

NRLsted 7/12/92

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See Instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name First United Methodist Church
other names/site number Resource # WH0036

2. Location

street & number Main Street
city, town Searcy
state Arkansas code AR county White code 145 zip code 72143

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked), public-local, public-State, public-Federal
Category of Property: building(s) (checked), district, site, structure, object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing (1), Noncontributing (0), Total (1)

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources of White County, Arkansas

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: [Signature]
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
Date: 5-13-92

In my opinion, the property meets (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official:
Date:
State or Federal agency and bureau:

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[ ] entered in the National Register.
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register.
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register.
[ ] other, (explain):
Signature of the Keeper
Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/ Religious Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/ Religious Structure

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Mid 19th Century/ Gothic Revival

Late Victorian/ Gothic

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls brick

roof Asphalt

other glass

wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1877

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See "Historic and Architectural Resources of White County, Arkansas," Section H.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property \_\_\_\_\_

**UTM References**

A 

Zone	Easting	Northing
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B 

Zone	Easting	Northing
------	---------	----------

C 

Zone	Easting	Northing
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D 

Zone	Easting	Northing
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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Kenneth Story, National Register Coordinator/Architectural Historian  
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 14 December, 1989  
street & number 225 E. Markham St., Suite 200 telephone 501-324-9346  
city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201

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## Description

The First United Methodist Church is a brick, single story, T-shaped ecclesiastical structure with a central, square front tower with spire set back upon the gable ridge of the sanctuary, which in turn is intersected toward its eastern end by a full-height transept. Stylistically the building borrows from the early nineteenth century English Gothic Revival church designs with its symmetry and emphasis on verticality though High Victorian Gothic elements appear also. It is covered with composition shingles, glazed with stained glass, and supported by a continuous brick foundation.

The western or front elevation consists of a tall central entrance tower on the gable end, set back upon the gable roof, and flanked by two pointed arch, stained glass windows. Stepped buttresses with stone offsets and decorative brick corbelling define the northern and southern edges of both the elevation and the projecting central tower. The tower is punctuated by a large, pair door entrance with a stained glass tympanum in the pointed arch transom above, another pointed arch stained glass window above divided by tracery into two tall pointed arch lights with a rosette window in the peak, and a pair of small louvered pointed arch openings just below the spire. The spire is a typical octagonal shape set upon a flaring four-sided hipped base, and is punctuated only by four narrow, gabled louvered dormer vents which face each of the four elevations. Two smaller spires cap the outside buttresses and the brick corbelling across the top of the gable and beneath the tower spire complete the elevation.

The northern and southern elevations are similar, though more recent additions have changed each somewhat. The northern elevation is composed of a later, shed roof addition on the rear (to the east), the gable end of the transept, the hipped roof bride's room in the corner of the nave and transept, the nave wall, and the small porch at the western end of the elevation. The rear room is fenestrated only by a single twelve-over-six wood sash window, while the transept end is punctuated by a single central, monumental pointed arch stained glass window. The bride's room features three pointed arch stained glass windows placed symmetrically in its wall and the two exposed bays of the nave wall are lighted with taller pointed arch windows. The single story gable roof porch at the western end has been extended with a covered, modern brick walkway which allows members protected access to the sanctuary in inclement weather. The southern elevation is even similar in its additions, except for the fact that the covered walkway extending from the gable roof porch at the western end is here constructed of wood and leads from the church to the education and activities building just to the south. Another wood gable roof porch projects from the western wall of the transept, which allows for a total of three exposed bays in the nave wall on this elevation though the type of fenestration is identical to the nave wall opposite.

The eastern wall is blank with the exception of a single door in the low, shed addition, placed toward the northern end.

The interior of the building was extensively repaired in 1902, though most of the work reproduced original elements; thus it is largely intact, featuring wood windows, trusswork and trim, and plaster walls of the same configuration and color as the original.

The church has undergone a series of alterations, though most are historic, and none significantly detract from the building's historic aspect. The original church consisted of a central tower,

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nave, and transept, which combined to form a Latin cross plan. After the primarily interior renovation of 1902, little other work was done on the building until the addition of the rear shed and the "bride's room" in the northwest transept corner c. 1935. The porch extensions at the western end (on the northern and southern elevations, just back from the main facade) were added recently.

The First United Methodist Church shelters a strong and active congregation, and hence is in very good condition.

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Significance

Criterion C, local significance

The First United Methodist Church (Part E, Historic Context #3) is the only surviving example in White County of the formal, early nineteenth century English Gothic Revival that swept England, and London in particular, before becoming one of the accepted styles for church design in America. This tall, symmetrical, and imposing interpretation of the Gothic idiom was far more popular with Catholic congregations than with any other, though its appeal clearly spanned religious denominations. Its traditional appearance and conspicuous placement on one of Searcy's main thoroughfares lend it a presence and effect unusual even for other ecclesiastical structures in White County.

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Acres of property: Less than one

UTM References

A 15/615000/3901300

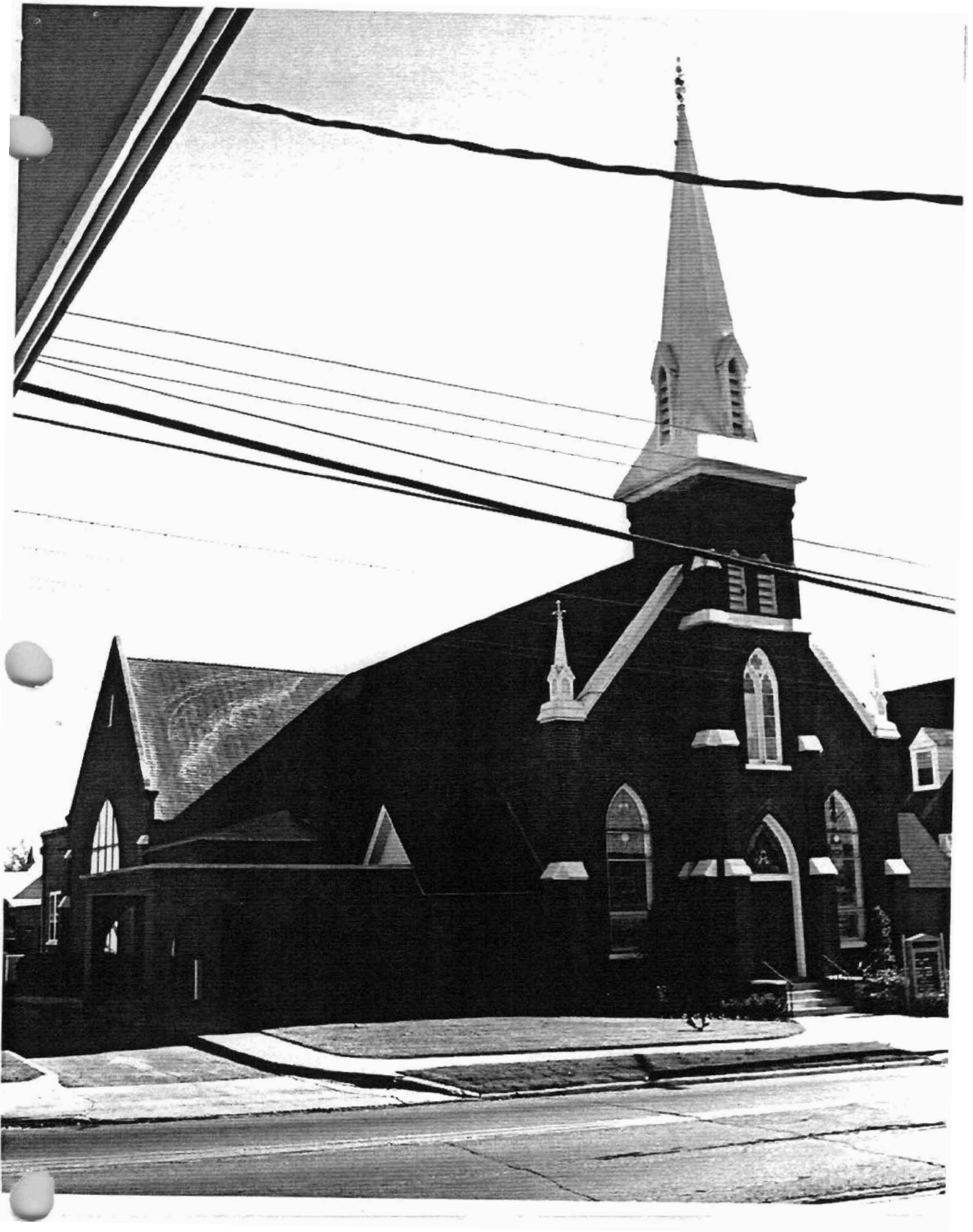
Verbal Boundary Description:

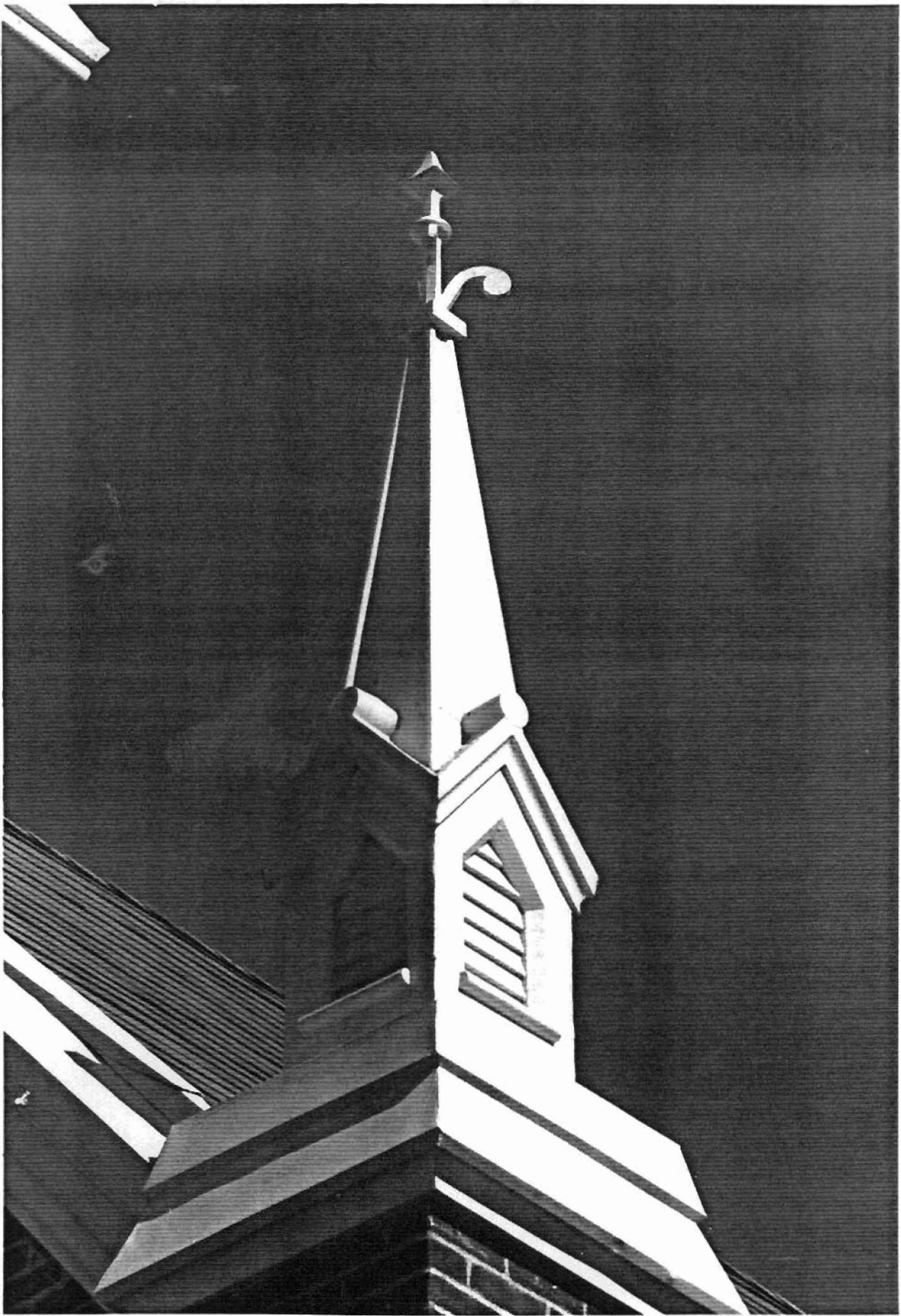
Beginning at a point formed by the intersection of the eastern edge of North Main Street with a perpendicular line running parallel to the southern elevation of the building and located 25 feet to the south thereof, proceed easterly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel to the eastern elevation of the church; thence proceed northerly for a distance of approximately 200 feet along said line to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel to the northern elevation; thence proceed westerly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running along the eastern edge of North Main Street; thence proceed southerly for a distance of approximately 200 feet along said line to the point of beginning.

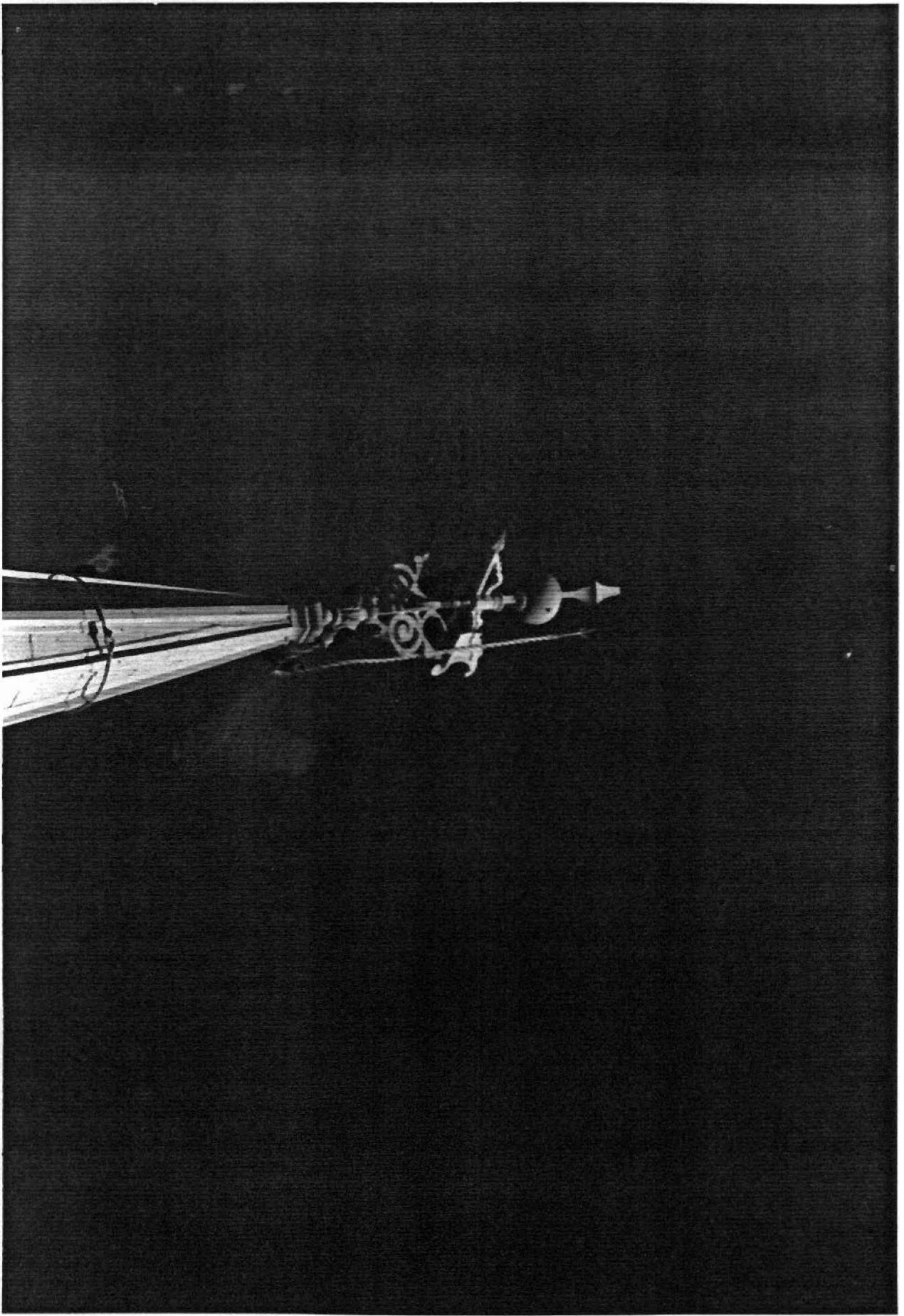
Boundary Justification:

The original lot has been subdivided during the non-historic period, resulting in an indefinite current lot boundary; therefore, this boundary includes all the property historically associated with this resource that retains its integrity.



