UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (II known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Trinity Church, Newport is a two story rectangular frame and clapboard building with gable ends and a low pitched roof. Two rows of round-headed windows run along the north and south sides and a larger arched window of similar form marks the central nave on the eastern end. The steeple on the western end is formed by a tall square wooden tower topped by a narrow modillioned cornice. From this rises an arcaded belfry framed by Doric pilasters with a modillioned cornice and triglyph frieze, a lantern with round-headed windows framed by Ionic pilasters supporting another cornice and plain architrave, and a slender spire. Tall slender cones, similar in form to the spire, rest at the corners of the first stage. The second and third stages are marked by urns, diminishing in size to correspond to the graduation of the steeple sections.

Although it lacks the variety of forms found at The First Baptist Meeting House in Providence, which is about forty years later, the steeple at Trinity has a soaring graceful form achieved by the slender, almost delicate proportions of its parts. The tower itself is somewhat awkward in the spacing of its openings which are unrelated by proportion, spacing, or architectural features, such as the use of a stringcourse on the tower at Old North.

The entrances on the north are framed by fluted pilasters on pedestals which support a segmental arch with a semicircular depression. This naive divergence from classical forms, almost as if a drawing in a pattern book had been misunderstood, provides a provincial freshness to the building, suited to the regional wooden construction.

The building, including the steeple was designed in 1725, but the steeple spire was not constructed until 1741. In 1768 the first top was blown down and replaced in its original form. It is therefore earlier than Old North, its model, which was redone by Bulfinch in 1807. The only other major structural alteration occured in 1762 when the building was lenthened by two bays.

The interior also bears a close resemblance to Old North, Boston. These two buildings are the only Colonial churches which use superimposed piers to support the balcony and ceiling, rather than the one large order. This feature relates the design to Wren's St. Stephens Holborn and St. Andrews Wardrobe. In both churches these piers are paneled below and flutted on the second level. Trinity, however, differs in ceiling construction. The lateral cross vaults of the aisle bays are lifted to the level of the main vault, thus forming a system of quasi-groin vaults over the nave. This creates a unifing lateral sweep which gives reposeful dignity to the austere simplicity of the interior. The effect is heightened by the large arched window set within a deep arched plaster reveal in the wall which forms a frame for the altar and pulpit.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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STATE Rhode Island	
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7. Description: (1)

Trinity Church

There are also a few seventeenth-century overtones in the raised paneling for the gallery breasts and the Jacobean "Union Jack" paneling under the warder's pew. This design was a favorite of Munday's who repeated it in the balcony of the Colony House and the Sabatarian Meeting House.

The great, triple-decked wineglass pulpit in its original center aisle position is a unique survival of a typical colonial form. The massive sounding board over the pulpit and the iron-work are fine examples of colonial craftsmanship.

The chancel table, made in England in 1680, is the original altar of the church. Trinity also possesses the second chalice and paten sent to the Colonies by the London Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG); this set has been in continuous use since 1702. There is also a bell, the gift of Queen Anne in 1702, and the original casework and a few pipes of the Bridge organ given by Bishop Berkeley. The royal crown and Bishop's mitre which ornamented it fortunately survived the Revolutionary War. Flemish brass chandeliers were first hung in 1728 and the painted altarpiece was a gift from the SPG in 1733. The high backed box pews are also a rare survival of the original. Trinity is one of the few early American churches which has never required restoration.

Boundary

Trinity Church is located on a long narrow block closely surrounded by other church buildings, period houses and warehouses. The landmark boundary has been drawn to exclude all but the church itself in the landmark designation, beginning at the northeast corner at the intersection of Spring and Church Streets, continuing south along the west curb of Spring Street to Frank Street, then west along the north curb of Frank Street to a point in line with the hedge at the rear of cemetery, then north along this hedge to Church Street, then east along the south curb of Church Street to the point of beginning as shown in green on the sketch map.

