Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

CITY, TOWN

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

STATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

# N

TONAL REGIS	STER OF HISTORI	C PLACES	RECEIVED DEC 2 3 1975		
NVENTORY NOMINATION FORM			DATE ENTERED JUN 1 8 1976		
SEE IN	NSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO TYPE ALL ENTRIES O		ATIONAL REGISTER FORM	S	
NAME					
HISTORIC MANAGEMENT MA	odern News Building				
AND/OR COMMON		Call's always	ifik z pora i casur pesdyteni	T03339-12	
LOCATION					
STREET & NUMBER					
CITY, TOWN	216 North Main		NOT FOR PUBLICATION CONGRESSIONAL DIST		
	Harrisburg	VICINITY OF	First	THE T	
STATE		CODE	COUNTY	CODE	
-)	Arkansas	05	Poinsett	111	
CLASSIFICA	ATION				
CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRES	SENT USE	
DISTRICT	PUBLIC	X_OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM	
X_BUILDING(S)	XPRIVATE	_UNOCCUPIED	× COMMERCIAL	PARK	
STRUCTURE	ВОТН	WORK IN PROGRE	SSEDUCATIONAL	PRIVATE RESIDEN	
SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	ENTERTAINMENT	TRELIGIOUS	
OBJECT	IN PROCESS	X_YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC	
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRESTRICT		TRANSPORTATION	
OWNER OF	I DD ODED TV	_NO	MILITARY	OTHER:	
OWNER OF	PROPERTY				
NAME		- 11			
STREET & NUMBER	L.D. Freeman and Mr	s. Ewell H. F	reeman		
STREET & NOMBER	P.O. Box 375				
CITY, TOWN			STATE		
Harrisburg VICINITY OF			Arkansas		
LOCATION	OF LEGAL DESCR	IPTION			
COURTHOUSE,					
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, E	Poinsett Co	ounty Courthous	se		
STREET & NUMBER	Q11				
CITY, TOWN	Courthouse	Square	STATE		
	Harrisburg		Arkansas		
REPRESEN	TATION IN EXIST	ING SURVE			
TITLE					
DATE					
		FEDEF	RAL _STATE _COUNTY _LOCA	L	
DEPOSITORY FOR					

#### CONDITION

\_\_DETERIORATED

**CHECK ONE** 

X EXCELLENT

X ALTERED

**CHECK ONE** 

\_UNALTERED

X\_ORIGINAL SITE

\_GOOD \_\_FAIR

\_\_UNEXPOSED

\_\_RUINS

\_MOVED DATE

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

The Modern News office is a single-storey, header-bond brick building constructed in a simplistic rectangular fashion. Built in 1888 by L.D. Freeman, Sr., the structure has a flat roof, while the tops of the side walls are covered with tile. The tops of these two walls descend front-torear in stairstop fashion. Tile caps the wall of the facade just above the lettering that spells out the words "The Modern News - Established 1888".

The windows toward the front in the side elevations are recessed; the tops of the openings are segmental arches. All the windows are double-hung and have plain molding with slipsills. A double-leaf, single-panel door forms the main entry, while a large, two-tone, metal awning extends across the facade above this entry.

The original building was constructed by W.C. Pratt to provide housing for the newspaper business of L.D. Freeman, Sr. As the paper's circulation increased and more space was needed, an additional fifteen feet was added to the rear of the building in 1910. Another addition occurred in 1952, with approximately fifteen more feet added to the 1910 addition. The only other major change that was made to the building came in 1953 when brick was laid across the front to give the facade the appearance of having been newly constructed.

Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED OCT 5 1976

**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

ITEM NUMBER 4

PAGE 1

DATE ENTERED

Modern News Building, Harrisburg, Poinsett County, Arkansas

Mrs. L. D. Freeman Harrisburg, Arkansas

PERIOD	AR	EAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	ECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	
PREHISTORIC	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION
1400-1499	_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	_LAW	SCIENCE
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE
1600-1699	ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
X_1800-1899	COMMERCE	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	_TRANSPORTATION
X_1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	X_OTHER (SPECIFY)
		INVENTION		Journalism

SPECIFIC DATES

1888 - Present

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

L.D. Freeman, Sr.

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the <u>Modern News</u> building derives from the significance of the newspaper which the building represents. This newspaper, the <u>Modern News</u>, has come to be a symbol of the history of Harrisburg, Arkansas. The long and consistent service of the <u>Modern News</u> has earned this standing for the newspaper. The newspaper's longevity of publication has also earned for the paper a certain statewide and, possibly, even a certain national distinction within the journalism field.

