

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

1. Name of Property

historic name Richland Christian Church

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 5301 (Callaway) County Road 220 [n/a] not for publication

city or town Kingdom City [X] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Callaway code 027 zip code 65262

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 [].)

Claire F. Blackwell
Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO

25 Jan 01
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:

- entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- determined not eligible for the
National Register.
- removed from the
National Register
- other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

Signature of the Keeper

Date

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)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

Name of related multiple property listing.

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
RELIGION/religious facility

Current Functions
VACANT/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
Other: gable-end church
Italianate

Materials
foundation stone
walls concrete
weatherboard
roof asphalt
other _____

Narrative Description

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

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.

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

Areas of Significance

Architecture

Periods of Significance

1873

Significant Dates

1873

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect/unknown

Builder/Wiggs & Russell

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 less than one acre

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	587320	4309415			
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 Richland Christian Church c/o Pauline Shiverdecker

street & number 221 East 14th Street telephone 573-642-4289

city or town Fulton state MO zip code 65251

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Section 7 Page 1

Richland Christian Church
Callaway County, MO

SUMMARY:

The Richland Christian Church is located at 5301 County Road 220, approximately four miles southwest of Kingdom City in Callaway County. Constructed in 1873, the frame, gable front, three-bay rural church building faces south. The symmetrical building is embellished with its original Italianate style hoods above front and side windows and the central transomed entrance. Along with the hoods, a jigsawn wooden trefoil set in the exterior wall above the primary entrance adds a decorative touch to this otherwise plain but extremely well-crafted 30' x 44' building. The relatively unaltered exterior retains its original weatherboard, windows and eight stone piers (infilled with concrete in the 1940s) on which it stands. Interior alterations consist of the installation of modern paneling over the original wainscot and other wall surfaces, and the installation of electric lights and a gas furnace. Overall the building substantially retains its historic integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. A small, frame outhouse near the church, constructed in 1912, also retains integrity and is counted as contributing.

ELABORATION:

The setting of Richland Christian Church remains relatively pastoral. The church is associated with a small cemetery that predates it. The yard contains several mature trees. In addition to the outhouse, a cistern with a hand pump is also nearby. To the south, Richland Creek from which the church takes its name flows through a landscape of gentle hills. Ultimately, the owner plans to let the buildings be moved as the last option to assure their continued preservation.

Exterior: The symmetrical primary façade has a transomed, slightly recessed central entrance flanked by 2/2 sash. Each opening is capped with a segmentally arched, molded hood. (Figure 1) A two-light transom above the entrance is similarly arched. The original six panel front door is present but has been sheathed with plywood.¹ Narrow framed inset panels in the door jamb create the slightly recessed entrance. A rectangular wooden sign with thin metal lettering is mounted on the wall just above the front door. Some of the letters have fallen, but the sign reads: RICHLAND CHRISTIAN CHURCH, ESTABLISHED 1870. A tall, slender cross attached to the left side of the sign extends above it slightly and a small painted red heart is between the cross and the "R". Centered between the sign and the apex of the gable is an intricate, jigsawn trefoil within a circle. The circle is approximately three feet in diameter. (Figure 2) This elaborate element is set-in and surrounded by the building's weatherboard cladding.

General building characteristics include 9½" wide watertable boards, drip cap, 9" wide frieze boards, bed mold at the frieze/soffit junction, closed soffit creating an approximately one foot overhang, fascia, and crown mold just below the asphalt shingled roof.

The east and west sides are virtually mirror images. Seven stone piers are in-filled with cement blocks and three nearly equally spaced 2/2 segmental windows with hoods are on each side. Four-and-one-quarter inch corner boards are topped with simple flat capitals below the frieze board. Instead of simply overlapping at the wall junctures, corner board joints are filled with strips of 5/8" quarter-round. Consequently, all corners have slightly rounded edges.

The north gable end has two openings. One is a windowless five-panel door four feet from the northwest corner and the other is a small, recently cut attic access near the gable point.

The window and door hoods consist of five visible elements on a base frame. Their total height is approximately five inches. Layers of quarter inch wood serve as tops and bottoms. Beginning at the

¹ A church view showing the original door without the sheathing is in A Pictorial History of the Kingdom of Callaway (The Fulton Sun, Fulton, MO, 1991), p. 41.

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Richland Christian Church
Callaway County, MO

bottom is a 1¼" plain board, a 1¾" crown mold, and a ½" quarter round. All parts are curved to match the segmental arches. (Figure 1)

Interior: The church interior consists of a single rectangular room with an arched ceiling. By design or coincidence, the arched ceiling complements the segmental windows and transom. In the middle of the room, two stove pipe hole covers in the ceiling indicate where the original heating stoves had been vented. The stoves were removed in the 1940s and a propane gas furnace was added in the southeast corner.² A red carpet runner extends from the entrance door to the pulpit area. Similar carpet upholsters the approximately one foot high rostrum platform at the north end.

Original 6" pine boards run the length of the room from north to south. The millwork and window enframements have been painted dark brown. Interior window tops and transoms are rectangular with segmental upper glass panes. The space between the rectangular sash and the segmental panes is filled with wood. The original 6½" window and door casings are intact. (Figure 3) The front door has been clad on both sides with ¼" plywood. Its casing has an additional 1" x 2-1/2" flat board attached at the outside edge, making the casing 7½" wide and 3½" thick. This deeper casing allows for some of the extra depth of the door jamb for the small framed panels.

