

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lee, Malcolm K., House
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1003 E. Franklin Street not for publication
city, town Monroe vicinity
state North Carolina code NC county Union code 179 zip code 28110

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>2</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
None

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Slate

other Wood

Limestone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The handsome Colonial Revival style Malcolm K. Lee House, built in 1919, is located on a large, landscaped lot in a residential neighborhood east of downtown Monroe. Two stories high, the brick-veneered, hipped-roofed, residence has a largely symmetrical exterior dominated by a colossal portico and flanking porches at the front corners. The interior of the house includes a formal entrance and stair hall with classically-derived woodwork, adjacent formal parlors and subsidiary rooms with a mixture of classical and Craftsman Style elements. The house is substantially unaltered and retains its integrity of location, design, and feeling.

Set on a slight rise above the level of East Franklin Street, the Lee House is located near the front of its substantial, four and a half-acre grounds. Its setting includes the house lot retained by Lee when he subsequently subdivided the surrounding property, together with several adjoining lots purchased by the Kendalls in the 1930s which had originally belonged with the house. The outer perimeter of the property is lined with large trees of a variety of species. To the rear and east of the house are open lawns. Large oak trees are set directly in front of the house, which is approached by a walkway lined with small English boxwood.

The main block of the house is two stories tall, five bays wide, and covered with a hipped roof of slate shingles. Extending laterally from the rear corners and side elevations of this block are balanced, hipped-roofed two-story wings. Another two-story, hipped-roofed wing extends toward the rear from the northwest corner of the house. Projecting from the base of this wing is a one-story service wing with low hipped roof, along the east side of which runs a screened porch. Another one-story, hipped-roofed rear wing, at the northeast corner of the rear elevation, was added in the 1920s. In the U formed by the rear wings is a small, one-story screened porch with balustraded deck above. Shallow interior brick chimney stacks rise symmetrically at either side the front block, and an exterior stack rises from the back of the rear wing. The masonry veneer of the frame house is of red tapestry brick laid in stretcher bond.

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The five-bay front elevation of the house is dominated by a two-story wooden portico. At the front of the portico are pairs of fluted columns with Greek Doric capitals. The outer columns have replacement shafts (ca. 1975) which sit on high octagonal bases. Supporting the rear of the portico are single fluted pilasters on either side. Set behind the line of the columns on the second floor is a suspended balcony whose picketed railing has oval inserts centered in each of its three sides. The raking cornices of the pediment have widely-spaced mutules. This cornice treatment continues around the front and side elevations of the house.

Centered under the portico is the main entrance to the house, a pair of French doors with transoms under a pediment supported by consoles. At either side of the entrance are narrow slit windows. Another set of French doors with a transom gives access to the balcony above. The first floor windows bracketing the portico have nine over one sash with fixed transoms, and the same window treatment is used on the side elevations. On the second floor, and throughout most of the rest of the house, are nine over one windows. All of the windows have soldier brick lintels and stone sills.

At the outer corners of the front elevation are pedimented side porches with standing seam metal roofs. Both these and the main portico are set on a concrete-topped continuous brick podium across the front of the house. The concrete slab is a ca. 1940 replacement for the original wood decking. Each outer corner of the side porches is supported by triple, fluted Doric columns, and on the west porch a single column centered in the side.

Extending from the side of the east porch is a hipped-roofed porte-cochere, supported on its outer end by paired columns set on a brick wall.

Behind the house to the northeast is a one-story, hipped-roofed brick garage of the same apparent date as the house. Its front elevation has a set of sliding wood doors. A single door with the same pattern as those used in the house opens into a storage area.

The principal interior space of the house is the front entrance/stair hall. Just inside the front doors is a U-shaped area with a set of pocket French doors on either hand leading to matching parlors. This U-shaped area has a complete classical entablature supported by pairs of pilasters on either side of the parlor doors. The rear portion of the hall widens into an stair hall, at the back of which rises a quarter-

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turn stair with landings. This stair has simple string brackets, turned balusters and a molded handrail that spirals at the base.

