

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION, GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

REGION: Rocky Mountain PARK/AREA NAME: Glacier National Park PARK NUMBER: 1430

STRUCTURE NAME: McCarthy Homestead Cabin STRUCTURE NUMBER: 125

LOCATION OF STRUCTURE: North Fork on the Flathead River Sec. 9, R 35 N R21W QUADRANGLE NAME: Polebridge, Montana
 QUADRANGLE SCALE: 7.5 min.

UTM A 11 5409290 696590

CLASSIFICATION:

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY:	CATEGORY:	NUMBER OF RESOURCES:		
		CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING	
<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building(s)	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 5 </u>	Buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> Public-Local	<input type="checkbox"/> District	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Sites
<input type="checkbox"/> Public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Structures
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Objects
<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/private & public	<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	TOTAL

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The McCarthy Homestead Cabin is locally historically significant, and therefore, eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. The cabin is the only representative of the pre-Park, 1910, period of homestead settlement in the North Fork of the Flathead River, Glacier National Park, Montana. The McCarthy cabin is a good representative of the Early Exploration and Settlement theme in Glacier National Park. The adjoining cabins and the former Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) buildings relocated to the property in 1953 are not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places due to the recent construction dates, lack of association to the theme, and in the case of the relocated CCC building the lack of historical significance, architectural significance and the loss of integrity. The Schoenberger house (across the road from the McCarthy Cabin) could be called the second generation of home building in the area. The architecturally significant Schoenberger house was built in 1916, about 8 years after the family settled. According to long-time North Fork resident, Mr. Conwell Robinson, the Schoenberger's first built a one room cabin similar to the McCarthy cabin.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The McCarthy Homestead Cabin was built during July and August of 1908 by Jeremiah McCarthy. The one room, hand-hewn square-notched cabin, built on the southern edge of the Big Prairie in the North Fork of the Flathead River was 16' x 20' with wooden floors, the fireplace was centered on the back wall and it had a shake roof. In 1948, the family decided to fix up the cabin and drew plans for the addition to the homestead cabin. Enclosed are copies of the drawings. In 1951, Mr. McCarthy's grandson, Conwell Robinson replaced rotted sill logs and covered the roof with rolled asphalt. In 1953, a bedroom, bathroom, and screened porch with concrete deck was added to the original cabin, changing the original dimension to 35' x 27'. The addition has a concrete floor and interior plywood paneling. The exterior walls of the addition are vertical pine siding and it has a rolled composition roof. A covered front porch wraps around the addition,

12/21/85

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION: (Cont.)

In 1954 and 1955, the sleeping cabins were built. The two room log constructed sleeping cabin is 12' x 23'. The front room has a concrete floor; the second room, a wooden floor. The cabin has a rolled composition roof.

The other cabin has an attached storage shed. The log cabin is 10' x 13' with wooden floors and a rolled composition roof. The attached shed is 10' x 6' with vertical board and batten siding. At a later date, the log cabin portion was covered with the vertical board and batten siding, however, the log rafters remain.

An elevated water tower, holding a 500 gallon tank and an enclosed electric plant, was built sometime during the early 1950s. The tower is sheathed with vertical pine boards. A 4' x 6' frame outhouse is behind the water tank.

Approximately 375 feet east of the main cabin is a machine shed and tack room. The frame 14' x 10' shed has wooden floors, plywood walls, and a rolled composition roof. The building was formerly used by the CCC east of the homestead on park lands. The Robinson family bought the building and moved it to its present location in 1952 or 1953. At the same time new siding, a new floor, and new roof was added to the former CCC camp building.

Although the McCarthy Homestead Cabin has been altered by the 1953 addition, the cabin's original fabric, with the exception of the roof, had been maintained, some of the original chinking remains. The addition of the adjoining buildings do not detract from the historical significance.

