

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUL 1 - 1983
date entered JUL 28 1983

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic N/A

and/or common Bank Street Historic District

2. Location

207--231 Bank St.

street & number East side of Bank Street, numbers
207 through 231, inclusive

N/A not for publication

city, town Waterbury N/A vicinity of

state CT code 09 county New Haven code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other: VACANT

4. Owner of Property

name City of Waterbury

street & number 235 Grand Street - City Hall

city, town Waterbury N/A vicinity of state CT

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Waterbury Town Clerk

street & number 235 Grand Street - City Hall

city, town Waterbury state CT

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission

city, town Hartford state CT

7. Description

<u> </u> excellent	<u> X </u> deteriorated	<u> </u> unaltered	<u> X </u> original site
<u> X </u> good	<u> </u> ruins	<u> X </u> altered	<u> </u> moved date _____
<u> X </u> fair	<u> </u> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Waterbury's Bank Street Historic District (Photographs 1-3) consists of four adjacent commercial buildings on the east side of Bank Street between Grand Street and Interstate Highway 84. The buildings are three-and-a-half to five stories tall and are of brick construction, with one facade built of rough-surfaced brownstone and granite blocks. Three of the buildings date from the 1880s: the Richardsonian Romanesque Pritchard Building, the elaborate Queen Anne-style Griggs building, and the eclectic Republican or Morrow building. The fourth is a Georgian Revival-style building erected in 1904. In addition to their basic brick and stone facade materials, the buildings include decorative features in terra cotta and limestone. Side and rear elevations, in contrast, have brick walls, simple segmental-arched windows, and at the rear, fire escapes and other modern additions.

The physical condition of the buildings is fair. Structurally, they appear sound, with fairly level floors and few obvious signs of settling. Some exterior surfaces are deteriorated, especially where demolition of adjacent blocks has exposed brick party walls. Some of the surface of the brickwork on the facade of the Griggs building is pitted and crumbling, especially where the grayish-white paint has been partly removed. All four buildings are now vacant and have been secured against entry, but broken windows and roof leaks have allowed some interior damage.

The buildings retain a high degree of historical integrity. Exterior alterations are mostly confined to alterations at the storefront level, but even on the ground floor some elements from the original storefronts remain on three of the four buildings. The interiors have been more extensively modernized, but the upper floors of the Griggs Building are virtually unaltered, with original fireplaces, wainscot, door trim, and full-height skylighted stairways.

The boundaries of the district reflect the physical isolation of these buildings from the rest of Waterbury's downtown. Formerly the district was a continuation of the commercial area which extends west on Grand Street and north on Bank, but today strong visual interruptions make these four buildings a cohesive unit which stands better on its own. Across Bank Street to the west is Buckingham Plaza (Photograph 3, left), a large concrete parking garage with stores and office space on the ground level. To the south is a vacant lot, beyond which is the corridor for Interstate 84 (Photograph 3, right). To the north, the four buildings are separated from the rest of Bank Street by a large vacant lot, the widening of Grand Street to four lanes, and across Grand Street, a large modern plaza and four-story bank building (Photograph 1). Finally, extensive vacant land at the rear of the lots provides a logical eastern limit to the district (Photograph 2).

Individual descriptions of the buildings follow:

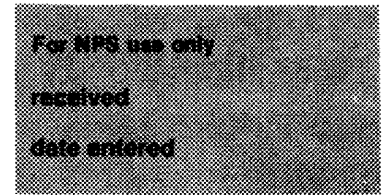
PRITCHARD BUILDING, 207-211 Bank Street (Photograph 4).

A four-story Richardsonian Romanesque building with a rough-surface brownstone and granite facade, the Pritchard Building dates from the late 1880s and has been attributed, on the basis of stylistic similarities,

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Representation in Existing Surveys (continued):

Existing Surveys:

1)
Waterbury Architectural Survey

1978 - Local

Records deposited with Connecticut Historical Commission,
Hartford, CT

2)
Central Business District Project Historic Survey

1978 - Local

Records deposited with Waterbury Renewal and Economic Development Agency
Waterbury, CT

3)
Waterbury, Connecticut: Central Business District
Rehabilitation Study

1980 - Local (Waterbury Action to Conserve Our Heritage)

Records available at Mattatuck Museum
Waterbury, CT

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Description (continued):

to Waterbury architect Joseph A. Jackson. The ground floor level has a central entry between modern display windows; above the doorway are two iron plates with rosettes, probably a remnant of the original storefront. The upper levels each have four windows organized as two bays of two paired openings. The one-over-one sash is modern. Heavy brownstone lintels mark the floor levels above the first and second stories, while the third-story windows are separated from their round-headed fourth-story counterparts by a checkerboard pattern of small square granite and brownstone blocks. Other decorative effects include quoins around the windows banded arches over the fourth floor openings and terra cotta moldings below the second and third story windows. The building's parapet consists of two tiers of simple recessed panels, and at the ends are short towers with pyramidal roofs terminating in stone crocket finials. The interior has been extensively altered, but on the third and fourth floors there is some narrow-board wainscotting and window frames of molded boards and corner blocks.

WHITTEMORE BUILDING, 213-219 Bank Street (Photograph 5).

Built in 1904 from a design by the Waterbury firm of Griggs and Hunt, the Whittemore Building is a four-story red brick building in the Georgian Revival style. The ground level has two entrances, one between the modern plate-glass windows and one at the far right. The storefront includes original cast-iron pilasters with a curving, interlaced motif and above, a cast-iron cornice with large modillions. The facade is four bays wide, with the middle two openings wider than the ends. Windows have molded limestone sills and splayed lintels with prominent keyblocks. They are fitted with eight-over-one sash, with four-over-one in the side-lights of the three-part center windows. A modillioned cornice runs below the fourth story windows, forming a continuous sill. The building's main entablature features a wide frieze, dentils, and modillions beneath the overhanging molded cornice. Raised brickwork at the corners of the building suggests quoins. The Whittemore Building was built as an extension of the Pritchard Block and the interior space is open between the two buildings. Of the original interior features, only molded window frames on the upper floors remain.

GRIGGS BUILDING, 221-227 Bank Street (Photograph 1).

The Griggs Building was built in 1884 and was designed by Waterbury architect Robert W. Hill. It is five stories tall, with the fifth-story facade treated as a steep hip roof (with fish-scale slates) and lighted by two large gabled dormers. The ground-floor level retains a significant portion of its original cast-iron storefront (Photograph 7). The various openings are separated by elaborate pilasters, Ionic in derivation, with

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Description (continued):

fluted necks and richly carved panels above their midpoints; the far left pilaster (Photograph 7) includes not only the foliate motif found in the others but also the monogram of the building's first owner. The center entrances have arched transoms with fan carvings in the spandrels. Above the stone lintel which spans the storefront level is a cornice enriched with egg-and-dart molding.

Above the ground floor the facade is bilaterally symmetric with a group of three windows on either side of the central bay. On the second story the central bay has a large terra cotta tablet bearing the inscription "Griggs Building." The windows have Corinthian pilasters bearing a plain entablature which extends across each set of three. The third story central bay has a tablet with the date "A.D. 1884" mounted within a frame with a triangular pediment as its header. Below the third-story windows are terra-cotta panels with a festoon carving in the center and bead-and-reel molding around the perimeter. The bead-and-reel motif is continued in the capitals of the pilasters, which support unusual lintels with an ogee-curved shape to their lower edge. The fourth story is presently obscured by a large billboard, but the windows beneath are round-arched in shape with shallow terra-cotta hoodmolds and prominent keystones (Photograph 6). The pilasters separating the windows are similar to those on the third story, but the panels below the windows are more richly carved, with foliate decoration in spiral form and owls in the center. Stringcourses of dentils run across the facade at the level of the fourth-story window impostes. The main cornice moldings form breaks over each of the arches and over the brick piers which demarcate the center bay and the corners of the building. Windows are fitted with one-over-one sash, with stained-glass border panes in the upper part.

The two gabled dormers each contain two windows and are flanked by huge foot scrolls. The denticulated cornice is returned across the gable and forms breaks over the jamb^s of the windows. The area within the resulting triangle is filled with elaborate vine-like carving. There is a large paneled chimney at either end of the roof, formed by a continuation of the side wall.

The interior of the ground floor is extensively modernized but the upper floors are virtually intact. The interior space is defined by two skylighted stairways front and back which rise to the full height of the building (Photograph 8). The stairs have elaborately turned balusters and newels and curving molded handrails. Rooms off these atria have doors and windows with board frames and corner block trim, and a simple narrow board wainscot is found in the hallway. Front rooms are large and each has a fireplace with Classical, Italianate, and Eastlake motifs intermixed (Photograph 9).

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Description (continued):

REPUBLICAN BUILDING (Morrow Building), 229-231 Bank Street (Photograph 1).

Built on land purchased in 1883, the Republican Building is three-and-a-half stories high and four bays wide. The storefront is recent and features a semi-circular window over the entry on the left, fluted and paneled pilasters, and a lintel with applied geometric designs. The second- and third-floor windows are similar to each other, with granite sills and lintels and six-over-one sash, but the second-floor openings are larger with panels filling the spaces above and below the windows. The top floor is lighted by a large semi-circular window. The stylistic sources are eclectic, and the building has a very decorative parapet which rises to a shallow peak in the middle (Photograph 10). The parapet features a band of terra cotta panels of alternating circular and foliate motifs, with sawtooth brick courses above and below. The topmost part of the parapet is stepped out by simple corbelling, with similarly formed brackets extending downward at the ends. Except for one stairway with turned balusters and a pressed-metal ceiling on the first floor, the interior contains little historical fabric.

All four buildings contribute to the character of the district.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1883-1904 **Builder/Architect** See Inventory, Item 7

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The buildings which form the Bank Street Historic District constitute a significant collection of late 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture (Criterion C). Two of the buildings are outstanding examples of Victorian styles. The Pritchard Building (209-213 Bank Street; Photograph 4) is one of only three Richardsonian Romanesque commercial buildings in Waterbury and illustrates the characteristic features of the style: rough-surfaced polychrome stonework, round-arched forms, and medieval ornament. The Griggs Building (221-227 Bank Street; Photographs 1,6, and 7-9) ranks with the Goodwin Block in Hartford as an extremely rare and elaborate commercial version of Queen Anne-style architecture. The other two buildings are less exceptional, but they too retain much of their historic appearance, including terra cotta and limestone decorative elements. Three of the buildings have been attributed to specific architects: each of these architects played an important role in creating the built environment of present-day Waterbury, and in several instances their influence was felt even beyond that city. In the end, however, the real value of these buildings transcends their individual significance. Although they are now detached from the main commercial area of the city, they recreate for a short stretch the essence of turn-of-the-century commercial architecture: a continuous row of large, multi-story buildings set close to the sidewalk, highly decorative and diverse in style, yet closely related in size, scale, and materials. As a representative row of commercial buildings, the Bank Street Historic District also illustrates the development of Waterbury in the late 19th century (Criterion A). From its beginnings as an industrial town through its growth as the center of America's brass industry, Waterbury matured to become an important commercial and administrative center as well as a large manufacturing city. These buildings are artifacts of that period of prosperity, and their continued survival serves to recall an important period in Waterbury history.

Prior to the 1880s, this area of Bank Street lay between the city's commercial center and an industrial area to the south and was divided into houselots owned by some of the city's wealthier citizens. Anticipating the southward expansion of the business district, two of these families moved to the well-to-do residential area in the Hill section of town and developed their old homesteads for commercial use.

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Anderson, Joseph. The Town and City of Waterbury. 3 vols. New Haven: Price & Lee, 1896.

Maloney, Cornelius F., et al. Waterbury, 1674-1974: A Pictorial History. Chester, Connecticut: Pequot Press, 1974. (continued)

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property about 1/4 acre

Quadrangle name Waterbury

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8	6	63	3	20	4	60	1	80	0
Zone		Easting				Northing				

B

Zone		Easting				Northing				

C

Zone		Easting				Northing				

D

Zone		Easting				Northing				

E

Zone		Easting				Northing				

F

Zone		Easting				Northing				

G

Zone		Easting				Northing				

H

Zone		Easting				Northing				

Verbal boundary description and justification The district boundary begins at the north-west corner of the building known as 209-213 Bank Street and runs along the north wall of the building, continuing in a straight line to the rear property line of Lot 56, Block 274, as shown on Waterbury Assessor Map 294 (cont.)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bruce Clouette & Matthew Roth, Partners, edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization Historic Resource Consultants date March 9, 1983

street & number 55 Van Dyke Ave, telephone (203) 547-0268

city or town Hartford state CT 06106

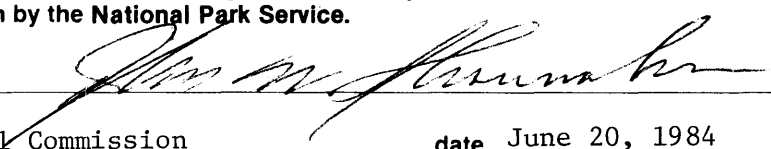
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

date June 20, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
Entered in the
National Register

date 7/28/83

for 
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Statement of Significance (continued):

