

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
President's House, Naval War College
AND/OR COMMON
Quarters AA

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *Coaster's Harbor Island*
Naval Education and Training Center
CITY, TOWN
Newport
STATE
Rhode Island

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF
CODE
44

COUNTY
Newport
CODE
005

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (if applicable)
Naval Education and Training Center, Department of the Navy
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN
Newport
STATE
Rhode Island

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Public Works Center
STREET & NUMBER
Naval Education and Training Center
CITY, TOWN
Newport
STATE
Rhode Island

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: An Historical Survey of the United States
Navy Property in Rhode Island

DATE: August 1974
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
CITY, TOWN
Providence
STATE
Rhode Island

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The President's House is an imposing two-story, wood frame, Colonial Revival structure, situated on a knoll that commands an impressive view of Narragansett Bay. The south (front) elevation is divided into five bays horizontally; on the first and second floors, 2/2 double-hung windows with shutters articulate the facade. Above the built-up wood cornice and colossal order pilasters, four gable pedimented dormers with 6/6 double-hung sash flank a similarly sized central swans-neck pedimented dormer, two on each side. The gable roof provides a one-foot overhang on each end and along the ridge, two brick chimneys are symmetrically positioned between the two pairs of gable pedimented dormers.

The first floor of the President's House is a variation of a double pile center stair hall plan with a kitchen ell on the north side, a closed-in porch on the west side, an enclosed entranceway on the south side, and a large glazed conservatory on the east side. When the building was constructed in 1896, the front entrance was open but covered with a pedimented porch supported with two wood Doric columns; the porch on the west side was also open. In addition, there was no conservatory on the east side; the dining room and east parlour each had a bay window on the east elevation and an opening to the east of the existing fireplaces linked them. The two-story bathroom addition, a wood frame, clapboarded volume, was installed onto the north elevation of the house in 1909. Within the next three years a glass-walled, gable-roofed palm room was added to the east side of the east parlour; it projected toward the south and included a semi-circular balcony on the south end. At the same time, the south half of the west porch was glass-enclosed and the openings from the west parlour modified into French doors.

In 1927, the palm room was extended northward to encompass the entire east facade of the building; to provide for a choreographed traffic flow, the east wall and bay window of the dining room were removed and the opening between the dining room and east parlour was closed. In addition, the south wall of this new reception room was extended to enclose the semi-circular balcony. At the same time, the west porch was renovated to become one large interior glass-enclosed space. The enclosure of the stairs on the south (front) elevation with glass and a second, smaller portico were also added at this time. A porte cochere was added to the main entrance in 1956.

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National Park Service

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Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet 1

Item number 7

Page 1

Presently, the house is intact and resplendent in its Colonial Revival detailing. The center stair hall, with its scalloped elliptical transomed and side-lit main opening, contains a matching elliptical arch opening in the center that separates the entry area from the stair area. The stairs themselves are a "C" shaped winding course with stained treads, painted risers, and straight painted balusters set into a sweeping rail with built-up stained newels. The east and west parlours are similar in design with wide openings and pocket doors separating each of them from the center stair hall; the north walls of both rooms contain fireplaces with wood mantels that typify Revivalist design themes with their fluted pilasters and dentilled mantel shelves. The dining room and its fireplace are similar in their design to the two parlours, except that a lighting valance was recently installed near the ceiling. In all four of these public rooms, the light-stained oak flooring is embellished with a geometrized, dark-stained inlay border. The baseboards and mouldings complement each other and the inlay. The baseboards are built-up of 1 x 8 boards with quarter round and ogee bottoms and tops, respectively; and the mouldings are beaded 1 x 6 boards with decorative edge strips.

The reception room and west porch remain unchanged, with their plentiful 6/6 double-hung windows and matching light-stained floors (without inlay). The ceiling of the reception room contains a built-up wood cornice that provides a visual spring for the shallow barrel-vaulted plaster ceiling; the west porch, however, contains a flat, painted, panelled ceiling with relief strips that articulate the panel joints.

The north ell, which contains the kitchen and servant-related spaces (including the back stair), is largely unchanged since its construction. The appliances, of course, have been upgraded and the dumbwaiter was removed at the first floor; however, all of the plain board cabinets for china, linens and silver remain intact and are in full use. In 1933, a small one-story clapboarded "modern" kitchen wing was added to the north ell, and the kitchen, formerly in the basement, was moved upstairs. This area was renovated in 1958, and serves contemporary day-to-day, non-ceremonial uses. The second floor and attic contain the private bedrooms and studies for the residents of the building; these spaces, which have undergone very few modifications, are more restrained than the public rooms, although the mouldings and baseboards are similar.

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National Park Service

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Continuation sheet 2

Item number 7

Page 2

The site is distinctly visible from every direction, and allows the building to assert an architectural reminder to all who see it of the prominence of its primary resident. The site presently also contains a small original wood frame laundry building and a concrete block two-car garage that was installed in 1959. Along the highly manicured north edge of the property, a row of wood greenhouses were built with the residence. They were damaged in the 1939 hurricane and subsequently rebuilt; however, severe budgetary constraints after World War II necessitated their removal. At present, the area is planted with a tall row of arborvitae.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1896

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Creighton Withers

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The President's House is significant under Criterion A, association with "broad patterns of our history." As the official residence of a series of senior naval officers assigned to commands historically present at the Naval Station at Newport, the ceremonial architectural style, formal interiors, and imposing setting on a knoll overlooking Narragansett Bay and at the head of a row of officers' quarters along Bainbridge Road symbolically express the importance of both the officers who have occupied these quarters and the relative significance of these commands. Since 1906, the residence has been reserved for the Presidents of the Naval War College, the country's premier institution for the advanced training of its senior personnel and a pivotal institution in the twentieth-century development of the United States Navy.

