

James C. Powel House  
28 Greenough Place  
Newport  
Newport County  
Rhode Island

HABS No. RI-320

HABS  
RI,  
3-NEWP,  
49-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## JAMES C. POWEL HOUSE

Location: 28 Greenough Place.  
Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Nass.  
Present Occupants: Owners.  
Present Use: Single family dwelling.  
Statement of Significance: This is a good, representative example of the bracketed, frame houses of the mid 19th century.

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PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

## 1. Original and subsequent owners:

The building is located in Plat 22, Lot 42. The following is an incomplete chain of title from Newport City Clerk's Records for the city of Newport. Reference is to number and volume of the Land Evidence Books, (LEB.--, p.--).

1852 Deed of August 13, 1852, recorded in LEB. 30, p. 35.

From: Andrew Robeson, Jr.  
 To: James C. Powel  
 For: \$1000

"... a parcel of land... bounded Southerly on land sold by this grantor to Joseph B. Tompkins one hundred ninety four feet, Westerly on a driftway between land of John J. Allen and the hereby granted premises, one hundred feet, Northerly on land sold by this grantor to William A. Sweet, one hundred eighty four feet six inches, Easterly on a court thirty three feet wide opening onto Catherine Street one hundred feet..."

1867 Deed of May 16, 1867, recorded in LEB. 39, p. 592.

From: James C. Powel  
 To: Julia M. Peckham  
 For: \$14,500

- 1869 Deed of January 12, 1869, recorded in LEB. 40, p. 359.  
From: Julia M. Peckham  
To: William G. Tiffany
- 1872 Deed of June 1, 1872, recorded in LEB. 42, p. 589.  
From: William G. Tiffany  
To: Thomas W. Sherman
- 1884 Deed of October 9, 1884, recorded in LEB. 55, p. 376.  
From: Samuel R. Honey, Trustee of Thomas W. Sherman  
To: Wilson S. Sherman
- 1893 Deed of February 8, 1893, recorded in LEB. 66, p. 342.  
From: Wilson S. Sherman  
To: Robert Colgate
- 1893 Deed of September 25, 1893, recorded in LEB. 65, p. 243.  
From: Robert Colgate  
To: Joanna S. Buffum
- 1928 Deed of October 1, 1928, recorded in LEB 122, p. 33.  
From: Joanna S. Buffum  
To: Julian Sloan
- 1934 Will of May 31, 1934, recorded in Probate Court Record  
Book 96, p. 420.  
From: Julian Sloan  
To: Blanche Sloan Carnegie
- 1934 Deed of May 31, 1934, recorded in LEB. 132, p. 354.  
From: Blanche Sloan Carnegie and City Farmer's Trust  
Company, Executors of the will of Julian Sloan  
To: Sara Post Jones
- 1938 Will of October 3, 1938, recorded in Probate Court  
Record Book 108, p. 749.  
From: Sara Post Jones  
To: Francis Coster White, daughter

1964 Deed of June 16, 1964, recorded in LEB. 211, p. 265.

From: Gustave J.S. White and wife  
To: Francis J. Dallett and wife

1965 Deed of March 30, 1965, recorded in LEB. 213. p. 278.

From: Francis J. Dallett and wife  
To: Robert W. Nass and wife

2. Date of erection: ca. 1854

3. Architect: Unknown

4. Builder or contractor: Builder was probably James C. Powel, first owner, who was listed in the Newport Directories of this period as a carpenter and builder.

5. Original plans: None known

6. Alterations and additions: In 1934, Charles C. Grant, architect, of Maplewood, New Jersey, made interior alterations, including a breakfast room. The plans are in the house. Apparently there were extensive interior rearrangements, new stairway, new floors, and the addition of Colonial Revival details.

7. Important old views: None known

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Records of Deeds in the Newport City Hall.  
Newport Directories in the Newport Historical Society.

2. Secondary and published sources:

None known

3. Likely sources not yet investigated:

Newport newspapers, diaries, and journals of the 1850's.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This is a typical example of the

bracketed, frame, Italianate houses of the 1850's.

2. Condition of fabric: Although extensively altered on the interior, the house is in excellent condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: About 42 feet by 57 feet; irregular plan; 2 1/2 stories.
2. Foundations: All foundations are fieldstone.
3. Wall construction: The clapboarded exterior is framed with broad corner boards and "stringcourses".
4. Structural system: The structure is wood framed.
5. Chimneys: There are two undecorated brick chimneys.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways: The present Dutch door is flanked by side lights. A segmented cap completes the entrance composition.
  - b. Windows: The double hung windows with six light sashes have segmented caps and sills carried on brackets. The facade windows have wood shutters.
7. Roof: The hip roof has deep boxed eaves with scrolled brackets at the corners. A course of small brackets serves as a bed molding topping the broad band of flush boarding above the second story "stringcourse". The bell roofed cupola with deep bracketed eaves has three round arched windows on each side. There is a single double arched dormer above the entrance.
8. Porches, stoops, and bulkheads: The original porch has been removed. The posts have been reused in the garden wall.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: The principal rooms on the first floor are grouped around a central hall. This plan is repeated on the second floor.
2. Stairways: The open well, U-shaped stairway has been replaced between the first and second floors. The original heavy funnel shaped balusters and molded rail remain

between the second and third floors.

3. Flooring: The floors are new throughout.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: All the walls and ceilings are plaster. A heavy plaster coved cornice remains in the living room.
5. Doorways and doors: The six panel wood doors are set in molded doorways.
6. Special decorative features: The living room fireplace has a marble mantelpiece.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces northeast on a level lot in a residential section.
2. Historic landscape design: The plantings are informal.
3. Outbuildings: A modern three car garage is located at the rear.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

Newport HABS Project -- 1969. Sponsored in cooperation with the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, Antoinette F. Downing, Chairman. Under the direction of James C. Massey, Chief of HABS, and Osmund Overby, (University of Missouri), Project Supervisor, Jack E. Boucher, photographer.