

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Rhode Island	
COUNTY: Providence	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Elizabeth Building

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
100 North Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Providence

STATE: Rhode Island, 02903      CODE: 44      COUNTY: Providence      CODE: 007

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
			Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Iroquois Company

STREET AND NUMBER:  
100 North Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence      STATE: Rhode Island, 02903      CODE: 44

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Dorrance and Washington Streets

CITY OR TOWN: Providence      STATE: Rhode Island, 02903      CODE: 44

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE:      CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Completed by 1876, the Elizabeth Building was part of a boom in the construction of commercial buildings in Providence during the 1870's and 1880's. (As this building is first mentioned in the Providence business directory of 1876, it is logical to conclude that it was erected in 1875 or 1874-1875 and--although the architect has not been identified--that it was designed by one of the twenty-one local architects or firms listed in the 1875 directory. At this time such cast-iron structures as the Equitable Building, by Walker and Gould, and the Hoppin Homestead Building, by James Bucklin, were also being erected here. These Providence "cast-iron fronts" were of four storeys only, on contrast to the higher structures of the same type seen in New York City.

The black-painted cast-iron front\* of the Elizabeth Building not only forms the main (east) street façade but also wraps around a two-bay section of the south side of the slender but massive rectangular structure (otherwise brick-walled), extending the ornamental detailing around an angle viewed from approaching streets. An 1891 photograph of the building shows the upper storeys of the iron front painted in a light colour, no doubt imitating stone, as such ironwork was intended to imitate. While the cast-iron east façade is divided into four storeys, the building actually contains five storeys, as the brick side and rear elevations reveal. The fifth floor is masked on the east elevation by a windowless mansard roof with ribbed metal covering.

Each floor of the iron front is divided from the next by a deep entablature with brackets in the frieze. These frieze brackets connect the vertical impetus begun at the base by the (now free-standing) fluted Corinthian columns with the Doric pilasters of the upper floors. A central accent is created by the grouping of the façade's five bays: the three middle bays are set between a wider bay at each end. At first-floor level the end bays both originally contained entrances (at present, there is only one, in the north bay). On the upper floors the three central bays each contain one window; the end bays contain paired window openings. On each floor these bays are separated by four fluted Doric pilasters into a configuration of aa-b-b-b-aa. The angles of the building are marked by panelled Doric pilasters at each floor level; the upper portions of their panels contain stylised floral ornament. The plain brick back and side walls of the building are pierced by a variety of window arrangements with strongly projecting and varied cast-iron cappings.

The interior of this building is of extremely simple plan. Directly inside the north, street-level entrance is a hall which contains an iron staircase and an elevator. Offices now fill the rest of this floor, doubtless originally devoted to shop space. Upper floors contain, as always, variously subdivided office space.

(See Continuation Sheet.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

7. Description.

Alterations on the exterior are minor. The original glazed shop-fronts of the ground floor were in 1960 replaced by Philemon Sturges with a marble curtain wall recessed behind the stone-based iron Corinthian columns and corner piers. A section of cornice on the north side is missing; a columned store-front at the south-east has been filled in with brick. These changes, however, do not interfere with the over-all form and ornament of the Elizabeth Building or with its architectural integrity.

- \* Information has been received that the cast-iron structural and decorative elements of the Elizabeth Building were produced in Providence by the Builders Iron Foundry (still existing under the name of B.I.F. Industries).

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) C. 1874-1875

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

As one of the few cast-iron fronts remaining in Providence, the Elizabeth building has an important place in the historic and architectural fabric of its city. It is representative of a period when commercial architecture was becoming, in both volume and design, conspicuous on the American scene. The age of the cast-iron-framed and ornamented business building has been called the precursor of our modern age of the steel and glass skyscraper. Immensely popular as cast-iron architecture was across the country, for decades, comparatively few examples remain in any of our cities now.

Those examples which we still have, and those which we can now see only in photographs, are handsome and disciplined structures--as is the Elizabeth Building. Cast-iron may have permitted variety and elaboration of textural or sculptural forms (particularly capitals, car-touches etc.), but the discipline imposed by the use of pre-made, uniform structural and ornamental members prevented the often-incoherent mixtures of shapes and styles seen in many other coeval buildings.

Where it stands, the Elizabeth building is also important in its immediate architectural and visual context--a three- or four-block stretch of shop and office or loft buildings which are roughly contemporary with it, similar in height and "weight." At the base of College Hill, with its treasures of residential architecture, this row of hundred-year-old commercial buildings forms an important retaining wall and a good screen against the open and often ugly traffic spaces and the heterogeneous business and governmental structures of the modern downtown immediately to the west.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		41° 49' 39" N	71° 24' 35" W	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Alice H. R. Hauck, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission DATE: April 7, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:  
State House, 90 Smith Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island, 02903 CODE: RI

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



GOLDSMITH-TREGAR CO. ADVERTISING

ONE WAY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

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COUNTY Providence	
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: Elizabeth Building			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: 100 North Main Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Providence			
STATE: Rhode Island	CODE 44	COUNTY: Providence	CODE 007
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT: Alice R. Hauck			
DATE OF PHOTO: March, 1971			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, State House, 90 Smith Street, Providence, R. I., 02903			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.  Exterior seen from the south-east.			



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DATE OF PHOTO: March, 1971			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, State House, 90 Smith Street, Providence, R. I. 02903			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.  Cast iron columns at street-level, supporting the iron façade; the marble screen behind them is a very recent insertion.			



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100 North Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Providence

STATE:

Rhode Island

CODE

44

COUNTY:

Providence

CODE

007

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Alice R. Hauck

DATE OF PHOTO: March, 1971

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission,  
State House, 90 Smith Street, Providence, R. I., 02903

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Window treatments on south side.



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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Elizabeth Building

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

100 North Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Providence

STATE:

Rhode Island

CODE

444

COUNTY:

Providence

CODE

007

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Alice R. Hauck

DATE OF PHOTO: March, 1971

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission,  
State House, 90 Smith Street, Providence, R. I., 02903

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Detail of iron structure and ornament on east façade.



**GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES**

Latitude: 41° 19' 39" N  
 Longitude: 71° 24' 35" W

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Providence	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Elizabeth Building

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

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100 North Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Providence

STATE:

Rhode Island

CODE

44

COUNTY:

Providence

CODE

007

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:

U. S. Geological Survey

SCALE: 1: 24,000

DATE: 1957

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.