

Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Segment

Name of Property

Logan Co., Arkansas

County and State

NPS Form 10-900

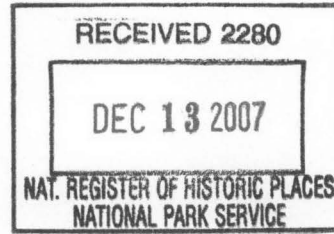
OMB No. 1024-0018

(Rev. 8-86)

1429

**United States Department of the Interior**

National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

**1. Name of Property**

Historic Name: Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Segment

Other Name/Site Number: LO0199

**2. Location**

Street & Number: Short Mountain Road between Horseshoe Mountain and Short Mountain Creek

Not for Publication: NA

City/Town: Paris

Vicinity: X

State: AR County: Logan Code: AR083 Zip Code: 72855

**3. Classification**

Ownership of Property: Public-local

Category of Property: Structure

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing    Noncontributing

___	___	buildings
___	___	sites
<u>1</u>	___	structures
___	___	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

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

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

#### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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.

*Cathie Matthews*    12/5/07

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

Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Segment  
Name of Property


Logan Co., Arkansas  
County and State

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register  
    \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
☐ 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

Historic: TRANSPORTATION Sub: road-related

Current : TRANSPORTATION Sub: road-related

### 7. Description

Architectural Classification: No style

Materials: foundation Earth, gravel roof NA  
            walls NA other NA

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

SUMMARY:

The Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Segment is a well-defined nineteenth-century roadbed currently designated as Short Mountain Road. It is approximately 3.7 miles in length, approximately 12 feet wide, and features sizeable banks on either side for much of its distance.

ELABORATION:

The Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Segment is a well-defined nineteenth-century roadbed currently designated as Short Mountain Road. It is approximately 3.7 miles in length, approximately 12 feet wide, and features sizeable banks on either side for much of its distance. Though it has been graveled periodically, its width and banking still strongly retain the appearance of an early nineteenth-century road.

Located just northwest of Paris in Logan County, the Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Road Segment clearly reflects the “vicarious experience” used as a standard by the National Park Service’s National Historic Trails office. The American soldiers and Native Americans who traveled the route in the 1830s would recognize the road cut today.

The Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Road Segment has excellent integrity of location in that it conforms to the revised route established by Lt. James Dawson. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program located the road segment in 2007 by georeferencing 1830s Government Land Office maps and the 1826 field survey by Reuben Richardson to modern quad maps; the nominated road section matches the historic road location closely. Its length clearly allows it to maintain a sense of travel and destination and it retains the physical characteristics of an early nineteenth-century roadbed, including its presumed original widths and embankments, giving excellent integrity of design, materials and workmanship.

The nominated section is remarkably clear of modern intrusions, which provides excellent integrity of feeling and association. The Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Road Segment would easily be recognized today by the people who traversed it in the early nineteenth century.

The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program conducted an in-depth survey of the Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road during the winter of 2006-7, using digitized nineteenth-century maps and modern quad maps and aerial photographs to identify any surviving sections of the road. The survey located several sections of the road, either abandoned or overlaying modern roads. The Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Segment was the by far longest and one of the most-intact segments identified.



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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: Statewide.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): NA

Areas of Significance: Exploration/Settlement  
Transportation

Period(s) of Significance: 1826-1828

Significant Dates: 1826-1828

Significant Person(s): NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: Thomas Hixson

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

### SUMMARY:

The Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Road Segment is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C with Statewide significance by virtue of its status as a remarkably long and virtually intact segment of the Military Road west of Little Rock that still reflects the workmanship and appearance of an early nineteenth-century road.

### ELABORATION:

On March 3, 1825, Congress approved a bill to establish a road from Little Rock to the Indian Territory, continuing a road between the Mississippi River and Little Rock that was authorized a year before. "The appropriation asked for is sufficient to make a wagon road," Arkansas Territory delegate Henry W. Conway said in seeking the \$10,000 appropriation. "The land lies high and dry; and the advantages will be direct communication with the States east of the Mississippi and an increase of the value of the public lands." In addition to the funding, Congress appointed Arkansas pioneers Benjamin Moore of Crawford County, Morgan Maness of Independence County and Edward McDonald of Lawrence County as commissioners to survey and mark a road between Little Rock and Fort Gibson, Indian Territory.<sup>1</sup>

In early October, the commissioners outfitted an expedition to seek a route for the road, returning on December 17, 1825. The *Arkansas Gazette* reported that “the Commissioners are unanimously of [the] opinion that a good road can be obtained, and at a trifling expense, considering its length and its great usefulness not only to the military, but to our citizens on our western frontier, on the route which they have selected.” The selected route would travel south of the Arkansas River from Fort Gibson in modern-day Oklahoma to Dardanelle, Arkansas, at which point it would cross to the north of the Arkansas to continue on toward Little Rock, avoiding Petit Jean Mountain and its surrounding bayous. The total distance of the road was estimated at “208 miles, 7 chains, and 72 links.” Included in the report was a description of Short Mountain Creek, which the surveyors described as “a considerable stream over which a bridge would be necessary. The expence of it would be about 300 dollars.”<sup>2</sup>

The commissioners’ report was duly sent to Washington, D.C., in the spring of 1826, and the *Gazette* reported on March 15 that Col. Matthew Arbuckle, commander of Cantonment Gibson, “has been ordered, by the Secretary of War, to employ a part of the troops under his command, in opening the road from Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson. The work is to be commenced immediately, and I hope, will be completed in the course of the next summer.”<sup>3</sup>

Arbuckle, however, was still in the process of building the cantonment near the point where the Neosho and Verdigris rivers join with the Arkansas. He reported to his superiors that he lacked an officer to lead a road-building detail, a physician to accompany it, and enlisted men to provide a labor force, especially since their quarters at Gibson were still incomplete. Arbuckle also contended that the proposed road was of little use to the army, except where it linked Fort Smith with Cantonment Gibson. By November 16, 1826, however, Lt. James L. Dawson, an assistant quartermaster general, was sent to Cantonment Gibson where he reported that “the Commandant of the Post has notified me that he will be enabled by the advanced State of the Works, to detail the Number of Men, requisite for opening the road from this to Little Rock, in the Course of a few weeks, which will accordingly be commenced.”<sup>4</sup>

Both Dawson and Arbuckle stridently opposed the route between the two military bases as proposed by the commissioners, with Dawson reporting to Washington that “it is not only 10 Miles longer than is Necessary, but passes over exceedingly rough Country, and Crosses all the Water Courses So Near their outlets, as Not to admit of their being forded in Wet Seasons.” A more sensible route selected by Dawson was approved, and soldiers from Cantonment Gibson commenced work in spring 1827 after Arbuckle received a blunt order directly from the General in Chief to start building the road. Dawson also received orders to seek proposals for contracts to construct the road between Little Rock and Fort Smith.<sup>5</sup>

Dawson placed a request for proposals in the *Arkansas Gazette* on July 3, 1827, asking that the proposals be made for 29 five-mile increments to link Little Rock and Fort Smith following the route laid by the commissioners. Arbuckle, meanwhile, reported to the Adjutant General in Washington that his troops “will, it is believed, finish the road as far as Fort Smith, in all the present Month; or early in the next.”<sup>6</sup>

On August 28, 1827, Dawson reported that he had completed contracts for the road between Little Rock and Fort Smith, that Arbuckle’s troops had completed their section, and that a “Considerable part of this distance has been opened by the County of Crawford, and the remainder being principally prairie land, will render the Completion of the intermediate portion, a work of little difficulty. ... The whole route will be completed by the end of the Current year.” The lieutenant estimated that \$4,900 would be needed to build six bridges along the route, nearly three times the amount predicted by the commissioners, and that the contracts for the five-mile increments would total \$6,096. Adding another \$1,250 for extra laborers, the construction job, minus the bridges, would cost \$7,346, using up the remainder of the Congressional appropriation for the road.<sup>7</sup>

The Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Segment was built by Thomas Hixson, who won a contract for \$700 to build 20 miles of road in Sections 17-20 at a cost of \$35 per mile.<sup>8</sup> The segment was listed in surveyor Reuben

Richardson's December 18, 1825, notes as being "timbered with post oaks &c" up to Short Mountain Creek, which he noted had a "good ford or sufficient bank for bridging." On the east side of the creek, "the country is gently rolling timberland with Redoak, post oak &c." Richardson's survey plat map also clearly shows the northward jog the road takes as it skirts Short Mountain between Three-Mile Creek and Short Mountain Creek.<sup>9</sup>

On New Year's Day 1828, Colonel Arbuckle reported that the U.S. Army troops from Fort Gibson had completed their labors and the *Arkansas Gazette* reported a week later that the "whole of the road from this place to Cantonment Gibson is completed, with the exception of 35 miles, which will be immediately put under contract." Dawson reported on January 10 that the 35 miles in question was under contract and would "be under operation in a few days, to be completed on the 30 April." He did not, unfortunately, include the name of the successful contractor, nor did the *Gazette* report further on the road's construction. For all intents and purposes, the Military Road between Little Rock, Arkansas, and Fort Gibson, Indian Territory, was considered complete in early 1828.<sup>10</sup>

Several sections of the old Military Road between Little Rock and Fort Gibson have been discovered in Arkansas, but none exhibit the remarkable length and intact status of the road by Short Mountain. Today, it serves as a testament to the soldiers and pioneers who constructed a link between the capital of the Arkansas Territory and the military post near the junction of the Arkansas and Grand rivers in the Indian Territory.

The Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road – Short Mountain Segment is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C with Statewide significance by virtue of its status as a remarkably long and virtually intact segment of the Military Road west of Little Rock that still reflects the workmanship and appearance of an early nineteenth-century road.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Moore, Benjamin, Morgan Maness and Edward McDonald. *Commissioner's Report*.

Nichols, Cheryl. *Construction of the Military Road Between Little Rock, Arkansas, and Fort Gibson, Oklahoma*. Research report for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, May 2003.

Richardson, Reuben. *Field Notes and plat map, Road from Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson*, December 18, 1825.

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:

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: The nominated property occupies approximately 11 acres.

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing    Zone Easting Northing

A   15   426602   3908042    B   15   432359   3907642

Verbal Boundary Description:

The property consists of a 32-foot wide strip of land running approximately 3.7 miles and connecting the following UTM points: A 15/426602/3908042; B 15/432359/3907642.

Boundary Justification:

This boundary contains the nominated roadbed and a ten-foot strip on either side of the road.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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Name/Title: Mark Christ/Community Outreach Director

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: August 30, 2007

Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St. Telephone: (501) 324-9880

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

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<sup>1</sup> Cheryl Nichols, *Construction of the Military Road Between Little Rock, Arkansas, and Fort Gibson, Oklahoma*. Research report for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, May 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Nichols, p. 2-4; Commissioner's report – Benjamin Moore, Morgan Maness and Edward McDonald to Dear Sir, December 26, 1825. In the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

<sup>3</sup> Nichols, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Nichols, p. 6-7.

<sup>5</sup> Nichols, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Nichols, p. 9-10.

<sup>7</sup> Nichols, p. 11-12.

<sup>8</sup> Nichols, p. 13-14.

<sup>9</sup> Reuben Richardson, Field Notes and plat map, Road from Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson, December 18, 1825.

<sup>10</sup> Nichols, p. 14-15.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road--Short Mountain Segmen  
NAME: t

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Logan

DATE RECEIVED: 12/13/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/03/08  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/18/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/26/08  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07001429

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: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 1.24.08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the  
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.





Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road - Short Mountain Segment

Paris vic., Logan Co, AR

Photo by H. Hope

February 2007

Negative on file at AHPP

View from West





Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road - Short Mountain Segment

Paris vic., Logan Co, AR

Photo by H. Hope

February 2007

Negative on file at AHPP

View from east





Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road - Short Mountain Segment  
Paris vic., Logan Co., AR  
Photo by H. Hope  
February 2007  
Negative on file at AHPP  
View from west





Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road - Short Mountain Segment

Paris view, Logan Co., AR

Photo by H. Hope

February 2007

Negative on file at AHP

View from west





Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road - Short Mtn. Seg.

Paris vic., Logan Co., AR

Photo by H. Hope

February 2007

Negative on file at AHPP

View from east





Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road- Short Mountain Segment

Paris vic., Logan Co., AR

Photo by H. Hope

February 2007

Negative on File at AHPP

View from east





Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road - Old Wire Road Segment

Paris vic., Logan Co., AR

Photo by H. Hope

February 2007

Negative on file at ACHPP

View from east





Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road - Short Mountain Segment

Paris vic., Logan Co., AR

Photo by H. Hope

February 2007

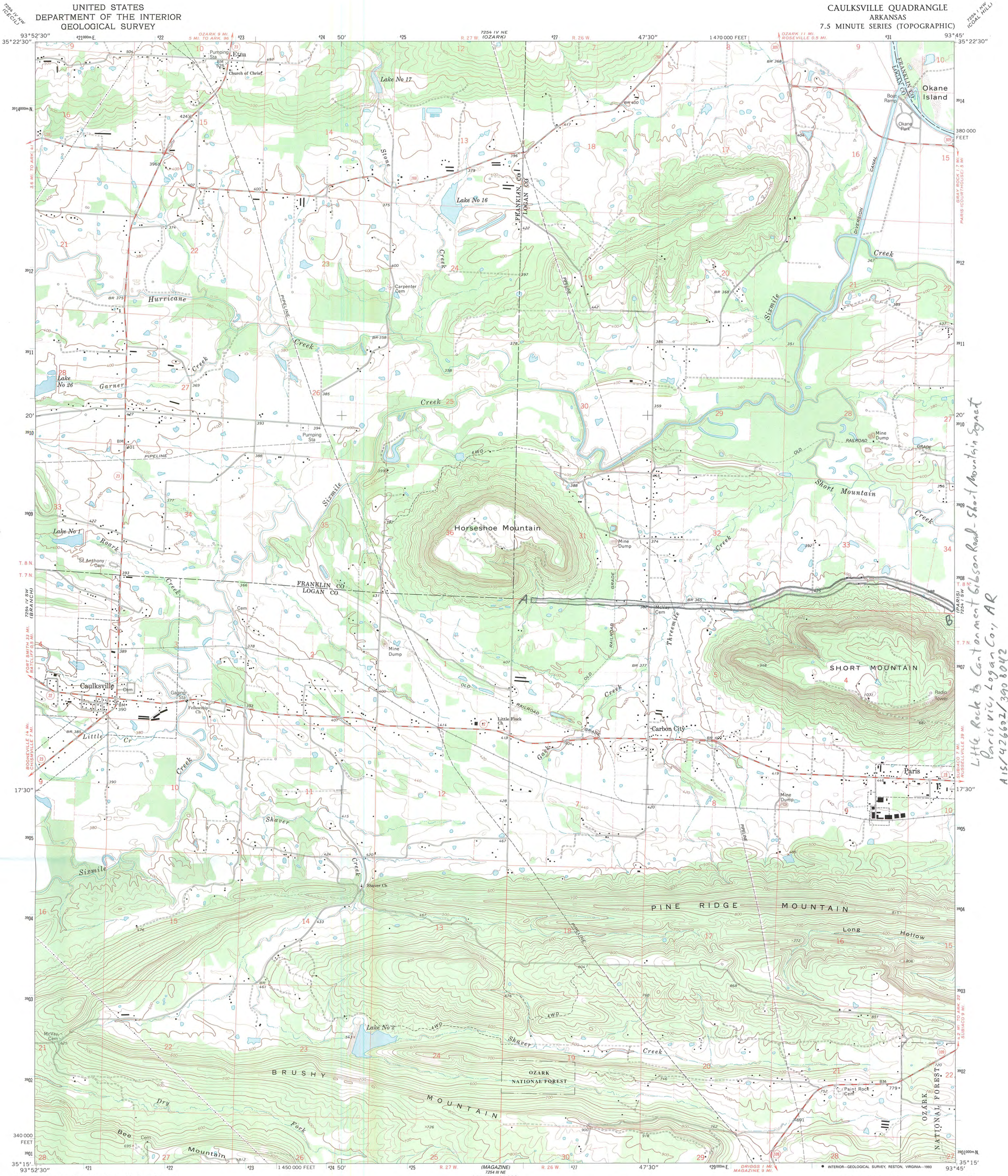
Negative on file at AHPP

View from west

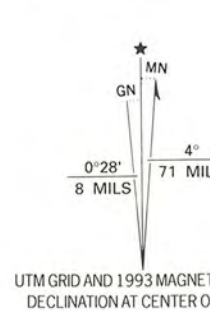


UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

CAULKVILLE QUADRANGLE  
ARKANSAS  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
taken 1962. Field checked 1966. Revised from aerial photographs  
taken 1989-90. Field checked 1992. Map edited 1993  
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Arkansas coordinate  
system, north zone (Lambert conformal conic)  
100-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue  
1927 North American Datum (NAD 27)  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks  
The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute  
intersections are given in USGS Bulletin 1875  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of  
the National or State reservations shown on this map  
Unlabeled wells are gas wells  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



SCALE 1:24 000  
CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

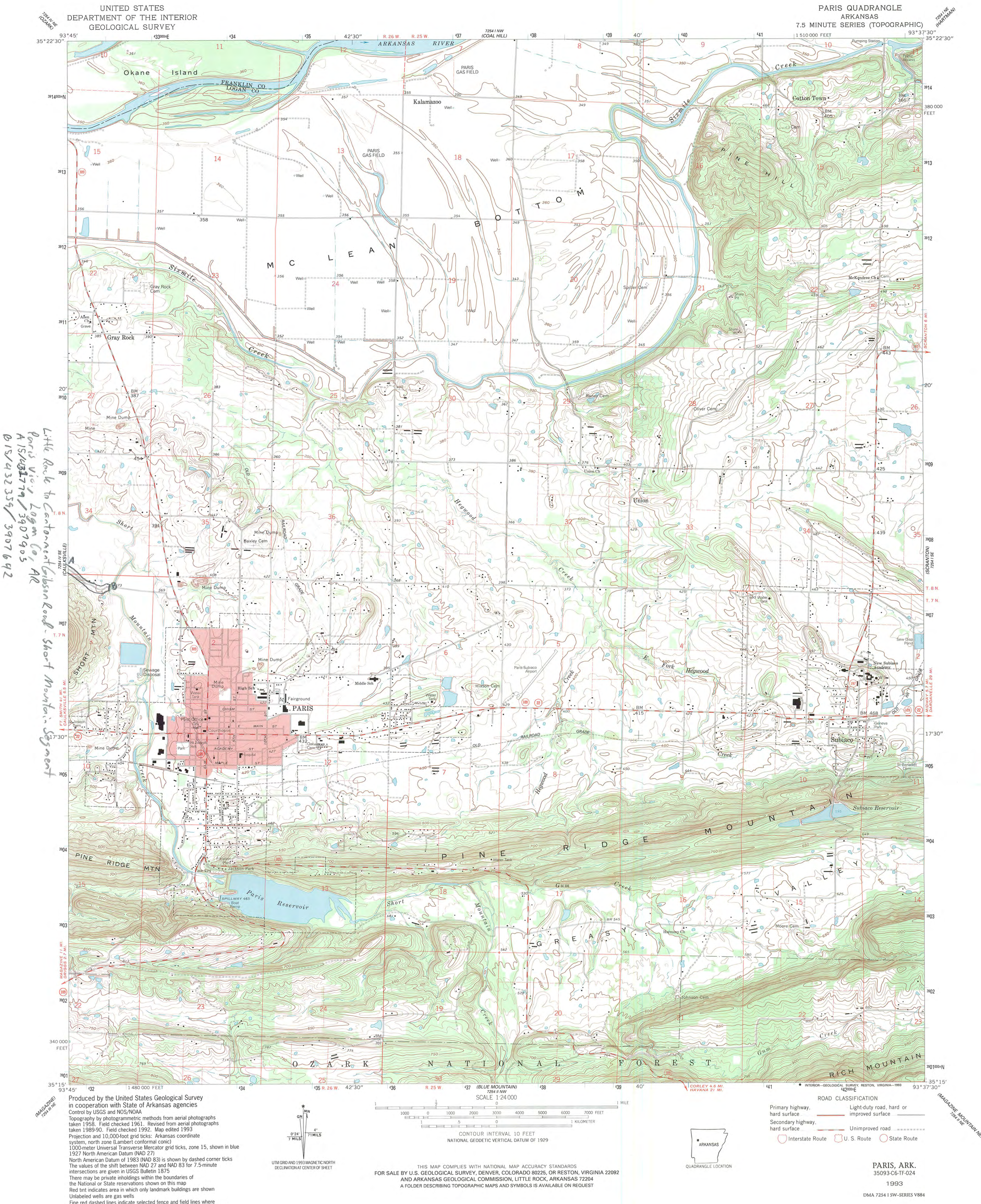


ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Primary highway, hard surface  
Secondary highway, hard surface  
Unimproved road  
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface  
Interstate Route  
U. S. Route  
State Route

CAULKVILLE, ARK.  
35093-C7-TF-024  
1993  
DMA 7254 IV SE-SERIES 8884

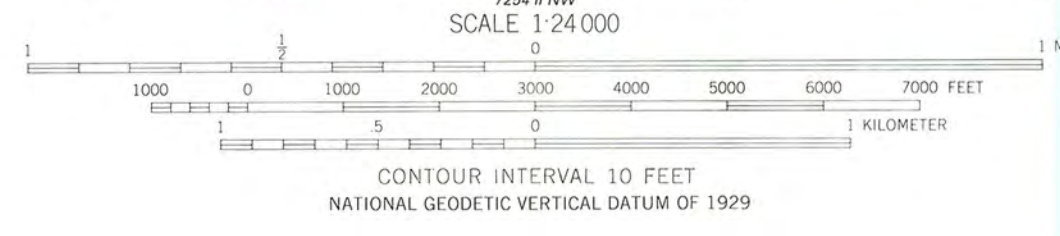
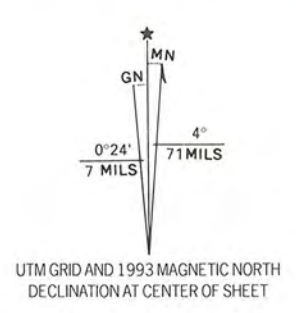
Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road - Short Mountain Segment  
Paris vic, Logan Co., AR  
A15/426602/3908042  
015/431779/3907903





Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road - Short Mountain Segment  
Paris view Logan Co, AR  
A1543279/3907905  
015432359/3907692

Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
in cooperation with State of Arkansas agencies  
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
taken 1958. Field checked 1961. Revised from aerial photographs  
taken 1989-90. Field checked 1992. Map edited 1993  
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Arkansas coordinate  
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the National or State reservations shown on this map  
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown  
Unlabeled wells are gas wells  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

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

PARIS, ARK.  
35093-C6-1F-024  
1993  
DMA 7254 1 SW-SERIES V884