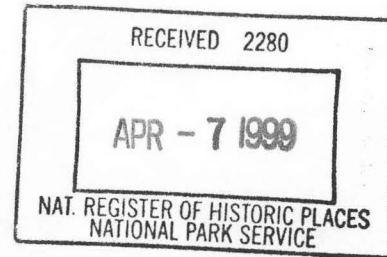


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM



=====

1. Name of Property

=====

Historic Name: Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District

Other Name/Site Number: BO 0091

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2. Location

=====

Street & Number: Courthouse Square

Not for Publication: N/A

City/Town: Harrison

Vicinity: X

State: AR County: Boone

Code: AR009

Zip Code: 72601

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: Public & Private

Category of Property: District

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>54</u>	<u>16</u>	buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	objects
<u>54</u>	<u>16</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 2

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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**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. Sater 3-26-99  
Signature of certifying official 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

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**5. National Park Service Certification**

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I, hereby certify that this property is:  
☒ entered in the National Register 6/6/99  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet. 5/6/99  
\_\_\_\_\_ 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 Keeper Date  
of Action

=====

## 6. Function or Use

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Historic: Commercial Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public-Government \_\_\_\_\_

Current : Commercial Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public-Government \_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

Early Twentieth Century Vernacular Commercial  
Classical Revival  
Spanish Revival

Materials: foundation brick, cast concrete roof tar build-up  
walls brick other tile  
cut stone  
field stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

### Boundaries

Boundaries of the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District are based on information contained in a comprehensive survey of buildings in the downtown commercial district of Harrison. The district roughly includes an area bounded by the alley south of W. Stephenson and E. Central on the south, the alley to the west of N. Willow on the west, the south one-half and northwest one-quarter of the block bounded by W. Rush, N. Willow, N. Main and W. Ridge, the south side of E. Rush to its intersection with N. Walnut where it turns and runs south along N. Walnut to the intersection with Central Avenue where it turns to run west along Central to S. Main then turning north to the point of beginning at the alley south of the 100 block of West Stephenson.

### Summary

The Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District is located in the center of the city's historic downtown commercial district. The county seat of Boone County, Arkansas, Harrison is located in the picturesque

Ozark Mountain range. The courthouse square is located less than two blocks from a winding Ozark stream called Crooked Creek which has historically been a strong influence on the development and physical appearance of the downtown.

The majority of the seventy buildings located within the district directly face the imposing Boone County Courthouse and are primarily of stone or brick masonry representing various vernacular details common to late nineteenth century and early twentieth century commercial buildings.

Of the seventy buildings in the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District, fifty-four (77%) contribute to the historic significance of the district. All but one of the sixteen non-contributing buildings were constructed prior to 1948. Twenty-nine (41%) of all the buildings in the district were constructed in the period of Harrison's greatest growth, 1900-1920. Included in the district are two buildings previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places: Boone County Courthouse (NR-07-21-76) and the Seville Hotel (NR-05-19-94).

### **Elaboration**

Harrison, Arkansas is located in a valley along the banks of an Ozark Mountain stream called Crooked Creek. The Original Town of Harrison, as laid out in 1869, consists of a center block with some twenty blocks surrounding it in a grid pattern. The center courthouse square is the focal point of the downtown. Situated in the center of the tree-shaded block is the three-story brick Boone County Courthouse. Across broad streets on all four sides of the courthouse square are rows of one and two-story commercial buildings ranging in age from the mid-1890s to 1940s. The courthouse square and portions of eight surrounding blocks comprise the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District. Located in this historic commercial and governmental center in the Northwestern portion of Arkansas are seventy buildings representing the development of Boone County, Arkansas and its county seat, Harrison.

The city of Harrison in Boone County, Arkansas is located in the center of Arkansas' Ozark Mountain range. Harrison is less than sixty miles from the Missouri state line and some forty miles east of the Victorian era resort town of Eureka Springs, Arkansas (NR-12-18-70). The city of Harrison developed in the valley of a typical Ozark Mountain stream known as Crooked Creek. The courthouse square and the adjacent blocks comprising the downtown commercial area are surrounded by the residential district, built on three hills overlooking the downtown.

The appearance of the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District can be attributed to the surveyor who laid out the town in 1869, Col. M. LaRue Harrison. His foresighted and ambitious design of the town square, providing broad streets and spacious design, has been one of the aspects which has enabled the downtown to successfully accommodate over one-hundred years of change.



Centered in the 1869 plat of the Original Town of Harrison is the courthouse square. The Boone County Courthouse (NR-07-21-76) was constructed in 1909 to replace the original 1870s courthouse, which had been destroyed by fire three years earlier. Prestigious Arkansas architect, Charles L. Thompson designed the building. The three-story brick building in the Classical Revival style sets an imposing and formal tone in the district. Scattered throughout the courthouse square grounds are monuments to historical events and persons in Boone County. A gazebo similar to one that was located on the grounds was reconstructed in 1976 at its original location in the northwest corner of the square. Original historic street lighting around the square has been recreated. The courthouse square sets a formal park-like setting, which has remained consistent with the surveyor's ambitious vision of the future city.

The Old Federal Building, constructed in 1905 at 201 N. Main Street on the northeast corner of the courthouse square is another anchor in the district. This highly visible three-story building is rectangular shaped with brick veneer. The building features Classical Revival style design elements such as cast concrete keystones, pedimented second story windows and a dentiled cornice. The building is now owned and occupied by Boone County.

The earliest buildings in the historic district are located in the 100 block of N. Willow on the west side of the square and in the 100 block of W. Stephenson, on the south side of the square. The five buildings constructed in the mid 1880s on N. Willow Street have largely remained indicative of their design, although some storefront alterations have occurred. However, the seven buildings on W. Stephenson on the south side of the square have changed in appearance, largely as a result of a devastating flood in 1961 which severely damaged the buildings. A number of historic buildings in that block were lost to this flood. Subsequent work by the Urban Renewal program resulted in the drastic alteration or removal of others.

The buildings in the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District constructed prior to 1900 frequently use native stone, abundantly found in the region. However, most of their facades are "dressed" in brick veneer.

The greatest period of growth in the city of Harrison was during the first three decades of the twentieth century. The strongest building boom occurred from 1900 to 1920 when twenty-nine (41%) of the buildings in the district were constructed.

The buildings constructed in the first two decades of the twentieth century are examples of the variations in vernacular commercial styles of the buildings constructed in Harrison during the era when the coming of the railroad brought a boom in its economy.

The Boone County Courthouse and Old Federal Building fall into the early part of this period. These grand and important buildings are exceptions to the general type of building constructed in this time period. Buildings located at 102 W. Stephenson and 108 E. Stephenson are simple rectangular, one-story with brick veneer. Minimal decorative detail is expressed in brick patterns at the cornice line.

The Parr Block, 112-120 E. Stephenson, constructed in 1917, is comprised of three small and one large flat-roof storefronts veneered in brick. Typically, the only decorative architectural detail is found in a dentiled cornice set into a recessed brick panel.

An excellent example of the use of the stone indigenous to the area is the c. 1910 building at 205 West Stephenson. This one-story building is constructed of heavy cut stone blocks used in much of the construction in northern Arkansas during this era. Arched window and entrance openings and a simple band of dentils at the cornice provide the decoration for this building.

Representative of the surge in the local economy beginning shortly after the turn of the century, are the Capps Building at 109-111 N. Main Street, and the Kirby Building at 123-125 N. Main. Both are two-story brick-veneered buildings constructed in 1914 and feature stylistic detailing in cast concrete window lintels and as on the Kirby Building, a cast concrete belt course running as a continuation of the second story window lintels.

The year 1929 saw the construction of several important components of the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District. The Montgomery Ward Building constructed at 120 N. Willow is a decorative vernacular adaptation of the then popular Spanish Revival style. The parapet of the building is divided into three bays and features arches inspired by the Mission style. The second story of the facade is faced in glazed terra cotta tile and features decorative green tile insets.

The Lyric Theater at 113 W. Rush on the north side of the square, was also constructed in 1929 and its decorative elements employ the elements of the Spanish Revival style. The dominating characteristic of this two-story building is its parapet which features decorative terra cotta insets and small terra cotta pilasters with finials.

The Seville Hotel (NR-05-19-94) is located at 300 N. Main Street on the northern point of the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District. This building, constructed in 1929 is an excellent example of an historic hotel designed in the Spanish Revival style. The three-story building is wood frame with brick and terra cotta veneer. It is a relatively elaborate interpretation of the Spanish Revival design, presenting a distinctly Baroque appearance. Molded terracotta tile on first floor walls, bracketed cornice and large arches characterize the Seville Hotel's design. The Building also presents signature stylistic characteristics of the Spanish Revival style such as the polychromatic spiral columns and moldings which are tinted with deep, rich colors.

The c. 1929 Phillips Petroleum Gas Station Building at 224 N. Main Street is reminiscent of the Tudor Revival style in its steeply front facing gabled roof with pseudo half-timbering. The gas station and adjacent garage/auto repair building at 206-208-210 W. Ridge were constructed to accommodate the growing number of tourists and automobile traffic in the city in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

The Milburn Building located at 122-124-126 N. Willow, next door to the Montgomery Ward building on the west side of the square, was constructed in 1930. The design of this two-story, three storefront building includes modest decoration in the use of a cast concrete cornice line and cast concrete coping on the parapet ledge. The building's simple and functional design is typical of commercial buildings constructed by local businessmen in the years immediately preceding the Great Depression.

Toward the end of the 1930s as the country recovered from the effect of the Great Depression, the city of Harrison began to see new construction. In the late 1930s and early 1940s the Rush Hotel at 114 E. Rush and an adjacent series of five commercial storefronts were constructed. The Rush Hotel is an outstanding example of the way native materials were being used in construction in this time period just before World War II. The three-story hotel is of frame construction and veneered in native fieldstone with brick corners and brick surrounding window and door openings. This combination of stone walls and brick detailing was popular in both commercial and residential design beginning in the mid 1930s and continuing in popularity through the 1940s.

The immediate post World War II construction boom in the country is reflected in five buildings in the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District. The one-story buildings 110-114 and 116 N. Walnut are indicative of the "streamlined" effect popular in the post war era. The buildings' exterior walls are veneered in glazed tile and feature dark horizontal bands of tile in the upper portions on three sides. The Cash Grocery Store Building and adjacent office building at 205 W. Rush and 207-209-211 W. Rush are simple brick veneered buildings with flat roofs and little ornamentation. The one-story building on the Northwestern corner of the square at 123-125 W. Rush is another example of the immediate post war construction boom. Its utilitarian function is augmented with a stepped parapet with cast concrete coping.

Only one building in the district is less than fifty years old. The c. 1961 gas station at 103 S. Main was constructed after the buildings originally occupying the site were destroyed in the May, 1961 flood.

Of the sixteen non-contributing buildings in the district, fifteen are historic and despite their alterations, remain a viable and important component of the courthouse square district.

The buildings in the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District are in good condition and for the most part, occupied. Few open spaces have been created in the district through demolition. The historic integrity of the district remains intact and the feeling of historic place and time is well conveyed in this example of an American small town courthouse square.

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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: A; C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Community Planning & Development  
Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: c. 1895-1947

Significant Dates: 1905; 1909; 1929

Significant Person(s): N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Charles L. Thompson  
Eugene Johnson  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

**Summary**

The Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District is comprised of seventy buildings, thirty-three of which are located directly on the square and another thirty-seven in the blocks immediately surrounding the Courthouse Square. The Harrison Courthouse Square is the center of Boone County government and a commercial center in the north Arkansas Ozark Mountain region. The buildings in the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District represent a continuum of the city's development. The Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District also is significant in its



parallel representation of the formation and development of Boone County, Arkansas. The buildings are indicative of the events which have shaped the county and the city of Harrison.

The Courthouse Square district retains its fundamental configuration and appearance despite the replacement of buildings, and remodeling of others. Many of the alterations to historic buildings in the district are a direct result of a more recent historic event- 1961 flooding of adjacent Crooked Creek.

The fifty-four contributing buildings in this district date between 1895 and 1948 and represent the era when Harrison established itself as a major center of government and commerce in the Ozark Mountain region of north Arkansas.

The district is being nominated under Criterion A in its historic and current role as the governmental center of Boone County. The Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District is significant in its exemplification of community planning and development. The district is also being nominated under Criterion C with local significance for its representation of variations of vernacular commercial building types.

The oldest buildings in the district were constructed in the late 19th century, but forty-one percent of the buildings in the district were constructed in the years between 1900 and 1920. Only one building in the district is less than fifty years old. Although sixteen (23%) of the district's buildings are non-contributing, they are an integral component in the district's streetscape.

### **Elaboration**

The city of Harrison in Boone County, Arkansas, is located in the Northwestern portion of the state, near the center of the Arkansas Ozark Mountain range. The downtown commercial district and Courthouse Square of Harrison is situated adjacent to a typical Ozark region small stream called Crooked Creek. Residential streets are built on three principal hills overlooking downtown. The Harrison area is known for its moderate climate, pure water and picturesque mountain scenery. Sections of the Ozark National Forest are located near the city and the Buffalo National River, the nations' first designated National River, runs just to the south of the city. At an altitude of 1000-1250 feet, Harrison is located in a fertile agricultural area known for its fruit production. The timber industry is an important aspect of the economics of the county with the bountiful supply of hardwoods from the adjacent forests. Boone County is also a rich mineral district with deposits of zinc, lead, copper and marble. Marble from the area is said to have been used in construction of the Washington Monument.

The promise of plentiful game--bear, deer, otter, and beaver--lured frontiersmen into the rugged Ozark Mountains of Arkansas early in the 1800s. Bison still roamed the land and parties of Osage Indian hunters were considered a threat to settlers. Explorer Henry Schoolcraft noted

in his diaries that in 1819 when he visited the future Boone County area, there were four white families living in the vicinity. Their diet consisted of corn and bear meat. Corn was grown for food for the families and horses, but no other vegetables were grown. Dried bearskins adorned their cabins. Packs of fierce dogs greeted approaching strangers.

By the 1830s settlers followed tributary creeks or traveled overland to reach the mountainous interior sections of northern Arkansas. A village named Carrollton (some twenty miles west of present day Harrison) was laid out in 1832 and became the county seat of Carroll County. In 1836 Arkansas was admitted to the Union as the twenty-fifth state. A postmaster was appointed to serve the area around the headwaters the Ozark Mountain stream, Crooked Creek. The post office was named Crooked Creek. Another settlement in the immediate vicinity was called Stifler Spring and was located near a spring close to the present day courthouse square. These sites in the Crooked Creek valley were to become the city of Harrison.

Boone County, Arkansas was formed from territory from surrounding counties and legislation creating the county was signed into law on April 9, 1869. The Civil War had divided the northern section of the state and formation of the new county can be somewhat attributed to a struggle for power between Republicans and Democrats. In this Reconstruction era of Arkansas' history, J.T. Hopper, who had established his home in the Crooked Creek valley prior to the Civil War, was elected to the state legislature in 1868. He considered Carroll County much too large for citizens to reach the county seat in one day and introduced a bill which called for creation of a new county, to be known as "Boon". At the same time another legislator secured the passage of a bill creating Newton County to the east, all of which actually divided the old county of Carroll into three counties.

Local history states that the intention was to name the county "Boon". A letter from Senator Hopper, who wrote the legislation creating the new county, stated that the county was well named for it would certainly be a "boon" to the people of this area.

The *Arkansas Gazette* newspaper on April 9, 1869 ran an article on the creation of the new county and reported that the name "Boone" was in honor of Daniel Boone. Despite the origins of the how the name of the county came about, the act creating the county spells the name "Boone".

The establishment of Boone County had a major impact on the political structure of adjoining counties, Carroll to the west and Marion and Newton to the east. The act creating Boone County provided for a special election to establish and elect county officers who would then locate the permanent county seat. The act specified that "said seat of justice shall be permanently located as near the center of said county as eligible location may be found, not to exceed six miles from the ascertained center thereof".



The 1869 act also provided that "the temporary seat of justice of said county shall be at the store-house of H. W. Flick.....". Flick operated a store and post office at Crooked Creek. As a political lieutenant of General Powell Clayton, known as the "Carpetbag Governor", Flick was a powerful political entity in north Arkansas during the reconstruction era.

Flick had envisioned building a new city on the banks of Crooked Creek. In the year 1870, Flick brought in a civil engineer who was in the area surveying for a possible railroad line from southern Missouri into north Arkansas. The engineer was a former Union Army Colonel named M. LaRue Harrison. At Flick's request Colonel Harrison surveyed a townsite on the banks of the crooked little stream and in return the new town was named in his honor.

In 1870 Flick had the name of the post office at Crooked Creek changed to Harrison. Flick encouraged newspaper editor Thomas Newman to move to the new town and publication of the weekly *Boone County Advocate* newspaper was begun.

Carefully and competently laid out, the "Original Town of Harrison" featured extremely broad streets, particularly around the courthouse square. Some early citizens felt this was a waste of land and thought the streets on the square should be narrowed. However, Colonel Harrison's foresighted, orderly and spacious design of the courthouse square prevails and continues to be an important asset to the city.

H. W. Flick gave three lots to the Boone County School District for "school and religious purposes", but he was not the only moving force in the establishment of Harrison. In 1870 land owners Lorenzo D. Rush and his son Lorenzo Jr. donated Block One of the Original Town of Harrison plat to Boone County to be used for a county courthouse. The Rush family also donated lots in Block 10 to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1875 an election was held to choose the permanent county seat. The proposition was between Harrison and the nearby community of Bellefonte. Residents of Bellefonte offered voters in the county a site and courthouse building free of cost to them if they would move the county seat there. Rooted in deep-seated rivalry from the Civil War era, the campaign to choose the Boone County seat became bitter. Rumors abounded that opposing forces were set to attack and destroy the towns. However, none of these rumors proved to be true and no actual fighting was reported. In a close vote, Harrison was chosen as the seat of Boone County. Local historic accounts of the election attributed Harrison's win to the fact that loads of watermelon were served by the citizens of Harrison to sway the vote.

Certificate of incorporation was issued for the "Town of Harrison" in March, 1876. Town fathers saw a great opportunity to usher the birth of their town with the Centennial Celebration of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Still thought of as one of the greatest

events held in Harrison, the July 4, 1876 picnic near the square in downtown Harrison heralded a new dawn for the citizens of Boone County overcoming the division in political sentiments from the Civil War and the hatred and prejudice of the Reconstruction era.

When Boone County was settled, many of the early surrounding communities were built around springs. Eureka Springs to the west in Carroll County, was built around the curative values of water. By 1879 almost forgotten Osage Indian legends of healing waters in the Ozark Mountain springs were revived. At that time the Carroll County Judge was afflicted with a serious skin disorder and sought treatment at one of the rumored springs for ten weeks and at the end of the period was completely well. Word of this spread and people began coming, first by the hundreds and later by the thousands to northern Arkansas' springs to be healed of every conceivable malady.

This surge of visitors seeking the healing power of the waters in Carroll and Boone counties in the 1880s brought the first post-Civil war era of prosperity. Although Boone County and Harrison did not see the immense growth experienced in Eureka Springs and Carroll County during this era of resort boom, the numbers it brought to the northern Arkansas area was a substantial economic force in Boone County in the 1880s. Also in the late 1870s and 1880s zinc mining became a flourishing industry in Boone County and remained so for several years.

Harrison had a population of around 1000 residents by the mid 1880s. The town had public and private schools. Passenger and freight service was available to nearby Eureka Springs (NR-12-18-70) and Springfield, Missouri by wagon or coach. Industry in Harrison included a cotton gin, wool carding mill, flour mill, and steam woodworking mill, all located near Crooked Creek, south of the Courthouse Square. A two-story courthouse had been constructed in 1872 from bricks made in a kiln erected at the site. This building burned in 1906 and was replaced in 1909 by the current courthouse building designed by noted Arkansas architect Charles L. Thompson (NR-07-21-76).

Harrison was a viable town in the 1880s and early 1890s, but still had the look of a "wild west" town with dirt streets, and wood plank sidewalks. Wood buildings with false fronts stood on all sides of the square. The courthouse in the center of the square was flanked with hitch racks where horses were tied and ate out of feed boxes. By the middle of the 1890s there were still several vacant lots around the square. The number of these vacant lots was constantly changing due to fires. On several occasions fire destroyed entire sections of wooden business buildings on the square. Around this time some of the town's far-sighted businessmen began building brick and stone structures, many of which still stand today. Thirteen buildings in the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District were constructed in the mid to late 1890s. Although only four of these earliest remaining building are

contributing to the historic district, the fact that these structures have survived floods, Urban Renewal and unsympathetic remodeling lends them significance as a continuous part of the fabric of Harrison's Courthouse Square.

Although these early buildings in Harrison's Historic Courthouse Square still remain in use, most have been modernized. The earliest buildings in the district are located on the streets facing the Boone County Courthouse. A series of buildings from the mid 1890s is found on the west side of the square along N. Willow.

Around the turn of the century, the Harrison Courthouse Square began to take on a new look. Many new brick and stone buildings had been constructed and three new banks were established on the square, adding to the one existing bank which had been there since 1886.

The year 1901 marked the beginning of a new era of growth for Harrison. It was in that year that the St. Louis and North Arkansas Railroad line reached Harrison. It had been a dream for the town, since the railroad came to Eureka Springs some twenty-two years earlier. Harrison was now connected with Eureka Springs and points north in Missouri. By 1906 the line had become the Missouri and North Arkansas Railroad and tracks eventually connected east to Helena, Arkansas on the Mississippi River. Harrison businessmen had given \$40,000 toward construction of the rail line to their town. Boone County farmers had donated right-of-way along the line.

In the early years of the twentieth century a rumor began that a new Post Office and Federal Court House would be built to serve a Federal Court Division which had been created in Harrison in 1902. Skeptics did not believe that the Federal Government would spend thousands of dollars to construct a large building in the hills of Arkansas. However, with the influence of two Ozark Mountain natives who were elected to Congress from Arkansas, a joint announcement came from their offices that the Federal Building project had been approved for Harrison. In 1903 land at the northeast corner of the Courthouse Square was purchased and construction begun on the Federal Building. Completed in 1905, the Harrison post office was moved from its leased quarters on the north side of the square into its new home. One of the most historically important buildings to the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District, this three-story brick building with stylistic detailing in Classical Revival design is an imposing landmark in the downtown.

The three-story brick Boone County Courthouse (NR-07-21-76) was constructed in 1909 to replace the original courthouse building which was destroyed by fire in 1906. This centerpiece building in the historic district was designed by prolific Arkansas architect Charles L. Thompson. Unaltered from its original appearance, the building still serves as the Boone County Courthouse.

Of note is the fact that a great influx of workers were brought into the Harrison area to work on construction of the railroad and Federal Building. Between 1901 and 1921 the city's population doubled. During this period of intense immigration, friction built up between the African-American citizens living in the area and new workers. An incident resulting in a hanging of an African-American boy lead to a flight of black residents from the county. By 1920 virtually no black citizens resided in Harrison.

In 1911 when the Missouri and North Arkansas Railroad passed into new management, it was decided to make Harrison the center of the railroad's operations. Modern shops and a roundhouse were constructed for the rail line in Harrison. The general offices of the Missouri and North Arkansas Railroad were also moved to Harrison. Despite the intense bigotry and hatred among citizens, Harrison continued to prosper and grow and was elevated to a "City of the Second Class" in February, 1920.

With the increase in population and growth, Harrison city services were greatly expanded. A citywide water and sewer improvement district was created by the City Council in 1914 and built the following year. A municipal power plant was established in the early 1920s and in 1924 Harrison created its first street improvement district for the purpose of paving the streets in the business section.

The return of legalized liquor in 1933 brought about a boom in stave milling at Harrison and for a time five plants were operating, some 24 hours a day. In the 1930s Harrison became a shipping point for red cedar and hardwood taken from the surrounding Ozark mountains.

Flooding of nearby Crooked Creek has ravaged Harrison's downtown a number of times. Flooding in 1894 and 1915, and 1945 had caused severe damage to the south side of Harrison's Courthouse Square. As a part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal program, a levee was built along the bank of Crooked Creek to hold back the flood waters which have periodically swept through the south side of the square.

Despite the levee, on May 7, 1961 the waters of Crooked Creek flooded the downtown of Harrison, reaching depths of up to twelve feet in some sections. The devastation of this flood was unparalleled in the city's history. Buildings were actually moved off their foundations by the force of the raging waters and carried blocks away. Contents of the buildings on the west, south and east sides of the square were swept out by floodwaters. After two and one-half hours, the floodwaters receded and damage assessment begun. The May 1961 flood resulted in some \$5.4 million in damages to Harrison's downtown. The *Harrison Times* reported that 80 percent of the business district was destroyed.

Martial law was declared by Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus to prevent looting. National Guard units and Civil Defense personnel were moved into the area to assist local officials with the pandemonium that broke out.



Businessmen immediately began to seek emergency loans from the Small Business Administration to rebuild and replace stock. The Federal Urban Renewal program was sent in to assist city officials and businessmen in developing a rebuilding plan for the devastated downtown area. Federal grants were used to purchase land for parks, levees and rerouting of roads over Crooked Creek

As a result of the 1961 flood, many of downtown Harrison's historic building stock south of the courthouse square was destroyed. Those buildings on the square which suffered the greatest damage were destroyed. Others were rebuilt or remodeled.

Despite the changes and losses to the Courthouse square brought about by the 1961 flood and subsequent demolitions and remodeling, the Harrison Courthouse Square presents an image which is distinctly representative of its greatest period of growth in the first few decades of the twentieth century. Adapted and expanded upon in the 1930s and 1940s, Harrison's historic downtown continues to be the center of regional government and commerce in its breathtakingly beautiful setting in the Ozark Mountains.

The buildings in the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District are a significant representation of the city's development from a small village to the center of business and government in Boone County.

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*Harrison Daily Times*, Sesquicentennial Edition, July 4, 1986.

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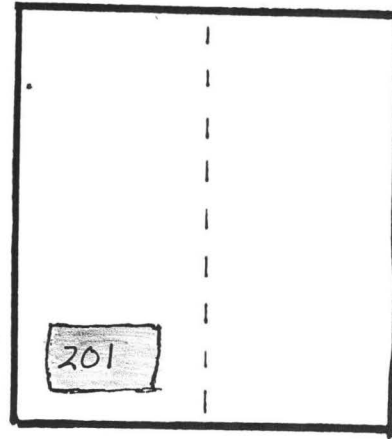
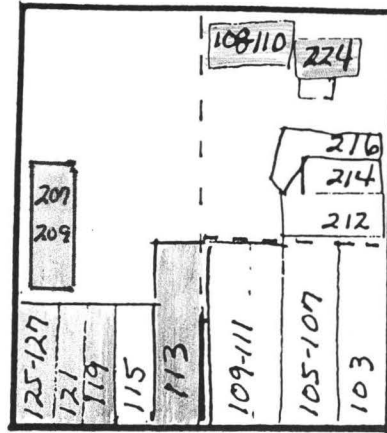
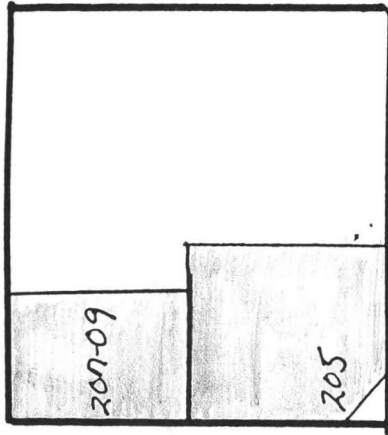
Logan, Roger V. Jr., "Harrison and Environs in the 1890s." *Boone County Historian*, Vol. III, No.III, 1980.

Logan, Roger V. Jr. editor, and the Harrison Chamber of Commerce. *Mountain Heritage*. Harrison, AR: Times Publishing Company, 1969.

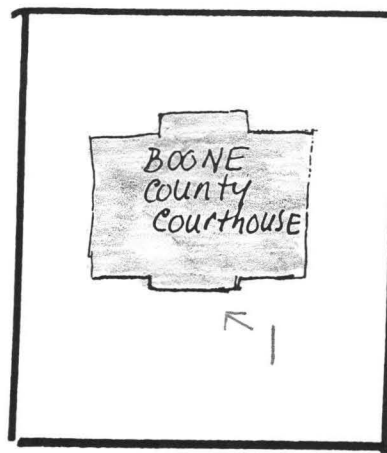
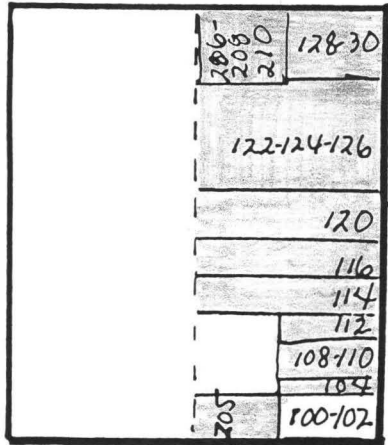
# HARRISON COURTHOUSE SQUARE Historic District



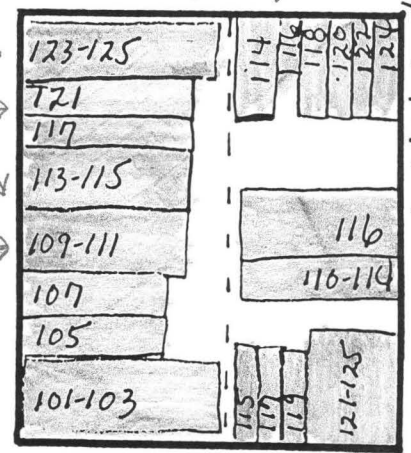
W. Ridge



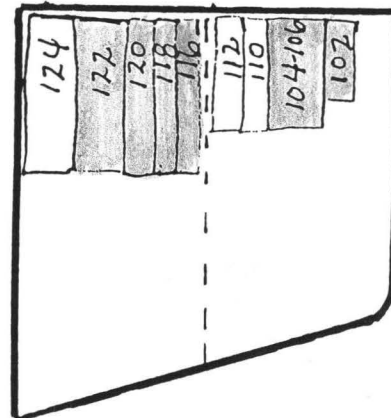
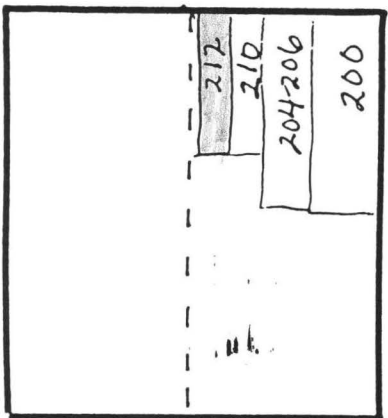
W. Rush



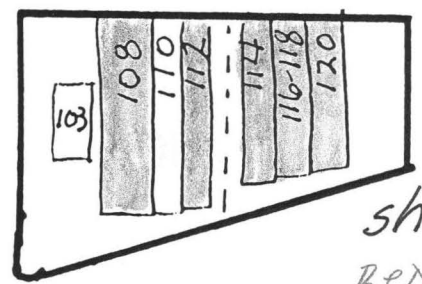
E. Rush



W. STEPHENSON



E. STEPHENSON



SHADED - Contributing  
Red - photo Key



Main Street Harrison, "Historic Walking Tour". Harrison, AR: Harrison Daily Times.

Plat Map-"Original Town of Harrison", Boone County Tax Assessor, Harrison, AR.

Rea, Ralph R., *Boone County and Its People*, (Van Buren, Arkansas: Press Argus, 1955).

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Harrison, Arkansas, 1897, 1904, 1909, 1914, 1923, 1932, 1939.

Toops, Connie, *Harrison, Arkansas 1986 Commemorative Calendar*. Times Publishing Company, Harrison, AR, 1986.

Workers of the Writers' Program. *The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas*, with new introduction by Elliott West, Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1987 (original copyright 1941).

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 -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Approximately 15-16 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>490160</u>	<u>4009540</u>	B	<u>15</u>	<u>490460</u>	<u>4009540</u>
C	<u>15</u>	<u>490460</u>	<u>4009200</u>	D	<u>15</u>	<u>490160</u>	<u>4009200</u>

Verbal Boundary Description:

An area bounded by the alley south of W. Stephenson and E. Central on the south, the alley to the west of N. Willow on the west, the south one-half and northwest one-quarter of the block bounded by W. Rush, N. Willow, N. Main and W. Ridge, the south side of E. Rush to its intersection with N. Walnut where it turns and runs south along N. Walnut to the intersection with Central Avenue where it turns to run west along Central to S. Main then turning north to the point of beginning at the alley south of the 100 block of West Stephenson.

(See included map)

Boundary Justification:

This boundary contains all the property historically associated with the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District that retains its historic integrity.

=====

**11. Form Prepared By**

=====

Name/Title: Sandra Taylor Smith, Consultant to Main Street Harrison

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: March 26, 1999

Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St.

Telephone: (501) 324-9880

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

# HARRISON COURTHOUSE SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT

<u>RESOURCE #</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>BUILDING NAME</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>CONTRIBUTING</u>
BO0001	Courthouse Sqaure	Boone County Crthse.	1909	C
	100-102 N. Willow		c. 1895	NC
	104 N. Willow		c. 1905	C
	108-110 N. Willow		c. 1895	C
	112 N. Willow		c. 1895	C
	114 N. Willow		c. 1895	C
	116 N. Willow		c. 1895	C
BO0016	120 N. Willow	Montgomery Ward Bldg.	1929	C
	122-126 N. Willow	Milburn Building	1930	C
	128-130 N. Willow		c. 1930	C
	102 W. Stephenson		c. 1910	C
	104-106 W. Stephenson		c. 1910	C
	110 W. Stephenson	Coffman Building	c. 1895	NC
	112 W. Stephenson	Phelps Building	c. 1895	NC
	116 W. Stephenson		c. 1895	C
	118 W. Stephenson		c. 1895	C
	120 W. Stephenson		c. 1895	C
	122 W. Stephenson		c. 1895	C
	124 W. Stephenson	First Federal Bldg.	c. 1895	NC
	103 W. Rush		c. 1910	NC
	105-107 W. Rush		c. 1910	NC
	109-111 W. Rush	Time Building	c. 1897	NC
BO0021	113 W. Rush	Lyric Theater	1929	C
	115 W. Rush		c. 1920	NC
	119 W. Rush		c. 1929	C
	121 W. Rush		c. 1929	C
	125-127 W. Rush		1946	C
	101-103 N. Main	Walters Building	c. 1920	C
	105 N. Main		c. 1900	C
	107 N. Main	Kirby-Evans Bldg.	c. 1900	C
	109-111 N. Main	Capps Building	c. 1914	C
	113-115 N. Main		c. 1913	C
	117 N. Main		c. 1913	C
	121 N. Main		c. 1913	C
BO0005	123-125 N. Main	Kirby Building	1914	C
	201 N. Main	Federal Building	1905	C
	212 N. Main		c. 1922	NC
	214 N. Main		c. 1929	NC
	216 N. Main		c. 1929	NC
	224 N. Main	Phillips Petroleum	c. 1929	C

# **HARRISON COURTHOUSE SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Page 2

<b><u>RESOURCE#</u></b>	<b><u>ADDRESS</u></b>	<b><u>BUILDING NAME</u></b>	<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>CONTRIBUTING</u></b>
BO0003	300 N. Main	Seville Hotel	1929	C
	108-110 W. Ridge		c.1929	C
	205 W. Rush		c.1948	C
	207-211 W. Rush		c.1948	C
	206-210 W. Rush		c.1930	C
	200 W. Stephenson		c.1907	NC
	204-206 W. Stephenson		c.1900	NC
	210 W. Stephenson		c.1900	NC
	212 W. Stephenson	Allison Building	c.1900	C
	205 W. Stephenson		c.1900	C
	114 E. Rush	Rush Hotel	c.1939	C
	116 E. Rush		c.1939	C
	118 E. Rush		c.1939	C
	120 E. Rush		c.1939	C
	122 E. Rush		c.1939	C
	124 E. Rush		c.1939	C
	115 E. Stephenson	Parr Block	1917	C
	117 E. Stephenson	Parr Block	1917	C
	119 E. Stephenson	Parr Block	1917	C
	121-125 E. Stephenson	Parr Block	1917	C
	108 E. Stephenson	Wagley Building	1917	C
	110 E. Stephenson	Wood Building	c.1917	NC
	112 E. Stephenson		c.1917	C
	114 E. Stephenson		c.1920	C
	116-118 E. Stephenson		c.1920	C
	120 E. Stephenson		c.1920	C
	103 S. Main		c.1961	NC
	110-114 N. Walnut		c.1946	C
	116 N. Walnut		c.1946	C

Total Number of Buildings in District- 70

Number of Contributing- 54 (77%)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 99000523

Date Listed: 5/6/99

Harrison Courthouse Square

Historic District

Property Name

Boone

County

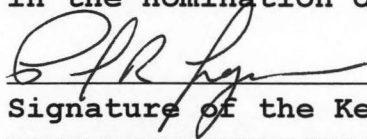
AR

State

N/A

Multiple Name

-----  
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

5/4/99

Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

Resource Count:

The count is revised to include *52 contributing buildings* and *16 noncontributing buildings*.  
[For database purposes previously listed NR properties are not included in the count.]

Historic/Current Function:

The historic and current function categories are amended to add: *Commerce-business, financial institution, specialty store, and department store; Government-courthouse and government office*. [Whenever possible, listings of both the categories and subcategories should be entered.]

Area of Significance:

*Commerce* and *Government* should be added as areas of significance.

This information was confirmed with the Arkansas SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Boone

DATE RECEIVED: 4/07/99 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/19/99  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/05/99 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/22/99  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 99000523

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: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

\_\_\_ACCEPT \_\_\_RETURN \_\_\_REJECT \_\_\_\_\_DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District is significant under NR Criteria A and C in the areas of Commerce, Government, Community Planning & Development, and Architecture. The district represents a cohesive collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings centered on the imposing courthouse square at the heart of the rural community of Harrison, Arkansas. The buildings illustrate well-preserved local examples of vernacular and high-style commercial and civic design from the historic period and reflect the "boon" in community building and development witnessed around the turn of the century as the small agricultural community of Harrison emerged as an important regional center of government and commerce with the arrival of rail service.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept Criteria A+C

REVIEWER Paul R. Lusignan DISCIPLINE HISTORIAN

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE 5/6/99

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





1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone Cty., AR
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. Boone Cty. Courthouse viewed from the southeast
7. photo # 1



FEE NET

Dood's

Fido's

DOLLAR  
GENERAL  
STORES

HARRISON'S FIRST  
CYBER  
CAFE

SALE

APPLIANCES



1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone Co., AR
3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. 100 Block N. Willow view from the southeast
7. photo # 2



1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone Cty. AR
3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. Milburn Bldg. (122-126 N. Willow) View from East
7. photo #3





1. HARRISON Courthouse Square Historic District
2. BOONE County, Arkansas
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. 100-102, 104, 108-110 & 112 N. Willow, viewed from the northeast
7. photo #4



1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone Co., AK
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1990
5. negative on file AHPP
6. 224 N. main view from the east
7. photo #5





1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone Co., AR
3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. Federal BLDG. (201 N. MAIN) view from northwest
7. photo # 6







1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone Cty. AR
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. Kirby Bldg. (123-125 N. Main) view from west
7. photo # 7



1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone Cnty, AR
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. 123-125, 121 & 117 N. Main, viewed from the northwest
7. photo #8





1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone Cnty, AR
3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative in file AHPD
6. 100 block of N. Main, viewed from the northwest
7. photo #9





RED WING SHOES  
& NOCONA BOOKS

**MORRIS JEWELERS**  
CUSTOM JEWELRY DESIGNS GIFTS DIAMONDS

*Harrison Flower  
& Design*

1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone Cty. AR
3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. 113-115 N. Main view from west
7. photo # 10



1914  
CAPPS - PAUL

BEN FRANKLIN

Burchell's Ben Franklin

Crafts Flowers Frames



1. HARRISON Courthouse Square Historic District
2. BOONE Cty. AR
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. CAPPS Bldg. (109-111 N. MAIN) view from west
7. photo # 11





1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone County, Arkansas
3. Photograph by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. Negative on file AHPP
6. 205 W. Rush viewed from southeast
7. photo # 12



1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone County, Arkansas
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. 100 Block W. Rush, viewed from the southwest
7. photo #13





1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone Co., AR
3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. Rush Hotel - 114 E. Rush & 116-124 E. Rush view from northwest
7. photo # 14





1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone County, AR
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. 100 Block W. Stephenson, viewed from the northwest
7. photo # 15

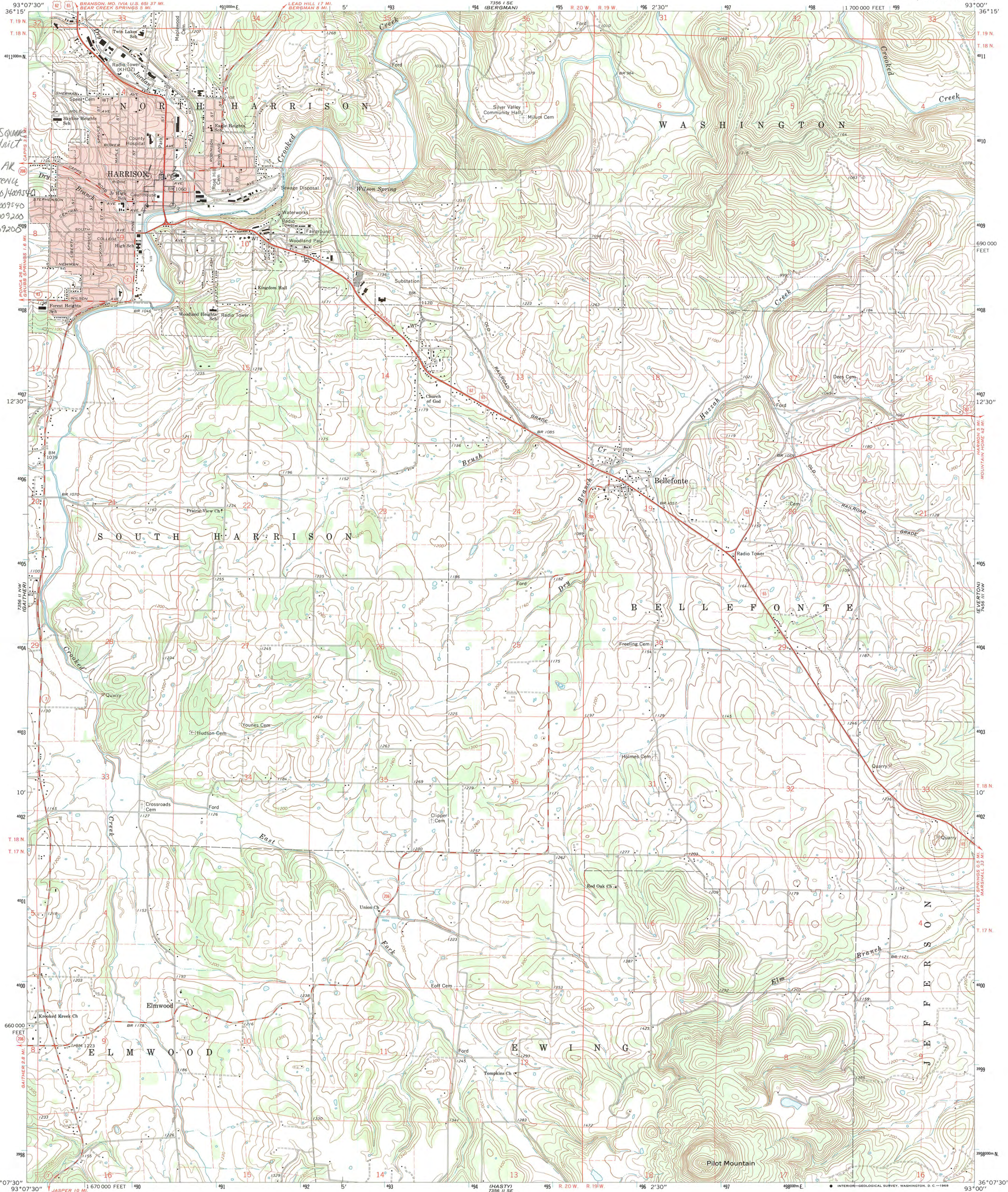


1. Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
2. Boone Cty., AR
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. August, 1997
5. negative on file AHPP
6. 110-114 & 116 N. Walnut view from the southeast
7. photo # 16



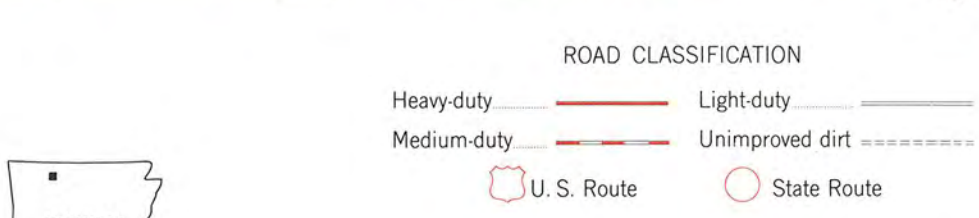
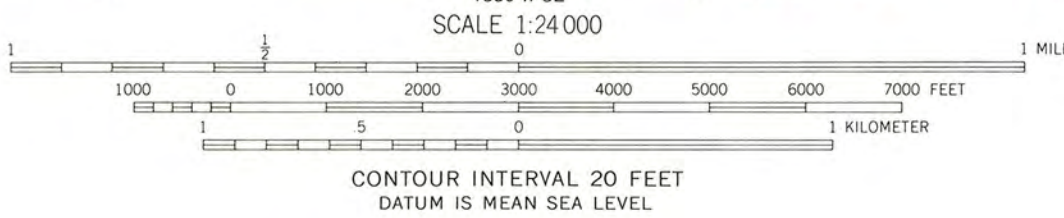
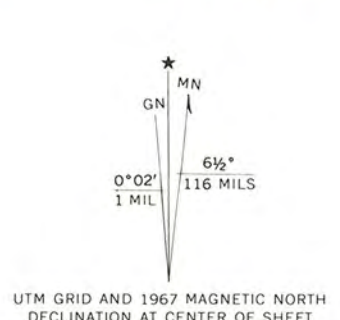
UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

HARRISON QUADRANGLE  
ARKANSAS—BOONE CO.  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



HARRISON  
COURTHOUSE SQUARE  
HISTORIC DISTRICT  
HARRISON  
BOONE CO. AR  
UTM REFERENCE  
(1) 15/490160/4009540  
(2) 15/490160/4009540  
(3) 15/490160/4009200  
(4) 15/490160/4009200

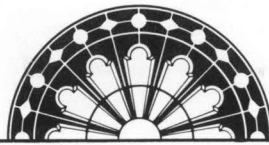
Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
photographs taken 1964. Field checked 1967  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Arkansas coordinate system, north zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 15, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked  
Map photostereoscopic 1975  
No major culture or drainage changes observed



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72204  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

HARRISON, ARK.  
N3607.5—W9300.7.5  
PHOTOINSPECTED 1975  
AMS 7356 II NE—SERIES V884





ARKANSAS  
HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
PROGRAM

March 29, 1999

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, D. C. 20002

RE: National Register Nomination for the Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District, Boone  
County, Harrison, Arkansas

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the nomination for 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 Slater  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures

