

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 Burdette School Complex Historic District

Other names/site number _____

2. Location

Street & number 153 East Park Lane

not for publication

City or town Burdette

vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Mississippi County code 093 zip code 72321

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.)

Cathie Matthews
Signature of certifying official/Title

9/05/01
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

Burdette School Complex

Mississippi County, Arkansas

Name of Property

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		
5		1		buildings
0		0		sites
0		0		structures
0		0		objects
5		1		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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Tudor Revival

Prairie School

Craftsman

Other: Plain/Traditional

Other: Quonset

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

ASBESTOS

STUCCO

roof ASPHALT

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

State

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1922-1951

Significant Dates

1922, circa 1930, 1939, circa 1948

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Works Progress Administration

Harrison Construction Company- Osceola, AR

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, designated landmark, recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey, recorded by Historic American Engineering.

Primary location of additional data:

- Location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State Agency, Federal Agency, Local Government, University, Other.

Name of repository:

Burdette School Complex

Name of Property

Mississippi County, Arkansas

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property Approximately 9 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	234630	3966970	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Nine acres of the NE 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section 29, Township 14 N, Range 11 E

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses all buildings historically associated with the school complex.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ruth Hale (edited by Zac Cothren)

organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 7/31/01

street & number 1500 Tower Building 323 Center St. telephone (501)324-9789

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 _____

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 Burdette School Historic District consists of approximately 10 acres containing six buildings utilized by Burdette's school community. Covered walkways connect some of the buildings but they are considered to be separate resources. Harrison Construction Company of Blytheville, Arkansas, constructed the first modern school building on the property in 1922. The single-story Prairie style building is sheathed in stucco with a partial basement and covered by a truncated hip roof. The building retains many of its original features on both the interior and the exterior. The architect is unknown but the building plan was selected for the modular interior features that have made it a multi-purpose building. The largest building on the property is a Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) constructed building designed in the Tudor Revival Style. The one-story red brick building was built in 1939 and also retains many of its original interior and exterior features. The former cafeteria is a Craftsman style building that is sheathed in asbestos that was added pre-1950.

Many original windows remain on the cafeteria but have been covered in plywood. The façade of the Quonset style gymnasium is made up of a false front parapet. The parapet disguises the fact that the roof of the structure is not one, but three Quonsets. Only from the rear of the building is this visible. The former agriculture building is a Plain Traditional style building. Like the old cafeteria, the windows are covered, but not infilled and the building has been sheathed in asbestos. The only noncontributing property within the district boundary is the current school cafeteria that was built in 1967. The red brick rectangular shaped building is located near the center of the campus and it, despite its newer construction, blends rather nicely with the rest of the buildings. The district is bounded on the east by South Hickory Lane, the north by East Park Lane, the west by a small area of undeveloped land, and the south by an irrigation ditch.

ELABORATION

1922 School Building (contributing)

The truncated-hipped roof Prairie Style building was constructed in 1922. The northern elevation, or front façade, is fenestrated east to west by four ribbons of two twelve-over-one windows and a small twelve-pane casement window is centrally located above the front door. The fifteen light glass door is flanked on each side with five sidelights. A hipped roof porch extends from above the door and connects to the covered walkway that joins the building with the WPA school building.

The east elevation and west elevation of the building have identical fenestration. Both sides are fenestrated by four sets of two twelve-over-one windows. Metal pilasters extending from the eaves to the ground separate the building into four different sections on both sides.

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The south elevation has a small addition constructed in 1934. The addition has a lower roofline than the original portion of the building. With the exception of a twelve-pane casement window, centrally located above the roof of the addition, all fenestration on the elevation is located on the addition where two four-pane casement windows flank the central door.

The interior of the building was remodeled in 1934 with funding from the Civil Works Administration, but except for the covering of the hall walls with wallboard, remains virtually unchanged. Original wood flooring, doors and radiators are still found throughout the schools interior. The building has served as classrooms, a vicarage, and as the superintendent's residence. The building was most recently used as a pre-school facility.

WPA Building (contributing)

The Works Progress Administration constructed this English Revival Style, red brick, one-story building in 1939. The building displays a large rectangular-shaped wing that makes up the front of the school with a smaller rectangular-shaped wing that makes up the rear of the building. The auditorium that intersects both wings in middle connects the building with an intersecting gable roof. The building faces north toward East Park Lane and is covered by a gable-on-hip roof. The dominating features of the building are the two arched entryways that are covered by steeply pitched intersecting gable roofs.

The north/front façade is fenestrated from left to right by four ribbons of three, nine-over-nine windows. A pair of twelve-light doors beneath a twelve-light transom is recessed beneath an arched entryway to a steeply pitched gable overhang. The building's two main entryways are separated from left to right by a single nine-over-nine window followed by three ribbons of three of the same type of window and followed by a single window. The northwest entrance is identical to the northeast entrance. Continuing left to right to the end of the front façade are three ribbons of three nine-over-nine windows.

The west elevation of the wing is fenestrated by a pair of wood doors, each displaying six panes that are located under a shed roof covered porch. Two pair of two nine-over-nine windows follow the door. The east elevation of the wing is only fenestrated by a pair of doors identical to those found on the west elevation.

The south elevation of the main wing is divided into two sections by the school auditorium that joins the front wing of the building to the rear wing. The southwest section of the main wing is fenestrated with six pair of nine-over-nine windows. An individual nine-over-nine window is the last fenestration on this section of the building. The southeast section of the wing is fenestrated by four ribbons of three nine-over-nine windows. It is also fenestrated by a pair of the windows on the extreme southeast side.

The section that joins the buildings two wings serves as the school auditorium. Both sides are fenestrated equally with two ribbons of three nine-over-nine windows and a single door in each southernmost corner.

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The smaller rear wing of the building is void of fenestration on its north facing elevation. A shed roof awning porch covers a fifteen-light door on both the east and west elevations of the wing. The south elevation is fenestrated by four ribbons of three nine-over-nine windows. Two of the ribbons are located on each side of a small room that projects from the center of the elevation and houses the building's furnace system.

The interior of the building remains nearly entirely original. Beautiful wood floors, trim, and doors remain and original desks can still be found in some of the classrooms. The library portion of the building has suffered very few alterations and still retains all original built in bookshelves. The school auditorium is pristine.

Old Cafeteria (contributing)

The old cafeteria is located at the southeast corner of the campus and was constructed circa 1930. The Craftsman style building still contains many of its original windows, although they have been covered with plywood. The building is sheathed in asbestos that was applied in the mid-1940s. The building is topped with a hip roof that has five louvered dormer vents. The building's main entrance is located on the north elevation. Access is gained through a pair of five paneled wood doors that are sheltered by a gable roof awning overhang. A second pair of fifteen-light doors is located along the west elevation. There is also a single door located along the east elevation of the building. Although some of the windows are infilled, many are just covered with wood and remain intact. Therefore, the building is considered a contributing resource because of its historic significance to the school complex.

Gymnasium (contributing)

The Gymnasium was constructed in the late 1940s in the Quonset style. The façade of the Quonset gymnasium is made up of a false front parapet. The parapet disguises the fact that the roof of the structure is not one, but three Quonsets. Only from the rear of the building is this visible. The building is covered with a corrugated metal roof and is situated behind the W.P.A. Building.

The entryway extends out from the center of the façade. A nine-pane stationery window is located directly east of the metal double doors. A twelve-pane stationery window is located directly west of the entrance. Nine dormers with four-over-two windows are located along the roof of the building on both the east and west elevations. The south elevation is fenestrated by five four-over-two double hung windows. There are also two sets of double doors located on the elevation.

The most outstanding features of this building are located in the interior. The strange looking metal exterior sharply contrasts with the beautiful wood interior. The fine woodwork rises with the curvature of the roof and makes up the gym ceiling. Original wood floors, ceiling, walls, and built-in spectator bleachers are beautifully maintained.

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Agriculture Building (contributing)

It is fitting that a school, located in an area of the state where the economy revolves around agriculture, would have a building solely used to teach agricultural skills. The Plain-Traditional building faces north toward the W.P.A. building. The off-center entrance is covered with a gable roof porch supported by wood post. The building was covered in asbestos plate siding at the same time as the cafeteria in the mid-1940s. Large wood utility doors remain on the south elevation of the building. Plywood has been placed over all window openings, but all windows remain underneath the temporary covering. Since the application of plywood is not permanent and wall material was added over fifty years ago the building is considered a contributing resource.

New Cafeteria (non-contributing)

The only non-contributing building on the property is the school cafeteria. The cafeteria was built in 1967 to replace the old cafeteria that is still located on the property. The red brick gable roof building blends nicely with the remainder of the school, considering its modern construction. The north elevation is comprised of a section of the building that projects outward from the main portion of the building. The elevation is fenestrated by five twenty-five pane stationary windows. Along both the east and west sides of the projection the building is fenestrated with a pair of double glass doors that provide students access to the cafeteria. The east and west elevations of the main body of the building are each fenestrated with three pair of two-over-two windows. There is also a door located near the rear on both elevations. The only fenestration on the south elevation of the building is a door located on the southwest corner.

Integrity

The Burdette School Complex maintains a high degree of integrity. All buildings that have been built on the site remain making this the most intact school complex known to exist in all of eastern Arkansas. The location and setting of the school is almost exactly how it would have appeared when the school was constructed with a small residential area north of the school and acres of farmland on the other three sides. The beautiful design of the two main school buildings, both interior and exterior exemplify the workmanship and materials used in construction during the time period. The intact cafeteria, gym, and agriculture building have had some minor alterations, however the vast majority of the changes are temporary and do little to detract from the buildings. More importantly the functions that the buildings served contribute to the historic feeling of the school complex.

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SUMMARY

The Burdette School Complex contains five contributing buildings and one non-contributing building all sited on 9 acres of land in Burdette, Arkansas. The Blytheville School District now owns the buildings, but the school complex was closed at the end of the 2001 school year. The 1922 Prairie style building and 1939 Works Progress Administration Building are wonderful examples of historic school buildings. Minor alterations have occurred to the circa-1930 cafeteria and agriculture building and the circa-1948 gym, however they are only temporary and the buildings contribute to the overall appearance of the school complex. The complex reflects the development of the community and the importance placed on educational and cultural activities by its residents. The fact that none of the complex's buildings have been removed makes the school very unique, especially in the Delta area that makes up eastern Arkansas. The Burdette School Complex is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** for its varied styles of architecture, and under **Criterion A** for the educational role it has played in the town of Burdette. It is being nominated with **state significance** as the most extant historic school complex known to exist in the Delta Region of Arkansas.

ELABORATION

In the early part of the twentieth century rural communities in Mississippi County were relatively isolated because of poor transportation. Roads were unpaved and mostly unimproved. Automobiles were rare and most travel was by mule-drawn wagon. It was in this environment that Burdette was founded. It was originally a company town owned by the Three States Lumber Company. The town was incorporated in 1905 when the company opened a mill there. When workers began moving into the town with their families the growing need for a school was felt throughout the community.

While local churches attended to spiritual needs, the school often administered to the more practical aspects of daily living in small communities. In addition to performing its educational mission, the school served as a community meeting place, a recreational/cultural center, the polling place, refuge in times of flood, and as an outpost for public health services. Students were vaccinated and inoculated against typhoid fever and other illnesses in the school nurse's office. Nutrition was poor and diseases caused by lack of vitamins and minerals and unsanitary living conditions were common. The local school provided advice on better eating habits and hygiene to improve the health of the students.

The first school in Burdette was in a building owned by the Three States Lumber Company, but the date of origin is not known. This building stood on the northwest corner of the intersection of what is now Arkansas Highway 148 and North Hickory Lane. It burned and was replaced by another Three States owned building located on North Hickory Lane about one mile northeast of the first location. The third school was on the corner of South Hickory Lane and East Park Lane, directly across from the present campus. There was also

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an early school for black children but its location is unknown. When a new school building was completed in 1922 the old school became the black school.

