

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

LM

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**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:
College Hill Historic District

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
See attached sheets for boundaries of the Historic District

CITY OR TOWN:
Providence

STATE: <u>Rhode Island</u>	CODE	COUNTY: <u>Providence</u>	CODE
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3. CLASSIFICATION

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

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mayor Joseph ^A Doorley, Jr. City of Providence

STREET AND NUMBER:
City Hall

CITY OR TOWN: <u>Providence 02903</u>	STATE: <u>Rhode Island</u>	CODE
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
Kennedy Plaza

CITY OR TOWN: <u>Providence</u>	STATE: <u>Rhode Island</u>	CODE
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey (drawing and photos of many bldgs.)

DATE OF SURVEY: 1937-40 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:
Washington 20540

CITY OR TOWN: <u>Washington 20540</u>	STATE: <u>D. C.</u>	CODE
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

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7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The College Hill Historic District is comprised of approximately 120 acres of land in the 381-acre portion of Providence that is known as the College Hill section. The College Hill section, which contains all of the original (1638) town site, is bounded on the north by Olney Street, on the south by George M. Cohan Boulevard, on the east by Hope Street, and on the west by the Providence and Moshassuck Rivers.

The College Hill Historic District, located on the west side of the College Hill section, is that portion of College Hill which contains the largest concentration of historically and architecturally valuable structures. The backbone of the District is Benefit Street, which runs north-south the length of the District for some 17 blocks and spreads east and west of Benefit Street in a irregular form - sometimes for one block on either side, sometimes considerably more, and sometimes less. The District is comprised of the 18th century and early 19th century core of Providence and, located on the steep western slope of College hill, overlooks the present-day more modern commercial center of the city. The District contains a total of some 338 historic structures; these include 63 colonial buildings dating from the 1730-1783 period and 275 Federal period structures erected in the period 1784 to 1825.

Historic structures, chiefly residences - at the northern and southern ends of the District, suffered from blight over the years. From 1960 to date more than 150 of these buildings have been restored on their exteriors and been put into good condition. Work is actively in progress on other historic houses in the District and there are very few modern intrusions in the area.

Among the architecturally distinguished structures located in the College Historic District are the following buildings:

1. The First Baptist Meeting House, located at 75 North Main Street. This Late Georgian frame church was designed by Joseph Brown and erected in 1774-75. The church is of national significance architecturally and is a Registered National Historic Landmark.
2. The John Brown House, located at 52 Power Street. A magnificent example of a Late Georgian three-story brick mansion, the residence was designed by Joseph Brown and built in 1786-88. The house is of national significance architecturally and is a Registered National Historic Landmark.
3. The John Corliss-Edward Carrington House, at 66 Williams Street. Built in 1810-12, this residence is a superb example of a large three-story brick Adamesque-Federal styled mansion.
4. The Thomas Poynton Ives House, at 66 Power Street. Built by Caleb Ormsbee in 1803-06, the Ives House is a magnificent example of a large three-story brick Federal residence.
5. The Joseph Nightingale-Nicholas Brown House, at 357 Benefit Street. Erected by Caleb Ormsbee in 1791-92, this residence is a distinguished example of a large three-story frame late Georgian house.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

II. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" 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) 1730-1825

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 College Hill Historic District is a superb example of a late 18th century and early 19th century New England city. The district contains the 120-acre core of the original 381-acre 17th century town site, as laid out by Roger Williams in 1638, and approximately 338 structures of the Colonial and Federal Periods, built between 1730 and 1825.

History

Providence had its origin in 1636 when Roger Williams, religious leader and Indian trader, and his followers, exiled for heresy from Congregationalist Salem, Massachusetts, set up a colony at the head of Narragansett Bay and at the confluence of the Moshassuck and Woomasquitucket Rivers. The new settlement grew around a spring of fresh water located on the west side of North Main Street near the present Alamo Lane, a short distance south of Smith Street. The separation of church and state in Rhode Island was partly responsible for the pattern of Providence's growth. In Massachusetts and Connecticut town land was set aside for the state church, facing on a common, and the church and green became the centers around which the settlers grouped their houses. In Providence, however, no church was built until 1700 and no village green was ever contemplated. Instead the Proprietors, in 1638, laid out deep narrow house lots in a straggling line along an Indian pathway on the east shore of the Great Salt River and the lots extended eastward up over a steep hill to present-day Hope Street. Topography determined this peculiar linear plan and influenced the shape of the long, narrow house lots which ranged from 100 to 135 feet in width, 1600 to 3000 feet in length, and from 4 1/2 to 8 1/2 acres in area. The houses were all located on the west side of the lots and faced upon the north-south "Towne Street" (now called North and South Main streets) that formed the spine of the village. The town site was comprised of about 381 acres and occupied the area now known as College Hill.

By 1650 there were about 51 wood houses, a mill and one tannery; only one colonist was engaged in the sea trade and the remainder were planters. In 1675, during King Philip's War, Providence was burned to the ground by the Indians, except for two houses. The town was rebuilt on its original plan and by 1700 had some 1,200 inhabitants. In the early 1700's Providence began to turn from farming to the sea and there was a steady expansion of commerce with Europe and the West Indies.

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(Number all entries)

8. Significance

1

By 1730 the increased prosperity was reflected in the numbers, size, and style of Providence's churches and houses the first brick houses were erected in that year. Until the eve of the American Revolution, however, Providence lagged far behind Newport, Rhode Island, as a commercial and trading center, but by 1775 the stage was set for the emergency of Providence as a major port. During the ensuing years of the Revolutionary War, Providence's commerce was crippled by the blockade of Narragansett Bay, but the town did not suffer occupation by the British for three years as did Newport, and its commerce recovered quickly after the war. By 1880 the population of Providence numbered over 7,500 whereas Newport's population had dropped from 9,000 to about 4,000 between 1775 and 1780: Providence had finally supplanted Newport as the chief trading port in Rhode Island. Providence' commercial wealth is still reflected in the survey fine, homes, churches, and public buildings- erected during this period during this period, many of which were designed by the noted amateur architect, Joseph Brown of Providence.

In the early 19th Century Providence rapidly shifted from the sea to industry. In 1790 the first successful American cotton manufactory was established in Pawtucket by Samuel Slater with funds provided by a Providence merchant. By 1812 over 30 cotton mills were in successful operation and fortunes founded on shipping were now augmented by native industry and by wholesale and retail commerce. By 1824 the city had a population of 15,000. As Joseph Brown had been responsible for most of the significant building immediately before and after the Revolutionary War, so the imprint of the architect-builder, John Holden Greene, was stamped on early 19th century Providence. He designed almost every important building erected between 1809 and the close of his career in 1830. By 1857, with a population of 50,000, Providence had spread far to the south, west and north of the original town site.

In August, 1960, the College Hill Historic District in Providence was established by municipal legislation. The District is under the supervision of an appointed commission whose purpose is to main the intergrity of its whole and to preserve, maintain and improve the architectural and visual qualities of its parts or contents. Over the years certain parts of the Historic District --- mainly at its northern and southern ends --- had suffered from blight, though fortunately this was seldom accompanied by the disappearance of historic structures. Much improvement has taken place in these portions since 1960 and is being continued with the advice and control of the Historic District Commission, the assistance of the Providence Preservation Society, and the funds and enthusiasm of the property-owners themselves. More than 150 historic houses have been restored to date.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Antoinette F. Downing, Early Houses of Rhode Island (Richmond, Va., 1937).

Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Rhode Island Architecture (Providence, 1939).

Rhode Island, A Guide to the Small State (American Guide Series)(Boston, 1937), 275-280.

Dorothy and Richard Pratt, A Guide to Early American Homes - North(New York, 1956), 90-92.

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	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 12 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian

ORGANIZATION: Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service DATE: 8/6/70

STREET AND NUMBER: 801-19th Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D. C. CODE:

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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 _____

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

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

(Number all entries)

9. Major Bibliographical References for College Hill Historic District:

Wayne Andrews, Architecture, Ambition and Americans (New York, 1955), 92.

John W. Reps, The Making of Urban America, A History of City Planning in The United States (Princeton, 1965), 138-139.

College Hill, A Demonstration Study of Historic Area Renewal (Published by the Providence City Plan Commission in cooperation with the Providence Preservation Society and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Providence, May 1967).

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Providence	
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(Number all entries)

2. Boundaries of the College Hill Historic District:

Southern boundary begins at back lot lines of Sheldon Street; then east along back lot lines of the south side of Sheldon Street to the east side of Brook Street, thence north along the east side of Brook Street to the center of Williams Street. Then west along the center of Williams Street to the east side of Thayer Street, thence north on Thayer Street to the north side of Power Street. Then west along the north side of Power Street to approximately 1/2 the distance between Thayer Street and Brown Street where it turns north to Charlesfield Street on the north side of that street. It then turns west a very short distance where it turns north, then west, then south to include two houses on the north side of Charlesfield Street. It then proceeds west on the north side of Charlesfield Street to approximately 2/3 the distance between Brown Street and Benefit Street where it turns north across Benevolent Street along the west side of Magee Street to the back lot line of Benevolent Street, thence west, about 1/3 the distance between Magee Street and Benefit Street on George Street along the back lots lines of George Street and Benevolent Street, thence north to the north side of George Street, then west 1/3 the distance from Prospect Street and Benefit Street. It turns north here to the back lot lines on the north side of George Street, thence west to the back lot lines on the east side of Benefit Street where it turns north crossing College Street to the north side of Waterman Street. It proceeds north around the corner of Waterman and Benefit Streets east on Angell Street on the south side to the back lot lines on the east side of Benefit Street, thence northerly approximately 1/2 the distance between Angell Street and Meeting Street, thence east across Congdon Street along the north back lot lines of Angell Street on Defoe Place, thence southerly along the west side of Defoe Place to the south side of Angell Street. Here it turns east along the south side of Angell Street to the west side of Prospect Street where it turns south across Waterman and College Streets to approximately 1/3 the distance between College and George Streets where it turns east into the Brown University Campus thence north to the north side of Waterman Street to include University, Manning and Hope College Halls. Here it turns west to the back lot line on the east side of Prospect Street at the corner of Waterman Street, then north along the east back lot lines of Prospect Street to the south side of Angell Street, thence east to the back lot line of the west side of Brown Street. Here it turns north to the north side of Olive Street, thence westerly to the back lot line of the east side of Prospect Street at the corner of Olive Street where it turns north to the north side of Meeting Street. Here it turns west to the corner of Prospect and Meeting Streets then north on Prospect Street to approximately 3/4 the distance between Meeting and Cushing Streets where it turns west to the back lot lines on the west side of Prospect Street. Here it turns south to the north side of Meeting Street, thence westerly to the east side of Congdon Street, then north on Congdon Street to Cushing Street then east to the back lot lines on the east side of Congdon Street where it turns north, following these back lot lines on the east side of Congdon Street, across Bowen Street and Lloyd Avenue to a point approximately 1/4 the distance between Lloyd Avenue and Jenckes Streets where it turns west across Congdon Street to the back lot lines on the west side to Congdon Street, thence south

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)





STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Providence	
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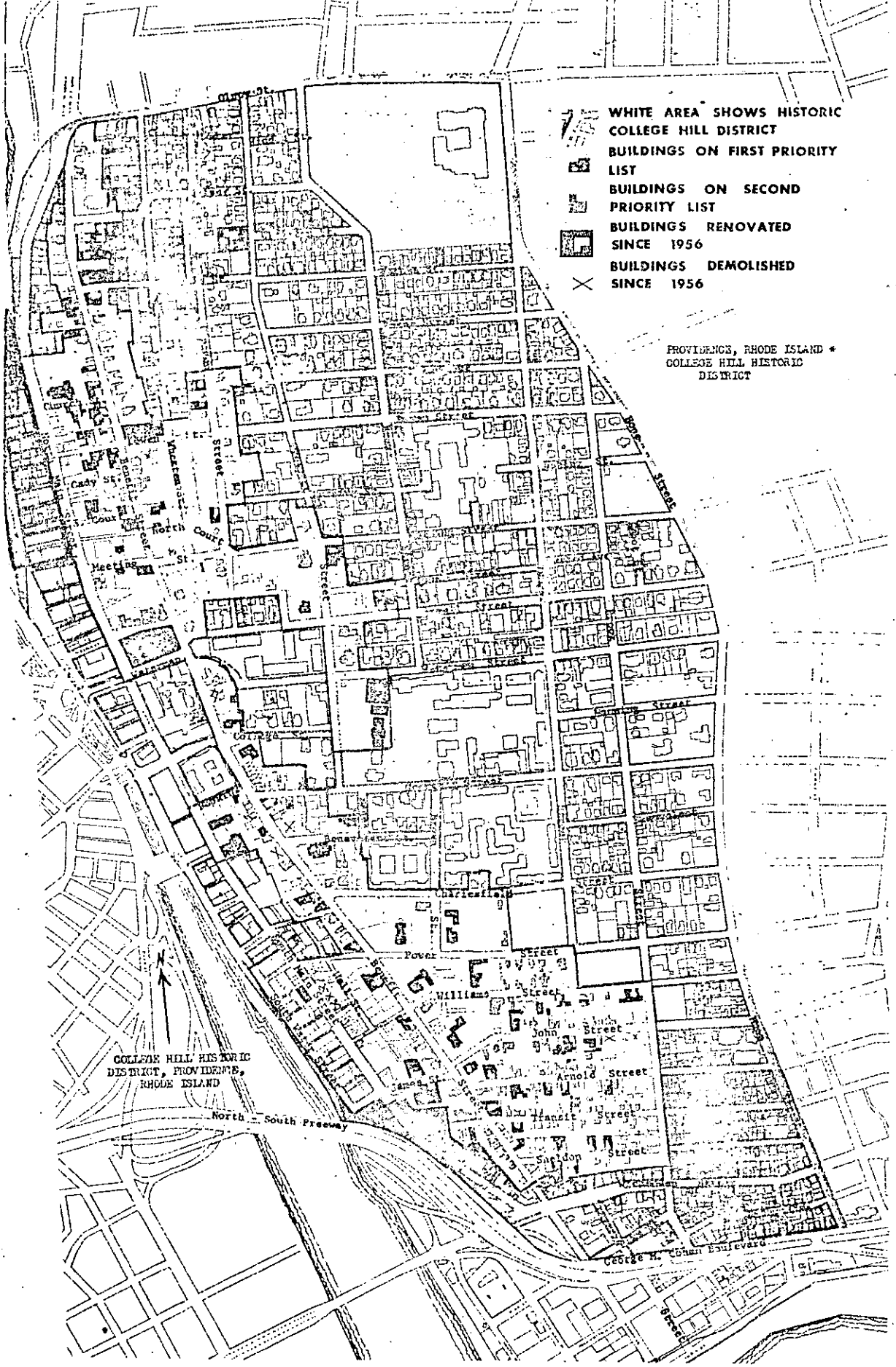
2. Boundaries of the College Hill Historic District: (1) continued)

to the northern boundary of Prospect Terrace Park where it turns west along the back lot lines on the north side of Bowen Street to the back lot lines on the east side of Benefit Street. Here it turns north, following the back lot lines on the east side of Benefit Street, and it crosses Jenckes and Halsey Streets to the south side of Olney Street where it turns west and south along the west side of Benefit Street. This is the northern boundary of the District.

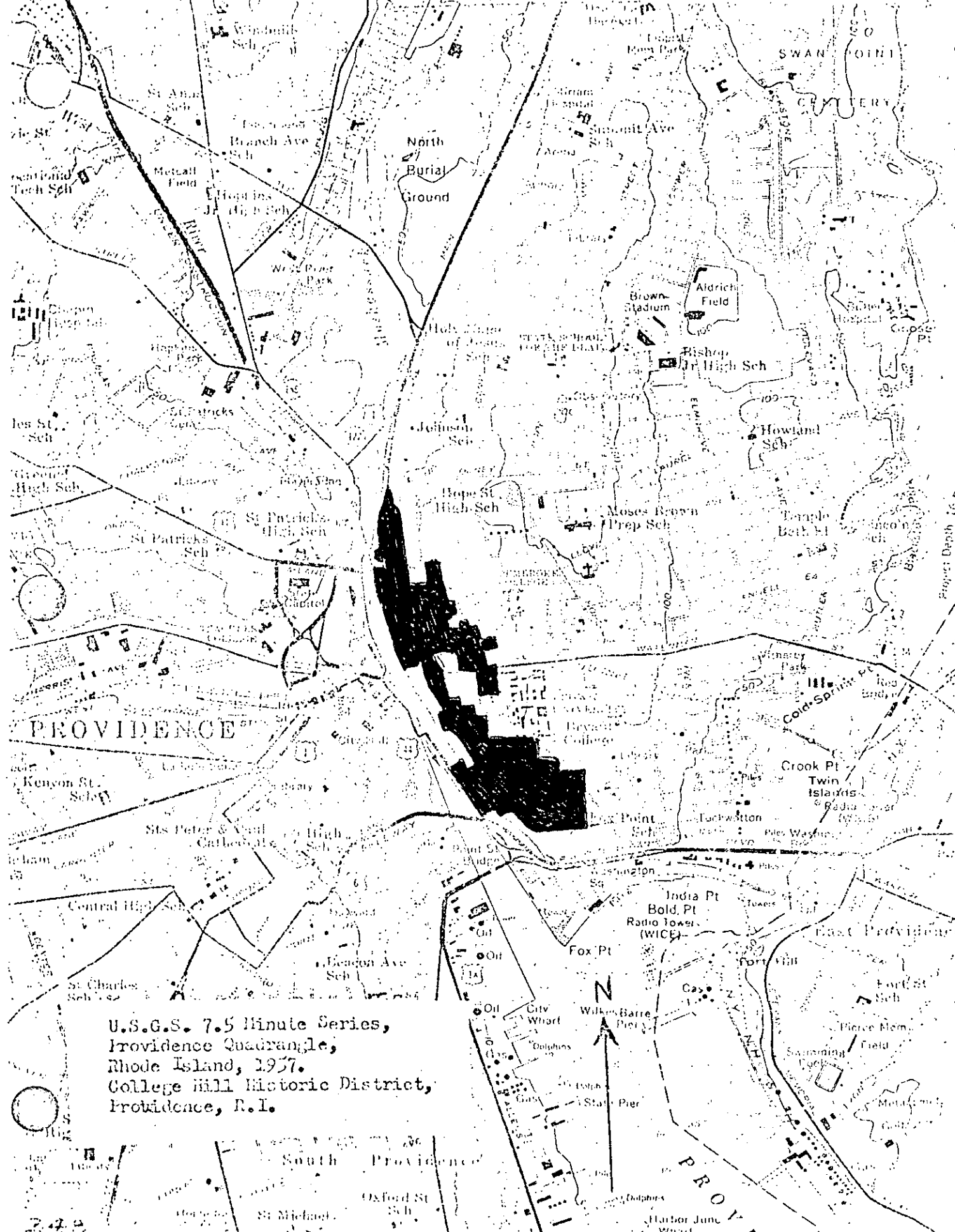
Starting south on the west side of Benefit Street, approximately 1/4 the distance from the junction of North Main and Benefit Streets and Star Street, the line goes west to the back lot line on the west side of Benefit Street, then south along the back lot lines on the west side of Benefit Street to the corner of Benefit and Star Streets where it turns west along the back lot lines on the north side of Star Street to the back lot line on the east side of North Main Street where it turns south to the south side of Star Street, thence east to a point approximately 1/2 way between Benefit and North Main Streets where it turns south to the back lot line on the south side of Star Street. Here it turns west to the west side of North Main Street at the north east corner of Smith and North Main Streets. Now it runs south on the west side of North Main Street to the south west corner of Waterman and North Main Streets where it turns east on the south side of Waterman Street to the south west corner of Benefit and Waterman Streets. Now the line runs south along the west side of Benefit Street across College Street to the south west corner of Benefit and Hopkins Streets where it turns west to the west side of South Main Street where it turns south along the west side of South Main Street to a point approximately 1/3 the distance between Hopkins Street and Planet Street where it turns east to the back lot lines along the west side of Benefit Street. It now turns south along the back lot lines on the west side of Benefit Street across Planet Street to Power Street. Here it turns west again to South Main Street on the east side, north on South Main Street approximately 1/2 the distance between Power and Planet Streets where it again turns west across South Main Street to the west side of South Water Street. Here it turns south on South Water Street to the south side of James Street where it again turns east on the south side of James Street to the back lot line of the house on the south west corner of James and South Main Streets, thence south along this back lot line to the south line of this corner property thence east across South Main Street following the back lot lines on the south side of James Street to a point where the back lot lines on the south side of James Street join the back lot lines on the west side of Benefit Street. The line then runs south along the back lot line on Benefit Street across Transit Street to the back lot lines on the south side of Transit Street, thence east to the back lot lines on the west side of Benefit Street where it turns south along these back lot lines on Benefit Street to the Southern Boundary or beginning approximately 1/2 way between Wickenden and Sheldon Streets on Benefit Street.

- WHITE AREA SHOWS HISTORIC COLLEGE HILL DISTRICT
-  BUILDINGS ON FIRST PRIORITY LIST
-  BUILDINGS ON SECOND PRIORITY LIST
-  BUILDINGS RENOVATED SINCE 1956
-  BUILDINGS DEMOLISHED SINCE 1956

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND *
COLLEGE HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT



COLLEGE HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND



U.S.G.S. 7.5 Minute Series,
 Providence Quadrangle,
 Rhode Island, 1957.
 College Hill Historic District,
 Providence, R.I.

South Providence

PROVI

Project Depth 16 F.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

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

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME
COMMON: College Hill Historic Distric
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN: Providence
STATE: Rhode Island CODE COUNTY: Providence CODE

3. MAP REFERENCE
SOURCE: U.S.G.S. 7.5 Minute Series, Providence Quadrangle, Rhode Island
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.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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

STATE	
COUNTY	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

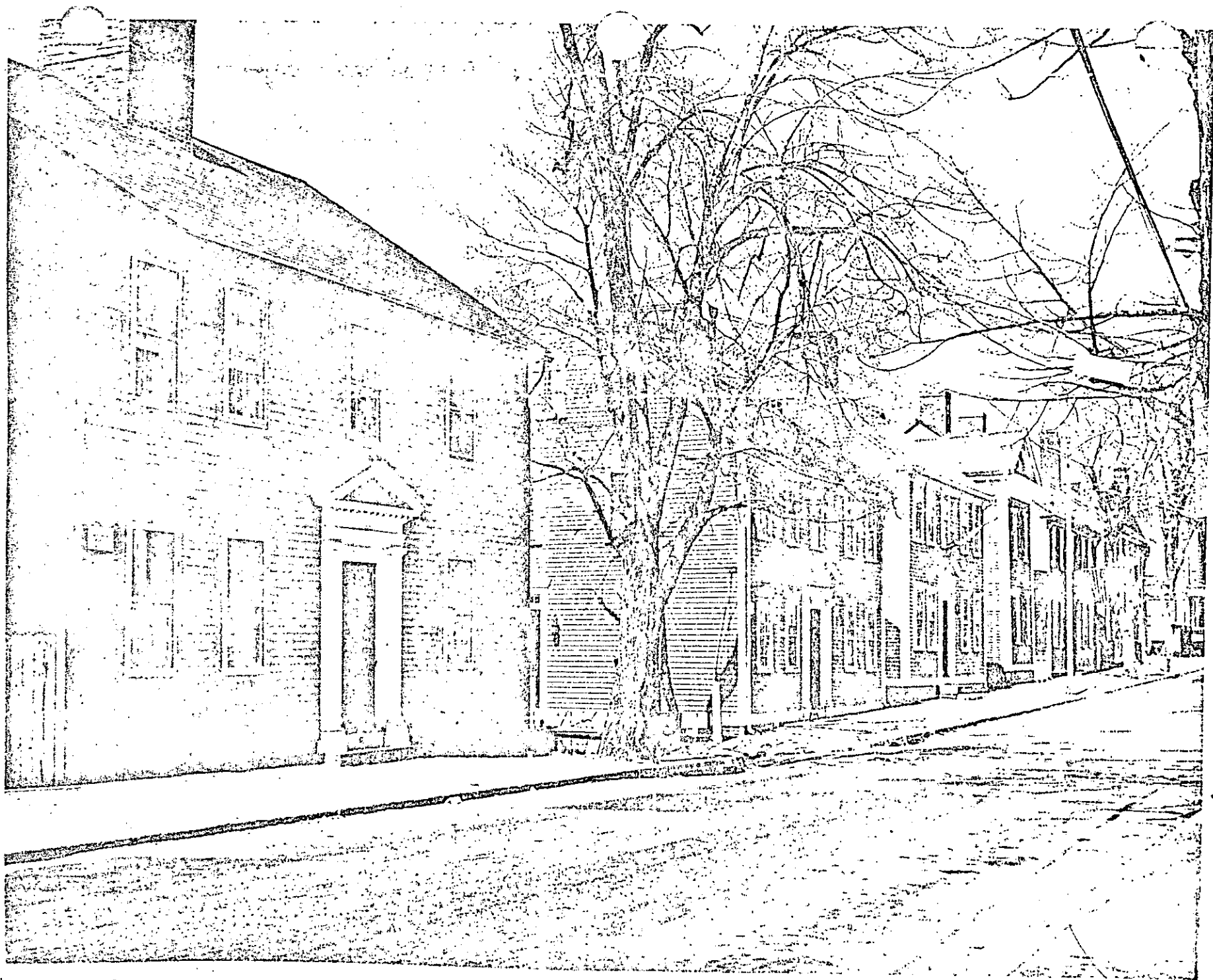
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME
COMMON:
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN:
STATE: CODE COUNTY: CODE

3. PHOTO REFERENCE
PHOTO CREDIT:
DATE OF PHOTO:
NEGATIVE FILED AT:

4. IDENTIFICATION
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.



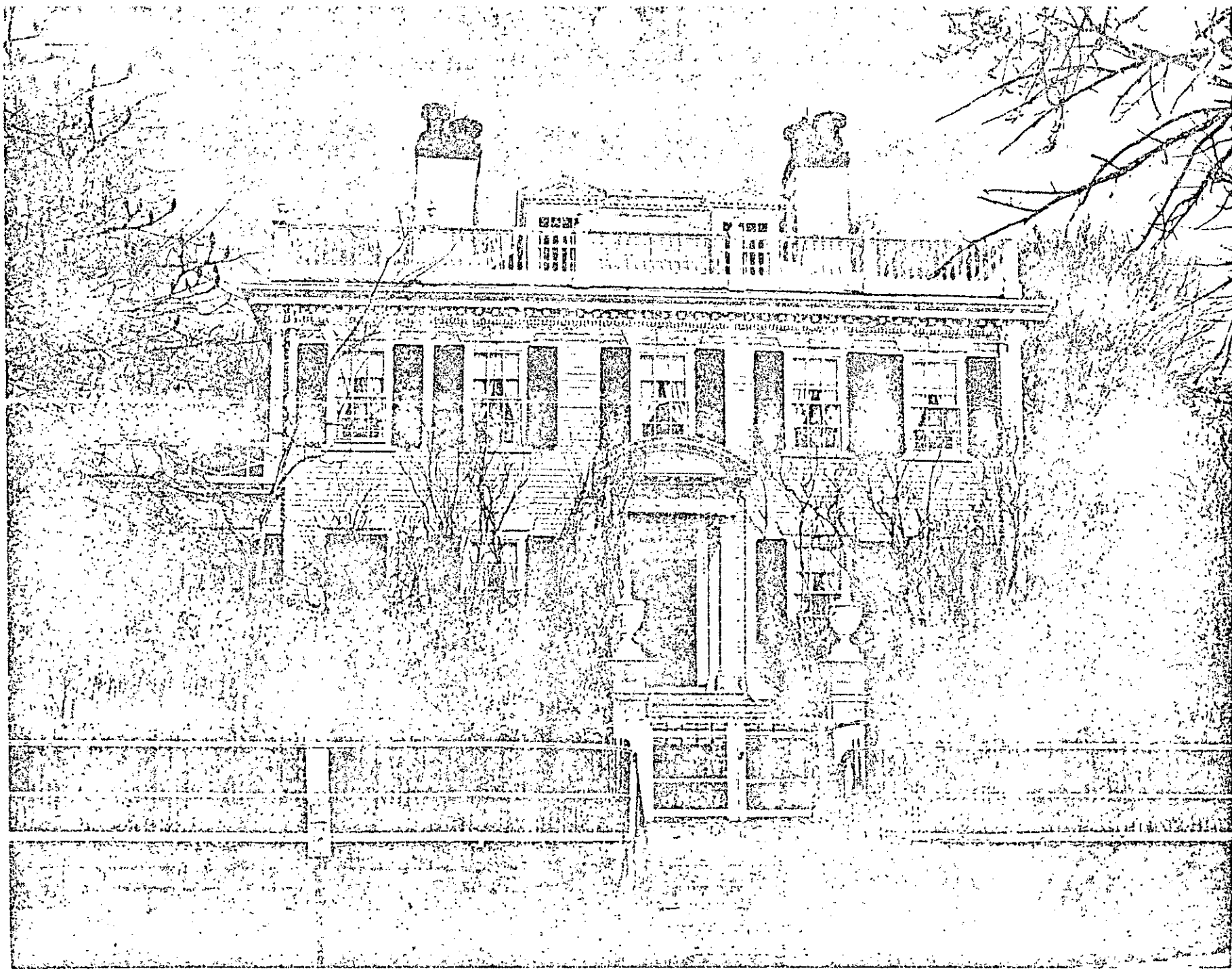
Houses 42-62 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island

