

JUL 28 1982

TENNESSEE MULTIPLE PROPERTY FORM

Title: Historic Resources of Paris, Tennessee

County: Henry

Historic Name: Paris Commercial Historic District

Common Name: Paris Commercial Historic District

Classification: District

Owner: Multiple Ownership

Location: Along sections of East and West Wood Street, West Washington Street, North and South Poplar Street, North and South Market Street, Fentress and W. Blythe Street in Paris, Tennessee.

<u>Contributing:</u>		<u>Non-Contributing</u>	
Buildings	44	Buildings	8
Structures	0	Structures	0
Sites	0	Sites	0
<u>Total:</u>	44	<u>Total:</u>	8

Description:

The Paris Commercial Historic District is a notable collection of late 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture in Paris, Tennessee. The district contains fifty-two buildings used for commercial and governmental purposes and all but eight of these retain their architectural integrity. The district is centered around the 19th century public square of the town and extends to include significant buildings along side streets. The buildings within the district are primarily two to three story masonry structures with detailing and designs reflecting the Italianate, Victorian Romanesque, Colonial Revival and vernacular commercial forms of the period. While the majority of the commercial buildings have had their storefronts altered most retain original upper facade detailing.

The original public square was laid out in 1823 when Paris was formed as the county seat of Henry County. The court square was designed with a central rectangular lot containing the courthouse and adjacent blocks and lots arranged in a symmetrical plan. Surrounding the courthouse were four streets named Wood, Poplar, Market and Washington. The lots surrounding the courthouse became the center of commerce in the town.

The first courthouse on the square was a log building constructed in 1823. This building was later replaced by a brick courthouse in 1825 which stood until 1850. During these early years the town square consisted of brick, log and frame buildings which were used for residences and commercial purposes. The town square contained several stores, hotels and small industries in the years prior to the Civil War. No buildings survive around the square from this ante-bellum area. At 214-216 N. Poplar Street, however, is the remaining portion of the Benjamin Brown House built ca. 1838. This two-story brick residence was a large central passage plan residence according to maps and historic photographs. The building is of Flemish bond construction on the main facade but half of the structure was removed and other major alterations took place around 1925 when it was converted to commercial use. This building is the

oldest extant structure in the downtown area.

In these early years the town was a small community of several hundred inhabitants with Paris serving as the commercial and governmental center of the county. Goods were shipped to Paris via the Tennessee River and by wagon from several landing points east of the town. Several cotton and tobacco factories were begun in the 1830s which provided a number of jobs to residents. These cotton mills shipped products throughout the South and were the best known commercial enterprises in the town. During the 1850s the town had prospered to the point to support the establishment of the Bank of Paris in 1855. This bank was founded in a building on the square but it was forced to close during the Panic of 1857.

The present appearance of the square began to take shape in the years after the Civil War. The construction of the railroad in 1860 through the community had a major impact on the development of small industries around the downtown area. While tobacco and cotton mills remained an important part of the town's economy, other factories opened around the square. These included lumber mills, woolen mills and wagon manufacturers. During the 1870s the population of the town remained around 2,000 with the court square continuing to be the main commercial center of the community. A fire in 1873 destroyed much of the west side of the square but by the late 1870s this side of the square contained new one and two-story brick buildings and brick buildings were constructed along other sides of the square.

By 1880, the west, north and east sides of the square contained solid rows of brick commercial buildings and many of these on the north and east sides of the square still exist. While the original storefronts of these buildings have been replaced original cast iron columns and pilasters remain extant. Upper facade features are intact and reflect the Commercial Italianate styles of the period. Typical detailing includes arched windows with sheet metal hood molding, decorative recessed brickwork, and sheet metal cornices with brackets. Excellent examples of this style can be seen at 112-116 W. Washington and 113-125 N. Poplar. Along the south side of the square was the Carter House Hotel and several one and two-story frame and brick stores. None of these buildings survive.

Throughout the late 19th century the present appearance of the square continued to take shape. The establishment of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad shops in Paris in the late 1890s resulted in increased commercial activity around the square. The county erected a new courthouse in 1897 which was designed by prominent architect Reuben H. Hunt of Chattanooga. This two-story brick design was constructed with Victorian Romanesque detailing. A fire in July of 1899 destroyed much of the west side of the square but the economic vitality of the town was such that it was completely rebuilt with two story commercial buildings by Christmas of the same year. This block was designed by architect David V. Stroop who gave this row Colonial Revival embellishment with terra cotta belt courses and balustrades.

By 1900, the court square displayed rows of brick buildings on the west, north and east sides and most of these buildings remain to the present. Around the square other important buildings were constructed in the early 20th century. The most notable of these was the Crete Opera House on W. Washington Street. This Romanesque design building was a large three story structure built to

house offices and a theatre on the upper floors. The success of the opera house was short lived and it became the headquarters of the National Toilet Company in 1914. New commercial buildings were constructed across from the opera house along W. Washington including the row at 204-206 W. Washington and the Caldwell Hotel at the corner of Fentress and W. Washington.