The front parlors of the house are simply-finished, with window and door surrounds with two-part architraves and with varnished hardwood mantels over white-tiled chimney faces that have cast-iron coal grates. Identical brass pendant ceiling fixtures and wall sconces, with painted glass shades, survive in each room.

Throughout the house are the original brass or iron lighting fixtures of various types. The same baseboards and architraves are used throughout, as are the unusual Craftsman Style four-panel mahogany-varnished wood doors. In the more formal spaces oak strip floor was employed, the rest of the flooring being pine.

Behind the west parlor, and joined to it and the stair hall by French doors, is the dining room. This room is finished like the parlors, except for a diagonally-set varnished Craftsman Style mantel with glazed tile face and Craftsman Style cast iron coal grate. To the rear of the dining room is a breakfast room with a built-in, partially-glazed hutch and a simple painted mantel. Behind the breakfast room is the kitchen.

On the east side of the entrance hall a passage leads, through a door, to a rear hall, off of which are a sitting room, a bathroom and a bedroom. The bedroom, housed in the aforementioned one-story wing, was added in the 1920s and is finished to match the rest of the house. Like the dining room on the opposite side of the house, the sitting room has a diagonally-set varnished Craftsman Style mantel. The bathroom has patterned mosaic tile floors.

The second floor is centered around the stair hall. French doors lead to a sitting room behind the balcony at the front of the house. Short halls lead to five simply-finished bedrooms with painted mantels and to one bathroom.

6. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Commerce

Period of Significance

1919-1933

Significant Dates

1919

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Lee, Malcolm

Architect/Builder

Tucker, Marion G.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The M. K. Lee House is significant in the history of Monroe, North Carolina, as one of the finest local early 20th century examples of the Colonial Revival style of residential architecture and through its association with M. K. Lee, who played a prominent role in the community's business and civic life from 1910 until his death in 1933. Under Criterion B, the house is associated with the productive life of Malcolm K. Lee (1865-1933), organizer of the Farmers and Merchants Bank and Bearskin Cotton Mills and a county commissioner at the time of his death. The house is also eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as a well-crafted and locally outstanding example of the Colonial Revival style, exhibiting the conscious imitation of Georgian and Federal elements. styles. The Lee House is an early example of the brick Colonial Revival house, still the dominant residential form in the Carolinas. This style, together with the Classical Revival style, was associated in Monroe with the great prosperity engendered by a booming cotton economy. It is also the work of a prominent local builder, G. Marion Tucker, who was the contractor for a large number of buildings--commercial, residential and institutional--in the first three decades of the 20th century. During the 1978 survey of Monroe's historic architectural resources, the Lee House was highlighted as one of a small number of substantial suburban residences built prior to 1920 which were comparable to the grand Classical Revival houses erected in the city's central area during the period. Much of that area and many of those houses are being nominated to the National Register as the Monroe Residential Historic District. Of the other major suburban residences, the John C. Sikes House was listed in 1978 and four others--the Heath House, the R. B. Redwine House, Crow's Nest and the Ed Crow House--are being nominated as the Waxhaw-Weddington Roads Historic District.

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Historical Background

Malcolm K. Lee was born in Union County in 1865, a son of Harrison and Elizabeth (McCaskill) Lee, and was educated at the Union Institute. After teaching school briefly, he entered commerce in the town of Marshville, located some ten miles east of Monroe, the county seat.(1) In 1895, Lee married J. Glennie Williams of Monroe Township, with whom he had four children.(2) He became a prominent member of Marshville's business community, incorporating the M. K. Lee Mercantile Company in 1902, acting as a principal in the establishment of the town's telephone company in 1903, and being a major shareholder in the Bank of Marshville in 1904. Near the end of the first decade of the 20th century, he was a co-founder of the Ash-Lee Manufacturing Company, which produced agricultural implements, and of the Union Hardware Company.(3)

