

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 Pike County Courthouse

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Courthouse Square

N/A not for publication

city, town Murfreesboro

N/A vicinity of

state Arkansas

code 05

county Pike

code 109

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Pike County

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town Murfreesboro

N/A vicinity of

state Arkansas

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Clerks Office

street & number Pike County Courthouse

city, town Murfreesboro

state Arkansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Survey of Pike County has this property been determined eligible? yes no N/A

date 1972 federal state county local

depository for survey records Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

city, town Little Rock

state Arkansas

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY

Located at the site of three former courthouses and encircled by the Murfreesboro business district, the Pike County Courthouse is the area's most impressive example of the Art Deco Style. Designed by the prominent architectural firm of Witt, Siebert and Halsey of Texarkana, the three-story building features the clean modernistic lines of the Art Deco Style. The present structure has been the center of political activity and community affairs since its completion in 1932 and still functions as a center of service to county citizens. A simple structure, yet striking in its style and design, the Pike County Courthouse is the only example of the Art Deco Style in the area and architecturally is one of the most significant building in Murfreesboro.

ELABORATION

Dominating the downtown area, the Pike County Courthouse rises above the surrounding buildings as Murfreesboro's most impressive structure. The three-story symmetrical brick and limestone structure faces north and consists of a cross plan with wings that project at four angles. The north elevation possesses a full-storied entrance projection within which a limestone frontispiece surrounds the third and second floor double windows and the replacement doors of the main entryway.

The first and second floors are separated by a limestone band embellished with a greek key and shield design above the entryway. Pilasters rise from the stone band on all corners of the structure and are capped with limestone blocks. Windows, originally six-over-six double-hung sash, were replaced with one-over-one ionized aluminum double-hung sash windows. A window lies between all corner pilasters at each story. East and west elevations possess two bays apiece separated by a pilaster placed off-center on each wall.

The east and west sides of the structure's rear section contain two windows in the one bay at every story. The south elevation is divided by pilasters into four bays with each bay possessing a window on each floor. Square towers lie at the inner southeast and southwest corners of the building and are capped with limestone blocks.

A limestone parapet tops the roof, which gently rises to a point above the full-storied entrance projection. The point is embellished with an inverted palmette and the parapet possesses a band consisting of alternate ovals and double-pointed arrows.

The interior consists of three floors with administrative offices on the first floor, a courtroom and judges chamber on the second floor, and what was once the county jail with two cells on the third floor. A new jail was constructed at a different location and the old one is no longer in use.

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Continuation sheet

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The main double-door entryway provides access to a circular foyer flanked by two curved staircases. Behind the foyer on the left and right two interior hallways lead to administrative offices. At the rear of the first floor a third stairway leads to a judge's chamber, which lies behind the courtroom.

The paired staircases, lined with vertical siding and chair rail molding, lead to a small vestibule and courtroom on the second floor. The courtroom is entered through double doors with five horizontal panels. The ceilings, once two stories in height to accommodate a balcony, are now suspended. Paneled-wood wainscot clads the walls and original wooden seats remain in the courtroom. Original nickel-plated and smoked glass light fixtures are representations of the phoenix.

Two jail cells on the third floor are accessible only by a stair on the east side of the courtroom.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		

Specific dates 1931-1932 **Builder/Architect** Witt, Seibert and Halsey

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY

Located on the Murfreesboro court square, the Pike County Courthouse was constructed in 1932 with funds obtained through a bond issue of fifty-thousand dollars. Employing the finest architects, the structure was built upon the site of three former courthouses. The town's business district grew to surround this site where Pike County's political and governmental activity took place. Due to its role in community planning, politics, and government and as the only Art Deco Style structure in the area the Pike County Courthouse is an important representative of the history of Pike County.

ELABORATION

Built in 1932 at a cost of forty-five thousand six-hundred dollars, the Pike County Courthouse is the fourth structure to serve the area at the county government level.

Pike County was created by an act of the State Legislature in 1833 with the temporary county seat fixed at the home of Pascal C. Sorrells in the town of Zebulon. At a location near where the present structure stands the town built a log courthouse when the town changed its name to Murfreesboro in 1836. In the spring of 1855 the log structure burned, along with all county records to that date. The next courthouse, built in 1856 by contractors Moses and Jackson Brock, was a two-story frame building surmounted by a cupola. In 1895 the frame structure burned along with all records. The second courthouse was replaced by a two-story brick building constructed in 1897 and served the county until it was razed in 1932 to make way for the present structure.

