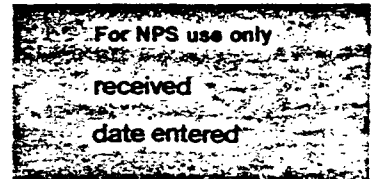


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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



1. Name

historic Harry S Truman Farm Home

and/or common Solomon Young Farm, Truman Farm

2. Location

street & number 12301 Blue Ridge Boulevard Extension _____ not for publication

city, town Grandview, _____ vicinity of congressional district 5

state Missouri code 29 county Jackson code 095

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☒ district	☒ public	☐ occupied	☐ agriculture
☐ building(s)	☐ private	☐ unoccupied	☒ museum
☐ structure	☐ both	☒ work in progress	☐ commercial
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ educational
☐ object	☐ in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ entertainment
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ government
	☒ not applicable	☐ no	☐ industrial
			☐ military
			☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Jackson County, Missouri
c/o Bill Waris, County Executive
street & number 415 East 12th Street

city, town Kansas City _____ vicinity of state Missouri 64106

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Jackson County Courthouse, Kansas City
Annex

street & number 415 East 12th Street

city, town Kansas City _____ state Missouri 64106

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

The Solomon Young Farm is included
title on the National Register of Historic Places. Has this property been determined eligible? ☒ yes ☐ no

date 1978 ☒ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records National Register of Historic Places

city, town Washington, D. C. _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition			Check one	Check one
☒ excellent	house	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered	☒ original site
☐ good		☐ ruins	☒ altered	☐ moved
☒ fair		☐ unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Harry S Truman Farm Home rests on a slightly irregular 5.2-acre plot fronting on Blue Ridge Boulevard Extension, Grandview, Missouri (see boundary map). The land is mostly level, sloping gently downward on the east side. The Truman Farm Home dominates the small remnant of the family's once-prosperous farm. Southeast of the home is a frame garage, northeast of the residence stands a poultry house. Several historic fence and gate posts are situated at various locations on the property (see site map).

The Harry S Truman Farm Home

The Harry S Truman Farm Home is a 2-story, 3-bay irregularly T-shaped vernacular farm residence. The home, currently being restored to its early twentieth century appearance, is comprised of 3 rectangular sections. The front (west) section has a north-south axis; the middle section has an east-west axis and is attached perpendicular to the front section's east side; the small third section is attached immediately east of the center section. A roughly 27- by 6-foot, 3-bay porch graces the main (west) facade; a 7-foot 6-inch by 14-foot 6-inch porch is situated on the south elevation at the crux of the front and center sections. The house measures 44 feet east-to-west (without the porch) and 36 feet 6 inches north-to-south at its widest points, and includes approximately 1900 square feet of living space.

The frame structure has clapboard siding, traditionally painted white. The west section rests on a brick foundation; stone and brick masonry foundations support the other sections. The west section has a hipped roof, as does the front porch. The other sections have gable roofs. All roofs are covered with asphalt shingles. The house has four single-stack chimneys.

The home's primary entrance is centered on the west facade's first floor; other entrances provide access to the center and east sections. Most of the structure's windows are 6 feet tall, one-over-one double-hung sash windows.

The home has few decorative details. The main decorative feature

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1867–present

Builder/Architect Solomon and Harriet Louisa Gregg Young

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Harry S Truman's 11 years on the family farm at Grandview were years of growth and development. Truman frequently counted his years on the farm among the best of his life. From 1906 to 1917, Truman not only increased his agricultural skills, but also nurtured other abilities that would serve him the rest of his life. Knowledge of farming directly assisted him in developing his Federal farm program, and greatly enhanced his appeal to farmers during the 1948 presidential campaign, perhaps providing his marginal victory in usually Republican areas of the West and Midwest. The "farm years" were years in which Truman cultivated social and speaking skills, and commenced his political career. As he prepared to leave high office, the Grandview farm was Truman's first choice as a site for his presidential library.

HISTORY

Solomon and Harriet Louisa Gregg Young, the maternal grandparents of Harry S Truman, emigrated to Jackson County, Missouri, from Kentucky, in 1841. Young bought farmland near present-day Grandview three years later,* and built a small brush-roofed log cabin on the property shortly thereafter. Apparently the cabin was built only to meet land purchase requirements, for the Youngs lived on another farm called Parrish Place in what is now Kansas City until sometime in the 1850s. Solomon's youngest daughter, Martha Ellen, was born at Parrish Place in 1852.³

Solomon Young was raised as a farmer and spent most of his life in that occupation, but was almost equally successful in trans-continental freighting and land speculation. He led several expeditions over the Santa Fe and Oregon Trails from 1846 to 1854 and again from 1864 to 1870. These excursions usually lasted about a year, beginning in May and ending the following spring.⁴

*Solomon Young's holdings in the county eventually included large tracts southeast of present-day Grandview, northeast of Grandview, and the 600-acre tract which was eventually managed by his grandson, Harry S Truman. That tract is commonly known as the "Grandview Farm."

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation Sheets 9-1 through 9-3.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 5.2

Quadrangle name Grandview, Missouri-Kansas

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is the entirety of Parcel No. R64-810-03, Jackson County, Missouri.
See attached Boundary Map.

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

state Missouri code 29 county Jackson code 095

state _____ code _____ county _____ code _____

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jill M. York, Regional Historian

organization National Park Service

date April 23, 1984

street & number 1709 Jackson Street

telephone (402) 221-3426

city or town Omaha, Nebraska 68102

state _____

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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____

date _____

For NPS use only

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

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

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is the front porch, where slender turned wood columns support the porch roof, which is graced with a band of turned wood spindles immediately below the porch roof.

Garage

This 27- by 18-foot frame structure was built sometime between 1890 and 1910. The horizontal board siding is covered with sheets of asphalt bearing a brick design. Asphalt shingles cover the gable roof. The west end has a large garage door opening; hinged panel doors on the east and west ends are boarded shut. The sills rest on stone piers. The garage is in fair condition.

The precise date of construction and original use of this building are disputed. One source claims the structure was built circa 1890 and was used by the Youngs as a temporary residence while the extant farm home was under construction. Bray further speculates that the building was used as shelter for hired hands during Truman's years on the farm.¹ While this interpretation is plausible, it is not substantiated by other sources. Fred Truman contradicts Bray's interpretation; he recalled that the garage once served as the post office in Grandview, and was moved to the farm during Harry Truman's tenure as Grandview postmaster (1914).² The structure was converted for use as a garage, and currently provides storage space for the restoration project.

Poultry House

This 30-by 12-foot frame structure has a random width plank shed roof covered with corrugated metal. The sill of the circa 1905 structure rests on limestone piers; a concrete floor was added later. The Poultry House is in fair condition.

Stone Posts

Historically, ten stone fence posts marked the Young-Truman farm. Three pairs served as gate posts; the remaining four marked the corners of the yard. Of these, only the corner fence posts and

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one pair of gate posts stand on the nominated property (see site map).

The posts are of quarried random coursed limestone capped with Portland cement. Varying slightly in size, the posts are square-shaped in plan with approximately 30-inch sides, and measure from 60 to 66 inches in height. The stone posts, constructed circa 1900, are in good condition.

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Harriet Louisa Young managed the Missouri properties and the children during her husband's absence.⁵

For a short time, Young owned a ranch near Sacramento, California, but most of his considerable holdings were in Missouri. In 1854, Solomon ended his first series of freighting expeditions, and settled on one of his Jackson County farms.⁶ By 1860 he owned 1,929 acres in Jackson County.

The Civil War brought hard times to Missouri, and in 1861 the Youngs' farmstead was raided by the "Red Legs," a band of abolitionists led by Jim Lane. The raiders killed 400 hogs, shot the chickens, and forced Harriet Louisa to cook for them until her fingers blistered.⁷ Two years later, Union Brigadier General Thomas Ewing, hoping to clear the area of Confederate sympathizers, ordered the Youngs to leave their land and report to the Federal military post in Kansas City. After a short time, Harriet Louisa took her children to Platte County, where they stayed for the remainder of the Civil War.⁸ Solomon was out west on one of his freighting expeditions.

In 1867 Solomon purchased an additional 398 acres and built the family's first frame house on the Grandview property.⁹ This residence served until it was destroyed by fire in 1893, the year after Solomon's death. A short-term resident of that first frame house was young Harry Truman.

Martha Ellen Young, meanwhile, had married a neighboring farmer, John Anderson Truman, in 1881. The couple moved to Lamar, Missouri, where their son, Harry, was born in 1884. Another son, Vivian, was born in Harrisonville, Missouri, two years later. The Truman family moved to the Youngs' Grandview farm in 1887 and a daughter, Mary Jane, was born there in 1889. The Trumans moved to Independence the following year, when Harry was old enough to start school.

Following Solomon Young's death in 1892, Harriet Louisa continued to operate the farm with the assistance of her son, Harrison. After the house burned to the ground in 1893, and over the next two years, Harriet Louisa directed the construction of the existing frame residence.¹⁰

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Several years passed, and Harrison began searching for someone to help his mother run the farm so he could retire and move to the city.¹¹ John Truman, then operating a farm near Clinton, Missouri, had suffered severe crop damage from a flood, and agreed to leave his Clinton farm and return to Grandview to manage the Young property. Because he was unable to operate the 600-acre farm alone, Vivian returned to assist him in 1905, and Harry in 1906. Vivian remained until 1911, when he married and moved to a place of his own. Harry stayed as his father's assistant, and after his father's death in 1914, became the sole manager of the Grandview farm until he left for military service three years later.