The permanent presence of the U.S. Navy in Newport dates to 1869, when an experimental torpedo station was erected on Goat Island. In 1884, the Naval War College, the oldest center for the advanced study of warfare in the nation, was established in what had been the Newport Asylum. It was moved to Luce Hall (Building 1) in 1894. The college constituted the prototype for similar institutions of advanced military education, introducing, for example, the concept of war games, which had been pioneered in Europe. Graduates since World War I have achieved the most senior positions in the Navy, and over the course of the twentieth century, the college has exercised great influence with regard to the development of strategy, tactics, and philosophy.

A year after the Naval War College moved into Luce Hall, specifications were issued for labor and materials for the "Commandant's Quarters" and the contract awarded to Creighton Withers, a local architect who appears in the Newport Directory from 1895 to 1906, when he left for San Francisco. The quarters were built in 1896 at a cost of \$16,226.

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National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet 3

Item number 8

Page 1

The structure was built and has always been used as the official residence of a commanding officer, although it has not been exclusively assigned to the Naval War College. Indeed, during the first 17 years of its existence, jurisdiction over the property vacillated between the Bureau of Navigation and the Bureau of Yards and Docks. The earliest known occupant of the quarters was Captain John McGowan, Commanding Officer, Naval Station, in 1899. It remained the residence of the commander of the Naval Station through 1904, although from June to November 1903 Captain W. W. Meade, then the occupant, was simultaneously the President of the War College and the Commandant, 2nd Naval District. From 1904 to 1905, Rear Admiral Charles M. Thomas, Commandant, Naval Training Station and 2nd Naval District, was in residence, followed by Captain A. C. Dillingham, Superintendent, Naval Training Service, from 1905 to 1906. In May of 1906, Captain John P. Merrill, President, Naval War College, moved into the quarters. From that time to the present, the building has been occupied by the successive Presidents of the War College except for the tenure of Captain Albert Gleaves, Commandant, Training Station and 2nd Naval District, from November 1911 to December 1913.

As observed elsewhere (Section #7), the site of the structure symbolizes the prominence of its occupant, and the dual function of the structure as both the official quarters of a commanding officer and the residence for himself and his family is expressed by the treatment of the interior spaces. The second floor and attic containing the private spaces for the family are furnished in a more restrained fashion than the public rooms on the first floor, although the floor plan is consistent with the architectural style of the building, and the mouldings and baseboards echo the more elaborate decorative details found in the main rooms on the first floor. The six principal rooms on the first floor (West Porch, Library, West Parlor, East Parlor, Dining Room, Reception Room) respond to the formal entertainment hosted at the residence. The expanse, elaborate decorative details, and traffic flow permitting use, if necessary, of the entire floor (except for the rear kitchen areas), including the center hall with its sweeping staircase, all contribute to the sense of occasion associated with events at this dwelling.

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Continuation sheet 4

Item number 9

Page 1

Kennedy, Gerald. Coasters Harbor Island, Newport, Rhode Island,
U.S. Naval War College, 1884 - . Manuscript on file at the
Naval War College Naval Historical Collection, Newport. n.d.

Newport Directory. Sampson, Murdock & Co., Newport, Rhode Island.
1895-1906.

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. An Historical
Survey of United States Navy Property in Rhode Island.
1974.

U.S. Naval Station, Newport, Rhode Island, Public Works Center,
Quarters AA, Building Files, Correspondence, Record Plans,
and Sketches, 1909-1965.

U.S. Naval Station, Newport, Rhode Island, Record Group 39,
Manuscript Collection, Naval War College Historical
Collection, Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island

Individual Items:

Inventory of and Receipt for Furniture, October 4, 1909

Inventory of and Receipt for Furniture, April 29, 1912

Inventory of and Receipt for Furniture, May 10, 1912

List of Occupants, President's House - Naval War College
[ca. 1972]

Memorandum as to Building No. 19, April 20, 1908

Memorandum for Files, typescript, February 23, 1954

Memorandum to Chief of Bureau of Yards and Docks, August 3,
1926

Memorandum to Chief of Bureau of Yards and Docks, May 12,
1936

Memorandum to Chief of Bureau of Yards and Docks, January
29, 1959

Naval War College Military Construction Program since 1890,
n.d.

Plans and elevations, 1909, 1958-1965

Specifications for Labor and Material for Commandant's
Quarters, August 1895

Survey of Furniture in Quarters B [redesignated AA], April
5, 1926

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National Park Service**

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The property is bounded by Luce Avenue on the south, Bainbridge Road on the west, and tall hedges on the north and east. Contained in this area are the dwelling, formal circular drive leading to the main and side entrances, dependencies, and the yard area historically laid out in formal gardens, according to a surviving, circa 1950s aerial photograph from the Building Files, Quarters AA, in the Public Works Office, U.S. Naval Station, Newport.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3/4 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 9	3 05 72 5	4 59 75 4 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Continuation Sheet

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Amy Friedlander, Ph.D., Senior Historian and John R. Bowie. AIA

ORGANIZATION

Cultural Resource Group
Louis Berger & Associates, Inc.

