

Appendix B: Courthouse Square Historic District – Detailed Description and Inventory

Sections in this Appendix

Description

Significance

Inventory of Properties

Information in this Appendix was taken from the National Register of Historic Places Inventory and Nomination Form for the Courthouse Square Historic District.

Description

The Courthouse Square Historic District vividly reflects the origins and development of the mid-nineteenth century courthouse town, which expanded and flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The District centers upon and derives its distinctive character from the courthouse square. Around the square is a dense streetscape of late 19th and early 20th century masonry commercial buildings unified by their one to three-story scale, rhythmic windows, and ornamental brickwork. Extending out from the square, axial and secondary streets are lined principally by commercial buildings for one, two, or three blocks before changing to mixed, residential, or parking use. Although the commercial fabric dominates the district, there is an important sprinkling of other types of buildings: A small number of antebellum domestic buildings dating from the mid-19th century founding of the town; a few elaborately adorned late 19th century residences expressive of industrial wealth and several simpler dwellings; and key institutional buildings of the early 20th century, reflecting the growing town's prosperity and ambitions. To the west of the district's core is an intact, predominantly late 19th century area consisting of well-preserved late nineteenth century houses along West Elm Street, the town's best surviving residential thoroughfare, and the exceptionally fine Graham Presbyterian Church. The boundaries have been drawn to focus on the central core commercial/government West Elm Street and to encompass the contiguous and intact key institutional and residential buildings. They exclude recent commercial and institutional, construction and parking lots that surround the district.



Graham Presbyterian Church

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Plan and Courthouse Square

The courthouse town, an expression of the primacy of county government in North Carolina, is one of the state's most important types of communities. Graham, laid out as the courthouse Municipality of Alamance County in 1849, has remained a small community, for nearby Burlington siphoned off commercial development. Thus Graham embodies the importance of the courthouse in unmistakable



terms, for the centrality of the courthouse square and the surviving frame of commercial fabric stand intact.

Graham, laid out by a local surveyor, Silas Lane, follows the Lancaster square plan—one of three types of plans seen in North Carolina courthouse towns. A quarter of the state’s one hundred county seats have a simpler scheme, with a courthouse square on a primary intersection. Some have no defined courthouse square. Only a few have the Lancaster square plan, a plan that is the most dramatic in its visual impact and also the least resistant to traffic congestion by virtue of its being in the road. Named after its early use at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the plan features a large square at the meeting of the main streets, created by notching out the corners of the adjacent blocks. In North Carolina, this scheme survives in only a few towns, including Pittsboro, Whiteville, Carthage, Mocksville, Lincolnton, and of course Graham. The square in Graham is among the most emphatic examples, principally because of the quality and intactness of the block faces that frame the square and reinforce vertically the horizontal plan. Commercial buildings surround the notched-out square and turn the corners to the axial streets—Main running north-south and Elm running east-west. Commercial and residential buildings line these axes and the secondary streets.



Alamance County Courthouse

Antebellum Survivors

Graham’s courthouse square is occupied by a handsome, conservative Neoclassical Revival courthouse erected in the 1920s. The original courthouse begun in 1849 was a simple back structure, probably enriched with Greek Revival or Italianate detail. It was altered over the years and eventually razed for the present building. But probably its character, along with the original town plan, influenced building in the community in its early years. There are some vestiges of the original building period surviving. They reflect the simple rectangular forms and mid nineteenth century pattern book details that probably appeared in the courthouse.

Although altered, both the Harden House and the Hunter House are identifiable as remnants of the early building era. Both are two-story frame dwellings with the prevalent central passage plan, shallow roofline, and plain, vaguely Greek Revival woodwork



Harden House



Hunter House



typical of the period. The Harden House is the more ambitious and intact of the two. It reflects pattern book influences and a general Italianate flavor in its paired windows, hip roof, and simple curved brackets. Comparison with a key rural house is noteworthy and suggestive. In 1849, local industrialist E.M. Holt employed Eli Denny, a local builder, to erect a country villa after designs by New York architect A.J. Davis—either copying a Davis scheme in the *Horticulturalist* or obtaining a custom design from Davis directly. In that same year, Denny and other men erected the new courthouse in Graham. Resemblances between the simple Italianate details of the Harden House and the Holt Villa, particularly the simple Davis-esque brackets, suggest the possibility of a connection.

Other antebellum survivors in the district include several commercial buildings, which occupy key locations and have been subjected to various degrees of alteration. The most intact and imposing is the Nicks Store, sited on a corner of the square. Its fine, plain brickwork, unpretentious woodwork, and handsome porch recall the character of commercial building in the town’s antebellum years. Altered but important for its age and location is the Scott Store, also on a corner of the square. It is a stuccoed two-story masonry building of the 1850s, with surviving elements of corbel cornice. Less recognizable is the antebellum origin of the small brick building that survives as a fragment of the once sprawling Trollinger Hotel; only the massive masonry walls and simple Greek Revival interior woodwork recall its early date.

Late Nineteenth Century Architecture

In contrast to the fragmentary character of Graham’s antebellum buildings, the post-Civil War growth period left a generous and diverse heritage. Domestic and commercial architecture alike embody the vigor and eclecticism of the period.



Nicks Store



Scott Store



Former Trollinger Hotel



Late Nineteenth Century Dwellings

Standing on generous lots on the axial and secondary streets, and clustered in a group on West Elm Street, are several key examples of late 19th century domestic architecture. Many of them reflect the growing wealth of the locally dominant Holt family and the family's desires for impressively stylish if not fabulously costly architecture.

The late Italianate style, more ornate than the antebellum Italianate mode, appeared in several dwellings. The most notable surviving example is the Captain James White House, erected in 1871 for a daughter and son-in-law of industrialist E.M. Holt. The cross-gable roof, bracketed eaves, and projecting entrance bay faintly recall the elder Holt's Davis-inspired villa and perhaps a lasting interest in the mode. Several outbuildings stand on the spacious, lushly shaded lot. A later example of the family's predilection for the Italianate is the 1885 McBride Holt House, an L-shaped frame house with bracketed eaves, bay windows, and crisp detail.



Captain James White House, now the Alamance County Arts Council

Other two-story frame houses repeated the familiar L-shaped or central hall plan plus an infusion of various other late nineteenth century styles and the increasing availability of mass-produced wooden ornament. The Captain J.N. Williamson is the most dramatic. The Second Empire style composition of towers, porches, and rich wooden decoration was also built for a daughter and son-in-law of E.M. Holt. Another stylish but basically conservative Holt family house is the Holt-Mebane-Ward House, built in 1892. The two-story central passage plan dwelling has a high cross-gable and hip-roof, bold bargeboards and kingpost ornament in the gables, and something of the flavor of the Queen Anne style. The contemporary Tate House built for merchant-developer A.B. Tate in 1894 is similar in scale and materials, but it has simpler wooden ornament combined with the shingled textures and cut-out corners of the Queen Anne style. There are a good number of simpler dwellings dating from this period as well. Typical is the small rental house built by Tate. It has a symmetrical plan, central front gable, and simple porch ornament. Other modest frame dwellings, ranging from utterly plain to modestly decorated, survive on axial and secondary streets, recalling the close physical relationship of residential development to commercial hub.

Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Commercial Architecture

The predominant historic fabric of the Graham District and one of its most important elements is the fine late nineteenth century and early twentieth century commercial architecture. The town grew rapidly in prosperity and ambitions. Like many North Carolina towns, its leaders and builders saw the permanence and quality of brick building as an important sign of urban progress. This coupled, with more money and the easier availability of brick, meant that thousands of brick commercial buildings rose throughout the towns of the urbanizing state to replace older frame buildings. In Graham, the quantity, cohesiveness, variety, and high quality of these buildings are especially outstanding.



