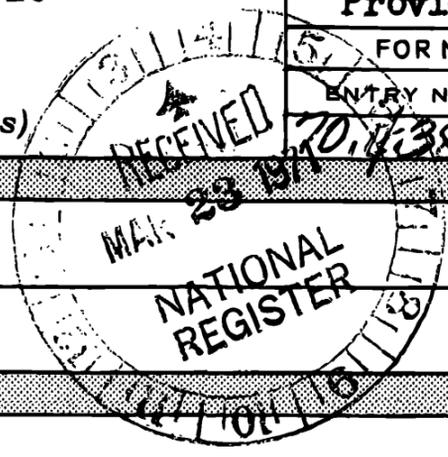


**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Rhode Island</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Providence</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER <b>70-1038.0011</b>	DATE <b>4/28/70</b>



**1. NAME**

COMMON: **Sixth District Court House**

AND/OR HISTORIC: **Colony House or Old State House**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: **150, Benefit Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Providence**

STATE: **Rhode Island** CODE: **44** COUNTY: **Providence** CODE: **007**

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes: Restricted <input type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input type="checkbox"/>	Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>
Educational <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNERS NAME: **State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations**

STREET AND NUMBER: **State House, 90, Smith Street**

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

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: **City Hall**

STREET AND NUMBER: **Dorrance and Washington Streets**

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

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **Less than 1 acre**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: **College Hill Demonstration Grant Study**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1959** Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: **Providence City Plan Commission**

STREET AND NUMBER: **10, Dorrance Street**

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

**7. DESCRIPTION**

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This building was constructed in 1760-1762 and is of brick above a stone basement, with quoins and rusticated window trim of brown sandstone, a wide brick belt and additional embellishments of wood. When first built it was a rectangle of about forty by seventy feet, containing two storeys (as it still does) above a basement inserted in a steeply-sloping site between Benefit Street on the east (above) and North Main Street on the west (below). Its roof was and remains of decked, hipped form--interrupted originally on one, if not both, elevations by a central pediment at the eaves containing a circular attic window. This in turn surmounted a large, wide, pedimented window treatment directly over the entrance(s). The hipped roof was topped by a balustraded deck supporting a cupola or clock-belfry. This is the best description that can be made from an old print of the building as seen from the west (a part of Walling's 1851 Map of Providence).

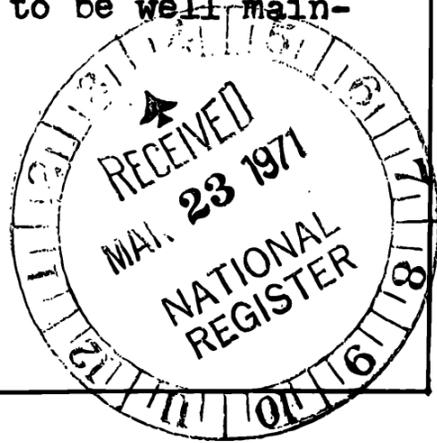
Interior accommodations provided for the offices of colonial government (at that time shared between Providence and Newport) and for the government's library. On the interior, only one room--the north-east one on the 1760-1762 building's second floor--fully retains its original appearance, although throughout additions, alterations and renovations an over-all XVIII-Century manner and type of trim has been maintained.

In 1850-1851 the building was enlarged and altered by Thomas A. Tefft, but in a very sympathetic way. He extended forward a new brick entrance pavilion on the west front, with a long stair rising to a main door of Italianate aedicular form but not out of harmony with the older architecture. Surmounting this pavilion or projecting bay, he placed what looks like an adaptation of the old wooden clock tower and cupola originally in the centre of the main block's roof.

At a still later time in the XIX Century further enlargement was required, and an addition to the east front was made by Alfred Stone. He brought forth from the old east wall--directly onto the Benefit Street pavement--a block containing entrance, foyer and flanking rooms, two bays in depth and matching the original building in height. In his use of brick, of sandstone rustication etc., he was as careful and understanding as Tefft. The result is that few people to-day, unless so instructed, are aware that this building has undergone change since 1762.

