

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

Though Kingston Village did not develop extensively until the mid-eighteenth century, its earliest settlement dates from the so-called Pettaquanscutt Purchase -- a major part of that tract of land known by its aboriginal name as the Narragansett Country, and an extremely fertile and productive area which included within its boundaries the present towns of North Kingstown, South Kingstown, and Narragansett -- from the Narragansett Indians in 1658. The original purchasers, a Boston Company of seven men whose intent was to found a settlement rivaling the Providence Plantations, settled on the east slope of what became known as Tower Hill, overlooking Narragansett Bay in the eastern part of the present South Kingston. On a ridge and its adjacent slopes, about four miles west of Tower Hill, these purchasers laid out a 1,000-acre tract of land for farms, and soon a small settlement was established here, apart from the village at Tower Hill. This was the beginning of Kingston Village, known then as Little Rest, a name derived from the supposed sojourn of soldiers just prior to the Great Swamp Fight of 1765 during the King Philip's War.

The basis of this new village was formed by the crossroads of the old Pequot Indian Trail, now North and South Roads, and a right-of-way through the farms to Tower Hill, later to become the main street of Kingston -- Kingston Road -- and its extension as Mooresfield Road. (The Post Road, which elsewhere in western and southern Rhode Island had generally followed the Pequot Trail, had bypassed this portion to pass instead to the east through Tower Hill.) The first house lots were established soon after 1700 when Robert Potter, who maintained a farm to the north of the main street, deeded a number of small lots along that side of the street, mostly to his children. The first house known to have been built in Kingston was erected in 1710 by John Moore at the crossroads, on a two-acre lot on the southeast corner. A substantial two-and-a-half-story, three-bay wide, gambrel-roofed house, it remains today with a later two-bay extension on its west side (see map code f). Opposite, facing South Road, is the Elisha Reynolds House built in 1738; the second oldest extant structure in the village, it too is a two-and-a-half-story, gambrel-roofed structure (see map code jj).

South Kingston was incorporated as a town in 1732 and a decade later a court house and jail had been raised at Tower Hill, an outgrowth of the earliest settlement in the town. The growth of the community at Little Rest had been rapid however and was soon large enough to challenge Tower Hill, and when in 1752 the original court house and jail had fallen into disrepair, the county seat was transferred to Little Rest, the beginning of a gradual shift of county activities which would culminate a century later. It was in this period that Kingston Village (its name after 1825) developed. The center for the system of large plantations in the fertile South County region of the pre-Revolutionary and Early Republican era, the village was service oriented, the cultural, professional, and legal center of the county.

In 1775 the old County Court House was constructed at 1329 Kingston

(see continuation sheet 1)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" 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)

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/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

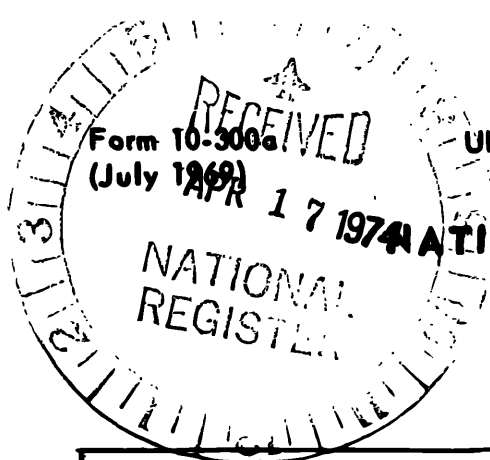
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Originally the site of the hunting and agricultural grounds of the Narragansett Indians, the South County region in the eighteenth century developed a society which was an anomaly in New England, indeed which was more akin to the plantations of the South. With a cultural affinity to Newport, an economy based on slaves, and a freedom from the religious restrictions of the other New England colonies, a wealthy, even flamboyant, life of leisure flourished. While the other Rhode Island towns had been built around ports, basing their economies on the commerce of trade, Kingston in a way unique to Rhode Island was the cultural and professional center of a great agricultural district.

The village was for nearly a century and a half the county seat, and the Court House itself was for fifteen years, through the Revolutionary War and after, one of the five state houses of Rhode Island. Besides the Court House, Records Office, and Jail, there were taverns and inns, stores, a bank, lawyers' offices, two schools, a church, doctor's offices, blacksmith shops, and even a stage coach barn. Unchanged by the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century, this heritage comes down to us today nearly intact. For of the forty-four structures within the historic district, fully three quarters predate 1840, within a village environment essentially unchanged for over a century.