In 1883, manufacturer Henry C. Griggs sold part of his lot to J. Henry Morrow, editor of one of two major daily newspapers in Waterbury, the Republican. Morrow had the building at the south end of the district built to accomodate not only the editorial offices and presses for the paper, but also the printing business which was an important sideline for the firm. It was called the Republican Building until 1896, when the paper moved again to larger quarters. Although not as elaborate as the other buildings in the district, the Republican or Morrow Building forms an important part of this short streetscape. The corbelling and terra cotta panels at the cornice are typical of the Victorian-period decoration commonly used in commercial architecture, and in its height and brick and granite materials it echoes the other buildings of the district. And, of course, as the earliest commercial building in the district, it pre-figured the ultimate development of the block. The fanlight appears to anticipate the Colonial Revival Style.

The following year Henry Griggs erected his own commercial building on part of what was once his home lot. Griggs was an important manufacturer in Waterbury, a founder of Smith and Griggs Manufacturing Company, makers of small brass items such as corset fasteners. He also owned another factory which made buttons. Considered in his day one of the leading figures of the community (he represented Waterbury in the General Assembly for two terms), Griggs spared no expense in erecting the commercial block which bears his name.

As an architect Griggs chose Robert W. Hill (1828-1909). Hill had studied with Henry Austin in New Haven and was at the time the dean of Waterbury architects, with important accomplishments not only in that city but throughout the state. Hill designed a courthouse for Litchfield County, state-owned armories throughout Connecticut, and many public buildings in nearby towns. His office trained the leading Waterbury architects of the next generation, including Theodore B. Peck, Joseph A. Jackson and Henry C. Griggs' son, Wilfred Griggs. Of the many Waterbury buildings attributed to Hill, the Griggs Building is the largest and most elaborate, one of the few which survive to this day to mark this important career.

Hill's design is a rare use of the Queen Anne style in commercial architecture. More common in residential construction, the style put a premium on asymmetry and picturesque forms, a requirement difficult to work into the facade-oriented nature of the commercial block. Nevertheless, the use of the large dormers and the mixture of straight and round-arched window heads do create the irregularity which was prized in the Victorian era. Moreover, with its use of brick, slate, and terra cotta, the Griggs Building illustrates the variety of surface texture in favor at the time. The term "Queen Anne" was used by the Victorians who originated the style because they thought that buildings during that monarch's reign were unique in combining medieval and Tudor elements with the Classical motifs of the Renaissance. Perhaps just an excuse for eclecticism, this combination became the hallmark of Queen Anne-style ornament, and is

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Statement of Significance (continued):

rarely better illustrated than in the Griggs Building. On one story are Corinthian pilasters, on another arcades of Romanesque arches. One set of panels has a rich festoon carving, another a design of vines, flowers and birds recalling the enriched surfaces of European cathedrals. A similar juxtaposition of Classical dentils and medieval spiral carving occurs on the faces of the dormers. Although paint and modern signage obscures the richness of the exterior, the Griggs Building stands among the best examples of Queen Anne commercial architecture in the state. Moreover, the intact interior and storefront elements add to its completeness as historic architecture.

Despite Griggs' obvious pride in his building (with both his name in terra cotta and his initials molded into the pilastered storefront), the block never became first-class commercial space. However, the business area did expand southward, and as newer, larger, and presumably more expensive buildings were erected further up Bank Street, existing businesses moved south to these blocks. Griggs' first major tenant was the Franklin House, a \$2.00-a-day hotel, which moved from its old location at 62 Bank Street. Other businesses included George Fiske, piano tuner, who also moved from another place on Bank Street; L.D. Benton's photographic studio; and a billiard parlor. The building remained in use as a hotel until recent years.

Griggs was joined in 1884 by his neighbors to the north, the heirs of the Pritchard estate, whose homestead occupied a large lot extending to Grand Street. They erected the large block known as the Pritchard Building (Photograph 4) and rented out space to a number of small businesses, including a jewelry store and a confectionary. The building's round arches, deep window reveals, rough-surfaced contrasting stone, and medieval ornament typify the Romanesque Revival developed by H.H. Richardson and his successors. The building is attributed to Joseph A. Jackson, a second-generation Irishman and a second-generation architect. Jackson (born 1861) designed many of Waterbury's finest buildings, of which St. Patrick's Hall (1889) is also in the polychrome, Richardsonian Romanesque style. Jackson was working in the office of R.W. Hill at the time the Pritchard Block was built, but eventually set up on his own, with offices in New Haven and New York as well as Waterbury. Jackson was a member of the prestigious Architectural Club of New Haven, and probably is more widely represented than any other Connecticut architect: he had as a major client the Roman Catholic Church, and designed many, if not most, of the large brick buildings erected by the Church throughout the state in its turn-of-the-century expansion.

The Pritchard Building was sold in 1901 to John H. Whittemore. Like Henry C. Griggs, Whittemore was an industrialist who supplemented his fortune with income from real estate developments. Whittemore was president of the Naugatuck Malleable Iron Company and a director of the

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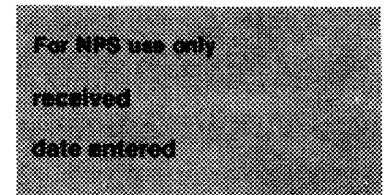
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New Haven Railroad and the Colonial Trust Bank of Waterbury. Shortly after purchasing the Pritchard building he enlarged it with the Georgian Revival structure added to the south (215-219 Bank Street; Photograph 5). Early tenants included a shoe store and clothing store, as well as apartment-renters on the upper floors. Like the other buildings on this block, this structure accomodated many of the businesses which spilled over from the more intensive commercial area just to the north of Bank Street's intersection with Grand Street. The entire property, including the original Pritchard Building, the 1904 extension known today as the Whittemore Building, and a later north addition (now demolished), was operated as a single commercial property and was called the Pritchard Block.

Whittemore's architect for the 1904 addition was Wilfred E. Griggs, son of Henry Griggs, and by that time part-owner of the Griggs Building next south. Griggs (1866-1918) was the major early 20th-century architect of Waterbury. A university-trained architect (Yale, 1887; Columbia, 1889), he was responsible for such elaborate Waterbury landmarks as the Elton Hotel (1905), the New Haven County Courthouse (1905), and the Masonic Temple (1911). In 1912 he designed the Lilley Building, a steel-framed eight-story office building which was the first of its type in Waterbury. Although neither the largest nor the most elaborate of his creations, the Whittemore Building is important in illustrating his skill in fulfilling a modest commercial commission. It is a good example of the Georgian Revival (one of few Griggs buildings in that style), with the characteristic red-brick exterior, small-pane sash, quoins, and the classically-derived cornice treatment. In the total context of Waterbury's early 20th century architecture, the Whittemore is but one of many stylish buildings which document the commercial growth of the city in that period. However, it assumes additional significance as part of one of Waterbury's earliest, most-distinguished and best-preserved commercial rows.

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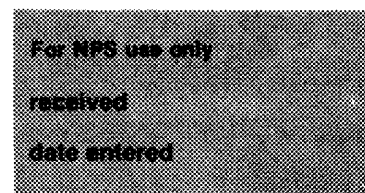
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Page 1



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Pidgeon, Roger H. Atlas of the City of Waterbury. Philadelphia: D.L.
Miller, 1896.

Sanborn-Perris Map Company. Sanborn Map of Waterbury, Connecticut.
New York, 1895.

Waterbury City Directory, 1883-1904.

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Geographical Data and Verbal Boundary Description & Justification (continued):

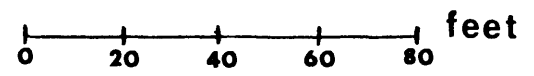
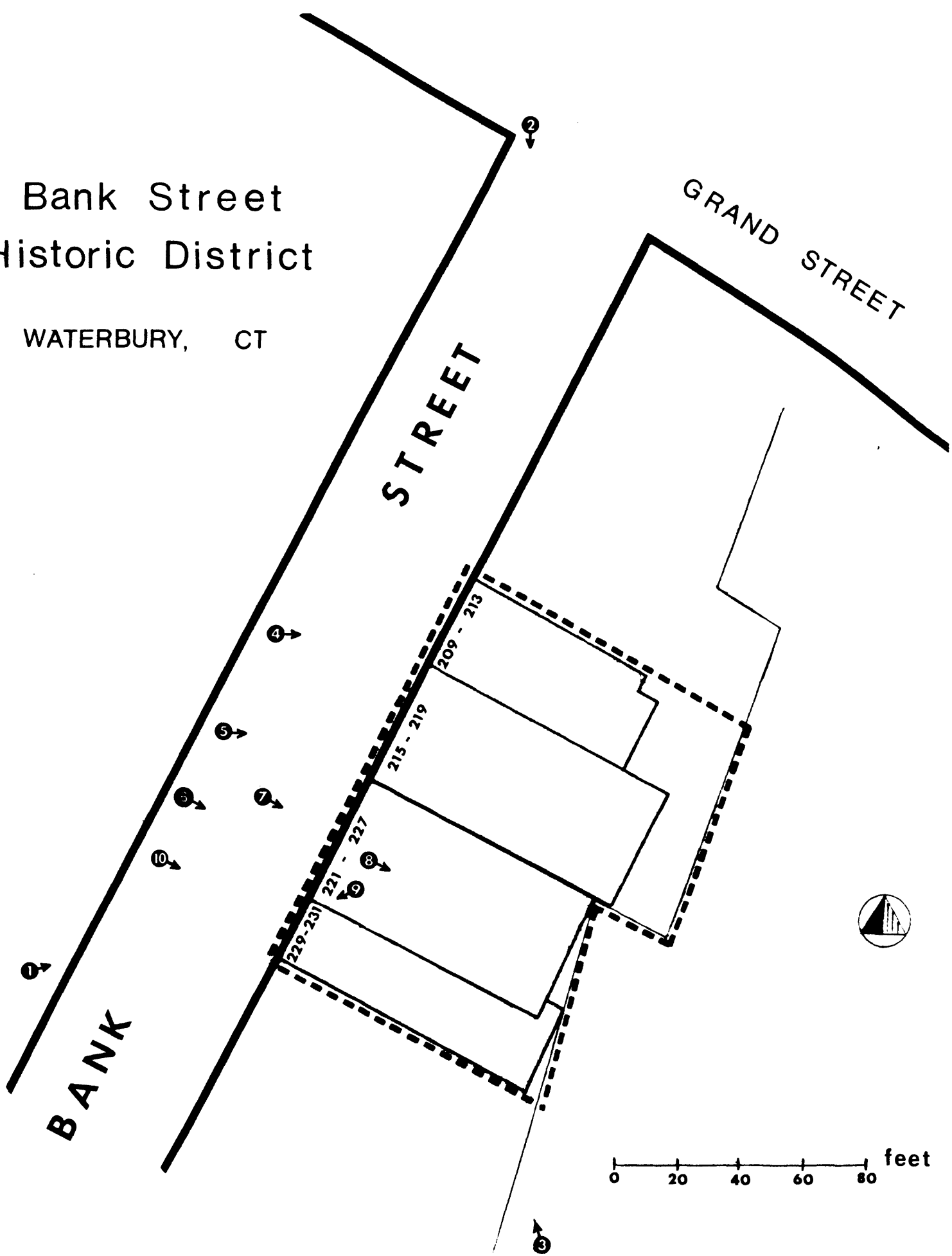
It runs southwesterly along the rear lines of Lots 56, 562, and 55, turning westward to follow the southern property line of the lot which is shown as the northern part of Lot 55 (the south wall of the building known as 229-231 Bank Street). It runs in a northwesterly direction along that line to Bank Street, then continues northeasterly along the east line of Bank Street to the first point.

The boundary thus includes only the buildings themselves and the small amount of land between the back walls and the rear property lines. It excludes the surrounding parcels which are all vacant or used as parking lots.

The justification of this boundary was based upon the visual isolation of this group of four buildings from the rest of Waterbury's commercial area. To the north is a vacant lot, then the widened, four-lane Grand Street, then a modern bank and plaza separating the district from the rest of Bank Street. The rear or east side of the buildings faces a very large vacant lot encompassing an area several times larger than the district itself. To the south, a vacant lot used for parking and the large elevated highway, Interstate 84, create a logical terminus for the district. And on the west, the modern Buckingham Plaza, a concrete parking garage with stores and offices on the ground level, separates the district from other historic commercial buildings on Grand Street.

Bank Street Historic District

WATERBURY, CT



- ① Photos
- District Boundary