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 Call Street Historic District

and or common

2. Location

Bounded by Temple Avenue (U.S. 301) and Jefferson St., Cherry Street and Madison St.

county

Bradford

city, town Starke

____ vicinity of

12

code

state Florida

3. Classification

Ownership Status Category **Present Use** ____X district ____ occupied ____ public _ agriculture _ museum x___ commercial _ building(s) ____ private _ unoccupied ___ park X work in progress _x_ both x____educational _____ structure _ private residence **Public Acquisition** _____ site Accessible _ entertainment ___ religious ____ object ___ in process _x_ yes: restricted government ___ scientific -x being considered ____ yes: unrestricted industrial _ transportation military no other:

4. Owner of Property

name^{Multiple} ownership

street & nur	nber			
city, town	Starke	vicinity of	state	Florida 32091
5. Lo	ocation of l	Legal Description		
courthouse	, registry of deeds, etc.	Bradford County Courth	ouse	
street & nur	nber	U.S. 301 North		
city, town		Starke	state	Florida 32091
6. Re	epresentat	ion in Existing Su	rveys	
title Hist	oric Call Stre	et Survey has this property	y been determined e	ligible? yes _X_ no
date May	1985		federalX_ sta	te county local
depository	or survey records	ureau of Historic Prese	rvation	
city, town	Tallahassee		state	Florida

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7 1985 112/85-12

code 007

Description

Condition

<u>×</u>___ fair

dition		Check one
excellent	deteriorated	<u>x</u> unaltered
good	ruins	<u>x</u> altered
fair	uneynoeed	

Check one X original site moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The proposed Call Street Historic District, located in downtown Starke, Florida, consists primarily of one and two story attached and detached commercial buildings. The physical development of the district began during the late 1850's with the completion of the Florida railroad to Starke and the laying out of Call Street. Contributing buildings in the district date from c. 1875 to approximately 1931 and generally are of a masonry vernacular design. The district has lost some of its physical integrity due to poor maintenance, destruction and alteration, but remains sufficiently intact to convey a sense of its historic period of development.

The Call Street Historic District includes all or parts of ten city blocks and covers approximately twelve acres within the corporate limits of the small city of Starke, Florida. It reflects the physical development of the historic commercial center of Starke from approximately 1859 until c. 1931. Call, the first and eventually the principal street in the commercial center, was laid out around 1859. Together with the railroad, it formed an axis or crossroads around which the town of Starke developed. The original plat of Call Street does not exist, probably having been destroyed in one of two fires that razed the Bradford County Courthouse during the 19th century. All but the western two blocks of the district are contained within a plat known as the Original Town of Starke which was surveyed in 1881. Blocks in the district vary in form and dimensions. They consist of four half blocks 210 feet by 105 feet on either side of the railroad and larger square and rectangular blocks of varying dimensions in the remainder of the district. Lots, where platted, are generally 52.5 feet by 105 feet.¹

The plat of the Original Town of Starke was bisected, at a slight angle from the northwest, by the tracks and right-of-way of the Florida Railroad Company. Call street runs perpendicular to the rail line and, in combination with it, has continuously formed the major axis of the original commercial sector of Starke since the laying out of the town. Its orientation is from the southeast to the northwest. It is paralleled to the north by Jefferson Street and to the south by Madison Street. Thompson, Walnut, and Court, the other streets within the district, all run parallel to the rail line and perpendicular to Call Street.

Commercial buildings of a masonry vernacular design predominate within the district. They date from c. 1875 until about 1931. Only two buildings with a fully developed style are located there--the Romanesque Revival Bradford County Court House and the Neo-classical Bradford County Bank Building. Not coincidentally, they are the only two buildings thus far documented which were designed by architects.

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The district includes a total of forty-one buildings. Of these, twenty-four or approximately sixty percent are considered contributing to the historic character of the district. All but two buildings in the district, the Bradford County Courthouse (photo No. 1) and the Von Kirn Residence-Magnolia Hotel (photo No. 3), were originally used as commercial buildings. The courthouse housed the public offices of Bradford County until 1968, and the Von Kirn residence was a private home until it was enlarged and converted to a hotel during the 1920's.

Buildings that contribute to the district are crosshatched on the district map and listed as C on the inventory. They add to the sense of time place, and historical development of the district through their location, design setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Many of these buildings have been altered. However, unless significant features have been completely removed or irreparably changed, they are considered contributing. As an illustration, the facades of several buildings have been masked by aluminum screening, a feature which once removed would return them to a close approximation of their original physical appearance (photo No. 4). A number of others have been stuccoed, but retain the majority of their original architectural features (photo Nos. 9, 13).

The extent of the alterations, the time when they occurred, and the significance of the building were all considered when designating an older building contributing or non-contributing. Alterations to many buildings are mitigated by their age. They occurred primarily during the Florida land boom of the 1920's and the Camp Blanding boom which overwhelmed Starke during World War II. They, therefore, are part of the historic physical development of Call Street and have developed a significance in their own right. Examples of historic alterations can be seen in the Richard and Pace General Merchandise Store, the Old Post Office Building, the original Bradford County Bank Building, and the Hemingway Building (photo Nos. 9, 11, 13, 21).

Non-contributing buildings are listed N on the inventory and coded white on the district map. They fall into two categories: Buildings constructed within the period of historical significance of the district (1857-1931) that have lost the integrity of their original physical appearance and buildings which post-date the period of significance and do not fulfill the National Register criteria of exceptional significance (photo Nos. 22-29).

Many of these buildings, in the opinion of the preparer, should under normal circumstances be considered contributing. They are associated with the Camp Blanding boom, possibly the most important

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period of economic development in the history of Call Street. They are compatible in scale and in use with buildings constructed prior to the 1930's although their design, in many instances, is influenced by the Art Moderne Movement of the 1930's and 1940's (photo No. 33). Their rounded corners are the most obvious feature associated with the Moderne. Their exterior fabric is generally stucco over concrete block rather than brick, the predominant building material used during the period of significance. However, given the current strict interpretation of the fifty-year rule by the staff of the National Register, it would be difficult to make a case for them being considered of exceptional significance. They are, therefore, classified as noncontributing, although many are included within the boundaries of the district (photo Nos. 32-33).