After 1905, construction abated with only a few new buildings erected around the square. By 1907, the one-story brick Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis passenger depot was built on Fentress Street. This building was constructed with wide eaves and a hipped roof typical of early 20th century railroad stations. In 1908, the U.S. Government purchased the old Carter House Hotel on W. Wood Street and replaced it with a one-story brick post office building. This Colonial Revival design was built according to the plans of government architect James Knox Taylor.

Little new construction occurred in the downtown square area until the 1920s. During these years most of the one and two-story buildings in the 200 block of N. Poplar Street were constructed. Important buildings of this decade included the Hotel Greystone at the corner of W. Washington and Fentress. This two-story brick hotel was built to take advantage of the rail passenger traffic of the period and it is a vernacular design of yellow glazed brick construction. This glazed brick was also used for the construction of the First National Bank in 1926. Built at the corner of N. Poplar and E. Wood this five story building was the tallest building constructed in the downtown area and featured Neo-Classical detailing on the first story.

Since 1926, construction has been limited in and around the square. Most of the buildings on the west, north and east sides of the square retain their upper facade detailing and only a few have been covered with metal or other modern materials. Despite the alterations of storefronts in the 20th century many buildings retain original cast iron columns and pilasters. Interiors also often retain original pressed metal ceilings and intact office arrangements on the second and third stories. The only major building constructed on the square in recent years is the modern bank at the corner of E. Wood and N. Poplar. Another modern bank was built to replace the Caldwell Hotel on W. Washington.

#### Individual Property Descriptions:

1. 101 W. Blythe St.: Two-story brick vernacular Masonic Temple constructed in 1924. The main entrance has original double doors of single-light frame and glass which lead to the second story staircase. Flanking this entrance are single-light frame and glass doors. Over the main entrance is an elliptical transom and brick relief arching. The brick has an orange textured glaze. Windows are 9/1 and 8/1 sash. In the entrance bay is a recessed arched window and sheet metal pediment with modillion blocks. At the roofline is a stepped parapet with concrete coping. The building has a gable composition roof. (C)

2. Court Square: The Henry County Courthouse is a two and one-half-story brick Victorian Romanesque style building constructed in 1897. The building was designed by Chattanooga architect Reuben Hunt and has not been significantly altered. On the north and south facades are large arched openings on the first story with radiating stone voussoirs. These facades also display a blind Romanesque arcade on the second story. Windows on the first story are rectangular 1/1 sash with single light transoms while windows on the second story are arched 1/1 sash. On the half story are pedimented dormers and

intersecting hipped roof lines. On the north facade is a prominent square clock tower with a cupola. The interior of the building has been remodeled but retains original paneled doors and frame staircase. (C)

3. 203-207 Fentress St.: One-story vernacular design Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis railroad station constructed ca. 1910. The main entrance has original single-light glass and frame doors above which are dentil molding and a single-light transom which has been enclosed. Above door and window openings are jack arches of alternating stone and brick with stone keystones. The windows were replaced ca. 1950. The upper portions of the door and window masonry openings were enclosed with brick. Two corbelled brick chimneys rise from an original metal shingle, hipped roof. The eaves are wide and exposed. On the west facade is a projecting bay window. The east facade has brick jack arching above the windows. The foundation is of stone. (C)

4. 100 N. Market St.: Two and a half story brick commercial building with Colonial Revival detailing built in 1899. The main entrance is at the southeast corner of the building. The storefront was altered ca. 1920 and has large display windows, frame and glass doors, cast iron pilasters, and a ca.1960 metal awning. The windows on the second story rest on a continuous terra cotta sill and are enclosed with plywood. At the roofline are three single-light attic windows below which is a terra cotta dentilled cornice. Above the attic windows is a matching terra cotta cornice with dentils. At the roofline is yet another terra cotta cornice with modillion blocks. At the corners of the building are projecting terra cotta caps. The south facade has been covered with stucco and the arched windows have been enclosed. The interior its original pressed metal ceiling. (C)

5-6. 102-104 N. Market St.: Two and a half story, brick, Colonial Revival commercial building built in 1899. The storefront was altered ca.1960, but the original cast iron pilasters remain. Above the second story windows is a terra cotta cornice with dentils, and above the single-light attic windows is a terra cotta cornice with modillion blocks, corbelled brickwork and dentils. The interiors of the first floors have been altered extensively and no original detailing remains. (C)

7-10. 106-112 N. Market St.: Two and a half story, brick, Colonial Revival commercial building built in 1899. The building is divided into four sections with separate storefronts. All storefronts were altered between 1960-80. The original cast iron pilasters remain beneath the altered storefronts. The windows on the second story rest on a continuous terra cotta sill, and above these windows is a terra cotta cornice with dentils. Above the attic windows is a second terra cotta cornice with dentils. At the roofline is a terra cotta cornice with modillion blocks, and across the roofline is a balustrade with turned terra cotta balusters. At the attic level of 106 is the inscription, "1899 Trevathan", on 108 "1899 Commercial Bank", on 110 "1899 Trevathan", on 112 "1899 Cavitte". (C)

11-12. 114-116 N. Market St.: Two and a half story, brick, Colonial Revival commercial building built in 1899. The two storefronts were altered ca. 1960; however, the original cast iron pilasters remain. Attached to the 116 storefront is a metal plaque inscribed with "D.V. Stroop, Architect" and it appears he designed the entire block. The upper facade is exactly like 102-104 N. Market except for the second story windows which were replaced with fixed metal windows ca.1970. The upper facade of 116 has a wrought iron balcony, and in

the south bay of #106 is an original single-light frame and glass door with a single light transom which opens onto the stairway leading to the second floor. (C)

13. 118 N. Market St.: One-story brick, vernacular design commercial building constructed ca. 1899. The storefront retains the original double doors of frame and glass but all other elements of the storefront were remodelled ca. 1970. The upper facade has a rectangular brick decoration. At the roofline is a sheet metal cornice above which is a pedimented stepped parapet. The interior retains an original pressed metal ceiling. On the north facade are the original arched window openings and added board and batten siding. (C)

14. 302 N. Market St.: Two-story frame vernacular design commercial building constructed ca. 1910. On the main (east) facade is an original corner entrance with single light glass and frame doors and a single light transom. The exterior has weatherboard siding and upper facade windows are six-over-six sash. The building has a monitor roof with six light clerestory windows. (C)

15. 201 S. Market Street: The First Presbyterian Church is a one and a half story brick, Colonial Revival Church built in 1916. The main facade is divided into three bays. The recessed central bay contains the entrance with original frame double doors. Each door contains a stained glass window in Union Jack patterns. Above the doorway is a stained glass transom also in Union Jack pattern. Flanking the doorway are two rectangular single-light stained glass windows. The portico is supported by Doric columns, and the simple entablature is decorated with dentils. The two bays which flank the portico contain a large three-light window with a stone sill, stone keystone and brick jack arching above which is a smaller rectangular stained glass window. The first story addition on the north facade was added ca. 1980. The south facade has original stained glass windows with stone sills and brick jack arching beneath which is a stone belt course. The sanctuary is square in plan with the altar in the southeast corner. (C)

16. 101-109 N. Poplar St.: Five-story brick, commercial building originally built as the First National bank in 1926. The building displays Neo-Classical decoration on the first story. The first story is divided into eight bays by Corinthian motif stone pilasters which frame vertical three-light, ca.1970 windows. The entrance was added ca.1970 with metal and glass doors framed by relief arching. The upper four stories are divided into three bays each with three 1/1 sash windows. The building has a simple concrete entablature and a cornice with dentils. The south facade is similar to the west facade with the first floor divided into seven bays as are the upper floors. On the west facade the one-story addition was added in two phases, in 1969 and 1979. (C)

17. 111 N. Poplar St.: Two-story brick commercial building constructed ca. 1890. The facade was altered ca. 1970 with the addition of a metal front (NC).

18. 113 N. Poplar St.: Two-story brick, commercial Italianate design building constructed ca.1880. Most of the storefront dates to ca.1925 with a single-light glass and frame recessed door with a single-light transom. Display windows have copper muntins resting on marble bulkheads. Cast iron columns also remain on the storefront. Over the storefront is a ca.1970 metal awning. On the second story are four arched 1/1 sash windows. The central bay windows have corbelled brick hood molding. Flanking windows are recessed with brick relief arching.

Above the windows are three attic windows which are round with floral motif metal grilles. Over the attic windows is brick relief arching. The roofline is pedimented with a dentilled, corbelled brick cornice. The interior has been remodeled. (C)

19. 115 N. Poplar St.: Three-story brick, ca. 1880 commercial Italianate building. The storefront has been altered with ca. 1970 frame and glass design. Added materials hide original cast iron pilasters. The transom has been enclosed. The upper facade windows are arched with corbelled brick hood molding. Arches in windows are connected by corbelled brick. Windows have been enclosed with frame panels. At the roofline is a corbelled brick cornice with dentils. The interior is remodeled but retains a pressed metal ceiling. (C)