DATE

November 1986

STREET & NUMBER

100 Halsted Street

TELEPHONE

201-678-1960

CITY OR TOWN

East Orange

STATE

New Jersey

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Frank C. Williams
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

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

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

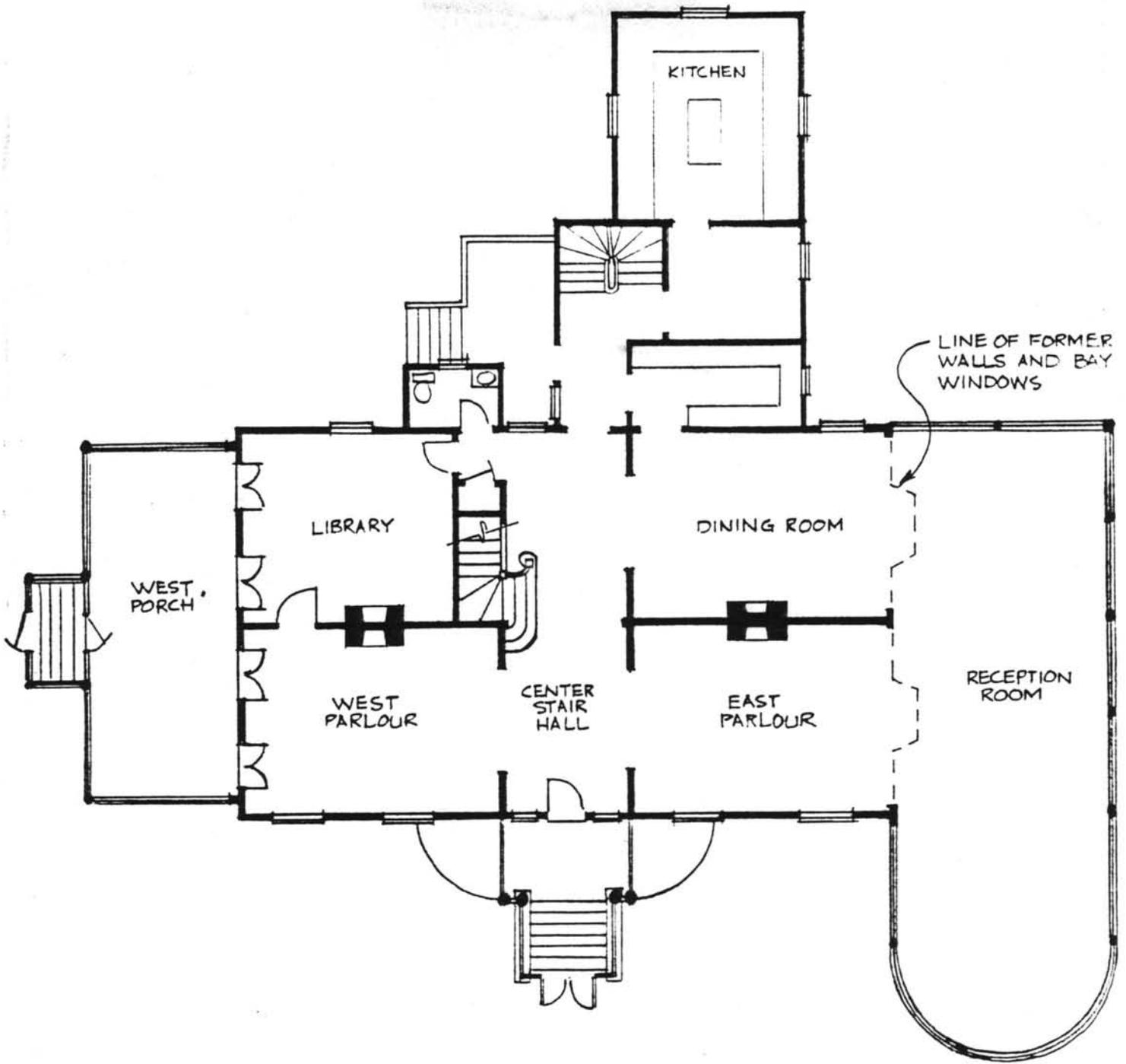
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

