

3226

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

DEC 27 1988

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Commerce Commercial Historic District  
other names/site number Harmony Grove Commercial Historic District

2. Location

street & number Along Line, State, Cherry, Sycamore and Broad  not for publication  
city, town Commerce Streets  Vicinity  
state Georgia code GA county Jackson code GA157 zip code 30529

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>21</u>	<u>5</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>22</u>	_____ structures (plan and
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		_____ objects railroad
			_____ Total right-of-
			_____ way)

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. N/A See continuation sheet.

Elizabeth A. Lyon 12/16/88  
Signature of certifying official Elizabeth A. Lyon, Deputy SHPO Date  
Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Allore Lyon Entered in the National Register 1/19/89  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
COMMERCE/department and specialty  
INDUSTRY/manufacturing  
RELIGION/religious structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
COMMERCE/department, specialty,  
restaurant  
INDUSTRY/manufacturing

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
 (enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque  
LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate  
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY  
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/commercial style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick  
 walls brick, concrete block  
 roof asphalt  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Commerce Commercial Historic District consists of historic brick structures of mixed use built in the late 19th and early 20th century. Most are attached commercial buildings. The district also includes industrial plants and a brick church building.

The district is situated along a ridge which is followed by the railroad and is the dividing watershed for three rivers. The irregular street pattern is due to the city being at the site of a confluence of several wagon roads, leaving an irregular street pattern. The commercial structures have common setbacks along the main streets. There are several alleys and service entrances. Landscape features include sidewalks and the railroad right-of-way. The commercial structures are located along State Street, Central Avenue, and North and South Broad. The ground floors were used for retail and service businesses, while the upstairs were used for offices and some residences. While most of the commercial buildings are of unglazed red brick, the Babcock Building is quite different with its decorative cast concrete block. Most of the two-story commercial structures have flat or arched top windows while the Opera House has unusually large second floor round arched top windows with drip moldings and keystones, and ventilating dormers on the roof. Elaborate designs in the brickwork appear in the upper portion of many one- and two-story buildings, recessed squares and triangles above a corbelled pattern and pilasters being most notable. A commonly used storefront material is cast iron.

The vacant brick and frame church at the east edge of the district is constructed in an asymmetrical plan with cross-braced detailing in the gable and overhang. Panels of stained-glass windows are set into two large, elevated, arched window openings. Smaller arched glass windows form a band around the lower level along both street facades. The window shapes and placement as well as the heavy massing of the church suggest a Romanesque Revival form.

The three industrial plants in the district were constructed between about 1900 and 1936. All three structures are brick.

See continuation sheet

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

---

The Blue Bell complex is composed of various adjoining warehouses constructed over a 35-year period. The plant has undergone considerable window alteration over time to accommodate new manufacturing methods and uses.

Contributing/Noncontributing Properties

Contributing properties in the Commerce Commercial Historic District consist of relatively intact commercial, industrial, warehouse, and institutional buildings in downtown Commerce built between 1850 and 1938. Also contributing to the character and appearance of the district are the irregular street layout and the railroad right-of-way. Not contributing to the district are properties built or substantially remodeled since 1938.

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
architecture  
commerce  
industry  
community planning

Period of Significance  
1850-1938

Significant Dates  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A

Significant Person  
N/A

Architect/Builder  
N/A

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

Statement of Significance

The Commerce Commercial Historic District is significant in architecture for its fine collection of late 19th and early 20th century commercial and industrial structures reflecting the typical use of brick and a few rare cases of extensive use of decorative brick. The structures chronicle the growth and development of Commerce from the post village of Harmony Grove in the 1880s to a thriving center of industry and trade up through the 1920s and 1930s. The commercial structures are also significant for the masonry motifs ornamenting upper facades, which are vernacular in origin and distinct in this district. Elaborate designs in the brickwork appear in the upper portion of many one-and two-story buildings, recessed squares and triangles above a corbelled pattern and pilasters being most notable. All commercial buildings are of masonry construction, most being unglazed red brick. Some of the storefronts are made of cast iron from the local Hood Foundry and Machine Company. One notable exception is the Babcock Building's upper facade constructed in decorative cast concrete block with a fleur-de-lis pattern. The 1910 Opera House has unusually large second-floor round-arched top windows with drip moldings and keystones, and ventilating dormers on the roof. Also within the historic district is the Commerce Presbyterian Church completed in 1912. The heavy massing of the brick and frame construction along with the placement of the windows suggest a Romanesque Revival design. Panels of stained glass are set into two large elevated rounded arch window openings. The three industrial plants in the district were constructed between about 1900 and 1936. Their utilitarian forms, brick construction, and alterations over the span of the historic period reflect the shifts in the economy and manufacturing technology. These architecturally significant buildings are good examples of turn-of-the-century mill structures typically found in small Georgia cities.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Jaeger, Dale. "Historic District Information Form-Commerce (Harmony Grove) Commercial Historic District." 1987 (on file at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources)

