

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NR 9/19/07

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Old Turrell City Hall

other names/site number Site #CT0119

2. Location

street & number 160 Eureka Street

☐ not for publication

city or town Turrell

☐ vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Crittenden code 035 zip code 72384

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐  
request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic  
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐  
does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Cathie Shattuck  
Signature of certifying official/Title

7/5/07  
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is  
☐ entered in the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined eligible for the  
National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register.

☐ removed from the National  
Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Old Turrell City Hall

Name of Property

Crittenden County, Arkansas

County and State

**5. Classification****Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private  
☒ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register****6. Function or Use****Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/city hall

GOVERNMENT/fire station

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/maintenance building

**7. Description****Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/Quonset Hut

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls METAL

roof METAL

other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☒ **C** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Levels of Significance** (local, state, national)

Local

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Politics/Government

**Period of Significance**

c.1955-1957

**Significant Dates**

c.1955-1957

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked)**Cultural Affiliation** (Complete if Criterion D is marked)**Architect/Builder****Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References****Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal Agency
- ☐ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Old Turrell City Hall  
Name of Property

Crittenden County, Arkansas  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one.

### UTM References

(See additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>749286</u>	<u>3918271</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register &amp; Survey Coordinator</u>	date	<u>April 9, 2007</u>
organization	<u>Arkansas Historic Preservation Program</u>	telephone	<u>(501) 324-9787</u>
street & number	<u>1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street</u>	city or town	<u>Little Rock</u>
city or town	<u>Little Rock</u>	state	<u>AR</u>
		zip code	<u>72201</u>

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

☐ **ps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name	<u>City of Turrell</u>	telephone	<u>          </u>
street & number	<u>PO Box 249</u>	city or town	<u>Turrell</u>
city or town	<u>Turrell</u>	state	<u>AR</u>
		zip code	<u>72384</u>

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

### SUMMARY

The Old Turrell City Hall is located at 160 Eureka Street in the small northeast Arkansas community of Turrell. The building is a classic example of a Quonset hut, a building type that was developed by the military in World War II. The building rests on a continuous cast-concrete foundation and the walls/roof are covered in corrugated sheet metal. The buildings windows are metal-framed casement windows and the buildings entrances are on the front and rear facades.

### ELABORATION

The Old Turrell City Hall is located at 160 Eureka Street in the small community of Turrell, Crittenden County, in northeastern Arkansas. The building, which was built c.1955, is a great example of a Quonset hut, which is a building type that was developed during World War II to shelter troops overseas. The building's rounded profile, encompassing the walls and roof in one continuous plane, is the signifying element of the building type.

The Old Turrell City Hall rests on a continuous concrete foundation and its walls/roof are covered in corrugated sheet metal. The majority of the metal's corrugations run horizontally, although some near the building's peak run perpendicular to the rest, indicating that the building was likely built by Stran-Steel of Detroit, Michigan.

The building's windows are four-pane, metal-framed, casement windows, and the building's doors, which are on the front and rear facades, are also metal.

### Front/West Façade

The building's front façade is dominated by the centrally-located roll-up garage door, which is comprised of horizontal metal panels. To the left of the garage door is a single four-pane, metal-framed, casement window. The main entrance to the building is located to the right of the garage door, and is comprised of a metal door with recessed metal panel in the bottom half and four square glass panes in the top half.

### Side/South Façade

The south façade is fenestrated by a single four-pane, metal-framed, casement window towards the west end of the façade. Since the window is vertical, it projects from the façades curve and it is surrounded by metal panels on the side and top. The top panel is also sloped slightly to allow water runoff.

### Rear/East Façade

The rear façade has an entrance at the center of the façade that has a plain metal door. The remnants of a single goose-neck light fixture are located above the door near the top of the façade.

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Section number 7 Page 2

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### Side/North Façade

The north façade is fenestrated by a single four-pane, metal-framed, casement window located in the center of the façade. Like the window on the south façade, this window projects from the façades curve and is surrounded by metal panels on the side and top. The top panel is also sloped slightly to allow water runoff.

### Integrity

The Old Turrell City Hall retains good integrity. The largest change to the building has been the replacement of the roll-up garage door on the front façade. However, the current door was installed without changing the size of the original opening and without compromising the original architecture and character-defining features of the Quonset hut's design. In addition, Turrell has retained the small-town setting that was present in the 1950s when the building was built.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

### SUMMARY

The Old Turrell City Hall is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion C** as a good intact example of a mid-twentieth-century Quonset hut. Built c.1955, likely by the Stran-Steel Corporation of Detroit, Michigan, the Old Turrell City Hall is a good example of the building type, which was developed during World War II by the military to shelter troops overseas. The building served the Turrell community from c.1955 until current city hall was built in 1968, and is also being nominated to the National Register with **local significance** under **Criterion A** for its associations with governmental activities in Turrell.

