

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Walter B. Sorrells Cottageand/or common Sorrells Hall

2. Location

street & number Pine Bluff Youth Services Center Route 8, Box 970 7521 W. 13th St. N/A not for publicationcity, town Pine Bluff N/A vicinity ofstate Arkansas code 05 county Jefferson code 069

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☐ district	☒ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture
☒ building(s)	☐ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☒ educational
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment
☐ object	☐ in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial
	<u>N/A</u>	☐ no	☐ military
			☐ museum
			☐ park
			☐ private residence
			☐ religious
			☐ scientific
			☐ transportation
			☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Pine Bluff Youth Services Center c/o Mr. Webb Farrellstreet & number Route 8, Box 970city, town Pine Bluff N/A vicinity of state Arkansas

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthousestreet & number Barraque Streetcity, town Pine Bluff state Arkansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ nodate ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY

Designed and constructed in 1920 as the first permanent building for the Boys Industrial School, the Walter B. Sorrells Cottage is the only remaining structure dating from this institution's initial phase of development. Eclectically combining elements of the Craftsman and English Revival styles, the building was designed by Mitchell Seligman, a successful Pine Bluff architect.

ELABORATION

Sorrells Cottage occupies an ample corner lot of the Youth Services Center campus. Of frame construction, the building is brown brick on the first floor and stucco with half-timbering on the second floor. An asphalt-shingled clipped gable roof has overhanging eaves with exposed rafter ends and is supported on the ends by decorative kneebraces. A shed dormer projects from the front and rear roof slopes. Two interior brick chimneys project from each end of the roof ridge. Windows on the first floor of the building are detailed with jack arches of vertically-laid brick. An eclectic combination of double-hung and casement windows with a variety of pane configurations are found on each elevation.

The facade of the building features a one-story three bay brick porch that projects from the corner and shelters two entrances. Brick columns support the parapeted flat roof which is accentuated by merlons with smooth stone caps. A stone shield is inset in the parapet above the porch entrance. Separate entrances with transoms and sidelights provide distinct access to the superintendent's living quarters and the administrative offices. An off-center casement window is positioned between the two entrances. A pair of single-light fixed windows is located on the first floor to the right of the porch. These as well as several other windows are replacements. The stuccoed second floor of this elevation has two pair of double-hung windows. A shed dormer with four square nine-light casement windows is centered in the roof slope. A one-story flat-roofed projection extends from the southeast corner and is treated similarly to the front porch.

The southeast side elevation reveals a small one-story brick addition to the rear of the southeast one-story office projection. This alteration, as well as several interior changes, were designed by Reed and Willis, the successor firm to Mitchell Seligman's office. The half-timbered second floor of this elevation has two pair of narrow casement windows. Two pair of centered casement windows illuminate the attic. The northwest end elevation has two double-hung and a pair of casements on the first two floors and a pair of attic casement windows.

The rear elevation reveals that a door that accesses the offices was added at the location of an original window. This side of brick addition is flush with the rear wall of the original structure. As is the case with the other three elevations, the rear possesses a mixture of window types. The fenestration pattern is irregular, with three six-over-one double-hung and two pair of narrow casements on the first floor and three pair of narrow casements and a square sixteen-light casement on the second floor.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400-1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500-1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600-1699	☒ architecture	☐ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700-1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☐ 1800-1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☒ 1900-	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☒ other (specify) Juvenile Justice

Specific dates 1920 Builder/Architect Mitchell Seligman - Architect
E. C. Royce - Builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY

The Pine Bluff Youth Services Center had its beginnings in 1917 when a combination of donated and purchased land was designated for what was then called the Boys Industrial School, an alternative to the state penitentiary for teenaged boys convicted of crimes. The Walter B. Sorrells Cottage, designed and constructed in 1920, was the first permanent structure and remains today as the only testimony to the initial efforts to provide institutional care for delinquent/dependent youth in Arkansas. In addition, the building is significant as an eclectic combination of two popular early twentieth century styles, the Craftsman and English Revival, and was designed by the successful and prolific Pine Bluff architect, Mitchell Seligman.

