**DEPOSITORY FOR** SURVEY RECORDS CITY, TOWN

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# PHO28/148DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

OCT 1 4 1975

RECEIVED

\_\_FEDERAL \_\_STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

STATE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY NOMINATION	FORM D	ATE ENTERED JAN 1	1976
SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW T TYPE ALL ENTRIES (			IS
1 NAME			3 9 7
HISTORIC Curran Hall			
AND/OR COMMON	anester samul, mi		larade of
Walters - Curran - Bell H  2 LOCATION	ouse		
STREET & NUMBER 615 East Capitol 5+		NOT FOR PUBLICATION	
CITY. TOWN Little Rock		CONGRESSIONAL DIST	
STATE	VICINITY OF CODE	Second	CODE
Arkansas	05	Pulaski	119
3 CLASSIFICATION	a Francisco de la companya dela companya dela companya dela companya de la compan		
CATEGORY OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRE	SENTUSE
DISTRICTPUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
$\frac{X}{B}$ BUILDING(S) $\frac{X}{B}$ PRIVATE	_UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK
STRUCTUREBOTH	_WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	X_PRIVATE RESIDEN
_SITE PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	ENTERTAINMEN	TRELIGIOUS
OBJECTIN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
BEING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL	_TRANSPORTATION
OWNER OF PROPERTY	_NO	MILITARY	OTHER:
NAME Mrs. Averell Tate			
STREET & NUMBER	ALT THE DESIGNATION		
615 East Capitol	Character a little		
CITY.TOWN Little Rock	te in a complete of b	STATE	maritiffing to
	VICINITY OF	Arkansa	as
5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCR	RIPTION		
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS,ETC. Circuit Clerk's	Office		
STREET & NUMBER Pulaski County (	Courthouse	Mary House of Boundary	
CITY, TOWN		STATE	
Little Rock		Arkansa	ıs
REPRESENTATION IN EXIST	ING SURVEYS	S	
TITLE			
DATE	and the said a	ASCIDE LANGE WITH THE	



#### CONDITION

\_\_EXCELLENT \_\_GOOD

X FAIR

\_\_DETERIORATED

\_\_RUINS

**CHECK ONE** 

\_UNALTERED

**CHECK ONE** 

X\_ORIGINAL SITE

\_\_MOVED DATE\_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Constructed in 1842 for Colonel Ebenezer Walters, Curran Hall is a distinguished example of Greek Revival architecture adapted to the setting of the Southern frontier. According to long-standing and widely-accepted tradition this house was designed by the noted Greek Revival architect, Gideon Shryock.

The one-storey main block of the house possesses brick walls that are laid in stretcher-bond pattern. A small central portico, covered with a low hipped roof and braced by four squared Doric columns and two Doric pilasters, projects from the front (north) elevation. The columns were attenuated in the 1920's to accommodate the placement of brick piers at their bases. The whole building rests upon a raised foundation. The main block of the house is capped with a low hipped roof, and one interior chimney on the west side of the roof survives.

The outstanding feature of the structure must be its symmetrical delicacy combined with the sense of snug solidity which the five-bay front facade conveys. Central to the facade is a flat, double-leaf doorway with lights above the single panels of the doors. A shoulder architrave featuring Doric pilasters surrounds the entranceway. The shoulder architrave is bordered on both of its sides by narrow side-lights and is surmounted by a trabeated (extended) transom. The whole is enclosed in a non-embrasure type architrave, which consists of symmetrically molded pilasters that are crowned with crossettes. Four 6/6 sash windows symmetrically flank the entranceway. Their lintels are formed into flat, radiating, brick voussoirs. The windows are set over slipsills.

A porch and two later additions are attached to the rear elevation. The porch was enclosed at an undetermined date. Both additions were originally auxillary buildings constructed at a date contemporary with the erection of the main house. They were moved to their present positions — one attached to the southeast corner of the house and the other connected to the rear porch — in 1891. Both have gable roofs and bevel-board siding, while the addition connected to the rear porch has its own lean-to shed addition.

The interior floor plan is the symmetrical, four-room, central-hall type. The dimensions of the hall are 13' X 41½' X 15½', and those of the four rooms are a uniform 19' X 20' X 15½'. Each room contains its original fireplace and classically-designed mantel. The floors retain much of their original cypress boarding, and the wooden moldings, which are classically simple and elegant, also retain their original character.