### ELABORATION

Crittenden County was formed by an act of the Territorial General Assembly on October 22, 1825, and was approved by Governor George Izard. It was named after Robert Crittenden, who was the first Secretary of the Territory of Arkansas. Originally, Crittenden County included all of the land between the Mississippi River west to the St. Francis River and the Missouri/Arkansas border south to approximately the location of Marianna, Arkansas, in neighboring Lee County. The size of Crittenden County shrank over the years as land was taken to form St. Francis County in 1827, Mississippi County in 1833, Cross County in 1862, and, finally, Lee County in 1873.<sup>1</sup>

Growth in the Turrell area began in the 1880s as a direct result of the lumber industry coming to Crittenden County. Toof, McGowan & Company operated a steam-powered mill in the area in the 1880s, although it burned in August 1885. The area then became the center of operations of the Turrell-Lily Lumber Company, a company owned by Wisconsin lumberman Fletcher E. Turrell. When Turrell became the first postmaster of the community on February 15, 1901, the town was named after him.<sup>2</sup>

Turrell's location was an important and logical choice for the community since it was at the junction of two railroad lines. The Springfield and Memphis Railroad Company, which was chartered on December 3, 1880, began service through the area around January 1, 1883, on its Springfield, Missouri, to Memphis, Tennessee, line. After the railroad changed names a couple of times, the line was leased by the St. Louis San Francisco Railroad (Frisco) on August 23, 1901, and they eventually purchased the line on August 23, 1928. The second railroad line through Turrell, the Frisco's main line between St. Louis and Memphis, joined the Kansas City to Memphis line on the south edge of town, and an arc-shaped spur also joined the two lines just south of the city hall site.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Woolfolk, Margaret Elizabeth. *A History of Crittenden County, Arkansas*. Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, Inc., 1993, .2-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 257.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 257-258.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

By the 1920s, it was decided to incorporate the community. William Rector Flippo, who was nephew of William Grief "Happy" Flippo, one of the first store owners and a head sawyer and inspector with the Baker Lumber Company, spearheaded the effort for incorporation. Flippo circulated a petition for incorporation and obtained 96 signatures. After the incorporation was approved on September 6, 1926, Flippo served as the community's first mayor.<sup>4</sup>

Once Turrell was incorporated, the community began to develop infrastructure and municipal services to serve the residents, beginning with fire protection. A volunteer fire department was in place by 1938 when a two-wheel cart with a reel of hose was acquired. Charles W. Wilkerson became the first fire chief in 1949 and the first fire truck was acquired on November 21, 1960.<sup>5</sup> At the same time that the fire department was being developed, Turrell installed a waster system, well, and 50,000-gallon water tower, which was partially funded by the Public Works Administration.<sup>6</sup>

Installing infrastructure in the community continued again in the 1950s. A new water well was drilled in 1953 and the community's sewer system was completed in November 1954. In 1956, natural gas became available in Turrell after a franchise was granted to Mid-South Gas Company and the city agreed to install gas lines. The following year street lights were installed.<sup>7</sup>

As the Turrell city government brought additional services to the town's residents, the community decided it was time to construct a city hall. As a result, the 1950s also brought about the construction of the Old Turrell City Hall, a multi-purpose structure that not only housed city offices, but space for the city's fire truck as well. The community needed a building that would be inexpensive and easy to build, and a Quonset hut was the perfect choice to meet the community's needs.

The development of the Quonset hut occurred during World War II, when the Navy expressed the desire to develop and produce a prefabricated building that could be used to shelter troops serving abroad. The Navy wanted the hut to be suitable for mass production, portable, easily erected and taken down, adaptable to any kind of climate or geographic region, and be able to provide soldiers the most comfort and protection possible. The contract for development of the Quonset hut was added to the NOy-4175 contract with the George A. Fuller Company and the Merritt-Chapman and Scott Corporation for the construction of the U.S. Naval Air Station at Quonset Point, Rhode Island. The Navy gave the go ahead for the development of the hut on March 31, 1941, with the understanding that the first huts would be ready to be shipped on June 1.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 258-259.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p. 260.

<sup>6</sup> Information on the PWA in the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

<sup>7</sup> *Foolfolk*, p. 261.

<sup>8</sup> Decker, Julie and Chris Chiei. *Quonset Hut: Metal Living for a Modern Age*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005, pp. 1-3.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Once the go ahead was given for the development of the hut, the Fuller Company put together the design team, which was lead by Otto Brandenberger, the only licensed architect on the team, and Robert McDonnell, Tomasino Secondino, and Dominic Urgo. The team was told to use the British Nissen hut as the basis for their design, which had been invented by Lt. Col. Peter Norman Nissen of the British Royal Engineers. The Nissen hut was used during World War I as a better alternative to the tent, and although the hut's concept was simple, erection of the building was more labor intensive than was sometimes practical.<sup>9</sup>

The Navy gave the design team only two conditions that they had to comply with. First, the new hut design had to be arched, in order to provide strength and also to allow the deflection of shell fragments. Second, the building had to be simply and quickly constructed. Brandenberger's design team submitted the first drawings for the hut's design on April 4, 1941, and the final construction drawings were submitted on May 15 and approved a week later. (Apparently, the final approval process was a formality, since an order for 2,488 huts had been submitted on April 10, 1941, and was already being filled.)<sup>10</sup>

The name "Quonset hut," however, was not made official until July 18, 1941, when, in response to the misuse of the Nissen name, Lieutenant Commander E. S. Huntington, on behalf of Admiral Moreell, issued a memo that stated, "In order to avoid possible difficulties, which might arise over the continued use of the designation 'Nissen' Huts, in view of existing patents, it is requested that in the future the hut be referred to as the Quonset Hut on all drawings, in correspondence and in conversations."<sup>11</sup>

Although the Quonset hut was a success (approximately 8,200 were produced by the end of 1941), it was decided to redesign the building late in 1941. The arch design was successful, but it had a limitation in that counters and low cabinets could not be placed against the wall, resulting in wasted space. The redesigned hut, which was approved in October 1941, kept the arch, but placed it on top of four-foot tall vertical walls. The new hut also featured a redesigned frame developed by Stran-Steel, a subsidiary of the Great Lakes Steel Corporation, that was lighter in weight and easier to erect than the previous frame and eliminated many of the necessary bolted connections. The popularity of the Stran-Steel framing system is illustrated in the fact that approximately 120,000 Stran-Steel huts were produced by the end of World War II.<sup>12</sup> In fact, a 1943 advertisement for Stran-Steel boasted that "There's a new "Jeep" in the military field! This all-purpose building of strip steel."<sup>13</sup>

Even before World War II was over, brainstorming was occurring on how to use the Quonset hut in the post-war age. In 1943, an ad for Stran-Steel read that "there is little doubt that the high point of industrial

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 6-7, 9.  
*ibid*, pp. 13, 16.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 17, 24.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, p. 64.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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efficiency achieved during these war years will prove an important holdover in the days of peace.” Once the war ended, and America was suddenly confronted with a housing shortage because of the returning veterans, the Quonset hut was seen as a quick and easy solution. Not only that, it was touted as something that was representative of “high-tech, postwar modernism” and advertisements for Quonset huts often used words like “progressive,” “flexible,” and “efficient.”<sup>14</sup> Although the Quonset hut was mainly used by the common person, some architects, including Bruce Goff and Renzo Piano, have also been influenced by the design and have used it in their own commissions.<sup>15</sup>

However, the Quonset hut was not just used for residential purposes, but was envisioned as “an instrument for modernization, a machine not just for living but for shopping, banking, and farming.” Again, Stran-Steel led the way in promoting the Quonset hut, and a 1948 advertisement that featured the Poier Motors Chevrolet and Oldsmobile Dealership in Snohomish, Washington, touted that “These streamlined buildings strike the right note in architectural design...just as the sleek new cars on salesroom floors strike the right note in automotive design.”<sup>16</sup> In addition to car dealerships, Quonset huts were employed as supermarkets, theatres, arm buildings, and even churches.

The use of a Quonset hut for the Old Turrell City Hall made sense in the mid-1950s. The flexible nature of the building type, along with the ease of construction and maintenance, meant that the Quonset could easily meet the city’s needs. The amount of press coverage and advertisements, especially for Stran-Steel after World War II, also meant that the Quonset hut and its virtues would have been made known to even the smallest community. In addition, it would not hurt if the community was seen to be progressive.

Although not known for sure, it is believed that the Old Turrell City Hall was manufactured by Stran-Steel c.1955. Although Stran-Steel flourished with the development of the Quonset hut, the company actually developed a lightweight steel framing system before the war. Unlike most steel frames, the system developed by Stran-Steel was intended for residential purposes and made its debut at the 1933 Chicago World’s Fair in the Good Housekeeping-Stran-Steel House. However, the system was expensive, because mass production could not be taken advantage of. The development of the Quonset hut, however, allowed mass production, which resulted in a reduced cost.<sup>17</sup>

The Old Turrell City Hall was the city’s governmental center until the current city hall was built in 1968.<sup>18</sup> The new building offered more space for city offices and services than the Quonset hut did. After that, the building continued to house the fire department and is now used as a city maintenance facility. The Old

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 66 and 71.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 55-61.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 81.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 17.

<sup>18</sup> Woolfolk, p. 260.

Old Turrell City Hall  
Name of Property

Crittenden County, Arkansas  
County and State

United States Department of the Interior  
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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Turrell City Hall proves, as was written in *Quonsets: The Story of a Building That Gave America a New Standard of Quality Building Values*, that "the clean lines of the Quonset have won nationwide acceptance, and with a minimum of care the basic Quonset will maintain its good appearance almost indefinitely."

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Turrell City Hall is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion C** as a good intact example of a mid-twentieth-century Quonset hut. Built c.1955, likely by the Stran-Steel Corporation of Detroit, Michigan, the Old Turrell City Hall is a good example of the building type, which was developed during World War II by the military to shelter troops overseas. The building served the Turrell community from c.1955 until current city hall was built in 1968, and is also being nominated to the National Register with **local significance** under **Criferion A** for its associations with governmental activities in Turrell.

