

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 Dallas Graded and High School

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 300 West Church Street

not for publication

city or town Dallas

vicinity

state North Carolina

code NC

county Gaston

code 061

zip code 28034

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.)

Debbie Crow
Signature of certifying official/Title

3/5/02
Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
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): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object |

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	Objects
1	0	Total

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

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: school

VACANT: not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Composition shingles

other Cast stone

Narrative Description

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

See 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Education
Architecture

Period of Significance

1924-1952

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the 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.

Significant Dates

1924

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

McMichael, architect

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):

- 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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State Agency
Federal Agency
Local Government
University
Other

Name of repository:

State Archives, Gaston County Register of Deeds

Dallas Graded and High School
Name of Property

Gaston County, NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .93 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 17 483720 3907650
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.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ellen Turco & April Montgomery
organization Circa, Inc date December 28, 2001
street & number P.O. Box 407 telephone 919-416-1016
city or town Durham state NC zip code 27702

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 William Farris
street & number 1806 Grace Street telephone _____
city or town Wilmington state NC zip code 28405

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

Narrative Description

The Dallas Graded and High School, now referred to as the "Church Street School," is located at 300 West Church Street in the town of Dallas. The building sits on a 0.93 acre site and encompasses the entire south end of the block bounded by Church Street to the south, Maple Street to the west, Main Street to the north and Oakland Street to the east. The site is adjacent to an early twentieth-century neighborhood and is located just two blocks from the (former) Gaston County Courthouse in the heart of downtown Dallas. The school building faces south and overlooks the school's former athletic fields that now operate as a town park. The school's 1939 gymnasium sits just east of the site on the northeast corner of Church and Oakland Streets and now serves as the town's recreation center. In the rear yard of the school sits a ca. 1925 water tower.

Exterior

The two-story red brick Classical Revival school building built in 1923-1924 is an intact example of the type of school built throughout the state in the late 1910s and 1920s as a result of the school consolidation movement. The original portion of the school is a seven-bay building, laid out in a T-plan with a raised basement form. The flat roof is highlighted by a brick parapet that is peaked over the central entrance. A separate pediment also tops the primary entrance bay. The building's overall ornamentation is spare, however, the original design and materials are largely intact.

The façade is dominated by a three-bay porticoed entry pavilion. The pavilion is supported by brick piers with pre-cast concrete bases and capitals, which in turn support a wooden entablature with a projecting cornice. The projecting cornice continues across the front of the wings of the building and around its central core, which rises approximately six feet higher than the wings. Fourteen stairs rise to the pedimented entrance where the double-leafed entry with glazed upper panels is framed by sidelights and a multi-light transom. The entry is flanked by triple nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows. The window openings measure forty inches wide by one hundred inches tall and are surrounded by five inch-wide wooden frames. Similar windows in groups of four fenestrate the wings extending from each side of the pavilion. Narrow six-over-six double-hung sash windows light the lower level of the main building and clerestory window openings (now boarded) on the facade of the building's core lit the attic space. A lower level entrance to the west of the central entry stairs is a modern glass enclosure with double-leafed entry doors.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

A seven bay addition, constructed in 1951, adjoins the façade at the west end. Like the original building, the addition features brick walls with a concrete parapet. The addition has one entry on the façade where the original building and addition connect. The addition, like the original building, has windows set in groups of four. However, the windows of the addition contain a fixed sash with twelve lights with the bottom two lights hinged to open inwards.

The east elevation exhibits the building's decorative brickwork. Concentric squares of brick soldier courses with center cast stone diamond shapes embellish the east elevation and allude to an Art Deco influence that was popular by the 1920s. The same design is present on the west end of the main block. However, due to the 1951 addition, this brickwork is now visible only from the interior stairwell connecting the original school building to the addition. The east end retains its original configuration of exterior masonry split stairs running parallel to the building.

A one-level ell projecting to the rear (north) of the central main block originally housed the gymnasium. Its five bays are delineated by groups of two nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows and standing buttresses. In 1939 the gymnasium was altered to house a library, two classrooms and two bathrooms. At that time the segmentally-arched transoms which crowned the tall windows were filled in with brick.

The 1951 addition to the west, also with upper and lower levels, adjoins the main block. The original west end exterior stairs and entry were removed when this wing was added. The west elevation consists of an unadorned brick wall with a double-leafed entrance under a simple portico. While photographs of the addition dating from the early 1950s indicate that the original entry doors to this wing were six lights over two horizontal raised panels, the current doors are of solid metal. The only other fenestration on this elevation is the vent from the upper level stairwell.

