

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Charter Oak Schoolhouse

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

OFFICE COPY

CITY, TOWN Schuline

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
24th

STATE Illinois

VICINITY OF
CODE 12

COUNTY Randolph

CODE 077

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Randolph County Historical Society (c/o Mrs. Emily Lyons)

STREET & NUMBER RR #1 Kaskaskia Island

CITY, TOWN St. Mary's

VICINITY OF

STATE Missouri

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Randolph County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Chester

STATE Illinois

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE 1. Inventory of Historic Landmarks in Randolph County
2. Inventory of Historic Structures in Randolph County

DATE 1. April 1974
2. October 1972

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Illinois Department of Conservation, Division of Historic Sites

CITY, TOWN Springfield

STATE Illinois

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Charter Oak Schoolhouse has an octagonal plan with a single interior room and a vestibule attached to the east elevation. There is another doorway on the southwest elevation. The structure's one story rests on a foundation of locally quarried limestone and has brick walls surmounted by a low pitched roof with a central belfry of clapboard. The belfry has louvers on the north, south, east and west sides. A chimney with a concrete cap rises along the southeast elevation between the vestibule and the window. The clapboard vestibule rests on a concrete slab. Each of the southeast, south, west, northwest, north, and northeast elevations has a single 2/2 double-hung window with a semi-circular arch and a limestone sill. The brick is laid in common bond and, at each corner, is raised from the plane of the walls to form a pilaster strip. A cornice is formed by four courses of corbelled brick. The Schoolhouse's basic dimensions are given on the attached sheets.

The present structure described above has evolved from the following changes made in the original structure. It is uncertain, but the belfry may not have been placed on the schoolhouse until 1883. The vestibule was added sometime before 1918. The southwest side door was added sometime after 1920. At least before 1916 and until September 1968 the north elevation had a 2/2 double-hung window on either side of the original window. These two windows were added to satisfy the state's legal requirements for lighting. These two windows were removed and replaced by brick in a fashion similar to the original as part of the restoration by the Randolph County Historical Society. That restoration also included repointing the original "soft brick" with portland cement, covering the roof of the belfry, school, and vestibule with shakes, and the installation of the present floor and sub-floor.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1873

BUILDER/ARCHITECT -- William M. Holcomb

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Charter Oak Schoolhouse has national and state-wide significance. Of the 53 octagonal schoolhouses known to have existed in the United States (1), the Charter Oak Schoolhouse is one of nine which remain (2). It is the only octagonal schoolhouse known to have existed in Illinois.

HISTORY

The Charter Oak Schoolhouse was built in 1873 by William H. Holcomb for \$1000.00 and was the third tax-supported schoolhouse built on the site. Daniel Ling, the teacher in the previous schoolhouse, advocated the replacement of the second schoolhouse (1863-1873) with an octagonal structure. Ling was a native of Michigan and the presently available documentation reveals only that he studied in the "East". The origin of Ling's promotion of the octagonal plan is presently unknown. It cannot be attributed to Orson Fowler simply because the schoolhouse was erected after the publication of A Home for All or the Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building (1848) which inspired most of the octagonal structures built in America. Octagonal schoolhouses have at least one source besides Fowler's work for 20 of the 53 octagonal schoolhouses were built before Fowler's book was first published. Wherever Ling obtained the idea, he advocated it to the school board on the grounds that eight walls, each with its own window, would permit more light than other contemporary designs which he believed left classrooms dark. Ling also claimed that octagonally arranged walls would more effectively resist the windstorms and tornadoes which frequent the area than the four-walled schoolhouses commonly constructed. The structure served as a schoolhouse for 80 years until 1953 when all one-room schoolhouses in the area were closed. Between the years 1873 and 1953 the school building was also used for public meetings, farm meetings, afternoon Sunday school, prayer meetings, spelling bees, speaking contests, political rallies and other meetings of importance to the community. When the school closed, it and the accompanying land were bought by Miss Nellie Ohms, a former teacher. The property was bought from her in 1960 by the Randolph County Historical Society which retains title today and maintains the structure as a museum for the interpretation of education in the one-room schoolhouse.

