

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

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Paris Grocer Company
Other name/site number: Kimbell-Paris Grocery Company; Boren-Stewart Company
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 1221 South Church Street
City or town: Paris State: Texas Zip: 75460 County: Lamar
Not for publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

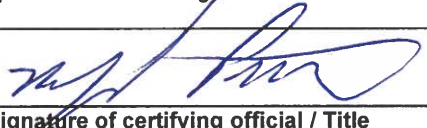
3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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
Signature of certifying official / Title
Date 8/22/2025
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

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar 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	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
1	2	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse

Current Functions: COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Warehouse

Principal Exterior Materials: Foundation: Concrete Walls: Brick Roof: ASPHALT and OTHER: TPO (Thermoplastic Polyolefin) Other: WOOD (loading dock), Aluminum (restaurant addition)

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-9 through 7-16)

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar 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: NA

Areas of Significance: COMMERCE (*local level of significance*)

Period of Significance: 1915-1955

Significant Dates: 1915, 1916, 1954

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

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

Architect/Builder: NA

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 8-17 through 8-26)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheet 9-27)

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

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: approximately 1.5 acres

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 33.650644° Longitude: -95.554199°

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated boundary is the legal parcel described as "CITY OF PARIS, BLOCK 159, LOT 19, 1221 S CHURCH," (ID#16606) by Lamar CAD on 9/16/24. **(Map 3)**

Boundary Justification: The boundary includes all the property historically associated with the Paris Grocer Company.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Marvin Gorley, Consultant
Organization: Harrison, Walker & Harper
Street & number: 2510 South Church Street
City or Town: Paris State: TX Zip Code: 75460
Email: mgorley@hwh1887.com
Telephone: 903-517-3491
Date: May 13, 2024

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets MAP-28 through MAP-31)

Additional items (see continuation sheets FIGURE-32 through FIGURE-39)

Photographs (see continuation sheets PHOTO-40 through PHOTO-62)

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,

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph Log

Name of Property: Paris Grocer Company Warehouse and Headquarters

City: Paris, Texas

County: Lamar

Photographer: 1-4 (Aaron Benson) and 5-20 (Marvin Gorley)

Dates Photographed: 8/3/2022, 12/21/2023, 3/6/2024, and 4/24/2024

Photographs accurately depict the property's current appearance at the date of NPS submittal.

Photograph 1 of 37 (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0001)

Description: Aerial view of Paris Grocer at NE corner of South Church Street and East Hearne Avenue.

Camera Direction: Northeast

Date Photographed: August 3, 2022

Photograph 2 of 37 (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0002)

Description: Aerial view of south elevation of Paris Grocer.

Camera Direction: North

Date Photographed: August 3, 2022

Photograph 3 of 37 (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0003)

Description: Aerial view of northwest corner of Paris Grocer.

Camera Direction: Southeast

Date Photographed: August 3, 2022

Photograph 4 of 37 (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0004)

Description: Aerial view of northeast corner of Paris Grocer.

Camera Direction: Southwest

Date Photographed: August 3, 2022

Photograph 5 of 37 (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0005)

Description: Loading dock on north side of Paris Grocer building.

Camera Direction: Southeast

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 6 of 37 (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0006)

Description: Service dock alcove on west side of Paris Grocer building.

Camera Direction: Southeast

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 7 of 37 (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0007)

Description: Northeast corner of noncontributing metal building in north parking lot.

Camera Direction: Southwest

Date Photographed: April 24, 2024

Photograph 8 of 37 (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0008)

Description: Northwest corner of noncontributing metal building in north parking lot.

Camera Direction: Southeast

Date Photographed: April 24, 2024

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 9 of 37 (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0009)

Description: West entrance to Trail de Paris on north end of Paris Grocer site.

Camera Direction: Southeast

Date Photographed: April 24, 2024

Photograph 10 of 37 (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0010)

Description: Interior view of west side of original 1913 warehouse.

Camera Direction: West

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 11 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_00011)

Description: Interior view of east side of original 1913 warehouse.

Camera Direction: East

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 12 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0012)

Description: Interior view of west loading dock converted into a restaurant.

Camera Direction: North

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 13 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0013)

Description: Interior view of west loading dock converted into a restaurant.

Camera Direction: Southeast

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 14 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0014)

Description: Interior view of east side of 1916 warehouse addition.

Camera Direction: East

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 15 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0015)

Description: Interior view of west side of 1916 warehouse addition.

Camera Direction: West

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 16 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0016)

Description: Interior view of northwest corner of first floor office.

Camera Direction: Northwest

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 17 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0017)

Description: Interior view of southwest corner of first floor office.

Camera Direction: Southwest

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 18 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0018)

Description: Interior view of southeast corner of second floor office converted into residential loft.

Camera Direction: Southeast

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 19 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0019)

Description: Interior view of northwest corner of second floor office converted into residential loft.

Camera Direction: Northwest

Date Photographed: December 21, 2023

Photograph 20 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0020)

Description: View of rooftop deck above loft.

Camera Direction: Southwest

Date Photographed: March 6, 2024

Photograph 21 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0021)

Description: View of north side truck dock.

Camera Direction: Southwest

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 22 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0022)

Description: View of north elevation of office addition.

Camera Direction: South

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 23 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0023)

Description: View of west elevation of office addition.

Camera Direction: East

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 24 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0024)

Description: View of office addition eaves on west side of building.

Camera Direction: North

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 25 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0025)

Description: View of structural brackets under service dock canopy.

Camera Direction: East

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 26 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0026)

Description: View of west elevation of restaurant (former truck docks).

Camera Direction: Southeast

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 27 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0027)

Description: View of painted sign on south elevation (Paris Grocer Co. over Boren-Stewart Co.).

Camera Direction: North

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 28 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0028)

Description: View of east elevation.

Camera Direction: North

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 29 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0029)

Description: View of roll-up garage door on southeast interior of original warehouse.

Camera Direction: Southeast

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 30 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0030)

Description: View of wall between original 1913 warehouse and 1916 warehouse addition. (Former north exterior wall of original warehouse.)

Camera Direction: North

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 31 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0031)

Description: View of ceiling rafters typical throughout warehouse.

Camera Direction: South

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 32 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0032)

Description: View of walk-in safe on first floor of office expansion.

Camera Direction: North

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 33 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0033)

Description: View of stairs in office addition.

Camera Direction: South

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 34 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0034)

Description: View of infilled floor under skylight on second floor of office addition.

Camera Direction: East

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 35 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0035)

Description: View of skylight on second floor of office addition.

Camera Direction: Southwest

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 36 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0036)

Description: View of pressed tin ceiling on second floor of office addition.

Camera Direction: Northwest

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Photograph 37 of 37. (TX_Lamar_Paris Grocer_0037)

Description: View of infilled porch on second floor of office addition.

Camera Direction: Northwest

Date Photographed: July 16, 2024

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Narrative Description

The 1913 Paris Grocer Company is one-story masonry warehouse with a two-story office addition (1916) at 1221 South Church Street¹ in Paris, Lamar County. Originally built for the Boren-Stewart Grocer Co., local wholesaler Paris Grocer Co. purchased the building in 1915 and operated its headquarters there until 1955. It has a rectangular footprint, flat asphalt roof, and red loadbearing brick² walls supported by a raised concrete foundation and Red Oak framing. The elevated foundation was designed to accommodate wagon or truck delivery on the north and rail delivery on the south elevations. Architectural decoration is minimal and limited to the former office, which features a pent roof between raised parapets that slope east. A variety of brick coursing patterns express the top of the parapet wall, tops of windows, patio openings, and two small ornamental stone features between the openings, on the west façade of the second floor. An open plan characterizes the interior warehouse. Historic alterations include the concrete floors that replaced the original interior wood planks in 1954. Although a portion of the west (street-facing) elevation loading dock is enclosed, the nominated building retains overall integrity. The nominated boundary has two noncontributing resources, a building and structure, used for storage.

Site and Setting

Paris is the county seat of Lamar County in Northeast Texas approximately 16 miles south of the Texas-Oklahoma border and 100 miles northeast of Dallas. The 35.2 square mile city is home to approximately 25,000 people. The city's terrain is generally flat. Paris Grocer Company is at the southern city limits between the Church Street Historic District (NRHP 1988) and the Texas and Pacific Railroad tracks (**Map 2**). Historically, surrounding blocks were characterized by rail-related infrastructure, cotton processing facilities, manufacturers, and warehouses. An African American enclave, the TP Community, developed south of the tracks in the first decades of the 20th century, and its community members worked for the companies (like Paris Grocer) at nearby facilities.³ Many historic-age resources have been demolished with little new development. A rail spur that once serviced the nominated warehouse has also been removed.

The nominated property is a 1.55-acre flat lot bounded on the west by South Church Street (State Highway 24), on the south by East Hearne Avenue and former T&P tracks, the east by 3rd Street Southeast, and the north by the Trail de Paris bicycle/walking path (**Map 3-4**).⁴ The large Paris Grocer Company building occupies the southern portion of the property. It faces east toward South Church Street with a sidewalk between the building and roadway. On the lot's northside, a chain-link fence separates the parking lot (west side) from an area with patches of grass and concrete. A noncontributing 20 x 60-foot metal storage building is along the eastern property line, and a noncontributing metal shipping container (structure) is north and perpendicular to the noncontributing storage building (**See Map 6**). Both have been on the property since c. 2010. The nomination does not count the moveable semi-trailer, north of the noncontributing structure, as a resource.

¹ Formerly 1243 S. 22nd Street

² All exterior walls are made of 8-inch-long by 4-inch-deep red bricks. The bricks' smooth texture and non-standard dimensions reflect their historic manufacture. Because they are unbranded, the manufacturer cannot be authenticated. However, during this time, many historic buildings in Paris used bricks made by the Ferris Brick Company "History of Ferris." City of Ferris, Texas. 22 February 2024. Web. <<https://www.ferristexas.gov/about/pages/history-ferris>>

³ Mt. Canaan Baptist Church, one of the community's anchoring institutions, listing in the National Register in 2024. (NRHP 100010581)

⁴ On February 15, 2016, an easement was granted to the City of Paris for a 25-foot-wide strip on the property's northern boundary to be used as part of the Trail de Paris, a 11.5-mile section of the 130-mile Northeast Texas Rails-to-Trails walking path project.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Exterior

Overview (Photo 01)

Paris Grocer Company is an approximately 35,000 square foot one-story warehouse with a two-story office on the building's northwest corner and was built in two phases between 1913 and 1916. It has a rectangular footprint, flat asphalt roof, and red loadbearing brick⁵ walls supported by a raised concrete foundation and Red Oak framing. The elevated foundation was designed to accommodate wagon delivery on the north and rail delivery on the south elevations. More recently, they were both used as truck docks. Architectural decoration is minimal and limited to the former office, which features a pent roof between raised parapets that slope east. A variety of brick coursing patterns express the top of the parapet wall, tops of windows, patio openings, and two small ornamental stone features between the openings, on the west façade of the second floor.

Fenestration in the Paris Grocer Building's one-story exterior warehouse walls is minimal. Most are clerestory windows placed eight feet above floor level so that stored product would not obstruct natural light into the building. Extant original clerestory windows are 3.5 x 3.5-foot with twelve-panes framed in wood. Larger 3 x 7-foot twelve-over-twelve double-hung wood windows are in the southwest corner of the warehouse where the office was once located. The two-story office walls on the northwest corner of the building, however, are dominated by windows. Those in the north and south walls are 3 x 7-foot, double-hung originals made of metal in two-over-two pane configuration. The ones in the west wall are 3 x 7-foot, double-hung replacements made of wood in one-over-one pane configuration. Office windows are sometimes grouped in pairs or triplets. No original exterior doors exist anywhere in the building. They have been replaced with storefront entrances or metal roll-up doors.

West Elevation (Photo 03)

The 165-foot-wide west elevation fronts South Church Street, a major north/south residential artery. It is composed of the 49-foot-wide office, a small 32-foot-wide loading dock, and an 84-foot-wide former restaurant.

The two-story office has no doors on its west side. There are six regularly spaced 3 x 7-foot, one-over-one, wood-frame, double-hung windows on the first floor and three groups of three single-hung windows on the second floor of the red brick facade. Adjacent to it, a loading dock alcove reveals two-thirds of the office's south wall, half of which is straight and half at a 45-degree angle. The 15-foot-wide straight wall contains a 3 x 7-foot, double-hung, two-over-two, metal framed, chicken wire window on the first floor and a group of three wood covered double-hung windows on the second floor. The 15-foot-wide angled wall has a back door and one double-hung window on the first floor and two double-hung windows on the second floor, one of which has been covered with wood. The glass back door is not original. It has been infilled into a much larger original opening.

A small loading dock area in the middle of the Paris Grocer Building's west elevation was once part of a much larger loading dock that extended the length of the original building's west wall. On its south side, two-thirds of the 32-foot-wide space is covered by the original dock's corrugated metal roof. Its north side is open to the sky. A 10-foot-wide, 2-foot-high wood plank loading dock rests against the entire east wall, and a narrower 4-foot-wide dock covers the entire south wall. A gap between two sets of concrete steps on the space's north side once held scales for weighing incoming product. The concrete floor drops sharply on the south side and disappears under the former restaurant.

⁵ All exterior walls are made of 8-inch-long by 4-inch-deep red bricks. The bricks' smooth texture and non-standard dimensions reflect their historic manufacture. Because they are unbranded, the manufacturer cannot be authenticated. However, during this time, many historic buildings in Paris used bricks made by the Ferris Brick Company "History of Ferris." City of Ferris, Texas. 22 February 2024. Web. <<https://www.ferristexas.gov/about/pages/history-ferris>>

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

The original loading dock on the west side of the original 1913 warehouse was enclosed with metal wall paneling to establish a short-lived one-story restaurant called Cane River Loading Dock. The 84-foot-wide restaurant façade has a 9-foot-wide by 12-foot-deep alcove entrance 17 feet from its north end. A single storefront door in the south side of the entrance alcove provides access to the former restaurant. In the restaurant's west wall south of the alcove are three groups of three regularly spaced metal-framed picture windows with awnings. The sloped roof of the restaurant is covered with single-ply white Thermoplastic Polyolefin (TPO).

