

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Conway Commercial Historic District
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by Main Street on the south, Harkrider Street and Spencer Street on the east, just south of Mill Street to the north, and Locust Street on the west. not for publication
city or town Conway vicinity
state Arkansas code AR County Faulkner code 045 zip code 72032

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets
does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title 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 for additional
comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- 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:)

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
68	56	buildings
	3 (park/vacant lots)	sites
2	2	structures
		objects
70	61	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

2

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business, professional, financial institution, specialty store, department store, restaurant, warehouse

SOCIAL/meeting hall

GOVERNMENT/fire station, post office

EDUCATION/college

RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater

AGRICULTURE/processing, storage

INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility, industrial storage

HEALTH CARE/medical office

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling, hotel

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business, professional, financial institution, specialty store, restaurant

GOVERNMENT/city hall, government office

DOMESTIC/single dwelling, multiple dwelling

RELIGION/religious facility

RECREATION AND CULTURE/music facility, outdoor recreation

LANDSCAPE/parking lot, park, garden

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:
Italianate, Classical Revival, Late Gothic Revival,
Mediterranean Revival

MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style

OTHER: Modern

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE, BRICK, STEEL

walls STUCCO, STONE, BRICK, SYNTHETIC, METAL,
GRANITE, CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT, METAL, TERRA COTTA

other

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property
for National Register listing.)

A Property is associated with events that have
made
a significant contribution to the broad patterns
of
our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of
persons
significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive
characteristics
of a type, period, or method of construction or
represents the work of a master, or possesses
high artistic values, or represents a significant
and
distinguishable entity whose components lack
individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield,
information important in prehistory or
history.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1879-1960

Name of Property

County and State

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B.** removed from its original location.
- C.** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder

George W. Donaghey, Firestoni & Adams, Sanders & Ginocchio, Thompson & Harding, W. Homer Stewart, Wittenberg & Delony, F.U. Harton

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency – Arkansas State Library and Archives
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University-University of Central Arkansas Archives
- Other

Name of repository:

#

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Conway Commercial Historic
District
Name of Property

Faulkner County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Approximately 33.89 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>551298</u> Easting	<u>3883304</u> Northing	3	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>551260</u> Easting	<u>3883423</u> Northing
2	<u>15</u>	<u>551287</u>	<u>3883347</u>	4	<u>15</u>	<u>551032</u>	<u>3883427</u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Angie Clifton/ Architectural Historian, Edited by Ralph S. Wilcox, NR & Survey Coord.
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date April 27, 2010
street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street telephone (501) 324-9787
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____
town _____ code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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SUMMARY

The Conway Commercial Historic District has remained a thriving commercial center for Conway, Arkansas. Conway is the county seat for Faulkner County, located in the southwest section of the county and in the central part of the state within the Fourche Mountain subdivision of the Ouachita Mountains. Two buildings within the district have been previously listed on the NRHP. The ca. 1925 Frauenthal & Schwarz Building (NR listed 10-23-92) is located at 801 Front Street at the south end of the district. The 1918 Farmers State Bank Building (NR listed 12-22-82) is located at the northwest corner of Front and North Streets in the north-central section of the district. The district encompasses 19 full and 4 partial blocks. Within the district boundaries, there are 130 buildings, one park, 2 vacant lots, and 4 ancillary structures. Of the buildings within the district, 54.1% (72 total including the two previously NRHP listed buildings) are contributing elements. These buildings date to the district's period of significance and maintain a high level of integrity. The other 60 buildings and the park account for 45.9% of the district and are non-contributing. These buildings were designated noncontributing due to alterations compromising their integrity or being outside the district's period of significance.

The period of significance is broad because development in Conway happened in four phases. The buildings in this district represent each of these periods, which cover the years of 1879-1960. In addition, all buildings constructed after 1960 are listed as non-contributing buildings within the district. There are ten buildings and a public park (15%) within the district built after 1960. The Conway Commercial Historic District's buildings represent commercial architecture from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

ELABORATION

Conway was named the county seat of Faulkner County in 1873 when the county was formed by the Arkansas Legislature. Conway is located approximately 45 miles north of Little Rock to the west of Cadron Creek. Asa P. Robinson platted Conway Station around the railroad depot and began selling lots in 1871. The streets within the first few original blocks of Conway are parallel (northwest-southeast) or perpendicular (northeast-southwest) to the railroad (see Figure 1 in Historic Photos). The area that now encompasses the city of Conway was part of the 640 acres given to Asa Robinson for his service as an engineer for the railroad. This is the same area that the proposed historic district is located. The town began to grow in the late 1870s after the first courthouse was erected in 1877. The original buildings were frame construction and in 1878 a fire destroyed most of Conway's commercial center. None of the frame buildings from that time survived. The first brick building was built in 1879 by Max Frauenthal. The 1879 Max Frauenthal Building (FA0645, contributing) at 904 Front Street is the only extant section of this building. The two-story building with a chamfered entrance was located at the corner of Front and Oak streets until part of it was replaced with the ca. 1960 McNutt Building (FA1075, non-contributing). Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from 1886, 1897, 1904, 1909, 1913, 1919, 1926, 1931, and 1931-1948 gave a clear picture of the development of the town and its buildings. The maps reveal that the town's development began along Front Street between Oak and North streets with some development along Railroad Avenue (now Parkway) and Front Street between Oak and Main streets.

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The first phase of construction discussed is between 1879 and 1900. This period reflects the years that Conway was establishing itself as a cotton market and commercial center for the county. The second period of construction includes buildings built between 1901 and 1920 and was a time of continued growth. The third period of development from 1921 to 1940 still had growth and prosperity, even with the economic hardships that arose from the Great Depression of 1929. The last phase of development was from 1941 to 1960 and represented in-fill in downtown Conway, as well as the growth of industry.

1879-1900

The architecture of downtown Conway in the first period of its development can be described as standard late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial architecture. These brick buildings vary between one and two stories in height and feature rectangular plans, and some of these buildings contain an Italianate style influence. The buildings from this time period are primarily located along Front Street with the exception of two buildings that are located on Oak Street.

The oldest remaining building in the district and first brick building in the town is the 1879 Max Frauenthal Building (FA0645, contributing) at 904 Front Street. It is a two-story building with Italianate influence that features a deep trim band with large eave brackets below at the cornice line and segmental arched paired windows at the second floor. The Sanborn maps show it originally being a drug store, but it was listed as the Main Café in the 1930 City Directory. The 1890 Bank of Conway Building (FA0647, non-contributing) at 908 Front Street was the first bank in Conway. The building was originally a Gothic Revival structure with a cut stone façade, arched windows, arched stone entrance, and a battlement at the north end, but now has ca. 1985 replacement brick, windows, and doors on the front façade. The Bank of Conway was built by George W. Donaghey, later Governor of Arkansas, and established by W.W. Martin, Jo Frauenthal, S.G. Smith, J.H. Stubbs, and W.F. Wilson in 1890. The ca. 1890 Cole's Grocery Store Building (FA0648, contributing) at 912 Front Street is an intact example of a late nineteenth century two-story commercial building. The building has brick soldier courses at the cornice line and still has the original one-over-one sash, double-hung windows that has "DOCTOR FERGUSON/DENTIST" painted in one of the windows. The ca. 1900 Clarence Day Food Store (FA1092, non-contributing) at 1012 Front Street represents typical early twentieth century commercial architecture. The 1904, 1909, 1913 Sanborn maps showed it as originally being a general store, and in 1919 it was a moving picture theater. By the 1940s Clarence Day Food Store had opened, which remained in business till the 1970s. Next door to the Clarence Day Food Store is the ca. 1900 City Café Building (FA0658, contributing) at 1014 Front Street. This one-story brick building was originally a general store but became City Cafe by 1930.

None of the early frame constructed hotels have survived from this time period, but the Layman Hotel Buildings still exist on Front Street. The ca. 1900 Layman Hotel was located at both 1017 Front Street (FA0665, contributing) and 1019 Front Street (FA0666, contributing). These two buildings both have storefronts at the street level spaces, and the second floor consisted of rooms for the hotel.

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These buildings later became part of the Commercial Hotel (FA0655-FA0668), which is discussed in the next phase of development. The ca. 1900 Floyd Cummins Furniture Store (South) Building (FA0651A, contributing) at 917-919 Front Street is a two-story, Italianate style brick building that features a deep trim band at the cornice line with four large eave brackets, brick soldier courses, and a central balcony with arched transoms over the door and sidelights. The building was originally a furniture store according to the 1904 Sanborn Map.

Conway saw a huge growth during this phase of development that followed the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad being constructed in 1871. Before 1871 the location of Conway was nothing but wilderness, but by 1900 the town boasted a population of over 2,000. The town had a bank, seven dry goods stores, three hotels, eleven grocery stores, two millineries, two general stores, two lodge halls, three drug stores, three restaurants, two furniture stores, two warehouses, three meat markets, three blacksmiths, three barbers, two hardware stores, a printing company, post office, undertaker, photographer, cobbler, along with several offices, warehouses, and boarding houses. The 23 buildings remaining from this phase of development represent 15.5% of the district. This phase of construction reflects Conway's establishment as a commercial center with an influx of settlers moving to the area for the promise of prosperity and growth.

