

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New Hampshire
COUNTY: Rockingham
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE MAY 11 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:
Benedict House

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Thomas W. Penhallow House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
30 Middle Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Portsmouth

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
First

STATE: New Hampshire CODE: 33 COUNTY: Rockingham CODE: 015

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Library</u>
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments <u>Annex to Public Library</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
City of Portsmouth

STREET AND NUMBER:
City Hall
126 Daniel Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Portsmouth

STATE: New Hampshire CODE: 33

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Rockingham County Registry of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:
Rockingham County Court House
Hampton Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Exeter

STATE: New Hampshire CODE: 33

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
NONE

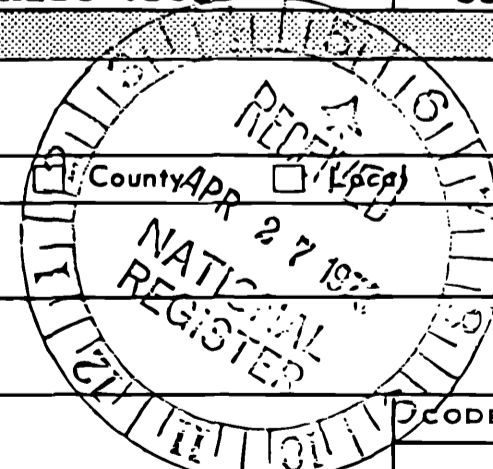
DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:



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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

Present: The Penhallow House is a three-story brick structure with a low hip roof and two chimneys on the north (rear) elevation. The brickwork throughout the original portions of the building is laid in Flemish bond. The foundation of the house is primarily fieldstone, but has hammered granite exposed above grade on the front and side elevations.

The facade of the building is symmetrically divided into five bays. The main entrance has an arched doorway opening with sidelights and an elliptical fanlight. Over the doorway is a semicircular portico supported by columns with carved Ionic capitals. Above the portico is a large Palladian window set into an arched recess in the brickwork. The main cornice of the building is wooden. Its bed mouldings are lathe-turned "Gothic" drops that derive ultimately from plates 1 and 3 of Thomas Shearer's The Cabinet-Maker's London Book of Prices, (1788, 1797, 1803), a furniture-maker's trade manual that exerted a definite influence on Portsmouth architecture after 1800. The cornice of the semi-circular portico is embellished with mutules, a form of classical ornament that was popularized by the American joiner and author Asher Benjamin, and may be seen in Plate 20 of his American Builder's Companion (1806).

The floor plan of the house includes a central hallway and two major rooms on each floor. In the hall is a spiral stairway of unusually fine detail and small scale. Each of the major rooms of the house is ornamented with well-executed woodwork. The eastern room on the first floor, for example, has cornices and a mantelshelf that are ornamented with mutules similar to those on the doorway portico. Most of the interior folding window shutters of the house survive intact.

Connected to the west end of the house is a large brick wing that was added in two stages. The earlier segment of the wing dates before 1850, while the larger portion was probably added during the 1860's or 1870's.

Original: The original appearance of the Penhallow House differed only slightly from the present appearance. The major change was the addition of the mid-nineteenth century wing on the west, which altered the original fabric of the building only slightly. Similarly, a passageway built in 1954 to connect the house to the Portsmouth Public Library was constructed with little damage to the house. Other changes have included replacement of the original window sash about 1870, replacement of the original front door about 1900, and removal of the window blinds.

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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. 1811

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input checked="" 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

Architecture: The Thomas W. Penhallow House was built between 1810 and 1813 on a lot of land that abutted the newly-built Portsmouth Academy. It was constructed for Thomas Morton, a Portsmouth merchant who shortly moved to Boston. Morton advertized the house for sale in the New Hampshire Gazette, beginning on February 22, 1814, as "that beautiful and convenient Brick House, situated near the Portsmouth Academy." The house was purchased in November, 1814, by Thomas W. Penhallow, a Portsmouth merchant. Penhallow occupied the house until 1835, after which the property began to pass through the hands of a succession of owners.

The major importance of the Penhallow house lies in its architectural quality. The house was built at the same period that many other brick dwellings were being constructed a few blocks away in central Portsmouth, but it is architecturally far superior to most of the brick houses in the center of town. The Penhallow House is similar to the truly grand brick mansions that were built in western Portsmouth after 1812, and appears to have been the first of a group of such houses. Other buildings in this group were designed and constructed by Jonathan Folsom, Portsmouth's leading builder-architect after 1812. The Penhallow House may have been one of Folsom's earliest works.

The Penhallow House is one of only two in Portsmouth that combine a semicircular portico with a Palladian window to form an entrance frontispiece of large scale and unusual classical pretension. The house is also outstanding for the quality and state of preservation of its interior joiner's work, especially its spiral staircase and its mantelshelves. The interior woodwork displays an unusually wide range of decorative motifs.

Urban Planning: At the period at which Penhallow House was built, the area near the Haymarket and the Academy was largely undeveloped land. The district was soon transformed into the most fashionable residential neighborhood of Federal-period Portsmouth, however. The Penhallow House was the first brick mansion that was built in this district, and was the precursor of other elegant brick houses that were built on Middle and Islington Streets soon after. Thus, the Penhallow House helped to establish a social change that ultimately resulted in the creation of one of New England's finest residential areas.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

John Mead Howells, The Architectural Heritage of the Piscataqua (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Company, Inc., 1937, 1965), 187.

Society of Architectural Historians/Strawberry Banke, Inc., Architecture Near the Piscataqua (Portsmouth, N.H.: Strawberry Banke, Inc., 1964) 32.

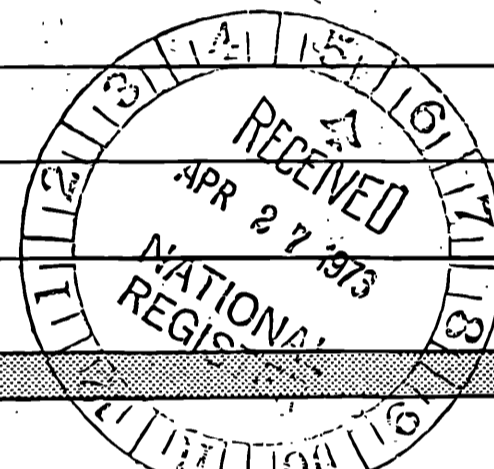
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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	° ' "	° ' "		43° 04' 31"	70° 45' 41"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: $\frac{1}{4}$ acre

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



19/356-600
1770436

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
James L. Garvin, Research Curator

ORGANIZATION: **Strawberry Banke, Inc.** DATE: **March 22, 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 300

CITY OR TOWN: **Portsmouth** STATE: **New Hampshire** CODE: **03801**

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: George Gilman
Title: Commissioner, Department of Resources and Economic Development
Date: March 29, 1973

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

Robert K. Utley
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/11/73

ATTEST: W. J. Smith
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 5-9-73