This structure has been a property of the colony and state since its inception; it has always been in use and continues to be well maintained.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian <input type="checkbox"/>	16th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	18th Century <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	20th Century <input type="checkbox"/>
15th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	17th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	19th Century <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1760-1762, 1850-1851 ff.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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/Phi- losophy <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"/>	_____
Art <input type="checkbox"/>	<del>Language</del> Architecture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Social/Human- itarian <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Music <input type="checkbox"/>		_____

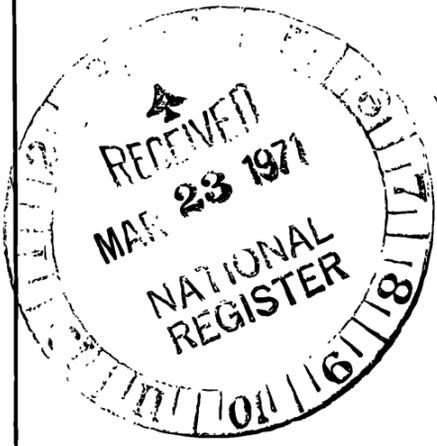
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

To most visitors or sightseers the attraction of this building will lie in its historic place as a one-time capitol of the state of Rhode Island, an honour shared until 1900 with the other Colony House in Newport. It housed the legislature which by a great majority proclaimed Rhode Island as the first free and independent republic in America on May 4, 1776--two months before ratification of the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia. The building now serves the state daily, though for judicial purposes only.

Others will find the building's architecture alone to be of interest, for it is a good example of an XVIII-Century building which, though not large, was intended to be imposing and expressive of the majesty of government. In this respect it was successful, aided by its siting. While no classical orders or really pompous academic adornments were incorporated into this basically simple building, a certain robust and solid quality was given to the brick elevations by the pronounced quoin treatment of brown stone at the corners and the vigorously rusticated surrounds of the windows. This same form of trim was wisely copied in the later additions.

Changed internal use and space requirements have not permitted all of the interior to remain as first built. However, the one second-floor room already mentioned which has kept its old trim still gives--with its cornice, pilaster and panel decoration--a good idea of an "official chamber" of the mid-XVIII-Century. Added and rearranged rooms show in their décor admirable understanding of, and attunement to, the building's known age and style.



Capitol of R.I. from 1776-1900

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

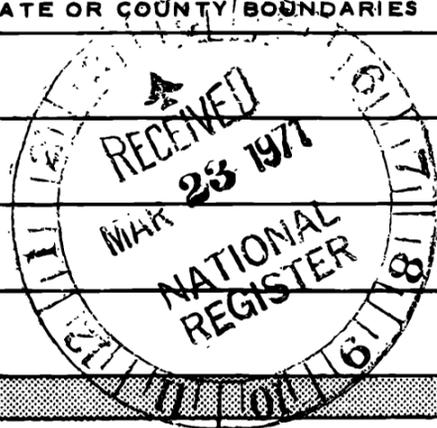
Cady, John Hutchins: The Civic and Architectural Development of Providence, 1636-1950 (Providence, Rhode Island, 1957), pp. 37, 38, 41, 100, 194.  
 Downing, Antoinette F.: Early Homes of Rhode Island (Richmond, Virginia, 1937), pp. 95, 110, 118, 157.

**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 ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		41 ° 49 ' 30 " N	71 ° 24 ' 26 " W	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Richard B. Harrington, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission      DATE: March 5, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 State House, 90 Smith Street

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

**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>Frederick C. Williams</u></p> <p>Title: <u>State Liaison Officer</u></p> <p>Date: <u>March 18, 1971</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____                  Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>/s/      4/28/70</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p><u>William H. Murray</u>                  Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date: <u>4/13/70</u></p>
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OTM REF 12-16-75 W M