North Elevation

Although it is the only side without street frontage, the north elevation of the Paris Grocer Company Building is its primary facade. It earns that distinction by containing main entrances, the largest loading dock, and all parking spaces. The 205-foot-long red brick elevation is divided into two parts, a 155-foot-long one-story warehouse on the east and a 50-foot-wide two-story office on the west.

The one-story portion of the north façade features a 106-foot-long, 10-foot-deep wooden truck dock against a 25-foot-tall red brick wall. On the east end of the loading dock is a 21-foot-long storage room. A 6-foot-wide concrete vehicle ramp was added near the storage room to provide access into the warehouse. Above the truck dock roof, wall bricks and eight of the north wall's ten original windows are hidden by a decorative wood covering. Evenly spaced on the dock are three dock doors. Two of those are now secured by metal roll-up doors and one has been infilled with a doublewide glass storefront entrance. Unfortunately, major deterioration of the wooden dock has made it unsalvageable. A duplicate replacement is planned by the current owner.

The two-story portion of the north façade has a generous use of windows reminiscent of Two-Part Block Commercial architecture. There are six 3 x 7-foot, double-hung, two-over-two, metal framed, chicken wire windows on the first floor along with a single glass storefront door. Six pair of double-hung windows plus one group of three are on the second floor. An additional 3 x 7-foot window splits the floor levels in the stairwell landing area, and a 3 x 3-foot window is in the mechanical room below it. The exterior wall of the office is constructed of the same red bricks as the warehouse.

South Elevation (Photos 01 & 02)

The 215-foot-wide south elevation of the Paris Grocer Building on East Hearne Avenue is the most visible to vehicle traffic due to its location near the wide-open Texas & Pacific railroad tracks. A huge 5-foot-tall mural painted along its roof line extends from the west edge of the brick warehouse for 112 feet, more than half of the warehouse wall's 180-foot width. PARIS GROCER CO. WHOLESALE GROCERS is painted in 3-foot-tall letters to greet northbound drivers as they proceed into downtown Paris. If looked at closely, BOREN-STEWART, the first owner's name, can be discerned underneath PARIS GROCER CO.

It was along this wall that a railroad spur delivered goods through three evenly spaced 10-foot-wide by 8-foot-tall dock doors. The door on the east end is now accessed via a wooden ramp while the other two are standard 3-foot-high truck loading docks. Metal roll-up doors have replaced the original wooden doors of the first two. A man-door has been infilled into the east-side dock door opening. There are also twelve windows cut into this elevation which have been covered with metal. Four 3 x 7-foot, twelve-over-twelve, wood frame windows are evenly spaced between the west edge of the warehouse wall and the first loading dock where the building's original office was once located. Four 3.5 x 3.5-foot, twelve-pane, wood frame clerestory windows are evenly spaced between the first two docks and four more between the last two docks. On the west end of this elevation is the 35-foot-wide metal south wall of the former restaurant.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

East (Rear) Elevation (Photo 04)

The Paris Grocer Building's 165-foot-wide east elevation on Southeast Third Street is its least prominent. There are no doors in this façade, only eighteen 3.5 x 3.5-foot clerestory windows. Twelve windows are evenly spaced in the original 110-foot-wide original warehouse section. Three of those have been replaced with louvered fans. Six more windows are in the 55-foot-wide 1916 building addition on the elevation's north end, but they are placed higher than those in the original warehouse.

Interior

Overview

The floor plan of the Paris Grocer Company Warehouse and Headquarters Building is basic, consisting of two main areas, the original building on the south and the 1916 warehouse/office expansion on the north. The original building section is predominantly open floor plan. Its original loading dock on the west has been converted into a closed-in split-level commercial area which was once used as a restaurant. The 1916 expansion on the building's north side is divided into open warehouse on the east and a two-story office on the west. They are separated by a ten-foot strip containing a stairwell, a restroom and a walk-in safe.

The interior of the Paris Grocer Building is typical Early Twentieth Century American Commercial Warehouse architecture. Primarily utilitarian in design, the building's open floor plan is supported by an over-engineered framework of heavy red oak timbers in both the original warehouse and its 1916 expansion. The thick timbers allowed for a slower burn time in case of fire, to which buildings like this one were susceptible.⁶ Distinctive 7.5-inch square chamfered columns in the Paris Grocer building point specifically to a midwestern adaptation of this style of architecture.⁷ Unfinished exterior brick walls contain mostly small, clerestory windows which supplement the natural light provided by skylights in the building's roof. Putting the windows eight feet above floor level kept them unblocked by product stored in the warehouse. The building's concrete floor is uncovered.

1913 Warehouse

The original Paris Grocer Building, now the south section of the facility, consisted of approximately 18,000 square foot of warehouse space and 3,700 square foot of loading dock when it was built by the Boren-Stewart Wholesale Grocer Company in 1913. The interior was wide open except for a small office in the southwest corner of the warehouse.⁸ The office was relocated when the building was expanded in 1916. Original red oak columns placed 18 feet apart divide the interior space into a grid of bays, six from north to south and ten from east to west, which are anchored to a concrete foundation that replaced a wood plank floor in 1954.

In the south wall, there are 12 windows evenly placed in groups of four between three dock doors. Four 3 x 7-foot double-hung wood windows are in the southwest corner where the office used to be, and eight 3.5 x 3.5-foot 12-pane fixed clerestory windows are placed eight feet above floor level to avoid being blocked by product in the warehouse.

The east wall of this section has twelve 3.5 x 3.5-foot clerestory windows. Three of those have been replaced with louvred fans.

⁶ "Utah's Historic Architecture Guide – Commercial, Public & Industrial Building Types." Issuu Inc. Accessed 20 February 2024. Web. <https://issuu.com/utah10/docs/architectural_guide_booklet/s/9401>

⁷ Eaton, Leonard K. "Warehouses and Warehouse Districts in Mid-American Cities." *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine*, 11(1), 17-26. <<https://doi.org/10.7202/1019064ar>>

⁸ "Boren-Stewart Wholesale Grocer Co." Sanborn Map. March 1914. 33. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

The north wall was originally an exterior wall. It had two 12-pane 3.5 x 3.5-foot clerestory windows in each of its ten bays. After the building was extended in 1916, this wall became an internal wall. Subsequently, nine of its twenty windows were bricked in. Most of the others are now empty holes. In addition, this wall has three 8-foot tall evenly spaced portals connecting the two sections of the building. The one on the west is 8-foot wide. The middle one is 5.25-foot wide, and the one on the east is 7-foot wide.

The west wall has four penetrations: one window, two doors, and a large portal. A 3 x 7-foot double-hung wood window that has been sealed is in the first bay on the wall's south end along with a wooden man door to its right that has also been sealed. In the second bay is an 11.5 x 8-foot restroom, not original to the building, which was used by the former restaurant. To its right in the third bay is a wooden man door that leads to the restaurant. A 21.5 x 8-foot warehouse office is in the fourth bay followed by a 9 x 8-foot portal into the restaurant's office in the fifth. In the far north corner, the sixth bay, is a 3.5 x 6-foot utility room.

Interior: Former Restaurant (Photos 12 & 13)

When originally built in 1913, the Paris Grocery Building had a loading dock lot along its entire west exterior wall that covered approximately 4,000 square feet. About ten percent of it was a three-foot high loading dock made from wooden planks. The entire lot was covered by a sloped corrugated metal roof supported by 4.5-inch round metal poles and 12-inch I-beams. The sides were open.

In 2002, most of the loading dock was converted into a split-level restaurant by adding walls to the metal framework. Twenty feet of it on the north end was left without walls to be used as part of a small loading dock. The restaurant was open for only a short time, but its remnants survive, including its bar and wall menus. The 10-foot-deep, 3-foot-high wood-plank loading dock on the east side of the restaurant is now covered with modern commercial tile flooring and surrounded by 1.5-inch black metal tube fencing. Two sets of stairs access the elevated area which housed the restaurant's bar and some seating. Restrooms in the adjacent warehouse were accessed through a door in the center of its east wall. The north wall of the restaurant was plain with no doors or windows. The lower section on the west side contained most of the restaurant's seating capacity. There are three groups of three regularly spaced metal-framed picture windows in its west wall which is constructed of metal, wood, and sheetrock. The interior finish is painted drywall with a corrugated metal wainscot. The north restaurant wall contains the main storefront entrance, the cashier, and stairs leading to the restaurant office. The owner is considering demolition of the non-original walls so that the building can be returned to its original configuration.

1916 Warehouse Addition (Photos 16 & 17)

After the devastating city-wide fire of March 21, 1916 destroyed its downtown facility, the Paris Grocer Company moved operations to its warehouse on South Church Street. Almost immediately, the company enlarged the facility by adding a 59 x 205-foot extension on its north side in the same architectural style as the original building. It consisted of approximately 8,000 square feet of one-story warehouse space on its east end and approximately 3,000 square feet of two-story office space on the west separated by a ten-foot section that now contains a stairwell on the north, a walk-in safe in the middle, and a restroom on the south.

Two bays along the east end of the 145 x 55-foot warehouse section were dedicated to cold storage. The original red brick walls in this area are unpainted, making its location easily discernable. The east wall of the cold storage area contains six 3.5 x 3.5-foot, twelve-pane, clerestory wood windows. There are four more in its north wall which are now covered by an exterior decorative wall treatment. The south wall had no windows because they were bricked in when the expansion was added. No information is available about the west wall of the cold storage area other than its location which was provided by the 1920 Sanborn map. That wall no longer exists.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Unlike the cold storage area, the rest of the warehouse walls in the 1916 warehouse addition have been painted white. The north wall of this portion of the warehouse is perforated with six windows and three doors. The 3.5 x 3.5-foot, twelve-pane, wood clerestory windows are higher than the three dock doors' 8-foot clearance. Two of the loading dock's doors have been replaced with metal roll-up doors. The third one, on the west end, has been infilled with a glass storefront door. The interior west wall of the warehouse is interrupted only by two man-sized doors on the north side and an 11-foot tall, 21-foot wide, 9-inch deep, bump out in the middle. The bump out was created by the walk-in safe on the other side of the wall. One of the doors gives access to a stairwell and the other to a mechanical room under the stairs. The south wall of this part of the warehouse contains openings which were once exterior clerestory windows in the original building configuration. There are also three 8-foot-tall portals in this wall which provide access to the original warehouse. Along the middle of south wall, there is a one-story wood frame mezzanine which is one bay wide by three bays long in size.

A ten-foot-wide section of rooms separates the warehouse from the office. It contains a stairwell on the north which is directly above a mechanical room. The concrete stairs lead to a residential loft on the second floor which was originally office space. In the middle of the 10-foot section is a walk-in safe, and on its south is a restroom.

Office – First Floor

Access to the first floor of the office from the warehouse is made through the stairwell. The 2,700-foot open floor plan space is mostly rectilinear except for a small section in the southwest corner that is part of an external truck dock. Seven columns, three concrete and four wood, support exposed ceiling beams under a pressed metal ceiling. A bay on the first floor's west side is divided into four sections, while the rest is divided into three east/west bays. The original wood plank office floor is covered with multi-colored patterned tile. The north wall of the office has one 3 x 7-foot, double-hung, two-over-two, metal frame windows in its first bay (west end). The main exterior entrance and another window are in the second bay. Two 3 x 7-foot windows are in each of the third and fourth bays of the north wall. The west wall has six evenly spaced 3 x 7-foot, double-hung, one-over-one, wood frame windows. The south wall is irregular in shape, the west side being ten feet further north than the east. The two are connected by a slanting wall which contains a back door and a 3 x 7-foot window. There is also a window in the west part of the south wall and a door into the original warehouse on its east part. The east wall of the office's first floor has no windows. It does have three doors. The one on the north goes to the stairwell. The one in the center is a heavy metal vault door, and the one on the south is to a restroom.

Office – 2nd Floor

The second floor of the Paris Grocery Building's office was converted into a residential loft in the early 2000s. It is predominantly open floor plan interrupted only by two 12-inch square centrally located columns. The common space contains living, kitchen, and library areas. Highlighting this area is a 9 x 13-foot vintage double pitched skylight with gabled ends and chicken wire glass surrounded by a pressed tin ceiling. Beneath it, a mezzanine has been infilled with wood to match the existing floor. A bedroom on the north side of the loft is isolated by a privacy wall with walk-around entries on the east and west. There is a closet east of the bedroom and a spiral staircase to the rooftop deck on its west side. A well-equipped kitchen is located on the east wall of the common area. To its left is a door into an 18 x 10-foot pantry/laundry room, and to its right is a door into a 12 x 10-foot restroom. Wall-to-floor bookshelves dominate the center of the south wall. There is a two-over-two double-hung window to its right. The west wall of the loft was once an exterior wall which separated the living area from a covered porch. The covered porch has been walled-in to create two additional rooms on the loft's west side, one 14 x 31-foot on the south and one 14 x 16-foot on the north. Their walls were created by infilling with five groups of three windows.

Alterations (Photos 07 & 08 and Figures 03 & 04)

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

The Paris Grocer Company Warehouse and Headquarters Building has been altered during its 112-year life span (1913-2025). The most significant occurred in 1916, only three years after it was first built, when a 59 x 205-foot warehouse/office expansion was built on its north side which matched the architecture of the original building. Its architect was Lang & Witchell of Dallas in association with Curtis, Broad & Lightfoot of Paris. The contractors were W.R. Hatcher of Dallas and W.R. Eubank of Paris.⁹ The architect and builder of the original warehouse was Lang & Witchell. For the next 108 years, changes to the property were not as noteworthy.

The 1916 expansion included an unattached 20 x 75-foot-long garage near the warehouse's northeast corner.¹⁰ A photo in a 1936 Paris News advertisement shows it to be constructed of materials compatible with the main building.¹¹ The garage was still there in 1946,¹² but was replaced at a later unknown date by a noncontributing metal building of the same size which still exists.

From 1913 to 1916, the warehouse office was in the southwest corner of the original warehouse configuration.¹³ Large 3 x 7-foot extant windows pinpoint its location since all other windows in the warehouse are small clerestories. Original office walls have been removed and the space made part of the overall warehouse. Office operations were moved to the two-story west end of the 1916 expansion.

The biggest remodeling job ever undertaken at the Paris Grocer Building occurred in late 1954. Its wood floor was removed, and a six-inch concrete slab was poured over a dirt fill to form a new floor. Installation of the concrete floor paved the way for use of heavy-duty forklifts. The merchandising arrangement was also completely re-organized in steel shelves, racks, and wooden pallets to economize on operation and speed up service. It made the Paris Grocer Company the most modern wholesale distribution plant in Northeast Texas according to John A. Cain, general manager and executive vice president of the firm. Work on the warehouse was contracted to Bray and Parham.¹⁴ Only two months later, in January 1955, the Kimbell Grocery Company of Fort Worth purchased the Paris Grocer Company.¹⁵

Other changes were made to the warehouse that may have occurred around this time, but there is no documentation as to exactly when. All original exterior doors no longer exist. Wooden dock doors were replaced with metal roll-up doors, and entrances were changed to glass storefronts. Originally, nine double pitched skylights provided natural light to the building.¹⁶ Only the one in the office remains. Those in the warehouse have been replaced with 22 fixed, flat industrial skylights. The rail spur on the building's south side has been removed.

The most architecturally significant alteration to the Paris Grocer Building occurred in the early 2000s. The second-floor office in the 1916 addition was converted to a residential loft, obscuring the only part of the building that deviated from the plain box configuration which characterized its Early Twentieth Century American Commercial Warehouse architecture. Originally, the second floor of the office contained an open porch lined with a wood fence under a sloped roof. The fence was removed, and the open areas were infilled with brick and windows to create additional interior rooms for the loft. A mezzanine below the skylight was also infilled with wood to match the existing floor, and a privacy wall erected to separate the living area from the sleeping quarters. In addition, a spiral wood staircase was installed to provide access to a new rooftop deck.

⁹ "Contracts Awarded." Paris Morning News. 21 May 1916. 4. Print.

¹⁰ "Insurance Maps of Paris, Texas." Sanborn Map Company. June 1920. 28. Print.

¹¹ "Serving the Homes." The Paris News. 31 May 1936. 23. Print.

¹² "Insurance Maps of Paris, Texas." Sanborn Map Company. February 1946. 24. Print.

¹³ "Insurance Maps of Paris, Texas." Sanborn Map Company. May 1914. 33. Print.

¹⁴ "Paris Grocer Company Does Big Remodeling." The Paris News. 14 September 1954. 5. Print.

¹⁵ "Kimbell Buys Paris Grocer." The Paris News. 3 January 1955. 1. Print.

¹⁶ "Insurance Maps of Paris, Texas." Sanborn Map Company. June 1920. 28. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

The most visible alteration to the Paris Grocer Building came in 2002. Walls were added to the metal framework surrounding the loading dock on the building's southwest corner to make a split-level restaurant. Wood dock planks were covered with a commercial tile flooring and a bar added. An office/storage room was built on its north side and a restroom in the adjacent warehouse. The restaurant survived only a short time.

An alteration to the Paris Grocer site was initiated on February 15, 2016. An easement was granted to the City of Paris for a 25-foot-wide strip on the property's northern boundary to be used as part of the Trail de Paris, a 11.5-mile section of the 130-mile Northeast Texas Rails-to-Trails walking path project.¹⁷

Integrity

The location of the Paris Grocer Company Warehouse and Headquarters Building continues to be one of the most strategic in Paris. Its highly visible setting on a right-angle curve of State Highway 24 places it at the south gateway into the city. Adjacent railroad tracks keep the view of its south elevation clear of obstructions. Nearby industries in the surrounding industrial district keep the location commercially viable, and the Church Street Historical District on its north complements the property's historical value.

Although more than 100 years old, the Paris Grocer Building is largely unaltered and retains its Early Twentieth Century American Commercial Warehouse architectural style. Its original red brick exterior walls exist but are covered in a few places by easily removable materials. However, the wooden loading dock on the building's north side is badly deteriorated due to weathering and may not be salvageable. Alterations which compromise the building's historical integrity include walls added to the southwest loading dock to make a restaurant and the conversion of the second-floor office porch into rooms for a residential loft. But the structural framework of the loading dock still exists. The original walls and columns of the office porch still exist. The interior floor plan of the Paris Grocer Building remains open much as it was in 1916. Almost all original building materials are intact. Brick walls, wood framework, and most windows are extant. The most notable replacements are its doors and skylights. The Paris Grocer Building still looks and feels like a warehouse, and storage continues to be its primary function.

¹⁷ "Recreational Trail Easement." Harrison, Walker & Harper to the City of Paris. 15 February 2016. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Statement of Significance

Paris Grocer Company Warehouse in Paris, Lamar County, is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as the longtime headquarters of a major wholesale grocery firm significant to the city's economic development. Chartered in 1899 and headquartered downtown, Paris Grocer Company purchased the nominated warehouse in 1915 from another wholesaler to expand its operations. The new warehouse, originally built in 1913, was located at the southern city limits along the Texas & Pacific Railroad tracks. When a major fire destroyed downtown in 1916, Paris Grocer Company relocated its headquarters to the nominated building, adding a cold storage warehouse and two-story office addition. The firm successfully expanded to become a regionally important wholesale business that operated until 1955 when Kimble Grocery acquired the company. The subject building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Commerce at the local level of significance for the period 1915-1955.

History of the Grocery Industry in Paris, Lamar County

In the beginning, Paris, Texas was a grocery store. George W. Wright (1809-1877), founder of the town, built his general store in 1840 on property he purchased in Red River County, soon to be Lamar County. An article published by the *Digital Research Library of Illinois History Journal* gives an accurate description of general stores of that era which applies to Wright's store:

In the 1800s, merchants simply sold the items they could obtain and resell. These general stores, mercantile, or emporiums served rural populations of small towns and villages and the farmers and ranchers in the surrounding areas. They offered a place where people could find food and necessities that would have otherwise been difficult to obtain. In addition to merchandise, a general store offered a meeting place for isolated people to socialize and do business. Many of these stores also doubled as a post office.¹⁸

Wright's store was thus the beginning of a Northeast Texas town and its grocery industry.

In 1844, Wright donated 50 acres surrounding his store in exchange for making Paris the county seat of Lamar County. Afterwards, many grocery stores were established in the new community including Hooks & Adams in 1868, the store from which the Paris Grocer Company evolved. Hooks & Adams became Adams & Scott in 1881 and employed Samuel W. Williams (1850-1922) that year. Thirty-five years later, in 1916, Williams told the Paris Rotary Club how Hooks & Adams began wholesaling groceries in a modest way the year he was hired. It was the first wholesale grocer in Paris and Lamar County. He said that he took charge of the wholesale work from another employee after which it became the main enterprise and was conducted on a larger scale. Soon after, the retail business was discontinued altogether. After operating as an exclusive wholesale house for a while, Williams found it necessary to know the exact cost of the company stock. He visited wholesale grocers across North Texas to research their accounting systems. All merely added a flat percentage to cover cost, freight, and handling. Not satisfied, Williams devised a new cost system based on the exact cost to purchase, acquire, store, sell, and ship products to the customer and hired an expert bookkeeper to manage it.¹⁹

The new system was so successful that practically every grocery house within 500 miles of Paris began using it.²⁰ It stood the test of time for in 1916, after the big Paris fire, insurance adjusters said "they found the Paris Grocer Company's business run with more system and that the claims were gotten up in better shape and the records kept

¹⁸ "Explanations of Historical Terms." Digital Research Library of Illinois History Journal. Accessed 21 March 2024. Web. <http://livinghistoryofillinois.com/explanations/word_grocery_means.html>

¹⁹ "Simple Story of a Great Business." The Paris News. 25 October 1916. 6. Print.

²⁰ Ibid.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

better than any mercantile business they had ever adjusted.”²¹ Ten years later, the Paris City Directory listed 44 retail groceries and only one wholesale grocer, the R.F. Scott Grocer Co. (formerly Adams & Scott), which became the Paris Grocer Company in 1899. Williams served as president of the Paris Grocer Company from 1900 to 1922.

During his 1916 Rotary program, Williams also boasted how the Paris Grocer Company was the first wholesale grocery in the area to establish branch houses. He said it was necessary to meet the growing competition of grocers in other cities. In 1916, Paris Grocer had branches in Greenville, Sulphur Springs, Clarksville, and Hugo.²² The Hugo²³ and Sulphur Springs²⁴ branches opened in 1901-1902. The Greenville²⁵ branch opened in 1909, and by 1913, there was one in Clarksville.²⁶ A second Oklahoma branch was added in 1921 at Idabel,²⁷ and a fourth Texas branch was established at McKinney in 1922.²⁸ These six branches made the Paris Grocer Company one of the largest food-distributing agencies in the Northeast Texas/Southeast Oklahoma area. They served Lamar, Fannin, Grayson, Red River, Bowie, Delta, Titus, Hunt, Collin, Hopkins, Cass, Franklin, and Kaufman counties in Texas and most of the southeastern tier of counties in Oklahoma.²⁹

Paris Grocer’s earliest wholesale competitor was the Goldman Bros. Grocer Company. Abe Goldman had worked in the retail grocery business as an employee and as an owner since coming to Paris in 1870. He first worked as a “handy” boy in the Cohn’s confectionery store on the west side of the downtown square. After several years, Abe managed to save enough money to open his own confectionery and had just stocked it when the Paris fire of 1877 wiped him out. Penniless again, Abe went to work as a clerk in the Baum Grocery Store for seven years, then opened his own retail grocery on Clarksville Street in 1884. The following year, in 1885, he and his brother Louis began wholesaling groceries. Their Clarksville Street store was destroyed by the Paris fire of 1916, but by that time they had extended their business to Hugo, Oklahoma. They also had a warehouse just across the street from the Paris Grocer Company near the Texas & Pacific Railroad tracks. After the fire, the Goldmans operated out of their warehouse for three months before selling their local stock to the Paris Grocer Company and their Oklahoma stock to the England Abbot Company. Abe Goldman then moved to Arizona to oversee his mining interests.³⁰

In 1913, the Boren-Stewart Company of Dallas established a branch at Paris in a warehouse (the nominated building) they constructed at the south end of Church Street near the Texas & Pacific railroad tracks. Established in 1888, the company operated in North Texas for more than 40 years, but on South Church Street for only two.³¹ It sold its warehouse to the Paris Grocer Company on June 22, 1915.³²

The first three wholesale grocers in Paris had warehouses within a block of each other, all with access to the Texas & Pacific (T&P) Railroad for shipping freight via rail sidings built alongside their loading doors. The T&P was the first of five railroad lines into Paris. Its arrival in 1876 hastened the development of an industrial neighborhood on the south side of Paris. Overland delivery was no longer restricted to horse-drawn wagons. It wasn’t long before the wholesalers

²¹ “Local News Notes.” *The Paris News*. 23 May 1916. 4. Print.

²² “Simple Story of a Great Business.” *The Paris News*. 25 October 1916. 6. Print.

²³ “Paris Grocery Sale in 1955 Reported Here: Established in Hugo in 1901; Is Town’s Oldest Business.” *The Southeast Oklahoman*. 23 December 1954. 1. Print.

²⁴ “Hopkins County TXGenWeb: Paris Grocer Company.” *Sulphur Springs & Nelta Business Directory*. 1902. Accessed 10 April 2024. Web.

²⁵ “New Blocks for Greenville.” *The Daily (San Antonio) Express*. 27 December 1909. 10. Print.

²⁶ “Paris Grocer Company.” *The Sulphur Springs Gazette*. 26 September 1913. 11. Print.

²⁷ “Paris Grocer to Combine Idabel, Hugo Warehouses.” *The Hugo Daily News*. 28 July 1953. 1. Print.

²⁸ “In the News 13 Years Ago: January 23, 1922.” *The Paris News*. 23 January 1935. 4. Print.

²⁹ “Paris Grocer Company Serves Wide Territory.” *The Paris News*. 28 April 1938. 24. Print.

³⁰ “Paris Then and Now: Penniless at 15, a financier at 63.” *The Paris Morning News*. 8 April 1920. 4. Print.

³¹ “Boren-Stewart Company out of Grocery Field.” *Chicago Packer*. 17 March 1928. 24. Print.

³² “Boren-Stewart to Paris Grocer.” *Lamar County Records*. 22 June 1915. Deed Book 145. 622. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

discovered that goods could be dispatched by rail car lots. These larger shipments produced a leap in scale which kept prices competitive. In 1935 alone, 294 carloads of merchandise were shipped to the Paris Grocer Company.³³ The wholesale grocer in Paris was an important link to its food service supply chain. In an age when overland transportation was confined to the railroad and the horse-drawn vehicle, these firms performed a vital function for the local farmer and the small-town retailer. A company's expertise lay in its knowledge of who produced the commodities and of the means of bringing buyer and seller together. Successful firms tracked freight rates, forwarding agents, and storage facilities – services that were essential to the mostly agrarian North Texas economy.³⁴

On March 21, 1916, the largest fire in the history of Paris consumed the town. More than 1,400 buildings were destroyed including the downtown commercial district. The insurance loss from the fire was approximately 5 million dollars and the total monetary loss was about 11 million.³⁵ The fire left the Paris Grocer Company with no wholesale competitors. Boren-Stewart had sold its warehouse to them a few years before and the Goldman Bros. were put out of business by the conflagration. However, the tragedy generated an urgent need for food which created an opportunity for others to enter the wholesale food business in Paris. Pete Humphries, a grocery retailer in Paris since 1898, stepped up.³⁶ His was the one big retail grocery store untouched by the flames. He hired clerks from the burned groceries and kept his main building open day and night to feed the homeless.³⁷ The following year, according to the 1917 Paris City Directory, Humphries added wholesaling to his operation in competition with the Paris Grocer Company.³⁸ Humphries died in 1933,³⁹ but the successful business continued to bear his name until 1951 when it became a Tom Thumb Supermarket.⁴⁰

Another wholesale grocer house came to Paris in 1917. In July, the England-Haynes Wholesale Grocer Company of Durant and Hugo, Oklahoma engaged temporary quarters in Paris at 34 East Houston Street until a property could be purchased for erecting their own building.⁴¹ Their permit for doing business in Texas was granted on September 19, 1917.⁴² The company was organized in March 1913 as the England-Abbott Grocer Company with a capital stock of \$50,000. In July 1915, the capitalization was increased to \$100,000, Mr. Abbott's interests were absorbed, and the firm name was changed to the England-Haynes Grocer Company. Three years later, in 1916, a branch was established in Hugo.⁴³ Within five years, it was one of the largest wholesale grocers in Oklahoma. In August 1926, the company became the Boswell-Haynes Grocer Company.⁴⁴ It was still in business at Paris in 1929 according to that year's Paris City Directory.⁴⁵ The company closed and sold its Bonham Street property in 1933.⁴⁶

The Simmons Grocer Company was organized on January 1, 1923 with only three people on the payroll: Frank Simmons (president and manager), George Thebo, and Ruth Chastain. Prior to opening the business, Simmons had worked for the Paris Grocer Company as a salesman for almost sixteen years, since 1907.⁴⁷ His company originally

³³ "Briefs About Town." The Paris News. 7 January 1937. 5. Print.

³⁴ Eaton, Leonard K. "Warehouses and Warehouse Districts in Mid-American Cities." Urban History Review. Vol. 11. No. 1. June 1982. 17–26. Print. <<https://doi.org/10.7202/1019064ar>>

³⁵ "Has Paris Come Back?" The Paris News. 21 March 1917. 1. Print.

³⁶ "Special Values for Farmer's Sales Day." The Paris News. 18 March 1934. 8. Print.

³⁷ "Pete Does Biggest Business in N. Texas." The Paris News. 12 September 1919. 9. Print.

³⁸ "Business Directory: Pete Humphries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1917. 320. Print.

³⁹ "Obituary: Pete Humphries." The Paris News. 9 February 1933. 1. Print.

⁴⁰ "Humphries Now Tom Thumb Store." The Paris News. 1 January 1952. 15. Print.

⁴¹ "New Jobbing House Coming to Paris." The Paris News. 18 July 1917. 8. Print.

⁴² "New Texas Charters." Fort Worth Star-Telegram. 19 September 1917. 13. Print.

⁴³ "A Going Wholesale Grocery Co." Durant Daily Democrat. 8 January 1919. 1. Print.

⁴⁴ "England-Haynes Now Boswell-Haynes Grocery." Durant Weekly News. 6 August 1926. 5. Print.

⁴⁵ "Business Directory: Boswell-Haynes." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1929. 413. Print.

⁴⁶ "Grocer Company Buys Home." The Paris News. 26 November 1933. 7. Print.

⁴⁷ "Deaths and Funerals: G. Frank Simmons." The Paris News. 6 May 1958. 6. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

opened for business on West Kaufman Street in a building leased from Boren-Stewart. It moved to Bonham Street in 1930 to property it purchased from the Boswell-Haynes Grocer Company three years later. In 1933, the company's Bonham, Texas branch operated three trucks within a 50-mile radius of its warehouse. The Paris office served within a 50-mile radius of Paris using five trucks.⁴⁸ Due to failing health, Frank Simmons sold the company in 1936.⁴⁹ A.K. Haynes became president and general manager.⁵⁰ By 1938, Simmons Grocer Company's trade territory extended to DeKalb on the east, Commerce on the south, Whitewright on the west, and Fort Towson, Oklahoma on the north.⁵¹ That year, Simmons and Paris Grocer were the only "exclusive" wholesalers in Paris.⁵² In 1949, Haynes sold the business to a Sherman wholesale grocery firm and retired.⁵³

The grocery business in Paris, wholesale and retail, became more politically organized during the 1930s. The Paris Grocer Company played a big role under the leadership of its general manager, R.C. Lane (1879-1947). In 1934, he was made a member of the National Recovery Administration (NRA) Code Authority board to represent wholesale grocery distributors in a 13-county sector of Northeast Texas.⁵⁴ Frank Simmons, another Paris wholesale grocer, was the overall code authority for the Paris sector.⁵⁵ The NRA was established by executive order under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1933 following the Great Depression. In collaboration with business leaders, the Roosevelt administration drafted codes for fair industry practices, including minimum prices at which products could be sold, minimum employee wages, and maximum weekly hours that employees could work. However, the NRA codes were deemed invalid by the U.S. Supreme Court two years later in May 1935.⁵⁶ On March 8, 1937, Lane was elected president of the Texas Wholesale Grocers Association. He had been vice-president the previous term. He was also a long-standing member of the National-American Wholesale Grocers Association and an outstanding figure in the Southwest wholesale grocery business.⁵⁷ The following year, Lane served as temporary chairman during the formation of a Paris unit of the Texas Retail Grocers Association.⁵⁸ Organizational meetings for the group were held at the Paris Grocer Company headquarters.⁵⁹ In 1942, Lamar County was lagging behind on the government food stamp plan until the Chamber of Commerce named Lane chairman of a special food stamp committee. He set plans in motion, set up a patent organization, and put the program into operation which promised to increase Lamar County grocers' business by \$150,000.⁶⁰

Across the nation in the 1930s, retail grocery chain stores became a growing concern for independent grocers. Because they purchased products in large volumes at lower cost, chain stores could sell for less. Their prices were so low that independents often purchased chain store products for resale in their own stores. To level the playing field, U.S. Congressman Wright Patman supported an amendment to a bill in 1935 that would outlaw price discrimination between chain corporations and independent merchants.⁶¹ In 1938, a candidate for governor of Texas even

⁴⁸ "Grocer Company Buys Home." The Paris News. 26 November 1933. 7. Print.

⁴⁹ "Simmons to Resign Post." The Paris News. 2 January 1936. 1. Print.

⁵⁰ "A.K. Haynes Named Head of Company." The Paris News. 26 January 1936. 7. Print.

⁵¹ "Simmons Grocer Company Outstanding Wholesaler." The Paris News. 28 April 1938. 25. Print.

⁵² "Two Large Wholesale Grocers Here." The Paris News. 9 October 1938. 6. Print.

⁵³ "Deaths and Funerals: Mrs. A.K. Haynes." The Paris News. 9 July 1959. 6. Print.

⁵⁴ "Johnson Will Retire, Anderson Will Succeed." The Paris News. 16 May 1976. 1. Print.

⁵⁵ "Code Chiefs Are Chosen by Grocers." The Paris News. 8 February 1934. 1. Print.

⁵⁶ "Grocers Will Hold Meeting." The Paris News. 4 February 1934. 1. Print.

⁵⁷ "National Industrial Recovery Act (1933)," Milestone Documents, National Archives. Accessed 14 August 2025.

<https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/national-industrial-recovery-act>.

⁵⁸ "New Leader of Grocers." The Paris News. 8 March 1937. 5. Print.

⁵⁹ "Chapter is Formed Here." The Paris News. 9 May 1938. 1. Print.

⁶⁰ "Grocers to Organize Local Unit." The Paris News. 4 March 1938. 1. Print.

⁶¹ "Lane Helps to Start Food Plan." The Paris News. 5 April 1942. 38. Print.

⁶² "Chain Stores are Attacked." The Paris News. 18 June 1935. 3. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

recommended a constitutional amendment that would keep chain stores out of the state.⁶² However, Piggly Wiggly was already in Paris. It was first listed in the 1921 Paris City Directory along with 91 independent groceries served by four wholesalers.⁶³ Piggly Wiggly, the first chain store in the United States, was a self-service grocery, a concept invented by Clarence Saunders in 1916.⁶⁴ Safeway, the second grocery chain in Paris, was first listed in the 1936 Paris City Directory along with 85 independent groceries.⁶⁵ The third opened in Paris in 1951. It was a Tom Thumb. There were only 73 independents listed in the 1957 Paris City Directory.⁶⁶ Brookshires was first listed in the 1959 directory with 71 independents.⁶⁷ To combat growing chain store dominance, fifty independent grocers banded together in 1946 for the purpose of mass buying and established the Associated Wholesale Grocers of Dallas. By 1961, it had 500 members.⁶⁸ One of those was Harlan's AG Food Store which opened in Paris on September 11, 1958. The "AG" stood for Associated Grocers. Owner Bill Harlan said that the Associated Wholesale Grocers of Dallas was one of the fastest growing "retailer-owned" wholesale houses in the United States.⁶⁹ More chain stores came to Paris. Walmart in 1976 and Winn-Dixie in 1989. The Paris Walmart was the first Walmart store in Texas.⁷⁰ A few years after it opened, only 38 independent groceries were listed in the 1980 Paris City Directory. Ten years later in the 1990 directory, 37 were listed, less than half of the 91 independent retail grocers listed in 1921. The downward trend in their numbers can be at least partially attributed to the presence of chain groceries in the city.

By 1937, the Paris Grocer Company had another competitor.⁷¹ The Northeast Texas Wholesale Grocery, owned and operated by Ralph Wilson, was located on Southwest 2nd Street just north of Market Square. His great-granddaughter, Melissa Wickersham, said Wilson once shared a train shipment of product with Sam Walton, the future founder of Walmart, during their formative years as grocers. Neither could afford to pay for the whole shipment.⁷² Wilson ran unsuccessfully for mayor of Paris in 1940. He later retired from the grocery business and pursued his interest in flying and promoted its usefulness in business. Unfortunately, Wilson died in a plane crash in 1947.⁷³ His daughter Margie, who had worked in his stores since she was old enough to make change, opened her own retail/wholesale grocery business in his old store when she returned to Paris in 1942.⁷⁴

The Kimbell-Diamond Grocer Company, another wholesale grocer, opened in Paris in mid-1942 at 33 North 13th Street. It was a branch of the Kimbell-Diamond Company of Fort Worth owned by Kay Kimbell.⁷⁵ On November 3, 1946, its name was changed to the Kimbell-Paris Company.⁷⁶ The store served five counties in a radius of 60 miles from the city. It was one of 41 wholesale groceries operated by the Kimbell Grocer Company at that time.⁷⁷ On January 3, 1955, the firm assumed operation and management of the Paris Grocer Company. The million-dollar-plus transaction included the Paris headquarters and its three branch warehouses.⁷⁸ Kimbell operated in Paris for

⁶² "Crowley Raps Chain Stores." The Paris News. 10 May 1938. 2. Print.

⁶³ "Business Directory: Piggly Wiggly." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1921. 338-341. Print.

⁶⁴ "How Piggly Wiggly Idea Came About." The Paris News. 7 March 1940. B1. Print.

⁶⁵ "Business Directory: Safeway." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1936. 373-375. Print.

⁶⁶ "Business Directory: Tom Thumb." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1957. 42-43. Print.

⁶⁷ "Business Directory: Retail Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1959. 65-66. Print.

⁶⁸ "Associated Wholesale Grocers Collection." Dallas Public Library. Accessed 12 April 2024. Web.

⁶⁹ "Harlan's Store has Formal Opening Today." The Paris News. 11 September 1958. 10. Print.

⁷⁰ "Walmart Founder." The Paris News. 30 June 1976. 1. Print.

⁷¹ "Congratulations Mr. and Mrs. C.H. Brown." The Paris News. 28 February 1937. 2. Print.

⁷² Oral interview with Melissa Wickersham by Marvin Gorley. 16 April 2024.

⁷³ "Ralph Wilson is Killed in Crash Near Blossom." The Paris News. 26 May 1947. 1. Print.

⁷⁴ "New Grocery Store Will Open Here." The Paris News. 13 November 1942. 2. Print.

⁷⁵ "Advertisement: Kimbell-Diamond Milling Co." The Paris News. 7 June 1942. 6. Print.

⁷⁶ "Kimbell-Paris Co. is Announced Here." The Paris News. 3 November 1946. 10. Print.

⁷⁷ "\$8,000 Addition at Kimbell-Paris Co. is Started Friday." The Paris News. 17 August 1947. 21. Print.

⁷⁸ "Kimbell Buys Paris Grocer." The Paris News. 3 January 1955. 1. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

approximately ten years before closing in 1965.⁷⁹

In September 1953, just a few months before the Paris Grocer Company was taken over by Kimbell-Paris, the company underwent a major renovation to its warehouse. The biggest remodeling job ever at the Church Street building included the replacement of its wooden floor with concrete. That paved the way for use of heavy-duty forklifts in the building. The company had never before used mechanical equipment to handle merchandise.⁸⁰ The forerunner to the forklift was the counterbalanced lift truck. First developed in 1917, the lift truck did not use forks but instead chains and flatbeds. Forks were added in 1923 along with a ratchet and pinion system for lifting. In the late 1930s, pallets were standardized, and forklifts were manufactured to conform. The system became mainstream in the warehouse industry, but it required a solid building foundation that could support the traffic and the added weight of stacked product.⁸¹ The Paris Grocer building was one of the first warehouses in Paris —perhaps the very first— to use forklifts.

