

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NR LISTED
JAN 26 1999
AHPP

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Little, J.E. House

Other Name/Site Number: FA0116

2. Location

Street & Number: 427 Western Avenue

Not for Publication: N/A

City/Town: Conway

Vicinity: N/A

State: AR

County: Faulkner

Code: 045

Zip Code: 72035

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

+

0

Buildings
Sites
Structures
Objects
Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Catherine J. Sate
Signature of certifying official

12-14-98
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- _____ entered in the National Register _____
- _____ determined eligible for the National Register _____
- _____ determined not eligible for the National Register _____
- _____ removed from the National Register _____
- _____ other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date
Of action

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6. Function or Use

Historic: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling

Current : Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Neoclassical
Craftsman

Materials: foundation Concrete roof Ceramic tile
walls Brick other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

The J.E. Little House, built c. 1919 on Conway's Western Avenue, is a two-story Neoclassical residence with Craftsman influences. This imposing home is buff brick and features rubbed stucco on the gable-ends, on the east and north porches, and on the second-story of the northern porte-cochere. Open eaves and decorative brackets are covered by a gable-roof of ceramic tiles. The pediment of the central two-story front porch - supported by four massive Tuscan columns - is embellished with an oculus window and wooden dentils. A flat-roofed porch on the first floor covers the south half of the front facade and provides a platform for a small second-story porch leading from an upper bedroom under the main gabled porch roof. An open tiled patio on the front facade is bounded by brick half-walls and brick piers capped with limestone and decorative concrete urns. A weatherboard garage is to the northwest of the home and is considered non-contributing to this nomination. The J.E. Little House is located in an older neighborhood east of the University of Central Arkansas and south of the Faulkner County Hospital. The home has suffered only two alterations, one to the rear with the removal of an exterior staircase, and replacement of two original windows with modern storm windows on the south facade and is in excellent condition but faces danger of being commandeered by the University for use as a fraternity home which has been the case with many large private homes in the immediate area.

Elaboration

The J.E. Little House is a two-story, Neoclassical residence constructed of buff brick on a continuous concrete foundation. This large high-style home is in a mixed neighborhood of older and modern houses east of the University of Central Arkansas and south of Faulkner County Hospital. The area is rapidly changing in character with the conversion of single-family residences to

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fraternity houses and rental units servicing the University. The J.E. Little House remains as a pristine example of an early 20th century single-family home designed in the Neoclassical style with Craftsman influence. Constructed c. 1919, it retains such original features as a two-story pedimented porch, double-hung windows, rubbed stucco and a porte cochere. The only change has been the removal of a rear exterior staircase, nevertheless the home's appearance largely reflects that of its early days.

The front, or eastern elevation, of the home is symmetrical with a two story gabled porch supported by four massive wooden Tuscan columns. This porch has a rubbed stucco pediment with a central fanlight surrounded by dentil work over a wide architrave. Spanning the length of this elevation, and partially down the south elevation, is an open patio with a tile floor surrounded by a limestone capped brick wall. Four brick piers topped with concrete urns rise from the north and south ends of the patio. Extending over half of the patio and underneath the roof of the two-story porch is a one-story, flat-roofed porch, supported by four Tuscan columns. Seven limestone steps lead from the sidewalk to the center of the porch.

From south to north, fenestration on the first-story begins with a pair of three-over-one double-hung wooden windows with a limestone sill. A row of soldier bricks, seen only on the east elevation, borders the top of the first-story windows. The one-light front door is centered in the east elevation under the two-story porch. The door and two sidelights are beveled glass and are topped by an eight-light transom. Two light fixtures with glass globes are located to either side of the door. Two more pairs of windows extend to the north corner of the house.

On the second story south to north, a pair of three-over-one windows are directly under the open eaves of the roof. The windows are decorated with a limestone sill supported by short limestone brackets. A second-story porch is sheltered by the pediment of the center porch. This space, on the roof of the first-story porch, is reached by a one-light wooden door topped with a small three-light transom. It is flanked by two narrow three-over-one windows above wooden panels. The deck is outlined by a decorative balustrade with square coffered posts. Two more pairs of windows with limestone brackets light the north corner of the second-story.

The eastern side of the porte-cochere is visible from the front elevation. The two-story porte-cochere is set back a few feet from the front wall and is supported by a brick pier. A ribbon of four three-over-one windows line the wall above a section of rubbed stucco with half-timbering.

The northern elevation of the Little House begins on the northeast corner with a short span of brick wall on the front patio. Two short brick piers are topped with concrete urns. Four limestone steps lead from the patio to the yard. The first-story of the house, east to west, is fenestrated with two double-hung windows, a single-leaf paneled door topped with a three-light fixed transom, which leads to a third window. A brick half-wall topped with limestone connects the two supporting brick piers of the porte-cochere. The second-story is lit by a single window to the east of the porte-cochere's gable-end, which displays a ribbon of four windows above rubbed stucco and half-timbering. The wall above the windows is also covered with stucco and the tile roof is supported by three decorative wooden brackets. A single

window lies to the west of the porte-cochere on the wall of the main house. The gabled attic-story of the house displays rubble work above a wide frieze band, a fan light, and five knee braces. The north wall of a rear two-story sleeping porch/screened-in porch echoes the porte-cochere with a ribbon of three windows above a section of half-timbered rubble work on the second-story.

The western, or rear, elevation is lit north to south on the first-story with a single window, a ribbon of three windows beside a narrow exterior brick chimney, and another single window. A screened-in porch encloses a window and a three-light wooden door with three-light transom. The porch is accessed by four concrete steps leading to a single centered screen door flanked by a brick half-wall and two brick piers. At one point, there was a set of exterior stairs that led to the second floor located on the rear porch, possibly used by servants. However, these steps have been removed.

The second-story north to south is fenestrated with a pair of windows, two single windows next to the chimney and a short single window adjacent to the sleeping-porch. The porch features a ribbon of three windows outlined with rubble work. Three decorative knee braces support the gabled roof of the porch.

The southwestern corner of the southern elevation's first-story reveals the side wall of the screened-in porch, outlined by a brick half-wall. The main wall of the house projects forward from the porch a few feet. Two modern one-over-one windows on the house flank a narrow exterior brick chimney. There is wood filling between the bottom of the windows and the sills because the modern windows are smaller than the original windows. An original window opens to the west of a larger exterior brick chimney with decorative limestone caps. A single-leaf three-light door with fixed three-light transom opens onto the patio at the southeastern corner. An original globe light fixture is located to the left of the door. Five concrete steps within a brick half-wall lead from the patio at the southeastern corner of this elevation. The patio is outlined with a brick wall and two piers topped with concrete urns.

The enclosed second-story of the rear porch displays a ribbon of three windows and the rubble work seen on its west and north walls. The second-story of the house contains two single windows adjoining the narrow chimney, a third window to the west of the larger chimney and a fourth window at the east corner. Above the wide freize band the attic-story has a centered Palladian window. Rubbled stucco covers the gable-end which is bolstered by five wooden knee braces. The center brace forms the keystone of the Palladian window.

A non-contributing frame outbuilding to the northwest is used as a garage.

The interior of the home is largely original and has only undergone minimal changes. The foyer has original oak floors and pine molding which can be found throughout the first-story. There is a dog-leg staircase, with a turned-spindle balustrade and a spiraling round newel post. A square newel post begins the ascent to the second-story from the landing. A bench with a hinged seat is located along the right side of the staircase. A den opens to the south of the foyer. This room and the kitchen to the southwest were

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

The J.E. Little House is an outstanding example of Neoclassical architecture with Craftsman influences. Built c. 1919 on Western Avenue in Conway the single-family home is becoming an anomaly due to the looming presence of the University of Central Arkansas campus to the west. The University has destroyed or converted several older homes in the area, minimizing the original character of the neighborhood. The Little House is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion C with local significance for the retention of Neoclassical and Craftsman features found in abundance on the home. The Little House is also being nominated to the National Register under Criterion B with local significance for its connection with its owner, John Elijah Little. Mr. Little was a prominent Faulkner County agriculturalist and banker who donated land to Hendrix College and Faulkner County Hospital in Conway.

Elaboration

Conway grew from a railroad construction camp for the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad in Faulkner County. In 1871 Colonel A.P. Robinson, chief engineer in charge of construction accepted 640 acres of land from the railroad in lieu of a paycheck. From these acres he set aside the northeast quarter for a townsite called Conway Station. The south half was allocated to the colonel for private hunting land. Conway became the county seat in 1873 and was incorporated in 1875. After the completion of the railway and the courthouse in 1877 the town began to grow, reaching a population of 1,028 by 1880. The town remained the only organized municipality in the county until 1916.

The J.E. Little House took its place on the western edge of Conway in 1919. The large Neoclassical home, built by planter John Elijah Little, was erected on the site of a brick Queen Anne Revival-style residence that had been destroyed by fire in 1918. Mr. Little had come to southern Faulkner County from Mississippi in 1883 to become an overseer on the plantation of Lee B. Atkeison along the Arkansas River. John married Lollie Trundle, the sister-in-law of Mr. Atkeison in 1885. The Littles began buying land and amassed a plantation of 3,200 acres near what is now Mayflower. After the death of Mrs. Little in 1892 a community known as Lollie plantation grew up on Mr. Little's land. By 1900 it began to prosper and included a store, cotton gin, sawmill for lumber and shingles and a molasses mill. The plantation had its own postmark and Mr. Little served as postmaster from 1888 to 1911. By 1928 there were eighty families residing on the plantation working to grow cotton, corn and sorghum.

Besides agriculture Mr. Little was also a prominent businessman. In the last ten years of his life, Mr. Little was a banker and majority stockholder and vice-president of the Faulkner County Bank and Trust Company. In 1914 he donated 640 acres to Hendrix College, and in the early 1920s he donated the southeast corner of Western and College Avenues to Faulkner County Hospital. Mr. Little also furthered education in Conway by serving on the ad hoc committee to locate the State Normal School in Conway and was on the Board of Trustees at Hendrix College. After the flood of 1927 Lollie Plantation

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suffered a setback as gullies and sand inundated the land over the plantation and several houses were destroyed. Mr. Little died in 1928 and the plantation went through several hard years until 1935 when it experienced a brief comeback. However, due to modernization and the loss of manpower to factories Lollie would never again achieve the prosperity it once knew and would eventually fail. In 1951 Lollie experienced an extremely poor cotton crop and a year later the land was divided among the five heirs.

The size of the Lollie Plantation made J.E. Little one of the more substantial plantation operators in Faulkner County during the early twentieth century, and allowed Little to pursue other ventures from his Conway home. Nothing remains of Little's once extensive farming operations near Mayflower (except for scattered features). The Little Home in Conway best reflects the prominent economic and social status achieved by important local planter J.E. Little and reflects the common pattern of substantial in-town homes built by wealthy Arkansas agriculturalists. The period of significance 1919 to 1928 reflects the period of Little's association with the home and his important local contributions.

Architectural and Historical Significance

The J.E. Little House is a pristine example of Neoclassical architecture with Craftsman influences in Conway. The home is situated in a neighborhood that has undergone a multitude of changes with the introduction of a county hospital and state university that have taken over many single family homes on the street for use as fraternities or administrative space. The Little House survives in its original capacity as a single family home that has retained the lions share of its features such as a intricate two-story porch and limestone window and porch details. The interior also possesses many of its original fixtures and woodwork. The Little House is thus being nominated to the National Register under Criterion C with local significance for this survival of authentic Neoclassical details. The house is also being nominated to the National Register under Criterion B with local significance for its connection to the owner John Elijah Little. Mr. Little was the owner of a 3,200 acre plantation west of Mayflower that employed eighty families. The plantation produced cotton, corn and sorghum and prospered from 1887 to 1935. Mr. Little was a banker, shareholder and vice-president in the Faulkner County Bank and Trust Company. In the areas of education in Faulkner County he donated 640 acres to Hendrix College where he served on the Board of Trustees. He also served on the ad hoc committee to bring the State Normal College to Conway. The Faulkner County Hospital received the southeast corner of Western and College Avenues from Mr. Little for the construction of their facility. The size of the Lollie Plantation made J.E. Little one of the more substantial plantation operators in Faulkner County during the early twentieth century, and allowed Little to pursue other ventures from his Conway home. Nothing remains of Little's once extensive farming operations near Mayflower (except for scattered features). The Little Home in Conway best reflects the prominent economic and social status achieved by important local planter J.E. Little and reflects the common pattern of substantial in-town homes built by wealthy Arkansas agriculturalists. The period of significance 1919 to 1928 reflects the period of Little's association with the home and his important local contributions.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

- Buchanan, Bob. "The Rise and Fall of Lollie Plantation." Log Cabin Democrat.
March 21, 1993.
- McClanahan, Melinda. "Bygone Days." Log Cabin Democrat. January 20, 1986.
- Rhodes, Sonny. "Every Step is Surprise." Arkansas Gazette. April, 17, 1980.
- McAlester, Virginia, and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. Alfred A.
Knopf, New York. 1992.
- Faulkner County Historical Society. *Faulkner County Its Land and People*.
River Road Press, Conway, Arkansas. 1986.
- Information submitted by Patty Siebenmorgan, Conway. February 22, 1998.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary Location of Additional Data: _____

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than one acre.

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>549570</u>	<u>3882300</u>	B	_____	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____	_____

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Verbal Boundary Description:

Part of Lot 1 Block 5 Sammie A. Little Replat of the J.E. Little Addition to the city of Conway, Faulkner County, Arkansas, being a part of the NE 1/4 SE 1/4 Section 11, Township 5 North, Range 14 West, recorded in Plat Book A at Page 148 described as beginning at the northeast corner of said Lot 1, thence west 439.1 feet to the northwest corner of said Lot 1, thence south 210.0 feet to the southwest corner of said Lot 1, thence east 202.8 feet, thence north parallel to the east side of said Lot 1, 32.0 feet, thence east 12.5 feet, thence south 2.0 feet; thence east 217.5 feet or to the east line of said Lot 1, thence northwardly along the east line of said Lot 1 180.0 feet or to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the J.E. Little House in Conway, Faulkner County.

11. Form Prepared By

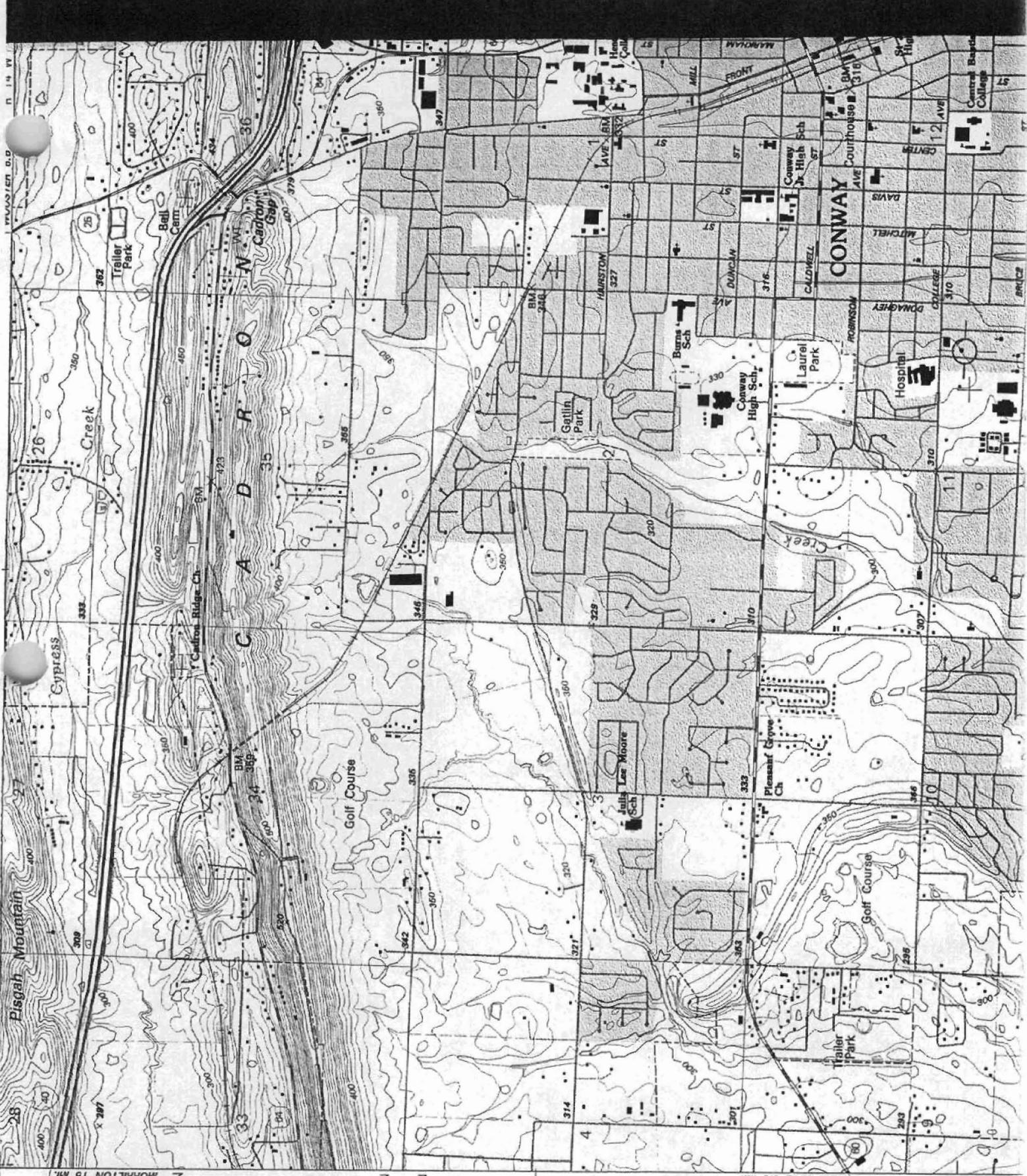
Name/Title: Sherriann Lovelace-Chandler, edited by Holly Hope/Survey Historian

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: 12/10/97

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

City or Town: Little Rock

State: AR ZIP: 72201



JE LITTLE HOUSE
 CONWAY, FAULKNER
 COUNTY
 UTM
 15/549570/3882300
 3886000N
 MORRILLTON 15 MI.
 RUSSELLVILLE 43 MI.

T 6 N
 T 5 N

3884

PERRYVILLE 20 MI.
 NEW DIXIE 8.6 MI.

5' 00"
 3882

