

PH 0046990

Form 10-300
(July 1969)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Arkansas	
COUNTY: Sebastian	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 7 1972

Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt
Third Congressional District

1. NAME			
COMMON: River Front Hotel			
AND/OR HISTORIC: Commercial Hotel <i>Use this name</i>			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: 123 North First Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Fort Smith			
STATE Arkansas	CODE 05	COUNTY: Sebastian	CODE 131

3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered
		<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: Donald W. Reynolds Enterprise			
STREET AND NUMBER: 920 Rogers Avenue			
CITY OR TOWN: Fort Smith	STATE: Arkansas	CODE 05	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Sebastian County Courthouse			
STREET AND NUMBER: 6th Street - Rogers Avenue			
CITY OR TOWN: Fort Smith	STATE: Arkansas	CODE 05	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program			
DATE OF SURVEY: August 1971 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Arkansas History Commission			
STREET AND NUMBER: 300 West Markham			
CITY OR TOWN: Little Rock	STATE: Arkansas	CODE 05	

FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER MAY 7 1972
DATE

INSTRUCTIONS

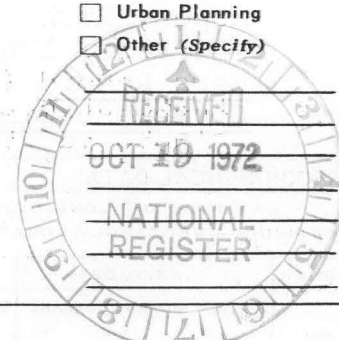
8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☐ 18th Century☐ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1898-1899

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal☐ Education☐ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Prehistoric☐ Engineering☐ Religion/Philosophy☐ Other (Specify)☒ Historic☐ Industry☐ Science☐ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Sculpture☒ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Social/Humanitarian☐ Art☐ Architecture☐ Theater☐ Commerce☐ Literature☐ Transportation☐ Communications☐ Military☐ Conservation☐ Music

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1838, the Congress of the United States established a permanent military post on land bought from Captain John Rogers, near the site of the older military post at Belle Point. In the autumn of the previous year, Captain Rogers had advertised in Arkansas newspapers and in the newspapers of New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, and other cities that he would establish a town at Fort Smith.

The land on which the Commercial Hotel was built was part of a tract of land given in a government patent dated November 15, 1830, to Hugh Tygart. Two years later, Tygart sold 235 acres, including the hotel property, to Captain Rogers.

At the time (1898-1899) that the Commercial Hotel was built at 123 Front Street, the Cherokee Strip had been open only nine years; and Oklahoma was still the Indian Territory. Front Street was the main street of that brawling and rollicking frontier. Fort Smith was the metropolis of the area; and to the city and to Front Street came the railroad men, the displaced Indians, the criminals, the dirt farmers, the cowboys, and the women of unsavory reputation. They were not to leave until well into the 20th century.

The old hotel was for years one of the most important and thriving business houses in the river section of the town. Pearl Starr, daughter of the notorious Belle, moved to 215 Front, just across the street.

That hotel was an opulent and prosperous venture is attested to by the fact that in

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Arkansas	
COUNTY Sebastian	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 7 1973

(Number all entries)

8. Significance Continued:

1911 the building, its furniture and fixtures, sold for \$47,000.

It was not long, however, before civilization finally tamed both the Indian Territory and Front Street. The Indian Territory became the State of Oklahoma in 1907; and eventually the name of Front Street, with all its associations, became the more civilized "First Street." The hotel ceased operations, its patrons gone, and has remained vacant until the present time.

The importance of the Commercial Hotel lies in the fact that it is perhaps unique in Arkansas. Fort Smith was a border city and a gateway to the west. It was the "fun city" of the Indian Territory and the Commercial Hotel one of the fun spots of the town. Its clientele were not the rich nor the socially prominent, but those outcasts and individualists whose forebears had crossed the Alleghenies two centuries before.



PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM WHEN THE PROPERTY IS RESUBMITTED.

DATE:

3/26/73

NAME OF PROPERTY

RIVER FRONT HOTEL

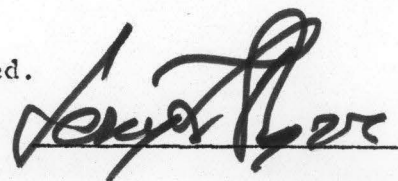
The attached National Register Inventory-Nomination form is being returned to your office for clarification of the information indicated below.

1. Name. _____
2. Location. _____
3. Classification. _____
4. Owner of Property. _____
5. Location of Legal Description. _____
6. Representation in Existing Surveys. _____
7. Description. _____
8. Statement of Significance. _____
9. Bibliography. _____
- ✓ 10. Geographical Data.
 - a. Longitude and Latitude Coordinates. COORDINATES CANNOT BE CHECKED ON MAP. PLEASE SEND ORIGINAL U.S.G.S. MAP
 - b. Acreage. Please supply acreage
(ACREAGE SUPPLIED) 4-3-73
(ORIGINAL U.S.G.S. MAP ENCLOSED) 4-3-73
11. Form Prepared By. _____
12. Certification. _____
- Photographic Coverage. _____
- Map Coverage. _____
- Other. _____

Clarification or correction of the above items must be made prior to the initiation of our professional review. Correction of these technical errors does not necessarily insure that the nomination will then satisfy the National Register criteria in full.

Thank you for your attention to the above items checked.

SIGNED:



PROPERTY

~~River Front Hotel~~ Commercial Hotel STATE Ark.

SEBASTIAN CO.

73000301

1/10/73

Working number

10.19.72.1582

TECH REVIEW

Photos 1Maps 1

REVIEW

~~Long is not~~ Can't be checked long is incorrect

HISTORIAN

it seems unlikely that it has
been vacant since hotel ceased
operations it did in 1907-Accept
use hist. name
Need acreage 3/11/73
otherwise Accept
3-27-73
Shull

ARCHEOLOGIST

ARCHITECT

ACCEPT
KH
3/26/73

BRANCH CHIEF

Long is close

OK Rgt
5/1/73

EDITORIAL REVIEW

KEEPER

Wm
3/2

National Register write-up

Acknowledge 10/19/72

Federal Register entry

7-3-73

Send-back 3-29-73

Re-submit 4/10/73

Register no.

MAY 7 1973



NPS Number 5/7/73

Title: Commercial Hotel

T.O.C.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	
Arkansas	
COUNTY	
Sebastian	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
MAY 7 1973	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

PROP

1. NAME

COMMON: RIVER FRONT HOTEL

AND/OR HISTORIC: Commercial Hotel

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

123 North First Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Fort Smith

STATE:

Arkansas

CODE

COUNTY:

05

Sebastian

CODE

131

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Arkansas Historical Preservation Program

DATE OF PHOTO: 1971

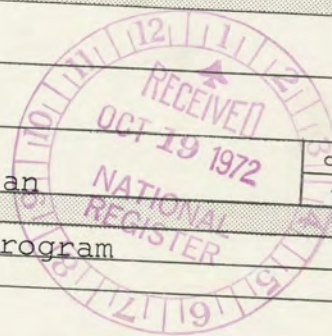
NEGATIVE FILED AT:

Arkansas History Commission

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

View from the east.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

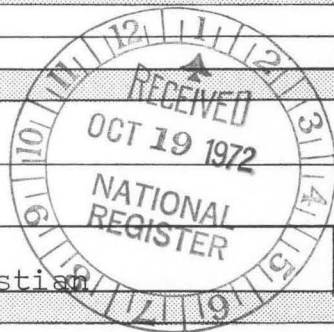
PROPERTY MAP FORM

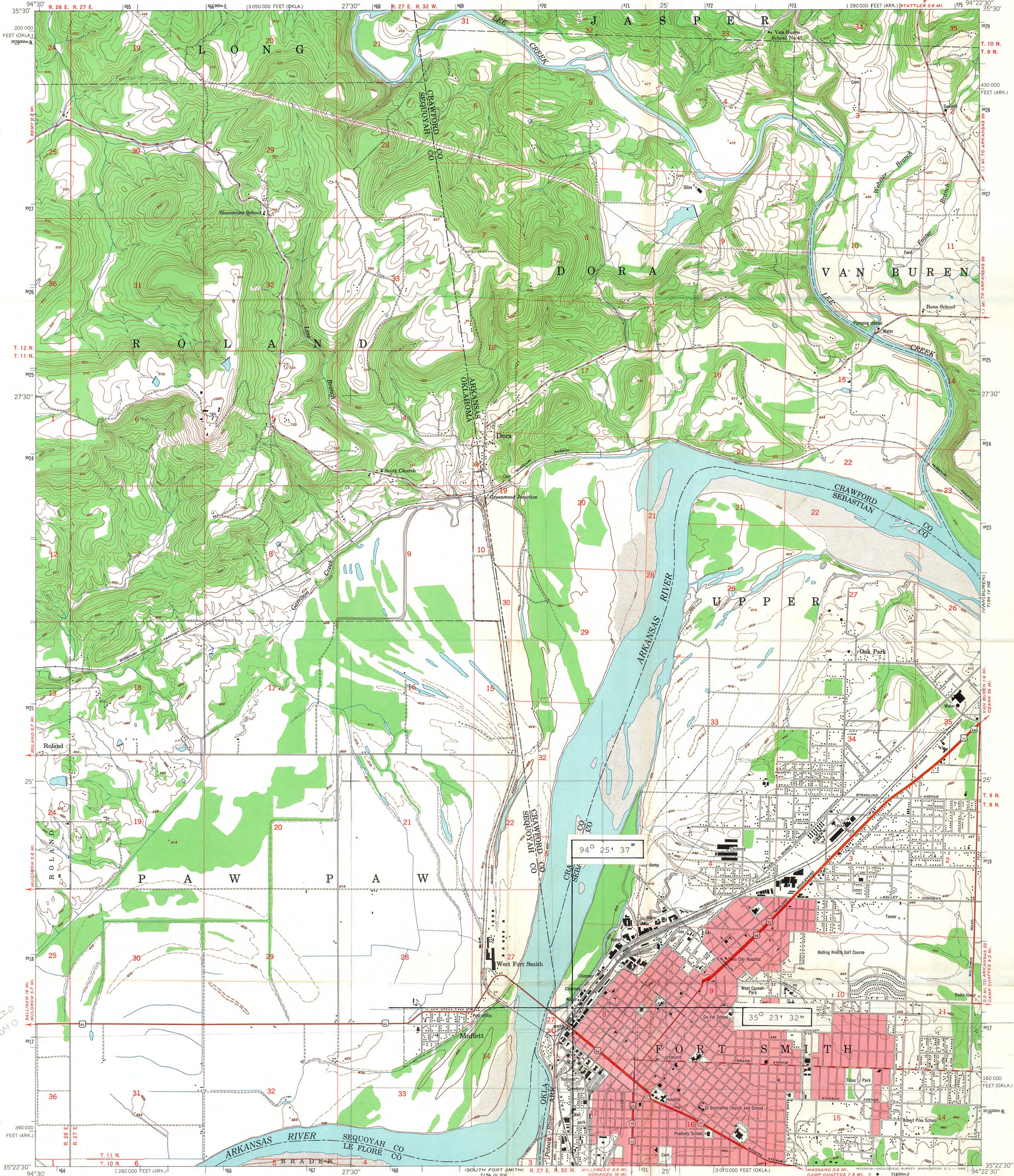
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Arkansas	
COUNTY Sebastian	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 7 1973

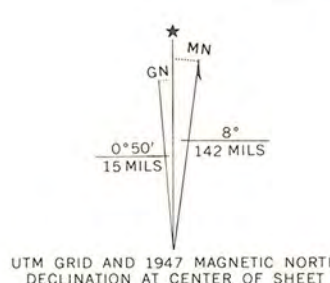
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: RIVER FRONT HOTEL			
AND/OR HISTORIC: Commercial Hotel			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
123 North First Street			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Fort Smith			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Arkansas	05	Sebastian	131
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE:			
United States Geological Survey			
SCALE: 1:24,000			
DATE: 1947			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			





Mapped by the Army Map Service
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey
Control by CE, USGS, and USC&GS
Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods
Aerial photographs taken 1946. Field check 1947
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on Arkansas coordinate system,
north zone and Oklahoma coordinate system, north zone
Unchecked elevations are shown in brown
No distinction is made between dwellings, barns,
commercial and industrial buildings
Red tint indicates area in which only
landmark buildings are shown
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue



SCALE 1:24,000
1 000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
1 KILOMETER
CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
DASHED LINES REPRESENT HALF-INTERVAL CONTOURS
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225 OR WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242
AND BY THE ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
HARD-SURFACE ALL WEATHER ROADS DRY WEATHER ROADS
Heavy-duty 4 LANE 16 LANE Improved dirt
Medium-duty 4 LANE 16 LANE Unimproved dirt
Loose-surface, graded, or narrow hard-surface
U. S. Route State Route

FORT SMITH, ARK.-OKLA.
N3522.5-W9422.5/7.5
1947
AMS 7154 IV NW-SERIES V884

Green 3-6-73
CSHULL

MAR 12 1973

H34-PHR

Mr. Gene Richardson
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
1023 West Third Street
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Mr. Richardson:

At your request, we have checked on the status of the six properties which you mentioned in your letter of February 22. The two properties about which the review committee was particularly concerned, the Louisiana Purchase Survey Market and the Washington County Courthouse, were both entered in the National Register on February 23, 1972. The other four properties, Jacob Wolfe House, River Front Hotel, Trappell Hall, and Old Randolph County Courthouse, are still pending.

If some emergency arises in connection with one of these buildings, we will be happy to expedite the review of the nomination. As we have limited staff and have a continual influx of nominations the normal review process usually takes several months. We appreciate your patience.

Changed to
Commercial
Hotel

Sincerely yours,

(signed)

Charles A. Herrington
Chief, Review Unit
National Register

cc:

Mr. William E. Henderson, Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism, State
Capitol -Room 149, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201 w/cy inc
Director, Southwest Region w/cy inc

LI - Mr. Winge

PHR - w/cy inc

CSHULL:so-p 3/6/73 BASIC FILE RETAINED IN PHR



February 22, 1973

Mr. Jerry Rogers
Chief of Registration
National Register
National Parks Service
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Rogers:

The Arkansas State Review Committee has asked us to verify that the following nominations are in your possession and are currently under consideration by the National Register Staff.

<u>Nomination</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Date Submitted to the National Register</u>
1. <u>Louisiana Purchase Survey Marker</u>	Monroe	7-12-71
2. <u>Washington County Courthouse</u>	Washington	7-12-71
3. <u>Jacob Wolf House</u>	Baxter	10-16-72
4. <u>River Front Hotel</u>	Sebastian	10-16-72
5. <u>Trapnall Hall</u>	Pulaski	12-27-72
6. <u>Old Randolph County Courthouse</u>	Randolph	12-27-72

Mr. Jerry Rogers

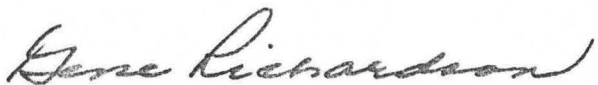
-2-

February 22, 1973

In order to keep our records current and readily available for reference by the State Review Committee, we would appreciate your responding by letter or memo concerning these properties. The State Review Committee is particularly concerned about the two nominations submitted in July of 1971. If they have been misplaced or for any reason you did not receive them please notify us at once and we will immediately mail additional copies.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gene Richardson".

Gene Richardson
Arkansas Historic
Preservation Program

FER:bjf

Green 10/18/72
act

134-PHR

MAR 30 1973

Mr. William E. Henderson
Director
Arkansas Department of Parks and
Tourism
State Capitol - Room 149
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Mr. Henderson:

In response to your request for the status of six nominations we have consulted our files and have listed the properties below.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Louisiana Purchase Survey Marker | Added to the Register
2/23/72 |
| 2. Washington County Courthouse | Added to the Register
2/23/72 |
| 3. Jacob Wolf House | Received 10/19/72 in
review |
| 4. <u>River Front Hotel</u> - <i>Commercial
Hotel</i> | Received 10/19/72 in
review |
| 5. Trapnall Hall | Received 1/3/73 in
review |
| 6. Old Randolph County Courthouse | Received 1/3/73 in
review |

As you know, we have been behind in the review of nominations because of short staffing. We are beginning to catch up with our backlog and should be current fairly soon.

Sincerely yours,

Charles A. Herrington
Chief, Review Unit
National Register

cc:

Director, Southwest Region w/cy inc

LI

PHR, w/cy inc

KHOLLER:so-p 3/28/73 BASIC FILE RETAINED IN PHR

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ARKANSAS

STATE

Date Entered **MAY 7 1973**

Name

Location

Commercial Hotel

**Fort Smith
Sebastian County**

Pillow, Jerome Bonaparte, House

**Helena
Phillips County**

**Old Post Office Building and
Custom House**

**Little Rock
Pulaski County**

Also Notified

**Hon. John L. McClellan
Hon. J. W. Fulbright
Hon. John P. Hammerschmidt
Hon. Bill Alexander
Hon. Wilbur D. Mills**

Mr. Steven Ruttenbaum, GSA

**State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. William E. Henderson, Director
Arkansas Department of Parks &
Tourism
State Capitol - Room 149
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201**

Director, Southwest Region
PHR NRowland:mm 5/10/73