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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic and Architectural Resources of White County, Arkansas

B. Associated Historic Contexts

The Settlement Era in White County
The Development Era in White County
The Railroad's Effect on Industry and Architecture in White County
Boom and Bust: The War and Depression Years

C. Geographical Data

The geographical boundaries of White County, Arkansas

☐ See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Cathryn A. Buford — 7-25-91
Signature of certifying official — Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Patrick Andrus — 9/12/91
Signature of the Keeper of the National Register — Date

WHITE COUNTY HISTORIC CONTEXTS

1. The Settlement Era in White County: 1700's - 1835

While wandering through Arkansas during the late 1830's, German writer Frederick Gerstacker recorded this lyrical, yet apt description of the region now known as White County:

> "As beautiful a panorama as I had ever beheld lay spread out before me. A sea of forest as far as the eye could reach, in every shade of color, from the darkest green to light blue. . . the Little Red River winding through the midst of it, while a light downy mist hung about the tips of the trees on its banks. To the west and southwest, the distant mountains cut sharply in a mass of blue against the lighter morning sky. Hills overgrown with pines rode above the darker extent of the oak, like islands floating in a deep green sea, as the sun's rays were reflected from the dewy leaves. Light vapor rising here and there from the valleys, curling over the forest, and vanishing into air, revealed the site of human habitations hidden in the woods. I sat long, lost in contemplation of the lovely scene."[1]

Located in the northeast part of central Arkansas, White County is bounded on the east by the White River and divided into northeastern and southwestern sections by the Little Red River. The eastern section is generally level with the White River flood plain, while the western half, typified by undulating valleys and rolling ridges, is more rugged. The hardwood forests that Gerstacker noted, together with a moderate climate and an abundance of natural springs, made this area particularly enticing to early settlers.

Hunters and trappers were the first European immigrants into the White County region, pausing every now and then at Arkansas Post, a loosely organized trading center located to the southeast on the Arkansas River. Established in 1686, the Post was the first European settlement in America west of the Mississippi River and was ruled by both French and Spanish governments during its long though tenuous existence. Although both governments intended to 'civilize' the Post with permanent settlers, the majority of its population throughout the 1700's consisted of Quapaw Indians and French-Canadian hunters and traders, who relished the daily struggle for survival in an untamed world.

The French, who regularly sent commandants, a small number of soldiers, and Jesuit priests to the region had a more lasting influence than did the Spanish, even after the Post was sold to the United States in 1803 along with the rest of the Louisiana territory. In The Emigrant's Guide, published in 1818, W. Darby noted that the Post ". . . has remained poor and inconsiderable, like all other places where the inhabitants depend upon hunting and trade with savages for their subsistence and commerce. The inhabitants are mostly French, many of them mixed blood."[2] The French residents also left a legacy of place names as they roamed throughout the area. In the southeast section of the county alone one can find Bayou Des Arc, Glaise Creek, De Partee Creek and Cypress Bayou. Another legacy was the French Colonial architecture. These one-story buildings were

characterized by high foundations and extensive porches that were supported by slender wooden posts under the main roof line, which was steeply pitched and hipped. Traveler Thomas Nuttall described these after visiting the area in 1819:

> "The houses, commonly surrounded with open galleries, destitute of glass windows and perforated with numerous doors, are well enough suited for a summer shelter, but totally destitute of comfort in the winter."[3]

Although records can be found of French settlers in the county as early as 1745, the oldest community - Georgetown - was established in 1789 by Francois Francure, who received a Spanish Land Grant for his claim. This settlement, which is the oldest continuously occupied town in the state, was known in the late nineteenth century as Negro Hill because it consisted of a large number of blacks who, according to various reports, were either owned by Francure, had escaped from Louisiana plantations, or were freedmen.[4]

Yet for many years, homesteads in the county were few and far between. As one observer noted in 1786, even though the soil along the rivers was "suitable for the cultivation of wheat, flax, hemp and tobacco. . . the greatest industry of the inhabitants at present is hunting."[5] Joining the hunter as a temporary inhabitant was the herdsman, who raised small truck gardens and patches of corn only for subsistence. In his journey through the Arkansas territory in 1806, Major Stephen Long described the herdsman's lifestyle:

> "When the canes are fed down and destroyed and the acorns become scarce, the small cornfield and the rude cabin are abandoned, and the squatter goes in search of a place where all the original wealth of the forest is yet undiminished. Here he again builds his hut, removes the trees from a few acres of land which supplies its minimal crop of corn, while the neighboring woods, for an extent of several miles, are used both as pasture and hunting grounds."[6]

The shelters built by these early settlers were simple and often rudely constructed. Rock overhangs or crude lean-tos served as the first dwelling places, while more elaborate lean-tos, constructed of poles faced with shakes cut or riven from logs, housed families for weeks. These structures were then retained as kitchens when - or if - a more substantial dwelling was built, usually a single room log cabin. With the rapid "Americanization" of Arkansas that began around 1815, agriculturalists from the eastern United States continued log construction based firmly upon the architectural traditions of the northeastern part of the country.

The American immigrants were also more agriculturally and community oriented than their French predecessors, and they gradually sought ownership of the public domain rather than just a free use of a part of it. While the hunter or herdsman often became a landowner later on, the agricultural immigrants were motivated by land grants and family associations to own land from the beginning.[7] They often settled in groups of families or in previously established communities, such as Center Hill, Royal Colony and Georgetown, rather than individually or in single families. For example, John

Standlee explored central Arkansas from 1778-80, then returned to his home in Kentucky. In 1811, his sons and son-in-law traveled to the area Standlee had described and settled on the Little Red River below the mouth of Devil's Fork. They cleared thirty acres, built three cabins, then returned for their wives and children. Finally, in 1814, Standlee joined his family in the territory he had visited thirty-four years earlier.[8]

Like Standlee, most of these early immigrants came to White County from Tennessee, Kentucky and other southeastern states and, according to pioneer settler A. C. Jeffery, consisted of some "good citizens, some outlaws and some refugees from justice."[9] In addition, merchants, blacksmiths, doctors and other "urban settlers" followed on the heels of the agricultural immigrant, adding significantly to the development of the region's small communities.

In order to lure a continuous stream of these rural and urban settlers into the area, the survey and registration of lands was necessary. In the beginning, land grants were little more than permits to locate in an ill-prescribed area, intended to entice loyal immigrants, reward military service, encourage industries and generally attain the "affection of the inhabitants."[10] Spain conferred two of these grants in the White County area; the first was Francure's 1789 settlement, and the second was to John Fayac, who received 638 acres on a fork of the White River in 1801.[11] Both of these claims were later acknowledged by the United States when it took possession of the territory.

But the U.S. government ran into land policy problems at first with its military grants and its delays in completing public surveys. The military grants were issued - usually in remote areas - to compensate veterans of the War of 1812 and to encourage enlistments, and Arkansas was selected as one of these areas. But problems mounted when few veterans actually settled on their grants, instead choosing to sell out to land-hungry speculators or enterprising lawyers.[12]

Delays in completing public surveys also hampered the government's orderly apportionment of land. In the White County area, a guide meridian and standard lines (the first steps in applying an imaginary order to the wilderness) weren't surveyed until 1818 and 1819, in conjunction with Arkansas becoming its own territory (it had previously been part of the Missouri Territory). Although a completed public survey was necessary before legal title could be granted, many pioneers claimed or resided on the land anyway, and Congress was forced to recognize these "squatters" through the enactment of various pre-emption laws. These laws granted the squatter the first bid on land when it was auctioned following the survey, which allowed him to retain his improvements and gain clear title to that which he had lived on for years.[13]

Rivers and waterways, such as the White and Little Red Rivers and the Cypress Bayou, continued to provide the earliest access into the county, as well as the most desirable areas for settlement. German families, including Lewis Vongrolman and Philip Hilger, established homesteads at Big Creek and the Little Red River, with Hilger operating a ferry across the river. Bull Creek and Stephens Creek were some of the other sites chosen by the first immigrants.[14]

But because White County was removed from the common departure points of the Mississippi River, most settlers selected and settled lands before reaching this area; therefore, development was slow. In addition, numerous obstructions and rafts on the White River made transportation difficult.

In 1831, and again in 1835 the territorial assembly petitioned Congress to remove "the snags and lodgments of timber" in the White River, saying that "a large and respectable portion of the citizens of the Territory are entirely dependent on this River as the only Channel through which their produce can reach the Mississippi River."[15] Because of these impediments, the Little Red River became the most important river highway, with major steamboat landings located at Searcy and West Point.

With river locations so vital to settlement, road development into and within the White County region was slow. One of only two major roads was the famous Southwest Trail (later improved, extended and renamed the Military Road), which crossed the White River at Batesville. In 1834 or 1835, the English traveler George Featherstonhaugh described the Arkansas section of this road:

> ". . . the trees had been razed close to the ground and . . . the road was distinguished by blazes cut into some of the trees standing on the roadside, so that it could not be mistaken; a great comfort to travelers in such a wilderness."

