

2127

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received SEP 30 1988

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Newton Union School House

and/or common Champion School

2. Location

street & number Collings & Lynne Avenues

NA not for publication

city, town Haddon Township vicinity of

state New Jersey code 034 county Camden code 007

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Township of Haddon

street & number Haddon & Reeves Avenues

city, town Westmont vicinity of state New Jersey 08108

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Camden County Courthouse

city, town Camden state New Jersey 08101

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Camden County Inventory of Historic Places (revised) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records Camden County Cultural & Heritage Commission

city, town 250 South Park Drive, Haddon Township state New Jersey 08108

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located to the north of Collings Avenue between the Reading Railroad and Lynne Avenue, the Champion School is a one-story one-room stuccoed brick school-house with a front vestibule addition. Built in 1821, the 540 sq. ft. original building was laid in common bond red brick with a wood shingled gable roof and a date stone in the eastern gable end. Windows punctuate the facades symmetrically and presently feature simulated casement four-over-four double-hung sash, plank frames, ovolo/fillet brick moldings, and projecting wooden show sills. All window openings were originally secured with two-panel shutters. On the front (Collings Avenue facade), the original centered entrance became an interior feature after the c.1855 addition of a 10'x7' vestibule. Symmetrically placed, this cross-gable addition is punctuated by two nine-over-six sash side windows and originally featured a front entrance door with simple lean-to porch. The box cornice is articulated with Italianate brackets which, along with the 4/4 sash, probably date to c.1870. A second front vestibule addition was built in 1896 and removed in 1913 when the front grade was lowered considerably and the whole building stuccoed. A rear addition which dated to 1896 was removed in 1986 after its partial collapse.

The 18' by 30' main room is simply appointed with plastered walls and ceiling, diagonal hardwood floor (1896), simple Victorian baseboard (1896), plaster board wainscot (c.1913), and three-panel sash vestibule door (c.1940). The rear wall was opened into the 1896 addition to create one larger space and is now boarded up. The 1892 photograph shows one rear window towards the east; it is suspected that a sash door found in the cellar occupied the corresponding western opening. A 2½' high integral blackboard surface which dates to c.1855 and was made by introducing carbon black into the final plaster coat, has survived beneath a layer of paint on three walls. The vestibule's original wooden trim -- baseboards, window trim, and door surround -- has survived largely intact, articulated with beads and ogee moldings. A small hatch in the 10' high ceiling provides access to an unfinished attic featuring through-pegged mortised and tenoned roof rafters with numerical markings. The unfinished dirt cellar provides remarkable evidence of a mid-nineteenth century change: open joist pockets along the north wall, infilled brick channels along the south, painted plaster carried behind the floor joists, and obsolete baseboard nailers indicate that the floor was originally 3½ feet lower than its present level. Furthermore, past excavation of the dirt floor, an added chimney, an added cellar opening on the Lynne Avenue elevation, and coal fragments suggest that the floor was raised to accommodate a coal furnace because the crawl space could not be deepened any further without jeopardizing the wall foundations.

Despite its deteriorated condition stemming from twenty years without occupancy or maintenance, the Champion School clearly conveys its nineteenth century architectural heritage. A polyethelene tarp now covers the building's roof to prevent further moisture infiltration while fundraising efforts are underway.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c. 1821-1905 **Builder/Architect** Newton Union School Society

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Champion School is the first "Free School" in Old Gloucester County, one of the oldest public schools in the State of New Jersey, and a surviving prototypical example of a nineteenth-century one-room schoolhouse. The building is the only extant structure associated with Samuel and Elizabeth Champion and the only remaining non-residential building associated with the Newton Meeting. The Champion School through its educational, religious, and civic uses has been a cornerstone of the Newton/Haddon Township community for over 150 years. The founding colonists' meeting house stood on this site from 1684 to 1809.

In March 1682, six Irish Quakers established Newton Colony, the first permanent English settlement in Old Gloucester County. Two years later, one of these settlers, Thomas Thackara, conveyed two acres of his property to the Newton Meeting to provide ground for the Old Newton Burial Grounds and a site for the first meeting house. Built in 1684, this meeting house stood until 1809 to the south of the Champion School site. In 1821, the Meeting sold the northerly portion of Thackara's conveyance for \$75 to several inhabitants of Newton Township who had "made application...for buying a part of the Old Meeting House lot for the purpose of erecting a school house."¹ These inhabitants formed the Newton Union School Society with the goal to educate the area's youth to enable them to become "useful members of society." Ten years later, when the Meeting noted that no title had been conveyed nor payment received for the lot "altho' they have a new brick School House thereon," Samuel C. Champion was "the only person willing to come forward and pay the...money and receive the deed."² Champion was a neighborhood leader who served as Freeholder of Newton Township. He had substantial land holdings adjacent to the school; Collings Avenue was Champion Avenue in 1821, and Lynne Avenue, Champion Lane. His wife, Elizabeth Zane Champion, was a direct descendant of one of the original settlers, Robert Zane. Upon passage of the New Jersey Public School Act in March 1838, the Champion School was named as the first free school in Old Gloucester County. In May of that year, the taxable inhabitants of Newton Township elected four trustees who raised by subscription \$110 which was paid to Samuel Champion and the deed to the school was transferred to the first Board of Education. The building, which was in use as a school until 1905, was the only public school in the area for over 60 years.

¹ Minutes of the Haddonfield Monthly Meeting, 14 May 1821, p. 140

² Ibid., 12 December 1831, p. 348

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheets.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.73

Quadrangle name Camden NJ-PA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8	4	9	1	2	1	6	0	4	4	1	7	4	0	0
Zone			Easting						Northing						

B

Zone			Easting						Northing						

C

Zone			Easting						Northing						

D

Zone			Easting						Northing						

E

Zone			Easting						Northing						

F

Zone			Easting						Northing						

G

Zone			Easting						Northing						

H

Zone			Easting						Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

Block 215, Lot 10 of the Haddon Township Tax Map. Roughly 75' by 400' in size.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Margaret Westfield, Preservation Architect

organization date February 25, 1988

street & number 401 Bellmawr Avenue telephone (609) 547-0465

city or town Haddon Heights state New Jersey 08035

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature [Signature]

title Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources date September 28, 1988

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature] date 9/27/88
Keoper of the National Register
Entered in the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
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Camden County, New Jersey

Both during and after the building's educational use, the Champion School housed other community activities. The Newton Literary and Debating Association was founded there by "the young men of Newton, Camden County N.J., [who] convened at the Newton Union School House, May, 1856, for the purpose of instituting a plan for their mutual improvement in literary attainments and general mental culture...."³ From 1907-11, the building served as Christ Chapel Protestant Episcopal Church, and from 1915-18 as West Collingswood Presbyterian Church. Neighborhood socials and receptions were held there for several decades. In 1939, the building was home to the First Children's Church of South Jersey, "the only chartered children's church in existence."⁴ Boy Scout Troup 112 met at the School, as did the Collingswood Women's Club in the 1950s.

Architecturally, the Champion School is significant as a straightforward example of a rural nineteenth century one-room schoolhouse executed with the form, detailing, and construction methodology characteristic of its period. The c.1855 raising of the floor adds to the building's significance by illustrating how the simplest of educational buildings --a single room with a wood stove for heat-- was prudently upgraded through the introduction of a furnace and the addition of a vestibule. The rear addition dramatically altered the school's plan type so that its subsequent removal compliments the building's period of significance. Building fabric which has been lost to alterations and deterioration will be restored to the c.1892 appearance based on historic photographic documentation and physical evidence. A grant has been received from the National Trust to facilitate the building's restoration to an architectural museum devoted to nineteenth century education.

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- 3 "Constitution and By-Laws of the Newton Literary and Debating Association," Philadelphia: Brown's Book, Job, and Card Printing Office, 1857, Preamble.
- 4 Franklin H. Carter, Supervisor, First Children's Church of South Jersey, letter to the Camden County Historical Society, 5 October 1939.

