

# **CHAPTER 2**

## **FINDING PLACES IN ARKANSAS**

### **USING HIGHWAY MAPS**

Take an Arkansas road map and locate the numbers "1" through "10" along the top and bottom of the map. Now look along the sides and locate the letters "A" through "J". The index of cities, towns, and communities gives you a letter and number for each. (For example, Little Rock is E-5.) To find Little Rock, locate the number "5" at the top of the map. Now move your finger down even with "E" and you will find Little Rock in the area where "5" and "E" cross. As you study this history, you will need to keep a map handy to locate places as they appear in the text.

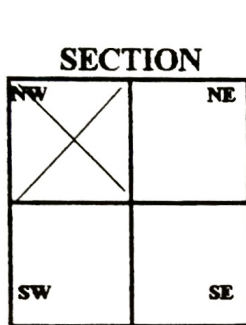
### **FINDING LAND IN ARKANSAS**

Have you ever wondered how people keep track of land, who owns what, and where and how the land could be located? If someone handed you a deed to the SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 36, Township 1 South, Range 6 West of the Principal Meridian, would you be able to find it? Each county courthouse has thousands of copies of deeds with descriptions similar to this.

How does the system work? The survey of Arkansas began in 1815. The principal meridian was established at  $91^{\circ}$  west of the prime meridian at Greenwich, England. A baseline was established across the middle of Arkansas from east to west. After establishing a baseline and a principal meridian, surveyors divided land into a grid pattern by extending township lines parallel to the baseline at six mile intervals. Range lines were made parallel to the meridian also at six mile intervals. The intersecting lines formed townships six miles square. Townships were identified by a system locating them with a township number north or south of the base line and a number east or west of the principal meridian. Each township includes 36 sections. Each section is 640 acres and quarter sections are 160 acres. Quarter sections were the standard homestead.

# ARKANSAS PUBLIC LAND SURVEY SYSTEM

Land description examples for the following 1/4 sections (160 acres) of land that are marked with an "x" are:



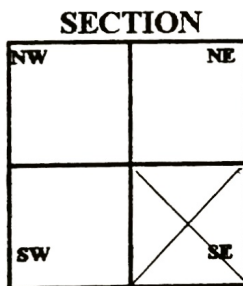
TOWNSHIP  
36 SECTIONS

6	5	4	3	2	1
7	<del>8</del>	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	36

RANGE 7 WEST

TOWNSHIP 5 NORTH

1. NW 1/4, Sec. 8, T 5 N, R 7 W  
(Land Description)



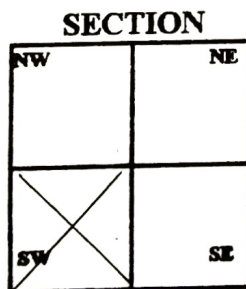
TOWNSHIP  
36 SECTIONS

6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	<del>21</del>	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	36

RANGE 2 EAST

TOWNSHIP 4 NORTH

2. SE 1/4, Sec. 21, T 4 N, R 2 E  
(Land Description)



TOWNSHIP  
36 SECTIONS

6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	<del>36</del>

RANGE 5 WEST

TOWNSHIP 2 SOUTH

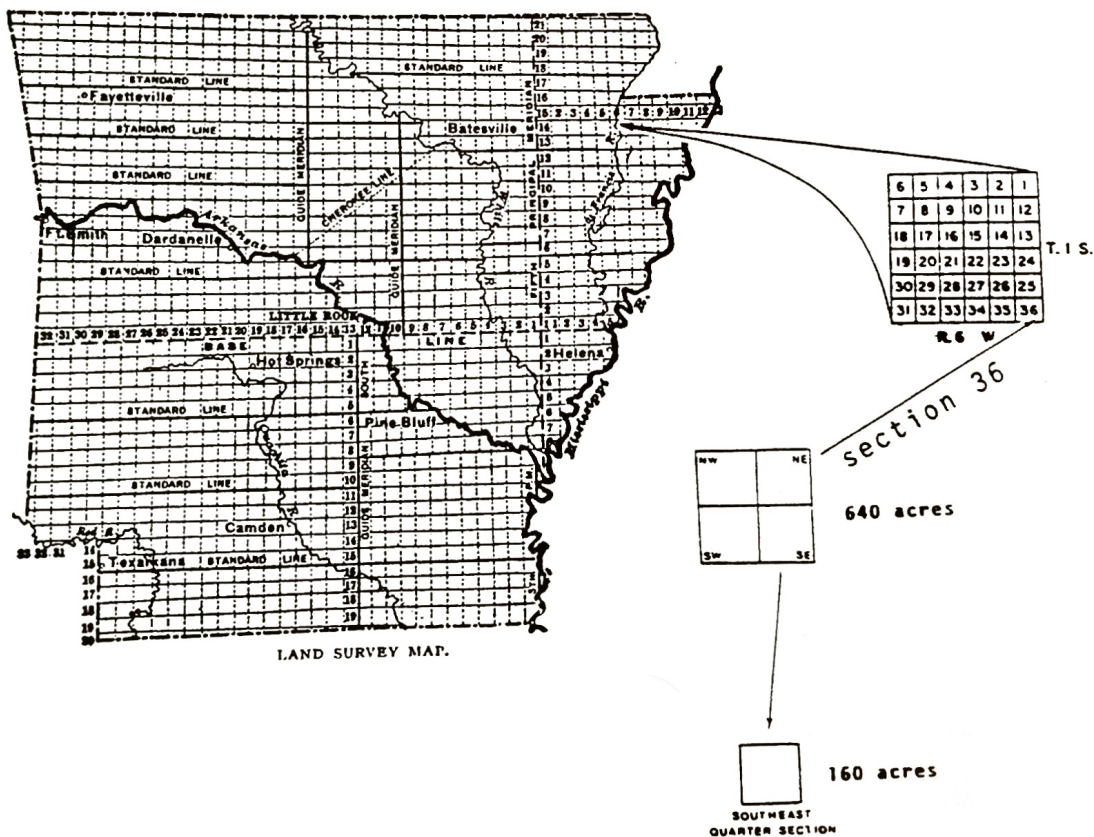
3. SW 1/4, Sec. 36, T 2 S, R 5 W  
(Land Description)

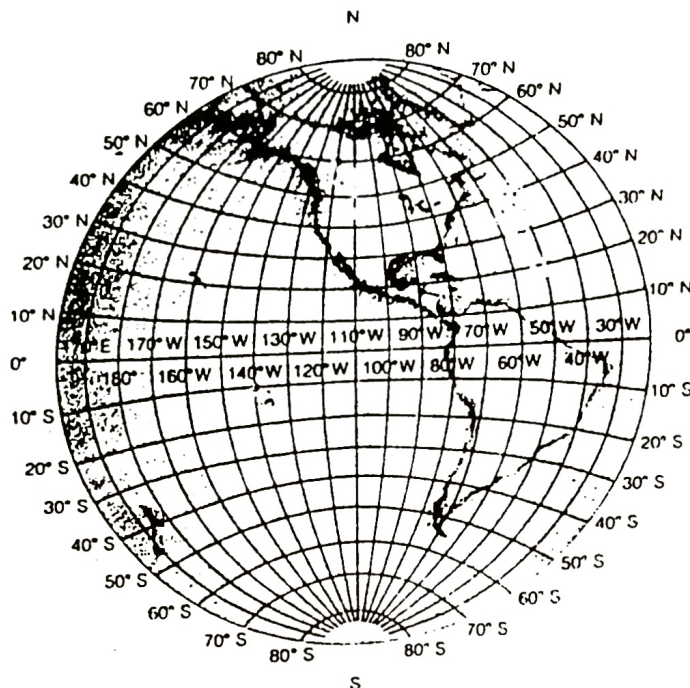


Smaller tracts can be further subdivided by simply adding more descriptions. For example, the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  can be broken down by adding the S $\frac{1}{2}$  of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ . The smaller the tract of land, the longer the description. A 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  acre description is quite common.

A quarter section is 160 acres. One fourth of that would be 40 acres. One fourth of 40 acres would be described as the NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , which would be 10 acres. One fourth of the 10-acre tract would be 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres, and so on. The south half of that NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  would be 20 acres.

The U. S. Government first gave land to the veterans of the war of 1812. Also, the Homestead Act of 1862 gave settlers 160 acres for living on the land and improving it.



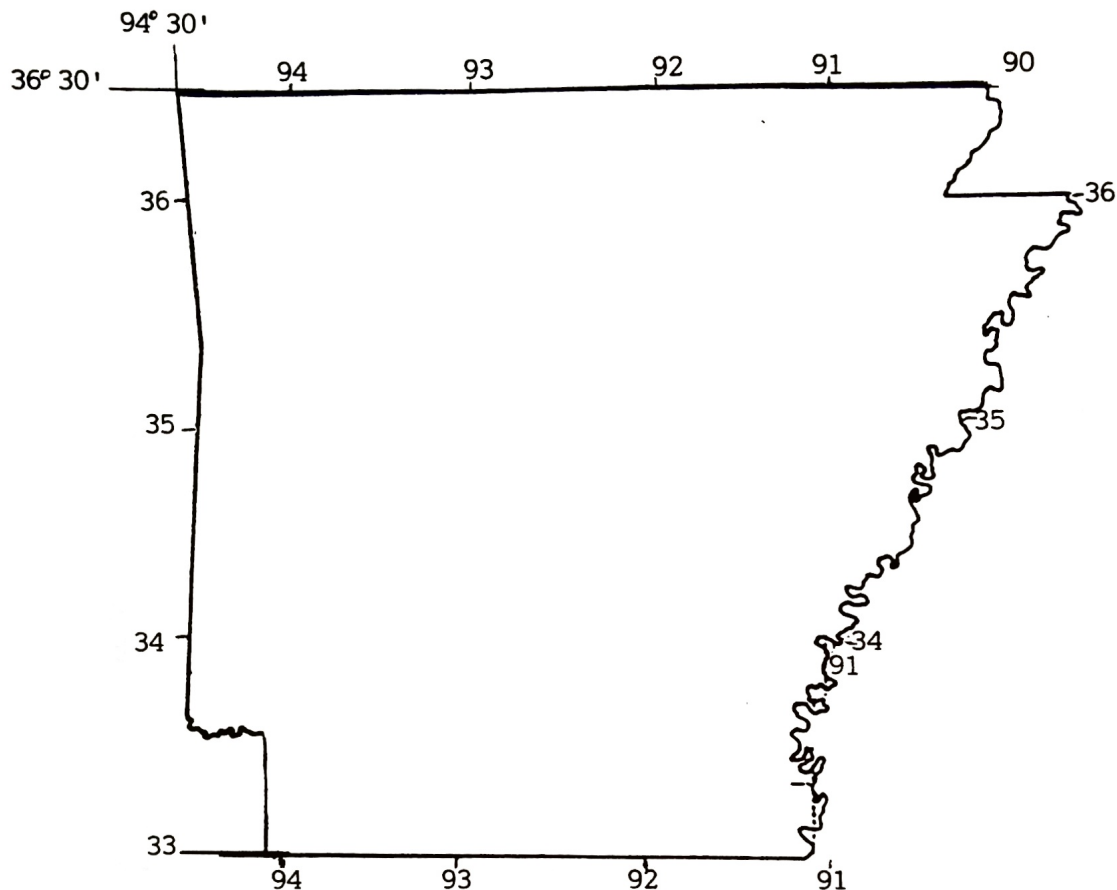


## FINDING YOUR WAY WITH LONGITUDE AND LATITUDE

The above map shows how the world is divided into a grid system. The east-west lines are called latitude lines. They run parallel to the equator. All of North America is in north latitude. Arkansas is between 33 degrees north, and 36 degrees and 30 minutes north. One degree is about 66 miles. There are 60 minutes in one degree. Degrees are designated with a small zero ( $^{\circ}$ ). Minutes are designated with an apostrophe ( $'$ ). For example, halfway between  $33^{\circ}$  north and  $34^{\circ}$  north is  $33^{\circ}$  and  $30'$ .

Hand-held computers are used by police and other emergency organizations to determine latitude and longitude. Locations can be found within a few seconds by pressing buttons. Using these requires an understanding of the system.

Longitude lines are the north-south lines. These all run from the North Pole to the South Pole. The numbering begins on the Prime Meridian which runs through Greenwich, England. In North America, all longitude numbers are west. Arkansas lies between  $90^{\circ}$  and  $94^{\circ}$  and  $30'$  west longitude.



The numbers along the sides of the above map are north latitude numbers. Along the top and bottom are longitudinal numbers giving degrees west of the Prime Meridian. On both latitude and longitude, when using minutes, halfway between each degree would be 30 minutes. One fourth of the distance would be 15 minutes, etc.

Here are some examples of the locations of four towns in Arkansas. Using the above map, find the degrees north and west for your town.

1. 36°, 15' North 94° West..... Springdale
2. 35°, 25' North 93°, 30' West..... Clarksville
3. 34°, 15' North 92° West..... Pine Bluff
4. 34°, 40' North 92°, 30' West..... Little Rock