

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only  
received APR 8 1982  
date entered  
MAY 21 1982

1. Name

historic, Blackwell Street Historic District

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Blackwell Street and adjoining streets (see #10) <sup>Sussex</sup> N/A not for publication  
city, town Dover N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~ 13th  
state New Jersey code 34 county Morris code 027

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name See Continuation Sheet

street & number

city, town N/A vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Morris County Courthouse

street & number Washington Street

city, town Morristown state New Jersey 07960

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N.J. Historic Sites Inventory: Dover #1409 has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Office of Cultural and Environmental Services

city, town Trenton state New Jersey 08625

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" 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
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Note: Parenthetical numbers throughout the nomination refer to the Historic District map.

The Blackwell Street Historic District is comprised of 79 buildings, one archeological site and two bridges which occupy part of a regular street grid laid out in the 1830's. The majority of the structures face along 5 1/2 blocks of Blackwell Street and two blocks of Sussex Street, the intersection of which represents the commercial center of Dover since at least 1853. The district is comprised of primarily late 19th century buildings with commercial uses at the street level, residential and office spaces above; varied in architectural styles and elements; attached; two to three stories high; constructed of frame, masonry or brick with flat roofs; and built to a uniform lot line. What results is a continuous wall plane typical of urban street-scapes, broken in only two places by vacant lots (now used as pocket parks). Although primarily commercial, the district does contain Dover's most historically significant public, religious, entertainment, educational, and transportation buildings, and it remains the viable center of commerce and activity today. Less than 8% of the buildings in the district are classified as intrusions and three individual properties are listed or pending National Register status. (Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Station, N.R. 5/23/80 - The Baker Building, N.R. 7/1/81 - Old Stone Academy, S.R. 7/15/79).

The district's main delineators are Blackwell and Sussex Streets (intersecting at right angles); the Rockaway River and the former Morris Canal bed to the north; and running parallel to Blackwell Street, the tracks of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad (now Conrail) on the south and west. Although historically significant, the Rockaway River is not a dominant physical feature in the district because of its narrow width and channelized banks. Topography is level, lying at the bottom of a partial bowl created by wooded hills rising to the south, west, and north.

Although there are varied architectural styles and elements, the overall impression of the district is one of homogeneity. Most commercial buildings fall into two categories. They usually conform to a plan that includes large display windows flanking a center door with three windows evenly spaced on the floors above. Examples of this type are (28), (43), (65), (66), and (67). A number of larger commercial blocks meant to house multiple tenants are characterized by greater architectural elaboration. They provide visual rests in the streetscape rhythm. Prominent examples include (20), with vernacular ornament; (34), an Italianate block with bracketed cornice and twin gables; (59), marked by bands of round-arched windows; and (68), an eclectic composition with pyramidal-roofed tower. Although terra-cotta and pressed metal are found, ornament is usually executed in wood and brick, with prevalence of rusticated stone sills, lintels and keystones. A stylistic analysis will be found in Section 8 under "Architecture."

The majority of the structures within the district have been altered at the pedestrian level to keep up contemporary appearances. Changes include the addition of synthetic sidings, altered shop windows and obtrusive signage which are easily reversible alterations. These problems are being addressed by local agencies as newly renovated buildings are demonstrating the possibilities achievable through good design planning. Street trees are small and newly planted, and there is no evidence of historic street furniture or paving.

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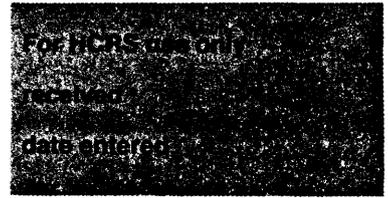
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Adding variety to the stock of commercial buildings are three stone churches (8, 52, and 54), and a fourth (24), which is hidden behind a commercial facade on Sussex Street; the large Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Station (54B); the Stone Academy (54C); and a scattering of residences (7, 27A, 75 and 76). Most of these buildings play key roles as familiar sighting points or as boundary delineators. St. John's Episcopal Church (54), for example, occupies an entire block at the east end of Blackwell Street where the only mature shade trees in the district are found. Its location across from the Methodist Episcopal Church (52) and the three story Bergen Building (53) creates a monumental gateway on the district's eastern border. The Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Station and the Stone Academy, within sight of each other at the southeast corner of the district, are freestanding structures readily distinguishable from the commercial row of the main street. The First Presbyterian Church (8) sits near the west end of Blackwell, and its 120 foot tower is the highest point on the street. Residential buildings surviving at the west end of the district include Colonial Revival, Romanesque, and eclectic elements. Until the turn of this century, the commercial center of town did not expand west beyond Warren Street, and "Doctor's Row" and the McFarlan Park were all that existed there. The final urban metamorphosis of Blackwell Street included the uniform commercial and institutional development west of Warren, with the exception of a few remnants of "Doctor's Row" (7, 75 and 76) and the Pierson Block (1), a row of six attached apartments.

The northern boundary of the district was chosen because it historically and visually represents the portal into the central downtown commercial core. The structures on the east and west of Sussex Street maintain the uniformity and scale of the downtown and demonstrate the first dense concentration of commercial structures denoting the change from residential use which predominates north of Clinton Street. Although the integrity of the structures on the western side of Sussex may be questionable, changes are probably reversible and the structures are historically significant. Three buildings in this section of Sussex remain as reminders of an influential transportation link in Dover. The Second Empire Central Hotel (33), its neighbor the Central Building (32), and the Central Railroad of New Jersey's Depot (22) were built after the extension of the Central Railroad of New Jersey's lines to town in 1881. The buildings have adapted to modern commercial uses as the line carries only freight today.

Surprisingly, there is only visible remnant directly related to the Morris Canal's technology; a lock behind (34). Visible remains of the lock include a cinder block area amidst the concrete channel walls of the Rockaway River marking the entrance to the lock. Mechanical equipment may exist below ground in this area, as public works projects have encountered completely intact lock remains during past excavations in the area. The site where the Railroad lines meet the Morris Canal is the only site in history where a train and canal boat collided. The railroad ran over the Canal with a drawbridge that rose allowing barges to pass beneath. The bridge failed one day and, thus, the collision. Numerous entertainment houses and theatres and hotels are extant (although adapted for more contemporary uses), as well as the commercial core of town. These entities developed rapidly as a result of the Canal's construction through Dover in 1829-31. The importance of the district as a commuter and freight point was underscored when the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western built an

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imposing station here in 1901. Still in use, the station offers commutation services to nearly 1500 people daily.

The condition and intact states of the majority of the structures in the Blackwell Street Historic District, combined with a rejuvenated interest in the restoration of buildings here, make it a prime candidate for a "Main Street" prototype project, as developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The concentration of economically viable and architecturally cohesive commercial structures has brought about several inquiries for Tax Act certifications, and is certainly an attractive selling point for small business investors.

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INDIVIDUAL DESCRIPTIONS OF RESOURCES

Blackwell Street Historic District

In compiling the following individual building descriptions for structures within the Blackwell Street Historic District, a system of four categories was used to assess the architectural and streetscape qualities of each structure:

1. The term "Key" is applied to those buildings, structures, and objects which possess distinct architectural and historical significance, and which act as landmarks within the architectural matrix of the district.
2. "Contributing" refers to buildings (and structures, etc.) dating from the period of the district's significance which have some architectural and/or historical importance, and which visually contribute to the cohesiveness of the district's streetscapes.
3. "Harmonizing" buildings (structures, etc.) are those dating from the period of the district's significance which have been significantly altered, or newer buildings which are compatible (in massing, materials, setbacks, etc.) with the character of the district. Investigation of the reversibility of alterations and of the significance of newer buildings to the architectural and historical integrity of the district is necessary prior to certifying properties in this category for Tax Act purposes.
4. "Intrusions" are those buildings (and structures, etc.) which detract from the character of the district.