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**

Acreage of property 9 acres

UTM References

A 

1	7
---	---

2	7	3	6	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	7	8	7	4	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

C 

1	7
---	---

2	7	3	6	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	7	8	7	1	3	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

B 

1	7
---	---

2	7	3	8	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	7	8	7	2	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

D 

1	7
---	---

2	7	3	4	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	7	8	7	3	3	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The Commerce Commercial Historic District in downtown Commerce, Jackson County, is an area along Line, State, Cherry, Sycamore and Broad Streets. The National Register district boundary is indicated by a heavy black line on the district sketch map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The district boundary is drawn to include the concentrated area of relatively intact historic commercial, industrial, warehouse, and institutional structures that together constituted the historic downtown of Commerce. Excluded from the district are areas of nonhistoric development, severely altered historic buildings, and residential development.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Lisa Raflo, National Register Researcher  
 organization Historic Preservation Section date December 14, 1988  
Department of Natural Resources  
 street & number 205 Butler Street, SE Suite 1462 telephone 404/656-2840  
 city or town Atlanta, state Georgia zip code 30334

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 2

The district is significant in commerce and industry because it was one of the largest distribution centers of goods and services in a several-county region. Its initial location along a major wagon route from the northern mountain counties to points south provided a natural center for trade. The real growth and development of Commerce as a distribution center came with the completion of the railroad after the Civil War. An 1889 Gazetteer called the town "a great trading center." At one time there were several cotton warehouses, a hardware warehouse, and a mercantile building all supplying the needs of the community and several surrounding counties. In 1906, because of the city's active status in distribution, the city fathers changed its name from "Harmony Grove" to "Commerce." Then, during the early 20th century, industry began to expand and the warehouse buildings were replaced or modified for industrial use. The Commerce Overall Company was the first industry established in the district in 1917 and shortly Commerce became known across the south as home of the "Grander Brand Overall," the company's trade line. In 1925, the company merged to become National Overall and, in 1928, the entire operation became Globe Superior Corporation at which time a new plant was built on View Street. In 1934, the corporation sold out to the Blue Bell Manufacturing Company. The district is characterized historically as mixed use with examples of commercial, offices, and industrial businesses. These structures reflect the growing needs of the community during the late 19th and early 20th century and show the city's growing importance as a major trade and distribution center. Despite the fact that Commerce is not the county seat of Jackson County, it has a considerably developed downtown area that is normally characteristic of most county-seat municipalities. Commerce is also a good example of the variety of commercial, religious, and industrial enterprises that were typically found in business districts of small Georgia towns. The church, factories, professional, retail, and trade enterprises all contributed to servicing the Commerce community.

The district is significant in community planning due to its unusual irregular, seemingly unplanned layout. This resulted from the emergence of the town along the intersection of several historic wagon roads. The Athens-Clarksville Road was an early route through this area that evolved into State Street and Cherry Street. In the late 1870s, with the establishment of the railroad corridor, commercial development took place along the railroad

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

---

right-of-way through the center of town. This relationship is most noticeable in the layout of the Broad Street commercial structures which follow the bend of the rail line. The uniqueness of the plan is that it wasn't "planned." This evolutionary plan with its 45-degree intersection at State and Broad Streets contrasts with the typical gridiron plans of other Georgia communities. It appears this way because Harmony Grove was not typically surveyed and planned, and its development was more gradual. The settlement pattern of this historic district is significant and unusual as a result of this interplay of wagon and railroad routes.

National Register Criteria

These areas of significance support this district's eligibility under National Register Criteria A and C.

The district meets National Register Criteria A as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The district is a good example of a particular type of commercial district commonly found in small Georgia towns in the late 18th and early 19th century. Harmony Grove was first established along wagon routes from the northern counties to the southern markets. Its main period of development occurred once the railroad lines were completed in the later 1800s and the town grew into a major distribution center. To reflect this commercial nature, the city even changed its name to "Commerce" in 1906. The district is also an example of a historic mixed-used district. Not only were there wholesale and retail businesses, but also industrial, residential, religious, and entertainment functions. The historic buildings arranged along the trading route and rail lines once housed wholesale and retail operations, cotton warehouses, manufacturing and lumber companies, an Opera house, and a motion picture theater. All these businesses contributed to developing Harmony Grove/Commerce into a major regional center for commerce and trade.

This district meets National Register Criteria C because of its architectural significance in commercially designed buildings. The district contains a significant number of intact wholesale, retail, and industrial type structures commonly used during the late 19th and early 20th century. While most of the commercial buildings are of unglazed red brick, common to all Georgia communities, some have cast-iron storefronts and one particular structure

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 4

is of decorative cast concrete block. Many of the structures are designed with masonry facades motifs, elaborate brickwork, recessed brick squares and triangles, and brick pilasters. Highlighting this architecture is the Romanesque Revival style of the former Presbyterian Church, a downtown landmark building since its construction in 1912. In contrast are the industrial brick structures which are of a simple utilitarian design. These architectural features are all characteristic of historic commercial districts in small Georgia cities.

Criteria Consideration

The former Presbyterian church is an integral part of the district and is significant for its architectural qualities. It contributes to the broad pattern of the town's development and is typical of many church structures built in industrial and commercial areas of small Georgia cities during the early 20th century.

Historical Narrative/Developmental History Context

Although white settlement of Commerce (originally called Harmony Grove) dates back as early as 1808, when Eli Shankle married Rebecca Hargrove and built a log house near what is now Spring Street, the establishment of a central business district for the village didn't begin until the 1850s. At that time the center of business activity developed along State and Cherry Streets, known as the Athens and Clarksville Road. One of the first stores was run by S. M. Shankle (son of Eli) and Dr. W. B. J. Hardman at the corner of Sycamore and Cherry, constructed about 1850, now demolished.

Within the Commerce Commercial Historic District, one of the earliest stores was a wood-framed mercantile business owned by C. W. Hood, located on State Street where the Blue Bell Plant now stands. Hood's mercantile was replaced by Power and Williford in 1891 with a larger brick-structure mercantile which is shown on the 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, and which was later incorporated into the Blue Bell Plant complex in the 1920s. The general store featured in the recent novel, Cold Sassy Tree, is based on the Power and Williford Store. One of the store's owners, Ben Power was the inspiration for the novel's main character, Grandpa Blakeslee.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 5

---

In 1872 a gazetteer described the town as a "post village," nine miles east of the county seat with a population of 300 (about one-quarter black and three-quarters white). By 1880, census data showed the population increased by 107. Gazetteers of that year placed the population at 500 and called it a "prosperous town" with a Baptist and Methodist church, an excellent high school, and steam, grist and saw mill. About 4,000 bales of cotton were exported yearly, along with large quantities of grain.

In 1876 the Northeastern Railroad Company laid tracks through Harmony Grove from Lula connecting with Athens 18 miles to the south. The railroad created a divided main street (Elm and Broad) and was catalyst for commercial development along Broad.

In 1884 Harmony Grove was incorporated and officially became a town. Among other things, the first town charter prescribed a mayor and council as its form of government, prohibited the sale of "intoxicating liquors, and banned billiard halls, pool tables and ten-pin alley within the corporate limits.

The coming of the railroad and the incorporation of Harmony Grove induced what local historian T. C. Hardman called "an era of brick store buildings." The earliest available Sanborn Map, 1895, shows sixteen one-and two-story brick commercial buildings within the historic district, predominately along Broad Street, and nine frame commercial structures.

On 1895 Sanborn Maps, two general stores, two groceries, and a harness shop, all of frame construction (one iron clad) were clustered on State Street at the intersection of View Street. In the block and a half closest to Broad Street (and the railroad), on the north side of State Street, there were larger connecting, one and two-story brick structures housing more general stores, a hardware, and a drug store, with offices above.