The construction techniques of the cabin were typical of other log homesteads from the same period. Therefore, the cabin does not possess architectural significance.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION:

The history of the homestead settlement in the North Fork of the Flathead River area began in 1901 after the completion of a wagon road from Apgar to Lower Kintla Lake. The road, constructed to transport oil drilling equipment to Kintla Lake, became an access for homesteaders who moved into the Valley. The area saw an increase in homesteads after passage of the Forest Homestead Act of 1906.¹

Prior to the creation of Glacier National Park this area was a part of the Blackfeet National Forest, administered by the United States Department of Agriculture. The Forest Homestead Act of 1906 made it possible to homestead on nontimbered land within national forests that had agricultural potential and were not necessary for watershed protection or forest growth. Between the passage of the act and 1915 the Department of Agriculture approved 12,000 forest homesteads throughout the country.²

In the North Fork area the homesteads were for the most part on the east side of the river. Some of the homesteads in the North Fork were the Gephart Homestead (1906) on McGee Meadow; the Cummings on Quartz Creek (1908); the Johnnie Walsh on Big Prairie (1906); the Schoenberger on Big Prairie (1906); the Sullivan on Camas Creek (1908); Henthorne's in the middle of Big Prairie; the J.K. Miller on the north end of the Big Prairie; and the McCarthy (1908), also on the Big Prairie.³

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION: (Cont.)

These homesteads have been characterized as "subsistence homesteads in which the residents combined farming, hunting, and trapping with occasional quick-income jobs outside the Valley."⁴

In 1910, the homesteaders opposed the inclusion of this area in the newly created Glacier National Park. The residents became "inholders" and were allowed to keep their property with the National Park Service having the right to purchase the property at a stated time.

Two years prior to the park's creation, Jeremiah McCarthy, a naturalized American citizen who was born in Ireland, filed for a Homestead Entry under the Forest Homestead Act of 1906. The property, 130 acres, was in Section 9, Township 35N, Range 21W, Flathead County, Montana. Mr. McCarthy and his Massachusetts born wife, Margaret, lived in Butte, where Jeremiah McCarthy worked as a miner. In 1906, McCarthy visited his cousin Dennis Sullivan who lived in Bad Rock Canyon, southwest of the present-day park. Sullivan and McCarthy visited the North Fork area and later applied for homesteads. McCarthy's 130 acres were on the southern edge of the Big Prairie. After filing on June 29, 1908, McCarthy, Tim Sullivan, and John Abbot built the one room log cabin. McCarthy died from consumption the following spring, May 1909.

During the summer of 1901, Mrs. McCarthy and her oldest child returned to the homestead cabin from Butte where she left her other four children. In order to keep the homestead, Margaret McCarthy tilled the required amount of land in 1909. In 1910, she built a fence and had a small garden. In 1911, she fenced more land and prepared two acres to seed and raised a garden; in 1912, one mile of fencing was completed, nine acres were prepared for cultivation and she raised a garden. Fifteen acres were seeded with oats and timothy in 1913. By the time the Final Proof certificate was signed in August 1913, the entire property was fenced, including an inside fence for the garden.

Prior to the final proof, Mrs. McCarthy spent every summer at the homestead performing the tasks to meet the homestead requirements.

