

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Ratcliff, Jesse House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Route 1, Box 38

not for publication

city, town Barnett ☒ vicinity of congressional district #4 - Hon. Ike Skelton

state Missouri code 29 county Morgan code 141

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no / to be determined	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name J. Lee and Bob Woolley

street & number Route 1, Box 38

city, town Barnett vicinity of state Missouri 65011

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder of Deeds

street & number Morgan County Courthouse

city, town Versailles state Missouri 65084

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title 1. Missouri Historic Sites Catalogue has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1968 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Missouri
Hitt and Lowry Streets

city, town Columbia state Missouri 65201

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Jesse Ratcliff house is a two-story central passage I-type house constructed of hand-cut native limestone. The house is located in Morgan County northeast of Barnett, near the Moreau River. It sits facing the southwest and is topped by a medium gable roof now covered with asphalt shingles replacing the original shake roof.¹

The walls of the Ratcliff house are laid in somewhat regular ashlar courses of squared blocks of limestone, some quite large, which alternate with courses of long thin blocks to create an interesting visual pattern. Large stone lintels occur over doors and windows on the first story.

Rough sawn cedar shutters, which are recent additions, adorn deeply recessed windows and the front entry which also sports a transom and trabeated sidelights which is as close an association with the Greek Revival style as the house manages to achieve. An unusual feature, round windows or portholes, in the eastern and western endwalls just below the gables, precipitated the local name, "the house with eyes."² Except for these 4 windows which ventilate the attic, two at each end, the endwalls are windowless.

Three chimneys at gable ends are internally engaged. A pre-1861 saddlebag house chimney remains separated from the house near the northeast corner. This chimney serviced the original Ratcliff house, later torn down (ca. 1919) and moved across the road where it still stands though now covered with siding.³

The full basement is articulated by stone partitions where the unusually large size of the stones used is apparent. The foundation is all hand cut native stone as are the walls which measure approximately 3 ft. in thickness.

The first and second floors have been remodeled with a modern kitchen and bath addition attached about 1973 and a screen porch added in 1979. The house originally had a rear porch later converted into a summer kitchen now replaced by the new addition.⁴

All original rooms were plastered except the downstairs hall where the natural stone was left uncovered. Insulation, paneling, wainscoting and new plaster have been added over the original wall treatment.⁵ The stone walls are still uncovered in the hallways, however.

In the main hall the original walnut stairway, complete with square nails and pegged railings, remains in excellent condition. While the oak board floors are original all fireplaces have been altered.⁶

No significant outbuildings remain since a fire destroyed the carriage house and barn in 1974.⁷

A modern garage (not included in the nomination) sits just west of the house. The current owners, Bob and Jlee Wooley, have renovated the house. The house is in excellent shape.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1861-1864 Builder/Architect Mr. Porter

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Jesse Ratcliff house is significant not only as one of the oldest homes in Morgan County but also as one of the best constructed houses of native stone in the state of Missouri. The man who decided to build such a formidable structure, Jesse Ratcliff, migrated with his family from Hickory County, Ohio in 1843.¹

In 1854 Jesse Ratcliff purchased 240 acres and by 1861 he had expanded his farming acreage to over a thousand acres in Morgan County.² Originally the Ratcliffs built a small log frame house with a stone chimney that remains intact just a few feet from the northeast corner of the stone house.³ With plans to expand the log house into a saddle-bag type the chimney was built so both sides could be utilized. However, the Civil War changed those plans and the second half of the log house was never built.

In the 1800's Morgan County was one of the best stock counties in Missouri and limestone was "good and abundant in quantity."⁴ These factors made the large stone house an affordable project for the Ratcliffs although the construction would take three long years.⁵ Because so many homes were burned in Missouri during the Civil War, Jesse made up his mind to build a house that would not burn.⁶

Although there were at least two at the turn of the century, the uniqueness of stone farm houses in Morgan County is reflected in a 1916 agriculture report that listed only one stone structure and over 2,000 frame or log structures in the county.⁷ Between 1861 and 1864 the limestone for the house was quarried in the Fall, a quarter of a mile northeast of the house.⁸ Both the quarry site and the nearby Ratcliff family cemetery can still be seen as can a trace through the woods where the stones were dragged to the building site.

Not only are stone houses rare in Morgan County, but also in the state of Missouri as well, except in the German settlement areas where stone was a common construction material for domestic dwellings. A similar type of house was built by Elias Ratcliff, Jesse's relative, a few miles to the North near High Hill in Moniteau County. This house now stands in great disrepair and has been abandoned for many years. Another much less ambitious stone house of similar construction, the McDow house, is also nearby in Morgan County. As brick or wood was the preferred construction material for pretentious mid-Missouri houses of this period, the Ratcliff house stands as an imposing exception.

Surviving Ratcliff family members recall a Mr. Porter, an area carpenter and stone mason, acting as construction foreman.⁹ A horse and mule powered log boom was used to hoist the large stones.¹⁰ During the construction years Jesse and his son, William, also operated a water powered grist mill on the Ratcliff farm.¹¹

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. "Couple Restores Old Farmstead." Eldon Advertiser, 26 June 1975.
2. History of Morgan County, Missouri, 1833-1979. Versailles, Missouri: Morgan County Historical Society, 1979.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .06 acre

Quadrangle name "Barnett, Mo."