Today the Town of South Kingstown has still no real town center, but rather retains its agrarian character, interspersed with local communities of various sorts. Most recent growth has been centered to the south of Kingston about the nineteenth century industrial villages of Wakefield and Peace Dale, and today nothing remains of the original settlement at Tower Hill. With the development of the University of Rhode Island at Kingston, there has been pressure for further suburbanization and resort facilities. The value of Kingston Village's historic and architectural fabric, almost unchanged since its greatest period of growth, has long been recognized and protected by its residents, and since 1959 has been under the control of a locally initiated historic zoning ordinance and its preservation seems thus assured.

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	Washington	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE
		MAY 1 1974

(Number all entries)

2. Location.

For the purposes of this National Register nomination, the bounds of the Kingston Village Historic District are as follows: the district includes all properties on both sides of North Road between its intersections with Kingston Road and Briar Lane, to a distance of 200 feet back from the center line of North Road; all properties on both sides of Mooresfield Road between its intersection with Kingston Road and a point 600 feet easterly on Mooresfield Road, to a distance of 200 feet back from the center line of Mooresfield Road; all properties on both sides of South Road between its intersection with Kingston Road and a point 1,000 feet southerly on South Road so as to bound on but not include the Potter Cemetery, to a distance of 200 feet back from the center line of South Road on its east side and to a distance of 600 feet back from the center line of South Road on its west side; all properties on the south side of and including Kingston Road between its intersections with Mooresfield Road and Little Rest Road, to a distance of 200 feet back from the center line of Kingston Road; and all properties on the north side of Kingston Road between its intersections with Mooresfield Road and Upper Campus Road, to a distance of 400 feet back from the center line of Kingston Road.

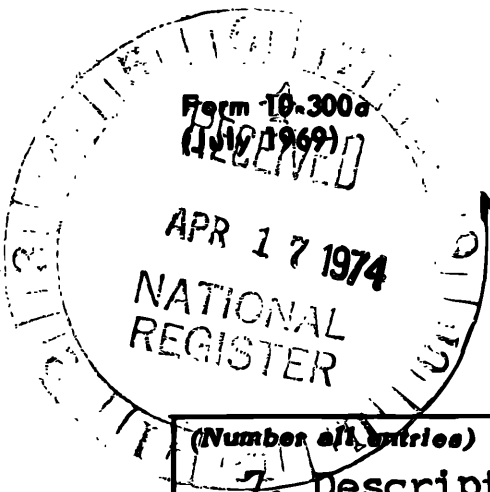
6. Representation in Existing Surveys.

Rhode Island Statewide Survey: Report Number 13
1970 -- State
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
John Brown House, 52 Power Street
Providence, Rhode Island Code 44

7. Description.

Road (see map code u). One of the five original state houses where the rotating Rhode Island General Assembly met from 1776 to 1791, it served as the county court house for 115 years. A typical two-and-a-half-story, gable-roofed late Colonial structure when built, it was altered to its present appearance in 1876 by the addition of a mansard roof and a central pavillion and tower to which the original belfry was moved. Since the removal of the county court to West Kingston at the end of the nineteenth century, the building has been the home of the Kingston Free Library. Immediately to the left of the Court House, at 1331 Kingston Road (see map code v), is the old County Records Office, now the Little Rest Museum, a granite Greek Revival structure which when built was said to be the first fully fireproof building in the state. In 1792 the old County Jail was erected at 1348 Kingston Road (see map code x); it is now the headquarters of the Pettaquamscutt Historical Society. The Kingston Inn, a large gambrel-roofed structure constructed in 1757, stands at 1320 Kingston Road (see map code r), nearly opposite the Caleb Westcott Tavern of 1774 at 1309-1311 Kingston Road (see map code m), and the Timothy Peckham Tavern of before 1800 at 1323 Kingston Road (see map code s), both somewhat smaller scaled gable-roofed buildings. Opposite the Court House

(see continuation sheet 2)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #2

STATE	Rhode Island
COUNTY	Washington
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 1 1974