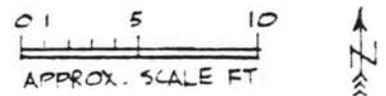
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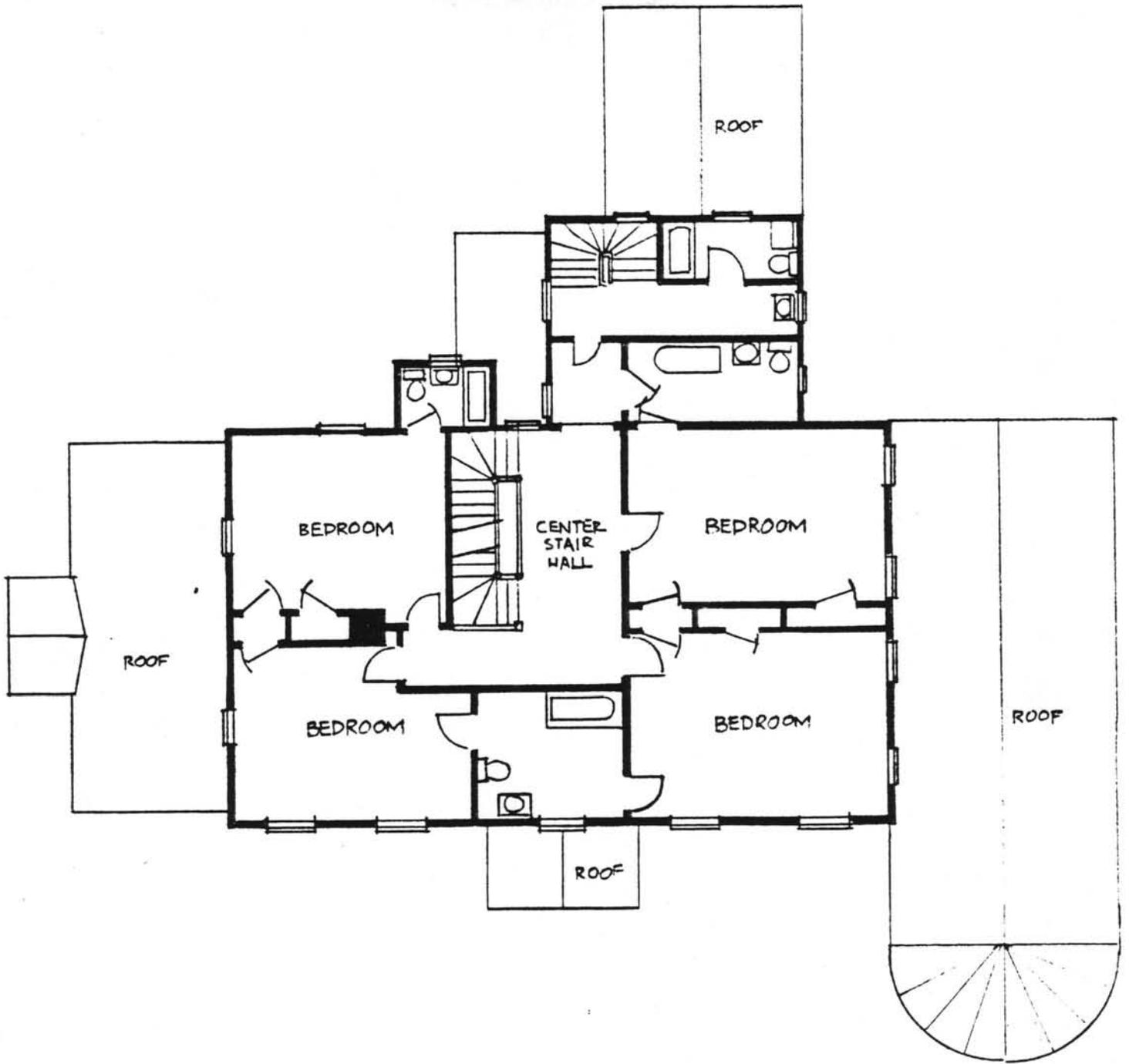
DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

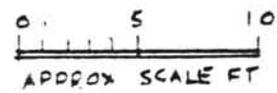


EXISTING CONDITION
 • FIRST FLOOR PLAN •
 PRESIDENT'S HOUSE





EXISTING CONDITION
 · SECOND FLOOR PLAN ·
 PRESIDENT'S HOUSE





President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
South (front) elevation
John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
October 1986

#1

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Associates, Inc., East Orange, NJ



President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
West and North elevations
John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
October 1986

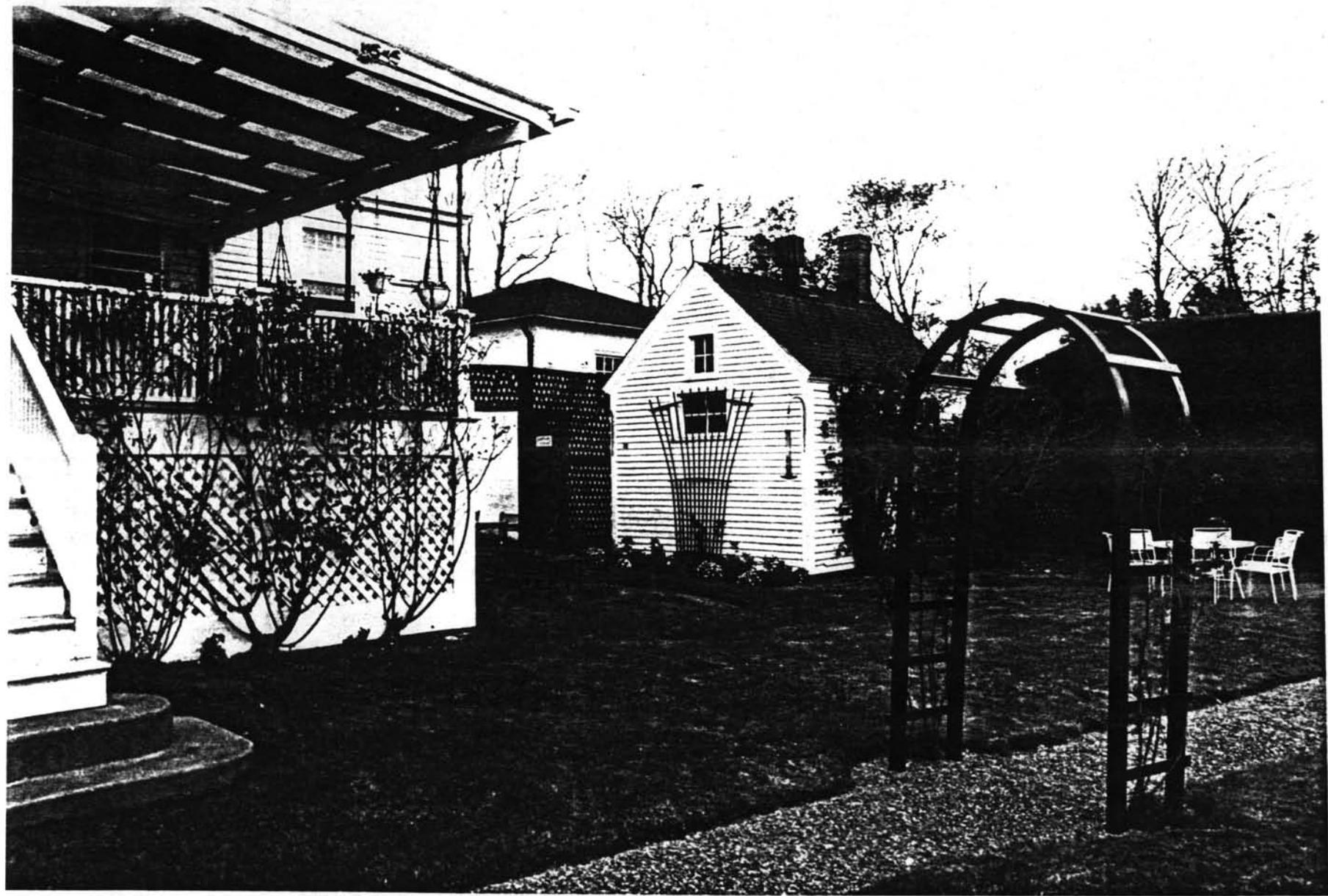
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Associates, Inc., East Orange, NJ



