

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet

116

Item number 1,2,4,6, & 10

Page 1

INDIVIDUAL DATA SHEET

General Description

Code: WO-089

Congressional District: First

Name: Woodruff Co. Courthouse
Address: 500 North 3rd Street
Augusta, Arkansas
County: Woodruff

Current Owner: Woodruff County
Judge John Davis, County Judge
Address: 500 North 3rd Street
Augusta, Arkansas 72006

Architectural Information

Architectural Firm: Charles L. Thompson

Date of Construction: 1901

Stylistic Influence: Richardsonian Romanesque

Original Use: Courthouse

Present Use: Courthouse

Geographical Information

UTM Reference: 15 648730/3905940

Acreage: Less than one

Verbal Boundary Description: Courthouse Addition
All Block 1

Condition

Excellent
 Good
 Fair

Deteriorated
 Ruins
 Unexposed

Unaltered
 Altered

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Item number 7 & 8

Page 2

Code: WO-089 (500 N. 3rd, Augusta, AR)

Physical Description

Although designed in 1900, the inspiration for this impressive courthouse clearly derives from the Victorian architectural aesthetic and, more specifically, from the late work of the influential nineteenth-century American architect Henry Hobson Richardson. Harking back to the nineteenth century are the verticality, the asymmetrical massing, and the rich colors (white stone trim against dark red brick) and textures of the building. Like Richardson's work, there is a clarity and powerful simplicity to the whole -- both in the massing and in the simplified decorative details.

Although richly asymmetrical, the building's massing of blocky component parts presents a clear geometry. From a high hipped roof, enriched with iron cresting, an entrance wing projects slightly on the front elevation and is framed by a corner two-story hexagonal tower capped by a tent roof and on the south corner by a tall square tower with pyramidal roof. Again, characteristic of Richardson's work, a round arch springing from simple stone impost forms the entrance for the recessed doorway. The round arch motif is echoed in the brick window heads of the hexagonal tower and in the arched openings crowning the clock tower. The handsome clock tower rises

(continued)

Statement of Significance

This courthouse in Augusta is one of the most monumental and significant structures in Woodruff County, a somewhat remote and rural farming area. The structure is enhanced by its spacious, tree-lined setting of broad lawns on a slightly elevated plot. The design is a distinctive and excellent one in the firm's repertoire of courthouses and one of the earliest as well. In the firm's later courthouses there is often a somewhat questionable eclectic blend of stylistic elements. Here, however, the architect's inspiration appears to be derived from more nearly a single source, i.e., the late work of the architect Henry Hobson Richardson. Like the best examples of Richardson's nature work, the structure depends upon pleasing proportions, a clear geometry of simple components and consistent scale in massing for its dignified effect, rather than upon fussy decorative detail. There is a richness apparent in the fine brickwork, detailing and in the polychromy provided by light stone trim against the dark red brick. However, like Richardson's late public buildings, the overall effect is one of dignity appropriate for its civic function provided by robust, massing of strong component elements and sensitive use of material, scale and detail.

