

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Watts, Dr. J. D., House

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: 205 W. Choctaw

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Dumas

vicinity: N/A

state: AR county: Desha code: AR 041 zip code: 71639

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	sites
<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	structures
<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	objects
<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

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

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

=====

**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. Slater  
Signature of certifying official

10-14-94  
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

=====

**5. National Park Service Certification**

=====

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): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Boall 12.9.94

Entered in the  
National Register

[Signature] Signature of Keeper Date  
of Action

=====

**6. Function or Use**

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Historic: Domestic

Sub: Single Dwelling

Current : Domestic

Sub: Single Dwelling

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## 7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification:

Colonial Revival

Queen Anne

\_\_\_\_\_

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation concrete block roof asphalt  
walls weatherboard other brick

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

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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: local.

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: c. 1909

Significant Dates: N/A

Significant Person(s): N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Williams, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_

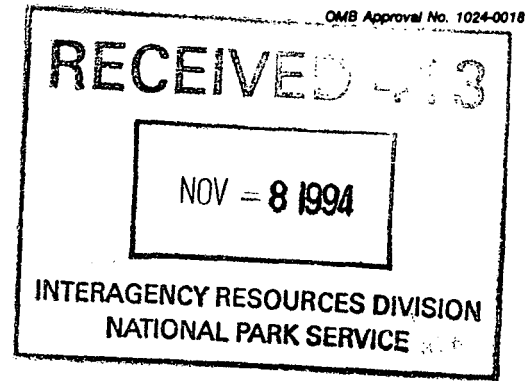
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.  
X See continuation sheet.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1



**Summary**

The Dr. J. D. Watts House is a one-and-a-half story, wood-frame house that was constructed c. 1909 in a transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival style of architecture. Exterior features include a colonnaded wrap-around porch, a front wall dormer, and two cross gables that are decorated with patterned wood shingles and gingerbread. The interior contains a delicate Victorian fretwork screen and a two-tiered mantelpiece. There are four outbuildings included in the nomination and one noncontributing building. Located at 205 W. Choctaw Street in Dumas, the Dr. J. D. Watts House is in good condition and virtually unaltered since construction. It is currently rented as a single family residence.

**Elaboration**

Constructed c. 1909, the Dr. J. D. Watts House is a one-and-a-half story residence that reflects a transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival appearance. A concrete block pier foundation supports a wood frame that is clad with white-painted simple-drop novelty siding. The composition-shingled roof is composed of a short, central hipped roof with three cross gables on the side and rear elevations. There are three interior brick chimneys protruding from the roofline; two are located to the east and west respectively of the center ridge while the third is located directly behind to the south. A large gable-roof wall dormer projects from the front elevation and is placed in the center of the facade. This dormer features a central Palladian window, which is comprised of an arched one-over-one window flanked by two smaller stationary panes, with diamond-patterned wood shingles on either side and fishscale shingles above. The window is accented by a projecting crown molding and an exaggerated, decorative wood keystone. Lastly, the dormer is augmented by jigsawn gingerbread along the fascia boards near the gable peak. Unfortunately, a portion of the gingerbread appears to be broken and missing.

Aside from the wall dormer, the front elevation is embellished by a full-facade, single-story front porch that partially wraps around both side elevations and is supported by eleven Tuscan columns. A central single-leaf door entrance provides access to the interior and is flanked by two large windows. The elegant wood panelled door contains an upper light which is surrounded by fluted Ionic pilasters that support a full entablature with dentil course. The two large picture windows are composed of a short and narrow upper sash of forty-two diamond and geometric-shaped panes over a single pane.

The porch flooring on the western elevation of the wrap-around porch has been removed at some point in the nonhistoric period to create a carport. The western wall underneath the porch is fenestrated with a central twenty-seven-over-one (diamond and geometric-shaped panes), double-



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hung window. This wall intersects with a projecting cross gable that has a stationary window with multiple diamond-shaped panes north-facing wall underneath the porch. The western elevation of the gable end contains a pair of centrally placed twenty-seven-over-one windows and an attic gable end filled with fishscale and diamond-pattered wood shingles. A segmental arched, single-pane stationary window is positioned near the peak and is outlined by a pointed-arch crown and surround. Above this window, the fascia boards are adorned with jigsawn gingerbread. The southern wall of the cross gable is fenestrated by a central one-over-one, double-hung window.

