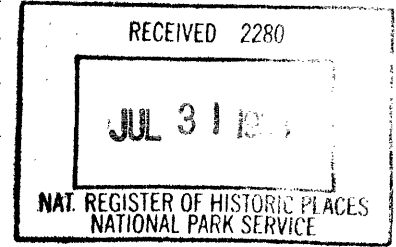


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Torbert Street Livery Stables
other names/site number Hercules Powder Company Printing Department
Charles Printing Co., Wilmington Motorcycle Club
Cann Bros & Kindig Printers, Barclay Bros Printing
CRS Numbers: N-7554.01 and N-7554.02

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 305-307 Torbert Street not for publication
city or town Wilmington vicinity
state Delaware code DE county New Castle code 003
zip code 19801

=====

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 nationally statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David R. [Signature] June 18, 1998
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
4. National Park Service Certification
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain): _____

Patrick Anders 9/14/98

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

=====
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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Transportation</u>	<u>Road Related</u>
<u>Industry/Processing/Ext.</u>	Sub: <u>Communications Facility</u>
<u>Landscape</u>	<u>Street Furniture</u>
<u>Commerce/Trade</u>	<u>Organizational</u>
<u>Commerce/Trade</u>	<u>Warehouse</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Vacant/Not in Use</u>	Sub: _____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian, Vernacular

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>Fieldstone</u>
	<u>Concrete Block</u>
roof	<u>Metal</u>
walls	<u>Brick</u>
	<u>Fieldstone</u>
	<u>Concrete Block</u>
other	<u>Wood</u>
	<u>Iron</u>

Narrative Description (See continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

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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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation
Communications

Period of Significance ca. 1884 - 1947

Significant Dates. 1887-1901
1901-1908
1912
1922
1934
1946

Significant Person N/A
Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (See continuation sheets.)

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(See continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

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

Primary Location of Additional Data

___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
X Local government
___ University
X Other

Name of repository: City of Wilmington Planning Dept.,
Inter-Neighborhood Foundation

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreeage of Property < 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	452887	4400100	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

The Torbert Street Livery Stables nominated parcel is bounded on the north by 13th Street and on the east, west, and south by adjacent property lines. The nominated boundary includes parcel numbers 2602820086 and 2602820085 as delineated on the City of Wilmington "Property Address/Parcel Number Listing" of 5 March 1991.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes 305 and 307 Torbert Street, their connector building, and 20th century additions. The nominated property contains the entire parcel historically associated with the Torbert Street livery stables, the Wilmington Motorcycle Club, and the printing concerns.

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Lori Plavin Salganicoff, Preservation Planner
organization City of Wilmington Planning Dept. date 5 June 1997
street & number City/County Bldg, 800 French St telephone (302) 571-4402
city or town Wilmington state DE zip code 19801-3537

=====
Additional Documentation
=====

The following items are attached to the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Architectural Description, Statement of Significance, Bibliography.

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 minute series) indicating property's location.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

=====
Property Owner
=====

name The Inter-Neighborhood Foundation
street & number 1300 French Street telephone (302) 429-0333
city or town Wilmington state DE zip code 19801

=====
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. 470 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Architectural Description

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The Torbert Street Livery Stables at 305-307 Torbert Street is a conglomeration of two separately-built two-story livery stables, joined together and expanded through additions and internal alterations. The livery stables rise separately to two stories with oppositely oriented gable roofs, although the plan of the building at its first floor is of two fully-connected, offset rectangles.

The Livery Stables are located in the middle of the north side of its block. Torbert Street is a one-block street running east-west from Twelfth to Thirteenth Streets between and parallel to West and Washington Streets. The building is free-standing, surrounded by Torbert Street to the south, two parking lots to the east and west, and a private yard at its north. The current setting of the Livery Stables is not uncommon for historic resources on secondary streets: it remains the only street-facing building on the north side of Torbert Street, although a modern building and its parking lot face Torbert Street from the south. Many of the residential buildings of Washington, West, 13th, and 12th Streets remain, although among those demolished are several that had presented side walls to Torbert Street. The Livery Stables, and the street lamp column at the former alley, are the only remaining historic structures on the street.

The appearance of the original buildings' facades continue to reflect their original use as livery stables. The brick facade of 305 sits approximately 25 feet forward of the brick facade of 307 Torbert Street. The original segmental arch livery stable entrance, flat arch window, and segmental arch office entrance openings are partially covered with wood boards. The end-gable second floor facade of 305 Torbert Street is divided by three segmental arched windows and topped with a simple wooden cornice. To the west of 305, the side-gable facade of 307 Torbert Street contains only one opening, a modern first floor doorway that now provides access to the Livery Stables. Earlier window and door openings are visible in the facade's brickwork, however. The brick facade of the one-story connecting hyphen building, constructed atop the alley that had originally run between 305 and 307 Torbert Street, sits in the same plane as the facade of 307 Torbert Street. An historic street lamp is located in front of this hyphen.

The interior of the Livery Stables reflects its history as brick livery stables joined, added to and converted to a printing plant and warehouse. Within the envelope of historic livery stables, large open spaces supported by cast iron columns and historic wood beams reinforced with iron rods as well as steel I-beams used as beams and columns remain intact. Changes in wall and flooring materials and location visible at the interior mark the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Architectural Description

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different campaigns of building. The building is in good to fair condition, with some deterioration owing to vacancy and lack of maintenance.

Since the complete building is comprised of two main buildings, their connecting hyphen, and their additions, it presents a complex volume. In the interest of clarity, the descriptions of the Livery Stables' specific architectural features are organized as follows: Exteriors of 305 Torbert Street and 307 Torbert Street & additions clockwise from their facades, the connector building, the interior of the Livery Stables, the east garage building, and street furniture.

305 Torbert Street exterior

A concrete floor sits in front of the stable entrance, while a plywood covered, 1"-thick, 3"-wide tongue-in-groove porch floor is located at the western half of the facade. These were the floor surfaces beneath a recently removed modern porch. The original brick first floor facade wall is intact but the openings are substantially covered with boards on wood framing attached to the brick. The porch addition, along with the widening of the office entrance door, were undertaken by the Paski family for their Charles Printing Company in the early 1970s. The porch replaced yet another temporary frame structure shown on earlier maps.

The gable-front second floor of this facade is symmetrically arranged, with three evenly-spaced segmental arched windows with sills of angled brick. New windows sit inside historic wood frames. Probably used as the hay loft entrance, the middle window is wider than the others, and a diamond-shaped plate approximately 1' above it may cover the location of a pulley. This facade contains a painted advertisement for Cann Brothers & Kindig, Printers at the second floor of the southwest corner.

While the brick connector building covers most of the first floor of the west elevation, the second floor retains original window openings, although new windows have been placed within. A barely visible painted advertisement is visible at the south end of the second floor of this facade. North of the small second floor connection between 305 and 307 Torbert Street, a line in the brickwork marks the depth of the original livery stable building. Comparing this evidence with historic atlases and documented usage information reveals that the livery stable had been more than doubled in size before 1901 and again extended northward between 1901 and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Architectural Description

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1908 to its current five-bay depth.

Owing to a drop in grade, the north elevation of 305 Torbert Street sits three stories high. It is constructed of an uncoursed fieldstone ground floor and common bond brick above. Symmetrically divided into three bays like the south facade, the window openings are larger. These openings are topped with segmental arched brick, including at the basement level where segmental arch brick lintels sit atop fieldstone openings. Also at the basement level, shorter windows flank a door where windows are located above. A wood cornice with wood bargeboards cover the gable end. A chimney rises from the northeast corner of the building. The side gable cornice and bargeboards are of wood.

