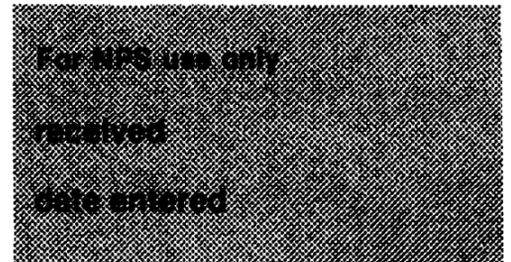


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NAME: Potter-Collyer House

LOCATION: 67 Cedar Street

OWNER: Bernard J. & Mary A. McCaughey
67 Cedar Street
Pawtucket, R.I. 02860

CONDITION: Good; altered; moved, 1962.

DESCRIPTION: The Potter-Collyer House, a striking mid-to-late nineteenth-century vernacular cottage, presently sits on the southern edge of a mid-nineteenth century residential neighborhood located south and west of Pawtucket's downtown. Directly across the street from the house, a depressed section of I-95 has carved an east-west canyon through this area, consuming in the process the original site of this house (at 134 Pine Street). The building was moved the approximately 400 feet to its present location in 1962.

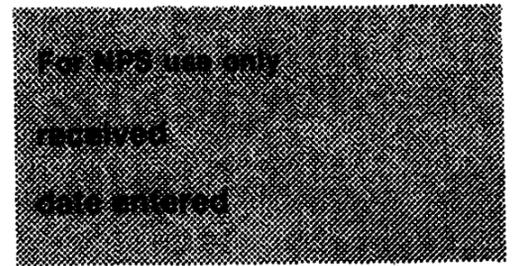
The Potter-Collyer House is a timber-framed dwelling composed of two distinct sections: a story-and-a-half, flank-gable cottage with a central cross gable, erected in 1863 and a two-and-a-half story, hip-roofed rear addition, the product of two later building campaigns, one before 1877 and one between 1895 and 1902. The oldest section of the house has been extensively reworked (mostly in the late nineteenth century) and today retains little more than its basic form and a few distinctive elements of trim from the original building campaign. These original exterior details include the Gothic hood moulds over the cottage's second floor end windows and the precise, geometrical Gothicizing bargeboards. Prominent features later added to this original section of the house include the pair of bay windows on the cottage's facade and the side porches with lacy, jig-sawn openwork. In both later building campaigns, great pains were evidently taken to tie the design of the new sections into that of the existing. Most particularly, the distinctive geometrical bargeboards of the original cottage have been carefully echoed along the eaves and window heads of the later section.

The floor plan of the Potter-Collyer House is an unconventional one (see plan) a result of the building's extensive late nineteenth-century enlargement and remodeling. The two major doorways are now located at either end of the original cottage; that on the east side was long the principal entry. These may have replaced an earlier vestibule centered on the facade of the 1863 building. The eastern doorway opens into a library/office (once a stairhall?) linked by a

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flattened archway to the eastern of the two front rooms. The western doorway opens into a narrow hallway containing a three-run stair with turned (cherry?) newels and balusters. The western front room boasts a marbleized slate mantel and an elaborate Renaissance Revival built-in bookcase. Both front rooms have simple parquet floors. The western end of the rear addition contains the present dining room; handsome pseudo-exposed-beam ceiling here was probably inserted after a change of ownership in 1909. The kitchen, in the opposite end of the added section, has been recently modernized. The upstairs chambers in the rear section are simply detailed and appear intact; the chamber floor plan in the front of the house appears to have been altered during the 1880s remodeling.

PERIOD: 1800-1899

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

SPECIFIC DATE: 1863 and later

ARCHITECT: Unknown

SIGNIFICANCE: The Potter-Collyer House is significant as a unique and a visually arresting example of the picturesque, vernacular taste popular in Pawtucket in the late nineteenth century.

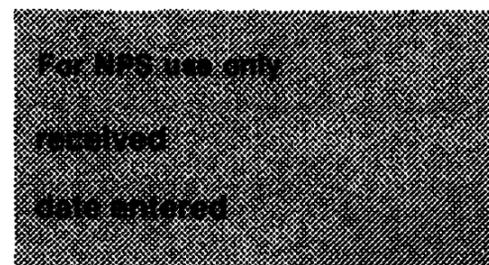
The original section of the house was erected on the westerly side of Pine Street in 1863 for Elisha O. Potter, of whom little is presently known. Four years later, Potter sold the property to Samuel S. Collyer, a partner in Pawtucket's N. S. Collyer & Co. engravers, machinists, and manufacturers of calico and bleaching machinery. Collyer was named Chief of the Pawtucket Fire Department in 1874 and on July 7, 1884, while racing to the scene of a fire, Chief Collyer was thrown from a hose cart at the corner of Conant Street and Mineral Spring Avenue, suffering ultimately fatal injuries.

The Potter-Collyer House in its original form could have been a story-and-a-half flank-gabled-roof cottage with a prominent, central cross-gable. This was a popular vernacular dwelling-house form in mid-century Pawtucket, although few unaltered examples of the type still remain. (Another example of the type, the Charles Payne House at 25 Brown Street, is included in this nomination.) The original house was enlarged in the late 1860s or early 1870s and again around the turn of the century.

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The remodelings have produced a building most unusually composed and picturesquely detailed, and the interior retains much of the feeling of this era. Although now removed from its original setting, the Potter-Collyer House remains today as a unique manifestation of the imaginative popular taste of the late nineteenth century.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The nominated property is Pawtucket Assessor's Plat 53B, lot 120, which includes the Potter-Collyer House and its small yard.

ACREAGE: less than one acre; 9700 square feet

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

UTM: A 19 301680 4638260

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