

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

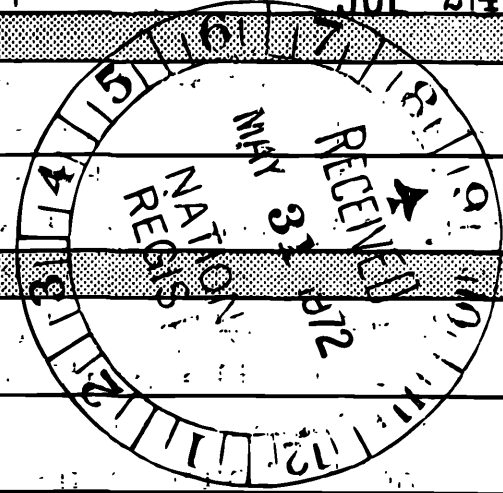
(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Rhode Island	
COUNTY: Providence	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUL 24 1972

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Walker (Philip) House

AND/OR HISTORIC:



2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
432 Massasoit Avenue, Rumford

CITY OR TOWN:  
East Providence

STATE: Rhode Island, 02916

CODE: 44

COUNTY: Providence

CODE: 007

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <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	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher D. Potter

STREET AND NUMBER:  
432 Massasoit Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:  
East Providence

STATE:  
Rhode Island, 02916

CODE:  
007

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
East Providence City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Taunton Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:  
East Providence

STATE:  
Rhode Island

CODE:  
007

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Building Survey Inventory (HABSI)

DATE OF SURVEY: 1952

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

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

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

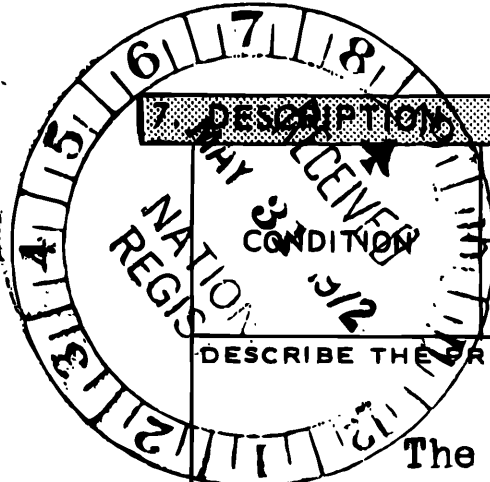
STATE:  
D.C.

CODE:  
11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:	
COUNTY:	
ENTRY NUMBER	JUL 24 1972
DATE	

FOR NPS USE ONLY



7. DESCRIPTION		(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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Philip Walker house, located near the Seekonk River in the village of Rumford in East Providence (originally part of Rehoboth, Massachusetts), stands on a former expanse of farmland. The oldest (1679) house in the area, it is presently a two-and-one-half-storey, gable-roofed, shingled structure with two large brick chimneys--one internal and the other at the south end. There is a nineteenth-century small entry porch on the east, or main, front; and an old one-storey, gable-roofed ell at the south end was converted into an open porch about 1900. At about the same time a one-storey, gable-roofed ell was built on the north end to house a new kitchen. About 1750 the seventeenth-century main house was lengthened to the south by extending the gable roof and adding four rooms, two on the ground floor and two above, with a brick chimney of triangular plan set between them.

The original (northern) part of the house is still clearly identifiable. It is heavily framed throughout, with exposed plates, girts and summer beams (all now cased, this probably done when the house was enlarged) and is nearly square--about 28 by 28 feet. Originally clap-boarded, it was built around a very large plain-topped off-center brick chimney on a somewhat atypical three-room scheme (see plan). In this plan the main entrance, located in the south (left) front bay, does not face the chimney but--as originally designed--let directly into the keeping-room opposite the staircase, which was built against the south wall of that room. This staircase, built in one long run with a short turn at the top, has a wide-boarded closed string course, some seventeenth-century vertical beaded and bevelled sheathing below, plain square posts and a handrail molded on the outer face only. The present flat "S"-shaped balusters were made by the present owner's father about sixty years ago, but he followed the original pattern. Except for a small room just south (left) of the staircase wall, the keeping-room originally extended across the entire east front. The room has long since been divided by a wide vertical-boarded partition along the old summer beam to separate the present hallway from the keeping-room-kitchen, which became related to the northern half of the former large room. Here the large cooking fireplace--with its brick hearth and a beehive oven, closed by a two-panel door, at its right-side front--extends from the summer beam and partition wall nearly across the west side of the room. It has retained its original lintel, and some seventeenth-century beaded and bevelled vertical sheathing finishes the remainder of the wall. The original plastered ceiling has been removed to expose the old floor joists above.

The rear (or west side) of the original house consisted of a large living-room at its southern end and in the northwest corner a small room tucked in behind the chimney, each with its own fireplace. In the back

(See Continuation Sheets.)

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
JUL 24 1972	

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

living-room the heavy framing beams, including the summer beam, all now have casings of c. 1750 and run moldings applied at the cornice level; they are the most conspicuous features of the room. A simple one-storey mantel of c. 1800 frames the fireplace opening.

The two ground-storey rooms added on the south in 1750 or thereabouts consist of a dining-room and a "back parlor;" this latter room is treated as an extension of the back living-room in the early part of the house. In each of these added rooms a handsome, wide mantel-breast is set across the room corner; each room is panelled from floor to ceiling, with a typical (for 1750 work) bolection molding framing its fireplace opening and run moldings forming the ceiling cornice. The treatment above the dining-room mantel, now darkened with age, consists of a narrow and a wide horizontal panels above the fireplace; that above the back room fireplace has cupboards with panelled doors closing upon old book hinges. The small room south of the staircase in the original part of the house has been converted into a closet for the dining-room.

Upstairs, the two new chambers are without special detail, but the second-storey of the original house has several interesting features. Noteworthy is the unusually large, and evidently original, upper stair-hall which conforms to the entry plan downstairs as it was later altered. A batten door with strap hinges leads into the northeast corner chamber, above the kitchen. This room has an extraordinary mixture of seventeenth-century vertical sheathing with wide bevels and unusual (probably homemade) groovings, combined with a provincial version of stile-and-rail panelling that repeats the detail of the sheathing. The stairs to the garret, formerly located between the chimney and the western wall of the above-kitchen chamber, have been removed to allow space for a bathroom. At the rear, the above-living-room chamber, like its counterpart below, has heavy exposed and cased beams. The mantelpiece in this room probably dates from 1750, when the house was enlarged. It is embellished with very colloquially-handled pilasters that frame the mantel panels and come to a baseless stop above the molding for the fireplace opening. Two-panel doors are used in this room.

In general, throughout the house are to be found several door types, including batten and four-panel ones as well as the above-mentioned two-panel doors; and much of the hardware, which includes strap, several versions of H-L, H and book hinges, various types of bean or pointed latches and box locks, is original. Most of the old wide-board flooring is in place. Except for the kitchen, where the joists were exposed later, walls and ceilings are plastered.

(See Continuation Sheet 2.)



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)-2

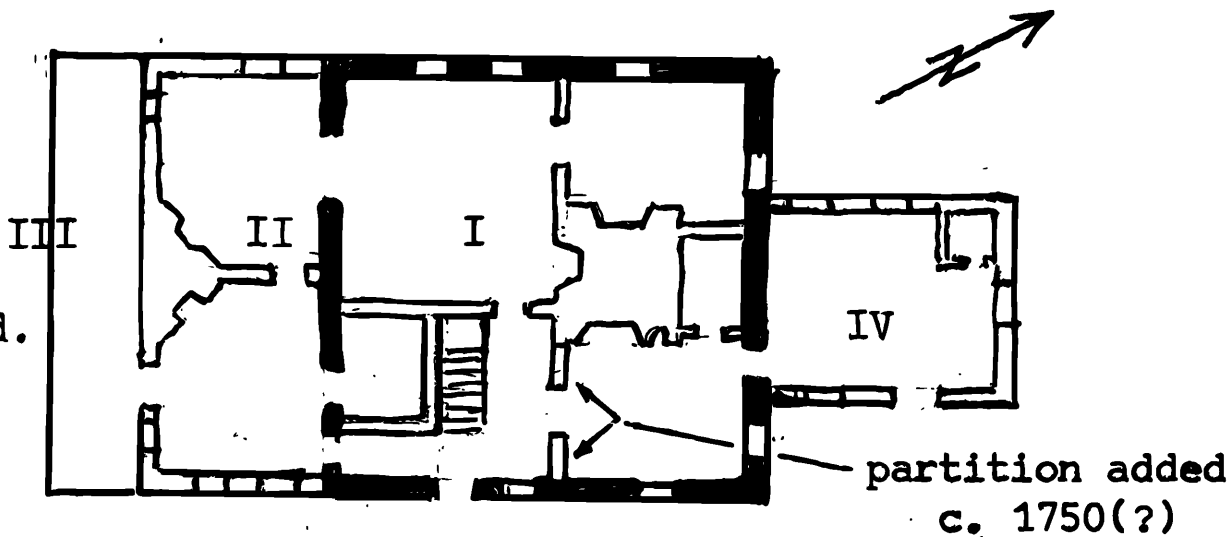
STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Providence	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUL 24 1972

(Number all entries)

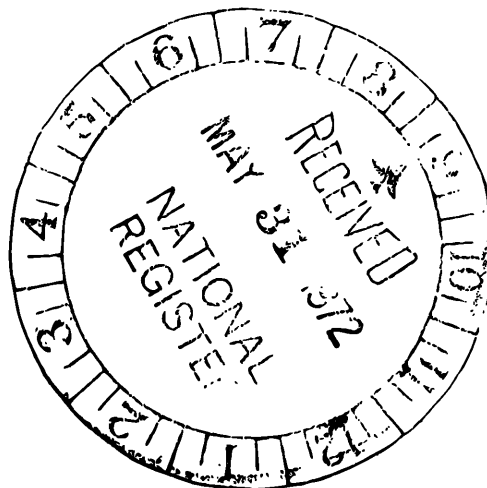
7. Description.

The oldest remaining windows are in the northeast corner rooms. They have nine-over-nine sash, as do most of the other windows, and probably date from about 1750.

Sketch-plan (not to scale) of the first floor. The outline of the original structure is darkened.



- I. Original house.
- II. C. 1750 addition.
- III. Southern one-storey addition converted to open porch.
- IV. Modern kitchen.



**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1679, 1750 ff.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

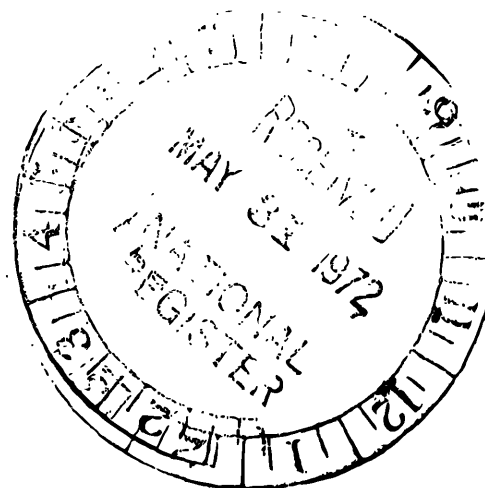
- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> 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

Philip Walker's first house was burned in the Indian War of the mid-1670's that devastated all the buildings in its area. In 1678-1679 Walker rebuilt his house on the old foundation. Although his "new" house does not conform to the Rhode Island stone-end houses considered typical for this period, its plan--in which an entry-cum-stair-hall is lacking and the three main rooms are swung around an off-center chimney--is an interesting one and akin to the Christopher and Job Townsend houses in Newport. The original framing, with its heavy summer beams, girts, plates and corner posts, is still intact and--together with some seventeenth-century sheathing and the staircase--can be studied profitably. The 1750 addition at the southern end and the general refurbishing that took place at that time furnish excellent examples of mid-eighteenth-century finish.

Walker himself was a prominent local figure. In the words of Richard LeBaron Bowen he was a "farmer, weaver, sawmill proprietor, deacon of the church, constable, and incidentally the second richest man in Rehoboth." He was also the chronicler in verse of the bloody battles of King Philip's War; and again, according to Bowen, his house is "the oldest poet's house in New England [while] few houses are so unquestionably dated." With a small amount of careful restoration the inherent architectural importance of the Philip Walker house can be made more evident. Its local historical importance has long been recognized.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Bowen, Richard LeBaron: Early Rehoboth (Concord, New Hampshire, 1945).  
 Isham, Norman M.: Early American Houses ... (reprint, New York, 1967).

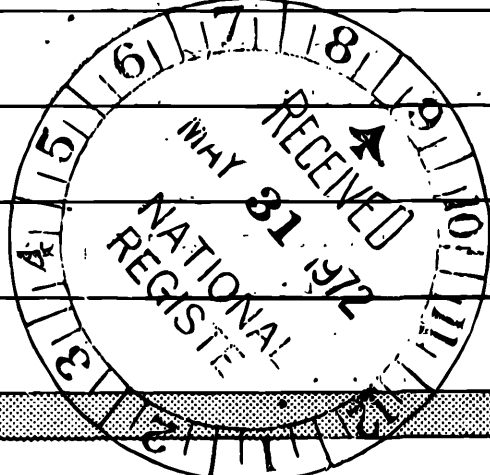
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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' 48.77"N	71° 21' 49.14"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:  
**Mrs. George E. Downing, Chairman**

ORGANIZATION: **Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission**      DATE: **May 3, 1972**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**John Brown House, 52 Power Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Providence**      STATE: **Rhode Island, 02906**      CODE: **111**

**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: *Frederick R. Williamson*

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: May 5, 1972

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

*Robert H. Utley*  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 7/24/72

ATTEST:

*W. Bradford*  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 7/20/72

19/303700/4633430  
 UTM REF  
 12-16-75-ww  
 SEE INSTRUCTIONS

6787 IV NW  
(Dewitched)

UNITED STATES NORTH ATTLEBORO 7.5 MI.  
3.2 MI. TO U.S. I  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

ATTLEBORO (CIVIC CENTER) 6 MI.  
HEBRONVILLE 2.3 MI.

71°22'30"  
41°52'30"

304 54,000 FEET R.I.

305 50000 E.

306

20'

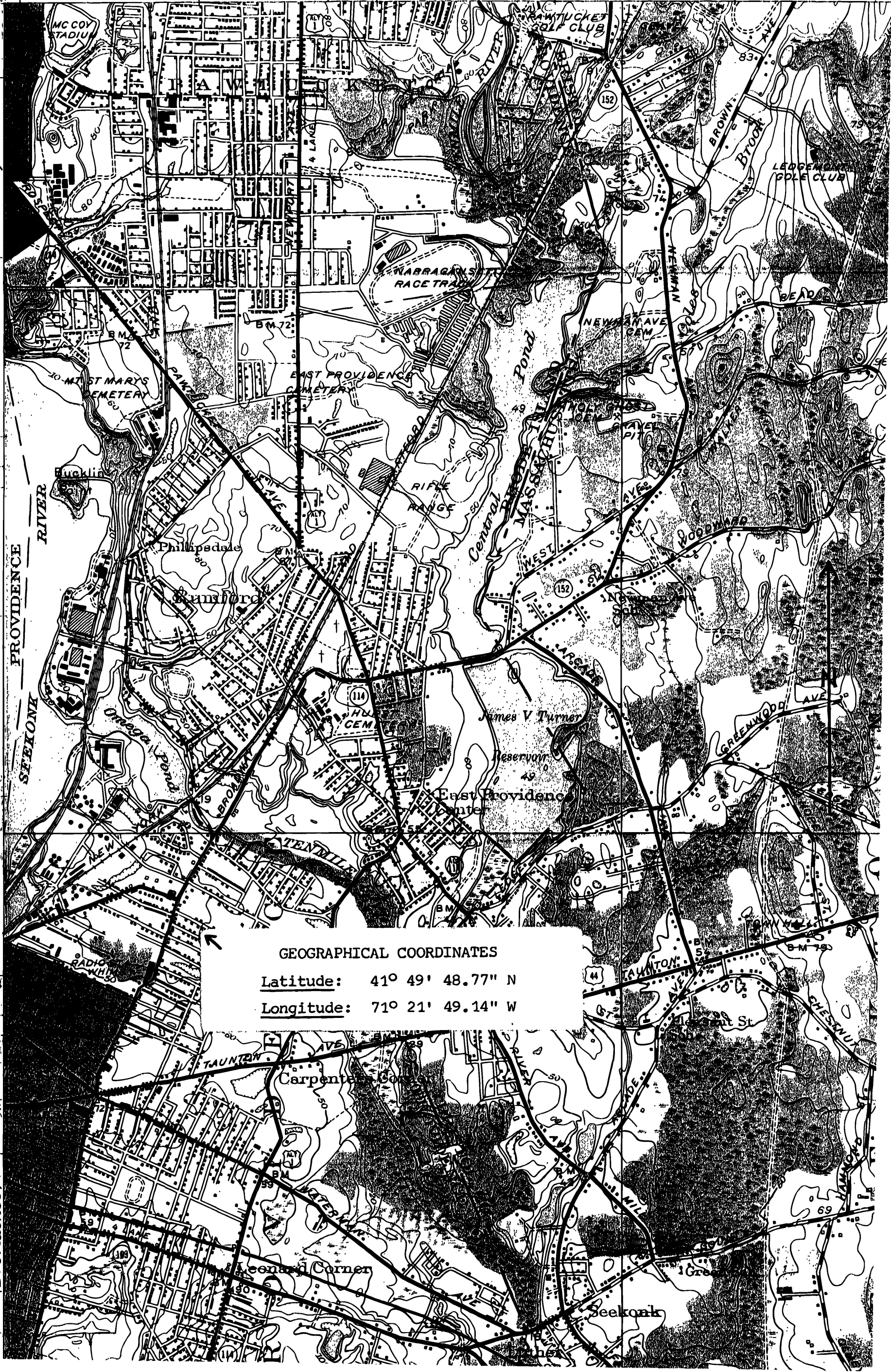
4638000 N.

GRANITE MILLS (R. I. 11) 10 MI.  
0.5 MI. TO U.S. I

4636  
280000 FEET  
R.I.

CHEPACHET 17 MI.  
PROVIDENCE (STATE CAPITOL) 2.7 MI.

DANIELSON 30 MI.  
PROVIDENCE (UNION U.S. 11) 2.7 MI.  
6767 IV SW  
(Providence)



GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES

Latitude: 41° 49' 48.77" N  
Longitude: 71° 21' 49.14" W

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

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



Continuation sheet 22

Item number 7

Page 23

NAME: Philip Walker House

LOCATION: 432 Massasoit Avenue

OWNER: Mrs. Christopher D. Potter  
432 Massasoit Avenue  
East Providence, R.I. 02916

## DESCRIPTION:

The Philip Walker House, set on a large lot in a suburban neighborhood containing residential and commercial buildings, is screened from the street by dense plantings of shrubs and trees. It is a rectangular, two-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed frame structure with two plain-topped brick chimneys, one internal and one at the south end. A gable-roofed porch across the south end of the house was originally an enclosed ell that was opened up and converted into a porch about 1900; at approximately the same time a central, gable-roofed entry porch on the main (east) facade; a one-story, gable-roofed kitchen ell on the north; and shingle wall covering were added to the house. The southern portion of the present house was a mid-eighteenth century addition to a smaller, seventeenth-century dwelling. The present nine-over-nine double-hung windows were probably installed at the time of the southern addition.

The original (northern) portion of the house--with its heavy, cased timbers visible--has an unusual plan with three rooms arranged around an off-center brick chimney. The main entrance (in the south bay of the original facade; the central bay of the present facade), instead of opening into a small entry and stair hall in front of the chimney, opened into the keeping room, which contained a single-run staircase along the south wall, facing the entrance (this room has long since been partitioned into separate stair hall and keeping room). The entrance and stair case were placed so that a small room lay between them and the south wall of the original house. Two other rooms on the ground floor are disposed in a fashion that permits each to have a fireplace. Around 1750 the house was extended two bays to the south; this addition contains two rooms with a triangular brick end chimney set between them. On the second floor, rooms are arranged to correspond to those on the floor below.

Throughout the house, much of the historic interior is left intact. Most of the old wide-board flooring is still in place. The house contains some seventeenth-century vertical-plank wall sheathing and eighteenth-century paneling and a variety of batten, two-panel, and four-panel doors hung on strap, H-L, H-, and book hinges.

(See Continuation Sheet #23).



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

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



Continuation sheet 23

Item number 7

Page 24

DATES: 1679, ca. 1750, et seq.

## SIGNIFICANCE:

The Philip Walker House is an excellent example of colonial domestic architecture. The original portion of the house, constructed 1678-1679 on the site of an earlier dwelling destroyed in King Philip's War, is the oldest extant building in East Providence.

Its plan deviates from the standard New England dwelling types of the period--the Rhode Island stone-ender and the two-room, central-chimney house of Massachusetts and Connecticut--but is similar to that of a few Newport houses, indicating that it may be a noteworthy regional variation of colonial building patterns. The remaining seventeenth-century interior finish and eighteenth-century renovations offer much information to the student of colonial construction and decorative arts.

The building's historical associations are also of great importance. Philip Walker, the original owner of the house, was one of the most prominent men in early Rehoboth, the Massachusetts township which originally included present-day East Providence. Walker's wealth and position were rivalled by few in the community; he was a farmer, weaver, and mill proprietor and served as church deacon and constable. A descendant still owns and occupies his home, three hundred years after its construction.

ACREAGE: less than one acre

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Assessor's Plat 18, Lot 114

UTM: 19: 303720: 4633420

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: State

Entered on the National Register 24 July 1972

(See Continuation Sheet #24).