UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY — NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries — complete applicable sections)

STATE:
Rhode Island
COUNTY:
Bristol

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
71,844,0020	8/12/71

1. NAME

COMMON:
Warren United Methodist Church + Parsonage

AND/OR HISTORIC:
First Methodist Church

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
27 Church Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Warren

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Rhode Island, 02885	44	Bristol	001

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☒ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object	☐ Public Public Acquisition: ☒ Private ☐ In Process ☐ Both ☐ Being Considered	☒ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☒ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☒ Restricted ☐ Unrestricted ☐ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☐ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☐ Other *(Specify)*	
☒ Educational	☐ Military	☒ Religious		
☐ Entertainment	☐ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Methodist Episcopal Church

STREET AND NUMBER:
27 Church Street

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Warren	Rhode Island, 02885	44

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Warren Town Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE
Warren	Rhode Island, 02885	44

(Stamp: RECEIVED JUL 14 1971 NATIONAL REGISTER)

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Statewide Survey of Historic Buildings

DATE OF SURVEY:	☐ Federal	☒ State	☐ County	☐ Local

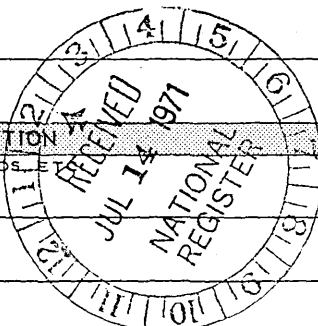DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House, 90 Smith Street

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

CONDITION	*(Check One)*					
	☒ Excellent	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)			*(Check One)*		
	☒ Altered		☐ Unaltered		☐ Moved	☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present United (or First) Methodist Church fronting south on Church Street in Warren, Rhode Island, was built in 1844, the second church building on the site. The structure is a long (62' by 78') gable-roofed, two-story building with a full two-story Greek Revival portico and a steeple and spire built up of modified Georgian elements. The view of the building as seen from the Town Common is dramatic; adjacent eighteenth-century and Victorian buildings combine to establish it in an important historic environment.

Exterior:

Four colossal hand-hewn wooden Doric columns set upon $4\frac{1}{2}$'-square granite bases rise 32' to support a wide plain architrave with a narrow dentil-band below a plain frieze which supports a plain cornice framing the pediment. Four panelled pilasters divide the façade wall into bays, each of which contains a single 9-over-9-sashed window on the ground level and a two-story compound 9-over-9 window above, all with heavy, molded lintels. This pattern of wall pilasters and fenestration is continued on the sides of the church. Flush boards are used for the front wall cover; the sides are clapboarded.
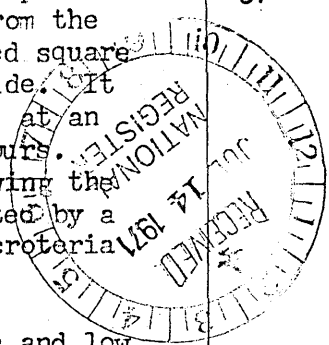
The main front entrance is not original. The original flat-headed enframement containing massive, eight-panelled double doors was replaced in 1958 by the present doorway of smaller scale, carrying a broken-scrolled pediment and containing smaller doors beneath a transom. (An additional entrance on the church's east side was closed in 1869.) On the north end of the church building, the sanctuary projects 6', with no windows except a small round-headed one at the northwest corner, near a plain rear entrance to the vestry.

The steeple, of retardataire Georgian form has three square, graduated stages leading to an octagonal cupola-base for the small spire with a simple arrow weathervane; the spire's termination is 130' from the ground. The steeple's first level is a horizontally-rusticated square indented at its angles, with narrow triple openings on each side. It contains a great bronze bell placed there by the town in 1855, at an original cost of $ 700.00, to enable the clock to sound the hours. This bell was originally rocked by a great wooden wheel, to swing the striker inside; today the bell is hit by a metal hammer operated by a rope pull. A widely-projecting cornice originally carrying acroteria (now removed) crowns this stage of the steeple.

The steeple's second level has panelled corner pilasters and low projecting panels containing acroteria motifs on each side, below the four clock-faces, which are painted black and have their original gold numerals. Inside, naturally, is the clock room, where in 1848 the town placed iron clock-works (inoperative now and awaiting repair) with 300-pound weights.

(See Continuation Sheet.)

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- ☐ Pre-Columbian|
- ☐ 15th Century
- ☐ 16th Century
- ☐ 17th Century
- ☐ 18th Century
- ☒ 19th Century
- ☐ 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)* 1844

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Aboriginal
- ☐ Prehistoric
- ☐ Historic
- ☐ Agriculture
- ☒ Architecture
- ☐ Art
- ☐ Commerce
- ☐ Communications
- ☐ Conservation

- ☒ Education
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Industry
- ☐ Invention
- ☐ Landscape Architecture
- ☐ Literature
- ☐ Military
- ☐ Music

- ☐ Political
- ☒ Religion/Phi-losophy
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Sculpture
- ☐ Social/Human-itarian
- ☐ Theater
- ☐ Transportation

- ☐ Urban Planning
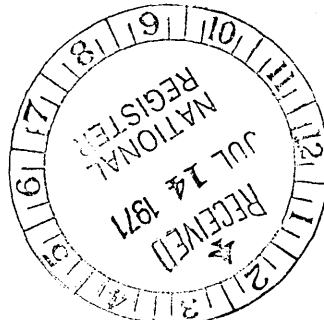- ☐ Other *(Specify)*

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historically, the Warren church is the first Methodist church in Rhode Island and the third in New England.

The present church building of 1844 stands on land given by John Luther in 1794 and on the site of the first church building, dedicated on September 24 of that same year. The story of Methodism in Warren began in 1789 when the Reverend Daniel Smith, an associate of the Reverend Jesse Lee, a noted pioneer of Methodism, held the first meeting in Kickamuit, now East Warren. By 1793, the Reverend Philip Wager had been appointed first minister of Warren Church. By 1844 his little church had been outgrown, and in that year--during a period of great commercial prosperity in Warren, generated by sea trade, ship-building and whaling-- the congregation decided to erect a larger building.

This building is an excellent example of the vernacular architecture (here in the Greek Revival style) which is an important part of our American heritage. Not only is the church an outstanding architectural landmark, but it is located in the heart of Warren's historic waterfront area, where enough of the town's early building remains to warrant designation as an historic area. A full survey of the whole area is now being completed for the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission.

This handsome church, opening onto the Town Common, facing Church Street quietly lined with small-scale houses dating from the 1740's to the 1880's, is an irreplaceable element in this close-knit historic neighborhood.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Town of Warren, Rhode Island: 200th Anniversary of Warren, Rhode Island
   (Warren, Rhode Island, 1947).
Methodist Episcopal Society, Warren, Rhode Island: Highlights in the
   History of the Church (Warren, Rhode Island, n. d.).
The Providnce Journal (Providence, Rhode Island), March 1, 1971, p. 29.
Baker, Virginia: The History of Warren, Rhode Island, in the War ofthe
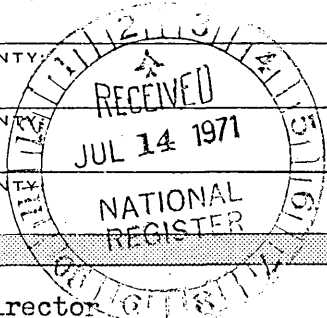   Revolution, 1776-1783 (Warren, Rhode Island, 1901).

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 ° 43 ' 49 N	71 ° 17 ' 02 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
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Elizabeth S. Warren, Assistant Survey Director

ORGANIZATION Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission	DATE March 29, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House, 90 Smith Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence	STATE Rhode Island, 02903	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

Title State Liaison Officer

Date June 8, 1971

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

AUG 1 2 1971

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date JUL 2 9 1971

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) -1

| STATE Rhode Island |
| COUNTY Bristol |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |
| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

The smaller third level of the steeple repeats that of the clock level and is pierced by 6-over-6 windows of battered shape with heavy architraves. Upon this stage rises the delicate octagonal cupola, with panelled pilasters and eight windows, which supports the panelled, wood-sheathed spire and the weathervane with its gilded arrow.

During renovations in 1970 the acroteria upon the cornice of the bell tower (and these may have originally been a repeated adornment at the upper levels of the steeple) were removed due to deterioration and have not been replaced.

Interior.

The church auditorium is reached by stairs at either side of a large, high front hall which contains a balcony and a catwalk from it to the bell-rope. Staircases have massive turned newel posts and rectangular wood balusters that continue across the balcony. Walls are plastered down to a wainscot of horizontal flush boards.

The auditorium, designed to seat 500, is nearly square, measuring 60'-6" wide and 65'-6" deep. The pew plan is laid out with a wide center aisle and side aisles; the original box pews are still in place. The side balconies have plain fronts of recessed panelling and are each supported by four round wooden columns with Doric capitals. The original choir loft or rear balcony is now closed off by a solid wall.

An 1874 stereoscopic photograph of the altar wall is of great interest, showing that area before the present organ was installed in 1907. This shows painted trompe-l'oeil decoration representing two great Ionic columns set in front of a pilastered wall; these columns support an entablature with frieze and dentils below a panelled ceiling. The painted perspective creates an illusion of great depth in what is actually a very shallow platform. This old view also shows details painted on the pilaster capitals on each side of the platform, a Greek-key frieze around the panelled ceiling and a band of dentils on the continuous entablature—all seen today without this ornamentation. Church records suggest that all these elaborations may have been added in 1869.

Today, two colossal free-standing fluted Ionic columns stand at the rear of the auditorium, slightly forward (north) of the choir balcony and the curving vestibule wall; they support the main cornice of the auditorium at that end of the building. The now-vanished painted columns may have been intended to echo these.

Original colors of the auditorium, of its elaborately painted trompe-l'oeil pulpit area and its ornamental ceiling are unknown. In the refurbishing of 1951 the now coved, originally compartmented, ceiling was painted a pale blue-green. The walls are soft beige. Stronger

(See Continuation Sheet 2.)

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)-2

| STATE |
| Rhode Island |
| COUNTY |
| Bristol |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |

ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
7.8.44.0020	8/13/71

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

colors are introduced through use of dark red velvet window drapery, scarlet carpeting and dark red pew cushions. The box pews are a soft grey-green and have their original carved, curvilinear mahogany arm-rests.

Repair to the interior of the steeple has been extensive. All the main vertical members here have either been replaced or repaired. Elsewhere, horizontal metal cross-pieces have been added where required; iron brackets have been used; and some of the great 12"x12" wood beams and rafters have been replaced. In the church attic, the original wood pegs tying rafters and braces together are, however, still performing their function in many places.

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)-3

STATE
Rhode Island

COUNTY Bristol

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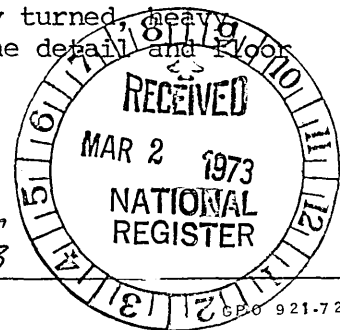
ENTRY NUMBER | DATE

(Number all entries)

1. Name.
    Common: Warren United Methodist Church-- Addition of Parsonage to
          Original Nomination
    And/or Historic: First Methodist Church

2. Location: 27 Church Street, Warren

3. Classification: Same as on original nomination

4. Owner of Property: Same as on original nomination

5. Location of Legal Description: Same as on original nomination

6. Representation in Existing Surveys: Same as on original nomination

7. Description.
    Condition: Excellent, Unaltered, Original Site

    The Methodist Parsonage is to the west of the Church. The main part
of the building is 25'6" by 33', the rear projection 19' by 17', and the
east projection 5' by 17'. These combine to form the precise rectilinear
masses of the Italian Villa style. The parsonage has a one-story veranda
extending from the east projection to the front of the building, is a full
two stories in height, and is entirely flat roofed. The foundation is of
slate stone cemented over and grooved on the outside to imitate granite,
the walls are wooden clapboards over frame construction, the two chimnies
are of brick, and the front steps are of granite.

    The exterior detail is typical of the Italian Villa style and the
1858 date of construction. The entrance, situated in the corner created
by the east projection, is framed by sidelights and a cornice supported by
four scrolled brackets. A heavy cornice supported by two scrolled brackets
of the type above the doorway crowns each of the six over six windows while
a projecting sill with a pair of curved brackets beneath further emphasizes
the opening. By far the most outstanding element of the architecture is
the elaborately scrolled brackets beneath the main cornice with a smaller
version appearing on the porch. The S-scroll design from which stylized
leaves gracefully extend is the greatest achievement of the carpenter's
skill and the designer's originality. On the veranda the fluted octagonal
posts finished with a lamb's tongue are joined by flat arches, have a
moulded entablature and base, and are distinctly non-classical, all very
much in the robust character of the Italian Villa style. Mouldings also
embellish the cornerboards and water table. Inside the parsonage the most
noteworthy feature is the staircase with its vigorously turned, heavy
mahogany newel post and turned balusters. Otherwise the detail and floor
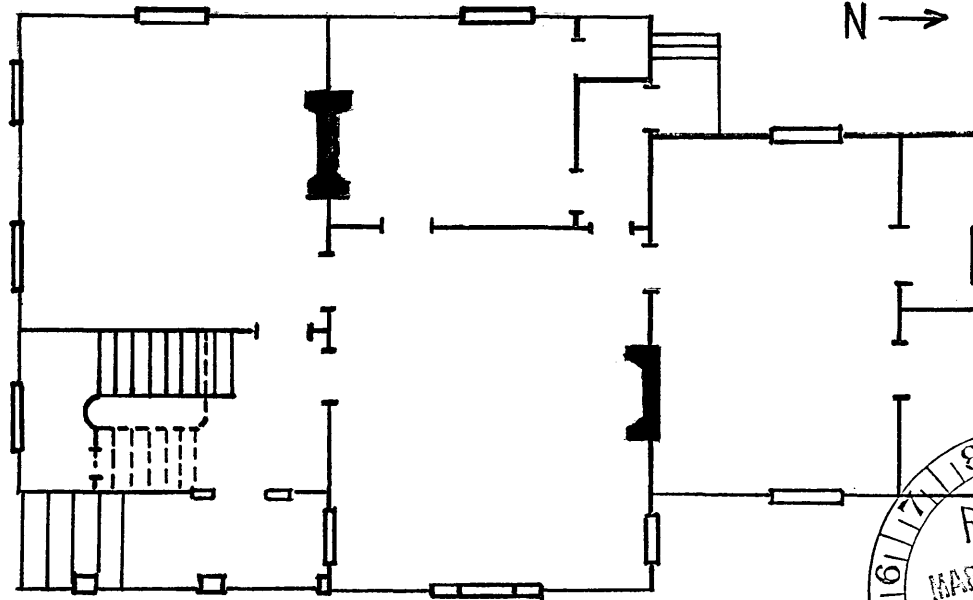plan are simple and typical of the period and style.

3/12/73

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(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)-4

STATE Rhode Island
COUNTY Bristol
FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

N →

8. Significance.

The house was built in 1858 by the Methodist Church as a parsonage
and has remained as such to the present. It has suffered no remodeling
and all of the exterior detail has been preserved intact. As it still
serves its original purpose and maintains its original appearance, the
parsonage is a fine vernacular example of the Italian Villa style.

This is one of the few instances in the history of vernacular building
where the names of the men who were responsible for the design and execution
of the building are known. A building contract between the Building
Committee of the Methodist Church and the carpenter survives. Ezra Millard
Martin (1818-1900) of Warren agreed to construct the building following the
plans and detailed drawings of "Hoar and Drown". Lewis Thomas Hoar (1810-
1881) was Martin's partner in a local lumber business and the Drown referred
to was either Henry Francis (1818-1899) or Joshua Champlin (1821-1907),
brothers and both carpenters in Warren. This involvement on the part of
Lewis Hoar as both a lumber dealer and draftsman or designer was a typical
combination for the period. None of these men were architects. They were
born in and spent their lives in the immediate area and the parsonage
reflects their provincialism and lack of professional training. Their
version of the Italian Villa has been modified in accordance with their
knowledge and capabilities. They did succeed in capturing the basic
qualities of the style and showed their individuality in the truly splendid
brackets beneath the cornices.

W. 3/12/73

GPO 921-724

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)-5

STATE		
Rhode Island		
COUNTY Bristol		
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE

(Number all entries)

The parsonage is as fine an example of vernacular architecture in the Italian Villa style as the church is in the Greek Revival. Moreover, the parsonage survives unaltered. The church and parsonage are considered one property and together form an integral part of Warren's historic waterfront district.

9. Major Bibliographical References.

Building Contract Between the Building Committee of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Warren and Ezra M. Martin, January 27, 1858.

The New-England Mercantile Union Business Directory, 1849.

Record of Deaths, Town of Warren.

The Warren Directory, 1876, 1881.

10. Geographical Data: Same as on original nomination.

11. Form Prepared by:

Mrs. Richard P. Sullivan, Grants Administrator
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission   January 30, 1973
John Brown House, 52 Power Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02906   Code: 44

12. State Liaison Officer Certification

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 : State.
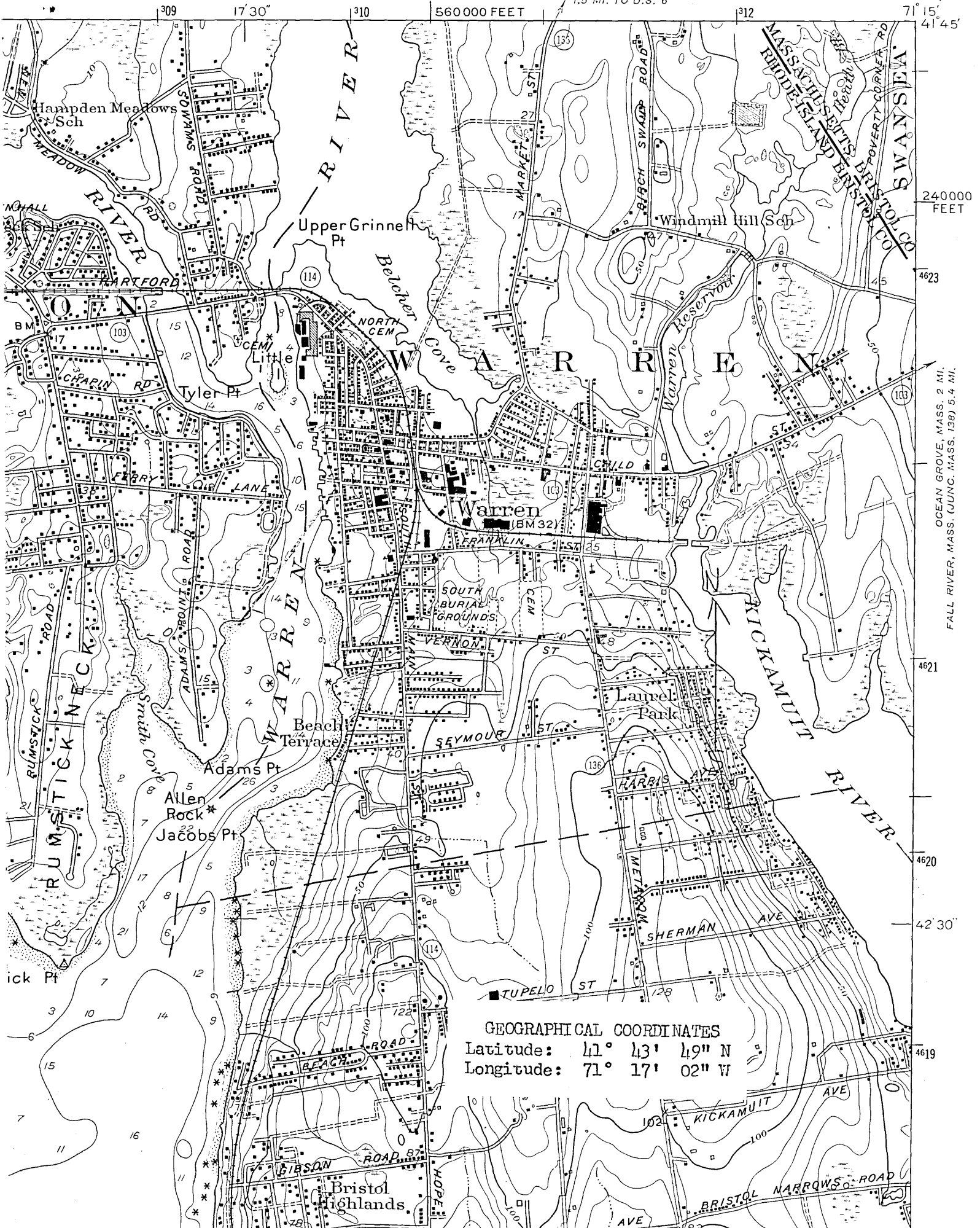
Name _____

Title   State Liaison Officer

Date   February 14, 1973

3/12/73

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6767
(Son

1.5 MI. TO U.S. 6

560 000 FEET

71° 15'
41° 45'

240000 FEET

309   17'30"   310   312

4623

Hampden Meadows
Sch

MEADOW RIVER

SWAMP POND RD

NHALL
Sch

RIVER

Upper Grinnell
Pt

Belcher Cove

Windmill Hill Sch

MARKET ST

BIRCH SWAMP ROAD

POVERTY CORNER RD

MASSACHUSETTS, BRISTOL CO.
RHODE ISLAND, BRISTOL CO.

SWANSEA

27

Warren Reservoir

103

HARTFORD

114

ON

BM
17

103

CEM
Little

NORTH
CEM

W   A   R   R   E   N

50

45

103

CHAPIN RD

Tyler Pt

FERRY   OAK   LANE

WARREN

CHILD ST

OCEAN GROVE, MASS. 2 MI.
FALL RIVER, MASS. (JUNC. MASS. 138) 5.4 MI.

Warren
(BM 32)

103

FRANKLIN

25

ST

ADAMS POINT ROAD

Smith Cove

RUMSTICK NECK ROAD

SOUTH
BURIAL
GROUNDS

VERNON   ST

KICKAMUIT RIVER

4621

Laurel
Park

Beach
Terrace

SEYMOUR   ST

136

Adams Pt

Allen
Rock

Jacobs Pt

HARRIS   AVE

METACOM

49

4620

SHERMAN   AVE

114

42'30"

ick Pt

122

TUPELO   ST

128

GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES
Latitude: 41° 43' 49" N
Longitude: 71° 17' 02" W

Bristol
Highlands

BEACH   ROAD

GIBSON   ROAD

HOPE

102

KICKAMUIT   AVE

100

BRISTOL NARROWS   ROAD

AVE

4619