

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: William Decker Johnson Hall
Other name/site number: Johnson Hall
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 1020 Elm Avenue
City or town: Waco State: Texas County: McLennan
Not for publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this
(☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my
opinion, the property (☒ meets ☐ does not meet) the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:

☐ national ☐ statewide ☒ local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

	Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer	1/13/2025
Signature of certifying official / Title		Date
Texas Historical Commission		
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government		

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

Category of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: Education: College, Research Facility, Education-Related

Current Functions: VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification: LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS:
Commercial Style; LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival

Principal Exterior Materials: BRICK, WOOD, GLASS

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-10)

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: A (Religious Properties)

Areas of Significance: EDUCATION, ETHNIC HERITAGE/BLACK (*local*)

Period of Significance: 1923-1975

Significant Dates: 1923, 1924 (north wing)

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Pittman, William Sidney

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 11-27)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 28-32)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. Part 1 approved on (date)
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- ☐ Other state agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than one acre (approximately 0.62 acres)

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 31.571806°N Longitude: -97.120827°W

Verbal Boundary Description: The building is located on the north side of the former Paul Quinn College campus. The nominated boundary includes less than one acre, specifically the north central portion of the legal parcel identified as QUINN CAMPUS INC Lot 1A Block 1 (Property ID: 320628) Waco, McLennan County, Texas as recorded in the McLennan County Appraisal District. Data accessed March 8, 2024 (Maps 4-5).

Boundary Justification: The nominated boundary includes less than one acre in the north central portion of the larger 19.34 acre legal parcel identified as QUINN CAMPUS INC Lot 1A Block 1 (Property ID: 320628). The boundary includes all property historically associated with the building. Much of the larger former campus has been lost, is not cohesive, and does not retain integrity and thus is excluded.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Rebecca Wallisch, MS (Architectural Historian), Megan Warley McDonald, MHP, MA (Architectural Historian)

Organization: Post Oak Preservation Solutions

Street & number: 2506 Little John Lane

City or Town: Austin State: Texas Zip Code: 78704

Email: Rebecca@postoakpreservation.com

Telephone: 512-766-7042

Date: February 22, 2024

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets 33-38)

Additional items (see continuation sheets 39-60)

Photographs (see continuation sheets 5-6, 66-79)

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photograph Log

Name of Property: William Decker Johnson Hall
City or Vicinity: Waco
County: McLennan
State: Texas
Photographer: Rebecca Wallisch
Date: May 6, 2023 and August 22, 2023

All photographs accurately depict property conditions. No changes nor significant deterioration has occurred since the photos were taken in May and August 2023.

Photo 1 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0001.tif)
Primary (south) elevation, view northeast.

Photo 2 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0002.tif)
West elevation, view southeast.

Photo 3 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0003.tif)
Rear (north) elevation, view southwest.

Photo 4 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0004.tif)
East elevation, view west.

Photo 5 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0005.tif)
Streetscape along interior driveway in front of William Decker Johnson Hall (right), view northwest.

Photo 6 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0006.tif)
Streetscape along Garrison Street with William Decker Johnson Hall (left), view northwest.

Photo 7 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0007.tif)
View of extant but bricked over archways in loggia beneath portico at basement level, view southwest.

Photo 8 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0008.tif)
View of former dining area in basement level, view west.

Photo 9 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0009.tif)
View of former dining area showing some extant original windows, sidelights, and transom at building's northwest entrance, view northwest.

Photo 10 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0010.tif)
View of northeast stairwell from basement level, view north.

Photo 11 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0011.tif)
View of steel staircase in bay 8 along north elevation from basement level, view northeast.

Photo 12 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0012.tif)
First floor corridor, view southeast.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 13 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0013.tif)
Representative classroom space on first floor, view south.

Photo 14 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0014.tif)
Second floor showing door to balcony at right, view south.

Photo 15 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0015.tif)
Second floor showing door to balcony at left, view northwest.

Photo 16 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0016.tif)
Portico balcony accessed on second floor, view west.

Photo 17 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0017.tif)
Third floor looking towards southeast corner of the building, view east.

Photo 18 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0018.tif)
Representative bathroom (third floor), view east.

Photo 19 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0019.tif)
Representative corridor (third floor), view northwest.

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.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Narrative Description

William Decker Johnson Hall is located at 1020 Elm Avenue on the former Paul Quinn College campus in northeast Waco, McLennan County, Texas. The T-plan, three-story (with a partially subterranean basement), reinforced concrete frame building with red brick exterior was constructed in 1923 to house classrooms and girls' dormitories, but served a variety of functions over the years. Designed by prominent Black architect William Sidney Pittman, the building possesses both industrial and commercial characteristics and features a classically inspired grand entrance with dual staircases and projecting portico. Other character defining features include a flat roof, intricate brick detailing at the cornice, brick window surrounds, and chimney. The property has been vacant since Paul Quinn College relocated to Dallas in 1990. As a result, the interior has experienced significant deterioration and vandalism. The building exterior is largely intact except for some broken, damaged, or infilled windows and doors, although many are extant behind the infill. Despite the impacts of long-term vacancy, the building retains historic integrity.

Setting

William Decker Johnson Hall is located in northeast Waco, Texas, although the area has historically been referred to as East Waco.¹ The building is within the former Paul Quinn College campus, located northwest of Elm Avenue, which historically served as a major thoroughfare in Waco and was part of the Meridian Highway. This portion of the Waco city grid is rotated approximately twenty degrees east from true cardinal direction alignment. The description is written as though the campus has true north-south orientation, with Garrison Street at the north, Elm Avenue at the east, Chestnut Street to the west, and Rose Street to the south.

The surrounding area is comprised primarily of residential neighborhoods, many of which were historically occupied by the city's Black residents, and numerous businesses along the commercial corridor on Elm Avenue, including many that catered specifically to Black travelers during the Jim Crow era.² There are no properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places within 0.5 mile of the former Paul Quinn campus (Maps 1-5).³

Site

Amongst the oldest intact resources, William Decker Johnson Hall is a prominent landmark located at the north end of the former Paul Quinn campus south of Garrison Street, with its primary (south) elevation facing inwards towards the campus. An interior driveway is located northwest of the building (approximately 25 feet) that leads to the center of the former campus. Another interior drive travels along the primary (south) elevation roughly 70 feet from the building façade. Between the road and the building is a large grassy area, with a concrete sidewalk leading to the dual staircases at the entrance (Photo 5). Landscaping is minimal, with a few trees scattered around the building. On the north elevation, the building's outermost façade is roughly 15 feet from Garrison Street, with a concrete sidewalk lining the roadway (Photo 6). Along the east elevation a gravel driveway travels directly adjacent to the building.

¹ McLennan County Appraisal District maps and data list the address on Elm Street, however most current maps and physical street signs indicate that the roadway is actually Elm Avenue. Source material utilizes both Street and Avenue, but for the purposes of this document Avenue has been used throughout.

² Texas Historical Commission, "African American Travel Guide Survey Project," accessed April 20, 2023, <https://www.thc.texas.gov/content/african-american-travel-guide-survey-project>.

³ The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) previously determined that the campus, along with several blocks to the northeast and southeast of the campus, may be eligible for listing on the National Register as the Paul Quinn College Neighborhood Historic District (TxDOT CSJ: 0015-01-171 Texas Department of Transportation, "Historic Resources Aggregator," accessed January 16, 2024, <https://txdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e13ba0aa78bf4548a8e98758177a8dd5>).

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

To the east of William Decker Johnson Hall are two 1960s buildings that formerly housed the Sherman-Abington Library and the Chapel/Bishop OL Sherman Science Hall. Their current functions are unknown. To the south, the ca. 1890 Administration Building now houses offices, and the 1950 Joseph Gomez Administration Building is now part of the Rapaport Academy. On the west side of the central drive are buildings associated with the Doris Miller Community Center and Cen-Tex African American Chamber of Commerce. These include the 1972 Kultgen-Jackson Gymnasium and 1948 George B. Young Auditorium, both of which were extensively altered in the 2000s. Along the south end of the campus, the former 1975/1976 Adams College Center is vacant and severely deteriorated. The 1951 Abraham Grant Dormitory and the 1968 Moody Liberal Arts Building have been renovated and are currently in use by the Rapaport Academy (Maps 3-7, Figures 1-6, Photo 5). When considering the larger Paul Quinn College property, much of the historic campus has lost integrity or been replaced with parking lots or contemporary buildings, is not cohesive, and is excluded from the nomination.

Exterior (Photos 1-6, 16)

William Decker Johnson Hall is a T-plan structure with a flat roof and three stories plus a partially subterranean basement.⁴ It possesses both industrial and commercial characteristics. The top of the T is located at the west end of the building. The building's structure consists of reinforced concrete beams, columns, and floor slabs with multi-wythe brick masonry on the exterior. The brick, laid in a running bond, is primarily red although it includes some green, gray, and mauve tones throughout. A darker maroon brick surrounds windows and doors in a stacked pattern and is also used as a rowlock string course at the top of the basement level. The maroon brick is also utilized in a soldier course above the third-floor windows to create modest corbeling at the cornice, and as a rowlock course along the roofline. Originally, windows with brick surrounds were present on the partially elevated basement level. Although they have since been infilled with brick, some original windows have been preserved on the interior. Overall, the elevations of the building feature evenly spaced windows. It appears that the original windows were one-over-one hung windows but were replaced by two-over-two aluminum frame windows sometime prior to the 1950s.

Primary (South) Elevation

The primary (south) elevation consists of 12 bays, with the western three bays projecting from the main façade to form the top of the T (Figures 14-17, Photos 1, 5). The primary entrance is located on the south elevation and is accessible via an elevated, projecting, single-story portico or gallery that spans Bays 6-10 (from west to east). The porch roof is supported by six square, brick columns topped with concrete caps, one at the outside of each bay. The second floor balcony features a balustrade with simple, narrow arches between the columns (Photo 16). The balustrade was historically mirrored at the porch level but is no longer extant. Matching staircases of brick with concrete treads and caps are located at bays 6 and 10 and originally the half-story space between the two staircases consisted of three cut-out brick arches, but those have since been infilled although remain extant on the interior. Lettered signage for 'William Decker Johnson Hall' in concrete or terra cotta is inset into the building façade beneath the cornice and appears to be original. A metal fire safety ladder and staircase are affixed to the building in bay 2 on the upper two levels.

West Elevation

The west elevation is symmetrical and features seven bays (Photo 2). A concrete staircase at the central bay leads to the elevated first floor entrance, which is currently boarded. It appears that some kind of projecting awning or cantilevered roof over the entrance was removed. Evenly spaced single window openings flank the entrance door and line the second and third stories, although many are missing or boarded. Beneath the primary staircase, which runs perpendicular to the

⁴ The building was originally intended as a U-shaped building with symmetrical front façade on the primary (south) elevation, although the eastern wing of the building was never completed.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

elevation, a secondary staircase runs parallel to the façade under the main staircase and accesses the basement level. Basement level windows have been bricked in, but some appear extant on the interior.

Rear (North) Elevation

The rear (north) elevation has 12 bays, with the westernmost three bays projecting from the main façade (Photos 3, 6). This elevation is largely utilitarian, consisting of rows of evenly spaced single windows, a majority of which are missing or boarded. As with the other elevations, basement-level windows have been bricked in, although many are extant on the interior. Between bays 6 and 7 (from west to east) there is a square brick chimney that is topped with modest decorative brickwork that matches the cornice. Metal scuppers and downspouts are located at the east end of the building and within the ell between bays 3 and 4. The ground floor window of bay 7 has been retrofitted with a single entrance door and is accessed by a metal staircase affixed parallel to the building.

East Elevation

The east elevation is minimally adorned (Photo 4). The elevation is symmetrical and features brick stringcourses at the first-floor level and the third-floor level. A single, central window is placed at the first, second, and third floors, and no basement level windows or enclosed openings are evident. This elevation also lacks the brick parapet and cornice evident on the other elevations. Eight projecting brick elements are evenly spaced up and down the elevation at either side of the column of windows. The corners of this elevation each feature four of the same projecting brick elements.

Interior (Figure 13, 24-27, Photos 7-15, 17-19)

Due to decades of vacancy, the interior of the building has been subject to significant neglect and vandalism. As a result of the significant damage to extant interior features and lack of historic architectural plans, historic floor plan configurations were difficult to discern.

The building is generally organized around a central corridor that runs through the center of the building from east to west on all floors. There are two staircases, one is a concrete staircase located in the northeast corner where the main body of the building meets the top of the T (Photo 10). The second staircase, which is only accessible on floors one through three, is located along the north end and is of steel construction with steel railing, some portions featuring rubberized treads (Photo 11). Each floor features one bathroom located north of the concrete staircase and consists of two stalls with separate washrooms (Photo 18).

The basement level can be accessed via a set of concrete stairs on the northwest side of the portico that lead to a non-historic metal door. Inside the metal door is the historic loggia that has since been bricked in, although the original brick archways are evident (Photo 7). In the loggia, the original basement level entrance door with multi-lite transom is still evident although some glass panes are damaged, and it appears that sidelights are painted. An additional two doorways are extant at the south end of the loggia and retain their original transoms. The basement level features concrete floors, and concrete ceiling supported by concrete beams and columns. Some non-historic wood wall framing that likely divided the large open space are evident (Photos 8 and 9). An additional entrance (currently boarded) is located on the north end of the building and retains its original transom and some sidelights, although a few may be damaged (Photo 9).

The first floor features concrete floors covered with carpet, concrete support columns, metal frame room partitions, and lay-in grid ceiling over concrete (Photos 12 and 13). The second floor is similar to the first floor with carpet over concrete floors, lay-in grid ceiling over concrete beams, and non-original partition walls that divide classroom spaces (Photos 14 and 15). On the primary (south) elevation of the second floor, a single metal door leads to the portico balcony (Photos

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

1, 16). Like the bottom floors, the third floor features carpeted concrete floors, drop-in grid ceiling below concrete ceilings with concrete beams, and metal framed partition walls in various states of disrepair (Photos 17-19).

Alterations

William Decker Johnson Hall has been vacant since Paul Quinn College relocated to Dallas in 1990, and as a result has experienced deterioration and vandalism.

On the exterior, some of the original window and door openings, particularly those on the partially subterranean basement level, have been bricked in, although this appears to have occurred during the period of significance. The building's original wood windows were replaced with aluminum sometime prior to the 1950s, and many of the existing windows are broken, boarded, or completely missing. Existing wood window frames are deteriorating and in need of repair. Some original masonry along the parapet and cornice are missing. On the primary (south) elevation, lay-in grid ceiling was added to the portico roof, the porch-level balustrade was removed, the arches between the staircases were infilled sometime prior to 1972 (historic change during the period of significance), and the original entrance door on the first floor is no longer extant. Historically, an additional entrance was located at the basement level under the portico, accessible via a half flight of stairs. The original basement level entrance door is still extant and retains its original sidelights and transoms, although it has experienced some damage. On the rear (north) elevation, at some point a former window was converted to an exit door.

On the interior, the building has suffered from ongoing neglect, resulting in water damage and some vandalism. The original plasterwork evident in the former dining room is no longer extant and the building's original interior configuration is difficult to discern. All four floors feature metal frame partition walls in various states of disrepair and lay-in grid ceilings are failing.

Quinn Campus, Inc., a Waco based non-profit organization that purchased the building in 1999, has preliminary plans to restore the building and return it to community use.

Integrity

Despite years of deterioration and neglect, many of William Decker Johnson Hall's character defining features, particularly on the exterior, are extant and clearly legible. The building retains its **location** within the heart of the former Paul Quinn College campus, facing other buildings historically associated with the college including the former Joseph Gomez Administration building (ca. 1950) and Abraham Grant Dormitory (ca. 1951). Although the campus is no longer the home of Paul Quinn College and modern intrusions were added, it is still located on a large parcel within the historically Black neighborhood of East Waco, and the property retains hallmarks of an educational campus, and thus integrity of **setting** is largely intact. Despite the building's current condition, it still retains its simple, classically inspired **design**, evident in the prominent central staircases and portico. The building retains its flat roof, three story T-shaped form, brick window surrounds and fenestration pattern, and chimney. The building's red brick and concrete exterior **materials**, and modest decorative brick **workmanship** along the cornice and portico are extant and clearly legible. With its prominent massing and all-brick exterior, the building remains a significant emblem of the former Paul Quinn College campus that served the surrounding community for over a century. As the backdrop for numerous portraits and photographs celebrating graduation ceremonies and other prominent events, the building stands as a proud symbol of the community's commitment to advancing higher education for Black Wacoans and Texans. With all these aspects combined, it conveys the **feeling** of an early twentieth century collegiate educational building. It is no longer **associated** with higher education in Waco or Paul Quinn College.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Statement of Significance

William Decker Johnson Hall (also referred to as Johnson Hall) located at 1020 Elm Avenue in Waco was designed by prominent Black architect William Sidney Pittman on the former campus of Paul Quinn College, the first private Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in Texas. Paul Quinn College was established in Austin during the Reconstruction era before relocation to Waco in 1877 and reflects the legacy of formerly enslaved Black Texans seeking an education following emancipation. Throughout the twentieth century, the college significantly expanded its curriculum and campus.⁵ Operating for over a century, Paul Quinn College provided educational opportunities for thousands of Black students who were prohibited from attending nearby White institutions due to racial discrimination and segregation. Integration in the 1970s caused decreased enrollment and financial constraints, leading the college to relocate to Dallas in 1990.

William Decker Johnson Hall is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for Education and Ethnic Heritage (Black) at the local level of significance. As one of the oldest extant resources on campus, the property represents Black Wacoans' commitment to expanding opportunities for higher education and the important role it played in the community. Constructed during the 1920s campus building campaign, the multi-purpose building housed the girls and boys dormitory, library, classrooms, chapel, administration, and dining room, as well as other functions over the years. Much of East Waco's built heritage has been lost due to extensive tornado damage in 1953 and significant urban renewal efforts from the 1950s through 1970s, and the building stands as a rare intact historic resource in the neighborhood. The period of significance begins in 1923, when the building was completed, and ends in 1975 reflecting its ongoing use as an educational building through the 50 year threshold. While Paul Quinn College was historically associated with the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, the building meets Criterion Consideration A (Religious Properties) because it is primarily significant for its secular function as an educational building.⁶

The Reconstruction Era in Waco

The earliest Black residents to reside in Waco and greater McLennan County were enslaved people, many of whom were made to work on large cotton plantations that surrounded the Brazos River. In 1860, 2,395 enslaved persons resided in the county, making up approximately 40% of the population. Following the Civil War, many formerly enslaved individuals living in rural areas relocated, and the Black population of McLennan County increased to 4,627 people, making up more than a third of the county's overall population in 1870.⁷

Following emancipation, many formerly enslaved Texans moved to urban areas, including Waco, seeking employment and educational opportunities. In 1870, Black men found work in Waco as laborers, wagoners, brick layers, well diggers, carpenters, and flour mill workers. At that time, very few white-collar occupations were open to Black men and were generally limited to that of preacher or teacher. Employment opportunities for Black women were even fewer, limited

⁵ Current (2024) guidance for writing inclusively about race and ethnicity distinguishes between the terms Black and African American. African American is generally used to describe persons of African descent in the United States. The term Black is broader and can encompass people of African ancestry in the diaspora, or other ethnicities or national origins worldwide. The vast majority of people transported in the transatlantic slave trade were from the African continent, and thus a majority of Black residents in the United States in the late nineteenth century were African American. However, immigration to the United States increased during the twentieth century, and the make-up of Black residents in the U.S. diversified. Thus, the authors of this nomination have utilized the term Black rather than African American to encompass the diversification of Black residents in the U.S. through the twentieth century. "Updated Guidance on the Reporting of Race and Ethnicity in Medical and Science Journals," JAMA Network, accessed August 28, 2023, <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2783090>.

⁶ National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1995) 26-27.

⁷ Vivian Elizabeth Smyrl, "McLennan County," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed August 05, 2023, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/mclennan-county>.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

to that of a cook, domestic servant, or laundress.⁸ Black labor would contribute significantly to Waco's economic development in the late nineteenth through twentieth centuries.

Due to lack of professional opportunities, education was a significant priority for Black Americans following the Civil War, and the need for schools emerged in the immediate Reconstruction era. The majority of Black children listed in the 1870 Waco census were recorded as attending school.⁹ A number of schools were established in Waco and the surrounding area during the late 1860s, including the Howard Institute, one of the first educational institutions for Black Wacoans, believed to have opened in 1865.¹⁰ By 1868, there were five schools for Black children in Waco and the immediate vicinity, operated by various individuals and institutions.¹¹

While the earliest Black schools were founded by White, northern, philanthropists, by the mid-1870s Black Wacoans were running the schools. Professor Alexander James Moore started teaching small groups of children in his home in 1875, and by 1878 his First Street Colored Free School was meeting in the AME Church. By 1881, Moore was teaching in a four-room schoolhouse in an old hospital at the corner of Clay and River Streets. At that time, the surrounding blocks north, east, and west of the schoolhouse were primarily inhabited by Black residents.¹² During the late 1870s, the Sixth Street School operated in the old Howard Institute property and the East Waco school served Black children living east of the Brazos River, until a new public school was constructed in 1885 on North Seventh Street.¹³ In 1899, the East Waco school relocated to a property near Paul Quinn College, where a three-room building was constructed.¹⁴

A significant advancement for the education of Black residents in Waco and the surrounding region took place in 1877 when Paul Quinn College (at the time known as the Connectional School for the Education of Negro Youth) relocated to the city from Austin. Waco had been chosen for the new site of the college because of its large population of Black residents and because it was more centrally located within the state.¹⁵ Upon moving to Waco, the school was renamed Waco College and was originally located at the corner of 8th and Mary Streets. In 1881, the school moved to its current location in East Waco and was renamed Paul Quinn College after prominent AME Bishop William Paul Quinn. (Figure 1)¹⁶ Paul Quinn College was also responsible for producing Waco's first Black newspaper. The *Paul Quinn Monthly*, was published monthly from 1890 to 1898 and weekly after 1898, at which time it was called the *Paul Quinn Weekly*.¹⁷ Waco's Black population gained a second institution of higher learning in 1901 when Central Texas College was established on North Fourth Street. Founded by the General Baptist Convention, the small college eventually reached an enrollment of 500 before closing in 1931 due to financial difficulties.¹⁸

In the late nineteenth century, East Waco was home to numerous industrial enterprises, including lumber yards, freight depots, mills, and wagon yards, along with commercial enterprises including grocery stores, warehouses, and drug stores. These enterprises were primarily located along Bridge Street, Elm Avenue, Dallas Street, and fronting the Brazos River.¹⁹ By 1880, the establishment of these industries led to additional working-class employment opportunities for Black men. Women continued to be limited to domestic occupations. Black families frequently lived in close proximity to

⁸ Lassell and Wolfenden, *Intensive Survey of the USDA Warehouses and the Paul Quinn Neighborhood District, Waco, Texas*, 19.

⁹ 1870 census, Waco, McLennan County, Texas. Available on Ancestry.com.

¹⁰ Garry H. Radford, Sr., *African American Heritage in Waco, Texas*, (Austin, Texas: Eakin Press, 2000), 4.

¹¹ Meredith G. Akins, "The Freedmen's Bureau Schools in McLennan County, Texas," Baylor University, 2011, 47.

¹² 1893 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

¹³ "Colored Free Schools," *The Waco Daily Examiner*, October 8, 1878, 4; "A War Cloud," *The Waco Daily News*, September 23, 1885.

¹⁴ "Waco a Center of Education," *Waco Semi Weekly Tribune*, December 16, 1908.

¹⁵ Robert Randolph Debes, "A Sociological Study of Paul Quinn College, Waco, Texas," Baylor University, 1949.

¹⁶ Lorita Manning, "...And the Bush was not Consumed." A Brief History of Paul Quinn College

¹⁷ Radford, *African American Heritage in Waco, Texas*, 117-8.

¹⁸ Rebecca Sharpless, "Central Texas College," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed August 08, 2023, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/central-texas-college>.

¹⁹ Lassell and Wolfenden, *Intensive Survey of the USDA Warehouses and the Paul Quinn Neighborhood District, Waco, Texas*, 15.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

White families, as strict patterns of residential segregation had not yet taken form.²⁰ Several ethnically diverse communities were formed in the city, including East Waco (also known as the Fifth Ward) and Sandtown in the Fourth Ward.²¹

Waco at the Turn of the Century

At the turn of the century, Bridge Street (present day South University Parks Drive) both north and south of the Brazos River was the primary commercial center for Waco's Black community as well as other ethnic groups. Originally known as Main Street, upon completion of the Waco Suspension Bridge in 1870, the street was renamed Bridge Street. As early as 1877, several Black businesspeople owned barbershops on Bridge Street and by the mid-1880s, the street was home to several flourishing Black fraternal organizations.²² Sometime after the turn of the century, a streetcar began crossing the Brazos River into East Waco, connecting the surrounding area and Paul Quinn College to downtown. Subsequently, residential development in the blocks surrounding the campus increased.²³

Black Texans continued to move from rural areas to Waco during the early twentieth century seeking better schools and jobs. Most settled in East Waco, including the area immediately surrounding Paul Quinn College. An educated Black middle class emerged in the early twentieth century made up of doctors, dentists, and business owners.²⁴ Many graduates from Paul Quinn and Central Texas College found work in Waco, further contributing to the growing middle class. The influx of new residents to Waco at the turn of the century, coupled with the growing successes of the Black middle class, resulted in backlash from White Wacoans. Several incidents of racial violence took place in Waco during the Jim Crow era, including lynchings in 1905, 1915, and 1916 and in the following decade, Waco became a center of Ku Klux Klan (KKK) activity.²⁵

Despite intimidation from the KKK, Waco's Black community played an early and significant role in securing voting rights for Black Texans. In 1936 a local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was established, meeting primarily in the city's Black churches. Once established, the chapter of the NAACP worked to promote political and social equality in Waco and greater McLennan County.²⁶

While residential areas of Waco were not strictly segregated in the early twentieth century, by the 1930s, residential segregation was firmly entrenched. In East Waco (the fifth ward), for example, in 1900, 57 percent of the population was White and 43 percent Black.²⁷ However, as racial tensions increased in subsequent decades, patterns of racial segregation began to emerge and solidify. By 1930, Garrison Street (where Paul Quinn College was located) served as

²⁰ 1880 census, Waco, McLennan County, Texas. Available on Ancestry.com.

²¹ Lassell and Wolfenden, *Intensive Survey of the USDA Warehouses and the Paul Quinn Neighborhood District, Waco, Texas*, 19

²² General Directory of the City of Waco, for 1884-1885, The Texas Collection, Waco City Directories; Amanda Sawyer, "Bridge Street," Wacohistory.org, <https://wacohistory.org/items/show/49?tour=7&index=10>, accessed July 10, 2019.

²³ Lassell and Wolfenden, *Intensive Survey of the USDA Warehouses and the Paul Quinn Neighborhood District, Waco, Texas*, 16.

²⁴ Vivian Elizabeth Smyrl, "McLennan County," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed August 05, 2023, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/mclennan-county>; Lassell and Wolfenden, *Intensive Survey of the USDA Warehouses and the Paul Quinn Neighborhood District, Waco, Texas*, 20.

²⁵ Roger N. Conger, "Waco, TX," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed July 26, 2023, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/waco-tx>.

²⁶ Ida Carey and R. Matt Abigail, "Evans, Richard D.," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed August 11, 2023, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/evans-richard-d>; St. James Methodist Episcopal Church, Waco, McLennan County, Texas, National Register of Historic Places, Reference #100004374.

²⁷ Susan Lassell and Leslie Wolfenden, *Intensive Survey of the USDA Warehouses and the Paul Quinn Neighborhood District, Waco, Texas* (Texas Department of Transportation, CSJ: 0015-01-171, 2010), 18.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

an unofficial color line in East Waco.²⁸ White residents lived on the blocks closest to the Brazos River, while the areas north and east of Paul Quinn College were primarily inhabited by Black residents.²⁹

Post-War Waco

During the 1940s and 1950s, Waco's population was approximately 16 percent Black, a significant drop from previous decades.³⁰ Several factors likely contributed to this population decline. Many Black citizens living in the Jim Crow South migrated to northern and western states during the 1920s and 1930s in response to increased racial violence and inequity. Military Service in World War II and after also provided opportunities for many Black servicemen in the 1940s and 1950s. Veterans who chose to remain in Waco were able to utilize the GI Bill and access low-cost home loans, and many purchased homes in new areas in East Waco, including Carver Park Addition, River Oaks, Gholson Heights Addition, Hollywood Addition, and Sharondale Addition. As White families sold their homes on the east side of the Brazos River many Black residents began to settle in previously White areas of East Waco.³¹

During the 1950s, Bridge Street was a thriving commercial district and a number of businesses catering to the Black community were also located along Elm Avenue. Several of Waco's Black newspapers were also headquartered on Bridge Street, including the *Waco Messenger*, which began publishing in 1932.³² In 1953 a devastating tornado destroyed numerous buildings on Bridge Street, while others were so badly damaged that they were demolished. The few businesses that survived or were rebuilt following the tornado would eventually be lost in a citywide urban renewal project in 1968.³³

As was the case throughout the United States, desegregation of Waco's businesses, schools, and public facilities took place during the mid-twentieth century. In Waco, White and Black civic leaders collaborated to avoid the high-profile sit-ins and protests taking place throughout the South, orchestrating much of their work behind the scenes and out of the local press.³⁴

While a great deal of progress was made in the desegregation of businesses and public facilities during the 1960s, desegregation of Waco's public schools was a drawn-out affair. Though the Supreme Court case of *Brown v. Board of Education* deemed school segregation unconstitutional in 1954, Waco Public Schools would not begin to desegregate until 1962. On September 7, 1962, after several fruitless conversations between the local NAACP and the Waco school superintendent and school board, seventeen students accompanied by their parents and members of the NAACP attempted to integrate five public schools. All were turned away. Two months later, lawyers for the students filed a suit in the U.S. District Court. In response, the Board of Education of the Waco Independent School District (WISD) declared its intention to desegregate the school district, beginning with the first grade in the 1963-1964 school year, with additional grades added each year. All grades of the WISD were technically integrated by the fall of 1968, though most schools remained predominantly populated by either White or Black students. Faculty integration of Waco schools did not begin

²⁸ John Young, "When the Color Line Shifted in East Waco," *Waco Tribune-Herald*, accessed July 26, 2023, <http://wacohistoryproject.org/Places/colorline.html>.

²⁹ Lassell and Wolfenden, *Intensive Survey of the USDA Warehouses and the Paul Quinn Neighborhood District, Waco, Texas*, 22.

³⁰ Patricia Ward Wallace, *Waco A Sesquicentennial History*, (Virginia Beach: The Donning Company, 1999), 115.

³¹ Lassell and Wolfenden, *Intensive Survey of the USDA Warehouses and the Paul Quinn Neighborhood District, Waco, Texas*, 23.

³² Radford, *African American Heritage in Waco, Texas*, 117-8. The Brazos River was a physical barrier used to reinforce segregation policies.

³³ Amanda Sawyer, "Bridge Street," Wacohistory.org, <https://wacohistory.org/items/show/49?tour=7&index=10>, accessed July 10, 2019.

³⁴ Joe L. Ward, Jr., "Quiet Desegregation of Waco's Public Facilities," Waco History Project, accessed July 26, 2023: <http://wacohistoryproject.org/firstperson/joeward.html>; "C-C Report Cites Steady Progress on Race Problem," *The Waco Times-Herald*, January 9, 1964, 12B.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

until 1971.³⁵ A series of lawsuits in the early 1970s led the WISD to enact a plan in 1973 to better integrate the city's schools, involving the closure of eight elementary and middle schools and greater implementation of busing.³⁶

Black Wacoans were also negatively impacted by the urban renewal projects of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. One of the earliest urban renewal projects to impact Waco's Black community was a partnership between the Waco Urban Renewal Agency and Baylor University. The "slum clearance" project involved the removal of buildings between Fourth and First Streets and Jones and Leila Avenues near the Brazos River, the majority of which were homes, businesses, and churches owned by Black residents. Waco carried out the largest urban renewal program in Texas, completing ten urban renewal projects by the late 1970s, more than any other city. These projects were severely detrimental to communities of color.³⁷

Waco's Black community made significant political strides beginning in 1966, when Dr. Garry Radford was elected to Waco City Council, the first Black person to be elected to public office in the city. In subsequent decades, Black Texans were elected to numerous public offices. In 1974, Oscar Du Conge became the first Black mayor of Waco, and in 2004, Mae Jackson was the first Black woman to be elected mayor.³⁸

As of 2020, Black residents make up 19.4 percent of Waco's population. Efforts to preserve Waco's remaining Black cultural and built heritage are underway, including the preservation of William Decker Johnson Hall.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

In the immediate post-Civil War era, the rapid expansion of educational opportunities for Black residents in Texas was the result of the tireless efforts by the formerly enslaved. As Black Texans narrowed the primary and secondary education gaps in the early decades of Reconstruction, southern states refused to provide adequate public institutions for higher learning. Thus, privately run historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were established across the South and in Texas to educate the next generation of Black residents.

Reconstruction-Era Educational Efforts

In 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation declared freedom of 4 million Black people across the South, although for many enslaved persons were not freed until the end of the Civil War and passage of the 13th Amendment in January 1865, and in Texas not until June 19, 1865 (Juneteenth). Education of enslaved persons was strictly prohibited in the antebellum period, however, many risked violence or even death to pursue an education, often in clandestine gatherings in fields and houses under the cover of darkness.³⁹ Formerly enslaved Black Americans set out to bridge the literacy gap created by centuries of oppression and subjugation, and subsequently established thousands of schools across the U.S. and the South.⁴⁰ By 1866 there were reportedly at least 500 schools established in the South by former enslaved residents to educate rural Black children.⁴¹

³⁵ Wei-ling Gong, "A History of Integration of the Waco Public Schools: 1954 to the Present," (Baylor University, 1987), 15-32.

³⁶ Ibid., 41-59.

³⁷ Allie Roberts, "Urban Renewal: Baylor University Project," Waco History, accessed August 11, 2023: <https://wacohistory.org/items/show/229>.

³⁸ Radford, *African American Heritage in Waco, Texas*, 141-5; Allie Roberts, "Dr. Mae Jackson," Waco History, accessed August 15, 2023: <https://wacohistory.org/items/show/223>.

³⁹ Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 5.

⁴⁰ Young, "Black Colleges and Universities," 40; Library of Congress, "Emancipation and Reconstruction," accessed August 16, 2023, <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/immigration/african/emancipation-and-reconstruction/>.

