Form 10-300 (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	ILY
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

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2.	LOCATION street and number: 14 Clarke Street	,			<u>.</u>		
	Newport						
	Rhode Island, 02	2840	CODE	COUNTY:	ort	_	005
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Built in 1756, the Ezra Stiles House is a large, two-and-one-half-story, five-bay-wide, gambrel-roofed house. Its plan is that of four rooms on each principal floor with central halls, organized around two large interior brick chimneys. Now facing west, the house originally faced its garden to the south, with its gable end to the street. When turned west to face the street it was placed a new new, high, brownstone foundation abutting the sidewalk. Even though the house was turned and remodelled in 1834, it retains its over-all eighteenth-century lines and character.

The windows have their original pegged frames and moulded cornices. Two pedimented dormers which light the garret on the front also remain. The original doorway was replaced with one of Greek Revival design. Set in a panelled recess and protected by a one-story, flat-roofed portico supported by Doric columns and simple pilasters, this doorway is framed by a transom and sidelights of etched glass. The original cornerboards were also replaced with the simple panelled pilasters common to the Greek Revival. A two-story clapboarded kitchen ell with a brick end wall and interior chimney adjoins the house to the rear. Bay windows, each two stories tall, have been extended from the front rooms at either side of the house.

Although the house has retained its cased beams and panelled wainscoting on the interior, many of the mantels and much of the other trim in its rooms dates from after 183h. A graceful, winding staircase in the central hall rises from the ground floor all the way to the third level under the gambrel roof.

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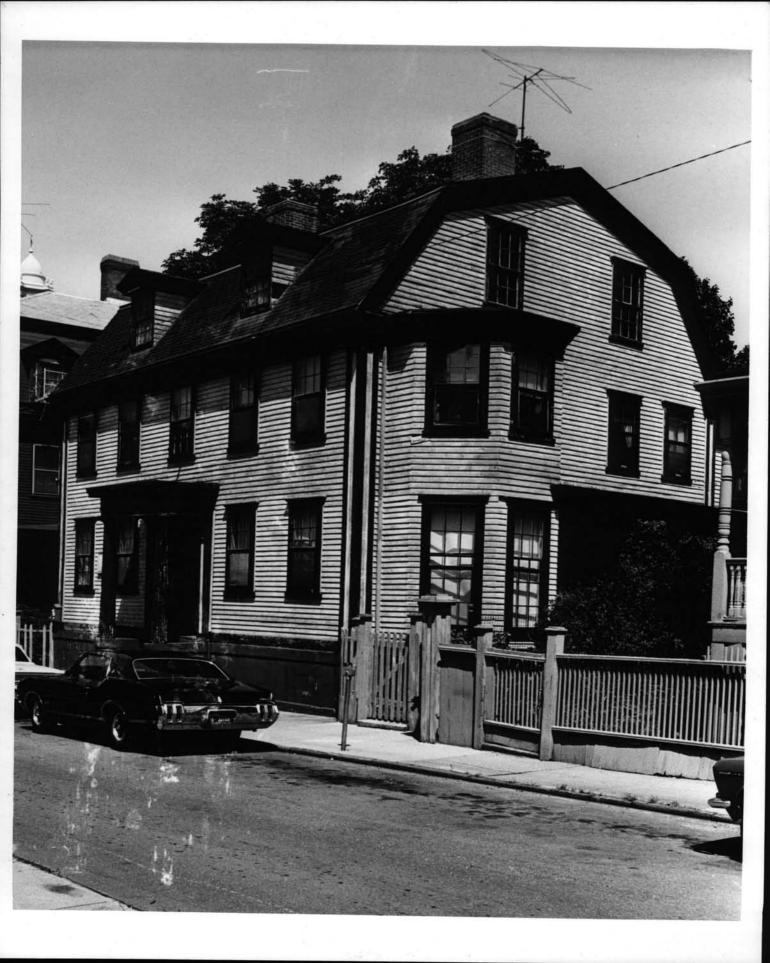
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FORM PREPARED BY								***************************************
Clifford M. Renshaw, III, Cons	ultant	.		•				
ORGANIZATION				· 		DATE		
Rhode Island Historical Preser	vation	1 (Commiss	ion		Jun	e 20,	1971
STREET AND NUMBER:					· -			,
State House, 90 Smith Street								
CITY OR TOWN:		5	TATE					CODE
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STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION		ो			REGIST		FICATION	į.
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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Downing, Antoinette F., and Scully, Vincent J., Jr.:



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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

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1. NAME		
соммом: Henderson Home		
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2. LOCATION		
STREET AND NUMBER:		
14 Clarke Street		
CITY OR TOWN:		
Newport		
STATE:	CODE COUNTY:	CODE
Rhode Island	Lili Newport	005
3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
рното скерит: Clifford M. Ren	shaw, III	
DATE OF PHOTO: August, 1971		
	Historical Preservation Commission,	State House.
	eet, Providence, Rhode Island, 02903	
4. IDENTIFICATION		
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Exterior seen from t	ne soutn-west.	