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	1	5
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5	3	1	6	1	0
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4	2	5	0	3	3	0
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Zone

Easting

Northing

B

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Zone

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The Ratcliff House and adjacent saddlebag chimney are located in Morgan County, Missouri, within the Barnett quadrangle and occupy a rectangle that measures 55' (east/west) by 45' (north/south). This rectangle has as its center point the UTM coordinate.

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

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1. Roger Dillon/Historic Preservation Officer

organization Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments date July, 1980

street & number P.O. Box 786 telephone 314/346-5616

city or town Camdenton state Missouri 65020

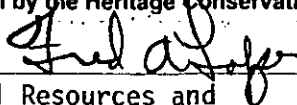
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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



Director, Department of Natural Resources and
title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 22 Feb 82

For HCRS 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

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

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

RATCLIFF, JESSE HOUSE

For HCERS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 6

Page 1

2. Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments
Historical Survey
1979
LOCLG, P.O. Box 786
Camdenton
county
Missouri 65020
3. Missouri State Historical Survey
1978
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
Jefferson City
state
Missouri 65102

Item number 9

Page 1

3. Nelson, W.L., ed. and compiler, Missouri State Board of Agriculture Monthly Bulletin. Vol. 14, No. 2, February 1916.
4. Ratcliff, John. Interview by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.
5. Wetmore, Alphonso, compiler, Gazeteer of the State of Missouri. New York: Harper's and Brothers Printers (1837). St. Louis: R.A. Campbell (1837).
6. Wooley, Jlee. Interview by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.

Item number 11

Page 1

2. Lynn Morrow, Research Historian
Center for Ozark Studies
Southwest Missouri State University
Springfield
June, 1980
417/836-5755
Missouri 65802
3. James M. Denny, Section Chief, Nominations-Survey
and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City
September 5, 1980
314/751-4096
Missouri 65102

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

**National Register of Historic Places
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RATCLIFF, JESSE HOUSE

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date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1

1. A personal interview with Jlee Wooley, by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.
2. "Couple Restores Old Farmstead," Eldon Advertiser, 26 June 1975.
3. A personal interview with John Ratcliff (great-grandson of Jesse Ratcliff) by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.
4. History of Morgan County, Missouri, 1833-1979. (Versailles, Missouri: Morgan County Historical Society, 1979) p. 75.
5. Eldon Advertiser, 26 June 1975.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Personal Interview, by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.
9. Personal Interview, by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.
10. Personal Interview, by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.

Item number

2. Personal Interview, by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.
3. Personal Interview, by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.
4. Personal Interview, by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.
5. Personal Interview, by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.
6. Personal Interview, by Roger Dillon, June, 1980.
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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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RATCLIFF, JESSE HOUSE

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

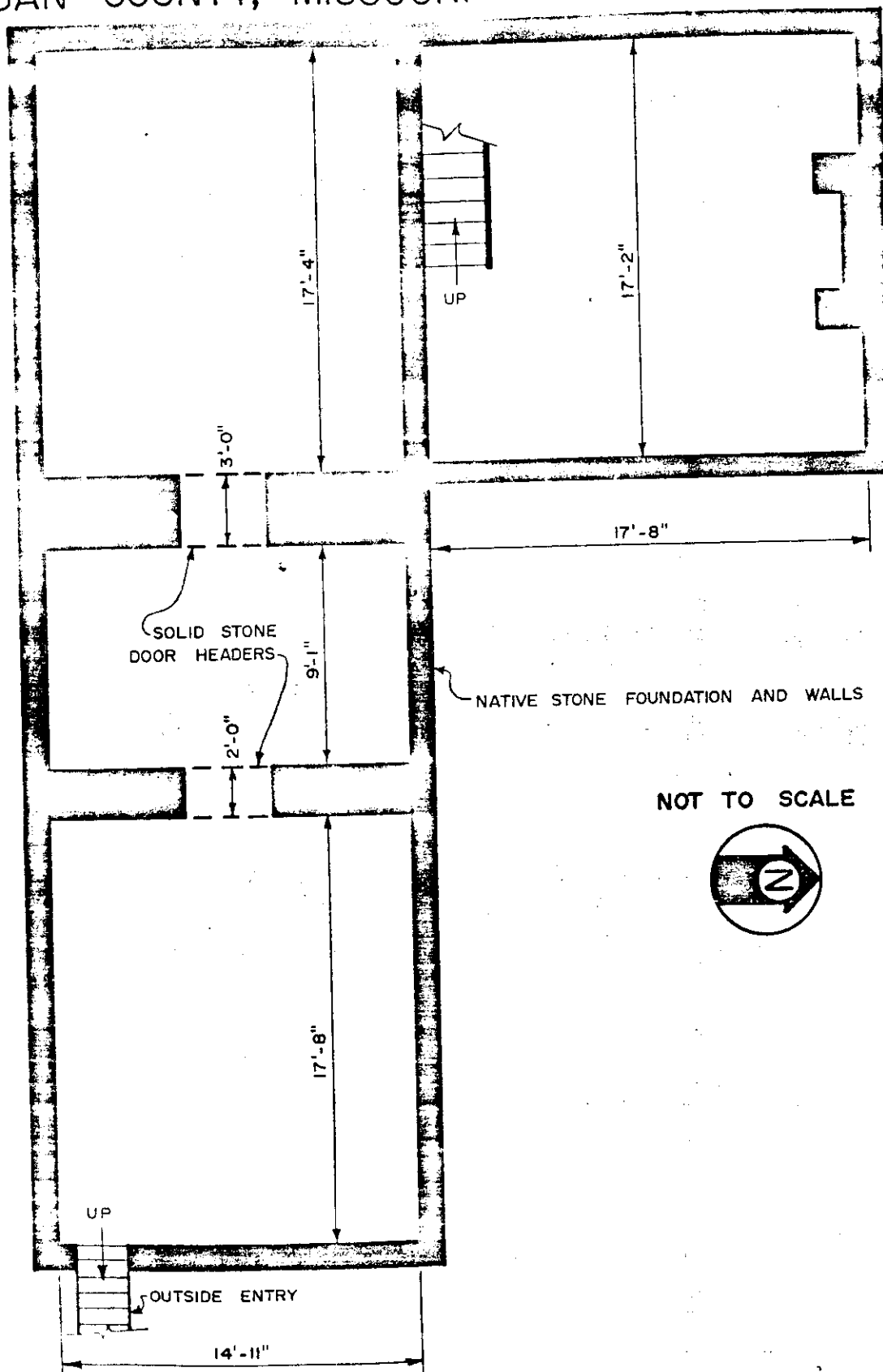
Page 1

After Jesse Ratcliff, the house was owned by various members of the Ratcliff family until Robert and Jlee Wooley purchased it in 1972. The Wooleys have remodeled the house to include modern convenience but have for the most part restored it to its mid-nineteenth century appearances.

FOOTNOTES

1. History of Morgan County, Missouri, 1883-1979. (Versailles, Missouri: Morgan County Historical Society, 1979) p. 75.
2. A personal interview with John Ratcliff (great-grandson of Jesse Ratcliff) by Roger Dillon, June 1980.
3. Ibid.
4. Gazeteer of the State of Missouri, compiled by Alphonso Wetmore. (New York: Harper's and Brothers Printers 1837) (St. Louis: R.A. Campbell 1837) p. 127-128.
5. History of Morgan County, Missouri, 1833-1979 p. 75.
6. Ibid.
7. Missouri State Board of Agriculture Monthly Bulletin. W.L. Nelson, editor and compiler. Volume 14, No. 2, February 1916, p. 23.
8. History of Morgan County, Missouri, 1833-1979, p. 75.
9. "Couple Restores Old Farmstead," Eldon Advertiser 26 June 1975; A personal interview with John Ratcliff (great-grandson of Jesse Ratcliff) by Roger Dillon, June 1980.
10. History of Morgan County, Missouri, 1833-1979. p. 75.
11. Ibid.