The ceiling consists of 4'x4' framed panels of a Masonite-type material which also covers the walls above a chair rail just below the windows. Paneling has been added over the original wainscot. (Floor plan - Figure 4)

Most of the interior changes involving composition board were made in about 1969 or 1970, in preparation for the church's centennial celebration. This material was added above the chair rail to cover the cracking plaster and paneling was applied over the wainscot.³ New baseboard was probably installed at the same time. In order to more easily attach the upper wall covering, squared-off interior window cornices were removed.⁴ Aluminum storm windows have been added to the exterior. These windows somewhat disrupt the segmental appearance of the openings but are easily removed. A view of the front (south) facade of the church, before the addition of storm windows and the plywood covering on the front door, is pictured in A Pictorial History of the Kingdom of Callaway.⁵

Because the exterior changes have been so minor, the building looks very much as it did in 1873. Inside, wall surfaces have been covered and there have been other changes but virtually all of them date from the 1940s. The changes include installation of an LP gas furnace and electric "school house" type lights in 1945.⁶ Frances Dunlap Heron described the building's 1873 appearance in her father's biography, Here Comes Elijah: "Through the front door, which opened directly on to the outside, he entered the big rectangular room. He sat in one of the homemade oak pews and contemplated for a while the arched ceiling. Then he counted the eight windows, three on the east, three on the west, and one on each side of the front door. A door at the northwest corner opened into the back yard. The floor was of six-inch boards..... The aisle running north from the front door ended in a step up onto a platform against the

² Interview with Pauline Shiverdecker, January, 2000, Fulton, MO

³ Shiverdecker, interview January 2000.

⁴ Shiverdecker, interview August 5, 2000.

⁵ A Pictorial History of the Kingdom of Callaway (The Fulton Sun, Fulton, MO, 1991), p. 41.

⁶ I. Stanley Williams, "An Annotated History - The Christian Churches of Callaway County Missouri", May 1, 1965, p. 256.

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**Richland Christian Church
Callaway County, MO**

center of the north wall. Center front of the platform was a light-colored wooden stand, homemade like the seats ...”7

Constructed in 1912, the outhouse is a small, shed-roofed building measuring 9½' east-west by 5' north-south. A privacy wall attached to the southeast corner extends eastward. Another privacy wall (no longer intact) was attached to the southwest corner and extended westward. The outhouse is constructed from six primary tree-posts of which four are located in the corners of the west compartment and two in the northeast and southeast corners of the east compartment. Horizontal 2x4s are attached to the posts. The building is clad with vertical wide tongue and groove boards. Rafter ends are visible on the north and south sides below the corrugated metal roofing. Doors are made of planks held together by interior “z” braces. Simple diamond-shaped pieces of wood hold the doors shut; hooks are on the inside. Two small window openings are in the south elevation; the west opening has a single light sash attached on the interior. The front and top boards with square holes and modern style toilet seats are intact in both compartments.

The cistern and pump were added near the southwest corner of the church in the same year that the outhouse was built, 1912.

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Richland Christian Church
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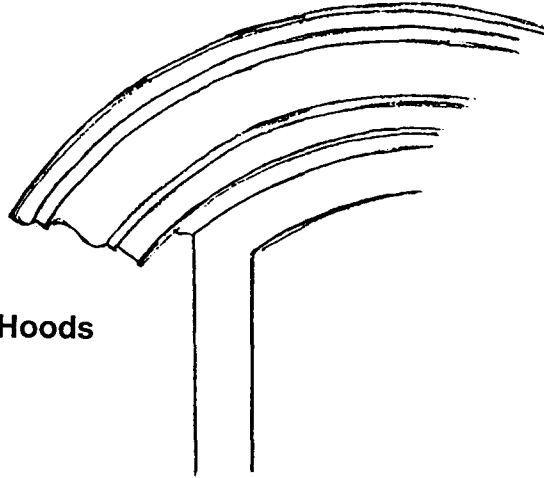
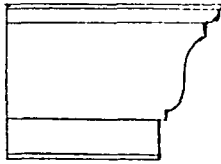


