

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

1. STATE Rhode Island	2. THEME(S). IF ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE, WRITE "ARCH" BEFORE THEME NO. Theme XX - Architecture (Colonial)	4. APPROX. ACREAGE .1 acre
3. NAME(S) OF SITE Old State House (Old Colony House)		
5. EXACT LOCATION (County, township, roads, etc. If difficult to find, sketch on Supplementary Sheet) Washington Square, Newport, Newport County.		
6. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PRESENT OWNER (Also administrator if different from owner) State of Rhode Island, adm. by the Old State House in Newport, Rhode Island, Inc.		
7. IMPORTANCE AND DESCRIPTION (Describe briefly what makes site important and what remains are extant)		

The Old State House, or Old Colony House, erected in 1739-41, is probably the finest and least altered example of Early Georgian public building architecture in the United States.

Designed and constructed by Richard Munday, a master carpenter of Newport, the plan of Old State House is more domestic than monumental; like most Georgian public buildings it resembles an enlarged private dwelling rather than a state house. Built to house the General Assembly of the Colony of Rhode Island, the rectangular two-and-a-half story building also served as a center for public meetings and religious and social functions. The main (west) facade is elevated on a basement of granite masonry, and the central door approached by a flight of granite steps. Above this base, the walls are made of red brick, with rusticated sandstone trim surrounding the windows and emphasizing the corners. The belt course between the first and second stories, comprised of three courses of stone, is of unusual depth.

The gable roof is cut off at the top to form a flat deck, and this shape is echoed in the truncated central gable on the main facade. The small-paned windows are topped by segmental arches with prominent sandstone keystones, a shape repeated in the subtle upward curves of the four pedimented dormer windows. But the dominant feature of the seven-bay facade is the central unit combining doorway and balcony. The balcony doors are topped by a broken segmental pediment whose scrolls effloresce into swept-back foliage; between the scrolls a pedestal carries a carved and gilded pineapple. A large octagonal cupola in two stories crowns the roof deck with its Chinese Chippendale rail.

(Continued)

8. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Give best sources: give location of manuscripts and rare works)

See page 3.

9. REPORTS AND STUDIES (Mention best reports and studies, as, NPS study, I.I.A.B.S., etc.)

Historic American Building Survey: (8 photos, 1937).

4308-11, 4516

10. PHOTOGRAPHS * ATTACHED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	11. CONDITION Excellent	12. PRESENT USE (Museum, farm, etc.) Museum	13. DATE OF VISIT Sept. 18, 1917
14. NAME OF RECORDER (Signature) Charles W. Snell	15. TITLE Historian	16. DATE Nov. 15, 1967	

\* DRY MOUNT ON AN 8 X 10 1/2 SHEET OF FAIRLY HEAVY PAPER. IDENTIFY BY VIEW AND NAME OF THE SITE, DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH, AND NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER. GIVE LOCATION OF NEGATIVE, IF ATTACHED, ENCLOSE IN PROPER NEGATIVE ENVELOPES.

(IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED USE SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET, 10-317a. AND REFER TO ITEM NUMBER)

Form 10-317  
(Sept. 1957)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

1. STATE <u>Rhode Island</u>	2. THEME(S). IF ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE, WRITE "ARCH" BEFORE THEME NO. <u>IX, Development of the English Colonies, 1700-1775</u>
3. NAME(S) OF SITE <u>Old Colony House</u>	4. APPROX. ACREAGE

5. EXACT LOCATION (County, township, roads, etc. If difficult to find, sketch on Supplementary Sheet)  
Washington Square, Newport

6. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PRESENT OWNER (Also administrator if different from owner)  
State of Rhode Island, administered by The Old State House in Newport, Rhode Island, Inc.

7. IMPORTANCE AND DESCRIPTION (Describe briefly what makes site important and what remains are extant)  
The Old Colony House is a superb public building of Colonial America, possessing both historical and architectural distinction. The building, designed by Richard Munday, was erected in 1739-41 to house the General Assembly of the Colony of Rhode Island, but served also as a center for public meetings and religious and social functions. The death of George II, the succession of George III, and the Colonies' acceptance of the Declaration of Independence were among the momentous events proclaimed from the second floor balcony. During the Revolution the Colony House served as a hospital for the British and later the French forces quartered in Newport. When General George Washington came to Newport to visit the newly-arrived French army a banquet was held in the great hall on the first floor. From 1790 until the dedication of the new State House in Providence in 1900, the May sessions of the Rhode Island legislature were held in the Old Colony House.

Two and a half stories high, the Colony House is built of red brick resting on a granite masonry basement. The gabled roof, cut off to form a flat deck at its peak, is surmounted by a two-story octagonal cupola. The dominant feature of the main facade is the center doorway and balcony. The building's interior consists of a large room 40 by 80 feet on the first floor with a row of square columns running down the middle, and three rooms on the second floor. The Colony House has been restored under the direction of Norman M. Isham and is today a public monument rich in historical associations and architectural significance.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Give best sources; give location of manuscripts and rare works)  
Antoinette Downing and Vincent J. Scully, The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island, (Cambridge, 1952); Norman M. Isham, "The Colony House at Newport, Rhode Island," Old Time New England, VIII, No. 2 (December 1917); Hugh Morrison, Early American Architecture (New York, 1952); Roderick Terry, "History of the Old Colony House at Newport," Newport Historical Society Bulletin, No. 62 (October 1927).

9. REPORTS AND STUDIES (Mention best reports and studies, as, NPS study, HABS, etc.)

10. PHOTOGRAPHS* ATTACHED: YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	11. CONDITION <u>Excellent</u>	12. PRESENT USE (Museum, farm, etc.) <u>Historical Monument</u>	13. DATE OF VISIT <u>10/28/59</u>
14. NAME OF RECORDER (Signature) <u>Charles E. Shedd, Jr.</u>		15. TITLE <u>Historic Sites Historian</u>	16. DATE <u>5/9/60</u>

\* DRY MOUNT ON AN 8 X 10 1/2 SHEET OF FAIRLY HEAVY PAPER. IDENTIFY BY VIEW AND NAME OF THE SITE, DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH, AND NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER. GIVE LOCATION OF NEGATIVE. IF ATTACHED, ENCLOSE IN PROPER NEGATIVE ENVELOPES.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS  
SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

This sheet is to be used for giving additional information or comments, for more space for any item on the regular form, and for recording pertinent data from future studies, visitations, etc. Be brief, but use as many Supplement Sheets as necessary. When items are continued they should be listed, if possible, in numerical order of the items. All information given should be headed by the item number, its name, and the word (cont'd), as, 6. Description and Importance (cont'd) . . .

Page 2.

STATE	NAME(S) OF SITE
Rhode Island	Old State House (Old Colony House)

7. Continued:

The interior of the first story is one large room, 40 by 80 feet, with a row of square Doric pillars running down the middle, each with pedestal and segment of entablature. A door at either end of the room also opens into the street. The second floor contains three rooms: the Governor's Council, located at the south end; the Chamber of Deputies, at the north end, and a large lobby or hallway, situated between them. Walls with tall narrow panels are featured by pedestaled pilasters in the Ionic and Corinthian orders.

During the Revolution the State House served as a hospital for the British army and later as quarters for French troops. The May sessions of the Rhode Island Legislature were held in the building from 1790 until 1900, when they were moved to the newly completed State House at Providence.

The interior of the Old State House was partially restored in 1917 under the direction of Norman M. Isham. This work was largely limited to the first floor and consisted mainly of clearing out the many 19th century partitions that subdivided the original large room. Maintained in excellent condition, Old State House is open to visitors as a public monument.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS  
SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

This sheet is to be used for giving additional information or comments, for more space for any item on the regular form, and for recording pertinent data from future studies, visitations, etc. Be brief, but use as many Supplement Sheets as necessary. When items are continued they should be listed, if possible, in numerical order of the items. All information given should be headed by the item number, its name, and the word (cont'd), as  
6. Description and Importance (cont'd) . . . Page 3.

STATE Rhode Island	NAME(S) OF SITE Old State House (Old Colony House)
-----------------------	---

8. References:

Hugh Morrison, Early American Architecture (New York, 1952), 444-445, Fig. 371; Rhode Island, A Guide to the Smallest State (American Guide Series) (Boston, 1937), 218-219; Antoinette F. Downing, Early Homes of Rhode Island (Richmond, Va., 1937), 116-120; Roderick Terry, "History of the Old Colony House at Newport," Newport Historical Society Bulletin, No. 63 (October, 1927); James G. VanDerPool, "Historical Development of Architecture in the U.S.A., 1632-1912," (N.P.S. Ms., 1966), 45; Antoinette F. Downing and Vincent J. Scully, Jr., The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1915 (Cambridge, 1952), 57-58; John H. Green, The Building of the Old Colony House at Newport, Rhode Island (Newport, 1941).

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
COUNTY:	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Old Colony House

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Old State House

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Washington Square and Court House Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Newport

STATE: Rhode Island	CODE: 44	COUNTY: Newport	CODE: 005
------------------------	-------------	--------------------	--------------

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments	_____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER: DATE:

FOR NPS USE ONLY

Original + Machine copy to NERO 12/5/72 EWS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Boundaries: This historic building is surrounded by streets and is consequently freestanding. Sidewalks on both sides and ends are included by the Newport Assessors Office in the lot the building occupies and provide no less than twelve sections of dimensional boundaries. The building as a whole is about 75 feet long on the northeasterly and southwesterly sides and about 37.5 feet wide on the northwesterly and southeasterly ends.

(Containing 6,400 square feet on Lot 222, Plat 17, bounded southwesterly by Washington Square in four sections of 25 feet, 20 feet, 20 feet and 25 feet respectively more or less; northwesterly by Washington Square in four sections of 20 feet, 25 feet, 30 feet and 14 feet respectively more or less; northeasterly by Court House Street in two sections of 25 feet and 85 feet respectively more or less; and southeasterly by Court House Street in two sections of 25 feet and 12.5 feet respectively more or less to the point of beginning on Washington Square.

The attached quadrangle sheet with latitude and longitude computations has been provided through the courtesy and cooperation of Mrs. George E. Downing, Chairman of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		41° 29' 25.32" N	71° 17' 108.84" W	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 0.14

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Edwin W. Small, Assistant to Director, Northeast Region

ORGANIZATION: National Park Service, New England Field Office      DATE: 11/28/72

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1400 John W. McCormack Post Office & Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: Boston      STATE: Massachusetts      CODE: 25

12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

N/A for Registered National  
Name: Historic Landmarks

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

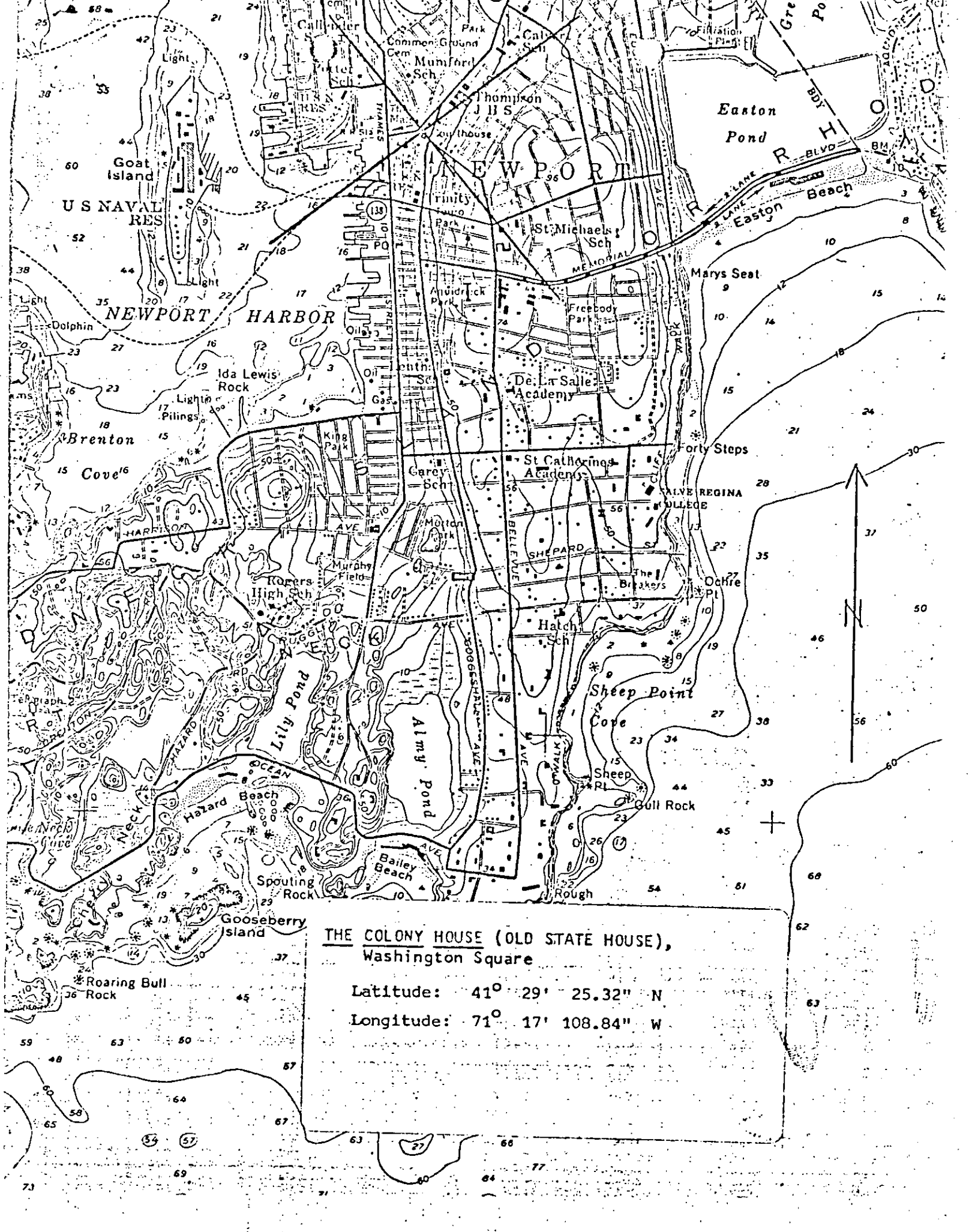


THE COLONY HOUSE (OLD STATE HOUSE),  
 Washington Square

Latitude:  $41^{\circ} 29' 25.32''$  N

Longitude:  $71^{\circ} 17' 108.84''$  W





THE COLONY HOUSE (OLD STATE HOUSE),  
Washington Square

Latitude: 41° 29' 25.32" N

Longitude: 71° 17' 108.84" W