The commercial buildings range in size from one to three stories and in extent from a single bay to the impressive nine-bay width of the Vestal Hotel. Their styles encompass a wide range of possibilities characteristic of the period: The bold arches of the commercial Italianate, the simple rhythm of rectangular windows, the imposing classical motifs reflecting the influence of the 1920 courthouse, notes of Art Deco modernity in the movie theatre and a few other examples, and other examples that combine current styles with vigorous brickwork detail. These buildings date from the immediate postwar period through the Depression, with the principal concentration probably dating from Mont-White Theatre, which retains its full program of street level as well as upper façade treatment to the more typical Wrike Drug Store, where street level alterations have occurred. But upper stories remain intact to buildings, such as the Green-McClure Furniture Building, where original fabric survives under a later skin, or the Graham Underwriters' Agency, where the condition of original fabric beneath plastic or metal front is dubious. The chief concentration of commercial architecture focuses on the square and extends for a good distance along North Main Street and shorter distances on West Harden and West Elm Streets.

Notable landmarks on the square include the massive Vestal Hotel with its long façade articulated by a central pavilion, arched windows, and the strong geometry of pilasters, cornices, and belt courses of corbelled brickwork. Neighboring the hotel and defining the northeast corner of the square is the Scott Building. It repeats the belt courses, pilasters, corbelled cornices, and arched windows, but here the brick mason incorporated yellow with red brick to emphasize the bold lines and create a vivid polychromy. The southeast corner of the square is dominated by the antebellum Nicks store and also contains a handsome later structure unified by arched windows and two-story scale. The southwest corner, like the southeast one, has a prominent antebellum corner building, but the others on the corner date from the later eras. The Holt-Nicholson Building is actually two buildings, fronted by a highly textured stone façade of a material seen on other early twentieth century buildings including the Fire



Vestal Hotel



Mont-White Theatre



Holt-Nicholson Building



Station. The most outstanding façade in this quadrant and one of the most elegant in the town is the National Bank of Alamance. It boasts a beautifully preserved combination of two eras: A dignified Italianate or Renaissance Revival upper façade with fine brickwork arches and pilasters, and a lower façade whose smooth stone classicism and stylized Ionic pilasters link it to the Neoclassical courthouse it overlooks. The fourth corner (northwest) is dominated by two powerful buildings. At the south corner stands the Paris Building, a three-story, eight-bay by six-bay structure. Simple rectangular openings at the upper levels are framed by broad corner pilasters that rise to a corbelled cornice. The north projecting corner is anchored by one of the most important structures in Graham, the three-story Patterson Building of 1898. A full program of Italianate commercial elegance survives in one of the corner bays, which is also framed by pilasters. This building combines with key buildings at all the projecting corners to form a strong frame for the courthouse square and bold corners to the axial streets that extend from the square. Each is vital as an anchor in the district, and each has the vigorous architectural character appropriate to its place in the town.



Paris Building

The other principal concentrations of commercial architecture extend north along Main Street and west along Harden and Elm Streets. Those on North Main Street are the most distinctive. The three-story Wrike Drug Store embodies a version of Italianate commercial architecture common in other towns but rare in Graham. A simple corbelled band outlines the façade, within which are shallow arched and rectangular windows. The roofline features a heavy metal bracketed cornice, in contrast to the brickwork cornices more standard in Graham. More expressive of Graham’s apparently indigenous commercial vocabulary is the striking Mont-White Theatre of 1906. It is a large three-story building, eight by four or five bays. The polychrome brickwork of red and yellow and the arches and corbelling and pilasters link it to the contemporary Scott Building and Vestal Hotel, while its massing and particularly the cut-off corner entrance link it with the earlier Patterson Building a block south. Another forceful corner building is the 1933 Graham Sporting Goods building. The two-story brick building gains presence from starting corner pilasters that rise as Art Deco ziggurats above the plain roofline. The Art Deco theme recurs, predictably, in the 1928 Theatre, where a streamlined ziggurat motif defines the central bay.



Wrike Drug Store



The two side streets to the west contain modest but significant commercial buildings. Their masonry materials, one and two-story scale, and simplified arched, corbelled, and other motifs contribute greatly to the totality of the district.

Institutional Buildings: Early Twentieth Century

The major institutional buildings of the district date primarily from the early twentieth century. In contrast to the eclectic and Italianate character of the commercial fabric, they embody more literal revival styles and provide an interesting accent to the domestic commercial architecture.

The focal building is the 1923 Alamance Courthouse, which embodies Greensboro architect Harry Barton’s facile handling of classical details and massing. The strictly rectangular stone building has its main entrances facing north and south, each with an impressive portico of six columns whose order derives from the Tower of the Winds. East and west elevations have simple classical entrances and tall pilasters. Rectangular windows are set cleanly into the stone block walls. Slightly contrasting quoins accent the corners of the building, and a broad modillion cornice and balustrade mark the roofline. In mass and location and elaboration, the courthouse is the most forceful architectural statement in the town.

North of the courthouse on the central square stands the Confederate monument, a tall pillar of stone topped by a statue of a Confederate soldier.

As handsome as the courthouse, and quite different from it, is the Presbyterian Church. It stands at the west edge of the District amid a large and shaded lot. Its rich red brick and terra cotta work, asymmetric form, warm Gothicism, and verdant setting strike a nice contrast to the cool grey stone, contained symmetry, simple classicism, and tight urban setting of the courthouse. Although including an antebellum original section and later additions, the chief element of the church complex is the fine Gothic Revival cruciform sanctuary and tower. Richmond architect Charles L. Reade combined the deep red brick, rough stone, and



Graham Sporting Goods



Confederate Memorial



Former Post Office



fine terra cotta ornament in a design of Gothic character but something of the density and warmth more characteristic of the Romanesque. The predominant brickwork links the building to the commercial fabric of the commercial town, but the Gothicism and obvious role of an architect set it off from the rest of the district's commercial vernacular.

A less ambitious example of early twentieth century revivalism is the small United States Post Office of 1935, now used for commercial purposes. The simple brick box has the regulation classical details typical of WPA architecture, including plain stone cornices and nicely executed metal and wood motifs.

Intrusions and non-contributing elements in the district consist chiefly of a few parking lots and later commercial buildings or remodelings. A typical non-contributing building is a small mid twentieth century brick structure. None of the intrusions are big, and most are merely slightly incongruous extensions of the scale and materials that dominate the town fabric. They do not severely detract from the overall impression of the district. It survives as a clear and consistent statement of a courthouse town whose buildings recall its antebellum beginnings and prime development from the Civil War to the Depression.

Significance

The Courthouse Square Historic District, centered on the square surrounding the handsome 1923 Neoclassical courthouse, represents the most intact remaining area of historically and architecturally significant structures in this small piedmont county seat and industrial city. The area comprising the district is associated with the early development of Graham as a government and modest trading center during the thirty years after its establishment as the seat of Alamance County in 1849, and the subsequent growth of the town into a small industrial city during the 1880~1940 period. The architecture of the district reflects the town's changing character. The small number of surviving mid-nineteenth century houses and commercial buildings are specimens of simple vernacular designs used for such structures in towns of the North Carolina piedmont during the mid-nineteenth century. The larger and visually dominant group of late nineteenth and early twentieth century houses, stores, and public buildings reflect the adoption of the nationally popular Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Romanesque, Neoclassical, Art Deco, and Art Modern styles during the 1880-1940 period. The Courthouse Square Historic District visually links the present city to its antebellum origins and early industrial development while remaining the center of the community's economic life.

Adolescent Years, 1851-1880

Settlement of the North Carolina piedmont had begun by the 1740s, and a century later, the area constituted the most populous region of the state. Between 1750 and 1850, sixty-three new counties were created in the state, thirty one of which were clearly located in the piedmont. One of these was Alamance, carved from Orange County in 1849. Naming the new county seat proved to be a difficult task as members of the General Assembly energetically debated the issue. Giles Mebane, sponsor of the bill creating Alamance County, successfully pushed through the name Graham, in honor of the contemporary governor, William A. Graham. The appointed commissioners purchased seventy-five acres for the county seat and hired Silas M. Lane, a local surveyor, to lay out the town. When completed in



1850, the plan formed a large square surrounding a smaller square reserved for the courthouse and jail. Graham was incorporated in January, 1851.

The first courthouse was a two story brick structure erected at a cost of \$6,400. The contract was awarded to Eli Denny and Company; the brickwork was under the immediate supervision of John and Samuel McClain; and John and William Denny executed the woodwork. With the courthouse serving civic and religious as well as legal functions, life in early Graham quickly centered around the courthouse



Holt Store

square. From all parts of Alamance, residents came to the county seat to conduct legal business and, while there, to shop and trade. Law offices, mercantile stores, and several hotels were soon built to serve their needs, and Graham emerged as a trading center, not only for Alamance County, but also for parts of Orange, Chatham, Caswell, and Randolph.

The ink had barely dried on the town's corporate charter when the founding fathers faced a major decision. Plans for the North Carolina Railroad called for track to be laid through the village and made it an ideal place for the company shops. After considerable debate, town leaders decided that the railroad would have a negative effect upon the trading center, disrupt the operation of the court, and destroy the carefully laid out appearance of the county seat. No tracks were to be laid within one mile of the courthouse and another location had to be selected for the shops. The North Carolina Railroad thus bypassed Graham, and Company Shops was built two miles west of town in 1856.

The decision proved to be a momentous one as Company Shops (now Burlington) soon outstripped the county seat. The denial to the railroad also insured that Graham would remain a small country town until the Industrial Revolution broke loose in the 1880s shifting the economic focus of the piedmont from a rural to an urban setting. Even then, growth in Graham, unlike that in Burlington from 1880 to 1914, was more restrained, a characteristic that preserved much of its early architecture, especially in the area around the courthouse square now being designated as a historic district. Although many of the earliest structures were razed to make room for buildings of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a few from Graham's adolescent years still survive.

Building Patterns, 1851-1880

The building patterns during Graham's infancy reflected the town's role as a trading and legal center. The early 1850s saw at least eight mercantile stores erected, five of which were made of brick and five of which were either two or three stories tall. Among the early merchants were T.J. Hunter, James T. Murray, Peter R. Harden, W.C. Donnell, James S. Scott, Alfred Holt, Thomas Sellars, Daniel "Short Neck" Isley, and the firm of McLean and Hanner (Thomas G. McLean and Robert Hanner). Small brick or frame structures housed the offices of local attorneys such as James E. Boyd, Thomas Ruffin, Jr., R.Y. McAden, and James R. Graham. Visiting lawyers and other nonresidents quartered at the wooden hotel of John



Clapp or the newer brick hotel built by John Trollinger. Other buildings surrounding the courthouse included a saloon, drugstore, a female seminary, and a smattering of private dwellings.

Graham's antebellum life spanned a single decade, and only five structures remain from those formative years. Probably the oldest extant structure in the district stands on the southwest corner of Courthouse Square on Lot Number seven of the original plan. It was built as a store in 1851 for Alfred Holt by his father, E.M. Holt, Alamance County's textile pioneer. The second oldest structure, a three story brick building, was erected also about 1851 on the southeast corner of the Square by Thomas G. McLean and Robert Hanner, a trading firm known as McLean and Hanner. Tradition claims that the bricks were fired on the lot by slave labor. Years later, the store was purchased by W.J. Nicks and has since been known by that name.

In the early 1900s, L. Banks Holt raised all but the eastern section of the old Trollinger Hotel. With extensive remodeling, the section stands today as a private residence on Elm Street. The homes of merchants J.T. Hunter and Peter R. Harden have been preserved also. The former, erected in the early 1850s, now houses the surveyor's firms known as David Thompson, Inc., while the latter, built with some remodeling in 1915, is now used for insurance and law offices.

Building patterns changed little over the next 20 years, although some modest expansion did occur in the district. The Trollinger Hotel, the town's leading hostelry, was expanded by the addition of a long, one story brick wing (later known as Brick Row) used for guest overflow and law offices. In 1875, the Alamance Gleaner, founded by Captain E.S. Parker, began publication on the third floor of the hotel. By 1873, a new Classical and Mathematical School had opened north of the courthouse on Lot Number 46, continuing the emphasis on education begun by the female seminary. W.C. Donnell and James S. Scott built a two-story, frame store south of the new school



Former Trollinger Hotel



Former J.T. Hunter House



*Former Captain James Williamson House,
now Bank of America*



in 1867 and a similar structure was erected on the southwest corner of the Square in 1876 by J.W. Harden. He also added a small annex to serve as the town's post office. In the 1870s, E.M. Holt, whose family was to play a major role in the town's history, built a home in Graham for each of his three daughters. The house he erected for Frances, wife of Dr. John L. Williamson, no longer stands, but the home of his daughter, Emma, wife of Captain James W. White, is now occupied by the Alamance County Arts Council. Elmhurst, constructed in 1878 for Mary Holt and her husband, Captain James N. Williamson, remained a private residence until 1939 when the present occupant, McClure Funeral Home, acquired the property. Today, the building is occupied by the Bank of America.

By 1880, Graham remained a small country town characterized by general trading activity and the legal obligations of a county seat. But the Industrial Revolution was shifting into high gear and was to change forever the pastoral quiescence of the community.

Expansion and Growth, 1881-1914

The decades after 1880 were characterized by rapid industrialization in Piedmont North Carolina. Reconstruction had formally ended in 1877, giving a sense of political stability that encouraged business investment. The resumption of specie payments in 1879 instilled confidence among capitalists and initiated an economic upswing in industrial development. The New South "gospel of salvation through manufacturing" was preached throughout the state but took its strongest hold in the piedmont, and the Holt family of Alamance was among the chief missionaries of that gospel. Newspapers called for more industry. Between 1880 and 1900, the value of manufactured products in North Carolina increased by \$75 million, and the number of industrial employees jumped from 18,000 to 70,500. Alamance County, with a heritage of antebellum pioneer textile manufacturing, nearly tripled the number of industrial plants in the 1880s, reaching a total of seventeen by 1890. Though much of the county's land remained agricultural by 1890, the economic base switched from farm to factory, shifting the focus of life from a rural to an urban environment. Graham was located in the center of the industrial explosion.

Tobacco and textile manufacturing appeared almost simultaneously in the county seat but the latter proved more durable and influential. The first tobacco factory was a converted private school in the southwest part of town. A new tobacco factory was erected in 1885 and by the mid 1880s, the firm of Long, Stockard and Company was manufacturing smoking tobacco on the second floor of Pugh Corner, a building named for John R. Pugh but built by Thomas Sellars in the 1850s. The rise of James B. Duke's American Tobacco Company swallowed up small competitors, however, and those that were not absorbed were driven out of business. By 1890, Graham's tobacco manufacturing had virtually ceased and the growing textile industry became the focus of economic attention.

Though the Holt name is synonymous with the textile industry in Alamance County, the first two cotton mills in Graham were built by the Scott family. In 1882, James Sidney Scott and his brother-in-law, W.C. Donnell, financed construction of a cotton mill on West Harden Street. Three years later, L. Banks Holt bought the plant and renamed it Oneida Mill. Scott and his sons then constructed the Sidney Mill in north Graham in 1885. Textile production has since been a large part of the Graham economy.



Increasing prosperity brought heightened cultural tastes and a greater sense of artistic appreciation. Ornamented structures following the nation's trends replaced former utilitarian structures; an Opera House was built where a general store once stood; and the new phenomenon of motion pictures made its appearance on the eve of the First World War. Caught up in the improvement idea, the city leaders authorized macadam streets to replace the dirt roads and in 1892, Graham became the first town in Alamance County to have a macadam street. Electricity came to the county seat in 1902; the town waterworks were constructed in 1904; and in 1911, a streetcar line opened that connected Graham with both Burlington and Haw River. By 1914, the modern city of Graham had begun to emerge. Much of the growth took place outside the historic district, but there were significant changes within the district itself.

Building Patterns, 1881-1914

Between 1881 and 1914, eight structures are known to have been raised, removed from the district, or to have burned to the ground. No less than twenty four buildings, nearly all brick, rose in their places, often filling the interstices that characterized the earlier building patterns. Many of these structures will stand and, along with the few extant antebellum buildings, form the core of the district today. Though predominantly commercial, the specific uses of buildings changed frequently. The almost constant turnover in function reflected the rising prosperity of the era and the effect of that prosperity upon the built environment, an effect that transformed neatly laid out town lots into cluttered city blocks competing for a share of the wealth. Several older structures were reworked. The McLean and Hanner Store was purchased in 1892 by William J. Nicks who sealed off the second floor for use as his residence. The basement was converted into a dining room for guests during court week and an annex was added to the rear that housed a kitchen on the first floor, an office on the second, and a bedroom on the third. Another two-story addition on the south side of the store was rented to Sing Lee for the town's first and only Chinese laundry. By 1914, the store of W.J. Nicks was already a landmark in Graham. In 1889, James H. Holt built an addition to the old Alfred Holt Store and rented it to Thomas A. Albright for a drug store and post office. In 1899, the Bank of Alamance moved into the structure and remained until 1906. The building was remodeled into its present appearance in 1924. In 1901, L. Banks Holt bought old Trollinger Hotel and tore down all but the eastern section and used the brick to construct his cotton mill at Bellemont. In 1904, the remaining part of the hotel was stuccoed and used for a residence. With some improvements by Banks Quakenbush in 1925, the structure has continued to be a private residence.

New buildings in the district included the three-story Paris Building erected about 1912 by Dr. O.J. Paris on the northwest corner of the Courthouse Square. The structure housed the Citizens Bank and a variety of other tenants. Two other two-story brick buildings on the northern side of the lot were erected about the same time.



Paris Building



About 1898 L.L., George W., and John S. Patterson raised Pugh Corner building and replaced it with the three-story brick structure now standing on the corner of the courthouse. When completed, the Patterson Building was the most spacious structure in Graham. Another two-story brick structure was erected on the lot about the turn of the century to complement the Patterson Building. Both are still standing, although the Patterson Building was damaged by fire in 1977.



Former Vestal Hotel

In 1902, W.S. Vestal built the town's third hotel on the northeast corner of Courthouse Square. A fire destroyed the structure in July 1903, six months after its gala opening. Vestal immediately built a new two-story brick hotel on the lot, a structure containing seventeen rooms, large office, parlor, and its own water system. The Vestal Hotel opened in 1904 and quickly replaced the Brick (Trollinger-Hutson) Hotel in the life of the town.



Wrike Drug Store

Brief mention should be made of other structures erected that show the extent and diversification of activity in Graham in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as the country flavor of the county seat continually gave way to town life. In 1889, L. Banks Holt erected a mercantile building north of the courthouse which, according to local press, was the handsomest store building in the county. The store was later bought by Green and McClure and has since housed a retail furniture business. On the same lot, J.C. Simmons erected a three-story brick building about 1902 which functioned primarily as a drugstore though the second floor contained offices and the third a meeting hall. A drugstore has existed in the structure for nearly 80 years. In the southwest quadrant of Court Square, Captain E.S. Parker built a one-story brick law office near the bank which has served that function since 1902.



Law Office

Sometime around 1905, W.H. Holt and A.B. Nicholson constructed the first building of concrete, now coming rapidly into use, in the town. The popularity of the fad prompted T.C. Montgomery, then owner of the old



J.W. Harden Store on the same lot, to add a concrete and glass front to make his facility harmonize with its neighbor. A.B. Nicholson, instigator of concrete construction in Graham, had been widely known for his work throughout North and South Carolina. He built a number of structures in town including the Opera House as well as the infirmary at Wake Forest College. Nicholson retired after completing the Holt-Nicholson Building about 1905.

In 1906, W.J. Nicks erected a two-story brick building which he rented to the town as a dispensary of alcoholic beverages. The people of Graham had decided in a referendum to close the local barrooms in favor of a municipally operated facility, forcing the demise of the old Peco Saloon that had been in business since the early 1850s. The new Dispensary was located in the upper corner of the lot adjoining the Nicks' Store lot on the south. Anxious moments followed the arrival of Carrie Nation in 1907, but after berating the purpose of the structure, she left the premises intact. State-wide prohibition in 1908 closed the Dispensary.



Former Dispensary

Although Graham's first fire-fighting company was organized in 1904, it was not until 1912 that a Firemen's House was constructed, on the lot where John Klapp's wooden hotel formerly stood. Later serving as the town hall, the structure now functions as the Graham Historical Museum.



Graham Historical Museum

The first movie theatre came to town in 1913 when the "Mexican" opened to patrons on the second floor of a brick structure erected on the southern part of the old J.W. Harden lot. The first floor housed a commercial enterprise. The "Mexican" was changed to the "Alcoa" in 1919 and operated until World War II. The building, which has received extensive alterations, is currently home for the Graham Underwriters' Insurance Agency, Inc., the town's oldest insurance firm.

While the number of structures erected and the increasing specification clearly reflected the demographic and commercial growth of Graham into an urban center during this period, an emerging cultural sophistication was perhaps best illustrated by the construction of an Opera House. The Mont-White Theatre company, Inc. built the three-story brick structure in 1906 on a lot north of the courthouse where both the Classical and Mathematical School and the J.V. Pomeroy Building had once stood. The first floor contained a mercantile establishment while the stages and orchestra pit were located on the second floor. The third floor provided a balcony for stage productions. Graham's first



theater opened on October 19, 1907, and played to a packed house. When no performances were scheduled, the Opera House was opened for civic functions, fraternal meetings, and plays by amateur groups. For nearly two decades, the Opera House held center stage in the cultural life of the town.

By 1914, Graham, despite growth and modernization, remained a quiet, essentially residential community compared to Burlington. The city life, so to speak, belonged to Burlington. The county seat would continue to grow with twentieth century urbanization and the changes wrought by the automotive age, but the central core remained largely intact.

Graham Since World War II

In contrast to the sprawling twentieth century expansion of many North Carolina towns, Graham's growth was inhibited by its geographical location. The textile manufacturing community of Haw River lay just to the northeast; Burlington, rapidly growing from a town into a thriving city, was closing in on the northern and western boundaries of the county seat; and the vast L. Banks Holt estate covered most of the southern area of the town and extended into the county. This restrictive ring insured that the building patterns investors turned to Burlington where the population was growing over four times as fast as in Graham. Ironically, the automobile that changed the urban face of Burlington produced the opposite situation for the county seat. The citizens of Graham could enjoy the benefits of a nearby modern city without incurring many of its problems. When the Holt estate was broken up for residential development, many citizens found it convenient to work in Burlington while living in Graham. The county seat thus retained the character it had developed shortly after the turn of the century, a residential community with a central commercial district centered around the courthouse square.

Building Patterns in Modern Times

Between 1914 and 1930, some of the older buildings in the historic district were torn down and replaced by the structures now standing. Others were changed both in structural form and function. Nevertheless, the historical integrity of the district was essentially unaltered and has remained so even though some structures have been added since the 1930s.

In 1916, the old Peco Saloon was razed, and the present two-story building at Lot Number 13 Court Square SE erected. The owner of the lot purchased the outdated jail, had the bricks cleaned, and reused them in building the present structure. Over the years, it has been used for various purposes including hosiery mills and retail stores and, along with the old Dispensary, currently houses the textile firm of Eric, Inc.



Eric, Inc.



The one-story brick building at 125 East Elm Street was constructed in 1916 following the destruction of the Young Ladies Seminary Building which for many years had been serving as apartments. A long-time automobile dealership, the structure is now occupied by Farm Services, Inc.



Farm Services, Inc.

The growth of Burlington and increasing use of the automobile brought fewer overnight visitors to Graham; consequently, patronage at local hotels dwindled. In 1928, the Vestal Hotel was sold in eight sections. One part became a café while other sections served a variety of mercantile purposes. All retain the same use today. Another portion, however, was converted into a service station until World War II when it was returned to its original design to function as a grocery store. The Isley Brothers Grocery has been its occupant since that time.

In 1918, the James Sidney Scott House, north of the courthouse, was torn down, and the lot divided into eighteen parcels for sale at public auction. Ten years later, the Graham Theater was built which was gutted by fire in 1935. Remodeled to its present appearance, the theater stands amidst a number mercantile structures erected in the 1920s and 1930s.



Graham Theater

By 1924, less expensive and more enticing motion pictures had supplanted live performances in the cultural life of the community. The Opera House became a financial liability and was sold in that year to Rich and Thompson, furniture dealers and undertakers. It remained a retail furniture store until World War II, and today houses Graham Gift Shoppe and Kernodle Antiques.

During the First World War, Graham saw two efforts to capitalize on the soft drink craze sweeping the country. The first effort came in 1915 when W. Ernest Thompson built a one-story building on the east side of the town hall (now the Graham Historical Museum) and opened the Christo Cola Bottling Works Company. The enterprise was short lived, however, and the structure is now a dry cleaning establishment. The second attempt followed in 1916 when Dr. O.J. Paris erected a one-story building on the northwest corner of the Square. First known as Chero Cola Bottling Company, the name was later changed to Carolina Bottling Company. Like other businesses facing the effects of World War II to private enterprise, the company ceased operation during the conflict. For many years, the building was occupied by Amick's Tire and Battery Hospital but has since been renovated for use as a law office.



One of the most noticeable changes in the District was the alteration of the old W.J. Nicks store. In 1954, Hurricane Hazel wrecked the roof and third story of the structure. Durward T. Stokes, Nick's son-in-law and then proprietor of the store, chose not to replace the damaged floor and altered the structure by capping it with a flat roof. The three-story building was thus reduced to two stories. Ten years later, Stokes liquidated the general store business.

Because it is the focal point of the historic district, the courthouse planned in 1923 represents the most significant changes in the twentieth century. Initial plans for the structure's location would have destroyed a number of historic buildings, including W.J. Nicks Store. Disagreement over the proposal between merchants and county commissioners was resolved when the architect, Harry Barton of Greensboro, displayed his plans for the new courthouse. The size of the proposed structure dictated that it be constructed on the same site as the original building. The present courthouse was completed in 1924 at a cost of approximately \$250,000.



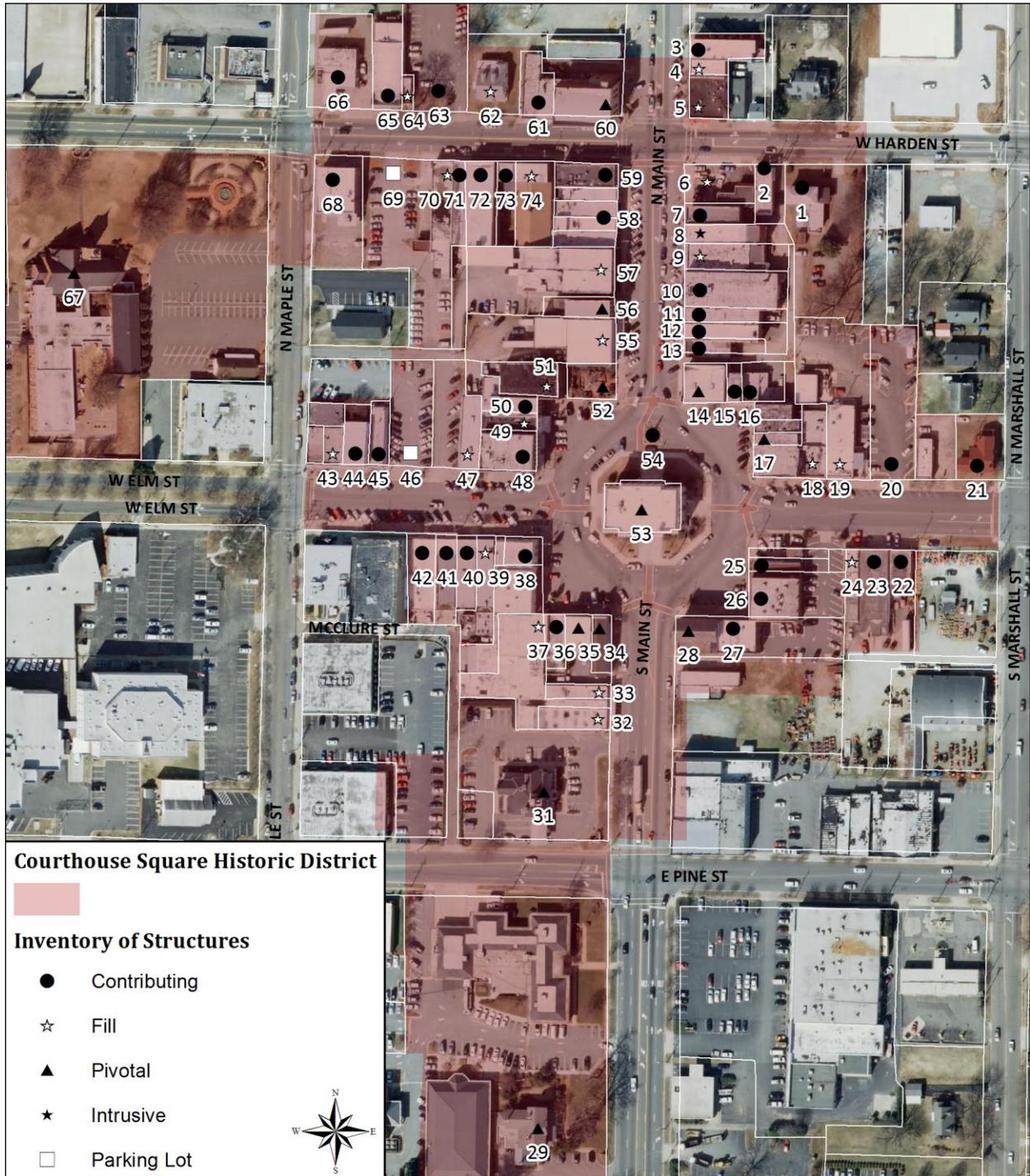
Alamance County Courthouse

Since World War II, the business life of Graham has increased slowly but steadily, and most of the town's growth has been in residential areas outside the historic district. Few urban centers in North Carolina can claim a virtually intact district that visually links the present city to its antebellum origins and is still the focal point of commercial activity.



Inventory of Properties

An inventory of properties in the Courthouse Square Historic District serves as a guide for identifying and evaluating potential landmarks and for developing design guidelines. It also forms the basis for developing local preservation goals and a preservation plan. The following inventory includes a map of the district, along with pictures and descriptions of individual buildings.



1. Harden House at 109 East Harden Street

Mid-nineteenth century; Contributing

Two-story frame mid-nineteenth century house built by merchant Peter R. Harden. Weak tradition maintains that the Ohio carpetbag judge, Albion Tourgee (1835-1905) resided here while serving as a member of the state constitution conventions of 1868 and 1875. The house has interior chimneys, symmetrical façade with long and narrow paired window openings, and simple paneled door with glass in the upper half, flanked by long, narrow sidelights. The center hall plan interior has been altered but plain Greek Revival doors and frames survive as does the early framing in the cellar.



2. 105 East Harden Street

Early-twentieth century; Contributing

One-stepped roof once used as the office of the Gleaner. The windows on the side elevation, now bricked in, were arched with decorative brickwork above.



6. 100 East Harden Street

Twentieth century; Fill

Triangular shaped station with s-shaped "hypotenuse." Sheathed with enamelled tiles.



7. 133 North Main Street

1923; Contributing

Two-story brick building with flat roof built by R. N. Cook and Dr. O. J. Paris. The building has round arches on the second story similar to those on the Vestal Hotel. It also has corbelled cornice and pilasters. The first story displays a modern glass store front.



10. 119 and 117 North Main Street

1928; Contributing

Two-story theatre with simplified Art Deco style stucco on brick and an adjoining barber shop. The first story, which has been reworked, displays a modern glass store front with enamelled tiles. The structure was gutted by fire and somewhat rebuilt in 1935.



11. 113 North Main Street

Twentieth century; Contributing

Flat roofed two-story brick building with reworked first story glass front and metal flat roofed awning extending from the building southward to include buildings #11-12. Notable decorative brickwork on the second story.



12. 111 North Main Street

Ca. 1940; Contributing

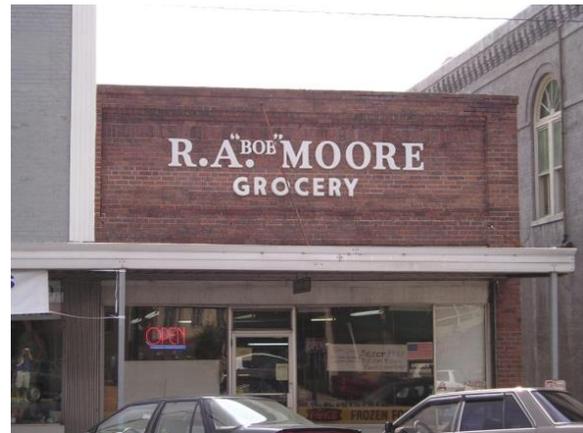
Two-story brick with black and grey glass tile façade on first story and glass entrance and store windows.



13. 109 North Main Street

Early twentieth century; Contributing

One-and-a-half story brick structure with first story glass front.



14. Scott Building at 101 North Main Street

Ca. 1900; Pivotal

Two-story common bond commercial building with decorative brickwork built circa 1900 by James Sidney Scott and W.C. Donald. The modern first story renovation contains a west (front) elevation with picture windows, a recessed entrance containing glass double doors and a flat roof overhang. The second story front elevation consists of three single sash windows on either side of a center double window all beneath individual awnings and semi-circular arched windows. The connecting arches spring from pilaster strips that separate second story bays on the front elevation. Yellow brick distinguished the building where it is employed in the semicircular arches, in the string course below the brick patterned entablature and along the roof's ledge. Yellow brick is also used in monumental pilasters which appear at the building's corners and side elevations.



15. 8 Court Square NE

Ca. 1903; Contributing

Two story-brick with yellow brick façade. Decorative brickwork over second story windows and cornice. First story store front contains modern glass entrance. The interior is also modern. The building was built by Z. T. Hadley and Dr. W. R. Goley.



16. 10 Court Square NE

Ca. 1903; Contributing

L-shaped single story brick building with shed roof built by Z. T. Hadley and Dr. W. R. Goley. Two rows of brick corbelling carry along the front façade. Display windows are set in plain surrounds. The entrance is composed of a single door with side lights. “Z.T. Hadley Jeweler” is set in title at the entrance.



17. (Former) Vestal Hotel at 14, 20, 22 Court Square NE

Ca. 1904; Pivotal

Long, rectangular, building of brick lay in one-to-five common bond. The structure was built as a hotel in 1904 by W. S. Vestal to replace a previous hotel which burned the preceding year. The second story has pilastered parapets, numerous string courses and connecting semicircular arches above a pattern of single and narrow, paired window openings. The first story contains four separate commercial establishments with picture windows and glass entrance doors under modern awnings along the front (west) elevation. The entire building formerly operated as a hotel for salesmen, and judges, and out-of-town lawyers during court sessions. It was last used as a hotel in 1928.



20. J. T. Hunter House at 126 East Elm Street

Ca. 1860; Contributing

Rectangular two-and-a-half story frame house sheathed with asphalt shingles, two gable and stucco brick chimneys and one rear brick chimney. The house has two over two fenestration, paneled central entrance door flanked by divided sidelights and an entrance porch with turned, paired posts and pilasters flanking the entrance. The core of this building is a two-story frame building of mid-nineteenth century vintage with simple—even crude—Greek Revival woodwork.



21. (Former) Trollinger Hotel at 140 East Elm Street

Ca. 1850; Contributing

Single story stuccoed brick structure that was part of the hotel built by John Trollinger in 1850. The renovated interior retains a pressed metal ceiling and a few plain Greek Revival surrounds and doors. Originally the hotel extended to the courthouse from the northeast corner of Elm and Marshall. Historian Dr. Durward Stokes believes the hotel was three stories originally named the “Orange Hotel;” it was subsequently renamed the “Union Hotel” and later the “Brick Hotel.” The hotel served visitors during their stay in Graham, including North Carolina Governor Zebulon Vance during his campaign of 1876. The more modern Vestal Hotel was built in 1904. Since then, this structure has been reduced to its present size and converted to a private residence.



22. 125 East Elm Street

Early twentieth century; Contributing

Much altered single story brick structure with double arches on bricked window and an arched entrance. Present remodeled façade has casement windows. At the rear is a two-bay garage.



23. 123 East Elm Street

Early twentieth century; Contributing
Single story building with flat roof and modern façade. Awning over the entrance on north elevation.



25. 21 Court Square SE

Twentieth century; Contributing
Rectangular, brick building with L-shaped brick wall extending off northeast corner to form garage. Reworked modern store front on west elevation. The structure stands on the property listed as lot no. 5 in the original town plan.



26. 13 Court Square SE

Ca. 1916; Contributing
Two-story brick structure with decorative arches and patterned brickwork on second story. The building has had a number of uses in its history including retail establishments and mills. In 1923, its second floor was used as a courtroom during construction of the new courthouse. The building displays decorative stucco molding between the first and second stories and has a modern first story storefront. Pilasters ornament the corners and the spaces between each set of three bays on the upper story.



27. (Former) Dispensary at 7-11 Court Square SE

Early twentieth century; Contributing

Two-story brick building with permastone façade. Windows on the second story are arched with 2/2 sash. The lower story has modern store fronts. The building, which was built by W. J. Nicks, was originally used as the town dispensary, the predecessor for our modern day alcoholic beverage packaging stores.



28. (Former) W. J. Nicks Store at 102 South Main Street

Ca. 1851; Pivotal

Two-story brick building, laid up in common bond, built for Hannah and McLean Trading Company ca. 1851. The oversized bricks were reportedly made by slave labor. The building features two-panel doors with simple molded frames and a porch which carries across the entire front (west) elevation supported by cast iron columns with decorative capitals. Originally a three-story building, the top floor was destroyed by Hurricane Hazel in 1954. Sash is 6/6. When Hannah and McLean went out of business in 1857 the building was sold to James D. Bason for retail businesses. Then in 1892, the property was again sold to W.J. Nicks. Nicks expanded the building and lived on the second floor. Part of the retail space was utilized by Sing Lee for Graham's only Chinese laundry. The third floor was rented out for various meetings, etc. Nicks died in 1952, but the business continued to be operated by members of his family until 1964. Restoration of the 3rd floor was started in 2000.



29. Captain James White House at 213 South Main Street

1871; Pivotal

This rectangular, two-story frame house is an early Victorian house of faintly villa form with a 1900 addition to the south elevation. The dominant feature of the front (east) elevation is a projecting entrance bay and a one-story façade porch. Oversized unusually curvilinear brackets appear under the wide eaves of the gable roof and accent the side, paneled frieze. A triangular



arch surmounts the second story central window. A neoclassical doorway was added in 1950. The house was built by E. M. Holt (1807-1884), prominent textile manufacturer, for his daughter, Emma, and his son-in-law, Confederate Captain James White (?-1887), also a textile owner. Outbuildings include a frame, steep gable-roof storage porch, and a rectangular single story frame schoolhouse with a post and bell standing near the front entrance.

31. Captain J. North Williamson House at 141 South Main Street

1878; Pivotal

This two-story frame Victorian mansion is an excellent and well preserved example of the Second Empire style of architecture. The Williamson House is an asymmetrical composition of bay windows, porches and corbelled and paneled chimneys. An off-center tower with mansard roof and elegant cresting dominates the front façade. Bold decorative woodwork occurs on eaves, brackets, and odd tapered porch columns. Fenestration consists of rectangular double sash windows with rounded corners flanked by handsome louvered shutters, some of which have decorative, irregular sawtooth hoods. The interior features plaster medallions and cornices, heavy applied moldings, marble mantels and tooled-leather wainscoting. The house was built by textile businessman E. M. Holt for his daughter, Mary Elizabeth (1844-1935) and her husband, James N. Williamson (1842-1921). Williamson was a commanding officer in the Confederate Infantry and the founder of Ossipee Textile Mill.



34. Holt-Scott General Store at 38 Court Square SW and 105 South Main Street

Ca. 1850-1860; Pivotal

Two-story rectangular stuccoed brick structure built as two separate but connected sections. The courthouse façade features a notable corbelled corner and broad molded cornice. The lower corner has had recent “colonial” alternations. Second story wide double sash windows are flanked by louvered shutters. The only original features remaining are two cornices and one original mantel. Originally the building, built by E.M. Holt for his son Alfred, operated as a general store. Estimates of the building age vary but some local residents, including Graham’s historian, believe the store is the town’s oldest business establishment; all agree it is at least the second oldest commercial structure in Graham. Presently, the building serves as a lawyer’s office and realty office.



35. 36 Court Square SW

Ca. 1906; Pivotal

Spectacular two-story building with a combination of a Renaissance Revival and Neo-classical style store front. Bounded by structures on both sides, only the front (north) elevation is visible. The first story granite façade is Neo-classical (probably added in the 1920s) with entablature and Corinthian pilasters—relating the façade to the classical style of the county courthouse. The first floor interior contains richly molded classical plasterwork ceilings. The second story, though somewhat altered, is executed in Renaissance Revival style laid in common bond with rich red pressed bricks, a popular material for commercial buildings at the turn of the century. The second story features a projecting cornice, several pronounced string courses and semi-circular arched windows with connecting compound arches. The building displays copper door and window work. The former bank is one of the few which did not close during the Depression.



36. 10 Court Square SW

1902; Contributing

Single story brick with light birch veneer façade and windows with marble jack arches with keystones and lintels. Marble forms the wainscot and frames the doorway.



38. Holt-Nicholson Block at 20-26 Court Square SW

1905; Contributing

Two-story concrete building with stone façade and stepped side elevations. A rough stone façade (similar to the fire station) with smooth stone pilasters around narrow paired one-over-one sash windows was added to the second story of this structure and to the buildings next to it which now read as one building. The structure, built by W. H. Holt and A. B. Nicholson, was the first concrete building in town.



40. 106 West Elm Street

1940s; Contributing

Single story brick with two shades of brick in decorative patterns at corners, above metal overhang and around modern store front entrance.



41. 108 and 110 West Elm Street

1940s?; Contributing

Single story brick with two shades of brick in decorative patterns and in borders around building's fenestration. Modern glass store front.

42. 101, 112 and 114 West Elm Street

1940s?; Contributing

Single story brick building containing three store fronts. The fenestration of 101 W. Elm has been covered with plywood. The other two store fronts display decorative brick work above the metal awning and over the tile and glass store front. Brick pilasters are located at the corners and between the two bays.



44. (Former) Graham Fire Department at 135 West Elm Street

1911-1912; Contributing

Two-story, concrete block structure with façade of rusticated concrete block erected to house Graham's Fire Department. The cornerstone lists S. T. Johnston as the contractor and builder. The building later served as Graham's town hall and now functions as the Graham Historical Museum. Smooth-surfaced pilasters of concrete frame the façade, which is unaltered at the second story. A major renovation in 2001 restored many of the original features that were removed over the year.



45. (Former) Christo Cola Bottling Works at 131 West Elm Street

1915; Contributing

Simple, one-story brick commercial building originally built to house Graham's first soft drink manufacturing plant. The enterprise was only in business a short time before being succeeded by a second local soft drink firm, the Chero Cola bottling Company, and the former Christo Cola building eventually became a dry cleaning establishment, its present use. The building has a simple corbelled panel above a mid-twentieth century plate glass storefront; the storefront is sheltered by a metal awning. The eastern wall of the building, which was exposed when the adjacent structure was demolished for a parking lot, displays a mural painted in recent years which depicts a scene of early Graham including the original Courthouse, the W. J. Nick Store, a grist mill, and some early dwellings.



48. Paris Building at 23 Court Square NW

Ca. 1912; Contributing

Three-story brick commercial building with blond brick façade and corbelled cornice, erected by Dr. O. J. Paris shortly after he purchased the lot on which the structure stands in 1912. The Paris Building, considered one of the finest commercial structures in Graham at the time of its construction, housed such tenants as Citizen's Bank, the Alamance Independent Phone Company, and the U.S. Post Office during its early years. A music shop and florist occupy the two ground floor storefronts today. A major restoration of the building was complete in 2001.



49. Moon Building at 17 Court Square NW

Ca. 1912, remodeled mid-twentieth century; Fill

Two-story brick commercial building with remodeled storefront and aluminum screen. Building probably erected by Thomas C. Moon shortly after he purchased the lot on which the structure stands in 1912.



50. 12 Court Square NW

Ca. 1912; Contributing

Simple, two-story brick commercial structure erected about the same time as the Moon and Paris buildings following sale of land on which the buildings stands. Altered plate glass and permastone storefront with relatively unchanged upper floor with corbelled cornice and three segmental-arched windows.



51. 8 Court Square NW

Mid-twentieth century; Fill

Two-story, brick commercial building with pilaster strips and corbelled cornice. Plate glass storefront west side of façade with separate entrance to upper floor on east side. Row of four casement windows and plastic sign on second story façade.



52. Patterson Building at 106 North Main Street

1898; Pivotal

Three-story brick commercial building with elaborate corbelled cornice. Erected in 1898 by three brothers, L. L., George W., and John S. Patterson, the building was the most spacious in Graham at the time of its construction. The building houses such commercial tenants as the Graham Drug Company, the Graham Hardware Company, and Citizens Bank during its early years; the second floor contained office space and the third floor, known as “Patterson’s Hall” was frequently used for civic and social meetings and for professional and amateur performances. The building has a five-bay façade facing N. Main St., a six-bay façade facing Court Square, NW, and a one-bay cut-away corner facing the Alamance County Courthouse. Due to extensive deterioration, the building was demolished and used as parking for several years. In 2001, the downtown park was created commemorating the 150 plus anniversaries of the incorporation of Graham and Alamance County.



53. Alamance County Courthouse in Center of Court Square

1923; Pivotal

An imposing three story, Neo-classical Revival building located on a hexagonal plot in the center of Graham's commercial district. The courthouse is dominated by a hexastyle portico carrying an entablature which bears the inscription "Alamance County Courthouse." The flat roof is concealed by a parapet wall above the entablature of the building. Windows are linteled and capped by stone cornices and lintels with keystones. Tall stone columns with acanthus and palmetto capitals appear on each elevation, unifying the building's four sides. The courthouse entrances, one on each side, have elaborate entablatures resting on scroll consoles decorated with a crest of anthemion and palmetto antefixes. A brick courthouse and jail were erected on this site when Graham the county seat in 1849. It was replaced by present structure built in 1923 by Northeast Construction Company of Charlotte. Barton was an architect of public buildings, including many of North Carolina's courthouses. The present courthouse, Graham's most impressive structure, is individually listed in the National Register of Historical Places.



54. Confederate Memorial in Center of Court Square just north of Courthouse

1914; Contributing

Stone monument to Confederate war soldiers of Alamance County, erected in 1914 by the Graham Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. The monument rests on two rectangular slabs of rusticated stone and a pair of pedestals with inscriptions praising the heroism and devotion of the county's Confederate troops. Above the pedestals a pillar rises to a statue of a Confederate private at attention.



56. 114 North Main Street

Ca. 1901; Pivotal

Three-story brick structure with blond brick façade and fine, decorative cast-iron cornice. Dr. J. C. Simmons erected the building for his drug store and to house offices and fraternal meetings after a fire destroyed the previous building on the site in 1901. Slender pilasters and corbelling frame the second and third stories; the four façade windows on each floor have metal lintels above double-hung sash. The altered first story consists of plate glass windows and a glass entrance door beneath a metal canopy.



58. 122-134 North Main Street

Ca. 1914; Contributing

Typical row of early twentieth century one-story brick stores with simple paneled and corbelled detail above altered plate glass storefronts. The row was built by the sons of James Sidney Scott, who operated an earlier store on the site and who founded with his sons the Sidney Cotton Mill. The Sidney Mill, founded in 1885, was Graham's second textile operation.



59. 142 North Main Street

1933; Contributing

Two-story, brick, simplified Art Deco style building with decorative concrete pilasters at corners and patterned brick pilasters and other decorative brickwork at second store. Structure erected in 1933 by the Graham Drug Company and now occupied by Graham Sporting Goods. An especially notable feature is the unaltered display window at the building's northeast corner facing W. Harden Street, which has a frosted glass transom and an apron of black enamel tiles. A broad decorative course of diagonal brickwork carries across the front and side of the building just above the storefronts. The building's Main Street storefront has been altered and is sheltered by a metal awning.



60. Mont-White Theatre at 200 North Main Street

1906; Pivotal

Richly detailed, three-story brick building erected for the Mont-White Theatre, which for two decades after its construction was the center of Graham’s cultural life. The Mont-White Theatre Company built the structure in 1906 with mercantile space on the first floor, stage and orchestra pit on the second story, and a balcony on the third floor. When no professional performances were scheduled, the theatre was opened for civic functions, fraternal meetings, and plays by amateur groups. The building is one of the most striking commercial buildings in the district, with blond brick on the east (N. Main Street) elevation and on the cutaway corner facing the Main-Harden intersection, and red brick on the south (W. Harden Street) elevation. Contrasting shades of brick and rusticated stone accentuate the building’s numerous decorative features, including round-arched transoms at their first and second stories, belt courses between the floors, and the elaborate corbelled.



61. 103-107 West Harden Street

Ca. 1900; Contributing

Typical row of early twentieth century one-story brick stores with simple paneled and corbelled detail above altered plate glass storefronts. A metal awning shelters the storefronts.



64. 121 West Harden Street

Undetermined age, possibly ca. 1940; Fill

Tiny, single-story brick store/office building attached to Western Auto (inventory #65). Two rooms deep.



65. 127 West Harden Street

Undetermined age, ca. 1935; Contributing

One-story, common bond brick commercial structure with corner pilasters and aluminum-and-plate-glass storefront.

66. 131 West Harden Street

Undetermined age, ca. 1930; Contributing

T-shaped, flat roofed, brick filling station with handsome classical detail, including dentil cornice. Brick posts with molded capitals shelter service area in front of station office, with two bay garages to east. Rectangular wing on north (rear) elevation.



67. Graham Presbyterian Church at 200 West Harden Street

1855, remodeled and expanded 1897-1908, addition 1920, interior remodeled 1950s; Pivotal

Deeply set in a broad lawn facing W. Harden Street, Graham Presbyterian Church is a fine, cruciform sanctuary of Gothic-inspired design whose varied exterior detailing is enriched by the use of two types of red brick, terra cotta, and rusticated stone. The present sanctuary was produced by a complete remodeling and expansion during 1897-1909 of the congregation's second church, which had been erected in 1855. The remodeling and expansion were designed by architect Charles L. Reade of Richmond, Virginia.



The principal element of the church's main façade is the square, two-stage, castellated tower, which is trimmed by buttresses capped with rusticated stone. Smooth-surfaced, glazed brick seen on the tower and are filled with stained glass installed under Reade's direction. There is a gable-roofed vestibule at the eastern end; both are trimmed buttresses capped by rusticated stone. The vestibule gable is decorated with small squares of molded terra cotta set in a checkerboard pattern. The 1920 Sunday school wing is separated from the sanctuary by a pleasant courtyard and an arcade that was erected at the time of the addition. The interior of the sanctuary underwent a major remodeling during the 1950s, but retains the strikingly large wooden brackets resting on stone corbels that were undoubtedly among the most distinctive features of Reade's design.



68. (Former) Graham Post Office at 128 West Harden Street

1935; Contributing

One and two story brick building of simplified Works Progress Administration classical design with decorative bands of molded concrete around buildings. Simple entrance with concrete steps, wrought iron rail and pilasters with stone capitals flank entrance. Interior has simple oak paneling and no mural.



70. 118 West Harden Street

Undetermined age, mid-twentieth century; Fill

Single-story, brick and concrete structure with modern glass storefront. Drive-in window with metal overhang on west side adjoining parking lot.



71. 116 West Harden Street

Undetermined age, possibly ca. 1930;

Contributing

One-story, flat store building with slightly recessed plate glass storefront.

72. Erwin Block at 114 West Harden Street

1946; Contributing

Two-story, flat-roofed brick building with stone façade. Second story has seven-bay division and is faced with rough-cut stone blocks. Centered over the second floor is a tablet with the inscription “Erwin 1946”. The first story is faced with smooth-surfaced stone framing two recessed storefronts and an entrance to the second story at the east end of the façade. The storefronts have double doors with four-pane transoms. A large, centrally placed granite column supports the two light transoms that project over the recessed storefronts.



73. 112 West Harden Street

*Undetermined age, possibly ca. 1930;
Contributing*

Two-story, flat-roofed brick structure with modern glass display windows with wooden panels above set in wooden surrounds.



74. 108 West Harden Street

*Undetermined age, possibly ca. 1930, remodeled mid-
twentieth century; Fill*

Brick structure originally erected as two-story building with one story now in use. Upper portion of façade occupied by sign, corbelled brickwork along roofline. Modern, reworked glass and plastic tile front.

