

Gutierrez Building  
1603 E. Seventh Avenue  
Ybor City (Tampa)  
Hillsborough County  
Florida

HABS No. FL-263

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

GUTIERREZ BUILDING

HABS No. FL-263

- Location: 1603 East Seventh Avenue, Ybor City, Tampa, Hillsborough County, Florida.
- Present Owner: The Gutierrez Family.
- Present Occupant: The second floor of the building serves as low rental rooms. There are four stores on the first floor, three vacant and one leased by Miami Jewelry Company.
- Significance: The Gutierrez building was owned by one of the first Spaniards to arrive in Tampa, Gavino Gutierrez. He was instrumental in convincing Vincent Martinez Ybor and Ignacio Haya to move their cigar factories to Tampa, which later developed into a city. Ybor started a trend which resulted in Tampa eventually becoming the largest manufacturer of cigars in the world. The building as first constructed had a decorative balcony which was among the first architectural ornaments in Ybor City.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History :

1. Date of erection: 1904. The building opened in the fall of that year.
2. Architect: Possibly Gavino Gutierrez.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The Gutierrez building is located in the Ybor City subdivision, Block 57, lot 5. The lot was sold by Vincent Martinez Ybor in 1886 to his friend and fellow cigar manufacturer, Ignacio Haya. In 1890, Ignacio Haya sold the property to Gavino Gutierrez who constructed the building in 1904. The land and building have since remained in the Gutierrez family.

The following property records are compiled from Chelsea Title and Guaranty Company, Tampa, Florida.

1886

Deed recorded July 7, 1886, filed February 26, 1887  
Book V, page 174  
Vincent Martinez Ybor, et al  
to  
Serafino and Ignacio Haya

1887

Deed recorded January 24, 1886, filed May 28, 1887  
Book V, page 503  
Vincent Martinez Ybor, et al  
to  
Sanchez and Haya

1890

Deed recorded December 10, 1890, filed July 3, 1893  
Book Y4, page 37  
S. Sanchez and wife by attorney Ignacio Haya and wife  
to  
Gavino Gutierrez

1895

(confirmation of previous sale)  
Deed recorded January 9, 1895, filed February 21, 1895  
Book I1, page 266  
Edward Manrara and wife (referred to in 1886 deed as et al)  
to  
Serafin Sanchez and Ignacio Haya

1898

Deed recorded April 2, 1898, filed April 4, 1898  
Book A2, page 324  
Gavino Gutierrez and wife Nellie  
to  
Francisco Colado

1898

Deed recorded April 15, 1898, filed April 21, 1898  
Book A2, page 360  
Francisco Colado and wife  
to  
Nellie Gutierrez  
(Price of transaction at this time was \$10,000.)

1904

Lease recorded April 12, 1904, filed April 12, 1904  
Book J, page 265  
Gavino Gutierrez and wife leased part of the building on lot 5  
to  
Robert Tugge, for four years and ten months for \$5,680.00

1909

Deed recorded April 22, 1909, filed June 16, 1909  
Book 102, page 403  
Gavino Gutierrez  
to  
Nellie Gutierrez

1929

Deed recorded January 22, 1929, filed February 9, 1929  
Book 835, page 516  
Nellie Gutierrez, widow  
to  
Joseph Kasriel, (sale of a small portion of the lot for the  
construction of a wall extension)

1932

Deed recorded February 3, 1932, filed March 11, 1932  
Book 964, page 37  
Gavino Gutierrez and wife  
to  
Aurora McKay, Marie and G. Mitchell  
(1/4 interest in lot 5)

1932

Deed recorded December 12, 1932, filed January 11, 1933  
Book 964, page 48  
Aurora G. McKay and husband  
to  
Maria Mitchell

1941

Deed recorded September 29, 1941, filed October 13, 1941  
Book 1187, page 493  
Mary H. Mitchell, widow  
to  
Gavino Gutierrez

