

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

## 1. Name of Property

historic name: Ballou - Weatherhead House

other name/site number: Welcome Weatherhead House

## 2. Location

street & number: Tower Hill Road (Pole 68)

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Cumberland vicinity: N/A

state: RI county: Providence code: 007 zip code: 02864

## 3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: building(s)

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>      </u>	buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	sites
<u>3</u>	<u>      </u>	structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Property name Ballou - Weatherhead House, Providence Co., RI

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination      request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets      does not meet the National Register Criteria.

     See continuation sheet.

Frederick C. Williamson  
Signature of certifying official

3 May 1993  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property      meets      does not meet the National Register criteria.      See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

_____ entered in the National Register	_____	_____
_____ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
_____ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
_____ removed from the National Register	_____	_____
_____ other (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic:	<u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub:	<u>single dwelling</u>
Current:	<u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub:	<u>single dwelling</u>

Property name Ballou - Weatherhead House, Providence Co., RI

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification:

Colonial

Federal

No Style

Other Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: foundation STONE roof ASPHALT  
walls WEATHERBOARD other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

X See continuation sheet.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: 1748 1846

Significant Dates: 1748 1799 1815 1846

Significant Person(s): N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X See continuation sheet.

Property name Ballou - Weatherhead House, Providence Co., RI

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office, Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property: approximately 2.5

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	<u>19</u>	<u>297580</u>	<u>4652040</u>	B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:  See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification:  See continuation sheet.

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/Title: Virginia H. Adams, Senior Architectural Historian

Organization: The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. Date: April 1992

Street & Number: 387 Lonsdale Avenue Telephone: (401) 728-8780

City or Town: Pawtucket State: RI ZIP: 02860

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### Description

Standing in a secluded clearing surrounded by woods approximately 300 feet north of Tower Hill Road, the Ballou-Weatherhead House is a small, plain, one 1/2-story Colonial dwelling constructed sometime between 1748 and 1799. The gable-roof, wood-frame, clapboard-sheathed structure has a single interior chimney set west of center and in front of the roof ridge. It is difficult to determine on the basis of visible physical evidence and the available historical record whether the main portion of the house was built in one or two phases. It has a relatively broad gable roof, with an asymmetrical four-bay entrance facade on the south gable flank side and a slightly asymmetrical five-bay entrance facade on the east gable end. The interior contains two sets of bake ovens at the south and north fireplaces of the large off-center chimney. These features suggest that the house may have originally been smaller and was enlarged to the rear under a reworked roof. Expansion would have occurred prior to about 1820, based on the Federal style trim in the northeast room. A small one-story, mid-nineteenth-century kitchen ell is attached to the west side and set back towards the rear. A one-story, well-scaled, mid-twentieth-century addition extends to the rear (north). Both have gable roofs. On the interior, the modified center chimney plan with two kitchen fireplaces and bake ovens and the relatively elaborate Federal treatment of the northeast parlor provides further evidence of the development history. The house is a very simple Colonial/Federal cottage with restrained exterior and interior trim (northeast parlor excepted) and is very well preserved. The attractive rural setting in a remote section of Cumberland includes three distinct structures near the house. A stone wall-lined entrance drive continues as the east side of a stone wall-enclosed area of unknown function immediately to the south of the house. A cluster of stone foundations is located immediately to the southwest of the house. A nineteenth-century well head stands to the east of the house. All contribute to the ambience and historic rural character of the property.

The main block of the house measures approximately 30 x 27 feet and rises from a dry laid fieldstone foundation exposed about one foot above the ground surface. The cellar is L-shape under the front (south) and east portions of the house. The clapboard walls are simply articulated with narrow corner boards and sill boards. Similarly, simple narrow roof eaves and cornice overhang define the broad gable roof line, with the windows on the gable flank elevations framed to just below the roof cornice. The first floor windows are six-over-six double-hung wood sash set in plain sills and board surrounds, although the east elevation windows have a thin cap board. The gable end attic windows have six-over-four sash in narrower openings. The rear addition windows are six-over-six sash similar to those

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of the main block on the east and north. On the west, the least visible elevation, plate-glass sliding doors fill the wall. A small skylight has also been added to the rear (north) roof slope of the main block within the last ten years. The two entrance doors on the south and east and the door on the kitchen ell (south) are also simply trimmed. The doors have raised panels - four panels on the south and six panels on the east. The chimney rises from a base at ground surface below the house and projects through the roof ridge at a point west of center.

The four-bay south elevation contains what may be the earliest section of the house. The arrangement of openings is irregular, with, from left to right (west to east) two windows, a door, and a window. The five-bay east elevation, contained under the broad end gable, possibly dates from a Federal period expansion. It is composed of five bays on the first floor, with an entrance in the center bay. The actual placement of first floor openings is not quite equally spaced in the wall, being slightly offset to the north. The two attic story windows, however, are centered under the gable peak.

The west and north elevations are partially obscured by additions. The small one-story west ell added in the mid-nineteenth century has a gable roof parallel to that of the main house. It is one-bay wide and is set back towards the rear of the house, leaving the south first floor window and one attic window in the main block. Entrance is through a door in the south end. The north ell, added about 1960, is also one story in height, with a gable roof perpendicular to the main house. It is two bays wide and extends rearward for two bays from the western half of the rear wall of the house. Two windows on both the east and north elevations are six-over-six sash similar to those in the main house. The west elevation, which is the least readily visible, contains plate glass sliding doors. Despite the recent construction date and the use of plate glass in this addition, its noncontributing status is mitigated by its reference to the older house in massing, materials, small scale, and relatively unobtrusive siting.

Entrance to the cellar is on the west side of the house. A gently sloped earthen ramp cut in to the ground slope and protected by dry laid stone retaining walls leads to the cellar door under the west ell.

The interior first floor plan of the main house consists of four primary rooms. Three rooms are arranged on the south, east, and north sides of the brick chimney, which is offset to the west of center. A fourth room located on the southeast corner of the house was originally two smaller rooms according to the present owner. On the west side of the

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chimney, the plan is completed by an enclosed stair case to the second floor and a short corridor connecting the south and north rooms and providing access to the stone cellar stairs.

The interior finishes on the first floor are highly intact, including moldings, four-panel doors, wainscoting, chair rails, chimney mantels, horsehair plaster, and wide floor boards. Original brown and green paint remains in the small west hall, and original hardware including wrought iron HL hinges, strap hinges, and early Norfolk latches floors exist on many of the doors. The following discussion of individual rooms proceeds counter clockwise around the chimney, beginning in the southwest room.

The south entrance opens directly into the southwest room at its southeast corner. The room has wide flush-board wainscoting and narrow, plain window surrounds. The large fireplace has bake ovens behind a raised panel door to the right (east) of the fire box, a simple wide-board firebox surround with narrow applied molding, and a small recessed cupboard (with no door) over the fireplace. The stair to the second floor is immediately to the left (west) of the fireplace and is concealed by a door. This is the primary living space and has seven doors connecting to other parts of the house and the outside. The two encased "posts" between openings on the south exterior wall appear to be have been added after the original construction, based on differences in appearance between them and the corner posts. According to the present owner, newspaper fragments found in one of the posts indicate a possible construction date of about 1860 and they now function in part as enclosures for second floor wiring.

The southeast room is very plain and was formerly two rooms, as reflected in the two adjacent doors adjoining the southwest room and in the scar visible from removal of the partition wall in the last ten years.

The east entrance opens directly into the northeast room. This room is unusual in the house for its Federal period detailing which was probably added after the original construction. In comparison to architectural detailing in other Federal period houses in the town and region, the decorative trim is relatively common and restrained, although it is finely executed. A reeded chair rail extends around the room and continues along the architrave of the chimney mantel. The mantel shelf has a dentil cornice, and fluted pilasters flank the firebox. The window and door surrounds have more complex molding treatments than the rest of the house, although they are still relatively simple. The exterior door is located in the east wall at the southeast corner of the room.

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The prominent feature of the northwest room of the main house is the fireplace with bake ovens to the left (east), a simple surround similar to that in the southwest room, and a double recessed cupboard with paneled doors above. Two curved iron hooks are located in the ceiling in front of the fireplace; their age and function is not known. Part of the north wall of the room has been removed to open to the room to the single room of the mid-twentieth-century addition. The northwest room is connected to the southwest room by the small corridor along the west side of the chimney stack, and has doors leading to the northeast room and to the northern room of the small west ell.

The nineteenth-century west ell contains two rooms. One on the south opens off the southwest room of the house and is used as a kitchen. The smaller north room opening off the northwest room of the house is now used as a bathroom. Wall and roof framing is exposed in the plaster walls of the ell.

The second, or attic, story contains a small closet-lined hall, a bathroom, and a single bedroom at the east end. The brick chimney is exposed in the hallway.

The L-plan cellar is approximately eight feet deep, with fieldstone walls and a concrete floor. At sill level, there is one 5-light window on the south side and two 2-light windows on the east side. Access is via an exterior door below ground surface level and interior stone stairs. Floor joists under the southern section of the house (southwest and southeast rooms) run north-south, while under the northeast room they run east-west. The chimney base and the ground under the northwest room are unexcavated. Built out stone work at the top of the foundation on the south and east sides of the chimney base, along with a 6-inch square adzed beam set at an angle on the south side, support the south and east fireplaces.

The house received few changes until the mid-twentieth century when it began to be used as a summer house. Electricity and plumbing were installed about 1950.

The house is approached by an approximately 300-foot-long gravel drive leading north off Tower Hill Road. Tower Hill Road is a winding narrow country lane through hilly, wooded terrain, with scattered historic houses along it, and has been designated as a local historic district (Tower Hill Historic District, Town of Cumberland). The drive is bordered on the west by a dry laid stone wall, which continues north almost to the house. It forms the east wall of the rectangular grassed area enclosed by walls on four sides which lies in front of the house. The function of this area is

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not known, but it may have been a grazing pasture or garden. The west wall of this enclosure continues north again towards the southwest corner of the house forming a retaining wall as the ground slopes downward to the west. In this area, dry laid retaining walls, buried walls, and the remains of a granite firebox facing north to the west ell, indicate the location of former structures. One was most likely a barn, but the fireplace could be the remnant of an earlier, undocumented house. The wellhead to the east of the southeast corner of the house consists of a small wood-plank structure with a gabled cap, set on a large, flat, rectangular stone. A round iron grill in the south side reads "BATES, 1837, PROV". The land surrounding the house is flat to the south, rises gently to the east, drops to the west towards a manmade pond, and slopes down to the north. There is very little landscaping or domestic plant material, and the overall sense of the setting is of a small house and related features in a grassy clearing in the woods.

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### Significance

The Ballou-Weatherhead House is significant as a well-preserved illustration of Colonial domestic architectural design situated in a secluded rural setting. The off-center chimney plan, the double bake ovens, the suggestions of evolutionary development of the form, and the relatively elaborate Federal style interior decorative trim in one room which contrasts with the simplicity of the house offer opportunities for further study of variations in Colonial/Federal period domestic vernacular architecture. The history of the property is also of local interest as an example of the many small eighteenth- and nineteenth-century farms scattered throughout Cumberland and Rhode Island. This farm has association with some of Cumberland's earliest families and with two housewrights. The period of significance is defined from 1748 to 1846, the years in which the property was owned by the Ballou family and by Welcome Weatherhead. The Ballou-Weatherhead House possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and meets National Register criterion C at the local level. The property also may be shown to meet criterion D with additional study.

Although William Blackstone had built a dwelling on the east side of the Blackstone River in Cumberland about 1635, consistent settlement of the town did not occur until the cessation of active hostilities between the Native Americans and the European settlers at the end of King Philip's War in 1676. Members of the Ballou family began to settle in the hilly northern part of Cumberland just after 1700, when James Ballou, a wealthy landowner from Providence, bought land and settled in this area, known as the Rehoboth North Purchase or Attleborough Gore.

The land on which the Ballou-Weatherhead House stands was part of the earliest land holdings of the Ballou family. In 1748, Noah Ballou purchased a 110-acre tract, which included this land, from his brother Amariah Ballou, a cordwainer. The land was described as being near a place called Hoopole Hill, bounded south by the highway and north and west by Common Land and land of Amariah Ballou. The deed also included a one-third part of Iron Rock Meadow, which was probably located to the west on Iron Rock Hill (Book 1:268, 4/1/9/1748). It is likely that Noah Ballou constructed the house sometime after 1748.

In 1799, Oliver Ballou (1763-1843), a housewright and son of Noah, received a one-half interest in the homestead farm property and half of the meadow land (five acres) called Iron Rock Meadow. His father retained a life lease on the property (Book 9:66, 9:183, 4/19/1799). Oliver's brother, Amariah, also a housewright, had already deeded his rights to his

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father's lands and real estate to Oliver two years earlier (Book 8:398, 12/19/1797).

Oliver Ballou owned the homestead farm until 1815, when he and his wife, Abigail Ballou, sold it to Welcome Weatherhead. The 1815 deed refers to Ballou as a gentleman. The extent of Ballou's building activities is not known. It is possible that Oliver Ballou expanded the house and added a second kitchen, permitting he and his father to reside independently under one roof. In his later life, he assisted his son, Dexter Ballou, in establishing the first cotton factory in Woonsocket (Dexter Ballou stone mill, later Lippitt Woolen Mill, Main Street, Woonsocket, 1836, listed in the National Register) and died at the house of his son-in-law, Jonathan Miller, a short distance east on Tower Hill Road, January 15, 1843.

Welcome Weatherhead, who was also a housewright, purchased the entire Noah Ballou homestead farm for \$4620. The first lot of land included 111 acres 50 rods with two dwelling houses and a barn, and other buildings on the north side of Tower Hill Road, and the second lot was 11 acres 138 rods, part meadow and part woodland, at Iron Rock Meadow (BD Book 11:305, 3/27/1815). Weatherhead occupied the farm from 1815 to 1846. Being a carpenter, Weatherhead would also have been capable of expanding the house and adding the Federal trim and second entrance.

Weatherhead, the son of John and Tabitha Weatherhead, was born February 8, 1776, and died in 1846 (Probate Records Book 18:609, 19:46, 52, 65). Probate records indicate his will was to be published, but it was apparently never recorded. His inventory, however, was and included farm and household items, along with a boat shop, boat carpentry tools, and a considerable amount of lumber. It seems he had shifted or augmented his earlier woodworking skills as a housewright to include those of a boat builder. His was one of at least 19 boat shops in northern Cumberland in the nineteenth century. Boatbuilding was an important cottage industry for the town during this period, when small boats were made of the locally abundant forest timber and shipped overland to the coastal towns of Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Welcome Weatherhead apparently had two daughters Phebe and Amey C. Weatherhead. The latter was probably Amey Comstock who married Ephraim Whiting Cargill on December 12, 1829. She inherited the farm, as it is referred to as her former homestead in 1919. In 1904, Welcome W. Cargill, likely the son of Amey and grandson of Welcome Weatherhead, purchased the land and buildings from the heirs of Welcome Weatherhead (Book 52:448, 5/23/1904). The property was then sold, in 1919, by the heirs of Welcome Cargill, deceased, to Lowell Emerson of Providence. The deed indicates

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that the property included the land sold by Oliver Ballou to Welcome Weatherhead in 1815, as well as other lands (Book 62:469, 12/10/1919).

Emerson in turn sold a portion of the property in 1940 to Robert H. Schacht, Jr. and Clara J. Schacht of Providence. It consisted of a two-acre rectangular lot with the Cargill House so-called, the walled garden so-called, and a 30-foot-wide easement which ran along the east boundary of the Schacht lot and over Emerson's land to Tower Hill Road (Book 91:401, 11/25/1940). Robert Schacht was senior minister of the First Unitarian Church in Providence, and the property was used as a summer house. In 1970, it passed to Arthur H. Schacht, son of Robert Schacht, the present owner (Book 223:505, 11/3/1970). The lot was enlarged to the east in 1972 (Book 233:557, 8/29/1972).

