

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

RECORDS OF

PLAT 3  
LOT 226

#50 BENEFIT STREET...WOOD

#36 IN 1824      #36 IN 1844      #48 IN 1847      #50 IN 1866

1798-1812

1795 JOSEPH WHIPPLE, GENTLEMAN, SELLS TO SAMUEL STAPLES, HOUSEWRIGHT, FOR \$250 LAWFUL SILVER MONEY, ONE CERTAIN LOT OF LAND BOUNDED: S BY BURR AND GORHAM 80'; E BY BENEFIT STREET 40'; W BY S STAPLES 40'; N BY JOSEPH WHIPPLE 80'....DB 24/127

1799 JOSEPH WHIPPLE SELLS MORE LAND TO SAMUEL STAPLES ADJOINING THE ABOVE ON THE N SIDE BOUND E BY BENEFIT STREET 32'; N BY GRANTOR 72'; W BY JOHN WHIPPLE 30'; S BY STAPLES 79', FOR \$231...DB 26/193

1812 - see  $\oplus$  Fire Record

1814 PROVIDENCE DIRECT TAX:..SAMUEL STAPLES...1 LOT 72' IN FRONT AND 79 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' BACK WITH TWO WOODEN DWELLING HOUSES. ONE 32' FRONT AND 28' FRONT TO BACK...2 STORIES HIGH IN FRONT AND THREE IN BACK..(52 BENEFIT)...THE OTHER 16' ON THE FRONT AND 38' BACK. (#50 BENEFIT STREET.)

1849 WILLIAM STAPLES DIED...HIS SONS WILLIAM R STAPLES AND SAMUEL STAPLES JR, BEING HIS ONLY HEIRS.

1849 WILLIAM R STAPLES QUIT CLAIMS TO SAMUEL STAPLES JR..."A CERTAIN LOT OF LAND BOUNDED E ON BENEFIT STREET; S BY JABEZ GORHAM; W PARTLY ON J GORHAM AND PARTLY ON JOEL METCALF; N ON LAND OF EARLE D PEARCE WITH TWO DWELLING HOUSES (#52 AND #50)...DB 117/326

1850 WILLS: SAMUEL STAPLES JR DEVISES ALL HIS PROPERTY BOTH REAL AND PERSONAL AND THE INCOME OF IT TO HIS NATURAL CHILDREN MARY R AND ISABELLA F STAPLES....WILLS 16/260

MARY R STAPLES M EMERY H PECKHAM WHO DIED IN 1880...NO ISSUE. SHE DIED IN 1903, AND DEVISED ALL HER REAL ESTATE TO HER NEPHEW GEORGE B CALDER 2ND ON CONDITION THAT HE PAY CERTAIN EXPENSES AND LEGACIES.

ISABEL STAPLES M WILLIAM H CALDER. SHE DIED IN 1897 INTESTATE, LEAVING HER HUSBAND AND ONLY CHILD, GEORGE B/CALDER 2ND. WILLIAM CALDER DIED IN 1903....R 1 TITLE GUARANTEE

1922 GEORGE B CALDER MORTGAGES THIS PROPERTY TO NATHAN W REMMER AND BARNEY GOLDBERG...DB 629/35

1945 THE PROPERTY CHANGED HANDS SEVERAL TIMES AND WAS TAXED TO AXEL JOHNSON IN THIS YEAR

1955 PROPERTY TAXED TO ANNA JOHNSON AND ROBERT A JOHNSON

1958 PROPERTY TAXED TO BURNSIDE INC.

$\oplus$  1812 Sam'l Staples - occ. Benj. Munroe - Wood - 16' fr. - 38' fr to back  
2st hi in fr P 3 in back. Addition on W side 8' x 13 1st. hi.  
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**THE MODEST ARCHITECTURAL MODE,  
AN ANALYSIS OF FIVE DOMESTIC DWELLINGS  
IN PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND, c. 1780-1812.**

**A THESIS PRESENTED**

**BY**

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**TO**

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**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS**

**FOR THE DEGREE OF**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**IN THE SUBJECT OF**

**ART HISTORY**

**RADCLIFFE COLLEGE**

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SINCE 50 BENEFIT STREET WAS A VERY MODEST HOME BEFORE ITS RENOVATION IT IS PROBABLE THAT ALL PAPERS WERE OF AMERICAN ORIGIN. THEIR SIMPLICITY OF PATTERN COMBINED WITH THE ABSENCE OF THE ENGLISH TAX STAMP MAKES THIS ASSERTION POSSIBLE. THE EARLIEST, C. 1760, WERE PROBABLY PURCHASED IN BOSTON BUT BY 1790 JEREMIAH L. JENKINS, OF PROVIDENCE WAS ADVERTISING "AN ASSORTMENT OF HOUSE PAPER... BOSTON MANUFACTURED AND IMPORTED," WHICH MADE THE SELECTION MORE CONVENIENT.<sup>78</sup> FOURTEEN YEARS LATER, 1804, THOMAS S. WEBB ANNOUNCED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FIRST RHODE ISLAND "MANUFACTORY, ON WESTMINSTER STREET." THE AD, EMBELLISHED WITH A CRUDE DRAWING OF AN ELABORATE FESTOON WALLPAPER, ASSERTS THAT MR. WEBB

HAS FOR SALE, AT HIS PAPER-HANGING MANUFACTORY, IN WESTMINSTER STREET, A VERY LARGE ASSORTMENT OF PAPER HANGINGS, SUITABLE FOR PARLOURS, KEEPING ROOMS, ENTRIES, HALLS, &c. WITH FESTOONS, PAROCH,<sup>79</sup> LACE AND FRUIT BORDERS, OF VARIOUS WIDTHS, AT WHOLESALE OR RETAIL.

THE PAPERS AT 50 BENEFIT STREET ARE BOLD BRIGHT STENCIL DESIGNS ON HEAVY SQUARES OF PAPER. BETWEEN ONE AND FOUR LAYERS WERE FOUND IN EACH OF THE FOUR ORIGINAL ROOMS BEHIND THE LATER MANTELS. DOWNSTAIRS PUBLIC ROOMS WERE MORE FREQUENTLY PAPERED THAN THE PRIVATE BEDROOMS. THE FIRST FLOOR EAST ROOM WAS PAPERED FOUR TIMES BEFORE ITS ALTERATION. THE BOTTOM LAYER OF PAPER, A RED-BROWN DESIGN ON A YELLOW GROUND, IS TOPICAL IN MOTIF. (FIG. 295) THREE CROSSED FEATHERS TIED IN THE CENTER BY A BOW-KNOT REFERRED TO THE PRINCE OF WALES, LATER GEORGE II, WHO ASCENDED THE THRONE IN 1760.<sup>80</sup> THESE FEATHERS WERE PLACED WITHIN A DIAMOND SHAPED PATTERN COMPOSED OF STIPPLED DOTS SET AGAINST RANDOM DOTS AND MAPLE LEAVES. STIPPLING OF THE PAPER IS AN EARLY DEVICE FIRST USED IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY BLACK AND WHITE "EMBROIDERY" PAPERS. THIS SAME MOTIF OF CROSSED FEATHERS WAS POPULARIZED IN THE CHAIN BACKS OF HEPPLEWHITE.

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THE PROVIDENCE GAZETTE, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1790, VOL. XXXVL, NO. 1852

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THE PROVIDENCE GAZETTE, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1804, VOL. XLI, NO. 2123

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THIS SOURCE WAS SUGGESTED BY RICHARD RANDALL, ASSISTANT CURATOR OF DECORATIVE ARTS, BOSTON MUSEUM. ACCORDING TO SUGDEN AND EMMONSON, THE DEVICE OF PRINCE OF WALES FEATHERS IS NOT A NEW ONE. THIS, COMBINED WITH THE INITIALS C.P., RESULTED IN THE ASSIGNING OF A PAPER FOUND IN AN OAK BOX IN ENGLAND TO THE REIGN OF JAMES I OR CHARLES I (P.25).

THE SECOND LAYER FROM THE BOTTOM WAS OF A NEW NATIONALISTIC THEME.

OF THE SAME COLOR COMBINATION AS THE LAST, THE ENGLISH ROYAL THEME WAS DISPLACED BY POSSIBLY ONE OF THE EARLIEST WALL PAPER RENDITIONS OF STARS, STRIPES, AND EAGLES WHICH WOULD DATE IT SOON AFTER 1782, THE DATE OF THE ADOPTION OF THE EAGLE AS A NATIONAL EMBLEM. (SLIDE OUT AND REVERSE WALLPAPER, FIG. 297.) BETWEEN THE THIN STRIPS ARE ALTERNATING STARS AND CIRCLES IN ONE BAND AND EAGLES AND CIRCLES IN THE NEXT.

OVER THIS A MOST DRAMATIC TWO-COLOR PAPER OF BLUE AND GREEN ON SELF-COLOUR BACKGROUND (FIG. 297) EVOKED IMAGES AS DIVERSE AS ASSYRIAN SUN WHEELS AND CLASSIC CHAIR BACKS. (FIG. 296) COMPOSED OF 12" DIAMETER GREEN STYLIZED SPOKED SUN WHEELS WITH OPEN-WORK FLUTED EDGES THE AREA BETWEEN THE DESIGN IS FILLED IN WITH SPRIGS OF BLUE LEAVES. THE DESIGN MAY HAVE BEEN EXECUTED AT ANY TIME DURING THE LAST QUARTER OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY OR THE FIRST YEARS OF THE NINETEENTH.

THE TOP PAPER IS MORE SOPHISTICATED IN DESIGN. IN TWO SHADES OF GREY AND GREEN, BUNCHES OF SMALL FLOWERS AND LEAVES ARE BLOCKED OUT IN MASSES OF GREEN AGAINST A GREY ON GREY BACKGROUND. (FIG. 298) BOTH THE MODELING OF THE LEAVES AND THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SHADOW PRINT PRODUCE THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL EFFECT APPRECIATED IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY.

ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING PAPERS FOUND WAS THE BOTTOM LAYER OF THREE IN THE WEST ROOM FIRST FLOOR. (FIG. 300) IN GREY-BLACK AND WHITE ON TAN PAPER IT IS, IN THE VIGOR OF THE FLOWER AND LEAVES, AND THE STIPPLING OF THE GROUND, A DESCENDANT OF THOSE PRODUCED IN ENGLAND DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. (FIG. 299) LARGE SCALD MAGNOLIAS AND LEAVES, GROUND-COLORED WITH GRAY HATCHING, ARE ENTWINED AROUND A VERTICAL CLASSIC FRET WHICH WAS A FAVORITE ARCHITECTURAL MOTIF OF THE MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. AS IN THE OTHER STENCILS THERE IS NO OUTLINE. THE BLACK DOTS WERE LAID FIRST FORMING THE BASIS OF THE FLORAL DESIGN.

ON TOP OF THE MAGNOLIA PRINT IS A BRIGHT YELLOW, GREY, AND CREAM PAPER OF THE ROOCO MODE, (FIG. 303) THREE SMALL STYLIZED FLOWERS ARE GROUPED WITHIN AN OVAL ROPE FRAME SURROUNDED BY SYMMETRICALLY PLACED FEATHER-LIKE LEAVES. IN STYLE IT IS BOTH A DIRECT DESCENDANT OF ONE OF THE OLDEST PAPERS FOUND IN CHRIST'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE FROM 1509 (FIG. 301), AND A PARALLEL INTERPRETATION OF THE ROGAILE MOTIVES OF CHIPPENDALE IN THE 1760'S AND 70'S. THE INSERTION OF THE ROSETTE IN THE COILED TENDRILS IS STRIKINGLY SIMILAR IN BOTH. (FIG. 302)

THE TOP LAYER (FIG. 305) IN THE WEST ROOM IS OF A SIMPLIFIED MONUMENTAL PATTERN OF FLAT EMERALD GREEN CLASSIC PALMETTES OR ANTHEMION ORNAMENTS (FIG. 304) PLACED AGAINST AN OFF-WHITE BACKGROUND FILLED WITH A GREY SHADOW PRINT OF THE SAME PALMETTES. SUCH PATTERNS WERE USED TOO IN FURNITURE STENCILLING OF THE EMPIRE PERIOD.

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ON THE SECOND FLOOR, LESS FREQUENTLY PAPERS BEDROOMS REVEALED BUT THREE PAPERS IN THE TWO ROOMS. TWO WERE IN THE BACK ROOM AND ONE IN THE FRONT EAST ROOM. THE SINGLE LAYER IN THE EAST ROOM IS OF A PATTERN SIMILAR TO THAT OF "GOTHIC" CHAIRS OF 1760 (FIG. 306), AND IN COLOR CLOSE TO DELFT TILES. IT MAY DATE ANY TIME BETWEEN 1760 AND 1800. (FIG. 307)

IN THE BACK WEST ROOM ARE TWO PAPERS. THE BOTTOM IS DERIVED FROM A FIFTEENTH CENTURY FLORENTINE TAPESTRY AND COMBINES A STRIPED PRUSSIAN BLUE MEDALLION WITH A COMPLICATED TAN FLORAL FILLER AGAINST A LIGHTER TAN BACKGROUND. FIG. 308) ON TOP OF THIS IS A GREY PAPER OF A DELICATE INFORMAL FLORAL PATTERN.....

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JANET WARING, EARLY AMERICAN STENCILS (NEW YORK, 1937). FIG. 105, MAMBOANY CARD TABLE G. 1822 BY GEORGE W. MILLER OF NEW YORK.