

See... #1.  
H. Mason's  
ALBUM

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Records of

Plat 16  
Lot 101

#368 BENEFIT STREET...Wood

1824...#196

1844 #196

#368 in 1866

#300 in 1847

- 1717 Major William Hopkins, yeoman, sells for 86 pounds of good and Lawful Bills of Publick Croodit to Captain William Crawford, a certain parcoll of land containing about 5 acres lieing in the southern end of Providence Towne, being a house Lott bounded: W by the Towne Street 100'; N by Roger Williams; E by a Highway ; S by William Ashton...Deed Book 3.84
- 1719 Here follows the assignment on a Deede which is Recorded in the Booke number three and on page 84 the which deed was signed by William Hopkins to William Crawford, the contents being of a 5 acre Lott situated towards the southern end of said Providence Towne...passed from said Hopkins to said Crawford:
- William Crawford for 90 and 1 pounds currant money of New England well and trully paid by William Ashton, devises to him the said William Ashton the said lott of land as described in DB 3.84...DB 4.85
- 1765 WILL: William Ashton devises to son William (2) " my now Dwelling House (South Main Street) and the 6-acre Lott I bought of Major William Hopkins" (W side of South Main Street) ITEM: I give to my daughter Rebecca Sabin my square table with 3 drawers...she having been provided for before. ITEM: To my 2 grandsons John & Jesse Sabins silver buckles that now belong to my Jacket and britches, equally. ITEM: to my son Joshua 6 shillings out of my moveable Estate...all the rest and residue to my son William. Joshua and William Ashton, executors...Wills ~~12.179~~ 5.391
- 1765 William Ashton Dies  
1794 " " 2 m. Dorcas Field of Scituate.
- 1798 CHACE INDEX CARDS: William Ashton : The unsold portion of the E end of the Home Lots of Thomas Hopkins and Edward Hart ~~was~~ bought in 1718 of William Crawford: N on Rebecca Williams; S on William Ashton (see Bank Mtg 11/107) part went to John and Jesse Sabin and part to Stephen and William Ashton. John Street was cut through the middle. Daniel Williams daughter Patience married William Ashton and had with her one of the Home Lots...probably the Hart Lot.
- 1801 see  $\Delta$
- 1798 CHACE INDEX CARDS: William Ashton jr: E on Benefit Street; N on Daniel 100' Olney; a Dwelling House 38' x 30'...2 stories...unfinished.
- 1814 PROVIDENCE DIRECT TAX (to pay for the War of 1812): William Ashton jr ... 1 2-story House 38' x 30'...wood...upper story unfinished.. Lot 90' x 100' back....also...
- 1816 WILL: William Ashton ~~jr~~ To my wife Eunice the use and improvement of all my property. ITEM: to daughter Betsy Congdon...~~ITEM:~~ in lieu of what I have set off to my sons Stephen and William Ashton jr. <sup>3</sup> ITEM: to my son William Ashton jr, the lot of land where his DWELLING HOUSE now stands fronting 40' on Benefit Street and extends W/ward 90'..Wills 12.179
- 1821 Five records Joshua H. Linsley - W side more....  
Benefit - wood - lower part of brick - 38' front  
x 30' fr. to rear 2st hi in front - 23 in rear  
Self occupied, wash room adina 8x10' - FR Vol 6-2035

#368 BENEFIT STREET....continued

- 1824 <sup>Ashton family here until 1866</sup> William Ashton, sailmaker, lived here...Prov Directory <sup>and/or family until</sup>
- 1844 William and William H Ashton, sailmakers, and Miss L A Ashton, milliner, lived here...Prov Dir
- 1848 William Ashton jr died intestate, leaving five children. Three died early leaving William H Ashton and Caroline F Ashton. Caroline Ashton had an illegitimate child, Edward A Ashton, who was adopted by her brother William H Ashton. Caroline married Nathaniel Oxx.
- 1847 William Ashton, sailmaker, and Miss L A Ashton, milliner lived here..P D
- 1849 PR Joshua Langley PR Vol 41.17427
- 1866 William Ashton and Harriet Ashton, milliner lived here...Prov Dir
- 1856 PR Jph Langley PR Vol 59. 26697
- 1883 William Ashton died intestate...his sole heir-at-law was Caroline Oxx, and in 1890 Caroline Oxx willed the Estate to nephew, <sup>cabinet-maker</sup> Edward A Ashton..Wills 33/445
- 1894 Edward A Ashton sells the property to Alexander A Walter and John Farrell.. "known as the Ashton Homestead Estate"...DB 394.101  
1894 Mrs. Michael Soquet et al PD  
The property changed ownership several times and was taxed to the following persons in the year designated:
- 1902 Frank Alexander
- 1903 Edward W Williams
- 1904 John O'Connor
- 1909 Arnold W Essex
- 1911 Charles R Easton
- 1953 Industrial Trust Co u/t agreement with C R Easton
- 1959 Elizabeth J Easton
- 1962 Barrington College u/w C R Easton
- 1963 Property sold to Donald Nelson

1861  $\Delta$  Fire Record. Wm Ashton - w side Benefit St - wood  
38' x 36' - 2st hi - chimney - self occ. Vol 1 - #340

Wallis Howe designed the center second story window  
He took measurements of the window in the  
Percia Borden House in Bristol for duplication  
here. (c 1910) Wallis Howe also did the  
W. S. Bank on Benefit St in 1929.

WILLIAM ASHTON, JR., HOUSE

An Addendum to  
 William Ashton, Jr., House  
 368 Benefit Street  
 Providence, Rhode Island  
 in HABS Catalog Supplement (1959)

**Address:** 368 Benefit Street, Providence, Providence County,  
 Rhode Island. Lot 101, Plat 16. 196 Benefit  
 Street in 1824, 300 Benefit Street in 1847, 372  
 Benefit Street in 1866.

**Present Owner  
 and Occupant:** Elizabeth J. Easton.

**Present Use:** Dwelling.

**Brief Statement  
 of Significance:** This is an example of a medium-sized frame house of  
 about 1800. It is typical of Providence in its  
 plan and exterior detail, except for the center  
 window on the second floor. The interior detail is  
 exceptionally elegant.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Original and subsequent owners:

1764 **William Ashton** died and devised to his son William Ashton his  
DWELLING HOUSE and lot he purchased of William Hopkins---Wills  
 Book 5, page 391, in Providence City Hall.

1798 **Chase Notes:** William Ashton--E on Benefit Street; N 100' partly  
 on Daniel Olney and partly on Jno Sabin and Williams Thayer---  
 taxed for \$1,000 (U. S. Census 1798)---[Notes at the Rhode Island  
 Historical Society gathered by Henry R. Chase in preparation of  
 his book, Owners and Occupants of the Lots, Houses and Shops in  
 the Town of Providence, Rhode Island in 1798. Located on Maps  
 of the Highways of that Date (Providence, 1914)]

1807 **Fire Record:** William Ashton--self-occupied--W side of Benefit  
 Street 38' x 30'--wood--2 stories high--1 chimney.---Mrs. fire  
 insurance records of the Providence Mutual Insurance Co. at the  
 offices of the Providence Washington Insurance Co., Providence,  
 R. I., Volume 1, Policy #340.

1810 **1811 - 7/24 - 1811**  
 1810 **Scn,** William Ashton devised his estate to wife Eunice, but  
 devised part of his estate with House to William Ashton Jr,  
 his son.---Wills Book 12, page 179, in Providence City Hall.

- 1846 William Ashton Jr. died intestate, leaving five children. Three died early leaving William H. Ashton and Caroline F. Ashton. Caroline Ashton had an illegitimate child, Edward A. Ashton who was adopted by her brother William H. Ashton. Caroline married Nathaniel Cox.
- 1853 William H. Ashton died intestate--his sole heir at law was Caroline Cox.
- 1890 Caroline Cox willed the Estate to her nephew, Edward A. Ashton---Wills Book 33, page 445, in Providence City Hall.
- 1894 Edward A. Ashton sells the property to Alexander A. Walter and John Ferrell--"known as the Ashton Homestead Estate"---Deed Book 394, page 101, in Providence City Hall.

The PROPERTY changed ownership several times and was TAXED to the following persons in the year designated:

- |      |                    |      |  |
|------|--------------------|------|--|
| 1902 | Frank Alexander    | 1911 | Charles R. Easton                                    |
| 1903 | Edward W. Williams | 1953 | Ind. Tr. Co. Trustee u/t agreement with C. R. Easton |
| 1904 | John O'Connor      | 1959 | Elizabeth J. Easton                                  |
| 1909 | Arnold W. Essex    |      |  |

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B. Date of erection: The house is similar to others in the area built in the 1790's, and the house mentioned in the 1764 deed must be a different one. The house was apparently not standing at the time of the Federal tax of 1796, but ~~was probably built very soon after, perhaps a few years~~ *and* ~~before~~ the fire insurance record of 1807.

*was described*

C. Sources of information: Antoinette F. Downing, Early Homes of Rhode Island (Richmond, Virginia: Garrett and Massie, 1937). Interior view, p. 307. See p. 337 for a window on the Parker Borden House in Bristol, similar to the center, second-floor window of the Ashton house.

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