

State of Connecticut  
**CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford 06106

**HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY:**  
Buildings & Structures

**SURVEY OF GUILFORD, NEW HAVEN COUNTY, 06437**  
June-December 1981

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Town No.:	Site No. 155
UTM	
QUAD:	
DISTRICT	IF NR SPECIFY
<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> NR	<input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Potential

IDENTIFICATION

1. ADDRESS 20 Fair Street  
(map 39, lot 19)
2. NAME  
(historic) I. S. Spencer's Sons  
NAME  
(common) Spencer Foundry
3. USE  
(historic) Foundry  
USE  
(present) Vacant
4. IF MOVED, WHEN AND FROM WHERE:



DESCRIPTION

5. ARCHITECT
6. DATE Various--see below
- BUILDER  
STYLE Industrial architect-  
ure of many periods
7. ALTERATIONS  
Principal changes recorded are: 1869, brick foundry 60' x 100' added to original building; 1880, enlarged; 1883, brass foundry added; 1909, plating rooms enlarged; 1910, addition on south side with tower; c1955, addition, whereabouts unspecified.
8. NOTABLE FEATURES  
Powerful, well-proportioned tower. Although of great bulk, it is lightened by the many windows, the recessed plane of the glass, and the variety of shapes and heights of the openings. Horizontal and vertical elements well balanced.

SIGNIFICANCE

9. ARCHITECTURAL-HISTORICAL  
What is perhaps most remarkable about this building is the comfortable way it fits into a street of small 18th and 19th century frame houses, carrying on a tradition of mixed neighborhoods that was commonplace for three centuries before the days of Planning and Zoning.  
Isaac Stowe Spencer in 1857 bought a foundry that had just begun operations (making tripods for daguerreotype cameras) on Fair Street, and thus began Guilford's most long-lived industry. Known by 1867 as I. S. Spencer's Sons, it lasted over a century and remained in the Spencer family until 1945, when the Spencers were bought out by Harry Sweitzer, a business man who hailed from Syracuse, New York, and had joined the company seven years before. In 1860 the foundry employed 5 men, and most of its output was (continued on next sheet)

SOURCES

10. SOURCES  
Roth, Matthew, Connecticut: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites. Soc. for Industrial Archeology. 1981. Dorothy Whitfield Society '76; Connecticut Historical Commission '72; Lindsay; "100 Years of Service," company pamphlet, 1957.



In all categories below, check more than one box if applicable.

If you have not actually made certain of the answer to a given question, either leave it blank or write "inferred" after the checked box; or, if drawn from a previous investigator, give source.

11. **MATERIALS**

- |   |   |                                      |   |                                 |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clapboard      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brick | <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco      | <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Shingle | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone       | <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete    | <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding   |                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone        | <input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone | <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum/Vinyl   |                                 |

12. **STRUCTURE**

- |                                      |                                  |  |                                   |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Frame: | <input type="checkbox"/> Masonry | <input type="checkbox"/> Iron or Steel | <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Post & Beam |                                  |  |                                   |                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balloon     |                                  |  |                                   |                                 |

13. **ROOF**

- |   |  |                                   |   |                                 |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pitched  | <input type="checkbox"/> Gable-front     | <input type="checkbox"/> Hip      | <input type="checkbox"/> Shed           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saltbox                | <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-gable     | <input type="checkbox"/> Flat Hip | <input type="checkbox"/> False Dormer   |                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gambrel                | <input type="checkbox"/> Mansard         | <input type="checkbox"/> Flat     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sawtooth       |                                 |
| b. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tower(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor         | <input type="checkbox"/> Cupola   | <input type="checkbox"/> Dormered Gable | <input type="checkbox"/> Dome   |
| c. <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle        | <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Shingle | <input type="checkbox"/> Slate    | <input type="checkbox"/> Metal          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

14. **NUMBER OF STORIES:**

2

**APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS:**

LOT SIZE: 345' X 142'  
(APPROX)

15. **CONDITION: Exterior**

- |                                    |                               |  |                               |                              |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> Bad |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------|

16. **CONDITION: Structure**

- |                                    |                               |                               |                               |                              |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> Bad |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|

17. **OUTBUILDINGS** (visible from public road)

- |   |   |                                 |   |                                  |
|---|---|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barn(s)                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Carriage House | <input type="checkbox"/> Garage | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shed(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Shop(s) |
| Other (well, stand, greenhouse, gazebo, privy, etc.): |   |                                 |   |                                  |

18. **LANDSCAPING** (visible from public road)

- |  |  |                                     |                                      |                                 |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planted Grounds | <input type="checkbox"/> Garden        | <input type="checkbox"/> Terracing  | <input type="checkbox"/> Plaza       | <input type="checkbox"/> Court  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stone Wall(s)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pickett Fence | <input type="checkbox"/> Iron Fence | <input type="checkbox"/> Post & Rail | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

19. **SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT**

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Town Street                                   | b. <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial               | c. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rural   | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Wooded             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-rural  | <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural                | <input type="checkbox"/> Lakefront          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clustered Growth  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential      | <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Development   | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation, now or originally | <input type="checkbox"/> Salt marsh         |
| d. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Of outstanding scenic/architectural value     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Of scenic/architectural value                               |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Of supportive value to contiguous scenic/architectural area |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral   |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other:  |  |   |

20. **ROLE OF BUILDING IN ENHANCING QUALITY OF ENVIRONMENT**

- |   |                                    |                                     |                                  |                                 |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vital | <input type="checkbox"/> Important | <input type="checkbox"/> Supportive | <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|

21. **OWNERSHIP**

- |                                 |   |  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private | <input type="checkbox"/> Interior accessible |
|---------------------------------|---|--|

INDEX NO: 155

22. **Name**

P.O. discs

Date 7/7/81

**Photographer**

P.O. discs

Date 7/7/81

Negative 1:6 #

**Organization:**

Guilford Preservation Alliance  
P.O. Box 199, Guilford, Conn. 06437

Old's Neg. R 1:6

23. **THREATS TO BUILDING**

- |                                     |  |  |                                     |                                 |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None Known | <input type="checkbox"/> Highways      | <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism     | <input type="checkbox"/> Developers | <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal    | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Owner | <input type="checkbox"/> Deterioration | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:     |                                 |

24. **SUBSEQUENT EVALUATIONS**

DESCRIPTION

COMPILED BY

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## 9. Architectural-Historical con't.

agricultural implements, an indication of the local market that it served. By 1880 60 men were employed and were producing such export products as parts of bicycles, legs for school desks, and Spencer Scales. In 1904 Frederick C. Spencer, grandson of Isaac, became president (for F. C. Spencer see 122 Broad Street). He enlarged the plant and broadened its market; a 1905 catalogue shows door bells, name plates, door knobs, gas attachments, and other items. It was in Frederick Spencer's presidency that the tower was built.