Although currently obscured from view by a covering of ivy, recent photographs describe the east elevation as almost entirely common-bond brick, with the same line in brickwork as is evident on the west facade. North of this line, two bays of segmental arch windows wider and shorter than the north elevation and south facade openings, mark the first and second floors. Two bays of windows south of this brick line are also shorter and wider, but less so, and are topped by flat arch lintels. In keeping with typical livery stable construction, these windows are placed above the eyes and noses of pedestrians. The wood fascia runs the full length of the facade.

The ridge of the gable roof is pierced by four metal ventilators and exhaust pipes. The ventilators, located above both sections of the building, are alike and appear to have been installed at the same time, i.e. after 305 Torbert Street was extended to the north. The ventilators have no mechanical parts within; they are simply closeable metal chimneys and are typical for livery stables. The building is topped by a metal roof.

307 Torbert Street & additions exterior

Currently containing a new garage door with flat metal lintel at the west corner of the first floor and bricked-in windows at the second floor, the original and later appearances of this facade are evident. The east half of the first floor has new brickwork that matches the brick used to infill the second story windows. This covered the opening created in the 1970s by the Charles Printing Company when it removed the one-story brick garage addition to the east half of the facade, that was probably built for the Wilmington Motor Cycle Club between 1914 and 1927. A blackish discoloration approximately eight feet from the ground could be tar residue from the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 4

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Architectural Description

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garage roof. Above this, two plainly visible symmetrically located window openings, their segmental brick arches and limestone sills intact, now contain brick. Unlike its neighbor to the east, this gable-roofed building presents an side gable as its facade with a corbelled brick cornice and wood bargeboard with a coping of pressed metal. The west corner edge of this facade unevenly marks the addition of the 1966-7 one-story cinderblock and brick addition. A line in the brickwork here does not follow a straight vertical, but flares out, suggesting the demolition of the original west wall.

The east, west and north elevations of the original 307 Torbert Street are only visible at the second floor. The east and west elevations are three-bay front gable elevations. Like the south facade of 305, the west elevation of 307 has three symmetrically-placed windows consisting of one large window flanked by two equally smaller windows. The window openings are rectangular, however, with metal lintels but are now covered with wood boards. One window remains at the east elevation second floor -- south of the second floor connector building. The original first floors of the west and north livery stable elevations were replaced in 1966-67 when the Paski family created an open rectangular space for their printing operations. The one story addition that removed these walls also utilized one and removed two earlier brick garage buildings that had been added in an ell formation to the north facade. The new western wall is built of cinderblock with brick at the northwest corner where the remaining early 20th-century addition was located. Like the south facade, the north elevation contains a corbelled brick cornice at its second floor livery stable roof. The roofs of 307 Torbert Street and its flat-roofed additions are tarred felt.

Connector Hyphen

The first floor of this common-bond brick building, constructed during or after 1946, runs from the south facade of 307 Torbert Street to the north facade of 305 Torbert Street, covering the space between the two where an alley once ran. The small, frame construction, second floor rises to near the height of the two buildings, but is only as deep as a hallway. The first floor is capped by a concrete block coping, and the second floor with pressed metal. A second floor window faces south. Remnants of the alley may be present beneath the flooring.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

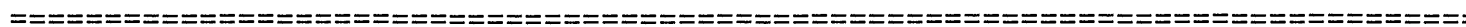
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 5

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Architectural Description



Livery Stables' Interior

The interiors of the original livery stables have been altered to create large, substantially uninterrupted spaces for the printing facility and paper warehouse through the removal of the alley-facing exterior walls at the first floor. Second floors retain their original massing and remain simple open lofts.

Built after 307 Torbert Street and with more attention to aesthetic detail, 305 Torbert contains four trusses defining five bays at its first and second floors. Above the first floor, the second floor is supported by building-width wood beams with brackets and a turnbuckle rod bottom chord at its three northernmost bays. The fourth bay contains an I-beam. Second floor gable roof trusses are wood with a metal kingpost at the southernmost two bays, and simple wooden trusses at the northernmost two bays. At the first floor of 305 Torbert Street, concrete flooring extends approximately 36' back -- the depth of the original building -- with wood flooring beyond. The flooring above is wood. These differences from north to south, along with changes in brickwork, mark early 20th century building campaigns. A straight stairway is located at the original east wall, roughly next to the second floor connector hyphen.

Approximately forty percent of the first floor western perimeter wall has been removed to create openings through to 307 Torbert Street. In these open sections, the second floor alley-facing walls for both buildings are each supported at the first floor with steel I-beams. A hatch door located at the original northwest corner of 305 Torbert Street leads to the basement/crawl space. A window for this level is visible. More information about the alley may be buried beneath the floors of the buildings, including remnants of the alley itself.

307 Torbert Street and its auto garage additions experienced more alterations to accommodate the Hercules paper warehouse and later printing operations. The entire first floor structure was retrofitted with I-beam floor beams and columns. The second floor retains the original massing, and is an open loft with a simple untrussed gable roof. An ell-shaped stairway is located at the original southeast corner, running along the south facade. Within the ell stands framing from a removed elevator system.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

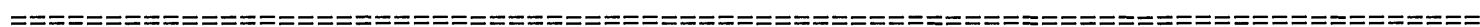
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 6

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Architectural Description



East Garage Addition

A one-story common-bond brick garage addition sits at the southeast corner of 305 Torbert Street, abutting that building's east facade wall in the same footprint as the garage shown in the 1927 Sanborn map. The shed roof of this structure slopes downward from north to south, its edges covered by a pressed-metal cornice. A modern garage door covers the rectangular garage opening at its south facade.

Street Furniture

A street lamp, approximately ten feet high, sits in front of the connector building's south facade where the alley had been. Typical of late-nineteenth, early-twentieth century street lamps, this object is fabricated of cast iron. The circular column narrows slightly from its two-and-a-half foot decorative base to a fluted portion approximately six feet long. Above a smaller fluted portion sits a wide flat circular element that would have held the lamp glass. A portion of the fixture above remains.

Stamped on the upper fluted area is the following: "Patented DOT 51 1898 No 31745."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Statement of Significance

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Originally built separately as livery stables in the late 19th century and later joined together, 305-307 Torbert Street is significant under Criterion A as a document of Wilmington's early transportation history, the earliest documented Wilmington location of "electric blue printing," and as the earliest still-extant building owned by the chemical giant Hercules Corporation in Wilmington; and under Criterion C as a rare surviving example of urban livery stable architecture in Wilmington. Although impacted by several alterations, including the masonry closure and/or reduction of window and door openings and incompatible additions, much of this is reversible and/or reconstructible.

The property's period of significance ranges from ca. 1884, the earliest documented date of livery stable construction at the site, to 1947, the fifty-year threshold and a year after both buildings came under the ownership of Hercules Corporation. An historic street lamp, sitting on the alley near the connector hyphen, also dates from this period of significance and is included in this nomination as an historic object. The alley it would have lit was open until the construction of the hyphen during or after 1946.

Historical Background: Livery Stables in Wilmington

Until the early nineteenth century, a traveler in the region had the choice of walking, utilizing the river, or riding horses and horse-driven carriages. Poor road systems and surfaces encouraged river transportation as the most comfortable means for longer-distance traveling, although horses and horse carriages were commonly used for shorter trips. The improvement of the routes by chartered turnpike companies in the early nineteenth century and introduction of the horse-dependent railroad into Wilmington in the mid-nineteenth century did not so much replace other means of overland travel as it augmented them. Livery stables were one of the types of surface transportation facilities that flourished in the nineteenth century.

Livery stables were also among the first type of horse-related facility to be adapted to other uses with the introduction and popular use of automobiles beginning in the early twentieth century. These urban stables, built for the efficient boarding of large numbers of horses by those who could not afford their own personal carriage houses, were later used to store and service the "horseless carriages." By 1936, most of the large city and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Statement of Significance

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suburban stables had been converted into car garages or service stations if they had not been demolished.¹ By 1993, only seventeen buildings remained in Wilmington which had been used at one time as livery stables.² 305 and 307 Torbert Street each count among those.

Early Property History -- the Construction of Livery Stables

The block originally owned by the eponymous William and Elizabeth Torbert between 1848 and 1858 was sold by them in two parts. William Leibrandt bought the northwest corner of the block, where 307 Torbert Street would eventually be built, while the northeast corner of the block, and the future site of 305 Torbert Street, was acquired by Olaf Cronham. Atlases provide the first descriptions of the area, depicting in the 1868 Beer's Atlas an undeveloped block and surrounding area.

By the time of the publication of the 1876 Hopkin's Atlas, only one house, that of the cooper Olaf Cronham, sat on the north side of Torbert Street. Within the block formed by Torbert Street to the south and Thirteenth Street to the north, two alleys were shown sitting perpendicular to eachother. One ran parallel to Torbert Street and splits the block further into northern and southern portions. Another alley is laid which would separate 305 and 307 Torbert Street from eachother once built. The area from Torbert Street south to Twelfth Street contained, by that time, buildings facing Twelfth Street and West Street.

The late nineteenth century was a time of expansive development; the City of Wilmington grew to Torbert Street and beyond during this period. Within less than ten years of the 1876 Hopkins Atlas, according to contemporary deeds, the block between Twelfth and Thirteenth Streets and Washington and West Streets was divided by its owners into rowhouse lots. These subdivisions included all but 307 Torbert Street, 305 Torbert

¹Ralph, MaryAnna and Van Blarcom, Craig W., "Cultural Resource Survey Evaluation Report: Livery Stables in Wilmington, Delaware, 1880-1920," p 7.

²Ibid., page 28.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Statement of Significance

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Street, and Olaf Cronham's cooper shop adjacent to 305 Torbert at West Street³. The Sanborn Atlas of 1884 extends as far north as Torbert Street and shows a brick stable at 307 Torbert Street. 1884 is also the first year that Torbert Street is listed as a street in the annual Wilmington City Directories. By the publication in 1901 of Baist's Atlas for that year, the area had been densely settled; brick stables sit at both 305 and 307 Torbert Street.

The Business Directories published as part of the annual Wilmington City Directories also document the city's expansion to the north from its initial development roughly between the Christina River and Fourth Street. Tracking the listed livery stables reveals seven, all below Sixth Street, in 1875. Included in the nine livery stables listed in the 1877 Directory is the first above this nucleus, at Delaware and Tatnall Streets.⁴ The Wilmington City Directories of the late nineteenth century describe both the City's march northward and the increasing need for large urban stables. Eight livery stables are listed in 1880-81, eighteen in 1881-82, twenty-one in 1882-83, thirty-three in the 1888 Directory, and fifty-eight in 1900.

As described in the "Livery Stable Cultural Resource Survey" by Ralph and Van Blarcom, however, many more stables dotted the alleys and side roads of Wilmington than were listed. These structures served local neighbors and often relied on word-of-mouth for their advertising. Indeed, when they were used as livery stables, neither 305 nor 307 Torbert Street made their way into a Business Directory. That they were livery stables is shown in nineteenth century atlases as well as through interpretation of the remaining architectural elements.

³1209 West Street was demolished in 1967. Its neighbor at 1211 West Street came down in 1972.

⁴According to J. Thomas Scharf's 1888 *History of Delaware* (page 669), the Wilmington City Railway Company was incorporated in 1864. Shortly afterward, a horse-driven rail road was constructed to carry paying passengers from the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Station up Front Street to Market, up Market to Delaware Avenue, and from thence to Middle Depot; a distance of two miles. The condition of the rails laid then declined owing to a manifold increase in usage in the 1880s, and they were replaced in 1887. The 1893 Wilmington City Directory Map shows the conversion from "Horse Rail Road" to "Electric Line" on Delaware Avenue.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 4

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Statement of Significance

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built before 1884. Not yet shown in the 1887 Baist's Atlas, the original stable at 305 Torbert Street was constructed between 1887 and 1901, where it appears in the Baist's Atlas for that year. The alley between the two appears for the first time in the 1887 atlas. 305 Torbert Street was twice extended its full width northward. Comparing physical evidence to the 1901 Baist's Atlas reveals that its size was roughly doubled before 1901 and extended once again sometime between 1901 and 1908 when it was vacated for several years. The extensions included windows larger than the original, reflecting the developing science of horse care at the time and its increasing valuation of well-lit facilities.

Early Printing Concerns and Garages for Horseless Carriages

By 1893, the railway which ran along Delaware Avenue had been converted to an electric line, foreshadowing the changes soon to come to horse travel with the introduction of the automobile. Like many of its kind, both 305 and 307 Torbert Street ceased to operate as livery stables in the early twentieth century. In 1912, Barclay Brothers moved their cabinet-making shop from their neighboring home on Twelfth Street to 307 Torbert Street and began in 1913 to publicize their ability to perform "electric blue printing" at this location. Theirs was the first advertisement for this product in the Business Directory, apparently the only such enterprise until Wilmington Blue Print began operations in 1936. In 1914, 307 Torbert Street also became the location for the Wilmington Motor Cycle Club, joining the leagues of livery stables to be reused for enterprises related to horseless, motorized transportation.

In 1923, ten years after first occupying the building, Barclay Brothers left 307 Torbert Street, although maintaining other properties on the block in the following years. The Wilmington Motor Cycle Club was the sole tenant of the property until it disappeared from the Business Directory in 1928. However, by the time of publication of the 1927 Sanborn maps, four one-story flat-roofed brick buildings had been added to the livery stable. One addition was attached to the south (front) facade, while the other three formed an ell attached to the north facade. All but the northernmost additions to 307 Torbert Street were being used as "auto houses or private garages" by the time of this 1927 map. They were likely added by the Wilmington Motor Cycle Club between their arrival on site in 1914 and the 1927 map.

305 Torbert Street, which according to city directories had been left vacant since 1908, was acquired in 1922 by Cann Brothers & Kindig, Printers. In their cover page advertisement in the 1921/1922 directory, they describe themselves as having a modern printing plant, a bookbinding department and a paper ruling department at this

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 5

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Statement of Significance

=====

305 Torbert Street, which according to city directories had been left vacant since 1908, was acquired in 1922 by Cann Brothers & Kindig, Printers. In their cover page advertisement in the 1921/1922 directory, they describe themselves as having a modern printing plant, a bookbinding department and a paper ruling department at this location. The following year, Cann Brothers & Kindig purchased a small lot that included the rear of 305 Torbert Street to address a property conflict that began when Olaf Cronham divided his land in the 1880s. The 1927 Sanborn map shows similar brick additions to this building as were added to 307 Torbert Street -- two one-story "auto house or private garage" buildings extending linearly from the southeast corner along Torbert Street and a two-story, full width addition to the north facade. A frame structure is shown attached to the first floor of the south facade. The original building and the large north addition are shown on the map as being used for "Printing" and "Electric Motors."

Hercules Powder Company Acquisition of 305 and 307 Torbert Street

305 Torbert Street continued to be used as a printing facility when it was bought by the Hercules Powder Company in 1934 for use as their company printing plant. However, despite commercial enterprise elsewhere on the block, 307 Torbert Street seems to have remained vacant⁵ from the time of the 1928 departure of the Wilmington Motor Cycle Club until the Hercules Powder Company acquired that building in 1946. The company added it to 305 Torbert Street to expand their printing facility, using and adding attached one-story additions as a paper warehouse.⁶ 305 and 307 Torbert Street would not be separate again.

The Atlas published by Franklin in 1936 shows no new additions to either 305 or 307 Torbert Street since the 1927 Sanborn. But changes done by Hercules during or after 1946 include the attachment of the two buildings with a small one-story connector building over the alley, demolition of portions of additions, and construction of new ones. Never formally recognized as a City-owned passageway, the alley was closed and built-upon

⁵305 Torbert St. is either not listed or described as vacant in the Street by Street directories of this period.

⁶As shown in the 1927 Sanborn map that was updated to 1954.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 6

Torbert Street Livery Stables

name of property

New Castle County, DE

county and State

Statement of Significance

=====

without such activity being recorded in the municipal archives. The complex volume created by the ell addition to 307 was simplified using existing perimeter walls. The easternmost of the two garages added to 305 Torbert Street now no longer appears on the building. The underlying footprints of the historic livery stables, however, remain the same as those present by 1908.

Historical Background: Hercules Powder Company, from Formation to the Establishment of a Printing Plant

Hercules Powder Company was one of three internationally known chemical companies whose Wilmington presence "transformed [the city] from a center for heavy industry into its current image as the chemical capital of the world."⁷ The company had been formed by the E. I. duPont deNemours & Co. in 1911 as a result of an anti-monopoly ruling by the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Delaware that forced duPont to divest half of its explosives business. To address the requirements of the ruling, duPont formed two companies, Hercules and Atlas, named for recognized duPont products. Hercules Powder Company was created consisting of three dynamite plants, seven black powder plants, two powder mills, six sales offices and approximately a thousand employees across America, with its headquarters located in several rented floors of the Equitable Building at 900 Market Street in Wilmington, Delaware. Hercules began operating on the first day of 1913. By the end of that same year, Atlas had assets of \$7.7 million, Hercules of \$14.7 million, and duPont of \$74.8 million. By 1988, Hercules Powder Company sales topped \$3 billion.

Although the duPont Corporation, which had outfitted the two new companies with its oldest equipment, was the predominant supplier of explosives during World War I, Hercules nevertheless expanded its explosives business. This was likely aided by the court order creating Hercules which had stipulated that the company was to receive duPont Corporation research reports for its first five years. At the close of WWI in 1918, Hercules had produced over 100,000,000 pounds of smokeless powder, in addition to being the nation's largest producer of TNT. It also began to diversify into different uses for chemicals which allowed them to develop and prosper as a chemicals, rather than explosives, company in the years after the WWI. This diversification was achieved

⁷Hoffecker, Carol E, *Wilmington, Delaware. Portrait of an Industrial City, 1830-1910*, 1974, page 157.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 7

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Statement of Significance

=====

through nationwide acquisition of different types of smaller chemical companies and a dedication to research and development.

In 1928, the company adopted a multidivisional structure that lasted well into the 1970s. In the 1930s, Hercules established its corporate Research and Development Laboratory west of the city along Lancaster Pike. From this lab came such chemical industry giants as protective coatings and plastics. Through World War II and afterward, the company continued this pattern of growth through acquisition and research, expanding into cellulosic plastics, insecticides, food additives, rocket fuel and other types of chemical propulsion. A national concern since its first years of operation, the corporation became multi-national. Wilmington, however, continued to serve as the corporate headquarters for the entire chemical industry.

The chemical industry recognized the need for the American people and American business to understand its importance to the United States if it was to compete on the international scene. In 1908 the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AICE) was formed for this express purpose. Interested in fostering rapid new developments, early chemical industry leaders also contributed to advances in higher education. The establishment and success of a petrochemical industry between the wars yielded American chemical producers unprecedented economic and scientific accomplishment in the history of industrial technology. These advances were made in the manufacture of organic chemicals, plastics, elastomers, and other petroleum-based products. Hercules was at the forefront, not only developing breakthrough processes but also publishing important industry magazines to declare their findings and help further the technologies.

In 1934, around the time that they were establishing their R & D laboratory, Hercules established a printing department at 305 Torbert Street. According to Hercules company records, 305-307 Torbert Street is the first Wilmington building owned by the company, who rented their main offices, and the oldest still standing. Here the company published some its own findings as well as other chemical industry literature. Beginning in 1938, the corporation listed a Technical Library Division in the Wilmington Business Directory in large bold type, the only division listed separately from the main office listing.

According to company records, the literature produced at the Torbert Street plant included *The Chemist*, a highly technical chemical industry magazine, *The Explosives Engineer*, a magazine for the explosives industry,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 8

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Statement of Significance

=====

The Papermaker, directed at the paper industry, and internal corporate magazines and newspapers such as *The Mixer*, and the *Beacon Rocket*. Company pamphlets were published that described "better living through chemistry," demonstrating that Hercules was making products to help mankind grow better crops, eat better, dress better, travel farther, and live longer and more comfortably. Beginning in 1945, advertising published at the plant described peacetime applications for products developed for World War II.⁸ This campaign may have spurred the company to expand its printing plant and acquire 307 Torbert Street as a paper warehouse in 1946. In order to create their printing plant, Hercules connected the two buildings between 1946 and 1950.⁹

Recent Property History

Needing larger facilities, Hercules moved its printing department out of the Torbert Street buildings in 1965. The department had occupied 305 Torbert Street for more than thirty years, and 307 for almost twenty. Charles and Gladys Paski bought the buildings in 1965 for their "Charles Printing Company," a commercial printing enterprise previously located at 510 North Orange Street. According to archival building permits, the rear ell additions of 307 Torbert Street was extended by the Paskis in 1966-67. This is most likely the time at which the ell formed by the auto garage perimeter walls was altered to widen the building to the full parcel width. The first floor of 307 Torbert Street became an open rectangle.

Gladys, listed in the Wilmington City Directories as a binder since 1936, and her husband Charles, a printer since 1940, both disappeared from those rosters in 1969. The Charles Printing Company continued to appear in the Directories for a few more years, and then it too ceases to be listed. Company and Paski family records reveal that after his parents died, Charles Paski Jr. ran the Charles Printing Company at 305-307 Torbert Street until his own death in 1991. His wife Catherine closed the company in March of 1991, leaving it vacant.

⁸Hercules Powder Company, "Labors of War for Peace," Wilmington, DE, 1945.

⁹The 1927 Sanborn map (updated to 1954), shows the buildings attached and with the same footprint as appears in the 1996 Sanborn map. Archival building permit records of the City of Wilmington's Department of Licenses and Inspection date back to 1950 for the printing plant. The only permit sought by the Hercules Corporation for the buildings is a July 1950 permit for an \$11,000 air conditioning system, and none of the subsequent owners filed a building permit to open and connect the buildings.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 9

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Statement of Significance

=====

Around this time, it was discovered that the Paski family was interested in demolishing the building for a parking lot. Recognizing the importance of these adapted livery stable buildings, the Inter-Neighborhood Foundation (INF) purchased them in 1995 for the purpose of their adaptive reuse. INF is a not-for-profit organization community advocacy organization whose focus is the built environment.

Conclusion

Since their original construction in the late-19th century, and the myriad subsequent additions and alterations, the buildings have seen use as livery stables, a cycle club, auto garages, commercial and corporate printing facilities, and a warehouse. Despite intrusions onto the historic fabric it has retained sufficient integrity to describe its history and to serve as a document of the history and growth of Wilmington.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 2

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 3

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

Bibliography

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 4

Torbert Street Livery Stables
name of property

New Castle County, DE
county and State

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