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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

SEP 21 1987

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Stanton Masonic Lodge and School  
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number West Main Street N/A not for publication  
city, town Stanton N/A vicinity  
state Tennessee code TN county Haywood code TN 075 zip code 38069

3. Classification

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

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

*Herbert L. Hays* Signature of certifying official Date 9/17/87  
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.

Signature of commenting or other official Date  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

*Allan Byers* Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 10-22-87

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Social: meeting hallEducation: school

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Other; community center

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brickwalls Weatherboard

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roof Asphalt shinglesother 

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Stanton Masonic Lodge and School is located on the south side of Tennessee Highway #179 West, approximately one hundred yards west from United States Highway #70 in Stanton, Haywood County, Tennessee. The 1871 lodge is a two-story rectangular building of frame construction, with Greek Revival detailing. Built on brick piers, the building is covered with weatherboard and is five bays wide. The lodge has a low-pitched gabled roof, boxed cornice, cornice returns, pilaster corner boards that mimic Doric columns, and pedimented windows and doors. Original shutters currently cover the upper story windows on the main facade.

The north, or main, facade of the Stanton Masonic Lodge and School contains five windows on the second story and three windows and two doors on the first story. The entrance door on the east end leads to the main floor while the door on the west end enters into a stairwell that goes to the upper story. The west door is original, but the east door has recently been replaced by one of identical material, design, and age from a neighboring residence. The original porcelain door knobs and iron box locks remain on both doors. Transoms above each door have been covered by louvered panels and wooden steps lead to each door. A rusted sign near the west door denotes that F&AM #640 met here. Original shutters are closed over the upstairs windows, with most of the shutter hardware intact. The lower windows are covered by simple wooden covers to protect the glass. The window covers were added by the Masons after the building ceased to be used as a school to prevent vandalism. It is assumed that some of the original shutters deteriorated, however, several were sold during the 1950s. The poplar weatherboard is in fair condition, but a small portion on the east, near the second floor level has been replaced because of damage by bee infestation to the original siding.

The east and west elevations of the lodge and school are very similar. There are two windows on the second story of the west elevation, but none on the first. On the east side of the building there are two windows on each level. A small louvered vent is located in the gable end near the roof centerline on both elevations. Some of the weatherboard on the west side was replaced because of rot caused by bee infestation. The siding on the east side suffered the most extensive damage by bees. Despite repeated applications of pesticides by an extermination firm, honey continued to seep through the plaster on the inside and through the exterior siding. During May 1987 the siding was removed and the honeycombs dislodged. At

See continuation sheet

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this time extensive termite damage was found to exist and two-thirds of the supporting timbers were replaced. Poplar siding, of the same cut and shape as the original, replaced the rotted boards.

The brick pier foundation has been enclosed by brick infill on the north, east, and west elevations. No date has been determined for this enclosure, however, pictures taken outside the building circa 1918 do not show this improvement.

The rear, or south, elevation of the lodge has undergone the most alterations. Currently there are five windows across the second story, on the first story only one window still exists and it is covered by a wooden cover similar to the ones used on the north facade. Two other windows and a door are covered by siding similar to the original. A door, located in the second bay from the west, has been reopened and temporary steps were added. The roof damaged by a windstorm and rain has had new decking and shingles added. Two small, deteriorated, flush gable chimneys were taken off at the roof level and covered. A deteriorated brick pier, located near the center bay caused the building to sag, however, the building was jacked up, the pillar repaired, and some supporting beams reinforced. The foundation is not enclosed on this side. At one time, two one-story ell additions extended from the south elevation providing additional classroom space. The first room was added circa 1895 to the eastern side of the south elevation and was entered from a door leading from the stage. The second classroom on the western end of the south side was added circa 1915. Use of the building as the community's school was discontinued after the spring of 1920 and the Haywood County School Board deeded the property back to the Masonic Lodge in 1922. The two classroom wings were removed during the 1920s.

Work on the south elevation has been done in accordance to recommendations by the Center for Historic Preservation, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesburo. Future plans for the exterior of the building include replacing the steps with a ramp, providing accessibility to the handicapped.

The first floor of the Stanton Masonic Lodge and School contains the schoolroom which measures approximately thirty feet by forty-six feet with a ten foot stage on the east end. The floors are constructed of tongue and groove pine boards, three-and-one-quarter inches wide. The ceiling is beaded wood paneling. The walls are plaster on lathe with wooden chair rail, wainscoting, and twelve inch baseboard. Simple, molded surrounds trim the windows and doors. Future plans for restoring the schoolroom include replacing the plaster walls which cannot be repaired, repairing the sagging ceiling, and refinishing the floor. The west end of the schoolroom

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is occupied by an enclosed stairs to the upper floor on the north end and by a small closet on the south end. Three square posts run down the center of the building.

The second floor of the building contains the lodge meeting room. The west end contains the landing, a narrow hall parallel to the stairwell and an ante room in the northwest corner. The hall contains a built-in cabinet used for Masonic supplies. The walls on the second floor are plaster in rather good condition. The ante room is small and contains two windows and a small (two feet square) cut out entrance to the attic. The baseboards, window surrounds, chair rails and door facings in the large meeting hall are identical to those of the first floor, however, there is no wainscoting. The woodwork is stained dark brown as are the three stations on the west, south, and east walls. The floor appears to be original and is in good condition except around the windows where there is some water damage. A ceiling of acoustical tiles, probably added in the 1930s, was removed in the summer of 1986 revealing a ceiling of beaded board. The stations of the Masonic liturgy consist of three wood piers topped by light bulbs and a pentagonal table.

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

1871

1871

Architecture

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

The Stanton Masonic Lodge and School is nominated under criteria C for its architectural significance in Stanton and Haywood County. Built in 1871, the Stanton Lodge and School marks the town's rise from the desolation and destruction of the Civil War and immediate Reconstruction. The post-Civil War period was a time of mercantile growth for the South and like many small towns, Stanton saw its greatest growth in population and business during this period.

Built in 1871, during the early stages of post-war town expansion, the lodge was a symbol of the promise of new growth. Vital to this hope for prosperity was Stanton's location on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. The presence of the railroad encouraged the growth of business and by the 1880s Stanton boasted three groceries, two dry goods stores, two drug stores, two saloons, and a gristmill and cotton gin. Many of the men who moved to Stanton to open these new businesses became or were already members of the Masonic Order. Membership in the Masonic Lodge increased as mercantile growth brought new merchants and prospective members to the community and the need for a permanent lodge soon became apparent.

Early records found in the lodge indicate that the formal meetings of the Masons began on July 28, 1869, and the state charter from Tennessee Grand Lodge was received on October 5, 1869. On July 20, 1871 a big celebration was held when the cornerstone was laid. Permission for this ceremony to be held was granted by the Grand Lodge of Tennessee. This was an important day for the town of Stanton and people were invited from Brownsville, Danceyville, and Mason to join in the celebration.

The Masonic Lodge was composed of the town's most prominent citizens as well as men of lesser distinction. Most of the younger and middle-aged men were veterans of the Civil War, most from the Confederate States of America, but at least one was a United States of America Army Major and several were union sympathizers. Thus the lodge seemed to serve as a healing quality in this small town which had seen the Union Army occupying its premises and raiding its outskirts and killing civilians. An early

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Goodspeed. History of Tennessee. Nashville: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1887.

Johnson, Alma Dunlap. "The Stanton Lodge and Old School." Compilation, December 1985.

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property less than 1 acre

UTM References

A 

1	6	2	8	1	8	0	0
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3	9	2	7	1	2	0
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Zone      Easting      Northing

B 

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Zone      Easting      Northing

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Beginning at the northwest corner of the Baptist Church lot and running thence south 182 feet to an alley, between the Thomas Hicks lot and the lodge lot, thence west 64 feet to Boswell Street, thence north with said street 241 feet to Main Street, thence with Main Street 154 feet to the beginning. Boswell Street is now known as Holland Street.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

This includes sufficient property to protect the historic integrity of the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title 1) Laura Barnes and 2) Alma D. Johnson

organization 1) Ctr for Hist Pres 2) Stanton Gar. & Hist Society date July 1987

street & number 1) 1425 E. Main St. 2) Box 177 telephone 1) 615-898-2947 2) 901-548-

city or town 1) Murfreesboro 2) Stanton state TN zip code 6866  
1) 37130  
2) 38069

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resolution outlines plans for the building to be an academy and lodge hall and specified that each member should subscribe to as much stock as he was able to purchase and pay in three equal installments over a three-year period. The teacher renting the downstairs was obligated to teach at least three and not over five children to be picked out by the three Lodge Trustees to receive free tuition. The first floor of the lodge served as the community's only school site, school had previously been held in a church. The building soon became the social center for the community, hosting oyster stews, barbecues, ice cream suppers, Halloween and Christmas celebrations, little theater productions and other performances, cake walks and moving pictures. There were and are no other secular buildings in the community of comparable size.

As the educational center for the community for fifty years, the school was responsible for grades one through twelve until around the turn of the century when it was decreased to ten grades. All professions were represented among its graduates who were usually taught by teachers brought into the community for this purpose. Records from the building indicate that the first school master was Joseph D. Crafton, a charter member of the lodge, who had been holding classes at another location in town. College preparatory work was stressed and all students studied foreign languages. Children who lived outside of the town came by surrey, buggy and horseback, and their parents built stables for their horses across the street at the rear of the Methodist Church property. The initial annex to the school was the "little folks room," housing grades one through three. The second annex housed grades four through six, making life a little easier for the teacher of the upper grades.

Ownership of the building and the lot on which it stands, now vested in the Stanton Garden and Historical Society, Incorporated, was difficult to trace. On June 2, 1860, Nathan Adams and his wife, Grace Stanton Adams deeded to F. W. Chaney a large tract of land located near Stanton Depot which evidently contained the lot on which the lodge building was built. On January 15, 1873, Flemman W. Chaney transferred the lot on which the lodge stands to Langdon C. Newman in consideration of one dollar. On April 21, 1876, Mr. Newman transferred the property to J. H. Ware. This is the first deed in which the building is mentioned or described as the Stanton Masonic Lodge. On January 12, 1877, Mr. Ware transferred the land back to Mr. Adams. On December 11, 1877, Mr. Adams transferred the property back to Mr. Ware. On May 21, 1879, Mr. Ware deeded the lot to W. H. Claxton who held it until August 23, 1882, when he transferred it to the directors of the Stanton School District and their successors in office. This is a long and complicated deed which reserves the top floor of the building for the use of the Masonic Lodge. On January 2, 1922, the Haywood County School

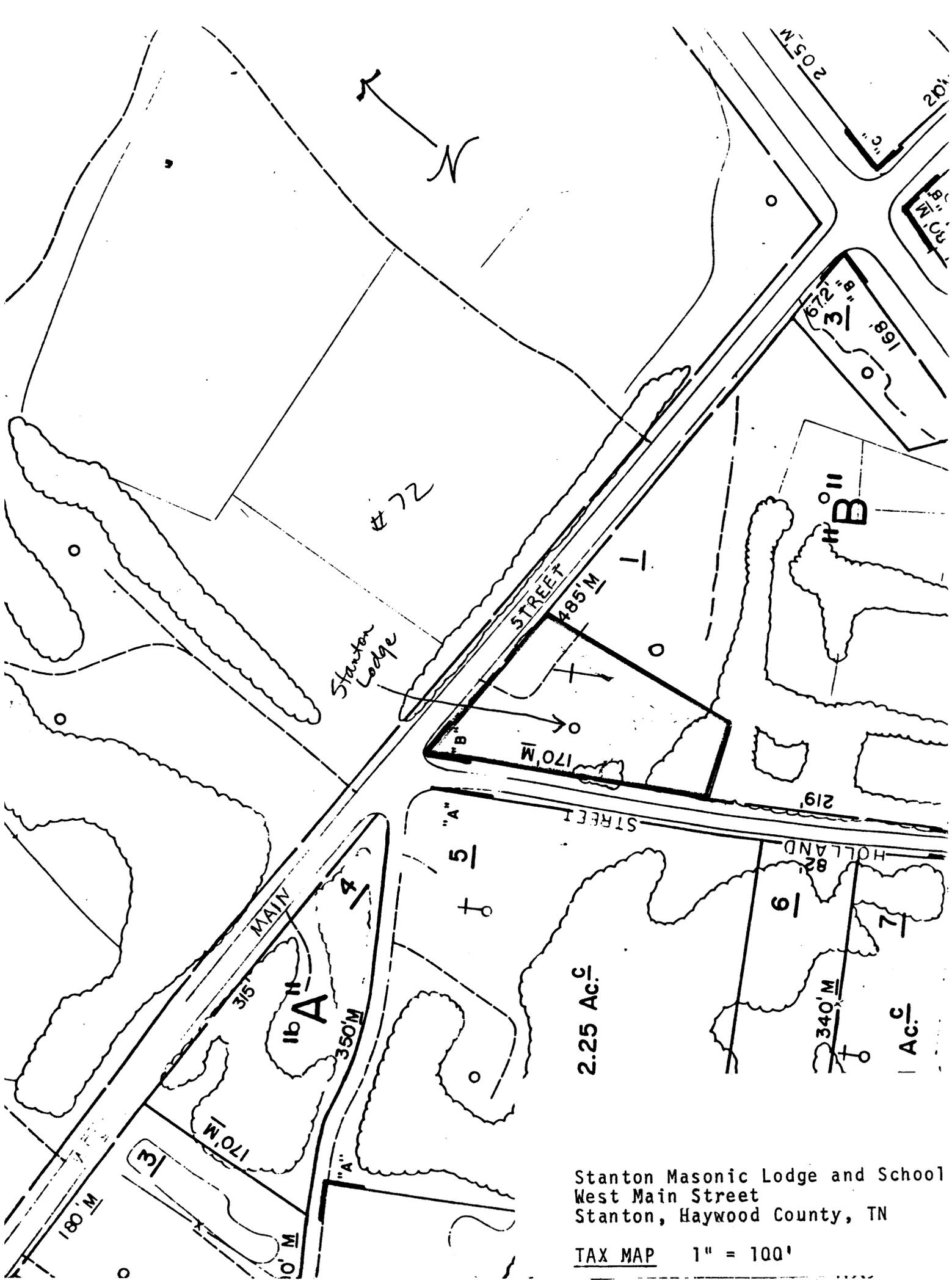
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Board transferred the land back to the trustees of the Masonic Lodge. All of the above owners were members of the lodge and ownership seemed to shift to whomever could pay something for the property.

The Masonic Lodge was inactive some time during the latter part of the nineteenth century until 1906 when it was reactivated. This has been established by deeds and by minutes of reorganization in 1906. It was then active until the fall of 1985 when it disbanded because of decrease in membership. Following the building of a new school by the Board of Education in 1920, the old school was used as a community center on an irregular basis, but was used by two churches while their own buildings were being built, the Methodists in the 1920s and the Church of Christ in the 1960s and 70s. Its last use was by a youth group in the late 1970s. Thus, this building has played a significant part in the community throughout its history as an important gathering place for the town's residents.

The Stanton Masonic Lodge and School is architecturally significant to Stanton and Haywood County as one of the best examples of vernacular Greek Revival architecture in the region. There are no other examples of vernacular Greek Revival architecture from this period on the Haywood County survey nor are there any buildings of this type in Haywood County listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The building's low-pitched roof, boxed cornice returns, pilaster corner boards, and pedimented windows and doors are all good examples of the vernacular expressions of the Greek Revival style. It is unusual to find this style used on a building of this period; yet, for the people of Stanton, the building's Greek Revival detailing formed a connection between their era, the post Civil War era, and that of their antebellum ancestors. In this way, the architecture of the building as well as the building's use evoked a sense of community and belonging.



Stanton Masonic Lodge and School  
 West Main Street  
 Stanton, Haywood County, TN

TAX MAP 1" = 100'