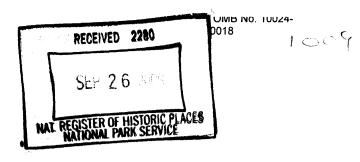
(Oct. 1990)

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	
2. Location	
street & number 5055 Old Highway 31 E	N/A☐ not for publication
city or town Bethpage	🛛 vicinity
state TN code TN county Sumner code 16	37022 zip code <u>37022</u>
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that nomination   request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering p National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 my opinion, the property   meets   does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that considered significant   nationally   statewide   locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments)  Signature of certifying official/Title  Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer — Tennessee Historical Commission  State or Federal agency and bureau  In my opinion, the property   meets   does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See Continuation See	properties in the CFR Part 60. In this property be nments.)
Signature of certifying official/Title Date	-
State or Federal agency and bureau	
<u> </u>	
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.	Date of Action ///8/06
ceplain:)	

Durham's Chapel School	<del></del>	Sumner Co., TN				
Name of Property		Cou	inty and State			
5. Classification						
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)		Irces within Property isly listed resources in count.)			
□ private     □ public-local	building(s)     district	Contributing	Noncontributing			
public-State	☐ site	_1	2	buildings		
public-Federal	☐ structure	0	0	sites		
	☐ object	2	0	_ structures		
		0	0	objects		
		3	2	Total		
Name of related multiple (Enter "N/A" if property is not pa		in the National Re	buting resources previo	ously listed		
N/A		N/A				
6. Function or Use						
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructio	ns)	Current Function (Enter categories from				
EDUCATION/school		RELIGION/religiou	s facility			
		-				
7. Description						
Architectural Classificat	ion	Materials				
(Enter categories from instructio		(Enter categories from				
		foundation STO	NE			
OTHER: Rosenwald Scho	ool	walls WOOD				
		roof ASPHALT,	METAL			
		other CONCRE				

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheets.

Durham's Chapel School  Name of Property	Sumner Co., TN
8. Statement of Significance	County and State
Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)	Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.	EDUCATION SOCIAL HISTORY ETHNIC HERITAGE: African American ARCHITECTURE
☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.	
☑ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.	Period of Significance c. 1923-1956
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	
Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)	Significant Dates 1923
Property is:  A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	Cinnificant Danson
☐ <b>B</b> removed from its original location.	Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked) N/A
C moved from its original location.	Cultural Affiliation
D a cemetery.	N/A
☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	
☐ F a commemorative property	Architect/Builder
☐ <b>G</b> less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.	Smith, Samuel L., Rosenwald Community School Plan  Designer
Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation she	eets.)
9. Major Bibliographical References	
<b>Bibliography</b> (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form of	n one or more continuation sheets.)
Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A  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 Name of repository: MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Durham's Chapel School	Sumner Co., TN					
Name of Property	County and State					
10. Geographical Data						
Acreage of Property Approximately 1.5 acres	Bethpage, TN 313 NE					
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)						
1 16 559977 4036526	3					
Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing					
2	4					
	See continuation sneet					
Verbal Boundary Description						
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)						
<b>Boundary Justification</b> (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)						
11. Form Prepared By						
name/title Jaime Woodcock, Sarah Jane Murray, Leslie	N. Sharp, and Carroll Van West					
organization Center for Historic Preservation	date September 8, 2006					
street & number 1416 East Main Street; MTSU, Box 80						
city or town Murfreesboro	state TN zip code 37132					
Additional Documentation						
Submit the following items with the completed form:						
Continuation Sheets						
Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating t	the property's location					
A 0000 map (7.5 or 10 minute series) indicating t	ine property a location					
A <b>Sketch Map</b> for historic districts and properties h	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.)						
	illiam E. Rogan					
name _ Durham's Chapel Baptist Church c/o Reverend W						
name _ Durham's Chapel Baptist Church c/o Reverend W	<del></del>					

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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#### VII. DESCRIPTION

The Durham's Chapel School lies in rural Sumner County, Tennessee, south of the town of Bethpage, and is located along Old Highway 31 E, an early twentieth century road that once served as a major transportation artery between Gallatin to the south and Kentucky to the north. The school is on the southeast side of the road and is now used by the adjacent Durham Chapel Baptist Church for meetings and special occasions. Separated from the rush of traffic on the new highway by a dense thicket, this bypassed section of the road maintains a rural feeling.

Durham's Chapel School was constructed to standardized plans for a two-teacher school with industrial room of the Rosenwald School Building Program in 1923. The one-story, weatherboard, shingle cross-gable roof building has a limestone block foundation. The school's Craftsman-inspired detailing, specifically exposed rafter tails, brackets, and wide-overhanging eaves, acts as the primary decorative features of the building. The Durham's Chapel School's original wood walls, doors, flooring, stage, and ceiling give the building significant historical integrity. It is sited on an irregular rectangular lot, with the modern U.S. Highway 31E comprising the east boundary and the Old Highway 31E comprising the west boundary.

The school's front, or northwest, facade has a projecting center room with four, double-hung, nine-over-nine, wood sash windows and a front-gable roof with a rectangular, louvered gable-end vent. There is an entrance to each side of the projecting center room. Both entrances feature a simple shed-roof canopy with triangular braced supports and asphalt shingles and a set of two concrete stairs that lead to a vestibule. Inside the two vestibules are the five-paneled wooden door entrances that lead to the two large classrooms. Paired, double-hung, six-over-six wood sash windows covered with plywood are to one side of each entrance.

The northeast elevation is a solid weatherboard wall with rectangular vents cut into the stone foundation and a rectangular, louvered gable end vent.

The southwest elevation is similar to the north elevation.

The southeast elevation contains the signature Rosenwald Plan trait of two long bands of windows, one for each classroom. Each contains six double-hung nine-over-nine wood sash windows. Six of the twelve windows are covered with plywood. Also on this elevation is a plywood-covered opening in the stone foundation.

The interior consists of two equally sized classrooms, two small cloakrooms, and a projecting center portion for the industrial room. Most of the original features are extant, including the floor plan, floors, walls, ceilings, cabinets, doors, moldings, hardware, chalkboard, partitions, stage, and stove. Movable partitions and a three-panel wood door separate the two classrooms. The Durham's Chapel School has an original wooden stage at its southwest end. The plan allowed for the partitions to be opened and thus both rooms could serve as an "auditorium" for school presentations, theater, concerts, and public meetings.

Also in the southwest classroom, there is an original wood-burning stove that served as the school's heating system. The stove sits close to the center of the building and has an interior chimney. On the southwest wall,

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between the entrances of the two cloakrooms, there is a bulletin board in each classroom. The original chalkboards line the walls of the gable ends, or northeast and southwest walls. A simple chair rail divides the walls' lower portion of vertical wood paneling and plaster upper portion.

Now used as a kitchen and storage area, the industrial room was used for home economics training. The current sink, refrigerator, and stove were installed circa 1955 when county officials provided funds for limited updating of the school facilities in the wake of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Along the southwest wall of the room is a bulletin board, while the northeast wall has original tall wood built-in cabinets, a feature not typically found in this type of Rosenwald Plan school.

In the schoolyard, there are historic resources associated with the school. The Girls' Privy (1923) is northeast of the schoolhouse. It is a typical building of its kind with frame structure, weatherboard exterior, and a single wooden seat. The structure is in poor condition (NC, due to deterioration).

The Boys' Privy (1923) is southwest of the schoolhouse. It also features a frame structure, weatherboard exterior, and a single wooden seat. This structure is in poor condition (NC, due to deterioration).

