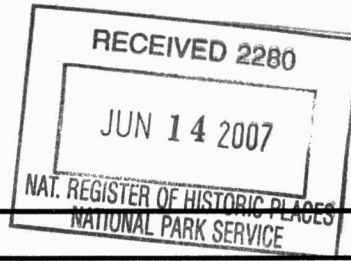


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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**



1. Name of Property

historic name Harper School
other names/site number Harper Community Building

2. Location

street & number NE corner of State Rd 82 and State Rd U [N/A] not for publication
city or town Harper [N/A] vicinity
state Missouri code MO county St. Clair code 185 zip code 64776

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 [].)

Mark A. Miles Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO June 14, 2007 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 [].

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper 7-24-07 Date

Property Name
County, Missouri

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri
Page 2

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
Contributing Noncontributing

_____ 2 _____ buildings

_____ _____ sites

_____ _____ structures

_____ _____ objects

_____ 2 _____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

Education/school _____

Current Functions

Social/clubhouse _____

Work in Progress _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Other/one-room schoolhouse _____

Materials

foundation Stone _____

walls _____ Weatherboard _____

roof _____ Asphalt _____

other _____

Narrative Description

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Summary:

Harper School, a frame one-room country schoolhouse, is located in the tiny village of Harper in St. Clair County, Missouri. The one-acre site is on the northeast corner of State Highways 82 and U, approximately one mile southwest of where St. Clair County touches both Hickory and Benton counties. Constructed in ca.1875, the gable-front building is 20 feet wide by 32 feet long. The austere building (it has a shed-roof porch but lacks such elaborations as a vestibule or cloakroom) stands on its original foundation of uncoursed rubble held together with cement. Twin entrances, one used by boys and the other by girls, are centered in the primary west elevation which faces Highway U. The interior is plain but largely intact although it was last used as a schoolhouse almost half a century ago. One of two frame privies constructed in 1935 is intact a short distance southeast of the schoolhouse. A small gravel parking area is in front of the building. Harper School retains a high level of integrity of location, design, materials, craftsmanship and setting.

Elaboration:

Harper School occupies its original schoolyard which slopes moderately to the south. Because of the slope, the sandstone foundation is visible on the south elevation but not the north. The building sits on land which was privately owned at one time and then donated, in 1892, for use as the site of a schoolhouse. The front of the schoolhouse is approximately 60 feet from Highway U. The location is approximately ten miles east of Osceola, in southwestern Missouri. In 1952, in the first of two school consolidations, the Harper students were transferred to Bear Creek School in Polk Township. In 1960, Bear Creek School was closed and the students who would have attended Harper began attending Osceola School (NR listed 1/21/99). Osceola, the seat of St. Clair County, is a historic town which was burned during the Civil War.

The general setting for Harper School is still reasonably evocative of when the schoolhouse was originally constructed and used. State Highways 82 and U which run south and west of Harper School, respectively, are smooth-surfaced roads today but unpaved versions of those roads existed during its early years as a schoolhouse. The east-west road (Highway U) passed only a few yards south of the schoolhouse. To the best recollection of the surviving students and others in the Harper community, the land was always open as today. A hedge row of trees continues to separate the school building from the nearest house to the east. But except for a single residence, Harper School is the only historic building in the community that still retains its original structure. Goshen Primitive Baptist Church, whose members met in Harper School shortly after its construction, is still standing a short distance southeast of the schoolhouse but it has gone through several stages of modernization and the congregation is small. The community's old

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

**Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri**

hotel and the last grocery store have been converted into residences.

Twin entrances flank an interior chimney which pierces the ridge of the gable roof. The chimney, which projects only a couple of feet or so, has a simple raincap. The original entry doors consist of three horizontal panels below four-light glazing. A concrete porch with an old but nonoriginal shed-roof is across the entire front. Under its recently applied smooth surface, the concrete is old and gravel-rich. Behind the concrete step, oak planks rest on rock. The porch roof is supported by four cedar posts of recent vintage. The porch roof itself was probably constructed in the early 1920s. High in the front gable, a light fixture with a single bulb projects from the façade. From the porch, a concrete walk extends to an old hand pump which still draws water from a 50-foot well. Ivan McLerran, who is 85 years of age, started Harper School in 1928 and remembers the porch roof and well as being there when he was in school.

Three openings containing six foot tall, double-hung 4/4 windows are symmetrically aligned in each side wall. Crowns are decorative but only modestly so. These windows provided natural lighting for the building during most of the decades when it was used as a schoolhouse. A lone metal hook which once held a coal oil lantern remains in the ceiling at the front of the schoolhouse.

The building's wall framing, rafters and floor joists are native oak. Exterior walls are sheathed with six inch horizontal cedar siding which was recently scraped, primed and repainted white. Corner boards have simple capitals. The side walls extend 12 feet from their base to the roof overhang. Front and back walls measure 19 feet from their base to the tip of the roof.

A hole in the ceiling over the former location of the teacher's desk indicates where the rope that rang the school bell was suspended. The belfry (visible in historic photos) will be replicated astride the gable roof on the east end of the building by the Harper Homemakers Club.

All of the lumber used in the original construction was grown, cut and milled by citizens of the Harper community. Over the years the building started leaning to the northwest but in 2005, volunteers succeeded in pulling it back into place and securing the walls with the structural framing intact. A few deteriorated boards, sections of sash and broken window panes have been replaced but overall the building is in excellent and relatively original condition for its age.

Three-inch tongue-and-groove boards, freshly painted white, cover the interior walls and ceiling. An original blackboard is intact, in three sections, across the rear wall. A grooved plank of wood is attached to the bottom for holding chalk and erasers. Above it, the school's original pictures of the American flag and presidents Lincoln and Wilson still hang. Except

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 3

**Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri**

temporarily for repainting of the interior walls, they have never been removed from the building even though it was last used as a schoolhouse in 1952.

Electricity was installed in 1947, and fluorescent lighting was added after the building was purchased, in 1961, by the Harper Homemakers Club. Until the building was electrified, coal oil lamps provided illumination when daylight was insufficient. None of the original electric lights remain and only two of the fluorescent units are intact. Modern ceiling lights with fans and new wiring were installed in 2005 as part of an ongoing refurbishment project. Despite these alterations, the interior schoolroom easily projects a sense of its past because so much of the historic fabric is intact.

Heat is still provided by a wood stove in the middle of the schoolroom. This stove dates from when the school was still attended by students. The sides have been reinforced and there is a crack in the lid. The round metal stovepipe is supported by small link chains suspended from the ceiling on its route from the stove to the brick chimney in the west end.

A frame privy, one of two originally on the schoolyard, is situated southeast of the building. This was the boy's facility. The girl's facility was closer to the building, off the northeast corner, but it has been dismantled because of deterioration. School board minutes indicate the privies were built in September 1935. The facilities had similar concrete stands with two wooden seats attached. Constructed of vertical boards, the remaining privy has an opening for ventilation near the underside of its slanted, shingled roof. It is in sound condition and is painted white inside and out.

The Harper community intends to preserve the schoolhouse so that it can be appreciated by future generations. It is hoped that the official recognition associated with National Register status will bolster fund-raising to help preserve this still eminently usable example of a one-room schoolhouse. Community events and donations from former students and their families have been the main source of money for repairs and upkeep. Most manual labor has been and probably will continue to be donated.

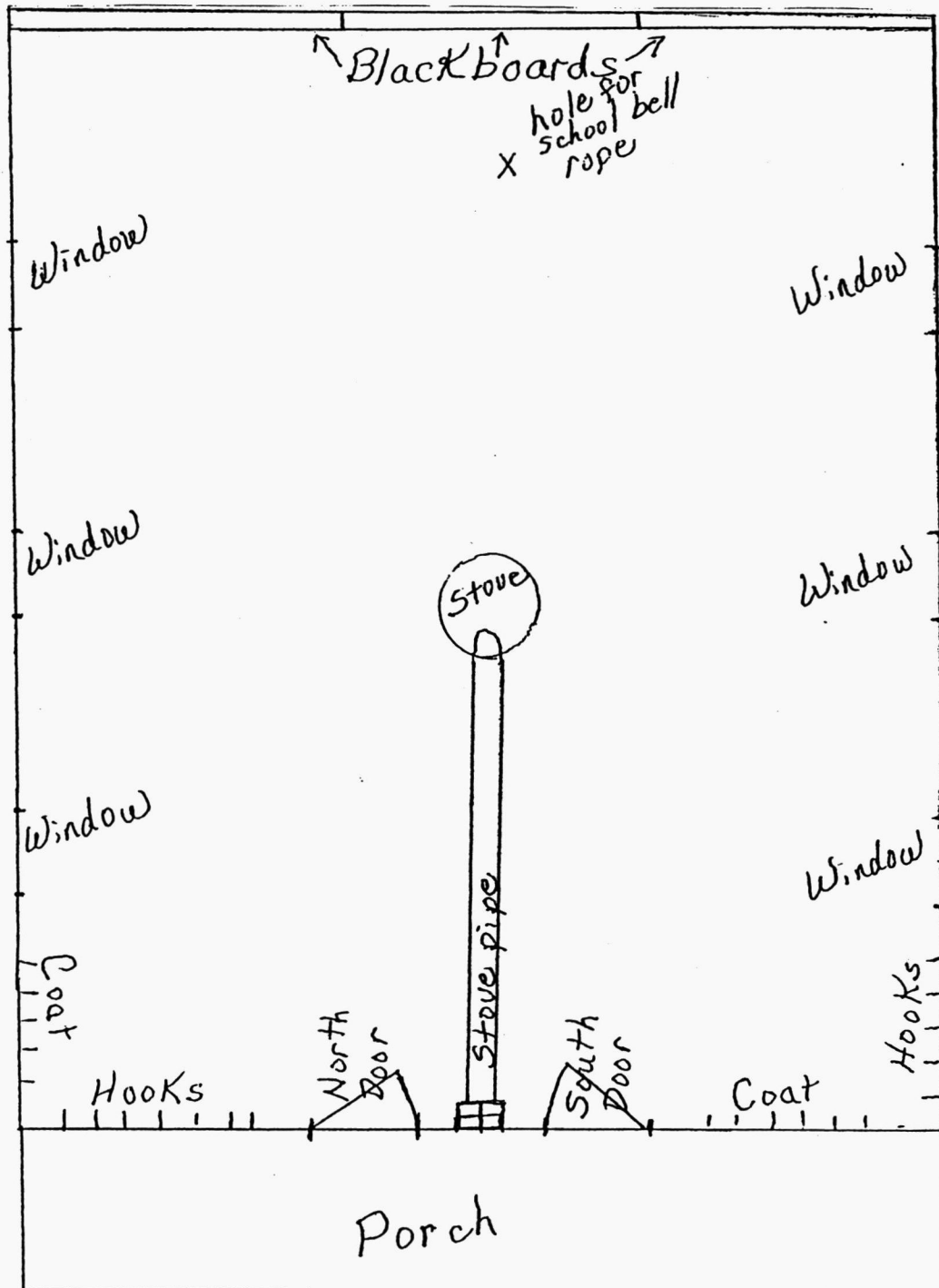
United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 4

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Harper School Floor Plan



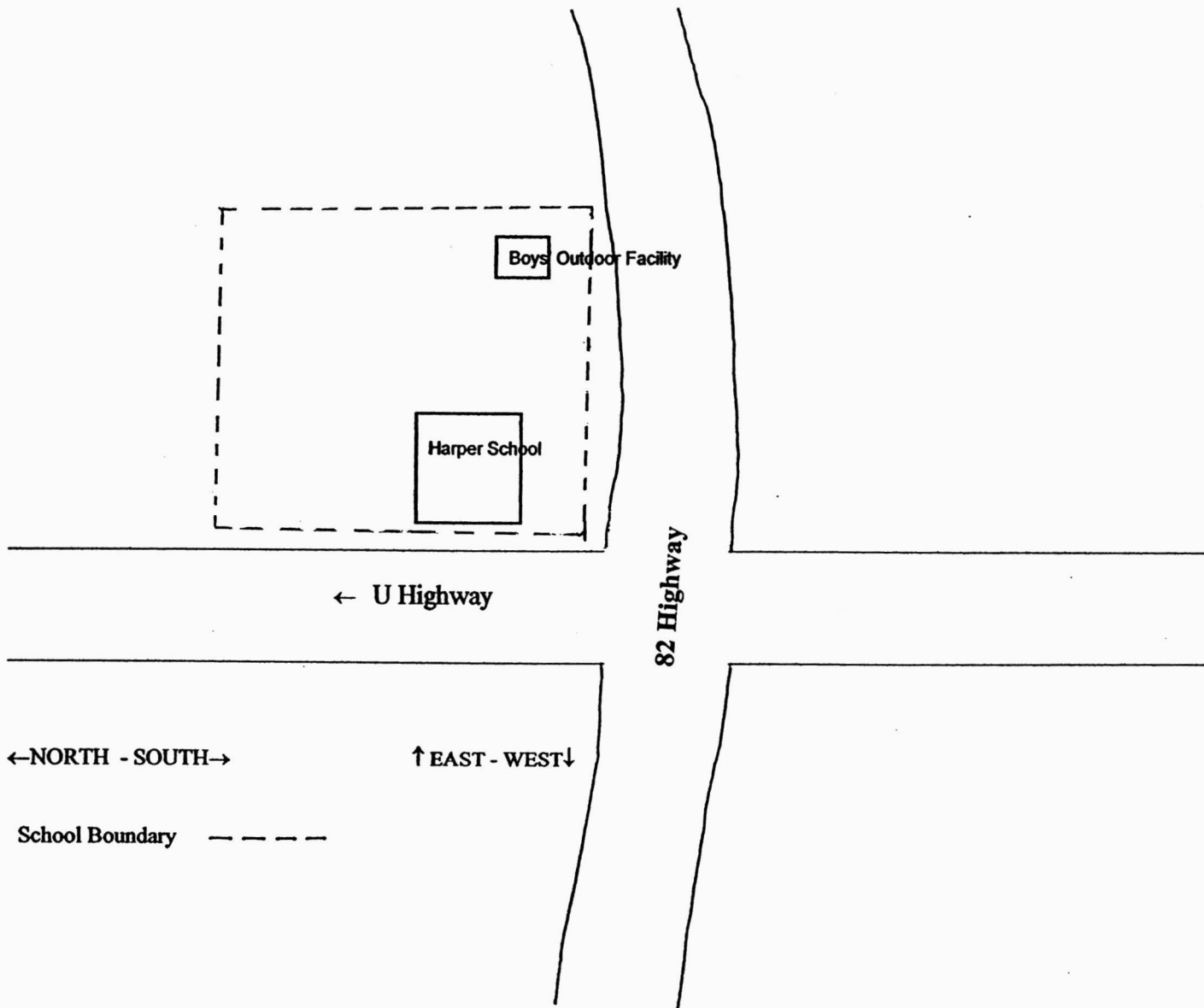
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Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 5

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Harper School Site Plan



Property Name
County, Missouri

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri
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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

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

Criteria Considerations

Property is:

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

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

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

Areas of Significance

Education

Periods of Significance

1875-1952

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository: _____

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 6

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Summary:

Harper School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under Criterion A in the area of Education. Constructed in ca.1875, Harper School is a very early example of a one-room schoolhouse in St. Clair County, Missouri. It is a one-roomer in the strictest sense, lacking even a vestibule or cloakroom. Harper School is where children in grades one through eight who lived in east-central St. Clair County's School District No. 2 (later School District No. 48) came in pursuit of a basic public education. As the only public building in Harper, the role of the schoolhouse went beyond education. The nominated building has provided space for such things as quilting bees, coon hunting groups, reunions of descendants of the Harper family who founded the community, and as a polling place for Polk Township. For a few years after its construction, members of at least two area churches met in the building before erecting their own houses of worship. Today the building is still instantly recognizable as a one-room schoolhouse, and it easily conveys a strong sense of its original function. Land usages and road arrangements are basically the same as historically, so that integrity of setting is retained. The period of significance runs from construction of the schoolhouse in ca.1875 until consolidation in 1952, after which the Harper students were transported by bus first to Bear Creek School six miles away and then, in 1960, to Osceola School in the county seat city of Osceola a dozen miles to the west.¹

Elaboration:

The first pioneer settlers in the area where the Harper community developed were John M. Harper and his wife Nancy (Williams) Harper, who arrived in 1835. The Harpers, who came to Missouri by way of Kentucky, established a homestead near Hogles Creek, in what was then Benton County. This site was just three-fourths of a mile east of the future site of Harper School. Like other early settlers in the area, the Harpers felled trees for timber to construct their house, made their own furniture and clothing and farmed with the aid of teams of oxen. Their nearest neighbors were six miles away. John M. Harper's life was relatively short. He died on April 15, 1839, at the age of 45.² Harper School was situated on private property until February 20, 1892, at which time John M. Harper's grandson (also named John M.) and Martha D. Harper deeded an

¹ On April 6, 1961, the voters of Harper School District No. 48 approved annexation to the Osceola Independent School District. Two days later, Osceola's board of directors accepted the annexation. On April 12, the St. Clair County superintendent of schools made it official.

