

NR 11-05-87

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Missouri-Pacific Depot

and/or common Helena Depot (preferred)

2. Location

street & number Corner of Natchez and Missouri Streets N/A not for publication

city, town Helena N/A vicinity of

state Arkansas code 05 county Phillips code 107

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Union Pacific Railroad c/o Mr. C. O. Durham

street & number 1416 Dodge Street, Rm 306

city, town Omaha _____ vicinity of state Nebraska

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Phillips County Courthouse

street & number 622 Cherry Street

city, town Helena state Arkansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Helena Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date Spring 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

city, town Little Rock Arkansas

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

Located on the southeast corner of Missouri and Natchez Streets at the southern end of the downtown area and paralleling the levee, the Missouri-Pacific Depot in Helena is a fine unaltered example of early-twentieth century depot architecture in Arkansas. Constructed ca. 1915 of red brick with limestone accents, this two-story building exhibits detailing from the Craftsman period as well as subtle Classical Revival influences. Originally designed to serve as the regional headquarters for the St. Louis Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad, the depot has a two-story northern section which is more finely detailed than the more functional one-story freight section of the building. The entire structure is surmounted by a hip roof covered with composition shingles and features large decorative knee braces supporting the wide overhanging eaves. Gabled and louvered attic vents occur midway across the one-story section and above the south (rear) elevation. The building has a steel frame structure and rests on a poured concrete foundation. Lintels, sills, belt and string courses are all of limestone blocks. The bricks used in the exterior of the building have rounded edges and the mortar employed is reddish in color. A brick platform surrounds the building and continues approximately seventy yards south of the rear of the structure. The Missouri-Pacific Railroad sold the property to the Union Pacific Railroad who has recently boarded up the building on the first level. This significant structure survives as the southern architectural anchor for the downtown and retains a high degree of architectural and historical integrity.

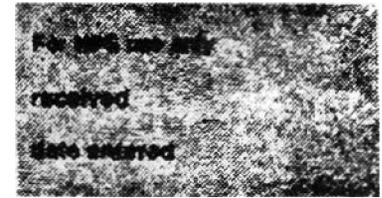
ELABORATION

The facade of Helena's Missouri-Pacific Depot is three bays wide and faces north to the downtown area. The northern two bays of the building are two stories tall. This section exhibits more detailing than the one-story section of the structure. This two-story section features a widely overhanging hip roof supported by paired brackets and decorative rafter ends at the eaves. The northern (facade) elevation displays a centrally located entrance covered with a small suspended shed roof. The shed roof is covered with barrel tiles, which indicates the original roofing material of the entire building may have been of this material. The entry is flanked by a pair of elaborate console brackets and symmetrical projecting bays with arched windows. Windows throughout the building are wooden casement with rectangular panes grouped in pairs and surmounted by a horizontal pane. This arrangement is coupled to fill one sash. The arched window retains this arrangement with the added fan-light above. Outlined by radiating brick voussoirs with stone springers and keystones, these more elaborate windows display radiating muntins in the fan-light. A limestone belt course divides the upper, lower and basement levels. A limestone stringcourse accents the red brick facade at the sill level and the simple cornice above the arched windows is also of limestone blocks. Windows on the upper level retain the same arrangement, but are smaller, which further emphasizes the horizontal orientation of the facade.

The east elevation runs parallel to the levee upon which the train tracks run. This elevation contains two bays of the two-story section, three bays of baggage section and eight bays of freight section, for a total length of thirteen bays. Originally, the freight and baggage sections were separated by a breezeway which must have been filled in during the early history of the building because the decorative brick which characterizes the rest of the structure was used in the enclosure. The mortar is a lighter red color than the rest of the building, which emphasizes this enclosure. Several of the original batten freight doors and paneled entry doors on this elevation remain.

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

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The southern (rear) elevation is two bays wide with a freight door in both bays. This elevation retains one of its original batten doors. A wooden loading dock occurs across this elevation.

The west elevation retains the same divisions as the east elevation. However, the freight bays display wooden loading docks and transom areas which are flanked by smaller casement windows in the same sash arrangement as the rest of the building. Due to the sloping of the site, the depot building is set on a raised poured concrete foundation, which is most visible on this elevation.

A brick paved platform wraps around the building and abruptly ends at the loading dock area on the west elevation. This platform continued around the north and east elevations and continues down the tracks in a southward direction for approximately seventy yards. This entire platform area is included in the boundaries of the nomination.

The interior of the building retains its historic room arrangement. The lower level of the two-story building retains its segregated waiting room areas. These rooms retain their decorative floor tiles but have suffered paneling and lowered ceilings. The baggage room is accessed from the waiting room closer to the tracks. A large metal cage is located in the baggage area. One bathroom is located off the waiting room closer to Natchez Street. Another bathroom is located in the baggage area. Access to the upper level is through a simple unadorned staircase, the entrance of which is located on the outside of the building. The offices are arranged around a central hallway and retain many of their historic features including ceiling height, chair rail, baseboards and plaster walls.

Two other Missouri-Pacific Railroad depots which are currently listed in the National Register include the Beebe Depot in White County (NR 1979), and the Earle Depot in Crittenden County (NR 1986). Both of these depots are small, one-story, brick depots which were used as combination passenger and freight facilities. The Beebe Depot, built in 1910, displays architectural detailing similar to the Helena depot including large overhanging eaves supported by large knee braces, and an overall stylistic bent toward the Craftsman period. The Earle Depot, built in 1922, displays subtle Craftsman and Classical Revival influences. The Helena depot is larger and is more finely detailed than these smaller buildings because of its broader range of functions. Unlike these buildings, the Helena depot is oriented toward the downtown area and not the railroad tracks.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates c. 1915 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY

Constructed c. 1915, the Missouri-Pacific Depot in Helena is one of Arkansas' finest examples of the architecture which characterized that company's construction in the early days of the twentieth century. Of Craftsman design with Classical Revival influences, the depot was built on the site of an old Arkansas Midland Railway Company depot, and is the city's best representative of the railroad industry which once rivaled river traffic to make Helena one of Arkansas' transportation centers.

ELABORATION

The city of Helena (population 9,000) has always been known as Arkansas' only port on the Mississippi River. Located fifty miles south of Memphis, the town grew before the Civil War as a shipping outlet for the products of the rich alluvial farms of Arkansas' delta. During the 1870's the lumber industry discovered the vast pine forests of southern Arkansas, and railroad lines began laying miles of track to facilitate the movement of raw and milled lumber. With its reputation as a transportation center already established, Helena became the location for as many as five railroad lines by the turn of the century, providing an alternative route for rail traffic by bypassing Memphis and its high transfer fees.

The Arkansas Midland depot at that time occupied the site of the present Mo-Pac structure. In 1901 Arkansas Midland was purchased by railroad baron Jay Gould and became part of his St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern line. The latter company was eventually merged with Gould's other holdings to form the Missouri-Pacific.

During the course of the transfers of ownership, the original depot was enlarged and remodeled, but 1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps show plans for a new structure to be located a few yards north of the original building, and 1918 maps show the depot completed in its present form and owned by Missouri-Pacific. The Helena depot boasts a two-story facade, with the upper level being used for offices and administrative purposes, a reflection of Helena's importance to the Missouri-Pacific line and the company's importance to the city. The hipped roof and wide eaves which distinguished Mo-Pac architecture of the period are very much in evidence. The building is virtually unaltered, and is one of Arkansas' best remaining examples of popular-design railroad architecture.

A once booming transportation center, Helena is now suffering economically as a result of the agricultural depression and competition from Arkansas' fast-growing trucking industry. The Missouri-Pacific depot was sold to the Union Pacific railroad in 1985. It is now boarded up and the track next to it is being removed. Although buildings from other railroad companies remain from Helena's heyday, none is as intact or as architecturally outstanding a reminder of the rail industry which once flourished there.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- City Directories, Helena, Arkansas, 1900, 1909, 1917, 1923/24.
McCool, B. Baren. UNION, REACTION AND RIOT, A BIOGRAPHY OF A RURAL RACE RIOT.
Memphis State University: Memphis, 1970.
Porter, Jesse. "By Steam and Rail to Helena", HELENA, THE RIDGE, THE RIVER, THE ROMANCE.
Little Rock, 1978.
Porter, Rusty. "Walden Galleries Formerly Depot", HELENA-WEST HELENA ARKANSAS WORL.
April 26, 1981.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Helena