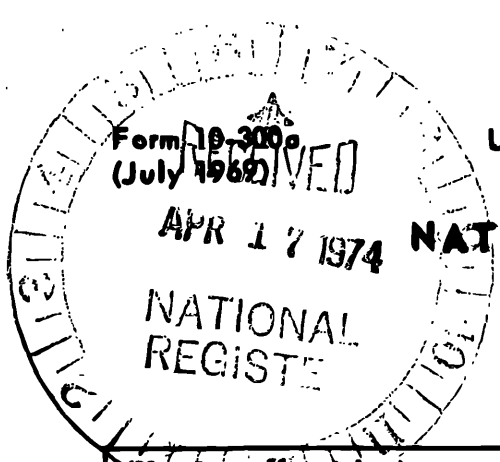
(Number of entries)

7. Description.

is the Kingston Congregational Church at 1334 Kingston Road (see map code w) built in 1820 on the typical meeting house plan; the peculiar Parish House, with its Federal elliptical doorway and factory-type monitor roof, was built adjacent to the church at 1328 Kingston Road (see map code t) in 1832. A private school was started as early as 1759; later used as a store and more recently as a post office, the original one-room school house remains today at 1313 Kingston Road (see map code n).

The only farmhouse from this period within the confines of the village was located at the end of a narrow lane (see map code ii), now known by the name of the original owner, the Hon. Elisha Reynolds Potter, a Rhode Island Supreme Court Justice, who built his house in 1809 in the traditional New England two-and-a-half-story, gable-roofed, central chimney form. In town the prevalent doorway type dates from the Federal period and has side pilasters with elongated capitals so as to accommodate a transom light under the entablature; good examples are those of the Thomas R. Wells House of 1820 at 25 North Road (see map code cc) and the Luke Aldrich House of 1829 opposite at 36 North Road (see map code ff). Most houses here have incorporated splayed lintel window caps but only the Wilkins Updike House of 1819 at 1276 Kingston Road (see map code d) has quoining at the house's corners as well. The Tomas S. Taylor House of 1827 at 1305 Kingston Road (see map code k), the Asa Potter House of 1829 at 1291 Kingston Road (see map code h), and the Luke Aldrich House are all built on the central-hall, four room, two chimney plan and have hip roofs with monitors and balustrades, an important Federal type. The first two have elaborate entrance porticos as well, with side and transom lights. The Sarah Fellows House of c.1820 at 7 South Road (see map code kk) has a gable-on-hip roof. During the eighteenth century the surrounding plantations had kept a number of slaves, but by the beginning of the nineteenth century this had all but ceased and many of the freed slaves found their way to Kingston. One, a blacksmith named George Fayerweather, built the one-and-a-half-story gable-roofed house on Mooresfield Road (see map code z) in 1820, which has been restored as a museum in recent years.

With the exception of the old County Records Office of 1857, the Henry Eldred, Jr., House of c.1840 at 26 North Road (see map code dd) is the only good example of the Greek Revival period in Kingston; originally a one-story Doric temple with a portico of six free-standing columns, it was raised earlier this century by inserting a shingled second story above the entablature. But when the railroad was built through South Kingstown in 1837 Kingston Village was bypassed, and with no water power of its own, Kingston was not industrialized as were so many Colonial towns of Rhode Island. Sustained only by its status as the county seat -- the heyday of the large plantations was now over -- and the establishment of the Kingston Seminary in 1853 -- the bracketed Victorian school building is located at 33 North Road (see map code ee) -- the town slowly deteriorated during the second half of the nineteenth century. A mansard cottage on the outskirts of the village at 1262 Kingston Road (see map code c), a one-and-a-half-story
(see continuation sheet 3)



Form 10-300a
(July 1962)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #3

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Washington	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 1 1974

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

"Lazy-T" plan farmhouse with carpenter detail, and the alterations made to the Court House in the then current Second Empire style, are almost the only representations of the Victorian period in Kingston Village.

The founding of the Rhode Island College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts in 1892 on the outskirts of Kingston has been the single most important development of the village since its inception. Now the University of Rhode Island, the school has grown to a considerable size in recent years. But except for the new faculty houses along Kingston Road, which necessitated the demolition of the 1740 Cyrus French Estate, the university has been expanding back away from the village itself on old farmlands. Today Kingston Village has buildings dating from the early eighteenth century to the twentieth century, but the vast majority are from the Colonial and Early Republican eras including a central cluster of twenty-nine adjacent structures from this early period.