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CHAIN OF TITLE

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------|-----|--|
| 12 Apr 1677 | Lib.B | 50 | West Jersey Deeds 1677-1693: Indenture 12 April 1677 between Wm Penn, Gawin Lawrie, Nicholas Lutas and Edw Byllinge and Robt. Turner, Joseph Sleigh, Robt. Zane and Thomas Thackery and Wm Bate a grant to land in West Jersey, America. N.J.A., 1st series, vol. XXI, N.J. Records 1664-1705, describes as "one undivided 90th share of the 90 equal hundreds of the Province." |
| 10 Mar 1681 | | 351 | N.J. Archives (as above) p. 351 for Mark Newbie, Wm Bate, Geo Goldsmith, Thos Thackery, Robt Zane and Thomas Sharp, 1600 a. between two braches of a creek at ARWAWMOSSE bounded by Wm Coopers Creek (Revels Bk, p. 25). |
| 16 Sep 1681 | A | 98 | Gloucester County Deeds: Thos Sharp recorded the deed to the above 1600 a. on 12 Feb 1718. |
| 1 Mar 1683 | | 358 | N.J. Archives as above: for Thomas Thackery, 250 a. on Newton Creek adjoining Robt Zane (Revels Bk, p. 59). |
| 11 Jan 1688 | G3 | 423 | Gloucester County Deeds: Thomas Thackery recorded this survey as 264 1/2 a. |
| 1702 | | | N.J.A. Index of Wills. Thos Thackara, by last will and testament, to his son Benjamin, a minor, in trust, estate less 60 a. conveyed to John Whitall. |
| 7 Mar 1708 | B | 50 | Gloucester County Deeds: Benjamin Thackara to Thomas Sharp and others, the old Quaker Meeting House lot (of approximately 2 acres set aside by Thomas Thackara from his original grant of ground for use by the Newton Meeting as a cemetery and meeting house lot in 1683). |

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Newton Union School House, Haddon Township,
Camden County, New Jersey

- | | | | |
|--------------|------------|-----|---|
| 9 Jan 1712 | B | 52 | Gloucester County Deeds: Benjamin Thackara to Thomas Sharp and others, another lot of ground adjoining the above mentioned land on the northwest and containing about .8 acre (given by Thomas Thackara in 1684 but not recorded). |
| 27 Feb 1771 | unrecorded | | Deed of Trust: between Josiah Kay of Waterford Township and John Gill and others, recently appointed as "Trustees for Meeting House Land at Newton" by the Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting. |
| 10 June 1771 | unrecorded | | Deed of Trust: confirms the propositions of the trust by the above named group of Trustees, as appointed by the Haddonfield Quarterly concerning the graveyard and meeting house ground. |
| 24 Oct 1799 | D | 165 | Gloucester County Deeds: James Thackara and Jane, his wife to Joseph Sloan and Elizabeth, his wife, the lands of Stephen Thackara by will, registered in the prerogative office at Trenton, 170 acres (which, apparently by some mis-calculation, included the ground upon which the Quaker cemetery and meeting house were located). |
| 8 Oct 1808 | M | 172 | Gloucester County Deeds: Deed of Trust between Samuel Webster of Newton Township, last surviving Trustee, and Joseph Glover and others, a new group of Trustees appointed by the Haddonfield Quarterly for 3 acres, 18 perches of land. |
| 10 Oct 1808 | M | 175 | Deed of Trust: confirms the propositions of the Trust by the above named group of Trustees, concerning the graveyard and meeting house ground. |
| 16 Oct 1810 | W | 585 | Gloucester County Deeds: Joseph Sloan and Elizabeth, his wife to James Sloan and wife Rachel, for the sum of twenty-five dollars, the lot where the meeting house stands and the burial ground (recorded 18 Jan 1816). |

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6 June 1811	0	597	Gloucester County Deeds: Joseph Sloan and Elizabeth, his wife, to a group of Trustees, namely Joseph Glover, and others, appointed by the Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting, the Newton Meeting House lot and cemetery property.
31 Dec 1831	157	P3	Gloucester County Deeds: Benjamin Cooper, surviving Trustee, to Samuel Champion and wife, that parcel of ground containing the Champion School Bldg., that was built in 1821 for \$75.
12 May 1838	unrecorded		Samuel Champion and wife to the Newton Union School Trustees, namely Thomas Marshall and others, the property upon which the Champion School had been built in 1821, for the sum of \$110.
1838	unrecorded		The Champion School property was transferred to the custody of the Newton Township School Board and declared the first public school in Gloucester County.
after 1865	unrecorded		Champion School property transferred from Newton Township School Board to jurisdiction of Haddon Township (inc. 1865) School Board.
20 Dec 1955	1983	477	Camden County Deeds: transfers Champion School property from Haddon Township Board of Education to the Township of Haddon for the sum of \$500 (recorded 4 Jan 1956).