But as early as 1905, Lee had begun investing Monroe enterprises. When Charles Iceman, R. A. Morrow and W. S. Lee incorporated the Icemorlee Cotton Mills in that year, M. K. Lee was one of the many individuals purchasing shares.(4) Later, in April 1910, the following announcement was made in the Monroe Journal, "Mr. M. K. Lee and family moved from Marshville last Tuesday to their new home, the S. R. Moore place east of town. Mr. Lee is one of the leading business men of the county and he and his family receive a cordial welcome to Monroe." (5) The site of the Moore place was a 100-acre tract located on the north side of the Wadesboro road slightly less than one mile from the central business district.(6)

Lee quickly established his business stature in his new community. In the following year, 1911, he was the major shareholder for the organization of the Farmers and Merchants Bank, which he served as president.(7) In announcing the pending opening of the new bank, the Monroe Journal again praised Lee's business acumen, stating, "Mr. Lee is one of the county's best business men and will manage the new business in a way to both safeguard his stockholders and to aid in the development of the town and county."(8) The bank was first located in a building on South Hayne Street which was destroyed by fire in 1927, although the Bank had previously merged with the Monroe Bank and Trust Company.(9) He also became involved in a number of commercial enterprises, including the Co-operative Mercantile Company, which dealt in general merchandise.(10)

Among his most important enterprises was Bearskin Cotton Mills, organized in 1917 with Lee as one of the principal shareholders. Bearskin

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joined the growing number of textile mills in Monroe (four were in operation by 1919). Lee served as the company's president for several years.(11) Bearskin, which commenced operations in 1919, manufactured cotton yarn in a refurbished building which had been erected in 1910 for the Piedmont Buggy Company. The latter had gone out of business by 1916, and Bearskin was able to acquire its facility.(12) G. Marion Tucker was hired to build thirty cottages for workers on a nearby tract of land.(13)

Lee's contributions continued to be recognized in the local newspapers. In 1919, when he was a director and treasurer of the Monroe Chamber of Commerce, it was said that, "Although having lived in Monroe only ten years, Mr. Lee ranks today as one of our leading business men."(14)

Having become established in the business community, Lee apparently needed a substantial home to reflect that status. Almost exactly seven years after his move to Monroe, it was announced that, "Mr. M. K. Lee is preparing to move the present dwelling house on the old Moore place, one mile from town on the Lee's mill road, to make room for a handsome brick veneer building that he will erect this summer provided the war does not interfere." (15) Unfortunately, the war probably did interfere with the construction of Lee's house, as it did with the construction of other buildings in Monroe; in December 1918, the new house was still incomplete.(16)

Although an architect for the house has not been positively identified as yet, it has been suggested that the designer was Louis Asbury of Charlotte.(17) An examination of the Asbury papers in the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina did not confirm this attribution. However, M. K. Lee's daughter, Mrs. J. Paul Gamble, remembers that the contractor was G. M. Tucker, a local builder who was responsible for the construction of a large number of buildings in Monroe in the first three decades of the 20th century, including commercial buildings, public buildings, churches, and a wide variety of residences. He was assisted by E. C. Ingram, a masonry contractor with whom he worked on other commissions.(18)

George Marion Tucker (1874-1933) was a Union County native who became a carpenter early in life. His occupation was listed as "house carpenter" in the 1900 census. Soon entering the construction business, Tucker quickly established himself as a major building contractor in Monroe and Union County, working in both masonry and frame construction. (19)

Among the more prominent Monroe buildings whose construction was super-

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vised by Tucker are the Belk-Bundy Building (1911), a large Italian Renaissance Revival commercial building; St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1912), a modest Gothic Revival church designed by the Charlotte architectural firm of Wheeler and Stern; the massive Monroe Hardware Company Warehouse (1924); the masterfully-executed additions to the Union County Courthouse (1926); the 1928 reconstruction of the Secrest Building; and the handsome early 20th century suburban residence of Judge R. B. Redwine.(20) Many of the buildings are being nominated to the National Register as contributing elements in historic districts--the Monroe Downtown, Monroe Residential and Waxhaw-Weddington Roads historic districts.

The Monroe newspapers from 1910-1930 [earlier editions are lost] regularly published accounts of Tucker's commissions, including workers' housing at Bearskin Cotton Mills (1918), a brick school building in North Monroe (1919), and the Union County Home (1911). In addition, the construction of a great number of substantial houses in Monroe can be attributed to him. It can justifiably be said that Tucker had a significant impact on the development of Monroe's building stock during the first three decades of the 20th century, a boom era in the city's history which saw a tremendous proliferation in residential and commercial construction.

The style selected for Lee's new residence was the enormously popular Colonial Revival style with a monumental portico, the latter a feature which dominated early 20th century residential construction among the prosperous businessmen, industrialists, and professionals of Monroe. A clear demonstration of their status in the community, houses of this type are found in great number in the Monroe Residential Historic District, where the majority of the town's leaders lived. The mode has been frequently identified as the choice of those making their fortunes in the cotton economy.

With its elegantly tapered, fluted columns in the Greek Corinthian order, and its skillfully-ordered parts, the Lee House exhibits a delicacy and sophistication that is lacking in many of the other Monroe examples. The interior finishes of the house, carried out in a mix of Colonial Revival and Craftsman styles, obtain a maximum effect from relatively simple features through careful detailing and arrangement.

The Lee House was built in a suburban location, like the 1926-27 John C. Sikes House (National Register, 1978) and the four principal houses in the Waxhaw-Weddington Roads Historic District (nominated, 1987). All reflected a taste for a more rural setting, while maintaining proximity

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to the community's core where the owners carried out their principal activities.

Apparently, Lee's new residence was seen locally as one of the town's premier new residences, a reflection of the community's prosperity, as its photograph was featured in a special promotional magazine supplement published in 1919 by the Monroe Journal under the title "Monroe, North Carolina, Wants You."(21) The house had been complete for less than a year at this time, and its grounds had not as yet been landscaped. In November of the following year, it was announced that,

Mr. M. K. Lee has given a Greensboro landscape artist a contract to beautify the grounds of his handsome place on the Lee's Mill road, and by next summer his yard will pre- an alluring picture to passersby. Green grass, roses and flowers in profusion and young trees that will eventually attain the growth of monster oaks, will be planted within the next few weeks.(22)

Unfortunately, the name of this landscape designer has not been determined.

M. K. Lee, like many businessmen, apparently was a victim of the Great Depression. He was declared bankrupt in August 1933 and died on 9 November 1933.(23) He had then served for approximately one year as a member of the Board of County Commissioners.(24)

As part of the settlement of his bankruptcy case, Lee's home was sold to Clyde B. Kendall of Washington, D. C., who moved into the house with his wife in 1937.(25) Kendall (1875-1956) was a native of Anson County, a graduate of North Carolina State College, a veteran of the Spanish-American War and World War I. For much of his working life he was a geodetic engineer for the U. S. Geological Survey. In his latter capacity, he was involved in the survey of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Mrs. Kendall, who still owns and lives in the house, is a native of Texas; she trained as a nurse at Johns Hopkins University and served in Europe during World War I and at a variety of other foreign locations in the years following the War.(26)

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Footnotes

(1) "M. K. Lee Succumbs After Long Illness," Monroe Enquirer, 13 November 1933, p. 1.

(2) Union County Register of Deeds (hereinafter cited as UCRD), Marriage Register; and United States Census, Union County, North Carolina, 1910, population schedule.

(3) UCRD, Record of Corporations, vol. A, pp. 76, 81, 109, 196, and 202.

(4) UCRD, Record of Corporations, vol. A, p. 134.

(5) Monroe Journal, 19 April 1910, p. 3.

(6) UCRD, deed book 49, p. 179.

(7) UCRD, Record of Corporations, vol. A, p. 253.

(8) "New Bank and Trust Company," Monroe Journal, 31 January 1911, p. 1.

(9) Sanborn Map Company, Insurance Maps for Monroe, 1914; and UCRD, deed book 65, p. 469.

(10) "Monroe, North Carolina, Wants You," Monroe Journal, 16 December 1919, p. 35; and Monroe City Directory, 1922.

(11) UCRD, Record of Corporations, vol. B, p. 120; and Monroe City Directory, 1922-23.

(12) "Bearskin Mill to Start Not Later Than April First," Monroe Journal, 7 February 1919, p. 1; and "Local and Personal," Monroe Journal, 4 April 1916, p. 5.

(13) "Local and Personal," Monroe Journal, 27 August 1918, p. 5.

(14) "Monroe, North Carolina, Wants You".

(15) "Local and Personal," Monroe Journal, 13 April 1917, p. 5.

(16) Monroe Journal, 17 December 1918, p. 5.

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(17) Mary Ann Lee, An Inventory of Historic Architecture (Monroe: City of Monroe, 1978), p. 230; and Mrs. J. Paul (Elizabeth Lee) Gamble, 301 E. Houston St., Monroe, N. C., Allison Black telephone interview, 30 June 1987.

(18) Gamble interview.

(19) "Marion Tucker Dies After Long Illness," Monroe Enquirer, 6 July 1933, p. 1; and U. S. Census, 1900, population schedule, Union County.

(20) Black and Black, Preservation Consultants, National Register nominations for Monroe Downtown Historic District, Monroe Residential Historic District and Waxhaw/Weddington Roads Historic District, 1987.

(21) "Local Intelligence," Monroe Journal, 23 November 1920, p. 1.

(22) Ibid.

(23) Union County Clerk of Superior Court, Orders and Decrees, vol. 12, p. 432.

(24) "M. K. Lee Succumbs."

(25) Union County Register of Deeds, deed book 75, p. 558; and Mrs. Julia Kendall, 1003 E. Franklin St., Monroe, N. C., Allison and David Black interview, 20 February 1987.

(26) Union County Register of Deeds, Vital Statistics--Deaths, vol. 42, p. 178; "Obituaries," Monroe Enquirer, 8 January 1956, p. 3; and Kendall interview.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 4.5 acres

UTM References

A

1	7
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5	4	2	4	6	0
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3	8	7	0	4	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Lee House nomination are indicated by a dashed line drawn on the accompanying Monroe planimetric map, drawn at a scale of 1"=200'.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The Lee House nomination includes the house lot, together with several lots which were sold by Lee following a 1920s subdivision, but which were rejoined to the house lot in the 1930s by the Kendalls.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David R. and Allison H. Black

organization Black & Black Preservation Consultants date 6/30/87

street & number 620 Wills Forest Street telephone (919) 828-4616

city or town Raleigh state North Carolina zip code 27605

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"Bearskin Mill to Start Not Later than April First." Monroe Journal, 7 February 1919, p. 1.

Gamble, Mrs. J. Paul (Elizabeth Lee). 301 E. Houston St., Monroe, North Carolina. Allison Black telephone interviews, 8 March 1987 and 30 June 1987.

Kendall, Mrs. Julia. 1003 E. Franklin St., Monroe, North Carolina. David and Allison Black interview, 20 February 1987.

Lee, Mary Ann. An Inventory of Historic Architecture. Monroe, N. C.: City of Monroe, 1978.

"M. K. Lee Succumbs After Long Illness." Monroe Enquirer, 13 November 1933, p. 1.

"Marion Tucker Dies After Long Illness." Monroe Enquirer, 6 July 1933, p. 1.

Monroe Journal. 1910-1920.

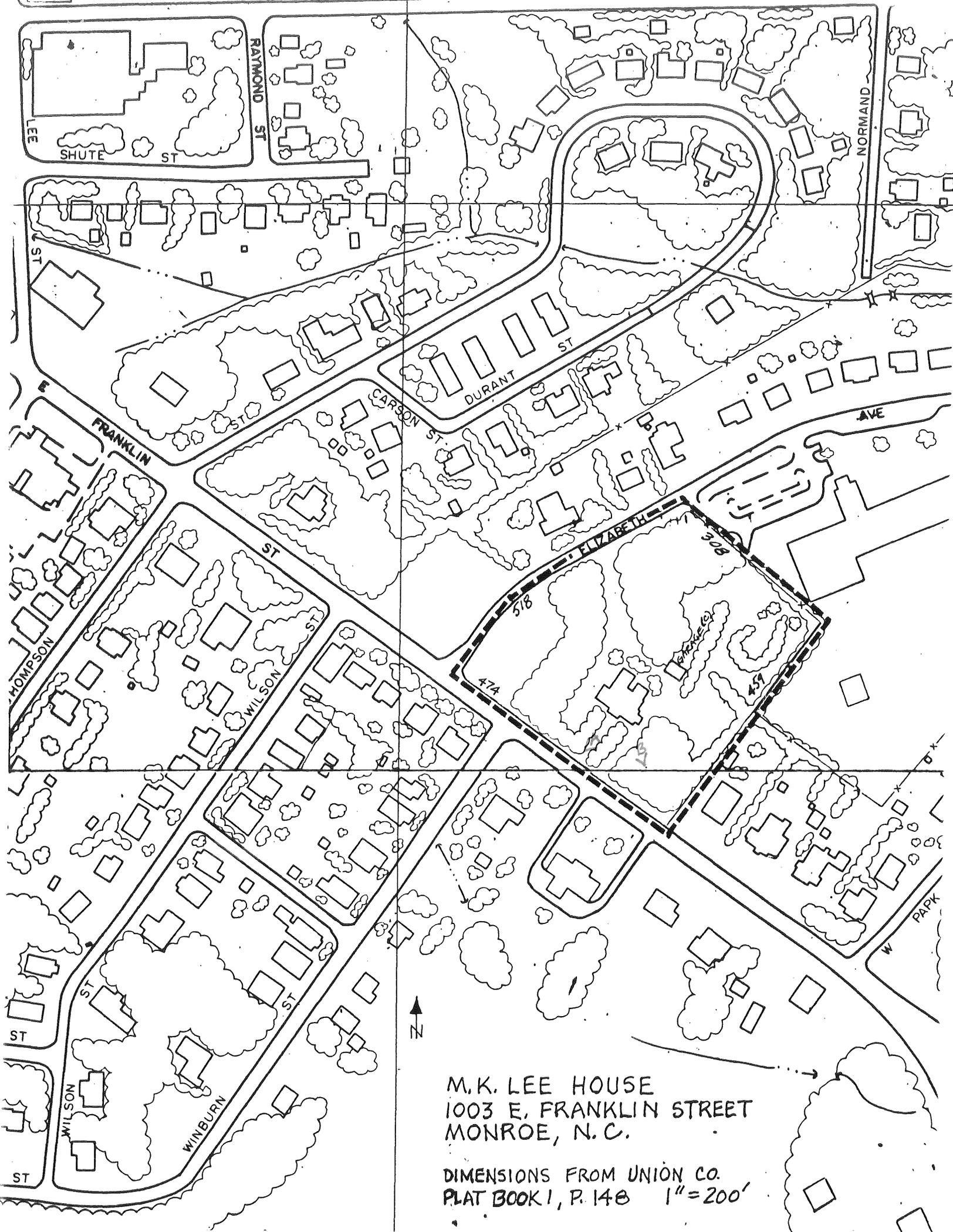
"Monroe, North Carolina, Wants You." Monroe Journal, 16 December 1919, p. 35.

"New Bank and Trust Company." Monroe Journal, 31 January 1911, p. 1.

"Obituaries." Monroe Enquirer, 8 January 1956, p. 3.

Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps, Monroe Series, 1914.

Union County Register of Deeds. Deeds, Marriage Register and Record of Corporations.



M.K. LEE HOUSE
 1003 E, FRANKLIN STREET
 MONROE, N. C.

DIMENSIONS FROM UNION CO.
 PLAT BOOK 1, P. 148 1"=200'

M.K. LEE HOUSE
MONROE, N.C.
1:24 000
ZONE 17 E 542 460

N 3870420

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