Selective Inventory of Structures of Special Historic and Architectural Value

<u>No.</u>	<u>Street, Name, Date</u>	<u>Map Code</u>
	<u>Kingston Road</u>	
1243	Sherwell, 1893	a
1259	William H. Chace House, c.1750	b
1262	Mansard House, c.1875	c
1276	Wilkins Updike House, 1819	d
1282	Kingston Hill Store, c. 1850	e
1286	John Moore House, 1710	f
1286R	Updike Law Office	g
1291	Asa Potter House, 1829	h
1299	Asa Potter Law Office, 1831	i
1301	Abel Cottrell House, 1818	j
1305	Thomas S. Taylor House, 1827 (ell, Joseph Perkins House, 1775)	k
1308	John Douglas House, 1753	l
1309	Caleb Westcott Tavern, 1774	m
1313	Private School, 1759	n
1314	Matthew Waite House, 1819	o
1315	Nichols Stage Coach Barn, 1825	p
1319	John T. Nichols House/Landholders Bank, 1802	q
1320	Kingston Inn, 1757	r
1323	Timothy Peckham Tavern, pre-1800	s
1328	Parish House/Thomas P. Wells House, 1832	t
1329	Old County Court House, 1775	u
1331	Old County Records Office, 1857	v
1334	Kingston Congregational Church, 1820	w

(see continuation sheet 4)

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

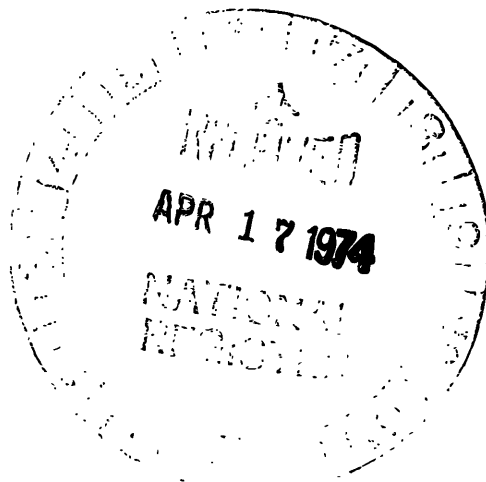
(Continuation Sheet) #4

STATE	Rhode Island
COUNTY	Washington
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
1	MAY 1 1974

