

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JAN 9 1990

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 Phillips Memorial Auditorium
other names/site number Lincoln Normal School

2. Location

street & number Corner Lincoln Avenue and Lee Street not for publication
city, town Marion vicinity
state Alabama code AL county Perry code 105 zip code 36756

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> objects
			<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: NA
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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] 12-21-89
Signature of certifying official Date
Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)
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] 2/13/90
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education/Auditorium

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation & Culture/Auditorium

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof fiberglass

other wood: columns

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Phillips Memorial Auditorium (1935-1938) is a one-story, rectangular-shaped brick building built in the Classical Revival style. The front elevation features a colonnaded porch beneath the front-end gable roof, and has a broken pedimented entrance. Both side elevations have a row of five arched windows. The utilitarian interior consists of an open auditorium space and a raised stage. The Phillips Memorial Auditorium is situated on a .08 acre lot at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Lee Street. The auditorium faces west, away from the intersection. Located immediately in front of the auditorium is a c.1950 one-story school building. The rest of the block is vacant where the other buildings associated with the Lincoln Normal School once stood.

* * * * *

The auditorium is rectangular in shape, measuring approximately forty feet wide and one hundred and three feet long. The building has a concrete foundation and a full basement. The structure of the building consists of load-bearing masonry walls with brick veneer. The low pitched front-end gable roof is constructed from wood trusses. The roof is covered with fiberglass shingles, replacing the original asbestos shingles.

The main (west) elevation has a temple-like facade. The five square wood columns with reeded capitols support the entablature and gabled pediment. In the center of the pediment there is a bull's-eye window surrounded by four keystones. Curved concrete steps lead to the entrance portico.

The main elevation has five bays with a central pair of doors, two single doors, and two windows. The primary central entrance consists of double paneled doors with six panes of glass on the upper half. The doors are topped with a large rectangular transom. The whole door is surrounded by a stuccoed classical casing with ears. Above the casing is a full entablature topped with a broken scroll pediment with an urn in the center.

The center doors are flanked on both sides by single doors with transoms and surrounded by classical casings. The end bays are double-hung sash windows with six-over-nine panes. Stuccoed panels are under each window and surrounded by classical casements. Above each of the outside two bays are stuccoed panels inserted in the brick.

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

1937 -1942

Significant Dates

1937-1938

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

NA

Architect/Builder

unknown

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

CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE

The Phillips Memorial Auditorium is locally significant as a good representative example of the Classical Revival style of architecture; a style that dominated institutional architecture in Alabama during the early to mid- twentieth century. Throughout the state, public buildings such as schools, post offices, courthouses, and churches were designed in the Classical Revival style. The Phillips Memorial Auditorium is one of the best mid-twentieth century example of this revival style to survive in Marion.

The auditorium is also architecturally significant as the last remaining example of the Classical Revival style associated with the Lincoln Normal School's greatest period of expansion, 1900 through the 1930s. During the first three and one half decades of the twentieth century, the Lincoln Normal School experienced a tremendous building boom with the construction of seven large academic and residential buildings. All of these buildings were designed in the popular Classical Revival style of architecture, and exhibited similar architectural details. Like the auditorium, the buildings were designed with grand pedimented porticals, box columns and pilasters, decorative window trim, and broken pedimented door surrounds. (See attached photographic copies.) The Phillips Memorial Auditorium is the only building associated with this period of the Lincoln Normal School to survive; all of the other buildings were demolished in the 1970s.

CRITERION A: EDUCATION/ETHNIC HERITAGE-BLACK

The Phillips Memorial Auditorium, constructed between 1935 through 1938, is locally significant as the last remaining building associated with the Lincoln Normal School in Marion, Alabama. The Lincoln Normal School, founded in 1867, was the last normal school to be established by the American Missionary Association. The A.M.A. established and administered schools throughout the south to provide blacks with a private liberal arts academic education that went beyond industrial and vocational training. The Lincoln Normal School was under the auspices of the A.M.A. for 76 years, although most of the financial support was provided through local contributions. The school's

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Lincolnite Reunion." Program from the Lincoln Alumni Reunion, July 3-4, 1980.
Sherer, Robert G. Subordination or Liberation? The Development and Conflicting Theories of Black Education in 19th Century Alabama. The University of Alabama Press: Tuscaloosa, 1977.

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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.08 +

UTM References

A

1	6	4	6	9	1	4	0	3	6	0	9	6	1	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet and attached map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire city lot that has been historically associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Steven M. Kay/Cultural Resources Coordinator
organization Alabama Historical Commission date 12/14/89
street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone 205 242-3184
city or town Montgomery state Alabama zip code 36130

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Both the north and south side elevations are identical and consist of a row of evenly spaced, slender window openings. The typical window is a double-hung sash window with ten-over-ten panes. Below the window is a stuccoed panel. Above the window is a fan light transom. The window is surrounded by a row of end bricks topped with a cast concrete keystone.

Above the row of windows is the continuation of the entablature and cornice. Three small louvered dormers are located on each side of the roof. There is a small brick chimney in the rear center of the roof.

At the end of the side elevation is a small toilet/dressing room wing, each measuring eight feet by ten feet long. Each wing has an outside door which opens to a small concrete stoop and is covered with a wood canopy supported by an ornamented wood bracket. The toilet/dressing rooms have a flat roof and a thick cornice.

The main entrance opens directly into the large auditorium. There is beaded wood wainscot below the window sills; the remainder of the walls are plastered. On the north and south walls there are square pine pilasters spaced between each window. The door and window casements are pine. The floor is quarter sawn heart pine boards, measuring two to three inches wide. At the rear of the building is a raised stage. There is a modern suspended fiberboard tile ceiling which hides the original wood cornice and tile ceiling. The chandeliers and wall sconces are Art Deco design and finished in natural aluminum. The rest rooms have the original 1930s fixtures, beaded wood toilet stalls and wood floors.

INTEGRITY:

The Phillips Memorial Auditorium is in good condition and retains its integrity as a 1930s school auditorium. The alterations to the building have been minimal and include replacing the original asbestos roof shingles with fiberglass shingles and inserting a suspended ceiling. None of these alterations compromise the auditorium's architectural or historical integrity.

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most significant period of expansion occurred in the first three and one half decades of the twentieth century. During this period, seven academic and residential buildings, including the auditorium, were constructed to accommodate the increased attendance. The auditorium served as the main meeting and social center for the school as well as Marion's black community. The Phillips Memorial Auditorium was the last large project undertaken by the Lincoln Normal School before it was incorporated into the Perry County public school system in 1943. The A.M.A. continued to own the property and buildings, however, until 1960.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATION (EXCEPTIONS): G

The Phillips Memorial Auditorium, as part of the Lincoln Normal School administered by the American Missionary Association, is locally significant under Criterion A for its historical associations as a unique private educational institution that provided superior liberal arts education to rural blacks in Perry County, Alabama. The historical significance of the Phillips Memorial Auditorium and its association with the Lincoln Normal School continued from its completion in 1938 until the institution was incorporated into the Perry County school system in 1942. The period of significance is extended beyond the fifty-year cutoff period (1939) because the institution continued to play an important role in the education of blacks in Perry County until 1942. After 1942, the Lincoln Normal School ceased to exist and the facility became part of the county school system; ending a significant period of black education in Perry County.

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In July of 1867, a group of freedmen in Marion, Perry County, Alabama established the "Lincoln School in Marion." The newly created board of trustees acquired a lot in the western section of Marion and erected a small building to serve as a classroom. A lack of funds, however, made the recruitment of teachers impossible. In September 1868 the trustees of the Lincoln School entered into an agreement with the American Missionary Association. The trustees agreed to lease the grounds and building to the A.M.A. without charge for ten years. In return, the A.M.A. kept the building in repair and payed the teacher's salary. The first major action of the A.M.A. was to construct the First Congregational Church (NRHP 12/17/82) in 1871 for the local black community.

On December 6, 1873, the Alabama Legislature chartered the "Lincoln Normal University" for the purpose of training black teachers. In 1887 there were 400 students, and several new buildings were constructed. A severe fire destroyed part of the school in 1889 and the state removed the institution to Montgomery as the "State Normal School for Colored Students." This school later became the Alabama State University.

After the fire, the A.M.A. decided not to reopen a school in Marion. In 1887, the black citizens of Marion raised subscription for three hundred dollars to establish an independent school. Hearing of this local commitment, the A.M.A. agreed to reopen the school. The school had poor and meager facilities, and for the next ten years the school barely survived. Once again the A.M.A. threatened to close the school in 1897. Local black citizens and friends of the school pledged thirteen hundred dollars to continue the school. The teachers agreed to continue to work one more year for only food and clothing contributed by the local black citizens.