In 1917 voters in the town of over 900 residents authorized a twelve-mill school tax and the Burdette Special School District # 35 was formed. In 1918 the beginning of school was delayed by the world wide influenza epidemic. Around this same time period C.W. Ramey, the first school board president, was sent to Indiana by Three States Lumber Company to investigate a new type of school building with modular interior walls. The plans he returned with were accepted and the new school building was ready for the 1922 school year. By that time there were three teachers and a principal at Burdette's white school and two teachers and a principal at the black school. At nearby Florenden Plantation, home of former Governor Lowden of Illinois, there was another teacher. These three schools made up the Burdette School District. By 1929 the district consisted of seven schools: Burdette, Florenden, and five others spaced between Burdette and Blytheville.

In 1922 the timber and lumber operations were complete and most of the town's buildings were moved to other locations. Before that time Three States had developed a farming operation on its cleared land and had begun to sell the newly cleared land for agricultural purposes. James Feagin Tompkins, who had been the farm manager for Three States, formed Burdette Plantation Incorporated in order to purchase a large block of land. The town continued on a reduced scale, but was still essentially a company town, this time supporting the plantation operation. Burdette Plantation continued to support the school. James Tompkins became a Board member in 1918 and served on the Board until his death in 1936.

In the early 1930s an agriculture building and a cafeteria were constructed on the school grounds. When the Works Progress Administration constructed a large building on the school grounds in 1939 the satellite schools were consolidated into the new school and existing school buildings at Burdette. A gym was added to the complex in the late 1940s. The last building added to the complex was a new cafeteria that was added in 1967.

Parents and children alike were exposed to music, with school concerts being an occasion for all to enjoy. Meals in the cafeteria were offered for local Farm Bureau meetings, Four-H Clubs, and other groups. Sports events and school carnivals held in the gymnasium attracted enthusiastic audiences of all ages.

The W.P.A. building serves as an elementary school and the 1922 building serves as a preschool facility. The high school was consolidated into Blytheville High School more than a decade ago. The town's population that stood at over 900 when the school was built is only slightly above 300 today. The Blytheville School District has announced the school's closing at the end of the 2001 school year. No future plans have been made for the building and it could become victim to vandalism or deterioration if action is not taken.

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Significance

The town of Burdette was once a thriving lumber company town that successfully made the transition to an agricultural town when the timber was all cleared. With less labor-intensive agricultural practices the town's population has drastically declined. The Burdette School Complex is the most intact group of buildings that survive from the town's heyday. The school grew and declined with the town for almost eighty school terms. Although this year's class will be the last, the complex will continue to be held in high accord by generations of town citizens who were educated at the facility. The Burdette School Complex Historic District is being nominated to the National Register with state significance under **Criterion C** for its varied architecture and as the most extant historic school complex that is known to exist in Arkansas. It is also being nominated under **Criterion A** for the educational role it has played in the town of Burdette.

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Bibliography

Yarbro, Peggy. History of the Blytheville School District, Blytheville, AR, 1996.

Burdette Special School District Board of Directors. Minutes, 1917-1929, 1932-1934

