

FINAL

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Mitchell Downtown Historic District  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by Tenth, Oak, Fifth, & N. Mississippi Streets N/A  not for publication  
city or town Mitchell N/A  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Lawrence code 093 zip code 47446

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
[Signature] 8/4/97  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building, district, site, structure, object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Table with 3 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, and Resource Type (buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total). Values range from 0 to 75.

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling, COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store, GOVERNMENT: Post Office, SOCIAL: Meeting Hall, HEALTH CARE: Medical Business/Office, COMMERCE/TRADE: Financial Institution, EDUCATION: Library

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling, COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store, GOVERNMENT: Post Office, COMMERCE/TRADE: Business, VACANT: Not in use, COMMERCE/TRADE: Financial Institution, EDUCATION: Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

- LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate, LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne, LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque, 19th & 20th c. AMER.: Bungalow/Craftsman, 19th & 20th c. REVIVALS: Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation: STONE: Limestone, walls: BRICK, WOOD: Weatherboard, roof: ASPHALT, other: METAL

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE  
 POLITICS/GOVERNMENT  
 ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1853-1946

**Significant Dates**

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

McGuire & Shook

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Mitchell Downtown Historic District  
Name of Property

Lawrence IN  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 19.6 AC

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	545670	4287360	3	16	545700	4286900
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	16	546090	4287060	4	16	545300	4287160

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Stephen T. Wyatt, Jr.  
organization Mitchell on the Move date 10-22-96  
street & number RR 11, Box 257 telephone 812/275-8047  
city or town Bedford state IN zip code 47421

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Downtown Mitchell Historic District, Lawrence County, Indiana

Description

The Downtown Mitchell Historic District is located about seven miles south of the geographic center of Lawrence County. Mitchell, located in Marion Township, is south of the East Fork of the White River, which cuts the county in two. Mitchell was founded as a railroad town, and today the CSX Railroad continues to pass just south of the historic district.

The district contains a fine collection of late nineteenth century Italianate commercial buildings typical of the railroad era. In the early 20th century, new industries led to a boom in growth that is reflected today in substantial buildings such as the First National Bank Building and the Odd Fellows Hall (Mitchell Antique Mall). The district extends north beyond the Main Street buildings to include significant homes, part of a residential area with inhabitants closely tied to Main Street. All of the downtown historic district lies within the town's original plat except for one block and several nearby lots west of Eighth Street. The plat established the grid street pattern, which is tilted to line up with the railroad tracks. Because of its railroad orientation, there are no true north-south or east-west streets in the original plat.

Of the district's 104 total resources, 75 are buildings contributing to the district's integrity. Twenty-one of the district's 28 non-contributing buildings were constructed after the period of historic significance, and seven historic buildings were altered to the point where they lost their historic integrity. One of the district's buildings, the Mitchell Opera House, was previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Opera House was placed on the National Register in 1981. There is also a historical marker in the district, located on Eighth Street in front of the Mitchell Library. The marker states that astronaut Virgil Grissom was born in Mitchell.

The district contains a wide variety of 19th and early 20th century commercial and residential buildings. In addition to the Italianate style, architectural styles include Queen Anne, Free Classic, Neoclassical, Craftsman and Richardsonian Romanesque. The district's contributing architecture begins with a commercial vernacular Main Street building dating to the mid-1800s and ends with 1930s homes such as a Craftsman-style Four Square house at 209 Ninth Street.

Italianate

Seven of the district's buildings are Italianate, dating from about 1874 to 1900. The oldest is the Jacob Finger Methodist Church (photo 12), 135 N. Eighth St. The brick church was built in 1874 and added on to in 1925. The building has Italianate detailing on a front gabled roof form. The

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Downtown Mitchell Historic District, Lawrence County, Indiana

steeple tower is built into the building's northeast corner. The wooden, double-door entrance is at the base of the tower, with the doorway trimmed by a framed full arch, similar to the exuberant enframed stained glass windows. Three windows are grouped together in the center. Above them is an enframed wheel window. The cornice line is accented by eave brackets. The metal shingle roof has decorative patterns.

The 600 block of West Main Street has five Italianate buildings, four of which are in a row on the north side of the street. The row begins on the west at 619 W. Main (photo 16), the location of the circa 1895 building now occupied by Persimmon Tree Antiques. The two-story brick building has its original cast-iron storefront. The upper facade has limestone window sills and lintels, and the windows are shuttered closed. The metal cornice above them is bracketed. On the right, the end bracket is positioned on the adjoining building, matching the storefront pier below.

That adjoining building, 615-617 W. Main (photo 15), is circa 1890. The building's storefront has been altered, but the upper facade is original. The Italianate detailing is carried out in masonry, with corbeled brick cornice brackets and brick window hoods and limestone sills. An addition has been created on the top of the building, elongating the facade by several feet, most likely in order to increase the pitch of the roof.

Next door at 609 W. Main (photo 17) is a circa 1890 building occupied by the Old Grocer Antiques. The brick building with its cast iron storefront is the most outstanding of Main Street's Italianate commercial structures. The tall storefront has two rows of transom level windows and an entrance on the left opening onto the stairs to the second level. There are three narrow Corinthian columns, one on each side of the main doorway, and one to the right of the upstairs entrance. The piers on each end of the storefront are fluted, and the left one is positioned on the adjoining building. The storefront cornice is bracketed. There are three rectangular upstairs windows, each with elaborate bracketed crowns. Designs from the window crowns are repeated in the ornate, bracketed upper cornice.