At the northwest end of the historic district on Broad Street, in 1895, was a detached tin shop; two connected "pie-shaped", brick general stores rounded the forty-five degree curve onto State Street. The triangular block bordered by North Broad, State Street and Central Avenue was nearly filled with connected two-story commercial buildings housing more general stores and a jewelry store. Only the eastern tip of the triangle was left undeveloped.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

---

The town well was located at the northwestern point of this triangle, at the corner of N. Broad and State Streets. According to local historian, T. C. Hardman, "This well was a public watering place and most of the merchants in that locality came each morning with their buckets for their drinking water."

The structures facing S. Broad in 1895 (south of Central Avenue) were one-and two-story brick (mostly) and frame structures, connected except for a vacancy in the middle of the block. This space was presumably left open to allow access to a large feed yard and public well in the interior of the block, which is today a parking lot owned by the Downtown Development Authority. Businesses in 1895 housed in this block included two drug stores, three general stores, one hardware, a men's clothing and a furniture store and an upstairs printing shop, which indicates the diversity of goods and services available to travelers and an expanding residential population.

During the 1880s and 1890s, farmers from mountain counties in north Georgia and North Carolina continued to send their livestock through Harmony Grove to southern markets, and the area remained a favorite overnight stop. On their return trips they stopped in town to load their covered wagons with manufactured goods--particularly heavy items like cook stoves, plows and cooking implements--which saved hauling them up from Athens or Augusta.

The railroad undoubtedly was an even greater factor in the growth and development of Harmony Grove. Again, according to local historian, T. C. Hardman, the town became one of the leading distribution centers in northeast Georgia. An 1889 gazetteer called the town "emphatically a great trade center, drawing considerable business from Banks, Hall, Franklin, Jackson, Hart and Clarke Counties, and one of the best cotton markets in Northeast Georgia, shipping annually 12,000 bales." By that time there was telephone connection with Athens, where the nearest bank and telegraph office were located. According to novelist Olive Ann Burns, the author of Cold Sassy Tree, the first telephone line came from Athens and connected to three locations in Harmony Grove--her grandfather's store (Powers and Williford), the drug store, and Dr. L. G. Hardman's office.

In a single decade the population of Harmony Grove more

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 7

than doubled, from 611 in 1890 to 1,454 in 1900. 1901 saw a second act of incorporation in which a provision was made for a sewer system, water works, and electric lights. Also proposed that year were the grading and drainage of streets and the paving of sidewalks. The sidewalks along Broad and State Streets were laid with plank floors in front of the stores until the brick store buildings began to be erected.

By 1906, no longer content to be just a town, nor to be named "Harmony Grove," the city fathers changed the name to the "City of Commerce" in a third act of incorporation. At that time a board of health was established and a city physician employed. That year the city contracted with Harmony Grove Mill to supply electrical power for "twenty or more" street lights in town, and residential current. (Eleven years later the city built its own power plant at the waterworks site) In 1907, a Fire Department was organized, and a city fire ordinance passed stating that no building shall be erected in material other than brick, stone, or concrete (excepting dwellings).

The 1908 Sanborn Map shows considerable growth had occurred over the previous 13 years. A large brick cotton warehouse was built on State Street at the rear of the Power and Williford store. First evidence of a bank in the historic district appeared in a new brick building on the east corner of State and View. This would become City Hall by 1932 and is today Louises's Beauty Shop. A brick warehouse had been built facing Riley/Line Street, a brick store replaced a frame one in that same block facing State (between View and High), and brick expansion and infill had occurred on the last block of State on Broad. The triangular block and town well remained unchanged, except for the occupancy. On the South Broad block three narrow frame stores had been replaced by one two-story brick structure housing a general store and grocery. A small ironclad ice house had been constructed in the feed yard. A one-story brick general store now faced Central Avenue in the same block.

By a fourth act of incorporation in 1909, it was evident that the city waterworks had been built. That act also established a stock law (that livestock could no longer roam at large), prohibited horse racing, and authorized the construction of paved sidewalks and curbing. In 1914 the first sidewalk pavement was laid and the contract went to W. C. Campbell Co., Columbus, Georgia, with T. C. Hardman chairing the street committee.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 8

---

The 1909 act also provided for the election of a building inspector, and it required fire escapes on all commercial buildings.

In June of 1910 the members of the Commerce Presbyterian Church (prior to 1905 the congregation was known as the Harmony Grove Presbyterian Church) purchased the lot on the corner of Cherry and Bowden Streets for that purpose of erecting a church building. The structure was completed in 1912 at a cost of \$12,850.00.

In 1920 the "Commerce Street Improvement Act" gave "power to the city to grade, pave, macadamize, or otherwise improve for travel or drainage, the streets, lanes, alleys of the city." In 1927 street paving actually began.

The 1922 Sanborn Maps show several significant changes to downtown. A large brick hardware warehouse had been built on State Street, filling in between the 1891 mercantile building on the west and the cotton warehouse (pre-1908) on the east. A narrow connecting brick storage building was also added to the east end of the cotton warehouse, occupying the area that was later to become the Blue Bell complex. Another huge brick cotton warehouse was built in the feed yard, convenient to the Broad Street access. An additional long, narrow, one-story brick general store faced Central Avenue on that same block.

On the corner of State Street and View, by 1922, there were three connecting brick structures facing State, the easternmost one being two-story. (The bank on the corner, along with the middle store, now auto accessories, were one-story and built prior to 1908). Behind the bank and the auto store, facing View Street, the National Overall Company plant had been constructed and was noted as having electric power and lights. Another bank building was built on the opposite corner of State Street and View and two more brick warehouses facing Riley Street on that block. The State Street block on North Broad remained unchanged. In the triangle block, the eastern tip was used for expanding the back end of the hardware facing Broad. In the South Broad block, the frame and ironclad Commerce Brick and Lumber Company building of long standing was replaced by a large two-story structure housing three separate store fronts on ground level and an "opera house" on the second level. Connected to that, a smaller-scale two-story structure was added which housed Commerce Auto Sales Company; it anchored the southeast

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 9

end of the commercial district.

The "Opera House," according to newspaper accounts, was built around 1910 and provided the city with major entertainment for a decade. Prior to 1922, however the venture failed and seats were removed for conversion to a basketball court. The space was shortly changed again into "Sander's Sanatorium" (which is how it appears on 1922 Sanborn maps), and by 1928 the upstairs was used to house convicts who were paving Commerce's main street.

The most telling occupant changes by 1922 in the district were the introduction of an overalls manufacturing company, the addition of a second bank, several new cotton warehouses, several automobile related businesses and garages, and a motion picture theater (the "Colonial"). Commerce was becoming more prosperous and cosmopolitan than ever before.

In the following decade, hard times would fall on the nation, yet the last available Sanborn Map, 1932, shows evidence of growth. The population had been on a steady incline, and doubled again over the previous three decades, putting it at 3,002 in 1930. A healthy increase of 543 residents occurred in the 1920s alone. Apparently there were jobs to be had in Commerce.

By 1933 the Commerce National manufacturing Company (indicated as the National Overall Co. on the 1922 Sanborn maps) moved its operation to a bigger facility, taking over the adjoining warehouses on State Street, now known as The Blue Bell plant. (The Globe Superior Corporation with headquarters in Arlington, Illinois bought out the ownership in 1928, and in 1934 Globe sold to Blue Bell Manufacturing Company.) By 1932, the buildings comprising the present Blue Bell complex were in existence. The 1891 mercantile store building was left standing and the other additions demolished. A two-story brick structure was built attached to the rear and a portion of the south facade of the former mercantile store building. The 1891 building and the addition were encased in a facade of common bond brick to create the large industrial building. Whether or not the industrial sash windows are original to the structure is unknown.

The National Overall Company factory on View Street became a cotton warehouse but returned into service as a operating plant. In about 1938 window alterations were made. The Commerce News had moved in next to City Hall. A one-story brick-structure replaced the last frame (iron clad) building at 22 State Street.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 10

At the northwest point of the triangle block, where the town well had been, a filling station was now added, but other buildings remained unchanged there. On the South Broad block, a shallow-two-story building at 16 and 18 (which had housed a doctor's office and drug store, and then "vulcanizing") was replaced by a new alleyway called "Wilhard" (at 16 S. Broad) and two stores (a new 18 and 20) adjoining 22 S. Broad. The auto sales and service (now the News office), with a 60 car capacity, still anchored the block.

1936 was a significant year of industrial changes in the historic district. First, Blue Bell merged with with Globe Superior and took over the plant in Commerce on State Street. That year a new system of manufacturing was introduced, new equipment was installed, and some changes to the exterior of the building were made. Also that year a small, brick industrial building was built facing Cherry Street (across from the Presbyterian Church) which now houses Commerce Screen Printing. That was built by the Siticide Company, whose founder, Dr. L. J. Sharp, invented and manufactured a formula to cure "scabis." Scabis was "parasitic itch" and the product was first put on the market as "Parasiticide," the name later shortened to "Siticide" in 1924. For a number of years the product was manufactured in Dr. Sharp's office, but the need for a larger space resulted in the construction of the brick building in 1936. At the time the city history was published, 1949, the product was still being advertised and sold in the mid-west and eastern states.

After World War II, until recently, Commerce continued to grow, although not so rapidly in later decades. In the more than fifty years that have elapsed since its historic period, the downtown district has remained remarkably intact. Today, the only major structure missing is the large cotton warehouse in what is now the parking lots beside Blue Bell. The one major addition (with alteration to historic structures) is the Oxford Plant on State Street, opposite Blue Bell. The front facade of several historic sections of the building and later nonhistoric additions were bricked in one continuous facade. Most importantly, this district historically has had mixed use--commercial, professional and industrial--and all those uses are present and viable today. The serve well the residents and travelers through Commerce as they always have.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Photographs  
Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

---

**Photographs**

Commerce Commercial Historic District  
Commerce, Jackson County, Georgia  
Photographer: James R. Lockhart  
Negative filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
Date: November 1987

Description (1 of 12): South Broad Street businesses and the Opera House, south of Will Harden Street; photographer facing north.

Description (2 of 12): South Broad Street businesses, south of Central Street; photographer facing northeast.

Description (3 of 12): South Broad Street businesses, at Central Street intersection; photographer facing east.

Description (4 of 12): South Broad Street businesses, at State Street intersection; photographer facing east.

Description (5 of 12): North Broad Street businesses, at State Street intersection; photographer facing northeast.

Description (6 of 12): State Street businesses, at View Street intersection; photographer facing northwest.

Description (6 of 12): State Street businesses, at View Street intersection; photographer facing northwest.

Description (7 of 12): Central Street businesses, at State Street intersection; photographer facing southwest.

Description (8 of 12): Blue Bell plant along State Street; photographer facing southeast.

Description (9 of 12): Oxford Plant along View Street; photographer facing south.

Description (10 of 12): Presbyterian Church, intersection Cherry Street and Shankle Street; photographer facing northeast.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Photographs  
Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 2

---

Description (11 of 12): Intersection of Cherry Street and Shankle Street; photographer facing west.

Description (12 of 12): Rear facade of the Opera House along the alley; photographer facing northwest.

COMMERCE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT  
 COMMERCE, JACKSON CO., GEORGIA

DISTRICT SKETCH MAP

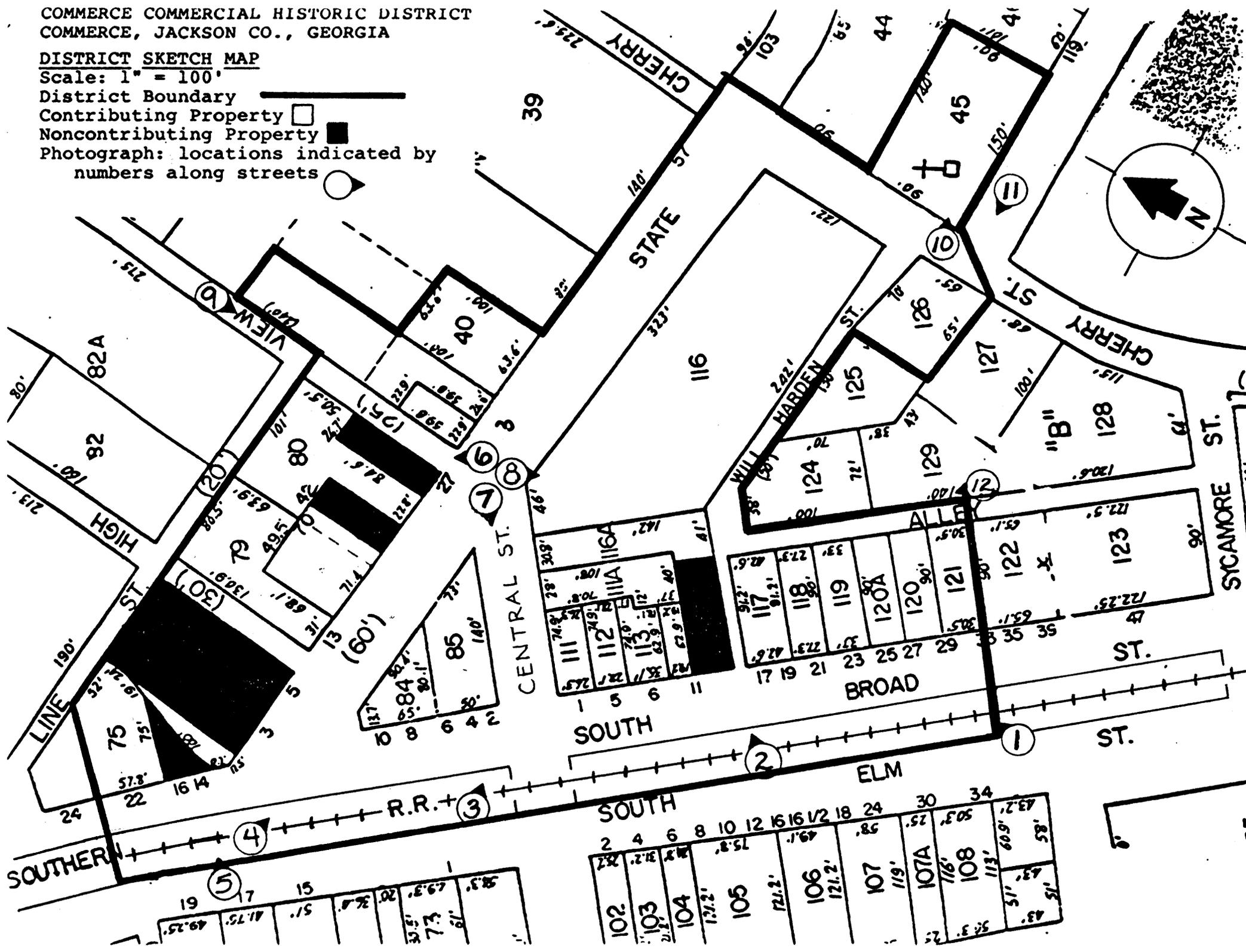
Scale: 1" = 100'

District Boundary

Contributing Property

Noncontributing Property

Photograph: locations indicated by numbers along streets



19	7	15	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
49.25'	41.75'	51'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'
7.3'	7.3'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'	6'
58.3'	49.3'	51'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'	32.8'

102	103	104	105	106	107	107A	108	108	30	34
21.2'	21.2'	17.2'	17.2'	121.2'	119'	25'	113'	113'	58.3'	43.2'
21.2'	21.2'	17.2'	17.2'	121.2'	119'	25'	113'	113'	58.3'	43.2'
21.2'	21.2'	17.2'	17.2'	121.2'	119'	25'	113'	113'	58.3'	43.2'

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

---

Commerce Commercial Historic District

Jackson County, GEORGIA

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVAL

Keeper *Amy Schlayer 8/4/89*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JUL 14 1989

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

AMENDMENT/CORRECTION  
Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

AMENDMENT/CORRECTION  
COMMERCE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT  
JACKSON COUNTY, GEORGIA

The "district sketch map" submitted with the Commerce Commercial Historic District National Register nomination (listed January 19, 1989) contained an error in classifying contributing and noncontributing properties. A noncontributing building at 23 South Broad Street (tax map parcel no. 119) was erroneously marked as contributing. This building, a one-story brick commercial structure, is covered with a modern false facade which features a large shed or pent roof/awning overhanging the sidewalk (see photo no. 1). In its current condition it does not contribute to the historic district.

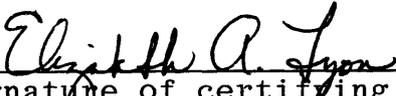
A revised district sketch map is enclosed with this continuation sheet. The revised map is dated June 30, 1989.

A revised count of the number of contributing and noncontributing resources in the district is as follows:

Contributing/Noncontributing Buildings:	20/6
Contributing/Noncontributing Structures:	1/0
Total Contributing/Noncontributing Resources:	21/6

Prepared by

Richard Cloues  
Historic Preservation Section  
Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
June 30, 1989

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official  
Elizabeth A. Lyon  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Date 7/6/89

COMMERCE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT  
 COMMERCE, JACKSON CO., GEORGIA

DISTRICT SKETCH MAP

Scale: 1" = 100'

District Boundary

Contributing Property

Noncontributing Property

Photograph: locations indicated by numbers along streets

REVISED 6-30-89

