

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: 1137 West Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Parkville

vicinity: N/A

state: MO county: Platte

code: 165

zip code: 64152

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>      </u> buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

=====  
4. State/Federal Agency Certification  
=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets      does not meet the National Register Criteria.      See continuation sheet.

*G. Tracy Mehan III*

13 July 1992

Signature of certifying official

Date

G. Tracy Mehan III, Director

Department of Natural Resources and State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property      meets      does not meet the National Register criteria.      See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====  
5. National Park Service Certification  
=====

I, hereby certify that this 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):                                     

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic:           RELIGION                                    

Sub:           Religious Facility                                    

Current :           RELIGION                                    

Sub:           Religious Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Late Gothic Revival

Other Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: foundation Limestone roof ASPHALT  
walls Limestone other Shingle

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Local.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance: ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK  
ARCHITECTURE

Period(s) of Significance: 1907-1942

Significant Dates : 1907

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown/Breen, Charles Patrick

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X See continuation sheet.

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

See continuation sheet.

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 -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>354425</u>	<u>4339550</u>	B	___	___	___
C	___	___	___	D	___	___	___

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

The boundary of the Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church is shown as a dashed line on the accompanying map entitled "Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church, Boundary Map".

Boundary Justification: \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

The boundary includes all of the city lots, and parcels of lots, that have been historically associated with the Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church.

=====

11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Deon K. Wolfenbarger

Organization: Three Gables Preservation Date: July 1, 1992

Street & Number: 9550 N.E. Cookingham Drive Telephone: 816/792-1275

City or Town: Kansas City State: MO ZIP: 64157

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 1

**SUMMARY:**

The Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church is a two-story, gable roof church constructed of native limestone and located high on a hill in Parkville, Platte County, Missouri. A castellated tower on the northeast corner and projecting bays on the south deviate from the basic rectangular plan. The ground floor contains a dining room and kitchen, and is entered from a central door. The sanctuary is reached from steps on the exterior of the east side of the church, which lead to the tower. Window sizes and shapes vary - the most notable is a stained glass set on the east elevation, which consists of a paired set topped with a semi-circular transom. The transom extends into the wood shingled gable end, and a recessed semi-circular arch of shingles follows the curvature of the transom. Concrete steps lead from Elm Street up the steep lot to a level area, which contains the church and gravel drive and parking. The southeastern slopes of the lot are heavily wooded, and large deciduous trees line the western edge as well, along West Street. The church retains its historical integrity in location, setting, association, feeling, design, materials, and workmanship.

**ELABORATION:**

The Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church in Parkville, Missouri, was constructed in 1907 of native limestone, quarried locally. The two-story church is set on the southeast face of a steep bluff, which overlooks the town of Parkville. The approximate half-acre church site rises in elevation from its border with Elm Street on the southeast. Concrete steps rise lead from Elm Street, on the southwest corner of the property, to a level plateau which contains the church, parking lot, and small grassy area. A gravel drive leads from West Street, the western boundary of the church site, behind the church on the north to a small gravel parking area on the east side of the church. The southeastern slope contains a thick grove of native deciduous trees, and the western edge of the property, along West Street, is lined with mature deciduous trees, somewhat obscuring the view of the church in the late spring and summer. A church sign, set within a rock garden, is located directly in front (south) of the church on a slope.

The plan of the church departs somewhat from a basic rectangle. The composition shingled, side gable roof of the main portion of the church has a central wall dormer on the front (south) facade. This dormer corresponds with a two-story projecting central bay which contains the ground level entry door. A lower gable roof

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 2

on the west end of the building is one bay wide and recessed on the front facade. However, on the rear (north) elevation, the plane of the wall and the roof is uninterrupted. The gable ends of the roof and dormer have square wood shingles. On the east gable end, the shingles are arranged in a semi-circular, recessed pattern, following the curve of the top of the stained glass window. The west gable end contains an interior wall chimney.

A three-story, castellated tower is on the northeast corner of the church. The tower is nearly square, approximately 10 feet by 11 feet, and while it projects from the east elevation, its surface is flush with the rear (west) elevation of the building. The tower contains the entrance to the sanctuary on the second story, as well as a men's restroom with an outside east entrance only on the ground level. The double wood entry doors are reached from the south by concrete steps, with a stone balustrade capped with concrete. The third story of the tower contains paired, tall and narrow wood louvered vents set within round arched openings.

A high level of craftsmanship is evident in the masonry, which features random coursed ashlar, quarry-faced limestone with prominent raised pointing. A cornerstone on the southeast corner bears the inscription "Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church June 29, 1907". The window and door lintels also feature prominent stonework, with nearly all the fenestrations having arched lintels with radiating voussoirs. The rear (north) elevation has four regularly spaced windows on both stories of the main portion of the church (there are no windows on the west side of the tower). The first story windows are four-over-four, double-hung wood sash. The second story windows are stained glass, and are one-over-one, double-hung wood frame. On the west elevation, there are three narrow, one-over-one, double-hung stained glass windows on the second story. The east elevation, which also includes the tower, contains a large stained glass window set in the center of the second story. It features paired, tall rectangular fixed panes, topped with a semi-circular transom above which extends into the shingles of the gable end. The wood shingles above are arranged in a semi-circular pattern and set within a recessed panel, further emphasizing the tops of the window. The east side of the tower also contains a stained glass window on the second story, which is one-over-one, double-hung sash. A simple wood door on the ground level of the tower leads to a men's restroom which was added ca. 1940's; another ground level door on the east elevation leads to storage under the steps.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 3

The front facade has a large, recessed entrance on the ground level, located in the central projecting bay. The double wood doors have wood screen doors. The first floor entrance is flanked by four-over-four, double-hung wood sash windows, and topped with a grouping of three, one-over-one stained glass windows on the second floor. The eastern bay only of the front facade contains another stained glass window on the second floor. The western, recessed bay on the front facade has a tall, narrow four-over-four, double-hung window on each story. All of the windows have simple stone lugsills.

The sanctuary of the Washington Chapel is located on the second floor of the building, and can only be reached by exterior steps leading to the tower. A small vestibule contains a coatrack and table containing the guest register. The walls of the vestibule have textured paint. Double doors provide entry on the northeast corner of the second floor, which contains three rooms. The main sanctuary, approximately 28' by 33', occupies the main section of the church. In the western bay, a small room on the south has a sink and bookshelves. The church piano and overflow seating are also in the western bay, which is divided from the main sanctuary with folding doors (usually kept open).

A semi-circular pulpit area is in the southwest corner of the main sanctuary room. It is a platform, raised three steps above the seating. The pews are arranged in a semi-circular, two-aisle plan, facing the pulpit. The pews themselves are straight, with simple curved ends. The high ceiling is of beaded board, and the linoleum tile floor has carpeted aisles. The cylindrical light fixtures, donated in 1965, hang from the ceiling on metal poles and have crucifix emblems. The floor molding is simple, wide wood, and the walls are smooth plaster.

The stained glass windows are the most prominent features, their patterns being clearly evident on the interior. The oldest window is on the east elevation, and is dedicated to John A. McAfee, one of the founders of Park College. The other windows were installed in 1953, and have the following dedications: the east window in the tower, "Community Youth Club"; on the north elevation, from east to west - "Mrs. Lucy Frazier" - "Charter Members Mrs. William Washington, Mr. & Mrs. Wade Saunders, Andrew Jackson", "First Stewards Louis Nichols, Richard Rogers, Spencer Cave, Robert Carter, Otis Washington, Charlie Brown", "First Trustees George Bolden, Ruben Martin, Allen Little, Arch Brown, Richard Rogers", "Bishops W.H. Miles, Joseph Beebe, I. Lane, N.C. Cleaves, M.F. Jamison, J.A. Hamlett" - "In Memoriam

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

=====

Page 4

George and Kate Bolden" - "Rev. & Mrs. R.A. Simpson"; on the west elevation, from north to south - "In Memory of Alfred & Sarah Johnson by Pansey Stephens & Pearl Mosley" - "In Memory of Vivian Cave Johnson" - "In Memory of Marian E. Brown"; and on the south facade, the grouping of three windows contains a dedication in the center "In Memory of Leonard Clayton 33 Yrs. Steward", which is flanked by "Willing Workers" on the left, and "Morning Glories" on the right. In addition to their prominence due to the effect of the stained glass, the windows are further emphasized by their deeply recessed openings, particularly on the triple windows on the south, which are open to the floor. Within this recess is the American flag, two iron floor candelabra, and a small table for the Communion.

The first floor of the Washington Chapel contains a large dining room with several tables, directly under the main sanctuary. A steel I-beam runs east/west in the center of the room, and is supported by round columns. Double, panelled wood doors on the southwest corner of the dining room lead to a kitchen area with modern cabinets and fixtures, as well as an antique stove. A door on the northeast corner leads to a women's restroom, located in the lower section of the tower. A closet is situated in the southeast corner of the dining room. Circular light fixtures with three bare bulbs are historic, dating from the time of the installation of electricity in the 1910's.

