

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

RECORDS FOR

**294 WAYLAND AVENUE
Plat 39, Lot 275**

**Thomas Grimes House
Architect: Richard C. Sanders
Built 1899**

Summary: This property, located at the northwest corner of Wayland Avenue and Elton Street, was originally part of Moses Brown's late 18th century country estate known as Elm Grove Farm. The block containing 294 Wayland Avenue was first platted for residential development in 1865 as the Elm Grove Farm Plat, then replatted in 1870 and again in 1891 as the Moses Brown Farm Plat. Thomas Grimes, who owned a wholesale liquor business and lived on Angell Street, built this house as a rental property in 1899. The first occupant was the architect, Richard Sanders, who lived here in 1899. Thomas Grimes himself lived here in 1903 before moving next door to 296 Wayland Avenue. Since Grimes died in 1914, the house has changed hands only three times. The current owners, Todd and Julie Andrews, purchased the property in 1995.

Chronology

1770-1800

Moses Brown, great-great grandson of Chad Brown (one of the original settlers of Providence), acquired a large parcel of previously undeveloped land on the East Side of Providence. The boundaries of Brown's estate, known as Elm Grove Farm, extended north from today's East Manning and Pitman Streets, to what is now Laurel Avenue, and east from present day Arlington Avenue, Lloyd Avenue, and Hope Street to the Seekonk River. Brown's country house (1772, demolished), sited near what is now the intersection of Humboldt and Wayland Avenues, eventually became his year round residence. (*RIHP&HC, Historic and Architectural Resources of the East Side, Providence, 1989*)

A Map of Owners of Lots in Providence in 1798, compiled by Henry B. Chace in 1912: Plate V shows Moses Brown's farm occupying over 300 acres north of today's Angell Street (then called "Moses Brown's Road to the Central Bridge"), between what is now Hope Street and the Seekonk River. (*Archives*)

1836

Deed Book 140, Page 401: On February 9, 1836, Moses Brown willed to his granddaughter Anna Almy Jenkins, wife of William Jenkins, his homestead farm in Providence Neck. Anna was to have a life tenancy, and after her death the property was to pass to her son, Moses Brown Jenkins (born two days previously), provided he should attain the age of 21, marry, and have a child. (*PPS Records for 257 President Avenue*)

1849-1856

The process of subdividing East Side farmsteads into house lots began as early as the late 1840s, in anticipation of the city's population increasing, and of transportation improvements that would facilitate access to the more remote areas of the East Side. Anna Almy Jenkins died in 1849 and left her father's homestead farm to her two children, Anna Almy (Jenkins) Hoppin and Moses Brown Jenkins. When Moses Brown Jenkins turned 21 in 1857, he and his sister divided the family

homestead, with Moses taking the portion north of Angell Street. (Angell Street then includes South Angell Street today.) Meanwhile, (RIHP&HC, Historic and Architectural Resources of the East Side, Providence, 1989)

1865

"The Elm Grove Farm Plat Belonging to Moses B. Jenkins" was surveyed and drawn by Charles E. Paine (recorded in Plat Book 8, Page 15, and copied on Plat Card 215) in 1865. This plat contained over 6.3 million square feet of land, and was divided into three tracts numbered 1, 2 and 3. Tract #1 (with over 3.2 million square feet of land) was bounded by Wayland Street on the east, by Angell Street on the south, by Asylum Street (now Arlington Street) on the west, and by land of Mary H. Robeson, Phebe Allen, Heby C. Dorr and Crawford Allen on the north. No buildings are shown on this map. (*Registry of Deeds*)

1868

Deed Book 184, Page 74: On October 1, 1868, William Jones Hopkins, guardian of Moses B. Jenkins (under court decree dated September 22, 1868), sold to Charles C. Taber and Henry M. Taber of New York City, the three tracts of land shown in the Elm Grove Farm Plat map of 1865. [Note: The Tabers had considerable influence on the development of this part of the East Side in the mid to late 19th century. Taber Avenue is named for them.] (*Archives*)