Old Turrell City Hall

Name of Property

Crittenden County, Arkansas

County and State

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Decker, Julie and Chris Chiei. *Quonset Hut: Metal Living for a Modern Age*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005

Information on the PWA in the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

Woolfolk, Margaret Elizabeth. *A History of Crittenden County, Arkansas*. Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, Inc., 1993.

Old Turrell City Hall

Name of Property

Crittenden County, Arkansas

County and State

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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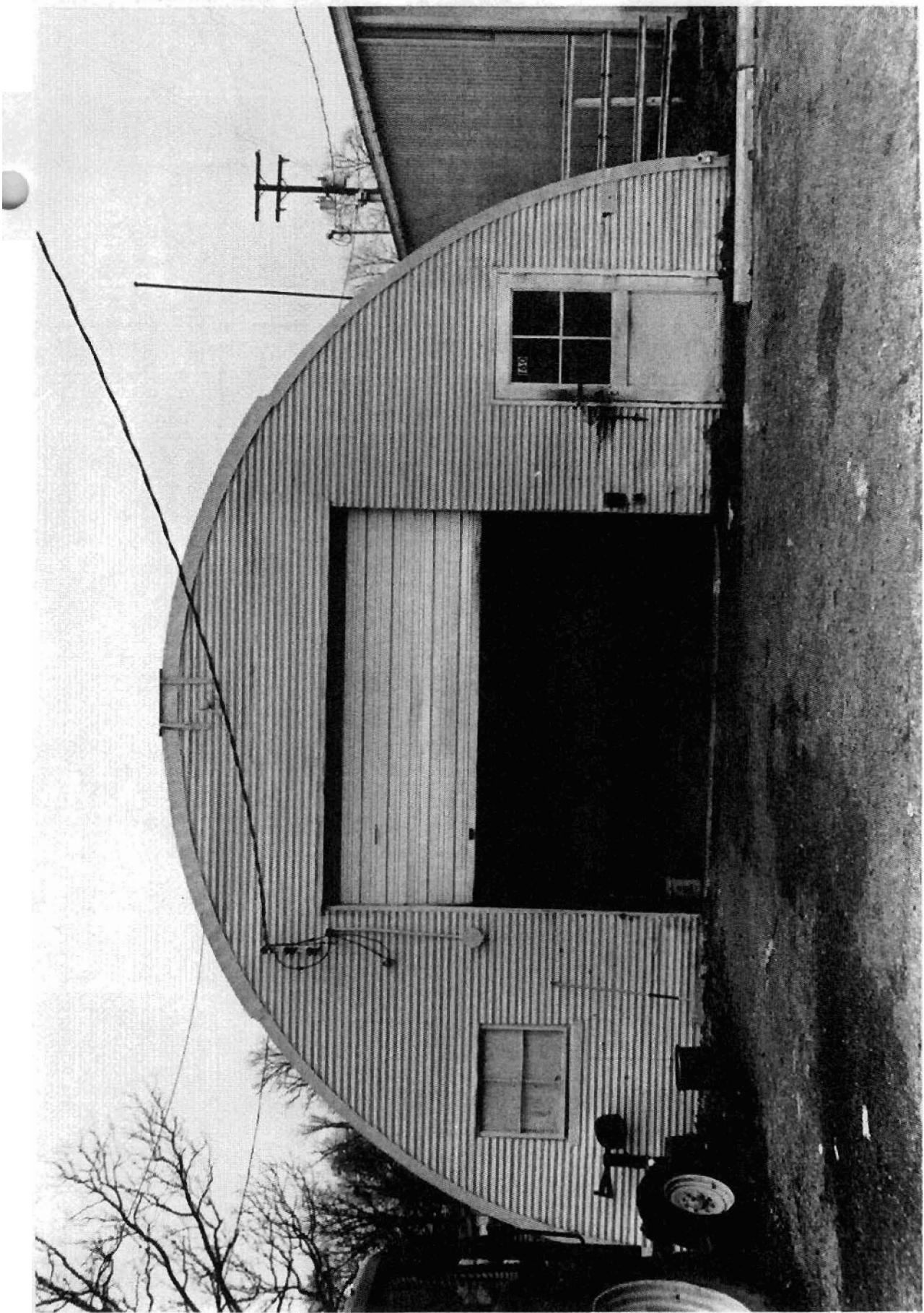
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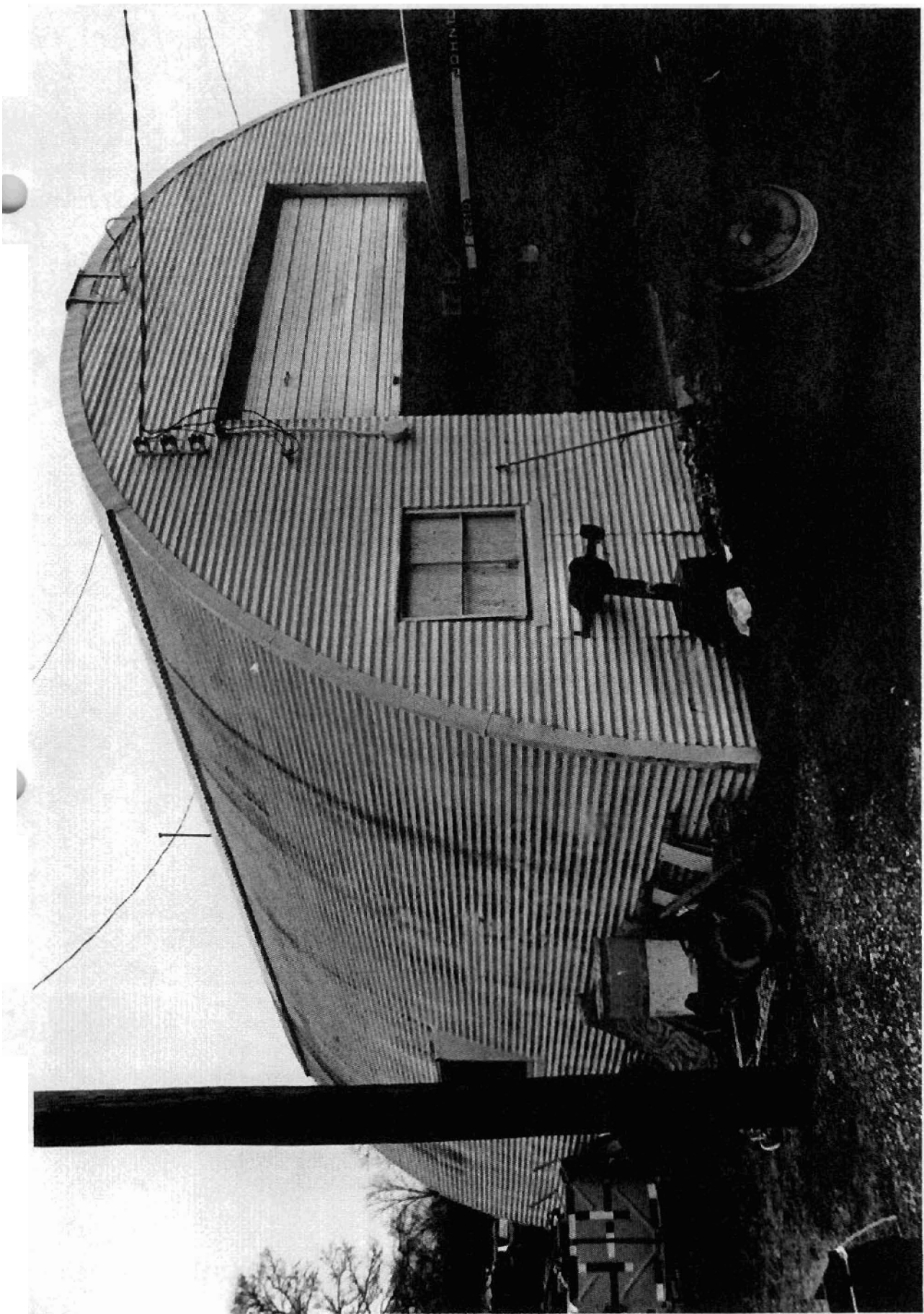
### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