He also wrote that "one or more settlers here, having quarreled about the direction of the Military Road, have taken the liberty to cut roads resembling it, and blazed the trees, to their own cabins."[16] But by the 1840's the main county road had become the stagecoach route, which was established between Little Rock and Batesville. This road took the traveler from Batesville to Step Rock to Providence, across the Little Red River at Beeler's Ferry and on into Searcy.

Settling this region now known as White County was definitely slow and sporadic. The earliest county residents -- French and Spanish hunters and trappers -- were independent pioneers more interested in profit than in settlement, and their architecture reflected their European influence as well as their lack of permanence. The farmers from the northeastern part of the United States who arrived later were more community-oriented, but they were still settling into virtual frontier areas with few established settlements and very slim populations (this was true not only of this area, but of the entire state as well; Little Rock was the only civic and cultural center at this time). These later residents' vernacular farmsteads, constructed primarily of logs, were scattered throughout the region, usually with family associations dictating their locations. Finally, some of the major hindrances to settlement stemmed, ironically, from attempts to clear roads and waterways and establish land policies, each of which was marked with disagreement and confusion.

2. The Development Era in White County: 1835 - 1870

Once access into the area began to improve, its population gradually increased; on October 23, 1835, one year before Arkansas became a state, White County was officially organized. It was created from sections of Independence, Jackson and Pulaski Counties and got its name either from the river or from Sen. Hugh White of Tennessee, who was the Whig presidential candidate that year. Yet the establishment of the county did not necessarily guarantee the establishment of the county seat. While commissioners dawdled, a post office was built in Frankfort and the postmaster, Ephraim Guthrie, began lobbying, perhaps a bit too vigorously, to locate the county seat there. According to an observer, "a struggle ensued involving six of the outstanding citizens of the county . . . resulting in

indictments of trespass, assault and battery being lodged against them."[17] Frankfort actually was selected as the site in 1838, but, following numerous delays, sixty-five county citizens petitioned for its relocation to Searcy, which was near White Sulphur Springs and in the geographical center of the county. When their request was finally granted in 1840, the town fathers immediately built a log cabin to serve as the courthouse, which was replaced by a two-story frame structure about ten years later.[18]

The establishment of a county served as some inducement to settlement and commerce; however, like the rest of the state, the area remained a wilderness frontier for many years. There were fewer than 950 residents in the entire county when Gerstacker visited in the late 1830's; approximately 840 of these were whites and 90 were slaves.[19]

Gerstacker wrote several descriptions of farmsteads as he traveled throughout central Arkansas in the late 1830's. These simple log structures serving as house, smokehouse, corn crib and lean-to shed, belonged to Mr. Turoski, a former Polish army officer who resided in White County:

> "The Pole's dwelling was nothing but a simple rough log-house, without any window, and all the chinks between the logs were left open, probably to admit fresh air. . . A smaller building near the house contained the store of meat for the winter. There was a field of four or five acres close to the house, and another about a quarter of a mile off on the river. He had some good horses, a great many pigs, quantities of fowls, and several milk cows . . . The Indian corn of last harvest was in a small building in a field by the river . . . There was a kind of shed attached to the house, in which leaves of Indian corn, plucked green and then dried, were kept as fodder, and here the hens came to lay their eggs."

This dogtrot log structure, belonging to a man named Saint living near the Batesville road, was typical of many pioneer settlements in central Arkansas:

> "The house was built of logs, roughly cut. It consisted of two ordinary houses, under one roof, with a passage between them open to the north and south, a nice cool place to eat or sleep during the summer. Like all blockhouses of this sort, it was roofed with rough four feet planks; there were no windows, but in each house a good fireplace of clay."[20]

The majority of architecture for both rural and urban settlements was vernacular and of either log or (if a sawmill was nearby) frame construction. What little High Style architecture existed was restricted mainly to the larger communities and to the more substantial plantations and farmsteads. The settler chose a variety of vernacular floorplans: a single pen, or room; a dogtrot (two pens separated by an open breezeway); an enclosed dogtrot, or central hall; and a saddlebag style (two pens with one fireplace in the center serving each room). Most likely, the settler's house would be a single pen log structure with a gable roof, a native stone fireplace and either half dovetail or square corner notching. If a kitchen was built, it was usually a detached building in an attempt to keep its intense

heat from reaching the rest of the house. Pier foundations and the open dogtrot were other construction methods used by settlers to combat the region's hot and humid summers. As quoted by Gerstacker earlier, the typical farmstead included a smokehouse for meat storage, a corn crib, a lean-to shed for other storage and, in later years, a barn. One of the most important features of the homestead was the fence, constructed "so that the cows might come to be milked." Gerstacker described the fences as "formed of split logs of black or red oak or hickory, ten or eleven feet long, and four or five inches thick. . . laid zigzag, and carried to a height that no horse, much less a cow, can jump over."[21]

Gerstacker spent some time in the wilderness and participated in the construction of a house similar to those in White County:

> "In the backwoods, building is a very simple art. In the first place, small trees of oak, or some other good wood, are felled and cut to the requisite length. Next comes the foundation: two of the largest trunks are laid parallel to each other on the ground at the proper distance, two others are laid across their ends to form the square, and fitted into each other with notches, which makes the building all the firmer, and closes the crevices. In this way the walls are run up, but without any entrance. (The windows, doors and chimney opening are cut) with the axe after the walls are up. The roof is then laid, and, Swiss fashion, has to be secured with weights, to prevent its being blown away; but wood being more plentiful here than stone, heavy poles, called weight poles, or young trees are used instead. . . Dabbling with moist clay being dirty and disagreeable work, the chimney is generally left until it is too cold to do without it."

Clearing and cultivating the wilderness involved immeasurable labor, but Gerstacker found that the Arkansas pioneers had adapted to the task:

> "The western settlers, and particularly those in the southwestern states, are not very fond of hard work; in those wild regions they prefer rearing cattle and shooting to agriculture, and are loth [sic] to undertake the hard work of felling trees and clearing land. To make the labors as light as possible, yet still to increase their fields, they generally clear a small space every autumn, and ploughing it very slightly, sow it with turnips, which answer best for new ground. Next year it is fenced in and added to the field.
>
> "When about to make a clearing, the American looks out for the largest and straightest oaks, which he fells, and splits into poles, from ten to twelve feet long, for fencing. When he thinks he has enough for this purpose, the rest is cut up and piled; next, the trees which have a diameter of eighteen inches and under are felled, at about half yard from the ground, and cut into lengths, while the larger trees are girdled

> all round with the axe, and very soon die. The shrubs and bushes are then rooted up with a heavy hoe, and, with the help of the neighbors who are invited for the purpose, the whole, except the poles for the fence, is rolled into a heap and set on fire.
>
> "As soon as the land is cleared of all that can be easily removed, it is fenced in and ploughed. This last work is very severe, and gives the ploughman and cattle many a rough shake, as the ploughshare, catching in the roots, has constantly to be lifted out of the ground, or to be moved out of the way of the standing stumps. These stumps give the fields a very extraordinary appearance; it takes from six to ten years before they rot away entirely. It sometimes happens that the trees killed by girdling are blown down amongst the growing crops, and the settler has a great deal of trouble in removing them."[22]

As settlement continued throughout the 1840's and 1850's, new land policies were instigated in an attempt to correct past abuses. In 1841, a major pre-emption law was enacted that allowed single men, heads of families and widows to pre-empt a 160-acre tract of public land and make improvements on it for one year before payment was required. In 1850, the federal government applied a Swamp Land Act to several states, including Arkansas. Lands classified as unsold "swamp and overflowed lands, made unfit thereby for cultivation" were granted to each state, with the requirement that proceeds from the sales of these lands go "to the purpose of reclaiming said lands by means of . . . levees and drains . . ." White County was designated with 80,340 acres of swamp land, which originally sold for $1.25 per acre.[23]

The population of the county increased over 280 percent between 1840 and 1850, and over 300 percent by 1860. The second post office was established in 1849 at Stony Point, located on the Batesville - Little Rock Road.[24] However, Searcy was by far the largest community. With its three types of mineral springs, it developed not only as the county seat, but as a resort area as well. Numerous hotels were built in the vicinity of the springs, the first of which was a double pen log house operated by a Mrs. Howerton, whose husband led a wagon train into the county in 1836. William Anderson Yarnell, an early educator who came to Searcy in 1858, described one of these hotels in his diary:

> "At Searcy I put up at Bond's Hotel and was never better treated or more agreeably appointed in my life. People may say what they please about Arkansas, but whoever goes to Bond's will get the worth of his money. I find the people of Arkansas good looking, intelligent, civil, agreeable, and accommodating."[25]

Searcy's commercial district also included several drugstores, including Robertson's Drugstore (now Quattlebaum's Music Center), located on the southeast corner of the courthouse square. This two-story structure was built around 1860 by Stephen Brundidge, who came to Searcy from Alabama and built many of the town's brick buildings. Brundidge had his own portable brickmaking machine and oven, which he carried to each site.

