

NR listed 5/30/91

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Knob School/Masonic Lodge

other names/site number N/A

### 2. Location

street & number State Highway 141

not for publication N/A

city, town Knob

vicinity N/A

state Arkansas

code AR

county Clay

code AR 021

zip code 72436

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

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

#### Category of Property

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

#### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>      </u> buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

4-23-91

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

### 5. National Park Service Certification

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 the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

School  
Masonic Hall

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Masonic Hall

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Craftsman  
Other: Plain Traditional

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls Weatherboard  
roof Tin  
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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**Summary**

The Knob School/Masonic Lodge is a two-story frame structure with a rectangular plan covered by a hipped roof main section and a smaller hipped roof over the frontal single-story extension with inset porch and end rooms.

**Elaboration**

Constructed in 1923, the Knob School/Masonic Lodge is a rectangular two-story frame building of a vernacular Craftsman style. The Craftsman influence is seen primarily in the exposed rafters of the hipped roofs. The main two-story section rests on a continuous concrete foundation and is shielded from the elements by a large hipped roof sheathed with tin. The original frontal single-story extension rests on concrete piers and is likewise covered by a hipped tin roof. White-painted weatherboarding is used for the siding.

The southern or front elevation features a full-facade, single-story extension covered by a hipped tin roof. This extension features a central inset porch with a single column in the center. The current column is of recent vintage, but it appears that a column has always stood there. The rear wall of the porch is the main wall for the two-story section and is pierced with two doors which provide entry for the two first-floor rooms. The end rooms, originally cloak rooms, each contain a single, central-placed, four-over-four double-hung window. The second-story facade has four evenly-spaced four-over-four double-hung windows with a fifth identical window located just west of its symmetrical position.

The western elevation is comprised of a four-over-four double-hung window in the western cloak room of the single-story front extension. The main section is dominated by two groups of side-by-side, six-over-six double-hung windows separated by three identical six-over-six double-hung windows for a total of seven six-over-six windows in the western facade. The second-story elevation is lighted by two four-over-four double-hung windows.

The northern elevation is dominated by weatherboarding with nothing but five unevenly-spaced, upper-story, four-over-four double-hung windows to provide lighting. The eastern elevation is identical to the western with the exception of the upper-story four-over-four windows being spaced closer together and the recent addition of a black-painted steel fire escape attached to the northern second-story window. The fire escape extends to the south alongside the building at about a forty-five degree angle and reaches the ground near the front of the building.

There have been few interior modifications to the structure. The two cloak rooms have been converted into rest rooms, and the western first-floor classroom has had some kitchen facilities

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added. The original oil lamps, hung along the walls, were removed in the late 1930's when the school received electricity. A multiple-folding wooden partition originally separated the two classrooms. The wooden partition remains today but folds only at one end to allow access to the adjoining room. This modification occurred when a school teacher, Ms. Signa Horton, became exasperated with her students passing notes to the children in the other classroom through the cracks caused by the folding doors. To remedy this situation, she had her father nail wooden strips over the cracks, which solved the note-passing problem but rendered the partition largely immovable.

The upper-story was originally constructed for the Masonic Lodge and consists of a small vestibule and the meeting room. The stairway was originally entered through the western cloak room, but has since been reconstructed and is located along the southern wall inside of the western classroom. The enclosed stairway walls and the vestibule have been sheathed with modern imitation wood paneling. Alterations to the Lodge meeting room have been minor and consist primarily of the addition of pinewood wainscoting.

There are no outbuildings associated with the Knob School/Masonic Lodge. At one time, there was an outbuilding described as a pergola where the big bell of the Masons and the well pump were housed. There were outdoor toilets, but these were removed when the cloak rooms were converted into rest rooms after the school acquired a rural water system. The school building is located on four acres of land.

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Summary Criterion C, local significance

The Knob School/Masonic Lodge is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance as the best surviving example of a vernacular Craftsman frame school building in the county.

### Elaboration

The Knob School/Masonic Lodge is the best extant example of a vernacular Craftsman frame schoolhouse in the county. The school building was the third school built at Knob and was constructed in 1923 by Tump and Sweet Cagle, two brothers from Rector who, with the advent of sawmills in the area, began building frame houses to replace the area's log homes. Two local carpenters, Ernest Reed and John Mannon, assisted with the construction.