President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
East elevation
John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
October 1986

#3

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Associates, Inc., East Orange, NJ



President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
View of garden looking northwest at wood
frame laundry building
John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
October 1986

#4
Negative on file at Louis Berger &
Associates, Inc., East Orange, NJ



President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
View of garden looking northeast
John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
October 1986

#5

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Associates, Inc., East Orange, NJ



President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
Center Stair Hall, first floor, looking
south

John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
October 1986

#6
Negative on file at Louis Berger &
Associates, Inc., East Orange, NJ



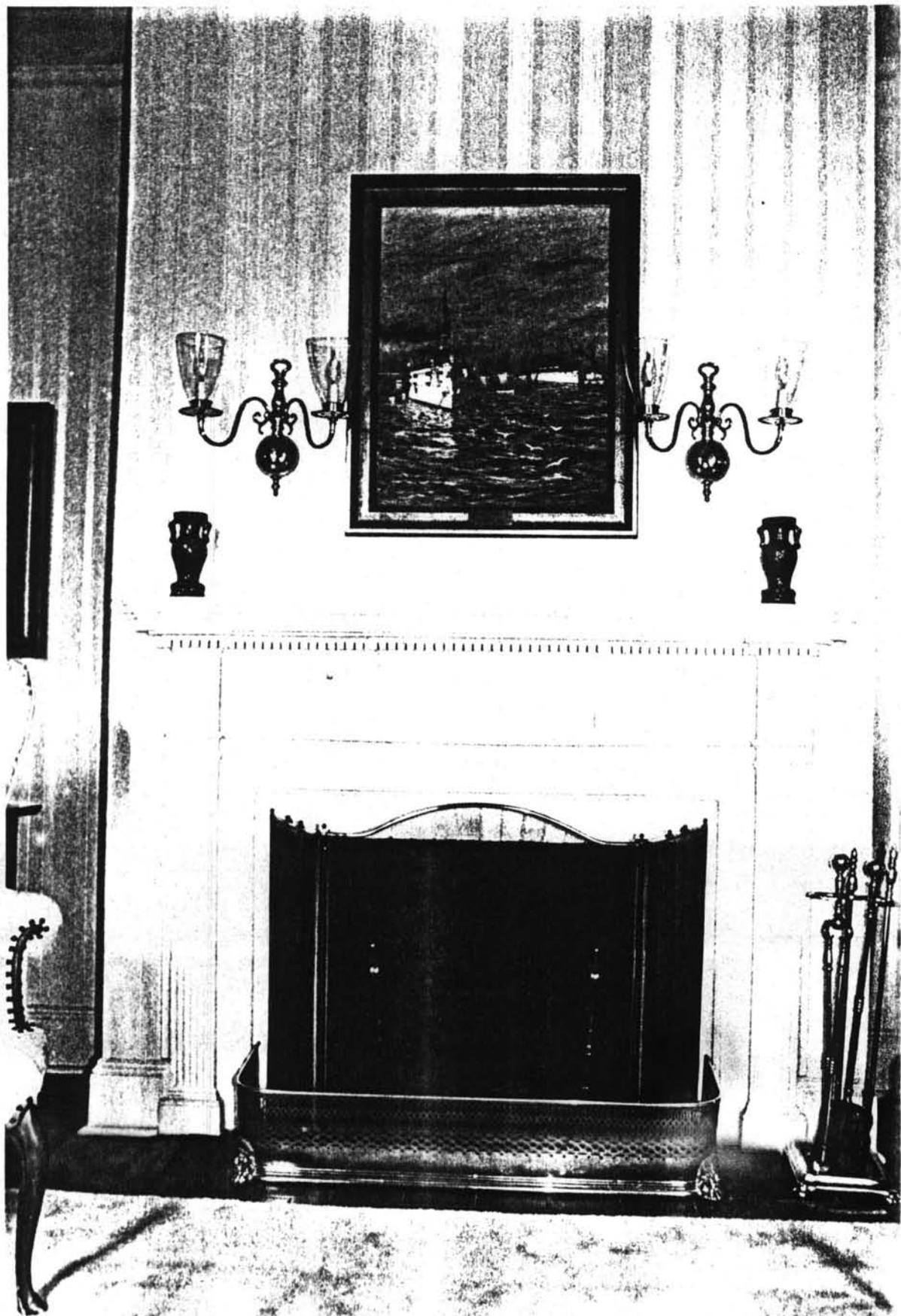
President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
Center Stair Hall, first floor, looking
north
John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
October 1986

#7
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Associates, Inc., East Orange, NJ



President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
View of east parlour, looking west toward
center stair hall and west parlour
John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
October 1986

#8
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Associates, Inc., East Orange, NJ



President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
Detail of fireplace, east parlour
John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
October 1986

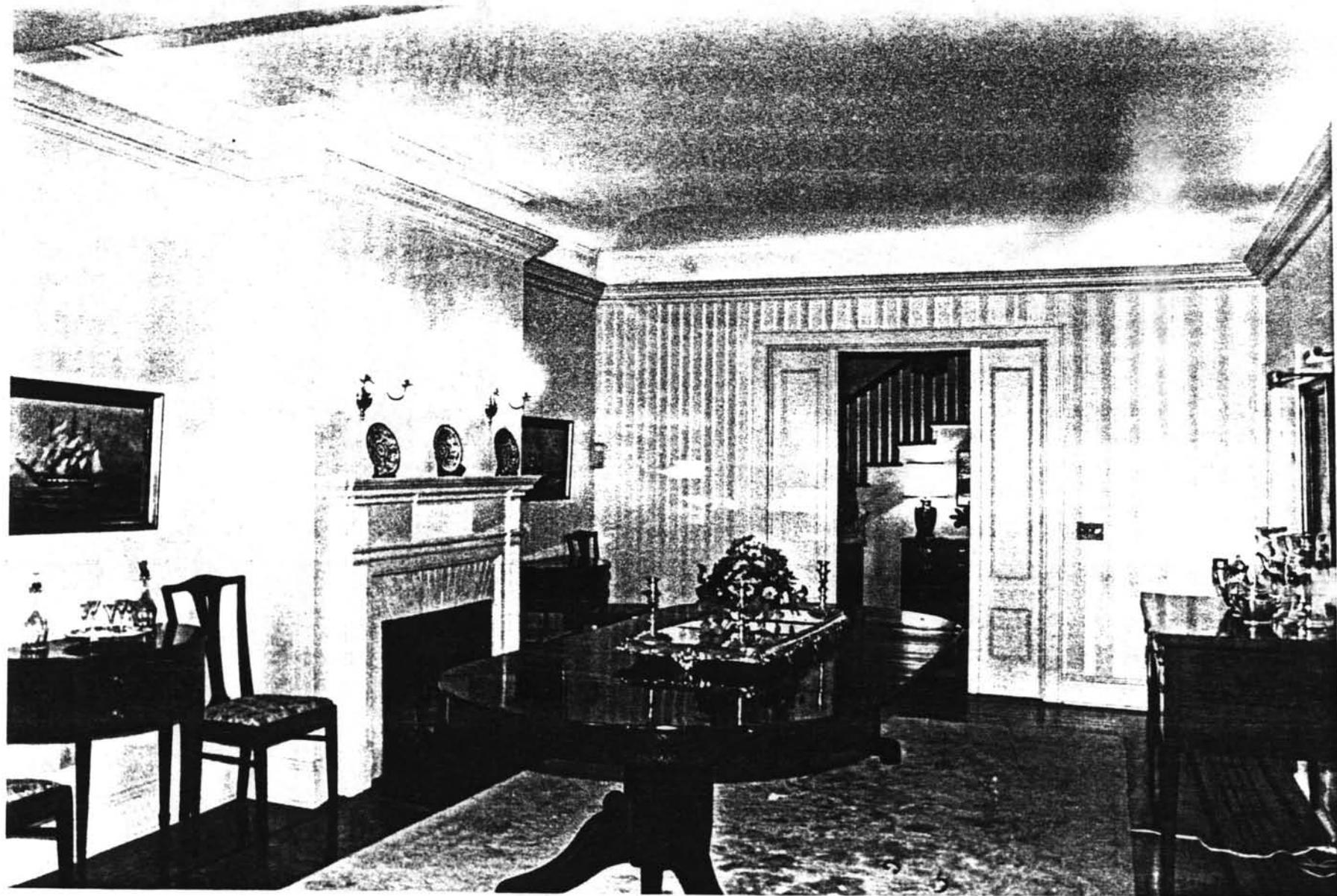
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President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
Detail of fireplace, west parlour
John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
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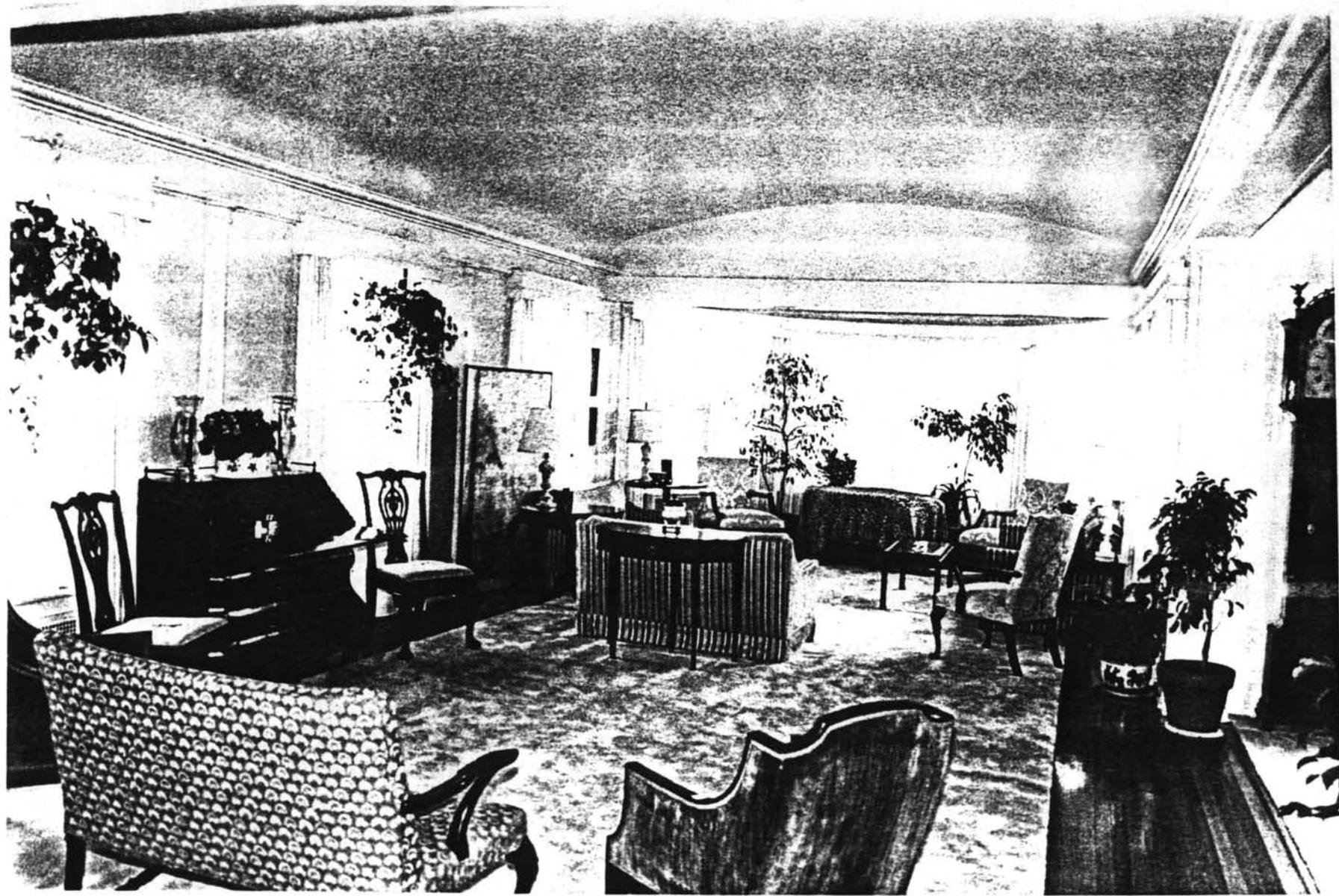
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President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
View of dining room, looking west toward
center stair hall
John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
October 1986

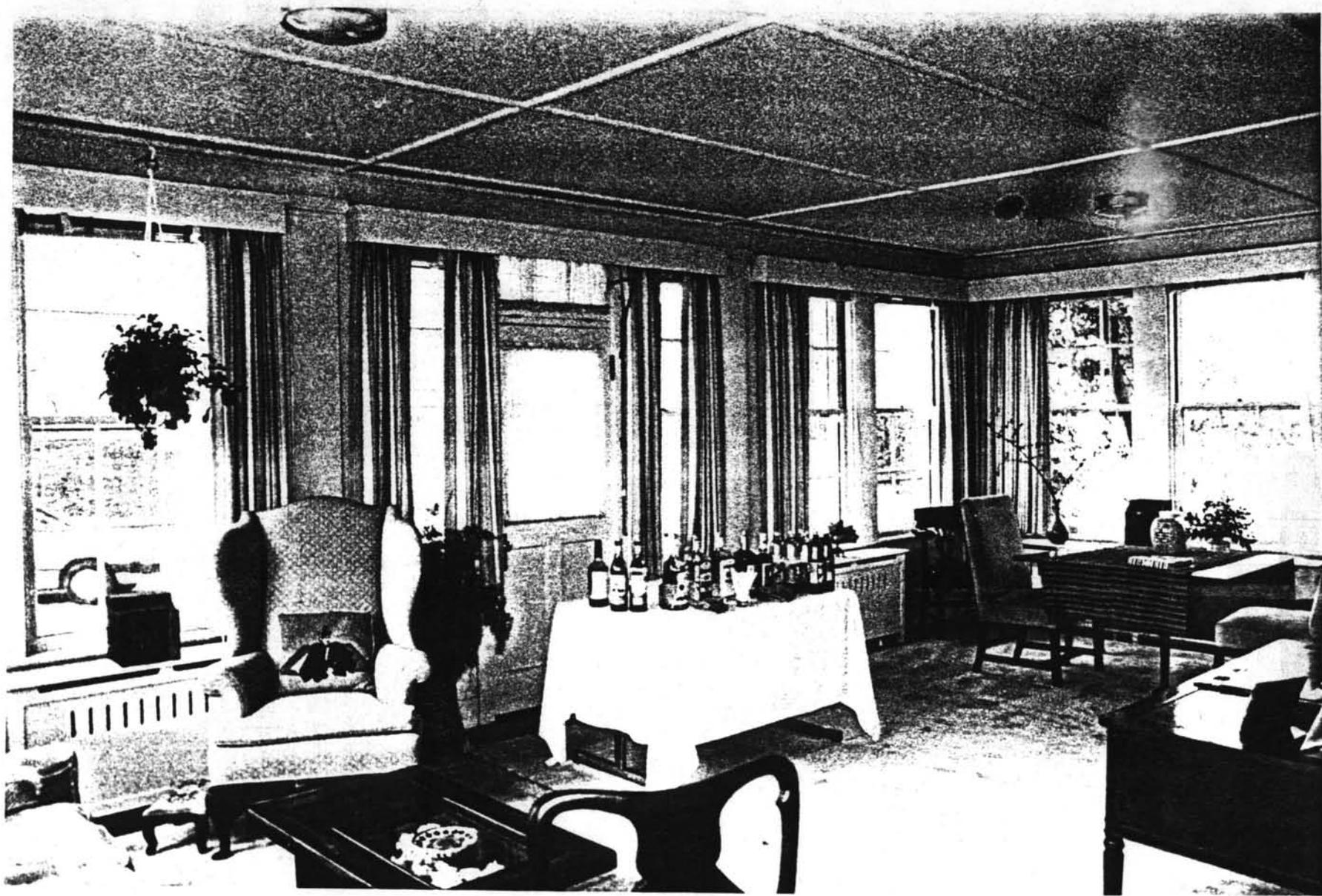
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President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
View of reception room, looking south
John R. Bowie, A.I.A.

#12

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Associates, Inc., East Orange, NJ

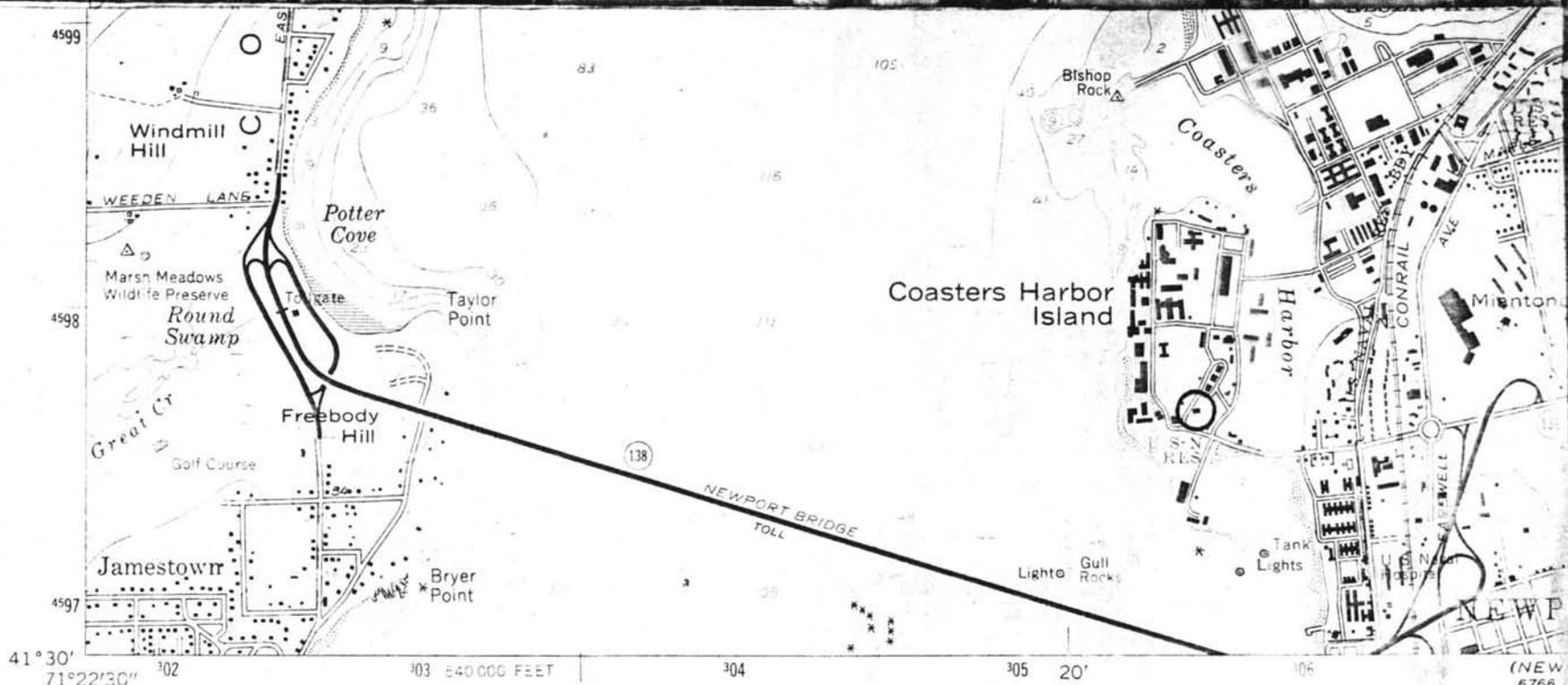


President's House, Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
View of west glass-enclosed porch, looking
northwest

John R. Bowie, A.I.A.
October 1986

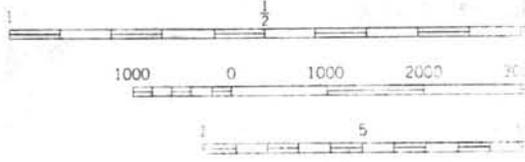
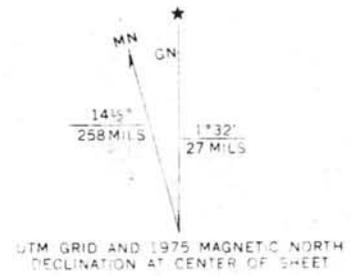
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(NARRAGANSETT PIER)
5755 IV NW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS and USC&GS
 Topography by planetable surveys 1939. Revised 1955
 Hydrography compiled from USC&GS chart 236 (1956)
 Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
 10,000-foot grid based on Rhode Island coordinate system
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
 zone 19, shown in blue
 Red tint indicates area in which only
 landmark buildings are shown
 Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
 taken 1970 and 1975. This information not field checked



CONTOUR INTERVAL
 NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
 DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN
 SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE
 MEAN RANGE OF TIDE

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS