

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 Gillham City Jail

other names/site number SV0069

### 2. Location

street & number Located approximately 325 feet southeast of the Hornberg Avenue and Front Street intersection  not for publication

city or town Gillham  vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Sevier code 133 zip code 71841

### 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.)

*Cecilia Matthews*  
Signature of certifying official/Title

12/7/11  
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

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

Gillham City Jail

Name of Property

Sevier County, Arkansas

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

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

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

Contributing

Noncontributing

1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

Number of Contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT / correctional facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/ Plain Traditional

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Reinforced Concrete

walls Reinforced Concrete

roof Reinforced Concrete

other Metal

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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 distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**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.

**Levels of Significance** (local, state, national)

Local

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

Politics/Government

**Period of Significance**

1914-c.1962

**Significant Dates**

1914

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Gillham City Jail  
Name of Property

Sevier County, Arkansas  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreege of Property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>378871</u>	<u>3781631</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </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 Kelsey Fields/Intern, edited by Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator  
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date October 7, 2011  
street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center St. telephone (501) 324-9787  
city or town Little Rock state Arkansas 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 City of Gillham  
street & number 1942 Highway 71 telephone 870-386-7136  
city or town Gillham state Arkansas zip code 71841

**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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

### Summary

The Gillham City Jail is a single-room reinforced-concrete structure of a style similar to other jails found in the county and the state. This jail features a barred door on the west elevation and small barred window openings in the other three elevations. It is located in a small park north of the Kansas City-Southern Railroad tracks, to the south and east of the center of the city proper.

### Elaboration

The jail is located in the southeast corner of a small open park area north of the Kansas City-Southern Railroad tracks, bounded on the east by East Avenue, to the north by Front Street and to the west by the triangle with the public well. The structure is a single-story, one room reinforced-concrete rectangle with a vaulted, reinforced-concrete roof and a reinforced-concrete pad foundation. The walls are generally in good condition excepting a chip in the southeast corner above the foundation. The walls are punctuated by three small window openings with vertically placed round-metal bars. The east elevation window is high on the wall, near the roof while the north and south windows are nearly centered in the façade. The door is centered in the western elevation. It is constructed of flat metal bars placed vertically on the outside of the door and horizontally on the inside. The bars are then riveted at each intersection creating a grid pattern. The door is mounted to the building by three hinges. The top and middle hinges are barrel hinges; however, the bottom hinge has a historic repair wherein the original hinge was replaced with a T hinge. The door is held shut with a hasp and staple type closure which is currently secured by a modern padlock.

Similarly styled city jails have been found in other cities in Sevier County, as well as in other regions in Arkansas. They were typically constructed between 1910 and 1945 in small cities dependent on the railroad, and far enough from the county jail to merit the need of a small temporary holding facility. This allowed the city to hold suspects before releasing them or transferring them into a county building. These jails are all solitary, separate from city government buildings. The most easily identifiable characteristic of this style is the use of reinforced-concrete walls and roofs. The buildings are rectangular in shape, single storied, and most often have a one-room interior with no partitions. The buildings are fenestrated by window and door openings of metal bars with no glass, leaving the interior open to the elements. Occasionally the doors are made of solid metal, instead of bars.<sup>1</sup> The Gillham City Jail is unique from the other similarly styled jails because of its truncated, gable roof with the door located in the gabled end. This is an element of decorative design not found in the similar jails of Sevier County.

---

<sup>1</sup> From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Arkansas Architectural Resources Forms, "Horatio Jail: Resource Number SV0112," "Lockesburg City Jail: Resource Number SV0108," "Old Grady Jail: Resource Number LI0086," "Maynard Jail: Resource Number RA0151," and Jill Bayles, "McRae Jail, White County, Arkansas," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 07/20/1992, p. 7, 1, Jill Bayles, "Russell Jail, White County, Arkansas," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 07/23/1992, p. 7, 1, and Jill Bayles, "Beebe Jail, Beebe, White County, Arkansas," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 09/13/1991, p. 7, 1.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

---

Furthermore, the metalwork found on each of the jails is different and most likely reflects the work of local blacksmiths, of which Gillham had two.

