

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Rhode Island
COUNTY:	Newport
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	MAY 8 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Eisenhower House

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Commandant's Residence, Quarters Number One, Fort Adams

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Harrison Avenue, Fort Adams

CITY OR TOWN:  
Newport

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
#1: Fernand J. St. Germain

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Rhode Island	44	Newport	005

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <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 type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments Vacant

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: United States of America, Department of the Navy  
Commanding Officer, Navy Public Works Center

STREET AND NUMBER:  
--

CITY OR TOWN:  
Newport

STATE:  
Rhode Island

CODE:  
44

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Newport City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Broadway

CITY OR TOWN:  
Newport

STATE:  
Rhode Island

CODE:  
44

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Rhode Island Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY: 1974

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:  
52 Power Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Providence

STATE:  
Rhode Island

CODE:  
44

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER  
DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

MAY 8 1974

**7. DESCRIPTION**

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Eisenhower House at Fort Adams stands isolated on a bluff amidst broad lawns rimmed with hedges. The drive leads through an alley of old shade trees and encircles a flower bed in front of the house. The rear of the building faces the fort to the north. To the east is Brenton Cove and Newport Harbor, to the west Narragansett Bay and Conanicut Island. The southern prospect affords a view across the fields of Hammersmith Farm and Newport County Club to the Atlantic. One could hardly ask for a finer setting.

The house was built in the winter of 1872-73 for General H. J. Hunt, commandant of Fort Adams. It is a two story clapboard structure with high mansard roof. A mansarded ell extends from the rear of the building. The main body of the structure is three window bays wide and two deep. The static mass of this block is varied by a semi-octagonal bay, running the full height of the building, thrust out on the west side. A piazza surrounding the building on its three principle elevations has chamfered and braced posts supporting a flat roof. The east end of the piazza has been enclosed to form a glassed-in sun porch; the existing piazza balustrade does not appear to be original.

A boldly scaled modillioned and dentillated cornice ornaments the skirt of the mansard roof. The juncture of the steeply sloped lower roof pitch and the nearly flat deck above is finished with a heavy moulded curb. "Stick Style" barge boards and shaped fascias trim the mansard's dormer windows. Three brick chimneys ornamented with raised panels and corbel belts rise from the deck. A fourth chimney serves the ell. An exterior chimney has been added to the northwest face of the main body of the house.

The symmetrical three bay south elevation of the house has a central entrance, a hooded central second story window, and a central cross-gable in the roof. The vertical progression of these accents is played off against the emphatic horizontals of the cornice, unbroken by the cross-gable, and the piazza roof. Likewise, the peaked caps of the dormers contrast with the moulded and projected lintels of the second story windows.

Fenestration throughout the main body of the house is regular. The windows are arranged in a straightforward grid pattern. The window openings are of equal size on each floor. Dormer and second story windows have 2/2 double hung sash. The tall first floor windows reach to the floor; some are hung with french doors rather than sash.

One enters the house through paneled double doors leading into a small vestibule; a second pair of doors separates this entry from the central stairhall. Set in this second set of double doors are large panes of glass etched and frosted with vine borders and garlands; central wreaths contain the cipher "U.S." The stairhall gives access to the upper floors, the three public rooms on the first floor, and to the service ell. The stairs themselves rise in three runs to the second floor. The open newel is illuminated by a skylight. The balusters are

See continuation sheet 2

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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

(Continuation Sheet) 2

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 18 1977

(Number all entries)

7. Description cont.

turned and applied scrollsaw frets ornament the riser ends. The newel post is a massive moulded and carved affair. At its base the "U.S." cipher appears once again.

East of the stairhall are the library and dining room; a double door connects these rooms. The library is fitted out with paneled bookshelves and an iconographically unique mantelpiece in which colonnettes supporting the mantel shelf take the form of cannon and cannon balls, emblematic of the Artillery Corps. West of the hall is a single large parlor. An archway supported on paneled pilasters with Corinthian capitals divides the apartment in two. French doors in both the parlor and library lead out onto the piazza.

The layout of the service ell is a modest reflection of the sophistication the housekeeping arts achieved in the late nineteenth century. At the rear of the building is a large kitchen, back hall and service entrance. A staircase from the kitchen leads directly to the servants quarters above. Between the kitchen and dining room is a butler's pantry; a pass-through connects kitchen and pantry. The ell also contains a larder, now partially taken over by a lavatory.

