

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. RI-144

JOANNA BARNES HOUSE

Address: 49 Benefit Street, Providence, Providence County,
Rhode Island.

Plat 10, Lot 136. In 1847 this property was
33 Benefit Street. Since 1866 it has been
49 Benefit Street.

Present Owner: Burnside Corporation, 12 Westminster Street,
Providence 3, Rhode Island.

Present Occupant: Vacant.

Present Use: The house is being rehabilitated for residential
use.

Brief Statement
of Significance: This is a medium large frame house, built before 1814,
typical of Providence in this period, but with some
unusual details.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners:

1773 Joseph Whipple sells land to John Jenckes £270
10s lawful money---"a certain lot of land of 15
acres neither more or less. Bounded: S by
Charles Keens; E by Ferry Lane (now Hope Street);
W by Benefit Street; N by my other lands."---
Deed Book 20, page 91, in Providence City Hall.

1790 John Jencks wills Whipple lot to 7 heirs--David
Leonard Barnes and wife Joanna draw this lot
known as the Barnes lot--South side of Jencks
Street.---Wills Book 7, page 367, in Providence
City Hall.

1798 David L. Barnes, "situated in the Northerly part
of the town of Providence; E on Benefit Street;
N on Joseph Jenckes; S on heirs of Charles Keene--
6 acres, val. \$1100"---no dwelling--Prov. Direct
tax 1798 - List B. ("This schedule of real estate
of Providence was undoubtedly made by officials
appointed by the U. S. Government in connection
with Direct Tax of Oct. 1, 1798.")

1814 Mrs. David L. Barnes...1 dwelling house on the east side of Benefit Street 40' x 38'..wood..2 stories high. One barn 20' x 25'..one woodhouse 16' x 14'. The lot contains about 3/4 acres.—Mrs. tax descriptions in the Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, for the 1814 Providence direct tax to the federal government.

1826 "House of Joanna Barnes not quite finished." "Joanna Barnes, widow of David L. Barnes for \$4,000 on a house situated on the E side of Benefit St. in the town of Providence. Said house is built of wood 42' in front x 40' from front to rear with an addition of 18-1/2' x 41' all 2 stories high in front & rear & occupied as a dwelling house & part of the addition as a woodroom. N.B.—The chambers in the addition are not finished the the floors are laid & the windows cased." Mrs. fire insurance records of the Providence Mutual Insurance Co. at the Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, Rhode Island, #7135 dated 1/10/1826.

1866 Edwin J. Nightingale, trustee (replacing Henry A. Rogers, deceased) of Estate of Anna E. Nightingale, wife of Everett B. Nightingale under trust deed of her then name Anna E. Pratt (daughter of Joanna Barnes) to Henry A. Rogers (Deed Book 125, page 433, in Providence City Hall) & deed from said Henry A. Rogers to me (Deed Book 172, page 366, in Providence City Hall) sell for \$25,000 to Sarah J. S. Burfee, wife of Thomas, a certain lot of land—being lots 1 (with dwelling house), 2, & 3 on plat called "Estate of the late Mrs. Joanna Barnes" platted in 1836 by Samuel Lockwood as shown in Book of Plats #1 Page 30.

This property was taxed to the following persons in the years designated:

1866 Sarah J. S. Burfee, wid. Thomas
1906 Fanny B. Bovy of Max & Rose Sheet of Morris
1912 Fanny B. Bovy of Max
1921 Leon Cohen & wf Bertha
1923 Julius Lebovitz & wf May
1930 Rose Greene
1936 Maude C. Green
1944 Mary M. Fraser
1956 Wm. O. Moore and wf Fehronia
1958 Burnside Corp.

2. Note of erection: This is apparently the house described in the 1814 tax list as "40'x38'...wood...2 stories....," and, therefore, was built between 1798 and 1814. The note that the house is unfinished in the 1826 Fire Record apparently refers only to the rear wing.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: Medium large house, typical of the period, but with some details unusual to Providence (rusticated siding, Greek Fret cornice, elaborate interior cornices, heavy window detail).
2. Condition of fabric: Structurally sound but in poor condition. Many modern features recently removed prior to rehabilitation.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: Main block facing west. About 39' (5 bays) wide by 36' deep, two-and-a-half stories high. Small rear wing about 10' deep x 18' wide.
2. Foundations: Front and part of sides: Dressed granite ashlar; other parts: Broken field stone laid random.
3. Wall construction: Rusticated wood siding, simulating stone 18" wide x 6" high on front and sides. Shingled back and rear wing. Heavy timber frame visible at the inside corners of the house; otherwise the structure was not observed, probably stud wall.
4. Porches, stoops: Front entrance porch with Doric columns at the front corners and flat Doric pilasters; entablature similar to roof cornice. Five steps dressed granite; with 12" paving stones laid diagonal. Railing with lattice on both sides.
5. Chimneys: Two inside chimneys.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doors: Plain molded door trim and six panel door, neither apparently original.
 - b. Windows: Double hung wood windows, 6 over 6 light with 10" x 14" panes in apparently original sash. Molded trim with entablature on front with mitered corners. Second floor window trim set below roof cornice and does not interrupt it.
7. Roof:
 - a. Shape and covering: Gable roof framed without ridge pole. Roll roofing covering.
 - b. Cornice: Horizontal and raking cornice with cyma recta crown mold and Greek Fret bed mold.
 - c. Dormers: None.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: Central hall plan, two rooms deep, with secondary stairway in small rear ell. Five rooms on the second floor. Several small rooms and a brick smoke chamber on third floor.
2. Stairways: Open wall, L-shaped, open string stair. Stairway wainscoting and step ends, original. Stairway balustrade, rails, newels, and stair from second to third floor are apparently later nineteenth century.
3. Flooring: Later narrow hardwood flooring laid over original floor.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster. Southwest parlor with apparently later paneling in ceiling.
5. Doorways and doors: Mainly original with molded, mitered trim and six panel doors with molded, slightly raised panels.
6. Trim: Wooden cornice in most rooms - much original trim remains. Stucco cornice on first floor apparently later in two rooms. Hall has flush board wainscoting, chair rail, and reeded cornice.
7. Hardware: Mortise locks; some knobs with evidence of silver plating. Butt hinges.
8. Lighting: Electric
9. Heating: Two fireplaces with wood mantels and square hearth tiles in second floor rear, are possibly original; other mantels are apparently mid-nineteenth century.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: The house is situated at the southeast corner of an intersection, in a residential area, set back from the street, on a lot up five steps at the front.
2. Enclosures: Retaining wall at the front and part of the side, about 3-1/2" high, plastered over. Lower part stone, upper part concrete block.

3. Walks: Brown sandstone steps. Original, large stone entrance walk; brick walks around house at the street.
4. Landscaping: Entrance walk flanked with two large horse chestnut trees.

Prepared by Osmond R. Overby, Architect
National Park Service
AND Antoinette F. Downing
for the Providence Preservation Society
July 1961.

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

#49 BENEFIT STREET

Joanna Scott Jencks b. 1762 d 1835...dau of ^{John} Joseph Jencks
m. Joseph Dolbar Russell who died 1792
issue: Mary...m. Benjamin Monroe

m. 2nd time ^{David} George Leonard Barnes
issue: Ann Eliz^a...m Peter Pratt..2nd time Thomas Burgess
Joanna Scott Barnes...m William E Richmond
Freelove Sophia...m Samuel Arnold
Geo. Leonard Barnes

Wid of Peter Pratt
 MARRIAGE AGREEMENT BETWEEN
 (nee Leonard)
 ANN ELIZA PRATT AND THOMAS BURGES
da. of Joanna Barnes
 49 BENEFIT STREET

DB Book 70 B 85

INVENTORY OF FURNITURE 1843

1	SAXONY CARPET	\$50.
10	HAIR SEAT MAHOGANY CHAIRS	30.
1	SOFA	20.
2	CARD TABLES	15.
2	MIRRORS	40.
1 PR.	GIRONBOLES	5.
1 PR.	VASES	5.
1 PR.	CRICKETS	1.
1 PR.	OTTOMANS	3.
1	MAT	1.
1	BRUSSELS CARPET & 1 RUG	30.
1	SOFA	10.
1 PR.	OTTOMANS	3.
12	CURLED MAPLE CHAIRS	6.
1	MAHOGANY TABLE	5.
1 PR.	MANTLE LAMPS	5.
1	CLOCK	5.
1	MIRROR	30.
1	MAHOGANY ROCKING CHAIR	5.
1	INGRAIN CARPET AND RUG	5.
6	FLAGG SEAT CHAIRS	3.
1	WASH TABLE	1.
1	MIRROR	10.
1	STOVE AND IRONS, ETC.	5.
1	BUREAU	7.
2	WASH STANDS	3.
1	INGRAIN CARPET	3.
1	MAHOGANY BEDSTEAD	4.
1	BUREAU	5.
1	DRESSING TABLE	5.
6	FLAGG SEAT CHAIRS	3.
1	STOVE, AND IRONS FENDER, ETC.	5.
1	MIRROR	5.
6	FLAGG SEAT CHAIRS	1.
3	TABLES	3.
1	PAINTED CARPET	15.
1	MAHOGANY FRENCH BEDSTEAD	20.
1	BUREAU	10.
1	WASH STAND, ETC.	10.
6	MAHOGANY CHAIRS	6.
1	EASY CHAIR	1.
1	INGRAIN CARPET	6.
1	MIRROR	2.
1	INGRAIN CARPET	3.
1	MAHOGANY BEDSTEAD	3.
1	BUREAU	5.
1	WASH STAND	2.
1	TABLE	1.
1	STOVE, ETC.	5.
1	MIRROR	2.

INGRAIN

MORE....

MARRIAGE AGREEMENT (CONTINUED)

INVENTORY OF FURNITURE

1	MAHOGANY BEDSTEAD	\$2.
1	COT	1.
> 1	INGRAIN CARPET	1.
1	MIRROR	1.
1	MAHOGANY BUREAU	4.
1	DRESSING TABLE	2.
1	WASHSTAND, ETC.	2.
1	SINGLE BEDSTEAD	2.
1	SET WHITE CHINA	20.
1	TEA SET	20.
	OTHER CHINAWARE	10.
2	PLATED FRUIT BASKETS	5.
1	SILVER CASTOR	5.
18	SILVER FORKS	40.
3½	DOZ. SPOONS	75.
	OTHER SILVERWARE	25.
	KNIVES, FORKS, ETC.	20.
	CROCKERY & GLASSWARE	50.
	BRITANIA WARE	20.
> 3	HAIR MATTRESSES	15.
> 4	FEATHER BEDS	50.
	LINEN SHEETS	20.
	COTTON SHEETS	10.
	OTHER BEDDING	15.
	TABLE LINEN	20.
	COVERS	20.
>	STRAW CARPET	5.

APPRAISED AT INVENTORY \$923 BUT ESTIMATED BY THE PARTIES
TO THE TRUST DEED AT \$1500.

THOMAS BURGESS
ANNELIZA PRATT

NUMBER FORTY-NINE BENEFIT STREET
The David Leonard Barnes House (1790-1798)
Owners: Mr. & Mrs. Edward W. Roberts
Occupied By: Owners

Flower Arrangements: Perennial Planters Garden Club

The large two-story gable-roofed house at 49 Benefit Street is perhaps the only house in the old part of Providence finished with the wooden blocks ~~cut~~ to look like stone, ^{which are known as} called rusticated siding. Like the Jenckes house, just north, and unlike the houses on the west side of Benefit Street, it is set back some twenty-feet from the front sidewalk. Also like the Jenckes house, the building stands on part of the land ^{sold by} Joseph Whipple ~~sold~~ to John Jenckes in 1773. When John Jenckes died in 1790, he left his property to his seven heirs; ~~and~~ his daughter Joanna and her husband David L. Barnes (who was a United States attorney) drew the lot south of the homestead house, which fell to Joseph Jenckes (43 Benefit). We know that by 1798 the house had been built, because it was included in the United States Direct Tax List, and was valued at \$1100.

^{Insert} ~~(This house, with its dignified setting, its spacious central hallway and handsome high ceiled rooms, served by two interior chimneys, is a good example of the stately homes being built in Providence at the end of the eighteenth century.)~~ ^{here} The use of the rusticated siding, frequently seen in Newport and elsewhere before the Revolution, but somewhat out of fashion at this date, indicates the somewhat conservative tendency ^{that} ~~which~~ has always been typical of Providence building styles.

The house remained in the Barnes family until 1866, when it was purchased by Judge and Mrs. Thomas Durfee, who lived there for forty years. After 1906 it changed hands eight times until 1958, when

Banker incorporated subject in their insurance with their policy, the
policy was not paid, but the subject was left so that the purchaser
could be free to restore it with the use of his own preference.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward W. Roberts ^{who} acquired the house ~~in 1961~~, from
~~Brunswick Corp~~ in 1961 ~~and engaged~~ Donald

Shepard of Netop Incorporated to supervise
its restoration. ~~The house had undergone~~

~~Some alterations~~ made in the
Victorian period, probably about 1850, and these
have been kept.

HABs

#33
1847

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

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

RECORDS OF
#49 BENEFIT STREET-WOOD

PLAT - 10
LOT - 136

1847--#33

1866--#49

1773 Joseph Whipple sells land to John Jenckes 1270 10s law-
ful money--"a certain lot of land of 15 acres neither
more or less. Bounded: S by Charles Keene; E by Ferry
Lane (now Hope Street); W by Benefit Street; N by my
other lands."---20/91

1790 John Jencks wills Whipple lot to 7 heirs--David Leonard
Barnes and wife Joanna draw this lot known as the Barnes
(#) lot--South side of Jencks Street.---W7/367

#1796
1798 U.S. Attorney
David L. Barnes, "situated in the Northerly part of the
town of Providence; E on Benefit Street; N on Joseph
Jenckes; S on heirs of Charles Keene--6 acres, val.
\$1100"--no dwelling--Prov. Direct tax 1798-List B.
("This schedule of real estate of Providence was undoubt-
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in connection with Direct Tax of Oct. 1, 1798.")

1814 see other side
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finished." "Joanna Barnes, widow of David L. Barnes for
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in the town of Providence. Said house is built of wood
42' in front x40' from front to rear with an addition of
18 1/2' x 41' all 2 stories high in front & rear & occupied
as a dwelling house & part of the addition as a woodroom.
N.B.--The chambers in the addition are not finished tho
the floors are laid & the windows cased." 1/10/1826

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Horatio B. Nightingale under trust deed of her then name
Anna E. Pratt (daughter of Joanna Barnes) to Henry A.
Rogers (120/433) & deed from said Henry A. Rogers to me
(172/366) sell for \$25,000 to Sarah J. S. Durfee wife of
Thomas, a certain lot of land--being lots 1 (with dwelling
house), 2, & 3 on plat called "Estate of the late Mrs.
Joanna Barnes" platted in 1836 by Benoni Lockwood as shown
in Book of Plats #1 Page 30.

This property was taxed to the following persons in the years
designated.

1866	Sarah J. S. Durfee, wid. Thomas	1930	Rose Greene
1906	Fanny B Bevy wf Max & Rose	1936	Maude C. Gross
	Shaset wf Morris	1944	Mary M. Frazer
1912	Fanny B. Bevy wf Max	1956	Wm. O. Moore and wf
1921	Leon Coken & wf Bertha		Febronia
1923	Julius Lebovitz & wf May	1958	Burnside Corp.

#1798 - David L. Barnes lived on W side of
Benefit St. (near College St) in house
owned by Joseph Jenckes (chaec)

* 1814 MRS DAVID L BARNES...1 DWELLING HOUSE ON THE E SIDE OF BENEFIT ST
40'x38'..WOOD..2 STORIES HIGH. 1 BARN 20'x28'..1 WOODHOUSE 16'x14'.
THE LOT CONTAINS ABOUT 3/4 ACRES (PROV DIRECT TAX 1814)

First house in the neighborhood to be owned by Jews... "Old Houses of R I"
R I Hist Soc