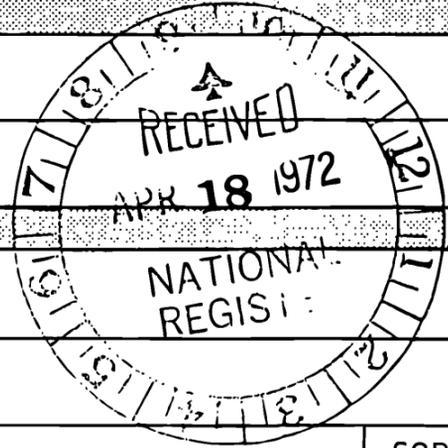


**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Rhode Island	
COUNTY: Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 31 1972



**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Covell, (William King, III), House

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Sanford (Milton H.) House; Villa Edna; Villa Marina

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
72 Washington Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Newport

STATE: Rhode Island, 02840

CODE: 44

COUNTY: Newport

CODE: 005

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNERS NAME:  
William King Covell, III

STREET AND NUMBER:  
72 Washington Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Newport

STATE:  
Rhode Island, 02840

CODE:  
44

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Broadway

CITY OR TOWN:  
Newport

STATE:  
Rhode Island, 02840

CODE:  
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

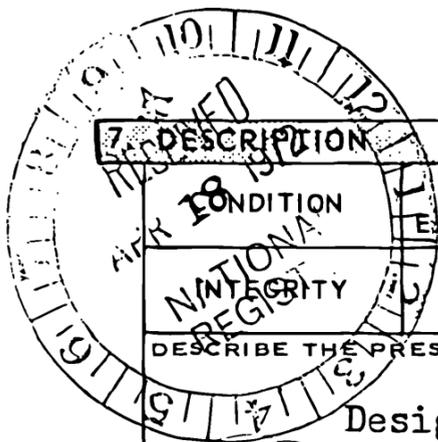
STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER: MAY 31 1972

DATE:

FOR NPS USE ONLY



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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Designed by the Boston firm of Fehmer and Emerson, and built in 1870 by A. A. Low and Company as a summer house for M. H. Sanford, "Villa Edna," as it was then called, was described at the time of construction as "the most elaborately finished house ever built in Newport." Rather severe on its exterior, the two-and-one-half-story house, capped by an angular mansard roof flaring at the eaves, rests on a granite and brick foundation. Light strips of horizontal and vertical boarding are laid flat against the clapboarded walls, to suggest wooden structural articulation--part of the "stick style" vocabulary appearing about this time. The cubical mass of the main block is broken slightly by an off-center, projecting, low mansard-roofed entrance tower that, with the main entrance (placed in a side of the tower), serves to disguise the old, basic four-room-and-central-hall plan. A wide, one-story piazza with a slightly pitched roof extends around three sides of the house and butts against the entrance tower. It lightens and dissipates the effect of mass and creates an open woodenness of character in spite of the mansard roof ballooning above.

Exterior decoration is extremely simple for the period. Fenestration is limited to single or grouped windows of various sizes, glazed with large panes, some of which bear subtly etched or stained designs. The removal of the original louvred exterior shutters (still stored within the house) has further augmented the plainness of the walls. The double-leaf main entrance is also unadorned. Almost the only decorative elements on the exterior are the bracketed dormers above the street façade which are provided with wooden railed balconies reminiscent of Swiss chalets.

Basically of a traditional, four-room plan, the interior is arranged around a central hall. A double parlour opens off the hall to the south, and a dining room to the north. A maid's room and a pantry, with its dumbwaiter to the original kitchen in the basement, adjoin the dining room. Without a hint on the exterior, a dramatic, 35-foot-high stairway tower rises the full three stories in the front of the house, and is decorated with heavy ornamental carved stairway railings and ornate projecting wooden balconies on the upper stories.

In contrast to the building's exterior, its interior decoration is extremely lavish and remains fully intact. The floors throughout are of oak, cherry, hard pine, maple and black walnut, laid in a different pattern in each room. Many of the original metal gas lighting fixtures remain in place, although they are now electrified. The principal rooms retain their richly-carved mantels, surmounted by heavy mirrors, and their wainscoting. The woodwork of the parlours is of butternut with ebony trim and panels of mottled wood from the root of the butternut tree. The dining room has similar trim, but of black walnut.

(See Continuation Sheet.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 31 1972

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

The walls of most of the rooms and many of the ceilings still display their original colors (primarily terra-cotta, blue or green) and are richly stencilled in stylized floral motifs of pastel shades, quite similar to the designs published in the mid-nineteenth century by Owen Jones.

The house remains virtually unaltered. Several of the ceilings on the first floor have been panelled, but the original stencilling remains intact behind this covering; and several of the bedrooms on the upper floors were panelled in the latter part of the nineteenth century. There has been a minimum of interior repainting, and that which has been done has duplicated the original colors and patterns. The basement, which is a full story in height at the rear of the house, and the second story are now used as apartments.



**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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 type="checkbox"/>	19th Century <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1870**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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 type="checkbox"/>	_____
Art <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>		_____
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>		_____

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

Built in 1870, the Covell house is one of the earliest works of the Boston architect, William Ralph Emerson, who is well-known for his later "shingle style" houses of the 1880's on Mount Desert Island in Maine and in the Boston and North Shore areas in Massachusetts. Working in conjunction with the German-born architect Carl Fehmer during a brief partnership, Emerson designed the Covell house in an early "stick style," with the internal construction allowed by the balloon frame expressed on the clapboarded exterior walls; although--much simplified--the house is stylistically tied to the earlier, academic traditions of mansard houses which, however, were more opulent and less skeletal.

This house was given prominence in an exhibition of Emerson's work at the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University in 1969 and in the accompanying catalogue. The great importance of this house today lies in its unparalleled interiors of carved woods, original furnishings, and rich stencils which can be seen in unspoilt condition and arrangement. It is one of the very few structures which still fully retains these early stencils of abstracted and linear floral motifs, such as were widely circulated in Owen Jones' Grammar of Ornament in the mid-nineteenth century. Although the paint has begun to deteriorate in a few spots, there has been a minimum of repainting, and that which has been done has duplicated the original colors and designs.

Quite recently, the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (having extended its interests and its properties into the Victorian era) has taken particular interest in this house, which it may wish and be able (through arrangements with the present owner and occupant) to acquire, to maintain and restore as a notably intact house-museum.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

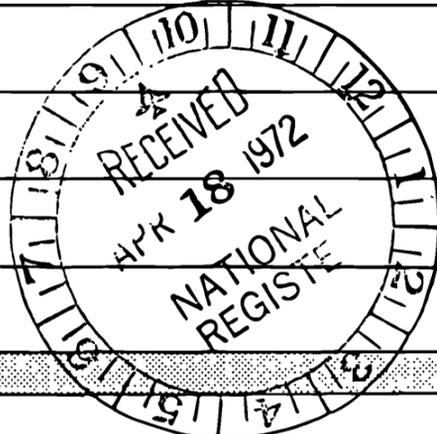
Downing, Antoinette F., and Scully, Vincent J., Jr.: The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1915 (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1952), p. 134.  
 Darling, Fayreen B.: The Most Elegant House in Newport, in "Yankee," Vol. 31, No. 4, pp. 78-81, 128-129. April, 1967 (Dublin, New Hampshire, 1967).  
 Zaitevsky, Cynthia: the architecture of William Ralph Emerson, 1833-1917 (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1969), pp. 4-5, 76, 94-95.

**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 ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		41° 29' 38.54"N	71° 19' 17.91"W	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Clifford M. Renshaw, III, 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: Fredrick C. Williams

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: April 14, 1972

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

Robert M. Utley  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 7/31/72

ATTEST:

William Thomsen  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

19/306120/1596006

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

12-10-78-4-4