The second and third stories of the house each contain four bedrooms. Bathrooms have been installed in the space over the vestibule. Four-panel doors and heavy moulded door and window casings are found throughout the house. Floors on the first and second story are hardwood; the third story floor is pine.

The Eisenhower House is in good condition and an excellent state of preservation. The property is in process of acquisition by the State of Rhode Island from the federal government. Plans are being developed for its use as a part of the emerging Fort Adams State Park. The 4.7 acre site includes the house (Building #1 at Fort Adams) and a two-car garage (Building #82).

8. Significance cont.

which to attack. An extensive system of landward defenses guarding this sector is a distinguishing feature of Fort Adams.

The fort was designed to defend against sailing ships with smooth bore cannon. Events of the Civil War proved that masonry coastal fortresses had been rendered obsolete by steam-powered vessels and rifled naval guns. These weapons could demolish the likes of Fort Adams. In the Post-Civil War era, defensive armaments here and at other coastal forts were removed from masonry casemates and dispersed in external batteries.

The old fort was maintained as a command post, arsenal and barracks. It was no longer necessary to keep the obsolescent landward defenses and the surrounding field of battle free of compromising obstructions and soon

See continuation sheet 3

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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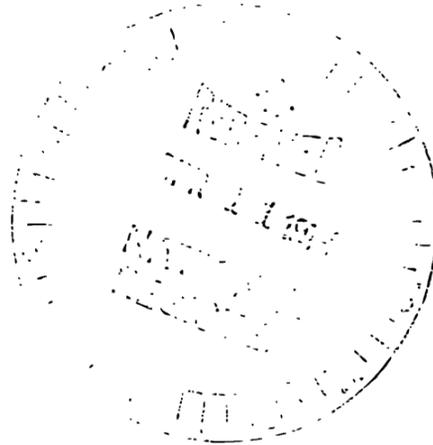
(Continuation Sheet) -3

STATE		Rhode Island
COUNTY		Newport
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
	MAY 18 1979	

(Number all entries)

8. Significance cont.

construction of new facilities took place in this area. The Eisenhower House serving Fort Adams' commander was the first dwelling on post built outside the walls, its handsome situation made available by a fundamental change in the conduct of coastal warfare.



**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" 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) **1872-73, 1958, 1960**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	losophy	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	itarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Eisenhower House is a well preserved late nineteenth century dwelling. It was designed by George C. Mason and Son, a leading Newport architectural firm. It cost \$20,000, and is representative of upper middle class suburban residences of the period. As a 1958 newspaper article suggests, "spaciousness without show" distinguishes the house architecturally.

The first Fort Adams commandant quartered in the house was General Henry Jackson Hunt. Hunt has been cited as the most distinguished American artillery officer of the mid-nineteenth century. He came from a military family and was educated at West Point, graduating in 1839. Hunt served in the Mexican War of the 1840's, revised artillery tactics for the army in the 1850's, and fought on the Federal side throughout the Civil War. Perhaps his most famous involvement in a Civil War battle was at Gettysburg where his cannon broke Pickett's charge.

The best known resident of the house, albeit the one who occupied it for the briefest periods, was Dwight Eisenhower. President Eisenhower lived here during late summer vacations in 1958 and again in 1960. It is from these visits that the house gets its name. During the President's first Newport vacation in 1957 he lived at the Naval War College on Coasters Harbor Island. But golf was President Eisenhower's chief recreational activity, and the house which bears his name is the closest government-owned residence to the Newport Country Club where he played. Thus it was that the former commandant's quarters at Fort Adams became the "Summer White House."

Aside from its associations with past residents, the Eisenhower House may be interpreted historically as a symbol of a momentous shift in American military strategy. To comprehend this point, one must perceive the house in relation to the artillery post on which it was built.

As planned in the 1820's, Fort Adams was considered an impregnable defensive bastion guarding the approaches to Narragansett Bay. As a fortress, it was designed to function effectively even under siege. Ammunition storage, food, water and living space for officers and men were provided within the fort. The potential battle ground to the south was kept clear so that no enemy would have a sheltered position from

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Malone, Dumas (Editor); Dictionary of American Biography;  
 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1932; V. IX, pp. 386-387.  
Newport Mercury; 4 January, 1873.  
Providence Journal; 27 August 1958; pp.1, 15;  
 7 July 1960; pp.1, 8.

**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	° ' "	° ' "		41° 28' 17.47"	71° 20' 33.87"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 4.7 acres.

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:  
 D. W. Chase, Survey Director

ORGANIZATION: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

DATE: March 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 52 Power Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence

STATE: Rhode Island

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: Richard Williams  
 Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: APR 1 1974

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

A. R. Winters  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/8/74

ATTEST:  
Ann H. [Signature]  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 5-7-74

CIT/1  
 19/500  
 45

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

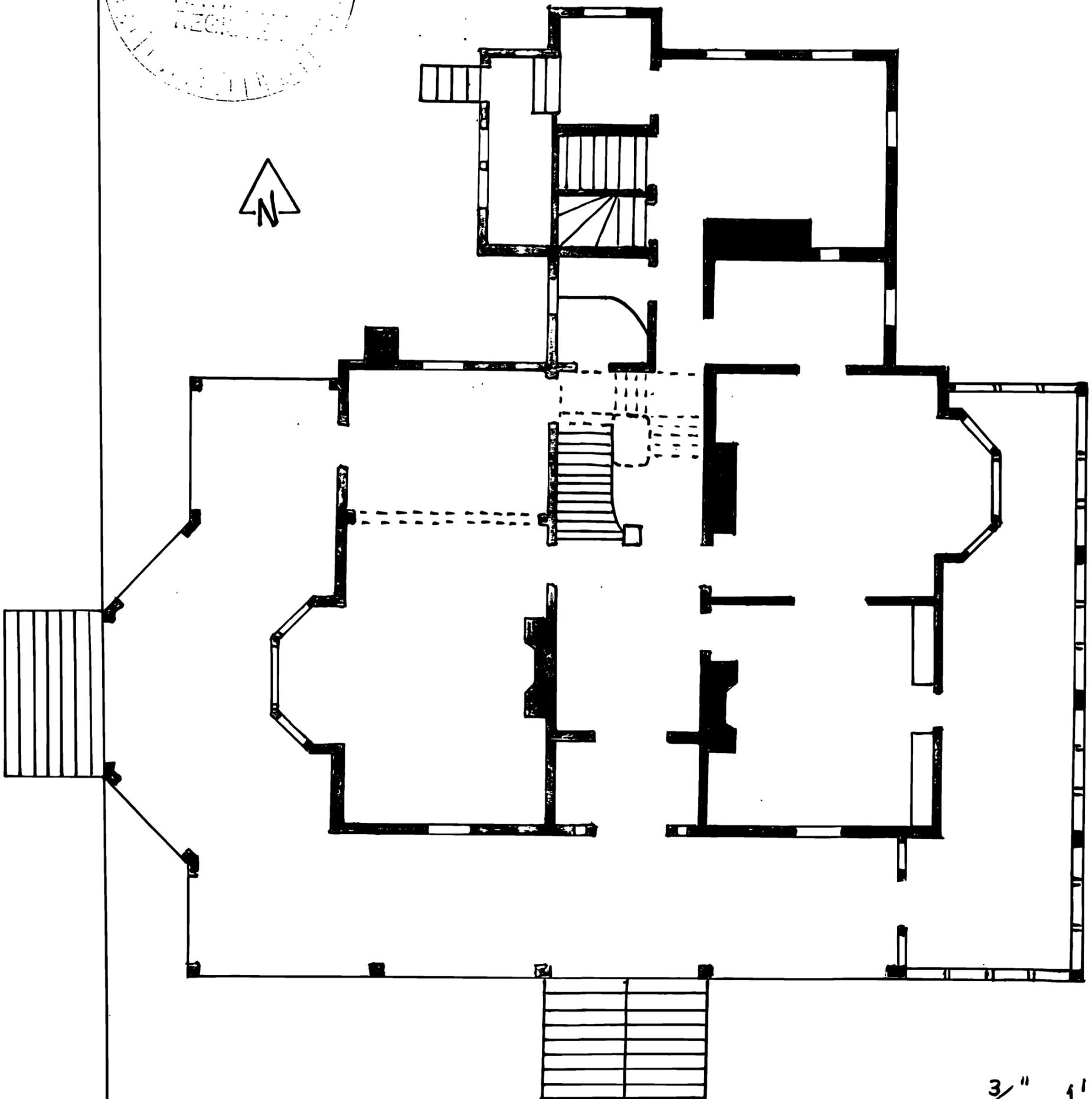
(Continuation Sheet) 1

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
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MAY 8	1974

(Number all entries)



EISENHOWER HOUSE  
first floor plan



3/32" = 1'