

PH0507491

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED NOV 18 1977
DATE ENTERED APR 20 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC BURTON HARDWARE STORE

AND/OR COMMON
Burton Brothers Hardware Store

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Intersection of High Street and Spring Alley
CITY, TOWN Seaford
STATE Delaware VICINITY OF CODE 10 COUNTY Sussex CODE One 003
--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Burton Brothers, Inc.
STREET & NUMBER
High Street & Spring Alley
CITY, TOWN Seaford STATE Delaware 19973
VICINITY OF CODE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Sussex County Court House
STREET & NUMBER
The Circle
CITY, TOWN Georgetown STATE Delaware 19973

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Delaware Cultural Resource Survey; S-385
DATE
1973
--- FEDERAL STATE --- COUNTY --- LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs;
Bureau of Archaeology & Historic Preservation
CITY, TOWN Dover, Hall of Records STATE Delaware 19901

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Burton Brothers store is a roughly square building, two stories high, with a low-pitched roof. The facade consists of two identical storefronts facing High Street. The left, or east, storefront has always been a hardware store; the west section was at one time a motion-picture theatre, but is now the appliance department of the hardware store.

The street level, or main floor, features original plate glass windows. Of the two doors, only the west one remains as a wood-framed glass door. The left door is a modern aluminum concession to the fire laws.

Atop the facade is an elaborate pressed metal cornice, imitating in style and detail the cast-iron and wood cornices that were popular a generation earlier. On each of the two facade elements there are three windows in the second story. The windows are bracketed with tin trim that encloses panels in an urn motif. Another cornice over the modern sign above the storefronts is also of elaborate pressed steel.

The rest of the facade contains pressed sheet metal imitations of rusticated cement blocks. This same covering is found on the east wall, along Spring Alley. The west wall, formerly a party wall, is unembellished.

Inside, the east half of the building contains original floor-to-ceiling hardware cabinets, a very early counter, a glass-in office, and some early gondolas. Modern fixtures are interspersed. The floor is tongue-and-groove pine, as is the sheathing on the inside of the walls. The west half contains a portion of a pressed metal ceiling, indicating that it was once subdivided into several rooms. Today, the front half of this section is cleared as an appliance store. The back half, with remnants of a stage, or shelf, is partitioned off as a repair department.

Upstairs, the stock room over the east portion remains open and unfinished. The diagonal sheathing boards may be clearly seen. Massive pegged timbers rest on posts to support the roof structure. Over the western half is an apartment, which is unused at present.

There are several contemporary commercial structures along High Street nearby, but all have been extensively modernized. To the rear, off the nominated property, is the Martin House, purported to be one of the oldest houses in Seaford; it once stood on the site now occupied by the store.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	Technology	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Burton Brothers Hardware Store is one of the last surviving examples of a type of decorative metal work that was popular for a brief period during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Elaborately wrought, galvanized pressed sheet metal embellishes the entire exterior of two walls, except the windows and doorways. The design used in this particular example reflects the height of the technology in this type of sheathing.

Cast-iron fronts and woodwork imitating stone were introduced at the middle of the century. By the 1870's, pressed sheet metal was being used extensively in the form of elaborate cornices for parapet walls and roofs. Gradually, sheet material became available for entire embellished facades, replacing the heavier and more expensive cast-iron.

Galvanized sheathing had the advantage of being a fireproof covering for a wooden building, which needed minimum maintenance. When W. S. Burton built his hardware store on High Street around 1900, he chose this material. Unlike the other large Seaford commercial buildings of the period, which were of masonry, the Burton store is strongly built of frame with diagonal yellow pine sheathing. It was unusual when it was built, and unique today.

Since its construction, the building has housed the Burton Hardware Store. W. S. Burton operated the business until around 1918, when he leased it to another operator. His sons, around 1926, took over the building under the name of Burton Brothers, which continues to this day.

sketch map

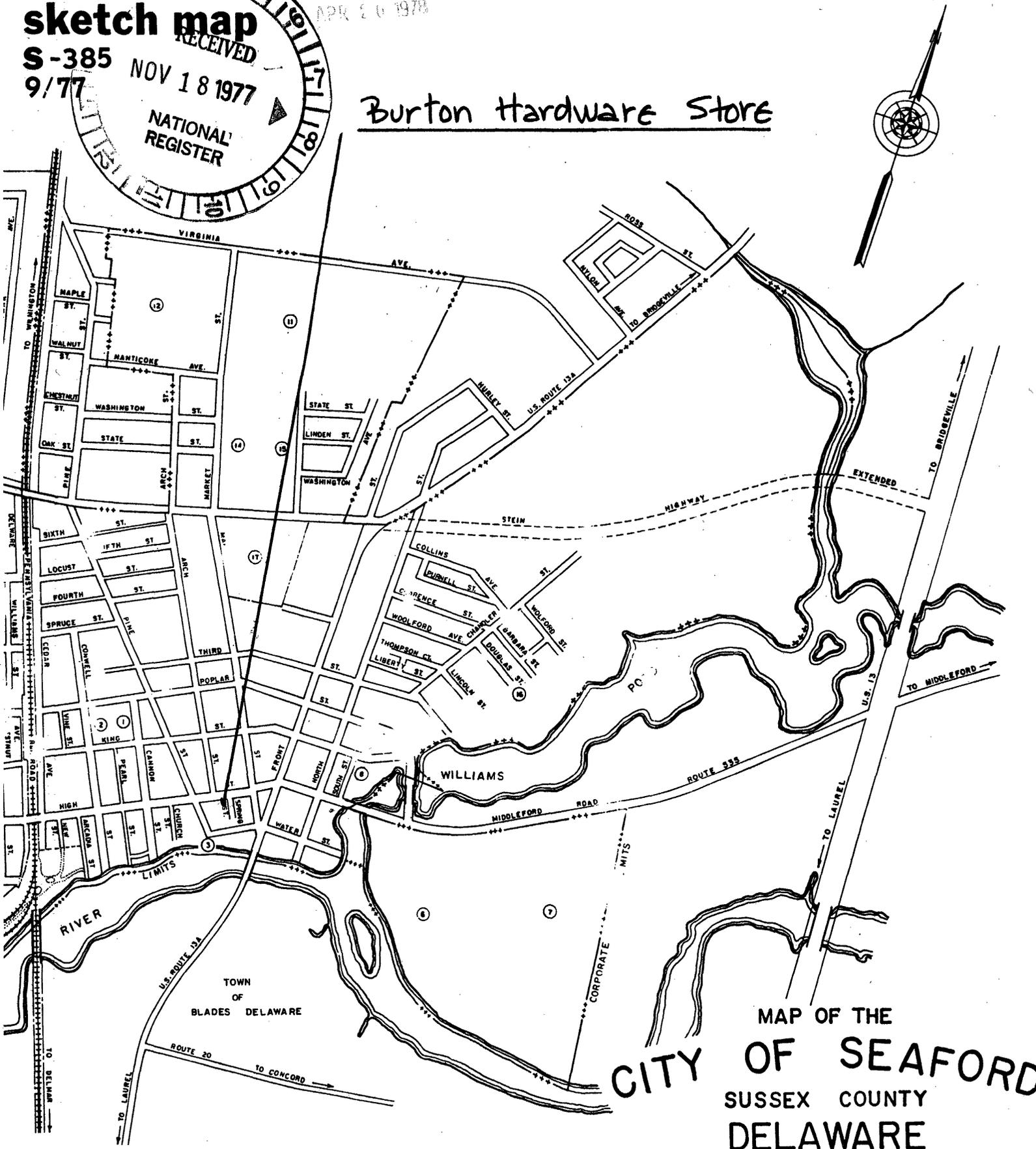
S-385
9/77

NOV 18 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER

APR 20 1978

Burton Hardware Store



MAP OF THE
CITY OF SEAFORD
SUSSEX COUNTY
DELAWARE