### **Integrity**

The Gillham Jail retains excellent integrity from when it was built. The jail has suffered no alterations since it was built in 1914, and still reflects the original cast-concrete construction. The setting around the jail also retains its small-town appearance, reflecting the era that the jail was in use.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

### Summary

The Gillham community developed out of the early 1900s railroad development in southwestern Arkansas. It soon grew to size that it developed a city government, which constructed the city jail sometime between 1914 and 1917. The city jail is locally significant under Criterion A as it is one of the few surviving structures of this era in the community. Furthermore, it is a wholly intact example of a traditional style of city jail typically constructed between 1910 and 1940 and found in small railroad communities in Arkansas.

### Elaboration

The history of Gillham really begins with the history of the Silver Hill community and the railroad. According to Goodspeed Sevier County was "one of the best" locations for mixed farming in the state; however the "remoteness from market facilities render[ed]" farming in the county ineffective. Yet, Goodspeed predicted in 1890 that with "the completion of several lines of contemplated railroads through the county, great changes in farming operations may be expected to follow." This prediction proved accurate and a great change occurred in the Silver Hill community.<sup>1</sup>

Silver Hill was a small mining community in Sevier County in the late 1860s and 1870s. Although no silver was found in the area, the Silver Hill mine prospered as did the town. In the late 1890s the speculated railroad was built, and the Kansas City, Pittsburg and Gulf Railroad Company drew out lots and constructed a new depot, a scant one and one-fourth mile away from Silver Hill.<sup>2</sup> This new development coupled with the availability of transportation, spelled doom for the Silver Hill community. Nearly all of the residents moved into the new town and within six months even the post office was moved to Gillham.<sup>3</sup>

Gillham remained a mining town as the Bellah and Davis Mines operated nearby. The American Antimony Company even constructed an ore mill in town. During the increased mining operations in World War I, the area mines were said to have produced eighty or ninety carloads of zinc concentrate. In addition to the mining industry, the old Silver Hill saw mill stayed in operation, turning its focus to producing staves and crossties for the railroad. Furthermore, the availability of rail transportation allowed for the development of a truck farming industry. Following the war, packing sheds were built in town to process the turnips, cucumbers, radishes, green beans, squash, cantaloupes, watermelons, grapes, peaches, pears, apples, blackberries and over 500 acres of strawberries

---

<sup>1</sup> Goodspeed, *The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*, (Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1890), 217.

<sup>2</sup> *Railroad-Era Resources of Southwest Arkansas (Lafayette, Little River, Miller and Sevier Counties), 1870-1945*, (Little Rock: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 1995), 19.

<sup>3</sup> From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Sevier County-General Inquiry File, "The Rise and Fall of Gillham," *The Looking Glass* vol 4 (June 1978), 4.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

that were produced in the area.<sup>4</sup> Other agricultural products included corn and cotton, which were processed by the cotton gin and grist mill, and cattle for meat and dairy.<sup>5</sup>

This era is known as the 'golden age' of Gillham, because of the town's rapid and sustained increase in population and commercial development in town. In response to such growth, the city board voted in 1914 to construct a jail. The jail was constructed near the cotton gin/grist mill across the railroad tracks from the ore mill. It is constructed of reinforced-concrete and features a truncated gable roof, three barred windows and a barred door in a style of jail that can be found in small railroad communities in Arkansas. The structure was completed sometime between 1914 and 1917.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, the 'golden age' of Gillham did not last long.

When the Great Depression struck in the 1930s, Gillham's industries were hard hit like many in the country. Following the depression was brief resurgence of prosperity in the truck farming industry. Not only were the packing sheds for the railroads active, but during harvest the Southern Ice Company trucks "would be lined up bumper to bumper 'all the way back around where the road turns as it comes into town.'"<sup>7</sup> Although one of the packing houses shipped 40,000 bushels of cucumbers in the summer of 1942, the advent of World War II caused many young men in Gillham to join the military and many more residents left to work for the war industry in other parts of the country.<sup>8</sup> This led to a lack of available labor force and population to provide funds for city infrastructure, causing the Gillham economy to fail.

It is unknown how long the Gillham Jail was used, but small-town jails such as this were often used until the mid to late twentieth century. The Gillham Jail is a testament to the nature of its community, as it reflects the small-town atmosphere that Gillham has possessed ever since settlement. The city now supports a population of less than 200 citizens and has no need for the jail. The building now sits empty in a small park area where Goff and Gamble's warehouse, wagon shed, cotton gin, and grist mill once stood. It is one of the few buildings left from the 'golden age' of Gillham, as such it a locally significant structure eligible under Criterion A.

---

<sup>4</sup> Railroad-Era, 20.

<sup>5</sup> From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Sevier County-General Inquiry File, Geraldine Smith Helms, "Celebration to Remember," 18.

<sup>6</sup> From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Arkansas Historic Resource Form, "Gillham Jail: Resource Number SV0069," 1994.

<sup>7</sup> Rise and Fall, 5.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8      Page 3

---

### Statement of Significance

The Gillham community developed out of the early 1900s railroad development in southwestern Arkansas. It soon grew to size that it developed a city government, which constructed the city jail sometime between 1914 and 1917. The city jail is locally significant under Criterion A as it is one of the few surviving structures of this era in the community, and it reflects the role of local government in providing law enforcement for its residents in the early 1900s. Furthermore, it is a wholly intact example of a traditional style of city jail typically constructed between 1910 and 1940 and found in small railroad communities in Arkansas.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

---

### Bibliography

#### Monographs

Goodspeed. *The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1890.

*Railroad-Era Resources of Southwest Arkansas (Lafayette, Little River, Miller and Sevier Counties), 1870-1945*. Little Rock: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 1995.

#### From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

Bayles, Jill "Beebe Jail, White County, Arkansas." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. 09/13/1991.

Bayles, Jill "McRae Jail, White County, Arkansas." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. 07/20/1992.

Bayles, Jill "Russell Jail, White County, Arkansas." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. 07/23/1992.

"Horatio Jail: Resource Number SV0112." Arkansas Architectural Resources Form,

"Lockesburg City Jail: Resource Number SV0108." Arkansas Architectural Resources Form.

"Maynard Jail: Resource Number RA0151." Arkansas Architectural Resources Form.

"Old Grady Jail: Resource Number LI0086," Arkansas Architectural Resources Form.

"The Rise and Fall of Gillham," *The Looking Glass* vol.4 (June 1978). Sevier County-General Inquiry File.

Geraldine Smith Helms. "Celebration to Remember." Sevier County-General Inquiry File.

Gillham City Jail  
Name of Property

Sevier County, Arkansas  
County and State

---

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

---

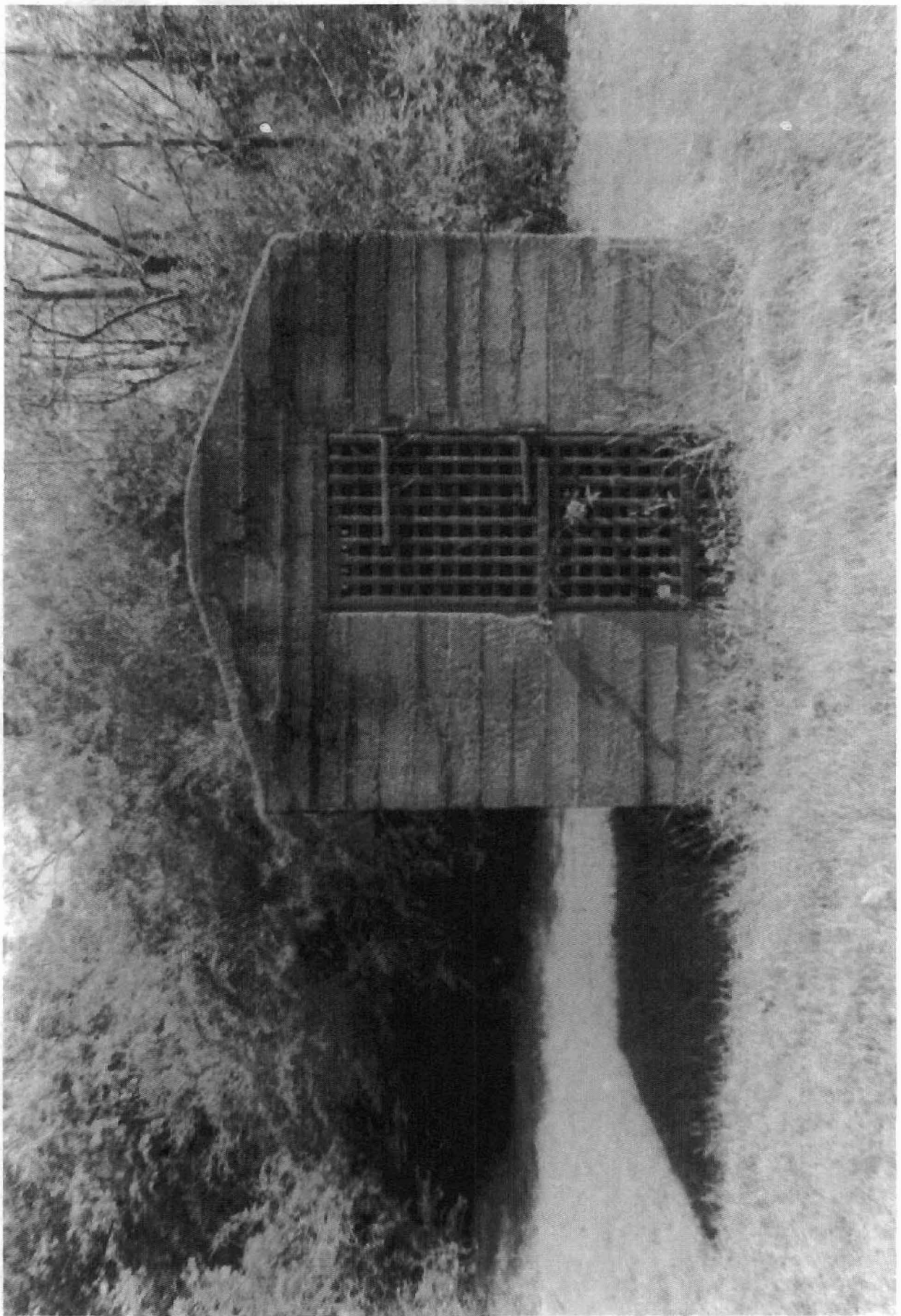
### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

