

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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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 CENTRAL SQUARE

and/or common CENTRAL SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 2-27 Central Square, 1 Summer Street,
1-3 North Main Street, & 2 South Main Street not for publication

city, town Bristol vicinity of congressional district (2nd)

state N.H. code 33 county Grafton code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: public monument

4. Owner of Property

name (See Continuation Sheet #1)

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Grafton County Courthouse/Registry of Deeds

street & number Route #10

city, town North Haverhill state New Hampshire 03774

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Bristol Cultural Resource Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records Lakes Region Planning Commission

city, town Meredith state New Hampshire

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>n/a</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Central Square is an open square at the center of Bristol village, around which the town's commercial district developed in the 19th century. The Square is a four-sided space, almost rectangular, but wider on its northern side than on its southern side. Six streets enter the Square at its four corners--Pleasant Street and North Main Street at the northwest corner, Summer Street at the northeast corner, Central Street and Spring Street at the southeast corner, and South Main Street with its bridge over the Newfound River at the southwest corner. (The Newfound River flows behind the buildings on the west and south sides of the Square. Indeed, two buildings are partially suspended over the river.) Most of Central Square is paved, with sidewalks on all four sides. Besides the Soldier's Monument lot (described in site #14), there is only one small lawn area, on the east side of the Square in front of the Bartlett House (#3). Much of the Square is marked off for parking, and one area at the north end of the Square is specifically set off by curbing for a parking lot.

The Central Square Historic District includes, besides the Square itself, fourteen sites--two late 18th century taverns, one early 19th century house (with a non-contributing 20th century apartment addition) nine 19th century commercial buildings, one non-contributing 20th century commercial building, and a group of public monuments. It includes all of the buildings facing the Square, and one other building just over the South Main Street bridge, which was also part of the 19th century commercial district. While the three residential buildings retain their lawns and sideyards, the later commercial buildings made maximum use of their lots and form almost solid walls on the west, south and part of the east sides of the Square.

Our descriptions will begin with the oldest buildings in the northeast corner of the Square and then continue "clockwise" around the Square, considering the east, south, west and north sides respectively.

#1 - Sleeper Tavern (D & D Trust) - Capt. Moses Sleeper built this house soon after 1790. About 1794, Sleeper opened it as a tavern, which he kept for twenty-two years. The building sits on a sizeable lot, with a front lawn facing the Square. It is a typical late 18th century house--a 2½ story, gable-roofed wooden structure, originally five bays wide and two bays deep. The building has a cut granite block foundation and clapboarded walls with plain trim--corner-boards, close eaves and close verges. The windows and door surrounds are also fairly plain, with a simple moulded trim. The main entrance is in the center of the long south facade, facing the Square, while a side door is found on the east side. The house was built into a steep bank, terraced so that the ground in the rear is at the second story level. A small one-story, gable-roofed ell, clapboarded with plain trim around its door and windows, is attached to the second story at this rear level. The house has seen a few exterior changes, notably about 1918, when a large, gable-roofed, glassed porch was added at the main entry, and the single windows of the south facade were replaced by double windows. (A double window and a triple window also appeared on the east and west sides, respectively.) Other changes have included a sheet metal roof, newer paneled doors with windows, a small pedimented porch at the side door, and the changing of some windows from six over six sash to six over one sash. These alterations, although regrettable to the architectural purist, were not entirely unsympathetic. The new windows have the same moulded trim as the older windows. And the porches were built in a compatible simple Colonial Revival style. The form and much of the original character of the Sleeper Tavern is still visible today.

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1790's to 1898

Builder/Architect N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Central Square Historic District in Bristol is significant in the three separate but related areas of commerce, planning, and architecture. Firstly, it is a small town 19th century commercial district that has survived virtually intact, appearing today almost as it did at the end of the 19th century. Secondly, the layout of that commercial district is rather unique, for its buildings are disposed around an almost rectangular open square, not along a "Main Street" or around a parklike common, as is typical of other New Hampshire towns. Thirdly, the District includes a high concentration of architecturally interesting buildings of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The success of a commercial district depends on two essentials, a central location and a reliable market. Central Square developed at the major road intersection at the center of a manufacturing village on the Newfound River. And its history actually begins with the construction of the first road and the first mill in the community. The township of New Chester (an area encompassing the present towns of Bristol, Bridgewater and Hill) was granted to a group of proprietors in 1753. But the actual settlement of the grant did not begin until the late 1760's. The proprietors then had a crude road built along the Pemigewasset River from the Franklin boundary to the Plymouth boundary. This first road crossed the Newfound River at what is now the South Main Street bridge and continued to the northeast along today's Summer Street. About 1767, the first mill in the township, a sawmill and gristmill, was built on the Newfound River just east of Central Square. Today's Central Street developed as a path from the main road to the mill. Its junction with the proprietors' road was, in fact, the first road intersection in the town. In 1769, the miller's log cabin became the first building on the present Square when it was erected on the site of building #5.

The mill was an important destination for the town's early farmers. And the intersection of the mill road and the proprietors' road began to develop as a small commercial center by the end of the 18th century. The first store in Bristol opened in the 1790's in a building just north of the miller's house. As early as 1797, a blacksmith shop had been erected on the site of building #11. And, by 1794, two taverns had opened at the northeast corner of the Square. These taverns still stand. Ebenezer Kelly's tavern (#2) has been extensively remodeled, but Moses Sleeper's tavern (#1) has received relatively minor alterations which do not obscure its typical late 18th century design.

The intersection became even more important in 1805, when the Mayhew Turnpike was built from the Smith River north, via the east shore of Newfound Lake, to West Plymouth. The Turnpike entered Central Square over the South Main Street bridge, and continued north as today's North Main Street. The Turnpike was a short cut from the Baker River valley, and to some extent, the upper Connecticut River valley, south to the Merrimack River valley and Massachusetts. It soon developed as an important highway, and other roads were built to connect with it. About 1808, today's Pleasant Street was constructed from the Turnpike west towards South Alexandria, Danbury, and other western New Hampshire towns, incidentally establishing the northwest corner of the Square. The southeast corner's importance was reinforced when Spring Street, a residential street, opened sometime before 1820, and when

(See Continuation Sheet #9)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Charles E. Greenwood, HISTORY OF BRISTOL, 1819-1969, Meredith, N.H., 1969.
 Richard W. Musgrove, HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF BRISTOL, NEW HAMPSHIRE
 Bristol, N.H., 1904, (also reprinted Somersworth, N.H., 1976)
 BRISTOL WEEKLY ENTERPRISE, June 22, 1878 (Abel Block, #6); November 9, 1893 (Bristol Bank, #13)
 Photographic Collections of The Bristol Historical Society and Mason Westfall.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3.7

Quadrangle name Holderness, N.H.

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UMT References (UTMs calculated at center of Central Square.)

A	1 9	2 7 9 1 0 0	4 8 2 9 9 2 5	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification - See Continuation Sheet #11

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state	N/A	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Ruell

organization Lakes Region Planning Commission date October 7, 1982

street & number Main Street telephone (603) 279-8171

city or town Meredith state New Hampshire 03253

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *George G. ...*

Commissioner, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development

title NH State Historic Preservation Officer

date February 8, 1983

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

J. ...
 Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
 National Register

date 3/24/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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(Bristol Tax Map numbers appear in parentheses.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>#1 - The D & D Trust
c/o Gerald & Richard Devivo, Trustees
PO Box #282
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-27)</p> <p>#2 - Bristol Baptist Church
1 Summer Street
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-102)</p> <p>#3A- Mrs. Susan Beno
27 Central Square
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-107)</p> <p>#3B- Beno, Devivo & Mirski
Central Square
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-108)</p> <p>#4 - Roger & Janet Tozier
32 Pleasant Street
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-109)</p> <p>#5 - Joseph Simkevich
Central Square
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-110)</p> <p>#6 - John Moyer, Jr.
PO Box #126
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-127)</p> <p>#7 - Eunice Dasch
42 Beech Street
Franklin, N.H. 03235 (U4-126)</p> <p>#8 - John Mathews
2 South Main Street
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-163)</p> <p>#9A- William & Margaret Langdon
13 Central Square
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-123)</p> <p>#9B- Guy & Linda Peets
29 School Street
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-122)</p> | <p>#10- Bristol Drug, Inc.
7 Central Square
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-124)</p> <p>#11- Harris Brothers, Inc.
5 Central Square
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-177)</p> <p>#12- James R. Peabody
Central Square
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-121)</p> <p>#13- The Bristol Bank
PO Box D
Bristol, N.H. 03222 (U4-81)</p> <p>#14- The Town of Bristol
PO Box #197
Bristol, N.H. 03222</p> |
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#2 - Kelly Tavern (Baptist Parsonage) - About 1794, Ebenezer Kelly built and opened a tavern on the corner opposite the Sleeper Tavern. Although one of the few surviving 18th century buildings in Bristol, the house today bears little resemblance to its original form. Early photographs show a 2½-story, gable roofed building, not unlike the Sleeper Tavern. But, in the early 20th century, the building was extensively remodeled, receiving a gambrel roof, new windows, a corner tower, and an exterior fieldstone chimney. Since 1958, it has served as the parsonage for the neighboring Bristol Baptist Church. Today, the Parsonage is a 2½-story gambrel roofed building with a fieldstone foundation, sitting close to the sidewalk at the northeast corner of the Square. The main entrance, at the center of the long west facade, is a paneled door, flanked by sidelights, protected by a modern gable-roofed hood and reached by wooden steps. Above the entry is a double window. The bay to the south of the central bay has single windows, while the bay to the north has a triple window on the first story, and a shallow bay window projecting from the second story. Above are two shed roofed dormers. At the southwest corner of the house is a two-story tower with a cross gable roof and large windows overlooking the center of the Square. The south facade is enlivened by the tall exterior fieldstone chimney and a two-story, three-sided bay window. The third story is lit by two single windows and the attic by a diamond shaped window. The north facade is relatively simple, with a single window and a triple window on the first two stories, two single windows on the third, and another diamond shaped attic window. To the rear is a two-story gambrel-roofed ell with a hip-roofed porch sheltering the door on its south side and a shed-roofed hood over the two doors on its north facade. The Parsonage is obviously no longer an 18th century building in appearance, but it still contributes to the historic and visual character of the Square.