Although the eastern elevation cross-gable is arranged identically to its western counterpart, the wrap-around porch is differentiated by four columns as opposed to three and it has a floor. This side has, however, been screened with a lightly constructed, grid-patterned framework. The only other change is that the front, or north-facing, wall of the cross gable contains a single-leaf door entrance.

The rear of the house was originally composed of a cross-gable projection on the western end. At some point, a hipped-roof, partially enclosed porch has been added to the rear, or southern end, of this projection, which is fenestrated on its western elevation by a pair of one-over-one windows. The porch is enclosed with three juxtaposed six-over-six windows on the western side with screen wire and a short wooden bulkhead on the rear and eastern elevations. This porch is accessed by a three concrete steps and a single-leaf entrance. Another, though more historic, rear addition is the shed-roof section that extends across the rear of the house and is flush with the original southern end of the rear cross gable on the southern elevation. This elevation contains two small one-over-one windows and a conventional-sized window of the same configuration. The eastern elevation wall is flush with the eastern end of that elevation's cross gable and is covered with false-bevel type novelty siding with a pair of one-over-one windows.

The most striking interior feature of the house is the Victorian jigsawn and turned ball fretwork screen at the front of the back hall (the front door enters directly into the living room). Supporting the screen are two composite Ionic columns featuring both fluted and turned elements. Half-height panelled walls fill in the space between the columns and the jamb. Only slightly overshadowed by the fretwork screen is the ornate mantelpiece that outlines the tiled fire surround. The wood mantelpiece is supported by two wood, non-fluted Corinthian columns and contains a carved floral relief in the center of the frieze. The over-mantelpiece, which is supported by identical, though shorter, columns, contains an oval, bevelled-edge mirror that is embellished with egg-and-dart molding and carved wreath reliefs in the wood surround. The house also contains pocket doors and elaborate door and window moldings with the patera corner blocks. Otherwise, the wood flooring is in good condition, but the papered walls and ceilings are in poor condition.

**United States Department of the Interior  
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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

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There are four associated outbuildings that are included in this nomination. All are box constructed with vertical cypress planks and covered by a corrugated metal roof. To the southwest of the house is the building known as the work shop. The gable end entrance faces north, and there is an open shed addition to the east with another single-leaf entrance. There are two gable-roof storage buildings; the smaller and more deteriorated specimen is positioned diagonally behind the shed-roof addition to the house with the entrance facing northwest. Located at the southeast corner of the property, the other storage building is painted white and has an eastern facing door in the gable end and a four-pane stationary window on the western elevation. The chicken house, located southeast of the southeast corner of the house, is the most interesting building visually as it employs a shallow-pitched saltbox roof with wide eaves and rake supported by functional wood knee braces. There are two side entrances facing west, though the southern door consists of a wood frame covered with chicken wire. The southern section, which is covered by the longer-sided roof, is open on the southern and eastern elevations. A small window is located on the eastern elevation of the northern section.

Most of the property is still divided by a variety of fences, both historic and nonhistoric. A wood fence of undeterminate age extends to the west from the southern wall of the western cross gable. Newer fences erected by adjacent property owners mark the western and southern boundaries of the property. A historic wire fence separates the residence and outbuildings from the adjacent Craftsman-style building to the southeast of the house. This historic structure originally served as Dr. J. D. Watts' office and clinic, but is now a rented single-family residence and is considered noncontributing to this nomination.

Located at 205 W. Choctaw Street in Dumas, the Dr. J. D. Watts House is virtually unaltered and in good condition. It is currently being rented as a single family residence.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 1

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**Summary**

The Dr. J. D. Watts House is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance as the best extant example in Dumas of a transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival-style residence.

**Elaboration**

The modern history of the Dumas area began in 1851 when the State of Arkansas issued a land deed to Findley Holmes of Mississippi, who purchased the land in the Dumas-Pickens area for \$1.25 an acre. Holmes never settled in the area, however, and he later deeded the land to his son, Abercrombie, who moved to a farm east of Dumas in 1867. By 1890, *The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas* reported that Holmes owned 640 acres with 320 of those in the cultivation of corn and cotton. Holmes also raised cattle and horses and operated a cotton gin on his farm.

Three years after Abercrombie Holmes settled on his farm, William B. Dumas purchased the land from Holmes on which the present-day town that bears his name is sited. A native of Tennessee, Dumas was engaged in agriculture, and by 1890 owned 940 acres with 300 in cultivation. *Goodspeed* noted that Dumas, like Holmes, also grew corn and cotton, raised a considerable herd of cattle, and operated a "large steam cotton gin" which brought him a paying annual income. Unlike Holmes, Dumas was actively involved in the timber industry - manufacturing and exporting staves to markets in the Northeast. Dumas also operated a store which served as the first freight office and post office. He served as county surveyor for number of years, constable and deputy sheriff of his township, and school director.

The settlement at Dumas remained small up to the turn of the century. In 1880, the population was estimated at less than one hundred people, but the income produced by the timber cutting and the cotton grown on the cleared land added impetus to the town's growth. By 1900, the town could boast a weekly newspaper, a hotel, drug store, and a livery stable. The town was incorporated in 1904 with Gus Waterman as the first mayor. Waterman was another early prominent settler in Dumas and had a large general mercantile business. Six years after incorporation the town counted 519 residents; however, that number more than doubled (1,124) when the 1920 census was taken. During the 1920's, Dumas seemed poised to become a significant industrial center based on the existing presence of four lumber mills and a broom factory. Unfortunately, as in countless other towns and cities across the state, this growth and optimism was stemmed by the onslaught of the Great Depression. Dumas recovered, however, and currently possesses an economy based on both agriculture and industry.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

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The nominated property was constructed in 1909 by a Mr. Williams, who had moved to Dumas from the north. According to oral tradition, the house site was originally a swampy cypress brake. Undeterred, Williams brought hundreds of wagon loads of dirt to fill in the brake. These efforts were rewarded continually in times of floods, and the house even escaped submersion during the great flood of 1927. Williams did not get to enjoy the fruits of his labors for that long of a period, however, as the house was purchased by Dr. J. D. Watts in 1918.

Dr. James David Watts was born in Centre, Alabama on January 16, 1876. He attended the Southern Medical College at Chattanooga, Tennessee and graduated in 1904. The following year he married Ethel Cotham of Monticello. They moved to Dumas in 1918 with their two children, Donnie Marie Watts (Mrs. Norman Weiss) and James Harold Watts. Dr. Watts became a respected doctor and citizen of Dumas and was a member of the Arkansas Medical Society, the American Medical Association, the Omega Lodge 547 F. & A. M., the Sahara Temple, and the Dumas Baptist Church. He was involved in civic affairs as well, serving as president of the Dumas School Board and as the Dumas Health Officer. Dr. Watts was also employed as physician and surgeon for the Missouri Pacific Railroad. Following Dr. J. D. Watts death on March 29, 1936, Donnie Marie Watts Weiss resided in the house until her death in 1989. The house is now owned by her widower, Norman Weiss, and used as a rental property.

This house is an excellent and virtually unaltered representative of the transitional period in residential architecture when the Colonial Revival style was in favor, but still being constructed on essentially Queen Anne floor plans and often with residual Queen Anne details. As the best surviving representative of this style in Dumas, the Dr. J. D. Watts House is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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X See continuation sheet.

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:

X 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: approximately one

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A 15 639260 3750570 B         

C          D         

   See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:    See continuation sheet.

Lots One, Two, and Three in Block Three of Waterman's Addition to the City of Dumas, Arkansas.

Boundary Justification:    See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with this resource that retains its integrity.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1

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**Bibliography**

Deed abstracts and other information supplied by Debbie Shea, April 1994.

"Doctors of Desha County." A Historical Compilation by the Desha County Historical Society, 1969.

Eastham, Mrs. T. W. "Dumas." *Desha County Historical Society 1981 Program*. Vol. 8 No. 1.

"History of Watts residence revealed." *The Dumas Clarion*, October 27, 1993.

Schexnayder, Charlotte. "Looking Back at Dumas." *Desha County Historical Society 1979 Program*. Vol. 6, No. 2.

Stroud, Rebecca. "Early Ordinances Detail Dumas." *Desha County Historical Society 1979 Program*. Vol. 6, No. 2.

