

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. 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. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Ritchie Grocery Building

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Front & Olive Streets☐ not for publication N/Acity, town Texarkana☐ vicinity N/Astate Arkansascode ARcounty Millercode 091zip code 75502

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of related multiple property listing:

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

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 80.
In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined eligible for the National
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.☐ removed from the National Register.☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/ Department Store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/ Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th & 20th CENTURY REVIVALS/
Romanesque Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locallyApplicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1905

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

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

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

☒ See continuation sheet

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

UTM References

A 15 403190 3698240
Zone Easting Northing

C

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This boundary includes all the property historically associated with this resource.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth Story, Architectural Historian

organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date May 4, 1990

street & number 225 East Markham, Suite 300 telephone (501) 371-2763

city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201

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Summary

The Ritchie Grocery Building is a two story, brick masonry commercial retail and warehouse structure designed in the later, less three-dimensional interpretation of the Romanesque Revival style. The plan is roughly square, with a metal awning on two sides and a screened porch on a third. It is located at the corner of Front and Olive Streets in downtown Texarkana.

Elaboration

The Ritchie Grocery Building is a two story, brick masonry, commercial retail and warehouse building designed in the later, more delicate interpretation of the Romanesque Revival first made popular in America by the Boston architect H.H. Richardson. Its plan is roughly square with a later metal awning covering a later concrete loading dock on the southern and eastern elevations and a screened porch on the northern elevation. Three concrete chimneys are rise from the interior near the eastern elevation and the gable roofed cover to the elevator shaft rises toward the southern elevation. The flat, built-up tar roof is set behind a brick parapet, the walls are sheathed with brick and the entire structure is supported by a continuous cast concrete foundation. A partial basement beneath the building originally housed refrigeration equipment.

The eastern or front elevation features a central, slightly projecting bay with a double-leaf cargo door and arched, multi-pane transom in the first floor and three arched windows in the second floor. The first story wall to the south of the projecting bay is punctuated with two double-leaf cargo doors flanking two smaller arched windows. The wall to the north on the first story features three arched window openings - each subdivided into two smaller arched windows with an arched transom above - placed around another arched entry. The second story wall is fenestrated by six pair of arched windows placed symmetrically around the central projecting bay. A metal cornice completes the elevation.

The southern elevation is accessed by four separate, double-leaf arched entries on the first floor, with smaller arched windows placed between them. The second story is lighted by eleven arched windows, though there were originally thirteen openings (two have since been filled). A metal cornice caps this elevation also. The northern elevation opposite is similar, with several compound arched windows placed around smaller arched windows and cargo entries on the first floor and a second story lighted with the same tall, narrow arched windows. The western elevation is blank.

Significant exterior decoration includes the ornamentation of the cargo entry on the eastern elevation with a delicate, Classical wood pediment, the trimming of the arched windows with a thin course of shallow brick trim and the dentillated metal cornice.

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The interior was originally divided into but two floors; an intermediate floor within the first story was installed at some point in the recent past. Some of the original office areas survive on the first floor, as does an early stairwell, complete with turned balustrade. The external walls are not covered on either floor, the original wood floors remain and an early elevator continues to provide access to the upper level. The second floor is largely open and interrupted only by the intermittent rows of supporting columns; the result is a grand, open space, reminiscent of a ballroom.

The Ritchie Grocery Building has suffered few serious alterations. Two second story windows have been filled, an intermediate floor has been added (which the prospective owner plans to remove) and the metal awning and loading dock have been added.

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Summary

Criterion C, local significance

The Ritchie Grocery Building is the only turn-of-the-century commercial building still standing on Front Street in Texarkana, Arkansas, and the best example of a Romanesque Revival commercial building to survive intact.

Elaboration

The Ritchie Grocery Building is the only turn-of-the-century building still standing on Front Street in Texarkana, Arkansas. The building is located at the corner of Front Street and Olive (formerly Vine), about 1 1/2 blocks east of the state line between Arkansas and Texas. Front Street is the first street north of the railroad tracks along which the original town was laid out. The tracks of the Texas and Pacific Railroad and the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railway met at the state line and prompted the creation of the city at this location. The first lots on the Texas side of town were sold on December 8, 1873. Texarkana, Arkansas was incorporated as a town on November 12, 1880 and the plat of the original town was recorded December 13, 1880.

Frances William Mullins moved to Texarkana in 1884 to establish the Texas Produce company, a wholesale produce and grocery business and the first in the city. The company was originally located on the Texas side of town on Main Street. A 1893 map of the city bears a directory of businesses which lists the Texas Produce company as selling groceries and beer at Pine and Clinton (now West 3rd Street). This building was built c. 1900 to house the company. The original structure occupies Lots 21-24, Block 75, original city of Texarkana; these lots were purchased in the spring of 1895 from two separate individuals and a deed of trust given to Adolphus Busch of St. Louis on July 23, 1895 as security for a \$15,000 loan.

Mr. Mullins is credited with revolutionizing the wholesale produce and grocery business by using the railways to make daily shipments of perishable goods to Little Rock, Pine Bluff and points in Texas. Mullins served as mayor of Texarkana, Arkansas for two terms between 1896-1900, during which plans were made for building streets throughout the city. He was also a member of the school board from 1889-1896 and from 1909-1914. Mullins died at the age of 67 on September 4, 1917.

In February of 1926 the building was sold to the Ritchie Grocery Company for \$60,000. Sometime later Lots No. 18-20 were purchased adjoining the original four lots on the west and a one-story masonry addition was constructed (extant). The Ritchie Grocery Company was organized in Camden, Arkansas in 1886 and headquartered in El Dorado, Arkansas by 1903. It was founded by J.C. Ritchie and W.W. Brown for the primary purpose of selling food stuffs and hay for livestock; however, due to its almost immediate success, it soon expanded into

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"staple and fancy groceries," carrying a much broader line of such other items as hardware and appliances. Its success also led to the establishment of one of Arkansas' earliest chain wholesale department stores: in addition to operating the El Dorado and Texarkana stores by 1926, the Company opened stores in Pine Bluff and Magnolia at about the same time. The Ritchie Grocery Company operated the Texarkana branch of its wholesale grocery business in this building until the mid-1970's and continues to own the building.

The Ritchie Grocery Company Building is the only Romanesque Revival building remaining in downtown Texarkana with this degree of integrity and architectural quality: the monumental, arched openings on the first floor contrast nicely with the more restrained, vertical arched windows on the second floor, creating an easy and unified visual transition from the first floor to the second. There are other masonry buildings of similar style and age in the area but most are along the main business thoroughfare of Broad Street and have been renovated with new facades, windows and store fronts. An adaptive reuse of the Ritchie Grocery Company Building is planned which will convert the upper floor to loft apartments, remove the intermediate floor and convert the first floor to a market of small food and produce vendors.

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Bibliography

Chandler, Barbara Overton and J. Ed Howe, *History of Texarkana and Bowie and Miller Counties, Texas-Arkansas*.

Deed Records, Miller County Courthouse, Texarkana.

Interview by Rick Hall with John Benson, Sr., Ritchie Grocery Company.

Leet, William D., *Texarkana, A Pictorial History*.