The next building (photo 15) to the east, 607 W. Main Street (occupied by Sunshine Cleaners), is circa 1895. It too has a metal cornice, but its storefront has been altered. The right pier, as well as the columns and transom around the entrance to the upstairs, remain, but except for the column on the far left, the remainder has been replaced or covered over with limestone veneer and contemporary columns. The upper facade is brick, with bands of rough-faced limestone serving as window sills and lintels for the rectangular windows. The windows are double-hung with transom

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windows on top.

Across the street at 622 W. Main (photo 23) is a two-story, circa 1880 Italianate structure. The building has an iron storefront with piers on each end and a recessed entryway centered between columns. The transom area has been covered. The upper facade has three rectangular windows, each with limestone sills and metal hoods. The windows are centered in larger brick rectangles. At the top of each rectangle is bracket-like corbeling. The facade is topped by a metal cornice detailed with emblems and floral designs.

The last of the district's Italianate buildings is a two-story brick structure, 122 N. Sixth St. (Photo 30), constructed in about 1900. Doorways are recessed into each side of the brick storefront, which is built out from the rest of the building's brick exterior. The storefront is capped by limestone sills. Above the doors, the bricks and sills are stacked in decreasing widths, topped by a line of brick stretching almost to the top of the facade. Between them are two windows, each accented by pedimented stone hoods. Most of the windows on the sides of the building are also hooded, but they lack the pediments. On the right side of the building near the front is a bay window addition with replacement siding. The building is capped by a stone coping, with the center of the facade projecting above the sides.

### Folk Victorian

There are eight Folk Victorian homes in the district. The homes are simple folk house forms with Victorian decorative detailing.

The earliest one was built in about 1875 at 717 W. Brook St. The one-story, side-gabled roof house mimics the Italianate style through its cornice-like brackets.

The Dr. William Dings House (photo 4), 703 W. Brook St., circa 1885, is a gabled-ell home with Victorian trim. The Victorian embellishment is in the window gables, with their patterned fronts, brackets and spindlework.

Other Folk Victorian houses are located at 822 W. Brook, 813 W. Warren St., and 126 N. Sixth St. The 822 W. Brook house, built about 1900, is a one-story, gable front structure with a bay window on the west side. The 813 W. Warren St. home, circa 1900, is a gable front and wing house with flat jigsaw-cut trim on the gable eaves. The 126 N. Sixth St. house (photo 30) is a two-story frame I-house, circa 1900, with a wraparound porch with spindlework.

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## Downtown Mitchell Historic District, Lawrence County, Indiana

An earlier I-house, circa 1880, is at 913 W. Warren (photo 5). This one is also two-story, but has brackets under the eaves. Most of the original porch has been replaced, and the house has been covered with siding. Continuing to the east, 905 W. Warren (photo 6) is a central passage house, circa 1870, with a Victorian spindlework porch below a centered front gable. It too has been sided. Then next door at 931 W. Warren is another circa 1870 Folk Victorian. Much of this house's wraparound porch has been replaced and siding has been added to the exterior.

### Queen Anne

Some of the finest houses in the district are the large, Queen Anne style homes. Probably the most elaborate is at 709 W. Warren St., the 1894 Edward Moore House (photo 7). The house has a wraparound front porch made of limestone. Paired classical columns and a pediment porch roof gable are indicative of the house's Free Classic detailing. Bay windows jut from the first and second floors, with a front gable above them. The east side is dominated by a tower. The house is currently home to the Chastain Funeral Home, and a multi-vehicle garage has been added to the rear.

The William T. "Dolly" Moore House (photo 2), 803 W. Brook St., is a gabled-ell Queen Anne house built about 1885. It is sited on a corner lot (the northeast corner of Eighth and Brook streets). A bay window extends from the south elevation, and a porch with spindlework detailing wraps around the south and east elevations. Another original porch is on the west side. The bay is embellished with trim that simulates an overhang above the ground floor windows and cutaways between the bay and gable front above the second floor windows. The center of the bay has shallow rectangular stained glass windows above the paired main windows.

Another gabled-ell Queen Anne house is at 120 N. Ninth St. This two-story circa 1910 house has bay windows under both gables. The original porch appears to have been replaced, and the clapboards are covered with siding. Other Queen Anne houses include a 1900 Queen Anne cottage at 215 Eighth St; a circa 1900 house at 613-615 W. Warren St.; a circa 1900 cross-gable cottage at 818 W. Brook St.; and the house at 823 W. Warren St., circa 1895. All have been altered on the exterior, generally by the addition of siding.

### Richardsonian Romanesque

The Bank of Mitchell Building (photos 25, 26), 602 W. Main St., is the district's lone Richardsonian Romanesque structure. Built in 1897, the building has round-topped arches over the ground floor windows, masonry walls, tower turret and asymmetrical facade, all identifying



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Downtown Mitchell Historic District, Lawrence County, Indiana

features of this style. The bank's name is written in stone above the front doors, which are flanked by classical columns and covered by a classical pediment. Above the entrance is the turret. The entry, turret and part of the Main Street facade are limestone, and except for belt courses, the remainder of the masonry is brick on the two-story, corner lot building.

In the same block at 628 is another building with Romanesque styling, belonging to the First National Bank. But this building is a new "old" building. Its facade was created in 1981, not the 1890s.

Free Classic

Six houses in the district have at least some elements of the Free Classic Victorian style.

The circa 1910 Fannie Moore Richardson House (photo 11) is probably the best example. The dormer windows on this house at 704 W. Warren St. are Palladian. Other classical details include the columns on the wraparound porch, which has been enclosed. The two-story home also has a bay window on the right side of the second story facade.

On the same block are other Free Classic houses. One was built about 1910 and located at 714 W. Warren St. This two story home has a wraparound limestone porch with classical columns. Behind the porch on the home's west side is a bay window. Another Free Classic house is across the street at 709 W. Warren St., the Henry Crawford House (photo 7), circa 1905. This house has a gambrel roof. The wraparound porch with its grouped classic columns indicate the house's style. The columns are raised to the porch rail level, resting on limestone piers.

Other houses with Free Classic influences are located at 821 W. Brook St., 910 W. Brook, and 705 W. Warren St.

Craftsman

There are a half dozen Craftsman style buildings in the district, most of them modest bungalows. The most elaborate Craftsman building is the Mitchell Public Library (photo 18), 804 W. Main St., built in 1917. This Carnegie library is clad in limestone with a reddish-brown tile roof. The main entrance, housed in a small cross gable, faces Eighth Street. The entry doors are at the top of six steps. On both sides of the entrance are windows, grouped in sets of three with transoms on the main floor and double hung windows on the basement level. On the Main Street side, an entryway to the basement is built out.

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Downtown Mitchell Historic District, Lawrence County, Indiana

A sympathetic addition, built in 1994, echoes the original library building with limestone and keystones in the window arches.

The rest of the Craftsman buildings are bungalow homes. One of the more detailed is the Jacob Effron House (photo 3), built in 1917 at 721 W. Brook St. Unlike most Craftsman bungalows, this one has a hipped roof (it does, however, have a small side-porch gable). The porches have brick columns and a brick closed porch railing capped with limestone. The brick columns rest on supports built up in limestone block from the block foundation. Other details include triangular knee braces under the eaves and sidelights around the front door. Another early bungalow, circa 1920, is at 722 W. Warren St. (photo 10). This front-gabled house has a second front gable set off to the left for the front porch.

The district's other Craftsman houses include side-gabled-roof bungalows at 712 W. Warren St. (circa 1930) and 729 W. Main St. (circa 1910); and a front-gabled-roof bungalow at 131 N. Eighth St. (circa 1915).

American Four-Square

Elements of Victorian and Prairie styles can be seen in the American Four-Square houses in the district.

At 910 W. Brook St. is a Four-Square house, circa 1910, with bay windows on the north and west elevations. The bay windows, along with the classical stone columns, give a Free Classic Victorian appearance to what, with its two ranks of windows and off-center entrance, is an American Four-Square house. Also built about the same time is another Four-Square house with Free Classic styling, located at 821 W. Brook St. (photo 1). About 25 years after those homes were built, another Four Square house went up at 209 N. Ninth St. The Ninth Street house has Craftsman and Prairie influences, with exposed rafters of the Craftsman style and horizontal porch roof lines typical of the Prairie style.

Neoclassical

The Mitchell Opera House (photo 27), built in 1905-1906 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1981, is one of two of the district's Neoclassical structures. The Opera House is a symmetrical two-story brick building with a one-story entrance and vestibule. The original sets of double doors are flanked by brick pilasters that are repeated at the corners, and

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## Downtown Mitchell Historic District, Lawrence County, Indiana

each pilaster has a stone entablature. At the cornice level between each set of pilasters is an ornate cartouche. Directly above the doors is an entablature with dentil molding, which runs across the center panel. The entry is topped by a simple pediment. The east elevation (the entrance side) has casement windows with limestone lintels and sills. A bracketed cornice extends between small parapets at the corners of the facade and between a center parapet. Originally, a railing topped the cornice. On the north side two of the nine arched windows are bricked in where a doorway was added in 1919. The west side, with its gambrel roof gable (necessary because of the stage), has been altered to allow access via overhead garage doors for fire trucks and city vehicles during the time the building housed city offices. Inside, the seats, balcony and stairways were removed in the late 1940s, when the building was transformed into a youth center. In 1952 the City of Mitchell moved its offices into the building. The stage floor was raised. Only the proscenium arch, the dressing room, and the catwalk were left. Some 40 years later, when the building was returned to its original use as a public auditorium, the seats and balcony were reinstalled, the garage door openings were bricked in, and the basement was expanded.

The district's other Neoclassical building is the First National Bank Building (photo 21), 626 W. Main St., constructed in 1927 and designed by McGuire & Shook. The two-story brick building has classical limestone pilasters capped with brick, an ornamental design, and a pediment. Symmetrically balanced windows flank the entrance, originally with eight panes each, stacked in pairs. A stone water table serves as the window sills. Above the entry are rows of windows. The window opening is the same as when the building was constructed, but the windows have been changed. On both ends of the facade, brick columns rise to capitals even with the top of the windows. The bank's name is spelled out above the windows and below a boxed cornice. Above the cornice the brick facade continues to a stone cap.

### Colonial Revival

A side-gabled roof Colonial Revival house, circa 1920, is located at 211 N. Eighth St. The two-story frame house has pediments above the entry door, and in the gables above the second floor and sunroom. Another Colonial Revival house, circa 1930, is at 719 W. Warren St.

### Commercial Vernacular

Main Street has many vernacular buildings mixed among its high-style structures. Beginning on the west end of the district on the north side of the street, the Sherwood Chastain Auto Company Building (photo 13) is the first commercial vernacular example. The one-story brick building, located at 737-739 W. Main St., circa 1915, is now used by Crawford Morris Lumber & Home

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Downtown Mitchell Historic District, Lawrence County, Indiana

Center.

At 709 W. Main St. is the former Theatorium, circa 1910, now occupied by S&H Antiques & Gifts and Jack Sun Air Conditioning. Next door at 705-707 W. Main is the vacant Knights of Pythias Building (photo 14), circa 1900. Parts of the original metal storefront can be seen under a wood covering on this two-story block building, which was damaged by fire. The roof has been replaced and reconfigured.

In the next block, at 635 W. Main (photo 15) is a circa 1920 building last occupied by the Mistletoe Falls Cafe. This two-story brick building has been covered with siding. Next door at 621-631 W. Main St. is a circa 1905 brick building with limestone trim and a metal upper cornice. The original storefront, with its transom windows and cornice, appears to have been removed, replaced by a limestone veneer. The paired, double hung windows of the second floor have been bricked in.

On the south side of Main, the H. H. Crawford Lumber Co. Building (photo 19), 738-748 W. Main (circa 1925) is a two-story brick structure. Further to the west is another two-story, circa 1925, brick at 718 W. Main, currently occupied by Dunbar & Company Insurance. Next door at 702-706 W. Main is the Mitchell Odd Fellows Hall (photo 20), now home to the Mitchell Antique Mall. The Odd Fellows Hall has its original storefronts. Stone is inset into the brick with the letters IOOF and the dates of both the building's construction and the lodge's founding carved in stone.

In the next block, at 624 W. Main St., is a two-story, circa 1900 building with a metal storefront and rough-faced limestone block upper facade. Further east at 622 W. Main St. is the Holmes Hardware Building (photo 23), circa 1880. This two-story brick building has a bracketed metal cornice. The storefront has been altered and a shingled canopy added over the transom window area.

The last of the street's commercial vernacular structures is one of its oldest, located at 521 W. Main St. (circa 1860). The two-story brick building's storefront has been altered.

Other commercial vernacular buildings in the district include the Mitchell *Commercial* Building, 116 S. Seventh St. (photo 28), circa 1910 with later additions; 125 N. Sixth St. (photo 29), circa 1900, a two-story brick building occupied by King Chiropractic; and 129 N. Sixth St., a two-story

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Downtown Mitchell Historic District, Lawrence County, Indiana

circa 1900 block building with a bay window centered in the upper facade and a virtually unaltered storefront.

Vernacular

The district has several vernacular houses. At 709 W. Brook St. is a gabled-ell house, circa 1910. Its windows have been replaced and siding has been added: the original brick front porch remains. Other vernacular houses can be found at 619 W. Warren St.; 601 and 611 W. Warren (circa 1900); and 213 N. Eighth St., a gable-front residence built about 1900.

Noncontributing

The noncontributing buildings either were built after the period of significance or were altered to the point where they are no longer identifiable as historic buildings. Examples include a contemporary building at 649 W. Main St. occupied by Furniture World; and a house at 214 N. Eighth St. that looks like it may have been a Craftsman Bungalow when it was built in about 1925, but since has been extensively remodeled.

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Downtown Mitchell Historic District, Lawrence County, Indiana

## Significance

The Downtown Mitchell Historic District possesses local significance as the historical commercial and governmental center of the city of Mitchell and Marion Township. The district contains a cohesive neighborhood of 19th and 20th century commercial and residential styles such as Italianate, Queen Anne, Free Classic, Dutch Colonial, Neoclassical and commercial vernacular styles. The district's commercial and residential buildings are important to the history of the development of Mitchell and Lawrence County. The district shows much evidence of the town's growth that resulted from its location at the intersection of two railroads. The Downtown Mitchell Historic District can be evaluated within the historic context of small railroad towns in Indiana between 1853 and 1940 and meets criteria A and C.

As early as 1810 settlement began in this area of south central Indiana with several families coming here from Lee County, Virginia. By a legislative act in 1818 Lawrence County was organized from what was part of Orange County. Palestine, located on the East Fork of the White River, became the county seat. The county seat moved to Bedford in 1825 after river-related illnesses struck Palestine.

The county's early industries centered around milling and pork packing. One of the first mills built in the southern part of the county was at the spot now called Spring Mill. By 1820 a small community had grown up around the profitable mill. Spring Mill reached its zenith during the period of 1820-1850, prior to the construction of the railroad which bypassed the village. In 1825 Hugh Hamer bought the big mill there and began to haul goods by wagon to Louisville, Kentucky and other destinations. He and others built flatboats at various boat yards on the White River and its tributaries and began the shipment of flour, whisky, pork and other products to New Orleans. These flatboats, with their items bound for market, were a good indicator of economic progress for the Lawrence County area.

While Indiana's earliest agricultural activity centered in the southern portion of the state, the uneven terrain, poor soil and lack of access to transportation kept many of these early farm operations at a subsistence level. Pork, grain and liquor were the most common products. The primary local crop was corn. Since this was bulky to transport, it was often turned into liquor or fed to hogs to produce pork.

Mitchell was not the first town in Marion Township, but it was the only one to prosper and

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survive into the 20th century. The first town in the area, Redding, was laid out in 1842 and became the main trading place for county residents who lived south of the White River. A second town, Woodville, was established in 1849 along the Monon rail line. The building of the Baltimore & Ohio rail line led to the founding of a third town, Juliet, in 1850. For about two years, Juliet was the terminal of the Monon line (then called the Louisville, New Albany and Chicago Railroad), and thrived. Goods shipped by rail from the south were put on wagons there for deliveries to Bedford, Bloomington and other towns. The completion of the railroad north led to the town's demise.

Mitchell was next in this string of new towns. Platted in 1853 by G.W. Cochran and John Sheeks, it was laid out at the junction of the Baltimore & Ohio line and the Chicago, Indiana & Louisville line and was named in honor of General Ormsby MacKnight Mitchell, chief surveyor for the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad. Because of its location at this rail hub, Mitchell supplanted the other Marion Township towns. In 1859, West Mitchell was laid out by Jonas Finger, adding 115 lots to the original 640-lot plat.

The streets of the original plat running east and west are Vine, Baker, Frank, Mississippi Avenue, Main, Warren, Brook and Oak. North-south streets were numbered one through eight. The streets of the West Mitchell addition carried on the east-west street names, but used the names Brady, Stevens and Finger for the new north-south streets, instead of continuing the consecutive number street names. The streets were later renamed to conform to the consecutive number system.

The town site was originally a dense forest of trees. In 1849, the first of these trees were cut for the right of way of the Chicago, Indiana & Louisville Railroad. During the same year a spot was cleared for a log cabin occupied by school teacher John White. White did not stay for the founding of the town, and the first town settler was probably G.W. Dodson. He was joined by many others and by 1860 the town had grown to 612 people, in a county with a population of 13,692. By this time, the town was served by telegraph service via the two rail lines.

In 1864, Mitchell was incorporated as a town with elected officers.

Perhaps the oldest building in the district is at the southeast corner of Sixth and Main streets. Hoosier Uplands last occupied this building, a brick commercial vernacular structure at 521 W. Main Street. One town history says the building was erected by Albert H. Johnston in the 1850s.

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Isaac Glover purchased the building in 1881 from Johnston's heirs and opened a clothing store there. In 1886, the City Drug Store moved into the building and remained there for almost 100 years. The store, which also sold books, originated from a business founded by William A. Burton and Dr. Isom Burton. William's sons Frank, Mart and Ed owned the store by the time it moved into this building, and they gave the business the name City Drug Store. The upstairs of the building was a Masonic Hall.

The town grew to a population of 1,087 by 1870. Several of the structures constructed about that time remain today. Two are on Warren Street and both are residences. One is a vernacular house at 901 W. Warren, and the other is a central passage house at 905 W. Warren. Another building, a folk Victorian house at 717 W. Brook Street, was built about 1875. In 1874, the Jacob Finger Methodist Episcopal Church was constructed at the southwest corner of Warren and Brady streets (135 N. Eighth Street). The site is near a grove where the church's first quarterly meeting was held in 1856. The Italianate sanctuary cost \$8,000, and of this sum, Jacob Finger contributed \$2,000. The building was expanded in 1925. Another church, the Mitchell Presbyterian Church, was built in 1871 on Main Street, with a steeple and town clock added later. A 1992 fire heavily damaged the church and the congregation relocated to Ind. 60 on the south side of the city.

By the time of the 1879 Atlas of Lawrence County, much of the area of the Mitchell Downtown Historic District contained homes or commercial buildings. Approximately 67 buildings within the district boundaries can be identified on the 1879 Mitchell map. Three of the Main Street block faces had virtually filled with buildings, creating cohesive streetscapes. Almost all of these buildings were replaced through the years, but two c. 1880 buildings remain, located at 620 and 622 W. Main Street. The two-story brick buildings are occupied by Holmes Hardware, which was incorporated in 1928 when the Holmes brothers, John L. and Samuel W., and John's son S. Wendell Holmes, purchased H.H. Crawford's hardware business. John and Samuel's father, Joseph L. Holmes, started the family business 41 years earlier, first as a wagon maker and then as a grocer, located originally on the north side of the street. According to Sanborn insurance maps, the Holmes Hardware buildings were earlier home to a clothing store and a dry goods store, with a printer above the clothing store. The Holmes' purchased the buildings from Jacob Effron, who had operated the Effron (clothing) Store at 622 W. Main, and Lou Terrell, owner of the City Pool Room, 620 W. Main.

A two-story vernacular I-house at 913 W. Warren St. also survives from about 1880. The



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railroad town had grown to 1,500 residents by 1880, having more than doubled its population within 20 years.

What was probably the city's first Queen Anne-style house, the William T. "Dolly" Moore House, was built about 1885 at 803 W. Brook Street. Dolly was the oldest son of one of the town's most prominent citizens, financier Milton Moore, whose magnificent Italianate mansion was torn down in 1958. Milton's father, Silas Moore, was one of the town's first dry goods merchants. Silas built the Trade Palace in the 1850s (since demolished) at the northeast corner of Sixth and Main Streets. About 10 years after Dolly built his house, his brother Edward built a house on West Warren (see below). As a gift, their father Milton had a house built across the street from Edward's house for Fannie Moore Richardson (see below), Edward and Dolly's sister. Dolly ran the family's dry goods business after his father started the Bank of Mitchell in 1882.

Also dating to about 1885 is a gabled-ell house at 703 W. Brook St. The home was built for Dr. William Dings, one of the many local businessmen and doctors who built their homes in the district.

Two more Main Street buildings were constructed about 1890: the current site of Ollie's Restaurant, 615-617 W. Main, which was a grocery from at least the 1890s through about 1920; and the current location of Old Grocer Antiques, 609 W. Main, which was a drug store in 1894, then became a grocery by 1899, with a lodge upstairs. Both buildings are Italianate.

The town underwent extensive construction over the next 20 years, with 42 surviving buildings erected in the Mitchell Downtown Historic District alone. Six of the existing buildings are from the beginning of this time, circa 1895. The city's most elaborate Queen Anne style house, the Edward Moore House, is one of the six. The Moore House, 705 W. Warren St., now has an addition and is being used as the Chastain Funeral Home. Another home from this period is a folk Victorian at 823 W. Warren St. Four more Main Street buildings date from this period. Persimmon Tree Antiques operates in an Italianate building at 619 W. Main that housed a dry goods and grocery store originally. Sunshine Cleaners is in another Italianate building at 607 W. Main St., which served originally as bakery and later became a grocery store. City offices were once located upstairs.

