

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 Noll, Willis, Residence

other names/site number Site #WA0928

2. Location

street & number 531 N. Sequoyah Drive

not for publication

city or town Fayetteville

vicinity

state Arkansas

code AR

county Washington

code 143

zip code 72701

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.)

Cathie Matthews
Signature of certifying official/Title

10/26/04
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 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:

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 the Keeper

Date of Action

Noll, Willis, Residence
Name of Property

Washington 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		buildings
		sites
		structures
1	1	objects
2		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/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Wrightian

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls WOOD/weatherboard

roof WOOD/shake
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)

Statewide

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1950

Significant Dates

1950

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder

Edward Durell Stone, Architect

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:

University of Arkansas Library Special Collections, Fayetteville

Noll, Willis, Residence
Name of Property

Washington County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property Less than one.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 396928 3992330
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date September 21, 2004
street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street telephone (501) 324-9787
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 Clark Milligan
street & number 531 N. Sequoyah Drive telephone _____
city or town Fayetteville state AR zip code 72701

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.

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SUMMARY

The Willis Noll Residence, which was built in 1950, was designed by the Arkansas-born architect Edward Durell Stone. The long, low residence, with a full basement, is built on a steeply-sloped site on Mount Sequoyah on the east side of Fayetteville in northwest Arkansas. Due to the nature of the site, the house appears to be one-story tall in the front but two-stories tall in the rear. The foundation of the property, along with the chimney and parts of the walls are built out of red Roman brick. The rest of the walls are sided with horizontal drop siding. The house is crowned by a low-pitched gable-on-hip roof covered with wood shakes.

ELABORATION

The Willis Noll Residence, which was built in 1950, is one of five residences in Arkansas designed by native-born architect Edward Durell Stone, and the only example in his birthplace of Fayetteville. The house, which is located on a steeply-sloped site on Mount Sequoyah on the east side of Fayetteville, exhibits the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright, as did many of Stone's residential designs in the 1940s and early 1950s, through its many windows that bring the outdoors in, the open floor plan, and the use of natural materials.

The Noll Residence is a long, low house with wide eaves and a low-pitched, gable-on-hip roof covered in wood shakes. Although the house appears to be one-story tall in the front, due to the steep slope of the site, it appears to be two-stories tall in the rear. The majority of the walls are sided in wood drop siding, although portions are built out of red Roman brick. The house also features many large stationary windows and glass doors, especially along the rear of the house, to take advantage of the large rear deck and views of Fayetteville beyond.

The Noll Residence rests on a continuous foundation, which is also built of red Roman brick. The Roman brick was also used to build the massive chimney towards the north end of the house and a low wall around the courtyard at the front entrance. The courtyard also contributes to the nomination.

In addition to the house, a basketball court is present in the backyard. However, because of its age, it does not contribute to the nomination.

Front/East Façade

The front façade of the Noll Residence is long and low, facing the top of the lot's slope at N. Sequoyah Drive. Beginning at the north end of the house is the open carport. The roof of the carport is supported at the northeast corner by a Roman brick column. An open doorway is located to the left of the column and the rest of the carport is enclosed on the east side by the front façade's wall, which is sided with drop siding.

Proceeding south along the façade, there are two pair of single-pane, wood-framed casement windows that provide light to the kitchen. (According to the plans for the house, the window frames are redwood.) Further south along the façade, a set of French doors followed by a plate glass window, followed by another set of

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French doors and two more plate glass windows provide light and ventilation to the dining room area of the house, and also provide access to the front courtyard area. The courtyard is surrounded by a low wall built of red Roman brick. To the left of the southernmost plate-glass window is the main entrance to the house, which has a solid wood door. (The door is birch, according to the plans.) A full-height Roman brick wall extends out from the façade to the edge of the eave to the left of the main entrance, and was likely meant to provide additional privacy to the bedroom area of the house.

The bedroom area is the next portion of the house proceeding south along the front façade. A band of wide and short rectangular, wood-frame windows extends along the entire remaining length of the front façade. The windows are unusual in that they are low in the façade, located only 2' 8" above the ground level on the outside and at waist height on the inside.

Side/South Façade

The south side of the house has a very narrow façade. The right side of the façade is a solid wall with wood drop siding like that on the front façade. The middle of the façade has a set of French doors that provide access to a small wood stoop with wood railing and a set of steps leading to the ground level at the front of the house. To the west of the French doors is a large plate-glass window, followed by the southern end of the rear deck, which has the same kind of wood railing as the stoop on the south side.

Rear/West Façade

The west façade of the house is also long like the front façade, although the length is broken up by the living room area, which forms a T off the rear of the house. Due to the steep slope of the site, the rear façade of the house is two-stories tall. Beginning at the south end of the façade in the bedroom area of the house, the upper or main level has three plate-glass windows followed by a door that provide light to the master bedroom and access to the deck. To the left of the door, the façade projects slightly around the exterior of an indoor closet and is sided with drop siding.