The Ballou-Weatherhead House exhibits both typical and atypical aspects of Colonial/Federal domestic architecture of the region. Many elements of its form and detailing reflect common domestic architecture of the period. While the evolution of the house is not entirely clear, its form attests to variety in adaptive solutions to domestic architecture of the period. The asymmetrical four-bay south elevation differs from the usual half-house configuration, and the five-bay, center entrance treatment in a gable end elevation is relatively unusual. The two equally prominent entrance facades, along with the pair of kitchens, also contribute to our increasing documentation of multi-household use of a single dwelling.

Lacking definitive documentation, it is impossible to determine with certainty whether the trim in the northeast parlor, and an enlargement of the house, were executed by Oliver Ballou or Welcome Weatherhead. However, the quality of the joinery and the house's association with the two housewrights offer a valuable opportunity for further study and interpretation.

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Property name Whipple - Jenckes House, Providence Co., RI

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### Major Bibliographical References

Land Evidence Records, Town of Cumberland

Probate Records, Town of Cumberland

File of historical information, in possession of owner

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. Historic and Architectural Resources of Cumberland, Rhode Island. Virginia Adams Fitch. Providence: RIHPC, 1990.

Simpson, Robert V. North Cumberland, A History. Privately printed, 1975

Nelson, Newell. Map of the Town of Cumberland, RI. Boston: White, Aaron, Jr., 1838.

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### Geographical Data

#### Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property boundaries conform to Cumberland Assessor's Plat 60, Lot 20, and the 30-foot-wide easement containing the driveway, as shown on the attached map.

#### Boundary Justification:

The nominated property boundaries encompass the house, associated structures and features, the immediate setting, and access from Tower Hill Road. The boundaries are chosen for convenience as the present lot lines of the land associated with the house and its related features. They comprise that portion of the eighteenth-century Ballou property which was carved out and sold as a 2-acre separate lot and access easement in 1940, as well as a small section added to the east side of Lot 20 in 1972.

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### PHOTOGRAPHS

Ballou - Weatherhead House  
Tower Hill Road  
Providence County  
Cumberland, Rhode Island

Photographer: Virginia H. Adams

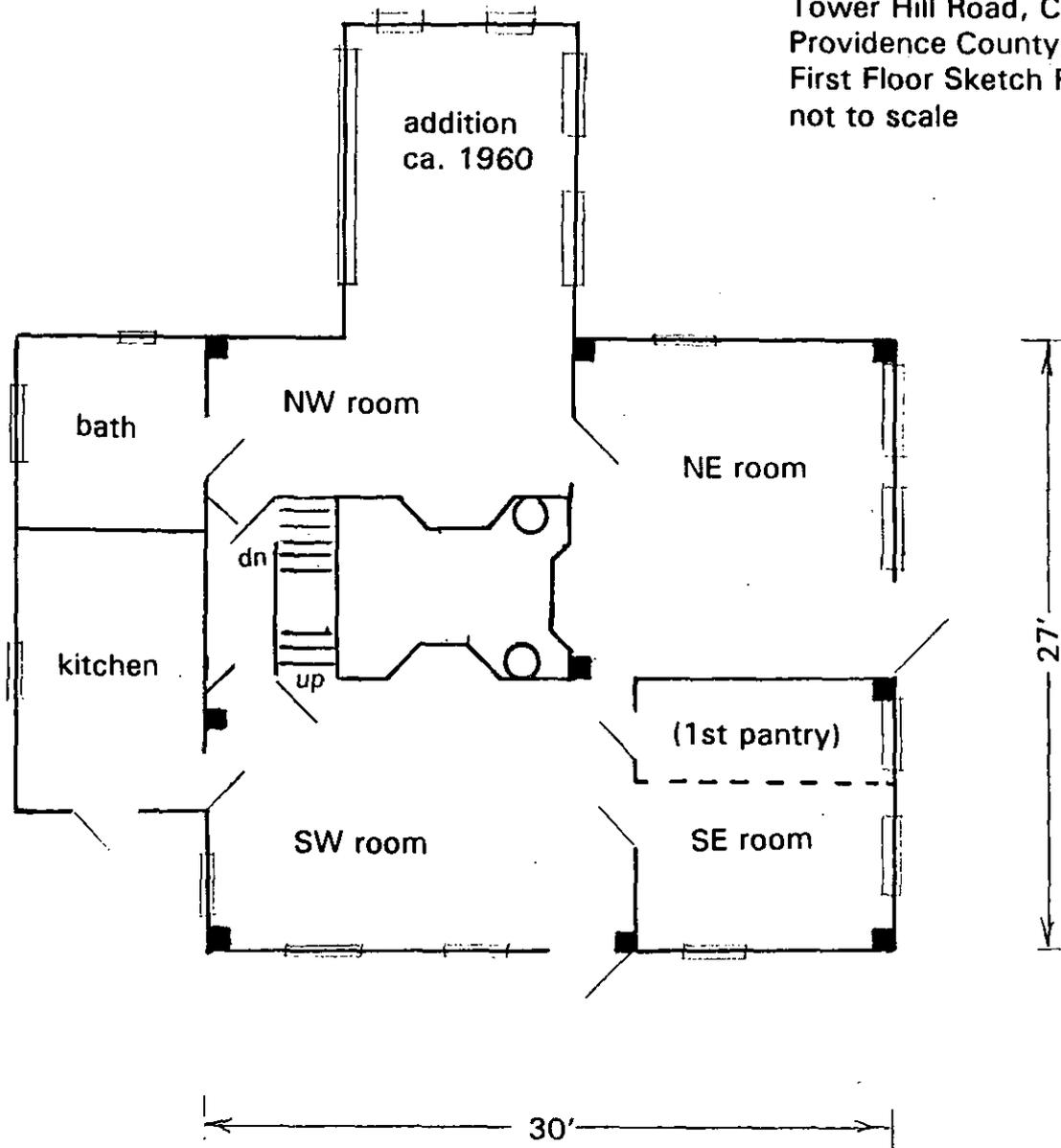
Date: September, 1992

Location of Negatives: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission,  
150 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903

[Above information applies to all photographs]

1. View looking north at south facade and 19th-century kitchen ell.
2. View looking west at east facade and ca. 1960 ell, with 19-century well head in foreground.
3. View looking north at southwest room fireplace.
4. View looking south at northwest room fireplace.
5. View looking southwest at door, corner post, chair rail, and fireplace of northeast room.
6. View looking southeast from house across enclosed pasture towards entrance drive.

BALLOU - WEATHERHEAD HOUSE  
Tower Hill Road, Cumberland  
Providence County, Rhode Island  
First Floor Sketch Plan  
not to scale





Ballou - Weatherhead House  
Tower Hill Road  
Providence County  
Cumberland, Rhode Island

Photo # 1 of 6



Ballow-Weatherhead House  
Tower Hill Road  
Providence County  
Cumberland, Rhode Island

Photo # 2 of 6



Ballov-Weatherhead House  
Tower Hill Road  
Providence County  
Comberland, Rhode Island

Photo #3 of 6

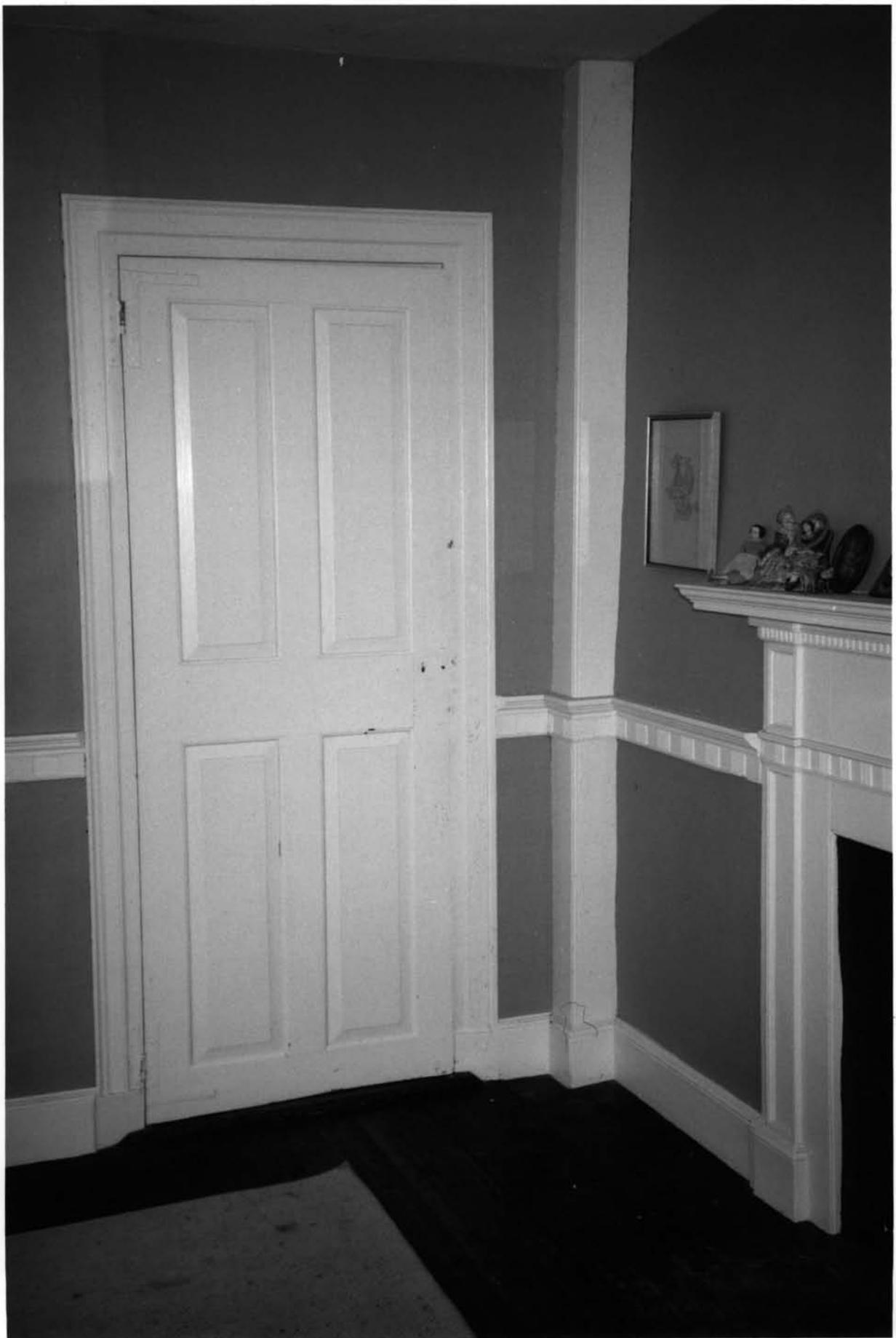


Ballow-Weatherhead House  
Tower Hill Road  
Providence County  
Cumberland, Rhode Island  
Photo # 4 of 6



Bullou-Weatherhead House  
Tower Hill Road  
Providence County  
Cumberland, Rhode Island

Photo # 5 of 6



Ballow-Weatherhead House  
Tower Hill Road  
Providence County  
Concord, Rhode Island

Photo # 6 of 6

BALLOU - WEATHERHEAD HOUSE

TOWER HILL ROAD

CUMBERLAND

PROVIDENCE COUNTY, RI

STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

WILLIAM F. CALLAHAN, COMMISSIONER

UTM:

19,297580,4652040

1296

27°30"

1297

6768 III SW  
(FRANKLIN)

WRENTHAM, MASS 7.0 MI.

299

25' 300