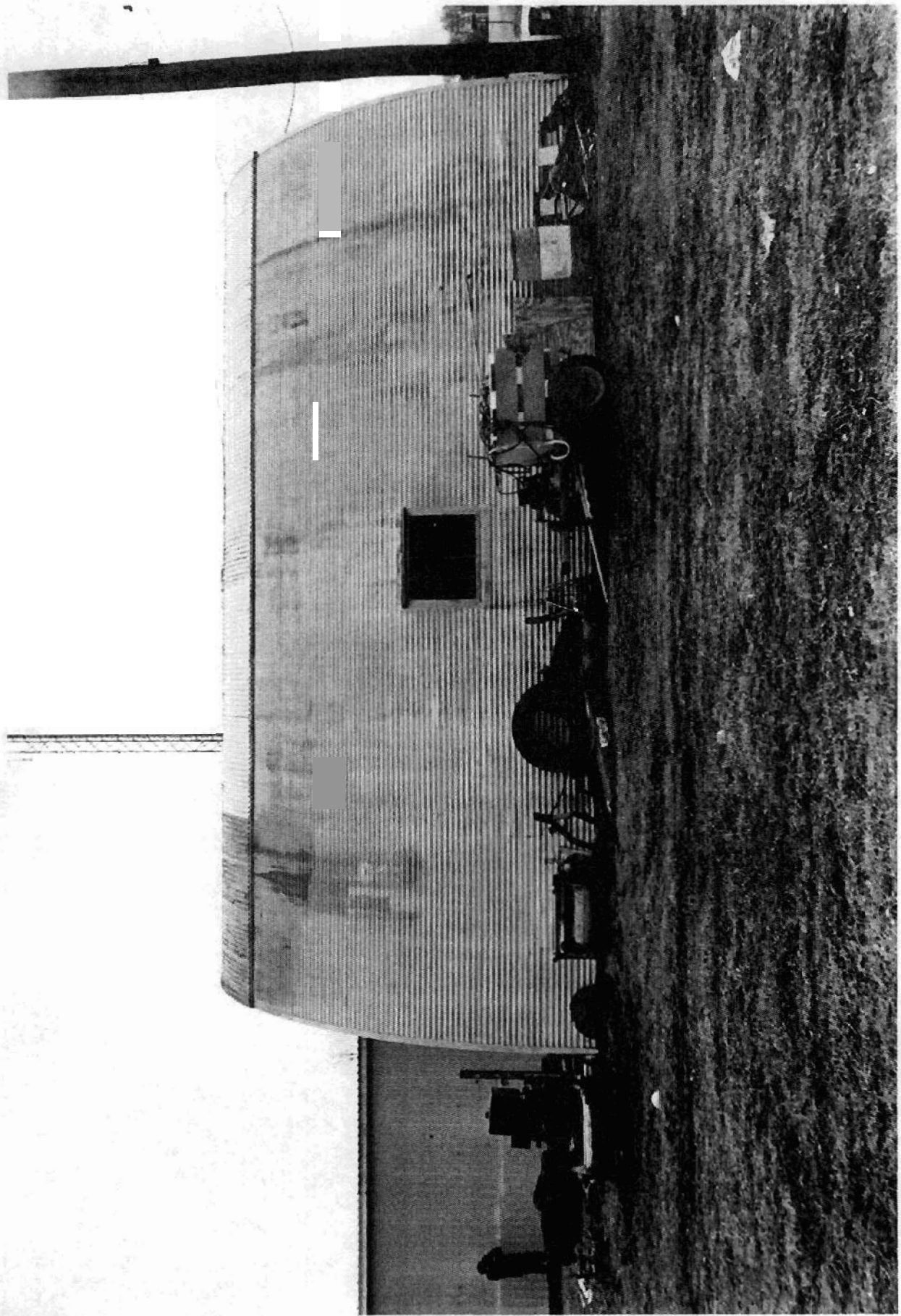
From the northeast corner of the Eureka Street and Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad line, proceed northwesterly along the east side of Eureka Street for 85 feet to the point of beginning. From the point of beginning, proceed northwesterly along the east side of Eureka Street for 60 feet, thence proceed northeasterly perpendicular to Eureka Street for 100 feet, thence proceed southeasterly parallel to Eureka Street for 60 feet, thence proceed southwesterly perpendicular to Eureka Street for 100 to the point of beginning.