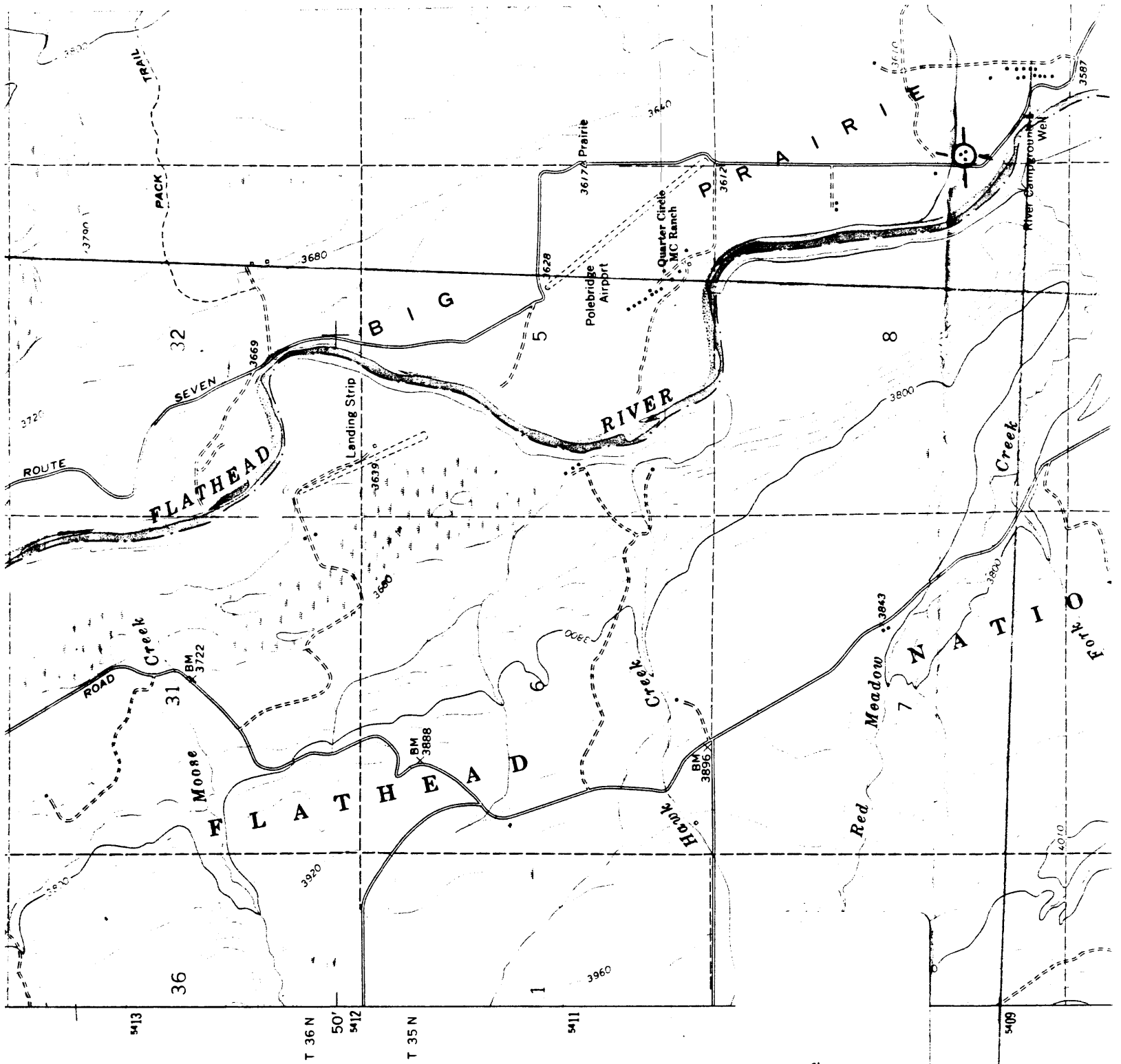
In 1914 or 1915, the road, relocated to its present location, was closer to the river and also the McCarthy and Schoenberger homesteads.

After 1930, some of the children of the homesteaders left the valley for economic opportunity. The valley again changed after the end of World War II. The homesteads became summer cabins for the residents. The children and grandchildren of Mrs. Margaret McCarthy, who died in 1939, continued to use the homestead cabin as a summer cabin. During the early 1950s, the addition to the homestead cabin was completed, the additional buildings were constructed, and the former CCC camp building was relocated to the property.⁵

The property was purchased by the National Park Service in 1970.

1. Newell, Alan, Walter, David, and McDonald, James. Historic Resources Study, Glacier National Park and Historic Structures Survey. National Park Service 1980, p. 394
2. Gates, Paul W. History of Public Land Law Development. Washington, D.C.; Government Printing Office, 1968, p. 512.

3. Newell, Walter, and McDonald, p. 394.
4. Ibid, p. 397.
5. Interview with Conwell Robinson by Mary Shivers Culpin, December 1984 in Denver, Colorado



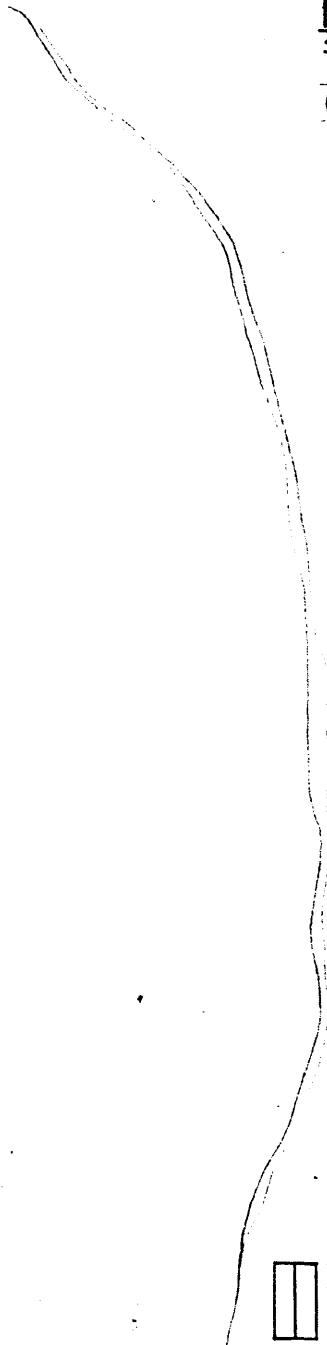
MCCARTHY HOMESTEAD
 Polebridge, Montana Quadrangle
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 GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MONTANA

TACK HOUSE AND MACHINE SHED




McCARTHY HOMESTEAD
SCALE 1=50

GLACIER NATIONAL PARK




 GUEST COTTAGE

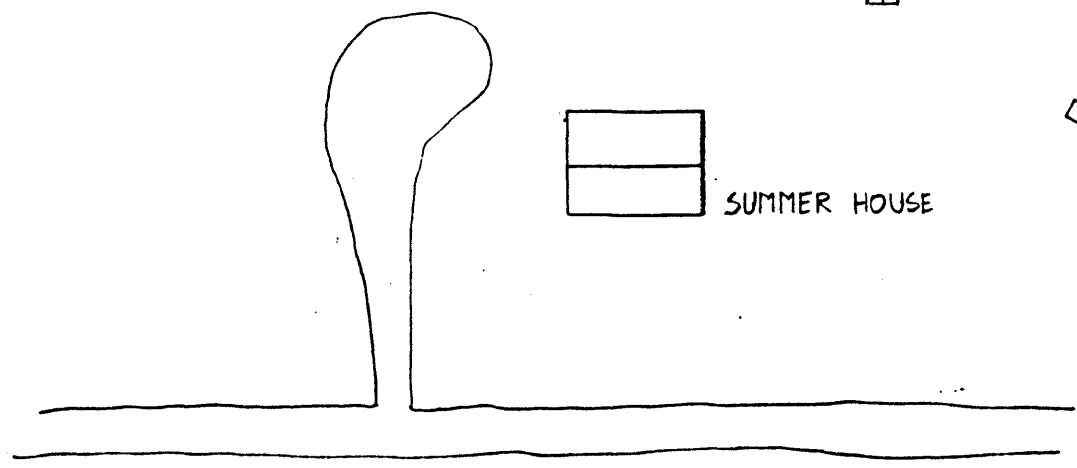
 GUEST COTTAGE/WOOD SHED

 WASHROOM AND LAUNDRY

 WATER TOWER

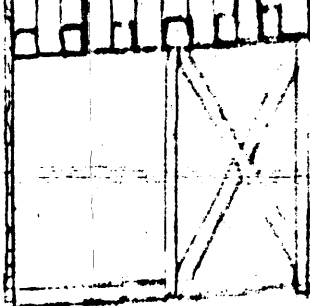
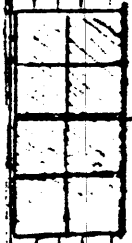
 OUTHOUSE

 SUMMER HOUSE

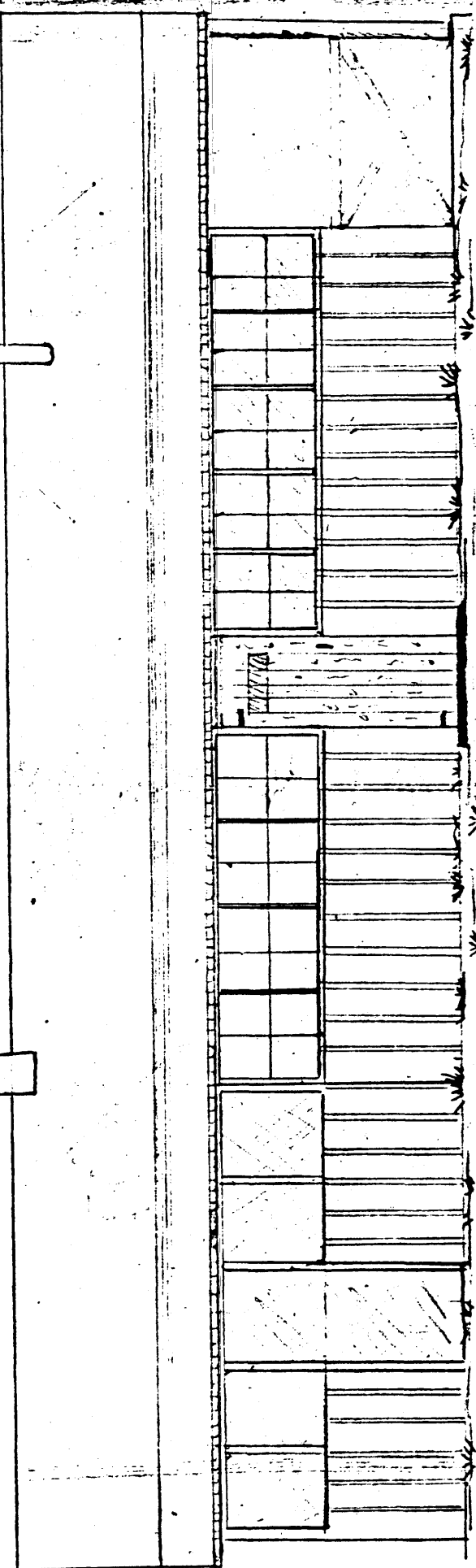
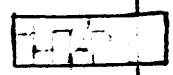
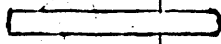
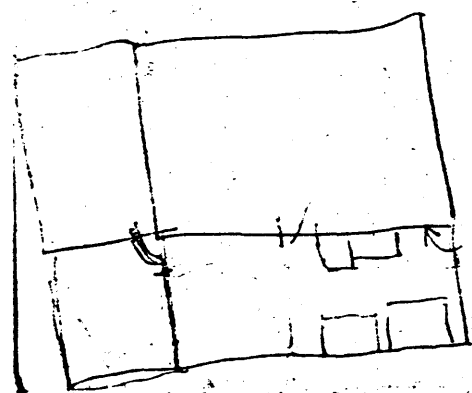


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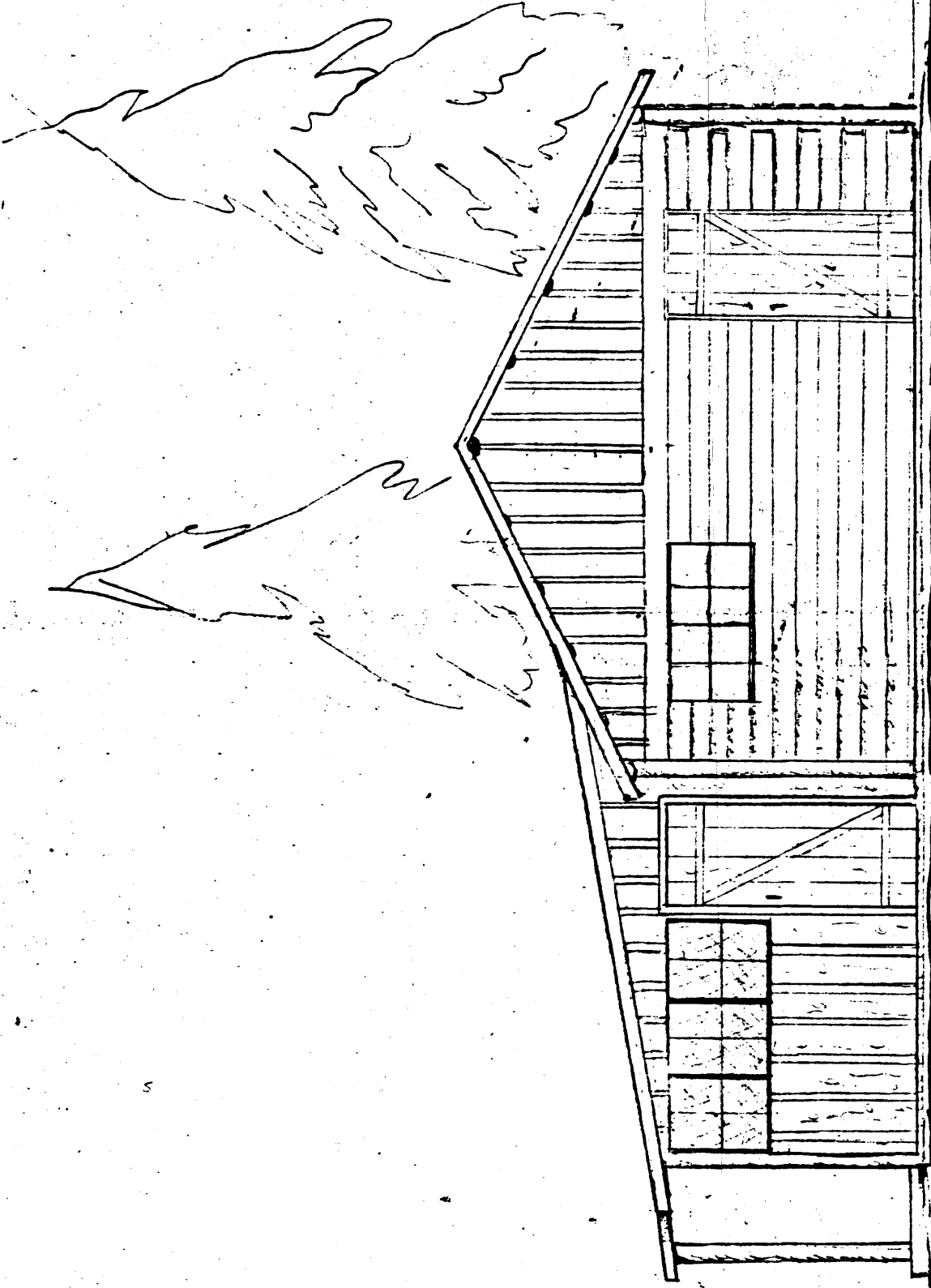


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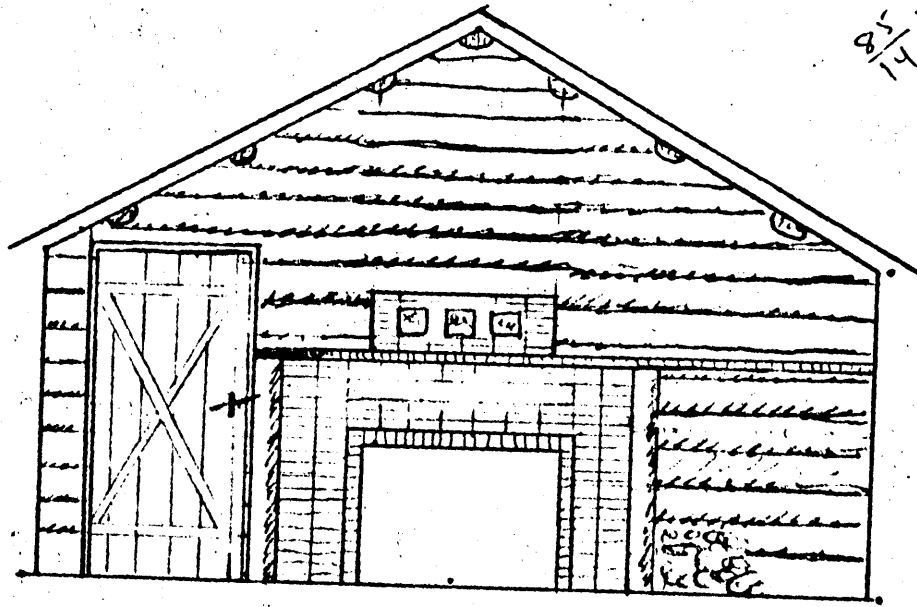


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101



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100
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