

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Harvey C. Couch School

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: Located northeast of intersection of County Road 11
(Calhoun Road) and County Road 25

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Calhoun

vicinity: N/A

state: AR county: Columbia code: AR 027 zip code: 71753

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. _____ See continuation sheet.

Cathryn H. Slater _____ 4-13-93
Signature of certifying official 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.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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5. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this 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 Keeper Date
of Action

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6. Function or Use

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Historic: EDUCATION _____ Sub: School _____

Current: SOCIAL _____ Sub: Meeting Hall _____

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7. Description
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Architectural Classification:

Craftsman

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation Brick roof Asbestos
walls Brick other N/A

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Locally.

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE

Period(s) of Significance: 1928

Significant Dates: 1928

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Curzon, Richard/
Wilson, Guy/F.N. Powell

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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X See continuation sheet.

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 -- Specify Repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: Approximately one

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>485700</u>	<u>3675500</u>	B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____

____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: ____ See continuation sheet.

See attached sketch map.

Boundary Justification: ____ See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes all of the surrounding property historically associated with this resource that retains its integrity.

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Kenneth Story, Architectural Historian

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: April 9, 1993

Street & Number: 323 Center Street, Suite 1500 Telephone: (501) 324-9880

City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201

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Summary

Located on the north side of Calhoun Road (which runs southeast from the county seat of Magnolia toward Atlanta, Arkansas), the Harvey C. Couch School is a single-story, brick masonry veneer school building designed in a restrained version of the Craftsman style. Built in 1928, the Harvey Couch School remains remarkably intact, the only exceptions being the addition of internal plumbing and a modern air conditioning system.

Elaboration

The Harvey C. Couch School is a single-story, brick masonry veneer school building designed in a restrained version of the Craftsman style. Its rectangular plan is augmented only by a gable roof, open front porch and four concrete staircases that project at different points from the building's other three sides. Three brick chimneys project from the main, hipped roof section of the school: the first near the center of the west wall, the second near the northeast corner, and the third just to the south of center of the east wall. The combination hipped/gable roof is covered with asbestos shingles, the walls are faced with brick, and all are supported by the continuous brick foundation.

The southern or front elevation is anchored by the projecting, open, gable roof front porch that shelters the recessed, double-leaf entrance beneath. The porch and recessed entrance are both placed slightly off-center toward the east. The entrances within are each composed of a single-leaf, eighteen-pane wooden door surmounted by a six-pane transom. The pediment of the porch gable features the concrete entrance signage stating "Calhoun Dist. No. 3/Harvey C. Couch School." Directly above, in the gable peak of the main building is a simple, eight-pane wood fanlight set into a brick arch. Two nine-over-nine wood sash windows fenestrate the wall to either side of the porch. The northern or rear elevation opposite is asymmetrically punctuated by two single-leaf doors -- one placed just beneath the cornice to the west of center and the other placed lower and near the eastern wall -- both of which are covered with simple, bracketed shed roofs. A grouped pair of nine-over-nine wood sash windows, placed between the two doors, lights the interior. Each of the two entrances is accessed via a simple concrete staircase that runs along the wall and up to a flat concrete deck supported upon a pair of brick piers.

The western elevation is composed of four groups of three windows each, all of which are of the same nine-over-nine wood sash configuration seen elsewhere. A single wood sash window completes the elevation at the northern end, along with a single-leaf, eighteen-pane wood entrance door also accessed via a short concrete staircase and deck, and sheltered by a

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bracketed, wooden shed roof. The eastern elevation opposite exhibits a comparable amount of window surface, though the configuration differs somewhat. Two groups of triple windows light the wall to the south, while the windows to the north of the central, single-leaf entrance are placed in one group of four and another of two. All windows, however, are of the same size and pane configuration as those on the elevation opposite.

The significant exterior details are limited to the decorative Craftsman style brackets on the southern porch and gable end, the southern fanlight, the brick piers supporting the front porch and the exposed rafters that extend around the western, northern and eastern elevation. A single band of bricks placed on-end creates a watertable located approximately two feet above grade that extends around the main body of the building.

The interior is relatively simple -- as was typical of public school construction during the 1920's -- with simple plank moldings around windows and doors, and the walls and ceiling covered with beaded board. Some interesting features survive, such as the beveled wall/ceiling intersections around the classrooms and the use of simply panelled rolling overhead doors to divide rooms and separate the stage area from the classroom.

The alterations to the Harvey C. Couch School are limited to the addition of two bathrooms, the air conditioning of the western half of the building, and the extension of the stage area ten feet to the south. It remains largely intact.

Also included in the nomination is an adjacent, modern metal building; it is non-contributing.

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that included Harvey Couch himself as featured speaker and comments by former Governor T. C. McRae.

The existence of such other Harvey C. Couch-associated properties as the two afore-mentioned dams and his residence on Lake Catherine known as Couchwood (all of which are already listed on the National Register) precludes the eligibility of this property under Criterion B. Yet the minimal yet evident Craftsman-style influence on the design of this structure -- including the decorative stick brackets, the exposed rafters and the square brick piers supporting the porch -- elevate this typically functional school building to its status as the best example of this particular architectural style in the small community of Calhoun. It is for this reason that is locally significant under Criterion C.

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Bibliography

Banner News, Magnolia, Arkansas: August, 1928; July, 1940.

Chenault, Fletcher, *Leaders of Men*, (Magnolia, Arkansas: 1930).

Deed Records, Columbia County Courthouse, Magnolia, Arkansas; Book 66, page 488.

Goodspeeds' Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas, (Chicago, Nashville and St. Louis, 1890).

"The Harvey Couch Homecoming," *Dixie Magazine*, Volume IV, Nos. 8-9, August-September, 1928.

Home-Coming Day Exercises, Program of Events, Calhoun, Arkansas, August, 1928.

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Summary

Criterion C, local significance

The Harvey C. Couch School is locally significant under Criterion C through its status as the best example of a Craftsman-style school building in the community of Calhoun. Of particular note are the exposed rafters, the tall brick chimneys, and the wood knee braces that support the porch roofs on all sides of the structure. The interior, finished in narrow beaded board, is also typical of school buildings designed in this style.

Elaboration

The community of Calhoun was among the earliest established within the confines of what would become Columbia County (officially created by an act of the State Legislature on December 17, 1852) as it could claim one of the earliest recorded post offices. It also became the center and namesake of one of the first townships created after the establishment of the county.

The first European settlement in the proximity of what was to become the Calhoun community came from Georgia, Alabama and the Carolinas. Though the migration began as early as the 1820's, it occurred in earnest during the 1840's and 1850's. Many settlers stopped in Calhoun on their way to Texas and decided to remain, possibly due to the abundance of wild game. Though the county seat was established at Magnolia -- six miles to the northwest -- Calhoun supplied several of the county officers that served during its incipient years.

The Calhoun community declined in importance after the Civil War, largely due to the decision of such railroad companies as the St. Louis, Arkansas & Texas (later the Cotton Belt) and the Louisiana and Northwest to lay their tracks elsewhere in the county. Soon such railroad communities as Magnolia, Waldo, and Emerson enjoyed the growth and prosperity so frequently brought by the railroad and the access it provided to larger markets and goods, while the more remote communities became increasingly isolated and peripheral to this changing economy. Yet even into the early twentieth century Calhoun managed to retain a significant portion of its population -- no mean feat in the face of the myriad opportunities offered elsewhere by the growth of the national railroad system.

One of Calhoun's most distinguished citizens would figure prominently in the construction of the new District No. 3 school. Harvey C. Couch, born and raised in Calhoun, became one of Arkansas' pioneers in economic and industrial development. Before founding the electric power company Arkansas Light & Power in 1913 -- the forerunner to Arkansas Power & Light -- Couch was an early leader in Arkansas's fledgling telephone industry in the 1890's and early

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1900's. Later, in the 1920's and 1930's he became a major force in the railway industry through his acquisition of the Louisiana & Arkansas and Kansas City-Southern railroads.

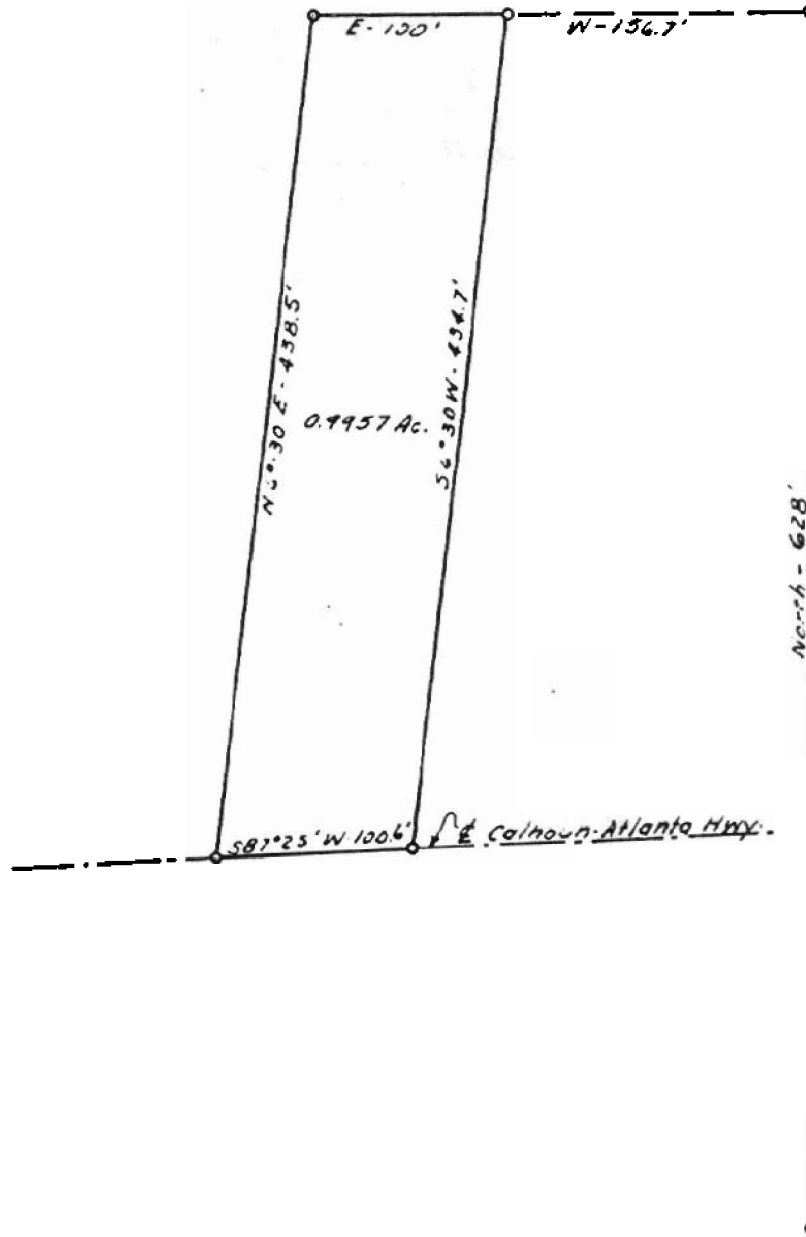
However, it was the founding of Arkansas Power & Light and the direct guidance with which he steered its growth during the Great Depression for which he is best known. Couch's dream began with the purchase of two small, independent electric plants in Malvern and Arkadelphia around 1907. He then contracted with a local lumber company to install extra boilers in its own power plant, using the excess steam to operate a 500 kilowatt generator in a separate plant erected adjacent to the sawmill. A transmission line was then installed between the sawmill and the Malvern and Arkadelphia communities, thereby providing these cities with their first source of electricity that was available 24-hours per day.

The success of this initial venture encouraged Couch to begin expanding his markets, and, of necessity, his investment capital. Throughout the course of the 1920's Couch continually brought in potential investors and industrialists from throughout the country to inspect his thriving operation. He first procured the capital necessary to expand the company and then began an impressive campaign to expand the market for his electricity. Up to the mid-1920's nocturnal lighting constituted the primary demand for this service. Couch recognized this and began to push for the electrification of cotton gins and the use of electric pumps for rice irrigation. His success in this effort, combined with the ongoing purchase and incorporation of other previously-independent power and generating systems further required the construction of the Rammel and Carpenter Dams on the Ouachita River, thereby creating Lake Catherine and Lake Hamilton, respectively. Furthermore, the ability to raise and lower the amount of power produced, dependent upon demand, allowed the Arkansas Power & Light Company to survive the Great Depression while continuing to produce electricity. When Harvey Couch died in 1940 he left an impressive legacy of economic and industrial development that changed the lifestyles and standard of living of Arkansans forever.

