

JUL 28 1988

TENNESSEE MULTIPLE PROPERTY FORM

Title: Historic Resources of Paris, Tennessee

County: Henry

Historic Name: Lee, Robert E., School (Site # 2)

Common Name: Lee, Robert E., School

Classification Building

Owner: Paris Superintendent of Schools, 402 Lee Street, Paris, TN 38242

Location: 402 Lee St., Paris, Tennessee

<u>Contributing:</u>		<u>Non-Contributing</u>	
Buildings	1	Buildings	0
Structures	0	Structures	0
Sites	0	Sites	0
<u>Total:</u>	1	<u>Total:</u>	0

Description:

The Robert E. Lee School is a two-story brick academic building constructed between 1892-93 with a lunchroom added in 1929. The building is three bays in width and constructed in a central hall plan. On the main (east) facade, the central bay is framed by buttresses supporting a square tower with a pyramidal roof and finial. The tower has a sheathing of asbestos shingles. The main entrance has an original 4-light glass and frame door with a 12-light semi-circular transom. The windows in the building are two-over-two sash with stone sills. Dividing the first and second stories is a corbelled brick beltcourse.

The north, south and west facades also display two-over-two sash windows. On the south facade is a one-story porch with square brick columns and an added metal fire escape. On the north facade the original doors have been replaced with ca. 1940 glass and frame doors. At the rear (west) facade is a one-story brick addition added in 1929. This addition displays four-over-four sash windows, a stepped gable roof and corbelled brick decoration.

The interior is divided into individual classrooms and offices which retain all original detailing. These details include four panel doors with transoms and bulls-eye corner blocks. The stairs retain the ornate milled newel posts and turned balusters. In the classrooms and hallways is tongue and groove wainscoting, plaster walls and fluted window moldings. Few alterations have taken place to either the exterior or interior of the building with interior alterations consisting primarily of dropped ceilings and added carpet. There are no outbuildings. The building is sited on a large four acre lot with adjacent open playing fields and parking areas.

Period of Significance: 1893 - ca. 1938

Area of Significance: Education

Criterion: A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Statement of Significance:

The Robert E. Lee School is notable as the oldest remaining public school building in Paris and as a center of public education in the early 20th century. Public education in Paris began in 1881 in the building that had previously housed the Paris Male Academy on the present site of the Lee School. From 1881 until 1889 there were eight grades in the Paris Public Schools. In 1890, the Legislature of Tennessee enacted a law creating a ten year school at Paris, to open in the fall of 1891. The Paris Public School was to be known as City High School. At the opening of the fall term in 1891, Professor Todd Hunter became the principal.

In December of 1891, the City High School building burned, and classes were held in another location while the present school was constructed. This new City High School opened in September, 1893 and was a two-story brick structure with classrooms and offices for the school system. The building had a central bell tower on the main facade but was otherwise limited in decoration. Not long after its opening the school was renamed for Confederate General Robert E. Lee.

Throughout the early 1900s the Lee school was the main center for the town's public education. All grades were taught here and thousands of Paris students attended classes at the school. A county high school was opened in 1906 which increased educational facilities for county students. Known as the E. W. Grove School (NR-1980), this brick school was designed with a central tower and other details similar to the Lee School. The construction of new schools in the city and county in the late 1930s resulted in lower attendance at the Lee School but it continued to be used as a grade school until 1975. Since 1975 the school has been used as offices for the city school system. The Robert E. Lee School has not been significantly altered and remains an important part of the educational history of Paris.