Construction of the Art Deco building was funded through a fifty-thousand dollar bond issue. After its passage the architectural firm of Witt, Siebert and Halsey of Texarkana, Arkansas was employed to draw plans. In the October 23, 1931 issue of the "Pike County Courier" it was reported that a bid offered by contractors May and Sharp had been accepted and the building reached completion in March of 1932.

Art Deco-inspired courthouses were built throughout the 1930's in Arkansas. An Art Deco Courthouse much like the Pike County Courthouse stands in the town of DeQueen in Sevier County. Excepting later additions to the Sevier County Courthouse the floor plan is the same as the courthouse in Murfreesboro.

Due to the Pike County Courthouse's role in county government, its historic location and its distinctive Art Deco Style, the Pike County Courthouse is an important representative of Pike County's heritage.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Pike County Courier, October 23, 1931, p. 1
Mr. Hastings Boyd, born July 19, 1910 in Murfreesboro where he now lives.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property One acre

Quadrangle name Murfreesboro

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	5	4	3	6	3	4	0	3	7	6	9	0	1	5	1	5
Zone				Easting				Northing								

B

Zone				Easting				Northing								

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David James A. Spann, Economic Development Specialist, edited by AHPP staff

organization West Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc.

date September 9, 1986

street & number P. O. Box 1558

telephone (501) 624-1036

city or town Hot Springs

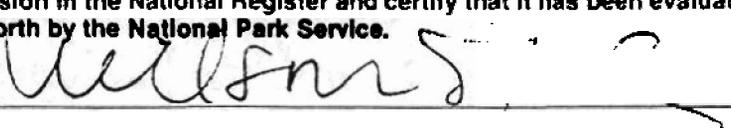
state Arkansas

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 9-12-86

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

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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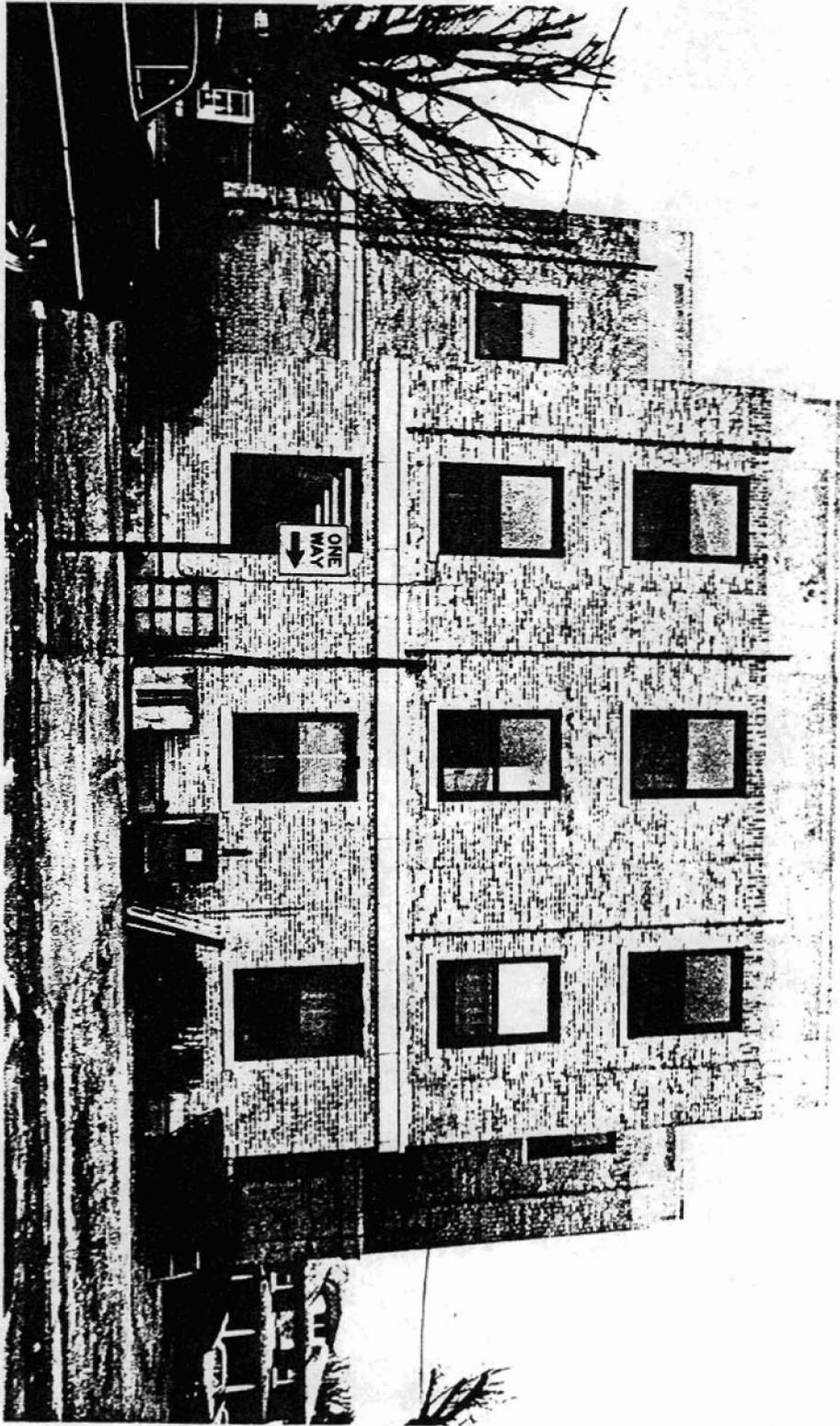
Continuation sheet

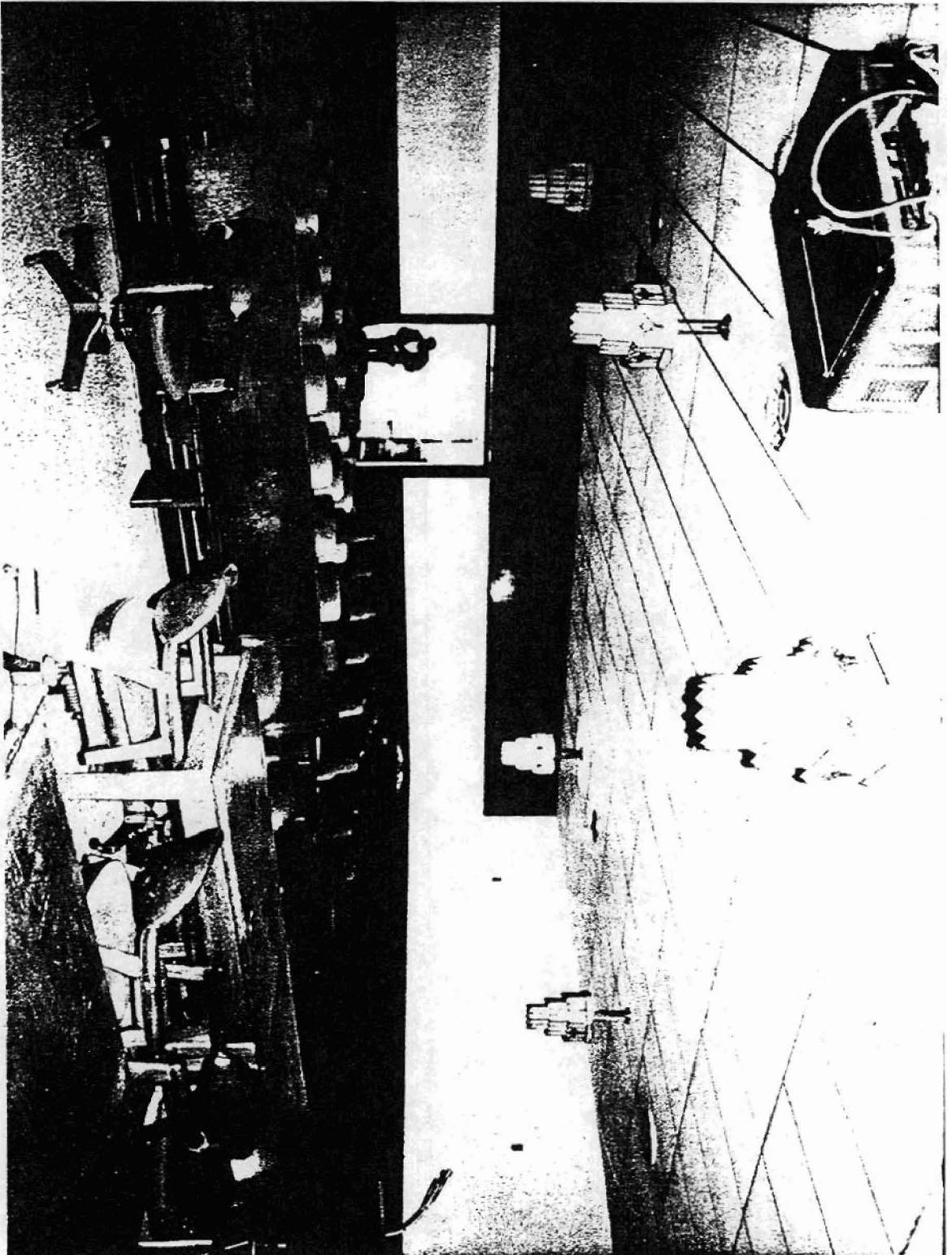
Item number 10

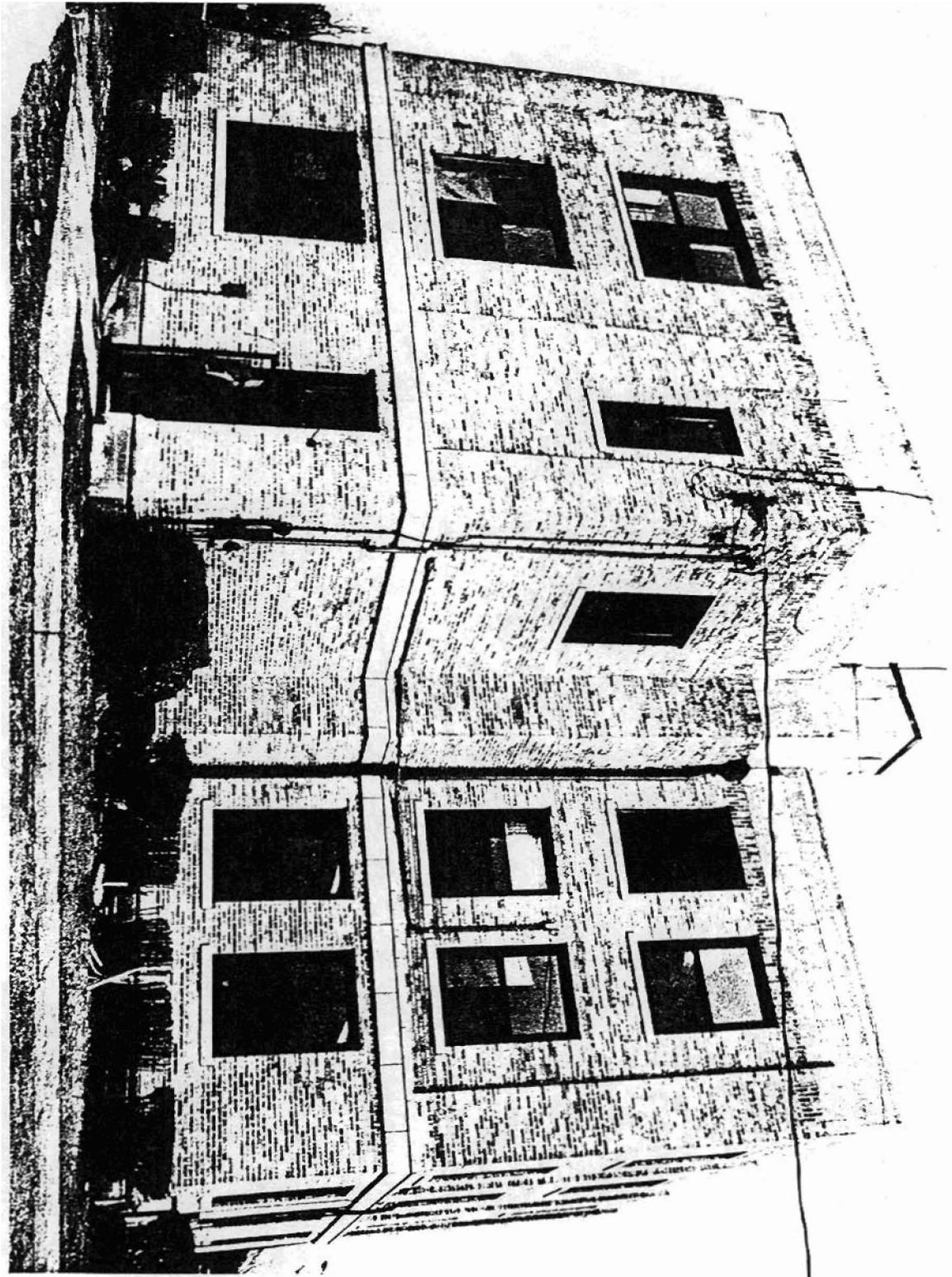
Page 1

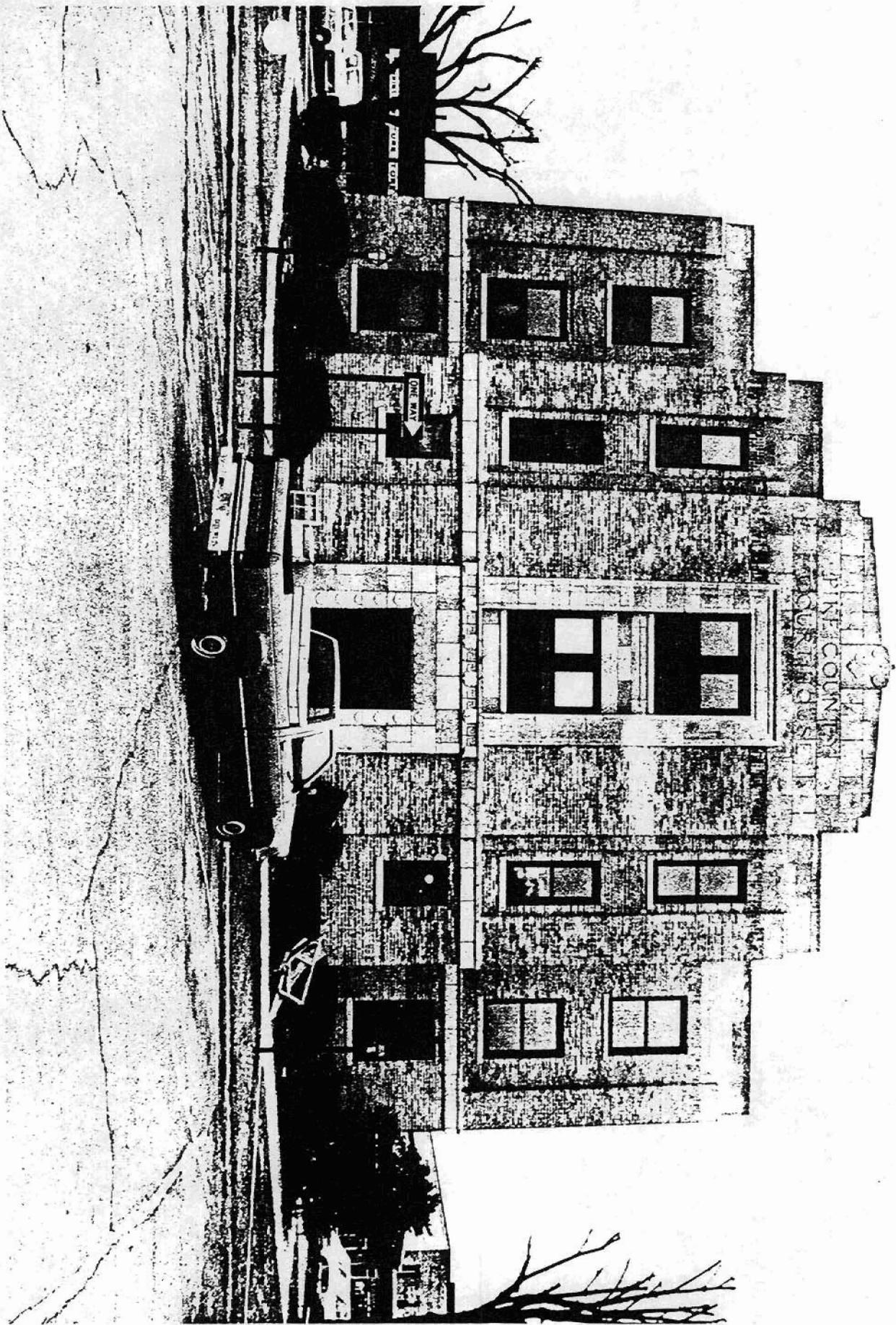
Verbal Boundary Description-

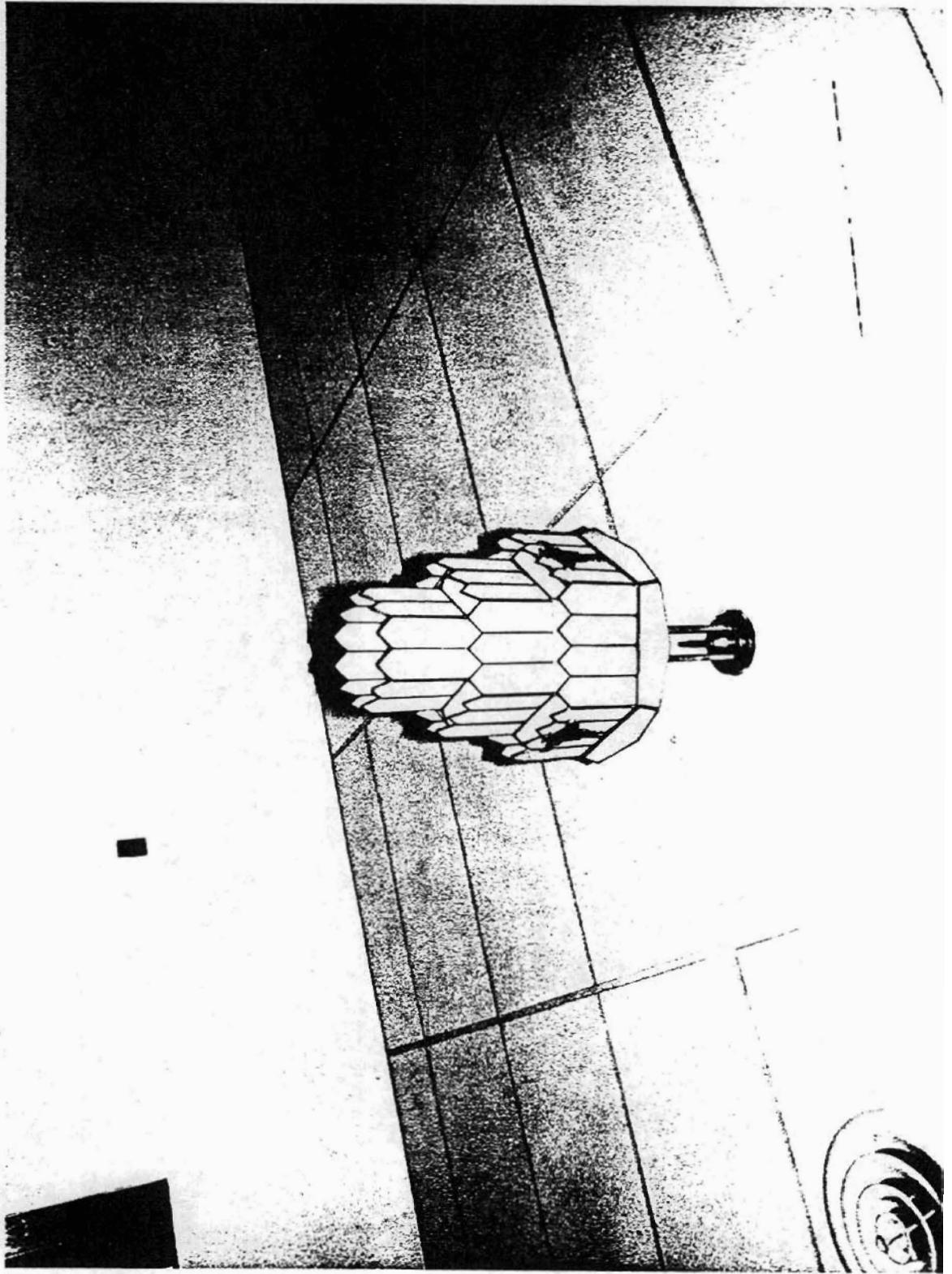
The property is located on the Courthouse Square in Murfreesboro. Beginning at the northwest corner of the property at the corner of West Courthouse Square Street and North Courthouse Square, proceed east along North Courthouse Square Street to East Courthouse Square Street. Then proceed south along that street to South Courthouse Square Street. Then proceed west along that street to West Courthouse Square Street. Then proceed to the point of origin.











**Pike County
Courthouse**

Pike County Courthouse
Murfreesboro, Pike Co.

UTM Reference:

A 15 436340 3769055

Murfreesboro, Arkansas Quadrangle

1:24000