UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
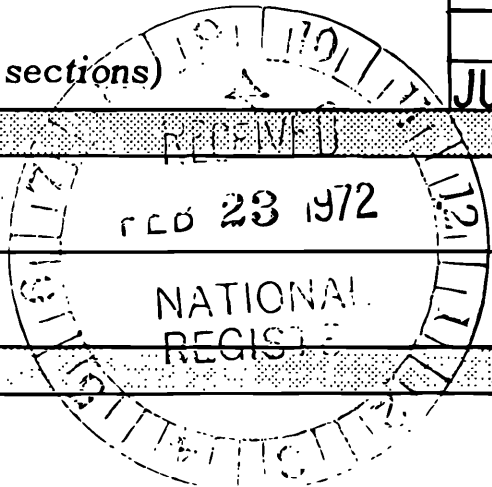NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries — complete applicable sections)

STATE:
Rhode Island
COUNTY:
Washington

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
JUN 3 0 1972	

RECEIVED
FEB 23 1972
NATIONAL
REGISTER

1. NAME

COMMON:
St. Paul's Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
76 Main Street, Wickford

CITY OR TOWN:
OK ~~North Kingstown~~ (Wickford)

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Rhode Island, 02852	44	Washington	009

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY *(Check One)*		OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District ☐ Building ☒	Public ☐	Occupied ☒	Yes:
Site ☐ Structure ☐	Private ☒	Unoccupied ☐	Restricted ☒
Object ☐	Both ☐	Preservation work in progress ☐	Unrestricted ☐
	Public Acquisition: In Process ☐ Being Considered ☐		No: ☐

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Agricultural ☐	Government ☐	Park ☐	Transportation ☐	Comments ☐
Commercial ☐	Industrial ☐	Private Residence ☐	Other *(Specify)* ☐	
Educational ☐	Military ☒	Religious ☐		
Entertainment ☐	Museum ☐	Scientific ☐		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
St. Paul's Church

STREET AND NUMBER:
76 Main Street, Wickford

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
North Kingstown	Rhode Island, 02852	44

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Town Clerk

STREET AND NUMBER:
80 Boston Neck Road

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE
North Kingstown	Rhode Island, 02852	44

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre

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
JUN 3 0 1972
DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

CONDITION	*(Check One)*					
	Excellent ☒	Good ☐	Fair ☐	Deteriorated ☐	Ruins ☐	Unexposed ☐

INTEGRITY	*(Check One)*		*(Check One)*	
	Altered ☒	Unaltered ☐	Moved ☐	Original Site ☒

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(If known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, built in 1847, was designed in the prevailing "carpenters'" Romanesque style by Thomas A. Tefft, who was instrumental in the local development of that style, many prominent features of which are displayed in this building. As a translation of the Georgian meeting-house type, the church in its original conception was reduced to the barest compositional elements./ The architect's drawings indicate a six-bayed nave beneath a gable roof with a cupola near the front, at the gable peak. The existing structure, however, is more complex and picturesque: a tower with bell turret and clock-faces rises to the left of the projecting central entrance-part of the tripartite façade, and a narthex addition with rather crude detailing, further to the left (or east) completes the asymmetry. Horizontal clapboarding (recently replaced) tends to decrease the vertical effect of the front and of the tall, narrow arched openings and the corbel strips along the sides of the building. Wooden pilasters define the side bays; a rosette window in the front gable is a later insertion. (The contradictory and sometimes overly-assertive detailing found on the main church is absent on the small side chapel to the left: here, the door of the projecting entranceway is of proportionately small size;) Large arched corbel tables are the only decoration on the entry and on the nave, except for a small rosette window (now painted over).

