

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 JUN 20 1974

1. NAME

COMMON: TIVERTON FOUR CORNERS HISTORIC DISTRICT
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: <i>See continuation sheet #1 for District boundaries</i>			
CITY OR TOWN: Tiverton		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: #1 - Fernand J. St. Germain	
STATE: Rhode Island	CODE: 44	COUNTY: Newport	CODE: 005

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Multiple
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN:
STATE:
CODE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Tiverton Town Hall			
STREET AND NUMBER: Highland Road			
CITY OR TOWN: Tiverton,	STATE: Rhode Island	CODE: 02878	44

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Statewide Survey--Phase 1		
DATE OF SURVEY: 1974-1975 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local		
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission		
STREET AND NUMBER: John Brown House, 52 Power Street		
CITY OR TOWN: Providence	STATE: Rhode Island	CODE: 44

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
COUNTY:
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DATE:

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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 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

7. Description:

Tiverton Four Corners is formed by the intersection of the north/south axis of Main Road and the east/west axis of East Road and West Road (Neck Road) leading to Fogland Point. Originally the land belonged to the Pocasset tribe of Indians. John Clarke and William Coddington, who purchased the island of Aquidneck from the Narragansetts in 1637, also bargained with Massasoit, chief of the Wampanoags, for "the use of any grasses or trees on ye maine land on Pawaakasick side". By 1659, Plymouth Colony had made grants in this southern section of present day Tiverton although it is doubtful that any settlement existed before 1673.

Formal development of Tiverton began in 1679 with land sales by Plymouth to the Proprietors of Pocasset and the Proprietors of Punkateest. Tiverton Four Corners developed in the southern or Punkateest section. One of the original twenty-seven Proprietors of Punkateest, Daniel Willcocks of Portsmouth, had already settled at the north end of Nonquit Pond just west of the Corners. Based on King Charles Charter granted in 1663, Rhode Island claimed all land three miles east of Narragansett Bay and the Seconnet River; Massachusetts claimed the boundary went through the middle of the East Passage or Seconnet River, the strait of Bristol Ferry up Narragansett Bay and the Pawtucket River. Agitation for separation from Massachusetts, who absorbed Plymouth in 1691, by the Pocasset freemen, rankled Tiverton for fifty years. The dispute was finally settled in 1746 when Tiverton, Little Compton, Bristol, Warren, parts of Swansea, Rehoboth and Cumberland were made part of Rhode Island.

Today, sixteen historic buildings which reflect the architectural, social and economic growth of this important country crossroads line both sides of the Main Road leading to Four Corners. The four buildings which are found on each corner are key elements in the definition of this historic district.

The Chace-Cory House, c. 1730, on the southeast corner, was originally built by either Benjamin or Abner Chace. In 1816, Andrew Cory, whaling captain, bought the homestead for his bride, Mary Jane Seabury; the Cory House remained in possession of his descendents until 1962. The Cory, Gray, and Seabury families are all related and maintain a long tradition of seafaring. Restoration of this house and grounds which include an unusual 19th century wash-house, outhouse, garden and stonewalls, is now under the supervision of the Tiverton Historical Society who were given the property in 1964.

The Chace-Cory House is a typical colonial, gambrel-roof, central chimney, 5-room plan farmhouse with the addition of a recent ell to house modern utilities. Detailing of the exterior includes original, heavy, projecting, pegged window frames with 12/12 sash and narrow 9/9 sash in the gambrel ends; old panes from demolished Fall River mills have been used to replace original glass. The front entrance is a simple flat-head

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

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	
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(Number all entries)

#2 Location:

TIVERTON FOUR CORNERS

The Tiverton Four Corners Historic District can be defined as follows:
(See sketch map)

Beginning at point in the Main Road 25' ± west of the northwest corner of the lot containing the Amicable Congregational Church then running east approximately 145' ± to the northeast corner of this lot, then turning south along the east side of all lots fronting on Main Road to a point in the middle of East Road approximately 720' east of the center of the intersection, then running west for 430' ± to the northeast corner of the lot presently containing Gray's ice-cream parlor, then south along the east border of all lots fronting on Main Road to a point on the south side of the Mill Pond then running 400' ± easterly to this northeast corner of the lot containing Lawton's Christmas Shop, then turning south 650' ± traversing this lot to intersect its south boundary, then turning west 450' ± to the west side of Main Road, then north along Main Road 300' ± to the southeast corner of the lot presently used by the H. N. Wilcox Fishing Co., then west 425' ± along the south side of this lot to the southwest corner, then north 340' ± to the north side of the flume then west 200' ± to the southwest corner of the lot containing the Lawton house, then northerly for 600' ± to the corner of the Lawton lot fronting on Main Road, east for 100' to the southwest corner of the Snell lot, then northerly 200' to West Road. The boundary continues 240' ± west along the West Road to a corner, then northerly 700' on the west side of all lots fronting on Main Road to a point in the McGeough lot then west 300' ± to the southwest corner of this lot then north 525' ± to the northwest corner of this house lot, then east 400' ± along the north side of the Camara lot to meet the west line of Main Road then northerly 425' ± to the point of beginning.

7. Description:

design with original frame and 5-pane transom.

On the interior, the kitchen, small downstairs bedroom, and pantry, have survived almost intact from the 1730 period. The great kitchen fireplace with a 7' opening has a bake oven set at back right and an unusual elliptical and beaded chimney front topped with two full width open cupboard shelves. The exposed ceiling joists are blackened from years of smoke. Of note are the two parallel large beams which frame from the end girt into the chimney girt on each side of the fireplace opening. These carry smaller hand-hewn oak joists held in place by mortice and tenon construction. Vertical oak planks, originally white-washed, are now exposed in both the kitchen and the bedroom; the pantry was plastered before 1800 and has been left intact. Two-panel doors with original iron latches open into both the pantry and the bedroom.

(See continuation sheet #2)

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet) #2

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7. Description.

Alteration of the rest of the first floor has included removal of the original front stair, remodeling of the South Parlor, c. 1816, with the addition of a fine Federal type fireplace trimmed with a dentil course and row of small incised circles and replacement of the original mantel in the North Parlor by a three panel over-mantel, c. 1750, removed from the destroyed Hambly farmhouse in North Tiverton. The North Parlor, originally a bedroom, is furnished with some Cory antiques including two rush seat bannister back chairs and an eighteenth century blanket chest. Upstairs, a small dormer has been removed from the west facade and partitions slightly changed for a caretaker's apartment. The "Old Chamber" which extends over the kitchen and pantry which was used by Jane Gray Seabury Cory for a school is intact.

The Arnold Smith House, c.1750, on the southwest corner of Four Corners was probably built as a store or school. A bake shop formerly stood just north of this building between it and the Neck Road. The Arnold Smith House has an excellently proportioned gambrel roof with a wide cornice overhang (8") and was enlarged, c.1820, by the addition of a long gable-roof one-story ell on the west and a small workroom on the north. The present chimney in the southwest corner of the main gambrel section with a 45° fireplace is apparently original. The east main facade includes a simple flat head door with 4-pane transom flush under the cornice and heavy pegged window frames with molded caps that break out from the cornice, 6/6 sash are not original.

The Soule-Seabury House, c.1770/1809, on the northwest corner of Four Corners was begun by Abner Soule, blacksmith, Revolutionary soldier, whalesman, and descendent of George Soule of the Mayflower. In 1808, Abner gave to his son Cornelius the homestead farm with all buildings except for the blacksmith shop - previously acquired in 1797 by another brother, Christopher. By 1809, Cornelius (1769-1818), famous sea captain, merchant, politician and farmer, owned the entire corner. Cornelius rebuilt the homestead into the stately mansion which has survived ^{with} approximately 95% of the furnishings acquired over the years by the Soule and Seabury families. The Soule-Seabury House is to be opened to the public as a private museum in May, 1974.

Today, this hip-roof, Federal, country house is laid out on a central hall paired chimney plan. It contains eight rooms, a kitchen and cellar kitchen with large farm fireplace. The original house, built by Abner Soule, c.1770, was probably only one room deep with a central chimney facing south on the East Road. A very steep three-run stairway leading to the attic and an interior stonewall in the cellar which could have formed the original north foundation wall support this assumption. In the attic the date "1809" cut in the roof plate establishes the date of the braced-frame hip-roof addition.

Exterior trim includes corner quoins, and a wide front entrance facing west to Main Road which is Federal in style with a deep entablature and dentil frieze supported by consoles above fluted pilasters on low bases.

(See continuation sheet #3)

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet) #3

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7. Description.

The windows have 12/12 sash and are capped with flat splayed lintels. Paired hip-roof dormers on the west and east sides also date from 1809.

On the interior, the first and second floor each have four fireplaces; all have Federal one-story mantels with the exception of the southeast kitchen, now the dining room, which has retained an earlier over-mantel. Doors throughout the house are four-paneled with the exception of six-panel doors found in the "Captain's Room" or large southwest second floor chamber and a two-panel door set into the fireplace wall of the southeast bedroom.

Tiverton Four Corners is completed by the A. P. White Store on the northwest corner. This two-story Victorian building with mansard roof and cupola was built in 1875 as a general store by Andrew Peregrine White, who in the 1870's operated with his brother, Charles Henry White, the A.P. White & Bro. mill complex on the north side of the Mill Pond flume at the southern limit of Four Corners. It was designed from the first for commercial use on the first floor with living space above; use as "The Country Store" today continues this original intent.

The wrap-around one story veranda is distinguished by square wood posts which support elaborate scroll brackets with a central bullseye motif that support the porch roof overhang. The mansard roof is supported by smaller paired brackets which are repeated at the cupola level. Window treatment is varied including plain wood frames with molded caps on the first level, more elaborate single and compound windows with brackets under projecting cornices on the second level, a pair of bay windows on the east facade and bracketed gable-roof dormers with a delicate incised pattern set into the main mansard.

Other buildings of interest leading from the north into Four Corners include the Amicable Congregational Church, begun in 1811 and remodeled into a vernacular Greek Revival building in 1846 and remodeled again in the twentieth century. Just south of the church stands a small Greek Revival Parsonage constructed for this purpose in 1832. Next in the row is the Union Public Library, built in 1868 as Good Templars Hall, now moved back from its original location flush on Main Road; it has been the home of the Library since 1898. The Benjamin F. Seabury House, built about 1840 in the Greek Revival style, by one of Cornelius Seabury's thirteen children, stands just north of the large Soule-Seabury mansion. Across Main Road on the west side is the Wilcox-Davol House, c.1800. In the late 1880's Four Corners was sometimes called Wilcox Corners.

South of Four Corners beyond the Chace-Cory House is the Pardon Corey House, c.1840, a typical small Greek Revival style country house probably built by the owner who was a carpenter. South of this is the King Cottage, c.1800, which has colonial details badly obscured by modern alterations; its

(See continuation sheet #4)

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(Continuation Sheet) #4

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7. Description.

adjacent shed once served as a tinsmith shop. A small industrial complex which began in the eighteenth century is found next on the east and west sides of Main Road. By 1895, the complex included four buildings - a carriage shop (demolished), ice-house (partially demolished), grist mill and store. Today, a "white-smith" has constructed a modern shop incorporating the old livery stable and the north part of the ice-house for use as the "Lantern Shop and Metal Works". Just north of the flume stands a stone, two story, Greek Revival style grist mill built on the foundations of an earlier mill and owned by A. P. White & Bros. in 1870. On the south side of the flume is a stone and wood, two-story, Early Victorian style store, c.1870, owned by C. H. White; both structures are today used for storage. Next the Nonquit Grange occupies a Late Victorian, wood, gable-roof hall with two entrances. The Grange, organized in 1893, acquired use of the property from Charles White. Across Main Road is the last remaining early industrial structure - Preserved Tripp's Wheelwright Shop owned by the Bateman family in 1854, who probably built the sluiceway, grist mill and store on the east side of the road. This Wheelwright shop had a large overshot wheel on its north side built into the stone first story below the dam - both dam and wheel are now gone.

Four major elements define Tiverton Four Corners: the Chace-Cory House, c.1730, the Arnold Smith House, c.1750, the Soule-Seabury Mansion, c.1770/1809, and the A. P. White Store, 1875. Visually the Amicable Congregational Church, 1846, limits the northern development and the mill complex at Nonquit Pond flume the southern development of this historic district. Water power, rich farm land, the proximity to the ferry at Fogland to Aquidneck Island and the presence of major roads leading east to Dartmouth and south to Little Compton all contributed to the development of this lively crossroads as a commercial, industrial and social center.

TIVERTON FOUR CORNERS HISTORIC DISTRICT

TIVERTON, RHODE ISLAND

NUMBER NAME, DATE, DESCRIPTION

Main Road

- | | |
|------|--|
| --- | ✓ "Amicable Congregational Church," 1811/1846; (Greek Revival, gable roof, two-story, wood clapboard; altered) |
| 3804 | ✓ "Parsonage", 1832 (Greek Revival, gable roof, one-story, wood clapboard) |
| 3832 | ✓ "Union Public Library", 1868. (Early Victorian, gable roof, one-story, wood shingle; moved) |

(See continuation sheet #5)

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet) #5

STATE Rhode Island	
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(Number all entries)

7. Description.

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>NAME, DATE, DESCRIPTION</u>
3842	✓"Benjamin F. Seabury House", c.1840 (Greek Revival, gable roof, two-story, wood clapboard)
3852	✓"Soule-Seabury Mansion", c.1770/1809 (Colonial/Federal, hip roof, two and one-half story, wood shingle)
---	✓"A. P. White's Store". 1875 (Late Victorian, mansard roof with cupola, two plus one, wood clapboard.)
3879	✓"Wilcox-Davol House", c.1800 (Colonial/Greek Revival, gable roof, two-story, wood shingle)
3895	✓"Arnold Smith House", c.1750/1820 (Colonial, gambrel roof, one and one-half story with one story gable ell, wood shingle.)
3908	✓"Chace-Cory House", c.1730 (Colonial, gambrel, one-story with one-story gambrel ell, wood shingle)
3920	✓"Pardon Corey House", c.1840 (Greek Revival, gable roof, two-story, wood clapboard)
3924	✓"King Cottage", c.1800 (Colonial, gable roof, one-story, wood clapboard; altered)
3940	"The Metal Works", c.1960 (20th century, gable roof with shed additions, one-story, wood shingle; rebuilt)
3946	"Grist Mill", c.1850. (Greek Revival, gable roof, two-story, plus full basement, stone)
3948	"Store", c.1870 (Early Victorian, gable roof, two-story, plus full basement, stone and wood shingle)
3949	✓"Preserved Tripps Wheelwright Shop" c.1800. (Colonial, gable roof, two-story plus full basement, stone and wood shingle)
3964	✓"Nonquit Grange", c.1870 (Late Victorian, gable roof, two-story, wood shingle)
3988	"Davenport House", c. 1840 (Greek Revival, gable roof, two-story, wood clapboard; altered.)

8. 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | <u>Indian History</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | <u>Whaling</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | <u>Fur Trading</u> |
| <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

8. Significance.

The development of Tiverton Four Corners as an important country cross-roads dates from the last quarter of the seventeenth century and spans three hundred years. Its geographic location near water power, rich farm land, and the Seconnet River dictated its logical use as a commercial, industrial and social center. The early years of settlement by Portsmouth men and Mayflower descendents, are recorded as a time of Indian battles, friction between Rhode Island and Massachusetts over land ownership and taxation which led to open rebellion in 1692 by the Pocasset freemen, and ultimately the acquisition of the Pocasset lands, or modern Tiverton, by Rhode Island in 1746.

During the Revolution, Tiverton men and women played an active role. Four Corners became a natural point of assembly as it intersects the main north/south road from Stone Bridge to Little Compton and the east/west highway leading from the Fogland Ferry to Dartmouth. Of interest to military historians is a letter dated June 28, 1778, from Colonel Pardon Gray to Lieut. Philip Cory asking him to assemble men at the Corners in preparation for the arrival of the French forces before the Battle of Rhode Island fought in August of 1778. Dorcas Seabury Soule is known to have captured a British spy in her kitchen in the house begun by Abner Soule at Four Corners.

Whaling, not farming, occupied many Four Corners families. Philip Cory's son, Andrew, who served on both the "Pulsford" and "Isaac Howland", whalers out of New Bedford, brought his bride, Mary Jane Gray Seabury, to the gambrel roof homestead known as the Chace-Cory House in 1816. His oldest son, Edward Gray Cory continued the whaling tradition, bringing home a bride from Australia in 1842. Andrew Cory's grandson, Edward Joseph Cory, Jr., born in 1895, continued the family tradition; logbooks, harpoons, shells and whale vertebra are all part of the Cory family memorabilia.

Cornelius Soule, who enlarged the Soule-Seabury House in 1809, was a famous sea captain employed in both the China trade and in John Jacob Astor's dreams to build a fur empire in the Pacific Northwest; he comes alive on the pages of Washington Irving's "Astoria". In 1811, Soule sailed the "Beaver", pride of Astor's fleet, from New York to the mouth of the Columbia.

(See continuation sheet #6)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bibliography

"Chace-Cory House and its Restoration 1964-1970", Tiverton Historical Society, Tiverton, R. I., 1970.

Cory Family Records, compiled by Dr. Henry Hall Forbes, New York, N. Y.

"Lilian Potter was Brilliant, Outspoken", Sakonnet Times, pp. 12-13, October 17, 1968.

(See continuation sheet #7)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	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° 34' 31"	71° 11' 30"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	41° 34' 34"	71° 11' 14"		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	41° 34' 02"	71° 11' 06"		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	41° 33' 59"	71° 11' 22"		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 50 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Elizabeth S. Warren, Assistant Director of the Statewide Survey

ORGANIZATION: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

DATE: March 29, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
John Brown House, 52 Power Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence

STATE: Rhode Island

CODE: 02906

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.

Lucretia Annally
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: JUN 20 1974

ATTEST:

Charles Henry
Acting Keeper of The National Register

Date: 6/17/74

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

APR 19 3 17 65 PM '74

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet) #6

STATE Rhode Island	
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8. Significance.

the Columbia River, discovered by another Tiverton mariner, Robert Gray, twenty years earlier. A letter exists from Cornelius Soule, delayed in Canton by the war of 1812, to his cousin Cornelius Seabury, merchant, at Four Corners, discussing money owed to Seabury. On his return, Cornelius Soule deeded the house at Four Corners to Cornelius Seabury to fulfill payment - the cost was \$4,600.00.

Cornelius Seabury, merchant, sea captain, sealer, politician, and landowner, was born in Tiverton in 1769. By the age of twenty-five he returned from a successful seal expedition to the Pribiloff Island and married Mary Gray against her father Colonel Pardon Gray's wishes. After a stay in the frontier settlement of Schoharie, New York, they returned to Tiverton. In 1810, he leased land from his cousin Cornelius Soule for a store on the northeast corner of Four Corners and in 1816 acquired the great Soule-Seabury mansion. Today, this mansion contains a unique record of the Soule-Seabury family including furniture, ceramics, utensils, clothing, whaling memorabilia, Far Eastern artifacts and ledgers of interest to both architectural, social and art historian.

The Seabury family were involved in the development of many Four Corners social institutions. Cornelius Seabury's general store served as a social center for the community; here the first Four Corners Post Office was opened (1820) and the Union Society, first library in Tiverton established in the same year as a private society. Reorganized as the Union Public Library in 1860, the library moved many times - to Benjamin Seabury's property, to the Tripp Wheelwright shop, to the Wilcox-Davol House, to the Almy-Richards House (demolished) and finally in 1896 to its present home, Good Templars Hall on land given by Seabury heirs.

Following Cornelius' death in 1854, the Soule-Seabury mansion was acquired by his son, Joseph, also a sea captain. Joseph left the house to his sister, Nancy Reid, widow of Jared Reid, minister of the Amicable Congregational Church from 1841-1851. During the rebuilding of the church in 1846, services were held in the Soule-Seabury mansion. By 1892, the house came into the possession of Nancy Reid's niece, Carolyn Slocum Potter. Known as the "Potter House" for many years, both the Potter children had distinguished careers - Joseph became a well-known naval architect and Lilian, one of the first students at the Rhode Island School of Design, artist, writer and custodian of the heritage found in Four Corners.

Other families at Four Corners were involved with early industry. Land records speak of a grist mill established by the Snow family early in the eighteenth-century. By the middle of the 19th century, a grist mill, two blacksmith shops, and wheelwright shop had grown up around the flume which leadswest from the Mill Pond to Nonquit Pond in addition to the stores at

(See continuation sheet #7)

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet) #7

STATE	
Rhode Island	
COUNTY	
Newport	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
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(Number all entries)

8. Significance.

Four Corners. This industrial development reached its peak by 1870 with ownership of the Mill Pond shared by A. P. White & Bros. until a bitter feud split the business partnership.

By the close of the nineteenth century, growth of Tiverton Four Corners had stabilized. Only the new A. P. White Store, 1875, illustrated changing architectural tastes and wealth. Physically this handsome, late Victorian structure with mansard roof and brackets still dominates Four Corners. It remained for the twentieth-century to witness destruction of the historic Almy House on the southeast corner for the new Gray's ice-cream parlor parking lot and loss of the old Cornelius Seabury general store to accommodate modern traffic. It remains for the last half of the twentieth century to recognize and protect the architectural, social and economic heritage of the Tiverton Four Corners crossing - recognizing its role dating from settlement through the Revolution, its maritime history, the pre-Civil War industrial development, growth of social and religious institutions, and the continuing tradition of commercial use from the eighteenth century to today.

9. Bibliography.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #8

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUN 20 1974

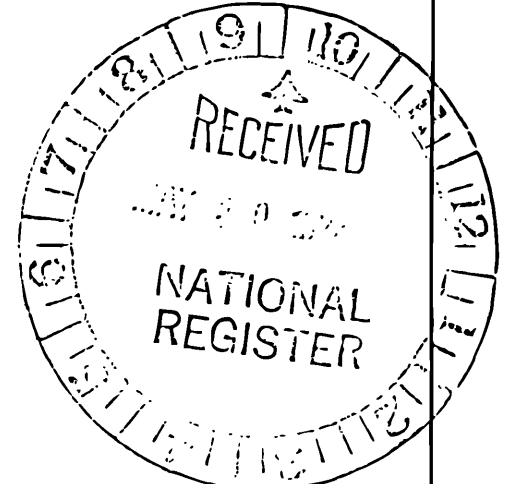
(Number all entries)

7. Description (Cont.)

ADDITIONS TO INVENTORY

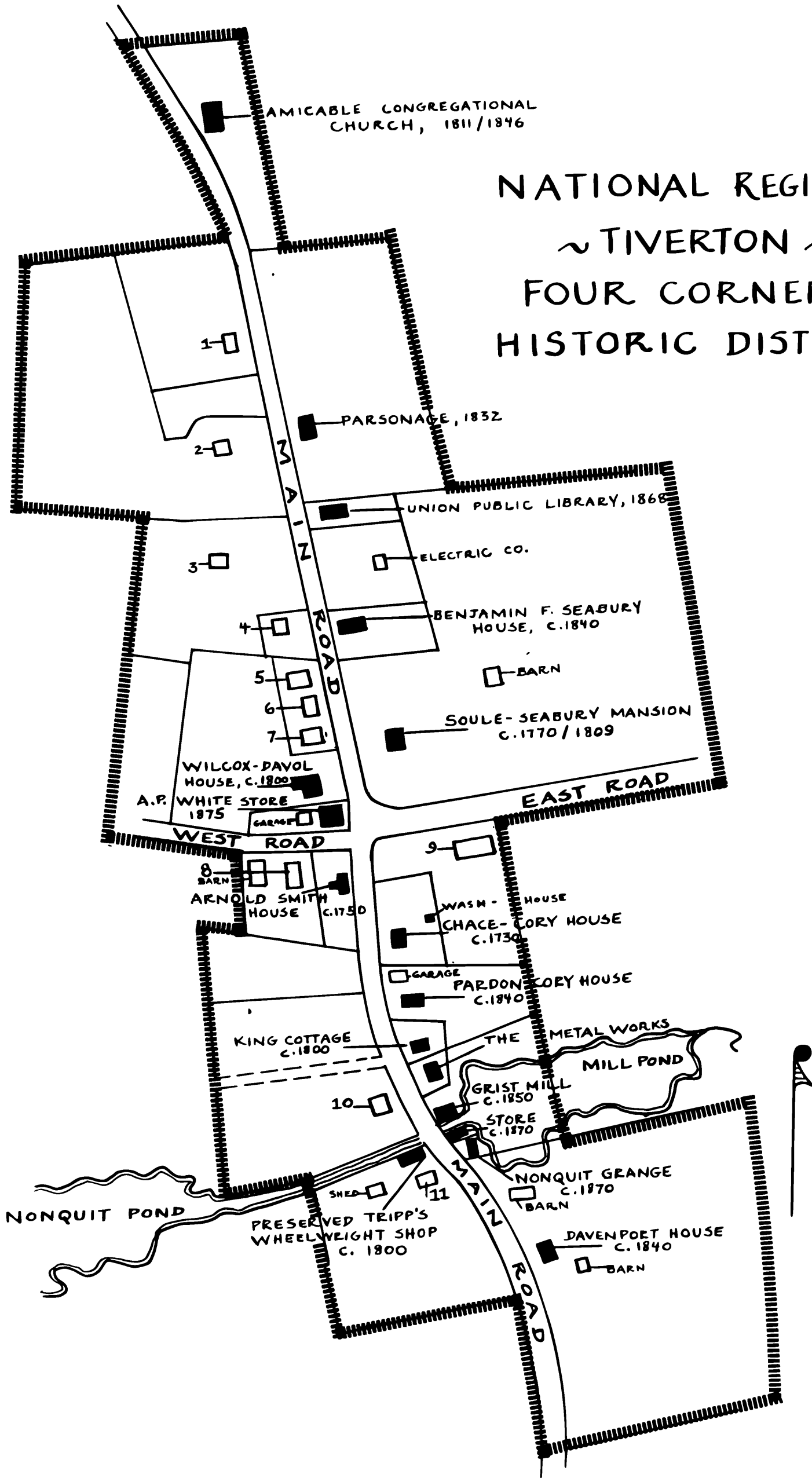
TIVERTON FOUR CORNERS HISTORIC DISTRICT

TIVERTON, RHODE ISLAND



<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Name, Date, Description</u>
1	Main Road 3775	Ranch House, (20th century, gable roof, one-story, wood shingle)
2	3785	House, (20th century, gable roof, two-story, wood shingle, enlarged)
3	3831	House, c.1880, (Late Victorian, gable roof, two-story and one-story ell, wood shingle)
4	3841	"Four Corners Restaurant", (Early 20th century, gable roof, one-story, wood shingle)
5		Cottage, (early 20th century, hip roof, one-story, wood shingle)
6	3851	"Rays Arco Station", (20th century, gable roof, one-story, cinder block)
7	3847	Cape, (20th century, gable roof, one and one-half story, wood siding)
8	Neck Road 8	"Snell House", (20th century, gambrel roof, two-story, wood shingle, plus late Victorian barn, gable roof, one-story, wood shingle)
9	Main Road and East Road	"Gray's Ice Cream and Country Store", (20th century, series of gable roof, one-story, wood shingle)
10	Main Road 3941	"Charles Wilcox House", c.1870 (Late Victorian, gable roof, two-story plus one-story ell, wood shingle, remodeled)
11	3949	Garage, c.1890 (Late Victorian, gable roof, one-story, wood shingle, converted from old blacksmith shop)

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COMPILED MARCH, 1974