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Item number 7

Page 3

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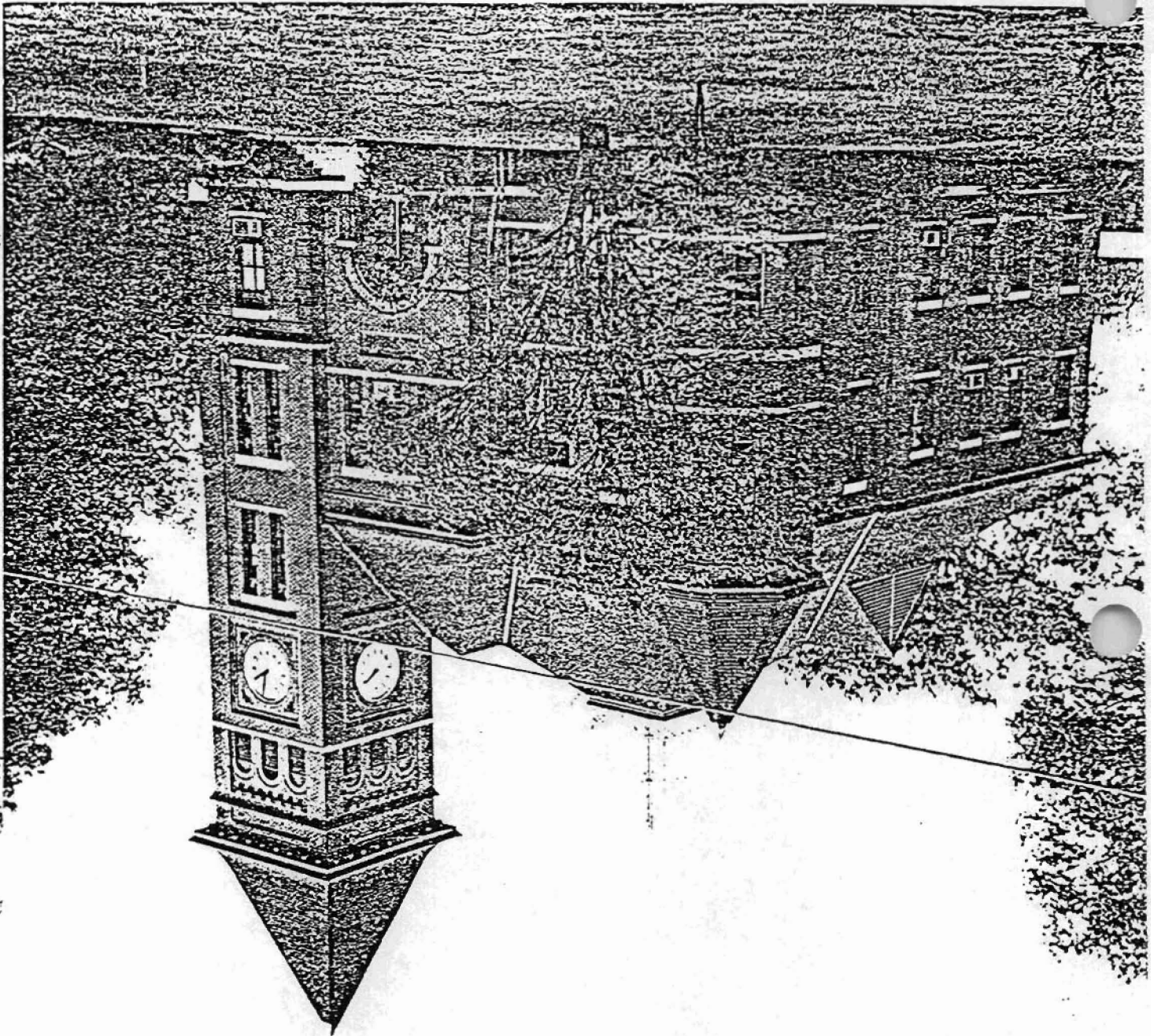
Physical Description

