

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Rhode Island	
COUNTY: Providence	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
MAR 7 1973	RECEIVED

1. NAME

COMMON:
Carr House

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Carr (Dr. George W.) House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
29 Waterman Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Providence

STATE: Rhode Island, 02903 CODE: 44 COUNTY: Providence CODE: 007

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input 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 type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Rhode Island School of Design

STREET AND NUMBER:
2 College Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island, 02903 CODE: 44

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
Dorrance Street at Washington Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island, 02903 CODE: 44

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1959 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:
Independence Avenue and 1st Street, S. E.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
COUNTY:
ENTRY NUMBER
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

Carr House, now forming a part of the building complex of the Rhode Island School of Design, was designed about 1885 by Edward I. Nickerson of Providence as a residence for Dr. George W. Carr and is a large, three-and-a-half-storey town house rising upon a constricted corner lot. It is in the "Queen Anne" style and has (or gives the impression in spite of site restrictions) a spreading--but highly-punctuated--mass, and a high-roofed "picturesque" silhouette. On a steep slope, in a conspicuous location at a busy intersection, only its north and its east elevations are generally to be observed, and these were treated with thought and invention.

Wood-framed (probably of "balloon" construction), the house rises abruptly from the sidewalk upon a basement of finished, coursed ashlar which terminates in the simplest of sloped, angular water-tables. Above, the first storey is covered by irregularly-shaped flat-faced (or split?) fieldstone up to a prominently-projecting wood moulding with a kind of frieze band above it. The second storey is faced by scalloped and plain shingles, and the third storey in the roof displays panelling and half-timbering. Generously-provided bow and oriel windows are sheathed with cast bronze; some railings and roof ornaments are of copper; the roof itself is of slate; and the upper stages of the panelled and hooded chimneys are of brick. The many-windowed west elevation and the south end (a now-exposed party-wall) of the building were not expected to be seen and are faced in unadorned brickwork.

The house is basically a rectangle, though there is a round, four-storey, extinguisher-capped tower inset in its north-east corner, and numerous small protrusions, recesses and tricks of ornament are introduced to deny flat rectangularity. Designed to appear as one large residence, Carr House was actually planned as two separate dwellings (with minimal internal openings between them)--a small southern slice of the structure being intended as a three-storey house for a son or daughter, upon marriage.

The north (Waterman Street) front has the main entrance in its centre, reached by stone steps at one side of an unroofed, stone-parapetted platform before a slightly-recessed double door. To the right of the entrance is a metal-and-plate-glass oriel; at the left are one window and then the rounded, large-windowed base of the tower which turns the corner into Benefit Street. (On the right-hand or north-west corner of the first floor a section of wall has, chamfer-like, been cut out; a column on an angled corbel "interestingly" supports the resulting overhang above.) Having turned along Benefit Street past the tower, one sees a single first-floor window, then two recesses which harbour multi-windowed bows and, as well, the squeezed front doorway to the son's or daughter's narrow house. On the second floor, window openings are numerous and random: here single, there paired, and some in a large bronze-clad oriel over the main entrance. At third-floor level they are even

(See Continuation Sheet 1.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

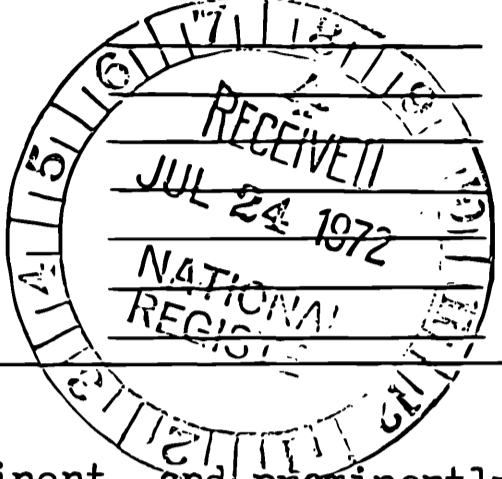
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) C. 1885

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Carr House is one of Providence's most prominent--and prominently placed--examples of the early "castellated" expressions of the Shingle or "Queen Anne" Style. The influence of the English architect Norman Shaw was infectious in America during the 1870's; and although Carr House was not built until about 1885, its architect employed in an inventive manner many of the elements that Shaw had popularised--an irregular outline achieved by steep roof sections, tall chimneys and overhanging bays; and a diversity of surface treatments and ornamental materials and details. (In time, the term "Nickersonian" became applied locally to this style of Nickerson's works and those of his contemporaries.)

The small, sloping lot on which Carr House is situated dictated the design of a contained, urban structure, and Nickerson responded by emphasising vertical proportions more than he could horizontal ones, and by rendering the ornamentation in a reasonably subdued fashion. One of the finest external features of the house is the use of mouldings, which have become quite thin and elegant, with mediaeval suggestions. The swelling bays and projections of the house allude to an undulating wall, but are somewhat starched, particularly in comparison with works in a similar but freer style by H. H. Richardson and McKim, Mead & White in Newport. The upper storey of Carr House shows an admixture of Stick and Shingle Styles, akin to, but less agreeably resolved than, Richardson's Watts Sherman house of almost ten years earlier. The house, however, exemplifies the spatial and pictorial freedom of the Shingle Style and achieves this intention on a very restricted urban site.

Carr House was purchased in 1916 by the Rhode Island School of Design, which in 1923 began using it as a dormitory. The house had later use as offices in one part, an infirmary in the other. Since 1965 it has housed a security office; and since 1971 the building has also served as space for studios and a restaurant-lounge. The interior has thus been re-handled extensively, and to-day only the entrance hall, the stair, the large eastern dining-room and several of the fireplaces can be considered untouched and architecturally or decoratively significant. These fireplaces are exquisitely coloured and assist their

(See Continuation Sheet 2.)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cady, John Hutchins: The Civic and Architectural Development of Providence, 1636-1950 (Providence, Rhode Island, 1957), pp. 170, 224.
 Cull, Edwin Emory, A. I. A.: Plans of proposed remodelling of the Dr. G. W. Carr house, 1931 (kept at the Physical Plant Office, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island).

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 TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		41° 49' 36.96" N	71° 24' 29.85" W	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

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

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
B. Christopher Bene, Surveyor-Researcher

ORGANIZATION: **Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission** DATE: **May 9, 1972**

STREET AND NUMBER:
John Brown House, 52 Power Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Providence** STATE: **Rhode Island, 02906** CODE: **44**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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: *B. Christopher Bene*

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: July 14, 1972

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

Robert W. Henry
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 3/7/73

ATTEST:
W. J. [Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 3-1-73

19/000000/1630000
 12-12-1972
 OJ M REF
 SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)-1

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Providence	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
PAR 7	1973

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

more "random:" in a gable, in an oriel in a gable, in three types of shed-roofed dormers. The fourth level of the tower detaches itself from the mass of the roof and has round-headed windows nearly encircling it.

Internally, the house still displays its original plan (although in some places there are to-day new openings, or rooms have been sub-divided), and a good part of its trim is in original condition--the latter meaning varnished woods of various kinds in various rooms, exhibiting elaborate joinery, panelling and carving.

From the central, parqueted vestibule in the north front a few steps lead up to the inner double doors which have incised decoration and large glazing. Within is a main hall wainscoted (as is the vestibule) in golden oak. The eight-foot-tall doors of this hall have complex moulded architraves with circle-in-square corner blocks and heavy cornices. The wide and massively-railed stairway is fitted into the south-west corner of the hall and rises in an angular three-quarter turn, with two landings, to the second floor. To its left--on the hall's south wall--are two segmentally-arched alcoves separated by an ornamental pier: one contains a stone and tile fireplace; the other, a door leading to the service portion of the house. A stained-glass skylight, receiving its light through a shaft from the roof, is in the ceiling over the stairwell.

The moderately-sized north-eastern room (probably the reception-room) on the first floor has one curved, windowed corner in the base of the tower. Across this room's south-eastern corner is a tiled fireplace with wooden columns of eclectic style supporting a shallow mantel shelf. A narrow moulded cornice runs around the ceiling. The second room opening from the east side of the hall would seem to have been the dining-room and can be entered through sliding doors from both hall and reception-room. Woodwork in this room is dark-stained, and wainscoting and doors are elaborately panelled; a heavy cornice employs mouldings, panelling and dentils; and the ceiling is beamed. The east wall of the room has a five-section bow window, and the west wall a fireplace treatment contained between floor-to-cornice fluted Doric pilasters. The hearth has back and sides of cast iron with foliate and mask motifs and a surround of small, square, bright tiles bordered by a brass strip; around the tiling runs a wooden moulding which supports a "frieze" panel with relief-carved, Gibbons-like foliage; above this, modillions support a dentilled cornice. The overmantel has complex panelling--the upper range of which has scallop-shell tops--and a heavy shelf across its middle which is supported on consoles. Across the hall, the large north-western room (presumably a drawing- or sitting-room) contains a fireplace with fluted pilasters and large brackets adorning its mantel. Panelling remains under the windows here, and originally a south-western alcove was enframed by a wide key-stoned and dentilled arch. The room filling the south-western portion

(See Continuation Sheet 2.)

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) 1972



STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Providence	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
MAR 7 1973	

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

of the first floor would seem to have been the kitchen, connecting through pantries with the stair-hall and the dining-room.

The southern slice of Carr House, or the secondary residence, could be reached from the main house through a south door in the dining-room. Here the main floor has a sizeable central stair-hall and three principal rooms. The hall has a corner fireplace with overmantel mirror, and the staircase is almost as ornate as that of the main house. Two of the rooms on this floor have bow windows, and two have tiled fireplaces.

The second and third floors of both portions of the house accommodated numerous bedrooms and have fireplaces placed like those on the first floor. However, these floors are decorated rather sparingly in contrast to the first floor. Door enframements of symmetrical mouldings have corner blocks with mechanically-carved circles in them.

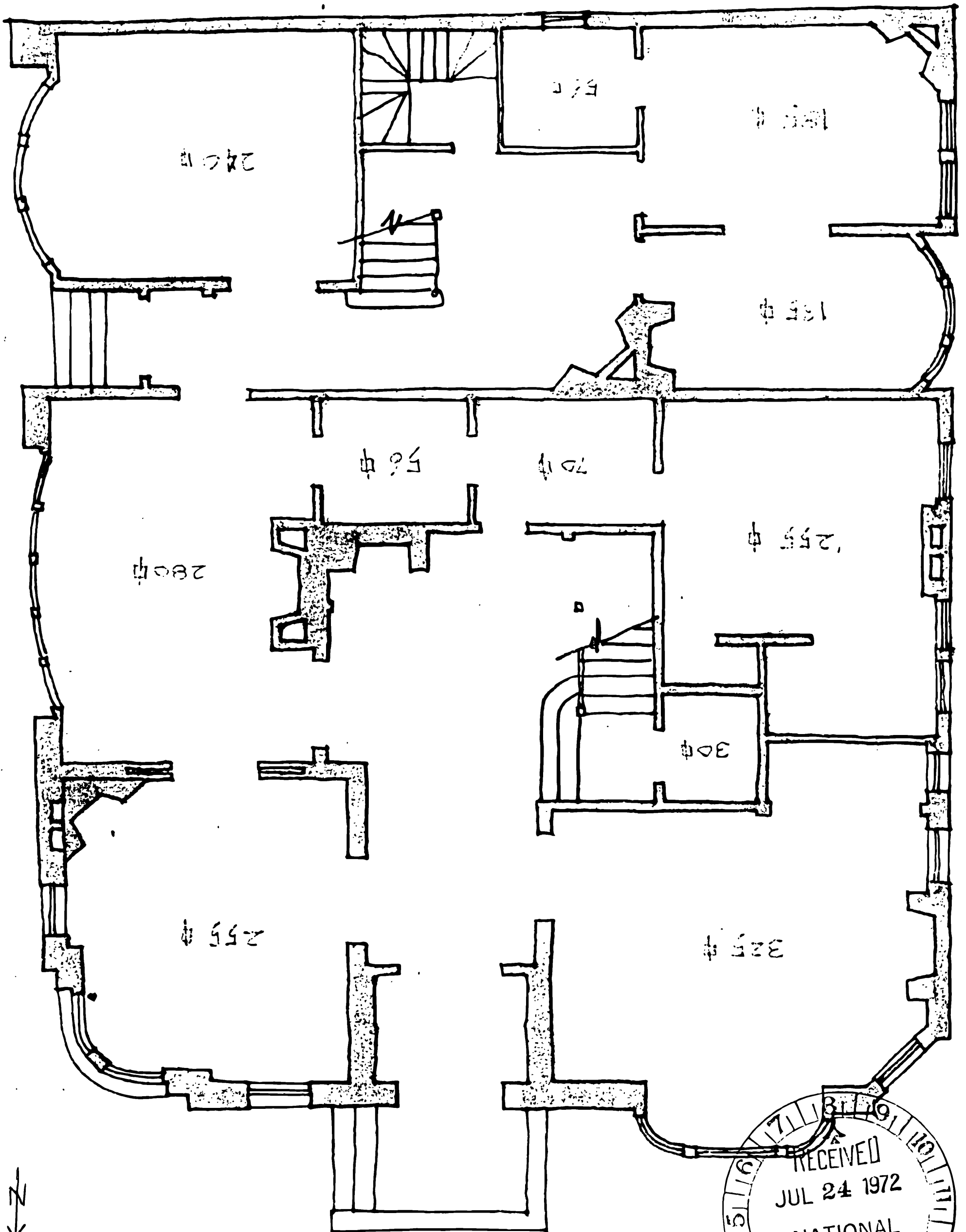
The interiors have been somewhat changed and re-divided, but not ruined. The north-eastern room of the first floor has its woodwork painted, as in much of the rest of the house, excepting the main hall and the dining-room in particular. The western half of the first floor has now openings throughout its entire north-south spaces and serves as a student restaurant-lounge; one of the pantries is now a cork-lined exhibition gallery; rooms of the upper floors serve as studios.

8. Significance.

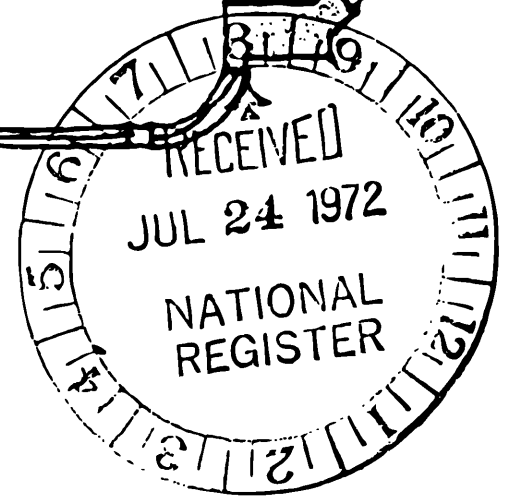
magnificently-panelled surroundings in giving, somehow, a sense of comfortable domesticity, within a blending of sumptuous materials on a not-grandiose scale.

Edward I. Nickerson, its architect, was trained in the local office of Clifton A. Hall. Nickerson was one of the founders of the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and served as the chapter president from 1893 to 1895. Carr House is his best-known work here and remains a fine example of the extremely decorative and inventive trend in domestic architecture before the shift to the Classical and Colonial Revivals. Carr House has always provided a strong, memorable architectural image and accent at this busy intersection of Waterman and Benefit Streets. Along historic Benefit Street, it is the only example of its architectural style and thereby, quite literally, a stunning one to visitors. To Providence people, it has long been a landmark.

CARR HOUSE.



FIRST FLOOR.
(1931)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

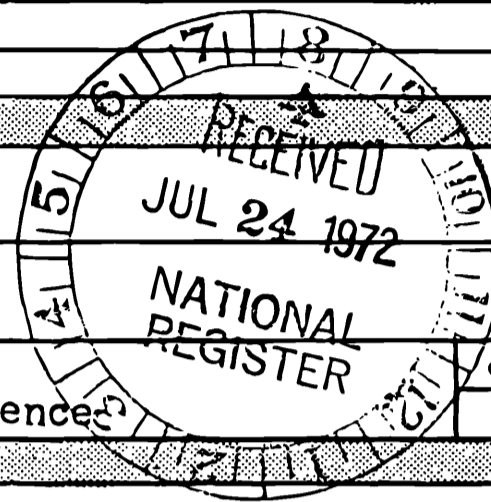
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Providence	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER MAR 7 1973	DATE

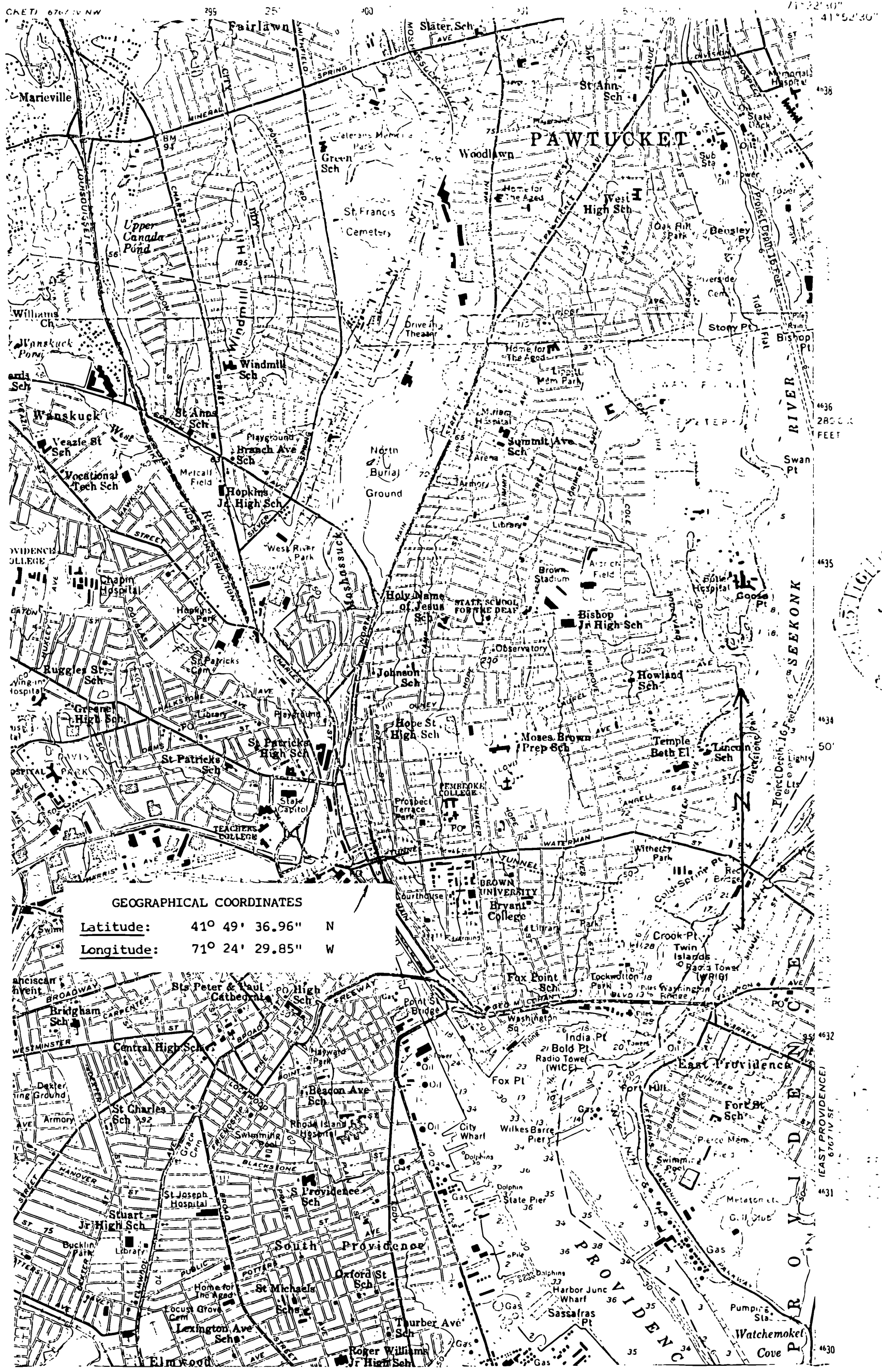
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: Carr House			
AND/OR HISTORIC: Carr (Dr. George W.) House			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: 29 Waterman Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Providence			
STATE: Rhode Island	CODE 44	COUNTY: Providence	CODE 007
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT: Copy from Rhode Island School of Design			
DATE OF PHOTO: 1931			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Original plans at Rhode Island School of Design, 2 College Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02906			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. Plan (no scale given) of first floor by Edwin Emory Cull, 1931.			



PROVIDENCE QUADRANGLE
RHODE ISLAND
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

6707444
ATTLEBORO



GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES

Latitude: 41° 49' 36.96" N
Longitude: 71° 24' 29.85" W