Figure 1. Window Hoods

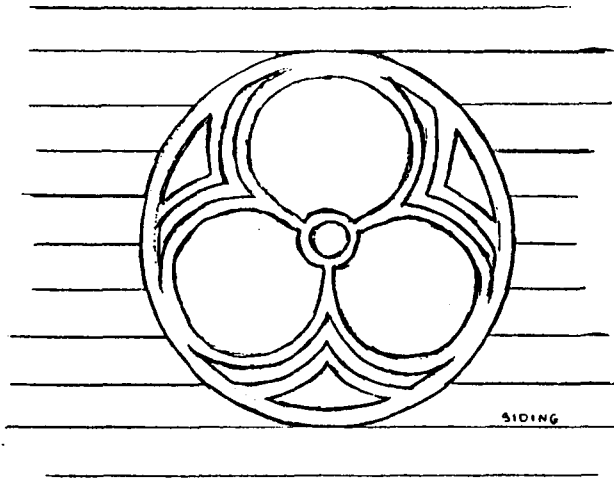


Figure 2. Trefoil

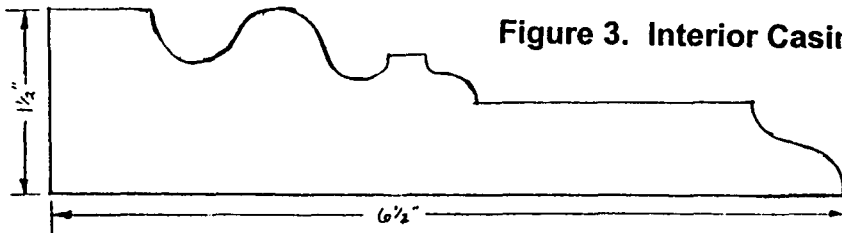


Figure 3. Interior Casing

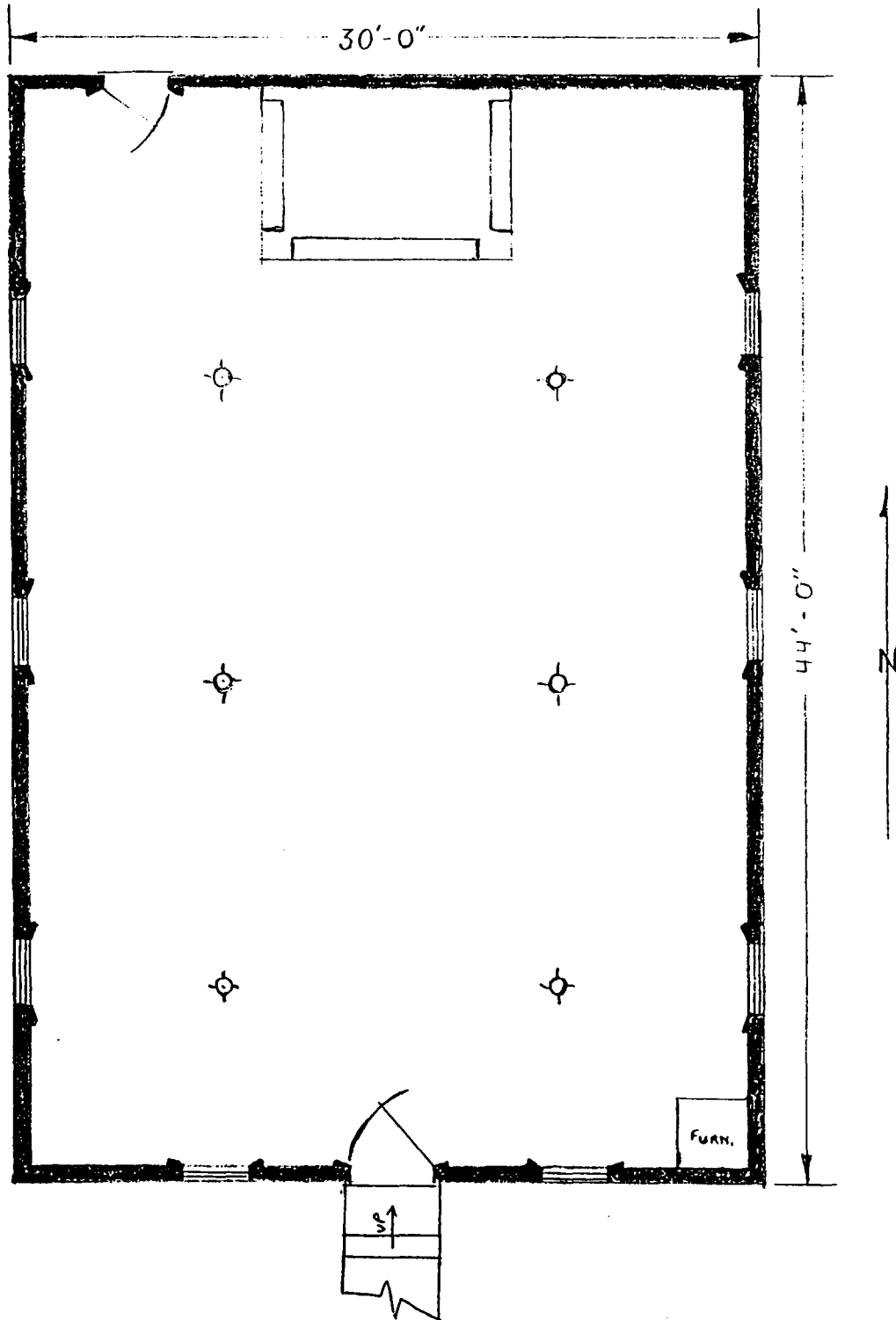
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Richland Christian Church
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Figure 4. Floor Plan