Under the leadership of Elizabeth Phillips, principal from 1896 until her death in 1927, the school began to grow and take on a new life. Again the teachers and local blacks campaigned to raise over one thousand dollars for a new academic building. But in the middle of constructing a "fine modern brick structure," the hired builders struck for higher wages. Livingston Hall was completed by the students and faculty in 1902.

From 1900 through the 1930s, the school experienced a great period of growth and construction. At its peak in 1930, the school had over six hundred students, twenty-six teachers, forty acres of land, two academic buildings, three dormitories and several faculty houses. In 1905 Phillips Hall was constructed as a dormitory for girls, and a boys dormitory was finished in 1908. Van Wagenen Hall, an elementary building was constructed in 1909. During the years of the First World War, contributions and supplies were limited so the growth of the school declined. But by the 1920s the institution continued to expand. Woolworth Hall, a science and home eco-

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nomics building, was completed in 1921. By 1926 the attendance increased so much that it was necessary to build Ranny Hall, another dormitory for girls.

The faculty and supporters of the school envisioned the erection of an auditorium, but the depression of the 1930s halted the construction of any additional buildings. Local financial support of the institution by blacks in Marion was greatly reduced, and attendance dropped dramatically. In an effort to stabilize attendance, tuition was reduced from twenty-five dollars a year to nine dollars, then down to four dollars. The school found it necessary to cease boarding students in 1932. Despite the severe economic hardships, the local black citizens of Marion, faculty, and alumni were able to raise enough funds to begin construction on an auditorium in memorial to Elizabeth Phillips in 1935. The auditorium was completed in 1938 and was dedicated the following year.

The auditorium was designed in the Classical Revival style, as were the other buildings on campus. Many of the architectural details that were found on the other buildings were repeated on the auditorium, such as the predominant portical, box columns, and broken pediment above the main entrance door. The auditorium served as the primary meeting space for both the school and local black organizations.

Despite the economic hardships that faced the institution in the 1930s, the school continued to improve both its curriculum and its facilities. To meet the needs of the students as well as the local black community, the institution began cooperative services such as a health program, hot lunch and transportation programs, and an agriculture department. During this period many of the older buildings were renovated, and the campus was landscaped.

In 1943 the Perry County Board of Education began a cooperative effort with the A.M.A. in providing financial support of the school. Over the next ten years, Lincoln School gradually went from a private institution to a segregated county public school. Because of the segregation laws that existed in Alabama at the time, the white faculty and staff could no longer remain at the newly created public school.

Although Lincoln School was incorporated into the Perry County school system in 1943, the A.M.A. continued to own the land and leased the facilities to the Perry County Board of Education until 1960. At that time the land and all of the buildings were purchased by the State of Alabama for sixty-two thousand dollars. Five years later the state sold the aging and deteriorating facilities to the Perry County School Board.

In September 1970 the county-run school was finally closed. After the enforcement of anti-segregation laws, the black students of Perry County were sent to the more modern county school built for the white students. The county did not have the need or the finances to maintain the large and deteriorating buildings associated

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with the Lincoln Normal School. At this time many of the buildings were demolished, and the remaining buildings were used as storage for the county board of education. The auditorium served as the county career center for the next eight years.

In 1978 the last three buildings associated with the Lincoln Normal School complex were sold by the county to the public. At this time Woolworth Hall, (1921), and Ranny Hall, (1926) were demolished. The Phillips Memorial Auditorium was purchased and preserved by the alumni of the Lincoln Normal School. The building now serves as a local meeting hall and social center.

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Legal Description to 0.8 Acres of the Old Lincoln Normal School Tract in the City of Marion, Alabama

Beginning at the Southwest intersection of Lincoln Avenue and Lee Street in the City of Marion, Perry County, Alabama, thence from said point of beginning run Westerly along the South boundary of Lincoln Avenue for 159.8 feet, thence South 15 minutes West 153 feet, thence South 52 degrees and 30 minutes East 165.5 feet, thence South 85 degrees and 30 minutes East 25.5 feet to the West boundary of said Lee Street, thence Northerly along the West boundary of Lee Street for 263.1 feet to the point of beginning and ending of the parcel of land herein described. Said land lying in the City of Marion, Perry County, Alabama, and containing 0.8 acres more or less.

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graphs Page 1

Information is the same in items 1-5 for all photographs listed.

