NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PRO	OPERTY			
Historic Name:	KINGSCOTE			% .
Other Name/Site Nu	mber: George Noble Jo David King Jr.			
2. LOCATION				
Street & Number:	Bellevue Avenue			Not for publication:
City/Town:	Newport	•		Vicinity:
State: RI	County: Newport	Code: 00)5	Zip Code: 02840
3. CLASSIFICAT	ION			
Publ Pub	rship of Property Private: X ic-Local: blic-State: :-Federal:	Ca	Building(s): X District: Site: Structure: Object:	
Number of Resource Contri 1 1	s within Property buting		Noncontributing buildings sites structures objects Total	
Number of Contribu	ting Resources Previously	y Listed in the	National Register: 1	-
Name of Related Mu	altiple Property Listing:	N/A		
			Designated a NATIONAL HISTORIC LAND	MARK on
			JUN 19 199	6

by the Secretary of the Interior

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Prese certify that this nomination request for determinat standards for registering properties in the National Register o professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In m not meet the National Register Criteria.	ion of eligibility meets the documentation of Historic Places and meets the procedural and
Signature of Certifying Official	Date
State or Federal Agency and Bureau	
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet	the National Register criteria.
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	
Determined eligible for the National Register Determined not eligible for the National Register Determined not eligible for the National Register	
Removed from the National Register	
Other (explain):	
Signature of Keeper	Date of Action

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic:

DOMESTIC

Sub:

Single Dwelling

Current:

RECREATION & CULTURE

Sub:

Museum

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Mid-19th Century Gothic Revival

MATERIALS:

Foundation: Granite, Concrete

Walls:

Brick, Wood Shingle

Roof:

Slate (Vermont Red)

Other:

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Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

Kingscote was one of the first summer cottages built in Newport, and a precursor of the picturesque and later academic revival style houses built on Bellevue Avenue from the 1840s through the early 1900s. Built on one of the highest points of Newport, Kingscote originally commanded a view of the Atlantic Ocean to the east and Newport Harbor to the west. The growth of trees and the construction of new buildings has since obstructed these water views.

Kingscote, designed by the architect Richard Upjohn in 1839, originally was built for George Noble Jones. Upjohn's creation was in a style that would come to be known in America as the Gothic Revival or "picturesque manner." Upjohn designed Kingscote to serve as a summer residence for Jones, as well as a year-round residence for the owner's mother and sister. The wooden house was originally painted beige, its paint mixed with sand to give the exterior the appearance of sandstone.

The Gothic hood moldings over the doors and windows of the house were used for romantic effect by the architect, Richard Upjohn. The irregular roofline, composed of gables, chimneys, and elaborate Gothic detailing were all typical of the picturesque style. Kingscote is one of the best examples of this period and style. The curving drive, walks, and circular mound in the front of the house were laid out by the prominent landscape architect, Andrew Jackson Downing. The exteriors and interiors of Kingscote have been preserved by the Preservation Society of Newport County in pristine condition.

The house changed owners in 1863 due to pressures brought on by the Civil War. It was purchased by William Henry Hunter King. In 1876, the house was bought by his nephew, David King Jr., who expanded and remodeled its somewhat modest Gothic design. A red slate roof was added and the interiors redecorated by the New York firm of Leon Marcotte. New furniture was purchased for the servants' quarters, a large number of oriental rugs were purchased, and several rooms repapered and repainted. Curtains, bed linens, and kitchen crockery and glass were also replaced. In addition, the Newport Gas Light Company was assigned to modify the wall sconces and chandeliers. More dramatically, the original dining room was enlarged and the service wing rebuilt by the Newport architect, George Champlin Mason. Mason's design included a laundry on the ground floor and additional bedroom space on the second floor.

The house was formally christened "Kingscote" on June 1, 1880, having been in the hands of the King family from 1863 until 1880, and it was at this time that perhaps the most monumental changes were made. These changes were made by Stanford White, a partner in the prestigious architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White, who was called upon to design and construct a new, larger dining room, two master bedrooms and nursery rooms. Although these additions were larger in scale than the original Upjohn design, they fitted well into the overall balance of the house. The Mason service wing of 1876 was moved back forty feet, serving to sandwich the new dining room between the serving wing and the original Upjohn dining room. The red slate roof that presently exists replaces what was probably a wooden shingle one.

¹ Kingscote, Newport, Rhode Island: The Preservation Society of Newport County, p. 19.

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FIRST FLOOR

The interiors of Kingscote as they presently exist are primarily the result of the redecorations carried out from 1877 to 1880 by Leon Marcotte under the supervision of Mr. and Mrs. David King III. The 1881 Stanford White dining room, bedrooms and nurseries are also in their original condition, and the appointments within them. The collections in the house, which span five generations of the King family, reflect the family's 18th-century Newport heritage, their involvement in the China Trade, and extensive travels throughout Europe.

Foyer

The Foyer of Kingscote is framed by a Gothic archway; the archway is supported by two wooden columns, quatrefoil in section with octagonal bases and capitals. The floor is parquet in style; the ceiling is of panelled wood. All openings leaving the Hallway are surrounded by Gothic label moldings.

Study/Morning Room

This room was employed as an office by the residents of Kingscote, and its walls are trimmed in Gothic detail with panelled pine wainscoting and papered plaster above. The blue and grayish wall paper is by Morris and Company and has a geometric leaf pattern. The ceiling is marked off in large panels by comb-faced wooden strips with rosettes at intersections. Interior louvered shutters frame both of the casement windows.

Library

The Library was originally the site of the dining room in the original Upjohn design. After Stanford White's addition it became the Library. The floor is composed of random-width wooden boards and the ceiling is dominated by a large gothic cornice. The bay window on the west wall has casement sashes with small diamond panes and reeded architraves. The fireplace is faced by smooth brick and topped by a wooden mantel with delicate Gothic panelling. The wallpaper is a reproduction of the original bent willow design by William Morris (1834-1896) and is in the style of the English Aesthetic Movement; a small piece of the original is preserved next to the door.

The door in the north wall of the Library has two sliding panel leaves which open to the Stanford White Dining Room. The door in the east wall leads to the entrance hall and the one in the south wall to the Study.

South Parlor/Sitting Room

The South Parlor was used as a family sitting room. Its color treatment and furnishings are typical of the 1880s. The cove molding was painted in warm shades of forest green and brick red to compliment the English flocked wallpaper. The wallpaper was the design of the decorator Leon Marcotte and is composed of alternating strips of green colors. The parquet floor of the South Parlor is from Groocock and Company. Gothic arched panels in the doors and window aprons are picked out in light yellow graining against dark reddish-brown trim.

