

NR listed 9/17/90

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 Rosenwald School

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number Highway 26

not for publication N/A

city, town Delight

vicinity

state Arkansas

code AR

county Pike

code AR 109

zip code 71940

### 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

1

##### Noncontributing

1 buildings

\_\_\_\_\_ sites

\_\_\_\_\_ structures

\_\_\_\_\_ objects

1 Total

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

Name of related multiple property listing:

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.

Cathryn A. Bryant  
Signature of certifying official

8-1-90  
Date

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 \_\_\_\_\_

### 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)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/meeting hall

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Cast Concrete

walls Other: novelty siding

roof Asphalt shingle

other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**8. 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  
EDUCATION  
ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black  
   
   
   
 

Period of Significance

d. 1938  
1917 - 1940  
1917 - 1940

Significant Dates

N/A  
N/A  
N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
   
 

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Works Progress Administration  
 

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

**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**

acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A 1,5 4,5,8|0,3,0 3,7|6,6|1,6,0  
Zone Easting Northing

B \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

D \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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 Angela K. Albright, National Register Assistant  
Organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date July 17, 1990  
street & number 225 E. Markham, Suite 300 telephone (501)371-2763  
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

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**Summary**

Architecturally, the Rosenwald School is a typical 1930's Works Progress Administration project. The continuous cast concrete foundation supports this frame construction, rectangular building and its gable roof. Adorning the southern (front) elevation is the one-half, front porch with its gable roof, concrete steps and floor, and wooden columns.

**Elaboration**

The Rosenwald School is a one story, frame building with a cast concrete foundation. The walls are sheathed now, as they were originally, in novelty siding. Both gable roofs, over the porch and the building, are covered with composition shingle. The porch features four simple wooden columns. The northern facade is lighted by eight double-hung nine-over-nine windows, three light each room, and two smaller ones light the stage area on the eastern end of the school. The southern (front) facade is fenestrated symmetrically with two small and two large stationary windows, each with nine panes.

The interior is divided into two rooms and a stage area. Each room has its own door leading outside. The walls are covered with beaded board; the board is vertical from the floor to approximately half way up the wall, and horizontal to the ceiling. The floor is also beaded board. Dividing the two rooms is a set of four movable wood panels that, when opened, create an almost uninterrupted single room. On the east end of the building is a stage and against the back wall of the stage are two doors and two small sets of steps leading to the restrooms.

A c. 1943 cafeteria building is located just west of the school. It was always used as a cafeteria, but is now unoccupied. A sidewalk leads from the school to the cafeteria, and from the school towards the playground. The land around the school is now used for a playground and picnic area for the Harrison Chapel Baptist Church, and the building is used as a community room. A new sink and counter have been installed in the school so as to be more functional for the community.

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### Summary

The Rosenwald School survives in its original location as an excellent example of Depression-era W. P. A. construction, and as a part of Rosenwald's legacy as the foremost benefactor to negro education in the South; therefore, it is being nominated under criteria A and C, with national significance.

### Elaboration

Contrary to common belief, the education of many southern black Americans took place on southern plantations while many were slaves. Some masters allowed a few of their slaves to become skilled workers or artisans by permitting them to be apprentices or employees of craftsmen outside the plantation. In fact, it was quite profitable for the plantation to have a number skilled slaves in order to avoid having to hire expensive mechanics, craftsmen, machinists, seamstresses, etc. Education was also taking place among the children, often without the master's knowledge. Many of the children of the masters thought it quite amusing to play "school" and teach the slave children how to read and do math. To the children it was a game, but in actuality it was part of the beginning of the black education movement in the South after the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. In fact, many slaves were able to use their talents and skills to gain their manumission, or to do enough work outside the plantation to buy their way out of slavery.

After the Emancipation Proclamation and the flight of the blacks to northern cities, many religious organizations and education-oriented groups realized the need for education among the black refugees. Plantation life had left many blacks unable to cope with life in the city or with finding jobs. Benevolent societies sprang up in cities such as Boston, Chicago, New York, Cincinnati, and Philadelphia in 1862-1863. Together with church organizations, they provided food, clothing, religious leaders, money, and teachers for the newcomers. Church organizations were the leaders in the freedman's school system in its beginning stages. At the forefront of the religious groups was the American Missionary Association, organized in 1849 to operate Christian missions and educational institutions at home and abroad. Other religious groups included The Baptist Church, North (or Home Mission Society), the Freedman's Aid Society, and the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church; a great deal of the money and supplies these groups provided were dispensed through the Union Army. In March, 1862 the New England Freedman's Society, along with General Edward L. Pierce and numerous other educators, initiated the Port Royal Experiment. The experiment involved developing the economy, directing blacks to economic independence, and organizing schools.

In 1863 the Freedman's Inquiry Commission suggested the creation of a government agency to deal specifically with the care of the freedmen. In 1865 Congress passed an act creating the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, otherwise known as the Freedmen's Bureau. The Bureau was useful because it committed the United States to the task of caring for the freedmen, and because it made that care a part of the official structure by which the South was being controlled. Even though the Freedmen's Bureau was able to remedy many of the flaws of the relief programs for the freedmen, it was the strongly motivated individuals of the religious groups and benevolent organizations that were mainly responsible for the education of the blacks. These individuals were for the most part devout Christians and well-trained teachers from New England.

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One of the zealous individuals that became one of the most significant figures in southern black education was Julius Rosenwald. Rosenwald was quite successful as a businessman, but his philanthropic work has always overshadowed his financial success. He entered the clothing business in New York in 1878. In 1895 he invested \$35,000 in the stock of Sears, Roebuck, and Company, and in less than thirty years it grew into \$150,000,000. He became president of the mail-order firm in 1910 and then chairman in 1925. During the years Rosenwald was most active as a philanthropist, Sears and Roebuck expanded into the retail chain-store business, and he was actually absent from the company from 1916 to 1919. As early as 1910, Rosenwald was a trustee of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama and made gifts on behalf of the rural school movement to the Institute, primarily through close contact with Booker T. Washington. His funds made possible the erection of sixteen YMCA buildings and one YWCA building for blacks. This stimulated gifts from others for similar projects in many cities in both the North and South, including the financial support for a large black housing project in Chicago. Rosenwald was active in a number of Jewish organizations and granted substantial financial support to the National Urban League. Also, he was appointed a member of the Council on National Defense and served as chairman of its committee on supplies.

In 1917 Rosenwald established the Julius Rosenwald Fund. This fund was destined to attract more money to the benefit of black education than any other philanthropic undertaking to this date. The fund's broad purpose was for the betterment of mankind irrespective of race, but it was aimed more specifically at creating more equitable opportunities for black Americans. Unlike many charity organizations, the Rosenwald Fund sought to motivate blacks and whites to help themselves. The policy of the Rosenwald Fund was to only help a school if the community, blacks and whites alike, had raised some of the money themselves; however, the black community usually provided the labor. Rosenwald and the directors of his trust first directed their attention toward building rural schools (such as the one in Delight), later toward high schools and colleges, and finally toward the providing of grants and fellowships to enable outstanding blacks and whites to advance their careers. Not only did the Rosenwald Fund help to build rural schools, it was also responsible for a number of buildings and libraries on college campuses. The directors of the trust were also involved to a certain extent in the direction of the curriculum at all levels of education. Their emphasis was on the educational needs of country children. They maintained that some vocational skills were necessary, as were the ability to do some math, to read and write clearly, to have some understanding of biological processes and farming, and to understand the fundamentals of sanitation and health.

State records indicate that when the fund ceased activity in 1948, it had aided in the building of 389 school buildings in 35 counties in Arkansas. The total amount contributed by the fund was \$1,952,441. The state or counties owned and maintained all of the schools, and the land was usually donated by a white landowner. In Arkansas, R. C. Childress of Little Rock was the Rosenwald Building Agent. Childress was the first degree graduate of Philander Smith College and was the second black person to work for the state Education Department. He dedicated his life to education and, consequently, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff has named Childress Hall for him, and the high schools in Wynne and Nashville were named for him.

The Rosenwald School in Delight is representative of the typical Rosenwald school in Arkansas in population, curriculum, and architecture. It was a two-teacher, eight-grade school, and a number of

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white students attended the school as well. The Delight school, like most of the others in Arkansas, fell into disuse in the 1970's when the policy of desegregation became common practice.