After Kimbell-Paris closed in 1965, the grocery industry in Paris continued to change. Fewer and fewer independent groceries remained. Chain stores and convenience stores replaced independent groceries. The 1970 Paris City Directory listed 52 independents; the 1980 directory listed 38; the 1990 directory listed 37; and the 2000 directory listed 41.⁸² By 2010, there were only 11 listed in the city directory and just 6 in the 2021 directory.⁸³ There were also a few wholesalers in Paris during these years. The Ross Food Distributing Company operated in 1965.⁸⁴ Red River Wholesale was in business between 1989 and 1991.⁸⁵ Frito-Lay served the city around 2000-2001,⁸⁶ and Oak Farms Dairies in 2002.⁸⁷

R.C. Lane, manager of the Paris Grocer Company, summed up best the grocery business in a 1936 *Paris News* article:

The grocery business is America's biggest business, and it is taken just as a matter of course in the average person's life. It is a difficult business though, because you must be a shrewd buyer and a careful buyer – buying to fill the needs, wishes, and whims of your customers. You must also be a good salesman, a merchandiser of food, service, and quality and a very human individual as well. You can't go into the grocery business for fun, but you can have a lot of fun in the business. The grocery business means hard work, long hours, steady grind, and small profits but it is the most fascinating business in the world and the most human business there is.⁸⁸

⁷⁹ Paris City Directories

⁸⁰ "Paris Grocer Company Does Big Remodeling." *The Paris News*. 14 September 1954. 5. Print.

⁸¹ "Forklift History: The Complete Story." Conger Industries, Inc. 8 April 2024. Accessed 19 April 2024. Web.

< <https://www.conger.com/forklift-history/> >

⁸² "Business Directory: Retail Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1970. 58-59. Print; "Business Directory: Retail Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1980. 81-82. Print; "Business Directory: Retail Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1990. 57-58. Print; "Business Directory: Retail Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 2000. 16. Print.

⁸³ "Business Directory: Retail Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 2010. 12. Print; "Business Directory: Retail Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 2021. 17. Print.

⁸⁴ "Business Directory: Wholesale Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1965. 59. Print.

⁸⁵ "Business Directory: Wholesale Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1989. 58. Print

"Business Directory: Wholesale Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1990. 58. Print.

"Business Directory: Wholesale Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 1991. 58. Print.

⁸⁶ "Business Directory: Wholesale Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 2000. 16. Print.

"Business Directory: Wholesale Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 2001. 14. Print.

⁸⁷ "Business Directory: Wholesale Groceries." Polk's City Directory of Paris, Texas. 2002. 9. Print.

⁸⁸ "Lane Says Retail Grocer Occupies Important Place." *The Paris News*. 19 March 1936. 13. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Paris Grocer Company (1897-1955)

The business that later became Paris Grocer Company was originally established in 1868 under the name Hooks & Adams and operated from a rented building facing the city's courthouse square. As the grocery wholesaler grew, it changed ownership, names, and locations several times until 1897 when George F. Hicks partnered with Charles P. Floyd to charter the Paris Grocer Company by combining their interests in the R. F. Scott Grocer Company and Hicks-Floyd Grocer Company. Three years later, Samuel W. Williams (a part-owner) succeeded Hicks and held the post until his death in 1922.⁸⁹

With a background in bookkeeping, Williams researched and developed a system to track the constantly fluctuating cost of merchandise. Like other wholesalers, Paris Grocer Co. was losing money by not accurately adjusting the price of goods its sold. Williams's method was so successful that "practically every grocery house in 500 miles of Paris" adopted it.⁹⁰ His innovations increased the company's profits and ability to trade in larger quantities of goods for a broader market. To accommodate this growth, Paris Grocer Company needed a facility larger than the former downtown Babcock Opera House where they headquartered. On June 22, 1915, the Paris Grocer Company purchased a warehouse on South Church Street near the Texas & Pacific Railroad tracks from Boren-Stewart, another wholesale grocer, for \$21,693.83.⁹¹

Two years earlier, Dallas-based Boren-Stewart Grocer Co. hired the prominent architectural firm Lang & Witchell to design a one-story 18,000-square foot brick warehouse near the rail line south of downtown Paris. A massive red oak framework and plank flooring was installed. Its thick timbers burned slower, making the building less susceptible to destruction by fire. Large red oak posts were also well-spaced for storage purposes.⁹² Clerestory windows were placed eight feet above the floor in the north, east, and south walls so that stored product would not block natural light from entering the warehouse. Larger windows were placed in the building's southwest corner where a small office was located. A loading dock was located across its entire west exterior wall.

Paris Grocer's acquisition of the Boren-Stewart warehouse proved providential when, on March 21, 1916, an epic fire devastated the city. With the downtown headquarters destroyed, Williams moved all operations to the warehouse on South Church Street where its goods had escaped the fire. The company was instrumental to the city's recovery efforts, as they helped feed citizens who lost homes and jobs in the conflagration.

Williams also led the company to reinvest in the city when it purchased the neighboring lot for an addition one month after the fire.⁹³ Lang & Witchell with Curtis, Broad & Lightfoot (associate architects) announced in *The Paris Morning News* on May 21 that the W.R. Hatcher Construction Company had been awarded a contract to build the new 59 x 205-foot brick addition on the lot.⁹⁴ Completed in 60 days, the addition featured a two-story "pretty-faced" brick office with a tile roof over a second-floor open porch. The public entrance from South Church Street was built into a diagonal wall connecting the addition to the original warehouse. A one-story warehouse addition extended from the office and

⁸⁹ Samuel W. Williams (1850-1922) first worked for the company in 1879 as bookkeeper for Hooks & Adams. Before that he worked in the county/district clerk's office. Williams became Lamar County deputy clerk in July 1873 under J.H. Wright, then under John W. Kavanaugh who died shortly after taking office. Williams replaced him and was acting county clerk during March 1874. He became deputy clerk once again in April 1874 under Dee Ridley. "Deputy County Clerks of Lamar." *The Paris News*. 19 November 1940. 4. Print.

⁹⁰ "Simple Story of a Great Business." *The Paris News*. 25 October 1916. 6. Print.

⁹¹ "Boren-Stewart to Paris Grocer." Lamar County Records. 22 June 1915. Deed Book 145. 622. Print.

⁹² Sanborn Insurance Map of Paris, Texas. June 1920. 28. Print.

⁹³ On April 16, 1916, Paris Grocer purchased from Richard Ivey a 57 x 216-foot lot adjacent to the north side of its property for \$750. "Ivey to Paris Grocer." Lamar County Records. 6 April 1916. Deed Book 157. 118. Print.

⁹⁴ "Contracts Awarded." *Paris Morning News*. 21 May 1916. 4. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

included a cold storage for fresh vegetables, fruits, butter, cheese, and more.⁹⁵ Paris Grocer occupied the new space on August 17.⁹⁶ The following year, the company purchased another lot on its northern side and built a large garage (now demolished).⁹⁷

With its large, modern headquarters, Paris Grocer Co. became the first wholesaler in Northeast Texas to establish branches in other cities. By 1922, they expanded operations to McKinney, Greenville, Sulphur Springs, Clarksville, and to Hugo in Oklahoma.⁹⁸ Improved and new roadways, a major initiative of Paris boosters at the time, played a large role in this expansion. Three state highways—SH 9, SH 5, and SH 35—intersected in Paris and connected the city to markets north in Oklahoma, east, and west. The company, at first reliant on the railway, invested in trucks for overland delivery. Within 20 years, two of the state highways became Interstate 271 and Interstate 82.

William Milling succeeded S.W. Williams in 1922 with Bob Lane as Vice-President, and under their partnership grew the wholesaler into a million-dollar institution through the 1940s. Milling started with the Scott Grocer Company as a \$50-per-month salesman and was still there when it became the Paris Grocer Company in 1897.⁹⁹ By 1938, the company was one of the largest food-distributing agencies in Northeast Texas and Southeast Oklahoma, covering a 20,000-mile territory that served Lamar, Fannin, Grayson, Red River, Bowie, Delta, Titus, Hunt, Collin, Hopkins, Cass, Franklin, and Kaufman counties in Texas, and most of the southeastern Oklahoma counties through its branches in Hugo and Idabel.¹⁰⁰ Well-respected within the grocery industry, Lane was elected president of the Texas Wholesaler Grocers Association and served on the local chapter of the Texas Retail Grocers Association.¹⁰¹

Information about the Paris Grocery Co.'s local employment is scarce. Known figures indicated 100-150 employees worked companywide in sales, warehouse, and transportation divisions through the 1950s. Newspaper articles imply that most employees were white men but, as with most periodicals of the era, the *Paris News* privileged coverage of its white citizens. One exception in the research was Moscow Moody, photographed in 1974 at age 74 with William Milling at the latter man's 85th birthday celebration. Moody was born in rural Mississippi in 1873 and moved to Paris by 1900 where he married Louella Simmons. The wholesaler hired Moody c. 1911 as a laborer, promoted him to truck driver in the 1920s, and he retired from Paris Grocer before 1947.¹⁰²

Competition from other wholesalers and the passing of its longtime leader William Milling began to strain Paris Grocer Co. in the early 1950s. Two branches, at Sulphur Springs and Idabel, closed in 1952. To combat industry pressure, the business undertook a major renovation to the 1916 warehouse in 1954. Installation of a concrete floor paved the way for use of heavy-duty forklifts. The company had never before used mechanical equipment to handle merchandise. The merchandising arrangement was also completely re-organized in steel shelves, racks, and wooden pallets to economize on operation and speed up service. It made the Paris Grocer Company the most modern wholesale distribution plant in Northeast Texas according to John A. Cain, general manager and executive vice president of the firm. Work on the warehouse was contracted to Bray and Parham.¹⁰³

One month after the remodeling, Paris Grocer Company approved a liquidation plan for April 30, 1955, that eventually led to a complete sale of the firm's assets. Stockholders were assured of receiving approximate book value for their

⁹⁵ "Paris Grocer Co. Will Have Cold Storage." *Paris Morning News*. 20 May 1916. 1. Print.

⁹⁶ "Paris Grocer Co. in New Quarters." *Paris Morning News*. 17 August 1916. 5. Print.

⁹⁷ "Ragland to Paris Grocer." *Lamar County Records*. 1917. Deed Book 141. 573. Print.

⁹⁸ "Scott Leaves Grocer Company." *The Paris News*. 29 August 1951. 6. Print.

⁹⁹ "Paris Grocer's 85th Birthday." *The Paris News*. 23 November 1947. 1. Print.

¹⁰⁰ "Paris Grocer Company Serves Wide Territory." *The Paris News*. 28 April 1938. 24. Print; "Vocational Service Stressed at Rotary." *The Paris News*. 16 May 1947. 10. Print.

¹⁰¹ "Paris Grocer is President State Wholesale Association." *The Paris News*. 8 March 1937. 5. Print.

¹⁰² "Paris Grocer's 85th Birthday." *The Paris News*. 23 November 1947. 1.

¹⁰³ "Paris Grocer Company Does Big Remodeling." *The Paris News*. 14 September 1954. 5. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

stock which exceeded one million dollars the last fiscal year.¹⁰⁴ Fort Worth-based Kimbell Grocer Company assumed operations on January 3, 1955. The million-dollar-plus transaction included the Paris headquarters and its three branch warehouses. John Cain, former general manager and executive vice-president of Paris Grocer remained as manager of the Paris plant.¹⁰⁵

Headquartered in Fort Worth, the Kimbell Grocer Company began branch operations at Paris in mid-1942 as the Kimbell-Diamond Company located at 33 North 13th Street.¹⁰⁶ On November 3, 1946, it was announced that the wholesale grocer would be succeeded by the Kimbell-Paris Co. operating at the same location under the same management.¹⁰⁷ The following year, in August 1947, a 4,000 square foot expansion was added to its wholesale building at 67 NW 11th Street to accommodate its rapidly expanding business. The Paris store served five counties in a radius of 60 miles from the city. It was one of 41 wholesale groceries operated by the Kimbell Grocer Company at that time.¹⁰⁸

Paris Grocery Co. Building (1965 – present)

The old Paris Grocer building continued its usefulness after Kimbell Grocery closed in 1965 and it was no longer a wholesale grocer facility. It was vacant until 1967 when the National Hardware & Supply Company moved in.¹⁰⁹ National Hardware was established in 1944 by Roy Willoughby on West Kaufman Street. He remained its owner until his death. His son, Fred Willoughby, continued the business until 1986, then sold it to Hamp Hodges, a Paris entrepreneur and West Point graduate. Hodges sold the business but not the property in 1987 to longtime National Hardware employees Sonny Gentry, Chris Brown, and Doris Riney. In May 1991, Brown sold out to Gentry and Riney who moved the company to a new location on Highway 82 East in November 1996.¹¹⁰ Hamp Hodges retained ownership of the old Paris Grocer building when he sold the National Hardware business in 1987 and lived there for several years. In 1996, it was campaign headquarters during his unsuccessful bid for the United States Congress.¹¹¹ National Hardware moved in November 1996 leaving the building vacant for several years. In 2002, the truck docks on the building's southwest corner were enclosed and converted into a restaurant called Cane River Loading Dock which lasted only a few months.¹¹² Hodges sold the former Paris Grocer property to Pike Burkhart in 2005.¹¹³ Burkhart planned to repurpose the building into an artist-in-residence community with space for creative work and education.¹¹⁴ Plans called for upscale lofts, a restaurant, bar, and indoor courtyard.¹¹⁵ Burkhart remodeled the second floor of the office area into a loft apartment. Unfortunately, the project stalled, so he sold the property on September 27, 2010 to Chip Harper, owner of Harrison, Walker & Harper (HWH).¹¹⁶ On February 15, 2016, an easement was granted to the City of Paris for a 25-foot-wide strip on the property's northern boundary to be used as part of the Trails de Paris, a 11.5-mile section of the 130-mile Northeast Texas Trail rails-to-trails walking path project.¹¹⁷ The old Paris Grocer Company building is currently used as a warehouse by the 136-year-old HWH construction company.

¹⁰⁴ "Paris Grocer Co. Entering into Plan of Liquidation." The Paris News. 22 December 1954. 1. Print.

¹⁰⁵ "Kimbell Buys Paris Grocer." The Paris News. 3 January 1955. 1. Print.

¹⁰⁶ "Advertisement: Kimbell-Diamond Milling Co." The Paris news. 7 June 1942. 6. Print.

¹⁰⁷ "Kimbell-Paris Co. is Announced Here." The Paris News. 3 November 1946. 10. Print.

¹⁰⁸ "\$8,000 Addition at Kimbell-Paris Co. is Started Friday." The Paris News. 17 August 1947. 21. Print.

¹⁰⁹ "We Have Moved." The Paris News. 24 September 1967. 24. Print.

¹¹⁰ "National Hardware Company Has Served Paris Area Since 1944." 22 July 1997. 18. Print.

¹¹¹ "Republican Candidate to Open Local Campaign Office." The Paris News. 14 January 1996. 1. Print.

¹¹² "Legal Notices: Cane River Loading Dock Has Applied for Permit." The Paris News. 12 July 2002. 13. Print.

¹¹³ "Hodges to Burkhart." Lamar County Appraisal District. 15 February 2005. Or1579. 195. Print.

¹¹⁴ Burkhart, Pike. "Phone Interview by Marvin Gorley." 25 April 2022.

¹¹⁵ Carroll, Bill and Beth Thompson. "Grocer's Warehouse Building Plans & Renderings." Pike Burkhart. 2005. Digital

¹¹⁶ "Burkhart to Harper." Lamar County Appraisal District. 27 September 2010. Vol. 082370. 2010. Print.

¹¹⁷ "Recreational Trail Easement." Harrison, Walker & Harper to the City of Paris. 15 February 2016. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Conclusion

Between 1897 and 1955, Paris Grocer Co. became one of the largest wholesale food-distributing firms in Northeast Texas and Southeast Oklahoma, serving an area covering approximately 20,000 square miles.¹¹⁸ At its height, the company had branch offices in McKinney, Greenville, Sulphur Springs and Clarksville, Texas and in Hugo and Idabel, Oklahoma.¹¹⁹ The company's Paris headquarters were at the nominated building, which it acquired from the Boren-Stewart Company in 1915 until 1955 when the Kimble Grocery Company bought it out. It is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Commerce at the local level of significance for its importance to the economic development of Paris, Lamar County. The period of significance is 1915-1955, the year Paris Grocer Co. purchased the building through its subsequent sale.

¹¹⁸ "Vocational Service Stressed at Rotary." The Paris News. 16 May 1947. 10. Print.

¹¹⁹ "Two Large Wholesale Grocers Here." The Paris News. 9 October 1938. 6. Print.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

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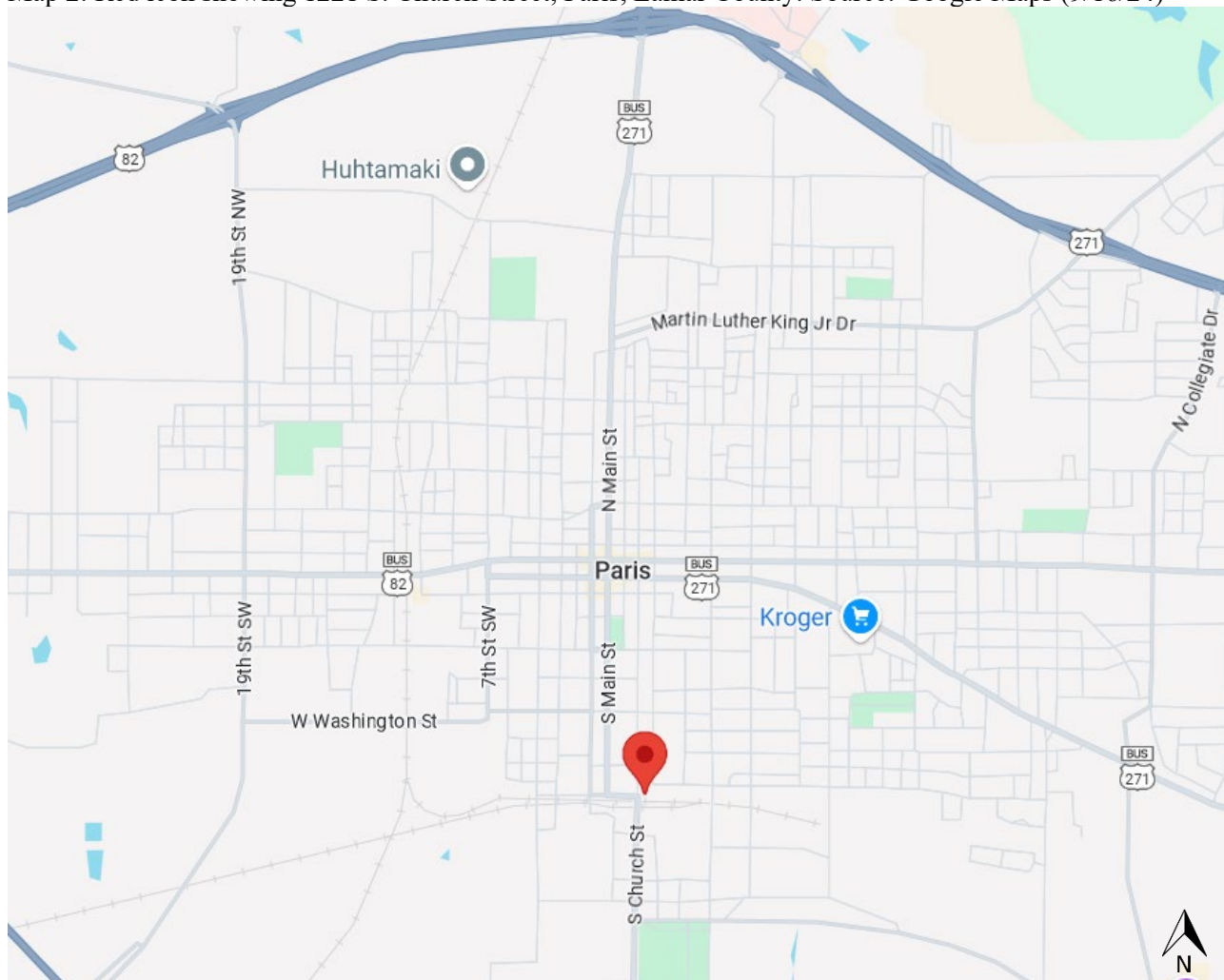
Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Maps

Map 1: Lamar County, Texas

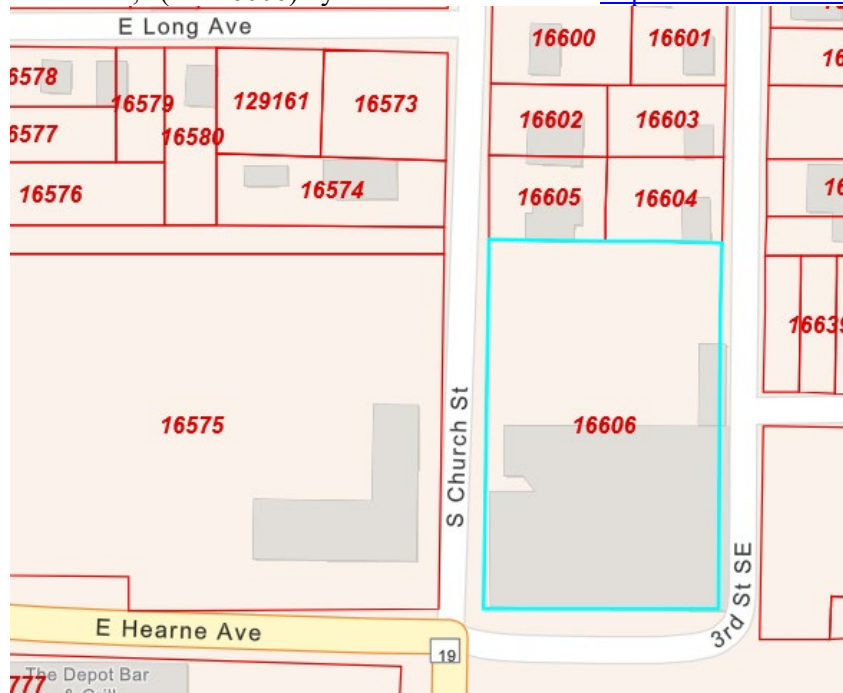


Map 2: Red icon showing 1221 S. Church Street, Paris, Lamar County. Source: Google Maps (9/16/24)



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Map 3: The nominated boundary is the legal parcel described as “CITY OF PARIS, BLOCK 159, LOT 19, 1221 S CHURCH,” (ID#16606) by Lamar CAD. Source: <https://esearch.lamarcad.org/> (9/16/24)

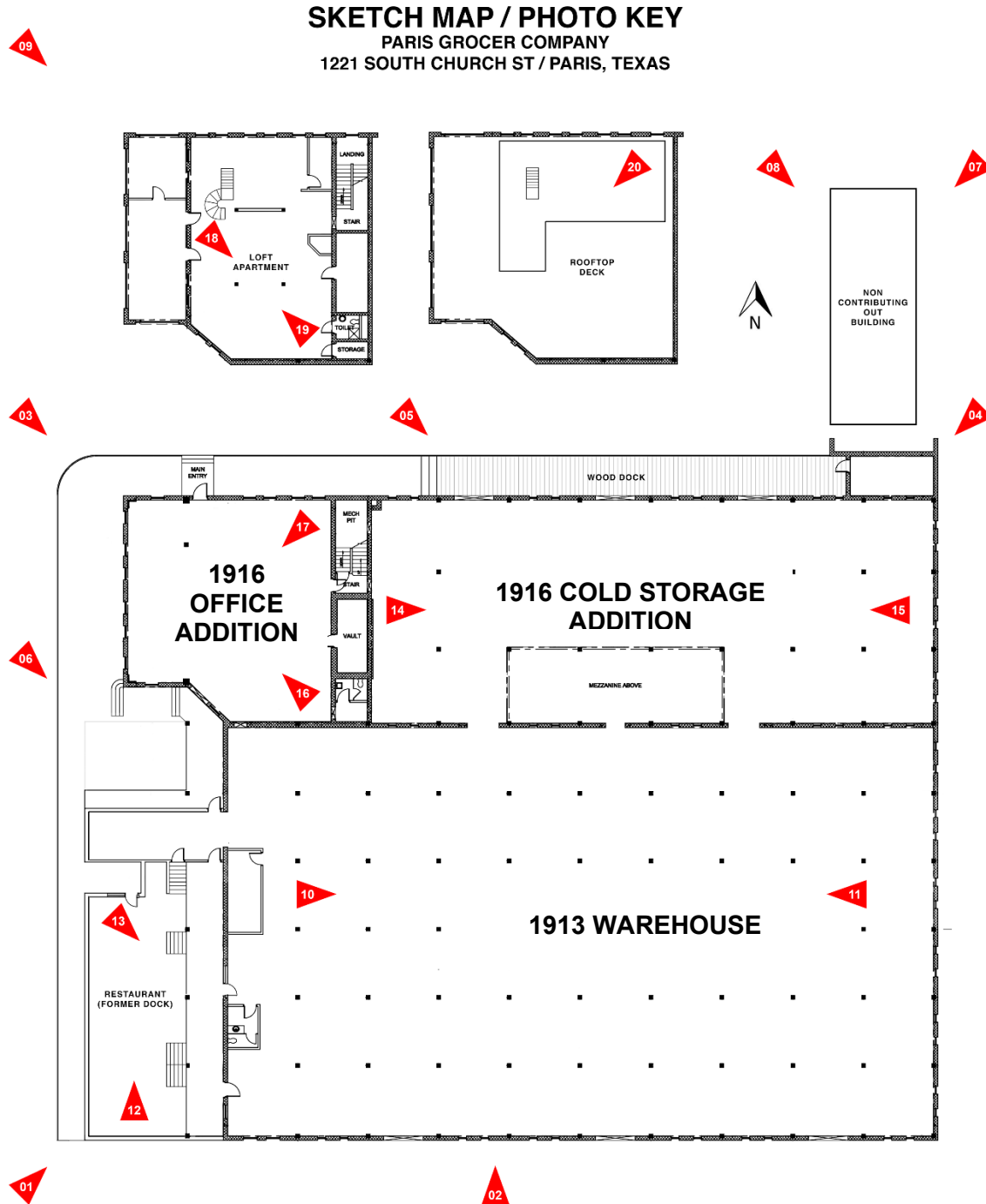


Map 4: Paris, Paris Grocery Co Warehouse 33.650644° -95.554199° Source: Google Earth 9/16/24



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Map 5: Sketch Map and Photo Key



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Map 6: Site Map Showing Contributing and Noncontributing Resources

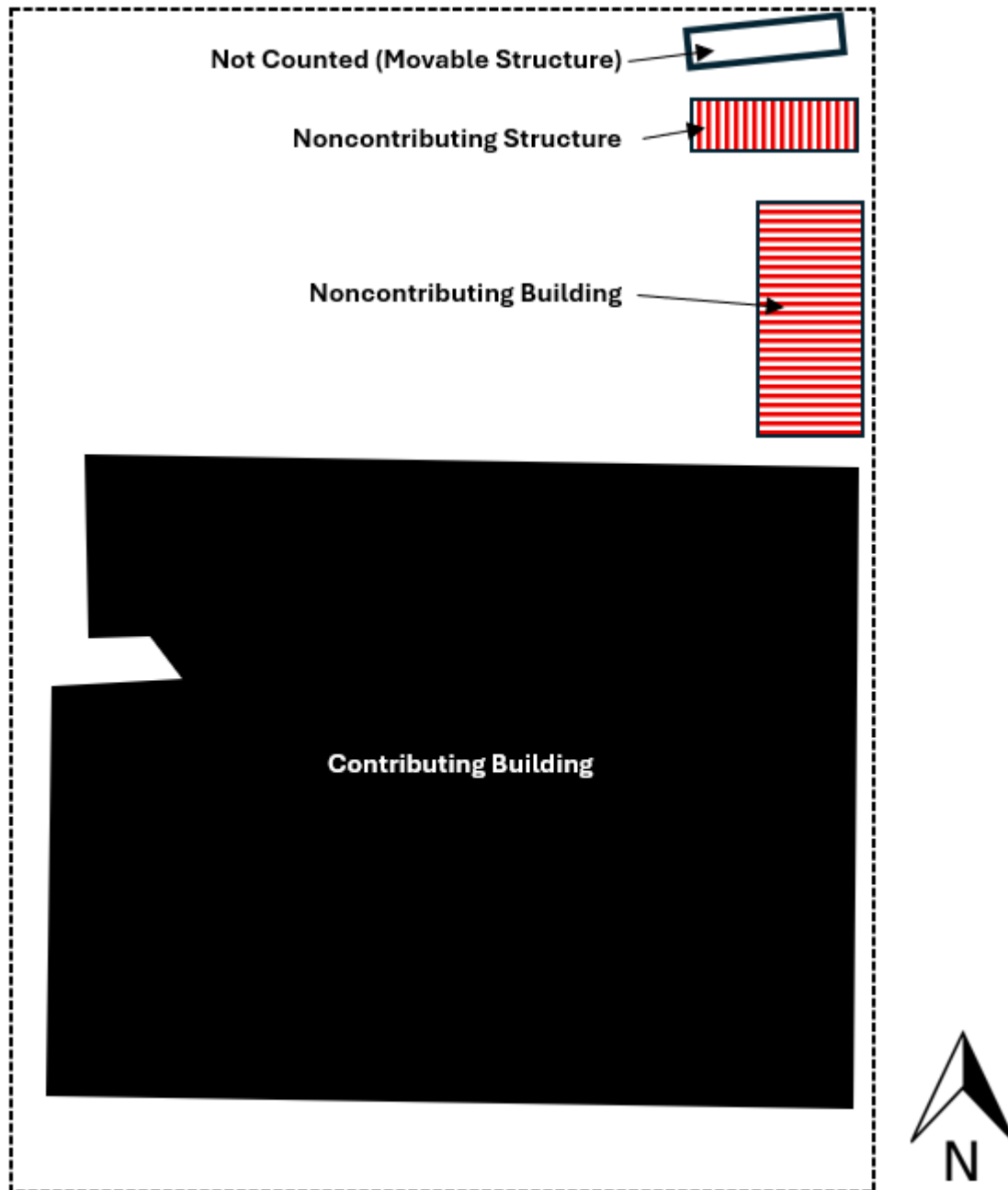


Figure 1: Current floor plan.



This is a detailed historical plat map of the Paris, Texas area, showing industrial, commercial, and residential developments. The map includes streets like S. Main, S. 20th, S. 22nd, and Sycamore. Key locations include the Paris Oil & Cotton Co. Cotton Oil Mill & Refinery, Goldman Grocery Co., Boren-Stewart Co. Wholesale Grocer, and Mt. Carmel Baptist Church. A compass rose and a scale of feet are also present.

Streets and Layout:

- Top:** HEARNE AV.
- Left:** S. 20th ST.
- Center:** S. MAIN
- Right:** S. 22nd ST., SYCAMORE

Industrial and Commercial Buildings:

- Top Left:** 157, 158, 159. Includes "NOT NAMED", "THE O. L. GREGORY VINEGAR CO.", "GOLDMAN GROCERY CO. WHOLESALE GROC. & PRODUCE", and "BOREN-STEWART CO. WHOLESALE GROCER".
- Center:** T. & P. R. R. PASSENGER DEPOT, T. & P. R. R. FREIGHT DEPOT, PLATFORM 1.
- Bottom Left:** PARIS OIL & COTTON CO. COTTON OIL MILL & REFINERY, COTTON OIL MILL, HULL STORAGE, COTTON OIL REFINERY.
- Bottom Center:** 168, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.
- Bottom Right:** PIERCE-FORDYCE OIL ASSOCIATION OIL DISTRIBUTING STATION.

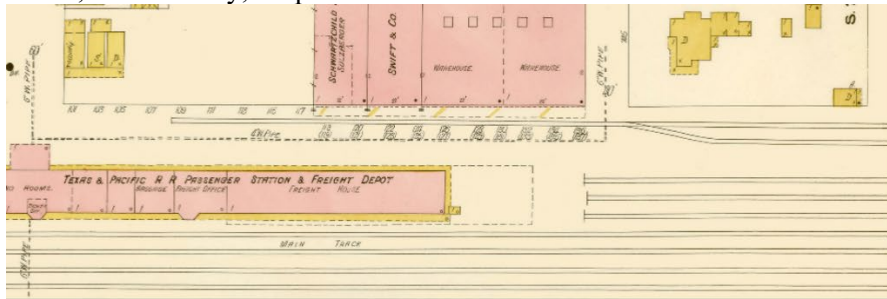
Other Features:

- Compass Rose:** Located in the center of the map, showing North (N), South (S), East (E), and West (W).
- Scale of Feet:** Located at the bottom right, showing a scale from 0 to 100 feet.
- Church:** MT. CARMEL BAPTIST CHURCH, located in the bottom center.
- Storage:** OIL STORAGE, HULL STORAGE, COTTON OIL MILL, COTTON OIL REFINERY.
- Depot:** T. & P. R. R. PASSENGER DEPOT, T. & P. R. R. FREIGHT DEPOT, PLATFORM 1.
- Refinery:** COTTON OIL MILL & REFINERY, COTTON OIL REFINERY.
- Distributing Station:** PIERCE-FORDYCE OIL ASSOCIATION OIL DISTRIBUTING STATION.

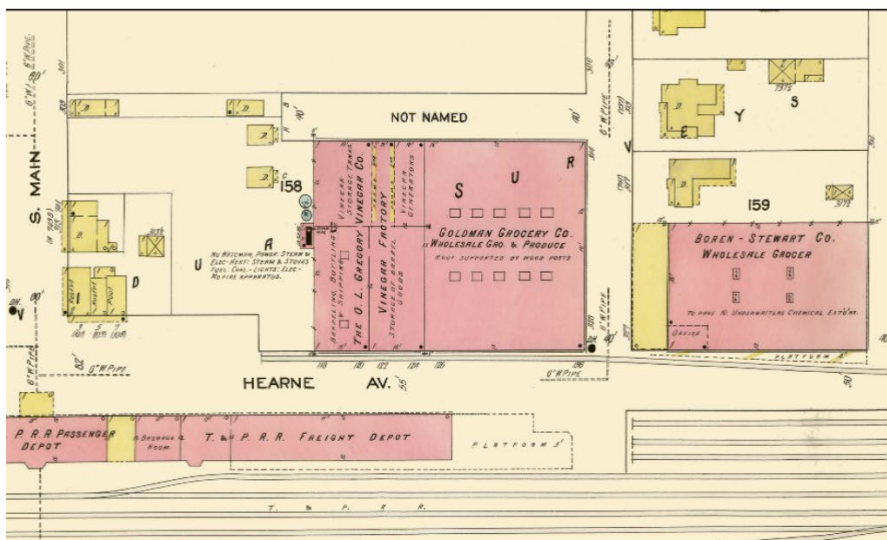
Section FIGURE, Page 33

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

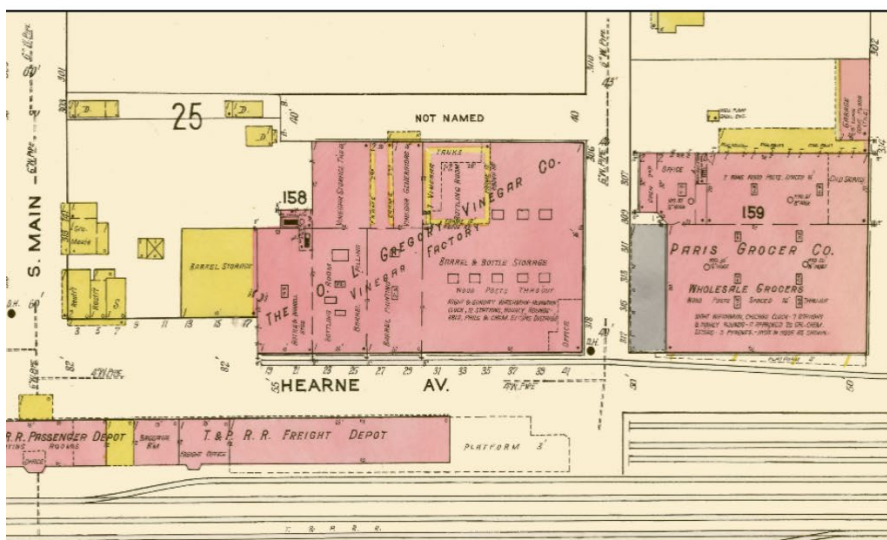
Figure 3: Sanborn maps document the property's evolution between 1914 and 1920. Source: University of Texas at Austin, PCL Library, Map Collection.



Residential (1908 Sanborn Map Detail, page 28)



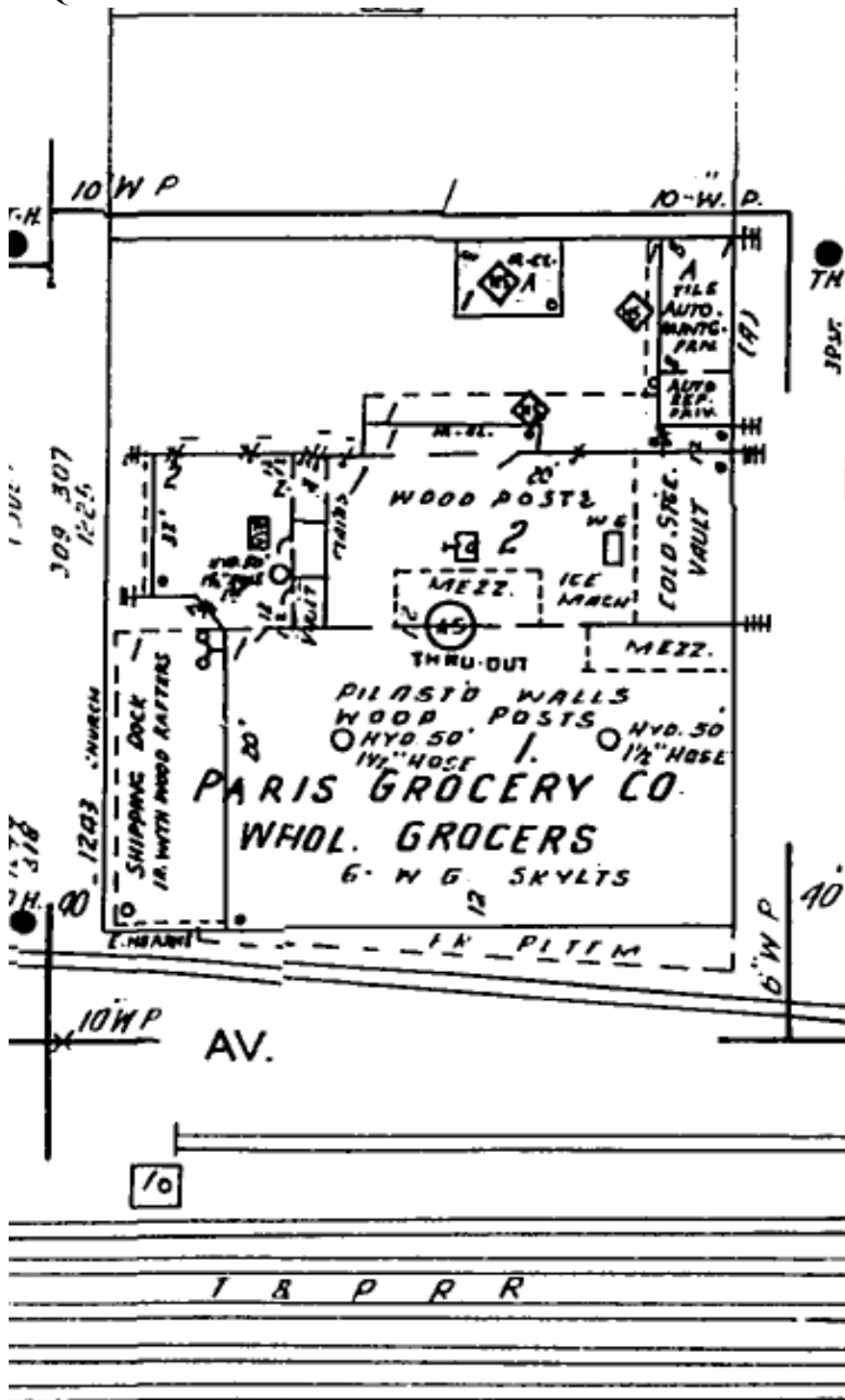
Original 1913 Warehouse (1914 Sanborn Map Detail, page 33)



Original 1913 Warehouse plus 1916 Addition (1920 Sanborn Map Detail, page 28)