1870

"The Moses Brown Farm Plat," surveyed and drawn by Charles E. Paine (recorded in Plat Book 11, Page 2, copied on plat card 281), shows the area bounded by Arlington Avenue on the west, Angell Street on the south, Butler Avenue on the east, and Laurel Avenue on the north. Within this plat lies a block bounded by Wayland Avenue on the east, Humboldt Avenue on the south, Elmgrove Avenue on the west, and Irving Avenue on the north; Elton Street has not yet been laid out. This block is divided into ten 19,000 square foot lots, numbered 98 through 107 inclusive. Lot 104, on the west side of Wayland Avenue 100 feet south of Irving Avenue, has 100 feet of frontage; this lot would later be subdivided into two smaller lots, including the one where 294 Wayland would eventually be built. No buildings are shown on this plat map, but there is a note that "purchasers of lots are prohibited from placing any buildings on this plat with 20 feet of any street or avenue, and all their deeds are subject to this agreement." (*Registry of Deeds*)

1872

Deed Book 237, Page 49: On June 8, 1872, Charles C. Taber and Henry M. Taber sold to Royal D. Horton of Barrington, for \$4,750, Lot 104 on the Moses Brown Farm Plat of 1870. The deed notes that the lot measures 100 feet along Wayland Avenue and 190 feet deep (19,000 square feet), and also notes the requirement of a 20-foot setback from Wayland Avenue. (*Registry of Deeds*)

Mortgage Book 58, Page 501: On December 10, 1872, Charles and Henry Taber purchased from Moses B. I. Goddard a mortgage note on Lot 104 signed by Royal D. Horton and dated June 8, 1872 (recorded July 6, 1872). Horton mortgaged dozens of lots to Goddard. (*Registry of Deeds*)

1875

Atlas of the City of Providence, Vol. 1 (Wards 1, 2 and 3), by G.M. Hopkins Co, Plate J (pages 44-45) shows the block bounded by Wayland, Irving, Elmgrove and Humboldt Avenues (no Elton Street yet), containing ten 19,000 square foot lots. Lot 104 is labeled as owned by R.D. Horton. (*Archives*)

1882

Atlas of the City of Providence by G.M. Hopkins Co, Plate 4, again shows the block bounded by Wayland, Irving, Elmgrove and Humboldt Avenues (still no Elton Street). Lot 104 is shown on the west side of Wayland Avenue, 100 feet south of Irving Avenue. (What had previously been Lot 103, immediately south of Lot 104, has been subdivided into two lots, the northernmost of which, 40 feet wide, will become the Elton Street right-of-way.) No buildings are shown on Lot 104, but two other structures appear elsewhere on the block. (*Archives*)

1890-1891

Deed Book 361, Page 309: On October 7, 1890, Charles C. Taber and Henry M. Taber auctioned off Lot 104 on the Moses Brown Farm Plat of 1870 to Henry L. Aldrich (the previous owner, Royal D. Horton, had defaulted on this and many other mortgages held by the Tabers). Aldrich bid \$100 for the property. (*Registry of Deeds*)

Deed Book 361, Page 331: On October 7, 1890, Henry L. Aldrich sold 11 lots to Charles C. and Henry M. Taber, for \$1.00, including Lot 104 on the Moses Brown Farm Plat of 1870. The deed notes that this is "the same premises that Royal D. Horton conveyed by mortgage to the grantor." (*Registry of Deeds*)

Assessor's Plat Card for Plat 39, Lot 275 indicates that Charles C Taber heirs and Henry M. Taber owned the property as of December 1, 1890. (*Assessor's Office*)

In 1891, the Moses Brown Farm Plat was replatted and a new map drawn by Charles E. Paine (recorded in Plat Book 19, Page 17, copied on Plat Card 640). The block bounded by Wayland Avenue, Elton Street, Elmgrove Avenue, and Irving Avenue is divided into 16 lots. Each of the four lots on Wayland Avenue between Irving Avenue and Elton Street has approximately 40 feet of street frontage, and is approximately 100 feet deep. The lot at the corner of Wayland and Elton is numbered 354 and contains 4,000 square feet of land area. No buildings are shown on the map. (*Registry of Deeds*)

1895

Atlas of the City of Providence by Everts & Richards, Plate 6 (pages 32-33), shows the same 16 lots laid out in this block, and a 4,000 square foot lot at the corner of Wayland Avenue and Elton Street. No buildings are shown on this map. (*Archives*)

1898

Deed Book 416, Page 328: On March 21, 1898 Cornelia F.M. Taber, widow of Charles C. Taber, and several other heirs of both Charles and Henry M. Taber, sold 21 lots of land to Waldo I. Getchell of Cambridge, Mass for \$100. The deed notes that on December 21, 1897 Charles Taber's heirs and Henry Taber had entered into an agreement to sell this property to Waldo Getchell; that Henry Taber died three days later; and that Henry Taber's heirs now agreed to complete the transaction. The sale included Lot 354, so designated on the Moses Brown Farm Plat of 1891, at the northwest corner of Elton Street and Wayland Avenue. (*Registry of Deeds*)

Assessor's Plat Card for Plat 39, Lot 275 indicates that Waldo I. Getchell owned the property as of May 2, 1898. (*Assessor's Office*)

1898 (continued)

Deed Book 421, Page 85: On June 22, 1898, Waldo I. Getchell of Cambridge, Mass. sold two lots of land to Walter V. McGinn of Providence, for \$100 (nice profit!). The lots are identified as Lots 354 and 355 on the Moses Brown Farm Plat of 1891. Lot 354 is further identified as being located at the northwest corner of Elton Street and Wayland Avenue (lot 355 sits immediately to the north). The deed does not mention any buildings on the lot. (*Registry of Deeds*)

Deed Book 418, Page 169: On June 28, 1898, Walter V. McGinn of Providence sold Lot 354, at the northwest corner of Elton Street and Wayland Avenue, to Thomas Grimes of Providence. The deed notes that the lot is the same "conveyed to this grantor by deed from Waldo I. Getchell dated June 1898." The deed does not mention any buildings on the lot. (*Registry of Deeds*)

Assessor's Plat Card for Plat 39, Lot 275 indicates that Thomas Grimes owned the property as of July 1, 1898. (*Assessor's Office*)

Providence City Directory for 1898 lists Thomas Grimes, owner of Thomas Grimes and Bro. (a wholesale liquor distributor at the corner of Dorrance and Washington Streets in downtown Providence), living at 227 Angell Street. (*Archives*)

1899-1900

City Tax Records for 1899 show that Thomas Grimes of 227 Angell Street owned Plat 39, Lot 275. The lot was valued at \$2,420. In 1900, the assessed value increased to \$3,700 – a modest increase of \$1,280, but apparently sufficient to indicate that the house had been constructed during the previous year. (*Archives*)

Building Inspection Records for 1899: Permit #44 dated January 23, 1899 indicates that Thomas Grimes intended to build a wood frame, 2-1/2 story dwelling house at the corner of Wayland Avenue and Elton Street. The estimated cost of construction was \$5,000. The architect was R.C. Sanders, and the builder was J. J. Bebeau, Jr. (*Archives*)

The 1899 City Directory for Providence indicates that architect Richard C. Sanders lived in a house on Wayland Avenue at the corner of Elton Street. Since Thomas Grimes actually owned this property, it appears that Sanders was the first tenant in this house of his own design. Grimes himself is listed as living at 227 Angell Street in 1899. (*Archives*)

Providence House Directories for 1899 and 1900 do not list an address of 294 Wayland Avenue. The 1901 House Directory lists Mrs. George Makepeace residing at 294 Wayland. (*Archives*)

1902

Assessors Plat Maps, Plat 39: The block retains 16 house lots (some slightly reconfigured). The lot at the corner of Wayland Avenue and Elton Street is numbered 275, and contains 4,000 square feet of land area, with 40 feet of frontage on Wayland Avenue and 100 feet along Elton Street. (*Archives*)

1903-1914

Providence House Directories for 1903 and 1905 list Thomas J. Grimes living at 294 Wayland Avenue. In 1907 the house was occupied by James S. Brown; in 1909 by Richard G. Hooper; in 1911-1913 by Frederic Cutts. Meanwhile, Thomas T. Grimes and Thomas M. Grimes are both listed as

1903-1914 (continued)

living next door at 296 Wayland Avenue from 1907-1911; Thomas T. Grimes lived there alone in 1913. *(Archives)*

Providence City Directories 1903-1914: This directory lists Thomas Grimes (no middle initial) living at 294 Wayland Avenue in 1903. From 1904-1909, Thomas M. Grimes (a clerk, with an office in the Union Trust Building – not the same Thomas Grimes who ran a liquor business; perhaps his son?) is listed as either living or boarding at 294 Wayland. The 1913 Directory lists Thomas Grimes (again, no middle initial) at 296 Wayland Avenue; the 1914 Directory indicates that he died on February 23, 1914. *(Archives)*

1908 Atlas of the City of Providence by L.J. Richards Co., plate 9: A house with the address 294 Wayland Avenue is shown at the corner of Wayland Avenue and Elton Street (in fact, the entire block has been built out). Thomas Grimes is shown as the owner of both 294 and 296 Wayland in 1908. *(Archives)*

Providence Index of Deaths indicates that Thomas Grimes (again, no middle initial!), son of Robert and Catherine, died February 23, 1914, age 69. *(Archives)*

Assessor's Plat Card for Plat 39, Lot 275 indicates that "Rhode Island Hospital Trust Company u/w Thomas Grimes" owned the property as of June 1, 1914. *(Assessor's Office)*

1918

1918 Atlas of the City of Providence by G.M. Hopkins Co., Plate 20: The house at 294 Wayland Avenue is shown as owned by the R.I. Hospital Trust Company. A notation on this block refers to the Moses Brown Farm Plat. *(Archives)*

1921-1922

Deed Book 615, Page 375: On December 28, 1921, the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Co., as trustee of trusts established under the will of Thomas Grimes, late of Providence, sold Lot 354 for \$10 to Lester T. Woolf and wife Nina S. Woolf of Barrington, RI. The lot is described as sitting at the northwest corner of Elton Street and Wayland Avenue, and designated #354 on Plat Card 640 (recorded in plat book 19, page 17). No buildings are mentioned in the deed. *(Registry of Deeds)*

Assessor's Plat Card for Plat 39, Lot 275 indicates that Lester T. Woolf and wife Nina S. Woolf owned the property as of March 1, 1922. *(Assessor's Office)*

1925-1926

Deed Book 672, Page 252: On May 20, 1925, Lester T. and Nina S. Woolf sold the property to Harriet B. Draper of Providence, for \$10. The lot, "with all buildings and improvements thereon," is identified as Lot 354 on Plat Card 640, situated at the northwest corner of Elton Street and Wayland Avenue. It is described as measuring 100 feet on the south (Elton Street) and the north, and 40 feet on the east (Wayland Avenue) and west. The deed notes a restriction that 20-foot setbacks were to be observed from any avenue 60 feet in width.

Assessor's Plat Card for Plat 39, Lot 275 indicates that Harriet B. Draper owned the property as of June 15, 1925. *(Assessor's Office)*

1925-1926 (continued)

1926 Atlas of the City of Providence by G.M. Hopkins Co., Plate 20: The house at 294 Wayland Avenue is shown as owned by H. Draper. A notation on the map refers to the Moses Brown Farm Plat on plat card 640. (*Archives*)

Providence City Directory for 1925 lists Mrs. Harriet B. Draper at 15 Parade Street; in 1926, she is listed as living at 294 Wayland Avenue. Her occupation is not indicated. (*Archives*)

1931-1932

Assessor's Plat Card for Plat 39, Lot 275 indicates that Harriet B. Harding, wife of Browne Harding, owned the property as of June 15, 1931; and that Browne Harding and wife Harriet B. both owned the property as of December 1932. (*Assessor's Office*)

Deed Book 761, Page 336: On June 27, 1932, Harriet B. Harding (formerly Harriet B. Draper) sold the property to Browne Harding and Harriet B. Harding, his wife. The property is described as Lot 354 on Plat Card 640, located at the northwest corner of Elton Street and Wayland Avenue. (*Registry of Deeds*)

Note: Harriet B. Draper married Browne Harding, an electrical engineer, in June 1930. Harding was her second husband; she had originally married Philip C. Draper in January 1909. Mr. Draper's death was not recorded in Providence between 1909 and 1930. (*Archives*)

1937

1937 Atlas of the City of Providence by G.M. Hopkins Co., Pages 19-20: The house at 294 Wayland (now with garage at the rear/northwest corner of the lot) is shown as owned by B. Harding et ux. A notation on the map refers to the Moses Brown Farm Replat on plat card 640. (*Archives*)

1951-1955

Providence Index of Deaths: Harriet B. Harding, wife of Browne, died September 1, 1951. Browne Harding died November 25, 1955. (*Archives*)

Browne Harding married his second wife, Flora-Hilda, in 1954. (*Office of Vital Statistics*)

Assessor's Plat Card for Plat 39, Lot 275 indicates that Browne Harding owned the property as of December 1951; and that Flora H. Harding owned the property as of December 1955. (*Assessor's Office*)

Providence City Directory for 1955 lists Browne Harding, electrical engineer, living at 294 Wayland Avenue. The 1956 directory lists Flora Harding, widow of Browne, at the same address. (*Archives*)

1994-1995

Assessor's Plat Card for Plat 39, Lot 275 indicates that the Flora-Hilda Harding Trust, R.I. Hospital Trust Bank, Trustee (probate 94-111) owned the property as of April 26, 1994. (*Assessor's Office*)

Deed Book 3196, Page 276: On September 8, 1995, the Rhode Island Hospital Trust National Bank, trustee of the Flora-Hilda Harding Trust (dated 9/8/1982) under the terms of Miss Harding's will (dated 2/9/1993), officially received title to all of Miss Harding's real estate on Wayland Avenue, specifically

1994-1995 (continued)

Lot 354 as shown on Plat Card 640. The document notes that Miss Harding died on March 2, 1994 and that her will was probated on April 26, 1994. The bank was also the executor of Miss Harding's will. (*Registry of Deeds*)

Deed Book 3196, Page 273: On September 8, 1995, the Rhode Island Hospital Trust National Bank, as trustee of the Flora-Hilda Harding Trust established 9/8/1982, granted to Todd G. Andrews and Julie E. Andrews of Washington, DC, all rights to the land on Wayland Avenue that Flora Hilda Harding had owned at her death. The property is described as a lot of land with all buildings and improvements thereon on Wayland Avenue, at the northwest corner of Elton Street and Wayland Avenue, designated as Lot 354 on the Moses Brown Farm Plat of 1891 recorded on plat card 640. (*Registry of Deeds*)

Assessor's Plat Card for Plat 39, Lot 275 indicates that Todd G. and Julie E. Andrews owned the property as of September 8, 1995. The card references deed book 3196, pages 273 and 276. (*Assessor's Office*)

Research compiled by Kathryn J. Cavanaugh
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