NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

NAME

HISTORIC Hope Block/Cheapside

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
22-26 and 40 North Main Street

CITY, TOWN
Providence

STATE
Rhode Island

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
City Hall

STREET & NUMBER
Dorrance and Washington Streets

CITY, TOWN
Providence

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNER

STATUS

PRESENT USE

PUBLIC

X OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

MUSEUM

STRUCTURE

X BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

COMMERCIAL

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

EDUCATIONAL

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

X COMMERCIAL

X OCCUPIED

X OCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

X OCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

Other:

YES: RESTRICTED

EDUCATIONAL

INDUSTRIAL

YES: UNRESTRICTED

ENTERTAINMENT

TRANSPORTATION

NO

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Rhode Island Statewide Survey

DATE
1973

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

CITY, TOWN
Providence

STATE
Rhode Island
One of Providence's major commercial districts throughout the nineteenth century was an area called "Cheapside," located immediately north of the colonial market place. Today, only two buildings remain as evidence of the development of this area in the Victorian era: the Hope Block, 22-26 North Main Street, a Second Empire brick structure (1873); and the adjacent Cheapside Block, 40 North Main Street, built by the firm of Stone and Carpenter in the High Victorian Gothic style (1880).

The Hope Block is located on the west side of North Main Street with Drowne Street on the south and the Cheapside Block to the north. It is a brick and granite structure of four stories including Mansard with a five-bay facade in a two-one-two pattern. Constructed in 1873 by an architect still unknown, its composition is sufficiently general to make an attribution to any known architect of the day difficult. However, the building is one of a few survivors of the many Second Empire style commercial structures erected in Providence between 1866 and 1875.

The street level of the Hope Block retains its original cast iron decoration with more recent plate glass windows between. Four stop-fluted Corinthian pilasters delimit the ends of the building and frame the central door. The cast iron lintel is undecorated except for a line of dentilling at the cornice.

The second and third stories of the facade are constructed of a fine-grade smooth brick with granite band courses, window sills, and keystones. Double-window projecting pavilions flank a center bay of one window. All of the windows are two-over-two sash and rounded at the top. A granite band course immediately above the cast iron street level serves as the sill for second story windows. Both middle stories are decorated by heavy granite keystones and a narrow granite band course at the springing of the arches for the round top windows. A horizontal granite band with the name "Hope Block" separates the second and third floors in the central section, and this wide band is carried across the projecting pavilions.

Above the third story, the brick wall facade is replaced by a slate Mansard roof with wooden trim. The two shallow side pavilions culminate in projecting units of battered form. The double windows below are here replaced by one wide window, still two-over-two sash, but with a segmental top. The roof pavilions are framed in wood and decorated by a series of rosettes and rope moldings at the corners. The central window in the Mansard has an arched form like those below and is outlined here by a wide wooden molding. At the top, an overhanging cornice is supported by modillions and decorated with inset panels along the bottom. A line of dentils separate the cornice from the slate roof.

The Drowne Street facade, along the south, is finished in a rough brick, but follows the general fenestration pattern of the main facade. Square windows illuminate the first story, while arched forms exist above. The side silhouette

See continuation sheet 1
The Hope Block and Cheapside Building are the only remnants of a once prosperous commercial district and two of the best extant examples of Victorian commercial architecture in Providence. From the early nineteenth century, Cheapside was the name given to the commercial district running along the west side of Main Street, north from the eighteenth century Market House to the First Baptist Meeting House. The Cheapside area was the dry goods center for Providence and businesses like Watson and Gladding (later B. H. Gladding and Company) were initiated here as early as 1805. As evidenced by these two buildings, the district was still flourishing at the end of the nineteenth century.

In addition to their significance for local commercial history, the Hope Block and Cheapside are noteworthy examples of the city's popular architectural styles. Differing in quality, the two structures represent the decline of the Second Empire style, popular in Providence from 1866 to 1875, and the succeeding High Victorian Gothic, a style that held sway from 1875 into the 1890's. Similarly, the buildings present the range from the anonymous and simple Hope Block to the more nervously exciting Cheapside, a work of the prominent Stone and Carpenter office.

The Hope Block, constructed in 1873, is a rather vernacular extraction of contemporary buildings modeled on the stylistic dictates of France's Second Empire. Its high style prototype, represented in Providence by the Butler Exchange (Arthur Gilman, 1872) and the Providence City Hall (S. J. Thayer, 1875), is characterized by a highly plastic composition of projecting pavilions, series of columns, topped by a Mansard roof with cast iron cresting. With the exception of the two buildings above, Providence did not achieve a high style interpretation of the Second Empire style. The Hope Block is distinguished by projecting pavilions and a Mansard roof, its only real hallmarks of the Second Empire style. Basically, however, the extreme regularity, use of hard brick and block lettering strongly ties the building to mid-century forms.

Cheapside is a much finer example of Providence's commercial architecture. In general, the work done during the High Victorian Gothic style here was more sophisticated than the Second Empire developments. The period marked the ascendancy of two major offices---Stone and Carpenter (later Stone, Carpenter and Willson) and W. R. Walker. Providence was introduced to the High Victorian Gothic style in

See continuation sheet 3
of the roof resembles a salt-box shape, being a gable, flank to the street, that is truncated at the front by the Mansard.

Although the Cheapside Block is a more sophisticated piece of architecture, its designer was sensitive to perpetuating the scale of the earlier Hope Block. Cheapside, also a four-story brick structure with granite and cast iron articulation, was a product of one of the major architectural firms of the period, Stone and Carpenter. It represents the mature High Victorian Gothic style in Providence commercial architecture.

Cheapside's designer, Alfred Stone (1834-1908), subtly organized the composition to express verticality. The ground level is divided into two large open units for shops, with the general building entrance in the section to the left. On the three upper levels, changes in fenestration enliven the facade and augment the vertical thrust of the building. On the second story, two groups of a wide window flanked by two slightly narrower windows repeat the basic two-part solidity of the ground floor. At the same time, the second story pattern provides a transition to the composition of the top two floors—pairs of narrow windows on the outside and double larger windows in the center. Thus, the composition is modeled from two equal parts to a definite central focus. Polished marble colonnettes in the centers of the third and fourth levels reinforce this development.

The cast iron work of the first story is complex and fascinating. Mimicking the adjacent Hope Block, three ground level piers are grooved in a manner to suggest fluting. Above the fluting, the piers are decorated by bands of raised rosettes and inset panels of rosettes, stylized palmette leaves, guttae and oblong pendants. Open work brackets of foliate design support a simple cast iron lintel distinguished by two long horizontal panels with raised moldings. The two outside piers serve as the bases for buttress-like elements that extend, in brick, up the edges of the facade and break through the line of the cornice.

Above the street level, the facade is vitalized by several Victorian Gothic characteristics: rough and carved granite insets, patterned brickwork, wooden panels of cut-out decoration, and colorful tiles. The windows of the second and third levels are surmounted by wooden panels with battered sides. Rough granite blocks enframe these areas. The wooden panels contain cut-out, flat, stylized foliage, which is simpler in the third level than the second. The use of pattern in brick, well illustrated by this building, includes laying bricks in a diagonal pattern, pointing corners towards the front, recessing bricks to create shadow patterns, and corbelling. A polished marble colonnette with Romanesque capital is supported on a bracket between the center windows in the upper two levels.

See continuation sheet 2
The fourth story is composed of three pointed dormers over the double window groups. The central dormer contains a pointed Gothic arch over the two central windows. To either side, the double windows are capped by a heavy stone lintel and a segmental brick arch above. Colored tiles (in blue, orange and black) are used to crown the compositions: one in the center of each side dormer and a group of four in the central dormer. The roof line is emphasized by a wide stone course in which quatrefoil designs are carved. This cornice is broken by the top of the central dormer and the extensions of the buttress elements at the edges.

The exposed Amos Street elevation, on the north, shows regular fenestration and is decorated by simple brick corbelling in the cornice.
the Wilcox Building, 1875, designed by Edwin O. Howland. Stone and Carpenter's first exercise in this style was the flamboyant Dorrance Hotel, 1878, next to the site of the new Providence City Hall. Cheapside was the only other Victorian Gothic commercial building by the firm and the only one now extant.

Thus, from both an historical and an architectural point of view, these buildings are evidence of the commercial development in the city. Their adaptive reuse is certainly feasible and should be encouraged. Because of their key geographic location, the structures are essential to the visual fabric of the city and the historic context of economic growth.

In the twentieth century, expansion into this area by the Rhode Island School of Design has changed the land use pattern from commercial to institutional. In 1955, the Hope Block was acquired by the State of Rhode Island. During the 1974 elections, a referendum calling for, among other things, demolition of the Hope Block was defeated by the voters. Only if both buildings can be maintained and given a vital function will this evidence of Providence's past survive.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

| A | 1,9 | 2,9 | 9,9,3 | 0,9,0 |
| C | ZONE EASTING | NORTHING |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>CODE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Keith N. Morgan, Museum Specialist

ORGANIZATION
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

DATE
March 26, 1973

CITY OR TOWN
Providence

STATE
Rhode Island

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DATE

DATE
**NAME**

**HISTORIC** Hope Block and Cheapside

**LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Providence

VICINITY OF

COUNTY Providence

STATE Rhode Island

**PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT Keith N, Morgan

DATE OF PHOTO June, 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

**IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Cheapside, primarily above street level

PHOTO NO 3

INT: 2983-75
NAME
HISTORIC Hope Block and Cheapside

LOCATION
CITY, TOWN Providence
VICINITY OF
COUNTY Providence
STATE Rhode Island

PHOTO REFERENCE
PHOTO CREDIT Keith N. Morgan
DATE OF PHOTO June, 1975
NEGATIVE FILED AT Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

IDENTIFICATION
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET
Cheapside and Hope Block: General View looking south along North Main Street
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>1</strong> NAME</th>
<th>Hope Block/Cheapside Historic District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HISTORIC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND/OR COMMON</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>2</strong> LOCATION</th>
<th>Providence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CITY, TOWN</td>
<td>Providence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICINITY OF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUNTY</td>
<td>Providence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>3</strong> PHOTO REFERENCE</th>
<th>Keith N. Morgan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHOTO CREDIT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATE OF PHOTO</td>
<td>March, 1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEGATIVE FILED AT</td>
<td>Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>4</strong> IDENTIFICATION</th>
<th>Detail, Cheapside Block sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME &amp; STREET</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHOTO NO</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# National Register of Historic Places Property Photograph Form

**Name**

- Historic: Hope Block/Cheapside Historic District

**Location**

- City, Town: Providence
- Vicinity of: ______
- County: Providence
- State: Island

**Photo Reference**

- Photo Credit: Keith N. Morgan
- Date of Photo: March, 1975
- Negative Filed At: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

**Identification**

- Describe view, direction, etc. If district, give building name & street: Detail of cast iron fronts, Hope Block and Cheapside
- Photo No: 5
NAME

HISTORIC Hope Block/Cheapside Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

CITY. TOWN Providence

VICINITY OF

COUNTY Providence

STATE Rhode Island

PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Keith N. Morgan

DATE OF PHOTO March, 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Cheapside, central dormer detail

PHOTO NO 7
Hope Block/Cheapside Historic District

Providence, Rhode Island

PHOTO REFERENCE

Keith N. Morgan

March, 1975

Hope Block, above street level
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>NAME</strong></th>
<th>Hope Block/Cheapside Historic District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY/TOWN</td>
<td>Providence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICINITY OF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUNTY</td>
<td>Providence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PHOTO REFERENCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHOTO CREDIT</td>
<td>Keith N. Morgan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATE OF PHOTO</td>
<td>March, 1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEGATIVE FILED AT</td>
<td>Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IDENTIFICATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME &amp; STREET</td>
<td>Hope Block, Mansard roof detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHOTO NO</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NAME
Hope Block/Cheapside Historic District

LOCATION
CITY, TOWN Providence
VICINITY OF
COUNTY Providence
STATE Rhode Island

MAP REFERENCE
SOURCE U. S. Geological Survey
SCALE 1/2400
DATE 1957, photorevised 1970

REQUIREMENTS
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES
Hope Block/Cheapside Historic District

Zone  Easting  Northing
   19   299930   4633090
NAME
Hope Block/Cheapside Historic District

LOCATION
CITY, TOWN Providence
VICINITY OF Providence
COUNTY Providence
STATE Rhode Island

MAP REFERENCE
SOURCE U. S. Geological Survey
SCALE 1/2400
DATE 1957, photorevised 1970

REQUIREMENTS
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES