

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

JUL 13 1983

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Gennett, Henry and Alice, House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 1829 East Main Street^e N/A not for publication

city, town Richmond N/A vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Wayne code 177

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name World Life and Accident Association
c/o Mr. and Mrs. Wayne E. Vincent

street & number 5900 Old U.S. 27 South

city, town Richmond N/A vicinity of state Indiana 47374

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office, Wayne County Courthouse

street & number 401 E. Main Street

city, town Richmond state Indiana 47374

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Department of Natural Resources

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Henry and Alice Gennett House is a large, Colonial Revival-style home located on the near east side of Richmond, Indiana. Prominently situated at the corner of Main Street (U.S. 40) and 19th Street, the home is constructed of yellow brick and features a limestone foundation and a monumental entry portico. Constructed in 1900 for one of the founders of the Starr Piano Factory, the home was converted into apartments in the 1940's. The current owner is presently renovating the structure for office uses.

The home consists of a large, rectangular, hip-roofed central block with small projecting wings, or porches, on each facade. The symmetrical main (north) facade is three bays wide and is dominated by the two-story main entry portico, surmounted by a large, semi-circular bay (photo 3). The portico, itself, consists of four fluted Ionic columns on a semi-circular platform, ringed by three steps of cut limestone. The main door is a single-leaf, glazed unit enhanced with decorative floral carving, and surmounted by a transom. This door is located in a recessed entryway which is flanked by two fixed-sash windows mounted in plain surrounds on walls angled at 45° to the main door architrave. A terra cotta strip molding enhances the plain brick surrounds of the first and second story windows in the main body of the house. The windows, themselves, are double-hung sash units with single lights in the upper and lower sashes (photo 4).

A second entrance and portico of somewhat smaller scale is located in the center of the east facade (photo 5). This semi-circular portico is one story high and was flanked by two screened porches on either side. These porches were later enclosed and refitted as bathrooms after Henry Gennett's death.

Projecting from the west facade is the conservatory, a one-story wing with a semi-circular bay. The conservatory features a band of large, double-hung, one-over-one windows separated by brick piers treated as pilasters. This bay originally housed a grand piano manufactured by the owner's firm.

On the south or rear wall of the house is a two story, enclosed porch which was originally screened on both floors. When the house was converted to apartments in 1940, the porch was extended 8' south and walled with plywood on the second floor and wood siding on the first floor. The porch foundation, which was originally limestone block, was extended with cinder block (photo 6).

The overscaled entablature with modillions follows the second floor ceiling line of the house. The actual masonry wall area extends approximately 5' above this line to the cornice. Pedimented dormers with Doric pilasters interrupt this cornice at irregular intervals; the window sills of these units rest on the entablature. Truncated, hipped roofs are employed on the central block and the conservatory; the north wing and the east portico have flat, built-up roofs. A balustrade originally appeared on the east portico roof, but this feature has been removed.

Five chimneys extend above the roof. They are of brick construction with four-step, corbelled molding above, which the shaft continues. Each chimney is finished with a narrow rimmed cap to form a crown on the shaft. The chimney located in the southeast portion of the south wall is flush. The other four interior chimneys are located nearly equidistant from the east-west centerline of the house.

The main entrance to the house opens into a T-shaped, wood paneled hallway. At the juncture of the main and cross hallways is a stone fireplace (photo 7). To the right (west) of this fireplace is the staircase to the second floor. The first floor landing is also

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 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-	<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 1900 Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance ~~(in one paragraph)~~

The Gennett House is significant for its architecture and for its association with Henry and Alice Gennett, both of whom achieved local prominence for their involvement with Richmond's industry and commerce. The home is a large, Colonial Revival-style structure noted for its Ionic-columned, two-story entry portico. The original owner of the house, Henry Gennett, was one of the founders of the Starr Piano Company, and served as its president for more than 20 years. After his death, his widow, Alice, took an active role in the management of the firm and eventually became Chairman of the Board. The Gennetts' home, remodeled into apartments in the 1940's, is currently being renovated for use as an insurance office.

Henry Gennett was born in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1852, and worked there, and in St. Louis. Gennett and his father-in-law, John Lumsden, operated a chain of music stores, and in 1893 joined with Benjamin Starr in organizing a piano manufacturing firm located in Richmond. Gennett came to Richmond in 1894 shortly after their new factory, the Starr Piano Company, was almost completely destroyed by fire, and helped rebuild and expand the firm. Gennett served as vice-president of the firm until 1898, when he became company president. For the next 24 years, he led the firm through a period of great growth, expanding the Richmond plant into a 35 acre industrial complex, and establishing (in 1907) a second plant in Los Angeles. During this period Starr pianos became well-known for their quality, consistently winning awards at manufacturers' shows and trade expositions. The company entered the recording business in 1915 under the Starr label. The label was soon changed to Gennett, and became famous for its recordings of Bix Beiderbecke, Hoagy Carmichael, Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton, and Gene Autry. Gennett continued as president of the firm, as well as director of two Richmond financial institutions, until his death in 1922.

Alice Gennett, Henry's wife, was well-known locally for her work as president of the Gennett Theatre Company and as a member of the Richmond Musical Club (reorganized as the Musical Study Club in 1904). Upon her husband's death she became more involved with the operations of the company, and served as vice-president for three years beginning in 1922. In 1925 she became Chairman of the Board. She remained at this house until 1939, when she sold it to a local realtor.

The Gennett House is well known, locally, for its Colonial Revival style and architecture and its imposing portico. One of the largest and most significant structures in Richmond's exclusive Linden Hills subdivision, the house was already considered a local landmark in 1906 when it was pictured in a centennial history of the county. Prominently sited on a large corner lot on Richmond's Main Street (U.S. 40), the home continues to dominate this near-east-side neighborhood.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.03 acres

Quadrangle name Richmond

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	6	6	8	1	6	8	0	4	4	1	0	8	0	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B

Zone		Easting						Northing					

C

Zone		Easting						Northing					

D

Zone		Easting						Northing					

E

Zone		Easting						Northing					

F

Zone		Easting						Northing					

G

Zone		Easting						Northing					

H

Zone		Easting						Northing					

Verbal boundary description and justification Starting at the southwest corner of South 19th Street and East Main St., 178.38' west to the boundary of the property deeded to TAT Realty, then 237.2' south, then 177.5' east to South 19th St., then 253.4' north to the starting point.

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Stuart R. Boggs, Historic Preservation Planner

organization Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana date July 27, 1982

street & number State Headquarters 3402 Boulevard Place telephone 317/926-2301

city or town Indianapolis state Indiana 46208

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 J. M. Redman

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date 6-30-83

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date 8/11/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Gennett House

Item number 7

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a light well with distinctive leaded glass windows looking out over the roof of the conservatory. To the right of the main entrance is the former library which still contains the original, built-in bookcases. West of this room was the billiard room which occupied a portion of the conservatory. South of the conservatory was an open air porch which was made into a bedroom when the house was converted into apartments. To the right of the east entrance was the guest bedroom; to the left was Alice Gennett's bedroom. The second floor originally contained a second dining area and kitchen. The main dining room and kitchen were located at the rear of the house on the first floor (as well as a playroom and two bedrooms). The third floor was originally used as a ballroom, but in later years was used, principally, for storage by the Gennett family.

The three-bay automobile garage was constructed some time after 1909 (the garage appears in the updated 1909 Sanborn map, but not in the original, uncorrected 1909 version). It is a green painted, Shingle style structure located just south of the house and facing South 19th Street.

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Continuation sheet Gennett House

Item number 9

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Fox, Henry Clay, ed. Memoirs of Wayne County and the City of Richmond, Indiana, Vol. 1.
Madison: Western Historical Association, 1912.

"Henry Gennett, Richmond Piano Maker, Expires." The Indianapolis Star, June 3, 1922, p. 1.

"Henry Gennett Dies." Richmond Palladium, June 3, 1922, p. 1.

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory: An Introduction and Instruction Manual.
Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana. Indianapolis, February, 1976.

Level, Harry William, 730 South 12th Street, Richmond, Indiana. Interview, July 22, 1982.
(Former employee of Gennett family.)

"Pictorial History of the City of Richmond, Indiana, 1806-1906." Dalbey's Centennial
Souvenir.

Turner, Pauline Katherine, Apartment #2, Shelley Apartments (former Gennett House),
Richmond, Indiana. Interview, July 22, 1982.