

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Records of

Plat 32
Lot 414

#1206 Westminster Street...wood
Built ca.1828 by Peleg Boss

NUMBERING:	1893 - to date	#1206 Westminster Street
	1871 - 1892	#630 High Street
	1867 - 1870	#404 High Street
	1847 - 1866	#290 High Street
	1844	#216 High Street
	1841	#205 High Street

1825 Reuben Burdon, a cabinet maker of Prov., sold land to Peleg Boss of Menden, Mass. for the sum of \$300.00. The property measured 42½' on the south side of the road leading to Johnston and extended back 279' on a gangway. Eventually the road to Johnston would become High Street and finally Westminster and the gangway would become Hammond. The property conveyed here as a single lot would, over the course of years, be divided into five lots denoted on the current Tax Assessor's Plat #32 as lots #414, 398, 313, 480 and 311. The structure which is today #1206 Westminster Street is located on that part of the original property that became lot #414, and is the first of four structures to be built on that property. (Deed Book 50:156).

**** Early Providence Tax Records indicate that Peleg Boss began paying taxes on property in that town in 1828. In that year he was taxed on real estate valued at \$1600.00 and paid a tax of \$4.96. For the year 1829 the value of his real estate was the same but his taxes increased to \$5.28. There are no vital records currently in Providence that relate to Peleg Boss.

**** The Providence City Directories for 1824 through 1832 indicate a number of families named "Boss" living on High Street:

1824	Jeremiah Boss, house carpenter, #49 High St.
1826	Jeremiah Boss, house carpenter, #49 High St.
	Joseph Grant, hatter, High St.
1828	Jeremiah Boss, house carpenter, High St.
	Fenner L. Boss, High St.
	Alexander Boss, machinist, High St.
	Peleg Boss, house carpenter, High St.
	Joseph Grant, hatter, High St.
1830	Jeremiah Boss, house carpenter, High St.
	Peleg Boss, house carpenter, High St.
	Joseph Grant, hatter, High St.
1832	Jeremiah Boss, house carpenter, west end of High St.
	Peleg Boss, house carpenter, west end of High St.
	Joseph Grant, hatter, west end of High St.

Joseph Grant is mentioned because he purchases the property from Peleg Boss in 1834/36. In the early tax records Grant had been taxed for real estate valued at \$3,000.00 in 1828 and \$6,000.00 in 1829. It is not clear what relationship existed between Jeremiah and Peleg Boss, however their properties were adjoining, Jeremiah's being just west of Peleg's on the Johnston Road.

1826 The Providence City Directory indicates that 9 new wooden houses and

one of brick were built on High Street between January 1824 and 1828, more than were built on any other street in the town during that period.

1836 In a deed written on the 20th of September, 1834 but not recorded until April 11th 1836, Peleg Boss of Prov. conveyed the property measuring 42½' on High Street and extending back 279', including a dwelling house and a barn, to Joseph Grant. (Deed Book 68:250).

1836 In a deed that had been written on the 23rd of September, 1835 but not recorded until April 15th, 1836, Joseph Grant of Prov. conveyed the property to Samuel A. Pearce of Prov. Again the property included a dwelling house and barn. (Deed Book 68:251).

**** According to the Providence Directory Joseph Grant lived on the west end of High Street, since this had been his address from 1824 there is no reason to suggest that he ever lived in this structure. The probable resident for the period from 1836 until 1839 is Samuel A. Pearce, a manufacturer, whose address is given as "High Street".

1840 Samuel A. Pearce conveyed the full 279' lot, including a dwelling house and other improvements, to Rufus Greene, Jr. for the sum of \$2,000.00. (Deed Book 78:143).

**** The Providence City Directory indicates that Rufus Greene, Jr. moved from #114 Westminster Street to #205 High Street where he lived in 1841.

1842 Rufus Greene, Jr. conveyed the lot, measuring 42½' X 279', and including a dwelling house, barn and other improvements, to James W. Winsor for the sum of \$3020.00. (Deed Book 81:384).

**** The Providence City Directory indicates the following residences for James W. Winsor between 1844 and 1850:

1844	James Winsor, grocer, #183 & 216 High St.
1847-48	James Winsor, grocer, #17 Exchange Place home #290 High St.
1850	James Winsor, wholesale grocer #17 Exchange Place home #124 Broadway

The 1850 Directory indicates that "Nathaniel G. Thom, civil engineer" lived at #290 High Street during that year.

1851 James W. Winsor of Prov. and his wife Ann C. Winsor conveyed the lot of land with buildings and improvements on it to George A. Cole of Prov. for the sum of \$4200.00. The parcel of this deed measured 42½' on High Street but was only 200' deep thus including only the land that would become Tax Assessor's lots #414, 398, 313 & 480. (Deed Book 124:158).

1857 The property is conveyed by George Cole to Nathaniel Wheaton who on the same day conveys it to Cole's wife Catherine S. Cole. Both transactions were for \$4200.00 and occurred on the 16th of June, the first at 3:05 PM and the second at 3:10 PM. The property conveyed was the 42½' X 200' lot of the previous deed. (Deed Book 149:21 & 22).

- 1857 At the time of the transfer to Catherine S. Cole The City of Providence Tax Ledger, series A, book 5, page 16, shows the tax value of the property as \$1369.00 and the structures as \$2500.00.
- 1857 The Walling Map of the City of Providence shows the existing structure and indicates the owner is "G.A.Cole".
- **** George A. Cole, a captain and mariner, moved to #290 High Street from #19 Summer in 1852. According to the Providence City Directory Cole lived there from 1852 until 1865.
- 1865 George A. Cole and Catherine S. Cole his wife conveyed the property, measuring 42½' on High St. and extending back 200', to Edward W. Billings of Prov., for the sum of \$8,000.00. (Deed Book 171:433).
- **** The Providence City Tax Ledgers indicate that the value of the land was \$1870.00 and the buildings was \$2500.00 in 1866. (Ledger series A, book 7, page 60). When the property was revalued in 1867 the value of the land had increased to \$2125.00 while the value of the buildings had fallen to \$2200.00. (Ledger series B, book 1, page 192).
- **** During the years that the property was owned by Edward W. Billings the Providence City Directory indicates that he was in residence there. For the year 1866 the street address was given as #290 High St. Between 1867 and 1870 the street address was #404 High St, and from 1871 until 1876 it was #630 High St.. From 1866 until 1869 Billings' son, Edward G. Billings, boarded with his father. Throughout the period Billings was listed as dealing in "music, fancy goods etc." first at #60 Westminster, then at #66 Westminsyer and finally at #99 Westminster, his son was a clerk in the same business.
- 1873 The records of the Providence Water Board indicate that service commenced at what is now #1206 Westminster on July 23, 1873.
- 1875 The G.M.Hopkins City Atlas of Providence, plate: 46-47, vol.2, shows the structure on a lot of 8500 sq.feet owned by Edward W. Billings. The street address is #630.
- 1876 William H. Hall, mortgagee of Edward W. Billings and his wife Hannah P. Billings, sold the property at a public auction when Billings defaulted on a mortgage that he had issued on the 11th of April, 1874 to Hall as security for a negotiable promissory note for \$5,000.00. The highest bidder was Mary E. Hopkins with a bid of \$3,000.00, however she also assumed a mortgage to Mechanics Savings Bank and a city assessment for the opening of Hammond Street, the latter two totaling \$10,590.00. The lot of land included a dwelling house and other improvements and fronted on High St. 42½' and was 200' deep. It was noted as being all of lot #313 on the City Assessor's Plat #32. (Deed Book 257:394). This deed was recorded on the 28th of July.
- 1876 Shortly after purchasing the property Mary E. Hopkins, a single woman, divided the property and resold it. On the 12th of October, 1876 she conveyed a "lot of land with a dwelling house and other improvements.... on the easterly corner of High and Hammond Streets....bounded northerly by said High Street 42½'...and westerly by said Hammond Street 100'

and is the northerly one half of lot no. 313... to Charles F. Rawson of Providence. (Deed Book 258:463). On the 18th of April, 1877, Mary E. Hopkins conveyed the remaining, southerly portion of the property to Charles F. Rawson. (Deed Book 292:183). Although the lots received separate deeds with the transfers to Rawson they are not held by different owners until 1885 when Rawson conveys the southern portion of the property, later to become lots #331 & 480, to C.H. Perkins. (Deed Book 331:199).

**** The Providence City Directory indicates that Charles F. Rawson lived at #630 High Street from 1877 until 1884. During that time he was employed as a "paper ruler" at #19 Westminster Street.

1882 The G.M.Hopkins City Atlas of Providence, plate 15, indicates the existing structure, at #630 High Street, was owned by C.F.Rawson.

1887 The Mechanics Savings Bank, mortgagee of Charles F. Rawson, sold the property at public auction when Rawson defaulted on a \$9,000.00 he had executed to them October 12, 1876. (Mortgage Book 83:217). The highest bidder was William S. Hayward at \$7050.00. The property conveyed was the northerly half of lot #313, including the dwelling house and other improvements. (Deed Book 342:451).

**** The Tax Ledgers of the City of Providence indicate that additional structures or additions to existing structures were made by William S. Hayward in 1889 and 1895. In January of 1889 Hayward was taxed for a structure valued at \$2200.00 located on lot #414. Following the note, "see below, building added" the value of the structures on the same lot had risen to \$5500.00 in July 1889 and by June 1895 had risen again to \$5800.00. In all probability this is the period when the additions were made to the facade of the existing structure, however this is also the period that a structure was built at #6 Hammond St. which at this time was also part of lot #414 and therefore not accounted individually in the Tax Ledgers. (Ledger Series E, book 5, page 193).

**** William S. Hayward, who had been Mayor of the city of Providence from 1881 through 1883, died November 5th, 1900 at the age of 65. His estate, left for the support of his widow Lucy Maria Hayward should she survive him, eventually left Hayward's home at #577 Broad Street and much of the residue of his estate to his daughter, Sadie R. Prew wife of William E. Prew. (Prov. Probate Record #6254). Sadie R. Hayward had married William E. Prew January 4, 1888. The couple had three children; William H. who died four days after his birth March 13, 1889, Hayward H. Prew born March 13, 1892, and Grace H. for whom no vital records are available. With the final settlement of their grandfather's estate the house at #1206 Westminster became the property of Hayward H. Prew and his wife Alice G. Prew. When Hayward H. Prew died on March 30th 1920, at age 28, his entire estate went to his wife. (Prov. Probate Case #21158). Within a year after the death of her first husband Alice had remarried to become Alice G. Wilcox.

**** The Providence City Directory indicates that while the property was owned by William Hayward and his heirs it was rented to various tenants: (In 1893 the street address shifted from #630 High St. to #1206 Westminster)

- 1891-96 Frank E. Weeden, mill superintendent of Weybosset Mills
 1897 Mr. & Mrs. Edward H. Parks
 1898 no listing
 1899-01 T.S. Hughes, soap manufacturer
 Thomas Y. Hughes, clerk, boards
 1903-07 Frank L. Perin, optician
 various boarders, from 2 to 4
 1909 vacant
 1911 Mrs. Annie Allen
 1913-16 Frederick N. Brown, physician
 S. Robinson MacClellan, nurse, boards
 1917-20 Frederick N. Brown, physician
 1921-22 DR. Leon Gauthier, specialist
- 1921 Alice G. Wilcox, formerly Alice G. Prew widow of Hayward H. Prew, conveyed the property, fronting on Westminster St. 42 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' and extending back 100', to Horatio D. LaFauci of Providence. The property conveyed here includes what is today lots #414 and 398 on Tax Assessor's Plat #32. Earl R. Wilcox released his claim on the property as Alice's second husband. (Deed Book 616:311).
- 1922 On the 8th of August Horatio D. LaFauci and his wife Virginia LaFauci conveyed the lot at the corner of Hammond and Westminster, measuring 42.5 by 57.60', to Raffaele Lapolla and his wife Angelina Lapolla of Providence. The property conveyed here was the northerly part of the land conveyed to LaFauci by Alice Wilcox, including only that portion of the original property that is today described as lot #414 on the Tax Assessor's Plat #32. (Deed Book 629:221). By a second deed of August 8th Lapolla also obtained lot #398 from Horatio D. LaFauci and his wife. This lot measures 42.40' on Hammond and was 42.5' deep. (Deed Book 629:222).
- 1922 A single deed of September 27th conveyed both lots, #414 and 398, from Raffaele Lapolla and his wife Angelina Lapolla of Prov. to David Yunis of Providence. (Deed Book 632:168).
- 1928 In a deed recorded on the 16th of July David Yunis and Zalvah Yunis of Prov. conveyed the lot at the corner of Westminster and Hammond, measuring 42.5 X 57.06 and the lot on Hammond St. measuring 42.5' X 42.4' to Wolf C. Sharp and Samuel L. Sharp of Providence. (Deed Book 711:246).
- 1928 In December of that year Wolf C. Sharp and his wife Fanny and Samuel L. Sharp and his wife Fannie S. Sharp conveyed the two lots with all the buildings and improvements to Axel E. Johnson of Providence. (Deed Book 721:130).
- 1930 Axel E. Johnson and his wife Anna Johnson conveyed the two lots to Vito Bevilacqua of Providence. (Deed Book 739:272). This deed was recorded July 9th.
- 1930 In a deed recorded on the 23rd of October Vito Bevilacqua, who was not married at the time, conveyed the two lots to Angelo D'Anella and his wife Rosaria D'Anello of Prov. as joint tenants. (Deed Book 743:299).
- 1935 On the 26th of June the property was sold at a public auction by The

Providence Institution for Savings. The Institution was the mortgagee for a mortgage originally executed by David Yunis, February 7, 1928 for \$5,000.00 and recorded in Mortgage Book 566:403. The Providence Institution for Savings was the highest bidder at \$2,800.00 for that part of the parcel which is now lot #414. They also purchased the second part of the parcel, lot #398. (Deed Book 785:303).

1935 On the 20th of September that same year the Providence Institution for Savings conveyed both lots to Joseph DeLorenzo and his wife Marie DeLorenzo of Prov. as joint tenants. (Deed Book 789:55).

**** The Providence City Directory indicates the following residents for the period 1923 through 1975:

- 1923-24 Ernest LeMay, cabinet maker
- 1925-26 Gustaf Carlson, rooming house
- 1927-28 Peter Salway, rooming house
- 1929-31 Harold W. Greenwood, lodging house
- 1933-34 Albert Cantwell, tailor
- 1935-37 Joseph DeLorenzo, shoe repair
- 1938 Joseph DeLorenzo
& Sebastiano B. Pettinato
- 1939-41 Joseph DeLorenzo
& Vincent A. Bianchini, physician
- 1942-53 Joseph DeLorenzo
& Margaret M. Norton, masseuse
- 1954-55 Joseph DeLorenzo
& H.L. Davis
- 1956-62 Joseph DeLorenzo
& Arthur E. Johnson
- 1963-75 Mrs. Mary DeLorenzo
& various others, 1967-75 Dominic Saint Pietro

1973 Maria DeLorenzo, a widow, conveyed the lot at the corner of Westminster and Hammond, lot #414 measuring 42.5' X 57.6', to herself and Dolores F. DeLorenzo and Catherine A. Hogan as joint tenants. (Deed Book 1172:461).

1981 Maria DeLorenzo of Prov., Dolores R. D'Agostino of West Warwick formerly Dolores DeLorenzo, and Catherine A. Hogan of Cranston conveyed lot #414 to H. Michael Planka of Warwick and Michael A. Planka of Newport as joint tenants. (Deed Book 1225:808).

The date of ca.1828 and the attribution to Peleg Boss of the existing structure at #1206 Westminster Street is supported by the following documents which have been detailed above:

- 1825 Deed conveying land only to Peleg Boss from Reubem Burdon.
- 1828 First City Directory listing for Peleg Boss on High St..
- 1828 Tax Ledgers showing the real estate taxed to Peleg Boss.
- 1834 First deed to specifically mention the structure.

The later additions to the structure have been dated 1889 and/or 1895 on the basis of tax records.

The West Side, Providence: Statewide Preservation Report P-P-1, issued by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, May 1976, makes the following statement in regard to this house:

"G.A. Cole House" (ca.1825): 2½ story Federal house with hip roof and monitor; excellent doorway with wood fanlight; altered by addition of late Victorian oriel on second floor. (pg.60)

The date given in the report was based on stylistic evaluation, and although less specific than that given here is not in contradiction with the date of ca.1828. The Commission's attribution of the structure is based on the 1857 Walling Map of Providence, a copy of which is attached. As such it does not represent the original owner or occupant of the house and so is superseded by this research.

A PORTION OF PROVIDENCE TAX ASSESSOR'S PLAT 32