ELABORATION

On April 25, 1905, Governor Davis approved an act providing for the establishment of a "State Reform School, for the discipline, education, employment and reformation of convicts under the age of eighteen years." Act 199 provided for white and black students, both male and female, housed in separate quarters. This first reform school was located approximately ten miles west of what were then the Little Rock city limits. Because the location was difficult for farming and sited in dense timber growth, this initial location proved unsatisfactory. In 1915 Julia Houston, the first probation officer from Pine Bluff, presented a bill to have the students moved. At first the proposal was vetoed, but later it was approved by Governor Brough. In 1917, Act 67 of the legislature changed the name of the institution to "Boys Industrial School of the State of Arkansas." The governor appointed a board whose first responsibility was to acquire new site.

Captain Geisreiter of Pine Bluff donated 160 acres of land and the citizens of Pine Bluff raised \$5,466, some of which was used to purchase 80 adjoining acres. The Act of 1917 provided \$5,000 for the purchase of land. The surplus of this amount was used for a building fund. Simple cottages were erected and a detachment of boys was sent to the site to begin clearing the land and cultivating. According to an article in the Graphic, a former Pine Bluff newspaper, on October 26, 1917, the first buildings at the school were temporary frame board and batten structures. Forty additional acres of land were purchased on April 13, 1918, for \$1,400. This provided the high ground on which to build the new buildings. In 1919, the legislature appropriated \$98,000 for a vast building program and a plan was made for a complex of permanent structures, which included three cottages for boys, a building for the superintendent, a dining hall and a gymnasium. The administration building was also to serve as the superintendent's residence.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acresage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Pine Bluff

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	5	5	8	4	0	4	0	3	7	8	6	4	6	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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G

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Verbal boundary description and justification

SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 11, Township 6 South, Range 10 West.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Karmen P. Williams (Edited by AHPP staff)

organization Pine Bluff Youth Services Center

date December 1984

street & number Route 8, Box 970

telephone

city or town Pine Bluff

state Arkansas

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national X state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

Arkansas SHPO

date

4-22-86

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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The interior plan of Sorrells Cottage reveals its intended dual function. The left front entrance accesses the superintendent's quarters, which consist of a living room, dining room and kitchen on the first floor and three large bedrooms and a bath on the second floor. The straight-run stair between the two floors is located inside the front door. A winding stair leads from the second floor to the unfinished attic. Wood floors and plaster walls are found throughout this simply-detailed, minimally-altered residential portion of the structure. The right entrance leads to a reception area and offices, separate from the residence and confined to the first floor. This administrative area has been substantially remodeled.

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Sorrells Cottage was designed in 1920 by Mitchell Seligman, an architect with a successful practice in Pine Bluff. Seligman first came to Arkansas as project architect for the Citizens Bank Building (now the National Building), which was designed by Desairdin and Sheblessy of Cincinnati, Ohio. Seligman chose to remain in Pine Bluff and started his own practice in August of 1909. Born in 1883, Seligman was raised and educated in Louisville, Kentucky, where he graduated from the Louisville Manual Training School in 1901. Seligman designed numerous buildings in Pine Bluff, among them Central High School (Junius Jordan School), 1917-1918; the Woodrow Wilson School, 1924; the Merrill High School; the Elks Club; the Shrine Temple, 1927-1928, and Parkview Apartments.

Sorrells Cottage was named for Walter Sorrells, editor of the Pine Bluff newspaper The Commercial, and was designed to function as both an administration building and superintendent's residence. The design combines Craftsman features with those typically associated with English architecture, such as half-timbering. It is significant that this building, as well as those that immediately followed, has a domestic scale and appearance, rather than an institutional character. E. C. Royse, as successful bidder, was the contractor for the building. He and Seligman were frequently involved in the same projects.

The Legislative Acts of Arkansas, Act 723 of 1923, allocated \$125,000. for building expenditures. The Julia Houston Cottage, Tom C. McRae Cottage, a trades building, hospital and additional small cottages were erected. None of these structures remain.

By 1935 the Boys Industrial School consisted of a total of 360 acres, the present size of what is now called the Pine Bluff Youth Services Center. No major building programs took place until the 1950's. The Youth Services Center is now a facility for the care and treatment of delinquent youth, males ages 13-18.

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Historical Development of Arkansas Youth Services

1905 - Act 199 - Established a reform school for boys near Little Rock. The school was under the administration of the state prison system.

1917 - Act 67 - Changed the names of the boys and girls reform schools to industrial schools. The schools were now under the administration of independent boards appointed by the governor. The Boys Industrial School was relocated in Pine Bluff, and the Girls Industrial School remained at Alexander.

1921 - Act 526 - Established separate Boys Industrial Schools for White and Negro under the management and control of the Board of Managers of the Boy's Industrial School.

1937 - Act 60 - Boys Industrial School established at Wrightsville at about this time.

1949 - Girls Training School at Fargo was established.

1953 - Act 52 - Established a separate Board of Managers for the White and Negro Boys' Industrial School.

1955 - Act 398 - Removed the Boys' Industrial School from the Penal System of the state, deeming it to be a Training and Educational institution entitled to all the rights and privileges of any other accredited educational institution of the State of Arkansas.

1961 - Act 72 - Changed the name of the institution to Arkansas Boys' Training School.

1963 - Act 515 - Name was again changed to Arkansas Training School for Boys at Pine Bluff.

1968 - The separate and independent boards of the Training Schools were condensed into one board appointed by and responsible to the governor for supervisor of the schools.

- a. A reception and diagnostic service was established and provided by the Rehabilitation Department at the Benton Hospital Center.
- b. A parole service was established to provide aftercare services to the youth released from the schools.
- c. Central Office Administration was established and referred to as the Training School Department.

1969 - The Training Schools were integrated in November, 1969 - Blacks were admitted to previously White Training Schools.

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1971 - State government reorganization. Development of a department of Social and Rehabilitative Services (now referred to as the Department of Human Services).

- a. Juvenile Services Division was now responsible to the Director of the Department of Human Services as well as a governor-appointed board.
- b. Arkansas Commission on Crime and Law was established about this time - LEAA Fund available for delinquency prevention and control. Some of the first community projects were developed.

1974 - Need for comprehensive state plan for youth service was documented. The Department of Human Services received an LEAA grant to produce a state master plan for the delivery of needed youth services.

1976 - State master plan was completed.

- a. Deinstitutionalization of Status Offender Project implemented.
- b. Emphasis - community-based projects.

1977 - Establishment of the Division of Youth Services as an integral part of the State Department of Human Services.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Commercial, November 4, 1919, Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