⁴¹ Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 5.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Black religious congregations also formed free, church-sponsored Sabbath schools that primarily operated in the evenings and on weekends to promote literacy. By 1868 the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church had enrolled nearly 40,000 students in Sabbath schools across the South, and 200,000 by 1885.⁴² Despite significant barriers, the efforts of Black residents throughout the South to improve literacy were largely successful, and between the 1860s and 1880 illiteracy among the formerly enslaved population dropped from 95 to 70 percent, and reached 30 percent by 1910.⁴³ By the 1870s, efforts to expand educational opportunities to secondary and collegiate levels were increasing.⁴⁴

Dr. Van S. Allen, former Vice Principal of Paul Quinn College (1985-1990) described the transformative power of access to education at the turn of the twentieth century, and particularly an education that was led by the Black community. Allen, the oldest of nine children born to Mississippi sharecroppers with an elementary-level education, recounted that:

When I started school, the Black kids had five months of the school year and the White children had seven months. The White children who lived on the farms like we did were picked up by buses and bused to school. The people who taught us were people who were genuinely interested in teaching, and they went to all ends to give the best they could give to teaching us. We learned to appreciate our circumstances as poor people and Black people and sharecroppers in Mississippi. They spent a great deal of time explaining to us what had happened to our ancestors and what we would need to do in order to help change the circumstances to a more inviting, supportive, and otherwise encouraging living experience.⁴⁵

For Allen's parents, and the parents of many young southern Black children of the era, education was fundamental, and "in their experiences, they were convinced that education was the principal vehicle for changing one's life experiences and they encouraged education at every opportunity."⁴⁶

Expansion of Black Higher Education in Texas and the South

There were three Black colleges in the U.S. founded prior to the Civil War, Cheyney University in Pennsylvania (1837), Lincoln University in Pennsylvania (1854-1856), and Wilberforce University in Ohio (1856).⁴⁷ In 1862, the passage of Morrill Act allowed the federal government to establish public land-grant colleges, although it did not require provisions for colleges that would admit Black students. Some states did choose to establish Black land-grant colleges, and between 1870 and 1890 nine were established in the South.⁴⁸ In 1876 revisions to the Texas Constitution codified racial segregation and required separate schools for White and Black children. Thus, the first and only state-funded college for Black students was founded as the Alta Vista Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas for Colored Youth. In 1878, the school's stewardship was passed to the board of Texas Agricultural & Mechanical College (Texas A&M), and the following year was converted to a co-educational Normal School to prepare teachers to work in the growing number of Black primary and secondary schools. Enrollment increased, and in 1899 the school's name was changed to Prairie View State Normal & Industrial College (present-day Prairie View A&M).⁴⁹

⁴² Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 15.

⁴³ Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, Ebook 65.

⁴⁴ M. Christopher Brown II. "The Declining Significance of Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Relevance, Reputation, and Reality in Obamamerica." *The Journal of Negro Education* 82, no. 1 (2013): 3–19. <https://doi.org/10.7709/jnegroeducation.82.1.0003>.

⁴⁵ Dr. Van S. Allen, "The significance of HBCUs and Paul Quinn College." Interviewed by Rebecca Wallisch on the Paul Quinn campus in Waco, May 6, 2023.

⁴⁶ Dr. Van S. Allen, "The significance of HBCUs and Paul Quinn College."

⁴⁷ Young, "Black Colleges and Universities," 40.

⁴⁸ Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, Ebook 388; National Archives, "Morrill Act 1862," accessed August 16, 2023, <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/morrill-act>.

⁴⁹ Shabaz, *Advancing Democracy*, 11-12; Prairie View A&M University, "College History," accessed August 10, 2023, https://www.pvamu.edu/about_pvamu/college-history/.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

By the late nineteenth century, with only one public university available to Black residents of Texas, numerous privately funded colleges and universities were founded throughout the state. In 1872 Paul Quinn College was established by Black ministers of the AME church. In subsequent years several other Black colleges were established in Texas: Wiley College in 1873, Tillotson College in 1877, Bishop College in 1881, and Guadalupe College in 1884 (Table 2).⁵⁰ By 1890 the number of HBCUs in the U.S. had grown to over 200.⁵¹ That year, the Morrill Act was expanded, requiring new Black land-grant institutions or for existing institutions to include programs for Black citizens.⁵² This resulted in the establishment of at least 16 additional HBCUs.⁵³

In 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court decided the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case, which created a discriminatory policy of ‘separate but equal’ education. As a result of the case, Black colleges began incorporating teacher training programs into their curriculums to create a large pool of educators to work in the country’s segregated school systems.⁵⁴ However, as demand for higher education increased, state-run Black colleges and universities could not keep pace with the needs of the community, and thus collegiate-level study was left largely to private colleges and universities.⁵⁵

Just as private HBCUs were gaining their footing, broader changes to the collegiate-level landscape in the early twentieth century made the situation even more challenging. The creation of national and state accreditation agencies established more formal definitions of “high school,” “college,” and “university,” and within a short period the lists of accredited universities were adopted as the standard bearers for institutions of higher education. Processes for accreditation typically considered enrollment, endowment funds, and graduation rates, which placed an undue burden on HBCUs, many of whom struggled to stay fiscally solvent.⁵⁶ In the early twentieth century, many of the HBCUs in Texas sought accreditation from the Texas Department of Education (DOE) and the Southern Association of Colleges as a means of legitimizing the institutions. Tillotson, Wiley, Samuel Huston, Guadalupe, St. Philips, Bishop, Paul Quinn, and Texas colleges all received accreditation from the Texas DOE by 1933, although Paul Quinn struggled over subsequent decades to maintain their accreditation status.⁵⁷

HBCUs continued to be the primary source of collegiate study for Black students throughout the early decades of twentieth century. In 1915 there were 2,474 Black students enrolled in collegiate grades in southern states and the Washington, D.C. area, with only 12 students enrolled in public land-grant schools.⁵⁸ In 1926, 75 percent of the 13,860 Black college students in the U.S. were enrolled at private colleges.⁵⁹

During the 1920s and 1930s, the Black social and professional elite in Texas began to form a civil rights movement, advocating for participation in primary elections through a series of court cases. After achieving some success in the political arena, they turned their attention to the issue of higher education.⁶⁰ Scholars argue that in many ways, the fight for access to higher education in Texas and the South sowed the seeds for later civil rights advocacy in the post-war era. Their goals were threefold; to continue advocating for a Black branch of the University of Texas at Austin per the separate-but-equal doctrine established in *Plessy*, more financial support for the state-funded university at Prairie View,

⁵⁰ Diana Elizabeth Williams, *Martin Hall at Texas College, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form* (National Park Service, 2018), 8-19.

⁵¹ Young, “Black Colleges and Universities,” 41; Brown, “The Declining Significance of Historically Black Colleges and Universities,” 8.

⁵² Young, “Black Colleges and Universities,” 41.

⁵³ National Archives, “Morrill Act 1862.”

⁵⁴ Young, “Black Colleges and Universities,” 41.

⁵⁵ Young, “Black Colleges and Universities,” 43.

⁵⁶ Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, Ebook 406-407.

⁵⁷ Michael R. Heintz, *Private Black Colleges in Texas 1865-1954* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1985), 64-65.

⁵⁸ Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, Ebook 388.

⁵⁹ Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, Ebook 388.

⁶⁰ Shabaz, *Advancing Democracy*, 42.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

and provisions for the state to provide financial aid to Black students pursuing education outside of Texas due to lack of state-sponsored programs.⁶¹ However, by the 1940s, Black Texans began to shift their focus to desegregation.⁶²

Post-War Higher Education in Texas

In the mid-1940s many forms of funding for HBCUs dried up, while at the same time more students were entering universities. In 1944, 27 privately accredited HBCUs (later up to 33) launched a campaign for the creation of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF). Unlike many of the earlier funding strategies, which relied on northern, primarily White philanthropists and religious organizations, this effort was entirely Black led. That year, the UNCF successfully raised \$765,000, reaching \$1.2 million in 1950, and over \$2 million in 1960. By the 1970s, it was the largest supporter of Black higher education in Texas and the U.S and helped fund Paul Quinn College.⁶³ In 1954, 90 percent of Black students enrolled at college in the U.S., or roughly 100,000 students, were at HBCUs.⁶⁴

In the 1950s and 1960s the Civil Rights Movement, a sweeping nation-wide effort led by Black activists and leaders to end segregation and legally enshrine equal rights, resulted in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.⁶⁵ These acts prohibited segregation in public spaces, made employment discrimination illegal, expanded voting rights, required school integration, and granted the federal government enforcement authority for these provisions.⁶⁶ Following desegregation, Black students sought educational opportunities at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) and Black student enrollment at all institutions of higher education increased 110 percent between 1964 and 1969.⁶⁷ Although a necessary and long overdue development, an unintended consequence of desegregation was declining enrollment at HBCUs, and consequently, a drop in funding.⁶⁸ Furthermore, while the goal of integration was to create more opportunities for Black students, the implementation methods (having Black students adopt White-centered models of education) took a psychological toll.⁶⁹

In the 1970s, amid ongoing discussions about the relevancy of HBCUs in a post-*Brown* landscape, Dr. Van S. Allen presented an address to members of the UNCF in Washington, D.C. Allen argued that while desegregation opened the door for Black students to enroll at PWIs, the assumption that these institutions were inherently better or superior to HBCUs neglected the fact that “black colleges were doing a job in education that no other colleges or universities in our nation were doing.” HBCUs were accepting students who had a variety of backgrounds and experiences but may not adhere to the strict admissions standards of PWIs. Allen argued that PWIs forced Black students to adhere to a strictly, White, Euro-centric culture instead of fostering inclusion and acceptance of all cultures. In contrast, HBCUs allowed Black students to develop a deep understanding of all cultures, but especially an understanding of Black culture.⁷⁰

⁶¹ Shabaz, *Advancing Democracy*, 25.

⁶² Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, Ebook 425.

⁶³ Williams, *Martin Hall at Texas College*, 47.

⁶⁴ Richardson and Harris, “Brown and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), 371.

⁶⁵ National Park Service, “The Modern Civil Rights Movement 1954-1964,” accessed August 10, 2023, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/civilrights/modern-civil-rights-movement.htm>.

⁶⁶ National Archives, “Civil Rights Act 1964,” accessed August 10, 2023, <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/civil-rights-act#:~:text=This%20act%2C%20signed%20into%20law,and%20made%20employment%20discrimination%20illegal.>

⁶⁷ Walter Allen, R., Joseph O. Jewell, Kimberly A. Griffin, and De’Sha S. Wolf. “Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Honoring the Past, Engaging the Present, Touching the Future.” *The Journal of Negro Education* 76, no. 3 (2007): 269.

⁶⁸ Cox, Alan and Jamie Crawley. “Texas Main Street Rehabilitation Study.”

⁶⁹ Jeanita W. Richardson, and J. John Harris. “Brown and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs): A Paradox of Desegregation Policy.” *The Journal of Negro Education* 73, no. 3 (2004): 365–78. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4129618>.

⁷⁰ Van S. Allen, “The Basic Case for UNCF,” Accessed August 16, 2023.

<https://sakai.unc.edu/access/content/user/vschoenb/Public%20Library/People/People/VanAllen/0-files/UNCF-Fundraising-SREB-VanAllen-1970.pdf>.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

In the 1980s, some HBCUs, including Spelman, Morehouse, Howard, Xavier, saw their enrollment increase significantly, when White enrollment increased 41 percent, and Asian/Pacific Islander enrollment 31 percent.⁷¹ However, many of the smaller institutions, like Paul Quinn College, struggled to compete with PWIs for students and funding.

HBCUs in the Twenty-first Century

The enduring significance of HBCUs is evident in the overall graduation rates and employment successes of alumni. By the early 2000s, there were 107 HBCUs in the U.S. educating over 300,000 students and employing over 14,000 faculty.⁷² In 2006, HBCUs enrolled 14 percent of Black undergraduate students, but graduated 28 percent of Black undergraduates who earned a degree. Around the same time, it was reported that 70 percent of Black doctors, 35 percent of Black lawyers, and 50 percent of Black teachers and engineers had degrees from HBCUs.⁷³

History and Development of Paul Quinn College Campus

Early Foundation

Paul Quinn College was founded in 1872 in Austin as the Connectional School for the Education of Negro Youth.⁷⁴ Founded by a group of African Methodist Episcopal (AME) preachers, the school was first housed at the Metropolitan AME Church in Austin, until it relocated to Waco in 1877. The first campus in Waco was located between 8th and Mary Streets (present-day Greyhound Bus Stop at 301 W. 8th Street).⁷⁵ The school was initially established as a vocational school to train students in blacksmithing, carpentry, saddlery, and other trade skills, although it eventually expanded its curriculum to include teacher training programs and liberal arts departments.⁷⁶

In 1881, leadership at Paul Quinn exchanged their lot in downtown Waco and paid an additional \$3,500 to J.C. Frazier for a 20-acre lot being Lot No. 1 of the Old Hood Homestead (also referred to as the Garrison Plantation) on the east side of the Brazos River (Figure 1).⁷⁷ That year, the school was renamed Paul Quinn College after AME Bishop William Paul Quinn, it was officially chartered by the State of Texas, and five faculty members taught courses in mathematics, music, Latin, theology, English, printing, carpentry, sewing, and domestic work.⁷⁸ In 1882, a three-story, wood frame building was constructed to house elementary, secondary, and college level courses.⁷⁹ Around 1890 the campus's first brick building was constructed for \$1,200, funded by a 'ten cents a brick' campaign (Figures 2 and 7, Table 1). Over the years it served as the Boys Dormitory, Girls Dormitory, Administration Building, and later laboratory (extant). In 1893 Elm Avenue adjacent to the campus was paved and in 1899 a wood frame chapel was constructed for \$414, followed by the J.K. Williams residence for \$290.21 in 1900, and another building in 1904 that cost \$15,491 (Figure 9).⁸⁰

⁷¹ Allen, Jewell, Griffin, and Wolf, "Historically Black Colleges and Universities," 271.

⁷² Glenn S. Johnson, Vance Gray, Lolita D. Gray, N. Latrice Richardson, Shirley A. Rainey-Brown, Kimberly L. Triplett, and Luisa E. Bowman. "Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the Twenty First Century: An Exploratory Case Study Analysis of Their Mission." *Race, Gender & Class* 24, no. 3-4 (2017), 47.

⁷³ Johnson, et al. "Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the Twenty First Century," 48.

⁷⁴ Cox, Alan and Jamie Crawley. "Texas Main Street Rehabilitation Study: Johnson Hall Historic Paul Quinn College Campus, Waco, Texas."

⁷⁵ *A Brief History of Paul Quinn College*, 25.

⁷⁶ "From Small Trade School to Modern 4-Year Education Center: A Century of Development," *Waco Tribune*, March 5, 1972, 5.

⁷⁷ *A Brief History of Paul Quinn College*, 35-36.

⁷⁸ Cox, Alan and Jamie Crawley. "Texas Main Street Rehabilitation Study: Johnson Hall Historic Paul Quinn College Campus, Waco, Texas;" "Annual Catalogue of Paul Quinn College 1962-1964," Waco: Paul Quinn Weekly Print, 1964.

⁷⁹ Hales, "Paul Quinn College."

⁸⁰ *A Brief History of Paul Quinn College*, 37.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

In December of 1901, the main building on the campus was lost in a devastating fire. The three-story brick building had served as classrooms on the first two floors and as a girl's dormitory on the third floor (Figure 8). It also housed the majority of the college's books, which were destroyed. The building was not insured, presenting a significant financial hurdle to the college in rebuilding.⁸¹ Construction of a new building began in August of 1902, and utilized some of the bricks from the original structure. The new, three-story building was intended to be "much more imposing" than the previous building, although it was arranged in a similar manner with classrooms on the first two floors and a girls dormitory on the third floor (Figure 10, Table 1).⁸² A new challenge arose during its construction, when the boys dormitory was lost in a fire almost exactly one year later.⁸³ It appears that the first two floors of the new main building were completed by 1903, but the college struggled to raise the funds to complete the third floor dormitory until 1906.⁸⁴ The new building was named Grant Hall in 1914, after Bishop Abraham Grant bequeathed approximately \$2,000 to Paul Quinn College in his will. The funds were used to complete the long-awaited girl's dormitory on the third story of the building.⁸⁵

Although the college was founded by the AME Church, it was not a religious school or seminary. The school catalogue from 1900-1901 stated that, "While the college is the property of the AME Church, there is nothing sectarian taught in classes and no effort is made to persuade persons to change their religious beliefs."⁸⁶ That year, admission to Paul Quinn required applicants to submit testimonials about their character and evidence of good standing from their previous school.⁸⁷ At that time, Paul Quinn offered Bachelor of Divinity, Bachelor of Arts, and Bachelor of Science degrees, along with master's degrees for those who completed five or more years in the field of education and presented a thesis.⁸⁸ The school presented four major education tracks. The English Theological Course provided theological study to students who wished to become ministers but lacked the finances or time to complete a full seminary. The Normal track was for teachers in training, the Industrial track included specializations in printing, carpentry, mechanics, and ladies industrial (crocheting, dressmaking, housekeeping, and cleaning), and the Music track prepared students for careers in musical performance.⁸⁹

In addition to coursework, students at Paul Quinn were active in extracurricular activities. In 1903, the college hosted the statewide oratorical contest (debate) for HBCU students in Texas. That year, seven of the total eleven HBCUs were present at the contest, including Prairie View, Wiley, Marshall, Bishop, Tillotson, and Sam Houston.⁹⁰ In 1907, Paul Quinn had 205 youth seeking an education, although many were likely enrolled as secondary (high school level) students.⁹¹ In 1915, Paul Quinn asserted that its students, through their subsequent contributions to the workforce in its first 34 years in Waco, turned out an annual average of \$25,000 to the local economy.⁹²

In the 1920s the campus continued to expand, and William Decker Johnson Hall was completed at that time. The initial estimate for construction was \$162,000, however lack of funds meant that only a portion of the proposed building was completed, for an actual cost of \$64,000, although final totals differed in various publications (Figure 11).⁹³ In subsequent years, additional paving of the roadways along Elm Avenue and Garrison Street was completed. In 1926, Sanborn Fire

⁸¹ "Famous Negro School at Waco Greatly Damaged by Fire," *The Houston Post*, December 16, 1901.

⁸² "Work Begun," *Waco Times Herald*, August 21, 1902.

⁸³ "Fire Last Night," *Waco Times Herald*, January 11, 1903.

⁸⁴ "Timely Aid Given in Finishing Building," *Waco Times Herald*, January 26, 1906.

⁸⁵ "Paul Quinn's Annual Commencement," *Waco Times Herald*, May 27, 1914.

⁸⁶ "Annual Catalogue of Paul Quinn College 1900-1901," Waco: Paul Quinn Weekly Print, 1901.