² This information was compiled from two sources: (1) George T. Harper's genealogical history of the Harper family, dated June 5, 1988 and (2) an article published in the *St. Clair County Courier* (date unknown) about the August 29, 1935, Harper family reunion.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 7

**Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri**

acre of land containing the building to the Directors of School District No. 2.3

In the late 19th century, two churches in the Harper community are known to have used Harper School as a meeting place or alternate meeting place for at least a few years before constructing their own houses of worship. The earliest known reference to a schoolhouse at Harper is in the 1875 minutes of the Goshen Primitive Baptist Church, which was the first denomination to use the schoolhouse as a place of worship. The April 1875 minutes of "the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church called Goshen" simply state that "the church agreed to hold [their] next meeting at the new School House on Harper Prairie."⁴ A year later, in 1876, the neighboring Hopewell Baptist Church was organized and, after originally meeting in the homes of the members, began meeting monthly at Harper School. This continued until about 1880 when Hopewell Baptist Church obtained a building of its own. A mission was held at Harper School from 1890-92.⁵

After the erection of schoolhouses with log walls but before there were standardized plans, most Missouri schoolhouses looked much like the nominated property, i.e., they were plain, gable-front frame structures. Harper School is relatively intact, inside as well as outside, and the way it was operated as a schoolhouse and the role it played in community life were typical of rural schools throughout the country. Although free public education in America dates from the administration of President Jefferson, it only became a reality for most of the nation in the mid-19th century. Since the country was largely rural, many Americans began their educations in one-room schoolhouses not much larger or fancier than Harper School. As late as 1913 (almost 40 years after the construction of Harper School), half of all school-age children in the country still attended one-room schools of which there were approximately 212,000.⁶

Missouri's own background in public education has been strong. In 1820, its original constitution called for free schools. Rural school districts were set up wherever there was a need. State law required only that there be at least 20 students living in a district and that the school board meet annually to set the rate of the school tax levy and the length of the school term for the following year. At the turn of the century, 9,119 out of 9,742 Missouri school districts were rural. At the same time there were 10,393 teachers in rural schools, only 1,274 more than the total number of rural school districts. Clearly, although the details varied from place to place, the majority of Missouri's rural schools were one-room, one-teacher frame buildings much like

3 Deed record dated February 20, 1892, Book 41, page 71, St. Clair County Recorder's Office, Osceola, Missouri.

4 Minutes, Goshen Primitive Baptist Church, April 1875 (as written by church clerk James Harper).

5 Minutes, Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church, (as written by John H. Myers, church clerk, Benton Co., Missouri, 189_).

6 Andrew Gulliford, *America's Country Schools* (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1984), p. 35.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 8

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Harper School. In such schools it seemed that no student was unimportant. The teacher, students and their often deeply-involved parents typically interacted like one big family.⁷

Along with Harper School, other one-room schools in St. Clair County's Polk Township included Bear Creek School, Concord School and Square Prairie School. Before consolidation in the late 1950s, St. Clair County had more than a hundred schools, most of which were rural, some with such curious names as Little Jewel School (Monegaw Township), Chalk Level School (Center Township), Harvard "Lizard Lick" School (Collins Township), Shoe School and Ditty School (both Appleton Township). The stories behind some of these names would undoubtedly be worth remembering. And as appeared to be a common practice in much of the country, St. Clair County had its share of "pleasant" schools. There were at least four: Pleasant Grove (Monegaw Township), Pleasant Hill (Doyal Township), and Pleasant Valley and Pleasant View (both Butler Township).⁸

Presumably the small rural schools—which were the backbone of American education—would have been larger than just one room had there been a need. But the schools had to be within walking distance of the students, so population density was a factor. Limited budgets were part of the equation that kept the buildings small, and in any case the classroom needed to be small enough for the teacher's voice to be heard throughout the room.⁹

Many one-room schoolhouses made do with single entrances, but at Harper there were twin entrances, representative of a growing emphasis on privacy for boys and girls. Separation of the sexes had to be a challenge in such a simple one-roomer as Harper, but on the walls by each of the entry doors are four-inch boards containing rows of nails (instead of hooks actually designed for the purpose of hanging coats). Girls and boys apparently hung their wraps on opposite sides of the room. Presumably, separate tables with wash basins were near the entrances as well but on opposite sides of the room. For the benefit of the smaller children, one row of coat nails is lower than the others to provide an easier reach. Most of the nails are of the wire type although one is the older square cut type.

With interior dimensions of only 19 feet by 31 feet, Harper School was slightly smaller than many one-room school buildings in Missouri, especially those constructed 20 or 30 years later. But at least in the first half of the 20th Century, it was common for Harper School to have an enrollment of between 20 and 40 students, a significant number of whom happened to share the

⁷ Walter Williams, ed., *The State of Missouri: An Autobiography* (Columbia, MO: E. W. Stephens Press, 1904), pp. 197-200.

⁸ Gulliford, pp. 35-36.

⁹ Gulliford, p. 36.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 9

**Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri**

Harper surname. Enrollment appears to have declined gradually during the first half of the 20th century up to consolidation, but earlier records are unavailable.¹⁰

The average daily attendance at Harper and other one-room Missouri schools invariably was lower, and sometimes much lower, than the total enrollment. The average daily attendance for 1913-14 is unknown, but 44 students were enrolled that year so the average daily attendance almost certainly was higher than 30. In the 1921-22 school year (which ran from September 5, 1921 through February 17, 1922), the Harper enrollment was 34 and the average daily attendance was approximately 22. In the 1945-46 school year, 23 students were enrolled at Harper School and the average daily attendance was approximately 20. By the 1944-45 school year, when there were 95 rural school districts in all of St. Clair County, the majority (81) reported an average daily attendance of fewer than 15 students. In fact, 53 of these districts had an average daily attendance of fewer than 10.¹¹

According to family tradition supported by enrollment records, a preponderance of Harpers have attended and been involved in the operation of Harper School over the years. This is as might be expected, given the history of the community and the fact that it was so close-knit. For example in 1946-47, when there were 23 students, ten of them were named Harper (Janalee Harper, Beverly Harper, Owen Harper, Shirley Harper, Paul Harper, Kathleen Harper, Zelpha Harper, Opal Harper, Patsy Harper, and Peggy Harper). Those particular Harper children had three different sets of parents. The teacher was Mrs. Geneva Harper of Osceola while Otha Harper, also of Osceola, was a member of the school board. In 1913-14, when there were 44 students at Harper School, nine of them were Harpers. J. L. Harper was one of the trustees and John W. Harper was clerk. In another, undetermined year when there were 44 students, ten of them were Harpers.¹²

School District No. 48 records from 1913 through 1952 document a high rate of teacher turnover at Harper School. A few teachers taught back-to-back school terms but most teachers taught there for only one year. A partial record of Harper School teachers and principals is as follows:

1913-1914	S. C. Crouch	Principal
1915-1916	Harvey K. Hill	Principal
1916-1917	Mrs. Alta Bridwell	Teacher

¹⁰ Teacher's Term Reports for Harper School, various years.

¹¹ Compiled from teachers' term reports for Harper School, Harper School programs for 1913-14, and State Superintendent of Public Schools, *Rural Education and Rural Life in Missouri, Report of the Cooperative Study of...* (Jefferson City, MO: Mid-State Printing Co., 1945), p. 147.

¹² Teachers' term reports.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 10

**Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri**

1917-1918	Ethel Myers	Teacher
1919-1920	Enid Vannice	Teacher
1920-1921	Goldie-Rollian Frasure	Teacher
1921-1922	D. W. Strong	Teacher
1922-1923	Ruth McClelland	Teacher
1923-1924	James McClelland	Teacher
1924-1925	Lydia Wood	Teacher
1925-1926	Bethel Bradley	Teacher
1927-1928	James McClelland	Teacher
1928-1929	Paul Copenhaver	Teacher
1930-1931	Geneva Murray	Teacher
1931-1933	Ruby Parson	Teacher
1934-1936	Elora L Meredith	Teacher
1936-1939	Boyce Scott	Teacher
1939-1940	Guy Wood	Teacher
1940-1941	Donald Boring	Teacher
1941-1943	Elaine Wood	Teacher
1943-1944	Ethel Stull	Teacher
1944-1946	Geneva Harper	Teacher
1946-1947	Bondena Harper	Teacher
1947-1948	Dolsie Shelton	Teacher
1948-1951	Helen Mitchell	Teacher
1951-1952	Geneva Harper	Teacher

Of the teachers who taught multiple years, Boyce Scott and Helen Mitchell each taught three consecutive terms (1936-39 and 1948-51, respectively). But Geneva Harper taught on three different occasions: In 1930-31 (as Geneva Murray before her marriage to Elder Wilmer Harper, who was on the school board when she was first hired and later preacher at Goshen Church), and from 1944-46 and 1951-52 (as Geneva Harper). Mrs. Harper was the last teacher the school ever had.

Oral histories were used to supplement the various records found for Harper School. Former student Evelyn (Gilbert) Cary moved to a farm near Harper and entered the second grade in 1937. She walked to school, attending until she was graduated from the 8th grade in 1943. This was before the building had electricity. Mrs. Cary recalled that during the late 1930s or early 1940s, the Missouri State Board of Education believed that light coming from windows on opposite sides of a schoolhouse could be harmful to the students' eyesight and recommended physical changes to the buildings to alleviate this perceived problem. Most districts made the changes,

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 11

**Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri**

she recalled, but not Harper. Members of the Harper School Board (which included her father, Richard Gilbert) felt that making the schoolroom darker would damage pupil's eyes more than crosslighting. The school board at Iconium School in neighboring Jackson Township felt likewise and also failed to comply, she said.

Mrs. Cary also recalled that there was not enough money to purchase playground equipment, so the students played simple games such as tag, fox and the goose, marbles and dare base. Despite the shortage of funds the school had a ball team and played neighboring schools, she said. Each December a Christmas party was a noontime feature, and adult involvement was strong. The end of each school year was celebrated with a pie supper. Adults in the community occasionally rehearsed for and performed plays in the schoolhouse. Mrs. Cary recalled that during one summer between 1936 and 1940, adult members of the Harper community gathered at the school to make mattresses for poor families. One cotton-filled mattress was provided for each two persons in a household. Mrs. Cary's own household was a recipient of two mattresses. She remembered that the cotton felt good in the beginning but eventually it hardened and then it became more difficult to fall asleep.¹³

In its early years, Harper School served as a church building as well as a schoolhouse, and throughout its history it has filled an important educational and social role in the community. Harper School was used as a polling place for Polk Township until 2003, and if a ramp can be constructed onto the concrete porch, this election-day function may be restored. On odd-numbered years, a reunion of Harper descendants is held at the church. Attendance runs well over a hundred and is thought to be larger each year. Members of the community plan to maintain the old schoolhouse and make it available for social events as in the past. Each spring now the third grade teacher from Osceola School brings her class to Harper School. They write on the old chalk board, look at historic pictures and hear the history of the Harper family and the school. Since very little remains of the original hamlet, Harper School serves as a particularly important reminder of their own histories .

Because St. Clair County has not been surveyed, it is impossible to say whether Harper School is unique in its part of southwestern Missouri. However it is probably one of the few early schoolhouses in St. Clair County still in excellent condition and regularly utilized by its community. Bear Creek School, where the Harper students were transferred in 1952, no longer stands. If it ever became necessary, Harper School could easily be converted back to a one-room schoolhouse. Today Harper School stands as fine local example of this once common building type. Its significance as a typical one-room country school is readily apparent.

¹³ Mrs. Evelyn (Gilbert) Cary, a former student at Harper School, was interviewed by Linda Harper on November 2, 2006.

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Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Harper School, St. Clair Co., ca. 1900



This early photo shows Harper School before the addition of a porch in the 1920s. The male teacher (perhaps his title was principal) is at left and thirty-three students are arranged in three rows in front of the building.

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Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Harper School, ca. 1930



This Depression-era photo shows the schoolhouse with its present shed-roof and a cupola for a school bell. Teacher Geneva Murray—looking scarcely older than some of the students—is in the back row middle. Front row, L to R: _____ Hughes, Ira McLerran, Dorothy White, Evelyn Hughes, Inez McLerran, Ella Raynor, unknown, Wilma Kay McClellan, unknown, Clayr Butler. Back row, L to R: unknown, Ivan McLerran, unknown, unknown, teacher Geneva Murray, Elma Gaston, Ila McLerran, Irvin Harper, Melvin McMillin.

