

1/22/77

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
22	SEP 1972

1. NAME

COMMON:
Luce Hall

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Naval War College and Torpedo School

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
U. S. Naval War College, Coasters Harbor Island

CITY OR TOWN:
Newport

STATE Rhode Island, 02840	CODE 44	COUNTY: Newport	CODE 005
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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
U. S. Navy Department

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:
District of Columbia

CODE:
11

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Newport City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
Broadway

CITY OR TOWN:
Newport

STATE:
Rhode Island, 02840

CODE:
44

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Not so represented

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
DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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 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

The several buildings to-day comprising the United States Naval War College occupy an elevated part of Coasters Harbor Island, a slightly-mounded, somewhat oval piece of land with a south-easterly tail, and connected by a causeway with the old north-western end of the city of Newport.

Foremost and oldest among the buildings presently housing the College is that known as Luce Hall, which, when built, was designated "The Naval War College and Torpedo School" and then provided those two institutions' entire accommodation. Luce Hall was completed in 1892 as the result of a Congressional grant of \$100,000 in 1890 which finally indicated a desire for the War College's permanence of life and location (due to internal hostilities in the Navy Department the College had had several changes of location and serious uncertainties of long existence). When funds allowed the College to construct on Coasters Harbor Island--which had in fact been its earliest location--classes were suspended for two years to allow for the building of Luce Hall and for its supervision by (the then) Captain A. T. Mahan, its first president.

The building was placed at the south-western corner of the island; its main front faces south and overlooks Newport and its harbour. Responsibility for exterior design and for the supervision of construction was assigned to George C. Mason & Son of Philadelphia, a firm with long Newport connections. The interior plan was to be arranged by Captain Mahan and by George Mackay, a civil engineer in navy employ. Accommodations would be needed for lectures, administration, sleeping, dining and social purposes.

The result of this collaboration is a building of timber and brick, its outer walls covered by rock-faced granite ashlar, its roofs covered by slate. It is 210 feet long and 47 feet deep, and above a high basement contains two-and-a-half storeys and garrets. It faces directly south and is on a prominence just above the water, having a fine view in the direction of the city and Narragansett Bay beyond it. The exterior designed by Mason & Son is similar to the exteriors of many simple academic or institutional buildings of the XVIII and XIX Centuries elsewhere. The building is essentially a long oblong. On its long elevation the centre section (13 bays), capped by a gable roof slightly truncated, is the widest one and has a slight, gabled projection at its centre; there is placed the principal entrance, sheltered by a pedimented wooden porch with Tuscan columns, reached by stone steps. At either end of this wide central section is a slightly-projecting terminal "pavilion" of four bays--hip-roofed, however--also having a central gabled feature housing a subsidiary entrance with porch. At the time of its construction Luce Hall was described as being in "the Flemish style" because the three gables accenting the south front and the single one of the north front are of stepped stonework; other Flemish decorative elements are not to be seen. The roof has low shed dormers all around the building and is ornamented at the middle of the centre range by an octagonal glazed cupola

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7. Description.

with a high roof of ogee profile, not unlike many cupolas of American colonial design.

Internal accommodations were ample for 1892 and included "two large lecture rooms, a fine library, a number of offices and chart rooms and also lodging rooms for the lecturers, ... space in the basement for quarters for employees, for work shops, for coal etc." The wooden interior trim was intentionally and economically simple. Windows were to have the folding, louvered interior shutters in use at the time, and specifications required that "in each of the four parlors there will be a mantel piece, to cost \$25.00."

Once occupied, Luce Hall was sufficient for all its purposes until 1901, when a library annex was constructed to the north. There has since been other annex expansion; and a whole nearby building complex in (hopefully) the best of our modern style is now in planning for the College.

However, Luce Hall still stands as the dominant, independent, pre-facing and official unit of the U. S. Naval War College: a building externally unchanged, one of importance, importantly sited, and of proud bulk if not of aesthetic subtlety. Internally, it has had necessary rearrangements and modernisations, painting, "glossing" and veneering; the expansive stair-halls are its best interior remnants.

8. Significance.

may no longer be unique, but it is probably still the foremost of its kind and has been outstanding for innovative and participatory modes of instruction, which now take place in annexes, while Luce Hall is the administrative centre. This building has enframed the history, personalities, activities and advances of the College: to-day, still well-sited and architecturally robust--landbound but seaward-looking--it forms a rugged monument to Luce's original concepts.

9. Major Bibliographical References.

- Buell, Lieutenant Commander Thomas B.: Admiral Raymond A. Spruance and the Naval War College (Newport, Rhode Island, 1971), pp. 3-4.
- Mason, George C., & Son: Specifications for the Construction of a Building for use by the Naval Torpedo Station and War College ... (Washington, D. C., 1891), iv-25 pp.

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 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) 1890-1892

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Luce Hall, if not the cradle of the U. S. Naval War College (this cradle exists nearby, as the former Newport Poor House of 1819, already on the National Register), has certainly been its growing-up-place and remains its centre of administration and reception.

The college which it once entirely housed would take an important place as an institution of specialised education at the highest level wherever located. Although founded decades later than the Naval Academy at Annapolis, it has--as a very select "graduate school"--seniority of status over that academy, and it takes seniority of age over all other colleges of naval strategy in the world. What the building has housed and houses make it a landmark in the history and study of naval warfare and, especially, in this nation's great successes when study, theory and experiment originating in Luce Hall have had to be put into actual practice.

Lieutenant-Commander Thomas B. Buell has described the College's origins:

"The concept of the Naval War College had begun with Stephen B. Luce in the late 19th century. He believed that naval officers must systematically study the art of naval warfare ... Luce's persuasive argument continued ... 'The naval officer ... should possess a knowledge of the science and practice of war ...' and then apply the principles to military operations at sea ... He closed by submitting '... a post-graduate course for the study of the Science of War, Ordnance, and International Law, and ... cognate branches of these three grand divisions ...' The Naval War College survived, developed, and matured with a basically unchanging mission."

Too long to list would be the familiar names of those illustrious naval officers who have passed through Luce Hall and the War College and later put the knowledge and tactical skills gained there to use in this country's wars, or those who--having done both--returned to serve as successive presidents of the College. Too long to list also would be the distinguished civilians who have been received at Luce Hall and who have lectured there, or the select groups of visiting officer-students from foreign navies who have passed through it. The U. S. Naval War College

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

U. S. Naval War College: The Naval War College: Its Philosophy, Founding and Facilities (Newport, Rhode Island, n. d.), 2 pp.
 (Stockton, Charles Herbert, Captain, U. S. N.): History of the Naval War College (1884-1889). Unpublished essay in the archives of the U. S. Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, pp. 6-9.
Milestones of Naval War College History. Memorandum, December 31, 1959, in the archives of the U. S. Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, pp. 8-11.

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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	0 ' "	0 ' "		41° 30' 26.81"	71° 19' 47.84"	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Richard B. Harrington, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission DATE: July 29, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
John Brown House, 52 Power Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island, 02906 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>Trenick Williams</u></p> <p>Title <u>State Liaison Officer</u></p> <p>Date <u>August 22, 1972</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u>Robert H. Utley</u> Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date <u>9/22/72</u></p> <p>ATTEST: <u>[Signature]</u> Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date _____</p>
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