1901-1920

The buildings from Conway dating from the second period in its construction reflect a time of continued growth and prosperity. The town's population grew, many businesses opened, and residential areas of town were expanded. The buildings during this phase of development consist of one and two story brick buildings from the early twentieth century. Several of these buildings display Gothic Revival, Classic Revival, and Italianate styles. The ca. 1910 Central Meat Market Building (FA1074, contributing) at 1113-1115 Oak Street is a two-story brick building with ceramic glazed brick on the front façade that has Italianate influence with a wide overhanging eave boxed with large eave brackets with a deep trim band that has dentil molding, rectangular windows set into recessed brick panels on the second floor of the front façade, and segmental arched windows with brick hooding on the east elevation. Next door to the Central Meat Market is the ca. 1915 Halter Building (FA0644, contributing) at 1117 Oak Street that was home to Greeson's Drug Store until 1966 with several offices on the second and third floors. This building is extremely similar to the Central Meat Market Building with windows set in recessed brick panels on the second floor and has ceramic glazed brick on the north and west elevations. It has Italianate influence that features arched windows set into recessed brick panels on the third floor and a deep trim band at the cornice line with large eave brackets. The ca. 1910 Goad Brothers Café and Bakery (FA1079, contributing) at 1304 Oak Street is a one-story brick building with Gothic Revival influence. The building features battlements at the top of the parapet on the front façade, the sash on the transoms form lancets, and fairly elaborate brick corbeling between the battlements and transoms. The 1918 Farmers State Bank Building (NR listed 12-22-82) at 1003 Front Street is a Classical Revival Style building designed by architects Thompson and Harding. The front façade has tan brick with four monumental stone Tuscan engaged columns set on high plinths. "Farmers State Bank" and two laurel wreaths are carved into the stone parapet. The ca. 1905 Conway Printing Company Building (FA1083, contributing) at 1316 Oak Street is a typical one-story early twentieth century commercial

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building. The building originally housed the Conway Printing Company, but by 1930 the *Log Cabin Democrat Newspaper* was located in the building. The ca. 1920 Harton Service Station (FA0636, contributing) at 802 Front Street is a brick structure at the corner of Main and Front streets. The front half of the building has a recessed porch supported by two large brick columns on the south elevation and a diagonal storefront at the back of the recessed porch. The building no longer functions as a service station, and the gas pumps are no longer present.

The 46 buildings remaining from this phase of development represent 31% of the district. The surviving buildings from this period housed general stores, feed and seed stores, offices, groceries, a newspaper company, lodge halls, hotels, a bakery, restaurants, barbers, hardware stores, a post office, meat markets, shoe stores, a jewelry store, drug stores, clothing stores, service stations, a theatre, and a cotton seed warehouse. This phase of construction reflects the continued growth of Conway with the establishment of more businesses, colleges, and residential neighborhoods as the population grew to over 4,500 by 1920.

1921-1940

Even with the Great Depression hitting in 1929 and economic hardships, several businesses and industries opened and old ones prospered which provided opportunity for Conway. The ca. 1925 Frauenthal & Schwarz Building (NR listed 10-23-92) at 824 Front Street is a two-story commercial brick building with steel reinforcements created from an existing 1880 building. The Mediterranean style building with Italianate influences has a dark brown upper brick façade decorated with a white-painted cornice that has dentil molding interrupted by six white-painted Italianate brackets. Another impressive building from this period is the Smith Ford Showroom (FA0661, contributing) at 1020 Front Street. The Art Deco influenced two-story building is brick constructed with vertical inset stone that gives the illusion of pillars. It also has a rounded recessed porch with a storefront on the south end of the front façade. Three other auto sales buildings still exist within the district. They include the ca. 1925 Monarch Motor Company, Inc. Buildings (FA1069A, contributing and FA1069B, contributing) at 925 Oak Street and 826 Court Street, and the ca. 1925 Bolls-Ford Auto Sales Building (FA0673, contributing) at 1101 Front Street. Seven other buildings originally functioned as auto repair businesses or service stations within the district from this period.

The ca. 1930 Central Arkansas Funeral Service Building (FA1106, contributing) at 812 Chestnut Street is a one-story standard commercial building with field stone walls and brick quoining at the corners of the building and the windows and door. Other field stone buildings include the ca. 1930 Hair Unlimited Building (FA1104A, non-contributing) and the ca. 1935 Sporty Runner Building (FA1117, contributing). The 1933 Conway Fire Station No. 1 Building (FA0682, contributing) at 1401 Locust was designed by Wittenberg & Delony and built by W. Homer Stewart. The original fire station was located at 927 Locust, but the 1933 Fire Station is a one-story brick structure with two large garage doors and a front entrance on the south end of the front façade.

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The 56 buildings remaining from this phase of development represent 38% of the district. Offices, an ice cream manufacturer, a general merchandise store, barber shops, several auto sales and repair shops, service stations, a lumber company, restaurants, cotton-related businesses, a blacksmith, grocery stores, a dairy company, an ice plant, furniture store, warehouses, and a fire station make up the businesses originally in the buildings constructed during this phase of development. Conway's population reached nearly 6,000 by 1940.

1941-1960

Eleven buildings exist from this period of development within the boundaries of the Conway Commercial Historic District. The buildings include four commercial buildings, a service station, a bank, two auto sales buildings, two office buildings, and an automotive manufacturing building. The 1960 First State Bank Building (FA1076, non-contributing) at 1201 Oak Street now functions as City Hall. This two-story building has an L-shaped Roman brick main section with a steel-framed one-story section with granite paneling and stationary windows. This building represents typical mid-century commercial architecture with modern influences with a flat roof, flat porch roofs, and Roman brick. The ca. 1950 Lock Shop Building (FA1214, non-contributing) at 1015 Van Ronkle Street was designed to fit into a small triangular-shaped lot. The one-story concrete block building has a contemporary-modern feel with its triangular shape and low-pitched gable on hip roof with a flat overhanging eave over the front façade. The 1950 W.H. Reynolds I and II Buildings (FA1215, contributing and FA1216, contributing) at 1021 and 1017 Van Ronkle Street represent contemporary-modern mid-century commercial architecture. They were built together but have a brick partition separating them. They were designed with angled storefronts due to the shape of their lot and feature flagstone on the front façade. The 11 buildings from this period of development represent 7% of the district. By 1960, the city of Conway's population reached nearly 10,000.

CONCLUSION

Conway's commercial center has evolved from its beginning in the 1870s. The town originally had all frame constructed buildings until a fire in 1878 destroyed a sizeable portion of the town. After the fire, more permanent brick structures began to be built in Conway. The city received electricity in 1895, a telephone exchange in 1898, water works in 1909, and a sewer system in 1913. The first fire stations were wooden and built in 1900. Until 1916 Conway was the only municipality in all of Faulkner County, making it the only commercial center in the county at that time. Conway was also where farmers from all over the county came to sell their cotton. Hendrix College (1890) and Central College (1892) helped make Conway an education center for the region. The Arkansas State Normal School (now named University of Central Arkansas) later opened in 1908. The 1920s to the 1940s was a time when the buildings in Conway began to have concrete foundations and more modern building techniques, even with the economic hardships brought by the Great Depression. Due to its rich history and architecture, downtown Conway truly has its own character and charm. Its residents have retained an awareness of their heritage and culture, which has kept Conway's downtown connected to its past.

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INTEGRITY

With 54.1% of the resources contributing to the integrity of Conway Commercial Historic District, it has a good visual connection to its period of significance. The contributing buildings have integrity of location and setting, as well as retaining their original design and materials used during their original construction. Many of the alterations that have occurred for the non-contributing buildings are reversible. The Conway Commercial Historic District remains the main commerce area for the town. Twelve resources, or 9.2% of the resources, within the district are currently vacant. Only 6 of the vacant buildings are non-contributing and none of the buildings have suffered much neglect. Many of the buildings, both contributing and non-contributing, have boarded windows and doors, which mainly account for side elevations and second floor windows. The alterations on the facades of the majority of the buildings in the district occurred between 1950 to present, and many of the alterations were only to the storefronts with the exception of stucco on some buildings. Only two vacant lots exist where early twentieth century buildings once existed.

The lack of alterations of the structures and few numbers of buildings built after 1960 in the Conway Commercial Historic District has tremendously helped retain the architectural integrity and continuity of the district.

