

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 MAY 12 1987

date entered

JUN 09 1987

1. Name

historic

and/or common Church Street Historic District N-10951

2. Location

street & number Between 8th and 7th Streets and Locust and Church Streets not for publication

city, town Wilmington vicinity of congressional district

state Delaware code DE county New Castle code 003

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name List retained at SHPO

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder of Deeds

street & number City/County Building, 800 French Street

city, town Wilmington state Delaware

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1986  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town Dover state Delaware

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## 7. Description

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<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 date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

The Church Street Historic District contains 28 buildings and 7 vacant lots (former house sites). Of the 26 contributing buildings, 22 are single family dwellings. Commercial buildings stand on three of the four corners of the city block which makes up the district: a large Second Empire building which was originally a saloon and hotel, a bar and restaurant which also has Second Empire elements, and a smaller Queen Anne style store. The two non-contributing buildings are a small wooden garage (#23) and a frame house which has been altered (#24). Though there are no modern intrusions, two of the four block faces contain empty lots: Locust Street has four empty lots and Church Street has two.

The Church Street Historic District contains 26 contributing buildings, two non-contributing buildings and seven non-contributing sites.

The district is in the eastern section of the city in the area between the Brandywine and Christina Rivers where the land is nearly flat. The land gradually rises to the west and toward the central business district. Within the area from the rivers to the commercial district of the city are many blocks of brick rowhouses, a few churches and schools, and small corner stores. East of the district lies the St. Stanislaus Kostka Church and a small block containing four row houses. Raised railroad tracks run across the peninsula between the Brandywine and Christina Rivers from north to south. The area east of the tracks contains a large modern warehouse which is all that remains of the Jackson and Sharp Company and open, unused space.

The late nineteenth century development of the Church Street Historic District was strongly linked to the car works, ship building and iron works which located on the Peninsula formed by the Christina and Brandywine Rivers. The railroad two blocks to the east was also a major employer of many of the residents living in the small rowhouses which make up the residential element of the Church Street Historic District.

The residential buildings in the district share similar proportions, materials and general construction dates. The six house brick row on 8th Street (#s 2-7) has

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1920	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1880 - 1920 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Church Street Historic District is a small district covering one block on Wilmington, Delaware's east side. The buildings on the block date from the late nineteenth century and represent the second phase of construction. They are a mix of residential and small commercial buildings with distinctive commercial buildings at three of the four corners of the block. The commercial buildings and the houses stood conveniently close to machine shops, railroad-car factories, and shipbuilding industries that occupied the nearby banks of the Brandywine and Christina rivers. Many residents of the block also worked for the railroad, which at the time the houses were built operated at grade level rather than atop a viaduct as it does today. The district is therefore significant under criterion A for its association with the broad patterns of the industrial and residential development of the city of Wilmington. The architectural styles within the district represent popular adaptations of Second Empire, Queen Anne, and Italianate as applied to urban rowhouses and shops. In addition, the block retains interior structures and an alley. The district's rowhouses and commercial buildings are virtually unchanged from the time they were built and make the district significant under Criterion C.

The Church Street Historic District is within two blocks of the narrow neck of land that connects the main part of the city of Wilmington to an area locally called "the peninsula." At the end of "the peninsula" the Brandywine and Christina Rivers meet and flow into the Delaware. This narrow neck has played an important part in the city's development for centuries. The Swedes, the first Europeans to arrive in Wilmington, landed there in 1638. Both rivers are navigable at this point. The swift flowing Brandywine provided waterpower for the operation of mills along its banks as early as the eighteenth century. The wider, less rapid Christina supported the steam-powered industries of the nineteenth century and made it possible

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.3

Quadrangle name Wilmington South

Quadrangle scale 1.24000

### UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>1</u> <u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>7</u> <u>1</u> <u>7</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>7</u> <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>1</u> <u>9</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>6</u> <u>1</u> <u>9</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>
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D	<u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>8</u> <u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>
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E	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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G	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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H	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached sheet.

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

state	<u>NA</u>	code	county	<u>NA</u>	code
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state	<u>NA</u>	code	county	<u>NA</u>	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan J. Eggert  
Priscilla M. Thompson

organization The History Store date August 17, 1986

street & number 827 Tatnall Street telephone (302) 654-1727

city or town Wilmington state Delaware

# 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 John T. Ken

title Director, Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs date 5/5/87

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

George M. McPherson Entered in the National Register date 6/12/87  
Keeper of the National Register

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

Chief of Registration

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had few alterations since it was constructed in the 1880s. The simple two story homes retain their Italianate bracketed cornices and all of the porches remain though some of the original turned posts and brackets have been replaced with newer supports and railing. The homes on Locust Street (#s 8-11) are also two story brick rowhouses with bracketed cornices showing the Italianate influence which was popular in urban residential architecture of the nineteenth century. The brick row on 7th Street (#s 13-21) built by Alvin Allen in the 1890s is embellished with corbelled cornices and marble keystones. Only the end houses (#21 and #13) have had exterior alterations in the form of large windows which have been added to the first floor.

Of the 22 fully attached rowhouses nearly all are still single family homes and have retained the side hall plan with living room, dining room, and kitchen extending from the front to the rear on one side of the first floor and bedrooms over those rooms on the second floor.

Sharing the 700 block of North Church Street are six similar two story brick houses. Number 24 on the map (702 North Church Street) is the only noncontributing residential building in the district. It is a wooden house which has been covered with stucco, had a stone veneer applied to the raised basement, and a new bow window installed on the first floor. Attached to 702 are two contributing houses. (#25,26) They have the corbelled shoulders and alley way as seen on the row on 7th Street but generally their style is simpler with a plain box cornice, wood sills and lintels, and a flat arch over the entrance. The construction date of these houses is similar to that of the row on 8th Street which was probably built in the early 1890s. 704 and 706 North Church Street have also retained their original single family use and layout.

Just north of an open space on North Church Street is a two story brick house which varies from others in that it is fully detached and has a cornice which runs across the

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front above double first story windows. On the north side of an alley are two more houses which are attached to 718 North Church Street. 714 and 716 North Church Street (#28) probably date from the 1890s. 714 is set back from the street and has lost the front of its bracketed cornice. 716 North Church Street is distinguished by the second story wood bay and the segmental round arch over the door. This building also has a side hall plan which has not been significantly altered.

The three commercial buildings on three of the district's four corners have existed nearly one hundred years with surprisingly few alterations. All were built in the late 1800s and survived on the business of the workers moving to the east side of Wilmington to be near the growing rail car and ship building industries. Though it no longer contains a store to provide goods to the residents the unusually shaped brick store at the corner of 7th and Locust Streets (#12) has retained its slate-covered tower and second story bay. At the west end of the same block stands a brick commercial building which is now a bar and restaurant. (#22) Despite alterations to the first story windows, the large scale created by the building's mansard roof and many dormers still provides the block with an anchor or focal point.

The building on the corner of North Church and 8th streets provides a similar focus for the north end of the block. The Second Empire elements of 718-720 North Church Street (#1) are intact and in good condition from its multi-colored slate roof which holds pedimented dormers to the bracketed pressed metal corner entrance. The first floor of 718 has held a business since its earliest years when a grocery store was located there. Now the store area is vacant, but it most recently held a liquor store. The use of the first floor of 720 has consistently been a bar or saloon through its 90 years of existence except for a brief time during prohibition. The first floor is vacant; second floor contains apartments which are probably little changed

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in layout from the 1920s when the owner converted what were hotel rooms into apartments.

The natural red brick of the commercial buildings allows them to blend with the brick rowhouses. It is their larger scale and Second Empire and Queen Anne embellishments which offers some variation from the relatively small and simple Italianate homes.

Brick is by far the dominant material used in the district. In fact, the only exceptions are the noncontributing house mentioned earlier (#24) and the only other noncontributing structure, a small wooden garage. (#23) The natural brick color has been changed on only seven buildings. Four houses have been painted and three have been stuccoed.

The characteristics of the district which distinguish it from the surrounding area are the architectural integrity and good condition of the buildings. Of the surrounding blocks there are none which exhibit whole block faces which are in comparable physical condition. Neither is there a block with commercial buildings which have retained the style elements as the Queen Anne and Second Empire buildings in the Church Street Historic District have.

The northern and western boundaries consist of mainly residential buildings in poor condition which are separated by several empty lots. Nearly half of the west side of the 700 block of Church street is now vacant. On the northeast corner of Church and 8th Street stands a corner store behind which are four empty lots now being used as a community garden, the two remaining rowhouses of a row which originally may have spanned the whole block, and a large garage building. The east corner of the block is also a vacant lot.

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Old Swedes's Church, which is a National Historic Landmark, and the St. Stanislaus Kostka Church are located in the blocks to the south and east respectively. The deviation that 7th Street makes in the grid street plan is evidence of the long influence that the Old Swede's Church has had on the area. The northward angle taken by 7th Street was most likely made in order to accomodate the shape of the old churchyard and cemetery. The mature trees and open space of the churchyard provide a pleasant break in the densely developed area.

Two of the district's four block faces have plantings. In front of the long brick row on 7th Street stand several maple and sycamore trees which provide the shade that porches do for the row on 8th Street. Much larger maple and sycamore trees tower over the two story houses on Locust Street. Some locust, mulberry, and maple trees are found in the center of the block in the open lots on North Church Street.

A detailed description of each building in the district follows:



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- .1 720 N. Church St. -- 718-720 Church St. -- Three story corner building with grey fish scale mansard roof. There are three rows of red slate in the middle of the roof. Dormers have arched roofs and the bracketed cornice is metal. The entire building is now four bays wide on Church St., and appears to be actually two buildings. Segemental arches with stone keystones top the windows. The first floor has a corner store entrance topped by metal bracketed cornice which has an iron post supporting corner. The entrance has a large window beside it which faces Church St. The southernmost section of the building has a storefront with plain cornice above it and an entrance door with marble steps leading to living quarters. The facade is pressed brick. On the side there are 6 dormers projecting from the mansard. The cornice described earlier extends along the 8th St. side. The corbelled chimney is decorated with a terra cotta swag. Along the 8th St. side there are ten two over two double hung windows on the second floor. On the first floor there are 7 windows and 2 doors. All of the windows have segmental arches and keystones. At the end of the building is a 3 bay wide two story brick extension. It has two sets of wooden garage doors on the first floor, a slate covered 3 window bay on the second. The roof is a slate mansard cap with a plain cornice. This rear section has number 800 E. 8th St. on it, but it is actually a part of 720 Church St. C. 1885. (1 Bldg.)
- .2 802 E. 8th St. -- Two story fully attached row house. The two bay wide house has a flat roof and wooden cornice with small brackets. The front porch is supported on plain square posts. The balusters and railing are replacements of the original. First floor windows have brick relieving arches. The door has a rectangular transom. Second floor windows have flat lintels

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- and brick sills. The windows are one over one replacements. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .3 804 E. 8th St. -- Two story fully attached row house. The two bay wide house has a flat roof and wooden cornice with small brackets. The facade has been painted red. The front porch is supported on black metal posts. The railing is also metal. First floor windows have brick relieving arches. The door has a rectangular transom. Second floor windows have flat lintels and brick sills. The windows are one over one replacements. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .4 806 E. 8th St. -- Two story fully attached row house. The two bay wide house has a flat roof and wooden cornice with small brackets. The front porch is supported on black metal posts. The railing is also metal. First floor windows have brick relieving arches. The door has a rectangular transom. Second floor windows have flat lintels and wooden sills. The windows are one over one replacements. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .5 808 E. 8th St. -- Two story fully attached row house. The two bay wide house has a gable roof and wooden cornice with small brackets. The front porch is supported on black metal posts. The railing is also metal. First floor windows have brick relieving arches. The door has a rectangular transom. Second floor windows have flat lintels and wooden sills. The windows are one over one replacements. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .6 810 E. 8th St. -- Two story fully attached row house. The two bay wide house has a gable roof and wooden cornice with small brackets. The facade has been painted red. The front porch is supported on heavy turned posts with open sway brackets. The railing is wooden replacement of the original. First floor windows have brick

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- relieving arches. The door has a rectangular transom. Second floor windows have flat lintels and brick sills. The windows are one over one replacements. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .7 812 E. 8th St. -- Two story semi-detached end of a row. The two bay wide house has a gable roof and plain wooden cornice. The front porch is supported on heavy turned posts. The metal railing is a replacement of the original. First floor windows have brick relieving arches. The door has a rectangular transom. Second floor windows have flat lintels and brick sills. The windows are one over one replacements. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .8 719 N. Locust St. -- Semi-detached end of row house. This stucco covered brick house is two stories high and two bays wide. It has a flat roof with a plain cornice. A pair of windows are on the first floor and two on second floor. and a pair of windows on the first. These six over six double hung windows may be replacements. The small porch is supported by iron railing that is probably new. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .9 717 N. Locust St. -- Fully attached middle house in row of three. The house is two bays wide. The two windows on second floor are double hung one over one. The only window on the first floor is also one over one. There is a small rectangular transom over the door. Between 717 and 715 there is an alley entrance. The roof cornice has small plain brackets. The houses of this block have low pitched gable roofs. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .10 715 N. Locust St. -- Semi-detached end of row house in three house row. The main block of the house has a low pitch gable roof while the extension at the rear has a flat roof. The house is two bays wide and the brick has been painted

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- pink. The heavy cornice has scrolled brackets and a row of brick dentils below the frieze. The two windows on second floor and two windows and door on first floor have wooden sills and the first floor windows have wooden lintels. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .11 711 N. Locust St. -- Fully detached house that was probably at one time attached. The two story, two bay wide house has a low pitch gable roof. Window openings have been altered slightly and now have brick sills. The facade is pressed brick, and the arch above the entrance door at one time held a glass transom. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .12 823 E. 7th St. -- This two story triangular shaped brick building has two windows on the second floor and a window and entrance door below it at the north end of the Locust Street side. All these openings have brick relieving arches above them. Toward the corner there is a three window bay covered with fish scale slate on the second floor and below it a storefront display window. The opening across the corner contains an entrance door. Above the door a rounded tower, also covered with blue fish scale slate, projects and is topped with a conical roof. A bay and show window, matching those on Locust St. overlook 7th Street. Toward the west end of the 7th St. facade are two double hung windows per floor and another entrance. 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .13 819 E. 7th St. -- Semi-detached end of row two story brick house. This house is at a slight angle to the rest of the row. It has been somewhat altered and now has now a large multi-paned picture window on the first floor. Below it are two small basement windows with brick relieving arches above them. Beside it is an alley entrance, two second floor windows have brick relieving arches with keystones. Second

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- floor windows are replacements. A corbelled brick cornice is topped by a small moulded wood cornice. 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .14 817 E. 7th St. -- Fully attached row house a section of which is at a slight angle to the rest of the row. It appears to have its original double hung one over one windows on second floor. Above the door there is a rectangular transom. The windows have brick relieving arches with stone keystones. Basement windows have wooden frames filled with rat screen and are topped with brick relieving arches and are covered with iron grills. Above the deep corbelled brick cornice is a moulded wood cornice. 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .15 815 E. 7th St. -- Fully attached two story brick row house. The house is two bays wide and has a corbelled brick cornice which is topped with a moulded wooden cornice. The window and door openings have brick relieving arches and stone keystones. The one over one windows are replacements. Two basement windows have wooden frames and are covered with iron grills. An alley entrance also has a brick relieving arch and an iron gate. 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .16 813 E. 7th St. -- Fully attached two story brick row house. The house is two bays wide and has a corbelled brick cornice which is topped with a moulded wooden cornice. The window and door openings have brick relieving arches and stone keystones. The one over one windows may be original. Two basement windows have wooden frames. An alley entrance also has a brick relieving arch and an iron gate. 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .17 811 E. 7th St. -- Fully attached two story brick row house. The house is two bays wide and has a corbelled brick cornice which is topped with a

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- moulded wooden cornice. The window and door openings have brick relieving arches and stone keystones. The one over one windows are replacements. Two basement windows have wooden frames. An alley entrance also has a brick relieving arch and an iron gate. 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .18 809 E. 7th St. -- Fully attached two story brick row house. The house is two bays wide and has a corbelled brick cornice which is topped with a moulded wooden cornice. The window and door openings have brick relieving arches and stone keystones. The one over one windows are replacements. Two basement windows have wooden frames and are covered with iron grills. An alley entrance also has a brick relieving arch and an iron gate 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .19 807 E. 7th St. -- Fully attached two story brick row house. The house is two bays wide and has a corbelled brick cornice which is topped with a moulded wooden cornice. The window and door openings have brick relieving arches and stone keystones. The one over one windows may be original. Two basement windows have wooden frames. An alley entrance also has a brick relieving arch and an iron gate. 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)
- .20 805 E. 7th St. -- Fully attached two story brick row house. The house is two bays wide and has a corbelled brick cornice which is topped with a moulded wooden cornice. The window and door openings have brick relieving arches and stone keystones. The one over one windows may be original. The second floor windows have metal awnings. Two basement windows have wooden frames. An alley entrance also has a brick relieving arch and an iron gate. 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)

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21. 803 E. 7th St. -- Fully attached two story brick rowhouse two bays wide. There is a brick corbelled cornice topped with a moulded wooden cornice. Second floor window openings have relieving arches and stone keystones. The first floor has been substantially altered since construction, as it is now part of the corner bar. There is a pent roof projecting above a modern replacement first floor window with multi-paned glass. Stucco now covers the original brick facade on the first floor. 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)
22. 801 E. 7th St. -- A corner store four bays wide on Church Street and two bays wide on Seventh Street. The first floor is now occupied by a bar, and has been substantially altered with the same stucco and multi-paned window as 803. The second floor has the same double hung sash windows with relieving arches and stone keystones on the Seventh Street side. On the Church Street side, they do not have the keystones. This corner section is three stories high with a slate mansard roof and two shed roofed dormers projecting from it on the Seventh Street side. There are four shed roofed dormers on the Church Street side. A pentroof, a recent alteration, projects over the first floor windows on 7th Street and continues around on the Church Street side. There are three windows and a small aluminum siding covered oriel window on the second floor on the Church Street side. There is also a small one storey section with remnants of a porch above it at the end of the building on Church Street. 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)
23. No # Church St.- A small one story garage, appears to be made of salvage material - noncontributing. NC. (1 Bldg.)
- 24 702 Church St. -- Two and a half story two bay wide house with steep pitch gable roof. This

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structure has been radically altered; presently a new facade and roof are being constructed. A modern bay window has been installed on the first floor, and a pair of modern double hung sash windows have been installed on the second floor. There is a watertable constructed of stone surrounding two basement windows. The front door and the bracketed hood above it are replacements. NC. (1 Bldg.)

25. 704 Church St. -- is a fully attached middle of row house two stories high and two bays wide with a flat roof and plain metal box cornice. All four windows on the facade are one over one double hung sash with wooden lintels and sills. The two original basement windows are still in place. This is the middle structure in a short, three house row. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
26. 706 N. Church St. --is a semi-detached end of row house much like 704. It has a flat roof, metal cornice, and four one over one double hung sash windows. The front entrance is in the northernmost bay on this structure, and the original transom light above the front door is still intact. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)
27. 712 N. Church St. - Fully detached two storey house two bays wide with a steep pitch gable roof, and a plain cornice. There are two double hung, two over two windows with flat lintels on the second floor. The facade is pressed brick. The First floor has probably been altered to allow the present pair of double hung windows. There is a simple cornice with small quarter-round brackets above the first floor. The front door in the southernmost bay is a replacement, but it once had a small rectangular transom above it. The two basement windows have flat wooden lintels. There is a small chimney with a corbelled top rising



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above the north side of the house. 1880s. C. (1 Bldg.)

28. Probably 716 N. Church -- This building is a two story house with its second floor recessed behind a first floor porch. The second floor facade is covered with a green stucco, and there are two two over two double hung sash windows. There is a bracketed cornice at the side - this is just one room deep and the building to the north of it was once a long building extending to the rear with little dwellings. To the north of it and attached to the large corner building is a two story building of pressed brick with flat roof. On the facade first floor is a doorway with arched opening which once held a transom, now filled with stucco. There are also two windows with flat lintels, these are double hung two over two. Two basement windows have flat lintels and wooden frames filled with rat screen. On the second floor of this section is a three window oriel window made of wood. It is topped with a heavy bracketed cornice that was open work panels between the brackets on both the fireze and soffit. 1890s. C. (1 Bldg.)
29. Vacant lot; former house site; non-contributing site.
30. Vacant lot; former house site; non-contributing site.
31. Vacant lot; former house site; non-contributing site.
32. Vacant lot; former house site; non-contributing site.
33. Vacant lot; former house site; non-contributing site.
34. Vacant lot; former house site; non-contributing site.
35. Vacant lot; former house site; non-contributing site.

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for Wilmington's shipbuilders to launch their products along its banks. In 1832 the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad traversed the city and crossed the Brandywine near the neck two blocks from the Church Street Historic District.

In the eight years between 1868 and 1876 the east side of Wilmington developed rapidly as industries expanded and row houses began to fill previously empty blocks. Where there had been empty lots and brickyards between Wilson and Spruce streets, investors built row houses, usually for the workers who would man the city's expanding industries. One of Wilmington's large railroad car builders, Jackson and Sharp, sprawled across the peninsula, and more tracks were added to the railroad as other industries began locating on both rivers. Holy Trinity or Old Swedes Church, the area's oldest and most prominent landmark is located in the block next to the Church Street Historic District. The Church fell into disrepair in the nineteenth century as its members in the more distant sections of the city decided to build their own new churches.

The wooden house of William Valentine stood at the northeast corner of Church and Seventh streets in 1876. He was a painter, and lived at this address for many years after he purchased the property in 1845. The pie shaped lot near the intersection of Locust and Seventh streets had no buildings on it and belonged to Philip Plunkett. There were a number of wooden houses on Locust and Church streets and a few small wooden buildings in the center of the block. These older buildings remained in place for ten or more years after newer ones appeared on the nearby blocks.

At the other end of the block a square brick building stood at the southeast corner of Church and Eighth streets. The land had passed from the Wollaston family, large landholders in Wilmington, to Mary Betts and her husband, Benjamin, a builder. The property then went to Robert R. Porter, who purchased land for housing construction throughout the city of Wilmington. After one or two more transfers, Witsil and Fox, Merchants purchased the property at sherriff's sale in 1860 for \$1,010. Henry

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Witsil operated a wine and liquor store at 411 Shipley Street, and it appears that he and Hugh Fox intended to operate the same type of business at 720 North Church Street. However, when John Mc Hugh purchased the property later that same year, the deed referred to the building as a three story hotel.<sup>1</sup>

McHugh operated a saloon at this location for many years. McHugh's business was evidently successful because before the turn of the century he built a much larger building on the site. (#1, 720 Church St.) There is no evidence at present to indicate whether the old building had deteriorated or whether it might have suffered a fire. It is also possible that Mc Hugh rebuilt because he wanted a larger, more modern building. Some elements of the old building may have been incorporated into the new one, but if so, there is no evidence on the exterior. The building standing today has a pressed brick exterior, mansard roof, and other distinctive characteristics of late nineteenth century buildings. McHugh had also purchased the wooden shed and a small piece of land in the adjoining lot. He then demolished the old wooden shed and constructed another three story Second Empire style building (#1, sometimes called 718 N. Church St.) that was attached to the corner building where he operated his saloon.<sup>2</sup>

A two story brick building next to McHugh's (#28, 716 N. Church St.) extended deep into the interior of the block. In 1884 This was a boarding house operated by Mary Radan, a widow.<sup>3</sup> The boarding house was eventually rebuilt or divided to create a row of tiny dwellings on an alley reached from Church Street called McHugh's Court.

At the other end of the block similar changes took place. Alvan Allen purchased a portion of the north side of the 800 block of Seventh street from William Valentine in 1884. In 1890 Allen purchased the Valentine house lot gaining ownership of the entire north side of the 800 block of Seventh Street.<sup>4</sup> In the 1890s Allen built the row of ten brick houses that stretch along this curved street from Church Street nearly to Locust Street. (# 13 through #22; 801 - 819 Seventh Street) Allen had manufactured tiles near

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Smyrna, Delaware in 1863. After becoming associated with William Bell, his firm received the contract for the drain tiles for Fairmount Park in Philadelphia. Allen purchased the Lewis brickyard at Front and Du Pont streets in Wilmington in 1882. He then established a yard near the junction of the B & O Railroad and the Wilmington and Northern Railroad near Union Street. There he employed over eighty men and produced five million bricks a year.

It was not unusual for brick manufacturers, lumber mill operators, and others associated with the building trades to be housing developers in late nineteenth century Wilmington. They used their own products to build houses for the city's expanding workforce. Allen's design for a group of two story attached brick houses with a three story corner store at the end could have been selected from any one of a number of house pattern books, or it might have been of his own conception. The three story store at the corner has a mansard roof with shed roof dormers; it is not identical to the large corner store at the other end of the block, but it echoes its size and scale.

The rest of Allen's property on this block was vacant for a few years before the Queen Anne style corner store was built to fill the odd shaped lot at the intersection of Seventh and Locust streets. (#12, 823 Eighth Street) Although it is a single fully detached building, the store has room for two or more residences. It is only two stories high, but its round tower and second story bay windows give it prominence equal to the other two corner stores.

For nearly half a century the block had three story stores on all of its four corners. Unfortunately, the one that stood at the southwest corner of Eighth and Locust streets has been demolished. The row of houses on Eighth Street (# 2 - #7, 802-812 E. Eighth St.) that included this store evidently date from about 1880. The difference in roof lines and purchase dates indicates that the row may have been constructed at two different times. The deed registry and city directories indicate that some of them were owner-occupied. For example, Michael Donlon, a laborer

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who worked for the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad, owned his home at 802 East Eighth Street (#2), and Thomas Gillen, a laborer, owned his home at 812 East Eighth Street (#7). Other residents of the block in the 1880s were John Isler, a laborer for Pusey and Jones, the Wilmington shipbuilder, E. Holloway, a watchman for Jackson and Sharp, and George Bursler, a carpenter for Jackson and Sharp. The corner store, which is no longer standing was a cigar and tobacco store operated first by Catherine Curran and later by William Cox.

The four two-story brick houses on Locust Street (# 8 - #11, 711, 715, 717, 719 Locust St.) are similar in style and date to the row on Eighth Street. It is interesting to note that in 1884 there were an additional six wooden structures on Locust Street, none of which are standing today. At that time a majority of the buildings in the blocks east of Locust Street were also of wood, while the blocks to the west were filled with brick houses. Most of the residents of Locust Street in 1890 were laborers, many with the nearby firm of Jackson and Sharp.

Of the four residences remaining in the middle of the 700 block of North Church Street, 702 (#24) is evidently a very old wooden house that has been radically altered. On this block there were also additional wooden houses that no longer exist. In the late nineteenth century the majority of their residents also worked in nearby industries.

About 1910, newly arrived immigrants from Poland began to settle in the area, although earlier arrivals from Poland had settled on the west side of Wilmington in the Browntown/ Hedgeville neighborhood. It was a long distance from the east side to St. Hedwig's, the city's only Polish Catholic Church. Therefore Reverend Monsignor John S. Gulcz of St. Hedwig's secured permission to start a new parish. Services in Polish started in the basement of St. Mary's Church at Sixth and Pine Streets in 1912. St. Stanislaus Church was incorporated in 1913 and and soon thereafter purchased the entire block surrounded by Seventh, Eighth, Buttonwood, and Locust streets, the block just east of the Church Street Historic District for its building

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A number of old wooden buildings were demolished to make room for a new brick church, dedicated in 1914. A school and parish house used existing buildings until a new school with auditorium was built in 1921. With a new ethnic parish close at hand, even more Poles came into the neighborhood. By the 1920s nearly every house in the Church Street Historic District was occupied by Polish-Americans, who also lived in many of the other nearby blocks. Fire nearly destroyed the church in 1924, making it necessary to rebuild St. Stanislaus. The parish also built a new rectory in 1949. Eventually most of the parishioners moved to the suburbs, but for two or more decades, the Church Street Historic District was part of a Polish-American neighborhood.

Not long after the Poles began to move into the neighborhood, the advent of prohibition had a major impact on the oldest business in the district, Mc Hughs' saloon at 720 N. Church Street. (#1) As mentioned above, John McHugh started his business in 1880 and his family carried it on until the Prohibition amendment made the sale of beer, wine, and liquor illegal in 1920. The Mc Hugh building was the largest and most impressive in the district, and at various times the city directory listed it as a hotel as well as a saloon. The interior indicates that there were probably some rooms for rent, but a large room on the second floor must have been used for meetings or dances.

By 1920 Joseph B. McHugh owned the property, and the city directory listed his business as "billiards and soft drinks." McHugh may have tried to compensate for the loss of income from his saloon by creating more rental units, because by 1927 his entire building, both 718 and 720 Church Street, had become apartments. In 1931 John Krznowski and Frank Raniszewski purchased McHugh's building. After repeal of Prohibition in 1933, Raniszewski reopened part of the building as a beer saloon and Krznowski ran a grocery store in the section of the building that is 718 North Church Street.

At about the same time McHugh's Court appeared in city maps and directories; this was the former boarding

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house at 716 Church Street, divided and expanded to become a group of small living units. The Wilmington City Directory of 1921-22 listed nine residents, all with Polish names, in McHugh's Court.

The social history of the Church Street Historic District in the late nineteenth century is little different from the surrounding blocks. It contained a mix of stores and houses, and its residents worked in many of the same industries. It is different architecturally in that most of its buildings replaced earlier, frequently wooden structures. Therefore, the district represents the change that took place in the neighborhood rather than simply new construction. Other blocks to the east where this same transition might have been represented at an earlier time have now been destroyed or rebuilt again.

Wilmington's population was expanding rapidly when most of the buildings in the Church Street Historic District were built, and their architecture is not unique in the city. However, Second Empire and Queen Anne buildings are not abundant on the city's east side; there is no other block with this particular variety of late nineteenth century styles so well preserved. This small one block district includes small Italianate rowhouses with bracketed cornices, large Second Empire buildings with mansard roofs, as well as the bay windows and towers of the Queen Anne style. The block also includes a type of alley house that is quite unusual, if not unique, in Wilmington. Unlike other nearby blocks, this block conveys the general impression that it dates from the late nineteenth century.

The Church Street Historic District is distinguishable from the blocks that adjoin it. Olds Swedes Church, a National Historic Landmark, occupies the block immediately to the south and is historically not related to the Church Street Historic District. St. Stanislaus Church occupies the block immediately to the east of the district and is related to one of Wilmington's Polish-American communities. Relatively recent renovations and construction probably make St. Stanislaus ineligible for the National Register. To the north and the west the Church Street

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Historic District is bounded by small rowhouses that belong in type and date to another district further west.

The buildings in the Church Street Historic District are in generally good condition, and most retain their distinguishing architectural elements. The one exception is 702 North Church Street (#24), a radically altered older wooden house. This will be a noncontributing building. The only other noncontributing building is a small wooden garage on Church Street. Some preservation activities are beginning to take place in the district, notably at 718-720 North Church Street. At present there is a general interest in making the neighborhood look better because of its proximity to Old Swedes Church, which will be a focal point in the forthcoming celebration of the 350th anniversary of the Swedish landing.

The architecture and the history of the Church Street Historic District convey a sense of the late nineteenth century on Wilmington's east side. Within the context of the history of the city of Wilmington, the district displays a variety of locally typical architectural styles in a one block area; it is an unusual if not unique block for the east side.



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Maps and Atlases as noted in the text.

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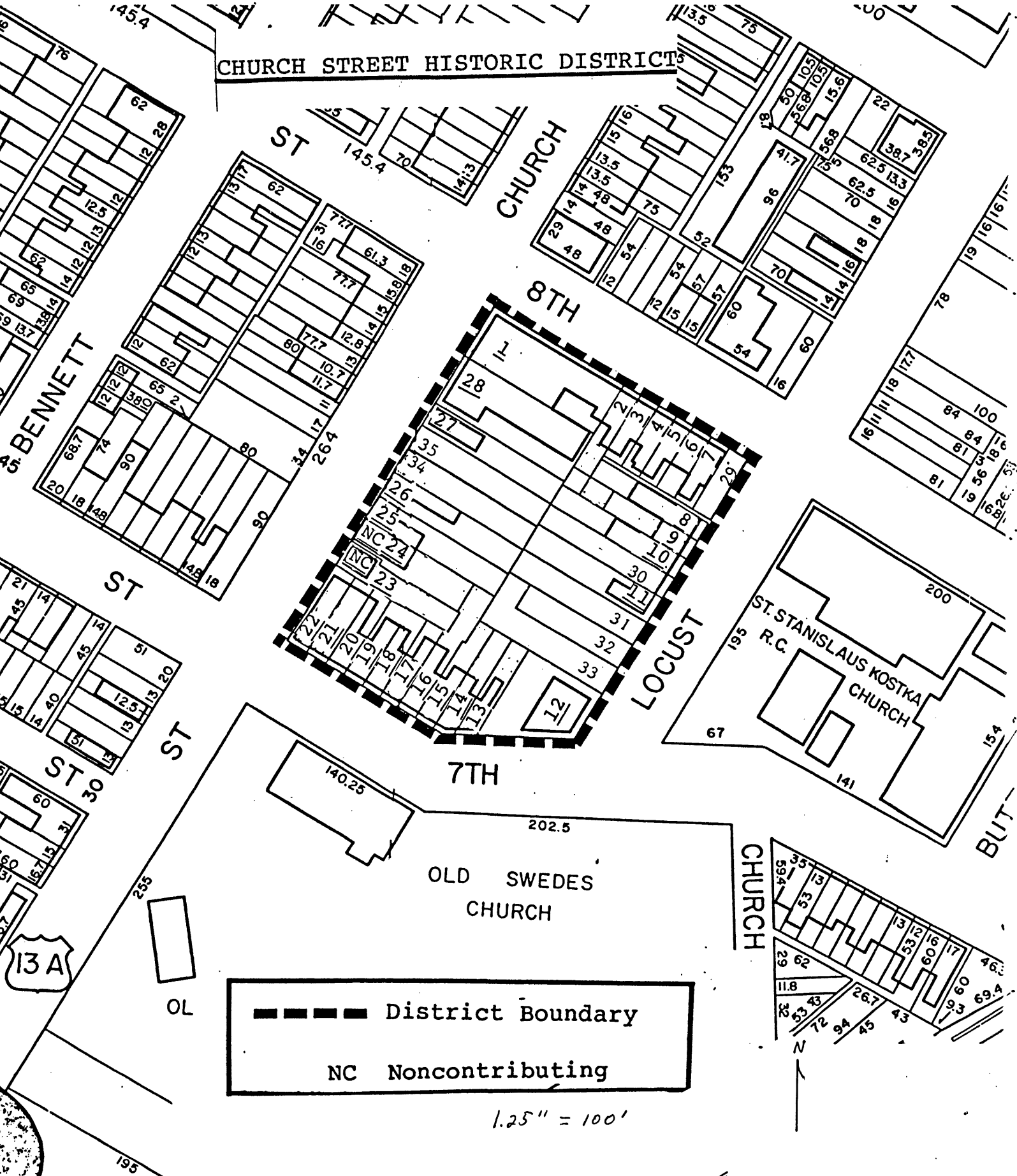
10

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Beginning at the curb of the southeast corner of Church and East 8th streets; thence continuing easterly along the curb of East 8th Street to the southwest corner of Locust and East 8th streets; thence southerly along the curb line of Locust Street to the northwest corner of Locust and East 7th streets; thence southwesterly along the curb line to a point near 817 East 7th Street then continuing in a westerly direction along the curb line of East 7th Street to the northeast corner of Church Street and East 7th Street; thence northerly along the curb line to the point of beginning at the southeast corner of Church Street and East 8th Street.

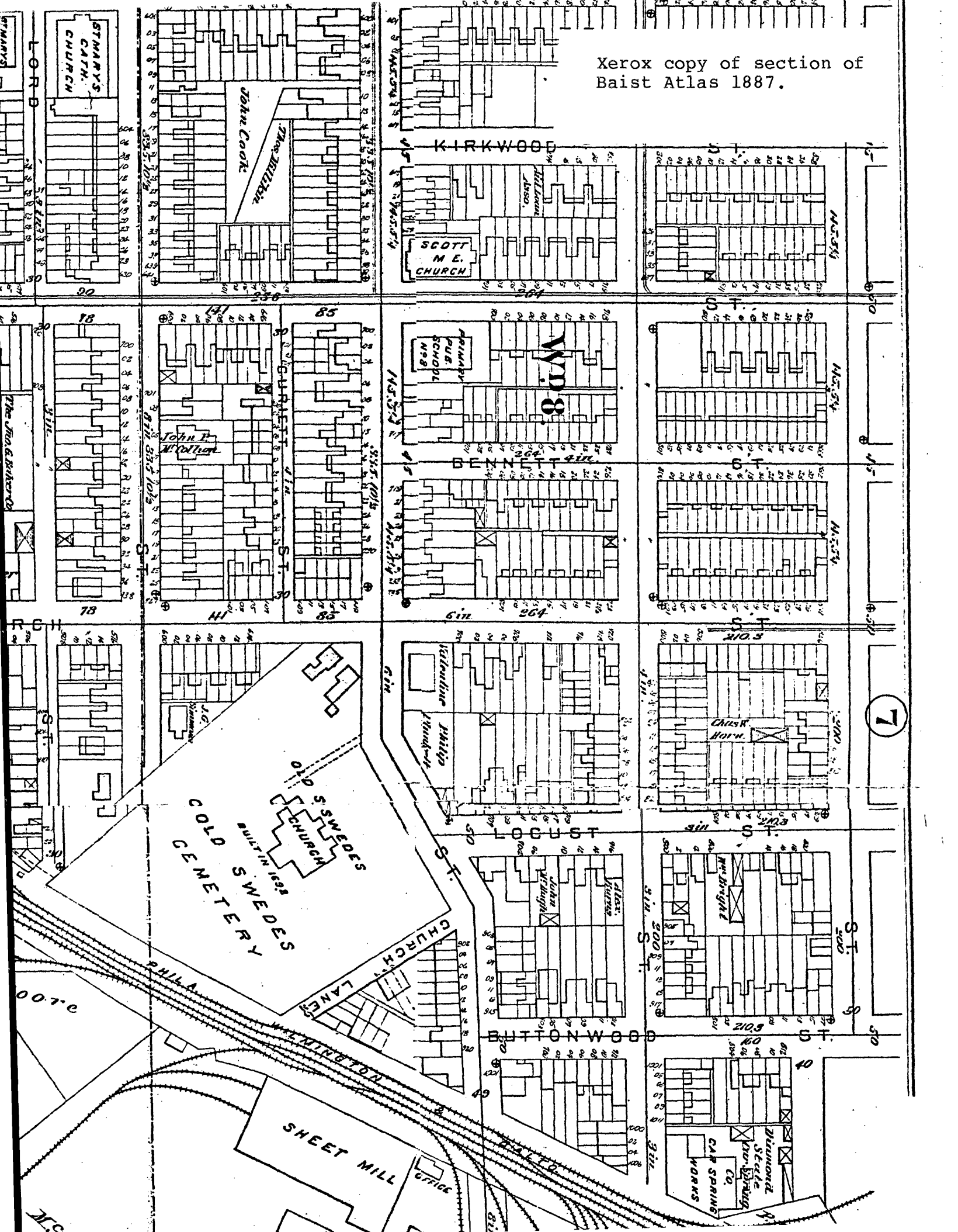
CHURCH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT



District Boundary  
 NC Noncontributing

1.25" = 100'

Xerox copy of section of  
Baist Atlas 1887.



KIRKWOOD

SCOTT  
N. E.  
CHURCH

Primary  
Pub.  
School  
No. 8

W. P. 8

William  
Phillip  
Lindholm

Chas. K. Horn

Wm. Wright

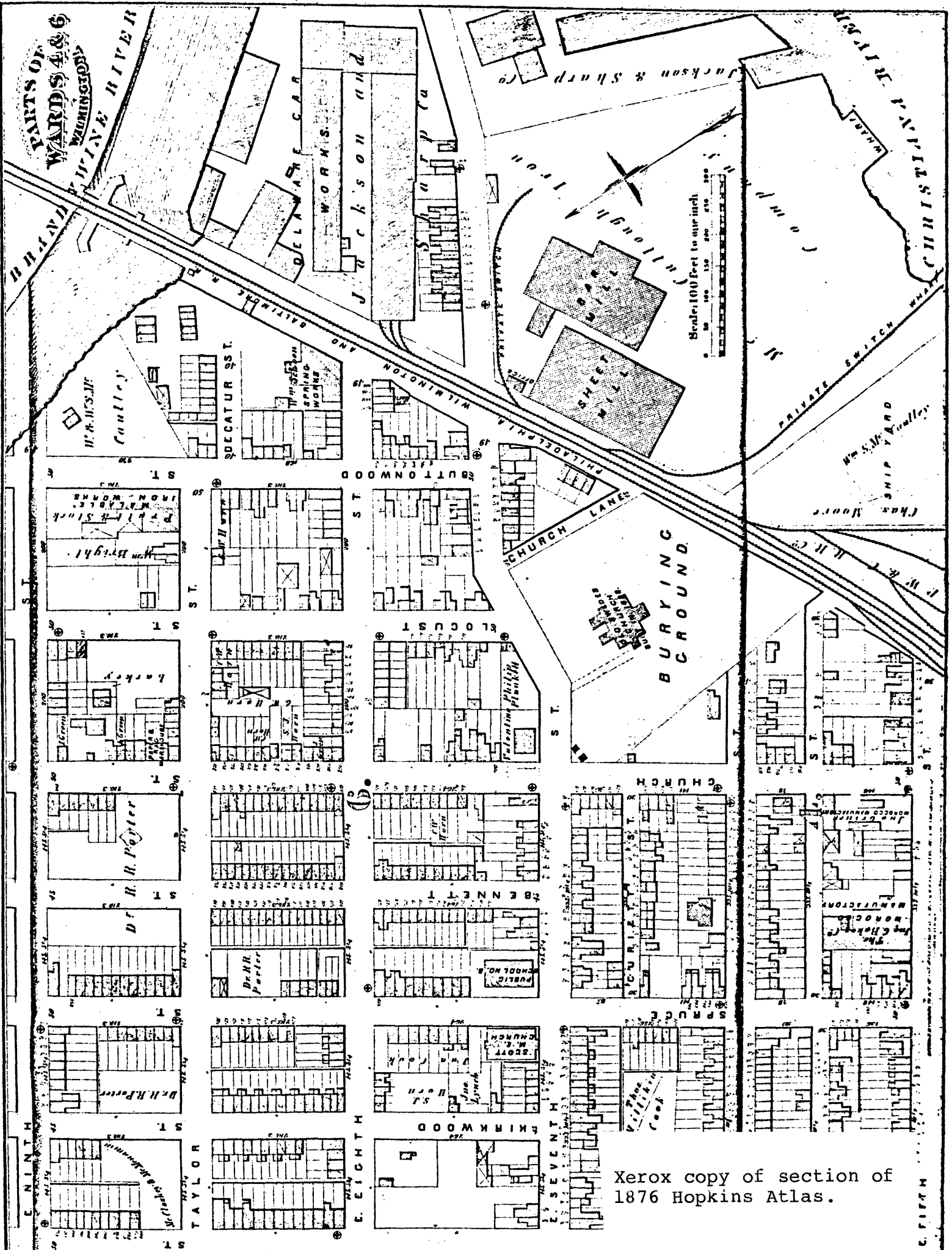
OLD S. SWEDES  
CHURCH  
BUILT IN 1832  
COLD SWEDES  
CEMETERY

CHURCH LANE

SHEET MILL

Car Spring  
Works  
Diamond  
State  
Ice-Drilling  
Co.

7



Xerox copy of section of 1876 Hopkins Atlas.

**BRANDYWINE  
VILLAGE**



Xerox copy of section of  
Baist Atlas 1868.