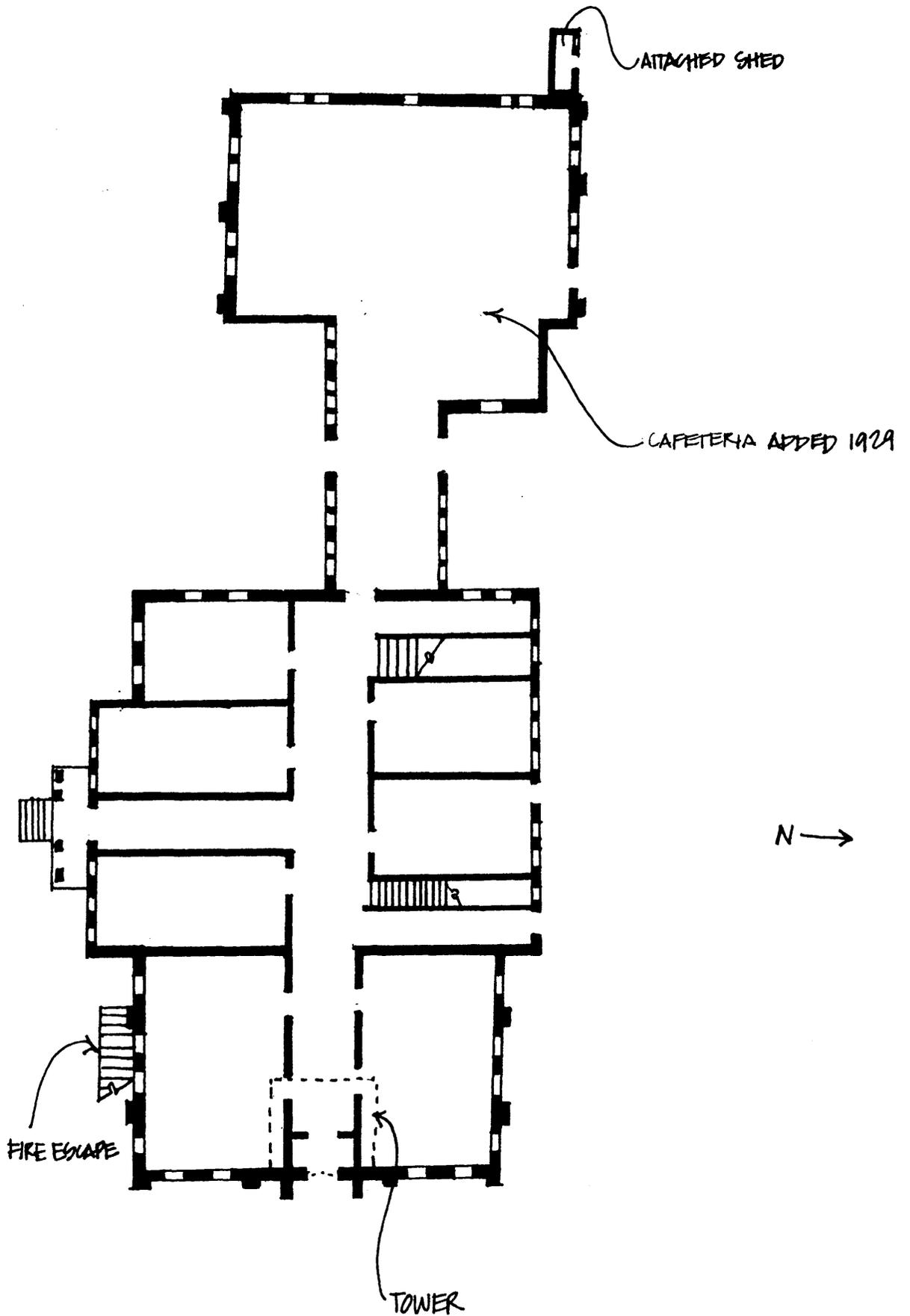
Acreage: 4.43 acres

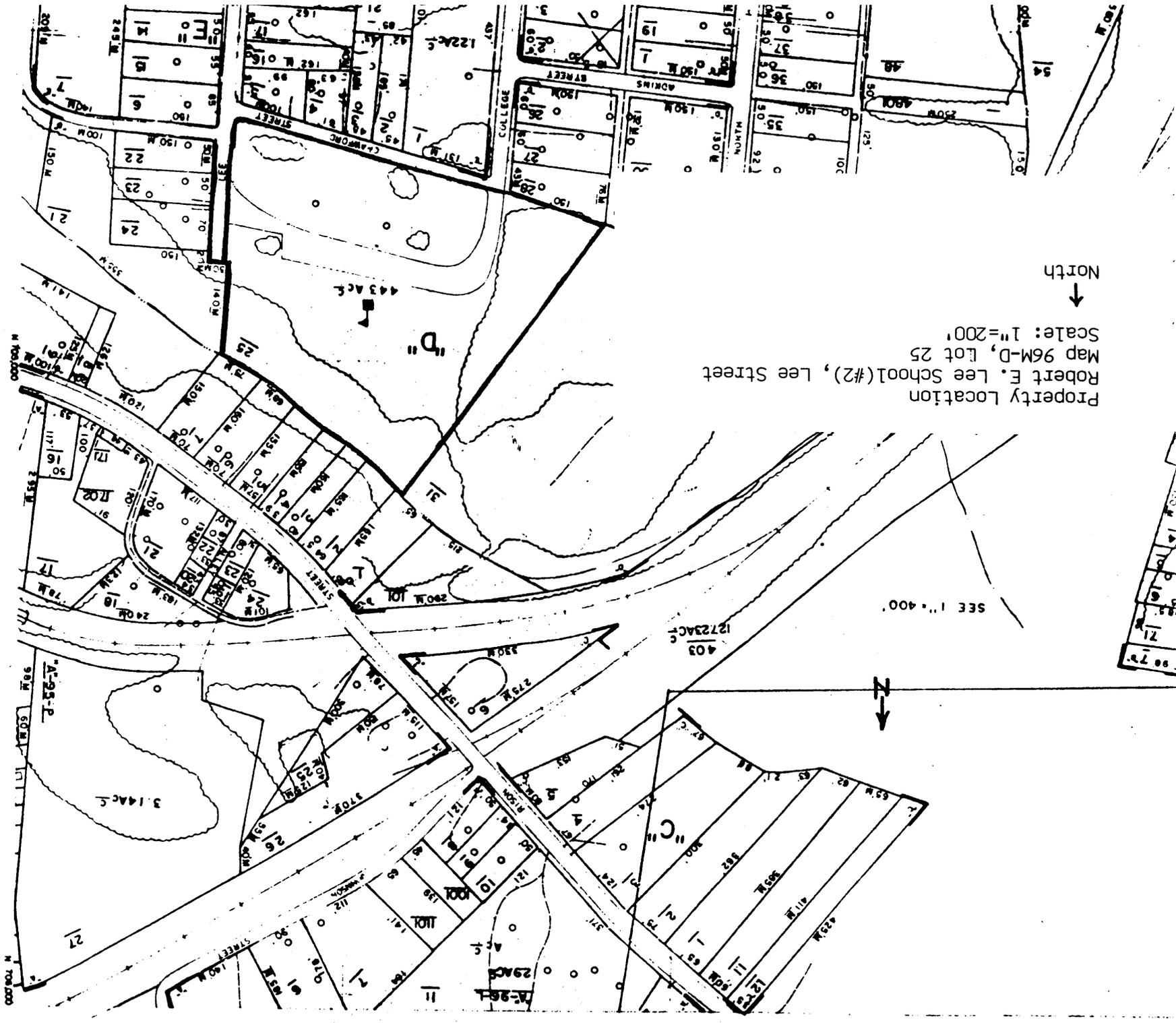
UTM References: Paris Quad/16/380580/4018500

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification: The boundary for the Robert E. Lee School is illustrated on accompanying Henry County tax map # 96 M, block D, lot 25. The boundary is drawn to include all property presently associated with the school. The boundary is sufficient to protect the historical setting of the site.

Supplemental Bibliographical References:

ROBERT E. LEE SCHOOL - #2





Property Location  
 Robert E. Lee School (#2), Lee Street  
 Map 96-M-D, Lot 25  
 Scale: 1"=200'

SEE 1"=400'

