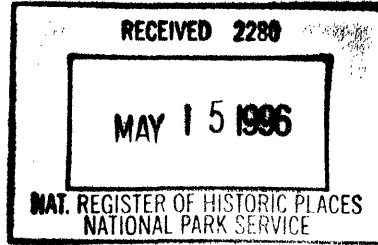


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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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 Tennessee State University Historic District  
other names/site number Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial College

2. Location

street & number 3500 John A. Merritt Boulevard N/A  not for publication  
city or town Nashville N/A  vicinity  
state Tennessee code TN county Davidson code 037 zip code 37209

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. Haynes 5/7/96  
Signature of certifying official/Title 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Edson A. Beall 6-14-96  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
Entered in the  
National Register

**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

6	1	buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
7	1	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: college

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: college

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK, CONCRETE

walls BRICK, CONCRETE, limestone

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD, GLASS

**Narrative Description**

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

**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** N/A

(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 year of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African American

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1927 - 1949

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Tisdale & Pinson; Marr & Holman; McKissack &

McKissack; Williston, D.A.

**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:

Tennessee State University

Tennessee State University Historic District  
Name of Property

Davidson County, TN  
County and State

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** 7 acres

**UTM References**

Nashville West, TN 308NE

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 515300 4002260  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 \_\_\_\_\_

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.)

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Harrison Stamm, Dr. Carroll Van West  
organization MTSU Center for Historic Preservation date September 1995  
street & number Box 80 telephone 615-898-2947  
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

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## Additional Documentation

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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

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## Property Owner

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

name Tennessee State University, Dr. James Hefner, President  
street & number 3500 John A. Merritt Boulevard telephone 615-963-7517  
city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37209

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**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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Tennessee State University Historic District, Davidson  
County, TN

VII. Description

The Tennessee State University Historic District contains seven buildings located in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee. The buildings are divided by Centennial Boulevard, with the original 1915 and 1927 mall campus buildings on the north side and the 1932 and 1949 buildings on the south side. The focal point is the Administration and Health Building, on the south side of Centennial Boulevard. Building projects after 1932 continued to transform the landscape of Tennessee State University (TSU) on the south and north side of Centennial Boulevard.

The Tennessee State University Historic District buildings have all been constructed between 1927 and 1949 out of brick with limestone decorative features, giving the campus a unified appearance. All buildings reflect various interpretations of Classical Revival architectural movement of the early twentieth century.

TSU was established in 1912, as the first African-American institution of public higher education in the state. Established under the Federal Morrill Act, and the Tennessee General Education Bill, this land-grant school was originally called Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State Normal School and was located one-half mile beyond the end of the city streetcar line. The City of Nashville provided the school with thirty-five acres of land designated for a campus, ninety-five acres of farm land for a demonstration and teaching farm.

The initial buildings have all been demolished, at least by 1950. Historic photographs indicate that the original campus consisted of three main buildings: the main hall, a male dormitory, and a female dormitory. These brick buildings were designed in a restrained Collegiate Gothic style and were situated on the north side of Centennial

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Tennessee State University Historic District, Davidson  
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Boulevard. In 1915, a classical-influenced President's House (Goodwill Manor, rebuilt in 1993 [NC]) and an Industrial department (now demolished) were added on the north side of Centennial increasing the physical plant's value to \$100,000.

The second building phase in the history of TSU began in 1927 with the construction of Hale Hall (now demolished), Memorial Library, and Harned Science Hall, which were all located on the north side of Centennial Boulevard. These buildings raised the college a physical plant value to over one-and-a-half million dollars. Along with this building phase came an improvement in the campus landscape, as D.A. Williston, a landscape gardener designed a series of connected sidewalks and asphalt roads in the mall area (non-extant).

A third phase in the built environment of TSU began in 1932, with the construction of the Jane E. Elliott Women's Building, the Administration and Health Building, and the Industrial Arts Building, with the latter two situated on the south side of Centennial Boulevard. This was a major expansion of the college and since this period, most campus buildings have been located on the south side. In 1935, the Works Progress Administration allocated \$148,183.00 for new construction and school supplies, along with \$75,874.39 of local funds for additional building and landscape projects. These additions provided TSU with much of its present day appearance as the football stadium, track field, and stone fence along the streetcar line (now Centennial Boulevard) were constructed. The stone fence is included within the boundaries of this nomination and is considered a contributing element (C).

The fourth phase of TSU's built environment began in 1943 with a \$6,000,000 expansion and improvement program. Due to wartime demands for building materials, this expansion program was not completed until 1949. The improvements included the construction of an engineering building, a new heating plant, agricultural laboratories, expansions to the

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Tennessee State University Historic District, Davidson  
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library and women's building, and a new health and physical education building. The new construction increased the value of TSU's physical plant from \$3,500,000 to \$9,500,000 by 1949. This expansion program allowed TSU to be recognized by the State Board of Education as a full-fledged university.

All seven of the buildings included in the Tennessee State University Historic District represent one, if not more, of these four expansion periods. Together they create an unified whole, associated by history, design, and location, that document a significant place in the history of African-American history in Tennessee.

1. Goodwill Manor  
Originally President's House  
Architect: Unknown, but attributed to Moses McKissack  
ca. 1915 (demolished), 1993 (rebuilt)

It is a brick two story hipped roof "T" plan building of Classical Revival style that rests on a brick foundation. The main "T" plan building is flanked by one story winged porticos, the east elevation portico has been enclosed with three elongated ribbon twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash windows set into wooden panels on the facade and two elongated twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash windows set into wooden panels on the elevations. The west elevation portico is not enclosed and is highlighted by a plain entablature which is repeated on the east portico. Goodwill Manor is also marked by centrally placed chimneys on both ends of the main structure which have been decorated with a limestone string-course and entablature.

The symmetrical five-bay facade is dominated by a full-height distyle in antis. The four first story windows are elongated twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash windows set into wooden panels. The distyle in antis is flanked by engaged squared, unfluted, Doric columns. The first story entrance is a pediment doorway with a full transom.

The second story is marked by its five eight-over-eight double-hung sash windows with wooden lintels and two four-

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Tennessee State University Historic District, Davidson  
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over-four double-hung sash windows with a wooden lintels appears in the distyle in antis. A plain entablature leads to the low hipped shingled roof, which includes four arched dormers with four-over-four double-hung sash windows topped with eyebrow windows. The dormers have tin rooftops. The building was reconstructed in 1993 as a modern office building. (NC, due to 1993 reconstruction)

2. Learning Resource Center  
Originally Memorial Library  
Architect: Unknown for 1927 section  
McKissack and McKissack Architects (south facade) for  
1943-49 section

It is a brick two story hipped roof "T" plan building of Classical Revival style that rests on a reinforced concrete foundation. The original facade of this building faced north towards the center of the initial campus mall. However, its renovations and additions from 1943 to 1949 changed the orientation of this building so that today its facade faces south towards Centennial Boulevard.

Its historic north facade has a limestone veneer first story, originally marked by eleven-bays of eight-over-eight double-hung sash windows which have all been enclosed. A hexastyle portico, with Tuscan columns beginning on the second story, are crowned with a plain entablature. A steel staircase leads to the second story portico which contains five elongated, eight-over-eight arched windows. The west end window has been converted into a doorway. All these windows are decorated with limestone keystones and lintels. On either side of the portico is a Palladian window, both have modified Gibbs surrounds and limestone lintels. Another decorative feature of this 1927 facade is a plain entablature which leads to the low hipped tin sheeted roof.



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The 1949 south facade is a three-part design with limited ornamentation that is compatible with, and blends well with, the earlier section of the building. Its style reflects the Classical Modern design often associated with buildings by the Public Works Administration and the Works Progress Administration. Its central block features eleven-bays and is divided into a five-bay engaged limestone portico with three-bay brick sections flanking either side. The first story entrance uses three modern glass doors and transoms. The second and third stories are identical with five eight-over-eight double-hung sash windows vertically separated by six engaged squared Tuscan columns. The flanking brick sections are three-bays with three stories of eight-over-eight double-hung sash symmetrically placed windows. The decorative elements are minimal, all windows have limestone lintels and sills, a belt-course separates the limestone first story from the brick second and third stories. A limestone cornice is the only other decorative element on this central block.

The two story, five-bay wings echo the ornamentation of the central block. These features include a limestone belt-course, eight-over-eight double-hung sash windows on the raised basement and first stories with limestone sills. The second story windows are eight-over-eight double-hung sash with limestone lintels and sills. Crowning the building is a limestone cornice. (C)

3. Harned Science Hall  
Architect: Unknown  
ca. 1927

It is a brick three story flat roof with parapet, rectangular plan building of Classical Revival style that rests on a reinforced concrete foundation. The eleven-bay facade is divided by a second story string-course. The second and third stories are marked by seven central bays with a limestone veneer.

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The first story facade is highlighted by three centrally placed and slightly recessed arched doorways. Each door consists of two glass entrances with an arched transom with four diamond panes of glass and are decorated with a limestone arch and keystone. The four six-over-six double-hung sash windows set into limestone keystones, lintels, and sills flank both sides of the three doors, creating a perfectly balanced facade.

A limestone belt-course divides the first story from the second and third stories. The seven centrally located bays of the second and third stories are identical in appearance. This section of the building is highlighted by its limestone veneer and eight engaged, squared Tuscan columns separating each set of six-over-six double-hung sash windows, with a limestone mullion dividing the pair along with limestone lintels and sills. A limestone panel divides the second story windows from the third story windows, which are identical in design. Two six-over-six double-hung sash windows are set on either side of this limestone section. The second story windows are decorated with a limestone panels, entablatures, sills, and rest on the belt-course. As for the third story windows, they have limestone sills and lintels.

The top of the building is decorated with a limestone string-course and followed by a band of bricks, then a limestone entablature. The parapet is decorated with the crest of the Medici family, which is also the symbol of medicine and science. (C)

4. Jane E. Elliott Building  
Architect: Marr and Holman Architects  
ca. 1932, 1949

It is a brick three story flat roof with parapet, rectangular plan building, with a "T" extension that was added from 1943 to 1949. This building of Classical Revival style rests on a reinforced concrete foundation. The basement level is underground on the facade, but exposed on

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the south and north elevations. The symmetrical thirteen-bay facade is dominated by a projecting three-bay, full-height, tetrastyle portico. The first story projection has three vaulted entrances with modified Gibbs surrounds. The second story has four free-standing, unfluted Corinthian columns and two engaged, squared, unfluted Corinthian columns. The columns are crowned with a cornice, balustrade, and four decorative urns.

All three stories have five-bay nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows flanking the central projecting portico. The first story windows have limestone lintels and sills, while the second and third story windows have decorative limestone keystones, lintels, and sills. An ornamental belt-course separates the first and second stories and a limestone cornice is the only other decorative element on the facade.  
(C)

5. Administration and Health Building  
Architect: Tisdale and Pinson Architects  
ca. 1933, 1966 renovations

It is a brick three story hipped roof "T" plan building of Classical Revival style that rests on a reinforced concrete foundation. Built on the south side of Centennial Boulevard, this building became the focal point of the campus with its fifteen-bay facade, dominated by a projecting pediment, hexastyle portico, and topped with a cupola. The portico is characterized by a first story arcade with five recessed doorways. Inscribed over the three central doorways are the words "Think, Work, Serve;" the college motto. Six unfluted, Corinthian columns are topped by a plain entablature and pediment with a clock and swags. There are four second story windows in the portico with the one doorway in the center. These windows are elongated double-hung sash windows with limestone lintels, sills, and panels. The doorway has a transom with four vertical panes of glass and two casement doors. There are five double-hung sash windows with transoms, limestone lintels, and sills on the third story.

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The five-bays flank either side of the portico. The first story windows are double-hung sash with cast-iron decorative bars and precast limestone sills; the second story windows rest on the belt-course with an enlarged sill and keystone highlights. The third story windows are double-hung sash with limestone lintels and sills. A string-course accents the top of the building followed by a band of bricks and a limestone cornice.

An elaborate limestone cupola accents the rooftop. The cupola begins with a balustrade, then squared Tuscan columns create a octagon shape with arched openings. A plain entablature and cornice leads to its tin roof. (C)

6. Industrial Arts Building  
Architect: Unknown, but attributed to  
McKissack and McKissack  
ca. 1933

It is a brick three story hipped roof rectangular building of Classical Revival style that rests on a reinforced concrete foundation. The symmetrical five-bay facade is dominated by a projecting pediment, tetrastyle portico. The portico is characterized by its limestone veneer on the first story entrance. The square, unadorned doorway is recessed with a double-hung sash window with limestone sills on either side. The portico stretches across both the second and third stories and is identified by four unfluted, Corinthian columns, with a cast-iron balustrade running its length. Four square, engaged, unfluted Corinthian columns create a rhythmical pattern with double-hung sash windows placed between each column. The pediment on the portico contains an arched eyebrow window with four panes of glass and a decorative arched brickwork highlighted by a limestone keystone.

Limited ornamentation remains on the flanking stories, the first story contains only a limestone string-course. A limestone belt-course marks the first story and second story division, along with single double-hung sash windows on

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either side of the portico on the second and third stories. All windows are slightly recessed and have limestone frames with sills. A restrained entablature and cornice crowns the top of the third story. The roof is a low hipped roof with tin sheeting. (C)

### 7. Engineering Building

Architect: McKissack and McKissack Architects  
1943- 1949

It is a brick, three story flat roof with parapet, "U" plan building of Classical Modern style that rests on a reinforced concrete foundation. The eleven-bay facade is characterized by a projecting limestone entrance. This five-bay centrally located entrance is marked by two flights of limestone steps leading to another projecting section, which contains three recessed modern glass entrances on the second story. These entrances are separated by squared Tuscan columns and three different crests on limestone panels separating the second and third stories. Flanking these entrances are single-hung sash windows, with decorative eagle crests on limestone panels separating the second and third stories. The third story is marked by five single-hung sash windows all with limestone sills. The frieze of the entablature has the word "ENGINEERING" centrally placed with running dog ornamentation on either side.

The sides of this central entrance are symmetrically balanced and identical, with three-bays of fixed ceiling to floor windows with limestone frames. Directly above the first and third story windows is a limestone string-course; separating each section of windows are horizontal and vertical bands of brickwork. The roof of this building is flat with tar shingles. TSU officials installed new fixed, single-sashed windows in 1995. (C)

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8. Stone Wall  
Works Progress Administration  
ca. 1932

This is a four foot, ashlar cut limestone wall. (C)

There are other extant buildings constructed at TSU in the 1932 and 1943 building phases, but these are not included due to their separation from the core district buildings. Most new construction on the campus continues to expand the built environment on both sides of Centennial Boulevard. The six historic, one reconstruction buildings in the Tennessee State University Historic District have not been significantly altered and retain their integrity of site, location, function, and historical associations.

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Tennessee State University Historic District, Davidson  
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### VIII. Statement of Significance

The Tennessee State University Historic District in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, is eligible for National Register Historic Places under Criterion A for its significant statewide association with African-American ethnic identity and educational history from 1915 to 1949 and under Criterion C as a significant example of collegiate campus architecture, largely associated with the African-American firm of McKissack and McKissack.<sup>1</sup> The buildings are divided by Centennial Boulevard, with the original 1915 and 1927 mall campus buildings on the north side, and the 1932 and 1949 buildings on the south side. Building projects after 1932 continued to transform the landscape of Tennessee State University (TSU) on the south and north side of Centennial Boulevard. While not yet fifty years old, the TSU Historic District is significant for its association with African-American education.

In 1912, Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State Normal School was established in Nashville as the first state public African-American institution of higher education. Its white counterpart, the University of Tennessee (1794), predated it by a century and remained a segregated institution until its graduate schools began token integration in 1952.

TSU was established by acts of the state legislature in conformity with the Federal Morrill Act of 1862, as amended in 1890. The original Morrill Act of 1862 was passed to provide public schools for educating teachers; in 1890 this act was revised to include state schools for the education of African Americans. As a result of the revision of the Morrill Act, the University of Tennessee established Knoxville College (NR 5/1/80) in 1890 as a "separate entity" offering higher education to African-American students in

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<sup>1</sup>Throughout the statement of significance the TSU Historic District will be discussed in its historic names demonstrating its evolution as an educational institution.

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"manual training, domestic science, and other courses deemed suitable for blacks."<sup>2</sup> But Knoxville College was not educating African-American teachers and concerned citizens began to petition for a public normal school. Many Tennesseans felt Knoxville College was an adequate solution since it reflected the "equal, but separate" doctrine of the Plessy vs. Ferguson case (1896). It was also located in the more racially tolerant eastern division of the state. But its East Tennessee location also meant that the school was remote from the larger population concentrations of African Americans in Middle and West Tennessee.

State officials only gave lip service to the "separate but equal" doctrine. As the 1890s merged into the twentieth century, the decreasing amount of equal resources to African Americans became more evident as educational facilities for African-American teachers were not provided. The General Assembly also approved statutes prohibiting instructors from teaching pupils of the opposite race.<sup>3</sup>

In 1909, the General Education Bill resolved this dilemma by establishing "one agricultural and industrial normal school for the industrial education of negroes and for preparing negro teachers for common school."<sup>4</sup> This led to an intense lobbying campaign by the Nashville African-American community for this normal school, and in 1911 the City of Nashville received (50%) funding from the state and the matching federal appropriation (50%) for agricultural and mechanical education for Tennessee Agricultural and

<sup>2</sup>Samuel H. Shannon, "Land-Grant College Legislation and Black Tennesseans: A Case Study in the Politics of Education," History of Education Quarterly (Summer 1982), 145.

<sup>3</sup>Cynthia Griggs Fleming, "The Development of Black Education in Tennessee, 1865-1920," Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1977, 32.

<sup>4</sup>Evelyn Pitts Fancher, "Tennessee State University (1912-1974): A History of an Institution with Implications for the Future," Ph.D. diss., George Peabody College for Teachers, 1975, 14.



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Industrial State Normal School.<sup>5</sup> Nashville was able to acquire the institution largely due to the efforts of J.C. Napier, Benjamin Carr, and Henry Allen Boyd, and the open forum provided by Nashville Globe newspaper. The Globe published articles demonstrating the African-American community's commitment to the establishment of a state-supported institution and promised \$20,000 from private citizens and \$80,000 by the city.<sup>6</sup> These commitments allowed the city to secure thirty-five acres of land designated for a campus and ninety-five acres of farm land, both parcels of land located on a rocky hilltop one-half mile beyond the city streetcar lines.<sup>7</sup> This land was on the outskirts of town farther west of already established African-American universities such as Fisk University (NR 2/9/78), and Meharry Medical College.

Historic photographs indicate that the original campus consisted of three main buildings: the main hall, a male dormitory, and a female dormitory. These brick buildings were designed in a restrained Collegiate Gothic style and were situated on the north side of Centennial Boulevard. Between 1913 and 1915 a Classical Revival-styled President's House (Goodwill Manor, reconstructed in 1993) and an nondescript Industrial department (not extant) were added on the north side of Centennial Boulevard, bringing the physical plant's value to \$100,000.<sup>8</sup>

The creation of Tennessee A. & I. reflected "the era of Negro Industrial Education" influenced by Booker T.

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<sup>5</sup>Fleming, 122. In 1913, out of the 33-1/3 percent of Tennessee's gross revenue allocated for education, \$45,000 annually went to white normal schools and \$15,000 annually went to TSU.

<sup>6</sup>Shannon, 98.

<sup>7</sup>Fancher, 17.

<sup>8</sup>R. Grann Lloyd, Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State University (1912-1962): 50 Years Leadership Through Excellence (Nashville, 1962), 38.

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Tennessee State University Historic District, Davidson  
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Washington's "Tuskegee Idea."<sup>9</sup> The "Tuskegee Idea" became the national model for African-American land-grant universities, since it was the notion that African Americans needed to be trained as mechanics, pressmen, farmers, and in domestic science to qualify for jobs and in doing so "reducing the number of 'loafers and crap shooters'."<sup>10</sup> This phase of African-American education has been characterized as "rudimentary instruction" since it did not improve the status of African Americans but provided "negro education which white Southerners and Northerners could support, although they were rarely 'industrial' and seldom 'high'."<sup>11</sup> Washington's philosophy was accepted by many white leaders since it educated African Americans within the framework of segregation.

In order to attract African Americans, Tennessee A. & I. began to place primary importance on teacher training and making the "'industrial' instruction these prospective teachers received the 'practical' kind that would help them contend with the impoverished conditions of the rural school."<sup>12</sup> With the changed emphasis of the industrial school, enrollment increased and improvements came in the 1920s, as many philanthropists became aware of Washington's Tuskegee model and established private foundations for the education of African Americans.

Tennessee A. & I. played an important role as the central public higher education location for many of the philanthropic organizations, which contributed to the improvement of African-American education in the 1910s and

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<sup>9</sup>Preston Valien, "Desegregation in Higher Education: A Critical Summary," The Journal of Negro Education 28 (Summer 1958): 375.

<sup>10</sup>Shannon, 148; Fleming, 41. As stated in Fleming, "there is no evidence to suggest that state officials were directly influenced by Washington's position," however their views are similar.

<sup>11</sup>Valien, 375.

<sup>12</sup>Shannon, 150.

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Tennessee State University Historic District, Davidson  
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1920s. For example, the Julius Rosenwald Fund was founded in 1917 and benefited Southern African Americans with its mission to build and improve school facilities. Tennessee A. & I. housed the office for the state Rosenwald School Building Agents while the Rosenwald Fund Administration Office was at Fisk University.<sup>13</sup> Also located on Tennessee A. & I. campus was the office of the state supervisor for the Anna T. Jeanes Fund, a charity designed "for the specific purpose of helping Negro rural schools in the South" and to provide teachers, who could serve as "the center of the entire county."<sup>14</sup> Another important fund was the General Education Board established in 1903 by John D. Rockefeller. The General Education Board contributed funds to improve African-American educational facilities in the land-grant model by "support[ing] agricultural and home economics division work among Negroes in the South."<sup>15</sup>

The changes on the campus beginning in 1922 are a combination of increased philanthropic support, increased interest and support on the state level from P. L. Harned, the Commissioner of Education, and Governor Austin Peay, and the standardization of teacher licensing, which required normal schools to become teachers' colleges.<sup>16</sup> The latter change allowed the school, formerly known as Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State Normal School, to become

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<sup>13</sup>Shannon, 186. Ullin Whitney Leavell, Philanthropy in Negro Education (Nashville: George Peabody College for Teachers, 1930), 119.

<sup>14</sup>Horace Mann Bond, The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order (New York: Prestice-Hall Inc., 1934), 136. Anna T. Jeanes was a Quaker, who believed in African Americans receiving an education and was encouraged to establish a personal fund by Washington and George Peabody, treasurer of the General Education Board.

<sup>15</sup>Bond, 139.

<sup>16</sup>Andrew David Holt, The Struggle for a State School System of Public Schools in Tennessee 1903-1936. (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1938).

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Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State Normal College  
and shift from a two-year to a four-year teachers' college.

The appointment of a state school architect and increased appropriations to state universities and normals schools allowed for the start of a building program.<sup>17</sup> These changes qualified Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State Normal College to officially become Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State College in 1924.

In the late twenties the school's enrollment was expanding and several constituencies stepped in to assist the school including \$100,000 from the General Education Board for buildings if \$230,000 was raised from other resources. President Hale fulfilled this offer by guaranteeing \$65,000 from the African-American community for the erection of a library, and \$165,000 was provided by the General Assembly.<sup>18</sup> These contributions allowed for the 1927 construction of Hale Hall, a women's dormitory (destroyed), Memorial Library, and Harned Science Hall. All these new buildings were located on the north side of Centennial Boulevard, an arrangement which allowed the school to maintain a central mall campus. Therefore, by 1927 the university had expanded to eight buildings, raising the physical plant's value at over one-and-a-half million dollars.<sup>19</sup>

Along with the building program came an improvement in the campus landscape. D.A. Williston, a landscape gardener, designed a series of connecting sidewalks and asphalt roads in the mall area. This work was well received and proclaimed as "a miracle...on a once barren hill."<sup>20</sup> However, the campus still was located only on the north side of Centennial Boulevard and all main buildings were organized in a mall, unlike today's campus, which is

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<sup>17</sup>Holt, 354.

<sup>18</sup>Lloyd, 37.

<sup>19</sup>Lloyd, 38.

<sup>20</sup>Fancher, 42. Due to extensive alteration, the landscaping can no longer be considered as an contributing site.

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divided by Centennial Boulevard. The change in the campus's orientation from a central mall to a divided campus represents the third phase of Tennessee A. & I.'s history.

This period of Tennessee A. & I. history is represented by building projects as well as changes in the philosophy of educating African Americans. As W.E.B. DuBois began to consider the question of segregated schools and equality in education, he found many problems and no clear-cut solution. DuBois felt the major problem with segregated education in the land-grant model was the lack of self-knowledge and self-respect in African Americans; since as long as they desired to attend the white schools and were ashamed of the historical black universities, the races will never be equal.<sup>21</sup> The philosophy of DuBois called for a liberal arts education in order to develop the "New Negro," an African American with a racial heritage connected to African history, Egyptian Pharaohs, and other elements of a classical education. Tennessee A. & I. expanded its liberal arts department by offering a wider course selection allowing students to explore their heritage.<sup>22</sup> However, the land-grant model was not abandoned and a on-going debate developed between advocates who followed either Washington or DuBois.

In 1934, the university received monies to aid in the construction of the Jane E. Elliott Women's Building, for the teaching of home economics; the Administration and Health Building; and the Industrial Arts Building. In addition, an extensive landscape project was undertaken with \$148,183.00 in Works Progress Administration monies. These new buildings continued the land-grant university model, since they housed instructional facilities in areas "appropriate for the race" such as auto mechanics,

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<sup>21</sup>W.E.B. DuBois, "Does the Negro Need Separate Schools?" The Journal of Negro Education 4(July 1935): 331.

<sup>22</sup>Fancher, 65. Tennessee A. & I. offered courses such as "The Negro in Drama and Theatre", "American Prose and Poetry of Negro Life", "Negro History", and "Races and Nationalism".

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Tennessee State University Historic District, Davidson  
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bricklaying, farming, child development, and food service, to name a few degree programs.<sup>23</sup> The building phase also represented a change in the campus's orientation, since the Administration and Health Building and the Industrial Arts Building were located on the south side of Centennial Boulevard, making the Administration and Health Building the focal point of campus.

The change in the campus's focal point signaled its continued growth by planning for future expansion and provided to be beneficial within a short period of time. New demands on TSU came from legislation that increased the educational requirements for teachers to four years of college training for high school certificates and two years for elementary teaching.<sup>24</sup> However, in the midst of the Great Depression, the state teachers' colleges were in danger of losing state monies. In reaction, a movement took place "an intensive drive to convince the (Recess) committee [of the legislature] that it was not the will of the people that the normal schools be closed, and appropriations to the university seriously curtailed."<sup>25</sup> As African-American students were unjustly excluded from state and federal funding, as well as white universities which offered graduate and professional training, they began to protest the long-standing notion of "separate but equal".<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>William H. Martin, "The Land-Grant Functions of the Negro Public College," The Journal of Negro Education 31(Summer 1962): 393-400.

<sup>24</sup>Holt, 394. According to Holt this measure "was intended to counteract the practice, which had been common during the depression, of employing teachers on the basis of their economic need rather than their professional training. During the school year 1931-1932, 1,095 certificates had been issued to teachers who had only one quarter of college training."

<sup>25</sup>Holt, 395.

<sup>26</sup>Holt, 397. State funding for Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial College was \$52,000 while the University of

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In 1935 and 1938, two important cases, one with the University of Maryland Law School and Gaines vs. University of Missouri, undertaken by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), were presented before the United States Supreme Court. In both cases, the court ruled in favor of African-American students, who had been turned away from graduate and professional training at white universities. These decisions opened graduate and professional training to African-American students in white universities and established the NAACP as the most respected of all the African-American organizations in civil rights issues.

The Gaines decision demanded that in states where all white universities offered graduate and professional degrees not available at state supported African-American universities, the states would be required to open its doors or establish graduate and professional programs in state supported African-American universities.<sup>27</sup> Tennessee A. & I. benefited from this decision immediately, as state funding was provided for the construction of educational facilities and improved academic standards to qualify the university for its own graduate schools. State officials, in other words, would rather spend scarce state resources and building new buildings and programs at TSU than allow African Americans into the strictly segregated white colleges.

Tennessee A. & I.'s president Dr. Walter S. Davis initiated an academic organizational structure in order to "equalize" Tennessee A. & I. with the University of Tennessee.<sup>28</sup> The academic organizational structure created "seven divisions

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Tennessee received \$450,000.

<sup>27</sup>Valien, 375.

<sup>28</sup>Fancher, 62.

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with fourteen departments...offer[ing] three (graduate) degrees" and moved Tennessee A. & I. closer to the status an A class university.<sup>29</sup> In 1943 Tennessee A. & I. was allocated \$6,000,000 for an extensive expansion and improvements program. Completed over a six year period, the delay being largely attributed to wartime shortages in building materials, the improvements program included the construction of an engineering building, new heating plant, agricultural laboratories, dormitories, expansions to the library and women's building, and a new health and physical education building. The new construction increased the physical plants value from \$3,500,000 to \$9,500,000 by 1949.<sup>30</sup> The improvement program also allowed Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State College to be recognized by the board of Education as a full-fledged university renamed Tennessee State University in 1951, thus fulfilling President Davis's work and vision in the 1940s.<sup>31</sup>

Tennessee State University is significant not only as an educational institution, but also for its architecture. Even though many of the buildings have had additions and interior alterations they continue to reflect their original appearance and retain integrity. Three architectural firms have been associated with the building of TSU: Tisdale and Pinson, Marr and Holman, and, most importantly, McKissack and McKissack.

Moses McKissack III established the architectural firm of McKissack and McKissack in 1905, a firm which would come to

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<sup>29</sup>ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Vertical Files, Tennessee State University. President Letter. October 17, 1949. This letter lists the improvements undertaken by the university with state funding.

<sup>31</sup>Don Doyle, Nashville Since the 1920s (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 171.



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contribute significantly to Nashville's growth and educational reputation. The architectural firm of McKissack and McKissack is considered one of the first architectural firms in the United States to be organized and staffed by African-American architects and draftsmen. Its buildings were built across the United States, with the majority of them being southern African-American educational facilities. The McKissack firm traces its tradition back to Moses McKissack I, who was sold into bondage and learned to be a master builder.<sup>32</sup> He taught building practices to his son Gabriel Moses McKissack, who went into business in 1879 as a builder in Pulaski, Tennessee. This tradition continued from father to son to Moses McKissack III, the founder of McKissack and McKissack. Moses III received a formal education at Pulaski Colored High School then went on to work for a local architect as a draftsman. Moses III moved to Nashville, Tennessee, to start his own building business and received his first major commission, the Fisk Carnegie Library (NRHD, 2/09/78), in 1908.<sup>33</sup> In 1909 Calvin McKissack graduated from Fisk University and began working with his brother Moses III. The firm officially became McKissack and McKissack in 1922 when Calvin became a permanent partner. The firm was the first African-American architectural firm to register in Tennessee and later received licenses in almost every southern state.<sup>34</sup> The firm's impact on the built environment of TSU has been present since its beginnings and continues with many of the most recent campus buildings (Thematic McKissack NR 1985).

The Tennessee State University Historic District has statewide historical and local architectural significance. The campus represents the evolution of an African-American university over thirty years of continuous change in local, state, and federal legislation. The buildings are relevant

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<sup>32</sup>Linda T. Wynn, Leaders of Afro-American Nashville: McKissack and McKissack (Nashville: Department of History, Tennessee State University, 1985).

<sup>33</sup>Wynn, n.p.

<sup>34</sup>Wynn, n.p.

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since they are physical documents to specific, and significant, periods of development in the university's history in particular, and to the history of public higher education for African Americans in Tennessee in general. They document as well the changing attitudes of both white and African American education reformers towards educating African Americans. Consequently, the buildings have been "modernized" in the past forty years as state and federal officials have accepted the necessity and desirability of providing better higher educational opportunities for African Americans. The officials of Tennessee State University, in turn, have utilized this additional funding to improve their educational facilities while, at the same time, they have maintained the historic core of the campus as a source of pride and identify for the university, and the surrounding community. Even though the buildings have been adapted to suit the needs of a growing university, they have maintained their integrity and work together to explain and represent the evolution of the first African-American institution of public higher education in the state of Tennessee which justifies its significance even though some of the buildings are not yet fifty years old.

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X. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property corresponds to the marked area of  
Parcels sixteen and nineteen, Davidson County Tax Map P92A.

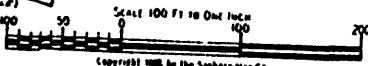
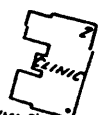
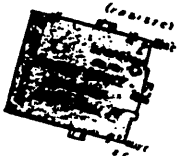
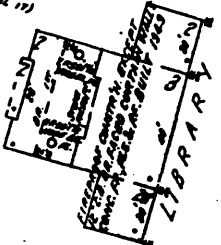
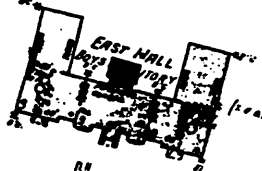
Boundary Justification

The nominated boundaries contain all of the extant historic  
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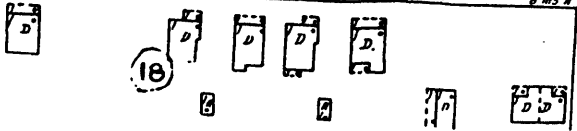
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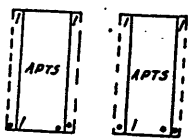
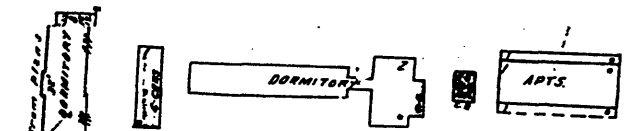
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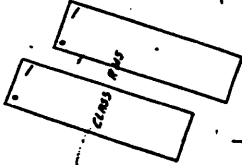
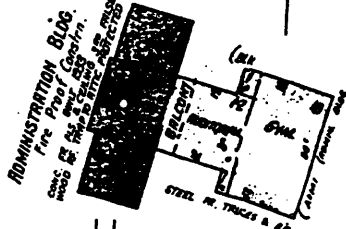
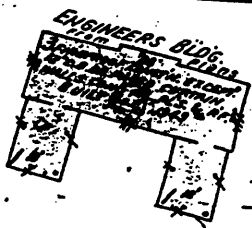
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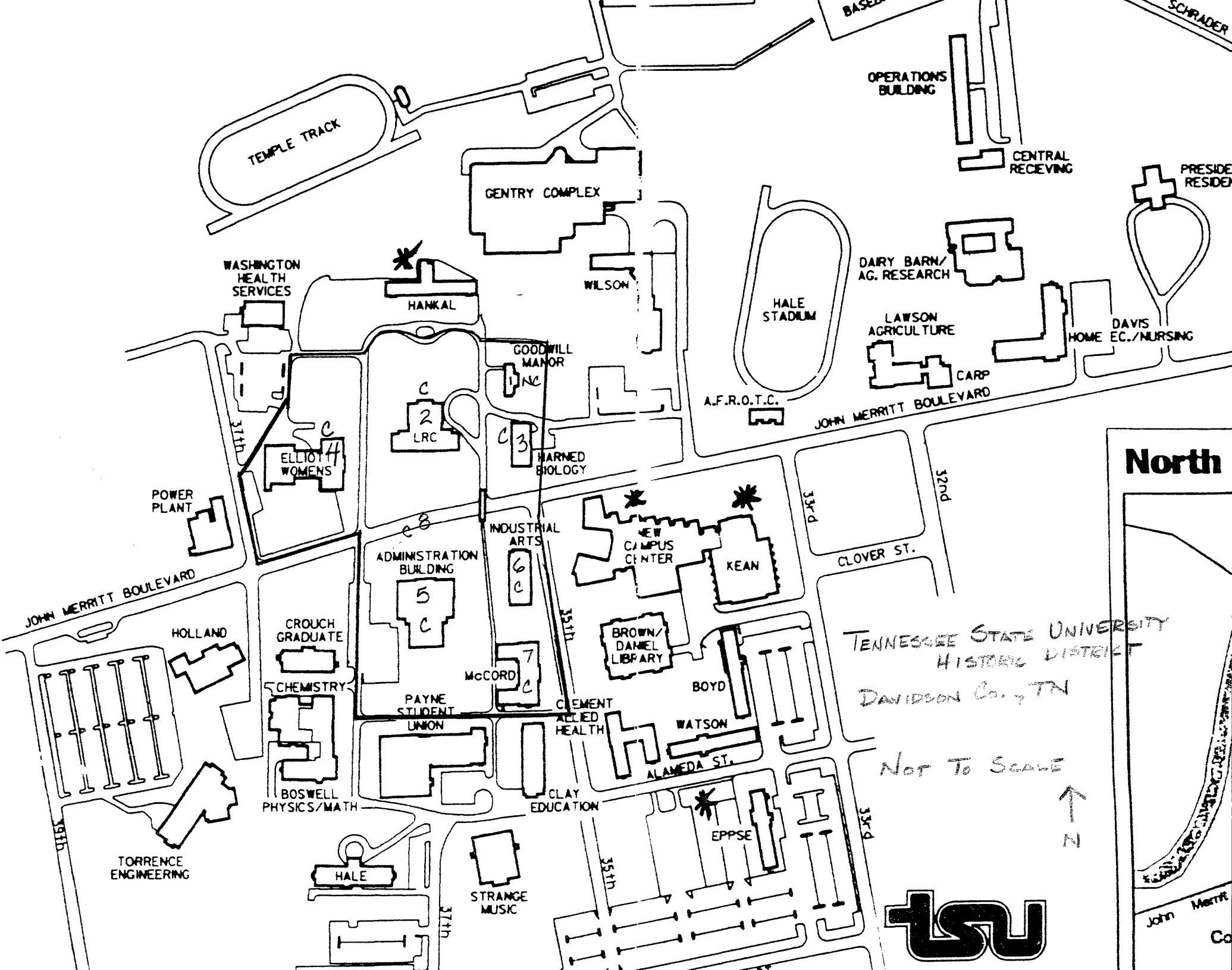
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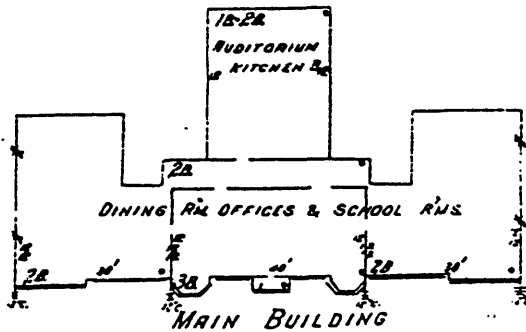
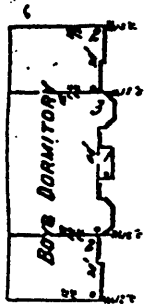
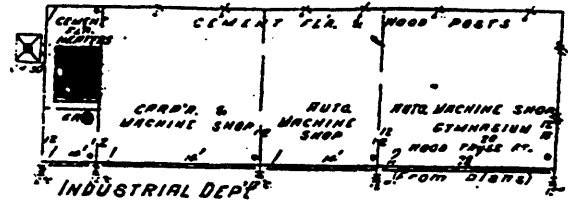
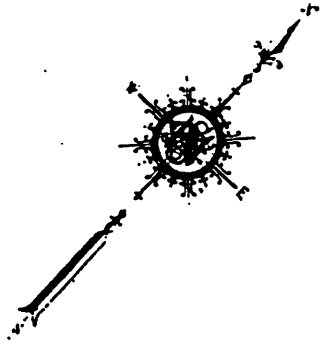
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HISTORIC DISTRICT  
DAVIDSON Co., TN

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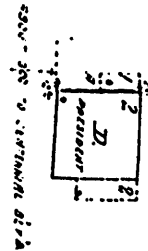


John Merritt  
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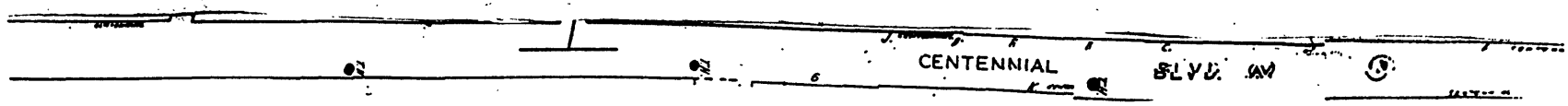
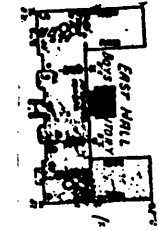
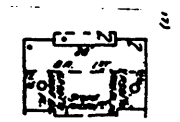
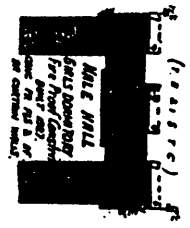
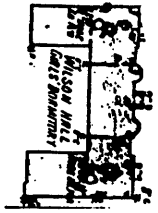
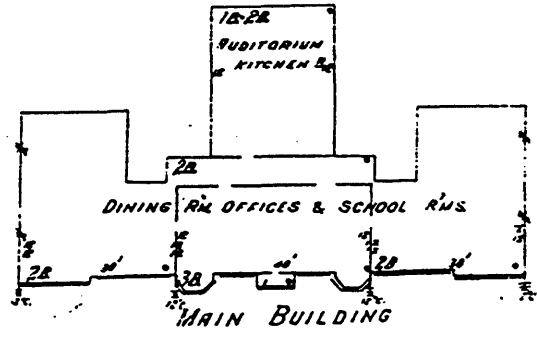
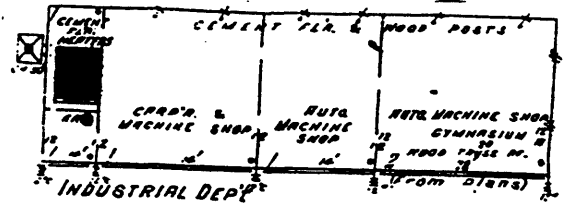


TENNESSEE AGRICULTURAL & INDUSTRIAL STATE NORMAL SCHOOL  
(COLORED)

WATCHMAN - NO CLOCK - HEAT - STEAM - DOWN & LIGHTS. ELECTRIC NO FIRE APPS.

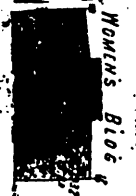
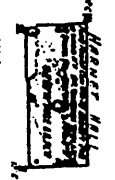
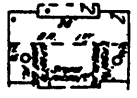
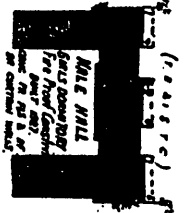
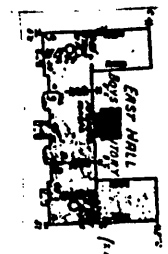
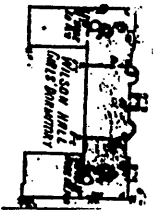
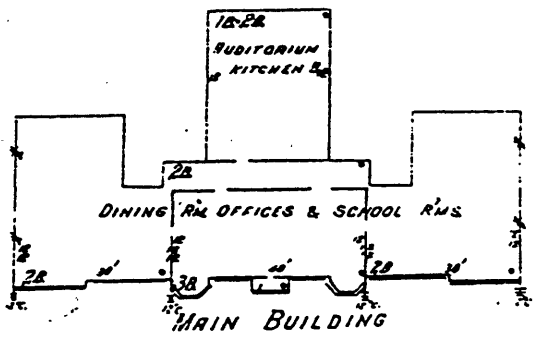
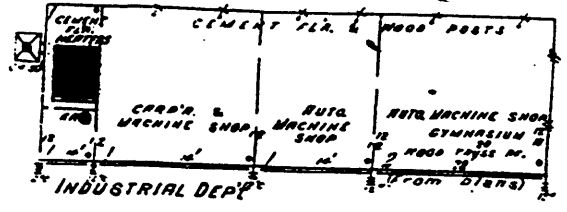


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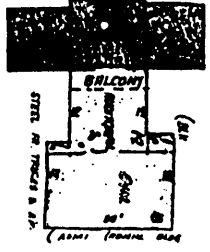
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NOT TO SCALE



CENTENNIAL BLVD. SW

ADMINISTRATION BLDG.  
Fire Proof Constrn.  
CONC. FR. FLR. & CEILING  
WOOD W/ TRAP DOOR PROTECTED



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NOT TO SCALE