#3A - Bartlett House (Susan Beno) - The date of the construction of this 2½-story brick house is uncertain. A date as early as 1802 has been attributed to the building. But, if, as has been stated by some authorities, the house was built for Levi Bartlett (1807-1868), it would not have been erected before the late 1820's or early 1830's. Whatever its actual date, the Bartlett House is a fine early 19th century house, and the best pre Civil War building on the Square. It is a gable front house with a sidehall plan, built of brick laid in common bond on a smooth cut granite block foundation. The windows of the main block are six over six sash windows, with wooden frames, smooth granite lintels and sills. (Some have louvered shutters as well.) The lateral cornice is a box cornice with mouldings and a narrow frieze board. The western gable cornice, facing the Square, is shallower with short returns. The main entrance is found in the northernmost bay of the three bay west facade. Its paneled door is flanked by half sidelights and topped by a semi-elliptical louvered fan. A similar but smaller louvered fan ornaments the gable. The spacing of the four windows on each story of the south facade is determined by the two chimneys which rise high above the roof. Because of the interior stairs, the north facade of the main block has only three windowed bays. A two-story brick ell, one bay narrower than the main block and two bays long, is found to the rear. Its north wall, cornice and roof are continuous with those of the main block. However, the ell's windows, although also six over six sash windows, are simpler with wooden frames and sills. A single door on the south facade of the ell opens onto the only modern exterior addition, an open wooden deck. The house is set back in its lot, with an interesting wrought iron fence along the sidewalk, a side lawn with trees and a small storage shed to the south, and a parking lot to the north.

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

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#3B - Attached to the Bartlett House is a wooden apartment building, under separate ownership and described in the non-contributing section.

#4 - Cass Block (Roger & Janet Tozier) - Joseph Cass built this 2½-story gable-roofed commercial block about 1848. The two-story porch, facing the Square on the long west side of the building, is not original, but is probably a late 19th century addition. It certainly gave character to what appears in old photographs as a somewhat bland wooden building. The porch is supported by four columns on each story, the upper columns being smaller than the lower ones. It is otherwise rather simple with a plain second-story railing and a narrow box cornice. In the center of the first story of the west facade is a door with moulded trim and a transom window. On each side of the door is a storefront with large plate glass windows. Again, the storefronts are not original, but, with their plain wooden trim, they do not seem out of place. The second story features seven windows and a door that opens onto the porch. The lateral cornice of the main block is obscured by the porch and its roof flashing, but the gable cornices, box cornices with mouldings and short returns, are visible. The roof is now covered by sheet metal and has lost the two chimneys that once punctuated its ridge. The walls are presently covered with tan "brick" asphalt siding, save for the first story of the western facade, which retains the older clapboarding. In the rear is a two-story wing, largely hidden by the main block and its southern neighbor. With the exception of the "brick" siding, the sheet metal roof, and a few other elements such as the telephone booths on the porch, the Cass Block retains its late 19th century, if not its pre Civil War, appearance. And its columned porch does give the building a pleasing, if simple, architectural dignity.

#5 - Joe's Supermarket, the only 20th century building facing the Square, is described in the non-contributing section.

#6 - Abel Block (John Moyer, Jr.) - The first two stories of this rectangular commercial block were erected by A.J. Smith before the Civil War. About 1870, he sold the property to William H. Abel, who enlarged and remodeled the building in 1878. Abel remodeled the exterior of the block, and added a basement and a third story under a new mansard roof. The result was the finest Second Empire building in Bristol. The north facade, facing the Square, has a high cut granite block foundation interrupted by two bulkheads, four windows (now boarded shut), and the granite steps leading up to the two entries. The first two stories of the building (on all sides) are framed by wooden quoins and topped by a deep frieze. The storefronts on the north are well lit by almost continuous tall plate glass and muntined windows above a short paneled base. The recessed entryways both have double paneled doors with tall windows beneath a transom window. Above the storefronts, there is now a scar left by the removal of a porch roof that once covered the sidewalk in front of the block. The second story of the north facade has six windows with chamfered side trim set on a flush boarding wall. Above the frieze is a wide box cornice with mouldings and true classical modillions. The crowning glory of the block is its tall mansard roof with convex lower slopes. A cornice with mouldings marks the break between the shingled lower slopes and the sheet metal covered upper slopes. The lower slope is broken by plain chimneys on the east, south and west, and by twelve dormers, four on the long sides (north and south) and two on the shorter sides. The gable roofed dormers feature arched two over two sash windows, flanking chamfered pilasters with bases, and a box cornice with mouldings and short returns.

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The south facade of the building, visible from the South Main Street bridge, has six sash windows on each story. They are decorated by segmental arch heads in the brick basement, and by chamfered side trim and bracketed sills in the two wooden stories. With the exception of wooden quoins, the south and east walls are currently covered by asphalt shingles. Fortunately, rehabilitation of the Abel Block is now underway. Its height and quality certainly make it one of the most important buildings on the Square.

#7 - Bean-Tukey Block (Eunice Dasch) - This 2½-story commercial block was built by Reuben C. Bean about 1841 and somewhat enlarged by C.H. Tukey in 1901. The building now covers every inch of its site and even projects over the Newfound River to the south. Early photographs show a gable-roofed building with clapboarded walls, a tall brick chimney rising from the center of the long north roof slope and a flat western wall. Most of the building's surfaces have been resheathed, with sheet metal on the roof, red "brick" asphalt siding on the walls, and even stucco on the chimney. A large shed dormer has been added to the north slope of the roof. And the western wall now has a slight angle built into it. But, the basic form and composition of the building survives. And restoration of the exterior should not be too difficult. The north facade, facing the Square, has two store-fronts beneath a continuous lintel board with moulding. They both have plate glass display windows with plain wooden trim and recessed entryways with double doors. Above are four second story windows and the block's simple box cornice. The shed dormer has a triple window flanked by single windows. Plain trim surrounds these north windows, as well as those on the west and south walls. The distinctive feature of the south facade is a one-story wooden porch suspended over the Newfound River at the first story level. This modest building could, with some restoration, contribute significantly to the historic character of the Square.

#8 - Draper Block (John Mathews) - This commercial block is located just south of the South Main Street bridge, and is plainly visible from Central Square. Construction of the brick building was begun by George A. Draper in 1874. But, while Mr. Draper was watching the excavation of the foundation, the earth beneath his feet gave way and he fell head first into the foundation trench. He died of his injuries and their complications a few weeks later. The Draper Block is a 2½-story gable roofed building, with a full brick basement and a small projecting section with a flattish roof at its rear northwest corner. The eastern gable front facing South Main Street has a cut granite block foundation and two arcaded storefronts. The imposts of the arches are marked by a projecting band of bricks. And the arches are supported within the storefronts by paneled pillars. Although the paneled wooden bases beneath the windows are probably original, the windows, doors, and flush boarding infill of the arches, are obviously modern. The south storefront has two semicircular arches, sheltering a display window and an entry. The north storefront has three three-centered arches, with the entry in the central arch. The windows of the second and third floors of the east facade and the windows of the block's other facades are all sash windows with segmental arch heads and granite sills. The taller windows of the second story have been replaced by modern windows two-thirds of the original height, with wood infill added above. The building's cornice is a box cornice with mouldings, but no frieze. The sheet metal roof is broken only by a single large chimney. To the south is a one-story shed-roofed porch with a base of granite piers with latticework, but a newer top of steel posts and modern flush boarding. The Draper Block is a good example of a simpler Victorian commercial block, with its arcaded storefronts still surviving, if not exactly in their original form.

(See Continuation Sheet #5)

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West side of Central Square - The four two-story roofed commercial blocks on the west side of Central Square form a still intact Victorian streetscape. Built or remodeled almost within a single decade, they all have brick fronts with segmental arched windows on the second story and wide cornices supported by large paired carved brackets with pendants. Three of the buildings are the same height, and two have identical cornices. All of their original storefronts have been replaced by more modern storefronts with large display windows, but, otherwise, the buildings still carry their 19th century facades. The rare unity of their design, enlivened by individual differences in ornament, make them one of the most pleasing elements in Central Square.

#9 - 11-13 Central Square (#9A, 13 Central Square - William & Margaret Langdon; #9B, 11 Central Square - Guy & Linda Peets) - This block was erected in 1872 after the Dec. 7, 1871, fire destroyed the previous buildings on this site. Although it was designed and built as a single building, the north and south sections of the block have been separately owned for at least a century. In the center of the east facade, is a recessed entry for the stairs, topped by a segmental arch head and corresponding brick hood mould. Originally, the storefronts to the north and south of this door had similar ornament. Each consisted of a doorway between two windows, all with their own segmental arch heads and hood moulds. These storefronts were replaced by newer ones with large plate glass display windows and recessed entryways. Above the storefront, is a four course band of projecting bricks. The eight windows of the second story still retain their six over six sash, segmental arch heads, brick hood moulds and granite sills. A single projecting brick course supports the cornice's five pairs of carved brackets with pendants. A band of smaller and simpler brackets appear directly below the wide box cornice on a narrow board. Only the front wall of this block is brick. The building itself is of balloon frame construction, supported in part by piers, as, at high water, the Newfound River flows under some of the building. The south and west walls of 13 Central Square are now covered with vinyl "clapboard" siding, while the rear west wall of 11 Central Square is still sheathed with wooden clapboards.

#10 - Rollins Block (Bristol Drug, Inc.) - The same 1871 fire that destroyed the buildings at 11 and 13 Central Square also leveled the building on this site. Leston L. Rollins built the present block in 1872. The title "ROLLINS BLOCK" still appears in large letters above the second-story windows. As at 11-13 Central Square, the Rollins Block originally had two storefronts and a stairway entry, each window and door under a separate segmental arch. Today, one drugstore occupies the first floor, behind a newer storefront with plate glass windows and a recessed entry that serves both the store and the modern stairway. Above the storefront is a long plastic wall sign. Six evenly spaced sash windows with segmental arch heads, brick hood moulds and granite sills are found on the second story. The cornice, with its three pairs of large brackets, is virtually identical, in design and detail, to the cornice of 11-13 Central Square, built in the same year. The front and side walls of the Rollins Block are brick, but the rarely seen rear wall is sheathed with clapboards and sheet metal.

(See Continuation Sheet #6)

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#11 - Cavis Block (Harris Brothers, Inc.) - Soon after the July 4, 1861 fire destroyed the Cavis family store, this brick block was built as a replacement. The five-bay brick facade with cut granite block foundation is divided into a two-bay section and a three-bay section by vertical strips, banded on the first story and paneled on the second. Each section originally had a storefront like those of the blocks to the south, with separate windows and doors, under their own segmental arches. As one furniture store now occupies the building, the south storefront no longer has its own door, and is filled by a large plate glass window sheltered by a shingled hood. The northern storefront is a late 19th century wood and glass remodeling. Between two large display windows with transom windows, is the entry--double doors with windows beneath another transom window. The posts flanking the entry are fluted with carved bases and tops. Above the painted wall signs over the storefronts is a three-course band of projecting bricks. On this band rests the granite sills of the five second-story sash windows with their segmental arch heads. Directly above the vertical strips are the three pairs of carved brackets with pendants that support the wide cornice with its paneled soffit. A row of smaller carved brackets on a narrow board are also found just below the cornice. The utilitarian rear wall is unornamented, its windows having only plain granite sills and lintels.

#12 - White's Block (James R. Peabody) - In 1848, Warren White built a 2½-story gable-roofed brick block with a granite foundation at the corner of Central Square and Pleasant Street. Gutted by fire on July 4, 1861, it was rebuilt as a two-story block with a flat roof. Late 19th century photographs show an arcade on the Central Square frontage of its two stores. Today, the building has two large plate glass window storefronts which share a recessed entry in the center of the Square facade. (Both are now used by a single hardware store.) The five windows of the second story of the Square facade have granite sills and segmental arch heads with carved tympanums and brick hood moulds. The windows and the side door on the Pleasant Street frontage are plainer, with granite sills and lintels. Just below the cornice's eleven pairs of carved brackets are found panels in the brickwork, as well as in the soffit of the wide cornice. On the south side of the building is a triangular shaped lower brick wing, wedged between the main block and the Cavis Block, but invisible from the streets. The rear walls, like those of the other three blocks, are unornamented.

#13 - The Bristol Bank - In December of 1891, the Bristol Savings Bank purchased the site for a new bank building. Construction began the following spring on a three story flat roofed brick block designed by architects Dow & Randlett of Concord. The building was completed and occupied in the fall of 1893. Much of the first story of the block has been obscured and altered. A recent one-story brick and glass addition hides the first story of the south facade, and a quarter of the first story of the west facade. A modern porch with a suspended roof over a concrete platform occupies the rest of the west facade. The storefront, two entries and large bank window still visible on that facade have been modernized, with new windows and doors, but their flanking brick piers still retain their bands of granite. On the north side, a one-story drive-in teller unit has been added. Above the first story, however, the bank block is unaltered. As the west side facing North Main Street and the south side facing Central Square are the most prominent, they received the most ornament. Vertical brick strips divide the six-bay south facade into three equal sections, and the eight-bay west facade into four unequal sections. An ornamental grid is completed by the continuous granite lintel and sill courses of the second story and third story windows.

(See Continuation Sheet #7)

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The taller third story windows actually have two lintel bands, one at the top of the two sliding sash, the other above the fixed upper sash with its small decorative panes. The walls are topped by a tall brick parapet, supported by a continuous corbel table. The parapet is ornamented by bands of sawtooth courses between the vertical strips and by a row of small recessed panels. At the top of the parapet, the recessed sections are corbelled out to meet the plain of the vertical strips, thus finishing the wall with a narrow continuous band of brick. The one bay section above the main entry on the west facade received additional decoration--a panel of basket weave bricks between the second and third stories, and another band of sawtooth courses below the corbel table. The north and east walls were given less attention. The granite bands were omitted, each window receiving its own granite sill and lintel. The brick vertical strips appear only at the corners and once in the center of the east facade. The decorative parapet was continued on the north facade, but the east facade has only a narrow projecting brick band topping its wall. Most of the backgrounds are paved for parking and access to the drive-in teller. But, south of the building, there is a small lawn facing the Square. The Bristol Bank is one of the most prominent buildings on Central Square, and a good example of the more pretentious late 19th century commercial blocks.

#14 - Soldiers' Monument - In 1896, the United States government gave the Bristol G.A.R. post a surplus Civil War naval mortar for use as a monument. The mortar came from the U.S.N. Orvette, which had served in the Mississippi River, Mobile Bay and South Carolina campaigns. The short but massive mortar was brought to Bristol in 1897 and placed on a granite base in Central Square. Across its face was fixed a round tablet commemorating Bristol's Civil War dead. The memorial was formally dedicated on November 4, 1898. It sits in a small rectangular park protected by curbing. Later, other monuments were erected here to honor Bristol's Revolutionary and World War I soldiers. Both are bronze plaques mounted on rough stone slabs. Also found on the same small lot are a pile of cannonballs in front of the mortar, the town flagpole, a light pole, ornamental shrubs and a tree.

Non-contributing Buildings

#3B - Bristol Town Square Apartments (Beno, Devivo & Mirski) - The wooden ell and barn of the Bartlett House (#3A) became the starting point for an elderly housing project constructed in 1979 and 1980. The ell, a two-story gable-roofed building with a one-story shed roofed addition to the south, and the connected barn, a two-story gable-roofed structure, were converted into apartments. A one-story wing to the south, as well as two much larger two-story wings on the east, were added to provide more units. The older buildings still retain their clapboarded walls, box cornices, and some of their six over six sash windows, but they have been partially modernized with new windows and entries. The newer buildings, also clapboarded, have plainer eaves and modern windows. The apartments were built close to the south and east lot boundaries, and have a parking lot on the north. The 16-unit wooden apartment building is under separate ownership from the brick Bartlett House. It does not face the Square, and, for those looking from the Square, is largely obscured by the Bartlett House. In fact, if the apartment complex was not physically attached to the Bartlett House, it would not be included in the Historic District.

(See Continuation Sheet #8)

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#5 - Joe's Supermarket (Joseph Simkevich) - This two-story concrete walled block was built in 1917 on the site of the Emerson Block, a 3½-story mansard roofed building that burned in 1912. It is the only 20th century building facing the Square. A long rectangular building with an almost flat roof, the block was built of poured concrete, that was left rough on the side walls, otherwise distinguished only by their wooden framed windows and doors. The narrow west facade facing the Square has a modern sheet metal and plate glass storefront with recessed entry on the first story. The stucco covered second story features two triple windows and a pattern of boards laid into the stucco. While different in style and period from the other buildings in the District, the block at least respects the scale of the older commercial buildings on the Square.

In summary, the Central Square Historic District is a 19th century commercial district that developed around an open square. With two exceptions, the buildings in the district are late 18th century or early 19th century residences, and mid or late 19th century commercial buildings. All have been altered to some degree, but virtually all still retain their architectural integrity. And most could be restored to their late 19th century appearance without too much difficulty. Even with out restoration, the Central Square Historic District appears today much as it did at the end of the 19th century.

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Central Street was extended to the new Central Bridge over the Pemigewasset River to New Hampton in 1823. Central Street became the main entry to the village when the Franklin and Bristol Railroad station on the bank of the Pemigewasset River opened for business in July of 1848.

Thus, in the early 19th century, Central Square became the major road intersection in the town. Unfortunately, we know less about the establishment of the Square itself. Town records do not mention any formal layout of the Square, although they do describe the layout of the roads running through the Square, which did establish some of its boundaries. The open space of the Square may have appeared simply in response to public use, as a wide space that developed naturally at the intersection of five major roads. And there may have been private decisions by bordering landowners to leave the space to the public. Probably, the Square was created by a combination of all of these public and private decisions. Whatever the cause, the result was an almost rectangular open square that does give Bristol's downtown a rather unique formal focus. The typical 19th century New Hampshire business district developed along a Main Street or, occasionally, around a common. There were few open spaces in business districts. And most of them, such as Market Square in Portsmouth and the Central Squares of Rochester and Dover, were vaguely triangular in shape, actually little more than widened intersections. The only other New Hampshire square that shares the almost rectangular shape and the formal quality of Bristol's Central Square is Tremont Square in Claremont, which did not acquire its present plan until after an 1879 fire cleared the site. The unique character of Central Square's layout should be recognized as an important exception to the usual New Hampshire downtown layout.

The development of mills using the waterpower of the Newfound River and the growth of the village on the river should not be described here in any detail. Suffice it to say, that by 1819, the village was large enough to become the center for a new town called Bristol. And, that within twenty years, that town's population nearly doubled. The Square, with its central location, became the natural commercial district for Bristol. In the early 19th century, there were a few houses built on the Square. Of these, only the Bartlett House (#3A) remains. It is a fine vernacular Federal brick house, one of the best buildings of its period in the town. Public buildings, the Town Hall, churches and schools, were located near, but not on, the Square. By the Civil War, most of the buildings on the Square were commercial. The majority of these early buildings were wooden, like the Bean-Tukey Block (#7) c. 1841, and the Cass Block (#4) c. 1848. Despite some later alterations, these two gable-roofed buildings are typical of the period. Densely packed wooden buildings do, however, raise the danger of fire. And the west side of the Square burned twice. On July 4, 1861, a fire destroyed four buildings and gutted the brick White's Block (#12). White's Block was remodeled as a two-story, flat-roofed block, and a similar brick block, the Cavis Block (#11), was built just south of it. Another fire on December 7, 1871, destroyed the southern buildings on the west side again. And two more two-story, flat roofed brick fronted blocks were built there in 1872 (#9 & #10). All four buildings share the same scale and basic design, creating a unified Victorian facade on the west side, which remains one of the most attractive features of the Square.

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Commercial expansion continued in the late 19th century. Some buildings were enlarged. The Abel Block (#6) received a third floor and was remodeled in the fashionable Second Empire style in 1878. It is still one of the best buildings on the Square. The commercial district also began to expand along Pleasant Street, North and South Main Streets. The Draper Block (#8) 1874-5, just south of the South Main Street Bridge is one of the two survivors of this modest expansion. It is a good example of a simpler late Victorian brick commercial block. The three-story brick block erected by the Bristol Savings Bank (#13) 1892-3 was more pretentious, requiring the services of a Concord architectural firm. The skills of Dow & Randlett are certainly obvious in this dominating building. Almost at the end of the century, the symbolic importance of Central Square as the heart of the community was recognized by the erection of a Civil War soldiers' monument (#14) 1897.

The 20th century has, of course, had its effect on the District. The Square was paved in 1900 and has since acquired the usual parking spaces, road signs, street lights, etc. More serious was the loss of three buildings--Ichabod Bartlett's Store (on the site of the parking lot at the north end of the Square), the Hotel Bristol (at the northwest corner of the North Main Street and Pleasant Street intersection), and the Emerson Block (at the northeast corner of the Central Square and Central Street junction). But, these losses led to the construction of only one 20th century building facing the Square, Joe's Supermarket (#5) on the site of the Emerson Block. The Bartlett Store site was absorbed into the Square's open space. And that section of the Hotel Bristol site facing the Square is now a rather small landscaped park. Bristol's new commercial buildings have appeared not on the Square itself, but on the formerly residential streets near it--South Main Street, Pleasant Street and Lake Street. There has been some modernization of the Square's buildings, notably new store-fronts and new siding on a few of the wooden buildings. However, with the possible exception of the Baptist Parsonage (#2), these alterations have not been so extensive as to threaten the integrity of the Square's architecture. Although restoration has begun on only a few of the buildings, the District still retains, to a large extent, its late 19th century appearance. Today, the Central Square Historic District contains a rare downtown square, an almost intact late 19th century commercial district, and a number of individual buildings of architectural merit. It is therefore, certainly, worthy of inclusion in the National Register.

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Verbal boundary description & justification:

The boundary of the Central Square Historic District is as follows: beginning at the corner of the South Main Street bridge, then south on South Main Street to the south boundary of John Mathews, then along the southern and western boundaries of John Mathews to the Newfound River, then west on the Newfound River to the west boundary of James R. Peabody, then north on western boundary of James R. Peabody and across Pleasant Street on the same line to the east curb of North Main Street, then north on North Main Street to the north boundary of the Bristol Bank, then along the northern and eastern boundaries of the Bristol Bank to the north boundary of Lot 1 of D & D Trust, along the northern and eastern boundaries of Lot 1, then across Summer Street on the same line as the east boundary of Lot 1 to a point east of the Baptist Parsonage, then south on a line coinciding with the east boundary of Susan Beno to the east boundary of Susan Beno, then along the eastern boundary of Susan Beno to north boundary of Beno, Devivo & Mirski, then along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of Beno, Devivo & Mirski to east boundary of Roger and Janet Tozier, then south on the eastern boundaries of Roger and Janet Tozier, and Joseph Simkevich to the north curb of Spring Street, then west on Spring Street to Central Square, then south on the east boundary of John Moyer, Jr. to the Newfound River, and then west on the Newfound River to the center of the South Main Street bridge. The District boundary is drawn to include Central Square and two overlapping groupd of buildings, the buildings facing Central Square and the surviving buildings of the 19th century commercial district. (The Draper Block, #8, is actually the only 19th century commercial block not on Central Square.)

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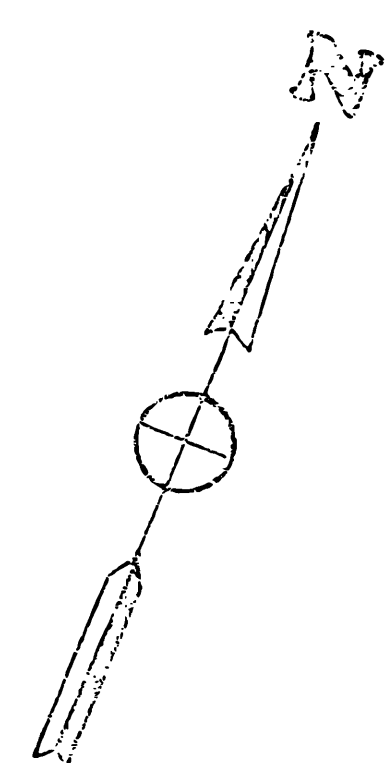
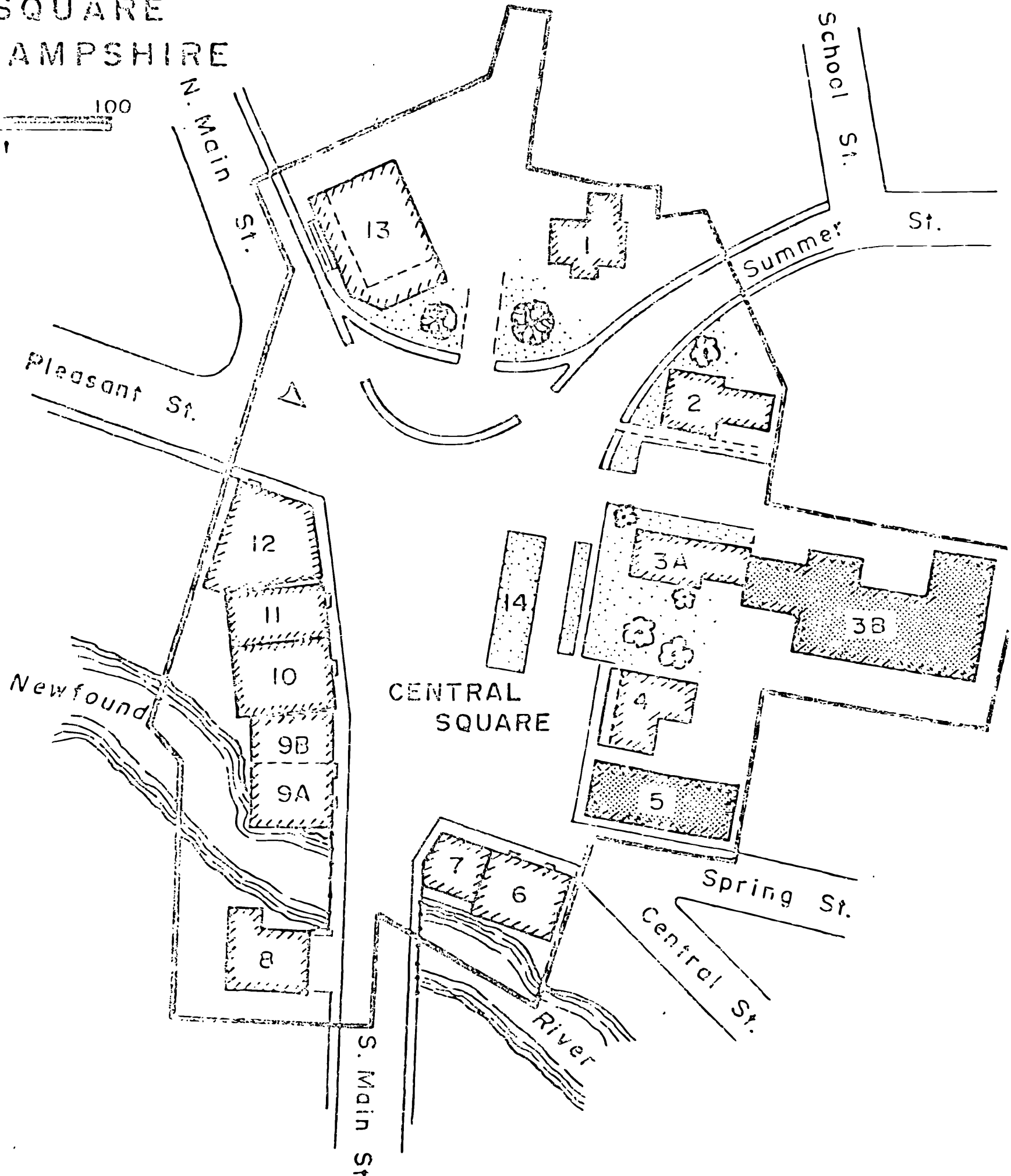
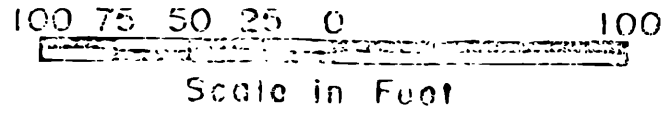
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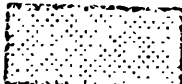
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CENTRAL SQUARE
BRISTOL NEW HAMPSHIRE



 Non-contributing buildings

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