

Mansard added  
18 —

Built —  
By —

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Records of

#286 BENEFIT STREET...Wood

Plat 12  
Lot 138 and  
Lot 430

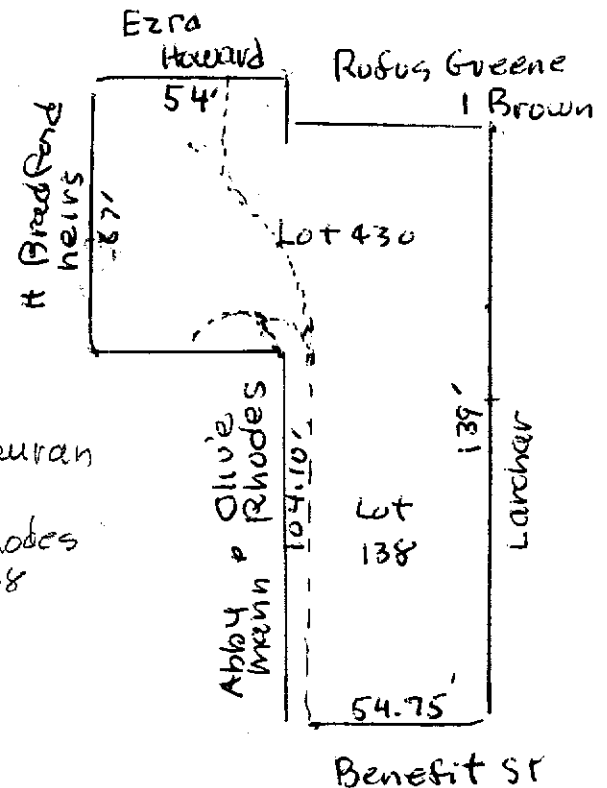
#220 in 1847 and until 1866..then #286

- 1783 Joseph Crawford for 36 L lawful sivler money sells to Seth Jenkins a certain strip of land bounded: E by the Back Street 12'; S by Giles Peckham's dwelling house and Seth Jenkins 116'; W 12' and N 116' by grantor...the grantor and heirs to pass and repass through the said granted land at all times...Deed Book 21.50
- 1839 INDENTURE: Mary Throop Dorr of the 2nd part, grants and sells off to Sullivan Dorr jr, in trust, of the 3rd part a certain lot of land nearly opposite the Benevolent Congregational Society's Meeting House on Benefit Street bounded: E by Benefit Street; S by the late John Mauran; W by Benoni Cooke and Isaac Brown; N by John Larchar, together with all the household furniture, stuff and utensiles of any kind and description to the said Mary belonging now principally placed in the dwelling house herebefore mentioned...DB 73.360
- 1844 John P Knowles, attorney, lived here and until 1855 (#220) Prov Directory
- 1845 POLICY RECORD: John P Knowles - w side Benefit st. wood - 28' x 34' - 2st high in front + 3 in rear - Addition a 16' sq. 2 stories high. Another 8' x 18' - 1 story high - whole occupied for a Dwelling House PR 31.12888
- 1846 INDENTURE: Heirs of T L Halsey 1st part..to Joseph P Knowles 2nd part: A certain strip of land now leased to Joseph H Knowles and is a portion of the land conveyed by Joseph Crawford to Seth Jenkins in 1782; S Jenkins to Simon Smith in 1783, and by Freelove Smith extrx. of said Simon to T L Halsey in 1807...DB 113.399
- 1852 POLICY RECORD: John P Knowles;..W side Benefit Street...wood..28' x 34' 2 stories high in front and 3 in rear. Addition 16' sq..2 stories high Another 8' x 18'..1 story high..occupied as a Dwelling House..49.21309
- 1853 Sullivan Dorr jr, trustee of Mary Ames sells to John P Knowles, attorney, for \$5000 a certain lot of land bounded: E by Benefit Street 42'; S by a 12' gangway and Ezra Howard 116' (gangway) and 30 $\frac{1}{4}$ '; W by Benoni Cooke and Isaac Brown 55 $\frac{1}{2}$ '; N by John Larchar 139'..All buildings and improvements now the property of Knowles...DB 135.45 (see map)
- 1854 John P Knowles sells for \$11,500 to William W Bishop the above land(with a Dwelling House) being the same as DB 135.45...DB 138.49
- 1854 POLICY RECORD: William W Bishop..W side Benefit Street..wood..28' x 34' 2 stories high in front and 3 in rear. Addition 16' sq..2 stories high Another 15 x 35'..2 stories high of brick..Another 10' x 5'..occupied as a dwelling house...DB/BB/ Vol 55..#24354
- 1855 William W Bishop and/or family lived here until 1863...Prov Directory

more...

#286 BENEFIT STREET...continued

- 1858 BANKRUPTCY: William W Bishop assigns all his property to Billings Brastow the daid Brastow..." and to pay my father Nathaniel Bishop the sum of \$6,216 I owe him"...DB 152.176
- 1869 Billings Brastow quit claims to Nathaniel Bishop a certain lot of land with a Dwelling House and other improvements bounded: E by Benefit St. S by John Mauran and Olive Rhodes; W by Ezra Howard, Rufus Greene and Isaac Brown; N by Rufus Greene and John Larchar.:DB 154.7
- 1859 Mathaniel Bishop sells for \$4000 to Nancy K Bishop, wife of William W Bishop a certain lot of land with a Dwelling House, being the same conveyed to said Bishop by Billings Barstow in 1859...DB 154.8
- 1864 William W Bishop and Nancy K Bishop his wife in right of said Nancy sell for \$25,000 to Adeline C Tobey, wife of John FTobey, counsellor, a certain lot of land, now being lots #138 and #430 on Plat 12, meaning to convey the same estate conveyed to Nancy K Bishop by deed from Nathaniel Bishop in 1859 (154.8) subject to right of Olive B Rhodes to pass and repass to her said lot to and from Benefit Street over and upon the S/ly portion of the lot hereby conveyed of 12' width... Bounded (see map)...DB 168.3
- 1864 John FTobey and/or family lived here until 1872..Prov Directory
- 1874 Property was taxed to Henry L Kendall Estate and to the various owners in the year designated:
- 1895 Providence Public Library
- 1896 Gardner Miller and his Estate until
- 1919 Eliza Goff and Goff Estate until
- 1942 Property taxed to Anthony C Paolina
- 1944 Margaret T and Mary A Nagle
- 1958 Mario Suacina and wife



1847  
4226  
Benefit } Olive Mauran m.  
Christ. Rhodes  
1838

H 299 (1847)  
LAND  
owned  
by  
Mauran

Mary A Gowdey  
December 1964

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Records of

#286 Benefit Street.....wood  
ca. 1839

Plat 12  
Lot 138  
& 430

The existing structure was built on property that had come to Mary Throop Dorr through her mother's family, the Allens. Although the house was built during the ownership of Mary Dorr she did not live there and apparently the property was rented, although it is not known to whom. The first documented occupant is John P. Knowles, in 1847. Between 1847 and 1865 the structure was #220 Benefit, since that time it has been #286 Benefit.

- 1824 Providence Probate Case A-4865, dealing with the distribution of Mary Throop Dorr's undivided 1/7th part of the Crawford Estate under the will of Zachariah Allen indicates that the property on Benefit was already held by the Trustees of Mary Throop Dorr. At this time Mary was under 14 years of age. Her father, Sullivan Dorr, and Phillip Allen, who was also the Executor of the estate of Zachariah Allen, were serving as her Trustees. Mary's mother, Lydia Allen, had married Sullivan Dorr on the 14th of October, 1804. She was one of Zachariah Allen's daughters and was named in his will (Probate Docket A-3564).
- 1839 In anticipation of her marriage to Samuel Ames, Mary Throop Dorr executed a trust agreement appointing her brother Sullivan Dorr, Jr. as her trustee. The real property included in the trust consisted of two lots of land, both with furnished houses. One of the lots was the property on Benefit Street, the other was at the corner of Power, Brook, and William Streets. (Deed Book 73:360).
- 1845 An Insurance Policy was recorded in the name of John P. Knowles for a wooden structure on the west side of Benefit, 28' by 34', two stories high on the front and three in the rear. Also including two additions: one 16' square and the other 8' by 18', one story in height. The structure was occupied for a dwelling house. (PR. 31:12888).
- 1853 Mary Throop Ames, lately Mary Throop Dorr of Prov., directed her Trustee to convey the property to John P. Knowles for the sum of \$5,000.00. The property was bounded easterly on Benefit 42', northerly on land belonging to John Larchar 139', westerly on land belonging to Benoni Cooke and Isaac Brown 55½' and southerly on land belonging to Ezra G. Howard 116'. (Deed Book 135:45).
- 1852 An Insurance Policy was recorded by John P. Knowles for the same property named in the 1845 policy. (PR. 49:21309).
- 1854 For the sum of \$11,500.00, John P. Knowles conveyed to William W. Bishop of Prov., "That certain lot of land with the dwelling house and other improvements...described in the certain deed from Sullivan Dorr, Jr. Trustee of Mary T. Ames....Also the right...to the gangway or strip of land in said deed mentioned, which to me pertains by virtue of said

deed...and also...pertains to me as lessee named in a certain lease from Thomas Lloyd Halsey and others, recorded in Book 113 at page 399." (Deed Book 138:49).

1854 An Insurance Policy was recorded by William W. Bishop for the property on Benefit Street, including a structure and several additions. The structure was of wood, 28' by 34', 2 stories in the front and 3 in the rear. The additions included: one 2 stories high and 16' square; another 15' by 35', 2 stories high of brick, and a third 10' by 5'. The structure was occupied for a dwelling house. (PR. Vol. 55:24354).

\*\*\*\* During this early period the Providence City Directory gives the following information of interest in connection with this house:

1844 John P. Knowles, attorney, #63 Pine St.  
1847-55 John P. Knowles, attorney at #3 Broad St.  
resides at #220 Benefit St.  
1854-55 William W. Bishop, agent R.I. Bleachery  
resides at #320 Benefit St.  
1856-63 William W. Bishop, agent R.I. Bleach Works  
resides at #220 Benefit St.

\*\*\*\* It was William Bishop who assembled the parcel as it is today with the execution of the following deeds:

1846 On the 1st of January Thomas Lloyd Halsey; Sarah Halsey, a single woman; Harriet Creighton, a widow, all of Prov.; Frances M. Cross, a widow of Charleston, S.C.; and Thomas Lloyd Halsey, guardian of Mary Anna Wright of Prov. an infant executed an indenture with John P. Knowles for a 12' strip of land on the west side of Benefit Street. "Said parcel...hereby leased is a portion of the land conveyed by Joseph Crawford to Seth Jenkins in 1782, by said Seth Jenkins to Simon Smith in 1783, and by Freelove Smith, executor of said Simon to Thomas Lloyd Halsey(now deceased) in 1807...". (Deed Books 30:338, 117:353, 113:398).

1852 Frances M. Cross and the other devisees of Thomas Lloyd Halsey convey a lot and a gangway on Benefit Street to Ezra Howard. This is the property on the west side of Benefit just south of the lot in question here. (Deed Book 129:265 & 316).

1854 Ezra W. Howard conveyed the right to the easterly portion of the lot he had purchased from Frances M. Cross to William W. Bishop for \$1.00 and other valuable considerations. "Beginning at the junction of the fence dividing land of Henry Bradford's heirs from said lot purchased of said Cross and of the fence dividing the land of Olive B.M. Rhodes from said lot...and running westerly 67', thence northerly 54' more or less to a mark on Benoni Cooke's barn, thence easterly along said barn 21.22', thence continuing easterly along the fence dividing land of the Grantee from the lot purchased from said Cross 45.78' to the northerly end of said fence of Olive

B.M.Rhodes thence southerly 54' more or less till it comes to the first mentioned bound....Also rights to a strip measuring 12' on Benefit...in deed book 129 at page 316,317 & 318, of October 3,1852." (Deed Book 135:380).

1858 For the benefit of his creditors, William W. Bishop conveyed all his property, real and personal, to Billings Brastow of Prov. whom he had appointes as his assignee. Brastow was charged with 4 tasks: first to pay all the expenses of the transfer and to withhold a reasonable compensation for himself; second to pay Bishop's father Nathaniel the \$6216.00 that was owed him; third to pay Charles Hart and William H. Porter, Prov. attorneys, the sums due them for their services; and fourth to pay other creditor's claims with the residue. (Deed Book 152:176). Other deeds relating to the bankruptcy proceedings include:

17 May,1859 at 12:55 PM Billings Brastow transfered the Benefit Street property to Nathaniel Bishop of Prov. for \$1.00.

17 May,1859 at 1:00 PM Nathaniel Bishop, father of William, transfered the Benefit Street property to Nancy K. Bishop, William Bishop's wife for the sum of \$4,000.00.

These deeds are from Deed Books 152:176, 154:7 and 154:8.

1864 William W. Bishop and Nancy K. Bishop, both of Prov., conveyed the property to Adeline C. Tobey, wife of John F. Tobey of Prov., for the sum of \$25,000.00. The parcel included both lot 138 and 430 on Benefit Street and was the same premises conveyed to Nancy Bishop from Nathaniel Bishop. (Deed Book 168:3).This transfer was subject to the right of Olive B.M.Rhodes to a right of way over the southerly portion of the property. The right of way was the 12' wide strip mentioned above.

\*\*\*\* The Providence City Directory indicates that John F. Tobey lived at #286 Benefit from 1864 until 1872.

1874 John F. Tobey and his wife Adeline C. Tobey conveyed two lots of land with a dwelling house and other improvements on the westerly side of Benefit St. to Henry L. Kendall for the sum of \$22,100.00. The parcel included both lots #138 and #430. (Deed Book 249:319).

1875 The Providence City Atlas,plate 0, page 64-65,showed the existing structure and indicated the owner was H.L.Kendall. The street address was #286 Benefit.

1883 According to the Providence City Directory, Henry Kendall resided at #286 Benefit from 1875 until his death in 1883. His Probate Record, found in Prov. records A-13797, indicated the estate contained some 31 different properties with combined rents of \$1780.42. The bulk of the estate was left in trust to care for his sisters and their children. Other bequests were made to various charities, primary among those being the Providence Public Library. In the final settlement of the estate some years after Kendall's death the Public Library became the owner of the property.

- \*\*\*\* The Providence City Directory indicates that Kendall's sister, Miss Jane W. Kendall, resides at #286 Benefit from 1884 until 1895. During a portion of that time, 1893 - 1894, and in 1896 Charlott Frogley, a widow also lived at the address.
- 1896 The Providence Public Library conveyed the property to Mabel Anna Miller, wife of Gardner L. Miller of Prov., for the sum of \$12,000.00. The parcel included both lots #138 and #430 with the following dimensions: 54.75'-X 104.10' X 54' X 67' X 54' X ? X 139', and was subject to the right of way of Olive B.M.Rhodes. (Deed Book 406:368).
- 1919 Gardner L. Miller of Prov. and his wife Mabel A. Gardner conveyed the property to Eliza Goff, also of Providence. (Deed Book 582:479).
- \*\*\*\* Both the 1908 and 1918 Providence City Atlases indicate that G.L.Miller owned the two lots at #286 Benefit. They contained 8169 and 3600 square feet respectively. (Plate 1 in both).
- \*\*\*\* The Providence City Directory indicates that Dr. and Mrs Gardner L. Miller resided at #286 from 1897 until 1921, and that Mrs Eliza Goff was there from 1923 until 1939. The over lap in dates as compared to the land evidence is explained by the publication lag of the directories.
- 1939 Mrs Goff lived at the address until her death on the 17th of July at age 77. She had been born in London, England, and was the widow of Alpheus B. Goff. She died intestate leaving a son, Louis B. Goff, who resided at #286 Benefit from 1940 until 1942. (Probate Docket #40768).
- 1942 Robert H. Goff and Louis B. Goff, both of Prov., being the heirs of Eliza Goff, conveyed the property to Louis B. Goff and his wife Florence W. Goff as joint tenants. The transaction, for \$10.00, was by quit claim deed. (Deed Book 851:38). Executed September 25, 1942 at 3:58 PM.
- 1942 In a deed of the same day, executed at 3:59 PM, Louis B. Goff and his wife Florence W. Goff conveyed the property to Anthony C. Paolino of Providence. (Deed Book 851:40).
- 1944 Anthony C. Paolino and his wife Ethel I. Paolino of Prov. conveyed the property to Margaret T. Nagle, Mary A. Nagle and Josephine A. Nagle, all of Prov., as joint tenants. (Deed Book 867:331).
- 1958 Mary A. Nagle, of Prov., conveyed the property to Roger A. Brassard of Seekonk, Mass. (Deed Book 1062:314). Recorded March 4, 1958.
- 1958 On the 20th of May, Roger A. Brassard and his wife Jacqueline C. Brassard both of Seekonk, deeded the property to Mario Svacina and Antonie Svacina his wife, both of Prov., as joint tenants. (Deed Book 1077:224).
- 1977 Mario Svacina of Prov. conveyed the property by quit claim deed to Antonie Svacina of Providence. (Deed Book 1201:369).
- 1978 Antonie Svacina transferred the property to Tijan Jasmay Brook of Prov.. (Deed Book 1209:759).

The dating of the original structure is based primarily on the marriage indenture of Mary Throop Dorr in 1839, indicating that the structure was in existence. As previously mentioned the first recorded occupant was John P. Knowles in 1847. The documents referred to here do not allow the dating of the later Mansard roof, nor are there any existing records of Intention to Build available for these modifications.

Prepared by,

Ann C. Street  
December, 1982

Schematic diagram of the property