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

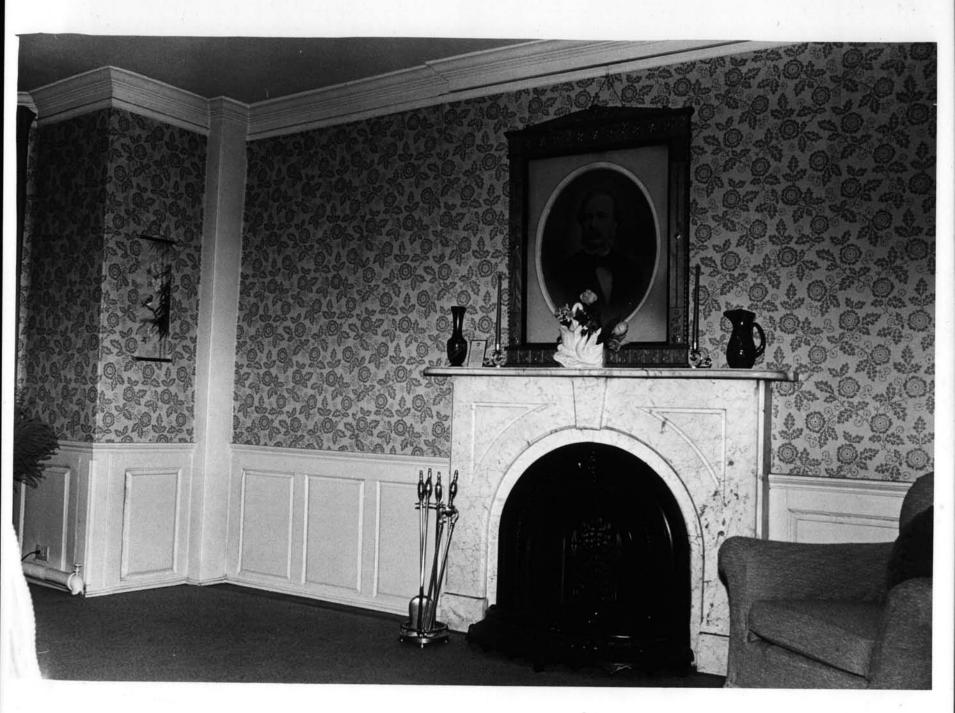
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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AND/OR HISTORIC: Stiles (Ezra) Hou	is e		
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CITY OR TOWN: Newport			
Rhode Island	CODE COUNTY:	port	00
3. PHOTO REFERENCE	-		
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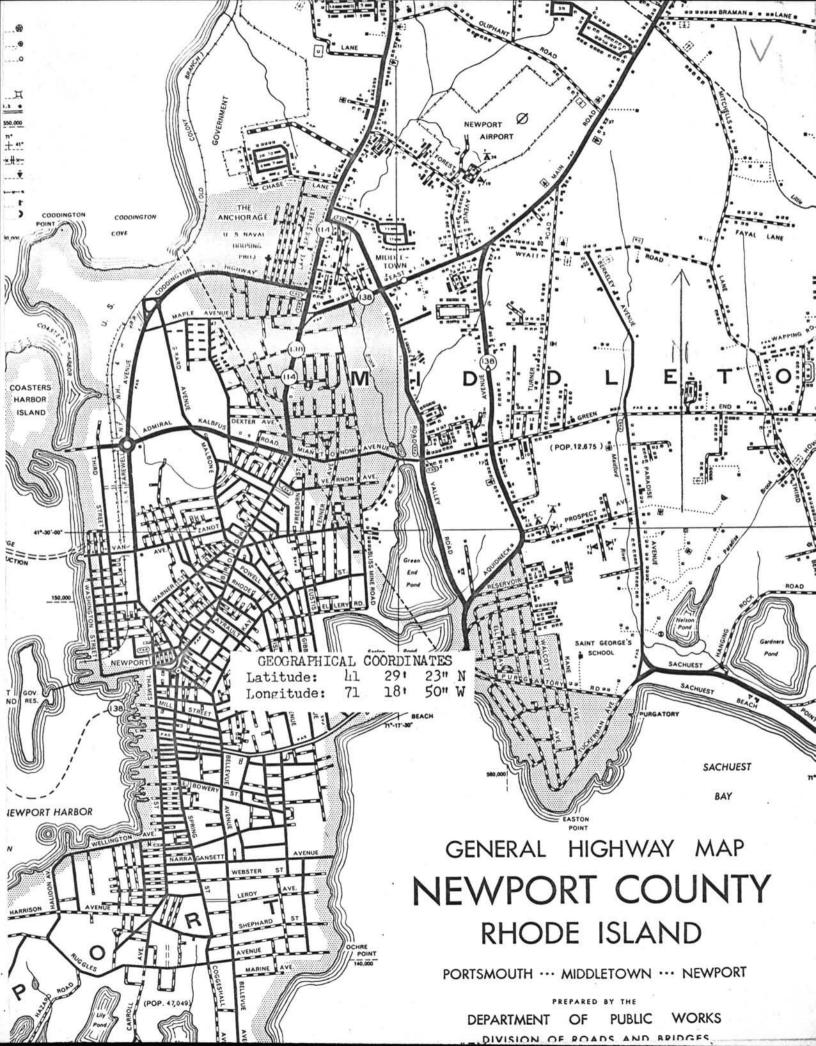


UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Portion of north-west p	parlor, show	ing eighteenth-century	woodwork,



Form 10-301 (July 1969)

'UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

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Form 10-300 (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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The Newport Artillery Company, an organization chartered in 1741, raised money in 1835 to build its permanent quarters on Clarke Street, a locale that had been prominent in Newport's history from the time of the city's first settlement. Alexander MacGregor, a stonemason from Scotland who was responsible for much of Newport's early-19th-century stone building, was hired to design the armory, and Duress and McWade were taken on as contractors. MacGregor piled walls of random ashlar (native stone given by Enoch Hazard from his Rocky Farm) and topped them with a modest gable to create a building of simple, but relatively heavy, temple form. He rusticated the corners and the main doorway. A long lintel over the double, panelled doors reads "1741. Artillery Company." (In photographs taken in 1870, one can see that the gable was then undecorated, the doors were diagonally planked, and an extremely tall flagpole stood on the sidewalk in front.) The building was set on a narrow lot, donated by Audley Clarke, a Newport merchant and benefactor, with 28 feet of frontage; and the structure itself was originally no more than 50 feet deep. In 1873 there was an addition to the rear, increasing the number of east-west bays from four to eight. While this addition distorted the originally fine proportions of MacGregor's design, the armory -- situated as closely as it is between the Second Congregational Church on the right and the Robert Stevens house on the left--was not really impaired in general appearance. Its architecture was harmed, however, in 1906 when the gable was raised to make way for a second story. Though the new stonework and brickwork are well matched to the old, the added height and the introduction of five windows across the upper façade have marred the Greek-Revival intentions of the original design. A granite belt course was then added along the sides of the building. There are iron bars on these front windows and iron shutters for the windows on the sides of the building. Of visual interest is a large, relief-carved wooden eagle applied to the gable or tympanum in 1880. Taken from the paddle-box of the S. S. "Metropolis," the bird is set against a red-painted wooden semicircular background. Two triangular panels with embedded cannonballs flank the eagle emblem.

The interior is open and rather plain, with a ceiling height of about 15 feet. The panelled wainscoting that was probably once varnished is now painted a light green to match the plaster walls. The floor is of wooden planks, and the ceiling is now of 19th-century pressed tin with an elaborate lace-like pattern. The symmetrically-molded architraves of the doors have circle-in-square block ornament at the upper corners. The front and rear stairways of the long first-floor drill hall (now used as a museum) have simple square wooden balustrading. The back stairs were added when the building was heightened, and include a large podium landing, perhaps meant as a speaking or command platform. Photographs taken in 1908 show the new upstairs lounge rooms which were finished in dark panelling; the central uplatirs room still has its large hearth; but this suite is not now in stairs room still has its large hearth; but this suite is not now in length of the building and has stone walls and a wood-beamed ceiling.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Owing to the antiquity of the militia organization it houses, and to its presence in this historic block, the Clarke Street armory has much to speak for it besides its architecture. The Newport Artillery Company's earliest origin was in 1639 as a "trained band" against hostile Indians; and, according to Elton Manuel's detailed account, in 1711

"a group of 18 men, calling themselves the 'principal inhabitants of the town' applied to the General Assembly for a charter to form an organization ... the charter was approved. They chose Jahleel Brenton as their first commanding officer."

When, nearly one hundred years later, they desired a permanent and, if possible, monumental armory they employed Alexander MacGregor, a Scotch stonemason who also built the fine granite walls of the early part of Fort Adams, the Perry Mill, Stone Villa, Swanhurst, and the Thorn house in Newport.

In adapting rough-laid local stone to the smooth rigidities of the Greek Revival style so popular in the early part of the 19th century, the armory is unusually successful: MacGregor's handling of it is strong and confident (even if quoining seems out of place in this style). The building in old photographs and restored sketches depends on its striking proportions for its effect—the simplicity of its rectangular and superposed triangular masses, the flatness of the façade, the primitively "defensive" heavy inset doors.

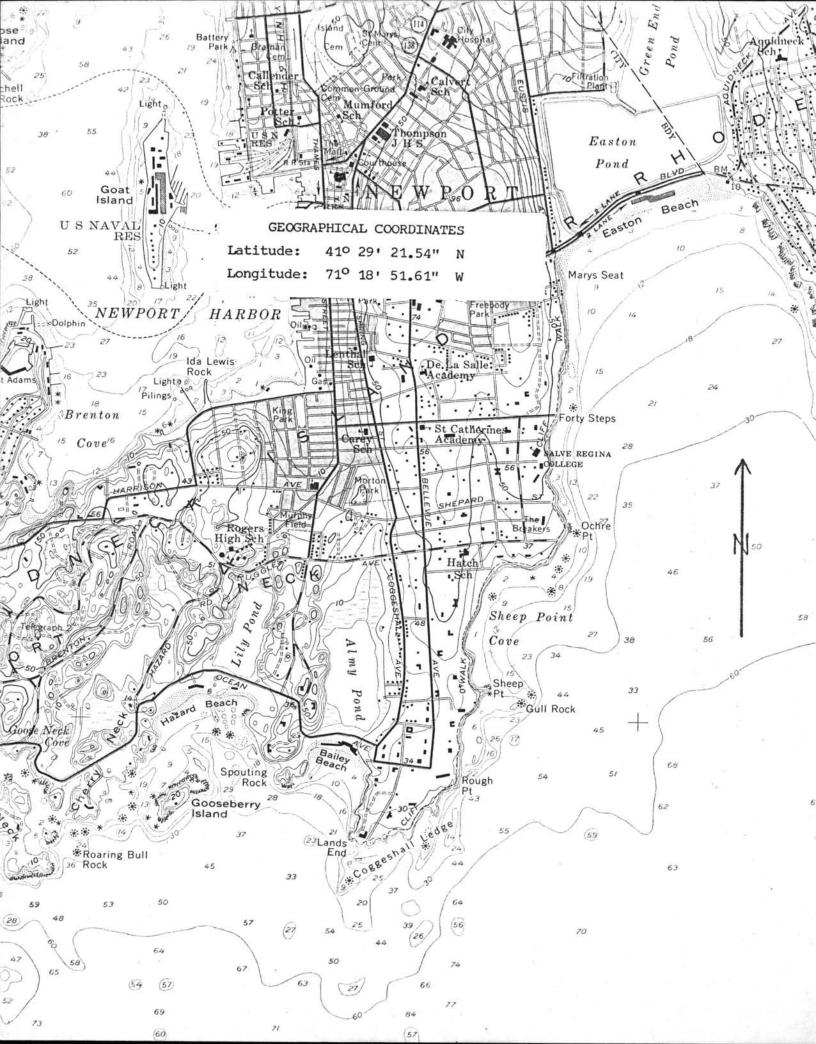
The armory's architectural individuality and long-established place in the community of Newport, as well as its present use as a highly instructive military museum, make it an integral part of the fabric of the Clarke Street neighborhood, and indeed of Newport's overall heritage.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES



(July 1969)	NATIONAL PARK SERVICE		Rhode Island			
	NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTOR	RIC PL	ACES	Newport		
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