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Resource #	Historic Name	Address	C/NC	Map ID
FA1066	Building at 909-911 Oak St	909-911 Oak St	C	1
FA1067	Building at 913 Oak St	913 Oak St	NC	2
FA1068	John Walters Chevrolet Building	915 Oak St	NC	3
FA1069	Monarch Motor Co. Bldg	925 Oak St/826 Court St	C	4
FA1070	City Meat Market Building	1003-1007 Oak St	NC	5
FA0710	Earl Rogers Building	1002 Oak St	C	6
FA0709	Thessing Grocery Store Building	1004 Oak St	C	7
FA0715	Earl Rogers II Building	Lot Bounded by Oak, Court and Van Ronkle Streets	NC	8
FA0708	Strack's Grocery Bldge	1008 Oak St	C	9
FA0707	Chicago Bargain Store Building	1010 Oak St	C	10
FA0714	Moll Café Building	1009-1011 Oak St	C	11
FA0707 B	Blue Ribbon Shoe Store II Building	1012-1014 Oak St	C	12
FA0707 C	Oak St Drug Store Building	1016 Oak St.	C	13
FA0707D	Building at 1018 Oak St	1018 Oak St	C	14
FA0713	Hambuchen Appliance II Building	1015 Oak St	NC	15

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Resource #	Historic Name	Address	C/NC	Map ID
FA0707E	Matchett's Barber Shop Building	1020 Oak St	C	16
FA0712	Burchfield Building	1021 Oak St	C	17
FA0706	Grummer Hardware Company	1022 Oak St	C	18
FA0711	LT Lasley & Sons General Merchandise Building	1021-1023 Oak St	C	19
FA1071	EM Jeans Building	1100 Oak St	NC	20
FA0719	The Grand Theatre	1101-1103 Oak St & 823 Chestnut	C	21
FA1072	Patton's Self Service Grocers Building	1105- 1107 Oak St.	C	22
FA0701	J.C. Penney Company Building	1109 Oak St	C	23
FA0703	Westmoreland & Sons Furniture and Hardware Building	1110-1112 Oak St	C	24
FA1073	Camp Cash Store Building	1114 Oak St	C	25
FA702	WA Camp & Sons Dry Goods Store	1116 Oak St	C	26
FA1074	Central Meat Market Building	1113-1115 Oak St	C	27
FA1075	McNutt Building	1120-1124 Oak St	NC	28
FA0644	Halter Building	1117 Oak St.	C	29

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Resource #	Historic Name	Address	C/NC	Map ID
FA1076	First State Bank	1201 Oak St	NC	30
FA1077	First State Bank Building II	1208 Oak St	NC	31
FA1078	Building at 1302 Oak St	1302 Oak St	NC	32
FA1079	Goad Brothers Café and Bakery	1304 Oak St	C	33
FA1080	Jones Book Store	1308 Oak St	C	34
FA1081	Westmoreland & Sons Furniture Annex Building	1310 Oak St	C	35
FA1082	Faulkner County Abstract Co. Building	1312 Oak St	NC	36
FA1083	Conway Printing Co	1316 Oak St	C	37
FA1084	Ferguson Building	1318 Oak St	NC	38
FA1085	Building at 1320 Oak St	1320 Oak St	C	39
FA1086	Building at 1319-1321 Oak St	1319-1321 Oak St	C	40
FA0683	Newberry Ice & Produce Co. building	1325 Oak St	NC	41
FA1088	Martin Walters Service Station	900 Locust	C	42
FA0682	Conway Fire Station #1 Building	1401 Locust	C	43
FA0700	Donaghey Building	827-831 Parkway St	C	44

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Resource #	Historic Name	Address	C/NC	Map ID
FA699	Woodmen of the World Hall	825-827 Parkway	C	45
FA0698	Hotel Conway	821-823 Parkway St	C	46
FA0697	White Ice Cream Company	819 Parkway St	NC	47
FA0696	Farris Agency Building	817 Parkway St	C	48
FA0695	Harmon Transfer Co. Building	815 Parkway St	C	49
FA0694	Building at 813 Parkway St	813 Parkway	NC	50
FA0693	Robert Rabb Accounting Building	811 Parkway	C	51
FA0692	Conway News II Building	809 Parkway	C	52
FA0691	Conway Cleaning Company Building	807 Parkway	C	53
FA0690	City Plumbing Company Building	801-805 Parkway	NC	54
FA1089	Conway Traffic Division Building	800 Parkway St/1234 Main St	NC	55
FA1090	Conway District Court Building	810 Parkway	NC	56
FA0636	Harton Service Station Building	802 Front	C	57
FA0637	Palace Café building	804 Front	NC	58

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Resource #	Historic Name	Address	C/NC	Map ID
FA0638	Sample Shoe Store Building	806 Front St	NC	59
FA0639	BonTon Bakery Building	808 Front	NC	60
FA0640	Cecil's Fabric Building	810 Front	NC	61
FA0641 a,b,c	Simon's Grocery Building	812-816 Front St	NC, NC, NC	62
FA0642	Frauenthal and Schwarz Building	824 Front	L	63
FA0643	Fletcher Smith Jewelry Building	826 Front	NC	64
FA0645	Max Frauenthal Building	904 Front	C	65
FA0646	Durham & Farris Real Estate and Insurance Building	906 Front	C	66
FA0647	Bank of Conway Building	908 Front St	NC	67
FA1091	Hintons Store Building	910 Front St	NC	68
FA0648	Cole's Grocery Building	912 Front St	C	69
FA0649 A and B	Selby's Store Building	914-916 Front St	NC, NC	70
FA0649 C	Bethels Store Building	918-920 Front St	NC	71

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Resource #	Historic Name	Address	C/NC	Map ID
FA0650	Russell & Conway Real Estate & Insurance Building	913-915 Front St	C	72
FA0652	Baker Drug Co. Building	922-924 Front St	C	73
FA0651A	Floyd Cummins Furniture Store Building (South end)	917-919 Front	C	74
FA0651B	Floyd Cummins Furniture Store Building (North end)	921-923 Front St	C	75
FA0654	Central Drug Co. Building	1000-1004 Front St	C	76
FA0655	Barnes Studio Building	1006 Front St	NC	77
FA0656	Court Café Building	1008 Front St	NC	78
Fa0657	Bill Erbacher's Meat Market Building	1010 Front St	NC	79
FA1092	Clarence Day Food Store Building	1012 Front St	NC	80
FA0658	City Café Building	1014 Front St	C	81
FA0661	Smith Ford Showroom	1020 Front St	C	82
FA0653	Farmers State Bank Building	1001 Front St	L	83
FA1093	Phillips-Gwin Shoe Shop Building	1028 Front St	NC	84
FA0662	Conway Bottling Works Building	1030 Front St	C	85

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Resource #	Historic Name	Address	C/NC	Map ID
FA0663	Glen Irby Studio of Dance Building	1032 Front St	C	86
FA0664	People's Store Building	1015 Front St	NC	87
FA0665	Layman Hotel Building (South end of Store Building)	1017 Front St	C	88
FA0666	Layman Hotel Building (North end of Store Building)	1019 Front St	C	89
FA0667	Commercial Hotel (Middle) Building	1021 Front St	NC	90
FA0668	Commercial Hotel (Main) Building	1023-1025 Front St	C	91
FA0669	Mode & Clayton Wholesale Grocery Building	1027 Front St	C	92
FA1094	Parker's Lock & Key Shop Building	1051 Front St	NC	93
FA0670	Covington Roofing Co. Building	1053 Front St	NC	94
FA0671	Hutto's Grocery & Feed Store Building	1061 Front St	C	95
FA0672	Plunkett, Jarrell Grocery Co. Building	1069-1071 Front St	C	96
FA1095	Building at 1081-1089 Front St	1081-1089 Front St	NC	97
FA0673	Bolls-Ford Auto Sales Building	1101 Front St	C	98

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Resource #	Historic Name	Address	C/NC	Map ID
FA1097	Building at 904 Parkway St	904 Parkway St	NC	102
FA1098	Goad Brothers Café and Bakery II	902 Parkway	NC	103
FA1099	Goad Brothers Café and Bakery III	901 Parkway	NC	104
FA1100	Simon Park	NW corner of Main and Front St.	NC	105
FA1101	Central Arkansas Trophy Building	914-918 Chestnut	NC	106
FA1102	Building at 912 Chestnut St	912 Chestnut St	NC	107
FA1103	Grand Theatre Dressing Room Building	829 Chestnut	C	108
FA1104 A& B	Ferrell Properties Building	816-832 Chestnut	NC, NC	109
FA1105	Leo Hamburg Building	814 Chestnut	NC	110
FA1106	Central Arkansas Funeral Service Building	812 Chestnut	C	111
FA1107	Building at 1024 Main St	1024 Main St	NC	112
FA1108	Smith Building	1002 Chestnut St	NC	113

