

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received AUG 19 1983

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Prince Hall Masonic Temple

and/or common Prince Hall Masonic Temple

2. Location

street & number 1000 U Street, N.W.

n/a not for publication

city, town Washington

N.A. vicinity of

congressional district

Walter E. Fauntroy
Delegate

state District of Columbia

code 11

county

n/a

code 001

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	n/a in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Masonic lodge

4. Owner of Property

name Acacia Masonic Hall Association

street & number 1000 U Street, N.W.

city, town Washington

n/a vicinity of

District of Columbia
state 20001

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder of Deeds

street & number 6th and D Streets, N.W.

city, town Washington

state District of Columbia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title District of Columbia's Inventory
of Historic Sites

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date December 9, 1982

federal state county local

depository for survey records

Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
Historic Preservation Division

city, town Washington

state District of Columbia

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Prince Hall Masonic Temple at 1000 U Street, N.W., is a six-story rectangular structure faced with Indiana limestone. It stands on a prominent corner in the U Street corridor and it appears today remarkably as it did when it was completed. The building was designed by Albert I. Cassell, a prominent black architect. It was begun in 1922 under authorization of a permit issued to complete the structural elements of the entire building and to fully complete the first two floors. One elevator shaft was planned for the structure, which was built of concrete, steel, brick, and stone. The estimated cost of the project was \$285,000. During 1924, the third floor was completed. In 1928, authorization was finally given to complete the remaining floors as originally-planned. By 1929, the structure was finished, at a cost of \$500,000.

The Prince Hall Masonic Temple is a classically detailed symmetrical structure with five bays along U Street, N.W., and six bays along 10th Street, N.W. The bays are delineated above the second floor by massive pilasters running to cornice of the building. The building is dinded horizontally by a flat stringcourse above the second floor. A massive projecting cornice above a frieze decorated with medallions of the symbolic signs of free masonry caps the building.

The U Street, N.W. facade is pierced on the first floor by large show windows, doors and an entrance that rises two stories. The two-story entrance was, unfortunately, altered in the mid-1960's by surrounding the opening with white marble. The alteration is out of character with the building but it could be reversed at some future date. Groups of three windows define the bays on the second and third floors and large paired windows pierce the upper floors. The 10th Street facade varies somewhat from the U Street facade.

The entrance on 10th Street is surrounded by two-story fluted pilasters and capped by a classical entablature. It is located in the fourth bay south of U Street. The fenestration on the second, third, and fifth floors match that on the U Street facade. The openings on the first floor have been reduced to three small glazed panels in the upper portion of the original openings. The center bays on the fourth floor feature triple windows and the outer bays each have a single window. The windows in many of the openings were replaced as part of the mid-60's alterations. Although unfortunate, the alterations do not seriously detract from the dignified, classical presence this building has on the street.

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
			(black history)	

Specific dates 1922-1929

Builder/Architect Albert I. Cassell, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Joint Committee on Landmarks of the National Capital has designated the Prince Hall Masonic Temple at 1000 U Street, N.W., as a Category III Historic Landmark in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites. The Prince Hall Masonic Temple meets the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for the following reasons:

- (1) An excellent example of classical institutional architecture, it was designed by Albert I. Cassell, a prominent black architect who made an important contribution to the architectural heritage of the District of Columbia.
- (2) It has been continuously associated with one of the nation's earliest Prince Hall lodges, founded in 1825 by both slaves and free blacks.
- (3) Throughout its history it has provided services for blacks, such as a social club and commercial office space, which was not available elsewhere in the city, especially in the segregated climate of the first half of this century.

In 1928, Albert I. Cassell (1895-1969) became the third black Washingtonian to become a registered architect. Cassell, born in Towson, Maryland, in 1895, received a Bachelor of Arts in Architecture from Cornell in 1919, his education have been interrupted by service as a heavy field artillery training officer in World War I. Cassell practiced in Bethlehem, PA, for a short time before going to Tuskegee Institute, where he became associated with William Hazel. Hazel and Cassell designed five buildings at Tuskegee. In 1920, Hazel became the first instructor of architecture at the newly-founded architecture school at Howard University. Cassell followed Hazel to Howard, and taught there for two years. In 1921, he became chairman of the Department of Architecture. Cassell then became the architect for the university. Cassell is primarily known for his association with Howard and with their building program but he also found time to design a number of other buildings, including the Odd Fellow's Temple, Providence Hospital, and the Women's Dormitory at Morgan College all in Baltimore, the Women's Dormitory at Virginia Union University, and the Margaret Murray Washington vocational School, the Odd Fellow's Temple (1883 9th Street, N.W.), and the Prince Hall Masonic Temple in Washington. (1) Cassell was also one of the first black architects recorded by the Historic American Building Survey.

(1) His buildings at Howard include dormitories, the power plant, the Chemistry Building, Frederick Douglass Memorial Hall, and Founders Library, the focal point of the campus.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately .3 acres

Quadrangle name Washington West-D.C.-MD.-VA.

Quadrangle scale 1:2400

UMT References

A

1	8	3	2	4	3	1	0	4	3	0	9	2	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property stands on lot 826, Square 333 in the northwest quadrant of the District of Columbia. The rectangular lot has a 93.87 foot frontage on U Street, N.W., a 140 footfrontage on 10th Street, N.W., and an area of 13,146 Square feet.

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne H. Adams, Architectural Historian
 organization Dept. of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
Historic Preservation Division date June 1983

street & number 1133 North Capitol Street, N.E. telephone (202) 535-1282

city or town Washington state District of Columbia

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 Carol B. Thompson
 title Director
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs date 7/19/83

For NPS use only

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

Shelley Byers **Keoper of the National Register** **Entered in the National Register** date 9/15/83

Attest: _____ date _____
 Chief of Registration

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

Cassell was hired to design the Prince Hall Masonic Temple by an important group of black Free Masons who can trace their Masonic lineage back to 1787, when Prince Hall obtained a charter from the British Grand Lodge. Prince Hall was born in 1748 in Barbados, the son of Englishman Thomas Prince Hall and his free negro wife. In 1765, Hall arrived in Boston where, by the age of 25, he was a property owner and voting citizen. Hall was a minister, patriot, and founder of black Free Masonry in this country.

Hall's African Lodge No. 1, organized in Boston and initiated by a British army lodge only a month before the Battle of Lexington, was the first organized body of black Masons in this country. The organization grew and Hall became a Grand Master in 1791. Hall's primary concern was education for blacks and, in 1796, he succeeded in having the selectmen of Boston make provisions for schools for black children. Hall remained a force in the community until his death in 1807. The following year, the Masonic Lodge he founded was renamed Prince Hall Grand Lodge in his honor.

The following was included in the Application for designation of the Prince Hall Masonic Temple as an Historic Landmark submitted to the Joint Committee on Landmarks by Most Worshipful Grand Master Thomas L. Johnson on behalf of the Temple, dated 18 October, 1981.

Prince Hall Freemasonry has been practiced in the Washington, D.C. area since June 6, 1825; this privilege having been granted to Social #1 by the African Grand Lodge of North America, in Pennsylvania. Subsequently, Social Lodge No. 1 was joined from March 27, 1848, by Universal Lodge No. 2 and Felix Lodge No. 3, to form the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia which is in existence today. This organization has held a regular meeting at least once a year since it was founded. It is exceeded in seniority among black Grand Lodges, upon the North American Continent, only by the Grand Lodges of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.

The aforementioned Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, from whom the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia secured the privilege of practicing Freemasonry, was organized in 1815. This Grand Lodge is second oldest black Grand Lodge upon the North American Continent; obtaining its charter from the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

(Continued on form NPS-10-900)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts was established in 1791, with Prince Hall as the Most Worshipful Grand Master. It is the oldest black Grand Lodge upon the North American Continent; and is the outgrowth of the establishment of African Lodge No. 489, in Boston during 1787, by Prince Hall who obtained a charter from England. The charter was obtained from England, because Prince Hall was anxious to establish a black Masonic Lodge, but was continually rebuffed from obtaining same from those white authorities in America who possessed the power to grant a charter.

Modern Freemasonry (or "Speculative Masonry"), as it is known today can be traced back to England during 1723, when it was decided (based on a resolution in 1649) that the "privilege of Masonry shall no longer be confined to operative masons". but be free to men of all professions, provided they are regularly approved and initiated by the Master of St. Paul's Lodge in York, England."

The organization of Masonry, as a society, into distinct groups originated during the building of King Solomon's Temple. From that time to this day, Masonry has kept its original forms and laws.

No institution of ancient or modern times has done more for uplifting of the human race and uplifting of what is known as "Society", than Freemasonry, whose noble precepts and incentives to higher purposes has made it a power for untold good.

For centuries, the Black Man has been, through circumstances and environment, degraded and oppressed. Generations passed, and until within the memory of those over forty, knowledge and social privileges have been denied him. However, the last two decades has seen a change and the black Man has taken his equal stand (mentally, physically and socially) among the rest of mankind. Freemasonry has had much to do with the advancement of the Black Man; and henceforth has contributed greatly to his cultural heritage.

Beginning with the chartering of Charles Datcher Lodge No. 15, at the turn of the Twentieth Century, to date, twelve lodges have been issued charters by the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia; bringing the number of warranted lodges to a total of 23, and the total of Master Masons to approximately 5700. From his earliest days of membership in our Masonic Order, each Mason is taught that relief (or assistance) is an important tenant of a Mason's profession and practice. To this end, those members of our Grand Lodge have engaged in providing assistance in many, many ways, as needed by those found worthy to a degree commensurate with their needs. Our Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge has provided scholarships over the years to deserving high school graduates of the Washington, D.C. area. Approximately \$250,000 has been provided over a ten-year period; high-lighted by disbursements of \$42,000 per year, during 1981 and 1982. Also, \$100,000 has been contributed (through the United Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction) to several Black colleges and to organizations which are fighting to gain equal rights and justice for all. On Thanksgiving Day, 1981, in conjunction with Council of Churches, National Capital Area, dinners were provided to many, many needy persons, without charge. Huge monetary contributions have been donated to organizations such as Salvation Army, Sickle Cell Anemia, Police Boys' and Girls' Clubs, Hospital for Sick Children, Stoddard Baptist Home, Childrens Hospital National Medical Center, McKinley High School Band, Opportunities Industrialization Center,

(Continued on NPS-10-900)

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 3

St. Ann's Infant and Maternity Home and Cardoza High School Band for its Rose Bowl Parade Trip. All of these contributions were made without any expectation of receiving future rewards or making the recipients beholden to our Grand Lodge. Also, twenty years ago, our Grand Lodge established and now fosters a youth group (the Knights of Pythagoras) whose overall aim is to "reach down and pull up a boy to the full height of an upright man." Several of these former members became Master Masons at the age of 21. Additionally, approximately three years ago, the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia established a Youth Band, which gives the youth overall discipline training, while each is enjoying playing his (or her) musical instrument. Since 1975, a Prince Hall Masonic Blood Bank has been in operation whereby the members of the Masonic Order donate blood under the auspices of the American Red Cross. Such donations are subsequently utilized for the needs of the Prince Hall Masonic Family and relatives, free of charge to those requiring blood for operations, transfusions, etc. Donations over the last several years have been on an average of 1000 pints per year. Also, the Grand Lodge provided funds to furnish and refurbish rooms of D.C. General Hospital and Howard University Hospital, Department of Pediatrics and Child Health. In addition, the Prince Hall Masonic Family Credit Union was recently established. Property purchased by our Grand Lodge for possible subsequent expansion, has been made available for occupancy by those on fixed incomes; with the Grand Lodge supplementing the rental payments. Finally, during this Twentieth Century, our Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge has continued a tradition of "laying" (setting) cornerstones of edifices, which dates back to times immemorial. Most all Black Churches in the Washington D.C. area and some public buildings, e.g., as on the University of the District of Columbia's campus, have had their cornerstones "laid" by the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia. In view of the foregoing, it is apparent that the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia has been continuing to 'move forward,' during the Twentieth Century, following the directions pointed out for us by those who founded our Grand Lodge.

Some Blacks who have gone down (or will go down) in the pages of history are numbered among Prince Hall Masons; e.g., Congressman Walter E. Fauntroy of Washington, D.C.; Mayors Marion Barry of Washington, D.C., Tom Bradley of Los Angeles, and Coleman Young of Detroit; Thurgood Marshall, first Black Supreme Court Justice; Oscar Depriest- an early Congressman from Illinois; Reverend Benjamin Hooks, Executive Secretary of NAACP; William Tolbert-late President of Liberia; and famed musicians such as the late Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Lionel Hampton; and Maurice Turner Police, Chief in Washington, D.C.

Prior to occupying the building which is presently utilized for masonic practice, the early members of our Grand Lodge bought a three-story building located at 5th and Virginia Avenue, S.E. from the members of (White) Naval Lodge No. 4.

(Continued on Form NPS-10-900)

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 4

They began utilizing this building in 1893, and after being made aware of the possibility of damage by a major fire in the building the brethren decided to purchase ground elsewhere and build a new building instead of sinking more money in the old building to make it fireproof.

Subsequently, our Grand Lodge decided on June 3, 1919, to make a downpayment for purchasing a lot at the corner of 10th and U Streets, N.W., identified as Square 833, lot 826, on which was to be constructed a new temple. Insufficient building fund contributions delayed any progress on the project, so that the only evidence of construction on this site was an expansive excavation.

Finally, piecemeal construction was commenced in 1922 under authorization of a permit issued to fully complete only two of the six stories. However, authority was granted to erect the structural girders for all six stories. The building was constructed of stone, brick, concrete and steel, with the front of Indian Limestone. One elevator shaft was planned for this construction. Also, a retail store was planned for the lower story. The estimated cost of the project was \$285,000. The construction permit was applied for by Jesse H. Mitchell who would subsequently form the first black bank in Washington, D.C., and was one of the Most Worshipful Grand Masters of all Black Prince Hall Masons in the Washington, D.C. area. During 1924, walls were erected to the third floor, as authorized by the aforementioned permit.

Subsequently, in 1928, authorization was granted to finally complete construction of the six-story building, as originally envisioned. Construction was completed during 1929, at a cost of approximately \$500,00, and was dedicated on Memorial Day (May 30th) 1930.

The first floor of the new Temple consisted of an arcade into which faced five store-style spaces.

The mezzaine consisted of 14 offices. A large auditorium spans the entire second floor. The fourth floor consisted of spacious chambers which were to be utilized by the Royal Arch, Knights Commandery, the Shriners and the order of the Eastern Star.

On the fifth floor were found the Lodge room and a lounge and Club room.

On the sixth floor were found the Grand Lodge Office, an office for the Trustees and a Library.

(Continued on Form NPS-10-900)

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 5

The building, including the interior arrangements of the various chambers were designed by Albert Cassel, a widely-renown Black architect, who also designed most of the buildings constructed on the Howard University campus during the 1930's and 1940's. He designed the chambers of the new Temple to closely resemble those of the Biblical King Solomon's Temple.

The new Temple was completed during the "height of rigid segregation in Washington, D.C.", when Blacks were denied the opportunity to socialize at many establishments located outside of the black neighborhoods. Therefore, the Masonic Temple provided a locale whereby Blacks could obtain some forms of social satisfaction; such as a bowling alley in the basement, a restaurant ("The Bamboo Inn") and a very spacious ballroom ("The Crystal Auditorum") on the second floor.

Another impact of that segregation was the inability of black businesses and black professionals to obtain office spaces outside of the black neighborhoods. The Masonic Temple provided these needed office spaces.

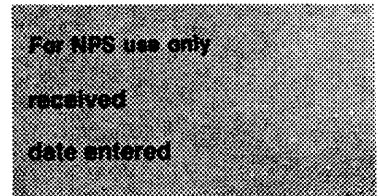
During the "Depression Days", when jobs were scarce and the phrase-"Last Hired and first Fired" became indelibly stamped into the minds of Blacks, incoming money to maintain mortgage payments diminished to the point that our Grand Lodge was unable to retain ownership of the building, and it went into a receivership. Therefore, in 1933; the brethren had to surrender title to the Temple, and were unable to regain title until 1948. Sometime during the years between 1933 and 1948, the United States Government utilized the building for office spaces. In order that the building could be so used, the Government modified the aforementioned masonic chambers. (Note: Pictures, previously included herewith, which depict the original arrangements; e.g., "The Canopy in the Blue Lodge Room"). When the Grand Lodge regained title to the building, the Government did not restore the chambers or reattach the appurtenances which had been removed, or provide funds for those purposes. Since returning to the Temple in 1948, the brethren have only been able to amass sufficient funds to liquidate the mortgages; and have been unable to obtain adequate funds to restore the chambers to their original configuration (i.e., before Government occupancy). Therefore, the brethren have had to "make believe" much of the practice which they were formerly able to actually accomplish.

In view of all of the foregoing, it is clearly evident that the property, in question, has contributed immeasurably to the history and culture of a countless number of Black men who have lived (or are living) within the Washington, D.C. area.

(Continued on NPS-10-300)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

Bibliography

Application and case record for Landmark Case No. 81-14 before the Joint Committee on Landmarks

Newspaper articles from the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University

Interview with Harrison Etheridge re. Albert I. Cassell

The following list of sources was used for the preparation of the Application for Designation submitted by Most Worshipful Grand Master Thomas L. Johnson:

HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY, Among Colored People in North America, by William H. Grimshaw, 1903; Reprinted 1960

HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF FREEMASONRY, Delmar D. Darrah (1945)

HOLY BIBLE (I Kings, Chapter 6 & II Chronicles, Chapter 2).

DR. CHARLES H. WESLEY (Retired) College President and Noted Historian

PAST MASTER JOHN SMITH

COLONEL WEST A HAMILTION (Retired Army Officer and Statesman)

PAST MASTER BENJAMIN SHELLMAN

MISS MICHELLE L. ROBINSON - Librarian

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