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PERIOD (Check One or More as Pre-Calumbian) 15th Century	Appropriate) [] 16th Century [] 17th Century	区 18th Century	20th Century
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicab	le and Known) 1725	-26, 1768	
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Trinity Church, Newport, was begun in 1725 by Richard Munday, a local craftsman who also was responsible for the Colony House, Newport, another national historic landmark. Very similar in design to Old North (Christ Church) Boston, it seems likely that William Price, a Boston print dealer and one of the founders of Trinity, as well as the designer of Old North, obtained the plans. This would explain the close relationship to the Boston church. Both churches are closely related to the designs of Sir Christopher Wren for his London Churches, indicating access to his plans which Price might have had. The elegant classical correctness of the spire contrasts with the curious segmental pediments broken at the top by inverted semicircles over the eastern doors and the awkward proportions of the tower openings, giving an unorthodox yet distinctive character to one of the most beautiful of colonial churches. Trinity is also one of the very few church buildings which retains its original interior furnishings and has never required restoration. With its steeple and interior intact, Trinity remains a rare survival and important example of Georgian church design in the American colonies.

HISTORY

The present Trinity Church was erected in 1725-26 by Newport's master carpenter, Richard Munday, designer of the Colony House and some of the finer private houses of the period. Both the interior and the steeple of Trinity are considered to be more closely related to Wren's London churches than any other Colonial building with the exception of Old North. Old North in Boston had been begun two years earlier from essentially the same plans. Both are associated with William Price, a Boston print dealer, who could have had access to prints or plans of Wren's churches.

Wren designed over fifty-two churches for London after the Great Fire of 1666 and these had an unmistakable effect on all subsequent church design.

The London Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was founded in 1701 and they are known to have commissioned the architect to draw plans for several churches proposed to be erected in the Colonies.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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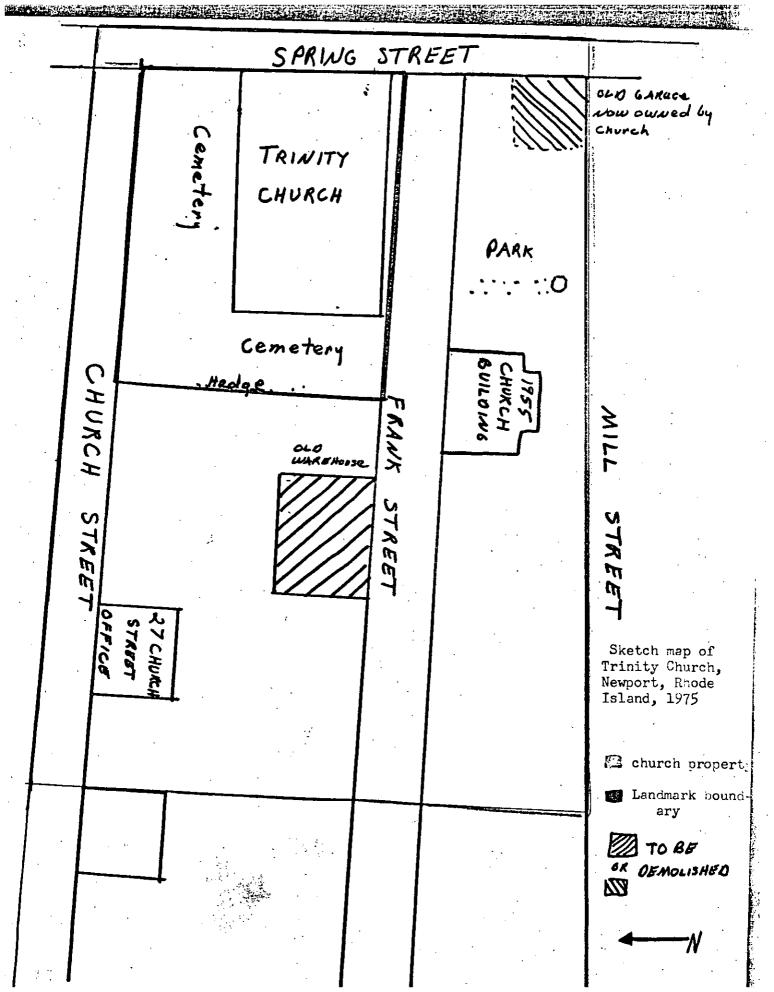
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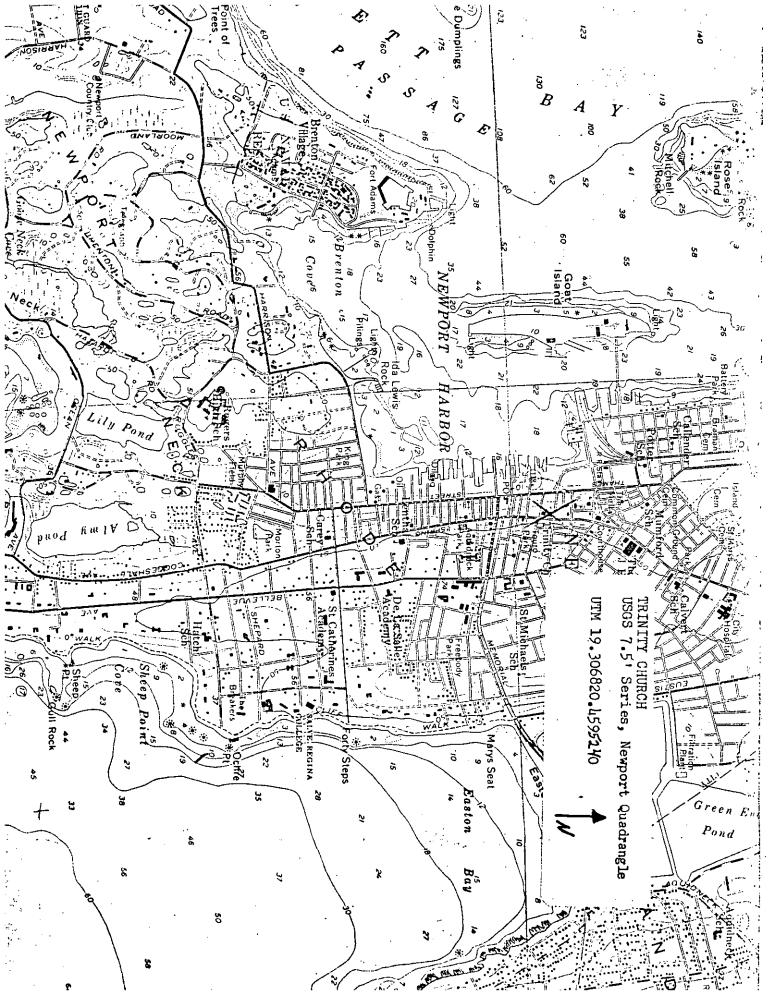
Since none of these plans have been found it is speculation to link Trinity or Old North directly to them, but they are specifically related to Wren's designs in general and particular comparisons can be made to his churches. The spire for example relates to St. Lawrence Jewry and the use of superimposed piers on the interior, used nowhere else in Colonial church building, related to St. Stephens Holbron and St. Andrews Wardrobe.

The spire, designed in 1726, was not actually constructed until 1741. In 1768, when it was found to be defective it was taken down and rebuilt to follow the original design. In 1762, the church was lengthened two bays (30 feet) by dividing the building in half, moving back the rear portion and joining the sections with matching fabric.

The church still possesses the original altar table, a bell sent by Queen Anne to the parish in 1702 and an organ given by Dean Berkeley in 1733. The building has been in continuous service since 1726 and still maintains an active parish today.



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

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

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Form 10-301 (July 1969)

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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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FOR NPS USE ONLY
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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PHOTO CREDIT: Patricia Heintzelman			
DATE OF PHOTO: October, 1974			
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View of Trinity Church, west	end		
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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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View of east end of church.

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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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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View of modern 1955 church building, not given landmark status.

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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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

COUNTY Newport FOR NPS USE ONLY

Rhode Island

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES	Newport	·]	
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AND/OR HISTORIC: Trinity Church			
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Trinity Church, Newport is a two story rectangular frame and clapboard building with gable ends and a low pitched roof. Two rows of round-headed windows run along the north and south sides and a larger arched window of similar form marks the central nave on the eastern end. The steeple on the western end is formed by a tall square wooden tower topped by a narrow modillioned cornice. From this rises an arcaded belfry framed by Doric pilasters with a modillioned cornice and triglyph frieze, a lantern with round-headed windows framed by Ionic pilasters supporting another cornice and plain architrave, and a slender spire. Tall slender cones, similar in form to the spire, rest at the corners of the first stage. The second and third stages are marked by urns, diminishing in size to correspond to the graduation of the steeple sections.

Although it lacks the variety of forms found at The First Baptist Meeting House in Providence, which is about forty years later, the steeple at Trinity has a soaring graceful form achieved by the slender, almost delicate proportions of its parts. The tower itself is somewhat awkward in the spacing of its openings which are unrelated by proportion, spacing, or architectural features, such as the use of a stringcourse on the tower at Old North.

The entrances on the north are framed by fluted pilasters on pedestals which support a segmental arch with a semicircular depression. This naive divergence from classical forms, almost as if a drawing in a pattern book had been misunderstood, provides a provincial freshness to the building, suited to the regional wooden construction.

The building, including the steeple was designed in 1725, but the steeple spire was not constructed until 1741. In 1768 the first top was blown down and replaced in its original form. It is therefore earlier than Old North, its model, which was redone by Bulfinch in 1807. The only other major structural alteration occured in 1762 when the building was lenthened by two bays.

The interior also bears a close resemblance to Old North, Boston. These two buildings are the only Colonial churches which use superimposed piers to support the balcony and ceiling, rather than the one large order. This feature relates the design to Wren's St. Stephens Holborn and St. Andrews Wardrobe. In both churches these piers are paneled below and flutted on the second level. Trinity, however, differs in ceiling construction. The lateral cross vaults of the aisle bays are lifted to the level of the main vault, thus forming a system of quasi-groin vaults over the nave. This creates a unifing lateral sweep which gives reposeful dignity to the austere simplicity of the interior. The effect is heightened by the large arched window set within a deep arched plaster reveal in the wall which forms a frame for the altar and pulpit.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Trinity Church

There are also a few seventeenth-century overtones in the raised paneling for the gallery breasts and the Jacobean "Union Jack" paneling under the warder's pew. This design was a favorite of Munday's who repeated it in the balcony of the Colony House and the Sabatarian Meeting House.

The great, triple-decked wineglass pulpit in its original center aisle position is a unique survival of a typical colonial form. The massive sounding board over the pulpit and the iron-work are fine examples of colonial craftsmanship.

The chancel table, made in England in 1680, is the original altar of the church. Trinity also possesses the second chalice and paten sent to the Colonies by the London Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG); this set has been in continuous use since 1702. There is also a bell, the gift of Queen Anne in 1702, and the original casework and a few pipes of the Bridge organ given by Bishop Berkeley. The royal crown and Bishop's mitre which ornamented it fortunately survived the Revolutionary War. Flemish brass chandeliers were first hung in 1728 and the painted altarpiece was a gift from the SPG in 1733. The high backed box pews are also a rare survival of the original. Trinity is one of the few early American churches which has never required restoration.

Boundary

Trinity Church is located on a long narrow block closely surrounded by other church buildings, period houses and warehouses. The landmark boundary has been drawn to exclude all but the church itself in the landmark designation, beginning at the northeast corner at the intersection of Spring and Church Streets, continuing south along the west curb of Spring Street to Frank Street, then west along the north curb of Frank Street to a point in line with the hedge at the rear of cemetery, then north along this hedge to Church Street, then east along the south curb of Church Street to the point of beginning as shown in green on the sketch map.

SIGNIFICANCE (No. 1971)	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Maria Jana Maria Cara Sangara	
PERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian (☐ 16th Century	🔼 18th Century	20th Century
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Trinity Church, Newport, was begun in 1725 by Richard Munday, a local craftsman who also was responsible for the Colony House, Newport, another national historic landmark. Very similar in design to Old North (Christ Church) Boston, it seems likely that William Price, a Boston print dealer and one of the founders of Trinity, as well as the designer of Old North, obtained the plans. This would explain the close relationship to the Boston church. Both churches are closely related to the designs of Sir Christopher Wren for his London Churches, indicating access to his plans which Price might have had. The elegant classical correctness of the spire contrasts with the curious segmental pediments broken at the top by inverted semicircles over the eastern doors and the awkward proportions of the tower openings, giving an unorthodox yet distinctive character to one of the most beautiful of colonial churches. Trinity is also one of the very few church buildings which retains its original interior furnishings and has never required restoration. With its steeple and interior intact, Trinity remains a rare survival and important example of Georgian church design in the American colonies.

HISTORY

The present Trinity Church was erected in 1725-26 by Newport's master carpenter, Richard Munday, designer of the Colony House and some of the finer private houses of the period. Both the interior and the steeple of Trinity are considered to be more closely related to Wren's London churches than any other Colonial building with the exception of Old North. Old North in Boston had been begun two years earlier from essentially the same plans. Both are associated with William Price, a Boston print dealer, who could have had access to prints or plans of Wren's churches.

Wren designed over fifty-two churches for London after the Great Fire of 1666 and these had an unmistakable effect on all subsequent church design.

The London Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was founded in 1701 and they are known to have commissioned the architect to draw plans for several churches proposed to be erected in the Colonies.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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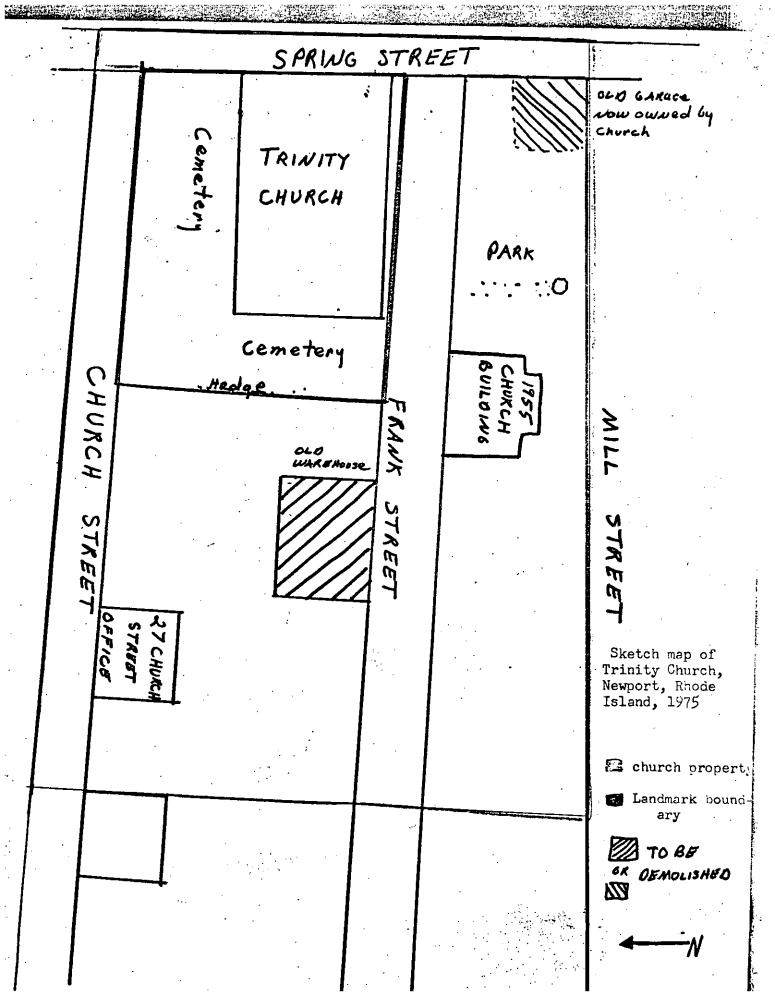
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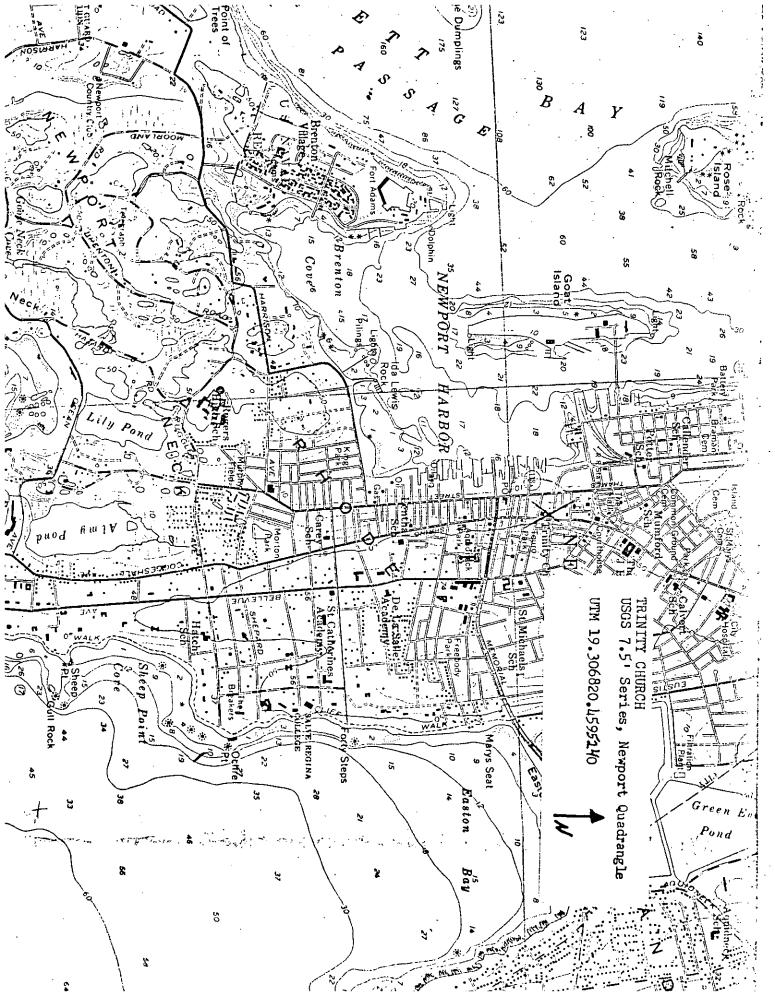
Since none of these plans have been found it is speculation to link Trinity or Old North directly to them, but they are specifically related to Wren's designs in general and particular comparisons can be made to his churches. The spire for example relates to St. Lawrence Jewry and the use of superimposed piers on the interior, used nowhere else in Colonial church building, related to St. Stephens Holbron and St. Andrews Wardrobe.

The spire, designed in 1726, was not actually constructed until 1741. In 1768, when it was found to be defective it was taken down and rebuilt to follow the original design. In 1762, the church was lengthened two bays (30 feet) by dividing the building in half, moving back the rear portion and joining the sections with matching fabric.

The church still possesses the original altar table, a bell sent by Queen Anne to the parish in 1702 and an organ given by Dean Berkeley in 1733. The building has been in continuous service since 1726 and still maintains an active parish today.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

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Form 10-301 (July 1969)

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACE'S PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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View of Trinity Church, west	end	

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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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View of east end of church.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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View of modern 1955 church building, not given landmark status.

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AND/OR HISTORIC Trinity Church 2. LOCATION STREET AND NUMBER: 141 Church Street at Spring Street CITY OR TOWN: Newport STATE: COUNTY: CODE Rhode Island Newport 005 3. PHOTO REFERENCE PHOTO CREDIT: Patricia Heintzelman DATE OF PHOTO: October 1974 EGATIVE FILED AT: Historic Sites Survey, NPS 4 IDENTIFICATION DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. Interior view of east end of church.

