

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Oakdale School
other names/site number Building 401/077-119-05025

2. Location

street & number Morgan Road, Jefferson Proving Ground N/A not for publication
city, town Madison X vicinity
state IN code IN county Jefferson code 077 zip code 47250-5100

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Department of Army Historic Preservation Officer Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

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

Signature of commenting or other official Indiana Department of Natural Resources *Patrick R. Ralston* Date 3-20-92
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

9. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1869-1941

Significant Dates

1869

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

unknown

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

[Faint, illegible text]

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # HABSI
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	6
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6	3	6	6	3	0
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4	3	0	0	0	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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 Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laura Thayer, Historic Preservation Consultant, for
 organization U.S. Army Jefferson Proving Ground date March 22, 1991
 street & number 3905 N. 500 W. telephone 812/372-6806
 city or town Columbus state IN zip code 47201

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Section No. 7 Page 1 Oakdale School

Oakdale School is located in the southeast corner of section 29, township 5 north, range 10 east, in Jefferson Proving Ground, a U.S. Army facility, which comprises 55,000 acres in Jefferson, Ripley, and Jennings Counties. The administrative center for the proving ground, a complex of brick and concrete, and wood frame buildings, is located at the south end of the property, in Monroe Township, Jefferson County. The land in this area is hilly and rocky, which is characteristic of the southeast region of Indiana.

The school, designated by the army as Building 401, is located northwest of the main complex of buildings, on the west side of Morgan Road, formerly called West Recovery Road, and historically known as Paper Mill Road; north of Firing Line Road, historically known as Calloway Road. The building's immediate surroundings are open fields, with woods across West Recovery Road. A firing line is to the south. Prior to 1941, this was a rural area, with farmsteads scattered throughout the countryside.

Oakdale School faces east. The building is a one story stone structure with a rectangular plan, 24 feet wide by 30 feet deep (photos 1, 2). The building is one bay wide on the east and west facades, and three bays wide on the north and south facades. The walls of the building are coursed limestone. The front gable roof has the original wood shingles, covered with a corrugated metal roof, and on the top, a standing seam metal roof.

In the center of the east facade (photo 1) is the entry, which has a vertical-paneled door, a wide wood jamb, and a stone stoop and lintel. Windows in the building are wood, and have double hung sashes with six lights in each sash (photos 1, 2). On the north side of the building, all window sashes are intact (photo 4). On the south side, both sashes are missing from the window in the center bay, and one sash is missing from the east window. Some window glass is missing. Windows have wood sills and stone lintels. Currently, the openings are boarded. Under each window, near the base of the building, is a small, square vent.

Around the top of the building is a wide, wooden frieze,

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which returns at the gable ends. Rafters are exposed under the eaves.

There is one room inside the building (photos 3, 4, 5). The walls are plaster. These are generally in good condition, except at the top of the walls. The ceiling, which is also plaster, is in poor condition, and wood lath is exposed in many areas. The floor is maple boards. There is a plain, wood baseboard around the room. On the west wall is a blackboard (photo 5), which extends the width of the wall. Above this blackboard are stove pipe holes. There is also a stove pipe hole in the center of the ceiling. At about the level of the meeting rail of the windows, is a strip of wood for coat hooks (photo 3). This appears to have extended around three sides of the room (south, east, and north) at one time, but now is intact on only the east wall and parts of the north and south walls.

The building is unaltered and in fair condition.

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Section No. 8 Page 1 Oakdale School

Oakdale School is significant under criterion A as the best of only two extant buildings associated with education in Monroe Township, for the period from 1817 to 1941. It is significant under criterion C as the finest example of a 19th century stone, one room schoolhouse in Jefferson County, for the period roughly between 1850 and 1880.

Jefferson County, organized in 1810, was one of the first counties in the state to be settled. The first schools in Monroe Township were established prior to 1820. These included Liberty School, opened in 1817, and Woods School, opened in 1818 or 1819. Other schools were started in the 1820s. In all, ten district schools were established in Monroe Township. Oakdale School was started in 1829. The first building was a hewn log structure. The early schools were subscription schools which were generally underfunded, often taught by incompetent teachers, and inadequately heated and lighted. Even so, at this early date in Indiana, Monroe Township probably had one of the best systems of township schools in the state.

Legislation allowing taxation by townships for the purpose of supporting schools, was passed during the session of 1851-1852. This led to the construction of over 2,700 schoolhouses in Indiana. A report of Monroe Township schools was prepared in 1852. It shows that, by that date, only Liberty and Woods Schools were stone buildings. One school was a frame building. The remaining six schools were of log construction. Two years after the report was made, the law allowing taxation for schools was declared unconstitutional. Monroe Township schools continued to operate, probably with a combination of public funds, donations, and subscriptions. Many of the schools in the state were forced to close at this time for lack of funds. Possibly since Jefferson County was one of the most densely populated, and most prosperous areas of the state by this time, the people of Monroe Township were able to continue to operate their schools.

In 1867 and 1873, state legislation giving townships the authority to tax for the support of schools was again passed. This was a great boon to education in the state, and made possible the full development of the system of small, district schools which was to prevail until about 1900. In 1869, the present stone Oakdale School building

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was constructed.

Jefferson County was at a peak of population in 1870, with 29,741 people. Monroe Township was also at a peak, with 1,760 people. Soon after this, the population for both the county and township began to decline steadily. In 1940, shortly before Jefferson Proving Ground was established, the population of Monroe Township was only 881. Jefferson County had been an early agricultural, industrial, commercial, and shipping center in Indiana. As the population of the state expanded, however, the southern counties could not compete with the superior shipping routes and rich agricultural land of the north. The economy of the county declined, and many people moved away. Because of this economic downturn, school development in Monroe Township stagnated.

In other townships in Indiana, there were important developments in education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Among these were the establishment of high schools, and the consolidation of district schools. Neither of these developments took place in Monroe Township. Instead, the system of small, decentralized schools continued. Despite the loss in population, all of the district schools apparently remained open until the early 20th century.

In about 1920, the district schools in Monroe Township began to close. By the time the Army acquired the land for the proving ground, in early 1941, there were only four schoolhouses still in operation. These were Oakdale, Liberty, Big Creek, and Bryantsburg. All four schools were within the boundaries of the proving ground, and were soon closed. Only Oakdale is extant. There is one historic Monroe Township schoolhouse located outside the proving ground which is extant. This is Hebron School, c. 1860, identified in the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. This building has a new door, and window openings have been altered. It is now used as a residence. Oakdale and Hebron are the only two historic structures associated with education in Monroe Township. Of the two, Oakdale has a higher degree of integrity.

In addition to being significant in the area of education, Oakdale School is significant for its architecture. It is the best extant representation of a stone, one room schoolhouse in Jefferson County. Most one room schoolhouses in Indiana were of brick or frame

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construction. In Jefferson County, many of the schoolhouses were stone. In 1918, the Department of Public Instruction reported that there were 87 stone, 4,311 brick, 3,555 frame, 2 log, and 77 concrete schoolhouses in use in the state. Jefferson County had the most stone schoolhouses, with 29. Most, or all of these, were district schools. At least six of the Monroe Township Schools were stone: Liberty, Woods, Hebron, Oakdale; and Big Creek and Bryantsburg, both built in the 1870s. The majority of the other stone schoolhouses enumerated in the report were in southeastern Indiana. There were 11 in Ripley County, 10 in Franklin County, eight in Switzerland County, and four in Dearborn County.

The Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory identified 10 stone schoolhouses in Jefferson County. Of these, only one, Oakdale, was given a rating of "outstanding." Six, including Hebron, were given a rating of "notable." The stone schoolhouses of Jefferson County, built between about 1850 and 1880, are typically one story, rectangular in plan, and have a front gable, standing seam metal roof, and the door in the gable end. The sides of the buildings are three or four bays wide, and have double hung windows. A typical interior has hardwood floors, and plaster walls and ceiling. To be eligible for listing in the National Register, a stone schoolhouse should convey its historic character of a small, rural school. It should not have exterior additions, or changes in the roof configuration. The interior should not be partitioned, or have lowered ceilings. Window and door openings should not be altered. Because all of these buildings have been abandoned or adapted for another use, some features of the building may be deteriorated or altered. The rarity of the resource should be taken into consideration when evaluating changes in historic window frames and sashes, doors, and roofing material.

In southeastern Indiana counties other than Jefferson, unaltered examples of stone schoolhouses are rare. Ripley, Franklin, Switzerland, and Dearborn Counties have all been surveyed for the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. Only one stone schoolhouse in these counties was rated "outstanding." This is School No. 1 in Shelby Township, Ripley County. Several stone schoolhouses in this township were lost after the establishment of Jefferson Proving Ground, which occupies about half of the township.

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Section No. 8 Page 4 Oakdale School

District schools in general are becoming increasingly rare in Jefferson County. In the 19th century, there were over 70 of these small schoolhouses in the county. Only 18 were identified in the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. Of these, 10 are stone, seven are frame, and one is brick. Besides Oakdale, only one district school in the county, a frame building in Graham Township, received a rating of "outstanding."

Jefferson Proving Ground was established by the U.S. Army in March, 1941 as a U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command. Most of Monroe Township was included in the boundaries. At the time the proving ground was started, many of the houses of former residents were moved to an area at the south end of the property to serve as officers' homes. Most of the early bridges, including stone, concrete and metal bridges, are intact. Few other structures from the pre-World War II era survive. Buildings were moved from the proving ground, demolished, or used as targets by the Army. Oakdale School, located close to the firing line, was used for storage. Today it is vacant, and the Army has plans to restore it for use as a museum.

The east boundary for the proving ground is U.S. 421. A small strip east of this road comprises the part of Monroe Township outside the proving ground. In this area, twenty properties which predate the proving ground were identified in the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. Among these are farms, houses, churches, cemeteries, a blacksmith shop, a campground and a school. These, along with the few extant properties in the proving ground, illustrate the pre-World War II life of the Monroe Township community. Of the properties in Monroe Township, Oakdale School was the only one to receive a rating of "outstanding" in the inventory.

A HABS/HAER survey of Jefferson Proving Ground was conducted in 1983. No category I or II properties were identified. Category III properties included Old Timbers Lodge, built in 1932, in Ripley County, and several bridges. Oakdale School was the only building in Jefferson County identified as a category III property.

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Baker, Sue. For Defense of Our Country, Echoes of Jefferson Proving Ground. Indianapolis: Guild Literary Services, 1990.

Cotton, Fassett A. Education in Indiana. Bluffton: The Progress Publishing Company, 1934.

Gresham, John and Company. Biographical and Historical Souvenir for the Counties of Clark, Crawford, Harrison, Jefferson, Jennings, Scott and Washington, Indiana. Chicago: Chicago Printing Company, 1889.

Herberhart, Charles E., Director of Jefferson County Historical Society, compiler. "Jefferson Proving Ground Records," 1941 (copies at Indiana Historical Society, and Public Affairs Office, Jefferson Proving Grounds).

Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, Inventory Forms for U.S. Army Jefferson Proving Ground, October 1983.

Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Indiana. Chicago: Baskin, Forster and Company, 1876.

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. Jefferson County Interim Report. Indianapolis: Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 1989.

"Jefferson Proving Ground Schools and Teachers, Monroe Township, 1817 to 1941." (compiled by Public Affairs Office of Jefferson Proving Ground, no date).

Legislative Reference Branch. Yearbook of the State of Indiana for the Year 1918. Indianapolis: William B. Burford, 1919.

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for District School #3, Carroll County, Indiana, 1987.

Thornbrough, Emma Lou. Indiana in the Civil War Era, 1850-1880. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana Historical Society, 1965.

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Section No. 10 Page 1 Oakdale School

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the west side of Morgan Road, 200 feet north of the south boundary of Section 29, Township 5 North, Range 10 East; thence west 200 feet; thence south to the north side of Firing Line Road; thence east along the north side of said road to the west side of Morgan Road; thence north to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundary roughly comprises the historic school grounds. It does not include any roads or structures other than the school building.