In 1928 Couch decided that it was time to do something for the small, rural community in which he had been raised. The Calhoun community desired a new, modern school building for its students; Harvey Couch offered to donate the \$10,000 it would cost for the construction of the building itself according to plans supplied and approved by the State Department of Education. The school district supplied the site and class room equipment; virtually everything else was donated by some member or friend of the Couch family, including the kitchenette equipment, the piano and the books for the library. Designed by the architect Richard Curzon and constructed under the supervision of Mr. F. N. Powell with Guy Wilson serving as builder, the Harvey C. Couch School measured 75 feet by 48 feet and included classrooms that could accommodate 150 students. It was dedicated in August of 1928 with a homecoming celebration



1" = 100'



SE Cor. NW 1/4 - NW 1/4
Sec. 35-T17S-R20W

PLAT OF SURVEY
FOR
CALHOON COMMUNITY CLUB INC.

Commencing at the SE Corner of the NW 1/4 - NW 1/4 - Sec. 35-T17S-R20W and run North 628 ft; Thence West 156.7 ft. to the Point of Beginning; Thence S 6°30' W 434.7 ft. to the Center of Calhoun-Atlanta Highway; Thence S 87°25' W 100.6 ft. Along said Highway; Thence N 6°30' E 438.5 ft; Thence East 100 ft. to the SURVEYOR'S CERTIFICATE Point of Beginning.

I certify that the above plat discloses the result of a survey made by me on Feb. 4, 1959 and that the improvements are shown above. There are no encroachments from the above property on to adjoining property or from adjoining property on to the above property. Any easements disclosed by the survey are shown.

Paul E. Hoop

Surveyor

KANSAS
MISSION
OCK

CALHOUN QUADRANGLE
ARKANSAS - COLUMBIA CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

1:650,000 FEET

93° 07' 30" W
33° 15' N

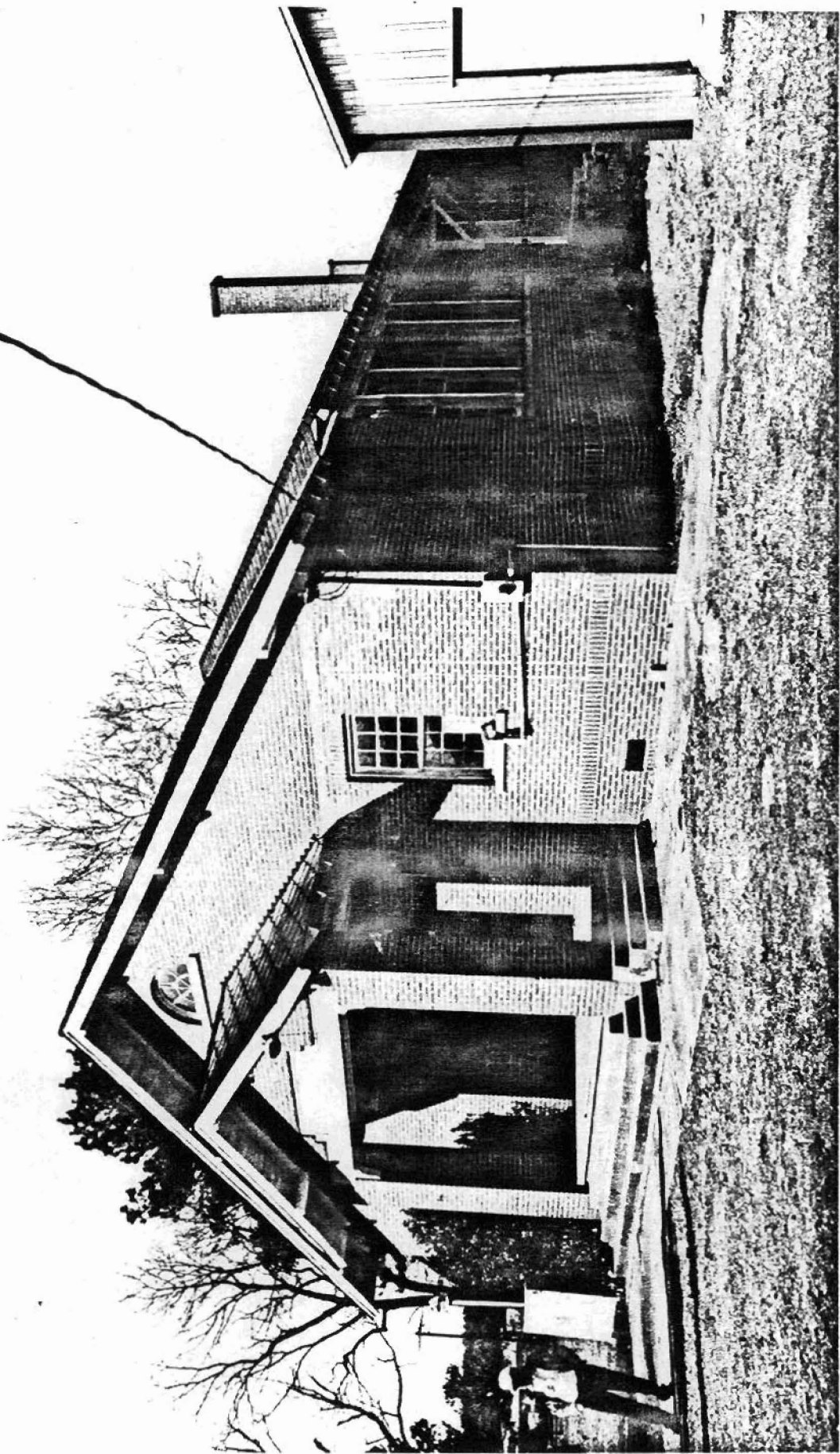


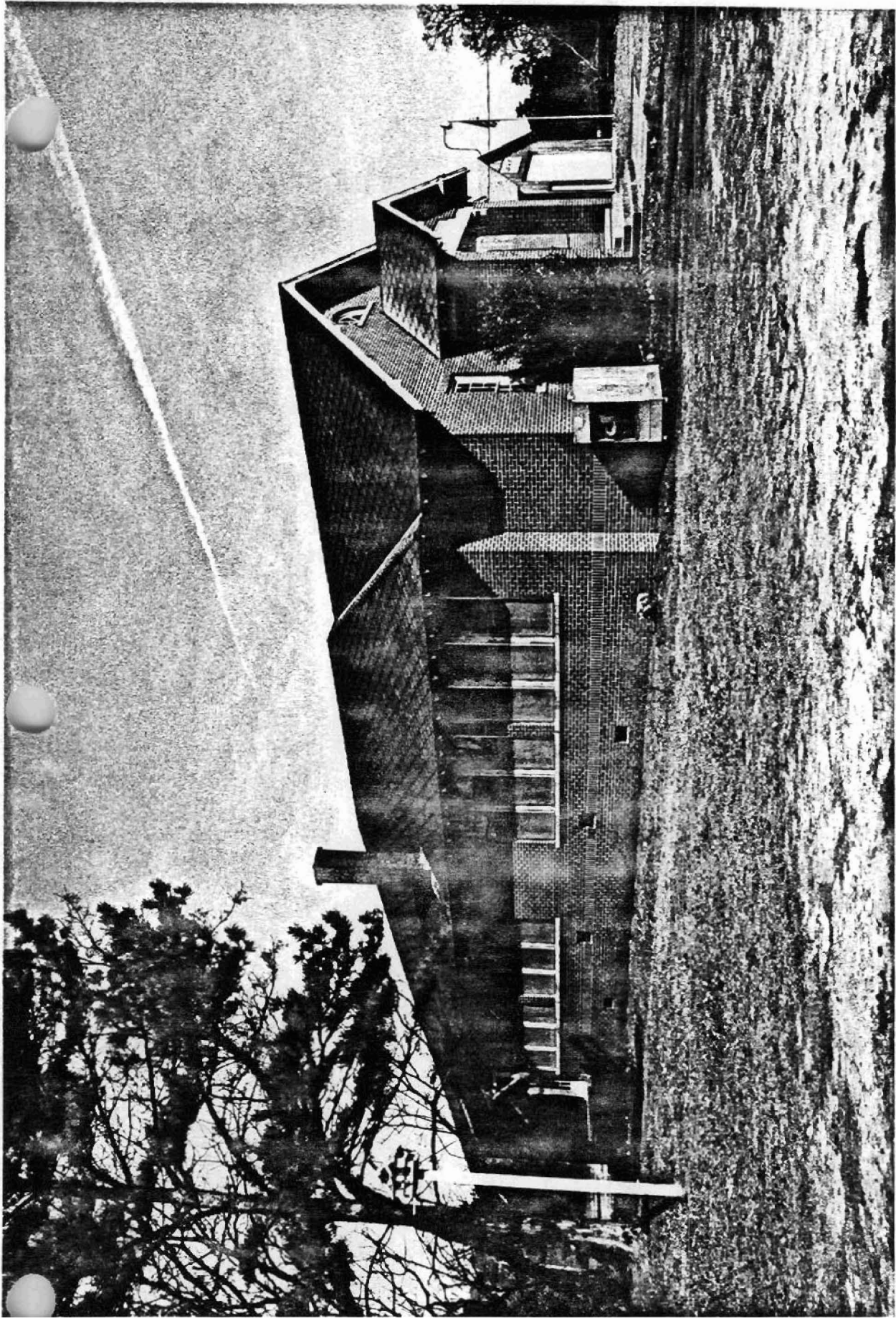
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FEET

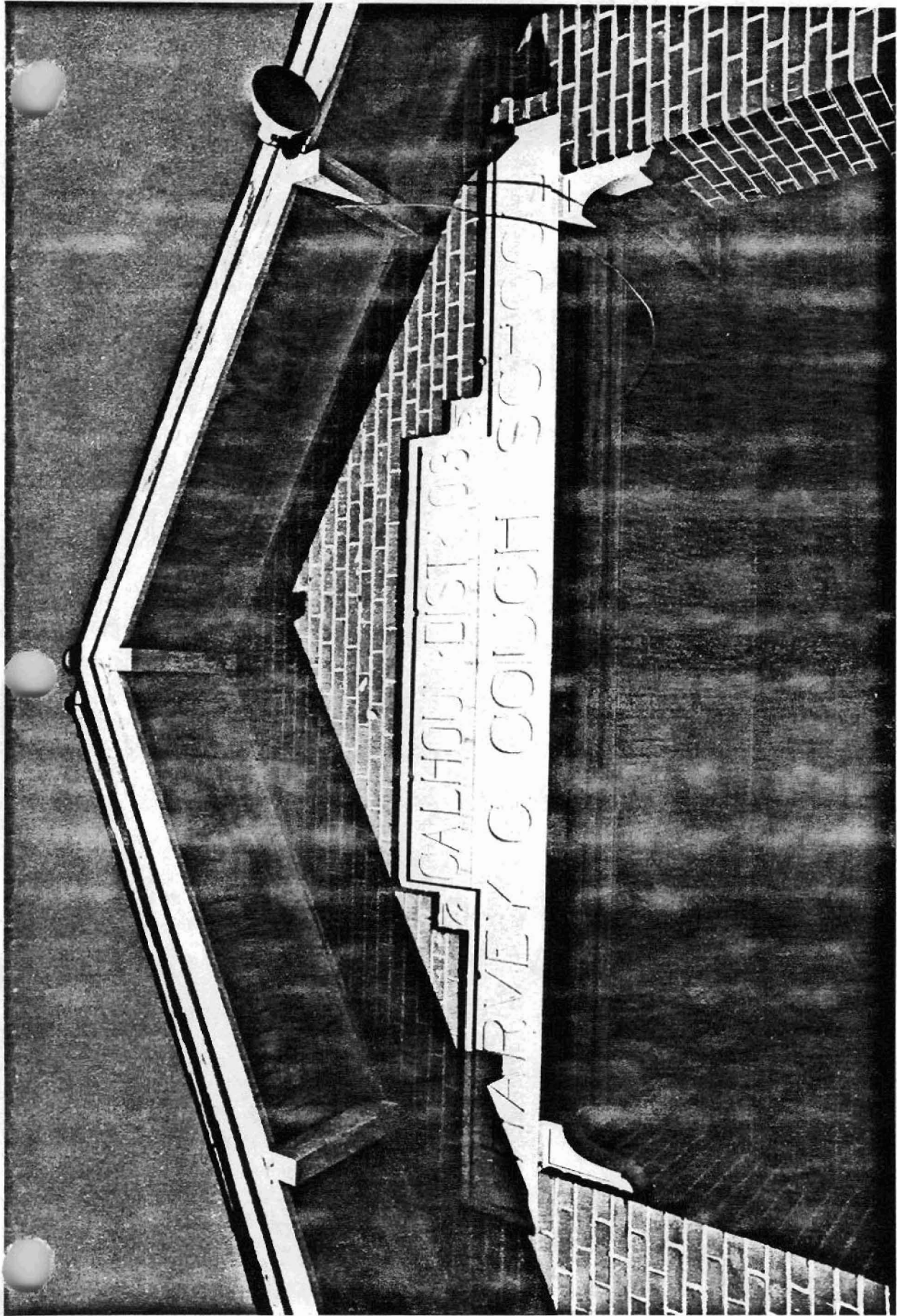
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HARRY C. ROCK
JENNER
CALHOUN,
COLUMBIA CO.,
ARKANSAS
15485700/3675500

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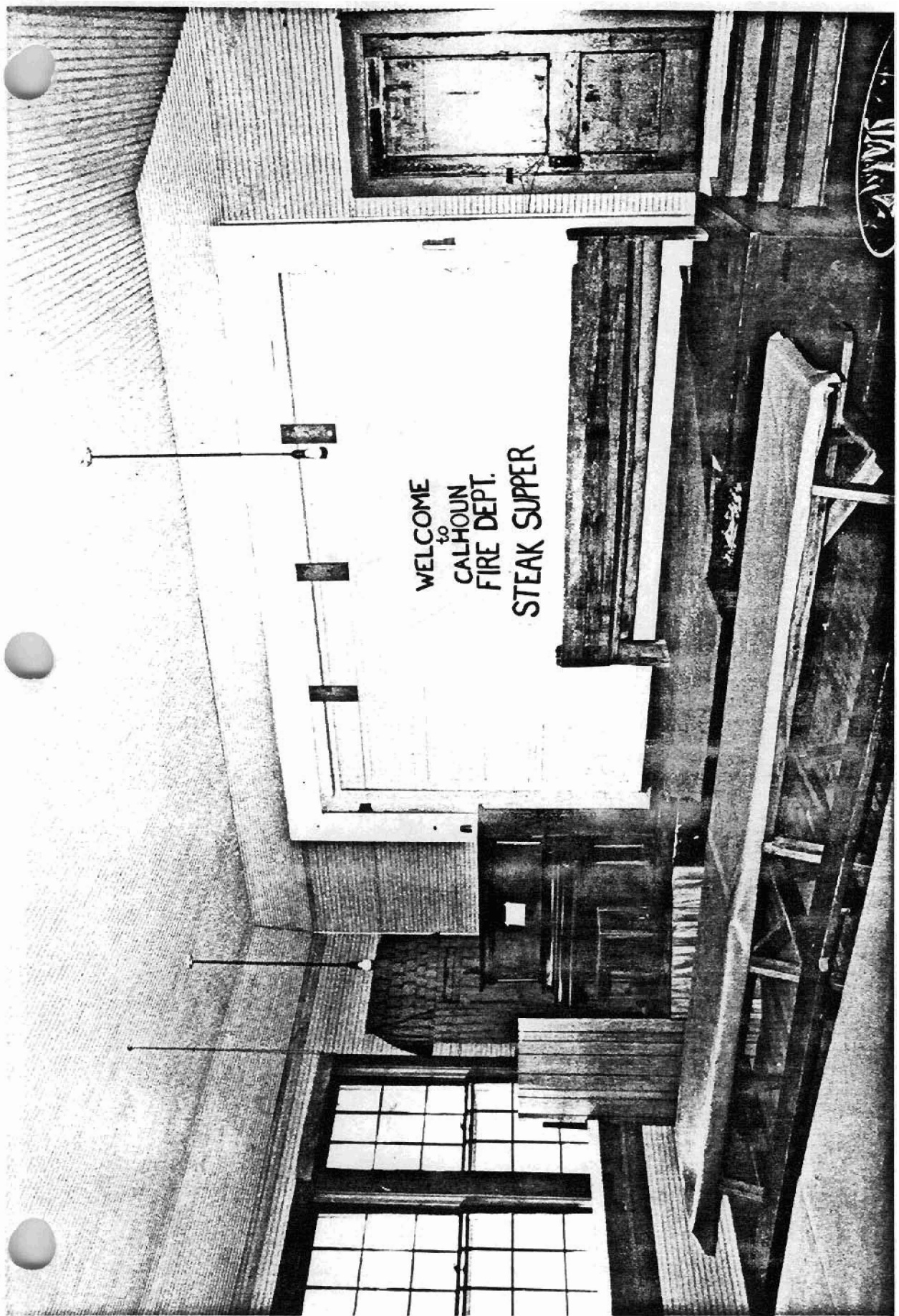
1350' SE
VILLAGE











WELCOME
to
CALHOUN
FIRE DEPT.
STEAK SUPPER



