

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Rhode Island	
COUNTY: Providence	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: Sprague (Governor) Mansion
AND/OR HISTORIC: Sprague (William) House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 1351, Cranston Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Cranston			
STATE: Rhode Island, 02910	CODE 44	COUNTY: Providence	CODE 007

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			Yes: Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME: Cranston Historical Society		
STREET AND NUMBER: 1351, Cranston Street		
CITY OR TOWN: Cranston	STATE: Rhode Island, 02910	CODE 44

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: City Hall		
STREET AND NUMBER: 869, Park Avenue		
CITY OR TOWN: Cranston	STATE: Rhode Island, 02910	CODE 44
APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2-3/4 acres		

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:		
DATE OF SURVEY:	Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/>	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:		
STREET AND NUMBER:		
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/>		Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

What has for some years been called the Sprague Mansion consists in fact of two intentionally conjoined residential structures built as far apart as c. 1790 and 1864. Both are timber-framed and clapboarded, of two-and-one-half storeys above granite-faced basements, though they conspicuously do not have the same roofline. This two-part building on a large corner site has its longer alignment on an east-west axis; the principal entrances face south.

The c. 1790 portion of the house is a long gabled rectangle of eight bays on its main front, five at its east end. Placement of its old (two) chimneys and of its entrance, the spacing of windows, the cornices of gable, eaves and dormers indicate that it was in its beginnings only a conventional five-bay dwelling and that it was later (early XIX Century) extended to the east. In so extending it, the early-style capping mouldings of window openings were copied above the new ones, but the sashes of all were changed to six-over-six. (Such copying was not the case with eaves, new dormers and enlarged gable, where large XIX-Century mouldings appear.) The main entrance to this old part of the Mansion is in its original location but does not retain its original style. The doorway has a segmental transom and sidelights appearing to date from the time of enlargement; there is a square porch supported by two Tuscan columns on pedestals--dating more likely from the Colonial Revival. The entire north side of the house was extended at some time by the depth of one room, producing the wider gable with the tall dormers which are now seen.

Internally, the c. 1790 house has a short central entrance- and stair-hall whose walls become narrowed to the north because they encase chimneys serving the three principal downstairs and upstairs rooms of the original plan, these being to left, right and rear of the hall, with smaller rooms filling the rear angles. (Such an arrangement is visible in floor plans but is now encased by the range of north and north-east extensions.) Almost nothing now survives of interior woodwork or trim of original date, but granite load-bearing construction in the basement remains of interest--particularly in the wine-cellar.

The above house received a large western addition in 1864. This addition is three bays wide on its south front and runs back to considerable depth. Its two-and-a-half storeys are much higher than those of the older structure. The roof form is that of a high, truncated or decked gable, and there is an octagonal cupola. The main entrance is at the south-east corner, covered by a porch having both paired and single Tuscan columns.

(See Continuation Sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> | Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Political <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/> | Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> | Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Historic <input type="checkbox"/> | Industry <input type="checkbox"/> | Science <input type="checkbox"/> | <u>House museum,</u> |
| Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> | Invention <input type="checkbox"/> | Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/> | <u>community centre</u> |
| Art <input type="checkbox"/> | Landscape <input type="checkbox"/> | Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> | Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> | Theater <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Communications <input type="checkbox"/> | Literature <input type="checkbox"/> | Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Conservation <input type="checkbox"/> | Military <input type="checkbox"/> | | _____ |
| | Music <input type="checkbox"/> | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

Beginning in 1790, the Sprague Mansion was for more than three-quarters of a century the centre of the Sprague clan and (in the literal geographical sense) the centre of the large commercial and industrial operations which they built up, economically and paternalistically dominating the surrounding town. From their Cranston residence the Spragues branched out with conspicuous success into a variety of fields, politics, finance, the military, social life. Preëminent in Rhode Island, they and their activities, businesses were also of note nationally; and the expansion and elaboration of the Mansion is indicative of their importance and social intentions.

One William Sprague was Governor of Rhode Island and later United States Senator; another William was Governor from 1860 to 1863, when he became Senator for the next twelve years. The latter William had a short but notably gallant Civil War military career and a short but notable marital one, having married the beautiful, accomplished and extravagant Kate Chase of Washington.