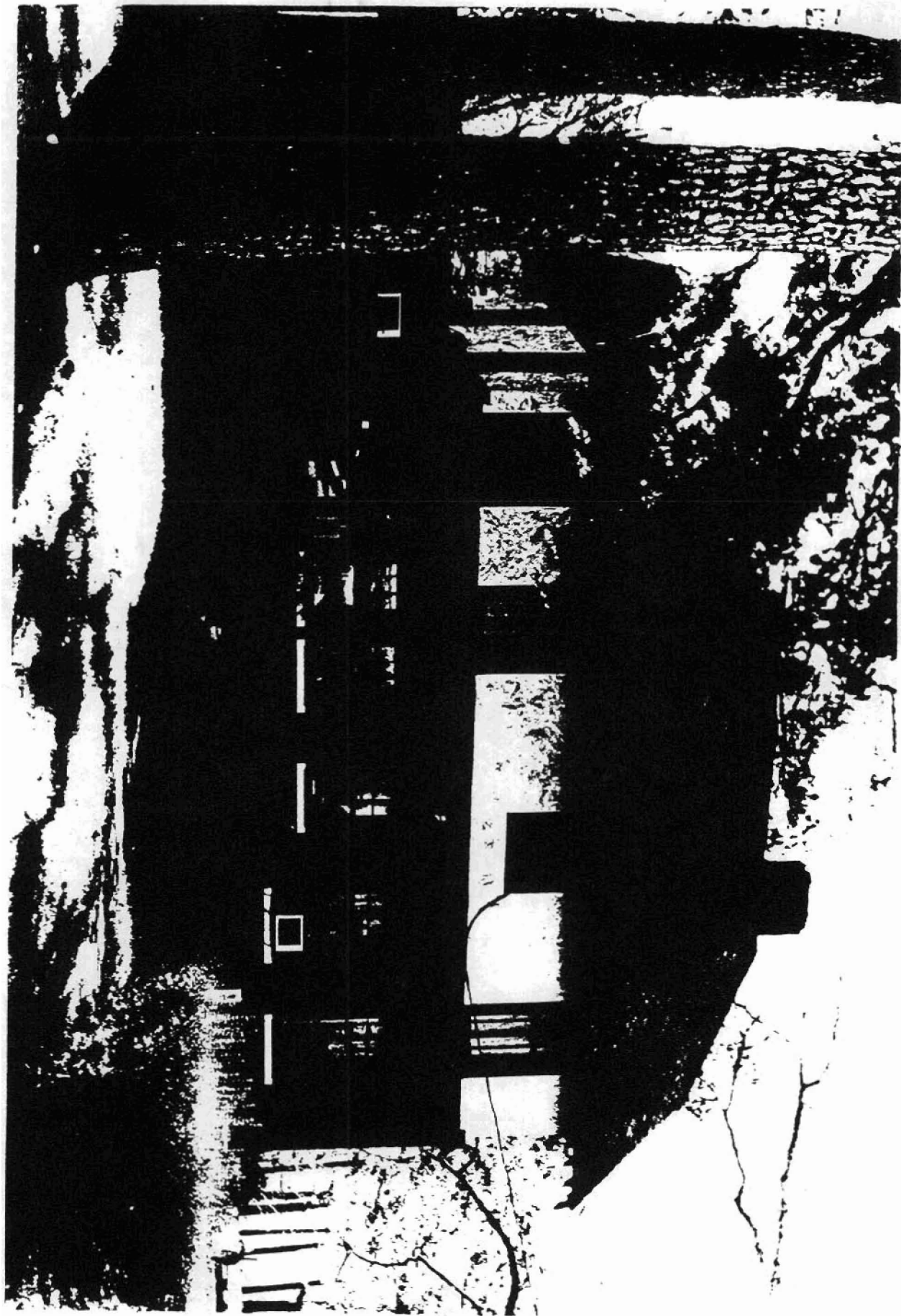
The Graphic, a former newspaper of Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

Herndon, Dallas T., editor, Centennial History of Arkansas, 1922, S.S. Clark
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Specifications for Alterations and Additions to the Superintendent's Cottage,
Reed and Willis, Architects.



Walter B. Sorrells Cottage
Pine Bluff, Jefferson Co.
View from north

Taken by Julie Vosmik, AHPP
November 1.