The Rosenwald School in Delight is nationally significant because it is a symbol of the extensive work Rosenwald and his fund did for the education of blacks and whites throughout the South. In effect, Rosenwald changed the course of education in the South, and in race relations and education throughout the United States.



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## Bibliography

*The McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Biography*, by Saul Engelbourg, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973, p. 279.

*Encyclopedia Americana*, Danbury, Connecticut: Grolier Incorporated, 1987.

*A History of Negro Education in the South*, by Henry Allen Bullock, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967.

"Power Lunch in Chicago in 1911 Led to Schools for Southern Blacks," *Arkansas Gazette*, February 20, 1989, pp. 1B-2B.

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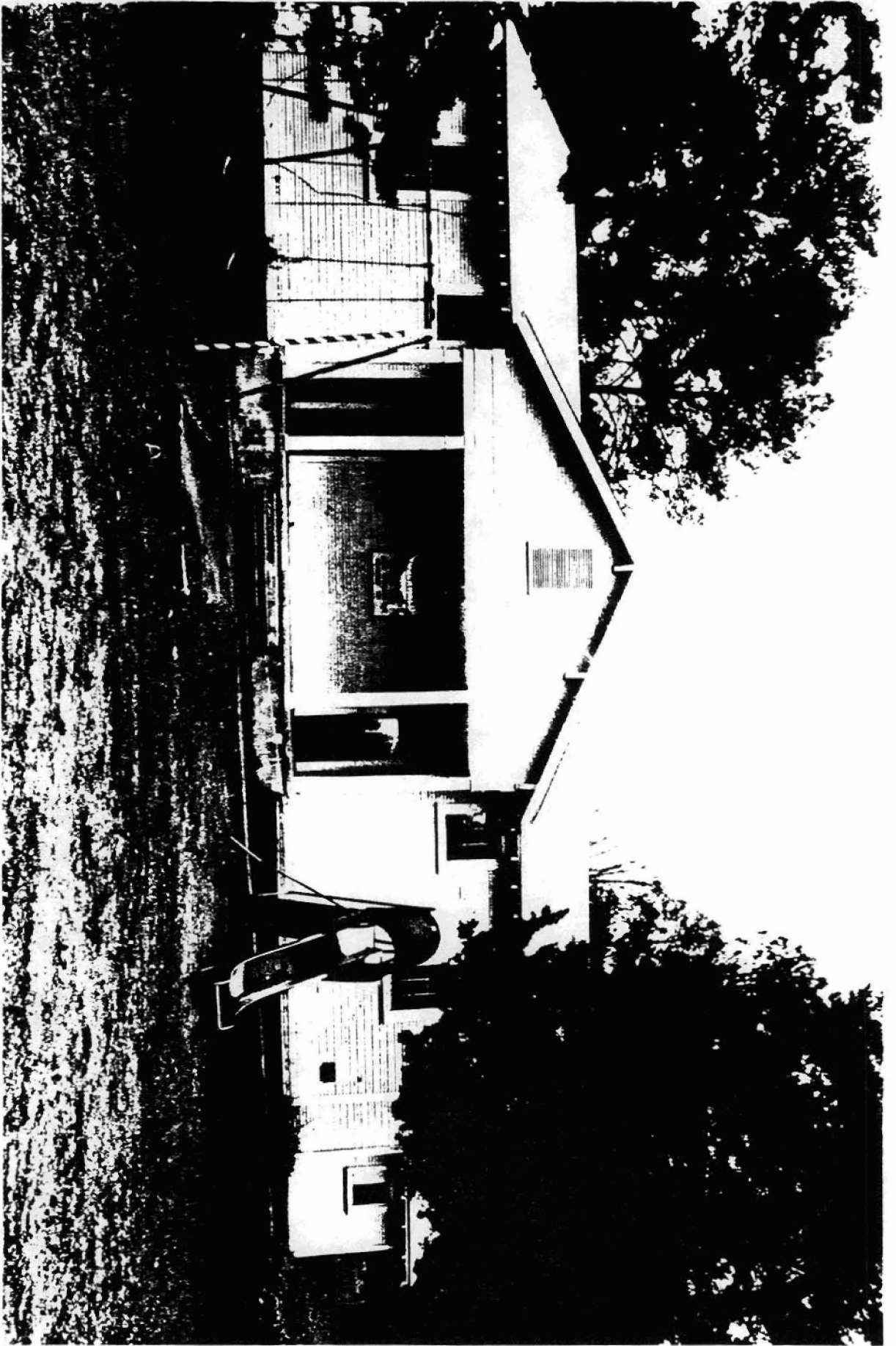