Although the majority of Searcy's homes and buildings were vernacular, examples of Greek Revival, Federal and Italianate architectural styles did exist; however, most builders preferred instead to use the details from these styles to elaborate what was basically a variety of vernacular forms.

The other communities in the county, including Center Hill, Opal, Pleasant Grove, El Paso and Royal Colony were separated by an average of eight or ten miles, which led to their emergence as self-sufficient towns that usually featured a post office, blacksmith shop, and one or more mercantile stores, dry good stores or grocers. The second most important community in the county, after Searcy, was West Point, located at the highest year-round navigation point on the Little Red River. It served as a major distribution center, was home to 350 residents, and could boast of three general stores, a drug store, a gristmill, a cotton gin, a blacksmith, a wood shop, a church and a school by the outbreak of the Civil War.[26]

Every community had a church, usually Methodist or Presbyterian; Searcy served as a 'mission point' for these two denominations. The first meeting house was usually log, later replaced by the congregation with a more substantial, traditional frame building. A small, frame Methodist church located near Center Hill is typical of the church architecture in these communities. Known as the Smyrna Church, this structure was built in 1854 and is one of the oldest extant churches in the county. It has a metal gable roof, a front foyer with double wooden doors, a brick interior central chimney and imbricated shingles on the gable end. In most towns, the church also served as the school, which was usually formed by subscription.

One of the first schools, established in 1849, was the Polytechnic Institute, Incorporated, of Searcy. Its curriculum included "civil engineering, analytical and agricultural chemistry and their kindred branches, and a liberal study of the classics" and it had the distinction of being the first school west of the Mississippi to use the word 'polytechnic' in its title. In 1851, the Searcy Male Academy was formed with an initial enrollment of 25 students.[27]

Agriculture dominated the county's industry in the years prior to the Civil War, with farmsteads, cotton gins and gristmills the most prevalent enterprises. One local industry that may have supplemented the incomes of quite a few farmers was liquor distillation. In his tour of the area, Gerstacker encountered a distiller named Magness who "extracted such a superior spirit . . . that he declared he would not sell a drop of it, but keep it all for his own drinking."[28]

Wells with salt water discovered east of Bald Knob led to a small but thriving salt mining industry in the county. The timber industry also began to develop in the southern sections, where hickory, oak, gum and other hardwood forests were abundant. Sawmills, like the steam-driven one erected by George Harder, were located near the rivers so that orders could be floated downstream to the lumber mills, which relied on either roadways or waterways to transport the finished product on to Little Rock, the nearest major market.

The institution of slavery contributed to the county's antebellum economy, although not as predominantly as in other southern areas. This West Point residence, built for Judge P.A. McDaniel in 1852 and no longer extant, was one of the few plantation homes:

> ". . . it was, in those days, considered a residence of the better class. The lumber used for the house was made from native trees, mostly cypress, and sawed with jigsaws by McDaniel's slaves. There are six large rooms, each 20 feet long, 18 feet wide, with ceilings 14 feet high. Each room has a large fireplace with hand-carved wood paneling. The doors, window frames and columns of the porches are also hand-carved. Wide pine lumber was used for the floors. Through the center of the house a wide hall was built and to the rear were the servants quarters, where the meals were prepared and then carried to the house to be served."[29]

Another plantation, whose structures are still standing, belonged to James Walker and was located on the Old Southwest Trail. The original single-pen log house, built soon after Walker came to White County in 1850, was later expanded into a dogtrot; his family added a frame I-house, numerous tenant houses, a commissary, a cotton gin and several barns to the property about 1900.

The survey and registration of land, the establishment of new communities and the continued clearing of transportation routes all led to the gradual organization of the county into a more permanent settlement though the architecture and construction methods of the buildings did not always reflect permanence in the usual sense. The style was consistently vernacular, the materials either log or sawn lumber, and the focus was on function rather than aesthetic design. White County was still a frontier wilderness, and would remain so in attitude as well as in appearance for many years.

3. The Railroad's Effect on Industry and Architecture in White County: 1870 - 1914

Railroad fever was not overly contagious among frontier Arkansans during the 1840's and 1850's, despite the fact that Congress granted the state 500,000 acres of public lands and required that the revenues from their sale be applied to the construction of roadways, bridges, canals and railways. Although the first track - for the Memphis and Little Rock Railway - was laid in 1854, it still remained incomplete by the start of the Civil War.[30] The delays in laying the track for the state's second proposed railroad, the Cairo and Fulton, which planned connections with the St. Louis and Iron Mountain in Missouri and the Galveston and Red River in Texas, caused Governor Henry M. Rector to complain in his 1860 inaugural address that ". . . The grant made by Congress has, so far, proved rather a curse than a blessing. For seven years past, nearly one-half of our territory has, on that account, been reserved from the sale and settlement---the consequence is no roads, less revenue, and a smaller population than we should have had."[31] Fortunately for the state, the grant, which was originally scheduled to expire in 1863, was extended and increased following the Civil War, and by 1874, the Arkansas and Missouri lines finally merged to become the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railway (now Missouri-Pacific Railway). This line enters White County about five miles west of its northeast corner and runs the length of the county in a southwesterly direction.

Once railroad construction was underway, the citizens of White County realized that the economic and political survival of each town depended upon its proximity to the line. But because

the county was still largely undeveloped, the population, influence and financial ability of these towns was too slight to offset any added costs of detour construction. Yet this did not deter Searcy's town council, which was able to successfully organize the Searcy Branch Railroad, connecting their town with the main line. Taking advantage of the area's abundant forests, the line used wooden rails "stripped with oak 1 1/2 by 3 inches . . ." (the same type of track used in England as early as the eighteenth century), and cars were drawn over the rails by mules.[32]

Other communities bypassed by the railroad either quickly relocated, like the Stony Point residents who moved to Beebe, or slowly disappeared altogether. Citizens of West Point, the once-prosperous Little Red River port, saw their town decline not only because of its location, but also because of its dependence on steamboat traffic, which suffered as the railroad gradually took over. In 1883, ethnologist Edward Palmer visited the remains of the town and noted: "West Point was once a famous river center but now nearly deserted. R. Roads the cause." By 1887 only one steamboat docked regularly at the port and a Memphis newspaper reporter morosely observed the rows of abandoned stores and houses which "only [spoke] of better days and [showed] what time and Jay Gould have done to the place."[33]

Yet any negative results from the railroad were far outweighed by its effect on increasing the population and settling the county. Section camps and depots along the tracks turned into new settlements, then quickly grew into small towns. Bradford, Russell, Garner, McRae, and Kensett were shipping stations that sprang up along the Cairo and Fulton line and flourished along with the railroad. In 1860, the county's population was 8,316; by 1870 it had reached 10,347; and in 1880 it was 17,794.[34]

Perhaps the greatest benefits provided by the expansion of the railroad were economic. As the railroad industry thrived during the turn of the century, so did the county's lumber and agricultural industries. Residents in southern White County took advantage of the large number of oak, gum and hickory forests in the area, which could only be transported via railroad. By 1909, with over two billion board feet of lumber cut, Arkansas ranked fifth among the states in lumber production. Lumber mill owners and local entrepreneurs also established a network of tram or 'dummy' lines across the county, connecting logging camps and settlements with their mills.[35] One of these, the Doniphan, Kensett and Searcy Railroad, was built from the Doniphan Lumber Mill to the Iron Mountain tracks in Kensett, and later extended into Searcy. The Doniphan Mill, the only surviving industrial site in the county, was originally owned by the C. J. Carter Lumber Company of Kansas City, and included workers' houses and a commissary within its complex.[36] The Doniphan Mill also helped bring about the town of Letona, which housed several sawmills and a hotel to handle the growing number of lumber agents who traveled to the area.

Yet even though this new industry gave an economic boost to White County in the years prior to 1929, cotton production still reigned supreme. Cotton fields dotted the countryside, even in the midst of tree stumps around which the ever-efficient farmer plowed. Geographically separate towns such as Floyd, located in the western part of the county, and Sunnydale, in the north, were sites of large cotton gin complexes. Ginned cotton was then shipped throughout the country via the county's major railroads. By 1929, White County ranked fourth in the state's cotton production.

The county's strawberry industry was also greatly influenced by the use of the railroad. Co-operatives, like the Strawberry Growers Association, were established to allow cheaper shipments of the berries to worldwide markets. Judsonia, Bald Knob, Searcy and Beebe were the leading strawberry-producing communities in the county, with nearly 1000 carloads of the berries shipped by 1920.[37]

Changes in industry and the growth of the railroad led to changes in the county's rural and small town architecture during this period. The increases in the strawberry industry and in farm tenancy (which had risen from 35% in 1900 to 43% in 1935) caused the addition of picking sheds and tenant houses to existing farmsteads.[38] While farmers were busily adding these new structures, they -- along with builders in the new railroad towns -- were relying on several additional choices of vernacular styles whose floorplans included double pen (including a new double pen I-house version), L-shaped, and T-shaped. Vernacular architecture predominated because the goal was to establish fairly expedient and inexpensive residential and commercial areas in these rapidly developing communities.

Larger communities like Searcy and Beebe were affected because more and more people were able to come into town for shopping and entertainment. Turn- of-the-century Searcy, with a population of about 2000, had ". . . a bank, two steam grist mills, a cotton gin, a planing mill, a fruit and vegetable canning factory, three newspapers, a telegraph and express office and daily mail deliveries."[39] Its post office, built in 1914, was surely a source of pride to residents, as these were rarely constructed in towns with less than 3000 people. Smaller towns became more and more self-sufficient and began offering banking and shopping services to surrounding rural areas.

The county's major religious denominations saw their congregations increase significantly enough during this era to warrant construction of large, high style churches. The Cumberland Presbyterians, who first began sending preachers into the area in 1824, built a Classical Revival church on the northeast corner of Race and Spring streets in Searcy in 1903. A Gothic Revival church on Searcy's Main Street was erected by the Methodists in 1873, almost thirty years after the town first became a stop on their circuit rider's route. Although there were Episcopalians living in Searcy before the Civil War, they did not organize a church until 1890. Their first building was destroyed by fire in 1902, but was quickly replaced with the Gothic Revival structure that still stands.

On April 18, 1889, over 2000 people met to make arrangements for founding a college in Searcy that would be "dedicated to the development of Christian womanhood in Arkansas." Only four years later, Galloway College enrolled 276 women, and was a great source of pride in the community.[40]

As commercial, religious and institutional structures expanded within the county, so followed the residential areas. Searcy experienced a major housing boom that began in the 1880's. Several Italianate, Queen Anne, Eastlake and Colonial Revival structures were built in the vicinity of Race, Oak, Arch and Center Streets in the years prior to World War I. Theo and Gene Henderson, a father and son team, were responsible for building many of Searcy's homes during this period, as well as several hundred more in White County.

Great strides were made in the county's industrial, agricultural, educational and social development during the years between the Civil War and World War I. However, much of this development, and the subsequent economic stability of the county, was dependent upon the railroad. What was once difficult for residents to accept had now become the lifeblood of almost every community in the county.

4. Boom and Bust: The War and Depression Years in White County 1914 - 1939

Aided by the thriving railroad industry, White County experienced an economic surge during the war years, as did other counties throughout the state. Residential architecture was greatly affected after the war by the many soldiers returning from overseas. Their need and desire for new homes was coupled with an awakened interest in European designs, leading to the construction of several Revival styles (particularly English) in larger towns like Searcy and Beebe. Other architectural designs unique to this post-war, pre-Depression era included the Craftsman style, which was inspired by the designs of two California architects and brothers, Charles Sumner and Henry Mather Greene, and featured an emphasis on the building's relationship to its environment. The Sears home was another building type unique to the period. These mail-order houses mirrored current architectural styles, were constructed of quality materials and were affordably priced, all of which accounted for their enormous popularity during the 1920's.

The twenties and thirties saw additional changes in housing and farmsteads in rural White County. No longer merely a form of subsistence, the family farm became an entrepreneurial operation. This new venture is best represented in the county by the Wright farmstead, located near Bald Knob, which began in 1890 as a one-room log house with loft and cellar. As the family grew, this house was expanded to include a rear room and shed addition. By 1924, the family was able to afford a new farmhouse -- one of the finest in the area -- which borrowed architectural details from the Craftsman style and cost a total of $2,589.44. No longer dependent upon construction materials coming directly from the farm, the family was in a position to take advantage of the wide range of materials available from local merchants including lime, brick, dimensional lumber, shingles and paint, and a carpenter was now hired to do most of the work.

Additional structures built on the farmstead included salt or smoke houses for preserving meat; a chicken house; at least one tenant or 'camp' house; and the most important farm structure, the barn. Most county barns were post-and-beam constructed transverse crib styles that provided storage for hay, cotton seed, corn, tools and machinery, as well as stalls for livestock.

The small, two-room tenant houses usually held two families and were built with either frame or, more likely, box construction. Box houses were built with vertical boards nailed to a sill and top plate without the use of wall studs in the framing. Window and door openings were cut out after the "boxing" was completed. This technique was once thought to be restricted only to tenant houses, but can be found in approximately 40% of the county's historic farm houses including the majority of documented vernacular styles.[41]

A new structure uncommon to the family farm enterprise at this time was the Delco House. Reflecting the technological advances of the period, it was built to house Delco batteries that supplied 12 volt D.C. current that could be used for electric light bulbs in the house and barn or to other equipment such as water pumps. This new technology, a major investment, replaced the coal oil lamps used by most farm families until 1937, when Rural Electrification Administration programs made their way into rural Arkansas. By the 1940's, most farm families had also added a 'car house' (as Wright referred to it in his ledgers) for their automobile.

Although cotton and strawberries were the main cash crops in a family farm enterprise, other crops were planted for market as well, including Irish and sweet potatoes, sorghum, peas, corn and watermelons. Additional income was made from the sale of cattle, sheep, hogs and poultry, with livestock feed grown on the farm. The Wrights also produced and sold butter for 40 cents a pound; occasionally shipped cream by railroad to a Safeway Grocery Store supplier in Muskogee, Oklahoma; built a dipping vat and charged local farmers one dollar a head to treat their cattle for ticks; and even bred their prized bull for a fee.

This diversification saw the Wrights and other farm families through the winter and spring of 1926-27, when extremely cold temperatures were followed by the worst spring flooding on record. After several years of prosperity in the early 1920's, Arkansas found itself 46th in the nation in per capita income and first in highest debt by 1929, even before the stock market crashed. However, the final blow to many farmers was the drouth of 1930, which resulted in crop failures and bank closings, forcing many families to leave their farms.

> "We had a big war, big prosperity and now a big depression. Now, it is up to us to turn to the little things that each one of us can do, and by cooperation build our own neighborhood. The return of prosperity is a one-man job and each man is the ONE MAN to do it. Let us beware that we do not let our morals slip. Trouble should make us bigger and stronger men."[42]

When Hicks Deener wrote this for the White County Citizen in 1933, a record 4627 men were unemployed in the county. The People's Bank of Searcy and the Union Bank and Trust Company had both closed their doors, as had the White County Bank in Beebe and the Citizen's Bank in Bradford. Cotton was a "ragged king" at five cents a pound, and farmers were battling the boll weevil as well as the effects of a major drouth that had occurred three years before. Thousands of farms were being sold at auction for taxes; farm tenancy increased; and the county Red Cross was gratefully accepting donations of food and other articles from neighboring states.[43]

While the Searcy City Council voted to reduce auto and occupational taxes and city merchants posted National Recovery Administration Blue Eagles in their windows, federal government agencies swarmed into communities with building projects that ensured continued development.

Three of these agencies, the Works Projects Administration (WPA), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and the National Youth Administration (NYA), designed to put the unemployed back to work and teach them a trade, left a notable mark upon the county's architecture and landscape during

the 1930's. The WPA was responsible for constructing several schools, gymnasiums and community buildings. In one eighteen-month period alone, there were eight WPA projects completed involving schools and two involving public buildings, and even when the agency didn't provide the manpower for a project, they provided the necessary funding. The CCC employees, of which there were 75,000 statewide, planted numerous trees in an effort to control the ravages of erosion and undertook major construction projects including the building of dams, bridges, and recreation areas.[44]

Skills learned while working for both the WPA and CCC were not forgotten once the men returned to their homes. Many smaller buildings throughout the county reflect the influence from these larger projects, as this excerpt from a 1934 article in the Arkansas Democrat illustrates:

> "Take a boy from an Arkansas farm who has been used to living in a one-room cabin, and was fairly contented with it, just as his father and his grand-father before him. He attends a CCC camp and learns stone masonry, and some of the rudiments of architecture. He sees how a beautiful structure can be built in the forest from the materials right at hand. When he goes back to his home, he will have the realization that by merely getting to work with simple tools, he can make his family environment infinitely better."[45]

White County citizens did not stand idly by while the federal government undertook its projects, but formed their own measures in an attempt to keep their communities alive. One of these was the White County Canning Kitchen, a project of county women. With donations from businessmen, the women moved into the abandoned White County Baking Company building on West Race Street in Searcy and began 'putting up' meats, fruits and vegetables for needy families. The program was such a success that a new kitchen was built in 1934. White County merchants also decided to contribute one percent of all the money they received from government programs into a fund that would provide aid to those older citizens not helped by other federal programs.[46]

The strawberry business actually survived during the Depression years. In 1935 alone, five to six million plants were shipped out along with 1500 carloads of berries, and over 100 field and shipping workers brought approximately $1,600,000 into the county. Unfortunately, the industry also attracted thousands of migrant pickers who created a labor surplus and drove down the pickers' price per quart. After granting them a grace period, county officials finally loaded the workers onto a freight train, ordering them to "move on."[47]

A stone quarry located at Bee Rock employed a large number of farmers who made extra cash loading the stone into truck beds and transporting it to waiting railroad cars. Other employment came from J. A. Thompson's cotton gins, located in West Point, Albion, Pangburn and Searcy. In addition, two temporary, government-funded "Depression factories" opened in Searcy, along with a Chevrolet dealership, a Western Auto store, and several department stores.