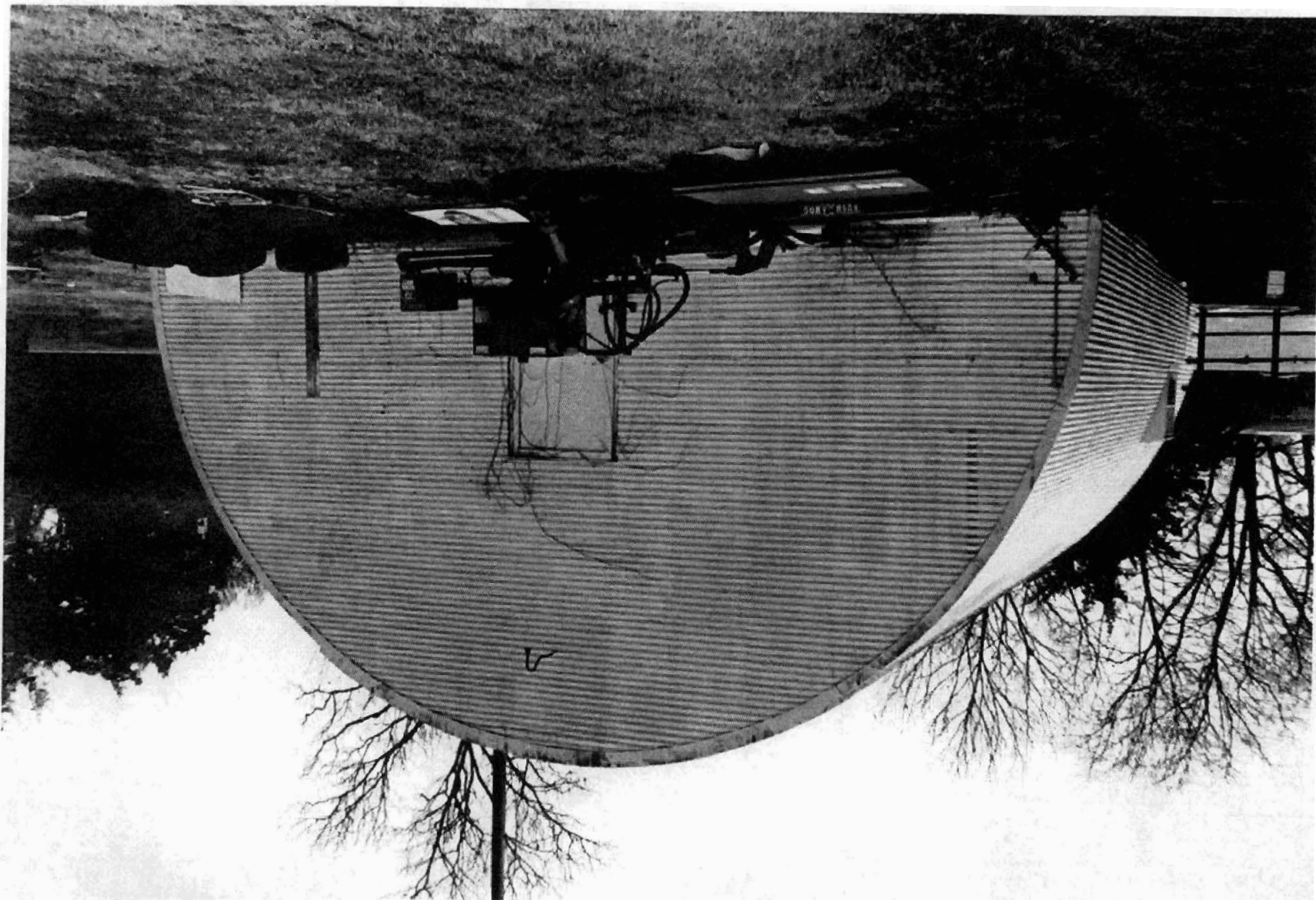
### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

