

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Rhode Island
COUNTY:	Washington
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	DEC 31 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:	Wickford Historic District
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION

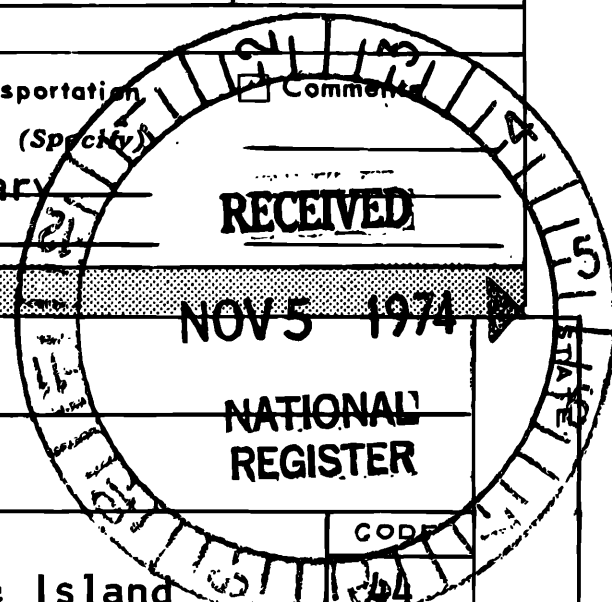
STREET AND NUMBER: <i>roughly bounded by Town Hall and Post Roads as far as Mill Pond</i> See continuation sheet 1 and 5 to Lindley Ave.			
CITY OR TOWN:		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:	
North Kingstown		Robert O. Tiernan # 2	
STATE:	CODE:	COUNTY:	CODE:
Rhode Island	44	Washington	009

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Library</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:	Multiple ownership
STREET AND NUMBER:	See continuation sheet No. 1
CITY OR TOWN:	North Kingstown
STATE:	Rhode Island



5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:	North Kingstown Town Hall
STREET AND NUMBER:	Boston Neck Road
CITY OR TOWN:	North Kingstown 02852
STATE:	Rhode Island 02852
CODE:	44

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:	
DATE OF SURVEY:	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:	(in part) Main Street Association
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN:	Wickford
STATE:	Rhode Island 02852
CODE:	44

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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

Among the villages that make up the Town of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, Wickford is the most extensive and the most closely built, but it does not seem urban. The other villages centered upon ferries, mills, or agricultural exchange, or finally upon summer vacationists. Wickford eventually had all of these. From its beginning it was a place of land and water occupations, its own land and harbor interpenetrating through a series of tidal ponds.

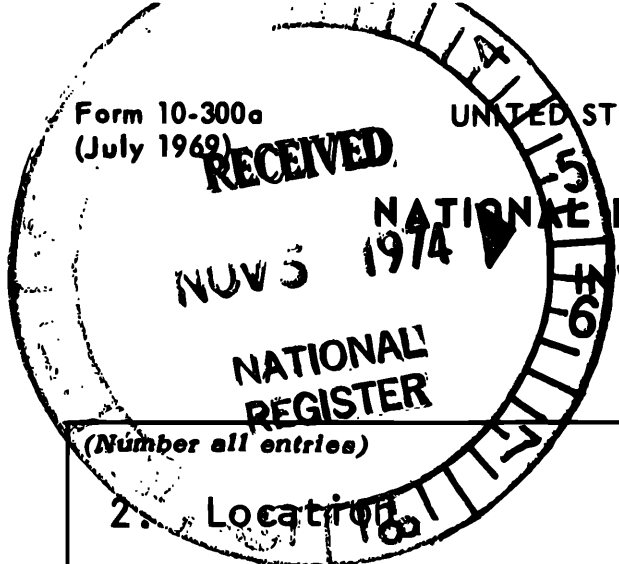
Wickford owes its small scale to the dead-ending of two main roads at the water, and of one short internal street in T-intersections at both ends; it owes its homogeneous character to the fairly rapid development of half a mile of Main Street as a mixture of dwellings and shops during the years roughly 1785-1845. The almost uniform roof slope and chimney dimension, the repetition of a few building types and facades, and the existence of five or six related doorway types, create an urbane pattern within which a few exceptions make good accents.

Though the oldest surviving houses are outside the village itself, there are Wickford houses from early in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. Their close cheek-to-cheek setting with their later neighbors suggests that early developers made sharp bargains, but as competition for the remaining lots grew, values obviously will have risen. The original lots were surely deeper, the ones on the south side of Main Street reaching to Wickford Cove; the opening of Washington Street, perhaps about 1800, had the same effect of cutting across old boundaries as did the opening of the "dog leg" of Church Lane parallel to Main Street when the Narragansett Church was moved in 1800.

The phrase "Standard Wickford type" used in the listing of buildings, refers in principle to the two-story house with central chimney and five-room plan; where this phrase is modified by the word "lopsided", or where the word "lopsided" is used alone, it is intended to indicate by these three or four words the type of 18th-century house which is generally considered to have grown from a house of one room and garret into a house of two symmetrical rooms on opposite sides of the original chimney, possibly two rooms on each of two floors, and which came to include a lean-to -- the whole frequently not quite symmetrical in measure. Except for one or two very large and ambitious late 18th-century houses, and for the smaller 19th-century examples of the one and-a-half story, gable-roofed type, there are very few central-hall houses in Wickford.

