

1087

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Butlers` Store

other name/site number: Butler Brothers` Store

2. Location

street & number: 5498 Main Drive

not for publication: N/A

city/town: New Hope

vicinity: N/A

state: AL county: Madison

code: 089

zip code: 35760

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: public-local

Category of Property: building

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>0</u> | <u>0</u> | objects |
| <u>3</u> | <u>0</u> | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

LATE 19TH AND EARLY
20TH CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS

Other Description: _____

Materials: foundation brick roof asphalt
walls brick other concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : _____

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1908 1939

Significant Dates: 1908 1939 _____

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: unknown

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

X See continuation sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

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

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|---|-------|-------|
| A | <u>16</u> | <u>554550</u> | <u>3821650</u> | B | _____ | _____ |
| C | _____ | _____ | _____ | D | _____ | _____ |

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: ___ See continuation sheet.

The Butlers` Store is situated on an approximate 200` X 200` lot at the southwest corner of Main Drive and Washington Street, New Hope, Alabama. This parcel of land is located in Section 11, T6S, R2E, Town of New Hope, Madison County Alabama. For more precise boundaries, please refer to map.

Boundary Justification: ___ See continuation sheet.

The boundaries were delineated to include the Butlers` Store Building.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Harvie P. Jones/FAIA; Jennifer Bryant/NR Intern; Melanie Betz/AHC Reviewer

Organization: Historic Huntsville Foundation Date: April 09, 1991

Street & Number: 104 Jefferson Street Telephone: 205/539-0764

City or Town: Huntsville State: AL ZIP: 35801

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The Butlers` Store consists of three attached buildings with a rear addition. The central and north stores, built in 1909, are the oldest and display brick corbelling and slightly arched windows. The south building, constructed in 1939, is a one-story structure with a simpler cornice and some decorative brickwork.

The central or main building is a two-story structure over a full basement with a mezzanine at the rear. The five-bay facade of the tallest, central building is punctuated by slender cast-iron columns made by G.L. Mesker and Co. of Evansville, Indiana. The column facades have delicate floral reliefs. The bulkheads are of wood panel construction. The wood entry doors appear to be original. The windows of individual plate glass may also be original. A mid-20th-century metal awning covers the sidewalk and shades the tall transoms that are now painted.

The first floor ceiling is about 18 feet high to accommodate the mezzanine and to throw light far back into the deep room in the tall transoms. The mezzanine housed the offices which overlook the sales area and was the receiving end of the overhead trolley system that carried cash and tickets back and forth from the sales area to the office. This trolley system is still in place and operable. A rear second-level addition, probably added in the 1920s based on its 3/1 bungalow-style sashes, expanded the office mezzanine areas, added a vault and ground floor restrooms opening to the exterior.

The second floor ceilings are about 10 feet high. The second floor was lighted by 10 windows on the front and rear, now blocked with plywood. Several original sashes are still present. The front sashes are 1/1 and the rear sashes are 2/2.

The central building interior retains many of its original 1908 features including its wide staircase with turned balusters and newels. Also retained is a manual, rope-hung freight elevator, rolling ladders to reach the topmost shelves, and most of the dry-goods shelves at both the first and second floors. The floors and ceilings are wood, and walls are plastered brick. The late-Victorian style vault door is in place, with fluted pilasters, corner blocks, decorative bosses, and molded profile plinths.

The north building, said to be constructed at the same time as the central, is a three-bay, two-story brick structure with arched windows and a corbeled brick cornice like the central building. The transom is only about 30 inches tall and is of "frosted" pattern glass. The pair of wooden entry doors are apparently original. The bulkheads are of paneled wood, similar to the central building. The metal glazing beads and angled corners of the plate-glass shop front appear to be copper, probably original. The exposed north brick wall of this building has five upper-floor arched openings; two windows and two doors that once led onto a balcony or fire escape, evidenced by 20-foot joist-pockets in the wall. The ground floor contains a door and two partially bricked windows, all arched.

The three-bay brick south building has brick piers with intermediate supports and wood-paneled bulkheads with metal but probably original glazing beads at the plate glass. Its wood and glass entry door appears to be original. The one-room interior has a concrete floor and wood roof trusses. The original ceiling, of unknown material, is gone. The walls are plastered brick. The south wall, without openings, is built of salvaged large street-paving bricks made by Graves Brick Company of Birmingham. The rear has a large wood sliding vehicle door, 10 X 10 feet, and arched windows and a personnel door.

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Section number 7 Description Butlers` Store Page #2

The brick parapets of the three buildings are all stepped down to the rear with the sloping built-up roof and are capped with brown glazed terra cotta caps.

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Section number 8 Significance Butlers` Store Page #1

Criterion C, Architecture

Constructed in 1909 (with a connected building added in 1939), the Butlers` Store, New Hope, is a good and intact representative of early 20th-century commercial architecture in rural Alabama. This utilitarian architecture, which was sometimes adorned with brick corbelling and cast-iron columns, reflects the modest brick and frame commercial buildings that were constructed during this period. The Butlers` Store has retained most of its original features including its overall shape and form, brick veneer, cast-iron columns, fenestration including original storefronts, brick corbelling, and many interior features including room configuration, display and stock fixtures, a c. 1920s cash register, rolling ladder, rope elevator, floors and ceilings, and stairway. For 80 years, the Butlers` Stores were used for general merchandise, hardware, dry goods, furniture, office space, and as a bank.

Historical Summary:

New Hope was originally incorporated as Vienna in the 1830s. City lots were laid out and the town quickly prospered. During the Civil War, however, New Hope was completely destroyed by Union troops except for the Post Office and the Masonic Hall. Following the war, rebuilding began and in 1881, the town was reincorporated under its present name, New Hope. The town lost its incorporation in 1915 due to a conflict involving the mayor, and it was not incorporated again until 1956. (1)

The Butler family began their operation in Madison County as early as the 1850s. (2) The present Butlers` Store was constructed in 1909 by James Edward Butler. The main, central building was used as a general merchandise, hardware, and dry goods store as well as office space. The north building, constructed at the same time, served as Rison Bank until the Depression when it was interconnected to the central building as the grocery store department. The southern structure was added in 1939 as the furniture department of Butlers` Store (3).

One of the most prosperous times for the business occurred in the 1930s when the Tennessee Valley Authority began construction on the nearby Guntersville Dam and Hydroelectric plant. This boom continued until after World War II. (4) By the 1950s, 100 years after the family business began, the Butlers operated one of the largest mercantile businesses of its kind in the state. The store not only sold groceries, furniture, and hardware but also electrical appliances, farm equipment, and building materials. In addition, they bought cotton and cottonseed and sold a vast amount of commercial fertilizers. (5) However, as agriculture declined and jobs in nearby Huntsville increased, the business declined and finally closed in the mid-1970s. Uses since have been temporary and sporadic. The complex is now vacant and owned by the city of New Hope. (6)

1
Ruth Brock, "New Hope-Then and Now," Alabama League of Municipalities. July 1963.

2
Dorothy Bell, "A Continuous Business for Eighty-three Years," 25 July 1955. Obtained by Harvie P. Jones.

3
Dorothy Bell, Interview with Harvie P. Jones, New Hope, Alabama, 21 June 1991.

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4

Ibid.

5

Bell, "A Continuous Business for Eight-three Years."

6

Bell, Interview with Jones.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Bibliographical References Butlers` Store Page #1
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Bell, Dorothy. "A Continuous Business for Eighty-three Years," 25 July 1955.
Obtained by Harvie P. Jones.

Bell, Dorothy. Interview with Harvie P. Jones, New Hope, Alabama, 21 June 1991.

Brock, Ruth. "New Hope-Then and Now," Alabama League of Municipalities, July 1963,

"This Date in Alabama History," Birmingham News. 4 September 1941.

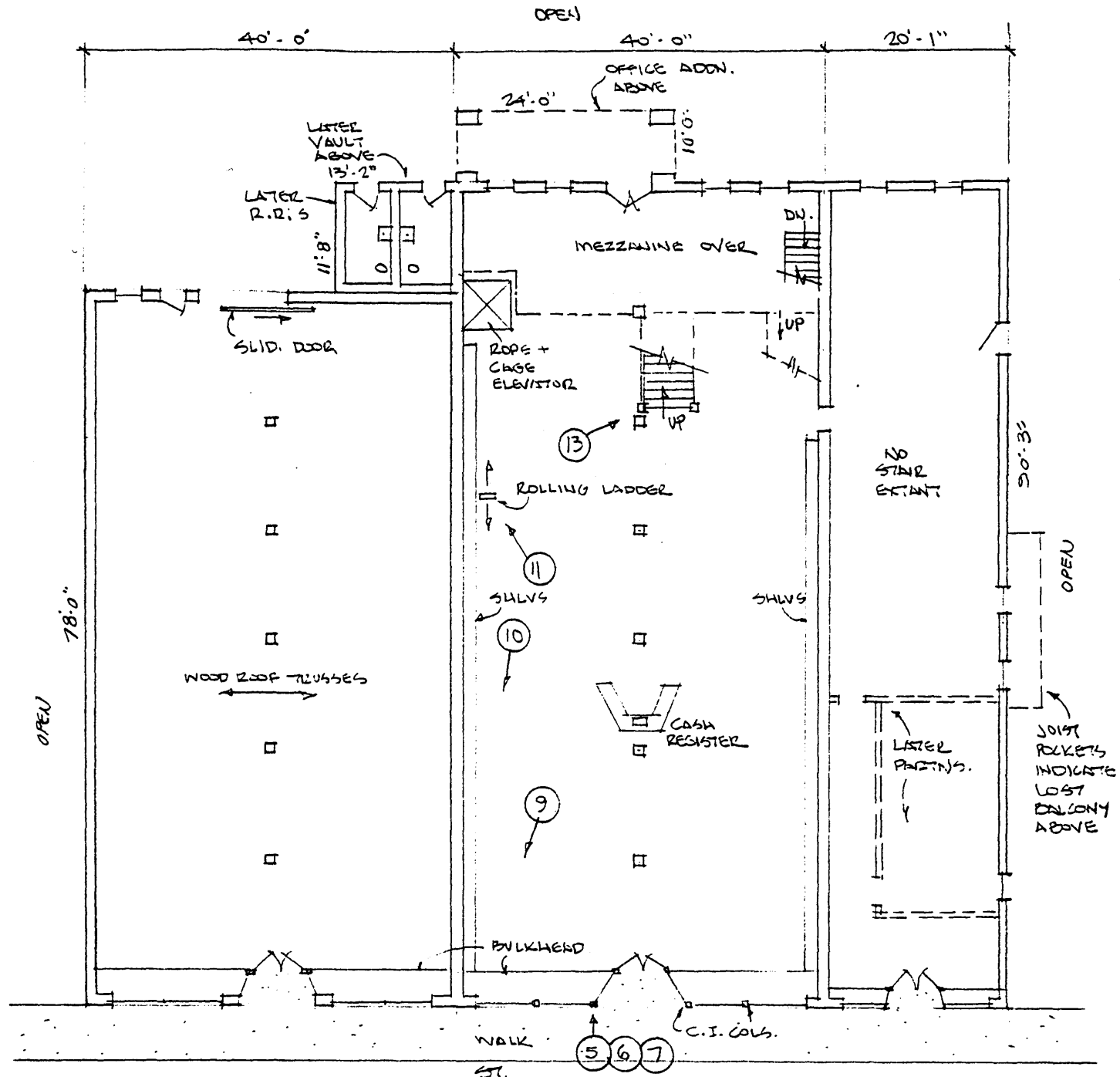
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Section number Photographs Butlers` Store Page #1

Butlers` Store
5498 Main Drive
New Hope, Madison County, Alabama
Harvie P. Jones, FAIA, Photographer
1991
Negatives-Alabama Historical Commission

- 1) Looking SW at the three east fronts.
- 2) Looking NW at the central and north building fronts.
- 3) Looking SW at the north building storefront.
- 4) Looking SW at the north building storefront.
- 5) Looking west at the bulkhead exterior of the central building. The columns are cast iron, by G.L. Mesker and Co., Evansville, Illinois. The floral decoration is cast as part of the columns.
- 6) Looking west at a close-up view of the cast-iron decoration.
- 7) Looking west at a close-up view of the trademark on a cast-iron column.
- 8) Looking NE at the rear of the three buildings. The two small additions contain an office (left), and a vault and restrooms (right), probably added during the 1920s.
- 9) Central building, looking SE at a display window and bulkhead. The measuring rod is 8 feet tall.
- 10) Interior, central building, looking east toward the front. Most display and stock fixtures remain, as does a cash register that appears mid-20th century or earlier.
- 11) Interior, central building, looking SW Rolling ladder, dry-goods shelves, and rope-elevator beyond.
- 12) Interior, looking SW, second floor, upper part of rope-elevator.
- 13) Interior, central building, looking north, first floor, at the staircase.
- 14) Interior, central building, second floor, looking west down the staircase, to the mezzanine.
- 15) Interior, central building, second floor, looking east to the front. The pipes are a sprinkler system. The dry-goods shelves are probably original. The walls are plaster on brick.



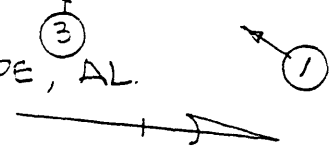
SOUTH BLDG.
 1939
 1 STORY
 CONC. FL.

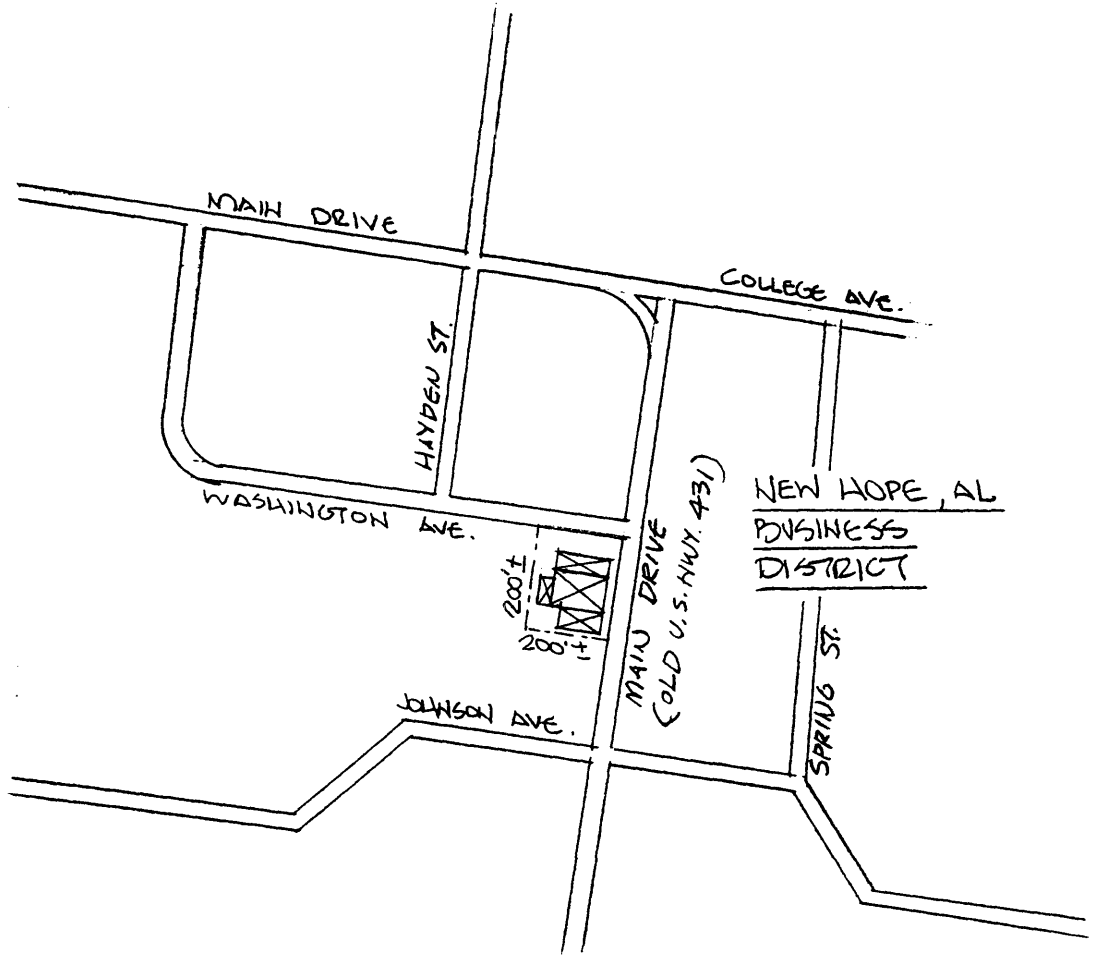
CENTRAL BLDG.
 1909
 2 STYS. + FULL BSMT.
 TOP FL. = SIMILOR
 WOOD FLOORS AT 1,2
 CONC. FL. AT BSMT

NORTH BLDG.
 1909
 2 STOREYS
 CONC FL. AT 1
 WOOD FL. AT 2



STREET-FLOOR PLAN - BUTLER'S STORE - NEW HOPE, AL.
 1"=20' APPROX. 31 MARCH 1991
 HAYLIE P. JONES, F.A.I.A., HUNTSVILLE, AL.





BUTLER'S STORE, NEW HOPE, AL.

VICINITY MAP

1" = 400' ±

30 MARCH 1991

HARVIE P. JONES, F.A.I.A., HUNTSVILLE, AL