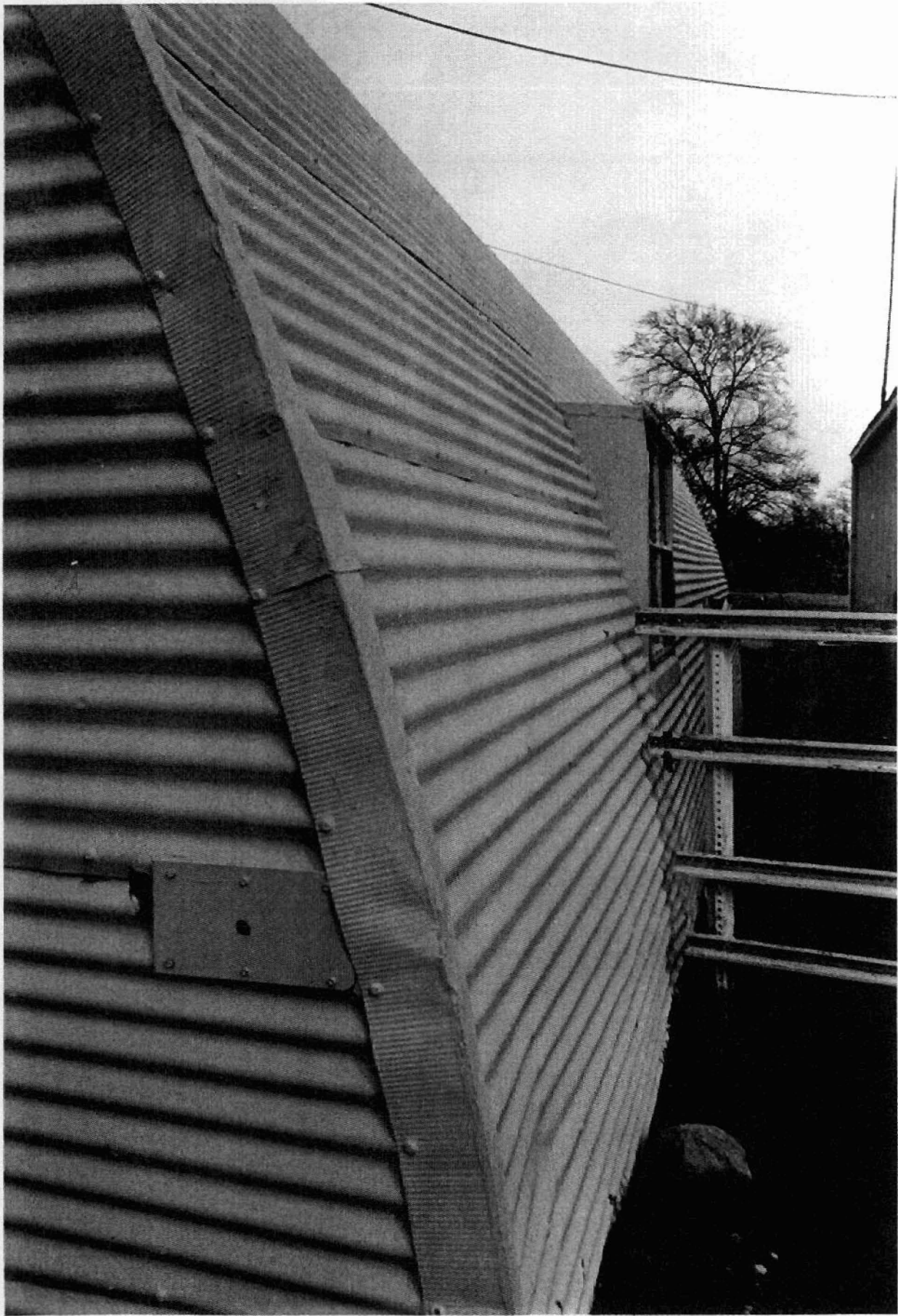
The boundary contains the land that is historically associated with the Old Turrell City Hall.