The buildings within the proposed district are constructed at a low level, very human scale. They are, with only two exceptions, one and two stories in height. Nearly all share a common setback with their main facades being sited plumb with the sidewalk easements which crisscross the district. Viewed in profile, their facade lines are well integrated both horizontally and vertically. Call Street, particularly the blocks east and west of Walnut Street, is densely developed. The only breaks in the visual continuity of the streetscape are vacant lots where historic buildings have been removed. The pricipal side streets in the district, Walnut and Thompson Streets, are not as densely developed, reflecting a later, less intense period of building construction and a lesser degree of visual continuity (photo Nos. 30-41).

When first constructed, the buildings along Call Street were very well coordinated in terms of their color, materials, proportions, and architectural features. Alterations have changed a number of these features. Many buildings which were originally red brick have been painted or stuccoed, resulting in the loss or obscuring of some architectural features, particularly window and door surrounds and ornamental brick work. Many of these alterations were done on a wholescale basis during the 1920's and 1940's and are thus consistent throughout the district. (photo No. 43).

Within the period of significant development of the district there are several sub-periods of growth characterized by distinct architectural styles, materials, and ornamental features. Most of the buildings which contribute to the historic character of Call Street were built between 1875 and 1910. They are one and two-story masonry vernacular buildings designed as retail storefronts on the first floor and as offices and entertainment or meeting spaces on

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the second. Many, mainly those which are two stories in height, show a definite Italianate architectural influence. Features associated with the Italianate style are arched and segmented arched window heads, the hood moldings which surround them, and the corbelled brick work found in the vernacular interpretation of a classical entablature, particularly corbelled cornices and frieze panels (photo Nos. 6, 9, 11, 13, 14).

Most of these early buildings extend along East Call from Walnut Street to Cherry Street. They were originally constructed of red brick, using a common bond pattern with headers every eight courses. They rest on continuous brick foundations or poured concrete slabs, and have flat roofs with parapets. In virtually every instance they have a boxy form and a rectangular plan. Unless they are detached or sited on a street corner, they exibit a single, primary facade where all entrances, windows and decorative elements are placed. They generally contained fixed display windows on the first floor and double-hung sash windows on the second, either in a 4/4 or 6/6 light pattern. Other noteworthy features of these buildings include corner entrances (photo Nos. 13, 14) and dentil and dog's tooth string courses (photo Nos. 8, 11, 13).

The storefront architecture of these early buildings is noteworthy. It was the predominant commercial architecture throughout the United States during the late nineteenth century when Call Street was undergoing its initial period of development. The storefront was an innovation of the mid-19th century in the United States. The first-story of the storefront featured large display windows and a formal entry. Upper stories were reserved for office space on the interior and on the exterior served as the location for much of the ornamentation of the building. Detailing was minimal, frequently limited to decorative brick or stonework incorporated into the structural configuration of the building. The shop windows were flanked by vertical supports or pilasters. The pilasters provided an inviting frame for displaying retail merchandise. The business entry was frequently recessed to avoid competition with the display $area.^2$

Horizontal or kick panels beginning at ground level and rising several feet, served as the practical conclusion to the storefront display area. They were immune to breakage and weather damage and provided the visual fourth side of the glass frame. These panels were generally constructed of wood or iron.³ Continuation sheet

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A common storefront configuration was a center entrance with two obliquely placed windows flanking the doorway and a band of transom lights placed above. Metal or wood canopies or canvas awnings were most extensively used over commercial storefronts. They provided shelter for shoppers and extended the display surface of the building. Merchandise could be set under the awnings to be viewed by passersby and simultaneously was protected from summer sun and rain.

Historic photographs (photo Nos. 41-43) document the storefront architecture of Call Street. The storefronts there are consistent with storefronts throughout the United States in terms of their design and materials. Several good examples are the Richard and Pace General Store, Stumph's Department Store, and the original Mitchell's Drug Store (photo Nos. 8, 9, 12). They retain their original storefront configuration. They exibit large plate glass display windows in an oblique form at the first-floor level. Te display windows are flacked by a recessed entry and framed by kick panels, pilasters, and transom lights. Awnings or canopies remain a common feature of these and other buildings along Call Street (photo No. 31).

The first-floor interiors of the early storefronts along Call Street were generally open flexible spaces, designed primarily for displaying retail merchandise. They were frequently divided by a party wall into two bays of nearly equal dimensions with a separate business occupying each bay. Most buildings retain this configuration. The most noteworthy feature of many of these buildings was their pressed metal ceilings. These ceilings can still be found in the Gaskin's Brick Block, Pace and Richard General Store, and Stumph's Department Store.

Beginning around 1902, the architecture of Call Street began to diversify. That year, the landmark building in the district, the Bradford County Courthouse, (listed on the National Register in 1974), was constructed (photo No. 1). Designed by builders/ architects B. B. Smith and L. A. Blackburn of Montgomery, Alabama, it embodies a style most closely resembling Romanesque Revival Features associated with the Romanesque Revival style are the semicircular arched openings, the gabled tower, the steeply pitched gabled dormers, the brick finish with rock-faced stone strim and the projecting gabled pavilions.

The focal point of the main facade of the courthouse is the monumental clock tower with its elaborate roof details. The tower has a steeply pitched hip roof topped by a finial. Four dormers,

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with steep parapeted gables, project from the roof. The tower fenestration includes paired round arched windows just above the main entry to the building, fixed single light windows hung in strips on the front and side elevations, and round fixed windows in the gables in the tower roof. A dentil course is located beneath the cornice of the tower and the cornice of the main roof of the building. Stone lintels and sills and brick corbelling complete the exterior ornament of the tower.

The courthouse is constructed of a dark red brick with Bedford limestone and terra cotta trim. The limestone placed in sills, lintels, and keystones serves to contrast with the red brick and highlight specific details of the building. The terra cotta is used for arches, spandrels, in entrances and in tower details. It is painted red to blend with the brick.

The main entrance to the building is set into the base of the tower and is accessible through an arched opening cut through a one bay wide porch with single bays on either side. A series of steps lead up to the stairs where the arch rests on brick piers. Auxiliary access can be gained through round arched entrances in both the east and west elevations. The entrances are set into the base of pavilions projecting from each elevation.