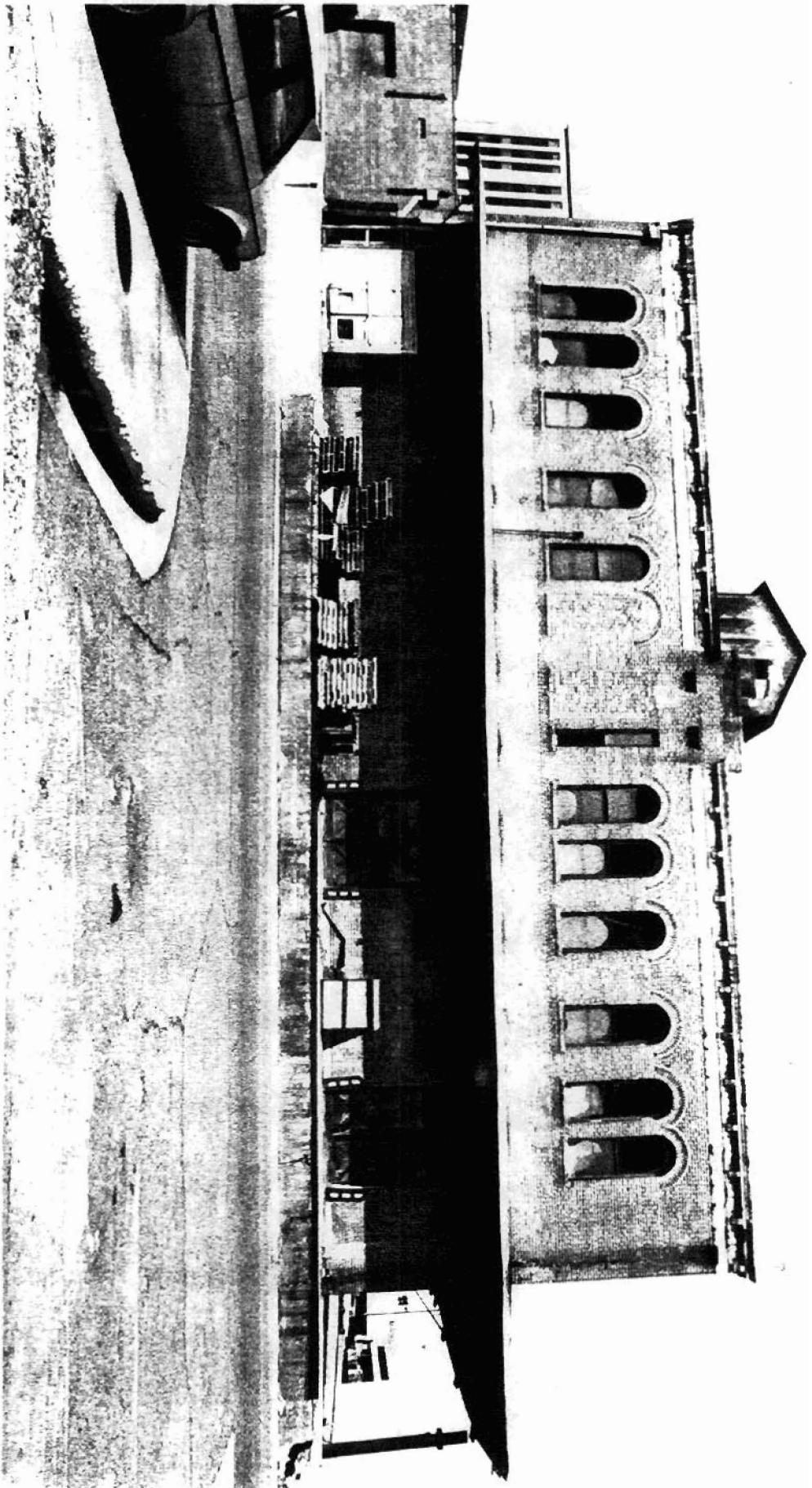
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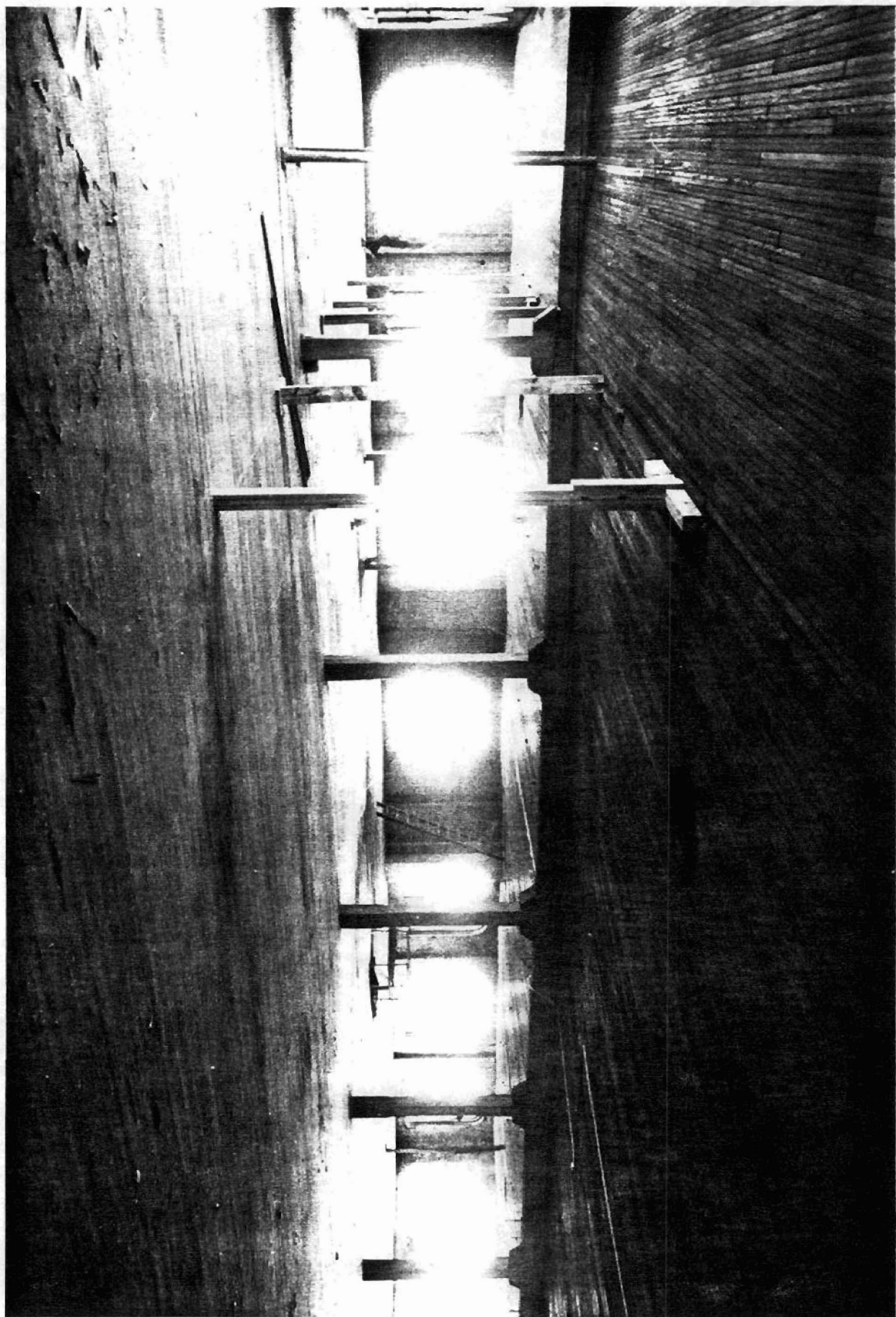
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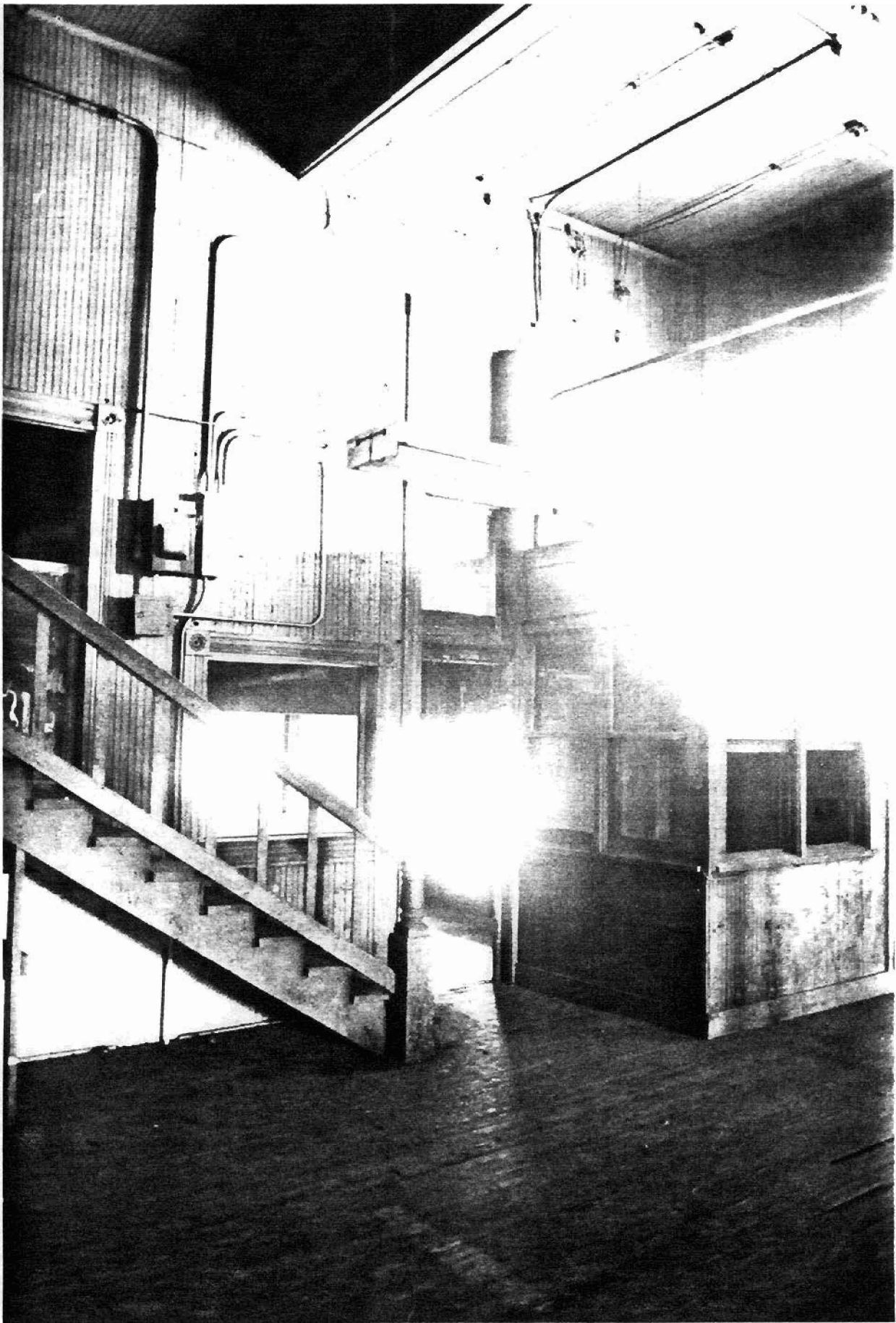
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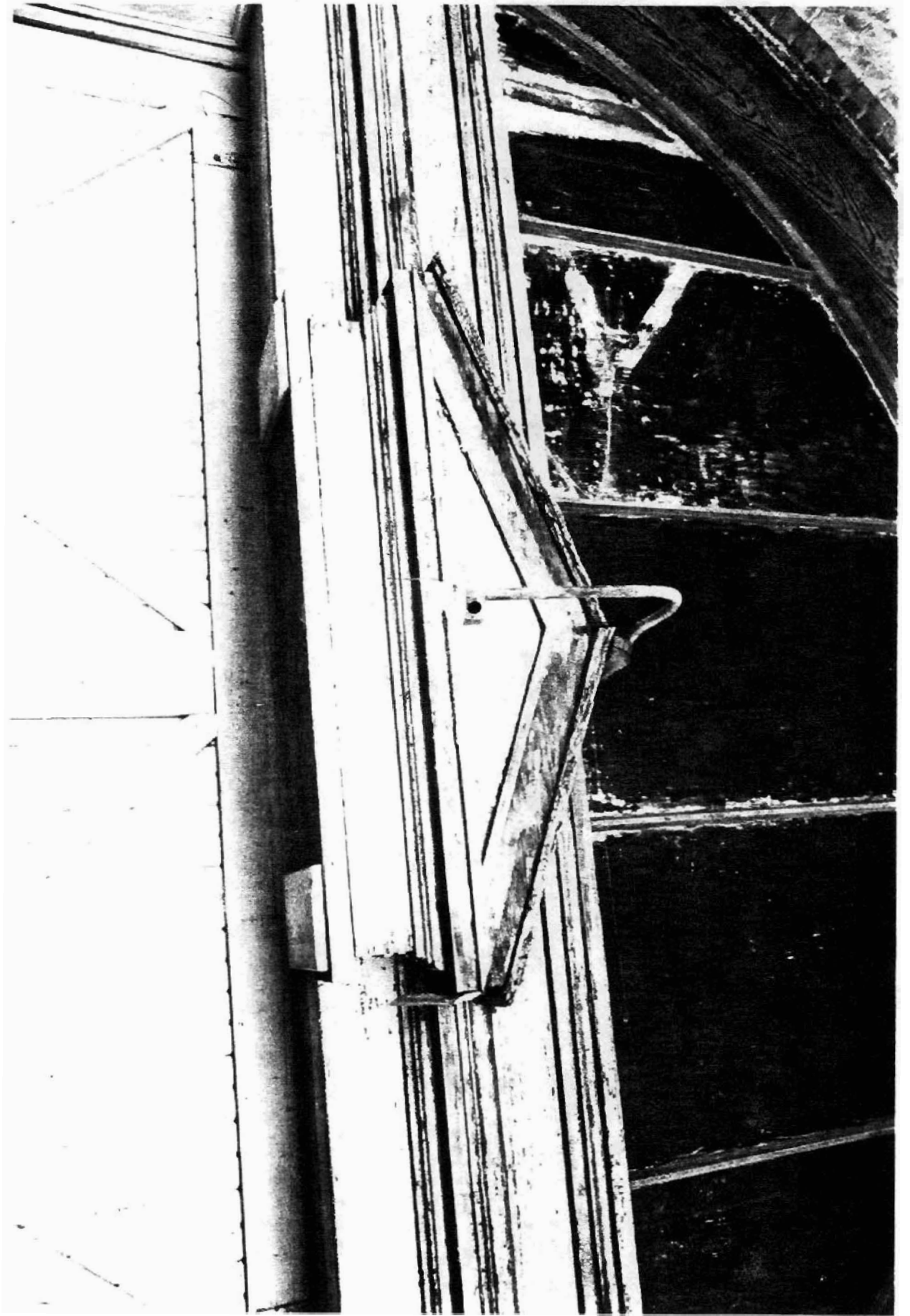
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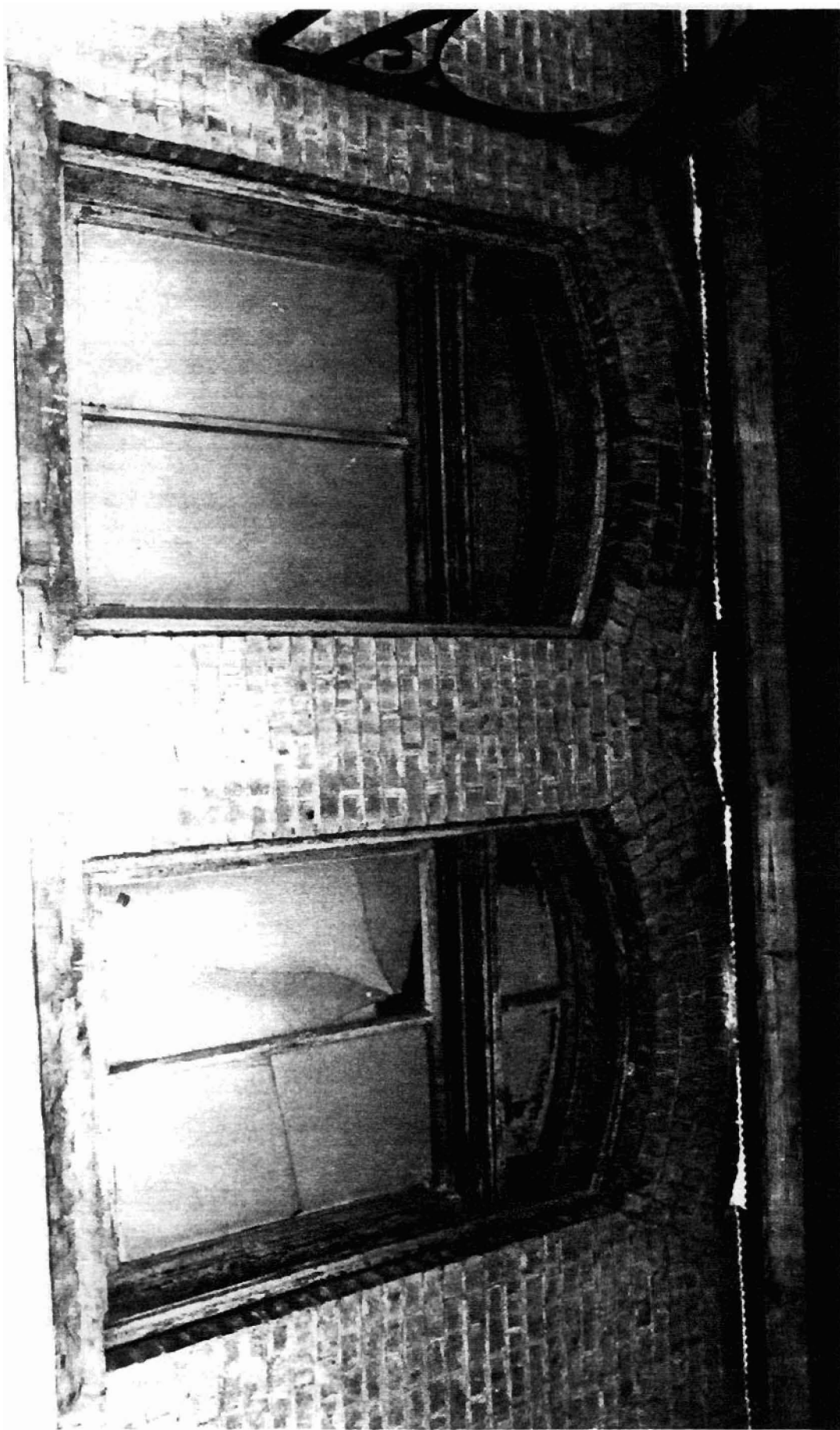
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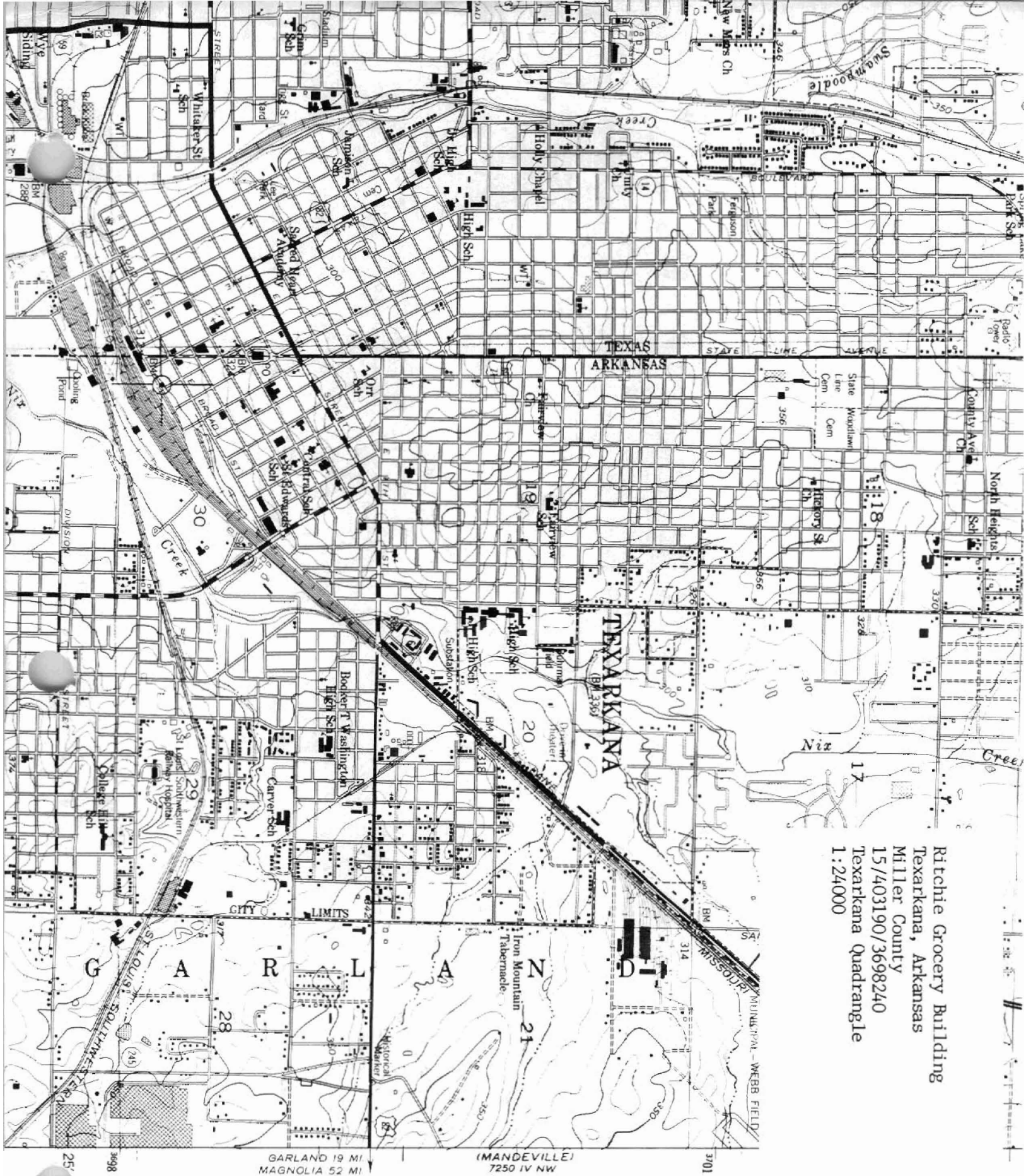












Ritchie Grocery Building
Texarkana, Arkansas
Miller County
15/403190/3698240
Texarkana Quadrangle
1:24000