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The fireplace of the South Parlor has glazed, molded brick facing, a gothic panelled mahogany mantel, and a red and black tile hearth. The south end of the South Parlor has a

polygonal bay with double casement windows covered on the interior by louvered shutters.

North Parlor/Drawing Room

This room was redecorated by Mrs. King in the late 1800s in the style of a French Salon. The walls were covered in French watered silk, and the gilded Louis XVI style furnishings were ordered for the room. Between 1910 and 1920, David King's daughter, Mrs. Armstrong, replaced the original mantel with a white marble Rococo Revival fireplace that was brought from a family townhouse in New York because of its French design.

This room was used for small, informal supper parties, very popular in Newport, where guests would gather after dinner for entertainments. These included music, charades, and amateur theatricals, with this room being used as the stage, the south parlor for seating of the guests, and the doors serving as curtains.

The full length windows of the Drawing Room are an early example of the sliding door concept, and can be pushed all the way back into the walls to allow cool breezes to circulate. The inclusion of such a device reflects the Victorian concern for proper ventilation and viewing the landscape from their comfortable parlors.

Old Library

The Old Library is located to the west of the North Parlor/Drawing Room. Its floor is of random-width wooden boards and it has walls and trim similar to those in the parlors.

Dining Room

In 1881, the Dining Room was enlarged by the firm of McKim, Mead, and White. The reason for the renovations at this time is significant because it reflects the taste of American society. Newport was emerging in the 1880s as the pinnacle of American culture and society, and the King house needed to be enlarged in order to entertain on this larger scale.²

The Dining Room also demonstrates the ability of Stanford White to create decoration as well as color and lighting effects. His predominantly "Queen Anne" decorating scheme draws on a number of Oriental, British, American and Italian sources for its designs. The cork tiles on the ceiling, among the first such used in American architecture, were selected for their color and texture as well as for acoustical qualities. The paneling and built-in sideboard were installed by Stanford White and reflect the influence of Colonial American design. The sideboard incorporates 18th-century motifs, such as shells and ball and claw feet.

² See first floor plan 1-7 original house, 8-12 Stanford White addition.

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The north wall has a built-in walnut buffet with brass hinges and pulls. Seven small roundels filled with spool work are located above the buffet as well as in the three entrances to the room. A huge fireplace, 6'10" by 6', with Italian Siena marble facing, is located in the west wall. The dahlia mosaics used over the fireplace are echoed in White's hammered brass wall brackets and cast-iron fireback. Flanking the fireplace are two windows composed of three-inch square, molded milk glass panes. These colored glass tiles are the work of Louis Comfort Tiffany and Company; they are the first known installation of his glass bricks. Each toplight has two flowers of red and green glass. This detail is echoed in the window bay in the southwest corner of the room.

The room can be made larger by a movable partition or screen on the east end made of black walnut and composed of elaborate spindle work with two leaves in its center (with brass pulls) that open to the east. It is indicative of White's preference for the use of screens in his designs throughout the 1880s.

SECOND FLOOR

The use of "hood moldings" over the doors of the second floor rooms are a continuation of the Medieval motifs used throughout the building.

Upper Hall

The rounded bookcase of the Upper Hall was made to fit the particular wall it sits in and hides a staircase that leads up to the staff quarters.

Southeast Bedroom

This room was used by Mrs. David King as her summer bedroom, kept cool by its numerous windows. The southeast part of the house was kept closed during the winter months, as it was not equipped with central heating. The curtains of the Southeast Bedroom were hung about a foot in front of the windows to allow clearance for the shutters.

Guest Bedroom

This room of the house, as well as two other bedrooms, are part of the 1881 Stanford White addition to Kingscote. The fireplace in the Guest Bedroom was also designed by White and has never been altered. It has brick facing with narrow black mortar joints; green, gold and black tiles decorate the hearth. The mantel of the fireplace is wooden with double mantel shelves, lightly scaled spindle brackets, and panel work painted green with gold details.

Pink Bedroom

The Pink Bedroom is part of the original house by Upjohn and is the smallest bedroom of the house. It was used by Mrs. Anthony Barclay Rives, David King's granddaughter, as a winter bedroom. The fireplace surround is composed of 19th-century Dutch Delft tiles.

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School Room

The School Room was used by generations of the King family for academic instruction. It contains a Shaker rocking chair, a 19th-century hobby horse, and many vintage books collected from travels abroad. Leather buckets in the School Room are house firebuckets and are marked "N. Jones 1855."

The barn is a non-contributing structure on the grounds that is currently used as a stable/garage. There is also a large non-contributing parking lot used by visitors to the house.

LIST OF RESOURCES

Contributing:

Main House

Non-Contributing:

Barn (now garage/stables)
Parking Lot

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has consident Nationally: X Statewide:	lered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Locally:
Applicable National Register Criteria:	A B C_X_ D
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):	A B C D E F G
NHL Criteria: 4	
NHL Theme [1987]: XVI.	Architecture E. Gothic Revival (1830-1915) 1. Early Gothic Revival
NHL Theme [1994]: III.	Expressing Cultural Values 5. Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Urban Design
Areas of Significance:	Architecture
Period(s) of Significance:	1839—1881
Significant Dates:	1839-1841 1876 1881
Significant Person(s):	
Cultural Affiliation:	N/A
Architect/Builder:	Richard Upjohn (1802-1878) Stanford White (1853-1906) Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) George C. Mason (1850-1924)

Page 10.

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Kingscote is one of the first of Newport's summer "cottages," and a predecessor of those mansions which were built later and would characterize America's age of luxury and industrial wealth. From the beginning, this house was at the center of social activity in Newport. It was fitting that the unusual design was highly original and was pivotal in establishing the career of Richard Upjohn of New York. The origin of this plan and elevation are probably derived from Alexander Jackson Davis' book *Rural Residences* (1838). Davis, along with Andrew Jackson Downing, freed American architecture from the past and laid the foundation for the then-new theories about the house and its setting. Kingscote is one of the first successful demonstrations of these ideas.

Kingscote is one of the few surviving structures of its size, style and period in the United States. The Gothic Revival style that is evident in the design of Kingscote was an innovative and dramatic departure from traditional architectural taste. Its design has been called the "truly American" style and the "great creation and consummation of Early Victorian culture in America." Kingscote was at the forefront of the shift away from the rigid classic mode to a more flexible, "more human" style of design. Of all Early Victorian styles, the picturesque house is best characterized by the gothic villa.

Richard Upjohn, and to a certain extent James Renwick and later John Notman, was at the center of a movement in American art and architecture that emphasized the "picturesque" rather than the merely beautiful. The theory of "picturesqueness" is described by Andrew Jackson Downing in his *Treatise on Landscape Gardening* (1841):

The Beautiful is an idea of beauty calmly and harmoniously expressed; the Picturesque an idea of beauty or power strongly and irregularly expressed...In nature, we would place before the reader a finely formed elm or chestnut, whose well balanced head is supported on a trunk full of symmetry and dignity...; as a picturesque contrast, some pine or larch, whose gnarled roots grasp the rocky crag on which it grows, and whose wild and irregular branches tell of the storm and tempest.³

The movement towards picturesqueness that was part of the Gothic Revival style was among the first such trends to relate the house directly to its natural surroundings. The picturesque manner became so entrenched in the character of American architecture, popularized by such leaders of the profession as Upjohn, A.J. Davis, Henry Austin, and Ammi B. Young as a symbol of American aspirations, that it came to be referred to as simply the "American

Pierson, William H., Jr. American Buildings and their Architects. Garden City, New Jersey: Anchor Books, 1980, p. 366.

Gowans, Alan. Images of American Living. Philadelphia and New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1964, p. 323.

Downing, Andrew Jackson. A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening. Reprint. Sakonnet, Rhode Island: Theophrastus, 1977, p. 54.

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style."⁴ Kingscote is an ideal example of this idea, created at the height of its popularity in American architecture. In the decade after Kingscote was built, the picturesque "became the closest thing to a national style the United States has had since the early days of the classical revival."⁵ Of the select group of surviving Gothic cottages, the Bowen House (Roseland) and the Jonathan Sturges House, both in Connecticut, the Alice Austen House on Staten Island, Martin Van Buren's Lindenwald, and Jay Gould's House (Lyndhurst) in New York, are National Historic Landmarks.

With such importance embedded in the mood of American architecture toward the picturesque manner of design, it is of paramount importance that Kingscote is one of the few remaining examples of such architecture in America today. Having been carefully maintained by the King family through the generations, since 1972 it has been carefully manicured to reflect the finest detail of its historical moment. This moment in American history found Kingscote to be the best "vehicle by which American art expressed the change from a still rural, individualistic, and naively romantic world in the early 19th century to the harder, brittler, more complex mid-19th century world of high finance and heavy industry."

George Noble Jones, a wealthy planter and speculator from Savannah, Georgia, was the great-grandson of Noble Jones I, who had come to Georgia from England on the ship *Ann* in 1733.⁷ George Jones had been a frequent summer resident of Newport when he decided to build his own summer cottage in 1839 after marrying Delia Tudor Gardiner. Jones was one of the first to build a house in Newport that was exclusively for his own personal use, and which was located in an out-of-town setting.⁸ Jones' choice of a location for his house was a dusty strip of road, lying on the outskirts of the village, which would become Bellevue Avenue, the boulevard of America's social elite.⁹ It was through his father-in-law, Robert Gardiner, that he knew of the architect Richard Upjohn, who had designed a house called Oaklands for Gardiner in 1836.

Born in Shaftesbury, England, Richard Upjohn began his professional life as a cabinet-maker. This occupation altered dramatically, however, when, after coming to New York in 1829, he was hired as a draftsman to repair and alter Trinity Church (1839-46); his importance increased when his design became an entirely new church. On the completion of

⁴ Gowans, Alan; p. 321.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 322.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

⁷ Kingscote, Newport, Rhode Island: The Preservation Society of Newport County, p. 4.

Benway, Anne. A Guidebook to Newport Mansions. Newport, Rhode Island: The Preservation Society of Newport County, 1984, p. 15.

Aslet, Clive. The American Country House. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990. p. 240. The whole concept of the summer resort that centered around a grand hotel and its ancillary cottages would enjoy enormous popularity after the Civil War. Most of the successful resorts—Saratoga, Long Branch, Cape May, and White Sulphur Springs—were developed around social life and served as the settings for the rituals of the established families and the parvenu.

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this work, Upjohn became known as "America's premier architect of Gothic churches." This expertise in Gothic design would endow Kingscote, the George Noble Jones House, in Newport, with the finest of details, in addition to being the first luxurious Newport summer "cottage" on Bellevue Avenue.

Upjohn's fame as a master of the Gothic style is typical of his skilled use of brownstone and stained glass and he was one of the first American builders to employ decorative half-timbering in the design of his houses. He was also noted for his mastery of asymmetry in his designs, which is given its most spirited example in Kingscote. 12

The King family has been a part of Newport since the mid-18th century. William Henry King's purchase of the property and house in 1863 brought added wealth and importance to the house, as well as financing the evolution of Newport in American art, architecture, and culture.¹³

William Henry King (1818-1897) was at the forefront of America's leaders in the China trade, working with his brother Edward for the firm of Russell and Co., one of the nation's leading tea companies. He was extremely successful in business, becoming a full partner in the firm by the time he reached the age of 25; his tremendous productivity in these affairs led him to retire a mere seven years later. King's involvement in the China trade explains the great number of Chinese artistic works in the house, including those scenes of China painted by Irish expatriate artist George Channery (1774-1852).

Stanford White was born in New York City and received some higher education. Nevertheless, he apprenticed to Henry Hobson Richardson, the finest architectural firm in the country. In 1878, White spent almost a year abroad, and in 1879, he joined the firm of Charles McKim and William Mead. His other work in Newport includes the Newport. Casino (1879-81), the Tilton House (1881-82), and Rosecliff (1902).

In 1877, prior to joining their firm, Stanford White along with McKim and Mead travelled the New England seaboard in seach of the Colonial style. The light structural frame covered by wood shingles with interiors lit by diamond pane windows, which they developed, was dubbed the "Shingle Style." McKim and White were the designers, Mead the engineer. McKim contributed a sense of order while White's sense of space, light, and scale was pictorial. The first effective demonstration of this orderly structural technique was the Newport Casino (a National Historic Landmark), now recognized as one of the most

Jordy, William H., and Christopher P. Monkhouse. Buildings on Paper. Brown University, Rhode Island Historical Society and Rhode Island School of Design, 1982, p. 236.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

Pierson, William H., Jr., p. 373; Jordy, William H., and Christopher P. Monkhouse, p. 236. Richard Upjohn's position in the history of the American architectural profession is profound. He was instrumental in the founding of the American Institute of Architects in 1857, serving as its first president. In addition, he was respected abroad as an international leader of his field, and became an honorary member of the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Institute of Portuguese Architects.

¹³ Kingscote, p. 25.

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distinguished buildings of the 1880s. The same sensitivity is evident in Stanford White's dining room addition to Kingscote. There is a serenity in the room derived from the coherence of the beautiful materials employed: metal on the fireplace, the glass cubes, the paneling, and the thin strips of cork on the walls and ceiling.

White's work at Kingscote more than doubled the overall dimensions of the house, and transformed it from a modest Gothic cottage orné to a luxurious mansion to be compared with the finest private residences of its time. In addition, White used his careful studies of American Colonial architecture to add a traditional New England flavor to Kingscote. It is in part this incorporation of contrasting styles of architecture which gives Kingscote its uniqueness in American architectural history.

The illness of William Henry King in 1867 left Kingscote to the guardianship of the heir, David King Jr., to carry on the maintenance and development of the house. The house was unoccupied for several years and in 1876 David King Jr. ultimately purchased the property. After the death of David King Jr., Kingscote passed to his widow, Ella Rives King, in 1897. From Ella Rives King, the house passed to her daughter, Maud Gwendolyn King Armstrong. Mrs. Armstrong passed away in 1968, at which time Kingscote came into the hands of her daughter, Gwendolyn Armstrong Rives. In 1972, it was bequeathed to the Preservation Society of Newport County, which is its present owner.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Anslet, Clive. The American Country House. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Benway, Anne. A Guidebook to Newport Mansions, Newport, RI: The Preservation Society of Newport County, 1984.
- Gowans, Alan. Images of American Living. Philadelphia and New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1964.
- Jordy, William H., and Christopher P. Monkhouse. Buildings on Paper. Brown University, Rhode Island Historical Society and Rhode Island School of Design, 1982.
- Kingscote. Newport, RI: The Preservation Society of Newport County, undated.
- Pierson, William H., Jr. American Buildings and Their Architects. Garden City, NJ: Anchor Books, 1980.
- Upjohn, Everard M., Richard Upjohn, Architect, Churchman. New York, 1939.

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rev	ious documentation on the (NP	(3):
_	Preliminary Determination of Previously Listed in the Nation Previously Determined Eligibl Designated a National Historic Recorded by Historic America Recorded by Historic America	e by the National Register. Landmark. n Buildings Survey: # RI-307
Prin	nary Location of Additional Da	ta:
X	State Historic Preservation Of Other State Agency Federal Agency Local Government University Other (Specify Repository):	Archives, Preservation Society of Newport County, Newport, Rhode Island; Archives, Newport Historical Society, Newport, Rhode Island; Newport City Hall, Records of Deeds, Newport, Rhode Island; Upjohn Collection, Drawings, Avery Library at Columbia University,

New York, New York.

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

B&W PHOTOGRAPH INFORMATION

All photos share the following information:

Kingscote

Newport, Rhode Island

Credit: The Preservation Society of Newport County

- 1. South Facade, 1990
- 2. South Parlor, c. 1970
- *3. Dining Room, 1994 (pending)
- *4. Library, 1994 (pending)
- *5. Drawing Room, 1994 (pending)
- *6. School Room, 1994 (pending)

COLOR SLIDE INFORMATION

All slides share the following information:

Kingscote

Newport, Rhode Island

Credit: The Preservation Society of Newport County

- 1. South Facade, 1990
- 2. South Parlor, 1985
- 3. Library, 1985
- 4. Dining Room, facing west, 1985
- 5. Dining Room, facing east, c. 1970
- 6. Dining Room, facing west through screen, 1985
- 7. Buffet, 1985
- 8. Tiffany glass panels, 1985

^{*} photos 3-6 are not yet available but will be sent within 2 weeks.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property:

3.3 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing

A 19 307150

4594600

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the property is defined in the deed of September 2, 1968, Land Evidence Book No. 225, pp. 168-169, held by the City Clerk's Office of Newport County, Rhode Island. The property is located in Plat 28, Lot 114. The boundary of the property is defined to the north by Jones Street, to the east by Bellevue Avenue, to the south by Bowery Street, and to the west by King Street.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes the house (contributing) and land which have historically been part of the Kingscote estate and which retain historic integrity, except for the non-contributing garage and parking lot.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: John Tschirch, Director of Education

Maxim Antinori, Assistant

The Preservation Society of Newport County

424 Bellevue Avenue

Newport, Rhode Island 02840

Telephone:

401/847-1000

Edited by:

Carolyn Pitts, Architectural Historian

National Historic Landmarks Survey

National Park Service

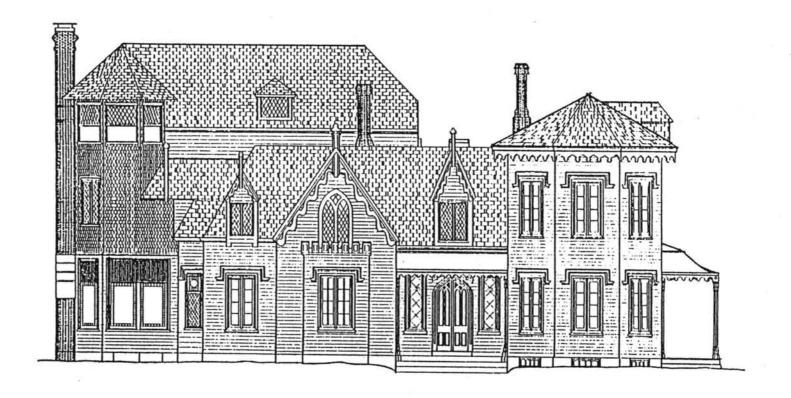
P.O. Box 37127, Suite 310 Washington, DC 20013-7127

Telephone:

202/343-8166

Date:

23 May 1995



FRONT SOUTH ELEVATION

SALWR OT BARBARA STOKEY

OFFICE OF ARCHGOLOF AND HETORIE FRESERVATION
UNDER SMEETING OF THE HATIONAL FARE SERVICE,
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE MISSION

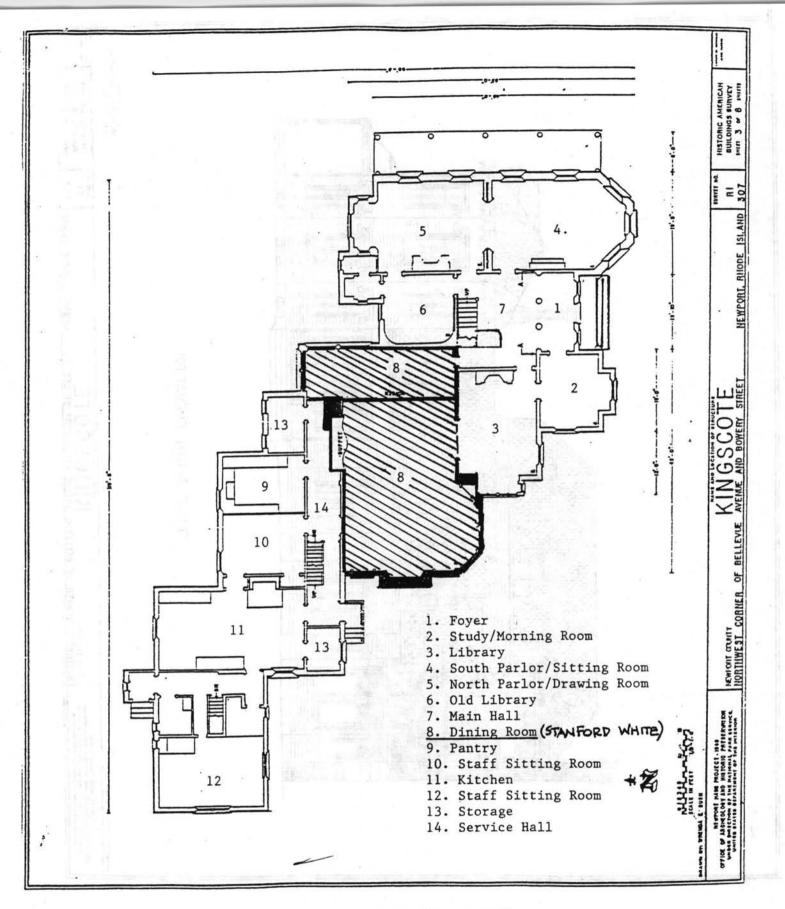
NEWPORT COUNTY NORTHWEST CORNER OF BELLEYUE

KINGSCOTE AVENUE AND DOWERY STREE

EWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

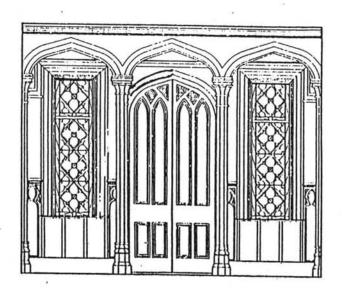
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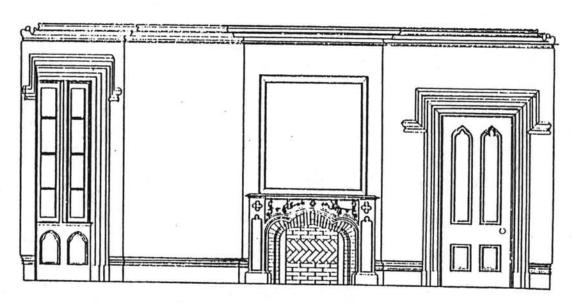
HISTORIC AMERICAN SUILDINGS SURVEY



FIRST FLOOR PLAN, "KINGSCOTE"

SECTION A THROUGH ENTRANCE HALL





ELEVATION OF WEST WALL OF SOUTH PARLOR

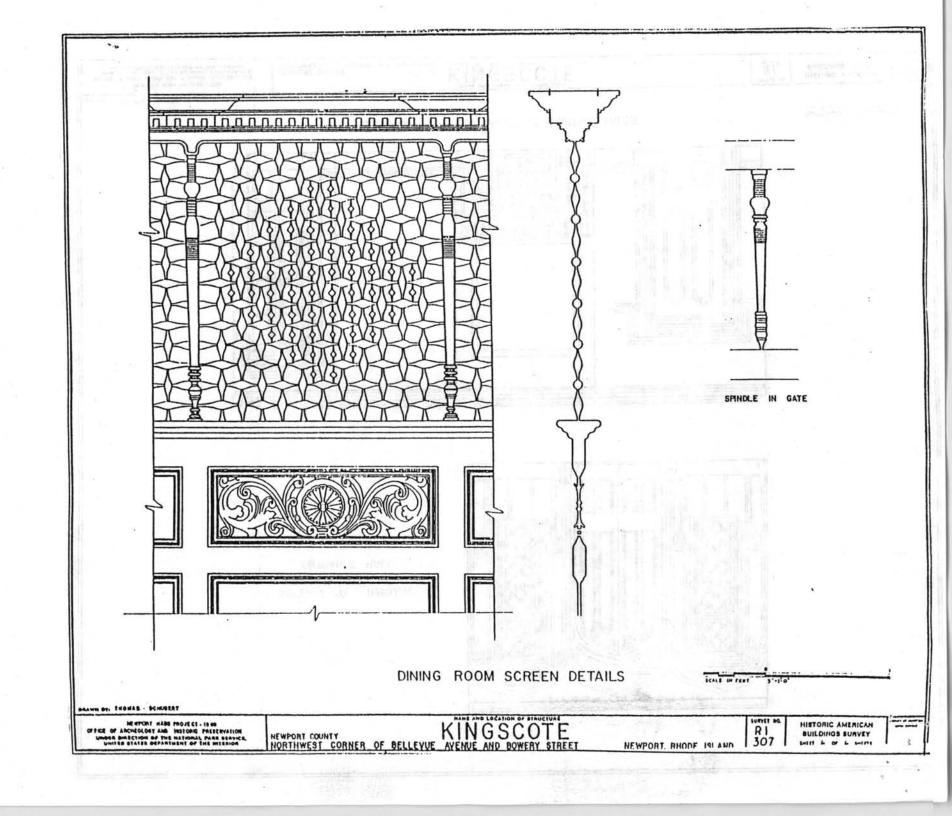
BRANK BY MITTEL TO HOLDE

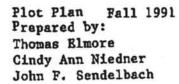
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NEWPORT COUNTY OF ICITEMIE

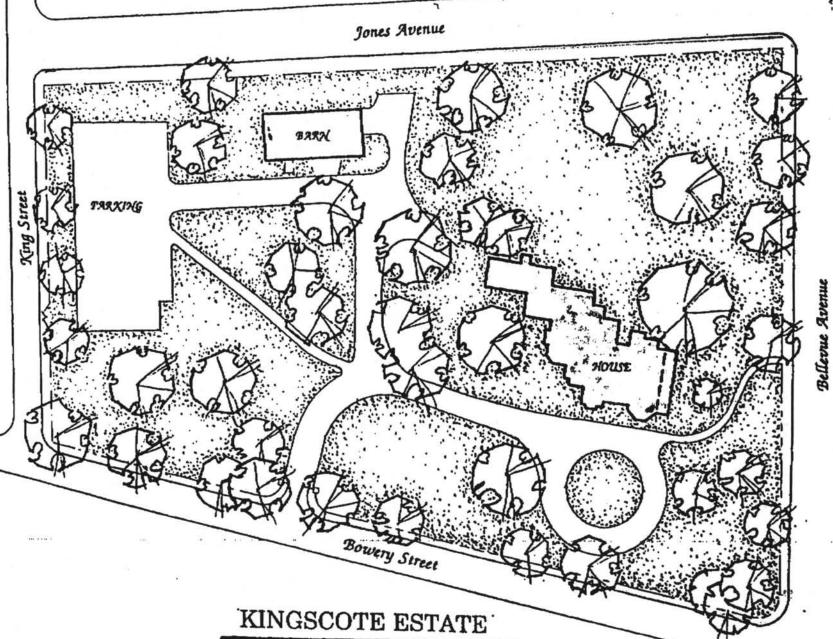
KINGSCOTE

RI HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

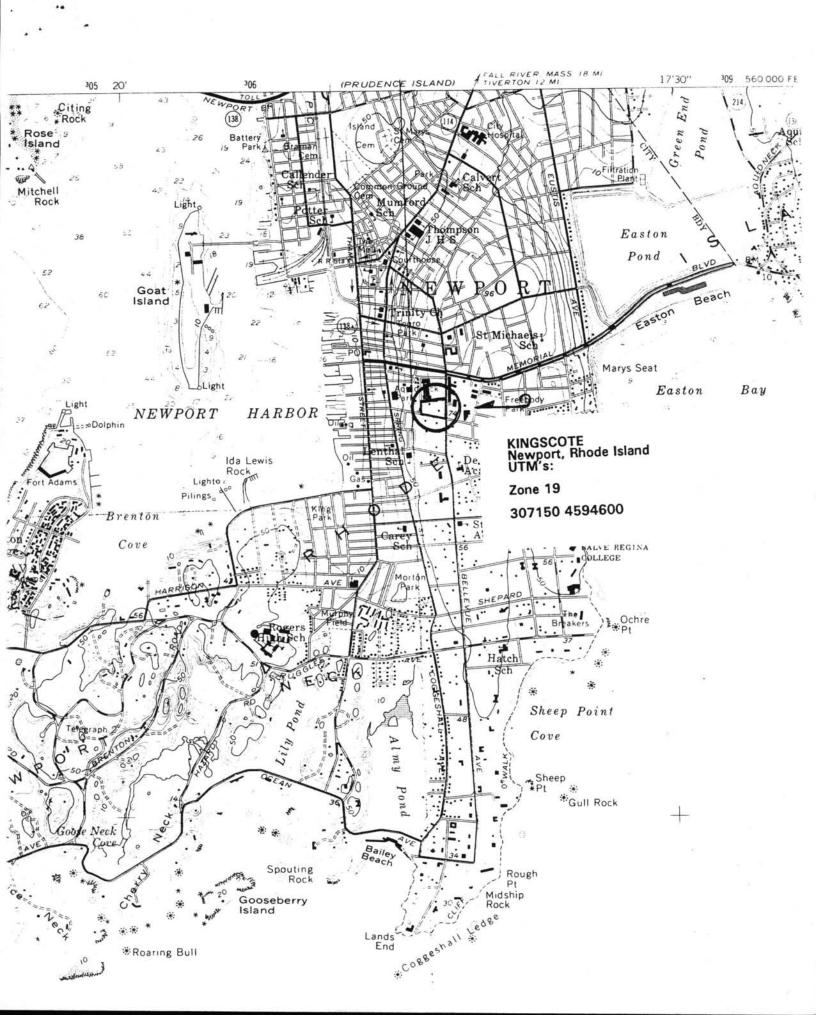




Prepared for: Historic Preservation Studio Univ. of Mass. at Amherst



Scale: 1" = 60' - 0"



Form 10-300 (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

	<u>-</u>
Rhode Island	
COUNTY:	
Newport	
FOR NPS USE ON	ILY
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

	(Type all entries	s – complete app	licable sections)) -				1		
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Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	
Rhode Island	
COUNTY	
Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONL	Υ
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Continuation Sheet)-2

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

created as a prelude to the magnificent new dining-room to its west. Hallway and dining-room are divided by an ornamental (and completely removable) long screen-wall and double-leafed doorway of wooden turned spindles, lattices and carved open work. The dining-room itself is a large oblong with a three-windowed bay slightly extruded at its south-west corner. Walls are panelled to plate-rail height, which matches the height of the hall screen, and there is a built-in sideboard on the north one. At this level a moulding runs continuously in a designedly unifying way around the room; above it, north and south walls are covered by a "paving" of thin rectangular cork strips, as is the ceiling of understated compartments. The west wall, the great decorative feature of the room, is quite different. Here there is a large hearth surrounded to moulding-height by a plain, wide, flat band of tawny, grey-veined marble; above the moulding, the chimney-breast is faced with small squares of creamy Tiffany tiles. On either side of the fireplace, small squares of Tiffany glass, white with some of blue, form shimmering, translucent "window-walls," and this glass borders the large plate-glass panes of the windows in the corner bay, where again there are transoms with dahlias in stained glass. Smokey and pearly Tiffany glass has also been used for the shades of the wall sconces. This décor, innovative in its day, was nevertheless handled so as to be a transition and not a jolt from the older part of the house.

In the original structure the general lay-out of rooms on the second floor follows that of the first floor, with the exception that chambers are smaller, because beside and between them are inserted -- unusual for 1839-1841--large clothes- and linen-closets. Trim here is like that downstairs, but simpler and often painted rather than stained or varnished; however, the upper hall's ceiling has polygonal compartmentation defined by slim, dark-stained mouldings. There are two small rooms here of particular interest. The first is over the downstairs vestibule area and has a large southern window; this was originally an aviary -- probably also including greenery -- and through large French doors from the hall the birds could be observed (it is now a bathroom, and the doors contain frosted glass). To its right, over the present study, is the old school-room, which is not large. It has a southern dormer with latticed, Gothic-pointed casements; flanking this dormer on the inside are two cuphoards or bookcases each enclosed on two sides by glazing matching that of the dormer. Upper rooms in the 1880-1881 addition display simple moulded door trim with corner blocks and interesting tinted wooden mantels which McKim, Mead & White seem to have adapted from William Morris.

On the somewhat sheltered and simply-landscaped grounds (chiefly lawn, large old trees including red Japanese maples, a weeping willow, some shrubberies), there is also a one-and-one-half-storey clapboarded stable of mid-Victorian style with dormers having sawn, curving barge-boards. House and grounds are impeccably maintained. The house is occu-

(See Continuation Sheet 3.

Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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FOR NPS USE ONL	Υ
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(Continuation Sheet) -1

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

north-west of the house, and this has its full complement of dormers, lattices, bargeboards, pendants and pinnacles.

In 1880-1881 the house was enlarged for the King family, who had acquired it in 1861. Undertaken by the firm of McKim, Mead & White, and chiefly to provide a sizeable new dining-room, this enlargement was accomplished by moving the service wing a distance to the north-west and inserting between it and the main house a three-storey, squarish block covered by grey shingling and a hipped roof, whose first floor contains the dining-room. In roofline, scale, similarity of trim etc., it was made, as much as possible, to harmonise with and not overpower the delicacy of the old "cottage."

Entering through the Tudor-arched, double-leafed front door, one is in a vestibule area set off from the nearly-square stair-hall by three open pointed arches on attenuated clustered columns of moulded wood. Trimmed in dark wood, the hall has a dado whose shallow panels are of cusped, pointed-arch form, and its ceiling is wood-panelled. The stair rises along the north and west walls and has a ramped moulded handrail carried on slim turned balusters which runs up from a heavy, round, turned newel; stair-ends are ornamented by carving. Window and door trim here, as elsewhere on the interior, consists of drip-moulds. To the right of the hall lie the two drawing-rooms which fill the eastern block of the house. They are connected with each other by a wide four-centred archway with sliding doors, and this shape is echoed by the enframement of an alcove in the north bay. Both rooms having floor-length sliding windows opening onto the east porch. The mantel in the south drawing-room is the original one, of polished dark wood with carving of Gothic inspiration. and encloses an arched hearth-opening bordered in moulded brick and backed by herringbone brickwork. A twin mantel in the north drawing-room was removed c. 1888 to allow substitution of an elaborate one of statuary marble in Rococo Revival design brought from a New York town house of King relatives which was being demolished: as that house and its mantel dated from 1840 they were contemporaneous with Kingscote. A study (formerly a downstairs bedroom) fills the south-west corner of the first floor and has the small machicolated bay-window seen left of the entrance. To its north, and projecting westerly, is the library (the old dining-room), which has early painted glass filling the transoms of its four-part western window. There is a small "north library" (probably the original library) beyond the wall which backs the start of the main staircase.

From the north-west corner of the original house a hallway area runs north within, and giving access to, the enlargement of 1880-1881. This passage is panelled in dark wood on its east side, but its north end is opened by large windows which have transoms showing dahlia-flower motifs in stained glass; these flowers are also shown in relief on the brass wall-sconces lighting this passage which Stanford White and his partners (See Continuation Sheet 2.)

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Kingscote's importance and significance are considerable and varied. It was designed as a summer retreat, for which a "rustick Gothick" style had been considered appropriate as far back as the gazebos and tea-houses in XVIII-Century English gardens. An early advocate of this style here was Alexander Jackson Davis, who used it to provide freedom of plan and ventilation and "un-rigid," non-academic exterior forms for country and summer houses. His thinking was contagious to Richard Upjohn (1802-1878), Kingscote's architect—who already had an interest in asymmetrical planning and the Gothic style—and was promoted well past mid-century by A. J. Downing and Calvert Vaux.

Kingscote exhibits the newly-desired picturesqueness and romanticism of form and the concomitant freedom of planning in an immediately understandable and visually interesting way. It is small-scale; it is full of variety; its has a playful asymmetry; it has ever-changing light and shadow within its porches, its overhangs, its corners, even its rooms. It is a landmark of its generation and style and of American architecture as a whole.

Its intrinsic value is enhanced by the fact that it was designed by the famous Richard Upjohn: a number of his drawings for this house are at the Avery Library of Columbia University. He practised from the 1830's to the 1870's and was a prime promoter of the Gothic Revival, though designing more churches than residences in that style, and he was founder of the American Institute of Architects. Because of its Gothic style, its location and state of preservation, Kingscote fills an important place in Newport's impressive sequence of dwellings exhibiting the full variety of architectural treatments prevailing from the XVIII Century through the 1900's. There is the additional importance of the celbrated McKim, Mead & White dining-room added in 1880-1881. Here is an early example of the inventive decorative talent of this famous firm, which was to influence American house interiors for decades to come. Of particular note in this room are its qualities of heing light and airy while at the same time rich; there is new handling of old materials -- wood and marble -- and imaginative employment of new ones -- Tiffany glass and cork. Also notable about the house in general are its immaculate state of preservation and the important and handsome accumulation of family furniture, rugs, porcelains, paintings, silver, objets de vertu etc. which fill its rooms and have long been there.

(See Continuation Sheet 3.)

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Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

Rhode Island	
COUNTY	
Newport	
FOR NPS USE ON	LY
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Continuation Sheet)-3

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

pied, and the decoration and contents present an excellent picture of XIX-Century life and prosperous taste at a time before ostentation had displaced comfort.

8. Significance.

Kingscote even has an interesting "genealogy." In 1835 Upjohn designed a large Gothic villa in stone, in Maine, for Robert H. Gardiner-perhaps his first residential essay in that style. Gardiner's son-in-law was George Noble Jones, of a prominent Georgia plantation family. Such Southerners were among the first to discover Newport's summer charms, and Jones in turn chose Upjohn to build a house for him there. In Newport, the Joneses apparently had a very friendly connection with the locally long-established King family, who had descent from the city's early benefactor, Abraham Redwood. Liking what Upjohn had done for Jones in 1839, Edward King called upon that architect to design for him in 1845, on a large property west of Kingscote, an imposing house in "Italian villa" style which still stands there and is famous.

Once the Civil War had erupted, the Joneses were unable to use their summer home, though the Kings apparently watched over the property for them. During the war arrangements were somehow concluded for its sale to William Henry King in 1864, when it received its present name. He had been engaged in the China trade, which will account for many of the furnishings and ornaments seen in the house. (It worth noting, in passing, that later Georgia Joneses have not forgotten the house and have come north to visit it: it was they who informed of the aviary.) In this century Kingscote descended to Mrs. E. Maitland Armstrong, born Gwendolen King, who resided there until her death in 1968 and made its preservation a great object of her life. In 1949 she was obliged to do rattle with the City of Newport, which in one of its more misguided moments wanted to condemn the property and build there a modern high school which would have destroyed not only Kingscote but the entire remaining ambience, including the Newport Casino complex and other nearby properties of architectural distinction. Fortunately the municipality was prevented from accomplishing this intention. Kingscote is now owned and occupied by Mrs. Armstrong's daughter, Mrs. Anthony Rives, who returned to the house in order to continue giving it the great care that it has always had.

Note: Mrs. Rives died suddenly on October 23, 1972. Under the terms of her will, the Kingscote property is devised to The Preservation Society of Newport County, which will in future maintain and operate it as a house-museum.

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	p. 126. Downing, Antoinette F., and Scully, Vincent J., Jr.: The Architectural										
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	1952), pp. 122-123, 150-151.										
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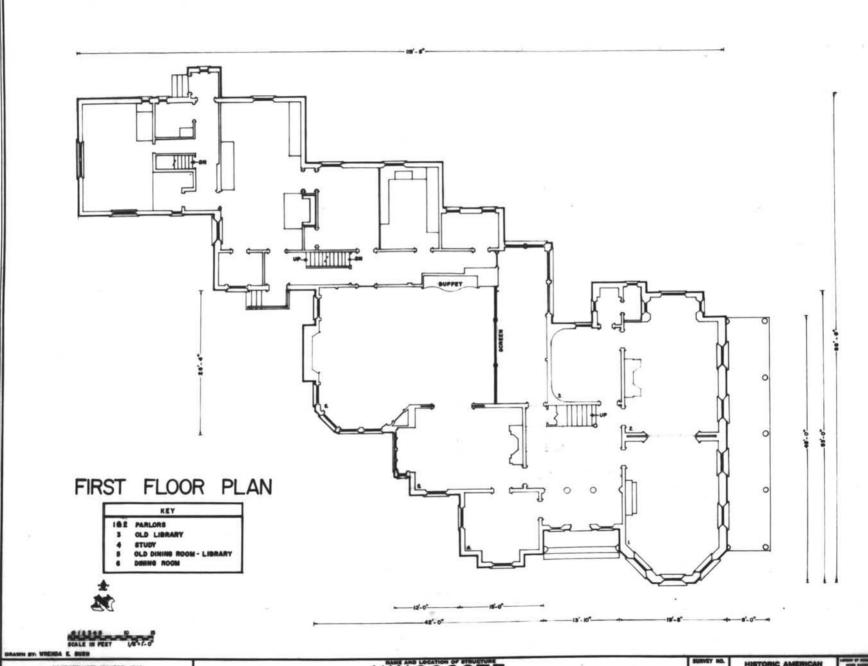


UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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NEWPORT MAIS PROJECT-1980

PFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
UNDER DIRECTION OF THE INSTORICAL PARK SERVICE.
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

KINGSCOTE

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND 307

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY SHEET 3 OF 6 SHEETS ---

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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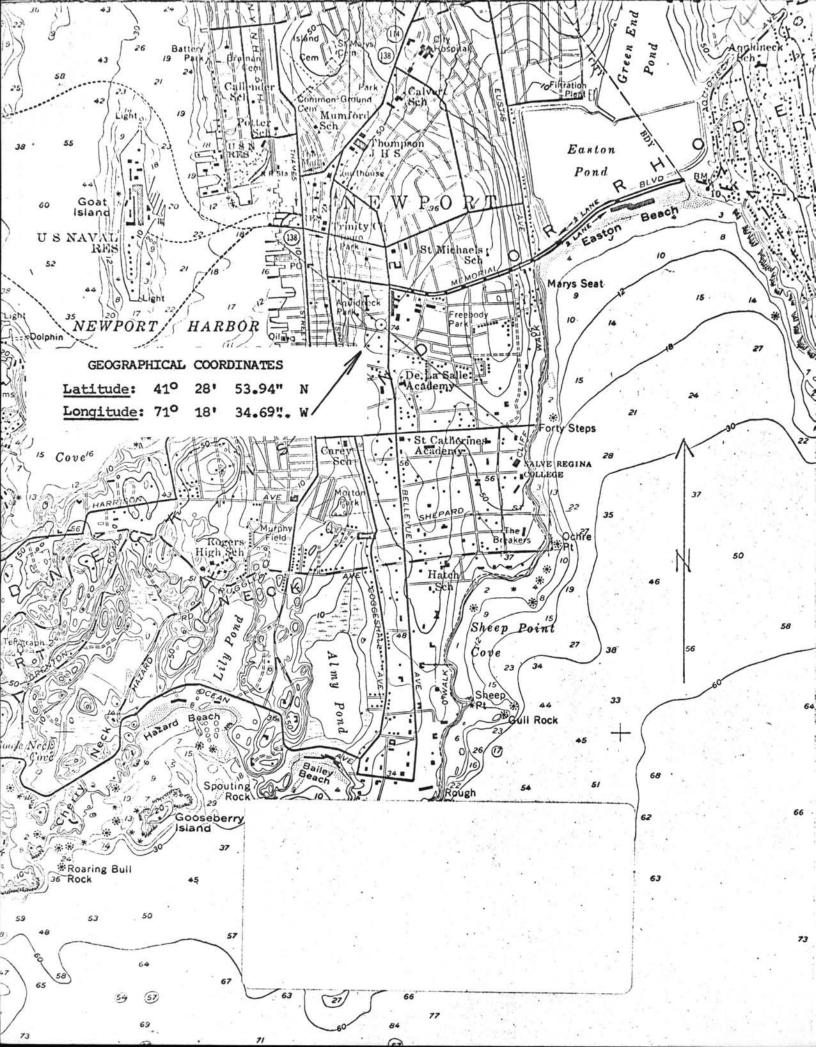
RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION

PAMELA A KENNEDY

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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Form 10-301 (July 1969)

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)

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