

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION FILE
Tennessee State Historic Preservation Office

Listing Name: Hurdlow School
Address: 5759 Wet Prong Road
City: Lynchburg
County: Moore
Associated MPS: N/A

Listing Date: 3/20/2025
Reference Number: SG100011548



Bounded by the Salmon River on the west and south, 4th Street at the northern end, and Prospect and Morton streets at the east,
Malone, SG100011536,
LISTED, 3/17/2025

OHIO, LUCAS COUNTY,
East Toledo Main Street Historic District,
Main Street, bounded by Front St. and Starr Ave, between Euclid and Platt streets,
Toledo, SG100011535,
LISTED, 3/17/2025

PENNSYLVANIA, ALLEGHENY COUNTY,
Loutellus Apartment Hotel,
231-245 Melwood Avenue,
Pittsburgh, RS100011109,
LISTED, 3/17/2025

SOUTH CAROLINA, HORRY COUNTY,
Noel Court and Apartments,
312 6th Ave. North,
Myrtle Beach, OT100005988,
REMOVED, 3/21/2025
(Myrtle Beach MPS)

TENNESSEE, GREENE COUNTY,
Conway Bridge,
Briar Thicket Rd./ Knob Creek Rd. over the Nolichucky River,
Briar Thicket vicinity, OT09000948,
REMOVED, 3/17/2025

TENNESSEE, KNOX COUNTY,
Emory Place Historic District (Boundary Increase II),
750 Stone St. NW,
Knoxville, BC100011549,
BOUNDARY INCREASE APPROVED, 3/20/2025
(Knoxville and Knox County MPS)

TENNESSEE, MONROE COUNTY,
Pardue, James M., House,
403 North Price Street,
Sweetwater, SG100011553,
LISTED, 3/21/2025

TENNESSEE, MOORE COUNTY,
Hurdlow School,

5759 Wet Prong Rd,
Lynchburg vicinity, SG100011548,
LISTED, 3/20/2025

TENNESSEE, SULLIVAN COUNTY,
Looney, Moses, Fort House,
5436 Old Island Rd.,
Kingsport vicinity, OT78002638,
REMOVED, 3/17/2025

TENNESSEE, WASHINGTON COUNTY,
Bashor Mill,
NE of Johnson City,
Johnson City vicinity, OT80003878,
REMOVED, 3/17/2025

UTAH, DAVIS COUNTY,
Burns-Wood House,
231 East 100 North,
Farmington, MP100011518,
LISTED, 3/14/2025
(Settlement Era Buildings of Farmington, 1847 to 1896)

UTAH, DAVIS COUNTY,
Chaffin, Henry and Leatha, House,
189 North 100 East,
Farmington, MP100011530,
LISTED, 3/17/2025
(Settlement Era Buildings of Farmington, 1847 to 1896)

UTAH, DAVIS COUNTY,
Van Fleet, Elias and Lucy, House,
93 East 300 North,
Farmington, MP100011532,
LISTED, 3/17/2025
(Settlement Era Buildings of Farmington, 1847 to 1896)

UTAH, DAVIS COUNTY,
Miller, William H. and Helen, House,
147 North 100 East,
Farmington, MP100011544,
LISTED, 3/17/2025
(Settlement Era Buildings of Farmington, 1847 to 1896)

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- 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.)

- Private
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
2	0	objects
3	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

No style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE; WOOD; ASPHALT; BRICK

Narrative Description

The Hurdlow School building is a one story, rectangular, concrete block building located on Wet Prong Road near Highway 50 in Moore County. It is surrounded primarily by open agricultural fields with a few single-family homes and agricultural outbuildings scattered along Wet Prong Road. Character defining features of the school’s exterior when it was constructed include its rectangular shape, side gable roof, rusticated concrete block, front-gable porch, recessed entryway, battery of window openings present on the east and west elevations, and brick chimney. Character defining feature of the interior include the layout of the school, concrete block walls, plaster tile ceiling, tile floors, and stage. The property includes two other resources: a Contributing ca. 1949 flagpole, and a Contributing ca. 1949 swing set frame.

SITE FEATURES

The Hurdlow School is located on a grassy four-acre lot that slopes down to meet Wet Prong Road. Mature trees mark the boundaries of the parcel. The main access point is a lightly graveled, unfinished path. Cars pull off Wet Prong Road and onto the path, which brings visitors to the north elevation of the property. A metal T-shaped swing set frame is located to the northwest of the property, and a metal flagpole is located west of the façade (west elevation).

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HURDLOW SCHOOL, 1949 CONTRIBUTING BUILDING

The Moore County Board of Education began construction on the nominated Hurdlow School building in the early Spring of 1949. Before building supplies could be unloaded at the building site it was necessary to grade a high bank and driveway and construct a road. The men of the community took care of this. Although this building was not supported by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, some of the architectural elements, including the adjacent classrooms divided by a sliding partition, rectangular form, and battery of windows were inspired by the two-teacher plans designed and implemented as part of Rosenwald's school building program in the earlier part of the 20th century.

Exterior

The Hurdlow School is a single-story, rectangular building capped by a side gable asphalt shingle roof, constructed of rusticated concrete block, and sat upon a concrete block foundation. The gable fields on the north and south elevation are filled with horizontal aluminum siding. Unless otherwise noted, the school windows are no longer present, though the historic fenestration pattern of openings has been maintained. Many windows also retain their original concrete sills.

West Elevation (Façade)

A single-story porch supported by two rusticated concrete block columns and capped with a front gable, asphalt shingle roof shelters the school's main entrance on the west elevation. The porch gable field is covered in horizontal aluminum siding, and a metal attic vent is visible beneath the gable peak. The floor of the porch is concrete, and the ceiling of the porch is wood. The porch shelters a recessed entry filled with original paired wood, four-panel, two-light doors, surrounded by original, simply ornamented wood door surround. Two window-openings are visible to the north of the porch. A battery of four, large window openings are south of the porch, with a smaller window opening located on the southern edge of the west elevation.

Historic photographs indicate that the battery of windows were once filled with wood, nine-over-nine light, double hung windows, and the three smaller windows were filled with wood, six-over-six light, double hung windows. All windows featured a simple wood surround. Photographs also show a simply ornamented cornice that spanned the length of the façade (see Figures 1 and 2).

South Elevation

A single, wood, double-hung, six-over-six light window is visible on the west end of the south elevation, though it is missing its glass. East of this window is a door opening. Concrete steps with metal railing access the basement level, which is located under the stage. Basement level entrances are open.. A metal vent is located between the basement stairs and door opening. A louvered attic vent is located beneath the gable peak of the roof.

Photographic evidence and physical evidence indicate the south elevation entrance once featured a wood screen door sheltered by a shed-roof awning. This entrance opened onto a small, poured concrete landing (See Figure 2).

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Figure 1: Hurdlow School, circa. 1949-1950. Photograph Courtesy of Hurdlow Community Club, "Hurdlow Scrap Book, 1949-1950."



Figure 2: Hurdlow School, circa. 1949-1950. Photograph Courtesy of Hurdlow Community Club, "Hurdlow Scrap Book, 1949-1950."

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East Elevation

Four, large window openings define the east elevation of the school. South of the large window openings is a single, smaller window opening. Beneath the smaller window, at the basement level, is a second entrance with no door. An interior, brick chimney is visible on the east elevation roofline, between the larger window openings and the smaller window opening on the southeast corner of the elevation.

Photographic evidence indicates that each large window opening was filled with a battery of three, wood, nine-over-nine light, double hung windows (See Figures 3 and 4). It is also likely that the smaller window opening was filled with wood, six-over-six light, double hung windows like the other smaller school windows.



Figure 3: Hurdlow School, circa. 1950-1951. Photograph Courtesy of Hurdlow Community Club, "Hurdlow Scrap Book, 1950-1951."

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Figure 4: Hurdlow School, circa. 1950-1951. Photograph Courtesy of Hurdlow Community Club, "Hurdlow Scrap Book, 1950-1951."

North Elevation

Two boarded up window openings are centered on the north elevation. An attic vent is directly beneath the gable peak, covered by ivy. Remnants of the original wood, nine-over-night light, double hung window is visible in the westernmost window opening (See Figures 3 and 4).