1. Phillips Memorial Auditorium
2. Marion, Alabama, Perry County
3. Mary Mason Shell
4. October 17, 1988
5. Alabama Historical Commission

6. Main elevation, camera facing east
7. No. 1

6. Main elevation, camera facing east
7. No. 2

6. Side elevation, camera facing south
7. No. 3

6. Entrance to side dressing room, camera facing north
7. No. 4

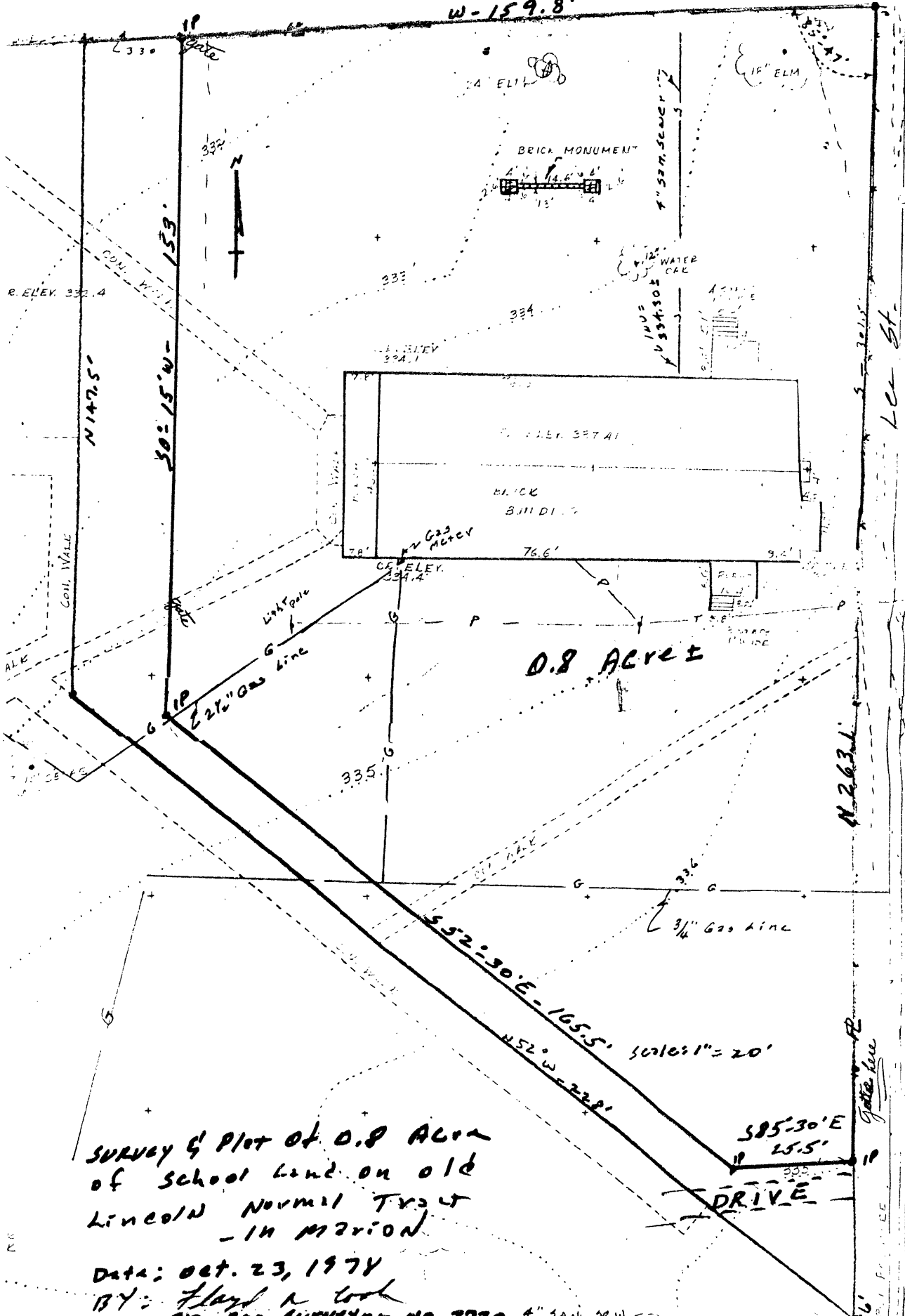
6. Interior, stage, camera facing east
7. No. 5

6. Interior, side wall, camera facing south
7. No. 6

6. Interior, front wall, camera facing west
7. No. 7

Lincoln Ave.

W-159.8'



0.8 ACRES

SURVEY & PLOT OF 0.8 ACRES
 OF SCHOOL LAND ON OLD
 LINCOLN NORMAL TRUST
 - IN MARION

Date: Oct. 23, 1978

BY: Floyd R. Cook
 CIVIL ENGINEER NO. 3730