The fenestration of the main part of the building is regular, consisting of double-hung sash windows. Those on the first floor are paired with full arch surrounds. They are topped by fanlights and accentuated with keystones. Windows on the second floor of the main facade are paired. They and the windows on the side elevations are double-hung sash with plain surrounds and flat stone lintels.

The courthouse has a steeped pitched, hip roof with intersecting gables set on the pavilions on the east and west elevations. Its parapeted gable dormers contain paired round arched windows. It is square in plan with a rectangular rear addition constructed in 1939. Because of its high quality design and materials and its political significance, the Bradford County Courthouse is the landmark building of Call Street.

The second most prominent building along Call Street is the Neo-classical Bradford County Bank (photo No. 2). Located at the southeast corner of Call and Walnut Streets, its design also breaks with the earlier masonry vernacular architecture of the district. Designed by Jacksonville architect Wilbur Talley, the bank is a blend of features taken from classical architecture and design elements and building materials fashionable at the time of its construction. 10-900-a

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The blend results in a handsome, well designed structure built of high quality materials.

The most striking feature of the bank is an in antis portico, consisting of four monumental concrete columns with ionic capitals, enriched with egg and dart molding. The columns are unfluted and rest on an attic base. They rise with entasis to the capitals which supports a simple, molded architrave. Above the architrave in the frieze is the inscription "Bradford County Bank." A dentil course separates the frieze from the cornice with the cornice serving as the base for a heavy pilastered parapet with concrete coping. Other significant features are the pedimented frontispiece above the entrance and the fluted pilasters flanking it.

To the average observer, the features of the building appear to be consistently borrowed from the vocabulary of the ionic order. Closer inspection, however, reveals several decorative features associated with Prairie School architecture. These features were probably drawn from Wilbur Talley's exposure to the Prairie School architecture of Henry John Klutho and others practicing contemporaneously with him in Jacksonville. One example of this is the geometric pattern in the transom light above the main entrance. The pattern, consisting of bars radiating from a solid disc, is found in the J. F. Lane residence in Jacksonville, one of Klutho's earlier designs. Another Prairie School decorative feature is the partition windows in the interior. The windows are applied in bands and contain leaded art glass shaped in a Wrightian geometric pattern.

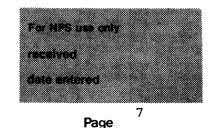
Like most corner buildings along Call Street, the Bradford County Bank Building presents a secondary elevation subordinate to the main one but nonetheless detailed and worthy of note. The west elevation of the bank consists of the side bay of the portico and five bays defined by engaged pilasters resting on a continuous concrete base and extending to the entablature and parapet wall, which are continued from the main facade.

Other materials and features of the bank are the buff-colored brick laid in a Flemish bond pattern, the frescoed ceilings in the main lobby, the mahogany, oak, and bronze millwork, the brass fixtures and chandeliers, the massive fireplaces and the aforementioned art glass windows. Given its quality of design and materials and its association with one of the leading architects in Florida, the Bradford County Bank Building is one of the landmarks of Call Street. Continuation sheet

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After World War I, the architecture of Call Street remained diverse. Most of Call Street was fully developed by this time. New construction infilled the side streets of the district, particularly Walnut and Thompson, and its terminal points at Temple Avenue (now U. S. 301) and Cherry Street. The major building constructed during this period was the Magnolia Hotel, a masonry enlargement and remodeling of the former frame residence of Starke Mayor A. L. von Kirn (photo No. 3). Several buildings constructed during the 1920's, the Kruse Grocery and the local Ford dealership (now Terwillegar Motors), reflect the Mission Revival stylistic influence then in vogue throughout Florida (photo Nos. 4, 10). The remaining buildings constructed during the 1920's and early 1930"s were simple, largely unadorned masonry vernacular buildings. The Coca-Cola Bottling Plant at 140 S. Thompson Street, constructed c. 1931, is the most recent building considered contributing to the district. Based on historical research, there appears to have been little construction activity in the proposed district until the Camp Blanding boom of World War II.

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Beyond its historic buildings, the proposed district contains significant streetscape features. Portions of the original brick streets constructed during the second decade of the present century remain at the 100 block of North Thompson Street, the 100 block of North Cherry Street (just outside the district boundaries), and the 100 block of East Jefferson Street. Stone curbing remains in many areas of the district (see district map and streetscape photographs for the location of both of these features).

When electric street lamps were placed there during the 1920's, Call Street was known throughout the surrounding area as the "Great White Way." The lamps had a classical design, consisting of an attic base and fluted columns rising with entasis. They were topped by a glass lobe. Three of these lamps remain just outside the district at the northwest corner of South Cherry and East Madison Streets. Consideration is currently being given to returning them to their original location as part of planned streetscape improvements to Call Street.

The recommended boundaries of the proposed district are slightly irregular and reflect the concentrated development of Call Street from 1858 until approximately 1931. They are defined by usage and historical and visual continuity. The rough boundaries are Jefferson Street on the north, Cherry Street on the east, Madison Street and the rear property line of buildings fronting on the southside of Call Street on the south and Temple Avenue or U. S. 301 on the west. With one exception, the former Bradford County Courthouse, the boundaries contain only commercial buildings, which share similar ages,

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historical associations, and physical qualities such as scale, materials, design and set-back. The east and west terminal points of the district are anchored by the courthouse and the rail line, the two major physical landmarks along Call Street. Between these two points most of the historic development of Call Street occurred.

Jefferson Street marks a transition from commercial to other Beyond it, to the north, are several churches, the Starke uses. Woman's Club, and an historic and very attractive residential neighborhood, located principally along Walnut Street. To the east, the district extends to Cherry Street, just beyond the rail line, where the historic commercial sector of Starke terminates and another residential neighborhood begins. Madison Street, between the railroad tracks and South Thompson Street, marks part of the southern boundary. The southern boundary extends up South Thompson and then proceeds west along the back property line of the buildings along East and West Call. Beyond it are commercial buildings; however, their age and design are not consistent with those of the buildings within the proposed district (see photo Nos. 24, 28, 29).

The western boundary of the district is Temple Avenue, or U. S. 301, one of Florida's major roadways. Historically, Temple Avenue marked a division between the Call Street commercial/governmental sector and outlying residential areas. The division is now further emphasized by heavily traveled, four-lane wide U. S. 301. U. S. 301 has become the location of concentrated, contemporary commercial strip development. Many of the buildings are pre-fabricated, franchised, commercial establishments of contemporary design. They contrast greatly with the attached, primarily masonry, storefront commercial buildings along Call Street.

NOTES

1. Bradford County Courthouse, Deed Records, Book I, p. 147; ibid., Book N, p. 759.

2. Mara Gelboom, "Old Storefronts, 1870-1920," <u>Old House Journal</u>, Vol. VII, No. 7, March, 1978, pp. 25, 32-34, passim.

3. ibid.

4. ibid.

5. ibid.

6. Robert C. Broward, <u>Henry John Klutho, The Prairie School in</u> Jacksonville, (Jacksonville, 1983), p. 293.

8. Significance

1.

Period	Areas of Significance—C	heck and justify below		
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	community planning	Iandscape architecture	e religion
1400–1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science
1500–1599	agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
1600–1699	<u>x</u> architecture	education	military	social/
1700–1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian
<u> </u>	x. commerce	exploration/settlement	philosophy	theater
<u> </u>	communications	industry	_x_ politics/government	transportation
		invention		other (specify)

Specific dates 1857 - c. 1931 **Builder/Architect** various

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The proposed Call Street Historic District fulfills criteria A, B, and C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It has local significance in the areas of exploration/settlement, transportation, commerce, politics/government, and architecture. Its extant historic buildings date from 1875 until c. 1931. They embody the period when Call Street functioned as the center of transportation, commerce, and government for Starke and Bradford County. While the proposed district has lost some of its physical integrity, it remains sufficiently intact to convey its historical associations and its period of significance.

During the late 1850's a series of events occurred which would prove pivotal to the settlement of Starke and the founding of Call Street. The earliest documented development within the proposed district dates from 1857 when a post office was established in its vicinity and given the name Starke. George W. Cole, the first postmaster, should be credited with the founding of Starke for several reasons. In addition to his duties as postmaster, he is described by several early settlers as having named both the town of Starke and Call Street. Furthermore, he was the original owner of the fortyacre tract of land that formed the original town plat. He formally acquired the tract in 1858, and his holdings included all but a small portion of the proposed district.¹

The commercial development of Starke began during the late 1850's when John Charles Richard and George Pace established a store in the vicinity of Call Street. Richard, a native of Georgia, was in the lumber business at Middleburg during the early 1850's. He later moved to Jacksonville where he formed a partnership in a mercantile business with George Pace. Hearing of the new railroad to be built through Starke, he moved there and started the first general merchandise store on what became Call Street. Pace apparently split time between Jacksonville and Starke during the early years of the business. He moved to Starke from Jacksonville in 1872 and joined Richard as a full-time resident of the town. He was thereafter an ` important community leader. He was prominently involved in the incorporation of the town in 1876 and served on the town council The Richard and Pace General Store, located on during the 1880's. East Call at the railroad tracks, is one of the pivotal buildings in the district (photo No. 9). It dates from the 1880's and is significant for its association with two of Starke's pioneer merchants and settlers.²

9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property <u>App</u> Quadrangle name <u>Starke</u>	roximately :	12 acres	Quadrangle scale 1:24000
UTM References			
		8	
Δ 1 7 3 9 3 2 6 β 3 3 3 Zone Easting Northin	L ₁ 2 9 6 0 9		3 9 3 1 8 0 asting Northing
c 1 7 3 9 2 8 2 0 3 3 1	1 2 8 2 0	D 1 7	3 9 2 9 2 0 3 3 1 3 0 4 5
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G└── └┴─└──┙ └─┴		н∟] [
Verbal boundary description and	justification		
(see c	ontinuation	sheet)	
List all states and counties for pr	operties overlap	ping state or cou	nty boundaries
state N/A	code N/A	county N/A	code N/A
state	code	county	code
11. Form Prepar	ed By		
·····			
name/title Historic Property	7 Associates	s/Diana Prime	elles
Organization Bureau of Hist	coric Preser	rvation date	
street & number The Capitol		telep	ohone (904) 487-2333
city or town Tallahassee		state	, Florida
12. State Histori	c Prese	rvation O	fficer Certification
The evaluated significance of this prop	erty within the sta	te is:	
national	•		
As the designated State Historic Prese	rvation Officer for	the National Historic	Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-
665), I hereby nominate this property for according to the criteria and procedure			
State Historic Preservation Officer sign	nature CC	me li	Yun
	(3	
title State Historic Preser	vation Office	r	date Oct. 28, 1985
For NPS use only I hereby certify that this property	is included in the	National Register	· · · · · ·
Imu SI.	agel	-	date 12/2/85
Keeper of the National Register	- ye - I		<i>wµµy w y wy wyy wy wywywy wywywywywywywywyw</i>
/ Attest:			date
Chief of Registration	·····	<u> </u>	

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The key event in the development of the Call Street district was the construction of the Florida Railroad. Transportation into the area which became Starke was limited before the completion of the railroad. Prior to that time, early settlers depended largely on water transportation if they wished to market their goods. The nearest link to water transportation was the river landing at Middleburg, some 15 or 20 miles to the east on the North Prong of Black Creek. In pre-railroad days, they hauled their cotton and other crops to market by ox or mule team to Middleburg, where it was loaded on boats for the long, slow ride up the St. Johns River. While in Middleburg they would buy their basic necessities and coffee, tobacco, and the few other items that they did not grow on their farms.³

The Florida Railroad reached Starke in January, 1858. Its construction marked an important event in the history of the transportation industry in Florida and served as a catalyst for the development of the town and Call Street, its initial market place and area of settlement.⁴ In 1859, following the arrival of the railroad, George W. Cole subdivided his acreage and began selling lots. Call Street was the first street laid out. It formed a crossroads with the railroad and became the focal point of the early development of Starke. Initially, it served as the location of both commercial and residential buildings, although over time commercial development predominated.⁵

The Civil War interrupted the development of Call Street and Starke in general. As was true in communities throughout the South, many residents of Starke and the surrounding area joined the Confederate Army. Captain J. C. Richard, the pioneer merchant of Call Street, organized Company A of the 10th Florida Infantry, a unit which fought at the Battle of Olustee. Beginning with the Civil War, the military has been periodically associated with the economic development of Call Street and the lives of merchants, politicians, and others whose workplaces were located there.⁶

