

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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



2

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

1. Name

historic Rhodes Street Historic District

and/or common

2. Location

street & number ~~Both sides of Rhodes Street~~ ^{Janes, and Alphonso Sts.} west of Eddy Street not for publication
~~Also adjacent properties on Alphonso and Janes Streets.~~

city, town Providence _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district No. 2 Rep. Claudine Schneider

state Rhode Island code 44 county Providence code 007

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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 Various -- See owners list in Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission files.

street & number

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Providence 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 type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>Unknown</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Rhodes Street Historic District consists of nineteen early and late Victorian houses on one block of Rhodes Street * The boundaries of the district are determined by the different building types and land uses that surround this isolated block.

The nineteen houses on Rhodes Street exemplify the middle- and upper-middle-class domestic architecture of the 1850-1895 period. The majority of houses are set back from the street on the ample lots laid out in the 1830's when the Rhodes family first subdivided this portion of their ancestral farm. However, some of the later houses are crowded together close to the edge of the sidewalk on small sites created by a division of the original lots.

Among the finest houses are the Asahel Herrick House (c. 1855, 236 Rhodes, Figure 3), an unusual cruciform plan Italianate dwelling with a cupola; the William C. Rhodes House (c. 1860, 231 Rhodes, Figure 2), a classic example of the Italianate palazzo style; the John Smith House (1879, 252 Rhodes, Figure 6), a large Italianate bracketed house; and the Alpheus B. Slater House (1888, 251 Rhodes), a spacious brick-and-shingle Queen Anne house. Surrounding these are a variety of houses which constitute a cross section of nineteenth-century architectural development unique in South Providence; a typical Greek Revival house of the 1840s at number 220, a small Italianate bracketed cottage of the 1860s at number 244, a substantial Second Empire house of the 1880s at number 258, and an elaborate Queen Anne two-family house of the 1890s at number 221.

*and adjacent on Alphonso Street and Janes Street.

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Inventory for Rhodes Street Historic District
All structures in this district are contributing.

Alphonso Street

- 10-12 (Plat 46, Lot 267) House (c. 1890). 2½-story, end-gable tenement, its original siding now covered with asphalt shingles. Hooded center entrance flanked by two two-story bracketed bay windows. This multiple-family dwelling is a typical, though less common, type found in late nineteenth-century Providence: the four- or six-unit building with two apartments per floor.

Janes Street

- 2-4 (Plat 46, Lot 26) Joseph Kiernan House (c. 1893). 2½-story, end-gable, 2-family house. Probably built as an income-producing property, this house typifies the format used throughout Providence in the late nineteenth century: its side entrance-and-stairhall is entered through a hooded doorway, and a two-story bay window lights the front room of each flat.
- 10-12 (Plat 46, Lot 506) Elizabeth Harris House (c. 1893). Contemporary with and almost identical to the adjacent Kiernan House at 2-4 Janes Street, this house was probably also erected as an investment property.

Rhodes Street

- 205-207 (Plat 46, Lot 175) Frederick McGowan House (1915). A typical Providence type: 3½-story, dormered-hip-roofed, clapboard-and-shingle, three-decker tenement with a Tuscan-columned three-level front porch and a three-level bay window on the facade.
- 213-215 (Plat 46, Lot 495) Mathew English House (1895). A typical Providence type: 2½-story, cross-gable-roofed, frame, Queen Anne, two-family house with a spindlework porch and a two-level bay window on the facade. The house was originally clad with clapboards and shingles but is now covered with asphalt shingle siding.
- 217-219 (Plat 46, Lot 585) Jane T. Carter House (1896). A typical Providence type: 2½-story, cross-gable-roofed, frame, Queen-Anne, two-family house with extensive twentieth-century alterations including two-level front porch with parapet-wall railings, changes in the fenestration, and the addition of asbestos-tile siding over the original clapboards and shingles. This house was apparently built as a twin to 213-215.

(See Continuation Sheet #2).

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received

date entered

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- 218 (Plat 46, Lot 494) House (c. 1915). A small, 1½-story, end-gable-roofed, weather-boarded, bungalow with a porch across the front under the gable with a parapet-wall railing and plain, square posts. This house was moved to this site after 1937 from an unknown location.
- 220 (Plat 46, Lot 292) House (c. 1845). A 2½-story, end-gable-roofed, three-bay, side-hall-plan, clapboarded, Greek Revival house with corner pilasters, a classical door treatment and a two-level porch across the front. This typical Greek Revival house was divided into a two-family house in the early twentieth century when the porch was added.
- 221-223 (Plat 46, Lot 544) Patrick Gaffney House (1895). A 2½-story, end-gable-roofed, clapboarded, Queen Anne two-family house with a complicated gable treatment, a coved cornice, and elaborately articulated fenestration. The scroll-work-ornamented front porch has lost its original balustrades. Gaffney was a retail liquor dealer whose shop was on nearby Eddy Street. (Fig. 1).
- 224 (Plat 46, Lot 291) House (1860s). A small, 2-story, end-gable-roofed, shingled cottage with fieldstone foundations. The second floor may have been added to this simple house, now much altered.
- 231 (Plat 46, Lot 268) William C. Rhodes House (c. 1860). A 2½-story, low-hipped-roofed, clapboarded, Italianate house with quoins, widely bracketed eaves, paired windows with caps, round-head dormers, a triple window with a Palladian motif, and an elaborate door treatment with a barrel-vaulted hood supported by scrolled consoles with inverted scrolled consoles on brownstone bases flanking the steps. This house was moved to this site in 1883 from its original location a block away when that site was redeveloped. Rhodes, who lived at 200 Hope Street on the East Side, rented this house to Henry J. Alfreds, a registered pharmacist who worked at 811 Eddy Street. (Fig. 2).
- 235-237 (Plat 46, Lot 264) Ann Murray House. (1882 and 1890). A 2½-story, low-hip-roofed, two-family house with a pair of identical hooded entrances flanking a two-story bay window. This clapboarded house, now covered with asphalt shingles, appears to be an 1890s remodelling of the 1882 carriage house that occupied this lot when Ann Murray acquired it.
- 236 (Plat 46, Lot 286) Asahel Herrick House (c. 1855). An unusual, 2½-story, cross-gable-roofed, Italianate house with an octagonal cupola, bargeboard trim, a bracketed cornice, and a roundhead door with sidelights below an elaborate hood with
(See Continuation Sheet #3).

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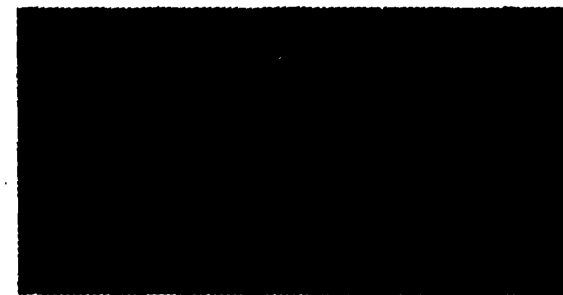
carved pendants. The application of the asbestos-tile shingles over the clapboards resulted in the removal of the corner quoins. Asahel Herrick was a machinist. When he built his large house about 1855, Rhodes Street was part of Cranston. Asahel lived in the house with his family, one of whom was George L. Herrick, a musician with his office at 87 Westminster Street, who acquired the house and occupied it into the 20th century. George, however, must not have been as successful as Asahel because throughout the late 19th century he took in ever increasing numbers of boarders--at times as many as fourteen. (Figs. 3, 4).

- 241 (Plat 46, Lot 269) Alpheus B. Slater/Lemuel J. Oster House (1865 and 1888). A 2½-story, mansard-roofed, three-bay, side-hall plan, shingled house with a spindle-work porch across the front. This house appears to be a remodelling of the 1865 Alpheus B. Slater House which was removed from its original site two lots away in 1888. Oster, the new owner who moved the house, apparently added the ill-proportioned mansard roof and the spindle-work porch.
- 243 (Plat 46, Lot 3) Mary Reiley House (1894). A small, plain, 2½-story, end-gable-roofed, frame house with bracketed eaves and a door hood. The original clapboards are now covered with asphalt shingles.
- 244 (Plat 46, Lot 285) Maria Bullock House (1878). A 1½-story, end-gable-roofed cottage with bracketed window caps and an elaborate door hood. Asbestos shingles now cover the original clapboards. (Fig. 5)
- 245-247 (Plat 46, Lot 270) Charles S. Clarke House (1860s). A 2½-story, deck-on-hip-roofed house, with its extensive additions to the rear, had the shed-roofed dormers added by the 1880s and the two-level front porch after Clarke's death in 1920, when it was converted into apartments. The asphalt shingling covers the original clapboards.
- 251 (Plat 46, Lot 271) Alpheus B. Slater House (1888). A large, 2½-story, cross-gable-roofed, brick-and-shingle, Queen Anne house with front and side porches and an arcaded porch on the second floor. The aluminum siding apparently covers the original wood-shingle cladding of the second floor. This was Slater's second house on the site, replacing his original 1865 dwelling which is now at 241 Rhodes Street. Slater, who was the Treasurer of the Providence Gas Company whose offices were in the What Cheer building (demolished) near Market Square, moved to Rhodes Street in 1865 and built a low-hip-roofed, 2-story house with bay windows and Italianate detailing. (It is across the street from the Smith House). Between 1882 and 1889, probably closer to the latter date, he built this lavish new house on the site of his earlier home. It was not unusual for a successful man to build a new home at the time of his retirement from business in the 19th century; and, shortly afterwards, Slater left his position with the Providence Gas Company.

(See Continuation Sheet #4).

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- 252 (Plat 46, Lot 282) John Smith House (1879). A large, 2½-story, cross-gable-roofed, clapboarded, Italianate bracketed house with paired windows below bracketed window caps, bracketed bay windows, and a balustraded entrance porch with square, paneled posts on pedestals. Smith was a partner in William Smith and Company, jewelry manufacturers at 118 Dorrance Street, when he moved to Rhodes Street and built this house. (Fig. 6).
- 258 (Plat 46, Lot 499) Lucy D. Anthony House (1888). A 2½-story, mansard-roofed, clapboarded Second Empire style two-family house with a modillion cornice, a two-story bay window and an early-twentieth-century Tuscan columned porch on the front. This may actually be an earlier house that was moved to this site in 1888.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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 c. 1850-1895 **Builder/Architect** N.A.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Rhodes Street Historic District is significant as a well preserved collection of high quality nineteenth-century domestic architecture and as a representative of the development of South Providence as a Victorian neighborhood.

For the first two centuries of Providence's history, South Providence was a largely unoccupied rural hinterland to the Town of Providence. Some settlement must have occurred in South Providence in the late eighteenth century, but only a few buildings are known to have existed in the area before 1840. During the second quarter of the nineteenth century several large landholdings were subdivided and offered for residential and industrial development. The Rhodes family ancestral farm was one of these, and during the 1830's the lots along present-day Rhodes Street were laid out. Intensive development of the Rhodes land was slow in occurring, however, and the area was not built up until after the Civil War.

By the middle decades of the nineteenth century, Providence had become a major industrial and commercial center. As Providence's industries continued to grow in number and size and as downtown land became too valuable for large-scale industrial use as a result of the demand for commercial and office space, many industries began to locate on the fringes of the central city along the major traffic arteries. South Providence was attractive as an industrial location because of the availability of large plots of undeveloped land near downtown. Its well-developed streetcar lines and the existence of residential areas such as Rhodes Street were further attractions.

The houses on Rhodes Street were built beginning in the 1840's to house the managers and skilled workers of nearby factories. The original residents illustrate the diversity of occupations to be found in industrializing South Providence. Asahel Herrick was a skilled machinist who worked at a factory on nearby Eddy Street. John Smith was a partner in William Smith and Company, jewelry manufacturers, on Dorrance Street in South Providence. Patrick Gaffney, liquor dealer, and Henry J. Alfreds, a registered pharmacist who rented 231 Rhodes, both operated their businesses on Eddy Street. Alpheus Slater displayed particular devotion to Rhodes Street. Slater built his first house on the street in 1865 when he was employed as superintendent of the Providence Gas Company's gasometer on Crary Street a few blocks away. Subsequently he was promoted to the position of Treasurer of the company, and in 1888 he replaced the original Italianate dwelling with a handsome Queen Anne house.

(See Continuation Sheet #5).

9. Major Bibliographical References

Providence Directories, 1840-1900.
 Providence Land Transfer Records, 1840-1980.
 Providence Tax Assessor's Records, 1840-1980.
 Vollmert, Leslie J. South Providence. Providence, 1978.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 4

Quadrangle name Providence

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	9
2	9
9	6
0	8

4	16	3	1	0	8	1	0
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B

1	9
2	9
9	8
1	0

4	16	3	1	0	1	0	1	0
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C

1	9
2	9
8	5
1	0

4	16	3	1	0	9	4	1	0
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D

1	9
2	9
8	2
1	0

4	16	3	1	0	1	7	1	0
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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification Tax Assessor's Plat 46, Lots 3, 26, 175, 264, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 282, 285, 286, 291, 292, 494, 495, 499, 506, 544, 585 Rhodes Street; Alphonso Street; and Janes Street. The boundary was drawn (See Continuation Sheet #5).

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 Edward F. Sanderson, Leslie J. Vollmert, and Wm McKenzie Woodward/
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission Preservation Planners
 organization date October 1980

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *William C. Williams*

title date September 30, 1982

For HCRS use only

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

William C. Byers
 Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
 National Register

date 11/12/82

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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Like Herrick, Smith, Gaffney, Alfreds, and Slater, middle-class merchants managers, and artisans continued to settle on Rhodes Street during the later decades of the nineteenth century. Vacant lots were filled with houses reflecting the latest architectural styles in a pleasant suburban setting. By 1915 when the period of development was over, Rhodes Street presented a catalogue of the housing types that had been popular in Providence since 1840.

The houses themselves are, in many cases, superb examples of their period. The 1850's Herrick House is highly unusual in Providence for its cruciform plan, and its fine, original detailing includes a magnificently carved entrance and an ornamental cupola at the center of the cross-gable roof. The William C. Rhodes House is almost a textbook example of Providence's mid-century Italianate Palazzo style. Built about 1860, it stood originally at the corner of Rhodes and Eddy Streets and was moved to its present site in 1883. The Smith House is one of the finest and best preserved examples of the informal Italianate bracketed villa style of the 1870s in Providence. The brick-and-slate-clad Slater House is an elaborate, upper middle-class Queen Anne house of the 1880s, while the frame Gaffney House exemplifies the more typical Providence, middle-class, two-family house of the 1890s. The other houses in the district are less elaborate examples of the other styles and building types popular from 1840 to 1900.

Item #10, cont.

to include a dense concentration of mid-to-late nineteenth-century dwellings now isolated because of vacant land surrounding the group.

STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT
EVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND
NOT TO SCALE

- KEY
- GREEK REVIVAL
 - EARLY VICTORIAN
 - LATE VICTORIAN
 - EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