Interior

Unless otherwise noted, the interior features concrete floors, some with extant tiles or evidence of tiles, and concrete block walls. There is currently no ceiling, which exposes the original wood rafters of the side gable roof. There is evidence that the floors were covered in tile, baseboards were located throughout, and that the ceilings were plaster.

The main entrance opens into a foyer. Two doorways are visible immediately upon entry. The northernmost door features the original wood door surround. South of the foyer is the cafeteria. An empty doorway that leads outside is located on the south wall of the cafeteria. A build out designed to create space for the pantry, cloak room, and supply room runs along the east wall of the cafeteria. The pantry entrance is on the south wall of the build out, at the southern end of the cafeteria. Wood cabinets occupy the inside east wall of the build out. It should be noted that the pantry is divided from the cloak room and supply room by a concrete block wall. The original plaster ceiling is visible in the pantry. An entrance filled with a wood door surround and an original wood, three panel door on the east wall accesses the stage area from the cafeteria.

North of the foyer are restrooms one and two. The first restroom is no longer extant, though concrete block ghosting and plumbing indicate where components of the room would have been. Restroom two is north of restroom one. It maintains all four walls, though portions of the roof have collapsed. The entrance is filled with an original wood door that is missing the top two panels. A wood surround frames the door.

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The "Little Room" is accessed by proceeding directly through the northernmost foyer entryway, directly in front of (east) the main entrance. The room is separated from the "Big Room" by a concrete wall pierced by wood, three-panel folding doors. The folding doors are original and retain their wood surround. Plaster panels are located directly above the folding doors, though some have been damaged. A second entrance into the "Little Room" is located on the west wall, near the northernmost corner of the room. Four concrete block-size openings are visible between the two "Little Room" entrances; two at floor level, two at the roof/wall junction, likely for ducts or other mechanical equipment.

The "Big Room" is accessed by proceeding south through the folding doors, or through the southernmost foyer entryway, also directly in front of (east) the main entrance. An entrance is located directly south of the foyer entryway. This accesses the cloak room and supply room, which themselves are separated by a doorway. A stage occupies the southernmost end of the room. It features original three-panel folding doors and retains its original wood surround. Three plaster panels are visible above the stage, and an original wood, three-panel door with original wood surround is located to the west of the stage. A metal vent is directly beneath the stage, and two additional metal vents are located on the east wall of the "Big Room."

Proceeding through the stage door accesses the stage area. Three wood steps lead up to the stage, which has a wood floor and is supported by concrete block. The northeastern portion of the floor was water damaged and partially collapsed. An original three-panel wood door accesses the kitchen area on the west wall, near the stage stairs.

FLAGPOLE, c.1949 **CONTRIBUTING OBJECT**

South of the front steps of the school building is a c.1949 metal flagpole. Near the top it tapers to a smaller width. It has remained unchanged and in the same location since its installation in 1949. Because the flagpole retains integrity, was present during the Period of Significance, and is directly connected to the historical significance of the property as a school, it is a Contributing object.

SWING SET FRAME, c.1949 **CONTRIBUTING OBJECT**

West of the building is a c. 1949 T-shaped metal swing set frame. Though the swings are no longer present, the overall form of the frame has not changed since its installation. Because the swing set retains integrity, was present during the Period of Significance, and is directly connected to the historical significance of the property as a school, it is a Contributing object

INTEGRITY

The Hurdlow School retains enough integrity to communicate its historical significance as a school. The school has remained at the same location since its construction in 1949. The school is surrounded by open fields, rural roads, small residential houses, and farm complexes. This seclusion and rural nature is much as it was historically and communicates the property's historical importance as a center for education and community in the area. The school also retains enough integrity of materials, design, and workmanship to be eligible for listing in the National Register. Character defining features of the school's exterior when it was constructed include its rectangular shape, side gable roof, rusticated concrete block, front-gable porch, recessed entryway, battery of windows on the east and west elevations, and brick chimney. Character defining feature of the interior include the layout of the school, concrete block walls, plaster tile ceiling, tile floors, and stage. Since its construction, many of the doors and windows have been removed or are no longer extant. Portions of the

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roof need repair, and the floor and ceiling coverings are no longer present. However, the school continues to retain many of its original character defining features. This includes the rectangular shape, side gable roof, rusticated block, porch, recessed entryway, and window/door fenestration, which has remained unchanged since 1949. Further, the interior of the school clearly communicates its original layout. Critical to the operation of the school was the role of the “Little Room” and “Big Room” as classrooms that could be separated, or combined, at a moment’s notice by the folding doors in the middle, which are extant. Except for restroom one, all other interior spaces remain as they were historically and communicate their spatial relationship with the school’s other rooms. The Hurdlow School also retains its structural integrity. The school retains its integrity of association as a place of historical significance in the educational and social life of the community. Because the school retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and association, it also retains its integrity of feeling, thus making it eligible for listing in the National Register.

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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.)

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Education

Social History

- 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.

Period of Significance

1949-1962

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Architect/Builder

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Hurdlow School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its local significance in Education and Social History. The school building was constructed in 1949 in the small community of Hurdlow in Moore County, Tennessee. This one-story concrete block building featured many modern conveniences that rural schools generally lacked, including its concrete block construction, indoor plumbing, fully operational and stocked kitchen, and outdoor facilities like a baseball field and basketball court. The school taught grades one-through-eight and offered courses in subjects such as reading, writing, mathematics, and science. After-school clubs, such as 4-H and choir, were hosted at the school. The building also became the center of the social and cultural life of the surrounding community. Pageants, fundraisers, visiting dignitaries, adult school, and fish fries were just a few of the events hosted at the school building. Hurdlow School's Period of Significance begins in 1949 and ends with 1962, corresponding with the year the school opened and the year that it closed and no longer served an active role in the Hurdlow community.

Narrative Statement of Significance

BRIEF COUNTY CONTEXT

The Hurdlow School is located in the small community of Hurdlow, Moore County, Tennessee. Moore County is the second smallest county in the state, consisting of only 129 square miles in total size. It straddles two unique geological regions; half of the county is in the Highland Rim, the other half in the Central Basin. This division is reflected in the overall natural landscape. Rich, fertile valleys and farmland abut ridges populated by stands of timber. The Elk and Mulberry Rivers provide a rich and reliable water source. It is little wonder that these natural resources created a thriving agricultural economy that persisted well into the twentieth century.¹

Moore County was established from land in Lincoln, Bedford, Franklin, and Coffee Counties. After the Civil War, residents petitioned the state legislature for the creation of a new county. They argued that the great distances from their communities to their county seats was a burden. Initial plans had the county encompassing three-hundred miles; however, it was later pared down to its current size due to restrictions on the formation of new counties present in the Tennessee Constitution of 1870.² The Tennessee General Assembly officially created Moore County on December 14, 1871. It was named in honor of General William Moore, an early settler of neighboring Lincoln County, longtime member of the Tennessee Legislature, and a veteran of the War of 1812. The first meeting of the county commissioners took place on January 6, 1872. They divided the county into eleven civil districts: Lynchburg, Ridgeville, Marble Hill, Reed's Store, Tucker Creek, Waggoner's, Prosser's Store, Charity, County Line, Hurricane Church, and William B. Smith's Mill. Though many of these smaller communities no longer exist, most at least had a general store, one church, and a school, with some even boasting a post office, blacksmith, and a gristmill.³

Lynchburg was named the county seat in 1872 following a countywide election. It was, and remains, the largest and most populated community in the county. The unique location of the county seat soon transformed it into an important center for the mule trade in Middle Tennessee. It sat at the center of a triangle that connected

¹ Megan Dobbs Eades, "Moore County," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, Tennessee Historical Society, October 8, 2017.

² Eades, "Moore County," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, October 8, 2017.

³ Jillian Rael, *Images of America: Around Lynchburg* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2012), pg. 7.

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Tullahoma (Coffee County), Shelbyville (Beford County), and Fayetteville (Lincoln County), all of which were known for their mule stock. Lynchburg is perhaps best known for its whiskey production. The first known distillery in the area was erected in the community of West Mulberry in 1825. By 1876, there were over fifteen distilleries in and around Lynchburg, including the Jack Daniel’s Distillery (National Register Listed – 9/14/1972), built at Cave Spring in 1876. The Jack Daniel’s Distillery grew to become an internationally known and recognized whiskey brand. Tourism generated by the distillery and agriculture continue to play an important part in the city and county economy.⁴

HURDLOW SCHOOL – EDUCATION AND SOCIAL HISTORY SIGNIFICANCE

Early education in Tennessee was both decentralized and limited. The original Tennessee constitution failed to mention education. It was not until the 1806 Cession Act that the state officially recognized education in their plans for improving the state. Subsequent legislation attempted to establish an academy in each county, but the lack of funding and inability to enforce the legislation hamstrung efforts to create a public school system. A push for education reform swept the state in the 1830s, culminating in the passage of a law by the General Assembly in 1836 that recommended the establishment of a board of commissioners to oversee the state public school fund. Robert H. McEwen was elected as the first superintendent. He recommended numerous improvements to the public school system, including the gradation of schools, better schoolhouses, and a per diem for school commissioners. Unfortunately, an investigation revealed that McEwen was stealing from the school fund. The scandal turned some Tennesseans against public education in favor of the more “efficient” private model.⁵

It was not until the end of the Civil War and onset of Reconstruction that Tennessee made a concerted effort to bring about universal public education. In 1867, lawmakers passed legislation that would reorganize, supervise, and provide maintenance to common schools. The act also reestablished the State Superintendent of Education office, furnished additional sources of revenue to fund education, and established a system by which to supervise the implementation of the act in Tennessee counties. Though this act opened the door for public education in the state, it also enshrined segregation in education as the law of the land. Tennessee schools would remain segregated well into the twentieth century.⁶

By 1901, sixty-nine percent of white Tennesseans were enrolled in school, a marked increase from previous years. School funding, however, continued to lag behind. White and Black schools in rural areas struggled to

⁴ Rael, *Images of America: Around Lynchburg*, pg. 8; “Moore County,” *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, October 8, 2017.

⁵ Cynthia Griggs Fleming, “Elementary and Secondary Education,” *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, Tennessee Historical Society, October 8, 2017.

⁶ Fleming, “Elementary and Secondary Education,” *Tennessee Encyclopedia*; Mary S. Hoffschwelle, “Public Education in Tennessee,” *Trials, Triumphs, and Transformation: Tennessean’s Search for Citizenship, Community and Opportunity*, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, 2014, <https://dsi.mtsu.edu/trials/hoffschwelle>. The segregation of Tennessee schools had long reaching consequences for African American students. Black schools were critically underfunded and often received very little support in comparison to white schools. This issue was especially prevalent for rural Black schools in poor counties. Despite these challenges, Black communities came together to fund, build, and supply schools for their own. For more information on Black schools in Tennessee, see Mary S. Hoffschwelle, *The Rosenwald Schools of the American South* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006) and Jimmie Lewis Franklin, “Civil Rights Movement,” *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, Tennessee Historical Society, 2017.

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receive the money they needed to operate, maintain, and supply the school. They were largely primary schools (very few opportunities existed for students to attend secondary school during this period) and only met a few months out of the year to accommodate the overwhelmingly agricultural lifestyle of the students' families. It would not be until an act by the General Assembly in 1899 that counties were required to establish a secondary school facility.⁷ The State passed the General Education Act of 1909 to help alleviate funding shortages. The act set aside one-quarter of the state's gross revenue for public education, sixty-one percent of which would be allocated to counties on the basis of their total scholastic population. The remainder went to a fund to ensure each county could provide a universal school length term, regardless of the tax revenue generated.⁸ Other improvements came with legislation passed in 1907 and 1917 that replaced district school directors with county school boards, enacted a compulsory education bill, and required teacher certification.⁹

Tennessee's public school system faced a major setback with the arrival of the Great Depression in the 1930s. To compensate, state and local officials partnered with local communities and outside philanthropies to ensure schools continued to operate. At the same time, lobbyists fought to ensure that public education remained in the state budget. New Deal organizations, like the Public Works Administration (PWA), Works Progress Administration (WPA), and National Youth Administration (NYA), also helped build new schools and conducted limited repairs on existing ones. Clearly public education had become an important part of the services Tennessee should offer its citizens. World War II further underscored the importance of education in the eyes of both lawmakers and Tennesseans. State curriculums required discussions of such topics as freedom, democracy, and civic responsibility.¹⁰ At the same time, the Civil Rights Movement emphasized the unjust nature of segregation, in school and society. The Supreme Court outlawed racial segregation in United States public schools on May 17, 1954, following the landmark case *Brown v. Board of Education*. Tennessee schools began integrating shortly thereafter. Unlike other Southern states, Tennessee did not witness the same level of public violence in response to orders to integrate, though it was not completely absent.¹¹

Education in Moore County largely followed these larger state trends. Much like the rest of the state, the earliest settlers in the county lacked access to a public education system and thus had two options for educating their children: parents could teach their own children or enroll them in a private subscription school taught by professionally trained educators. Because many families relied on their children to complete agricultural tasks necessary for the family to survive, a majority of children during this early period did not receive a complete education. Further, the cost of private subscription schools made attaining an education even harder for those families inclined to prioritize education over other work. The end result was an environment in which only children from well-to-do families received a substantial education in Moore County.¹²

⁷ Fleming, "Elementary and Secondary Education," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*. The same act also empowered counties to levy special school taxes for the establishment of said secondary school.

⁸ Hoffschwelle, "Public Education in Tennessee," *Trials, Triumphs, and Transformation*.

⁹ Paul H. Bergeron, et. al., *Tennesseans and Their History* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2007), pg. 224.

¹⁰ Hoffschwelle, "Public Education in Tennessee," *Trials, Triumphs, and Transformation*.

¹¹ Fleming, "Elementary and Secondary Education," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*

¹² Rael, *Images of America: Around Lynchburg*, pg. 59; Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Moore County Tennessee 1871-2004* (Marceline: Walsworth Publishing Company, 2005), pg. 63.

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Smaller academies and an intermediate school system sponsored by the State arrived in the mid-nineteenth century. The first known academy was the Lynchburg Academy, built in 1856 and enlarged in 1866. It was later renamed the Lynchburg Male and Female Institute and was rechartered by the Tennessee General Assembly on January 24, 1870. T.S. Dance, D.B. Holt, E.H. Dance, M.N. Moore, and J.A. Silvertooth were charter members of the organization. The building (no longer extant) was described as “large and commodious” and boasted two teachers and an average attendance of eighty to one hundred students. School years consisted of two five-month sessions.¹³ Lynchburg’s second major educational institution came less than twenty-years later. The Lynchburg Normal School was chartered on June 25, 1885, and opened two months later in August.¹⁴ Forty-five pupils attended the school and received instruction from two teachers during a ten-month school year. Accounts described the School as possessing “first class educational facilities” and was the “rival” of the Institute.¹⁵

A wave of new rural schools cropped up in the years after the founding of the Institute and Normal School. Twenty-five white and four Black schools were present in the county by 1886. Generally, most of the county’s civil districts possessed at least one white school, though a few had two.¹⁶ Most of the early rural schools did not possess the same features that defined their counterparts in the county seat. Rural schools relied on wells for their water, outdoor privies for their bathrooms, and pot belly stoves for heating. More than a few did not have sanitary drinking water. The schools were frequently underfunded, despite receiving money from both the state and county for operation. Students had to pay for their own textbooks, and teachers were paid twenty-five dollars per month in 1900. Terms generally only lasted three months, and many did not offer high school-level courses.¹⁷

The 1886 Moore County Superintendent’s Report captures information about the school system towards the end of the nineteenth century. Despite the expansion of schools in rural communities, overall attendance remained low. The scholastic population of the county (ages 6 to 21) numbered 1,938 white students, and 244 Black students. Of those, 1,357 white and 138 Black children were enrolled in a school. Daily logs show only 924 white and 32 Black children attended school regularly, demonstrating that of the total population of students that could potentially attend school, just under 48 percent of white and roughly 57 percent of Black students attended school on a regular basis.¹⁸

From 1880-1951, the number of rural schools present in Moore County steadily decreased while the total number of students that attended the remaining schools/school districts increased. Of the thirty schools identified (both white and Black) in available sources, four closed before 1951. An additional three closed

¹³ Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Monroe County Tennessee*, pg. 63.

¹⁴ Charter members include John D. Tolley, J.T. Motlow, T.J. Eaton, J.N. Taylor, C.M. Wilson, E.H. Dance, E.Y. Soloman, and M.N. Parks. The principal was T.M. Estill and Laura L. Motlow taught music.

¹⁵ Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Monroe County Tennessee*, pg. 63.

¹⁶ Research did not uncover a definitive list of schools in the county. However, Moore County Heritage Book Committee’s *The Heritage of Moore County Tennessee, 1871-2004* and Jillian Rael’s *Images of America: Around Lynchburg* identify a large number of schools and provide some information on their construction date, facilities, student population, and some closing dates. This nomination refers to some of them in the narrative.

¹⁷ Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Monroe County Tennessee*, pg. 64.

¹⁸ Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Monroe County Tennessee*, pg. 64.

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between 1962-1972. A closing date for a further twenty-three could not be located, though it would stand to reason that they likely closed during the same time period, as a majority were described as small one-room schoolhouses with minimal attendance. This was a prominent trend in both Tennessee and across the nation. Indeed, a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics reveals that the national student to school district ratio increased from 217 in 1939 to 300 by 1950. This ratio increased exponentially beginning in the 1970s when school consolidation became a matter of policy rather than practicality. The decline of school numbers was due in large part to the limited facilities and funding to which most districts had access. By reducing the number of schools a district had to fund and staff, the overall quality of the remaining schools could be improved. Likewise, consolidating multiple districts frequently accomplished the same goal. The legacy of this movement remains contentious, but there can be little doubt that it transformed the growing education system into the one that we recognize today.¹⁹

It was within this broader context of both the expansion of access to education and the consolidation of small rural schools into more substantial facilities that the Hurdlow School was completed in 1949. At the time of its construction, the Hurdlow School was a thoroughly modern building and represented an investment in the community's education above, and beyond, the educational facilities that preceded it. The construction of the school also aligned with the consolidation of smaller schools nearby into this more substantial school building. Its concrete block construction, something taken for granted in the twenty-first century, was an immediate departure from traditional wood frame schoolhouses and a signifier of the modern nature of the school. First used at the turn of the twentieth-century, concrete blocks rapidly became the construction material of choice for public work projects by the 1930s due to their low cost and resiliency compared to other construction materials like wood.²⁰ Hurdlow School also boasted access to clean water that serviced the building's indoor restrooms, water fountains, and modern cafeteria. Electricity powered the kitchen's stove and refrigerator, in addition to lights throughout the school and any appliances the school or community needed, like projectors or fans. Each room had access to large windows for ventilation, and during the winter months a boiler room in the basement and a series of pipes heated the small school building. A semi-circular gravel driveway accessed the school. To the rear (northeast) of the school, students could take advantage of a baseball field, two basketball goals, seesaws, a six-seater swing, monkey bars, and two outdoor restrooms.²¹ For a small rural community like Hurdlow, the modern conveniences the school offered turned the property into the center for educational and community life.

¹⁹ Ed Young and Harry A. Green, "School System Consolidation," Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, Number 8, November 2005, https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tacir/documents/school_consolidation.pdf, pg. 3. The document goes on to explain many of the arguments for, and against, the gradual school consolidation process. Proponents of the pre-consolidation system point to the short commute time to school, the comradery that came from knowing your classmates and teachers as community members, and the pride that communities often felt in their small schools. Others point to the sub-par facilities, lack of access to specialized courses and educational equipment, and the frequently understaffed faculty as weaknesses of pre-consolidation education.

²⁰ "A short history of the cinder block," Trowel Trades Inc, https://troweltrades.net/2023/06/06/a-short-history-of-the-cinder-block/?srsltid=AfmBOorSwJXZBfYUVzCAE7XnVICgnDaIaRyvkwTHWZSBkp_mzoja0bQX, accessed 10/29/2024; Mike Jackson, "Block by Block: The History of CMUs, a Construction Staple," Architect, https://www.architectmagazine.com/technology/block-by-block-the-history-of-cmus-a-construction-staple_o, accessed 10/29/2024; J.P. Hall, "The early developmental history of concrete block in America," (master's thesis, Ball State University, 2009).

²¹ Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Monroe County Tennessee*, pg. 67.

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Students were taught courses in math, reading, science, and English in a single large room divided by a wood partition door. The “Little Room” accommodated grades one through four, and the “Big Room” taught grades five through eight. Each classroom had six rows of desks and featured their own chalk boards. A teacher was assigned to each grade group. The day began with the entire study body gathered around the flagpole on the school grounds where they recited the Pledge of Allegiance and said a daily prayer. Records indicate that attendance at the school was relatively high. A 1950-1951 annual yearbook shows forty-seven students in attendance for that school year.²² Further, the community of Hurdlow comprised all of the Fifth Civil District and portions of the Third and Fourth. From its opening in 1949 to its closure in 1962, the school taught a whole generation of students from a large swathe of Moore County.²³ Indeed, former student Mrs. Trixie Harrison remembered that “at Hurdlow School, not only were we taught a sound basic education, but we were also taught to love and respect our God, our Nation, our families, and our community.”²⁴

Hurdlow School offered its students a wide variety of clubs and extracurricular opportunities that made extensive use of its modern facilities. Students played sports like baseball and basketball on the school grounds, which also served a variety of other athletic and physical fitness activities. Hurdlow School also served as the headquarters for the student 4-H Club, one of the largest and most active clubs offered to students. Boys enrolled in the club raised corn, tobacco, potatoes, gardens, swine, poultry and beef cattle, which they showed at 4-H competitions, while girls participated in events like dress making. The Hurdlow girls went on to win first and second place in the broader regional dress making contest, earning them a final’s appearance in Chattanooga. All the 4-H students also helped with the painting and maintenance of the school.²⁵

When classes and student extracurricular activities ended, the building transformed into the center for Hurdlow community life. For example, every Wednesday the building became a movie theatre. A member of the community brought a movie projector and film reels to the school. Admission was ten cents and viewers were treated to a “short subject” or main feature (usually a Western) and a serial show. Educational movies were also offered to the community once a month free of charge. These movies generally focused on progressive farming subjects and civic responsibility and engagement. For example, from 1950-1951, movies on raising and processing quail, proper grazing techniques for cattle, and tobacco care and harvesting were shown at the school. A movie on the importance of voting and local elections was also shown alongside a movie on vacationing spots in Tennessee. Finally, some monthly educational movie nights were substituted with guest lecturers who spoke to the community about similar subjects. In March 1951, Paul Freeman of the Farmer’s Club spoke to a crowd about the tenants of community improvement. Four months later, the school welcomed the Duck River Electric Membership and the University of Tennessee Extension Service to talk about rural electrification and progressive farming techniques. They even hosted other communities to come talk about their community improvement projects and activities, such as the Lexie Cross Roads Community in August.²⁶

²² Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Monroe County Tennessee*, pg. 67.

²³ “Hurdlow Named for Schoolmarm,” *The Moore County News*, Lynchburg, Tennessee, July 1, 1971.

²⁴ Hurdlow Community Improvement Club, “Hurdlow Community Scrapbook, 1950-1951,” Collection of Erin Pierce.

²⁵ Hurdlow Community Improvement Club, “Hurdlow Community Scrapbook, 1950-1951,” Collection of Erin Pierce.

²⁶ Hurdlow Community Improvement Club, “Hurdlow Community Scrapbook, 1950-1951,” Collection of Erin Pierce.

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It is important to note that the school's role as a community education center extended beyond movies. One of the most impactful programs the school offered was an adult school offered to the Hurdlow community and hosted at the Hurdlow School. The adult school met twice a month after work and school hours. Educational courses focused on practical subjects and civic engagement. Parliamentary procedure, overviews on local, state, and national government, and health and first aid were some of the courses offered to Hurdlow community adults. Though the adult school did not offer a General Education Degree (GED) upon completion of the courses like modern programs, such classes were an invaluable enrichment opportunity for rural people who did not have access to the same level of education growing up as their children did. In return, the adult community of Hurdlow took it upon themselves to repair and provide maintenance for the building. Indeed, during the winter, men of the community operated and fueled the furnace of the school because the county could not afford to provide a janitor.²⁷

The modern facilities offered by the school, combined with the flexible space collectively offered by the "Big" and "Little" rooms, made the Hurdlow School the ideal place for hosting performance art shows or related cultural enrichment events. School pageants, skits, musicals, visiting gospel quartets, and folk dancing, led by Mr. and Mrs. W.M. Tolley (county agent and wife), all took place on the accommodating main stage of the Hurdlow School.²⁸ The Hurdlow Community Chorus met every second Saturday night of the month at the Hurdlow School to sing, and attendance from the community was always high.²⁹ A newspaper article covering a gathering at Hurdlow School demonstrated the usage of the school for community events. The article reported that the Hurdlow Home and Community Club hosted their April meeting at the school. Before the meeting, students enrolled at the school gave a musical program to the club members. After the conclusion of the club's business, the students and teachers invited club members to the cafeteria to see displays of student work, which were hung on the various chalk boards and walls of the school. The cafeteria then prepared for the club "delicious" punch and cookies.³⁰ Notable visitors to the community were also presented at the Hurdlow School. Such visitors included Senator Albert Gore, Tennessee Governor Frank Clement, and John McDonald of WSM radio.³¹

Community fundraising events for all of the various Hurdlow clubs, groups, and institutions were also held at the Hurdlow School. This included ice cream suppers, bingo games, and cake walks.³² One of the larger events hosted at the school was the Farmer-Banker Rally on July 10, 1952. Three-hundred farmers, farm leaders, bankers, and businessmen from two-dozen counties (including Wayne, Lawrence, Maury, Rutherford, Cannon, Marshall, Giles, Lincoln, Franklin, Coffee, Grundy, and Bedford) all gathered on the grounds of Hurdlow School. The cafeteria served more than 305 plates of food. Ninety-six total community clubs and fifty banking institutions were represented. During the rally, the accomplishments of the Hurdlow community were presented to those gathered. Discussions on enlarging the Hurdlow School grounds were also discussed.

²⁷ Hurdlow Community Improvement Club, "Hurdlow Community Scrapbook, 1950-1951," Collection of Erin Pierce.

²⁸ Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Monroe County Tennessee*, pg. 67.

²⁹ Hurdlow Community Improvement Club, "Hurdlow Community Scrapbook, 1954," Collection of Erin Pierce.

³⁰ "Hurdlow News: The Hurdlow Home and Community Club met Tuesday night April 24," Newspaper Clipping, Collection of Erin Pierce.

³¹ Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Monroe County Tennessee*, pg. 67.

³² Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Monroe County Tennessee*, pg. 67.

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Though this enlargement likely did not come to fruition, the revenue generated by the rally certainly buoyed the community and funded further efforts towards its improvement.³³

Finally, the new Hurdlow School quickly became synonymous with important community events like the annual fish fry and community baseball. Each of the surrounding Moore County communities formed their own men’s baseball teams. These teams would then play each other each Sunday during the summer. The well-kept baseball field of the Hurdlow School, in combination with its modern facilities, made it the primary place for these baseball games to take place, though teams did play at other community facilities. Candy and cold drinks were sold at the baseball games to visitors, and many remember fondly “burning to a crisp” watching the weekly baseball tradition in the field behind the Hurdlow School.³⁴ In August, the Hurdlow School grounds geared up for the annual community fish fry. Families gathered at the Elk River to harvest fish of appropriate size for the fish fry. The community then prepared the fish and other food items on the Hurdlow School grounds. Over sixty families in the area participated, and the fish fry regularly served 350 community members each August. Much like baseball, the fish fry was considered the “highlight” of the summer and was one of the most anticipated community events of the year.³⁵

Despite the efforts of community club members, the population of the Hurdlow community decreased throughout the 1950s and 1960s as families left rural areas for better paying jobs in nearby Lynchburg and towns in surrounding counties. This population decrease, combined with the broader trend of school consolidation in the county during this same period, resulted in the closure of the Hurdlow School in 1962.³⁶ Any remaining students were then bused to Lynchburg for school.³⁷ There is not much information on the period following its closure, but available records suggest that it was sold in 1978 to a new owner, and that from its closure in 1962 to its acquisition in 1978 the building did not receive the same level of use as it did in the years preceding it. At the conclusion of the article covering the April Community Club meeting, the writer implored the reader to “keep awake Hurdlow and show not only Moore County but Middle Tennessee that we are not only a dot on the map.” There can be little doubt that from 1949-1962, the Hurdlow School played an important role in the community’s efforts to keep awake the civic, educational, social, and cultural life of the Hurdlow community.

³³ Hurdlow Community Improvement Club, “Hurdlow Community Scrapbook, 1950-1951,” Collection of Erin Pierce.

³⁴ Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Monroe County Tennessee*, pg. 67.

³⁵ Moore County Heritage Book Committee, *The Heritage of Monroe County Tennessee*, pg. 67.

³⁶ Of the rural schools identified earlier in the nomination that we have closure dates for, three closed in the 1950s, two closed in the 1960s, and one remaining school closed in the 1970s.

³⁷ “Hurdlow School,” Newspaper Clipping, Collection of Erin Pierce.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):		Primary location of additional data:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	X	State Historic Preservation Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously listed in the National Register		Other State agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously determined eligible by the National Register		Federal agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	designated a National Historic Landmark		Local government
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #		University
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #		Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository:	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A			

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4 **USGS Quadrangle** Lois Quadrangle (2019)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

1. Latitude:	35.178867	Longitude:	-86.339338
2. Latitude:	35.179676	Longitude:	-86.338423
3. Latitude:	35.178683	Longitude:	-86.337723
4. Latitude:	35.177898	Longitude:	-86.338643

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is roughly diamond shaped. The nominated property boundaries correspond with the attached Boundary Map.

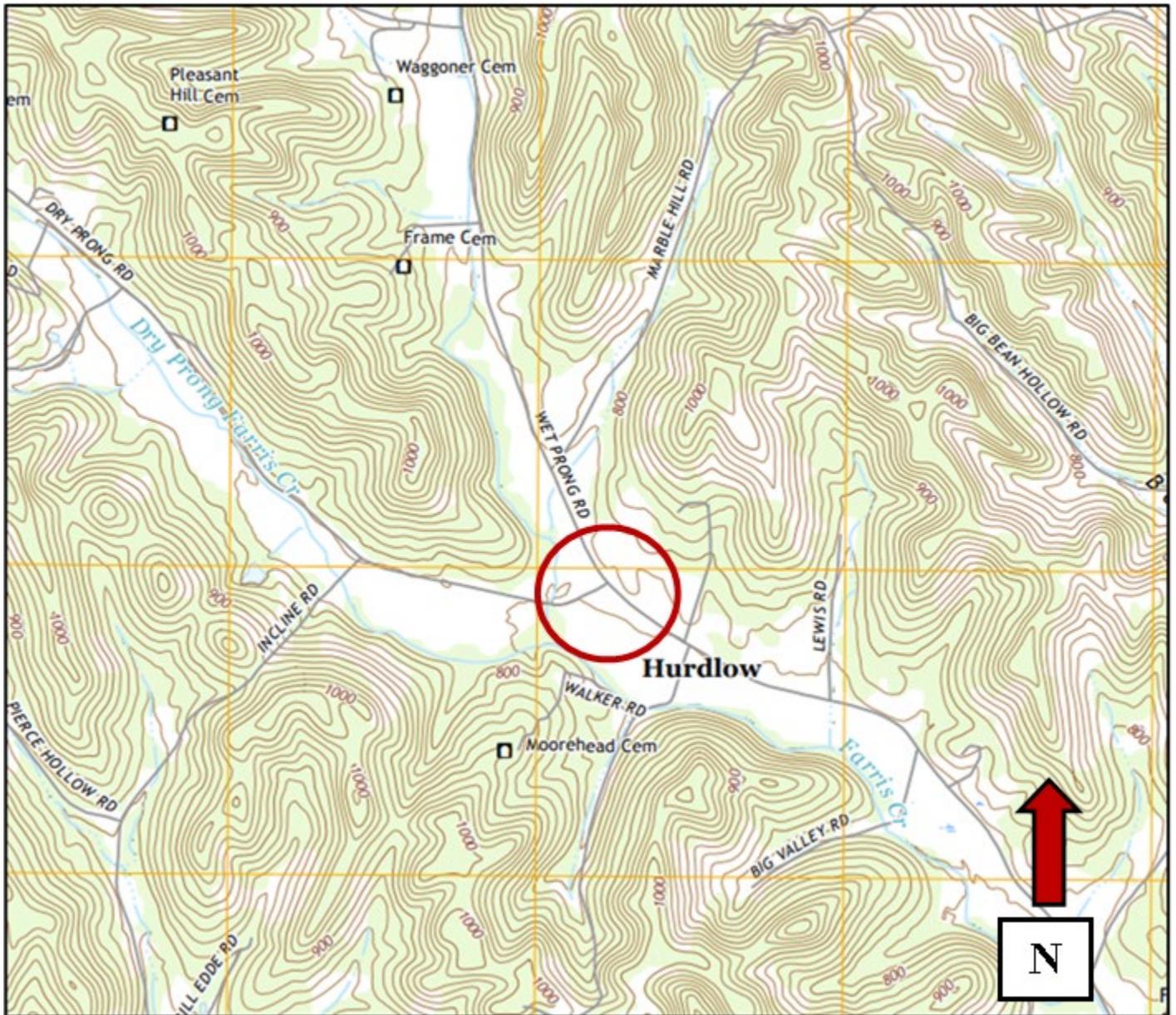
Boundary Justification

These boundaries encompass all historic resources known to be associated with the nominated building, including the yard surrounding the building, flagpole, and swing set.

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USGS Topographic Map

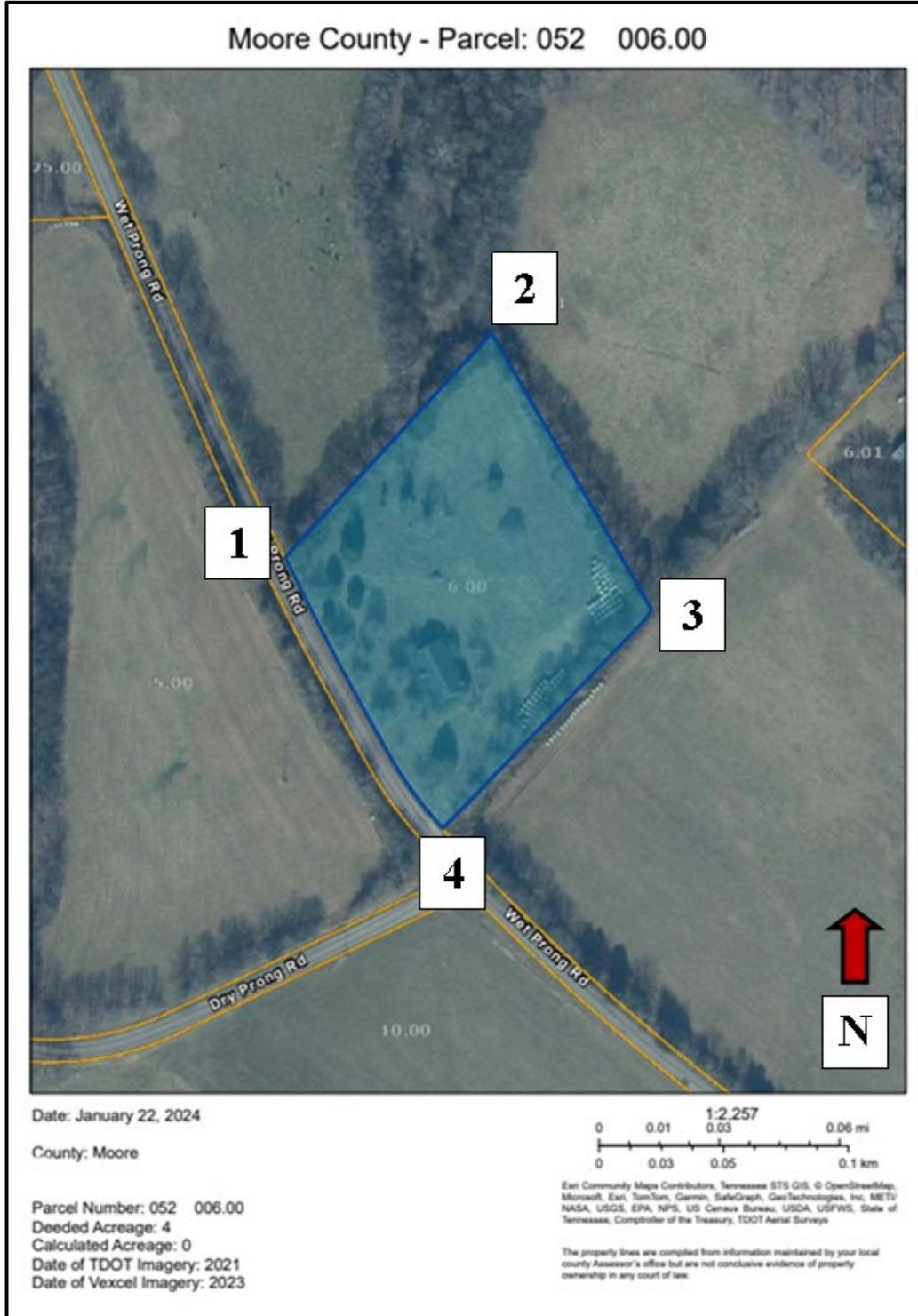


Red circle indicates location of Hurdlow School. Scale is 1:24,000. Map courtesy of the United States Geological Survey, 2019

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Boundary Map



Blue shaded area indicates National Register boundaries. Each number corresponds with boundary latitude and longitude points. Image courtesy of Tennessee Property Viewer, 2024.

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11. Form Prepared By

Name Erin Pierce Hill, Jillian Rael, & J. Ethan Holden

Organization Owner / Historian / Tennessee Historical Commission

Street & Number PO Box 403 Date 01/31/2025

City or Town Lynchburg Telephone 931-307-4220

E-mail epierce.11@live.com; jhistoryfinder@gmail.com; State TN Zip Code 37352
ethan.holden@tn.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent indicating the property's location.
- **Photographs:** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints. Photos should be submitted separately in a JPEG or TIFF format. Do not embed these photographs into the form)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. can be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps. They can also be embedded in the Section 7 or 8 narratives)

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 listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Photo Log

Name of Property: Hurdlow School
City or Vicinity: Lynchburg
County: Moore County State: Tennessee
Photographer: Rebecca Schmitt
Date Photographed: July 10, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 28. Façade and Flagpole (West Elevation). Photographer facing northeast.
- 2 of 28. West and South Elevations. Photographer facing north.
- 3 of 28. South Elevation. Photographer facing northwest.
- 4 of 28. South and West Elevations. Photographer facing northwest.
- 5 of 28. North and East Elevations. Photographer facing southwest.
- 6 of 28. North Elevation. Photographer facing southeast.
- 7 of 28. Swing set Frame. Photographer facing northeast.
- 8 of 28. West Façade Entrance Details. Photographer facing east.
- 9 of 28. West Façade Entrance Details. Photographer facing northeast.
- 10 of 28. Foyer, Towards Classrooms. Photographer facing northeast.
- 11 of 28. Cafeteria. Photographer facing south.
- 12 of 28. Cafeteria. Photographer facing north.
- 13 of 28. Pantry. Photographer facing north.
- 14 of 28. Stage. Photographer facing east.
- 15 of 28. Stage. Photographer facing south.
- 16 of 28. "Big Room," Towards "Little Room" and Folding Doors. Photographer facing northwest.
- 17 of 28. "Big Room" Window Openings. Photographer facing east.
- 18 of 28. "Big Room" West Wall. Photographer facing northwest.

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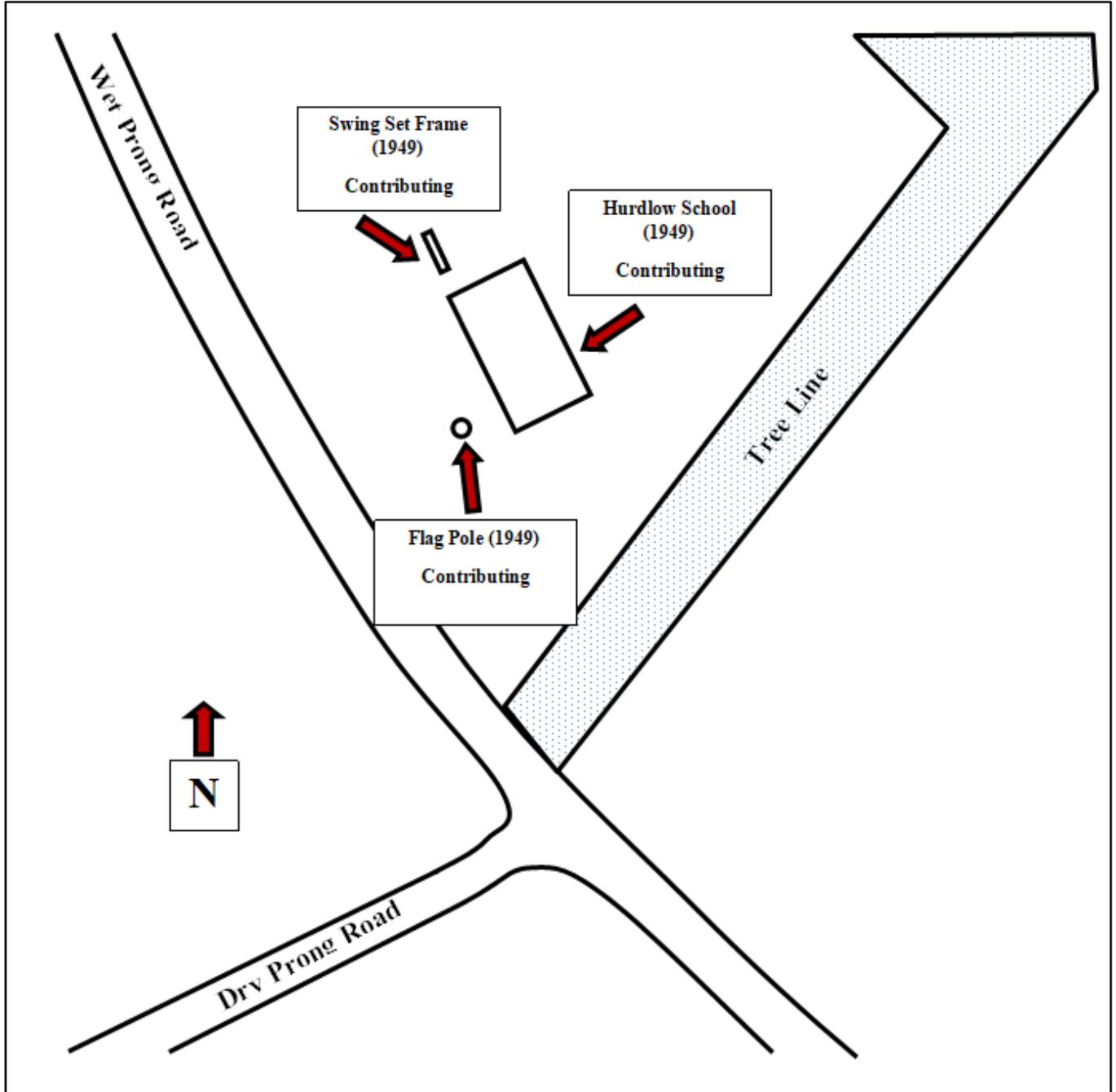
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- 19 of 28. "Big Room" Towards Stage. Photographer facing southeast.
- 20 of 28. "Little Room." Photographer facing northeast.
- 21 of 28. "Little Room" Window Openings. Photographer facing northeast.
- 22 of 28. "Little Room" Entrances. Photographer facing northwest.
- 23 of 28. "Little Room" Towards "Big Room." Photographer facing south.
- 24 of 28. Hallway, Towards Foyer. Photographer facing southwest.
- 25 of 28. Restroom. Photographer facing northwest.
- 26 of 28. Former Restroom. Photographer facing northwest.
- 27 of 28. Basement Entrance. Photographer facing west.
- 28 of 28. Basement Staircase. Photographer facing northeast.

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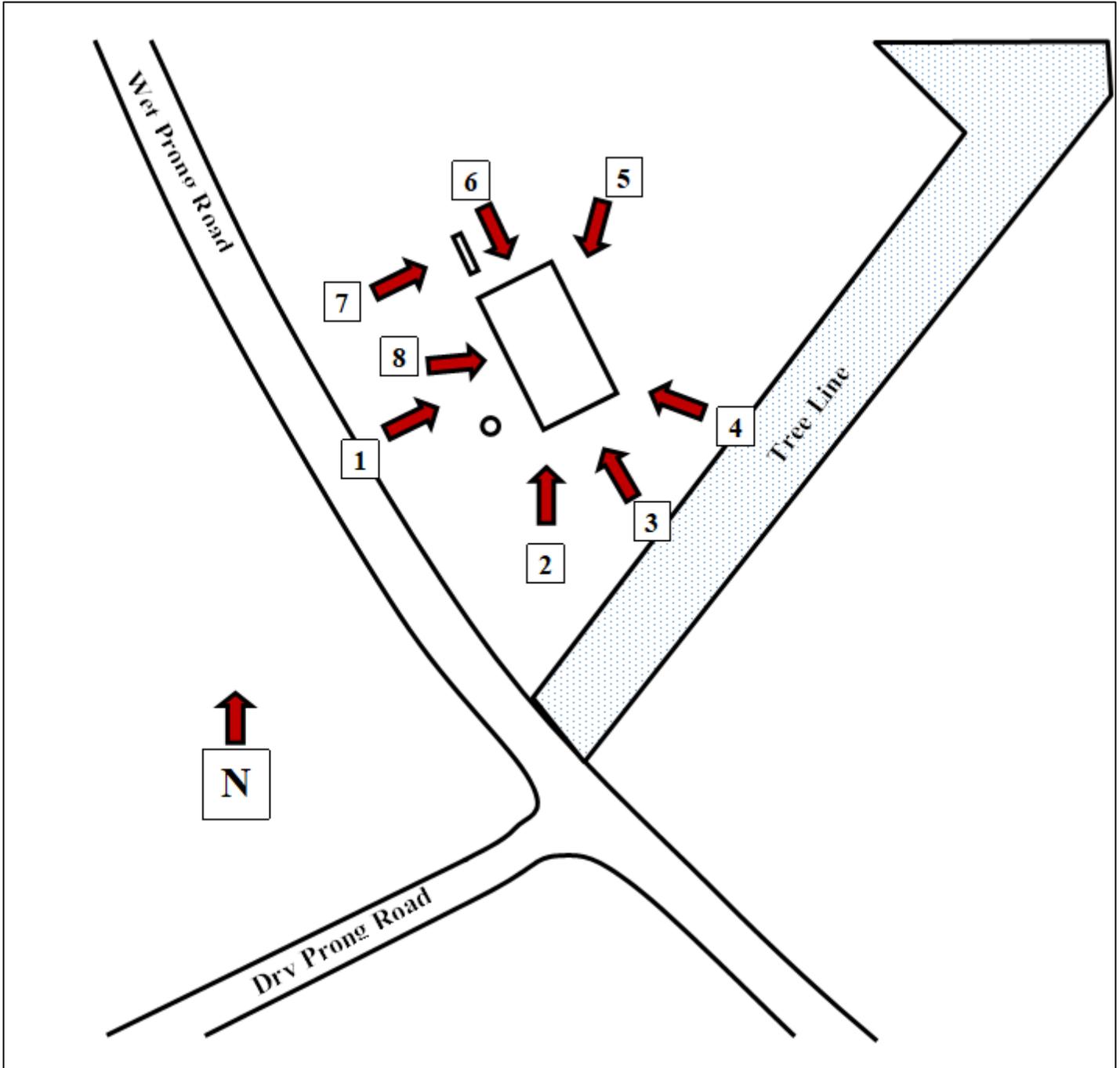
Site Plan, Unkeyed (Not to Scale)



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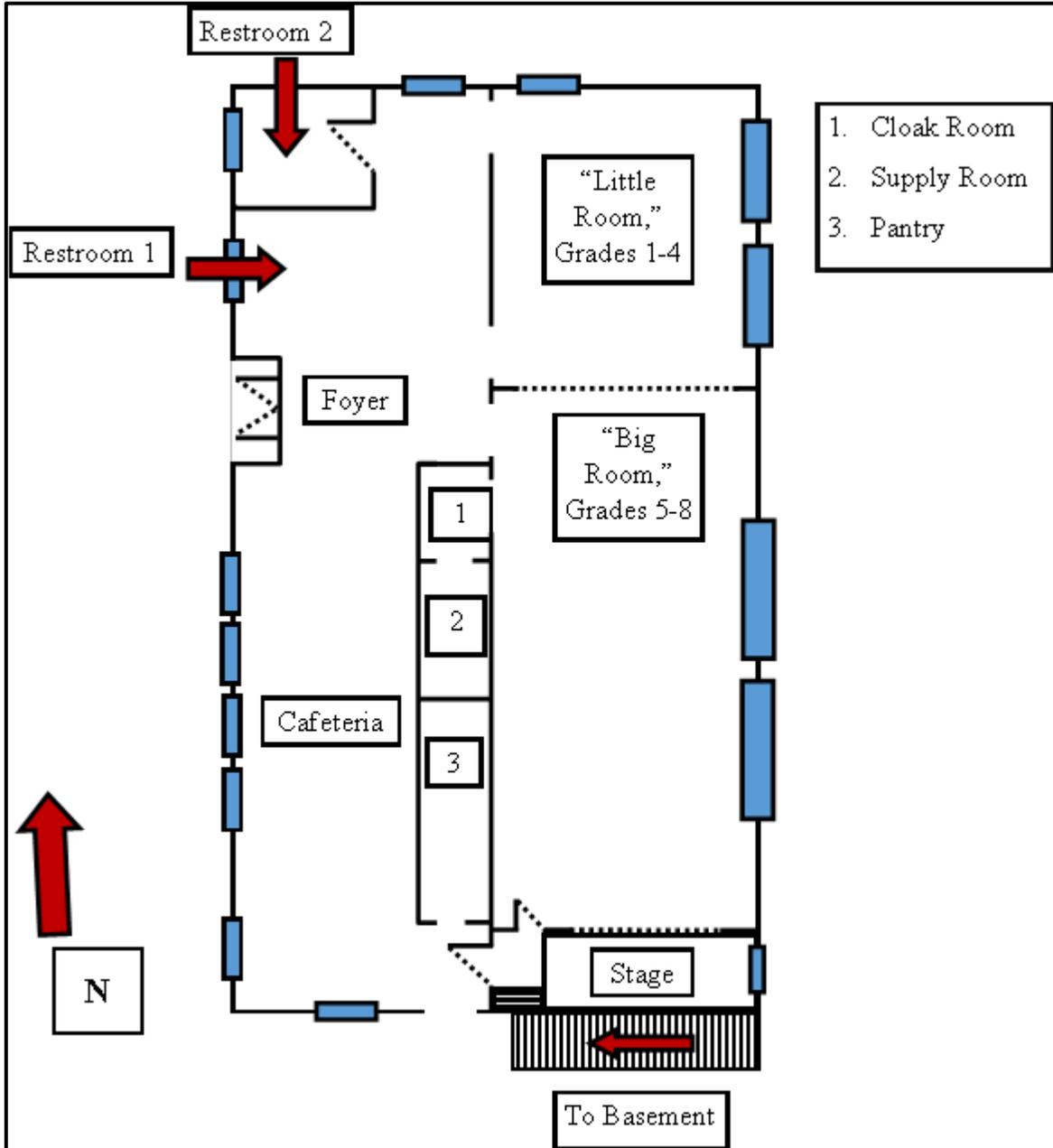
Site Plan, Keyed (Not to Scale)



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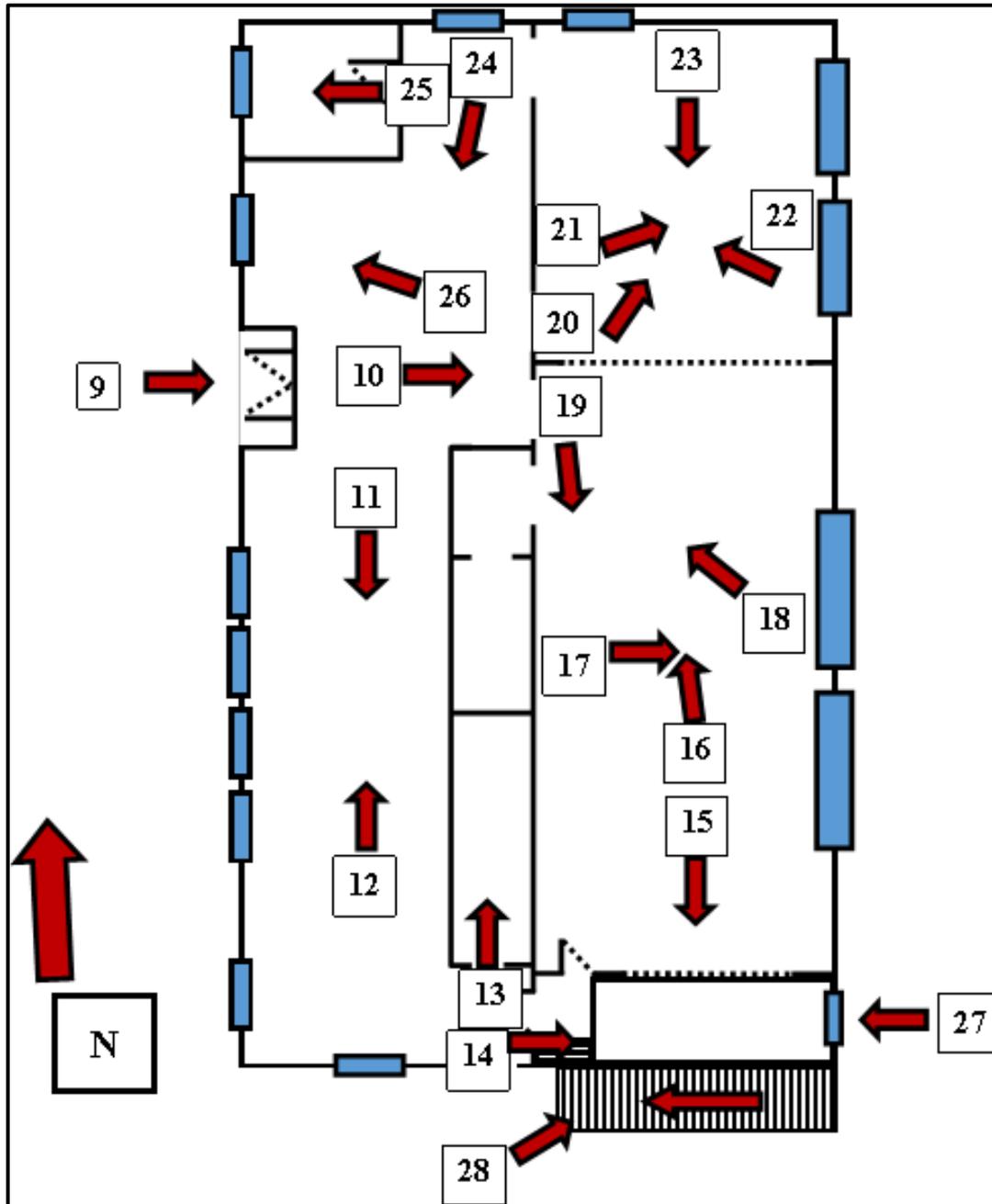
Floor Plan, Unkeyed (Not to Scale)



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Floor Plan, Keyed (Not to Scale)



Property Owner(s):

(This information will not be submitted to the National Park Service, but will remain on file at the Tennessee Historical Commission)

Name Pam Pierce & Erin Hill

Street & Number PO Box 403 Telephone 931-307-4220

City or Town Lynchburg State/Zip 37352

**HURDLOW SCHOOL
LYNCHBURG, MOORE COUNTY, TENNESSEE**



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LYNCHBURG, MOORE COUNTY, TENNESSEE



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