

**PPS RECORDS FOR
68-70 DEXTER STREET
PLAT 32, LOT 223**

**NELSON VIALI HOUSE
Built 1866-1867.**

DESIGNATIONS

This house is a contributing building within the Broadway-Armory Historic District (listed on the National Register of Historic Places); it is identified in the inventory as “House (1860s?).”

The house is also located within the Armory Historic District overlay zone designated by the City of Providence.

NOTES

Previous addresses:

38 Dexter Street (1866 to 1894)
68 Dexter Street (1895-1900)
68-70 Dexter Street (1900-forward)

Deeds indicate that Nelson Viall purchased this property as a vacant lot in April 1866, and tax records confirm that the house was standing as of April 1867. According to city directories, Nelson Viall did not live here until 1883 (at which time the address was 38 Dexter Street), so the house was built as rental property and may originally have been a single-family house, although it appears to have been in two-family use by 1894.

RECORDS *(All Records were found in Providence City Hall unless otherwise noted).*

Assessor’s Plat Maps and Chain of Title Cards (Assessor’s Office)¹

The 2014 map for AP 32 identifies 68-70 Dexter Street (also 49 Division Street) as Lot 223. The lot has 50.125 feet of frontage on Dexter and 100.25 feet on Division; the total area of the lot is 5,025 sq.ft.

Chain of title card for AP 32, Lot 223 – DEXTER ST.

George M. Griffin owned the property as of May 1, 1893.
George M. Griffin Estate owned the property as of June 10, 1911.

¹ Chain of Title Cards typically list owner names beginning in the late 19th c.; earlier ownership is identified through deed research. The cards are only available as scanned digital images, and the scanning sometimes did not fully reproduce the original card, so some names or dates can be incomplete or illegible.

Raimondo Villanova and wife Giovannina Villanova owned the property as of June 15, 1923.

Raimondo Villanova owned the property as of March 1931.

Raimondo & Giovannina Villanova owned the property as of November 1951.

Elviro Mastrobuono and wife Filomena Mastrobuono owned the property as of December 1958.

William F. Stockwell and wife Linda A. Stockwell owned the property as of January 24, 1977. (Refers to Deed Book 1196/898.)

In Hak Lim and wife Sojin Lim owned the property as of August 6, 1980. (Ref DB 1222/90, 91.)

Artibano Albanese owned the property as of June 28, 1984. (Ref DB 1265/918.)

John Thomas Scullane and Amy Bromberg owned the property as of November 26, 1985. (Ref DB 1316/895.)

B.R.M. Realty Associates owned the property as of March 24, 1986. (Ref DB 1342/245, DB 1350/88.)

Moshe Vaknin owned the property as of December 19, 1986. (Ref DB 1498/27.)

J. Elan Gandsman and wife Sandra J. Gandsman owned the property as of June 26, 1987 (Ref. DB 1613/11.)

Richard D. Hall owned the property as of August 5, 1988. (Ref DB 1860/158.)

Blackstone Bank & Trust Co., Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. Liquidating Agent, owned the property as of October 18, 1994. (Ref DB 3037/122.)

Mark Vannoppen owned the property as of November 6, 1995. (Ref DB 3227/115.)

Kristen A. Kiley owned the property as of May 9, 1996. (Ref DB 3326/194.)

[Last entry on this card.]

According to the Assessor's computerized data base, the current owners (since August 2003) are Karen J. Fuerherm and Frank D. Wood. Kristen A. Kiley is listed as the previous owner. The Assessor's records give the address of the house as 70 Dexter Street.

Maps and Atlases (Archives and Registry of Deeds) (SELECT MAPS ATTACHED)

Maps indicate that the house was constructed by 1875.

1843: "Plot of Lots of Land Belonging to the Dexter Donation," by Atwater & Schubarth, November 1843, copied by Schubarth & Haines, June 30, 1852. Recorded in Plat Book 2/Page 7, copied on plat card 52. The map shows several blocks of house lots south of "High Street" (now Westminster Street), from Dexter Street east to Bridgham Street, including Division, Harrison, and Hammond Streets. The future site of 68-70 Dexter Street is Lot 27 at the northeast corner of Dexter and Division Streets. The lot measures 50 feet on Dexter by 100 feet on Division. (*Registry of Deeds*)

1857: “Map of Providence, R.I.” by H.F. Walling, shows what appears to be a vacant lot at the northeast corner of Dexter and Division Streets; however, this map is a photocopy and the site is not visible in its entirety. (*Archives*)

1875: “City Atlas of Providence,” by G.M. Hopkins, Vol. 2, Plate J, shows the current house with its previous address of 38 Dexter Street, at the northeast corner of Division Street. The lot measures 5,025 sq.ft.; owner name is not indicated. (*Archives*)

1882: “Atlas of the City of Providence, R.I. and Environs,” by G.M. Hopkins Co., Plate 15, shows the current house with its previous address, 38 Dexter Street. Owner name and lot size are not noted. (*Archives*)

1895: “Atlas of the City of Providence” by Everts & Richards, Page 49, shows the address of the house changed to 68 Dexter Street, on a 5,025 sq.ft. lot. A bay window is illustrated on the south (Division Street) side. Owner name is not indicated. (*Archives*)

1908: “Atlas of the City of Providence” by L.J. Richards Co., Plate 15, shows the address of the house changed to 68-70 Dexter Street. A second house has been constructed at the rear of the lot, with the address 49 Division Street. The lot of 5,025 sq.ft. is owned by G.M. Griffin. (*Archives*)

1918: “Atlas of the City of Providence” by G.M. Hopkins Co., Plate 7, shows the address of the house as 68 Dexter Street. A small wood-frame garage has been built behind the house at 49 Division Street on the same lot. All buildings are on a 5,025 sq.ft. lot owned by G.M. Griffin Estate. The map refers to the Dexter Donation Plat (no plat card number. (*Archives*)

1926 and 1937: “Atlas of the City of Providence” by G.M. Hopkins Co., Plate 7, shows the house again with the address 68-70 Dexter Street; the house at 49 Division Street is still standing, but by 1926, the garage seen on the 1918 map had either been moved or demolished; a garage now stands closer to the middle of the lot, behind 68-70 Dexter. The 5,025 sq.ft. lot is owned by R. Villanova. These maps likewise refer to the Dexter Donation Plat on Plat Card 52. (*Archives*)

NOTE: Both the house at 49 Division Street and the garage were demolished, sometime after 1937. This house is presently the only building on the lot.

Deeds (Registry of Deeds, unless otherwise noted)

Deeds indicate that Nelson Viall bought the property as a vacant lot in 1866, and that the house was standing when he sold the lot in 1893.

Deed Book 175/79: On April 2, 1866, Lorenzo Vaughn of Providence sold to Nelson Viall of Providence, for \$2,000, a lot with improvements located at the northeast corner of Dexter and Division Streets, being Lot #27 in the Dexter Donation Plat [see Maps,

above, for full citation]. The lot measured 50 feet on Dexter Street and 100 feet on Division Street, for a total of 5,000 sq.ft. Being the same conveyed to the grantor by deed of Josiah Bailey and wife, on May 22, 1865, recorded in DB 172/193.

Deed Book 382/137: On April 19, 1893, Nelson Viall of Cranston sold to George M. Griffin of Providence, for \$100, a lot with buildings and improvements located at the northeast corner of Dexter and Division Streets, being Lot #27 in the Dexter Donation Plat on Plat Card 52. The lot measured 50 feet on Dexter Street and 100 feet on Division Street, for a total of 5,000 sq.ft. Being the same conveyed to the grantor by deed of Lorenzo Vaughn, on April 2, 1866, recorded in DB 175/79.

Intent to Build Records (Archives)

No building permit was found for the original construction in 1866-67, but a permit was issued for an alteration in 1899.

Permit #13483, dated October 31, 1899: intention to build a piazza at the house at 68 Dexter Street, corner Division Street; owner George M. Griffin.

Tax Records (Archives)²

Records indicate that the house was built between 1866-1867.

Ledger A4/Page 61 – As of July 15, 1865, Lorenzo Vaughn owned AP 32/223, 5,025 sq.ft., valued at \$1,000 for land and \$0 for buildings. Transferred June 1, 1866 to Nelson Viall (DB 175/79).

Ledger A4/Page 345 – As of June 1, 1866, Nelson Viall owned AP 32/223, 5,025 sq.ft., valued at \$1,000 for land and \$0 for buildings.

Ledger B5/Page 234 – As of April 1, 1867, Nelson Viall owned AP 32/223, 5,025 sq.ft., valued at \$1,005 for land and \$4,500 for buildings. **[Indicates construction of the house.]**

² **Tax Records:** Prior to 1854, Providence tax records only identified the name of the taxpayer and the amount of tax paid – not the location of the taxable property, or whether it was real estate or personal property. As of August 1, 1854, the Tax Assessor began using a system of plats and lots to identify individual parcels of real estate (although records did not indicate how many buildings were on any given lot, or distinguish between primary buildings and outbuildings, until the latter half of the 20th century). Tax records from the latter half of the 19th century are indexed by plat number, and recorded in a series of ledgers labeled “A” through “E.”

Directories (Archives)³

Directories indicate that Nelson Viall did not live in this house until 1883, so it was evidently constructed as rental property. The names of the tenants are unknown.

City Directories

- 1866-1878 Nelson Viall, warden State Prison.
- 1879-1882 Nelson Viall not listed.
- 1883-1885 Nelson Viall, (h) 38 Dexter Street [previous address for this house]
- 1892 **[First directory of street addresses]**
38 Dexter Street – A. Dempster, stuccoworker, (h)
R.O. Dempster, stuccoworker (b)
- 1893 38 Dexter Street not listed
- 1894 38 Dexter Street – D.S. Babcock, music teacher (h)
William E. Webster & Co., manufacturing jeweler (h)
[indicates 2-family use]

House Directories

- 1895 **[address changed]**
68 Dexter Street – Dwight S. Babcock, music teacher (h)
Frank W. Babcock, clerk (b)
William E. Webster & Co., manufacturing jeweler (h)
- 1900 **[first listing for 70 Dexter Street – confirms 2-family use]**
68 Dexter Street – Alice M. Bryant, widow (h)
Charles C. Bryant, bookkeeper (b)
George F. Bryant, machinist (b)
70 Dexter Street – Ward W. Hill, “Telegram” (h)
Harry W. Hine, janitor (b)

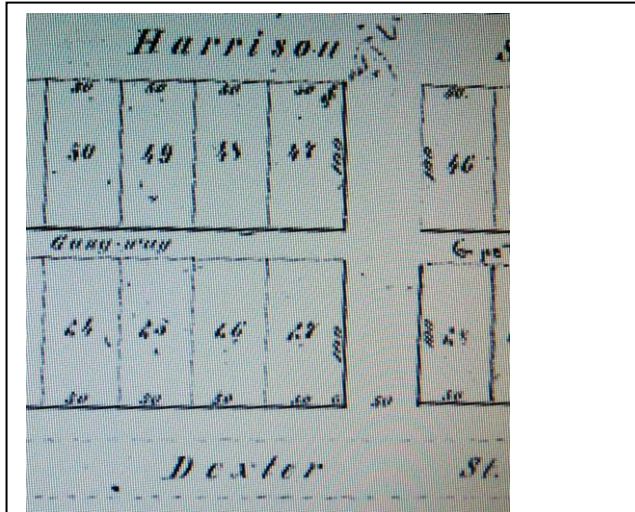
³ **Providence City Directories** were published intermittently beginning in 1824, and annually as of 1850. Until 1892, these volumes contained a street directory (listing the names and locations of all existing streets), and an alphabetical listing of residents and businesses. Residents’ professions and business addresses (if any) were noted before home addresses. As of 1892, city directories also included a section listing residential buildings by street address; this was published separately as a House Directory from 1895-1935. The notation “(h)” indicates home or a head of household; “(b)” indicates a boarder.

Providence House Directories list all residential buildings by street address. These began publication in 1892, incorporated within the larger City Directory. Separate House Directories were published from 1895 to 1937 (biannually from 1901); these were often a year behind the city directories during this period. As of 1938, the house directory was reincorporated within the City Directory.

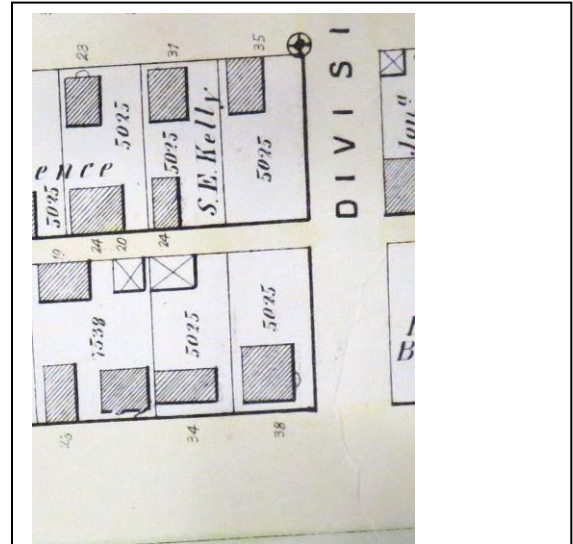
Additional Notes

Before purchasing this house in 1893, George M. Griffin owned and lived at the house across the street, on the southeast corner of Dexter and Division Streets. The original address of Griffin's house was 40 Dexter, changed to 74 Dexter in 1895.

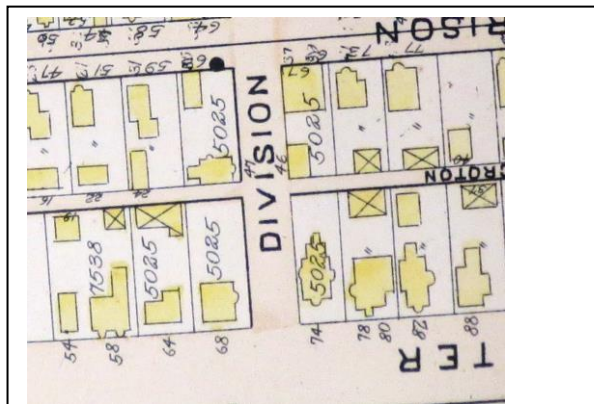
A building permit (#2666) dated July 24, 1884 was found under the name George M. Griffin, for construction of a 2-1/2 story, 1-family house, about 35 feet tall, at a cost of \$3,500, at "the northeast corner of Dexter and Division Streets." That location is evidently a mistake, as Nelson Viall still owned this property in 1884, and tax records indicate no increase in the tax assessment for additional buildings constructed at that time. According to maps, the second house on this lot, at 49 Division St., was built by George M. Griffin sometime between 1895 and 1908, and garages ca. 1918-1926. Therefore, this 1884 building permit may relate to the construction of Griffin's house at 74 Dexter Street, across the street at the *southeast* corner of Dexter and Division.



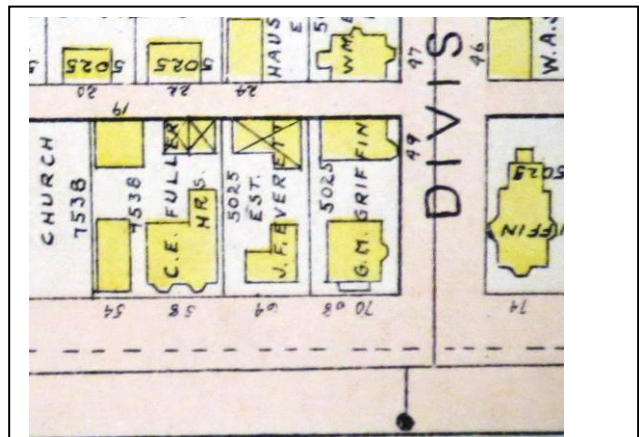
1843 Dexter Donation Plat, showing Lot 27
At the northeast corner of Dexter and Division Sts.



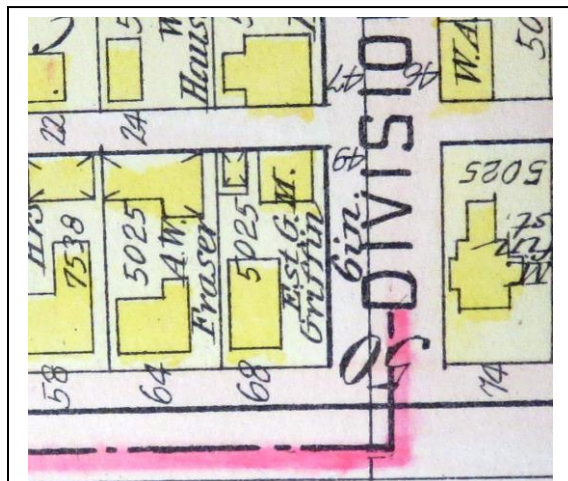
1875 atlas – shows house at “38” Dexter St.



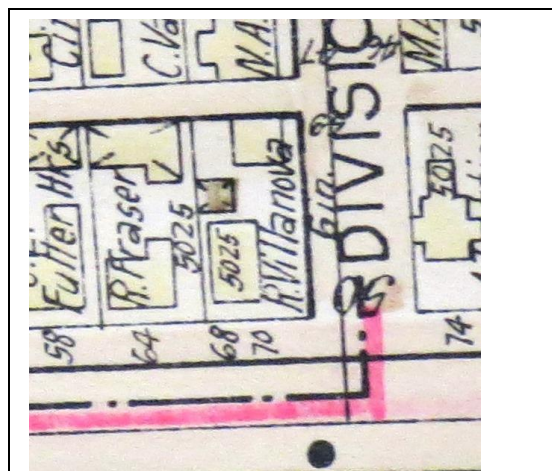
1895 atlas – address changed to 68 Dexter St.



1908 atlas – address changed to 68-70 Dexter St.
Also shows former house at 49 Division St.



1918 atlas, showing 68(-70) Dexter,
former house at 49 Division with garage
behind it (no longer extant).



1926 atlas, showing 68-70 Dexter, former
house at 49 Division, and garage replaced/
relocated (no longer extant).