The survey of the Blackwell Street Historic District was sponsored by the Department of the Interior's Historic Preservation Grants-in-Aid, administered through the National Park Service and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Cultural and Environmental Services, 109 West State Street, Trenton, New Jersey 08625. Individual survey forms for all properties have been included in the New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory on file at the Office of Cultural and Environmental Services.

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Map No.

1. Pierson's Block  
79-89 Blackwell Street  
Block 1204/Lots 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 (Key, c. 1890)  
  
Late Victorian Eclectic. Two-story, six-unit residential rowhouse, brick with stone, wood, metal and terra cotta trim. Residential.
2. Dover Steam Laundry  
75 West Blackwell Street  
1205/7 (Contributing, c. 1895)  
  
Commercial vernacular, three stories, four bays; brick with corbeled cornice. Alterations at first level. Commercial/Residential.
3. 71-73 West Blackwell Street  
1205/5 & 6 (Harmonizing, c. 1910)  
  
Italianate commercial vernacular, three stories, six bays; clapboard covered with asbestos shingles; wooden cornice with console brackets. Commercial/Residential.
4. 69 West Blackwell Street  
1205/4 (Harmonizing, c. 1910)  
  
Italianate commercial vernacular, 3 1/2 stories, four bays; aluminum siding over clapboard; well proportioned wood shop front. Commercial/Residential.
5. 67 West Blackwell Street  
1205/3 (Harmonizing, c. 1898)  
  
Colonial Revival, 2 1/2 stories, cross gambrels and round tower; cement brick facing over clapboard. Porches enclosed on first two levels and fire escape added. Major alterations. Residential.
6. Harry Loory Furniture  
65 West Blackwell Street  
1205/2 (Intrusion, c. 1916-27)  
  
Three stories; c. 1940's facing of glazed panels and cement block. Large window display across second floor. All original details - four bay, "butterbrick" facade - obscured. Commercial/Residential to Commercial.
7. Condict House/Presbyterian Church House  
55 West Blackwell Street  
1206/14 & 15 (Key, c. 1890)

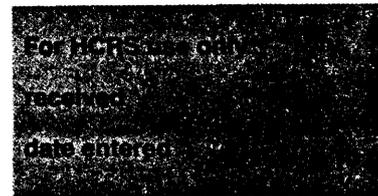
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Map No.

7. Queen Anne. 2 1/2 stories, three bays and round tower; brick. Two story front porch removed, shingled sleep porch over east entrance and decorative shingling in gable peak. Residential to Commercial.
8. Hoagland Memorial Presbyterian Church  
1206/14 & 15 (Key, c. 1899-1901)
- Romanesque Revival. Rock-faced granite; 120 foot tower with pyramidal roof; notable interior. Architect, Paul Botticher of Newark.
9. 43-45 West Blackwell Street  
1206/12 & 13 (Harmonizing, c. 1898)
- Three stories, four bays. Two buildings joined with synthetic siding, facade alteration resulting in loss of stylistic evidence. Wide signage cornice above first level. Residential/Commercial.
10. Baker Theatre  
39 West Blackwell Street  
1206/11 (Key, 1906)
- Vernacular with neoclassical elements. 1924 alterations. 2 1/2 stories with 70 foot stage-house wing; brick. Gross dimensions, 75 feet x 250 feet. Colonial Revival second level arcade - seven bays. Marquee over altered first level.
11. 33 West Blackwell Street  
1206/10 (Harmonizing)
- Construction date disputed (c. 1900?). Total exterior alteration c. 1950 has removed any sense of historic style or bay division. Commercial.
- 12.. 31 West Blackwell Street  
1206/9 (Contributing, c. 1890)
- Italianate commercial vernacular, three stories, three bays; brick with bracketed wooden cornice; altered shop front. Commercial/Residential.
- 12A. Bassett Highway  
1206/8 (Contributing, c. 1850)
- Commercial vernacular. 1 1/2 story brick with segmentally arched windows, stone sills. Served as livery stable and blacksmith shop until 1920's. Commercial.

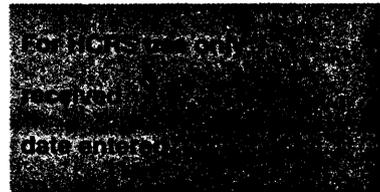
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Map No.

- 12B. 25-29 North Blackwell Street  
1206/7 (Harmonizing, c. 1887, addition 1896)

Italianate commercial vernacular. Three stories, seven bays. Facade altered with brick and stucco over clapboard. Windows replaced. Shares roof cornice with 12. Altered first level. Commercial/Residential.

13. 21-23 West Blackwell Street  
1206/6 (Contributing, c. 1890)

Commercial vernacular. Four stories, six bays. Brick with complex corbeling and terra cotta ornament; altered shopfronts, decorative iron fire escape on facade; polychrome belt courses at lintels and sills. Commercial/Residential.

14. 17-19 West Blackwell Street  
1206/4 & 5 (Harmonizing, c. 1870)

Italianate commercial vernacular. Three stories, six by eleven bays; clapboard covered with scored stucco; some windows at second level and shopfronts altered. Poor condition.

15. North Warren Street  
1206/2 (Harmonizing, c. 1870)

Italianate commercial vernacular. Three stories, five bays; scored stucco over clapboard; altered shopfronts, one window altered at second level, retains some original first level details. Commercial/Residential.

16. Dover Trust Company  
15 West Blackwell Street  
1207/7 (Key, 1915)

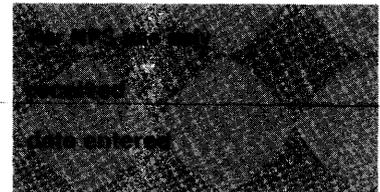
Neoclassical. Two stories, three by six bays (three northern bays added later). Marble (or fine limestone) ashlar. Colossal round-arched windows and other classical motifs.

17. United Jersey Bank  
13 West Blackwell Street  
1207/6 (Intrusion, 1887)

New facade c. 1973 attempts to echo motifs of Dover Trust in cast concrete panels. Hides two story wood frame building.

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Map No.

18. 11 West Blackwell Street  
1207/5 (Harmonizing, c. 1880)

Commercial vernacular; three stories, two bays. Clapboard altered with cement and aluminum siding. Storefront altered as were upper story windows. Pent roof over commercial level. Commercial/Residential.

19. National Union Bank Building  
9 West Blackwell Street  
1207/4 (Key, 1871)

Renaissance Revival. Three stories, three bays; brick with metal window surrounds and other trim. Ground floor altered c. 1929 with glazed terra cotta. Commercial.

20. Richards Block  
1-5 West Blackwell Street  
1207/3 (Key, c. 1870)

Addition between 1896 and 1901 of six north bays. Commercial vernacular. Three stories, 10 to 18 bays. Brick facade ornamented with brick and terra cotta. Iron dormer at roof corner. Shop front altered. Commercial.

21. Dover Town Hall  
37 North Sussex Street  
1203/1 (Intrusion, 1960-61)

Georgian Revival. One story with full basement; brick. Site of 1874 firehouse and used continuously for municipal functions since.

22. Central Railroad of New Jersey Depot  
47 North Sussex Street  
1324/5 (Harmonizing, c. 1881)

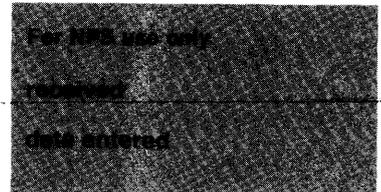
Vernacular Second Empire. Three stories, four bays. Aluminum siding over clapboard. Ground floor altered with first story southern extension. Railroad to Commercial.