While the interior of the main section of the house is relatively undisturbed, that of each of the two rear additions has been completely transformed. The southeast addition, which was originally Colonel Walter's office, is currently sub-divided into three rooms; the porch addition, which initially served as servants' quarters, now houses the kitchen and utility room.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

RECEIVED OCT 1 4 1975

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DATE ENTERED

The original grounds of Curran Hall covered two entire city blocks and contained numerous ancillary buildings. The planning of intervening years has reduced the lot to a bare minimum surrounding the house and the modern utility buildings, which include the garage, playhouse and storage shed. These accessory structures were designed to blend in harmoniously with the older building. Maximum use is made of the remaining grounds, with the planting of compact and decorative gardens that contain a number of historic flowering shrubs and rose bushes.

**PERIOD** 

#### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	X_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION
1400-1499	_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE
1600-1699	XARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799 <u>X</u> _1800-1899 1900-	ARTCOMMERCECOMMUNICATIONS	ENGINEERINGEXPLORATION/SETTLEMENTINDUSTRYINVENTION	MUSICPHILOSOPHY X_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	THEATERTRANSPORTATIONOTHER (SPECIFY)

SPECIFIC DATES Built Sept., 1842,

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Gideon Shryock

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Curran Hall stands as one of Little Rock's few surviving, antebellum landmarks. Furthermore, its significance is greatly increased by the professional skill and national fame of its probable architect, Gideon Shryock. (According to widely-accepted tradition, Shryock designed the house.) Great age and architectural significance do not constitute the entire importance of Curran Hall, for it has served as the home of a State Supreme Court Justice and a post-reconstruction Arkansas Secretary of State.

Construction on the house began in September, 1842, under the supervision of its first owner, Colonel Ebenezer Walters, and according to the specifications of his friend, Gideon Shryock. The Kentuckian, Shryock, was considered to be one of the foremost Greek Revival architects in America. His classical design for the state capitol building in Frankfort, Kentucky, (1826-1827) was universally admired, and in Little Rock the Arkansas state capitol, now the "Old State House" (1836), stood as another one of his major achievements. A year after work commenced on Curran Hall, Shryock reportedly drew up the plans for Trapnall Hall, which besides the "Old State House" and Curran Hall, is the only other surviving Shryock building in Little Rock. (That Shryock designed Trapnall Hall is part of the same tradition which purports him as designer of Curran Hall.)

Colonel Walters wished Curran Hall to be an "ideal cottage" suited to married life with his nineteen-year-old bride, Mary. Shryock, complying with the Colonel's desires, created a house which could not help but impress the local residents with its symmetrical, yet compact, charm and beauty. Onehundred-and-thirty years have gently touched Curran Hall, for the building of the present is nearly identical in exterior detail to the structure that took shape under the direction of Colonel Walters and Gideon Shryock. five-bay front (north) facade symmetrically groups four 6 over 6 sash windows with radiating voussoirs around a fine and (for Little Rock in 1842) grand portal. A double-leaf doorway with lights above single-panel doors centers the portal. The doorway is surrounded by a shoulder architrave, which in turn is bordered by side lights and a trabeated transom. Acting as a final encasement is a magnificent, non-embrasure type architrave, featuring symmetrically moulded pilasters, which are topped by corner blocks. A small, centrally located Doric portico extends off the front facade. Minor alterations to the colmns and flooring are the only departures from its original appearance.

Aside from the wooden portico, the entire one-storey structure is constructed

9 MAJOR BIBLIOG Allsopp, Fred W.	RAPHICAL REF	ERENCES	a 100 Years and More. Little
Rock: Parke	e-Harper Publishing	Company, 1922.	2 100 lears and Hore. Little
Arkansas Gazette.	Obituary, April 25	, 1922	
Hallum, John. Biog	graphical and Picto	rial History of	Arkansas. Albany: Weed, Par
& Company, I	Printers, 1887.		OROTERS VEG 10 THORA CONTROL
Harper, Clio. Earl	Ly Arkansas Bar. U	npublished Write	er's Project, Arkansas History
Commission,	Little Rock, 1940.	(Typewritten.)	TRULATIONAL ERSONA
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NAME/TITLE Mike Shinn, His	storian		
ORGANIZATION	Mroff algeria	Line-strawerk, p	DATE
	ic Preservation Pro	ogram	September 9, 1975
STREET & NUMBER			TELEPHONE
300 West Markha	m		(501) 371-1639 STATE
CITY OR TOWN Little Rock			Arkansas
2 STATE HISTORIO	CPRESERVATIO	ON OFFICER C	ERTIFICATION
THE EVA	ALUATED SIGNIFICANCE O	F THIS PROPERTY WIT	THIN THE STATE IS:
NATIONAL	STA	ATE_X	LOCAL
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			at it has been evaluated according to the
criteria and procedures set forth	by the National Park Service	e. /	-11-1-0
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION	OFFICER SIGNATURE Cana F	Richardson	* I comman
TITLE State Historic		The state of the state of	DATE September 9, 1975
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OR NPS USE ONLY I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE	IS PROPERTY IS HOLLING	D IN THE NATIONAL P	FGISTER
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# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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of brick. A low hipped roof covers the house. The interior is divided on the simple, four-room, central-hall plan. The simplicity of the floor plan is complemented by the unaffected elegance of the interior moldings and by the classically designed mantels, one of which is placed in each room. Two small ancillary buildings, which initially sat apart from the main house, were connected to the rear of Curran Hall in 1891. While the current size of the grounds is much reduced from the two-city-block estate of 1842, the grounds which do remain are tastefully devoted to gardens displaying historic shrubs. Curran Hall was and still is representative of the height of Greek Revival fashion on the Southern frontier.