The house was therefore for three generations, until the nearly simultaneous disintegration of both the Sprague fortune and the Sprague marriage in the 1870's, a background for much of Rhode Island's most important financial, political and social activity. Even after all of this vanished in one of the state's greatest financial débâcles, the Mansion has remained a prominent physical landmark in Cranston and the object of local legend and interest. Set at the head of its grounds, the house still presides serenely (and contrastingly) over what have become rather unbeautiful industrial and bungalow surroundings.

(See Continuation Sheet)

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7. Description.

The 1864 house has long stair-halls at its east side, where communication with the older house is at ground-floor and landing levels. The main first-floor rooms are a pair of connecting drawing-rooms taking up the entire west side, with a dining-room in a one-storey rear extension. The second floor has two large bedrooms and three smaller rooms, and the third floor has a similar arrangement. Trim throughout the addition is (except for the stair-rail of dark wood) of painted wood or plaster in simple but heavy Victorian forms. There are marble mantels on the first and second floors.

Around 1864 a long, two-storey stable building of brick (still existing) was built along the west side of the rear portion of the property, and the remaining rear land was improved by the planting of orchards, shade trees and gardens, now nearly all turfed over. After the departure of the Spragues, house and grounds were acquired by the Cranston Print Works for use as a manager's residence and guest-house. During this ownership the property had careful maintenance, which is being continued by the Cranston Historical Society, which in turn acquired the Mansion in the 1960's.

8. Significance.

In buying and maintaining the Sprague Mansion, the Cranston Historical Society has kept alive a part of Cranston history, a part of the long and varied Sprague family story and a tangible example of domestic architectural development. And this is not done under glass or behind ropes. The house has been suitably refurnished by the Historical Society; it is listed as a state tourist attraction; and it is available to the community for exhibitions and seminars, chamber concerts, receptions and dinners, school tours etc. Additionally, the stables display a fine loan collection of early carriages (the Carrington carriages owned by the Rhode Island Historical Society).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brayton, Gladys: The Spragues and the Sprague Mansion (Cranston, Rhode Island, c. 1965-1970), 7 pp.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	47°	29'	29"	71°	27'	30"			
NE	47°	30'	00"	71°	27'	22"			
SE	47°	29'	26"	71°	27'	21"			
SW	47°	29'	25"	71°	27'	29"			

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Richard B. Harrington, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

DATE: November 25, '70

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House, 90, Smith Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence

STATE: Rhode Island

CODE: III

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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1351, Cranston Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Cranston

STATE:

Rhode Island

CODE

44

COUNTY:

Providence

CODE

007

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Robert F. McCrystal

DATE OF PHOTO: 1970

NEGATIVE FILED AT:

Cranston Historical Society,

1351, Cranston Street, Cranston, Rhode Island, 02910

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

1864 addition seen from south-west.



OPEN

GOVERNOR SPRAGUE
MANSION

Coastal Historical Society

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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Exterior of the c. 1790 house from the south-east.

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DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Stair-hall of 1864 addition, looking north and showing at rear small hall to new dining-room (left) and to older house (right).



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PHOTO CREDIT: Robert F. McCrystal			
DATE OF PHOTO: 1970			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Cranston Historical Society, 1351, Cranston Street, Cranston, Rhode Island, 02910			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. South drawing-room of the 1864 addition viewed from north drawing-room, shown as at present decorated and furnished.			