Through circumstances brought on by the War, Bradford County was given its present name. Originally known as New River County, it was formed in 1858 from parts of Columbia County. The Florida State Legislature renamed New River County Bradford in honor of Captain Richard Bradford, the first Florida officer killed during the Civil War.⁷ The original seat of government of New River and later Bradford was Lake Butler. Following the War, a debate concerning the location of the county seat began between residents of Lake Butler and Starke. It would continue well into the twentieth century and would, in great measure, influence the development of Call Street.⁸

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After the War, the merchants of Call Street remained dependent on the railroad as their major source of transportation until trucking developed following World War I. Their economic well-being was subject to the mercurial fortunes of the railroad. A series of lines served the community during this period. They were the Florida Railroad until 1872, the Atlantic, Gulf and West India Transit Company from 1872 until 1881, the Florida Transit Railroad from 1881-1883, the Florida Transit and Peninsula Railroad from 1883 until 1884, and the Florida Railway and Navigation Company from 1884 until 1889.

The Florida Central and Peninsular Railroad Company absorbed the Florida Railway and Navigation Company in 1889. In 1902 the Seaboard Airline Railroad acquired the Florida Central and Peninsular. The rail line through Starke is currently owned by the Seaboard Systems Railroad, the successor line to the Seaboard Airline Railroad. It remains a major physical feature of Call Street.¹⁰

During the 1870's, political events began occurring which would shape the future of Call Street, Starke, and Bradford County. As the population of the town increased, politically active residents of Starke, particularly the Call Street merchants, began pressuring the Bradford County Commission to schedule a voter referendum to determine the site of the county seat. Since the establishment of the county in 1858, Lake Butler had been the seat of government of New River and later Bradford County.¹¹

Lobbyists supporting Starke maintained political pressure on the county commission until January 18, 1875, when the commissioners called a special referendum to decide the location of the courthouse. Starke received a majority of the votes cast in the referendum and was designated the county seat. The county offices were moved to Starke where they were located in the Thomas Hemingway Building, a wood frame, commercial structure. Although altered in 1927, the Hemingway Building (photo No. 21) still stands at the northwest corner of Call and Walnut Streets. It dates from c. 1875 and is the oldest building in the district.¹²

Residents of Lake Butler challenged the results of the referendum in court. In 1878, a circuit judge invalidated the referendum because of voting irregularities and ordered a new one. In the second referendum, Lake Butler prevailed. The county records and offices were returned there, and a new courthouse and jail were erected.¹³

During the 1880's and 1890's Call Street began developing the physical appearance which it large retains today. Around 1882, Dr. J. L. Gaskins constructed a brick commercial block on the corner diagonally opposite the Hemingway Building. The block consisted of a two-story

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building at the corner of Call and Walnut Streets and two one-story attached storefront buildings running west along Call Street (photo No. 6). Dr. Gaskins was among the more important business and political leaders of Starke. He was the political boss of the county during the period when the county convention system was still in force before the primary system was introduced. The first mayor of Starke elected when the town was incorporated in 1876, Gaskins subsequently served seven terms as a state representative and was chosen as speaker of the house from 1889 until 1891. He later served two terms in the senate.¹⁴

The Bradford County Bank, the first financial institution in Starke, was another important addition to Call Street during the 1880's. The building in which the bank was housed was erected in 1888 (photo No. 13). The bank remained at the southeast corner of Call and Thompson until 1914 when its offices were transferred to the handsome, neoclassical building at the southeast corner of Walnut and Call Streets (photo No. 2).¹⁵

Another chapter in the relationship between Call Street and the military began in 1893 when the local Home Guards, a unit whose existence dated from the Second Seminole War, reorganized as Company B, 4th Florida Militia. With the outbreak of the Spanish American War in 1898, Company B was mustered into service. Its commander was Captain Eugene Mathews, editor and publisher of the Bradford County Telegraph and one of the most prominent individuals associated with Call Street. Company B was headquartered during the first several decades of the twentieth century on Call Street in the building which subsequently served as Stumph's Department Store (photo No. 12).¹⁶

As the twentieth century neared, a number of the more important buildings in the proposed district were constructed. Around 1900, the Old Post Office Building was constructed on the north side of Call between Thompson and Walnut Streets (photo No. 11). It has housed a number of significant businesses during its existence. Moreover, it was the location of the Starke Post Office from the time it was built until the present post office building was constructed by the federal government in 1940.¹⁷

Another significant building constructed around the turn of the century was the J. N. Jones Building at the northwest corner of Call and Thompson Streets (photo No. 14). Initially, the Jones Building housed the owner's general store and later, the N. B. Hull General Store. During World War II, under the ownership of Charles Rosenberg, the

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second floor of the building was used as a rooming house for soldiers stationed at Camp Blanding, and the first floor was a bar colorfully decorated with the insignia of some of the units stationed at the camp.¹⁹

A third important addition to Call Street during this time period was the Hoover Brothers Studio (photo No. 17). Located at the corner of Call and Cherry Streets on the east side of the railroad tracks, the studio was constructed about 1906 and is named for Joe and Frank Hoover, two brothers who operated their photography business there. The Hoover brothers were well known portrait photographers. Their clientel extended beyond Starke to Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Their location on Call Street, near the rail line, other communities. was convenient for their out of town customers. Their models included actors and actresses from the William Stock Company, a theatrical group, which used to winter in Starke and present comedy dramas. Beyond its commercial importance, their building has political significance because of its association with Frank Hoover who served seven terms as mayor of Starke.¹⁹

The pivotal building located on Call Street is the former Bradford County Courthouse, constructed in 1902 (photo No. 1). The courthouse building is a local landmark and an example of Romanesque Revival architecture. It was designed and constructed by B. B. Smith and L. A. Blackburn of Montgomery, Alabama. More importantly, it embodies the political and commercial importance which the county seat represented to small Florida communities, particularly to local merchants such as those along Call Street, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is now being adapted for use as the Starke Center for Santa Fe Community College, Gainesville. It is considered to be one of the finest courthouse buildings in Florida and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in December, 1974.²⁰

The location of the Bradford County seat continued to be the subject of an ongoing and often bitter debate between Starke and Lake Butler until 1921. After the relocation of the county seat to Lake Butler in 1878, the issue remained quiet until 1887. That year the Florida Telegraph (now the Bradford County Telegraph) began an editorial campaign in support of returning the county seat to Starke. In the July 16, 1887 issue it announced that the Bradford County Commission had received a petition from the residents of Starke and had scheduled a referendum. When the referendum was held, the voters of the county decided by a narrow margin to return the county seat to Starke.

Despite their losses at the ballot box, the supporters of Lake Butler were uncompromising during the subsequent decade. They criticized Starke for failing to build a new courthouse and renewed their

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campaign to regain the county seat. In 1897, exactly ten years after the last one, the county commission scheduled another referendum with the stipulation that no matter which community won a new courthouse would be constructed. Starke, which had the larger population, easily won and has remained the county seat ever since. Five years later, the red brick courthouse on Call Street was built.²²

In 1921, the residents of Lake Butler were successful in their efforts to subdivide the county. A final resolution to the courthouse controversy followed the movement of the county seat four different times, the holding of four voter referendums on the issue, numerous court suits, and heated debate in the state legislature. After the construction of the 1902 courthouse, an annex was added in 1936. Call Street served continuously as the political hub of Bradford County from 1887 until 1968, when a new courthouse was erected along U. S. 301, near the northern limits of Starke. The relocation of the courthouse has been a major reason for the commercial decline of Call Street and its physical deterioration.²³

After the courthouse, the most architecturally significant building on Call Street is the second Bradford County Bank Building (photo No. 2). Completed in 1914, it was designed by Jacksonville architect Wilbur B. Talley and is a fine example of the neoclassical Revival style. Talley practiced in Jacksonville from the turn of the century until the early 1920's, when he relocated his practice to Lakeland. A leader in his profession, Talley was one of the founders of the Florida Institute of Architects and secured commissions through-He designed churches in Jacksonville, St. Augustine, out the state. Lakeland, and Tampa; the Bradford County High School in Starke, and other schools in Lake City, Ocala, Kissimmee, Orlando, Eau Gallie, and Sanford; and major governmental structures like the Palm Beach County Courthouse, the Duval County Courthouse Annex, and the Duval County Armory. His designs run the gamut of styles popular at the time, ranging from Romanesque and Gothic Revival to Classical Revival and Prairie School. His work is represented on the National Register of Historic Places by the Sanford Grammar School.²⁴

During the 1920's, Starke, like communities throughout the state, experienced growth associated with the Florida Land Boom. The population of the town once again increased, and the first hard surface road connecting Starke and Bradford County with distant communities was completed. Due in large part to the efforts of Eugene S. Mathews, state representative and publisher of the Bradford County Telegraph, the "short route" from Jacksonville to Tampa was constructed through Starke. The highway, originally known as state road 13, but now designated as State Highway 200 and U. S. 301, eventually supplanted

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the railroad as the principal avenue of transportation for Starke. It marks the western extent of Call Street and forms a major entry to the proposed district. The importance of Starke as a transportation center was further augmented by the opening of State Road 28 (now state road 100) during the 1920's. Known within the town limits as Madison Street, State Road 100 is located one block south of the district.²⁵

During the 1930's Starke, like communities throughout the country, suffered the effects of the Great Depression. The local economy declined, and the population stagnated. Starke received federal assistance and several public works projects were undertaken, most notably the addition to the courthouse by the Works Progress Administration in 1936 and the construction of the current post office building, which was completed in 1940 (photo No. 22). Both of these projects occurred within the boundaries of the proposed district.²⁶

World War II affected Starke as it did few other communities in the United States. Within a short time of the entry of the country in the war, Starke was overwhelmed by the construction of Camp Blanding, seven miles to the east on the shores of Kingsley Lake. A town of several thousand was confronted with the problem of accommodating the overflow from the fourth largest population center in the state. Call Street boomed as never before. With federal assistance, town officials were able to overhaul and expand utilities to cope with the overflowing population. Every vacant form of shelter, including garages, attics, and chicken coops were pressed into service to accommodate the military personnel and their dependents. The population of the town doubled and tripled, but much of it was transient. Following the war and the decommissioning of Camp Blanding, Starke returned to a more tranquil period.²⁷

In summary, the proposed Call Street Historic District is significant in five areas: exploration/settlement, transportation, politics/government, commerce, and architecture. Following the comletion of the Florida Railroad to Starke in 1858, Call Street formed a crossroads with the line and was the initial street in the newly founded settlement. For the next three-quarters of a century it was the focal point of rail transportation and commerce in Starke and much of surrounding Bradford County. The town of Starke was built up around the depot which for many years was located just south of East Call Street, near Madison. The railroad provided the Call Street merchants with a source of income from the goods and service they provided passengers and rail workers. It further provided them with a system for shipping and receiving goods to and from distant points.

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Furthermore, Call Street was an attraction for local residents. Townfolk went there to watch the trains arrive and unload their passengers and merchandise. Tourists came on every train, and the hotels, restaurants, and retail establishments along Call and the adjacent streets did a thriving business. Without the railroad there would be no Call Street nor Starke as they exist today. The decline in importance of the railroad as a system of transportation has much to do with the present economic problems of Call Street.

In addition, since its founding Starke has been noteworthy for the number of important political leaders it has produced, particularly given its relatively small size. Most of these politicians have been associated with the development of Call Street. Captain J. C. Richard, the pioneer merchant of Starke, served in the Florida House of Representatives. Frank Hoover was a multi-term mayor of Starke. Eugene S. Mathews, Speaker of the 1907 House of Representatives and member of the State Railroad Commission from 1924 to 1946, was the publisher of the Bradford County Telegraph with offices in numerous buildings along R. A. "Lex" Green, Speaker Pro-Tem of the House of Represen-Call Street. tatives in 1921, Congressman from the 2nd district for 20 years, and runner-up in the Democratic Primary for governor in 1944, had his offices in a building which stands at the corner of Court Street and Jefferson near the Bradford County Courthouse (photo No. 23). Charley Johns, President of the Florida State Senate and Acting Governor of Florida from 1953 until 1955, owned an insurance agency on Walnut Street south of Call, just outside the boundaries of the district (photo No. 24).

Call Street has additional political significance as the location of the Bradford County Seat from 1887 until 1968. The importance of the county seat to Call Street and Starke was pivotal. The county offices brought power, prestige, patronage, and jobs to Starke. The Call Street merchants were probably the main recipients of these benefits. The relocation of the county offices to U. S. 301, along with the lessening in importance of the railroad, have been major factors in the decline of Call Street.

Finally, Call Street has architectural significance. Its buildings embody an important period in the development of commercial architecture in Florida. A number of them date from the late nineteenth century and reflect an Italianate stylistic influence. Given its early development as a result of the construction of the Florida Railroad and the relatively recent historic development of most communities in the state, Call Street contains a number of the older and better designed masonry commercial buildings in Florida. Individual buildings of note are the Bradford County Courthouse and the former Bradford County Bank.

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Efforts are now being made to revitalize and beautify Call Street, the historic commercial, political, and transportation center of Starke and surrounding Bradford County. It is hoped that the listing of the district in the National Register of Historic Places will bring recognition to Call Street, encourage public and private investment there, and attract new businesses as well as tourists passing through Starke on U. S. 301. These historic preservation activities, planned streetscape improvements, and the opening of the Starke Center of Santa Fe Community College, located in the historic Bradford County Courthouse, are expected to help revive Call Street and return it to the pivotal role it once played in community life.

NOTES

1. Letter: Paul Lewinson, Chief Archivist, Industrial Records Branch, to E. L. Mathews, on file at the offices of the Bradford County Telegraph, Starke, Florida, July 9, 1954; Bradford County Deed Records, Book I, p. 147; <u>The Bradford County Telegraph</u>, February 23, 1978; Letter: Sanuel A. Swann to Mr. J. M. Johns on file at offices of Bradford County Telegraph, Starke, Florida, March 6, 1896; <u>Bradford</u> <u>County Telegraph</u>, March 15, 1889; ibid., March 22, 1889; ibid., November 12, 1954.

2. <u>Bradford County Telegraph</u>, March 15, 1889; ibid., March 22, 1889; Florida Times-Union, February 16, 1902.

3. Bradford County Telegraph, November 12, 1954.

4. Ibid.; George W. Pettengill, <u>The Story of Florida Railroads</u>, (Boston, Massachusetts, 1952), pp. 7-8, 21-22.; <u>Bradford County</u> Telegraph, November 12, 1954.

5. Bradford County Courthouse, Deed Records, Book N, p. 759; Bradford County Deed Records, Book I, p. 147.

6. Bradford County Telegraph, July 19, 1984.

7. Laws of the State of Florida, 1861, Chapter 1,300 (No. 43); Columbia County had previously been formed from Alachua and Alachua from St. Johns, the original county in East Florida.

8. Bradford County Telegraph, November 12, 1954.

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9. Pettengill, pp. 32-33; 39, 47-48.

10. Ibid., pp. 53-57 passim.

11. Bradford County Telegraph, November 12, 1954.

12. Ibid.; Bradford County Courthouse, Deed Records, Book B, p. 175; ibid., Book A, p. 85; ibid., Guardianship Book, 3, p. 19.

13. Bradford County Courthouse, Deed Records, Book D, p. 460; ibid., Book H, p. 451; ibid., Misc. Record Book, 4, p. 268; ibid., Book 27, p. 155; "Birds' Eye-View Map of Starke, 1884;" <u>Bradford County Telegraph</u>, July 26, 1979.

14. <u>Bradford County Telegraph</u>, November 12, 1954; "Centennial History," p.

15. <u>Bradford County Telegraph</u>, May 18, 1888; <u>Bradford County Telegraph</u>, May 25, 1888; <u>Bradford County Telegraph</u>, June 1, 1888; <u>Bradford County</u> Telegraph, January 24, 1890; Bradford County Telegraph, July 3, 1914.

16. Bradford County Telegraph, November 12, 1954; "Centennial History", p.

17. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Starke, 1901; <u>Bradford County</u> <u>Telegraph</u>, Centennial Edition, 1979; <u>Bradford County Telegraph</u>, August 3, 1899; <u>Bradford County Telegraph</u>, May 3, 1957; <u>Bradford County Telegraph</u>, November 12, 1954.

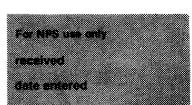
18. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Starke, 1901; <u>Bradford County</u> <u>Telegraph</u>, July 26, 1969; Mathews, Eugene L., Interview by Maria Eugenia Fernandez, 505 East Adkins Street, Starke, Florida; Charlotte Rosenberg, Interview by Maria Eugenia Fernandez, 3121 Thomasville Road, Tallahassee, Florida.

19. <u>Cedar Key Gulf Coaster</u>, February, 1898; <u>Bradford County Telegraph</u>, June 22, 1906; <u>Bradford County Telegraph</u>, March 15, 1984; <u>Bradford</u> <u>County Telegraph</u>, March 15, 1984; Bradford County Courthouse Deed Records, Book 1, p. 378; list of Mayors of Starke in the files of E. L. Mathews, Bradford County Telegraph, Starke, Florida.

20. Bradford County Courthouse, Minutes of the Board of County Commissioners, Book 4, pp. 122-134, 140, 191-193, 199.

21. Bradford County Telegraph, July 16, 1887; Bradford County Telegraph, November 12, 1954.

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22. Ibid., November 24, 1954.

23. Ibid.

24. Biographical information about Talley supplied by Stephen J. Tool, former Director, Jacksonville Historic Landmarks Commission.

25. Starke Centennial Corporation, "Starke, Florida, Centennial Historial Booklet," (Starke, Florida), p. 17.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.; Dovell, <u>Florida:</u> Historic, Dramatic, Contemporary, (New York, 1952), p. 827.

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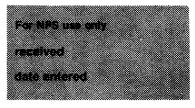
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Beginning at a point at the southwest corner of the Terwillegar Motors Building proceed north along U. S. 301 across Call Street past the former Bradford County Courthouse a distance of approximately 375 to the southeast corner of West Jefferson Street and U. S. 301; then proceed approximately 625' east along Jefferson across Court Street to the southeast corner of North Walnut Street; then proceed north approximately 60' to the northeast corner of East Jefferson Street; then proceed along the north side of East Jefferson Street approximate

to the southeast corner of North Walnut Street; then proceed north approximately 60' to the northeast corner of East Jefferson Street; then proceed along the north side of East Jefferson Street approximately 270' to the northwest corner of North Thompson Street, to include the brick street and stone curbing in the 100 block of East Thompson Street; then proceed south along the east side of North Thompson approximately 160' to the northwest corner of the Jones-Rosenberg Building; then proceed along the ear of the aforesaid building and the building at 213-215 East Call Street approximately 85' to the northeast corner of the latter building; then proceed south approximately 100' to East Call Street; then proceed east along Call Street approximately 100' across the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad Tracks to the southwest corner of the Acme Hardware Building; then proceed north along the west side of the aforesaid building 100' to include the brick warehouse building behind Acme Hardware; then proceed east approximately 85' to the west side of North Cherry Street; then proceed south along Cherry Street approximately 210' to the southwest corner of the building housing Harry Green Auto Parts; then proceed approximately 85' along the rear of the aforesaid building to its southwest corner; then proceed north approximately 50' to the south side of East Call Street; then proceed west along Call Street approximately 100' to the northeast corner of the Richard and Pace General Store; then proceed south along the east side of the aforesaid building approximately 200' to the north side of Madison Street where it intersects the railroad; then proceed along the north side of Madison Street approximately 85' to the northeast corner of Madison and South Thompson Street; then proceed north along the east side of South Thompson approximately 125' to a point; then proceed west across Thompson Street approximately 60' to the southeast corner of the building formerly housing Mitchell's Drug Store; then continue west approximately 209' following the rear property line of the buildings fronting on East Call between South Walnut and South Thompson Streets to the east side of South Walnut Street; then proceed across South Walnut approximately 60' to the south property line of the building at 119 South Walnut Street; then proceed approximately 50' to the southwest corner of the aforesaid building; then proceed north to the rear property line of the building containing Chastain's Gifts; then proceed west approximately 286' along the rear property line of the buildings fronting on the south side of West Call Street to the east side of South Court Street; then proceed west across Court Street, approximately 30' to the southeast corner of the Terwilligar Motors Building; then proceed west along the rear of the building approximately 110' to the point of beginning.

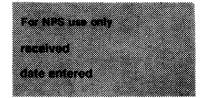
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SITE LIST			
NAME	ADDRESS	AGE	STATUS
East Call Street			
Williams Jewelry (Old Bank Building)	102	1914	C
Kendall Telephone	108	ca. 1885	N
Vacant	110-12	ca. 1885	С
Starke Shoe Repair	120	ca. 1890	N
City Barber Shop	126	ca. 1890	С
Montgomery Wards	134	ca. 1901	С
The Berry Patch		ca. 1906	С
Bakery	138	ca, 1906	С
Shoe Store (Hemingway Building)	101	ca. 1885	C
Allen's Office Supply	113	ca. 1895	Ν
Mitchell's Rexall Drug's	127	ca. 1895	С
Thompson Street			
McMillan Land Surveys	200	1888	C
Call Street Antiques	212	ca. 1884, 1887	С
Vacant	207		С
Vacant	213	ca, 1895	С
Jones Craft Shop	215	ca, 1895	С
RR Tracks			
Servistar Hardware	301	ca, 1885	С

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NAME	ADDRESS	AGE	STATUS
Old Hoover Building	311	ca, 1906	С
Sunshine Electrical	304-10	ca, 1924	С
West Call Street (going eas	st from High	way 301)	
Bradford Cty. Courthouse	209	1902	C
Terwillager Motors	210	ca, 1924	C
Court Street			
Bradford Cty. Telegraph	135	ca, 1885	N
Koch's Drugs	150	post 1931	N
Family Hair Designers	144	post 1931	N
Tomlinson & Brown, Attys.	142	post 1931	N
Vacant	134	post 1931	N
Gator Freight	120	ca, 1885	N
Bradford Printers	110	ca, 1885	C
Chastains Jewelry & Gifts	104	ca. 1885	C
Korner Fashion	100	ca, 1885	C
Vacant		post 1931	N
Prìest's		post 1931	Ν
Vacant	109	post 1931	Ν
Florida Twin Theatre	101	post 1931	N
Walnut Streat			

Walnut Street

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NAME	ADDRESS	AGE	STATUS
South Walnut Street			
Vacant	119	ca. 1931	С
North Walnut Street			
William's State Farm Ins.		post 1931	N
Magnolia Hotel	137	ca, 1884/1924	C
Building attached to Hemingway Building		post 1931	Ν
U. S. Post Office	122	1940	Ν
North Court Street			
Lex Green	111	post 1931	Ν
North Thompson Street			
Con Tel		post 1931	Ν
South Thompson Street			
Merle Norman Cosmetics	118	ca, 1912	Ŋ
Vaughn-Johnson Company	122, 1	40 ca, 1924	С

KEY: N = non-contributing buildings; C = contributing buildings

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet	Item nu	mberl 0	Page 5
NAME	ADDRESS	AGE	STATUS
East Call Street			
Bradford County Bank	102	1914	С
Kendall Telephone	108	c, 1885	N
Vacant	110-12	c. 1885	С
Starke Shoe Repair	120	c, 1890	Ν
City Barber Shop	126	c, 1890	С
Montgomery Wards-Bakery	134-138	c. 1906	С
Hemingway Building	101	c. 1875	С
Allen's Office Supply	113	c. 1895	N
Old Post Office	127	c, 1885	С
Stumph's - Armory Thompson Street	139	c, 1885	С
Original Bradford Cty. Bank	200	1888	С
Richard & Pace General Store	212	c. 1884. 1887	С
Jones-Rosenberg Building	207	c, 1901	С
Jones Craft Shop	213-215	c, 1895	С
RR Tracks			
Servistar Hardware	301	c. 1885	С
Warehouse	301	c. 1895	С
Old Hoover Building	311	c, 1906	С
Kruse Grocery	304-10	c. 1924	С

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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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Continuation sheet	Item number 10		Page 6
NAME	ADDRESS	AGE	STATUS
North Court Street			
Lex Green Building	111	post 1931	N
North Thompson Street			
Con Tel		post 1931	Ν
South Thompson Street			
Merle Norman Cosmetics	118	c. 1912	N
Original Ford Dealership	122	c. 1924	с
Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Plant Complex	140	c. 1931	C

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