

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

1. NAME

COMMON: State House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
90, Smith 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
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes: Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input type="checkbox"/>	Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/>
Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>
Educational <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	Comments _____
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	_____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House, 90, Smith Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island CODE: 38

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
Dorrance and Washington Streets

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island CODE: 38

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 14

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Not so represented

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Rhode Island's State House is unchanged in its present size and appearance from the original designs of McKim, Mead & White (influenced particularly by the taste of the partner Charles Follen McKim). Its construction began in 1895; it was first occupied in 1900; final details and landscaping were completed by 1904. It stands on a hillside site prominent in the city and beautiful in itself, though not at present surrounded by beauty.

The building is a large one, its square central block carrying a dome on a colonnaded drum--this dome flanked by four smaller cupolas with columns at the corners of the centre block. East and west of this centre block are long wings of the same height. In these respects, like many other state capitols, it follows the example of the United States Capitol in Washington. However, it is more sophisticated in exterior (and interior) proportion and detail than many others. (Even so, certain sensitive and sensible suggestions have been made for minor and aesthetically improving alterations to its exterior, though one doubts that they will achieve accomplishment.) It is to be placed within the frame of the brilliantly adaptive, late-Renaissance Beaux Arts type of architecture which became internationally popular for official buildings in the late XIX and early XX Centuries. As Henry-Russell Hitchcock has remarked, this building of style and elegance could have been as serenely set down in France, Italy, Argentina, or even Missouri, as here.

The State House is of brick and iron-beam construction, faced and ornamented with white Georgia marble. It is 333 feet long and, through its centre block, 180 feet deep. The dome rises 235 feet above foundation level and is of self-supporting "dynamic voussoir" marble construction (the second largest of four such domes in the world). Topping the dome is a classically-draped statue of the "Independent Man." On the north side of the building a centre projection carried on an arcade allows for a covered carriage-way beneath. At the centre of the south side is featured, above a similar arcade, a two-storey loggia at second-floor level behind columns in antis, overlooking the city. The east and west wings have glass saucer-domes surmounted by flagstaffs. There is, of course, exterior marble trim: a few well-placed balconies, swags in panels over windows etc.--rather chaste and late XVIII Century French in manner, reminding one somewhat of Mangin and McComb's New York City Hall.

Internally, there is a marble rotunda beneath the dome, entered from north and south; monumental stairs lead at east and west to second-floor level, where a balustraded gallery surrounds the rotunda; over subsidiary stairs are fine tunnel-vaults. The ground floor contains a

(See Continuation Sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

7. Description.

large number of offices and storage rooms. On the second floor are arrayed the handsomely-walled legislative chambers to east and west; the governor's suite with a lavish, pilastered reception room along the south; and the State Library extending over the north carriage entrance. Lateral areas of this floor are taken up by variously subdivided office space, as is the entire floor above (and the basement).

While sitting low to the ground on its north side (and behind a paved plaza), the State House is necessarily planted upon a fairly high, balustraded marble basement or terrace on its south side. This allows for an impressive and wide stair leading onto the long lawn sloping to the level of the city's centre. (The grace of the capitol's connection with the city is at present marred by the interruption of railroad yards and tracks and an unattractive passenger station. An urban renewal program intends to remedy this visual and landscape fault.)

8. 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) 1895-1900

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Aboriginal | Education | <input type="checkbox"/> | Political | <input type="checkbox"/> | Urban Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Prehistoric | Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> | Religion/Phi- | | Other (Specify) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Historic | Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> | losophy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <u>Governmental</u> | |
| Agriculture | Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> | Science | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | |
| Art | Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sculpture | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | |
| Commerce | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> | Social/Human- | | _____ | |
| Communications | Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> | itarian | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | |
| Conservation | Military | <input type="checkbox"/> | Theater | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | |
| | Music | <input type="checkbox"/> | Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The building's importance was intended to lie, as it has remained, in its function as the seat of Rhode Island's state government, finally concentrated in Providence and monumentally housed. It is, however, additionally important as a monument of the art and taste of its era, of the outstanding architectural firm which produced it; and it is certainly a dominant and handsome feature of the Providence city-scape.

Besides housing the offices of the governor, the legislative chambers and the State Library, the State House contains also important historic and, in some cases, artistic objects. There are the original Rhode Island charter granted by King Charles II in 1663 and in force until 1813; a series of portraits including one of Washington by Gilbert Stuart; battle flags carried by Rhode Island regiments from 1776 on; the silver service made in Providence and used on the battleship "Rhode Island." (Incidentally, the original drawings, plans etc. made by its architects are preserved in the capitol.) There are also heroic statues commemorating Rhode Island's contributions in World War II and--not least--the bronze figure of the "Independent Man," executed by George T. Brewster and selected by McKim, on the summit of the dome.

The statue symbolises the way of thinking which created and permitted the colony of Rhode Island in the beginning and which has persisted since then. Beneath it, McKim, Mead & White's notable building houses majestically both the historical relics and the current vital operations of that original state of the Union.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- ← Gady, John Hutchins: The Civic and Architectural Development of Providence, 1636-1950 (Providence, R. I., 1957), pp. 194-195.
- Hitchcock, Henry-Russell, Jr.: Rhode Island Architecture (Providence, R. I., 1939), p. 63.
- Daniel, Jean Houston, and Daniel, Price: Executive Mansions and Capitols of America (Waukesha, Wisconsin, 1969), p. 220.
- Rhode Island Development Council: A Background History of Rhode Island's State Capitol (Providence, R. I., n. d.), 3 pp.

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 ONE ACRE				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	71°	25'	00"	41°	49'	52"			
NE	71°	24'	49"	41°	49'	52"			
SE	71°	24'	49"	41°	49'	44"			
SW	71°	25'	00"	41°	49'	44"			

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

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Richard B. Harrington, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission DATE: August 1, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House, 90, Smith Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island, 02903 CODE: 28

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:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

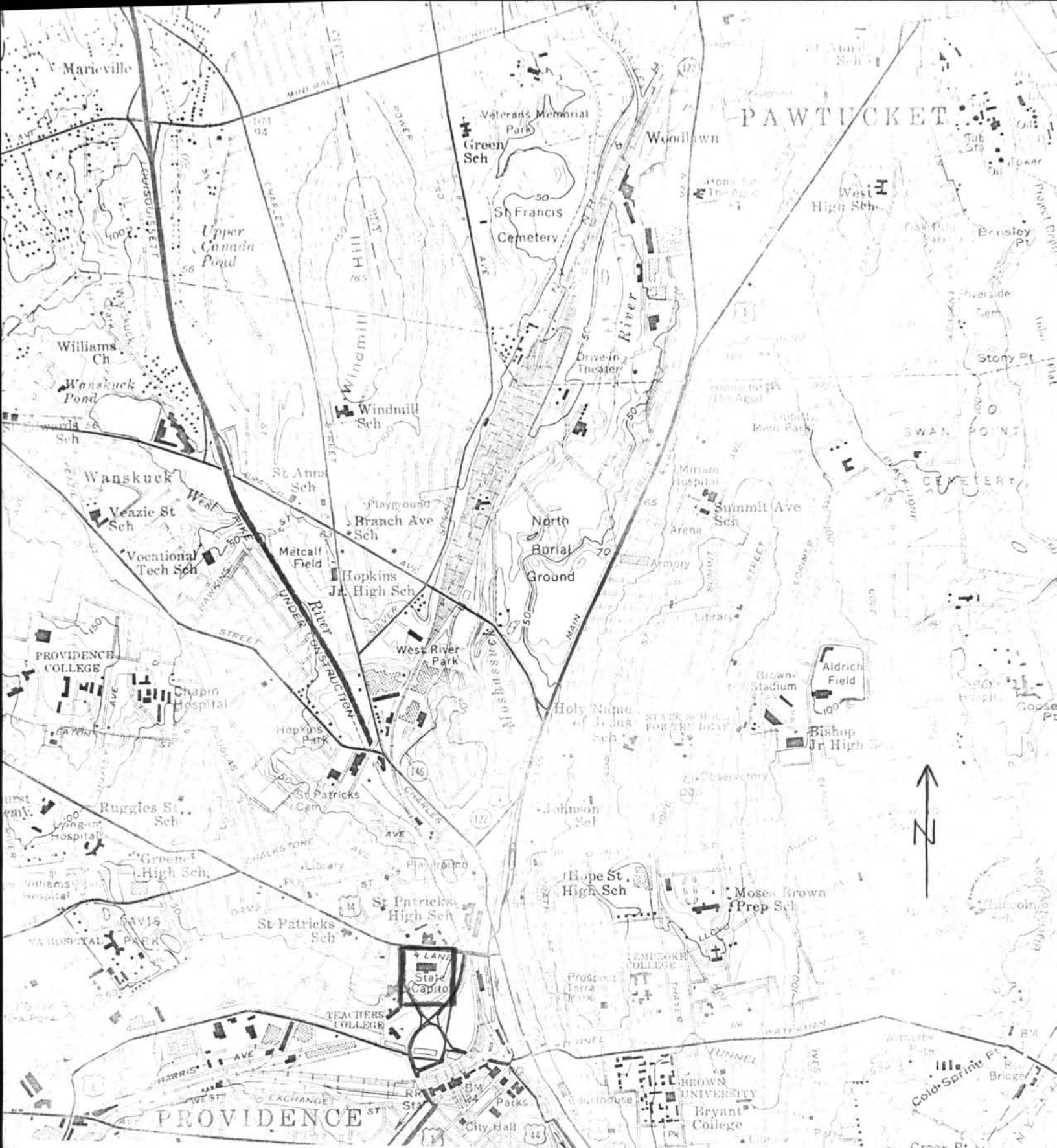
Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES
Latitude Longitude

NW	41° 49' 52"N	71° 25' 00"W
NE	41° 49' 52"N	71° 24' 49"W
SE	41° 49' 44"N	71° 24' 49"W
SW	41° 49' 44"N	71° 25' 00"W

Form 10-301
(Dec. 1968)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

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

STATE

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COUNTY

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STATE:

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CODE

38

COUNTY:

Providence

CODE

007

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE: U. S. Geological Survey

SCALE: 1: 24,000

DATE: 1957

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.





STAIR IN ROTUNDA

©



DETAIL OF MAIN ENTRANCE

©

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)

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CODE

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CODE

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3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

DATE OF PHOTO: C. 1900; copy negative, 1970

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, State House,
90, Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02903

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

View of rotunda and stairs (left), centre of south front (right),
from A Monograph of the Work of McKim, Mead & White, 1879-1915
(New York, 1915).





HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

©



GOVERNOR'S RECEPTION ROOM

©

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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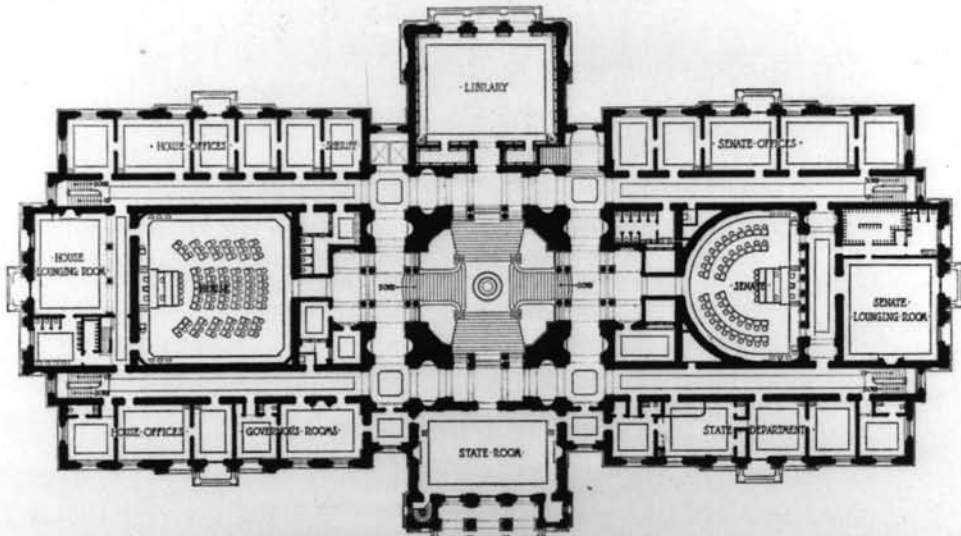
DATE OF PHOTO: C. 1900; copy negative, 1970

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, State House,
90, Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02903

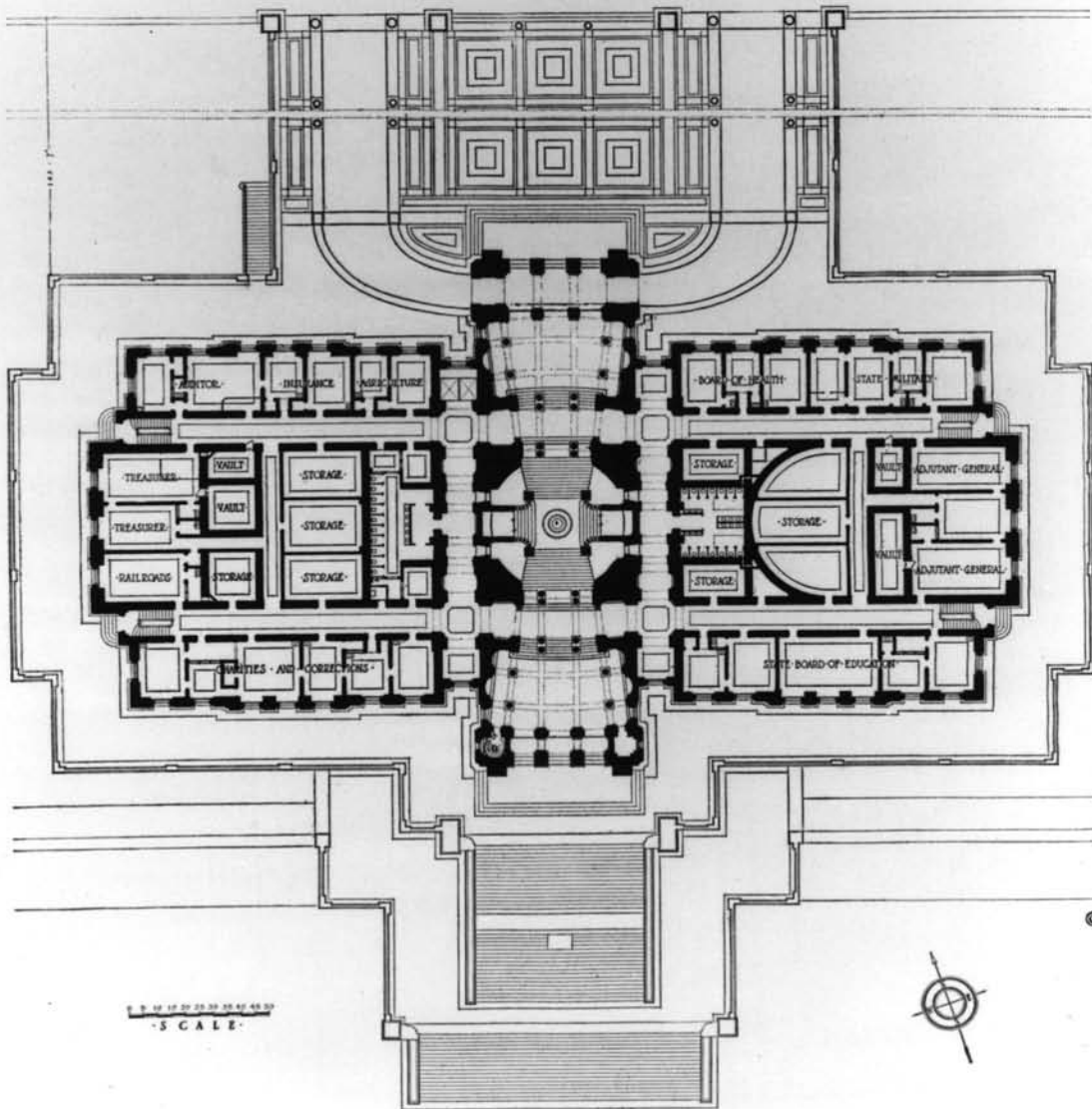
4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

House of Representatives (top), Governor's reception room (bottom),
from A Monograph of the Work of McKim, Mead & White, 1879-1915
(New York, 1915).



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Plans of first and second floors, from A Monograph of the Work of
the Work of McKim, Mead & White, (1879-1915 (New York, 1915).