

PH 0076171

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:

Arkansas

COUNTY:

Ouachita

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE

JAN 21 1974

## 1. NAME

COMMON:

POWELL-GODWIN-MAY HOUSE

AND/OR HISTORIC:

Benjamin T. Powell House *use this name*

## 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

305 California Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:

Camden

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

Four

STATE

Arkansas

CODE

05

COUNTY:

Ouachita

CODE

103

## 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY  
(Check One)

- ☐ District ☒ Building  
☐ Site ☐ Structure  
☐ Object

OWNERSHIP

- ☐ Public  
☒ Private  
☐ Both

Public Acquisition:

- ☐ In Process  
☐ Being Considered

STATUS

- ☒ Occupied  
☐ Unoccupied  
☐ Preservation work  
in progress

ACCESSIBLE  
TO THE PUBLIC

- Yes:  
☒ Restricted  
☐ Unrestricted  
☐ No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Agricultural ☐ Government ☐ Park  
☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☒ Private Residence  
☐ Educational ☐ Military ☐ Religious  
☐ Entertainment ☐ Museum ☐ Scientific

☐ Transportation  
☐ Other (Specify)☐ Comments

## 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

Mr. R. Paul May

STREET AND NUMBER:

305 California

CITY OR TOWN:

Camden

STATE:

Arkansas

CODE

05

## 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Ouachita County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Camden

STATE

Arkansas

CODE

05

## 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

DATE OF SURVEY: 1969-1973 ☐ Federal ☒ State ☐ County ☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Arkansas History Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:

300 West Markham Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Little Rock

STATE:

Arkansas

CODE

05

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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JAN 21 1974

## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Powell-Godwin-May House is a two-story frame house, with unevenly spaced bays across the front. It has a gable roof. The porch roof is a gable extended from the main roof and ends in a Classic Revival pediment. This portico is supported by four round, slender fluted columns and pilasters. There is a gallery on both the first and second floors. Both of the galleries are accessible from the house. There is an ornamental iron railing between columns on both porches.

The foundation of the building is of handmade brick, with frame and siding of cypress. The iron grill work is reputed to have been installed at, or near, the original construction date. In the downstairs rooms the molding trim has been refinished to the natural wood. Door hinges on exterior and interior doors are original, but some of the doorknobs and plates have been replaced over the years. The walls are the original plaster over split lath with only minor repairs having been made. Fireplace mantels are original, as are all of the door and window moldings. The molding around doors and windows in some rooms is ten inches in width. A decorative plaster medallion in the entrance hall was reputedly made by itinerant Italian plasterers, although it is impossible to confirm the accuracy of this statement, or to pin-point the date. The newel post, spindles, and the rail of the circular staircase are made of cherry; and the floors are of oak.

The main entrance on the first floor is a large single entry door with rectangular sidelights and transom. The door is void of any trim such as pilasters or entablature. There are shutters attached.

The access to the second floor gallery is a single entry door with rectangular sidelights and transom. The door is a glass panel type, three lights wide by five lights high. This door has neither pilasters nor entablature and is without shutters.

The windows are double-hung sashes with six lights per sash. All of the windows are original except for a few which have been replaced with copies of the originals. The panes of the originals are of handmade glass. The shutters, and shutter hardware, are copies of the originals.

The house has box cornices, pilasters on the corners with fancy mold capitals. The entablature consists of a plain bead for the architrave, a plain frieze and concave molding for the cornice. The roof is covered with composition shingles, and there are two internal chimneys with

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Arkansas	
COUNTY Ouachita	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JAN 21 1974

(Number all entries)

7. Description Continued:

corbelled cars extending from the roof.

The Powell-Godwin-May House was built in 1859, and since it displays many of the characteristics of the period, its appearance is probably not too vastly different today than when it was built.

The original roof would have been of cypress shingles, and the ornamental iron railing may be a post Civil War addition, with the original having been of wood. Gutters and downspouts, although they closely resemble original cornice molding are, most probably, later additions. Except for the noted minor alterations, the house is basically original.





## 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) 1859

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education           | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering         | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry            | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention           | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape           | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature          | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music               |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |  |  |  |

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Powell-Godwin-May House was built about 1859 by Benjamin T. Powell.

Architecturally, it displays the characteristics of the design and construction in vogue in Arkansas among the prosperous plantation owners. Perhaps even more significant is the fact that it is a representative type of town houses which were being built by those persons whose wealth was derived from the growing and selling of cotton.

The town of Camden was virtually created by cotton. It was the head of navigation on the Ouachita River and was in the heart of an area ideally suited for growing cotton. Its growth coincided with the cotton boom. In 1843-1844 Camden was still a small river village, but by the 1850's elaborate homes like the Powell-Godwin-May House were being built, and during the shipping time, cotton bales lined all the streets leading to the wharf. By 1860, Camden was the greatest cotton mart in southern Arkansas. The Powell-Godwin-May House survives as one example of the architecture developed in Arkansas during this period.

The Powell-Godwin-May House was intended to be innovative, but the only noteworthy innovation which now survives is the fact that it was apparently one of the first houses to be painted with the, then new, "steamboat paint."

When the Civil War started the house was occupied but still incomplete. In the spring of 1861, Benjamin Powell's eldest son, John Powell, joined the Confederate Army and went to war. While serving in the East, he sent home some young cedar trees from Acquia Creek, where his unit was encamped. These cedar trees still grow in the yard of the home, but John Powell was killed at the Battle of Chickamauga and never returned home to see them.

In April of 1864, when Federal troops occupied Camden,



# 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Arkansas Landmark Society Records, Arkansas History Commission, Little Rock, Arkansas.  
 Unpublished Federal Writers Project, "Ouachita County," Place File, Arkansas History Commission, Little Rock, Arkansas.  
 Camden Chamber of Commerce and the Ouachita County Historical Society, Historic Camden. (a brochure).  
 U. S. Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States: 1850. Population.

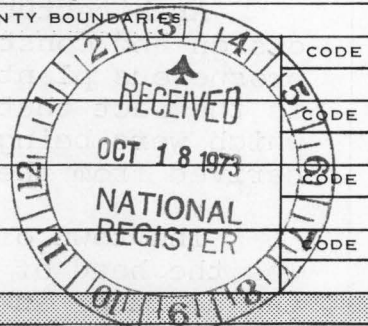
# 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "	33°	34'	52.5"
NE	° ' "	° ' "			
SE	° ' "	° ' "			
SW	° ' "	° ' "			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



# 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: <u>Ed Baxter, Staff</u>	
ORGANIZATION <u>Historic Preservation Program</u>	DATE <u>July 16, 1973</u>
STREET AND NUMBER: <u>1023 West Third</u>	
CITY OR TOWN: <u>Little Rock</u>	STATE <u>Arkansas</u>
	CODE <u>05</u>

# 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

# NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☒

Name William E. Henderson  
 Title Arkansas Historic Preservation Officer

Date October 10, 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

A. R. Mortensen  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 1/21/74

ATTEST:  
Ronald M. Guenberg  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 1/18/74

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

HB

NO  
ATM

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Arkansas	
COUNTY Ouachita	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE JAN 21 1974

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8. Significance Continued:

General Rice established headquarters in the Powell Home and remained until Camden was evacuated.

The house was built by Benjamin T. Powell and passed on to his youngest son after Mr. Powell's death. Powell's son subsequently sold the property to Mr. Solomon Black, who, in 1888, sold the property to Mr. W. E. McRae. In the mid-nineteen twenties the house was owned by Mr. and Mrs. Carl Ramsey. It was then sold to Mr. Elbert Godwin and occupied by the Godwin family until 1962 when it was sold to Mr. R. Paul May.



Benjamin T. Powell

PROPERTY

~~Powell-Hudson-May House~~

STATE

Ark.

WORKING NUMBER

10.18.73.3821

OUACHITA CO.

TECH REVIEW

PHOTOS

1

MAPS

1

74000485

CONTROL REVIEW

am

10.23

73

HISTORIAN

would like to know interior layout  
otherwise #7 good  
without discussion of Godwin or May  
would be inclined to use hist. name?

OK

Accept

Full

10/24/73

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

change  
name, ok with me.

Accept

etc

11/23/73

BRANCH CHIEF

Accept

Call

1-1774

KEEPER

Greenberg  
for 11/18/74

National Register Write-up

Send-back

Federal Register entry

3-5-74

Re-submit

Entered

JAN 21 1974

INT: 1538-73





Arkansas, Ouachita County

Powell-Godwin-May House

FORM 10-301 A  
(6/72)

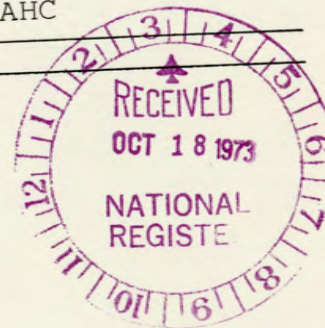
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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

1. NAME COMMON		AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
POWELL-GODWIN-MAY HOUSE			JAN 21 1974
2. LOCATION STATE		COUNTY	TOWN
Arkansas		Ouachita	Camden
STREET AND NUMBER			
305 California Avenue			
3. PHOTO REFERENCE PHOTO CREDIT		DATE	NEGATIVE FILED AT
Ed Baxter - HPP Staff		July 10, 1973	AHC
4. IDENTIFICATION DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			

North and West elevations viewed from the Northwest



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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

**1. NAME**

COMMON

AND/OR HISTORIC

NUMERIC CODE *(Assigned by NPS)*

POWELL, <sup>Benjamin T.</sup>~~GODWIN-MAY~~ HOUSE

JAN 21 1974

**2. LOCATION**

STATE

COUNTY

TOWN

Arkansas

Ouachita

Camden

STREET AND NUMBER

305 California Avenue

**3. MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE

DATE

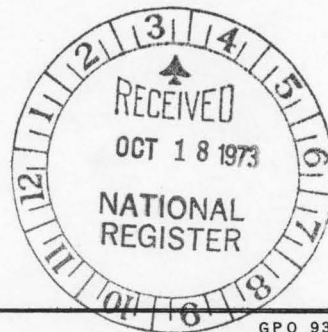
SCALE

U.S.G.S. 7.5 Minute Series  
Camden Quardrangle

1951

1:24000

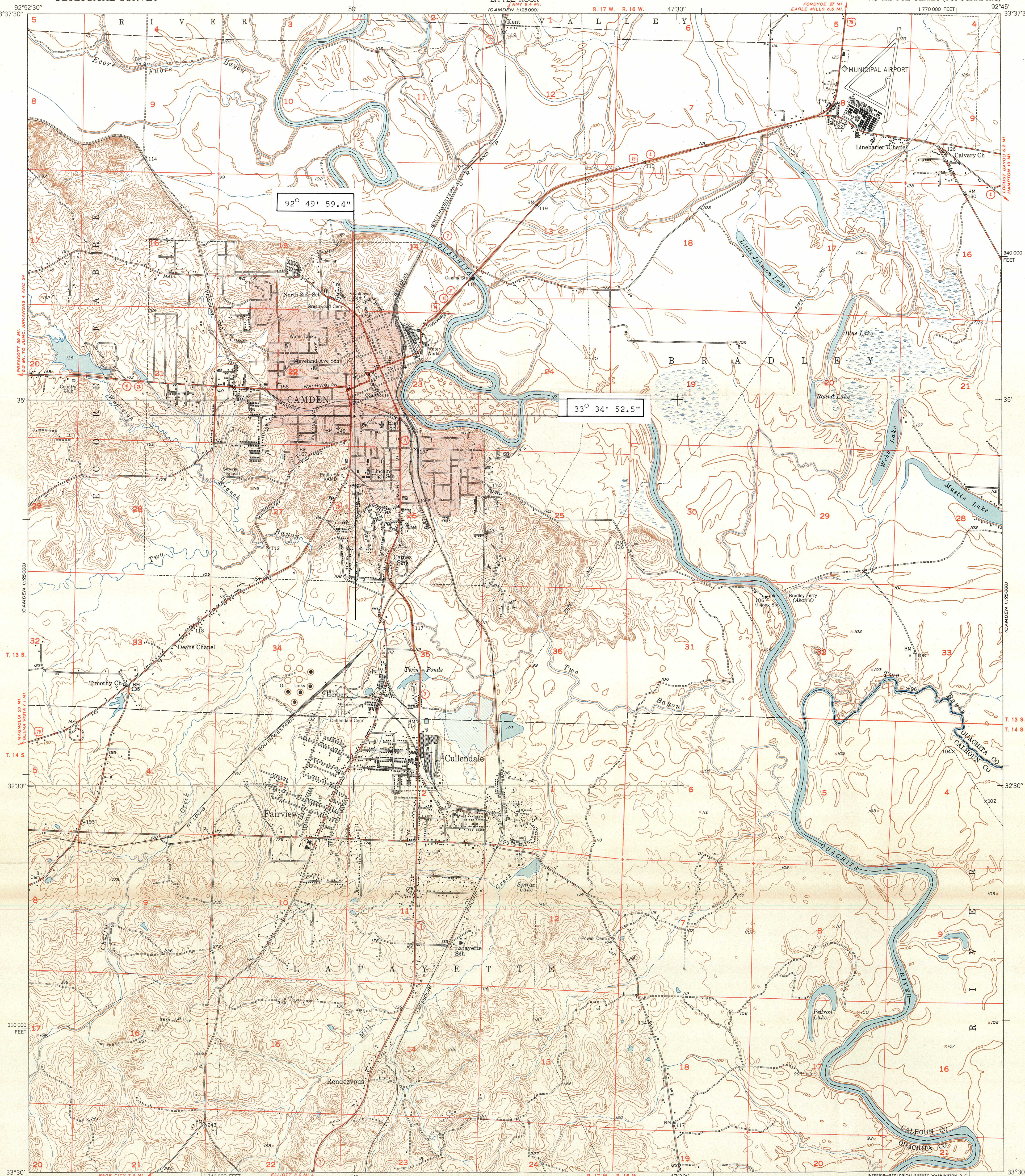
REQUIREMENTS: PROPERTY BOUNDARIES, WHERE REQUIRED, AND NORTH ARROW.





(CAMDEN 1:125 000)

7:5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

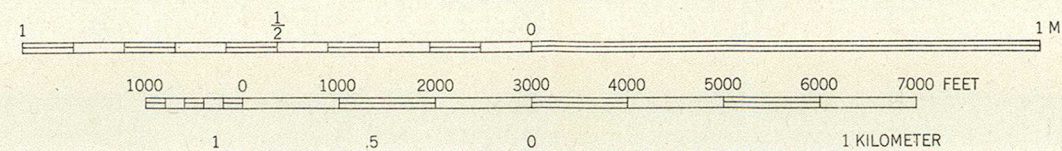


Culture and drainage in part compiled from  
aerial photographs taken 1940  
Topography by plane-table methods 1949-1950

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Arkansas coordinate system,  
south zone

Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown

SCALE 1:24 000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, FEDERAL CENTER, DENVER, COLORADO OR WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
AND BY THE ARKANSAS RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT 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 — 1 LANE 16 LANE      Improved dirt —=====

Medium-duty — 1 LANE 16 LANE      Unimproved dirt =====

Loose-surface, graded, or narrow hard-surface      - -

 U. S. Route       State Route

CAMDEN, ARK.  
N3330—W9245/7.5

EDITION OF 1951



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ARKANSAS

STATE

JAN 21 1974

Date Entered

Name

Location

Smith, Rowland B., House

Camden  
Quachita County

*Benjamin T. House*  
Powell-Godwin-Hay House

Camden  
~~Quachita County~~  
Quachita

Hon. John L. McClellan  
Hon. J. W. Fulbright  
Hon. R. H. Thornton, Jr.  
Director, Southwest Region

Also Notified State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. William E. Henderson, Director  
Arkansas Dept. of Parks and Tourism  
State Capitol - Room 149  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

PR MMOTT: p1 1.31.74