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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Cutler, Susan S. and Edward J. House

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 12 Woodbine Street

City or town: Providence State: Rhode Island County: Providence

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___national ___statewide _x_local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B _x_C ___D

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: [X]

Public – Local [ ]

Public – State [ ]

Public – Federal [ ]

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) [X]

District [ ]

Site [ ]

Structure [ ]

Object [ ]

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2		Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

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6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC – Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC – Secondary Structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC – Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC – Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Late Victorian – Stick Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD: Weatherboard; BRICK; ASPHALT

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Susan S. and Edward J. Cutler House is a one-and-a-half story, balloon frame, L-plan, Late Victorian, Stick style cottage built in 1880 in the Mount Hope neighborhood of Providence, Rhode Island. The house has a raised brick foundation, machine-sawn clapboard siding, a rectangular bay window on the south façade, a partly enclosed front entrance porch on the west elevation, wood trim combining Stick style and some Italianate style elements, and a cross-gable, asphalt-shingled roof. A ca. 1921 one-story, one-bay, front-gable, wood-frame garage, which stands directly behind the house, has similar materials and features. The exterior of the house has changed little since 1880; the original floor plan has been modified only on the second floor, with the addition of two bathrooms (ca. 1918 and 1989). Virtually all the interior finishes, including those in the 1920s kitchen, have survived from the period of significance. The Cutler House retains a high level of integrity in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Narrative Description

The Susan S. and Edward J. Cutler House is located on the north side of Woodbine Street, near its intersection with North Main Street, in the Mount Hope neighborhood of Providence. This part of Mount Hope first developed as a middle class, Victorian-era streetcar suburb with small house lots averaging 50 feet wide. When the house was constructed in the summer of 1880, this was a relatively undeveloped section of Providence. Since construction, nearby house lots have been built up and the neighborhood is presently dominated by two and three-family housing, with numerous single-family houses scattered throughout. Nearby North Main Street is a busy commercial corridor.

The dwelling is situated in the southeast corner of a 0.09 acre lot that slopes down to the west. There is a small front garden, a modest side yard to the west of the house, and a small back yard. An approximately 3½-foot-tall, wood, picket fence marks the property's southern boundary.

Exterior

The house is an asymmetrical, one-and-one-half story tall, balloon frame structure with an L-shaped plan. The long leg of the L runs north-south, measuring 17 feet by 36 feet, while the east-west leg measures 17 feet by 27 feet. A one-story entry vestibule with adjoining entry porch, each 6 feet wide and 9 feet deep, is located where the two legs of the L intersect. Off the north (rear) elevation of the structure is a single story mudroom and butler's pantry appendage that is 16 wide by 5 feet deep and has a nearly-flat roof.

The house rests on a brick foundation that, due to the slope of the lot, sits just above grade on the east elevation and is tall enough on the west elevation for short, double-hung sash windows. Above the foundation, the house is sheathed in machine-sawn, wood clapboards with chamfered corner boards, and has a relatively steep, cross-gable, asphalt-shingled roof with a simple moulded cornice and built-in gutter. The roof features Stick style, ornamental truss-work in each of the three gable peaks (south, east and west). The truss is a king's post, composed of a chamfered vertical post that descends from the peak of the gable down to a horizontal chamfered beam. From this point, two curved chamfered supports radiate out to the soffit. Attached at the base of the vertical post is a turned pendant drop. Two slender brick chimneys with corbelled shoulders and concrete chimney caps sit on the ridge of the roof, one on each intersecting gable.

A richly ornamented, one-story entry vestibule and adjoining porch are located at the intersection of the two main blocks of the house, sheltered beneath a single, hipped roof with a wide fascia and decorative wood eaves brackets. The porch is supported by one square, chamfered column and two matching chamfered pilasters, each of which features flat, scroll-sawn, wood brackets. These supports sit atop large bases that rise to the same height as the balustrade and are capped with simple mouldings. The most ornamental feature of the entry porch is its scroll-sawn, wood balustrade that is somewhat Gothic Revival in appearance, incorporating cruciform shapes into the design. It is composed of separately sawn flat balusters wedged between the bottom and top rails of the balustrade. Three concrete steps lead up to the painted canvas-covered floor of the

porch. Within the porch a fascia runs the length of all four sides, rising from the supports, and meeting the ceiling with a simple crown moulding. The principal entrance to the house is centered in the south elevation of the entry vestibule. The front door, original to the structure, is composed of five elaborately moulded panels: two vertical panels on the bottom, a horizontal panel, and two narrow, vertical panels on top. The two upper panels are glazed with etched glass. The door is set within a simple, wood surround with a flat architrave capped with a substantial crown moulding. A small, gabled, plank-walled entrance shed to the basement extends off the porch's west elevation; it sits on a concrete foundation and was added after the house's initial construction.

Another notable decorative feature of the Cutler House is the large, rectangular, bay window that is centered on the first story of the south elevation of the north-south block of the building. It has a shallow-pitched, hipped roof with a wide fascia and decorative wood eaves brackets, matching the entry porch. The bay has three slender, one-over-one, double-hung, wood sash on the south elevation and one on the west and east. Chamfered posts frame the window openings and there are moulded panels beneath each window.

The remaining fenestration on the structure, except where noted otherwise, consists of relatively narrow, two-over-two, double-hung, wood sash. The window openings have moulded trim and slanted window-hoods supported by wooden brackets, similar to those promoted by period architect Calvert Vaux for a "picturesque variety of light and shadow."[1] On the south façade two such windows are evenly placed on the second story, above the bay window, and one slightly narrower one-over-one, double-hung window sits to the west of the entry vestibule. The west elevation is composed of a gable end with two hooded windows on each floor. The windows are horizontally aligned, but the windows on the first story are slightly farther apart than the windows above. To the south is the entry vestibule, which has a one-over-one, double-hung sash window, and the porch, which contains a two-over-two window to the parlor.

The north elevation, which does not have a gable at the roofline, includes a one-story, flat-roofed appendage that houses a butler's pantry and a mudroom. The door to the mudroom is accessed by a small flight of wooden stairs and is surmounted by a slightly enlarged version of the window hoods found elsewhere on the house. Historic photos show that pierced boards with a quatrefoil pattern were once attached beneath this staircase, though they are no longer present. This elevation has three windows: one to the butler's pantry; a one-over-one, double-hung, wood sash to the mudroom; and one to the dining room (to the west of the appendage). A small, plank-walled entry shed with a shallow-pitched, front-gable roof, leading to the cellar, extends off the north side of the appendage.

The east elevation has a cross-gable directly opposite the gable on the west elevation with the same fenestration pattern and ornamental truss-work. Directly to the south of the gabled portion of the elevation is a round window on the second story, which illuminates the interior stairway. To the south of this is a small window opening, just below the eave, with three-over-three,

[1] Calvert Vaux, *Villas and Cottages: A Series of Designs Prepared for Execution in the United States* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1864): 302.

double-hung, wood sash and simple wood moulding. Below this window, but not vertically aligned and slightly to the south, is a two-over-two window with a hood, like the majority of windows on the house.

Interior

The first floor plan consists of three rooms circulating around a central, east-west staircase: a parlor to the south of the stairs, a kitchen to the north, and a dining room to the west of the kitchen. An entry vestibule is located where the two blocks of the house intersect, leading to the stairway and providing direct access to the parlor and dining room. A butler's pantry extends off the north side of the kitchen and a mudroom is located to the west of the pantry, and can be accessed from the dining room. The interior finishes on the ground floor are the finest in the house. The entry vestibule, parlor and dining room feature a wide, plaster cornice; thickly moulded, wood window and door trim; ornate cast iron radiators; and highly decorative Victorian hardware, such as brass doorknobs.

The entry vestibule has an early electric lantern on a chain, hanging from a plaster medallion with a floral motif. A wide, moulded cornice runs the perimeter of the ceiling, and original, four-panel doors with highly ornate Victorian doorknobs lead to the parlor and dining room.

The front parlor is the largest and most embellished room in the house. The thin, uniform, machine-sawn floorboards are arranged decoratively with a few rows of floorboards running the perimeter of the room, as opposed to having all the floorboards run parallel to each other across the entire room. The parlor also has a substantial plaster cove cornice and a plaster medallion from which a central light fixture hangs. While the house originally had gas light fixtures, this fixture has either been converted to electric or replaced with an early electric fixture. The parlor has two expensive elements: a large bay window, which was considered a luxury when the house was constructed, and a soapstone fireplace surround, which is very similar to ones marketed locally by individuals such as J.W. Farnum in the Providence Almanac and Business Directory for 1880.[2]

The dining room displays similar decorative elements, with the same floor pattern, substantial cornice, and similar plaster medallion. While a chimney lies behind the room's eastern wall, it does not have a chimneypiece and the baseboard shows no sign of there ever having been one. Nevertheless, there are built-in chimney cupboards next to where the chimney goes through the room.

The secondary spaces on the ground floor consist of the kitchen, butler's pantry, and mudroom. The kitchen is still configured as it was in the 1920s, and includes a cast iron Glenwood cooking range with a Cooper Oven Thermometer on the door, patented in 1922. The kitchen finishes include historic beadboard wainscoting and window and door mouldings, and a modern vinyl floor. The fixtures and finishes in the butler's pantry may also date to the 1920s. They include a large, porcelain double sink with integrated porcelain backsplash, beadboard wainscoting, lower

[2] *The Providence Almanac and Business Directory for 1880* (Providence, RI: Sampson, Davenport, & Co.): 261.

beadboard cabinets, and upper glass-door cabinets. The mudroom, which is accessed from the dining room, is utilitarian with very little embellishment. An early 20th century light fixture hangs from the ceiling and some hooks are fastened to a board that runs along the wall.

The enclosed staircase to the second floor has a wood baseboard and, at the top of the stairs, a simple wood balustrade with a turned newel post and turned balusters. The stairs lead to a second-floor hall with painted wood floorboards of unequal width; a round window with wavy, machine-rolled, cylinder glass; and built-in cabinetry comprised of two large lower drawers and an upper cabinet with a panelled door, all with ornate Victorian hardware. The hall also has a capped gas light-fixture hookup that has survived the conversion to electricity, as well an electric pendant light hanging from the ceiling.

Originally, the second-story floor plan included four bed chambers: one over the parlor, one over the kitchen, and two over the dining room. A board partition was added to divide the bed chamber above the parlor, creating a bathroom beneath the slanted wall of the roof, probably around the turn of the twentieth century.[3] This arrangement continued until ca. 1989 when an additional bathroom was constructed by dividing the large bed chamber above the kitchen into a more substantial bathroom with a shower, toilet, and sink, while leaving the remainder of the room as a smaller bedroom. At the same time the wall between the two smaller bed chambers above the dining room was removed to create one large bedroom.[4] This is one of only a few changes the house has experienced since construction, and the only substantial change that occurred outside of the period of significance.

The floors on the second story are covered with thin, machine-sawn, wood floorboards of unequal width that have been painted. Each room has a closet, plastered walls, some of which are slanted, four-panel doors with porcelain door-knobs, a high baseboard, and wide moulded trim around the doors and windows.

The basement of the Cutler House is partially finished and was used as servants' quarters. The basement is divided into two halves by the stairs from the ground floor. There is one large, unfinished room beneath the parlor, which houses the structure's mechanical systems. The present homeowner covered the original dirt floor in this room with concrete. Unlike the other half of the basement, the floor joists above and the brick foundation walls show no signs of having been plastered at any point. On the western wall, a four-panel wooden door leads to the entry shed on that side of the house and to its north are two, two-over-two, double-hung, wood-sash windows. Below these windows is a large work bench and built-in shelves. A plank wall with a fixed three-light window separates the work bench area from the staircase that descends from the ground floor.

The northern half of the basement is finished and includes one room beneath the dining room and two smaller rooms beneath the kitchen. All three rooms are finished with plaster walls and

[3] The tub is marked L.H. Tillinghast Supply Co., a Providence firm that was organized in 1895 and active through the 1910s. *Domestic Engineering*, vol. LXXIX, no. 9 (Chicago: Domestic Engineering Company, 1917): 336.
[4] Jill Tyler (current property owner), interview, April 2014.

ceilings and beadboard wainscoting. In the large room, the wainscoting runs the length of the room and is capped with a moulding that forms the sills of the double-hung sash windows in the room. The windows take up the height of the plaster portion of the wall to the ceiling and trim consists of simple flat boards on either side of the opening. Each door also features simple, flat trim. The eastern wall of the room has a plaster-covered chimney stack with a simple mantle-shelf, but no firebox, and evidence of previously being connected to a cast iron stove. A four panel door on the north wall of the room leads to a staircase up to the entry shed on that side of the house. The floor is poured concrete.

The finishes in the small room beneath the northern part of the kitchen are significantly degraded. The western end of the room has simple, utilitarian built-in shelving and the southern wall has a hook-up for a gas light fixture. The floor is poured concrete. The other small room, beneath the southern part of the kitchen, has a hook-up for a gas light fixture on the eastern wall, an early toilet with a wooden tank in the northeast corner, and a cast iron radiator attached near the ceiling on the southern wall. The floor is covered in asbestos tile. Each of these rooms has one small, three-light window on the east wall, flush with the ceiling.

Outbuildings

A small, one-bay, wood-frame garage is located in the northeast corner of the Cutler House lot, behind the house. It is accessed via a narrow concrete driveway, with a grass median extending halfway up its length, which extends north from the southwest corner of the lot and then turns east. While no building permit exists for its construction, Providence City Atlas and Sanborn fire insurance maps show that the garage was built between 1921 and 1926. Sited perpendicular to the house, facing west, the garage has a front-gable roof with wide overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails. It is sheathed in wood, shiplap siding with corner boards. Simple craftsman-inspired brackets are located at the corner boards and at the peak of the gable. A six-light, wood, fixed-sash window is centered on the north and south elevations. The garage bears resemblance in material, composition, and detail to The Parkway garage marketed in the Sears & Roebuck Co. Catalogue, which was advertised as being able to "blend with homes of nearly any architectural style" due to its simple trim and neat lines.[5] The only change to the garage since its construction was the replacement of its original, deteriorated swing-out doors with an overhead door in 1995.

Landscape Features

The primary landscape feature on the property is a wooden picket fence running the length of the property line on Woodbine Street. The fence was originally constructed in 1894 by A. J. Barbour & Co., a firm specializing in carpentry and building that was hired by the second owner of the property, Abel Inman.[6] By the 1980s the fence had become rotted and was falling down and was partially replaced. The turned post finials and hardware were retained, but the pickets, posts, and rails were replaced with similar, but not identical, parts. The fence was again damaged in 1996 when a car drove through it and was subsequently repaired in-kind.

[5] "Garages, Log Cabins, Play Houses, Cottages" (Newark, NJ: Sears, Roebuck & Co., Home Construction Division, 1935): 5.
[6] Providence City Archives, Intention to Build No. 10029. 26 April 1894.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [ ] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] 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.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” 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
- [ ] 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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1880 – 1925

Significant Dates
1880 – house constructed
ca. 1921 – garage constructed

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

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 Susan S. and Edward J. Cutler House is significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of architecture. Built in 1880, the Cutler House is an unusually well-preserved example of a

Late Victorian, Stick style dwelling. Typical of the style, the house exhibits wood siding; a steeply-pitched, cross-gable roof; and decorative trusses – or "stick work" – in the gable peaks. In addition, the house's diminutive size and asymmetrical form reflects the "picturesque" cottages promoted by popular nineteenth-century authors, such as Andrew Jackson Downing. The Cutler House displays a high level of integrity on the exterior and interior, with a majority of its historic finishes and features surviving intact.

Period of Significance Justification

The period of significance begins in 1880 when the house was constructed and continues through 1925, thereby encompassing the construction of the garage around 1921 and the renovation of the kitchen around 1922.

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

Property History

The lot now occupied by the Susan S. and Edward J. Cutler House was carved from land that, for much of the nineteenth century, was known as the Cyrus Grant Estate. The Grant Estate was in the rural outskirts of Providence; its northern property line, at North Street (present-day Rochambeau Avenue), corresponded to the boundary between the cities of Providence and North Providence. (Land north of North Street was annexed by the City of Providence in 1874.) The future site of the Cutler House is shown in the 1875 Providence Atlas as part of an unplatted, 11-acre[7] estate owned by the "Heirs of Cyrus Grant," who had died in 1849. The estate extended north from present-day York Street to the old Dexter Farm on North Street (present-day Rochambeau Avenue) and east from North Main Street up the steep hill to Camp Street, along with a smaller detached plot of land on the corner of North Main and Royal Street, one block south.

The sole surviving heir to the estate, William Gansey Grant, had been deemed incapable of managing his affairs and was appointed a guardian in 1859 due to "excessive drinking."[8] Upon his death on November 22, 1875,[9] he left his estate in considerable debt.[10] In order to resolve his obligations, the land was surveyed and platted in December 1878 by the order of the Rhode Island Supreme Court, producing the "Plan of the Division of the William G. Grant Estate on North Main and other streets," which was recorded in March 1879.