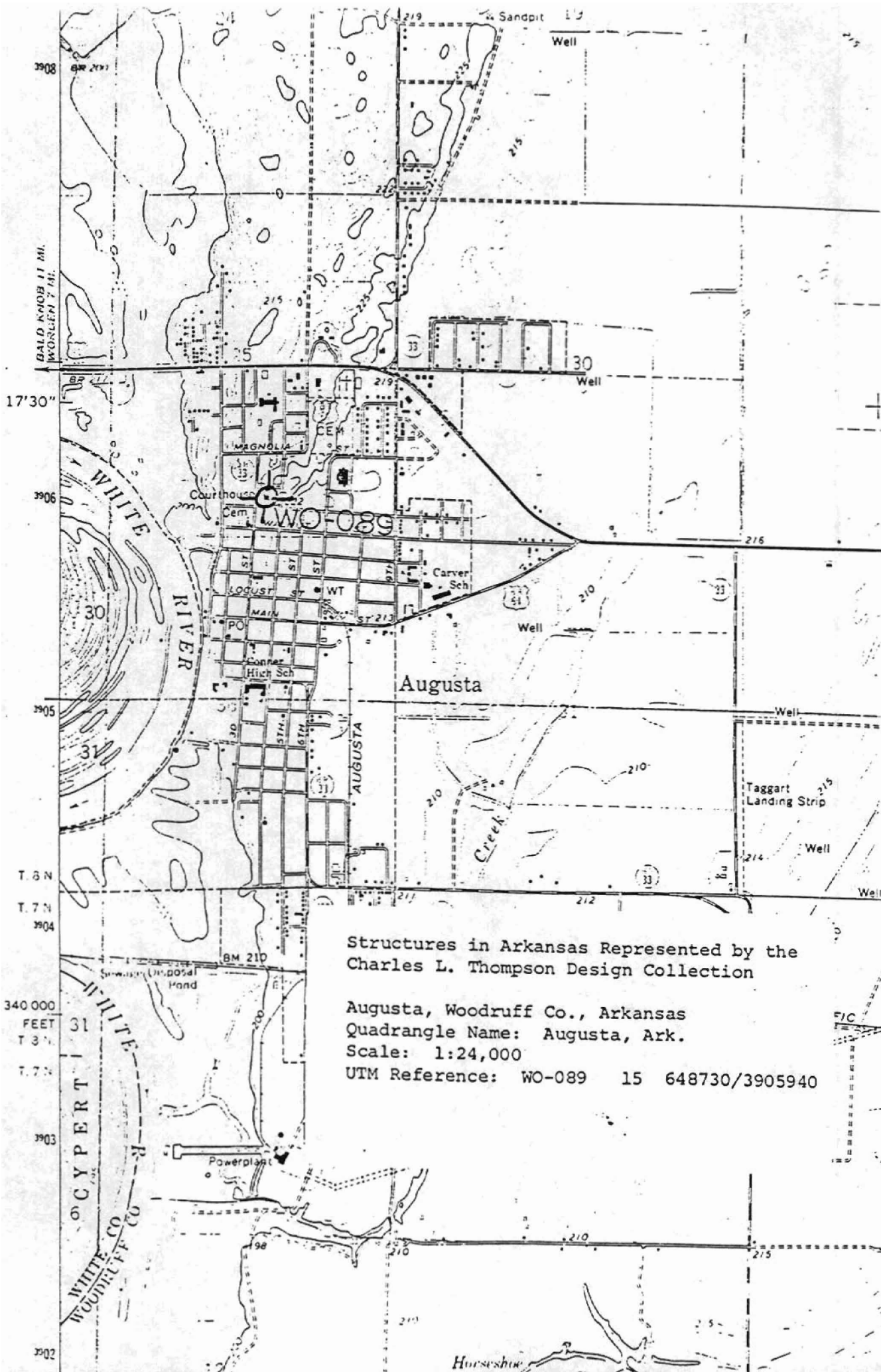
(continued)

in five stages. Providing a rustication to the base are the bricks laid in quoin-like effect. Two levels of long, narrow windows provide a second stage crowned by the clock. The topmost portion of the tower features triple recessed arches with louvers crowned by brick corbeling surmounted by a projecting cornice.

The decorative details are rather simple; the richness of the overall effect derives more from the contrast in color and texture of the light color of the stone lintel and sills contrasted with the dark brick, the brickwork patterns and from the vigorous massing of the components rather than from elaborate decorations. Over the arched entrance is inset a decorative curved terra-cotta panel in a foliate motif.

Statement of Significance





BALD KNOB 11 MI.
WOLLEN 7 MI.

17'30"

3906

3905

T. 6 N

T. 7 N

3904

340 000

FEET

T. 3 N

T. 7 N

3903

3902

Structures in Arkansas Represented by the
Charles L. Thompson Design Collection

Augusta, Woodruff Co., Arkansas

Quadrangle Name: Augusta, Ark.

Scale: 1:24,000

UTM Reference: WO-089 15 648730/3905940

FIC

Horseshoe