The Modern News newspaper was established by L.D. Freeman, Sr., in November, 1888, and has continued uninterrupted operation since that time by the Freeman family. The paper is one of the oldest established weekly newspapers in Arkansas. Several sources, including Who is Who in Arkansas, assert that the Modern News is the oldest weekly newspaper in the nation to be "operating under the founder's family name and continuously owned and published by a member of the original family." According to L.D. Freeman, Jr., the Modern News has never missed an issue and has been one day late only four times.

L.D. Freeman, Sr., moved to Arkansas from Alabama with his family at age five. He began serving his apprenticeship at age fifteen. One of the newspapers for which Freeman worked and which gave him valuable journalistic experience was the Memphis Avalanche.

In 1888 Freeman bought a printing business in Harrisburg, Arkansas, from H.M. Phelps. Phelps had printed the <u>Arkansas Tribune</u>. This paper had been the first to be printed in the Harrisburg vicinity. Its editor had been Foster Freeman, the brother of L.D. Freeman, Sr. The new owner changed the name of the paper to the <u>Modern News</u> and had the present-day <u>Modern News</u> office built. He started printing under the new name in November, 1888.

Freeman acquired his first typesetting machine in 1895. It was one of the first typesetters ever made, and Freeman found the machine impossible to operate. After months of confused frustration, Freeman decided to rid himself of the folly. Unable to move the assembled monstrosity, he tore out the wood floor in the Modern News building, dug a hole large enough to accommodate the huge machine, and buried it underneath a layer of concrete which still serves him as a sturdy floor for his shop.

In 1910 Freeman bought a Stover gasoline engine to furnish the power for the operation of his printing press. Local sources report that it was

9 MAJOR BIE	BLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES	
Allard, Chest	er C., comp. Who is Who in Arkansas. Edit	ed by Bessie B. Allard.
	Rock: Allard House, 1959.	
	W. History of the Arkansas Press for a Hu	ndred Years and More.
	Rock: Harper Publishing Co. 1922.	Tabaaa Gaabaa 1075
Freeman, L.D.	, Jr. Modern News, Harrisburg, Arkansas.	Interview, September, 1975.
	ALCOHOL: MORKEURS CO.	SHIP STANDARD SANDARD
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OTREET & AUUMOER	Arkansas Historic Preservation Program	December 9, 1975
STREET & NUMBER	300 West Markham	TELEPHONE
CITY OR TOWN	500 West Markham	(501) 371-1639 STATE
	Little Rock	Arkansas
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A-OTATE THE	THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHI	
Laprosis 1, 12		
NATIC	DNAL STATE	LOCAL
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	s property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that i	t has been evaluated according to the
criteria and procedure	es set forth by the National Park Service.	>
STATE HISTORIC PRE	SERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE Anne Bartley	a Dock
	Mille Dat Cley	
	istoric Preservation Officer	DATE 12-9-75
FOR NPS USE ONLY	THAT THIS BRONESTY IS INCLUDED IN THE MATIS	
	Y THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGI	STER / 1/-
Acting	a) muty	DATE 6/18/76
DIRECTOR OFFIC	E OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	537/
ATTEST: Chai	will the same	DATE 3 · 3 · / 4
REEPER OF THE N	ATIONAL REGISTER	

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DEC 2 9 1975

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

JUN 1 8 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

1

the first gasoline engine to make an appearance in Poinsett County and that people came from miles around Harrisburg to observe the operation of the new gadget.

Freeman's sons, Ewell Freeman and L.D. Freeman, Jr., stayed with the newspaper that had been so much a part of their lives as youths. After completing their formal education, Ewell joined his father as partner in 1919, and L.D. Freeman, Jr., became a partner in 1923.

Following the death of their father in 1934, the brothers continued the Modern News, together with a commercial printing plant. They operated as partners under the name of "Freeman Brothers." Ewell H. Freeman died in 1949, and since that time ownership of the newspaper has been jointly held by Mrs. Ewell Freeman and L.D. Freeman, Jr., with L.D. Freeman, Jr., serving as the newspaper's editor.

The cost of a year's subscription to the paper has increased over the years. Starting with \$1.00 for a year's subscription, the amount had increased to \$2.00 per year by 1960 and today is \$4.00 per year. This price change is reflective of the newspaper's many decades of service.

In 1962, after searching unsuccessfully for help to operate the press, L.D. Freeman, Jr., started using the services of other printers. From 1962 to 1973 the Modern News was printed at Wynne, Arkansas, and for the last two years it has been printed at Newport. The offices and nerve center of the paper, though, have not left Harrisburg.

Printed on Wednesdays and delivered on Thursdays, the  $\underline{\text{Modern}}$   $\underline{\text{News}}$  has served the information needs of the Poinsett County area for 86 years. News has been circulated to people in rural Arkansas, as the paper has met over 4,500 deadlines.

Such is the significance of the <u>Modern News</u>. For 87 years it has been a part of the history of Harrisburg and Poinsett County. It is one of the oldest weekly newspapers in Arkansas and, in the category of weekly papers still published by the same families which founded them, it is probably the oldest in the United States. The building in which this paper is printed is indeed very humble in appearance, but the building has housed the paper since its inception and thus shares in the very considerable significance of the Modern News.

Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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JUN 18 1976

**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE 1

Harper, Clio. <u>History of the Arkansas Press Association</u>. Little Rock: Parke-Harper Co., 1930.

Meriwether, Robert W., comp. A Chronicle of Arkansas Newspapers Published
Since 1922 and of the Arkansas Press Association 1930-72. Little
Rock: Arkansas Press Association, 1974.

Modern News. May 6 and December 23, 1910.

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Poinsette Co.



Modern News Harrisburg achansas Poinsett County

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

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

RECIEVED DEC 2 9 1975

DATE ENTERED JUN 1 8 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS

TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Modern News Building

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

\_\_\_VICINITY OF

STATE

COUNTY

Harrisburg

Arkansas

Poinsett

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Paul McCormack

DATE OF PHOTO September, 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

4 IDENTIFICATION

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

PHOTO NO.

West (front) and north elevations viewed from northwest

1 0/2

GPO 892-454



Harrisburg, achansas

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

> UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECIEVED DEG 2 9 1975

DATE ENTERED

JUN 1 8 1976

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

NAME

HISTORIC

Modern News Building

AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION** 

CITY, TOWN

\_VICINITY OF

STATE

COUNTY

Harrisburg

Arkansas

Poinsett

**PHOTO REFERENCE** 

PHOTO CREDIT

Paul McCormack

DATE OF PHOTO September, 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

**IDENTIFICATION** 

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET Facade viewed from the west

PHOTO NO.

GPO 892-454

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

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

RECEIVED DEG 2 9 1975

DATE ENTERED JUN 1 8 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS

TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Modern News Building

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

\_\_VICINITY OF

COUNTY

STATE

Harrisburg

Poinsett

Arkansas

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE

United States Geological Survey

SCALE

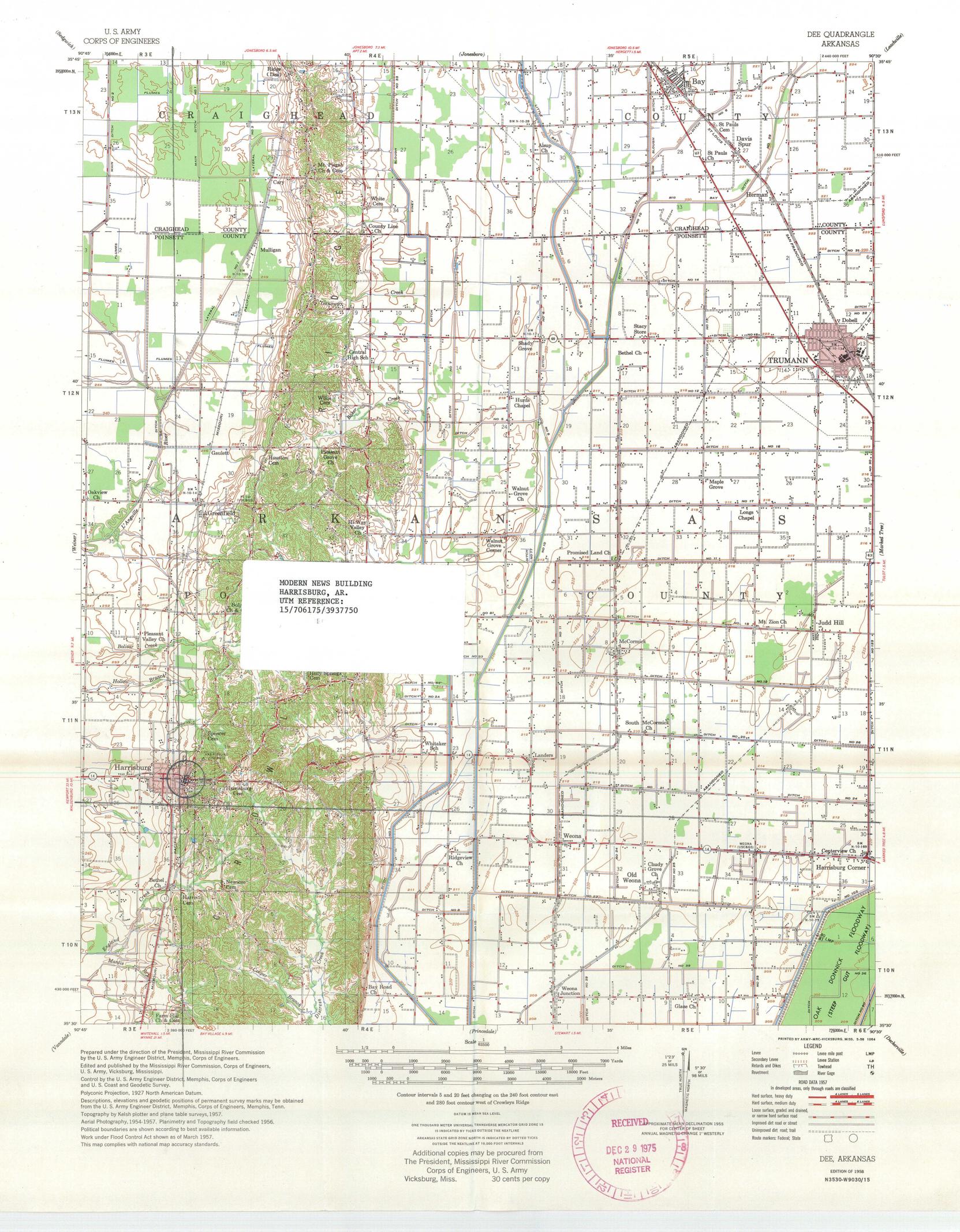
1:62500

DATE 1958

REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

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



#### ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE

ARKANSAS

Date Entered

JUN 18 1976

Name

Location

Modern News Building

Harrisburg Poinsett County

### Also Notified

Hon. John L. McClellan Hon. Dale Bumpers Hon. Bill Alexander

cc: Regional Director, Southwest Region

PR:MMott:cam:6/30/76

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



### ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

FIRST STATE CAPITOL . 300 WEST MARKHAM . LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201

September 28, 1976

Dr. William J. Murtagh Keeper of the National Register National Park Service - National Register Department of the Interior Washington, D. C. 20240

Re: Modern News Building

Harrisburg, Poinsett County

Dear Dr. Murtagh:

Please change the owner of the Modern News Building to reflect only Mrs. L. D. Freeman.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Anne Bartley

State Historic Preservation Officer

AB:cm

Enclosure

MATIONAL REG	ISTER	DATA	SHEET
INAME as it appears on federal register:	②OTHER NAMES:		3) date of entry: (a) county code
5 LOCATION street & number Lity / town HARRIS BURG	vicinity of		sett 6NPS REGION:
OWNER PRIVATE STATE MUNICIPAL COUNTY MULTIPLE FEDERAL (agency name)			ADMINISTRATOR:
9 EXISTING SURVEYS _HABS _ HAER _ NHL 10 FUNDED? _YES _ NO 11 CONGRESS.	DISTRICT SOURCE	CE of NOMINATION	FATE FEDERAL
□ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS	RIC LANDMARK?	ACREAGE &	if state who prepared form?  PRIVATE ORGANIZATION
CONDITION   deteriorated   Xaltered   Xeriginals   Xexcellent   ruins   unaltered   moved   moved   reconstructed   unknown   fair   unexcavated   excavated	E X IN	T INTACT-O PONOT KNOWN-4 POUNK	STANTIALLY INTACT-28 SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3 INTACT-0 ON OWN-5 XUNKNOWN-6 APPLICABLE-8 NOT APPLICABLE-9
BACCESS YES-Restricted YES-Unrestricted No Access Unknown	19 ADAPTIVE USE TYES TO	SAVED! X YES IS	PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT? yes
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:   ENGINEERING-11   LANDSCAPE	RELIGION - 22 -17 SCIENCE - 23 8 SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN SOCIAL/CULTURAL - 30	URBAN PLANNING-31 N-24 DOTHER (SPECIFY)  TOWNALISM	CLAIMS: explain 'first' 'oldest' 'only'
WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: NEWSPAPER CURRENTLY: NEWSPAPER	historic events: rebuc	952, Kear additions;	1953 Tacal
@architectural style(s): VERNACULAR	tect:	master builder:	engineer:
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NAMES give role & date  PERSONAL:  EVENTS:  INSTITUTIONAL:			
entrance Planked by double sagh windows under an elus Vernacular. Home of Modern News, Nane of the older	ngular, stepped flat minum awning; 1910 est weekly newspap	noot sections, from , 1952; tear addition ers in Arkansas ARO	t center double-door as N 953, facade rebricked 5195

IF ADDITIONAL SPACE NEEDED, NUMBER & PUT ON REVERSE

\_\_\_date\_\_

reviewers initials\_\_