The Yarnell Ice Cream Company, Searcy's oldest and one of the state's most lucrative industries, got its somewhat shaky start during the throes of the Depression. In 1933, Ray A. Yarnell bought the original Grisham Ice Cream Company by scraping together all of the cash he had and even

borrowing on his life insurance policy. Almost immediately, the bank holiday was declared and his capital was frozen. He managed to keep the business alive by borrowing more money and drawing no salary for over a year.[48]

One victim of the Depression that proved most distressing to Searcy citizens was Galloway College, which was forced to close its doors in the summer of 1933. The buildings were sold at public auction the following year. Luckily, rescue came in the form of Harding College, previously located in Morrilton, when its administrators decided to move into Galloway's empty facilities. The entire county welcomed the school, with one newspaper editor referring to its appearance as "nothing short of a Godsend."[49]

With impetus from government projects, the building industry managed to survive during this period, particularly in the county's small towns. The First Christian Church of Searcy, which had organized in 1906, constructed a Classical Revival church on Main Street in the 1920's, where the Church of Christ now meets. Catholics in Bald Knob were able to build a cut stone church in 1939, which was a unique material for church construction in the county. For residential architecture, the Bungalow became a popular design among the urban middle class, because its smaller size made it affordable and easy to maintain. This style is by far the most numerous in the residential areas of White County's communities.

After the relatively prosperous railroad and war years, county citizens had to struggle to keep their communities alive during the Depression. Yet a significant number of the area's houses, schools and churches date from this period of slow economic growth, thanks to assistance from the government and the fierce determination of White County residents.

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OUTLINE OF ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

1. VERNACULAR DWELLINGS
2. HIGH-STYLE DWELLINGS
3. RELIGIOUS AND INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS
4. COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS
5. TRANSPORTATION-RELATED BUILDINGS
6. FARMSTEADS
7. OUTBUILDINGS

1. VERNACULAR DWELLINGS

A. DEVELOPMENT ERA VERNACULAR DWELLINGS

Description:

During the Development Era (1835-1870) in White County a variety of vernacular houses were constructed. They were also built out of a variety of materials. Surviving examples from this period, however, are very limited in their floorplan design and construction technique.

Surviving vernacular house types of this period include single-pen log dwellings and log dog-trots as well as one-story, single-pile-with-central-hall frame buildings and their two-story, I-House, counterparts. The other type of frame dwelling that survives from this period is built on a T-shaped floorplan. All of these frame dwellings usually had full-front porches, simple cornices, and cornerboards with simple capitals.

Construction materials and techniques used on these buildings are as varied as the buildings themselves. Although all of the log houses have gable roofs, this is where their similarity ends. The structures vary in height from one to one and-a-half stories, have either cut stone chimneys located on the exterior end or ones constructed of brick that protrude from the slope of the roofline, and either stone or brick pier foundations. At a later date, the gaps in this type of foundation could have been filled in up to the sill with either matching stone or brick. If there was a sleeping loft, the stairway to reach it was usually located in the corner of the building. Logs were generally half-hewn, with either half-dovetail or square notching, and if there was chinking between the logs it was usually either a combination of mud and diagonal pieces of

wood or hand-rived horizontal board.

All of the surviving frame buildings from the Development Era also have gable roofs and brick chimneys; yet again, this is where the similarities end. These buildings range in height from one to two stories, and rest on either brick or stone piers. At a later time, the gaps in this type of foundation could have been filled in up to the sill with a matching type of material. While all of the chimneys on these houses are made of brick, they are found in a variety of locations on the building, including the exterior and interior ends. Other interior chimneys, which protrude from the slope of the gable roof, also exist on these houses.

Significance:

Vernacular houses from the Development Era (1835-1870) are significant under either Criterion A and/or C. Under Criterion A, these houses reflect the era in which they were constructed as well as the role both they and their occupants played in the development of their respective surrounding communities. Vernacular houses are also significant in architecture under Criterion C because they embody the forms and methods of construction commonly used during this period.

Registration Requirements:

For a Development Era vernacular house in White County to be considered eligible for the National Register it must have been constructed between 1835 and 1870, still retain over fifty percent of its original integrity, and either be located on its original site or on one that is sympathetic to its original site. The building must also convey the sense that it was originally a single residence dwelling.

B. RAILROAD ERA VERNACULAR DWELLINGS

Description:

During the Railroad Era (1870-1914) in White County a variety of vernacular houses were constructed out of a variety of materials. Surviving examples from this period exhibit numerous floorplan designs and construction techniques.

Log houses continued to be built in the Railroad Era. Extant examples are one-story in height and

their floorplans are either single-pen or double-pen with an enclosed or open central hall. Two-room plank wall buildings are also in evidence. However, the wood frame houses are the ones that display the most versatility in construction technique. Those built during this period range in height from one to two stories and their floorplans included hall and parlor; double-pen; dogtrot; single or double pile with central hall; gable entry; square, irregular, ell or T-shaped; double pile; cross-shaped; and the central hall or double-pen I-house. Box construction also became very popular during the Railroad Era. Box houses built during this period ranged in height from one to one and-a-half stories and floorplans were the simple hall and parlor, double-pen or T-shaped type. Load-bearing brick houses ranged from one to two stories in height and were irregularly shaped.

Each of these buildings exhibit a variety of roof types including gable, hipped, clipped gable, gable on hip, pyramid and bellcast. The chimneys on Railroad Era vernacular houses were of either brick or stone construction and are found in several locations on the structure. All of the buildings have either brick or stone foundations.

Significance:

Vernacular houses from the Railroad Era (1870-1914) are significant under either Criterion A, B and/or C. Under Criterion A or B, these houses reflect the era in which they were constructed as well as the role both they and their occupants played in the development of their respective surrounding communities. Vernacular houses are also significant in architecture under Criterion C because they embody the forms and methods of construction commonly used during this period.

Registration Requirements:

For a Railroad Era vernacular house in White County to be considered eligible for the National Register it must have been constructed between 1870 and 1914, still retain over fifty percent of its original integrity, and either be located on its original site or one that is sympathetic to its original site. The building must also convey the sense that it was originally a single residence dwelling.

C. BOOM AND BUST ERA VERNACULAR DWELLINGS

Description:

During the Boom and Bust Era (1914-1939) in White County a variety of vernacular houses were constructed. They were also built out of a variety of materials. Surviving examples from this period exhibit numerous floorplan designs and construction techniques.

Frame construction was one of the most popular and versatile construction techniques used during this period. Frame houses built during this era ranged in height from one to two and one-half stories and floorplans included double-pen, double-pile with central hall, irregular and double-pile. Other frame houses built in the county included the mail order houses from Sears Roebuck & Co., Creole cottages and rectangular house with three front doors. Box construction continued to be very popular during the Boom and Bust Era. Box houses built during this period were one story in height and floorplans were very simple such as double-pen, double-pile, saddlebag and single pile with a central enclosed hall. Load-bearing brick houses were one story in height and were irregularly shaped.

The above mentioned buildings had either gable or hipped roofs. Chimneys of Boom and Bust Era vernacular houses were of brick construction and are found in a variety of locations on the building. All buildings have either brick or stone foundations.

Significance:

Vernacular houses from the Boom and Bust Era (1914-1939) are significant under either Criterion A, B and/or C. Under Criterion A or B, these houses reflect the era in which they were constructed as well as the role both they and their occupants played in the development of their respective surrounding communities. Vernacular houses are also significant in architecture under Criterion C because they embody the forms and methods of construction commonly used during this period.

Registration Requirements:

For a Boom and Bust Era vernacular house in White County to be considered eligible for the National Register it must have been constructed between 1914 and 1939, still retain over fifty percent of its original integrity, and either be located on its original site or one that is sympathetic to its original site. The building must also convey the sense that it was originally a single residence dwelling.

2. HIGH-STYLE DWELLINGS

A. RAILROAD ERA BUILDINGS

Description:

The high-style residences constructed during the Railroad Era (1870-1914) in White County are those whose designs reflect the influence of a traditional architectural style pervading most of the aspects of their design -- although, as is always the case in discussing the architecture of a predominantly rural area that was crossed by a railroad, the line between high-style and vernacular or traditional design is necessarily vague. In spite of having lost a great deal of the historic built environment from the nineteenth century, the high-style residences of this era in White County that remain reflect the impact of all the major national styles of the period, including the Greek Revival, Italianate, Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne Revival and Folk Victorian. Furthermore, various transitional designs also feature elements of two or more of these styles, or feature the adornment of more vernacular traditional building types (e.g., I-houses) with architectural details from one or more of the popular national styles.

Larger homes overall tend to predominate within this particular building type for this period; the elevations tend to be one-and-one-half to two storys in height. The floor plans of these buildings are typical both of these traditional architectural styles and of the vernacular building types being so embellished: they vary from the double-pile, central hall plan of the Greek Revival and Greek Revival/Italianate transitional designs to the more rambling, asymmetrical plans of the Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne Revival and Folk Victorian styles. The building materials employed in the construction of high-style dwellings from this period include most of the common building materials of the period: brick and stone masonry, and dimensional lumber used in wood frame construction.

Significance:

By definition, all of the high-style dwellings from the Railroad Era will be eligible under Criterion C, either for the significance of their design, craftsmanship, or the construction techniques employed in their erection. As was the case throughout Arkansas, the railroad brought not only prosperity and increased contact with the outside world generally, but also an influx of traditional architectural styles that appealed to many of the more ambitious residents who desired to construct homes designed in the current architectural idiom. Thus these high-style dwellings are reflective of both the prosperity and broader national contact brought to the county by the railroad and the desire of many residents to proclaim their new architectural sophistication and acquire increased status thereby. These buildings remain the best and greatest testimony to what

this period of growth and prosperity meant to many of the county's residents on a more personal level, and how strongly it influenced them.

Registration Requirements:

For a Railroad Era high-style dwelling in White County to be considered eligible for the National Register, it must have been constructed between 1870 and 1914; it must retain over fifty percent of its original integrity; it must be located either on its original site or a new one sympathetic to the original site (and only if the building was threatened on its original site); and the building must convey the impression that it was originally constructed as a dwelling.

B. BOOM AND BUST ERA BUILDINGS

Description:

The high-style dwellings from the Boom and Bust Era in White County generally reflect the variety of national architectural styles that -- in some form -- permeated even the most rural recesses of the United States during this period. The styles include the Colonial Revival, the Craftsman (including the Bungalow), the English Revival, and various transitional interpretations, including transitional designs combining features from earlier styles (such as the Folk Victorian). As was common throughout the nation, the significant improvements in communications and transportation that began during the Railroad Era -- and which only increased during the Boom and Bust Era -- aided the diffusion of these national styles into even relatively remote rural areas; and thus many of the high-style dwellings from this period are frequently surrounded by outbuildings of various function that are also designed in the same style. As often as not these outbuildings are non-agricultural in function (such as Delco houses, professional offices and automobile garages), though many agricultural outbuildings also share the style of the main residence.

These buildings tend to be smaller in scale, due largely to the fact that several of these styles lent themselves to low-cost, middle-class, single-family home construction. One- to one-and-one-half-story heights predominate, though two-story buildings are also found occasionally. The floor plans range from the relatively balanced and symmetrical arrangements of Colonial Revival designs to the asymmetrical and rambling plans of both the English Revival style and the various interpretations of the Craftsman idiom. However, this period witnessed an even greater range of variation in plans between the symmetrical and the asymmetrical, and a trend can even be distinguished within the Craftsman style of overall asymmetricality in the early years of the

period giving way to regularity and symmetricality the further the building is designed from the initial vision that Gustav Stickley published in his *Craftsman Homes* books of the century's second decade. By the end of the 1930's, the plans of the Craftsman style dwellings became more contained and less picturesque overall. The building materials are chiefly wood frame construction covered with weatherboarding or novelty siding and brick or brick-veneer construction.

Significance:

By definition, all of the high-style dwellings from the Boom and Bust Era will be eligible under Criterion C, either for the significance of their design, craftsmanship, or the construction techniques employed in their erection. These buildings generally reflect the breadth of the influence of these early twentieth century styles and the extent of their permeation even into relatively remote areas. Overall, therefore, they are significant by virtue of both their individual design merit and the great extent to which they reveal the influence of these styles throughout the county.

Registration Requirements:

For a Boom and Bust Era high-style dwelling in White County to be considered eligible for the National Register, it must have been constructed between 1914 and 1939; it must retain over fifty percent of its original integrity; it must be located either on its original site or a new one sympathetic to the original site (and only if the building was threatened on its original site); and the building must convey the impression that it was originally constructed as a dwelling.

3. RELIGIOUS AND INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS

A. RAILROAD ERA BUILDINGS

Description:

There is not a large supply of religious and institutional buildings remaining from the railroad era in White County: several churches, a college dormitory and a post office are all that can be numbered in this subgroup. All of the buildings, with the exception of the cast concrete post office, are of brick or frame construction. The frame churches are located in small communities and possess simple stylistic details. The rest of the buildings, with the exception of one church,

are located in Searcy, and each displays stylistic elements common to the period between 1870 and 1920. The earlier brick churches, which are still used and are in good condition, feature a number of Gothic Revival motifs, including gable roofs ending in high parapeted walls, steeples, arched gable entries and pointed arch-shaped stained glass windows. Other churches, also still in use and in good condition, exhibit Romanesque and Classical Revival features, such as rounded arch-shaped stained glass windows, symmetrically balanced facades, and full-height, colonnaded entry porches with classical pediments and gable roofs.

The cast concrete post office is a prime example of the Italian Renaissance style. It features a simple hipped roof with a flat, symmetrical front facade, brackets under the eaves and full-height, recessed first floor windows.

The college dormitory is an interesting interpretation of the Colonial Revival style, with its roof-line balustrade and full-facade recessed porch supported by Ionic capital columns, combined with a flat parapeted roof and unusual rounded-arch openings on the foundation.

Significance:

The railroad's prominence in White County in the years prior to the Depression is reflected not only in the small, vernacular towns that sprang up alongside its tracks, but also in the emergence of high style architecture in the larger towns. By connecting a frontier area with the outside world, the railroad was able to increase the prosperity, population and cultural awareness of the entire county, and the effects of these increases gradually began to appear on public buildings as well as private ones. The boom in the agricultural and lumber industries that occurred with the advent of the railroad gave farmers, merchants and professionals more money, some of which they chose to spend on the construction of larger, more substantial, and more decorative churches, schools, and government buildings. A railroad-induced rise in the county's population naturally led to a rise in school and church enrollments, cementing the importance of these structures within the community. Furthermore, as travel became easier, county citizens began to discover the architecture of larger cities, leading to a new appreciation for popular design and artistic craftsmanship in the construction of public buildings. Therefore, the religious and institutional buildings that remain in White County from this period are symbolic of the railroad's influence in creating a more civilized way of life for these former 'backwoodsmen'.

In addition, the churches stand as sole representatives of the congregations they house: Methodists, Presbyterians, Methodist Episcopal, Disciples of Christ and Episcopalians were the major denominations in the county during this period, and these churches were (and still are) the

only houses of worship for these denominations in the towns where they are located.

In sum, the institutional properties are significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with education and civic functions and with the lifestyle that characterized the county during the railroad era. However, they and the churches are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the forms, methods of construction, high artistic values and the Gothic Revival, Italian Renaissance, and Colonial Revival styles popular during this period. These properties can stand on their own as excellent examples of these styles, even when taken outside their context in the county's railroad history.

Registration Requirements:

White County's surviving railroad-era religious and institutional buildings are individually noteworthy for stylistic reasons, due particularly to their designs and the workmanship and materials used in their construction. As a group, they are prime examples of the effects of moderate prosperity, combined with civic and religious pride, on the public architecture of small urban areas. Therefore, although these properties can be classified individually under a few stylistic categories, they must also be viewed as a group when considering their registration eligibility. In general, to meet registration requirements, the properties should have been built during the railroad era; they should retain sufficient physical features to identify them as having been built during the period of their construction; they should be good examples of the styles they represent; and they should retain their integrity of setting along abandoned or active railroad routes.

B. BOOM AND BUST ERA BUILDINGS

Description:

A large variety -- if not a large quantity -- of Depression-era religious and institutional buildings remain in White County, each of which was either built, funded or influenced by federal government recovery programs. These properties include jails, schools, government and community buildings, and four churches. Two buildings are clad in novelty siding, while the remainder are constructed of brick, stone or cast concrete. They are scattered throughout the eastern half of the county in small communities or in Searcy; they are still in good condition; and with the exception of the jails, they are still in use. Most also contain the stylistic elements common to government-funded buildings of this period between 1930 and 1939.