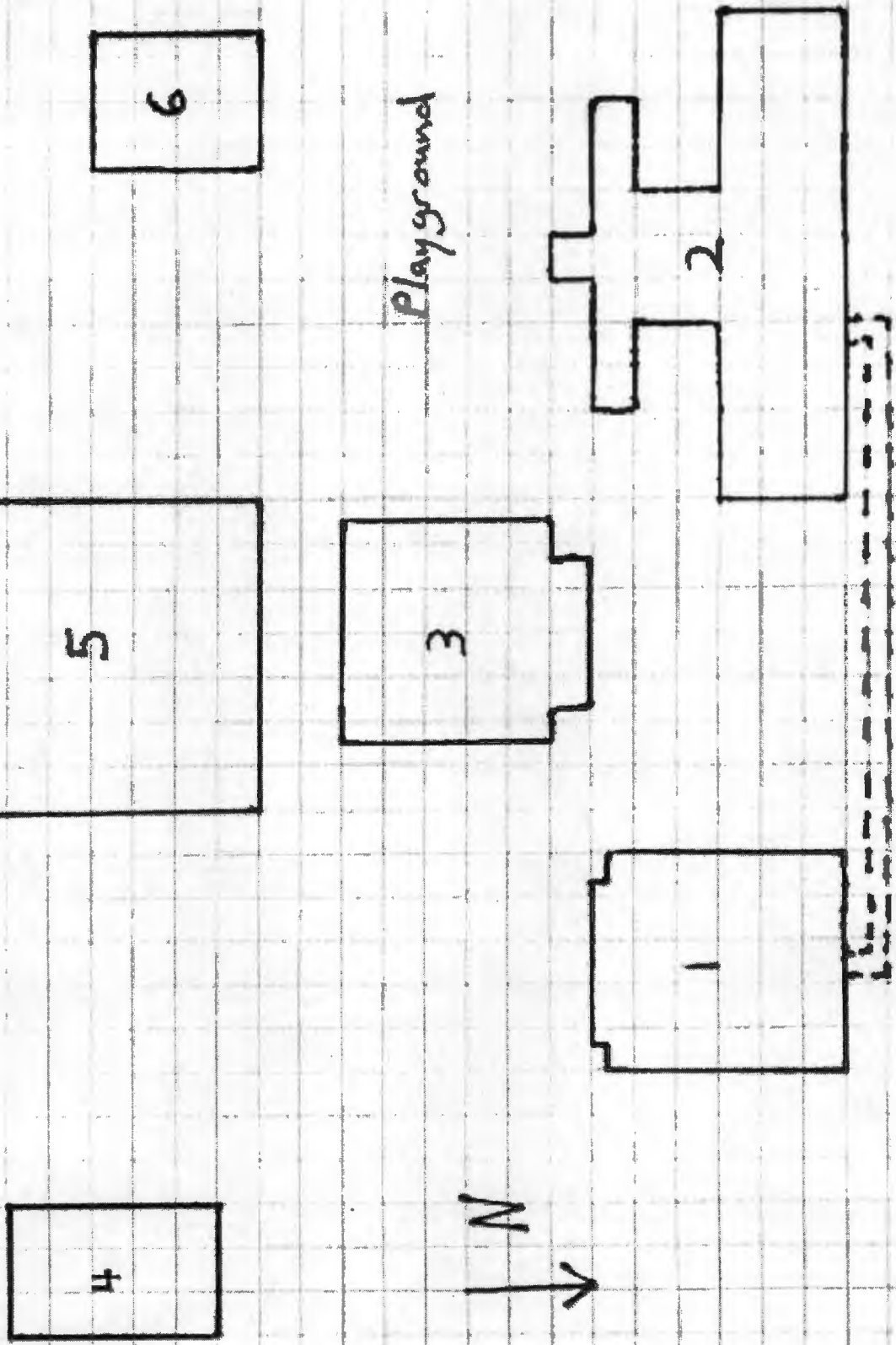
Junior High Journal, Burdette School, vol. 1, copy 1, February 23, 1934

Map of Burdette, AR Up To 1922 As Remembered by Charles Ramey and Emily Tompkins Sullivan, Privately Published, 1995.

Ramey, Charles. Unpublished Transcript of a Lecture About Burdette's History, n.d

Sullivan, Emily Tompkins. Interviews Conducted by the Nominator, 1998-2001

- 1. 1922 classrooms- C
- 2. W.P.A school building- C
- 3. cafeteria- NC
- 4. old cafeteria- C
- 5. gymnasium- C
- 6. agriculture building- C



VO. 23

18

BR 241

BR 244

BR 247

16

Sandy Ridge Cem

247 X

239

241

242

NO 67

DITCH

19

NO 6

20

238

21

246

ge Disposal
al Tech

Burdette

(148)

242

244

247

NO 36

BR 242

Burdette
School
Complex
Burdette, Mississippi Co.
Arkansas
UTM Coordinates:
NO 24 30 15 / 234630 / 3966970

Tuckertown

29

248

28

241

DITCH

240

(61)

BR 244

244

238

241

239

243

240

NO 25

31

BR 239

32

BR 243

33

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BR

237

BR 239

239

242

(120)

243

24

NO 31

N FRANCISCO

240



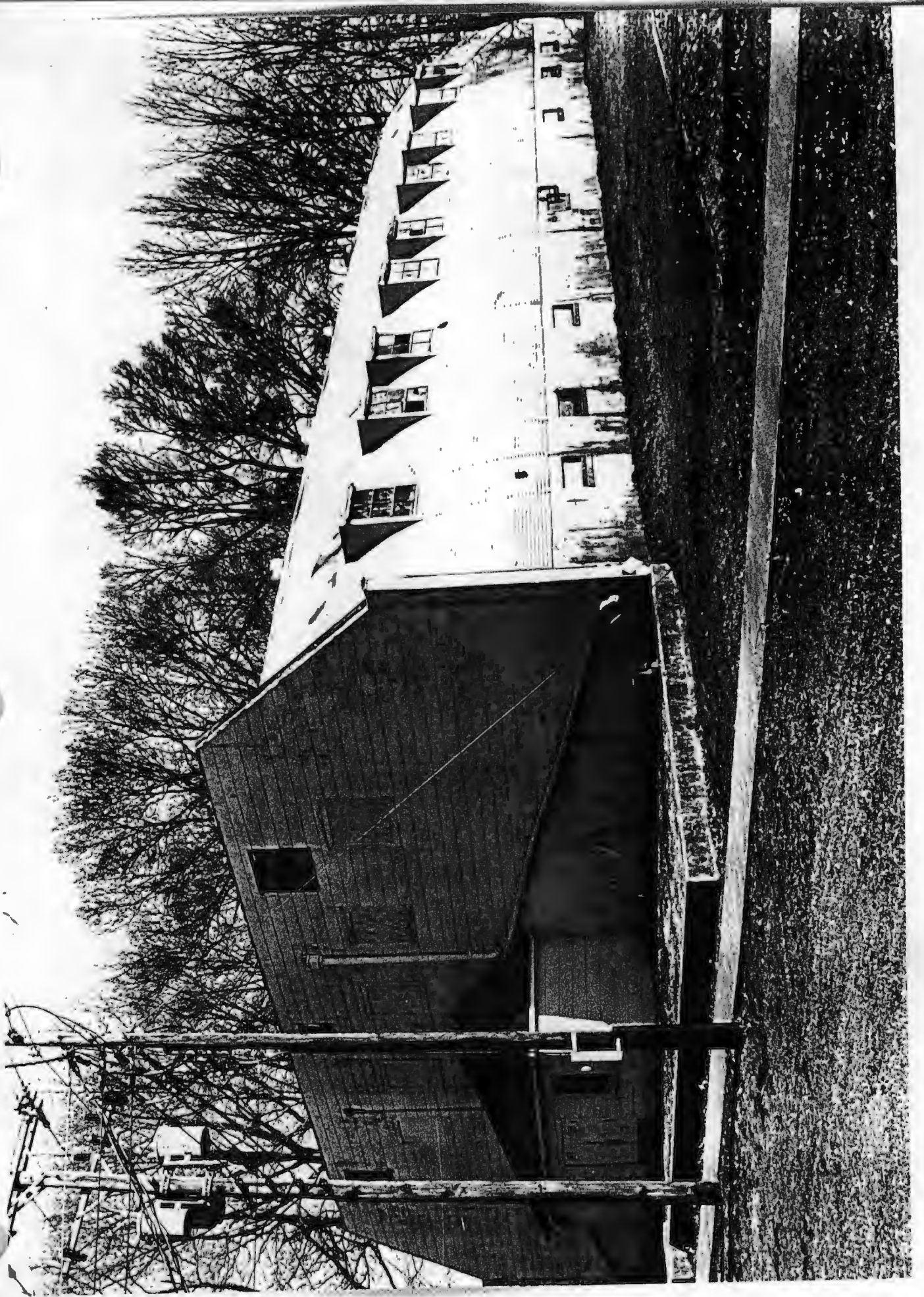
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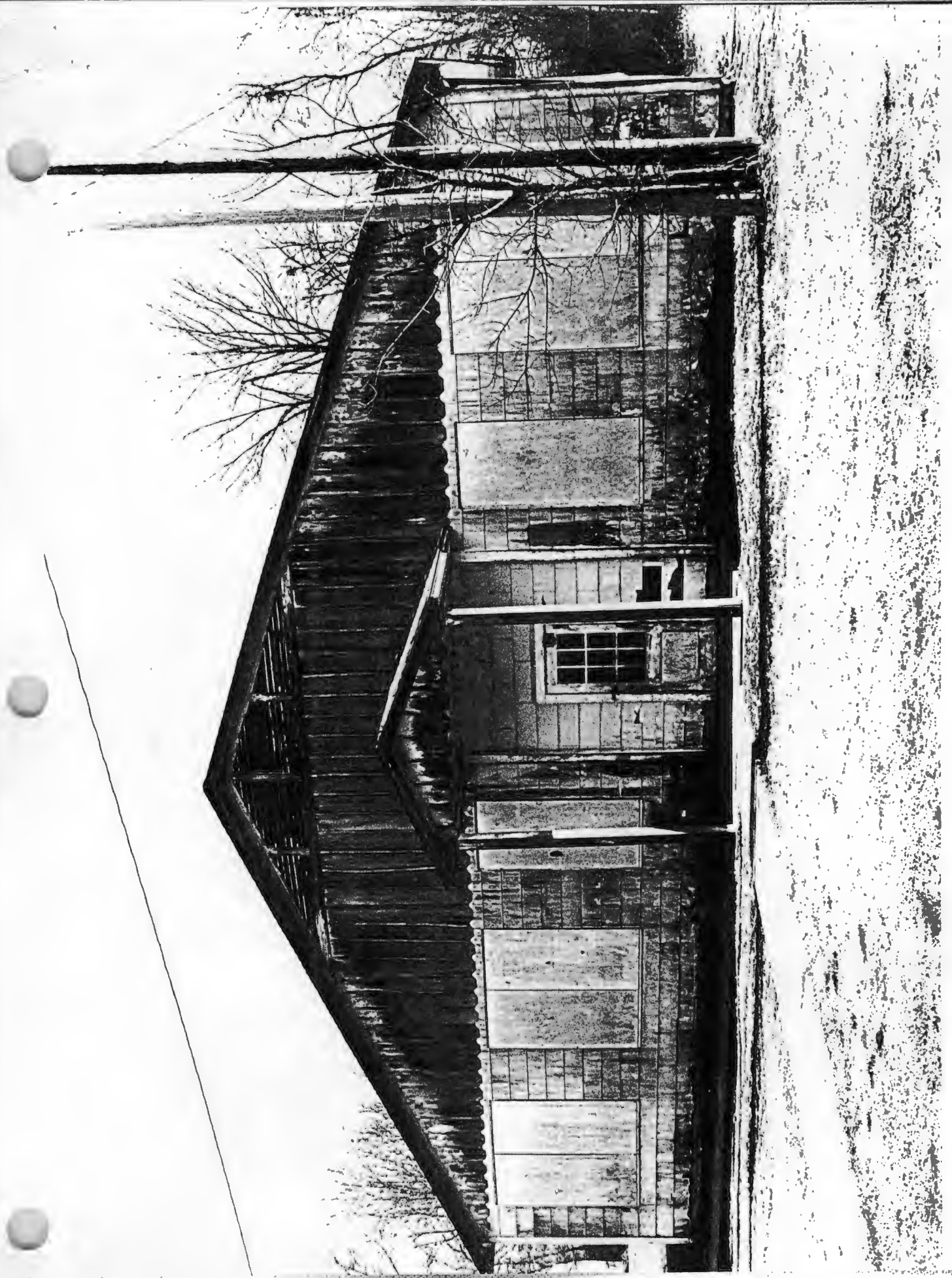














BURDETTE SCHOOL COMPLEX HISTORIC DISTRICT

RESOURCE NO	HISTORIC NAME	CONTRIBUTING
MS0239	BURDETTE SCHOOL #1	C
MS0240	BURDETTE SCHOOL #2	C
MS0241	BURDETTE SCHOOL GYMNASIUM	C
MS0242	BURDETTE AGRI BUILDING	C
MS0243	BURDETTE SCHOOL CAFETERIA	C
MS0247	BURDETTE SCHOOL CAFETERIA (NEW)	NC
MS0249	BURDETTE SCHOOL COMPLEX HISTORIC DISTRICT	I