20. 119 N. Poplar St.: Three-story brick, commercial Italianate building constructed ca.1880. The storefronts were altered ca.1980 with modern materials. The added metal and frame on the storefront conceal the original cast iron pilasters. On the south bay is a ca.1930 two panel door which opens onto a stairway leading to the second story. Over the door is an original Luxfer glass transom. Across the storefront is an original sheet metal cornice with dentils and an added ca.1960 metal canopy. The upper facade has original arched window openings with corbelled brick hood molding. The windows have been enclosed with frame panels. Between the windows are brick quoining. The interior has been remodeled but the pressed metal ceilings remain. (C)

21. 123-125 N. Poplar St.: Three-story brick ca. 1880, commercial Italianate building. The two storefronts are divided by a ca.1980 glass and metal door opening onto a stairway and above which is an enclosed transom. The north bay storefront is of ca.1970 glass and metal with a brick veneer bulkhead. The original cast iron pilasters are concealed behind the altered storefront. Above the storefront is an enclosed transom. The south bay storefront is also ca.1970 glass and metal but with a frame bulkhead. Frame panels conceal the cast iron pilasters and the transom above the metal awning. The second and third story windows are set in corbelled brick arches springing from brick, Doric motif pilasters. A projecting belt course separates the second and third story windows which are identical in design. The second story and third story windows have been replaced by single-light fixed glass or enclosed with frame panels. The interior has been altered. (C)

22. 201 N. Poplar St.: Two-story hollow core concrete, ca. 1920, vernacular commercial building. The two storefronts were altered ca.1960. The north bay storefront has glass and metal doors and windows with a stone veneer bulkhead. The original cast iron engaged columns frame the storefront. Above the awning is a transom enclosed with sheet metal. Dividing the north and south bays are ca. 1960 glass and metal double doors above which is a single-light transom. The doorway opens onto a stairway leading to the second floor. The south bay has an original single-light frame and glass door, display windows, and concrete bulkhead. Original cast iron pilasters flank the storefront. Above the storefront is an enclosed four-light transom. The windows on the second story have concrete sills and lintels and are enclosed with sheet metal. The stepped cornice is concrete. (C)

23. 204 N. Poplar St.: One-story brick vernacular design building constructed ca.1930. The storefront has an original single-light glass and frame door, display windows, and frame bulkheads. Over the storefront is an added ca.1970 shingle

awning. At the roofline is soldier course brick banding and a stepped parapet. The interior has been remodeled. (C)

24. 206 N. Poplar St.: Two-story brick vernacular design building constructed ca.1900. The storefront has the original recessed side entrance with a single-light glass and frame door. Above the door is a small single-light transom. The storefront has the original display windows with copper muntins. The bulkheads have an added stucco surface. The storefront has flanking brick piers with quoining and a stone base. The upper facade has two 1/1 sash windows with stone sills. At the roofline is a corbelled brick cornice with dentils. The interior has been remodeled. (C)

25. 207 N. Poplar St.: One-story brick, vernacular design commercial building constructed ca.1910. The storefront has ca.1930 single-light glass and frame doors with flanking display windows with copper muntins. Below the display windows are stuccoed concrete bulkheads. Over the storefront is a modern metal awning. The upper facade has a large rectangular brick panel and a small corbelled brick cornice with dentils. The interior has been remodeled. (C)

26. 209 N. Poplar St.: One and a half story brick, vernacular design commercial building. The storefront of the north bay was altered ca.1970 with a glass and metal door and metal siding. Above the storefront is a recessed rectangular panel and a cornice of four rows of stretcher bond brick. The south bay of the building has a ca.1970 glass and metal storefront. The transom is enclosed. The storefront is flanked by brick quoins. Above the transom area are enclosed windows with stone lintels and sills. Flanking the windows are two Doric motif pilasters supporting a corbelled brick cornice. Both storefronts have a metal awning. The interior has been remodeled. (C)

27. 210-212 N. Poplar St.: One-story brick ca. 1915, commercial building. The storefront for 210 has been altered with a brick veneer bulkhead, but the original display windows and single-light glass and frame door remain. The cast iron pilasters were manufactured by C.L. Wesley and Company of Evansville, Indiana. The storefront of 212 retains an original sheet metal bulkhead, display windows and single-light frame and glass door. Above the doors are single-light transoms, and above the windows are three-light transoms. The upper facade of 210 is encased by metal siding, and the transoms of 212 are enclosed. Above the storefronts is a metal awning. Above the transoms are two recessed rectangular panels and a stepped parapet roofline with a simple cornice. (210-NC) (212-C)

28. 214-216 N. Poplar St.: The Benjamin Brown House is a two-story brick building constructed ca. 1838. The building was altered into a commercial structure ca. 1930. The 214 storefront was added ca.1930 with a recessed central entrance containing a single-light glass and frame door and a small single-light transom. Bulkheads and surround are of black and white cararra glass. The storefront on the 216 facade was added ca.1930 with central single-light glass and frame door, ca.1950 display windows and stuccoed bulkheads. The upper facade has the original three bay configuration of Flemish bond construction. The windows have been enclosed and an original door opening exists in the north bay. At the roofline is a simple boxed cornice. Over the windows is jack arching. On the north facade is a stepped parapet. The building appears to have been constructed in a ell plan with a one-story ell. The interior retains some original four panel doors but the first floor has been remodeled. The interior of 216 has a ca.1930 Art Deco pressed metal ceiling. (C)

29. 215 N. Poplar St.: Two-story brick, commercial vernacular design building constructed ca.1920. The storefront retains an original single-light glass and frame door. The display windows are original with some added metal framing and stuccoed bulkheads. Transoms have been enclosed, and the storefront has added metal awnings. Windows on the upper facade have been enclosed with shutters. Below the roofline is a large rectangular panel, and at the roofline is a stepped parapet. The brick has a brown textured glaze. Windows on the north facade have also been enclosed. (C)

30. 218 N. Poplar St.: One-story brick ca. 1950 commercial building. (NC)

31. 220 N. Poplar St.: Two-story brick, ca. 1920 commercial vernacular design building. The storefront has been altered ca. 1970. It retains an original frame and glass single-light door, single-light transom and multi-light window. The bulkhead and corner piers are covered with a brick veneer. Above the storefront are windows with stone sills enclosed with frame panels. Above the windows is a two-brick stringcourse above which are three rectangular vents. Above the vents is a double stretcher bond brick cornice. (C)

32. 101 S. Poplar: Two-story brick, commercial building constructed ca.1930 with Art Deco detailing. The building was originally constructed as a theater but is presently used as a Christian Church. The storefront was altered ca.1960 with a brick veneer bulkhead, glass and metal double doors and windows. The upper stories of the main facade are covered in Cararra glass with several different colors of glass. The vertical central piers reflect Art Deco influences. The other facades are of exposed brick. The upper stories contain four light casement windows flanked by two six-light casement windows. Above the storefront is a ca.1960 metal awning. (C)

33. 103 S. Poplar St.: The Grace Episcopal Church is a one-story brick, Victorian Gothic Church built in 1895. On the main facade are the original frame double doors with Gothic arched panels. Over the doors is an arched transom with a stained glass rose window. On the main facade and side facades are brick buttresses. The corner tower has an arched vent window and a pyramidal roof with eave dentils and tower. The building has a standing seam gable roof. (C)

34. 102 W. Washington St.: Two-story brick ca. 1900 brick building with a ca. 1950 facade. (NC)

35. 104 W. Washington St.: Three-story, brick ca. 1890 commercial Italianate building. The storefront was altered ca.1970 with glass and metal doors and windows and a sheet metal awning. Above the awning is a panel of vertical board metal siding. The second and third story windows are original 4/4 sash with a double row of brick relief arching above which is a recessed panel with dentils. Dividing each window are two recessed, vertical rectangular panels, and beneath the third story windows is a continuous stone sill. Above each third story window is a recessed rectangular panel. The building has a simple concrete cornice. (C)

36. 108 W. Washington St.: Ca. 1900, two-story brick building with a ca. 1960 facade. (NC).



37-38-39. 112,114,116 W. Washington St.: Three-story brick, ca. 1880 commercial Italianate building. Storefronts on all three sections have been altered with ca.1970 glass, frame and stone materials. The original cast iron pilasters remain. On the second and third stories are arched 2/2 sash windows with stone sills and sheet metal hood molding with large keystones. The hood molding has inset floral decoration. Each section of the building has four bays centrally divided by a brick pilaster with quoining. Some windows retain the original rope molding design in the surround. At the roofline is an elaborate sheet metal cornice with acanthus leaf brackets, arched panels and floral decoration. The interior of 114-116 has been altered but retains an original pressed metal ceiling. The interior of 112 has been remodeled and no original details remain. (C)

40. 118 W. Washington St.: Two-story brick commercial Italianate building constructed ca. 1880. The storefront was altered ca. 1970 with an added metal door and display windows. The cast iron pilasters flanking the storefront are still visible. On the second story are original 4/4 sash arched windows with brick hood molding. Above the windows are tie rod anchors with floral decoration. Below the roofline is a corbelled brick cornice with dentil designs, zig-zag indented brick banding and inset rectangular panels. At the roofline is a simple brick parapet. (C)

41-42. 120-124 W. Washington St.: Two story brick, commercial Italianate building, constructed ca. 1880. The storefront of 124 was replaced ca.1960 with glass and metal double doors and display windows, and the bulkhead is covered with linoleum panels. The storefront of 120 was altered ca.1925 with a single-light glass and metal door with Art Deco fixtures, white glazed brick, and a black, beige, and red Carrara glass bulkhead. The interior of 124 has been altered and no original details remain. The interior of 120 retains its 1917 display cases. The second story has two original 1/1 sash windows set within recessed panels. Three other windows have been altered. The sills and lintels are of stone. The attic story has five circular vents covered with decorative metal grills set in recessed rectangular panels. At the roofline is a simple brick cornice. (C)

43. 202 W. Washington St.: Two-story brick building constructed ca. 1890 with a ca. 1970 added metal facade. (NC)

44. 204 W. Washington St.: Two-story brick, commercial vernacular design building constructed ca. 1890. The storefront has been altered with a ca.1940 glass and frame door and display windows. The transom has been enclosed and a metal awning added over the storefront. On the second story are enclosed rectangular windows with stone sills and lintels. Between the windows is horizontal brick corbelling. Above the windows are four sheet metal cornices and corbelled brick similar to that of 206 W. Washington. At the roofline is concrete coping. On the upper facade are brick piers and original vertical stone panels. The interior retains an original pressed metal ceiling. (C)

45. 206 W. Washington St.: Two-story brick, commercial vernacular design building constructed ca. 1890. The storefront has been altered ca.1940 with a central, glass and frame, recessed door and flanking display windows. On the east bay is an original single light glass and frame door with an enclosed single-light transom. Over the storefront is an added shingle awning. On the second story are enclosed rectangular windows with stone sills and lintels.

Between the windows is horizontal brick corbelling. Above the windows is a small sheet metal cornice with an egg-and-dart motif design. Above this cornice are sheet metal cornices and corbelled brick panels. At the roofline is a concrete parapet. On the west facade are round vent windows on the first story and enclosed arched windows on the second story. At the roofline is a corbelled brick cornice. This facade has been covered with stucco. (C)

46. 209-219 W. Washington St.: The Crete Opera House is a three-story brick Victorian Romanesque style building built in 1899. The storefronts of 209, 215 and 219 were altered ca. 1970. The storefront of 211 retains its original single-light glass and frame door, display windows with frame bulkhead panels, and luxfer glass transom. The storefront of 213 retains the same original details as 211. Dividing the storefronts are cast iron engaged columns which have decorative pellet molding and Doric capitals. For each storefront the columns support a cast iron lintel decorated with floral medallions. The columns were manufactured by Christopher and Simpson of St. Louis, Missouri.

The upper facades of 209 and 219 are identical. On the second story are three arched 1/1 sash windows with brick relief arching. Brick Doric motif pilasters divide the windows which sit on a continuous stone sill. The central bay is framed by brick Doric motif pilasters, and in its attic story is a round, single-light window above which is an elaborate floral, terra cotta keystone. The bays at either side of the central bay have arched terra cotta panels inscribed with the date "1899" above decorative garlands and swags. At the roofline is a corbelled brick cornice with dentils and small floral brackets. The three central sections of the Opera House rise to a full three stories.

The windows on the second story are rectangular 1/1 sash windows. Above the windows of 211 and 215 are stepped brick, soldier course lintels. Connecting the lintels are horizontal bands of brick belt coursing, and the windows sit on a continuous stone sill. The third story windows are rectangular 1/1 sash with a continuous stone sill above which are recessed brick panels with rope molding. Above the rectangular panels is a blind arcade within which are round recessed panels. Above the blind arcade is brick relief arching. The cornice is of corbelled brick with dentils. The central bay of the Opera House has an enclosed thermal window on the third floor with brick relief molding and a brick keystone. At the roofline is a blind arcade above which is an open arched brick arcade. Also at the roofline is a shallow tower with a corbelled brick cornice. The interior retains the original staircases, fireplaces, and upper story spaces. The stage and the seating have been removed. (C)

47. 210 W. Washington St.: One-story brick commercial building constructed ca. 1975. (NC)

48. 301 W. Washington St.: The Hotel Greystone, now the R.E.A. Johnson Building, is a three-story brick vernacular design structure built in 1925. On the north facade is the main entrance with ca. 1970 glass and metal doors above which is a transom bar with a fanlight transom. Beneath the fanlight is a ca. 1960 metal awning. Flanking the doorway are the original 6/1 vertical sash windows above which is brick arching with inset herringbone pattern panels. On the second story above the entrance is a small balcony with a stucco exterior. The central recessed bay also has a stucco exterior. Windows throughout the building are 1/1 paired sash. The building has a hipped roof with wide eaves. The west bays of the first story contain two storefronts with original

single-light glass and frame doors, single-light transoms and large display windows. Some doors have been replaced with modern doors. The interior retains the original floor plan with the lobby and dining room intact but it has been extensively remodelled. (C)

49. 304 W. Washington St.: Two-story brick commercial vernacular building constructed ca. 1915 with two storefronts both of which have been altered. The west section has added display windows and modern double doors of frame and glass. The transoms have been enclosed. Over the storefronts are ca.1960 metal awnings. The east storefront was replaced ca. 1970 with a recessed brick storefront. The west section of the second story has the original 9/9 sash windows with concrete sills. Windows on the second story of the east section have been enclosed. Above the second story windows is a corbelled brick cornice and two large rectangular panels. At the roofline is a curved and stepped parapet with concrete coping. On the first story of the east section are the original 6/1 sash windows. The clerestory windows are ten-light casement. The interior retains the original column and framing system. (C)

50. 101 E. Wood St.: Two-story brick and stucco, Spanish Colonial, commercial building constructed ca.1935. The corner entrance has a ca.1970 glass and metal door. Flanking the door are stucco floral panels. Over the entrance is an original metal awning with egg-and-dart, leaf-and-dart, and floral molding. Above the awning is a slight cornice with floral panels. On the second story, above the entrance, are rope molded columns, stucco panels with floral decoration, a segmental pediment and an urn. The building has original window openings on the first floor with added single light metal windows. The second story windows are original six-light casement. At the roofline is decorative brickwork and a tile clay roof. The interior has been remodeled. (C)

51. 101 W. Wood St.: (There are two listings for this address). One-story brick ca. 1970 commercial building. (NC)

52. 101 W. Wood St.: (There are two listings for this address). The U.S. Post Office is a one-story, Colonial Revival, brick building. The original section was constructed in 1908 with James Knox Taylor as supervising architect. The building rests on a raised basement with eight-light casement windows with jack arching. The main entrances have ca. 1970 metal and glass doors, engaged Doric columns, a pedimented cornice with modillion blocks and an elliptical arched transom with a keystone. The windows are arched with brick relief molding and stone keystones. Windows are 6/6 sash and 8/8 sash. Some windows have 2/2 sidelights and arched transoms. The building has quoins, a frame dentilled cornice and a hipped slate roof. Some windows have herringbone pattern brick in the arches while other window openings are blind. The interior has the original terrazzo floor and some original woodwork. At the east facade is a matching ca. 1960 one-story brick addition. (C)

Period of Significance: ca. 1838 - ca. 1935

Area of Significance: Commerce/Architecture

Architect/Builder: Stroop, D.V/ Hunt, Reuben H./Taylor, James Knox/ Unknown - Architects

Criterion: A and C

### Statement of Significance:

The Paris Commercial District is a notable collection of late 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture in Paris, Tennessee and has been the center of commerce in the community. The district is located in and around the original public square of the community and contains fifty-two buildings. The district contains the finest collection of commercial buildings in the town of Paris and intrusions and alterations have been minimal. The buildings in the district were occupied some of the community's most important businesses such as banks, manufacturing companies and retail stores and the downtown area continues to be the main commercial center of Paris.

The original plan of the community originated in 1821 by surveyor Edmund Hickman. Hickman was chosen to lay out the county seat of Henry County after its creation by the legislature. The original town was laid out in 104 lots centered around a court square. Lots were soon sold and several log and frame stores were built around the court square in 1823. Also in that year a log courthouse was built on the rectangular plot in the center of the square. This log building was replaced in 1825 by a one-story brick structure.

In its early years Paris became an important trading center of west Tennessee and the site of several notable cotton and tobacco mills. Many frame and brick buildings were built around the square and contained businesses such as dry goods and hardware stores, saloons and hotels. Steamboats brought goods to landings along the Tennessee River which were then shipped by wagon to Paris. From Paris goods were either sold or shipped by wagon to other communities in the region. The Crutchfield and Brown cotton mills produced finished cloth which was sold throughout the area and the tobacco warehouses of the town were also significant.

By the 1830s, Paris contained over 800 inhabitants with several mills and industries located in the community. On streets adjacent to the square a number of fine brick residences were also constructed. The oldest remaining building in the district is the Benjamin Brown House built ca. 1838 on N. Poplar Street. This two-story brick residence originally contained a detached kitchen and other outbuildings but these have been removed and the original section altered. Commercial and residential construction continued in the downtown area throughout the 1840s and 1850s. However, only the Brown House remains from the ante-bellum period in the public square area.

With the coming of the railroad in 1860, Paris became a prominent rail center in the western section of the state. This growth and development was reflected in the many new brick buildings constructed in the downtown area in the late 1870s and 1880s. A fire in 1873 destroyed much of the west side of the public square but by the 1880s new two and three story brick buildings had been built on the west, north and east side. The south side of the square was dominated by the Second Empire style Carter House Hotel and few commercial buildings were located on this block.

In the 1880s the population of Paris stood at 1,100 and the public square was the commercial center of the county. The 1886 Sanborn map of the square shows many of the existing buildings constructed by this date. Much of the north and east sides of the square were built in this period in the Commercial Italianate style. These buildings were two and three story structures with

storefronts and upper facade detailing typical of the period. The storefronts consisted of large doors and display windows separated by cast iron columns or pilasters. Upper facades consisted of arched windows with corbelled brick and sheet metal hood molding, corbelled brick panels and sheet metal cornices.

Paris was the undisputed commercial center of the county in the late 19th century. Directories of the 1870s and 1880s reveal dozens of stores and businesses catering to county residents. In 1873 these businesses included three saloons, five clothing stores, two shoemakers, a tailor and music store. The court square's importance in county politics was reflected not only by the presence of the courthouse but also by twelve attorneys who had offices in buildings around the square. One of these offices was used by Judge James D. Porter who was elected Governor of Tennessee and served from 1874 until 1878. His office no longer stands.

Paris experienced rapid growth during the 1890s with the population doubling by 1900. This was due primarily to the opening of the L&N Railroad machine shops on the western edge of the town. The L&N employed hundreds of workers and many new homes were built to the west and north of the public square. This growth was also reflected in the fortunes of the county which erected a new courthouse in 1897. This two-story Romanesque building was designed by Chattanooga architect Reuben H. Hunt who was one of the most prominent architects of Tennessee in the late 19th century.

By the late 1890s the present appearance of the town square evolved. In addition to the existing north and east sides of the square the west side of the square was rebuilt in 1899 following a fire. This side of the square was designed by architect David V. Strop who used Classical detailing in the terra cotta belt coursing, balustrade and attic windows. Strop was listed as an architect in Paris until the early 1900s when he moved to Chattanooga. He presumably designed other buildings in the downtown area but this row is the only definite design identified as his work.

Another significant development in 1899 was the construction of the Crete Opera House on W. Washington Street. The opera house was one of the largest buildings erected in the downtown area and it was the site of numerous theatrical performances in the early 1900s. The community's response to the opera house proved disappointing and in 1911 the building was sold to the National Toilet Company for sales and storage use. The original seating area and stage were removed on the upper floors but the exterior has not been significantly altered.

In addition to the many new buildings constructed around the square at this time other physical improvements took place. An electric light plant was opened in 1896 which supplied electric street lighting to the square and adjacent streets. Streets were paved during these years which removed much of the dust and dirt from the square area. Along with the new courthouse the courthouse grounds were landscaped and water mains were placed under the streets to provide for fire hydrants and fire protection.

Buildings constructed in the early 20th century around the square included the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad passenger station on Fentress Street. The railroad depot was a one-story brick structure which served the railroad's passenger traffic through the town. During the height of rail service

in these years several hotels operated adjacent to the station on W. Washington. The Caldwell Hotel was located on the north side of the street and operated for several decades. In recent years this building has been razed and replaced with a modern bank building. Another early hotel was the Maxwell Hotel located at the southwest corner of Fentress and W. Washington which was built ca. 1910. This brick hotel was replaced with a larger, more modern hotel called the Greystone in 1925. The Greystone was the last hotel built in the downtown area.

Another major building of the period was the construction of the U.S. Post Office at the southeast corner of W. Wood and N. Market in 1908. This brick building was a Colonial Revival design typical of post office construction of the early 1900s. The building's design was prepared under the supervision of government architect James Knox Taylor and was one of many such post offices constructed utilizing this Colonial Revival form and detailing. It featured a hipped roof, arched windows and classical detailing around the doors, windows and eaves such as dentils and modillion blocks. By the mid-20th century the building was enlarged with brick additions but it retains its original form and design.

During the 1920s the court square experienced few other new buildings. In 1926, the First National Bank building was erected at the northeast corner of E. Wood and N. Poplar Streets. This five story building was the tallest built in the downtown area and was designed with minimal classical detailing. This bank continues to be in operation although under a different name. The Twenties also saw new brick buildings constructed along the 200 block of N. Poplar.

In recent years the major changes to the existing historic buildings has been the addition of new storefronts. Most of the upper facades have remained intact with only a few of the buildings being obscured by added materials. New construction has also been limited with the modern bank building at the southwest corner of W. Wood and N. Poplar the major exception. The Paris Commercial District remains a major center of area commerce with most buildings containing shops or offices. The district's continued historic appearance and economic vitality make it a significant part of the Paris community.

Acreage: 17.2 acres

UTM References: Paris Quad/ A. 16/380780/4018260 B. 16/381080/4018250 C. 16/380920/4017980 D. 16/381060/4017980

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification: The boundary for the Paris Commercial District is illustrated on accompanying Henry County tax map # 106A and on the accompanying sketch map of the district. The boundary is drawn to include contiguous historic buildings in the downtown area which have not been significantly altered and to exclude modern buildings. The boundary is drawn to include sufficient property to protect the historical setting of the district.

Supplemental Bibliographical References: