Roger Williams University

DOCS@RWU

Historic Preservation Capstone Projects

Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation Theses and Projects

2014

National Register Nomination: the French House, 1287 Hope Street Bristol, Rhode Island 02809

Derek J. Dandurand Roger Williams University, ddandurand195@g.rwu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://docs.rwu.edu/hp_capstone_project



Part of the Historic Preservation and Conservation Commons

Recommended Citation

Dandurand, Derek J., "National Register Nomination: the French House, 1287 Hope Street Bristol, Rhode Island 02809" (2014). Historic Preservation Capstone Projects. 3. https://docs.rwu.edu/hp_capstone_project/3

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation Theses and Projects at DOCS@RWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Historic Preservation Capstone Projects by an authorized administrator of DOCS@RWU. For more information, please contact mwu@rwu.edu.

National Register Nomination: The French House 1287 Hope Street Bristol, Rhode Island 02809

Derek J. Dandurand
Master of Science
Historic Preservation
School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation
Roger Williams University
May 2014

SIGNATURE PAGE:

National Register Nomination The French House 1287 Hope Street Bristol, Rhode Island 02809

| Author: Derek J. Dandurand |
|--|
| Signature: |
| Date of Signature: |
| |
| Advisor: Jeremy C. Wells, Ph.D. |
| Assistant Professor of Historic Preservation Roger Williams University, Bristol, Rhode Island |
| Signature: |
| Date of Signature: |
| Reader: Eric Gradoia Architectural Historian Mesick Cohen Wilson Baker Architects, LLP |
| Signature: |
| Date of Signature: |
| |
| Dean: Stephen White, AIA Dean of the School of Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation Roger Williams University, Bristol, Rhode Island |
| Signature: |
| Date of Signature: |

DEDICATION:

This is dedicated to Miss Leaha Marie Bovino in hopes that someday we will grow old together in a historic home. Your love and support will never be forgotten. Without you I would not be same. You provide me with that unconditional love that keeps me going. I could not have done this without you and therefore I thank you deeply!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

First I would like to thank Jeremy Wells, Philip Marshall, Eric Gradoia and Arnold Robinson for the invaluable education in Historic Preservation that you have provided me with over the past seven years. I could not have completed this project without all of you.

I would like to thank my mother and father, Peter & Nancy Dandurand for supporting my life goals and education. These words cannot express my love and gratitude I have for you both. I love you Mom and Dad.

Finally, the National Register Nomination for the French House, also known as 1287 Hope Street, has been produced in hopes that one day it will be restored to its former grandeur in order to provide the future generations of our country with a tangible object that exemplifies the Stick style of architecture and to act as a tribute to the life of Col. George T. French Esq.

ABSTRACT:

This document serves as a National Register Nomination for the French House located at 1287 Hope Street in Bristol, Rhode Island. The French House is nominated under Criterion B for its association with Col. George T. French Esq., and Criterion C for its contribution to the Stick style of architecture in Bristol, Rhode Island.

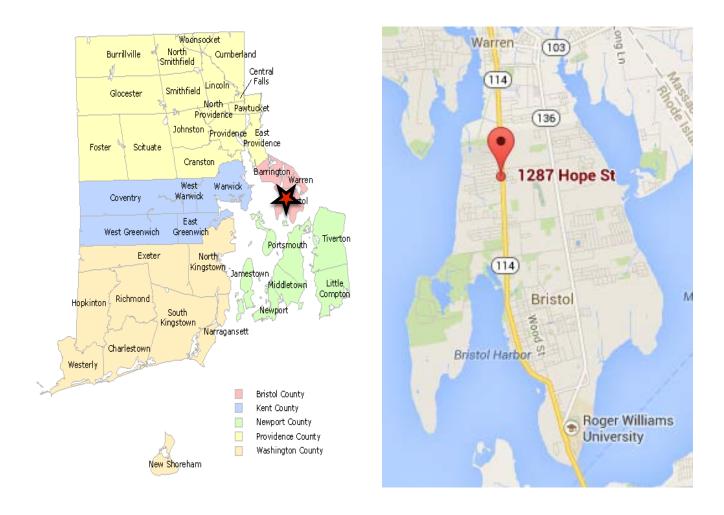
Built in 1881, the French House is a Vernacular Stick style cottage and gains its local significance under Criterion B for its relationship and association with Col. George T. French Esq., French was a lawyer, politician, patriot, and former Brown University student who dedicated his life to being a local influence on the Town of Bristol and the State of Rhode Island.

French contributed to the development of the State of Rhode Island through his professional career of being a member on the Rhode Island Bar (1875-1885), a member of the House of Representatives, and a member of the Rhode Island General Assembly (1883-1885). French's life was dedicated to the people of Bristol and the State of Rhode Island while serving on the General Assembly under Governor Augustus O. Bourne (1883-1885). French's involvement in the policymaking and planning of the Bourne Amendment, which was added to Rhode Island's Constitution, declared the removal of the real estate requirement for voting in state elections imposed in 1843 against naturalized citizens. This allowed citizens that did not own property to have the right to vote. This significant amendment highlighted French's professional career as a politician because it altered the lives of countless naturalized citizens who previously were not entitled the right to vote in any state elections. This set the precedent for the future of democracy in the United States of America.

In addition to being a politician and lawyer, French was a respected representative of the community. Bristol, Rhode Island is famed for having the oldest 4th of July Celebration in the United States of America. Since 1776, Bristol has been celebrating the Declaration of Independence, and for the 200th Bristol 4th of July Celebration in 1880 Samuel P. Colt acted as the chair of the planning committee. Since 1785, Patriot Speakers or the Speaker of the Day is chosen to speak to the entire community to launch the community celebration of the 4th of July. This position is reserved for respected and influential figures in the community. In 1882, the chosen 97th Patriotic Speaker was none other than Col. George T. French. This honor was indicative of French's popularity and familiarity in the Bristol community. More recent Patriotic Speakers include nationally recognizable political figures such as Claiborne Pell, the namesake for the Claiborne Pell Bridge (Newport Bridge), and Ira C. Magazine, President William Clinton's Senior Advisor Policymaker.

The French House is nominated under Criterion C for its significance as a representation of Late Victorian Architecture in Bristol. Built in 1881, by local builder William Hall of Warren, Rhode Island, the French House is a Victorian cottage built in the Stick style as illustrated by its asymmetrical form, multiple paned window sash, spacious verandah decorated with simple diagonal brackets, steeply pitched gable roofs with intersecting cross gables, king posts and struts, and corbeled chimneys. The French House although does not have any applied high-style stick-work, yet characterizes an interpretation of ornamentation through its overall architectural elements, and massing. The Stick style, even at a vernacular level, is not prevalent in Bristol,

making the French House one of the few, if not the only Stick style residential architecture in the town. The French House has retained most of its historic integrity and despite its neglected state, the house represents a style of architecture that scarcity deems it worthy of recognition and preservation.



NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

| Signature of commenting official: | Date |
|---|--|
| In my opinion, the property meets does | s not meet the National Register criteria. |
| State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Gov | ernment |
| Signature of certifying official/Title: | Date |
| | |
| A <u>X_B X_C</u> D | |
| nationalstatewide _X_l Applicable National Register Criteria: | ocal |
| In my opinion, the property meets does recommend that this property be considered signif- level(s) of significance: | |
| I hereby certify that this nomination requ the documentation standards for registering prope Places and meets the procedural and professional | rties in the National Register of Historic |
| As the designated authority under the National Hi | storic Preservation Act, as amended, |
| 3. State/Federal Agency Certification | |
| Street & number: _1287 Hope Street City or town: _Bristol State: _Rhode Island_ Not For Publication: Vicinity: _N/A | County:Bristol |
| 2. Location | |
| N/A (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple p | property listing |
| Name of related multiple property listing: | |
| Historic name: _The French HouseOther names/site number: _N/A | |
| | |

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

The French House

Name of Property

| Bristol, | Rhode | Island |
|------------|-------|--------|
| County and | State | |

| 4. National Park Service Certifica | ation | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------|
| I hereby certify that this property is: | | |
| entered in the National Register | | |
| determined eligible for the Natio | nal Register | |
| determined not eligible for the N | ational Register | |
| removed from the National Regis | ster | |
| other (explain:) | | |
| Signature of the Keeper | Date of Ac | tion |
| 5. Classification | | |
| Ownership of Property | Dublia Stata | |
| (Check as many boxes as apply.) | Public – State | |
| Private: | Public – Federal | |
| Public – Local | | |
| Category of Property | Site | |
| (Check only one box.) | Structure | |
| Building(s) X | Structure | |
| Dunuing(s) | Object | |
| District | | |
| Number of Resources within Prop | • | |
| (Do not include previously listed res Contributing | ources in the count) Noncontributing | |
| Contributing 1 | 9 | ldings |
| | | |
| | site | S |
| | strustru | ictures |
| | obj | ects |
| 1 | 1 Tot | al |
| | | |
| | | |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service / National Register

| The French House | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| NPS Form 10-900 | OMB No. 1024-0018 |
| National Park Service / National Registe | r of Historic Places Registration For |

| Bristol, | Rhode | Island |
|------------|-------|--------|
| County and | State | |

The French House
Name of Property

| 6. Function or Use Historic Functions | Current Functions |
|--|---|
| (Enter categories from instructions.) | (Enter categories from instructions.) |
| Domestic | Domestic |
| Single Dwelling | Single Dwelling |
| | = |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| 7. Description | |
| Architectural Classification | Materials: (enter categories from |
| (Enter categories from instructions.) | instructions.) |
| Late Victorian | Foundation: Stone, Concrete |
| Stick Style _ | Walls: Wood, Weatherboard |
| | Roof: Asphalt |
| | Other: Metal: Tin, Copper _ |
| | |
| Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current physical appe | grance and condition of the property. Describe |
| | oplicable. Begin with a summary paragraph that |
| | |
| briefly describes the general characteristics of the | |
| historic integrity.) | icant features. Indicate whether the property has |
| Summary Paragraph | |
| See Continuation Sheet | |
| | |
| Narrative Description | |
| • | |
| See Continuation Sheet | |

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900
OMB No. 1024-0018

NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

The French House
Name of Property

Bristol, Rhode Island
County and State

9 Statement of Significance

| 8. | Sta | ten | nent of Significance |
|-----|-----|------|--|
| (Ma | | x" i | e National Register Criteria in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register |
| | | A. | Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. |
| X | | B. | Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. |
| X | | C. | Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. |
| | | D. | Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. |
| | | | onsiderations in all the boxes that apply.) |
| | | A. | Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes |
| | | B. | Removed from its original location |
| | | C. | A birthplace or grave |
| | | D. | A cemetery |
| | 7 | E. | A reconstructed building, object, or structure |
| | | F. | A commemorative property |
| | | G. | Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years |

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900
OMB No. 1024-0018

The French House

Name of Property

Bristol, Rhode Island
County and State

| Significant Person |
|---|
| (Complete only if Criterion B is marked |
| above.) |
| French, Col. George T |
| |
| |
| Cultural Affiliation |
| _N/A |
| |
| |
| Architect/Builder |
| Hall, William |
| |
| |
| |
| |

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The French House, located at 1287 Hope Street in Bristol, Rhode Island, is significant at the local level under criterion B & C. The property is applicable under criterion B for its association with its original owner, Col. George T. French Esq., a lawyer, politician, patriot, and former Brown University student who dedicated his life to being influential in the development of the Town of Bristol and the State of Rhode Island. The French House is applicable under criterion C for its representation of the Vernacular Stick style, where this style of architecture is rare in Bristol. This document serves as a National Register Nomination for the French House located at 1287 Hope Street in Bristol, Rhode Island.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

See Continuation Sheets

Name of Property

Bristol, Rhode Island

| County and State | _ |
|------------------|---|
|------------------|---|

| 9. | Major Bibliographical References |
|----|---|
| Bi | bliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.) |
| P | revious documentation on file (NPS): |
| | |
| | preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested |
| _ | preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register |

_____ designated a National Historic Landmark

_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_

| Prim | ary location of additional data: |
|------|------------------------------------|
| | State Historic Preservation Office |
| _X _ | Other State agency |
| | Federal agency |
| _X _ | Local government |
| | University |
| | Other |
| | Name of repository: |

____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____ ____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _1.03_

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84:_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 41.702501 Longitude: -71.279980

2. Latitude: 41.703041 Longitude: -71.280029

3. Latitude: 41.703057 Longitude: -71.280828

4. Latitude: 41.702421 Longitude: -71.280705 United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900
OMB No. 1024-0018

The French House

Name of Property

Bristol, Rhode Island
County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

As described in the Quit-claim deed volume 223 page 285, the property boundaries are:

That certain lot or parcel of land together with all buildings and improvements thereon, situated on the northwesterly corner of Beach Road and Hope Street in the Town and County of Bristol and the state of Rhode Island, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at the southeasterly corner of the herein described tract at the said northwesterly corner of Beach Road and Hope Street; thence running Westerly bounding southerly on said Beach Road 200 feet to a fence thence turning and running Northerly by said fence 210 feet, more or less, to a row of trees, turning and running Easterly bounding northerly on said row of trees to the westerly side of Hope Street; thence turning and running Southerly bounded easterly by Hope Street 220 feet, more or less to the point and place of beginning.¹

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary description for 1287 Hope Street was chosen and included because it is the official description of the parcel referenced in the property deeds and is historically associated with the property.

¹ Bristol, Rhode Island, *Land Evidence Records*, November 30, 1978, v.223, p.283.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900
OMB No. 1024-0018

| NPS Form 10-900 | OMB No. 1024-0 |
|------------------|----------------|
| The French House | |

| Bristol, | Rhode | Island |
|----------|-------|--------|
| | | |

County and State

| 11. Form 1 | Prepared | By |
|------------|----------|----|
|------------|----------|----|

Name of Property

| tate: _ | _New Jersey | _ zip code:_08822 |
|---------|-------------|------------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| t | ate: _ | ate: <u>New Jersey</u> |

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 14

The French House Name of Property

Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Summary Paragraph

1287 Hope Street, also known as the French House, is a two-story, 2,327 square foot, balloon framed, vernacular Stick style dwelling. The front facade of the house faces east towards Hope Street and is accessible by a semicircular driveway that connects Hope Street to Beach Road. The French House is recognizable by its asymmetrical form, steeply-pitched cross-gabled roof, dormers, large surrounding verandah, and corbeled chimneys. The house is located in the center of a lot containing 1.03 acres. The perimeter of the lot along Hope Street is lined with large overgrown hedges that hide the house from the main road. A lack of maintenance has resulted in the landscape being overtaken by overgrown trees and plantings. In addition to the French House, there is a garage with a collapsed roof in the northwestern corner of the property. The current owner of the French House is the Edna Baxter Estate; Edna Baxter purchased the property in 1968. In late 2013, the Rhode Island Mortgage & Financing Corporation purchased the taxes at auction. The property has been subject of neglect for decades, yet retains most of its historic integrity on the exterior of the building. The exterior of the French House is largely intact in form and massing, while retaining the character defining features of the Stick Style. The integrity of the French House is evident with the retention of the steeply-pitched cross-gable roof, corbeled chimneys, kingpost and struts on the end gables, low-pitched surrounding verandah along with its diagonal braces, original windows and casing, and the original trim and siding. Although these character-defining elements are present, some of the ornamental details are in disrepair. The French House has lost its integrity of site over time due to a post-war subdivision along the western perimeter of the property. However, the integrity of the east side of the property has not been compromised. A keen eye can determine that the front lawn had a picturesque design that still features a incredibly large Beech tree that may be or may date to the construction of the house. The French House embodies the sentiments of a picturesque landscape and architecturally significant country estate of the late 19th century.

Narrative Description

The French House is a private residential dwelling located on the corner of Beach Road and Hope Street. The house is located on the north end of Hope Street and was excluded from the Bristol Waterfront Historic District. The house is situated on 1.03 acres of land and is surrounded by overgrown trees, hedges, and plantings. The front façade faces east and is parallel with Hope Street. The French House is set back from Hope Street and overgrown tall hedges act as a visual screen along the street, thus making it impossible to see the house from the road. Originally, the French House was part of a 60-acre farm, which included barns, outbuildings, and another farmhouse. The other farmhouse, known as the Swett Farmhouse predates the French House and is located at 1277 Hope Street. The only outbuilding that still is located on the property is a garage that is non-contributing to significance at the northwest corner of the property. There is

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 15

The French House Name of Property

Bristol County, Rhode Island County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

an unpaved semi-circular driveway leading from Beach Road to Hope Street; however, due to overgrown hedges and plantings, the Hope Street entrance is blocked, making the property only accessible from Beach Road.

The French House is a Vernacular Stick style house that has an irregular, asymmetrical, multiple-level massing with a partial cruciform plan, depicted by a four-bay width and three-pile depth. The house is constructed of wood balloon framing on a fieldstone foundation and is apparent by the multiple changes in plane and massing.

The roof structure is complicated due to the numerous roof forms. The entire roof of the French house is cladded in asphalt three-tab-black shingles. The main roof structure is a cross-gabled system running north to south and east to west consisting of four gables and a fifth gable facing west acting part of a double gable system. On the southeastern elevation, the valley of the crossgable roofline is interrupted above the cornice with a projecting concave mansard roof. This projecting mansard roof is also interrupted along the cornice of the south facing elevation with a gabled dormer. On the north facing elevation, a gabled dormer interrupts the cornice of the pitched roof on the east facing cross-gable. On east and west facing elevation, gable dormers interrupt the cornice of the pitched roof on the south facing cross-gable. The west facing elevation consists of a central double-gable roofline with a large central valley. The southern most gable in the double-gable is the west facing cross-gable. The north facing end-gable intersects another end-gable roofline that is part of the northern cross-gable system. These two intersecting rooflines share the same roof pitch on the east facing elevation, however, they have a separate roof pitch on the west facing elevation. The French House has three chimneys total with a common bond brick pattern and corbeled tops. Two of the chimneys are located on either ends of the north to south axis of the cross-gable and the third chimney is located on east end of the east to west axis cross-gable.

A large projecting one-story verandah wraps the east facing elevation as well as half of the north facing elevation and features a flat-seamed tin shed roof. There are eight posts supporting the roof of the verandah along with diagonal braces connecting each post to the roof. The verandahs floor level is approximately two feet above grade and is accessible by two wooden steps. On the northeast corner of the verandah, the post and diagonal braces are not attached to the building due to the verandah floor falling off of its posts and into the ground. On the southwest corner at the rear of the building is a small projecting verandah entranceway with the same motif consisting of three posts and diagonal braces supporting the roof. It incorporates a baluster with wainscoting as a half-wall enclosing the verandah. The ceilings of the east and west facing verandahs both have sky-blue painted wainscoting as the ceiling finish.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 16

The French House Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island County and State N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The French House has one primary entrance door on the same elevation of the mansard roof on the south elevation under the verandah. This entryway consists of a double door, however, the original doors have been removed and replaced with two doors made of thin plywood with diamond paned glass windows. The secondary door on the rear verandah consists of a singular, rectangular, double-inset, paneled door that is original to the house. There is no historically significant hardware on either of these doors.

The windows on the north, south, and east elevations are all wood-framed, double-hung sash. The French House has a total of forty-four wooden windows of all different sizes and variations. All windows have aluminum storm windows that are fixed to the window trim.

The east elevation features six window variations. Four of the windows under the verandah consist of two-over-one double-hung sash; one window consists of a stained glass top sash with a floral, fruit, and bird design over a one light double-hung sash. Two smaller windows at the first floor level on the east elevation are six-over-one light double-hung sash. On the second floor beneath the northeast valley, there is one window consisting of a fourteen-over-one diamond light double-hung sash. In the center of the cross gable on the east elevation, there is a paired two-over-one light double-hung sash and directly above the paired double-hung sash is a circular plaque window. The dormer on the northeast section of the roof has a two-over-one light double-hung sash. The dormer located on the southeast section of the roof is a round-top arched window that is a one-over-one light double-hung sash.

The south elevation features six window variations. The window openings of the central cross-gable consist of a projecting asphalt hooded square bay windows on the first and second floors. The first floor square bay window consists of a central thirty-five-over-one light double-hung sash, flanked by an east and west facing fifteen-over-one light double-hung sash. The second floor square bay window consists of three central one-over-one light double-hung sash flanked by an east and west facing one-over-one light double-hung sash. A circular plaque window is above the central square bay windows. Located on the second floor in the southeast valley directly above the verandah, beneath the projecting mansard roof, is a round arched one-over-one double hung sash.

The north elevation features three window variations. The window openings on the first floor consist of six-over-one light double hung sash. A paired one-over-one light double hung sash is located on the second floor. A small one-over-one light double hung sash is located on the north elevation under the northwest valley.

The west elevation features eight window variations. The window opening on the first floor under the paired gables is a projecting asphalt hooded square bay window with a central twenty-

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 17

The French House Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island County and State N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

four-over-one light double-hung sash with two eight-over-one light double-hung sash on each side of the central window. A north and south facing one-over-one light double-hung sash flank this square bay window. North of the central square bay window under the paired gables on the first floor is a set of three vinyl eight-light casement windows. Other windows on the first floor consist of six-over-one light double-hung sash. Three six-over-six light double-hung sash and a large central one-over-one light double-hung sash are located on the second floor above the projecting square bay window. Two six-over-one light double-hung windows are beneath the eaves of the paired gables. Located south of the southwest valley under a gabled dormer is a six-over-one light double-hung sash that is centered above the rear veranda and the rear entrance.

The entire house is sided with wooden clapboard with a four-inch exposure. The wooden window trim molding located around every window is consistently the same throughout the entire house. The window trim molding is a two inch wide molding consisting of an ogee/cyma reversa that terminates in a fillet. The base molding around the house is identical throughout and has a flat eight-inch exposure with a quarter round trim on top. The corner boards are a six-inch flat exposure with a round corner bead. The fascia board molding along the roof is six inch wide crown molding consisting of a cyma recta that terminates in a fillet with a half-round bead at the base. The raking molding has a six-inch flat exposure to a quarter-round to a square trim. The south elevation and east elevation cross-gable eaves feature wooden four-inch square king post and struts with acorn drops. This motif is apparent under the eaves of the three gabled dormers interrupting the cornice located on the south, east, and north elevations.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 18

Significance Statement:

Built in 1881, the French House is a Vernacular Stick style cottage and gains its local significance under Criterion B for its relationship and association with Col. George T. French Esq.,. French was a lawyer, politician, patriot, and former Brown University Student who dedicated his life to being a local influence on the Town of Bristol and the State of Rhode Island.

French contributed to the development of the State of Rhode Island through his professional career of being a member on the Rhode Island Bar (1875-1885), a member of the House of Representatives, and a member of the Rhode Island General Assembly (1883-1885). French's life was dedicated to the people of Bristol and the State of Rhode Island while serving on the General Assembly under Governor Augustus O. Bourne (1883-1885). French's involvement in the policymaking and planning of the Bourne Amendment, which was added to Rhode Island's Constitution, declared the removal of the real estate requirement for voting in state elections imposed in 1843 against naturalized citizens. This allowed citizens who did not own property to have the right to vote. This significant amendment highlighted French's professional career as a politician because it altered the lives of countless naturalized citizens who previously were not entitled the right to vote in any state elections. This set the precedent for the future of democracy in the United States of America.

In addition to being a politician and lawyer, French was a respected representative of the community. Bristol, Rhode Island is famed for having the oldest 4th of July Celebration in the United States of America.² Bristol has been celebrating the Declaration of Independence since 1776. The 200th Anniversary of Bristol and the Forth of July celebration was held together in 1880. Samuel P. Colt acted as the chair of the planning committee.³ Since 1785, Patriot Speakers or the Speaker of the Day is chosen to speak to the entire community to launch the community celebration of the Forth of July. This position is reserved for respected and influential figures in the community.⁴ In 1882, the chosen 97th Patriotic Speaker was none other than Col. George T. French.⁵ This honor was indicative of French's popularity and familiarity in the Bristol community. More

⁵ Ibid

² Lavey, Ray . "Annual Fourth of July Celebration | Bristol, Rhode Island History." Annual Fourth of July Celebration | Bristol, Rhode Island. http://www.july4thbristolri.com/history.htm (accessed May 10, 2014).

³ Lavey, Ray . "Past Committee General Chairman." Annual Fourth of July Celebration.

http://www.july4thbristolri.com/past.general.chairman.htm (accessed May 11, 2014).

⁴ Lavey, Ray. "Past Patriotic Speakers." Annual Fourth of July Celebration. http://www.july4thbristolri.com/past.patriotic.speakers.htm (accessed May 10, 2014).

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 19

recent Patriotic Speakers include nationally recognizable political figures such as Claiborne Pell, the namesake for the Claiborne Pell Bridge (Newport Bridge), and Ira C. Magazine, President William Clinton's Senior Advisor Policymaker.⁶

The French House is nominated under Criterion C for its significance as a representation of Late Victorian Architecture in Bristol. Built in 1881, by local builder William Hall of Warren, Rhode Island, the French House is a Victorian cottage built in the Stick style as illustrated by its asymmetrical form, multiple-paned window sash, spacious verandah decorated with simple diagonal brackets, steeply pitched gable roofs with intersecting cross gables, king posts and struts, and corbeled chimneys. The French House does not have any applied high-style stick-work, yet characterizes an interpretation of ornamentation through its overall architectural elements and massing. The Stick style, even at a vernacular level, is not prevalent in Bristol, making the French House one of the few, if not the only Stick style residential architecture in the town. The French House has retained most of its historic integrity and despite its neglected state, the house represents a style of architecture that scarcity deems it worthy of recognition and preservation.

Building History:

The French House property at 1287 Hope Street was originally part of a sixty-acre tract of land. The land, originally owned by William Coggeshall consisted of sixty-acres and was described in the land records as,

A certain undivided tract of land, situate in said Bristol, bound and described as follows, via: Westerly on the Main Road, leading from Bristol to Warren, Easterly on the Back Road so called, southerly on land of the estate of the late Thomas Cole, and Northerly on the land of George C Hatch.⁷

Lydia Bradford Hatch, widow of William Hatch (D.1835), purchased the land at auction on February 1, 1868 for the sum of one thousand five hundred and sixty five dollars.⁸

At the time of construction, the sixty acres of farmland abutted north of the Swett Family Farm. Lydia B. Hatch had one daughter named Jemima Wardwell Hatch (b.1831- d.1852) who married Elkanah French (d.1873). Jemima and Elkanah's son Col. George T. French

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Bristol, Rhode Island, *Land Evidence Records*, February 1, 1868, v.34, p.240.

⁸ Ibid

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 20

(b.1850-d.1885) married Elizabeth G. Swett (b.1853-d.1912) in September of 1881.9 Elizabeth G. Swett owned the southern abutting farm from as early as 1869 according to the 1870 D.G. Beers Atlas (Figure #1). 10 In an brief description in the Bristol Phoenix, it states that "A cottage house on the west side of the Main road on Bristol Neck, for Miss E.G. Swett. Outside nearly completed. William Hall, builder." In the 1895 Rhode Island State Atlas, the George T. French estate appears for the first time along with the other farm buildings. 12 According to the Bristol land evidence records, at the time of construction, the building and land was still owned by Lydia B. Hatch and did not transfer ownership until she passed away in 1894. 13 Although Lydia B. Hatch owned the estate, Col. George T. French paid the property taxes. The construction year can be determined not only from the previously mentioned in newspaper article, but the Bristol Town Tax for the years 1881, 1882, and 1884. In the 1881 town tax records, the value of George T. French estate, which reflects the previous year was the sum of two thousand one hundred dollars, 14 however the 1882 town tax records reflect the value of the previous year raised to nineteen thousand dollars. 15 This confirms that the French House was constructed. The 1884 Bristol Tax Records marked the first year that listed assets individually. The French Estate was described as being a farm on the West side of the Main Road, including a house located North of the farmhouse (Swett Farm House, 1277 Hope Street). 16

Following the death of Col. George T. French in 1885, the French House remained occupied by his wife Elizabeth S. French and their only son James Bernard French (b.1883-d.1956). On March 1, 1893, Lydia B. Hatch recorded her Last Will and Testament where it stated that upon her death her entire estate would go to her great grandson, James Bernard French. However, at the time of the will being recorded James was only an infant; thus his mother, Elizabeth S. French was the executor of the will until

⁹ Representative men and old families of Rhode Island; genealogical records and historical sketches of prominent and representative citizens and of many of the old families.... Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1908, p. 344.