#### Verbal Boundary Description

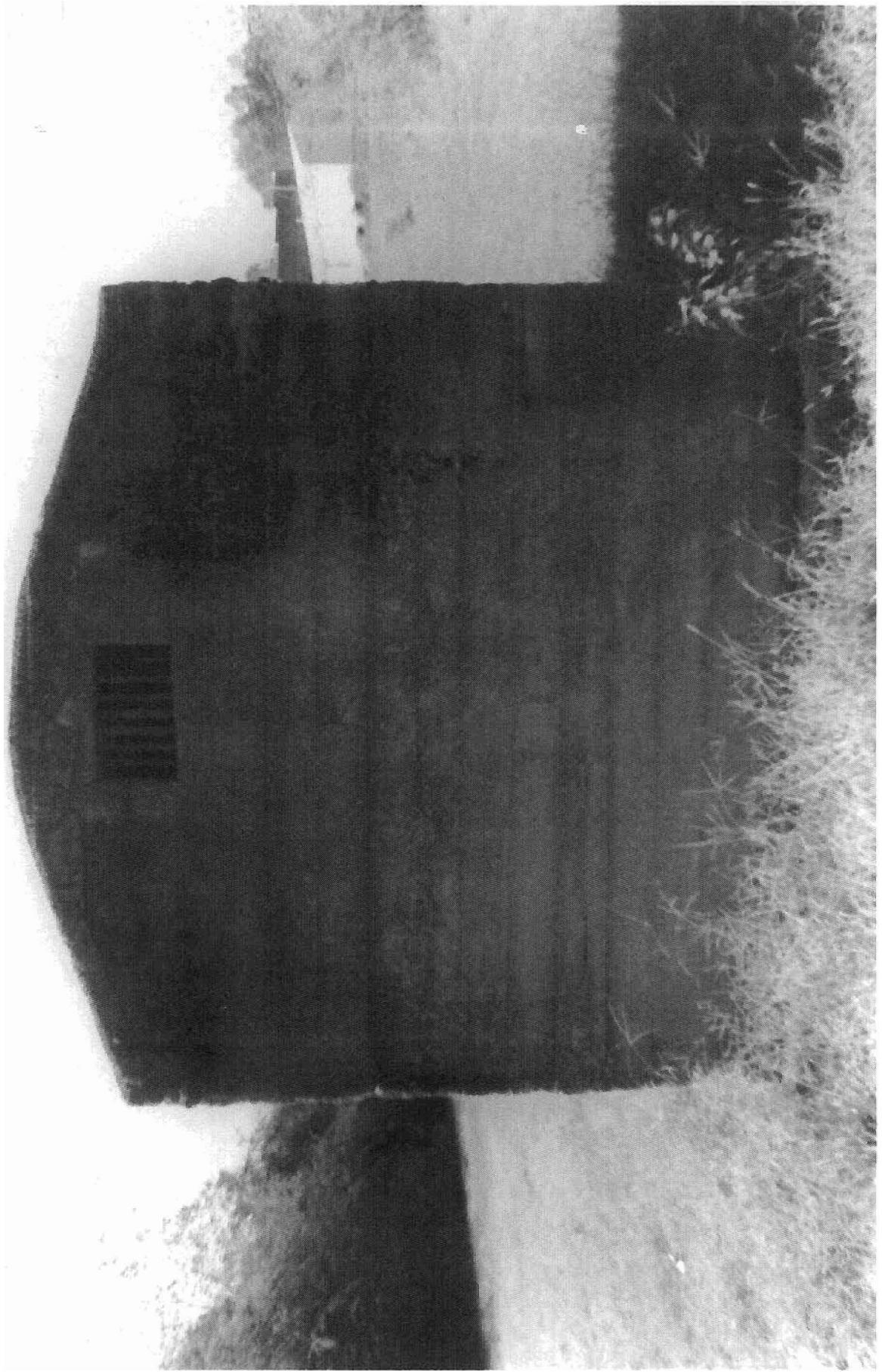
From UTM point 15/378919/3781639 proceed east fifty feet to UTM point 15/378878/3781638, then proceed south fifty feet to UTM point 15/378877/3781623. From there, proceed west fifty feet to UTM point 15/378863/3781619 and then fifty feet north, to the beginning point.

#### Boundary Justification

This boundary includes the Gillham City Jail and its immediate historical setting.

