

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

For NPS use only

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

received

date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Lincoln School

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number Missouri Highway B not for publication

city, town Canton vicinity of #9-Hon. Harold L. Volkmer

state Missouri code 029 county Lewis code 056

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name City of Canton, Missouri

street & number 124 North Fifth Street

city, town Canton vicinity of state Missouri 63435

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of Recorder of Deeds

street & number Lewis County Courthouse

city, town Monticello state Missouri 63457

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Missouri State Historic Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1981 federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Department of Natural Resources  
Historic Preservation Program

city, town Jefferson City state Missouri 65102

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Lincoln School faces east from a wooded lot in the center of Canton, Missouri. A vernacular, common bond brick building, with walls 13" thick, it rises one story from an ashlar limestone foundation. The simple ornamentation of its facades is yet strongly marked: the transomed doubleleaf entrance, which dominates the primary elevation, and all the one-over-one sash windows, are crowned with projecting segmental rowlock arches and skewbacks of brick. The medium-pitched, gable roof, sheathed in asphalt shingles, is defined by its surrounding wooden boxed cornice and plain frieze. The major alterations to the structure were made at an undetermined time, when the original wooden floor was replaced with concrete and the entrance door raised; both alterations were made necessary by the flooding of the Mississippi River, which yearly inundated the building.

The school measures 24' by 42' and its height to the cornice is 13'. In addition to the dominant window type, the secondary facades display smaller, fixed sash three light windows on the east, set under limestone lintels. All fenestration is trimmed with limestone lugsills.

Entrance to the building is made through doubleleaf panelled doors. An interior brick stove chimney, which once served a wood stove, but is now converted to gas, is centered on the south elevation.

Originally the school was a one room structure, but sometime after 1924, a partition was constructed, running north to south, five feet inside the entrance. Indoor toilets were added, as well as electricity.

At present, the school building is owned by the City of Canton and is used for equipment storage.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1880 Builder/Architect J. S. Eaton

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Lincoln School is significant as the first and only black school in Canton, Missouri. From its construction in 1880 until the Canton Public School System was integrated in 1956, Lincoln School provided the only educational opportunity for the area's black citizens, teaching grades one through eight and at times providing adult education classes as well. The school was built in response to an appeal from the town's black community for adequate facilities for the instruction of their children, which since 1866 had been held intermittently in a variety of locations.<sup>1</sup> The contractor for the structure was J. S. Eaton.<sup>2</sup> The building served as a school until 1956, then remained vacant for a number of years. It is used at present for storage. There is now a movement among Canton's citizens for the building's preservation as a local landmark.

The first school in Canton for Black children began on September 17, 1866, in a building last occupied by the Post Office.<sup>3</sup> The Canton Board of Education agreed to pay \$5 a month for its use and employed S.S. Seiler as teacher for \$50 a month, a high rate of pay, at that time.<sup>4</sup> Apparently the position had already been declined by other teachers. The school was closed, however, at the end of the year, because the Board lacked the funds to continue it. There is no evidence that school was held later that year, or the next.<sup>5</sup>

In 1868, the school was reorganized, and a new teacher appointed for \$30 a month. This time classes were held in a frame house owned by R. A. Grant.<sup>6</sup> By 1870, records indicate that the teacher of the school was authorized to admit students over the legal age on payment of \$1 a month tuition, provided they not interfere with the instruction of the regular pupils.<sup>7</sup> At this point, the school had taken up quarters in the African Methodist Church building.

By 1872, resentment surfaced among the black community in Canton. A large new school for white students had been constructed the year before and the contrast of white and black facilities was striking.<sup>8</sup> In response to their protests, the building owned by the A.M.E. Church was repaired by the Board, and new equipment purchased.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, on March 1, 1880, the School Board minutes recorded "a petition from the colored citizens of Canton asking and praying for a better school building for the accommodation of the colored children of Canton School District...."<sup>10</sup> A committee was appointed to estimate the cost of a new school building. On March 16, moving with unaccustomed rapidity, The Board resolved to submit to the voters a proposition to erect a new "colored school" at a cost of \$800.<sup>11</sup> At a special election on May 1, the proposal was carried.<sup>12</sup>

A location was chosen, a parcel of land in town which had been set aside as a park, and the project moved forward. On July 6, 1880, bids were opened and the contract for the construction of a brick building, 42' by 24' in size, was awarded to J. S. Eaton for \$700.<sup>13</sup>

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Canton Board of Education, Minutes of Meetings, 1866-1956.
2. Nickerson, Bertie. Interview with Colman K. Winn, April, 1980.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .2 acre more or less

Quadrangle name "Canton Mo.-111."

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

All of Lot 1, Block 30 in the Original Town of Canton. Dimensions fo the lot are 56' by 150', comprising .2 acre more or less.

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title I. Colman K. Winn, Archivist

organization Culver-Stockton College

date April, 1980

street & number

telephone

city or town Canton

state Missouri 63435

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Fred A. Lopez*

12/27/82

Director, Department of Natural Resources and

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

LINCOLN SCHOOL

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

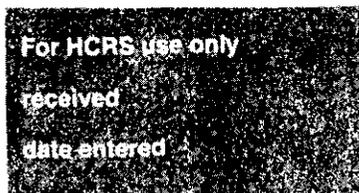
M.L. Clay was selected as teacher for the new school, at a salary of \$35 a month and at his request, was given permission to organize a school for adults at night--with the understanding that he take responsibility for expenses incurred and damage that might be sustained to the building.<sup>14</sup>

Even with the new, though modest, building, Lincoln School had many problems, which would continue throughout its seventy-five year existence: lack of furniture and equipment, poorly-educated teachers, rapid turnover of those teachers,<sup>15</sup> crowded classroom conditions and few textbooks.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, when a child graduated from Lincoln School, there was little opportunity for him to pursue higher education; no high school for blacks existed in Canton. In 1946, the School Board finally arranged with the Board in Hannibal to send its black students there to school-- a daily roundtrip of 80 miles. This difficult situation lasted until the final integration of Canton Schools following the Supreme Court decision in 1954, at which time Lincoln School was closed and its students admitted into white Canton schools.

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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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LINCOLN SCHOOL



Continuation sheet

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes of meeting of the Canton Board of Education, 1 March 1880.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes of meeting, 6 July 1880.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Canton Post Master, by Colman K. Winn, April 1980.

<sup>4</sup>Minutes of meeting, 15 September 1866.

<sup>5</sup>Minutes of meeting, 16 January 1867.

<sup>6</sup>Minutes of meeting, 7 February 1870.

<sup>7</sup>Minutes of meeting, 3 October 1870.

<sup>8</sup>Minutes of meeting, 3 May 1872.

<sup>9</sup>Minutes of meeting, 6 October 1873.

<sup>10</sup>Minutes of meeting, 1 March 1880.

<sup>11</sup>Minutes of meeting, 16 March 1880.

<sup>12</sup>Minutes of meeting, 3 May 1880.

<sup>13</sup>Minutes of meeting, 6 July 1880.

<sup>14</sup>Minutes of meeting, 4 October 1880.

<sup>15</sup>The teachers' terms of service at Lincoln School were generally short, lasting usually one year, sometimes even less. There was a single exception: Charles W. Lear, the school's first black teacher, was appointed to the position the first full year in the new building, 1881-1882. Lear was reelected to the post for the next 16 years. Replaced in 1899 for an unknown reason, he was rehired in 1905 and served until 1921, a total of 32 years. See: Eleanora E. Tate, "Back to Her Beginnings," Des Moines Tribune, 27 November 1975. Information also gathered from minutes of meetings of the Canton Board of Education, from 1866 to 1955.

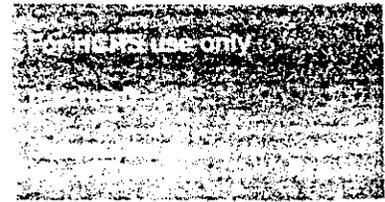
<sup>16</sup>Eleanora E. Tate, "Back to her Beginnings," Des Moines Tribune, 27 November 1975. Ms. Tate is a former student at Lincoln School.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid, and Bertie Nickerson, interview with Colman K. Winn, April 1980.

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LINCOLN SCHOOL



Continuation sheet

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Page 1

3. Post Master, Canton Missouri Post Office. Interview with Colman K. Wiss, April 1980.
4. Tate, Eleanora E. "Back to Her Beginnings." Des Moines Tribune, 27 November 1975.

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ITEM NUMBER 11

PAGE 1

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2. Janice R. Cameron, Research Assistant  
Department of Natural Resources  
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P.O. Box 176  
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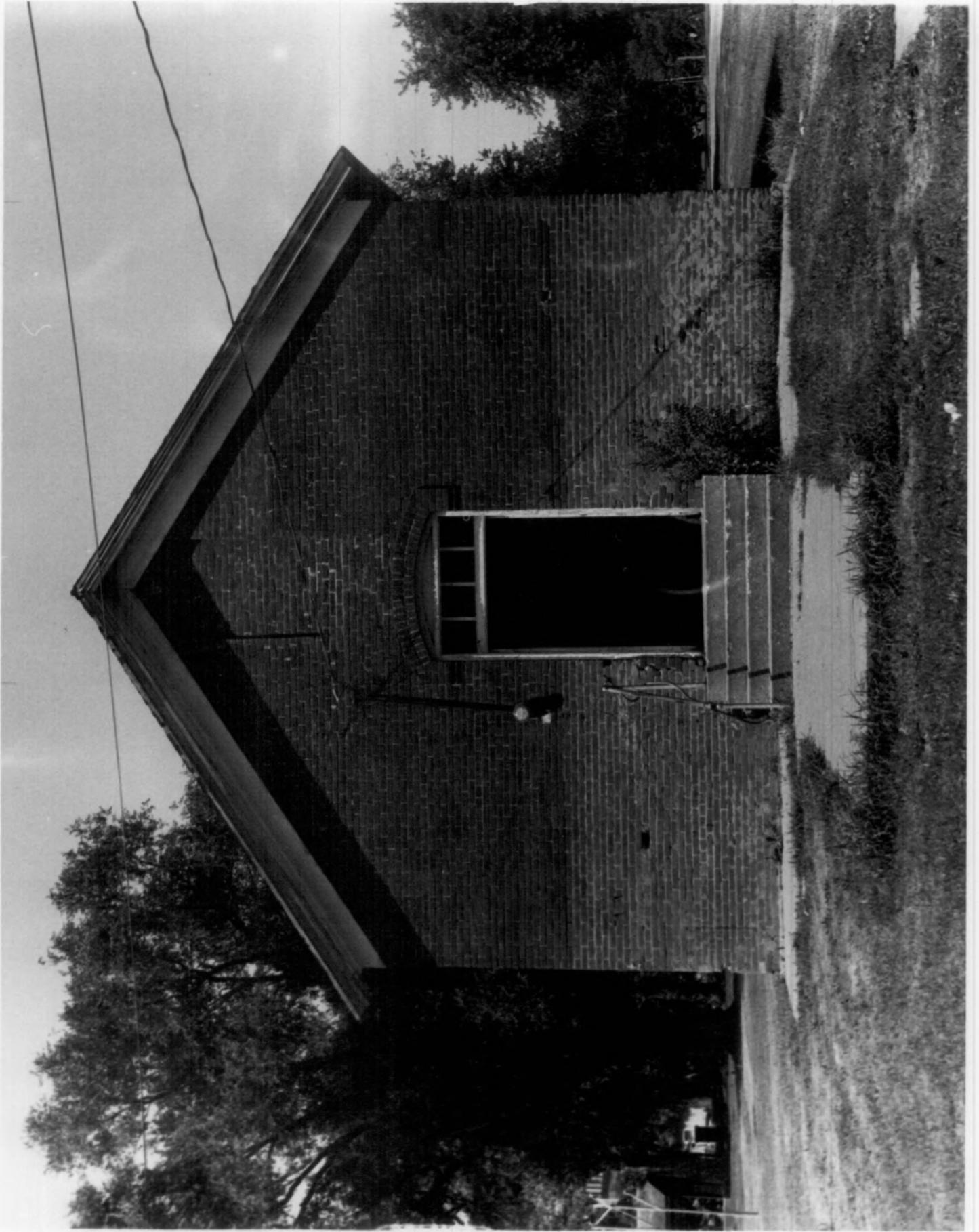
#1 of 2

LINCOLN SCHOOL  
Canton, Missouri

Photographer: Esther Jones  
July 18, 1980

Neg. Loc.: Public Relations Office  
Culver-Stockton College  
Canton, Missouri

General view of primary facade from the east.



LINCOLN SCHOOL  
Canton, Missouri

#2 of 2

Photographer: Esther Jones

July 16, 1980

Neg. Loc.: Public Relations Office  
Culver-Stockton College  
Canton, Missouri

General view from the north.

