

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Prudential Building

AND/OR COMMON
The Guaranty Building

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Church and Pearl Streets SW. corner

CITY, TOWN	Buffalo	___ VICINITY OF	37	___NOT FOR PUBLICATION
STATE	New York	CODE	Erie	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
				COUNTY CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
___DISTRICT	___PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	___AGRICULTURE ___MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	___PRIVATE	___UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL ___PARK
___STRUCTURE	___BOTH	___WORK IN PROGRESS	___EDUCATIONAL ___PRIVATE RESIDENCE
___SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	___ENTERTAINMENT ___RELIGIOUS
___OBJECT	___IN PROCESS	___YES: RESTRICTED	___GOVERNMENT ___SCIENTIFIC
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	___INDUSTRIAL ___TRANSPORTATION
		___NO	___MILITARY ___OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY (currently in receivership: United Founders Life Insurance Company, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma)

NAME Buffalo Holding Corporation

STREET & NUMBER 19 West 44th Street

CITY, TOWN New York STATE New York

___ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Erie County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Buffalo STATE New York

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE ___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN Washington STATE D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED (slightly)	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on the SW. corner of Pearl and Church Streets it is a 13 story steel frame skeleton, rectangular on the first floor and U-shaped above allowing for a light well at the rear (south). The structure measures 93 feet on Pearl Street and 116 feet on Church Street, 6 bays (Pearl Street) by 7 bays (Church Street). The steel frame is held by reinforced concrete footings. The structure is sheathed with tile and terra cotta curtain walls covered with distinctive Sullivanesque ornament. Although Sullivan designed most of the architectural ornamental scheme, the detailed working drawings were executed by George Grant Elmslie (two drawings of the capitals are deposited in the Avery Library, Columbia University).

The terra cotta sheathing was used as fire proofing for the metal skeleton and was also an ideal material for surface decoration.

The soaring verticality of the building is enhanced by its rather isolated site, unlike the Chicago buildings which are now often "swallowed up" by larger adjacent structures. The steel supports for the building are clearly visible on the ground and first floor elevation but divide into double windows for eleven stories terminating in an elaborate concave cornice with circular window openings. There are two of these circular windows per bay surrounded by beautifully carved terra cotta foliate ornament.

The ground floor shops have large unbroken glass display areas with the steel supports passing through the top of the window. These piers are topped by ornamental capitals. The doors are framed in non-structural arches that also carry fine ornamental detail.

The interior was equally elegant but has been renovated somewhat. Fire codes required closing in the open stairs but restoration would not be too complicated. Office spaces above were ample and each unit had no less than two windows. Some of the original marble mosaic floor remains, interior woodwork is oak and Mexican mahogany. There is a mosaic stained glass ceiling in the rear lobby designed by Sullivan. Some original ornamental hardware is retained in a small second floor gallery-museum.

Originally designed to contain 275 offices, a bank and a restaurant, the building is still operating with a limited tenant situation. The Prudential is perhaps the most beautiful of the early skyscrapers in that it synthesizes simplicity of form and function with great richness of surface ornament.

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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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES April 1894 to April 1895 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Louis H. Sullivan

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Buffalo, New York prospered in the second quarter of the 19th century because of railroading. It is situated at the end of the Erie Canal and was known as the grain depot of America. As Buffalo flourished, construction soared and from the 1840's until the end of the century, the city was embellished with a large number of outstanding structures in the core of the city.

Richard Upjohn designed St. Paul's Cathedral between 1846 and 1851, H. H. Richardson was working on the State Hospital and Daniel Burnham was creating the then largest office building in America; the Ellicott Square Building (1896). In the same year, another Chicago firm of Adler and Sullivan designed the Prudential. Burnham and Adler and Sullivan, mid-western designers had given Buffalo two buildings far in advance of anything then standing in New York City.

The Prudential is the last collaborative effort of Dankmar Adler and Louis H. Sullivan. Their earlier Wainwright Building (1890-91) in St. Louis was the prototype and many scholars agree that the triumph of early skyscraper construction is realized in this Buffalo building (Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Hugh Morrison, Vincent Scully). Many of the ideas Adler and Sullivan had used in earlier high-rise structures culminate in the Prudential--wedding clarity of design to richness of ornament.

It is an example of what Hugh Morrison calls "integration of romanticism and realism." Sullivan's place in the history of modern architecture is perfectly expressed in the Prudential--his life long effort to free architecture from the revivals and re-revivals of past vocabularies and to find an appropriate new vocabulary for his own place and time and particularly for America.

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Continuation Sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 7	6 7 3 4 0	4 7 4 9 7 7 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See Continuation Sheet)

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Carolyn Pitts, Historian

3/4/75

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Washington 20240

STATE

D.C.

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Major Bibliographical References:

Prudential Building

Andrews, Wayne, Architecture, Ambition and Americans, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1955.

Andrews, Wayne, Architecture in New York, A Photographic History, New York Athenaeum, 1969.

Burchard, John and Bush-Brown, Albert. The Architecture of America, A Social and Cultural History. Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1961.

Condit, Carl, The Chicago School of Architecture. University of Chicago Press, 1964.

Condit, Carl, American Building Art: 19th Century, Oxford University Press, N. Y.: 1960.

Connelly, Willard. Louis Sullivan as He Lived: The Shaping of American Architecture. New York, Horizon Press, 1960.

Eaton, Leonard K. American Architecture Comes of Age: European Reaction to H. H. Richardson and Louis Sullivan. Cambridge, Mass. M.I.T. Press, 1972.

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Hitchcock, Fein, Weisman, Scully. The Rise of An American Architecture. Praeger Publishers, N.Y.: 1970.

Kaufman, Edgar (Editor), Louis Sullivan and the Architecture of Free Enterprise, Catalogue of Exhibition. Art Institute of Chicago, 1956.

Kaufman, Edgar. The Rise of an American Architecture. N.Y., Praeger, 1970.

Morrison, Hugh. Louis Sullivan: Prophet of Modern Architecture. New York, Norton, 1935.

Schuyler, Montgomery. American Architecture and Other Writings, Vol. II., Ed. by Jordy and Coe. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass: 1961.

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(Continued)

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Scully, Vincent. American Architecture and Urbanism. New York: Praeger,
1969.

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Geographical Data (Verbal Boundary Description): Prudential Building

The easterly 116 feet of the inner lot 77 according to survey of Holland Land Company bounded and described as follows:

Northerly by the southerly line of Church Street 116 feet; easterly by the westerly line of Pearl Street 1 chain and 41 links more or less; westerly by a line parallel with the westerly line of Pearl Street and 116 feet westerly at right angles therefrom; and southerly by the northerly line of inner lot 76, 116 feet, by the same more or less said premises being known as the Prudential Building, Buffalo, N.Y.

Liber No. 5794, p. 123.

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