

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 THE STRAND HISTORIC DISTRICT

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Bounded on the North by Ave. A, on the East by 20th St., on the South by the alley between Avenues C and D, and the West by Passenger Depot, North to Ave. A, including lots 5,6,7 of block 685 between Ave. A and New Strand Street. NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Galveston CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Texas VICINITY OF CODE COUNTY Galveston CODE

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

| CATEGORY                                     | OWNERSHIP                                      | STATUS   | PRESENT USE   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC                | <input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED                    | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)         | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE               | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE                | <b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>                      | <b>ACCESSIBLE</b>                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN VICINITY OF STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Galveston County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

722 21st Street

CITY, TOWN Galveston STATE Texas

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Many, but not all buildings have been listed in Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1966

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN STATE

Washington, D.C.

## 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 type="checkbox"/> GOOD            | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS        | <input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED              | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED    |   |   |

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Strand District of Galveston was a thriving, energetic, and prosperous business area close to the shipping channel. It was particularly active during the seventies and eighties of the last century. The blocks between Mechanic and Strand and 20th and 26th streets contain at least forty-five buildings of architectural interest as representative illustrations of the types of commercial structures used and preferred in their era. It is their preservation en masse that is of real architectural significance as a still extant visual segment of the business life of the latter third of the nineteenth century.

The buildings show the span of popular architectural styles from the Greek Revival to the Beaux Arts with the bulk representative of the Gothic, High Victorian, French and Italianate styles in their vernacular and usually modest expressions. The frequent arcades at the first floor level are still generally apparent and relatively unaltered. The common materials are stuccoed brick or red brick with cast iron or stone details. The buildings are often handsome with nice proportions.

At the time when the area was at its most active the street level was four to five feet lower than it is at present, permitting drays and wagons to load and unload at the level of the raised sidewalks. After the tremendous devastation of the September 8, 1900 hurricane the whole island was raised with fill and the street is now almost flush with the first story entrances. The hurricane also ripped off a very large number of the cast iron cornices and this destruction probably also accounts for the removal of many of the flat canopies that were originally nearly universal in this sunny southern climate. However, enough cornices and canopies still remain to demonstrate the original character of the street.

The Greek Revival buildings that remain are generally handsome simple four-story brick structures with brick cornices, nicely proportioned six over six windows with cap-molded lintels of iron or stone, and sills with end brackets. The first floor openings may be either arched or trabeated, and piers rather than columns are the usual supports in the facade. These may be ornamented with cast iron applied capitals. The Washington Hotel at 2218-22 Mechanic has fine paneled French doors with fan lights in its arches.

Several fires in the seventies razed whole blocks of commercial structures, many of frame but many also probably of the Greek Revival type. New buildings were begun at once and it is modest versions of the Victorian styles of the seventies that now are the predominant types in this district. The first story was usually designed as an arcade (not the French type with deep openings forming a walkway, but just a flat series of arched openings). Most of the buildings still retain their cast iron one-story fronts. Many still have their double doors. Piers with large rectangular areas of glass between them were sometimes used. Hood moldings were the principal choice for decorating the upper story windows. Rusticated pilasters were often used to give vertical organization to the facades. The standard treatment of the brick was a stucco covering frequently scored to resemble

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)           |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |   |  |

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The principal commercial area in Galveston from the 1850's to the early 1900's was called The Strand. Located near the wharf on Galveston Bay, The Strand District included the businesses of the most prominent, prosperous, and influential men in Texas. Such men as John Henry Hutchings, J. J. Hendley, Henry Rosenberg, and John Sealy were well established entrepreneurs by the late 1850's. They accumulated fortunes and exerted commercial and political control over much of Texas through their financial ties with northern business interests and local harbor and transportation facilities as well as through their political connections in the state legislature.

Representative of the commercial houses on The Strand in the 1850's was the Hendley Company, founded by William and Captain J. J. Hendley along with John Sleight and Philip Gildersleeve. The firm was a cotton and commission house. By 1858, the year in which construction on the Hendley Building began, it was the leading company in Galveston. "The Hendley Building enjoys the distinction not only of being the first pretentious business building in Galveston," said Howard Barnstone in his book The Galveston That Was, "but also (of) having been constructed at a greater proportionate cost than any other building in the city." The brick in the building was imported from Boston via the Hendley line vessels.

The Hendley Building was guaranteed a place in history during the Civil War when the first shot in the Battle of Galveston, January 1, 1863, was fired from a cannon on its roof. A large hole in the cornice on the 20th Street side caused by a cannonball from a Federal gunboat left signs of the Battle. The result of that conflict was that Southern forces regained control of Galveston Island for the remainder of the war. The Hendley Company was one of several firms forced out of Galveston by the War, but it was moved back from Houston and reestablished when the Federal blockade ended.