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Historic Photograph, c. 1892, from the collections of Charles S. Whiley, Sr.

Historic Photograph, 1909, from the collections of the Camden County Historical Society.

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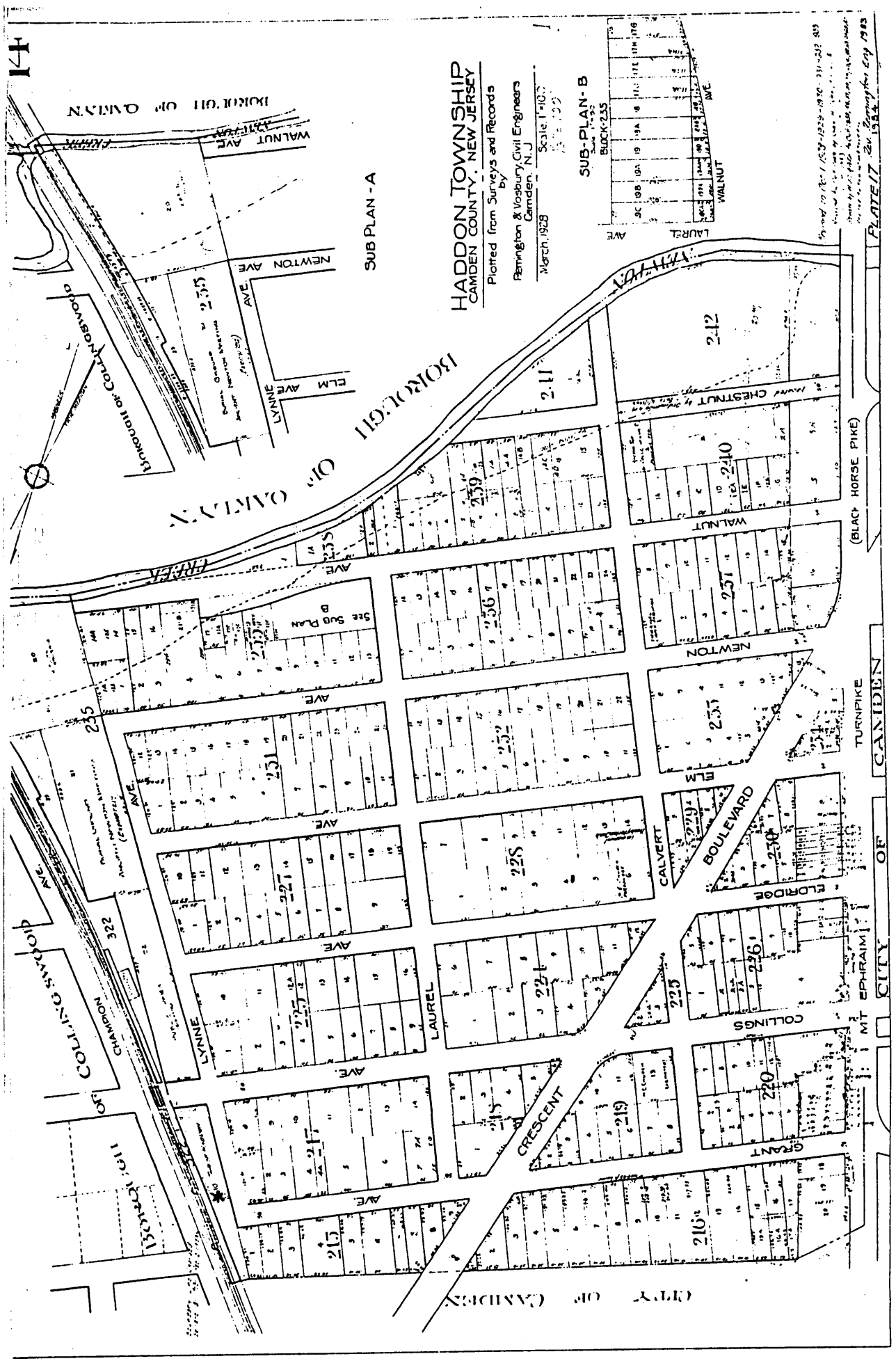
Newton Union School House, Haddon Township,
Camden County, New Jersey

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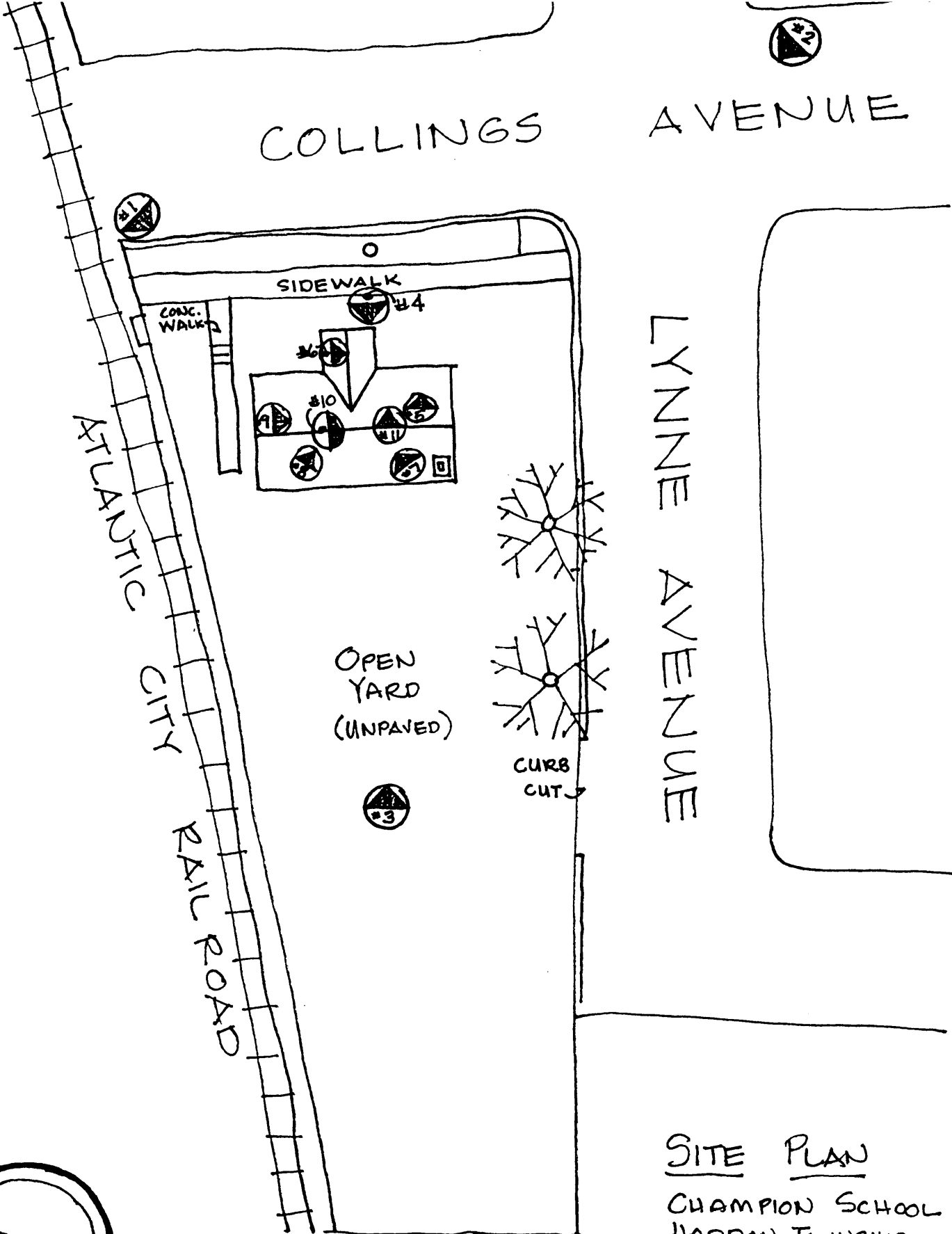


HADDON TOWNSHIP
CAMDEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
 Plotted from Surveys and Records
 by
 Remington & Voadury, Civil Engineers
 Camden, N. J.
 March 1928
 Scale 1"=100'

