

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

**1. Name of Property**

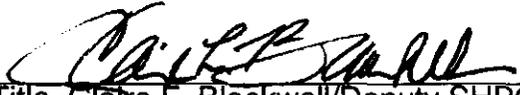
historic name Bible Grove Consolidated District #5 School  
other names/site number Bible Grove School

**2. Location**

street & number South side of Route T at Bible Grove [ n/a ] not for publication  
city or town Bible Grove [ n/a ] vicinity  
state Missouri code MO county Scotland code 199 zip code 63531

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [  ] nomination [  ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [  ] meets [  ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [  ] nationally [  ] statewide [  ] locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments [  ].)

 30 March 2000  
Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [  ] meets [  ] does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments [  ].)

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date
[ <input type="checkbox"/> ] entered in the National Register See continuation sheet [ <input type="checkbox"/> ].	_____	_____
[ <input type="checkbox"/> ] determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet [ <input type="checkbox"/> ].	_____	_____
[ <input type="checkbox"/> ] determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
[ <input type="checkbox"/> ] removed from the National Register	_____	_____
[ <input type="checkbox"/> ] other, explain see continuation sheet [ <input type="checkbox"/> ].	_____	_____

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	0 building
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site	1	0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0 structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	0	0 objects
		2	0 total

Name of related multiple property listing.

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**  
EDUCATION: school  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
OTHER: four-over-four schoolhouse  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 see continuation sheet [ ].

**Materials**  
 foundation CONCRETE  
 walls BRICK  
 roof ASPHALT  
 other WOOD  
 see continuation sheet [ ].

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**  
See continuation sheet [x]

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

**A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

**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.

**D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

Property is:

**A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

**B** removed from its original location.

**C** a birthplace or grave.

**D** a cemetery.

**E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

**F** a commemorative property.

**G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

**Periods of Significance**

1921-1950

**Significant Dates**

1921

**Significant Person(s)**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Salsbury, James T./

unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 5.0 acres

**UTM References**

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	559260	4466750			
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing

[ ] See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title see continuation sheet

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties 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.)

name Bible Grove Historical Preservation Committee of Scotland County, Missouri

street & number Route 1, Box 115 telephone 660/883-5774

city or town Baring state Missouri zip code 63531

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Bible Grove Consolidated District #5 School  
Scotland County, Missouri

Section 7 Page 1

**Summary:** The Bible Grove Consolidated District #5 School, a two-story rectangular brick building with a full basement, is located on its original five-acre tract south of Route T at Bible Grove, Scotland County, Missouri. Constructed in 1921, Bible Grove School is a well-preserved local example of an architect-designed, four-over-four schoolhouse with a bellcast roof featuring wide eaves, rows of original windows, a double-leaf entrance with a fanlight and, added in 1940, a tubular metal fire escape.<sup>1</sup> Much historic material is retained throughout the north-facing building, which measures 36 feet x 48 feet. The interior, which has decorative pressed metal ceilings, is still equipped with many of its original furnishings including blackboards, wooden lockers and desks. A side entrance was enclosed with brick infill where a bathroom was constructed and a rear door has been sealed, but otherwise the building strongly reflects its historic appearance. Enclosed by a woven wire fence, the spacious schoolyard contains original playground equipment, old but nonoriginal outhouses, an outdoor basketball court and the site of a 40-horse stable erected at the same time as the schoolhouse. Although the schoolyard has evolved, it remains evocative of the school's early decades and is counted as a contributing site. Overall, Bible Grove School retains a high level of integrity of location, design, materials, craftsmanship and setting.

**Elaboration:** The tiny community of Bible Grove (unincorporated; population about 15) is approximately five miles west of the junction of Route T and Highway 15, and is approximately 10 miles southwest of Memphis, the seat of Scotland County. Scotland County is within the first tier of Missouri counties south of the Iowa border and is the second county west of the Des Moines River. The Bible Grove schoolhouse is at the end of a gravel road which curves southward a few hundred feet from Route T. The Bible Grove cemetery is adjacent to the northwest portion of the schoolyard. While the setting always has been pastoral, the schoolhouse is adjacent to an early automobile highway known, in circa 1910, as the National White Way. The road passed between the schoolyard and cemetery and then followed the west side of the tract in a north-south direction.<sup>2</sup> A playground is southeast of the building and a circle drive and parking area is on the east. The site of a stable used by students and teachers who rode to Bible Grove School on horseback is near the south end of the tract. The schoolyard is bounded by oak trees and pastureland on the east, south and west. The schoolyard itself contains a variety of trees. A small pond is in the northeast corner.

Topped with a bellcast, truncated hipped roof with a three-foot overhang, the building's three floors include a basement level which is partially below grade. The foundation is poured concrete. The primary (north) elevation is symmetrical, contains three bays and is 48 feet wide. The masonry walls consist of hollow tile blocks faced by vertically-textured bricks, laid in a pattern of stretcher bond with an occasional course of Flemish. Throughout the building, the bricks are molded in muted shades of orange, rust, brown and green. The truncated portion of the asphalt roof holds the original school bell and a lightning rod system. On the roof's south slope, a square brick chimney is offset to the west. Guttering is present but downspouts are missing.

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<sup>1</sup>The four-over-four schoolhouse is a property type defined by the Missouri Historic Preservation Program.

<sup>2</sup>Information on the National White Way was provided by David Austin of the Missouri Department of Transportation.

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**Bible Grove Consolidated District #5 School  
Scotland County, Missouri**

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Centered in the primary facade is a double-leaf entrance equipped with original panel doors and topped with a four-segment fanlight. Flanking the entrance on each level is a grouping of three double-hung 6/6 windows with concrete lintels and lugsills. Lugsills are at grade for the shorter, basement level windows. Immediately west of the entrance, the basement window has been replaced with a door for a first floor fire escape. This minor alteration was accomplished without disturbing the original opening. A double, double-hung 4/4 window is centered in the facade at the upper level. Similar window construction is used throughout the building, although fenestration varies. The round arch above the main entrance consists of three rows of header bricks. Arches above entrances in the two side elevations are of similar design.

Fenestration on the 36-foot east elevation is asymmetrical, consisting of a double-leaf entrance with a round arch at the south end and four evenly-spaced window openings which are aligned vertically at each level between the entrance and the north corner. A double window is above the entrance at the third floor level. The original panel doors have been replaced by modern steel doors with one-light windows. The semicircular transom above the entrance contains a plywood insert.

Originally, the asymmetrical west elevation with the tubular fire escape was a mirror image of the east elevation. But in this facade, the side entrance has been infilled with brick where a boys' restroom was constructed in 1958-59. Like the main entrance in the north elevation, the infilled entrance near the south corner was double-leaf with a round arch containing a fanlight. Today this semicircular area is covered with a metal or wood panel. Because the bricks used for infill are of a lighter shade than the original bricks, the alteration is obvious even though the courses are aligned. A small 1/1 window provides illumination for the restroom. Offset toward the north on each level are four evenly-spaced and vertically aligned window openings. A double window opening is on the third floor directly above the former entrance. The double window opening and two other third floor window openings are covered by panels of painted plywood. Installed in 1940, the tubular, slide-type fire escape for the third floor descends at a 45-degree angle from the base of the northernmost window. The exit is about two feet above the ground near the infilled entrance. The chute is marred somewhat by rust and graffiti.

The south elevation is symmetrical, as is the north, although fenestration is much simpler. There are two window openings on each level and, at ground level, a central entrance which has been sealed with concrete just below the lintel. The window openings divide the facade into approximate thirds. The outline of a gable roof, in the form of old caulking, is centered in the facade between the basement and first floor. This was the location of a small connecting room between Bible Grove School and a former one-room schoolhouse that was moved onto the schoolyard in the 1950s, for use as a supplementary kitchen. The sealed rear entrance led down a short flight of stairs into the basement furnace room and storage areas for coal and wood. An original panel door at the bottom of the stairs is intact. The temporary kitchen, formerly the Frogge (Rabbit Roost) School from adjacent Tobin Township, has been removed from the property.<sup>3</sup> The regular kitchen is intact in the basement.

The floor plan is original with the exception of restrooms added in the southwest corners of the basement and first floor. A stairway in the southeast corner accesses all three levels of the building. A single-flight

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<sup>3</sup>Frogge School District was voted into Bible Grove Consolidated District #5 in 1952.

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stairway in the north central part of the building leads from ground level to the first floor. There is a central north-south hallway in the basement and first floor and an east-west hallway on the first and second floors. The basement contains the kitchen in the northeast, a classroom in the northwest, a furnace room in the middle of the south end and a restroom for boys in the southwest corner, the latter added in 1958-59. *Before the restroom was installed, this area was used for fuel storage. The first or middle floor has two large classrooms, one in the northeast and one in the northwest, and a restroom for girls in the southwest corner, also added in 1958-59. The second or top floor has classrooms in the northeast and northwest portions, plus a library in the southwest corner. Originally, this floor was used for the high school. The building never had a specific room for an office. Office functions were carried out in a first floor hallway area.*

Original material includes oak flooring and stairways, pine millwork, panel doors and tin ceilings. Blackboards, wooden lockers, school desks, kitchen tables and benches and books and other library materials are also intact. Flooring consists of random width tongue-and-groove boards with flat baseboards. *Wainscoting covers the stairway walls. The six-panel pine doors have flat casings. Classroom doorways have transoms for ventilation. Windows have flat casings with simple moldings. Classroom walls and ceilings are painted off-white above the wainscoting and blackboards. The building's decorative metal ceilings, which are well preserved, have concave cornices with an acanthus design in the mitered corners and a ribbed design in the horizontal portions. The main field consists of one-foot square panels with a diamond and acanthus motif. Newel posts feature projecting oblong trim with cove moldings. Handrails are molded. Newel posts and balusters are square. The bathroom partitions, consisting of beaded tongue and groove panels, stop short of the ceiling. Radiators are the current heat source, with boilers fueled by propane. Electrification, indoor plumbing, restrooms and a fire escape, while not part of the original design, reflect the building's evolution as a schoolhouse.*

Overall the schoolyard retains integrity as a contributing site although some of the features present today are nonhistoric and some original properties are missing. Various pieces of playground equipment date from circa 1921. Located southeast of the schoolhouse are the original merry-go-round, a two-board teeter-totter, a four-unit swing set, monkey bars and a tall slide. In the 1950s, two replacement outhouses were moved onto the property and placed along the east boundary where the original outhouses were located; only the southernmost one is standing upright. Also on the schoolyard are a concrete basketball court enclosed by a wood fence with wire mesh; picnic tables; a covered well; portions of a foundation; the concrete front step of another old schoolhouse; utility poles and a metal flagpole. The picnic tables, which are nonoriginal to the schoolyard, are southeast of the schoolhouse. The paved basketball court, directly east of the circle drive opposite the east entrance, was originally a dirt court used by girl students. A separate dirt court for boys was between the present court and the building. The sealed well is near the southeast corner. The flagpole is near the front entrance. The foundation was for the kitchen addition (Frogge School) off the southeast corner. Also near the southeast corner is the concrete step, recently salvaged from Knob View School, a one-roomer in adjacent Tobin Township, and placed on the grounds for preservation purposes. Historic properties no longer extant include a woodshed and a 40-horse stable. The woodshed was adjacent to the south entrance and the stable, a gable-roofed building with an aisle centered in the main north-south axis, was at the south end of the tract.

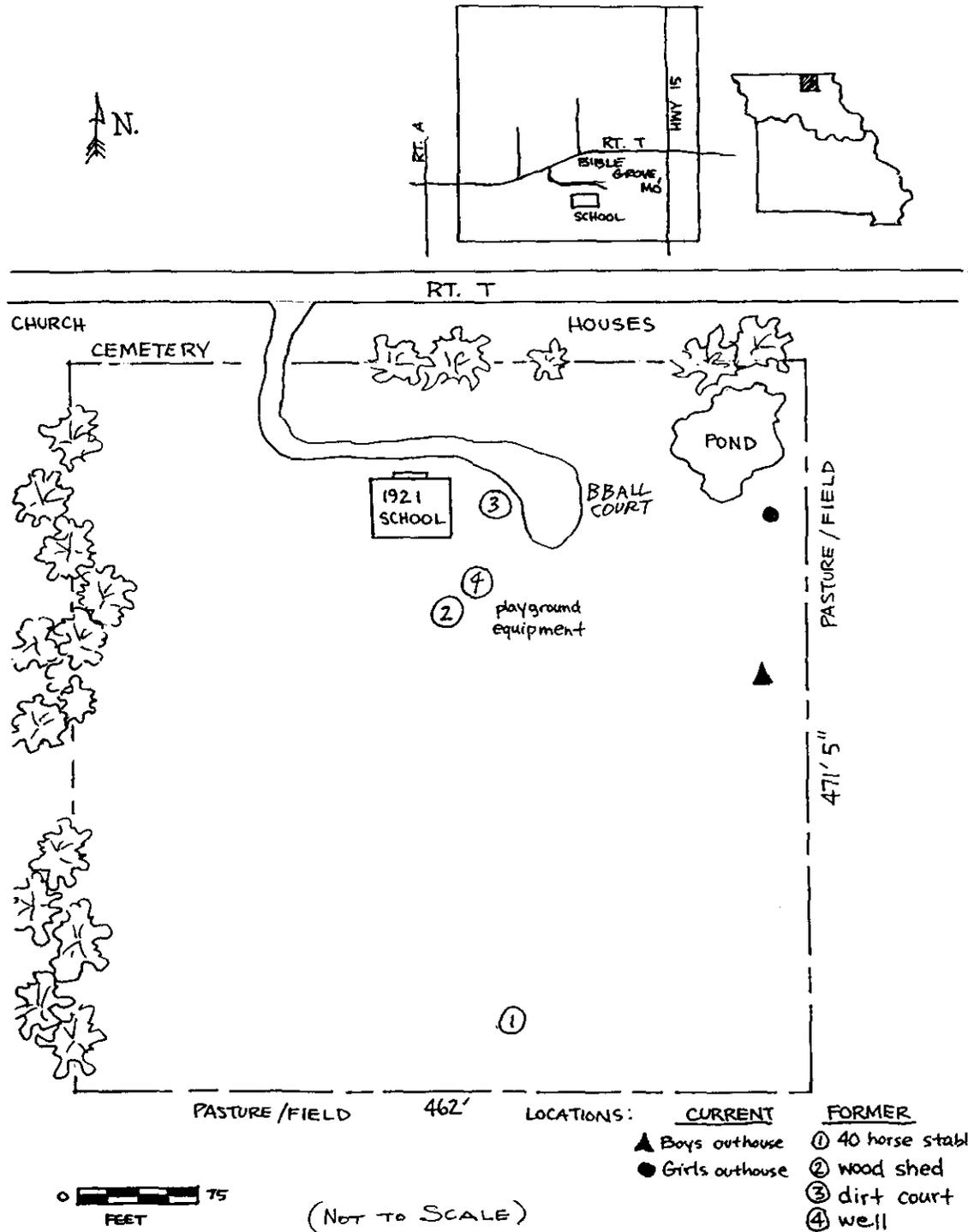
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Figure One. Site Plan and Location Map.



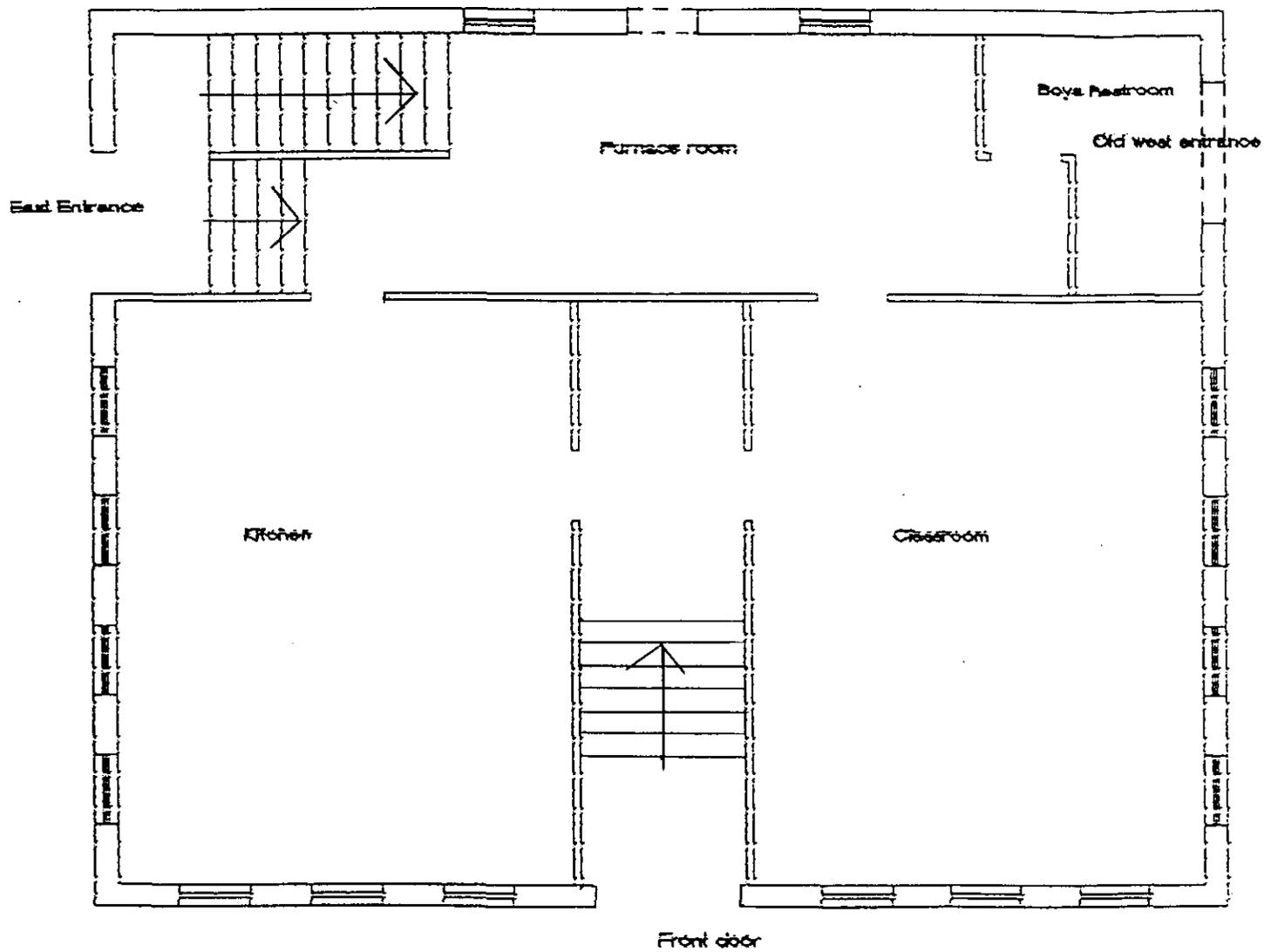
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Figure Two. Basement Floor Plan.



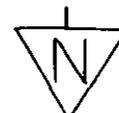
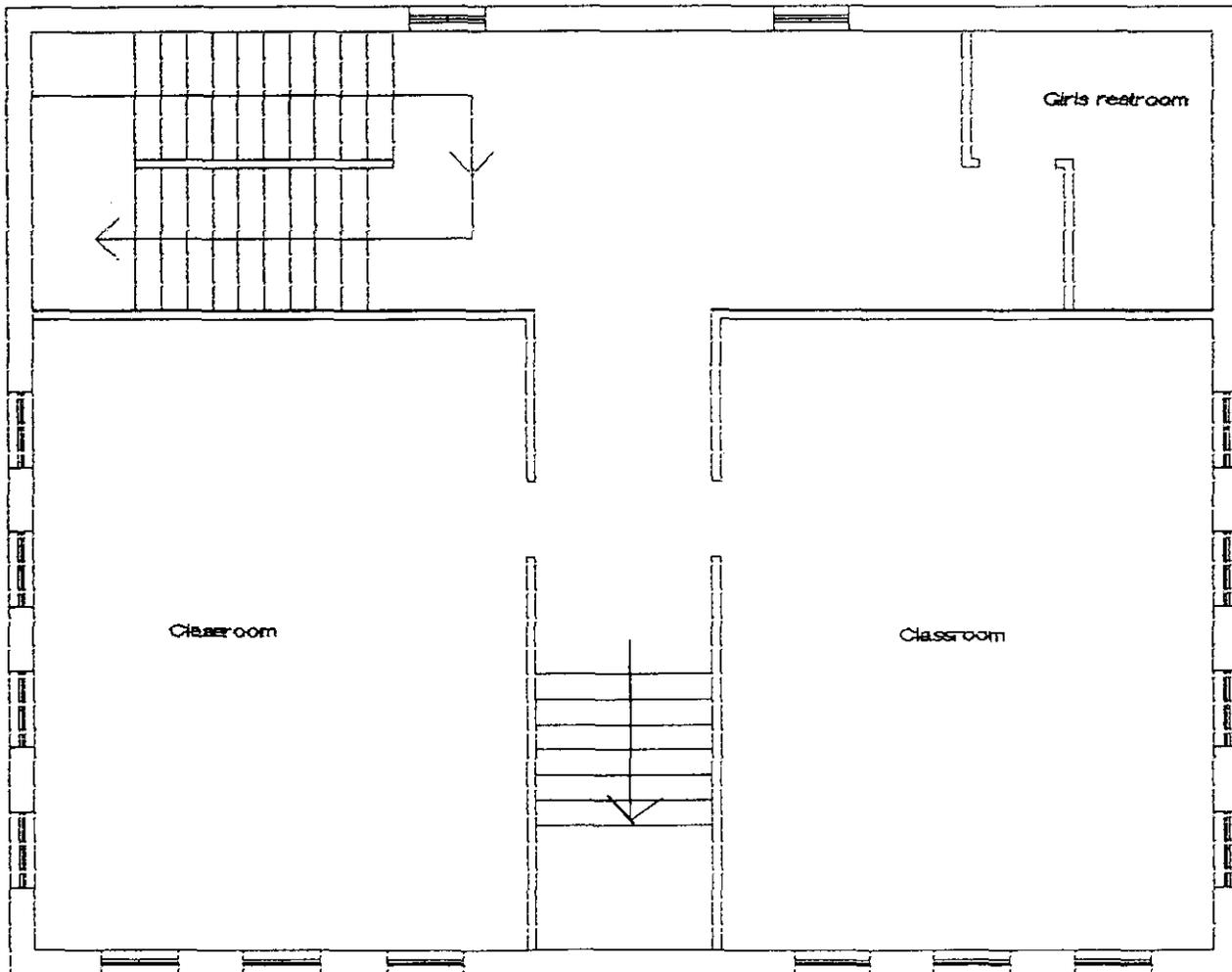
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Figure Three. First Floor Plan.



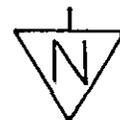
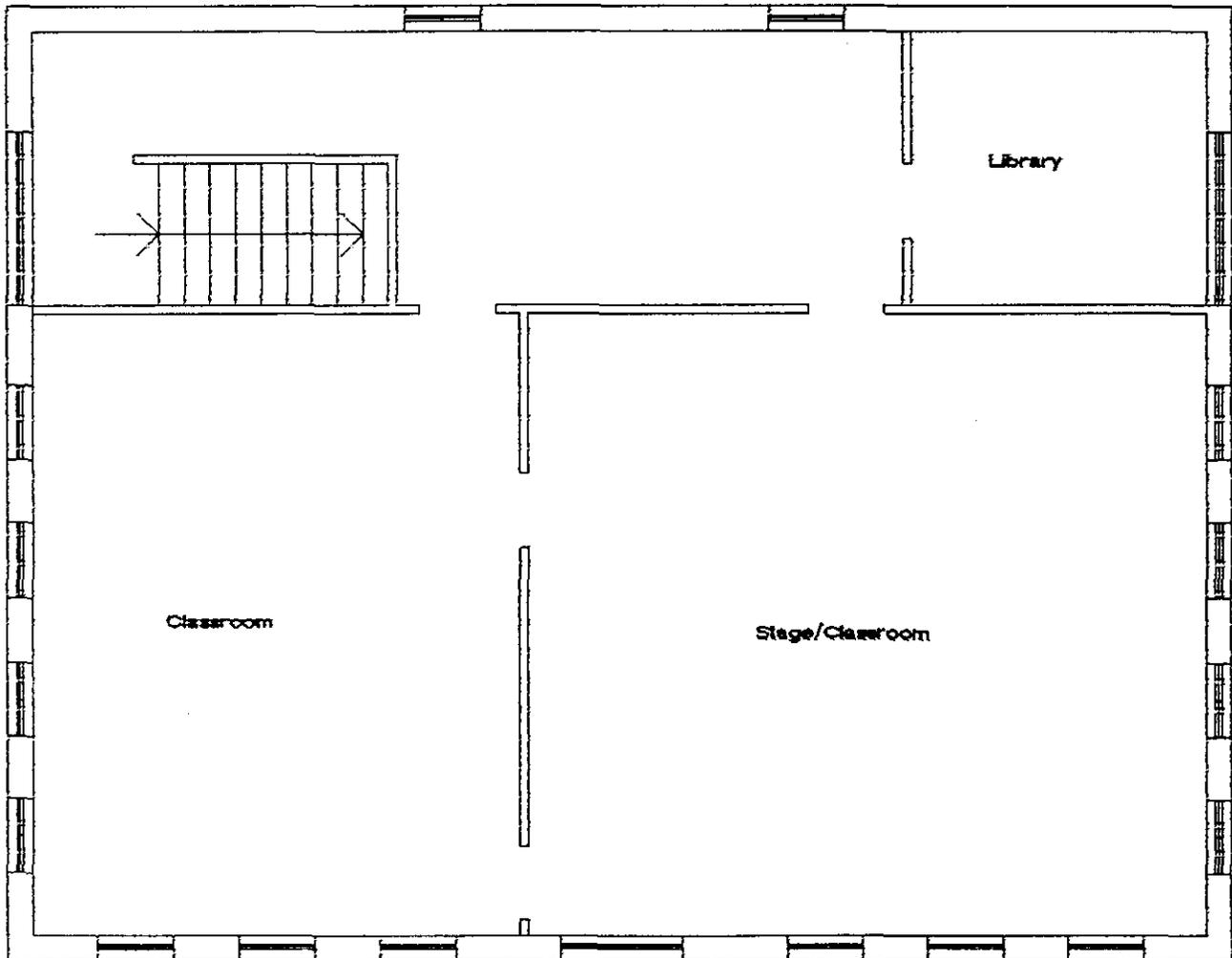
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Figure Four. Second Floor Plan.



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Scotland County, Missouri

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**Summary:** The Bible Grove Consolidated District #5 School, on the south side of Route T at Bible Grove, Scotland County, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C in the areas of EDUCATION and ARCHITECTURE. Bible Grove School is representative of an early consolidated rural schoolhouse in northern Missouri, serving six rural districts in Mount Pleasant Township from its construction in 1921 until its closing in 1995. Bible Grove School functioned as a consolidated elementary school for the duration of its 74 years as a schoolhouse and, for 35 years, served as the township's only high school. Traditionally, most schools in rural areas also filled a broader community role and the Bible Grove building was no exception, serving as a place for meetings and entertainments and becoming an important part of the local culture. Appropriately, the school was constructed by members of the community who donated their labor. Architecturally, Bible Grove School exemplifies an architect-designed, four-over-four schoolhouse building rendered in brick. Examples of this property type, variations of which gradually displaced many of the one-room schoolhouses which once dotted the American landscape, have themselves become increasingly rare. The Bible Grove building apparently was constructed according to an adaptation of a standard plan for schoolhouses, most specifically the plan for a somewhat smaller building at Lucerne in Putnam County. Like other consolidated school buildings of its period, it was built using mass-produced construction materials.<sup>4</sup> The building evolved over the years with the addition of electricity and indoor plumbing, but the floor plan remained essentially the same and much historic fabric is still present. The five-acre schoolyard, which contains original playground equipment and retains ambiance, is a contributing site. The period of significance, 1921-1950, begins with the year the schoolhouse was completed and ends at the arbitrary cutoff date for National Register properties.

**History of Bible Grove School:** The first white settlement of what became Scotland County along the Iowa border is believed to date from about 1833. In 1834 the future county's first church, originally known as Lebanon Christian Church, was constructed north of what became the Bible Grove schoolyard on the south side of what is now Route T. In 1835, some 14 years after Missouri achieved statehood, Bible Grove became one of the earliest settlements in the future county. In 1841, Scotland County was among 15 newly organized Missouri counties. Vassar Hill, where a Civil War battle was fought on July 18, 1862, was approximately a mile and a half north of the school.<sup>5</sup> In the early years of motoring, Bible Grove was located along the route of an automobile highway called the National White Way. Originating in Chicago, the road--constructed prior to the establishment of most local and state highway departments--crossed several states along its route to Colorado Springs, Colorado. Bible Grove was on the original leg of the highway in the stretch between Keokuk, Iowa, and Trenton, Missouri. By the 1930s, much of the road

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<sup>4</sup>Bible Grove School reportedly resembles a much smaller, circa 1915 consolidated high school building at Lucerne in nearby Putnam County. The Lucerne school, which among other things had two-window groups instead of three-window groups flanking the main entrance, was torn down in the 1970s.

<sup>5</sup>Joseph A. Mudd, With Porter in Missouri: A Chapter in the History of the War Between the States (Washington, D.C.: The National Publishing Co., 1909; reprinted by Iowa City, Iowa: Press of the Camp Pope Bookshop, 1992), pp.82-83.

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Bible Grove Consolidated District #5 School  
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apparently had been turned back to the counties.<sup>6</sup>

Following a traditional pattern, schoolhouses (along with churches) were built at an early stage of settlement. The first school classes in Scotland County were conducted in log cabins. Fifty years prior to construction of Bible Grove School, there were an estimated 2,000 log schools in Missouri.<sup>7</sup> Despite relatively primitive frontier conditions, illiteracy is said to have been largely nonexistent in the new county. The early schools were up to four or five miles apart but later one-room schoolhouses were built within walking or horseback distance from all of the rural homes.<sup>8</sup>

Eventually Scotland County was divided into 71 uniform school districts with a schoolhouse located approximately in the center of each district. The early school year usually began in September and was in session for six months. After a short vacation, a spring term lasting two or three months followed. Three directors and a clerk were elected to serve on the early school boards. College credits were not required for teaching but would-be teachers had to furnish evidence of good moral character and, in most cases, were required to be church members. Under this arrangement, with the districts established in tiers running east-west, the schools were only about two miles apart instead of four or five miles apart as previously. For various reasons, many rural students attended the one-roomers far beyond high school age. But since few actual high schools existed, secondary education was out of the question for most rural students.<sup>9</sup> Today as when Bible Grove School was constructed, the nearest high school is at Memphis, the county seat, some 20 road miles away.

The number of students enrolled in the typical one-room school varied from year to year and from school to school, but generally averaged between 20 and 30. The variation from school to school was fairly large in Scotland County, however, with enrollments apparently ranging from less than 10 to more than 60 students per school. According to retired Scotland County teacher Josephine Hunter, "Sixty-six pupils in a one-room school was a normal number when families were large and pupils attended until they were young men and women."<sup>10</sup>

During the early years of prosperity following World War One, before farm prices fell sharply in the 1920s, the sheer number of students attending one-room schools eventually created a desire for a larger, more

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<sup>6</sup>Information on the National White Way was provided by David Austin of the Missouri Department of Transportation.

<sup>7</sup>Charles E. Becker, Official Manual of the State of Missouri, 1921-1922 (Jefferson City, Missouri: The Hugh Stephens Printing Co., 1921), p.733.

<sup>8</sup>Josephine Hunter, "Rural Schools of Scotland County, Missouri," Scotland County Sesquicentennial 150 Years, 1841-1991 (Marceline, MO: Walsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1991), p.84.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

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permanent type of educational facility in Scotland County's Mount Pleasant Township. The type of building sought was one that could serve a dual role by providing both a high school education and an elementary education, with a central location so that the traveling distance would be reasonable from any point in the township.

Consolidation was increasingly urged by state officials, and in about 1918 a local consolidation effort began gaining momentum in Mount Pleasant Township. The project was spearheaded by representatives of the township's six school districts. While ultimately many Missouri farmers resisted consolidation, the advantages of having a high school along with overcrowding of at least some of the one-roomers resulted in strong community support for the project. The six cooperating districts were Purvis and Enterprise, both northeast of Bible Grove, Huston which was northwest, Hooppole which was southeast, Bluegrass which was west and McClure which was in the southwest part of Mount Pleasant Township. The representatives were D. J. Corwin from Purvis, Roy Redding from Enterprise, William Blaine from Huston, D. C. Dunn from Hooppole, Barton Hunt from Bluegrass and R. A. Clark from McClure. R. A. Norton was elected to serve as the district's first clerk and James T. Salsbury was elected treasurer. Clark served as the school board's first president.<sup>11</sup>

Construction of Bible Grove School is remembered as largely a community project, perhaps reflecting the "frontier spirit" that still prevailed in the area in the early decades of the 20th century. Much volunteer labor was used to implement the design of James T. Salsbury, a local resident with drafting skills who is said to have created an enlarged version of a consolidated schoolhouse at Lucerne for Bible Grove (also see Architecture, below).<sup>12</sup> Salsbury also served as the new district's first treasurer.

School records indicate that bricks used in the exterior walls were purchased from a company in Baring, Missouri. Windows and probably other construction materials were supplied by the Wieger Lumber Company of Memphis. Profiles of millwork and windows used in the schoolhouse are depicted in the Longbell Lumber Company Pattern Book, dated 1920. Most of the construction materials undoubtedly were hauled to the site by teams of horses.

The Bible Grove Consolidated District #5 High School opened in the fall of 1921 as a two-year high school. In 1923, when the first class of freshmen students completed their sophomore year, Bible Grove became a four-year high school. Status as a first-class high school was achieved by 1929. The students who were graduated from Bible Grove were academically qualified to enter college. The schoolhouse was electrified in the 1940s and, a decade later, indoor plumbing was installed. In 1952, two school districts in adjacent Tobin Township—Knob View and Frogge (Rabbit Roost)—joined Bible Grove. The Frogge building was moved to the southeast corner of Bible Grove School and used as a kitchen for several years; its foundation is still evident. Many Bible Grove graduates went on to college and returned to northeast

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<sup>11</sup>The primary source of information about the school's early history was Fred Snyder, a lifelong resident of Bible Grove. Mr. Snyder was involved with the local school throughout most of its history, first as a student (he was graduated from the high school) and later as a member of the District #5 Board of Education.

<sup>12</sup>Fred Snyder.

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Missouri to pursue careers in such fields as education, medicine, business and agriculture. Typical of other graduates of consolidated high schools during the period, they became such things as teachers, school administrators, physicians, nurses, business owners, postal carriers and farmers; a few entered military service. Bible Grove School remained a combination high school and elementary school until 1956, when the high school curriculum was discontinued.

During Bible Grove's period as a high school, some students rode horses up to eight miles to reach the school from the more remote areas of the township. Teachers also rode horses to school. The horses were kept in a stable at the south end of the schoolyard. The stable was built in 1921 and torn down in the late 1940s; only a site remains. Irene Swearingen, who traveled by horseback to attend classes at Bible Grove School, recalled that the gable-roofed building had 40 stalls flanking a wide central aisle. Each stall had an outside door. During World War Two, mattresses were produced in the building under a government program to aid farmers and returning servicemen. Labor was donated.<sup>13</sup>

Area demographics changed drastically in the 1930s. Throughout much of northern Missouri, school enrollments fell as the rural population declined. Declining property values compounded the problem for many schools, including Bible Grove School. Bible Grove survived the Great Depression but by the mid-1950s, increasing salaries and other economic factors made it impractical to maintain the high school curriculum. Beginning in 1956, high school students from Mount Pleasant Township were transported by bus to Scotland County High School, a nonconsolidated high school at Memphis. Bible Grove School continued as an elementary school for another four decades before continued low enrollment led to its ultimate closing in 1995. Long before 1995, Bible Grove School had in effect become an oversize but underused example of the one-room schoolhouses that it replaced 74 years earlier. In its last year, Bible Grove School still employed two teachers but enrollment had dwindled to 13.<sup>14</sup> Like the high school students earlier, the grade school students who would have attended classes at Bible Grove were bused to Memphis.

Typical of rural schools throughout America, Bible Grove School was used as a community center, serving as a site for such things as PTA meetings, Christmas programs, picnics, senior plays, music festivals, pie suppers (long a tradition of Bible Grove and other rural schools), newspaper publication and Fourth of July activities. The pies were made by young women of the Bible Grove community and auctioned to the young men, who sometimes bid extravagantly in order to eat pie with the woman of their choice. Apart from their obvious entertainment value, the pie suppers generated revenue for the school which could be used for the purchase of books and other equipment. Plays, programs and other events were presented in the larger of the two upstairs classrooms on a temporary stage supported by saw horses. Following an event, the stage was dismantled and lowered through a window to the ground. While the barn stood, it provided storage space for the stage components. The school's final Christmas program was presented on the stage in 1995.

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<sup>13</sup>Information on the barn was provided by two Bible Grove area residents who also attended Bible Grove School, Irene Swearingen and Fred Snyder. Irene Swearingen participated in the wartime mattress operation.

<sup>14</sup>According to the 1990 census, the total population of Mount Pleasant Township was only 64.

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Unlike many larger consolidated schools, for economic reasons the Bible Grove School lacked an indoor gymnasium. Instead there were two outdoor basketball courts with dirt surfaces east of the schoolhouse, one for boys and one for girls. According to all reports, despite practicing outdoors the Bible Grove students usually acquitted themselves well on indoor courts, competing against rival schools with ample success. Baseball and track were other school-sponsored sports at Bible Grove.

Today residents of the Bible Grove community are seeking to preserve the schoolhouse and its history so that it can be appreciated by future generations. After the school closed, the Bible Grove Historical Preservation Committee of Scotland County was formed by members of the community as a not-for-profit corporation with a goal of maintaining the building and grounds as a museum and community center. The schoolhouse--still the center of social activity at Bible Grove--also serves as the Committee's headquarters. Members hope that listing of the property in the National Register of Historic Places will (1) bolster its status within the preservation community and (2) help assure its long-term survival.

**Education:** Bible Grove School is locally significant as an early example of a consolidated school building with a high school as well as elementary levels. Students who formerly attended six one-room schools scattered across Scotland County's Mount Pleasant Township began attending Bible Grove School in 1921, many riding to and from school on horseback to receive their free public education in the years before automobiles became widespread. Unlike some consolidated schools, particularly those constructed decades later, Bible Grove School received widespread area support and the building was constructed primarily, if not entirely, by volunteer labor.

Typical of consolidated schools, students at Bible Grove were divided into separate classes for the various grade levels. Because Bible Grove School contained only five classrooms on its three floors, however, the 12 classes still had to share rooms and teachers. In practice, Bible Grove School retained many of the characteristics of the one-room schools it displaced. This was especially true after the high school curriculum was eliminated and enrollment plunged. Ultimately the old consolidated school met the same fate as the one-roomers, abandonment.

Although the concept of free public education in America was advocated by Thomas Jefferson, it did not become a reality in most parts of the nation until the mid-19th century. In Missouri, the implementation of public education was typically slow in coming although the congressional act under which the Territory of Missouri was organized in 1812 addressed education and the Constitution of 1820 declared that "the children of the poor shall be taught free." In 1839, the Geyer Act was a serious early attempt to incorporate Jefferson's ideas on state-supported education in Missouri. Geyer was largely ineffective, but in 1853 the General Assembly passed a new act that, finally, created a workable framework for public education in Missouri. By 1860, approximately one of every five Missourians attended school. After the Civil War, public education was significantly expanded in Missouri as elsewhere. The concept of free schools, once resisted as a form of charity, was clearly gaining support.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Claude A. Phillips, A History of Education in Missouri (Jefferson City, Mo.: The Hugh Stephens Printing Co., 1911), pp. 1-2, and Duane Meyer, The Heritage of Missouri: A History (St. Louis: State Publishing Co., Inc., 1970), pp. 287-292.

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For better or worse, Missouri was at the forefront of the school consolidation movement. As early as 1901, the General Assembly authorized the development of consolidated school districts in Missouri. In 1909, a law was passed authorizing three or more common school districts or a village district having less than 200 children of school age at the time of the most recent census, together with two or more adjoining districts, to consolidate for the purpose of maintaining both primary schools and a high school.<sup>16</sup> The 1913 Buford-Colley Consolidation Law, modified and made more liberal in 1917 and 1925, granted state aid as an incentive for enlarging districts.<sup>17</sup> Buford-Colley was one of the most significant measures in Missouri's educational history in that it shifted administrative responsibility from local districts to county superintendents. The law provided for uniform county school tax rates and empowered the county superintendents to make improvements in rural education.

The main theory behind consolidation was that children in rural areas would be better off in larger districts where they could be more completely separated according to grade level. Theoretically, this would bolster teaching efficiency and the children also would benefit from increased socialization with their peers. The case for consolidation was summarized by Duane Meyer in The Heritage of Missouri: A History: "This formation of larger districts eliminates duplication of effort and expense and allows better facilities and more specialized training than could be afforded by small rural schools."<sup>18</sup> Consolidation became increasingly feasible as transportation advances made it unnecessary for schools to be within walking distance of their students. When it became obvious that many recently created high schools were struggling because of dwindling enrollments, the state offered financial incentives that quickened the pace of consolidation. Essentially, consolidation went hand-in-hand with the development of high schools and an increased interest in higher education.

In rural areas like Scotland County, the early schoolhouses were small and fairly simple buildings because, usually, enrollments as well as budgets were limited (although some one-roomers apparently had extremely large enrollments). A time came when consolidation, touted by many educators, seemed to offer a real solution to the financial woes that plagued many districts. Before Bible Grove School was constructed, none of the existing one-room schoolhouses in Mount Pleasant Township had been located there. But Bible Grove occupied a relatively central location within the township, a fact that undoubtedly appealed to representatives of the six other districts who initiated the project. Support throughout the community ran high in any case because the new building would include a much-desired high school. While consolidation typically was opposed in rural areas after the movement accelerated following World War Two, early consolidations were much more likely to receive popular support. Undoubtedly, the idea of gaining a local high school was a major selling point. It provided instant identity, not only for tiny Bible Grove but for all of Mount Pleasant Township.

Numerous consolidations had occurred in Missouri by the time Bible Grove School was constructed in

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<sup>16</sup>Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1975.

<sup>17</sup>Sullivan, op cit.

<sup>18</sup>Meyer, op cit., p.727.

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1921, but there were still more than 9,000 individual school districts in the state and the consolidation movement was in its relative infancy; another 50 years would pass before the transition would be complete. By 1931, the number of one-room schoolhouses in Missouri was down to 7,296. By 1943, there were 5,782 one-roomers; by 1949, there were 3,788; and by 1953, there were 2,694.<sup>19</sup> In 1973, the state eliminated the last 25 of its one-room schools, ending an era.<sup>20</sup>

In One Room Schools of the Middle-West, Wayne E. Fuller noted that most of the Midwest's one-room schools "faded away in the 1950s. In county after county, year after year, they were constantly being closed, and the few remaining children were bused to schools that were larger if not better." Even when consolidation was successfully resisted by some one-room school districts, consolidation eventually came about "not because the farmers necessarily believed that larger schools were better but simply because their districts ran out of children." In terms of what it meant to its community, which was everything, Bible Grove School was very much like any of the one-room schools it displaced. Not surprisingly, Fuller's comments about the nostalgia associated with the loss of some one-roomers seem equally appropriate for the consolidated Bible Grove School: "In most places, the small schools passed quietly from the scene to make way for progress. But here and there, the closing of the one-room schools was accompanied by a certain sadness among the farmers and their wives, as memories of the little schools flooded in upon them. In their youth, the one-room schools had been their training ground for life and the remembered sites of their children's performances and last-day picnics. In those schools, the community had gathered, and it was obvious to them that closing their schools meant the eventual loss of their communities. So when it became known that a certain school would close, the last-day picnic became a special occasion, often attended by the oldest and youngest members of the district..."<sup>21</sup>

**Architecture:** Architecturally, Bible Grove School exemplifies a brick version of an architect-designed, four-over-four schoolhouse. Buildings of an approximately similar design are believed to have been a popular choice for consolidated schoolhouses in the early decades of the 20th century. While the four-over-four schoolhouse property type has not received a great deal of individual attention, it clearly has much in common with the architect-designed schoolhouses discussed by Andrew Gulliford in America's Country Schools. While these larger consolidated schoolhouses sometimes stood in sharp contrast to the smaller, simpler buildings they displaced, they were equally recognizable on the landscape because form, as architect Louis H. Sullivan once suggested, usually follows function. Even without the associated playground equipment, basketball court and outhouses, it is highly unlikely that Bible Grove School could

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<sup>19</sup>U.S. Office of Education, Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1952-1954 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1959), p.38.

<sup>20</sup>Leslie C. Swanson, Rural One-Room Schools of Mid-America (Moline, Illinois: Leslie Swanson, 1970, 1984), pp.30-31.

<sup>21</sup>Wayne E. Fuller, One-Room Schools of the Middle-West (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1994), pp.122-124.

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ever be mistaken for anything other than what it was designed to be, a four-over-four schoolhouse.<sup>22</sup>

The term four-over-four schoolhouse is somewhat misleading, since these buildings typically contained only two classrooms on each floor, along with a library, restrooms, hallways and stairwells. In the case of Bible Grove School, the larger of the two upstairs classrooms was often equipped with a take-apart stage and used as an auditorium. Actually, the four-over-four typology as used by the Missouri Historic Preservation Program has sufficient leeway to include three-story or even one-story forms. The type always has a central hallway and may have intersecting hallways forming a cross or T, as does Bible Grove School. Because of their balanced floor plans, four-over-four buildings often have a square appearance even when their footprints are rectangular rather than square, as in the case of Bible Grove School. Four-over-four schools also may be cruciform-shaped.<sup>23</sup>

Construction materials varied but most examples, like Bible Grove School, were constructed of brick. The type was constructed in urban as well as rural areas. Frequently, but not in the case of Bible Grove School, the primary facade was broken by a tower which might or might not contain a stairwell. In Gulliford, most pictorial examples of two-story, four-over-four schoolhouses are simply described as four-room schools, which is also somewhat misleading since at least some one-story schoolhouses had four rooms. None of Gulliford's examples looks quite like Bible Grove School. Wayne E. Fuller's One-Room Schools of the Middle West contains a photograph of a frame four-over-four schoolhouse constructed in Gustavus County, Ohio, in 1898, at the very beginning of the consolidation movement. "It cost \$3,000 and eliminated nine small schools," Fuller noted. There are other four-over-four schools in Fuller's book but as in Gulliford, none quite resembles Bible Grove School.<sup>24</sup>

James T. Salsbury, a local one-room school teacher with a knowledge of drafting, is thought to have adapted the plan of a smaller, circa 1915 consolidated schoolhouse at Lucerne in Putnam County for the Bible Grove building. Even though Salsbury was not, technically, an architect, it is appropriate to describe the building as "architect-designed." This terminology is correct because the plan which Salsbury is thought to have adapted was almost certainly based on an architect's plan book design for a consolidated schoolhouse. Among other things, Salsbury's design expanded the Lucerne building, adding windows and doors as well as internal space. Salsbury, who served as the consolidated district's first treasurer, also was a justice of the peace and a daughter, Lela Salsbury Odell, taught the first four grades when the new school opened. Educated at an academy in Novelty, Knox County, Salsbury—who lived a quarter of a mile

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<sup>22</sup>Andrew Gulliford, America's Country Schools (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1984), pp. 171-172.

<sup>23</sup>In addition to the four-over-four schoolhouse type, the Missouri Historic Preservation Program recognizes the gable end, hipped or pyramided cube, T-shape or central hall, WPA, and other as vernacular schoolhouse categories.

<sup>24</sup>Wayne E. Fuller, One-Room Schools of the Middle West (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1994), p.96.

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east of Bible Grove--was considered "a very capable man with a good education."<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, a detailed comparison of the two buildings probably is impossible because the schoolhouse at Lucerne, closed in 1960, was torn down in the 1970s.

Architecturally, the most distinctive characteristic of Bible Grove School is simply its size and massing on the rural landscape. The sense of permanency resulting from its appearance immediately distinguished Bible Grove School from the area's many one-room schoolhouses. Beyond that the bellcast roof with wide eaves, windows in well-defined groupings of two and three, and the primary central entrance with a fanlight all combine to announce that this building is, after all, a schoolhouse. The wide eaves suggest a Prairie School influence and the fanlight evokes various colonial and classical antecedents, but neither style is developed.

Only moderately altered, Bible Grove School stands today as a good example of an increasingly rare type of educational building in Missouri, the four-over-four consolidated schoolhouse. The building has evolved from its early period when there was neither electricity nor indoor plumbing but retains a preponderance of historic material throughout. Because it is not "old old," this building type is often taken for granted and, consequently, many such buildings have been demolished. Since a comprehensive survey of Missouri's schoolhouses has not been undertaken, it is impossible to compare Bible Grove School with other examples and the recommended level of significance is set at the local level.

Inside, the building is simply and efficiently laid out. Classrooms are found on all three floors. The kitchen and furnace room are in the lower level. On the third floor is the library and a large classroom which was equipped with a makeshift stage for special programs. Space in one of the corridors sufficed as an "office" and there was no gymnasium. A stairway accessing all three floors is in the southeast end and another stairway from ground level to the first floor is at the north end of the central hallway. Since the top floor is only accessed by the southeast stairway, a tubular steel fire escape was installed outside a window in the west wall in 1940. Significance is enhanced by the relatively original interior.

The five-acre schoolyard has evolved along with the building but it is still capable of strongly contributing to the ambiance of a consolidated schoolhouse. The setting is nearly as pastoral today as when the building was constructed 79 years ago. Although the stable once closely associated with the schoolhouse was torn down decades ago, its site has simply been allowed to return to a natural state. Bible Grove School, a four-over-four consolidated schoolhouse building adapted from a plan book design, stands on its original site as a good and relatively intact example of this diminishing type of resource. The schoolyard retains sufficient ambiance to be counted as a contributing site.

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<sup>25</sup>The information on James T. Salsbury was provided by Fred Snyder, a lifelong resident of Bible Grove and a former member of the Bible Grove Consolidated District #5 School Board.

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Lowry, Wanda. Resident of Lucerne, Missouri, who attended the Lucerne High School, interviewed by Reta Idell Langston, January 2000.

Snyder, Fred. Lifelong resident of Bible Grove and graduate of Bible Grove High School, interviewed by Reta Idell Langston, October 1999 and January 2000.

Irene Swearingen. Graduate of Bible Grove High School, interviewed by Reta Idell Langston, January 2000.

#### 10. Geographical Data

##### Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is a rectangular parcel measuring 462 feet by 471 feet. Beginning at a point on the property line (Point A), continue eastward 462 feet to Point B. Then continue southward 471 feet along the property line to Point C. Then continue westward 462 feet along the property line to Point D. Then continue northward 471 feet along the property line to the point of origin.

##### Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire five-acre parcel historically associated with Bible Grove School.

#### 11. Form Prepared By

1. Reta Idell (Erwin) Langston  
Concerned citizen for Bible Grove Historical Preservation Committee  
11991 Highway O  
New London, MO 63459  
Date: November 1, 1999  
Telephone: (573) 221-6806
2. Roger Maserang/Historian  
DNR/Historic Preservation Program  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
Date: February 18, 2000  
Telephone: (573) 522-4641

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**Photographs**

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Bible Grove School  
Bible Grove  
Scotland County, MO  
Taken by Reta Idell Langston  
Negatives on file with Reta Idell Langston

1. North elevation facing south.
2. North and west elevations facing southeast.
3. West elevation facing east.
4. East elevation facing southwest.
5. South elevation facing northwest.
6. View of north entrance from central hallway facing south.
7. Original iron and wood school desks in first floor classroom, facing east.
8. Stage on saw horses in second floor classroom, facing west.
9. Decorative metal ceiling in first floor west classroom, facing south.
10. View from Route T with cemetery (not on schoolyard) in foreground, facing southeast.
11. Playground equipment, picnic tables and outhouse, facing southeast.
12. Basketball court east of schoolhouse, facing east.
13. View from east side of schoolyard, facing west.
14. View from near site of stable in south end of schoolyard, facing north.

BIBLE GROVE SCHOOL  
SCOTLAND COUNTY, MO

STATE OF MISSOURI  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND WATER RESOURCES  
WILLIAM C. HAYES, STATE GEOLOGIST

UTM REFERENCE 15/559260E/4466

