

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Rhode Island	
COUNTY: Providence	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Hoppin (Thomas F.) House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
383 Benefit Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Providence

STATE:
Rhode Island, 02903

CODE 44	COUNTY: Providence	CODE 007
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" 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)
Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
William C. Fisher Company

STREET AND NUMBER:
383 Benefit Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Providence

STATE:
Rhode Island, 02903

CODE 44

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
Dorrance Street at Washington Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Providence

STATE:
Rhode Island, 02903

CODE 44

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1956, 1961

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:
Independence Avenue and 1st Street, S. E.

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:
District of Columbia

CODE II

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
COUNTY:
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)-1

STATE	
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(Number all entries)

7. Description.

retaining wall that runs along the west and south sides of the lot was once crested by sanded and painted cast-iron balusters and a brownstone rail. An iron gate remains at the sidewalk entrance on Benefit Street, but the larger one in the John Street driveway piers has been lost. The grounds are informally planted with shrubs, and today unkempt.

The Hoppin house is laid out about a central hallway running north-south; the south end is a large vestibule for the main entrance. The half of the house west of the hall is divided into three large (drawing- and dining-) rooms; the east half into a large room at the (south) front, a stair hall and east entrance hall at the center, and a smaller room and corridor leading to the kitchen at the rear (north). A door from the small room gives access to a service stair. (The second floor of the house has eight rooms in an arrangement like that of the first floor, around a long central hall; and the third floor is similarly laid out. Many rooms on the second and third floors have now been subdivided for office use.) The stair hall on the first floor is separated from the central hallway by an open triple arcade corresponding to the east and west exterior arcade treatment; this decorative feature is repeated by blind arcading on the west wall of the hall. The stairway is U-shaped around an open well, with two landings between floors; it has a closed-pannelled string, pannelled soffits, heavy angular newels between which turned balusters support a molded, ramped handrail; the whole is stained a dark oak color. The floor of the vestibule is covered with black and white marble tile; the wide pine boards flooring the first and second stories were intended always to be covered by carpeting; and the third story now is floored with asphalt tile.

Walls on the first floor display elaborate plaster and wooden paneling. The two front rooms at the southeast and southwest corners have oak-pannelled wainscoting, plaster ceilings laid off in panels, and (in the southeast room) an entablature with a Doric frieze. The ceiling in the southwest room is grained to look like wood. The plaster ceiling in the vestibule has one large recessed panel, heavily molded, with quadrants taken out of the corners. The two other principal rooms on the first floor have plaster walls and ceilings with elaborate trim, and the ceiling above the stairwell has a deeply-recessed oval panel. Doors on the first floor--some of which are sliding--have heavily-molded surrounds and panels (some later glass doors have been installed in the hall). The upper floors have plaster walls with molded, mitered architraves on doors (many of which have been removed) and windows, and generally simpler trim. Windows are recessed in the thick walls and have pannelled reveals, folding shutters. Corner rooms on all floors have fireplaces, many with heavy, decorated iron hearth surrounds or with marble mantels typical of the 1850's. The mantelpiece in the southwest room of the first floor, however,

(See Continuation Sheet 2.)

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet)-2

STATE	
Rhode Island	
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(Number all entries)

7. Description.

is of deeply-carved oak, with twisted columns and a great lion mask; it has a pink marble facing and a black marble hearth. The west middle room on the first floor is notable for its decoration. The walls have panels of raised plaster molding with rococo leaf detail at the tops and bottoms above a chair-rail and panelled wainscoting, and there are carvings over the doors. The ceiling has a center medallion from which a crystal chandelier is hung, and it is bordered by a molded plaster cornice with egg-and-dart and guilloche ornament. The mirror over the richly-carved white marble fireplace is part of the original scheme of decoration.

8. Significance.

only cultivated but also an heiress; together they made their large residence a center of artistic and social life in the city: due to their lavish style of entertaining it became known as "the house of a thousand candles." After Mr. Hoppin's death in 1873, his widow remarried, and the house was sometimes let, among its occupants being Governor George P. Wetmore, who in winters in the state capital needed magnificence equal to what he had during summers at Château-sur-Mer in Newport. In 1877, the house was taken over by the then Governor, Ambrose Burnside, on the occasion of a visit by President Rutherford B. Hayes, who was given a great fête at the Hoppin house, with ornamental illuminations outdoors.