4. Original plans and construction: When the building opened in 1904, the first, second and third floors each had different uses. The first floor was used for stores, offices, a moving picture parlor and a theater. Two parts of second floor were used for a hotel and apartments respectively. The entire third floor was constructed especially for the Palmetto Camp No. 161 of the Woodmen of the World. The theater was called the Pathe Theater and was opened by Jim Moore, a descendant of Buffalo Bill. The hotel part of the second floor was called the Dixie House and the November 13, 1904 Tampa Morning newspaper reported that the hotel's interior was "splendid".
5. Alterations and additions: The storefronts on the first floor have been altered to accommodate different functions for modernization purposes. This alteration of the original structure took place in the 1930s.

B. Historical Context:

Gavino Gutierrez was born October 26, 1849 in a small fishing village, San Vincente de la Barquera, near the foothills of the Cantabrian mountains in northern Spain.

Living in a seaside village made Gavino aware of the many cultures and people of the world, and by the age of 19 he was filled with the desire to travel. In that year he decided to leave for the United States, via Cuba.

The United States was in the reconstruction period when he arrived, but the confusion of the nation did not affect him. He began working as a bellhop in New York City, and in a short time had established an import-export business, selling merchandise from Spain, Cuba and Mexico. In his spare time he studied architecture, engineering, surveying and the English language. He became proficient in all of these pursuits.

When he was 28 years old, he fell in love with an Irish girl, Nelly Daly, and they were married October 31, 1877. Seven years later many important changes came into his life, changes which affected not only his own personal life but also the history of Tampa Bay.

Bernardino Gargol, a young Spaniard who owned Marmalade and Guava Paste factories in Cuba, was an intimate friend of Gutierrez. He told Gavino that he had reliable information that large plantations of wild guavas existed along the west coast of Florida in the vicinity of Tampa Bay. Gargol did not speak English; therefore he convinced Gutierrez to accompany him to Tampa, to help him.

They arrived with difficulty, as the Plant railway system did not yet reach Tampa; part of the trip was made by stagecoach from Sanford, Florida, to the Bay area. Upon arrival they found no guava plantations, and journeyed to Peru in search of the wild guavas. Their search ended in failure, and they returned to Tampa where the two men made a thorough search of the land. They were convinced that the surrounding country held a bright and profitable future. Gutierrez studied Tampa's natural harbor, favorable climate, hospitable citizens and deduced that this would be an ideal location for an export-import business. Hunting and fishing in Tampa further attracted Gutierrez to Tampa.

The two gentlemen decided to return to New York by sea, and while changing boats in Key West, they visited an old friend, Vincent Martinez Ybor, who owned one of the many cigar factories at Key West. They also met another mutual friend, Ignacio Haya, who owned and operated a cigar factory in New York City. These two men were to become developers of Tampa's history.

Ybor discussed the lamentable labor conditions in Key West to Gutierrez and mentioned his desire to move his factory out of the Keys. Gutierrez then told Ybor of Tampa, its ideal climate for cigar making, the favorable location of the port city between Havana and northern tobacco markets, and the friendliness of the people. Gutierrez was so convincing that Ybor and Haya decided to visit Tampa to investigate its possibilities, with Gutierrez as a traveling companion.

After their visit, Ybor and Haya were convinced that Tampa would be ideal for cigar making, and after serious negotiations with the Tampa Board of Trade and landowners Tampa was chosen as the site for the new cigar industries.

Gavino Gutierrez thus became the first advocate of a major industry in the area. His zeal, courage, foresight and wisdom were contagious. Ybor decided to build his factories in this location, and Haya, troubled by the climate and other conditions in New York City, soon made plans to move to Tampa.

Vincent Ybor selected Gutierrez, a capable civil engineer, to lay out the streets and to design and construct the factory and homes of the workers.\* The first tree was cut down on October 8, 1885, the beginning process which was to result in the development of a model city in Tampa.

In 1885, Gutierrez made plans to move his family from New York to Tampa; they arrived in the latter part of that year. His family consisted of his wife, two daughters Aurora and Adelaida, and a seven month old son, Gavino Jr. In 1888 a third daughter, Maria Harriot, was born.

Gutierrez was thirty six years old when he arrived in Tampa. He worked endlessly in the creation of the new town. Originally it consisted of a few blocks from Twelfth Street eastward to Fourteenth Street, and from Sixth Avenue northward to Ninth Avenue. The numerical designations of the streets were due to Gutierrez and it is significant that Ybor City is the only part of present Tampa that is so numbered.

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\*The factory building was presumably a temporary wooden structure, before the permanent brick building was constructed. See Ybor Cigar Factory, HABS No. FL-270, for information.

In the following years Gutierrez was busy constructing buildings which added to the character and size of the town. It grew in a few years from a small town to a city of 10,000 people, with numerous factories, restaurants, social clubs, hotels, stores and homes.

Gavino Gutierrez established the family fortune and properties by buying 149 acres of land in that area which extended from Thirty-sixth Street up to Fifteenth, and from Seventh Avenue to McKay Bay, and showed an extraordinary ability and knowledge in this field of real estate development. The land was subdivided and sold in parcels for the construction of homes. He also acquired a swampy piece of property which was drained and filled situated on Sixteenth Street and Seventh Avenue. A three-story building was erected on this lot in front of another two-story building, which served for a long time as a post office.

Gutierrez built his own home, which he named "Spanish Park", in an area covered with palm trees and other tropical plants. "Spanish Park" is still maintained in its original state.

Because of his prominent position in the community, Gutierrez was appointed the first Spanish consul in Tampa by the Spanish government. He held the office for many years without compensation from Spain.

During his later years, Gutierrez surveyed the island of Anna Maria on the west coast of Florida and acquired land there which still belongs to the Gutierrez family. He later made a trip around the world, keeping a diary of his interesting episodes. (The diary is now lost). He died in Madrid on March 8, 1919 and his body remained in Spain until 1924 when it was brought to Tampa, where it now remains.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The distinctive feature of the building is its decorative balcony across the entire front and along a portion of the building facing the side street.
2. Condition of fabric: The stores on the ground floor that front on Seventh Avenue have had their fronts remodeled and now stand vacant. The two shops that face North Sixteenth Street retain most of their original character.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The two-story building measures 70' x 95'-4" and is 29' 6" high. Both the north (front) and west elevations are ten bays.
2. Foundation: Brick.

3. Walls: Rear walls are common brick with headers at every seventh course. Front and side walls are face brick in running bond. A single corbeled band supports the balcony roof. Above this band are six equally spaced, recessed cast-iron ventilating grills. Directly above the grills is a layered corbeled band. Above the corbeled band is a plain brick parapet with a centered metal plate with the letters "GUTIERREZ BUILDING". A corbeled brick band tops the parapet. The minor street facade continues the corbeled bands and the parapet. A one-story extension has a double corbeled band above the storefronts and a cap on the parapet.
4. Structural system, framing: Brick bearing walls and cast-iron columns support "I" beams. Wood joists are supported by these beams. The masonry above the storefronts is supported by concealed iron lintels carried on 6" cast-iron columns with Doric trim.
5. Balcony: The front of the building has a balcony across its entire facade which turns the corner and continues 10 feet down the minor facade. The balcony is supported on 3" pipe columns with pipe flanges which are regularly spaced on 10" centers. The columns support a 4"x 10" wood girder. Short 4"x 10" wood beams frame into the girder above the columns at one end and a recessed into the brickwork at the other. 2"x 8" joists rest on top of these beams. The edge of the balconies is trimmed with 1"x 10", 1/4" rounds, and 1"x 4" boards. The decking is 1"x 4" wood. The balcony roof is supported by 2-1/2" pipe columns on pipe flanges screwed into the deck and braced back to the building with 2" pipe bolted to the brickwork. A 2" pipe beam runs along the top of the columns. Roof joists are 1-1/4" pipe attached to the building with bolts at one end and to the beam using pipe "tees". All connections are made with standard pipe fittings. 3/4" pipe purlins are bolted above the roof joists. The roofing is corrugated sheet metal without gutters. The balcony railing is 1-1/2" pipe attached to the building and/or the columns with "tees". The balusters are 1-1/2"x 1/8" wrought iron. The ends of the bars have been split and bent into decorative patterns. Balusters are bolted on 24" centers to a 1-1/4" x 1/8" bar at top and a 1-1/4" x 1/2" channel iron at bottom. The top bar is bolted to the underside of the railing and the bottom channel is bolted to the columns or the building.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The main facade has two storefronts with recessed doorways. A third storefront faces the corner with a diagonal recessed entrance. A single doorway opens onto the stairway going up to the second floor. The side street facade has two storefronts and two service doors. The main street store doors are single and have two glass lights over one recessed wooden panel. The door to the

stairway has a plain wooden door. The corner and side street stores have double doors, each with two lights over recessed wooden panels. The service doors have three recessed wooden panels and no glass. The second floor door to the balcony has one-over-one glass lights. All doors on the first floor have transoms.

- b. Windows: The storefronts have plate glass windows with wooden frames and sills. Beneath the sills are recessed panels of 4" wood strips. Above the store windows are glass transoms. All transoms are operable except those over the service doors. The transoms over the service doors have exterior horizontal metal bars. On the side street facade are three high double-hung windows with interior vertical bars. All second floor windows are double-hung, two-over-two. Except for storefront doors and windows, all doors and windows have radiating brick voussiors and brick sills.

7. Roof: The roof is flat with built-up roofing and slopes from the front to the rear.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The interior is not noteworthy. It is the exterior that makes the building unique. The first floor is subdivided into three large stores facing East Seventh Avenue and two smaller shops facing North Sixteenth Street. The second floor, originally designed as a hotel and apartment house and now operated as a rooming house, is subdivided into a number of small rooms opening onto a "Y" shaped corridor. "Gang" toilets and washrooms have been added at the rear of this floor.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The main facade faces north onto East Seventh Avenue, the main street of Ybor City (old Spanish Tampa). Directly across the street is a public park built on what was formerly one block of North Sixteenth Street. Diagonally across the intersection is the Centro Espanol and Cuban Theater. The minor facade fronts on North Sixteenth Street and is oriented west.
2. Historic landscape design: East Seventh Avenue has recently been redesigned and palms and other planting have been added. Directly in front of the building is a landscaped street divider. The cast-iron street lamps each with five opal globes, which illuminated Ybor City from 1909 until their removal, have been recast and replaced along Seventh Avenue.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Interview:

Pizzo, Tony, June 6, 1973

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

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2. Secondary and published sources:

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Newspaper articles:

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Pizzo, Tony. "Gutierrez Descubre a Tampa", Tropico, Revista Mensual al Servicio de Hispano - America, Marzo 1955, Ano 1, Numero 9.

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Historic American Buildings Survey  
Summer 1973

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The project was made possible by the National Park Service the Florida Bicentennial Commission and the City of Tampa. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, chief of HABS, the project was completed during the summer of 1973 at the HABS Field Office, Hillsborough Community College, Tampa, Florida, by Professor Donald W. Barnes, Jr. (Architect, North Carolina State University), Field Supervisor; L. Glenn Westfall (Hillsborough Community College), Historian; and four student architects: Steven E. Bauer (University of Kansas); Weldon E. Cunningham (University of Texas); Daniel L. Jacoby (Cornell University); and Amy Weinstein (University of Pennsylvania). The written documentation was edited in 1982 by Susan McCown, a HABS historian in the Washington, D.C. office, for transmittal to the Library of Congress. Walter Smalling, Jr. took the photographs in 1979.