

NHL

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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 Original U.S. Naval War College
AND/OR COMMON U.S. Naval War College

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Coasters Harbor Island
CITY, TOWN Newport
STATE Rhode Island
VICINITY OF first
COUNTY Newport
CODE 44
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT first
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"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME U.S. Navy/ President, Naval War College
STREET & NUMBER Naval War College
CITY, TOWN Newport
STATE Rhode Island

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Newport Court House
STREET & NUMBER Washington Square
CITY, TOWN Newport
STATE Rhode Island

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE National Register (Luce Hall)
DATE 1972
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN Washington
STATE D.C.
 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

First called "Weenachasett" the island was sold by the Indians to John Greene and Benedict Arnold on May 22, 1658. From this early date until 1881 when the Navy bought it, the island remained undeveloped except that in 1716 a hospital was authorized to be built there and in the early nineteenth century a quarantine house was built to accomodate persons suspected of having smallpox. Later this structure served as a deaf and dumb asylum as well as poor house for the city.

In 1862 the Naval Academy was moved from Annapolis to Newport as a safety measure because of the advancing Southern troops; and at that time there was a good possibility that the Academy would remain in Newport permanently. In fact, Commodore George S. Blake, Superintendent of the Naval Academy, in 1863, had George Mason, a Newport architect and Lt. Commander Stephen B. Luce, head of the Department of Seamanship, accompany him to Coasters Harbor Island to look for a site appropriate for a new building to house the Naval Academy. Later, referring to that first visit to the island, Luce said:

As we stood on the highest point of the Island. . . , and I looked upon the broad expanse of waters of Narragansett Bay. . . , the very favorable impression made upon my mind at that time was never effaced.²

Sixteen years later, in the summer of 1880, Captain Luce was a member of a board ordered to find a suitable place for a Naval Training Station. In December 1880 it reported favor of Coasters Harbor Island and the site was accepted by Act of Congress August 7, 1882 under the Sundry Civil Act. At the time of transfer, the appraised value of the island was \$190,000, consisting of 92 acres of land, an old asylum building and a house. The asylum and other buildings on the island were vacated in June 1884.

May 30, 1884 Secretary of the Navy Chandler appointed a board of officers, composed of Commodore Stephen B. Luce, Commander William T. Sampson, and Lt. Commander Casper F. Goodrich to:

. . . report upon the whole subject of post-graduate course, or school of application, to be established by the Department for officers of the Navy, giving in detail the reasons for establishing such school, the scope and extent of the proposed course of instruction, and an opinion as to the best location therefor.³

~~June 13, 1884 this board recommended that the proposed war college be located at Newport, Rhode Island, on Coasters Harbor Island and be housed in the old Asylum building there. An article in the Newport Daily News of April 14, 1896 described what the Asylum was supposedly like when the Navy first bought it:~~

The building consisted of a small churchy chapel, with parlor organ, plain pulpit, and comfortable seats for Sunday services. The dining hall was very clean and tidy, much of the food being raised on the island. The Asylum had performed the dual position of Asylum for the indigent and a reformatory.

By General Order 325, October 6, 1884 the Naval War College was established on the

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 checked="" 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 1884-

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

On October 6, 1884 the Secretary of the Navy issued General Order No. 325 which ordered that "A College is hereby established for an advanced course of professional study for naval officers, to be known as the Naval War College," describing the first military service training facility to be called a "war college." Thus General Order No. 325 ranks as one of the most important steps ever taken by the Navy.

The institution was put under the Bureau of Navigation, with Commodore Stephen Bleeker Luce as its first president, and the old Poor House on Coasters Harbor Island, Rhode Island, became its first home. The college's initial term began on September 3, 1885 and eight officers formed the student body. Even though the first term was short, ending on September 30, the school had begun, in spite of its numerous enemies. While Luce started the college, it was Alfred Thayer Mahan who as head of the college after 1886, gave to its teaching the influence and stature that affected naval policy, not only of the United States, but of practically every major power in the world during his day.

Coasters Harbor Island is a slightly elevated piece of land of about 100 acres in Narragansett Bay, connected by causeway with the old northwestern end of the city of Newport. Building #10 which first housed the U.S. Naval War College from 1885 until 1889, and Luce Hall, the first building constructed for the War College and the administration center since 1892, are situated side by side on a hill on the southwest end of the island facing Newport Harbor.

It cannot be said that the whole of the Navy cheered the creation of the war college, and the man most responsible for the rejection of the school by most old-line officers was Commodore Stephen Bleeker Luce. An exceptionally gifted educator, Luce served as the commanding officer at the military academy at Annapolis for four terms. During those years he evolved the idea that the Navy should have a post-graduate school where officers "could profit by a philosophic study of naval history." Perhaps such study could enable commanders to avoid the mistakes of others. In a talk before the Newport Branch of the Naval Institute on April 4, 1883, Luce specifically suggested that the navy establish post-graduate study of military science. This idea only irked the chiefs of the various naval bureaus, but it stimulated the Secretary of the Navy, William Eaton Chandler, who appointed a group to consider Luce's plan. This board subsequently reported favorably, leading to the issuance of General Order No. 325.

If Luce fathered the Naval War College, Alfred Thayer Mahan gave the college a sound philosophic basis, as well as great prestige. Mahan, "the great evangelist of modern sea

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Crowell, George T. Sr., Colonel USAF. Milestones of Naval War College History, Memorandum, December 31, 1959 in the archives of the U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I. (mimeographed).
- Eure, Leroy T., M. Sgt. Home of the Naval War College. Newport, R.I., Archives of the U.S. Naval War College, December 1960 (mimeographed).
- Harrington, Richard B. Luce Hall, National Register form prepared July 29, 1972. (cont'd)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 4 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,9	30,56,40	4,59,74,00	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

As indicated on the accompanying U.S. Navy guide map for Coasters Harbor Island the national historic landmark boundary includes the original war college building and Luce Hall, but excludes a communications station building located in between. Luce Hall and Building #10 are situated on the highest elevation on the island, with an excellent view to the south, of the southeasterly portion of Narragansett Bay. A narrow road is being constructed in front of Luce Hall to connect with Admiral (cont'd)

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Blanche Higgins Schroer, Landmark Review Project; S. Sydney Bradford, 1963

ORGANIZATION

DATE

January 15, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

Boundary Certified:

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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U.S. Naval War
CONTINUATION SHEET College ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

island with the Asylum building as its headquarters. An 1884 inspection report and survey stated that it would cost the government \$36,000 to clean, renovate and repair the building, build quarters for the president, install furniture and equipment, sewer, electric lights, etc. Again March 5, 1885 the property was surveyed and inventoried and described as follows:

Asylum (stone) 116' x 38'. Built 1820, cost to date \$20,000, estimated value \$13,500.

Annex 147' x 21', built 1867, cost to date \$3,500, estimated value \$1,600.

The inventory also listed a stable built in 1867, and an ice house built in 1879, which the war college tore down sometime later.

Admiral Luce moved into the old Asylum in September 1884 although no funds for renovation and no furniture or equipment for the building had been received. Renovation of the building started in July 1886 and by September the building was ready to accommodate the staff and student body. After remodeling for War College use, the first floor consisted of two end wings sub-divided into five rooms and a hall with closet space, one sitting room and one dining room with kitchen. The second floor was devoted to the lecture room (formerly a chapel) and several offices for the staff. The basement was reserved for use of the servants. Captain Mahan and his family, upon arrival in August 1886, occupied some of these rooms on the west side of the second floor as an apartment, until they were turned into offices. For many years the Naval Base Commander occupied the office at the end of the corridor in the easterly half of the building. This office was appropriated by President Dwight D. Eisenhower when he came to Newport and used the Naval Base and the residence of the president of the War College nearby as a summer retreat.