- 23A. 49 North Sussex Street  
1326/4 (Harmonizing, c. 1875)

Vernacular with Italianate influence. Three stories, two bays. Stucco and aluminum over clapboard. All levels altered. Roof cornice intact. Commercial/Residential.

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Map No.

- 23B. 51 North Sussex Street  
1326/4 (Harmonizing, c. 1850)

2 1/2 stories, aluminum sided; gable end to street, three bay with altered but well proportioned first level. Commercial/Residential.

24. First Free Methodist Church  
51 North Sussex Street  
1326/3A (Contributing, c. 1872)

Vernacular. Steeply-pitched slate-covered gable over irregularly-laid fieldstone walls. East facade obscured by cement shop front. Gable end to street. Second oldest standing church in Dover, now Commercial/Residential.

25. 55 North Sussex Street  
1326/3 (Harmonizing, c. 1910)

Vernacular. Two stories, three bays (probably originally four); aluminum siding. Ground floor altered with large display window. Gable end to street, lean-to addition to west. Commercial/Residential.

26. 59 North Sussex Street  
1326/2A (Open Space)

Parking Lot.

27. Searing's Hotel/North End Hotel  
58-60 North Sussex Street  
1325/1 (Key, c. 1860)

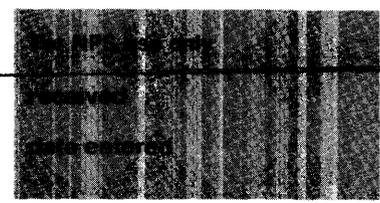
Italianate commercial vernacular. Three stories, seven bays; heavily bracketed wooden cornice with pendant drops. Storefronts altered c. 1900. Two story open facade porch removed and clapboard covered with permabrick. District boundary anchor. Commercial/Residential.

- 27A. Attached to Searing's Hotel to the east.  
Fronts Clinton Street (Contributing)

Possibly pre-1830 residence. 1 1/2 stories, three bays; gable roof, chimney at gable end wall. Flat roof porch over entrance, asbestos. Porch across facade, knee high window.

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Map No.

28. 58 North Sussex Street  
1325/16 (Harmonizing, pre-1853)

Vernacular. Two stories, three bays (probably a side hall plan originally). Synthetic siding over clapboard; one of the few remaining early houses in the district. Ground floor altered to shop fronts. Commercial.

29. 54-56 North Sussex Street.  
1325/15 (Contributing, c. 1920)

One story "taxpayer" of vertically-tooled tan brick; leaded transoms are painted over. Storefront intact. Commercial.

30. 50-52 North Sussex Street  
1325/14 (Contributing, c. 1935)

One story "taxpayer" with cement and glazed panel facade. Commercial.

31. 48 North Sussex Street  
1325/14 (Contributing, c. 1910)

Commercial vernacular, Romanesque and neoclassical elements. Three stories, four bays, divided in half by vertical pilasters. Modern face brick and pent roof added to ground floor. Commercial/Residential.

32. Central Building  
46 North Sussex Street  
1325/12 (Key, 1910)

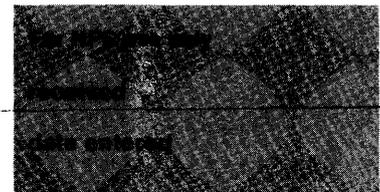
Italianate commercial vernacular. Three stories, four bays. Brick with rusticated sills and lintels. Store fronts are little altered. Heavy bracketed cornice with "Central" in central peak. Brick raised arches around central bays. Commercial/Residential.

33. Central Hotel  
40-42 North Sussex Street  
1325/10 (Contributing, c. 1872)

Mansarded commercial vernacular, 2 1/2 stories, five bays. Brick with slate roof, stone sills and lintels and Carrara glass ground-floor facade, pointed dormers, bracketed cornice. One of three Mansarded buildings in district. Commercial/Residential.

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Map No.

34. Schwarz Block  
30-36 North Sussex Street  
1208/1 (Contributing, c. 1875)

Italianate commercial vernacular veneer over clapboard. Bracketed cornice, two center gables, relatively small 2/2 sash. Alterations include brick veneer over clapboard and aluminum sided storefronts. Eight bay facade. Commercial/Residential.

- 34A. Schwarz Block Annex  
28 North Sussex  
1208/1 (Key, C. 1910)

Romanesque Revival. One story, two bays. Unusual pressed metal facade, with arches around windows and pilasters between. Commercial.

35. U.S. Post Office  
22 North Sussex Street  
1208/3 (Harmonizing, 1936)

Georgian Revival/Abstracted Classical. One story with double-height center wing flanked with projecting pavilions.

36. Moller's Opera House/Goodale Pharmacy  
16 North Sussex Street  
1208/15 & 16 (Key, c. 1860 with pre-1887 alterations)

Mansarded commercial vernacular. Three stories, L shape. Stucco over clapboard. Molded wooden cornice with brackets and modillions. Shopfront altered with aluminum and permastone. Opera House auditorium survives in altered form with original brass chandelier intact. Mansard roof may be later addition. Commercial/Residential.

37. 16 North Sussex  
1208/12-15 (Open Space)

Vacant lots landscaped as small park.

38. 1-3 East Blackwell Street  
1208/11 (Contributing, c. 1930)

Vernacular Art Deco. One story with granite or cast-stone facing. Original bay division obscured by refacing of glazed panels. Commercial.

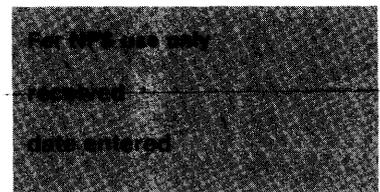
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Map No.

39. Dickerson Building  
5-7 East Blackwell Street  
1208/10 (Contributing, c. 1930)

Commercial vernacular with neoclassical detailing above second level at roof. Two stories, three bays; brick with terra cotta or cast-stone decorative panels (now painted). First floor altered with odd mix of windows and doors. Chicago style second story windows. Commercial.

40. 9 East Blackwell Street  
1208/10A (Contributing, c. 1875)

Italianate commercial vernacular. Three stories, three bays. Aluminum siding over clapboard; wooden cornice with paired brackets. Altered shop-front. Commercial.

41. 11 East Blackwell Street  
1208/9 (Contributing, c. 1875)

Second half 19th century. Italianate commercial vernacular. Three stories, three bays. Synthetic siding over clapboard. Bracketed and dentate wooden cornice. Commercial/Residential.

42. Collard Furniture Company  
13 East Blackwell Street  
1208/8 (Contributing, c. 1875?)

Commercial vernacular. Four story, narrow (15') two bay building of rusticated brick; bracketed cornice. Altered floor and first floor. Commercial.

43. Berry Building  
15 East Blackwell St.  
1208/7 (Key, 1892)

Vernacular Romanesque/neoclassical. Four stories, three by five bays. Pressed brick with rockfaced sills, lintels and keystones. Well-preserved except for ground floor. Porches around first two levels; window treatment changes at each story. Commercial/Residential.

- 43A. 12 North Morris St.  
1210/3 (Contributing, c. 1910)

Commercial vernacular. Three stories, three bays. Dichromatic pressed brick; main cornice has denticulated frieze. Shop front covered with

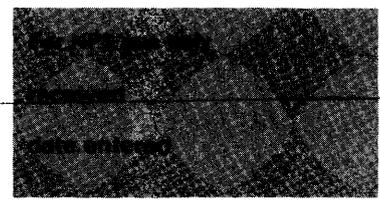
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Map No.

43A. synthetic stone. Commercial/Residential.

44. 17 East Blackwell Street  
1210 (Harmonizing, c. 1875)

Stylistic identity removed by modern addition of artificial siding. Three stories; shop front altered with pent roof and large windows. Central window in second level closed off. Commercial/Residential.

45. Harris Building  
19 East Blackwell St.  
1210/1 (Key, 1913)

Commercial vernacular with nominal classical influence. Three stories, four bays. Red brick with high-contrast white mortar. Ground floor altered. Brick ornamentation at cornice and lintels with stone keystones. Commercial/Residential.

46. 23 East Blackwell St.  
1210/4 (Contributing, c. 1910)

Commercial vernacular with Chicago School influence. Four stories with one bay ribbon window facade. Orange pressed brick and pressed metal panels in imitation of rusticated stone. Altered ground floor. Commercial/Residential.

47. 25 East Blackwell Street  
1210/5 (Contributing, c. 1910)

Commercial vernacular with classical motifs. Three stories, four bays. Brick, recessed panels, divided in 1/2, rusticated sills and lintels. Ground floor altered. Commercial/Residential.

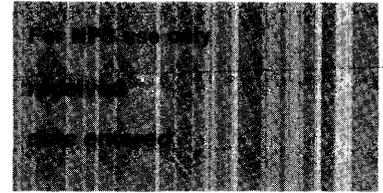
48. 27-29 East Blackwell St.  
1210/6 (Contributing, c. 1900)

Commercial vernacular with classical influence. Four stories, four bays, two windows per bay. Orange pressed brick; abstracted classical cornice. Tenement designed by U.S. Revenue Department. Storefronts altered. Commercial/Residential.

48A. 31 East Blackwell Street  
1210/9 (Open Space)

Vacant lot landscaped as small park.

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Map No.

49. 31 East Blackwell Street  
1210/9 (Contributing, c. 1930)

Neoclassical. Two stories, three by six bays. Brick with limestone trim creating false upper level colonade and pediment. Overscale modern signs detract from building. Commercial.

50. 7-9 North Essex Street  
1210/7 (Contributing, c. 1875)

Vernacular Second Empire. 2 1/2 stories, three bays; synthetic siding and brick over clapboard. Originally a double house, store fronts were added sometime after 1916.

51. Morris County Bridge #1019  
Crosses North Essex Street (Contributing, 1905)

Simple truss bridge with iron railings.

52. Methodist Episcopal Church/First United Methodist Church  
Northeast corner Blackwell and Essex Streets  
1211/1 (Key, 1874, 1906, 1964)

Romanesque/Gothic Revival. Two stories; nave and transept plan with no aisles. Rock-faced ashlar granite with brick or concrete trim. Note: 1964 addition is an intrusion. Architect Floyd Y. Parsons. Congregation dates from early days of Dover's municipal expansion.

53. Bergen Building  
47 East Blackwell St.  
1211/3 (Contributing, c. 1920)

Commercial vernacular with nominal classical elements. Brick, three stories, ground floor altered with aluminum and glazed panels. Four bays with double windows in central two bays. Parapet fanlight over side first level and entrance. Eastern district anchor building.

- 53A. Morris County Bridge #1018  
Crossing North Bergen Street (Contributing, c. 1910)

Simple truss bridge with iron railings.

- 54 & 54A. St. John's Episcopal Church, Parish House (Contributing, 1891)  
South side of Blackwell Street between Bergen and Essex Streets  
1213/1 (Key, 1866-1871)



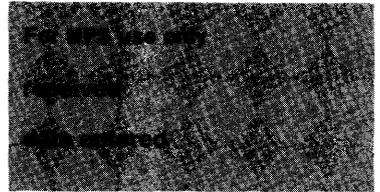
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Map No.

56. Woolworth Building  
26-28 East Blackwell Street  
1215/3 (Contributing, 1922)

Commercial vernacular with classical motifs. Two stories, four bays. Steel framing with terra cotta facade. Commercial/Residential.

57. Livingston Building  
24 East Blackwell Street  
1215/2 (Contributing, c. 1910)

Two stories (third destroyed by fire in 1948), two bays. Orange pressed brick with rusticated voussoirs. Altered ground floor. Commercial/Residential.

58. L. Lehman & Company Building/Heller Building  
18-22 East Blackwell Street  
1215/1 (Key, c. 1905)

Commercial vernacular block, originally with classical ornaments; limestone sills, lintels and name block. Three stories, seven by eight bays. Gray pressed brick; cornices removed, store fronts altered. Commercial/Residential.

- 58A. Attached to South of 58 on Morris Street  
1215/1 (Intrusion, c. 1960)

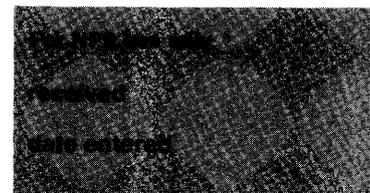
One story brick, with recessed center double door and a set of window trios to left and right. One store course above windows.

59. Brick Block  
6-16 East Blackwell Street  
1216/2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 (Key, c. 1875)

Commercial vernacular block with Romanesque or Renaissance Revival influence. Three stories, six attached three-bay units. Four-over-four round arched sash; sills and arches centered to become part of continuous dichromatic belt course; bracketed cornice with arcaded motif. Store level altered and in good state of integrity. Residential/Commercial to Commercial.

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Map No.

60. 2-4 East Blackwell Street  
1216/1 (Intrusion, c. 1960)

Two story, 1960's commercial vernacular office building of brick and cement with no redeeming architectural qualities. Six by nineteen bays. Site of the wood frame Mansion House, Dover's best known hostelry. Commercial.

61. Arrow Building  
2 West Blackwell Street  
1217/8 (Contributing, c. 1920)

Neoclassical; parapet, entablature and pilasters; three stories, two bay facade with Chicago windows. Limestone facing and trim. Commercial.

62. 4 West Blackwell Street  
1217/7 (Contributing, c. 1875)

Italianate commercial vernacular. Three stories, three bays. Synthetic siding over clapboard; bracketed cornice. Altered ground floor. Commercial/Residential.

63. 6 West Blackwell Street  
1217/6 (Intrusion, c. 1950's)

One story brick "taxpayer," c. 1950's. Was Pierson's. Commercial.

64. 8 West Blackwell Street  
1217/5 (Contributing, possibly 1853)

Italianate commercial vernacular. Two stories, three bays. Brick with stone window heads; elaborately cut wooden console brackets support massive cornice. Ground floor fenestration altered. Commercial/Residential.

65. 10 West Blackwell Street  
1217/4 (Contributing, c. 1875, altered early 20th century)

Originally a three unit row built c. 1870, each unit two stories and two bays, brick construction. No. 65 altered or rebuilt with limestone facing early 20th century. Despite alterations, the overall integrity of the row remains good. Commercial/Residential.

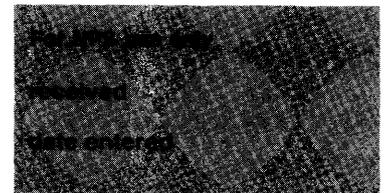
66. 12 West Blackwell Street  
1217/3 (Contributing, c. 1875)

See No. 65.

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Map No.

67. 14 West Blackwell Street  
1217/2 (Contributing, c. 1875)

See No. 65.

68. Baker Building/Baker Opera House/White Building  
16 West Blackwell Street  
1217/1 (Key, c. 1885)

Eclectic. Three stories, three by nine bays; tower and slate roof. Pressed brick with red and white mortar; elaborate brick paneling and corbelling. Built for William A. Baker, Architect/Builder unknown. Undergoing Tax Act restoration. Theatre to Commercial. (NR 7/1/81).

69. 7-11 Warren Street  
1218/18 and 19 (Key, 1911)

Commercial vernacular with classical motifs. Three stories; two attached blocks, two bays each. Pressed brick with pressed metal cornices. Recently restored. Commercial/Residential. Boundary anchor building.

70. 13 South Warren Street  
1218/19 (Contributing, c. 1925)

Commercial vernacular. One story, four bays, brick. Cornice covered with synthetic siding; will soon be restored. Post Office to Commercial.

71. National Union Bank  
24-26 West Blackwell Street  
1218/18 (key, 1929)

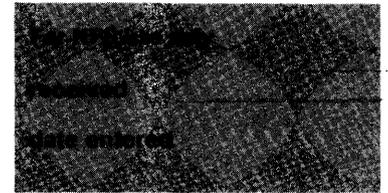
Neoclassical. Two stories; facade a monolithic block with arches, two story windows; essentially one bay with five window divisions; faced with cast stone. Interior gutted c. 1960 except for board room.

72. 28-30 North Blackwell Street  
1218/15 and 16 (Contributing, No. 28 c. 1916, No. 30 c. 1927)

Between 1916 and 1927. Commercial vernacular. Four stories, two bays; pressed brick, imbricated shingle and wood, ribbon windows with diamond upper sash, decorative cornice. Commercial/Residential.

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Map No.

73. 32-36 West Blackwell Street  
1218/8, 12 and 14 (Intrusion, No. 32 c. 1916, No. 34 c. 1927, No. 36  
frame house; alteration c. 1950)

Between 1916 and 1927. Commercial vernacular. Three stories with  
2/2 sash in banks of three. This building presents a philosophical  
problem in value judgements. Although it is evocative of the period  
of its facade alteration (c. 1950), it is out of keeping with the  
overall ambiance of the district and has been noted as an intrusion,  
It has been noted as having excellent architectural integrity.

74. 38-42 West Blackwell Street  
1218/8 (Intrusion, c. 1926)

Altered c. 1960 to a kind of vernacular International Style appearance.  
Two stories, ten bays, white brick. Commercial.

75. Dr. William J. Farren House  
44 West Blackwell Street  
1218/7 (Key, c. 1890)

Eclectic with Colonial Revival and Romanesque features. 2 1/2 stories,  
three bays; dichromatic pressed brick and pressed metal frieze above  
porch. Remnant of "Doctor's Row." Residential.

76. 48 West Blackwell Street  
1218/6 (Contributing, c. 1890)

Queen Anne/Colonial Revival. Two stories; irregular massing with  
projecting tower and bays. Covered with aluminum siding. Remnant of  
"Doctor's Row." Residential.

77. 50-52 West Blackwell Street  
1218/5 (Intrusion, post-1927)

One story brick and cement "taxpayer" of no architectural interest.  
Boundary anchor building. Commercial.

# 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Blackwell Street Historic District is the commercial and civic heart of Dover, New Jersey, the most important 19th century industrial town in Morris County. The institutions, businesses and architecture found within the district illustrate the lifestyle of a working class community from 1827 through the first third of the 20th century. From the beginning of its history, Dover's most important stores, banks, hotels, theatres, churches and public buildings have been found within the district, a concentration resulting from the planning efforts of the Town's founders, New York entrepreneurs Blackwell and McFarlan. The district served as the center for popular entertainment in Morris County, has been associated with four significant transportation phenomena and includes a variety of buildings spanning 100 years of American architecture. These buildings contribute to an understanding of vernacular commercial architecture in New Jersey.

### SETTLEMENT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

The roots of the Blackwell Street Historic District can be traced to the economic depression following the War of 1812, when Canfield and Losey, owners of the Dover Furnace since 1792, fell into debt and were forced to relinquish their holdings. In 1817, New York businessmen, Joseph Blackwell and Henry McFarlan received about 450 acres to settle accounts due. The land they acquired included all of the present central business district, although the village itself numbered no more than 12 dwellings and the iron works.

Announcement in 1824 of plans to build the Morris Canal raised Blackwell and McFarlan's hopes for their investment. In 1825, they commissioned a map of the community.<sup>1</sup> It included all buildings then standing (naming only two commercial establishments) and extrapolated new streets from the existing pattern, thus enabling the partners to draw building lot lines and to incorporate in the following year.<sup>2</sup> In 1827, they advertised in the Palladium of Liberty that building lots were for sale. In an effort to stimulate development, their terms included:

Ten per cent on the day of sale; 40 per cent on Nov. 1; 50 per cent on May 1, 1828...If improvements valued at \$800 are made during 1827 one-half the amount paid for the lot will be refunded. If improvements are made in 1827 and 1828, then 1/4 will be deducted from the cost of the lot.<sup>3</sup>

In 1829, McFarlan, who appears to have been the more philanthropic and public-spirited of the two partners, had erected at his own expense the Town's first general-purpose public building, still situated on its original lot on the north side of East Dickerson Street between Morris and Essex Streets.<sup>4</sup> It was known as the Stone Academy (54C) and

UTM NOT VERIFIED

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

See Continuation Sheets

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 25 acres ±

Quadrangle name Dover

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>	B	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	D	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>
E	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	F	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>7</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u>
G	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	H	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u>

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

Minor revisions by Candace Peck, Office of Cultural and Environmental Services 3/1982.

name/title Robert P. Guter, Consultant for

organization Dover Redevelopment Agency date October, 1980

street & number 37 North Sussex Street telephone (201) 366-2200

city or town Dover state New Jersey

# 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.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature Karime Schmidt

title \_\_\_\_\_ date March 24, 1982

For NPS use only

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

Bruce Van Duzend date 5/21/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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received  
date entered

housed the first religious services of both Presbyterians and Episcopalians, a school, and various public meetings. During this period, McFarlan's other civic projects included the planting of shade trees and the distribution of paint to owners who agreed to paint their houses.<sup>5</sup>

In 1831 the Morris Canal was completed to Newark, giving Dover a competitive advantage over Millbrook, then the leading industrial village in the vicinity. Blackwell and McFarlan's lots began to sell and Dover grew, steadily. An 1832 map by E.H. Van Winkle shows the downtown street grid in essentially its present pattern.<sup>6</sup> A map of Morris County published by J. B. Shields in 1853 depicts only two town plans in detail, those of Morristown and Dover, attesting to their importance and relatively large size.<sup>7</sup> According to Shields' map, approximately 60 buildings stood within the present district boundaries, with as many as 60 more scattered throughout the rest of the village; the greatest concentration of buildings were clustered about the intersection of Blackwell and Sussex Streets. Shields identifies ten "stores," a bakery, confection-ary, furniture store, two hotels and a bank. Public buildings were limited to the Presbyterian Church, public school and the Stone Academy. Measured solely by the increase in dwellings and commercial establishments, Blackwell and McFarlan's promotional and planning efforts must be judged successful. The presence of three iron furnaces and a rolling and slitting mill proves that hopes for a revival of the iron industry were realized as well. Henry McFarlan's personal commitment to Dover is evidenced by the large parcel he received for his residence on the north side of Blackwell Street west of Warren Street.

Between 1853 and 1887 the residential neighborhoods north and southwest of the business district were gradually filled with houses, but the Blackwell Street commercial area did not outgrow its original boundaries. The 1868 map published by Beers represents little change from the downtown of 1853.<sup>8</sup> Development remained clustered around the Blackwell/Sussex intersection with some increase in density. An additional north/south street was cut through to the east and names redesignated, so that the former Sussex-Essex-Bergen Street sequence became Sussex-Morris-Essex-Bergen.

By the time Robinson's Atlas of Morris County was published in 1887, Sussex Street north to Clinton Street had grown into a subsidiary commercial street, but the original Blackwell and Sussex axis continued to dominate the commercial sphere.<sup>9</sup> Blackwell west of Warren Street remained residential, anchored by the estate of Henry McFarlan. It was not until the turn of the century that the district underwent its final urban metamorphosis, with uniform commercial and institutional development lining Blackwell Street, except for a few remnants of "Doctor's Row" at the west end. Charles D. Platt commented on the change when he wrote in 1922, "The McFarlan regime lasted about half a century. Then it ceased. McFarlan Park, the pride of the village, was sold and soon all traces of the old gardens on both sides of Blackwell Street gave way to the show windows of thrifty storekeepers, the billboards of the Baker Theatre, the Hoagland Memorial Church."<sup>10</sup>

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TRANSPORTATION

The growth of the district is in large measure a result of improved transportation systems. Because Dover's history began with forge operations to smelt iron ore mined from the surrounding hills, the earliest roads were routes from mine to forge. First references to Dover roads appear in the Book of Roads A, found in the County Clerk's Office. Two roads surveyed in 1792 cite Beeman's Forge, an early Dover landmark, as a reference point.<sup>11</sup>

Shortly after 1800, New Jersey began to charter turnpike companies to build or improve roads. Two of these turnpikes ran along the edges of the boundaries drawn to define the present historic district. The Union Turnpike (1804) followed the approximate course of modern State Route 15, meeting the district boundary at Clinton and Sussex Streets. The Washington Turnpike (1806), ran from about the intersection of Blackwell and Prospect Streets to U.S. Route 46 and then west along the path of that highway.

Although these roads were important to Dover's early development, it was the Morris Canal that first sparked significant industrial and commercial expansion. Blackwell and McFarlan's previously-cited advertisement of 1827 mentioned the turnpikes, but emphasized the Town's location on the canal (still under construction), the Lehigh coal it would make available, and the improved access to eastern markets. In time the Canal did more than run through Dover. Its largest basin was built at the terminus of Essex Street (site of the present-day Commons Park) where boats were docked and loaded and unloaded with raw materials or finished goods. Around its banks were scattered several iron works, smithies, and a boat yard. The Canal required five locks to traverse Dover, and intersected Sussex Street and the Rockaway River within the boundaries of the present district. By stimulating industry, the Canal necessitated the commercial support system which developed into a center for goods and services.

In 1848 the Morris and Essex Railroad was extended west into Dover, further stimulating the town's growth into a central marketplace, and rendering the Canal increasingly obsolete. Produce came from as far away as Sussex County to be shipped to Newark and other points east. Freight tonnage had so increased by 1881 that the Central Railroad of New Jersey (Henry McFarlan, Jr., one of its organizers) extended its line to Dover with limited passenger service added. In 1901, the importance of the district as a commuter and freight point was underscored when the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western (successor to the Morris and Essex Railroad) built an imposing new station.

The last mode of transportation to impact Dover's growth was the Trolley. The Morris County Traction Company, incorporated in 1899, ran its first car through Dover in 1904 along Blackwell Street.<sup>12</sup> By 1911, through-service was available from Elizabeth to Lake Hopatcong, eventually on a half-hourly schedule.

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In addition to the obvious impact of canal, railroad and trolley line on Dover's prosperity, each introduced workers who lived or laid-over in town, thus swelling the local consumer market. In 1922 about 450 employees of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad (successor to the Morris and Essex line), and more than 100 employees of the Morris County Traction Company lived in Dover.<sup>13</sup>

The canal and trolley have vanished, but 1500 passengers depart from the Dover Train Station daily, and the Central still carries freight. Four county bus routes, one regional (Lakeland) and one national (Greyhound) ran through Dover; Blackwell Street is a county road; and four State, and Interstate roads run through Dover or near its boundaries.

RELIGION

Four church buildings survive within the boundaries of the district, three of them belonging to the town's first three denominations - Presbyterians, Methodists, and Episcopalians.

L.B. Magie, writing in 1895, observed that, "For one hundred and thirteen years after the first settler built his house and his forge within the limits of what is now Dover there was no church organization here."<sup>14</sup> Presbyterians were the first to find a home in Dover. They organized in 1835, under the jurisdiction of the Newark Presbytery, four years after completion of the Morris Canal through the town. Until 1842 they worshipped in the Stone Academy (54C). In that year, with a membership of about 40 persons, they dedicated their first church, a small wooden building, at the southeast corner of Prospect and Blackwell Streets.<sup>15</sup> It was moved, and replaced on the same lot in 1872 by a larger wooden building. In 1899, Hudson Hoagland, whose mother had been a founding member of the congregation, offered to pay for a new building as a memorial to his recently deceased wife. His offer was accepted and the congregation occupied its limestone Romanesque Revival church in 1901.(8).<sup>16</sup> It occupies a lot on part of the Henry McFarlan Estate, opposite the site of the two earlier churches. As late as 1905, all three buildings stood within view of one another.

The First Methodist Episcopal Church traces its roots to the Millbrook M.E. Church. It was the first congregation in Dover to have its own building, constructed in 1838 at the corner of North Sussex and McFarlan Streets. In 1872 the congregation divided, and one group built a stone church near the corner of North Essex and Blackwell Streets (52). It served the congregation until 1907, when a new church was added to it, the old building becoming a Sunday School annex.<sup>17</sup>

Like the Presbyterians, Episcopalians in Dover first met in the Stone Academy. The year was 1849 when Bishop Doane placed Dover under the charge of the Rector of St. Peter's Church in Morristown. The congregation grew slowly, but in 1866 was large enough to commence work on a building of its own, presumably designed by Richard Upjohn (54). Funds were quickly exhausted, however, and construction was halted until 1870. The following year the congregation was able to leave the Stone Academy

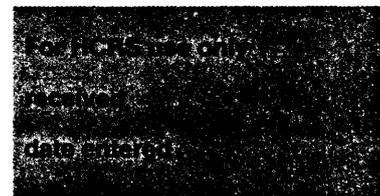
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and occupy its new Gothic Revival church, constructed on a choice piece of meadowland donated by Henry McFarlan, Jr., who had been appointed a lay reader by Bishop Doane.<sup>18</sup>

In the same year that the First Methodist congregation dedicated its building (1872), the Free Methodists erected a small stone church on a lot donated by Manning Searing. According to Platt, the Free Methodists advocated inexpensive buildings, and spent \$5,000 on the Sussex Street Church (24).<sup>19</sup>

The last group to establish itself in the district was Adath Israel of Dover. In 1917, 32 charter members organized an Orthodox congregation that met at Six West Blackwell Street in a hall over Pierson's Clothing Store (now replaced by [63]), where services were held in Hebrew.<sup>20</sup>

Religious trends in the district parallel those statewide during the same period: Presbyterians enjoyed an early ascendancy, being the most numerous of northern New Jersey denominations in most instances; strong evangelical campaigns gained converts for Methodism in the middle of the 19th century; the lingering taint of Toryism after the Revolution slowed the recognition and growth of Episcopalianism until mid-century; and outside of the larger urban centers, organized Judaism made scant progress until the twin stimulus of continued urbanization and Eastern European immigration before the First World War.

#### EDUCATION

For the most part, the history of education in Dover transpired in places outside the district with the important exception of the Stone Academy (54C). The construction of that building by Henry McFarland, Sr., in 1829, coincided with the introduction of an Act of Legislature to establish the first comprehensive school law.

Although Mr. McFarlan's specific intent regarding the educational use of the Stone Academy is not recorded, he apparently meant it to replace the old school building which had stood on the south side of Dickerson Street since the 18th century. Controversy arose over abandoning the old building, however, with the result that new and old schools held classes concurrently, sometimes sharing teachers. Because of McFarlan's generosity, Dover for many years had two "Academies," neither lacking for scholars. His interest in education is typical of the period, when approximately one fifth of New Jersey's voters were illiterate, and the lack of a general public educational system meant that religious and benevolent institutions and local interests assumed the responsibility for operating schools.

The Stone Academy also housed a number of parochial school classes during its years as a public building. In 1880 the McFarlan estate sold the Academy, which was then converted to a double dwelling house.<sup>21</sup>

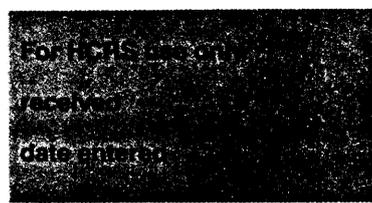
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COMMERCE

From the time of Blackwell and McFarlan's first map in 1825 until the Shields map of 1853, Dover experienced its most dramatic commercial growth. In 1825, it was hardly a village, with only one store to serve the iron workers; in 1853 Shields identifies 13 commercial establishments of various sorts, plus two hotels and a bank.<sup>22</sup> By 1868, at least 20 businesses can be identified. After that date some marginal commercial activity develops elsewhere, but the commercial core remains concentrated on Sussex Street south of Clinton Street and on Blackwell Street west of Bergen Street.

Hotels, boarding houses and places of popular entertainment were numerous, partly as a result of Dover's position as a transportation hub and trans-shipment point. Searing's Hotel (27) (later the North End Hotel) together with the Mansion House and the Park Hotel were three early hostelries followed by the Central Hotel, opened in 1872 by Leopold D. Schwartz (33).<sup>23</sup> The Mansion House was demolished in 1936, the Park Hotel in 1929.

Typical of the period, businesses were specialized. A few prosperous merchants built stores expressly for their own use, like the Berry (43) and Harris Buildings (45), but most commercial structures were built as speculative space. The three largest 19th century commercial buildings, the Richards Block (20), the Baker Building (68) and the six-unit row (59) were occupied by a succession of small businesses. Types of businesses found in the district between 1896 and 1927 may be discovered by referring to the accompanying table.

A bank had existed in Dover as early as 1831 but subsequently ceased operations. In 1872 the National Union Bank was chartered and occupied 7-9 West Blackwell Street (19) together with the U.S. Post Office. In 1929 the bank moved to its new building (71) erected on the site of the Park Hotel. A competitor, the People's National Bank, was established in 1898 and first occupied the Baker Building (68). In 1902 it was succeeded by the Dover Trust Company, and 13 years later moved to a new building (16) at the northeast corner of Blackwell and Warren Streets. The present-day successors to these two banks still occupy the 1915 and 1929 buildings, which, with the Baker Building, make the Blackwell and Warren intersection one of the prime commercial locations in the district.

THEATRE

From the mid-19th century to about 1930, the Blackwell Street District was the pre-eminent place in Morris County for popular entertainment. The three most important theatres still stand.

Built about 1860, Moeller's Opera House (36) is described in Munsell's 1882 History of Morris County as "Moeller's Opera House and Orchestra Hall."<sup>24</sup> It appears to have operated unrivaled until 1884, when William H. Baker built the Baker Opera House, a combined commercial block and auditorium (68). The Baker Building, or Baker Opera

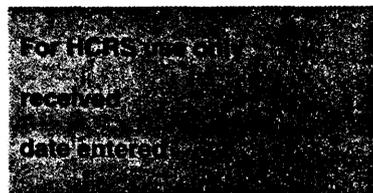
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House, as a gathering place for civic and recreational purposes and as a physical landmark has been an important part of the town's central business district since it was constructed. It remained the center for performing arts in town for 25 years, contributing to Dover's longstanding claim as the show business capital of Morris County.<sup>25, 26</sup> Today, it is the most imposing commercial building of its era to have survived in Dover and serves as a pivotal landmark on Blackwell Street. By 1906, Baker's growing ambition resulted in construction of the Baker Theatre (10) with the largest seating capacity of any auditorium in the county. It presented vaudeville and motion pictures, but specialized in lavish productions of legitimate plays brought on tour from New York City with their original casts.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the three principal theatres was the Bon Ton, which showed movies, and a number of dance halls, bowling alleys and fraternal halls which, together with the hotels and their bars, provided ample diversion for ordinary citizens as well as the canal and railroad crews that laid-over in town.

ARCHITECTURE

The commercial buildings of the Blackwell Street District illustrate the difficulty of applying strict stylistic labels to urban vernacular architecture. The following analysis is one way of approaching the diversity of styles found in downtown Dover, although other observers might choose different nomenclature.

The first four categories occur in roughly chronological order; the fifth can be found at various times. Since only a few buildings are architect-designed, all of the categories are essentially "vernacular," the high style labels meant to denote influences at various removes. The categories include:

1. Italianate
2. Second Empire
3. Renaissance Revival
4. Neoclassical
5. Eclectic Commercial

Searing's Hotel (27), built c. 1850, is a simple wooden structure with low-pitched roof and bracketed cornice, now faced with brick veneer and shorn of its wooden porch. It may be the earliest surviving building constructed expressly for a commercial use. A more explicitly Italianate building is the Schwarz Block (34), built c. 1870, also denatured by brick veneer and altered storefronts. Nominal Italianate influence can be found in several buildings with unornamented facaded and bracketed cornices, like #4 Blackwell Street (62). Heavy cornices, like that at #8 Blackwell Street (64) common in some areas, are not the rule in Dover.

Second Empire buildings in the district exhibit none of the plasticity and complex facade rhythm typical of the style's more monumental examples. In Dover they are likely to be simple boxes with Italianate cornices, identifiable as Second Empire only by their mansard roofs. Moeller's Opera House (36), probably built c. 1860, and

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the Central Hotel (33) of 1872 are the best examples.

Renaissance Revival facades are found in only three instances. The National Union Bank Building (19) of 1871 is the most sophisticated, with pedimented window surrounds and other detailing of pressed metal. Its original entrances, framed with free-standing columns, were replaced c. 1929 with a facing of glazed terra cotta. The six-unit row (59) built between 1868 and 1887 achieves a Renaissance quality through the repetition of round-arched windows and a unifying cornice. Cast-iron rosettes punctuate the ground-floor fascia. About 1910 a small, one story facade of pressed metal (34A) was added to the Schwarz block. The use of pressed metal for facades of this sort is rare in Dover, despite the location of the Dover Boiler Works' iron products industry in town. Tin ceilings are very common on building interiors here. The Schwarz example, with its rounded arches and clustered columns is probably closer to Romanesque than Renaissance proto-types.

During the first third of the 20th century, neoclassical motifs enjoyed popularity in Dover. Often the references are restrained - little more than classical moldings, symmetrical fenestration and rusticated keystones. Two outstanding examples of this type are #7-11 South Warren Street (69) and 27-29 East Blackwell Street (48). By 1915 when the Dover Trust Company was built (16), the classical vocabulary was being used in a more self-conscious manner. Like the National Union Bank of 1929 (71), the Dover Trust is obviously an architect-designed building. The facade of #31 East Blackwell Street (49) is a more naive expression of the neoclassical mode, in which a tetrastyle temple front appears to be pasted on an ordinary brick facade. The 1936 U.S. Post Office (35) brings the neoclassical chapter to an end, its boxy, rather brutal forms decorated with abstracted classical ornament typical of pre-war architecture in the United States and Europe.

Perhaps the most interesting architecture in the district, difficult to pigeonhole stylistically, is the last category, eclectic commercial. Most popular in the 1870's and 80's, it can be identified by its inventive use of paneling, corbeling and other brick ornament, the models for which appear to be largely ahistorical. The two best examples are the Richards Block (20) of 1869-1872 and the Baker Building (68), c. 1885. Less ambitious, but part of the same strain are #75 West Blackwell Street (2) and the trio adjacent to the Baker Building, one unit now altered (65-67), and (13).

Another motif evident in the district from about 1800 to 1920 is the use of rockfaced stone for sills, lintels and keystones. Probably attributable to the influence of H.H. Richardson, it is found in both vernacular and high style buildings, like the 1901 Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Station (54B) designed by F.J. Nies.

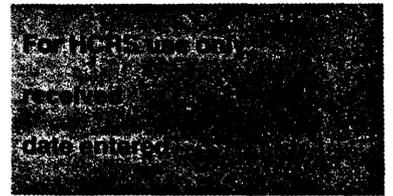
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Residential and religious architecture account for a small percentage of buildings in the district. The two best churches are St. John's Episcopal Church (54), designed c. 1865, probably by Richard Upjohn, but not completed until 1871; and the Hoagland Memorial (8) completed in 1901 to designs by Newark architect Paul Botticher. St. John's is a representative of the ecclesiologically correct bell-cote type based on English parish models. The Hoagland Memorial, notable for a beautifully detailed sanctuary, is typical of the late Romanesque Revival, modified in color and ornament by the return to classicism.

Number 58 Sussex Street (28) and the small house attached to Searing's Hotel (27A) are the oldest dwellings in the district, dating from the first half of the 19th century. They are typical of the three-bay, side-hall New Jersey plan which persisted in numerous variations for more than 100 years. The remaining houses include the turn-of-the-century Pierson Block (1), a six-unit apartment eclectic in ornament and materials, and the Dr. Condict House (7) from the same period, built in an eclectic Colonial Revival style with vernacular brick decoration, and (75) and (76).

Unique in the district is the Stone Academy (54C), a two-story rubble stone building dating from 1829. In its symmetrical composition and lack of ornamentation it is representative of vernacular New Jersey architecture in the first third of the 19th century.

NOTES

1. "Map of Dover, Morris County, New Jersey. Copy of one taken from Actual Survey in 1825."
2. Charles D. Platt, Dover Dates (n.p.; Author, 1922), p. 360.
3. Ibid., p. 468.
4. Ibid., p. 485.
5. Idem, Dover History (Dover: M. C. Havens, 1914), p. 34.
6. "Map of Lands at or near Dover, Morris County, New Jersey, drawn by E. H. Van Winkle, Surveyor, 1832."
7. "Map of Morris County, New Jersey" (Lighfoot and Geil, 1853).
8. "Atlas of Morris County, New Jersey" (New York: F. W. Beers, A. D. Ellis, G. G. Soule, 1868), p. 20.

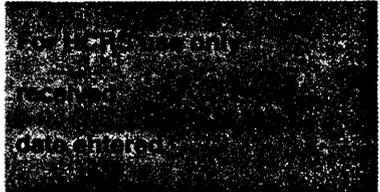
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9. "Robinson's Atlas of Morris County, New Jersey" (New York: E. Robinson, 1887), pp. 22-23.
10. Platt, Dover History, p. 156.
11. Ibid., p. 43.
12. Ibid., p. 259.
13. Ibid., p. 257.
14. Idem, Dover Dates (n.p.: Author, 1922), p. 413.
15. Ibid., p. 415.
16. Platt, Dover History, p. 160.
17. Ibid., p. 161.
18. Ibid., pp. 162-163.
19. Ibid., p. 167.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., p. 33.
22. "Map of Morris County, New Jersey" (Lightfoot and Geil, 1853).
23. Platt, Dover History, p. 157.
24. W. W. Munsell, comp., History of Morris County, New Jersey (New York: W. W. Munsell & Co., 1882), ff. p. 317.
25. Francis Hyatt Dickinson, comp., The Episcopalian Church of Dover, New Jersey to 1971 (Dover: n.p., 1971), p. 11.
26. Miller Roff, interview, Dover, New Jersey, August, 1980.
27. Phil Grassia, interview, Dover, New Jersey, August, 1980.

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COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES  
IN THE BLACKWELL STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT  
1896 - 1927

	<u>1896</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1916</u>	<u>1927</u>
1. Banks	1	2	2	2
2. Clothing	22	10	26	None listed as such
3. Entertainment	3	4	6	5
4. Food	33	38	34	Only three specified
5. Personal service	15	13	33	7
6. Restaurants and Hotels	4	7	10	6
7. Saloons and Liquor Stores	5	7	13	None listed
8. Transportation	4	5	5	4
9. Variety Stores	10	10	7	4
10. Miscellaneous	10	9	8	

1. BANKS

2. CLOTHING: Gentlemen's furnishings, Ladies' furnishings, Hats, Shoes, Haberdasher, Jewelry.

3. ENTERTAINMENT: Theatres, Billiards, Pool, Bowling, Dance Hall.

4. FOOD: Grocers, Bakery, Butchers, Dry Goods, Produce, Confectioners, Fruit, Teas, Cigars and Candy, Flour and Feed.

5. PERSONAL SERVICE: Cobbler, Shoe Shine, Tailor, Laundry, Pharmacy, Dressmaker, Barber, Undertaker.

6. RESTAURANTS, HOTELS: (Lunch and Ice Cream).

7. SALOONS AND LIQUOR STORES.

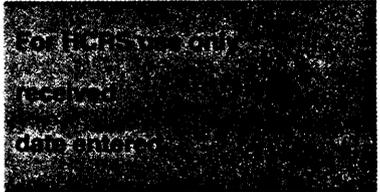
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8. TRANSPORTATION: Blacksmith, Livery, Wagon Repair, Harness, Garage, Auto Tires.
9. VARIETY STORES: General Store, 5 & 10¢, Hardware, Paints, Notions, Department Store.
10. MISCELLANEOUS: Books, Bicycles, Furniture, Music, Stationery, Sporting Goods, Toys.

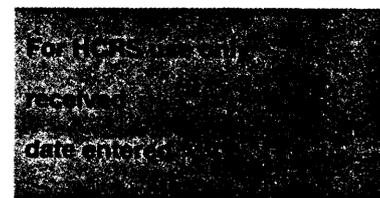
Source: Sanborn Insurance Atlases.

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Page 1.

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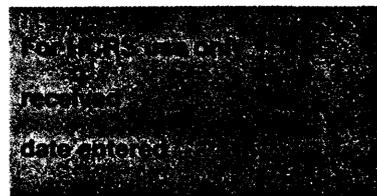
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The Blackwell Street District runs west along both sides of Blackwell Street from Bergen Street to the point where Blackwell intersects the tracks of Conrail. Included as well are Sussex Street from Blackwell to Clinton Street; Dickerson Street from approximately the middle of Tax Block 12-15 to Block 12-13; and parts of the following streets near their intersections with Blackwell Street: Bergen, Essex, Morris, Sussex, Warren, Prospect and Dewey. More specific boundaries may be ascertained by referring to the appended district map, compatible with a tax map base.

The commercial nature of the district and its boundaries are justified by altered physical character dictated by historical conditions and land use:

East

The dense commercial development typical of the district changes abruptly east of Bergen Street, where lots are larger and 19th century development was scattered.

South

The limit of the commercial area is delineated sharply on the south by land cleared for parking on the north side of Dickerson Street and by the tracks of Conrail (formerly the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad).

West

To the west, residential development and a sharp rise in grade clearly mark the natural limit of the district.

North

Northwest of Warren Street, the district is bounded by a 1950's shopping center. North of Clinton Street and northeast of Morris and Essex Streets, residential neighborhoods are found.