



## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Masonic Temple of Tampa is an elaborate Mediterranean Revival structure which features many of the most formal Beaux Arts influenced details of the style. Its sculptural lines are relieved by the light colors of its ornamental glazed terracotta detailing and elaborate brickwork. Attributed to M. Leo Elliot, one of the foremost architects working in the style, the Masonic Temple stands out as an extremely significant example of this architectural genre. Built in 1928, it incorporates many of the clean elements of neoclassic design such as Palladian windows as well as the intricate decoration of multicolored terracotta and patterned brickwork.

The front elevation of the Masonic Temple presents two low-pitched hip roof tower-like masses joined by a lower gable-roofed central loggia. Decorative terracotta tile appears at the string course directly below the second story windows. The roof is constructed of clay barrel tile and the roofline is defined by a bracketed eaves and a rich Beaux Arts influenced cornice containing intricate repetitive patterns of arches and sun design medallions. Each flanking pavillion contains paired palladian arched windows joined by ornamented pilasters and crowned within the rounded arches with diagonal floral patterned hemispherical terracotta work. Side elevations contain either paired windows of similar design with multi-paned sash or plain 3/3 sash. The most prominent side elevation contains an elaborate decorative arch incorporated into the side of the tower-like massing which covers nearly a third of the wall surface and contains an oversize representation of the masonic symbol and "Hillsborough Lodge No. 25 F & AM" within an elaborate surround featuring ornamental pilasters, quatrefoil medallions, decorative pointed brackets, and triangular floral patterns in a repetitive display of terracotta detailing.

The central mass of the front elevation is dominated by an intricately patterned door surround surmounted by an interlocking bracketed stringcourse enclosed within an elaborately patterned arched outline of molded stone. The central point of interest is the beautiful grillework brass and glass doorway. This central portion also contains two modern glazed window storefronts which were installed in 1955. Additional alteration involved the glazing of the arched upper story loggia of the central portion of the structure. This was done more recently and has not affected the integral structure of the building since all of the details of the upper story remain intact. Two rounded arched windows are still clearly visible from the street; from the interior of the building additional architectural details can be seen.

The interior of the building is entered through the 23' x 42' main lobby, which has a marble floor with a 10' marble base course. The walls are travertine tile and extend 13'4" to a plaster ceiling. A 16" plaster cornice extends throughout the length of the main lobby. Adjacent to the lobby is a 47' x 49' dining room with a kitchen area. The dining room features four wooden stenciled columns and ceiling beams as well as a decorative cornice. The dining area also contains several beautiful murals executed on canvas which were saved from another building of the era and transferred to the dining room walls.

## 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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1928

Builder/Architect M. Leo Elliot firm

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Masonic Temple is significant architecturally as an outstanding example of its style in the community, and the work of a leading Tampa area architect, M. Leo Elliot. In addition, it derives historical significance from the continued association with a number of active and influential community leaders who played important roles in the social, economic and political development of the Tampa area.

When the members of Lodge No. 25 decided to build a new temple in 1927, they turned to one of their own brothers and the city's most active architect for designs. M. Leo Elliot, a member of the Blue Lodge and the Scottish Rite had provided plans for the later organization's adjacent temple in 1921.<sup>1</sup> Using similar materials and detailing, but BeauxArts rather than Egyptian historical references, Elliot developed a compact Mediterranean Revival style structure to house ceremonial, administrative and commercial functions within a building limited to three city lots and by a \$150,000 budget.

Elliot was born in New York state in 1886 of Irish parents. He attended the New York Evening School and Cooper Union Institute of Technology. During this period he also worked as an office boy in the architectural and engineering firm of Welch, Smith and Provot and studied in Dan Barber's Atelier. He moved to Tampa in 1907 and his first major commission was the Centro Asturiano in that same year. The first Centro Asturiano was gutted by fire in 1912.

In 1907 he also entered into partnership with B. C. Bonfoey with whom he designed the second Centro Asturiano and the Tampa City Hall. Their partnership was dissolved in 1917. In 1920 he organized the firm of M. Leo Elliot, Inc., Architecture and Engineering which grew to include 46 draftsmen, six structural engineers and seventeen inspectors and which garnered many of the most lucrative architectural contracts in the state. The firm specialized in educational and commercial buildings.<sup>2</sup>

In 1926, M. Leo Elliot, Inc., were involved in 18 million dollars worth of construction and design projects. Among the buildings the firm was responsible for were the Tampa City Hospital, the Italian Club, the Scottish Rite Temple and the Tampa YMCA building. Elliot's work was decidedly influenced by the Neo-Classical and Beaux Arts influences of the day. The Cuban and Italian Clubs and the Tampa City Hall all are of monumental sculptural design. Although he did supervise a stable of professional and technical workers, he certainly must have taken an active hand in the design of the Masonic Temple since he was a member of the Masons as well as the Shriners, the Rotary Club and the Tampa Board of Trade.<sup>3</sup>

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Tampa

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

General Map of 1853, Lot 4 Block 66

### 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 F. Huetting, D. Primelles

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation

date July 23, 1986

street & number The Capitol

telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee

state Florida

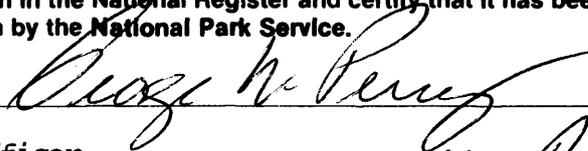
# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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



title State Historic Preservation Officer

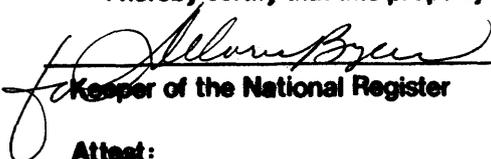
date Aug. 6, 1986

### For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date 9/11/86



Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
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A nine foot wide marble stairway leads to another narrower staircase (6'8") and the 56' x 41' lounge room on the second floor. This lounge adjoins a nine foot wide loggia which extends across the 56' south side and now contains a library, office and ladies lounge. The lounge has a 12' stamped metal ceiling and cornice.

The largest room in the temple is the 49' x 76' lodge room where the three symbolic degrees of masonry are conferred. This strikingly beautiful room has an ornate 30' ceiling and travertine tile walls. Indirect multi-colored lighting built into the ceiling enhances the massive cornice. The room seats 216 along the north and south side with a further capacity of 196 in the west balcony.

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The 1928 Masonic Temple contains numerous decorative references to the primary themes of masonry, the search for spiritual light and the labor of building that spirit. To represent this quest the tools of the medieval laborer, the gavel, plumb, ruler, square, level, and trowel are used. In addition, the use of sun medallions and other devices illustrated this idealized pursuit within the architecture of the building itself and particularly within the terracotta work.

Merchants, lawyers, engineers and educators comprised a large part of the Hillsborough Lodge's diverse membership. These men provided strong leadership in the private and public sector as well as within the fraternal order at various levels. While this was no doubt a symbiotic relationship, the fraternal order providing a "network" while satisfying a need for ritual and separateness, community service figured strongly in the lodge's activities. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Abe and Isaac Maas consistently worked for their local Blue Lodge while building what was to become Florida's largest department store, Maas Brothers. Abe was the more active of the two brothers serving as treasurer for thirty-three years and as Master in 1931. In addition to working for the Lodge and continually enlarging Maas Brothers, Abe joined the board of the Tampa Commercial Hotel Corporation, the agency which controlled the Floridan Hotel construction project begun in 1925.<sup>4</sup>

Isaac's interest in fraternal organizations and municipal life extended beyond the Masonic Order. He organized the Tampa Elks Lodge, served as director on the Tampa Board of Trade and as President of his Congregation Schaaari Zedek. He was a member of the committee of 15 which drafted the charter for the short-lived city commission form of government.<sup>5</sup>

Political figures in the lodge included Tampa Mayor Herman Glogowski and Governor Doyle Carlton. A master of eight years, Glogowski was especially active in civic life. He served as Tampa's Mayor in 1886, 1888, 1890 and 1892, during the town's first spurt of growth after the arrival of Henry B. Plant's railroad and the construction of the Tampa Bay Hotel in 1891. He also participated in the organization of the Tampa Fire Company.

Doyle Carlton, Governor of Florida from 1928 to 1933, although never a Master, was an active member of the Lodge while residing in Tampa and frequently participated in ceremonies and special events.<sup>6</sup>

Two leading local educators, Ludwig Buchholz and Ernest L. Robinson provided two generations of service to the lodge and their state and local school systems. The German-educated Buchholz was superintendent of schools in Hillsborough County during the area's pioneer period from 1887 to 1901 and again from 1909 to 1913, leaving the position for a four-year stint as Dean of Florida State College in Tallahassee. Buchholz's innovations in the teaching profession included the state's first teacher training institute. Further, he introduced manual training, domestic

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science and art, and libraries into the schools. In 1900 he was president of the State Teacher's Association.<sup>7</sup>

Although the Yale-educated Robinson worked exclusively for the Hillsborough County Schools, serving as principal of Hillsborough High School from 1909 until he became director of secondary schools in 1925, his greater contribution was in the field of history as the author of the county's first comprehensive history and biographical dictionary. His History of Hillsborough County, Florida, Narrative & Biographical was published in 1928. Robinson was master of Hillsborough Lodge in 1918.<sup>8</sup>

Tampa businessmen enjoyed more than fellowship and the opportunity for service as lodge membership and activities extended contacts and led to business opportunities. The mandated ritual of the Masonic funeral must have provided many referrals to Brother B. Marion Reed, an undertaker and mechanical engineer. Reed came to Tampa in 1906 and, while building one of Tampa's largest funeral homes, he applied his engineering skills to the area's much needed roadways. He laid out roads between Tampa, Jacksonville and Ft. Myers in 1909. He was master of the lodge and first secretary of the Tampa Auto Club during this same period.<sup>9</sup>

NOTES

1 Robinson, p. 237. A History of Hillsborough County.

2 Grismer, Tampa, A History, p. 384, Tampa Tribune, March 30, 1926, p.1.

3 Robinson, p. 237.

4 Karl H. Grismer, pp. 344-45; Robinson, pp. 308-309. Maas Brothers store grew from a 1,100 square foot general merchandise establishment in 1887 to an 85,000 department store in 1928 the year before the brothers sold to Hahn Stores.

5 Ibid.

6 Grismer, pp. 188, 193, 339, 392; Hillsborough Lodge No. 25, F & A.M., 1850-1976, p. 29.

7 Robinson, p. 200.

8 Ibid., p. 390.

9 Ibid., 357.

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Page 1

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