⁸⁷ "Annual Catalogue of Paul Quinn College 1900-1901."

⁸⁸ "Annual Catalogue of Paul Quinn College 1900-1901."

⁸⁹ "Annual Catalogue of Paul Quinn College 1900-1901," 10-14.

⁹⁰ "Negro Oratorical Contest," *San Antonio Daily Light*, March 30, 1903, p4.

⁹¹ "White Man Responsible," *Galveston Daily News*, November 17, 1907, 16.

⁹² "Paul Quinn College Wants New Course," *Waco Morning News*, April 25, 1915, 26.

⁹³ *A Brief History of Paul Quinn College*, 37

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Insurance maps show four main school buildings on the property: the 1903 Grant Hall building, the ca. 1899 then-laboratory at the center of campus, William Decker Johnson Hall, and a Home Economics Building at the northwest edge of the campus. Several residences were also located on campus for faculty. By that time, many of the college's early wood frame buildings had been destroyed or demolished (Figure 3, Table 1).⁹⁴

In the 1924-25 school year, total collegiate level enrollment at Paul Quinn was 98, with an additional 100 students enrolled in the "academy," the secondary high school level of classes. In 1925-26 those numbers increased to 166 total enrolled in collegiate study, reaching a peak of 198 in collegiate study in 1927-1928. In 1928, Paul Quinn had seven full-time faculty, all of whom were Black, and four of whom held master's degrees.⁹⁵ Around that time, Paul Quinn phased out the academy at the campus to focus on collegiate level study. That, combined with the economic collapse of the stock market, saw enrollment decline significantly to 79 in the 1928-1929 school year.⁹⁶

The onset of the Great Depression stymied the growth of the college during the 1930s. In 1932 Paul Quinn's enrollment had only increased slightly to 125 students and the college carried a debt burden of \$42,000.⁹⁷ Undeterred, leadership at the college was committed to improving the campus, and then-President A. J. Jackson urged students and teachers to assist with fixing up the buildings. Jackson organized Progressive clubs and enlisted alumni, friends, and AME congregations to fundraise for the school. By 1936, Jackson's efforts had paid off when the college had reduced its debt by over \$10,000 and increased enrollment to nearly 300 students.⁹⁸ Furthermore, Jackson collaborated with other HBCUs, including the public Prairie View A&M, to enlist faculty members to teach at Paul Quinn College.

Post-War College Expansion

Following World War II, enrollment increased as returning veterans sought to expand their employment opportunities through advanced education. In 1948, Paul Quinn boasted an enrollment of 518 students, 20 children at the nursery school, 53 in the in-service teacher section, and 39 faculty. Students attended from as far away as Oklahoma City and Alabama, although a majority came from within an 80-mile radius of Waco.⁹⁹ At that time, room, board, and tuition for nine months cost \$250 and day students paid \$37.25 per semester or \$125 for 12 months.¹⁰⁰ That year, the school hired its first business manager, M.P. Harvey, Jr., who embarked on yet another campaign to promote and expand the college. Under his tenure, which lasted from 1948-1954, six new buildings were added to the campus.¹⁰¹ The 1926 (updated to 1952) Sanborn map of the campus showed the ca. 1890 Administration Building at the center of campus, the 1903 Grant Hall, the 1923 William Decker Johnson Hall, the 1948 George B. Young Auditorium, the 1948 Vocational Building, a chapel under construction, a laundry building, a dining hall, and several faculty residences (Figure 4). In the early 1950s, the Joseph Gomez Administration Building, Sheppard Gymnasium, and a new chapel were completed on campus (Table 1).¹⁰²

In 1953, a tornado hit Waco, causing damage to many of Paul Quinn's buildings, including Old Grant Hall, the girl's dormitory building which had already been previously damaged by a fire in 1952 (Figures 5 and 17). In 1956, a fire also

⁹⁴ Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, "Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Waco, McLennan County, Texas, 1926," accessed January 19, 2024, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g4034wm.g4034wm_g08803192601/?sp=80&st=image&r=-0.304,0.258,1.503,0.924,0.

⁹⁵ "Bulletin - Bureau of Education." United States: Bureau of Education, 1928, available on Google Books, 863.

⁹⁶ "Report of the President - Paul Quinn College Waco, May 1929" Located at the Texas Collection at Baylor University.

⁹⁷ Hales, "Paul Quinn College."

⁹⁸ Hales, "Paul Quinn College."

⁹⁹ Castle, Melissa, "Original Purposes Kept by Paul Quinn College," *Dallas Morning News*, March 9, 1948. In Paul Quinn - Vertical File.

¹⁰⁰ Castle, Melissa, "Original Purposes Kept by Paul Quinn College," *Dallas Morning News*, March 9, 1948. In Paul Quinn - Vertical File.

¹⁰¹ *A Brief History of Paul Quinn College*, 47.

¹⁰² Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, "Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Waco, McLennan County, Texas, 1926 updated to 1952," accessed January 19, 2024, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g4034wm.g4034wm_g08803195201/?sp=70.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

destroyed the newly built chapel on the campus, completed only six years prior.¹⁰³ Part of Harvey's efforts included a large-scale fundraising drive in the 1950s for the construction of a new girl's dormitory and library. The drive involved nearly 300 Waco businesses, education, and religious leaders, and was endorsed by the Waco Chamber of Commerce, although it was expected that most of the funds would be raised by AME churches throughout Texas.¹⁰⁴ After successfully raising sufficient funds, the new Abraham Grant Dormitory (Grant Hall), was formally opened in 1954 (Table 1, Map 6).

In the academic years between 1962-1964, the school had expanded to add programs in Biology, Chemistry, Social Science, History and Political Science, Sociology, Elementary and Secondary Education, Psychology, Business and Economics, Modern Language, and others.¹⁰⁵ In 1965 the Paul Quinn campus had grown to include 15 buildings, although average enrollment had declined to 350 students.¹⁰⁶ This was likely to due to expanded opportunities for Black students at PWIs following integration. Despite declining enrollment, campus improvements continued in the 1960s and 1970s, with the construction new two new dormitories (Lucy Hughes Hall and Richard Allen Hall), the Sherman-Abington Library, the Sherman Science Hall, the Moody Liberal Arts Building, the Kultgen Jackson Gymnasium, and the Adams College Center (Table 1, Map 6, Figures 6 and 18).

As Baylor University and Waco Community College expanded, and integration slowly allowed for other educational opportunities, Paul Quinn was in dire financial circumstances by the 1980s, like many other HBCUs.¹⁰⁷ At that time, nearly 95 percent of students at Paul Quinn required financial aid, the buildings were deteriorating and in need of repair, and the institution had an endowment of less than \$1 million.¹⁰⁸ In an effort to improve the college's financial circumstances Norman Handy, who was selected president of the college in 1982, reorganized the school's administration, hired entirely new staff, and emphasized fundraising efforts. Handy also pushed for joining programming with Texas State Technical institute so that Paul Quinn students could earn degrees in engineering and computer science. In 1983, the graduating class of Paul Quinn was down to 77 students.¹⁰⁹ Although the school was faced with diminished enrollment and lack of funding, its impact to the surrounding community was still solidly felt in the 1980s, when reportedly 70 percent of the Black teachers and principals in the Waco school system were graduates of Paul Quinn.¹¹⁰

Paul Quinn Moves to Dallas

In 1988 Bishop College in Dallas, also an HBCU, was forced to close following a decade of financial uncertainty and declining enrollment.¹¹¹ In 1990 businessman Comer Cottrell spent nearly \$1.5 million to purchase the defunct Bishop College campus, which he subsequently offered to Paul Quinn under a lease-purchase agreement.¹¹² Paul Quinn was faced with a difficult decision, but felt that the competition for higher education in Waco was stiff and their debt burden high, so in September 1990, Paul Quinn relocated to the 132-acre Dallas campus.¹¹³ After Paul Quinn vacated the Waco campus, the buildings were abandoned and fell into disuse. In the early 2010s, the Rappaport Academy (a K-12 charter

¹⁰³ Turner, Thomas E. "Paul Quinn College Starts on Library," *Dallas News*, March 11, 1963. In Paul Quinn – Vertical File.

¹⁰⁴ "Drive Begun to Expand Paul Quinn Negro College," *Dallas Morning News*, March 28, 1954. In Paul Quinn – Vertical File.

¹⁰⁵ "Annual Catalogue of Paul Quinn College 1962-1964," Waco: Paul Quinn Weekly Print, 1964. Available at Dolph Briscoe Center for American History.

¹⁰⁶ *A Brief History of Paul Quinn College*, 47.

¹⁰⁷ Hales, "Paul Quinn College."

¹⁰⁸ Rhodes, Joe. "Paul Quinn: Texas' Smallest Liberal Arts College," In Paul Quinn – Vertical File.

¹⁰⁹ Rhodes, Joe. "Paul Quinn: Texas' Smallest Liberal Arts College," In Paul Quinn – Vertical File.

¹¹⁰ Rhodes, Joe. "Paul Quinn: Texas' Smallest Liberal Arts College," In Paul Quinn – Vertical File.

¹¹¹ Hales, "Paul Quinn College."

¹¹² Brown, Chip, "Oldest black college wet of the Mississippi makes move," *Sherman Democrat*, July 1, 1990.

¹¹³ Hales, "Paul Quinn College."

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

school) renovated several of the buildings on the campus, including the Gomez Administration Building and Abraham Grant Dormitory, for use as a middle and high school.¹¹⁴

Founded over 150 years ago, Paul Quinn College stands as testament to the advancement of Black higher education. William Decker Johnson Hall is one of the oldest and most prominent extant buildings associated with the Paul Quinn Waco campus and serves as a monument to the legacy of Waco's Black leadership.

William Decker Johnson Hall

Despite the construction of Grant Hall in 1903, additional space was needed as the college continued to grow in the early twentieth century. Efforts to build a new dormitory for female students on the Paul Quinn campus began as early as 1917. During this time, Bishop Joshua H. Jones spearheaded the fundraising effort, reaching out to the philanthropic Rockefeller education commission for \$25,000, as well as numerous districts of the AME Church.¹¹⁵ At least 20 districts of the AME Church contributed funds for the building over subsequent years, raising over \$30,000 by 1919.¹¹⁶ The fundraising effort was largely suspended during World War I, and during that time the AME funds were invested in Liberty Bonds and Treasury Certificates, which were managed by the Farmers Improvement Bank, a Black-owned bank in Dallas. Construction was delayed in the two years immediately following the war due to the high cost of building materials.¹¹⁷ Through Bishop Jones's efforts, the campus had saved nearly \$50,000 for the building's construction.¹¹⁸

The project was revived in the fall of 1920, when the Paul Quinn College board of directors authorized the construction of a new \$125,000 building to serve as a girl's dormitory. While architectural plans had not yet been selected, initial plans called for classroom spaces in the basement and first floors and dormitories for approximately 200 female students on the second and third floors. The building was to be equipped "with the best furniture that can be had."¹¹⁹

In December 1920, the Board of Trustees voted to accept the architectural plans submitted by William Sidney Pittman of Dallas for the new dormitory building (Figure 11). Pittman's original design included 70 shared bedrooms on the upper floors. The main (first) floor design included two office suites for the president and dean of the college, seven classrooms, stock rooms, bathrooms, and cloak rooms. The basement would hold laboratories, laundry, domestic art and science departments, boiler room, and janitorial rooms.¹²⁰ After approving Pittman's plans for the building, the Paul Quinn Board of Trustees asserted they planned to employ only Black builders and contractors for its completion.¹²¹

In 1921, Bishop William Decker Johnson took the reins from the former AME bishops continuing the work of fundraising for the new dormitory building, eventually amassing an additional \$100,000 during his tenure.¹²² Bishop Johnson had been ordained as the 42nd Bishop of the AME Church in 1920 with jurisdiction over numerous states,

¹¹⁴ Nelson, "Paul Quinn College."

¹¹⁵ Although articles indicate the college appealed to the Rockefeller educational commission, research was unable to confirm if the philanthropic organization ever formally contributed to the campaign. "Campaign to Assist Paul Quinn College is Very Successful," *The Waco Times*, June 7, 1917.

¹¹⁶ "Negro Methodist Conference Meets," *The Houston Post*, May 16, 1919.

¹¹⁷ "New Girls' Dormitory (Accepted Design) to be Erected on Campus of Paul Quinn College at an Approximate Cost of \$150,000," *The Dallas Express*, December 25, 1920, 1.

¹¹⁸ "Presiding Elder Howard Tells of Events Leading up to Plans for New Paul Quinn Dormitory," *The Dallas Express*, January 8, 1921.

¹¹⁹ "Paul Quinn College to Have New Building in the Near Future," *The Waco Times-Herald*, September 9, 1920, 11.

¹²⁰ "New Girls' Dormitory (Accepted Design) to be Erected on Campus of Paul Quinn College at an Approximate Cost of \$150,000," *The Dallas Express*, December 25, 1920, 1.

¹²¹ "New Girls' Dormitory (Accepted Design) to be Erected on Campus of Paul Quinn College at an Approximate Cost of \$150,000," *The Dallas Express*, December 25, 1920, 1.

¹²² "Presiding Elder Howard Tells of Events Leading up to Plans for New Paul Quinn Dormitory," *The Dallas Express*, January 8, 1921.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

including Texas.¹²³ The Trustees received bids for the construction of the new building between March and April of 1921.¹²⁴ Work began shortly afterward, and a groundbreaking ceremony was held on Friday, July 1, 1921. The event also served as a fundraiser for the project, with visitors “expected to contribute \$1 and throw one shovel full of dirt.” The Paul Quinn College Glee Club performed at the event, and Waco Mayor Ben C. Richards was a speaker.¹²⁵

Initial plans called for a “U” shaped building consisting of three wings. The project was phased in order to raise funds over time, with the central section constructed first.¹²⁶ Work on the new building proceeded throughout the summer and fall of 1921, and by October workers prepared to pour the concrete for the second story.¹²⁷ The college continued to fundraise throughout the building’s construction, holding a “ninety days campaign” collecting funds throughout the state.¹²⁸ Additional campaigns included hosting a barbeque and then weighing “every friend of the institution” and charging them 2 cents per pound.¹²⁹ In December of 1922, the building was nearing completion and was used as a temporary chapel and dining room. At that time, it was reported that construction of the building cost \$165,000. Designed with reinforced concrete for fire safety, the building was anticipated to house up to 250 girls.¹³⁰

Local newspapers announced that the building had been completed in January of 1923, and was being used as a girls’ dormitory and auditorium.¹³¹ A few months later, the building housed a chapel, dining room, and girl’s dormitory. An official cornerstone laying ceremony was held on September 27th, 1923 for the new William Decker Johnson Hall, named for the presiding bishop of the AME Church in Texas who had been instrumental in raising funds for the project.¹³²

Construction resumed in 1924, when the north wing of William Decker Johnson Hall was likely constructed (Figures 14-17).¹³³ The Black fraternal organization the Knights of Pythias of Dallas loaned the college \$20,000 in 1923, the American Woodmen loaned \$65,000 in 1924, and it was reported that additional funds were obtained from a loan company in Denver in order to complete the work.¹³⁴ At that time, the upper floors were used for the girl’s dormitory, with recitation rooms and library on the second floor. The library was in the southern section of the building in an area not initially planned for a library but included due to a state regulation requiring “affiliated educational institution[s]” to provide a library. The ground floor initially housed the manual training department for boys and the home economics department for girls. In the basement was a laundry facility. Shower baths and dining rooms were provided for girls in the new building, although their location is unknown.¹³⁵

As Johnson Hall was being completed, several other campus improvements were being conducted in the early 1920s under the leadership of then-President J.K. Williams. In addition to the dormitory building, plans for a new athletic building, enlargement of the athletic field and grandstand, construction of a 700-capacity chapel, and widespread campus landscaping were proposed or underway. Furthermore, with the construction or expansion of campus buildings, the overall campus layout was reorganized, and the main building was converted into a boy’s dormitory. Duplex apartments

¹²³ “William Decker Johnson,” Blackpast.org, accessed January 9, 2024, <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/people-african-american-history/william-decker-johnson-1869-1936/>.

¹²⁴ “Open for Bids,” *The Dallas Express*, March 26, 1921, 8.

¹²⁵ “Paul Quinn College to Inaugurate a Building Program,” *The Waco Times-Herald*, June 29, 1921, 11.

¹²⁶ “Negro College Plans Ground-Breaking Day,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, June 29, 1921, 6.

¹²⁷ “Make Good Progress on Paul Quinn Dorm,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, October 22, 1921, 7.

¹²⁸ “Forty-Second Term of Paul Quinn College Will Begin Sept. 12,” *The Waco Times-Herald*, September 3, 1922, 8.

¹²⁹ “Forty-Second Term of Paul Quinn College Will Begin Sept. 12,” *The Waco Times-Herald*, September 3, 1922, 8.

¹³⁰ “Paul Quinn College,” *Dallas Express*, December 16, 1922.

¹³¹ “Folks and Facts,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, January 31, 1923, 10.

¹³² “Paul Quinn Holds 42nd Commencement; \$13,592 Raised for School,” *Dallas Express*, June 16, 1923.

¹³³ “Expenditure of \$200,000 at Paul Quinn,” *Waco Times-Herald*, November 30, 1924, 4.

¹³⁴ “Negro Order Gives \$65,000 to Finish Girls’ Dormitory,” *Wichita Falls Times*, November 22, 1924, 4; “Expenditure of \$200,000 at Paul Quinn,” *Waco Times-Herald*, November 30, 1924, 4.

¹³⁵ “Expenditure of \$200,000 at Paul Quinn,” *Waco Times-Herald*, November 30, 1924, 4.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

for college faculty were also constructed and a science department installed. The design of the campus was intended to be laid out in a U-shape¹³⁶

During a \$15,000 renovation in 1944-1945, Johnson Hall received a new roof, new doors, and a new reception room, likely for the school chapel that was located in the building at that time.¹³⁷ In his 1949 thesis about Paul Quinn College, Baylor student Robert Randolph Debes described the multi-purpose functions of William Decker Johnson Hall. The ground floor (basement) housed the biology, chemistry, and physics laboratories, as well as three lecture rooms, supply rooms, and a shop. The library was located on the first floor of the building and housed over 18,000 books. In addition to the library, a "sound resistant music studio," lecture room, and work room were also located on the first floor. Men's dormitories were located on both the second and third floors.¹³⁸

In 1960, the first-floor library in William Decker Johnson Hall was renovated and enlarged and new furnishings were purchased, including "new blonde furniture of modern design purchased from the American Desk Company, Temple, Texas."¹³⁹ In the library, floors were bare concrete, while some offices featured beige and brown linoleum. Adjacent to the library was a reading room, with ivory-colored walls and white venetian blinds. At that time, the top two floors still housed boys' dormitory rooms and the basement held classrooms, offices, and science laboratories. The Music Department was located at the south end of the first floor.¹⁴⁰ The building lacked air conditioning and was heated using space heaters in the winter months.

William Decker Hall remained a men's dormitory on the second and third floors until 1969. During 1969 campus renovations, William Decker Johnson Hall was converted from a men's dormitory to executive and administrative offices. The basement was renovated for use as a Guidance Center and Behavioral Science Institute.¹⁴¹ Just six years later, William Decker Johnson Hall was renovated once again in 1975 to house a number of offices and meeting rooms, as well as the Black-Brown Ethnic Cultural Center and the relocated Sherman-Abington Library. Funding was provided by the Kresge Foundation of Michigan for the upgrades.¹⁴² The first floor served as a dining facility, and the second floor as a College Center with faculty lounge, recreation rooms, and meeting spaces.¹⁴³ At that time, drop in grid ceilings were added. Following the relocation of Paul Quinn College to Dallas in 1990, William Decker Hall has remained largely vacant for over 30 years.

William Sidney Pittman (1875-1958)

William Sidney Pittman was born in Montgomery, Alabama in 1875 (Figure 19). His mother worked as a laundress and his father is unknown.¹⁴⁴ He attended segregated public schools before enrolling in the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute (now Tuskegee University) at the age of 17. While at Tuskegee, Pittman's academic successes gained the attention of Booker T. Washington, founder and first President of the Institute and celebrated proponent of advancing educational opportunities for Black Americans in the Reconstruction era. Washington helped finance Pittman's further education at the Drexel Institute, at that time an all-White institution, where Pittman went on to become the first Black American to earn a degree in Architectural Drawing in 1897 (Figure 20).¹⁴⁵

¹³⁶ "Expenditure of \$200,000 at Paul Quinn," *Waco Times-Herald*, November 30, 1924, 4.

¹³⁷ "\$15,000 Repairs for Paul Quinn," *The Waco Times-Herald*, August 10, 1945, 10.

¹³⁸ Robert Randolph Debes, "A Sociological Study of Paul Quinn College, Waco, Texas," (Baylor University, 1949), 90, 95.

¹³⁹ Dolores Posey Harris, *A Survey of the Paul Quinn College Library, Waco, Texas, (Thesis)* (Atlanta: School of Library Service, 1968), 11.

¹⁴⁰ Harris, *A Survey of the Paul Quinn College Library*, 9.

¹⁴¹ "Centennial in '72: Steady Advances at Paul Quinn," *Waco Tribune Herald*, November 16, 1969.

¹⁴² Paul Quinn College Proud of its Heritage," *The Waco Citizen*, September 26, 1974, 2.

¹⁴³ "Work to Begin on Student Center," *The Waco Citizen*, July 31, 1975.

¹⁴⁴ Carolyn Perritt, "The Dissident Voice of William Sidney Pittman," Dallas Historical Society. *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas*, Volume 16, Number 1, Spring, 2004 (<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth35092/>; accessed March 23, 2023).

¹⁴⁵ Cox, Alan and Jamie Crawley. "Texas Main Street Rehabilitation Study."

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

After earning his degree, Pittman returned to Tuskegee in 1900 where he spent five years teaching before moving to Washington, D.C. and starting his own architecture practice. While in D.C., Pittman soon garnered several prominent commissions, including the Garfield Public School and the Twelfth Street YMCA. In 1906 William Pittman's design for the Negro Building at the Jamestown Tercentennial Exposition made him the first Black male architect awarded a federal commission (Figure 21).¹⁴⁶ While in D.C., Pittman also served as an editor on the *Negro Business League Herald*.¹⁴⁷

In 1907, William Sidney Pittman married Portia Washington, the eldest child and only daughter of Booker T. Washington, an accomplished musician and pianist. The couple resided in the Fairmont Heights neighborhood of Washington, D.C. until they relocated to Dallas in 1912. The family first settled on Juliette Street, before later moving into a residence at 1018 Liberty.¹⁴⁸ During his time in Dallas, William Pittman designed several buildings for the Black community. In 1915 the city issued a permit for the construction of the Grand Lodge of the Colored Knights of Pythias, a leading Black fraternal organization. Completed in 1916, it was the first major building in Dallas to be designed, built by, and paid for solely by Black Americans (NRHP 2017).¹⁴⁹ The prominent Beaux Arts building, located on Elm Avenue within the historically Black Deep Ellum neighborhood (Deep Ellum Historic District, NRHP 2023) of Dallas, also housed business offices for Black entrepreneurs, event spaces for social gatherings, social clubs, and school dances, and was the first building in Dallas to feature elevators available to be used by Black residents (Figure 22). Following the Pythias building, in 1919 Pittman was awarded the commission to design the St. James AME Church in Dallas, a Neo-Classical church building completed in 1921.¹⁵⁰

In 1921 Paul Quinn College hired Pittman to design William Decker Johnson Hall. The large, three-story building was a prominent structure, with a general T-plan and a central portico that was completed in 1923. Although only a handful of historic newspaper articles attribute the design of William Decker Johnson Hall to Pittman, the building is reminiscent of Pittman's work on the St. James AME Church in Dallas (1921), albeit more modestly adorned, with its monumental massing, classical proportions, arcaded loggia on the lower level, and prominent double staircases to the portico (Figure 23). Furthermore, other than Pittman's high-profile commissions, most of his work in Texas was not widely publicized, and only one historic architectural drawing of Pittman's Texas projects (Knights of Pythias Temple) is known to survive.¹⁵¹

By the late 1920s, Pittman's design commissions slowed, and he became increasingly frustrated with the lack of work opportunities. His disappointment and disillusionment ultimately bled into his personal life, and in 1928 his wife Portia took their three children back to Tuskegee. The onset of the Great Depression and subsequent moratorium on most building construction, combined with Pittman's reputation as mercurial and exacting, ultimately shuttered Pittman's architecture career.¹⁵²

In 1928, Pittman channeled his frustrations into a new project, his publication *Brotherhood Eyes*, which he advertised as oppositional to the local Black newspaper in Dallas, the *Dallas Express*. However, in 1936 Pittman landed in federal court on extortion charges, brought on by Edward L. Snyder of the Universal Life Insurance Company, who had been the subject of one of Pittman's controversial editorials. At his trial in 1937, Pittman was sentenced to five years in Leavenworth prison. He was 61 at the time.¹⁵³ After two years Pittman was released on parole and returned to Dallas,

¹⁴⁶ Perritt, "The Dissident Voice of William Sidney Pittman," 40.

¹⁴⁷ Perritt, "The Dissident Voice of William Sidney Pittman," 43.

¹⁴⁸ Perritt, "The Dissident Voice of William Sidney Pittman," 42.

¹⁴⁹ Perritt, "The Dissident Voice of William Sidney Pittman," 41.

¹⁵⁰ Perritt, "The Dissident Voice of William Sidney Pittman," 42.

¹⁵¹ Solamillo, Stan, "St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church Temple – Dallas Landmark Commission Form," accessed January 17, 2024, <https://dallascityhall.com/departments/sustainabledevelopment/historicpreservation/HP%20Documents/Landmark%20Structures/St%20James%20African%20Methodist%20Episcopal%20Temple%20Landmark%20Nomination.pdf>.

¹⁵² Perritt, "The Dissident Voice of William Sidney Pittman," 42.

¹⁵³ Perritt, "The Dissident Voice of William Sidney Pittman," 48.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

living in various apartments. Pittman died on March 14, 1958, and former friends at the Powell Hotel took a collection for his burial in the Glen Oaks Cemetery.¹⁵⁴

Despite the hardships of Pittman's later years, his early academic success created opportunities for him to earn an architecture degree, and he subsequently designed many important buildings in Washington, D.C., and later Texas. Pittman's designs were predominantly classically inspired, featuring symmetrical facades, large porticos with classical or Beaux Arts columns, and arched openings.

Other buildings by Pittman include (but are not limited to):

- Negro Building at the Jamestown (Virginia) Exposition c. 1906 (unclear if extant)
- Fairmount Heights School, Maryland (extant but severely deteriorated)
- Garfield Elementary, Washington, D.C. (extant)
- 12th Street Young Men's Christian Association Building, now Thurgood Marshall Center for Service and Heritage, Washington, D.C. (extant, NHL, 1983)
- Grand Lodge of the Colored Knights of Pythias Temple, Dallas 1915 (extant, NRHP 2017)
- Two buildings at Kentucky Normal and Industrial Institute for Colored Persons [now Kentucky State University]: the Trade School Building (Hathaway Hall, demolished 1967) and Hume Hall, which is still standing and houses the President's Office
- United Brothers of Friendship Lodge San Antonio 1915 (demolished)
- Various at National Religious Training School in Durham, NC 1910 (unclear if extant)
- Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), Fort Worth 1914 (extant, NRHP 1984)
- Joshua Chapel AME Church, Waxahachie 1917 (extant, Historic Resource of Waxahachie NRHP 1986)
- St. James AME Church, Dallas 1921 (extant)
- Wesley Chapel AME Church, Houston, 1926 (altered)
- Colored Carnegie Branch Library, Houston, 1913 (demolished)
- John P. Starks Residence, Dallas, c. 1918-1919 (demolished)
- Riverside Park Auditorium, Dallas, 1923 (destroyed by fire, 1930)
- West Texas Manufacturing Co., Dallas, 1923 (demolished)
- United Order of Odd Fellows Lodge//Atlanta Life Building, Houston, 1924 (demolished)¹⁵⁵

Conclusion

William Decker Johnson Hall is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for Education and Ethnic Heritage (Black) at the local level of significance. The period of significance is 1923-1975. While Paul Quinn College was historically associated with the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, the building meets Criterion Consideration A (Religious Properties) because it is primarily significant for its secular function as an educational building.

¹⁵⁴ Perritt, "The Dissident Voice of William Sidney Pittman," 49; Cox and Crawley, "Texas Main Street Rehabilitation Study" 17.

¹⁵⁵ Roark, Carol and Gary Skotnick with Greg Smith, "Grand Lodge of the Colored Knights of Pythias, Dallas, Texas," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 2017, page 14.

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William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

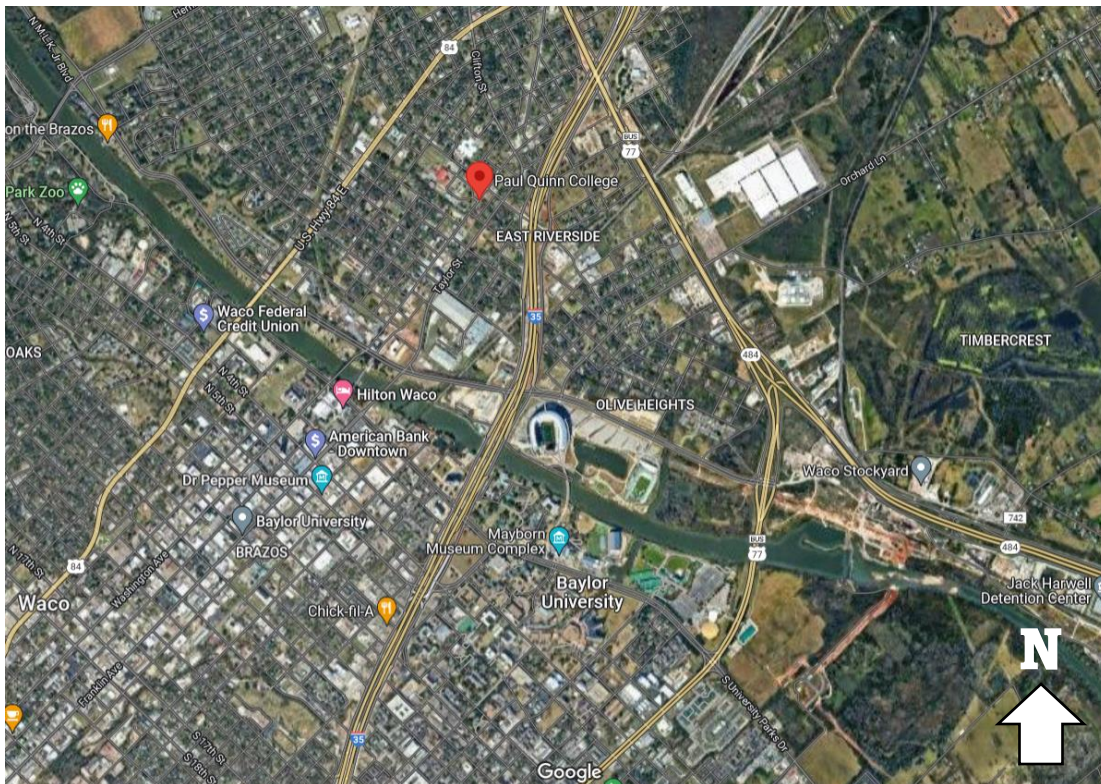
ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

MAPS

Map 1: McLennan County, Texas



Map 2: Waco, Texas showing Paul Quinn College campus, Google Maps accessed, November 8, 2022.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Map 3: William Decker Johnson Hall on former Paul Quinn College campus, accessed, November 8, 2022.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Map 4: William Decker Johnson Hall boundary shown in red, accessed, November 8, 2022.



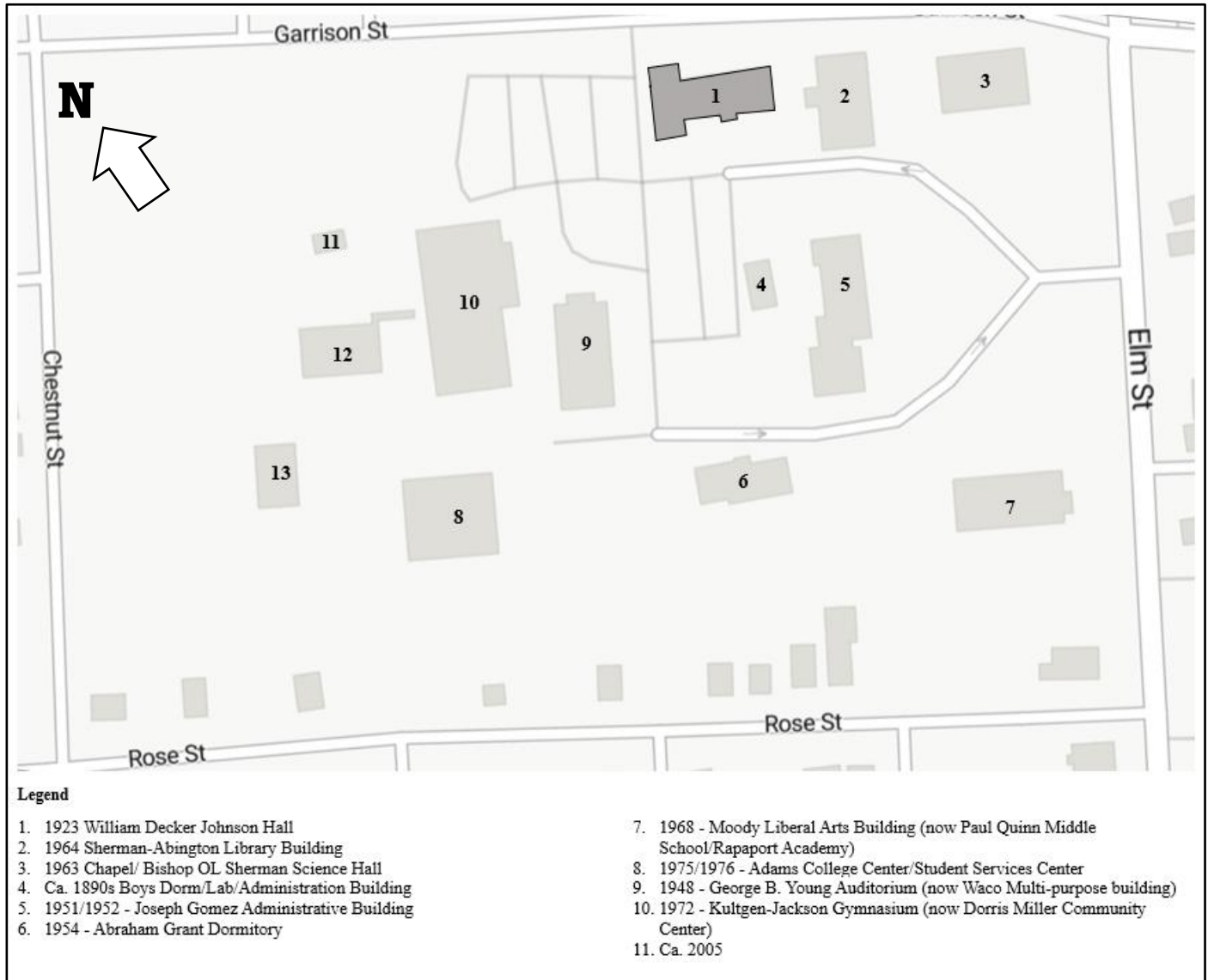
William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Map 5: McLennan County Appraisal District Map. Accessed March 8, 2024



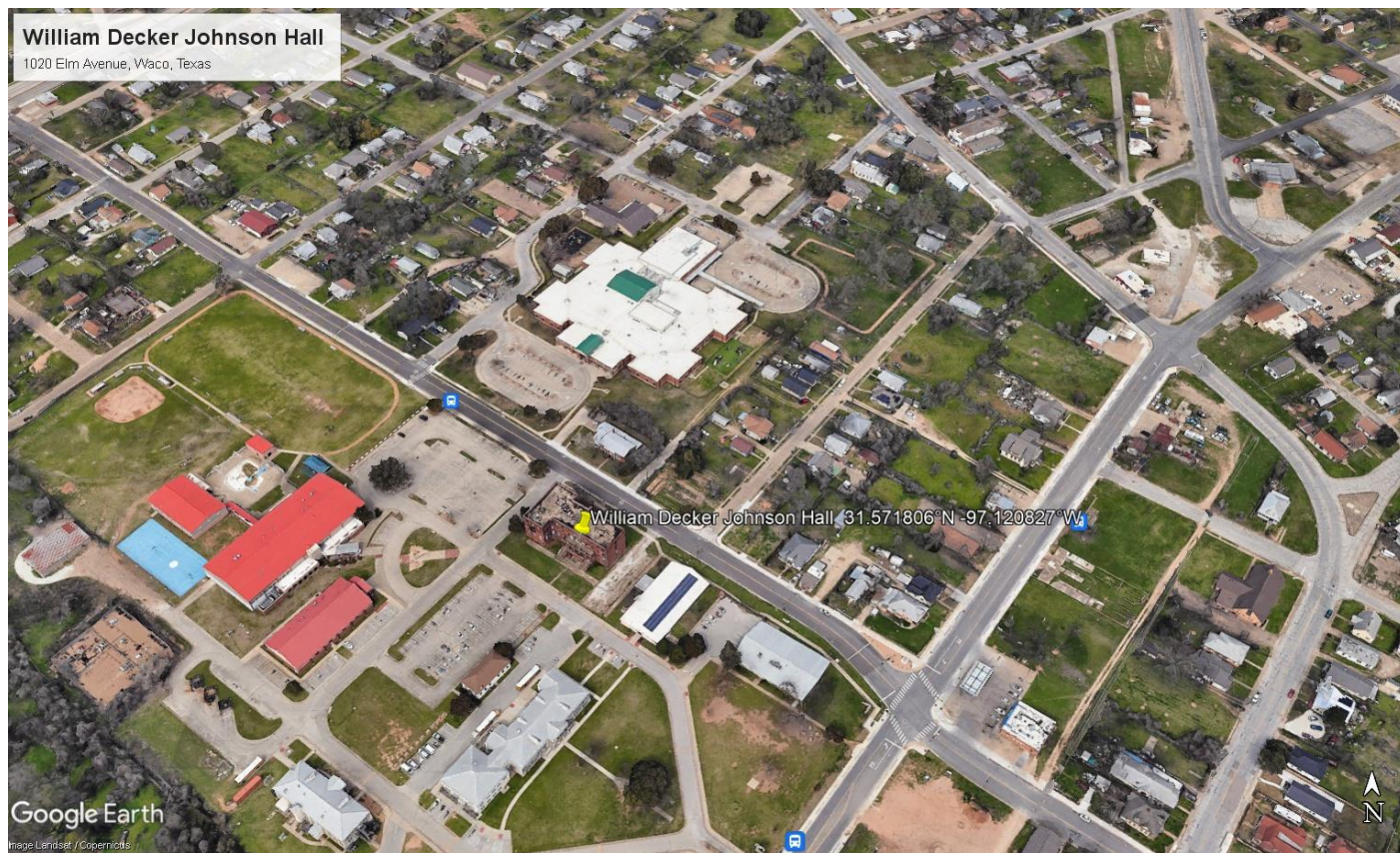
William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Map 6: 2024 Site Plan of former Paul Quinn Campus in Waco.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Map 7: Google Earth Map, accessed March 8, 2024.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

FIGURES

Figure 1: 1892 Birds Eye View depicting Paul Quinn College Campus. Westyard, A. L., and D.W. Ensign & Co. *Waco, Texas*. [n.p. D.W. Ensign & Co, 1892] Map. Source: Library of Congress.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 2: 1899 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicting Paul Quinn College Campus. The building at left "Recitation RM 1st/Girls Dormitory 2nd" burned in 1901. The "Boys Dormitory" at Center is still standing. Source: Portal to Texas History.

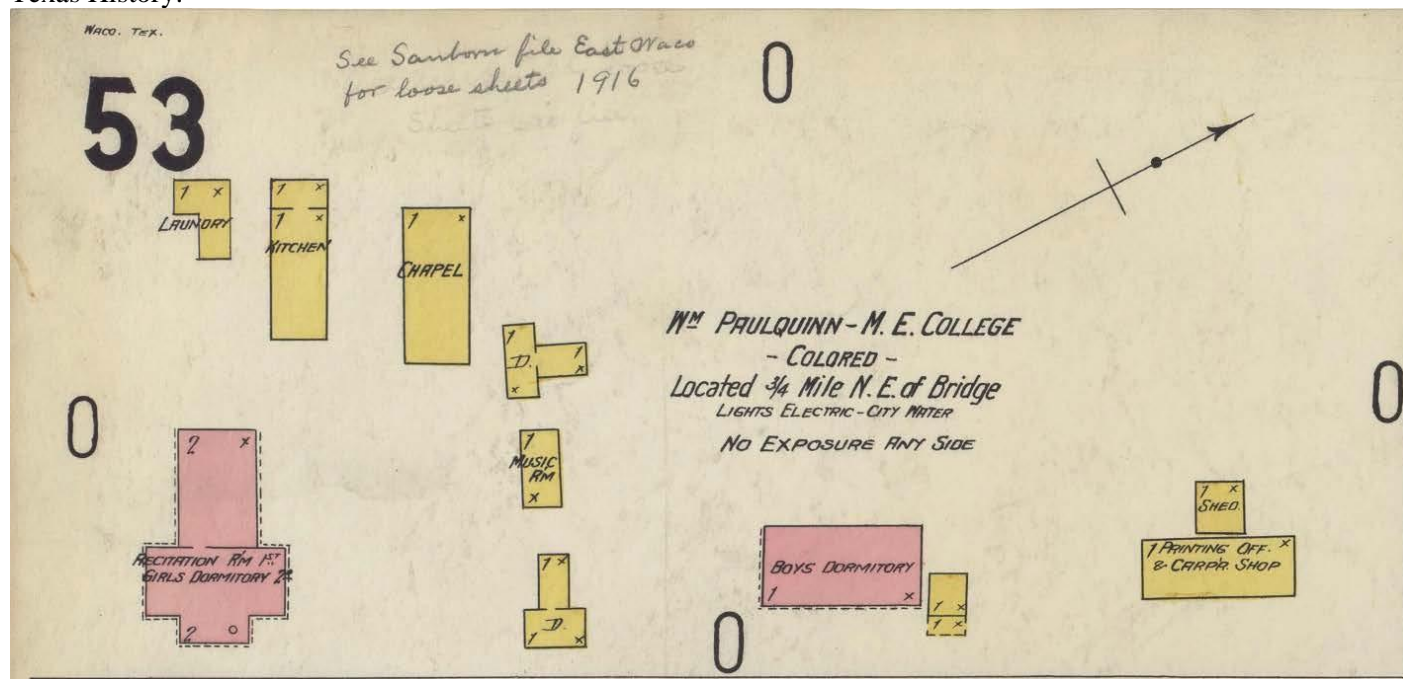
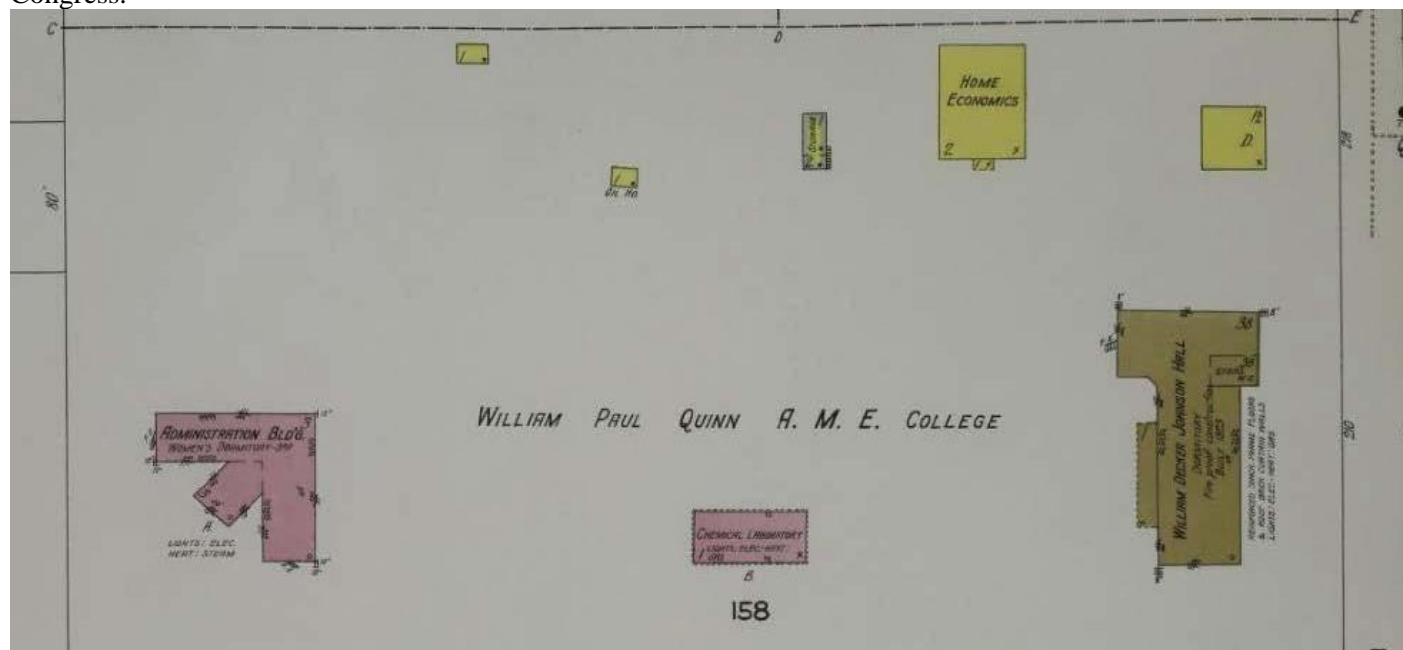
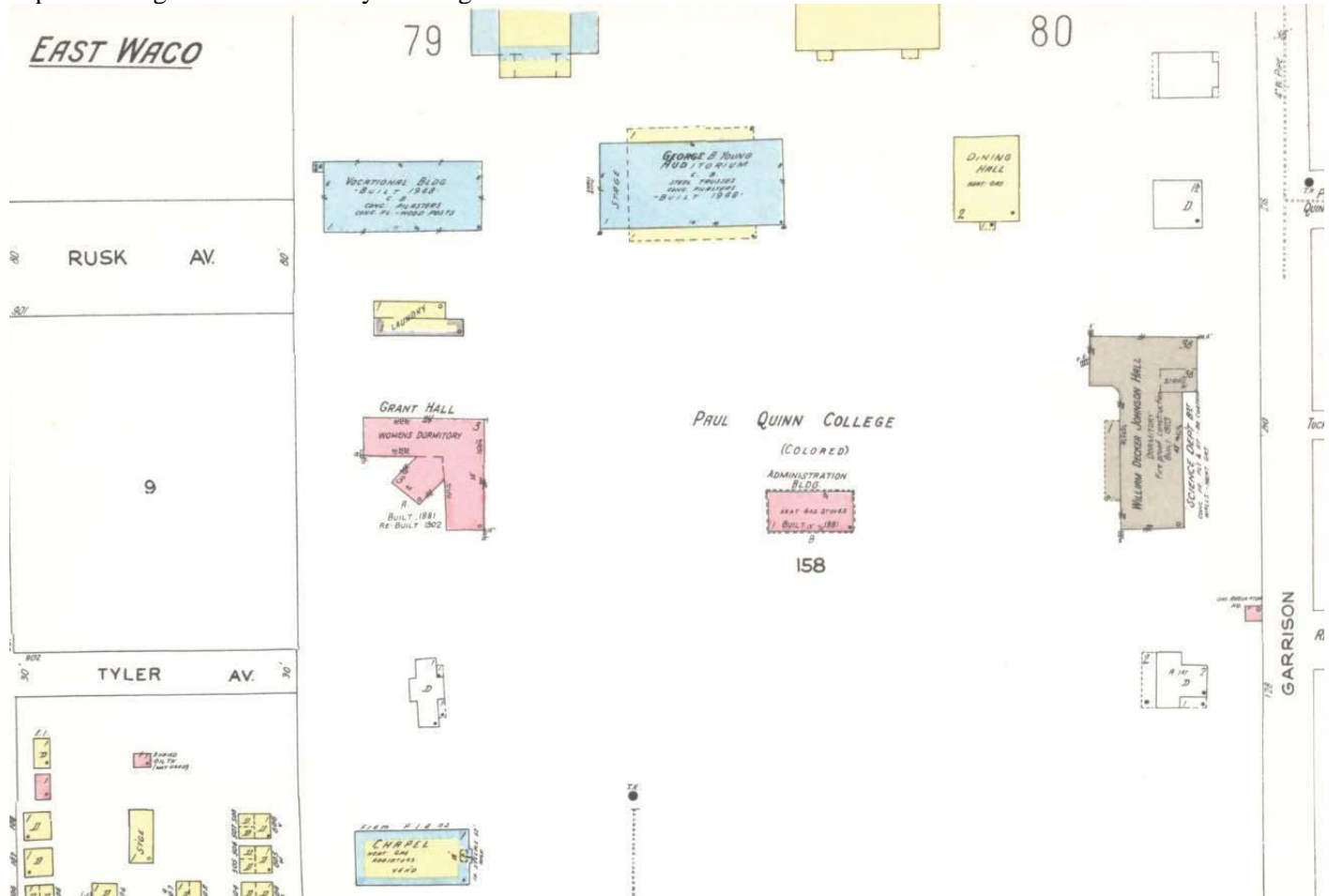


Figure 3: 1926 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicting Paul Quinn College Campus. Grant Hall, located at left, was constructed in 1903. William Decker Johnson Hall, constructed in 1922-3 is depicted at right. Source: Library of Congress.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 4: 1952 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicting Paul Quinn College Campus. William Decker Johnson Hall is depicted at right. Source: Library of Congress.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 5: 1955 Aerial photograph of Paul Quinn College courtesy of USGS Earth Explorer. William Decker Johnson Hall is the “T” Shaped building near top right.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 6: 1970 Aerial photograph of Paul Quinn College courtesy of USGS Earth Explorer. William Decker Johnson Hall is the “T” Shaped building near top right.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 7: 1898 view of Paul Quinn Campus from Elm Avenue. Source: *The Educator: Organ of the Educational Department of the A.M.E. Church*, 1, no. 1 (November 1898): 11.

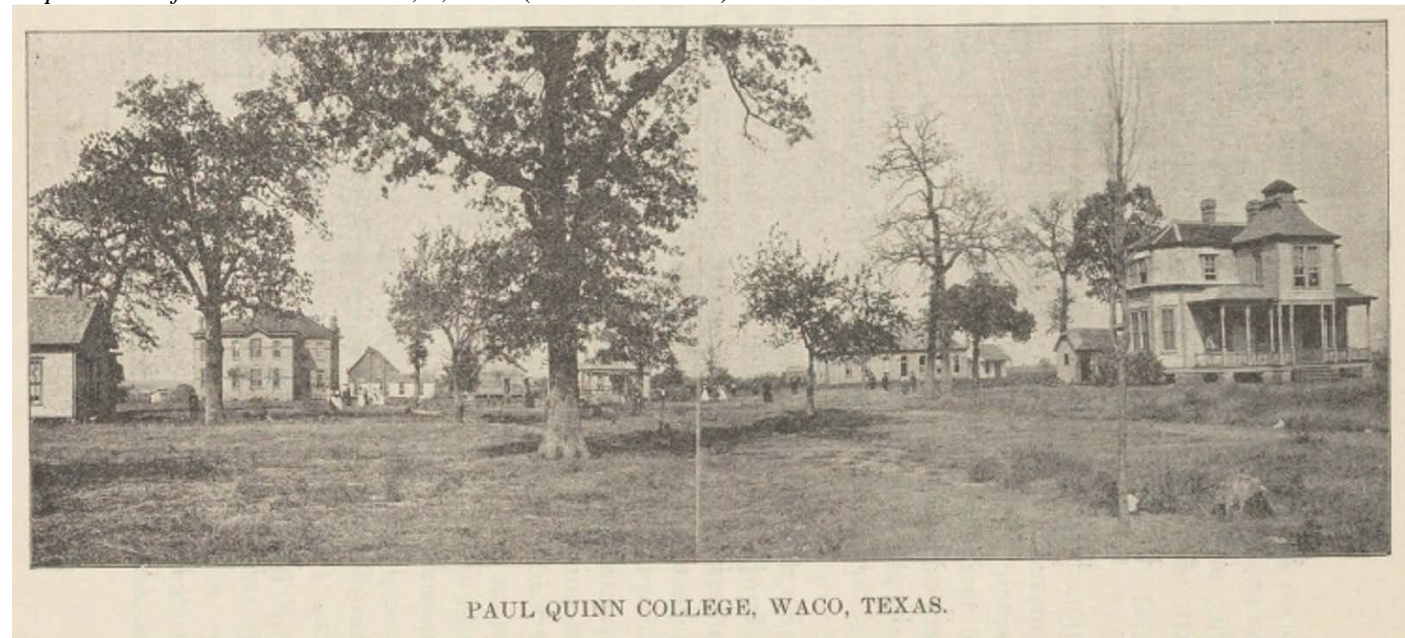


Figure 8: Circa 1901 image of original “main” campus building at Paul Quinn College. The building was lost to fire in 1901 and replaced with Grant Hall in 1902-3. Source: 1901 Paul Quinn College Catalog.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 9: Circa 1914 image of Paul Quinn College Campus, from Elm Avenue facing Northwest. Source: 1914 Paul Quinn College Catalogue. Only the hipped roof building in the background at right is extant (Building #4 on Map 6).

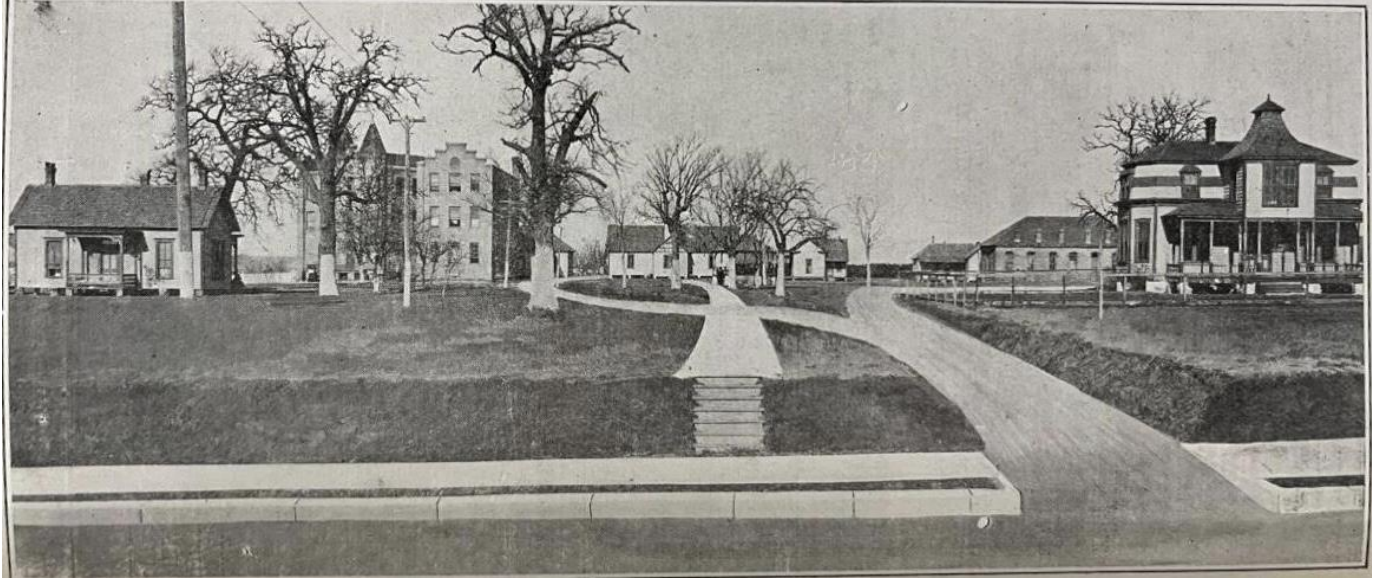
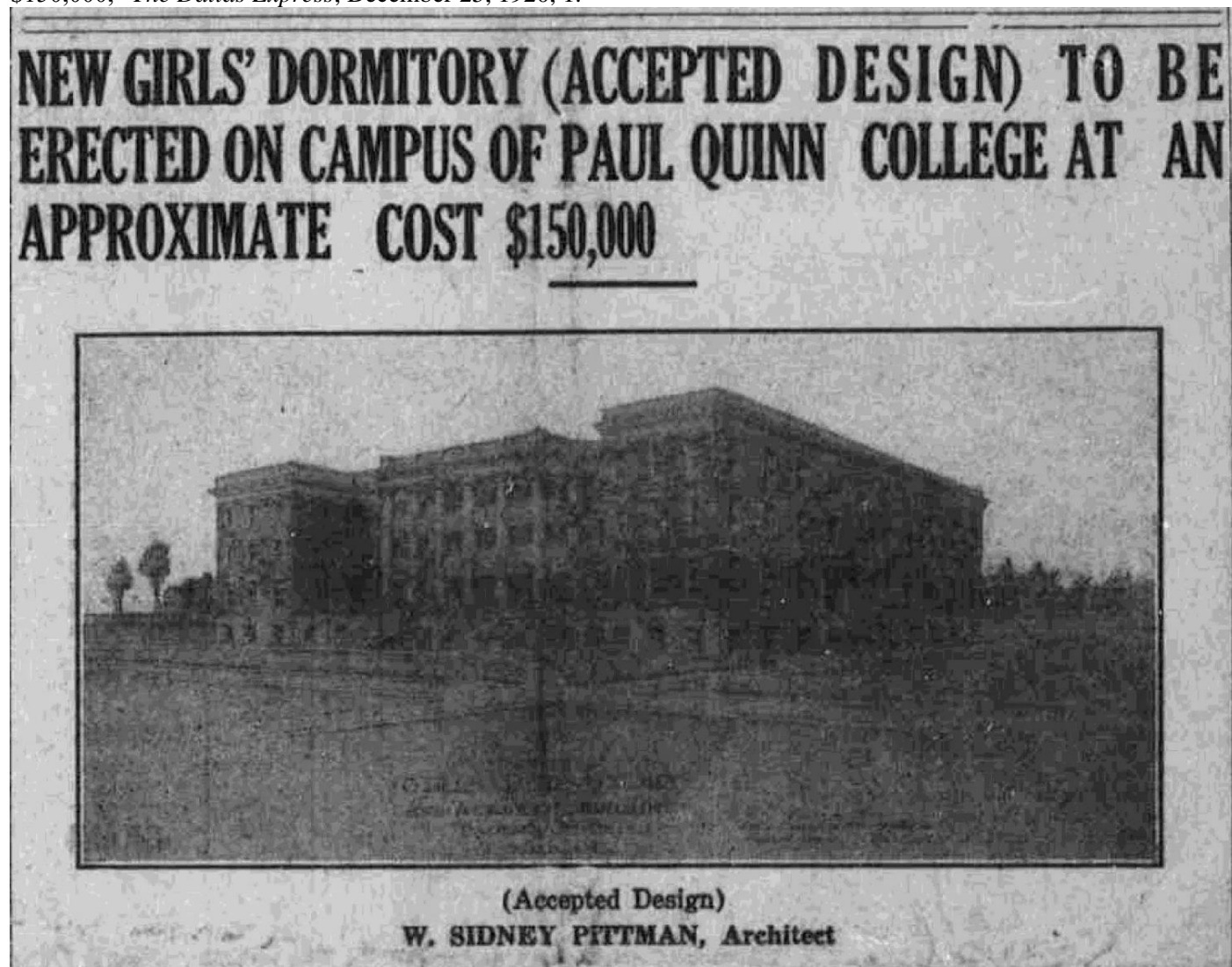


Figure 10: 1916 postcard depicting Grant Hall on the Paul Quinn College campus. Built in 1902-3 to replace the original brick main building, Grant Hall was lost to fire in 1953. Source: Agnes Warren Barnes, *Waco Texas: A Postcard Journey*, (Charleston: 1999).



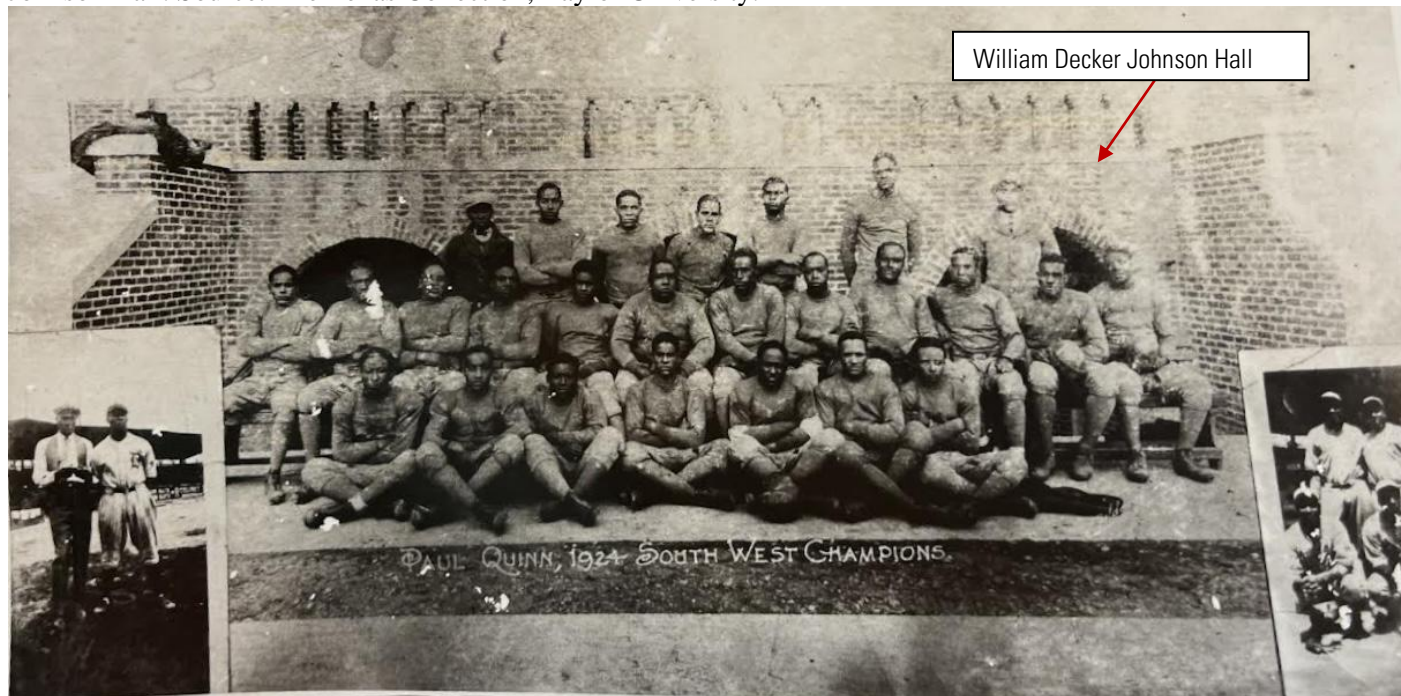
William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 11: 1920 rendering of William Decker Johnson Hall, as designed by Architect W. Sidney Pittman. Source: "New Girls' Dormitory (Accepted Design) to be Erected on Campus of Paul Quinn College at an Approximate Cost of \$150,000," *The Dallas Express*, December 25, 1920, 1.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 12: 1924 photograph depicting Paul Quinn football team in front of recently completed William Decker Johnson Hall. Source: The Texas Collection, Baylor University.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 13: 1942 interior photograph of athletic banquet in William Decker Johnson Hall. Source: The Texas Collection, Baylor University.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 14: 1947 photograph of a student in front of William Decker Johnson Hall. Source: Paul Quinn College Yearbook, 1947.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 15: Undated photograph of commencement ceremony outside of William Decker Johnson Hall (left). Source: The Texas Collection, Baylor University.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 16: 1950s Photograph of William Decker Johnson Hall. Source: The Texas Collection, Baylor University. Note that the arched openings beneath the portico have been enclosed by this time.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 17: Undated (ca. 1950s) birdseye aerial view of Paul Quinn College campus, Source: Baylor University Archives.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 18: View of Paul Quinn campus and William Decker Johnson Hall ca. 1970s. Source: Texas Collection, Baylor University.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 19: Architect William Sidney Pittman. Source: *Travel & Leisure*, <https://www.travelandleisure.com/hotels-resorts/kimpton-pittman-hotel-deep-ellum-dallas>, accessed August 23, 2023.



Figure 20: William Sidney Pittman at Drexel Institute ca. 1900. Source: <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/pittman-william-sidney-1875-1958/>, accessed August 23, 2023.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 21: Negro Building at Jamestown Exposition 1907 designed by William Sidney Pittman. Source: Library of Virginia.



Figure 22: Rendering of Pythian Temple in Dallas designed by William Sidney Pittman Source: *Dallas Express*, August 4, 1923, p7.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 23: St. James AME Church in Dallas designed by William Sidney Pittman. Source: *The Dallas Express*, January 15, 1921. Note the similarity between the arched openings beneath the portico, also originally featured on William Decker Johnson Hall.

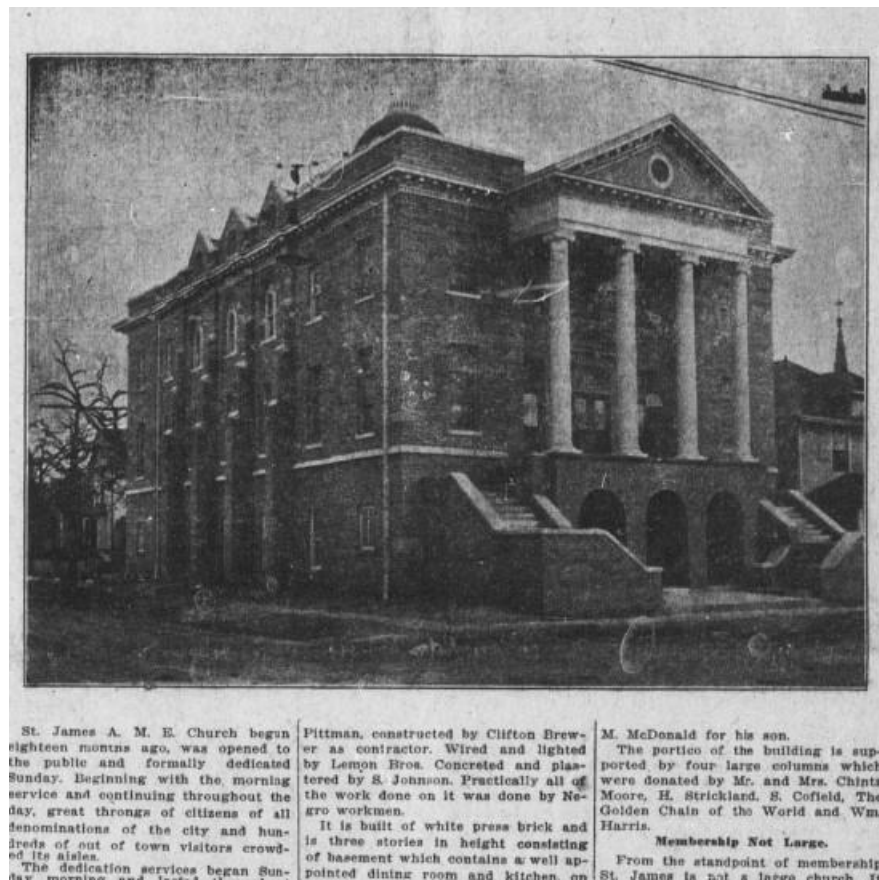


Figure 24: William Decker Hall Structural Plans – Basement (courtesy of 2022 Structural Assessment – JQ Infrastructure)

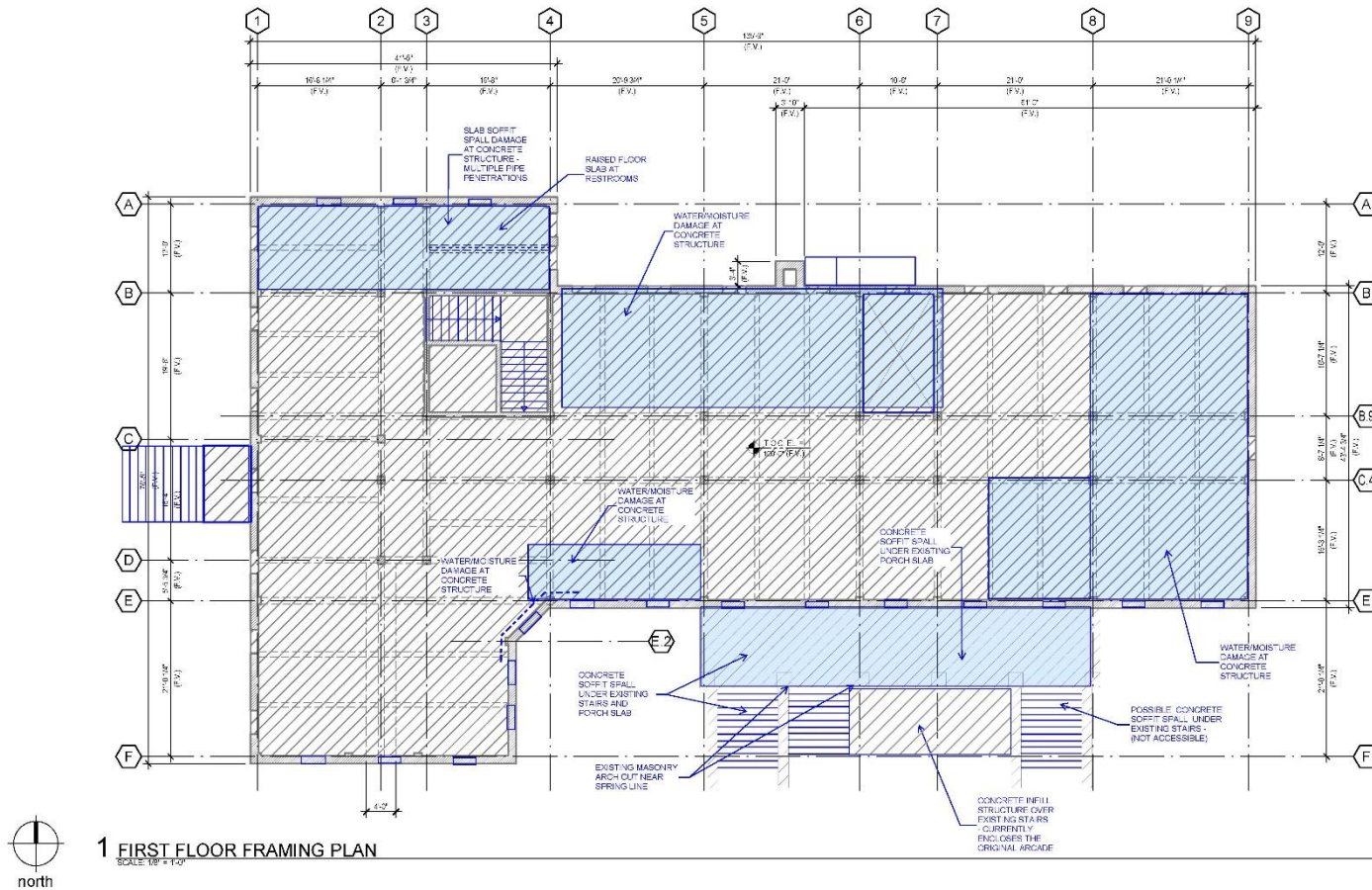
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1 BASEMENT FLOOR FRAMING PLAN

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 25: William Decker Hall Structural Plans – First Floor (courtesy of 2022 Structural Assessment – JQ Infrastructure)

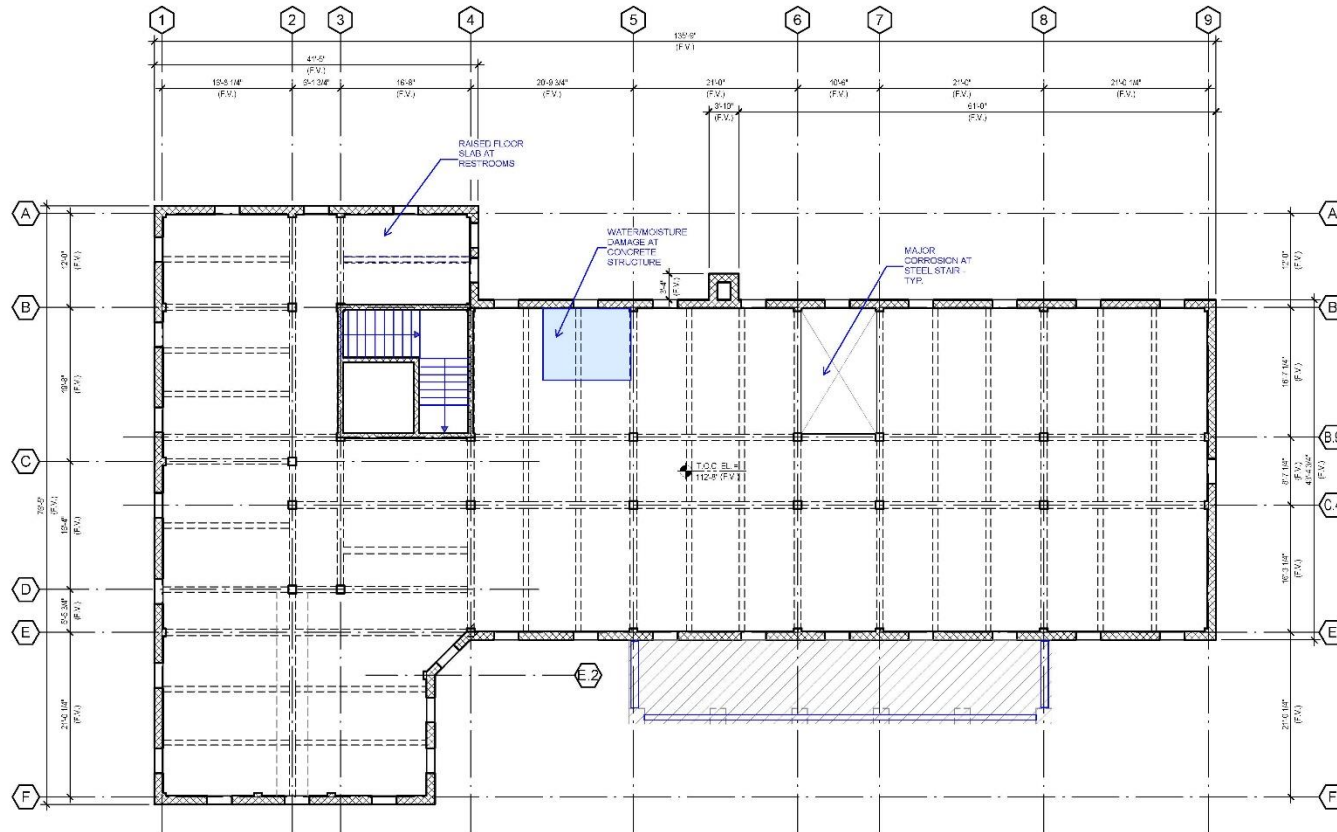
WILLIAM DECKER JOHNSON HALL



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 26: William Decker Hall Structural Plans – Second Floor (courtesy of 2022 Structural Assessment – JQ Infrastructure)

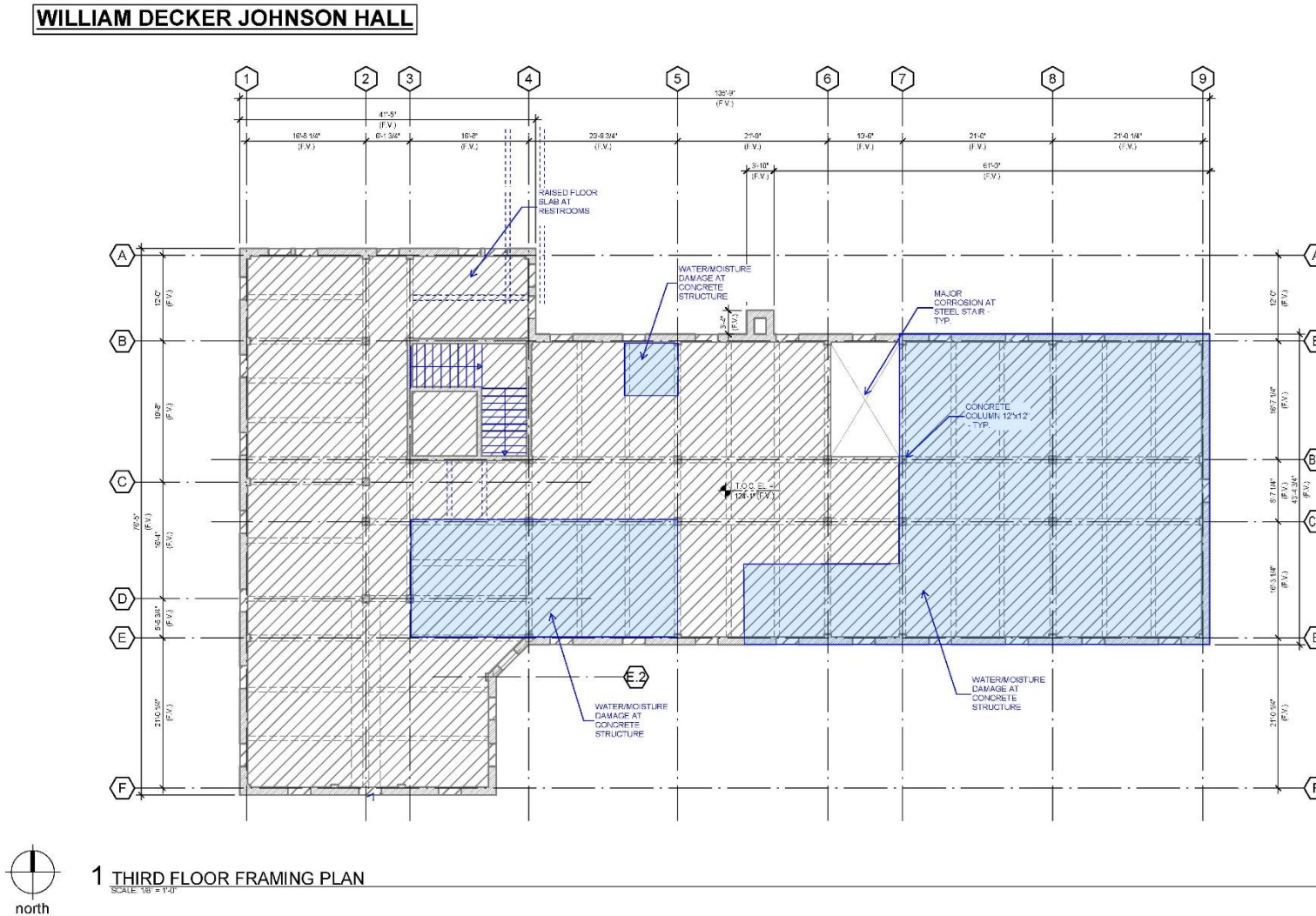
WILLIAM DECKER JOHNSON HALL



1 SECOND FLOOR FRAMING PLAN
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Figure 27: William Decker Hall Structural Plans – Third Floor (courtesy of 2022 Structural Assessment – JQ Infrastructure)



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Table 1: Timeline of campus development on former Paul Quinn College Campus – Waco*

Year Built	Building Name/Historic Function/Architect (if known)	Current Condition/Function (2024)
1881	Girl's Dormitory	No longer extant, later replaced in 1903 by Grant Hall
Ca. 1890	Administration Building/ Boys Dormitory/Chemical laboratory	Extant - now offices (See Building #4 on Map 6)
Pre-1899	Laundry Building	No longer extant
Pre-1899	Music Room	No longer extant
Pre-1899	Kitchen Building	No longer extant
Pre-1899	Printing Office and Carpentry Shop	No longer extant
Pre-1899	Chapel	No longer extant
1903/1904	Grant Hall Girl's Dormitory/Home Economics/Nursery School	No longer extant - destroyed in 1952 fire
1923	William Decker Johnson Hall Girl's Dormitory/Library/Laboratory William Sidney Pittman	Extant (Subject Building)- Vacant (See Building #1 on Map 6)
Ca. 1925	Home Economics Building	No longer extant - destroyed by fire in 1951
Ca. 1925	Chapel	No longer extant
1941	Home Economics Building	Remodel of previous building (likely a former faculty residence) - no longer extant, destroyed during 1953 tornado
1948	Vocational Building	Likely no longer extant
1948	George B. Young Auditorium	Extant but highly altered – now City of Waco Multipurpose Building/Centex (see Building #9 on Map 6)
1950	Student Union Building	No longer extant
1950	Chapel	No longer extant – destroyed by fire in 1956
1952	Sheppard Gymnasium	No longer extant – demolished ca. 1975
1951/1952	Joseph Gomez Administration Building Registrar/Offices/Post Office/Book Store/Classrooms	Extant – now Meyer High School/Rapaport Academy (see Building #5 on Map 6)
1954	Grant Hall/Abraham Grant Dormitory A.C. Reed and Son (Contractor)	Extant - now Paul Quinn Middle School/Rapaport Academy (see Building #6 on Map 6)
1964	Sherman-Abington Library. Later housed the Education Department in the 1970s.	Extant – current function unknown (see Building #2 on Map 6)
1966	Chapel/Bishop OL Sherman Science Hall Wiedemann and Salmond – Architects	Extant– current function unknown (see Building #3 on Map 6)
1968	Moody Liberal Arts Building Wiedemann and Salmond – Architects	Extant with large addition- now Paul Quinn Middle School/Rapaport Academy (see Building #7 on Map 6)
1968	Lucy Hughs Hall Girls Dormitory	No longer extant – demolished ca. 2000
1968	Richard Allen Hall Men's Dormitory	No longer extant – demolished ca. 2000
Ca. 1960s	Dining Hall	No longer extant – destroyed by fire 1970

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Table 1: Timeline of campus development on former Paul Quinn College Campus – Waco*

Year Built	Building Name/Historic Function/Architect (if known)	Current Condition/Function (2024)
1972	Kultgen-Jackson Gymnasium (now Dorris Miller Community Center)	Extant but highly altered ca. 2005 (see Building #10 on Map 6)
1975/1976	Adams College Center/Student Services Building. Cafeteria, recreation/ game rooms, student and faculty lounges, and offices.	Extant - now vacant and deteriorating (see Building #8 on Map 6)

Table 1: Due to the loss of many buildings over time due to fire, tornado damage, or deterioration, further research may reveal additional structures historically located on the campus not currently listed. Furthermore, some dates are approximate as source materials differed on completion dates.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Table 2. HBCUs in Texas					
Year Founded	Name (s)	Location	Founded By	Education Provided	Notes
1872	Paul Quinn College	Austin (1872-1877) Waco (1877-1990)	African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church	Elementary, secondary, and college courses.	Classes held in homes, in 1877 moved to Waco and held classes in a building. Moved to Dallas 1990.
1873	Wiley College	Marshall	Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church	High school and college.	Run by all-White staff until 1893. Extant and still in operation.
1876-1878	Prairie View State Normal School (formerly Alta Vista Agricultural College)	Prairie View	State of Texas	Agricultural and vocational training, added teacher training in 1880s	Established by Morrill Act. Extant and still in operation.
1876 Dallas, moved to Austin 1878	Andrews Normal College (later Samuel Huston)	Dallas/ Austin	Freedmen's Aid Society	Primarily religious but also literature, science, arts.	1898 first building at current location. Extant and in operation as Huston-Tillotson (NR 2021)
1877	Tillotson College (Tillotson Collegiate and Normal Institute)	Austin	American Missionary Association	Elementary, secondary, college training	Opened to students in 1881. Merged with Sam Huston in 1940s.
1881	Bishop College (formerly South-Western Baptist College)	Marshall	American Baptist Home Mission Society	Primarily religious study, but also included literature, arts, sciences.	Also called South-Western Baptist College. Moved to Dallas in 1961, closed in 1988.
1884, moved in 1914	Guadalupe College (East Texas Normal and Industrial Academy)	Near Seguin	Guadalupe Baptist Association	Initially offered elementary education but eventually expanded.	Moved closer to San Antonio in 1914. Fire of main building shuttered college in 1937.
Elementary school est. 1871, college established 1886 as a seminary	Mary Allen Junior College (formerly Crockett Presbyterian Church Colored Sabbath School, Moffatt Parochial	Crockett	Presbyterian Church	Began as a day and boarding school offering courses at the primary, elementary, high school.	Did not offer collegiate-level study until 1886 when the school opened a seminary on a separate parcel for teacher training of young girls. Closed in 1943, reopened 1944, closed again in 1972.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Table 2. HBCUs in Texas					
Year Founded	Name (s)	Location	Founded By	Education Provided	Notes
	School, Mary Allen Seminary)				
1894	Texas College (formerly Phillips University)	Tyler	Colored Methodist Episcopal Church	All branches of a literary, scientific and classical education wherein [all] shall be taught theology, normal training of teachers, music, commercial and industrial training, and agricultural and mechanical sciences	Extant and still in operation
1898	St. Philip's College (St. Philip's Normal and Industrial School)	San Antonio	Episcopal Church	Junior college, vocational institute	Extant and still in operation
1902/1903	Central Texas College (formerly Central Texas Academy)	Waco	Black Baptists	Theological and teacher training, business, music, and a variety of trades, as well as academic courses literature and drama	Founded 1902 as Central Texas Academy. Closed in 1931 and destroyed by urban renewal and construction of US 84 in early 1950s.
1910	Trinity Valley Baptist College Association (formerly Jermany College)	Kountze	Baptists	*Primary and secondary school	Opened 1910, closed due to lack of funding in 1928.
1912	Jarvis Christian College	Hawkins	Christian Women's Board of Missions of the Disciples of Christ	*Initially only offered elementary and high school level education. Added junior college in 1927.	Extant and still in operation.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Table 2. HBCUs in Texas					
Year Founded	Name (s)	Location	Founded By	Education Provided	Notes
1947	Texas Southern University (formerly Texas State College for Negroes)	Houston	State of Texas	Collegiate-level pharmacy, dentistry, arts and sciences, journalism education, literature, law, medicine, and other professional courses	Extant and still in operation.
1948	Southwestern Christian College (formerly Southern Bible Institute)	Founded in Fort Worth, moved to Terrell	Church of Christ	Seminary/liberal arts	Extant and still in operation.

Note Most of the information in this table was taken from various entries in the Handbook of Texas and confirmed by numerous sources listed in the bibliography.

William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

PHOTOS

Photo 1 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0001.tif): Primary (south) elevation, view northeast.



Photo 2 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0002.tif): West elevation, view southeast.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 3 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0003.tif): Rear (north) elevation, view southwest.



Photo 4 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0004.tif): East elevation, view west.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 5 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0005.tif): Streetscape along interior driveway in front of William Decker Johnson Hall (right), view northwest.



Photo 6 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0006.tif): Streetscape along Garrison Street with William Decker Johnson Hall (left), view northwest.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 7 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0007.tif): View of bricked over archways in loggia beneath portico at basement level, view southwest.



Photo 8 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0008.tif): View of former dining area in basement level, view west.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 9 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0009.tif): View of former dining area showing some extant original windows, sidelights, and transom at building's northwest entrance, view northwest.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 10 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0010.tif): View of northeast stairwell from basement level, view north.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 11 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0011.tif): View of steel staircase in bay 8 along north elevation from basement level, view northeast.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 12 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0012.tif): First floor corridor, view southeast.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 13 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0013.tif): Representative classroom space on first floor, view south.



Photo 14 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0014.tif): Second floor showing door to balcony at right, view south.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 15 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0015.tif): Second floor showing door to balcony at left, view northwest.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 16 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0016.tif): Portico balcony accessed on second floor, view west.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 17 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0017.tif): Third floor looking towards southeast corner of the building, view east.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 18 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0018.tif): Representative bathroom (third floor), view east.



William Decker Johnson Hall, Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 19 (TX_McLennan_WilliamDeckerJohnsonHall_0019.tif): Representative corridor (third floor), view northwest.