A well and water pump (1923) sit to the rear and to the east of the schoolhouse. The water pump is made of iron and consists of a manually operated pump, spigot, and piping that leads from the concrete trough and well. Few extant Rosenwald school properties in Tennessee still retain this much of the historic water system for the students. (C)

An original concrete sidewalk (1923) leads from the front entrance of the school to the asphalt road, Old Highway 31 E, which initially became an improved highway during the administration of Governor Austin Peay in the 1920s and then received additional improvements during the New Deal era. (C)

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#### VIII. SIGNIFICANCE

The Durham's Chapel School documents the development and evolution of a rural African American enclave of settlement, education, and religion during the Jim Crow era (1890-1955) of segregation in Sumner County, Tennessee. The nominated property is listing eligible under Criterion A for its local historical significance in education, social history, and African American ethnic heritage. The property is also eligible under Criterion C due to its design and integrity, reflecting the Rosenwald program's specifications for a two-teacher school plan.

#### **Background History**

African American settlement in this area began c. 1866-1870, with the founding of the Durham Chapel Baptist Church and the creation of the Durham Chapel Cemetery. Scholars of the Reconstruction-era, and Tennessee's own Rural African American Church Survey, document how newly emancipated African Americans rushed to create their own churches, schools, and cemeteries in the years immediately after the Civil War.<sup>1</sup> Building such community institutions was crucial to the nurturing of a distinctive African American identity.<sup>2</sup>

Schools were especially important to this search for community institutions and in the late 1860s African Americans, working with officials of the Freedmen's Bureau, constructed buildings that served both as school buildings and education buildings. Such was the case at Durham Chapel. The Reverend Peter Vertrees, a mulatto who played a crucial role in establishing African American churches and schools in Sumner County from emancipation until his death in 1926, founded Durham's Chapel Baptist Church in 1866. A local resident named Rodney Durham donated the land for the church to the community. At the time Durham's Chapel was organized, not enough potential members existed in the community to form a church, so Reverend Vertrees borrowed five members, the required number to organize, from his congregation at the Hickory Grove Baptist Church in nearby Gallatin, Tennessee. The congregation met in a building that also served as a local school. This building is not extant.

In the early years of Durham's Chapel, according to Vertrees' autobiography, a member named Will Malone stood guard with a shotgun during church services to prevent attacks by members of the surrounding community, who the Reverend referred to as "so wicked." The guard may have been necessary because of the building's association with the Freedmen's Bureau. Educating African Americans was very controversial to many whites in the 1860s and 1870s, and they often struck back by burning the buildings or threatening the occupants. According to an official Freedmen's Bureau report in the summer of 1866, "there is reported to be no safety for Union men or Freedmen, especially discharged colored soldiers in the Northern part of Sumner

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Carroll Van West, *Historic Rural African-American Churches in Tennessee, 1850-1970 Multiple Property Nomination,* (29 October 1999, On file at the Tennessee Historical Commission, Nashville, TN), 30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> West, 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Velma Howell Brinkley and Mary Huddleston Malone, *African-American Life in Sumner County*. (Dover, NH: Arcadia, 1998): 40.

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Co., there being a gang of cutthroats and villains, who under the head of Harper rob and murder without let or hindrance." Durham Chapel is in northern Sumner County, ten miles north of Gallatin, the county seat.

The era of the combination church and school ended c. 1900, when the Durham Chapel Baptist Church built a new sanctuary, marked by the rural vernacular of double front doors which made an unassuming mark on the landscape. The original church/school building became known as the "little red schoolhouse," which stood adjacent to the new building and remained as the community school until the construction of the Rosenwald school in 1923.

#### Rosenwald School Assessment

Sears-Roebuck magnate Julius Rosenwald funded his first school for Tennessee African Americans in 1915. In 1919, Rosenwald hosted a meeting in Nashville for education reformers who wanted to establish a rural school building program. They created a Nashville office which would review requests from local communities and provide money from the Julius Rosenwald Fund (JRF) according to the number of teachers planned for each school. By the time the program closed in 1932, the Rosenwald Fund had helped to build 354 schools in Tennessee.