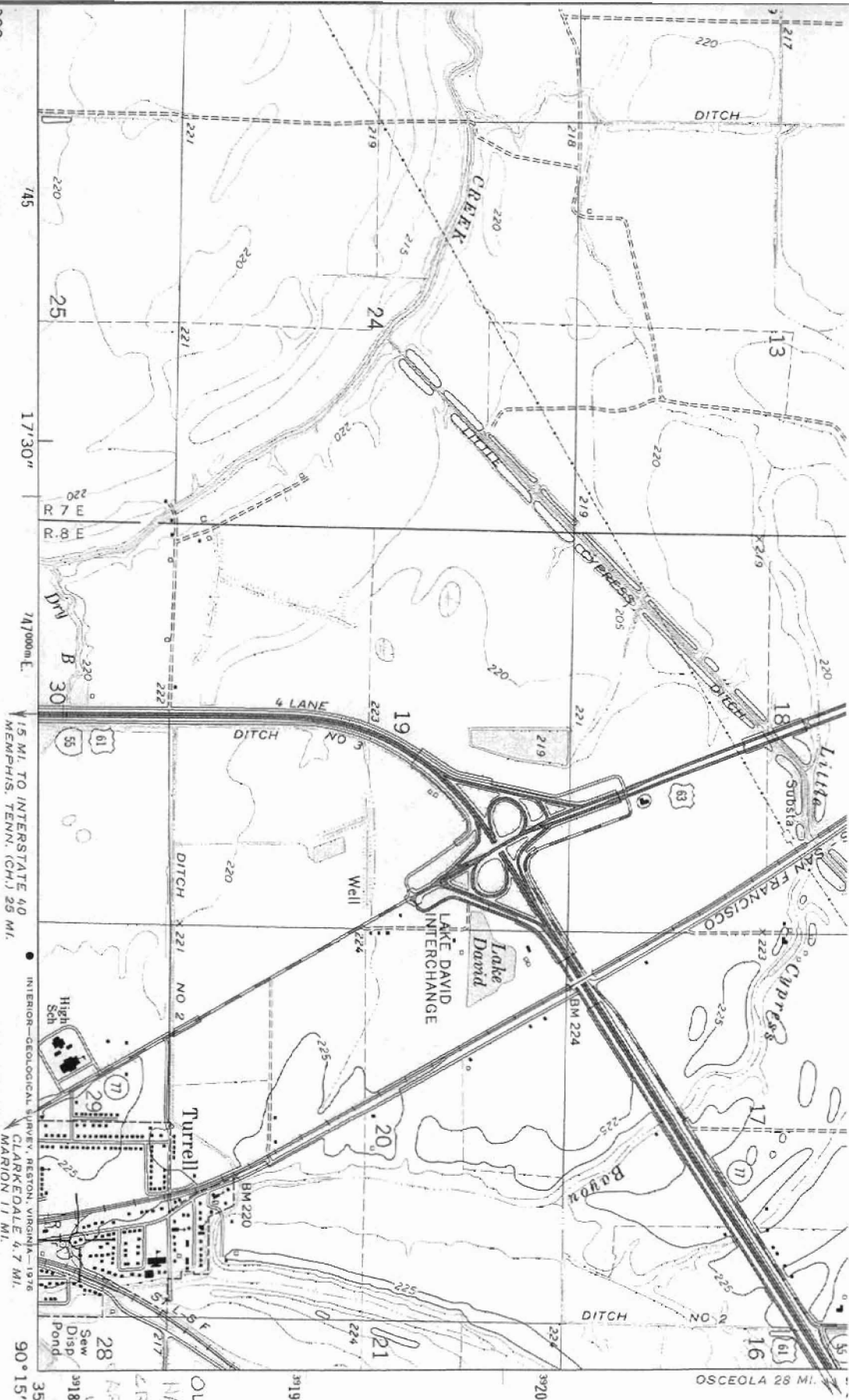












1:5 FEET  
 1:1 DATUM OF 1929



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface  
 Secondary highway, hard surface  
 Unimproved road

Interstate Route U. S. Route State Route

TYRONZA, ARK.

NE/4 EARLE 15' QUADRANGLE  
 N3522.5-W9015/7.5

1974

AMS 7954 IV NE-SERIES V884

UTM:  
 3918000m N  
 15749236/5418271

OLD TURKEL CITY  
 HALL  
 CLARKEDALE COUNTY  
 MARION 11 MI.  
 CLARKEDALE 4.7 MI.  
 CLARKEDALE 1976  
 INTERIOR-GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA