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COVER: A touch of the topiary art at Elm Court, from an early tinted photograph.
Photo by John T. Hopf
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ADOPT-AN-OBJECT

We hope that our members will continue to support the conservation of objects in our museum. By offering to "adopt" an object, the donor will help prolong the life of our collections, promote accuracy of appearance, and improve the quality of new exhibits currently being planned.

Gifts for conservation are tax-deductible. Each restored object will be displayed with a permanent label that will acknowledge the generosity of the contributor. For estimates and further information, contact Jeanne Vibert, research curator, at the Society.

NEEDLEWORK MAP
Newport, R.I., c. 1820
Photo by Paul Himmelstein

NEEDLEWORK MAP, polychrome chenille yarns on silk, by Ann Scott Mann, age 12, Newport, Rhode Island, c. 1815-20.

In early Newport, as in other American cities, sewing was a significant part of women's education. Private schools taught the proper young lady a variety of "accomplishments," including needlework, painting, dancing, and academic and social skills.
Map samplers, most made in the early nineteenth century, combined sewing practice with a geography lesson. Such elegant pieces of needlework, displayed in the parlor, conveyed the taste and refinement of the entire family.

Needlework maps, while popular in England, were extremely rare in America. The Newport Historical Society owns one of only a dozen surviving examples. The background material is silk, a highly perishable fabric, which has become very brittle and has cracked in several places. The delicate map is presently mounted on acidic material which causes both brittleness and yellowing. Only a professional textile conservator can remove this fragile picture from its harmful frame without further damage. Conservation treatment will arrest deterioration, give the object proper structural support, and enhance its appearance.

We hope that one of our members who appreciates the rarity and frailty of this needlework picture will sponsor its preservation.

Our thanks to Mr. Roger E. Potter for his generous contribution toward the restoration of the Potter family overmantel, c. 1740, illustrated in last issue.
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The Newport Historical Society has maintained a library and museum of Newport and Rhode Island history since its incorporation in 1854. Three centuries of political, business and family manuscripts, including the early records of the Town Council housed for the City of Newport, together with important holdings of maps, prints, photographs, newspapers and maritime memorabilia, are preserved by the Society as are furniture, silver, paintings and ceramics which give it a representative regional collection of the American decorative arts.

Incorporated into the Society's fireproof building is the 1729 Newport Seventh Day Baptist Church. In addition the Society owns the Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House (1675), the Friends Meeting House (1699), and Green End Fort.

*Hours:* The Society is open to the public
Tuesday through Friday 9:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
Saturday 9:30 A.M. to 12 Noon
Closed Sundays, Mondays, Holidays

The Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House and the Friends Meeting House are open June 15th to Labor Day. Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

*Newport History* solicits original articles on any aspect of Newport County history. All submissions will be considered by the editorial committee for publication. Obtain information from the editor, Judith Ronayne, at Society headquarters.