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Resource #	Historic Name	Address	C/NC	Map ID
FA1109	Building at 1014 Main St	1014 Main St	NC	114
FA1110	Farm Bureau Office Building	1110 Main St	NC	115
FA1111	Chamber of Commerce Building	900 Van Ronkle St	NC	116
FA1112 A & B	Conway Real Estate Board Office Building	922-924 Van Ronkle St	C, C	117
FA1113	Savannah Place	1004 Van Ronkle St	NC	118
FA1114	Quattlebaum's Antique Building	1010 Van Ronkle	NC	119
FA1115	Mattie's Cakes & More Building	1012 Van Ronkle	C	120
FA1116	Shoe Repair Building	1014 Van Ronkle	C	121
FA1117	The Sporty Runner Building	1016 Van Ronkle	C	122
FA1212 A, B, C	Brown's Sewing Center Building	1018-1026 Van Ronkle	C, C, C	123
FA1213	Moxie's Hair Salon Building	1006 Markham	NC	124
FA1214	Lock Shop Building	1015 Van Ronkle	NC	125
FA1215	WH Reynolds II Building	1017 Van Ronkle	C	126

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Resource #	Historic Name	Address	C/NC	Map ID
FA1216	WH Reynolds I Building	1021 Van Ronkle	C	127
FA1353	The Cotton Press Building	1090 Spencer St.	NC	135
FA	Building at 914 Van Ronkle	914 Van Ronkle	NC	136

Chart Key:

C = Contributing

NC = Non-Contributing

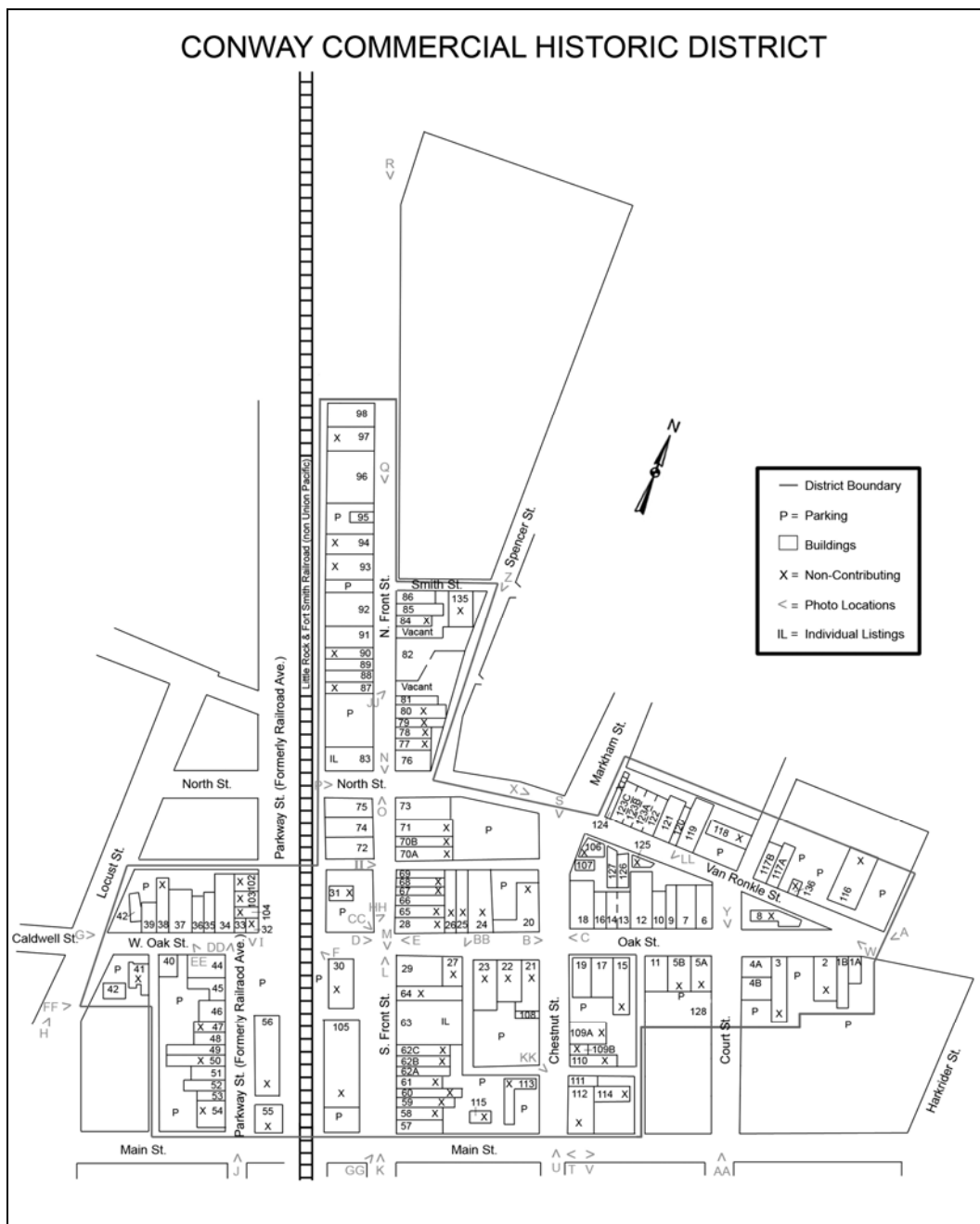
IL = Individual Listing

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SKETCH MAP



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SUMMARY

The Conway Commercial Historic District, located in Conway, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion A** for its association with early development in Conway and **Criterion C** for its variety and quality of nineteenth and twentieth century commercial buildings. The proposed district has been the largest commercial center in Faulkner County since its beginning in the 1870s after the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad was constructed in the area. The district retains a high degree of integrity with a total of 130 resources, 72 (54.1%) of which contribute to the district's period of significance and 60 (45.9%) that do not contribute. Most of the buildings in the district are brick, nineteenth and twentieth century commercial buildings, and some of these buildings display styles such as Italianate, Classic Revival, Late Gothic Revival, Mediterranean Revival, Art Deco, and Modern. Within the district boundaries, only eleven buildings were constructed after the period of significance, and only two vacant lots exist from the loss of original buildings. Overall, the buildings within the district convey a feeling of time and place. The Conway Commercial Historic District exemplifies the growth of the town through its height in the 1950s, and the period of significance spans from 1879-1960.

ELABORATION

Conway is the county seat of Faulkner County, Arkansas. Faulkner County is located just north of the center of the state and bordered by seven counties with Pulaski County directly south of it. Physiographically, the southern two-thirds of the county, which includes Conway in the southwest section, is part of the Fourche Mountain subdivision of the Ouachita Mountains. This subdivision has two anticlinal ridges called Cadron and Bayo Meto that are separated by level, sediment-filled valleys. Lake Conway is located southeast of Conway, with many small creeks and streams running through the area. The Arkansas River meets the mouth of Cadron Creek approximately 6 miles northwest of the western boundary of the district.¹

The only development in the area before the 1870s was an early French trading post, approximately five miles from present-day Conway, called Cadron Settlement. Cadron was the former county seat of Pulaski County for the year 1820, until it was relocated to Little Rock in 1821. The settlement disappeared by the 1850s.²

The history of Conway began with Colonel Asa P. Robinson, who was a native of Connecticut and a Yale graduate. He moved from New York to Little Rock in 1869 to construct the first twenty miles of the St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railroad. Upon his retirement, he was given 640 acres in what is now Conway as partial payment for his services as chief engineer for the St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern

¹ Dolan, Doris B., Hattie Ann Kelso Corrine H. Robinson, eds. *Faulkner County: Its Land and People*. Faulkner County Historical Society. River Road Press: Conway, Arkansas, 1986, pp. 5-6.

² Conway (Faulkner County). Found at <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net>.

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Railroad. He chose an area with an open prairie as the site of Conway Station and platted Conway Station in 1871. Three possibilities for the origin of Conway's name are: from an early political family in Arkansas, from the county for which it was originally located, or the railroad locomotive "Conway." After platting the town in 1871, he deeded land for the depot and the courthouse, and supported education for its residents. He started selling lots in 1871 when the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad was constructed through the area. Although Congress approved funding for the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad Company, construction did not begin on it until after the Civil War.³ The Arkansas Legislature formed Faulkner County from Pulaski and Conway counties in 1873 and named Conway as its county seat. The county was named after Colonel "Sandy" Faulkner. Col. Faulkner created the story of the "Arkansas Traveler," which was a story, painting, and tune that has molded the image of Arkansas since the 1840s.⁴ A reporter from the *Arkansas Gazette* reported, August 9, 1873, that, "The town [Conway] is situated on the outskirts of a beautiful prairie, giving a good breeze, a pleasant view, and excellent pasturage for stock." The town of Conway was officially incorporated in 1875 with Lorenzo Dowe Pearle, a drug store proprietor, as Conway's first mayor.⁵ *The Arkansas Traveler* became the first newspaper in Conway in 1875. George Washington Bruce founded the *Conway Democrat* in 1878, and Able F. Livingston started the *Log Cabin* in 1879. These last two newspapers merged into the *Log Cabin Democrat* in 1901.⁶

Cotton was the basis of Faulkner County's economy in the nineteenth to the late twentieth century. As the only municipality in the county, Conway became the commercial center for farmers throughout the county. Farmers would travel to Conway to sell or gin their crops, and buy supplies and groceries. Several entrepreneurs built cotton gins in Conway in the 1880s. These include: J.M. Shettles and J.D. Townsend's gin on Washington Avenue, John Ingram's Gin on Ingram Street, W.L. "Dude" Whitten and Otis Moore's Gin, Bob Adams' Gin, John Whitten's Gin, and Bob McCullough's Gin (located between Van Ronkle and Merriman streets, on Harrison Street). Conway's population grew as more agricultural and commercial businesses opened.⁷ R.T. Harrison opened the first business in 1871 or 1872, and by the late 1800s almost forty brick commercial buildings existed in Conway. Goodspeed stated that five churches, two public schools, one Catholic school, an opera house, fifty mercantile businesses, a flour and grist mill, two cotton gins, two planning mills, a foundry, furniture manufacturer, broom/barrel factory, a steam dye works, a wagon factory, three hotels, and several mechanic shops existed in Conway in 1889.⁸ The original railroad depots were located at the depot square between Main and Oak streets and Front Street and Railroad Avenue. The passenger depot was located on the east side of the railroad with the freight depot on the west side.

³ Ward, Bill M. *Conway: As It Was...As It Is*. Ward Agency: Bee Branch, Arkansas, 2008, pp.11.

⁴ Sanford C. "Sandy" Faulkner. Found at <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net>

⁵ Keith, Sonja J. and Tammy Keith. *Conway: A Story of Its People*. Community Communications: Montgomery, Alabama, 1999, pp. 13.

⁶ Conway (Faulkner County). Found at <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net>

⁷ Keith, pp.13-16.

⁸ Goodspeed. *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Pulaski, Jefferson, Lonoke, Faulkner, Grant, Saline, Perry, Garland, and Hot Springs Counties, Arkansas*. Goodspeed's Publishing Company: Illinois, 1889, pp. 711-712.

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Before the Bank of Conway at 908 Front Street (FA0647, non-contributing) opened in 1890, Conway residents had to do their banking in Little Rock. The Bank of Conway was founded in 1890 by Captain Martin, Jo Frauenthal, S.G. Smith, J.H. Stubbs, and W.F. Wilson. The bank was a Late Gothic Revival structure, and one of George W. Donaghey's first large building commissions.⁹

One of the most important early entrepreneurs in Conway was Max Frauenthal, who was a German immigrant who came to Conway with the railroad construction crew in 1871. He opened the second business in Conway in 1872, which was a mercantile company located on the east side of Front Street between Oak and Main streets. Even though Col. Robinson intended for Main Street and Railroad Avenue (now Parkway) to be the commercial center, Frauenthal thought it would be a good idea to locate his business in the alley where the farmers left their wagons while they were at market. This alley later became Front Street, and today the main commercial area is along Front and Oak streets.¹⁰

A fire destroyed the wood-framed businesses along Front Street in 1878. This made business owners reconsider using wood for their businesses. Max Frauenthal was the first to construct a brick building in Conway in 1879, which became known as the "Frauenthal Block." The building also features the first plate glass window in Conway. The building was built on the northeast corner of Front and Oak streets, and a section of it still exists at 904 Front Street (FA0645, contributing). Max Frauenthal had a cousin, Leo Schwarz, who moved from Germany to help with the family business. In 1892, Max sold all of his interest in the company to his cousins, and the company was renamed Frauenthal & Schwarz. After twenty-four years of business, the transactions for 1896 totaled \$300,000.¹¹ The business turned into a department store in the 1920s and closed its doors in 1952.

Conway's first public school was built in 1879. The land was donated by Col. Robinson, and the lumber for its construction was donated by Col. Robinson, George Washington Bruce, and Max Frauenthal.¹²

Captain William W. Martin came to Conway from Springfield, in Conway County, in 1885 with his friend, D.O. Harton, to open a general mercantile store called Martin & Harton. Martin was an active member of the Methodist church and was elected to the school board and city council. He was elected as the school board president in 1888 and later became president of the Young Men's Christian Association. He then served as the first president of Conway's first commercial organization called the Conway Board of Trade founded in 1891. Martin and Reverend Edward A. Tabor (pastor of the Conway Methodist Church) spearheaded the effort to get the Three-Mile Law passed to prohibit the sale of liquor in Conway. The law was passed December 31, 1888, and Conway became a dry county for the next 40 years. Martin also served as mayor of Conway from 1890-1905. Martin and G.H. Burr, a science teacher at Hendrix College, helped

⁹ Dolan, 1986, 112.

¹⁰ Dolan, pp. 90.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 90

¹² Keith, pp. 15.

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bring electricity and the town's first telephone exchange to Conway while he was in office. The Conway Electric and Manufacturing Company was established in 1895 after being issued a franchise by the city council to build a plant and provide Conway with electricity.¹³

Immigrants from Poland, Germany, France, and Switzerland started arriving in Conway around 1880. Many of these immigrants were Catholic and the first Catholic Church was St. Joseph's Catholic Church. The first church building was built in 1879. The church service was given in French, English, and German to meet the needs of its ethnically diverse congregation. In 1890, ninety Catholic families resided in Conway.¹⁴

Conway's population reached 1,207 in 1890. Conway in the 1890s saw the establishment of two colleges. The Methodist Episcopal Church South in Arkansas decided to move Central Collegiate Institute (now Hendrix College) from Altus, in Franklin County, to Conway in 1890. Captain Martin and Rev. Tabor were very influential in bringing the college to Conway, and Martin oversaw the selection of the campus site, at College Avenue and Center Street. The Baptist State Convention voted to create a women's college in 1892. George Washington Bruce influenced the decision to select Conway, and Col. Robinson donated 10 acres for the campus.¹⁵ Central Baptist College for Women opened its doors in 1892 with Rev. Charles William serving as its first president.

Conway continued to grow during the twentieth century. The population reached 2,003 by 1900. The town had two colleges, a public school system, electricity, a telephone exchange, and many thriving businesses. George W. Donaghey, a Conway resident, became governor of Arkansas. He served two terms from 1909-1913. Donaghey also built several buildings in Conway. Some of the buildings he constructed include: the Faulkner County Courthouse, the 1890 Bank of Conway (FA0647, non-contributing), and the ca. 1905 Donaghey Building (FA0700, contributing). He also had a hand in bringing the Arkansas State Normal School (now University of Central Arkansas) to Conway in 1907.¹⁶ Donaghey followed Col. Robinson's legacy of the importance of education and around this time Conway began to be called the "City of Colleges" and "Athens of Arkansas."¹⁷

The Faulkner County Bank, once located at the corner of Front and Oak streets, was established as the second bank in Conway in 1902. Donaghey, J.E. Little, V.D. Hill, G.W. Adkinson, W.D. Cole, Jr., B.L. Harton, and B.T. Deal helped establish the Faulkner County Bank. The next bank was the Farmers State Bank. This bank was established in 1912 by S.G. Smith, Frank Farris, Wiley Mosley, J.A. Pence, William J. Grummer, W.B. Mills, and W.L. Whitten. The bank moved into the building previously occupied by N.C. Martin & Sons at the corner of North and Front streets. The building was razed and a new bank building

¹³ Ibid., pp. 18-19.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 18.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 18-19.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 22-25.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 22-25.

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was constructed in 1918, which is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NR listed 12-22-1982).¹⁸

Since the railroad's completion in 1872, most trains needed a second engine to climb over Cadron Ridge. As Conway's commercial center grew, so did railroad activity, so in 1902 a tunnel was blasted out of Cadron Ridge using mostly convict labor. The tunnel still exists today and has become a symbol of Conway's past, as well as a reminder of how the railroad has fueled the American economy since the late nineteenth century.¹⁹

As a response to Conway's growth to a population of over 2,000, the city began to improve various public utilities and services at the turn of the century. The city of Conway had three wooden fire stations built on Duncan Street, Center Street, and one next to the city jail on Van Ronkle Street in 1900. Electric light service was extended beyond midnight to sunrise in 1904, and by 1910 electrical services were extended to residential areas. The Conway Board of Trade initiated a search for a reliable water source for the city in 1904, and the same year the city council formed a water works improvement district. After considering four different water sources, the Conway City Council decided on Cadron Creek as its water source. The water improvement district installed cast iron water mains along the unpaved streets of Conway's commercial center in 1914. A new passenger depot was built in 1914 after the 40-year old passenger depot was moved to the west side of the railroad where the freight depot was formerly located.²⁰

As America entered the automobile age, Faulkner County had 83 licensed cars, with 71 of them licensed in Conway in 1916. By 1919, Faulkner County had six road improvement districts. Conway's downtown streets were paved sometime before 1920, and U.S. 65 was constructed in the late 1930s.²¹

The first brick fire station was built on Prairie Street in 1917 to meet the needs of Conway's 4,000 residents, and the first fire chief for Conway was Rod Dickerson. The fire station even purchased a Ford Model "T" truck for their fire vehicle.²² The fire department was temporarily moved to Locust Street, and a new fire station opened at 1401 Locust Street (FA0682, contributing) in 1933.²³ The fire station is now used for Conway's physical plant.

In 1916, the Conway Board of Trade was replaced by the Commercial Club. The Conway Chamber of Commerce replaced the Commercial Club in 1927 with a mission that sought to promote agriculture,

¹⁸ Dolan, pp. 113.

¹⁹ Ward, pp.12.

²⁰ Keith, pp. 27.

²¹ Dolan, pp. 56.

²² Keith, pp. 27-28.

²³ Dolan, pp. 111.

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commerce, industry and civic affairs. The organization also created its first paid executive position for T.M. Williams.²⁴

From December 1926 to April 1927 heavy rains fell over most of the central states, which caused flooding along the Mississippi and Arkansas rivers. On April 19, the town was completely flooded. The flooding closed down rail lines and roads, and covered one eleventh of the entire county. The Commercial Club pulled together its resources and provided relief and supplies for Conway's citizens. Another struggle occurred with both Hendrix College and Central College having major financial problems. Frank Farris, along with R.W. Robins and George W. Clark, came up with the plan to capitalize the revenue from the city's electrical system and issue bonds against the earnings. This was one of the main reasons for the formation of the Conway Corporation. By the end of the decade the Conway Corporation had made \$215,000 in grant money, which was allocated for Hendrix College, Central College, the Arkansas State Teachers College (formerly the Arkansas State Normal School and now University of Central Arkansas), the local public schools, and St. Joseph Catholic School.²⁵

Prior to 1929, the city's electricity ran off unreliable steam engines. The Conway Corporation was then chartered with Frank E. Robins as chairman to dependably fuel the city's needs with newly developed diesel engines. The Conway Corporation built the electrical plant on Prairie Street. Professor G.H. Burr designed the electrical plant and ran it during its inception.²⁶

By 1930, Conway had reached a population of 3,000. Businesses were located on either side of the railroad depot like many other cities in the Cotton Belt. Five manufacturing plants existed in Conway during the 1930s that include: the Conway Cotton Oil Company, the Conway Compress Company, the Nona Lee Dress Company located in the Halter Building (FA0644, contributing), the George Reeves Mattress Factory, and the Faulkner Dairy Company. One of the most successful manufacturing businesses in the history of Conway is the Ward Body Works Company. Dave Ward opened a blacksmith business in 1933 between Harkrider and Court streets. He made his first all steel-bodied bus in 1936 and quit making everything but buses. He built the Ward Body Works Building on Court Street in 1947. His company became the largest industry in Faulkner County, the largest bus manufacturer west of the Mississippi, and employed over 1,200 people. In 1980, Dave Ward's business became AmTran Corporation, and in 2001 it became IC Corporation, which is still located in Conway.²⁷

The stock market crash of 1929 ultimately caused Conway's three banks to fail. The Faulkner County bank closed first in 1930. The following year the Farmers State Bank closed its doors. This was followed by the closing of the Bank of Conway, referred to as "Old Reliable," in January 1933. The city remained without banking services until July 1933 when Harvey C. Couch established the First National Bank in the former Farmers State Bank Building. The First National Bank is still open today, but moved in 1975 to 1 National

²⁴ Keith, pp. 32.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 32-33.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 40-41.

²⁷ Ward, pp. 36-37

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Plaza. The First State Bank was the second bank to open in Conway after the stock market crash. It was founded by Thomas G. Wilson and W.D. Ketcheside and opened for business in 1946 in the old Bank of Conway Building at 908 Front Street. Due to its growth, a new modern bank building (FA1076, non-contributing) with a drive-thru was built at the corner of Front and Oak streets in 1960.²⁸

In 1938, the Conway City Council decided to reorganize the medical facility in Conway and make it a private, nonprofit corporation. This made it possible for the hospital to buy land at College and Western avenues that was matched with federal funds for a new facility in 1957.²⁹

Although the first county fair was in 1914, the Young Men's Business Association organized the Faulkner County Free Fair in 1938. The fair did not have a home until 1946, when 40 acres was purchased for the YBMA fairgrounds, and today is one of the largest county fairs in the state.

Conway was in the business of cotton and education until the end of World War II when several industries and businesses changed the economic basis for the town. International Shoe Company opened a manufacturing plant in Conway in 1947 that employed 300 people. The Conway Chamber of Commerce influenced the construction of Lake Conway in 1951. Lake Conway is a 6,700 acre lake southwest of the city and is the largest manmade game and fish commission lake in the United States. This development led to residential construction, boat docks, gas stations, restaurants, and hotels being built around the lake. Another business that prospered was a livestock auction barn opened by Homer Brown and Major Lewis in 1943. The auction was first located off Markham Street, but has become the second largest auction in the southeast United States.

A new radio station went on the air in Conway in 1950. KCON began with a group of businessman that incorporated the Conway Broadcasting System. The general manager of KCON was James E. Clayton and was first located at the Arkansas State Teachers College (now University of Central Arkansas). The first educational television station, KETS/Channel 2, came to Conway in 1965. The Conway Corporation provided financial support for the television station.

The Conway Development Corporation was formed in 1959 by the Chamber of Commerce to aid in industrial growth and development. They purchased 178 acres near the airport in 1963 to open the Conway Industrial Park. The park was expanded to 318 acres in 1965. The corporation also developed the 158-acre Conway Industrial Park East in 1976. The Arkansas Children's Colony was established in 1959 as Arkansas's first center for disabled people. The center was renamed the Conway Human Development Center in 1981.³⁰

²⁸ Dolan, pp. 115.

²⁹ Keith, pp. 37.

³⁰ Keith, pp. 40-44.

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The railroad's passenger train service ended in 1960. The passenger depot built in 1914 was renovated and used as a freight depot. The original passenger-depot-turned-freight-depot on the west side of the tracks was razed in 1965. In 1975, the passenger depot on the east side of the tracks was razed and Main Street was extended across the tracks and the other areas were turned into parking lots. The railroad facilities are now operated by Union Pacific and located in southern Conway.³¹

Today, Conway's population has reached over 55,000. The University of Central Arkansas is the second-largest public university in the state. Industry now dominates the economy in Conway with the Nabholz Construction Corporation that began in Conway in 1949. Acxiom was founded by Charles Ward of Ward Bus Company and began as Demographics, Inc., in 1969. The other major industries employing Conway residents are Virco Manufacturing Corporation, Kimberly-Clark, IC Corporation, and Diamond State Bus Company. Toad Suck Daze is a local festival that takes place in downtown Conway at the end of April.³² The festival began in 1982 as a family-centered spring festival and is named for the legend of Toad Suck. The festival was named "Festival of the Year" for Arkansas in 1999.³³ Since its inception, Conway's residents have held onto a sense of community, and its continued growth is directly related to its citizens pulling together when facing natural disaster or financial difficulty.

Conclusion

The Conway Commercial Historic District, located in Conway, Arkansas, is being nominated with **local significance** for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** for being the largest commercial center in Faulkner County since its beginning in the 1870s when the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad was constructed in the area and **Criterion C** for its variety and quality of nineteenth and twentieth century commercial buildings. The historic buildings in Conway represent typical late nineteenth and twentieth century standard commercial architecture, and some of them display styles such as Italianate, Classic Revival, Late Gothic Revival, Mediterranean Revival, Art Deco, and Modern. The historic built environment of the district retains its architectural integrity and contributes to the district's period of significance that spans 1879-1960. The period of significance begins with the date of the oldest remaining building in the district being built in 1879 and the 1960 being the cut-off date designated by the National Park Service that determines a property historic. Since its beginning, Conway has been a commercial, political, economic, social, and industrial center for Faulkner County, and the commercial buildings still extant in the district are evidence of its historical significance.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 45.

³² Conway (Faulkner County). Found at <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net>.

³³ Keith, pp. 52.

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ADDITIONAL UTMS:

5. 15 551032E 3883362N
6. 15 550951E 3883367N
7. 15 550944E 3883649N
8. 15 550814E 3883648N
9. 15 550792E 3883707N
10. 15 550749E 3883696N
11. 15 550924E 3883280N
12. 15 550784E 3883214N
13. 15 550795E 3883111N
14. 15 550855E 3883117N
15. 15 550877E 3883063N
16. 15 551283E 3883211N
17. 15 551250E 3883271N

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning southeast in the parking lot behind 909 Oak Street (FA1066A), proceed north-northwest to Oak Street then north past Van Ronkle Street to the rear of the Chamber of Commerce Building (FA1111), thence proceed west to Markham Street, thence proceed south to Van Ronkle Street, thence proceed west to Spencer Street, thence proceed north to Smith Street, thence proceed southwest to Front Street, thence proceed north-northwest to the Faulkner County Farmers Association Building (FA0677), thence proceed west-southwest to the railroad tracks, thence proceed south-southeast along the railroad tracks to the alley just north of 904 Parkway Street (FA1097), thence turn west-southwest down the alley to Locust Street, thence proceed south past the south elevation of the Conway Fire Station No. 1 Building (FA0682), thence proceed northeast to the alley, thence proceed south to Main Street, thence proceed east-northeast just east of the Faulkner Dairy County Building (FA1350), thence proceed north-northwest just north of Ward's Body Works Annex Building (FA1352) in the parking lot, thence proceed east-northeast in the parking lot behind 909 Oak Street (FA1066A), which is the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This boundary was drawn to include properties in the Conway Commercial Historic District with the greatest density of structures maintaining a high level of integrity.

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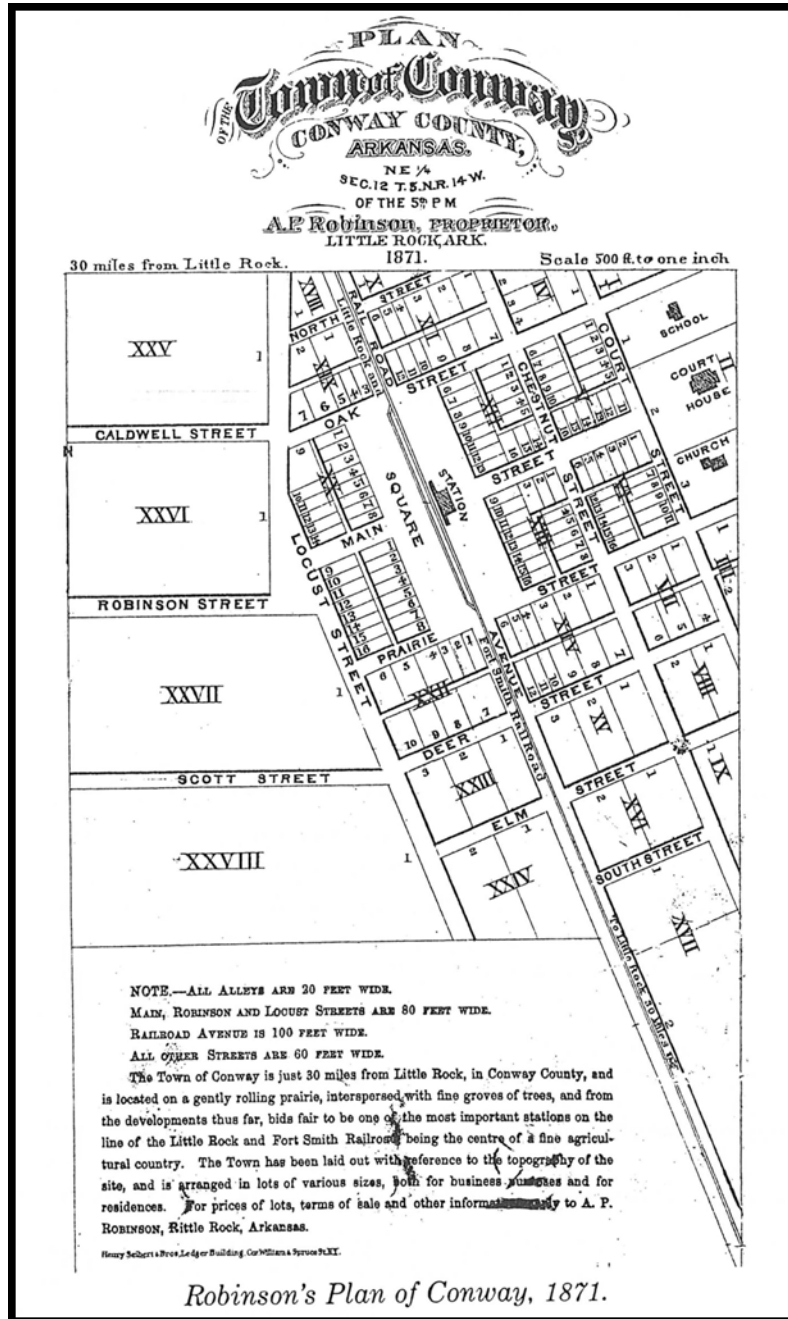


Figure 1. Col. Asa P. Robinson's Plan of Conway from 1871. Note that the town was laid out parallel to the railroad (northwest-southeast) and that Front Street was not in the original town plat. [Courtesy of Faulkner County Historical Society. *Faulkner County: Its Land and People*. River Road Press: Conway, Arkansas, 1986.]

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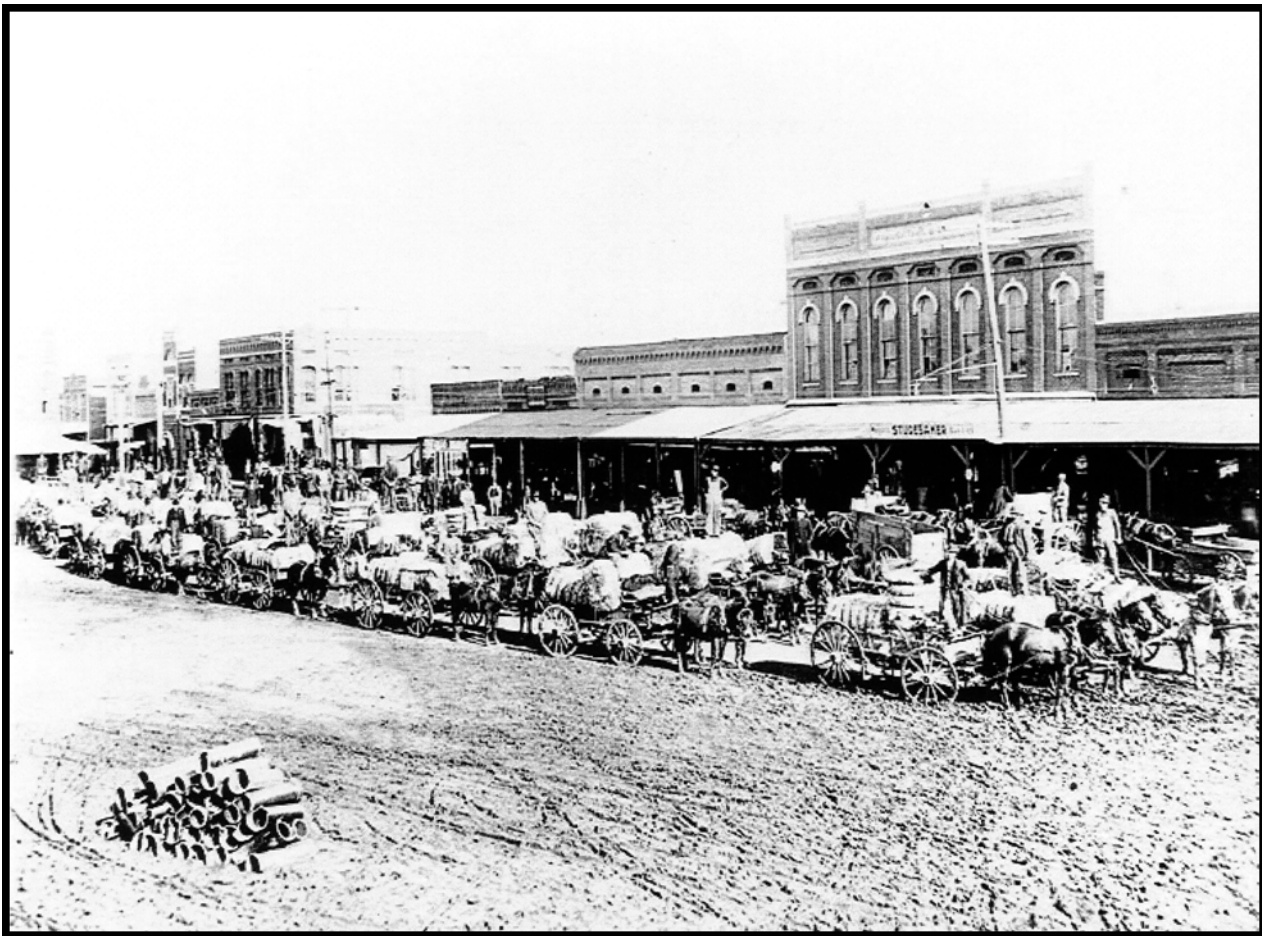


