

Axel de Ferson, aide-de-camp of Rochambeau
stayed in this house - 9.

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Records of

#312-314 SOUTH MAIN STREET..Brick

Plat 16
Lot 578

formerly $\frac{16}{84}$

1788 - 22.197

1797 "Peleg Williams and wife Rebekah, of the first part, and William Holroyd of the second part: Witnesseth: That the said Peleg and Rebecca in consideration of \$1 paid said Holroyd (the receipt is hereby acknowledged) and of the love and affection which they bear the families of Williams Thayer and James Thayer, sons of the said Rebekah, have given, granted, encoffed, and confirmed to said Holroyd four several certain lots."
Deed Book 30.399 ? 27.469

1798 "Chace Index Cards - What Thayer's house was owned by Peleg Wms - 580' S of cen. planet W.S. Nixon S"

1806 FIRE RECORD: William Holroyd, tenant of Rebekah and Peleg Williams...
E side of the Main Street...brick ~~bounded~~ S/ly part of Town...3 stories high..coveredd with wood...4 chimneys..completely finished..FR Vol 1..#252

1813 FIRE RECORD: William Holroyd, for the heirs of Williams Thayer..Main Street..E side...Brick..occupied by Williams Thayer for storing goods in cellar and living..27 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' front by 85' front to rear...3 stories high in front and two in rear...FR 4..#1360

1816 FIRE RECORD: Williams Thayer,,Main Street..e side..occupied by Bernon Helm..brick..27 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' front..85' front to rear...3 stories high front...
2 stories high in rear...FR Vol 4..#1595

1823 POLICY RECORD: Williams Thayer..South Main Street..e side..Brick 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' front and 85' front to rear...3 stories high in front and 2 stories high in rear. N.B. About 40' of the rear is only about 20' broad...occupied for a Dwelling House...PR 2.2463

1831 POLICY RECORD: Williams Thayer..South Main Street...E side...Brick...
27 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' in front and 85' front to rear..about $\frac{1}{2}$ of which is but 20' broad..
3 stories high in front and 2 in rear..occupied for a Dwelling House with a shop in the basement...PR 8.4330

1837 POLICY RECORD: Williams Thayer...So Main street...e side.. Brick 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' front and 85' front to rear about $\frac{1}{2}$ of which is but 20' broad..3 stories high in front and 2 in rear..occupied for a Dwelling House with a shop in the Basement that may be used for a grocery store...PR 16.7025

1915 Desmond Fitzgerald et al, heirs of Williams Thayer, sell to Gose Levy ~~167/18664~~ that tract of land with all buildings and improvements thereon bounded W by South Main Street 42.14'; N by Pioneer Lane 99'; E by Well Street 80'; S, W, and South by Frank Healy...DB 548.438-439

1922 Heirs at law of Gose Levy sell the above property to Joseph Elowitz
The property was taxed to the following persons in the year designated:

more....

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

2.

#312 - 314 SOUTH MAIN STREET....continued

1947 William Elowitz Estate

1952 Joseph ^d Elowitz, trustee

1955 Jesse N Mello

1956 Elsie Corrado

Rebecca Williams (later Thayer) House, 312, South Main Street, Providence.

Owned by Mr. Samuel Corrado, 43, White Avenue, East Providence, who conducts a business at the South Main Street house. Owner would like to restore the house with proper instruction, returning the main floors to residential use (probably one-family) while continuing to use the street level for business purposes somewhat different from the present ones.

The house appears to have been built c. 1768-1775, and the builder's intentions seem to have been to make it in certain respects a rather imposing dwelling. The main part of the house is oblong, built of brick, and is placed end to the street, being of two storeys above a basement opening onto the sidewalk; behind this, on the upper grade, is a two-storey service wing extending to the east. The original cornice is gone and a high mansard has been added as a third storey to the whole of the house and of course calls for removal. Supposition, plus certain interior and exterior evidence, indicate that there was originally only an attic above the second floor and that it was probably covered by a hip roof or by a sloped-gable roof. (At least, I am doubtful about the presence of a full third storey with dormers.)

The main entrance is on the south side, on a terrace level reached from the street by wide brownstone steps. With three bays to the street, there are five on the entrance front, the door occupying the centre one. It is plain that there was an entrance porch, on a brownstone platform still existing, and that it was a pedimented porch supported by (probably Tuscan) columns backed by pilasters against the house; the platform shows traces of the column bases and the facade traces of the pilasters. The door opening appears to have been quite simple, without sidelights or transoms. The windows of the house are treated externally with heavy and wide moulded sills supported on curved brackets. Whether or not these conspicuous sills supported any applied architrave or other window trim is conjectural.

Internally, the house has been very little sub-divided, if at all, and retains nearly all its original trim and woodwork throughout, though often badly scarred.

The principal and largest room of the first floor occupies the full width of the west, or street, front and the whole area to the left of the central hall. A door in the centre of the east wall leads to the hall and is surmounted by a dentilled triangular pediment (not repeated on the hall side due to the rise of the second flight of the main stair). A second door was cut c. 1840 in this wall when the room was divided in two—which it no longer is—and should be filled in. There is a panellled wainscot and an elaborate cornice with, I think, mutules. The large windows are surrounded by an architrave which incorporates beading. There are reveals for folding shutters which are no longer present. The fireplace has had a Victorian grate etc. removed and has been opened back to its original depth; its mantel is of an Adamesque-McIntire type with composition ornament of swags and would be a "modern" decorative feature whose insertion would follow about thirty years after construction of the house.

Across the hall are two smaller rooms, that in the north-east corner presumably having been the dining-room. I seem to remember that woodwork here was also original, except that the plainest of Greek Revival mantels had been installed here. I cannot comment on the other eastern room, at present equipped as an office.

In the hall, the front entrance and its door have been subject to clumsy changes, so that the door and its surround would need replacement. The stairway is equipped with a turned pedestal-type newel and unvaried turned balusters. There is a rumped hand-rail matched on both flights by the upper moulding of the wainscot. The stair-treads are without mouldings beneath. (The original wainscoting has been removed from the landing level.) The most impressive feature of hall and staircase occurs on the landing, where there is a large round-headed window—now needing to be replaced—in a quite robustly executed sedicular recess; this appears to be remarkably intact although partially obscured at the top by the interference of a later stair to the adjoined mansard story.

There are three or four rooms with, I think, original woodwork in the main part of the house as well as several bedrooms in the rear wing. Some mantels may be replacements of the Federal period.

Below, in the rear wing, I understand that the original hearth has been or is being uncovered.

This report is made as the result of a short inspection of the house on March 19, 1968, without the taking of either notes or drawings, and is subject to correction and/or addition. It is also purposely left at this time without suggestions.

Richard B. Harrington.

March 20, 1968.