Further north on the façade on the upper level are a single door followed by a plate-glass window followed by another door followed by another plate-glass door, and finally, another door. These doors and windows provide light and ventilation to the interior gallery space, and also allow access to the rear deck. To the left of the northernmost door, before the living room extension, is another slight projection of the façade around the exterior of an indoor closet that is sided with drop siding.

The lower level of the rear façade underneath the bedroom area is built of red Roman brick. Near the southern end of the façade is a wood picket enclosure followed by a plate-glass window. A short distance further north on the façade is a single wood entrance door with large glass window pane followed further down the façade by three large plate-glass windows. (The plate-glass windows in this area were installed in the house after 1962 when the University of Arkansas used the property as the President's residence and

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finished the basement.) The rest of the façade under the bedroom area is red Roman brick without doors or fenestration.

The living room projection on the rear façade has a small portion of wall covered in drop siding on the east end of the south side on the upper level. To the left of the wall is a set of French doors followed by three plate glass windows comprising the remainder of the south side of the living room. The rear deck also wraps around the north and west sides of the living room, and a set of stairs, built after 1962, provides access from the deck to the lawn below. The lower level of the south side of the living is partially built of red Roman brick, although the left side of the façade has three plate-glass windows that provide light to the lower level's family room.

The west side of the living room projection's upper level has three plate-glass windows on the right side followed by a set of French doors that provide additional light to the living room and also provide additional access to the deck. To the left of the French doors, the rest of the wall is built of Roman brick. The deck on this side of the living room projects dramatically, approximately twenty feet, away from the house. The lower level of the living room projection's west façade, like the upper level, has three plate-glass windows on the right side followed by a set of French doors that provide additional light to the lower level family room and also provide additional access to the yard. To the left of the French doors, the rest of the wall is built of Roman brick. Two posts on top of a low brick wall, set approximately ten feet away from the façade, provide support for the twenty-foot cantilever of the upper level deck.

The north side of the living room projection is solid Roman brick, although a portion of the façade projects slightly where a portion of the approximately twenty-foot wide chimney is exposed.

The west façade of the house in the kitchen area, to the north of the living room projection, has a large wood-frame picture window flanked on either side by a two-pane wood-frame sliding window on the upper level, and a solid Roman brick wall on the lower level. The last portion of the west façade, at the north end of the house, is the carport, which has a Roman brick column at the north end, and a large opening divided in thirds by wood posts to its right.

Side/North Façade

The north façade of the house is comprised of the open carport, which has a short curvilinear concrete driveway leading up to it off Company Street.

Interior

The upper level of the house very much reflects Stone's original plan. The north portion of the house contains the carport and kitchen, which contains a cathedral ceiling with exposed beams and a small Roman-brick fireplace on the south wall. The middle portion of the house on the upper level contains an open dining room and living room area. The living room also has a cathedral ceiling with exposed beams, and also

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features a Roman-brick fireplace on the north side. The windows and French doors on the west and south sides provide lots of light to the interior, and help to blur the line between the indoors and outdoors. The French doors also provide easy access to the deck.

The southern half of the house consists of the bedroom and bathroom area, which are accessed by an eight-foot wide gallery space. (The "space-wasting hallway" was a "constant irritant" to Stone, and the extreme width of the gallery was an experiment to try and make the hallway a multi-purpose space.) The gallery also has a blurred line between indoors and outdoors by the use of several doors providing access to the deck, and the large plate-glass windows. Although the master bedroom also has a number of plate-glass windows, again blurring the boundary between the inside and outside, the other bedrooms are currently very dark and private since they currently are only lighted by the low narrow windows on the front façade. (Originally, a set of accordion doors and roll-up shades, located on the gallery-side wall of the bedrooms, provided additional light and ventilation, but they were replaced by a solid wall when the house was owned by the University of Arkansas. However, the modification did not alter the sizes of the spaces.)

The lower level of the house, towards the northern end, contains the service areas, such as the laundry room. Underneath the living room of the house is the family room and, like the living room, it has several plate-glass windows letting in lots of light and providing views of the outdoors. Also like the living room, the family room has a Roman-brick fireplace on the north wall. The southern end of the house, underneath the bedroom area, was originally open but was converted into additional rooms by the University. Plate-glass windows, also installed by the University, continue Stone's vision of providing lots of light to the space and blurring the line between indoors and outdoors.

INTEGRITY

Overall, the Willis Noll Residence has good integrity and still conveys the original Edward Durell Stone design. The major changes to the exterior of the house have occurred on the rear, and include the construction of the stairs leading from the upper-level deck to the lawn, and the installation of plate-glass windows on the lower level of the bedroom area. However, these changes blend in with the rest of the house's architecture.

The interior of the house, especially on the upper level, still very much reflects Stone's original design of the house. Although the accordion doors and roll-up shades in the bedroom area of the gallery wall were replaced with a solid wall, the sizes of the spaces have not changed and one can still get a good idea of the original flow and design of the spaces. Also, throughout the entire house, one is still able to see the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright on the design, through the prodigious use of plate-glass windows to blend the inside with the outside, the use of natural materials, and the use of an open floor plan, allowing the various spaces to flow and merge into one another.

Noll, Willis, Residence
Name of Property

Washington County, Arkansas
County and State

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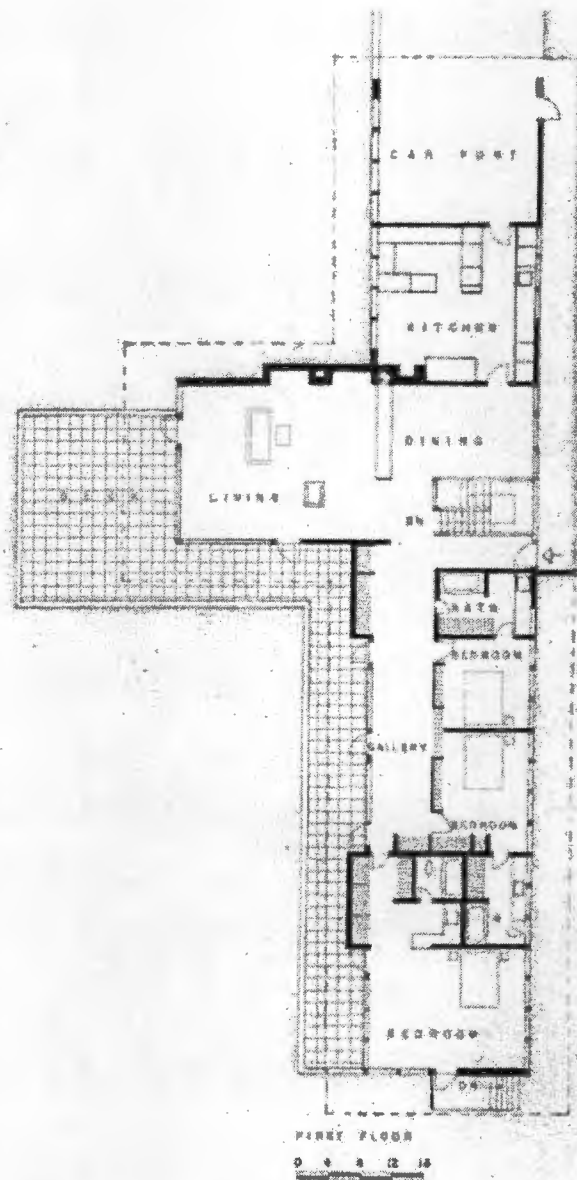
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The neighborhood around the Noll Residence is still comprised of mainly middle- and upper-middle class single-family residences on large lots like it would have been when the house was built in 1950. As a result, the setting still reflects the time of the house's construction.

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Willis Noll Residence first floor plan.

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SUMMARY

The Willis Noll Residence is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **statewide significance** under **Criterion C** as the only residence in Washington County designed by the internationally-known architect Edward Durell Stone. The house, which was built in 1950, is an excellent example of Stone's 1940s and early 1950s residential architecture, which often exhibited the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright through its use of natural materials, open floor plans, and blurring of the boundary between the indoors and outdoors.

ELABORATION

Edward Durell Stone, who became one of the major figures in twentieth-century architecture, was born in Fayetteville, Arkansas, on March 9, 1902. By the time Stone was born, his father, who was in his mid-50s, was in semi-retirement after being a merchant in Fayetteville. His mother, whose maiden name was Johnson, had come to Fayetteville from St. Louis to teach English at the University of Arkansas. Stone described his years growing up by saying that, "I never knew very strong discipline; I was allowed to do as I pleased, and had a very happy, carefree boyhood."¹

Stone was a good student in grammar school, and he enjoyed spending time outdoors in his spare time, whether it was fishing or looking for arrowheads with his father, swimming, or looking for birds' nests, since the superintendent of his grammar school got him interested in ornithology. Even as a young child, Stone had awareness of what an architect was, due to the fact that his brother, Hicks, decided to be an architect after visiting the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.²

As a child, Stone was also very creative. He wrote, "I loved to build things and had all sorts of projects; and my mother, who was talented in the arts, encouraged my interest in building, in drawing, in anything creative. She gave me a room upstairs in our house, where I had my own carpentry shop and built furniture, boats and bird-houses."³ It was even as a young boy that Stone won his first architecture competition, and he "jokingly blamed my becoming an architect on Senator J. William Fulbright, a boyhood playmate, whose family owned the local paper."⁴ He described the competition by writing:

The local lumber company, with the cooperation of the Fulbright paper, had a competition for a birdhouse, open to the boys of two counties... I elected to build a bluebird house. I made a wooden box and surfaced it with sassafras branches cut in half, so that it had the appearance of a log cabin. ... So it was a very functional job with rustic charm. As somebody said, the design might have

¹ Edward Durell Stone. *The Evolution of an Architect*. New York: Horizon Press, 1962, pp. 16, 18-19.

² Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 18-19.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

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been influenced by Maybeck or Greene & Greene or some of the very early Wright houses. ...

I won the first prize, two dollars and fifty cents, and it was announced in the daily paper. I was also the newsboy and delivered the papers, heralding my success. The prize was the first money I had ever earned and, when I found that I could do exactly what I liked best, have recognition and make money, it was my undoing.⁵

Stone began his higher education in the art department at the University of Arkansas shortly after the death of his mother. Miss Galbraith, who was one of the two teachers in the University's art department at the time, took an interest in Stone's talent, and wrote to his brother, Hicks, that he should be encouraged. In 1923, Stone moved to Boston and Hicks was able to get him a job as an office boy in the architectural firm of Strickland, Blodgett & Law.⁶

While Stone was living in Boston, he began formal architectural education at the Boston Architectural Club. Stone's education at the Club focused on drawing, and it was centered around classical orders and details. Stone had his work critiqued by architects in the Boston area as well as by professors at both the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Harvard. It was while Stone was studying at the Boston Architectural Club that he met and was hired as a draftsman by architect Henry R. Shepley, whom Stone called his "first patron." Even though Stone went to work for Shepley, he continued his education in the evenings.⁷

In 1926, Stone entered a competition to win a special scholarship to Harvard, and was awarded first prize, a year's tuition. He ended up completing two years of architectural study in the year's time, and then transferred to MIT for his fifth year of study. He had been lured to MIT because Jacques Carlu, a professor there, was beginning to experiment with modern design, something in which Stone was interested. Stone's study of modern architecture would get a big boost in 1927 when he won the Rotch traveling scholarship, an award of two years of study and travel in Europe.⁸ Although Stone did study historic architecture in Europe, he, like other students, was becoming enamored with modern design. He wrote, "Le Corbusier's first books were being published and in nearby Dessau the Bauhaus was founded, all heralding the arrival of the new machine age. Those ideas were contagious and we students spent our time redesigning the United States on marble-topped café tables."⁹

⁵ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 19-20.

⁶ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 20-21.

⁷ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 22.

⁸ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 23-24.

⁹ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 24-25.

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After studying in Europe, Stone returned to the United States, landing in New York in November 1929, which Stone said was "probably the least auspicious time in history to start an architectural career." However, he was able to begin a career, slowly at first, by working on projects under other firms. Most notably, Stone worked on the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel under the firm of Schultze and Weaver and on the Radio City Music Hall and Center Theater at Rockefeller Center as the chief designer under the firms of Hood and Foulhoux; Corbett, Harrison and MacMurray; and Reinhard and Hofmeister.¹⁰

Stone became an architect in his own right with the design of the Mandel House in Mt. Kisco (Westchester), New York, in 1933 (NR listed 03/01/96). The house was the first modern house in the eastern U.S., and was a concrete and steel building designed in the International style. Although the modern design created large amounts of excitement in the architectural community, the excitement was not shared by all. When another house in the style was built in the area, it "created such a flurry in the community that the zoning ordinances were changed to prevent further shocks to their sensibilities."¹¹

Much of Stone's architecture in the 1930s employed characteristics of the International style and other modern architecture that he had seen in Europe. Features such as simple geometric forms and large windows marked his architecture during the period, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the A. Conger Goodyear House in Nassau, New York (NR listed 04/12/03), illustrate his design style. He also became successful enough in the 1930s that he was able to establish his own firm, Edward Durell Stone & Associates in 1936 in New York.¹² (Over the years the firm would expand to include Edward Durell Stone, Inc., Hicks Drafting Corporation, and Torch Realty.¹³)

Although Stone's architecture of the 1930s was centered around the International style and the architecture that he had seen in Europe, his style would take a drastic turn in 1940 when he took a trip across the country to California. Stone had already begun to question the International style because the "style did not win general acceptance in this country: they were too sparse, too arid, too cold," but a visit to Frank Lloyd Wright's home, Taliesin, in Wisconsin turned Stone away from the style. Stone wrote: "Taliesin was a contrast to my previous concepts of residential design. The architecture was attuned to the natural beauty of the site; its natural materials, wood and stone indigenous to the countryside, seemed to remain so even in the structure itself. It was the first time I had ever walked through one of Mr. Wright's buildings and I was overwhelmed by its beauty."¹⁴

Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 29-30.

¹¹ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 32.

¹² Information on Edward Durell Stone found on "The Recent Past Preservation Network" at www.recentpast.org/people/stone.html.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 89.

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Stone's architecture through the 1940s, particularly his residential designs, would show a tremendous amount of Wright's influence with the use of natural materials and the use of an open floor plan, allowing the various spaces to flow and merge into one another. Stone further wrote:

My 1940 trip awakened me to the architecture we had created in our own country with indigenous talent and materials. I had been oriented towards European ideas because I had actually seen more of Europe than of my own country, but this was the beginning of my repudiation of the International style, and it led to a period of several years during which I expressed this new respect for natural materials in a series of wood houses in the east and in my native state of Arkansas.¹⁵

The visit to Taliesin cemented the friendship between Stone and Wright, and Wright would play a dual role in Stone's life as a "friend and personal hero" until his death in 1959.¹⁶

Like many Americans, Stone had his life interrupted by World War II. Although Stone was too old to fight at the time, he did seek out a general in Washington who was looking for architects and engineers to design buildings and other facilities for the Air Force. Stone found that military life was a "frustrating, slow-moving, bureaucratic process," but even so he was able to make some accomplishments while in the military, including recommending that military bases be master-planned in order to facilitate efficient development. In addition, he worked on revolutionizing hangar design, which had remained stagnant even though planes were getting larger, making hangars obsolete in a short amount of time.¹⁷

After the war ended, Stone returned to New York and reestablished his office in Great Neck on Long Island although he moved it to New York City a short time later. Many of his first clients in the late 1940s wanted residential designs, so Stone was able to apply the things he had seen in Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture. He wrote that, "The houses which I designed during this period were a new departure for me. They were more indigenous and therefore more at home in this country than my earlier houses inspired by European architecture."¹⁸ The Willis Noll House in Fayetteville and Felix Smart House in Pine Bluff, both built in 1950, illustrate the influence of Wright on Stone's architecture during the period.

The late 1940s and early 1950s were a busy time for Stone in Arkansas. In addition to the residential designs being worked on, which included homes in Fayetteville, Harrison, Little Rock, Pine Bluff, and McGehee, he

¹⁵ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 92.

¹⁶ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 91.

¹⁷ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 95-96.

¹⁸ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 97.

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was involved with other public and institutional designs for the University of Arkansas. His first major commission by the University was the Fine Arts Center, which included architecture, all of the visual arts, music and theater in one facility. To Stone's knowledge, it was the "first completely physically integrated Fine Arts Center."¹⁹ The Fine Arts Center would also lead to a design for the Sigma Nu Fraternity House, also built in 1949 with an addition in 1957. In addition to the commissions at the Fayetteville campus, Stone also designed a hospital (built 1950) and school (built 1954) for the University of Arkansas Medical School in Little Rock. By the time that the Carlson Terrace project was awarded, Stone even opened a field office in Fayetteville in late 1955. The office would remain open only a short time, however, before it was closed in late 1959.²⁰

However, during the early 1950s, Stone was still searching for a style to call his own. Since most of Stone's architectural training was based on classical design, he was looking for a style that was formal and based on classical ideas. He would finally find his style with the design and construction of the United States Embassy in New Delhi, India, in 1954. He "developed a more individualistic style, incorporating classical traditions and contemporary materials and methods."²¹ He described his thoughts on the complex in his 1962 autobiography:

First I decided to place the structure on a platform or podium under which automobiles could be sheltered from the 120 degree sun of India. Also – let's be frank – I wanted to keep them out of sight. The idea of a monumental building rising from a sea of multi-colored, tail-finned automobiles is simply revolting. I elected to place the offices on two stories around a water garden to gain the cooling effect of the fountains and pool. To shade windows and other glass areas from the sun and reduce glare, I adopted a terrazzo grille for exterior walls – an ancient principle in tropical climates. The entire building is shaded by a rectangular canopy separated from the second floor by several feet – a heat-dissipating breezeway. For proper shade I carried the canopy well beyond the wall of the building – beyond the reach of the cantilever – so columns were required for support. ... The result of solving all these considerations of climate and function produced a building type – a temple – almost as old as history.²²

¹⁹ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 41.

²⁰ Ernie Jacks (associate of Edward Durell Stone). Interview with the author. 16 September 2004.

²¹ Information on Edward Durell Stone found on "The Recent Past Preservation Network" at www.recentpast.org/people/stone.html.

²² Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 138.

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The embassy also used several characteristics, such as placing the complex on a podium, grillwork for exterior walls, and canopies, that he would use on designs in Arkansas, notably the Carlson Terrace Apartments at the University of Arkansas, built in 1956 and 1958, and the Pine Bluff Civic Center, built in 1963-1967. (Although the grillwork at Carlson Terrace probably provided some shading during the hot Arkansas summers, Stone wrote that it also "provides privacy and veils any irresponsible student housekeeping."²³)

The Embassy in New Delhi was also widely received in the architectural community, and really catapulted Stone onto the international scene. In fact, Frank Lloyd Wright called it one of the finest buildings in the past one hundred years, and said, "Ed, that's a perfectly beautiful building. If I were doing it I'd do it in the same way."²⁴ (Compliments from Wright were rare indeed. Although he called Stone an "honest" architect, he was not so kind to other firms of the day. For example, he often referred to Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, who are best-known for their work designing office buildings, as "Skiddings, Own-more, and Sterile."²⁵)

Stone's residential designs in the 1950s also changed, reflecting more of his classical ideas rather than exhibiting the influence of Wright. In fact, with respect to the Bruno Graf Residence in Dallas, Texas, built in 1956, Stone referred to it as a "formal" house that "evokes a sense of the classical Pompeiian house, enclosed by high walls, with all rooms opening to courtyards."²⁶ It was also during the very late 1940s and early 1950s, with respect to residential design, that Stone was finally able to develop a plan that eliminated the "space-wasting" hallway," which was a "constant irritant" to him. Although the Noll Residence in Fayetteville and the Smart Residence in Pine Bluff were experiments in eliminating the hallway by using wide galleries that were meant to be multi-purpose spaces, the Jay Lewis House in McGehee, built in 1955, is the best example in Arkansas of a residential plan without a hallway.²⁷

After the completion of the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, Stone became much more of an international architect. From the mid-1950s until the time he retired, Stone designed many commercial, civic, religious, and institutional buildings around the world. Probably his best known commissions from the later years of his practice are the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, designed in 1959, and the U.S. Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair, designed in 1957. The magnitude and scope of the projects Stone received after the U.S. Embassy project in New Delhi also put an end to his residential design after the mid-1950s.

Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 196.

²⁴ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 139.

²⁵ Robert C. Twombly. *Frank Lloyd Wright, His Life and Architecture*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1979, p. 384.

²⁶ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 141.

²⁷ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 97.

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After the initial flurry of designs that Stone did in Arkansas in the late 1940s and early 1950s, only a couple of his designs were built in the 1960s. Although Stone completed designs for the University of Arkansas Alumni Center in 1962 and the proposed Greer's Ferry National Garden Park in 1966, they were never built. Only his designs for the Pine Bluff Civic Center (1963-1967) and the First National Bank in Hot Springs (1969) were brought to fruition.²⁸ The Pine Bluff Civic Center is also significant among Stone's Arkansas designs in that it was the only collaboration in his native state with his son, Edward Durell Stone, Jr., who was the landscape architect for the project.

Stone continued to practice architecture, and also take an active role in the firm's practice, until he retired in 1974 due to health reasons. He died on August 6, 1978, after a brief illness, and was cremated and buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Fayetteville.²⁹

Edward Durell Stone will likely always be remembered as one of the greatest architects of the twentieth century. In fact, while the U.S. Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair was under construction in 1958, Stone was featured on the cover of the March 31 issue of *Time* magazine. The accompanying feature article on him wrote that he was "One of the profession's freest spirits and by general consensus the most versatile designer and draftsman of his generation. Ed Stone was a pioneer modernist. He early set his mark on such buildings as Manhattan's Museum of Modern Art, [and] became one of the deftest interpreters of the International Style initiated by France's Le Corbusier and Germany's Bauhaus school."³⁰ His legacy is further cemented by the many awards he received during his career, which included three medals from the Architectural League of New York (1937, 1950, and 1953), a Gold Medal (1955) and two Honor Awards (1958 and 1967) from the American Institute of Architects, the Architectural Excellence Award from the Metropolitan Washington Board of Trade (1965), and the First Prize in the 1973 American Society of Landscape Architects Competition.³¹

In the late 1940s, Willis Noll, a wholesale grocer in Fayetteville, approached Stone about designing a house for him on a steeply sloping site on Mount Sequoyah on the east side of Fayetteville. Stone designed a house that took full advantage of the site's topography, and that would require a minimal amount of site work. The design was heavily influenced by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright with the use of natural materials, an open floor plan, and lots of windows, especially on the rear façade, that allowed the outdoors to become a part of the house's interior. The large cantilever of the rear deck also picked up on Wright's love for the cantilever. The plans for the house were completed in early January 1950, and construction began shortly afterwards.³²

Ernie Jacks (associate of Edward Durell Stone). Letter to the author. 14 August 2003.

²⁹ Information on Edward Durell Stone found on "The Recent Past Preservation Network" at www.recentpast.org/people/stone.html.

³⁰ "More Than Modern." *Time*, 31 March 1958, p. 56.

³¹ Ann Lee Morgan and Colin Naylor (eds.). *Contemporary Architects, Second Edition*. Chicago: St. James Press, 1987, p. 873.

³² Clark Milligan (current owner of the property). Telephone conversation with the author. 30 August 2004.

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The Noll Residence was designed during a phase of Stone's work that he referred to as his "Frank Lloyd Wright period." Ernie Jacks, one of Stone's associates, wrote:

Still based on repetitive modules of 4 or 5 feet, the trussed ceiling construction was enclosed – not the exposed beams and decking as before – and covered by a low-pitched gable or modified hip roof usually of cedar shingles. On occasion, to emphasize a space in the interior, the flat ceiling was raised over an area to follow the slope of the roof. Often there were rows of masonry columns, or even a rhythmic repetition of masonry enclosures, where privacy was required. The planning was still very open, with the blocks of closed, private spaces reached through open rooms or corridor spaces, again widened and labeled "Gallery" or "Atrium." The Noll and Smart houses in Arkansas, and the Linder house in Pennsylvania, are examples.³³

The design of the house was notable for its day, and it was featured in the April 1952 issue of *House & Home* magazine. The article said that:

This is an opportunistic downhill house, whose designers preserved the contours of its site and used them to build size without formality. Because of the land drop they were able to construct an exceptionally unobtrusive two-story house, which doesn't put up much front, but has a lot of back.

From uphill, the house has a lean low brick façade which belies the actual size of the structure; from below, the true bulk is apparent, where the house opens up and reveals its spacious, comfortable character.

The key to this relaxed informality is the great raft of a porch which is suspended out over the grass and terrace below. Much more than a minimal balcony, this is a real duplication outdoors of the adjacent living room.³⁴

Unfortunately, Noll never saw the completed house, since he died while the house was under construction. After Noll's death, his widow married Herbert "Buck" Lewis, a prominent Fayetteville businessman who was the owner of Lewis Brothers Hardware, and president of the First National Bank.³⁵ They lived in the house for approximately twelve years.

³³ Ernie Jacks (associate of Edward Durell Stone). *The Elegant Bohemian*. Unpublished memoir, c.2004, p. 31.

³⁴ "On an Arkansas Hillside: A Spacious Timber Porch Shadows the Slope." *House & Home*, April 1952, pp. 98-100.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

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Circa 1960, the property was purchased by the University of Arkansas to be used as the chancellor's house. The University modified the home to its current form, which included finishing the basement and installing the plate-glass windows on the rear elevation's lower level and replacing the accordion doors on the bedrooms with a solid wall. By the early 1990s, however, the University decided to auction off the house with the intent of building a new chancellor's home designed by Fay Jones. The University set a minimum bid of \$150,000 for the property, and only one bid was received (just above the minimum threshold). After the details and some conflicts were resolved, ownership of the house was transferred to the current owners c.1991.³⁶

Although the design of the Noll House was inspired by the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, it is also possible that the Noll Residence design was also an inspiration for Wright. In 1956, Wright completed the first of three designs for Marshall Erdman and Associates for a prefabricated house. The Erdman Prefab #1 plan could be ordered as a three bedroom (model 1300) or four bedroom (model 1400) design. The price for the basic three-bedroom kit was \$16,400 while the fourth bedroom added \$1,200 to the cost. A garage kit (model 1310 or 1410) was \$400, and having an exposed basement with window wall was \$1,100. Wright's architectural fee was \$750.³⁷

The plan of the Erdman Prefab #1, with its kitchen space at one end, central dining room and projecting living room with fireplace, and wide gallery leading to the bedrooms, is very similar to the Noll Residence plan. In addition, some of the fenestration of the Erdman Prefab #1, most notably the large windows and French doors in the living room and the long row of windows on the front of the bedroom wing, are very similar in design and placement when compared to the Noll Residence. The Masonite Ridgeline siding with horizontal battens used on the Erdman Prefab #1 also mimics the horizontal siding that Stone used on the Noll Residence.³⁸

Today, the Willis Noll Residence remains a significant example of Edward Durell Stone's residential design in his native state of Arkansas. Stone, who became internationally-known, designed only five residences in Arkansas, and the Noll Residence is the only example in Fayetteville, the town where he was born. In addition, the Noll Residence is a good example of a residence that exhibits Frank Lloyd Wright's influence on Stone during the 1940s and early 1950s. As a result, the Noll Residence remains an important example of Arkansas's mid-twentieth-century architectural heritage.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Willis Noll Residence is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **statewide significance under Criterion C** as the only residence in Washington County designed by the internationally-

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ William Allin Storrer. *The Frank Lloyd Wright Companion*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993, p. 436.

³⁸ Storrer, p. 437.

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known architect Edward Durell Stone. The house, which was built in 1950, is an excellent example of Stone's 1940s and early 1950s residential architecture, which often exhibited the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright through its use of natural materials, open floor plans, and blurring of the boundary between the indoors and outdoors.

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Noll, Willis, Residence

Name of Property

Washington County, Arkansas

County and State

 United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, Block One, Mountain View Addition to the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas, as per plat of said addition on file in the office of the Ex-Officio Recorder and Circuit Clerk of Washington County, Arkansas.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes all of the land historically associated with the Willis Noll Residence.

THIS MAP COMPLETES WITH NATIONAL TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY, AND ARKANSAS TOPOGRAPHIC COMMISSION. A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS



North, 11 LIS (EAST) 11.1
FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS
1:25,000
92 UTM.

1577-1-311-3

90

23 West

22

20

20

244



NOLL, WILLIS, RESIDENCE

WASHINGTON COUNTY, AR

BENITA DUNALL

AUGUST 2004

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

EAST FACADE, LOOKING SOUTHWEST



NOLL, WILLIS, RESIDENCE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, AR

BENITA JUVALL

AUGUST 2004

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR
EAST FACADE, LOOKING NORTHWEST



NOLL, WILLIS, RESIDENCE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, AR

BENITA DUVALL

AUGUST 2004

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR
WEST AND SOUTH FACADES, LOOKING NORTHEAST

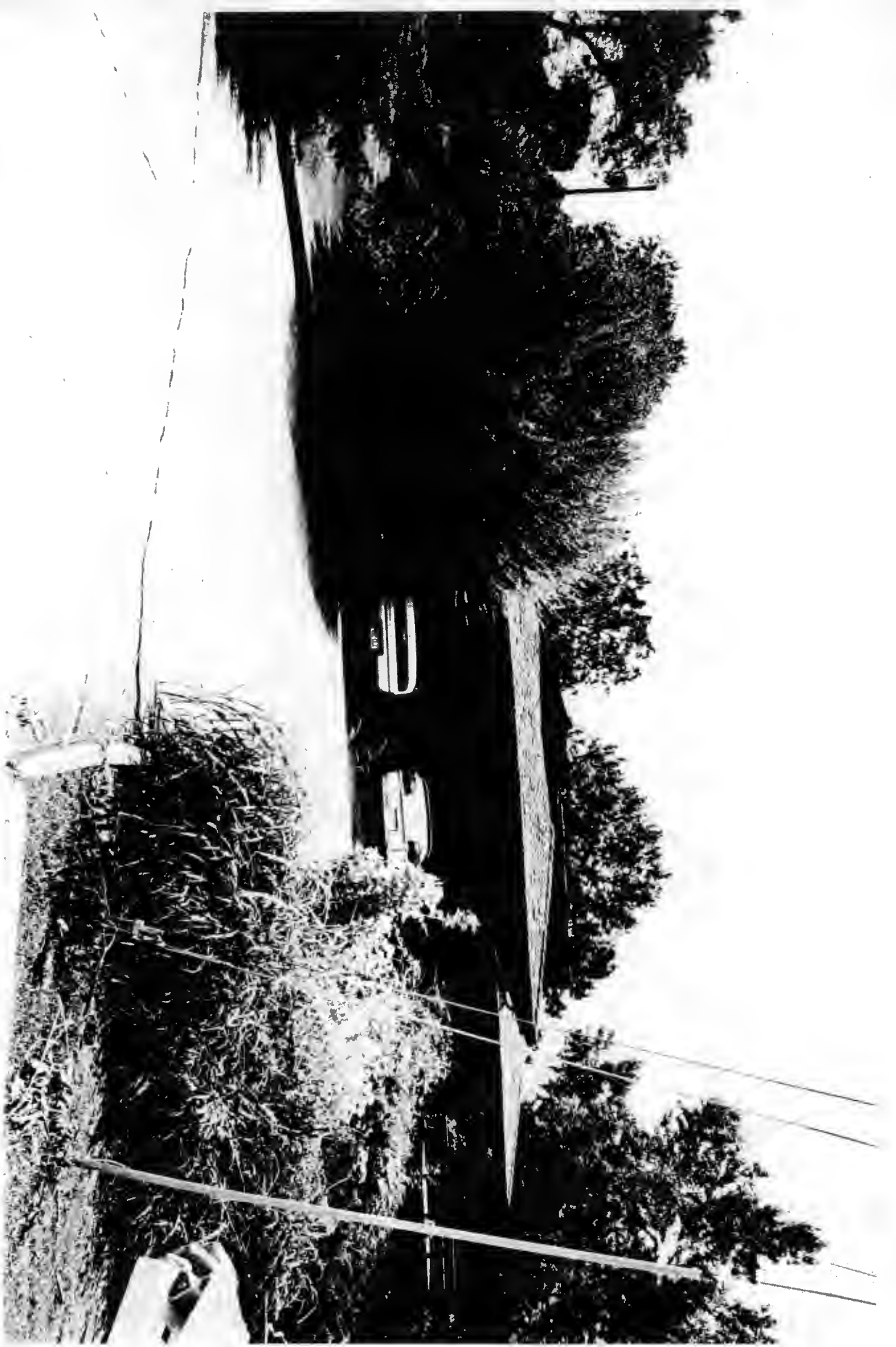


NOU, WILLIS, RESIDENCE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, AR

BENITA DUNALL

AUGUST 2004

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR
NORTH AND WEST FACADES, LOOKING SOUTHEAST



NOLL, WILLIS, RESIDENCE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, AR

BENITA DUVALL

AUGUST 2004

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR
NORTH FACADE, LOOKING SOUTH



NOLL, WILLIS, RESIDENCE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, AR

BENITA DUVALL

AUGUST 2004

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR
GALLERY, LOOKING SOUTH



NOLL, WILLIS, RESIDENCE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, AR

BENITA DUNNALL

AUGUST 2004

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR
MASTER BEDROOM, LOOKING SOUTHWEST



NOLL, WILLIS, RESIDENCE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, AR
BENITA DUVALL

AUGUST 2004

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR
LIVING ROOM & DINING ROOM, LOOKING NORTHEAST