

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Blees Military Academy

AND/OR COMMON

Still-Hildreth Osteopathic Sanatorium

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Highway 63 South

CITY, TOWN

Macon

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#9 - Hon. Harold L. Volkmer

STATE

Missouri

CODE

029

COUNTY

Macon

CODE

121

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT
☒ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☒ PUBLIC
☐ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☐ OCCUPIED
☒ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
☒ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ COMMERCIAL
☐ EDUCATIONAL
☐ ENTERTAINMENT
☐ GOVERNMENT
☐ INDUSTRIAL
☐ MILITARY
☐ MUSEUM
☒ PARK
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Macon

STREET & NUMBER

121 Bourke Street

CITY, TOWN

Macon

VICINITY OF

STATE

Missouri 63552

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Recorder of Deeds, Macon County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

121 Bourke Street

CITY, TOWN

Macon

STATE

Missouri 63552

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Missouri State Historical Survey

DATE

1978, 1979

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Department of Natural Resources

CITY, TOWN

Jefferson City

STATE

Missouri 65102

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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 Brees Military Academy, located on a 123 acre lot in the countryside just south of Macon, Missouri includes three buildings: Academic Hall and its adjacent heating facility (224' E-W X 88' N-S), the Gymnasium (100' E-W, 60' N-S) to the north and a modern garage to the west. Both major buildings are constructed in a variant of the Romanesque Revival style. Academic Hall is constructed of structural concrete and steel beams supported on iron columns and faced with buff brick and limestone over a concrete foundation. Because this building was designed to be fireproof, all interior features, window casings, doors and moldings, except for some wooden and cork floors which rest directly on concrete, are clad in molded copper. All walls and ceilings are finished with plaster. The Gymnasium is of frame construction faced with buff brick and limestone over a concrete foundation.

Decorative features of these buildings include crenellated gables and parapets, distinctively corbel tables and bartizans supported by corbeled culs-de-lampe. Academic Hall is capped with a hipped roof of red asbestos shingles and a large, gabled skylight, while the Gymnasium features a hipped roof faced with red tiles.

The interior elevation of Academic Hall reveals three floors and a basement. High coffered ceilings in the large open areas of the first floor are supported by Tuscan style iron columns and pilasters. A grand, wrought and cast iron staircase leads to the second floor aula or sun parlor. Galleried apartments at the second and third floor levels surround this grand open space, recessed behind a two story Tuscan colonnade. The large skylight above is suspended from 42' span riveted Howe type steel trusses supported by steel columns 14' above the top of the I beams just above the main ceiling. This trusswork also supports the gabled skylight above visible on the buildings' exterior. Academic Hall originally included 110 individual sleeping rooms of a small size (7'9" X 11'9"), 12 suites of faculty apartments, 3 large laboratories, a photographic darkroom, a study hall, a hospital, a carpentry shop, a drafting room, a large dining room and a huge kitchen. Except for the kitchen and dining room, the uses of many of these rooms changed over the years.

The plan of the Gymnasium originally included an indoor running track, a shooting gallery, the gymnasium proper, and a swimming pool (now filled in or covered) as well as showers and other accessory rooms. The roofing here is supported by modified Warren roof trusses of iron and timber spanning 61'5". On the south side, a reinforced concrete tunnel runs from the Gymnasium to the basement of Academic Hall.

The only major alteration to Academic Hall has been the placing of glass and steel partitions at several points in the large open area around the grand stairway on the first floor to facilitate air conditioning. In the Gymnasium, large rooms were partitioned into smaller ones after 1915.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 1898-1899

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

R.G. Kirsch and Company,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Blees Military Academy is significant for three reasons. Architecturally, Academic Hall and the Gymnasium are a unique expression of the Romanesque Revival style in their rural locale. As originally constructed, the Academy was provided with 400 surrounding acres on which were located orchards, a working farm, extensive gardens and a dairy. The pastoral nature of the surrounding environment survives and acts to enhance, through contrast, the monumental architecture of the Academy buildings. In addition, Blees Academy is significant as a surviving memorial to Colonel Frederick Wilhelm Blees, a Prussian immigrant who became a philanthropist, a teacher and the acknowledged chief benefactor of the City of Macon. Blees, who was born in 1860 in Aix-la-Chapelle, France, then a part of the Prussian Empire, served in the Prussian Army, studied at the Universities of Heidelberg and Kurzburg, taught at many private schools and colleges in the eastern and southern United States after his arrival here in 1881, and settled in Macon, Missouri in 1889 as headmaster of St. James Academy, an Episcopalian military school for boys. In 1896 Colonel Blees inherited the wealth of his father's coal and iron mining interests in Germany, and he used this to benefit the City of Macon. He was responsible for the construction of several of the town's commercial buildings and the town's first sewage system; he founded the local horseless carriage factory and the First National Bank of Macon; he financed the paving of the town's streets on a 50-50 basis with the city; and in 1898-1899 he financed the construction of the Blees Academy (Macon [Missouri] Chronicle-Herald, June 30, 1973, p. 1; General History of Macon County, Missouri, pp. 146-149). Finally, this property is additionally significant as the home of Still-Hildreth Osteopathic Sanatorium (1915-1968). Blees died in 1906, the Academy went bankrupt soon thereafter, and the buildings stood vacant until 1915. In that year Dr. Arthur G. Hildreth and Charles E. and Harry M. Still, sons of A.T. Still, the founder of the profession of osteopathy, established a sanatorium here devoted to the treatment and care of all types of nervous and mental disorders. The farm, dairy, gardens and orchards provided a diet of pure wholesome food, an important part of basic osteopathic treatment (Irma Miller, Macon [Missouri] Chronicle-Herald, June 8, 1970 and Hildreth, pp. 247-268). It was at this time that the interior of the Gymnasium was altered to house and isolate the most disturbed patients. Still-Hildreth was acquired by the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, Kirksville, Missouri in 1964 for use in psychiatric training. By 1968, however, finances forced its closing. The property, though recently acquired by the City of Macon, has been vacant ever since. Recently, the Veteran's Administration conducted a feasibility study on the Academy in preparation for its possible reuse as a nursing home. The buildings were found unfit for such a use, but they were saved from demolition due to exceptional cost of such an action (Christner Partnership, Inc., pp. 156-161). Currently, the Committee for the Preservation of the Blees Military Academy of the Macon County Historical Society is trying to locate a buyer or find a use for the property.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Christner Partnership, Inc. Feasibility Study for a State Veterans Nursing Home in Missouri. Jefferson City: Office of Administration, 1978.
2. General History of Macon County, Missouri. Chicago: Henry Taylor and Co., 1911.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

QUADRANGLE NAME "Macon, Mo."