In 1920 the house passed from ownership of the Hoppin heirs. Today the building houses two businesses whose needs have considerably altered the interior. The exterior is being allowed to deteriorate badly although it retains, as of now, most of its visual integrity. The grounds are poorly kept, and the retaining wall has lost all of its balustrade.

The Hoppin house is one of the great mansions on Benefit Street, an important part of the fabric of the Historic District in which it stands, and by itself deserves also this separate nomination to the National Register.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) C. 1853-1855

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Thomas F. Hoppin house is one of the largest and most elegant houses built in Providence during the mid-nineteenth century and is a handsome example of the interest during this period in formal English urban architecture, particularly that of Sir Charles Barry. The house is similar to contemporary London mansions in St. James's and in Kensington Palace Gardens, whose style is also reflected in Thomas A. Tefft's Tully D. Bowen house, just to the south, of a year or two earlier. Being in such close proximity, the two houses form an instructive pair; having a long, impressive façade on Benefit Street, the Hoppin house proclaims itself more grandly than does the Bowen house (a discreet Florentine palazzo). The Hoppin house, built about 1853, is also significant because it preceded Henry Childs's Henry Lippitt house (1863) on Hope Street, and Richard Upjohn's Marshall Woods house (1864) on Prospect Street--both of which represent a move away from the academically Italianate forms seen in the Hoppin house to a more stylized, Victorian mode during the 1860's. The interior of the Hoppin house displays an eclectic use of materials and decoration. The still-regular formal plan and massive staircase, the plaster moldings and marble fireplaces are among its most notable features.

Alpheus C. Morse (1818-1893), was the architect of this imposing dwelling, his first commission in Providence. Born in Massachusetts, he apprenticed as a draftsman in the Boston office of Alexander Parris in the 1830's and by 1842 was travelling in Europe, no doubt with an influence upon his future architecture; the buildings by Thomas Tefft which he could see in Providence and other places upon his return must surely have been another influence. After executing the Hoppin house, Morse remained the rest of his life in Providence, where he enjoyed a prosperous practice, designing numerous prominent buildings and important residences. He became the first president of the Rhode Island chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

On the site of the Hoppin house had first stood John Innes Clark's "mansion house," a close duplicate of the Joseph Nightingale house still nearby on Benefit Street. A fire razed the Clark house in 1849 during the occupancy of William Jenkins, whose daughter Anna subsequently married Thomas F. Hoppin and commenced by 1853 the present building. Thomas Hoppin was very cultivated and Anna Hoppin was not

(See Continuation Sheet 2.)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cady, John Hutchins: The Civic and Architectural Development of Providence, 1636-1950 (Providence, Rhode Island, 1957), pp. 126, 140.
 Glass, Anita F.: Early Victorian Domestic Architecture on College Hill (Unpublished thesis for M. A. degree, Department of Art, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, 1960).
 Hitchcock, Henry-Russell, Jr.: Rhode Island Architecture (Providence, Rhode Island, 1939), p. 50.
 The Merchants National Bank, Providence, Rhode Island: Providence (Providence, Rhode Island, 1918), pp. 60-62.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	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	0 . .	0 . .		41 . 49 . 16.60 N	71 . 24 . 10.53 W	
NE	0 . .	0 . .				
SE	0 . .	0 . .				
SW	0 . .	0 . .				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 B. Christopher Bene, Surveyor-Researcher

ORGANIZATION
 Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

DATE
 Feb. 12, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
 Room 201, 265 Melrose Street

CITY OR TOWN:
 Providence

STATE
 Rhode Island, 02907

CODE
 44

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

Name _____

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



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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STREET AND NUMBER: 383 Benefit Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Providence			
STATE: Rhode Island	CODE 44	COUNTY: Providence	CODE 007
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT: B. Christopher Bene			
DATE OF PHOTO: February, 1972			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, Room 201, 265 Melrose Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02907			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. Partial view of drawing-room.			



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COUNTY:

Providence

CODE

007

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: B. Christopher Bene

DATE OF PHOTO: February, 1972

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, Room 201,
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DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Mantel in room on first floor.



THE WILLIAM JONES
COMPANY
RETIRED OFFICERS
OF THE ARMY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

West elevation.



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DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Exterior from the south-east, showing (left) entrance porch,
(centre) arcade entrance from driveway with niche and statue
above, (right centre) service wing connected by arcade to stable
facilities (far right).



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NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, Room 201, 265 Melrose Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02907			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. Main staircase, seen at its first-floor beginning.			



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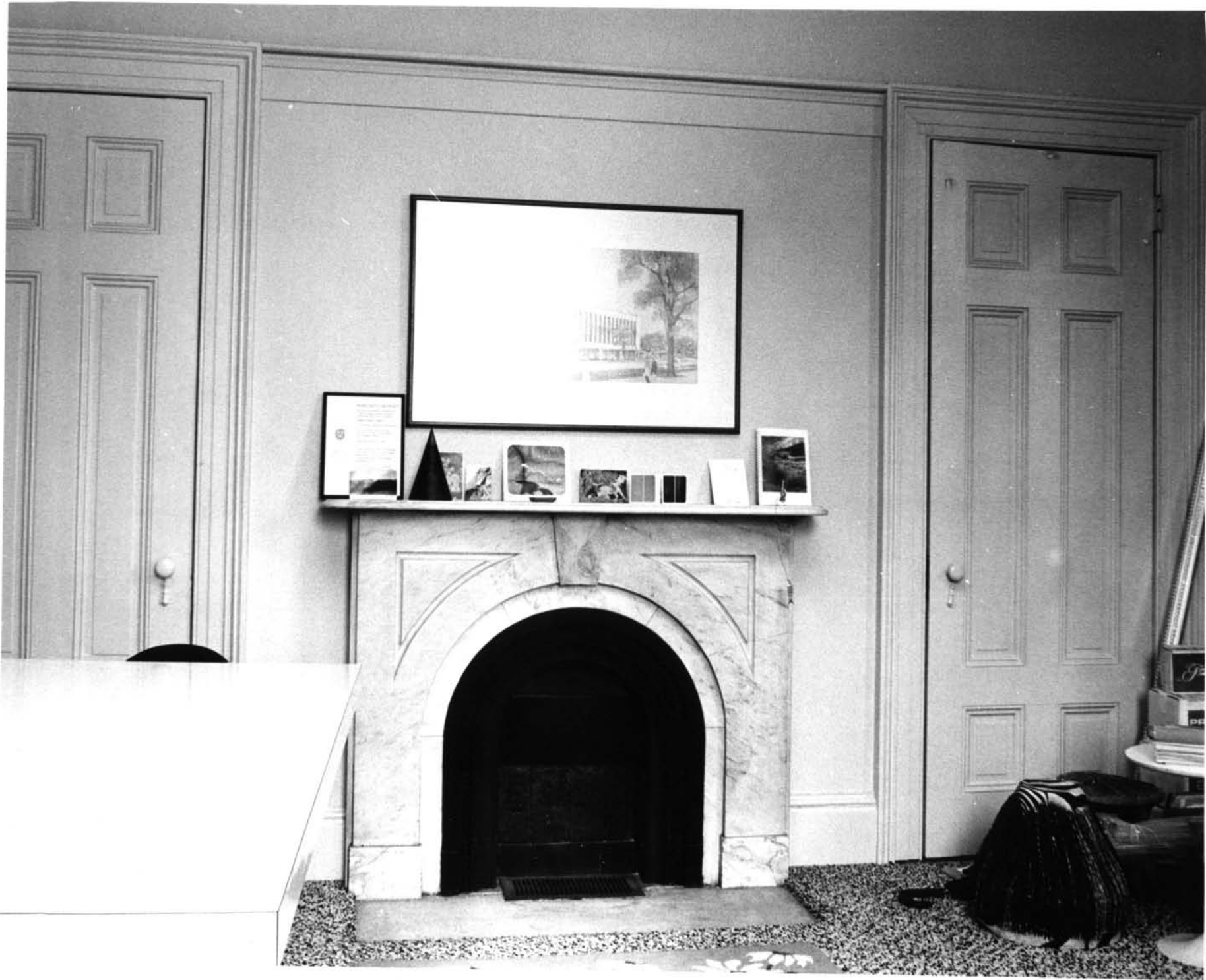
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DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Detail of first-floor hall and main stairway, looking north-east.



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4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. Detail of second-floor bed-chamber.			



GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES
Latitude: 41° 49' 16.60" N
Longitude: 71° 24' 10.53" W

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Rhode Island	
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CODE

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COUNTY:

Providence

CODE

007

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE: U. S. Geological Survey

SCALE: 1: 24,000

DATE: 1957

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.