SUB-PLAN-B
BLOCK-235

PLATE I
 City of Camden
 1928

Champion School, Haddon Township, Camden County, New Jersey



COLLINGS AVENUE

LYNNE AVENUE

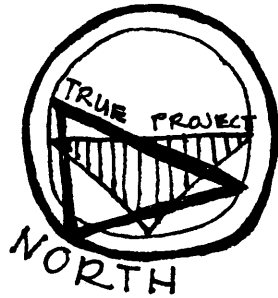
ATLANTIC CITY RAIL ROAD

SIDEWALK

CONC. WALK

OPEN YARD (UNPAVED)


CURB CUT

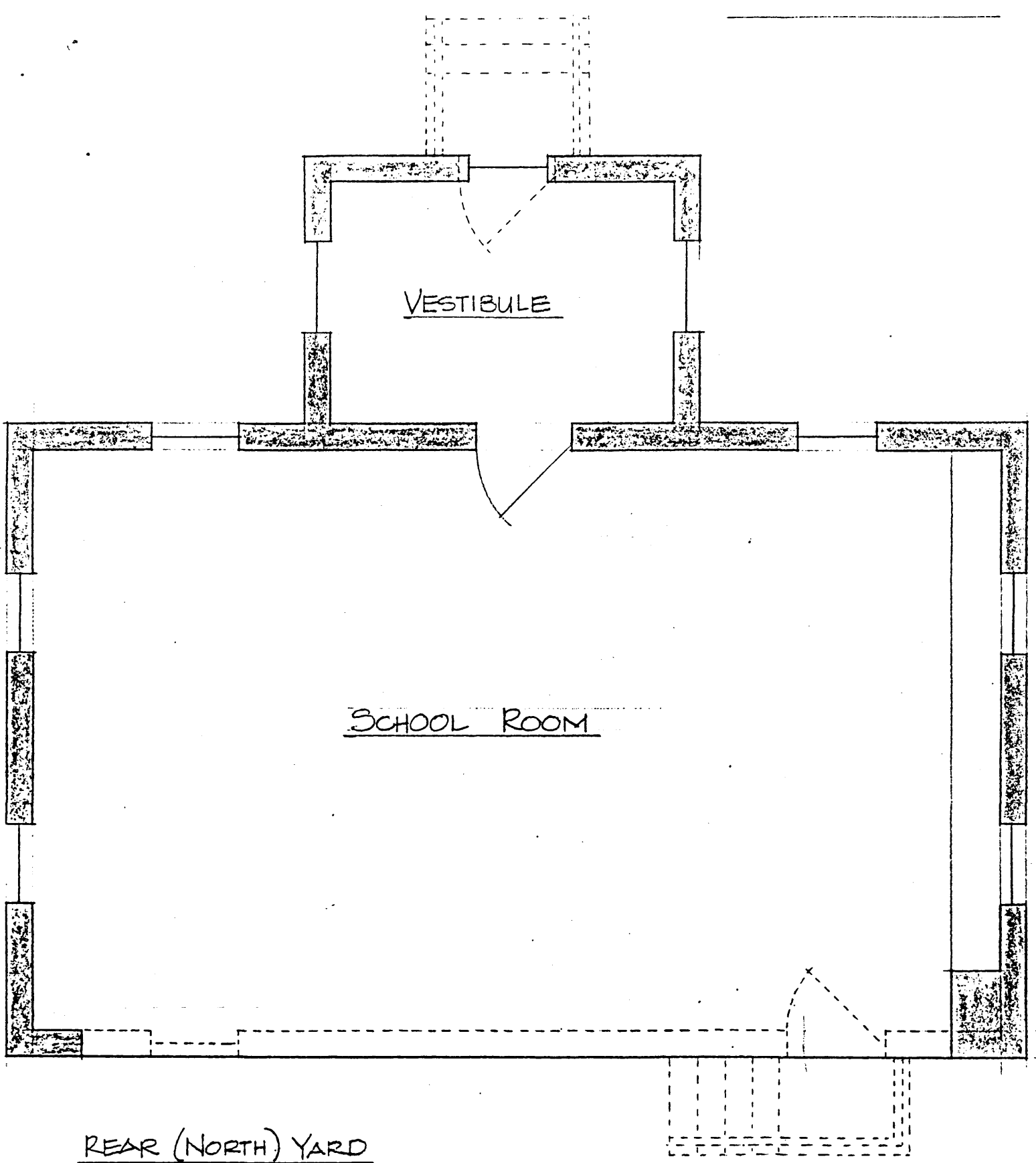


SITE PLAN

CHAMPION SCHOOL
 HADDON TOWNSHIP
 CAMDEN Co., NJ

not to scale

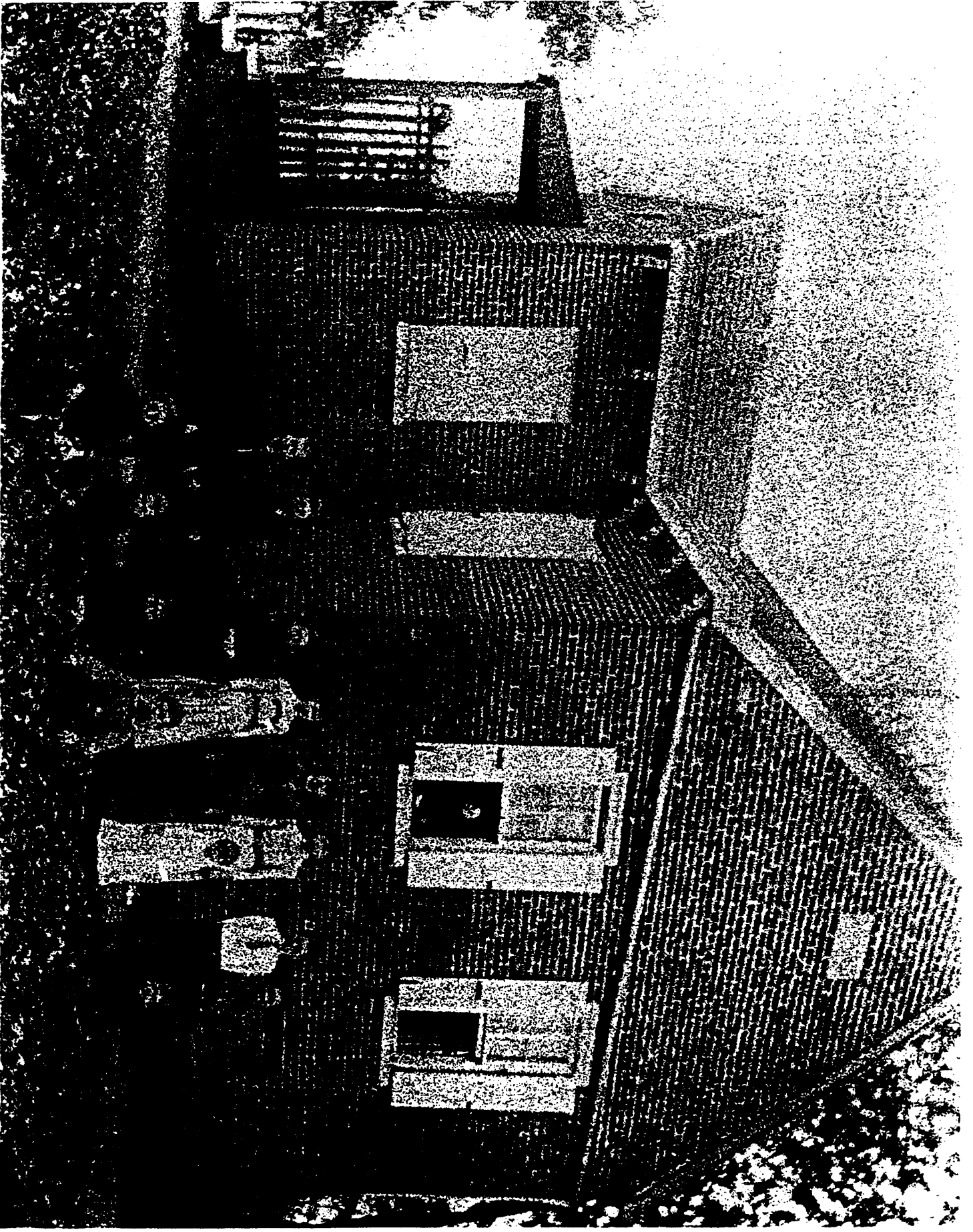
 Direction Camera Face
 #2 Number of Photograph



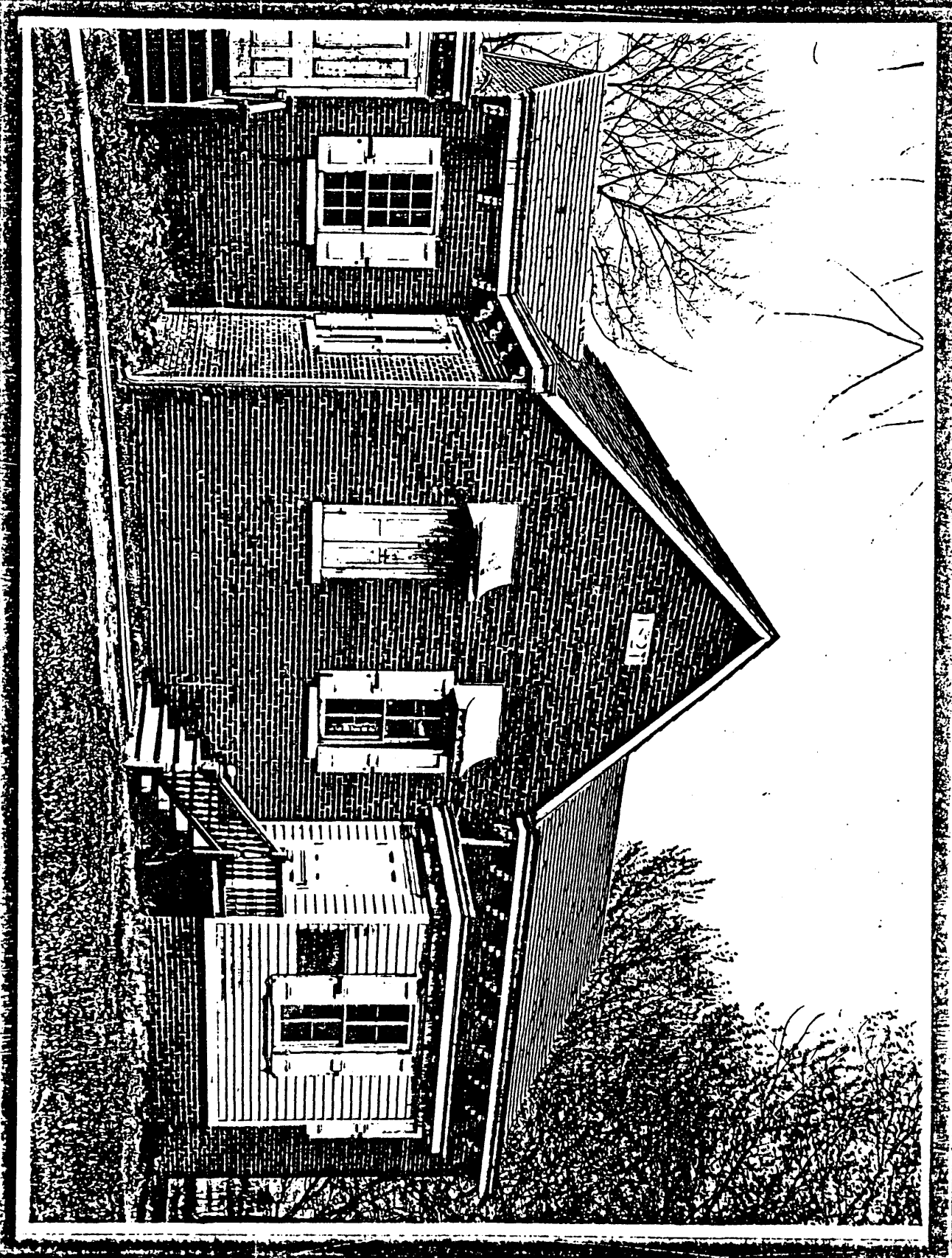
REAR (NORTH) YARD

THE CHAMPION SCHOOL
HADDON TOWNSHIP, N J
FLOOR PLAN • $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'-0''$

Champion School, Haddon Township, Camden Co., NJ
c. 1892 photo



1892



Champion School, Haddon Township, Camden Co., NJ 1909 photo