The Durham's Chapel Rosenwald School, like many other Rosenwald Schools across Tennessee, represented a new higher level of commitment by state and local officials to the education of African-Americans, although much of new commitment focused only on vocational education offerings. School boards spent more money on the local schools, making new teaching material and resources available to the students. Rosenwald also wanted his schools to be permanent additions to public education, so the principles of industrial/ vocational training and black self-help would be taught well into the future. He required that state and local government funds match his contributions as well as those of the local African-American community. Durham's Chapel school employed two teachers and was built at a cost of \$3,750. To receive this school, the black community was mandated to raise the first \$1,525. The Rosenwald Fund provided a \$700 grant, with the balance being paid from public funds from Sumner County.<sup>5</sup>

"The principles of black self-help and industrial education dominated the JRF school construction plan," according to historian Mary S. Hoffschwelle. The schools included facilities for industrial, agricultural, and home economics instruction. Schools like the Durham's Chapel Rosenwald School offered a thorough curriculum in vocational education, focusing on industrial training for boys and home economics for girls. White officials supported these new classes, and even provided more money for supplies and equipment, because the vocational classes produced, in white eyes, a "better trained" and "more reliable" workforce in the local area rather than migrating north to new opportunities. Sumner County whites supported home economics training for the local African-American girls because they assumed that work as domestics in homes in nearby Gallatin was appropriate, and their best chance at steady employment.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> "Report of Aug. 28, 1866, Sub-District of Nashville," Reports of Outrages, Riots, and Murders, Jan. 15, 1866-Aug. 12, 1868, Freedmen's Bureau Online, accessed 7/16/2005.]
<sup>5</sup> Brinkley, 34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Mary S. Hoffschwelle, "Rebuilding the Rural Southern Community: Reformers, Schools, and Homes in Tennessee, 1914-1929," PhD Dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1993, 111.

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The Rosenwald reformers believed that local participation and involvement in the schools construction was imperative because it could teach the community how to improve the appearance and sanitation of its own neighborhood. According to Hoffschwelle, reformers maintained "that rural blacks would be reformed first by building their Rosenwald School, which would unite them as a community, and then by the building itself, which would inspire hard work and clean living."<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, the building was to be more than a place for education; it was to be the center for community life. Therefore, the Durham's Chapel Rosenwald School has significant associations with the social history of the rural African-American community of Sumner County. It became a vital public gathering place for African-Americans in the Bethpage area. Rosenwald publications emphasized that "service to the community" was a top priority for the school building. The 1924 *Community School Plans* stated:

In planning the schoolhouse it should be kept in mind that the best modern schoolhouse is one which is designed to serve the entire community for twelve months in the year. Hence in all larger buildings at least a room for industries and for the use of the adult members of the community is important. Wherever possible a good auditorium, large enough to seat the entire community, should be erected in connection with every community school. If there are not sufficient funds for an auditorium, two adjoining classrooms with a movable partition may be made to serve this purpose. While movable partitions are not always satisfactory, they are much preferred to no assembly facilities.<sup>8</sup>

Durham's Chapel Rosenwald School has two such adjoining rooms, complete with a small stage which is still extant. The adjacent room could become part of the seating for lectures, performances, and other community events by pushing back the movable partition so that children and adults could view the speaker and hear the speech. The school served as a meeting place for African-American speakers on a variety of topics, from politics to race relations to the agricultural extension service. It also hosted school plays, community lectures from extension agents, and community pageants.

The school exhibits a high degree of architectural integrity. The frame construction of Durham's Chapel School is typical of surviving schools built in the 1920s and 1930s following the Rosenwald community school plans. Although the privies on the Durham's Chapel School grounds are dilapidated, they are significant because "health was a major concern of all the Rosenwald School planners in the 1910s and early 1920s, when few rural schools boasted any sort of toilets." The well and water pump were common features of schoolhouses in the area. An almost identical well and water pump exist nearby at the former Scattersville School, now the Scattersville Community Center. The other extant features—plan, woodwork, setting, chalkboard, stove, partitions—also contribute to the architectural significance of the Durham's Chapel School.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Community School Plans, (Nashville: Julius Rosenwald fund, 1924), 1.