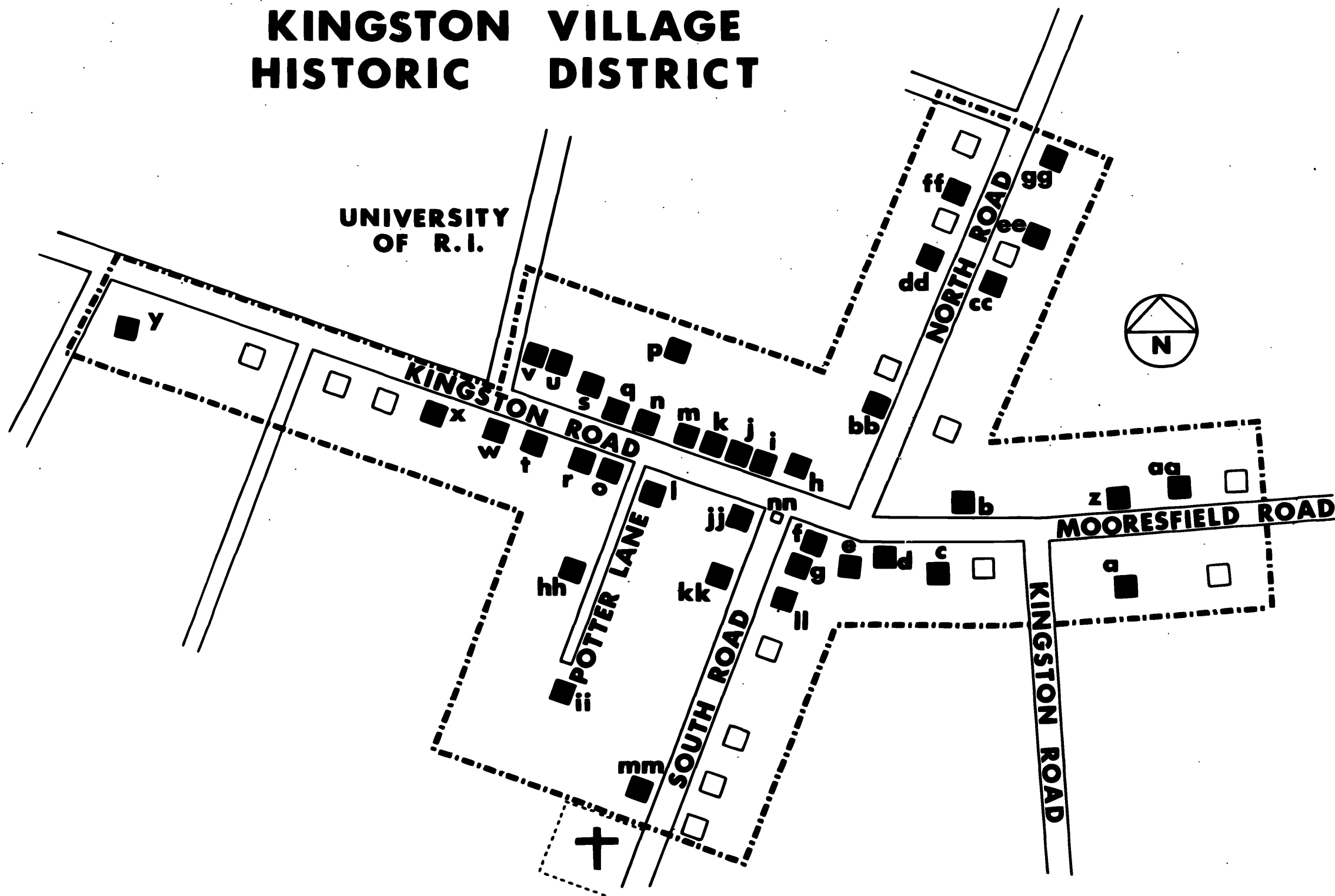
(Number all entries)

7. Description

- Kingston Road (continued)
- 1348 Old County Jail, 1792 x
-- John Potter House, 1775 y
- Mooresfield Road
- George Fayerweather House, 1820 z
-- Solomon Fayerweather House, c.1845 aa
- North Road
- 12 Timothy Peckham House, c.1796 bb
25 Thomas R. Wells House, 1820 cc
26 Henry Eldred, Jr., House, c.1840 dd
33 Kingston Seminary, 1853 ee
36 Luke Aldrich House, 1829 ff
39 G.N. Champlin House, c.1850 gg
- Potter Lane
- Old Manor House hh
-- Elisha Reynolds Potter House, 1809 ii
- South Road
- 1 Elisha Reynolds House, 1738 jj
7 Sarah Fellows House, c.1820 kk
8 Elisha Gardner House, c.1803 ll
31 Herbert Helme House, c.1788 mm



KINGSTON VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT



- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| a Sherwell | k Taylor House | u Court House | ee Kingston Seminary |
| b Chace House | l Douglas House | v Records Office | ff Aldrich House |
| c Mansard House | m Westcott Tavern | w Congregational Church | gg Champlin House |
| d Updike House | n Private School | x Jail | hh Old Manor House |
| e Kingston Store | o Waite House | y J. Potter House | ii E.R. Potter Homstead |
| f Moore House | p Stage Coach Barn | z G. Fayerweather House | jj Reynolds House |
| g Updike Law Office | q Landholders Bank | aa S. Fayerweather House | kk Fellows House |
| h Potter House | r Kingston Inn | bb Peckham House | ll Gardner House |
| i Potter Law Office | s Peckham Tavern | cc Wells House | mm Helme House |
| j Cottrell House | t Parish House | dd Eldred House | nn Village Well |

Form No. 10-301
Rev. 7-72

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
	MAY 1 1974

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON:		Kingston Village Historic District	
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
See continuation sheet 1.			
CITY OR TOWN:			
South Kingston			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Rhode Island	44	Washington	009
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE:			
James Gibbs, Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission			
SCALE:			
Not given.			
DATE:			
March 1974			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			