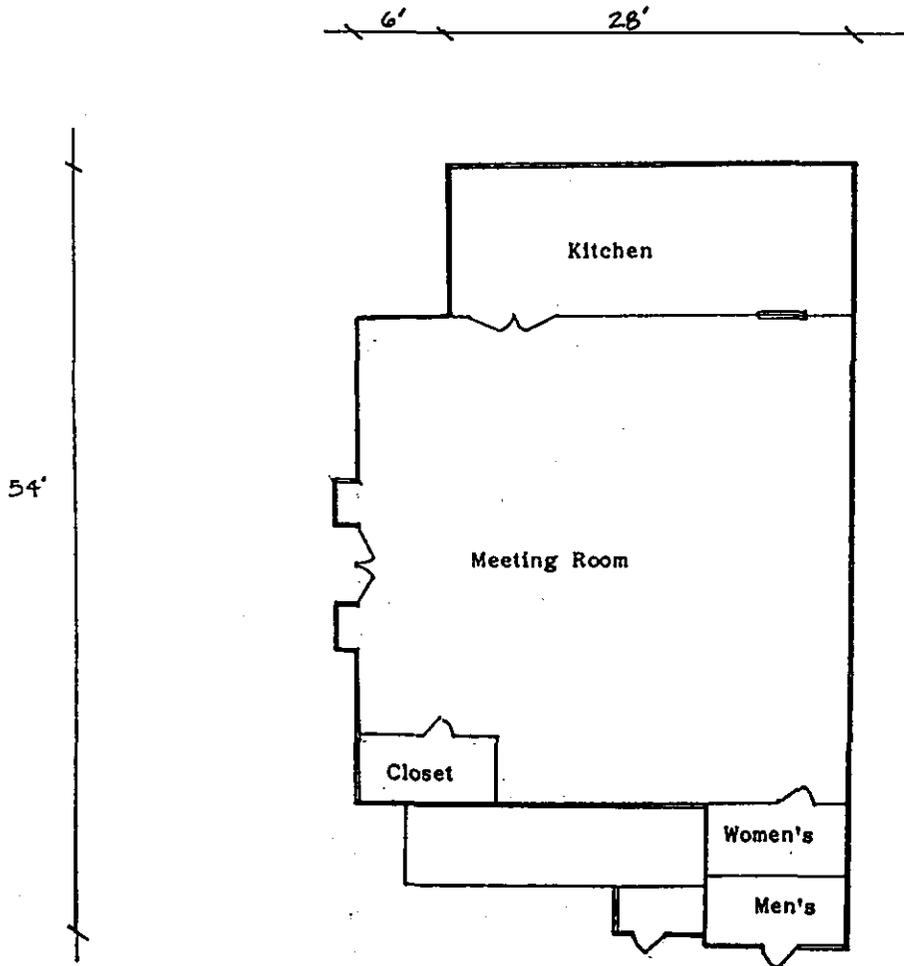
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

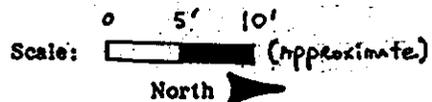
Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 5



FIRST FLOOR

Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church  
1137 West Street  
Parkville, Platte County, Missouri



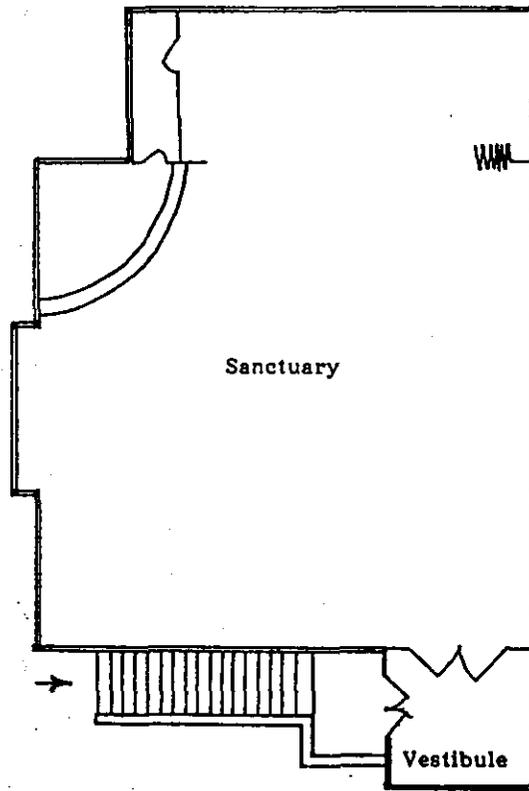
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

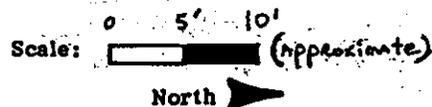
Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 6



SECOND FLOOR

Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church  
1137 West Street  
Parkville, Platte County, Missouri



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8

Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 1

**SUMMARY:**

The Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church in Parkville, Missouri is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK and under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE. As one of two black churches serving Parkville, the Washington Chapel is clearly associated with the historic thriving black community in town. The location and construction of the church is associated with Park College, which had plans for a "Negro Annex" to the college on land it owned in the northwestern portion of Parkville (McAfee, 1938). The construction of the church was supervised by Charles Patrick Breen, the Superintendent of Buildings at Park College, and students at the college provided some of the labor. Members of the church, and its pastors, were leaders in the black community in the Parkville area. Social as well as church-related events were held at the Washington Chapel, providing a focal point for the African American citizens. In the area of ARCHITECTURE, the Washington Chapel is significant as a regional expression of the Late Gothic Revival style, as applied to a vernacular church form. The building material - limestone - and castellated tower are features typical of this style. The church is an excellent representation of limestone construction, and is also significant as an unheralded example of the work of Charles Patrick Breen. Breen was Superintendent of Buildings at Park College for twenty-three years, and was responsible for twelve buildings on campus, all executed in native limestone.

**ELABORATION:**

For several years after the settlement of Clay and Jackson counties to the east and south, the area which was to become Platte County remained Indian territory. However, with the Platte Purchase Treaty, signed in 1836 and ratified in 1837, Platte County was quickly populated with white settlers. It was settled much faster than any other counties in the purchase area. In fact, before the end of 1837, nearly every quarter section was settled, and the county averaged more than twenty inhabitants per square mile (the average in the United States at this time was four and one-half inhabitants per square mile) (History of Clay and Platte Counties, 1885). The reason for the quick settlement of this county was the rich and fertile soil.

Hemp was the staple product of Platte County from its first settlement. Soon afterwards, the South began to look more to Missouri than to Kentucky for its supply of hemp for bagging and rope (Paxton, 1897). Platte County was not only the largest

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

=====

Page 2

producing county of hemp in Missouri, but in 1860, in the entire nation as well (History of Clay and Platte Counties, 1885). During this period, no machinery was invented which superseded the back-breaking labor required, particularly in cleaning the hemp. Hemp production was so arduous, in fact, that it was not possible to grow it without slave labor. Slaves were, therefore, in demand in Platte County.

Prior to the Civil War, the slave population of Missouri was not distributed evenly over the state. More than half could be found in twenty counties along the Missouri River, all of which were leading producers of hemp or tobacco (March, 1967). Platte County's African American population was nearly one-quarter of the county's total population in 1860. In the rest of Missouri at this time, most of the slaves were employed as general farm hands. Only in the farming of hemp and tobacco did systems develop resembling that of the plantation systems of the South (Ibid.).

The hemp industry, which had thriven upon the river shipping demands for rope, and which had been supported by slave labor, collapsed and eventually disappeared in Platte County after the Civil War (McAfee, 1938). Much of the white population moved away, and former slaves drifted into the town of Parkville, looking for work which the community either could not, or did not, supply (Ibid.).

The river site which eventually became the town of Parkville was selected and settled in 1837 by Stephen and David English (History of Clay and Platte Counties, 1885). It was known as English Landing when Colonel George Park bought out the English brothers. Park laid out the town plat in 1844, and was soon involved in several enterprises in the area. One venture was a newspaper, the Parkville Industrial Luminary, noted for its "Free-soil advocacy" (Tipton, 1990). At this time, the western border between Missouri and Kansas was quite volatile over the issue of slavery, and most of the early white settlers of Platte County were Southern. Taking issue to Park's ideas, about two hundred people raided the newspaper office in 1855, throwing the press and type into the Missouri River (Ibid.). George Park left town shortly thereafter, and did not return until after the Civil War.

When Colonel Park returned to the town, he found Parkville in a "hangover from the Civil War" (McAfee, 1938). The community which had been founded upon a regimen of slavery and river

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8

Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 3

traffic had to quickly adjust to accommodate railroads and free labor (Breckon, 1990). Park had attempted to secure a railroad for Parkville before the War, but was unsuccessful at that time. After the War, however, two important ventures were started which saw to assuring the small community's future. In addition to finally obtaining a railroad line, George Park persuaded Dr. John A. McAfee to come to Parkville to establish a Presbyterian college. In 1875, McAfee and seventeen students from Highland, Kansas arrived, and began conducting school in Colonel Park's hotel building in town (Tipton, 1990). From this date on, the college would play a key role in the development of the town of Parkville.

To the community of African Americans living in and around Parkville, the establishment of Park College meant, finally, an opportunity for employment. Both George Park, as Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and John McAfee, as President, believed that Park College should work with local black residents, many of whom were recently freed slaves (Breckon, 1990). Even though Park College utilized a student work program, there were still job opportunities available for black workers. Students and laborers at Park College cleared the land, constructed buildings, and raised food.

Beyond providing jobs, both Park and McAfee took a greater interest in Parkville's black community. Dependable workers at the College were deeded property by Park, as he owned a great deal of land around Parkville. Numerous quit claim deeds were filed (Ibid.). Steve Carter (a member of the Washington Chapel) supervised the construction of homes on these lots.

Dr. McAfee became interested in the idea of higher education for African Americans, primarily through his contact with Father Blatchely. Father Blatchely had built an institution of higher education for the recently emancipated slaves, just across the Missouri River in the Quindaro area of Kansas. McAfee used to ferry across the river to visit with the Father, who impressed the first president of Park College of the great need in this field (McAfee, 1938). As an educator, it should come as no surprise that Dr. McAfee

had ideals for the Negroes which went beyond the employment of selected individuals from among them. He was eager to help in training and highly equipping leaders from their race. One of his glowing ambitions was one day to have a Negro annex to the College, located so near that members of the faculty and managerial force could function

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number   8   Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

=====

Page 4

for both racial groups. He never proposed the move which in sequel has come to grief at both Oberlin and Berea, that of admitting the two races on common terms in the same classrooms. Dr. McAfee knew his Missouri too well for that (Ibid.).

The "Negro Annex" was to be located in the northwestern portion of Parkville, on a hillside and in the valley which was, by that time, already largely occupied by black residents. With thoughts of the Annex in mind, McAfee therefore acquired several plots of land in this area over the years, so that by 1907, a considerable holding of property was owned by Park College "across town" from campus (Standard Atlas of Platte County, Missouri, 1907).

Although the "plan for the Negro Annex died a-borning", the Washington Chapel, built in 1907 at 1137 West Street, "was erected in line with this project" (McAfee, 1938). The construction was done under the supervision of the College on land it formerly owned. However, the history of the congregation begins much earlier.

**ETHNIC HERITAGE:** the Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church  
As slaves, African Americans were barred from participation in nearly all of the public institutions in this country. White owners did, however, allow blacks to develop their own religious life. As one of the few means to express themselves, religion became the focus of the African American community. In particular, religion provided a new basis of social cohesion among slaves, at the very time the institution of slavery tended to lead away from any social structure (Frazier, 1964).

The early efforts of the Anglican Church in the 17th century, and the Church of England in the 18th century, largely failed in converting African American slaves. It wasn't until the "Great Awakening", which began in New England and spread to the West and South, that large numbers of blacks were attracted to organized Christianity (Ibid.). Baptist and Methodist preachers, and their accompanying revivals and fiery message of salvation, appealed to a number of outcast slaves. At first, though, the slaves joined the Methodist and Baptist churches of their masters and worshipped in segregated sections. As their numbers increased, they began to be provided their own churches. It was always, however, with white supervision (Ibid.). Blacks preaching to their own was greeted at first with a great deal of fear and suspicion. To do so, of their own will, was often a crime.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8

Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 5

Typical of this is an account from the early history of Platte County. In 1854, "Charles, a slave of Almond, Paxton, and Callahan, and Andy, a slave of L.C. Jack," were convicted, in indictment, for preaching the gospel to their fellows, with no officer present, on Atchison Hill, and each fined \$1 and costs, and were ordered committed until paid (Paxton, 1897).

In other parts of the country, however, freed slaves were desirous to achieve a certain degree of autonomy. In the late 1700's, Richard Allen formed the Free African Society in Philadelphia. This movement, begun by Allen, migrated to other cities where so-called African Methodist Episcopal Churches were set up (Frazier, 1964). Representatives of these churches eventually established the A.M.E. Church in 1816 in Philadelphia.

Other independent churches were organized, generally differing on the Methodist or Baptist form of worship, although on a smaller scale, Protestant Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Congregational black churches were also formed. After the Civil War, still another Methodist organization came into existence. In 1844, a split occurred in the Methodist Church over the question of slavery. In the North, as noted earlier, separate black congregations were allowed to organize and still remain connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the south, however, slaves continued to join and worship in the churches of their masters. After Emancipation, the small African American membership which remained in the Methodist Episcopal Church South was permitted to organize a separate church (Ibid.). Thus, the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church (today the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church) was formed in 1870, in Jackson, Tennessee.

The C.M.E. congregation in Parkville, Missouri is closely associated with the establishment of this new denomination. It is said to be the second C.M.E. church organized in the Missouri Territory, and was one of the Kansas City area churches to report at the setting up of the first General Conference of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in Memphis, Tennessee (The Christian Index, 14 February 1974). As a C.M.E. church, it was organized by Moses White of Leavenworth, Kansas in 1870, who also served as the first pastor (Ibid.). The charter members, however, had been meeting together earlier at the Park College Presbyterian Church. These charter members were: Mr. and Mrs. William Washington, for whom the church is named; Mr. and Mrs. Wade Saunders; and Andrew Jackson. Arch Brown, a member as well as minister, organized other C.M.E. churches in Wyandotte County, Kansas and Topeka.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 6

Louis and Armenta Cave were also early members, joining around 1872 (Kansas-Missouri Annual Conference, 18-22 September 1946).

The Washington C.M.E. congregation continued to meet in the college building in Parkville (the Missouri Valley Hotel) until 1877, when it was moved across the street to a brick structure. The group later moved to Main Street, on land thought to have been a grant from Park College (Breckon, 1990). The membership appears to have grown rapidly, for as early as 1886, the Park College Record noted that

For some time the colored people of town have been trying to raise means to erect a church, the present one having become too small and old for their use. This week they have purchased the ruins of the old college barn and will use the timbers, which are very heavy and solid, in building their new house of worship. We trust their effort may be successful, and if persistence will bring about success, they will not fail (Park College Record, 17 August 1886).

It would take more than persistence, however, for the congregation to finally see the fruition of their efforts. In spite of many local black residents receiving employment at Park College, it was still difficult to raise funds for construction of a new church. With the help of Park College and Howard McAfee (son of Dr. John McAfee), the present stone church building of the Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church building was finally begun in 1905 (Platte Shopper News, 17 October 1984).

The Washington Chapel was built on land which was originally planned by Dr. John McAfee for the "Negro Annex" to Park College, and at the time of construction, was still owned by Park College (Standard Atlas of Platte County, Missouri, 1907). Charles Patrick Breen, the Superintendent of Buildings at Park College, supervised the construction. The limestone was quarried from the College grounds (Breckon, 1990), and some student labor went into the construction of the chapel (McAfee, 1938). The remainder of the labor was provided by the men of the congregation.

Howard McAfee appears to have been closely involved with the planning of the Chapel, although it remains unclear today exactly who was responsible for the design of the church. As early as 1905, Howard McAfee had contacted the Manitowoc Seating Works, a church and school furniture company in Chicago, regarding the design of the interior layout of the Chapel ("Washington Chapel Christian Methodist Episcopal" Vertical File). It appears that

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 7

McAfee was originally considering circular pews for the Chapel, until he was advised by the company that its cost was about 75% higher than straight pews. He continued his association with the congregation after the Chapel was constructed, largely directing the Sunday School work (Kansas-Missouri Annual Conference, 18-22 September 1946). The C.M.E. congregation responded by dedicating the main, historic stained glass window on the east to "John A. McAfee".

The building was dedicated in 1907, and remained the spiritual, social, and visual focal point of Parkville's black community over the years. Several church organizations were formed, which provided social as well as spiritually for the members. These organizations included the Trustee Board, Steward Board, Stewardess Board No. 1 and Stewardess Board No. 2, the Senior Choir, Sunday School, Missionary Society, the Epworth League (for young people), the War Mothers and Wives (organized 1945), Usher Board, Young People's Choir and Junior Stewards (Ibid.). These groups were responsible for organizing many of the money-raising church events, which also happened to serve as social happenings for the local black residents (see Appendix I). In a year when most weekly tithes were around fifteen cents, one annual "rally" in 1913 raised almost \$50.00 for the Washington Chapel (Washington Chapel, Church records and documents).

The leaders of the church were also members of the leading African American families in Parkville. At the time of the 1907 dedication, the church trustees were George Bolden, Arch Brown, Ruben Martin, Allen Little and Richard Rogers. Stewards were Louis Nichols, Richard Rogers, Spencer Cave, Robert Carter, Otis Washington, and Charlie Brown. Steven Carter also served as treasurer (Kansas-Missouri Annual Conference, 18-22 September 1946). The church has had several pastors over the years, many who have also been leaders in Parkville, as well as in the national C.M.E. organization. As mentioned earlier, Moses White served as the first pastor, followed by J.L. Brown. Rev. Rosser was pastor when the congregation moved into the present building (Ibid.). Other pastors have included: A.W. Kelley, B.T. Whitlow, O.T. Neeley, W. Johnson, J.W. Jenkins, T.E. Taylor, R.A. Simpson, A.H. Daniel, P.H. Yates, H.R. L. Hardiman, Anderson, and others.

The Reverends Yates and Anderson played early roles in the integration history of Park College. While not allowing them to register and receive credit, Park College did select black community leaders to attend classes. Many did so, and completed

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 8

course requirements as early as 1938 (Breckon, 1990). It was the strategy of then President William Young to "ease into integration" by having mature African Americans in the classrooms, "to lead by example" (Ibid.).

Records indicate that payments were made over the years to Park College on the church debt, and to others which were probably associated with the construction of the Washington Chapel (Washington Chapel, Church records and documents). In 1913, the congregation made a \$348.60 payment to Park College on the debt. Added with Howard McAfee's "subscription" of \$25.00, this reduced the church's debt at this time to \$655.70. Payments were also made in the 1910's for stone, and to a note by C.P. Breen. However, it was not until October of 1931 that the final transfer of ownership for the land and building actually occurred. "In consideration of one dollar and exchange of properties", the Board of Trustees of Park College conveyed the property at the corner of 10th and West streets to the Trustees of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America, and to the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church of Parkville, Missouri (Ibid.).

The period of significance for the Washington Chapel reflects the arbitrary fifty-year cut-off date. However, it does somewhat coincide with the beginning of black migration to the urban cores of America. After WWII, in particular, many African American servicemen chose to stay in large cities, rather than returning to rural or small town life. This was somewhat the case in Parkville. However, the Washington Chapel remained a focal point of the African American community for several years after the War as well. Church, family, social, and community gatherings took place at the church. Alex Haley, noted author of Roots, twice visited the Washington Chapel, first in the 1960's, and again in 1977 (Kansas City Star, 13 February 1992). The annual celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday in Parkville is focused at the Chapel. Since the 1960's, however, the membership has slowly dropped, as African American youth have moved to larger cities in search of better employment opportunities than that offered by Park College.

As with African American churches across the country after the Civil War, the Washington Chapel provided an organized religious life for the black community in Parkville, which in return became the chief means by which a structured or organized social life came into existence. Since blacks were denied access to the mainstream of American society, the church played a pivotal role in practically every aspect of African American life (Frazier,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8

Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 9

1964). The church was also an example of economic co-operation within the community. In order to establish their church, the African Americans in Parkville had to pool their economic resources. Even with the assistance of Park College, it was necessary for Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church organizations to work for several years to buy the land and the building. In addition to economic co-operation, many self-help organizations grew out of the church, whose purpose included spreading Christian religion, education, and as well as providing assistance to its members. The church also provided an arena for political activities. Denied participation in the political life in America, the church was the main area of social life in which blacks could aspire to become leaders of men (Ibid.). Preachers often became leaders in the community, as is evidenced by the illustrious list of pastors for the Washington Chapel, some of whom participated in the integration of Park College. Members of the congregation were active in church politics as well, voting for officers in the various organizations. As a result, for many decades the Washington Chapel left its imprint upon practically every aspect of life for many of the African Americans of Parkville.

**ARCHITECTURE:** Charles Patrick Breen

The Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church was completed in 1907, and was executed in a vernacular adaptation of the Late Gothic Revival style. Late Gothic Revival buildings are simpler than those of the earlier High Victorian Gothic period (Whiffen, 1985). Late Gothic Revival churches are substantial in appearance, and usually built of stone, as is the Washington Chapel. Although the Washington Chapel's windows do not have the typical Gothic arch, the lintels are emphasized with fine stone work. The castellated tower on the northeast corner of the church is a typical attempt at providing verticality in design, and again adds to the massive appearance of the building. Overall, the design of the church is a restrained example of this particular style, with the emphasis on the building material.

It is the stone work itself which is especially noteworthy on the Washington Chapel. The limestone was quarried on the campus of Park College, and the construction supervised by "Pat" Breen (Breckon, 1990). Charles Patrick Breen was born in Weston, Missouri in 1857, and started at the age of fourteen in stone masonry under his father. His father had immigrated earlier from Ireland, where masonry was a well-paid field. In 1886, he was working across the river at the Quindaro Waterworks when he was

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 10

approached by Howard McAfee about working on the first substantial building for Park College, a stone chapel. Rather than working with a typical crew, however, Breen would be required to use student labor. This constraint dictated not only a talent for stone masonry, but patience and an ability to educate the workers. Breen's father had attempted the job before Pat, but lasted only a few days. Although extremely talented as a stone mason, his father did not have the patience to work with the untrained students ("Charles Patrick Breen" Vertical File).

C.P. Breen took the job, and so impressed the management of Park College that he stayed on as Superintendent of Construction, a position he held until 1909. Breen resigned his position with the College when Howard McAfee left, but he later constructed a hospital for the school under contract (Ibid.). While associated with Park College, however, he was responsible for construction of several significant structures on campus. After his first building, McCormick Chapel, he built the Mackay Hall, the first Alumni Hall, Labor Hall, the Library, the Observatory, Sunset Hall, Woodward, and Chestnut Labor Hall. Numerous other secondary structures, such as a canning factory, the water works, and a small bridge were also among his work (Park College Record, 9 April 1899).

All of these structures on Park College, as with the Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church, were constructed of native limestone. In addition to greatly affecting the built environment of Park College, C.P. Breen constructed several buildings and engineering projects in Parkville and other communities. He was responsible for the water and sewer lines in the city of Parkville, as well as the waterworks in Weston and the paving of Main Street in Platte City. He donated his efforts to the construction of the walls surrounding Parkville's public school grounds, as well as for the Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Weston, Missouri (Platte County Gazette, 16 December 1938). In 1910, he was awarded the contract for a stone church in Independence (Platte County Gazette, 6 January 1977).

The quality of craftsmanship is evident on all of Breen's buildings, and again on the Washington Chapel. Although clearly attributed to Breen (McAfee, 1938), the Washington Chapel does not generally receive recognition as one of his projects in the summaries of his work ("Charles Patrick Breen" Vertical Files). This, perhaps, can be attributed to the racism of the period in which he lived and worked. However, the Washington Chapel stands today as a tribute to a stone mason who was able to impart his

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

---

Page 11

knowledge of the craft to those working under him. In the case of the Washington Chapel, Breen not only worked with Park College student labor, but supervised the men of the church in its construction as well. As noted by the Park College Record, Charles Patrick Breen "not only believed in building buildings that would endure, but in building character into the men who worked for him." (Park College Record, 9 April 1899).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

---

Page 1

---

# CONCERT

---

Colored Methodist Church

Friday Night, Jan. 7, 1921

*Come and Enjoy Yourself*

*PLENTY FUN and MUSIC*

Jumbo Jum --- Mrs. PEPPERS the Ghost

---

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9

Washington C.M.E. Chapel

Page 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Breckon, Donald J. Park College's and Parkville's Black Heritage. Parkville, MO.: Park College, March 1990.
- "Breen, Charles P." Vertical File. Manuscript Collection. Fishburn Archives, McAfee Library. Parkville, MO.: Park College.
- Kansas-Missouri Annual Conference. Historical Souvenir Program: 65th Annual Session of the Kansas-Missouri Annual Conference, Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. Topeka, KS.: n.p., 18-22 September, 1946.
- Frazier, E. Franklin. The Negro Church in America. New York: Schocken Books, 1964.
- "Haley is recalled in Parkville." Kansas City Star. 13 February 1992, p. NO 1.
- History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri. St. Louis: National Historical Company, 1885.
- March, David D. The History of Missouri. Vol. I. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1967.
- McAfee, Joseph Earnest. College Pioneering. Kansas City, MO.: Alumni Parkana Committee, 1938.
- "104th Anniversary and Founders' Day at Washington Chapel." The Christian Index. Vol. 107, No. 3; 14 February 1974.
- Park College Record. Vol. VIII, No. 32, 17 August 1886; No. 15, 9 April 1899.
- Paxton, W.M. Annals of Platte County, Missouri. Kansas City, MO.: Hudson-Kimberly Publishing Co., 1897.
- Platte County Gazette. 16 December 1938, 6 January 1977.
- Platte Shopper News. Vol. 10, No. 20; 17 October 1984. "Old Church Highlights Parkville Tour."
- Standard Atlas of Platte County, Missouri. Chicago: Geor. A. Ogle & Co., 1907.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9

Washington C.M.E. Chapel

Page 2

---

---

Tipton, Mary L., ed. A Chronical of Memories: Park College - 1875-1990. Parkville, MO.,: Alumni Association of Park College, 1990.

Washington Chapel, Church records and documents. Parkville, MO..

"Washington Chapel Christian Methodist Episcopal" Vertical File. Manuscript Collection. Fishburn Archives, McAfee Library. Parkville, MO.: Park College.

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780. Cambridge, MA.: The M.I.T. Press, 1985.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photographs

Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 1

The following information is common to all photographs:

1. Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church  
1137 West Street  
Parkville
2. Platte County, Missouri
3. Deon K. Wolfenbarger
4. March 1, 1992
5. Department of Natural Resources  
Historic Preservation Program  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

Photograph #1

View of south (front) facade and lot, facing north.

Photograph #2

View of south facade, facing north.

Photograph #3

View of south and east elevation, including tower, facing northwest.

Photograph #4

View of south and west elevation, facing northeast.

Photograph #5

View of north and west elevation, facing southeast.

Photograph #6

View of east elevation, including entry tower, facing northwest.

Photograph #7

View of window, stone work, on south facade, facing north.

Photograph #8

Interior view of sanctuary, pulpit, from entry tower door, facing southwest.

Photograph #9

Interior view of sanctuary, windows, facing southeast.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photographs

Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church

Page 2

---

Photograph #10

Interior view of sanctuary, windows, and entry tower door  
from pulpit, facing east.

Photograph #11

Interior view of windows, facing south.

Photograph #12

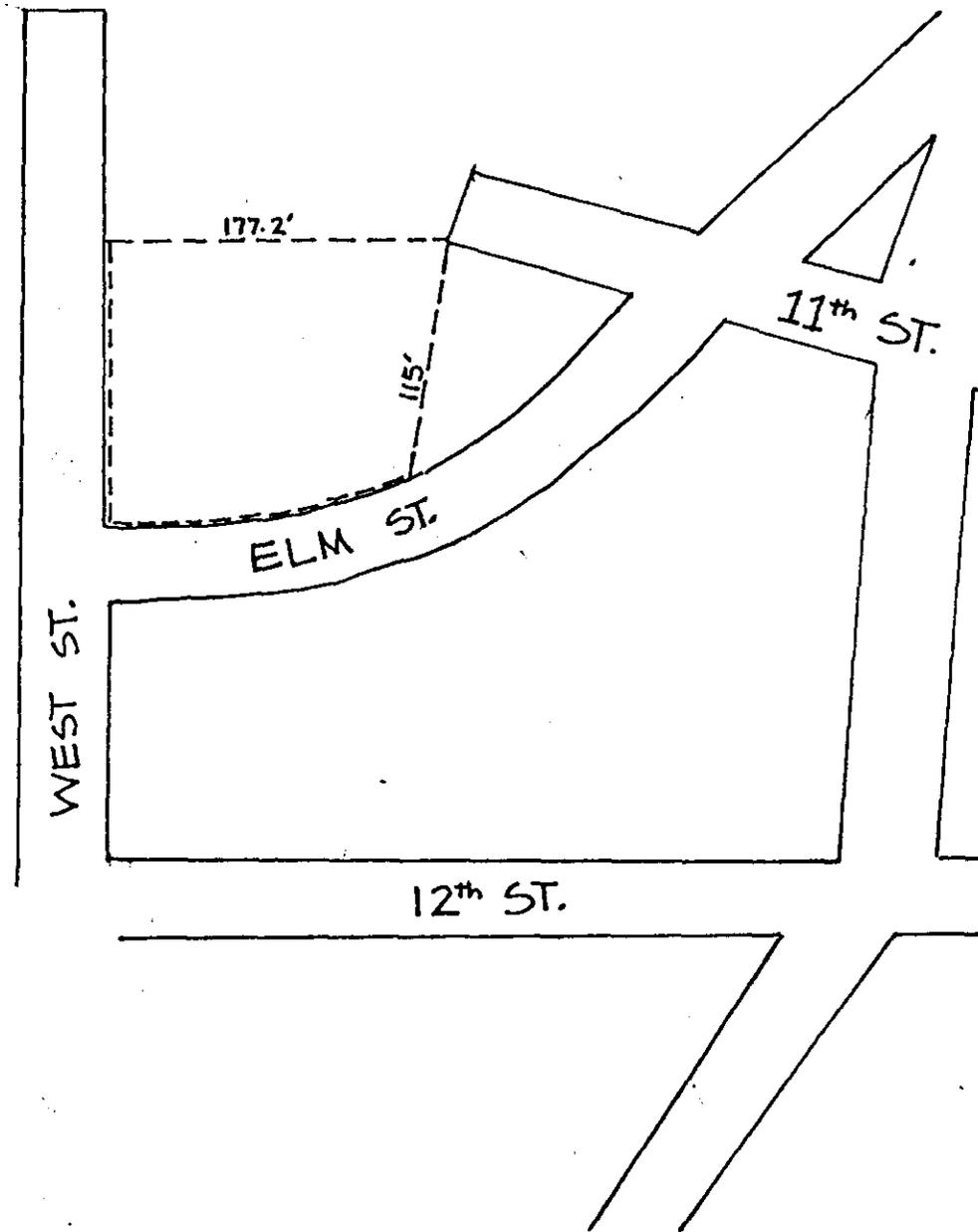
Interior view of "John A. McAfee" window, facing east.

Photograph #13

Interior view of first floor dining room, facing southeast.

Photograph #14

Historic photograph of Church Dedication, 1907, showing view  
of south (front) facade, facing north.



**BOUNDARY MAP**

**Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church**  
1137 West Street  
Parkville, Platte City, Missouri

Boundary is indicated by the dashed line.  
Scale: 1"=100' (approximately)

North 



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

### SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 92001055

Date Listed: 8/31/92  
~~8/27/92~~

Washington Chapel C.M.E. Church  
Property Name

Platte  
County

MO  
State

#### Multiple Name

-----  
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Beth Boland  
Signature of the Keeper

9/2/92  
Date of Action

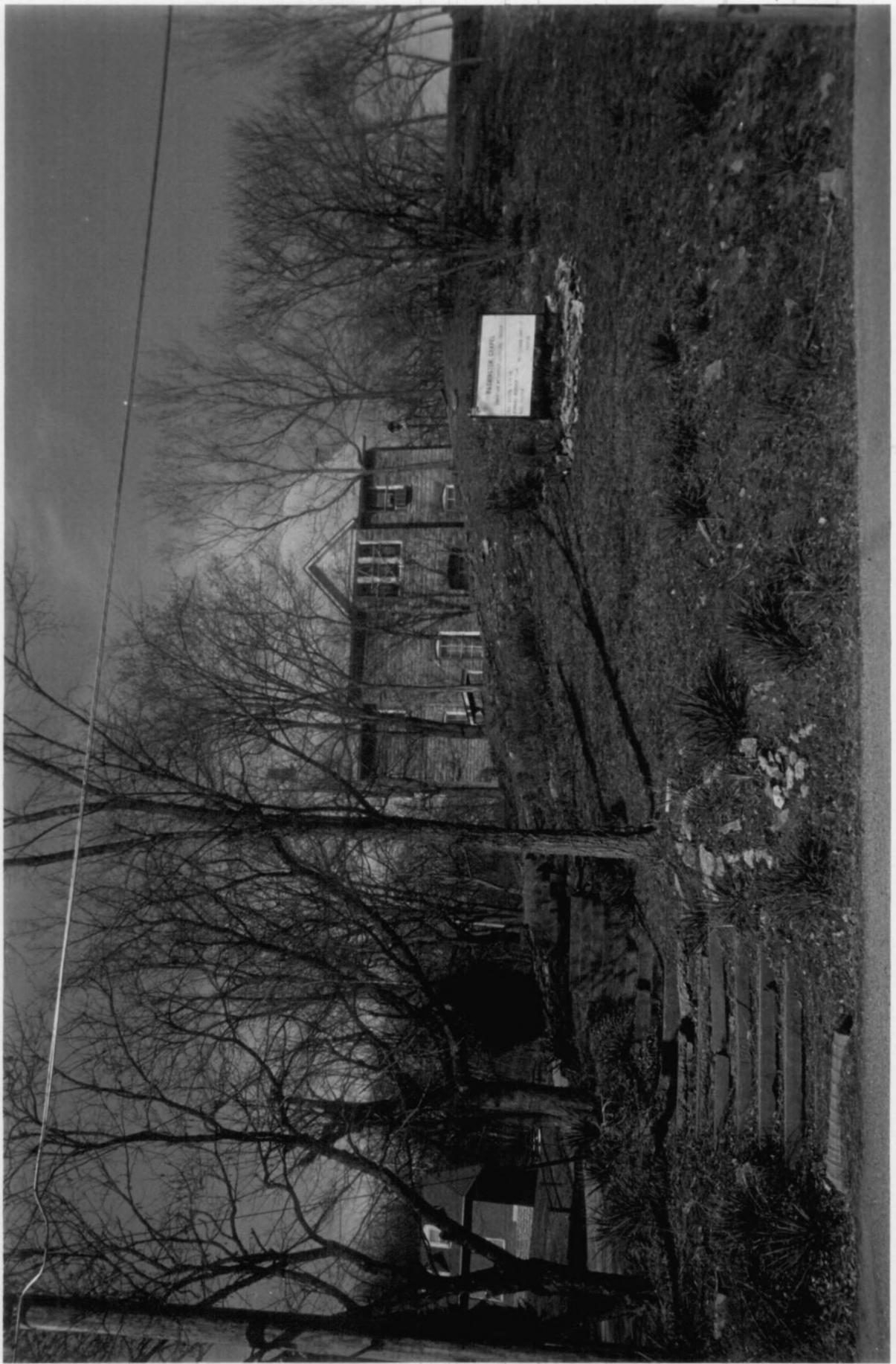
#### Amended Items in Nomination:

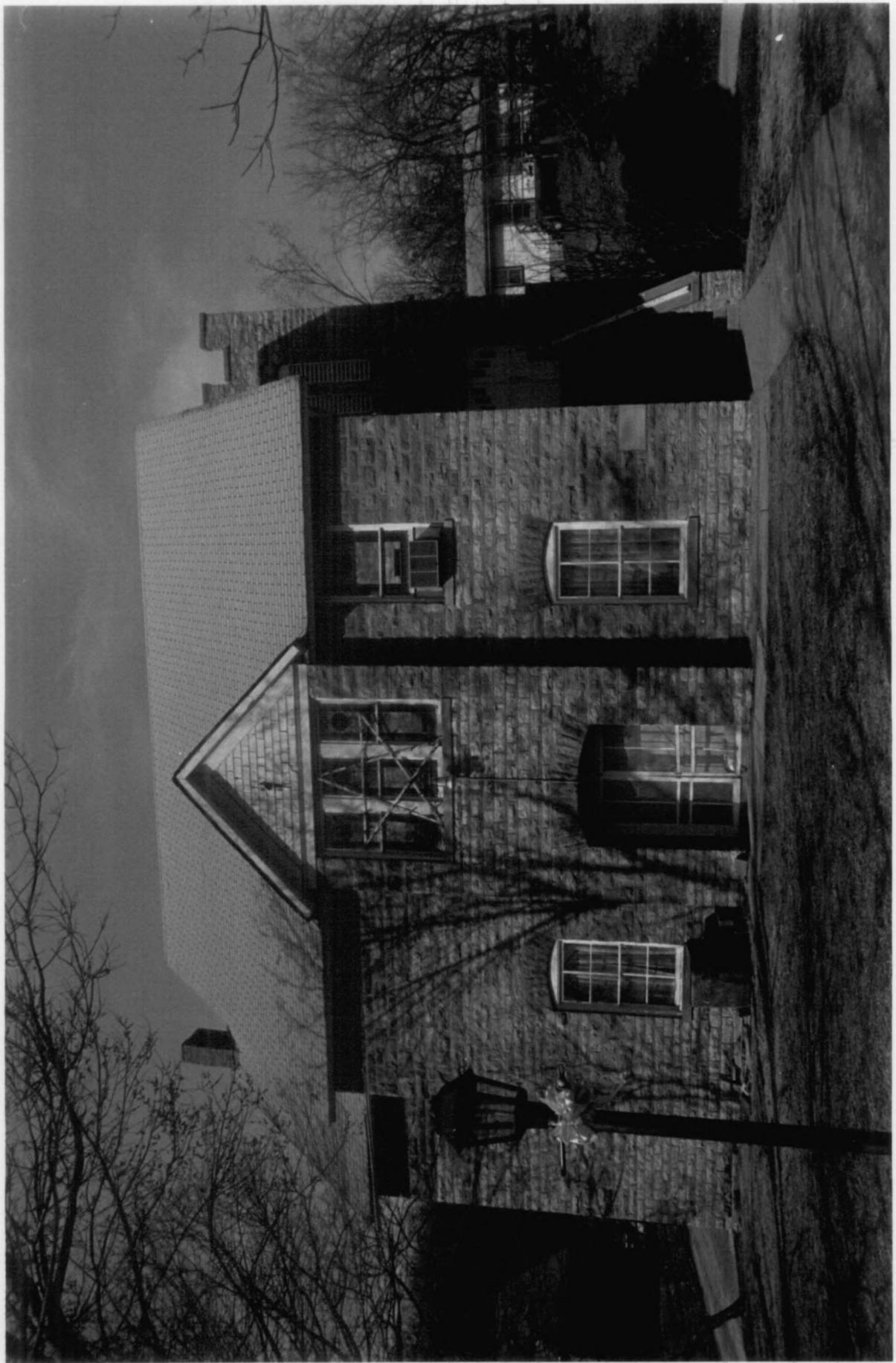
The applicable criteria consideration box is not checked. Because this property is a church, criteria consideration A (Religious property) applies.

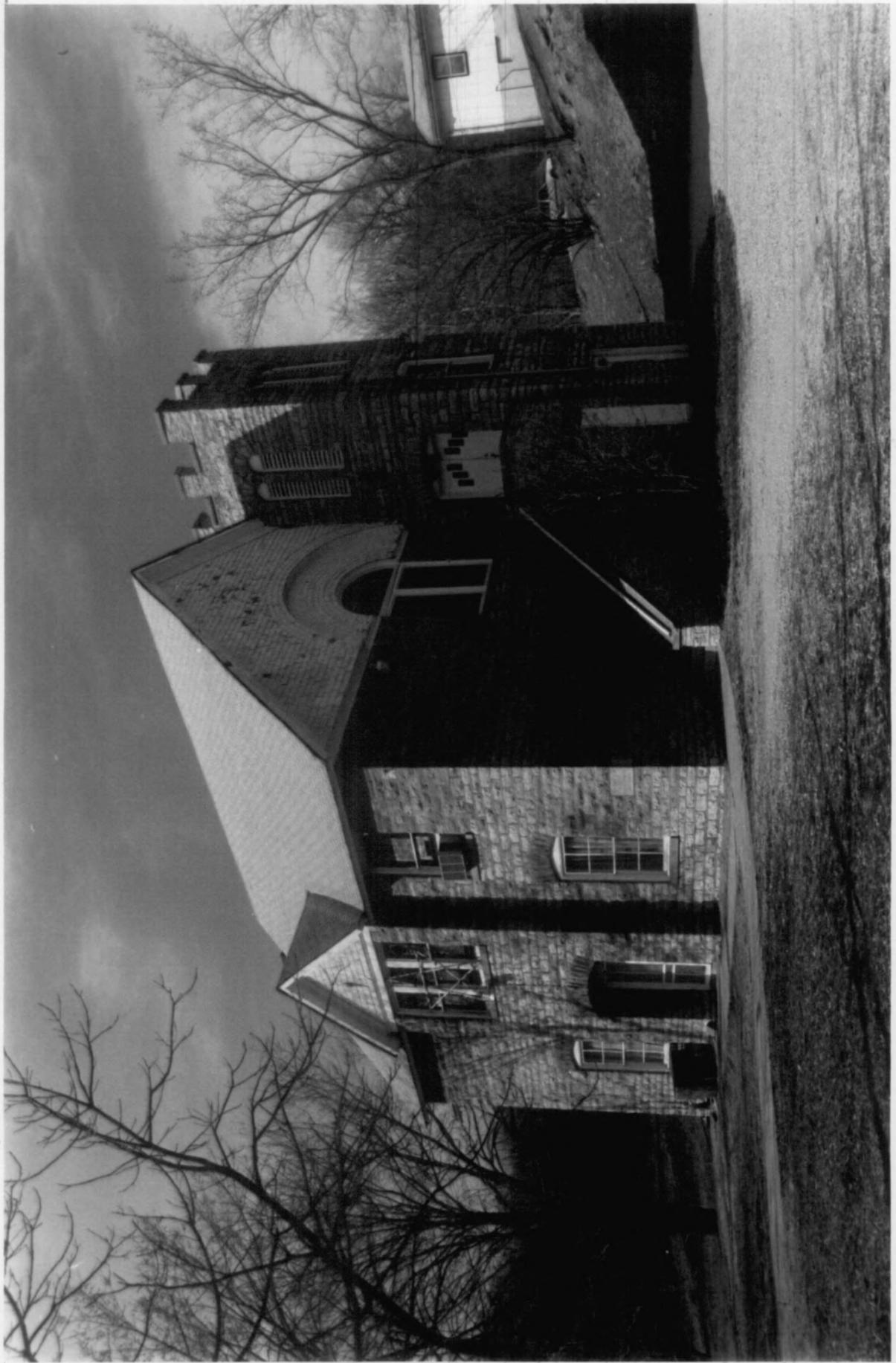
This information was confirmed by Steve Mitchell of the MO SHPO staff.

#### DISTRIBUTION:

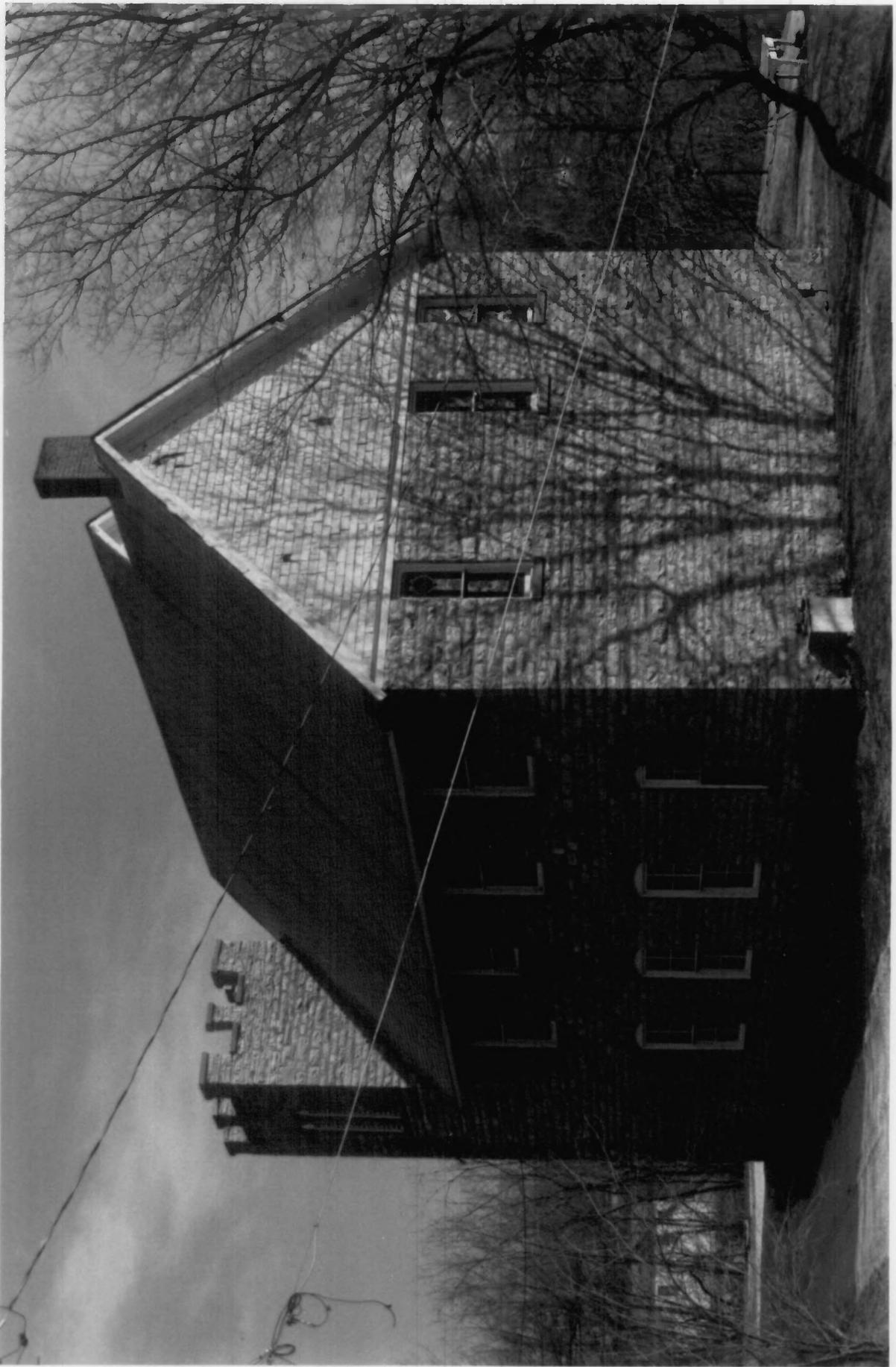
- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

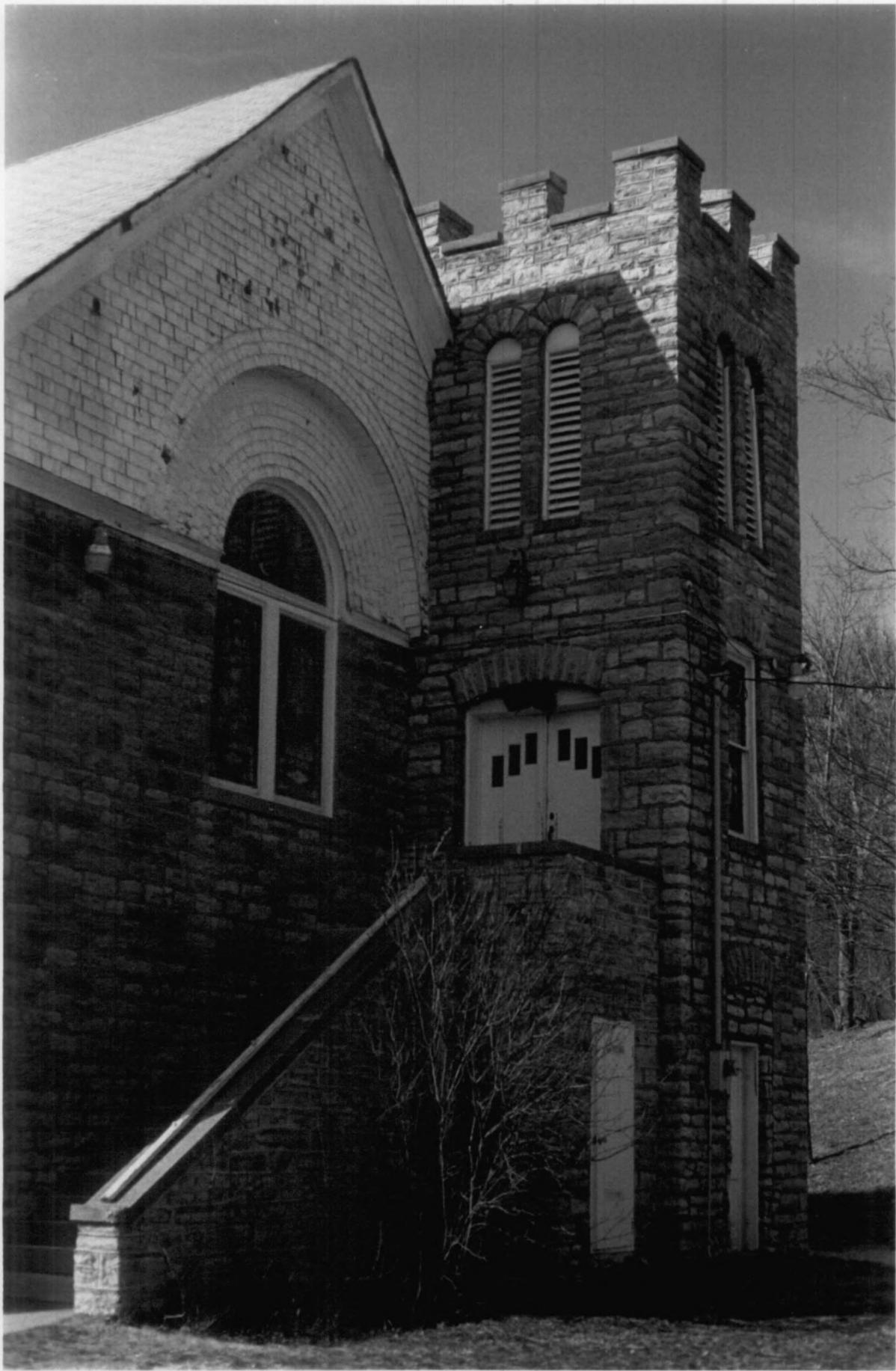


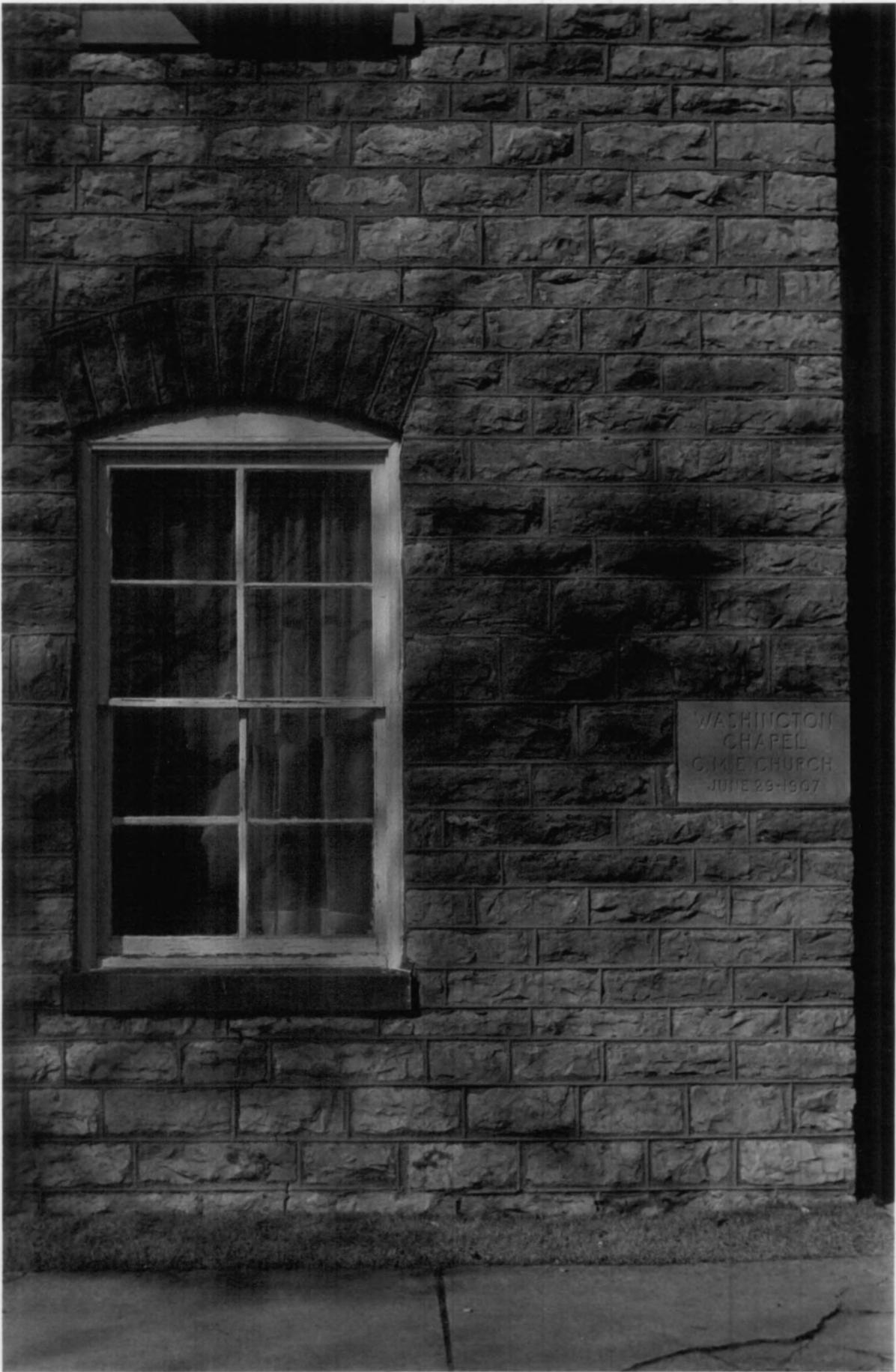




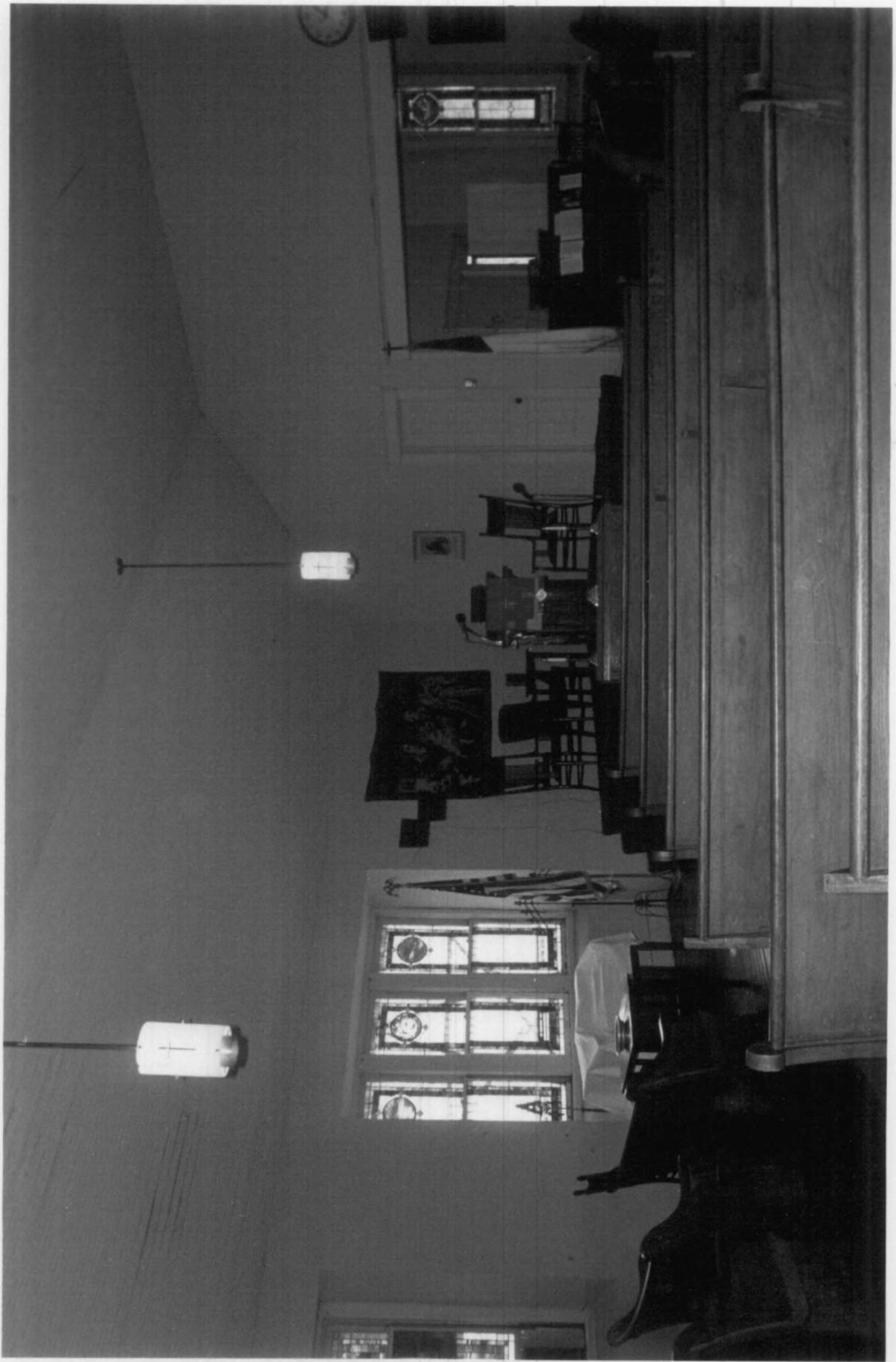




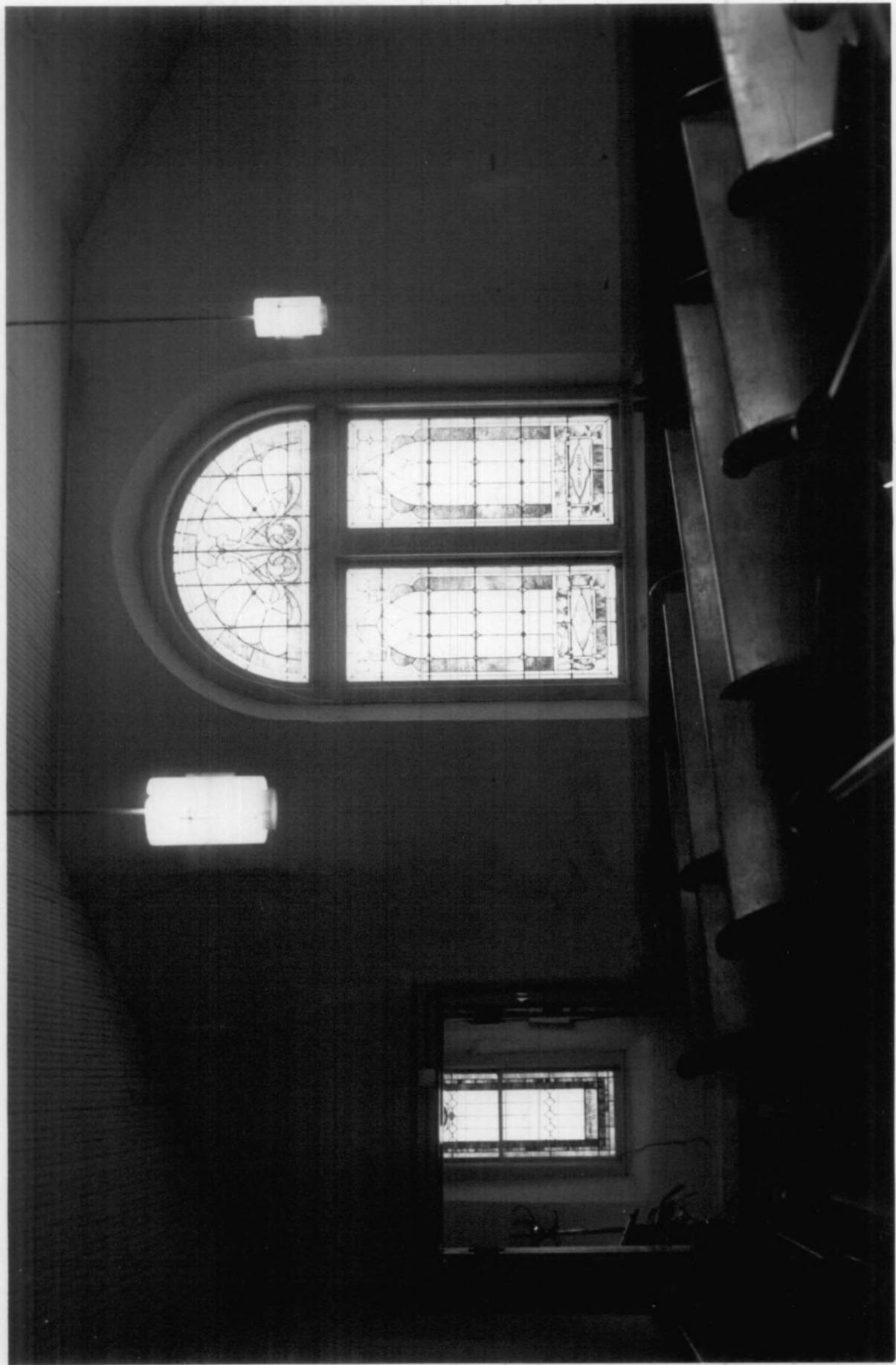




WASHINGTON  
CHAPEL  
C.M.E. CHURCH  
JUNE 29-1907









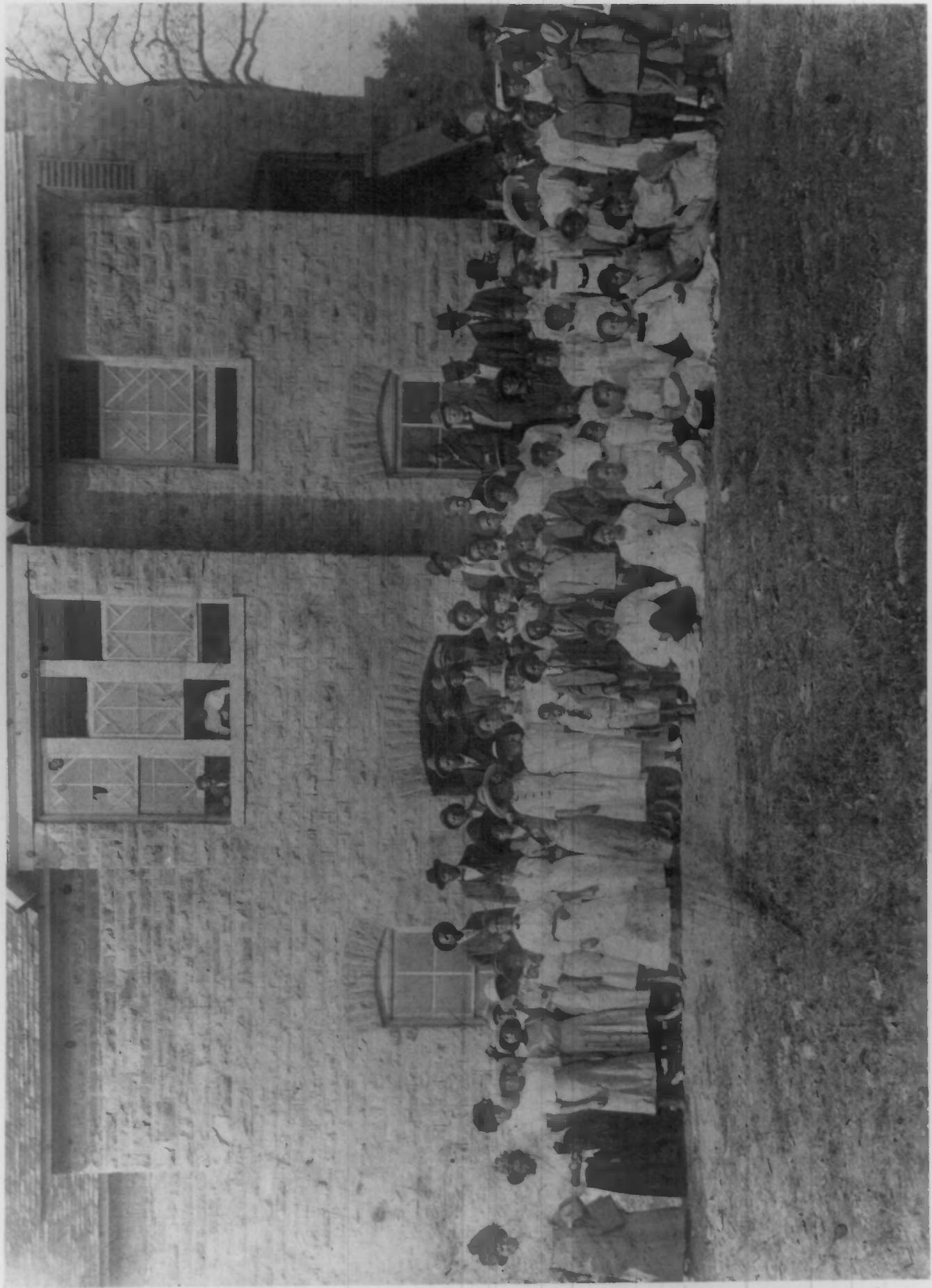
MORNING GLORIES

IN MEMORY OF  
LEONARD SLAYTON  
35 YEARS EYEWARD

MILLING WORKERS







Church Dedication 1907