<sup>~</sup>West, 62.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Mary S. Hoffschwelle, *Preserving Rosenwald Schools*, (Washington D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2003): 7.

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The education mission of the Rosenwald School, however, never quite separated the building from its earlier associations with the church. The church used the school and its grounds for various Sunday events and education needs due to the greater space of the school. This symbiotic relationship between the church and school buildings continued for fifteen years. But the need of the church for the school facilities changed in c. 1938 when pastor Dr. Jonathan Nathaniel Rucker, Vertrees' son-in-law, supervised a major renovation and expansion of the church building, which left the building in the general form and basic appearance (except for the brick veneer of the facade in c. 1960) of today. Dr. Rucker, a medical doctor educated at Meharry Medical College, served at Durham's Chapel from 1926 until 1945 and finished his career at First Baptist East Nashville (NR 07-27-2005).

The Durham's Chapel Rosenwald School continued to operate within the segregated educational system until 1962 when the Sumner County School Board voted to close the school due to low enrollment. Once closed, the building reverted back to its sacred use. The county would continue to own the land and the congregation would own, maintain, and use the building for their own purposes. It served the congregation as a fellowship and community hall until 1995 when the new Fellowship Hall was built adjacent to the Durham Chapel Baptist Church. Since 1995, the church uses the school on special occasions only. For example, the congregation hosted a tour stop for the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Rosenwald Conference in May 2004, during which Alice Rosenwald, granddaughter of Julius, visited Durham's Chapel School. In 2005, it was one of three Rosenwald Schools in Tennessee, to receive a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for renovation work.

Durham's Chapel School is a unique place in rural Sumner County where the inter-play and symbiotic associations that characterized African American community institutions in the age of Jim Crow take on lasting physical form. The school, however, remains the best artifact of an era when African Americans lived with and adjusted to segregation but always hoped for and strived for a better life for their children. It is an extant artifact of the vision of Southern reformers who believed that through new, functional architectural environments education and life would be improved within the rural African-American community. In one sense, the school is like all extant Rosenwald schools in the South. It was part of a major reform effort; it served as an educational and community center for a rural black community for at least 40 years, and its unassuming architecture reflected the quiet dignity of the program and the people it served. The surviving extant remains of this school are also significant artifacts of progressive school architecture, African-American education, and symbols of African-American ethnic heritage, achievement, and pride.

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- Interviews were also conducted by Leslie Sharp with Roberta Gardner, John Brown, and Maggie Brown (members of the congregation) during the Spring and Fall of 2004.

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#### X. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The Durham's Chapel School property is located on Old Highway 31 E in Bethpage, Tennessee. The nominated boundary is county parcel 48 as documented in the attached Sumner County Tax Map 84. The scale of the map is greater than 1" = 400' due to the standards of the Tennessee rural mapping system.

**Boundary Justification** 

The nominated property contains the historic and current legal boundaries associated with the Durham's Chapel School currently owned by Durham's Chapel Baptist Church, c/o Reverend William E. Rogan.

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Durham's	Chapel	School,	Sumner	Co.	TI.

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#### **PHOTOGRAPHS**

Durham's Chapel School, Sumner Co., TN

Photos by:

Anne-Leslie Owens and Leslie Sharp

MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Date:

May 2004

Negatives:

Tennessee Historical Commission, 2941 Lebanon Road, Nashville, TN 37243

Northwest facade, students, and teachers, photograph of historic photograph, facing east 1 of 11

Northwest facade, facing southeast 2 of 11

Southeast elevation, facing north 3 of 11

Northeast gable end, facing north 4 of 11

Northeast classroom, facing northeast 5 of 11

Interior, facing northeast 6 of 11

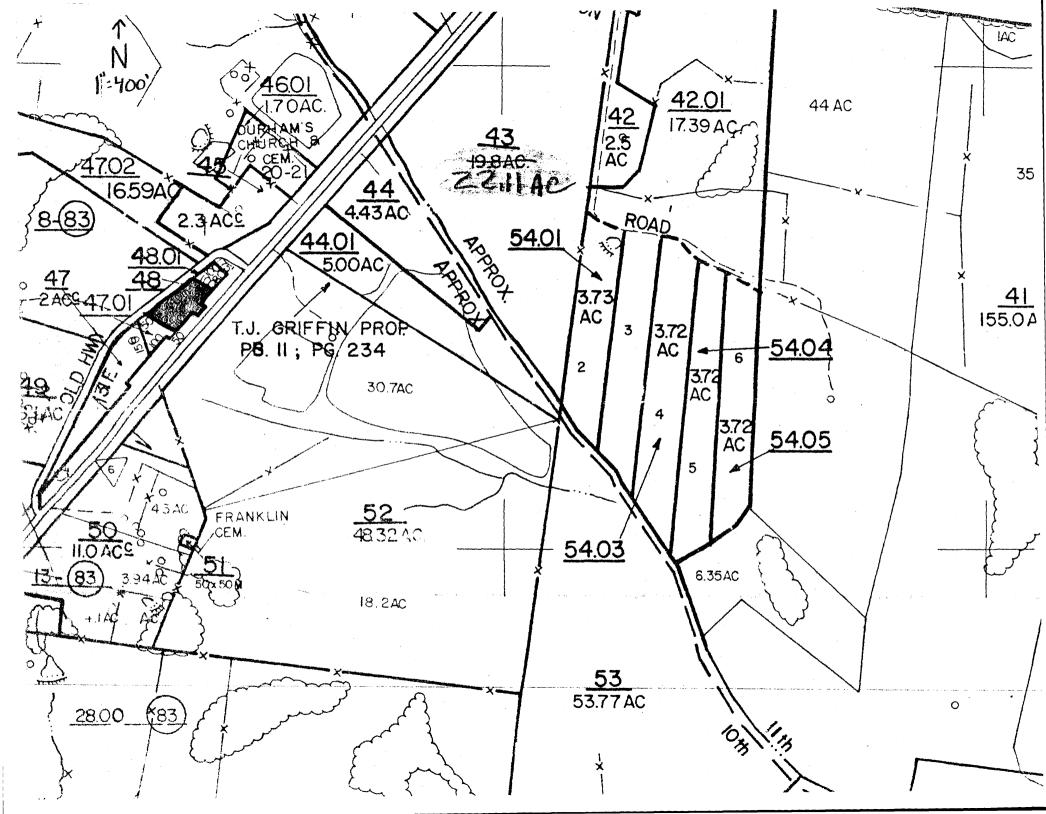
Original wood stage, facing southwest 7 of 11

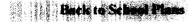
Community room cabinets, facing northeast 8 of 11

Boy's privy, facing southwest 9 of 11

Girl's privy, facing southeast 10 of 11

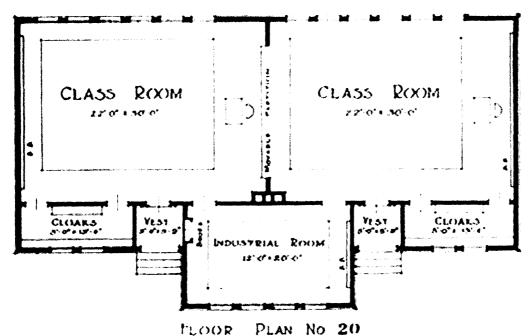
Water Pump and trough, facing southeast 11 of 11





#### Two Teacher Plan to face East or West





TWO TEACHER COMMUNITY SCHOOL TO FACE LAST OF WEST ONLY