At 602 W. Main Street is the Bank of Mitchell Building, a brick building with Richardsonian Romanesque detailing. The bank now occupies the entire building, but originally it occupied only

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the corner space and rented the other two spaces to tenants including a jeweler and a barber. The bank was founded by Milton N. Moore in 1882 and was the town's first bank. It is the oldest bank in Lawrence County.

Fourteen more buildings date from about 1900. On Brook Street, a folk Victorian home was built at 822 W. Brook and Queen Anne style homes were built at 818 and 822 W. Brook. The 600 block of West Brook had a Queen Anne style home constructed at 613-615 and gable front homes were installed at 601 and 611, all lots owned by Milton Moore. The gable front homes are said to have been created by dividing in two a wooden building that had housed the Bank of Mitchell on Main Street, but was moved to make way for the construction of the new bank building. On North Eighth Street, a gable-front house went up at 213 and a Queen Anne cottage at 215. Also, an I-house with Victorian trim was built at 126 N. Sixth St. The Knights of Pythias built their lodge hall at 705-707 W. Main, using the upstairs for their functions and renting the downstairs to a dry goods store and later the post office and a feed store. The Holmes grocery filled a two-story building constructed at 624 W. Main St. A small building at 116 S. Seventh St. housed the *Mitchell Commercial* newspaper. Newspaper publisher Howard Chitty opened the town's second gas station there in about 1916. The newspaper office closed after the *Commercial* merged with the *Mitchell Tribune* in 1921.

About a half block from Main Street on Sixth Street new buildings went up in about 1900 across from each other, one (built by Milton Moore) housing the post office with a photographer's studio upstairs at 129 N. Sixth, another housing the telephone exchange upstairs and a grocery downstairs at 125 N. Sixth (now occupied by King Chiropractic); and across the street at 122 N. Sixth a two-story Italianate structure filled with doctors offices (now occupied by Freeze Frame Photography). By this time, Mitchell had electric power for lights.

The prosperous town had a population of 1,772 at the turn of the century, and increased to a population of more than 3,400 by 1910. The economy was boosted by industries like Lehigh Portland Cement, which located a factory in the town in 1902. To feed the factory, quarries opened nearby to produce limestone for cement production, and several auxiliary mills went into operation.

The Mitchell Opera House, 221 N. Seventh Street, was completed in 1906. The Neoclassical building began as the county hall for Mitchell. Several Mitchell businessmen in 1903 asked the Lawrence County Commissioners to build a place for public meetings for southern Lawrence

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County. The commissioners agreed in 1904, according to the *Mitchell Commercial*, and Van Hoy and Sons of Loogootee were given the contract to build the hall. It is the only county hall built in Indiana outside of a county seat.

Douglas L. Hartzell recounted the building's later use in his successful National Register of Historic Places nomination for the structure: "At some point the building was turned over to the City of Mitchell. However, it was not maintained and fell into disrepair. In 1916 it was rented to Menlo Moore, a professional theatre man, who remodeled it in 1919. It opened on September 4, 1919 as the Mitchell Opera House, featuring minstrel shows, silent films, local talent shows, political rallies and debates, musical comedies and dramatic plays. It was also on the B.F. Keith Vaudeville circuit. Celebrities appearing at the Opera House included John Phillip Sousa's band, (magician Harry) Blackstone, and the silent film star Norma Talmadge.

"In 1927 the Opera House closed its doors, although the reason is not certain. The City renamed the building City Hall, and it once again was available for public meetings and entertainment."

In 1945 the Opera House was turned into a youth center, the Teen Canteen. Seven years later, Mayor Roy Ira moved the city offices into the structure, where they remained until the new Municipal Building was constructed in 1979.

By the time Hartzell wrote the nomination in late 1979, plans had been made to restore the building to its early appearance, and to its early use as an opera house. The restored opera house reopened in 1985 and is now a music and theater venue.

Other buildings erected about the time of the Opera House's construction include a gable-front house at 814 W. Brook St. and a Free Classic house at 709 W. Warren St. Henry Crawford, one of the town's most prominent men as owner of its lumber business, was the first resident of the Warren Street house. Two of Main Street's buildings were also constructed at this time. One is a two-story brick building built by Milton Moore at 621-631 W. Main St. According to Dorothy Stroud's *My Legacy for Mitchell, Indiana*, bricks for the building came from the burned out Mitchell Southern Indiana Normal School. The Main Street building sheltered a meat market, drug store, music store and furniture store in its four store spaces in 1909. Club meetings were held upstairs in space that later became the Phi Beta Thrift Shop. Today the building houses the Clothesline clothing store, a Farm Bureau Insurance office and Colglazier's Antiques on the

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ground level. Across the street at 628 W. Main, the First National Bank constructed a two-story building on property acquired from Dr. Dings. The First National Bank was chartered in 1902 with a capitalization of \$25,000. The bank building was constructed in the same year.

In 1907, the townspeople voted to make Mitchell a city with a mayor, clerk-treasurer and city council. In 1909 the dirt Main Street was paved with brick.

Ten homes and a commercial building remain that were built about 1910. The homes include a Queen Anne-style house at 120 N. Ninth St, an American Four-Square/Free Classic home at 821 W. Brook, a gabled-ell house at 709 W. Brook, another American Four-Square/Free Classic home at 910 W. Brook, Free Classic homes at 704 and 714 W. Warren, a bungalow at 729 W. Main St., and homes at 714 W. Brook St. and 617 and 623 W. Warren St. Dolly Moore built the Theatorium, a Nickelodeon theater, about this time at 709 W. Main and the building was later converted into store space. Today, S&H Antiques and Jack Sun Air Conditioning are located in the Main Street building.

By about 1915, housing tastes had changed, with bungalows the prevailing type of home. Craftsman bungalows were built at 721 W. Brook St. (built in 1917 for Jacob Effron, owner of the Effron Store) and 131 N. Eighth St. The Mitchell Carnegie Library (built in 1917 and expanded in 1994), 804 W. Main St., is also Craftsman style.

Beulah B. Munger is recognized as the "mother" of the library. She took the idea of creating a local library to the Mitchell High School Alumni Association and was elected the association's president. She appointed a committee to find out how a library could be established. Superintendent of Public Schools Robert Tirey headed the committee. Their efforts bore fruit in 1914, when the Carnegie Commission granted the city \$15,000. The Eighth and Main Street site was purchased for \$2,000. The new library formally opened Feb. 12, 1917. Seventy-six years later, construction began on a sympathetic addition to the original building, which the library had outgrown. The 4,800 square foot building grew to 12,800 feet to allow for an expanded collection and community meeting room, all handicapped accessible. In the process, dropped ceilings were removed from the original building, uncovering forgotten crown moldings.

By the late 1920s, the advent of the automobile had begun to influence the Downtown Mitchell Historic District's building stock. Garages appeared, including a large one at 106 N. Eighth Street. It became a fire station, and now is home to D&M Cleaners. A Ford automobile dealership

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was built in 1915 at 737-739 W. Main St. by Frank Chastain. It was the first Ford dealership south of Indianapolis. The building is now used by Crawford-Morris Lumber & Home Center. Chastain also established the first gasoline station in Mitchell at that address.

Three more of the district's buildings are circa 1920. They are a Craftsman bungalow at 722 W. Warren St., a Colonial Revival house at 211 N. Eighth, and a store building at 635 W. Main (last occupied by Mistletoe Falls Cafe).

Commercial building continued on Main Street in the mid-1920s, this time on the south side of the 700 block. Henry Crawford built a new facility for his lumber business, the H. H. Crawford Lumber Co., at 738-748 W. Main, replacing several smaller lumber yard buildings that dated back to the company's predecessor, the Jacob Bixler Lumber Yard. Crawford had purchased the business from Bixler's heirs in 1901, and previously had owned and operated a hardware and farm implement business. Crawford started his first venture, a hardware store, in the 1870s on Main Street. After Crawford's death in 1937, Raymond Morris became a partner in the business and the company was renamed Crawford Morris Lumber Co.

On the other side of what was then the Mitchell Presbyterian Church, a brick building with two retail/office spaces was built at 718 W. Main, with one of its first occupants being the city's post office. The building is now used by Dunbar & Co. Insurance. Next door at 702-706 W. Main, the Oddfellows built their hall and rented store space on the ground level, reserving the second floor for their gatherings. The Mitchell Antique Mall is now there. In 1927, the First National Bank contracted for the construction of its Neoclassical-style building at 626 W. Main St. The city's first screening of a talking motion picture took place in 1929 at the Orpheum Theatre, which was located at the northwest corner of Sixth and Main streets and demolished in the 1970s. Also dating from about 1925 is a since-remodeled Craftsman bungalow at 214 Eighth Street.

With the onset of the Great Depression, construction slowed. Just four buildings remain in the district from the Depression era. Two houses are circa 1930, a Colonial Revival home at 719 W. Warren St. and a Craftsman bungalow at 712 W. Warren. Two more homes are circa 1935: a Four-Square house at 209 N. Ninth St. and another house at 212 N. Seventh St. The city's population stood at 3,226 in 1930, and remained within 200 residents of that number until the baby boom of the 1950s.

Many of the historic buildings were lost in the first few decades after World War II. Fires, such

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as the one in January 1966 that destroyed several buildings west of the First National Bank, took their toll.

In recent years, the district has undergone a renaissance as antique stores opened in the old Main Street buildings to capitalize upon the proximity of tourists at Spring Mill State Park and the Spring Mill Inn. City residents formed a Main Street Program and worked with the city to replace crumbling sidewalks on Main Street with decorative walks, old fashioned streetlamps, and trees. Many building owners have fixed-up and painted-up their buildings, returning their buildings to their original appearance.

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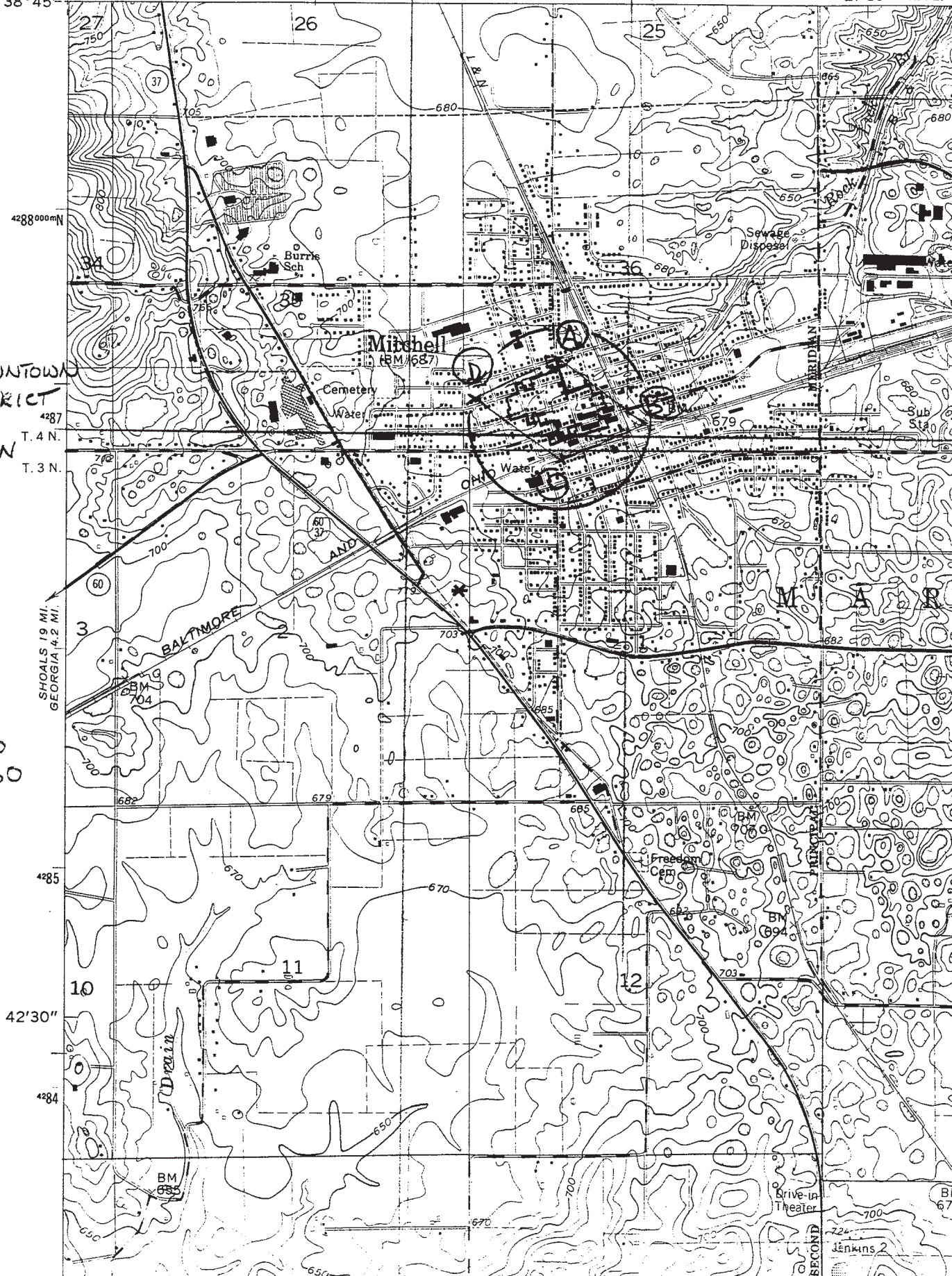
Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point intersected by the west curbline of Seventh Street and the east end of the east-west alley north of Brook Street, proceed west, crossing Eighth Street to the west edge of the property at 803 W. Brook Street; thence south to the south curbline of Brook Street; thence west to the intersection of that curbline with a line made by extending the east property line of 821 W. Brook Street across Brook Street to the south curb. Follow that line north to the south side of the alley behind the 821 W. Brook Street property, thence west to the east curbline of Ninth Street. Follow the east curbline of Ninth Street south to the southwest corner of Brook and Ninth streets, then proceed west to the west edge of the property at 910 W. Brook; then proceed south to the south side of the alley, then west to the west edge of the property at 913 Warren Street; follow the property line south to the north curbline of Warren Street, then proceed east to the northeast corner of Ninth and Warren streets; then cross Warren Street and follow the east curbline of Ninth Street to the north side of the alley; then proceed east to the east edge of the property at 120 N. Ninth Street, then follow the property line north to the north curbline of Warren Street, then follow the curbline east to a line made by extending the west property line of the property at 135 North Eighth Street, then proceed south to the north side of the alley, then continue east across Eighth Street to the point where the west edge of the property at 737-739 W. Main Street would intersect the north side of the alley if the property line were extended north across the alley; then proceed south along the property line and across Main Street to Main Street's south curbline, then proceed west to the west edge of the 804 W. Main Street property, then south to the north side of the alley; then east along the north edge of the alley across Eighth, Seventh and Sixth streets to the east edge of the property at 521 W. Main Street; then proceed north to the south curbline of Main Street, then west to the southwest corner of Sixth and Main streets; then proceed north and follow the west curbline of Sixth Street across the alley; then proceed east from the north side of the alley and cross Sixth Street and continue to the east edge of the property at 122 N. Sixth Street; then go north to the south curbline of Warren Street; then go west to the southwest corner of Sixth and Warren streets; then proceed north across Warren Street and follow the west curbline of Sixth Street to the south side of the alley; then follow the south side of the alley west and cross Seventh Street; then proceed north, cross the alley and continue north along the west curbline of Seventh Street; cross Brook Street and continue north to the point of beginning.

38° 1' SE  
(BEDFORD WEST)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

86° 30' 38° 45' BEDFORD 9.1 MI. 4.6 MI. TO U.S. 50 545000mE 546 R.1.W. 27'30" R.1.E.



MITCHELL DOWNTOWN  
HISTORIC DISTRICT

WRENCE CO, IN  
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T.3 N.

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- E 545670  
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- E 546090  
N 4287060
- E 545700  
N 4286900
- E 545300  
N 4287160

SHOALS 19 MI.  
GEORGIA 14.2 MI.

BALTIMORE

Drain

Drive-in Theater

Jenkins 2

C.V. BECOND