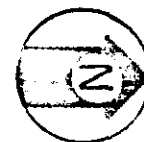
BASEMENT PLAN
RATCLIFF HOUSE
BARNETT VICINITY
MORGAN COUNTY, MISSOURI



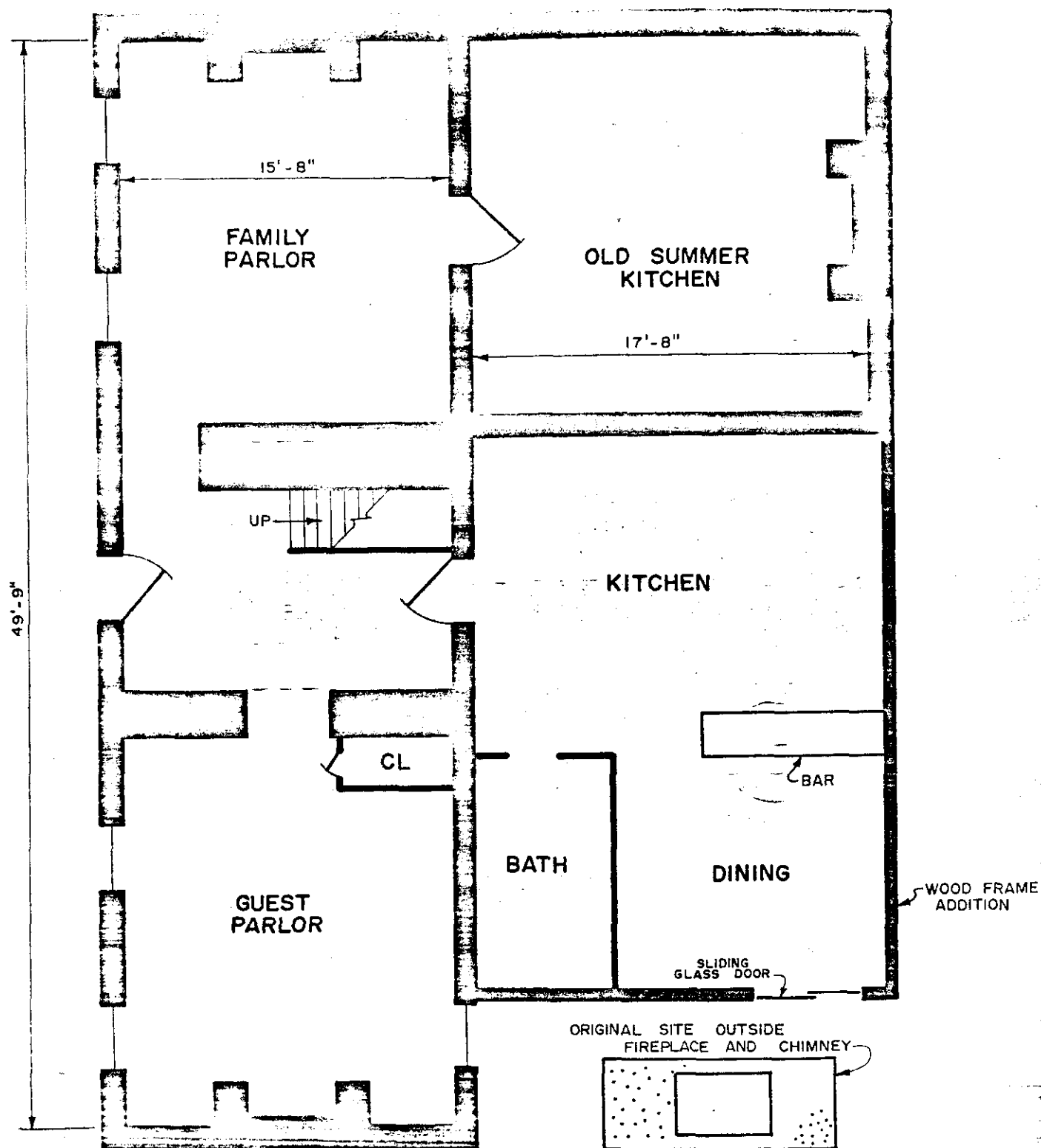
NOT TO SCALE



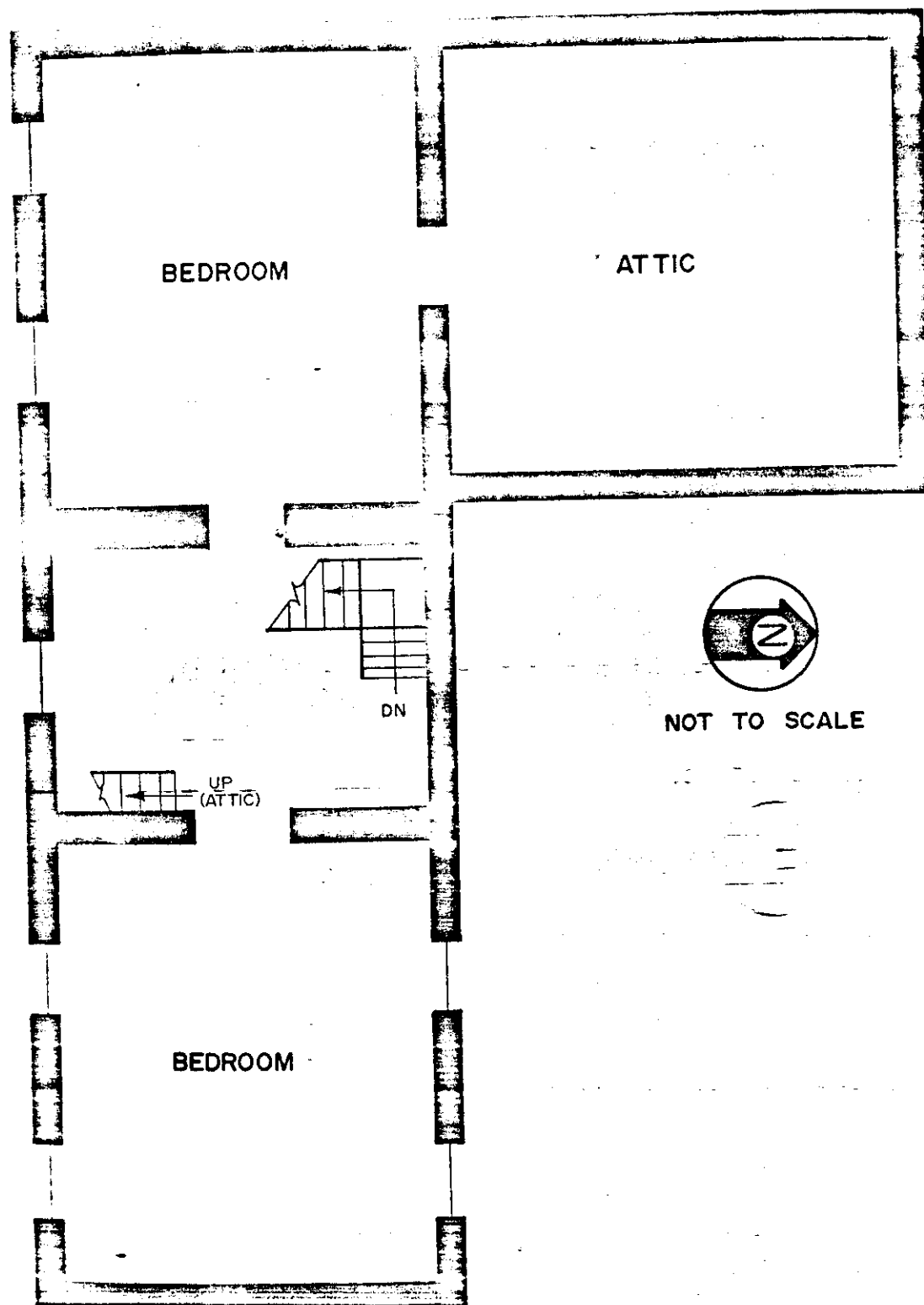
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
RATCLIFF HOUSE
BARNETT VICINITY
MORGAN COUNTY, MISSOURI



NOT TO SCALE



SECOND FLOOR PLAN
RATCLIFF HOUSE
BARNETT VICINITY
MORGAN COUNTY, MISSOURI



U.S.G.S. 7.5;
 "Barnett, Mo."
 Scale: 1:24,000

Ratcliffe House
 Barnett, Missouri

UTM REFERENCE:
 15/531610/4250330

Quadrangle
 (1960)

MORGAN CO
 MILLER CO



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

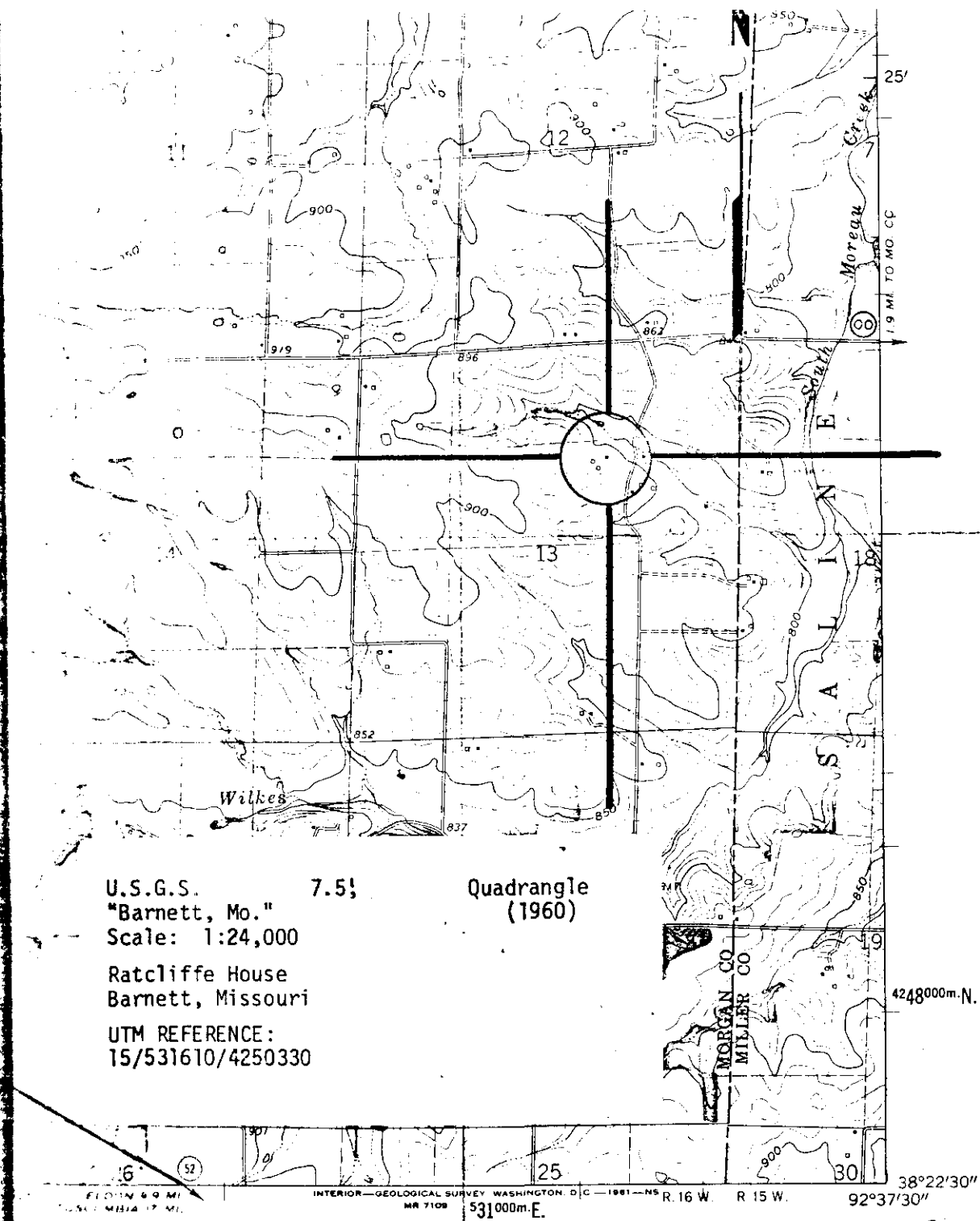
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
 Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - -

○ State Route

BARNETT, MO.

NW/4 ELDON 15' QUADRANGLE
 N 3822.5—W 9237.5/7.5

1960



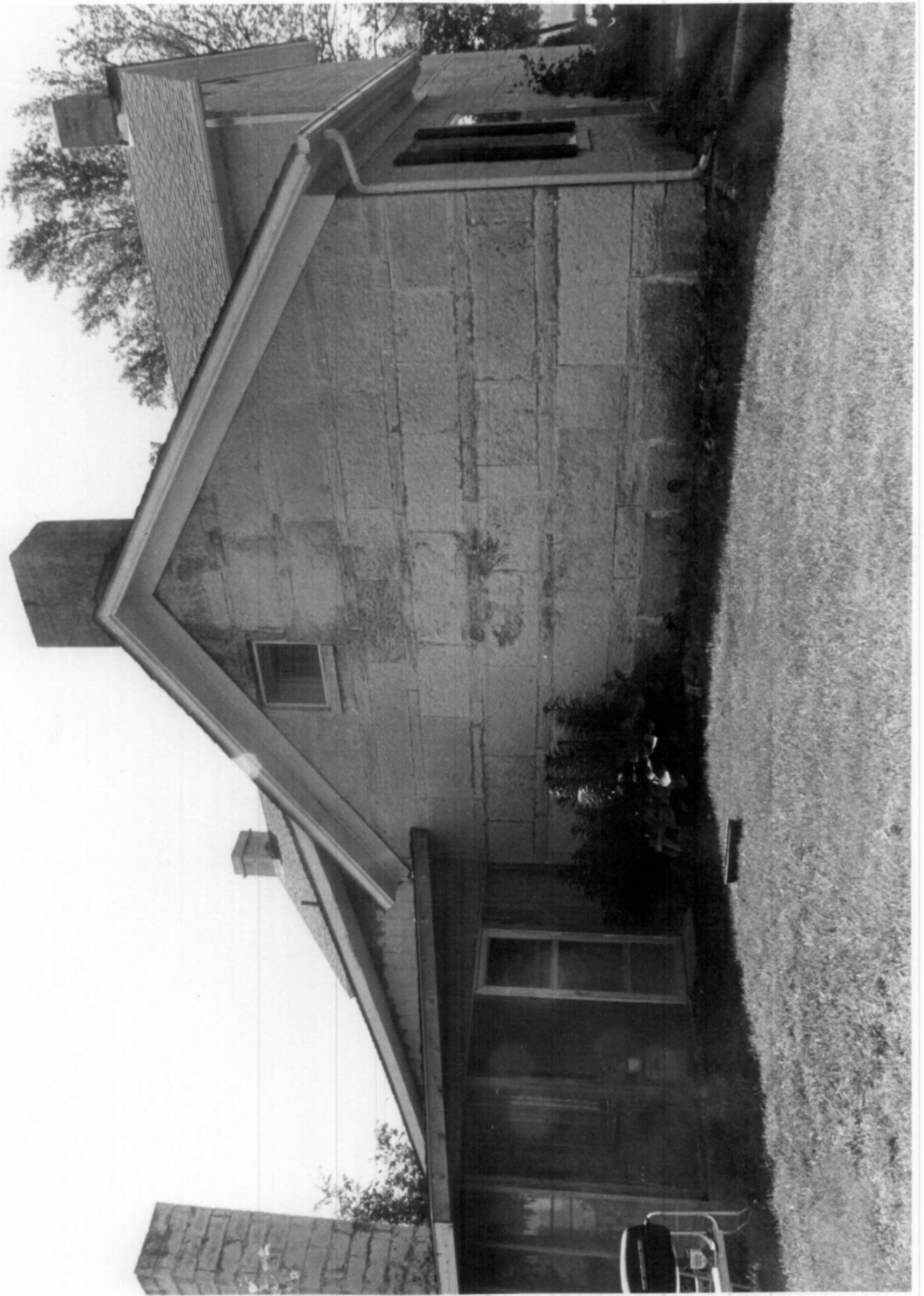
- Ratcliff House #1 of 10
Barnett Vicinity Missouri
Photographer: Roger Dillon, June, 1980
Lake of the Ozarks Council of Govern-
ments, Box 786, Camdenton, Mo. 65020
Exterior, front or southern facade.



Ratcliff House #2 of 10
Barnett Vicinity, Missouri
Photographer: Roger Dillon, June, 1980
Lake of the Ozarks Council of Govern-
ments, Box 786, Camdenton, Mo. 65020
Exterior, front (southern) and side
(eastern) facades, note saddle-bag
chimney.



Ratcliff House #3 of 10
Barnett Vicinity, Missouri
Photographer: Roger Dillon, June, 1980
Lake of the Ozarks Council of Govern-
ments, Box 786, Camdenton, Mo. 65020
Exterior, rear or northern facade.



Ratcliff House #4 of 10
Barnett Vicinity, Missouri
Photographer: Roger Dillon, June, 1980
Lake of the Ozarks Council of Govern-
ments, Box 786, Camdenton, Mo. 65020
Exterior, eastern endwall chimney and
round attic windows.



Ratcliff House #5 of 10
Barnett Vicinity, Missouri
Photographer: Roger Dillon, June, 1980
Lake of the Ozarks Council of Governments
Box 786, Camdenton, Mo. 65020
Exterior, main or front entrance.



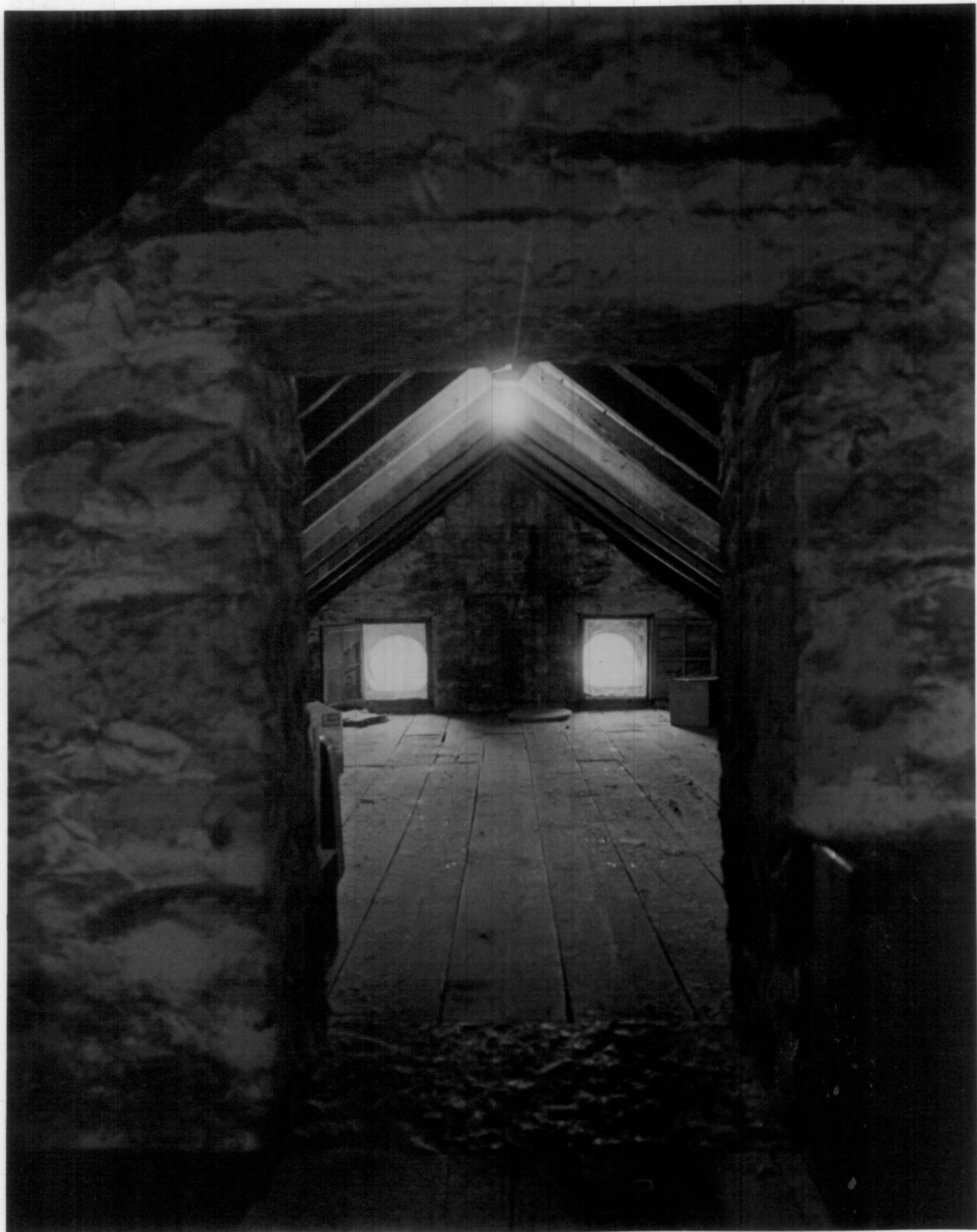
Ratcliff House #6 of 10
Barnett Vicinity, Missouri
Photographer: Roger Dillon, June, 1980
Lake of the Ozarks Council of Governments
Interior, downstairs main hall original
stairway, newell post and railing.



Ratcliff House #7 of 10
Barnett Vicinity, Missouri
Photographer: Roger Dillon, June, 1980
Lake of the Ozarks Council of Governments
Box 786, Camdenton, Mo. 65020
Interior, second floor original door knob.

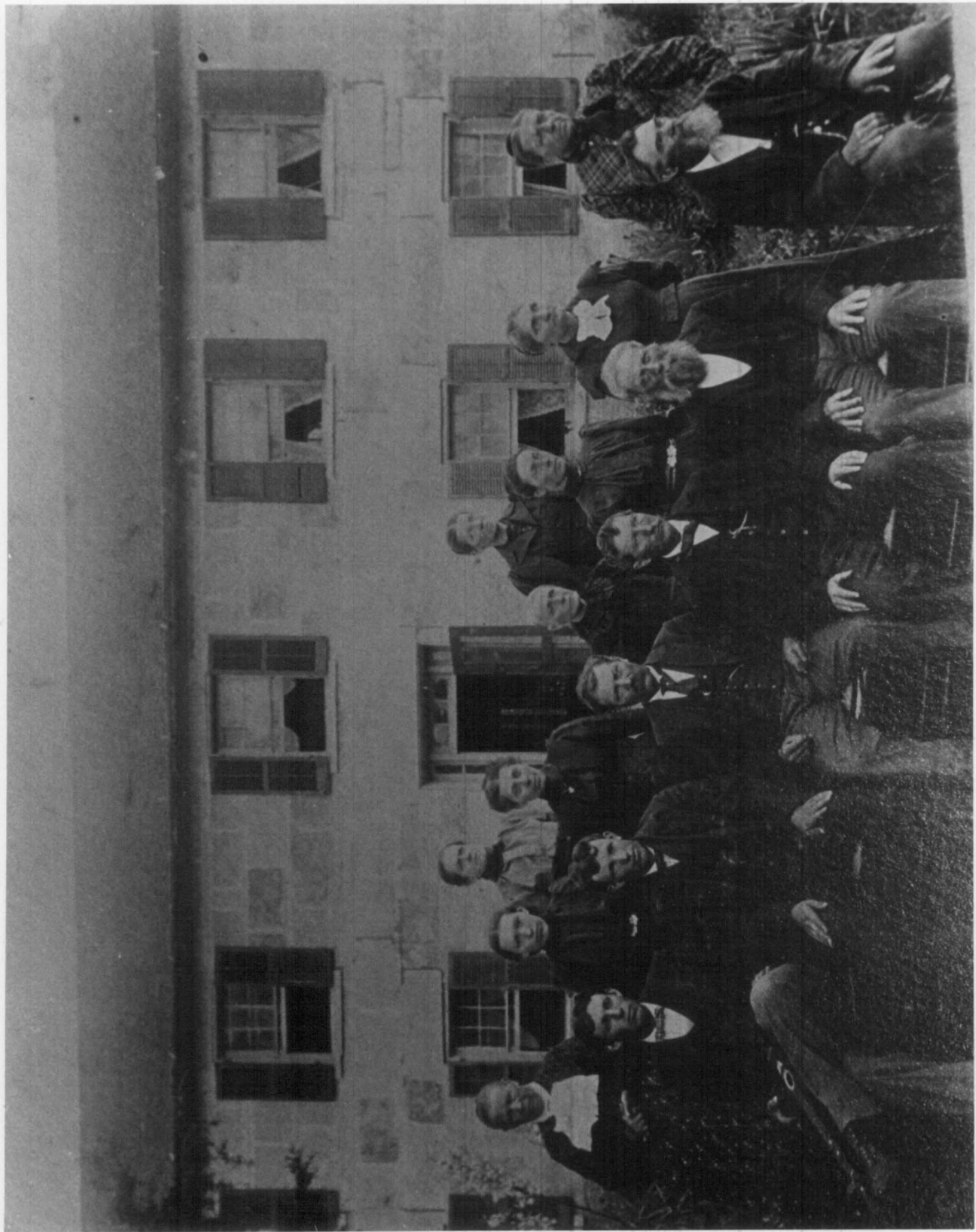


Ratcliff House #8 of 10
Barnett Vicinity, Missouri
Photographer: Roger Dillon, June, 1980
Lake of the Ozarks Council of Governments
Box 786, Camdenton, Mo. 65020
Interior, attic (note inner wall thickness and
round window openings)



Ratcliff House #9 of 10
Barnett Vicinity, Missouri
Photographer: unknown
Copy by: Roger Dillon, June, 1980
Lake of the Ozarks Council of Governments
Box 786, Camdenton, Mo. 65020

Copy made from photo owned by JLee and Bob
Woolley. Believed to be members of Ratcliff
family (ca. 1890).



Ratcliff House #10 of 10
Barnett vicinity, Missouri
Photographer: unknown
Copy by: Roger Dillon, June, 1980
Lake of the Ozarks Council of Governments
Box 786, Camdenton, Mo. 65020

Copy made from photo owned by Jlee and Bob
Woolley. Believed to be member of Ratcliff
family (ca. 1890).