Figure 2. Photograph of Front Street from the Railroad Depot showing cotton wagons coming to market, ca. 1900. [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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Figure 3. Front Street viewing north-northwest from Oak Street, ca. 1910. [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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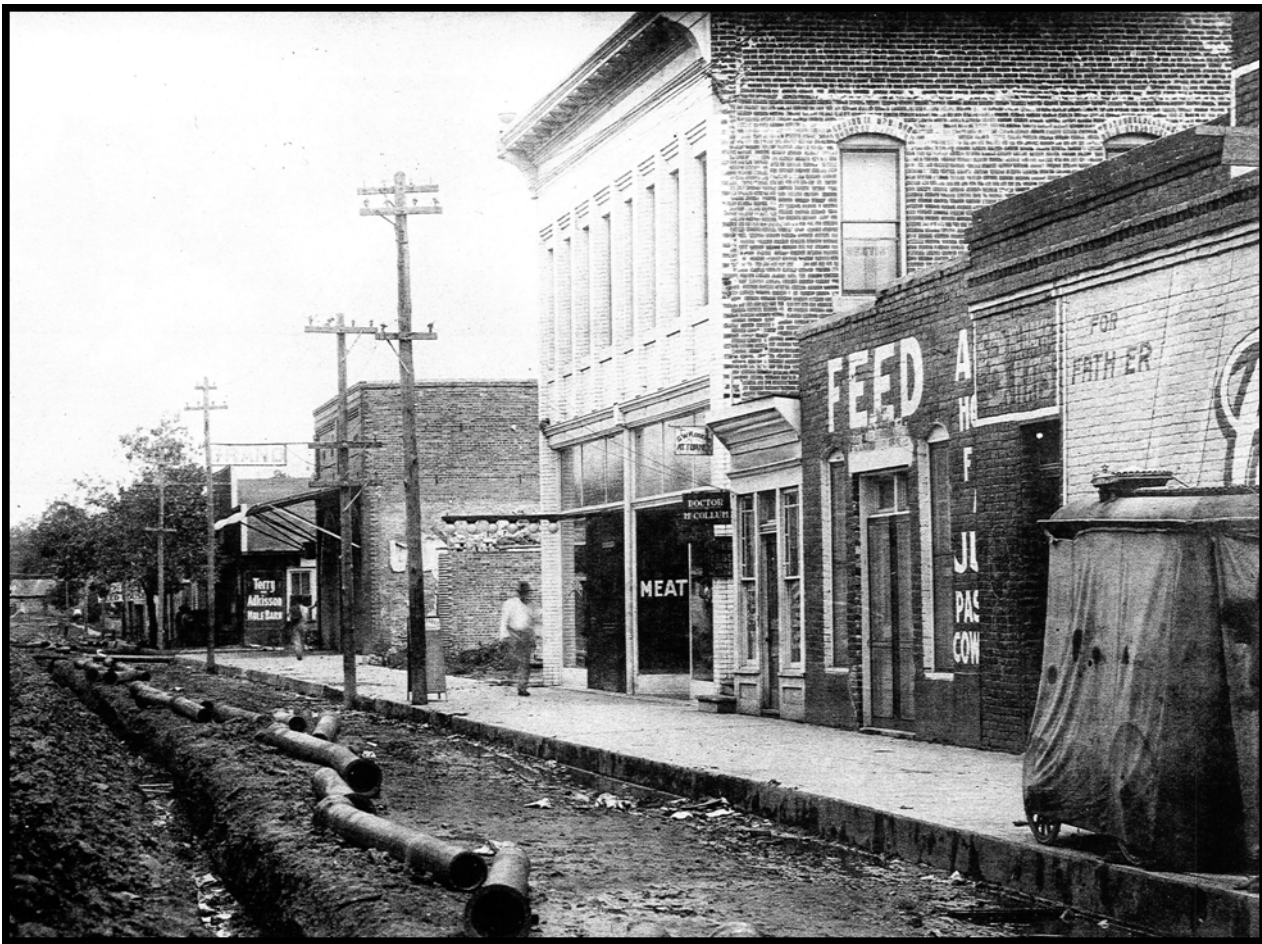


Figure 4. 1914 Photograph of Oak Street from Front Street, viewing east. The Central Meat Market Building (FA1074) is shown at right. [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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Figure 5. 1886 Photograph of Oak Street from Oak and Front streets, viewing east-northeast. Original Max Frauenthal Building on left is now the location of the ca. 1960 McNutt Building (FA1075). [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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Figure 6. Photograph of Parkway (formerly Railroad Avenue) and Oak streets from the April 1927 flood in Conway, viewing south-southwest. The Donaghey Building (FA0700) is on the left side of the photograph. [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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Figure 7. 1929 Photograph of the 800 block of Parkway Street (formerly Railroad Avenue) from Oak Street, viewing south. [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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Figure 8. 1929 Photograph of the Parkway Street (formerly Railroad Avenue) and Oak Street intersection from the railroad tracks, viewing north-northwest. [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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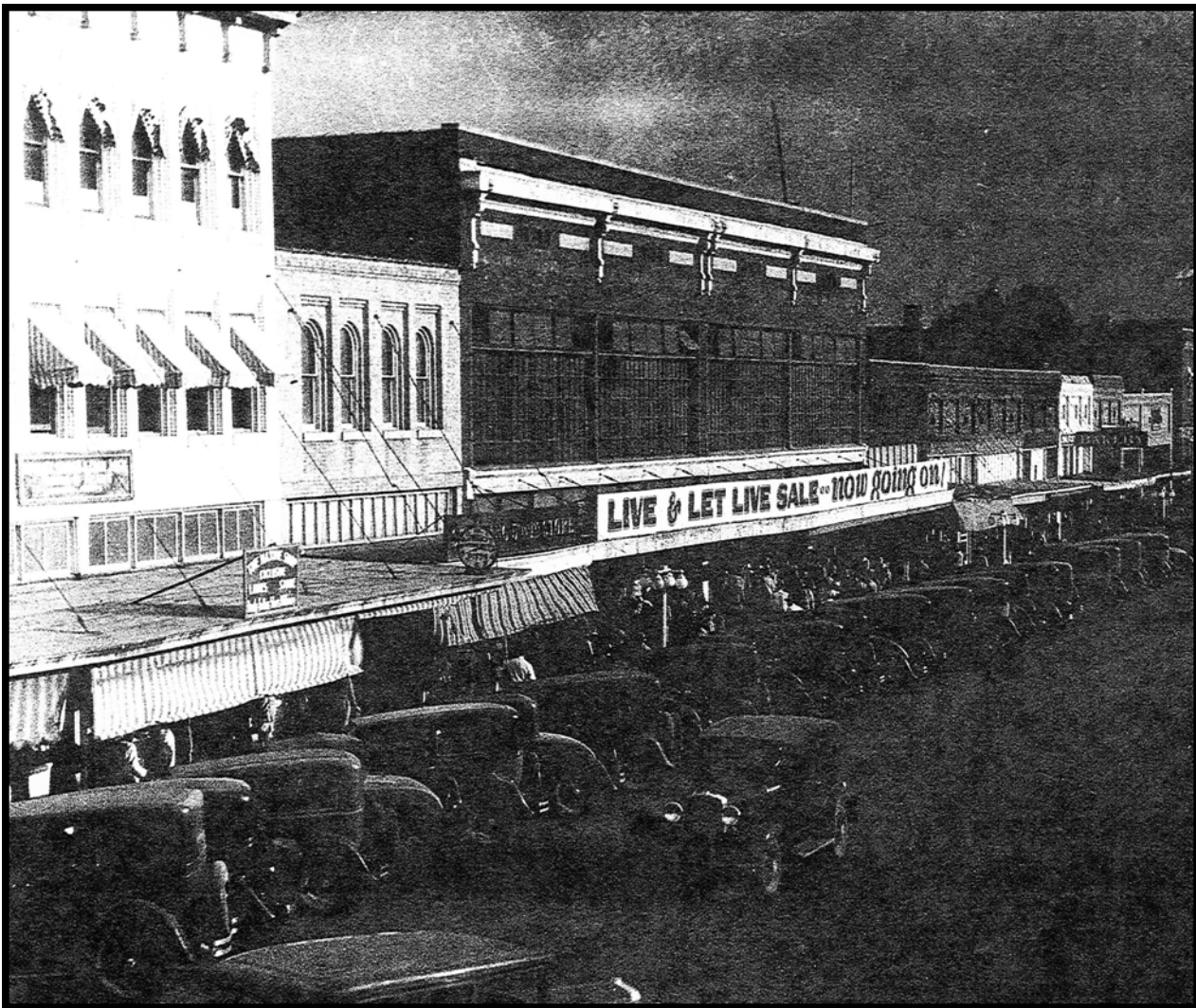


Figure 9. ca. 1930 Photograph of Front Street from Oak Street, viewing southeast. [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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Figure 10. ca. 1958 Photograph of Front and Oak Street intersection, viewing north. The ca. 1960 McNutt Building (FA1075) is now located at the corner of this intersection but the left side of the 1879 Max Frauenthal Building (FA0645) is still extant. [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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Figure 11. ca. 1930 Photograph of Front Street south of North Street, viewing north-northwest. [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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Figure 12. 1949 Photograph of the rear elevation of the ca. 1900 Clarence Day Feed and Grocery Building (FA1092). Fred Fields would promise to haul anything with his Model T truck (shown above). [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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Figure 13. 1960 Photograph of the 1960 First State Bank (FA1076) at the corner of Front and Oak streets, viewing south. [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]

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Figure 14. 1965 Photograph of Oak Street from Front Street, viewing east. [Courtesy of the Faulkner County Historical Society Photograph Collection at the University of Central Arkansas.]