Hendley, like Henry Rosenberg, John Sealy and other Galveston businessmen, got his start in capitalism during the 1850's while transportation facilities, principally ports and railroads, were inadequate to meet bustling Galveston's needs. He became a director of the Galveston Brazos Navigation Company in 1850 and then began to acquire his own shipping line. Rosenberg and Sealy also secured part of the water passage profits for themselves as part owners of the Galveston Wharf and Cotton Press Company. Even through great amounts of money were made during the decade before the Civil War, the buildings which testify to that wealth and signify the prominence of the Strand did not appear until after the War.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

UTM REFERENCES

|   |      |         |          |   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 15   | 326160  | 3243350  | B | 15   | 325420  | 3242900  |
|   | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |   | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | 15   | 326130  | 3242700  | D | 15   | 325420  | 3243360  |

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, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

2/11/76

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street, N.W.

TELEPHONE

202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington, D.C. 20240

STATE

# 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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13. Mrs. Esther G. League's Building, 2301-2307 Strand. c. 1870. The clothing house of Bernstein and Company not only occupied "The League Building" in 1874, but also the upper floors of the two adjoining buildings. The three-story brick has cast-iron columns and cornice on the ground floor. The upper floors have cast-iron window labels.
14. J. S. Brown Hardware Company Building, 2226-2228 Strand. 1870. The second oldest hardware firm in Galveston was a major supplier of hardware for the interior of Texas, and later became the largest hardware concern south of the Mason and Dixon Line. The present building includes two other buildings to the east. It was made of the best quality of Texas brick, and its foundation, also of the same material, was laid in a bed of solid cement several feet below the bottom of the Bay.
15. W. L. Moody Building, 2202-2206 Strand. 1884. Nicholas Clayton, architect. This building replaces a larger building, which was destroyed by the fire of January 13, 1882. Once a four-story brick with a large mansard roof, the building lost its upper floor, cornice and roof in the 1900 storm. The lower floor is decorated with cast iron columns, brick and terra cotta give a polychrome effect to the facades, which are further enhanced by intricate brickwork.
16. John Berlocher Building, 2221-2223 Strand. This building forms the western portion of a row of identical-appearing structures. Destroyed by the fire of February 24, 1870, it was rebuilt in 1871. Blum Hardware occupied the site until 1910, when the Black Hardware Company bought this and the adjoining structures.
17. The T. W. House Building, 2219 Strand. 1871. Col. T. W. House was a commission merchant and important cotton factor, who moved to Houston during the Civil War. The lower floor of this building consists of cast-iron clad brick piers, and were originally filled with double-leaf doors.
18. The E. S. Wood Building, 2213-2215 Strand. 1859. The fire of February 24, 1870, which destroyed all the buildings on this block, only partially damaged this structure; consequently, this building is second in age to the commercial buildings on The Strand. It forms the eastern two bays of this row. Originally, all three of its floors were covered with an elaborate iron front and topped by an iron cornice.
19. The Mensing Brothers and Company Building, 2118-2128 Strand. 1882. Gustave and William Mensing, came to Galveston in 1868 and formed a firm of cotton factors in 1873. One of the large upstairs rooms was used for a cotton sample room, where cotton factors displayed their samples, and the season's crops were

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auctioned off. The structure is stuccoed to resemble stone, and the lower floor is treated as an arcade with round arches springing from brick piers. Originally, it was topped by a large pediment, and urns decorated the cornice.

20. The Mallory Building, 2114 Strand. 1878. Erected by C. D. Mallory of Baltimore, son of the founder of the Mallory Line, the largest steamship line to serve Galveston. The building, now known as The Produce Building, replaces the original structure destroyed by the fire of 1877. Another fire, in November, 1881, damaged the building, and it was extensively repaired the same year. The ground floor is treated as an arcade with a paneled iron front. The upper story has hood-moulds over the windows. A triangular pediment once decorated the cornice.

21. Adoue-Lobit Bank, 2102 Strand. 1890. Nicholas Clayton, architect. This once handsome building has been altered.

22. First National Bank Building, 2127 Strand. 1877. P. M. Comegys, architect. The original three-story 1867 building was destroyed by the fire of 1877, and when rebuilt, reduced to two stories. It is believed that the original Corinthian patterned ironwork survived and used in the new building. The builder was Thompson Harden McMahan, a most prominent banker and merchant. The tile sidewalk was brought from England and laid as pavement in 1877.

23. The site of Thompson Harden McMahan's Office Building, 2125 Strand. Once a building which housed the city's leading attorneys, the site remained a vacant lot after the 1877 fire until 1895, when the present building was erected.

24. Mrs. Clara Lang's Building, 2119 Strand. 1878. Following the fire of June 8, 1877, Mrs. Lang erected two buildings, both four stories high and designed by the architect, John Moser. The building was made of pressed brick with artificial stone trim. Today, it is only three stories high and stuccoed over.

25. Marx and Kempner Building, 2117 Strand. 1877. Originally a small brick and iron front, the building has been covered over with stucco. I. H. Kempner and M. Marx established a wholesale grocery business in Galveston in 1870. In 1882, the partners dropped this interest and began a successful cotton trade; later, they included banking.

26. The Opperman Building, 2115 Strand. 1878. H. Pritchard, designer. Although the building was supposed to have been constructed as an iron and artificial stone structure, the facade is made of cement and plaster.