The arch motif of the exterior is carried on inside the church: the side walls have pilasters and corbel tables; the altar railing, altar wainscoting, balcony railing and pews continue the blind-arch theme. The nave doors have heavy strap-hinges, as do the doors of the main exterior entrance. The balcony is supported frontally on thin cast-iron colonnettes and still contains some of the original pews-- the pews now used by the congregation on the main floor below are approximate replicas. The walls, which were probably originally beige, are now painted green, and most of the original translucent glass of the windows has been replaced by modern stained glass. The pulpit, altar and Bible-stand are of woodwork dating from about 1890. Large wall plaques commemorate former parishioners but unfortunately disturb the rhythm of the bays. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the interior is the plain timber trussing of the ceiling, a reminder of the austerity of the original conception of the church. Recently refinished, this timbering may originally have been flat-painted, and the balcony-front--also refinished--grained. The church structure has been given minor alterations or occasional refurbishment in the ways mentioned, but the basic integrity of its architecture remains.
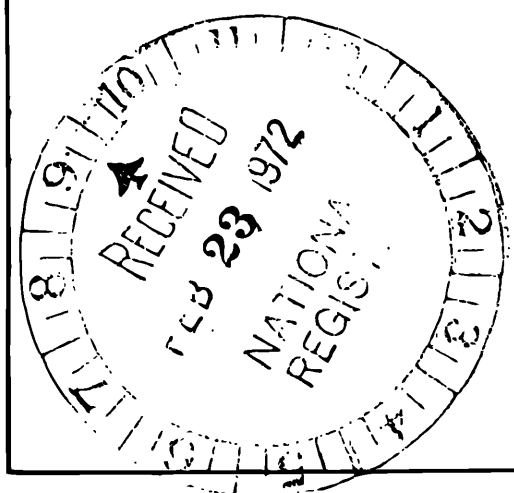
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian ☐   16th Century ☐   18th Century ☐   20th Century ☐
15th Century ☐   17th Century ☐   19th Century ☒

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1847   Thomas A. Tefft

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal ☐	Education ☐	Political ☐	Urban Planning ☐
Prehistoric ☐	Engineering ☐	Religion/Phi-	Other (Specify) ☐
Historic ☐	Industry ☐	losophy ☐	_____
Agriculture ☐	Invention ☐	Science ☐	_____
Art ☒	Landscape	Sculpture ☐	_____
Commerce ☐	Architecture ☐	Social/Human-	_____
Communications ☐	Literature ☐	itarian ☐	_____
Conservation ☐	Military ☐	Theater ☐	_____
	Music ☐	Transportation ☐	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Wickford is a well-preserved, if no longer pure, example of the re-use of Romanesque ecclesiogical archi-tecture in the XIX Century by an architect who was not only in the main-stream of architectural development of the time, but who--a native Rhode Islander--gave his state many fine works during his short life (1826-1859). It is in this sense that St. Paul's Church is a monument worthy of care: although the Romanesque style was gaining popularity in the late forties, Tefft was unique in his devotion to this style. Sim-plifying the style without quite denaturing it, he adapted it for varied domestic, commercial and ecclesiological purposes. ∤

Tefft's talent has been described by Margaret Ruth Little in her thesis, The Architecture of a Lamented Genius, Thomas Alexander Tefft, submitted in 1971 to Brown University towards a master's degree:

[He was] not interested in ecclesiological correctness, for his major concern was functionality. He advocated the crea-tive interpretation of mediaeval styles, and felt that "... the adaptation of buildings to our present modes of worship with uninterrupted spaciousness and good acoustic qualities, has hardly been seriously attempted."

His contribution can be seen as one of functional adaptation of a mediaeval style to current needs and means. St. Paul's Church ex-hibits its spaciousness in its honest structural timbering and un-hindered openness. With these, and its generous window areas, its sim-plified mode of decoration, it achieves what Miss Little terms a "loose-ness of massing" which here and in other Tefft buildings contributes to a flexible plan. St. Paul's Church deserves attention as a minor land-mark of 19th-century architectural forms and freedom and as a major one in the small-scale townscape of Wickford.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS
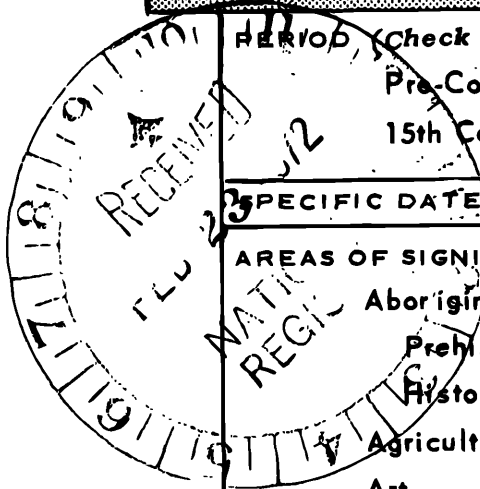
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Little, Margaret Ruth: The Architecture of a Lamented Genius, Thomas Alexander Tefft (Thesis for Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, 1971), pp. 60-62. Unpublished; quoted with permission.

Tefft, Thomas Alexander: Collection of original drawings of plans, elevations, perspective renderings in Brown University Archives, Providence, Rhode Island.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"

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 ONE ACRE

LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
41°	34'17.09"N		71°	26'59.21"W	

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
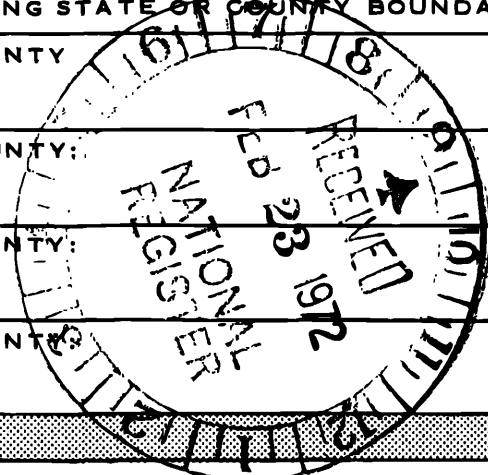
11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
B. Christopher Bene, Consultant

ORGANIZATION
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

DATE
Sept. 15, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House, 90 Smith Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Providence

STATE
Rhode Island, 02903

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 State Liaison Officer

Date February 14, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

_____
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 6/30/72

ATTEST:

_____
Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

71°30'
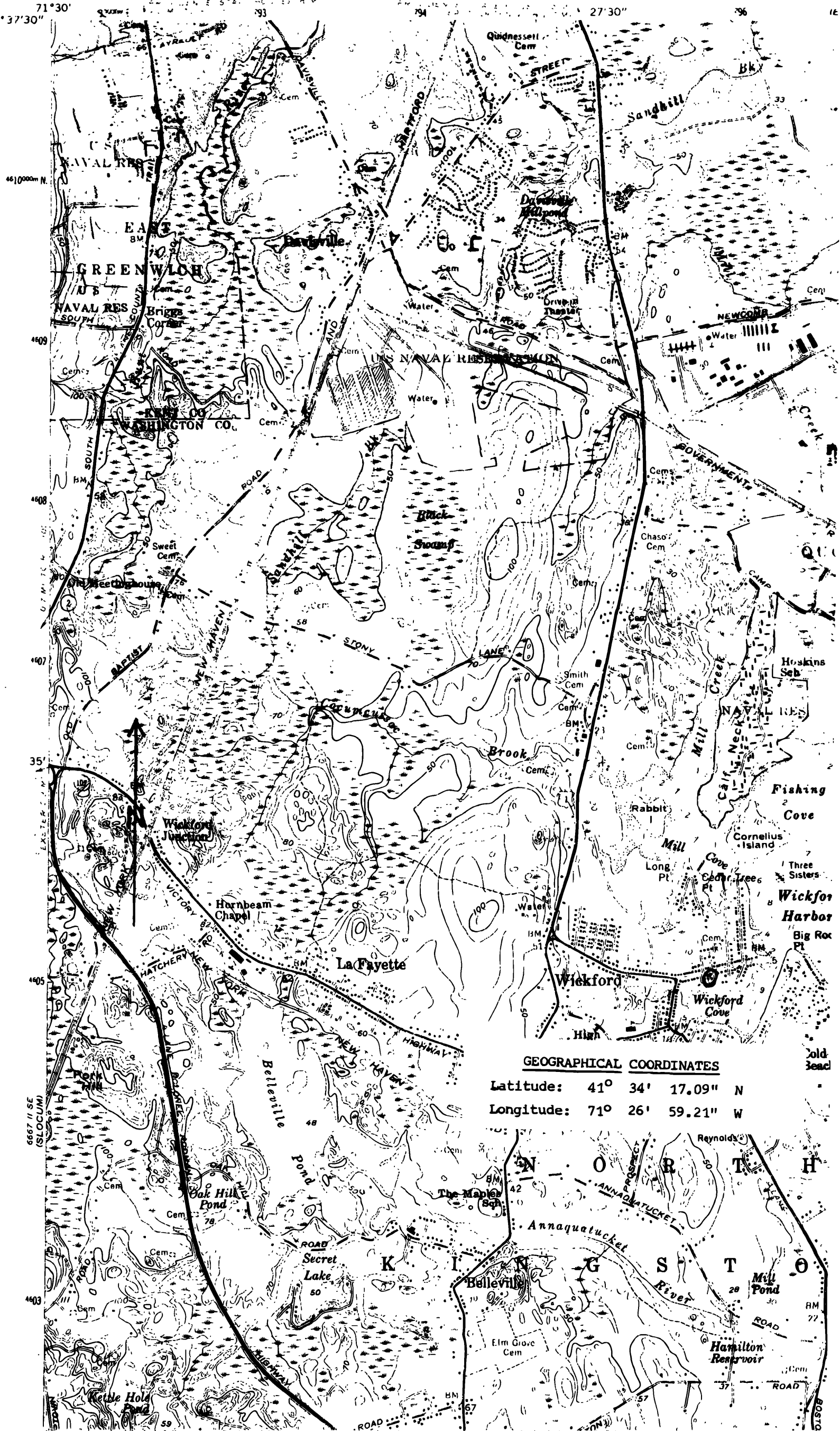41°37'30"

27'30"

(CROMPTON)

Quidnessett
Cem

STREET

Sandhill
Bk

NAVAL RES

Davisville
Millpond

EAST
BM

Saundersville

GREENWICH

Cem

Drive-in
Theatre

NEWCOMB

Water

NAVAL RES
SOUTH

Briggs
Corner

Water

US NAVAL RESERVATION

Cem

KENT CO
WASHINGTON CO

Cem

Water

Chase
Cem

GOVERNMENT

Cem

Black
Swamp

Sweet
Cem

Old Meetinghouse Cem

STONY

LANE

Smith
Cem

Cem

Hoskins
Sch

NAVAL RES

BAPTIST

NEW HAVEN

Cem

Brook

Cem

BM

Cem

Mill
Creek

Calf Neck

Fishing
Cove

N

Wickford
Junction

Rabbit

Cornelius
Island

Mill
Long
Pt

Cove
Cove
Pt

Three
Sisters

Hornbeam
Chapel

BM

Water

Cedar Tree

Wickford
Harbor

VICTORY

Cem

Big Rock
Pt

Cem

BM

HATCHERY

LaFayette

Wickford

Wickford
Cove

NEW HAVEN

HIGHWAY

High

Cold
Beach

Fort
Hill

Belleville
Pond

Reynolds

NORTH

Cem

Oak Hill
Pond

The Maple
Sch

BM

ANNAQUATUCKET

Annaquatucket

ROAD

Cem

Secret
Lake

KINGST
O

Annaquatucket
River

Mill
Pond

Belleville

BM

Elm Grove
Cem

Hamilton
Reservoir

ROAD

BOSTON

Kettle Hole
Pond

ROAD

Form 10-301
(July 1969)

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	
COUNTY Washington	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
JUN 3 0 1972	

1. NAME

COMMON: St. Paul's Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
76 Main Street, Wickford

CITY OR TOWN:
North Kingstown.

STATE: Rhode Island	CODE 44	COUNTY: Washington	CODE 009

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:
U. S. Geological Survey

SCALE: 1: 24,000

DATE: 1957

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

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