

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received _____
date entered _____

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

1. Name

historic Aylesworth Apartments

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 188-194 Broad Street N.A. not for publication
city, town Providence N.A. vicinity of No. 2 Claudine Schneider
congressional district
state Rhode Island 02903 code 44 county Providence code 007

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 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	N.A. 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
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Stanley Associates
street & number 190 Broad Street
city, town Providence N.A. vicinity of state Rhode Island 02903

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. City Hall
street & number 25 Dorrance Street
city, town Providence state Rhode Island 02903

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title South Providence has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date September 1978 federal state county local
depository for survey records Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
150 Benefit Street
city, town Providence state Rhode Island 02903

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Aylesworth Apartments is a large residential structure designed in the Queen Anne mode. It stands two-and-a-half stories high on a raised basement of brick and has a high hip roof. Typical of Providence Queen Anne dwellings, the building has a pressed-brick first story; a slate-hung second story; brownstone trim for sills, lintels, stringcourses, and coping; and carved-wood trim in the cornice and gable ends. The picturesque irregularity of the fenestration and roof detail belies the symmetry of the U-shape plan. The entrance is centered on the facade and set within a two-story, round-head-arch opening; the arch springs at the base of the second story, and a second-story balustraded balcony fills the arch.

The interior was originally divided into four large apartments, two on the first floor and two on the second floor. The units on the first floor had separate entrances from opposite ends of the recessed porch; access to the second-story units was through separate private staircases opening onto this porch. The original staircases were replaced with a larger single staircase at the time the building was rehabilitated for office use in 1978.

The apartments on each floor were mirror images of each other, and those on each side of the building were identical in plan. Each was laid out with rooms on either side of a long central hallway running the depth of the building to a rear stairhall (removed during the renovations of 1978 and replaced with a new rear stair and a bridge connecting the two ends of the U-shape plan). Although the building is no longer in residential use, this original configuration survives, and the rooms in each of these former apartments retain their original shape and much of their decorative trim. Elaborate Queen Anne mantelpieces with ornate tile surrounds remain in the principal rooms. The doors and windows throughout have wide, elaborately profiled surrounds. The ceilings are now obscured by a recent, dropped, acoustical-tile ceiling, but several of the principal rooms retain the original elaborate ceiling medallions and prominent plaster cornices.

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Continuation sheet 1

Item number 8

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They included: at 188 Broad, Fred T. Rogers, a physician; at 190 Broad, W.B. Mason, a provisions merchant and son of Israel B. Mason, whose large house stood farther west on Broad Street;² and at 194 Broad, Charles S. Bush, owner of a drug and chemical company located several blocks to the east in downtown Providence.

A handsome example of Providence's Queen Anne domestic style, the Aylesworth Apartments proved something of a dead end and inspired no immediate successors. Only after the turn of the century did other apartment buildings begin to appear in Providence, and these differ in scale and appearance from the Aylesworth. Twentieth-century apartment buildings in Providence are larger, containing at least twelve units, each much smaller than those in the Aylesworth.

²The Israel B. Mason House, 571 Broad Street, was entered on the National Register of Historic Places on 16 August 1977.

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 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 1888-89 **Builder/Architect** N.A.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The earliest extant apartment building in Providence, the Aylesworth Apartments is significant architecturally both as a touchstone and a foil for the city's late nineteenth-century residential architecture. In a city of primarily single- and two- or three-family detached houses, the apartment long remained the exception in Providence; the form of the Aylesworth Apartments and its lack of immediate successors bear witness to Providence taste of the time.

The so-called French Flat apartment building provided accommodations for separate suites of rooms under one roof, with each suite on only one level. The French Flat was generally rented to well-to-do families and bachelors, and the units provided many of the amenities of single-family dwellings, including ample reception rooms as well as service areas and servants quarters in the more commodious examples. The type became popular in New York and Boston after the Civil War, with over 200 such buildings rising in New York between 1869 and 1876 and 108 standing in Boston by 1878.¹ Those erected in New York and Boston often accommodated a significant number of suites and rose to the same height as contemporary office buildings, sharing form and style with office buildings.

The Aylesworth Apartments is clearly a local interpretation of the French Flat type. Its appearance here some twenty years after the form's popular acceptance in New York and Boston emphasizes Providence's preference for lower-density housing, particularly among higher-income groups. In plan and design, the Aylesworth Apartments resembles contemporary single-family dwellings, particularly the large, late nineteenth-century houses built nearby on Broad Street by Providence's post-Civil War mercantile and industrial elite. The separate entrances for the four flats were concealed behind the large arch centered on the facade, and the building's balanced asymmetry is typical of contemporary Providence Queen Anne single-family dwellings.

Eli Aylesworth built this apartment house as an investment. President of the Westminster Bank, Aylesworth lived just a block east on Broad Street, in an ample single-family dwelling long since demolished. His first tenants here were Aylesworth's peers, at least economically.

¹Gwendolyn Wright, Building the Dream (New York, 1981), pp. 137-38.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Vollmert, Leslie J. South Providence. Providence, 1978.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Providence

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	9	2	9	9	1	0	0	4	6	3	2	0	1	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Providence Tax Assessor's Plat 24, Lot 596. The property nominated includes only the original lot on which the building was erected.

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title William McKenzie Woodward/Principal Historic Preservation Planner

organization Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

date August 1982

street & number 150 Benefit Street

telephone 401-277-2678

city or town Providence

state Rhode Island 02903

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 *Frank Williams*

title _____ date September 30, 1982

For NPS use only

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

John Deane Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

11/12/82

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration