

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received SEP 16 1980

date entered APR 17 1981

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

1. Name

historic _____

and/or common _____ Commissioner's Office

2. Location

street & number _____ Westward on leeward side, _____ miles north of SongSong — not for publication
Village

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district _____

state _____ Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Is. code _____ county Rota code _____

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: abandoned

4. Owner of Property

name _____ Government of the Northern Mariana Islands

street & number _____

city, town _____ Saipan _____ vicinity of _____ state _____ Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. _____ Department of Land Management

street & number _____

city, town _____ Saipan _____ state _____ Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title _____ N.A. _____ has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date _____ federal state county local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Commissioner's Office is a one story structure 7.47m x 13.42m. There are auxiliary structures including a wall structure 3.58m x 4.57m x 1.5m high. A small wall south of the building appears to be a portion of a shallow well.

The wall construction is manposteria; the north, east and west walls are intact but a major amount of the south wall has been destroyed. The walls are approximately 0.40cm thick.

The original wood framed roof structure has been destroyed. The windows are in a regular arrangement similar to Spanish era structures. The lintels over the windows and doors are ifil. The exact window detail varies from the typical Spanish detail possibly due to influence from Japanese concrete structures.

The structure consists of two spaces with the entrance to the main portion from the north.

The site is heavily overgrown with vegetation, some of which has already had damaging effects on the main structure and auxiliary structures.

The walls were originally unpainted and remain in that condition. Manposteria construction generally uses lime mortar, but in this case the mortar may be portland cement.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates circa 1930 **Builder/Architect**

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The building is significant as one of a very few non-Japanese structures built during the Japanese era. Architecturally the building is a major transitional structure because it has major building elements from the Spanish era, but was built during the Japanese times. Very few transitional structures have been found, and these only on Rota.

Settlements by Japanese, circa 1930, displaced Chamorro settlements, particularly in the area of the sugar mills and Songsong Village. The Chamorros relocated to other areas including the vicinity of the commissioner's office. The Japanese appointed some Chamorro village heads or commissioners with limited functions pertaining to the Chamorro portion of the populace. The functions included notifying the community of laws and regulations, making reports on births, deaths and general conditions, collecting poll taxes, and assisting with labor procurement.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Paul B. Souder, Island of Rota; late 1940's; Micronesian Area Research Center.
 Album of the South Sea Islands; the South Sea Islands Assn; Japan, circa 1940;
 Photographic Essay.

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale 1:25,000

UMT References

A

5	5	3	0	1	7	0	0	1	5	6	7	0	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 From road on north to 10m beyond structure on other sides.

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

state	code	county	code
Commonwealth of the			
state Northern Mariana Is.		county	code Rota

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jack B. Jones Project Evaluator

organization J.B. Jones, Architect, AIA date April 1980

street & number P.O. Box 6277 telephone 646-1101

city or town Tamuning, state Guam 96911

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

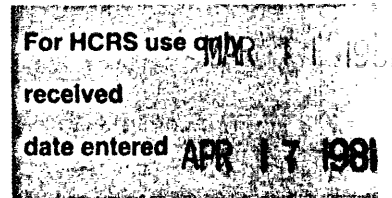
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature James B. Panghuan

title Chief, Division of Historic Preservation date 9/12/80

For HCERS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>Kevin Lee O'Connell</u>	date <u>4/17/81</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u>Patrick Andrews</u>	date <u>4/17/81</u>
for/Chief of Registration	

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Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

8. Significance:

1. Japan seized the Marianas, except for Guam, along with the other German South Sea Islands in October, 1915 and retained them under the Mandates commission of the League of Nations following the Versailles Peace Treaty. During the period from 1922 to 1943 the Japanese South Seas Government maintained a Branch Government in Saipan. In the mid to late 1920's the NKK became very active in Saipan, with some of the major construction in Chalan Kanoa dating from 1928. Major settlements in Rota dated from 1930. Tinian construction was similar to Saipan and Rota.
2. The economic organization in the Marianas as in all of the Japanese Mandates were dominated by three large civilian Japanese Corporations: Nanyo Bocki Kaisha, South Seas Trading Company; Nanyo Takushoku Kabushiki Kaisha and Nanyo Kohatsu Kabushiki Kaisha, NKK.
3. The NKK was the largest and most influential corporation in the Marianas because it was the most important economic organization in the islands. It operated a system of tenant farming on sugar plantations covering 28, 687 acres. Part of the land was owned by the NKK and part was leased from the native Chamorros. The NKK owned and operated 2 sugar mills on Saipan, 1 mill on Tinian and 2 on Rota. The Chalan Kanoa area of Saipan was the support base for the major mill on Saipan. Singsong village was the support base for the major mill on Rota. Tinian Village was the support base for the mill on Tinian. The mill capacity for just the two Rota mills was 1,000 tons of sugar cane per day.
4. The vast majority of the NKK physical plant was destroyed during World War II. Only some of the residential and administrative structures are in use today and these are not being used in support of sugar cane or other original NKK enterprises.

The remaining buildings have all suffered some war damage resulting from the Invasion of U.S. Forces in spring of 1944.

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Continuation sheet 1

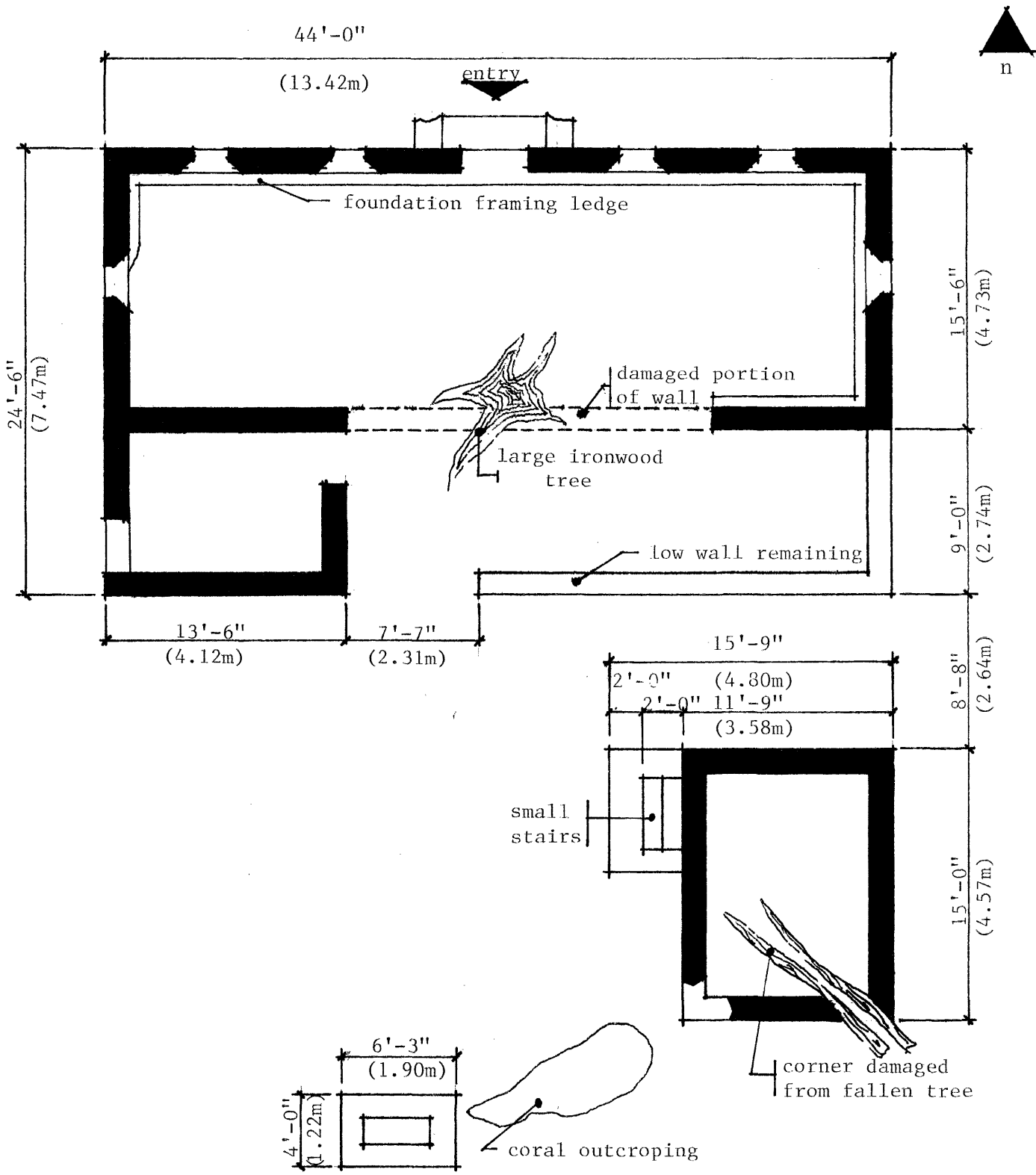
Item number 8

Page 1

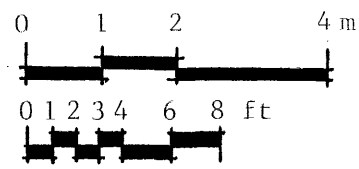
Commissioner's Office

Significance(cont.)

The building was constructed during the Japanese era for the native chamorro residents who had been relocated from Songsong Village. The construction materials were from Spanish times- coral rocks with cement, but several of the details were Japanese. The detailing at the openings is Japanese and so is the cornice at the top of the structure, Its a combination of both Japanese and Spanish influence.



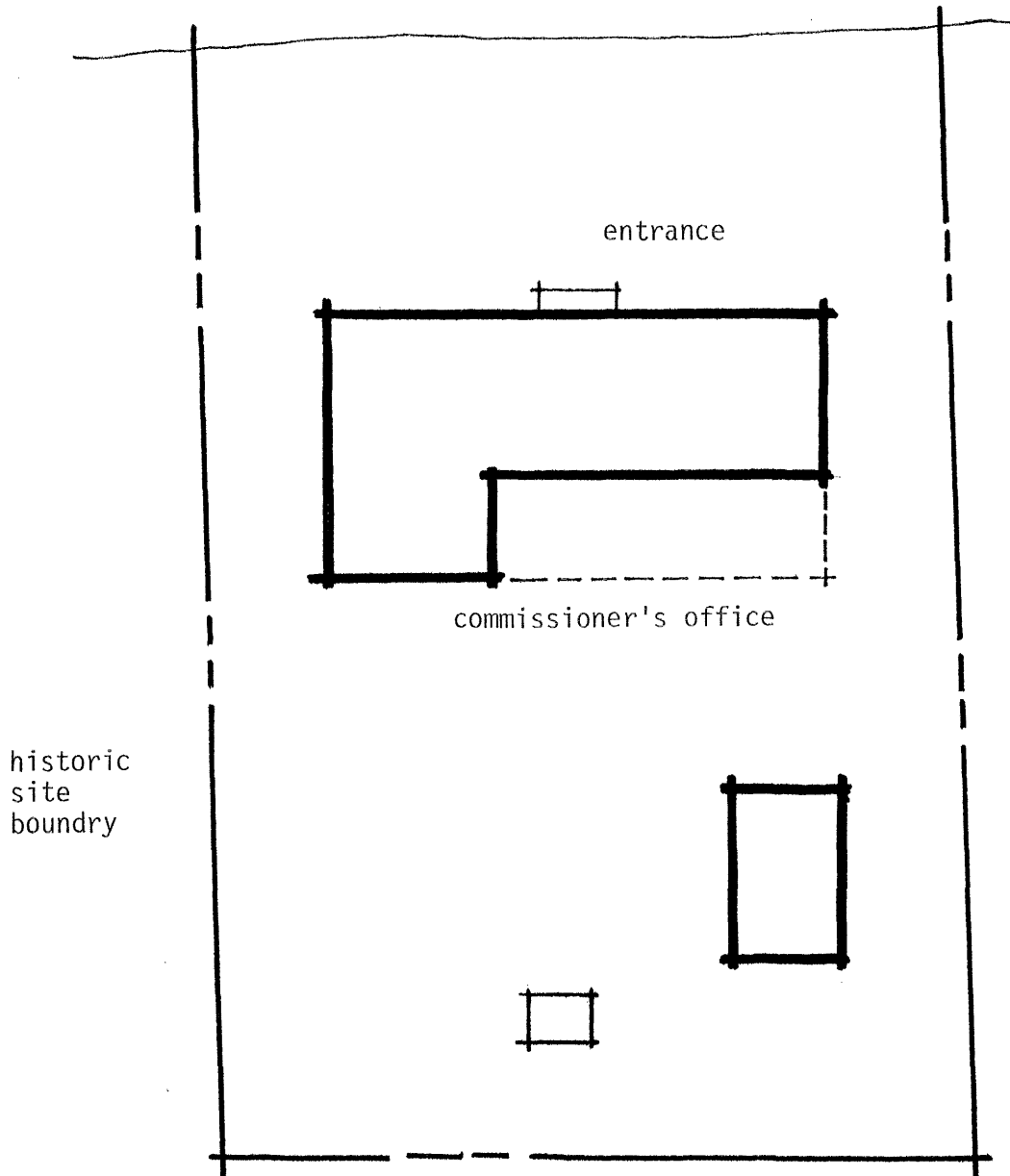
floor plan
map no. 3.
commissioner's office



APR 17 1981



coral roadway

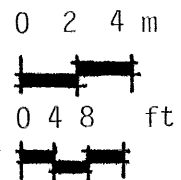


historic
site
boundary

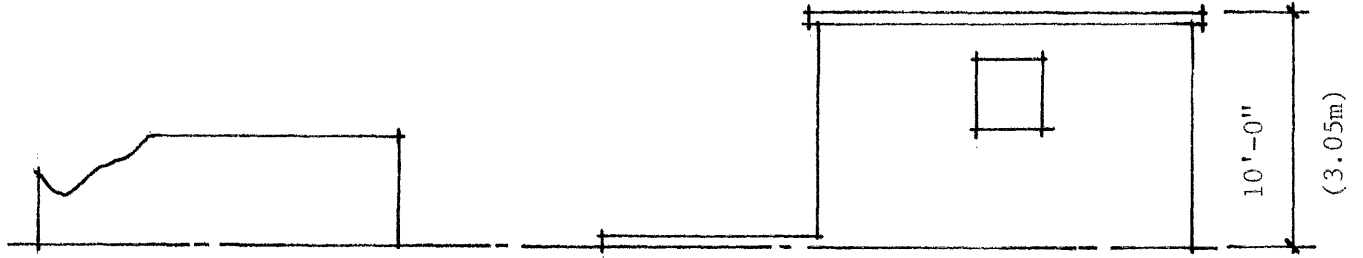
commissioner's office

entrance

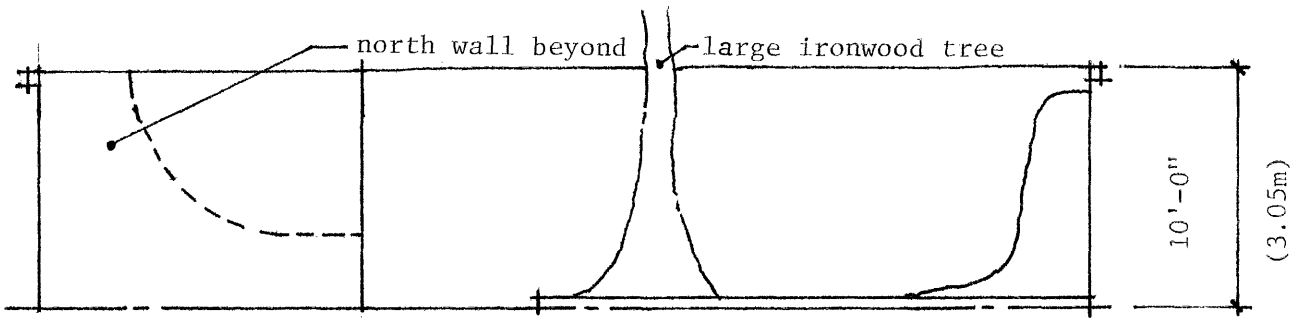
site plan
map no. 4
commissioner's office



APR 17 1981

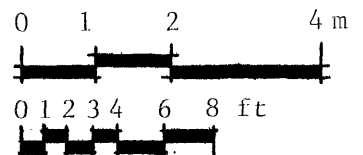


east elevation

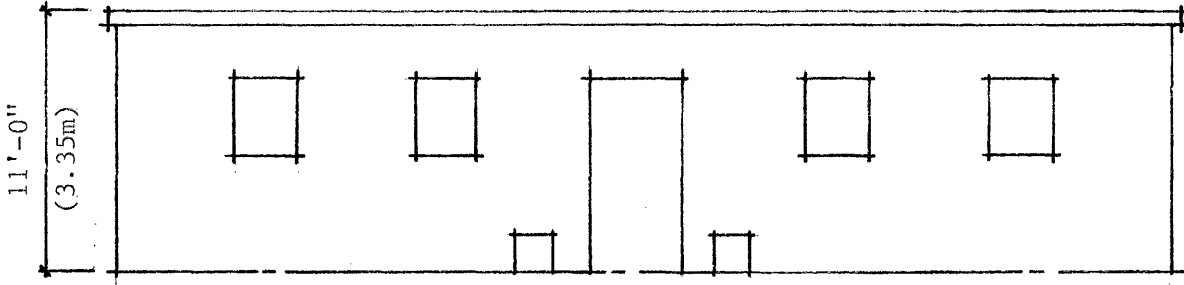


south elevation

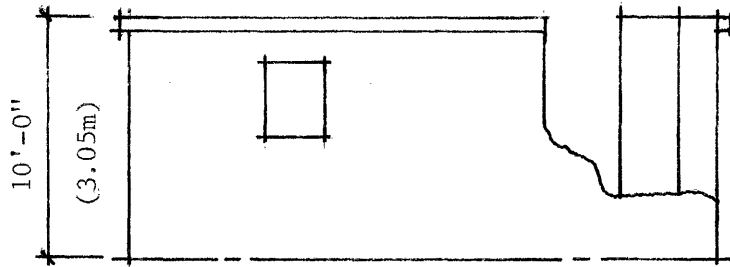
elevation plan
 map no. 4.
 commissioner's office



APR 17 1981 SEP 16 1980

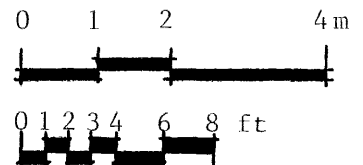


north elevation



west elevation

elevation plan
 map no. 5.
 commissioner's office



SEP 16 1930
 APR 17 1930