From 1906 to 1917, Harry Truman rose early and worked late, milking, plowing, sowing, haying, and doing the other diverse duties associated with farm life. He kept books for the farm, and knew how much each crop cost to produce and how much profit each undertaking yielded. Harry experimented with new agricultural techniques such as crop rotation and soil conservation. Under his careful management, farm production steadily increased.¹²

Unfortunately, the increased profits were absorbed by family legal expenses. When Harriet Louisa passed away in 1909, she willed the farm to her youngest children, Harrison and Martha Ellen. The Youngs' other children contested the will, and the legal battle dragged on for several years, devouring the family's financial resources. Farmers were among the first to suffer from the post-World War I economic hardships that culminated in the Great Depression; these hard times added to the Trumans' financial stress. In the late 1930s, Martha was forced to mortgage to the property to the Jackson County School District to pay lawyers' and court fees. The situation became critical in 1940 when the Democratic Party lost its traditional hold on the county government. The Republicans foreclosed on the mortgage in an attempt to embarrass Truman, who was running for re-election to the United States Senate. Political bias and years of financial stress finally forced Martha Ellen Truman from her childhood home.¹³

In 1945 Vivian repurchased the house and the 87 acres surrounding

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it. Friends of the family, under the leadership of Charles F. Curry, pooled their funds to purchase the remaining 200 acres so that the Trumans would be able to buy them at a later date. (Harry purchased the land from them in 1946.) Nevertheless, Martha Ellen, then 93 years old, never returned to the Grandview farm to live.¹⁴

As Truman prepared to leave the Presidency, his first choice for the site of his presidential library was the Grandview farm. For a variety of reasons, a different site was eventually chosen for the library.¹⁵ In 1958 the Trumans sold a 220-acre tract to an investment group, Triangle Investment Corporation, headed by Kansas City developer B. F. Weinberg, who built the Truman Corners Shopping Center on the site. Truman reserved the acres immediately surrounding the home for his family.¹⁶

SIGNIFICANCE

John Anderson Truman was a good farmer and a good teacher. Although his son's frequent letters to Bess Wallace often complained about the hard work and long hours,¹⁷ Harry knew what his father expected, what the farm demanded. At his father's side, Harry learned to rotate crops--first wheat, then clover (a soil conservation measure), corn, then oats, and back to wheat. The rotation proved successful; yields for all types of crops increased dramatically during Harry's years on the farm.¹⁸ John Truman insisted on straight rows, careful planting, and thorough harvesting. Harry later recalled to biographer Jonathan Daniels, "My father was a stickler for doing things correctly on the farm."¹⁹ Harry kept careful records documenting farm expenses and income, a duty which stretched his already long days well into the evenings.

While Truman was learning about sowing, harvesting, milking, caring for the horses, Black Angus cattle and Hampshire hogs, and the countless other jobs associated with farm life, he was also learning discipline and "horse sense." Harry once wrote to Bess, "Calves are like men. Some have sense--and some have not."²⁰ His mother observed, years later, "It was on the farm that Harry got his common sense. He didn't get it in town."²¹

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Farm life, busy as it was, ensured plenty of time for thinking. Every spring and fall, Truman spent hours walking or riding behind a horse-drawn plow. He recalled, "Riding one of these plows all day, day after day, gives one time to think. I've settled all the ills of mankind in one way or another while riding along seeing that each animal pulled his part of the load."²²

The farm years were years for developing social skills. Harry was not bound by the geographical confines of the farm. He spent what time he could in nearby Grandview, Dodson, Kansas City, and Independence. The leading name on Harry's social calendar throughout the farm period was that of Bess Wallace. Harry had met Bess shortly after his family moved to Independence in 1890, when he was just six years old. Although the two attended the same schools, their courtship did not begin until 1910, several years after Harry moved to the Grandview farm. Talk of the farm and farm life punctuated the couple's courtship.

During these years, Harry became more gregarious. The telephone party line enabled him to keep track of local events,²³ and he even enjoyed a few evenings playing with the Grandview Village Band.²⁴ His chief social commitment, other than Bess, was membership in the Masonic Lodge. He joined the Lodge in Belton (9 miles south of Grandview) in 1909, and established Lodge No. 618 in Grandview two years later.²⁵ Gaylon Babcock, also a member of the Grandview Masonic Lodge, remembered Harry as an "excellent director" and a good organizer. Babcock credited Truman's Lodge experience as a major factor in developing the social and oratorical skills that made him a successful politician.²⁶

Truman's political career humbly began the same year he moved to the Grandview farm. His father was an election judge, and Harry served as Grandview precinct clerk from 1906 to 1917, when he left to go to war. He campaigned when his father, John, ran for Road Overseer, an elected county position. Oddly, he did not want his father to have the job; Harry saw it as a thankless and back-breaking position. Nevertheless, he knew that his father wanted the job and would do it well, so he gave speeches and performed other campaign duties, and John won the election. Harry's reservations concerning the job proved well-founded, for in 1914,

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John Anderson Truman died from complications resulting from an injury sustained in performance of his overseer duties. Harry was appointed Road Overseer upon his father's death.

Harry Truman held other minor positions during the farm years. He joined the Washington Township Farm Bureau in 1913, and in 1914 he became the Bureau's President. He was elected postmaster in 1914, but appointed a local widow as his assistant and gave her the job and salary.²⁷ By 1914 Harry was gaining confidence in his political and oratorical skills; as he wrote Bess, "You ought to see what a grand piece of political guff I can hand out!"²⁸

Truman's political career grew over the years, as he eventually served as a county judge, United States Senator, and Vice President. Upon Franklin Roosevelt's death in April 1945, he became President of the United States. His agricultural experience became a major factor in his 1948 election victory, because Harry knew farm issues firsthand, and because he constantly appealed to farm voters on the basis of their common ground. Truman told voters that his opponent, Thomas E. Dewey, knew nothing about agriculture. He reminded them of the failure of the Republican Congress to provide adequate storage for the year's bumper crops, which forced farmers to sell at depressed prices or watch their grain spoil.²⁹ Truman romanced farmers with tales of his own agricultural experience, "I ran a farm for the best 10 years of my life, in Jackson County, Missouri. It had 600 acres on it, and I went there when I was 22 years old and left it when I was 33 to go to war....In those days, we had no federal government interested in the farmer."³⁰ Cabell Phillips credited "two devices--the natural, homespun speeches and the accurate and intimate hometown lore...as key[s] to his [19]48 campaign."³¹

Interest in the farmer was not just an angle to win votes. Much of Truman's federal farm program was founded in his own and his family's agricultural experience. He encouraged conservation of soil resources, and proposed assistance to farmers for restoration of abused and neglected land. To protect against fluctuations in production and demand, Truman proposed price supports. He promoted efficiency in the production and distribution of agricultural commodities, and sought a better living for "small" farmers.³² The improvement of agricultural life was one of his

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primary objectives.

Truman's affection for the farm remained a constant throughout his life. Speaking to a group from the Ohio Farm Bureau in 1950 he said, "I always give my occupation as farmer. I spent the best...years of my life trying to run a 600-acre farm successfully, and I know what the problems are. I have two nephews now on that same old place, operating it and operating it successfully."³³ To delegates to the National Four-H Club Camp he commented, "I hope to get back to the farm someday."³⁴ Less than two weeks later, on June 26, 1950, Truman contacted Edward F. Neild of Neild-Somdal Associates, an architectural firm, requesting that Neild prepare designs for a presidential library "located on the farm with which I have been associated the last sixty-six years."³⁵

Truman met with Neild at the farm the following year, the two selected a site for the library, and design commenced. A December 20, 1952, press release announced that plans were underway for the presidential library, to be built on farm land near Grandview. The press release stated that construction would begin in 1953, but such did not occur. In 1954 other sites were taken under consideration. Closer to public transportation, restaurants, and lodging, the present site of the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum was selected on July 8, 1954. The following year Truman considered selling a portion of the farm to local interests for construction of the Truman Corners Shopping Center, but hesitated. "I may want some place to come home to,"³⁶ he said. In spite of these misgivings, he sold the land, retaining the portion of the farm on which the house stands. The home represented a valued place in his past and a precious testament to his pioneer ancestors.

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2. Niel Johnson, "Oral History Interview with Fred L. Truman, Prairie Village, Kansas, March 17, 1983" transcript. (Independence, Missouri: Harry S. Truman Library, 1983), 27.

3. Bray, 5.

4. Sherry Piland, "National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, Solomon Young Farm," Item 8; and Jonathan Daniels, The Man of Independence (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1950), 38-40.

5. The Autobiography of Harry S. Truman, ed. Robert H. Ferrell (Boulder: Colorado Associated University Press, 1980), 28.

6. Johnson, "Oral History Interview with Mrs. Francis H. Montgomery, Grandview, Missouri, February 2, 1981" transcript. (Independence, Missouri: Harry S. Truman Library, 1981), 60.

7. Autobiography, 28.

8. Betty Strong House, "Solomon Young [and] Harriet Louisa Gregg," in Elsie Spry Davis, ed., Descendents of Jacob Young of Shelby County, Kentucky (Coronado, California: E. S. Davis, 1980), 126; Piland, Item 8; Kansas City Star, 30 June 1946; and Jackson County Advocate, 5 February 1975.

9. Bray, 5.

10. Ibid., 7.

11. Autobiography, 27.

12. Ibid., 30-2; and Piland, Item 8.

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14. Ibid.
15. See Neild-Somdal Associates Records, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri.
16. Kansas City Star, 27 January 1958.
17. See Harry Truman to Bess Wallace, 10 January 1911, Dear Bess: The Letters from Harry Truman to Bess Truman, 1910-1959, ed. Robert H. Ferrell (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1983), 18-9; and Truman to Wallace, 11 November 1912, Dear Bess, 104.
18. Autobiography, 31-2.
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21. The Harry S. Truman Farm Home Foundation, "The Truman Farm Home" (n.p., n.d., pamphlet).
22. Autobiography, 30.
23. Dear Bess, 21.
24. Ibid., 77.
25. Ibid., 37.
26. Fuchs, "Oral History Interview with Gaylon Babcock, Longmont, Colorado, December 12, 1964" (Independence: Harry S. Truman Library, 1971, transcript); 15, 61.
27. Dear Bess, 172-3.

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28. Truman to Wallace, 13 August 1914, Dear Bess, 173.

29. Cabell Phillips, The Truman Presidency: The History of Triumphant Succession (New York: MacMillan & Co., 1966), 235.

30. Rear Platform Remarks Speech at Fresno, California, 23 September 1948, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States (Washington, D. C.: Office of the Federal Register, 1949), 550.

31. Phillips, 229.

32. Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, 7 January 1948, Public Papers, 5-6; and Special Message to the Congress on Agriculture, 14 May 1948, Public Papers, 99.

33. Remarks to a Group from the Ohio Farm Bureau, 24 May 1950, Public Papers, 438.

34. Remarks to the Delegates to the 21st National Four-H Club Camp, 14 June 1951, Public Papers, 332.

35. Truman to Neild, 26 June 1950, Neild-Somdal Associates Records, Folder 2, Harry S. Truman Library.

36. Independence Examiner, 24 August 1955, Grandview-Truman Farm House File, Harry S. Truman Library.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet Harry S Truman Farm Home Item number 9

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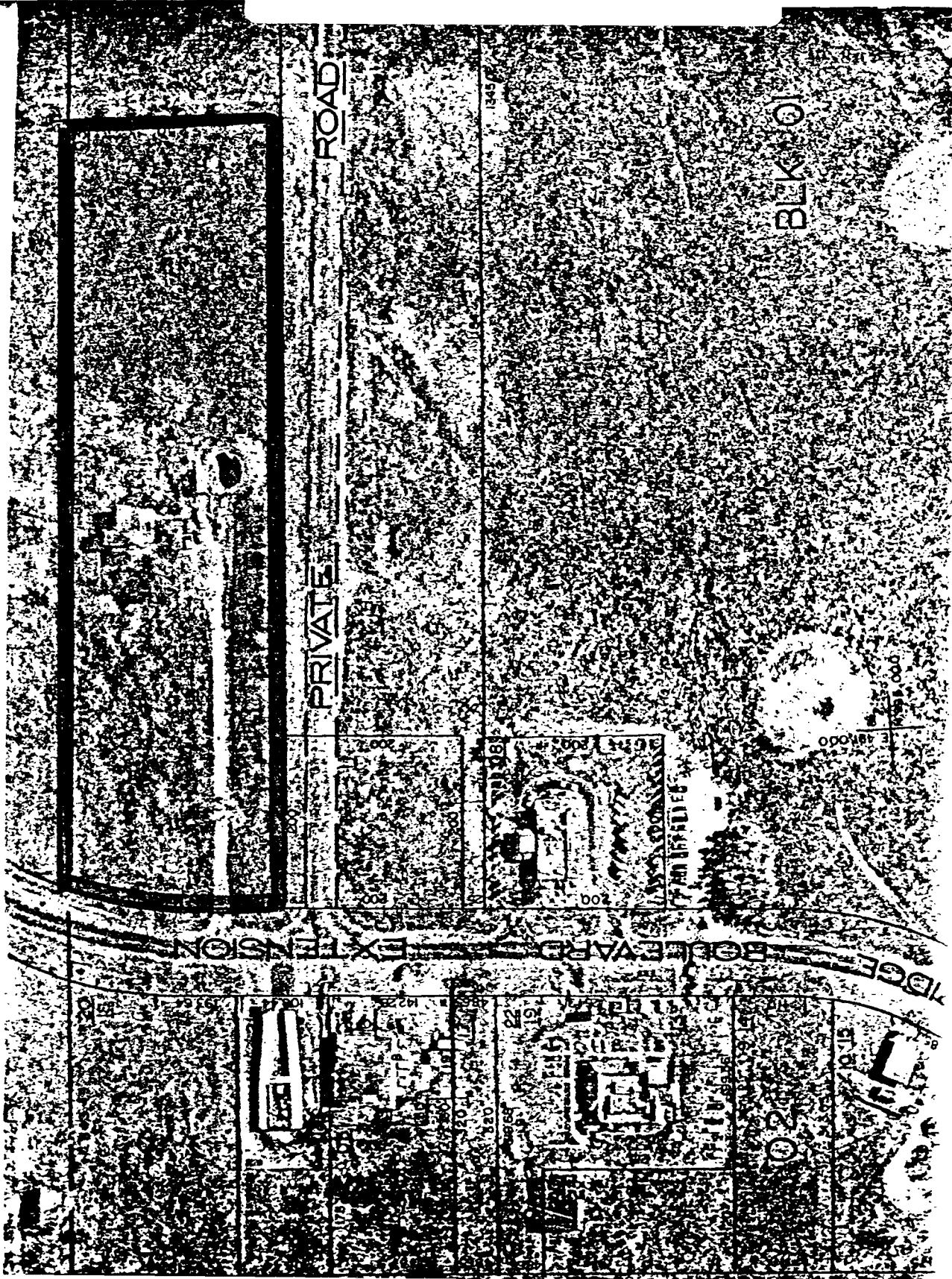
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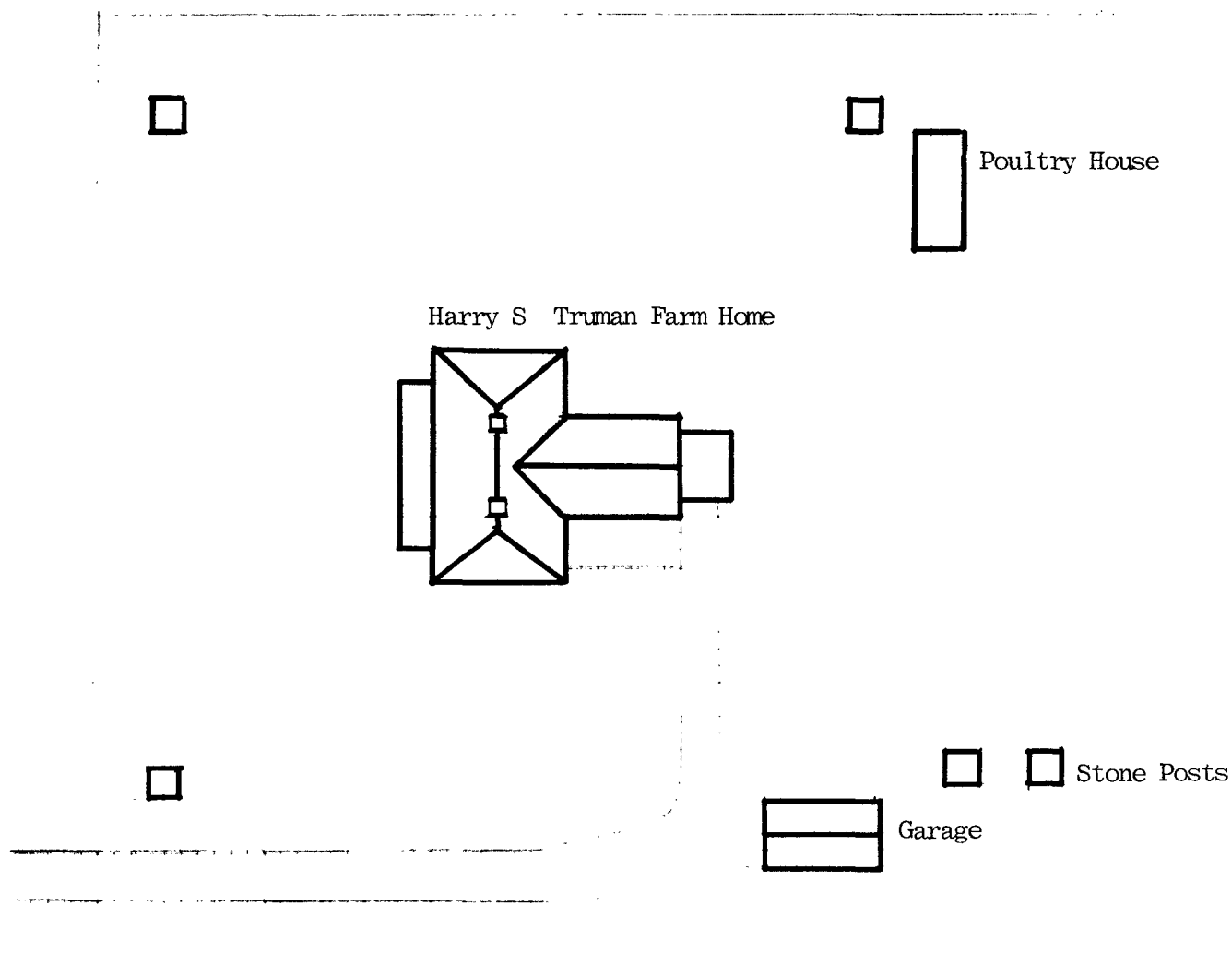
HARRY S TRUMAN FARM HOME
Boundary Map

Parcel R64-810-01-03, Jackson County,
Missouri.

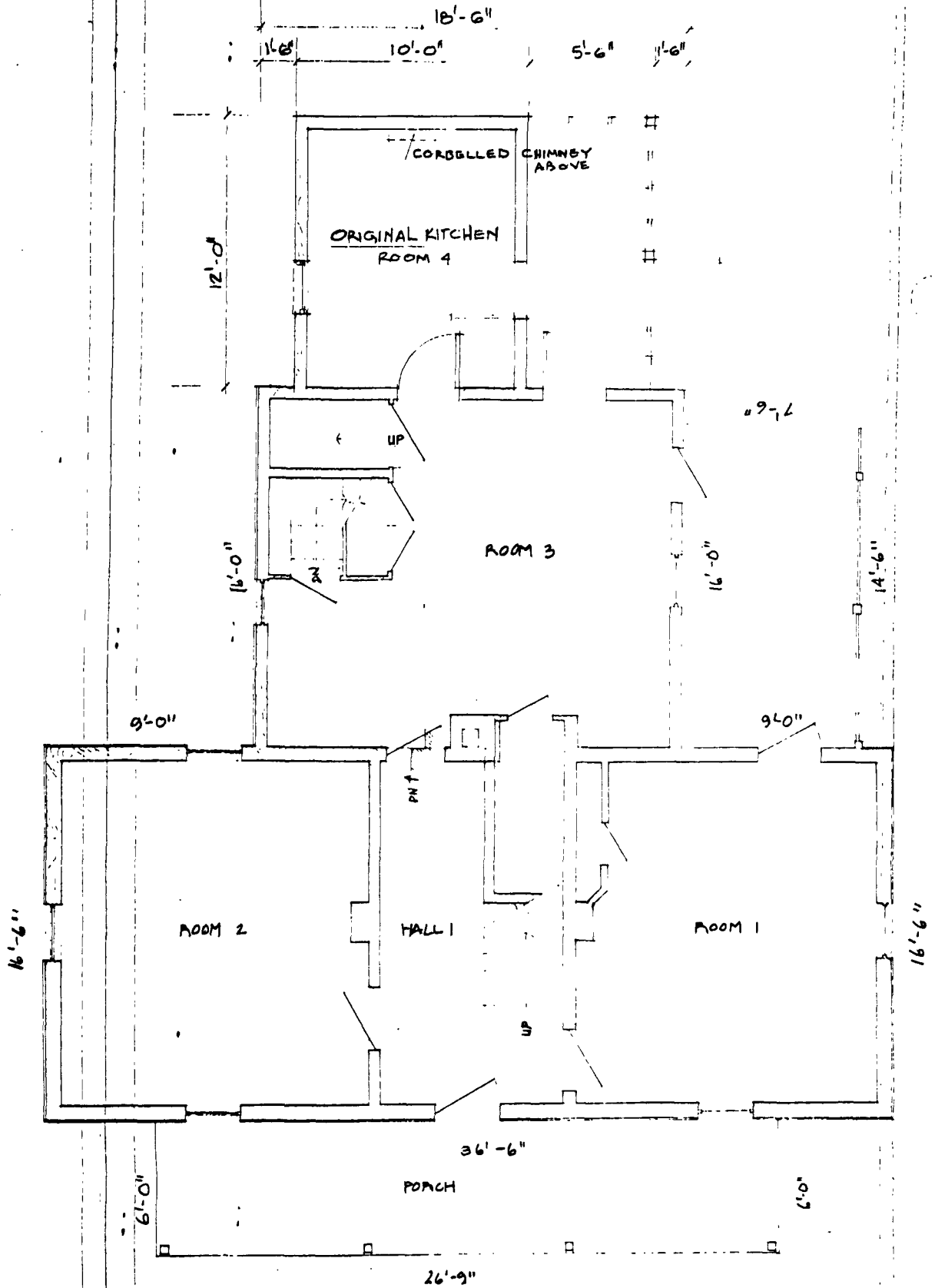


ORTHOPHOTO MAP OF JACKSON





HARRY S TRUMAN FARM HOME
Site Location Map
not to scale

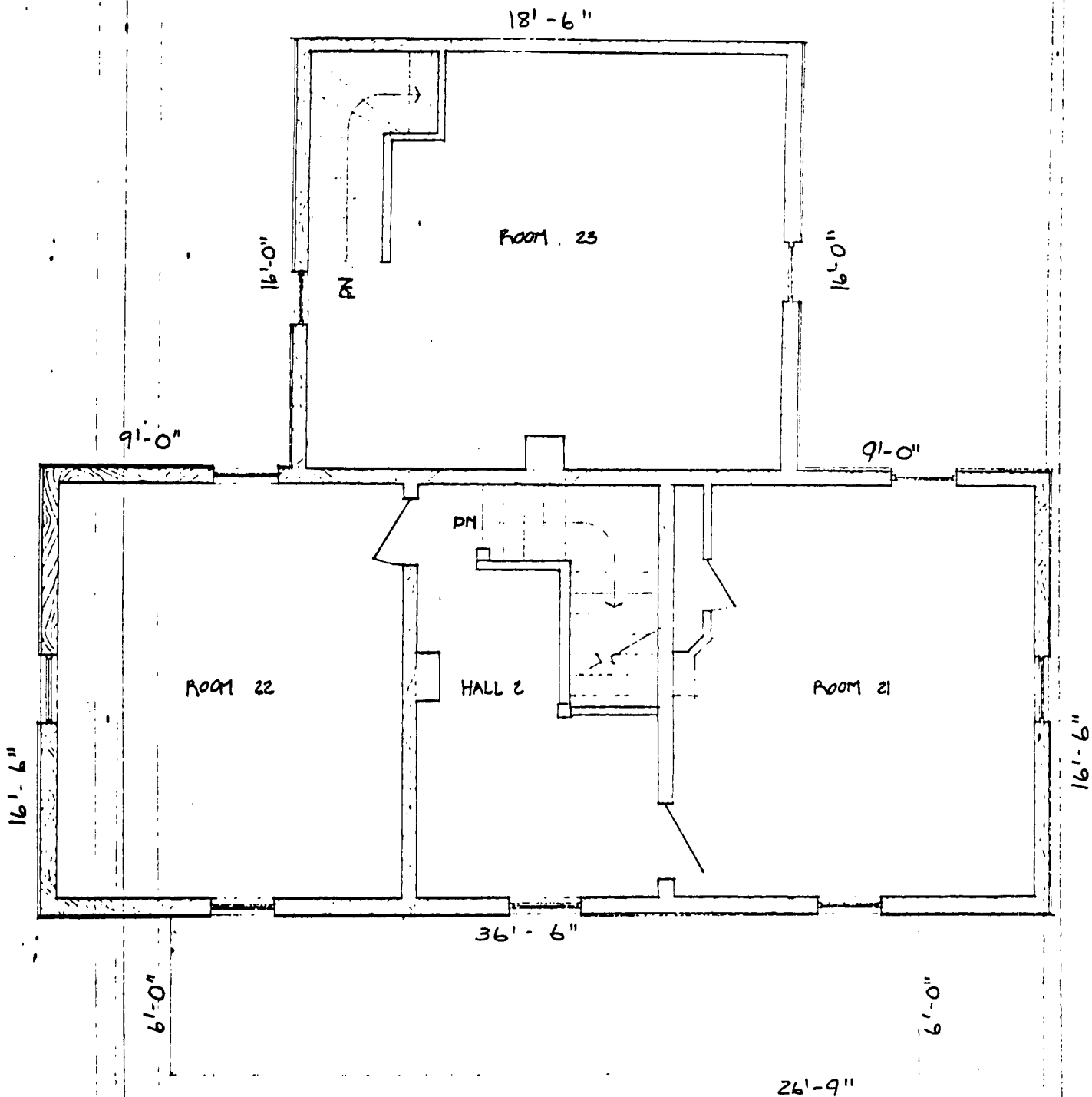


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

1/4" SCALE

ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS COLLABORATIVE
JOHN A HUFFMAN, AIA

Kansas City, Missouri
December 1983



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

1/4" SCALE

ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS COLLABORATIVE
JOHN A HUFFMAN, AIA

Kansas City, Missouri
December 1983