

**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: Cedar Hill

Other names/site number: Reed, Mrs. Elizabeth I.S., Estate;  
"Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum"

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: 4157 Post Road

City or town: Warwick State: RI Zip Code: 02818 County: Kent

Not For Publication:  Vicinity: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 \_\_\_x statewide \_\_\_ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

\_\_\_x A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_x C \_\_\_ D

<p><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b> <u>RI Historical Preservation &amp; Heritage Commission</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>
<p><b>Title :</b></p>	<p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

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#### 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object



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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Victorian/Gothic Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation and Walls: Stone/granite; Roof: Asphalt and Copper; Other: Wood

### 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.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Perched on top of a steep hill overlooking Greenwich Bay, "Cedar Hill" is an extraordinarily well preserved example of a large, luxurious country estate founded by a wealthy industrialist family in Warwick, Rhode Island, in the late 19th century; it is also the lone survivor of its type in the Cowesett section of the city. Built for Elizabeth Ives Slater Reed shortly after her marriage to Alfred Augustus Reed, Jr., and designed by the prominent Providence architect William R. Walker, Cedar Hill was constructed between 1871 and 1877. The imposing 3-1/2 story<sup>1</sup> Gothic Revival-style, granite mansion has four full-height, gabled, projecting pavilions; a massive, hip-roofed porte-cochere; and an elaborate 1-story, hip-roofed, wooden wrap-around porch. It is

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<sup>1</sup> When viewed from the outside, the house appears to be 2-1/2 stories tall because the cornice is located above the second floor level. However, on the interior, the house is actually 3-1/2 stories tall: the third floor has full height (11 foot) ceilings, plus an attic above.

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topped by a cross-gable and hip roof with multiple gabled dormers. Consistent with the Gothic Revival style, the house features pointed-arch windows and ornate wood bargeboard trim. The remarkably intact interior boasts generously proportioned rooms and extensive Late Victorian decorative woodwork, plasterwork, and painted finishes, executed by a team of highly skilled New England artisans. The mansion is in generally good condition. The nearly 28-acre estate also features gardens, lawns, and wooded areas, as well as three contributing outbuildings: an 1872 wood-frame carpenter's shop and a 1906 brick stable, both built during Mrs. Reed's lifetime and both in good condition; and a ca. 1930 fire station in fair condition. Since its construction, the mansion has remained a private owner-occupied residence, but in 2004 it was opened to the public as the "Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum." The property as a whole retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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## Narrative Description

### SETTING/TOPOGRAPHY

Cedar Hill's 27.38 acres occupy a roughly T-shaped lot, measuring about 250 feet along the west side of Post Road, about 1,000 feet across the rear lot line, and about 1,600 feet in depth. Much of this lot consists of a large hill that rises west of Post Road. When the mansion was built in 1871-1877, the estate was much the same size, although the property was configured somewhat differently, as a rectangular lot (in two parcels on either side of Post Road) stretching from Greenwich Bay westward and uphill to Love Lane.<sup>2</sup> (The present configuration of the lot is the result of extensive land acquisition, and subsequent disposition, by later owners over a period of more than a century.) Two historic photos taken ca. 1875-1880 (*see Photos 28 and 29*), show it standing on the open hilltop, with only a few trees nearby, so presumably it was visible from some distance away in many directions. Over time, the estate has become substantially more tree-covered; the house, which is set back about 1,200 feet<sup>3</sup> from Post Road, cannot now be seen from the street, but it still commands views of Greenwich Bay.

Cedar Hill is situated in the Cowesett neighborhood of south-central Warwick, between the village of Apponaug (which has been the city's civic and government center since the 1830s) and the neighboring town of East Greenwich. Cedar Hill lies approximately 1.5 miles south of the intersection of Post Road (RI Route 1) and Centerville Road (RI Route 117) in Apponaug, and about a mile north of Division Street, which is the boundary between the two municipalities. Post Road, a heavily traveled two-lane highway, runs close to the shoreline of Greenwich Bay as

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<sup>2</sup> Deed Book 37, Pages 265 and 298; also "Map of the Alfred Reed Estate, Coweset [*sic*], Warwick" (1872).

<sup>3</sup>Anne D. Holst.

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it passes by Cedar Hill. On the east side of Post Road, where a narrow strip of relatively flat land reaches to the water, is a railroad line that was first laid out in 1837 and remains active today (although the Cowesett depot, which was located just east of Post Road about a quarter mile north of Cedar Hill, does not survive). On the west side of Post Road, a steep hill (formerly known as "Drum Rock Hill"<sup>4</sup>) rises to about 150-200 feet in height.<sup>5</sup> Proximity to both Post Road and the railroad depot, and the spectacular views afforded by the hilltop setting, all contributed to the establishment of country estates like Cedar Hill in then-rural Cowesett in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

While Post Road dates back to Colonial times and has some surviving 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings, it also reflects the intensive suburban development that has occurred since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century: single family homes, apartment or condominium buildings, various businesses, and other non-residential uses now line the stretch of Post Road between Apponaug and the East Greenwich town line. Many of these more recent buildings are similar in height (1 to 2 stories) to their earlier neighbors, but have substantially larger scale and different setbacks, and frequently utilize modern materials like concrete, masonry veneers, and vinyl siding.

Along the west side of Post Road, particularly between Cowesett Road and Bay View Road, are several sections of tall stone walls and, occasionally, pairs of stone gateposts (some of which still hold iron gates). These are remnants of other 19<sup>th</sup> century country estates in Cowesett that were subdivided for suburban housing development in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> (Cedar Hill does not have stone walls along its front property line, or stone pillars marking its driveway.) One such estate, immediately north of Cedar Hill, belonged to Mrs. Reed's father-in-law, Alfred Augustus Reed, Sr. and was established just a few years prior to Cedar Hill. The elder Reed's home was demolished about 1930, and in 1935 his estate was platted with several dozen house lots situated on curving roads in a development called "Crestwood at Cowesett." Crestwood was fully built out by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with single family suburban homes, and a small cluster of similar houses stands near the southeast corner of the Cedar Hill property. But most of the land west and south of Cedar Hill, as far as Love Lane and Cedar Street, respectively, remains heavily wooded and only sparsely developed, which contributes to Cedar Hill's continued integrity of setting. All adjacent housing is well screened from the historic estate by mature trees, and presents little visual intrusion.

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<sup>4</sup>See 1895 Atlas of Southern Rhode Island, p. 158.

<sup>5</sup> See USGS map, attached.

<sup>6</sup> The stone walls and gateposts belonging to the former estate of Amasa Sprague II stand on Post Road and Cowesett Road, while the gateposts mark the entrance to what was the estate's carriage driveway, and is now a public street called Valentine Circle, part of a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century suburban development.

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Cedar Hill is approached via the estate's original carriageway, now paved in asphalt, which winds uphill past several stands of mature trees and expanses of lawn. At the top of the hill, the driveway circles around the house, branches off in several directions leading to various outbuildings, and loops back to the main drive. (See "Landscape Features," below, for a more detailed description.)

## THE MANSION

Architect William R. Walker's design for Cedar Hill was executed by general contractor French, Mackenzie and Company of Providence, stone mason Raymond A. Rathbun of West Greenwich, R.I., and woodwork contractor Nathaniel Elliot of Providence. Several other highly skilled artisans and craftsmen worked on the interior of the house. Among the most notable of these, master wood carver Charles Dowler of Providence produced the mantelpieces in the reception room, library, and dining room, as well as the newel post and corner posts on the main stairs, and the bookcases in the library. The Boston firm of W.J. McPherson & Co. produced all of the elaborate wall and ceiling stencils, as well as the etched glass used in doors and light fixtures. Kelly & Mooney, also of Boston, created the ornamental plasterwork.<sup>7</sup>

Unless otherwise noted herein, all dimensions, materials, architectural features, and decorative details are original, intact, and in good condition.<sup>8</sup>

### Exterior Architectural Features

The mansion stands at the top of the estate's prominent hill, facing east. The building consists of a 3-1/2 story<sup>9</sup> tall main block with a raised granite foundation, a hipped-and-cross-gable roof, and a full-height, gable-roofed projecting pavilion on each of its four elevations. A 3-1/2 story tall, gable-roofed service ell extends off the west elevation of the main block and a hip-roofed porte-cochere extends off the north. The main block, ell and porte-cochere are of granite, laid in random bond. An elaborate, 1-story, wood, hip-roofed porch wraps around the southern half of the east façade, as well as the entire south elevation and a portion of the west elevation.

Both the main block and the ell have three bays of fenestration on each side. The main block is approximately 57 feet wide (north to south) and 44 to 50 feet deep (east to west), not including

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<sup>7</sup> Invoices from Dowler, Kelly & Mooney, and McPherson are in the Clouds Hill archives. See also Hershon, p. 18. The name(s) of the artisan(s) who carved the parlor and main hall mantelpieces, as well as the dining room sideboards, were not specified.

<sup>8</sup> Anne D. Holst provided all dates and descriptions of repair work and alterations noted in this section.

<sup>9</sup> See footnote 1.

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the porte-cochere and the wrap-around porch. The ell measures about 37 feet wide by 28 feet deep, not including a 1-story enclosed entryway and an areaway containing stairs down to the basement (both on its west side). The main block rises to a height of about 53 feet above grade. The gable-roofed service ell is a few feet shorter than the main block, and, on the interior, there is a corresponding difference between the second and third floor levels of both sections.

The exterior exhibits numerous elements of the Gothic Revival style. (See Photos 1, 2, 3, and 4.) The steeply pitched roof, sheathed in asphalt shingle and sheet copper, has three gabled wall dormers and six gabled roof dormers which, like the projecting pavilions, are trimmed with ornate bargeboards with cross-bracing. A cast iron cresting rail encloses the copper portion of the roof. The three wall dormers have pointed-arch window openings; in the gable peaks at the pavilions and roof dormers, the tops of the windows are shaped as half-hexagons to suggest a pointed arch. The massive porte-cochere at the main entrance, with pointed arch detailing, and the full-width porch wrapping around three elevations, with flattened arch detailing, are particularly exuberant expressions of typical Gothic features. Most of the windows in the main block of the house have molded crowns, as does the east doorway. Most of the chimney pots are paired.

The Tarbox quarry in West Greenwich, R.I. supplied the pink-toned salt-and-pepper granite used for the foundation, walls, six chimneys, porte-cochere, porch supports, and six sets of steps (one on each side of the house, rising up to the first floor level, and two more in the ell, leading down to the basement). Gray-blue granite trim from the Welcome Whipple quarry in Lincoln, R.I. includes belt courses at all three floor levels on the main house and between the basement and first floor in the ell; quoins at each corner; window lintels and sills; door lintels; and embellishments on the porte-cochere's columns and Tudor arch openings. The Garnkirk chimney pots are clay.

The two primary entrances to the main block are located in the middle bays on the east façade and the north elevation, sheltered respectively under the wrap-around porch and the porte-cochere.

The wrap-around porch is 12 feet wide on the east and south, with shallow insets on both of those sides, and 9 feet wide on the west; it extends 44 feet along the east side, 69 feet along the south, and 15 feet along the west. From deck to ceiling, the porch is entirely constructed of wood. Chamfered square columns (grouped in pairs and threes at each corner) separate the heavy, decorative railings from similarly robust ornamentation below the porch roof, including flattened arches with drop ornaments in the openings between the columns, and paired cornice brackets at each corner. The porch's ceiling has a decorative pattern of exposed (non-structural) beams, as well as deep crown moldings. Under the deck, cast iron grates span the distance between the granite plinths that support the porch structure. The ceiling and floor were rebuilt in 1997, and some portions of the railing were replaced in kind.

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Sheltered under the east side of the porch is the main entrance to the house, which is now also the primary visitor entrance to the museum. The large, rectangular, recessed doorway is topped by a massive carved granite lintel, and protected by wood and glass double leaf storm doors. (See *Photo 30*.) The recess, which is approximately three feet deep, has wood paneled walls and decorative exposed beams on its ceiling, as at the porch. The approximately ten-foot tall double-leaf paneled wood primary doors feature large etched glass panels.

While a stately porte cochere might normally be expected to signify the main entrance, here it covers a side entrance that was only used in inclement weather.<sup>10</sup> The porte-cochere is about 18 feet square, with massive columns, Tudor arch openings on three sides, and a bracketed cornice at its hipped roof. Like the porch, its ceiling has a decorative pattern of exposed (non-structural) beams. The north entrance is recessed within a large rectangular opening that is about the same size as the east entrance, here topped by a hefty but simple granite lintel. Wood and glass double-leaf storm doors (matching those on the east entry) protect the solid wood panel double-leaf primary doors, which are shaped to fit into a Tudor arch interior door frame.

As noted above, the second and third floor levels of the ell are several feet lower than in the main block, but within each section of the house, the window and door openings generally align vertically as well as horizontally at the basement, first and second floor levels. The third floor windows and dormers variously align with windows below or are centered between bays on lower floors.

The basement level has segmental arch window openings, which are paired on the north façade and east elevation. Most of these openings contain arched 2-light, wood, hopper sashes guarded by cast iron grates; two openings on the north side, where the coal chutes used to be, are covered with painted plywood.

Above the basement level, all windows in the main block are double-hung, wood sash. On the first floor, the window openings are nearly floor-to-ceiling height (about 12 feet tall); they get progressively smaller on the second and third floors, but are still sizeable (about 7 feet and 5 feet tall, respectively). Most windows are single units in a 2/2 configuration; however, each of the four principal rooms on the first floor has a tripartite window with two narrow 1/1 sash flanking a wider 1/1, and above each tripartite window, each of the four bedrooms on the second floor has a pair of narrow 1/1 sash. Another pair of 1/1 sashes on the second floor above the porte-cochere illuminates the main stairway. On the third floor level, both of the large stone wall dormers near the southeast corner of the house have pairs of narrow, arched-

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<sup>10</sup> In the original doorbell system (which is still functional), when the east doorbell rings, the annunciator in the kitchen signals "front door;" the north doorbell signals "side door."

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top, 1/1 sash, separated by a decorative pilaster, all recessed within a pointed arch opening. The other dormers contain single unit 2/2 windows with a half-hexagonal top sash over a rectangular bottom sash. The first and second floor windows have modern aluminum storm windows (the original wood storm windows are stored on the premises).

The service ell has two secondary entrances: in the easternmost bay of its south elevation, under the wrap-around porch; and in the northernmost bay of its west elevation. Both of these entrances have been modified, but in a sensitive manner that respects the historic design and fabric, and would be readily reversible.

The south entrance has a simple granite lintel over a recessed wood and glass storm door that incorporates a transom window. The storm door protects a wood paneled door with a large etched glass panel. In 2008 a wheelchair lift was installed on the west side of the porch (one section of railing was removed, and is stored on site), and the porch deck between the lift and the south entrance was modified (in wood) to ramp up to the door. A simple metal pipe railing runs along one side of the ramp.

The west entrance is the "back door," regularly used by the building's current occupants. This is a large, simple paneled wood door with a large translucent glass window, recessed within an opening surrounded by pink and gray granite trim, which tapers up to the level of the second floor window sills. This entrance is now enclosed within a 1-story, hip-roofed, wood and MDO board structure that was built in 2002 to replace the original wood landing and removable wooden stoop (now stored on site). This enclosure features wood steps, a modern paneled wood and glass door in its south face, and two metal-framed single-light windows on its west side; it also incorporates a small portion of an original wood railing that used to enclose the former stoop.

The ell also provides two entrances to the basement. A wooden bulkhead is tucked into a recess on the north side where the ell meets the main block; inside the bulkhead, granite steps lead down to a large, solid panel wood door. A granite areaway also runs parallel to the west elevation; at the bottom of the areaway steps (underneath the back door) is a paneled wood door with a translucent glass panel. An ornamental wood railing that used to surround this areaway was lost to age and deterioration; temporary concrete and metal bollards now stand in its place.

The basement windows in the ell match those in the main block. First and second floor window openings (which are all the same size) typically have 2/2 double-hung, wood sash; however, in the middle bays of the second floor on both north and south sides are blind windows infilled with recessed granite, and on the second floor above the south entrance is an octagonal window. All third floor windows, including the dormers, are also 2/2 double-hung, wood sash with half-hexagonal upper sashes, as in the main block. All of the rectangular window openings

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in the ell's granite walls are trimmed with simple rectangular granite lintels and sills. The third floor window on the north side has granite trim mimicking its half-hexagonal top (suggesting a pointed arch), and the octagonal window on the south side has correspondingly octagonal trim.

The exterior of the house is generally in good condition. To address deterioration wrought by age and weather, various repairs to rooftop elements (including materials, chimneys, finials, and cresting rail) have been done in the past 40 years. Historic materials were salvaged and reused where possible (e.g., cast iron cresting rails), and materials that could not be salvaged were either replaced in-kind (e.g., copper sheet roofing, wood finials) or with appropriate substitute materials (e.g., cedar roof shingles replaced with asphalt shingles). An original, badly deteriorated ornamental parapet on the porch roof was removed, and the pitch of that roof was altered slightly to enable better drainage. A small flat skylight on the north roof slope above a bathroom, which had been added in the 1950s, was replaced in-kind.

### Main House – Interior

The original layout and interior finishes of the house have changed little since the 1870s.<sup>11</sup> (*See current floor plans/photo key maps, attached.*)

The basement, which has 9-foot ceilings, lies underneath the entire house, and is cut into bedrock. The basement has its own distinct floor plan and interior finishes; here there is no distinction between the main block and the ell, unlike the floors above. All access to the basement is provided through the ell: either from the back stairs, which provide vertical circulation from the basement all the way up to the third floor, or via the two exterior doors at the north bulkhead and west areaway (described above). These three access points feed into a long corridor that runs underneath the house from west to east. Fifteen rooms, passageways, and partially enclosed spaces are arranged in linear fashion around this corridor.

The basement today is primarily used for storage, although it also contains modern heating, hot water, and electrical equipment. The original uses of the various basement spaces were as follows. Proceeding eastward from the west door, on the north side of the corridor are two coatrooms for non-resident staff; an alcove containing the bulkhead door; an enclosed ash pit; two coal bins; and a storage room for preserved foods. The gardener's room, which is raised up one step above the basement floor, is at the east end of the corridor. On the south side of the corridor, again proceeding from west to east, are the laundry room, the back stairs (with a

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<sup>11</sup> The Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum has extensive collections of Late Victorian period furniture, textiles, light fixtures, artwork, and decorative objects, many of which were owned by Mrs. Reed or her descendants. In addition, artifacts related to original or historical systems for heating, gas lighting, plumbing, communications, fire protection, and security alarms also remain. While these items play an important role in the interpretation of the house as a museum, they are not described in this narrative.

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closet underneath that used to be the staff toilet room), the furnace room, the boiler room, and a storage room that contains the original ventilation duct for the boiler room. Two short perpendicular passageways lead to two more storage rooms on the south side of the house.

The house is built on ledge, so the basement floor under the main block is stone, with its original cement coating still mostly intact; the ell portion of the basement has wood flooring. The granite exterior walls are generally finished with whitewashed stucco, but in the two coat rooms, the laundry room, and the gardener's room, the walls are covered by varnished wood tongue-and-groove boards that also line the recesses of the windows. The back stairway and the interior partition walls are clad in vertical boards; however, the furnace and boiler rooms, as well as the former coal bins and ash pit, all have whitewashed brick walls. The underside of the wood flooring above, with exposed joists, forms the basement ceiling; most of this is simply whitewashed, although the two coat rooms have (or had) ceilings finished with lath-and-plaster, and the laundry room and gardener's room both have varnished tongue-and-groove boards on their ceilings. Many basement rooms have solid wood paneled doors. The basement has had some storm-related flooding problems in the past, which has contributed to the deterioration of some of the materials at this level.

In the main block of the house, the first floor plan consists of four principal rooms surrounding two perpendicular hallways, which are oriented east-west and north-south in relation to the two primary entrances. Each principal room occupies a corner of the main block: the reception room and the dining room are on the north side of the main hall, with the side hall and main stairway between them, while the parlor and the library are on the south side of the main hall. At the northeast corner of the side hall, next to the north doorway, is a small half-bathroom.

Despite the typically dark Late Victorian interior décor, the first floor level has a sense of openness and light. The spaces, doors, and windows are all generously proportioned. The main hallway is approximately 12 feet wide by 43 feet long; the side hallway is nearly 7 feet wide by 24 feet long; and the main staircase is about 5 feet wide (maintaining that width for its entire height up to the third floor). The four principal rooms range from 17 feet square to 17 feet by 23 feet. Ceilings throughout are 13 feet high. Each room has two doorways, providing easy circulation: the reception room opens into both hallways; the parlor and library are connected to each other as well as the main hallway; and the dining room is accessed both from the main hall and from the butler's pantry in the adjacent ell. Just as the floor-to-ceiling windows in each room provide light, air, and visual connections between indoors and out, the large doorways of each room have much the same effect on the interior spaces. The east entrance, with generously sized etched glass panels in its doors, opens directly into the main hall (*see Photo 5*); from there, three additional sets of double-leaf wood and etched glass paneled doors open into the parlor, the dining room, and the service ell (that doorway also has wide etched glass sidelights and a broad arched glass transom). The parlor and library also have a huge pair of solid paneled wood pocket doors between them.

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In all of the first floor spaces of the main block, lavish decoration enhances the basic interior finishes of hardwood floors in each principal room, patterned tile flooring in the two hallways and the half-bath, wood stairway and wainscoting, plaster walls, and plaster ceilings.

A broad, flattened arch of ornately molded plaster frames the side hall and main stairway. (See *Photos 6 and 7*.) High wainscoting of paneled wood lines every wall, as well as the staircase (all the way up to the third floor). Additional wood paneling lines the sides and tops of all window recesses, which are topped with decorative wood cornices that shielded the curtain rods; a similar cornice is mounted over both sides of the pocket doors between the parlor and library. The handsomely paneled wood doors have original decorative hardware; those with etched glass panels feature varying design motifs. A variety of fine woods (with natural finishes) was used for the paneling, flooring, stairs, doors, windows, and trim elements, including black walnut, mahogany, chestnut, and cherry.

In the reception room, parlor, both hallways, and all three levels of the main stairway, wide bands of hand-painted stenciling, depicting botanical and geometric patterns, are found just above all the wainscoting, and just below all the deep plaster crown moldings of the ceilings. The library and dining room walls are covered with original wallpaper, which also has botanical imagery; the dining room wallpaper is lincrusta.<sup>12</sup> All of the ceilings also have extensive stenciling, as well as ornate plaster medallions from which chandeliers are suspended. The dining room ceiling was painted over several decades ago, but test patches for removing the later paint have revealed that the original stenciling survives and could be restored.

Each of the principal rooms has a fireplace with an extravagantly detailed carved wood mantelpiece, above which is a huge carved-wood-framed mirror rising to the crown molding of the ceiling. The mantel shelves in the reception room, dining room, and library are topped with black marble. The main hall also has a fireplace (back-to-back with the one in the library) featuring an ornately carved wood mantelpiece, but it has a double mantel shelf and hood above it instead of a mirror, as well as Dutch tile trim around the firebox. The parlor, library, and main hall mantelpieces all feature pairs of mythological creatures (gryphons, satyrs, and chimeras, respectively) while the reception room and dining room fireplaces are decorated in accordance with the unique motifs for those rooms (see below).

The reception room has an unusual Egyptian theme, likely reflecting the Victorian interest in antiquities and exotica. (See *Photos 8 and 9*.) Here all of the decorative elements – the ceiling and wall stenciling, the mantelpiece (which was designed by architect William R. Walker and

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<sup>12</sup>Winkler and Moss, p. 121, notes that lincrusta was patented in 1877 but first manufactured in America in 1882, so this wallpaper may have been installed a few years after the house was completed.

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carved by Charles Dowler<sup>13</sup>), the window cornices, even the light fixtures - depict Egyptian figures and imagery such as musical instruments, lotus flowers, papyrus plants, bunches of reeds, stylized birds, and hieroglyphs. The mantel shelf is supported by two nearly life-size seated female figures in Egyptian dress. The same theme also extended to the custom-made furniture, making this room a rare example of total commitment to this exotic motif.

The parlor, in accordance with contemporary treatises on architecture and interior design, faces south and commands the best views of Greenwich Bay to the east.<sup>14</sup> It is the largest room on the first floor, and was Mrs. Reed's drawing room as well as the main receiving room for guests. (See *Photos 10, 11, and 12.*) The lighter-toned woodwork and brightly colored stenciling in this room, and the cherubs etched into the glass of the parlor doors, give the parlor a feminine aspect.

A notable feature of the library is its "English style" built-in bookcases, which line the southeast and southwest corners of the room, between the pocket doors and two sets of windows. (See *Photos 13 and 14.*) Instead of occupying the entire wall from floor to ceiling, these carved wood bookcases are only about 5 feet tall, leaving room for pictures to be hung above them; this style was fashionable in the 1870s. Their ornamentation includes slender columns with ornate, floral-inspired capitals. Both the mantelpiece and the bookcases in this room were carved by Charles Dowler.

The dining room is located on the north side of the house, and has a rich, dark color scheme as well as a doorway wide enough to allow two people to enter the room side by side – all as recommended by architecture and interior design authors of the 1870s.<sup>15</sup> (See *Photos 15 and 16.*) Here, the decorative theme is water birds, which appear in the etched glass of the double doors, on the carved wood mantelpiece of the fireplace (below the mantel shelf and adorning the sides of the mirror frame), on the window cornices, and on two built-in carved wood sideboards on the east and north walls. The mantelpiece here was also carved by Charles Dowler. This is the only first floor room to feature a closet, which is located north of the sideboard on the east wall (underneath the main staircase), and was originally used to store silverware. A second, fully functional but blind "closet door" in the east wall south of the sideboard provides symmetry to the east wall and to the room as a whole, balancing with the window and the door to the butler's pantry that flank the fireplace on the west wall. Both closet doors are solid panel wood, and of a size matching other interior doors on this floor.

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<sup>13</sup> Clouds Hill museum archives; also Binney, p. 866, and Hershon, p. 40.

<sup>14</sup> Binney, p. 863.

<sup>15</sup> Binney, pp. 861-866.

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The tiny (4 feet by 5 feet) half-bathroom on the east side of the side hall, next to the north doorway, is not nearly as extravagantly decorated as the rest of the first floor, but it does have a patterned tile floor, a marble corner sink, simple tongue-and-groove wood wainscoting, plaster walls and ceiling, and wood paneling lining its one small window recess.

The first floor finishes are generally in good condition, although some of the plasterwork is cracked or has been damaged by an occasional plumbing leak. Most of the cracks appear to have been caused by age, or movement in the ledge underneath the foundation, but vibrations from the nearby railroad line may also have played a role. In the 1940s, a frozen water pipe burst and damaged the stenciled ceiling and crown moldings in the southwest corner of the parlor; those areas were re-plastered, but not repainted. Additional patches of water damage on the ceilings of the main hall and of the reception room, which were likely caused by leaks from upstairs bathrooms, have not yet been repaired. A 2003 seismic tremor (a geological fault runs under the house) slightly widened some wall cracks, and also caused a section of the tile floor in the main hall to drop a couple of inches, but did not affect the structural integrity of the floor joists underneath or of the house as a whole.

The main stairway, which occupies the western half of the side (or porte-cochere) entrance hall, rises up in a series of four flights with two intermediate landings to the third floor level (these stairs do not go down to the basement). Each landing is illuminated by windows that are full height on outside (they slide up into a pocket on the inside); there is a shelf about 4 feet above the floor of the landing between the first and second floors. The stairway features heavy carved wood railings and paneled undersides; the elaborate wood newel post, topped with a tall, multi-globed lamp, was carved by Charles Dowler. The stairway walls, including along the landings, are lined with wood wainscoting, and feature continuous bands of stenciling above the wainscot. (See *Photos 6 and 17.*) Additional stenciling appears below the third floor ceilings of the stairway.

The second floor layout and proportions are similar to the first floor: four large bedrooms (ranging from 17 feet square to 17 by 19 feet) surround the stairway and a broad hallway. (See *Photos 17 through 22.*) Like the main hall below, this hallway runs perpendicular to the stairs, and is about 12 feet wide by 30 feet long. At the west end of the hallway is a narrow passageway (approximately 4 feet wide by 12 feet long), containing a closet on its north side; this passageway ends in a short flight of stairs down to the second floor level of the ell. All ceilings on this level are 12 feet tall, and the windows and doorways are about 7 feet tall, so the sense of openness and light that characterizes the public spaces on the first floor carries upstairs to the private spaces as well.

A flattened arch of molded plaster, about 11 feet wide, highlights the junction of the stairway and the hallway. Next to it is another, smaller, rounded molded plaster arch that graces a small alcove (6 feet wide by 3 feet deep) leading to the northwest bedroom. Each bedroom has solid

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wood paneled doors with original hardware, and a carved marble fireplace. The northeast bedroom is the only one lacking a walk-in closet with built-in drawers and cupboards. The northeast and northwest bedrooms have wood vanity sinks topped with marble to match their fireplaces.

All four bedrooms have a private bathroom, with decorative tile floors, plaster walls and ceilings, and paneled wood window recesses. The bath for the northeast bedroom originally was combined with a small closet, which was removed in 2005 when a stall shower was installed; that bathroom floor was also changed to tile at that time. The bath for the northwest bedroom is in the adjacent ell, reached via a short, wood-panel-lined stairway next to the fireplace; its additional features include a marble-topped wood vanity sink and a window seat (the decorative exposed beams in its ceiling were added in 2005). The bath for the southeast bedroom, which also connects to the southwest bedroom, features a window seat, beaded board wainscoting, round moldings at the ceiling, a marble-topped wood vanity double sink, and a bathtub enclosed in paneled wood with a faux (painted) marble top. The bath for the southwest bedroom, which is combined with its closet, features a marble-topped wood vanity sink and an original tin bathtub encased in tongue-and-groove boards; the tile floor here was wood originally. On the west side of this bathroom are some deep built-in shelves, and a small operable window that opens into the back stair hall, for ventilation.

On the second floor, the hallway originally had a finished wood floor, while each bedroom's hardwood floors were unfinished but covered with straw matting. The plaster walls in the hallway had decorative stenciling, and all of the bedroom walls were covered with French wallpaper. All bedrooms and the hallway had plaster ceilings with ornate crown moldings, center medallions (two of them in the hallway), and decorative stenciling. Each bedroom had maple wood baseboards, door frames, and paneled window recesses (some with window seats), as did the bathrooms associated with the northwest and southeast bedrooms. The hallway still has its original stenciling on walls and ceiling, and all of the original woodwork is intact in all of the second floor rooms. The bedroom finishes, however, have been altered over time. The southeast bedroom's stenciled ceiling, and the southwest bedroom's walls and ceiling, were all painted over ca. 1940. After the leaking roof above was fixed in the 1990s, repairs were undertaken to address extensive deterioration and some water damage on this level. All of the floors were painted. All of the wallpaper was removed (samples of each were preserved in storage), except for one wall in the northwest bedroom where the paper could be salvaged. Those bedroom walls that had been stripped of paper were then painted, including the crown moldings. The ceiling in the northeast bedroom was also painted over (after its original stenciling was photographed and traced for future reproduction). The plaster ceilings in the southwest and northwest bedrooms were replaced in MDO board, which was carefully installed around the original plaster medallions, and the stenciling in both of these rooms was reproduced following photographs and tracings of the original.

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The third floor, atypically, holds the largest room in the entire house: a billiard room, which occupies most of the south and east sides at this level. (See *Photo 23*.) Although the third floor has four rooms altogether, its layout is different than on the lower floors: the rooms are arrayed around three hallways that are perpendicular to each other, providing a zigzag path of travel across the entire width of the main block. The billiard room and the northeast corner bedroom (17 feet by 13 feet) are both accessed from the hallway (13 feet wide by 23 feet long) that runs east-west at the top of the stairs. At the west end of this hallway is a doorway leading to another, narrower hall that runs north-south (about 6½ feet wide by 17 feet long) and has a bedroom at each end: the north bedroom is about 15 feet square, while the south one is 19 feet by 16 feet. This second hallway also contains a large cedar closet on its west side, next to which is a third narrow hallway, running east-west (about 12½ feet long and 6 feet wide), with a short flight of steps at its western end leading down to the third floor level of the ell. None of the rooms on this level of the main block have a fireplace, or a bathroom. All ceilings here are 11 feet tall.

The interior finishes on the third floor are, with the exception of the main hallway and the billiard room, far less elaborate than on the lower floors, but likewise of the period and little changed, except as noted below.

The hallway at the top of the stairs has a finished hardwood floor, paneled wood wainscoting topped with decorative stencil work on plaster walls, and additional stenciling just below the plaster ceiling. (The ceiling sustained some damage that has not yet been repaired from a leaking water tank in the attic; the tank is no longer in use.) The two smaller hallways have finished hardwood floors, maple tongue-and-groove wainscoting, plaster walls and ceilings, maple trim around the doorways, and solid wood panel doors. A pull-down stairway to the attic was installed in the ceiling of the middle hallway in 1996; it took the place of an operable hatch window that could be opened for ventilation.

The billiard room has a finished hardwood floor, two wood-paneled window seats (these are in the large wall dormers near the southeast corner of the house), one deeply recessed dormer window with a half-hexagonal top, maple wood trim including baseboards, chair rails, and window and door surrounds, large double-leaf paneled doors, and elaborate stenciling on the walls and ceiling. However, while the original finishes remain on the walls, those on the ceiling had deteriorated to the point that the entire ceiling was replaced in the late 1990s. MDO board was carefully installed around the original plaster ceiling medallion, and the original stencil design, which had been photographed and traced, was repainted on the new ceiling. This room has all of its original furniture and fixtures, including the enormous billiard table.

The three third floor bedrooms all have painted hardwood floors, plaster walls, plaster ceilings with small center medallions, maple trim around doors and windows, and tall paneled wood doors with original hardware. Each bedroom has two windows; those that are dormers have

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deep half-hexagonal-shaped recesses. Each bedroom also has a walk-in closet with built-in drawers and cabinets; the closet in the northwest corner of the north bedroom contains a set of wooden stairs in its west side that lead up to the attic over the ell.

## Ell - Interior

In the service ell on the west side of the house, the basic layout on each floor consists of three rooms grouped around the back stair hall, which is located in the ell's southeast corner. As noted earlier, the ell's first floor level connects to the main block of the house from the back stair hall (which abuts the main hall) and through the butler's pantry (which adjoins the main dining room). The upper floors connect to the main block via short stairways up from the back stair hall. The ell's interior spaces are smaller than in the main block, but still of fairly generous size; all ceilings are 9 to 10 feet tall.

The interior finishes are less elaborate than in the main block, but likewise little changed from the original hardwood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, and maple woodwork, except as noted below.

The first floor level has the kitchen, the servants' dining room, and the butler's pantry, as well as a large vestibule inside the back door on the west side of the house. The three rooms all open into a small, square hall in the middle of the ell, and the vestibule also opens into the kitchen and the servants' dining room, providing easy circulation throughout this level. Original finishes are prevalent throughout, including wood floors, high tongue-and-groove wood wainscoting, plaster walls and ceilings, wood trim, including on all sides of the deep window recesses, and solid panel doors (about 7 feet tall). All plaster walls in the ell were repainted in the 1990s. Other features specific to individual spaces are noted below.

The kitchen, in the southwest corner of the ell, is the largest room on the first floor (18 feet by 16 feet). The original wood floor is covered with linoleum. The original sink and a marble-topped counter with wood cupboards underneath it line the south wall. A wide brick chimney breast (where the original range was attached) is on the west wall. A large built-in cabinet, with glass-fronted shelves above wood cupboards, occupies the north wall.

The vestibule, on the west side of the ell inside the back door (11 feet by 7 feet), is presently used as a laundry room, but originally held an ice box that extended across its east wall; ice was delivered through a short solid panel wood door in that wall. The vestibule lies between the kitchen and the servants' dining room.

The servants' dining room (17½ feet by 9 feet), in the northwest corner of the ell, has floor-to-ceiling wood cupboards on its east and west walls. This is presently the museum gift shop.

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The butler's pantry, in the northeast corner of the ell, is the smallest room on this floor (14 feet by 9 feet) but has finer-grade finishes, as befitting its close proximity to the main dining room. (See *Photo 24*.) A small alcove on the east side of the pantry, just inside the dining room door, is lined with carved wood paneling; matching paneling lines the deep window recess in the north wall. Underneath that window is a large copper sink, set within a marble countertop; below the counter are wood cupboards with solid doors. Floor-to-ceiling glass-fronted wood cabinets on the west, south, and east walls are topped with deep molded cornices, and feature narrow marble ledges above wood drawers and cupboards; the east cabinet includes a dish warming cupboard and a zinc-lined wine cooler. A small plaster medallion surrounds the ceiling light fixture.

The small square hallway connecting the butler's pantry, servants' dining room and kitchen has similar basic finishes (wood wainscoting and trim, plaster walls and ceiling). Built into the west wall of the hallway is a tabletop that swings up out of the wall, to temporarily hold dishes en route between the kitchen and the main dining room.

The back stairs and associated hallways have similar basic finishes (wood wainscoting and trim, plaster walls and ceiling) on all three levels. The stairway itself is also wood, with a carved railing and heavy newel post. The flight of stairs leading down to the basement is closed off by a paneled wood door with two narrow opaque glass panels; the rest of the stairway is open, all the way up. This stair hall also connects to the main hall, and to the south entrance to the house and the porch (now the barrier-free access to the museum); both of those large doorways have etched glass panels in them, providing lots of natural light to this space.

The second floor level of the ell has two similar-sized bedrooms that originally were the nursery and the governess's room, as well as a bathroom. Finishes throughout this level are simple: wood floors, plaster walls and ceiling, wood wainscoting in the stair hall and adjacent hallways, and wood trim (baseboards, door and window surrounds, and linings of the deep window recesses). All rooms have solid panel wood doors. The stairway opens into a short hallway along the south side of the ell, with an octagonal window in the south exterior wall; at the west end of this hallway is a large walk-in linen closet and the nursery, which occupies the southwest corner room. The nursery (16½ feet by 13 feet) has its own walk-in closet, as well as a fireplace, featuring a carved wooden mantelpiece with a large wood-framed mirror above it. The mantel shelf is supported by carved brackets, between which is a line of blue and white tiles depicting Bible stories. Similar tiles surround the firebox and decorate the hearth. Another short hallway on the east side of the ell has two stairways and a molded plaster archway at its north end; the east side stairs lead up to the second floor level of the main block, while the west side stairs continue up to the third floor of the ell. In the east wall of this hallway is a small window that ventilates an adjacent bathroom (in the southwest bedroom of the main block). In the northeast corner of the ell is a bathroom that was originally associated with the northwest bedroom in the main block (see additional description above). A third short hallway running

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east-west leads from the bathroom to a slop closet and then to the governess's room in the northwest corner of the ell. The governess's room (16 feet by 13 feet) has a walk-in closet but no fireplace.

The third floor of the ell has basically the same layout and features, and the same simple finishes, as seen on the lower floors. The southwest corner bedroom is 14½ feet by 14 feet; the northwest corner bedroom is 16 feet by 11½ feet; the bathroom is 10 feet by about 8 feet. Neither of the bedrooms have fireplaces. Details that are unique to this level include dormer windows that are deeply recessed into bedroom ceilings; a short flight of steps up to the southwest corner bedroom; a built-in linen closet on the landing at the top of the stairs; and an original marble-topped vanity sink and slop closet in the bathroom. The skylight in the bathroom was added in the 1950s, and replaced in kind in 1996 as part of the re-roofing project.

## OUTBUILDINGS

The estate has twelve outbuildings, most of them located behind (west of) the house; all are at least partially screened from view from the house by mature trees and shrubbery.

The three earliest outbuildings contribute to the overall historical and architectural significance of the property, although two have been significantly altered. These include the 1872 carpenter's shop and the 1906 stables, both built during Mrs. Elizabeth I.S. Reed's lifetime, and a ca. 1930s fire station, which is a unique artifact of early volunteer fire-fighting efforts in Cowesett.

The other nine outbuildings on the estate are a horse barn, a play house, a goat barn, a large barn with an indoor riding ring, a large barn for storing equipment, a wood shed, a greenhouse, and two small storage sheds. All of these date from ca. 1950 to 2005, and all are non-contributing. All are also temporary structures that lack foundations (the greenhouse is built on top of a 1940s-era concrete swimming pool, and the two large barns are built on concrete slabs). As such, they are not described in this inventory.

**Carpenter's Shop (ca. 1872; additions ca. 1880-1895 and 2000)**, located approximately 200 feet west of the house, facing east. (*See Photo 25.*) This workshop was constructed for the carpenters who worked on the main house; it does not appear on the 1872 plat maps of the estate (*see Figures 5 and 6 in Additional Information*) but family tradition holds that it was built at about that time.

The carpenter's shop is in good condition. Its original core is a 1 story, front gable roofed structure (approximately 30 feet square) with stone foundation, clapboard siding, wood trim (including an Italianate hood over the east entrance, and decorative brackets in the roof eaves),

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and asphalt shingle roof. Above the door is a wood 6/6 double hung sash window, topped with a multi-light transom. The north side elevation has a wood 1/1 window with a molded lintel; the west (rear) elevation has a group of three wood 6/6 windows. Inside the one-room shop, the floor is wood, and the walls and ceiling are clad in tongue-and-groove boards. It is still used as a workshop, as well as for storage. Two later additions both have trim elements that mimic those on the 1872 building. On the north side of the shop, set back from the east façade, is a small 1-story, gable-roofed tool shed (ca. 1880; seen on the 1895 atlas<sup>16</sup>) with clapboard siding, wood trim, and asphalt shingle roof; it does not have a foundation or windows. Another, considerably larger 1-story, gable-roofed addition covering the entire south side of the shop was built in 2000 to be the residence of the estate's caretaker: it has a raised concrete foundation, clapboard siding, wood trim, wood 1/1 windows, and asphalt shingle roof.

**Stable (1906, designed by Philip Allen; altered 1996)**, located approximately 150 feet northwest of the house, facing east. (See *Photo 26*.) This building, which is in good condition, replaced the estate's original wood-frame stable after it burned down, and was built on top of the earlier foundation. Philip Allen, Elizabeth I.S. Reed's son-in-law (married to her daughter Helen) was a businessman, not a professional architect, but evidently he had some design background.<sup>17</sup>

This 2-story brick building (approximately 45 by 65 feet) has a raised stone foundation, brick trim, an asphalt-shingled hipped roof with wooden cupola (the original flat roof, which leaked constantly, was changed ca. 1998), and a 2-story original rear ell. Each elevation has vertical brick piers and horizontal brick bands forming 2-story recesses for the windows and doors. The east façade is three bays across with a large, deeply recessed center entrance containing paired wood and glass sliding doors, reached by a concrete ramp. The entrance is flanked by paired vinyl-clad 6/6 double hung sash replacement windows. Elsewhere on the building, there are wood 6-light sash throughout the basement level; vinyl-clad 6/6 replacement windows (some paired) on the first floor level; and wood 6-light windows at the front and rear of the second floor level. The ell also has some small square single-light wood windows (for horse stalls); a secondary entrance on the south side (missing its steps), and a sliding wooden hayloft door on the second floor, north side. A stone-walled areaway and a stone stairway, both on the south side, lead to the full (unfinished) basement.

Inside the building, the main entrance opens into a large carriage room; on the south side are a small harness room and coachman's room, and in the rear ell are several horse stalls (modified from the original box stalls). Except for the unfinished brick perimeter walls and a section of concrete flooring just inside the main entrance, most of the interior materials are wood:

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<sup>16</sup> Anne D. Holst. Note that the 1895 atlas also shows a small addition on the south side of the carpenter's shop; this was demolished by the 1940s.

<sup>17</sup> R.I. Historical Society, Allen & Reed Records.

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flooring, tongue-and-groove board partition walls, doors, and trim; ceilings are unfinished. The second floor, reached by an enclosed stairway on the south wall of the ell, is entirely open space. At the top of the stairs is a remnant of the original ventilation shaft for the basement manure pit; when the roof was altered, the original copper ventilator was salvaged and placed in the lawn north of the main house. The stable presently houses the museum's collection of historic vehicles, and some elements of the interior have been modified in a minor and reversible manner for museum exhibits.

**Fire Station (ca. 1930)**, located approximately 75 feet northwest of the house, adjacent to the stable. (See *Photo 27*.) From ca. 1930 to 1957 this was the headquarters of the Cedar Hill Volunteer Fire Company, organized and led by Anne C. "Nancy" Allen (later, Mrs. Monterey Holst) to combat the forest fires that periodically swept over the estate and the larger Cowesett neighborhood. "Nancy" Allen was Helen and Philip Allen's daughter; she later inherited the estate from her mother.

This small 1-story, L-shaped wood-frame structure has a stone foundation, horizontal board walls, galvanized metal shed roof, and a few wood multi-light windows in an addition on the east side. Its interior layout consists of one room and a one-bay garage for fire truck. A slender 2-story gable-roofed tower at the southeast corner was used for drying fire hoses. The building is presently unused and in fair condition.

## LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Dry-laid, fieldstone walls are found in various locations in wooded areas of the estate; these are the only remnants of the Town of Warwick's Asylum Farm that occupied this land prior to the construction of Cedar Hill. They contribute to the overall historic and architectural significance of the property.

Little documentation about the original landscape design for Cedar Hill survives, other than the vehicular circulation system, which is depicted on an 1872 site plan (see *Figure 6*): the original main driveway winds uphill from Post Road, loops back on itself along the east side of the house, and also branches off to pass through the porte-cochere and circle around the entire house, again meeting up with the main drive. As it progressed uphill, the driveway was originally lined with elm trees, which were all lost to windstorms or Dutch elm disease, and were gradually replaced with white fir trees, by 1950. Some sections of the driveway are also lined with massive vertical stone slabs that function as retaining walls against the adjacent hillsides.

Historic photos taken ca. 1875-1880 show the house standing on a barren hilltop with very few trees or other plantings. (See *Photos 28 and 29*.) Family records indicate that by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, planting beds surrounded the entire house; a grass tennis court had been laid out

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just to the north; planting beds shaped like a giant lizard and crocodile occupied the downhill slope to the east; and a large flower garden extended southward from the house. Various walking paths provided circulation around the estate. Behind (west of) the carpenter's shop and the stables were vegetable gardens and chicken yards, and beyond those was a sizeable working farm (its house was built in 1879) that extended westward well beyond Love Lane.<sup>18</sup> The farm supplied fresh produce, meat, and dairy products for Cedar Hill and three other Reed family homes in Cowesett. The estate also offered a variety of recreational facilities: hunting in the woodlands west of the farm; swimming and boating in Greenwich Bay; and a private 9-hole golf course near Love Lane, which was built in the early 1900s by the estate's second owner, Helen S. R. Allen, daughter of Elizabeth I.S. Reed. A concrete in-ground swimming pool was built a short distance southeast of the house in the 1940s.<sup>19</sup>

Under the stewardship of Mrs. Allen, the estate grew to some 500 acres. Various parcels were gradually sold off over time, and the landscaping on the remaining estate has continuously evolved since Cedar Hill was first built. Today, planting beds still surround the house, but large expanses of green lawn have replaced the tennis court, the lizard and crocodile planting beds, and the original flower gardens. (The former copper ventilator that was removed from the brick stables building in the 1990s now stands in the northwest corner of the north lawn, looking like a piece of sculpture.) Aside from these lawns, and the clearings in which the various outbuildings stand, the estate is now heavily wooded, with a variety of large specimen trees including Atlas Cedar, English Yew, Camperdown Elm, White Oak, European Beech, American Elm, Connecticut Yankee Chestnut, Horse Chestnut, Euonymus, Black Walnut, Butternut, Weeping Norway Spruce, White Pine, White Spruce, and Canadian Hemlock. In addition, there are various flowering trees and shrubs (e.g., Magnolia, Mimosa, Rhododendron, Hydrangea, Lilac, Dogwood, Tulip Tree, Forsythia), and ground plantings, including several small gardens. As part of the estate's horseback riding facilities, an outdoor riding ring stands in what was originally the west lawn behind the house; a paddock is sited northwest of the horse barn; and a dressage course is located on the lower slope of the hill near Post Road.

The estate also contains some non-contributing structures, including four concrete footings built northwest of the house ca. 1920 to support a radio tower (the former Carpenter's Shop was a broadcast station for WILU Radio; the call letters are still nailed over the shop's front door); and a gazebo and bridge located north of the house, built in 2005.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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<sup>18</sup> The farmhouse and several outbuildings are seen on the 1895 atlas.

<sup>19</sup> Holst, "Welcome to the Gardens," and "Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum," visitor guides.

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**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.
- 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

Art

Community Planning and Development

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1871-ca. 1930  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1871-77

1906

Ca. 1930

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

William R. Walker  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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.)

Established as a country estate in the then-rural Cowesett section of Warwick and built between 1871 and 1877, "Cedar Hill" (the Mrs. Elizabeth I.S. Reed Estate), illustrates a national trend toward suburban living that accelerated throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when manufacturing was the driving engine of the American economy. As cities became bigger, busier, noisier, and dirtier, urban residents increasingly sought to live in outlying areas where

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there was more space and a healthier environment. This trend was initiated by the well-to-do, whose businesses were typically in the city, and for whom a country estate was not only a peaceful retreat but a symbol of prosperity and status. Warwick, which by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a suburb of metropolitan Providence, saw at least eighteen country estates built by successful Providence-based industrialists and other elites between 1850 and 1911. These estates heralded the later, much more intensive development of suburban locations in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Cedar Hill belonged to Elizabeth Ives Slater Reed, the daughter of one prominent manufacturer and the wife of another. Designed by the esteemed Providence architect William R. Walker, the remarkably intact Late Gothic Revival style granite mansion with opulent High Victorian interior is a rare example of both its type and style in Rhode Island, and the only known survivor of Walker's residential designs for wealthy industrialists in the post-Civil War era. Cedar Hill is also the only historic country estate in Warwick that is still in its original use (while also serving as a historic house museum), and still holds a land area consistent with its original acreage. The period of significance extends from 1871, when construction began on the house, to ca. 1930, when the last contributing structure on the estate was built. The property retains substantial integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and has statewide historic and architectural significance. It meets Criteria A and C for listing on the National Register in the areas of community planning and development, architecture and art.

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

This narrative describes first Cedar Hill's historical significance, then its architectural significance.

### Historical Significance

An extensive analysis of Warwick's historic context is presented in the Multiple Property Documentation Form *Historic Resources of Warwick, Rhode Island - Partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties* (NR, 1984).<sup>20</sup> This section summarizes relevant aspects of that context and further develops one particular topic:

"The establishment of an ever-increasing number of country estates in Warwick in the nineteenth century is an important theme in local history, for these

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<sup>20</sup> Note that this earlier NR nomination (pp. 94-95) and the Warwick survey report (pp. 29 and 71) both mistakenly identify Cedar Hill as the home of Alfred A. Reed [Senior], owner of the Oriental Print Works in Apponaug. (Cedar Hill was not NR listed in 1984 due to owner objection.)

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estates initiated the trend to suburban living and served as precursors to the wholesale suburbanization of the community which occurred in the twentieth century."<sup>21</sup>

The movement toward, and idealization of, suburban living was closely intertwined with several other national historical trends that converged in Rhode Island in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Industrialization provided opportunities for "self-made men" from humble backgrounds, as well as the already wealthy, to increase their fortunes; by 1910, Rhode Island was acclaimed as the second wealthiest state, per capita, in the nation.<sup>22</sup> The state's population also exploded, particularly in Providence, which became a major metropolitan area by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, drawing adjacent communities like Warwick into its economic orbit.<sup>23</sup>

But growth and prosperity also brought a variety of problems to urban areas, such as overcrowding, noise, pollution, disease, crime, and political and social unrest; and as a result, Americans began to look outside of cities for respite and refuge. Railroad transportation, introduced in the 1830s and expanded in succeeding decades, vastly improved travel times between outlying areas and the center city: for example, a journey of ten miles (the approximate distance between Cedar Hill and Providence) that used to take several hours on foot or in a horse-drawn vehicle could be accomplished in less than an hour by train. This made it much more convenient to live outside of the increasingly congested capital city, at least for those who could afford the cost of commuting by train to their workplaces. Later improvements in transportation, from electric streetcars to automobiles, eventually made the suburban ideal accessible to both the middle class and the working class, and as a result suburban areas became extensively developed, especially in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But prior to the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the suburban lifestyle was typically available only to the affluent, and was therefore a symbol of their prosperity and social status.

### Country Estates in Warwick

The first two country estates in Warwick predated the dawn of the industrial era, but only by a few years: "Spring Green," established in 1783 on part of a large farm overlooking Occupessatuxet Cove in northeast Warwick; and "Hopelands," (NR, 1984), established in 1792 on another farm in Potowomut, in southeast Warwick overlooking Greenwich Bay and abutting

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<sup>21</sup> Warwick multiple properties NR nomination, p. 77.

<sup>22</sup> Woodward *et al*, p. 57.

<sup>23</sup> Conley, pp. 261-266 contains Rhode Island population data for each municipality, from the date of settlement in the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century to 1980. For the period 1830 to 1900, Providence's population grew ten-fold, from about 17,000 to over 175,000. Warwick's population in that same timeframe almost quadrupled, from about 5,500 to over 21,000.

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the towns of East Greenwich and North Kingstown. Each of these estates belonged to daughters of one of Providence's richest mercantile families: Spring Green to John Brown's daughter Abby, wife of John Francis, and Hopelands to Nicholas Brown's daughter Hope, wife of Thomas Poynton Ives.<sup>24</sup>

As the Browns were among the first to realize, Warwick had some distinct advantages for wealthy Providence businessmen looking to establish a country retreat: it was conveniently situated about 10 miles south of Providence, and had large expanses of peaceful, quiet farmlands and woodlands, as well as an extensive coastline along Narragansett and Greenwich Bays that offered healthful sea breezes and beautiful salt-water views. By the 1830s, Warwick was also a major locus of industrialization within metropolitan Providence, with manufacturing complexes mostly sited along the Pawtuxet River, concentrated in the western part of town.<sup>25</sup> In addition, an established transportation network provided access to and from Providence by road, by steamboat, and by rail. William Sprague, partner in the nationally prominent cotton textile manufacturing firm of A. & W. Sprague Company, built a Federal/Greek Revival style country house in 1835, near the Sprague mills in western Warwick.<sup>26</sup>

A growing recognition of the recreational potential of Warwick's coastline, which further enhanced its appeal as a place to live, inspired the next generation of country estates in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>27</sup> Affluent Providence businessmen, prominent politicians, and other elites began to spend their summers at the seashore in Warwick; some also chose to live there year-round. Popular locations for the country estates established in this period included Warwick Neck and Potowomut, two peninsulas that embrace Greenwich Bay on its northeast

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<sup>24</sup>Warwick multiple properties NR nomination, pp. 74-78; also, Warwick survey report, pp. 73-74. Both estates remained in the hands of descendants of their original owners for over a century. The house at Spring Green still survives, but between 1931 and 1963 its extensive acreage was platted with some 800 house lots as the Governor Francis Farms; this is now one of Warwick's most desirable suburban neighborhoods. Hopelands, along with about 75 acres of land, became the campus of the Rocky Hill School in 1948, and since then several institutional buildings have been added to the property.

<sup>25</sup> Most of this intensively developed industrial area was set off as the separate Town of West Warwick in 1913.

<sup>26</sup> Warwick multiple properties NR nomination, pp. 43-45; also, Warwick survey report, pp. 61-62. The B. B. & R. Knight Company (makers of Fruit of the Loom products) acquired all of these properties after the Spragues went bankrupt in the Panic of 1873, and the country house became known as the Knight Estate (NR, 1984), remaining a family residence for nearly another century. In 1964, the Knight Estate, including about 10 acres of land, was donated to the State of Rhode Island for the establishment of a new state college; it is now part of the Knight Campus of the Community College of Rhode Island.

<sup>27</sup> Warwick survey report, pp. 26-28 and 36. The second half of the 19th century also saw the development of summer resorts, cottage colonies, amusement parks and other seasonal entertainments in areas like Warwick Neck, Buttonwoods, and Oakland Beach. These became popular destinations for people of all economic classes.

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and south sides, and Cowesett on the west side of the bay (*see Figure 1 in Additional Information*). Warwick Neck lacked railroad access until the Warwick Railroad opened in 1875, but Cowesett had a depot on the Providence & Stonington Railroad, which opened in 1837 and followed the west shoreline of Greenwich Bay on its route through Warwick. Travelers to Potowomut, where several country estates were located, could take the train to East Greenwich, about a mile from the western end of the peninsula. Both the Providence & Stonington and the Warwick Railroads were later incorporated into the New York, Providence, and Boston line. Access to all three areas was enhanced by the introduction of electric streetcar lines in the early 1890s.

Between 1850 and 1911, at least eighteen country estates were established in Warwick Neck, Potowomut, and Cowesett: two-thirds of them – including Cedar Hill – in a fifteen year period following the end of the Civil War (1867-1882).<sup>28</sup> Most, like Cedar Hill, were used as summer residences by prominent manufacturers, businessmen, professionals, and politicians who lived elsewhere: typically, in Providence. The 1870 and 1895 atlases do not identify property lines or lot sizes for these sections of Warwick, but evidently some estates held hundreds of acres, while others were more modestly sized. The houses on these estates, some of which had been built earlier and remodeled, exhibited a variety of architectural styles popular in the Victorian era, including Greek Revival, Second Empire, Gothic Revival, Shingle Style, Queen Anne, and French Renaissance. While not quite on the same level of size and grandeur as the summer houses built in Newport by some of the East Coast's richest families in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Warwick's country houses were impressive in their own right. But of these eighteen estates, six of the houses no longer exist,<sup>29</sup> and most of the others have been altered (not always sympathetically<sup>30</sup>). Furthermore, nearly all have seen a substantial reduction in land area: only three estates currently contain more than 6 acres,<sup>31</sup> and two of those are now in public or institutional use. The only surviving post-Civil-War country estate in Warwick that is substantially intact, still used as a private residence, and still retains a land area consistent with its original acreage, is Cedar Hill.

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<sup>28</sup> Warwick survey report, pp. 30 and 71, indicates that additional (unidentified) country estates were constructed in Warwick Neck after the Warwick Railroad was built in 1875; and also at the outer end of Potowomut, which was entirely owned by several interrelated families that had descended from the owners of Hopelands, toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>29</sup> Surviving outbuildings and landscape features at the Russell Estate (now Goddard Memorial State Park) have been NR listed; see Warwick Multiple Properties nomination, pp. 55-57A.

<sup>30</sup> Warwick survey report.

<sup>31</sup> Warwick Tax Assessor's online database.

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The Cowesett section of Warwick had been rural since the original settlement of "The Seventeen Farms" in 1685. Most of Cowesett's farmers traditionally practiced subsistence-level agriculture, producing milk, meat, vegetables and fruit, wool, lumber, and firewood to support their own families; some also grew tobacco and apples (for cider) commercially.<sup>32</sup> These farms were laid out on a grid of 17<sup>th</sup> century country roads that were roughly half a mile apart. The most important of these was Post Road, which followed the curving shoreline of the bay and had been part of the Pequot Trail before Warwick was first settled; this road earned its name when it became the main postal route through Rhode Island during the Revolutionary War. "The road at the head of the lots," later Love Lane, ran north-south along the crest of Drum Rock Hill roughly parallel to Post Road, and formed the western boundary of Cedar Hill when the estate was established in 1872. When the estate reached its peak size of 500 acres in the early 20th century, much of that land also abutted two other colonial roads: Cowesett Road, extending westward from Post Road well past Love Lane, and Major Potter Road, also running westward from Love Lane.<sup>33</sup>

While Warwick Neck and Potowomut were also rural well into the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Cowesett had some additional, unique enticements that surely contributed to the establishment there of Cedar Hill, along with several neighboring country estates. Perhaps most alluring was Drum Rock Hill, which rose to a nearly 200 foot crest above Greenwich Bay and Post Road, offering readily accessible building sites with dramatic, unobstructed water views. The 1862 atlas (see *Figure 2, in Additional Information*) shows about 18 buildings at the foot of the hill, on either side of Post Road. But only three buildings stood on the eastern slope of the hill, and two at the crest, all of them widely dispersed, leaving several hundred acres of open space available. All of this land also had easy access to the Cowesett railroad depot, located less than a quarter mile north of Cedar Hill. A mere mile and a half away, and also readily accessible by Post Road as well as by train, was the village of Apponaug, a thriving industrial and commercial center.<sup>34</sup> Cowesett's appeal would have been obvious to textile manufacturer Alfred A. Reed, who had business interests in both Providence and Apponaug. As further inducement, his brother

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<sup>32</sup> Holst, "A Brief History of Cowesett," pp. 5-6.

<sup>33</sup> Fuller, pp. 84-86; also Holst, "A Brief History of Cowesett," p. 1. The Town of Warwick in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was much larger than it is today: the western boundary of Cowesett's Seventeen Farms is now the town line between Coventry and West Warwick.

<sup>34</sup> Cowesett's proximity to downtown East Greenwich, likewise an important business and manufacturing locale, also prompted some wealthy families from that town to establish estates here during this period. In 1856 the owner of the Bay Mills in East Greenwich, Thomas J. Hill, bought the Josiah Barker house (1844), which stood on the north side of Division Street, a short distance east of Love Lane, to serve as his country estate (seen on the 1862 map in Figure 2, although not labeled with Hill's name). This house was named "Fyrtre Hall" by a subsequent owner in 1910. (Warwick survey report, pp. 20 and 61; also Holst, "A Brief History of Cowesett," p. 10.)