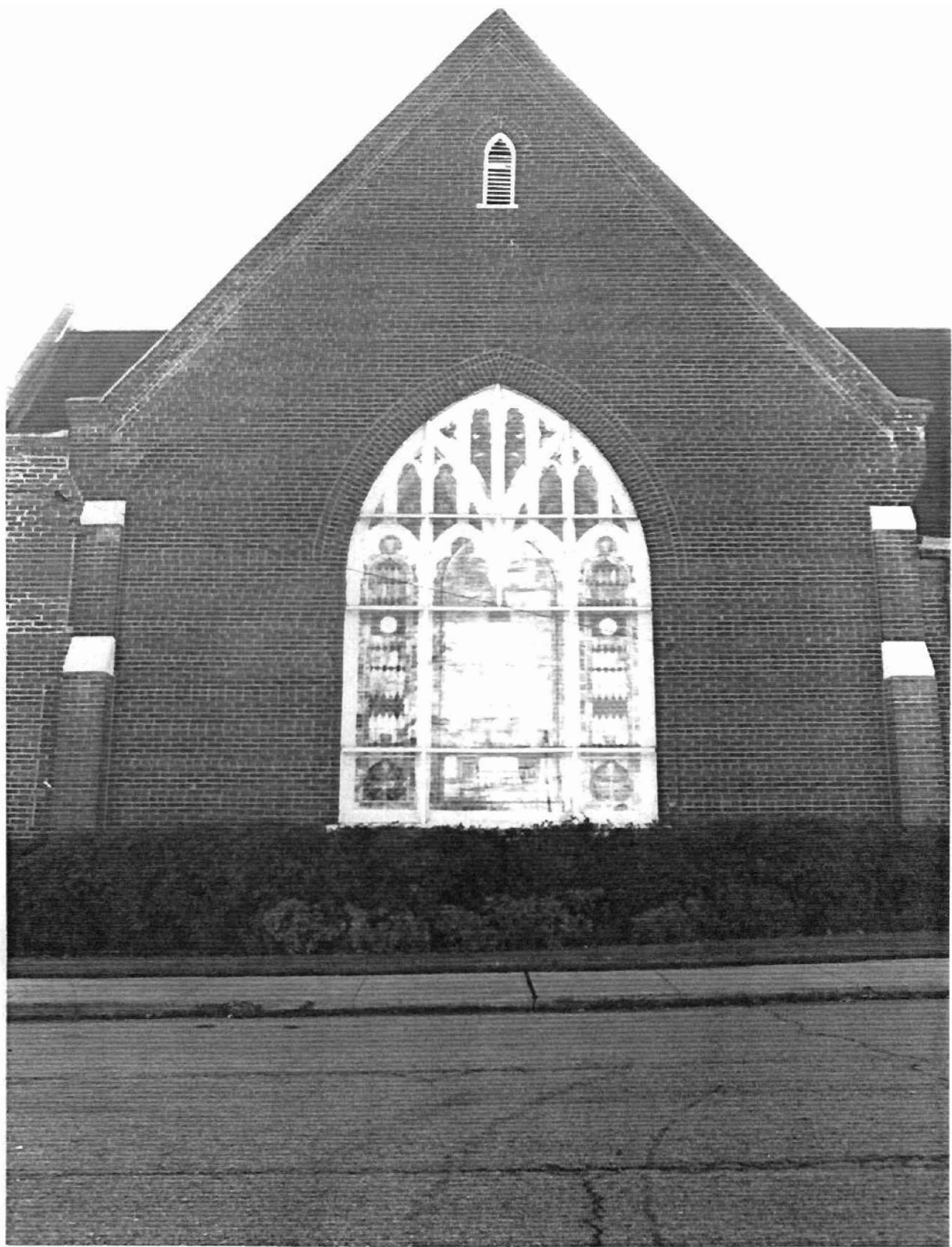


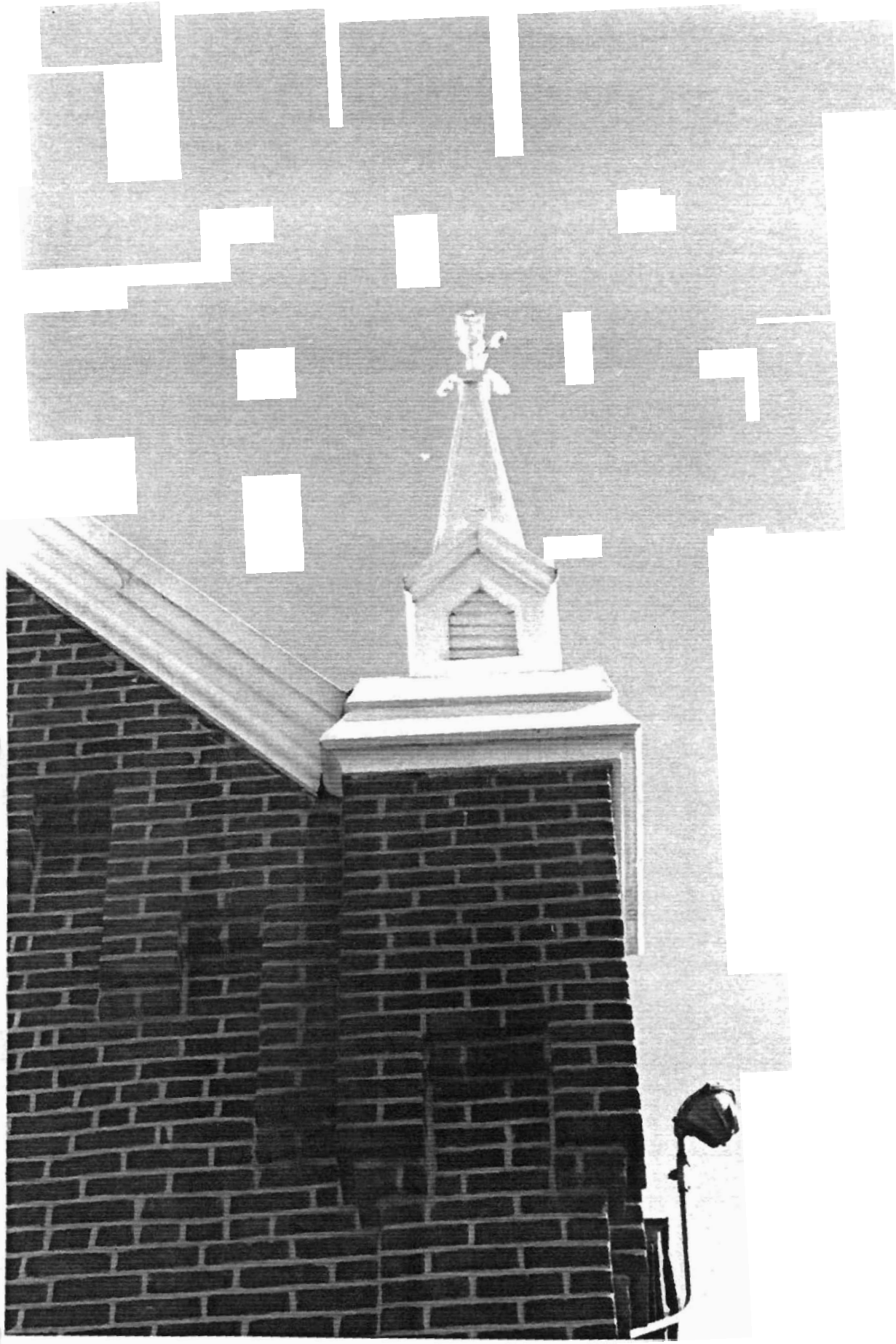


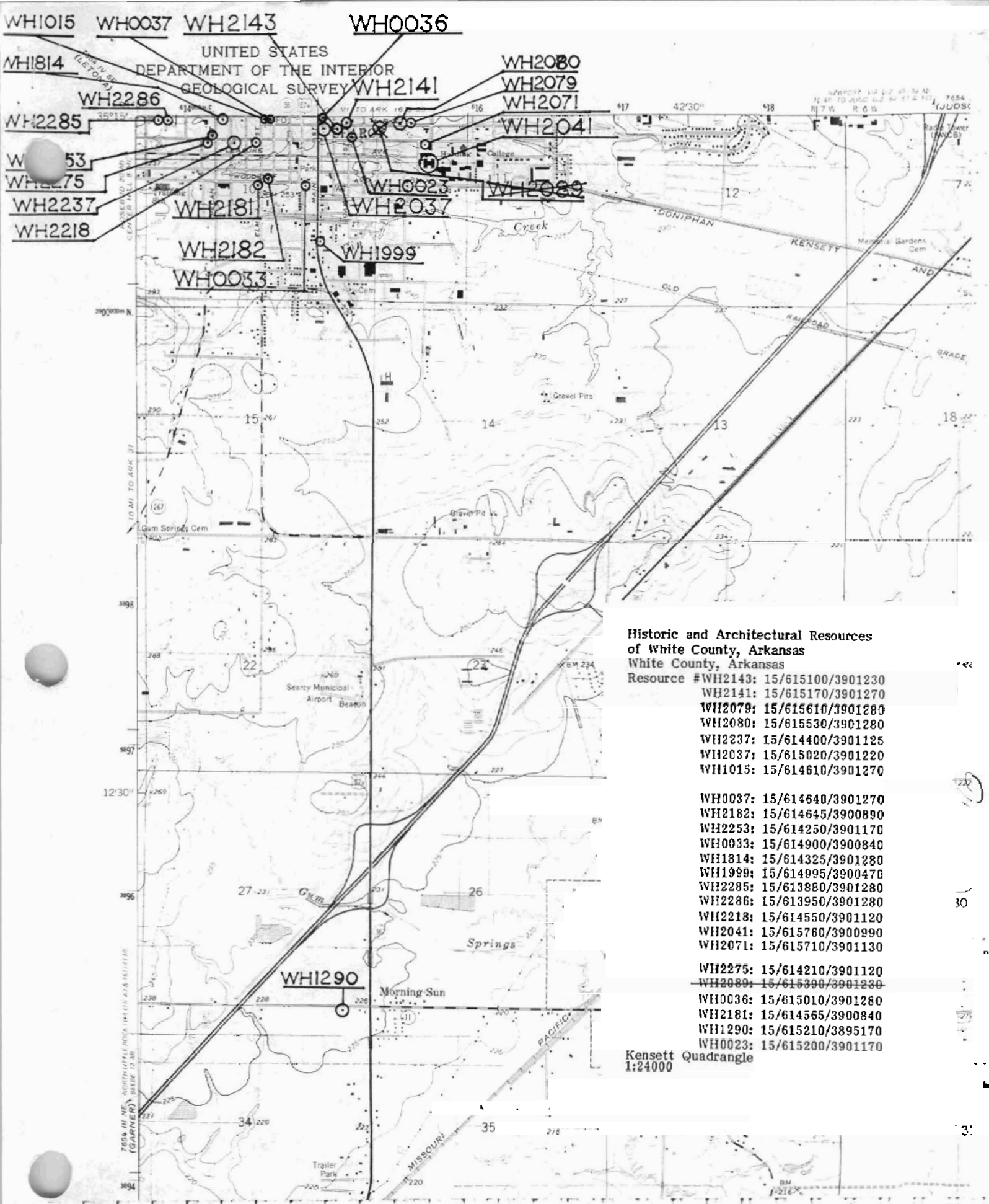












**Historic and Architectural Resources  
of White County, Arkansas**

- White County, Arkansas  
Resource #
- WH2143: 15/615100/3901230
  - WH2141: 15/615170/3901270
  - WH2079: 15/615610/3901280
  - WH2080: 15/615530/3901280
  - WH2237: 15/614400/3901125
  - WH2037: 15/615020/3901220
  - WH1015: 15/614610/3901270
  - WH0037: 15/614640/3901270
  - WH2182: 15/614645/3900890
  - WH2253: 15/614250/3901170
  - WH0033: 15/614900/3900840
  - WH1814: 15/614325/3901280
  - WH1999: 15/614995/3900470
  - WH2285: 15/613880/3901280
  - WH2286: 15/613950/3901280
  - WH2218: 15/614550/3901120
  - WH2041: 15/615760/3900990
  - WH2071: 15/615710/3901130
  - WH2275: 15/614210/3901120
  - WH2089: 15/615390/3901230
  - WH0036: 15/615010/3901280
  - WH2181: 15/614565/3900840
  - WH1290: 15/615210/3895170
  - WH0023: 15/615200/3901170

Kensett Quadrangle  
1:24000