The exceptions to this are the surviving jails, which, located in small communities, are made of cast concrete with flat roofs and contain no stylistic details; however, the jail in the larger town of Beebe does have a parapeted roof with rounded top, stationary windows and an interior flue chimney. Each of these jails was built in small railroad towns by the Works Progress Administration.

The WPA, Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration sponsored the construction of several public school buildings in the county during this period. Three are constructed of field stone with one-bay, central front porches and arched entries. These and the brick school and novelty-sided gymnasium possess other Craftsman-like features commonly found in 1930's government-funded public buildings: columns on piers, hipped or gable-on-hip roofs, exposed rafters and multi-pane and dormer windows.

The WPA-built community buildings, constructed of cut stone, also feature front porches with arched entries; one with a flat parapeted roof and another with a flat balustraded roof supported by stone columns. The site of the Judsonia Community building also contains an arch and several concrete capped stone benches and light poles.

The two surviving Depression-era government buildings are a city hall and a National Guard armory building, both of which are located in Searcy. Each of these brick structures exhibits some Art Deco elements, with their flat roofs and vertical roofline projections.

Two simple field stone, gable-entry churches and one novelty-sided church remain from this period. Although not built from government funds, their use of the same construction materials suggests an influence from the WPA and NYA structures that were being built at the same time throughout the county.

Another church from this period, in excellent condition and still in use in the small town of Bald Knob, exhibits some elements of the Tudor style that was popular after World War I. Most notable are its gable roofed, single story porch; its steeply pitched roof; and its decorative half-timbering on the gable ends.

Significance:

The federal relief programs that fueled the state's economy during the Depression years put thousands of people to work, reduced the illiteracy rate by 40 percent and served 1.7 million hot lunches in the public schools. Yet they also brought some form of physical improvement to

practically every single community. From 1935 to 1939, the WPA added almost 8,000 miles of highways, roads and streets throughout the state; built some 3,700 bridges and viaducts; and constructed 773 new public buildings, including 297 schools, 81 gymnasiums, five armories, 16 hospitals, four fire stations and three penal institutions. And, as state WPA administrator Floyd Sharp remarked in 1940: ". . . a great deal [of these projects] was done in rural areas. By cooperating with county, municipal and school officials, we have been able to build modern schools and recreational facilities which fill a need long felt in these areas. These buildings have given hundreds of communities common meeting places where none existed before. . ." [Arkansas Democrat, 21 March 1940.]

These government-funded structures not only improved the culture and economy of small communities, but affected an area's architecture and landscape as well. Their consistent use of stone and brick construction materials, basic floorplans and Craftsman and Art Deco elements led to distinctive 'WPA buildings' that are still notable today. For example, their floorplan for gymnasiums, which was widely used in rural and small town areas like Judsonia, displays the same basic features. It combines a 75' x 45' playing floor with a large stage on one end, seating for approximately 500, and two small classrooms, thus creating a multi-purpose facility.

Government-funded buildings also influenced the appearance of other properties throughout the county's communities. Small, simple residences, churches and commercial buildings that were constructed of native stone during the 1930's were undoubtedly reflections of public WPA, NYA and CCC structures, as the designs, skills and methods learned while working on one of these projects were not forgotten.

Therefore, these Depression-era properties are significant under National Register Criterion A for their associations with the federal relief programs' economic, cultural and educational influences on the county. However, they are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for generating a distinctive form, method of construction and style that became popular during this period.

Registration Requirements:

The schools, community and government buildings, and churches in White County that date from the Depression era are significant because of their stylistic features, construction materials and workmanship, and because of their symbolic value as a group. They are visual reminders of the region's economic, cultural and social history, thus symbolizing the Depression era as a whole. Therefore, their associations, functions and the feelings they convey also apply when determining their eligibility for the Register. In general, to meet registration requirements, the properties

should have been built between 1929 and 1939; they should retain sufficient physical characteristics to identify them as having been built during the period of their construction; and they should be in good or excellent condition.

4. COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

A. DEVELOPMENT ERA AND RAILROAD ERA COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

Description:

The surviving Development Era and Railroad Era Commercial Buildings were constructed between 1855 and 1912 and are reflective of the importance of commercial activity within their respective communities during this period. The buildings themselves housed a variety of commercial ventures such as grocery, drug, hardware, and millinery stores, as well as offices and banks. Some buildings housed commercial activities on the ground floor with either offices or private residences on the upper floors.

The majority of these commercial structures were more than one-story tall and of brick construction but some could be single-story wood frame structures. Brick commercial buildings usually had flat roofs with parapets while frame buildings generally had gable roofs with false fronts. In both types of structures ground floor fenestration generally consisted of large fixed frame windows with transom lights while the upper floors were usually adorned with multiple pane double-hung wood sash windows. Most structures lack any type of architectural detailing, but if they have any, it is usually an Italianate window hood-mold.

Commercial buildings were located in small towns near transportation hubs so that they could reach a great number of customers.

Significance:

Commercial buildings from the Development Era (1835 -1870) and Railroad Era (1870 - 1914) are significant under either Criterion A and/or C. Under Criterion A, these structures reflect the significant and instrumental contributions made by local entrepreneurs to the development of their surrounding communities. The very growth of these communities occurred because of the business transacted at these locations. Between 1860 and 1910, for example, the county's

population more than tripled. While all of the aforementioned businesses reflect the growth of the county during these periods, none does so better than the emerging banking industry. Banking, then a symbol of stability, started to blossom in Arkansas in the 1880's as more and more people were settling permanently in White County. People also began to settle permanently in the county because of improving lines of transportation.

River navigation, naturally, was the first transportation route to be exploited because it was easy to use. Rivers of note were the White and the Little Red. Even these major rivers, however, were unreliable because of fluctuations in water levels. Crude wagon trails such as the Batesville-Little Rock Road, Military Road, and the West Point-Georgetown Road, that crossed the county early in its history were significant because they opened up the county's interior and were somewhat more reliable than the water routes. While commercial ventures naturally sprang up around these bustling trade routes it was not until railroads made the scene that commercial activity in White County really exploded. These railroads not only opened up markets in never before reached areas throughout the country but their stopping points became prime locations for area newcomers to disembark.

Commercial buildings are also significant in architecture under Criterion C because they embody the forms and methods of construction commonly used during these periods.

Registration Requirements:

For a Development Era or Railroad Era commercial building in White County to be considered eligible for the National Register it must have been constructed between 1855 and 1914, still retain over fifty percent of its original integrity, and be located on its original site. It must also convey a sense of the original commercial use of the building.

B. BOOM AND BUST ERA COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

Description:

The surviving Commercial Buildings of the Boom and Bust Era were constructed between 1920 and 1939 and reflect the importance of commercial activity within their respective communities during this period. The buildings housed a variety of commercial ventures such as boarding houses and grocery and hardware stores. Some buildings housed commercial activities on the ground floor with either offices or private residences on the upper floors. It was during this

period that commercial activities became more specialized, especially in the larger towns. This was in direct contrast to the way businesses had operated during the Railroad Era. Instead of offering customers a variety of goods, merchants now dealt almost strictly in groceries, clothing, or hardware. In less populated rural areas, however, general stores were still commonplace.

The majority of these structures were more than one-story tall and of either brick or stone construction; however, there are a small number that are single-story wood frame structures. Most structures lack any type of architectural detailing; the little they have reflect the period's popular architectural styles, such as the dentilated cornices of the Colonial Revival design.

Commercial buildings were located in small towns near transportation hubs so that they could reach a great number of customers.

Significance:

Commercial buildings from the Boom and Bust Era (1914-1939) are significant under either Criterion A and/or C. Under Criterion A, these structures reflect the significant and instrumental contributions made by local entrepreneurs to the development of their surrounding communities. The very growth of these communities occurred because of business transacted at these locations. Between 1910 and 1940, for example, the county's population increased by a third. Commercial buildings are also frequently significant in architecture under Criterion C because they embody the architectural forms and methods of construction commonly used during these periods.

Registration Requirements:

For a Boom and Bust Era commercial building in White County to be considered eligible for the National Register, it must have been constructed between 1914 and 1940, still retain over fifty percent of its original integrity, and be located on its original site oriented towards a commercial thoroughfare. It must also convey a sense of the original use of the building.

C. RAILROAD ERA/BOOM AND BUST ERA INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

Description:

There are two types of historic industry that still have standing structures left in White County: cotton gins and a lumber mill.