- (1) The number 53 is based on the most comprehensive inventory of octagonal structure Carl F. Schmidt, The Octagon Fad (Scottsville, New York: Carl F. Schmidt, 1958).
- (2) Contrary to locally publicized accounts and Frederick Koeper, Illinois Architecture from Territorial Times to the Present: A Selective Guide (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 266, the Charter Oak Schoolhouse is one of nine, not three, octagonal schoolhouses in the nation. In addition to Illinois', there are two in Ohio and one each in Delaware, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. This number is derived from contacting the State Historic Preservation Offices and historical societies in these states.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Flynn, Lily, "Charter Oak School," unpublished manuscript, n.P., n.d.
2. Schmidt, Carl F., The Octagon Fad (Scottsville, New York: Carl F. Schmidt, 1958).
3. On-site inspection by Keith A. Sculle, October 19, 1977.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

QUADRANGLE NAME _____

QUADRANGLE SCALE _____

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
E	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
G	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
F	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
H	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION _____

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Keith A. Sculle

ORGANIZATION

Illinois Department of Conservation

DATE

December 8, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

405 E. Washington

TELEPHONE

(217) 782-3340

CITY OR TOWN

Springfield

STATE

Illinois 62706

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

STATE _____

LOCAL _____

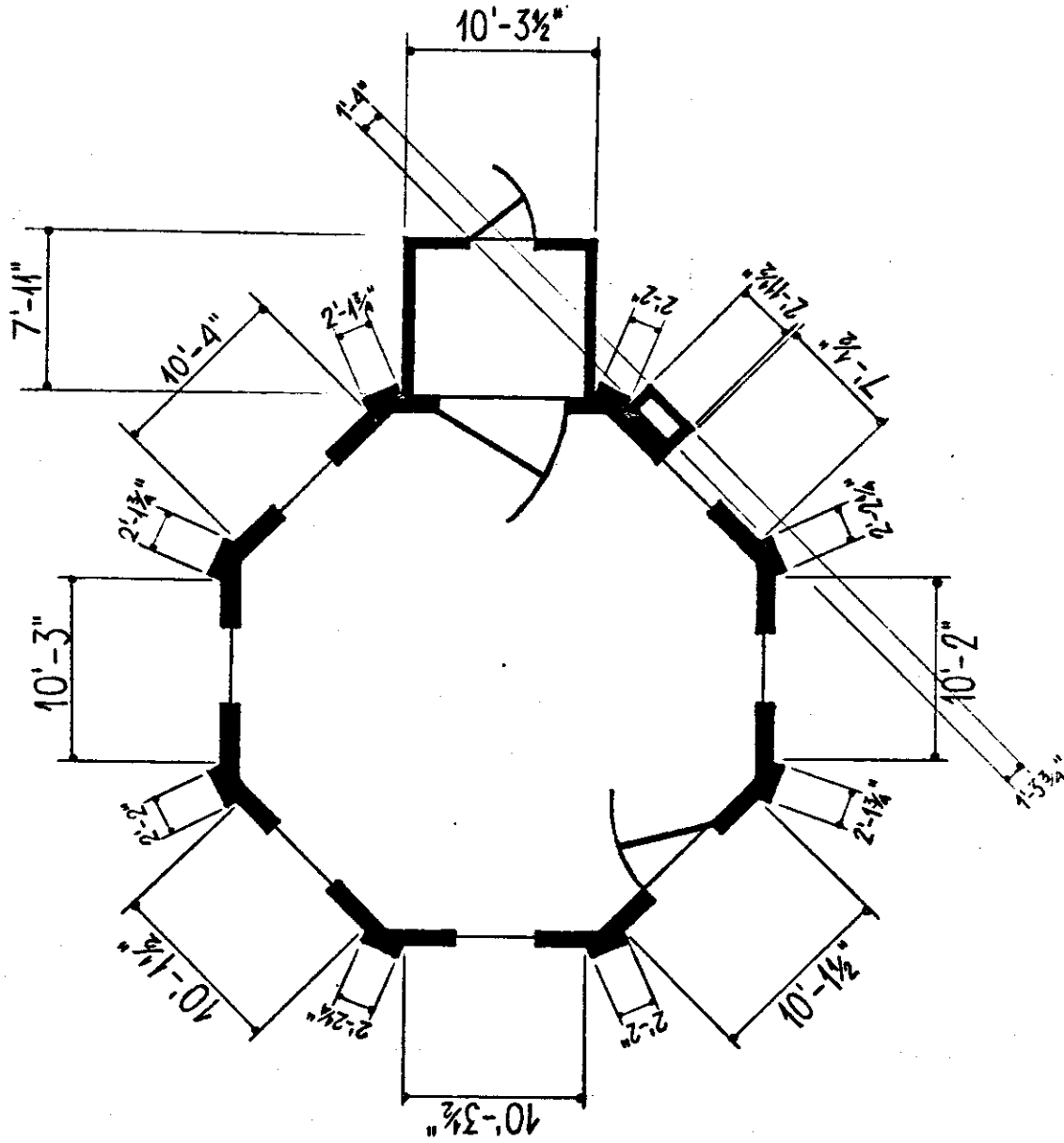
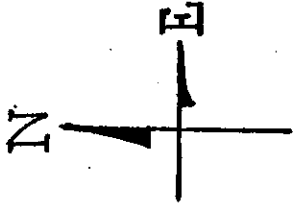
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE _____

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
ATTEST:	DATE
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION	DATE

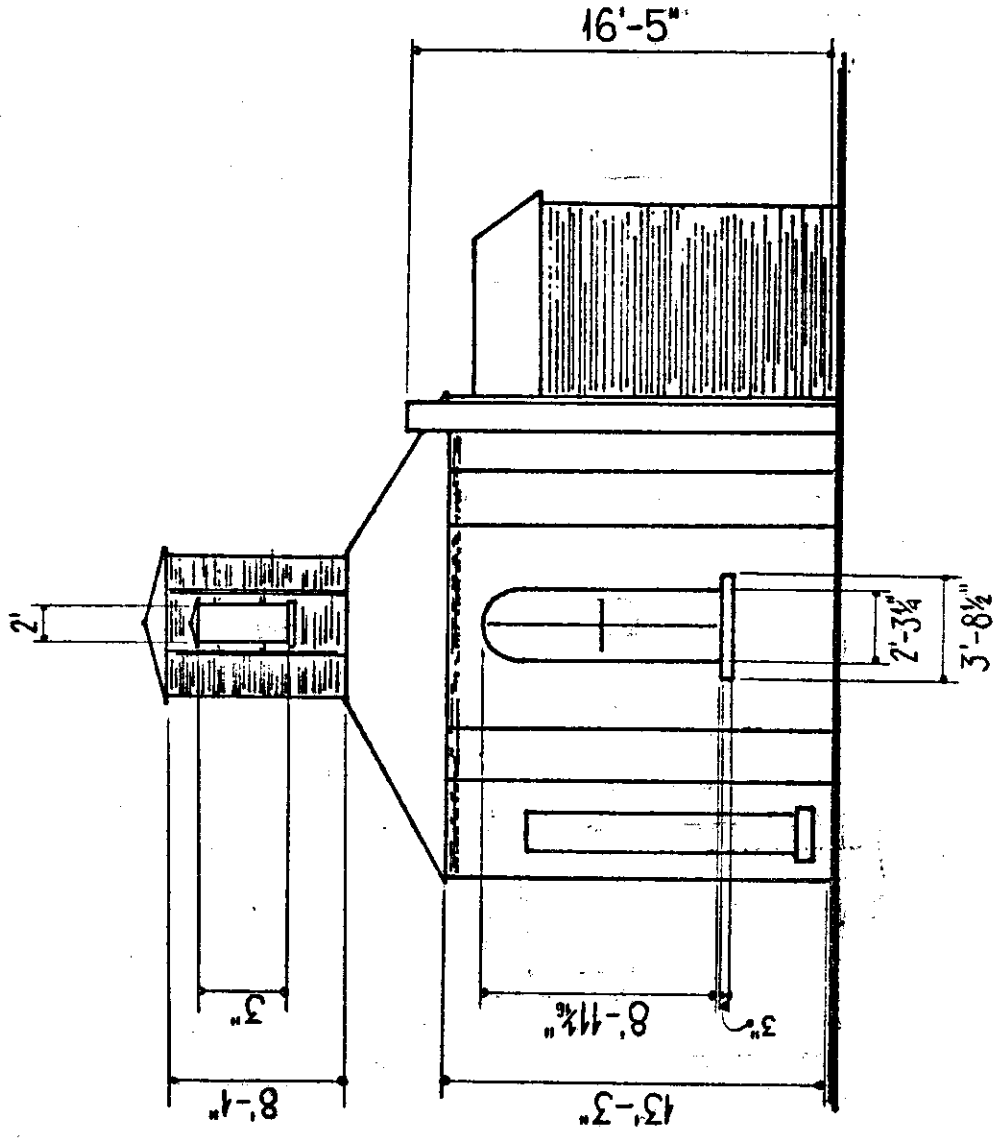


K.A. Sculle - 12/77

FLOOR PLAN
NO. SCALE

CHARTER OAK SCHOOLHOUSE
SCHULINE — RANDOLPH COUNTY — ILLINOIS

SHEET 1
OF 2 SHEETS



SOUTH ELEVATION
NO. SCALE

K.A. Seale - 12/77

SHEET 2
OF 2

CHARTER OAK SCHOOLHOUSE
SCHULINE — RANDOLPH COUNTY — ILLINOIS