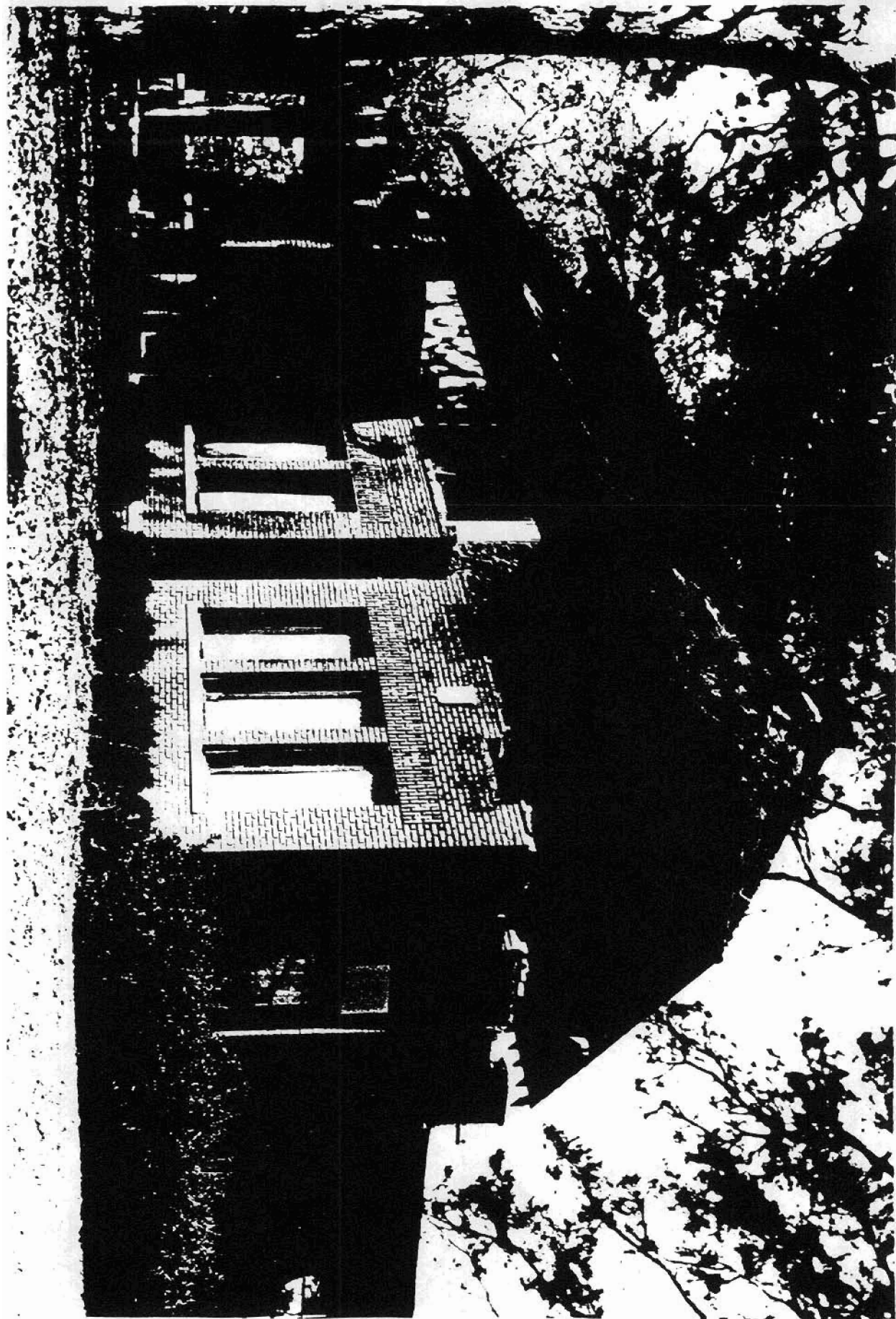
Walter B. Sorrells Cottage

Pine Bluff, Jefferson County

View from southwest

Photographed by Julie Vosmik, AHPP

November 1984



Walter B. Sorrells Cottage
Pine Bluff, Jefferson County
View from southeast
Taken by Ju" Vosmik
November 1984

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Continuation Sheet

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Pine Bluff, Arkansas

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 59111310 3171818171610
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 C
 E
 G

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 D
 F
 H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 8, Block 32, Woodruff Addition South and West to the City of Pine Bluff, Arkansas

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

James W. Leslie, Historian

ORGANIZATION

608 West 20th

STREET & NUMBER

Pine Bluff, Arkansas

CITY OR TOWN

Witsell and Evans, Architects

DATE

1010 Scott Street

TELEPHONE

Little Rock, Ark.

STATE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

PS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Deed Book 352, Jefferson County land records, p. 644.

Deed Book P-1, Jefferson County land records, p. 5.

Pine Bluff Weekly Press, November 20, 1873, p. 4.

Pine Bluff Graphic, September 17, 1912, p. 3.

Deed Book R-2, Jefferson County land records, p. 121.

Ben Pearson's abstract on Lot 8, Block 32, Woodruff Addition.

Ibid.

Interview members of Cook family.

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Pine Bluff Commercial.

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Leslie, James W., Land of Cypress and Pine, (Little Rock, Rose Publishing Company, 1976).

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