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27. J. S. Brown Building, 2111 Strand. 1878. Nicholas Clayton, architect. This building is two stories high with an iron front decorating the ground floor. The upper floor has paneled details and cast-iron hood moulds over the windows.

28. Mrs. Clara Lang's Building, 2109 Strand. 1878. John Moser, architect. The building is made of pressed brick and artificial stone. It has a cast-iron front on the ground floor, and patterned brickwork on the second story facade. Cotton factors and commission merchants used the building until 1898.

29. Ball, Hutchings and Company Building, 2101 Strand. 1878. Nicholas Clayton, architect. The building replaces the original J. S. Brown Hardware Building, which owned this and adjacent sites to the west before the fire of 1877. The building is a two-story brick, stuccoed and decorated with a simple cornice. The ground floor is treated as an arcade, with flat, pointed arches. The upper floor's paired windows are interesting.

30. The Hendley Row, 2000-2016 Strand. 1858-1859. These buildings are four adjoining structures; three of them are the oldest surviving commercial structures in the city. The building on the extreme west, although built at the same time, was burned in 1866 and rebuilt in 1867. The Row was erected by William and Joseph Hendley, Thomas Massey League and Francois Guilbeau. During the Civil War, a wooden cupola on the roof, served the Confederates as a watch tower to spy on the movements of the Federal gunboats, which constantly blockaded Galveston.

31. The Jockusch Building, 2025 Strand. 1866. John Jockusch, who came to Galveston in 1840, was the Prussian Consul to the Republic of Texas. In 1849, Galvas made a partner in the powerful commission house of R. and D. G. Mills. The iron front was supplied by a Baltimore firm, and the contractors were from the same city.

32. The Nichols Building, 2021-2023 Strand. Antebellum. Ebenezer B. Nichols, who built the structure, moved to Galveston in 1850, when he first opened a hardware store, and later became a cotton factor and commission merchant. The Nichols Building is undecorated and made of stuccoed brick. There are moulded architraves over the lower floor openings. Inside, cast-iron columns support the second floor.

33. The Rogers Building, 2013-2019 Strand. 1894. The initials, "J. D. R.", and the date, "1894", are inscribed in the facades of two parapets at the top of the building. John D. Rogers, a commission merchant probably built this structure as an investment since it was immediately occupied by C. Nicolini and Company, ship chandlers and importers.



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Compared to the rest of the South, Galveston recovered rapidly from the Civil War. In the 1870's, following the Civil War, Galveston found itself in the midst of prosperous times as indicated by the construction activity on The Strand. Because of numerous fires in that post-Civil War decade it is not known just how much building was accomplished in the previous two decades. By the 1870's Galveston had become the Gulf terminal of two great continental railroad systems, the Missouri Pacific and the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe. With this economic expansion almost two dozen buildings arose to symbolize the prosperity of the times. Henry Rosenberg, businessman and benefactor, and J. S. Brown, son of hardware wholesaler J. M. Brown, were typical of the men who then built along The Strand. Rosenberg erected a store at the southwest corner of 20th and Strand in 1875 after he had developed, by the 1850's, the largest dry goods store in Texas. J. S. Brown built the second Brown Building in 1878. A fire in 1877 had destroyed most of the 2100 block of Strand Street, including the old Brown and Lang Building at 2111 Strand; there J. S. Brown erected his new structure, called the J. S. Brown Building.

The vigorous building during the seventh decade of the 19th century waned in the eighth. Although the depression of the 1870's drained part of Galveston's vitality, such prestigious Galvestonians as W. L. Moody and John Sealy continued building along The Strand well into the 1890's. Colonel W. L. Moody, cotton broker, banker, and one-time state legislator, was representative of the undaunted entrepreneur. When a fire in 1882 razed the original Moody Building, erected in 1872, Moody commissioned the noted architect, Nicholas J. Clayton to design a new building to be built on the same site. Before the end of 1882, Moody had moved into his new structure at 2202 Strand Street. In 1895 Clayton was also the architect for the Hutchings, Sealy and Company Building, one of the few buildings erected on The Strand in the 1890's. Sealy, who died in 1884, never saw his new building which was then considered to be "of the most modern design."

The hurricane of 1900 caused much destruction along The Strand, but it was the development of the Houston Ship Channel and the lack of development in Galveston's harbor which brought an end to both Galveston's prosperity and the prominence of the Strand. Business stagnation, in Galveston's case, meant preservation of the past. As compared to their prosperous and eminent owners, most of the buildings on The Strand are not particularly distinguished. However, they exhibit the standard commercial tastes of the late 19th century and therefore retain for Galveston a reflection of the past often denied to many so-called "progressive" cities.

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Only a few of the buildings along The Strand have been designated as historic Texas landmarks by the Texas State Historical Survey Committee; however, the Galveston Historical Foundation is in the process of establishing its own historic district in the area with the aid of a grant from the Moody Foundation. The buildings in the district are being restored not only to preserve them but to put them into use in an effort to revitalize economic activity in downtown Galveston. In an effort to define a district and terminate this important street, the Santa Fe Railroad Office building on 25th Street has been included within the boundaries.

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