

April 2, 1962

Mrs. Lee Kaplan
78 Sea View Avenue
Cranston, Rhode Island

Dear Mrs. Kaplan:

First of all, let me thank you for taking time to show me through 314 Benefit Street two weeks ago.

If you should ever decide to restore the rooms to their original proportions, removing the interior walls which were put up to split each floor into small rooms, I would definitely be interested in renting an entire floor. As I think I told you, there is a crying need for large apartments of distinction and character in the neighborhood of the University. Brown has one thousand full or part-time faculty and administrative people on its staff! Make each floor, including the basement level in back, into one large apartment, and you could keep it full of faculty people on a year-around basis for years to come. They would be people who would appreciate it and care for it as they would their very own.

Please let me know if you decide to restore 314 Benefit Street. In the meantime, I shall have to keep on looking, since I must get settled this summer before college reopens in the fall.

Thank you again for your time.

Sincerely yours,

D. Bruce Hutchinson
Assistant Director
of Admission

Dear Betty -
DBH/esb

This is a copy of the letter I wrote after being given the grand tour of the Burnside Apartments. The students will all be gone for good in June and Mrs. K. wants adults to replace them. Unfortunately, she does not seem to see the wonderful possibilities of those beautiful old rooms. The whole thing is very sad, and it will continue as a second-rate rooming house. Bruce -

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Records of

#314 BENEFIT STREET

Plat 12
Lot 305

The General Burnside House

Built in 1866...Alfred Stone, architect

- 1824 Osaac Bowen, merchant, administrator of the Estate of Isaac Bowen, by order of the Supreme Judicial Court, sells for \$195 to Menzies Sweet, housewright, the highest bidder at public auction, one certain lot of land with a Dwelling House and other improvements thereon standing bounded: E by Benefit Street 40'; S by Planet Street 50'; W 25'; N 48', being the same lately occupied by Isaac Bowen and is subject to a mortgage of \$590....Deed Book 48.205
- 1828 Menzies Sweet sells for \$1025 the above property to Gideon Davenport...Deed Book 56.20
- 1831 Peleg Hull, trader, sells for \$965 to Tristram Burgess a certain lot of land bounded: E by heirs of Isaac Bowen 150'; S by Planet Street 90'; W by the grantees homestead; N by Thomas Howard 88'... Deed Book 60.263
- 1847 Gideon Davenport and wife Susan H Davenport, sell for \$1055 to Richard J Arnold a certain lot of land with all buildings and improvements thereon situated bounded: E by Benefit Street 42½'; S by Planet Street 50'; W by Tristram Burgess 25'; N by Nathaniel Bishop 48', being the same as sold to grantor by Menzies Sweet in 1828...Deed Book 107.219
- 1847 Tristram Burgess sells to Richard J Arnold a certain lot of land with all buildings and improvements thereon situated bounded: E by Nathaniel Bishop 102'; S by Planet Street 22'; N by Thomas Howard 32½'; W by grantor being PART of the estate grantor purchased of Peleg Hull in 1831...Deed Book 107.225
- 1865 Richard J Arnold sells to Fannie Bishop, widow of Nathaniel, two certain lots of land with all buildings and improvements thereon situated. One on the N corner of Planet and Benefit Streets and the other on the N side of Planet Street adjoining the above...

more...

#314 BENEFIT STREET...continued

being the same purchased in 1847 by grantor from Gideon Davenport and Tristram Burgess. The grantor means to convey all the land owned by him on the N corner of Benefit and Planet Streets and adjoining the estate of the late Nathaniel Bishop on the N and also the estate of the late Thomas Howard on the N, and the estate of the late Tristram Burgess on the W.....Deed Book 172,362

- 1866 Fannie Bishop, widow of Nathaniel, and mother-in-law of Ambrose E Burnside, sells for \$4000 to Mary R Burnside, wife of Ambrose, a certain lot of land situated on the N/ly corner of Benefit and Planet Streets and also a strip of land being the same as grantor purchased by deed from Richard J Arnold in 1865...Deed Book 175.401

1866 - 1867 - 1868 Ambrose E Burnside was elected as Governor of Rhode Island.