Coasters Harbor Island was originally acquired for use as a Naval Training Station, but the Training Service had primarily remained afloat. However, in 1888 it was determined that more naval training would be conducted in barracks on shore. At this time the Naval War College was forced to move to nearby Goat Island and in January 1889 it was consolidated there with the Naval Torpedo Station.

Although it took months of planning and renovating to prepare the old Asylum building for Naval War College use, the school only occupied the structure for three years. From 1889 until 1905 the building quartered seamen from the training facilities, then from 1905 until 1974 it was headquarters of the Naval Station, and since 1974 it has been occupied by the Naval War College Foundation, a non-profit organization of friends of the college.

The original Naval War College structure, now called Building #10, was built c.1820. Constructed of thick, roughcut stone, this structure has a four-story gable roofed central section and a large three-story wing on either side of it. An annex, built

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CONTINUATION SHEET U.S. Naval War College ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

in 1867 runs parallel to the front section. Comparison of the present exterior with that seen in c. 1900 photographs shows that the exterior of the building has not been changed at all in the past 75 years except for a new set of stairs, replacement of some windows, a small annex, of temporary nature on the west end, and small porches on the east end. The only decorative features on this very sturdy old institutional building are the octagonal cupola, wooden porch which spans the first floor of the central section, and the semi-elliptical window under the peak of the gable in the center front. Only a small portion of the interior is occupied presently, but continued use of the building is planned by the naval base. The interior stone walls are still exposed in many rooms, and much of the early floorplan is apparently intact

In the Naval Appropriations Act approved March 2, 1889, Congress provided \$100,000 to design, erect and furnish a building for the Naval Torpedo School and War College. The school, then situated on Goat Island, was to remain there according to specification in this act, however the site of the building was changed in 1890 to Coasters Harbor Island where there was much more space.

Plans for the internal arrangement of the War College building (Luce Hall) were prepared by Captain Alfred T. Mahan and Civil Engineer George Mackay. The plans for the exterior and the general specifications of the building were made by George C. Mason and Son, architects of Newport, R.I. and Philadelphia. The contract was awarded to Ashton S. Tourison of Philadelphia who submitted a bid of \$82,875.

Ground was broken in September 1891 and the structure was completed and accepted by the Navy May 28, 1892. The new building was erected west of the old Asylum building, at the same elevation, also facing south to Narragansett Bay. The building was constructed of rock-faced ashlar, with Fall River granite backed with brick, on a wooden frame. The building, when constructed, was described as somewhat Flemish in style, with three stepped gables across its front facade. It is a long oblong, and much like many large institutional buildings of the nineteenth century.

Luce Hall is 210 feet long and 47 feet wide and has two-and-one-half stories above a high basement. Beneath each of the three gables on the front is an entrance with a pedimented wooden porch with Tuscan columns and a flight of stone steps. The slate roof has low shed dormers all around the building and at the center of its peak there is an octagonal cupola with a steep roof, flanked by two smaller glassed-in octagonal cupolas which function as skylights. On its long elevation, the central section of thirteen bays has a gable roof and at either end of this wide central portion is a slightly projecting terminal, hip-roofed pavilion of four bays in width.

The central part of the structure was devoted to the college proper. A set of quarters was placed at each corner of the building, making four sets in all, to

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accomodate members of the staff and visiting lecturers. The western portion of the first floor was used for the library and on the second floor there was a large lecture room at each end. The basement served as quarters for the employees, storage areas and workshops.

To accomodate the greatly enlarged classes after World War I, extensive improvements and rearrangements were made in the main building in 1919 and additional rooms were constructed on the third floor. In 1904 an annex for the library and archives was completed to the north of Luce Hall, and connected to Luce by a bridge in the center of the rear wall. Pringle Hall, connected to Luce on the west by two bridges was completed in 1934. These wings copied Luce Hall in style and were faced with pink Milford granite, a close match to the Fall River granite used for Luce Hall.