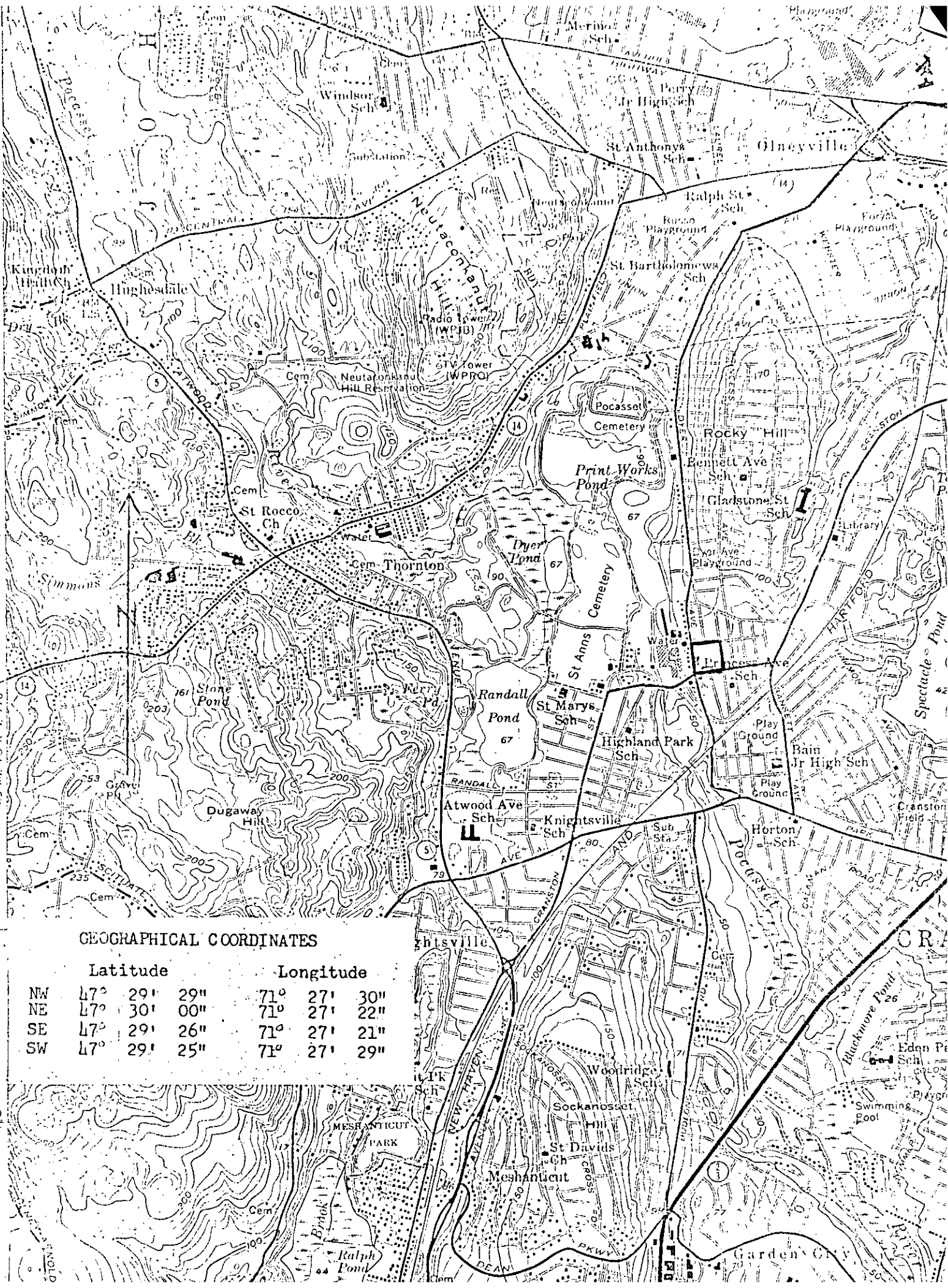
DANIELSON CO.
NORTH SCITUATE

47°30'
CLAYVILLE 10 MI.
4.3 MI. TO R. 1. 116

GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES

	Latitude			Longitude		
NW	47°	29'	29"	71°	27'	30"
NE	47°	30'	00"	71°	27'	22"
SE	47°	29'	26"	71°	27'	21"
SW	47°	29'	25"	71°	27'	29"

250 000
FEET



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

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

STATE Rhode Island	
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3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE: U. S. Geological Survey

SCALE: 1: 24,000

DATE: 1957

4. REQUIREMENTS

- TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. Property boundaries where required.
 2. North arrow.
 3. Latitude and longitude reference.