Knob is located in Clay County near the southern border with Greene County on the western edge of Crowley's Ridge. It was originally known as Rock Spring or Rock Spring's Community after a small spring on the ridge. Located on the Chalk Bluff-Gainesville Trail, the area around the rock spring was first settled around 1845. Nearby is another "everlasting" spring where Indians and the early travellers camped. The nearest trading center was Gainesville, approximately ten miles to the south, which became the county seat of Greene County in 1840 and had become well-established by the mid-1840's. Clay County did not exist at this time; the western half was a part of Randolph County and the eastern half, including Rock Spring, belonged to Greene County.

Clayton County was created by an act of legislation on March 24, 1873 and named in honor of John M. Clayton, a member of the state senate at that session. During the next session of the General Assembly on December 6, 1875, the last syllable of the name was dropped changing it to "Clay" in honor of Henry Clay of Kentucky. From this time until the turn of the century, Rock Spring experienced little change. More people settled though there was still no general store. After the passage of acts providing for a tax-supported system of public schools, the Rock Spring School District No. 13 was created in 1871. Local oral history indicates that subscription schools were held at Rock Spring many years prior to 1871, but an 1872 school register is the oldest record still in existence. The first school was held in a log house near the rock spring which was utilized for drinking water. Church services were also held in this building.

Rock Springs had somewhat of a frontier atmosphere in the late nineteenth century. One interesting story passed down from this era involves the infamous Jesse James. Jesse James was travelling on the Chalk Bluff-Gainesville Trail on his way to Missouri. At Rock Spring he passed by the old Lucy place and noticed a woman weeping on the front porch. After

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inquiring as to her troubles, Jesse learned that the mortgage on her home was due and, as she was a widow and unable to pay it, she would lose her home. According to the story, Jesse gave her a sack of gold to pay her debt and then rode away. Jesse, however, returned to the home and concealed himself until the transaction was completed. He then trailed the man who held the mortgage and promptly robbed him to reclaim his undoubtedly ill-gotten gains.

In 1901, the first store opened in Rock Spring. Two years later Rock Spring was granted a post office with James L. Bartlett as postmaster. Three names for the post office: Knob, Teddy, and Cork were mailed in by the local residents. The name Knob was chosen, presumably because the post office would be located on a hillside. The post office was discontinued in Knob in 1910 when Rural Free Delivery was started with Marmaduke as the post office. Knob experienced some growth during the first decade of the twentieth century. In 1907 the community acquired its first telephone system, and in 1909 the school district erected a new one-room frame schoolhouse with factory made seats. The community probably profited some from nearby timber-related industries, but for the most part the settlers were small-scale hill farmers. At that time, all of the flatland of the Cache River bottoms was either timber or stump covered and always subject to severe flooding. The first effort to utilize these wetlands was started in 1910 with the creation of the Central Clay County Drainage District with James Bartlett as president. Within a few years drainage ditches were dug and formerly unproductive swamp land became fertile farm land, making large-scale agriculture possible for the residents of this hillside community.

In 1913, an additional room was added to the existing one-room school at a cost of \$275. Despite this addition, construction on a new school began in 1923 as a result of newly available funds from the creation of a special school district. Coinciding with the construction of the new school was the search for a new building for the Boydsville Masonic Lodge # 75, whose charter dated November 11, 1853. The church building in Boydsville where they met regularly had burned in 1921. After deciding that it was too expensive to build a new structure, the Boydsville Masonic Lodge reached an agreement with the Knob School District to pay for a second-story addition to the new school then being built. The Masonic Lodge, along with the more recently established Order of the Eastern Star, continue to meet upstairs weekly.

The Knob School consisted of eight grades with four per room. High school was not available at Knob, and children who wished to continue their education enrolled in the high school at Lafe in Greene County, which was somewhat closer than Knobel, the nearest high school in Clay County. As consolidation with a larger school became necessary, many in the Knob community were hesitant to consolidate with the Lafe School District, which had expressed interest in the merger. The idea of county loyalty was partly the issue; however some of the people opposed consolidation with Lafe because of cultural differences. The

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people who had settled in Knob were mostly of English and Scotch-Irish descent and had moved to Arkansas usually from Tennessee or Kentucky, whereas Lafe had been largely settled by German immigrants of the Lutheran faith.

Whatever the reasons, the Knob School District consolidated with the Knobel School District in 1947 and became Knobel School District No. 11. At first only the seventh and eighth grades were taken to Knobel, but shortly thereafter all classes were conducted at Knobel. The classrooms at Knob have since served as a community center for the area, and a reunion is held each year for the former students.

The Knob School/Masonic Lodge is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance as the best surviving example of a wood frame school house in the vernacular Craftsman style of architecture in Clay County. There have been no significant alterations to the structure, and the exterior appearance has remained unchanged since its construction in 1923.

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### Bibliography

Horton, Signa Bartlett. *Knob: Its History and Folklore*, 1987.