Nearly all the surrounding farms and estates were similarly platted and subdivided into house lots during this period, in response to Providence's rapidly growing population as well as transportation improvements. The city's population doubled between 1865 and 1880 and again

[7] G.M. Hopkins & Co., *Atlas of Providence, Rhode Island, By Wards* (Philadelphia, PA: G.M. Hopkins & Co., 1875).
[8] Providence Probate Record #A7934 for William G. Grant, Providence City Archives.
[9] Providence Public Library, Providence Vital Records, Deaths, 14:6
[10] Providence Probate Record #A11402 for William G. Grant, Providence City Archives.

by 1910.[11] The decade leading up to 1880, when the Cutler House was built, saw one of Providence's fastest periods of growth as the city's population jumped more than 50% from 68,904 to 104,850 and the city nearly tripled in size from a "walking city" of 5.31 square miles to a "metropolis" of 14.76 square miles.[12] Tens of thousands of houses were constructed throughout the city, moving outward from the city core. The impetus for development in the Mount Hope neighborhood was twofold: its proximity to the industrial corridor along the Moshassuck River and the introduction of street railway service along North Main Street in 1875,[13] which shortened the commuting time to downtown. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the neighborhood took the shape of a streetcar suburb, with a rectilinear street pattern and small, narrow house lots that contained detached, single-family houses with small front yards.[14]

Samuel Hedly, a prominent real estate broker who helped subdivide much of the land in this area of Providence and advertised 3,000 lots and other land to sell in 1878, sold two lots in the Grant Estate Plat to Susan S. Cutler on October 8, 1879[15] for $200: Lot 14 on Woodbine Street and adjoining Lot 13 on Lancaster Street. At the time, Susan and her husband Edward J. Cutler lived just one block to the south at 39 Evergreen Street. On May 10, 1880 Mrs. Cutler submitted an Intention to Build a 25 foot tall, 1½-story, wood-frame dwelling on the north side of Woodbine Street, roughly 125 feet from North Main Street, that would cost $1,800.[16] The Cutler family was still living at 39 Evergreen Street when the 1880 U.S. Census was conducted in June. The taxes on the Woodbine Street property were adjusted for a house being constructed on July 31, 1880[17] and municipal services were run through Woodbine Street shortly thereafter; the street was graded and contoured in 1880[18] and water pipes were laid in 1882, extending west from Camp Street. [19]

By 1881, Susan and Edward Cutler, along with their two children, Mabel and Edward, were living at 12 Woodbine Street, the first home to be constructed in the William G. Grant Estate plat. The new house had servant's quarters in the basement, and evidently Sarah Rooney, a 23 year old servant from Ireland who was living with the Cutlers on Evergreen Street as of June 1880, moved with them to Woodbine Street later that summer. The presence of a live-in servant suggests that the Cutlers were financially comfortable, part of a growing middle class in Providence composed of clerks, managers, and professionals, who did "brain work" rather than engaging in manual labor.[20]

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[11] William McKenzie Woodward and Edward F. Sanderson, *Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources* (Providence, RI: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 1986): 59.
[12] John S. Gilkeson, *Middle-Class Providence, 1820-1940* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986): 137.
[13] Woodward and Sanderson, 22-23, 59.
[14] David L. Ames, *Draft National Register Bulletin on Suburban Development* (1998): 1-3.
[15] Providence, RI Registry of Deeds, Land Evidence Records, 8 October 1879, vol. 304: 305.
[16] Providence City Archives, Intention to Build No. 713, 10 May 1880.
[17] Providence, RI Tax Ledger Series C.2.241, 31 July 1880.
[18] Annual Report of the City Engineer, Providence, RI (Providence Press Company, 1880): 43.
[19] Annual Report of the City Engineer, Providence, RI (Providence Press Company, 1882): 34.
[20] Gilkeson, 95.

Susan Cutler (née Sheldon) was born in 1851 in Anthony, Rhode Island[21] to Lydia and Thomas Sheldon, an overseer at a cotton carding mill who held $2,500 in real estate in 1875. She grew up in Natick, Rhode Island and went to public school. Edward J. Cutler was born in Plainfield, Connecticut in 1847 to Job Herrick Cutler, a farmer, and Mary Wiley, a housewife. When Edward Cutler and Susan Sheldon married in Warwick, Rhode Island in 1870, Edward worked on a farm and held $4,000 in real estate and $5,000 in personal estate. To put the Cutlers' relative affluence into perspective, the controversial property requirement for voting in Rhode Island at this point was $134 in real estate and this "effectively disfranchised most of the state's naturalized citizens."[22]

Cutler first moved to Providence in 1877 when he founded Edward J. Cutler & Co., a broom manufacturing business on Pawtucket Avenue.[23] His business was one of only a few broom manufacturing outfits in Rhode Island and he appears to have been the leading broom corn dealer in the state. In 1887 Cutler entered into a business venture with a former competitor, John T. Kenyon. Building upon that partnership, Edward Cutler moved his family to Woodville, Rhode Island to begin a yarn manufacturing corporation with Kenyon, selling the house on Woodbine Street and the adjoining lot on Lancaster Street to Abel P. Inman in 1891.

Abel P. Inman was born in Massachusetts in 1849, to parents of old New England stock; his father was a machinist.[24] Abel Inman's wife, Elizabeth "Lizzie" (née McQuiltin), was born in Ireland in 1854 before immigrating in 1859.[25] Prior to purchasing the house on Woodbine Street, Inman worked as a machinist at the Angell Water Wheel Co. and lived at 293 Smith Street in Providence.[26] He later became a railroad engineer, first at the Providence & Worcester Railroad, and then, as of 1891, at the New York, Providence & Boston Railroad. This was the year that Inman moved to Woodbine Street with his wife and two children, Mabel A. Inman (born 1876 in Rhode Island) and George A. Inman (born 1879 in Rhode Island). By the 1900 U.S. Census, a 20 year-old female servant, Moriah Keenan, was living with them. Keenan was born in Rhode Island in May 1880 to Irish immigrants.

