1. NAME
COMMON: Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site
AND/OR HISTORIC: Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER: 29 East 20th Street
CITY OR TOWN: New York
STATE: New York
COUNTY: New York

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY (Check One)
- District
- Site
- Object
- Building
- Structure

OWNERSHIP
- Public
- Private
- Both

STATUS
- Public Acquisition: In Process
- Being Considered

ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
- Yes:
  - Restricted
  - Unrestricted

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government
- Industrial
- Military
- Museum
- Private Residence
- Religious
- Scientific
- Transportation
- Other (Specify)

4. AGENCY
National Park Service
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: North Atlantic Region
CITY OR TOWN: Boston
STATE: Mass.

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: New York City Register's Office
STREET AND NUMBER: 31 Chambers Street
CITY OR TOWN: New York
STATE: New York
CODE: 036

4. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY:
DATE OF SURVEY: [ ] Federal [ ] State [ ] County [ ] Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN: New York
STATE: New York
CODE: 036
Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace NHS, established in 1963, is a total reconstruction of the four-story brownstone house where he was born on October 27, 1858. This house was the family home until 1873. After 1873 the house suffered a series of alterations for commercial purposes, degerating finally into a two-story brick structure. In 1919 the Women's Roosevelt Memorial Association purchased the birthplace site for the purpose of reconstructing the home as the Roosevelt's had known it. Architect for the project was Theodate Pope (Mrs. John Wallace Riddle), of the American Institute of Architects. Mrs. Riddle based her plans for the reconstruction on the design of Robert Roosevelt's house, next door. Robert Roosevelt was Theodore's uncle.

As reconstructed, half of the house was a replica of the original Roosevelt house and the other half a museum and library. The rebuilders followed every clue that promised to bring them either authentic information concerning the appearance of the original house or actual pieces of furniture which were in it. The house has a basement, a parlor, library and dining room on the first floor; the second and third floors have three bedrooms each, and servants quarters on the fourth. The living room and two bedrooms were restored to the period of Roosevelt's boyhood.

The drawing room with its high ceiling, magnificent mirrors, crystal chandelier, and blue satin hangings has the characteristic elegance of the period. To the Roosevelt children, this room was one of much splendor and open for general use only on Sunday evening or on rare occasions when there were parties. The front bedroom, in which Theodore Roosevelt was born in 1858, contains the original furniture and a portrait of his mother. Next to it is the nursery, and beyond that is the open porch which he used as a gymnasium.

Boundary:

Commencing at a point 200.3 ft. east of Broadway and:
Running east along E. 20th St. for 50 feet; and
Running south and parallel with Broadway for 92 feet; and
Running west and parallel with E. 20th St. for 50 feet; and
Running north and parallel with Broadway for 92 feet.
### B. SIGNIFICANCE

<table>
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<th>PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)</th>
<th>16th Century</th>
<th>18th Century</th>
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<td>15th Century</td>
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<td>17th Century</td>
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<td>19th Century</td>
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<td>SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)</td>
<td>1858-1873</td>
<td>1901-09</td>
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### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Aboriginal
- Prehistoric
- Historic
- Agriculture
- Architecture
- Art
- Commerce
- Communications
- Conservation
- Education
- Engineering
- Industry
- Invention
- Landscape
- Literature
- Military
- Music
- Political
- Religion/Philosophy
- Science
- Sculpture
- Social/Humanitarian
- Architecture
- Theater
- Transportation

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

On this site, where he was born and lived until he was 15 years old, is commemorated the boyhood of the many-sided man who became his country's 26th President. Here, in a 4-story brownstone standing in a now-lost residential setting, Theodore Roosevelt passed some of his most formative years. After bouts with childhood ailments, early passions for nature and books, and the shaping influences of family and travel, he grew into the man whose character, vigorous personality, and momentous deeds made him a dynamic force in American life from his earliest political years to the day of his death.

Poor health plagued Roosevelt almost from the start. One of his earliest recollections was of his father walking up and down the room at night, holding him in his arms. The Roosevelt children spent their summers in the New Jersey Highlands or along the Hudson, but the change did little to help the youngster's condition. When he was 12 years old and his health was beginning to improve, his father spurred him along by installing a gymnasium on the porch of the nursery. The boy responded by doggedly working out on the apparatus, along with the rest of the neighborhood youngsters. Within a year he improved so much that asthma never again seriously interfered with his activities. If he missed out on the rough-and-tumble of boyhood, he found solace in books and natural history. He learned to read at an early age, and his keen intelligence and surging energy sought a range of outlets. Physically unable to attend school, he extended his uneven tutoring by wide reading. Heroic tales, science, and biography were his first tastes. By the age of 8, he was a budding naturalist, and by 14 had grasped the main tenets of Darwin. His curiosity left him little time for brooding.

When Theodore was 10, the Roosevelts went off to Europe for their first Grand Tour. Often homesick, ill, or exhausted, Theodore later remembered the trip with distaste. But for a boy so observant, the experience must have been something more than an ordeal in endurance. Four years later, in 1872-1873, the family returned to Europe. For Theodore, equipped now with better health, added years, and new resolve, this trip was more profitable.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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<tr>
<td>SE</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW</td>
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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 0.11

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Ricardo Torres-Reyes, Historian
BUSINESS ADDRESS: North Atlantic Region
STREET AND NUMBER: 150 Causeway
CITY OR TOWN: Boston
STATE: Mass.

DATE: 4/75
PHONE: 223-3778

12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

State Liaison Officer recommendation:

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ None

State Liaison Officer Signature

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Liaison Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The recommended level of significance is ☐ National ☐ State ☐ Local

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

DATE: 12/12/76

ATTTEST:

Keeper of the National Register

DATE: 12/12/76