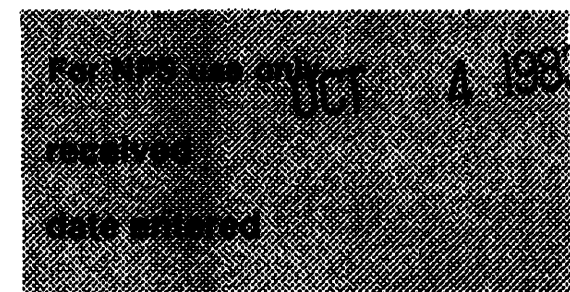


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet 158

Item number 7

Page 158

NAME: Mitchell-Arnold House
LOCATION: 41 Waldo Street
OWNER: John N. Arnold
41 Waldo Street
Pawtucket, RI

CONDITION: Good; altered; original site

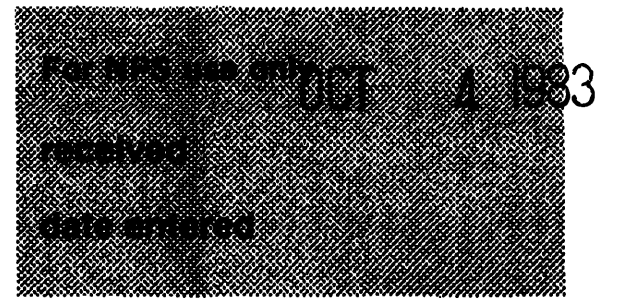
DESCRIPTION:

The picturesque, late nineteenth-century Mitchell-Arnold House is set on a spacious triple lot on the westerly side of Waldo Street in a late nineteenth-century residential neighborhood located between Pawtucket and East Avenues. The house is set near the southern edge of the lot; mature shade trees flank the dwelling-house and line the broad open lawn which stretches northward from it. A small, shingled tool-house near the property's back line is currently the only outbuilding standing on the lot; the tumbled-down stone wall which marks the property's back line is one of the very few such to survive in Pawtucket.

The Mitchell-Arnold House is a picturesque, late nineteenth-century assemblage created through at least slightly later additions or remodelings of an 1871 flank-gable cottage. The original structure and all of its additions are constructed of wood and are capped by steeply pitched gable roofs. The original portion of the building appears to consist only of the body (but not the porches, or the projecting central bay) of the story-and-a-half, flank-gable section which faces the street, together with the adjoining (eastern) hall of the rear ell. The remaining (western) half of the ell, standing two-and-a-half-stories high and featuring a dramatic, two-story corner oriel, was probably added about 1886. The single-story open-porch/enclosed entry on the southern end of the original cottage appears to be a very early addition; the rather similar porch on the southern side of the original ell might actually date from 1871. The short bay window near the southern end of the street facade appears in a photograph dated 1886; although somewhat altered around the turn of the century, this feature may be original. The two-story, cross-gabled bay and the hexagonal corner porch, though, do not appear in the 1886 photo (the added portion of the rear ell, however, is clearly shown in this view) and the supposition must be that these features of the facade were added sometime shortly thereafter.

Exterior wall surfaces are clapboarded, save for the upper stories of the ell addition and of the front gabled bay, which are finished in a lively, typically Queen Anne combination of shingles. Delicate, jig-sawn tracery ornaments the rail and the pierced parts of the entry and kitchen

(See Continuation Sheet #159)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet 159

Item number 7

Page 159

porches. The later, hexagonal porch is distinguished by Queen Anne-style turned posts and a perforated-panel rail. Simple stickwork ornaments the three gable peaks on the original house and ell; a single, molded modillion supports a simple, two-sided oriel thrown dramatically outward from the face of the facade's added cross-gable bay. The window below this tiny oriel features a handsome stained glass transom. The unaltered windows in the original portion of the house are commonly filled with two-over-two, double-hung sash, while several of the windows in the added section of the ell boast multi-paned Queen Anne-style upper sash.

Inside the house, the enclosed southern entry opens into a narrow stairhall containing a simple but handsome staircase which twists upward and inward along the back wall. Beyond the stairhall lies the (presumed) original dining room; the two major rooms across the front of the cottage may originally have been connected, but are no longer. The kitchen and pantry are located in the ground floor of the inner ell. Handsome parquet floors with intricate border designs appear throughout the first floor. Painted and heavily molded Victorian standing trim in some rooms has been replaced by later varnished oak trim of the "molded architrave with square corner blocks" variety. Twentieth-century changes include the enlargement of the doorway between the stairhall and the southern front room and the addition of a new closet-wardrobe in the northern front room.

PERIOD: 1800-1899

ARCHITECT: Unknown

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

SPECIFIC DATES: 1871-72, c. 1886, et seq.

SIGNIFICANCE:

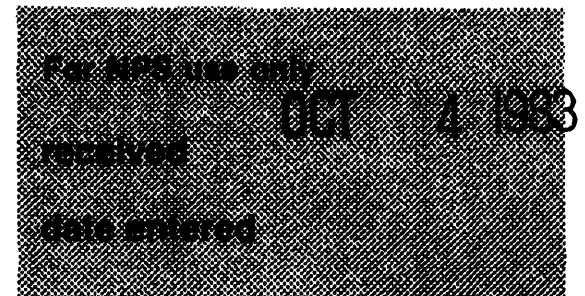
The Mitchell-Arnold House is architecturally significant as an exceptionally picturesque Late Victorian suburban cottage on an unusually large and graciously developed lot. It is, as well, a particularly successful example of a type of remodeling widely practiced in late nineteenth-century Pawtucket--the transformation of an unpretentious, flank-gable cottage of mid-century vintage, into a far more elaborate dwelling, suitable for a suburban family of means and taste.

The story-and-a-half, flank-gable cottage was a popular dwelling-house form in Pawtucket in the 1850s, 60s and 70s, with examples still standing in most of the city's mid-nineteenth-century neighborhoods. Dwellings of this type were short on space, however, and many of these mid-century cottages were subsequently enlarged in the 1880s and 90s, often with rather dramatic architectural results. One of the very best of these remodeled flank-gable cottages is the Mitchell-Arnold House.

(See Continuation Sheet #160)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet 160

Item number 7

Page 160

The original portion of 41 Waldo Street was erected for James W. Mitchell, a clerk employed by the Pawtucket coal and lumber dealers, Smith, Grant & Company, in 1871-72. Mitchell had actually purchased three adjacent houselots on the westerly side of the newly platted Waldo Street, and his homestead still benefits from the open space which his foresight thus assured. In 1886, Mitchell sold the Waldo Street homestead to John H. Arnold, a Pawtucket real estate and insurance man. Arnold had come to Pawtucket from Meriden, Connecticut, and had initially been in the drygoods business. By the 1880s, however, Arnold had opened his own highly successful real estate and insurance brokerage firm. Indications are that it was John H. Arnold who commissioned the major additions to the 1871 cottage. From both the obvious design quality of the added features, and from Arnold's known position as a leading real estate professional, it is probably safe to assume that those picturesque additions were all architect-designed.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The nominated property is Pawtucket Assessor's Plat 65A, lots 234, 235, and 236; it includes the Mitchell-Arnold House and its immediate surroundings--the three lots purchased by James Mitchell in 1871.

ACREAGE: less than one

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

UTM: A 19 301580 4637460