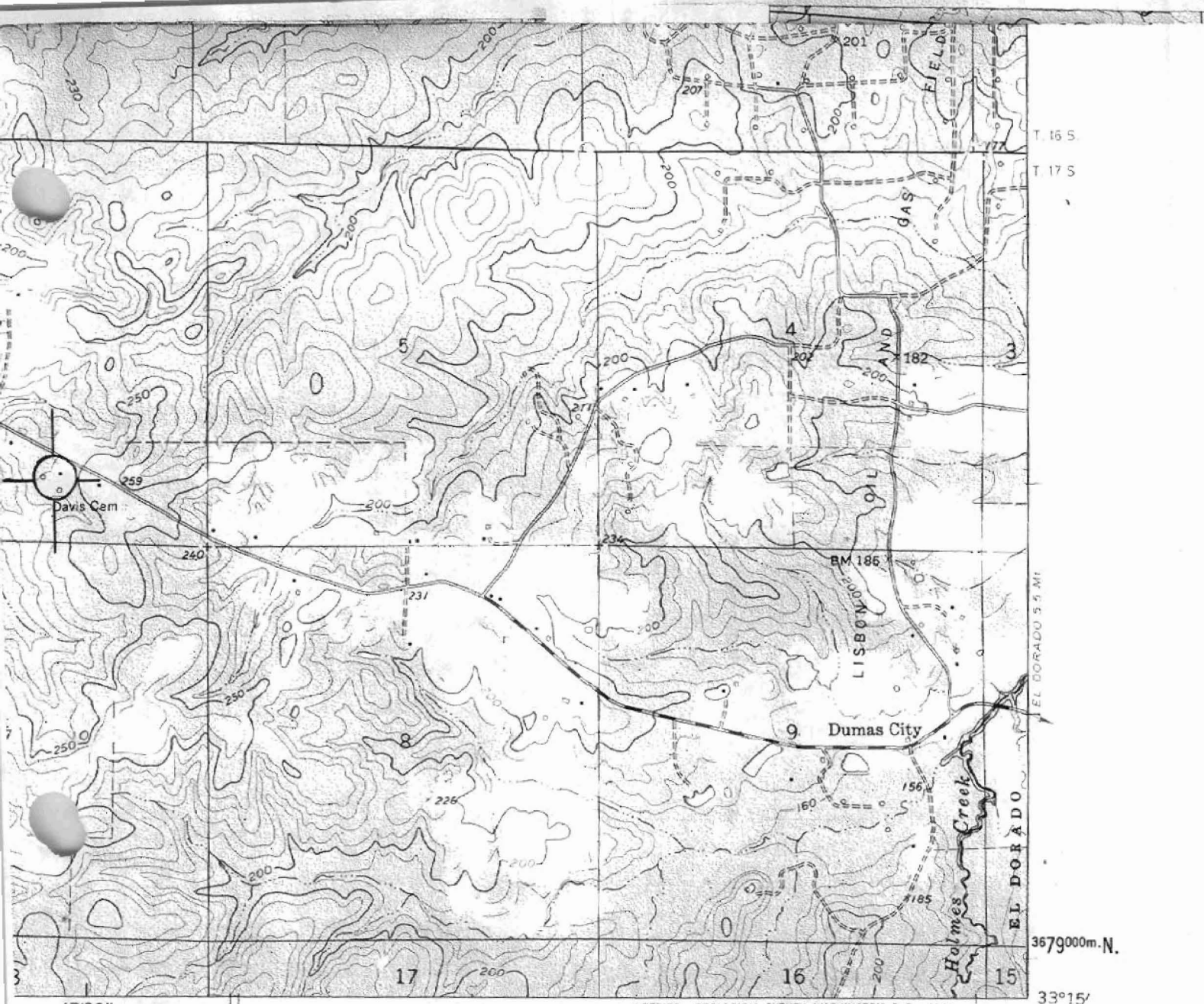
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11. Form Prepared By
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Name/Title: Helen A. Barry

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: 8/4/95

Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St. Telephone: (501) 324-9880

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



T. 16 S.
T. 17 S.

EL DORADO 5.5 MI

3679000m. N.

33°15'

523000m. E.

92°45'

(EL DORADO 1:62500)

11E

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty Light-duty
- Medium-duty Unimproved dirt
- State Route



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Willet House
Lisbon vic, Union Co., Ark.
UTM: 15/519300/3680960

LISBON, ARK.
N3315-W9245/7.5

1962

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