Other large buildings have been constructed directly north of Luce Hall, and most of the island is developed for a variety of Navy facilities. A large modern complex for the war college is presently under construction north of the Luce Hall complex. There is also a temporary structure, a communications center, located in between Luce Hall and the original War College building, however there are no intrusions between the two buildings and the bay. The huge Newport Bay Bridge now spans the harbor only a short distance south of the island.

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CONTINUATION SHEET U.S. Naval War College ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

power," succeeded Luce as president in 1886. Under his leadership, the school grew in reputation between 1885 and 1888, despite the continued activity of opponents. They were responsible for Congressional failure to appropriate funds for the institution in 1886, forcing Mahan to resort to various tactics to prevent the collapse of the college. Oil lamps had to be used for the Poor House, for example, even though a power line to the adjacent Torpedo Station ran within a few yards of the school. Making its hostility all the more obvious, the Bureau of Ordinance built a barricade around the Torpedo Station's property, to keep the college's students off its grounds.

Beyond keeping the college alive, Mahan presented a remarkable and very influential series of lectures on the role of sea power in history. Convinced that not only there should be a war college, the new president also believed that the institution should combat the tendency for officers to become little more than human machines as technical advances worked a revolution in ships. As he put it, the Naval War College, through the study of history, should enable an officer to become "the artist in war. . . (acquiring) intuition, sagacity, judgement, daring, inspiration which place great captains among creators, and war itself among the fine arts."¹

After studying for a year in the New York Public Library, Mahan presented a series of lectures to a class of twenty officers in the fall of 1886. The naval historian began his discussion with the early Dutch navy, then carried the story of naval history to the end of the American Revolution. Eventually, further study and lecturing led to the publication in 1890, of Mahan's classic work, The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783.

Mahan may have impressed his students, but his brilliant work did not still his critics. Opponents in 1887 persuaded Congress not to appropriate funds for the school. One Congressman in the hostile camp reminded his colleagues that the college was "not far from the Newport casino." Mahan continued to fight in behalf of the school, but in 1889 it was consolidated with the Torpedo Station. Fortune soon turned, however, and in 1890 Congress voted money for a war college building on Coasters Harbor Island, which was completed in 1892. A new threat appeared in 1893 when the Secretary of the Navy sought to abolish the institution. But while traveling to Newport, he read Mahan's The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire and the book made him a supporter of the school. The college continued to grow in stature after 1893, even though many in the service remained suspicious and hostile.

Admiral William Snowden Sims led the college to new achievements between 1919 and 1922, expanding and improving its courses. Moreover, the Navy fully recognized the school's value after World War I by adopting a policy of conferring the higher commands on graduates of the college.

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U.S. Naval War
CONTINUATION SHEET College ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Livezey, William E. Mahan on Sea Power. Norman, Oklahoma, 1947.
Mitchell, Donald W. History of the Modern American Navy. New York, 1946.
West, Richard S., Jr.. Admirals of American Empire. Indianapolis, 1948.
Westcott, Allen, ed. American Sea Power Since 1775. Philadelphia, 1952.

Footnotes

¹Richard S. West, Admirals of American Empire (Indianapolis, 1948).

²Lecture, "History of Naval War College" by Rear Admiral S. B. Luce USN (Ret), August 20, 1906 (unpublished) Newport, R.I. Archives of Naval War College.

³Senate Executive Document Nr. 68, 48th Congress, 2d session. Document filed in Archives of Naval War College, Newport, R.I.

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CONTINUATION SHEET U.S. Naval War College ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

Kalbfus Road and south of it the lawn stretches down the long slope of Dewey Field to the waterfront.

Beginning near the Commissioned Officers' Mess, the boundary follows the coast line along the southwest corner of the island, then northward between Mahan Hall and Spruance Hall to Admiral Kalbfus Road in a northeasterly direction, excluding the communications building, then to include Building #10 it runs along the northside of a driveway westerly, then northerly, then easterly to Admiral Kalbfus Road. Follow Admiral Kalbfus Road in a northern direction until it intersects with the the road running to the southeast corner of the island; follow this road until it reaches the Officers' Mess, then south to the point of origin.

1/23/77

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Rhode Island	
COUNTY: Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 22 SEP 1972	DATE

1. NAME

**

COMMON:
Luce Hall

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Naval War College and Torpedo School

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
U. S. Naval War College, Coasters Harbor Island

CITY OR TOWN:
Newport

STATE: Rhode Island, 02840

CODE: 114

COUNTY: Newport

CODE: 005

3. CLASSIFICATION

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

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
U. S. Navy Department

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: District of Columbia

CODE: 11

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Newport City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
Broadway

CITY OR TOWN: Newport

STATE: Rhode Island, 02840

CODE: 114

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Not so represented

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER: 22 SEP 1972

DATE:

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7. DESCRIPTION					
CONDITION.	(Check One)				
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins
(Check One)		(Check One)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered		<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE					
<p>The several buildings to-day comprising the United States Naval War College occupy an elevated part of Coasters Harbor Island, a slightly-mounded, somewhat oval piece of land with a south-easterly tail, and connected by a causeway with the old north-western end of the city of Newport.</p> <p>Foremost and oldest among the buildings presently housing the College is that known as Luce Hall, which, when built, was designated "The Naval War College and Torpedo School" and then provided those two institutions' entire accommodation. Luce Hall was completed in 1892 as the result of a Congressional grant of \$100,000 in 1890 which finally indicated a desire for the War College's permanence of life and location (due to internal hostilities in the Navy Department the College had had several changes of location and serious uncertainties of long existence). When funds allowed the College to construct on Coasters Harbor Island--which had in fact been its earliest location--classes were suspended for two years to allow for the building of Luce Hall and for its supervision by (the then) Captain A. T. Mahan, its first president.</p> <p>The building was placed at the south-western corner of the island; its main front faces south and overlooks Newport and its harbour. Responsibility for exterior design and for the supervision of construction was assigned to George C. Mason & Son of Philadelphia, a firm with long Newport connections. The interior plan was to be arranged by Captain Mahan and by George Mackay, a civil engineer in navy employ. Accommodations would be needed for lectures, administration, sleeping, dining and social purposes.</p> <p>The result of this collaboration is a building of timber and brick, its outer walls covered by rock-faced granite ashlar, its roofs covered by slate. It is 210 feet long and 47 feet deep, and above a high basement contains two-and-a-half storeys and garrets. It faces directly south and is on a prominence just above the water, having a fine view in the direction of the city and Narragansett Bay beyond it. The exterior designed by Mason & Son is similar to the exteriors of many simple academic or institutional buildings of the XVIII and XIX Centuries elsewhere. The building is essentially a long oblong. On its long elevation the centre section (13 bays), capped by a gable roof slightly truncated, is the widest one and has a slight, gabled projection at its centre; there is placed the principal entrance, sheltered by a pedimented wooden porch with Tuscan columns, reached by stone steps. At either end of this wide central section is a slightly-projecting terminal "pavilion" of four bays--hip-roofed, however--also having a central gabled feature housing a subsidiary entrance with porch. At the time of its construction Luce Hall was described as being in "the Flemish style" because the three gables accenting the south front and the single one of the north front are of stepped stonework; other Flemish decorative elements are not to be seen. The roof has low shed dormers all around the building and is ornamented at the middle of the centre range by an octagonal glazed cupola.</p>					

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

(See Continuation Sheet

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1890-1892			
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			
<p>Luce Hall, if not the cradle of the U. S. Naval War College (this cradle exists nearby, as the former Newport Poor House of 1819, already on the National Register), has certainly been its growing-up-place and remains its centre of administration and reception.</p> <p>The college which it once entirely housed would take an important place as an institution of specialised education at the highest level wherever located. Although founded decades later than the Naval Academy at Annapolis, it has--as a very select "graduate school"--seniority of status over that academy, and it takes seniority of age over all other colleges of naval strategy in the world. What the building has housed and houses make it a landmark in the history and study of naval warfare and, especially, in this nation's great successes when study, theory and experiment originating in Luce Hall have had to be put into actual practice.</p> <p>Lieutenant-Commander Thomas B. Buell has described the College's origins:</p> <p>"The concept of the Naval War College had begun with Stephen B. Luce in the late 19th century. He believed that naval officers must systematically study the art of naval warfare ... Luce's persuasive argument continued ... 'The naval officer ... should possess a knowledge of the science and practice of war ...' and then apply the principles to military operations at sea ... He closed by submitting '... a post-graduate course for the study of the Science of War, Ordnance, and International Law, and ... cognate branches of these three grand divisions ...' The Naval War College survived, developed, and matured with a basically unchanging mission."</p> <p>Too long to list would be the familiar names of those illustrious naval officers who have passed through Luce Hall and the War College and later put the knowledge and tactical skills gained there to use in this country's wars, or those who--having done both--returned to serve as successive presidents of the College. Too long to list also would be the distinguished civilians who have been received at Luce Hall and who have lectured there, or the select groups of visiting officer-students from foreign navies who have passed through it. The U. S. Naval War College</p>			
(See Continuation Sheet			

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

U. S. Naval War College: The Naval War College: Its Philosophy, Founding and Facilities (Newport, Rhode Island, n. d.), 2 pp.
 (Stockton, Charles Herbert, Captain, U. S. N.): History of the Naval War College (1881-1889). Unpublished essay in the archives of the U. S. Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, pp. 6-9.
Milestones of Naval War College History. Memorandum, December 31, 1959, in the archives of the U. S. Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, pp. 8-11.

(See Continuation Sheet)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		41° 30' 26.81"	71° 19' 47.84"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre

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: July 29, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
John Brown House, 52 Power Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island, 02906 CODE: 44

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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 Frederick W. Williams

Title State Liaison Officer

Date August 22, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Robert H. Wiley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 9/22/72

ATTEST:
William M. Stewart
 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Rhode Island
COUNTY	Newport
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	2 SEP 1972

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

with a high roof of ogee profile, not unlike many cupolas of American colonial design.

Internal accommodations were ample for 1892 and included "two large lecture rooms, a fine library, a number of offices and chart rooms and also lodging rooms for the lecturers, ... space in the basement for quarters for employees, for work shops, for coal etc." The wooden interior trim was intentionally and economically simple. Windows were to have the folding, louvred interior shutters in use at the time, and specifications required that "in each of the four parlors there will be a mantel piece, to cost \$25.00."

Once occupied, Luce Hall was sufficient for all its purposes until 1901, when a library annex was constructed to the north. There has since been other annex expansion; and a whole nearby building complex in (hopefully) the best of our modern style is now in planning for the College.

However, Luce Hall still stands as the dominant, independent, pre-facing and official unit of the U. S. Naval War College; a building externally unchanged, one of importance, importantly sited, and of proud bulk if not of aesthetic subtlety. Internally, it has had necessary rearrangements and modernisations, painting, "glossing" and veneering; the expansive stair-halls are its best interior remnants.

8. Significance.

may no longer be unique, but it is probably still the foremost of its kind and has been outstanding for innovative and participatory modes of instruction, which now take place in annexes, while Luce Hall is the administrative centre. This building has enframed the history, personalities, activities and advances of the College: to-day, still well-sited and architecturally robust--landbound but seaward-looking--it forms a rugged monument to Luce's original concepts.

9. Major Bibliographical References.

- Buell, Lieutenant Commander Thomas B.: Admiral Raymond A. Spruance and the Naval War College (Newport, Rhode Island, 1971), pp. 3-4.
- Mason, George C., & Son: Specifications for the Construction of a Building for use by the Naval Torpedo Station and War College... (Washington, D. C., 1891), iv-25 pp.