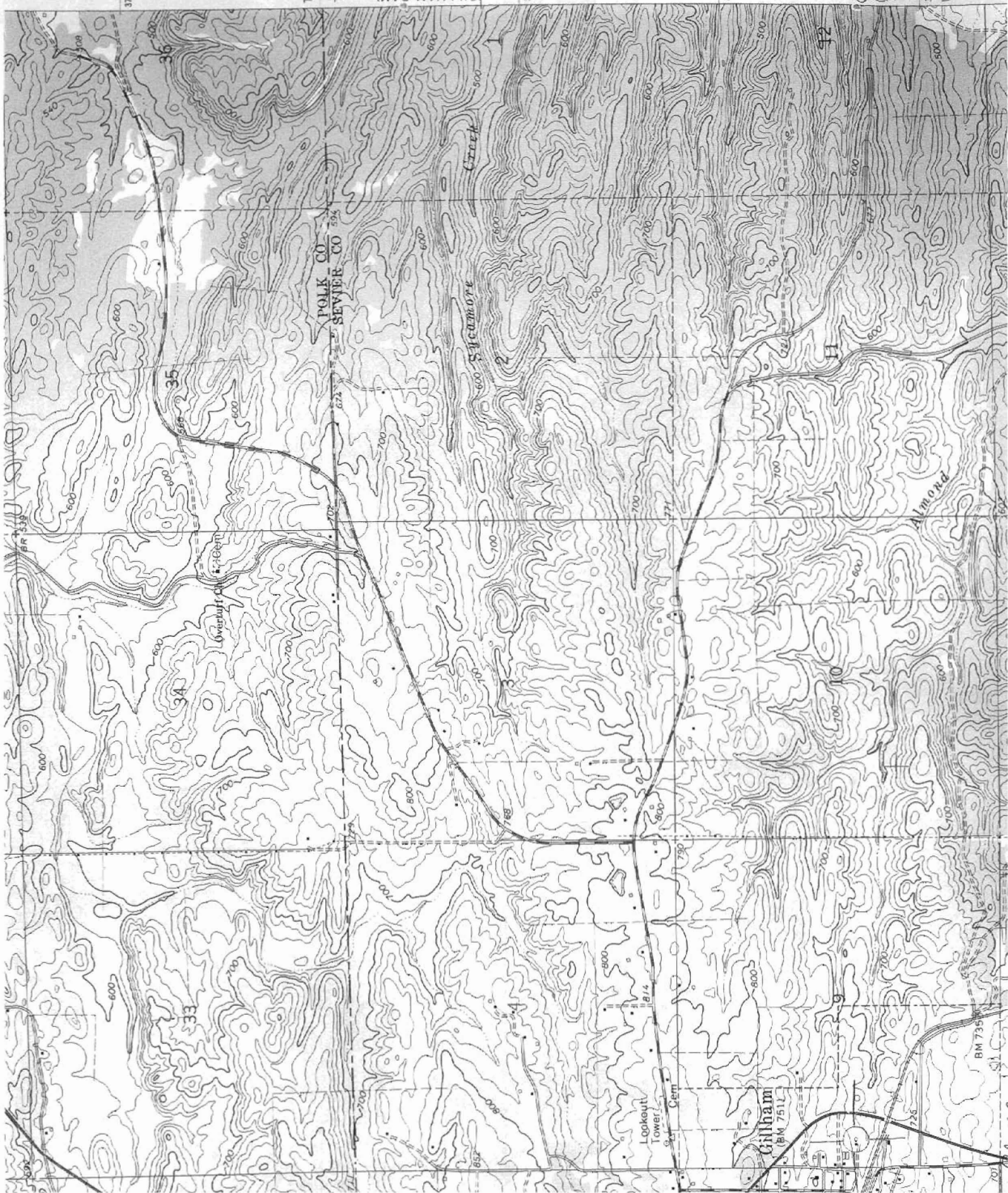












T.65.

T.75.

GILLHAM DAM  
7152 II NW

3783

3782

GILLHAM CITY NJ  
GILLHAM, SEVIER  
POLK COUNTY, AR

3781  
UTM

15/778871/778

POLK CO  
SEVIER CO

Creek

Sycamore

Almond

Gillham  
BM 7511

Lookout  
Tower

814

Clem

BM 735

35

34

33

4

72

11

10

9