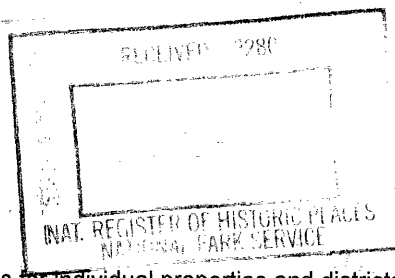


1218

**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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name McAdoo, Green, School

other names/site number Clinton Colored School; McAdoo, Green, Grammar School

2. Location

street & number 101 School Street

not for publication N/A

city or town Clinton

vicinity N/A

state Tennessee

code TN

county Anderson

code 001

zip code 37716

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert L. Hays
Signature of certifying official/Title

9/12/05
Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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:)

for Daniel J. Vician
Signature of the Keeper

11/8/05
Date of Action

McAdoo, Green, School
Name of Property

Anderson County, Tennessee
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education: school

Recreation and Culture: auditorium and sports facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Rehabilitation – Work In Progress

Recreation and Culture: sports facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Community School Plan for two-classroom school

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick, Concrete

walls Stone, Brick

roof Asphalt shingle

other Metal; glass

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheets.

McAdoo, Green, School
Name of Property

Anderson County, Tennessee
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)
Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education
Ethnic Heritage: African American
Social History

Period of Significance
1935 – 1956

Significant Dates
1935, 1947-48, 1954, 1956

Significant Person
(complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Barber, Frank

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

- Previous documentation on file (NPS):** N/A
- 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 # _____
 - recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

- Primary location of additional data:**
- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State Agency
 - Federal Agency
 - Local Government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository:

McAdoo, Green, School
Name of Property

Anderson County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately two acres Clinton 137 SW

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>757452</u>	<u>3999116</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cleo Ellis, President; James Cain, Treasurer; Marilyn Hayden, Secretary; and other members, edited and expanded by Dr. Carroll Van West, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

organization Green McAdoo Cultural Organization date April 9, 2005

street & number 101 School Street telephone 865.945.3031

City or town Clinton state TN zip code 37716

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Clinton (James S. Jones, City Manager, contact person)

street & number 100 Bowling Street telephone 865-457-0424

City or town Clinton state TN zip code 37716

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

Description

Green McAdoo School (1935, 1947-48, c. 1954) occupies a hillside location on Foley Hill facing south toward the downtown center of Clinton, the seat of Anderson County, Tennessee. Surrounded by a few houses and a neighborhood church, the historic multi-gable brick building has a prominent location in the African American neighborhood. The school has three distinct building dates: 1935 when the primary section of the building was constructed from architect Frank Barber's design; 1947-48, when the kitchen and cafeteria were added; and c. 1954 when the adjacent school gymnasium was constructed. The school building has a few alterations but it maintains its historic integrity.

The south facade of the school has five bays, dominated by an arcade composed of three semi-circular arched entrances in the center. The arcade was filled in by concrete blocks with a red brick veneer c. 1965, leaving only a new metal entrance door in the centermost arch. The semi circular top archway surrounding the metal door is approximately seven feet wide by nineteen feet high. The arch is made out of eight inch red brick using a whole brick, half brick spacing in the complete surface of the arch. The two remaining archways are located at sixteen inches spacing from the outer edge of the center arch, and are filled in to a solid surface with eight inch red brick that match the existing brick construction somewhat but not exactly; the original arcading is still visible. Also c. 1965, the porch of the building was altered with a concrete porch with four eight-inch steps to a thirty-two inch rise to top of porch. The porch is closed on two sides with steel tubular handrails. Flanking the center section are two matching gabled end wings that are defined by brick quoins. Both wings have two symmetrical two over two horizontal pane windows with rectangular building vents located at the gable field.

An extended part of the south facade is the kitchen wing, added in 1947-48. This brick three-bay wing is centered on a metal entrance door. This door is covered at the top with a canvas type umbrella-style awning, and joined by a wooden deck, which was installed c. 2000. Flanking the entrance are symmetrically located one-over-one double-hung windows. Adding the cafeteria wing to the original school building created a long horizontal facade, with the overall length of the building being approximately 100 feet.

The east elevation of the building, approximately thirty-six feet in length, is dominated by the cafeteria addition of 1947-1948. There are two symmetrically located one-over-two double-hung windows. This end of the building is capped by a gable roof that extends to a shed roof at the south. A rectangular brick vent is in the gable field, and a high square brick chimney is located at the southern end. The east elevation is set below ground level; to reach a rear playground and parking lot, a sidewalk and eleven concrete steps that rise to the level land surface were installed c. 1950.

The north elevation is asymmetrical due to the two different building periods. The elevation has fifteen bays, comprised of fourteen one-over-two windows and a rear entrance metal door. At the east end of the elevation is a shed-roof extension with symmetrically located one-over-one windows. On the west side of the extension is a centered metal door. A low concrete ramp, with metal railing, was installed c. 1980; the ramp allows handicapped access to the cafeteria and also allows for delivery. This elevation has an approximate length of 100 feet.

The west elevation has two bays of one-over-one windows. It contains access to the underground basement area that was used to house the old coal fired furnace. Eight eight-inch concrete steps and a stairway lead to a metal entry door. This opening is guarded by a two-inch constructed handrail enclosure.

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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

A rectangular brick fifteen-foot high chimney is at the northwest corner of the elevation. A rectangular metal coal chute door is located near the lower southwest corner of the elevation.

The floor plan of the building remains largely intact from its original construction, although the uses of some of the spaces have changed. The largest change occurred when the original arcade was filled in with brick and concrete block to create an entry hallway. This ten-foot by twenty-one-foot corridor allows entry into two of the classrooms. On either side of the hallway are two small offices, originally administrative offices and the library but modified into separate boys' and girls' restrooms c. 1947-48. These two rooms measure about eight by ten feet each.

Access is gained into the two classrooms of the 1935 school through separate doorways, with original six-panel wood doors. The floors of the classrooms were originally concrete, but now are covered with one-third low pile commercial carpet, and two-thirds coverage with one-foot square linoleum tile. The internal walls are finished with concrete type stucco, and have wallboards to the south side of the rooms. The original ceiling consists of two-inch tongue and groove boards, covered by plaster, but a paneled drop ceiling was installed c. 1980. The ceiling also has the heat, and air vents from the new central heat and air units installed at a later date. All classrooms have drop down lighting fixtures.

Classroom two is situated just off of the central entrance to the building and it was a multi-purpose room, in keeping with Rosenwald school design guidelines, that had a raised stage on the east end. Originally folding wooden doors separated the two classrooms so that the stage area would be fully accessible for large assemblies, but a solid wall was installed permanently separating the rooms in 1947-48. The stage is approximately eleven-feet by twenty-three-feet, on a platform eighteen inches high from the floor. There are two six-inch steps to gain access through an approximately six-foot opening in the four-foot high and fifteen-foot wide wooden partition that has been added to the front of the stage, c. 1947. At the northeast corner of the stage is a small-enclosed area that contains the air and heat furnace for this room. From the stage area, a doorway leads into a small corridor that connects the stage to the cafeteria and provides access to a small sink and utility area.

The cafeteria measures approximately twenty-four feet by thirty-six feet. The kitchen area is equipped with stoves. A serving counter separates the kitchen from the main dining area. There is also a five foot by seven foot furnace room located on the east side of the room.

The Green McAdoo School is a contributing building. (C)

The Green McAdoo gymnasium (c. 1954) is a large one-story brick building, with a brick and concrete foundation and asphalt shingle gable roof. Its north facade has four symmetrical bays of casement windows, which have been covered by corrugated metal panels, installed once a central heat and air system was introduced in 1999. At the northeast corner is a low-pitched, asphalt shingle projection that has double metal doors in the gable end. Built in 1999, the new entrance allowed for the installation of men and women restrooms, an office, and storage.

The west elevation of the gymnasium has two symmetrically located windows in the upper half of the elevation, each covered by a metal awning. The south elevation of the gymnasium has four symmetrical bays of casement windows, which have been covered by a corrugated metal panel, installed once a central

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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

heat and air system was introduced in 1999. The east elevation of the gymnasium has two symmetrically located windows in the upper half of the elevation.

The gymnasium interior is dominated by the large basketball court, which is still used for recreational purposes. The floor and bleachers date to 1954. There have been few changes in the interior. The new 1999 entrance to the building contains men's and women's restrooms, storage, and office space. (C)

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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

Statement of Significance

The Green McAdoo School, located at the intersection of School and Broad Streets in Clinton (population 9,409), Anderson County, Tennessee, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with themes of African American heritage, education, and social history. Constructed by the New Deal Federal Emergency Relief Administration, a precursor to the Works Progress Administration, in 1935, the Green McAdoo School also possesses significance as a local example of how New Deal programs sought to enhance African American education. As the city's only public African American elementary school, Green McAdoo Elementary School became an education and community center. Named for the late Green L. McAdoo in 1947, a Buffalo Soldier who served in the 24th Infantry,¹ the school educated the African American children of Clinton, Tennessee, during segregation. The period of significance of the school extends to 1956, when it served as a strategy center and staging area during the movement to desegregate the public high school in Clinton. Once desegregation was underway in the fall of 1956, local African American students would gather at the school to form a group before proceeding on their walk to the white school. The school also hosted various public meetings in 1955-1956 where the desegregation process was explained and discussed within the African American community.

The Green McAdoo School was initially known as the Clinton Colored School, built as a New Deal relief project in 1935. In late July 1934, the engineering department of the Tennessee Emergency Relief Administration (TERA), the state agency that carried out the Federal Emergency Relief Administration for Tennessee, approved construction plans for the school, and assigned O.E Jett from the area TERA office as project director. With support from TERA, the City of Clinton School Department, and Anderson County School Board, a total of \$8,214.49 was raised to complete the new building. TERA used a total of 66 common laborers, and 117 semi-skilled workers, who were given a few days work each during this depressed time in America.²

Few counties were as impacted by federal programs in the 1930s and early 1940s than Anderson County. In a ten-year period from 1933 to 1943, such major federal projects as the construction of Norris Dam and Reservoir by the Tennessee Valley Authority and the development of the secret Clinton Engineering Works (better known as Oak Ridge, the Atomic City) reshaped the county's landscape and demographics. Within that era of profound structural change, TERA was one of several lesser federal relief programs that carried out multiple projects in Anderson County. While it funded the construction of the Clinton Colored School, another New Deal agency, the Public Works Administration funded the construction of a much larger, more modern, and better equipped Clinton Elementary and High School, at the bottom of Foley Hill, on Broad Street in the 1930s.³

Architect Frank Barber designed the Clinton Colored School, following a plan for a two-teacher school, with a raised stage placed in one schoolroom so that the building could also serve as a community auditorium. Barber was a partner of the prominent Knoxville firm of Barber and McMurry. The firm "was known for its school and church designs. The firm designed, among others, Sequoyah Elementary School (1929) and

¹ Katherine B. Hoskins, *Anderson County Historical Sketches* (Clinton, 1979), 262.

² Anderson County Board of Education Meeting Minutes, October 11, 1934 and August 25, 1935. *Clinton Courier News*, August 26, 1935.

³ For New Deal impact, see Carroll Van West, *Tennessee's New Deal Landscape* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001), 10, 49-50, 153-55, 219-26; on TERA in general, see *ibid.*, 18.

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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

the Maryville High School” before the commission for the Green McAdoo School. During the New Deal, Frank O. Barber also designed the extant Colonial Revival-styled Corryton School (1936) in Knox County.⁴ The firm’s plan was an adaptation of school plans for rural and small town African American neighborhoods, originally devised by the Julius Rosenwald Fund. The local African American community had established a Rosenwald School Fund Committee and began the local fundraising effort to secure Rosenwald support as early as 1930, when the group served refreshments both nights of the school closing exercises of the Clinton Colored School. However, the Rosenwald Fund closed its school building program in 1932, before Clinton African Americans had an opportunity to fully raise their share of the funds and secure Rosenwald backing. Several similarly delayed or never funded Rosenwald school campaigns across the South were finished by New Deal agencies, with primary funding going from TERA and its successor, the Works Progress Administration.⁵

The new school replaced an older frame building that had occupied a significant place within the townscape of Clinton since emancipation. After the Civil War about 600 slaves were liberated in Anderson County. Early education for blacks was conducted in the churches, such as Asbury United Methodist Church and the Mt. Sinai Baptist Church. During the era of Reconstruction the Freedman’s Bureau constructed a school for African American children in the middle of the newly established freedmen’s community, on a prominent hill overlooking the town square of Clinton. This hill north of town became identified as Freedmen’s Hill (and later took on the present name of Foley Hill). Local white residents torched the black school in the spring of 1869, prompting a citizens’ meeting, where residents adopted the following resolution: “Whereas on the morning of March 7, 1869, the church and school on Freedman’s Hill in Clinton belonging to the colored people, was destroyed by fire under circumstances which leave but little doubt that it was the work of an incendiary . . . The people of Clinton and vicinity, without distinction of party or political antecedent, denounce the act.”⁶

The Clinton citizens took up a collection for the purpose of rebuilding a church and school for the African American community. The local history records that a former slaveholder and staunch Democrat, Colonel John Jarnigan, took the lead in the movement to rebuild the destroyed church and school. Less than two months later on May 1, 1869, a former slave, Andrew Freeman, of Anderson County donated one and a quarter acres of land for the building of what became known as the Whittier School for the African American community. School Superintendent, Charles D. McGuffey, nephew of the author of the famous McGuffey Readers, witnessed the execution of the deed.⁷ This town lot became the historic location for African American schools.

Located in the heart of the African American community, Green McAdoo exemplifies the 1930s concept of a neighborhood school. The Green McAdoo community, including the teachers and parents provided a

⁴ Katherine Wheeler, “Barber & McMurry Architects,” in Carroll Van West, et al., eds., *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* (Nashville: Tennessee Historical Society, 1998), 43; West, *New Deal Landscape*, 111.

⁵ There is no Clinton listing in the Rosenwald list of Tennessee schools, Julius Rosenwald Fund Collection, Fisk University Archives, Fisk University, Nashville; “School Closing Exercises at Clinton Colored School, For Term 1929-1930 (n.p., 1930). A copy of the program is available in the office of the City Manager of Clinton.

⁶ David J. Brittain, “A Case Study of the Problems of Racial Integration in the Clinton Tennessee High School,” Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1960, Snyder E. Roberts, *History of Clinton Senior High School 1806-1971*.

⁷ Hoskins, *Anderson County Historical Sketches*, 263.

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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

good educational experience for students despite equipment, salaries, and opportunities that were grossly inadequate in comparison with white public elementary schools. Despite unequal treatment from the outside world, Green McAdoo's faculty created a family atmosphere that is celebrated by alumni even today at a school, which touched the outskirts of Clinton, but that was never really part of the town, due to the spatial and cultural impact of Jim Crow segregation.

The Civil Rights story of Clinton was influenced by internal and external factors. Clinton Colored School, like many others throughout the South, experienced a myriad of events that plotted the course of history. The building itself is a telling barometer of the changes that reshaped Clinton from the New Deal to the end of public school segregation in Clinton.

The town and county experienced significant demographic change from 1940 to the 1950s due to the impact of Oak Ridge. The Clinton Colored School also was a shared jurisdiction between the City of Clinton and Anderson County; it received funding from both but also was answerable to both political entities. With the end of World War II, local African American citizens began to demand more equal school facilities. The Clinton Colored School was a two-classroom building, with no cafeteria, no gymnasium, and no indoor restrooms while the school down the hill had all of these features, and more. Race relations, according to white and blacks interviewed after the desegregation crisis, had been acceptable. African Americans comprised only 3 percent of the county's population in 1950—there were only 67 school age black children in the county. Blacks were neither a demographic, political, or economic threat. But they still insisted on better facilities, and in 1947-48 the board of education began to respond to those needs.⁸

Officials approved an expansion to Clinton Colored School, adding a cafeteria and interior restrooms, in 1947-1948. They also agreed to change the school name to honor Green L. McAdoo. The board proclaimed: "this Negro leader, now deceased, took an active part in promoting the civic interests of the Negro citizens of the Clinton community while he lived. The school is to be called the Green McAdoo Grammar School hereafter."⁹ McAdoo was a landowner and a valued employee of the Anderson County Courthouse. His father was Jack McAdoo, slave of the John McAdoo family who were among the first settlers in Anderson County. (Of this family William Gibbs McAdoo Jr. became Secretary of the U.S. Treasury under President Woodrow Wilson.) Green L. McAdoo served 20 years in the Army with the 24th U.S. Infantry, based in Fort McIntosh, Texas, in 1878; at Fort Sill, Indiana Territory in 1887; and in 1890 at Fort Grant, Arizona Territory. In 1896 at about 40 years of age Green McAdoo returned home from the army and was employed as custodian of the Anderson County Courthouse for the next 25 years.¹⁰

Due to the low enrollment of students at other county black elementary schools (Claxton, Andersonville, Oliver Springs, and Lake City), and the comparative inferior facilities at those buildings, the Green McAdoo Grammar School in Clinton became the leading educational facility for African American students in Anderson County.¹¹ The educational level there was for the 1st through the 8th grade. Moreover, since the school's design provided for a stage, and the conversion of two classrooms into an auditorium-like space,

⁸ Anderson County Population Totals, 1950 U.S. Census.

⁹ Clinton City Board of Education Meeting Minutes, December 1, 1948. Although the Board of Education record shows the school was named Green McAdoo Grammar School, it has been known locally as the Green McAdoo School.

¹⁰ Hoskins, *Anderson County Historical Sketches*, 262.

¹¹ As related to the Green McAdoo Cultural Organization by Hazel Moore, Pat Henderson, Bronce Griffin, and Virginia Smith.

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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

the school became a popular secular community meeting location. After graduation from 8th grade, black students were bused to Austin High School in Knoxville, or Lafollette High School in Campbell County. No African American high school was provided for black students in Anderson County. In addition to the public facilities, several young African American women from Clinton attended the Allen Home School for Negro Girls, a private school for high-school aged girls under the Methodist Church in Asheville, North Carolina.

In between those years, African Americans challenged the inequalities of the school system, especially the lack of black high school education in Anderson County, in federal courts. In August 1950, four black youth eligible to attend Clinton High School except for their race attempted to enroll at the school but were rejected by school officials. A group of citizens filed a lawsuit, which became known as *McSwain et al. v. County Board of Education of Anderson County, Tennessee* (104 F. Supp. 1861, 1952), on December 5, 1950. The filing of the case surprised many Clinton residents. As historian Janice McClelland has observed, "A great many people held, and still hold, that white Clintonians may not have welcomed the idea of desegregation, believing that, so long as colored schools were 'equal,' there was no reason to breach time-honored community custom and integrate the school system."¹² The county had recently made improvement to the African American school, not placing it on par with white schools but certainly improving the comfort of students with the cafeteria and inside restrooms; to many white residents, their good will was evident in the renovation as well as the renaming of the school in honor of Green McAdoo.

African American families would not be swayed and the lawsuit remained on the federal docket. When the *McSwain* case finally received a hearing on February 13, 1952, in the U.S. District Court of Knoxville, Judge Robert L. Taylor presiding, the local citizens were represented by a powerful group of activist African American attorneys. Z. Alexander Looby and Avon N. Williams of Nashville would later gain great fame from their role in the Nashville Civil Rights struggle and Student Movement of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Carl A. Cowan of Knoxville was a locally respected African American counsel. But most importantly was the presence of Thurgood Marshall of the Legal Defense Fund of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in New York City. Marshall's involvement meant that the NAACP considered the proceedings about Clinton to be of national significance and that the case had the potential of being yet another building block in the NAACP's patient legal strategy of undermining segregation.¹³

In his ruling announced on April 26, 1952, Federal District Judge Taylor denied the lawsuit and upheld the position of the county school board. Judge Taylor rejected out of hand the argument crafted by Looby, Williams, and Marshall that white and black students were "similarly situated" and therefore it violated the separate but equal doctrine for African Americans to attend high school in another county. Taylor countered: "Plaintiffs pin-point their case upon Clinton, and confine their proof to the effect of this alleged discrimination upon Clinton Negroes. It is a situation that exists in hundreds of towns, in Tennessee and out, where Negro students who live near a white school must pass it by and go to a Negro school located at varying distances beyond, and it exists at all levels, from the elementary school to the college, or university." The judge then complained: "This 'similarly situated' theory is the doctrine of equal protection carried to its ultimate extreme. Counsel for plaintiffs deny they are attacking segregation of races, but in

¹² McClelland, "Structural Analysis," 296.

¹³ See the biographical entries for Zephaniah Alexander Lobby and Avon N. Williams in the online edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (<http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>).

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McAdoo, Green, School
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the situation here stated, their action, as will be seen from a review of the facts, can be nothing else.”¹⁴ From testimony given in cross-examination, Judge Taylor concluded that the students “are not aggrieved at present arrangements. Nor are they happy in their role of hostility toward defendants [white education officials] who are their neighbors and personal friends.”¹⁵ Neither was Judge Taylor convinced that the African American families were terribly inconvenienced by separate schools. He even extended his arguments to make a point that probably half of the white students were in worse shape and had just as much a reason to claim a denial of equal protection, and that anyway the African American Austin High School in Knoxville had superior facilities in several ways than the white schools in Anderson County. In the end, Judge Taylor concluded that Clinton African Americans really had little to complain about and the problems and inconveniences of separate schools were “too small to be regarded as a denial of constitutional rights.”¹⁶

The federal court's ruling, while strongly in favor of school segregation, also told local officials that unless the African American schools remained close in quality to the white schools of the county, the county could expect a different type of court ruling from Judge Taylor. The legal landscape totally changed, however, on May 17, 1954 when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that segregation was inherently unequal and struck down the separate but equal underpinning of Jim Crow segregation. Two-and-one-half weeks later, the U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit, in a hearing where the Clinton black families were again represented by Looby, Williams, Cowan, and Marshall, reversed Taylor's 1952 ruling and returned *McSwain et al. v. County Board of Education of Anderson County* to federal district court for a new decision “in accordance with the decision of the Supreme Court in *Brown et al. v. Board of Education*.”¹⁷

Anderson County and City of Clinton officials moved quickly to upgrade African American school facilities in a last ditch effort to placate local African American residents and to delay school desegregation. For example the city and county agreed to fund and constructed a regulation size basketball court and gymnasium at Green McAdoo School in 1954. Janice McClelland points out: “The better educational interests of the county's black children, and certainly an interest in equal educational opportunities, hardly seems to have been a consideration of the school board until pressed to take an interest. Much, too, can be read into the major expenditures that were made for the construction of entirely new facilities for the black students of Anderson County between the years 1954 and 1958.” McClelland believes that “the board's attitude towards its black students is made clear not only by the eleventh-hour expenditures it made on black educational facilities, but by its legal actions and public sentiments. The Anderson County Board of Education, in fact, made every effort to prevent desegregation by legal means” until the summer of 1955 when it decided that a policy of delay was best—eventual desegregation could not be avoided. Neighboring Oak Ridge had quietly ordered the desegregation of its city schools that same year since Oak Ridge was still under federal jurisdiction at this time, operating separately from the state system of education and the decision there was to comply with *Brown v. Board of Education* quickly. In reaction, the county education board created an “integration committee” to develop an integration plan and authorized the county attorney to ask the federal district court to grant “a reasonable period of time to allow for completion of this study.”

¹⁴ *McSwain et al. v. County Board of Education of Anderson County, Tennessee* (104 F. Supp. 862-3, 1952).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 864.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 872.

¹⁷ *McSwain et al. v. County Board of Education of Anderson County* (214 F.2d 131, 1954).

