

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED

MAY 4 1976

DATE ENTERED

JUN 24 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Pitcher-Goff House

AND/OR COMMON
Goff Mansion

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
56 Walcott Street

CITY, TOWN
Pawtucket

STATE
Rhode Island

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

VICINITY OF

1 Honorable Ferdinand St. Germain

CODE
44

COUNTY
Providence

CODE
007

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Pawtucket Congregational Society

STREET & NUMBER
40 Walcott Street

CITY, TOWN
Pawtucket

VICINITY OF

STATE
Rhode Island

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Pawtucket City Hall, Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER
137 Roosevelt Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Pawtucket

STATE
Rhode Island

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Pawtucket Survey

DATE
1975-1976

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

CITY, TOWN
Providence

STATE
Rhode Island

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 Pitcher/Goff mansion is an anomaly. Its imposing Italianate exterior appears now much as it did when the building was completed for the Pawtucket manufacturer, Ellis B. Pitcher, about 1840. The mansion's interiors, however, are notable for the fine Queen Anne woodwork installed throughout for the building's second owner, Lyman B. Goff, another prominent industrialist, about 1881. Unifying interior and exterior is a consistently high level of design. Pitcher and Goff were among the most successful Pawtucket manufacturers of their respective periods and the Walcott Street mansion clearly reflects their status.

The original form of the main house appears to have been a two-story rectangular block, roughly 43' X 38', placed with its longer side facing Walcott Street. From this block projects: a one-story tetrastyle portico centered on the southern (Walcott Street) facade; a two-story service wing measuring some 20' X 25' on the northern end; and a pair of two-story bays on the side elevations, that on the west being semi-octagonal, that on the east, rectangular. At the second floor level both end bays of the Walcott Street facade were set well back from the plane of the remainder of the front wall. This device created a facade composed of three second floor window-bays centered over a five-bayed ground floor arrangement, and successfully tied the portico into the facade both horizontally and vertically. The roof structure was a complex system of very low hips, rising over the main block of the house to a low six-sided cupola. Roof and cupola alike were carefully screened from view by the building's deeply overhanging eaves, and by a balustrade accented by framed panels aligned on each of the building's major axes.

Goff's remodelling in the 1880's only slightly altered the exterior appearance. The only changes visible outside involved rebuilding the chimney stacks in a typically Queen Anne manner, adding a one-story verandah around the semi-octagonal bay on the building's western side, adding a porte-cochère on the east, and constructing two new rooms (one on each floor) in the corner between the back wall of the main house and the ell. Goff also had a set of stained-glass windows inserted in the eastern wall above the landing of his handsome new staircase. Since Goff's time, the only major changes to the overall form and exterior appearance have been the removals of the porte-cochère and several of the chimney stacks above the roofline.

The building is of timber frame construction, with clapboards covering all exterior walls. The exterior trim dates largely from

(See Continuation Sheet # 1)

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CONTINUATION SHEET 1 ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

the period of original construction, and includes some very elaborate carved work. Of particular note are the capitals of the four fluted columns, which are composed of acanthus and lotus leaves and have a distinctly Egyptian flavor. The theme used here is repeated at smaller scale for the capitals of the two fluted columns in antis which flank the front door, and is echoed also in the pilaster caps which ornament the front and sides of the main block.

Colonel Goff's remodelling of the house introduced a small amount of Queen Anne exterior detail, notably in the porte-cochère and the semi-octagonal western verandah. While a serious effort was obviously made to integrate the new work into the lines and character of the original design, still the later features are easily discernible, particularly by their use of a profusion of small round bosses characteristically applied to the necks of columns, piers, and pilasters.

The existing ground-floor plan (see continuation sheet #4) is a variant of the central hallway type, with the staircase located in a wide eastern cross-hallway at the building's rear. Of the four major rooms on this floor, three open from the central hallway: the large single parlor on the east (now subdivided by a thin partition wall), the smaller front parlor, and the dining room on the west. The fourth room, the library added by Colonel Goff, is entered from the staircase hall. The service ell contains a back stair-hall in line with the central hallway, and a kitchen separated from the dining room by a pair of pantries and a narrow passageway (now blocked).

If the current ground-floor plan is not largely original (barring the additions by Colonel Goff), there is little evidence to indicate what the original plan might have been. The Walcott Street facade, which has not been altered, clearly indicates that a central entrance and, presumably, a central hallway were intended from the start. Surviving original interior trim, as well as the placement of the chimney stacks, suggests that the arrangement of the major rooms on the ground floor has not been changed. This still leaves the location of the original staircase and the room division in the ell in doubt, but there seems to be little evidence to go on.

The second floor contains three large chambers over the main block of the house; a fourth large room in the section at the rear added by Goff; and a group of small rooms over the ell (presumably servants' quarters). How closely this resembles the original upstairs layout is not known. A flight of stairs in the ell leads to the cupola, which is in fact another small room, well-lighted

(See Continuation Sheet # 2)

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CONTINUATION SHEET 2 ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

if low-studded.

The major thrust of Goff's remodelling occurred inside the house, where all of the original mantels and doors, the staircase, and most of the standing trim were removed. Most of what original woodwork remains is found in the two ground floor parlors. The window recesses in both rooms are finished with sunken flat panelling of Greek Revival character, and the eastern room still retains most of its original door and window trim - flat architraves carrying simple entablatures with strongly projecting cornices. The Queen Anne woodwork which Colonel Goff had installed in the rest of the house was constructed in a variety of rich woods, highly carved. Most remains unpainted to this day. One chamber in particular is rather unusual, being completely finished in bird's-eye maple - mantel, door and window trim, and baseboards. Walnut, cherry, and butternut mantels and mahogany doors are common throughout the house.

Perhaps the most elaborately finished room in the house was the library on the ground floor added by Colonel Goff. The fireplace end of this room is still panelled from floor to ceiling, and enough similar panelling has been discovered in the cellar to suggest that the entire room was once finished in this manner. The library also boasts a coved plaster ceiling ornamented with hundreds of tiny embossed flowers. At the center of each is a small hole, roughly one-half inch in diameter. These are the intake ducts for a ventilation system of a type common in the era of gaslights.

With the exception of the presumed removal of the panelling from the library, alterations made to the mansion's interior since the property was given to the Pawtucket Congregational Society in 1941, have been minor. A flimsy partition now subdivides the large east room on the ground floor; institutional green paint covers most of the plaster; composition tile has been laid on the floors and acoustical tile hung from the ceilings. In addition, a modern kitchen has been installed in the basement of the ell, without the removal of the tremendous cast iron range (Arlington Range #8, Gardner Chilson, Boston, patented 1873), which Goff had installed on the main floor of the ell.

The Goff House stands some forty feet from the northern side of Walcott Street, facing south, on a lot which currently measures about three-quarters of an acre. The only other building on the

(See Continuation Sheet # 3)

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED	MAY 4 1976
DATE ENTERED	JUN 24 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET

3

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

4

property, a Shingle Style carriage house built for Col. Goff about 1890, stands at the very rear of the lot. The property was formerly quite a bit larger, as Goff had bought up a total of eight adjoining lots. Some of these have been incorporated into the Pawtucket Congregational Church parking lot on the west, however, and the construction of Interstate 95 in the mid-1950's took all the land to within twenty-five feet of the mansion's southeastern corner. On part of the property lost to the highway was a magnificent garden, complete with lily pond, pink and white magnolias, and an ancient copper beech.

Walcott Street itself is one of the oldest thoroughfares on the eastern side of the river, and has long been considered a prime residential street. Mansion-caliber houses were being built on it at least as early as the turn of the eighteenth century, when the Federal-style Starkweather House was erected just east of the Goff House lot, on the other side of the street (since moved to #60 Summit Street). The area continued to develop as an upper-class residential district through the nineteenth century. By the end of that period, this section of Pawtucket had earned for itself the name 'Quality Hill'. The Pitcher/Goff mansion was, and is, in very good company.

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

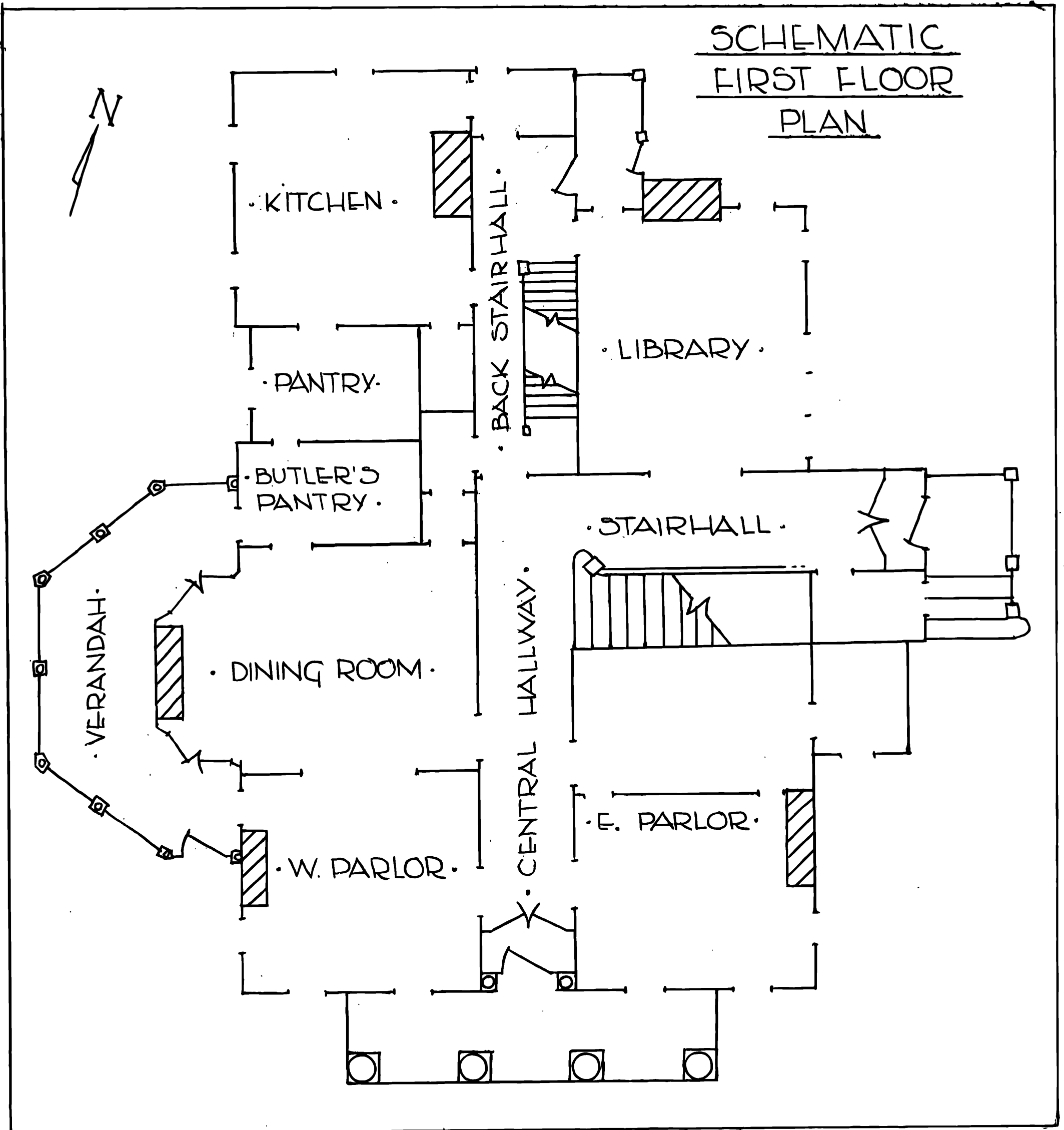
CONTINUATION SHEET

4

ITEM NUMBER

7 PAGE

5



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 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 type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <i>STRUGLE 9/1/83</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT <i>STRUGLE 9/1/83</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1840; 1881-1882 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Pitcher/Goff House is Pawtucket's finest remaining early Italianate mansion, and is one of a mere handful of large early houses still standing in the city. It is located in a fine nineteenth-century neighborhood of which it is an integral part, and to which its destruction would be a severe blow. Built about 1840 for an important Pawtucket manufacturer, and remodelled about 1881 for another, the house has been the home of two of the families which directed Pawtucket's evolution from a small manufacturing village into a major industrial city. The Pitcher/Goff mansion is an extremely valuable part of Pawtucket's cultural heritage.

Stylistically, the building is transitional, displaying a number of traditional Federal and Greek Revival elements subordinated to an overall design which is basically Italianate. The most conservative aspect of the house is undoubtedly its floor plan -- its central hallway, end-chimney layout representing a type common since the late eighteenth century. Surviving original interior trim is also somewhat conservative, being chiefly derived from Greek Revival sources. The exterior, however, while retaining features from both earlier styles, is dominated by the strong cubical masses and boldly projecting bracketted eaves of the nascent Italian Villa style. The building which resulted from this mixture still stands as one of Rhode Island's most interesting early attempts in the Italianate manner.

Ellis B. Pitcher was the son of Larned Pitcher, a pioneer machinist whose firm eventually became the famous Pawtucket machine company of James S. Brown. Ellis, however, chose not to follow in his father's footsteps, but became involved in the manufacture of cotton textiles. The younger Pitcher formed a partnership with Alanson Thayer, and the company produced cotton goods in the old Yellow Mill on the eastern bank of the river for a number of years. In 1844, he went into partnership with a number of other Pawtucket investors to form the Pawtucket Manufacturing Company. A large mill was erected on the site of the old Buffington Mill at the southwest abutment of the Pawtucket Bridge, and production of cotton cloth was begun.

(See Continuation Sheet # 5)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet # 7

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one

UTM REFERENCES

480

A	1,9	3,0,2	4,7,5	4,6,3,8	6,3,0	B					
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		
C						D					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Stephen J. Roper/Senior Survey Specialist

ORGANIZATION

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

DATE

16 April 1976

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 X

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Frederick R. Williams

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

April 30, 1976

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Active

W. M. ...

DATE

6/29/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

...

DATE

6-23-76

MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

5

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

2

Ellis Pitcher built his mansion house on Walcott Street some-time between 1836, when he purchased the lot (with an old house standing on it), and 1846, when the earliest extant Pawtucket tax records indicate that the mansion was already completed. As Pitcher did not marry until 1841, it would be logical to suppose that the house was not erected until about that date, or shortly before.

E. B. Pitcher died in 1869 and his heirs sold the estate to Colonel Lyman Bullock Goff the following year. Colonel Goff was related to the Pitchers by marriage (his brother, Darius L., had married E. B. Pitcher's daughter, Annie, in 1866), and the two families had long been neighbors on Walcott Street. The Pitchers may well have felt that the house was remaining 'in the family'.

Lyman B. Goff was the son of Darius Goff, one of Pawtucket's most spectacularly successful nineteenth century manufacturers. Lyman B. began his career in one of the family firms as a clerk. In 1872 he became a full partner with his father and brother, and the firm became known as D. Goff & Sons. In 1880, he assumed the position of treasurer of the Union Wadding Company, a firm started by his father, and said to have been the largest manufacturer of cotton batting in the world at that time. Upon the death of Darius Goff, Lyman B. was elected President of Union Wadding. In addition, he was involved in a great number of manufacturing concerns, not only in Rhode Island, but in other states and Canada as well. He became a director of several Rhode Island banks, including the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Company, he organized with his brother Darius L. the Pawtucket Electric Company, and he became a power in the Republican Party locally and nationally.

Colonel Goff deeded the Walcott Street mansion to his daughter, Elizabeth Goff Wood, in 1922. Nineteen years later, Mrs. Wood gave the property to the Pawtucket Congregational Society, specifying that she wished the house to be offered to the Red Cross, rent-free, for use as a chapter house. The Red Cross accepted the offer, and has occupied the building for the past twenty-five years. The rising cost of maintaining the house, however, has now driven the service organization into less elaborate quarters -- the Goff mansion has been standing empty since February.

(See Continuation Sheet #6)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

6

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

3

Concern for the mansion's future is already high in Pawtucket. The most promising current proposal comes from a group interested in establishing a children's museum in Pawtucket. This group considers the Goff mansion a prime location for the museum, and is now actively seeking financial support.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

7

ITEM NUMBER

9

PAGE

2

Pitcher/Goff House

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