

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: **Downtown Wilmington Commercial Historic District**

Other names/site number:

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number:

City or town: **Wilmington** State: **DE** County: **New Castle**

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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 level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

**State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
- ___ determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ___ removed from the National Register
- ___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

District

Site

Structure

Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>44</u>	<u>15</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>44</u>	<u>17</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 12

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE – Business
COMMERCE/TRADE – Specialty Store
COMMERCE/TRADE – Department Store
COMMERCE/TRADE – Financial Institution
COMMERCE/TRADE – Restaurant

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE – Business
COMMERCE/TRADE – Specialty Store
COMMERCE/TRADE – Department Store
COMMERCE/TRADE – Restaurant
DOMESTIC – Multiple Dwellings
EDUCATION – College

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN – Italianate
LATE VICTORIAN – Second Empire
LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS – Beaux Arts
LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS – Colonial Revival
LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS – Tudor Revival
LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS – Mission Revival
LATE 19th AND EARLY 20th CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS – Commercial Style
MODERN MOVEMENT – Art Deco
MODERN MOVEMENT – Moderne

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Limestone, Terra Cotta

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Located on North Market Street between 6th and 9th Streets in downtown Wilmington, Delaware, the Downtown Wilmington Commercial Historic District's nearly seventy buildings represent the city's commercial growth from the late-nineteenth through the mid-twentieth century. Consisting of a fairly cohesive urban streetscape on both the east and west sides of Market Street, the district contains a variety of building types and styles although early-twentieth century commercial buildings with storefronts are the most common. Masonry construction predominates with brick, limestone and terra cotta as the most popular building materials in the district. In terms of scale, the buildings range from one-story storefronts to mid-rise office towers, however the majority of the commercial buildings conform to a human-scaled, pedestrian friendly three- to four-story model that forms the backbone of this eminently walkable downtown environment. Throughout the district there are brick or concrete sidewalks with

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granite curbs, mid-sized deciduous street trees, lamp posts, and other street furniture such as planters. Topographically, the district is relatively flat but features a slight change in grade near the southern end, where Market Street begins to slope down to the Christina River, about one-third of a mile south of 6th Street.

Narrative Description

Like the Lower Market Street Historic District (NR 1980, Amended 1985), the Downtown Wilmington Commercial Historic District contains late-nineteenth century commercial buildings in a variety of revivalist styles, but it is largely defined by its twentieth century Beaux Arts, Commercial Style, Art Deco, and Moderne style resources. This unique collection of small- to mid-sized retail and office buildings represents the northward expansion of Wilmington's downtown commercial core during the first four decades of the twentieth century.

The oldest resources in the district date to the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Although not typical of the district, the impressive Second Empire-style Masonic Hall and Grand Opera House, designed by architect Thomas Dixon and built in 1871, is the earliest surviving building in the district to which an exact year of construction can be ascribed. The richly articulated façade, constructed largely of cast iron with rhythmic arched window openings and a tall mansard roof, was typical of large public buildings in American cities during the decade following the Civil War. Other buildings from the period between 1860 and 1890 in the district include the three-story, Italianate style brick commercial buildings at 718-720 and 726 North Market Street (radically altered then reconstructed in 2010-2011 using historic photographs); and the three-story Queen Anne-style brick commercial building with substantial stone ornamentation and cornice at 706 North Market Street. It is likely that many of the existing facades along Market Street conceal buildings dating from the pre-1850 period, but without any indication of their integrity, these resources can only be considered contributing to the historic district for their present appearance, which includes a variety of styles such as Beaux Arts, Art Deco, and Moderne.

One of the most common building types in the district is what architectural historian Richard Longstreth has defined as the two-part commercial block, which is a façade divided into the public storefront on the first floor and private spaces, typically offices or apartments, on the upper floors.¹ Most examples in the proposed district are constructed of red brick and feature three-sided projecting bay windows, usually clad in pressed metal, on the second and third floors. The two-part commercial block form is found at 710, 711, 713, 823 and 825 North Market Street, all of which were constructed between 1890 and 1910. As seen in these five buildings and others, stylistic treatment was minimal, however in some examples gabled fronts, denticulated cornices, or prominent eaves do exist. In most cases, the storefronts are later replacements.

¹ Richard W. Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2000), p. 24.

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More stylistically articulated commercial buildings from the 1890-1910 period are also found in the district. The former Snellenburg's store at 614-620 North Market Street, for example, is a four-story building in the Queen Anne style with large pressed metal pilasters and ornamented entablature between the third and fourth floors. Although the circular turret at the northwest corner of the building has been altered – the pointed conical roof has long been missing – it is a characteristic feature of corner-sited commercial buildings from the late Victorian period. The Queen Anne style is also found at the McVey Building (NRHP #85000150; also known as Govatos' Chocolates and Restaurant) at 801 North Market Street. Here, the three-sided pressed metal and stucco window bays so common throughout the district are combined with richly textured wall treatments of brick and stone. The building also features Classical pediments above the projecting window bays, corbeled brickwork above the third floor, a large denticulated cornice, and pressed metal finials atop the parapet.

The most identifiable Beaux Arts-style resources are found at 709 and 811 North Market Street. The limestone fronts of these four-story buildings feature traditional Neoclassical forms such as architrave window surrounds, corbeled sills, and imposing, denticulated cornices. Although it dates from Market Street's later period of development, the remarkably intact Reynold's Candy Company Building (1929) at 703 North Market Street is of a similar Neoclassical style, but executed in terra cotta rather than limestone. Finally, the two commercial buildings at 728 and 730 North Market Street, while influenced by their Beaux Arts antecedents, present relatively planar wall surfaces in brick and limestone, respectively, and feature more geometric roof pediments rather than deep, three-dimensional cornices. A much purer interpretation of the Neoclassical style is found at the Wilmington Savings Fund Society (1920) at 838 North Market Street. Faced with smooth ashlar limestone, the bank is principally defined by its imposing Egyptian Revival *in antis* columns, which separate the large window bays on the west and north elevations, and its denticulated cornice and balustrade at the roofline.

The earliest surviving Commercial Style resource in the district is the Crosby and Hill Building (1859, altered in 1920) at 605-609 North Market Street, which eschews all Classical ornamentation. The plain brick façade is articulated only by corbeled brick capitals on the piers at the fourth floor and at the parapet. A slightly later example, the two-story Kresge Building (1924) at 801-809 North Market Street, does feature some Classical ornamentation such as its prominent copper cornice. Like the Crosby and Hill Building, its composition is relatively flat compared to others on Market Street, presenting a face of simplified rectangular geometries articulated only by subtle variations in the patterns of the brick.

Further demonstrating the great variety in architectural style that occurred after 1900, Art Deco buildings also feature prominently in the district. The Delmarva Power and Light Building (1932) at 600 North Market, and the Farmers Mutual Insurance Company (1929) at 833 North Market are notable examples. These two buildings represent a new emphasis on clean lines and pure forms in limestone rather than the revivalist tendencies and eclectic ornamentation so prevalent during the nineteenth century. Where ornamentation does exist in the district's Art Deco resources, as on the front façade of the Farmers Mutual Insurance Company at 833 North Market, it consists of low-relief designs featuring simple geometric patterns or abstracted Classical motifs. Another Art Deco building, the former F.W. Woolworth store at 839 North

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Market (completed in 1940), eschews the purity of limestone in favor of a polychrome terra cotta treatment. The store features a two-part facade large display windows on the first floor and a second floor featuring abstracted pilasters of cream colored terra cotta pilasters, between which are peach colored terra cotta panels, some with ornamentation in relief.

Representing a further simplification of architectural form, the district also contains several buildings in the Moderne style, which became popular after 1930. Two commercial buildings at 700-702 North Market Street, originally an 1870s real estate and banking building, remodeled in the pre-World War II era as the Arthur's Apparel store and 712 North Market Street, known as the Max Keil Building, are typical of the Moderne style. Both favor simple surface treatments in white and peach colored terra cotta, respectively, and contain only sparse ornamentation, such as the terra cotta medallion above the second floor window of Arthur's Apparel and the abstracted, fluted pilasters at 712 North Market Street. The storefronts of both buildings, with their sweeping curved display windows, are highly characteristic of the emphasis on form rather than surface ornamentation in Moderne style commercial buildings of the 1930s.

Integrity

The Downtown Wilmington Commercial Historic District is substantially intact and therefore retains integrity as an urban commercial environment. The evolution of the district as the heart of the downtown area between 1870 and 1968 is effectively conveyed by the cohesive urban-commercial form of the buildings that line Market Street and adjacent Shipley and King Streets. In the variety of architectural styles present, which include the Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Beaux Arts, Commercial, Art Deco, and Moderne styles, the district follows trends in the design of commercial buildings that characterized downtowns across the United States during this period. Many of the storefronts have been altered over the years, but for the most part they are compatible with the original design of the buildings and the uses they serve.

Furthermore, it has been the nature of the district for storefronts to adapt to suit continually changing consumer tastes. The fact that many of the buildings continue to operate as small businesses means that the commercial character of the district has largely been preserved. At least one building, 715 North Market Street, could later be certified as contributing if its reversible alterations – in the form of stucco panels which appear to be hung from the building – can be removed to reveal the original facade. Lastly, although new buildings have been constructed in the district over the last few decades, they have been designed in a manner that is sympathetic to, or that complements, the surrounding buildings.

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Historic District Inventory

North Market Street (600 Block, East Side)

- .01** 600 North Market Street (Delmarva Power & Light Building) - 1932; expanded 1954. Five-story, six-bay wide commercial building in the Art Deco style. Extends seven bays east along East 6th Street. Designed by the Wilmington firm Brown & Whiteside for the Delmarva Power & Light Company. The first floor features limestone piers and metal framed display windows on a black granite base. Variegated green granite also frames the main entrance on Market Street. The upper floors are faced largely in now painted brick although the front elevation (facing Market Street) features four triangular limestone pilasters with Art Deco-style capitals, which frame the center windows between the second and fourth floors. The fourth floor parapet also features stylized Art Deco cresting in limestone. Similar ornamentation is found on the south elevation facing East 6th Street. The original first floor display windows on both the front and south elevations remain intact. On the upper floors, there are three-over-three and four-over-four steel windows on the front elevation and one-over-one steel windows on the south elevation, which appear to be original. The fifth floor was added in 1954. The building was listed individually on the National Register in 1985 (NRHP #85000149). Now home to the Delaware College of Art & Design. Status: Contributing.
- .02** 602 North Market Street - Vacant lot. Status: Non-contributing.
- .03** 604-608 North Market Street - 2015. Contemporary five-story apartment building. Status: Non-contributing.
- .04** 610-612 North Market Street - Parking lot. Status: Non-contributing.
- .05** 614-620 North Market Street (Snellenburg's Department Store, also known as 2 East 7th Street) - 1895. Four-story, seven-bay wide commercial building designed by Wilmington architect Edward L. Rice in the Queen Anne style. Extends six bays east along East 7th Street. Built as a branch of the famous Snellenburg's Department Store in Philadelphia. The first floor has been altered with cast stone cladding and modern aluminum storefronts. The upper floors are faced in painted brick and are articulated by large, pressed metal pilasters at the third floor and a large entablature at the fourth floor. A rounded turret at the northwest corner survives, although the pointed roof has been removed. Status: Contributing.

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North Market Street (600 Block, West Side)

- .06** 601 North Market Street - c. 1910, altered in 1992. Four-story, one-bay wide vernacular commercial building. Extends nine bays west along West 6th Street to Shipley Street. The first floor has been altered, however an original cast iron column survives at the southeast corner. The upper floors are faced in painted brick and contain regular window openings with nine-over-one and one-over-one wood windows. In 1992, triple-mulled sash windows on the 2nd floor were replaced with the present windows. Status: Contributing.
- .07** 603 North Market Street - c. 1900. Three-story, three-bay wide commercial building in the Italianate style. Faced in red brick with storefront at the first floor. The upper floors contain six-over-six wood windows and a denticulated cornice. Status: Contributing.
- .08** 605-609 North Market Street (Crosby and Hill Building) – 1888, altered 1920. Three-story, three-bay wide commercial building in the Commercial Style. Faced in brown brick with corbeled capitals on the piers between each bay. The storefront and windows on the upper floors were replaced after 2010 with new compatible aluminum windows. Status: Contributing.
- .09** 611-615 North Market Street (Kresge’s Building) - 1939. Two-and-a-half story, five-bay wide commercial building in the Colonial Revival style. Built as a single commercial space for the Kresge department store, although now the building contains three separate storefronts, which are later alterations. The building is faced in red brick with limestone accents, including window surrounds on the second floor, cornices above the second floor, and quoining that frames the building on both sides. The roof is pitched and clad in slate shingles. The rear elevation facing Shipley Street was executed in the Moderne Style, featuring yellow brick with original multi-light steel and glass block windows. The main entrance on the Shipley Street elevation has a red Vitrolite surround. Status: Contributing.
- .10** 617-629 North Market Street - c. 1960; heavily altered in 2015. Four-story, six-bay wide mixed-use building. Originally built as the Kennard-Pyle Department Store, the building features display windows on the first floor (recently replaced with modern windows). The original second and third floors were altered and a fourth floor was added in 2015 when the building was converted into apartments. All windows on the second through fourth floors were installed during the 2015 renovation. The building extends west to Shipley Street. Status: Non-contributing.

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East 7th Street

2 East 7th Street – See 614-620 North Market Street.

- .11 4 East 7th Street – c. 1900. Three-story, four-bay wide Victorian-style commercial building. The western half of the building is a one-story extension of a first-floor storefront, which contains large aluminum-framed display windows and was added in c. 1960. The upper floors are clad in stucco and contain three-sided projecting bay windows, which are clad in pressed metal. All windows are one-over-one vinyl
- .12 6 East 7th Street – c. 1880; altered c. 1940. Two-story, two-bay wide commercial building in the Modern style. Clad in black Carrara glass with aluminum framed display windows on the first floor. Status: Contributing.

North Market Street (700 Block, East Side)

- .13 700-702 North Market Street (Arthur's Apparel) - c. 1875; altered 1938. Three-story, three-bay wide commercial building. Although originally constructed in c. 1875 in the Italianate style, the front elevation facing Market Street and a portion of the south elevation facing E. 7th Street were completely refaced with white terra cotta tiles in the Moderne style in 1938. The storefront, with sweeping, curved glass entranceway and black granite base, was added at this time. On the eastern part of the south elevation, the nineteenth-century building remains visible. Although this part of the building has been clad in stucco and most of the original window openings have been infilled, the characteristic bracketed wood cornice remains. The building was listed individually on the National Register in 1985 (NRHP #85000153). Status: Contributing.
- .14 704-708 North Market Street (Braunstein's Building) - c. 1900; altered 1924. Four-story, seven-bay wide commercial building. Built as three separate commercial buildings in c. 1900, 704, 706 and 708 North Market Street were combined in 1924, at which point the existing metal storefront with large plate glass windows was added to create a single commercial space. This is one of the most intact storefronts in the Wilmington Downtown Commercial Historic District. Above the storefront, the buildings are clad in red brick. The center building, 706 North Market Street, contains a Beaux Arts-style center bay and a modillion block cornice at the roofline. The building was listed individually on the National Register in 1985 (NRHP #85003190). Status: Contributing.
- .15 710 North Market Street - 1903. Three-story, one-bay wide commercial building in the Queen Anne Style. Altered storefront on the first floor. The upper floors contain three-sided window bays clad in copper. There is a bracketed copper cornice with two finials at the roofline. Status: Contributing.

