

Listed in the NR 4/30/83

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received
date entered

4N0153

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Municipal Building - City of El Dorado

and/or common City Hall

2. Location

street & number 204 North West Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town El Dorado

N/A vicinity of

state AR

code 05

county Union

code 139

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name City of El Dorado

street & number 204 North West Avenue

city, town El Dorado

N/A vicinity of

state AR

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Union County Courthouse

street & number Union Square

city, town El Dorado

state AR 71730

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date

federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY

The Municipal Building of the City of El Dorado was designed in 1927 by Eugene John Stern, an architect important for his contribution to the development of Arkansas architecture. Stern was associated with the firm of Mann & Stern, Architects. The design of this two-story stone and masonry structure successfully combines features typical of the Art Deco style, such as a vertical emphasis and flat wall surfaces with classically-derived ornament. A centrally situated square tower, rising from the building's flat roof, is a dramatic focal point that creates a monumental presence appropriate to its function as the administrative headquarters of El Dorado and is indicative of the city's period of growth and prosperity following the discovery of oil in 1921.

ELABORATION

Symmetrical front and end elevations are constructed of dressed limestone and are embellished with Classical details. This is in contrast to the rear elevation which is buff-colored brick with a noticeable absence of ornament. The rear entrance is clearly utilitarian and was not intended for general use. Therefore, it is the front and end elevations, those most visible to the public, that demonstrate the incorporation of Art Deco and Classical Revival elements that distinguish the building.

Consisting of two stories built over a full basement, the building is rectangular in plan with centrally located lobbies and corridors. An office wing projecting on axis from the rear facade has been altered by the addition of an attached city jail to its south side and the bricking-in of the second floor windows.

The seven bay front elevation has a three bay central projecting frontispiece with fluted pilasters at each corner and slightly smaller fluted pilasters on either side of the centrally positioned entrance. Windows are eight-over-eight sash of uniform size, with the exception of a larger window directly above the entrance, which has twenty-four lights and a stylized iron railing. Originally, the entrance consisted of double wood and glass doors, above which was located a metal relief depicting two nude male figures bearing cornucopias. These features have since been replaced with modern glass doors and a glass panel upon which "City Hall" is lettered.

The judicious use of ornament on the exterior of the building is limited to the front elevation and tower. Pilasters lack capitals and bases and the architrave is a flat surface adorned only with the incised name of the building between two spheres. Above the fluted pilasters at the corners of the frontispiece are panels of carved limestone depicting two pegasi flanking an urn. The two bays on either side of the central projection have only swags of garland at the cornice as decoration, which continue for several feet from the corner on the north and south end elevations.

The end elevations are less detailed than the front, embellished with only several garland swags at each corner. The functional rear elevation has no ornamentation but does possess a rear entrance as well as a double-doored entrance to the Council Chambers.

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The Municipal Building's centrally situated tower is the most impressive feature of the building. Approximately equaling the height of the building's two-stories, it sits atop the flat roof, thereby counterbalancing the building's otherwise horizontality. At its midpoint, the tower steps in, creating a ledge upon which four urns are positioned at each of the four chamfered corners. Swags of garland relief resembling those found on the frontispiece are the only ornament on the lower portion of the tower. The upper portion has fluted pilasters and a Greek key meander at the cornice. The top of the tower terminates in three steps. Two grille-covered fenestrations on each side of the tower originally illuminated the second floor lobby.

The interior of this building is simply detailed with classical ornament and does not exhibit the same indulgence of the Art Deco as the exterior. Each of the two floors have a central lobby with marble floors, wainscot, piers and pilasters. Walls above the wainscot and ceilings are of smooth plaster. The south wings of both the lower and upper floors house the Council Chambers and Municipal Court Room respectively. Doors between the lobby areas and Court Room and Council Chamber are walnut, as is the wainscot in each.

Pilasters on the first floor have cast Ionic capitals with palmette and egg and dart detailing, while those on the second floor have simple Doric caps. The first floor lobby is dominated by a double stair with bronze railings and a landing directly above the front entrance. Plaster swags of garland at the cornice adorn the second floor lobby. Originally, a skylight beneath the tower provided daylight to the second floor, but the addition of a false dropped ceiling currently covers this feature.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1927-28 Builder/Architect Mann & Stern, Architects

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY

The El Dorado Municipal Building, commonly referred to as the City Hall, is significant for its successful combination of classical and Art Deco features and its representation of the pride and affluence that developed in the El Dorado area resulting from the oil boom of the early 1920's. Responding to the city's rapid growth and affluence, city leaders saw fit to erect a building of modern and elaborate proportions. Though the ornament is classical in derivation, the form of the building reflects the architect's familiarity with Art Deco, a modern and primarily urban style that, with its dramatic setbacks, rhythmic verticality and flat smooth wall surfaces, reflected the evolution of the American skyscraper. Also significant is the city's choice of Eugene John Stern, an accomplished architect responsible for many hotels, office, bank and civic buildings throughout the State of Arkansas. The Municipal Building contributes significantly to the City of El Dorado as a reminder of proud and forward thinking City officials and the citizens who supported the declaration of progress and affluence by allowing such a structure to come into existence.

ELABORATION

The first mention of construction of a new City Hall for the City of El Dorado, in the minutes of the City Council of the City, was on October 3, 1925, when the Council passed an ordinance calling for the election for sanction of the issuing bonds to construct a new City Hall. The amount of the issue was \$150,000. There was no further evidence of action on this particular issue until October 14, 1926, when an ordinance was passed that was identical to the previous document of October 3, 1925. Obviously, no action had been taken on the ordinance and, possibly, it had been forgotten. The council did pass an ordinance to repeal the second ordinance and then ordered that another be presented in the amount of \$150,000 and it was presented at the November 18, 1926 Council Meeting and defeated. Then on November 24, 1926, the Council again considered and passed an ordinance calling for an election for the sanction of the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$125,000.

The City Council, on June 30, 1927, officially hired the firm of Mann and Stern as architects to design and supervise the construction of the Municipal Building. Also, order for bids for construction was issued. The bids were opened on July 25, 1927, at 1:30 p.m. Bids were in amounts from \$129,300 to \$150,000. The City Council ordered the architect to submit revisions to the bidders which was done and William Peterson was selected with a bid of \$125,000. Construction began on the project shortly thereafter and the building was officially dedicated on February 17, 1928, at 8:00 p.m. The dedicatory plaque in the lobby lists Eugene John Stern as architect.

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The Municipal Building exemplifies one of the outstanding creative design variations of public buildings developed by the Mann and Stern firm.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Minutes of the City Council: 1925, 1927, and 1928.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name El Dorado, AR-LA

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

1	5	5	3	1	1	0	0	3	6	7	4	7	2	5
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

North 55 feet of East 102 feet of Lot 77, Johnston Sub-division.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Larry Combs, Mayor (edited by the staff of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program)

organization City of El Dorado

date May 13, 1983

street & number 204 North West Avenue

telephone (501) 862-7911

city or town El Dorado

state AR

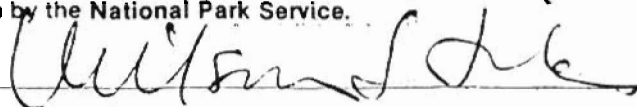
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 5-13-83

For NPS use only

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

date

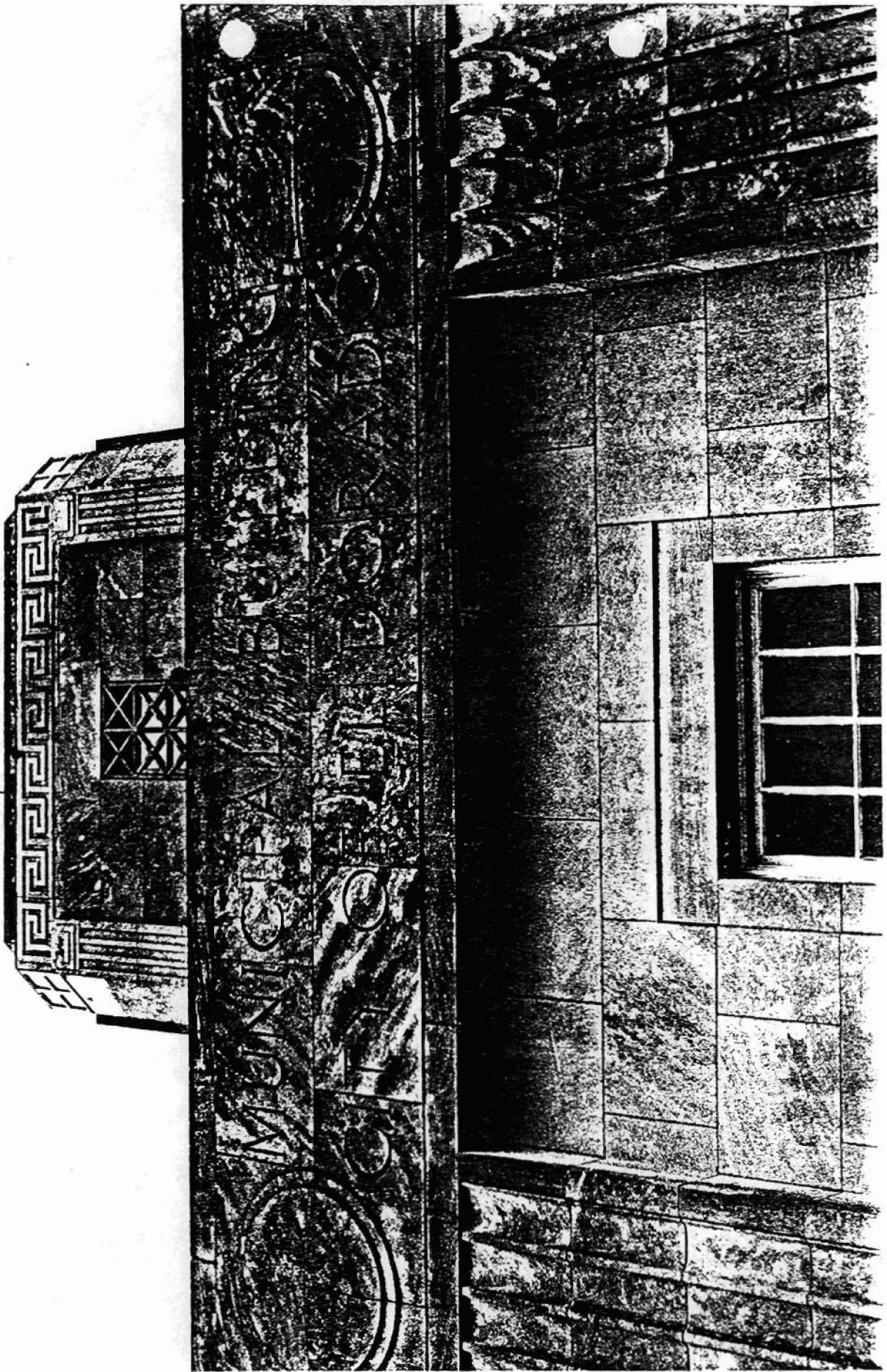
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

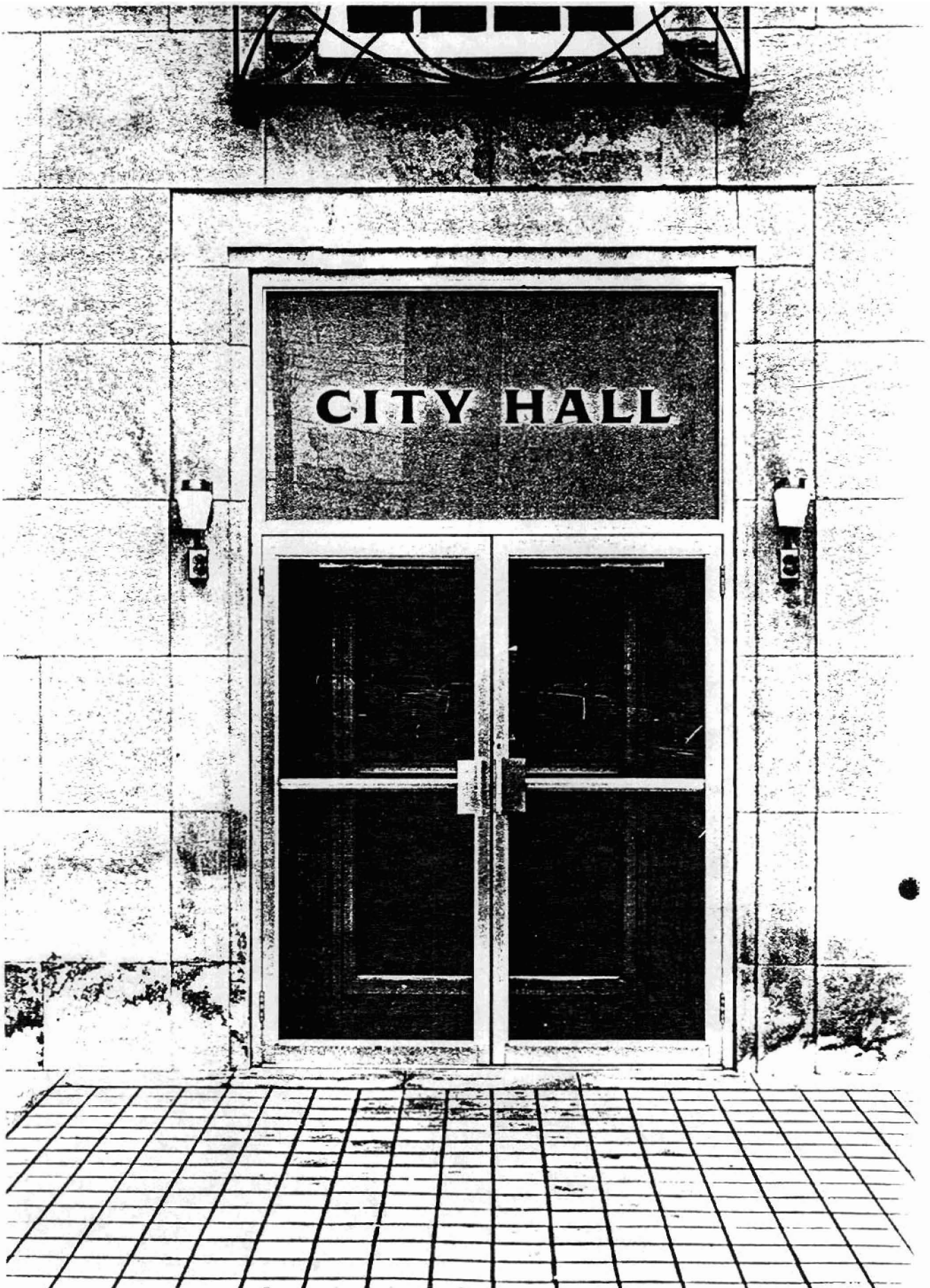
date

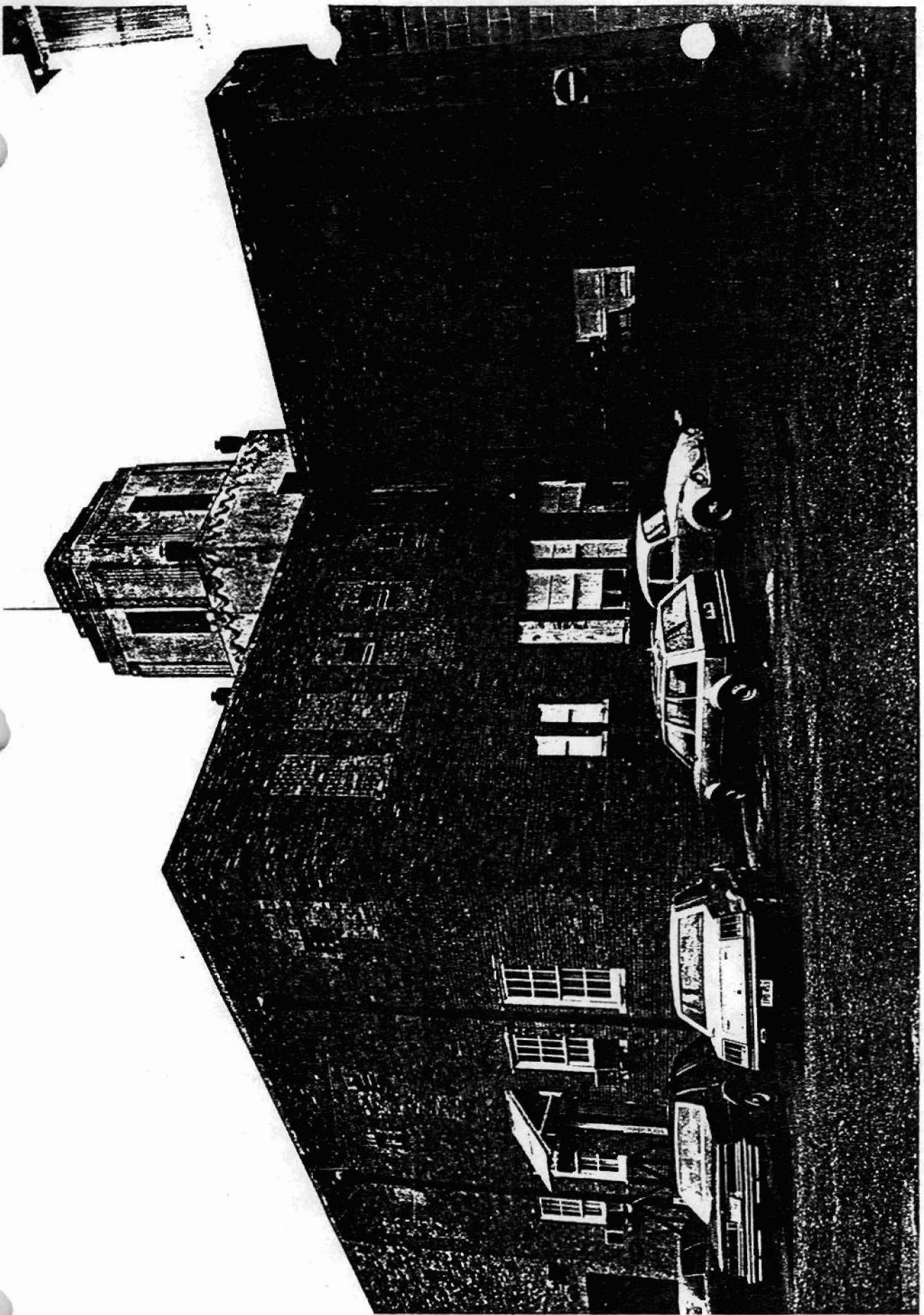
Chief of Registration

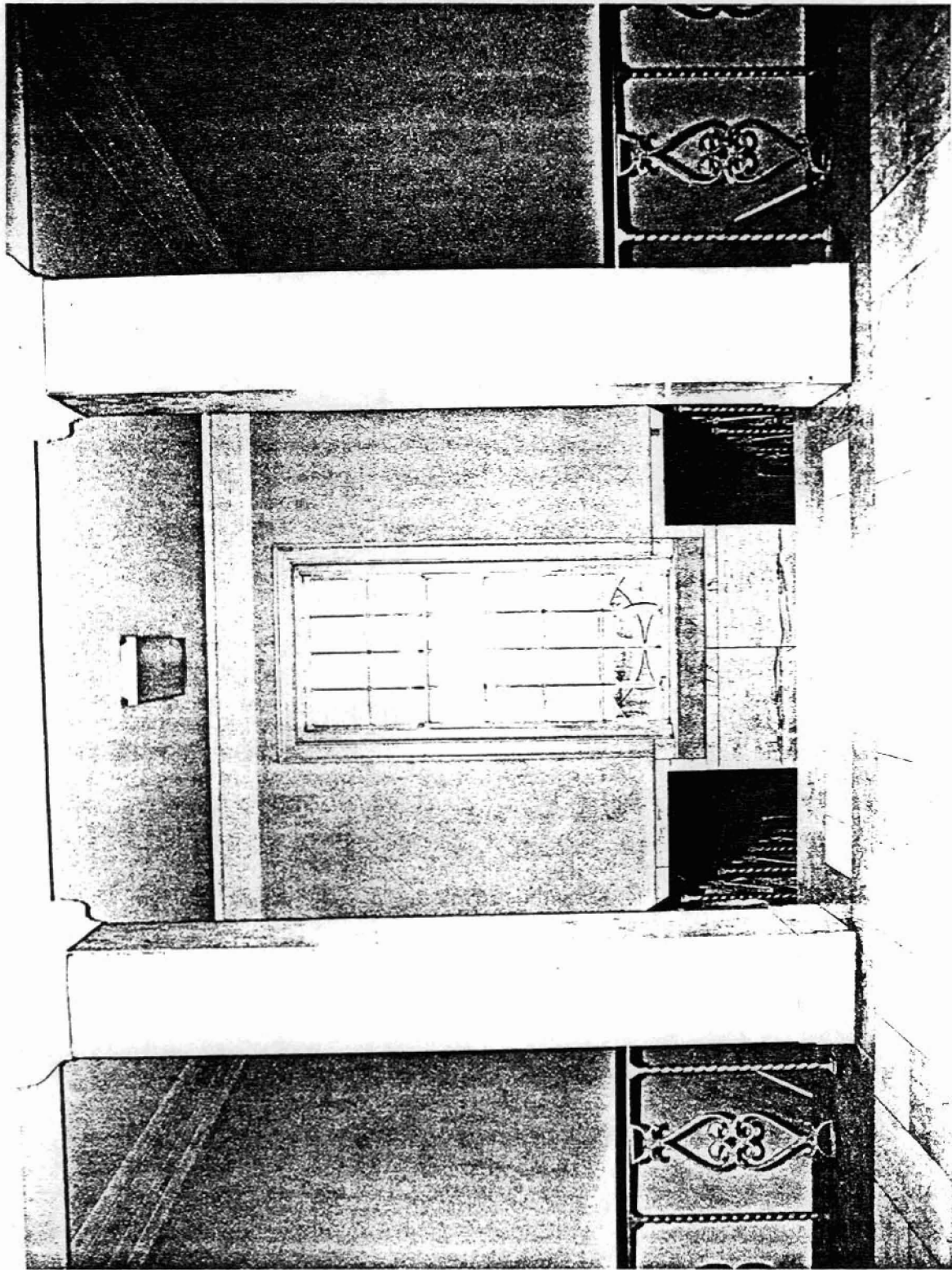


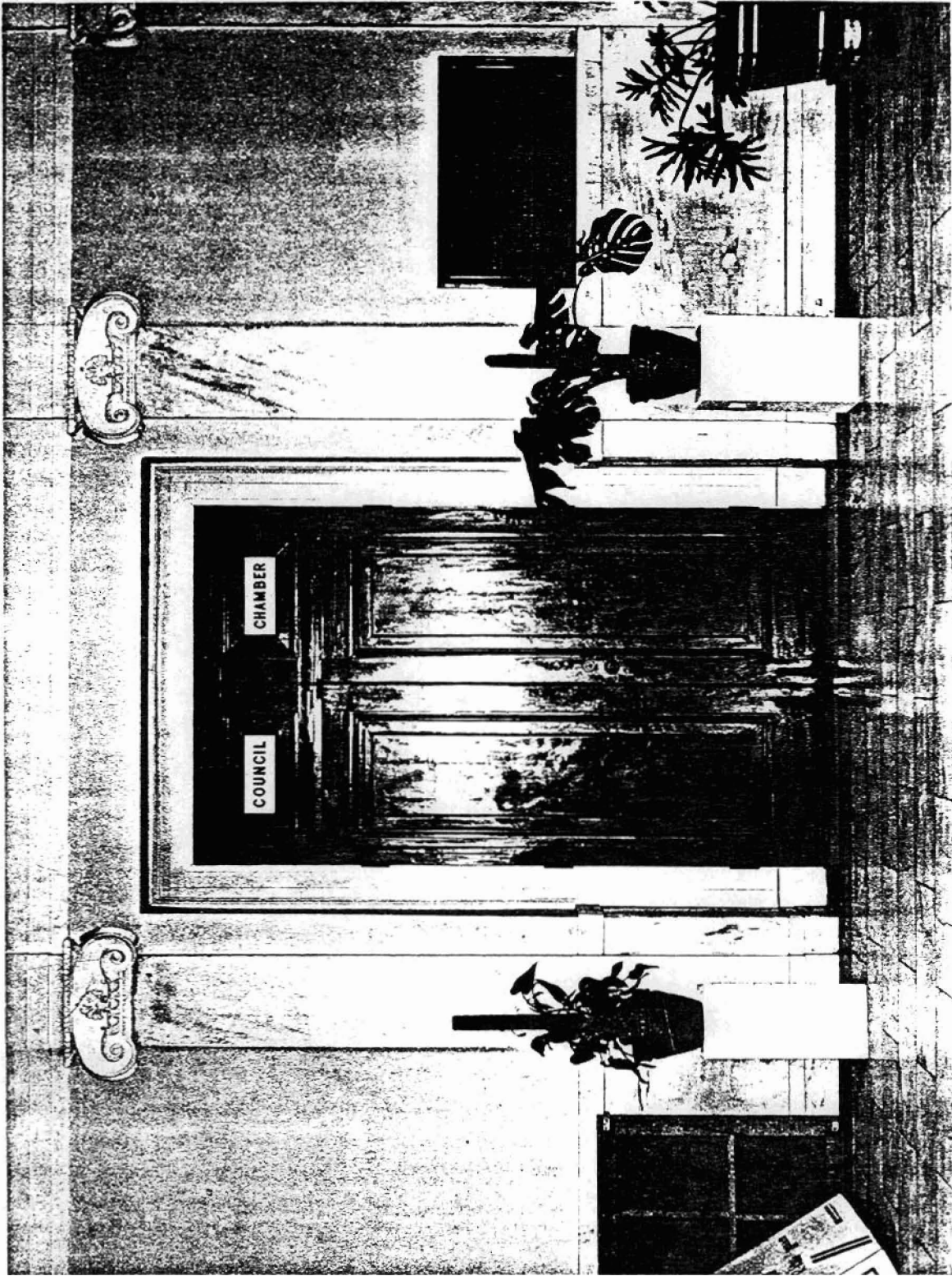


CITY HALL









7450 IV
(Loomis)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

33°15' 92°45' R. 15 W. 975000m E. 1960000 FT (U.S. NORTH)

STATE OF ARK
GEOLOGICAL SU

R. 15 W. 933

130

4

4

4

4

4

4

4

4

4

4

4

4

4

4

Municipal Building-City of El Dorado
El Dorado, Union County, Arkansas
Quadrangle: El Dorado, AR-LA
Scale: 1:62500
UTM Reference 15 531100/3674725

T. 17 S.

3677000m N

930000 FT
(U.S. NORTH)

3674

3673

3671

3670

3669

