Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
South Carolina	
COUNTY:	
Charleston	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
69.12.A1.0017	12/19/69

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: The Exchange and Provost

AND/OR HISTORIC: Custom House and Half-Moon Battery

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: East Bay at the foot of Broad

CITY OR TOWN: Charleston

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
South Carolina	41	Charleston	10

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☒ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object	☐ Public ☒ Private ☐ Both	Public Acquisition: ☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered	☒ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☒ Restricted ☐ Unrestricted ☐ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☐ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☒ Other *(Specify)*	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious	~~Meeting rooms for DAR~~	
☐ Entertainment	☒ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Daughters of the American Revolution in and of the State of South Carolina

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Charleston	South Carolina	41

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Register of Mesne Conveyance

STREET AND NUMBER: Charleston County Court House

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE
Charleston	South Carolina	41

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (Plus continuation sheet)

TITLE OF SURVEY: The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings (Vol. VI, COLONIALS & PATRIOTS)

DATE OF SURVEY: 1964 ☒ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

STREET AND NUMBER: Interior Building

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Washington	D.C.	09

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DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One) ☐ Excellent ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed	
	(Check One) ☒ Altered ☐ Unaltered	(Check One) ☐ Moved ☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The original plans for the construction of the Exchange and Custom House called for a structure in grand Palladian style, then so popular in England. The plans followed a set of drawings by William Rigby Naylor, except for the roof line. The builders, John and Peter Horlbeck, used a gambrel roof instead of the hipped roof which Naylor's plan specified.

The basement level of the building, now open to the public as the Provost Dungeon, was for custom business. The entrance level was an open arcade. The upper rooms were used as chambers of the colonial government.

Despite alterations, the Old Exchange, which will be 200 years old in 1971, is as solid as probably any building of age in Charleston. A study of the original articles of agreement, or a look at the means of support and the unusual truss work beneath the roof will testify to this.

The foundations were to be of brick and mortar 92 feet from north to south, 65½ feet east to west, and five feet below the street, or until a foundation was found. This was solved by constructing the Exchange on the fortifications of Half-Moon Battery, the fortress wall of the original city.

The steps were to be "made of Solid Portland Stone, Handrail and Bannisters of Portland Stone, and under the said Steps and platforms to be Brick Walls and Arches to support the same, the Wall to be three Bricks lengthways thick from Piazza Floor to the Wall Plates, the Central part of the East Front to be Four Bricks lengthways thick and 34 feet six inches high, the Piazza 15 feet in the clear from Stone Pavement to the Ceiling, The Piazza Floor to be paved with good Parbeck Stone."

Specifications also included stone for the parapet coping and the "rustick work." Two Venetian windows and 24 pilasters of the "Ionick Order" and classical urns to top the parapet wall were specified. The roof was to be of Welch Carnavan slate, the roof of the cupola and the bed of the entablature to be of lead, "Hips and Ridges to be covered with Lead, as also all the Pediment and Cornices to Windows, the Lead to Hips and Ridges and also the Pediments to be five pound weights to each square foot ..."

Doors to the cellars were to be of cypress and the windows were to have iron bars and shutters. Floor girders were to be 12 by 14 inches, joist to the floors were three by 14 inches; roof girders, eight by 12 inches; principal rafters, eight by 10 inches; common rafters three by six inches; purlions eight by eight inches; bond timbers for joists and girders to lay six by nine inches.

Evidence of the stout construction is visible in the attic today, where compounded king post truss beams cross in intricate patterns running east-west and north-south.

Much of the material came from England, but the cypress and heart of pine came from lands along the Ashley, and it is likely that the great number of bricks were of local manufacture.

Perhaps the most notable features of the Exchange today are those portions or ornaments that are now missing and that contribute to an obvious lack of exterior balance.

The original cupola, as designed by Naylor, had four Venetian or Palladian windows and eight columns of the Ionic order. A handsome substitute, designed

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [ ] 15th Century
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 17th Century
- [x] 18th Century
- [x] 19th Century
- [ ] 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)* 1767-1771

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- Aboriginal
  - [ ] Prehistoric
  - [x] Historic
- [ ] Agriculture
- [x] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [x] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Landscape Architecture
- [ ] Literature
- [x] Military
- [ ] Music
- [x] Political
- [ ] Religion/Philosophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [ ] Social/Humanitarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Urban Planning
- [ ] Other *(Specify)*

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Perhaps no other single structure in the state has been so immediately a part of important events from South Carolina's early history as the Old Exchange, the Charleston landmark which has been called one of the most valuable and historically significant buildings in South Carolina.

Even before the present structure was completed in 1771, the site on which it stands was the formal seaward entry to the city and had already made history.

It was here, in the move of the 1670 Charlestown settlement from Albemarle Point to Oyster Point, that the principal east-west street (then Cooper, now Broad) was run from the water side to the new town's marketplace.

And it was here, when the town was then fortified, that a semicircular, fortress-like seawall was placed. This was known as "Half Moon Battery," and on it was built the source of law and order for Carolina, a two-story building called the Court of Guard or the Palace of Arms. There was a guard house on its lower level and a council chamber above. This was standing by 1704, and housed such notorious provincial prisoners as Stede Bonnet and his pirates.

In the middle decades of the 18th century, Charleston was one of the most active ports in the British colonies, the volume of maritime trade leading to the need for some central structure to provide both commercial and customs services. In April, 1767, the Commons House of the Assembly passed an Act "granting to His Majesty the sum of 6,000 pounds for building of an Exchange and Custom House and a new Watch House for Charleston ..."

Begun in 1767, completed 1771, this was the Exchange Building and Provost, magnificent new building crowning the city-wide expansion that marked Charleston's most glorious century.

From the time of its completion the Exchange began to make history. It immediately became the focus of activity.

The grand portico of the building, with staircase sweeping up from the Bay, marked the formal entrance to the city from the sea. On these steps, arriving dignitaries were met. Lord William Campbell, last of the royal governors, was received here in "prophetic silence." The state's first governors were proclaimed here while Charleston remained the state capital. George Washington mounted these steps in 1791 as he entered the city for the first and only time, a visit highlighted by a "splendid concert and ball" in the Exchange's magnificent Large Room on the second floor.

"More than anything else, however," says South Carolina Historian Dr. George C. Rogers, "the Exchange symbolized the aspirations of Charleston's

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (plus continuation sheet0

Writers' Program of the WPA, South Carolina: A Guide to the Palmetto State. (New York, Oxford University Press, 1941).

Thomas, W.H.J., South Carolina's Historic Exchange Building. (Charleston: The News and Courier, April 6, 1969).

Sarles, Frank B. Jr. and Shedd, Charles E., Colonials and Patriots. (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office for the National Park Service)

Carolina Art Association, This is Charleston. (Charleston, The Carolina Art Association, 1960).

Rogers, George C., Charleston In The Age Of The Pinckneys. (University of Oklahoma Press, 1969)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY						OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	32 °	45 '	6¼ "	79 °	55 '	37½"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"						

17/60

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: approximately ½ square block

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Mrs. James W. Fant, Historic Resources Assistant

ORGANIZATION: South Carolina Department of Archives and History

DATE: 11/8/69

STREET AND NUMBER: Box 11188, Capitol Station 1430 Senate Street

CITY OR TOWN: Columbia

STATE: South Carolina

CODE: 41

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☒ State ☐ Local ☐

Name: Charles E. Lee

Title: Director, S.C. Dept. of Archives & History & State Liaison Officer

Date: Nov 12, 1969

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Everett Allen Quinnelly

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: DEC 17 1969

ATTEST:

William J. Murtagh

Keeper of The National Register

Date: NOV 20 1969

Form 10-300a
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STATE	
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6. South Carolina: A Guide To The Palmetto State
   1941 State Survey
   Depository: S.C. Department of Archives and History (partial)
   Box 11188, Capitol Station 1430 Senate Street
   Columbia, South Carolina Code:41

   This Is Charleston
   1960 County Survey
   Depository: Carolina Art Association
   135 Meeting Street
   Charleston, South Carolina Code:41

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7. DESCRIPTION (THE EXCHANGE AND PROVOST) page 9

by Charleston Artist Charles Fraser, took its place in 1835 but was removed after earthquake damage in 1886.

Also probably lost in the earthquake was the parapet with the large Portland stone urns. This left the roof with an out-of-proportion appearance. The East Bay side also lacks balance because of missing pilasters that may have come off with the removal of the two stair towers. These projecting towers had occupied the space through which East Bay Street, built over reclaimed land, now runs. This same land reclamation, about 1805, destroyed the Exchange building's waterfront setting.

Another feature long believed to have been removed from the habor side of the building was the portico described in an early reference, but it apparently never existed. Plans for the Exchange called for a "piazza," meaning an open arcade. The entire first floor was open and used as a market, but this reference was later interpreted as meaning a Charleston piazza, porch or portico. Hence the east side is probably little changed today from the original design.

The 18th century interior plan has been changed rather extensively, but remains much as it was when used as a post office after 1818.

The center is now occupied by a broad staircase and a service area on the east side. The two most impressive rooms, used as DAR meeting rooms, occupy the north and south ends and run the width of the building. Following DAR occupation, the ceilings of these rooms were lowered to cover exposed wiring and pipes.

On the upper floor, a number of rooms retain door frames and other particulars from the 19th century. The main feature of the second story -- the famous "Large Room" where the ball for George Washington's 1791 visit was held and where the government council met -- is now gone. It is simply part of the stair well and landing.

When the possibility of restoring the Exchange was studied by a special legislative committee, Charleston Architect Albert Simons drafted exterior and interior restoration plans.

Because the west elevation of the Exchange has received such drastic changes, partial restoration only is considered feasible. The stair towers would not be replaced; the market-arcade entrance level would remain enclosed; but otherwise the building would be returned as much to its original appearance as possible.

The area reaching from east to west entrances would be cleared of the service area. A stairway placed on the west side interior of both the north and the south rooms would put two stairways approximately where the original architect intended.

The Large Room would be fully restored as the finest assembly room in Charleston during the period in which it existed (wainscoting 14 feet high, eight columns, 20 pilasters and an entablature of three feet of the Ionic order; a cove ceiling six feet high, two chimney pieces, pediments to every door, etc.) To either side of the Large Room would be a service area, the two stair halls and a reception room. Space has also been allotted on the top level for humidity

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7. DESCRIPTION (THE EXCHANGE AND PROVOST) page 3

control and equipment.

Exterior plans call for a narrowing of the front entrance stairs on East Bay to permit a widening of the sidewalk. Pilasters would be added beside each niche on the west facade, now considerably out of balance from loss of these ornamental features. The parapet, stone urns and the Rigby Naylor cupola would be restored.

With this renovation, the view along East Bay and down the center of Broad, would show -- not an old building grown rather shabby with age -- but an edifice of striking quality, a magnificent heritage from Carolina's earliest years.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (THE EXCHANGE AND PROVOST) page 2

commercial classes intent upon having a city as magnificent as any in England or in North America, a true seat of empire."

Preceding the building of the Exchange was the adoption of the Townshend Acts , designed to tighten the system of collecting custom duties. Shortly after its completion, the building was used to store confiscated English tea. This action followed a mass meeting protesting Britain's rights to tax tea imported to the colonies, a meeting which S. C. historian Dr. D.D. Wallace sees as the first meeting of the S.C. General Assembly.

The Exchange also served as a meeting place for other significant gatherings.

Held here was a July 6, 1774, meeting protesting oppressive acts of the British Parliament, appointing delegates to the Provincial Congress in Philadelphia, and establishing a 99-member committee of almost unlimited powers to correspond with other provinces and to carry out the order of the general meeting.

When the State House was destroyed by fire in 1788, the Senate and House of Representatives used the Exchange for legislative meetings.

The Exchange was also the setting for the meeting to ratify the Constitution of 1790.

During the Revolutionary War, after the capture of Charleston in 1780, British troops were quartered at the Exchange (but failed to discover 10,000 pounds of powder hidden by General William Moultrie in a secret basement room.) American patriots imprisoned in the Exchange during the British occupation included Col. Isaac Hayne, subsequently martyred by his execution without trial.

In 1818 the Federal Government purchased the property for use as a custom-house and post office. The Exchange was damaged badly by Federal bombardment of the city during the Civil War. In 1913, an Act of Congress authorized its deeding to the Daughters of the American Revolution in and of the State of South Carolina to be held as a historical memorial. Although the DAR has held the deed to the building since 1917, it has been used during war years for government services. The sixth lighthouse district , the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Civil Works Engineering division of the U.S. Army have all had quarters here.

In 1970, when South Carolina celebrates the 300th anniversary of the colony's founding at Charleston, this most significant building will be just one year short of its own 200th year.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (THE EXCHANGE AND PROVOST) page 2

The original plans for the Exchange are on file at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.