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- .16** 712 North Market Street (Max Keil Building) - c. 1850; altered in 1938. Two-story, one-bay wide commercial building. Originally built in the mid-nineteenth century, the Market Street elevation was completely refaced in peach colored terra cotta tiles in a hybrid Art Deco/Moderne style. The first floor features a characteristic curved glass storefront with recessed entrance while the second floor contains a large multi-light steel window in the center with fluted "pilasters" on each side. The building was listed individually on the National Register in 1985 (NRHP #85000152). Status: Contributing.
- .17** 714-716 North Market Street - c. 1918. Three-story, one-bay wide commercial building in the Jacobean Revival style. Possibly designed by architect John Dockery Thompson. Built of red brick with limestone window surrounds and quoining, the storefront has been altered and stucco has been hung from the façade to cover the second floor. The original front elevation is visible only on the third floor, however the original window opening remains behind the stucco on the second floor. Status: Contributing.
- .18** 718-720 North Market Street - c. 1905. Three-story, three-bay wide commercial building in the Italianate style. Faced in red brick. Altered storefront on the first floor. The upper floors contain three one-over-one replacement windows within arched openings. There is brick corbelling above each window. The building is capped by simple pressed metal cornice. Status: Contributing.
- .19** 724 North Market Street (Breuer Building) - 1918. Three-story, two-bay wide commercial building in the Commercial Style. Faced in red brick. Two altered storefronts on the first floor. The upper floors contain tripartite aluminum replacement windows in each bay. Centered above the third floor, there is a tiled panel with the building's name. Status: Contributing.
- .20** 726 North Market Street c. 1880, radically altered then rebuilt in 2010-2011. Three-story, two-bay wide commercial building in the Italianate style. The present brick façade, including the cornice, was reconstructed based on historic photographs in 2010-2011. Altered storefront on the first floor. The upper floors both contain one-over-one replacement windows with stone sills and brick/stone arched heads. Status: Non-contributing
- .21** 728 North Market Street – 1909. Three-story, two-bay wide commercial building in the Beaux Arts style. Designed by Wilmington architect William Draper Brinckloe. Altered storefront on the first floor. There are two limestone pilasters on either side of the front elevation, however between the pilasters the facade has been clad in stucco. There are paired one-over-one replacement windows on the second and third floors. Status: Contributing.
- .22** 730 North Market Street – 1856, extensively altered in 1910. Four-story, three-bay wide commercial building in the Beaux Arts style. Originally built in 1856 with a cast

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iron façade for the Wilmington Savings Fund Society. The present brick façade was added in 1910 by architect William Draper Brinckloe. Extends eight bays to the east along 8th Street. Altered storefront on the front and north elevations. The building is clad in white brick on the upper floors with quoining at the corners. Contains three-light round top windows on the front elevation and simple one-over-one double-hung replacement windows on the north elevation, which is faced in painted brick. Status: Contributing.

- North Market Street (700 Block, West Side)**
- .23** 701 North Market Street - c. 1940; altered in c. 1970 and c. 1990 Two-story, one-bay wide commercial building. Extends eight bays to the west along West 7th Street. Although first built in the Moderne style, the upper two floors were removed in c. 1970 and the building was heavily altered in c. 1990 when the present stucco cladding and aluminum windows were installed. A portion of the original Moderne-style treatment survives at the west end of the south elevation, which features recessed entrance with stylized metal railing on the first floor and a sweeping rounded corner on the second floor. Status: Non-contributing.
- .24** 703 North Market Street (Reynold's Candy Company Building) - 1924. Three-story, three-bay wide commercial building in the Beaux Arts style. Designed by architect Clarence R. Hope. The remarkably intact storefront features center wood double doors with flanking wood-framed plate glass display windows with green marble bases. Above the storefront, a curved metal canopy extends out, spanning nearly the full width of the building. A multi-light leaded glass transom is situated above canopy. The upper floors are faced in white terra cotta with a cornice at the second floor, floriated polychrome spandrel panels at the third floor, and an additional large cornice at the roofline. The west elevation (facing Shipley Street) is faced in red brick and is simple in treatment. There are double-hung wood windows with transoms on the first and second floors and 1/1 vinyl replacement windows on the third and fourth floors. There is also a steel fire escape. The building was listed individually on the National Register in 1985 (NRHP #85000155). Status: Contributing.
- .25** 705-707 North Market Street (Christina Cultural Arts Center) - c. 1920; heavily altered in 1993. Two-story, four-bay wide community arts center in the Post-Modern style. Originally designed by architect John Dockery Thompson in c. 1920 as Grant's Department Store, the present stucco facade replaced an earlier Commercial Style version in 1993. Status: Non-contributing.
- .26** 709 North Market Street - 1902. Four-story, three-bay wide commercial building in the Beaux Arts style. Altered storefront on the first floor. The upper floors are faced in limestone with expressive bracketed window sills, spandrel panels at the third and fourth floors, and a large denticulated cornice in limestone at the roofline. The one-over-one double-hung aluminum windows are later replacements. The west

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elevation (facing Shipley Street) is faced in red brick and contains two simple metal doors on the first floor. On the second through fourth floors, there are large copper-clad bays with 1/1 aluminum windows and a copper cornice at the roofline. Status: Contributing.

- .27** 711 North Market Street - c. 1910. Three-story, one-bay wide commercial building in the Mission Revival Style. Altered storefront on the first floor. The upper floors are faced in red brick and feature large three-sided bay windows. There is a large overhanging eave with wood brackets at the roofline. The two-story west elevation (facing Shipley Street) is faced in red brick and is simply treated with 1/1 vinyl windows and a single-leaf metal door at ground level. Status: Contributing.
- .28** 713 North Market Street - c. 1910. Three-story, one-bay wide commercial building. Altered storefront on the first floor. The upper floors are faced in red brick and feature large three-sided bay windows. There is a brick pediment at the roofline. Status: Contributing.
- .29** 715 North Market Street - c. 1915; heavily altered in c. 1965. Three-story, one-bay wide commercial building. Originally built as an Eckerd Drugstore. The existing storefront is contemporary and the upper floors are completely clad in stucco. No historic features are visible. Status: Non-contributing.
- .30** 717 North Market Street – c. 1880; altered in 1940. Three-story, two-bay wide commercial building. A late nineteenth-century building which was refaced in 1940 with the existing red brick and aluminum windows. Status: Contributing.
- .31** 719 North Market Street - 1906. Three-story, one-bay wide commercial building in the Beaux Arts Style. The storefront has been altered and the second floor faced in contemporary brick. The third floor retains characteristic Beaux Arts features including a large, pressed metal window hood with denticulated cornice and contains three one-over-one double-hung replacement windows. A large pressed metal cornice is also found along the roofline. Status: Contributing.
- .32** 721 North Market Street - c. 1880; altered in c. 1940. Two-and-a-half story, one-bay wide commercial building in the Modern style. Originally built in the nineteenth century, the present storefront and Vitrolite facade were added around 1940. An original dormer window remains visible above these later alterations. Status: Contributing.
- .33** 723 North Market Street (Eckerd Drugstore) – 1938. Two-story, two-bay wide commercial building in the Modern style. Designed by the firm of Robinson, Stanhope and Manning for Eckerd's, a local drugstore chain. The storefront is contemporary but compatible. The second floor façade is faced in blonde brick with two single-light windows. Status: Contributing.

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- .34** 725-727 North Market Street – 1908, altered in 1954 and c. 1980. Three-story, three-bay wide commercial building at the southeast corner of Market and West 8th Street. Extends eight bays west to Shipley Street. The building was originally designed in the Beaux Arts style by architect John Dockery Thompson for the Union National Bank in 1908, the west elevation of which survives on the Shipley Street side. The building was largely refaced with black granite and white brick when it was converted into a store in 1954 (some of this material survives on the first floor of the 8th Street elevation). The present stucco cladding on the front and side were added in c. 1980. Status: Non-contributing.
- Shipley Street (700 Block, West Side)**
- .35** 701 Shipley Street (Foord & Massey Furniture Company Building) – 1917. Five-story, five-bay wide industrial building in the Commercial Style. Extends six bays west along East 7th Street. The building served as a factory and showroom for the Foord & Massey Furniture Company. Faced in red brick with terra cotta accents, the building has a consistent fenestration pattern with large window openings characteristic of the period (the existing windows are modern replacements). The building was listed individually on the National Register in 2006 (NRHP #06000145). As part of a certified rehabilitation completed in 2010, the building was converted into apartments with a first floor commercial space. Status: Contributing.
- .36** 711 Shipley Street - c. 1890. Three-story, two-bay wide commercial building in the Italianate style. Altered storefront on first floor. The upper floors are faced in buff brick and contain twelve-over-twelve double-hung vinyl windows with transoms, which were installed in 2014. There is a large pressed metal entablature between the second and third floors and a bracketed pressed metal cornice at the roofline. The north elevation once served as a party wall with an adjacent building. Status: Contributing.
- North Market Street (800 Block, East Side)**
- .37** 800 North Market Street – c. 1895, altered in 1929 and 1980. Three-story, one-bay wide commercial building in the Queen Anne style. Extends eight bays to the east along E. 8th Street. The first floor storefronts have been altered on both the west and south elevations. The present stucco was added in 1980. Defining Queen Anne-style features remain on the upper floors, including the buff brick wall surfaces with limestone window sills, heads, and belt courses; three-sided, pedimented window bays clad in painted metal; a large denticulated cornice supported by brick corbeling; and a brick parapet wall with metal finials. Status: Contributing.
- .38** 802-804 North Market Street - c. 1920. Three-story, two-bay wide commercial building in the Commercial Style. Altered storefront on the first floor. The upper floors are clad in painted brick with two groupings of four one-over-one double-hung windows per floor, which all have painted metal surrounds. Status: Contributing.

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- .39** 806-810 North Market Street (The Baby Grand) – c. 2000. Three-story, three-bay wide concert hall in a hybrid Beaux Arts/Second Empire style. The front, two-story portion replicates an earlier c. 1920 building that once existed on this site but was reconstructed as the entrance to the concert hall in c. 2000. The Second Empire style third floor was built at the same time. Status: Non-contributing.
- .40** 812 North Market Street – c. 2000. Three-story, three-bay wide hyphen constructed in c. 2000 to connect the Grand Opera House (818 North Market Street) to the Baby Grand (806-810 North Market Street). Status: Non-contributing.
- .41** 818 North Market Street (Grand Opera House)- 1871. Four-story, fifteen-bay wide opera house in the Second Empire style. Designed by architect Thomas Dixon. The facade is constructed largely of cast iron painted in a light cream color. The first through third floors are characterized by rhythmic arched windows and the fourth floor contains a large mansard roof clad in slate tiles. The Grand Opera House was listed individually on the National Register in 1972 (NRHP #72000294). Status: Contributing.
- .42** 824 North Market Street – c. 1985. Ten-story office building built in a 1980s corporate style with brick curtain wall. Status: Non-contributing.
- .43** 836 North Market Street - c. 1920; altered in 1963. Four-story, one-bay wide commercial building. Originally constructed in the Beaux Arts style in 1920, a large portion of the front facade was replaced with a modern curtain wall system when the building was combined with the Wilmington Savings Fund Society (838 North Market Street) in 1963. The granite base and limestone window surround and roof pediment date to the original period of construction. Status: Contributing.
- .44** 838 North Market Street (Wilmington Savings Fund Society) - 1920. Three-story, three-bay wide bank building in the Classical Revival style. The building extends fourteen bays east to N. King Street. Designed by Hoggson Brothers & Company of New York. Faced with smooth ashlar limestone, the bank is principally defined by its imposing Egyptian Revival *in antis* columns, which separate the large window bays on the west and north elevations, which separate the large window bays. The east elevation facing N. King Street was altered in 1963, when the building was combined with 836 North Market Street. The Wilmington Savings Fund Society was listed individually on the National Register in 1985 (NRHP #85000158) and was the subject of a certified rehabilitation in 2015, at which point the building was converted into apartments. Status: Contributing.
- North Market Street (800 Block, West Side)**
- .45** 801-809 North Market Street - c. 1924 (Kresge's Department Store). Two-story, five-bay wide commercial building in the Commercial Style. The building extends seven

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bays west to Shipley Street. Clad in orange brick with limestone accents. The first floor has been altered - the large window openings have been infilled with brick. On the second floor, however, defining Commercial Style features remain, including the regular window openings (now infilled with glass block), defining brick piers with geometric limestone ornamentation, a copper cornice, and a brick parapet wall with textured brick panels. Status: Contributing

- .46** 811 North Market Street - c. 1910. Four-story, three-bay wide commercial building designed by John Dockery Thompson in the Beaux Arts style. Faced in limestone. The storefront has been altered, however the original limestone surround remains largely intact (the cornice has been removed between the first and second floors). The upper floors feature one-over-one replacement windows with limestone surrounds. At the roofline there is a denticulated limestone cornice. On the west elevation (facing Shipley Street), the building is faced in red brick and contains a replacement aluminum storefront window and modern glass doors at ground level. On the second through fourth floors, there are pressed metal-clad bays with 1/1 aluminum windows. There is also a pressed metal cornice at the roofline. Status: Contributing.
- .47** 813 North Market Street - 1939 with later alterations. Three-story, two-bay wide commercial building. Originally built in the Moderne style, there are no visible historic features. The cornice at the roofline is contemporary. Status: Non-contributing.
- .48** 815 North Market Street - c. 1920 Four-story, three-bay wide commercial building in the Elizabethan Revival style. Clad in orange Roman brick with limestone window surrounds. A new, compatible storefront was installed on the first floor and the second floor was re-clad with matching brick with a limestone window surround in 2011. The remainder of the North Market Street elevation is fully intact. Status: Contributing.
- .49** 819 North Market Street – c. 1900, heavily altered in 1993 and again in 1999. Two-story, two-bay wide commercial building. Clad in painted EIFS stucco system. Contains modern, recessed display windows on the first floor and glazed wood doors on the second floors. Originally a three-and-a-half brick building in the Italianate Style (see Figure 18), the upper two floors were removed sometime before 1975. Status: Non-contributing.
- .50** 821 North Market Street – c. 1880, heavily altered in c. 1950, 1993, and 1999. One-story, three-bay wide commercial building in the Post-Modern style. Faced in granite. Contains a center entrance with glazed wood doors modern, multi-light arched aluminum windows. All existing façade treatments date from the 1993 alterations. Originally a five-story, Second Empire-style hotel (the Hotel Wilmington, see Figure 18), the upper floors were removed around 1950 when the front was completely remodeled in the Modern style for a shoe store. The rear elevation, faced in painted brick and containing a stone cornice, appears to date to the original, c. 1880 building. In 1999, the southern portion of the first floor was made into a pass-through to Shipley Street. Status: Non-contributing.