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Continuation Sheet

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Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Harper School, Class of 1941-1942



Harper School, Elaine Wood, Teacher—1941-42

- 1st Row-Dewey Henderson, Ronald Dee Gilbert, Naomi Breshears,
Patsy Harper, Peggy Harper, Kathleen Harper, Shirley
Harper, Leona Grace Brice**
- 2nd Row-Ida Jo Tankersley, Ruth Dietz, Iva Jean Tankersley,
LeRoy Harper, Edsel Mulkey, Leslie Harper, Evelyn
Gilbert, Wanita Gilbert**
- 3rd Row-Paul Harper, Opal Harper, Zelpha Harper, Vernon
Dietz, Miss Elaine, Teacher.**

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Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 15

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Harper School Teacher's Contract for 1944-1945

- 7 The teacher must make all monthly reports and file them with the district clerk at the close of each month before the monthly salary shall be paid. In addition a term report shall be filed at the close of the year. Section 10433, R. S., 1939.
- 8 No teacher shall receive the last month's salary until he or she presents a receipt for the term report signed by the county superintendent. Section 10615, R. S., 1939.
- 9 No person shall be granted a license to teach who is not of good moral character. Section 10627, R. S., 1939.
- 10 A teacher's certificate may be revoked by the county superintendent upon satisfactory proof of incompetency, immorality, neglect of duty or the annulling of written contracts with the board of directors without the consent of the majority of the members of the board which is a party to such contract. Section 10631, R. S., 1939.
- 11 The board may not employ a member of the board or a relative by consanguinity or affinity within the fourth degree as a teacher. Section 10342, R. S., 1939.

TEACHER'S CONTRACT

Section 10342, R. S., 1939

THIS AGREEMENT, made the 14th day of August, 1944
 between Mrs Geneva Harper, a legally qualified public-school teacher
 of the first part, and the School Board of District No. 48, County of St Clair
 State of Missouri, of the second part.

WITNESSETH: That the said Geneva Harper agrees to teach in
 public school of said District for the term of 2 months, commencing on the 21st
 day of August, 1944, for the sum of 85.⁰⁰ dollars per month
 to be paid monthly, and that for services properly rendered and reports correctly made, according
 law, said Board agrees to issue warrants upon the St Clair County Treasurer
 in favor of the said Geneva Harper for the amount of wages due
 under this agreement.

This Contract is subscribed to with a full understanding of Sections *10337, 10340, 10342, 1034
 10366, 10367, 10368, L1939-705, 10429, L1939-707, 10433, 10615, 10625, 10626, 10627, 10628, 1063
 R. S., 1939.

Done by order of the Board, this 14 day of August, 1944

Otha Harper, President

Kathryn Tankersley, Teacher

Attest: Kathryn Tankersley, District Clerk. Geneva Harper

Note: These sections apply particularly to teachers' contracts.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 16

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Harper School Teacher Geneva Murray Harper, ca. 1940s



Mrs. Harper taught at Harper School on three different occasions, for a total of four years. She became the school's last teacher when she returned to teach the 1951-52 term. In the fall of 1952, the students were transferred to Bear Creek School in a consolidation move and Harper School was closed.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 17

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Teacher's Term Report for 1917-1918

INSTRUCTIONS

This report must be made in duplicate. One copy is to be filed with the district clerk, the other with the county superintendent, who should receipt the teacher for it. Sections 10861 and 10935, R. S. 1909.

The teacher cannot legally draw wages for the last month of the term until this report has been made and filed.

Only one term report, made in duplicate, is required in one school year. If there be a change of teachers, the one who is teaching at the end of the year should make term report for the entire year. The law recognizes only one term each year in each school district, and one teacher each year for a one-room school.

Should there be more than one teacher employed, the subordinate teachers (the assistants) should report to the principal the necessary facts. The principal should make up and submit to the board, and to the county superintendent if the school is under his supervision, the consolidated term report.

Teacher's Term Report	To District Clerk and County Superintendent. <i>H. S.</i>
District No. <i>St. Clair</i>	County of <i>St. Clair</i>
STATE OF MISSOURI,	
For the term beginning on the <i>15th</i> day of <i>August</i> , 191 <i>7</i> , and ending this <i>29th</i> day of <i>March</i> , 191 <i>8</i> .	<i>O. School</i> Teacher.
IMPORTANT.	
<i>The board can not legally order the last month's warrant drawn until this report has been made and filed with district clerk and county superintendent. To issue the last month's warrant before the board has received the county superintendent's receipt for this report makes the members of the board personally liable for the money thus illegally paid, and may also cause loss of State School Fund on part of the school district. The apportionment of State School Fund depends upon this report. (R. S. 1909, Secs. 10861 and 10935, and Sec. 10888 Session Acts, 1911.)</i>	

TERM STATISTICS

- Enrollment: { White—male, *23*; female, *12*; total, *35*
Colored—male, *0*; female, *0*; total, *0*; grand total, *35*
- Total days' attendance by all pupils, *2300*; average daily attendance, *205*
- *Length of school term in days, *160*
- Total number visitors, *24*
- No. cases tardiness, *6*; truancy, *0*; corporal punishment, *0*
- No. pupils that may be seated in school—white, *38*; colored, *0*; total, *38*
- No. pupils completing common school course of study—male, *1*; female, *1*; total, *2*
- No. yrs. in H. S. Course; No. enrolled in H. S.; male; female; total
- No. volumes in library, *25*; value of library, *\$4.50*; amount spent this year for library: *\$1.00*
- { State: Life; 5-Year; Rural; Total;
Normal: Diploma; Elementary; Total;
County: 1st Grade; 2nd Grade; 3rd Grade;
Special; Total; Grand total

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 19

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Early plat map (date undetermined) of Township 38, Range 24, Sections 1, 2, 11 and 12.
In 1875, Harper School was constructed in the SW quarter of Section 12.

Township,
St. Clair County, #38, 24 Range
Mo.

<p>4227 Mr. Solmer 11.59 41.51 May 5 1882 1888 FC. 4015.</p>	<p>William 4 Cassidy Oct 4 1888 56322</p>	<p>William 4 Cassidy Dec 29 1889 60182</p>	<p>40.82 40.01 Daniel Abimathay July 23 1858 55659</p>	<p>John D. Jackson July 23 1886 52449 Samuel Stephens Mrs. Chas. Goales July 30 1858 56298</p>
<p>vd 670</p>	<p>John M. Ambler Dec 9 1858 56599</p>	<p>John M. Ambler Jan 18 1856 48620</p>	<p>John M. Ambler Dec 3 1855 56367 DE</p>	<p>Stephens Brooks Feb 20 1859 1807 Jan 1 1841 Mrs. Chas. Goales</p>
<p>195 Hd</p>	<p>James Martin Sept 27 1858 52285</p>	<p>John M. Lamson Drove only here at farm of Thomas Lamson March 4 1844 27078</p>	<p>John B. Oct 7 1857 53389</p>	<p>John M. Lambson Jan 21 1849 1591</p>
<p>1895 Hd</p>	<p>William F. Cassidy Jan 24 1858 Mr. 24 36</p>	<p>Bernard Pitt Aug 20 1839 2649</p>	<p>James G. Harber Dec 21 1857 54153 May 22 1857 Mr. 30 571</p>	<p>James William H. Childs March 26 1853 1605 James G. Harber Dec 21 1857 54161</p>
<p>B</p>	<p>Isaac Cassidy Feb 1858 57446</p>	<p>Joseph M. Bernier July 29 1857 5804</p>	<p>Harvey Harber Jan 11 1857 6373</p>	<p>James W. Harber Jan 17 1854 11915</p>

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 21

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri

Bibliography:

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Mayer, Duane. *The Heritage of Missouri: A History*. St. Louis: State Publishing Company, 1970.

McLerran, Ivan. Interviewed by Linda Harper, May 2006.

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Williams, Claude A. *A History of Education in Missouri: The Essential Facts Concerning the History and Organization of Missouri's Schools*. Jefferson City, Missouri: Hugh Stephens Printing Company, 1911.

Property Name
County, Missouri

Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri
Page 4

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property one acre

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	454580	4212720			

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

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. [I will mark the location and calculate the UTM's as required but the map itself must be provided. You need what is known as the Iconium quad. USGS maps can be purchased from the Dept. of Natural Resources, Geological Survey & Resource Assessment, P.O. Box 250, Rolla, MO 65402 or call (573) 368-2125.]

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property. [Acceptable B&W prints still haven't been provided. Please write, call or e-mail if you don't understand the requirements.]

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 Harper Homemakers Club, Linda Harper, trustee

street & number Rural Route 1, Box 36 telephone (417) 282-5079

city or town Quincy state MO zip code 65735

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10,11 Page 22

**Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri**

Verbal Boundary Description:

Harper School occupies one square acre in the SW corner of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 12, Township 38, Range 24 in St. Clair County, Missouri.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated one square acre tract represents all of the land historically associated with Harper School. This is the tract which was donated to the Directors of Harper School District No. 2 on February 20, 1892, by John M. and Martha D. Harper to be used for school purposes. In 1961, the Harper Homemakers Club purchased an additional two acres which are not included in the nomination.

Form Prepared By:

1. Linda Harper/Secretary/Treasurer
Harper Homemakers Club
Rural Route 1, Box 36
Quincy, MO 65735
(417) 282-5079
Original preparer

2. Roger Maserang
Historian
State Historic Preservation Office
Jefferson City, MO 65102
(573) 522-4641
Revisions and additional context

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section Photographs Page 23

**Harper School
St. Clair County, Missouri**

Photographs:

The following information is the same for all photos with the exception of those scanned into the nomination:

Harper School

Harper vicinity

St. Clair Co., Missouri

Photographer: Linda Harper

Date of photographs: May 2007

Negatives: On file with Missouri SHPO, P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102

List of photographs:

1. Primary (west) elevation, facing east.
2. West and south elevations, facing northeast.
3. East and north elevations, facing southwest.
4. Detail of north elevation, facing southwest.
5. Boy's privy, facing south.
6. Original chalkboard, facing east.
7. Northwest corner, facing northwest.
8. Detail of original wood stove, facing west.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Harper School

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MISSOURI, St. Clair

DATE RECEIVED: 6/14/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/28/07
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 7/13/07 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/28/07
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07000751

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 7.24.07 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in the
National Register**


RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



HARPER SCHOOL
EST. 1875

1 HARPER SCHOOL
ST. CLAIR CO., MISSOURI



MAPLE SCHOOL
EST. 1875

2 HARPER SCHOOL
ST. CLAIR CO., MISSOURI



3 HARPER SCHOOL
ST. CLAIR CO., MISSOURI



4 HARPER SCHOOL
ST. CLAIR CO., MISSOURI



5 HARPER SCHOOL
ST. CLAIR CO., MISSOURI



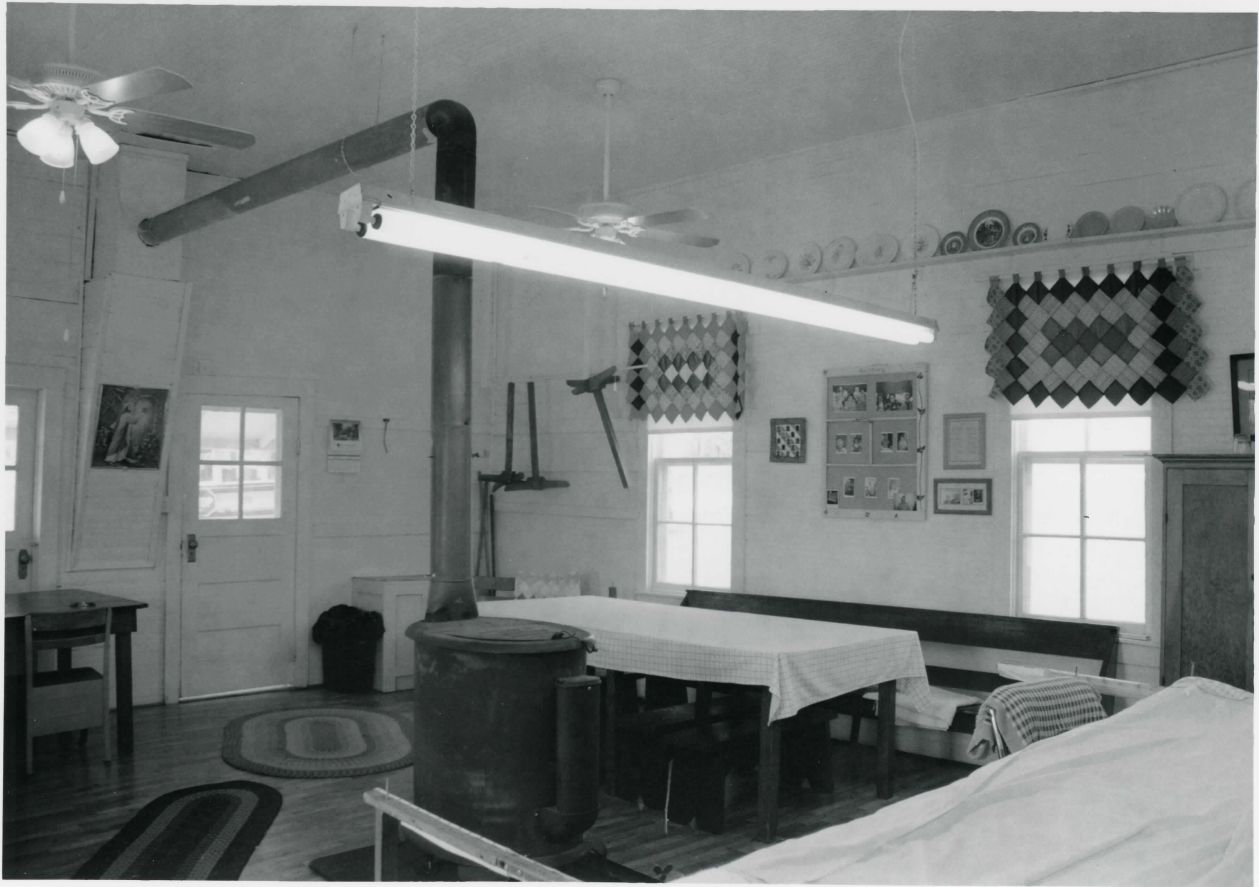
Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj

Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

012345678910

Handwritten notes on the rightmost chalkboard, including names like 'Krisin', 'Ernie M.', 'Alexis', and 'Darius', along with a complex diagram of interconnected nodes and lines.

6 HARPER SCHOOL
ST. CLAIR CO, MISSOURI



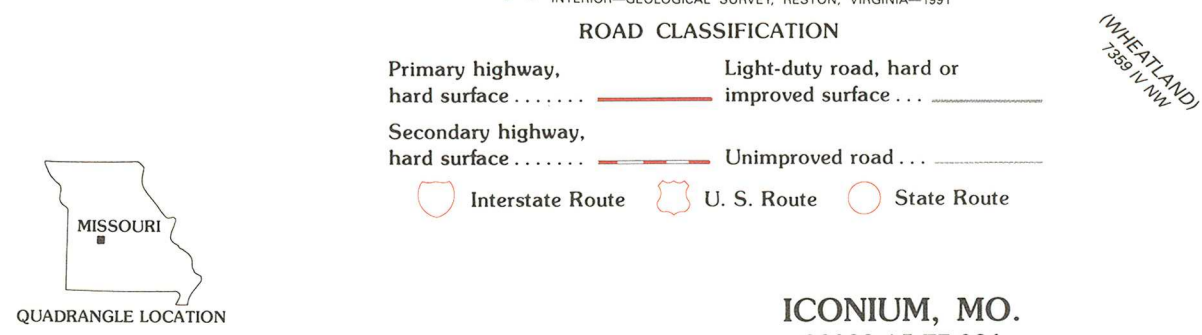
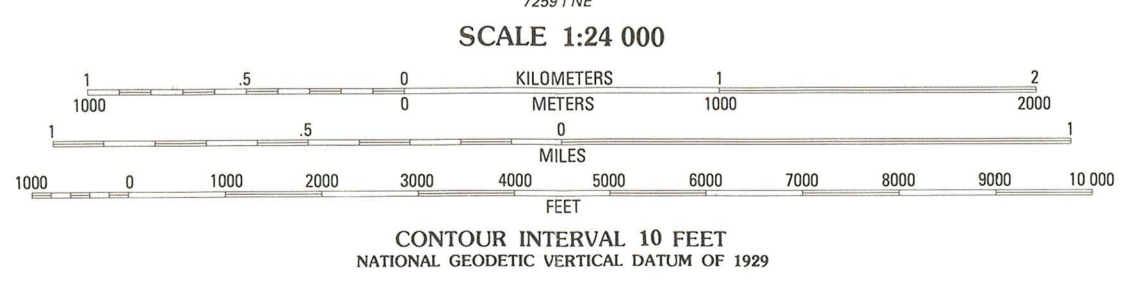
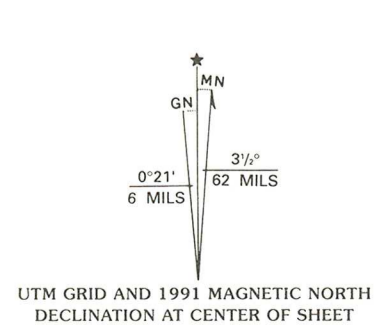
7 HARPER SCHOOL
ST. CLAIR CO, MISSOURI



8 HARPER SCHOOL
ST. CLAIR CO., MISSOURI



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Compiled from aerial photographs taken 1986
Field checked 1989. Map edited 1991
Projection: Missouri coordinate system, west zone
(transverse Mercator)
10,000-foot grid ticks: Missouri coordinate
system, west and central zones
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15
1927 North American Datum
The difference between 1927 North American Datum and North
American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) for 7.5-minute intersections
is given in USGS Bulletin 1875. The NAD 83 is shown by
dashed corner ticks
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map
Areas covered by dashed light-blue pattern
are subject to controlled inundation
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
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AND DIVISION OF GEOLOGY AND LAND SURVEY
MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, ROLLA, MISSOURI 65401
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

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