**Common:** Henderson Home

**AND/OR Historic:** Stiles (Ezra) House

**2. Location:**

**Street and Number:** 11 Clarke Street

**City or Town:** Newport

**State:** Rhode Island, 02840

**3. Classification:**

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<tr>
<th>Category (Check One)</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Accessible to the Public</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>Building □</td>
<td>Public □</td>
<td>Public Acquisition:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>Private □</td>
<td>In Process □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>Both □</td>
<td>Being Considered □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td>□</td>
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</table>

**Present Use (Check One or More as Appropriate):**

- □ Agricultural
- □ Government
- □ Private Residence
- □ Religious
- □ Home for the aged
- □ Transportation
- □ Other (Specify)
- □ Comments

**4. Owner of Property:**

**Owner's Name:** City of Newport

**Street and Number:** City Hall, Broadway

**City or Town:** Newport

**State:** Rhode Island, 02840

**5. Location of Legal Description:**

**Courthouse, Registry of Deeds, etc.:** City Hall

**Street and Number:** Broadway

**City or Town:** Newport

**State:** Rhode Island, 02840

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys:**

**Title of Survey:** Statewide Survey of Historic Buildings

**Date of Survey:** 1970-1971

**Federal □**  **State □**  **County □**  **Local □**

**Depository for Survey Records:** Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

**Street and Number:** State House, 90 Smith Street

**City or Town:** Providence

**State:** Rhode Island, 02903

**Code:** 005
Built in 1756, the Ezra Stiles House is a large, two-and-one-half-story, five-bay-wide, gambrel-roofed house. Its plan is that of four rooms on each principal floor with central halls, organized around two large interior brick chimneys. Now facing west, the house originally faced its garden to the south, with its gable end to the street. When turned west to face the street it was placed on a new, high, brownstone foundation abutting the sidewalk. Even though the house was turned and remodelled in 1831, it retains its over-all eighteenth-century lines and character.

The windows have their original pegged frames and moulded cornices. Two pedimented dormers which light the garret on the front also remain. The original doorway was replaced with one of Greek Revival design. Set in a panelled recess and protected by a one-story, flat-roofed portico supported by Doric columns and simple pilasters, this doorway is framed by a transom and sidelights of etched glass. The original cornerboards were also replaced with the simple panelled pilasters common to the Greek Revival. A two-story clapboarded kitchen ell with a brick end wall and interior chimney adjoins the house to the rear. Bay windows, each two stories tall, have been extended from the front rooms at either side of the house.

Although the house has retained its cased beams and panelled wainscoting on the interior, many of the mantels and much of the other trim in its rooms dates from after 1831. A graceful, winding staircase in the central hall rises from the ground floor all the way to the third level under the gambrel roof.
According to the records of the Second Congregational Church in Newport, this house was erected as a parsonage in 1756 on land which had been donated by William Ellery and Peter Coggeshall. From the time of its erection, until 1776, the house was occupied by Ezra Stiles, then minister of the congregation. In addition to being a brilliant churchman, Stiles was recognized as probably the most learned man in New England in his time, and he sought information on all manner of subjects. A friend of Benjamin Franklin, Stiles conducted the first experiments with electricity in New England. In the garden of his house on Clarke Street he grew white mulberry trees for experiments with silk-worms, explained in a still-preserved manuscript; he here observed the transit of Venus--in the company of Henry Marchant and William Vernon.

Stiles was also important as an educator. He had been librarian of the redwood Library since his arrival in Newport; and he helped James Manning found the third college in New England--Rhode Island College (now Brown University). His church's congregation, denated by the Revolution, was forced to dismiss him in 1776. Stiles became President of Yale College in the following year, but it was not until 1786 that he formally ended his ministry in Newport.

Architecturally, the Ezra Stiles House is most significant as part of an extremely well-preserved, one-block-long street of exceptionally fine eighteenth-century buildings which include the Second Congregational Church (1735) and the important Vernon House (c. 1708, enlarged c. 1760), a registered National Landmark. Although the Stiles House was somewhat altered in 1831, when the church sold it to a private individual, it nevertheless retains much of its early character. Its preservation is essential for the protection of the rare architectural quality and historical significance of the street in which it stands.
Approximate acreage of nominated property: Less than one acre

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Form prepared by:

Name and title: Clifford M. Renshaw, III, Consultant

Organization: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

Date: June 20, 1971

Street and number: State House, 90 Smith Street

City or town: Providence

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

Title

Date

National Register verification:

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

Chief, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Date

Attest:

Keeper of The National Register

Date
**PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

*Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENTRY NUMBER</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 1. NAME