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	7	2	1	6	1	0	3	8	2	2	4	7	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property associated with the Helena Depot is a triangular-shaped piece of land bounded on the north by Missouri Street, on the east by traintrack and levee, and on the west by Natchez Street. This is all the property historically associated with the Helena Depot.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robin K. Bodo, Preservation Consultant, edited by AHPP staff

organization for Main Street Helena

date August 1986

street & number 276 N. Garland

telephone (901) 278-3102

city or town Memphis

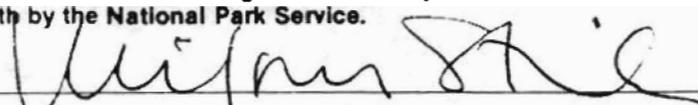
state Tennessee

12. 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 State Historic Preservation Officer

date April 30, 1987

For NPS use only

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

date

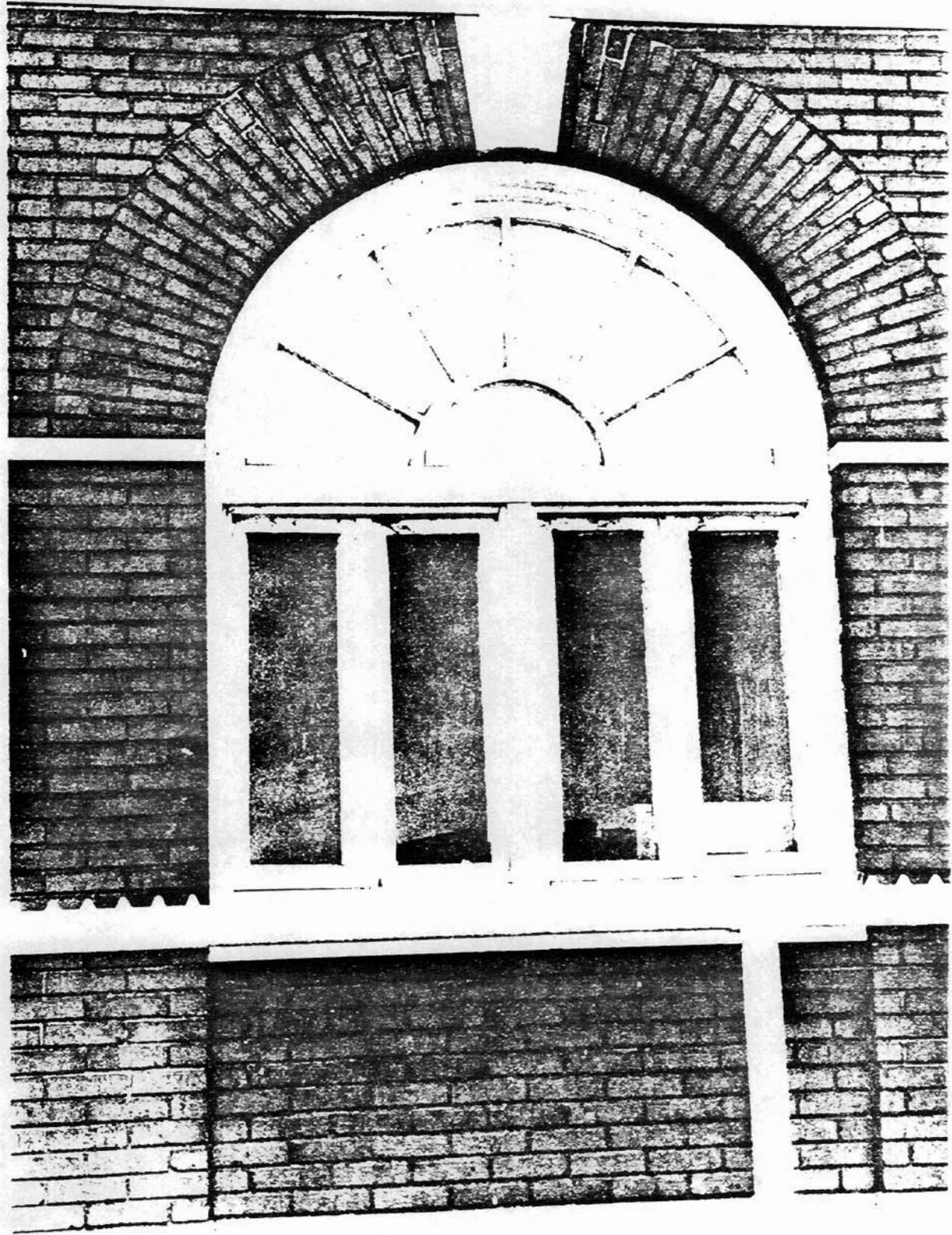
Keeper of the National Register

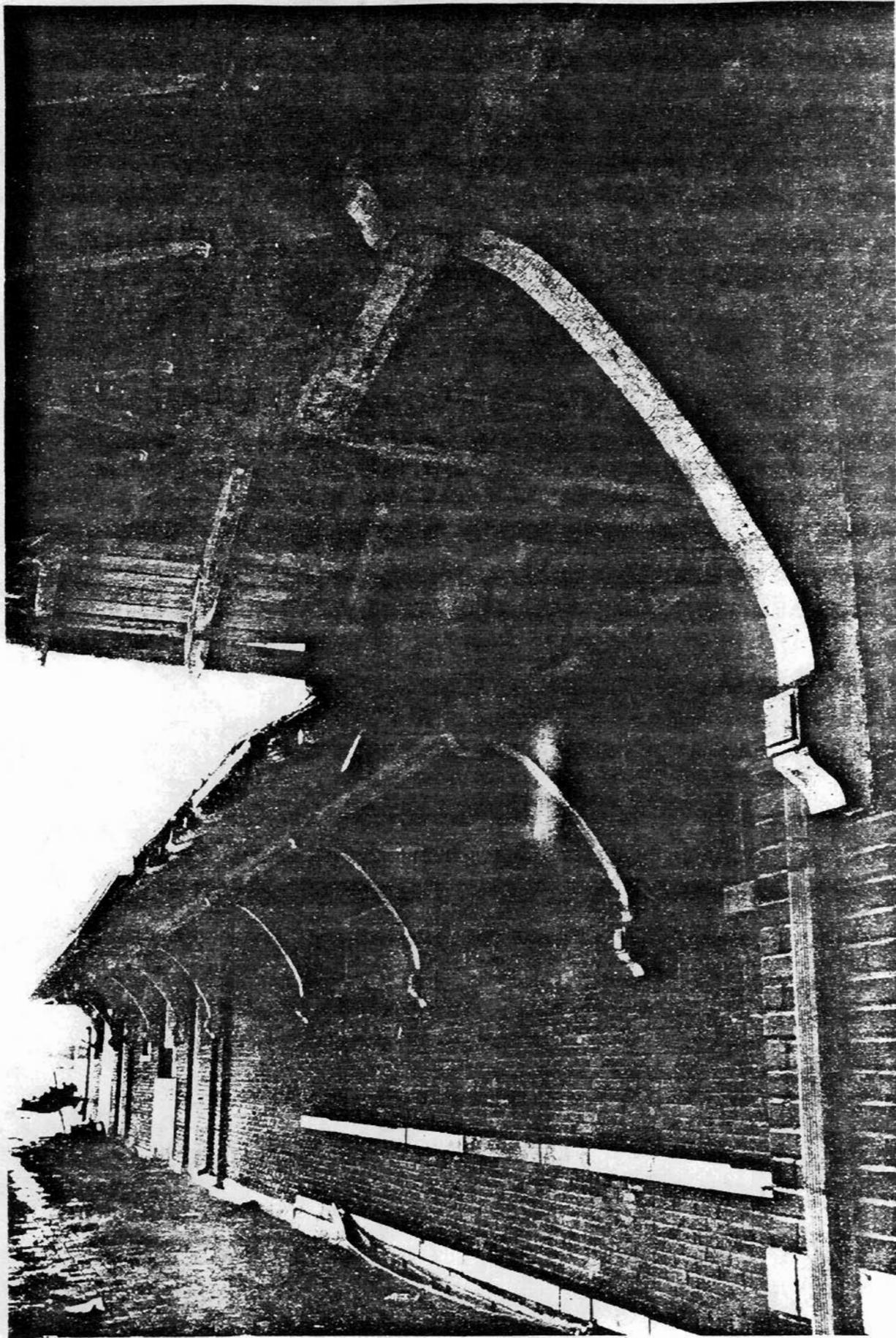
Attest:

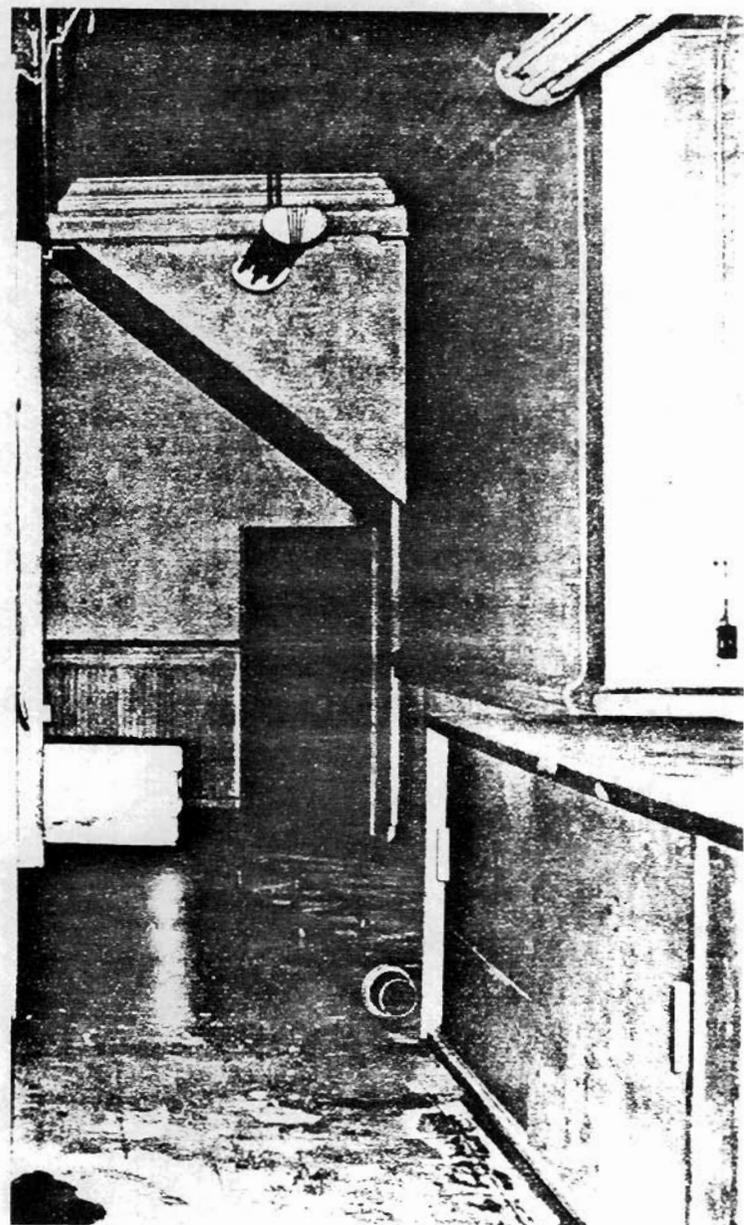
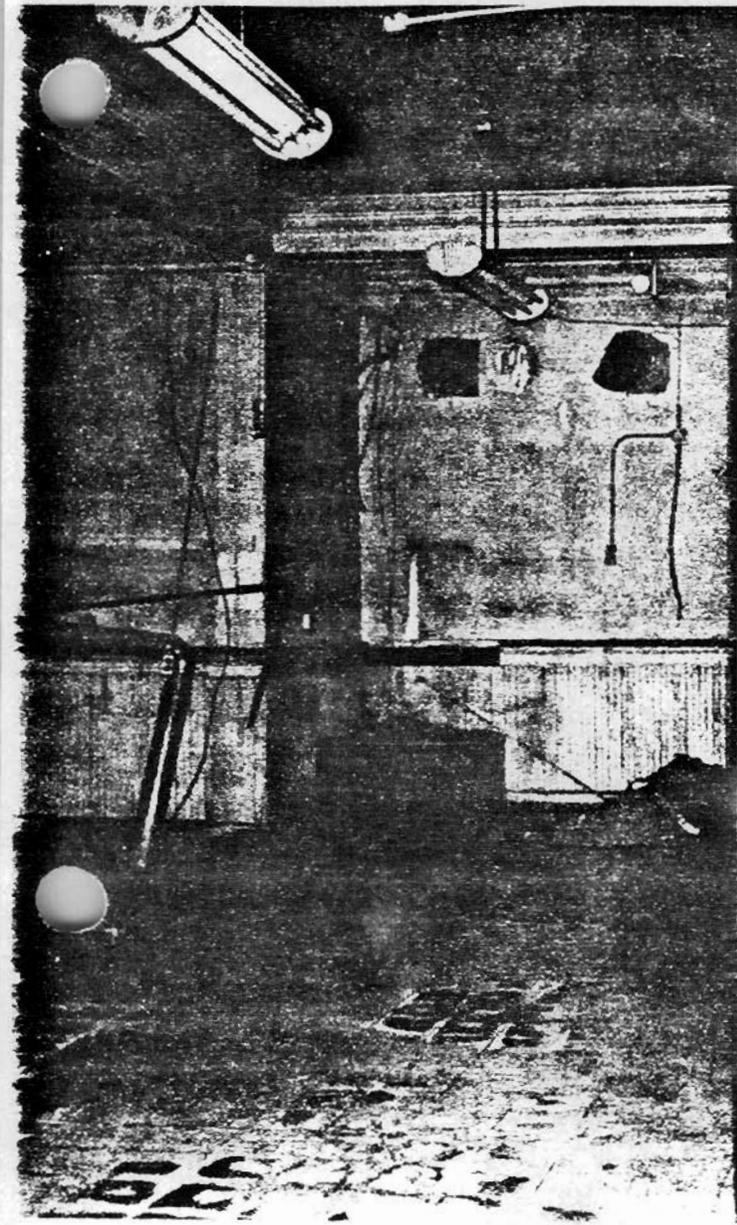
date

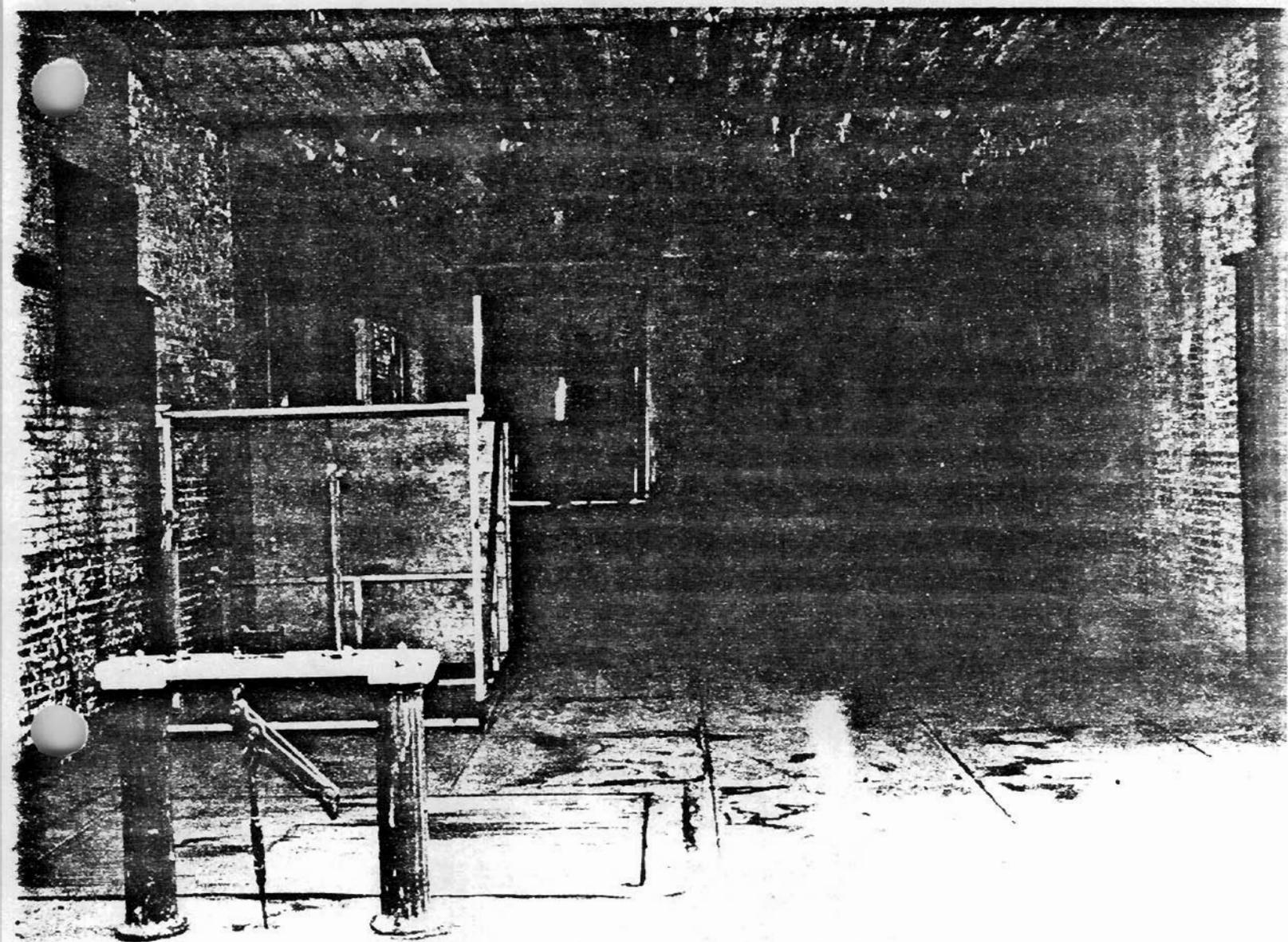


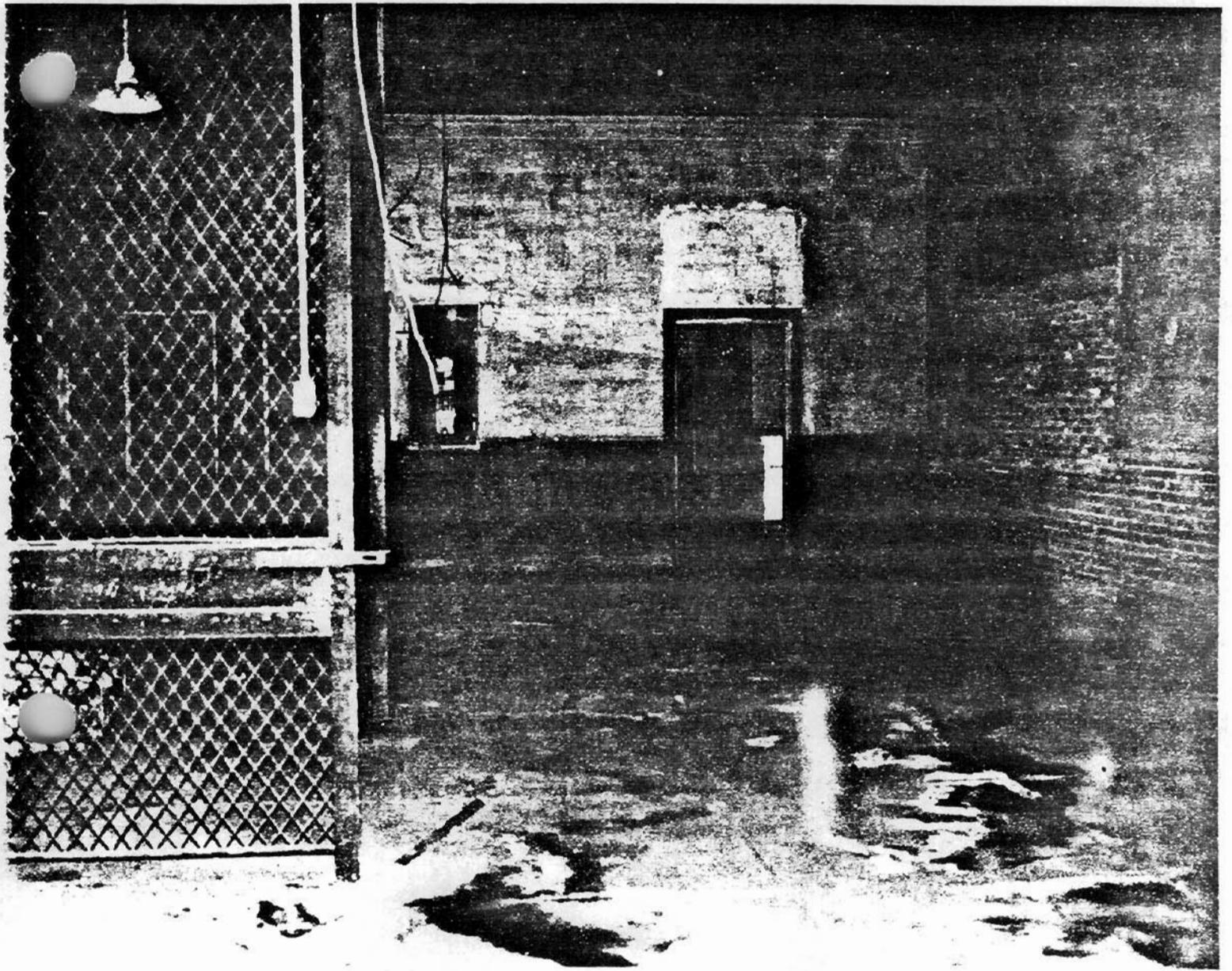




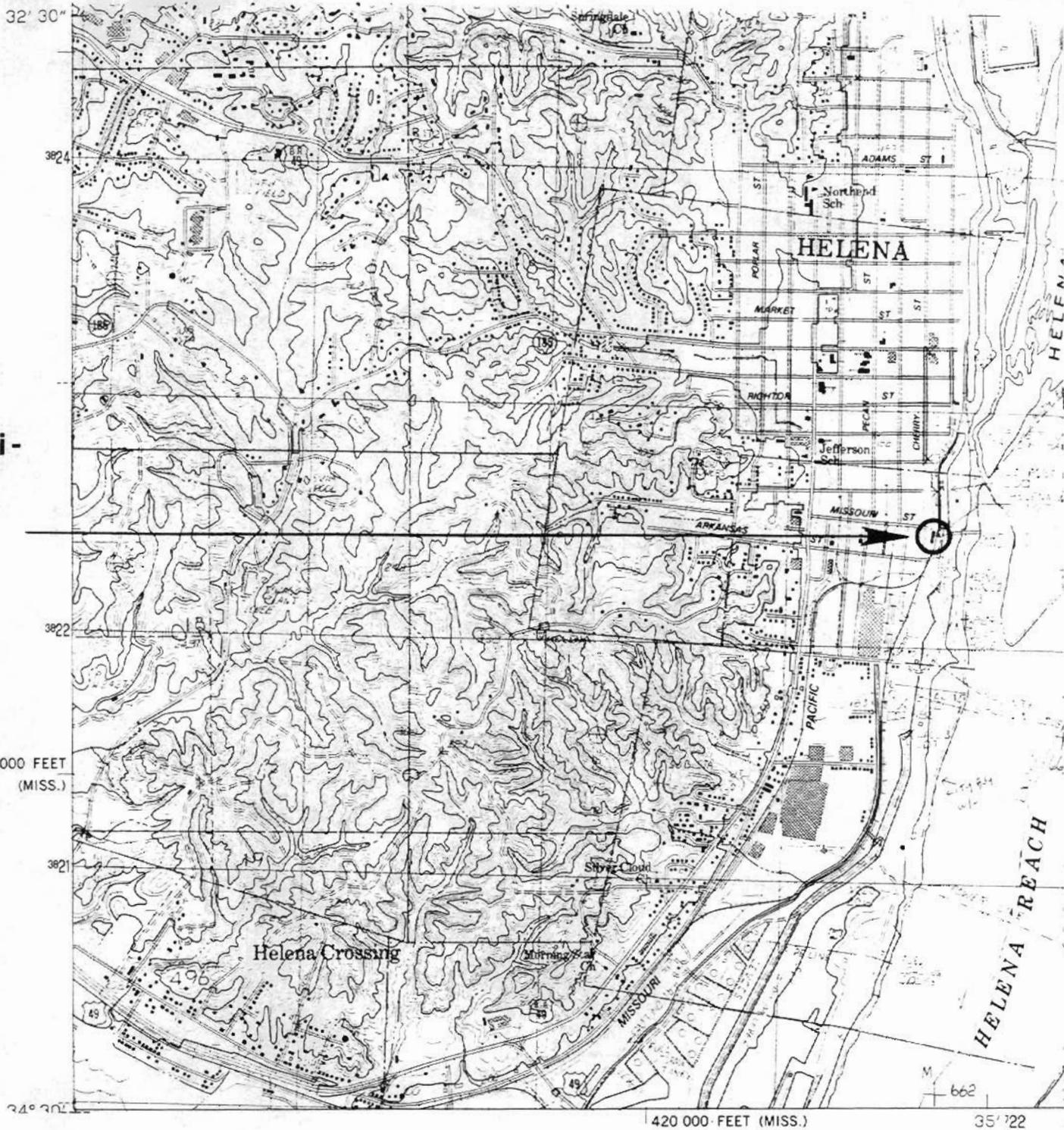








**Missouri-Pacific
(Helena)
Depot**

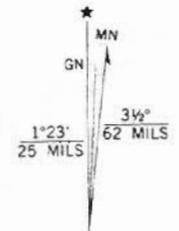


1 460 000 FEET
(MISS.)

420 000 FEET (MISS.) 35' 22

Missouri-Pacific Depot
Helena, Phillips County
Quadrangle name: Helena, Arkansas-Mississippi
Scale: 1:24000
UTM Reference: 15/721610/3822470

(FRIAT)



UTM GRID AND 1982 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

move the projection lines 9 meters south and 9 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map
Gray tint indicates area in which selected buildings are shown