A few years after purchasing the property at 12 Woodbine Street, the Inmans constructed a wood picket fence on the southern lot line, as evidenced by an "Intention to Build" that was filed with the City in 1894. The fence was built by A. J. Barbour & Co., a firm specializing in carpentry and building.[27] In addition, research indicates that it was during the Inmans' period of ownership that a bathroom was added to the second floor of the house, by dividing the bed chamber above the parlor. The tub in the bathroom bears the mark of the L.H. Tillinghast Supply Co. from Providence, R.I., which was organized in 1895 and was seemingly most active prior to Mr. Tillinghast's death in 1918.[28]

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[21] Rhode Island State Census of 1885.
[22] Gilkeson, 110.
[23] Providence City Directory (Providence, RI: Sampson, Davenport, & Co., 1877).
[24] U.S. Census of 1850, City of Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island, p. 331, family 173.
[25] U.S. Census of 1900, City of Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island, p. 5, family 110.
[26] The Providence Directory (Providence: Sampson, Davenport, & Co., 1879): 100.
[27] Providence City Archives, Intention to Build No. 10029, 26 April 1894.
[28] *Domestic Engineering*, vol. LXXIX, no. 9 (Chicago: Domestic Engineering Company, 1917): 336.

In 1906, Abel Inman and his wife still owned the Lancaster Street lot adjoining 12 Woodbine Street, originally purchased by Susan Cutler. Inman erected a multi-family house on this lot, at 9 Lancaster Street, and moved there with Lizzie in 1906. Inman continued to own 12 Woodbine Street after his move, using it as an income property by renting the house to tenants. The demand for rental housing was strong in Providence at this time, as immigration swelled the city's population. The Mount Hope area took on a distinctly more urban character, becoming densely built-up with multi-family housing, which commonly took the form of the local vernacular urban housing type, the triple-decker.[29]

From 1906 to 1910, Philip A. Smith, a clerk and meat cutter at a nearby market, lived at 12 Woodbine Street. Philip, born in 1857 in Ireland,[30] lived with his daughters Isabelle, Eleanor, and Anna, his sons Edward and Vincent, and his sister-in-law Annie J. McAvoy. Philip's children held both white collar and blue collar positions in the city: Isabelle was sorter at a screw factory, Eleanor was a stenographer in a real estate office, Edward was a steam fitter at a foundry, and Vincent was a merchant in tea and coffee (self-employed). From 1911 to 1913, John Campbell, a rubber worker[31] born in Scotland,[32] lived at 12 Woodbine Street with his daughters Jeannie, a bookkeeper, and Sarah, a clerk for Brown & Sharpe Manufacturing (the nation's leading machine tool manufacturer).

The final renter of 12 Woodbine Street was Weston Eayrs, a dyer born near Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1873, who rented the house between 1914 and 1915. Eayrs was married to Carrie Chilson Smith of Greenville, Rhode Island. Attracted by the opportunities Rhode Island industry provided, Eayrs had left his position as a foreman dyer for Waterhouse & Howard of North Adams, MA in 1914 to accept a similar position at the Stillwater Worsted Company's plant in Harrisville, Rhode Island,[33] which had begun operations two years prior. He most likely took the train to work each day in Harrisville.[34] Eayrs chose to rent the house on Woodbine Street because his parents, Walter Frederick Eayrs and Margaret Westerhouse, lived a few blocks away on Camp Street and their help was needed to watch his and Carrie's several children.[35] One of his daughters, Elizabeth, was born at the house.

Lizzie Inman died in February 1914 and her husband Abel died one year later, in February 1915. Their daughter, Mabel A. Allen, was the executrix of her father's will. She sold the property at 12 Woodbine Street in November 1915 to Frank Kiernan, whose descendants would continue to live at the property for the next six decades, until 1981.

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[29] John H. Cady, *The Civic and Architectural Development of Providence, 1636-1950* (Providence: Book Shop, 1957): 230.
[30] U.S. Census of 1910, City of Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island, p. 3B, family 65.
[31] Providence House Directory (Providence, RI: Sampson, Murdock, & Co.), 1911.
[32] U.S. Census of 1910, City of Providence Ward 2, Providence County, Rhode Island, p. 1B, family 323.
[33] *Fibre & Fabric: A Record of American Textile Industries*, vol. 59, 7 (March 1914): 18
[34] Eayrs, Ted (grandson of Weston Eayrs), interview, April 2014.
[35] Eayrs, Ted (grandson of Weston Eayrs), interview, April 2014.

Frank Edward Kiernan was born in Providence in 1862 to Irish immigrants. He married Rosella E. Masterson, another child of Irish immigrants, in 1888 in Providence and had several children with her before her death in March 1900. As of 1920, Frank Kiernan was employed as a hostler at a stable and lived on Woodbine Street with six of his adult children: Mary was a cashier at a clothing store, Celia was not employed, Henry was a laborer at a cotton mill, Thomas was a machine operator at Brown & Sharpe Manufacturing, Leonard was a steam-fitter at the Lord Construction Company shipyard, and William was a steam-fitter at the International Braid Company. The Kiernan family members' jobs and heritage reflect the rapid demographic shifts in the neighborhood over the previous decade, when it became a largely Irish and working class area of the city.

The 1935 state census shows that most of the Kiernan children continued to live at Woodbine Street with their father, despite ranging in age from 36 to 46 years old. At the time Frank Kiernan was working as a laborer for the City of Providence, Henry was a dyer at United States Finishing Company on Charles Street, Mary was a sales clerk at the Outlet Company (a leading local department store), and Thomas was a letter carrier for the U.S. Government. Leonard had moved one block away to 70 Lancaster Street and was a fireman.

Throughout the time the Kiernan family lived at Woodbine Street, ownership of the house shifted between the various family members. Frank Kiernan created a joint tenancy with his eldest daughter, Celia, in June 1931. This lasted until his death on December 6, 1941, when Celia became the sole owner and created a joint tenancy with her sister Mary Louise in December 1944. Their brother Henry was also boarding with them until his death in 1958. When Celia died in May 1963, Mary became the sole surviving tenant and created a joint tenancy with her brother Thomas Edward. The year after Thomas' death in 1980, Mary Kiernan sold the property to the current owner, Jill Tyler.

Jill Tyler was a social worker for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services when she moved into the house at Woodbine Street.[36] She has made only minor alterations to the property, including the construction in 1989 of an additional, more substantial bathroom (with a shower, toilet, and sink) on the second floor, created by dividing the large bed chamber above the kitchen. At the same time the wall between the two smaller bed chambers above the dining room was removed to create one large bedroom.[37] This is one of only a few changes the house has experienced since construction, and the only substantial change that occurred outside of the period of significance. Ms. Tyler also partially replaced the ca. 1894 wood picket fence in the 1980s, by which point it had become rotted and was falling down. The turned post finials and hardware were retained, but the pickets, posts, and rails were replaced with similar, but not identical, parts. The fence was again damaged in 1996 when a car drove through it and was subsequently repaired in-kind. Ms. Tyler's strong preservation ethic has ensured that the Cutler House has retained a remarkable degree of integrity and today the structure is arguably the best preserved house on Woodbine Street.

[36] Providence Directory (Malden, MA: R. L. Polk & Co., 1986).
[37] Jill Tyler (current owner), interview, April 2014.

Architectural Significance

The Susan C. and Edward J. Cutler House is a remarkably intact example of a Late Victorian, Stick style residence that also displays characteristics of the "picturesque cottage" movement popularized in the mid-nineteenth century by authors like Andrew Jackson Downing, Alexander Jackson Davis and Calvert Vaux. The Stick style is an intermediary between the Gothic Revival and the Queen Anne; all three styles drew strongly from the English medieval design influences that were popular during the late nineteenth century. Hallmarks of the style include wood siding; steeply-pitched, cross-gable roofs; and decorative trusses – or "stick work" – in the gable peaks. The Stick style was popular in the northeastern United States from the 1860s to the 1880s, at which point the Queen Anne style rose to prominence.[38] In Providence, the Stick Style peaked from the mid-1870s to the early 1880s,[39] a period that encompasses the construction of the Cutler House in 1880.

The popularity of the Stick style can be attributed in part to its frequent appearance in house pattern books of the period, which disseminated "highly affordable and comfortable designs"[40] for homes to the middle class. House pattern books first appeared in the early to mid-nineteenth century, replacing the earlier "builders' guides,"[41] which were targeted at housewrights and tradesmen. Pattern books included designs for homes in plan, elevation, and three-dimensional drawings. The first prototype of a house pattern book, *Rural Residences*, was published by Alexander Jackson Davis in 1837. Like the pattern books that followed, *Rural Residences* featured designs for romantic, historically-inspired, "picturesque" cottages and villas, many in the Gothic Revival style.[42] While villas were intended for the well-to-do, the cottages envisioned by Davis and his contemporaries were designed for those of more modest means. In *The Architecture of Country Houses*, Andrew Jackson Downing described "What a Cottage Should Be" as:

> "…a dwelling of small size, intended for the occupation of a family, either wholly managing the household cares itself, or, at the most, with the assistance of one or two servants. The majority of such cottages in this country are occupied, not by tenants, dependents, or serfs, as in many parts of Europe, but by industrious and intelligent mechanics and workingmen, the bone and sinew of the land, who own the ground upon which they stand…"[43]

Cottages were based on the same principles and featured the same picturesque characteristics as the villa,[44] but on a smaller and simplified scale adjusted to the means of the owner. Downing praised picturesque suburban dwellings as healthy, comfortable, practical, close to nature, and

[38] Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1986): 256.
[39] Woodward and Sanderson, 80.
[40] Alma deC. McArdle, *Carpenter Gothic: Nineteenth Century Ornamented Houses of New England* (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1978): 21.
[41] Vincent Scully, *The Stick Style and the Shingle Style* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971): xxv – xxvii.
[42] William Pierson, *American Buildings and Their Architects*, vol. 2 (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1976): 296.
[43] Pierson, 391.
[44] Pierson, 305, 392.

cultured.[45] By the 1850s, the cottage "had become one of the most uniquely American developments of the nineteenth century."[46]

The Cutler House fits Downing's description of a cottage, and it is quite possible that the Cutlers chose the design for their house from a pattern book; it is very similar to designs published by period architectural writers such as Calvert Vaux. The existence of an identical house less than one mile away at 30 Fourth Street, built between 1882 and 1895, reinforces the notion that the Cutler House was built based on a pattern book design. (The house at 30 Fourth Street has been subsequently vinyl-sided and has lost nearly all of its architectural detailing.)

In addition to house pattern books, the development and dissemination of the Stick style and other picturesque modes depended on technological advancements in wood-working. Heavy-timber framing was replaced first with braced-frame construction and then with balloon-frame construction, which was developed in Chicago during the 1830s. Balloon-frame systems were constructed of "two-inch boards varying in width joined only by nail joints" rather than the complex joinery of post-and-beam systems. These lighter framing techniques were partially the result of the growth of standard-sized commercially sawn lumber and mass-produced wire nails.[47] Balloon-frame construction allowed houses to have the asymmetrical massing that became characteristic of Victorian-era architecture,[48] as seen at the Cutler House.

The nineteenth century also saw marked advancements in the production of architectural elements and millwork, which made the various characteristic ornamental elements of the time, such as brackets, scrolls and bargeboard, available to a wider audience. The jigsaw, "one of the major advances in building technology" during this period, allowed for the rapid replication of an "inexhaustible variety" of shapes. The jigsaw and the scroll saw were especially good for cutting curves, though the shapes they cut were flat, unlike the rounded, hand-carved shapes seen in earlier periods.[49] Examples of jig- or scroll-sawn ornament at the Cutler House include the brackets at the bay window and porch and the porch balustrade. In addition, the system of mass production and replicable patterns changed patterns of ownership[50] by making single family suburban cottages affordable for middle class homeowners like Susan and Edward Cutler.

The design of the Cutler House reflects both the picturesque cottage movement, in terms of its asymmetrical plan and massing, and the Stick style, in terms of its architectural ornament. Asymmetry and irregularity were prized by proponents of the picturesque; at the Cutler House, these attributes are evident in the dwelling's L-shaped form and the bay window, which breaks up the plane of the building's south elevation. Other features common to picturesque architecture that appear at the Cutler House include the slender brick chimneys with corbelled shoulders and the decorative window hoods. In his popular, mid-nineteenth-century house pattern books,

[45] James Yarnall, *Newport through Its Architecture* (Newport, RI: Salve Regina University Press, 2005): 38.
[46] Pierson, 306.
[47] Yarnall, 38.
[48] Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Interior Architecture, 1870-1940* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2009): 56.
[49] Pierson, 419-420.
[50] Gottfried, 63.

Andrew Jackson Downing argued that, even at houses of modest cost, "the front door and principal or first floor windows should be recognized as something more than mere openings, by lintels, hoods, or borders (dressings)" and that chimneys should be improved "by a pleasing form or simple ornaments, or merely by having the usual clumsy mass lightened and separated into parts."[51] The architect Calvert Vaux likewise advocated the use of window hoods, to minimize solar heat gain "without shutting it out entirely" and to allow the window to remain open during rain storms, while also adding "to the artistic effect" of the building.[52] Downing and Vaux also promoted porches and verandas, with Vaux recommending that the posts be enriched with carving or chamfering and that the balustrade feature either turned balusters or that it be "composed of a flat surface, pierced with a pattern."[53] The entry porch at the Cutler House exhibits chamfered posts and a flat, patterned balustrade.

Key characteristics of the Stick style, all present at the Cutler House, include wooden wall-cladding; steeply-pitched roofs; cross-gables; chamfered posts and corner boards; and overhanging eaves. The style takes its name from its use of Medieval-derived decorative detailing executed in wood ("stick work"), including ornamental gable trusses intended to imitate the exposed structure displayed by half-timbered architecture. The cross-bracing on the Cutler House specifically mimics a king's post, which is the most common form in Stick style architecture.[54] At the same time, the residence includes some features associated with other styles, such as the bracketed cornices at the bay window and the porch, a hallmark of the Italianate style. This is typical for Providence, where treatment of the Stick style was marked by eclecticism and reflected a general "fluidity among the various sources and styles" of the time.[55]

The interior features and layout of the Cutler House likewise reflect the popular arrangements and characteristics of residences in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, which were influenced by technological advancements in heating. Instead of a floor plan composed of parlors arranged symmetrically around a central hall or chimney, as had previously been common, asymmetrical massing allowed interior spaces to be arranged in ways that placed an emphasis on proximity as a result of convenience and similar function. Kitchens during this period experienced the most change, with increased modernization and mechanization. In particular, running water and cooking ranges, as opposed to a hearth, became standard. It is not known whether the current kitchen configuration in the Cutler House is original to the house's construction, but, based on the presence of the ca. 1922 cooking range, it dates to at least the 1920s. The kitchen is very typical of that era, with beadboard wainscoting, a large cast iron cooking range, and a butler's pantry with glass upper cabinets and beadboard lower cabinets and a large porcelain sink. Specialized storage also appeared in houses around this time, particularly closets in each bedroom,[56] which the Cutler House boasts. The relative affluence of the Cutler family is reflected in the presence of servant's quarters in the cellar; in later decades, this arrangement allowed the house to be occupied by extended families.

[51] Pierson, 392.
[52] Vaux, 107-108.
[53] Vaux, 112-113.
[54] McAlester, 255-257.
[55] Woodward and Sanderson, 79.
[56] Gottfried, 13, 24.

The decorative treatments of the interior also conform to the standards of the era. For example, each of the "social rooms" in the house, the hall, parlor, and dining room, has an ornamental plaster ceiling medallion with a pendant lighting fixture, as well as multi-layered trim, with multiple pieces composing an architrave or crown moulding. Mantels of this period typically feature classical motifs such as an arched opening and a keystone, like the painted soapstone fireplace in the parlor in the Cutler House. As is especially common in vernacular structures of the period, the wood on the second floor of the house is of a lower quality than that on the first floor, and the ground floor has highly ornamented brass door hardware compared to the plain porcelain hardware on the second floor.[57] These aspects of the house represent typical period techniques for saving money that reflect the middle-class nature of the home.

The Susan C. and Edward J. Cutler House is an excellent example of a Late Victorian residence that displays key characteristics of the Stick style, including a steeply-pitched roof, cross-gables, and decorative wood trusses in the gable peaks. Typical of the Stick style in Providence, the house also incorporates elements from other styles, including Italianate-style eaves brackets. The Cutler House relates also to the mid-nineteenth-century "picturesque cottage" movement, which, through popular house pattern books, promoted the construction of small-scale, finely designed homes away from the urban core to an emerging middle class. The house is remarkably well-preserved, with most of its exterior and interior historic finishes and features intact.

[57] Gottfried, 113-115.

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Additional Resources

Eayrs, Ted. Grandson of Weston Eayrs. Interview. April 2014.

Tyler, Jill. Current Owner. Interview. April 2014.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
_____Federal agency
_X_ Local government
____ University
_____Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.09

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 41.845885 Longitude: -71.404950

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

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

The property encompasses 0.09 acres and is comprised of Providence Tax Assessor's Plat 5, Lot 323.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the nominated property are the same as they were when the Cutler House was built in 1880.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Dylan Peacock
organization: _____
street & number: 103 Parade Street
city or town: Providence state: Rhode Island zip code: 02909
e-mail: dpeacock204@g.rwu.edu
telephone: 603-944-7432
date: January 2015

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.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: The Susan S. and Edward J. Cutler House

City or Vicinity: Providence County: Providence State: Rhode Island

Photographer: Dylan Peacock Date Photographed: May 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 15 View of Cutler House, showing south and west elevations.

2 of 15 View of Cutler House, showing west elevation.

3 of 15 View of Cutler House, showing south and east elevations.

4 of 15 View of Cutler House, showing north elevation.

5 of 15 View of Cutler House, showing detached garage.

6 of 15 View of Cutler House, showing current fence condition.

7 of 15 View of Cutler House, showing scroll-sawn porch balustrade.

8 of 15 View of Cutler House cellar, showing finished room beneath dining room.

9 of 15 View of Cutler House dining room, looking south and showing interior finishes.

10 of 15 Detail of Cutler House dining room, showing ceiling medallion.

11 of 15 View of Cutler House kitchen, showing ca. 1922 cooking range.

12 of 15 View of Cutler House parlor, looking south and showing the bay window and radiator.

13 of 15 View of Cutler House parlor, looking northeast and showing the chimneypiece.

14 of 15 View of Cutler House parlor, looking northwest and showing interior finishes and vestibule.

15 of 15 Detail of main entrance door in the Cutler House vestibule, showing door hardware.

Aerials
Google Maps
Date: January 2015

1 of 2

2 of 2

Additional Information
Photo of Carrie and Frederick Eayrs, showing original fence at 12 Woodbine Street, ca. 1914.

Photo of Carrie Eayrs and daughter Elizabeth, showing back entry at 12 Woodbine Street, ca. 1914.

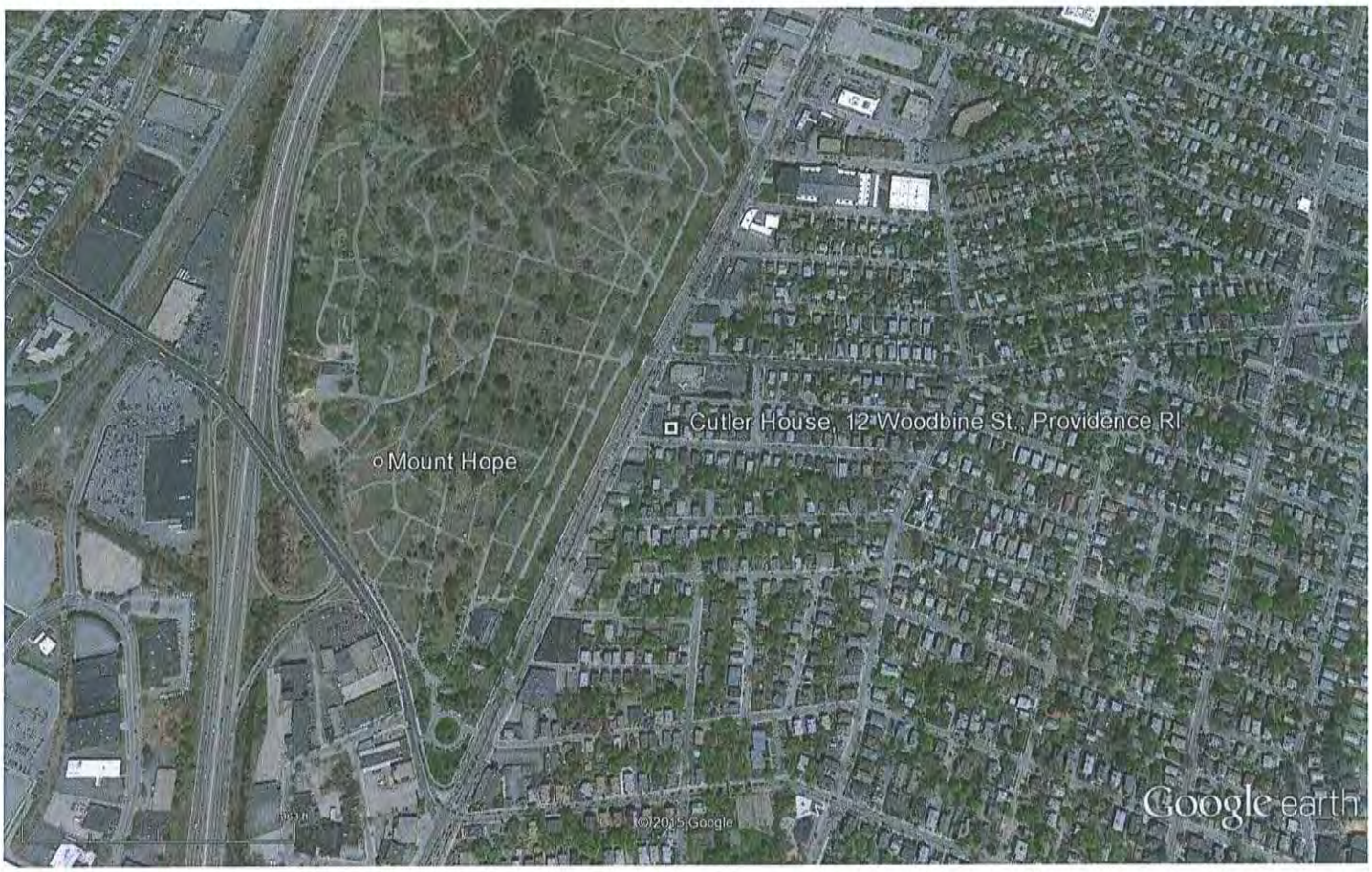
Providence assessor's map 5, showing boundaries of Cutler House property.

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

Additional Information

Photo of Carrie and Frederick Eayrs, showing original fence at 12 Woodbine Street, ca. 1914. Courtesy of Ted Eayrs.

Photo of Carrie Eayrs and daughter Elizabeth, showing back entry at 12 Woodbine Street, ca. 1914. Courtesy of Ted Eayrs.



Google earth

feet 2000
meters 700

Cutler House
12 Woodbine Street
Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island

Coordinates: 41.845885, -71.404950

Google earth

feet 200
meters 80

Cutler House
12 Woodbine Street
Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island

Coordinates: 41.845885, -71.404950