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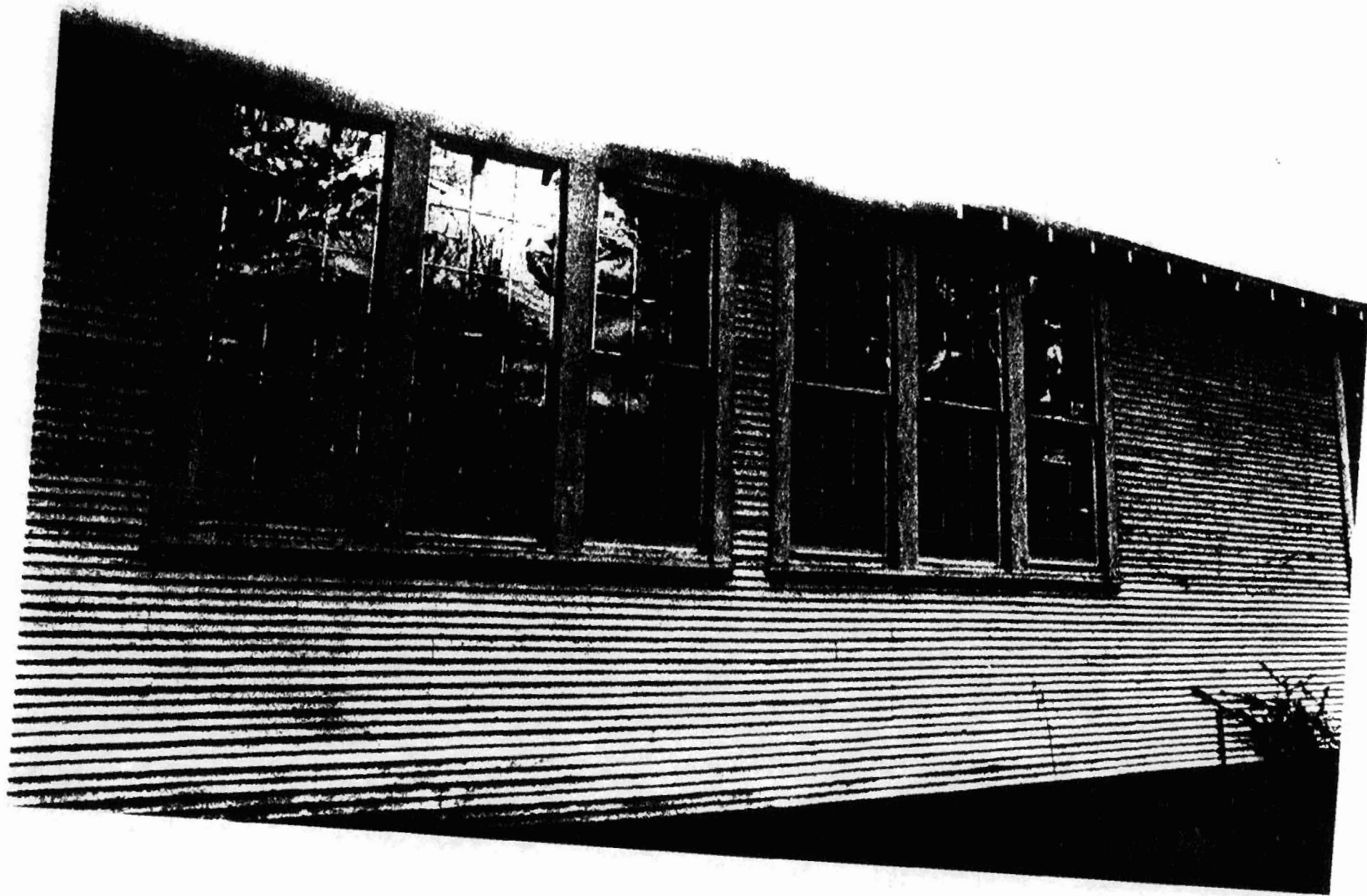
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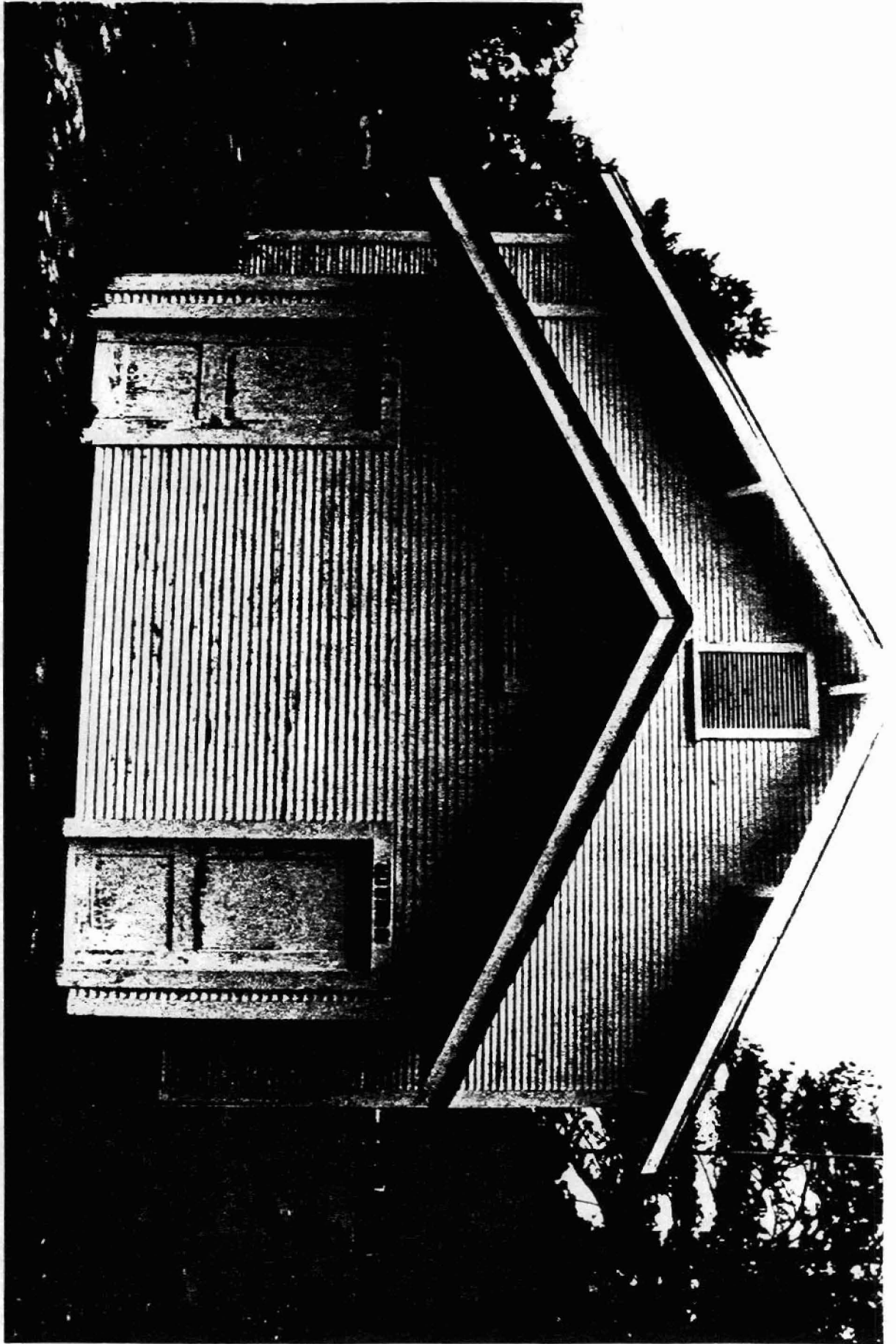
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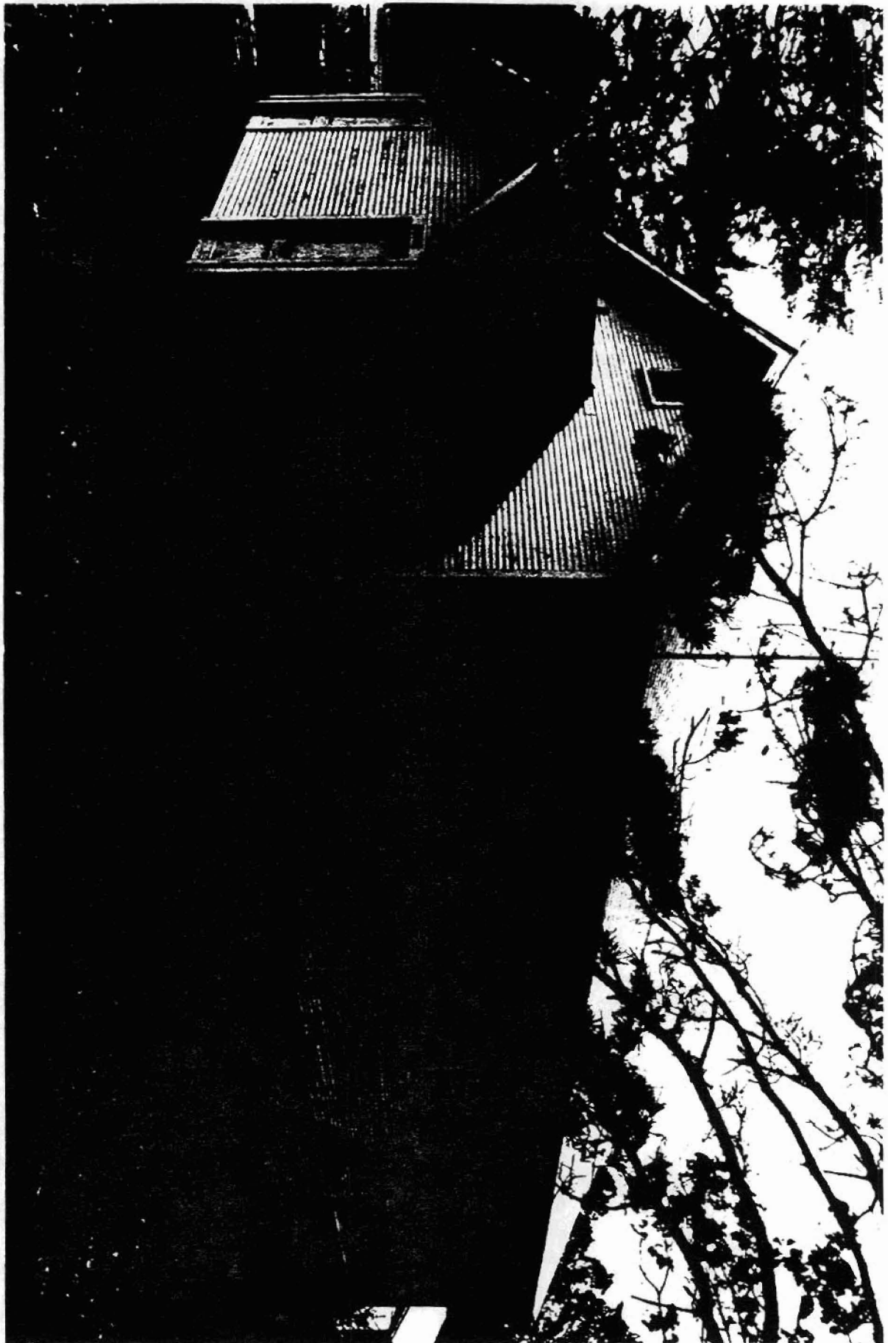
## Verbal Boundary Description

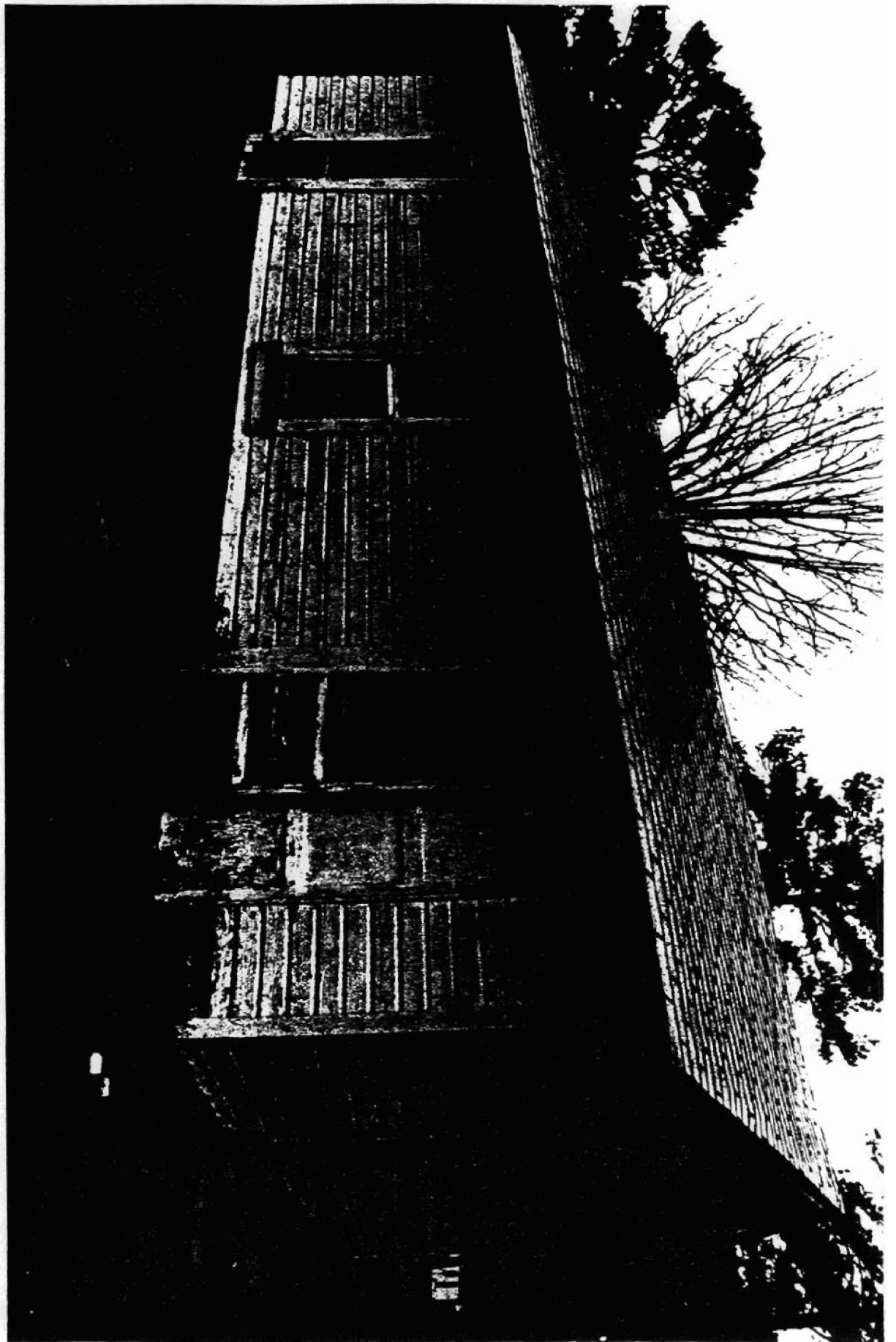
Beginning at the point formed by the intersection of the northern edge of State Highway 26 with a perpendicular line running along the eastern elevation of the school building, proceed northerly along said line to its intersection with a perpendicular line running along the building's northern elevation; thence proceed westerly along said line to its intersection with a perpendicular line running along the western edge of the Cafeteria building; thence proceed southerly along said line to its intersection with the northern edge of State Highway 26; thence proceed easterly to the point of beginning.



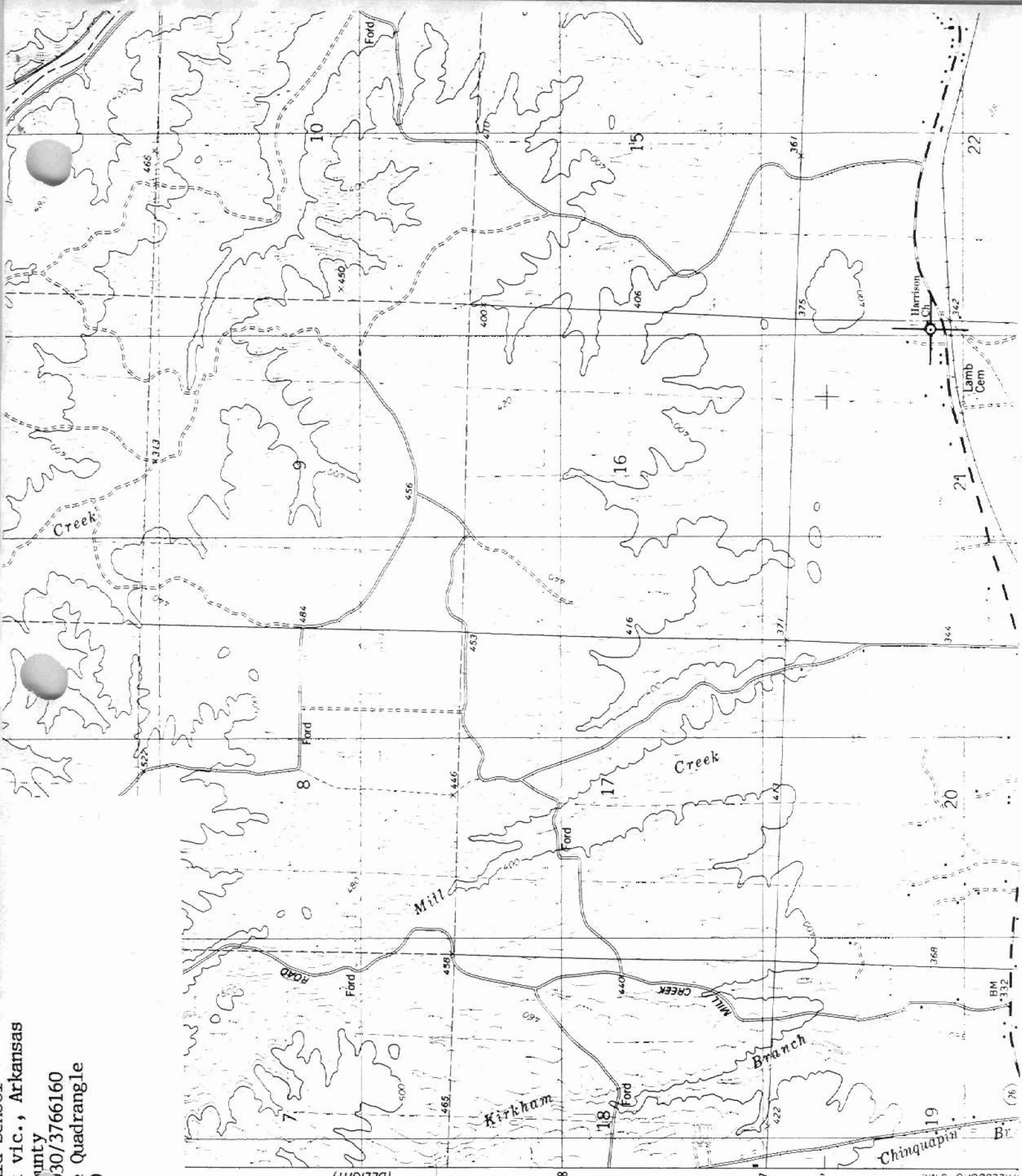








Delight vic., Arkansas  
Pike County  
15/458030/3766160  
Antoine Quadrangle  
1:24000



15/458030/3766160

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FREESBORO 13 MI.