"Mill-house type" is used here to indicate the frequent small clap-boarded house of about 1830-1860, the studding of which is stilted above the joists in order to allow head room of approximately bedstead height (at the lowest) in second-story rooms. This construction allows the use of most of the space under the roof. In a few cases, shallow windows under the eaves add light to the sides of upper-floor rooms; but this device, frequent in upstate New York, is not common in North Kingstown. In mill villages this house normally has the roof ridge parallel to the

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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2. Location

At Wickford, the west shore of Narragansett Bay is indented, and Wickford Harbor and its subsidiary coves are further indented between Poplar Point and Sauga Point; from each of which stretches a breakwater of rip-rap. The coves coming out of Mill Creek and Cocumscussoc Brook bound the historic district on the northeast, and Wickford Harbor itself forms the east boundary. From the point where the bridge of Boston Neck Road separates the Harbor from Wickford Cove, the district boundary is a lot's depth northeast of Boston Neck Road, to a point about 400 feet southeast of the south side of Beach Street; thence west at right angles to Boston Neck Road to a lot's depth west of said Road; thence northwest, paralleling said Road, to a lot's depth south of Beach Street; thence west, paralleling Beach Street, to the prolongation of the bounds a lot's depth west of Updike Avenue, thence northeast, paralleling Updike Avenue, to a lot's depth west of Updike Avenue, to within a lot's depth southwest of Boston Neck Road; thence, paralleling Boston Neck Road, and enclosing a lot's depth, to the bridge separating Cove from Harbor. Wickford Cove, on the south of the oldest part of Wickford Village, continues southwest as a series of ponds which form the rest of the southern boundary, to the point where the former branch line of the Penn Central Railroad ran; the west boundary of the district is in principle an average lot-depth west of Tower Hill Road, from the former railroad branch line north to and beyond the point at which the street name of Tower Hill Road changes to Post Road; this boundary continues to a point opposite the center line of the exit road from the state's boat-launching ramp on Mill Cove, which road is about 150 feet north of North Kingstown Police Station (plat 118, lot 32). The north boundary continues to and along that access road (Intrepid Road) to and along the southwest line of the right-of-way of the former Seaview Railroad, to the point where in 1974 the former right-of-way became Newtown Avenue; the north bound then continues more or less east along the north line of Plat 118, lot No. 29, extended, to Mill Cove. It is intended to include in the district the former wetland, latterly built upon within plat 117 and including lots 1 through 61. The map shows these bounds graphically.

7. Description

street, and has a hood over the central door. In North Kingstown it often appears singly with the gable to the street.

A few houses near the Brown Street corner of Main Street retain the shop windows which were a feature of the active commercial life of the first half of the nineteenth century; and one building (145 Main Street, Plat 117, Lot 254) betrays by its obtuse and acute angles that it must have been built late in the development to take full advantage of a narrow lot cut from a broad one. The Avis Block, Plat 117, Lot 156, (1850) facing the head of

(See Continuation Sheet 2)



Form 100-200
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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7. Description

Brown Street, a frankly commercial brick building of four shops with stairways to paired dwellings over them, and somewhat raised basements with sidewalk hatches, nonetheless kept a row-house scale.

After 1865, development had to take place mostly on marginal land around the harbor and its ponds. West Main Street had a few small businesses. Houses here and there were squeezed into the inherited pattern: examples are the mirror-twin stick-shingle houses of about 1875 in Bay Street, perhaps originally summer houses only; the spectacular "Eastlake" house of 1883 built by a mill-owner, replacing a small barn or store at 38 Brown Street; the shingle-style houses toward the west end of West Main Street and along Boston Neck Road on the way to the Town Hall (1888); and the almost "Queen Anne" shingle houses near the north end of Pleasant Street. The brick and iron business building of 1891 designed by W. C. Sawtelle of Providence for Governor Gregory, and containing offices, a small manufacturing business, and a lodge hall, occupied the whole of its lot at the southeast corner of Main and Brown Streets (Plat 117, Lot 83). There were also revisions of some houses of the 1830's and 'forties through new mansard roofs or rear additions.

Because of the close building of Wickford, very little construction resulted within the historic district in the late nineteenth century, but marginal waterfront on Mill Cove north of Ocean Avenue includes some small vacation cottages now occupied the year around; upland territory on Phillips Street, which had a few early 19th-century buildings, received some development after the building in 1907 of the town school (third on that site) between Phillips Street and Academy Cove; and in the mid-twentieth century land between the still later High School farther out on Phillips Street and the West Main Street settlement was given a decent small residential development. The large Georgian Revival house at Boston Neck Road and Beach Street, about 1925 (Plat 90, Lot 13) was probably inspired by the same activity which culminated in Norman Isham's careful restoration of the Narragansett Church, complete with pews, pulpit, and fine lettering by John Howard Benson, in the mid-nineteen twenties.

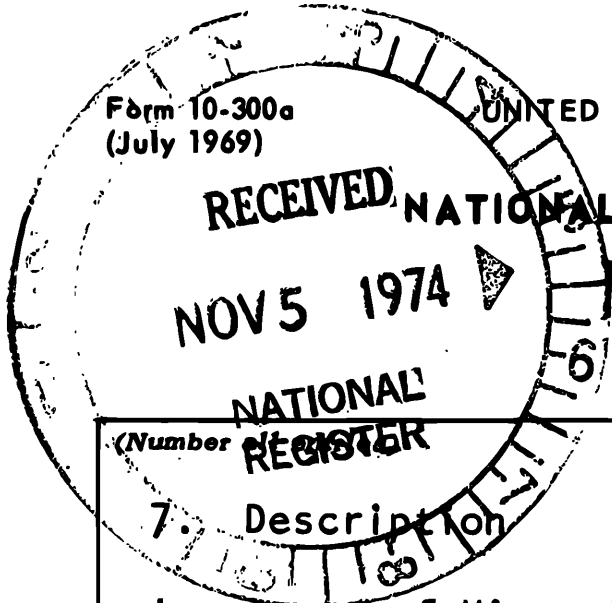
Newtown Avenue, on low-lying marginal land, was bitten out of the former Sea View Railroad right-of-way after its abandonment; this and the Navy housing of the 1940's on West Main Street are included in the District here nominated, as an enlargement of the area of the Historic Zone previously created under Rhode Island law; and this enlargement has the endorsement of the Main Street Association. The research done in preparation of that District by Charles and Violet Daniel underlies much of the present Nomination.

(See Continuation Sheet 3)

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(Continuation Sheet) - 3



(Number) 7. Description

**Inventory of Historic Structures Located Within Wickford Historic District
(Numbers are Key to Historic District Map)**

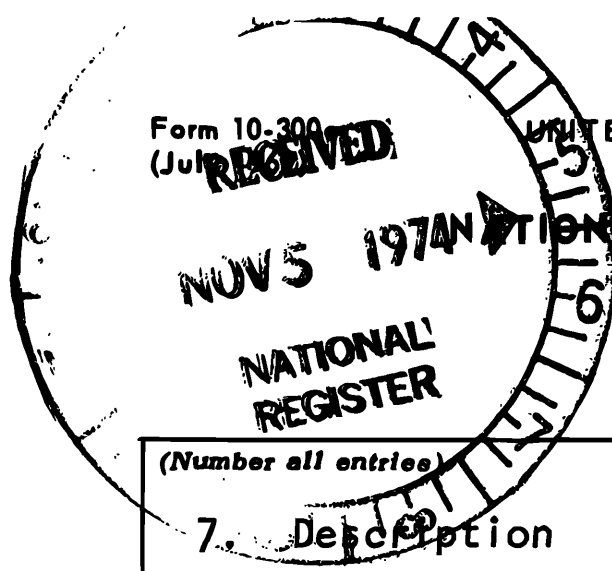
1. 166 Main Street: 2-story central chimney for Samuel Case, 1795.
2. Main Street: (Plat 117, Lot 160) First Baptist Church, Greek Revival, 1816 plus details of c.1835.
3. 101 Main Street: Two-and-one house for Samuel Cooper, 1750 with salt-box and frontal (Federal) extensions.
4. 71 Main Street: Expanded central chimney 2-story house, 1773 ff. (Narragansett House Hotel).
5. 79 Main Street: Double house, 1802 for Daniel Wall and 1809 for George Bailey.
6. 24 Main Street: Brick Federal house, 1817 for Noel Freeborn.
7. 41 Main Street: Large central-hall two-chimney house, 1786 for Immanuel Case (plus addition at rear).
8. 55 Main Street: St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Lombardic Romanesque 1847/8 designed by T. A. Tefft (plus additions), (National Register Property).
9. 19 Pleasant Street: Gable-over-hip-roofed central chimney house, 1745 for John Updike (plus addition and veranda at rear).
10. 42 Pleasant Street: 1½-story gable-roofed house, 1773 for Henry Hall (restored).
11. 55/57 Pleasant Street: Clapboard and shingle house with pseudo-17th century 2-story "porch" formerly entrance, c.1890, now multiple occupancy.
12. 61 Pleasant Street: Shingle-style house c.1890 with semi-octagonal stair bay center front.
13. 71 Pleasant Street: "Queen Anne" shingle-style house c.1890 with open and closed arches.
14. Church Lane: (Plat 117, Lot 71) Narragansett Church, built 4 miles SW of Wickford, 1707, moved to Wickford 1800, restored c.1925 by Norman Isham (National Register Property).
15. 35 Church Lane: 1-story house c.1845, mansarded c.1875, with added three story shingle-style c.1885.
16. 38 Church Lane: Very small gambrel, end to street, 1792 for Daniel Weeden.
17. 18 and 22 Bay Street: Twin mirror-image shingle and turned-post houses c.1875-1885.
18. 11 Bay Street: Very small and steep gambrel, parallel to street, for George Fowler, Jr. 1755.
19. 2 West Main Street: Large 5-bay, 2-story central-chimney house for Lodowick Updike 1793.
20. 17 West Main Street: Broad gambrel, end to street, for Stephen Cooper 1728, apparently raised (1815 ff.) on high brick lower story.
21. 83 West Main Street: 5-bay central-chimney house, c.1800, with small-scaled Federal detail.

(See Continuation Sheet 4)

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(Number all entries)

7. Description

22. 115 West Main Street: Late Greek Revival (Ionic) house for R. & M. Congdon (plus rear addition).
23. 136 West Main Street: Former Town House 1807-1808, as if school or meeting house, with later doorway, now storehouse.
24. 110 West Main Street: Broad-fronted gable-to-street 5-bay house, c.1830.
25. 250 West Main Street: Complex 2 and 3 story shingle-style house with verandas, c.1890.
26. 21 Tower Hill Road: Square late Greek Revival house c.1835, with cupola and veranda perhaps c.1860.
27. Brown Street: (Plat 117, Lot 184) 2-story early Greek Revival house with Doric entry and flush-boarded gable to street, c.1835.
28. 38 Brown Street: 2 and 3 story towered house in "Eastlake" style, for William Gregory, 1883.
29. 1 Brown Street: Brick irregular polygon with modest Lombardic detail built 1865 as Waterside Mill.
30. 55 Brown Street: 2-story Roman Revival "temple" on high basement, built 1898 as Public Library.
31. 1-11 West Main Street: Brick 2-story Avis Block, four shops with upper lodgings and garrets, built 1850 for Mrs. Avis A. Brown.
32. 13 West Main Street: Arcaded and rusticated brick and stone two-story and garret building, for Narragansett Bank, c.1880, with early Colonial Revival wood cornice detail.
33. Phillips Street (Plat 116, Lot 109): School, Colonial Revival style, 1907 (plus large additions).
34. 412 Tower Hill Road: St. Bernard's Roman Catholic Church and Rectory, respectively shingle-Gothic and (later simplified) shingle-domestic styles, c.1880.
35. 146 Boston Neck Road: Large shingle-style house with projecting stair bay and verandas (partly modified), c.1895-1900.
36. Boston Neck Road: (Plat 90, Lot 13): Georgian Revival house with fine exterior and interior detail, and barn/garage, c.1925.
37. Boston Neck Road: (Plat 90, Lot 36) Large 5-bay, 2-story central chimney house c.1800, with later veranda.
38. Boston Neck Road: (Plat 91, Lot 151): Town Hall, brick and stone "Richardsonian" style 1888, by William R. Walker & Sons.
39. 15 Oakland Avenue: Large 2-story Italianate house, apparently built c.1855-65 for W. B. Chapin, modified c.1885 with quoins and upper corner pilasters with porte-cochère added c.1900.
40. 35 Boston Neck Road: Large 2-story and garret bracketed house with broad veranda, c.1860-70.
41. 97 Brown Street: 3-story brick, stone, and terra cotta business building with interior iron supports, 1891 for William Gregory, designed by W. C. Sawtelle.

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goats produced milk which was made into cheese and exported in large quantities.

The Narragansett Country, as an agricultural exporter, was closely allied with Newport, the Rhode Island colony's major port. It was, of course, necessary to get livestock and produce from the area of production to the center of distribution and thus small trans-shipment ports along the western shore of the bay were established. Wickford became one of these.

Early in the eighteenth century Lodowick Updike decided to develop a portion of his coastal lands as a port community. The parcel he chose was a peninsula projecting into the middle of the harbor below Cocumscussoc. It was practically an island, for it was necessary to ford a shallow inlet to reach the property. The location was ideal because the harbor was excellent for navigation, sheltered, and close enough to the sea to remain free from ice in winter.

By 1709, Lodowick Updike had laid out what are now Main and Pleasant streets and offered lots for sale. His real estate venture, known originally as "Updike's Newtown", was slow in becoming a real settlement. Several of the original buyers were Newport merchants who had a clear interest in the venture. But the early purchases were speculative; most of the lots were never built upon by the owners who bought from Updike. The first house, erected by William Hall, went up in 1711. By the mid-eighteenth century, however, the beginnings of a community existed at Wickford, chiefly engaged in the transshipment of local products. In 1737, the year of Lodowick Updike's death, thirty-two lots had been sold and there were seven dwellings in Wickford, as well as several wharfs and warehouses. On the eve of the Revolution, more than fifty lots had been sold, and the village contained some twenty dwellings. The remainder of the land in Wickford belonged to Lodowick Updike's children. Of the twenty houses standing before the Revolution, some fifteen remain today, some little altered, others hardly recognizable.

The British occupied Newport during the war and controlled Narragansett Bay. As a result, the economy of Wickford was at a standstill. The village was subject to attack by marauding English troops and a local militia unit, the Newton Rangers, guarded the community.

The Revolution marked the close of Wickford's existence as a small trading port, dependent upon the prosperity of the Narragansett plantations. Agriculture became considerably less profitable after the war, and the plantations went into decline. Wickford, rather than fading along with them, entered a new era of growth and wealth. Capitalizing on its harbor, Wickford

See Continuation Sheet 6)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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 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) **1711, 1800**

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation <i>of shrubs</i> | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The origins of Wickford may be traced to the earliest European settlement along the west shore of Narragansett Bay. In the 1640's Richard Smith, an associate of Roger Williams, established a trading post on the Cocumscussoc Brook immediately north of the area which is the subject of this nomination. Smith's purpose was to trade with the Indians and he chose his site carefully, selecting a point on a major Indian trail -- later to become the colonial post road -- and skirted by a fine harbor.* Smith and Williams apparently decided to call this general area "Wickford" to honor Connecticut Gov. Winthrop's wife, Elizabeth, a native of Wickford, England (it was not until many years later that the name "Wickford" came to be associated exclusively with the present village).

Smith's trading post became the property of his son, Richard, Jr., who developed the land, was prominent in local affairs and took an active part in King Philip's War of 1675-76. ("Smith's Castle" at Cocumscussoc is already on the National Register). Richard Smith, Jr., left his estate, which included all of the present village of Wickford, to a nephew, Lodowick Updike.

Updike continued the Smith's lead and developed the property as a large and profitable plantation. The entire southeastern region of Rhode Island at this time, the "Narragansett Country", was dominated by a group of land owners controlling vast agricultural estates. Lodowick Updike was one of these land owners. The Narragansett Country was the most prosperous region of the colony, indeed, one of the richest areas in all the English colonies. The Narragansett Planters, as they were known, grew a variety of crops, but their chief activity was in raising livestock -- sheep, pigs, horses and cattle. They developed the famed Narragansett Pacer, a breed of horse so highly prized that the breeding stock was depleted in the eighteenth century. Their herds of cows and

* Roger Williams himself had established a trading post in this vicinity by 1638, (sold to Smith in 1651). There is some reason to believe that the 17th century house known as the Palmer-Northrup house (NR) located on the Post Road about one-half mile north of Wickford proper, relates to the trading post.

(See Continuation Sheet 5)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Cole, J.R.; History of Washington & Kent Counties; W. W. Preston, New York, 1889.
2. Coleman, Peter J.; The Transformation of R.I., Brown University, Providence, 1969.
3. Peace, John C. & John M. Niles; A Gazetteer of Connecticut & R. I.; William S. Marsh, Hartford, 1819.
4. Snow, Edward R.; Report of the R. I. Census of 1875; Providence, 1876
5. White, Wl. Hunter C.; Wickford & Its Old Houses; Main St. Assoc., Wickford, R.I., 1936.

(See Continuation Sheet 10)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA See Continuation Sheet 9

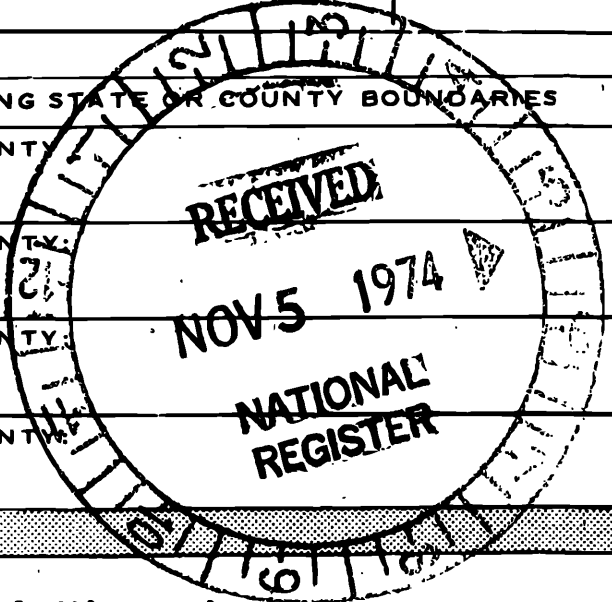
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

UTM
OK CD
SEE
LIST



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Winslow Ames, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission DATE: October 30, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: 52 Power Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island CODE: 44

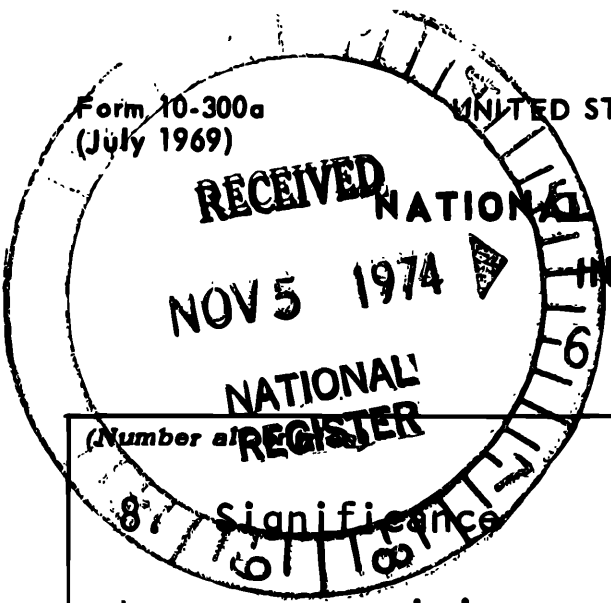
12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>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:</p> <p>National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name: <u>Richard C. Williams</u></p> <p>Title: <u>State Historic Preservation Officer</u></p> <p>Date: <u>October 31, 1974</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u>[Signature]</u> Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date: <u>DEC 31 1974</u></p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p><u>[Signature]</u> Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date: <u>DEC 31 1974</u></p>
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became a maritime community, with an economy based on fishing, boat building, the coastal and West India trades, and occasional ventures to the Mediterranean and South America. In the early nineteenth century six Wickford vessels and some 100 men were employed in the Labrador fishery. The catch was sold, salted or dried, usually in the Caribbean, where this cargo would be exchanged for molasses to be distilled in Rhode Island. A regular packet service linked Wickford with other Narragansett Bay ports, New York and Boston.

Other enterprises grew up in the thriving port community -- a jewelry business, a distillery, and a warp mill producing yarn set out for weaving in the farmhouses of the surrounding countryside. A bank opened and Wickford became the commercial center for the town, with shops of every description, many located in the homes of their proprietors.

In the boom years after the Revolution, vacant lots already sold were quickly built upon, and the Updike heirs soon made more property available for development. In 1800, lots were created along Brown Street, West Main Street and Church Street. Between 1780 and 1830 Wickford experienced its most rapid growth, and some fifty buildings dating from that period still stand in the village.

Wickford became the social, educational and political focus for North Kingstown. In 1800, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, built in 1707 (National Register Property) was moved to the village, largely at the instigation of the Updikes. Soon the Friends' Meeting House and a Baptist Church stood here too. North Kingstown's first Town House was erected on West Main Street in 1807. Washington Academy, built in about 1800 on a bluff overlooking the village, was widely known, and contained a library supported by the villagers.

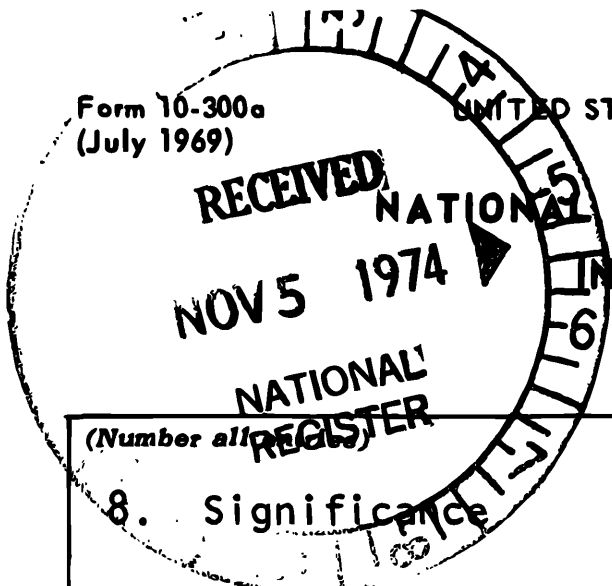
Wickford, for all its late eighteenth and early nineteenth century prosperity, was basically a small community, numbering about 650 inhabitants, with insufficient capital, population, or physical resources to remain ascendant and prosperous in a rapidly changing national economy. The great blow to Wickford came with developments in transportation. Steamboats came to Narragansett Bay in 1821, by-passing Wickford on their routes, and quickly dominating coastal trade and packet service. The Providence and Stonington Railroad, completed in 1837, also by-passed the village. In short, Wickford, formerly a trading and transportation center, was a backwater by 1840, and it became a somnolent coastal hamlet. The only major new development was the construction of the Waterside Mill in 1865. Originally a bobbin mill, it was a marginal operation, and closed several times before becoming a small woolen mill in later years. A fair number of extant buildings in Wickford date from this era. Mostly rather small, they in-fill between earlier structures, and reflect the community's

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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8. Significance

continuing local significance as a commercial, political and social center.

The fortunes of Wickford took a dramatic turn in 1871. Again, a change in the transportation system sparked that turn. In 1871 a branch line linking Wickford with the railroad made the village a focus of attention. At Wickford passengers left the train and boarded a steamer for Newport. The fastest way for summer visitors to get to Newport -- and there were thousands each year -- and the fastest way for Newporters to get to Providence, was through Wickford. This accessibility and constant traffic spurred development. Summer hotels were built and new boarding houses accommodated travelers. Wickford became a small-scale summer resort. The rail connection promoted other sectors of the local economy, like the oyster business which now could sell to the New York market.

The Sea View Railroad, a trolley line, opened in 1900. It passed directly through Wickford and made the village a favorite destination for excursionists from the industrial communities to the north. By 1910 the village was accessible to automobiles via paved roads all the way to Providence. And during the early twentieth century, Wickford was becoming rather self consciously picturesque. People were increasingly interested in historic sites and "colonial" architecture (even when it was, in fact, early nineteenth century). Several books and pamphlets were written on Wickford in these years, including one describing the village as the "Venice of North America".

Because the section of Wickford laid out by the Updikes was so compactly built-up by the late nineteenth century, this increased interest in Wickford, sparked early twentieth century construction which was largely confined to the periphery of the village, leaving the heart of the old maritime port intact. During the 1920's service on the Wickford branch line, and the Newport packet, were discontinued. Wickford became, once again, a quiet, waterside village. This tranquility did not last long.

Wickford suffered its most severe developmental strains as a result of the construction of the Quonset and Davisville naval installations just up the coast from the village during the Second World War. As part of the new military facilities, a large housing complex was built adjacent to the village on West Main Street. The presence of this housing complex and the tremendous number of personnel stationed so close-by, brought a flood of business to Wickford's shops, and significant changes to the village's commercial district, notably Brown Street. With the recent phasing-out of naval operations at Quonset and Davisville, the navy housing at Wickford is vacant.

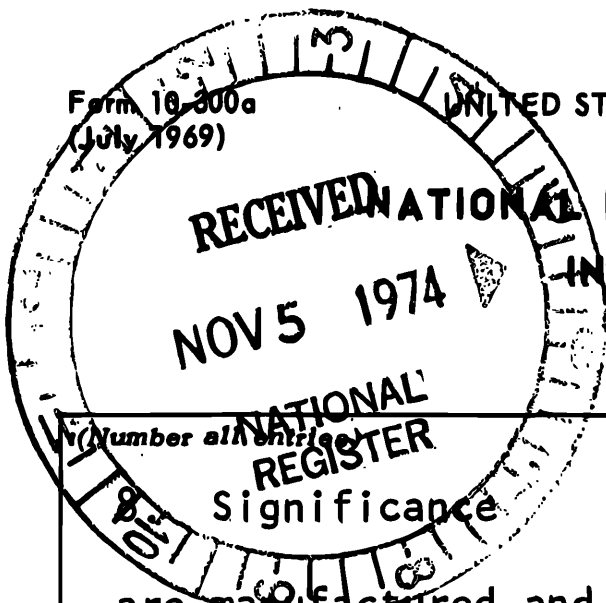
In the post-War era, Wickford's economy has been dominated not only by the Navy, but by the growth of its appeal as a harbor for pleasure boats. In the summer the harbor is crowded with yachts, and year round, sailboats

(See Continuation Sheet 8

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are manufactured and serviced here. Tourism has increased significantly; the Wickford Art Festival is the major local event each year. Commercial fishing is still profitable, but not highly visible as a physical presence in the village.

Visually, one of the most outstanding villages in Rhode Island, Wickford presents today, in much of its original context of wide streets and flat waterside terrain, the aspect of a late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century town (some seventy-five buildings of this date are still standing). Its general character is derived from the level line formed by the many closely-spaced two-story gable-roofed wooden houses set side to the street. The gambrel roofed or one-and-a-half-story houses dating from this early period, and the few buildings dating from the Greek Revival and later nineteenth century serve to give both a sense of variety and a continuity of history without destroying the long established cohesive village scale and street relationship. The public, waterfront and commercial buildings fit into this village character.

Worthy of special note is Old St. Paul's Episcopal Church, built in 1707 on Tower Hill and moved to this site in 1800. This fine building, already on the National Register, is one of Rhode Island's documentary structures of the transitional period. The house on Pleasant Street built by Lodowick Updike's grandson, John, in 1745 is an example of Wickford's early building period. A wooden two-story center chimney house with a gable-on-hip roof, it relates to many important pre-1750 Newport houses. More typical for Wickford's building pattern is the Immanuel Case House of 1786, which has been measured by HABS. It is an elaborated version of the plain gable roofed two-story house (here with central hall plan and two interior chimneys): its pedimented doorway is similar to that of the Updike house* of some forty years earlier. Houses like the Cyrus Northrup house at 90 Main Street, built in 1803, belong to the same gable-roof two-story type; their later date is indicated among other factors by their excellent pedimented fanlight doorways that are derived from American reprints of English eighteenth century carpenter's handbooks. Other doorways, some replacing earlier ones, reflect Greek Revival influence while the First Baptist Meeting House off Main Street, begun in 1816 and altered in 1835, is in its present form an excellent example of a country vernacular Greek revival wooden church. Built some twelve years later (1847) St. Paul's Episcopal Church, also on Main Street, is, with its asymmetrical side tower scheme, a picturesque wooden version of the carpenter Romanesque style. Like St. Paul's it is also on the National Register.

The 1850 brick two story Avis Block with first story shops at 1-11 West Main Street and the arcaded and rusticated brick and stone gable roofed structure, built in 1880 for the Narragansett Bank building, established

*the dates and priorities of six or more similar doorways in Wickford are undetermined.

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8. Significance

the scale for the commercial center. The Town Hall of 1888, a brick hipped-roof Richardsonian structure with gabled center pavillion designed by William R. Walker, and the Roman Revival Library designed in 1898 as a classical temple on a high basement should also be mentioned as taking their place in the Wickford townscape.

Taken together, the buildings that make up the village of Wickford represent an extraordinary and essentially intact post-colonial town.

The significance of Wickford lies in its unique land-and-water locus, in its persisting aliveness within an old matrix, and in its relatively serene background for the coming and going of many people. Its dead-end streets are not backwaters, but ways to and from the harbor and ponds. Wickford has lived through a cattle-shipping period; a time when neighboring mills were dominant and the village echoed them with small textile operations, small forges and foundries, small jewelry businesses, small distilleries; through a rather thin time when the transfer from train to ferry all summer, and the short-term services to passengers, left long dull months for the rest of the year; then a period of Navy ascendance; small waves of immigration to outlying mills which still left the village rather Yankee; the disappearance of Friends Meeting and the appearance of a Christian Science Church; and the lining of much of the harbor with marines. Throughout, it is the scale that has attracted inhabitants and visitors.

10. Geographical Data: UTM Coordinates

A	19 . 294810✓ . 4605590✓	19 . 296070✓ . 4604810✓	19 . 295480✓ . 4604500✓
B	19 . 295080✓ . 4605510✓	19 . 295560 . 4604620	19 . 295030✓ . 4604220✓
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

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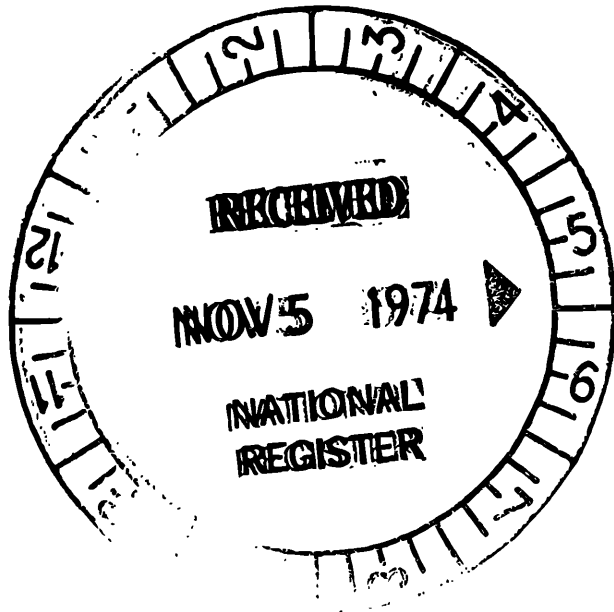
STATE		Rhode Island
COUNTY		Washington
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
	DEC 31 1974	

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9. Major Bibliographical References

6. Woodward, Carl R.; Plantation in Yankeeland; Cocumscussoc Association, North Kingstown, R. I., 1971.

7. Rhode Island Historical Society, Manuscripts.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Wickford Historic District, Washington Cty., N. Kingstown, RI

Section number 7

Page 4A

Description

ADDENDUM TO INVENTORY

Wickford Harbor


O.K. (launched 1936, built by John and George Anthony): A 30-foot wooden boat, permanently moored in Wickford harbor, just north of the Wickford Bridge. O.K. was constructed at Pawtuxet Cove, 20 miles north of Wickford, and was built by her first owners, brothers John and George Anthony. This is a Noank type, a variant of the cat-rigged sailboat, with the single mast aft of a small cabin. It is powered by a 4-cylinder, 50 hp Redwing engine. Used for fishing, O.K. was launched in 1936 and has been moored at Wickford harbor since 1938, home to her builders until their deaths in 1942 and 1970. O.K. has been an important element of the visual character of Wickford harbor for several decades, part of the pictorial history of the place. O.K.'s mooring has been a component of the district's significance for many decades; before O.K. tied up here, coal scows were routinely moored here. O.K. is frequently illustrated and has come to represent in graphic form the working waterfront of this port village.



Frederick C. Williamson
State Historic Preservation Officer

1/29/98
Date

Additional Documentation Accepted


3/4/98

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY Wickford Historic District
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: RHODE ISLAND, Washington

DATE RECEIVED: 3/23/99 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/07/99
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 74000013

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT _____ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Additional Documentation Accepted

RECOM. / CRITERIA Accept

REVIEWER Edson Beall

DISCIPLINE Historian

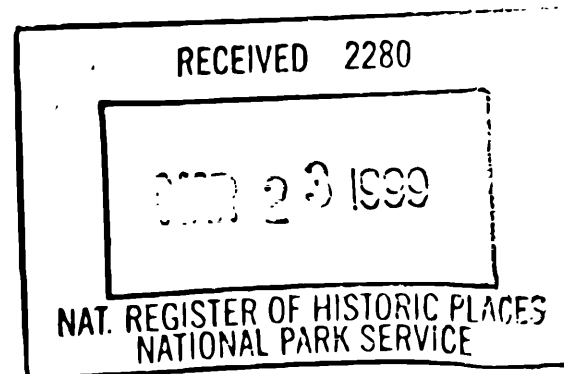
TELEPHONE 202-343-1572

DATE 4/21/99

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet



Property name Wickford Historic District, Washington Cty., N. Kingstown, RI

Section number 7

Page 4B

Description

Additional Documentation Accepted

ADDENDUM TO INVENTORY

Phillips Street

Smith Boatyard (early 20th century): The Smith Boatyard was established c. 1916, when Roderick and Ann Smith purchased the property from Nathan Waldron. Roderick Smith carried on both fishing and boatbuilding at this location, accompanied by his sons and other family members. In local parlance the enclave of houses occupied by Smith and his sons' families became known as Smithville. It is one of few such maritime places left along the Bay.

The boats built on the site ranged from the small skiff that tends the O.K. in Wickford Harbor, to large draggers, up to 65' in length, as well as sport fishing and lobster boats. The boats were built in the open yard and launched into Wickford Cove via a marine railway, a portion of which is still in place at the waterline. According to family tradition, Smith convinced the bridge engineers to raise the elevation of the proposed Hussey Bridge when it was under design, to insure sufficient clearance for Smith's boats. Even so, for the larger craft he built, he would submerge the hulls so he could tow them under the bridge. Although wooden boats are no longer made here, as recently as 1992, Roderick's grandson, Paul Smith, built a fiberglass fishing boat here.

There are two buildings on the property. The first is a small wood-shingled shanty with a gable roof, two bays wide and one deep. A single doorway flanked by a 2/2 double-hung window are in the elevation facing the water; there is a double-leaf door in the west end. There is a single room on the main floor and a small loft above. An exterior brick chimney for a stove is on the east end. The main room has traditionally been used to store fishing gear and to shuck scallops and oysters. The loft was originally used as the twine loft, where nets were worked on and stored. The shanty, which was built c. 1916, is a well-preserved example of a once-common and now-rare traditional waterfront building type used by fishermen throughout Narragansett Bay and on Block Island.

The other building is a former four-car garage and twine loft, built in the 1930s and recently converted into a residence. It is a one-and-a-half-story, gable-roofed, wood-shingled structure.

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Property name Wickford Historic District, Washington Cty., N. Kingstown, RI

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The boatyard has always had at least one dock, though docks have occupied three different locations, sometimes simultaneously. The present dock was established c. 1916, though its constituent parts have been replaced as needed over the years. The dock still incorporates some upside-down oak trunks, which were traditionally used as dock pilings, as well as more recent pressure-treated timber piles required by CRMC.

A rough rubblestone seawall lines the water's edge. In places it incorporates pieces of brownstone, which may be remnants of the property's 19th century use as the Waldron & Wightman's stone-workers' yard.



Frederick C. Williamson
State Historic Preservation Officer

3/3/99
Date