

# ELIZABETH AT THE CROSSROADS



A Self-Guided Walking Tour  
Through Historic Midtown Elizabeth



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# COUNTY OF UNION

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are extended to

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**Boxwood Hall State Historic Site** (Boudinot Mansion).

1073 East Jersey Street, Elizabeth, New Jersey

Usually open Monday - Friday

9:00 a.m. to noon and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

908-282-7617 (Call to confirm.)







# ELIZABETH AT THE CROSSROADS



Photo Courtesy of the Union County Historical Society

**A** great deal has changed since 1664, when the unsettled land that would become Union County was purchased from the Lenni Lenape Indians by a group of Englishmen. The area, named Elizabethtown after the wife of Sir George Carteret, proprietor of East Jersey, was the first permanent English settlement in New Jersey and the provincial capital of East Jersey.

By the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, Elizabethtown had become one of the most prominent cities in New Jersey. In the 1750s, Royal Governor Jonathan Belcher established his residence in Elizabethtown, making the town the colonial capital.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century transformed Elizabethtown into a transportation hub as railroad lines, highways and steamboat shipping converged in the city. Originally part of Essex County, the area split off and was incorporated as Union, the state's final county, in 1857. All of what is now Union County was once part of the Elizabethtown tract.

*Elizabeth at the Crossroads* presents a self-guided walk through the streets of historic mid-town Elizabeth. The tour stops allow visitors to linger and experience an era of the city's rich history and development as the permanent seat of government of the County of Union.

A map of the streets  
in this tour can be found in  
the center of this booklet on  
pages 16 & 17.

# ELIZABETH

AT THE

## CROSSROADS

A Self-Guided Walking Tour



1

**B**egin at the **ELIZABETH PUBLIC LIBRARY**, 11 South Broad Street. The main building was completed in 1912 and enlarged in 1925. The building was a gift of Andrew Carnegie, the wealthy philanthropist. During the eighteenth century, the lot was the **site of the Red Lion Inn**, where Washington was entertained on April 23, 1789, before proceeding to Boxwood Hall (see # 28). As you stand facing the library, at the far end of the parking lot to your left is the **Old Mill site**. In 1669, John Ogden opened a gristmill near the spot where South Broad Street now crosses the Elizabeth River. Until about 1900, the Elizabeth River was navigable to this point. This is the **original settlement area**; colonists would sail up a river as far as possible as protection from weather and invasion. The riverbanks were contained for flood control around 1985, but the river is still subject to the rise and fall of the tides.



Early 20th Century view: *Elizabeth Public Library, Union County Courthouse and First Presbyterian Church*





**Early 20th Century view:** *Elizabeth Avenue seen from the Union County Courthouse*

**C**ross Rahway Avenue (the street to your right) going north. The street on your right is **ELIZABETH AVENUE**—formerly Water Street, and earlier, the King’s Highway. One of the oldest streets in North America, it may have been used by the Dutch before Elizabethtown was settled. Legend says it was an Indian trail before the Dutch came. It extends to the Arthur Kill, the narrow strip of water that separates Elizabeth from Staten Island, New York. During the American Revolution, British and Tory raiders used Elizabeth Avenue as a direct route from Staten Island to the center of Elizabethtown.

## **U**NION COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Earlier courthouses occupied one half of this lot, the half farthest from the corner. The corner lot held a private house and later a hotel called the Sheridan House.

The first borough courthouse (Elizabeth was part of Essex County and the county courthouse was in Newark) was burned during a Tory raid in 1780. A new building was erected in 1797, but burned in 1808. The next building was enlarged in 1857 and became the county courthouse for Union County, separated that year from Essex County.

The chronology of the current complex:

Front portion:	1903
First Annex:	1925
Tower:	1931-32
New annex:	1990



The inscription is in Latin and means, “The voice of the people is the voice of God.”

The cannon, cast in Strasburg in 1758 was captured and recaptured by the French and English until 1779, when General Anthony Wayne recaptured Stony Brook. George Washington himself presented the cannon to the troops from Elizabethtown, who brought it home with them.

**BE VERY CAREFUL WHILE  
WALKING ON THIS BLOCK OF  
BROAD STREET—THE SIDEWALK  
IS VERY UNEVEN.**

As you walk along, notice the **memorial plaques** at the base of many of the trees.

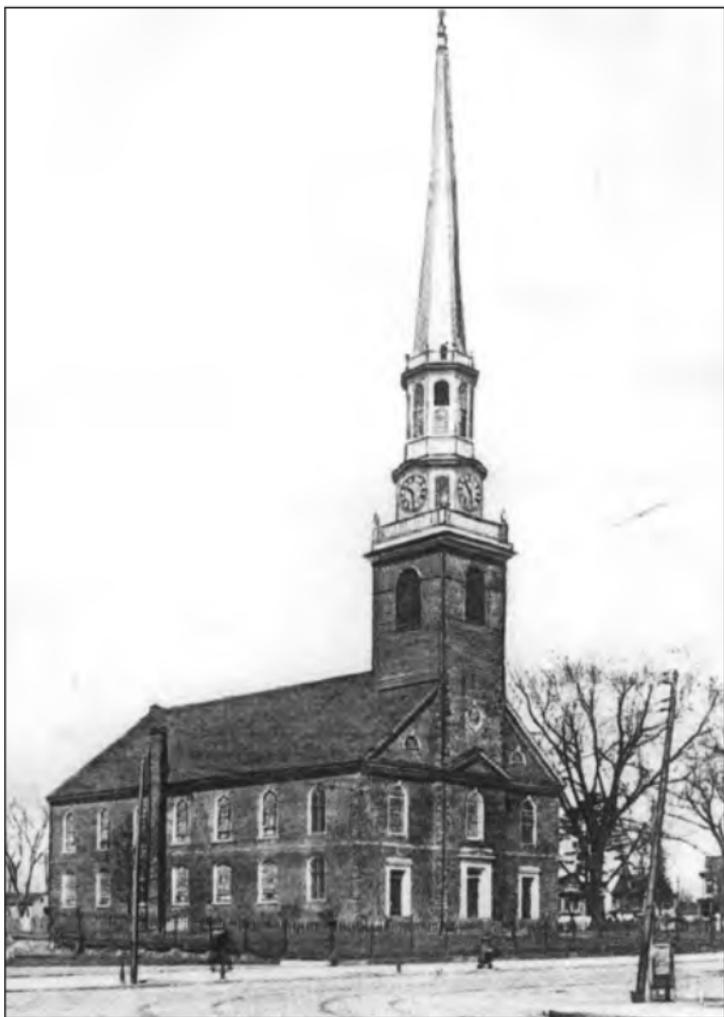


**T**HE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH The congregation was founded in 1664, the year the first settlers arrived in Elizabethtown. The original building, probably a simple Meeting House, was replaced in 1724. That structure was burned during a raid on January 25, 1780. The raid was led by Cornelius Hetfield, a Staten Island Tory originally from Elizabethtown, whose father was an Elder of the church.

A new building was completed in 1793; some of the exterior walls date from that structure. Aside from interior remodeling and redecorating over time, the building remained essentially unchanged until 1899, when a tornado blew off the steeple. (It landed upside down, the point buried in the earth.) The steeple was replaced in the early 1900s, only to be destroyed—along with the interior and the roof—in the great fire of June 25, 1946. While the church was soon rebuilt, and the interior restored to a Colonial, rather than Gothic style, the church steeple was not replaced until 2008. Both Elizabeth’s skyline and the town clock have been restored.

The churchyard contains the graves of many noted Elizabeth residents. One of the most famous is Rev. James Caldwell; his grave and





**First Presbyterian Church:** *Before the 1946 Fire*

that of his wife Hannah are marked by the obelisk. The land between the iron fence and the stone wall around the graveyard was known as the Parade Ground. Local militia units used it for military drills as late as the Civil War.

**T**HE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PARISH HOUSE, the red brick building on the corner, was erected in 1917.

5

The original building on the site was opened in 1767 as a classical school, known as the Academy. Aaron Burr was one of the early students. Francis Barber was named headmaster in 1771; one of his pupils was Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton and Burr were close in age, but Hamilton was 15 when he started here; Burr had already graduated. Barber left the school to join the Continental Army. He survived the Revolutionary War only to be killed by a falling tree in late 1781.



The Academy was burned during a British raid on February 25, 1779. Rebuilt and reopened in 1787, it closed in 1834; the building then became the first “Session House” of the First Church. Rebuilt in 1863 and again in 1917, it has been used as a Parish House, offices and Sunday School and is now the center of the congregation’s urban ministry.

6



**Broad Street:** *Probably dating from the 1950s*

**A**cross Broad Street are two converted movie theaters. The **REGENT THEATER** building, 41 Broad Street, has painted cement gargoyles along its upper facade. The building is the site of the home and printing office of Shepard Kollock, founder of the New Jersey Journal, later the Elizabeth Daily Journal, which published for over 200 years, until 1991. Past the brick-faced discount store, once the New Theater is the **UNION COUNTY SAVINGS BANK**, 61 Broad Street, founded in 1874.

7

**A**s you cross Caldwell Place continuing north, you are on the **site of Elizabeth’s first bucket brigade cistern**. Wells were dug around the city to provide fire protection for the residents in the days before fire engines.

8

**A**cross the street is **ST. JOHN’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH** which was established in 1706. The original brick building was enlarged several times; the current structure in the Gothic style was erected in



1859. The grave of Jonathan Dayton, Elizabeth native, Revolutionary War veteran and youngest signer of the Constitution, is located under the church.

The most famous rector was the Rev. Thomas Chandler who served, although not continuously, from 1751-1790. He fled to England during the American Revolution, pleading ill health, but there were rumors that he and his wife were suspected of spying for the British. His son, William, stayed in New Jersey and attained the rank of Captain in the New Jersey Volunteers, a Loyalist regiment under the command of British General Skinner.

The church was vacant during Chandler's absence since the Church of England was identified with the British crown. The British used the graveyard to quarter cavalry horses during their brief occupation of Elizabethtown in 1776, and both sides may have used it as a hospital. The interior was gutted, there were at least two attempts to burn the building down, and the organ pipes were melted down to make musket balls.

When the present church was erected, and again in 1895 when a new rectory was built, many of the gravestones were moved to the



St. John's Episcopal Church



north side of the church. Very few of these stones mark exact grave locations. Some of the grave markers are in French; there were French residents of old Elizabethtown and French speaking visitors from the West Indies. Some of the latter used to summer in Elizabethtown; the weather was more pleasant than in the tropics. The garden on the south side of the church was begun in 1953 in an effort to transform a barren grass plot into a place of peace and beauty.

**9** On this side of the street is the **WELLS FARGO BANK**, 68 Broad Street. Formerly the National State Bank, chartered in 1812, it has occupied the same site since 1814. Designated as one of Andrew Jackson’s “Pet Banks” in 1833, the State Bank was admitted to the National Banking System on August 1, 1865. It survived the Panic of 1837, and the Stock Market Crashes of 1873 and 1929—but not that of 1987. Note the etched



**Broad Street & Jersey Street:** *before Goerke was built*  
 glass windows across the street on the upper stories of 85 Broad Street, an example of Art Deco design. On the corner of Broad Street and West Jersey Street at 100 Broad Street is **SHOPPERS’ WORLD**, formerly Steinbach’s and for many years Goerke’s department stores. The location has a mercantile history that goes back to the eighteenth century.



**T**urn left onto West Jersey Street, heading west. This is a good place to note the stained glass windows on the side of the **Shoppers' World** building. Installed about 1913, they are original. Past the small stores on West Jersey Street is the Elizabeth Campus of **UNION COUNTY COLLEGE**. This modern building was erected in 1966 by Elizabethtown Gas Co., when the utility decided to remain in the City of Elizabeth. Designed by Vincent G. Kling of Philadelphia, the structure exhibits a fine example of the sculptural possibilities of building materials. One feature is the use of porcelainized external panels to break up an otherwise flat surface. Elizabethtown Gas moved to larger quarters in the 1980s. Union County College acquired the building and offers city residents a convenient location to further their education.

10

**C**ontinue on West Jersey Street, carefully crossing Elizabethtown Plaza and passing under the railroad. Cross West Jersey Street at crosswalk (Union Street). The **arch** of the railroad overpass is best observed from this side. This is one of several similar arches constructed in 1894, when the railroad tracks were elevated. The tracks had been laid at street level, but this interfered with ground transportation and caused safety problems.

11

**T**urn right (north) onto Union Street. As you approach West Grand Street, you will see **55 West Grand Street** to your left across the open lots. This tiny building is a fine example of the Tudor Revival style of the 1920s and 1930s. Half timbered with an oriel window and a gable end chimney, it seems to be the only small-scale commercial example of Tudor Revival in Elizabeth. To view the City of Elizabeth's 9/11 Memorial, turn right onto West Grand Street. Designed by local artist Dario Scholis, it was unveiled in 2002. The surrounding plaza provides an open space and

12



is the site of summer cultural events. Return to Union Street and turn right. Continue under the railroad to Julian Place. Turn right

13

**W**alk carefully on Julian Place—there is no sidewalk—past the former **CENTRAL RAILROAD OF NEW JERSEY STATION**, its structure restored and its interior renovated as a restaurant. Continue toward Broad Street and note the **three arches** that support the railroad tracks and allow the flow of automobile and pedestrian traffic. **THE ARCH**, an Elizabeth landmark, is the site where two railroads once intersected: The Pennsylvania Railroad and the Central Railroad of New Jersey. The tracks now belong to Amtrak and Conrail, respectively; New Jersey Transit uses the Amtrak tracks to serve the commuters of the area. Turn right (south) onto Broad Street.



**Julian Place**

14

**F**ollow Broad Street under the Arch. The slope of the street was caused when the arch was installed. In order to accommodate traffic under the railroads, the street level had to be lowered eight feet. This can cause flooding during heavy rains; hence, the series of drains in the street.

As you walk along Broad Street, you will notice modern storefronts at street level; however, many buildings exhibit much of their





Central Railroad of New Jersey: *Elizabeth Station*



### The Arch

original architecture on the upper floors. Some of the buildings, such as the one across the street at 233 Broad Street and its next door neighbor, date from the 1880s and 1890s and are typical of commercial buildings of the time. On this side of the street, 208 Broad Street, just past the small park, was constructed during the 1920s and is typical of the low-rise commercial architecture which became common in the Midtown area.

**C**ross Grand Street going south. The **UNION COUNTY TRUST BUILDING**, now home to Garden State Community Bank, dates from 1909. Its Neoclassical architecture was popular in the early twentieth century, particularly for institutional buildings such as banks. Across Broad Street is the **HERSH TOWER** at 125 Broad Street, the first “office tower” in Elizabeth. Once the tallest structure in Union County, it was commissioned by

15





**Union County Trust Building:** *Classical style*

Louis Hersh, an Elizabeth businessman. One of New Jersey's finest examples of Art Deco architecture, it was designed by the Newark firm of Meyers and Stanley. Since 1995, the office space has been modernized and the lobby and exterior restored.

16

**C**ontinue south on Broad Street to East Jersey Street. Cross Broad Street, and continue on East Jersey Street.



**The Isham Building:** *(above), 211-217 Broad Street, windows and street level changed*  
**The Burkley Hotel:** *(right), 221 Broad Street, greatly modified and enlarged*



17

**THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**, 1161 East Jersey Street, was founded in 1820 when the congregation of the



First Presbyterian Church became too large. The original sanctuary (the main part of the church) was dedicated May 1, 1822.

From 1827-53, the church cemetery was on a plot of land to the rear of the church, now covered by additions. The burials were removed when Evergreen Cemetery in Hillside opened in 1853.

**V**isible through the fence to the left side of the church is **1165 EAST JERSEY STREET**. Hidden behind modern storefronts, (the house was moved back) is a house with an 1870s Mansard roof. At one time it was the manse for the church; although an 1889 photograph identifies it as the home of George W. Bailey, M.D..

18

**I**n the eighteenth century, **AMBER HOUSE OF ELIZABETH**, 1155 East Jersey Street, was the site of the home of Hannah Arnett, patriot of the Revolutionary War. In 1776, a meeting of citizens of Elizabethtown was held to consider the amnesty offer of British General Sir William Howe. Hannah's impassioned eloquence against the offer impressed the citizens, who voted to remain loyal to the patriot cause.

19



**The Elizabeth Carteret Hotel:** *the lost facade and sign of the hotel*



In 1928, the building now on the site opened as the Elizabeth Carteret Hotel. For many years the ballrooms and banquet halls were used by the citizens of Elizabeth for festive occasions. In the 1980s the building, having lost most of its former elegance, was purchased by the Calvary Tabernacle. Sold again, it is now an assisted living complex.

**20** **A**cross the street is an Art Deco gem, **ALTENBURG PIANO HOUSE**, 1150 East Jersey Street. In business since 1847, Altenburg (still a family firm) moved to Elizabeth from New York City in the early 1920s. At first occupying a corner store, they moved to this location in 1930. The outside trim and the inside light fixtures have recently been restored; the sign is an Elizabeth landmark.

**21** **T**he Tudor Revival building on the corner next to Altenburg's houses the **RITZ THEATER**, 1148 East Jersey Street. Called the Jacobs Theater at the turn of the century, it was renamed The Ritz in 1926. It was originally designed for live performances, with emphasis on vaudeville, and later converted to a movie house. In 1980, it underwent renovation and live music, dance and theater events were presented, in addition to church services



*The Jacobs Theatre: facade changed as the Ritz Theatre*



and satellite broadcasts of sporting events. It has been used by movie directors, advertising agencies and musical performers as a set for movies, commercials and music videos.

**C**ross Jefferson Avenue. The small blue house across the street (1120 East Jersey Street) was for many years **the home of Anna J. Crouthers, M.D.**, one of the pioneer women physicians in the northeast. She was born Anna Tucker in 1852 in Union Township, and graduated from the New York Medical College and Hospital for Women in 1882. She was an instructor in anatomy at the college, but soon gave it up as her practice in Elizabeth grew. She married John P. Crouthers of Elizabeth on December 28, 1870 and died on January 2, 1930. The **YWCA** at 1131 East Jersey Street is housed in a Second Empire building. Large homes like this were popular with affluent Elizabeth residents during the 1870s and 1880s.

22



23

Central Baptist Church

**C**ontinue east on East Jersey Street. The stone structure is the **CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH**, 1125 East Jersey Street. The congregation was established on September 25, 1877 in a church building located on Jefferson Avenue. This building, whose cornerstone is dated 1899, is an example of

Cont.  
on  
page 18



# ELIZABETH

AT THE

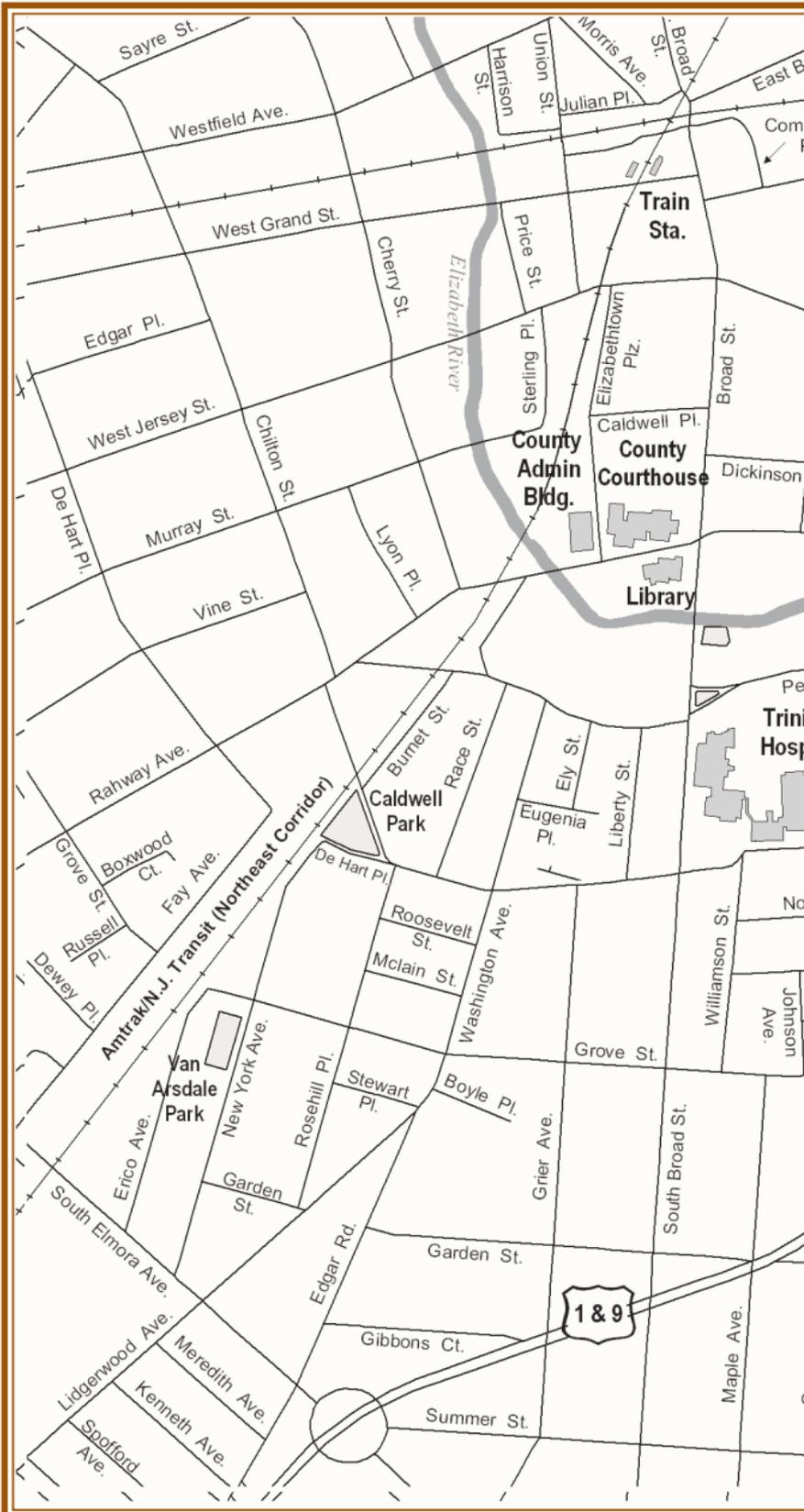


## CROSSROADS



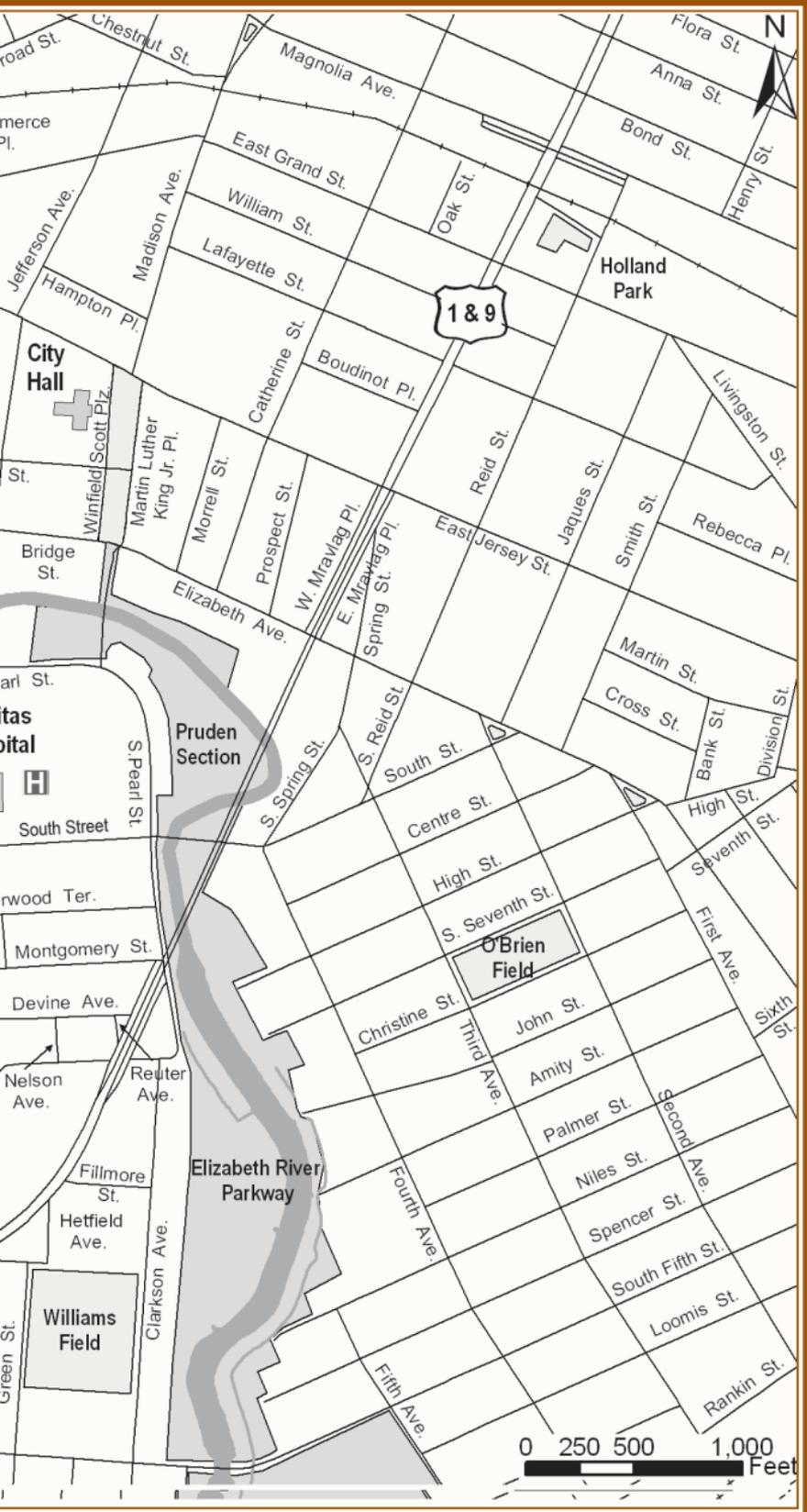
A Self-Guided Walking Tour

Distance: Approx. 3<sup>1/2</sup> Miles



# Enjoy your walk, but please do it safely.

Walk only on the sidewalks. Please cross streets only at corners and watch for turning cars. Where there are no traffic lights, be especially careful.



Cont.  
from  
page 15

Romanesque Revival architecture, a style popular in the late nineteenth century for public buildings, schools and churches. This church also has the “Gothic” touch of crenelation, the castle-like stone work design across the roof.

24

**A**cross the street is **1100 East Jersey Street**, originally the Third Presbyterian Church. The congregation was founded in 1851, when the memberships of the First and Second Presbyterian Churches became too large. The cornerstone of the church was laid September 21, 1852 and the church was dedicated March 28, 1855. A Sunday School and chapel to the rear of the main sanctuary were added in 1894, and a kitchen and gym with bowling alleys in the basement in the 1920s. The congregation merged with the Westminster Presbyterian Church in the 1980s.



Third Presbyterian Church

25

**T**he corner now occupied by a gas station was the site of a house demolished in 1928. From 1763 to 1790, the house was occupied by Dr. William Barnet, who served as a surgeon during the Revolution. After Barnet’s death, the house was purchased by a Mr. Hampton and renamed **Hampton Place**. In 1805, the house was purchased by Col. John Mayo of Richmond, VA and his wife Abigail DeHart, of an old Elizabeth family. Their



daughter, Maria Mayo Scott, wife of General Winfield Scott, inherited the house in 1818. General and Mrs. Scott resided in Elizabeth



**Winfield Scott House:** *Also known as Hampton Place*

when he was stationed in the Northeast. Their presence here attracted other Army officers including Robert Anderson, later a general and unsuccessful defender of **Fort Sumter**.

Coincidentally, Captain John McGowan of the United States Revenue Marine Service, who commanded the steamship **THE STAR OF THE WEST** in an unsuccessful attempt to relieve Fort Sumter, lived for awhile at 1027 Elizabeth Avenue.

**T**o your left is Madison Avenue, one of the oldest streets in Elizabeth. Intersecting Madison Avenue is a short (one block) street called Hampton Place, the only reminder of the estate which once stood here (see # 25). After World War I, this area north of East Jersey Street became home to upper middle class African-Americans. Among them were Dr. Clarence Cameron White, an orchestra conductor and violinist and the Paris-educated Madame Simmons, an organist and linguist, know for her literary and musical salons. The **GREATER MOUNT TEMANAME CHURCH**, affiliated with the largest

26





**Madison Avenue:** *Looking north towards Hampton Place; the first house on the left still stands*

African-American Protestant denomination in the country, is located on Madison Avenue. The congregation moved to this block from Washington Avenue, where it was established in 1860.

27

**C**ross Madison Avenue. On the corner are **two mirror image houses**, now connected by a modern addition. Built about 1890, these vernacular Queen Anne houses are representative of modest single family dwellings of the late nineteenth century.

28

**H**alfway down the block is **BOXWOOD HALL STATE HISTORIC SITE**, 1073 East Jersey Street. The red building is the surviving portion of an eighteen room mansion built ca. 1760. This was the home of Samuel Woodruff, local merchant and mayor; Elias Boudinot, lawyer and President of the United States in Congress Assembled; Jonathan Dayton, soldier, signer of the Constitution and Speaker of the House of Representatives; and William DeHart, aide to General Winfield Scott. Guests over the years included George Washington, Alexander Hamilton and the Marquis de Lafayette. Saved from the wrecker's ball in 1938 by the citizens of Elizabeth and deeded to the State of New Jersey, the house is open regularly for public visitation.

Continue east on East Jersey Street passing the **row of six houses** at 1057-1071 East



Jersey Street. Now divided into apartments, they were built as one family town houses in the 1870s. Originally, all had the high front steps such as those remaining at # 1061.

**O**n the corner is the **BONNELL HOUSE**, 1045 East Jersey Street, the front portion of which was built prior to 1700. One of the oldest houses in Union County, it was originally a two-room farmhouse with a basement kitchen and attic loft. The Bonnells (or Bunnells) were among the original settlers of Elizabethtown. The house is being restored by and serves as offices for The Historical Society: Elizabeth, NJ.

29

**C**ross East Jersey Street to the **BELCHER-OGDEN MANSION** at 1046 East Jersey Street. The wooden portion, housing a kitchen and scullery, was rebuilt in the mid 1960s on the Ogden's original seventeenth century foundations. The brick portion to the left of the

30



**The Belcher-Ogden Mansion:** *before its restoration*

front door was added in the early eighteenth century; the portion to the right of the front door was added in 1751, when the house was about to be occupied by the Royal Governor, Jonathan Belcher (appointed by King George II). Belcher lived here until his death in 1757. His money, patronage and library contributed



to the growth of the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University, which was founded in Elizabeth. (See # 44) The house was acquired later by Aaron Ogden, who became Governor of the State of Jersey. Ogden is known in legal history for the case **Gibbons vs. Ogden**, which gave the Federal Government control over interstate transportation. Ogden added another wing to the house, which extended into the unused parking lot. Both wooden wings were demolished by Warren Dix in the early 20th century, because of their poor condition. The Aaron Ogden wing could not be rebuilt because the property had been sold.

**31** This is a turn around point in the walk. Continue back west on East Jersey Street (the way you came). Carefully cross Morrell Street. To your left at 35-39 Morrell Street is the old Police Station, now an apartment house. The next block is the site of the future



**Christ Church:** *Later was Church of the Resurrection*

extension of **Jefferson House**, Elizabeth High School (see #32). The first lots are the sites of two houses which belonged to mayors of Elizabeth: **John C. Rankin, Jr.** and **Dr. Victor Mravlag**. The large parking lot once held the Episcopal **Church of the Resurrection**. The Gothic Revival church was badly damaged by fire and razed in 1988.



Cross Martin Luther King Plaza and turn left into Scott Park, where the cannons are located. The cannons, obtained from the Army in 1905, are 12 pound siege & garrison guns from 1839, the era of the Mexican-American War,



**Scott Park:** *Houses in background occupy land now covered by Jefferson High School*

when General Scott earned his fame. As you walk through the Park, try to find at least five different species of trees, as well as the eight small **monuments** and **memorials** – plus one across the street. The building on the right is the new (1939) **ELIZABETH CITY HALL**; on the left is **JEFFERSON HOUSE** of Elizabeth High School, originally the Boys' High School. (see # 36) Part of the lot of Jefferson House was once occupied by the home of Daniel Dod, a mechanic who built the boilers for the U.S.S. Savannah, which in 1819 became the first steamship to cross the Atlantic. The old City Hall and Market, replaced in 1939, were located in a building at the end of Scott Park. The Vietnam Veterans of



**Old City Hall:** *With market on the first floor, City Hall was replaced in 1939*



America, Chapter 779, erected the memorial now on the site; it lists the 29 Elizabeth residents killed during the Vietnam War.

**33** Cross Elizabeth Avenue to the right (west) side of Bridge Street. The parking lots behind the stores on your right mark the location of **Pruden, later Beerbower's, pottery works**. The river produced some of the clay, as well as the means to transport raw materials and finished products. Once you have crossed the river, use the path through the park to reach Pearl Street. On your left across Pearl Street is **ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL**. The campus occupies the site of Breidt's Brewery.

**34** On the other side of the park and set well back from the street is **ST. JOHN'S PARSONAGE**, 633 Pearl Street, also known as the **HAMPTON HOUSE**. The building was enlarged in 1765 and remodeled in 1871, but a portion of the original structure remains. On one of the stones is the inscription "A.H.M. 1696". The original builder was Andrew Hampton; the building served as the parsonage for St. John's Episcopal Church from 1765-1902, hence the two names. Continue on Pearl Street past the side of the **HAITIAN BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH**, (until 1994, St. James Methodist Church). The church is a good example of a simple interpretation of the Victorian Gothic style.

**35** **TRINITAS HOSPITAL**, formerly St. Elizabeth's, was founded in 1904 as the Elizabeth Catholic Women's Hospital on the corner of Pearl and Williamson Streets. Its first home was a house supposedly built by General Matthais Williamson in 1776. At the corner of Pearl and South Broad Streets is a small triangle of land called **SHERIDAN PARK**. It was sold in 1858 to the City of Elizabeth by Susan T.E. Williamson for \$1.00,





**First home of Saint Elizabeth Hospital**

with the stipulation that no building be erected on it. It was named Sheridan Park in 1871 by a resolution of the Elizabeth City Council, possibly to honor Patrick Sheridan, Councilman of the old Eighth Ward, where the park is located. It is not clear if this is the man who owned Sheridan House (see #3), but it is certainly possible.

**C**ross Pearl Street and continue south (left) on South Broad Street. Across the street, note 227 South Broad Street (Italianate architecture). At one time this building was the parsonage for the First Presbyterian Church (see #4).

36



**Old Battin High School:** *This building was originally known as the Dimock Palace*



Walk to the corner of South Street past **ABOFF HOUSE**, part of Elizabeth High School. Cross South Street to note the facade of **BATTIN SCHOOL #4**, 300 South Broad Street. A K-8 school, it derives its name from Joseph Battin, a president of the Elizabeth Water Company. In 1889, Battin presented the City of Elizabeth with a mansion known as the “Dimock Palace”, built in 1873 for Anthony Dimock at a cost of \$250,000. The mansion became the first Battin High School. The current building was erected in 1913 and became the Girls’ High School (see # 32), then Battin Middle School until 2007. The plain Classical Revival structure is enhanced by the terra cotta tile decorative trim.

**37** **C**ross South Broad Street, heading west on South Street one block to Grier Avenue. On the corner of Grier Avenue and South Street is **ST. VLADIMIR UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**, 309 Grier Avenue, which dates to the early twentieth century. Note its gilded onion domes.

**38** **T**urn left (west) onto Grier Avenue and follow it one block to Grove Street. Turn right (north) onto Grove Street for one block to Washington Avenue. These two blocks are part of an area called **QUALITY HILL**, developed between 1860 and 1890 to attract New York businessmen, who believed the congenial surroundings made the daily com-



**Quality Hill:** *A typical area home*





**Quality Hill Neighborhood:** *One of the many grand homes built in the nineteenth century*

mute worthwhile. Many of the large houses on their substantial lots are of Italianate and Second Empire styles, with details such as Mansard roofs. In between the large houses, now mostly subdivided into apartments, are smaller, twentieth century dwellings.

**O**n the corner of Washington Avenue and Grove Street, 828-842 Grove Street is an eight unit **brick row house**, built around 1900. The contrasting yellow brick used for the trim and end building wall design show influences of Colonial Revival style.

39

**T**urn left (south) onto Washington Avenue for two short blocks. As you approach the fork in the road, you will see on your left a fenced-in lot with a cross in the center. This is **ST. MARY'S CEMETERY**. Only a few monuments remain. The center cross is a memorial to the first pastor of St. Mary's, Rev. Isaac P. Howell. Despite the small size of the cemetery (2 acres), there were about

40



2,000 people buried here between 1849 and 1898. More than half were children who died in an epidemic of whooping cough. At least five Irish citizens who fought in the Union Army during the Civil War were also buried here. Most of the burials were removed when Mount Olivet Cemetery opened.

41

The cemetery is a turn around point for the walk. Head back north along Washington Avenue. The neighborhood continues mostly residential but with some buildings designed for commercial use on the ground floor. While most of the houses are one or two family units, there are multiple dwellings. Of interest are the “triple decker” brick buildings at **409-419 WASHINGTON STREET**, with the almost identical facades.

Between Roosevelt Street and South Street, on Washington Avenue once stood another house which gave its name to a street. Rose Hill (Rose Hill Place parallels Washington Street) was an elegant house built in the early nineteenth century. In 1815, it was acquired by Thomas Gibbons of Savannah, first as a summer residence and then as his home. Gibbons went on to greater notoriety when he and Aaron Ogden became involved in litigation (see # 30).

42

The north end of Washington Avenue was occupied in the early nineteenth century, but it was not until 1845, when **ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH** was built that the neighborhood began to grow. St. Mary’s congregation was founded in 1844, and the first church, a 50’ x 50’ building, was dedicated in November, 1845. The original structure is still there, although enlargements in 1862 and 1949 have hidden it. The 1862 building was simple Romanesque Revival design, but later additions have greatly altered it.





**St. Mary's Catholic Church:** *The first in Elizabeth*

**F**ollow Washington Avenue to Pearl Street. On the right corner is the **JUDGE JOHN CHETWOOD HOUSE**, built by Benjamin Cleveland in 1770. Recently installed, the vinyl siding covers eighteenth century Flemish bond brick work.

43

**C**ross Pearl Street and turn left (west). In front of you and then to your right is the **ELIZABETH CENTER APARTMENTS** co-op complex. Built in the 1960s, the four building cluster was the first federally subsidized, low-and-moderate income housing co-op in Elizabeth. While many of the co-ops built during the housing initiative of that time have failed, the Elizabeth Center has not only continued, but some of its original shareholders still live there.

44

Somewhere on Pearl Street between Washington Avenue and Race Street was the parsonage of



the First Presbyterian Church, occupied by Rev. Jonathan Dickinson in 1746. Here was the first location of the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University (see # 30).

45

**T**urn right (north) onto Burnet Street, just before the railroad. Follow Burnet Street for one block to Rahway Avenue. Turn right (east) onto Rahway Avenue, again crossing the Elizabeth River. Across Rahway Avenue, you can see the **UNION COUNTY JAIL** and the **UNION COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING** on Elizabethtown Plaza. As you continue toward Broad Street, you can see the additions made to the **UNION COUNTY COURTHOUSE** over the years (see # 3). At the corner, on your right is the Elizabeth Public Library and the end of the walk.

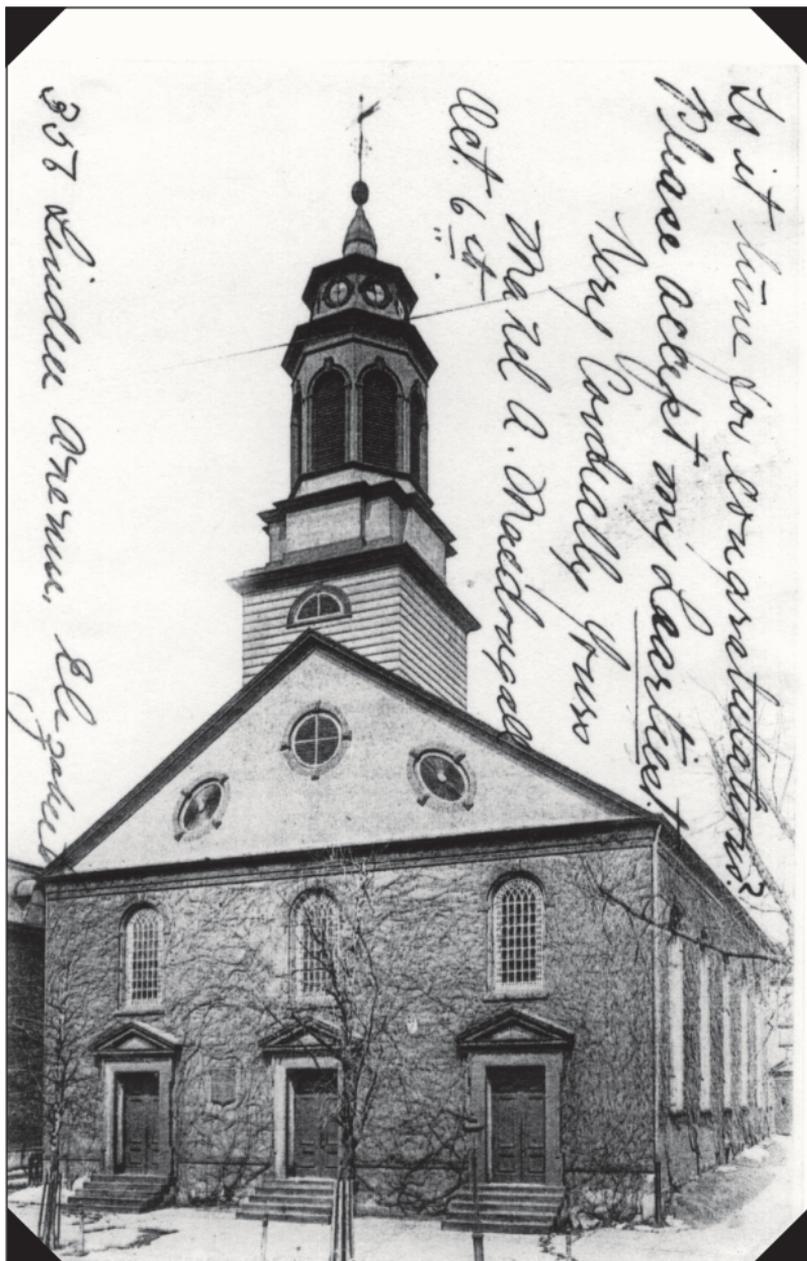


*ST. JOHN'S PARSONAGE  
Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs  
633 Pearl Street, Elizabeth, New Jersey*



We hope that this walking  
tour was both entertaining  
and enlightening.





**SPECIAL THANKS TO**

**Charles Shallcross**, historian and resident of Elizabeth, for use of the original postcards to illustrate *Elizabeth at the Crossroads*.

They are fine examples of Mr. Shallcross' extensive collection of vintage postcards documenting the growth, development and history of the city of Elizabeth.



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✿ NOTES





# ELIZABETH

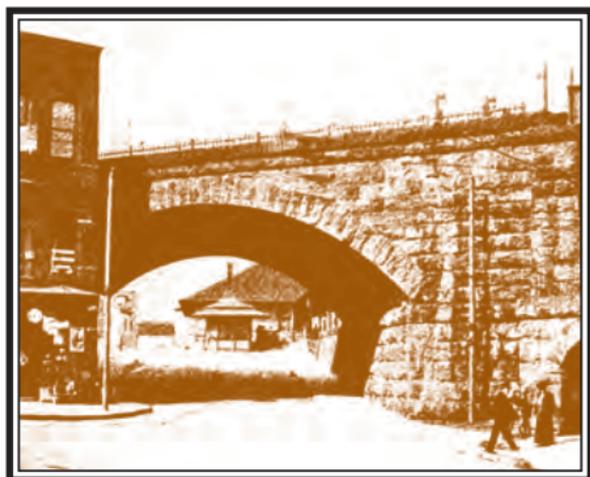
AT THE



## CROSSROADS



A Self-Guided Walking Tour



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