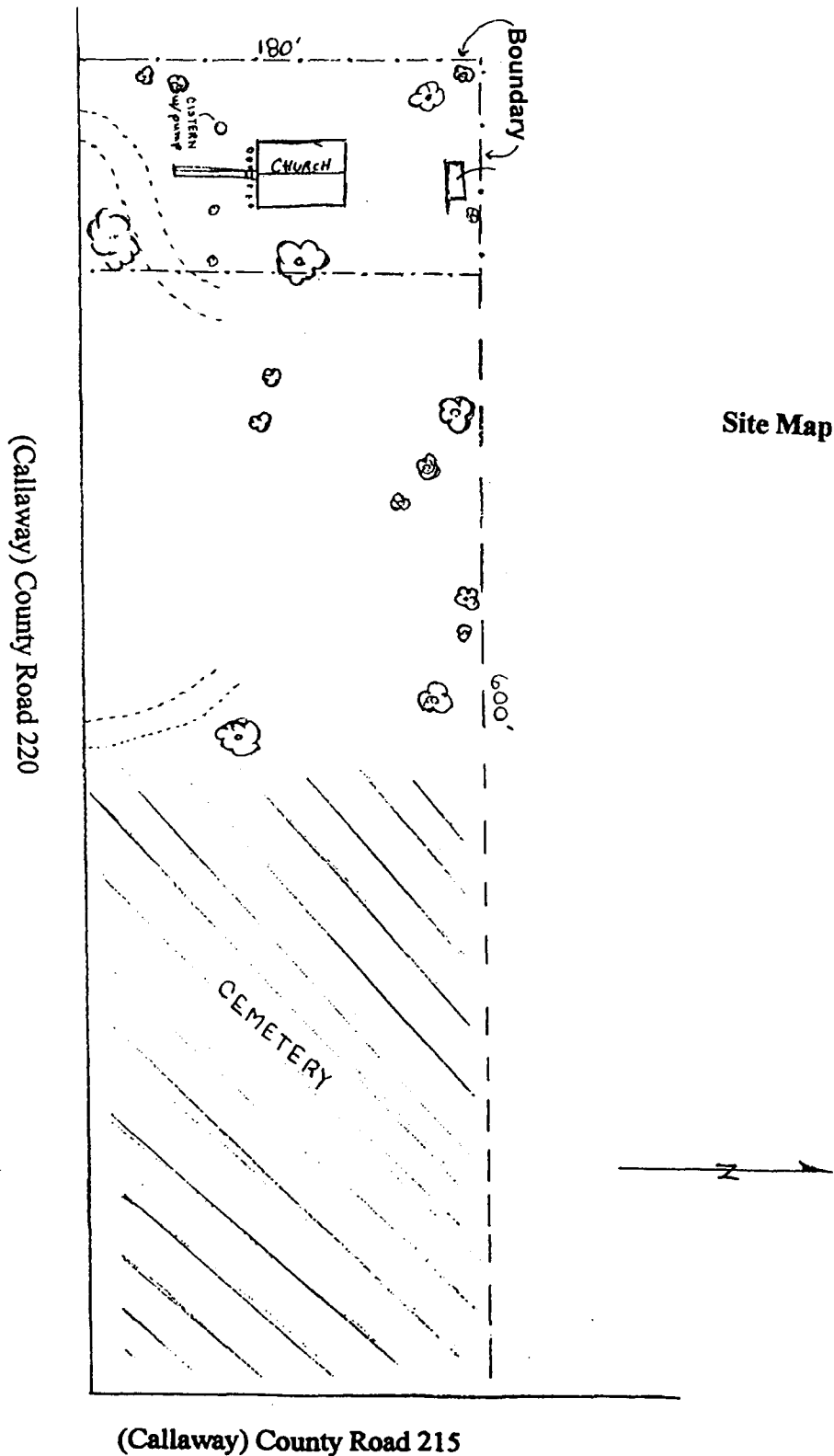


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Callaway County, MO



Site Map

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Richland Christian Church
Callaway County, MO

SUMMARY:

The Richland Christian Church, located along a county road approximately four miles southwest of Kingdom City in Callaway County, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for Architecture. Constructed in 1873, the building at 5301 County Road 220 exemplifies the vernacular gable-end church property type, of which it is a particularly fine and well-preserved example with uncommon rounded, Italianate style hoods over its windows and primary entrance. Local records indicate that these hoods were nonexistent on the 33 other identified 19th century rural church buildings in Callaway County, and apparently they were seldom used on rural churches throughout Missouri. Common characteristics of the gable-end church property type represented by the Richland Christian Church include wood frame construction, a front facing gable roof, a rectangular floor plan, and – with the exception of the bold hoods and an intricate trefoil in the front gable – modest architectural ornamentation. Within Callaway County, Richland Christian Church is the fourth oldest extant religious building, the oldest remaining Christian Church and the only church building of any type with Italianate window and door hoods. The presence of Italianate features may suggest that the building was designed by an architect. In form, construction, and details, the Richland Christian Church is a very good and intact example of a common type of simple 19th century religious meeting house constructed to serve small, close-knit rural congregations. Significance is local and the period of significance is the date of construction, 1873.

CHURCH HISTORY:

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) came to Missouri primarily through emigrants from Kentucky. The first Christian Church in Missouri was the Salt Creek Church in Howard County, organized in 1819. By the mid-1830s there were at least 25 congregations of "Christians" in Missouri, with approximately 1,200 members.⁸ The first church organized by the denomination in Callaway County was the Antioch Christian Church, in 1828.⁹

Plans for organizing the Richland Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) began with a meeting at the Miller Schoolhouse in the early 1870s. The meeting was led by Elder D. M. Grandfield of the First Christian Church of Fulton, Missouri.¹⁰ The exact date of this founding meeting is unknown. A sign on the church shows 1870 as the year of founding, but this date is probably too early. The church was probably organized in the fall of 1872.¹¹ In fact, the 1884 History of Callaway County reported that the Richland Christian Church was organized in 1872, with some 25 members.¹² The earliest newspaper mention of church organization in the area was October 18, 1872: "An interesting revival is in progress at Miller's school house, in this county, under the preaching of that popular minister, Elder D. M. Grandfield. At latest dates there had been 32 additions to the church, and the meeting is progressing with renewed interest."¹³

On February 8, 1872, William H. and Martha H. Trimble deeded about 2.5 acres of farmland to the Richland Christian Church.¹⁴ The building constructed on the site in 1873 is the nominated property, which stands today much as it appeared when completed.

⁸ Griffith A. Hamlin, A Heritage of Frontier Discipleship (The Ovid Bell Press, Fulton, MO, 1983), pp. 3-4.

⁹ I. S. Williams, p. 6.

¹⁰ I. S. Williams, p. 252.

¹¹ I. S. Williams, p. 252. Obituary of Mrs. Miller.

¹² History of Callaway County, Missouri (National Historical Company, St. Louis, MO, 1884), p. 944.

¹³ John B. Williams, publisher, Fulton (Missouri) Telegraph October 18, 1872, p. 3.

¹⁴ Warranty deed: Trimble to Richland Christian Church, Feb. 8, 1872.

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Richland Christian Church
Callaway County, MO

The Fulton (Missouri) Telegraph kept the community informed as the construction project progressed. On April 11, 1873: "Contract Let - The contract for the building of a new Christian church, near the cross-roads, on Richland creek, in this county, has been awarded to Messrs. Wiggs & Russell, of this city, at \$1,387, which is to be completed by the first of August. The size of the church will be 30 x 44 feet, and to be finished with segment windows and arched ceiling."¹⁵ On September 5: "Dedication - The Christian Church just completed at Richland 7 miles north of Fulton, will be dedicated on the second Lord's day in September, the 14th.....public are cordially invited to attend."¹⁶ On September 19: "The building is said to be quite a nice and comfortable one, and quite an ornament to the neighborhood."¹⁷ In the same story, the Telegraph reported that the dedication and picnic had been highly successful. The church was dedicated by Reverend E. B. Cake of Mexico, Missouri.¹⁸ The church was re-dedicated nearly a hundred years later on September 13, 1970, by Reverend J. H. Stidham, minister of the Richland Christian Church of McCredie, Missouri.¹⁹

The earliest records of this congregation were destroyed in a fire, but this was the only building ever constructed to house the Richland Christian Church congregation.²⁰ Information about the church can be found in a book entitled Here Comes Elijah by Frances Dunlap Heron. The book, a biography, is based primarily on letters written by the author's father, Elijah Scott Dunlap (1866-1944). Among other things, the book contains references about redecorating, the construction of the outhouse, the installation of the well and pump, the addition of lighting improvements, and the location of Sunday school classes and the choir. Following are excerpts:

Location of choir and classes:

"In the space between the rostrum and the wall on either side were pews placed sideways. The choir was assembling in that section on the east, which contained also a pedal organ."²¹

"In the opening session, the children sat on the front rows, the adults behind them . . . The little folks from two to fourteen retired to the northwest corner of the church..."²²

"The young folks' class...occupied pews halfway from the front on the west side of the aisle."²³
Lighting improvements:

In 1903, "Visibility was much improved by lamps of the bracket reflector type attached beside the windows in the east and west walls. The center aisle was aglow with three hanging luminaries that Elijah pulled down on a chain to fill with kerosene and to light. On each corner of the rostrum a post supported a lighted lamp. Red Brussels carpet ran down the aisle, around and over the rostrum."²⁴

15 Fulton (Missouri) Telegraph April 11, 1873, p. 3.

16 Fulton (Missouri) Telegraph September 5, 1873, p. 3.

17 Fulton (Missouri) Telegraph September 19, 1873, p. 3.

18 Program: "Richland Christian Church, McCredie, Missouri, Centennial 1870-1970," September 13, 1970, pp. 2, 5.

19 Fulton (Missouri) Sun-Gazette, September 11-12, 1970, p. 3.

20 I. S. Williams, p. 257.

21 Heron, p. 55.

22 Heron, p. 99.

23 Heron, p. 100.

24 Heron, p. 112.

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Richland Christian Church
Callaway County, MO

In 1909, unsatisfactory short lived acetylene lights were installed. "Acetylene soon gave way to Blaugas, to the improvement of evening worship and of Elijah's composure." 25

Preparations for the 1912 county convention (when new wallpaper, paint, carpet and new mission oak pulpit were added along with exterior Improvements):

"Outdoors Papa turned excavator and carpenter, supervising the digging of a well in front of the church and the building of other accommodations to the rear. Before 1912, a parishioner usually just went without. He did without water because there was none. He did without the primitive facilities at the corner of the yard except in extreme emergency because they were grotesquely uncomfortable in balmy weather, and well-nigh impossible in case of snow. There was no roof....Thanks to Papa's engineering, however, there arose a trim, four-square structure, complete with Montgomery-Ward catalogs, that was soothing to patronize and a pride to the congregation." 26

In 1941, the congregation signed up for rural electrification with a \$5 fee; wiring and fixtures were installed four years later, in 1945.²⁷ Later improvements were described by Pauline Shiverdecker, a current member of the congregation. In the 1940s, the two wood or coal heating stoves were replaced by a propane gas furnace. The stone foundation piers were infilled with concrete at about this time, providing additional support and reducing wintertime drafts. Most of the interior changes were made in about 1969 or 1970 as the building was spruced up in preparation for the celebration of its centennial.

The Richland Christian Church organization survived until the end of June, 1999. When the membership had dwindled to four and the minister retired, it was decided to discontinue services. Unable to maintain the building, the members considered demolishing it rather than watch it fall into disrepair or objectionable use. They later consented to having the building nominated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as part of an effort to save it. If feasible, moving the church to a compatible location might be a future step, with the present site then used as an extension of the cemetery.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The founders of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) believed that each congregation should be independent and free to interpret the scripture.²⁸ Local congregations were also to take care of their own affairs, financial as well as religious. The organizers of the Richland Christian Church, primarily rural farmers and their families, were typical of Christian Church congregations in rural Missouri in the late 19th century. Their needs were relatively simple and the gable front building they selected for their congregation was a familiar type at the time of its construction in 1873. Mainly, it had to be large enough to accommodate the anticipated congregation over the next several years and its design had to properly represent its purpose as a church. They needed a building that they could take pride in but that was not too showy. The fact that it remains extant 127 years later suggests that the Richland Christian Church was a highly satisfactory building in all respects.

For a few years before the church building was constructed, the group met at the Miller Schoolhouse and probably individual's homes.²⁹ This was a common practice. The congregation of the First Christian Church in Fulton, for example, had been organized for thirteen years before acquiring a church building.

25 Heron, p. 174.

26 Heron, p. 189.

27 I. S. Williams, p. 256.

28 Heron, p. 29.

29 Heron, p. 19.

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Richland Christian Church
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Their functions had been conducted in private homes and public buildings. In 1839, the Fulton congregation even hosted a state convention, probably by using rooms in the county courthouse.³⁰ The use of public buildings as well as private homes was a common occurrence in early Christian Church history. Leroy Garrett wrote of an early minister, Samuel Rogers, who often used the courthouse or another public building for meetings in towns. For meetings outdoors in the countryside, planks or logs were simply arranged for seating. When the weather was inclement, larger cabins or barns were used for meetings.³¹

In the early years of the Christian Church movement, the entire church operation was intended to be carried out in simple fashion without the encumbrance of a church bureaucracy.³² This desire for simplicity affected the architecture of late 19th and early 20th century Christian Church buildings. Regardless of a congregation's wealth, the buildings tended to be as simple and functional as the Richland Christian Church, or perhaps even more so. The extent of ornamentation was related more to philosophy than to financial capability.³³

Until 1911, the individual Christian Church congregations were largely on their own for paying for all facilities and preachers.³⁴ In 1873, the Richland Christian Church congregation secured a loan to fund construction of the church. By the end of the dedication day, sufficient funds had been donated to pay off the loan with money to spare.³⁵

The church which resulted from the necessity for a building, the ideals of simplicity, financial constraints and the generally used church style at the time, resulted in the Richland Christian Church fitting very well the Missouri Historic Preservation Program's typology for rural vernacular churches: "Missouri's rural vernacular churches are generally modest frame structures, traditionally painted white, with little ornament.....Always gable roofed.....Many have no steeple or belfry.....Primary entry is located in the gable end and consists of either one or two centered doors.....Fenestration and architectural detail is symmetrical."³⁶ All of these characteristics are present on the Richland Christian Church with one possible variation, paint color. Originally the building may have been completely white (as at present), but a 1913 photograph shows a light colored church with trim painted a darker, contrasting color. Windows, corner boards and the trefoil background were all accented with a darker color. In 1940 the church was white with dark green trim. When the interior was remodeled for the centennial in 1970, the exterior was painted a traditional white.³⁷

On a national basis, Jennings and Gottfried discuss American vernacular churches in very similar terms. They report that the gable-end church was widely used in rural areas, the form being suitable for many denominations. The buildings often were sited in an open area where their simple forms made a distinct but pleasing contrast with the natural surroundings. Most of the churches were frame, clad with weatherboard, shingles or board and batten siding. The gable roof was a key element. The gable indicated the truss type and ceiling shape and possible interior wood ornamentation. The Richland

30 Hamlin, p. 10.

31 Leroy Garrett, The Stone-Campbell Movement (College Press Publishing Company, 1994), p. 201.

32 Heron, p. 95.

33 Pheobe Stanton, Built In The U.S.A., American Buildings From Airports To Zoos (The Preservation Press, Washington, D.C., 1985), p. 140.

34 Heron, p. 182.

35 Fulton (Missouri) Telegraph, September 19, 1873, p. 3.

36 Beverly Fleming, typology for Missouri vernacular rural churches in "Preservation Issues" (Missouri Historic Preservation Program newsletter, Jefferson City, MO, Nov./Dec. 1992), p. 4.

37 Interview with Pauline Shiverdecker by Vicki McDaniel, October 1, 2000.

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Richland Christian Church
Callaway County, MO

Christian Church has arched-braced trusses resulting in its arched ceiling, which was one of the most frequently used types. The interior plan and furniture are also described. The basilica plan was the most common arrangement, with a center aisle creating a strong axis from the entrance to the pulpit area.³⁸ The gable-end form as described by Jennings and Gottfried applies to the Richland Christian Church.

In another study, Peter Williams described vernacular church buildings of the Midwest during the period of 1850 to 1890. Depending on the area's degree of "civilization," small, frame church buildings began popping up across this prairie region. Without regard to denomination or ethnicity, these properties had only slight variations of style or form. According to Williams, these church buildings were usually designed by the clergy or laity, perhaps drawing on memories of their original homeland for a few decorative features. The churches were generally constructed by the members in the community. Typically, these buildings measured about 30 feet by 80 feet, had gable roofs, were sided with weatherboard, and could accommodate from 100 to 300 worshippers. Nearly all were painted white. Interiors were simple. Heat was provided by wood or coal stoves and illumination was from kerosene or oil lamps.³⁹

The minimal ornamentation on the Richland Christian Church is in the Italianate style, and is expressed in the rounded hoods over windows and the primary entrance. Because the building is otherwise relatively plain, the impact of the hoods—a hallmark of Italianate architecture regardless of whether they are highly elaborated or relatively plain—is amplified. These hoods are unique in Callaway County. Of 33 rural 19th century religious properties in the county, Richland is the only one with segmentally arched windows and hoods. Most vernacular church buildings in Missouri either have flat head or, perhaps, Gothic windows. A circular window is sometimes present in the upper front gable end of Italianate buildings, and the jigsawed trefoil in the front gable of the Richland Christian Church is suggestive of such a window. Except for its shaped windows with hoods and a trefoil, the Callaway County building exemplifies the majority of rural church buildings of its period in appearance as well as size.

The Italianate style was most popular in the United States from about 1840 through 1885, having begun in England as an element of the Picturesque movement. Rambling, informal farmhouses (with square towers) were originally emphasized by the movement. In America, the Italian prototypes were modified and adapted.⁴⁰ Gowans suggested that a prime influence on country church buildings in America was, appropriately enough, the country churches of rural Italy.⁴¹ With country churches as an originating influence, it is appropriate that Italianate features are present on this rural example even though the style was apparently very rarely used on religious buildings. In A Field Guide to American Architecture, Carole Rifkind devotes a lengthy section to ecclesiastical architecture but does not mention Italianate styling. Instead, the Gothic Revival style is the focus of both periods (1840-1870 and 1870-1900).⁴² Fitting the pattern, the Gothic Revival style was popular for church architecture in Callaway County.

No evidence has been found to suggest that Richland Christian Church was designed by an architect. There is a local perception that professional input was involved but it is mainly based on the building's fairly high quality construction and the presence of Italianate detailing. The building was constructed by a contractor, Wiggs & Russell, who may have been solely responsible for the niceties. The extent of labor

38 Jan Jennings and Herbert Gottfried, American Vernacular Interior Architecture 1870-1940 (Iowa State University Press, Ames, IA, 1993), pp. 393, 395, 398, 400.

39 Peter W. Williams, Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States (University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1997), pp. 212-213.

40 Virginia and Lee McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1992), p. 212.

41 Alan Gowans, Styles and Types of North American Architecture (HarperCollins Publishers, New York, 1992), p. 189.

42 Rifkind, pp. 117-164.

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donated by members of the congregation is unknown. Although it is somewhat unusual for contrasting colors to have been used (as depicted in a circa 1913 photo) in the paint scheme rather than overall white, the original building almost certainly was painted white.

If an architect was involved, the most likely candidate was M. Fred Bell. Many designed buildings constructed in Callaway County in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were Bell's work. Bell, who became the resident architect in Fulton, arrived there in 1871, two years before the Richland Christian Church was constructed.⁴³ A prominent member of the community, the prolific Bell offered (in an 1882 advertisement) to design churches and schools for half of his usual fee.⁴⁴ In 1884 Bell designed the First Christian Church in Fulton (razed in 1911). Wiggs & Russell, the Richland Christian Church contractor, was also the contractor for the First Christian Church in Fulton. During Bell's rather lengthy (1871-1929) career, his involvement in local projects was not always acknowledged in published accounts. Apparently it was so typical for Bell to design local buildings that in many cases his name was not mentioned in published construction reports. Whether Bell designed the Richland Christian Church may never be determined but the building's uncommon window hoods and other nice touches at least suggest the possibility.

The Richland Christian Church functioned as a typical rural religious building. A search of available literature indicates that it is the oldest standing Christian Church in Callaway County and the fourth oldest religious building of any type in the county. It is also the only church building in the county with Italianate window hoods. The presence of Italianate style detailing, popular at the time of its construction in 1873, set it apart architecturally. Except for minor changes as noted within the sanctuary, Richland Christian Church today remains evocative of a circa 1870s rural church building in central Missouri, with a touch of class.

⁴³ Fulton (Missouri) Telegraph, April 11, 1873, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Fulton (Missouri) Telegraph, April 21, 1882, p. 1.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

The Richland Christian Church is located near the intersection of County Roads 215 and 220, approximately four miles southwest of Kingdom City, and seven miles north-northwest of Fulton, in Callaway County. The southeast corner of the nominated property is 512 feet west of the northwest corner of the intersection of County Roads 215 and 220, at the property line adjacent to County Road 220. From this point continue west 88 feet along the right-of-way of County Road 220 to the west property line; then proceed north 180 feet to the north property line; then proceed east 88 feet to the east property line; then proceed south 180 feet to the point of beginning. The boundary is defined visually by manmade elements on three sides although only County Road 220 along the south edge of the tract is relatively permanent; wire fences mark the west and north boundaries.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary is drawn to include the immediate churchyard with its two contributing properties but not an associated cemetery east of the church. It is likely that the church and outhouse, the only buildings on the original 2.5 acre tract originally deeded to the congregation by the William H. Trimble family eventually will be moved. The church stands in the approximate center of the tract.

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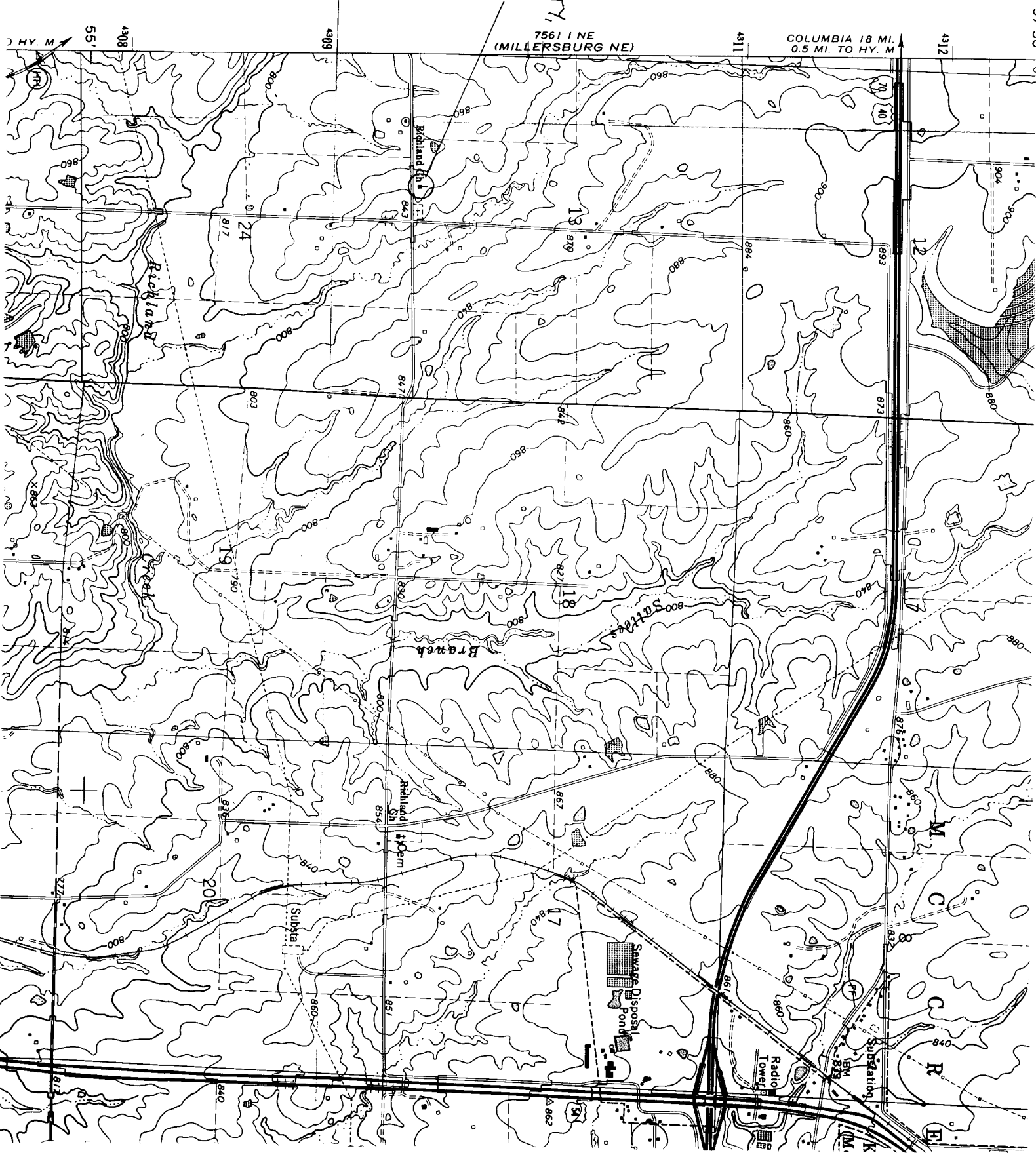
**Richland Christian Church
Callaway County, MO**

Photographs: The following information is the same for all photographs except as noted:

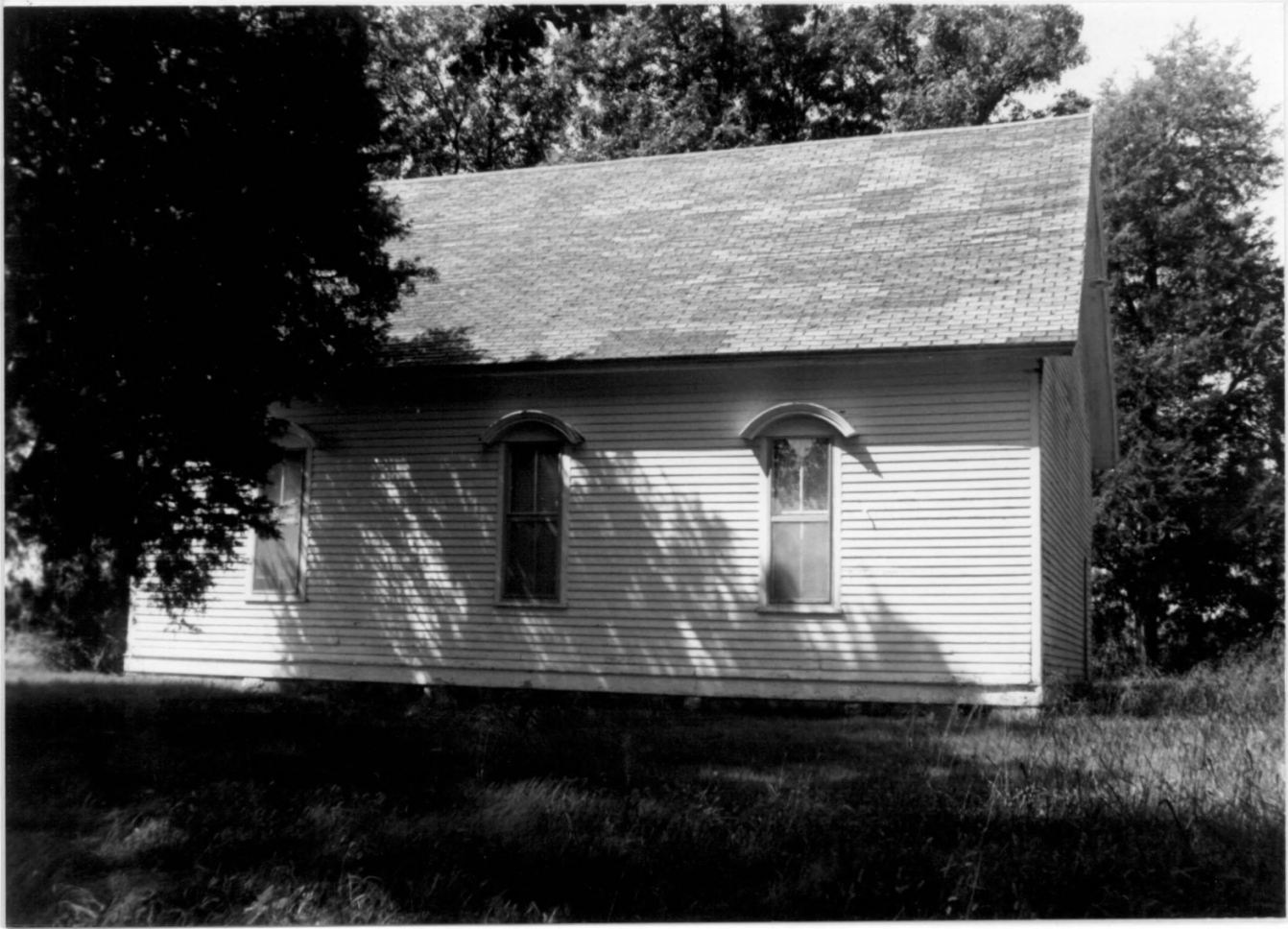
Richland Christian Church
Kingdom City vicinity, Callaway County, Missouri
Photographer: Vicki McDaniel
Date: September 2, 2000
Location of negatives: Vicki McDaniel, 5 Bartley Lane, Fulton, MO 65251

- #1. Primary (south) façade, facing north.
- #2. East elevation, facing west-southwest.
- #3. West and south elevations, facing northeast.
- #4. North and west elevations, facing southeast.
- #5. South and east elevations with outhouse, facing northwest.
- #6. South and east elevations with Sunday school classes, facing northwest (circa 1913).
- #7. Interior view, facing northeast.
- #8. Interior view, facing southwest.

RIGHLAND
CHRISTIAN
CHURCH
CALLAWAY COUNTY,
MISSOURI
DTM REFS
15/587320 E
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Richland Christian Church

5031 County Road 220

Kingdom City

Callaway County

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Files

2001/CY001/MR

Relocation photographs

Date: 2002









EXTRA
PHOTOS

2 KODAK 5053 TMY 3 KODAK 5053 TMY 4 KODAK 5053 TMY 5 KODAK 5053 TMY



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3A



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KODAK 5053 TMY 7 KODAK 5053 TMY 8 KODAK 5053 TMY 9 KODAK 5053 TMY 10 KODAK 5053 TMY



6A



7A



8A



9A



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19A



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21A



22A



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