The surviving cotton gin complexes were constructed between 1900 and 1940 and are reflective of the cotton industry's importance within their respective communities during the Railroad Era (1870-1914) and the Boom and Bust Era (1914-1939). A variety of structures are found at these sites, ranging from the main gin building to seed storage and compressor buildings to a steam generating boiler structure. The ginning and compressor buildings were usually large, multi-story frame structures sheathed in corrugated metal. Boilers were constructed of riveted steel. Gins were located near small towns and transportation hubs so that they could serve a great number of farmers efficiently.

The only surviving lumber mill in the county is unique because it is radically different from other types of mills commonly used in turn-of-the-century White County. Most lumber mills at this time were small, portable, steam-driven saws that could be moved wherever the timber was located. Yet Doniphan Lumber Mill, constructed c. 1905, is a large, permanent complex consisting of several structures and landscape features. The majority of the structures are constructed of cast concrete, are one story tall, have either monitor or shed roofs, cast concrete pilasters, and intact interiors. Landscape features include a steel truss water tower, drag-line piers and a log holding pond.

Significance:

Cotton gins are significant under either Criterion A and/or C. Under Criterion A, these industrial complexes were instrumental in the development of their surrounding communities. Much of the agricultural potential of these areas was realized through the operation of these facilities. [Cotton fiber was not the only useful item extracted from the unprocessed cotton; other cotton by-products were useful as well. For example, extracted oil was refined and used in cooking and in mixing lubricants and paints, while the hulls were used to feed livestock.] Cotton gins are also significant in engineering under Criterion C. By studying the configuration and machinery housed within these structures, one can document the significant changes in cotton processing technology in the early twentieth century and see firsthand what was once a major industry in these communities.

The Doniphan Lumber Mill complex is significant under Criterion A because it is the only extant large-scale, historic mill plant still in operation in White County. It is representative of the importance of the growing lumber industry in White County at the turn of the century.

Registration Requirements:

For a cotton gin complex in White County to be considered eligible for the National Register it must have been constructed between 1920 and 1935, still retain over fifty percent of its original integrity, and be located on its original site. The gin itself must be of frame construction with corrugated metal walls, stand at least two stories tall, and house the original machinery including the gin stands and cotton scales.

For a property to meet the registration requirements for a lumber mill complex it must have been associated with plant operations between 1900 and 1940. At least fifty percent of the structure must be original and unaltered to the extent that it does not detract from the integrity of the structure. It also must be located at the original mill site.

5. TRANSPORTATION-RELATED BUILDINGS

A. BOOM AND BUST ERA BUILDINGS

Description:

The Boom and Bust Era transportation-related buildings are primarily limited to railroad depots, gasoline stations, and cafes that were intended to function as part of a gasoline station complex. They are primarily of the Craftsman or Mediterranean architectural styles, and are all located on a major navigable waterway, rail line or highway. Most of these buildings are a single story in height and feature a variety of floor plans. They are primarily constructed of brick masonry, though wood frame transportation-related buildings may also exist.

Significance:

The transportation-related buildings constructed during the Boom and Bust Era will typically be eligible under Criterion A, though they will also frequently be eligible under Criterion C, being as most were designed in one of the national architectural styles popular during the period. By definition they owe their existence to their association with one of the principal modes of transportation that played such an important part in the dramatic growth, development and prosperity of White County that reached its fullest realization during the first half of this period.

Registration Requirements:

For a Boom and Bust Era transportation-related building in White County to be considered

eligible for the National Register, it must have been constructed between 1914 and 1939, still retain over fifty percent of its original integrity, and be located on its original site oriented towards a major transportation route or thoroughfare. It must also convey a sense of the original use of the building.

6. FARMSTEADS

A. SETTLEMENT ERA/DEVELOPMENT ERA/RAILROAD ERA/BOOM AND BUST ERA

Description:

Farmsteads from any era that survive are composed of a principal residence that is surrounded by at least one surviving associated historic outbuilding. The residences are typically of either a vernacular interpretation of one of the national architectural styles popular during the period in question, or, more often, one of the Plain Traditional house types many of the earliest European settlers brought with them from other southern states to the east. The associated outbuildings, to an even greater extent, tend to be of traditional design and construction techniques, though some occasionally reflect the influence of a popular architectural style. Farmsteads often span two or more of the county's historic eras due to the natural evolution and growth of such farms as either subsistence or commercial enterprises, or both.

The residences range from one to two-and-one-half storys in height and feature a variety of traditional floor plans (single-pile, central hall; double-pile, central hall; rear kitchen ells with open galleries that wrap around to the rear of the house, etc.). The associated outbuildings range from one to two storys in height (found principally in hay and livestock barns). All such farmsteads are typically of wood frame construction throughout, though fieldstone outbuildings are found occasionally.

Farmsteads typically also retain at least a substantial portion of their original associated property.

Significance:

Farmsteads from any of the eras of White County's history are usually significant under Criterion A and/or C. Under Criterion A, the standing structures and landscape features of these farmsteads are reflective of the developments in agricultural techniques and methods that occurred during

the associated historic period(s) and of the changing local and regional economy brought about by improvements in transportation and communications during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Farmsteads are eligible under Criterion C to the extent that they embody the forms and methods of construction commonly used for such structures during their period(s) of significance.

Registration Requirements:

For a farmstead from any era in White County to be considered eligible for the National Register, it must have been constructed between 1835 and 1939 and retain at least one associated outbuilding; ideally, it should also retain at least a substantial portion of the land originally associated with the farmstead. The farmstead must also visually convey a sense of the property having been a farmstead originally.

7. OUTBUILDINGS

A. SETTLEMENT ERA/DEVELOPMENT ERA/RAILROAD ERA/BOOM AND BUST ERA

Description:

Outbuildings from any era of White County's history were typically agricultural in nature, though such twentieth century technical innovations as direct current electricity and the automobile frequently also resulted in outbuildings being constructed for non-agricultural purposes. They are usually of Plain Traditional style and construction, though they occasionally also reflect the influence of a national architectural style popular during their period of construction.

Outbuildings are usually one to two storys in height and designed in a variety of floor plans, from the elaborate to the simple, dependent almost exclusively on the function and purpose of the structure. They are constructed of both stone masonry and wood frame, though unusual construction techniques tend to prevail in both construction techniques.

Significance:

Outbuildings from any era of White County's history are typically significant only under Criterion C, as most are considered worthy of nomination only by virtue of either their design,

construction techniques or craftsmanship. By definition, outbuildings were constructed as part of a larger complex of structures of varying purposes (e.g., farmsteads, fruit picking and packing facilities, etc.), and whenever possible have been nominated within intact ensembles of associated structures. However, many such ensembles of historic structures in the county have either been significantly altered (as through the application of historically-incompatible artificial siding) or demolished. Nevertheless, outbuildings of outstanding design or construction techniques remain significant by virtue thereof, and will be eligible under this criterion.

Registration Requirements:

For an outbuilding from any era in White County to be considered eligible for the National Register, it must have been constructed between 1835 and 1939 and must visually convey a sense of originally having been an outbuilding, or at least not the principal residence for the property on which it is located, where applicable.

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

[X] See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

[X] See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- [X] State historic preservation office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Specify repository: _____

I. Form Prepared By

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The multiple property listing of historic and architectural resources of White County, Arkansas, is based upon a comprehensive survey of historic structures in the county. It was conducted over a three year period from January, 1986, to January, 1989, by Jill Bayles, Don Brown, Joe DeRose, Steve Mitchell, and Michael Swanda. Bayles has a B.A. in History from Hendrix College. Brown has an M.A. in History from the University of Arkansas. DeRose has a B.S. in History and Political Science from Indiana State University and an M.A. in Public History from Loyola University of Chicago. Mitchell has a B.A. and M.A. in History from Arkansas State University. Swanda has a B.A. in Archaeology from the University of Arkansas.

This comprehensive survey documented 2,319 historic properties and groups of properties. Public and private roads were driven to examine all structures shown on city and USGS topographic maps. Each structure deemed 50 years old or older and more than 50% intact was recorded. Locations were noted on the appropriate USGS topographic and/or city map. Photographs, both black and white print and color slide, were taken of every structure. Computerized inventory forms were used to document key architectural and historical data, including a plan view drawing of the floor plan. Additional historical research of courthouse records, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, and other primary and secondary sources was conducted, and oral histories were recorded.

The survey identified a wide range of resources in the county spanning the years 1840 to the onset of World War II. Integrity requirements were based upon a knowledge of existing properties. The architectural and physical features of the county's surviving properties, derived from the survey, were considered in developing the outlines of potential registration requirements.

Historic properties were grouped under four historic contexts that best define the county's history and development: (1) Settlement Era (1700s-1835); (2) Development Era (1835-1870); (3) Railroad Era (1870-1914); and (4) WWI and the Depression Era (1914-1939). All historic properties were evaluated within the appropriate historic context(s) and under the appropriate eligibility criteria to identify significant resources eligible to the National Register of Historic Places.

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