**COMMON:** Henderson Home

**AND/OR HISTORIC:** Stiles (Ezra) House

### 2. LOCATION

**STREET AND NUMBER:** 1½ Clarke Street

**CITY OR TOWN:** Newport

**STATE:** Rhode Island

### 3. PHOTO REFERENCE

**PHOTO CREDIT:** Clifford M. Renshaw, III

**DATE OF PHOTO:** August, 1971

**NEGATIVE FILED AT:** Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, State House, 90 Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02903

### 4. IDENTIFICATION

**DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.:**

Exterior seen from the south-west.
Main stairway, seen at first-floor level.
### 1. NAME
- **COMMON:** Henderson Home
- **AND/OR HISTORIC:** Stiles (Ezra) House

### 2. LOCATION
- **STREET AND NUMBER:** 14 Clarke Street
- **CITY OR TOWN:** Newport
- **STATE:** Rhode Island

### 3. PHOTO REFERENCE
- **PHOTO CREDIT:** Clifford M. Renshaw, III
- **DATE OF PHOTO:** 1971
- **NEGATIVE FILED AT:** Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, State House, 90 Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02903

### 4. IDENTIFICATION
- **DESCRIPTION:** Portion of north-west parlor, showing eighteenth-century woodwork, nineteenth-century marble mantel.
GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES
Latitude: 41° 29' 23" N
Longitude: 71° 18' 0" W

GENERAL HIGHWAY MAP
NEWPORT COUNTY
RHODE ISLAND
PORTSMOUTH ... MIDDLETOWN ... NEWPORT
PREPARED BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
DIVISION OF ROADS AND BRIDGES
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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

**1. NAME**

**COMMON:** Henderson Home  
**AND/OR HISTORIC:** Stiles (Ezra) House

**2. LOCATION**

**STREET AND NUMBER:**  
14 Clarke Street  
**CITY OR TOWN:** Newport  
**STATE:** Rhode Island  
**COUNTY:** Newport  
**CODE:** 005

**3. MAP REFERENCE**

**SOURCE:** Rhode Island. Department of Public Works: General Highway Map, Newport County ...

**SCALE:** 1/4 inches: 1 mile  
**DATE:** 1966

**4. REQUIREMENTS**

**TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS**

1. Property boundaries where required.  
2. North arrow.  
3. Latitude and longitude reference.
**Form 10-300 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

**STATE:** Rhode Island

**COUNTY:** Newport

1. **NAME:**
   - **COMMON:** Newport Artillery Company Armory
   - **AND/OR HISTORIC:**

2. **LOCATION:**
   - **STREET AND NUMBER:** 23 Clarke Street
   - **CITY OR TOWN:** Newport
   - **STATE:** Rhode Island, 02810

3. **CLASSIFICATION:**
   - **CATEGORY:**
     - [ ] District
     - [X] Building
     - [ ] Site
     - [ ] Structure
     - [ ] Object
   - **OWNER:**
     - [ ] Public
     - [X] Private
     - [ ] Both
   - **PUBLIC ACQUISITION:**
     - [ ] In Process
     - [ ] Being Considered
   - **STATUS:**
     - [X] Occupied
     - [ ] Unoccupied
   - **ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC:**
     - [X] Restricted
     - [ ] Unrestricted
   - **PRESENT USE:**
     - [ ] Agricultural
     - [ ] Government
     - [ ] Park
     - [ ] Commercial
     - [ ] Industrial
     - [ ] Private Residence
     - [ ] Educational
     - [ ] Military
     - [ ] Religious
     - [ ] Entertainment
     - [X] Museum
     - [ ] Scientific
     - [ ] Transportation
     - [ ] Other, (Specify)
     - [ ] Comments

4. **OWNER OF PROPERTY:**
   - **OWNER'S NAME:** Newport Artillery Company
   - **STREET AND NUMBER:** 23 Clarke Street
   - **CITY OR TOWN:** Newport
   - **STATE:** Rhode Island, 02810
   - **CODE:** 005

5. **LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION:**
   - **COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:**
     - City Hall
     - **STREET AND NUMBER:** Broadway
     - **CITY OR TOWN:** Newport
     - **STATE:** Rhode Island, 02810
     - **CODE:** 005

6. **REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS:**
   - **TITLE OF SURVEY:** Statewide Survey of Historic Buildings
   - **DATE OF SURVEY:**
     - [ ] Federal
     - [ ] State
     - [ ] County
     - [ ] Local
   - **DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:**
     - Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
   - **STREET AND NUMBER:** State House, 90 Smith Street
   - **CITY OR TOWN:** Providence
   - **STATE:** Rhode Island, 02903

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

**ENTRY NUMBER**

**DATE**
The Newport Artillery Company, an organization chartered in 1741, raised money in 1835 to build its permanent quarters on Clarke Street, a locale that had been prominent in Newport's history from the time of the city's first settlement. Alexander MacGregor, a stonemason from Scotland who was responsible for much of Newport's early-19th-century stone building, was hired to design the armory, and Duress and McNade were taken on as contractors. MacGregor piled walls of random ashlar (native stone given by Enoch Hazard from his Rocky Farm) and topped them with a modest gable to create a building of simple, but relatively heavy, temple form. He rusticated the corners and the main doorway. A long lintel over the double, panelled doors reads "1741. Artillery Company." (In photographs taken in 1870, one can see that the gable was then undecorated, the doors were diagonally planked, and an extremely tall flagpole stood on the sidewalk in front.) The building was set on a narrow lot, donated by Audley Clarke, a Newport merchant and benefactor, with 28 feet of frontage; and the structure itself was originally no more than 50 feet deep. In 1873 there was an addition to the rear, increasing the number of east-west bays from four to eight. While this addition distorted the originally fine proportions of MacGregor's design, the armory--situated as closely as it is between the Second Congregational Church on the right and the Robert Stevens house on the left--was not really impaired in general appearance. Its architecture was harmed, however, in 1906 when the gable was raised to make way for a second story. Though the new stonework and brickwork are well matched to the old, the added height and the introduction of five windows across the upper façade have marred the Greek-Revival intentions of the original design. A granite belt course was then added along the sides of the building. There are iron bars on these front windows and iron shutters for the windows on the sides of the building. Of visual interest is a large, relief-carved wooden eagle applied to the gable or tympanum in 1880. Taken from the paddle-box of the S. S. "Metropolis," the bird is set against a red-painted wooden semicircular background. Two triangular panels with embedded cannonballs flank the eagle emblem.

The interior is open and rather plain, with a ceiling height of about 15 feet. The panelled wainscoting that was probably once varnished is now painted a light green to match the plaster walls. The floor is of wooden planks, and the ceiling is now of 19th-century pressed tin with an elaborate lace-like pattern. The symmetrically-molded architraves of the doors have circle-in-square block ornament at the upper corners. The front and rear stairways of the long first-floor drill hall (now used as a museum) have simple square wooden balustrading. The back stairs were added when the building was heightened, and include a large podium landing, perhaps meant as a speaking or command platform. Photographs taken in 1908 show the new upstairs lounge rooms which were finished in dark panelling; the central upstairs room still has its large hearth; but this suite is not now in use. The cellar, long used as a rifle-practice range, runs the full length of the building and has stone walls and a wood-beamed ceiling.
Owing to the antiquity of the militia organization it houses, and to its presence in this historic block, the Clarke Street armory has much to speak for it besides its architecture. The Newport Artillery Company's earliest origin was in 1639 as a "trained band" against hostile Indians; and, according to Elton Manuel's detailed account, in 17th century a group of 18 men, calling themselves the 'principal inhabitants of the town' applied to the General Assembly for a charter to form an organization... the charter was approved. They chose Jahleel Brenton as their first commanding officer.

When, nearly one hundred years later, they desired a permanent and, if possible, monumental armory they employed Alexander MacGregor, a Scotch stonemason who also built the fine granite walls of the early part of Fort Adams, the Perry Mill, Stone Villa, Swanhurst, and the Thorn house in Newport.

In adapting rough-laid local stone to the smooth rigidities of the Greek Revival style so popular in the early part of the 19th century, the armory is unusually successful: MacGregor's handling of it is strong and confident (even if quoining seems out of place in this style). The building in old photographs and restored sketches depends on its striking proportions for its effect--the simplicity of its rectangular and superposed triangular masses, the flatness of the façade, the primitively "defensive" heavy inset doors.

The armory's architectural individuality and long-established place in the community of Newport, as well as its present use as a highly instructive military museum, make it an integral part of the fabric of the Clarke Street neighborhood, and indeed of Newport's overall heritage.
REFERENCES


GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

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<tr>
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Degrees Minutes Seconds

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

LATITUDE: 41° 29.15' N
LONGITUDE: 71° 18.51.61' W

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

FORM PREPARED BY

Name and Title: B. Christopher Bene, Consultant
Organization: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
Street and Number: State House, 90 Smith Street
City or Town: Providence
State: Rhode Island, 02903
Date: September 25, '71

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 [X] Local [ ]

Name
Title
Date

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date
GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES

Latitude: 41° 29' 21.54" N
Longitude: 71° 18' 51.61" W
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. NAME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMON:</strong> Newport Artillery Company Armory</td>
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<td><strong>AND/OR HISTORIC:</strong></td>
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</table>

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STREET AND NUMBER:</strong> 23 Clarke Street</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CITY OR TOWN:</strong> Newport</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STATE:</strong> Rhode Island</td>
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<td>1. Property boundaries where required.</td>
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<td>2. North arrow.</td>
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<td>3. Latitude and longitude reference.</td>
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