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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 Applicat	ole and Known) 1720, C	• 1750	
REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Ch	eck One or More as Appropri	ate)	
Abor iginal	Education	Political	Urban Planning
☐ Prehistoric	Engineering	☐ Religion/Phi-	Other (Specify)
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Agriculture	Invention	Science	
Architecture	Landscape	□ Sculpture	
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Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

Rhode Island	
COUNTY	
Providence	
FOR NPS USE ONL	Υ
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
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(Number all entries)

7. Description.

Much of the hardware and several of the panelled doors throughout the house are original. Both the interior and the exterior of this house appear today almost exactly as they must have appeared when the lean-to was added in the middle of the XVIII Century.



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7. DESCRIPTION								
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ESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Captain George Dorrance house in Foster is an extremely well preserved five-bay-wide, two-and-one-half story, gable roof house with a rear lean-to. While the house is now of a five-room, symmetrical plan, it was originally of only two rooms on each story, these on either side of the massive, central, "Connecticut" stone chimney. It dates from the early XVIII Century (c. 1720). A three-room lean-to was added at the rear of the first story, as is indicated by the slight difference in floor levels; and the detail in these rooms suggests a date c. 1750. Exterior covering is of large, hand-split wooden shingles. Windows are 12-over-12 double-hung sash except on the ell, where they are 8-over-12. The doorway is unadorned, and the original plank door has been replaced.

On the first story, the keeping-room and the stairway reflect the early construction date of the house. The unchamfered cornerposts and girts, and the joists and floorboards of the chamber above are exposed in the keeping-room, as is the summer-beam, which is chamfered. A bake-oven is recessed into the back wall of the large, ten-feet-wide fireplace in this room, and there is evidence that there were originally two ovens. The triple-run stairway is outstanding. It abuts an exposed chimney wall of beautifully pointed and matched stone; and there is no evidence that this wall was ever plastered. The newels are square, with ball-shaped caps; the turned balusters are of refined proportion; and the stairs are encased by a panelled string course.

Opposite the keeping-room, the more sophisticated detail of the parlour suggests that it was remodelled in the middle of the XVIII Century, perhaps at the time the rear lean-to was added. Here, girts, cornerposts and the summer-beam are cased,— and the ceiling is plastered. The fireplace, originally of large dimensions, was rebuilt with finished stone to the smaller size seen today, with plain mouldings and large, simple, wooden panelling above. Interior detail in the dining-room is even more simple, with only a narrow wooden moulding distinguishing the fireplace. This fireplace is also built of finished stone, though the rear wall and hearth are brick. The small dimensions of this fireplace suggest that this lean-to room must never have served as the kitchen, as was usually the case with houses of similar plan.

The second floor consists of two bedrooms above the two original rooms of the first story. Gunstock cornerposts are exposed in both rooms, as are the beams and floorboards of the attic. While the original feather-edge vertical sheathing along the fireplace wall of the chamber above the keeping-room has recently been restored, the sophisticated, simple panelling along the fireplace wall of the other chamber is perfectly preserved and has never been painted. The other walls of these rooms are plastered.

(See Continuation Sheet)

^{*}Also typical of Rhode Island's South County.

The mantel tree was replaced during a recent restoration

Form 10-300 (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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