Courtesy Providence Preservation Society

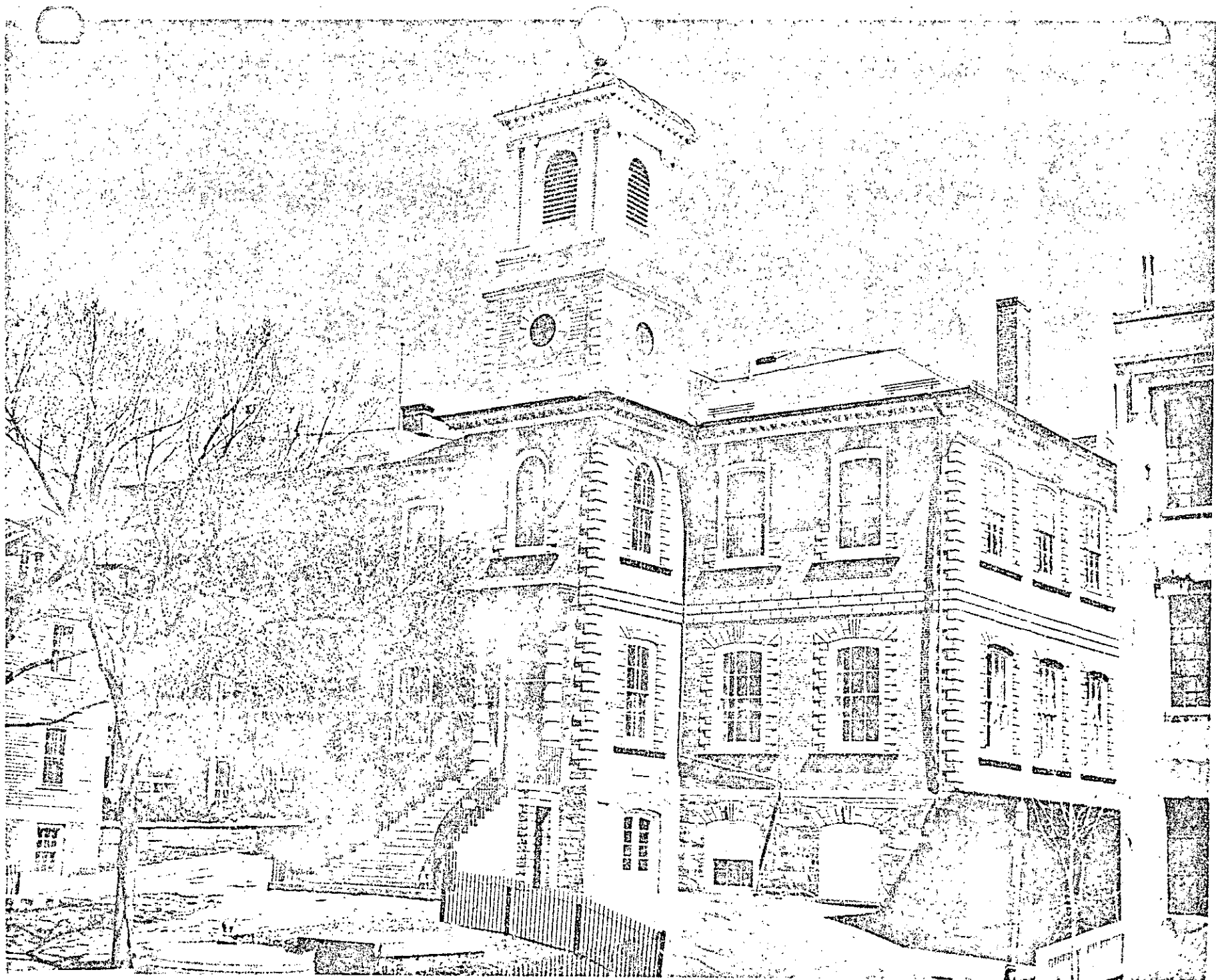


Houses 88-106 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island,

Courtesy Providence Preservation Society

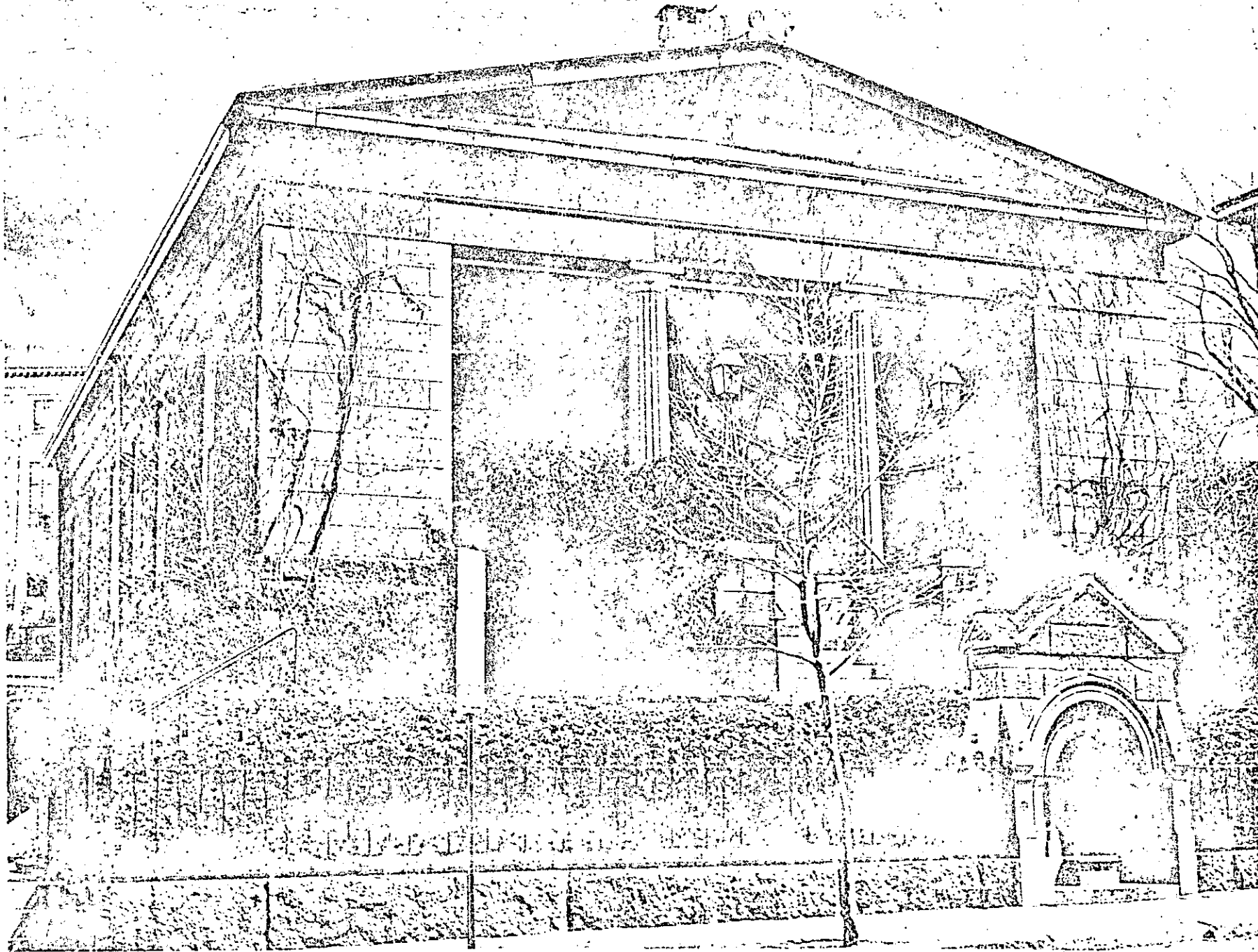


George Benson House, 64 Angell Street, Providence, Rhode Island, Courtesy Providence Preservation Society



Colony House. 150 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island

Courtesy Providence Preservation Society



Providence Athenaeum, 251 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island

Courtesy Providence Preservation Society