Interior

The Dallas Graded and High School's interior plan is simple. Overall the school contains 38,685 square feet, contained in twenty-six classrooms and a library. The original main block of the school totals 25,125 square feet and contains fourteen classrooms, an office, a cafeteria and a library. The school building contained an indoor basketball court, the first in the history of Dallas schools.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

The pedimented entry of the school opens up into a foyer. At the north end of the foyer is an arched opening leading into a gracious center hall. Two doors at the north end of the center hall lead to the north wing of the school which housed the gymnasium until 1939. Arched openings at the east and west ends of the center hall lead to narrower corridors, approximately eight-foot wide that run the length of the building. These corridors serve as a spine for classrooms located collaterally along it. A stairwell located at each end of the central hall leads to the lower level. The west staircase is closed off - the opening has been sealed with drywall - but the original door casing remains. The east stairwell is three-foot wide and houses wooden stairs. Each classroom on the main level is approximately the same size and rectangular shape; on average these classrooms are twenty-four feet deep by thirty feet wide, and boast five nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows, chalkboards, three-inch wide hardwood floors and a vertical bead board wainscot.

The lower level contains classrooms along a central corridor in the eastern wing. The boiler room and former cafeteria were located in the western wing. Each of the classrooms on this level are the same size and shape as those above, approximately twenty-four feet deep and thirty feet wide, and have four six-over-six double hung sash windows in each room. Less than half of the rooms on this level maintain their original wood floors; due to foundation work some original floors have been ripped up.

In 1939 a new gymnasium was built on the northeast corner of Church and Oakland Streets. The gymnasium housed in the north wing of the school was converted into a library, two classrooms and two bathrooms. These two classrooms were slightly larger in size - approximately thirty feet deep and twenty-eight feet wide - than the other classrooms found in the original portion of the school. Both the classrooms and the library exhibit paired nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows. The library has carpeted floors and fluorescent lighting fixtures that drop approximately eight feet from the ceiling. Both classrooms maintain the chalkboards, wood floors and vertical beadboard wainscot evident throughout the rest of the school.

The 1951 seven-bay addition totals 13,560 square feet. The addition contains eight classrooms, four on each level. Much like the 1920s main block, these classrooms were located collaterally along a central hall which continues its eight foot width throughout the addition. The central hall is

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 4

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

the unifying element of the addition to the main block. There are seven steps leading from the main block to the addition.

Each of the eight classrooms in the addition were constructed of equal size and shape, approximately twenty-four feet deep by forty-five feet wide. Since the time of construction these classrooms have changed in size and shape as a result of the school's changing venues in the latter part of the last century. A series of partitions have been installed in the classrooms on the south side of the hallway on the second floor. All of the partitions are made of drywall. Some of the partitions are six-feet high with the space from the top of the partition wall to the ceiling divided by glass windows, many of which are broken. The partitions appear to be easily removed and, furthermore, do not affect the overall integrity of the school. The classrooms on the north side of the hallway on the second floor and all of the classrooms on the first floor, of the 1951 section, retain their original size and shape.

All eight classrooms retain their original finishes: linoleum tile floors, concrete block interior walls, and acoustical tile ceilings. Each classroom's entry door consists of three square panels, the top of which is glass. Like the original main block of the school each classroom retains chalkboards and a vertical bead board wainscot. The windows in each classroom consist of a fixed sash with twelve lights with the bottom two lights hinged to open inwards.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 1

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

Summary Statement of Significance

The Dallas Graded and High School, commissioned by the Gaston County Board of Education in 1923, was completed and opened for classes by the fall of 1924. Associated with the nationwide consolidation movement of the late 1910s and 1920s, the school was constructed as part of the national trend to consolidate rural schools into larger schools with shared resources. In North Carolina 1500 one-room schools were consolidated to form larger education facilities with amenities such as gymnasiums and cafeterias. The Dallas Graded and High School represents the advances in public education made in Gaston County in the early twentieth-century and as such is eligible under Criterion A for Education.

This two-story Classical-Revival style building also exemplifies the national styles that influenced school architecture and the architecture of civic buildings throughout the state during the 1920s. The 1951 addition is in keeping with the overall form and ornamentation of the original building. The well-preserved school is eligible under Criterion C for Architecture.

Historical Background and Education Context

Gaston County was established in December of 1846, and named after Judge William Gaston (1778-1844) a North Carolina statesman, scholar and Supreme Court Justice (Separk, 1936: 4). The new county seat, Dallas, was named after the current United States Vice President George Mifflin Dallas and was located on seventy-five acres donated in 1847 by Jesse Holland.

In 1928 Oscar Lee Kiser submitted a Thesis to the University of North Carolina titled "The Growth and Development of Education in Gaston County." There are no known published texts on the history of education in Gaston County prior to Kiser's thesis. As a result, the majority of information on the subject, as illustrated in the statement below, has been passed on through oral history within the community. The following statement, dating to the 1930s, describes schools in the county prior to consolidation.

Little is known of the early schools of the county save that every community and settlement from the earliest days had its teacher, or teachers, and a little school running a few months each year, usually beginning at the time of "laying by" the crops. As the communities grew the need for schools grew,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

and at a very early date there was to be found in the leading communities of the county sufficient teachers for those early days. The two books most in use were the Blue Back Speller and Fowler's Arithmetic, and most of the teaching revolved around "readin', 'ritin', and 'rithmetic." The early teaching was done in one room at some home in the community. (Separk, 1936:62)

In "The History of Dallas" prepared by the 1953-54 eighth grade class of the Dallas Graded and High School it was reported that first school in Dallas was located in a small log house on the railroad where the present broom factory is located. School was held a few months each year and was taught by Professor Odell. The second school in Dallas was located on the town square in what is now referred to as the Smyre-Paseur House and taught by Miss Hersilia Paseur. The dates of operation for both of these schools are unknown. However, it is likely that they were in operation prior to the founding of Gaston High School, located in Dallas, in 1870. Within the next thirty-five years the Gaston High School building would become Gaston College, Gaston Female College and, finally, Dallas Graded School.

By the beginning of the twentieth century Gaston County was experiencing tremendous growth. Between 1890 and 1900 the county population soared from 17,764 to 27,903, a 57% increase, with Gastonia and Bessemer City being the two leading population centers in the county. This increase was almost solely due to the growth of the textile industry. In 1890 there were ten textile mills in the county. By 1900 that number had increased to twenty-seven and, by 1910 there were forty-eight textile mills in Gaston County.

The mills played a large role in the physical and economic development of the county, and they also played a significant role in the development of Gaston County's educational system. While the introduction of the mills brought prosperity to the communities of Gaston County, it also brought displeasure from the local community present prior to the introduction of the mill. With the mill workers came high levels of illiteracy, low levels of school enrollment and low graduation rates. These facts are topics of continuous discussion in the school board minutes beginning in the 1920s and continuing through World War II. The community's displeasure is evident in Oscar Lee Kiser's 1928 Thesis "The Growth and Development of Education in Gaston County," where it is stated that the high levels of illiteracy were reported to be a result of the mill workers being brought in from the extreme western counties of the state where, "Usually these people were not able to read and write" (Kiser, 1928:46).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

Low enrollment rates were attributed to the fact that mill families moved often, sometimes as much as seven times within a school year. (Kiser, 1928:65) The low rates of graduation were attributed to the ability of students to be able to take full time jobs in mills at age fourteen. As a result these children would enter high school but never finish.

The beginning of the twentieth century also proved to be a pivotal point in the development of Gaston County education. In 1904 F.P. Hall was appointed superintendent of Gaston County Schools. At a meeting of the Gaston County School Board on June 5, 1904 Hall introduced seven recommendations to improve the administration of the county schools. One of these recommendations was to consolidate the small school districts. Consolidation would be a recurring theme during Hall's tenure. The physical results of Hall's 1904 recommendation for consolidation would not be seen for almost a decade until schools such as Lander's Chapel and the Willis School were constructed in 1912 and 1919, respectively. These schools were one step up from the traditional rural schools in that they had two teachers, two classrooms and housed about thirty students ranging in age from six to fourteen (Brengele, 1982:55).

In 1905 Dallas residents voted on and approved a graded school in Dallas. The Gaston Female College, originally constructed in 1870, was sold to the county to be used for the graded school. A budget was developed for a principal and four teachers.

As the mills and textile industry continued to grow through the 1910s and 1920s a change in power occurred in Gaston County. As the mills and, more specifically, the mill owners, played an integral part in the development of the county it was deemed necessary that the county seat be moved from Dallas to Gastonia, in closer proximity to these businessmen and the majority of the population. In 1900 the population of Gastonia was 4,600 while the population of Dallas was a mere 500. This disparity in population was directly related to the proximity of the railroad to Gastonia and the ability for businesses to transport the goods manufactured in their mills from this location. In 1911 the new Gaston County Courthouse was completed and the county seat officially left Dallas. Towards the end of the 1910s, as a result of World War I, industries within Gaston County boomed with the production of war materials. By 1920 the county population had grown to 51,000, 21,000 of which depended on mills for their income (Williams, 1981:115).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 4

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

The economic boom that occurred in Gaston County during the first two decades of the twentieth century also had a dramatic effect on the county's schools. As a direct result of the increase in the school age population in conjunction with the nationwide school consolidation movement of the late 1910s and 1920s, larger more substantial schools were constructed throughout the county. In 1920 Gaston County reported having eleven brick school houses. By 1924 that number had increased to thirty-three (Gaston County Board of Education Minutes, April 12, 1923). Records of the State Department of Education indicate that this explosion of school construction was financed through county tax revenues, bonds and the state's Special Building Fund. In 1923 F.P. Hall, on behalf of Gaston County Schools, submitted Special Building Fund Loan reports for seventeen new schools in the county. The majority of these reports appear to be after-the-fact reports for schools already constructed. A large number of the schools constructed were located within mill villages. More than fifty percent of the county's \$269,561.11 disbursements in 1920 were given to mill schools in Gastonia, Bessemer and Cherryville. By the late 1920s the consolidation of rural white schools in Gaston County was complete. By 1927 it was reported that all one-teacher white schools in the county had been done away with (Kiser, 1928:60).

On May 3, 1920 the Gaston County School Board selected a site for the new Dallas Graded and High School. Two lots were purchased for \$1,800 and the county commission was asked to donate a third lot. (Gaston County Board of Education Minutes May 3, 1920) According to the Special Building Fund report for the Dallas Graded and High School, dated December 12, 1923, the sixteen-room school was constructed for a total cost of \$56,400; \$24,400 from the county, \$26,000 from bonds and \$6,000 from the special building fund. The school's identified architect was McMichael. The school board records do not indicate the architect's first name or his firm's name.

The Dallas Graded and High School opened for its first day of classes on September 1, 1924. The principal was Charlie Hawkins. This school would serve as a consolidation center for the previous Dallas Graded School as well as Long Creek and Morris. In addition, students from the High Shoals, Harden, Costner's and Willis consolidated centers would also attend Dallas High School. The total student population on opening day was 362. Local officials indicated, within the first week of the schools opening, that they would need more classrooms (Gastonia Gazette, 1924: 7).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 5

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

By 1930 the population of Gaston County had risen to 78,000, only 2,254 of which resided in Dallas. However, the prosperity that the growth of the past two decades had brought to the county did not carry over into the 1930s. Due to the 1929 strike at Loray Mill and the Great Depression both physical and economic development in the county abruptly stopped. By 1931, one out of every two mill workers became unemployed. Likewise, all of the feverish building of schools that had occurred in the county school system during the last decade came to a dead halt as well.

It is possible that the moderate growth of Dallas during the early 1930s, as opposed to the decline in other parts of the county, was due to the fact that of all the towns in Gaston County it had the fewest mills and was least dependent on them for local employment. During this period, Dallas Graded and High School continued to grow. At its opening in 1924 the school had an enrollment of 362 students. By the early 1930s the school's enrollment had nearly doubled to 637 students. In addition, the school had expanded into another building to house its home economics and agriculture programs; there was a faculty of nineteen and as a result of the increase in programs and faculty, fourteen elective subjects were offered: Latin, French, Home Economics, Agriculture, Chemistry, Physics, General Science, Biology, Band, Glee Club, Typing, Shorthand and Bookkeeping. Dallas Graded and High School also received a new principal during this period. In 1930 Mitchell Carr became the school's principal and would serve in this position until the late 1950s.

On October 13, 1938 the county school board awarded a contract in the amount of \$16,900 to Abee & Eckerd contractors of Icard, North Carolina for the construction of a gymnasium for the Dallas Graded and High School. According to the minutes of this meeting, the money for the new gymnasium came from the State's Special Building Fund. This is the same fund that provided the money for the building of the original school. It appears, from the Board of Education minutes, that a number of schools in the county were overcrowded prior to the onset of the Depression but funds were not available to alleviate this problem until the late 1930s. The construction of gymnasiums at a number of county consolidation schools allowed for existing gymnasium space to be converted to classrooms. In 1939 the new gymnasium at Dallas Graded and High School was completed at the northwest corner of Church and Oakland Streets. The construction of the new gymnasium allowed for the old gymnasium space in the north wing of the school to be converted into a new, larger library, two classrooms and two bathrooms.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 6

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

By the early 1950s Dallas Graded and High School was in need of yet another expansion. On January 9, 1951 general contractor E.R. Morgan was selected to construct the 13,000 square foot addition of the school's west wing. For a total of \$79,340 an additional eight classrooms on two levels were added.

Dallas Graded and High School closed in 1971 when students were transferred to North Gaston High School. The Dallas Graded and High School was converted to an elementary school and operated as such until the late 1980s. Since the late 1980s the school has operated as an alternative school, and as the site for Gaston County adult education through the fall of 1998. In November 1998 the county sheriff's department moved into the school temporarily as a result of a fire that gutted their Gaston County Courthouse office earlier that year. The school has been vacant since late 1999.

Architectural Context

The Dallas Graded and High School, constructed in 1924, is one of nine surviving consolidation-era schools in Gaston County. Twenty-two brick schools were constructed in Gaston County between 1920 and 1929. These schools were built as a direct result of the nationwide school consolidation movement targeted at closing small rural schools in exchange for larger brick schools that would centralize students and resources. The Dallas Graded and High School is, of the nine surviving structures, the best intact example of this significant era of school construction in the northeast quadrant of Gaston County

The nine extant consolidation era schools in Gaston County illustrate three different styles of school constructed during this era. (Former) Gastonia High School and Central Elementary School, both in Gastonia, illustrate the highest level of style and form associated with this period. Each are truly grand in scale and ornamentation. Central Elementary, constructed in 1914, is a full two stories on a raised basement with projecting side wings and central portico with four massive Doric columns that support a full entablature. (Former) Gastonia High School, now Ashley Junior High, is a three-story brick building with a projecting tower entrance and heavy Gothic detail. Although slightly less imposing, Flint Groves Elementary, also located in Gastonia, also exhibits a high level of ornamentation with brick and cast stone designs, a decorated parapet and large banks of windows.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 7

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

the county, as in much of the country, was working off of a specific plan. Perhaps not as concrete as a blueprint, but, certainly an understanding of what the form and decoration of these buildings was to be. All of these buildings exemplify what the consolidation movement was about in most of the country: larger schools with centralized resources and a focus on quality education with the construction of environments that would allow for and encourage just that.

In addition to its significance relative to school buildings in the county, the Dallas Graded and High School is the only representation of the Colonial Revival style in institutional or commercial buildings within the town of Dallas. The height of development for the town of Dallas occurred around the time of the town's creation as the county seat of Gaston County in 1847. As a result the majority of the buildings on the town square date from that period and exhibit the styles of that period. This is evident with the Greek Revival style courthouse and through to the early twentieth century Victorian influenced structures on the square. By 1923, the start of construction for Dallas Graded and High School, the county seat had already been moved to Gastonia. With the move of the county seat in 1911 little institutional or commercial development occurred in Dallas. This continued until the 1950s when a second building campaign occurred in town as a result of the post-World War II economy.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

Bibliography

Brengle, Kim Withers. The Architectural Heritage of Gaston County, North Carolina. Town of Gastonia, Gastonia, NC: 1982.

"Dallas High School Study List Application" prepared by Kaye Graybeal. January 15, 2001.

Gaston County Board of Education, Dallas and Gastonia, North Carolina. Board Minutes 1920-1971.

"Gaston County's Educational Heritage" Gaston County School project. No pagination. Gaston County Reading Room, Public Library, Gastonia. Date Unknown.

Gastonia Gazette, "Live News From Dallas" September 3, 1924, page 7.

Kiser, Oscar Lee. The Growth and Development of Education in Gaston County. A Thesis prepared for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC: 1928.

North Carolina Department of Education, Raleigh, North Carolina. Reports of the Special Building Funds 1920-1929.

Separk, Joseph H. Gastonia and Gaston County North Carolina 1846-1949. Kingsport Press, Kingsport, TN: 1936.

"The History of Dallas, North Carolina" prepared by Mrs. Hoffman's eighth grade class 1953-54. No pagination. Gaston County Reading Room, Public Library, Gastonia.

Williams, Robert L. Gaston County: A Pictorial History. The Donning Company, Norfolk, VA: 1981.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1

Dallas Graded and High School
Gaston County, North Carolina

Verbal Boundary Description

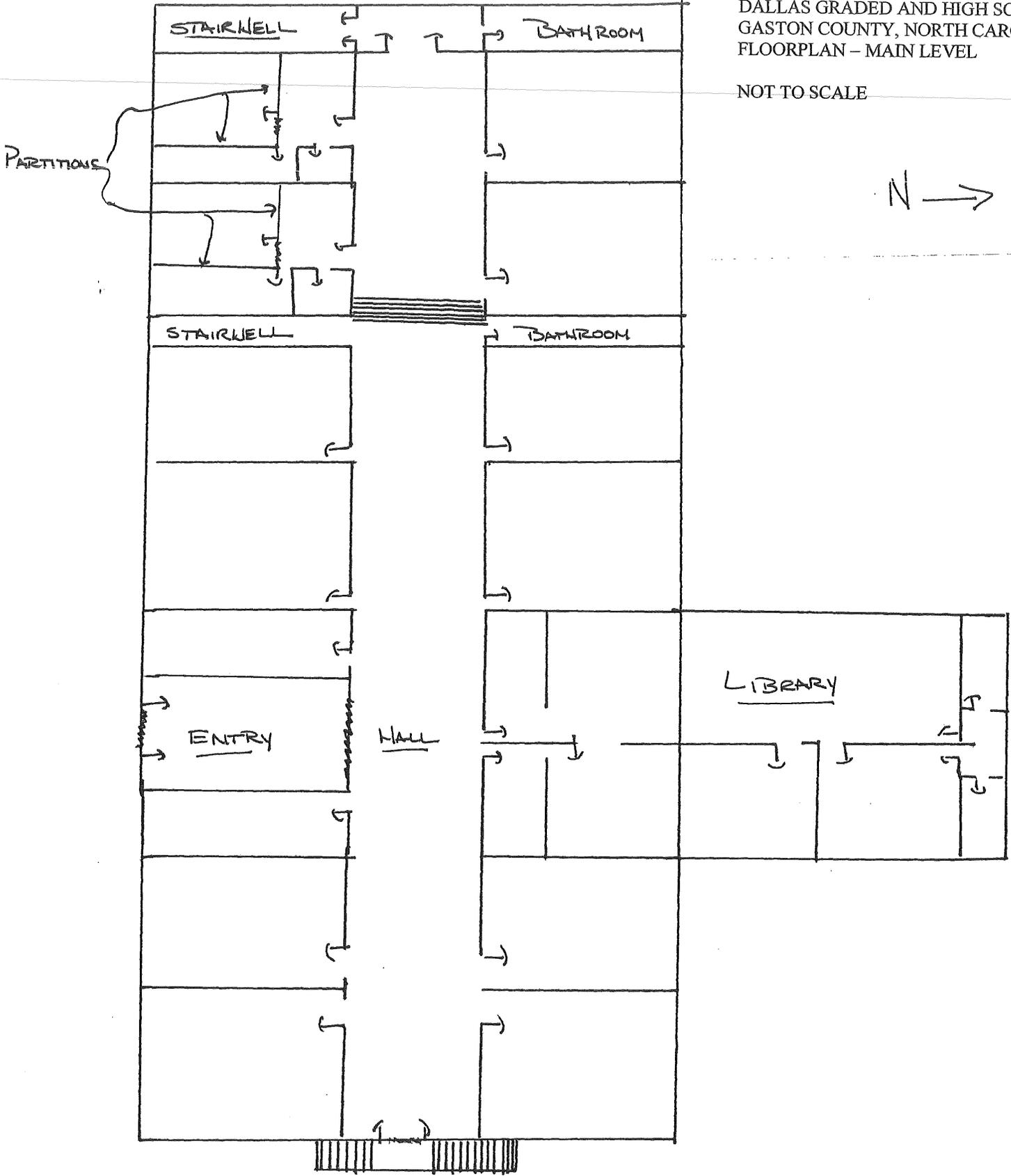
The boundary includes the 0.93 acres of the delineated parcel, parcel number 48.01, on the accompanying Gaston County tax map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the school building and the grounds immediately surrounding the building. This acreage was historically associated with the school property.

DALLAS GRADED AND HIGH SCHOOL
GASTON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
FLOORPLAN - MAIN LEVEL

NOT TO SCALE



NOT TO SCALE

