

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

For HCRS use only

received MAY 28 1980

date entered JUL 24 1980

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name Brown School

historic Friends' Yearly Meeting School

and/or common Moses Brown School (preferred name)

2. Location

street & number 250 Lloyd Avenue not for publication

city, town Providence vicinity of congressional district #2 Hon. Edward P. Beard

state Rhode Island code 44 county Providence code 007

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input 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:

4. Owner of Property

name New England Yearly Meeting of Friends

street & number The Maine Idyll (U.S. Rte. 1)

city, town R.D. 1, Freeport vicinity of state Maine 04032

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Providence City Hall

street & number 25 Dorrance Street

city, town Providence state Rhode Island 02903

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Friends' School, now Moses Brown School; Historical American Survey HABS #RI-255 has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1963 federal state county local

depository for survey records Rhode Island Historical Society Library

city, town Providence state Rhode Island 02906

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Moses Brown School is situated on a thirty-acre tract of treed and open land, extending from Hope Street to Arlington Avenue, between Lloyd and Alumni Avenues, on Providence's East Side, a primarily residential area which also contains a number of educational institutions (Brown University and Rhode Island School of Design among others). The immediate environs of the school, especially on the north and east, are suburban in character with large late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century houses ranged along tree-shaded streets.

The Moses Brown complex consists of ten buildings constructed over a period of 160 years. The original building (#1, site plan; photo #1), completed in 1819 from the plans of John Holden Greene, is the visual focal point of the campus. Long referred to as the "Middle House," the building faces south toward Lloyd Avenue, and is sited perpendicular to the long driveway which extends on a straight axis from the street (photo #2). The brick building Greene designed consists of a gabled center section with flanking wings, rising above a stone half-story basement. The central block is three and one-half stories high and five bays wide. Under the gable end, sited toward Lloyd Avenue, is a three-bay attic. Near the gable peak is a lunette window, and centered on the roof ridge is a large octagonal cupola. Four tall, brick chimneys rise from the side walls of the center section, which is flanked by two three-story wings, ten bays each, set at a right angle to the center block (#1a, site plan). Early prints show that the flanking wings were originally five bays long and two stories high, with flank-gable roofs. In 1826 the wings were extended to their present length and a monitor roof and attic were added. By 1831 a north wing had been attached to the west wing in order to accommodate the new "Academic Department." All three wings were altered to include a full third story beneath a mansard roof in 1888.

The exterior of Middle House is given a chaste, Federal treatment. Wood-framed, double-hung windows with 6/6 sash are cut crisply into the wall. The flatness of wall articulation is maintained by the use of unadorned granite lintels and sills which remain within the wall plane. A steep flight of granite steps leads to a one-story wooden Doric porch at the central front entrance of Middle House. The present portico dates from 1909. The original entrance consisted of a small, wooden, protective porch, partly enclosed on the sides, with Doric pilasters, a plain lintel, and a balustrade above. The rear facade of the building is the same, except for the central entrance porch, which resembles the original porch of the front facade.

Although the original school building continues to be used for classroom, dormitory and administrative space, the interior has been altered substantially over the years. Most larger rooms have been partitioned into smaller offices. Two rooms which remain intact, with original mantelpieces and ceiling moldings, are the headmaster's office

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and the visitors' waiting room, called the "Bird Room" because of the large display of stuffed birds which covers the entire northern wall (photo #3). These rooms open from either side of the entrance hall. A stairway positioned on axis with the entrance leads to the classrooms and to the dormitories.

Greene's design for the Middle House utilized a well-established institutional form, first used in Providence at the "College Edifice," Rhode Island College (1770, Joseph Brown, architect). The "Edifice," known today as University Hall, Brown University, was modeled after Robert Smith's Nassau Hall, Princeton University, of 1754-56. Greene's adaptation of the form resulted in a somewhat awkwardly proportioned and restrained Federal form.

The physical plant of the Moses Brown School grew considerably during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century. Alumni Hall (#1c, site plan), built to house a library and an auditorium on the first floor, with much-needed dormitory rooms for girls on the second and third floors, was attached to the east wing of Middle House in 1868. Before Alumni Hall was completed, girls had to sleep in two large rooms in the east wing, with beds arranged as in a hospital ward. The auditorium and the adjoining library were separated by sliding doors which could be opened to increase the auditorium's capacity. The library has since been removed from the building; the auditorium is still in use, but it is in a poor state of repair. The original tin ceiling is in an advanced state of deterioration and has been obscured by suspended acoustical tile.

In order to improve living conditions for male students, the Boys' Building was added to the west wing in 1872 (#1d, site plan). This three-story structure provides additional classroom and dormitory space. Both Alumni Hall and the Boys' Building are designed in a simplified Second Empire style, with ornament restricted to a mansard roof and to stone arches over windows.

The final addition to Middle House was the Lower School Building, erected in 1904 (#1e, site plan, photo #4) and connected to the west wing by a one-story archway. The addition is a narrow, rectangular, two-story Colonial-Revival brick building with 9/9 double-hung sash windows throughout. Windows on the first floor are arched with

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keystones; on the second floor the windows receive flat, brick arches, with keystones. A belt course separates the two floors of the building and three broad chimneys rise from the north wall. A double-pitched roof forms two pediments facing east and west. An oculus is located in the center of each gable.

Located in a separate building to the north of Middle House is the school's art studio, called the Studio of the Three Oaks (#2, site plan, photo #'s 5, 6). Built in 1892, the studio is a picturesque cottage constructed of boulders, timber framing and shingles arranged in a long, asymmetrical mass, on an elevated basement. The large single studio room is lighted by enormous panes of glass which open on the north side of the double-pitched roof in dormer-like projections, allowing the room to be flooded with natural light. A circular stairtower with a conical roof connects the two levels of the building. A wooden porch leads from the stairtower to the ground.

The Hawes Gymnasium, of 1902-08 (#3, site plan), is a three-story, horizontal mass of red brick, with elevated basement, hipped roof and dormers. A flight of granite steps leads up to a monumental brick entrance archway on the southern portion of the east and west facades. To the north of the stairway on each side is a conical stairtower. The Hawes Gymnasium takes its basic form from H. H. Richardson's library prototypes of the 1880's. Although it lacks the grace, the dignity and the meticulous refinement of Richardson's work, the low, horizontal shape, the conical stairtower, and the great archway entrance are derived from Richardson's work. Aptly enough, the interior of the gymnasium has been renovated recently to accommodate the school's main library.

Under a self-proclaimed "Program for Progress" in the late 1950's and early 1960's the Moses Brown School erected a number of modern facilities. The first building to be completed was the L. Ralston Thomas Laboratory Building of 1958 (#4, site plan). The simple, one-story, brick and cinder block, rectangular container with a double-pitched roof is located to the west of the Boys' Building. Friends Hall (1962, The Architects' Collaborative; #5, site plan, photo #7) is a box-like, two-story classroom building which is situated to the east of Alumni Hall. Projecting from the wide, southern glass wall is a stairtower of poured-in-place concrete. A wooden deck visually separates the basement from the main floor. Three laminated wood arches

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form a clerestory above the gallery of the former library space. Just to the east of Friends Hall is an old stone barn (#6, site plan) from 1852. For many years the barn served as a gymnasium for Lower School children. Today it functions as a study hall. To the north of the barn is an old power plant (#7, site plan) dating from the turn of the century, when the school provided its own direct current electricity. The building is now used for storage.

A field house of reinforced concrete arches was erected in 1966 (#8, site plan). In 1975 Moses Brown School constructed a new open-classroom elementary school building, designed by Morris Nathanson (#9, site plan, photo #8). After the open-classroom design proved to be ineffective, the firm of Floyd, Ellenswing, and Wallace renovated the structure in 1978. In the same year a cinder block gymnasium annex was built next to the field house (#10, site plan).

Landscaping of the Moses Brown School is arranged informally. Broad, level fields of grass are punctuated by groups of oak, fir, and a few remaining elm trees. The Theodate Lang Memorial Gate (photo #2) serves as the school's monumental entrance on Lloyd Avenue. Erected in 1907, the gate consists of two large, central piers and two subordinate arches constructed of brick with limestone trim and decorative metalwork. At the peak of each pier is an imposing iron lantern. The Lang Gate is similar in style and scale to the contemporary Van Wickle Gates (1901) at Brown University. A smaller gate in memory of Lucretia Gifford Chase was erected on Hope Street in 1911. A single iron lantern bridges two limestone piers. On the perimeter of the campus along Lloyd Avenue and the corner of Hope Street is an ornate iron fence. Built in several sections, it is furnished by, and dedicated to, the many classes which have benefited from the one-hundred-and-sixty-year presence of the Moses Brown School in Providence.

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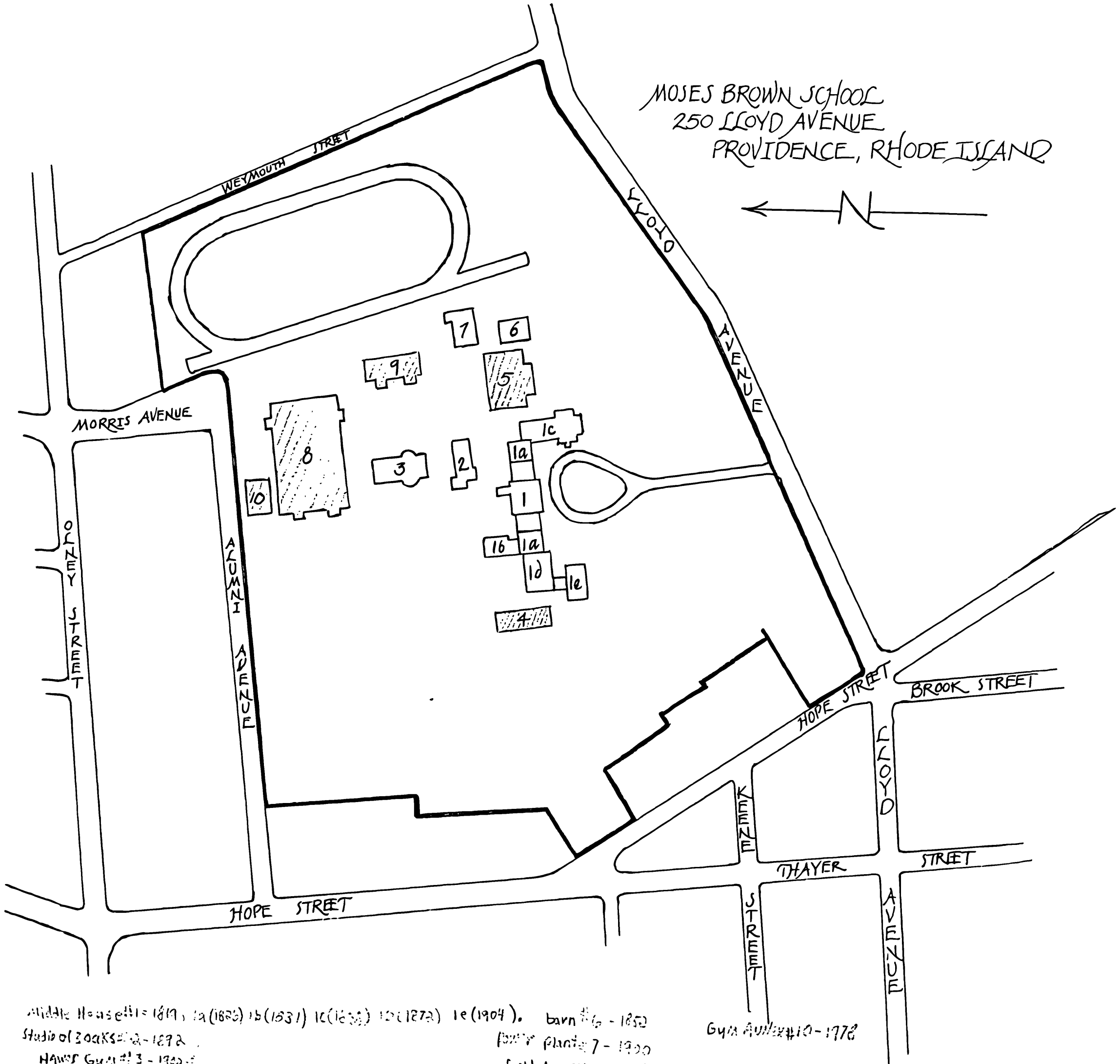
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Middle House #1 - 1819, 1a (1825), 1b (1831), 1c (1833), 1d (1872), 1e (1904). barn #6 - 1850
 Studio of Books #2 - 1872
 Hayes Gym #3 - 1902-3
 Lab #4 - 1958
 Collaborative #5 - 1962
 Barn #6 - 1850
 Power Plant #7 - 1900
 Field House #8 - 1901
 Elem. School #9 - 1905

Gym Annex #10 - 1978

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/history
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Moses Brown School is significant for its historic associations with the educational, religious, and social development of Rhode Island. Its architectural focal point, the original school building designed by noted local architect John Holden Greene and completed in 1819, is the second oldest school building still in educational use in the state.

Friends' Yearly Meeting School, the original name of Moses Brown School, began in Portsmouth, Rhode Island in 1784, closed four years later, and re-opened in Providence in 1819. The importance of the school's establishment and eventual revitalization cannot be overestimated, since the development of a comprehensive educational program--public or private--in Rhode Island was a protracted process often met by economic adversity, civil strife, and indifference.

With the exception of Rhode Island, the New England Colonies were progressive in their early educational development. The church in Puritan New England had a considerable influence over the establishment of early school systems because of the close union of church and state.¹ Schools were operated under the authority of clergy who were in civic power. Funding was provided by public taxation. Massachusetts took the first step toward establishing a public educational system in 1642. The colonies of New Hampshire, Connecticut, as well as New York, soon followed Massachusetts' example; by 1650, public education was compulsory for every colony in New England, with the exception of Rhode Island.

A combination of factors caused Rhode Island to lag behind her neighboring colonies in the establishment of educational institutions. Because of the religious freedom which prevailed in Rhode Island, church and state were separated, with the consequent lack of church interest in the development of public schools. Whereas the Congregationalists in Massachusetts believed in, and required, an educated ministry, the Baptists, Quakers, and other sects particular to Rhode Island did not have any specific educational requirements for their clergymen. Scattered settlements throughout the colony, boundary disputes with neighboring colonies, and a slow growth in population further retarded the growth of a viable educational system for many years.²

Although no state-wide school program came into fruition during the colonial period, efforts to provide public and private education on the local level succeeded to a limited degree. In 1764 the University Grammar School was established in Warren, Rhode Island as a preparatory school for

9. Major Bibliographical References

Cady, John Hutchins. The Civic and Architectural Development of Providence: 1750-1950. Providence: The Book Shop, 1957. passim.

(See Continuation Sheet #14)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 30 acres **UMT NOT VERIFIED**
Quadrangle name Providence Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

A	1 9	3 0 0 9 6 0	4 6 3 4 0 5 0	B	1 9	3 0 1 0 6 0	4 6 3 3 8 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 9	3 0 0 6 7 0	4 6 3 3 6 1 0	D	1 9	3 0 0 5 3 0	4 6 3 3 9 9 0
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification Providence Tax Assessor's Plat 11, Lots 1, 15, 48, 49, 50, and the southern portion of lot 45 defined by a line drawn eighty feet north of the southern boundary of said lot and parallel to said boundary.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Howard Maurer

organization R. I. Historical Preservation Commission date March, 1980

street & number 150 Benefit Street telephone 401-277-2678

city or town Providence state Rhode Island

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Frank C. Williamson

title State Historic Preservation Officer date May 14, 1980

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date 7/27/80

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Patrick Andrews date 7/22/80

Chief of Registration

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Rhode Island College, to be opened there the following year. Both institutions were removed to Providence in 1770.

In 1767 a committee of leading citizens in Providence made a vigorous effort to establish a free school system for the town; but after submitting a plan to build four schools for the "education of youth, being a thing of the first importance to every society," the town meeting rejected the proposal. Moses Brown, a prominent member of the committee, noted in a memorandum that:

the plan of a free school supported by a tax,
was rejected by the poorer sort of the people...
being strangely led away not to see their own
as well as the public interest therein...³

Despite the setback there were additional efforts to organize a plan for town schools. In 1768, a school known as Whipple Hall was built on Benefit Street. The following year the Meeting Street School House was completed, which still stands today. Both institutions were established by local proprietors and were supported by tuition fees. Moses Brown was one of the principal organizers of the latter school, which stood adjacent to the Quaker Meetinghouse which gave the street its name.

Education was the primary cause to which Moses Brown devoted much of his time and money; yet it was only one of many humanitarian interests that involved his efforts. Moses Brown was born September 23, 1738, in Providence, and died there September 6, 1836, just short of his ninety-eighth birthday. He was a direct descendant of Chad Brown, one of the original settlers of Providence, and was the youngest of the four prominent "Brown Brothers," the others being Nicholas, Joseph, and John. After the early death of his father, Moses was adopted by his uncle, Obadiah Brown, and later quit school at the age of thirteen to join his uncle and brothers in the family's thriving mercantile business. Subject to intense fits of vertigo, and bothered by questionable business practices in the mercantile industry over which he had no control,⁴ Moses retired early from active business life with ample funds drawn from his uncle's estate and from his brief business career.

After his retirement Moses Brown became increasingly active in civic affairs. In addition to serving as a member of the Rhode Island General Assembly he helped found the Rhode Island Historical Society,

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the Providence Athenaeum, and the Meeting Street School. Moses Brown never lost his business acumen, for in 1790 he brought Samuel Slater and the Arkwright cotton spinning process to Rhode Island, and helped to establish, with his son and son-in-law, the prosperous spinning firm known as Almy and Brown.

An event which had a profound effect on Moses Brown's life occurred in 1773, when his first wife, Anna, died. Shortly after her death Moses reported that he received a "divine light" pointing out the evil of owning slaves. "I saw my slaves with my spiritual eyes as plainly as I see you now, and it was given me as clearly to understand that the sacrifice that was called for of my hand was to give the liberty."⁵ Slavery was still common in Rhode Island during the 1770's. The practice was not outlawed in the state until 1787. It was not unusual for a well-to-do Providence family to own a few slaves (Moses owned ten).⁶ In 1773 Moses Brown signed a deed of manumission, freeing his slaves. Largely influenced by the Quakers' abolitionist stand toward slavery, Moses converted from the Baptist faith to Quakerism the following year.

Rhode Island's policy of religious toleration encouraged Quakers to settle early in the colony. During the latter half of the seventeenth century Rhode Island was the center of Quakerism in America. By 1690 almost half of the population of the colony was of the Quaker persuasion (Friends did not begin to settle in Pennsylvania until 1691). The Quakers exerted considerable political and commercial influence in Rhode Island through the first half of the eighteenth century. Friends held a number of high offices, including the governorship. Almost thirty meeting houses were built during this period.⁷ After the ravages of the Revolutionary War, Quakerism began its decline in Rhode Island. Friends decided to shun public office and any secular authority. For generations however, populous communities of Friends existed on Aquidneck Island in the towns of Newport and Portsmouth, and to the north in Smithfield where Moses joined the Monthly Meeting.

As a devoted convert to Quakerism, Moses Brown's main educational concern now was to provide for Friends a "guarded education"--an education free from the "Corrupt Ways, Manners, Fashions, and Language of the World."⁸ Since the foundation of Quakerism in England, by George Fox, in 1647, Friends rallied to the idea of having their

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children taught under Friendly influence. Later in life Moses recalled that after he joined the Society, "I was sorrowfully affected to find our discipline in regard to promoting of Schools so neglected that there was not one to be found under the regulation of friends."⁹ He believed fervently that:

Our principles lead to a separation from the world, its customs, habits, language, and manners; how then can we hope for faithful successors in our posterity, or that they will come up in principles and practices agreeable there to, if we continue so far to neglect the early care of our offspring, as to send them to schools where principles and practices so repugnant are inculcated and taught: It is essential to the continuance of every society, upon the foundation of its rise and establishment, that its first principles be often recurred to.¹⁰

After great effort, Moses and a few other Friends were able to establish a Monthly Meeting School in Smithfield in 1779; but it lasted for only two years. The reasons for the school's failure were to plague later attempts made elsewhere: a scarcity of qualified teachers, a lack of funds, the ravages of war, and the indifference of local Friends.

Not one to be discouraged easily, Moses Brown, after his experience at Smithfield, began to envision the first Yearly Meeting boarding school in America. It was to be modeled after the successful Ackworth School established in 1779 by the London Yearly Meeting for poor children of both sexes. As treasurer of the Meeting for Sufferings, Moses launched a subscription drive that was not very successful. The United States was in its "critical period" following the Revolution, and the economy and the government of the state and of the country were in a shambles. Although the Yearly Meeting School was practically doomed to failure from the outset, it opened in 1784 in the Portsmouth Meeting House. Among the school's thirty students was Moses' only son, Obadiah. Four years later, the school closed due to a lack of funds and a dwindling number of students. Funds remaining from the school were entrusted to Moses, who hoped to reopen the school some day. Quaker boarding schools modeled after the famous Ackworth School

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began successful operation in Poughkeepsie, New York, in 1796 and in Westtown, Pennsylvania, in 1799.

Over thirty years were to pass before the Friends' Yearly Meeting School in Rhode Island could be reestablished, but during the interregnum various public and private institutions were founded in the state. Each year, from 1795 to 1800, the town of Providence passed resolutions to establish free schools, but the provisions were not carried into effect. In 1800, however, John Howland, a barber of Providence and member of the influential Mechanics' Association, petitioned the State Assembly to enact a law establishing free schools in the state. Only Providence carried out the measure, which was opposed so strongly outside of the town that the bill was repealed in 1803. In October, 1800, four schools opened in Providence to a student body of about 800. By 1819, six free schools were operating in the town. It was not until 1828 that the General Assembly re-enacted and enforced the 1800 law.

In 1802, the Washington Academy in North Kingstown was founded in response to the demand for male school teachers and for the institutions to train them. Kent Academy, later called the East Greenwich Academy, opened in the same year. In 1810 the Smithfield Academy was founded by the Rhode Island Association of Free Baptists to teach students of both sexes. The Pettiquamscutt Academy, later Kingston Academy, opened in 1819 in South Kingstown.

By the year 1801 the school fund which had been entrusted to Moses Brown increased to almost \$3,900.00. Discussions were renewed concerning the reorganization of a Yearly Meeting school. The fund was not nearly sufficient, however, and the requisite \$16,000.00 needed to launch the institution could not be attained. By 1810 the fund rose to almost \$8,000.00, but the recent Napoleonic wars in Europe and their blow to the American economy put a damper on any effort to revitalize the school; the War of 1812 only made the situation worse.

When the cause of a boarding school in Rhode Island seemed to be all but hopeless in 1814, Moses Brown offered the Meeting for Sufferings the following proposal:

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Believing that a permanent institution for a guarded education of the rising generation will be promotive of their usefulness in society and the honor of Truth...I have concluded to give a tract of land on the West part of my homestead farm containing about Forty-three acres for the purpose of erecting suitable buildings for the boarding School thereon....As treasurer of the School fund I may for your information mention that its present amount is Nine thousand three hundred Dollars....¹¹

Needless to say, the Yearly Meeting accepted Moses Brown's offer to relocate the boarding school in Providence. The Quakers eagerly renewed their subscription efforts to complete the building fund. At first two buildings were planned for the site; one for boys, the other for girls. Higher costs and limited resources, however, restricted the building program to one building. After decades of delay, patience, and diligent work, Moses Brown's ultimate goal became a reality on January 3, 1819, when classes resumed at the Friends' Yearly Meeting School in Providence.

From the beginning, the boarding school was a success. Average attendance increased from seventy during the first few years to 125 during the following decade. Most students were between the ages of ten and fifteen.¹² Quakers predominated in the beginning; non-Friends were allowed to attend for an additional tuition charge if they pledged to conform to the Quaker customs of plain language and simple dress. Students lived a spartan existence under Quaker discipline. Friends believed that both sexes were entitled to an education; but boys and girls were to be kept strictly apart. Classrooms, dining rooms, play grounds, and, of course, dormitories were separated by sex. The school term ran for the entire year with no summer break. Art and music, considered to be "carnal" and "worldly," were prohibited from the institution.

The growth of the school's physical plant over the years reflects changes in the educational philosophy and curriculum as well as in the financial fortunes of the school. When the Yearly Meeting School

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opened in Providence, students were taught basic elementary subjects including the "three R's," grammar, and geography. Moses Brown hoped that the curriculum would include some day a department for advanced studies.

In 1822, Moses Brown's son Obadiah, died at the age of fifty-two, leaving \$100,000.00 to the school from his cotton-spinning fortune. The bequest was the largest single grant made to an institution of learning in America up to that time. With its greatly enlarge endowment, the Friends' School could afford to build an "Academic Department" in 1831. Prominent teachers from throughout the country were given considerable salaries to teach at the institution. John Griscom, then considered to be the most learned Friend in America, became the first principal of the new department for the exorbitant sum of \$1,500.00 per year--three times the salary of any previous instructor at the school.¹³ The famous instructors attracted more non-Friends who paid higher tuition. Enrollment by 1875 reached an average of 172, of which half the students were non-Friends.¹⁴ Prominent teachers often used the Friends' School as a stepping stone to the Quaker-affiliated Haverford College in Pennsylvania.

As the ratio of non-Friends to Friends increased toward the end of the nineteenth century, the Quaker notions of a "guarded education" began to change. Friends' School became less of a "character-building" institution; instead, greater emphasis was placed on college preparation.¹⁵ Social customs became more "worldly" at the institution when co-educational dining was first allowed in the basement of the new Boys' Building in 1872. Over time Friends came to believe that art and music did, indeed, contribute to a "spiritual life."¹⁶ The installation of a piano in Alumni Hall and the construction of the Studio of the Three Oaks, in 1892, indicate shift in the Quaker attitude toward the arts.

Rapid advances made in public education during the latter half of the nineteenth century put a strain on private academies. Not all private schools were able to compete with the vast resources of the public sector, and many of them had to close or to merge. To meet the situation the Friends' School began to admit day students in 1884. The Mowry and Goff Classical School, founded in 1864, joined the University Grammar School in 1898, which, in turn, merged with the Friends' School in 1904. The Lower School Building was constructed

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in that year to accommodate the new Country Day School for younger students. In the same year Friends' School was renamed in honor of its principal founder, Moses Brown.

Because of a growing prejudice, especially in the East, against coeducation, the enrollment of girls at the school began to decline toward the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁷ After the turn of the century the drop in numbers became precipitous, while the enrollment of boys continued to increase. Although the administration was obligated to provide for the needs of the remaining female students, the trustees were also under pressure to furnish additional space and facilities for boys.

In 1916 a special committee organized to find a solution to the problem recommended that the present complex be given over to the boys' department; girls would be relocated in a separate building to be constructed on school grounds. The plan was not implemented because of the outbreak of World War I and the resultant lack of funds for the project. After the war the administration stated that "all land now owned by the School is needed for the development of the boys' alone."¹⁸ In 1925 the Lincoln School, a modern girls' school located a short distance away from Moses Brown, became available for purchase. The following year the New England Yearly Meeting of Friends acquired Lincoln School, and the two affiliated institutions operated as single-sex schools for the next fifty years.

After the sentiment for coeducation grew over time, coeducation returned to Moses Brown during the 1970's. Today the student body is comprised mainly of day students, almost all of whom are non-friends.

Although the components of a "guarded education" have changed over generations, the Moses Brown School continues to function with a reputation as one of the finest private schools on the eastern seaboard. The School is of lasting importance for its integral association with the ideals and objectives of its principal founder, and for its role in Quaker life of the nineteenth century. Its contributions to the educational, social, and religious heritage of Rhode Island, in addition to its architectural interest, render the Moses Brown School a landmark worthy of preservation.

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¹William Howe Tolman. History of Higher Education in Rhode Island (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1894), p. 23.

²Ibid., pp. 23-26.

³Cited in Thomas B. Stockwell. History of Public Education in Rhode Island: 1636-1876 (Providence: Providence Press Company, 1876), p. 136.

⁴Rayner Wickersham Kelsey. Centennial History of Moses Brown School 1819-1919 (Providence: Moses Brown School, (1919) p. 36.

⁵Cited in Augustine Jones. Moses Brown: A Sketch (Providence: Rhode Island Historical Society, 1892), p. 13.

⁶James Francis Reilly. Moses Brown and the Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Movement (Masters Thesis, Brown University, May, 1951) p. 19.

⁷Interview with Thyra J. Foster, Curator of Archives for New England Yearly Meeting of Friends, March 27, 1980.

⁸London Yearly Meeting, 1690, cited in Kelsey. pp. 6-7.

⁹Draft of letter, Moses Brown to David Barclay, March 15, 1787, in Moses Brown Papers, (Rhode Island Historical Society), VI, Nos. 1474-1475, p. 3.

¹⁰Moses Brown's extracts of Minutes of the Yearly Meeting School Committee, Moses Brown Papers, Austin MSS., IV, "Education." (Rhode Island Historical Society).

¹¹Meeting for Sufferings MSS, Minutes 1793-1842 (Rhode Island Historical Society), pp. 166-167.

¹²Kelsey, pp. 52, 59.

¹³Ibid., p. 62.

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¹⁴Ibid., p. 97.

¹⁵Foster.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷William Paxton. Moses Brown School: A History of Its
Third Half-Century 1919-1969.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 21.

Moses Brown School, Providence R.I.

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**National Register of Historic Places
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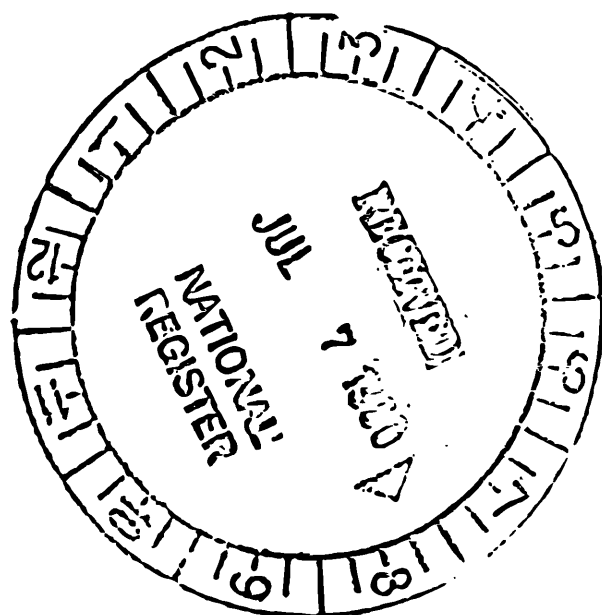
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Architecturally, Moses Brown is a handsome institutional complex developed over the course of its hundred-and-sixty-year history. The main building is the only extant institutional structure erected by John Holden Greene, Providence's premier early nineteenth-century architect-builder. It represents the conservative tradition of academic buildings, established by Renaissance types, which persisted until the end of the nineteenth century. The growth of the school and the demand for specialized facilities within the complex provided the opportunity for construction of several handsome late nineteenth-century buildings such as the Studio of the Three Oaks (1892) and Hawes Gymnasium (1902-1908), which demonstrate the shift in academic buildings to forms that respond more closely to a building's program, a trend begun by H.H. Richardson's school buildings in the 1870s. More recent structures, such as the L. Ralston Thomas Laboratory, Friends Hall, and the Elementary School illustrate a continuation of this practice of designing a building to fit the changing demands of educational practices, but these modern structures are visually distinct from their nineteenth-century neighbors and rely on a standard modernist design aesthetic. Moses Brown, taken as a whole, amply demonstrates the evolution of educational architecture over the past hundred-and-sixty years.



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