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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

Members of the committee included the principal of Green McAdoo School, additional white and black principals across the county, presidents of black and white PTAs, and various county and city officials.¹⁸

The policy of delay worked only for a few months (but at least it delayed integration for the 1955-56 school year). On January 4, 1956, Federal District Judge Robert L. Taylor in his final decree followed the Supreme Court's *Brown* decision and ordered the Anderson County School Board to end segregation by no later than the fall term of 1956. Once the ruling requiring integration, confined at this time solely to the high school, became the law of land, most Clinton residents accepted it. No public displays of outrage or attempts to stop the process took place in the summer of 1956. Registration of twelve African American students, who gathered at the Green McAdoo School before they walked together down Foley Hill on Broad Street to the white high school at the bottom of the hill (a procedure that they typically followed every day), took place without incident on August 20, 1956. The following weekend, however, white pro-segregationists arrived in Clinton and began to rally many white citizens to join them in protests against the black students and the prospect of integration. Two days before classes began, John Kasper, executive secretary of the Seaboard White Citizens Council, arrived in the city and issued a call for mass meetings of pro-segregationists and the organization of picketers. Nevertheless, on Monday, August 26, 1956, the "Clinton 12" made history by walking down Foley Hill from Green McAdoo School to attend classes at the high school; they were the first students to desegregate a state-supported high school in Tennessee and the first to do so in any southern state.¹⁹ Not until 1965 would the Green McAdoo School end its days as a segregated blacks-only institution. Finally, in that year, the ten-year struggle to desegregate public education in Clinton and Anderson County was over.

After closing as a segregated school, the Green McAdoo School next served as home to the Anderson County Headstart Program until a new building was built in 2002. Today, the building remains locked; however, the dreams and possibilities of the building's future are far from being contained. Green McAdoo has garnered a pivotal role in the City of Clinton's revitalization campaign. Through the efforts of the Green McAdoo Cultural Organization (GMCO), and the City of Clinton, plans are underway for the building to be transformed into the Green McAdoo Cultural Center in May 2006. The projected Green McAdoo Cultural Center 2006 opening will coincide with the 50th anniversary of Clinton's desegregation saga.

¹⁸ McClelland, "Structural Analysis," 299.

¹⁹ Janice M. McClelland, "Clinton Desegregation Crisis," Carroll Van West, et al., eds., *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* (Nashville: Tennessee Historical Society, 1998), 182; McClelland, "Structural Analysis," passim; June N. Adamson, "Few Black Voices heard: The Black Community and the 1956 Desegregation Crisis in Clinton," *Trial and Triumph: Essays in Tennessee's African American History*, ed. Carroll Van West (Knoxville, 2002), 334-349; In 2004, the Library of Congress produced an exhibit and a website titled "With an Even Hand": *Brown v. Board at Fifty* (www.loc.gov/exhibits/brown), which covered the Clinton events as the first example of integration in the South.

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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

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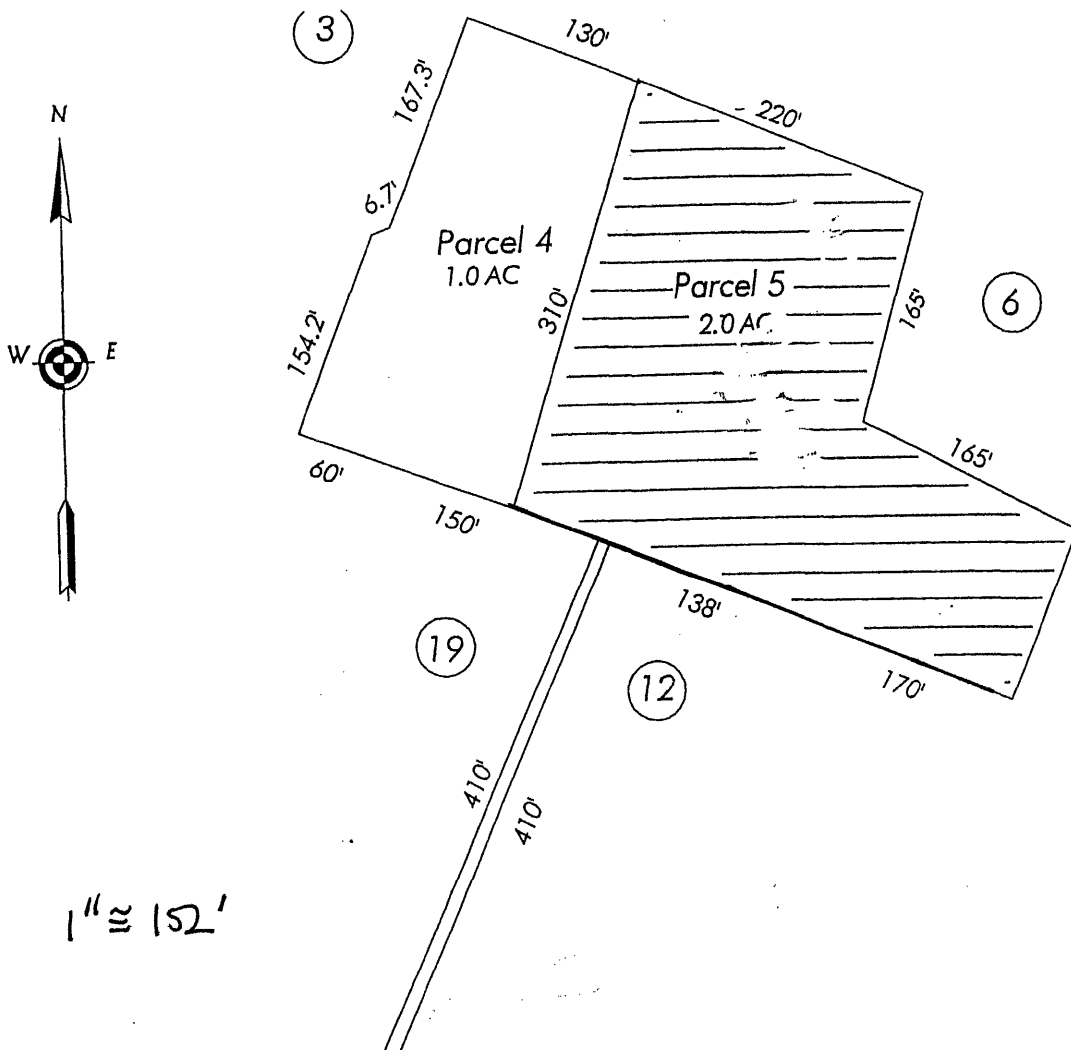
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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The school is situated on an approximately two-acre lot, as shown on parcel 5.00, Tax Map 741-B741 records of the property Assessor for Anderson County, Tennessee. The nominated boundaries are representative of all the historic property associated with the school during its period of significance.



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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

Photographs

Green McAdoo School, Anderson County, Tennessee

Date: April 2005

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

Photos by: Carroll Van West
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

View of Clinton from Green McAdoo School, facing south
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View of Green McAdoo School from Asbury United Methodist Church, facing north
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South facade, facing northwest
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East elevation, facing west
4 of 26

North elevation, facing southwest
5 of 26

West elevation, facing east
6 of 26

South facade and west elevation of gymnasium, facing northeast
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Gymnasium, west elevation, facing east
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Gymnasium, south elevation, facing northeast
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Gymnasium, north façade, facing south
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Gymnasium, north façade entrance, facing southwest
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Gymnasium, facing southwest
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McAdoo, Green, School
Anderson County, Tennessee

Original west classroom with stage, facing southeast
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Original west classroom, rear entrance, facing northeast
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Original east classroom, facing northwest
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Original east classroom, facing south
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Library, off of east classroom, facing southeast
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Restroom, facing west
18 of 26

Restroom, facing east
19 of 26

Original stage, facing northeast
20 of 26

Original stage, facing south
21 of 26

Lunchroom addition, facing northeast
22 of 26

Lunchroom addition, facing south
23 of 26

Washroom, facing east
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Gymnasium interior
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Gymnasium interior
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