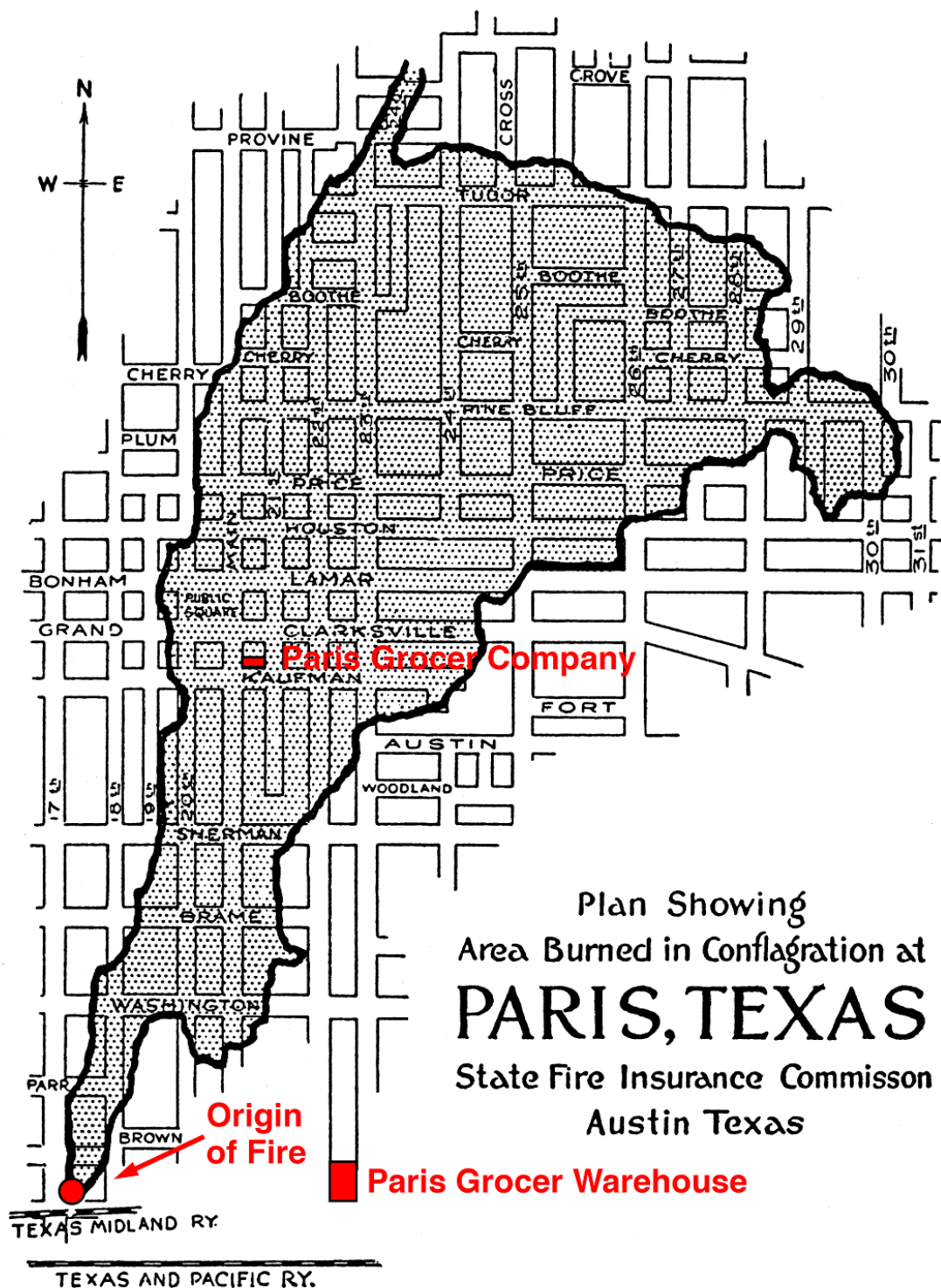
Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Figure 4: Paris Grocery [sic] Co. c. 1950. Source: Sanborn Map Company, Paris Feb. 1946-Oct. 1950, Sheet 24 via ProQuest.



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Figure 5: Map of 1916 Paris fire noting the nominated property and the company's original downtown offices that burned down. Source: Texas State Library and Archives.



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Figure 6: Then and now visual comparison of Loading Dock / Restaurant section of Paris Grocer.

THEN AND NOW
Paris Grocer Company Southwest Loading Dock / Restaurant
1221 South Church Street / Paris, Texas



October 31, 1935 The Paris News

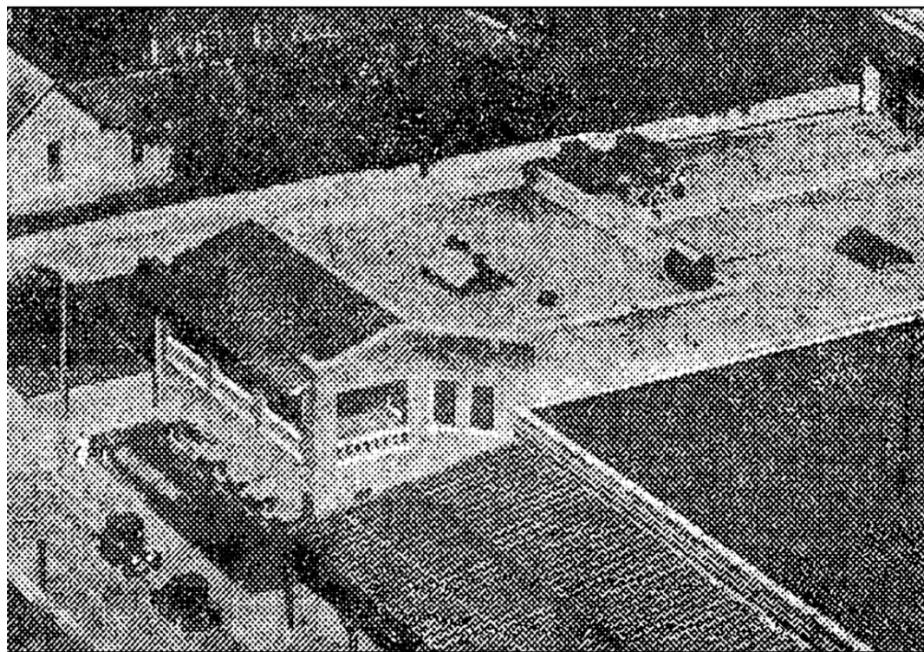


April 26, 2024 Loading Dock Walled In

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Figure 7: Then and now visual comparison of porch on second floor of office area.

THEN AND NOW
Paris Grocer Company Floor Two Porch
1221 Church Street / Paris, Texas



May 31, 1936 The Paris News



April 26, 2024 Porch infilled with windows and brick.

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Figure 8: May 31, 1936 *Paris News* advertisement placed by Paris Grocer.

Serving The Homes

OF NORTHEAST TEXAS AND SOUTHEAST OKLAHOMA FOR 37 YEARS
THROUGH THE FACILITIES OF YOUR RETAIL GROCER



(Airplane View of Paris Grocer Co., In Paris)

We Make No Experiments At The Cost Of Our Customers!

● OLD ● STRONG ● RELIABLE ● FRIENDLY ● PROGRESSIVE

For more than one-third of the interesting history of Texas which we celebrate with the Centennial, the Paris Grocer Company has been privileged to serve the homes of Northeast Texas and Southeast Oklahoma through the facilities of the independent retail grocers. And may we pause here to pay tribute to these grocers who have been so loyal to their patrons and to the communities in which they live. Theirs has been a big part in the development of the state.

During the thirty-seven years history of The Paris Grocer Company, a high-standard of business ethics has been maintained. At the outset a strong organization was set up, thoroughly capable of serving the grocers. Steadfastly we have refrained from any experiments at the expense of our customers. "No "off brands" or shoddy merchandise has been offered at the expense of customers and no "high pressure methods" have been employed in our sales efforts. Only dependable food products of quality from reputable manufacturers may be had from the Paris Grocer Co.

Just as the Paris Grocer Co., has given service during the past thirty-seven years, keeping always abreast of the times, so will this service be maintained in the future.

All Hail To Texas! With Your

100 YEARS OF GLORIOUS HISTORY!



No man can live in Texas without pride in citizenship. No man can live in Texas without a deep appreciation of those pioneers who led the way to the high state of development we have today. And no man can live in Texas without a full realization that even though 100 years old the future of Texas is brighter than that of any other state in the Union. Let us therefore join in the spirit of the Centennial, each doing our part to win new friends for our state and helping Texas grow. Let us be loyal to the institutions of our home towns and to the industries and merchants of TEXAS.

We Join All Northeast Texas In Inviting Centennial Visitors To Our Great State This Summer !

Paris Grocer Co.

WHOLESALE

Branch Houses At: Greenville, Clarksville, Sulphur Springs and McKinney, Texas and Hugo, and Idabel, Oklahoma

The Paris News / May 31, 1936

Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photographs

Name of Property: Paris Grocer Company Warehouse and Headquarters

City: Paris, Texas

County: Lamar

Photographer: 1-4 (Aaron Benson) and 5-20 (Marvin Gorley)

Date: 8/3/2022, 12/21/2023, 3/6/2024, and 4/24/2024

Date Photographed: See List

Photographs accurately depict the property's current appearance at the date of NPS submittal.

Photograph 1: Aerial view of Paris Grocer at NE corner of South Church Street and East Hearne Avenue. Camera Direction: Northeast



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 2: Aerial view of south elevation of Paris Grocer. Camera Direction: North



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 3: Aerial view of northwest corner of Paris Grocer. Camera Direction: Southeast



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 4: Aerial view of northeast corner of Paris Grocer. Camera Direction: Southwest



Photograph 5: Loading dock on north side of Paris Grocer building. Camera Direction: Southeast



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 6: Service dock alcove on west side of Paris Grocer building. Camera Direction: Southeast



Photograph 7: Northeast corner of noncontributing metal building in north parking lot. Camera Direction: Southwest



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 8: Northwest corner of noncontributing metal building in north parking lot. Camera Direction: Southeast



Photograph 9: West entrance to Trail de Paris on north end of Paris Grocer site. Camera Direction: Southeast

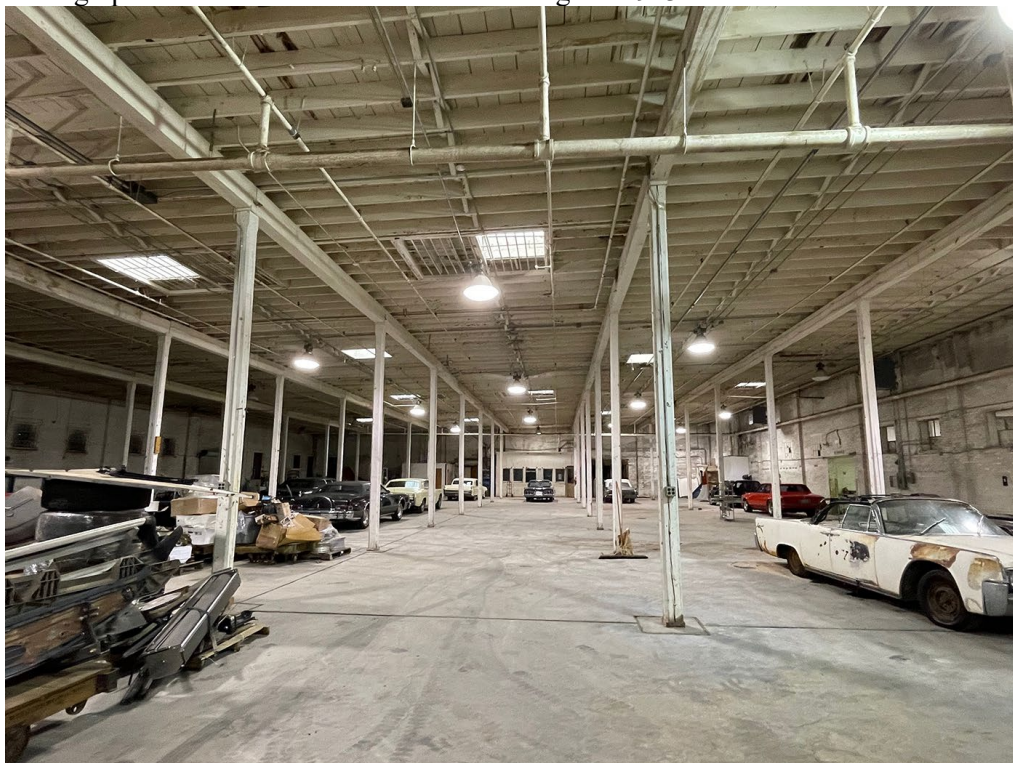


Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 10: Interior view of west side of original 1913 warehouse. Camera Direction: West



Photograph 11: Interior view of east side of original 1913 warehouse. Camera Direction: East



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 12: Interior view of west loading dock converted into a restaurant. Camera Direction: North



Photograph 13: Interior view of west loading dock converted into a restaurant. Camera Direction: Southeast



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 14: Interior view of east side of 1916 warehouse addition. Camera Direction: East



Photograph 15: Interior view of west side of 1916 warehouse addition. Camera Direction: West



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 16: Interior view of northwest corner of first floor office. Camera Direction: Northwest



Photograph 17: Interior view of southwest corner of first floor office. Camera Direction: Southwest



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 18: Interior view of southeast corner of second floor office converted into residential loft. Camera Direction: Southeast



Photograph 19: Interior view of northwest corner of second floor office converted into residential loft. Camera Direction: Northwest



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 20: View of rooftop deck above loft. Camera Direction: Southwest



Photograph 21: View of north side truck dock. Camera Direction: Southwest



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 22: View of north elevation of office addition. Camera Direction: South



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 23: View of west elevation of office addition. Camera Direction: East



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 24: View of office addition eaves on west side of building. Camera Direction: North



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 25: View of structural brackets for canopy over service dock. Camera Direction: East



Photograph 26: View of west elevation of restaurant (former truck docks). Camera Direction: Southeast



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 27: View of painted sign on south elevation (Paris Grocer Co. over Boren-Stewart Co.).
Camera Direction: North



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 28: View of east elevation. Camera Direction: North



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 29: View of roll-up garage door on southeast interior of original warehouse. Camera Direction: Southeast



Photograph 30: View of wall between original 1913 warehouse and 1916 warehouse addition. (Former north exterior wall of original warehouse.) Camera Direction: North



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 31: View of ceiling rafters typical throughout warehouse. Camera Direction: South



Photograph 32: View of walk-in safe on first floor of office addition. Camera Direction: North



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 33: View of stairs in office addition. Camera Direction: South



Photograph 34: View of infilled floor under skylight on second floor of office addition. Camera Direction: East



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 35: View of skylight on second floor of office addition. Camera Direction: Southwest



Photograph 36: View of pressed tin ceiling on second floor of office addition. Camera Direction: Northwest



Paris Grocer Company, Paris, Lamar County, Texas

Photograph 37: View of infilled porch on second floor of office addition. Camera Direction: Northwest



~end~