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George Reed already had a home in Cowesett (also seen on the 1862 map, identified as "G. Read").<sup>35</sup>

Alfred Augustus Reed (1817-1878) was a prosperous merchant in the East India trade; he lived in Indonesia from 1845 to 1857, and served as United States Consul to Java from 1850-1856.<sup>36</sup> Upon his return to America, he settled in Boston and turned his attention to manufacturing. In 1860 he purchased a tract of land in Providence, on Whipple Street between Hawes (now Admiral) Street and Oregon Street; there he constructed a small mill and, with business partner Edward Darley Boit, formed the Oriental Mills Manufacturing Company to make cotton print cloth and cambric (NR, 2005).

The business prospered immediately, and within a few years Reed and Boit needed a satellite location for printing and finishing fabrics. They found it in Apponaug, which boasted the 300-acre Gorton's Pond, with plenty of the pure water needed for bleaching, dyeing, and finishing processes. It also had excellent transportation facilities for importing raw materials and sending finished goods to market: via the Post Road, by train, and by boat (Apponaug had been a seaport since before the Revolutionary War). With all of these blessings in place, Apponaug drew the attention of industrial entrepreneurs early on: the village's first mechanized cotton textile mill was built about 1815 for the Manchester Manufacturing Company. Reed and Boit acquired the Manchester Mill in 1865, and on that site they constructed a new building for the Oriental Print Works.<sup>37</sup> The Oriental Mills and Oriental Print Works flourished until the Panic of 1893, when Reed's sons sold the mills to J.P. Campbell & Company, which was later reorganized as The Apponaug Company, "one of America's foremost bleaching, dyeing, printing, and finishing concerns," which remained in business until 1958.<sup>38</sup>

Alfred A. Reed, Sr.'s growing business interests in Rhode Island prompted him to acquire a second home here, and in 1867 he purchased two tracts totaling about 32 acres of land between Post Road and Love Lane in Cowesett.<sup>39</sup> Near the southern boundary of his new

<sup>35</sup> Anne D. Holst. "Read" was a common alternative spelling for "Reed."

<sup>36</sup> Warwick Death Index (Book 1, p. 126): Alfred Augustus Reed, manufacturer, died October 1, 1878, age 61, in Warwick. Also Holst, "Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum," p. 9; and Binney, p. 861.

<sup>37</sup> The Warwick survey report (p. 22) says the Oriental Print Works was built in 1859. The Oriental Mills NR nomination (Sec. 8, p. 2) does not specify a date for the Print Works, but the Clouds Hill Museum archives has a letter from Edward D. Boit confirming construction in 1865. That date appears in Holst, "The Thread of the River" (p. 39) and on the Warwick Historical Society website.

<sup>38</sup> Oriental Mills National Register nomination, Section 8, pp. 2-3, Warwick survey report, p. 22; Warwick Historical Society website.

<sup>39</sup> Deed Book 35/Pages 224 and 402.

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estate, he established a residence called "Edgehill" on the lower slope of Drum Rock Hill, just a short distance from the Oriental Print Works in Apponaug.<sup>40</sup> The 1870 atlas (*see Figure 3 in Additional Information*) shows one building on the west side of Post Road owned by "A. Reed," but an 1872 plat map of the "Alfred Reed Estate" shows what appears to be a sizeable residence as well as about a dozen agricultural outbuildings, indicating that the land continued to be actively farmed (*see Figure 5 in Additional Information*).<sup>41</sup> The mansion (with a larger footprint than in 1872) and a smaller collection of other buildings, linked by a series of curving driveways, can also be seen on the 1895 atlas (*see Figure 4 in Additional Information*). Edgehill was demolished in the early 1930s.<sup>42</sup>

Just south of Alfred A. Reed's new estate was another farm, known as the Town Asylum (seen on the 1862 map, *Figure 2*). This had been established in the 1830s to house the town's poor as well as orphans or infirm, disabled, or mentally ill persons whose families could not care for them.<sup>43</sup> In April 1869, evidently aware of Cowesett's growing desirability as a location for waterfront country estates, the Town of Warwick put the Asylum Farm up for sale, with an asking price of \$10,000 (well over its value as a farm). Five months later, Alfred A. Reed met that price and bought the entire 32-acre property, stretching from Cowesett Bay to "the road at the head of the lots" (Love Lane); his deed noted the rights of way for the Post Road and the

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<sup>40</sup> The larger of the two tracts that Alfred Reed Senior purchased in 1867 had "buildings and improvements" on it (DB 35/402). Reed may have renovated an existing house on his property, instead of building a new one. (Some other neighboring estate owners in Cowesett did the same.) "Edgehill" is shown in an undated photo from the Clouds Hill museum archives, reproduced in Hershon, p. 146, Fig. 1.11. Hershon describes Edgehill as a Greek Revival style house (p. 10), which would have been an unfashionable choice for the new home of a wealthy and status-conscious owner in the late 1860s, and furthermore is not consistent with the house in the photo: it not only lacks the vertical proportions typically associated with Greek Revival, but also has numerous Colonial Revival style features. Maps confirm that the footprint of this house changed between 1872 (plat map) and 1895 (atlas), with additions on the west side and rear, and a front porch wrapping around the east side, all shown in the photo. Whatever the original date of this house, it appears to have been "colonialized" in the 1880s or 1890s, perhaps by William Gordon Reed, who inherited Edgehill after his father died in 1878. (Will Book 16, pp. 420-427.)

<sup>41</sup> This plat map is in the collection of the Clouds Hill Museum; it was never recorded and thus is not available at Warwick City Hall. Note that Reed kept a house in Boston as well; his 1871 will (probated 1878) refers to "my mansion estate on Beacon Street in Boston, and my farm in Warwick in the State of Rhode Island." (Will Book 16, pp. 420-427.)

<sup>42</sup> Another new country estate established in Cowesett around this same time, at the corner of Cowesett Road and Post Road, likewise does not survive. Near the crest of Drum Rock Hill was a Gothic Revival style mansion, completed in 1870 for Amasa Sprague II, a partner in the A. & W. Sprague textile conglomerate (*see "A. Sprague" on the 1870 atlas, Figure 3*). The mansion, a large matching carriage house, and the tall stone walls that bordered the property, with massive gate-posts marking the main entrance, were all designed by architect William R. Walker, who also designed Cedar Hill. The Sprague mansion burned about 1930; the carriage house survives at 118 Valentine Circle, but much altered. The stone walls and gateposts are a neighborhood landmark.

<sup>43</sup> Hazard, pp. 45-48. The Asylum also appears on the 1855 atlas.

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railroad line passing through the farm.<sup>44</sup> This purchase increased the total size of Reed's estate to some 64 acres. The Asylum farmhouse later became part of the Cedar Hill estate (seen on the 1895 atlas (*Figure 4*) just north of the driveway that leads up to the main house). In about 1910 this building was moved to a new location across Post Road; it was demolished in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century for the construction of an apartment building.<sup>45</sup>

On May 9, 1870, Alfred A. Reed's son, Alfred, Jr. (1845-1895) married Elizabeth Ives Slater (1849-1917), the daughter of William Smith Slater of Slatersville, Rhode Island.<sup>46</sup> Perhaps the senior Alfred A. Reed had purchased the Asylum Farm in September 1869 with the intention to give Alfred Junior and Elizabeth a home of their own after they married; perhaps he decided to give his son the land at some later date. Either way, William R. Walker had been engaged as architect and the house was already under construction in October 1871, when Alfred Senior wrote a codicil to his last will and testament:

"... whereas my son Alfred has now commenced building a house for himself for which purpose I have promised him such part of the farm as may be agreed on, eventually to form a separate estate and property ..."<sup>47</sup>

Shortly thereafter, on November 10, 1871, the elder Mr. Reed deeded over most of the former Asylum Farm property to Alfred Junior.<sup>48</sup> By the end of the following summer, Cedar Hill's foundation and walls had been completed and construction of the roof was underway.<sup>49</sup> On

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<sup>44</sup> Warwick Town Meeting Records, No. 7, 1853-1873, pp. 586, 590, and 608. Also Deed Book 36-A, pp. 231-232. Although Hazard, p. 46, says the Asylum held "about 30 acres," the deed confirms it was 32 acres. The Town relocated its poor farm to a 180-acre tract on the north side of the bay, on lowlands bounded by Brush Neck Cove and Buttonwoods Cove. The 1870 atlas shows the "Town Asylum" in its new location; that site is now in Warwick Park.

<sup>45</sup> Anne D. Holst.

<sup>46</sup> R.I. Marriage Index.

<sup>47</sup> Will Book 16, pp. 420-427; Last Will and Testament of Alfred A. Reed, May 23, 1871 (probated 1878), with two codicils plus an agreement between Reed and his sons Alfred Junior and William Gordon Reed also relating to their inheritance. The first codicil, quoted above, is dated October 31, 1871. The second, undated codicil states " ... whereas my eldest son Alfred is provided with a house on my said farm, I hereby give and bequeath in fee simple to my second son Gordon all the remainder of said farm ..." The phrase "my said farm" might indicate that this codicil was written prior to Alfred Senior's conveyance of land to Alfred Junior in November 1871, but this is not certain: the comment that "Alfred is provided with a house" implies that Cedar Hill was already built, but it was far from completed in 1871.

<sup>48</sup> Deed Book 37-B/Page 174.

<sup>49</sup> Holst, "Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum," p. 10.

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October 12, 1872, Alfred A. Reed, Jr. conveyed the entire property to his father-in-law, William S. Slater, in two parcels: one of about 25 acres on the west side of Post Road, extending west to Love Lane; and another of about little over 2 acres on the east side of Post Road, extending to the bay. By deed of that same date, William S. Slater transferred the same two parcels to his daughter, Elizabeth Ives Slater Reed.

Also in October 1872, the noted Providence civil engineer Niles Bierragaard Schubarth prepared two plat maps illustrating the subdivision of Alfred Reed, Sr.'s estate and showing buildings, driveways, and pathways on both properties. (See *Figures 5 and 6 in Additional Information.*) Schubarth, a Norwegian immigrant who came to Providence in 1840, was a master draftsman who had designed two of the original buildings at the Oriental Mills complex. But he was better known as a land surveyor and planner, and as a landscape designer: his notable works included Juniper Hill Cemetery in Bristol (NR, 1998), River Bend Cemetery in Westerly, and in Providence, the North Burial Ground (NR, 1977), Swan Point Cemetery (NR, 1977), and the Cove Basin and promenade.<sup>50</sup>

In addition to giving his daughter the land at Cedar Hill, William S. Slater also paid for Elizabeth and Alfred's very expensive new home.<sup>51</sup> Slater certainly had the resources to be so generous: the Slater family owned multiple cotton and woolen mills in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire (the Slatersville mill alone produced half a million dollars in finished goods annually; today that would be about \$8 million<sup>52</sup>). Whether the elder Alfred A. Reed also helped to finance the construction of Cedar Hill before Slater stepped in, and whether Slater's involvement prompted any modifications to Walker's original design for Cedar Hill, is unknown. But thanks to Slater's financial support, Cedar Hill was a true showpiece by the time it was completed.

The bulk of the exterior and interior construction was finished by 1874, with additional interior finish work and furnishings provided over the next three years. Two wood-frame outbuildings were also constructed behind (west of) the main house: a carpenter's shop, built ca. 1872 to

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<sup>50</sup> Oriental Mills NR nomination, Section 8, p. 10.

<sup>51</sup> Deed Book 37/Page 265 (A.A. Reed Jr. to W.S. Slater); Book 37/Page 298 (W.S. Slater to E.I.S. Reed). Family tradition has it that all of these land transfers occurred before Alfred Junior and Elizabeth's wedding, and that Mr. Slater gave his daughter 500 acres of land and built her luxurious new home as a wedding present. Deeds confirm that the property did not come into Elizabeth's hands until two and a half years after her wedding, and that the estate only held about 28 acres at that time (although it did grow to 500 acres under a later owner); nevertheless Elizabeth did receive the property in her own name and her own right.

<sup>52</sup> Slatersville Historic District NR nomination. (Note that the document is dated 1978, but RIHP&HC's website says the district was NR listed in 1973.) Also, Holst, "The Thread of the River," pp. 13-21. The \$8 million figure was calculated at <http://www.measuringworth.com>.

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facilitate construction of the main house, and a stable (which was replaced with the current brick building in 1906). In 1877 architect William R. Walker presented to his client, William S. Slater, a full accounting of the cost of Cedar Hill. This indicates that by April 1872, Alfred A. Reed, Jr. had paid out just under \$5,200; Slater reimbursed his son-in-law in full, and bore all other expenses after that. By March 1877, the grand total cost for Cedar Hill added up to about \$136,000; today this would be over \$3 million.<sup>53</sup>

Warwick historian Oliver Payson Fuller, writing in 1875, mentioned Cedar Hill as one of the notable sights on the Cowesett shore south of Apponaug:

“On the hill the massive stone dwelling-house of Alfred A. Read [*sic*], Esq., vying, in architectural beauty, with the Sprague house, to the northward, and overlooking Narragansett Bay and the surrounding country.”<sup>54</sup>

In keeping with Cowesett’s long agricultural tradition, Cedar Hill was not just a luxury country estate, but also a working farm. In 1879 a farmhouse (also designed by William R. Walker) along with a U-shaped barn and a cluster of outbuildings that included a shed, ox barn, dairy, piggery, chicken coops, and celery house was constructed at the western end of the estate, near Love Lane; these buildings, none of which survives, are seen on the 1895 atlas (*Figure 4*). Orchards surrounded the farm buildings; vegetable gardens and chicken yards lay between the farmhouse and the main house. Cedar Hill’s farm supplied milk, butter, cheese, fruit, vegetables, and meat for the main house, for the three other family homes in Cowesett, and for the farmers themselves.<sup>55</sup>

Elizabeth and Alfred Reed raised four children at Cedar Hill: Alfred Slater Reed, Elizabeth Ives Reed, Helen Slater Reed (whose 1894 marriage to Phillip Allen connected the Reeds to another major Rhode Island industrialist family), and William Gordon Reed II.

When Alfred A. Reed, Sr. died in 1878, his sons Alfred Junior and William Gordon Reed inherited the Oriental Mills and Oriental Print Works; Alfred served as company treasurer, and then its president. The Reed brothers turned the company over to another manager in 1890 and sold

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<sup>53</sup> Clouds Hill Museum archives; various expense receipts paid by William S. Slater are reproduced in Hershon, Appendix 1. Also, *Providence Journal*, “Legacy in the Clouds,” June 22, 2003, p. K-1.

<sup>54</sup> Fuller, pp. 156-157. The 1895 atlas (*Figure 4*) and a historic photo confirm that Alfred A. Reed, Sr.’s home was constructed of wood, so Fuller’s reference is clearly to Alfred Junior’s home, Cedar Hill.

<sup>55</sup> Holst, “Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum,” pp. 44-46. The Reed family homes were Alfred Reed Senior’s mansion, “Edgehill;” another house located across Post Road from that estate (owned by Gordon Reed, according to the 1895 atlas), and the former “Asylum Farm” house on the Cedar Hill property (later occupied by Elizabeth’s son Alfred Slater Reed: see Deed Book 102/Page 192, Indenture of Lease dated September 25, 1920).

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the company in 1893, by which time Alfred had moved to New York City, while Elizabeth remained at Cedar Hill. Alfred never lived in Rhode Island again: he died suddenly in New York at the age of 49, on May 1, 1895. His brief obituary did not mention Elizabeth or any of their children, which may indicate the depth of his estrangement from his family.<sup>56</sup>

Cedar Hill's land area seems to have remained largely intact through Elizabeth I.S. Reed's lifetime; in 1914, three years before she died, she owned just two pieces of property: one small lot on the east side of Post Road, and on the west side of Post Road, a second larger and more valuable lot containing buildings; the locations of these two parcels conform with the description of the land she had received from her father in 1872.<sup>57</sup> One change to the estate occurred in 1906, when the original wood stable building burned down. Elizabeth's son-in-law, Philip Allen, designed the replacement brick stable, which still stands (albeit altered in the 1990s).<sup>58</sup> Philip Allen was a principal, along with his brother-in-law William Gordon Reed II, in the Providence-based firm of Allen and Reed (founded 1902), wholesale vendors of industrial plumbing and heating supplies.<sup>59</sup>

After Elizabeth's death in 1917, Cedar Hill passed to her daughter Helen Slater Reed Allen (1872-1952).<sup>60</sup> Mrs. Allen had electric lighting installed at the house in the 1920s, and she also significantly expanded the size of the estate, acquiring pasturage, croplands, orchards, and woodlands, including several small farms (occupied by staff who worked at Cedar Hill) and a gravel bank that provided the material for the estate's roads, all west of Love Lane.<sup>61</sup> By 1935 Mrs. Allen owned not just the same two lots on either side of Post Road that her mother had owned twenty years earlier, but also two dozen additional lots on Cowesett Road, [Major]

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<sup>56</sup> *Providence Journal*, May 3, 1895, p. 5.

<sup>57</sup> Warwick Tax List, 1914. The list only identifies the property owner's name, the general location of the property, and the amount of tax paid for land and buildings. It does not identify lot sizes. Assessor's plat and lot numbers, which specifically locate an individual piece of real estate, were not in use at this time.

<sup>58</sup> Anne D. Holst.

<sup>59</sup> R.I. Historical Society, Allen & Reed Records.

<sup>60</sup> Will Book 25, pp. 43-44: the Last Will and Testament of Elizabeth Ives Slater Reed, August 3, 1906 (probated 1917) states that all four Reed children were to inherit an equal share of their mother's estate. The will does not specify that Helen alone was to receive Cedar Hill, so she and her siblings must have come to a later agreement. The 1920 tax list indicates that Helen and her brother William Gordon Reed 2<sup>nd</sup> co-owned the two original lots in Cedar Hill, and both of them also signed the 1920 lease for their brother Alfred Slater Reed to rent the former Asylum farmhouse (see footnote 33), so apparently it took several years for Helen to become the sole owner.

<sup>61</sup> Holst, "Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum," pp. 45-46.

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Potter Road, Love Lane, and Greene Bush Road.<sup>62</sup> The size of these individual lots is unknown, but Cedar Hill at its largest held 500 acres. Recreational activities on the estate included Mrs. Allen's private 9-hole golf course abutting Love Lane and Cowesett Road, hunting in the woodlands, and swimming and boating on Greenwich Bay.<sup>63</sup>

Helen and Philip Allen's daughter, Anne "Nancy" Crawford Allen (1908-1997) put her own stamp on the estate well before she became Cedar Hill's next owner. In 1931, at the age of 23, Nancy Allen established the Cedar Hill Volunteer Fire Department to help combat the forest fires that swept over Cedar Hill and Cowesett with some regularity. She soon built a small fire station on the estate, which still stands behind (northwest of) the main house near the brick stables, to house a fire truck and firefighting equipment; wet hoses were hung up to dry in the station's tower. Nancy Allen was later recognized by the International Association of Fire Chiefs as the first woman Fire Chief. She also served as Deputy State Fire Marshal and as District Forest Fire Warden. She met her future husband, Monterey L. Holst, a U.S. Forest Service employee, when he came to Rhode Island to teach firefighting techniques to local departments after the Hurricane of 1938; they married in 1940. The Cedar Hill Fire Station, which operated until 1957, often tested new techniques and apparatus that helped improve firefighting efforts statewide.<sup>64</sup>

Mrs. Holst inherited the estate from her mother in 1952. A few years later, she waged a lengthy and ultimately unsuccessful fight against the proposed construction of Interstate 95 through the western part of her 500-acre estate; in the early 1960s the U.S. Department of Transportation took by eminent domain a swath of land approximately a mile long by several hundred feet wide, for the highway right-of-way. In later years other pieces of the estate were gradually sold off, either by Mrs. Holst or by her daughter and heir, Anne Dietrich Holst (born 1942), to offset maintenance costs or taxes; the most recent sale of approximately 150 acres occurred in 1997.<sup>65</sup> The residual estate contains 27.38 acres today, all of it on the west side of Post Road.

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<sup>62</sup> Warwick Tax Lists, 1920, 1935, and 1939; the 1935 and 1939 tax lists utilize assessor's plat and lot numbers. Given the volume of additional property acquired, deed research was not conducted. Note that some of Helen's land had once been part of her grandfather's estate next door. She did not inherit this directly from him, as Alfred A. Reed, Sr.'s will specifically excluded any son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or grandchild (Will Book 16, pp. 420-427), so she either received it after her father's death (Alfred A. Reed, Jr. may have died intestate, as his will was not recorded in Warwick), or she purchased land from her uncle William Gordon Reed or his heirs.

<sup>63</sup> Holst, "Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum," pp. 9 and 46.

<sup>64</sup> Obituary of Anne C. Holst, *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, August 2, 1997, p. A-8. Also, Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum website.

<sup>65</sup> This large tract is now the location of the "Seventeen Farms" suburban housing development (that name harkens back to the original settlement of Cowesett in 1685). A small cul-de-sac in Seventeen Farms is named Anne C. Holst Drive. Another street named for her, Nancy Allen Drive, extends westward from Love Lane.

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In 2004, Anne D. Holst and business partners Wayne A. Cabral and Christine E. Cabral opened Cedar Hill to the public as the "Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum." In addition to special exhibits and educational programming, the museum's mission includes stabilizing and preserving the original materials, finishes, and furnishings of the house as much as possible, so that scholars and enthusiasts of Victorian architecture and interior design can observe the effects of age, ultraviolet light, and wear in a home that has been continuously occupied by four generations of the same family. Since the house remains a private residence, the museum is open to visitors by appointment. The Victorian Society of America, which holds an annual Summer School in Newport, regularly uses the museum as a study site.

While the house has undergone some repairs and limited alterations over time (See Narrative Description ), it remains remarkably intact and retains a high level of integrity.

Although Cedar Hill has been able to retain much the same amount of land area that it had in 1872 (albeit somewhat reconfigured), the neighborhood around it has become more intensively developed. The adjacent estate belonging to Alfred A. Reed was subdivided for a suburban housing development (called "Crestwood at Cowesett") in the 1930s; and much of the land that used to belong to Cedar Hill in the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, between Love Lane and I-95, also is now occupied by plats of mid- and late 20<sup>th</sup> century single-family houses. Similar development has occurred on most of the other formerly rural properties along Post Road between Apponaug and East Greenwich. Post Road has also seen the construction of several apartment and condominium complexes, nursing homes and assisted living facilities, as well as commercial businesses and other non-residential uses. The type and pace of suburban development that has occurred in Cowesett over the past eight decades makes the substantial survival of Cedar Hill's original land area all the more remarkable.

### **Architectural and Art Significance**

By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, industrialization and urbanization spawned a new Romantic aesthetic in architectural and landscape design. This movement, which promoted naturalism, "the picturesque," and truth in architectural design (i.e., buildings should be of their own time and place, fit into their settings, and utilize high quality materials and craftsmanship), meshed very well with the suburban ideal. As a result, living in beautiful surroundings in outlying areas became equated with physical, mental, and spiritual health, good moral character, and civic values. Like industrial development itself, this trend began in England but soon spread to America. In 1832 the architect Alexander Jackson Davis published *Rural Residences*, the first American pattern book to depict Gothic Revival house designs (inspired by medieval

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prototypes) in three-dimensional renderings and floor plans.<sup>66</sup> Davis later collaborated with landscape architect Andrew Jackson Downing on *Cottage Residences* (1842), but it was Downing's *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850) that cemented the popularity of both the Gothic Revival and Italianate styles, particularly for rural domestic buildings, in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These new styles represented a deliberate departure from the classical formality of the Greek Revival style that had dominated American architecture since the 1820s. They were "less rigidly scientific," exhibited "more of the freedom and play of feeling of everyday life," and could be tailored to every economic class: farmhouses, cottages for workers, and villas for the wealthy.<sup>67</sup>

A new era of architectural eclecticism characterized the next half century and more, as advances in housing construction, such as the balloon frame and mass-produced architectural components, permitted buildings to have complex shapes and irregular floor plans. Asymmetry, variable textures, multiple colors, and elaborate detailing loosely based on a variety of European or more exotic prototypes, sometimes freely mixed together, all became the hallmarks of American architecture in the second half of the 19th century.

The Gothic Revival style first appeared in Rhode Island in the 1830s and 1840s, courtesy of the nationally prominent architect Richard Upjohn. Grace Episcopal Church in downtown Providence (1845-1846; NR, 1972) innovated the asymmetrical corner tower for American church design, and quickly became a major landmark.<sup>68</sup> "Kingscote," in Newport (1839; NR, 1973; NHL, 1996) was built as a summer residence for George Noble Jones, a wealthy planter and speculator from Savannah, Georgia; here Upjohn collaborated with Andrew Jackson Downing, whose design for the grounds included a picturesque curving driveway.

But despite these early and highly visible examples, the Gothic Revival did not enjoy the same popularity in Rhode Island as it did elsewhere, especially for residential buildings. As Henry Russell Hitchcock pointed out,

"The Gothic was, indeed, only one of the solvents of the glacier of Grecian discipline, and in Rhode Island not the most effective. ... in the field of domestic architecture first Italian and then French manners dominated in the forties, fifties, and sixties. ... The Italian Villa type far more than the Gothic Revival,

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<sup>66</sup> McAlester, p. 270.

<sup>67</sup> Downing, p. 27-28.

<sup>68</sup> Upjohn had pioneered the use of the Gothic Revival, which evoked the medieval parish churches of his native England, and hence Christian values, for American ecclesiastical buildings with his landmark Trinity Episcopal Church in New York City (1839-1846; NHL, 1976).

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encouraged the breakdown of the tradition of symmetry in American house design in the forties and fifties. ... and thanks to its impetus, American houses remained asymmetrical in the main for a generation after the Civil War." <sup>69</sup>

The English architectural critic John Ruskin helped to stimulate a brief renewal of interest in the Gothic Revival style during the 1870s. "The High Victorian Gothic phase was principally applied to public and religious buildings, although a few surviving landmark houses reflect its influence."<sup>70</sup>

Among over 19,000 National Register properties listed in Rhode Island, only 81 houses are identified as "Gothic Revival" or some variation of that term (Early Gothic Revival, High Victorian Gothic, Late Gothic Revival, Modern Gothic), with construction dates ranging from 1839 to 1919. More than half of these are in Providence and Newport. Warwick has three NR-listed Gothic Revival style houses, like Cedar Hill built in the 1870s, but none are country estates.<sup>71</sup> Bristol, Narragansett, Newport, and Westerly between them have eight NR-listed, architect-designed, Gothic Revival style (or inspired) mansions that were built for wealthy owners, some on sizeable tracts of land; five of these were built after 1870, and thus are more on a par with Cedar Hill.<sup>72</sup>

Cedar Hill's Gothic Revival elements include the steeply pitched gabled roof and gabled dormers with decorative bargeboards ornamented with Gothic trefoils; the pointed-arch (and simulated pointed-arch) windows at the third floor level; the Tudor arch detailing over the north doorway and on the porte-cochere and wrap-around porch; and the polychrome stonework, with contrasting horizontal bands, quoins, and window and door trim. The massing too, although nearly square, has projections and recesses on all four sides, creating a somewhat asymmetrical plan with four primary rooms of different shapes and sizes around a central main

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<sup>69</sup> Hitchcock, p. 49.

<sup>70</sup> McAlester, p. 280.

<sup>71</sup> Houses located at 1078 Buttonwoods Avenue, 1108 Buttonwoods Avenue, and 9 Tenth Avenue, all in the Buttonwoods Beach Historic District (NR, 1984).

<sup>72</sup> In addition to "Kingscote," these are (in chronological order): "Longfield" in Bristol (1848-1850; NR, 1972); "Malbone" in Newport (1848-1849; NR, 1976); "Seven Oaks" in Bristol (1873; Bristol Waterfront Historic District, NR 1975); "By the Sea" (1879), "Ocean Mount" (ca. 1880), and "Collins Cottage" (1880), all in Westerly (Watch Hill Historic District, NR 1985); and "Druidsdream" in Narragansett (1884; NR, 1989). Due to variations in stylistic terminology, especially in earlier NR nominations, other Gothic Revival country houses may exist in Rhode Island's NR inventory, but are not classified as such in the R.I. Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission's database, such as "Hazard Castle" in Narragansett (1846-1849, tower added 1884; NR, Ocean Road Historic District, 1982) and "Belton Court" in Barrington (1906, additions 1927-1928; NR, 1976). This analysis does not account for other examples of Gothic Revival houses in Rhode Island that have not yet been NR listed, or that have not survived.

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hallway. The house also has some Italianate detailing, including the U-shaped window crowns (which lack the drop moldings more characteristic of Gothic) and the paired square posts on the porch. (See *Photos 1, 2, 3, and 4.*)

Like most architects, William R. Walker presumably kept up with trends in the field and with the work of his contemporaries, and also maintained a design library for inspiration. But his clients also certainly had a say in the matter. Whether it was Elizabeth Reed alone who worked most closely with Walker, or whether her husband, her father, or her father-in-law also had a hand in the design of the house, clearly the goal was to make Cedar Hill a reflection of its owners' wealth, status, refinement, and taste. Both architect and client had many possible sources of design guidance. *The Architecture of Country Houses* was in its ninth printing by 1865.<sup>73</sup> The writings of several British architects, interior design experts, and critics enjoyed popularity in America, such as Robert Kerr (*The Gentleman's House*, 1865), Charles Eastlake (*Hints on Household Taste in Furniture, Upholstery, and Other Details*, published in London in 1868 and in America in 1872), William Wilkinson (*English Country Houses*, 1875), and Christopher Dresser (*Principles of Decorative Design*, 1873). American tastemakers like Harriet Prescott Spofford (*Art Decoration Applied to Furniture*, 1878) and Henry Hudson Holley (*Modern Dwellings in Town and Country*, 1878) also had a wide readership. All of these writers, and others, may have had an influence on the design of Cedar Hill.<sup>74</sup>

When the Reeds hired William R. Walker (1830-1905) as their architect in 1870 or 1871,<sup>75</sup> he was still in the early stage of his career, having opened his own architectural practice in 1864. Prior to that, he had little formal design training or experience: in the late 1840s he had worked for three years as a builder's apprentice while studying architectural drafting at a business school (during which time he may have become familiar with the work of Davis, Downing, Upjohn, and others), but then he spent about fifteen years pursuing other interests, including local and statewide political offices, military service, and membership in fraternal organizations. (He later attained the rank of Major General in the state militia, and also held several statewide

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<sup>73</sup> Downing, p. vii (introduction to the Dover edition by J. Stewart Johnson).

<sup>74</sup> Binney, pp. 861-876. Note that according to the Google Books and Internet Archive websites, Binney cited inaccurate publication dates for Kerr (1871); Wilkinson (1870), and Spofford (1877). Also, the title of this article mistakenly indicates that Cedar Hill is located in East Greenwich.

<sup>75</sup> Note that Hershon, p. 12, credits William S. Slater with choosing Walker to design Cedar Hill, apparently on the basis of the two men knowing each other because Slater had invested in the Narragansett Hotel in Providence, which Walker also designed. But that hotel was built in 1874-1878, several years after construction on Cedar Hill began. Furthermore, Cedar Hill had been designed and construction was already in progress when Slater bought the estate from his son-in-law and gave it to his daughter. But Slater kept Walker on the job, so evidently he found Walker's work acceptable.

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leadership positions with the Masons.)<sup>76</sup> Walker's ability to secure some important and visible commissions in the early 1870s, including two country houses for wealthy clients in Cowesett (one for the Reeds and one for Amasa Sprague), may have had as much to do with his ambition and his connections as it did his talent and experience to that date. But his ability to build on all of those assets, along with his facility for working in a broad range of architectural styles, resulted in a long and very successful career.

In 1876, as his work on Cedar Hill was coming to an end, Walker elevated one of his draftsmen, Thomas J. Gould, to partner. The partnership only lasted five years, but the firm of Walker & Gould designed several notable buildings, including the High Italianate style Equitable Building (1872; NR, Downtown Providence Historic District, 1984) and the High Victorian Gothic style Brown University Library, now known as Robinson Hall (1875-1878, NR, College Hill National Historic Landmark District, 1970), both in Providence. They also designed the Rhode Island Building at the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876, which was published in *The American Architect and Building News*, along with six other Walker & Gould buildings constructed in Rhode Island and Connecticut in the late 1870s.<sup>77</sup>

After Walker parted ways with Gould, he formed the firm of William R. Walker & Son (1881-1937) with his son William H. Walker; later he also welcomed grandson William R. Walker II to the practice. This became one of the most prolific, "most prominent and most highly esteemed"<sup>78</sup> architectural firms in Rhode Island. Their work included numerous state armories, schools, town and city halls, courthouses, libraries, theatres, churches, mills, hotels, commercial blocks, train stations, and private residences, designed in a wide variety of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century architectural styles.<sup>79</sup> Rhode Island buildings by Walker that were frequently cited in print as examples of his excellent work but which no longer exist include the Union Congregational Church, the Narragansett Hotel, and the High School, all in Providence. Other notable Walker buildings that are still extant include the Bell Street Chapel in Providence (1875; NR, Broadway-Armory Historic District, 1974); Warwick City Hall in Apponaug (1893-1894; NR, Warwick Civic Center Historic District, 1980); the Pawtucket Armory (1894-1895; NR, 1983); the Cranston Street Armory in Providence (1907-1908; NR, Broadway-Armory Historic District, 1974); and the Majestic Theatre in Providence (1916; NR, Downtown Providence Historic District, 1984).

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<sup>76</sup> Obituary of General William R. Walker, *Providence Journal*, March 12, 1905, p. 2.

<sup>77</sup> Hershon, p. 81.

<sup>78</sup> King, p. 116.

<sup>79</sup> Jordy, p. 238.

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In 1882, *King's Pocketbook of Providence* published an admiring profile of William R. Walker & Son, and a "meagre" partial list of their numerous and varied public and private buildings to date. However, that firm had only been in existence for a year at the time the book was published, so most of the cited buildings must have been designed by Walker as a solo practitioner, or by Walker & Gould. This list includes thirteen city and country residences for some of the top textile manufacturers and other luminaries in Rhode Island, such as B.B. Knight, A.F. Lamb, and John McAuslan, all in Providence; Governor William Sprague at Narragansett Pier; Amasa Sprague at Cowesett, and William Sayles and Frederic C. Sayles, both in Pawtucket.<sup>80</sup> Twelve of these thirteen houses are not in the RIHP&HC NR database; assuming this is not for lack of nomination, they either do not survive, or have been so altered that they would not meet the NR criteria. The thirteenth house belonged to Alfred A. Reed of Warwick; King says the house was called "Coweset" (a common alternative spelling), but that name has not been found in any other records. Since by 1882 Alfred A. Reed Senior was dead and his son would have stopped using the suffix "Junior," this reference must be to Cedar Hill.

Thus, in addition to being the only extant, largely intact post-Civil War country estate in Warwick, Cedar Hill is a rare surviving example of William R. Walker's residential buildings for distinguished clients of that same period.

During the six years that it took to construct and finish Cedar Hill, William R. Walker oversaw the work of nearly four dozen artisans, craftsmen, and suppliers,<sup>81</sup> all of whom can be identified thanks to the fortunate (and highly unusual) survival of numerous invoices and correspondence in the Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum archives. Of all of the individuals and businesses who created Cedar Hill's dazzlingly elaborate interior, two are particularly noteworthy: master wood carver Charles P. Dowler, and the decorating firm of W.J. McPherson & Co.

Charles P. Dowler (1841-1931) carved the ornate wood mantelpieces for the reception room, library, and dining room, as well as the library bookcases and the ornamental woodwork on the main stairway. (See *Photos 6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, and 16.*) Dowler had a lengthy professional association with William R. Walker: he did "the whole of the carving on the Narragansett Hotel, inside and outside, and the carving and decoration on the Sprague Mansion, and those of Mr. Lamb, Mr. Frank [Sayles], Mr. Horace Daniels, Mr. B.B. Knight, Mr. F. Nightingale," all of which buildings were Walker's designs.<sup>82</sup> Born in England, Dowler arrived in Providence in 1863 and first worked as a gunsmith, supplying munitions for the Union Army. After the Civil War he embarked on an artistic career that lasted more than half a century. In the late 1870s, just after

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<sup>80</sup> King, p. 116.

<sup>81</sup> Holst, "Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum," pp. 49-56.

<sup>82</sup> Hershon, p. 39. The original source of the quote here evidently spelled Frank Sayles' name as "Sale."

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Cedar Hill had been completed, Providence City Directories listed Dowler as a “Carver, Modeler, and Ornamental Designer – All kinds of Carving for Furniture and House in the latest style of the art.”<sup>83</sup> Dowler was “intimately associated with some of the finest and most important work in the State, including a quantity of rich interior and exterior decoration.” He was also a sculptor of public monuments (his 1890 Samuel Collyer Memorial in Pawtucket was NR listed in 1983), a jewelry designer, and a painter.<sup>84</sup>

William J. McPherson (1822-1900) emigrated from Scotland to Boston in the 1840s and rose to the top of that city’s design and decorating trades during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. W.J. McPherson & Co., established by 1845, offered custom work and a diversity of services: “House Painter and Glazier...Fresco Painter in Enamel, Oil, and Distemper Colors,” “Decorator,” and “Decorative, Painted, and Stained Glass Manufacturers.” The firm enjoyed over four decades of success; one of McPherson’s most prominent public commissions was the Connecticut State Capitol in Hartford (1877-1880). At Cedar Hill, McPherson did all of the stenciling and other decorative painting, and supplied all of the etched glass for doors and light fixtures. (*See Photos 5 through 23.*) Cedar Hill is the only full residential commission of this company known to survive intact.<sup>85</sup>

Cedar Hill’s interior decor reflects the Victorian interest in the comforts of home, and love of ornament. As favored by Eastlake, Dresser, and Holley, all of the first floor rooms and the main stairway have a three-part wall treatment: at least three feet of dark wainscoting or dado at the bottom of the wall (both for visual interest and to protect the walls from contact with furniture), a brilliantly colored frieze or cornice at the top, and a neutral field in between, where pictures would be hung.<sup>86</sup> The color schemes (lighter, “feminine” colors in the parlor; rich dark colors in the main hall and dining room) followed Swofford’s advice.<sup>87</sup> Painted ceiling stencils, plaster ceiling medallions above hanging light fixtures, ornate cornice moldings, dark woodwork (preferably stained or varnished, rather than painted), tile floors for primary hallways, hardwood floors (preferably with parquet borders) topped with Oriental carpets for first floor rooms, and straw matting on bedroom floors, also became popular at this time.<sup>88</sup> All of these were employed at Cedar Hill.

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<sup>83</sup> Hershon, pp. 38-39.

<sup>84</sup> Dowler’s Second Empire style home at 581 Smith Street in Providence, which was a rural cottage when constructed in 1872, was individually NR listed in 1984.

<sup>85</sup> Hershon, pp. 24-26.

<sup>86</sup> Winkler and Moss, p. 117.

<sup>87</sup> Binney, pp. 861-866.

<sup>88</sup> Winkler and Moss, pp. 123, 126-127, 145-149.

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Per Robert Kerr's directive, the parlor, as the lady of the house's primary sitting room and place to receive guests, "look[ed] south and command[ed] the best views," while the dining room was on the north side of the house, "free from heat and glare," with a doorway "wide enough for two persons to enter together without discomfort."<sup>89</sup> The spacious dimensions of the rooms at Cedar Hill, and the inclusion of a library ("considered integral to the refined household"<sup>90</sup>) were also consistent with the latest trends:

With large doors at either end, [the main entry hall] is commodious, lofty, and airy, bespeaking a growing concern for the healthfulness of one's surroundings. Spacious rooms, soaring ceilings, and cross ventilation all contributed to a lung-strengthening free circulation of air. In winter, drafts of frosty air from the entry doors could be confined to the hallway by closing doors to the adjoining rooms. ...

The best parlor was a reception room, the apartment to which a guest would first be shown. It was strategically located on the main floor, frequently at the front of the house, just off the entry hall ... the intent was to impress through a display of fine possessions."<sup>91</sup>

Cedar Hill's reception room, in the northeast corner of the house between the main and side entrances, is decorated in an Egyptian theme, reflecting a popular trend in the 1870s for antiquarianism and exotica. (See *Photos 8 and 9*.) Major, well-publicized international exhibitions, such as the Great Exhibition in London in 1851, and the Philadelphia Centennial in 1876, featured displays of ancient Egyptian architecture and artwork. Popular magazines like *Harper's Weekly* frequently published articles about archeological discoveries in Egypt, as well as current events like the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Travel writing by Americans who had visited Egypt also increased awareness of and enthusiasm for that ancient culture.<sup>92</sup> All of this resulted in a limited vogue for Egyptian-themed interiors (exotic décor inspired by Asian, Indian, and Islamic cultures was much more prevalent in this period). That the Reeds chose this particular theme for their reception room (where guests would spend relatively little time) and furthermore made such a total commitment to it (the wall stenciling, the carved woodwork on the mantelpiece and the large mirror above it, the cornices over the windows, the custom furniture, and even the light fixtures feature Egyptian-inspired imagery), speaks volumes about

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<sup>89</sup> Binney, pp. 861-866.

<sup>90</sup> Winkler and Moss, p. 138.

<sup>91</sup> Garrett, pp. 31 and 39.

<sup>92</sup> Hershon, pp. 2-4.

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the kind of first impression the Reeds wanted to create, as well as their sophistication and worldliness.

In 1986, *Country Life* magazine declared Cedar Hill's reception room to be "one of the most elaborate and extraordinary Egyptian rooms to be found on either side of the Atlantic."<sup>93</sup> More recent research by Marissa Hershon supports this claim, comparing Cedar Hill's reception room to just two other examples in the United States: Surgeon General and neurosurgeon Dr. William Hammond's library in New York City (1873, no longer extant), and the parlor of real estate magnate Samuel Eberly Gross in his Chicago mansion (1880-1881, altered).<sup>94</sup> According to Hershon, the Egyptian reception room at Cedar Hill "... is significant in the history of design as the only room of its kind to survive with special treatments to the walls and ceiling, woodwork, fireplace, furniture, and appropriate decorative objects remarkably intact."<sup>95</sup>

Along with spacious and luxurious living space, Cedar Hill also featured the latest modern conveniences of the 1870s: indoor plumbing for multiple bathrooms, a steam heating system, and a naphtha gas machine in the basement that fueled the lighting fixtures. As was common in large houses staffed by servants, an electric bell system and speaking tubes facilitated internal communication. An electric burglar alarm system (wired to windows and exterior doors), and a fire protection system that collected rainwater in two twelve-thousand gallon brick cisterns under the north and south lawns, reflected the Reeds' concern to protect their security and safety in this rural area.<sup>96</sup>

Cedar Hill is unusual not only for the remarkable survival of documents related to the original construction of the house, but also for its remarkable lack of documentation in print, given both its physical presence on top of Drum Rock Hill, and its extraordinary architectural character, especially its interior. Other than brief mentions in Fuller's 1875 history of Warwick and King's 1882 *Pocketbook*, no contemporary newspaper, magazine, or architectural journal articles about the house were found. (Evidently the Reeds valued their privacy, and opened their home only to family and to invited guests; they may also have asked William R. Walker not to publicize it.) Similarly, the house is featured in very few 20<sup>th</sup> century publications about Warwick's historic architecture. But it is a truly unique property in Rhode Island: an uncommon type and style of domestic building of the 1870s; the only known survivor of William R. Walker's residential designs for wealthy clients in the post-Civil War era; one of the few remaining examples of the work of Charles P. Dowler and W.J. McPherson & Co.; and the

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<sup>93</sup> Binney, p. 865.

<sup>94</sup> Hershon, pp. 61, 67, 70-71.

<sup>95</sup> Hershon, p. 4.

<sup>96</sup> Hershon, pp. 16-17.

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only historic country estate in Warwick that is still in its original use and still holds a land area consistent with its original acreage.

### A Note about Available Research Information

The Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum holds in its collections Reed, Allen, and Holst family papers, including numerous records relating to the original construction of Cedar Hill, historic photos, and two plat maps of Alfred A. Reed [Senior]'s and Elizabeth I.S. Reed's estates (*see Figures 5 and 6*; these were never recorded at Warwick City Hall, so copies are not available there). The museum has also produced several visitors' guides, newsletters, and a website, which contributed to this nomination.

Other primary source documentation about Cedar Hill proved to be fairly limited.

Historic atlases of Warwick typically did not depict Cowesett in detail: the 1855, 1862, 1870, and 1895 atlases indicate property owner names, and the 1895 map shows building footprints, but none of these maps indicate property lines or lot sizes. The 1917 atlas does not include Cowesett; nor do any Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps (which for Warwick are only available for 1922, updated in 1945 and 1958).

The City of Warwick assessor's office had two chain of title cards for 4157 Post Road: one with its current plat/lot number (222/2), and one with a former plat/lot number (51/10) for another lot contained within the estate. The earliest date on both of these cards is 1939. The original plat/lot number for the lot where the mansion house stands was 51/3, according to tax books, but that chain of title card was not on file.

Access to tax lists was limited; only the 1914, 1920, 1935, and 1939 lists were examined. The tax lists only indicate the owner name and the amount of assessments and taxes for each piece of property; they do not indicate lot size. Only the 1935 and 1939 tax lists indicated plat/lot numbers.

Very few city directories exist for Warwick for the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (the earliest volume found at the R.I. State Archives or at public libraries was dated 1907), and apparently none at all for the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Warwick directories were not utilized in the preparation of this nomination.

The Clouds Hill Museum does not have original architectural drawings for the house. The John Hay Library at Brown University in Providence does have some of William R. Walker's papers, but whether those papers include drawings of Cedar Hill or other references could not be determined, as the Hay Library was closed to the public during the preparation of this nomination.

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The R.I. Historical Society Library was also closed to the public during the preparation of this nomination. Other materials were examined at public libraries in Providence, Warwick, and East Greenwich, the State Archives, and online.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

### PRIMARY SOURCES

#### MAPS AND ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

Beers, D.G. & Company. Atlas of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. Philadelphia, 1870.

Caito, John P., Corp. Site plan for Assessor's Plat 222, Lot 2, 4157 Post Road. Cranston, RI, 2005.

Everts & Richards, Atlas of Surveys Southern Rhode Island. Philadelphia, 1895.

Pawtuxet Design & Development Inc., Warwick, RI. Floor plans for 4157 Post Road. Undated (stamped 2006 by the Warwick Zoning of Review).

Schubarth, N.B. Map of the Alfred Reed Estate, Coweset [sic], Warwick, R.I., surveyed and platted October 1872.

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Stevens, James. Map of Rhode Island. Place of publication unknown, 1831. (See [www.warwickhistory.com](http://www.warwickhistory.com).)

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CITY OF WARWICK

Assessor's Office: Chain of Title Cards

City Clerk's Office: Deaths Index, Land Evidence Records, Probate Records and Will Books,  
Town Meeting Records, Tax Lists.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

### PUBLISHED

Binney, Marcus. "Cedar Hill, East Greenwich, Rhode Island: The Home of Mrs. Monterey Holst," in *Country Life* magazine, April 3, 1986 (p. 861-866).

Downing, Andrew Jackson. The Architecture of Country Houses. New York, 1969 (republication of the original 1850 work).

Conley, Patrick T. An Album of Rhode Island History, 1636-1986. Virginia Beach, VA, 1986.

Field, Edward, A.B. The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations at the End of the Century: A History, Vol. 3. Boston and Syracuse, 1902.

Fuller, Oliver Payson. The History of Warwick, Rhode Island, from its Settlement in 1642 to the Present Time. Providence, 1875.

Garrett, Elisabeth Donaghy. At Home: The American Family 1750-1870. New York, 1990.

Hazard, Thomas R. Report on the Poor and Insane in Rhode Island, Made to the General Assembly At Its January Session, 1851. Providence, 1851.

Hitchcock, Henry Russell, Jr. Rhode Island Architecture. Providence, 1939.

Jones, Robert O., and R.I. Historical Preservation Commission. Warwick, Rhode Island: Statewide Historical Preservation Report K-W-1. Providence, 1981.

Jordy, William H. and Christopher P. Monkhouse. Buildings on Paper: Rhode Island Architectural Drawings 1825-1945. Providence, 1982.

King, Moses. King's Pocketbook of Providence, R.I. Cambridge, Mass. and Providence, 1882.

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McAlester, Virginia Savage. A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture. New York, 2013.

Winkler, Gail Caskey and Roger W. Moss. Victorian Interior Decoration: American Interiors 1830 to 1900. New York, 1986.

*Providence Journal* newspaper

Dunn, Christine. "It was a wonderful place to grow up [Spring Green/Governor Francis Farms neighborhood]," December 10, 2006.

Gunther-Rosenberg, Avis. "Legacy in the Clouds: The 1870s age gently in a Cowesett mansion," June 22, 2003, p. K-1.

[Uncredited]. "Obituary: Alfred A. Reed," May 3, 1895, p. 5.

[Uncredited]. "Gen. William R. Walker, Dead," March 12, 1905, p. 2.

[Uncredited]. "Anne C. Holst; first woman fire chief, columnist, pilot," obituary August 2, 1997, p. A8.

Woodward, Wm. McKenzie, Edward F. Sanderson, and R.I. Historical Preservation Commission. Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources. Providence, 1986.

## UNPUBLISHED

Hershon, Marissa Sarah. *An Egyptian Revival Reception Room, Cedar Hill, Warwick, Rhode Island, 1872-1877* (2010). Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master's Degree Program in the History of Decorative Arts, The Smithsonian Associates and Corcoran College of Art + Design, Washington, D.C. Available online at The Smithsonian Digital Repository: <http://si-pddr.si.edu/handle/10088/18627>.

National Register Nominations

Adams, Virginia H., Jenny R. Fields and Mark G. Rayburn. Oriental Mills, 10 Admiral Street, Providence, Rhode Island (2005).

Christian, Ralph J. Slatersville Historic District (1978).

Jones, Robert O. Historic Resources of Warwick, Rhode Island - Partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties (1983).

Tschirch, John and Maxim Antorini. Kingscote, Bellevue Avenue, Newport, Rhode Island National Historic Landmark Nomination (1995).

Woodward, Wm. McKenzie. Charles Dowler House, 581 Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island (1983)

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Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum  
Archives

Personal interviews with Anne D. Holst, property owner and Wayne A. Cabral, property manager.

Visitor guides and member newsletters, all written by Anne D. Holst:

"The Thread of the River: The Family Mills" (2008)

"A Brief History of Cowesett" (2010)

"Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum: A Preserved Victorian Home in Cowesett, R.I." (2012)

"The Carriage Museum" (undated)

"Welcome to the Gardens" (undated)

"A Portal to the Past" (Newsletter): Vol. 3, Issue 3, August 2012; Vol. 4, Issue 1, February 2013; Vol. 4, Issue 2, May 2013.

## WEBSITES

Aldrich House

<http://aldrichmansion.com/>

City of Warwick Assessor's Database

<http://data.visionappraisal.com/WarwickRI/findpid.asp?iTable=pid&pid=31241>

Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum

<http://www.cloudshill.org>

Find A Grave (birth and death dates for Alfred A. Reed Senior and Junior, Elizabeth Ives Slater Reed, Helen Slater Reed Allen, and Anne Crawford Allen Holst)

<http://www.findagrave.com>

Goddard Memorial State Park

<http://www.riparks.com/History/HistoryGoddard.html>

Google Books

<http://books.google.com>

Internet Archive

<https://archives.org>

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National Park Service/National Historic Landmarks Program  
<http://tps.cr.nps.gov/nhl/default.cfm>

Our Lady of Providence Seminary (formerly at Aldrich House)  
[http://www.catholicpriest.com/seminary/seminary\\_history.php](http://www.catholicpriest.com/seminary/seminary_history.php)

Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission  
<http://www.preservation.ri.gov>

Rhode Island Historical Society (Allen & Reed Records)  
<http://www.rihs.org/mssinv/Mss095.htm>

Spartacus Educational (John Ruskin)  
<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Jruskin.htm>

Warwick Historical Society  
<http://www.warwickhistory.com>

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**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
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 27.38 acres

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: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

**Or**

#### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                  |                   |
|-------------|------------------|-------------------|
| A. Zone: 19 | Easting: 296140  | Northing: 4617020 |
| B. Zone: 19 | Easting: 296180  | Northing: 4616900 |
| C. Zone: 19 | Easting: 295660  | Northing: 4616820 |
| D. Zone: 19 | Easting : 295660 | Northing: 4617140 |

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

The boundaries conform to Assessor's Plat 222, Lot 2 in Warwick, RI.

#### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the dwelling house, outbuildings, and approximately the same area of land that was part of the original Cedar Hill estate. Additional lands that were acquired by a later owner, increasing the size of the estate to 500 acres, and subsequently sold off for development with other uses, are not included in this nomination.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kathryn J. Cavanaugh, Historic Preservation Consultant  
organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number: 82 Larch Street  
city or town: Providence state: RI zip code: 02906  
e-mail kathycavanaugh@cox.net  
telephone: 401-273-4715  
date: July 29, 2014

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### 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.)

**Historic Maps and Charts (Figures 1 through 6):** See "Additional Information," attached.

### 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.

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### Photo Log

Name of Property: "Cedar Hill," also known as the Mrs. Elizabeth I.S. Reed Estate

City or Vicinity: Warwick

County: Kent

State: RI

Photographer: Wayne A. Cabral

Date Photographed: March 3 through 7, 2014

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

- 1 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0001)  
Exterior, east façade and north side elevation, looking southwest.
- 2 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0002)  
Exterior, east façade and south side elevation, looking northwest.
- 3 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0003)  
Exterior, rear ell, west front and south side elevation, looking northeast.
- 4 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0004)  
Exterior, rear ell, west front and north side elevation, looking southeast.
- 5 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0005)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, main hall, looking west.
- 6 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0006)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, main hall and stairs, looking northwest.
- 7 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0007)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, side hall off of main hall, and main stairs, looking north.
- 8 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0008)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, reception room, looking southwest.
- 9 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0009)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, reception room, detail of mantelpiece.
- 10 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0010)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, parlor, looking southwest.

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- 11 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0011)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, parlor, detail of plaster ceiling medallion.
- 12 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0012)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, parlor, detail of etched glass panel in doorway to main hall.
- 13 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0013)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, library, looking northeast.
- 14 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0014)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, library, looking southeast.
- 15 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0015)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, dining room, looking southwest. Note test patches for restoration of ceiling stencils.
- 16 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0016)  
Interior, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, dining room, detail of mantelpiece.
- 17 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0017)  
Interior, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, hall and stairway, looking northwest.
- 18 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0018)  
Interior, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, hall, looking west.
- 19 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0019)  
Interior, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, northeast bedroom, looking southwest.
- 20 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0020)  
Interior, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, southeast bedroom, looking southwest.
- 21 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0021)  
Interior, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, southwest bedroom, looking northeast.
- 22 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0022)  
Interior, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, northwest bedroom, looking northwest.
- 23 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0023)  
Interior, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, billiard room, looking northwest.
- 24 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0024)  
Interior, ell, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, butler's pantry, looking northeast.

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- 25 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0025)  
Exterior, carpenter's shop, looking southwest.
- 26 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0026)  
Exterior, stable, looking northwest.
- 27 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0027)  
Exterior, fire station, looking northwest.
- 28 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0028)  
Historic photo, ca. 1875-1880, exterior, looking southwest  
(same view as Photo 1).
- 29 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0029)  
Historic photo, ca. 1875-1880, exterior, looking southeast.
- 30 of 30 (RI\_KentCounty\_CedarHill\_0030)  
Main entrance, east elevation.

**Property Owner: (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)**

Name	Anne D. Holst	Email	office@cloudshill.org
Street & number	P.O. Box 522	Telephone	401-884-9490
City or town	East Greenwich	State	RI
		Zip Code	02818

**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**

**FIGURES 1 to 7: MAPS AND CHARTS**



*Figure 1: "Cowesett" or Greenwich Bay, with Potowomut on the south, Cowesett on the west, and Warwick Neck on the north and east. (1862)*

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Figure 2: COUNTRY ESTATES IN WARWICK, 1850-1911 (WN = Warwick Neck; P = Potowomut; C = Cowesett)

Name	Location	Date	Style	Current Status	Current Lot Size
"White Swan" Arthur B. Lisle	4365 Post Road (C)	Ca. 1800; mid-19 <sup>th</sup> c., 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Colonial, Greek Revival	Extant, much altered	Approx. 2.7 acres
"Fyrtre Hall" Thomas J. Hill (East Greenwich textile manufacturer)	159 Division Street (C)	1844; late 19 <sup>th</sup> c., 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Federal/Greek Revival	Extant, much altered; now the Atria Harborhill retirement community	Approx. 1.8 acres
Malachi R. Gardner (grain merchant)	162 Payton Avenue (WN)	Ca. 1850; altered 1880s	Greek Revival	Extant; in Bayside subdivision (1873)	30,000 s.f.
Professor Alva Woods	(WN)	Ca. 1850-1860	Unknown	Demolished 1880s	Part of Aldrich Est.
Governor William W. Hoppin	(WN)	Ca. 1850-1860	Unknown	Demolished 1880s	Part of Aldrich Est.
Benjamin R. Vaughan	51 Hesper Drive (C)	1867-1869	Second Empire	Extant	Approx. 1.1 acres
Benjamin Arnold House	230 Spencer Avenue (C)	1867-1868	Second Empire	Extant	Approx. 1.1 acres
Benjamin R. Arnold (New York); Charles H. Perkins (horseshoe manufacturer)	1096 Warwick Neck Avenue (WN) (2 houses)	Arnold by 1870; Perkins by 1899	Arnold – Unknown; Perkins - Shingle Style	Both extant (altered); adjacent to Warwick Country Club	Approx. 5.88 acres
"Edgehill," Alfred A. Reed, Sr. (textile manufacturer)	Post Road (C)	Possibly before 1869; 1880s-1890s	Possibly Greek Revival, later Colonial Rev.	Demolished 1930s; land platted for suburban homes.	N/A
Episcopal Bishop Thomas M. Clark	(WN)	Ca. 1870-1880	Unknown	Demolished 1880s	Part of Aldrich Est.
George C. Nightingale (textile manufacturer)	35 Westford Avenue (WN)	Ca. 1870	Second Empire	Extant (altered)	Approx. 1.08 acres
Amasa Sprague (textile manufacturer)	Cowesett Road and Post Road (C)	Ca. 1870	Gothic Revival (William R. Walker, architect)	House burned ca. 1930; land platted for suburban homes. <i>Stone walls/gates NR listed, 1984.</i>	N/A
"Cedar Hill" Elizabeth I.S. and Alfred A. Reed, Jr. (textile manufacturer)	4157 Post Road (C)	1871-1877	Gothic Revival (William R. Walker, architect)	Extant	Approx. 28 acres
"The Oaks" Henry and Hope Goddard Russell	Ives Road (P)	1875	Gothic Revival (Stone & Carpenter, architects)	Estate donated to State of RI 1939, now Goddard Memorial State Park. House burned 1975. <i>4 outbuildings NR listed, 1984</i>	490 acres
E.H. Robinson; later Gardner C. Sims (steam engine manufacturer)	65 Rhode Island Avenue (WN)	1882	Queen Anne	Extant	Approx. 1.4 acres
"Indian Oaks" U.S. Senator Nelson W. Aldrich	836 Warwick Neck Avenue (WN)	1886-1911; includes the former Woods, Hoppin, Ives, and Clark	French Renaissance (Carrere & Hastings, architects)	Extant; owned by R.I. Catholic Diocese since 1939; addl. buildings; now used for conferences and events. <i>NR listed, 1984</i>	Approx. 75 acres

Comment [r1]: Ultimately, not listed



Figure 3: Eastern Cowesett in 1862 (detail).

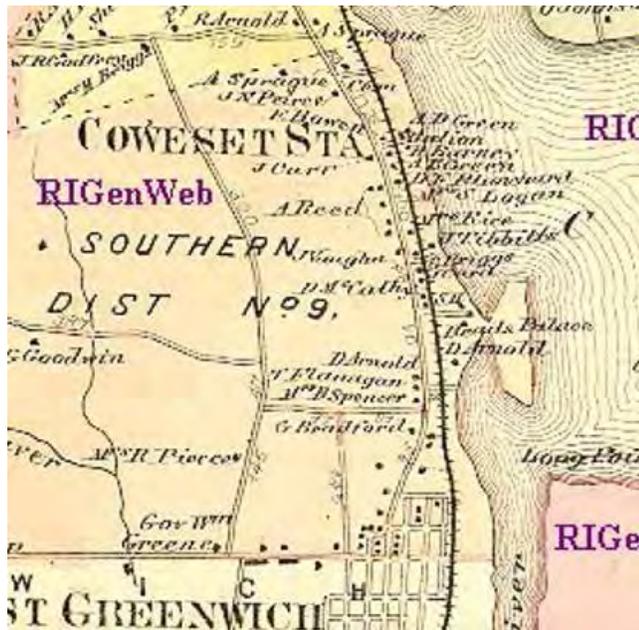


Figure 4: Cowesett in 1870 (detail)

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Figure 5: 1895 atlas (detail) showing Cedar Hill, belonging to Elizabeth I.S. (Mrs. Alfred A.) Reed. The estate's farm lies to the left of the main house. The property just to the north, owned by Elizabeth's brother-in-law [William] Gordon Reed, was originally built by Alfred A. Reed, Sr.





































EXIT





