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- .51** 823 North Market Street – c. 1910. Three-story, two-bay wide commercial building in a vernacular application of the Commercial Style. Altered storefront on the first floor. Faced in Flemish Bond red brick on the second and third floors, which contain centrally placed, three-sided metal-clad bay windows. Above the third floor there is a large overhanging eave. Status: Contributing.
- .52** 825 North Market Street – 1914. Four-story, two-bay wide commercial building in a vernacular application of the Commercial Style. Designed by architect Edward L. Rice, Jr. Altered storefront. Clad in red brick on the second and third floors, which contain three-sided bay windows. Above the third floor there is a denticulated pressed metal cornice and the fourth floor consists of a mansard roof with three one-over-one dormer windows. Status: Contributing.
- .53** 827-829 North Market Street – 1909; altered in 1941 and 1957. One- to three-story, two-bay wide commercial building in the Mission Revival Style. The three-story portion (827 North Market) was designed by Philadelphia architect Charles Barton Keen for the Wilmington Gas Company. The building was later occupied by the Diamond Ice & Coal Company. The three-story portion of the building (827 North Market) was combined with the adjacent one-story building (829 North Market) in 1957. The first floor contains an altered storefront with granite tile cladding, which was added to 827 North Market in 1949 and to 829 North Market in 1957 when the two buildings were joined. The second and third floors of the southern half are clad in tapestry brick with limestone window frames. Similar brickwork is found on the rear elevation facing Shipley Street. On the Market Street side, there is a large pressed metal cornice at the roofline with a pent roof clad in clay tiles. Status: Contributing.
- .54** 831 North Market Street – Four-story, mid-nineteenth century commercial building that was completely refaced during the 1980s. Status: Non-contributing.
- .55** 833 North Market Street (Farmers Mutual Fire Insurance Company) – 1929. Three-story, commercial building in the Art Deco style. Designed by the firm of Brown & Whiteside. Although the first floor has been altered and contains brown granite cladding, the second and third floors retain the original limestone treatment with abstracted fluted pilasters framing the east elevation. The second and third floor windows are divided by twisting colonettes or mullions. Above the third floor windows, “Farmers Mutual Fire Insurance Company” is carved into the stone. A circular medallion is located at the center of the pedimented parapet. Status: Contributing.
- .56** 835 North Market Street – c. 1900. Three-story, two-bay wide commercial building in a vernacular Commercial Style. The first floor has an altered storefront with recessed entrance and plate glass windows. The second and third floors are clad in painted brick. A three-sided bay window with one-over-one replacement windows extends from the second floor. There is a corbeled brick cornice above the third floor. Status: Contributing.

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- .57** 837 North Market Street – 1929. Four-story, three-bay wide commercial building in the Colonial Revival style. The first floor has an altered cast stone storefront while the upper floors are clad in red brick with terra cotta pilasters, window pediment at the second floor, and a cornice between the third and fourth floors. The building appears to have replacement four-over-two and six-over-two aluminum double-hung windows on the second through fourth floors (the second floor windows also feature transoms). Status: Contributing.
- .58** 839 North Market Street (F.W. Woolworth's & Son) – 1940. Two- to three-story, seven-bay wide commercial building in the Art Deco style. The first floor facing Market Street features large aluminum-framed display windows on a black granite base while the second floor is clad in peach and cream colored terra cotta with a clear Art Deco influence. The storefront and terra cotta treatment wraps around onto a small portion of the north elevation (facing West 9th Street), however the north and west elevations are otherwise clad in buff brick. On the second and third floor, the latter being a c. 1950s addition, there are aluminum casement windows with transoms that were installed to match the original windows as part of a certified rehabilitation in 2015. The building was listed individually on the National Register in 1987 (NRHP #86003755). Status: Contributing.
- ShIPLEY STREET (800 BLOCK, WEST SIDE)**
- .59** 801 Shipley Street – 1919. Four-story, five-bay wide apartment building at the northwest corner of West 8th and Shipley Streets. Extends three bays west along West 8th Street. Designed by architect Edward L. Rice, Jr. The first floor has been altered and is now clad in exposed aggregate concrete panels and contains contemporary metal doors (some glazed) on both the east and south elevations. The upper floors, which are clad in red brick and feature copper-clad three-sided bay windows on both sides, are mostly intact. The regular window openings all contain one-over-one replacement windows. A large copper-clad cornice caps the building on the south elevation, but is largely missing from the east elevation (the missing piece is in storage). Status: Contributing.
- .60** 803 Shipley Street – c. 1950. Two-story, two-bay wide commercial building. Status: Non-contributing.
- .61** 805 Shipley Street – c. 1830. Three-and-a-half-story, three-bay wide Federal-style house and store. The storefront on the east elevation, featuring large aluminum-framed display windows with a brick veneer surround, dates to c. 1960. The second and third floors feature brick construction coated with scored stucco and contain six-over-six double-hung wood windows. There is a denticulated wood cornice above the third floor and a pitched roof with two dormer windows. The rear part of the building, a three-story carpenter's shop dating from the late-nineteenth century, was merged with the front, Federal-style building sometime after 1930. The west

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elevation of the rear section (facing Orange Street) contains infilled windows and a center entrance with modern metal door on the first floor. On the second and third floor, some original six-over-six, double-hung wood windows with bluestone sills remain, however some of the openings are currently covered in plywood. Status: Contributing.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1870 - 1968

Significant Dates

1881, 1968

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Brown & Whiteside, Architects

William Draper Brinckloe, Architect

Hoggson Brothers, Architects

Clarence R. Hope, Architect

Charles Barton Keen, Architect

Edward L. Rice, Architect

Robinson, Stanhope and Manning, Architects

John Dockery Thompson, Architect

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

This nomination, incorporating properties in the 600 through 800 blocks of Market Street, the 700 and 800 blocks of adjacent Shipley Street, and the unit block of East 7th Street, establishes the significance of the Downtown Wilmington Commercial Historic District under Criterion A, Commerce, as the commercial heart of the downtown area between 1870 and 1968. The district is representative of the dynamic forces – including the arrival of electric trolleys, an evolution in residential patterns, and the resulting concentration of business interests – that transformed Market Street into a highly concentrated downtown commercial environment that prospered through much of the early twentieth century. Unlike the Lower Market Street Historic District (NR 1980, Amended 1985), which largely focuses on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century resources south of 5th Street, the Downtown Wilmington Commercial Historic District documents the evolution of Market Street between 6th and 9th Streets into the middle of the twentieth century. The district is also significant under Criterion C, Architecture, as a unique concentration of small- to mid-size commercial buildings dating from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. A variety of architectural styles – including the Italianate, Second Empire, Beaux Arts, Commercial, Mission Revival, Art Deco, and Art Moderne styles – are present in the district, paralleling national trends in the design of commercial buildings during this period.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Commerce

Early Commercial Growth in Wilmington: 1731-1860s

From its earliest period of development during the eighteenth century, Market Street in Wilmington has endured as the city's commercial heart. After the city was founded by Philadelphian Thomas Willing in 1731, the wharf on the Christina River at the foot of Market Street became a nexus of trade in grain and other agricultural products, which formed the backbone of the Delaware economy during the eighteenth century. Naturally, most early development in the city clustered near the river, where merchants built places of business alongside their residences and where small inns, taverns, and workshops could also be found. As Wilmington's status as a trading center grew, development gradually pushed northward along Market Street, but for the most part was confined to the area south of 5th Street.

Over time, the city began to outgrow the relatively limited space near the waterfront. With the construction of a new City Hall on Market Street between 5th and 6th Streets in 1798, commercial and banking activity was attracted north of 5th street for the first time – the Bank of Delaware opened at the northeast corner of 6th and Market Streets in 1816, a site now occupied by the Delmarva Power & Light Building (600 North Market Street). Dwellings were also built as far north as 8th Street. At the northwest corner of 8th and Market Streets, for

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example, John Dickinson, signer of the United States Constitution, built a house around 1800 on the site now occupied by the Kresge Building (801-809 North Market Street).² Other large buildings did appear over the next few decades, such as St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church (now demolished), which was built in 1845 on the site where the Christina Cultural Arts Center (705-707 North Market) now stands. For the most part, however, the area was still largely defined by detached houses and workshops, sparsely located, with many buildings constructed of red brick in the Federal style.

Gradually over the following decades, the character of upper Market Street would become markedly denser and more commercial, a transformation reinforced by the arrival of the railroad in Wilmington in 1837. That year, the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad began operations, building their main passenger station at Front and French Streets, only a couple of blocks from Market Street. With the arrival of the railroad, Wilmington's mercantile economy was rapidly displaced by one based on heavy industry in which railroad car construction, carriage making, and iron founding predominated. This new industrial activity was focused along the banks of the Christina River south of the railroad.³

Now connected by rail to the larger metropolitan centers of Philadelphia and Baltimore, Wilmington was opened to a wider world of trade that transformed the city's physical character. As new consumer goods began to arrive in Wilmington from points north and south, stores opened on Market Street to sell them. Older Federal-style buildings were renovated or demolished in favor of larger, more elaborate stores, hotels, and other commercial establishments. Still, the densest development remained south of 6th Street in the area previously listed as the Lower Market Street Historic District (NR 1980, Amended in 1985) between Front and 5th Streets and the Old Town Hall Commercial Historic District (NR 1985) between 5th and 6th Streets. Some early- to mid-nineteenth century buildings do remain in the Downtown Wilmington Commercial Historic District, albeit in an altered state. The three-story Federal-style former residence at 805 Shipley Street, for example, is indicative of the type of building that predominated in the district in its early years (although it has a c. 1960 storefront). Other buildings, like the Crosby and Hill Building at 605-609 North Market Street, were built during the late-nineteenth century but had their facades completely replaced in the early twentieth century.

In addition to bringing in raw materials and new consumer goods, the railroad allowed the creation of new types of employment, a major factor in Wilmington's huge population growth in the mid-nineteenth century. Supported by the new industrial economy, an ever increasing number of Wilmingtonians found work as factory owners, foremen, and laborers, among other occupations. Between 1840 and 1850 alone, Wilmington's population grew 67% from 8,367 to 13,979, the largest decennial increase in the city's history. In subsequent decades the city experienced additional large gains, reaching populations of 21,258 in 1860 and 30,841 in 1870.⁴

² Whitfield J. Bell, Jr., *Patriot-Improvers: Biographical Sketches of Members of the American Philosophical Society, Volume I, 1743-1768* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1997), p. 398.

³ Carol E. Hoffecker, *Wilmington, Delaware: Portrait of an Industrial City, 1830-1910* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1974), x.

⁴ U.S. Census data accessed at www.census.gov/prod/www/dececennial.html on August 8, 2016.

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Until the Civil War era, Wilmington was what historian Sam Bass Warner has termed a “walking city,” in which residence and workplace were located in close proximity to each other or, in many cases, within the same building.⁵ From the early eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries, upper Market Street in particular remained a mixed commercial-residential neighborhood as indicated by the Pomeroy & Beers Atlas of 1868, which shows houses, schools, churches, and cemeteries alongside businesses on Market Street between 6th and 9th Streets. Although the railroad did much for the city’s industrial prospects and catalyzed the development of a commercial district centered along lower Market Street, what is now considered the downtown area remained a mixed commercial-residential zone well past mid-century. That would soon change.⁶

Although the railroad brought new opportunities for Wilmington residents and began to change its urban form, the horse drawn streetcar, first introduced to the city in 1864, would have an even more transformative effect on Market Street. Following the lead of cities like New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, all of which had extensive horsecar lines by the early 1860s, civic booster Joshua T. Heald formed the Wilmington City Railway Company in February of 1864. By June of that year, the new company opened a line that began at the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad station at Front and Market Streets, then traveled up Market before turning west on Tenth Street to go out Delaware Avenue. With the arrival of the horsecar, Market Street began to coalesce as a commercial zone. The relative speed and affordability of horsecar service – the standard fare was six cents – allowed residents to seek living space away from the increasingly crowded downtown. The migration of Market Street’s residential population allowed commercial interests to expand. In the 1860s and 1870s many former houses were converted into storefronts, offices, and warehouses for an ever growing business zone.⁷ The Pomeroy & Beers Atlas of 1868 documents Market Street’s role as the spine of the city when the densest development was confined to an area roughly bounded by the Christina River to the south and east, Washington Street to the west, and Tenth Street to the north (see Figures 1 and 2).⁸

A directory of Wilmington businesses included in the 1868 Pomeroy and Beers Atlas provides a fuller picture of the type of commercial activity that occurred on Market Street around the time that the horsecar line was established. Professional offices were prevalent between 6th and 9th Streets with attorneys, doctors, and bankers being the most common. Real estate agents and insurance brokers could also be found in this stretch of Market Street, although in smaller numbers. Scattered among the small offices were a limited number of drugstores and dry goods merchants, however most retail activity was still confined to the area south of 6th Street before the end of the 1860s.⁹

⁵ Sam Bass Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston: 1870-1900*, second edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

⁶ D.G. Beers, *Atlas of the State of Delaware* (Philadelphia: Pomeroy & Beers, 1868).

⁷ Hoffecker, *Wilmington, Delaware: Portrait of an Industrial City, 1830-1910*, 39-40.

⁸ D.G. Beers, *Atlas of the State of Delaware*.

⁹ D.G. Beers, 17-18.

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Decades of Change: 1870 - 1968

Only six years later, as indicated by a Wilmington business directory in *The Delaware State Directory and Gazetteer for 1874-75*, the commercial environment of upper Market Street had greatly diversified thanks in part to the horsecar line. For the first time, businesses in large numbers began to open on adjacent streets, particularly on King Street where food vendors proliferated after 1872. With the growth in population north and west of the downtown, new businesses opened to serve an ever increasing number of shoppers who either lived within walking distance or commuted downtown on the horsecar line. Attorneys, real estate agents, bankers, doctors (and now dentists) remained prevalent between 6th and 9th Streets and formed a robust service economy, but they were becoming outnumbered by a wide variety of retail outlets including booksellers, several cigar stores, clothing stores of all types, confectioners, dry goods dealers, druggists, jewelers, milliners, and saloons. Curiously, there were also five sewing machine dealers along these three blocks alone. And, among the more common business types there could be found an artist, baker, cabinet maker, carpet dealer, grocer, hair dresser, paper hanger, photographer, stationery store, upholsterer and watchmaker. As indicated by the directory, many of these businesses occupied only the first floors of their buildings; on the upper floors, other tenants, most often small lawyers' or doctors' offices, private clubs, billiards rooms, and occasionally residential apartments could be found.¹⁰

As Market Street's retail economy expanded, the effect on its physical character was significant. Old houses continued to be converted into offices or shops, but more often were demolished to accommodate new commercial buildings with storefronts and open spaces designed exclusively for selling. Still, development was not strictly limited to commercial buildings. Banks, institutions and cultural spaces also opened on Market Street during this period, albeit in relatively small numbers. In 1856, the Wilmington Savings Fund Society completed a four-story, cast iron-fronted building at the southeast corner of 8th and Market Streets, although this building was significantly altered in 1910 when its present brick façade was installed. In 1861, the Wilmington Institute – formed by the merger of the Wilmington Library and the Young Men's Association - opened its large new home at northwest corner of 8th and Market Streets, a site now occupied by the Kresge's Building at 801-809 North Market.¹¹ Also, in 1871, the impressive Second Empire-style Masonic Hall with its Grand Theatre, also known as the Grand Opera House, became the most prominent performance venue in the city.¹² The presence of these large institutions and public spaces reinforced Market Street's retail economy, demonstrating its viability not only as a commercial district but as a cultural center for the increasingly cosmopolitan city.

Although the commercial evolution of Market Street continued apace through the 1870s and 1880s, it was not until the introduction of electrified trolleys in 1888 that the downtown as it appears today truly began to take form. That year, the Wilmington City Railway Company began

¹⁰ *The Delaware State Directory and Gazetteer for 1874-75* (Wilmington: Commercial Press, 1874), 347-381.

¹¹ J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Delaware, 1609-1888*, Volume II (Philadelphia: L.J. Richards & Co., 1888), 835.

¹² National Register of Historic Places, Masonic Hall and Grand Theatre, Wilmington, New Castle County, Delaware, National Register #72000294.

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to electrify its horse-drawn lines, creating a much faster, more efficient, and cheaper trolley system.¹³ Whereas the horse-drawn line charged a six-cent fare, the electrified line now charged only five cents.¹⁴ As in most other American cities, a desire to escape the crowded conditions of the urban core intensified toward the end of the century. With the promise of increased commuting speed provided by the electric trolleys, speculators built new housing developments farther outside the downtown for a continually growing city – between 1870 and 1890, Wilmington’s population very nearly doubled from 30,841 to 61,431.¹⁵ Workers, both middle and working class, could now enjoy a suburban lifestyle but also quickly and cheaply commute downtown where many jobs were located, and where both services and shopping, as described above, naturally concentrated. Because, as historian Kenneth T. Jackson writes, “the [trolley] routes almost invariably led downtown...the practical effect was to force almost anyone using public transit to rely on the central business district.”¹⁶

Despite the continued commercial growth brought by the trolley, in 1900 many people still made their homes in downtown Wilmington. That year, the U.S. Census recorded 44 households on both sides of Market Street between 6th and 9th Streets, with most concentrated north of 8th Street. Larger numbers of downtown residents also lived in houses or small apartment buildings on adjacent King and Shipley Streets. Nearly all of the residents were native born whites from Delaware, Maryland, or Pennsylvania. Because most single family homes had already been replaced or converted for commercial use, the majority of the families were renters who lived in apartments above or behind the shops that increasingly comprised the downtown streetscape.¹⁷ Soon, however, such apartments would all but disappear, overtaken by commercial interests willing and able to pay much greater rents.

Many small shops prospered on Market Street in the late nineteenth century, but larger retailers, including department stores, started appearing for the first time in the 1890s. Because the trolleys provided a quick and inexpensive means of transportation from outlying areas, they brought in the critical mass of shoppers necessary to support much larger stores.¹⁸ Dry goods dealers Crosby and Hill, for example, opened at 605-609 North Market Street just prior to the electrification of the streetcars but, after 1890, became the city’s largest retailer with 30 employees. At first, Crosby and Hill occupied only a portion of the four-story building, which was built as the McClary Building (cabinet makers) in 1859. By 1901, however, the retailer was growing so rapidly that they not only took over the upper floors but also built a large three-story addition at the rear. In 1920, Crosby and Hill modernized their building by constructing a new brick façade in the Commercial Style.¹⁹

¹³ Carol Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital: Wilmington in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), 19-20.

¹⁴ “Five Cent Fares,” *Morning News*, May 14, 1889, p. 1.

¹⁵ United States Census Bureau. Accessed at www.familysearch.org.

¹⁶ Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 113-114.

¹⁷ United States Census Bureau. Accessed at www.familysearch.org.

¹⁸ Frank M. Mayfield, *The Department Store Story* (New York: Fairchild: 1949), p. 31.

¹⁹ National Register of Historic Places, Crosby and Hill Building, Wilmington, New Castle County, Delaware, National Register #85000148.

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Perhaps a stronger indication of Market Street's growth as a downtown commercial zone during this period was the arrival of large out-of-town retailers. In 1895, Snellenburg's, one of the largest department stores in Philadelphia, opened a Wilmington branch at the southeast corner of 7th and Market Street (the building at 614-620 North Market Street survives; see inventory). Purpose built for the new store, the building was one of the largest and most architecturally embellished retail establishments in the city. Snellenburg's, "The store that saves you money," remained in operation for the next 35 years, after which the building was occupied by a succession of other retailers.

Another factor in the development of Market Street as Wilmington's primary commercial corridor was the creation of a new corporate and civic center around Rodney Square beginning in 1904. That year, the DuPont Company, with offices then scattered among numerous buildings in the downtown area, bought land at the northwest corner of 10th and Market Streets with the aim of building a large, consolidated headquarters. Although construction on various additions continued through 1937, the initial twelve-story, Beaux-Arts style building completed in 1913 was, to that point, the tallest Wilmington had ever seen. The new headquarters instantly made 10th and Market Streets the epicenter of the corporate city. Over the following decade, Rodney Square itself was transformed into a formal landscaped park and, in the tradition of the City Beautiful Movement, grand Beaux Arts-style civic buildings, including the Wilmington Public Building (1916) and the Wilmington Public Library (1922), were built around it to form a cohesive corporate-civic core for the city. Later, in 1937, the Wilmington Post Office and Customs House was completed on the north side of the square.²⁰ In 2011, Rodney Square and the surrounding buildings mentioned above were listed on the National Register as the Rodney Square Historic District (NRHP #11000522).

Rodney Square effectively created a boundary that prevented dense commercial development from expanding northward. As a result, businesses continued to concentrate on Market Street south of 9th, and it was in the years after Rodney Square was completed that the district experienced its greatest period of transformation. This phenomenon was noted by the *Sunday Morning Star*, which in 1925 remarked that "the installation of the last word in store fronts by several mercantile establishments; the erection of new store buildings and the improvement of old ones; [and] the number of transformations now contemplated...all speak vigorously of the development of this part of Wilmington's municipal life."²¹ This new emphasis on elegant storefronts brought throngs of shoppers during the daytime hours, but now increasingly attracted them during the evening. Again in 1925, the *Sunday Morning Star* reported that with innovative systems of illumination, "Night window shopping in Wilmington is a development of recent years to which the merchants of this city have turned considerable attention and expenditure."²²

²⁰ National Register of Historic Places, Rodney Square Historic District, Wilmington, New Castle County, Delaware, National Register #11000522.

²¹ "Wilmington Peer of Mercantile Cities," *Sunday Morning Star*, January 11, 1925, p. 33-34.

²² "Window Shopping at Night is Fascinating," *Sunday Morning Star*, September 6, 1925, p. 2.

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Although small shops continued to be popular during this period, much of the new development consisted of the expansion of larger department stores or the arrival of national department store chains. Crosby and Hill and Snellenburg's remained prominent but faced increasing competition as Market Street's popularity as a shopping destination grew. In 1915, Kresge's built a large store at 801-809 North Market. Braunstein's, a local store, opened in the combined nineteenth-century buildings at 704-708 North Market in 1917 and was the first store in the country to sell DuPont-developed nylon stockings in 1939.²³ Additionally, F.W. Woolworth's opened at 839 North Market in 1938; Kresge's opened a second store at 611-615 North Market in 1939; and by mid-century the Kennard-Pyle Department Store had gradually expanded their space at 621 North Market into the much larger, though now heavily altered, building that exists at 617-627 North Market.

With commercial expansion on Market Street came the typical urban woe of traffic congestion, which became most acute in the age of the automobile. According to Delaware historian Carol Hoffecker, cars began to rival the trolleys as a primary means of transportation for Wilmington residents. Unlike the trolleys, which traveled continuously into and out of the district with only brief stops to discharge and pick up passengers, drivers increasingly made Market Street their final destination for shopping and other business requiring an abundance of parking. Although there were initially no restrictions on parking or traffic controls at intersections, which created a highly unsafe environment for Market Street shoppers, the city gradually made changes in an effort to overcome these early challenges. Eventually, traffic lights were installed at major intersections, streets were widened and new regulations managed where drivers could park their cars.²⁴

As the automobile became ubiquitous in Wilmington – as it did in all American cities – new, more efficient roadways were created around the downtown in order to ease traffic congestion. Beginning most noticeably in the 1930s as part of the Depression-era New Deal, highways like Route 13, just east of the central business district, were constructed to allow through traffic to bypass the downtown altogether – previously, through traffic was routed down Market Street. Although downtown congestion was partially eased as a result, the new highway and others drew even more people away from the center of the city, aided by federal mortgage insurance from the Federal Housing Authority for the purchase of new homes in suburban areas.²⁵

Whereas in 1900 the U.S. Census recorded 44 households with Market Street addresses between 6th and 9th Streets, by 1930 that number had drastically decreased to only fourteen, largely as a result of intensifying flight to both newer residential areas within the city, such as north of the Brandywine and Union Park Gardens, and to the suburbs beyond the city limits. As in 1900, most of the residents were native born whites, lived in rented apartments, and typically were of a working class background with jobs such as machinist, laborer, bookkeeper, clerk, baker, and others.²⁶ A number of residents could also be found on adjacent Shipley Street and

²³ Paul C. Painted and Michael M. Coleman, *Essentials of Polymer Science and Engineering* (Lancaster, PA:

DEStech Publications, 2009), p. 58.

²⁴ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 98.

²⁵ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 107-110.

²⁶ United States Census Bureau. Accessed at www.familysearch.org.

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points west where houses and small apartment buildings like 801 Shipley Street could be found. This four-story apartment house was built in 1924 and is indicative of the type and scale of multi-family dwellings that were scattered throughout the areas east and west of Market Street during the early twentieth century.

At first, the continued movement of many Wilmington residents to the suburbs reinforced the concentration of commercial interests on Market Street. As visible in the district's various Art Deco and Art Moderne-style resources, many of which appeared between 1930 and 1940, Market Street continued to prosper as a downtown shopping destination during this period. One reason was that many residents still worked downtown, buoying retailers during the daytime hours. The Max Kiel Buildings at 700-702 and 712 North Market (both facades completed in 1938), the Eckerd Drugstore (1938) at 723 North Market, Kresge's (1939) at 611-615 North Market, and the F.W. Woolworth Company Building (1939) are evidence that both small local stores and large national chains experienced success even as fewer people lived near the downtown. A detailed business map published by the Nirenstein National Realty Map Company in 1950 shows the concentration of businesses that still existed on Market Street that year (See Figures 11 & 12). These stores thrived because they were located close to major employers, such as DuPont, who were located north of 9th Street. During these years, Market Street businesses farther away from the Rodney Square areas – generally those south of 6th Street – began to decline.

Soon, with the construction of larger highways and shopping centers away from the downtown, even upper Market Street, nearer Rodney Square, began to suffer. Most new shopping developments occurred north of the city. For example, Wanamaker's opened its Wilmington store in northwest Wilmington in 1950 and Merchandise Mart, a large shopping center, opened in northeast Wilmington in 1952. The completion of Interstate 95 through the West Side in the mid-1960s also greatly impacted the health of Market Street's retail economy by mid-century. Efforts to make the downtown more automobile-friendly – namely the widening of streets and the construction of parking garages – ultimately proved unsuccessful, forcing stores to close or open branches in suburban shopping centers.²⁷ Beginning in the 1950s, the trolleys that transformed the downtown a half-century earlier were replaced by buses providing less frequent service, an indication that fewer and fewer people were coming to Market Street to shop.²⁸

The Culmination of Decline: The Effect of the 1968 Race Riots

The late 1960s proved to be a critical period for Market Street and the downtown as a whole. In the days after Martin Luther King, Jr's assassination on April 4, 1968, many young African-American residents converged on the downtown area in protest, highlighting racial tensions that had been present in the city for decades. At first, the demonstrations were peaceful, but quickly turned violent after a students' memorial service for Dr. King, held in Rodney Square, ended around noon on April 8th. Major rioting took place not only on Market Street but in neighborhoods throughout the city. Several buildings in the district were damaged as a result of

²⁷ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 232.

²⁸ National Register of Historic Places, Historic Resources of Market Street (Multiple Resource Area), Wilmington, New Castle County, Delaware, National Register #64000105.

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the rioting and the throwing of stones or bottles at businesses located between 6th and 9th Streets (see Figure 20). For the most part, only storefront windows were shattered, but in some cases, stores were broken into and looted. Such damage occurred at Adams Clothes at 716 North Market Street and at Brait's, a men's clothing store at 804 North Market Street.²⁹

In an effort to calm the violence, Delaware Governor Charles L. Terry, Jr., called in a 2800-man unit of the National Guard, many of which were stationed along the stretch of Market Street south of 9th Street. As a result, order was largely restored to downtown Wilmington by the evening of April 9th and, within a week, Wilmington Mayor John Babiarz requested the removal of the Guard. Terry refused, however, and the city remained, in effect, under military occupation for the next nine months. The guard was finally recalled the following January by Terry's successor, Russell Peterson. However, the prolonged presence of the National Guard and mandatory curfews contributed to a sense of unease among residents, culminating in the end of Market Street as a popular downtown shopping destination.³⁰

Market Street in Recent Years

Not long after the riots, the city began exploring ways to revitalize the downtown as a welcoming, pedestrian-friendly shopping environment. In 1972, work began on the Market Street Mall (The Mall), which converted a portion of Market Street into a pedestrian plaza between 4th and 6th Streets and limited one-way traffic between 6th and 9th Streets (see Figure 21). The goal was to increase foot traffic for the struggling businesses, much of which came from nearby office buildings. Although the Mall was briefly successful, it eventually struggled to maintain its popularity outside of lunchtime hours and businesses continued to close. The Mall was renovated in the mid-1980s yet, due to the loss of automobile traffic that would allow suburbanites easier access to the downtown, it eventually failed as a means of attracting shoppers. The Mall was removed in sections beginning in 2001. By 2006, two-way traffic with street parking was once again introduced to the stretch of Market Street between 6th and 9th Streets.³¹

Criterion C, Architecture

The Downtown Wilmington Commercial Historic District is also eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion C, Architecture, for its unique concentration of commercial buildings in a variety of scales and styles, which parallel national trends in commercial architecture in the late-nineteenth and early- to mid-twentieth centuries. The district contains both ordinary commercial buildings, which are similar to those found in downtowns across much of the United States, as well as high style works that define Wilmington's status as a prosperous corporate capital during the district's period of significance.

²⁹ "Crisis Measures in Effect," *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), 9 Apr 1968, p. 1-2.

³⁰ "Mayor Sees His City Asunder, Ravaged," *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), 10 Apr 1968, p. 3, and Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 197-202.

³¹ "Phase Three of Market Street Reconstruction Project to Begin July 12," Delaware Department of Transportation, June 29, 2006, accessed August 2, 2016, <http://www.deldot.gov/public.ejs?command=PublicNewsDisplay&id=2431>.

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Although not typical of the downtown area as a whole, the oldest resources in the district date to the early- to mid-nineteenth century. At 805 Shipley Street, a c. 1830 Federal-style house), is indicative of the type of buildings that could be found scattered throughout the district in its early years. As demonstrated by the building's modern, c. 1960 storefront, many of these buildings were altered to accommodate a commercial use beginning in the mid- to late-nineteenth century or later. Additionally, the impressive Second Empire-style Masonic Hall and Grand Opera House, built in 1871, is the earliest surviving building in the district to which an exact year of construction can be ascribed. The richly articulated façade, constructed largely of cast iron with rhythmic arched window openings and a tall Mansard roof, was typical of large public buildings in American cities in the decade following the Civil War. More typical of commercial buildings on Market Street during the late-nineteenth century period are 718-720 and 726 North Market Street, both Italianate-style commercial buildings in red brick that were likely constructed in the 1870s or 1880s (The present brick façade of 726 North Market Street, including the cornice, was reconstructed based on historic photographs in 2010-2011).

At a point when the trolley was bringing more people than ever to Wilmington's downtown, new building technologies began to dramatically alter the appearance of Market Street's commercial buildings. With the increasing availability and affordability of large sheets of plate glass, along with the development of cast iron and later steel for structural support, large display windows with minimized frames, perfect for the display of merchandise, became prevalent. Although some earlier remodeled residences did remain, to a great extent the physical character of upper Market Street after 1890 was dominated by new commercial fronts with a decidedly lighter and more transparent character. Many such storefronts have been altered or replaced over the years, however significant intact examples remain at the Reynolds Candy Company (1929) at 703 North Market Street and the Braunstein's Building (storefront added in 1924) at 704-708 North Market Street. Although they appeared during Market Street's later period of development, both storefronts are indicative of the transparent nature of commercial buildings on upper Market Street between 1890 and 1930.

Around the turn of the century, the Queen Anne style was eclipsed by more traditional, Classically-inspired commercial buildings, which were influenced by the Beaux Arts emphasis of the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 and the City Beautiful movement that followed. Although located just outside of the district, nearby Rodney Square embodies this trend most strongly. Within the district, 709 and 811 North Market Street, were early examples of the Beaux Arts style. The limestone fronts of these four-story buildings feature traditional Classical forms such as architrave window surrounds, corbeled sills, and imposing, denticulated cornices. Although it dates from Market Street's later period of development, the remarkably intact Reynold's Candy Company Building (1929) at 703 North Market Street displays a similar Classical language, but in terra cotta rather than limestone. Finally, the two commercial buildings at 728 and 730 North Market Street, while influenced by their Beaux Arts antecedents, present relatively planar wall surfaces in brick and limestone, respectively, and feature more geometric roof pediments rather than deep, three-dimensional cornices. The most prominent example of revival of pure Classical form is found at the Wilmington Savings Fund Society (1920) at 838 North Market Street. Faced with smooth ashlar limestone, the temple-like bank is

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principally defined by its imposing Egyptian Revival *in antis* columns, which separate the large window bays on the west and north elevations, and its denticulated cornice and balustrade at the roofline.

Following national movements in urban commercial architecture, some Market Street buildings that appeared after 1910 characterized a shift away from revivalist styles and obvious surface ornamentation. Instead, they embodied a more honest expression of commercial form made possible largely by new structural technologies. The Commercial Style, in particular, which arose when the steel frame became common in construction in the early twentieth century, allowed large window openings that decreased the amount of wall surface to which ornamentation could be applied. These characteristics are most evident in the Crosby and Hill Building at 605-609 North Market (1859, façade added in 1920) and the Kresge Building (c. 1924) at 801-809 North Market.

As the twentieth century progressed, Market Street buildings began to embody a simplification in architectural form and ornamentation that arose in the early years of the Modern movement as demonstrated by the Art Deco and Moderne styles. The earliest Art Deco resources in the district are highly characteristic of commercial buildings that began appearing in American cities after 1920. Prominent examples include the Farmers Mutual Insurance Company (1929) at 833 North Market Street, the Delmarva Power & Light Building (1932) at 600 North Market, and the F.W. Woolworth Company Building (1939) at 839 North Market. These buildings feature relatively smooth wall surfaces in limestone or terra cotta; geometrical ornamentation carved in relief; and an emphasis on verticality, typically created by abstracted pilasters. While the Art Deco style was popular between 1920 and 1940, the Moderne style, with its emphasis on purer forms and planar wall surfaces, often with sweeping rounded corners, arose concurrently around 1930. The Max Keil Buildings at 700-702 and 712 North Market Street embody these characteristics most strongly. The sharp, cubic form of 700-702 North Market is clad in white terra cotta tiles on the upper floors and features a full-glazed storefront that curves into the recessed entrance. A similar but smaller storefront appears at 712 North Market, although that building is faced in peach colored terra cotta and features simple fluting on either side of the large central window as its only surface ornamentation.

Architects

In the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century, Wilmington was home to a flourishing architectural scene, the members of which produced many of the buildings that remain within the district today:

Edward L. Rice, Jr., who practiced in Wilmington from the 1880s through the 1920s, was perhaps one of the best known architects in the city during this period. Rice designed the Snellenburg's Department Store (1895) at 614-620 North Market Street and the apartment building at 801 Shipley Street in 1924, among other buildings in Wilmington located outside of the district. His work included many commercial, residential, public, and educational buildings.

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One of Rice's best known works was the Delaware Building at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893.³²

John Dockery Thompson, Jr. (1872-1924) was known for his work in the Beaux Arts style. He designed the Union National Bank (1908) at 725-727 North Market Street (now heavily altered) and the Dure Building (c. 1910) at 811 North Market Street. He is perhaps best known for his work on the Wilmington Public Building, also known as the City-County Building, which was built on the east side of Rodney Square in 1916. For that building, he collaborated with the New York firm of Palmer, Hornbostel and Jones.³³

William Draper Brinckloe (1872-1933) graduated from the University of Pennsylvania's School of Architecture in 1895. Although principally known for his residential work, Brinckloe occasionally designed small commercial buildings such as those at 728 and 730 North Market Street, built in 1909 and 1910, respectively. Brinckloe regularly contributed house designs to *Farm Journal*, *Architectural Record*, and Wilmington's own *Sunday Morning Star* and was featured in "Low-Cost Suburban Homes," a *House and Garden* supplement published in 1908. In 1913, Brinckloe partnered with John Canning, Jr., to form Brinckloe and Canning. Brinckloe published his own book of house plans, *The Small Home: How to Plan and Build It*, in 1924. Although his surname was originally Brinckle, in 1913 he successfully petitioned to have it changed to Brinckloe, which he claimed was the more accurate historical spelling.

John J. Kennedy (1881-1921) designed the Foord & Massey Furniture Company Building at 701 Shipley Street in 1916. Born in Wilmington and educated at the University of Pennsylvania, Kennedy primarily worked for clients in the ecclesiastic and parochial realms, including the original Adas Kodesh Congregation Synagogue (1898) at 6th and French Streets in Wilmington and St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church (1914) in Delaware City. He also completed numerous houses in Wilmington, DE throughout his career.³⁴

Brown & Whiteside, which consisted of Walter Stewart Brown (1877-1931) and George Morris Whiteside (1884-1963), designed the Delmarva Power & Light Building (1932) at 600 North Market Street and the Farmers Mutual Insurance Company Building (1929) at 833 North Market Street. After apprenticing with John Dockery Thompson for three years, Brown and Whiteside formed their partnership in 1910. The firm was well known for their prolific work on country houses throughout Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Jersey, and designed enlargements to Pierre S. DuPont's Longwood residence. In Wilmington, the firm also designed the YMCA at 511 West 11th Street (listed on the National Register in 2002), the seven-story office building at 200 West 9th Street (located within the West 9th Street Commercial Historic

³² National Register of Historic Places, Frank E. Schoonover Studios, Wilmington, New Castle County, Delaware, National Register #79000636.

³³ John Dockery Thompson, Jr. Obituary, *Wilmington Morning News*, June 6, 1924.

³⁴ "J.J. Kennedy Died in Philadelphia Today," *Every Evening*, October 26, 1921 and the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Database, https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/23576, accessed 3/1/16.

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District), and the First and Central Presbyterian Church at 11th and Market Streets, both in 1930.³⁵

Other architects: Wilmington clients occasionally brought in architects from Philadelphia and New York as well. In 1909, the Wilmington Gas Company hired Charles Barton Keen (1868-1931) of Philadelphia to design their new home at 827 North Market Street. Known primarily as a country house designer, Keen occasionally designed schools, banks, and office buildings. Known primarily for his Colonial Revival work, the Mission Revival style of 827 North Market Street represents a slight departure for Keen.³⁶ And, in 1920, the Wilmington Savings Fund Society commissioned the Hoggson Brothers of New York, the well-known designers of banks and office buildings, to build their new home.

³⁵ Walter Stewart Brown Obituary, *Sunday Morning Star*, December 20, 1931.

³⁶ Biography of Charles Barton Keen in the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Database, https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm?ArchitectId=A0748, accessed 3/1/16.

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Fig. 1 – Pomeroy & Beers Atlas, Wilmington, 1868.
(Historic District Boundary shown in white)

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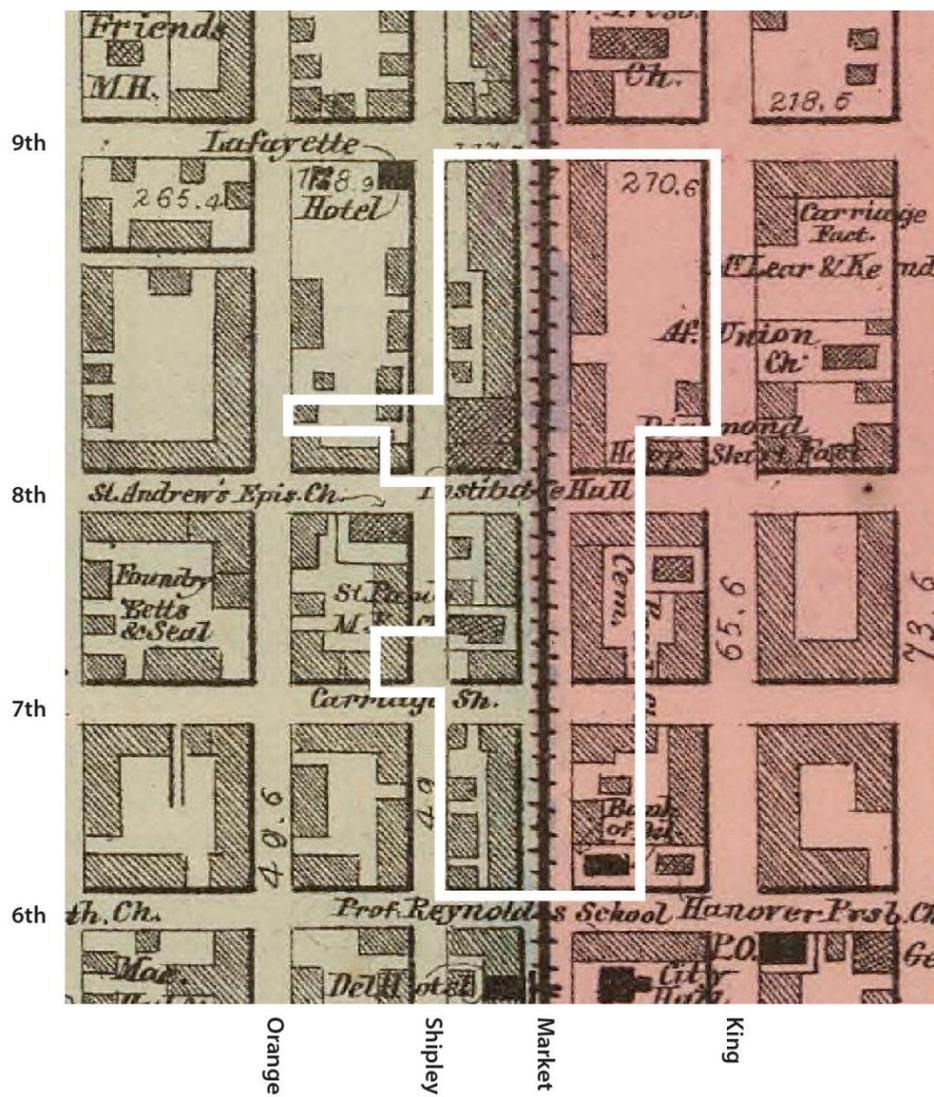


Fig. 2 – Pomeroy & Beers Atlas of Delaware, 1868. Showing the 600 Through 800 blocks of Market Street.
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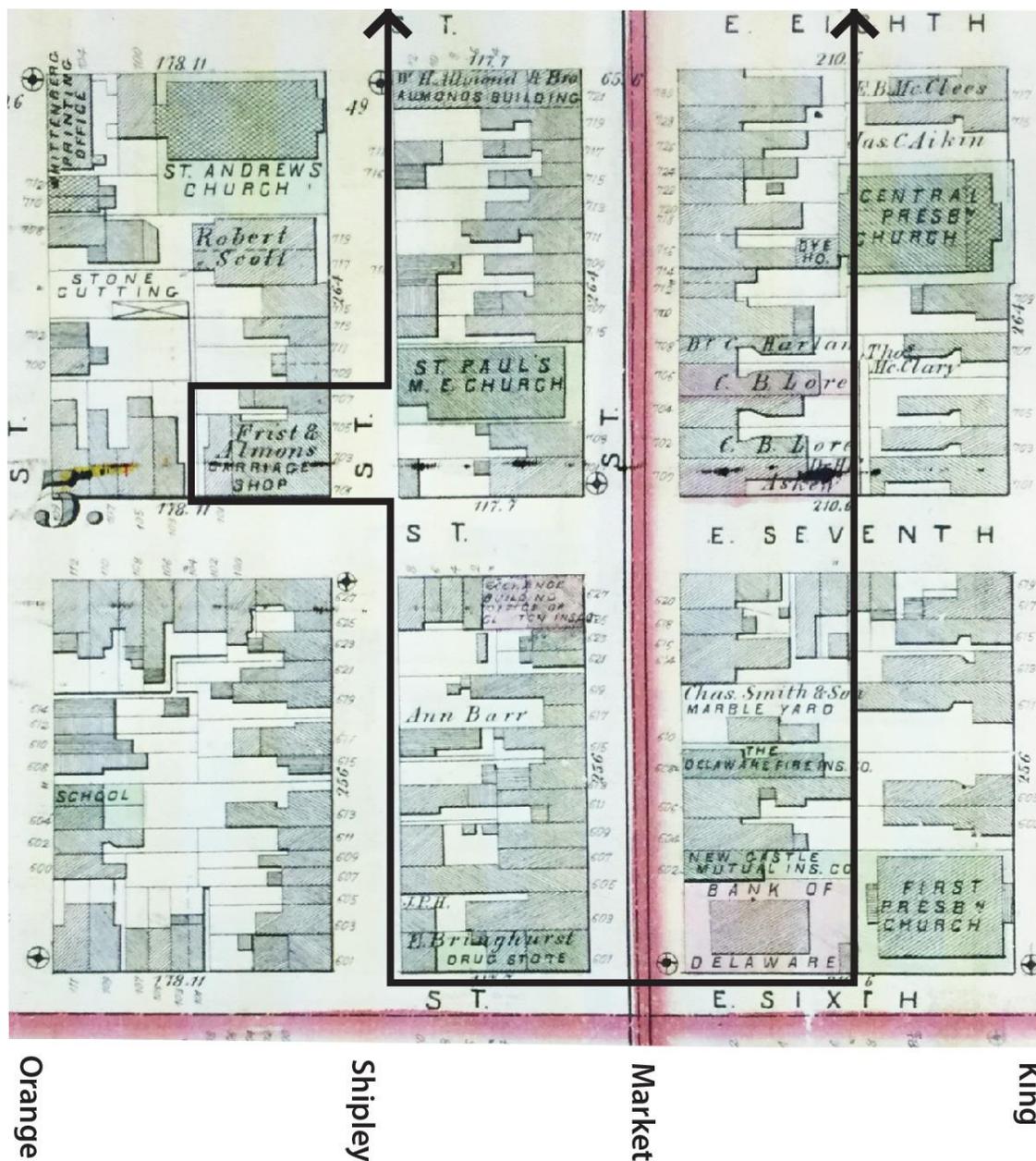


Fig. 3 – Hopkins City Atlas of Wilmington, 1876.

Showing the 600 and 700 blocks of Market Street with Historic District Boundary.

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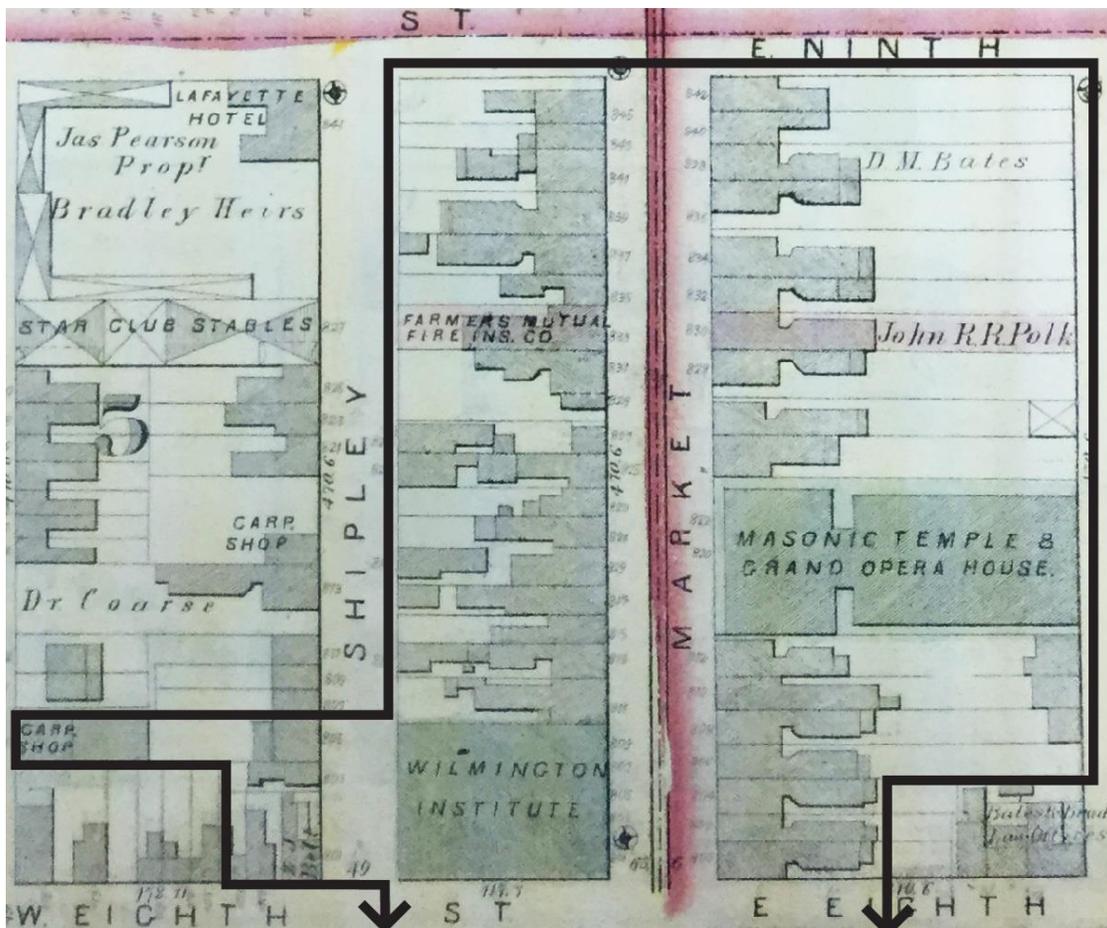


Fig. 4 – Hopkins City Atlas of Wilmington, 1876.
Showing the 800 block of Market Street with Historic District Boundary.

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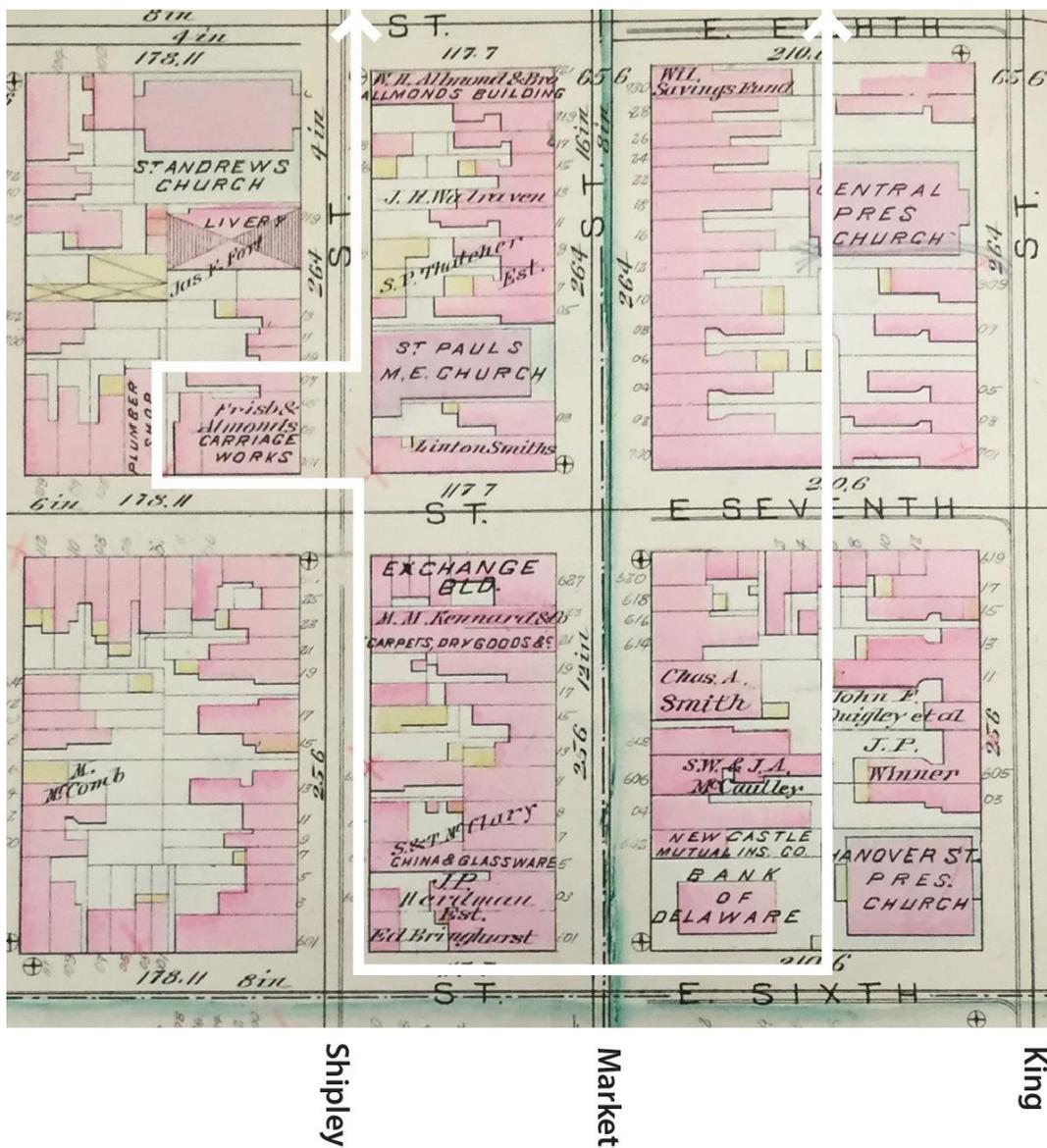


Fig. 5 – Baist Atlas of Wilmington, 1887.
Showing the 600 and 700 blocks of Market Street with Historic District Boundary.

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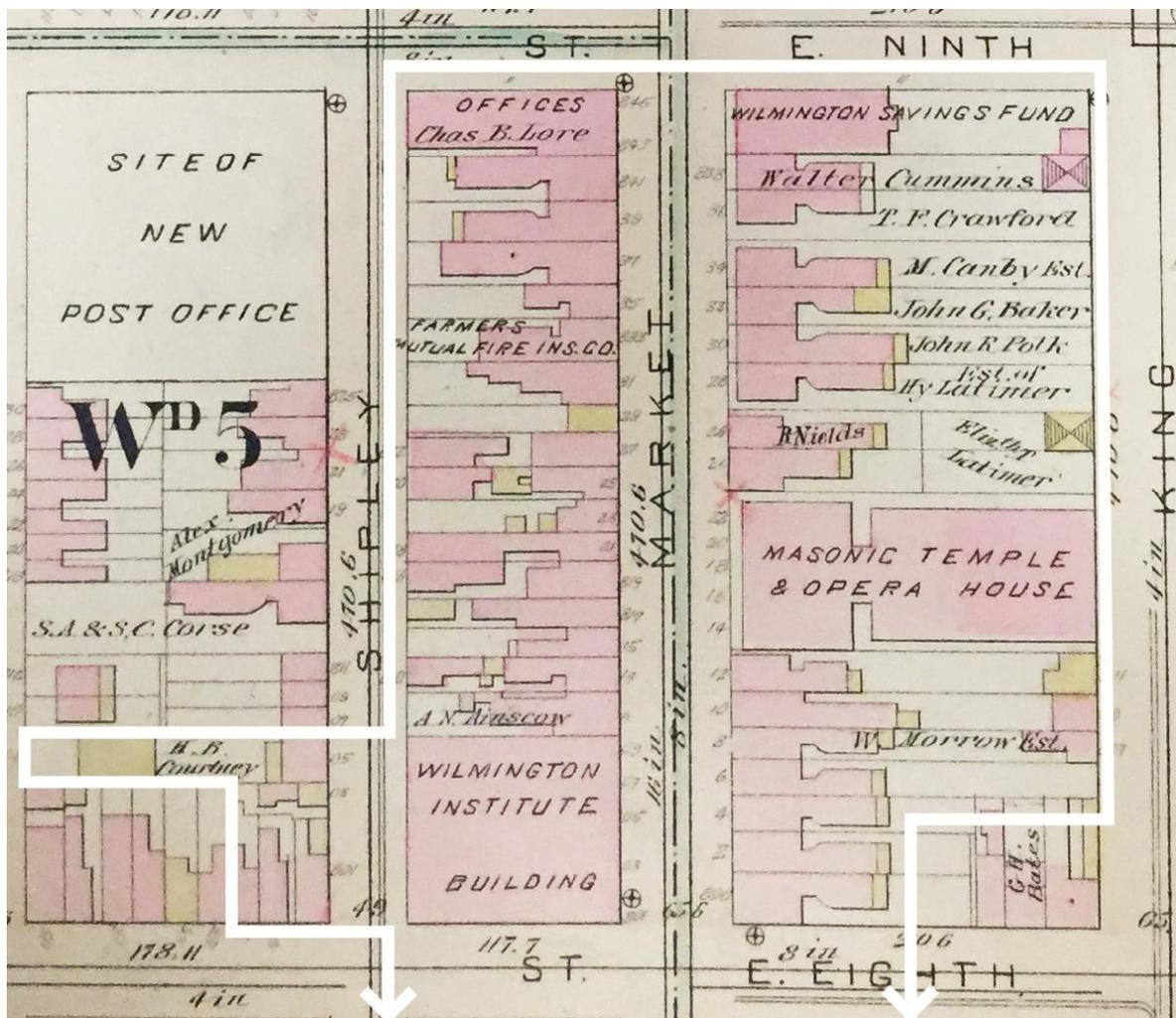


Fig. 6 – Baist Atlas of Wilmington, 1887.
Showing the 800 block of Market Street with Historic District Boundary.

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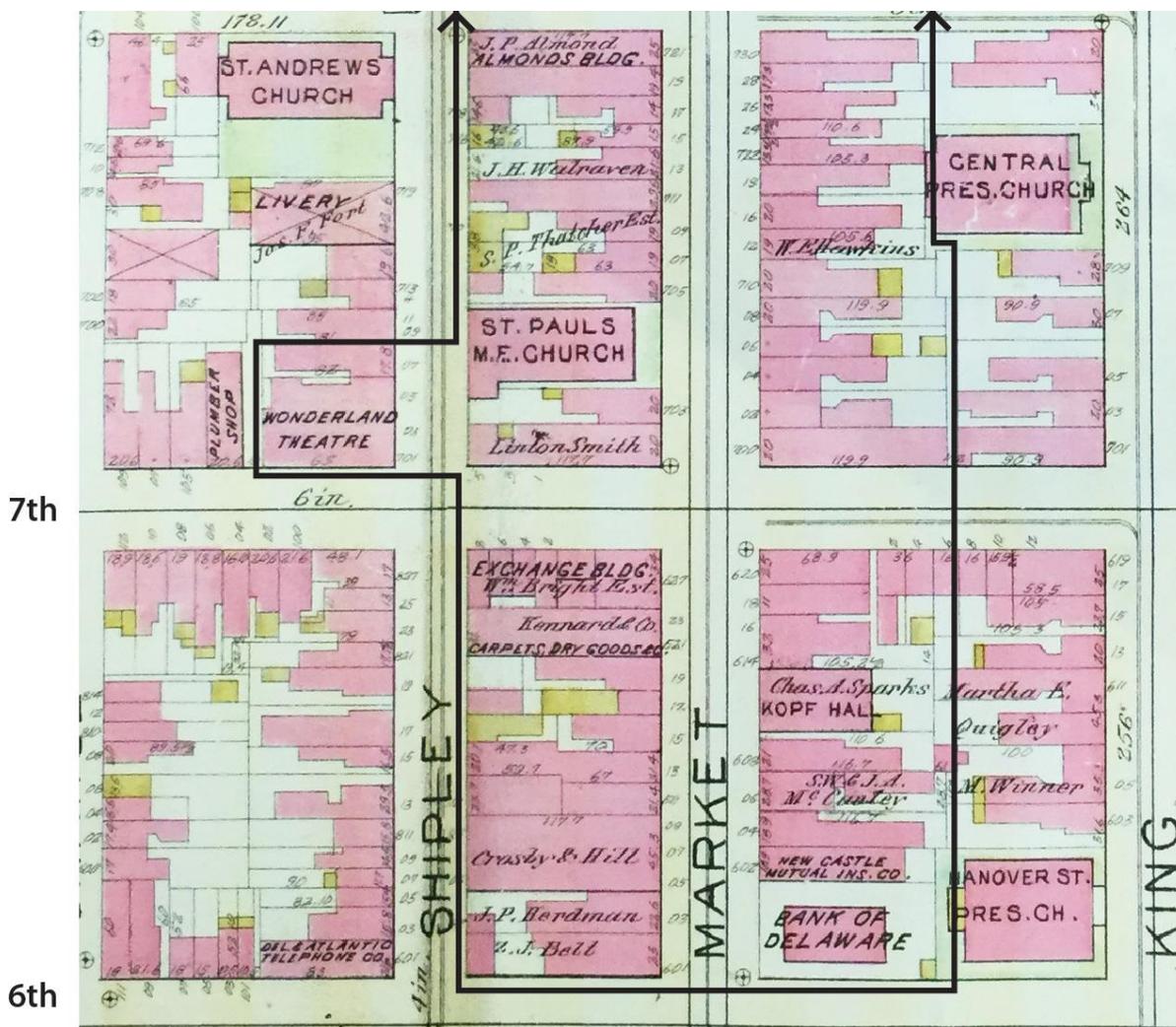


Fig. 7 – Baist Atlas of Wilmington, 1901.

Showing the 600 and 700 blocks of Market Street with Historic District Boundary.

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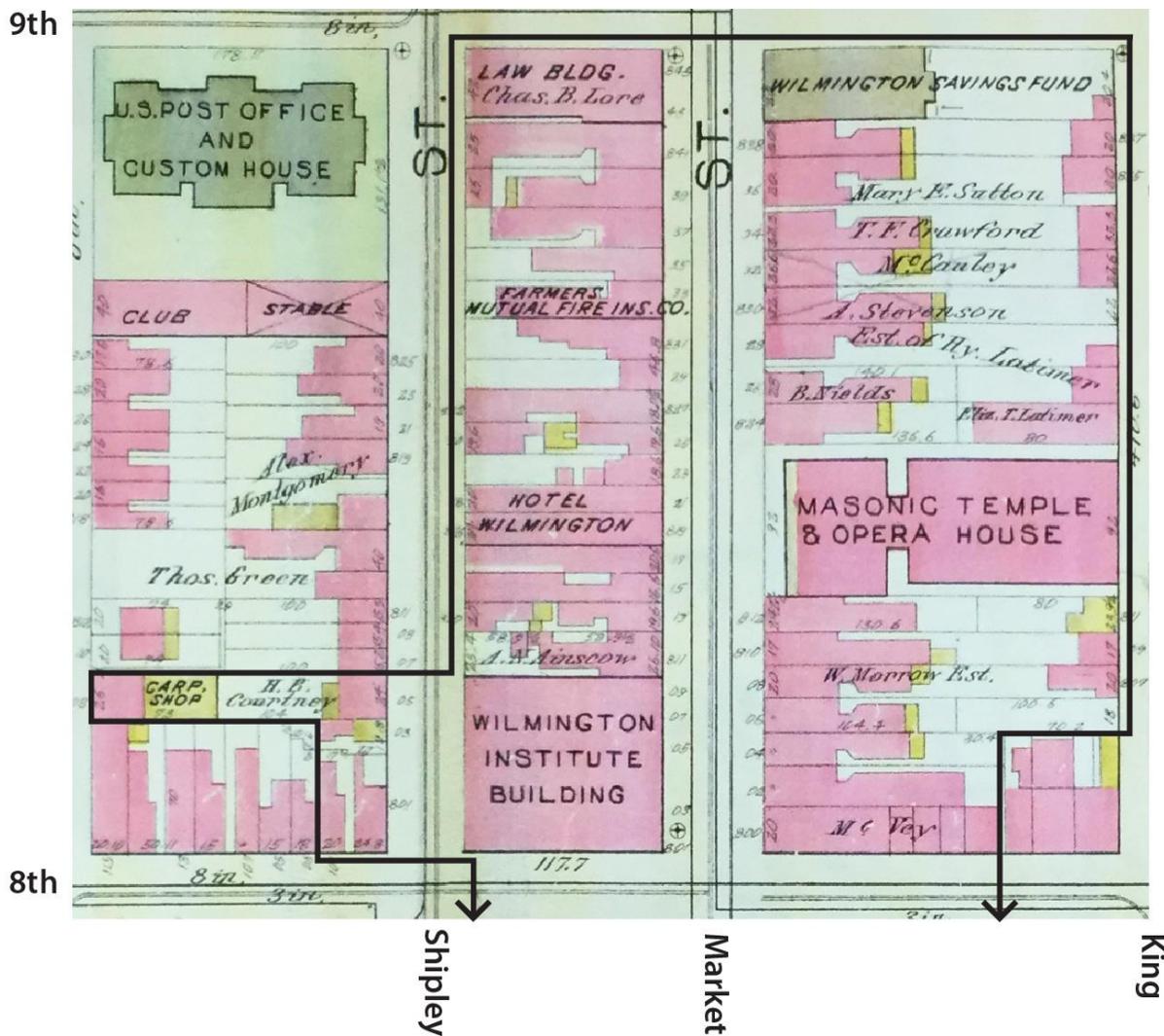


Fig. 8 – Baist Atlas of Wilmington, 1901.
Showing the 800 block of Market Street with Historic District Boundary.

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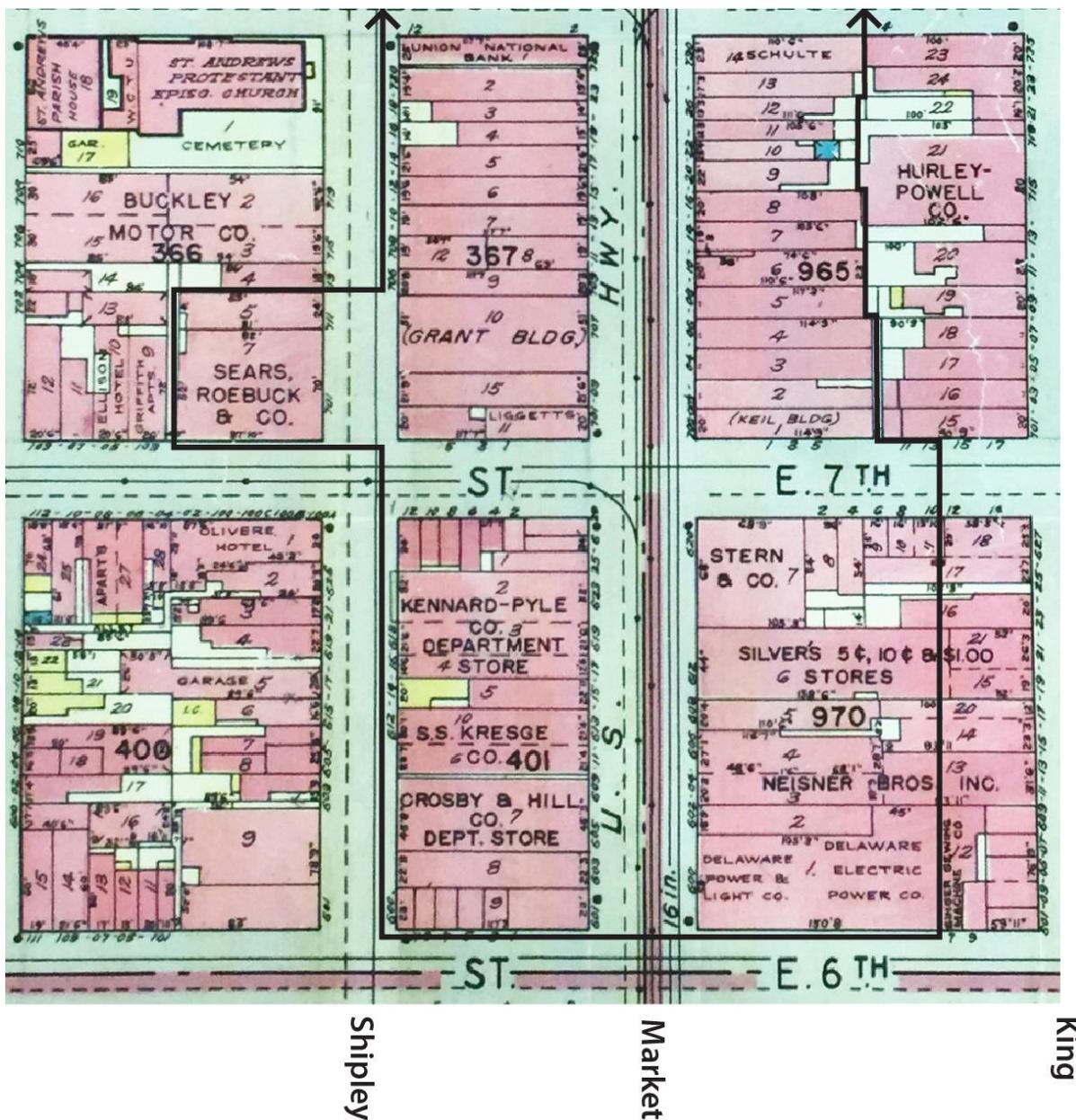


Fig. 9 – Franklin Property Atlas of Wilmington, 1936.
Showing the 600 and 700 blocks of Market Street with Historic District Boundary.

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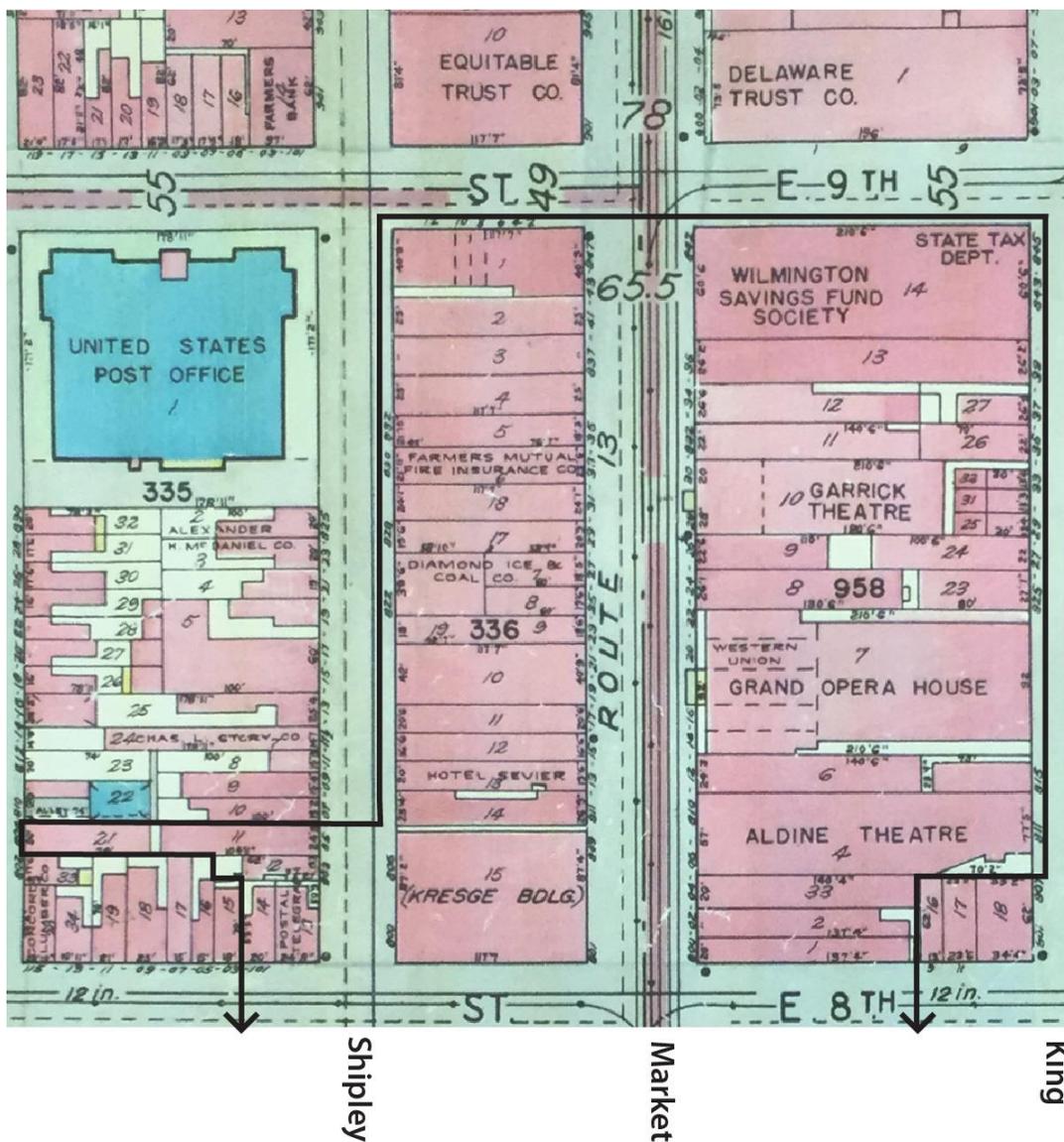


Fig. 10 – Franklin Property Atlas of Wilmington, 1936.
Showing the 800 block of Market Street with Historic District Boundary.

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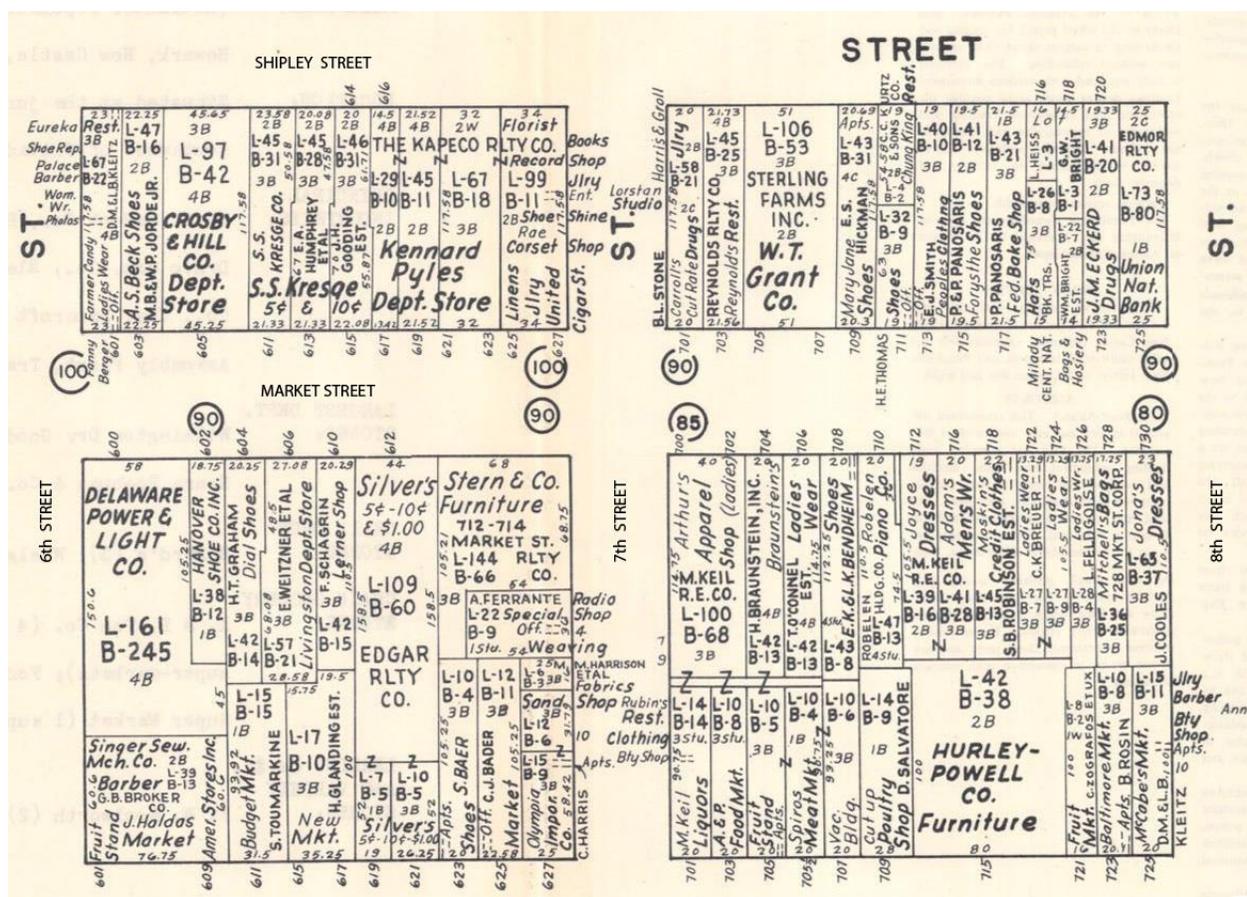


Fig. 11 – Nirenstein Business Map of Downtown Wilmington, 1950.

Showing the 600 and 700 blocks of Market Street.

(From Nirenstein's Middle Atlantic States Edition, 1950).

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Fig. 13 – Postcard showing Market Street north from 6th Street, c. 1920.
(University of Delaware Postcard Collection)

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Fig. 14 – Market Street south from 7th Street, c. 1915.
Shows the Snellenburg's Department Store at the southeast corner of 7th and Market.
(University of Delaware Postcard Collection)

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Fig. 15 – Market Street south from 8th Street, c. 1915.
(Historical Society of Delaware)

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Fig. 16 – Postcard showing the 700 block of Market Street (looking north toward 8th), c. 1910.
(University of Delaware Postcard Collection)

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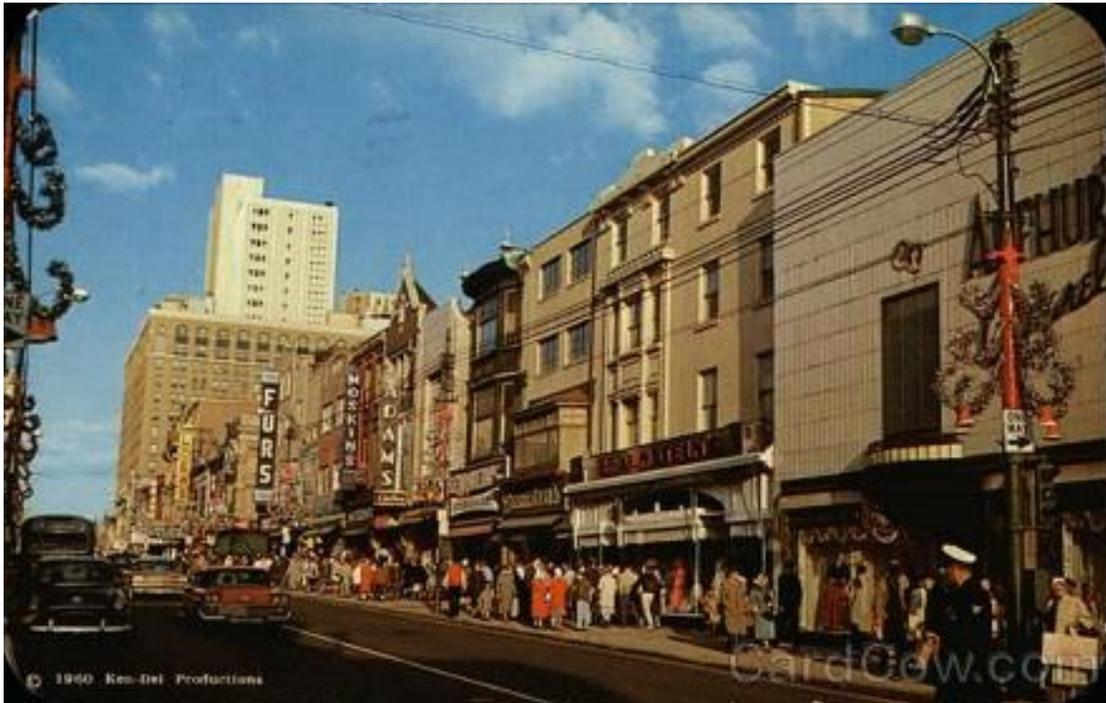


Fig. 17 – Postcard showing the 700 block of Market Street (east side), c. 1960

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Fig. 18 – 800 block of Market Street (looking north from mid-block), c. 1910.
(Historical Society of Delaware)

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Fig. 19 – Postcard showing Market Street north from 8th, c. 1920.
(University of Delaware Postcard Collection)

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Fig. 20 – Marching on the 800 block of Market Street on April 8, 1968 following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. 827-829 North Market (Linen Mart) is visible at far right.

(Historical Society of Delaware)

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Fig. 21 – Market Street Mall, looking north from 6th Street, c. 1980.
(Historical Society of Delaware)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Beers, D.G. *Atlas of the State of Delaware*. Philadelphia: Pomeroy & Beers, 1868.

Bell, Whitfield J., Jr. *Patriot-Improvers: Biographical Sketches of Members of the American Philosophical Society, Volume I, 1743-1768*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1997.

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Hoffecker, Carol E. *Corporate Capital: Wilmington in the Twentieth Century*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983.

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Mayfield, Frank M. *The Department Store Story*. New York: Fairchild, 1949.

National Register of Historic Places, Crosby and Hill Building, Wilmington, New Castle County, Delaware, National Register #85000148.

National Register of Historic Places, Historic Resources of Market Street (Multiple Resource Area), Wilmington, New Castle County, Delaware, National Register #64000105.

National Register of Historic Places, Rodney Square Historic District, Wilmington, New Castle County, Delaware, National Register #11000522.

Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Database. Accessed at <https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/>.

Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Delaware, 1609-1888*, Volume II. Philadelphia: L.J. Richards & Co., 1888.

Warner, Sam Bass. *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston: 1870-1900*, second edition. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Sunday Morning Star (periodical). Accessed at https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=VaBbNeojGYwC&dat=19400728&b_mode=2&hl=en

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United States Census Bureau (Census data from 1900 and 1930, accessed at www.familysearch.org).

Wilmington Morning News (periodical).

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 # _____

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property ~12 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 39.742145 Longitude: -75.550821

2. Latitude: 39.744878 Longitude: -75.548966

3. Latitude: 39.744289 Longitude: -75.547519

4. Latitude: 39.741561 Longitude: -75.549423

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the property is shown as a solid line on the accompanying map entitled "Downtown Wilmington Commercial Historic District."

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated district includes all properties on Market Street, and some on Shipley and King Streets, between 6th and 9th Streets, which convey the evolution of Downtown Wilmington from the late-nineteenth through the mid-twentieth century. Several properties fronting on the west side of Shipley Street are included within the boundary, but only where there is a group of at least two buildings that retain sufficient integrity, were constructed during the period of significance, and have a close relationship to Market Street's late-nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial development. This includes two groups of buildings, located at the northwest corners of 7th and Shipley Street, and 8th and Shipley Street, respectively. On the other hand, the parking lot at 713 Shipley Street has been excluded from the District boundary. The Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew at 719 Shipley (the southeast corner of 8th and Shipley Streets) was considered, but ultimately excluded because it did not fit within the commercial theme of the nomination, despite being considered eligible for listing on the National Register as an individual property (under criterion A), by consensus. Finally, the large parcel that occupies most of the 800 block on the west side of Shipley Street (known as 820 Orange Street) has been excluded because it is a large vacant lot, with an approved plan for new construction.

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The 900 block of North Market Street has been excluded from the boundary because, aside from the two National Register-listed properties, namely the former “Delaware Trust Building” at 900 North Market, and the Wilmington Institute Free Library (part of the Rodney Square National Register Historic District), all of the other buildings in the block have been substantially altered and lack integrity of material and design. The large, nine-story building – the former Equitable Trust Company Building-- at 901 North Market (the northwest corner of 9th and North Market) – has been heavily altered and therefore does not retain enough integrity to be considered a contributing resource. Two other buildings, 913 and 919 North Market, which are both post-1970 high-rises, were completed well outside of the period of significance and do not relate to the district’s commercial development during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Only one building, the three-story Wright & Simon store at 911 North Market, could potentially be considered contributing to the District. However, since the building is surrounded by what would be counted as non-contributing resources, the boundary does not extend north of 9th Street.

Finally, no resources fronting on King Street have been included within the District boundary due to a lack of historic integrity, including vacant lots. Only 615, 623, and 709 King Street, all three of which are late-nineteenth century buildings with storefronts, could potentially be considered contributing resources within the District. However, due to the fact that these buildings are surrounded by so many non-contributing resources, and the fact that most of the east side of King Street on these blocks was demolished during urban renewal in the 1960s and 1970s, King Street does not retain enough integrity *en masse* for these buildings to be counted as contributing resources. As shown in the attached National Register Nomination boundary map, the eastern boundary of the district follows the rear lot lines of the properties fronting on North Market Street between 6th and 9th Streets.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kevin McMahon, Associate
organization: Powers & Company, Inc.
street & number: 1315 Walnut Street, Suite 1717
city or town: Philadelphia state: PA zip code: 19107
e-mail: kevin@powersco.net
telephone: (215) 636-0192
date: March 4, 2016 (Updated September 9, 2016)

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Downtown Wilmington Commercial Historic District

City or Vicinity: Wilmington

County: New Castle State: DE

Photographer: Kevin McMahon

Date Photographed: January 2016

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

<i>Photograph #</i>	<i>Description of Photograph</i>
1.	600 North Market Street, view east
2.	602 and 604-608 North Market Street, view east
3.	614-620 North Market Street, view east
4.	614-620 North Market Street, view southeast from 7 th and Market Street
5.	601, 603, 605-609 & 611-615 North Market Street, view northwest from 6 th and Market
6.	601, 603 and part of 605-609 North Market Street, view west
7.	605-609 North Market Street, view west
8.	611-615 North Market Street, view west
9.	617-627 North Market Street, view west
10.	4 West 7 th Street, view south
11.	6 West 7 th Street, view southeast
12.	700-702 North Market Street, view northeast from 7 th and Market
13.	704-708 North Market Street, view east
14.	704-708 North Market Street, storefront, view southeast
15.	From right: 710, 712 & 714-716 North Market Street, view west
16.	From right: 712, 714-716, 718-720, 722-724 & 726 North Market Street, view west

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17.	From right: 722-724, 726, 728 & 730 North Market Street, view west
18.	700 Block of Market Street (east side), view southeast from 8 th and Market
19.	700 Block of Market Street (west side), view northwest from 8 th and Market
20.	703 North Market Street, view west
21.	705-707 North Market Street, view west
22.	709 North Market Street, view west
23.	From left: 709, 711, 713, 715 & 717 North Market Street, view west
24.	From left: 715, 717, 719, 721 & 723 North Market Street, view west
25.	From left: 719, 721, 723 & 725-727 North Market Street, view west
26.	701 Shipley Street, view northwest from 7 th and Shipley
27.	703 Shipley Street, view west
28.	800 North Market Street, view northeast from 8 th and Market
29.	802-804 North Market Street, view east
30.	From right: 806-810, 812 & 818 North Market Street (Partial view), view east
31.	818 North Market Street, view east
32.	824 North Market Street, view east
33.	From right, 836 & 838 North Market Street, view east
34.	838 North Market Street, view southeast from 9 th and Market
35.	801-809 North Market Street, view west
36.	From left: 811, 813, 815 & 817 North Market Street, view west
37.	From left: 817 & 819-821 North Market Street, view southwest
38.	From left: 823, 825 & 827-829 North Market Street, view west
39.	From left: 831, 833, 835 & 837 North Market Street, view west
40.	From left: 833, 835, 837 & 839 North Market Street, view west
41.	839 North Market Street, view southwest from 9 th and Market
42.	801 Shipley Street, view northwest from 8 th and Shipley
43.	From left: 801, 803, & 805 Shipley Street, view west

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.