1868-1871 Governor Ambrose E Burnside lived here...Prov Dir

- 1876 WILL: Mary R Burnside:... "all my property both real and personal to my husband Ambrose E Burnside for and during his natural life and after his decease I devise and bequeath the same to my Mother Fanny Bishop for and during her natural life. After the decease of Ambrose E Burnside and Fanny Bishop I give and bequeath to Fanny W Bishop and Ellen B Cameron, widow, children of my late brother William the sum of \$10,000 each"...R I Hospital Trust Company, Executors...Wills 25.303 Mary R Burnside died.
- 1881 General Ambrose E Burnside died.
- 1883 Fanny Bishop died.
- 1886 R I Hospital Trustee Company, trustees u/w of the Mary R Burnside estate, sell for \$17,000 a certain lot of land with all buildings and improvements thereon situated to Ellen B Cameron, widow, and Fanny W Bishop, single woman, the highest bidders at public auction bounded: S by Planet Street; W by Henry Child; E by Benefit Street; N by the late Fanny Bishop and partly by Thomas Howard...DB 335.319
- 1886 Fanny Bishop, single woman, and Ellen B Cameron, single woman, sell to Nancy K Bishop (their mother) that tract of land with the dwelling house and stable, being the same conveyed to the grantors by deed from the R I Hospital Trust Company in 1886..Deed Book 338.62
- 1893 Nancy K Bishop sells to Gardner C Luther a certain tract of land with a dwelling house and stable being the same as DB 338.62..... Deed Book 384.349

more....

#314 BENEFIT STREET...continued

1894 Gardner C Luther sells to Frederick E Perkins a certain tract of land with a dwelling house and stable conveyed to the grantor by Nancy K Bishop in 1893 (see map)....Deed Book 389.77

This property changed ownership several times and was taxed to the following persons in the year designated:

1894	Frederick E Perkins	1940	Eva I Briggs	Vendetti
1920	Prov Merril System Bldg Co Inc	1943	Paul A Riales & Nicholas	
1934	Russell R Gray	1956	Lloyd Investment Co	

1961 Lloyd Investment Company sells to Lee Kaplan and wife Belle, joint tenants that certain lot of land with all buildings and improvements thereon situated on the N/ly corner of Planet and Benefit Sts. Bounded: E by Benefit Street; S by Planet Street; W by Gino Conti; N by George E Wilson (see map)...Deed Book 1111.311

1972 Dirk Patricia

AMBROSE EVERTS BURNSIDE

Ambrose Everts Burnside was of Scotch ancestry, the son of Judge Edghill Burnside. He was born near Liberty, Indiana May 23, 1824 and died in Providence R I September 13, 1881. He was one of nine children.

He met Mary Richmond Bishop at a Ball and married her April 27, 1852. Mary R Bishop was the only daughter and youngest child of Major Nathaniel Bishop and Fanny (Winsor) Bishop. "She (Mary) was of courtly presence, rather tall and stately, of quiet and genial temper, self-reliant and of earnest religious convictions "

"General Burnside's home in Providence was a commodious, substantially built house on Benefit Street, comfortably, though not extravagantly furnished, and containing many souvenirs of the War. (Civil). It had a good reference library" General Burnside lived in this mansion from 1868 to 1871. **

G 3 times
General Burnside was Governor of Rhode Island ...1866-1867-1868.

In 1866 General Burnside lived with his mother-in-law Fannie W Bishop, widow of Nathaniel at 312 Benefit Street. Also lived at 312 Benefit Street from 1872 to 1881 when he died.

** All the above from: "Life of Burnside" by Benjamin Perley Poore at the R I Historical Society

GENERAL AMBROSE BURNSIDE HOUSE
HABS No. RI-162 (Page 2)

1866 Fannie Bishop, wd, Nathaniel for \$4,000 sells to Mary R. Burnside wf of Ambrose a certain lot of land situated on the Nly corner of Benefit and Planet Streets and also a strip of land being same as greater purchased by deed from Richard J. Arnold.----(Deed Book 172, page 362) - Deed Book 175, page 401 in Providence City Hall.

Property taxed to the following people

1866	Mary R. Burnside wf Ambrose	1894	Gardner C. Luther
1882	Mary R. Burnside Est.		Frederick E. Perkins
1884	Providence Childress' Friend Soc.	1920	Prov. Merrill Sys. Bldg. Co. Inc.
	Home for Aged Women		
	R. I. Hospital	1934	Russell R. Fray
	Prov. Assn for Ben of Colored Children	1940	Eva I. Briggs
		1943	Paul A. Ricles and Nicholas Vendetti
1884	Mary R. Burnside Est.		
1886	R. I. H. Trust Co., trustees	1956	Lloyd Investment Co.
	Fanny W. Bishop		
	Kileen B. Cameron		
	Henny K. Bishop		

B. Date of erection: 1866

C. Architect: Alfred Stone (1834-1908), born East Machias, Maine; graduated from Salem, Massachusetts, high school in 1850, architectural training in Boston firms, worked for Arthur Gilman in Boston; opened private practice in Boston in 1854, moved to Providence in 1864, later associated with Charles E. Carpenter and Edmund R. Willson, Fellow of the American Institute of Architects.

D. Sources of Information: For Burnside, see: Knight Edwards, "Burnside, a Rhode Island Hero," Rhode Island History, January 1977.
For Stone, see: obituary in the Providence Journal, September 9, 1908; John Hutchins Cady, The Civic and Architectural Development of Providence 1636-1920 (Providence, Rhode Island: The Book Shop, 1957), passim.

Prepared by Antoinette F. Downing and Elvira Gowdey
for the Providence Preservation Society
May 1963

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: This is a moderately large brick house, with an unusual irregular shape and a mansard roof.
2. Condition of fabric: Good

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Over-all dimensions: The house has an irregular but closed shape, approximately 50' x 60', with a large semicircular bay set into the southeast corner, and a small wing on the west side. The house is at the north-west corner of Benefit and Planet Streets, with the main entrance on the south side, but opening from a porch that leads to the east side of Benefit Street. Two-and-a-half stories high on the east, on a steeply sloping lot making the house three-and-a-half stories high plus an elevated basement on the west.
2. Foundations: Regular ashlar
3. Wall construction: Red-orange brick laid in running bond with narrow mortar joints. Water tables and belt-courses of a light, tan stone. Labels of top floor windows continue as belt course between windows, of the same stone.
4. Porches, bulkheads, etc.: Two-story entrance porch carried around the circular bay on the southeast corner. The lower level of the porch opens on Planet Street on the south side of the house, upper level on Benefit Street on the east side. The upper floor of the porch is supported on deep wooden brackets, heavily carved, and on cast iron columns, and has a latticed iron railing. A steeply pitched roof over the upper level of the porch has a patterned slate covering, cast iron pendant trim on the eaves, and is supported on deep wooden brackets.
5. Chimneys: Four brick chimneys with corbeled caps are visible.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Main doorway on upper level of porch with double doors with lighted top halves with heavy metal grilles, semicircular fanlight, opening trimmed with carved stone. Similar door directly below in plain rectangular opening.

#314 BENEFIT STREET...continued

314 Benefit Street

surveyed by

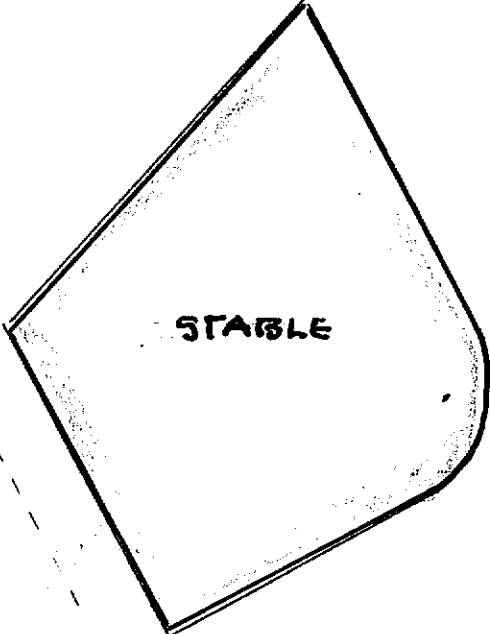
J.A. Latham ~~1894~~

scale 1"=6'

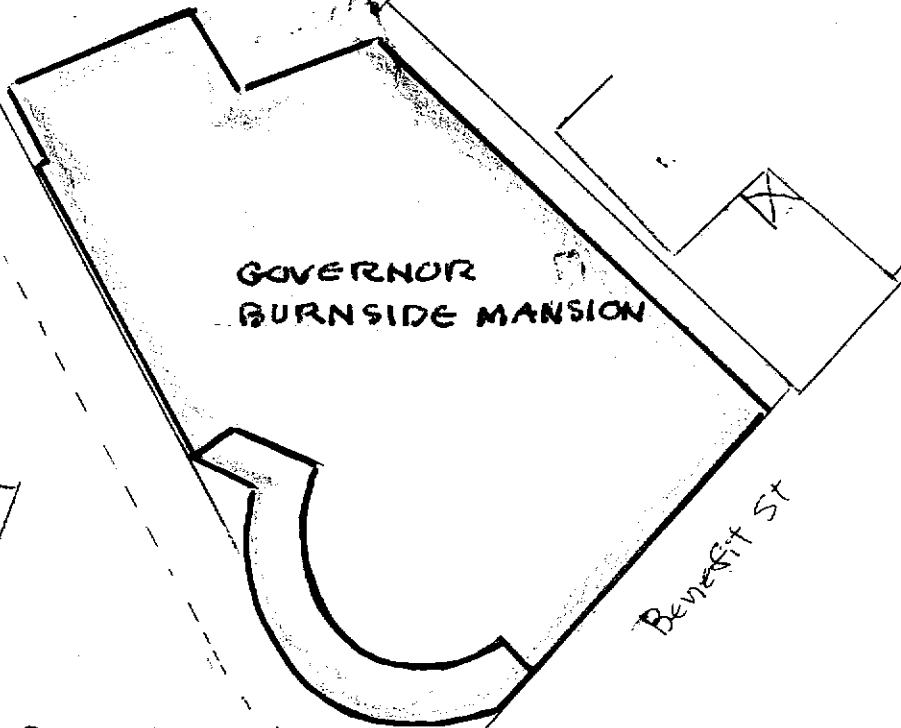
1894

Deed Book 389.77

Estate of Gen. Burnside



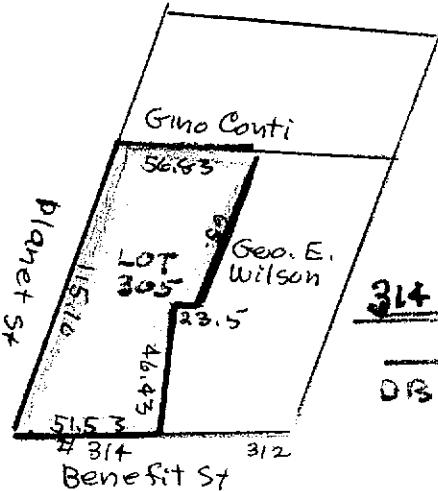
STABLE



GOVERNOR
BURNSIDE MANSION

Planet Street

Benefit St



314 Benefit St.

1961

DB 111.311

GENERAL AMBROSE BURNSIDE HOUSE

Address: 314 Benefit Street, Providence, Providence County,
Rhode Island.
Plat 12, lot 305.

Present Owner: Lloyd Investment Company

Present Occupant: Various tenants

Present Use: Apartment house

Brief Statement of Significance: This house was built for General Ambrose Burnside, Civil War hero, wealthy industrialist, Governor of Rhode Island, and Senator from Rhode Island. It is an early work in Providence by Alfred Stone, the most prominent architect in Providence toward the end of the 19th century.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATIONA. Original and Subsequent Owners:

1847 Gideon Davenport and Susan H. for \$4,055 to Richard J. Arnold, being same as deed to Grantors from Messias Sweet in 1828 (Deed Book 56, page 20) and also conveyed by said A. Davenport to William B. Bradford and by said Bradford by deed to said Susan H. Davenport. - Deed Book 107, page 219 in Providence City Hall.

1847 Tristram Burgess to Rich J. Arnold for \$1,000, being part of Estate Grantors purchase of Peleg Hull (Deed Book 60, page 263) in 1831. - Deed Book 107, page 225 in Providence City Hall.

1865 Richard J. Arnold (Rev. Stamp \$8.00) sells to Fanny Bishop, wd, Nathaniel two certain lots of land with all bldgs. and improvements. One on the N corner of Benefit and Planet Streets and the other on the N side of Planet Street adjoining the above. Being the same purchased by Grantor in 1847 from Gideon and Susan H. Davenport and Tristram and Mary Burgess p. 219 & 225 Book 107. The grantor means to convey all the land owned by him on the N corner of Benefit and Planet Streets and adjoining the Est. of the late Nathaniel Bishop on the N and W, to the Est. of the late Thomas Howard, also on the N side, and the Est. of the late Tristram Burgess on the W side. - Deed Book 172, page 362 in Providence City Hall.

- b. Windows: Tall double-hung windows, single or double-light sash. Windows facing the streets have stone sills on small consoles, and either elaborately carved stone heads with consoles or stone labels. Copper-covered bay window on the upper floor on the east side may be a later addition.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Mansard roof, tile covering, cast-iron railing at the peak.
- b. Cornice: Very heavy modillion cornice with denticulated bed mold.
- c. Dormers: Typical heavy dormers set into mansard roof.

8. Technical Description of Interiors

1. Floor plans: Rooms open off centrally placed entrance hall with stairway. Interior now divided into several apartments with many partitions added.
 2. Stairways: U-shaped, open well, closed string stair, runs from floor below main entrance level to attic, heavy mahogany hand rail with turned balusters and square carved newels, turned knobs missing from the newels, plaster walls in stairway, colored glass skylight at the top.
 3. Flooring: Hardwood floors, laid in patterns in some areas. Tiled floor in entrance hall.
 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster.
 5. Doorways and doors: Paneled mahogany doors in the principal rooms; molded architraves.
 6. Hardware: Some elaborate brass hardware remains.
 7. Lighting: Electric.
 8. Heating: Central. Some simple marble mantels with iron grates, and some elaborate wood mantels remain.
9. Site: On sidewalk line at the northwest corner of Benefit and Planet Streets; lot slopes very steeply down toward the west; attached garage on the southwest; small garden on the northwest.

Prepared by Command R. Overy
Yale University
May 1963