*The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*. Chicago, Nashville, and St. Louis: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1890.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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Name/Title: Patrick Zollner, National Register Historian

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: 10/13/94

Street & Number: 323 Center, 1600 Tower Bldg. Telephone: (501) 324-9880

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

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Desha

DATE RECEIVED: 11/08/94 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/22/94  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/08/94 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/23/94  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 94001460

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 12-9-94 DATE

Entered in the  
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



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CLASSIFICATION

☐ count      ☐ resource type

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STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

---

FUNCTION

☐ historic      ☐ current

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DESCRIPTION

☐ architectural classification  
☐ materials  
☐ descriptive text

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SIGNIFICANCE

Period      Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect      -  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

☐ summary paragraph  
☐ completeness  
☐ clarity  
☐ applicable criteria  
☐ justification of areas checked  
☐ relating significance to the resource  
☐ context  
☐ relationship of integrity to significance  
☐ justification of exception  
☐ other

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

☐ acreage      ☐ verbal boundary description  
☐ UTM's      ☐ boundary justification

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ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

☐ sketch maps    ☐ USGS maps    ☐ photographs    ☐ presentation

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OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas  
Photograph by Patrick Zolher  
May 1994  
Negative on file at AHPP  
View of workshop from the  
northeast





Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas  
Photograph by Patrick Zollner  
May 1994  
Negative on file at AHPP  
View of storage shed (directly behind house)  
from the west





Watts, Dr. J. D., House

Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas

Photograph by Patrick Zolher

May 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

View of storage shed (at rear property line)  
from the northwest







Watts, Dr. J. D., House

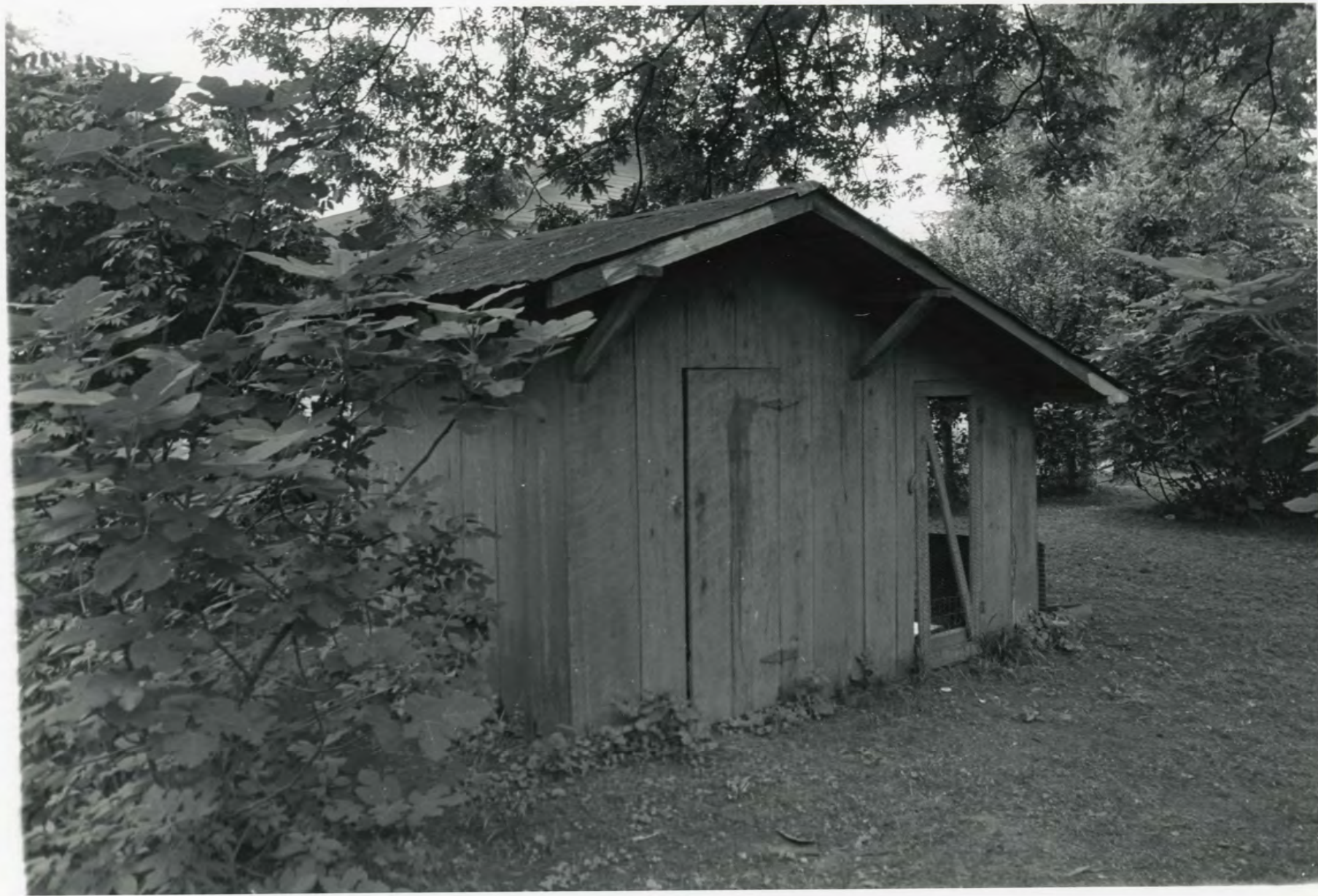
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas

Photograph by Patrick Zollner

May 1994

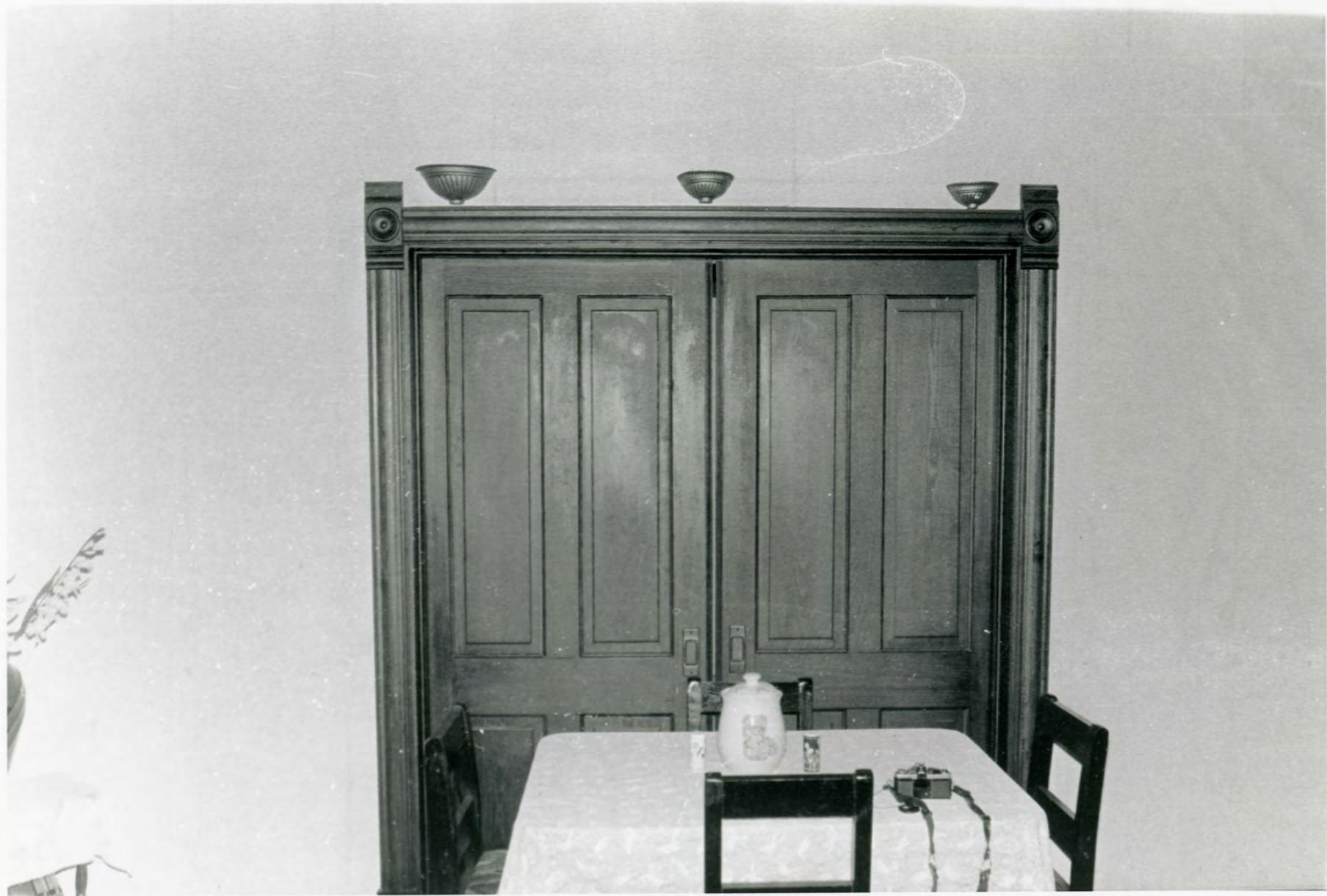
Negative on file at AHPP

View of living room mantelpiece  
from the north.



Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas  
Photograph by Patrick Zollner  
May 1994  
Negative on file at AHPP  
View of the chicken house from  
the northwest





Watts, Dr. J. D., House

Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas

Photograph by Patrick Zollner

May 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

View of living room pocket doors  
from the west





Watts, Dr. J.D., House

Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas

Photograph by Patrick Zollner

May 1994

Negative on file at AITPP

View of noncontributing clinic  
from the northwest







Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas  
Photograph by Patrick Zollner  
May 1994  
Negative on file at AHPP  
Detail of screen from the north



Watts, Dr. J. D., House

Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas

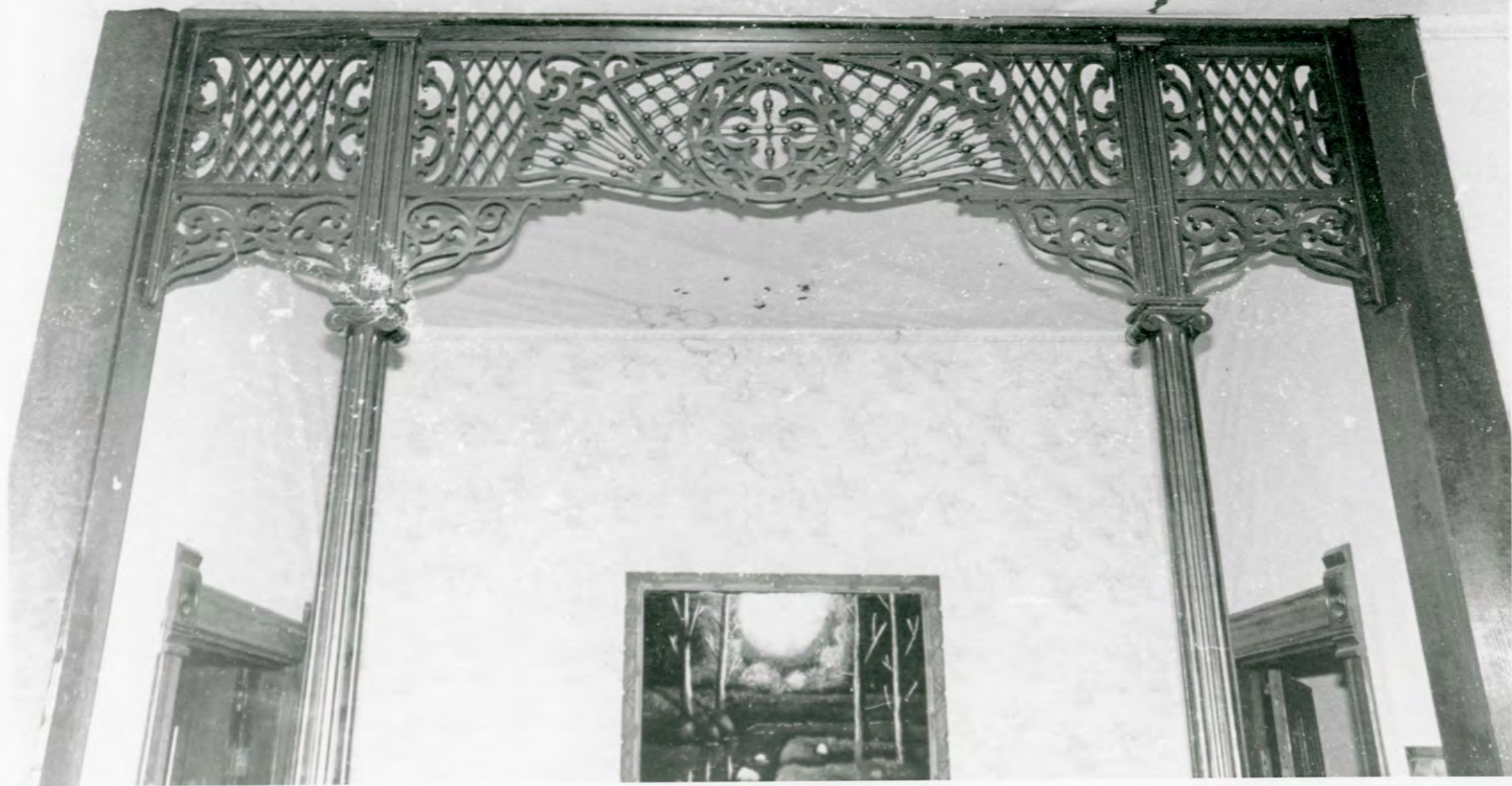
Photograph by Patrick Zolner

May 1994

Negative on file at AHP

View of living room door and molding  
from the north





Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas  
Photograph by Patrick Zollner  
May 1994  
Negative on file at AHIP  
View of firework screen  
from the north





Watts, Dr. J. D., House

Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas

Photograph by Patrick Zollner

May 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

View of fretwork screen & columns

from the north







Watts, Dr. J. D., House

Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas

Photograph by Patrick Zolher

May 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

View of eastern elevation gable  
end from the east.



Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas  
Photograph by Patrick Zolher  
May 1994  
Negative on file at AHPP  
View of front dormer from  
the north





Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas  
Photograph by Patrick Zolner  
~~July~~ 1994, May  
Negative on file at AHPP  
View from the north





Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas  
Photograph by Patrick Zolher  
May 1994  
Negative on file at AHPP  
View from the northwest







Watts, Dr. J. D., House

Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas

Photograph by Patrick Zollner

May 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

View from the west



Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas  
Photograph by Patrick Zollner  
May 1994  
Negative on file at AITPP  
View from the southwest





Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas  
Photograph by Patrick Zolher  
May 1994  
Negative on file at AHP  
View from the east

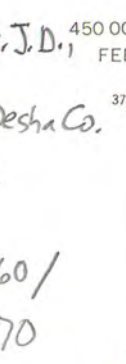






Watts, Dr. J. D., House  
Dumas, Desha Co., Arkansas  
Photograph by Patrick Zollner  
May 1994  
Negative on file at AHPP  
View from the Southeast





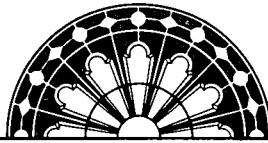
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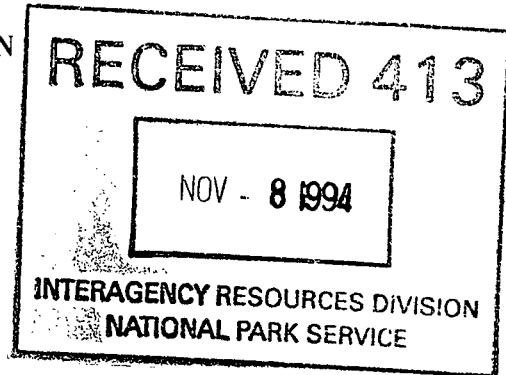
DUMAS, ARK.  
N3352.5—W9122.5/7.5

1969  
AMS 7751 IV NW—SERIES V884





ARKANSAS  
HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
PROGRAM



October 14, 1994

Carol D. Shull  
Chief of Registration  
United States Department of the Interior  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
800 North Capitol Street, Suite 250  
Washington, DC 20002

RE: Dr. J.D. Watts House

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the nomination of the above referenced property. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathy Buford Slater  
State Historic Preservation Officer

CBS:sdh

Enclosure