*Interview and communication with Signa Bartlett Horton.*



**B. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance  
1923

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates  
N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

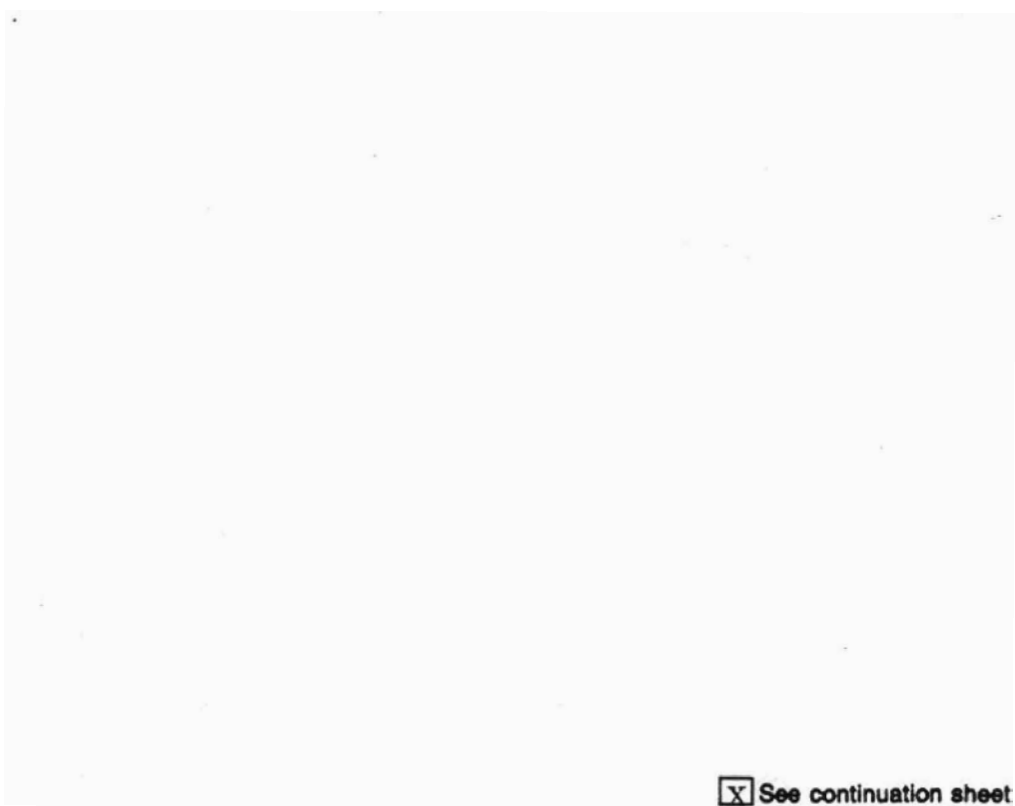
Significant Person  
N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Cagle, Tump  
Cagle, Sweet  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.



See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acres of property Less than one

**UTM References**

A 

1	5	7	2	9	0	4	0	4	0	1	7	9	9	5
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

C 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** Beginning at the intersection at the northern edge of Hwy. 141 and the line formed by the western elevation of the building, proceed northerly along said line to a point formed by the intersection of said line and the line formed by the northern elevation of the building; thence proceed easterly to a point formed by the intersection of said line and the line formed by the eastern elevation of the building; thence proceed southerly to a point formed by the intersection of said line and the northern edge of Hwy. 141; thence proceed westerly to the point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

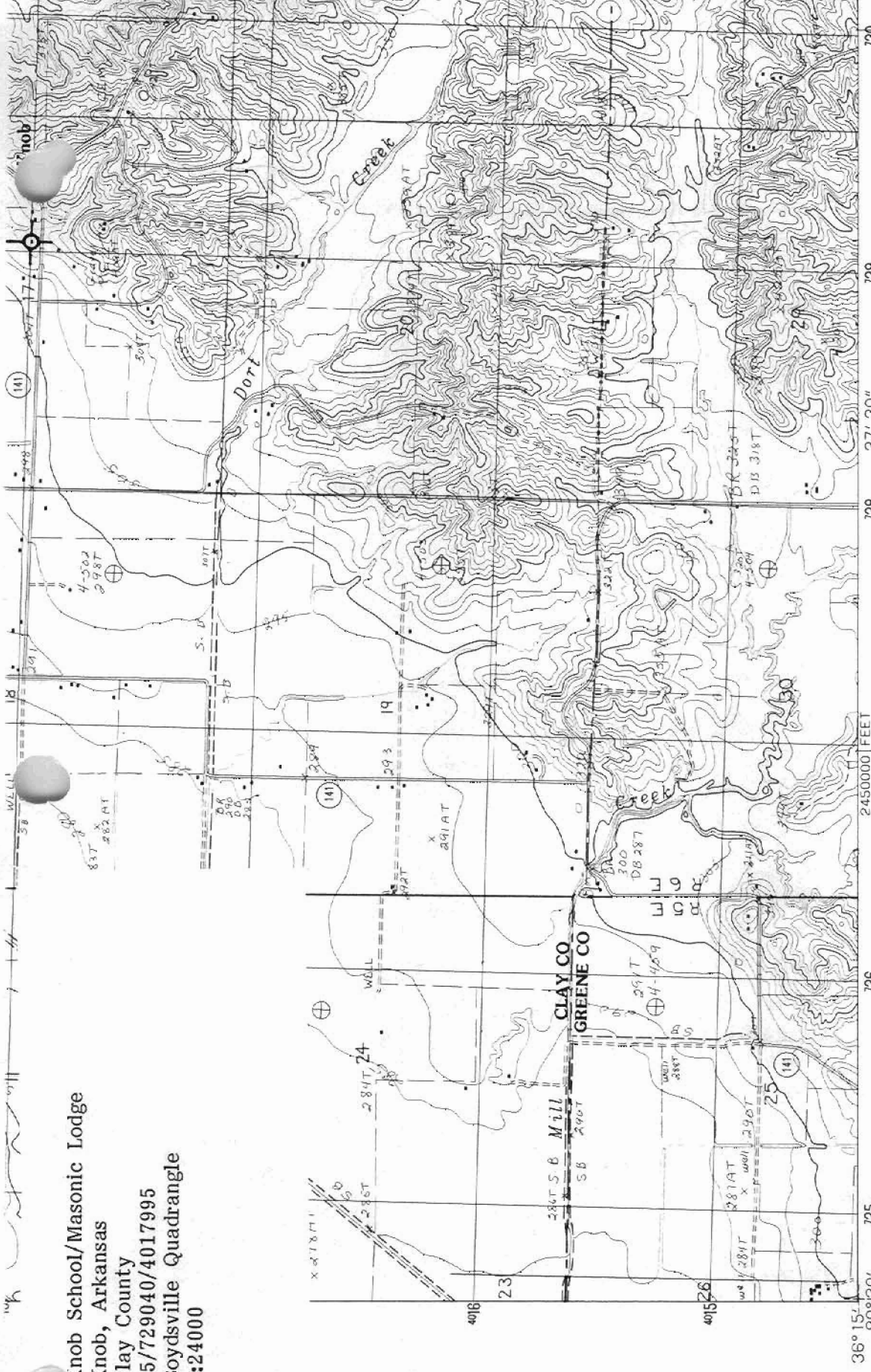
This boundary includes all the property historically associated with this resource.

See continuation sheet

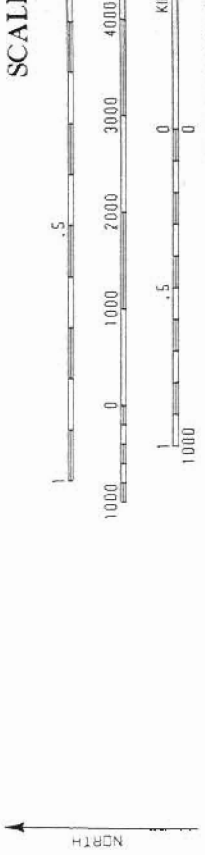
**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Patrick Zollner/ National Register Historian  
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 4/10/91  
street & number 225 East Markham, Suite 300 telephone (501) 324-9346  
city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Knob School/Masonic Lodge  
 Knob, Arkansas  
 Clay County  
 15/729040/4017995  
 Boydsville Quadrangle  
 1:24000



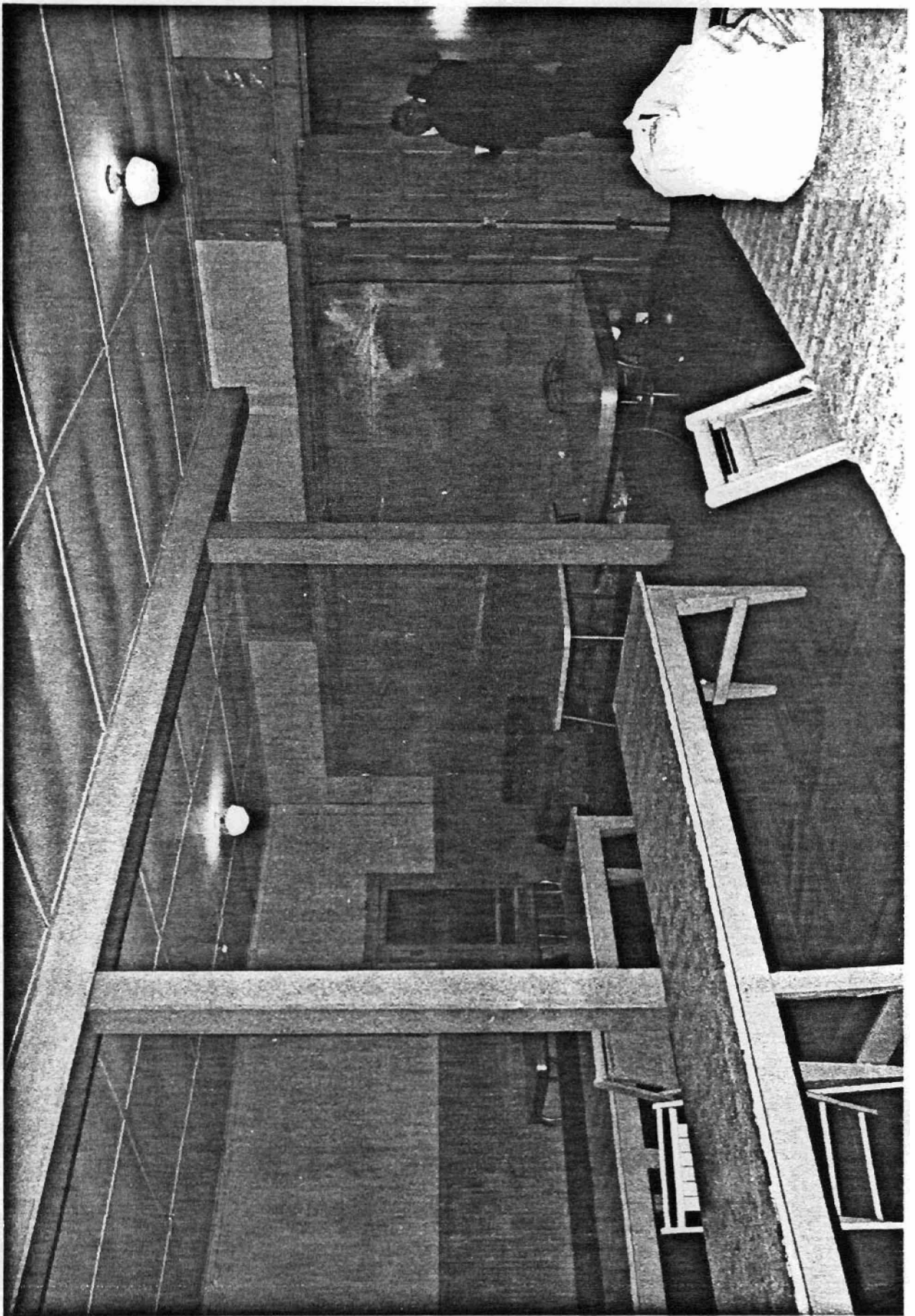
PRODUCED BY THE UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
 CONTROL BY . . . . . USGS AND NOS/NOAA  
 COMPILED FROM AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN . . . . . 1980  
 FIELD CHECKED . . . . . 1982. MAP EDITED . . . . . 1984  
 PROJECTION . . . . . LAMBERT CONFORMAL CONIC  
 GRID; 1000-METER UNIVERSAL TRANSVERSE MERCATOR . . . . . ZONE 15  
 10,000-FOOT STATE GRID TICKS. . . . . ARKANSAS, NORTH ZONE  
 UTM GRID DECLINATION . . . . . 13° EAST  
 1984 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION . . . . . 3°00' EAST  
 VERTICAL DATUM . . . . . NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
 HORIZONTAL DATUM . . . . . 1927 NORTH AMERICAN DATUM  
 To place on the predicted North American Datum of 1983,  
 move the projection lines as shown by dashed corner ticks  
 (5 meters south and 9 meters east)  
 There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of any  
 Federal and State Reservations shown on this map  
 No distinction made between houses, barns, and other buildings



**PROVISIONAL MAP**  
 Produced from original  
 manuscript drawings. Informa-  
 tion shown as of date of  
 photography.

CONTOUR INTERVAL  
 CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN  
 OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN  
 To convert feet to meters  
 To convert meters to feet

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL  
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER





BOYDSVILLE LODGE, No. 751<sup>st</sup> AM. KNOB CHAPTER No. 533 O.E.S. N.