¹⁰ Figure # 1 *1870 D.G. Beers Map*, p.87

¹¹ The Bristol Phoenix, New Buildings, Improvements. July 23, 1881. p. 2.

¹² Figure #2 1895 Everts & Richards Atlas, p.63.

¹³ Bristol, Rhode Island, "Land Evidence Records." March 3, 1893. v51, p. 414-416.

¹⁴ A List of Persons, Corporations, Companies and Estates, As Assessed in Accordance with the Town Tax. Providence: J.A. & R.A Reid, Printers, 1881, p.12.

¹⁵ A List of Persons, Corporations, Companies and Estates, As Assessed in Accordance with the Town Tax. Providence: J.A. & R.A Reid, Printers, 1882, p.13.

¹⁶ A List of Persons, Corporations, Companies and Estates, As Assessed in Accordance with the Town Tax. Providence: J.A. & R.A Reid, Printers, 1884, p.20.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 21

James was the age of eighteen.¹⁷ Lydia B. Hatch died at the age of eighty-seven on January 4, 1884, and the estate-transferred ownership to Elizabeth S. French and her son James.¹⁸ James B. French attended Yale University studying Agriculture at the Sheffield Scientific School from 1902 and graduated in 1905.¹⁹ After graduating, James moved to Los Palacios, Cuba where he was an agriculturist.²⁰ In 1912, Elizabeth S. French passed away and the estate was willed to James.²¹ Four years later in 1916, James sold the estate, consisting of sixty acres and the house to Julian Newton for the sum of ten dollars.²² The French family owned the French House and property for forty-eight years from 1868 to 1916. From then on, the house would be in the possession of two other families.

The Newton family, consisting of Julian Newton and Susan Newton purchased the estate in 1916 from James B. French. The estate was in their possession until 1950, when Susan Newton (wid.) passed away and Frank Newton, one of Julian and Susan Newton's sons, purchased the property from his two brothers for the sum of seven thousand five hundred dollars. Frank Newton and his wife Grace were the ones responsible for subdividing the sixty-acres into sub parcels on November 7, 1950. The Newton Plat (*Figure #3*) was then subdivided into small parcels of an average 1/3-acre for the construction of post-war development Ranch and Cape Cod style housing. The French House lot decreased to two hundred feet along Hope Street and seven hundred eighty-nine feet depth along the newly constructed Beach Road.

Frank and Grace Newton owned the property until 1968 when Donald and Edna Baxter purchased the property. At this time the French House lot had been reduced again to its current size of a two hundred foot by two hundred foot square. ²⁶ Overall, the Newton family owned the French House for a total of fifty-two years. A decade after the Baxter Family purchased the property, Donald Baxter passed away tragically when a car hit him when he was helping a citizen change a tire on Route 195 West towards Providence.²⁷

¹⁷ Bristol, Rhode Island, Land Evidence Records, March 3, 1893. v.51, p.414-416.

¹⁸ Bristol, Rhode Island, *Bristol Death Records*, January 17, 1895. v.5, p. 194.

¹⁹ Barber, William McKinley. Five year record class of nineteen hundred and five Sheffield scientific school... New Haven: Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor Press, 1910, p. 228.

²⁰ Embree, E. R. Directory of the living non-graduates of Yale University Issue of 1914. New Haven: Yale University, 1914, p. 457.

²¹ Bristol, Rhode Island, *Probate Records*, December 2, 1912, v16, p.145.

²² Bristol, Rhode Island, Land Evidence Records, July 16, 1916, v74, p.191.

²³ Bristol, Rhode Island, *Land Evidence Records*, August 8, 1950, v119, p.437.

²⁴ Figure #3, *The Newton Plat Map*, Plat Book 5, p. 23.

²⁵ Bristol, Rhode Island, Land Evidence Records, August 10, 1950, v119, p.437.

²⁶ Bristol, Rhode Island, *Land Evidence Records*, February 2, 1950, v169, p.366.

²⁷ Batcher, Ray, *Interview*, February 28, 2014.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 22

Presumably after the death of Edna Baxter's husband, the French House went into a state of deferred maintenance. The French House was not mentioned in the architectural survey of Bristol published in 1990 by the Rhode Island Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC). Elizabeth Warren, author of the RIHPHC report on Bristol noted that:

At the time of our very selective survey of northern Bristol in the late 1980s, there was a completely eccentric family living there. The woman was very hostile to anyone coming near the property, which was falling apart and the yard was full of junk cars. We stayed away.²⁸

Edna Baxter passed away in 2009, and since then the house has sat unmaintained and remains in probate court. The whereabouts of the Baxter sons are unknown. The French House taxes were auctioned on December 6, 2013 for the sum of seventeen thousand nine hundred and sixteen dollars to Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Financial Group.²⁹

CONTEXT FOR CRITERION C:

The French House derives a large portion of its significance from its Vernacular Stick style of Architecture. The highly picturesque Stick Style was a transitional style of architecture between the Gothic Revival style and Queen Anne style lasting from 1860 to 1890. Architect Richard Morris Hunt made the style popular in Newport, Rhode Island. The Stick style emphasized the wall surface rather than applying ornate elements to the cornices, windows, and doors. The emphasis on the wall surface and the illustration of the structure of the building was important in the Stick Style, although the exposed stickwork did not relate to the underlying balloon-frame construction. Towards the end of the 1880s the Queen Anne movement quickly replaced the Stick Style.³⁰

The French House, built in 1881, is one of the only Stick Style homes in Bristol. The house was built to serve as a home for Col. George T. French Esq. and Elizabeth Swett French as a newlywed couple. The French House was near completion by the time they were married in September of 1881. The builder, William Hall, was from Warren, Rhode Island. According to the Warren Waterfront Historic District Nomination, the only known history of William Hall was a carpenter and builder, who built and lived at 18

²⁹ Bristol, Rhode Island, *Land Evidence Records*, December 6, 2013. v.1737, p.141.

²⁸ Warren, Elizabeth, *Interview*, February 22, 2014.

³⁰ Scully, Vincent. The shingle style and the stick style: architectural theory and design from Richardson to the origins of Wright. Rev.ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 23

Wood Street in Warren until 1876 when he moved to Brook Street.³¹ His son, Frank Hall, was an architect by profession passed away on November 3, 1897.³² It is not known where the inspiration for the French House came from, however, south of the French House on Hope Street an early form of the Gothic Revival Style known as Longfield Estate exemplifies where the overall form and massing of the French House could have taken its inspiration from.

The French House, incorporates many character defining features of the Stick style. The asymmetrical form, steeply pitched cross gables, kingpost struts in the eaves of the endgables, arched windows, circular plaque windows, picturesque landscaping, diamond paned windows and stained glass windows contributes to the defining elements of the style. The French House not only represents a significant example of the Stick Style in Bristol, it also illuminates the wealth of Col. George T. French Esq. and his social class due to its size, location, and style. Overall, the French House has most of its historic integrity intact, however the building is in a neglected state, and due to its architectural significance it represents a style of architecture that in its scarcity in Bristol deems the building to be significant in its own right.

CONTEXT FOR CRITERION B:

Pre-1881

During his short life, Col. George T. French Esq., was a member of the Rhode Island Bar, served on the school committee, was the 97th Patriotic Speaker at the Bristol Forth of July celebrations, was a member of the House of Representatives and at the time of his death was a member of the Rhode Island General Assembly.

Col. George T. French Esq. was born on December 14, 1850 to Jemimia Wardwell Hatch (b.1831-d.1852) and James Elkanah French (b.1815-d.1873) in Bristol, Rhode Island. His ancestral maternal lineage was from Bristol, Rhode Island since the 18th century and can be traced to the 17th century in Plymouth, Massachusetts.³³ He married Elizabeth Gray

³¹ National Register of Historic Places, Warren Waterfront Historic District, Warren, Bristol County, RI, p. 108.

³² The Bristol Phoenix, Frank Hall Death Notice. November 5, 1897, p. 2.

³³ Stockwell, Mary Le Baron Esty. *Descendants of Francis Le Baron of Plymouth, Mass.* Boston: T.R. Marvin & Son, printers, 1904. p. 181.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 24

Swett (b.1853-d.1912) on September 14, 1881.³⁴ Elizabeth was the daughter of John Barnard Swett who was originally from Boston, Massachusetts. John B. Swett's wife, Annie Cecilia (DeWolf) Swett was the daughter of Henry DeWolf (b.1785-d.1857) of Bristol, Rhode Island. French spent two years at Brown University in Providence from 1871 to 1872 studying to become a lawyer. In his sophomore year, George's father became ill and as a result French did not complete his studies.³⁵ Col. George T. French career started in 1875 when he was admitted to the Rhode Island Bar. *The Bristol Phoenix* states:

The undersigned, who were appointed a committee to examine the claims and qualifications of George T. French, a candidate for admission to the bar respectfully report: That it appears by competent and satisfactory proof that the said George T. French has studied law in the office of James Tillinghast, Esq...George T. French, Esq., was admitted to the Bar and qualified to practice in all the Courts of this State. ³⁶

According to the *Bristol Phoenix*, Col. French was nominated to be a staff member on the Garfield and Arthur Campaign Club along with Samuel P. Colt another well-known Bristolian.³⁷ The Garfield and Arthur Campaign was led by the Republican Party in Bristol consisting of French and Colt to campaign for the Presidential Candidates Garfield and Arthur. Ultimately, Garfield and Arthur won the election.

The year 1880 was also a celebratory year for Bristolians, since it marked the Bi-Centennial of the settlement of the town. The celebration is described in the article as:

On the evening of September 23^{d,} there will be a grand illumination of the public buildings, stores and private residences. The Bristol Train of Artillery, under the direction of Col. R.B. Franklin, will fire at sunrise, at the close of the exercises in the large Tent, and at sunset, national Salutes on the Common.³⁸

In September of 1880, under the command of the Grand Marshal Samuel P. Colt, Col. French was nominated to be a Marshal during the celebration of the Bi-Centennial. His company was described in the Bristol Phoenix as:

³⁶ The Bristol Phoenix, *George T. French Becomes a Lawyer*, November, 13, 1875, p. 2.

³⁴ Representative men and old families of Rhode Island; genealogical records and historical sketches of prominent and representative citizens and of many of the old families.... Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1908, p. 344.

³⁵ Ibid

³⁷ The Bristol Phoenix, *Garfield & Arthur Campaign Club*. July 31, 1880, p. 2. ³⁸ The Bristol Phoenix, *Bi-Centennial Celebration*. September 18, 1880, p. 2.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 25

Company of gentlemen dressed in ye ancient pilgrim costume, formed in a hallow square, in the center of which will be borne the flag presented to the town by Colonel Byfield in the year 1710.³⁹

Clearly from the description, French is dressed in costume to represent the early settlers of the late 17th century.

Col. George T. French was a prominent citizen in the community and was friends of many noted citizens of the late 19th century. One of his friends and colleagues was Samuel P. Colt. Colt married in January of 1881 article in the *Bristol Phoenix* describes the wedding as being in the English Fashion. Col. George T. French was listed as an usher at the wedding. 40 Col. French was part of many other celebrations during his life, one of which was recorded in the Bristol Phoenix in June of 1881 where it describes the 87th Anniversary of the Bristol Train of Artillery. It was stated that Col. George T. French Esq., along with other prominent Bristolians such as, Col. James Coggeshall, Col. E. M. Wardwell, and Samuel P. Colt gave short speeches. Most of the prominent names are now today recognized by Bristolian as being the namesakes for buildings and streets located in the town.

1881-1885

In September of 1881, Col. George T. French Esq., married Elizabeth Swett French. The Bristol Phoenix reported in a section titled New Buildings, Improvement that, "A cottage home on the west side of the Main Road on Bristol Neck, for Miss L. G. Swett, outside nearly completed. William Hall Builder."41 Miss L. G. Swett stands for Liza Gray Swett, which upon her marriage changed her name to Elizabeth Swett French. The land that the French House was constructed on was owned by French's grandmother Lydia Bradford Hatch and was not willed to the French Family until she died in 1894. Since Lydia B. Hatch owned the property at the time of construction and was from significant wealth due to her husband's involvement in the Triangle Trade, it would be safe to say that she funded the construction of the French House. 42 In 1882, the French House was appraised for tax purposes at \$19,000, which is equivalent to \$450,000 today. Since there was no need for another home, French sold his dwelling and lot of land on the corner of Wardwell and Hope Street in the heart of downtown Bristol. Col. George T. French Esq. was a neighbor to Samuel P. Colt (Linden Place) before selling his house for one

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ The Bristol Phoenix, Col. Samuel P. Colt Married, January 15, 1881, p. 2.

⁴¹ The Bristol Phoenix, New Buildings, Improvements. July 23, 1881, p. 2.

⁴² The Bristol Phoenix, *Remembrance of Capt. William Hatch.* November 26, 1892, p.2.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 26

thousand eight hundred and seventeen dollars and thirty-three cents (\$1817.33). Today, the site of French's Wardwell and Hope Street dwelling is now the site of Colt Elementary School. During this time, those who could afford to were adapting to the Picturesque Movement, which was the act of moving out of the city due to the overcrowded industry and immigrants. This is exactly what Col. George T. French did when he built his home at 1287 Hope Street.

Col. George T. French Esq., can be noted in history as being part of a collaborative team to bring freshwater to Bristol. In December of 1881, French was part of a committee with other notable figures in Bristol such as W.T.C. Wardwell, G. Herreshoff and H.C. Herreshoff to draw up resolutions in the matter of introducing freshwater to Bristol. A meeting was held in the Court House to discuss the matter where it was agreed upon that the introduction of water to Bristol was necessary. The committee met in the law office of Col. George T. French Esq., for two days, resulting in a Special Town Meeting the following week to discuss the implementation of introducing water to Bristol. French's involvement in the introductory phase of this massive infrastructure plan led to the creation of the Bristol and Warren Water Works (BWWW), which was formed in 1882. The plan originally serviced over 6000 people with water being taken from the Kickemuit River that was delivered through cast iron pipes 14 miles through Warren to Bristol. Col. George T. French was part of a major milestone in Bristol's history while serving his community as a momentous leader.

Col. George T. French died of typhoid fever at his home on Bristol Neck on November 19, 1885, at the age of thirty-four years old. While his death notice was very short, he left an unforgettable impression upon the community and was described as an excellent man, possessing many good qualities. The funeral was described in the *Bristol Phoenix as:*

The funeral of Col. George T. French was solemnized from his late residence on Bristol Neck, Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock. The solemn services were conducted by the Rev. George L. Locke. There was a large attendance, including Governor Wetmore, ex-Gov. Bourn, Judge Colt, Attorney General Colt, and several members of the Legislature, of which the deceased was a member at the time of his death. The pallbearers were Messrs. Samuel P. Colt, Henry W. Hayes, Samuel Norris, Jr., Nathaniel Herreshoff, John DeWolf, and William Hodgekins. The remains were conveyed to the Juniper Hill

⁴³ The Bristol Phoenix, Real Estate Transactions During the Month of July, 1882. August 5, 1882, p.2.

⁴⁴ Bristol, Rhode Island, *Death Records*, January 4, 1886, v.5, p.117.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 27

Cemetery, for interment, and were followed by a long line of carriages containing relatives and friends of the family.⁴⁵

Not only was Col. George T. French's life and legacy honored in the Bristol Phoenix, a tribute was made in the House of Representatives of the General Assembly by one of his closest friends and colleagues, Col. James Coggeshall who stated:

He won the universal respect of the community where he was best known. He was a kind husband, genial friend, and companion, a patriotic citizen, and his mentor will not soon pass away. 46

Not only was Col. George T. French Esq., a prominent leader in the community, he touched everything with passion in his life. In the minutes from the House of Representatives addressed the resolution relative to the death of Col. George T. French Esq. According to the minutes:

Col. French was considered one of the House of Representatives brightest and best-loved members. French was described as a man of commanding presence, of great good nature and good fellowship, and possessed of sterling qualities of mind and heart, he endeared himself to all who met him, and his loss will be keenly felt by his associates of the general assembly...⁴⁷

In a letter written by French's wife in 1904, Elizabeth S. French, to Miss. Vaughn, the Keeper of Brown University Graduate Records, Elizabeth dictated:

He was on Governor Van Zandt's staff about 1875 to 1880. He studied law with Mr. James Tillinghast of Providence and practiced both in Providence and Bristol. He was in the legislature (RI General Assembly) about 1882 to 1885. He was also Judge of the Probate Court in Bristol for a few months in 1885 just before his death. 48

This letter is the only one known today to exist regarding the legacy of Col. George T. French Esq. written by his wife.

⁴⁵ The Bristol Phoenix, Funeral of Col. George T. French, November 28, 1885, p.2.

⁴⁶ Representative men and old families of Rhode Island; genealogical records and historical sketches of prominent and representative citizens and of many of the old families.... Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1908, p. 344.

⁴⁷ Ward, Henry. "Resolve the Death of George T. French." In *Acts and Resolves of the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantation, Providence*... Providence: E. L. Freeman & Co., State Printers, 1885. p. 242-243.

⁴⁸ Elizabeth S. French to Miss. Vaughn, December 4, 1904.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 28

Although this list seems short, Elizabeth S. French also describes in the letter that she is unable to respond with more information because she is away from her house in Philadelphia. Although Mrs. French was not able to provide more information to Brown University, Col. George T. French's legacy lived on through other literature.⁴⁹

After his death former Gov. Van Zandt stated:

George T. French was the most loved man I ever knew. The numerous expressions of high regard from his legislative associates stamped Colonel French as a man of more than usual private and public character, and one whose civil life was the highest expression of good citizenship.⁵⁰

Col. George T. French Esq. was a notable leader in Bristol and the State of Rhode Island. French touched the lives of many in the town by being a influential man in the local community. French is distinguished in many instances of being a respectable man upon many of the higher elected officials in the State. His contributions to the town of Bristol and the State of Rhode Island although today are forgotten, his life accomplishments are still being utilized without recognition every time one turns on the faucet and votes in State election. The influence French had on the Bristol Community and the State was momentous in a short time frame. French's death came sudden and shook the community. Many of French's colleagues and friends outlived him and were recorded as the namesakes of many Bristol locations and influenced the development of the turn of the century politics in Bristol and the State of Rhode Island. If French had lived on and did not die a sudden death, his accomplishments could have greatly superseded most in the community however, due to Col. George T. French short life his legacy was buried with him and forgotten.

4

¹⁹ Ibid

⁵⁰ Representative men and old families of Rhode Island; genealogical records and historical sketches of prominent and representative citizens and of many of the old families.... Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1908, p. 344.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

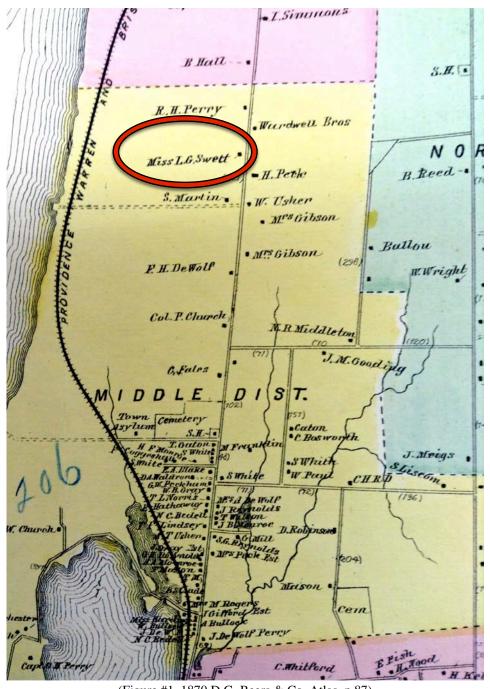
Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 29



(Figure #1, 1870 D.G. Beers & Co. Atlas, p.87)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

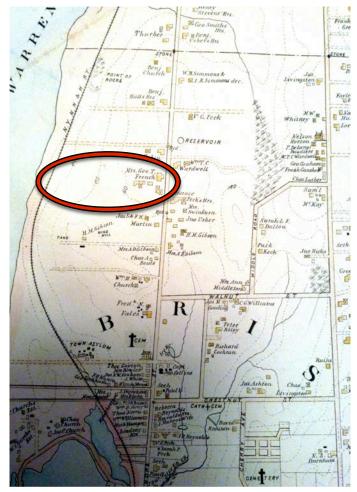
Name of Property

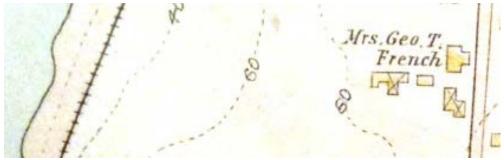
Bristol County, Rhode Island
County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 30





(1895 Everts & Richards Atlas, p.63.)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

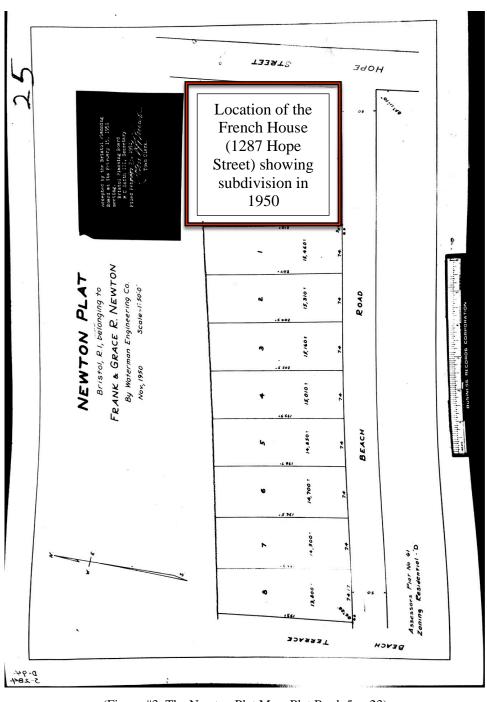
Name of Property

Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 31



(Figure #3, The Newton Plat Map, Plat Book 5, p.23)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 32

The French House

Name of Property

Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

BIBLIOGRAPHY/SOURCES CONSULTED:

- A List of Persons, Corporations, Companies and Estates, As Assessed in Accordance with the Town Tax. Providence: J.A. & R.A Reid, Printers, 1881, p.12.
- A List of Persons, Corporations, Companies and Estates, As Assessed in Accordance with the Town Tax. Providence: J.A. & R.A Reid, Printers, 1882, p.13.
- A List of Persons, Corporations, Companies and Estates, As Assessed in Accordance with the Town Tax. Providence: J.A. & R.A Reid, Printers, 1884, p.20.
- Barber, William McKinley. Five year record class of nineteen hundred and five Sheffield scientific school... New Haven: Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor Press, 1910, p. 228.

Batcher, Ray, Interview, February 28, 2014.

Bristol, Rhode Island, "Land Evidence Records." March 3, 1893. v51, p. 414-416.

Bristol, Rhode Island, *Bristol Death Records*, January 17, 1895. v.5, p. 194.

Bristol, Rhode Island, *Bristol Death Records*, January 4, 1886, v.5, p. 117.

Bristol, Rhode Island, Land Evidence Records, August 10, 1950, v119, p.437.

Bristol, Rhode Island, Land Evidence Records, August 8, 1950, v119, p.437.

Bristol, Rhode Island, Land Evidence Records, December 6, 2013, v.1737, p.141.

Bristol, Rhode Island, Land Evidence Records, February 1, 1868, v.34, p.240.

Bristol, Rhode Island, Land Evidence Records, February 2, 1950, v169, p.366.

Bristol, Rhode Island, Land Evidence Records, July 16, 1916, v74, p.191.

Bristol, Rhode Island, Land Evidence Records, March 3, 1893. v.51, p.414-416.

Bristol, Rhode Island, *Probate Records*, December 2, 1912, v16, p.145.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property

Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 9 Page 33

- Elizabeth S. French to Miss. Vaughn, December 4, 1904.
- Embree, E. R. *Directory of the living non-graduates of Yale University Issue of 1914*.. New Haven: Yale University, 1914, p. 457.
- Lavey, Ray. "Annual Fourth of July Celebration | Bristol, Rhode Island History." Annual Fourth of July Celebration | Bristol, Rhode Island. http://www.july4thbristolri.com/history.htm (accessed May 10, 2014).
- Lavey, Ray . "Past Committee General Chairman." Annual Fourth of July Celebration. http://www.july4thbristolri.com/past.general.chairman.htm (accessed May 11, 2014).
- Lavey, Ray. "Past Patriotic Speakers." Annual Fourth of July Celebration. http://www.july4thbristolri.com/past.patriotic.speakers.htm (accessed May 10, 2014).
- National Register of Historic Places, *Warren Waterfront Historic District*, Warren, Bristol County, RI, p. 108.
- Representative men and old families of Rhode Island; genealogical records and historical sketches of prominent and representative citizens and of many of the old families.... Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1908, p. 344.
- Scully, Vincent. The shingle style and the stick style: architectural theory and design from Richardson to the origins of Wright. Rev. ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971.
- Stockwell, Mary Le Baron Esty. *Descendants of Francis Le Baron of Plymouth, Mass.* Boston: T.R. Marvin & Son, printers, 1904. p. 181.
- The Bristol Phoenix, *Bi-Centennial Celebration*. September 18, 1880, p. 2.
- The Bristol Phoenix, Col. Samuel P. Colt Married. January 15, 1881, p. 2.
- The Bristol Phoenix, Frank Hall Death Notice. November 5, 1897, p. 2.
- The Bristol Phoenix, Funeral of Col. George T. French, November 28, 1885, p.2.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property

Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 9 Page 34

The Bristol Phoenix, Garfield & Arthur Campaign Club. July 31, 1880, p. 2.

The Bristol Phoenix, George T. French Becomes a Lawyer, November, 13, 1875, p. 2.

The Bristol Phoenix, New Buildings, Improvements. July 23, 1881, p. 2.

The Bristol Phoenix, *Real Estate Transactions During the Month of July, 1882.* August 5, 1882, p.2.

The Bristol Phoenix, Remembrance of Capt. William Hatch. November 26, 1892, p.2.

Ward, Henry. "Resolve the Death of George T. French." In *Acts and Resolves of the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantation, Providence*... Providence: E. L. Freeman & Co., State Printers, 1885. p. 242-243.

Warren, Elizabeth, Interview, February 22, 2014.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photographs Page 36

The following information is the same for all photographs:

The French House 1287 Hope Street, Bristol Bristol County, RI

All photos taken by Derek J. Dandurand, March 21, 2014

Location of digital photographs:

Derek J. Dandurand 130 Stanton Road Flemington, NJ 08822

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

- 1. South-East Elevation (RI Bristol County French House 0001)
- 2. East Elevation (RI Bristol County French House 0002)
- 3. North-East Elevation (RI_Bristol County_French House_0003)
- 4. North-West Elevation (RI_Bristol County_French House_0004)
- 5. West Elevation (RI_Bristol County_French House_0005)
- 6. South-West Elevation (RI_Bristol County_French House_0006)
- 7. South-East Elevation (RI Bristol County French House 0007)
- 8. Stained Glass Window Detail, East Elevation, 1st Floor (RI_Bristol County_French House_0008)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photographs Page 37



(The French House, Bristol, RI, #1)



(The French House, Bristol, RI, #2)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 38

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



(The French House, Bristol, RI, #3



(The French House, Bristol, RI, #4)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 39

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



(The French House, Bristol, RI, #5)



(The French House, Bristol, RI, #6)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 40

The French House

Name of Property Bristol County, Rhode Island

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



(The French House, Bristol, RI, #7)



(The French House, Bristol, RI, #8)