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	5
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5	4	5	6	2	5
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ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

1	5
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4	3	9	6	5	8	5
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ZONE EASTING NORTHING
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1	5
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4	3	9	6	5	7	5
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E

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Area enclosed by a polygon formed by straight lines connecting the above UTM reference points.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

1. Noelle Soren, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION Department of Natural Resources

DATE

Office of Historic Preservation

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P.O. Box 176

314/751-4096

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Jefferson City

Missouri 65102

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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 Director, Department of Natural Resources and
State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER a PAGE 1

3. Hildreth, Arthur Grant, D.O. The Lengthening Shadow of Dr. Andrew Taylor Still.
Macon: A.G. Hildreth, 1938.
4. Macon [Missouri] Chronicle-Herald, June 30, 1973, p. 1 ("Colonel Frederick Wilhelm Blees, Macon's Chief Benefactor").
5. -----, June 8, 1959, p. 4 ("Still-Hildreth Osteopathic Sanatorium").
6. Miller, Irma. "Col. Frederick Wilhelm Blees Built Academy Which Became Macon's Sanatorium," Macon [Missouri] Chronical-Herald, August 3, 1974, p. 1.

ITEM NUMBER 11 PAGE 1

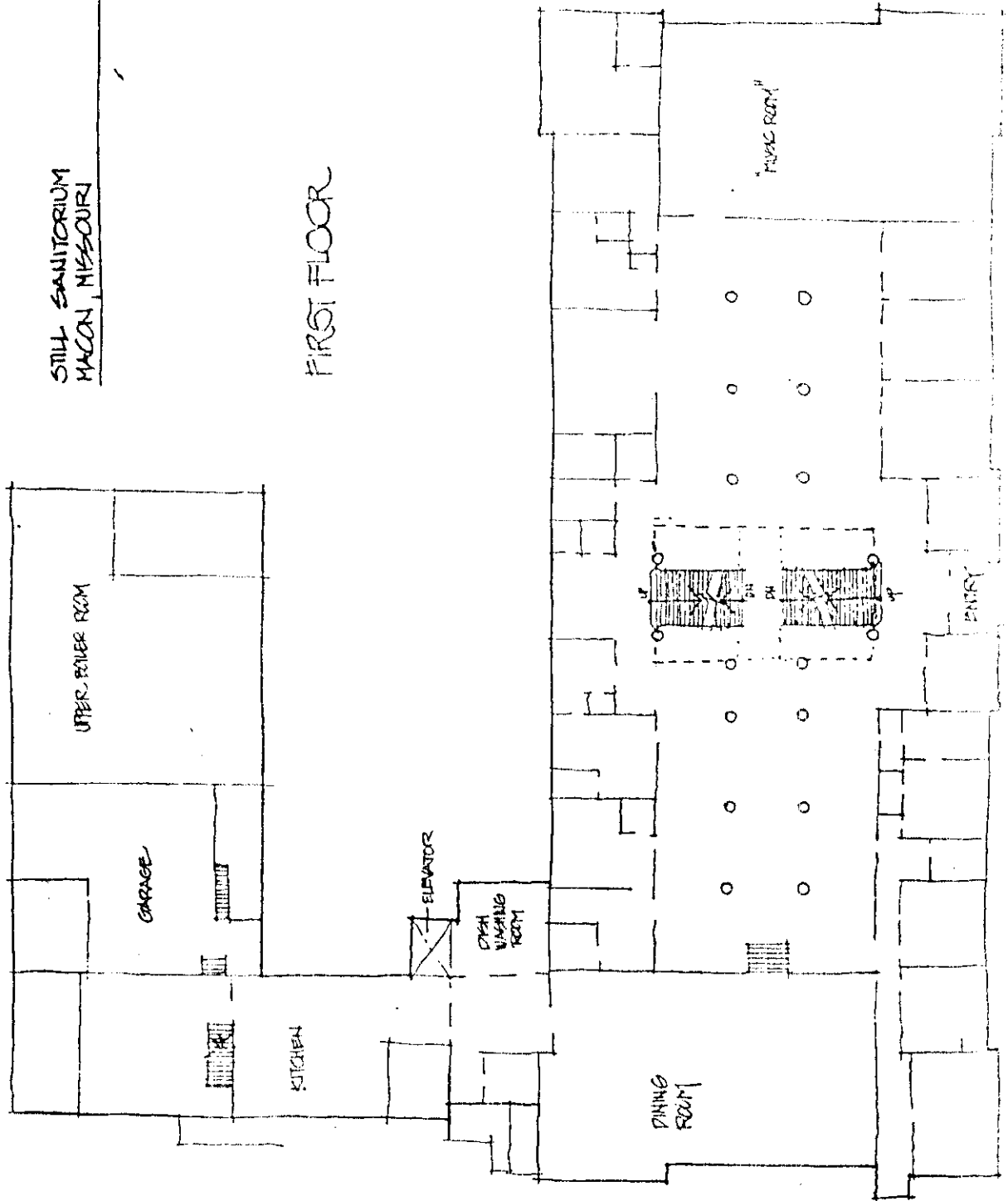
2. Mrs. Josephine Morrow
Mr. J. Russell Waller
Committee for the Preservation of the Blees
Military Academy
Macon County Historical Society
1202 Englewood Drive
Macon

816/385-3574

Missouri 63552

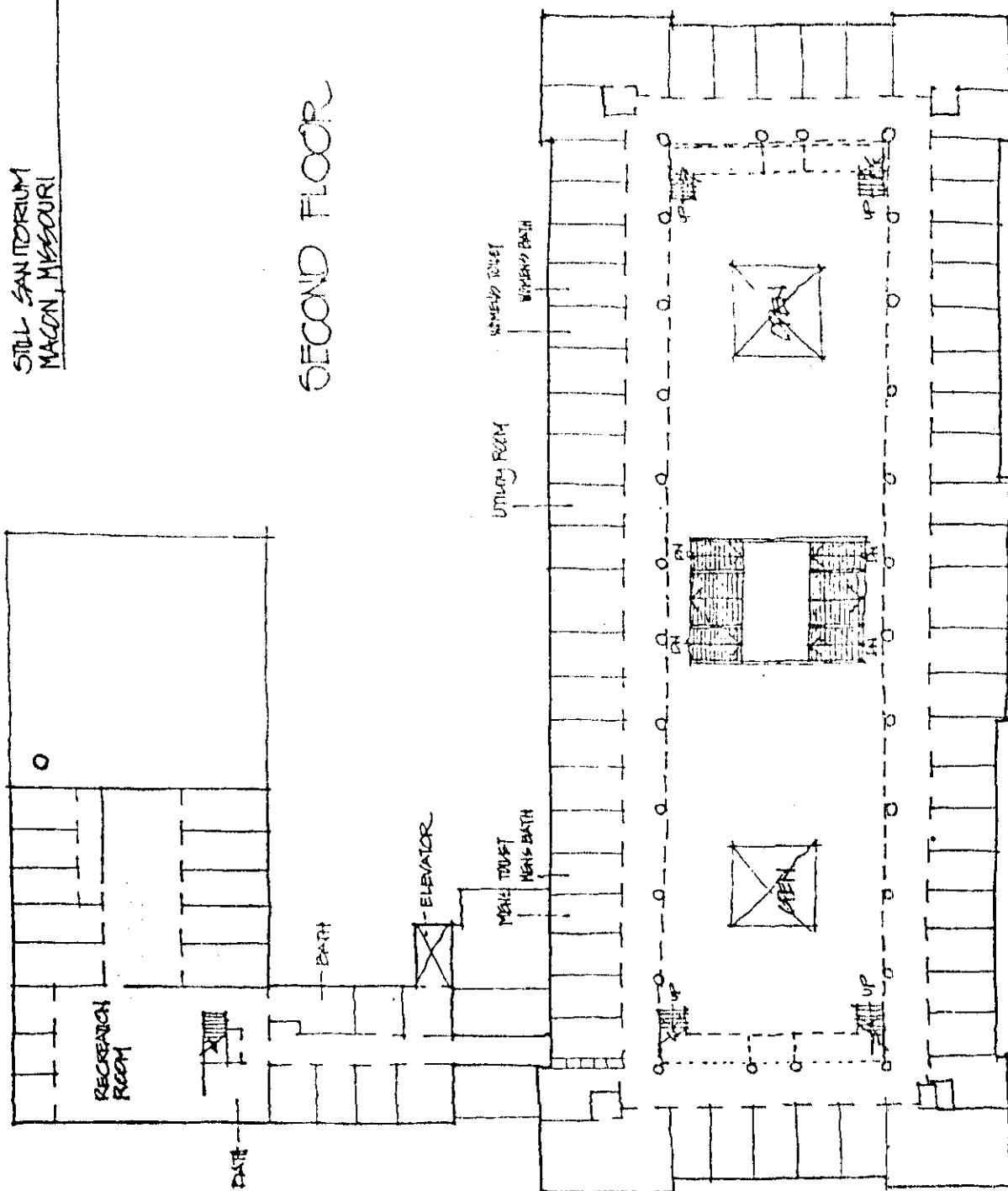
STILL SANITARIUM
MACON, MISSOURI

FIRST FLOOR

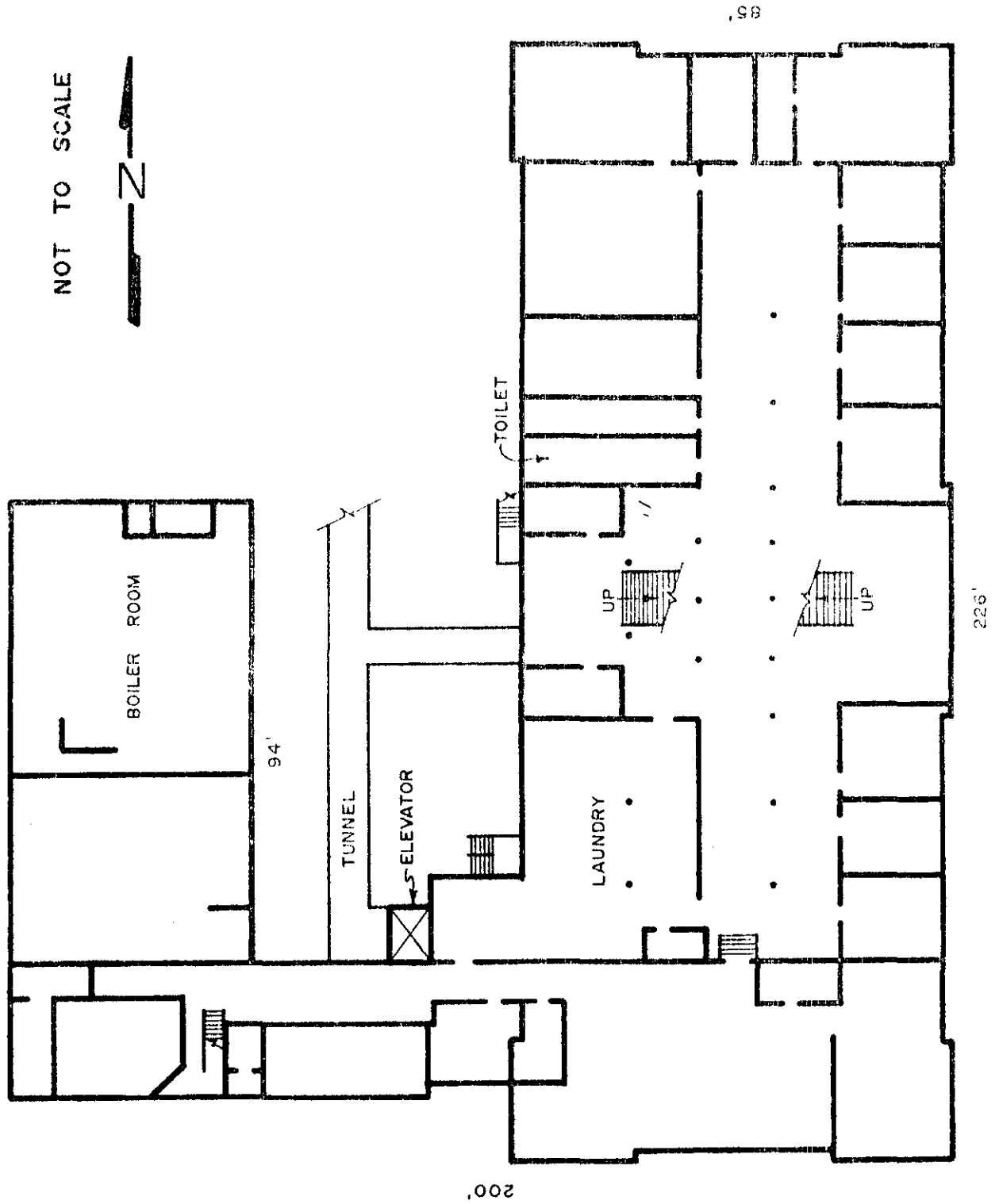


STILL SANITARIUM
MACON, MISSOURI

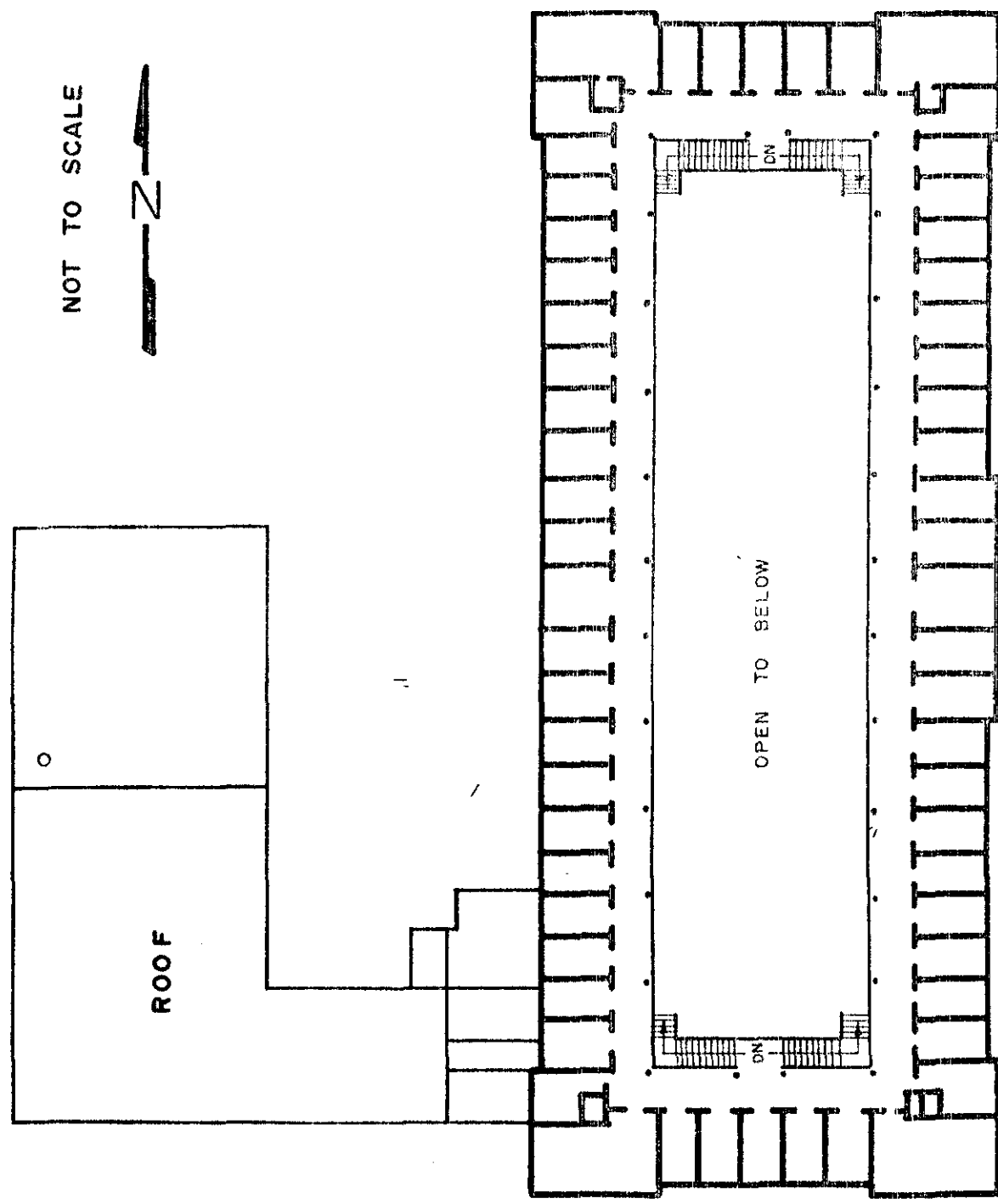
SECOND FLOOR



**BASEMENT PLAN
BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY
MACON, MISSOURI**



BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY
MACON, MISSOURI



NOT TO SCALE

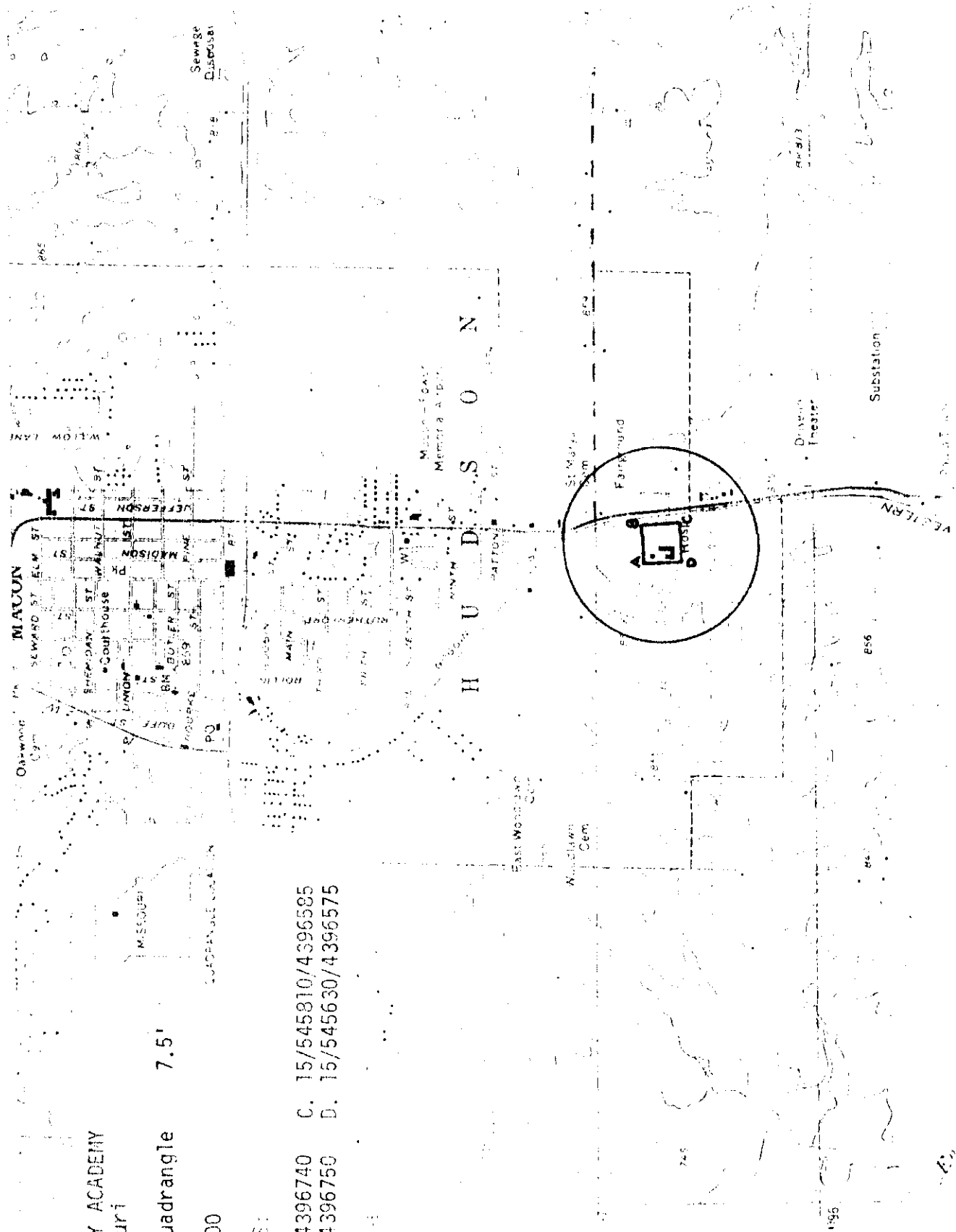


BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY
Macon, Missouri

U.S.G.S. Quadrangle 7.5'
"Macon, Mo."
Scale: 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES:

- A. 15/545625/4396740 C. 15/545810/4396585
- B. 15/545790/4396750 D. 15/545630/4396575



CLEES MILITARY ACADEMY

#402

COUNTY:

Macon

LOCATION:

Macon

OWNER:

City of Macon
121 Bourke Street
Macon, Mo.

ADDRESS:

DATE APPROVED BY A.C.:

July 20, 1979

DATE SENT TO D.C.:

August 16, 1979

DATE OF REC. IN D.C.:

August 20, 1979

DATE PLACED ON NATIONAL REGISTER:

October 11, 1979

DATE CERTIFICATE AWARDED
(AND PRESENTOR):

Given to Pat Steele: July 12, 1983
Presented:

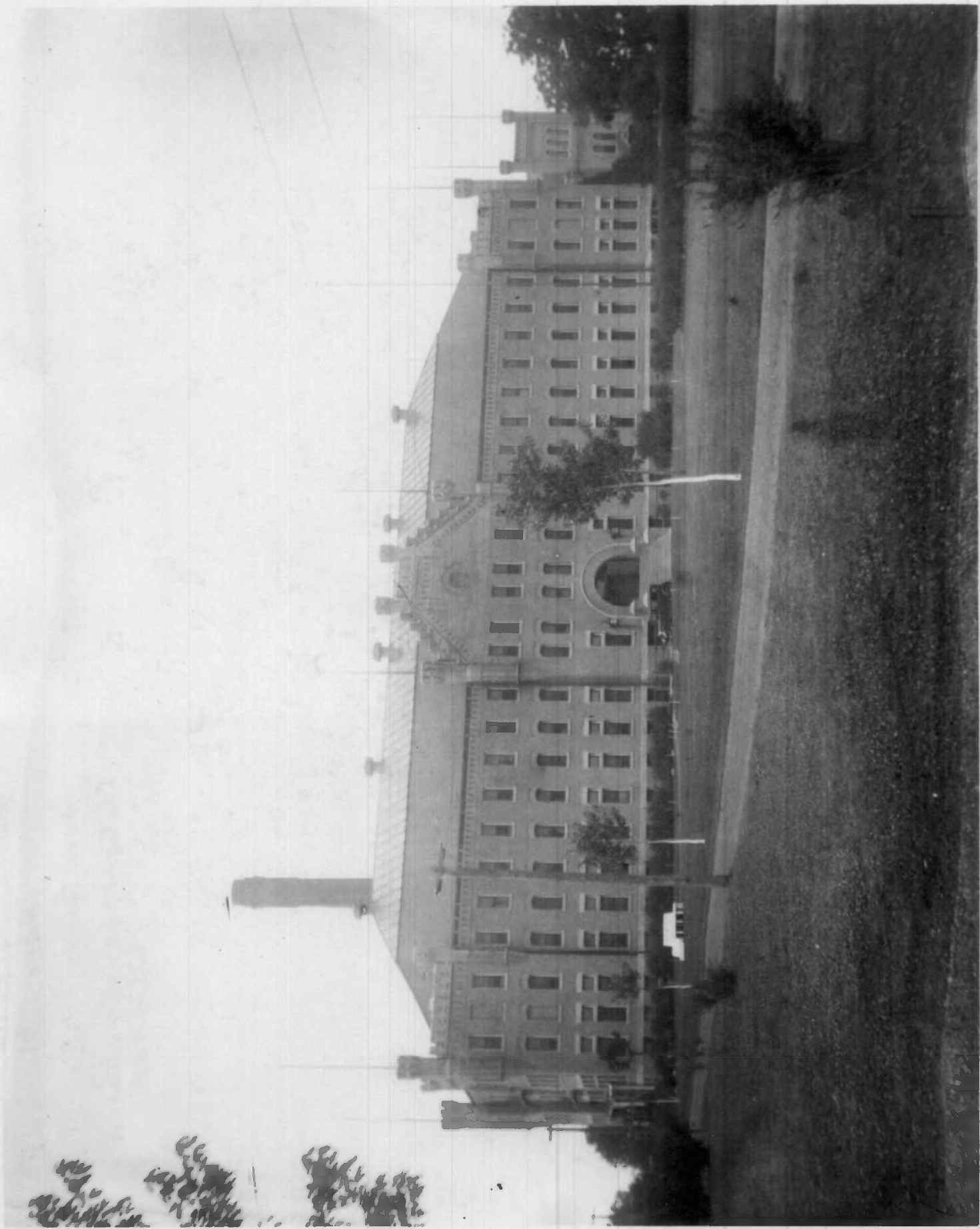
DATE FILE REVIEWED:

Blees Military Academy is significant for three reasons. Architecturally, Academic Hall and the Gymnasium are a unique expression of the Romanesque Revival style in their rural locale. As originally constructed, the Academy was provided with 400 surrounding acres on which were located orchards, a working farm, extensive gardens and a dairy. The pastoral nature of the surrounding environment survives and acts to enhance, through contrast the monumental architecture of the Academy buildings. In addition, Blees Academy is significant as a surviving memorial to Colonel Frederick Wilhelm Blees, a Prussian immigrant who became a philanthropist, a teacher and the acknowledged chief benefactor of the City of Macon.

BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY #1 of 10
Highway 63 South, Macon, Macon County, Mo.
Photographer: Leon Karel
April, 1979
Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville,
Mo. 63501
East facade, view to northwest. Note corbel
tables, crenellated gables and parapets and
glazed, hipped skylight.



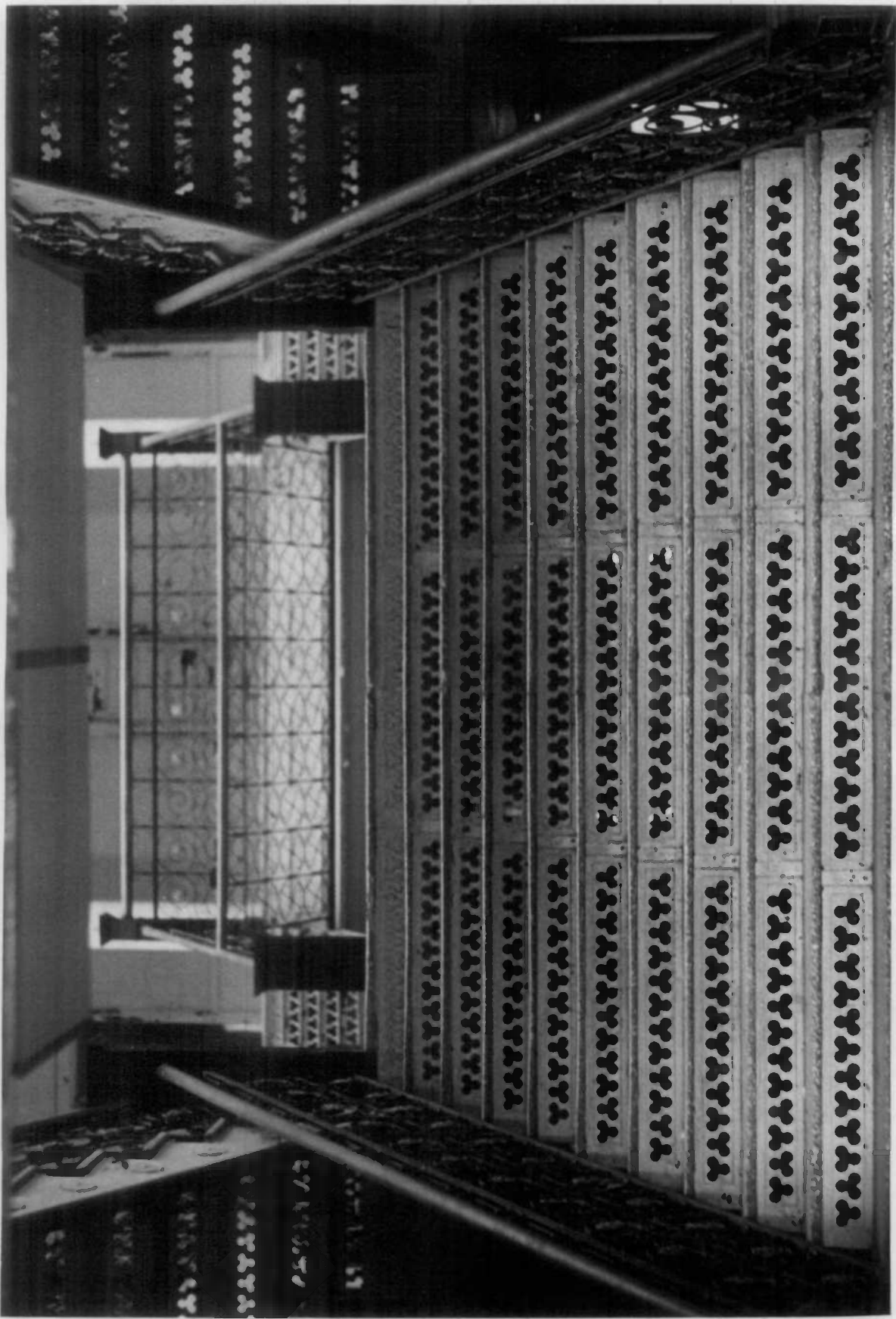
BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY #2 of 10
Highway 63 South, Macon, Macon County, Mo.
Photographer: Ora Roach
ca. 1930
Prof. Leon Karel, Northeast Missouri State
University, Kirksville, Mo. 63501
Old view of east facade. Note crenelles still
in place atop the bartizans.



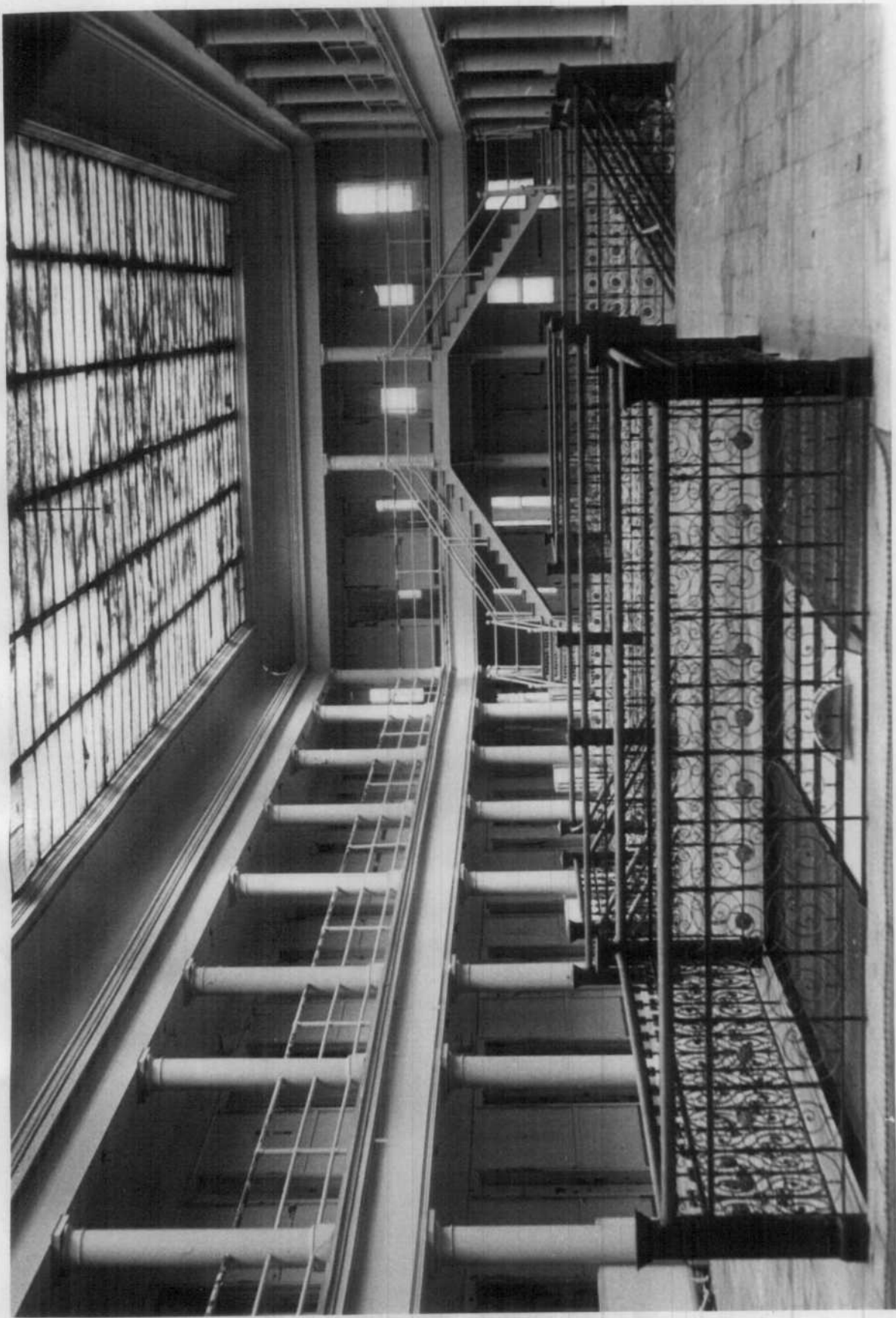
BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY #3 of 10
Highway 63 South, Macon, Macon County, Mo.
Photographer: Leon Karel
April, 1979
Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville,
Mo. 63501
East facade, detail of bartizans, corbels
and crenelles.



BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY #4 of 10
Highway 63 South, Macon, Macon County, Mo.
Photographer: Leon Karel
April, 1979
Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville,
Mo. 63501
Interior of Academy, first floor landing, detail
of ornate cast and wrought iron stair, view to
east.



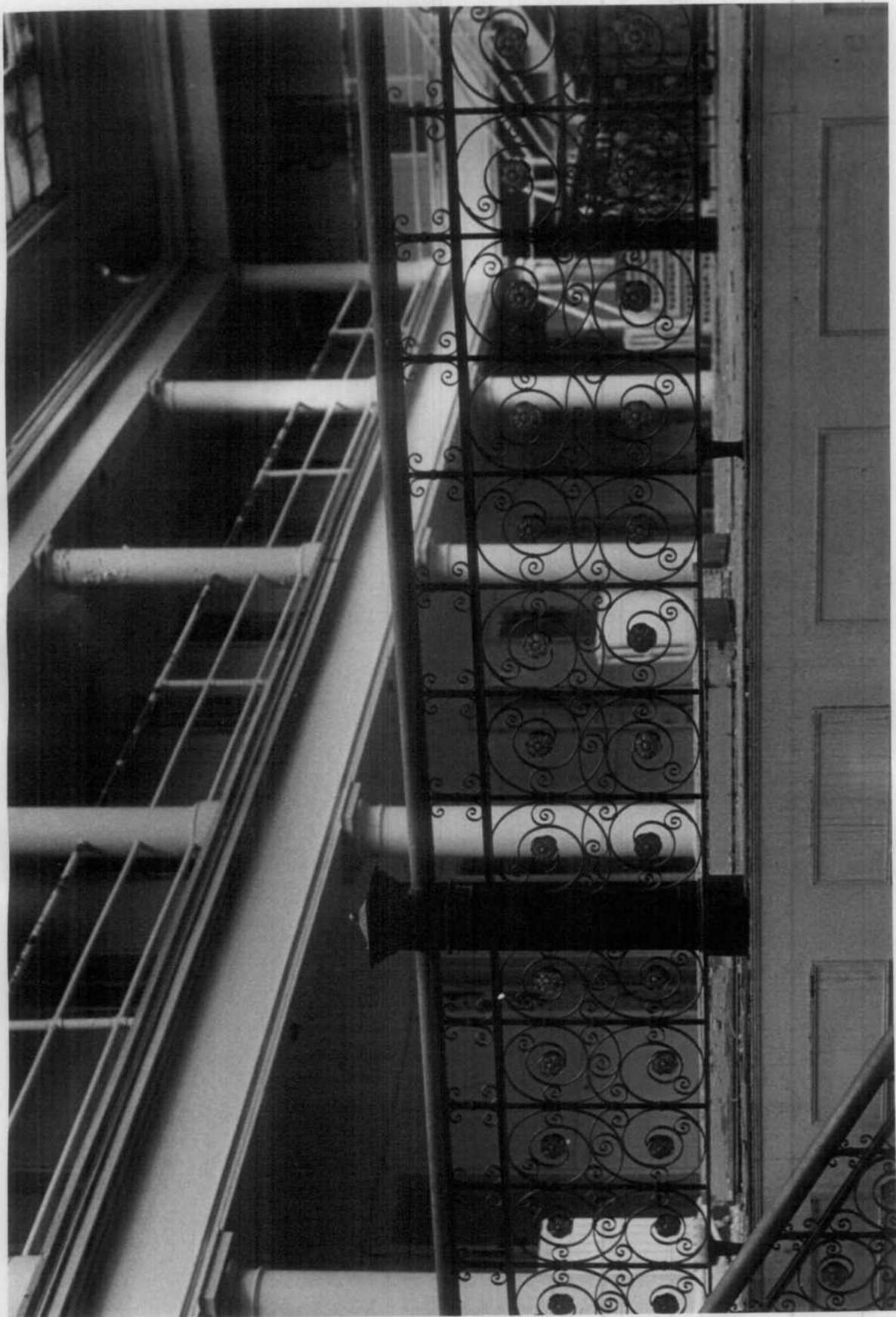
BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY #5 of 10
Highway 63 South, Macon, Macon County, Mo.
Photographer: Leon Karel
April, 1979
Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville,
Mo. 63501
Interior, second floor, the aula surrounded by
its cast iron colonnade and capped with its
sky light, view to north.



BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY #6 of 10
Highway 63 South, Macon, Macon County, Mo.
Photographer: Unknown
prior to 1968
Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102
Aula, view to northeast, during period when
building was used as Still-Hildreth Sanatorium.



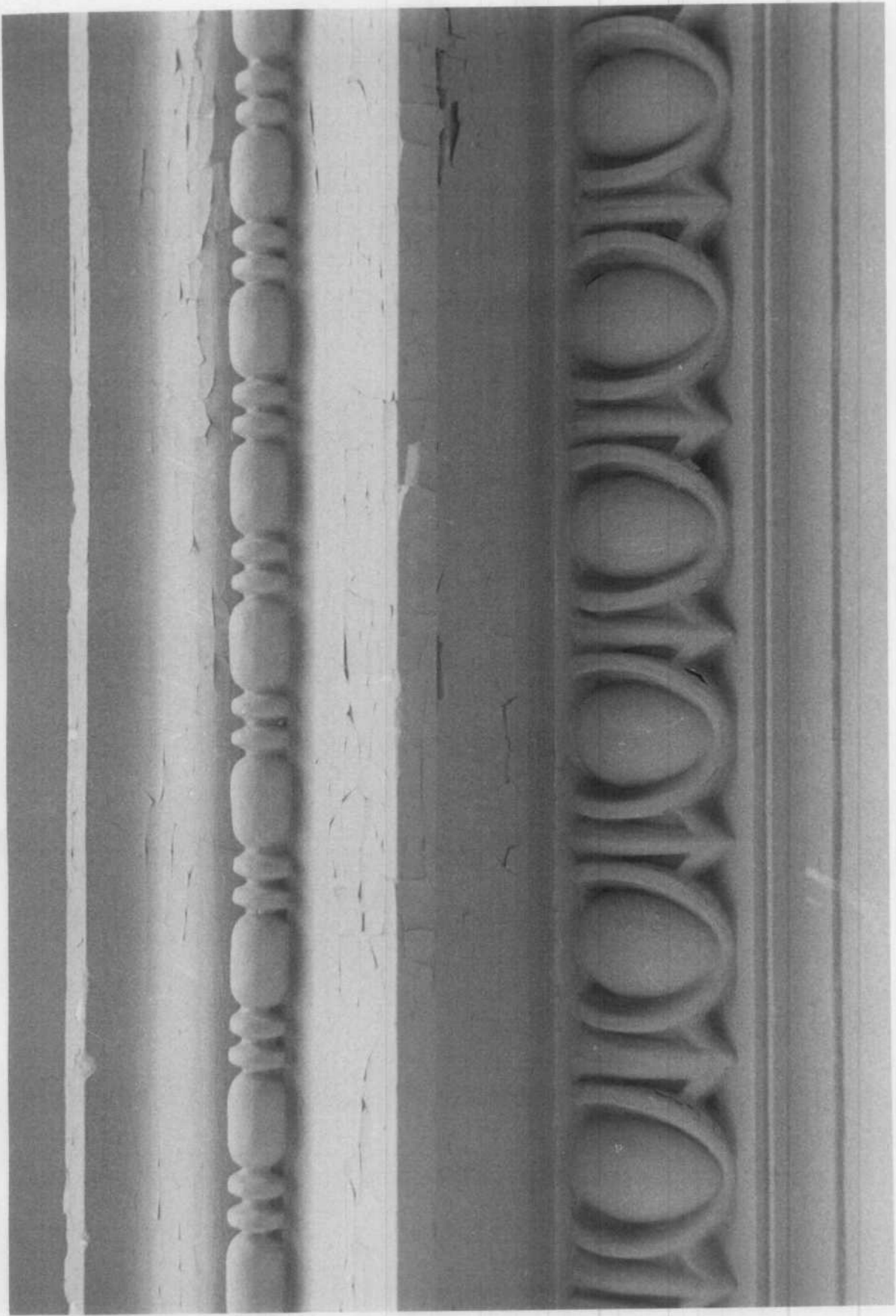
BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY #7 of 10
Highway 63 South, Macon, Macon County, Mo.
Photographer: Leon Karel
April, 1979
Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville,
Mo. 63501
Interior, second floor, detail of the wrought
iron railing, view to northwest.



BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY #8 of 10
Highway 63 South, Macon, Macon County, Mo.
Photographer: Leon Karel

April, 1979
Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville,
Mo. 63501

Interior, detail of wood moldings found above
the frieze at third floor level. Types are
bead and reel and egg and dart.



BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY #9 of 10

Highway 63 South, Macon, Macon County, Mo.

Photographer: Leon Karel

April, 1979

Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville,
Mo. 63501

Interior, below gabled glass roof, view to
north of trusswork with suspended glass
ceiling below. Also visible are the remains of
cloth used to shade the room below.



BLEES MILITARY ACADEMY #10 of 10
Highway 63 South, Macon, Macon County, Mo.
Photographer: Leon Karel
April, 1979
Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville,
Mo. 63501
Gymnasium annex, east facade.