The house was completed in July, 1843, but the Walters never made it their home. Mary Walters died in premature childbirth shortly before work was finished on the "ideal cottage". Col. Walters, finding the memories of his loss to be unbearable, placed his house in the hands of Trustees and departed for Texas, where he, too, soon died.

James Morre Curran's occupancy of the house that bears his name was brief. Curran purchased the house in 1849 for his bride, Sophia, who was the daughter of William Fulton, the last territorial governor of Arkansas and the state's first U. S. senator. A promising young lawyer, James Curran never fulfilled his potential; he died at the age of 33, leaving the estate in the care of his widow. Sophia eventually married one of Curran's former law partners, George Watkins—a man destined to become a Chief Justice of the Arkansas Supreme Court. The couple vacated Curran Hall during the early part of the Civil War and for several years thereafter the house remained untenanted.

The heirs to the estate of Sophia Curran Watkins (of which Curran Hall was a part) sold the house to the colorful Jacob Frolich, who was a printer, Confederate veteran, and member of the night-riding Knights of the White Camelia. Frolich would eventually be elected to three consecutive terms as post-reconstruction Secretary of State in Arkansas (1879-1885). Tenure in state office would be followed by a stint in Washington as Chief Clerk of Minerals, a position within the Department of the Interior, and later as Chief Financial Clerk of the Patent Office. However, no period of his life was more active or troubled than the few reconstruction years he spent in Curran Hall. Frolich's opposition to the policies of the reconstruction government in Arkansas was vehement enough for him to be fearful of reprisal. He fortified Curran Hall with a group of strategically placed trap doors, and at night he sheltered his livestock within the confines

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of the house. These tense times were climaxed by the mysterious murder of a Mr. Parker, reputedly an informer for the reconstruction government. Frolich was indicted for the murder, but he averted arrest by fleeing to Montreal, Canada. Subsequently, with the passing of the reconstruction government, he returned to Arkansas and was acquited of the charge. He sold Curran Hall in 1881.

The new owner was Mary Eliza Bell. Her father, William E. Woodruff, was the founder of the Arkansas Gazette, the first newspaper to be founded west of the Mississippi River. Her descendants continue to occupy the residence.

In Little Rock Curran Hall is considered an outstanding example of antebellum architecture, and the persons associated with the structure were, as a rule, significant state-wide or locally. In recognition of its local importance, Curran Hall bears the plaque of the historic preservation society of Little Rock, the Quapaw Quarter Association, designating it a nineteenth-century landmark of the city.

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JAN 1 1976

**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

ITEM NUMBER

9 PAGE 1

Tate, Averell. Unpublished written statement, 1968; filed at the Office of Arkansas Historic Preservation. (Handwritten.)

Property Curran Hall Pulaski Co.	
State Achareas Working Number 10.14.75.1806	76000453
TECHNICAL  Photos 5  Maps / 4 cont. sheets (#7-2)  Call	CONTROL (20. 20. 75
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National Register Write-up Send-back Federal Register Entry Re-submit	Entered JAN 1 1976



Form No. 10-301a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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DATE ENTERED

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AN 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC

CURRAN HALL

AND/OR COMMON WALTERS - CURRAN - BELL HOUSE

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

LITTLE ROCK

\_\_\_VICINITY OF

STATEANSAS

COUNTYSKI

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT BOB DUNN

DATE OF PHOTO WINTER, 1974

NEGATIVE FILED AT ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET (FRONT) NORTH ELEVATION, FULL VIEW, PHOTOGRAPHED FROM THE NORTH.

PHOTO NO.

1

GPO 892-454



Curran Hall Pulaski County, ch. Short portal (North)

# PROPERTY THE NATIONAL COOLER

Form No. 10-301a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

**NAME** 

HISTORIC

CURRAN HALL

AND/OR COMMON WALTERS - CURRAN - BELL HOUSE

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN LITTLE ROCK

\_\_VICINITY OF

COUNTY PULASKI STATE ARKANSAS

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

BOB DUNN

DATE OF PHOTO

WINTER, 1974

NEGATIVE FILED AT

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

PHOTO NO

FRONT PORTAL (NORTH) ELEVATION) VIEWED FROM THE NORTH

2



Curren Hall Pulaski County, dr near eles

> Form No. 10-301a (Rev. 10-74)

> > UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE LANDRIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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1 NAME

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AND/OR COMMON

WALTERS - CURRAN - BELL HOUSE

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

LITTLE ROCK

\_\_VICINITY OF

COUNTY

STATE ARKANSAS

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

**PHOTO CREDIT** 

BOB DUNN

DATE OF PHOTO

WINTER, 1974

**NEGATIVE FILED AT** 

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BOILDING WAIRE & STILLT

PHOTO NO

REAR FACADE (SOUTH ELEVATION) VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH

3



Pulaski Gunty, as.
Reas addition on the south-west part of the bouse

Form No. 10-301a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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1 NAME

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AND/OR COMMON

WALTERS - CURRAN - BELL HOUSE

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

LITTLE ROCK

\_\_\_VICINITY OF

COUNTY

STATE ARKANSAS

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

BOB DUNN

DATE OF PHOTO

WINTER, 1974

**NEGATIVE FILED AT** 

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET
REAR ADDITION ON THE SOUTH-WEST PART OF THE HOUSE VIEWED FROM
THE SOUTH-WEST.

PHOTO NO



Pulaski county, ar.
Rear addition on the south-east part of the house

Form No. 10-301a (Rev. 10-74)

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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1 NAME

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AND/OR COMMON

WALTERS - CURRAN - BELL HOUSE

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

\_\_\_VICINITY OF

COUNTY

STATE

ARKANSAS

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE** 

LITTLE ROCK

PHOTO CREDIT . BOB DUNN

DATE OF PHOTO WINTER, 1974

**NEGATIVE FILED AT** 

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET
REAR ADDITION ON SOUTH-EAST PART OF THE HOUSE VIEWED FROM
THE SOUTH-WEST.

PHOTO NO

5

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

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TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

1 NAME

HISTORIC

CURRAN HALL

AND/OR COMMON

WALTERS - CURRAN - BELL HOUSE

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

STATE

LITTLE ROCK

PULASKI

ARKANSAS

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE

U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LITTLE ROCK QUADRANGLE

SCALE

1:24000

DATE 1960

4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

- 1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
- 2. NORTH ARROW
- 3. UTM REFERENCES

### ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Allen

## STATE ARYANSAS

## Date Entered

19人

#### Name

# Jones, Arrhur J., House

## Harris House

## Curcan Hall

## Terry, William L., House

### Boyd, Thomas Slaza, House

### Darden-Gifford House

## Location

Little Rock Pulsoki County

Hensley

Pulaski County

Little Rock Polaski County

Little Rock Pulaski County

Lonoke

Lonoke County

Rosebud vicinity White County

#### Also Notified

Hon. John L. McClellan Hon. Dale Bumpers Hon. Wilbur D. Mills

Regional Director, Southwest Region

State Historic Preservation Officer
Ms. Anne Bartley
Acting Director, Department of Natural
and Cultural Heritage
The Old State House
300 West Makkham
Little Rock, Arkenses 72201

PR MMOTT: pl 1.14.76

INT: 2950-75

NATIONAL F	REGISTER	DATA	SHEET CA
DAME as appears on federal register:  CURRAN HALL  SOCATION Street & number city		An-Bell House	3 doe of entry: (a) county code:
615 EAST CAPITOL ST. LITTLE	Epock	AR PULASK	SOUTHWEST
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□ ART-5 □ EDUCATION-10 □ INVENTION-14	☐ PHILOSOPHY - 20 ☐ TRANSPORTATION -	- On	ly' 🗅
WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: REGIDENCE CURRENTLY: DITTO	dates of initial constructions: major alterations: historic events:	1012	ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION
GREEK REVIVAL	GIDEON SHRYOCK	master builder:	engineer:
andscape architect / garden designer: interior	decorator: artist:	33 artisan:	builder/contractor:
NAMES give role & date  PERSONAL: CEOFGE WATKINS - RESIDENT -  JACOB PROLICH - LITTER RES  EVENTS:  INSTITUTIONAL:		shape	es
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TATE, JACOB FROLICH.	PREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICA	= jAno past-civil	WAR AR SECRETARY OF
eviewers initials geoff date 3.7.78	IF ADDITIONAL SPACE NEED	ED, NUMBER& PUT ON REVERSE	