

SOUTH PROVIDENCE

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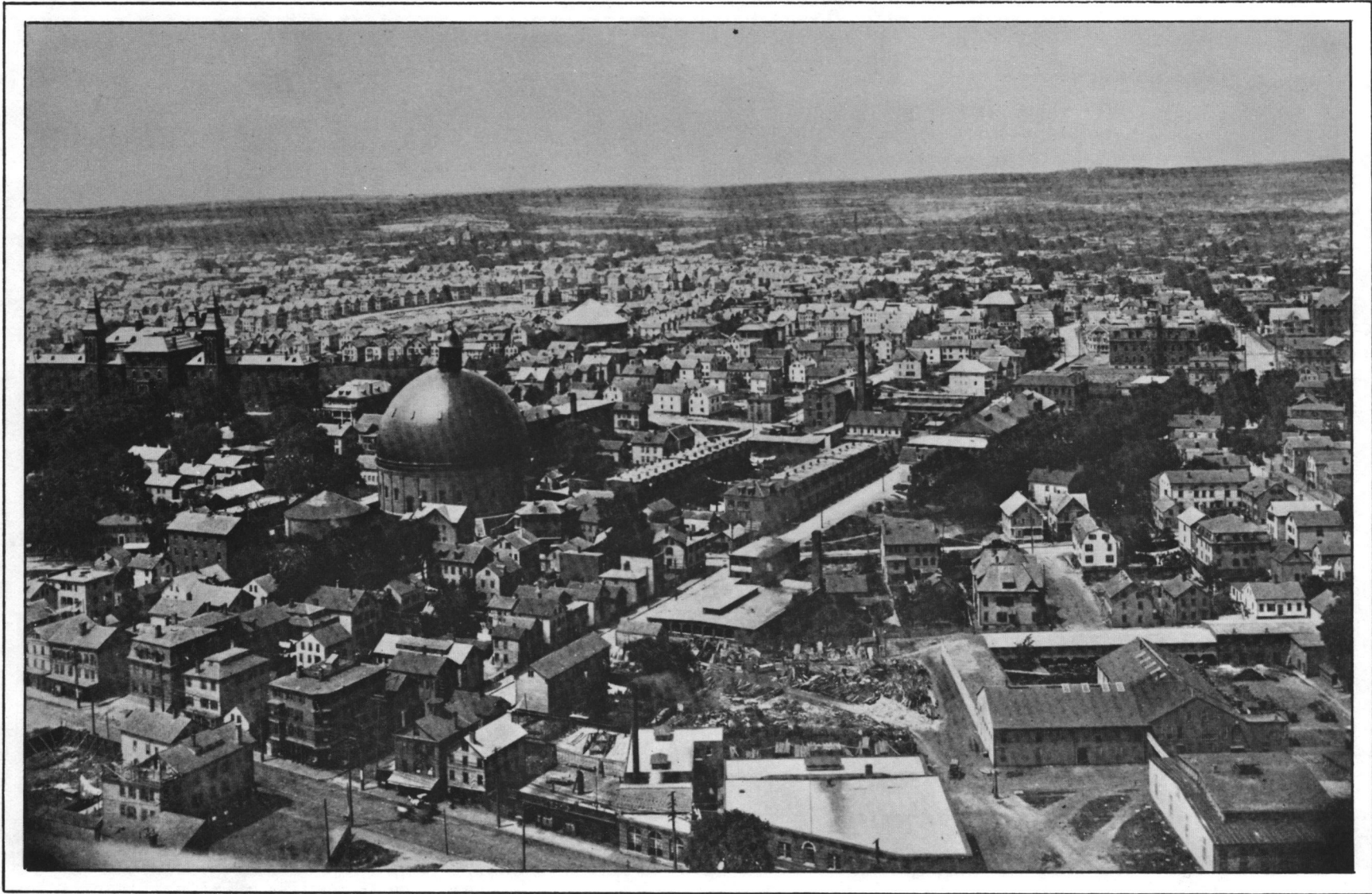
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The Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission is your state agency for historical preservation. The Commission identifies and protects historic buildings, districts, landscapes, structures, and archaeological sites throughout the State of Rhode Island.

Cover: Rhode Island Hospital from the southeast, 1864-1868; engraving, 1872; demolished.

Figure 1: South Providence looking west from the chimney of Narragansett Electrical Works; photograph, c. 1910.

South Providence, Providence
Statewide Historical Preservation Report P-P-2



Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
September, 1978



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Old State House
150 Benefit Street
Providence, R. I. 02903
(401) 277-2678

1 July 1978

The Honorable J. Joseph Garrahy, Governor
State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Governor Garrahy:

It is with pleasure that I transmit herewith
SOUTH PROVIDENCE, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND--
STATEWIDE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION REPORT P-P-2,
the eleventh publication in the Statewide Historical
Preservation Report series.

The report provides an analysis of the historical
and architectural development of South Providence, with
consideration given to current redevelopment problems,
and recommends preservation programs and procedures
which can be incorporated into the city's renewal
efforts for this neighborhood.

With the publication of this report, the Commission
is well on its way to fulfilling its responsibility to
record the rich cultural resources of Rhode Island.
Sixteen additional reports are now being prepared and
their completion will contribute significantly toward
the achievement of our goal to produce reports on all
thirty-nine cities and towns in the state. The Commis-
sion believes that its effort, as represented by this
and its other reports, will further the cause of
historical preservation in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,


Mrs. George E. Downing
Chairman

PREFACE

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission was established in 1968 by an act of the General Assembly to develop a state preservation program under the aegis of the National Park Service Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, United States Department of the Interior. Citizen members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor, and the chairmen of the House and Senate Finance Committees of the General Assembly, the Director of the Department of Economic Development, the Director of the Department of Environmental Management, the Chief of the Division of State-wide Planning and the State Building Code Commissioner serve as ex-officio members. The Director of the Department of Community Affairs has been appointed by the Governor as the State Historic Preservation Officer for Rhode Island.

The Historical Preservation Commission is charged with the responsibility of conducting a statewide survey of historic sites and places and from the survey recommending places of local, state or national significance for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places; administering federal grants in aid to National Register properties for acquisition or development; and developing a state historic preservation plan. Additional duties include compiling and maintaining a State Register of Historic Places, assisting state and municipal agencies in the area of historical preservation by undertaking special project review studies and regulating archeological exploration on state lands and under waters of state jurisdiction.

The Rhode Island statewide historical survey, inaugurated in 1969, has been designed to locate, identify, map and report on buildings, sites, areas and objects of historical and architectural value. In line with the current movement among preservationists, planners and architectural and social historians, the total environment of a survey area is considered. In addition to outstanding structures and historical sites, buildings of all periods and styles, which constitute the fabric of a community, are recorded and evaluated.



Fountain in Hayward Park (1888; demolished); formerly in Hayward Park on the site of the I-95 and I-195 interchange; photograph, 1896.

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I. INTRODUCTION

An historical and architectural in-depth survey of the South Providence Neighborhood in Providence, Rhode Island, was begun by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission in July, 1975, in conjunction with the city's Community Development Program. The survey was funded by the Historical Preservation Commission, through a survey and planning grant from the National Park Service, and by the City of Providence, with funds made available through the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. In this report, the term "South Providence Neighborhood" designates the area lying south of the central business district bounded by I-95 on three sides and Broad Street on the west.

To accomplish the goals of the statewide survey program three stages are necessary: field survey, preparation of maps and publication of a final report on each area studied. A standard survey form, the "Historic Building Data Sheet," is used throughout the state (see Appendix C). It incorporates both architectural and historical information and a photograph of each building or site. Historical information is obtained through the use of local maps, state atlases, city directories and published and unpublished histories, guidebooks or manuscripts which are readily available. Extensive deed research is not undertaken by the Commission staff. Data from the survey forms is ultimately transferred onto maps so that information pertaining to historical preservation can be easily used for planning purposes.

Upon completion, copies of the survey forms, maps and final report are filed at the Historical Preservation Commission office and in appropriate local repositories, such as the city or town hall, historical society or library. Copies of the published report are sent to the owners of all properties mentioned in it; local, state and federal officials; and selected schools, libraries and community organizations.

This report presents a concise history of the South Providence Neighborhood, its architectural and cultural development and current resources as well as recommendations for preservation planning. In the appendices are explanations of the National Register of Historic Places, the grants-in-aid program and the survey form of the Historical Preservation Commission. An inventory of noteworthy structures and sites in the survey area and a list of pertinent preservation agencies are also included.

The scope of the survey has been the whole spectrum of the South Providence Neighborhood's past as revealed in its present form, including topography, street pattern and commercial, industrial, institutional and residential buildings. This report deals with those manifestations of the neighborhood's past which should be retained as a living, active part of the city's present and future life. The function of this report is threefold: it is a planning tool, which can be used to guide future development; it is an educational resource, useful in the study of state and local history; and it can be a catalyst in awakening civic pride, helping residents to become aware of the historical and architectural environment in which they live and encouraging them to take a positive interest in the future of their neighborhood.

The Historical Preservation Commission would like to thank the following individuals who have contributed their time and advice to the South Providence Neighborhood Survey: Martha Bailey and George Turlo of the Providence Department of Planning and Urban Development; Dr. Patrick T. Conley of Providence College; Nancy F. Chudacoff and Marsha Peters of the Rhode Island Historical Society Library; Albert T. Klyberg of the Rhode Island Historical Society; Howard Chudacoff of Brown University; Norman Axler, Judith Chanoux, William Ferguson, Mehli Ozbilgin, Judith Praglin, Rick Robbins, Joseph J. Seymour, Pearl Smith, Alicia Soriano, Marcia M. Feld and Dieter Hammerschlag of the University of Rhode Island; Helena Wright of the Merrimack Valley Textile Museum; the Reverend A. L. Hemenway and the staff of Christ Episcopal Church; the Reverend Kevin Brassil and the staff and clergy of Saint Michael's Catholic Church; Mary Schofield of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence Archives; the administrators and staff of the Social Service Center at 25 Mystic Street; and Kenneth I. Fawthrop of the Providence Housing Authority.



Aerial view of South Providence; photograph, 1975.

II. PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL SETTING

South Providence lies to the south of the central business district and is bordered by Interstate 95 (I-95) on the north, east and south and Broad Street on the west.

The barrier created by the construction of I-95 in the 1950s has destroyed the neighborhood's traditional ties with the downtown and water front. The original topography of tidal flats and gently rolling hills bisected by ravines and dotted with ponds has been altered into a nearly dead-level grade in the last 125 years, and all of the ponds, streams and coves have been filled. Development patterns were established by 1850 and relate to the major thoroughfares that cross the area: Broad Street, Prairie Avenue, Plain Street, Eddy Street, Public Street and Thurbers Avenue. The remainder of the street pattern is the result of the neighborhood's nineteenth-century piecemeal development as a streetcar suburb. The random plan that evolved was rationalized in the twentieth century with the elimination of numerous dead ends and the completion of many through streets.

Traditionally, South Providence has been a diverse neighborhood containing a variety of land uses: single-family and multi-family housing, large and small industries, and neighborhood and regional market commercial establishments. This mixture continues to characterize the area today. The population is approximately 50 per cent Black and includes a substantial number of Spanish-speaking Americans. Although South Providence historically contained a mixture of social classes, today it is almost entirely working class with most of the residents employed outside of the neighborhood. It is characterized by short, irregular streets lined with detached, frame houses built close together at the edge of the sidewalk. Although the buildings vary greatly in size and architectural style, the overwhelming predominance of pre-1900 buildings on lots fifty feet wide gives the neighborhood visual cohesion. Until 1960 it was a densely developed area with scarcely a vacant lot to be found. Since 1960 vast numbers of buildings have been demolished, and today there are few streets that contain more than two-thirds of their original structures. In some areas entire blocks have been cleared. Although a large percentage of the land is vacant, only the Dudley Street Playground and Richardson Park provide sizeable developed recreation areas.

III. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

A. EARLY SETTLEMENT: THE RURAL HINTERLAND (1635-1835)

The area today known as South Providence was included in Roger Williams' original purchase from the Narragansett Indians; it was on the west side of the Providence River and its northern edge was approximately two miles south of Williams' settlement on what is now North Main Street.

Settlement in Providence in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was largely limited to the east side of the Great Salt River where the original "Home Lots" had been laid out. Although two houses existed on the West Side as early as 1650, little further settlement occurred. The ford across the river was replaced by a bridge in 1660 which proved structurally unsound and was demolished within a short time. The bridge was not rebuilt until 1711, and the ford was used in the interim. Such primitive conditions did not encourage extensive settlement, and the West Side was mainly used as pasture land.

By 1725, the Pequot Path traversing South Providence had been improved into the Pawtuxet cart road, connecting Providence with the small agricultural and trading center of Pawtuxet Village (Figure 1). The lands adjacent to the road, however, remained largely uncultivated and uninhabited. The still wild and unpopulated portion of South Providence below Dudley Street was ceded to form part of the new town of Cranston in 1754 and did not become a part of Providence again until 1868.

In the late eighteenth century, several institutions located in northern South Providence. These facilities were to have an important effect on the subsequent development of the area. By the time of the Revolutionary War, Providence was a thriving maritime trade center. The international seafaring traffic brought new diseases as well as prosperity, however, and in 1776 a smallpox hospital was built on a large tract which had been set aside as the "Hospital Lands." In 1798, a building for the care of yellow fever victims was erected on the site of the present Rhode Island Hospital complex (Figure 2); after 1805, when the yellow fever epidemics had subsided, this structure was used principally for the care of seamen and became known as the Marine Hospital. It remained in use as a city hospital until the 1860s when Rhode Island Hospital was built on the site; subsequently, it was moved and continued in use on the hospital grounds until 1963 when it was demolished.

In 1785, the Beneficent and Benevolent Congregational churches together purchased a two-and-a-half-acre parcel to be used as a cemetery. This land had been used by the French army as a campground in June of 1781 when they stopped in Providence on their way to Yorktown. Additional private cemeteries were established adjacent to the Congregationalists' purchase until the complex, known collectively as the West Burial Ground, sprawled over seventeen acres from Friendship to Plain street by 1842.

At the time of the Revolution, several private water companies were formed to provide pure drinking water to the growing residential area radiating outward from Weybosset Neck. The Providence Aqueduct Company established a fountain or well near the present intersection of Conduit and Stewart streets on a tract of land extending from Pine to Broad Street.

These early developments had an important effect on the settlement of South Providence because, together, the Hospital Lands, the seventeen-acre West Burial Ground and the Aqueduct Company tract formed a continuous barrier to the southerly growth of the city into South Providence for much of the first half of the nineteenth century.

Some settlement must have occurred in South Providence in the late eighteenth century, but only a few buildings are known to have existed in the area before 1840. The only recorded eighteenth-century buildings are two farmhouses, both now gone. One unsubstantiated account cites a mid-eighteenth-century farmhouse that once stood at 18 Beacon Avenue as the oldest house in South Providence, although the gambrel-roofed Tommy Burgess House that stood on the west side of Broad near Oxford Street was the only documented eighteenth-century house in the area. The few houses built along the Pawtuxet Road in the early 1800s have also been destroyed. The Cole House, formerly on the east side of Broad Street, was a typical farmhouse of the period. It was a frame, five-bay, center-chimney, one-and-a-half-story, gable-roofed, post-Colonial dwelling. An existing house of the same type is the c. 1840 David Sprague House at 263 Public Street (Figure 3) which is probably the oldest building in South Providence not moved here from outside the neighborhood. A cluster of five houses including the Cranston town clerk's office stood in the vicinity of Massie Avenue and Oxford Street on the west side of Broad Street before 1850, while the now vanished Burrows Homestead at Broad and Summer streets, reportedly erected in 1818, stood practically alone above Trinity Square until the 1850s.

B. THE FOUNDING PERIOD: THE THREE COMMUNITIES (1835-1865)

Between 1800 and 1832, when Providence adopted the city form of government, its population increased from 7,500 to over 17,000. The city's traditional reliance on maritime trade was now augmented heavily by local manufacturing. The textile industry, which had been initiated in 1790 by Samuel Slater in Pawtucket under the auspices of Moses Brown, was well es-

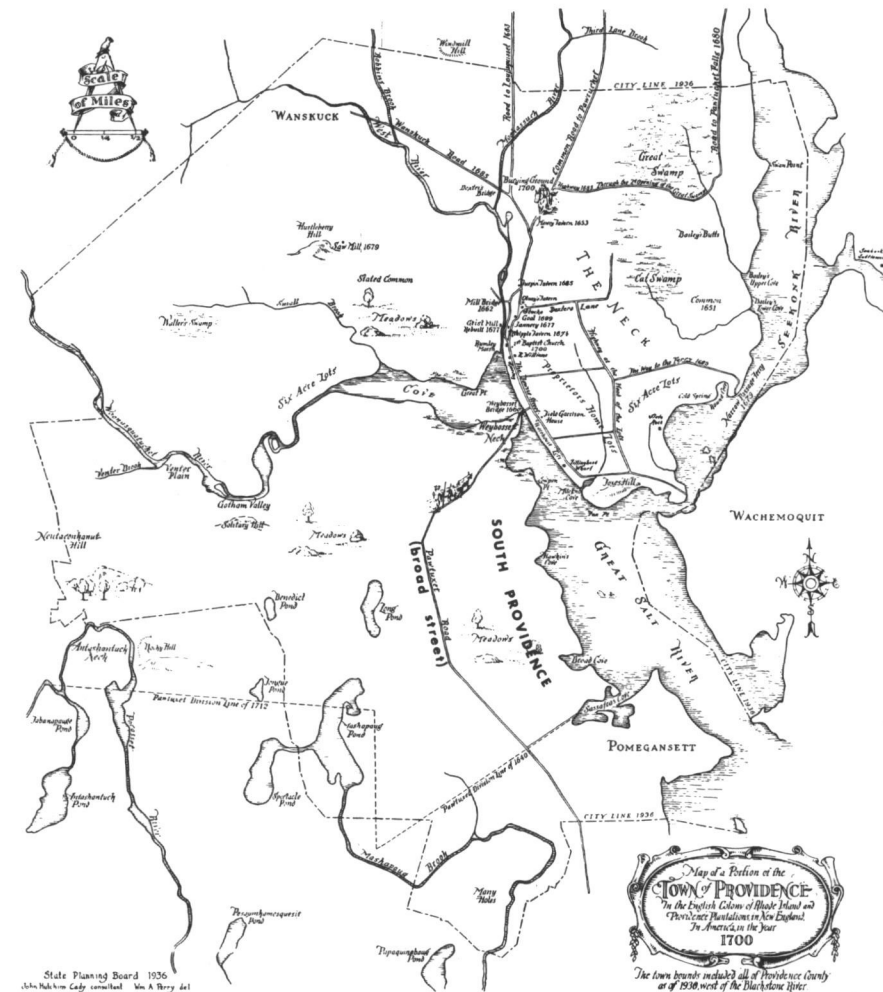


Figure 1: J. H. Cady map of Providence in 1700.

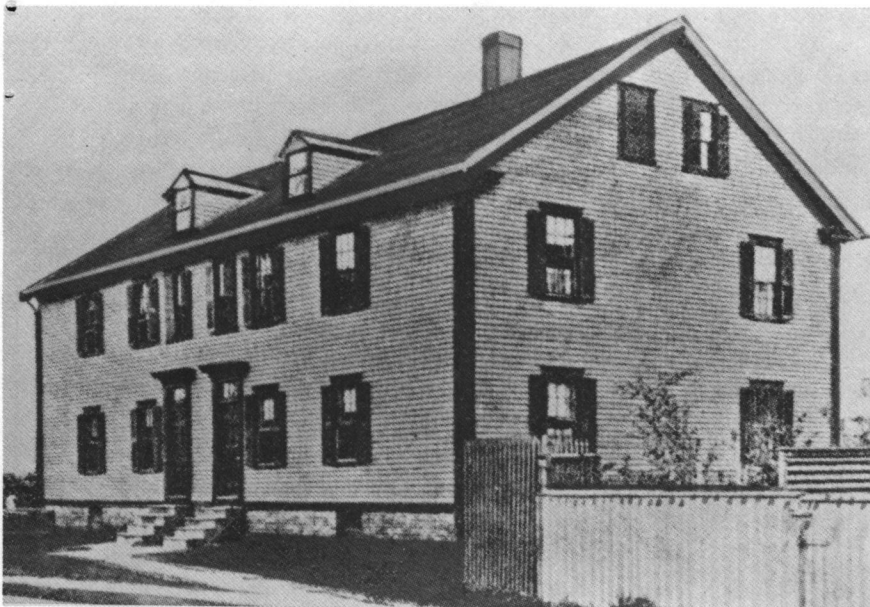


Figure 2: Providence Yellow Fever Hospital (1797; alterations, 1841; moved to Whately Place in 1863; demolished, 1963); photograph, c. 1900.



Figure 3: David Sprague House (c. 1840); 263 Public Street.

established by 1812 when there were over thirty cotton mills in operation in the Providence area.

The growth of industry coincided with the transportation revolution of the early nineteenth century. On the water front, the steamship revolutionized coastal shipping. Regular steamship service had been established to Newport in 1817 and to New York by 1819. Canals, such as the Blackstone which was completed to Worcester in 1828, facilitated inland water traffic between major industrial centers while turnpikes, such as the 1825 Pawtuxet Turnpike, linked smaller towns with major ports. It was the railroad, though, that was ultimately to have the greatest impact on transportation in New England. In 1831, the first steam locomotive in New England made a halting run from Boston to Providence initiating a new technology that was soon to eclipse all other forms of inland transportation. The turnpikes, the railroad and the growth of industry were to be decisive influences on the early nineteenth-century development of South Providence. Settlement at this period centered in three areas: Burgess Cove, Pine Street and Dogtown.

1. Burgess Cove

In the early 1800s, South Providence was a sparsely settled region of small farms. The only road, Pawtuxet Street (Broad Street), remained an unimproved country lane that fell largely into disuse after 1825 when the new toll road to Pawtuxet, the Pawtuxet Turnpike (Eddy Street), was opened.

In the mid-1830s, the Providence and Stonington Railroad was completed to the harbor at Burgess Cove, which had been known as Broad Cove in the eighteenth century. A small bustling village grew up at the rail terminus with shops and houses lining either side of a single street skirting the south bank of the cove. On a hill above the village near the east end of present-day Pavilion Avenue stood the Pavilion Hotel, a pretentious, two-story building with a portico. Other significant buildings were the railroad superintendent's cottage and a large bowling alley. The village catered to the needs of railroad employees and travellers. Burgess Cove was connected by a ferry with India Point, where the Boston Railroad Depot was located, and with the more densely settled part of Weybosset Neck by the Pawtuxet Turnpike.

The community flourished until 1837 when the railroad extended its tracks up the harbor on causeways along the course of present-day Allens

Avenue to Hill's Wharf at the foot of Lockwood Street. After this, the Burgess Cove community slowly disappeared. The Pavilion Hotel was eventually abandoned, and it burned in 1857; the superintendent's cottage became the White Swan Inn; and the bowling alley was subdivided into tenements.

In spite of the loss of the railroad, the remnants of the original settlement along what eventually became Kay Street survived as a working-class community into the early twentieth century when it was known as Rotten Row (Figure 4). Kay Street received this name as a result of a late nineteenth-century priest of Saint Michael's Church who declared that the residents were so generous in their offerings to the church that he felt as if he were on Rotten Row, one of the most exclusive residential streets of London, rather than a street of poor laborers. The inhabitants of Rotten Row were largely of English and Irish descent, and many were employed unloading the coal barges at the harbor junction coal pier that had been built near Burgess Cove after the extension of the railroad to Hill's Wharf.

In the 1850s, Burgess Cove took on new life as a suburban satellite of greater Providence where a number of prominent merchants and professionals settled. These men constructed their homes on the north and west banks of the cove and on the hill where the Pavilion Hotel stood overlooking the

working-class village of Rotten Row. Among the early settlers along the banks of the cove was Hezekiah Willard, a wealthy jewelry manufacturer who was a participant in the Dorr Rebellion of 1842 and later became collector of the port of Providence. Another, William Field, advanced the fledgling jewelry industry by introducing the use of engine-turned lathes. Field built a splendid mansion on Seymour Street in the 1850s (demolished). His neighbor, Ben Davis, established a successful pleasure-boat-building business at the foot of Seymour Street in 1853. A somewhat less successful industry founded on the banks of the cove was the first lager-beer brewery in New England, built in 1853 by a German immigrant. A bitter brew, the beer found little favor in Rhode Island, however, and the business failed almost immediately. The imposing brewery itself burned down a few years later. Near the brewery site the house built in 1860 by Providence's most successful wig maker, Thomas W. Camm, survives in altered form at 18 Haswell Street. Camm, like his neighbors, was attracted to Burgess Cove by its natural beauty and the cove itself, which allowed him to keep his small yacht, *Henrietta*, close at hand.

On the hill above Rotten Row, where the Pavilion Hotel stood, lived other prominent citizens of Burgess Cove, including Nathan Porter who was a leading figure in the development of South Providence. Porter, a lawyer, had bought a home adjacent to the Pavilion Hotel lot in the 1830s. After

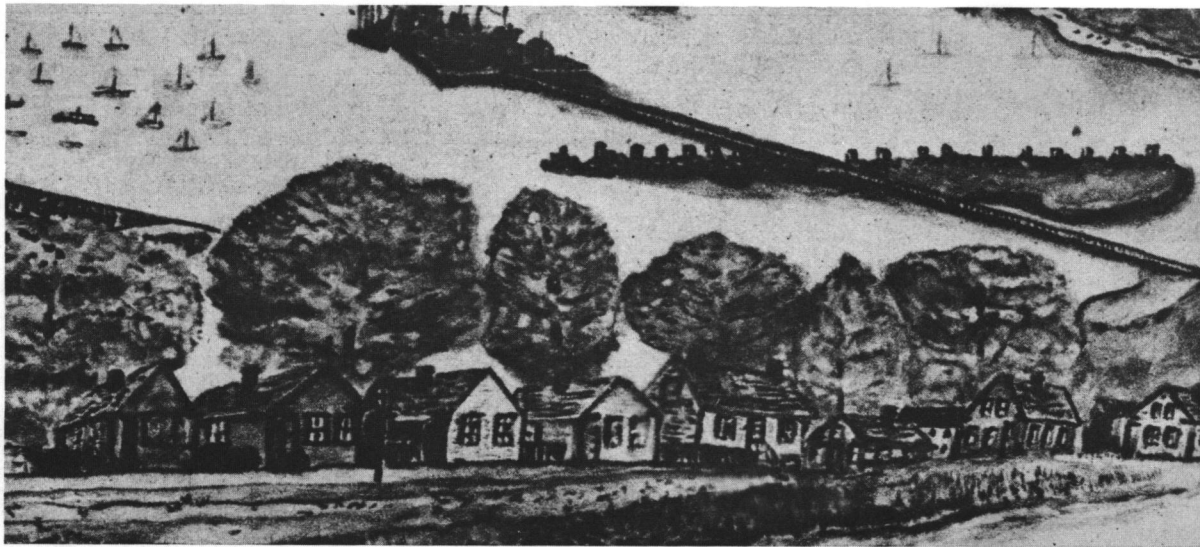


Figure 4: Rotten Row (demolished); formerly near the site of the Thurburs Avenue and I-95 interchange; watercolor by Robert Howard, 1893.



Figure 5: Willard Johnson House (1845-1853); 1002 Eddy Street.

making a modest fortune practicing law in San Francisco during the 1849 Gold Rush, he returned to Providence in 1850 and actively promoted the development of South Providence as a representative to the General Assembly for the town of Cranston, to which most of South Providence including Burgess Cove belonged until 1868. Pavilion Hill was also home to the French vice-consul of Providence in the 1850s, J. B. G. Fauvel Gaurand, who tried ceaselessly, but unsuccessfully, to persuade the General Assembly to charter a transatlantic steamship line between France and Rhode Island.

Most of the buildings of Burgess Cove were of a simple vernacular type. Old drawings indicate that many were plain, one-and-a-half-story, end- or flank-gable, wooden cottages of no particular architectural style and devoid of ornament. None of these have survived, although a few slightly more elaborate houses from the Pavilion Estate Plat dating from the 1840s and 1850s are still standing. At 6 Hylestead Street and 1002 Eddy Street (Figure 5) are one-and-a-half-story, end-gable, Greek Revival houses with corner pilasters and deep entablatures.

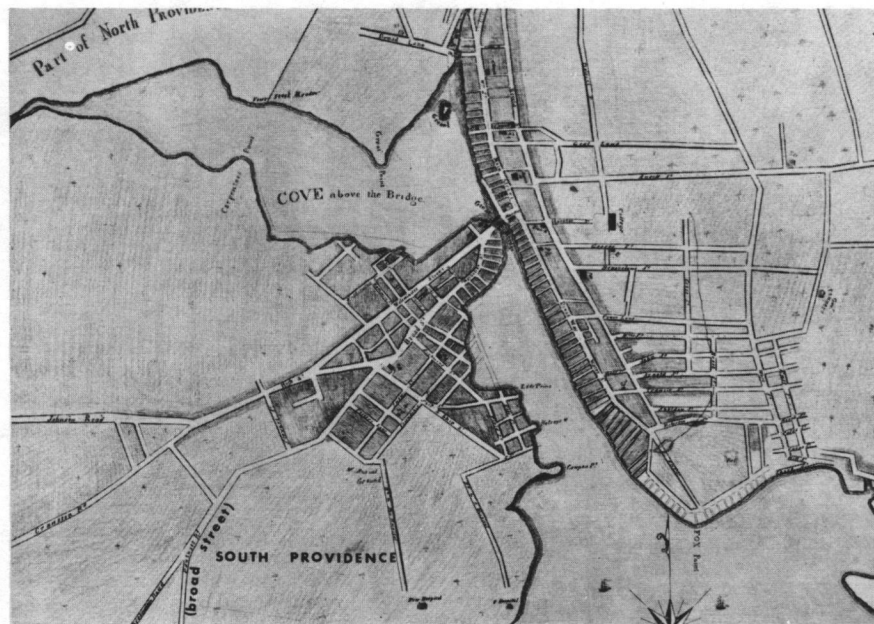


Figure 6: Daniel Anthony Map of Providence, 1803.

2. The Pine Street Area

Unlike Burgess Cove, which was South Providence's first independent urban development, the Pine Street area in northern South Providence developed as a middle-class residential extension of the West Side business district.

For the first four decades of the nineteenth century, the continuous chain of landholdings of the Providence Aqueduct Company, the West Burial Ground and the Hospital Lands formed a barrier to development in northern South Providence. A comparison of the Daniel Anthony maps of 1803 (Figure 6) and 1823 (Figure 7) reveals that while South Providence was still undeveloped in 1823, extensive settlement had occurred to the west between Pawtuxet Street (Broad Street) and Cranston Street as far south as Pearl Street. The subdivision of the Providence Aqueduct Company's land between Pine and Broad streets in 1832 made possible the first residential settlement in northern South Providence. The adjacent Timothy Wiggins and Daniel Field

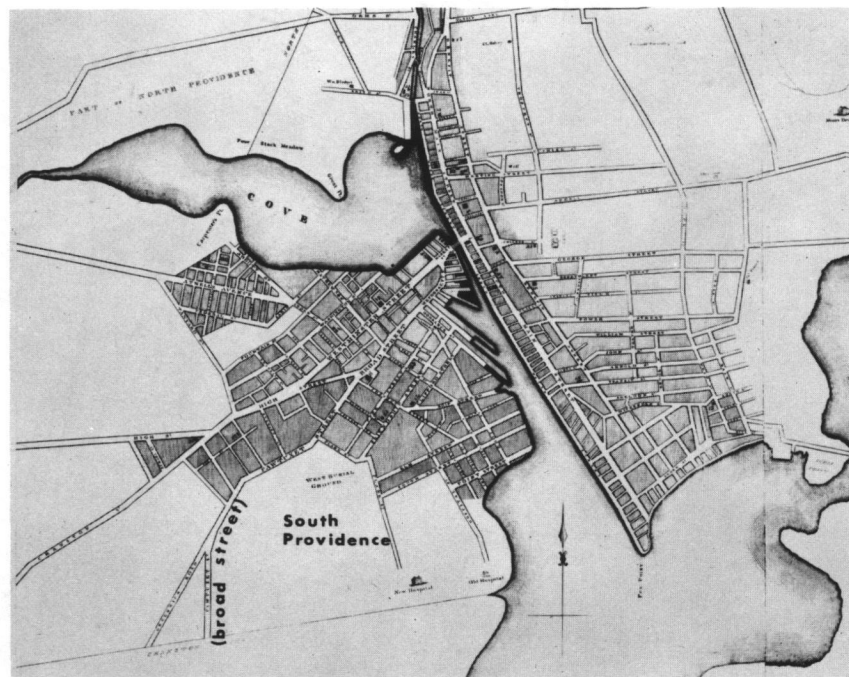


Figure 7: Daniel Anthony Map of Providence, 1823.

tracts were subdivided into house lots ten years later. Pine and Friendship streets had been extended into the area from the West Side business district by the early 1840s, and the remainder of the street grid west of Friendship Street and north of Dudley Street was established by 1844 (Figure 8). The West Burial Ground and the Hospital Lands, however, remained intact for several more decades, limiting further urban development.

The second quarter of the nineteenth century was a period of great mercantile and industrial expansion in Providence. In the decade from 1840 to 1850, the population grew from 23,000 to 41,000 – the most phenomenal population growth city city had experienced to date. Many of the newcomers were Irish immigrants who came to work in the burgeoning textile and metal-products industries. In addition to the growth of the Irish laboring class, the merchant, skilled mechanic, artisan and industrial-management classes also expanded. This latter group, whose businesses were located downtown or on the East Side, established a handsome middle class residential area along Pine Street.

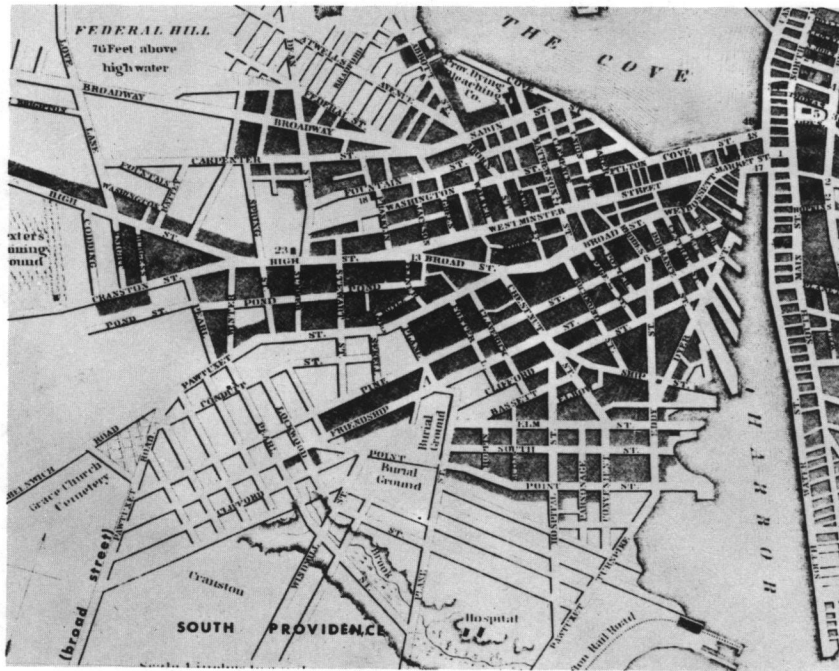


Figure 8: B. F. Moore Plan of the City of Providence, 1844.

Because northern South Providence was developed as the residential fringe of the West Side business district, settlement was limited by the lack of public transportation to within walking distance of the downtown area which then centered on Weybosset Neck and around Market Square. This is seen clearly in the 1857 H. F. Walling Map of Providence (Figure 9) which indicates that the blocks south of Lockwood Street were much less densely inhabited than the blocks to the north. The distance from the intersection of Pine and Lockwood streets to Market Square is approximately one mile – a traditionally comfortable walking distance in pedestrian cities. The importance of the physical proximity of residence to workplace and shopping was paramount in the days before mass transit when the ownership of a private horse or carriage presupposed either a rural residence or the wealth to maintain a city stable. Most city dwellers walked to work in the pre-Civil War era and never owned a horse.

Most of the independent middle-class merchants and artisans who moved to the Pine Street area in the 1840s and 1850s acquired their homes from the many carpenter-builders active in the area. For example, Lucien B. Kendall,

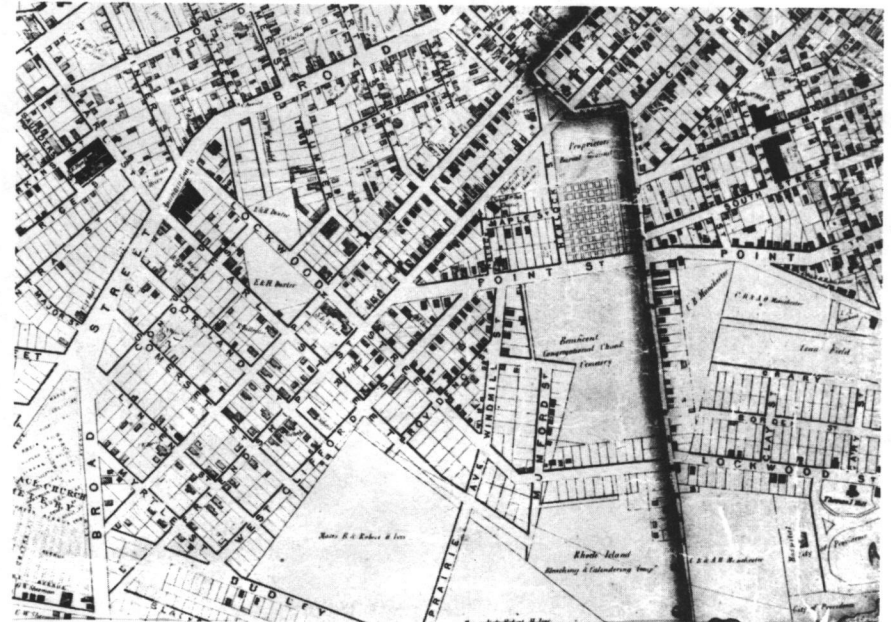


Figure 9: H. F. Walling Map of Providence, 1857.

GREEK REVIVAL (1830-1860)



The popularity of the Greek Revival style reflected an admiration for ancient Greek civilization and was partially based on its identification with the ideals of a free and democratic society. Its appearance coincided with the period of Jacksonian democracy, the Age of the Common Man, when Americans thought of themselves as the standard bearers of freedom and democracy in the world.

In architecture, this spirit manifested itself in buildings designed in imitation of Greek temples. Few buildings in Providence were built with two-story porticoes, however; instead, pilasters were applied to the corners to represent columns and the gable roof was turned end to the street and treated as a pediment. The most typical Greek Revival building type in Providence is the three-bay, end-gable, two-and-a-half-story house, such as the William H. Dyer House. Other features always found on Greek Revival buildings are a deep entablature, usually consisting of wide, horizontal boards under the eaves; a door flanked by pilasters and sometimes pedimented; and windows with wide frames and small molded caps.

- A: PANELED CORNER PILASTER
- B: CLASSICAL WINDOW ENFRAMEMENT
- C: PEDIMENTED GABLE
- D: CLASSICAL ENTABLATURE
- E: IONIC PORTICO
- F: THREE-BAY FACADE WITH SIDE HALL PLAN

Figure 10: Greek Revival Style Sheet: William H. Dyer House (c. 1842); 378 Pine Street.

a carriage painter with his shop on Dorrance Street, purchased 305 Friendship Street from its builder, carpenter George A. Kenyon, immediately after its completion in 1846. Similarly, Thomas H. Rhodes, a cashier for the State Bank on Westminster Street, acquired the house at 403 Friendship Street in 1855 from mason-builder William Clark. Independent contractors like Clark



Figure 11: Olney Read House (1842); 350 Pine Street.

would build and sell one house at a time on a speculative basis, perhaps living in it while he finished the interiors and ornamentation, before starting another house. Joseph R. Budlong (266 Broad), Thomas Peck (325 Friendship), John Henry Childs (47 Maple), Esek Tallman (433 Pine), George S. Thompson (428 Pine) and John Congdon (446 Pine) are a few of the contractors whose own fine homes are still standing. Carpenter-housewrights were also important to the development of the Pine Street area as a result of their extensive building for personal investment. William H. Dyer, who built the elaborately detailed house at 378 Pine Street in 1842 for his own use (Figure 10), also con-

structed numerous houses as his own rental properties of which only 389 and 391 Pine Street and 60 Maple Street still remain. Nathan B. Fenner, who built extensively on Lockwood Street from 1860 to 1890, also owned and rented a large number of the houses he constructed. Although most of these have been demolished, 236 Lockwood Street (built in 1866) remains as an example of Fenner's work.

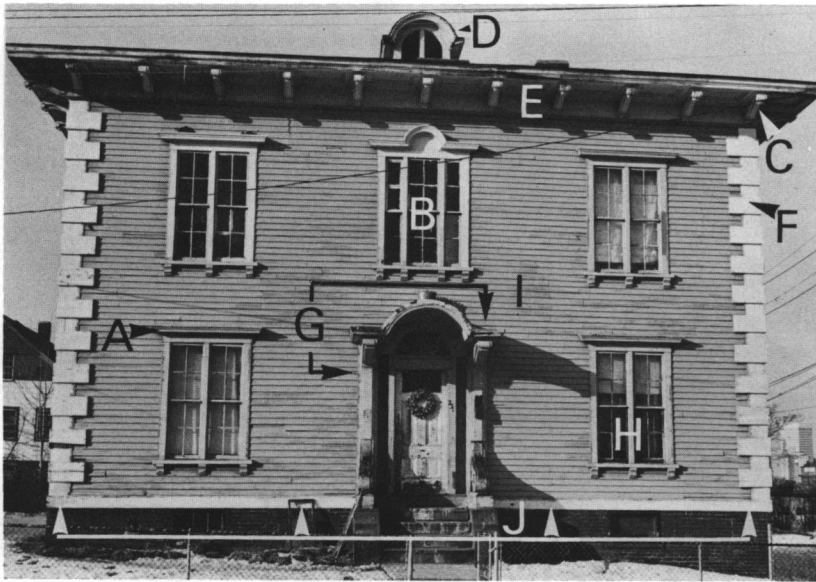
The most prominent architectural style in the Pine Street area is Greek Revival, which became popular throughout the United States in the late 1820s and remained in vogue in Providence until the Civil War. Signalling the end of Georgian design concepts, which had dominated American architecture since Colonial times, the Greek Revival style gained popularity as a manifestation of the new national trend toward the romantic and the picturesque that would ultimately lead to the eclecticism of late nineteenth-century Victorian architecture.

There were already excellent Greek Revival buildings in other sections



Figure 12: Otis Potter House (1843-1845); 353 Pine Street.

ITALIANATE (1850-1885)



- A: WINDOW CAP
- B: PALLADIAN WINDOW
- C: BRACKET
- D: ROUND-HEAD DORMER
- E: BRACKETED CORNICE
- F: QUOINS
- G: DOOR HOOD ON CONSOLES
- H: PAIRED WINDOWS
- I: CLAPBOARD SIDING
- J: THREE-BAY FACADE, CENTER HALL PLAN

The Italianate style became popular in the 1850s when Americans were searching for a romantic, picturesque architectural style from the past to imitate. The Gothic Revival style, based on medieval domestic architecture, was also popular in the 1850s for the same reason, but there are few examples of it in Providence. Italianate buildings were inspired by the palaces and villas of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italy. In South Providence the most typical Italianate house type is an imitation of an Italian Renaissance city palace. These are called Italianate palazzo style and are usually two- or three-story, boxy houses with flat roofs and widely projecting eaves decorated with brackets, such as the William C. Rhodes House. Brackets, the most common decorative feature of Italianate design, are curved wooden supports placed under a soffit, a bay window or a door hood. Other than brackets, Italianate houses frequently have round-head windows, wooden quoins on the corners, elaborate door hoods and long narrow windows, often in pairs, with projecting caps. Two-story, Italianate palazzo style houses sometimes have a cupola on the roof. Italianate houses built with towers, such as the Charles Holbrook House at 392 Pine Street (Figure 15), are referred to as "villa style." L-shaped houses, with low roofs, long side porches supported by square wooden posts, tall, narrow, paired windows and multitudes of brackets are called Italianate bracketed style and may date from the 1870s or 1880s, whereas the palazzo types were mostly built in the 1850s and 1860s.

Figure 13: Italianate Style Sheet: William C. Rhodes House (c. 1860; moved about 1889 from the southeast corner of Eddy and Rhodes streets); 231 Rhodes Street.

of Providence by the time the first house lots were built upon in the newly opened Pine Street area in the 1840s. The most prominent element of Classical Greek architecture to be incorporated into the Greek Revival style was the pedimented front portico. Although a few Providence buildings, such as the Arcade (1828) on Westminster Street and the remodelled Beneficent Congregational Church (1836) on Weybosset Street, were designed with full two-story porticoes, such temple fronts were generally too costly for use on modest residential buildings. Moreover, the deep porticoes, originally invented to shade the interiors of Greek temples from the searing Mediterranean sun, kept high-ceilinged New England houses frigid and dark during the long winter months. Local housewrights expressed the front portico symbolically by turning the gable end of the structure to the street, extending the deep entablature across the gable to simulate a pediment and applying paneled corner pilasters to represent columns. A few houses in the Pine Street area have excellently detailed one-story porticoes such as the exemplary William H. Dyer House at 378 Pine Street (Figure 10), but most have classically enframed and pedimented, slightly recessed doorways with side lights, such as the Olney Read House at 350 Pine Street (Figure 11).

Since there were no classical Greek house plans suitable for emulation, the ornamental details of Greek architecture were applied to modified Georgian floor plans. The house type that is most prevalent throughout South Providence is the three-bay, side-hall-plan, one-and-a-half- or two-and-a-half-story, end-gable, frame house built close to the street (Figure 10). Examples of flank-gable, center-hall-plan houses overlaid with Greek detail can also be found, such as the Otis Potter House at 353 Pine Street (Figure 12).

The side-hall-plan house type lent itself well to the long, narrow lots of neighborhoods like Pine Street where street frontage was at a premium. This plan remained the basis for two-family house design throughout the nineteenth century, although the architectural detailing changed to reflect new styles. The plans for the first and second floors are usually identical. The front door leads in to a relatively small hall containing the staircase to the upper floor. The front room, usually the most elaborately finished in the house and used as a parlor in larger houses, extends the depth of the hall and occupies the front two bays overlooking the street. Behind the front room and the hall is a larger room that extends at least two thirds the width of the house with a very small bedroom next to it. This large living-dining room was the center of family life in the house. Between it and the small adjoining bedroom is an interior fireplace that heated both rooms. Behind the dining room

and small bedroom, in the case of a large two-family house, are two more bedrooms with the kitchen behind these in an ell. Smaller single-family houses often just have the kitchen behind the dining room.

In single-family houses, the second floor contained only bedrooms while two-family houses had an apartment identical in plan to the first floor. Although, from the exterior, both single-family and two-family Greek Revival houses are similar, the longer houses with two-story ells on the rear were frequently originally built to contain two apartments with a separate kitchen on each floor of the ell.

The Italianate style rivaled the Greek Revival in popularity in the Pine Street area in the 1850s. The origins of this romantic style are based on the continuing national artistic quest for the picturesque that had earlier popularized the Greek Revival style. Although the original inspiration was drawn from the Renaissance villas of Tuscany, the informal, rambling, towered designs were found to be generally unsuitable for restricted urban lots and a tall, somber house type bearing some resemblance to Italian Renaissance town palaces was adopted (Figure 13). There were already excellent examples of Italianate houses on the East Side before 1855, such as the 1853 Tully Bowen



Figure 14: Thompson-Hawes House (c. 1863); 428 Pine Street.

House on Benefit Street, and the house type most commonly found in the Pine Street area is in modest imitation of these more opulent masonry mansions. Typically, Pine Street Italianate houses are three-story, three-bay, low hip-roofed, frame houses built close to the street with Italian Renaissance inspired ornament such as quoined corners, heavily pedimented paired windows, belt courses and widely bracketed cornices with paneled soffits. One of the finest buildings of this type is the richly detailed 1863 Thompson-Hawes House at 428 Pine Street (Figure 14). An unusual example of an urban towered villa is the 1869 Charles Holbrook House at 392 Pine Street (Figure 15). Double houses in the Italianate style are rare. One excellent example, however, is the handsomely detailed, brick-and-brownstone, 1857 John B. Wood House at 413-417 Pine Street, with its elaborately carved porticos (Figure 16).

Although building on Pine Street began in the 1840s, new houses in later architectural styles continued to be constructed in the neighborhood until about 1890. Its easy accessibility to downtown contributed to its continuing



Figure 15: Charles Holbrook House (1869); 392 Pine Street.

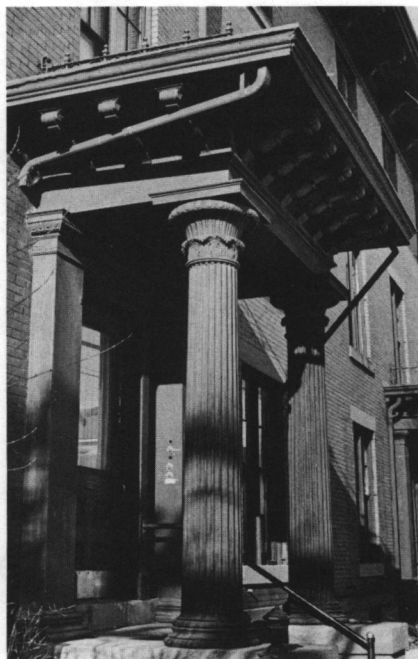


Figure 16: Detail of the John B. Wood House (1857); 413-417 Pine Street.

popularity as a fashionable middle-class residential area. Unlike Burgess Cove and Dogtown which have been destroyed, the fine Greek Revival and Italianate style houses in the Pine Street area remain as the best preserved group of mid-nineteenth-century residential buildings on the West Side of Providence. The importance of this historical survival of South Providence's early urbanization has been recognized by the nomination of the neighborhood to the National Register of Historic Places (see Appendix A).

3. Dogtown

In the mid-nineteenth century, a group of Irish immigrants settled in central South Providence and formed a community that became known as Dogtown.

The increasing industrialization of Providence after 1835 was reflected in the location of several industries in South Providence. By 1838, the Rhode Island Bleachery (Figure 17) had constructed the nucleus of a large complex on the east side of Eddy Street at the foot of Dudley Street. Within fifteen years the Providence Machine Company (1846) and the New England Screw Company (1852) had built substantial brick plants on the adjacent land north of the bleachery (Figure 18). These industries were attracted to the area by the availability of the large, inexpensive, water-front sites near downtown that had once been part of the Hospital Lands and by the excellent transportation facilities afforded by the Pawtuxet Turnpike (Eddy Street) and the Providence-Stonington Railroad tracks that skirted the property along the present course of Allens Avenue.

Another important Providence industry was the provisions trade, which located in South Providence in the early 1850s. Four slaughterhouses were built on Willard Avenue, then known as Clinton Street, between Prairie Avenue and Broad Street, with stockyards extending north to Blackstone Street where now vanished Oxen Pond provided a water supply. Prairie Avenue, in fact, derives its name from the course that the animals bound for the slaughterhouses followed after entering South Providence from Friendship Street. The location of the provisions industry on the fringe of the city in rural South Providence was influenced by the availability of cheap land for stockyards, the adjacent water supply at Oxen Pond and the malodorous and undesirable nature of the facilities that dictated their siting away from established residential areas.

These large industries, particularly the bleachery and the slaughter-

houses, soon attracted a pool of Irish laborers to previously uninhabited central South Providence. The Irish were the largest foreign-born ethnic group in Providence in 1850. The first large wave of Irish had migrated to Providence in the 1830s as laborers on the Boston and Providence Railroad, settling in Fox Point near the railroad terminus, where they subsequently became employed in the metals and textile industries. With the increasing immigration of the 1840s, the Irish community gradually became concentrated on the West Side in the Weybosset Hill area, where the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul had been established in 1838.

The 1844 subdivision and sale of lots in the Josiah Robinson tract, located between Robinson Street and Willard Avenue near the slaughterhouses, made possible the first concentrated Irish settlement in South Providence. The commercial hub of the area was the corner of Dora Street (Comstock Avenue) and Prairie Avenue where several stores and saloons were located. The center of community life, however, was the mission church of Saint Bernard on Prairie Avenue. In its early years, the Dogtown community was part of the congregation of the Catholic Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul. In 1857, a mission was organized in Dogtown to more conveniently serve the burgeoning community. Housed in a former Baptist church building near

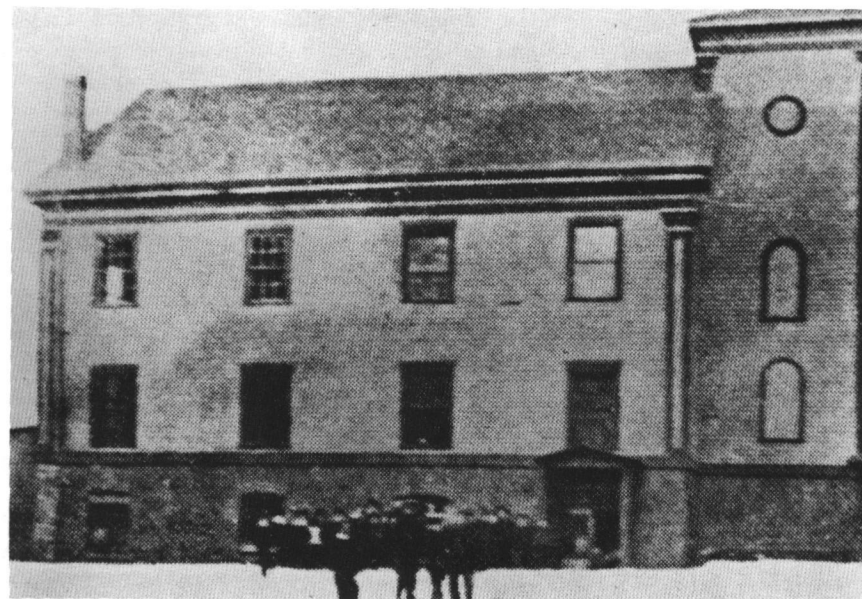


Figure 19: Saint Bernard's Mission (c. 1850; demolished); formerly at Prairie Avenue and Oxford Street; photograph, late nineteenth century.

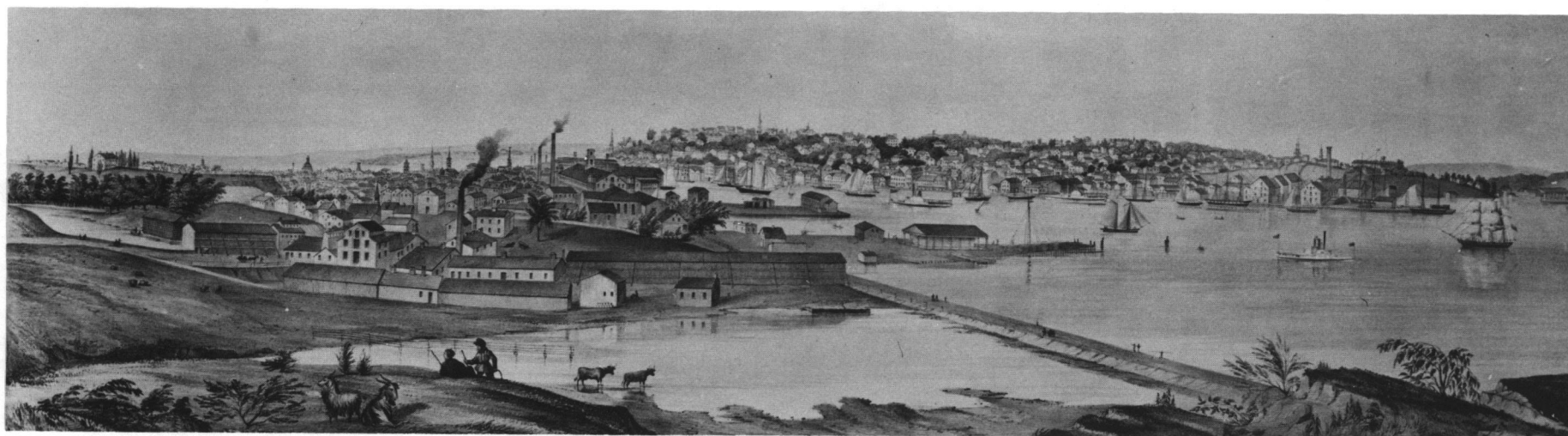


Figure 17: View of Providence from the south, 1849; watercolor by E. Whitefield. The Rhode Island Bleachery (1838; demolished) occupied the long sheds in the foreground on the shore of Hawkins Cove. The Providence Machine Company (1846; Eddy and Crary streets) is the long building with the cupola behind it in the distance, while the Yellow Fever Hospital (1797; demolished) stands on the hill alone at the left surrounded by poplar trees.



Figure 20: Saint Aloysius Orphans' Asylum (1861; demolished); formerly on Prairie Avenue between Oxford and Gallup streets; photograph, late nineteenth century.

the corner of Prairie Avenue and Square Street (Oxford Street) (Figure 19), Saint Bernard's, the forerunner of the present Saint Michael's, was to remain the focus of Irish social and political life in South Providence throughout the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries.

In 1861, the imposing Saint Aloysius Orphans' Asylum building (Figure 20) was completed on a site adjacent to Saint Bernard's Mission. In 1851, the diocesan orphan asylum had been put under the supervision of the Sisters of Mercy, an Irish order of nuns, and moved to their convent at Broad and Claverick streets on Weybosset Hill. The relocation of this institution to South Providence is an indication of the increasing prominence of the Dogtown Irish community in the mid-nineteenth century.

None of the mid-nineteenth-century architecture of the Dogtown community has survived, although it must have been very modest. The eighteenth-century, gambrel-roofed house at 120 Robinson Street (Figure 21), moved to this site in 1865 by Irish immigrant Mathew Lynch, and the handsome Federal style house at 348 Willard Avenue (Figure 22), also moved to South Providence from another site, are reminders of the early period of the Irish community in Providence when only the cast-off, outmoded housing of the natives was available to the newcomers.

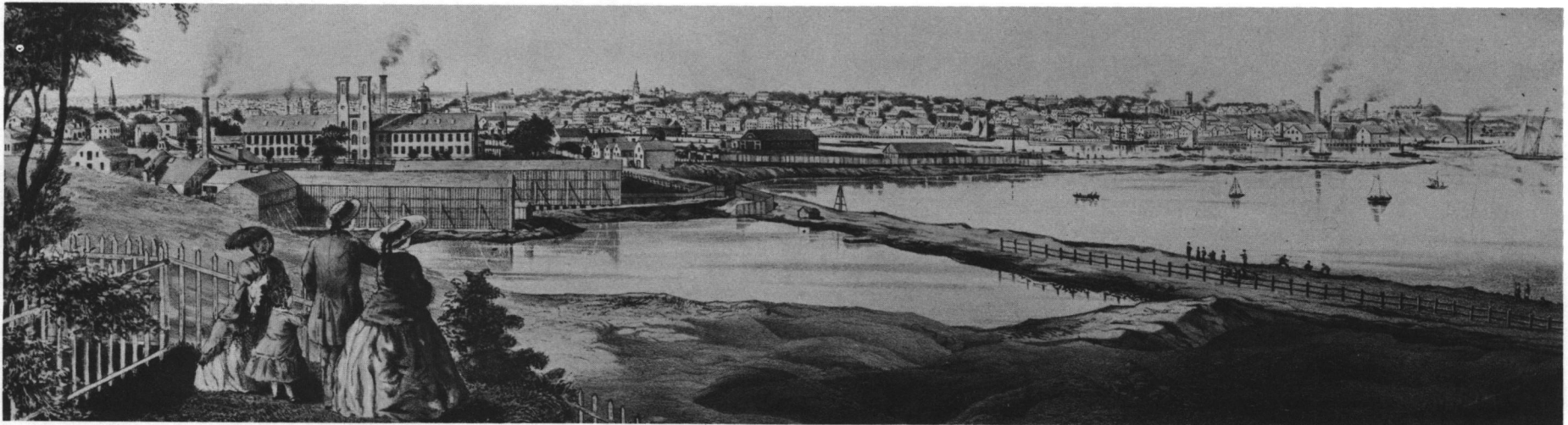


Figure 18: View of Providence from the south, 1858; watercolor by an unknown artist. Behind the bleachery is the twin-towered New England Screw Company (1852; demolished). This painting shows the same view as Figure 17 after a lapse of nine years. The causeway across Hawkins Cove on the right in both figures (now Allens Avenue) originally carried the tracks of the Providence and Stonington Railroad to its depot on a wharf behind the Providence Machine Company. The tracks had been relaid over a different route to the new Union Station on Exchange Place by 1848.

The subdivision of the Robinson tract in Dogtown was indicative of a trend that was affecting much of rural South Providence in the mid-nineteenth century. Into the 1840s, the vast majority of the area south of Dudley Street was composed of farms, the largest being the Burgess and Governor Fenner farms. Gradually, the Burgess and Fenner tracts were sold off in large parcels which were subsequently platted into house lots and streets by their various owners over the next sixty years. Although the subdivision process began about 1845, very little building occurred on the new plats until after the Civil War. Most of the lots were held for speculation in their unimproved state, although a few isolated houses were constructed, such as the 1848 Joseph R. Ballou House at 60 Bishop Street. The curiously irregular street pattern of South Providence today is the result of more than half a century of random platting by private developers on their small tracts of land. The labyrinthine street pattern that emerged in the late nineteenth century was improved somewhat in the early twentieth century when many dead ends were completed as through streets and numerous other streets were widened and straightened to assume their present courses.

Equally important to South Providence as this tradition of small-scale random subdivision was the sale of lots on the installment plan. This method of financing, known in the nineteenth century as conditional deeds, allowed the purchaser to pay for his lot in installments over a specified period of time. This arrangement, considered to be very liberal at the time, encouraged large numbers of the working class to buy property in South Providence.

Thus, while many of the area's Irish immigrants were banding together on the Robinson tract near the Willard Avenue slaughterhouses and forming Dogtown, other laborers were purchasing lots throughout South Providence primarily for speculation and future development although a few were actually settling on their isolated homesteads.

In summary, the population of South Providence before 1860 was centered around three nodes. Burgess Cove on the Pawtuxet Pike — an isolated village of independent tradesmen, prosperous suburbanites and the laboring class of Rotten Row — was connected to the East Side by a ferry and to the West Side by an irregular omnibus route over the Pawtuxet Pike (Eddy Street). The Irish laboring class clustered in the Dogtown immigrant settlement and worked in the nearby slaughterhouses, bleachery and metals industries. The development of the Pine Street area as part of the expanding West Side manifested itself in the handsome Yankee residential district on Pine and Friendship

streets, housing prosperous middle-class tradesmen and merchants. Of the three neighborhoods, only Pine Street remains today, its architectural and historical importance signified by its nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Elsewhere in South Providence, scattered houses had begun to appear along newly platted thoroughfares as the slow process of subdivision continued.

C. THE BOOM PERIOD: THE STREETCAR SUBURB (1865-1900)

With the end of the Civil War and the tremendous boom in industry and population that occurred in the following decades, Providence grew into an industrial metropolis. The population increased spectacularly from 50,000 in 1860 to 175,000 by 1900. Huge new residential areas were platted and developed. The metal products industries expanded until, by 1885, there were more than 100 iron and steel companies and over 160 shops involved in working precious metals in the Providence area. Improvements in public services enhanced the quality of urban life as telephone and telegraph services were established (1879), electricity inaugurated (1882), a sewerage plan initiated (1874) and water service improved. The most significant development for South Providence, however, was the advent of the first horse-drawn street



Figure 21: Mathew Lynch House (c. 1750-1770; moved, 1865 by Mathew Lynch); 120 Robinson Street.

railway line in 1865, which destroyed the traditional bounds of the pedestrian city and made it possible for workers to live beyond walking distance of their jobs. Partly because of this, the Irish, who were maturing into a major cultural and political force in the late nineteenth century, became concentrated in South Providence where the established Dogtown community with its Irish businesses, church and social institutions provided a supportive environment for the immigrants.

The large working-class population which resulted from further immigrant settlement and the continued availability of undeveloped tracts of land accessible by major transportation routes encouraged further industrial development. This growth stimulated settlement by prosperous merchants, executives and manufacturers employed in neighborhood industries or downtown, who settled along the broad new southern boulevards where they could build spacious homes located conveniently near their jobs. The burgeoning residential development of South Providence resulted in the establishment of churches and municipal services throughout the area. Private social-service institutions were attracted to the neighborhood by its expanding population and the large sites available with easy access to the central city. As a result of these factors, in the thirty years following the Civil War, South Providence



Figure 22: Peleg W. Gardiner House (c. 1815; moved between 1856 and 1875 from an unknown location); 348 Willard Avenue.

was transformed from a rural hinterland of isolated settlements into Providence's first major streetcar suburb.

1. Growth of the Irish Community

Much of the development of South Providence in the latter half of the nineteenth century was the result of the growth and prosperity of the Irish community. By 1868, the size of the Irish settlement in Dogtown was large enough so that the native, agrarian, Republican Party-dominated political structure of the town of Cranston, to which all of South Providence below Dudley Street belonged, became concerned about the increasing political power of the immigrants. Since the Irish overwhelmingly supported the Democratic Party, it was feared that eventually they might be strong enough to elect a Democrat as the town's only senator to the state legislature, as had already happened in Providence. To avoid this, Cranston ceded the South Providence and Washington Park sections back to the city of Providence in 1868, ensuring the continuation of Republican Party rule and representation in Cranston. This was only the first of a series of accessions to Providence made between 1868 and 1919 by surrounding towns in order to maintain Republican Party domination of the state senate in the face of expanding immigrant political power in the industrializing Providence metropolitan area.

In spite of their low economic and social status, the Irish had become a significant factor in the cultural life of Providence by the late 1830s. In 1839, the first St. Patrick's Day celebration was held in the City Hotel on Weybosset Street. In 1846, there were enough Irish to pack the Westminster Street Theater at an Irish Night performance by Samuel Lover, Victor Herbert's grandfather; while, in 1847, the community contributed generously to relief efforts during the potato famine in Ireland, although the leadership of the charity drive was in the hands of Providence's Yankee elite. As the century progressed, numerous social, charitable and burial organizations were founded to provide insurance, death benefits, unemployment relief and widows' benefits to the Irish community. The Ancient Order of Hibernians, still extant, was founded in Rhode Island about 1870 as a charitable organization, while the Sons of Irish Kings (a small elite social club) and the Friends of Ireland (a political organization interested in Irish emancipation in the old country) were other organizations prevalent in the nineteenth-century Irish community. Most of the burial and charitable societies disappeared in the twentieth century when the advent of the social security system and the increasing assimilation of the immigrants into American culture made them unnecessary,



Figure 23: View of Eddy Street from the Crary Street Gasometer; photograph, 1886. The Providence Machine Company (Eddy and Crary streets) is on the left; the New England Screw Company (demolished) as enlarged about 1880 is in the center; and the Rhode Island Bleachery (demolished) is on the right with the Providence Gas Company plant on the wharf in the distance.

while others became exclusively social clubs. The South Providence Temperance Cadets, an Irish military marching society, became widely respected in New England for their skill in the martial ceremonial arts. Between 1885 and 1892, the Irish readership of the Providence *Journal* was large enough to prompt the editor, Alfred Williams, to sponsor regular contributions to the paper from Ireland by young avant-garde writers of the Irish literary renaissance, such as William Butler Yeats, Katherine Tynan, Douglas Hyde and others. In the pages of the *Sunday Journal* between these years can be found

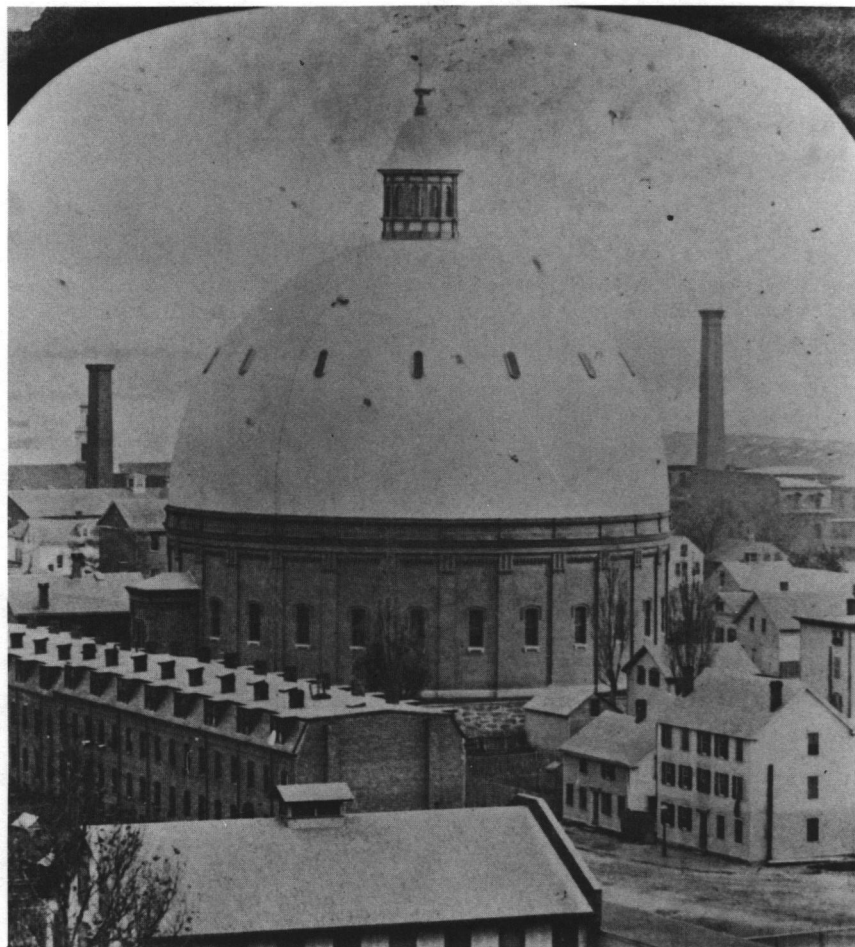


Figure 24: Crary Street Gasometer (1872; demolished, 1938); formerly between Crary and Borden streets; photograph, c. 1880.

early works of the Irish literary revival that was to culminate in the writings of James Joyce and Sean O'Casey a few decades later.

In the late nineteenth century, the Irish were becoming a well established and respectable portion of the Providence community, commanding considerable economic and political power. From 1870 to 1900, they expanded beyond the limits of the old Dogtown section into the surrounding areas of central South Providence.

2. Growth of Industry

The growth of the Irish community in South Providence was closely related to the industrial development of the neighborhood. As Providence's industries continued to grow in number and size and as downtown land became too valuable for large-scale industrial use as a result of the demand for commercial and office space, many industries began to locate on the fringes of the central city along the major traffic arteries. South Providence was attractive as an industrial location because of the availability of large plots of undeveloped land near downtown that were accessible by two major highways, Broad Street and Eddy Street. Its well developed streetcar lines and large population of laborers were further attractions. As a result, the water front along Eddy Street (Allens Avenue was still only a causeway traversing the tidal flats in the 1880s) had become completely industrial as far south as Dudley Street by 1855. In the succeeding decades, the established industries enlarged their plants and new factories were built further south along both sides of Eddy Street (Figure 23).

Perhaps the greatest monument to the increasing industrialization and urbanization of South Providence was the gargantuan gasometer (Figure 24) built by the Providence Gas Company in 1872 to store coal gas for the rapidly growing West Side. One of several that existed in Providence in the nineteenth century, the South Providence gasometer, a brick silo 142 feet in diameter and seven stories high with a metal-covered dome, stood at the corner of Crary and Hospital streets until it was demolished in 1938.

The 1853 American Buttwork Company, between Lockwood and Pearl streets, had long been the only large industry on Broad Street. It gained neighbors in the 1870s when the previously residential land between Broad and Pine streets became industrial. At this time, the area contained an odd variety of enterprises including a packing-box factory, a rubber-tubing plant, a paper-collar factory and a textile concern. By the end of the century, these indus-

tries had been almost entirely replaced by metal products firms and jewelry manufacturers. Small factories such as the still extant plant of the Luther Brothers Jewelry Company at Oxford and Harriet streets (Figure 25) were scattered throughout South Providence.

Other than resulting in the construction of new buildings, the increase in industry was important to the physical development of the area because it encouraged the economic class mixture that produced South Providence's rich architectural heritage. Not only was working-class settlement and housing promoted, but also executives, clerks and factory owners tended to settle near their jobs. This was particularly true in the Pine Street area which continued to house many small industrialists, such as Joseph P. Haskins whose packing-box factory on Summer Street was only a block from his Pine Street residence. New upper-income residential enclaves developed along the Broad and Eddy Street corridors and many isolated upper-class houses can be found spotted throughout more modest residential areas.

3. Suburban Development

In the 1860s, Eddy and Broad streets became fashionable suburban residential boulevards. Substantial houses were built by newly wealthy men prosperous enough to afford the luxury of a carriage and team to take them daily from their isolated homes into the city. Andrew Comstock, who pioneered by building his handsome home at 550 Broad Street in 1864, is typical. Coming to Providence in 1857 from Blackstone, Massachusetts, Andrew and his brother, Jonathan, founded a provisions business. Amassing great wealth during the Civil War, the brothers built similar houses on opposite corners of Broad Street and Comstock Avenue in 1864, near the firm's slaughterhouses on Willard Avenue. (Jonathan Comstock's house has since been razed.) Andrew subsequently became president of a huge meat-packing concern with plants in Hammond (Indiana), Omaha and Chicago and was a president of the Commercial Bank of Providence. Later in life he was a trustee of Brown University.

Israel B. Mason, who came to Providence from East Killingly, Connecticut, in 1850, entered the provisions business and also established a thriving firm with slaughterhouses on Willard Avenue. He built his first house nearby on the corner of Broad and Dartmouth streets in the late 1860s. This large house was soon a poor reflection of his vastly increased wealth, however, and in 1888 he moved it to 12 Dartmouth Street, where it stands today, and built an even finer house on its original site.

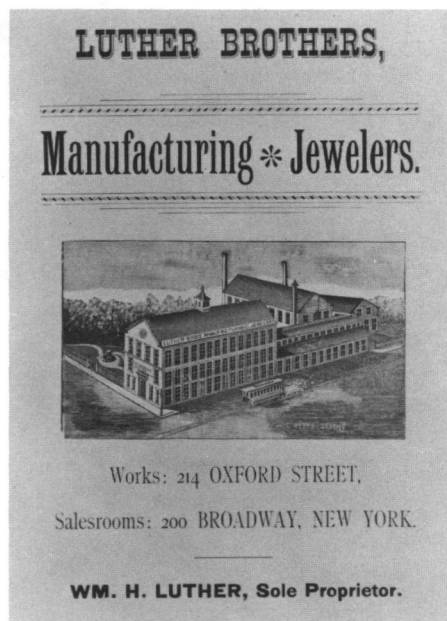


Figure 25: Luther Brothers Jewelry Factory (c. 1870); Oxford and Harriet streets; illustration, 1887.



Figure 26: B. B. Knight House (1868; demolished, 1916); formerly on Broad Street near Stewart Street; photograph, c. 1890.

Broad Street's foremost resident and promoter as a fashionable residential district, however, was B. B. Knight. Knight moved from Cranston to Providence in 1840 to work in the wholesale grocery business, but, in 1851, in partnership with his brother, Robert, he entered the textile industry. By the end of the Civil War, B. B. Knight was very wealthy and built a palatial mansion on Broad Street near Stewart Street (Figure 26). When it was completed in 1868, the house was one of the finest and most costly in the city. At his death in 1898, the Knight textile concern was the largest of its kind in the world; it subsequently became Fruit of the Loom Industries and moved to the south. His mansion was demolished in 1916.

The earlier houses on Broad and Eddy streets were chiefly Italianate in

style. The ornately bracketed Abram S. Goddard House at 970 Eddy Street; the elaborate William C. Rhodes House, now at 231 Rhodes Street (Figure 13); and the handsome Asahel Herrick House at 236 Rhodes Street are excellent examples near Eddy Street surviving from the 1860s. The much altered Samuel Gray House, now occupied by the Gallogly Funeral Home, is the only survivor of the Italianate period on Broad Street, although the magnificent brick-and-brownstone Cyrus Harris House (Figure 48) stood on the grounds of Saint Joseph's Hospital until 1962 when it was demolished to make way for the present building. An idea of the original appearance of these Italianate suburban homes of the 1850s and their landscaping can be gained from the c. 1866 photograph (Figure 27) showing the Thomas J. Hill House, home of the owner of the Providence Machine Company. The site of this estate on Lockwood



Figure 27: Lockwood Street looking east from Rhode Island Hospital; now part of the grounds of Rhode Island Hospital; photograph, c. 1866. The Thomas J. Hill Estate (c. 1854; demolished) is in the center with the original round, brick, 1863 Crary Street Gasometer (demolished) on the left.

Street is now occupied by Rhode Island Hospital.

By 1860, the Second Empire style had come into vogue and a number of large homes on Broad and Eddy streets were built in this mode. The Second Empire style had a particular appeal to the newly rich of the Civil War period, when many Americans travelled in Europe for the first time. In Paris the leaders of American fashion and design fell under the spell of Napoleon III's lavish regime and came away deeply impressed not only with the gay and elegant social life but also with the settings created to house the social spectacles of the French court. In the United States, architects sought to imitate the grandeur of the Paris Opera and the vastly enlarged Louvre Palace in buildings such as the Providence City Hall.

A modest carpenter's version of the Second Empire style was popularized in pattern books, in the press and in architectural publications for fashionable residences such as those being constructed in South Providence. The hallmark of the Second Empire style was the mansard roof which was most widely used from 1860 to 1880. Because of the extra living space they afforded on the top floor and the savings in real-estate taxes they offered over a full three-story house, however, mansard roofs continued to be built into the 1890s.



Figure 28: George A. Rickard House (left) (1872); 865 Eddy Street. E. A. Briggs House (right) (1872; demolished). Photograph, c. 1875.

The row of houses in the 800 block of Eddy Street (Figure 28), of which only the George A. Rickard House at 865 still stands, are typical large mansard-roofed houses of the post-Civil War era. The 1864 Andrew Comstock House at 550 Broad Street (Figure 29) was one of the first houses in the style built on Broad Street. Other important Second Empire houses surviving on Broad Street are the first Israel B. Mason House, now at 12 Dartmouth Street, and the Edwin A. Grout House, at 543 Broad Street.

Suburbanization accelerated in the late 1860s when the first horse-drawn street railway replaced the hourly omnibus stagecoach. It operated over practically the same route as the omnibus: down Eddy Street to Public, west to Ocean Street and from Ocean west along Thurbers Avenue to the car barn on Prairie Avenue. Ocean Street quickly became a main thoroughfare and was built up with small single-family cottages in the 1860s and early 1870s. The cottages were all of a similar type: unimposing, modest in scale and detail, one-and-a-half-story, steeply gabled boxes with a few small windows and a central door. These stark laborers' houses, such as 27 Gallup Street (Figure 30), were built in great numbers along the new streets in the 1860s and 1870s by conditional-deed lot holders of limited means.



Figure 30: Nancy Jencks House (c. 1875); 27 Gallup Street.

SECOND EMPIRE (1855-1890)



The Second Empire style became popular in Providence during the 1860s. It is based upon the French Renaissance Revival architecture of Emperor Napoleon III (1852-1870) of France, whose reign was known as the Second Empire to distinguish it from the period of Napoleon I. The luxury and opulence of Napoleon III's court was greatly admired throughout the world at the time, and French styles in clothes, furniture, manners and architecture were widely copied. Second Empire style buildings are easily identified because they always have a mansard roof—a roof with a concave or straight, steeply pitched, lower portion with dormer windows that actually forms another complete floor. The earlier type of Second Empire house is usually boxy and symmetrical with a small porch supported by square wooden posts, such as the Andrew Comstock House. The later types are often L-shaped with long porches and multiple bay windows. Most Second Empire houses have Italianate detailing with tall narrow windows with window caps and bracketed cornices.

- A: PALLADIAN WINDOW
- B: WINDOW CAP
- C: ROUND-HEAD DORMER
- D: MANSARD ROOF
- E: BRACKETED CORNICE
- F: WINDOW HOOD
- G: BRACKETED PORCH WITH PANELED POSTS
- H: THREE-BAY FACADE WITH CENTER HALL PLAN

Figure 29: Second Empire Style Sheet: Andrew Comstock House (1864); 550 Broad Street.

Ocean Street was a sparsely settled tree-lined country lane in 1860, and its subsequent history is typical of street development in South Providence. In 1868 when Providence re-acquired South Providence from Cranston, a massive campaign of improvements to Ocean Street was begun including widening, grading and laying water and sewer pipes. During this process all of the old trees were lost. More importantly, it was necessary to temporarily relocate the horsecar line tracks which were subsequently relaid along Eddy Street, the former Pawtuxet Turnpike, a few blocks to the east. With the exception of the William Field House on Seymour Street and the settlement at Burgess Cove, only a few large but isolated houses and the new 1867 Christ Episcopal Church (Figure 31) stood on Eddy Street in 1868. The horsecar line stimulated new construction there to such an extent that when the improvements to Ocean Street were completed the horsecar company refused to relay their tracks on Ocean Street as had originally been intended. After several years, the Ocean Street residents themselves subscribed enough money to subsidize the cost of relaying the rails and they again had streetcar service. About 1875, another horsecar line was extended down Prairie Avenue, spurring development in that area, and, in 1879, a line was constructed on Broad Street. As a result, with the advent of the horsecar lines, the spacious, upper-middle-class suburban residences that had been constructed in the 1850s and 1860s when South Providence was still rural found themselves increasingly surrounded by working-class homes (Figure 32).

The population of Providence doubled to 104,857 between 1860 and 1880 as a result of immigration and industrialization. South Providence grew

into a populous residential area as the lots along the horsecar lines were built up and the process of infilling on the side streets between the Prairie Avenue, Ocean Street and Eddy Street lines proceeded steadily. The previously rural suburb assumed the appearance of an urban neighborhood as closely built rows of substantial new houses gradually filled the vacant land.

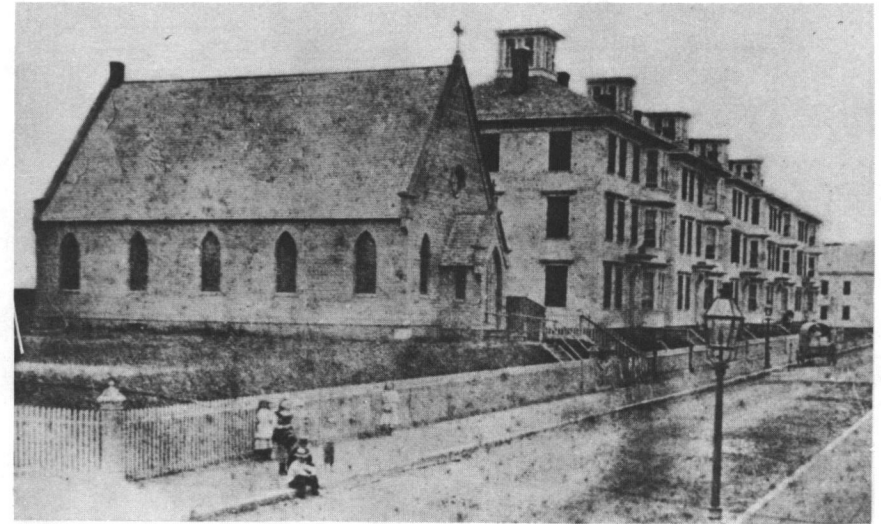


Figure 31: The first building for Christ Episcopal Church (1867; removed to another site in 1887 and subsequently demolished); formerly at Oxford and Eddy streets; photograph, c. 1880.

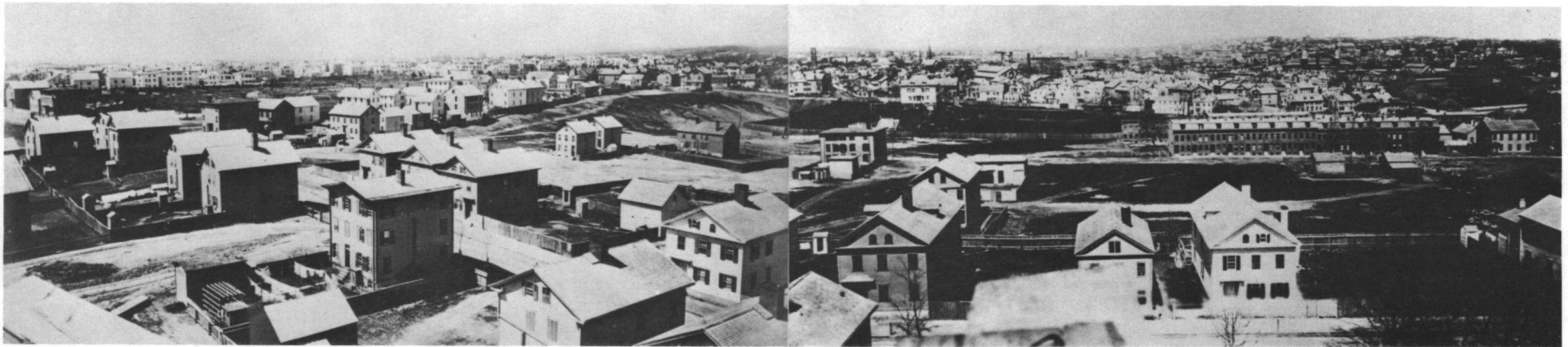


Figure 32: View of upper South Providence looking north and west from Rhode Island Hospital (all buildings demolished); photograph, c. 1866. The vacant land at the left is part of the West Burial Ground with Lockwood Street in the foreground.

In the late 1870s and 1880s, South Providence became a rental community of primarily two-family houses. The most characteristic building type of the period was the frame, two-and-a-half-story, end-gable, three-bay, side-hall-plan, two-family house. It was repeated in endless variations and overlaid with architectural motifs varying from the unornamented, as at 536-538 Prairie Avenue (Figure 33), to the elaborately trimmed, as at 437 Public Street (Figure 34). The bracketed, Italianate style, two-family house, however, such as 506 Public Street (Figure 35), was the most widely built type. Frequently, a mansard roof was substituted for the end gable on bracketed houses in order to be more fashionable and to obtain another floor of living space, as at 152 Pearl Street (Figure 36). Single-family houses, though built less often, were significantly more pretentious than the humble cottages of the 1860s and early 1870s. South Providence was increasingly becoming a community of middle-class, single-family home owners and working-class tenants. With the rising demand for rental property, the more pernicious side effects of urbanization began to appear as large lots were subdivided and back lots were built up. This crowding became particularly apparent adjacent to the major streetcar lines where the

demand for housing was greatest.

The compact two-family houses of the 1870s and early 1880s were blown up in scale in the late 1880s and 1890s to greater bulk and height and capped with steep, cross-gabled roofs. Verandas and towers were sometimes added and paneling, bosses and fancy shingling became standard features as the previous styles gave way to the more picturesque Queen Anne style (Figure 37), although the two-and-a-half-story, end-gable form inherited from the Greek Revival remained the basic type. The great impetus for this extravagant change of scale was the universal use of balloon framing, which made construction less expensive; the sudden availability in the East of vast quantities of cheap western lumber, as a result of the completion and consolidation of the transcontinental railway network; a large, low-paid, skilled labor force; and the availability of inexpensive, mass-produced architectural ornament.

Never before or again could so much house be built for so little money. South Providence, built-up during the height of this era, acquired an architectural legacy of extravagantly scaled and lavishly detailed buildings. It is



Figure 33: Adam Falconer House (c.1885); 536-538 Prairie Avenue.

Figure 34: Walter H. Johnson House (1884); 437 Public Street.

Figure 35: Ellery W. Price House (1870); 506 Public Street.

Figure 36: Thomas Little House (c. 1882); 152 Pearl Street.

the construction of this period that dominates the visual environment and gives the neighborhood its architecturally rich, late-nineteenth-century character.

The ownership of rental property was one of the most common forms of investment in the nineteenth century. Tax records reveal that most of the property owners in South Providence had Anglo-Saxon names. Nevertheless, some of the dwellings were owned by Irishmen. Property ownership was the only means of enfranchisement for local elections in Providence until 1928, and this factor probably stimulated real-estate investment by the more prosperous Irish. The majority of the Irish, however, neither had the financial means nor the cultural tradition of home ownership and remained tenants. Frequently, the owner of a multi-family building occupied one of the units and the others were rented to members of his family. It was also common



Figure 37: James H. Hagan House (1891); 728-730 Broad Street.

for a widow to invest in a multi-unit building and live off the income or operate it as a boarding house, since jobs for women outside of domestic service and the factory were rare in the nineteenth century.

Although many of the two-family houses were built in identical groups by a single landlord, it was unusual for a single owner to have more than three buildings in the 1880s. In the later eighties and early nineties, this pattern of small-scale, multiple-building ownership continued to influence the development of South Providence but was supplemented by the appearance of the large-scale speculative subdivision. Offering a completed house on a lot for a single price, this system had many advantages over the more complex direct owner-contractor relationship under which the would-be homeowner had to buy his lot, arrange for utilities, separately contract with all of the building trades required to erect the building and probably obtain a succession of short-term loans to finance the work.

Speculative building was most common in the single-family home market. As early as 1888, Gladstone Street (Figure 38) was lined with twenty-one almost identically planned, speculative houses, each in a slightly varied archi-



Figure 38: Powder House Plat Houses (c. 1888); Gladstone Street.

■ tectural motif. Thomas Ray, the East Providence contractor who built these houses, was among the first to introduce this type of building into South Providence. Ray's projects differed from earlier tract housing in that he sold his houses on the monthly payment plan rather than for a lump sum. This method of financing made new homes easily affordable to middle-class purchasers. Similar clusters of nineteenth-century tract housing can be found on Trask and Public streets and Potters Avenue. In many ways, these speculator-built homes were Providence's first modern subdivisions.

While the vast majority of South Providence was being built up with working-class, single- and two-family houses, the long-vacant area between Prairie Avenue and Broad Street was developing along different lines. Broad Street remained a largely unimproved country road south of Chester Avenue until 1873 when it was widened and graded into a major thoroughfare. Immediately, a real-estate boom occurred and it was widely believed that Broad Street would become the rival of the city's other fashionable boulevards, particularly Broadway. The boom quickly collapsed, however, partly as a result of the Panic of 1873, and comparatively little was built on Broad Street south of Lockwood Street until the 1880s. The few large houses that had been built



■ Figure 39: Wesleyan Avenue looking east from Broad Street; photograph, 1896. The Samuel B. Darling House (number 53) is on the left.

in the 1860s gradually gained neighbors as the Providence economy slowly recovered from the 1873 recession. As late as 1892, however, the land around Lillian Avenue was still an open pasture known as "The Plains" where travelling circuses would set up their tents for summer visits.

Beginning in the mid-1870s, the short streets to the east of Broad Street from Blackstone Street to Wesleyan Avenue were developed as an upper-class residential area. Comstock, Wesleyan and Harvard avenues were platted on the site of the stockyards of the former Willard Avenue slaughterhouses (relocated to Pawtucket in 1868), and, within a few years, these streets were lined with the large residences of wealthy and prominent men of affairs. Harvard Avenue was the first of these streets to be settled. The first houses, 39-41, 50 and 57 Harvard, were built in the long-popular Second Empire style for three prosperous West Side merchants in 1875. The architecture of these houses lent an imposing formality and dignity to the neighborhood that distinguished it from the more modest surrounding residential areas. Comstock and Wesleyan avenues were settled in the 1880s by other successful businessmen. For example, in 1885, Samuel B. Darling, a self-made captain of industry in precision tool manufacturing and a partner in Brown and Sharpe, moved from Prospect Street on the East Side to Wesleyan Avenue, in spite of its proximity to the raucous Dogtown Irish community. His Stick Style house still stands at number 53 (Figure 39).

When the first horsecar line was opened on Broad Street in 1879, the adjacent land became attractive for more intensive development. Because of the high status value of the neighborhood, much of the real estate along Broad Street was held at high prices; as a result, construction in the 1880s and 1890s was limited mostly to middle- and upper-class, single-family housing. After the trolley line was electrified in 1892, allowing greater speed, middle-class home owners began to settle in greater numbers in the newly developing neighborhoods south of Chester Avenue. Some of the new streets were built by contractor-developers as speculative subdivisions with neat rows of similar, closely spaced, one-and-a-half-story cottages, such as those on Glenham and Public streets and Reynolds and Potters avenues; while on other streets, such as Lillian Avenue, larger, individually designed, single-family homes predominate.

By the mid-1880s, the favored architectural style was the Queen Anne followed a decade later by the Colonial Revival. The Queen Anne style strove to produce a picturesque and visually arresting composition by using a startling variety of geometric shapes, materials, surface textures and designs. Complex roof lines with towers, turrets and multiple gables were a hallmark of the style.

Improvements in woodworking machinery made factory-produced, wooden ornaments available at a reasonable cost and houses of this period often have elaborate spindle-work porches and patterned gable trim. In its simplest form, the Queen Anne style could be reduced to a gabled, corner-towered, one-and-a-half-story cottage with a spindle-work porch, such as 7 Lillian Avenue (Figure 40). Upper-class residences in the style were rambling, architect-designed compositions, such as the palatial, second Israel B. Mason House (1888) at 571 Broad Street (Figure 41), now listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The popularization of the Colonial Revival style coincided with the last flowering of the Queen Anne. Because it occurred late in the development of South Providence, Colonial Revival style buildings are relatively rare. The 1897 Jethro Hawes House at 859 Broad Street (Figure 42) is one of the finest examples in the neighborhood. This large, boxy, hip-roofed, clapboarded house displays some excellent Colonial-inspired features, such as the semi-circular portico with ramped railings and the large Palladian windows. Other examples are 21 Wesleyan Avenue and 36-38 Marlborough Avenue. There are also



Figure 40: Charles Griffin House (1901); 7 Lillian Avenue.



Figure 43: Charles Atwood House (1897); 570-572 Broad Street.

numerous rambling and towered late Queen Anne houses with Colonial details – dentil cornices, classical porch columns, ramped railings and doors with side lights – such as 570-72 Broad Street (Figure 43).

4. Institutional Development

The growth of the Irish community and the maturing of South Providence as a populous residential area resulted in the construction of numerous religious and institutional buildings in the late nineteenth century.

By 1868, the Catholic congregation of Saint Bernard's had outgrown their first building and constructed a larger, brick, High Victorian Gothic style church at the corner of Oxford Street and Prairie Avenue. The new church was dedicated to Saint Michael and remained the center of Irish community life in South Providence until the early twentieth century when the first portion of the present Saint Michael's building was occupied. It continued in use as a parish recreation hall until it burned in 1969.

At the same time that the growth of the Irish community in Dogtown was requiring a new church, the predominantly Yankee suburban community

QUEEN ANNE (1875-1910)



- A: LOGGIA
- B: PANELING
- C: DORMER
- D: CORBELLED CHIMNEY CAP
- E: GABLE
- F: PINNACLE
- G: TURRET
- H: BAY WINDOW
- I: SLATE CLADDING

The revival of Tudor medieval domestic architecture in the late nineteenth century by English architects such as Richard Norman Shaw gave rise to an eclectic style that was misnamed Queen Anne. English Queen Anne architecture combined a variety of materials—brick, stone and colored slate—with a wealth of decorative detail to create richly colored and textured buildings that bore some resemblance to the small manor houses of sixteenth-century England. American Queen Anne buildings are characterized by their complex massing and the great variety of cladding materials used on a single building. Turrets, bay windows, porches, dormers and gables were often covered with differently shaped fancy shingles and applied wood and metal ornament. In very expensive buildings, such as the Israel B. Mason House, brick, stone and slate might be used for wall cladding in place of the usual clapboards and wood shingles of more modest dwellings like the Hagan House. The sunburst and sunflower were among the most popular Queen Anne decorative motifs, and wooden panels carved in these designs can be found on many houses of this period. Spindle work, used for porches and gable ornaments, was another hallmark of the style.



Figure 41: Queen Anne Style Sheet: Israel B. Mason House (1888); 571 Broad Street. James H. Hagan House (1891); 726 Broad Street.

COLONIAL REVIVAL (1895-1930)



The Colonial Revival style grew out of a desire on the part of many young architects in the late nineteenth century to create an architectural style based on America's past, rather than Europe's. After the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876, American Georgian architectural details began to be used with greater frequency until finally the Colonial Revival style emerged about 1890. This style eclectically combined colonial architectural forms such as gambrel roofs, Federal style doors with side lights, wide classical porches and Palladian windows into large comfortable houses bearing only a remote resemblance to their eighteenth-century counterparts. In more formal houses, high hipped roofs with towering chimney stacks and large dormers were used, such as on the Jethro Hawes House. Although the Colonial Revival tended to simplify the mass of the house into a box, Victorian features such as bay windows and turrets were still occasionally incorporated. About 1910, the eclectic Colonial Revival house with its large front porch and hybrid detail gave way to more-or-less correct copies of American eighteenth-century houses, but there are no examples of this later neo-Georgian or Georgian Revival style in South Providence.

- A: CLASSICAL PORTICO
- B: PALLADIAN TYPE WINDOW
- C: CLASSICAL ENTABLATURE
- D: HIPPED ROOF
- E: CRESTING
- F: HIPPED DORMER
- G: BAY WINDOW
- H: URN FINIAL
- I: DOOR WITH SIDE LIGHTS
- J: RAMPED BALUSTRADE

Figure 42: Colonial Revival Style Sheet: Jethro Hawes House (1897); 859 Broad Street.

at Burgess Cove and along Eddy Street had organized Christ Episcopal Church. In 1867, they built their first chapel on the corner of Oxford and Eddy streets (Figure 31). By 1888, the congregation, though not greatly increased in size, was prosperous enough to erect the present brick-and-brownstone Victorian Gothic church. This building, which is still used by the congregation, is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places (Figure 44).

Although a few other churches were established in South Providence in the late nineteenth century, the overwhelmingly Irish Catholic population of much of the area limited the need for a great number of other religious denom-



Figure 44: The second building for Christ Episcopal Church (1888); 909 Eddy Street; rendering by William R. Walker and Son, architects, c. 1888.

inations. Most of the Protestant churches were located in northern South Providence and on upper Broad Street, where the largest non-Catholic populations existed. The finest of these was the Union Congregational Church (Figure 45), constructed near Broad and Stewart streets in 1877 to serve the Yankees who were settling in the area. It was demolished in 1928 after the congregation merged with Plymouth Congregational Church on southern Broad Street.

The only other nineteenth-century Protestant church buildings which survive today in South Providence are: the 1889 First Swedish Baptist Church at 73 Plain Street (now Henry's Supermarket); the 1888 St. Paul's Methodist



Figure 45: Union Congregational Church (1877; demolished, 1928); formerly on Broad Street near Stewart Street; photograph, 1886.

Episcopal Church at Prairie and Potters avenues (now greatly altered); and the 1893 People's Evangelical Church at 35 Ashmont Street (Figure 46).

In addition to churches, some of the city's most important institutions located in South Providence in the late nineteenth century. In 1863, a private group acquired the portion of the old Hospital Lands tract (containing the old Marine Hospital) which included most of the land between Plain and Eddy streets from Dudley Street north almost to Lockwood Street. Shortly afterwards, utilizing bequests from Moses Brown Ives and Thomas Poynton Ives as well as numerous other gifts and subscriptions, this group initiated the construction of a large brick-and-stone hospital to provide free medical care for the poor. Up to this time there were only three hospitals in the city: Butler Hospital for the Insane (1847); the Dexter Asylum (1830) for the indigent, insane and sick; and the Marine Hospital (1798), used primarily for contagious diseases. Most of the population, rich and poor alike, were treated at home by overworked, private doctors. The medical profession in Providence had long advocated the building of a hospital to centralize medical care for the poor. Attempts to found a hospital in 1851 had failed as a result of lack of civic sup-



Figure 46: People's Evangelical Church (1893); 35 Ashmont Street.

port. The advent of the Civil War and the terrible suffering inflicted on soldiers (including the scions of prominent Providence families such as the Ives) by the lack of adequate medical facilities made the building of hospitals a popular national cause. The main building of Rhode Island Hospital (demolished) was first occupied in 1868 (Figure 47), although the interior was only half finished. The remaining portion of the building was completed and occupied in 1874 when increasing use made more space necessary. The original building together with several small structures that had been constructed on the grounds (most notably the 1891 Royal C. Taft Outpatient Building) adequately met the needs of the community until 1900. At this time, the hospital was caring for several hundred people a day, of which about 80 per cent were from Providence and 70 per cent were being treated free of charge with the rest paying only nominal fees.

Although Rhode Island Hospital provided free medical care for all re-

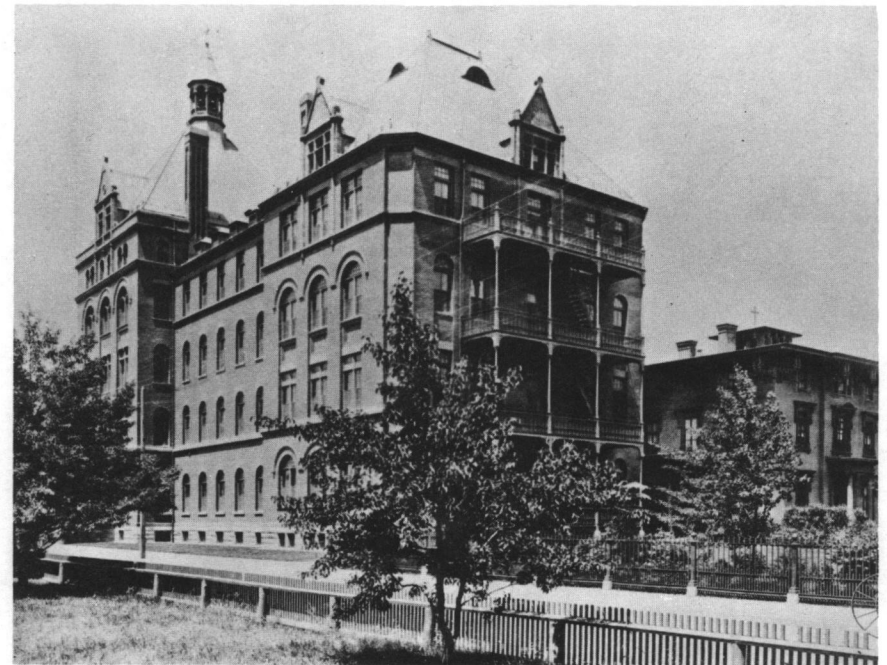


Figure 48: Saint Joseph's Hospital (1863-1895; demolished, 1962); formerly on Broad Street between Peace and Plenty streets; photograph, 1896. The 1895 addition by William R. Walker and Son is on the left and the 1863 Cyrus Harris House by Perez Mason is on the right.

regardless of race, color or creed, the Catholic Diocese opened a hospital in Providence to better serve the city's Catholic population. In 1891, Bishop Matthew Harkins bought the 1863 Cyrus Harris Estate at Broad and Plenty streets and started a hospital in the three-story, brick mansion on the site. This was the genesis of Saint Joseph's Hospital, which opened in the remodelled house in 1892. Almost immediately more space was needed, and, in 1895, a five-story addition was added as the first wing of a planned much larger structure (Figure 48). The new building was financed with contributions from the entire city including donations by many members of Providence's Yankee elite. It was staffed by nuns from the order of the Sisters of Saint Francis in Philadelphia. Although the hospital was open to all, regardless of race or religion, it was at first principally patronized by members of the city's large Irish and Italian Catholic populations. In the twentieth century, the hospital

grew into a major regional institution widely used by all of the population. In 1962 the old Harris mansion and portions of the 1895 building were demolished to make way for the present structure.

Another nineteenth-century institution is the Home for Aged Men which still functions today. The Home had been established in 1874 at 64 Point Street to provide a haven for indigent men over sixty years of age of American birth. Henry J. Steere, owner of the Wanskuck Mills and president of the Home, donated a larger house at 63 Chestnut Street in 1883. This building could only accommodate fifteen men, however, and there was a constant need for more space. When Steere died in 1889, he left \$150,000 to construct a new building, the present structure, which was completed on Broad Street in 1895 (Figure 49). It was enlarged several times and in 1908 was opened to



Figure 47: Rhode Island Hospital, east elevation (1864-1868; demolished, 1956); formerly on the grounds of Rhode Island Hospital on Eddy Street; photograph, 1886.

aged couples. The institution, now known as Steere House, currently has about seventy residents.

A large number of city buildings had been constructed in South Providence by 1890 as the demand for municipal services increased. Several public schools were built after 1868 when Providence re-acquired the portion of South Providence below Dudley Street from Cranston. Prior to this, many of the neighborhood youth attended small private schools, such as the one operated by Mrs. Joseph Grafton in her still extant home on the southeast corner of Prairie Avenue and Colfax Street. Of the once numerous wooden schoolhouses, which were mostly primary and elementary schools, the only surviving building (now greatly altered for use as a Masons' lodge) is at 883 Eddy Street. A simple, two-story, four-room, frame building that originally had a belfry, it is typical of a large number of similar structures constructed throughout the city in the 1870s and 1880s. Of the five larger brick schoolhouses, which were mostly grammar schools such as the now demolished 1877 Oxford Street Grammar School (Figure 50), only one remains today. The brownstone-trimmed Beacon Avenue School (Figure 51), built in the mid-1880s, is an excellent example of Romanesque Revival architecture. Unfortunately, the building, one of the finest of its kind in the city, stands

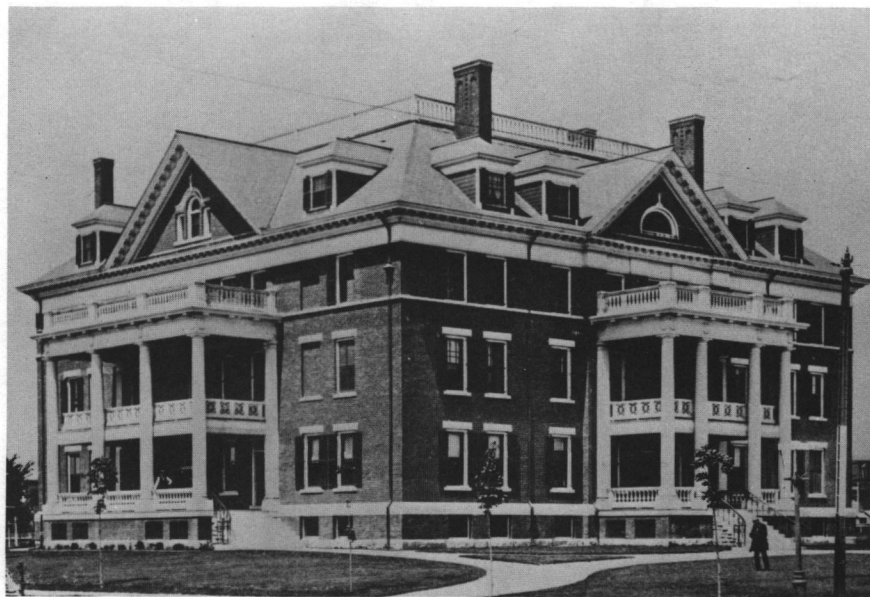


Figure 49: Home for Aged Men (1895); 807 Broad Street; photograph, 1896.

abandoned and derelict on the corner of Frank Street and Beacon Avenue. Today only the early twentieth-century Public Street Grammar School remains in use.

The police and fire departments were among the most important nineteenth-century municipal services. As South Providence matured and became more populous, substantial buildings were constructed to house these functions. The closely built rows of wooden houses made fire one of the most dreaded realities of nineteenth-century urban life. To combat this ever present danger, fire companies were established throughout South Providence. Although these companies were salaried by the city, which had established a paid fire department in 1854, they were often supplied with equipment by



Figure 50: Oxford Street Grammar School (1877; demolished); formerly on Oxford Street at Tennyson Lane; photograph, 1886.

- prominent local residents. For example, the William H. Luther Hook and Ladder Company Number Five, the only surviving nineteenth-century firehouse in South Providence, was endowed in 1885 by Luther, a jewelry manufacturer on Oxford Street. This firehouse at Burnside and Public streets (Figure 52) was most recently used as the Edna Fraser Memorial Employment Center. Another station, built in the early twentieth century at Oxford and Burnside streets for the Washington Steam Fire Engine Company Number Ten which had occupied the site since 1872, today houses the South Providence substation of the police department.

The police force in Providence prior to 1864 consisted of the old "Town Watch," a loosely organized holdover from Colonial times. In 1864, with the population approaching 55,000, this system was no longer adequate and a professional police force was instituted. By 1885, South Providence was populous enough to warrant its own police station, the Fifth District Police Headquarters, which was housed in the substantial, three-story, brick-and-granite building at 111 Plain Street that is now used for offices.

The city ward room, built at 103 Beacon Avenue about 1888, remains as a reminder of the role South Providence played in local politics in the nine-



Figure 51: Beacon Avenue School (c. 1885); Beacon Avenue and Frank Street.

teenth century. The building was used as a polling place and for political gatherings. Earlier wardrooms had existed in Temperance Hall at Eddy Street and Potters Avenue (demolished) and in Freedom Hall (demolished) at Eddy and Oxford streets. Wardrooms were important in the life of communities like South Providence where masses of impoverished immigrants looked to ward bosses to procure aid and assistance in dealing with a city government in which they felt powerless. Although today few of these structures remain, at one time they could be found throughout the city, especially in working-class immigrant neighborhoods.

5. South Providence at the Turn of the Century

South Providence emerged in the early twentieth century as a vibrant and diverse neighborhood with a buildingscape as varied as the street pattern itself (Figure 53). Developed on a piecemeal basis over a period of fifty years, a typical block afforded a rich mix of architectural styles as a result of its largely single-lot development pattern. An end-gabled Greek Revival cheek by jowl with a flat-roofed Italianate, a mansard Second Empire or a towered Queen Anne lent a visually appealing variety to the streetscapes in the older parts of the area. On other streets, where all of the development had oc-



Figure 52: William H. Luther Hook and Ladder Company Number Five (1885); 356 Public Street.

curred at the same time, the diversity could still be surprising if the developer was sensitive and varied the architectural treatment of the buildings.

Mixed with the houses were the small neighborhood stores made necessary by the realities of home food storage and preparation in the pre-refrigeration period. Firehouses, churches, schools, lodge halls of fraternal and social organizations, livery stables and factories were also integrated into the neighborhood, with the result that relatively few blocks at the turn of the century contained only houses. Most of the streets were lined with trees which visually unified the diverse blockscapes, absorbed some of the noise, kept down the dust from the unpaved streets and added a parklike quality to sections of the densely built-up neighborhood. Although most of the non-residential buildings and trees have been lost, it is important to realize that the streets of South

Providence had a very different ambience in 1900 when they bustled with the activity generated by the great variety of land uses contained in the neighborhood.

D. MATURITY: THE URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD (1900-1950)

By 1900, Providence had grown into a city of 198,635 people, of which over one-third had been born abroad. The Irish and the Italians accounted for almost half of the foreign-born population with the Russian and Eastern European Jews being the next largest group. Most of the immigrants were members of the city's large industrial laboring class and resided in inner-city neighborhoods with their countrymen. Of the working-class residential zones that encircled the downtown at the beginning of the twentieth century, South Provi-



Figure 53: View of South Providence looking north from Public Street; photograph, c. 1885. In the background are Rhode Island Hospital (demolished) and the Cray Street Gasometer (demolished) with the still extant Herrick House (center right, with cupola) and the large Smith House (to the left, with the cross-gable roof) standing on Rhodes Street.

dence was one of the most pleasant and attractive.

The period from 1900 to 1950 witnessed the completion of the neighborhood when new development filled vacant lands and construction and population growth gradually tapered off. It was a period of stability as social institutions matured and a second generation of residents developed an active community life. These five decades represent the comfortable middle years between South Providence's founding period and its precipitous decline after 1950.

1. Industrial Expansion

The continued industrial growth of Providence in the early twentieth century, particularly in the metal-products industry, was reflected in the proliferation of factories in South Providence. By 1915 much of Eddy Street and all of Allens Avenue were industrial. Eddy Street as far as Public Street was lined with factories including the still extant plants of the Seamless Wire Company at Public Street, the Gutta Percha Paint Company at Dudley Street and older concerns that have since been razed, such as the New England Screw Company. Throughout South Providence were dispersed metal-products and jewelry factories, traditionally the dominant industries in the area and a major component of the Providence economy. Many were small operations, located in residential neighborhoods, such as the numerous loft-type businesses on Thurbers Avenue or the surviving Luther Brothers Jewelry Company at Harriet and Oxford streets (Figure 25). Some were large complexes, like the Metal Products Company at Thurbers Avenue and Eddy Street.

Other firms crowded the old industrial enclave between Pine and Broad streets where numerous loft buildings offered small workshops for rent. The buildings occupied by many of the older industries of the 1850 to 1880 period were taken over by the new jewelry and metal-products companies; the J. P. Haskins Box Factory at Summer and Meadow streets, for example, became the United Wire Supply Company. The Summer and Stewart Street area, which was an outpost of the jewelry industry in 1870, had become an extension of the main downtown center of manufacturing by the early 1900s.

2. Ethnic Diversification

The Irish, who remained the dominant group in South Providence for the first five decades of the twentieth century, had gained a degree of social

acceptance and considerable political power in Providence by 1900. Several public officials and politicians of the twentieth century were sons of South Providence. In addition to Mayor Patrick McCarthy (1907-1909), men prominent in political affairs in more recent times have included Edmund Flynn, Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court; his brother, William, who was Governor from 1923 to 1925; and former Lieutenant Governor Edward P. Gallogly. Leaders in church affairs, such as Bishop Daniel P. Reilly, also grew up in the neighborhood.

The prominence and vitality of the Irish community was manifested in the growth of Saint Michael's Church. Long the center of community life, Saint Michael's grew into a complex of imposing buildings providing a full range of social services in the twentieth century. The new church (Figure 54), begun in 1891 and completed in 1915, was, with the exception of the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul, the most imposing and elaborate Irish church in the city. Around it a rectory (1925), a convent (1929) and a sixteen-room school (1925) were built. Upon completion of the new building, the old 1868 church on Prairie Avenue was converted into a parish recreation hall (destroyed by fire in 1969). The adjacent 1861 Saint Aloysius Orphans' Asylum, since razed, functioned as an orphanage and later as part of Saint Michael's parochial school. The parish remained one of the wealthiest and largest Catholic parishes in New England up through the 1950s with over 6,000 registered families. The importance of Saint Michael's role in the cultural life of the community was recognized in 1930 when the new South Providence branch of the Providence Public Library was built on Prairie Avenue adjacent to the church rectory. The entire complex has now been placed in the National Register of Historic Places.

As the community entered its second and third generations, some of the more prosperous Irish began to move to the newer suburbs of Washington Park and Edgewood. For many years, however, homes in South Providence that became vacant were occupied by other Irish — either from abroad or from other sections of the city. The Irish presence in South Providence, although waning, remained strong until the 1960s.

The history of South Providence in the first five decades of this century was also influenced by the growth and development of the Jewish community. The first recorded Jewish resident of Providence was Solomon Pareira, a Dutch immigrant tailor who settled on Weybosset Neck in 1838. The Jewish community on the West Side grew slowly but, in 1849, was large enough to pur-

chase a small plot of land near the New London Turnpike for use as a cemetery. In 1854, the Congregation of the Sons of Israel was founded as the first synagogue in Providence in a rented space downtown. The growth of the small community foundered during the Panic of 1857, however, and most of the settlers, including Pareira, moved away. As late as 1865, the Jewish community in Providence was only half as large as it had been in 1855, and, in 1860, there were only eighteen Jewish men in the city. After the Civil War, the population began to expand once more as new immigrants, mostly from Austria and other German-speaking countries, slowly drifted to Providence. By 1873, among the forty or fifty Jewish families in the city were the "Deutschen," a socially, economically and politically elite group of German-speaking Reform Jews who subsequently formed the aristocracy of the Jewish community. With the advent of the pogroms, in which Jews were persecuted and killed, in Russia in 1881 and subsequently in Romania and Poland, Eastern European Jewish immigrants flocked to New England, and by 1901 there were 3,500 Jews in Providence. From 1901 to 1911 the Jewish population increased to over 12,000.

While most of the new immigrants settled on Constitution Hill on the East Side and in the adjacent Smith Hill area, a sizable Jewish settlement had been founded in South Providence by 1900. The first Jewish settlers moved into the old Irish Dogtown section centered around Robinson Street and Prairie and Willard avenues, as the increasingly prosperous Irish moved to newer and better houses elsewhere in South Providence. Among the first Jewish residents were Isaac Marks, a tailor who moved to 14 Robinson Street in 1883, and Davie Frank, an auctioneer who settled at 81 Prairie Avenue in 1889. As the years passed, more Jews moved to Dogtown until, by 1920, its transformation from an Irish to a Jewish neighborhood was nearly complete. According to a 1910 survey, the South Providence Jews were mostly peddlers and merchants with businesses located on Willard and Prairie avenues and were somewhat more prosperous than their Constitution Hill and Smith Hill counterparts: the standard of living was higher, the houses newer and the weekly incomes more substantial than in other Jewish neighborhoods of the period.

The Jewish community underwent a transformation after 1875 as the need to provide social services for a large, impoverished immigrant population became acute. The Deutschen, because of their comfortable circumstances, had never had much need for mutual-aid societies or charitable organizations and few had been founded prior to 1877. Although a chapter of B'nai B'rith had been established in 1870 for charitable and benevolent purposes, it was not until 1877 when the Montefiore Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association

was founded that Hebrew social institutions really began to proliferate. The Montefiore Ladies Association, supplemented by the Young Ladies Hebrew Aid Society in 1894, managed the community's charitable and social service

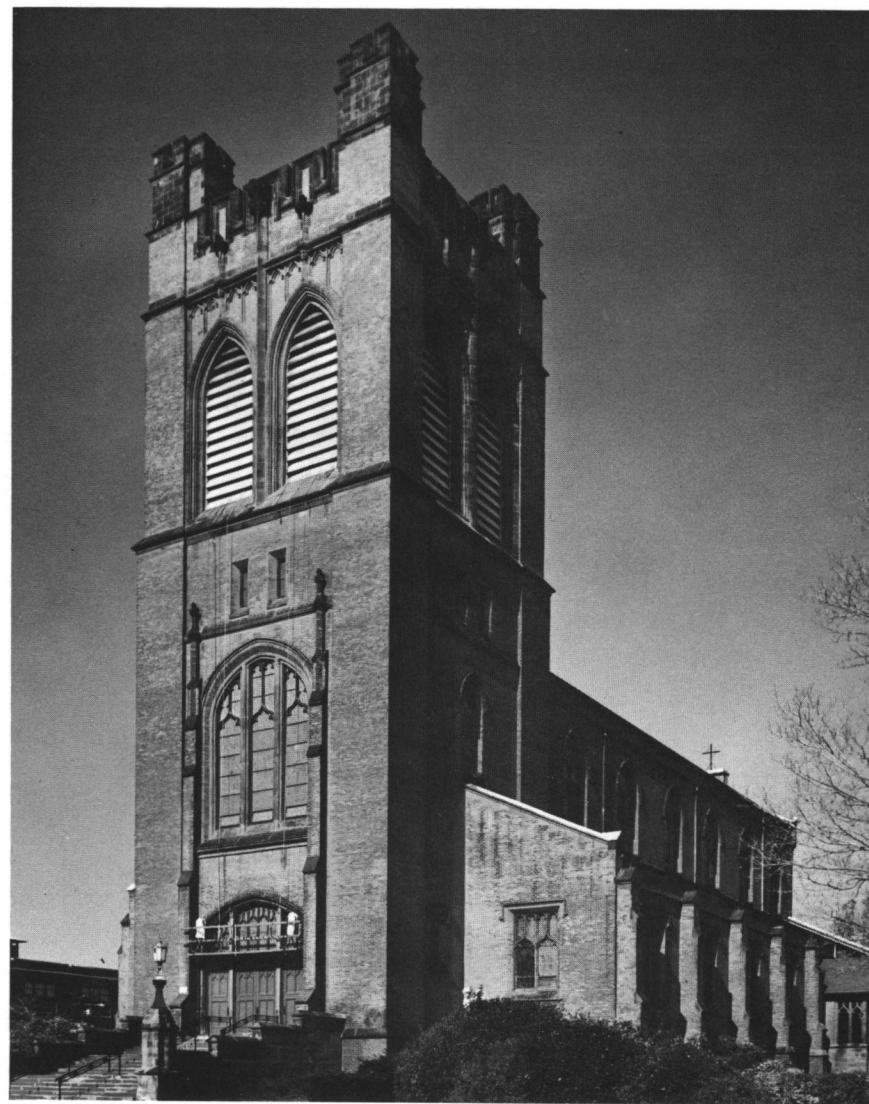


Figure 54: Saint Michael's Roman Catholic Church (1891-1915); Oxford Street between Gordon Avenue and Croylard Road.

programs until increased immigration and mounting social problems after the turn of the century gave rise to additional organizations. These included the Young Men's Hebrew Association, the Young Women's Hebrew Association, the Free Loan Association and the South Providence Ladies Aid Association among others.

In addition to these charitable and social organizations, a number of religious organizations were founded. In 1890, after occupying rented spaces since 1854, the congregation of the Sons of Israel and David constructed the first synagogue in Providence (demolished) at the corner of Friendship and Foster streets. The congregation had outgrown this building by 1909 when they sold it to finance the construction of the Neoclassical Temple Beth El, completed in 1911, at Glenham and Broad streets (Figure 55).

Because the Russian and Eastern European Jews did not wish to worship with the Reform Deutchen at Temple Beth El, six more synagogues were founded in South Providence by 1921. Some of these reflected the congregation's national origin and were informally known by such names as the Russian, Rumanian and Austrian synagogues; most of them were on Willard Avenue. Today, only the tiny building of the Linnath Hazedek congregation



Figure 55: Former Temple Beth El, now Congregation Shaare Zedek (1911); Broad and Glenham streets.

at 142 Willard Avenue still remains. In addition to the synagogues, a Jewish ritual bath house was built at 55 Staniford Street about 1900 and operated until 1956 when it was demolished for an urban renewal project. A Jewish orphanage was opened in 1908 at Willard and Prairie avenues in a two-and-a-half-story frame house, since demolished. The orphanage soon housed over thirty children and moved to an old mansion on North Main Street in 1910. Several Hebrew schools functioned as adjuncts to synagogues; these were consolidated in 1923 when a two-story building on Chester Avenue was purchased as a home for various charitable organizations and as a Hebrew language school for one hundred and fifty to two hundred pupils.

In addition to organizations aimed at preserving and perpetuating the Hebrew culture, a number of societies were founded to assist in Americanizing the Eastern European immigrants. The most prominent among these were the Wendell Phillips Educational Club and the United Hebrew Citizens Association of Rhode Island. Many of these organizations and the charitable and benevolent societies disappeared after 1920 when stricter immigration laws slowed the influx of foreigners and the Jewish population became increasingly American born. In later years, many of the city's leading professionals and businessmen came from South Providence. The best known Jewish public figure from the neighborhood is former Governor (1969-1973) Frank Licht.

As the century progressed, the Jewish population of South Providence expanded and outgrew the old Dogtown area, although Willard Avenue remained the heart of the Jewish commercial district until the 1950s. As the community increased in prosperity and expanded its boundaries into the surrounding streets, considerable new building occurred. Some of this development was the work of Jewish builders such as Harry Weiss who developed a large tract of multi-family houses at Broad Street and Thurbers Avenue between 1908 and 1910.

3. Architectural Development

The desire for comfortable, modern homes with income potential resulted in the proliferation of the most characteristic architectural expression of the first three decades of the twentieth century in South Providence — the three-decker. This building type responded to the need for higher density development on the remaining tracts of vacant land. Between 1900 and 1930, the population of Providence grew from 175,597 to 252,981, largely as a result of foreign immigration. South Providence, one of the most convenient of the working-class suburbs, was a popular place of residence for people of modest



Figure 56: James J. Harden House (1904); 421-423 Public Street.



Figure 57: Benjamin Rakatansky Three-deckers (c. 1925); 100-108 Gordon Avenue.



Figure 58: Abraham Spiegle House (1926); 181-183 Dudley Street.

means, and this created a strong demand for rental property.

Beginning in the late 1890s, the full three-story rectangular house with a tri-level porch fronting the street, commonly known as the three-decker, made its appearance. While the exterior went through a series of superficial stylistic changes over the next thirty years, the basic characteristics of the design remained unchanged. The typical floor plan called for a pair of off-center doors, opening from the first-floor porch, balanced by a large bay window. One of the front doors led into the first-floor apartment, while the other gave access to the common staircase that led up to the second- and third-floor units. The plans of the houses were standard and were very similar to the plans of the earlier two-and-a-half-story, end-gable, two-family houses. A series of rooms arranged linearly along one side of the house was balanced by a front

stair hall, an intervening kitchen, bedroom or bath and a steep winding back staircase lined up along the other side of the house. The number of rooms varied according to the depth of the house and there were two-, three- and four-bedroom schemes. The plan of the apartments on all three floors was identical.

Although there are some examples of three-deckers dating from the 1895-1900 transitional period when the full three-story house was evolving from the expanded two-and-a-half-story house, the three-decker did not become common until after 1900. Its heyday was from 1905 to 1925 when it comprised the bulk of new residential construction in Providence. The earlier three-deckers (Figure 56) reflected the Queen Anne style and featured multiple bay windows, complicated, multi-gabled roofs and a variety of wall-cladding materials including clapboarding and fancy shingling. Porches were usually

delicate in appearance and had turned posts and spindle-work balustrades.

In the early 1900s, the Colonial Revival style three-decker emerged as the most popular design and remained in vogue until about 1925. This house, while maintaining the same floor plan of the earlier models, took on a more unified, less ornamented character. The mass of the house was reduced to a simple box under a gable or hip roof usually with one front bay window. The clapboard wall cladding was often used in combination with plain wood shingles, and the porch became deeper and broader, sometimes extending across the entire front of the house. Tuscan columns replaced turned posts for porch supports, and the balustrades were composed of plain slats capped by a molded rail. The houses built on Gordon Avenue in the mid-1920s (Figure 57) are typical Colonial Revival three-deckers that illustrate the long popularity of this style tenement.

In the mid-1920s, simple, rectangular, end-gabled, three-deckers with half-glazed sun porches in place of the front bay windows became popular. Houses such as 181-183 Dudley Street (Figure 58) represent this final stage in the architectural development of the three-decker.

By the turn of the century, three-deckers were increasingly being built in large tracts by contractor-speculators who repeated them without variation in row after row. These developments were not considered to be an asset to the neighborhood, as an article in the October 22, 1916, *Providence Journal* indicates:

... but there has been a deplorable running to more or less cheaply constructed three-deckers, especially at Thurber's Avenue, where they are crowded together and are altogether unlovely looking.

Nevertheless, their builders were responsible for increasing the housing stock in the area with decent and inexpensive housing for the working class. With land becoming scarce and more expensive, the desire to maximize profits often resulted in the construction of these tall houses too close together on very small lots, however.

The advent of the electric streetcar line in 1892, which made the lower reaches of Broad Street accessible to all classes of commuters, spurred the intrusion of this tenement housing into the previously single-family middle- and upper-class Broad Street corridor. Soon contractors like Harry Weiss were

building colonies of three-deckers, such as the ones still extant on Weiss and Meni courts and Thurbers Avenue referred to in the *Providence Journal* article. Later major developments, such as Benjamin Rakatansky's eighteen-unit subdivision between Gordon Avenue and Croyland Road were constructed, and innumerable small clusters of ten or fewer identical houses are to be found on other streets throughout South Providence. Elsewhere, three-deckers were constructed in great numbers on back or side lots and as replacements for earlier buildings in previously developed neighborhoods. As a result, the three-decker, in its several architectural forms, is to be found on almost every street in the area and is rivaled in numbers only by the earlier and immensely popular two-and-a-half-story, end-gable, two-family houses of the 1870-1900 period.

New single-family houses were built much less frequently than three-deckers in the early twentieth century. These houses were the architectural descendants of the nineteenth-century, Victorian, tract cottages that had been constructed on the streets to the east of Broad Street between Massie and Chester avenues. A number of the cottages erected in the first fifteen years of the twentieth century were picturesquely towered, architectural continuations of the Queen Anne tradition of the 1890s. By 1915, however, the single-family cottage had entered its next stage of design development with



Figure 59: Thomas Carlisle House (c. 1912); 151 Briggs Street.

the simplification of the massing into a box with a wide front porch under a unifying, dormered, low-hipped roof (Figure 59). A further refinement saw the replacement of the long-popular bay window with the tripartite cottage window, forerunner of today's picture window.

Single-family cottages were usually built in groups by contractor-developers in a similar manner to the three-decker. The nineteenth-century developments such as the one on Gladstone Street were often large and reflected the availability of sizable parcels of undeveloped land on the lower stretches of Broad Street prior to the advent of the electric trolley line in the 1890s. By 1915, the absence of vacant land made the large subdivision obsolete in South Providence. The post-1915 type of cottage is to be found primarily in south-eastern South Providence, away from the built-up Broad Street corridor, mixed with the early single-family, laborers' cottages of the 1870s near Eddy Street. Handsome small clusters of twentieth-century cottages stand on Ashmont, Briggs and Richardson streets.

The single-family home represented a foothold in the middle-class world for South Providence's more prosperous tenement dwellers in the first three decades of this century. The neighborhood in which these houses were located became as important as the buildings themselves. The upwardly mobile worker most frequently sought to remove himself from the environs of his earlier struggles and to ensconce his family in a neighborhood of the class and status to which he aspired. The most satisfactory solution was to move to one of the newer suburbs of Washington Park, Edgewood or Mount Pleasant. As a result, the relatively few examples of suburban single-family cottages are concentrated in southern South Providence, indicative of the symbolic shift of the Irish middle class to the other side of the Providence-Hartford Railroad tracks to Washington Park and Edgewood. Although serviced by streetcar lines, neighborhoods such as Washington Park, to some extent, and, more particularly, Mount Pleasant represented the emerging concept of a class-segregated suburbia of front lawns and single-family houses on exclusively residential blocks made possible by the private ownership of an automobile. It is significant that the single-family bungalow of the 1915-1930 period was frequently equipped with a detached garage, in its day as much a residential status symbol as the carriage house had been decades earlier. South Providence, however, with its heavily mixed land uses, small building lots, sidewalk development, predominance of multi-family houses in out-of-fashion Victorian styles and overwhelmingly working-class population of mixed ethnic groups, was not adaptable to the residential aspirations of a newly mobile, suburban-oriented population seeking spaciousness and ethnic and economic homogeneity

in their class-segregated neighborhoods.

E. DECAY AND RENEWAL: THE URBAN SLUM (1950-1977)

By 1950, South Providence was densely built up. The primary physical changes that occurred in the area during the succeeding three decades were related to the painful and difficult adaptation of the neighborhood to the automobile, the increasing commercialization and industrialization of the fringe areas along Eddy and Broad streets, the expansion of Rhode Island Hospital, the construction of I-95, the ethnic transformation of the area and the effects of urban renewal.

1. The Period of Decay

The South Providence neighborhood enjoyed three decades of relative stability from 1920 to 1950 as a mixed Irish-Jewish, working- and middle-class neighborhood. During this period, the housing stock was gradually adapted to accommodate the automobile. Prior to 1950, there was little suburban development in Providence that was economically accessible to the vast body of the middle and working classes. A considerable portion of this group did not own automobiles and residence within reach of public transportation was still a necessity. Of those who could afford cars, and thus had access to the more remote suburbs, many elected to stay in the old neighborhoods close to friends and to the ethnic institutions that they found lacking in the new suburbs. This prosperous group spearheaded the adaptation of South Providence to the automobile as they attempted to assimilate twentieth-century technology into a nineteenth-century urban model.

The transformation was subtle, but disastrous; and the loss of amenity in the area probably contributed significantly to the subsequent decline of the neighborhood. The plethora of street improvements and widenings resulted in the loss of many tree-lined streetscapes and the further diminution of already tiny building lots. More landscape features were lost as small yards became driveways and back lots were crowded with jerry-built garages. The provision of sufficient off-street parking for a three-decker could totally eliminate any possibility of a green yard. In many cases, there was no way to accommodate an automobile on the restricted building lots and car-owning tenants began increasingly to look beyond South Providence to newer suburban areas for rental units. Gradually, owners and children who inherited parental prop-

erties also looked elsewhere for their residences. With the availability of cheap suburban housing after World War II, the owner-renter ratio of the neighborhood began to shift increasingly in favor of the renter. The cumulative effects of the inability of the physical fabric of South Providence to adapt successfully to the automobile — by 1950 a necessity for all but the lowest economic classes — were partly responsible for the loss of the middle class. The young, particularly after 1950, shunned the area, and, as the older population decreased, more cheap rental properties were created as large single-family houses were subdivided and formerly family-occupied tenements became absentee-landlord income properties. Although the Irish middle class had started to abandon the area in the early 1900s, many of the vacancies created were filled by other Irish from outside the neighborhood; but, by 1950, this immigration was no longer occurring.

Between 1951 and 1961, South Providence lost over half of its Jewish residents. The escalating number of vacancies were increasingly rentable only to low-income tenants, and, as a result, the population steadily became more homogeneously poor. Inevitably, as properties became less and less profitable and absentee landlordism increased, maintenance declined and the physical fabric of the neighborhood began to deteriorate.

Indicative, perhaps, of the transformation of South Providence into a community of the poor was the location of the city's second large public housing project in the area. In 1943, the Roger Williams Housing Project was constructed on a tract of mostly vacant land in southern South Providence bounded by Thurbers, Prairie and Pavilion avenues and Rugby Street (Figure 60). It originally contained 744 units and provided low-cost modern housing



Figure 60: Roger Williams Housing Project (1943); Thurbers Avenue between Prairie Avenue and Rugby Street; photograph, c. 1950.

units on pleasantly landscaped grounds. Enclosed by the project, Richardson Park provided space for recreation although the facilities were never well developed, while the handsome 1932 Georgian Revival style Roger Williams Middle School (Figure 61) bordered the complex on the west. The project was a great success as a living environment, and the tenants at Roger Williams for the first fifteen years of its existence formed a strong association that provided social services and maintained and beautified the grounds.

The history of the Roger Williams Project in the 1960s and 1970s reflects the larger trends that were affecting all of South Providence. In the late 1950s, after a change in the Housing Authority policy that had previously limited the number of Black families allowed to live at Roger Williams, the racially mixed project became predominantly Black. Maintenance was curtailed by the city at the same time that the twenty-year-old units began to require renovation. The increasing dissatisfaction of the residents with steadily shoddier living quarters resulted in a gradual loss of pride in the project and the abandonment of many of the resident-sponsored beautification projects. Slowly, Roger Williams became blighted, and units were vandalized and boarded up. Instead of being the place one could be proud to call home that it had been for fifteen years, Roger Williams became a place to escape from.



Figure 61: Roger Williams Middle School (1932); 278 Thurbers Avenue.

Another factor that influenced the physical deterioration of South Providence was the increasing spread of industrial and commercial enterprises into residential areas. By 1950, Eddy Street was densely industrial, and industry had spread several blocks to the west along Dudley Street and Willard Avenue. Much more damaging than the factories, however, was the spread of junk yards throughout central South Providence in the 1940s and 1950s, in spite of the residents' repeated pleas for help from the city in combating the growing nuisance. Along Broad Street, commercial development all but eradicated the elegant residential thoroughfare of 1910. The original heavy industry on upper Broad Street, the foundry of the American Buttwork Company at Pearl Street, the Rice and Hayward Bakery next door and the Joslin Sash and Blind Company, had all been demolished by 1916, when the invasion of automobile dealers as far as Pine Street was seen as a serious problem. Above Trinity Square, the conversion of residences to professional uses had been progressing for decades. So many houses were converted to doctors and dentists' offices in the early twentieth century that Broad Street was known facetiously as "Pill Avenue." In the 1950s, many of these houses were converted to commercial uses or demolished to accommodate new stores, parking facilities and automobile sales lots. With the proliferation of such enterprises, Broad Street gradually assumed its present commercial strip character.

The expansion of institutions, particularly Rhode Island Hospital, also played a key role in the physical transformation of South Providence after 1950. The hospital had experienced a period of expansion between 1900 and 1931 when a dozen large additions were made to the original 1868 building. These new buildings were all gifts from wealthy Providence families. The Great Depression of the 1930s and the austerity of the World War II era brought about a cessation of building activity. By the early 1950s, Rhode Island Hospital was in desperate need of an expanded physical plant. After masterplanning a modern complex, a new ten-story main hospital building was built in front of the old 1868 structure in 1955. The following year the old hospital was demolished to make way for the George Building. Growth continued steadily into the 1970s with many new buildings constructed. During this period, Rhode Island Hospital became a diversified regional medical complex with a heavy commitment to research and education as well as to the best patient care for its southern New England service area. The original grounds of the hospital were nearly filled with new construction and the aggressive policy of land acquisition for expansion of the hospital grounds and parking facilities that was instituted in the 1960s and 1970s resulted in major changes in the street plan of central South Providence. Acres of houses between Dudley, Oldham and Plain streets and Beacon Avenue were demol-

ished and the land converted into a vast parking lot. Expansion to the north engulfed all of Lockwood Street and the south side of Borden Street. The net effect of the hospital's growth has been the elimination of central South Providence east of Prairie Avenue and north of Dudley Street as a residential area, except for a small, but rapidly eroding, enclave centered about Frank and Emmett streets. The future expansion plans of Rhode Island Hospital will be a decisive force in the development of central South Providence.

No less dramatic in its effect on the physical fabric of South Providence was the construction of Interstate 95 in the 1950s. In addition to necessitating the demolition of dozens of buildings, the highway physically separated South Providence from the rest of the city, destroying its historic relationship with the downtown and the water front. The barrier effect on Route 95 accelerated the deterioration of the neighborhood. The containment of the developing blight in a limited area where it would not be able to spread to other parts of the city made the urgency of dealing with the problems of South Providence less pressing to the greater community. Compounding all this, South Providence became a refuge for poor minorities displaced from other areas of the city for redevelopment projects such as those at Mashapaug Pond, West River and Lippitt Hill.

After 1950, South Providence became the home of a new minority group. Succeeding the Irish and the Jews, southern Blacks who had migrated to the North seeking better employment opportunities settled in the neighborhood. As in the case of the earlier migrants, their first settlement was in the old Dogtown section between Robinson and Blackstone streets near Prairie Avenue, where rents were low. The housing stock, particularly in the small alleys and lanes that honeycombed the area in the early 1950s, was the oldest and most deteriorated, but, at first, was all that was available to Blacks in that period of rampant racial segregation. The Black community grew rapidly and, following the pattern of earlier groups, spilled over into the surrounding areas of central South Providence. Many long-established white residents moved to other areas as the neighborhood gradually became racially mixed.

With the arrival of Blacks, businesses and social and religious institutions arose to cater to the needs of the community. New commercial enterprises and restaurants were established and social-service agencies set up field offices in the neighborhood to provide family services and vocational programs. The South Providence Neighborhood Center (Figure 62), the Catholic Inner City Center at 542 Prairie Avenue and the Opportunities Industrial Center Training Facility at 93 Somerset Street are examples of this concept of rendering

social service to the resident in his own neighborhood.

Generally, the structure of the community did not encourage the formation of enduring clubs or fraternal organizations, although a still active order of Masons was established at 883 Eddy Street in the old Eddy Street school. Most of the organized social life of the community has been centered in the churches.

The Black residents generally found South Providence lacking in suitable religious institutions, and a number of new churches were founded. Some of the new congregations occupied the buildings being vacated by older religious institutions. For example, the 1888 Saint Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church at 364 Prairie Avenue (which had become a synagogue in 1938 when it was remodeled to its present appearance) became the home of the Black congregation of the Church of the Deliverance in 1967. Other new congregations established themselves in old houses and in vacant commercial buildings. These storefront churches are common throughout the area but are particularly numerous along Prairie Avenue. A few of the existing congregations have been bolstered by new migrants. The Second Free Will Baptist Church that had been established on Pond Street since 1852 moved to a handsome new building at 75

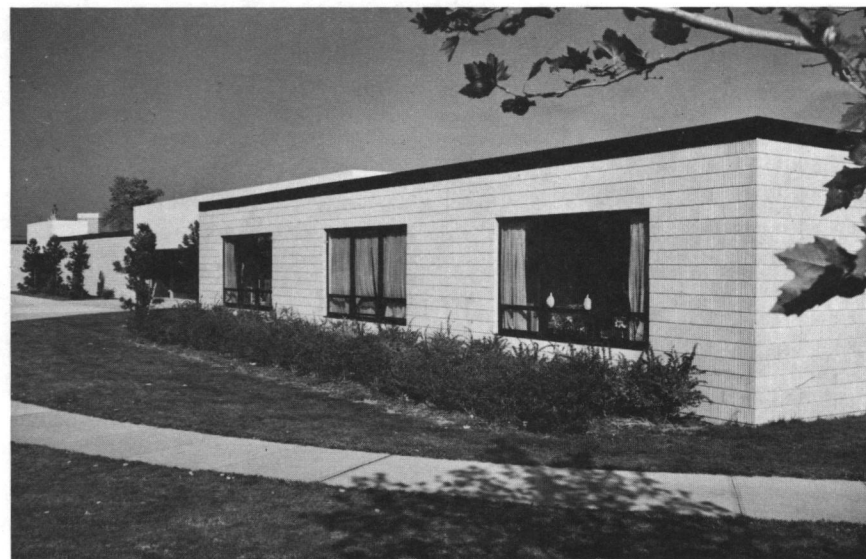


Figure 62: South Providence Neighborhood Center (1976); Prairie Avenue. Originally constructed as the Willard Shopping Center in 1956, it was destroyed and rebuilt to its present appearance in 1976.

Chester Avenue (Figure 63) in 1965 (after its old building was demolished for the construction of I-95) and has attracted a local congregation. Calvary Baptist Church at 747 Broad Street (Figure 64) also gained new Black members.

2. The Urban Renewal Era

In the early 1950s, South Providence was considered to be a declining but still viable community. Many of the problems of South Providence were ascribed to its aging buildings and outmoded service facilities. Subsequent efforts at reversing the area's downward trend were aimed at replacing its old buildings with new ones.

In 1947, Providence became one of the first cities in the nation to avail itself of the new federal programs aimed at revitalizing decaying urban areas. Since economic revitalization was the primary goal of the first program, the old Dogtown commercial area of South Providence was selected as a pilot project. By 1956, the fading, primarily Jewish, commercial strips on Prairie Avenue and along Willard Avenue (Figure 65) had been replaced by a suburban-style shopping center and parking lot (Figure 66) designed by prominent Providence architect Ira Rakatansky. Behind the new complex, known as Willard Center,



Figure 63: Second Free Will Baptist Church (1965); 75 Chester Avenue.

acres of unsightly junk yards were replaced by the contemporary Flynn Elementary School, designed by Harkness and Geddes. Another elementary school, Mary Fogarty, was built on Oxford Street a few years later as part of the same consolidation program aimed at replacing the outmoded Victorian school buildings in the neighborhood. The completed project was considered to be a success and a number of the displaced merchants relocated in the new shopping center. Relatively few houses were demolished for the Willard Cen-

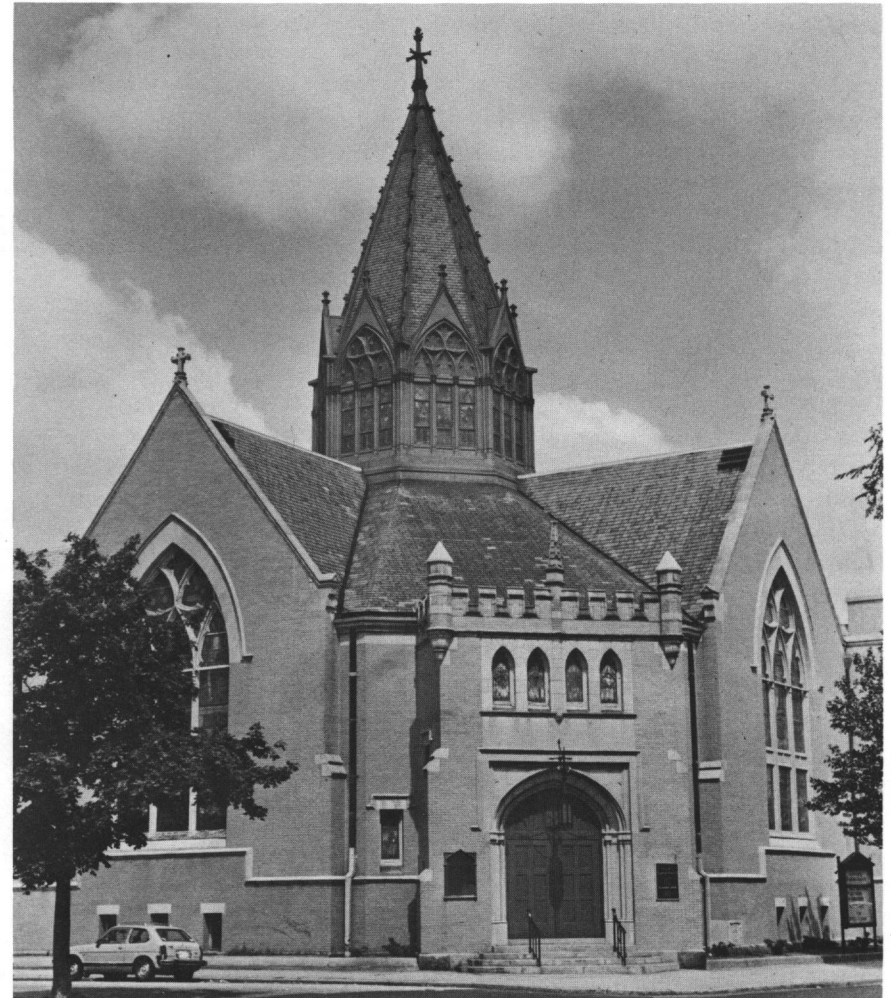


Figure 64: Calvary Baptist Church (1905); 747 Broad Street.

ter project since much of the eighteen-acre site was already vacant or in commercial use. The two hundred families affected were easily absorbed into the surrounding areas.

Meanwhile, living conditions in South Providence deteriorated markedly as the population declined from 35,882 in 1950 to 24,474 in 1960. Several of the reasons for this decline have already been mentioned. The loss of half of the area's Jewish population to other suburbs was an important factor. The loss of the Jewish population was part of a larger movement on the part of the younger, more economically mobile element of the established white community after 1950. Many more people moved out of South Providence than were moving in after 1960 and the surfeit of housing made the rental situation highly competitive. Some units were less economically viable than others as a result of their age and their need for extensive capital improvements such as new heating, plumbing and electrical systems. Increasingly, as tenants could not be found to occupy these houses, they were abandoned and demolished. In 1958, a study by Brown University reported that over 90 per cent of the houses in South Providence had been built before 1919 and that, not surprisingly, 75 per cent of the houses north of Oxford Street and 50 per cent of the houses south of Oxford were substandard.



Figure 65: View of the Willard Avenue Retail Section (all buildings demolished in 1954); photograph, 1948.

Northern South Providence was designated a Model Cities Area in 1967, and a massive program of demolition for residential redevelopment began. Virtually the entire remaining Dogtown section was cleared in this program as well as large tracts of land extending northward to Point Street and eastward to Plain Street (Figure 67). This area was adjacent to the Willard Center Urban Renewal Project. The cleared land was divided into two redevelopment parcels that still exist today, the Comstock Project and the Lockwood Project.

The concept behind the Model Cities redevelopment plan of the 1960s and 1970s was similar to the inspiration for the Willard Center Project of the 1950s: to rebuild South Providence in the image of suburbia. The Comstock Project now being completed across Prairie Avenue from the Willard Center is the realization of this dream. Small, suburban-style, detached, pre-fabricated, single-family houses are set in neat rows on large lots in a mock suburban subdivision (Figure 68). Only the large Victorian houses looming over the project on three sides remain to suggest that this was once a thriving, nineteenth-century, urban neighborhood. And too, at 120 Robinson Street in the middle of the project, is the eighteenth-century house that was moved to the area in 1865 when the site was the hub of Dogtown. Almost demolished with its neighbors, this house is now being attractively restored to become a source



Figure 66: Willard Shopping Center (1956); Prairie Avenue; photograph, c. 1963.



Figure 67: Aerial view of South Providence looking north from Willard Avenue. The Rhode Island Hospital complex is to the right of center with the South Providence Neighborhood Center on Prairie Avenue at the lower right.

of community pride and a reminder of the neighborhood's proud past.

At the same time that the federally funded Model Cities Program was being established, a rigorous code enforcement program initiated by the mayor's office in 1966 combined with a program of city-sponsored demolition of derelict buildings resulted in massive spot clearance and increasing abandonment by landlords unwilling or unable to upgrade their structures to minimum building code standards. While a few suburban-style, pre-fabricated ranch houses; split-levels; and colonialesque cottages were sprinkled throughout the area in the early 1970s under the HUD U235 and U238 programs, demolitions far outstripped new building, and vacant lots proliferated. South Providence was becoming a waste land as vacant lots and abandoned buildings appeared on almost every street.

Following racial disturbances in the late 1960s when the Willard Shopping Center (later renamed the Martin Luther King Center) was vandalized and abandoned, planning efforts to revitalize South Providence gradually ceased. Since 1970, the area, particularly northern South Providence, has continued to decay at an accelerating rate. Today, for example, fewer than 1000 people occupy the area north of Dudley Street, as compared with over 12,000 in 1950. The population decline in other parts of South Providence has been steady, though not so dramatic.

The continuing population loss is not only the result of the flight of the white residents but also of the dispersal of the Black community to other neighborhoods in the city. After 1965, small numbers of Black families began to settle in the adjacent Elmwood and Washington Park sections. The migration of the Black community out of the deteriorating South Providence area to the better housing and municipal services available in surrounding neighborhoods is a result of the improved economic status of the Black community and its increasing residential mobility. This has led to further abandonment and demolition in the neighborhood.

The recent history of the Roger Williams Housing Project exemplifies the effect that the dispersal of the Black community has had on South Providence. By June, 1977, only 236 of the remaining 676 units were still occupied. The social stigma that became attached to low-income housing in the 1960s and the improved economic and social condition of the Black community has resulted in a steady loss of population in the Roger Williams Project. The availability of low-cost housing units in newer projects elsewhere in the

city has also been a significant factor. Today, conditions at Roger Williams have stabilized as some of the thirty-three-year-old units are being attractively renovated. Social service programs sponsored by the Tenants' Association, such as the day-care center, are indicative of renewed tenant pride. The demolition of five of the buildings, however, is an admission that Roger Williams cannot successfully compete with newer projects and the overabundant private housing market to recapture its lost residents.

3. The New Minority

In 1965, the most recent ethnic migration into South Providence began. At about this time, the first large influx of Spanish-speaking Americans arrived, settling near Prairie Avenue and Oxford Street. In the last decade, the Spanish-speaking community has grown significantly and is now widely settled throughout South Providence. Many of the new residents from New York City and other northeastern industrial centers have been drawn to Providence by the lure of home ownership and the promise of a better way of life than they had known in more congested urban areas. The presence of this new faction in the community is manifested in the numerous Spanish-speaking commercial establishments that have appeared in South Providence and in the new Spanish



Figure 68: Comstock Redevelopment Project Houses (1976); Willard Avenue.

Catholic portion of the congregation at Saint Michael's Church. Their interest in home ownership has resulted in the purchase and renovation of numerous houses and is one of the most positive factors at work in reversing the physical deterioration of the area. While the full impact of this increasingly numerous group has yet to be realized, their presence is a stabilizing influence on the neighborhood. In cooperation with the established Black and white populations, they may help to rebuild South Providence into the viable and residentially desirable community it has historically been.

Today, South Providence is a forgotten corner of the city shunned by residents from other areas. It is an empty, deteriorating quarter where century-old buildings are disappearing daily. Virtually entire blocks are abandoned and demolished within a year. It is an area few people are proud to call home. This is a strange circumstance to occur in a neighborhood whose history and architectural heritage rival in significance any other section of the city. Fine examples of architecture representing virtually every period from 1840 to 1920 still abound. There is also vacant land — too much, in fact, in large multi-acre parcels and in small weed-choked lots on every street. The current state of South Providence represents a challenge to re-occupy and rehabilitate the old buildings and to fill the vacant land with sympathetic new development. The first steps are now being taken to realize both goals with such programs as Stop Wasting Abandoned Property (SWAP) and the new housing for the elderly being constructed on the vacant Saint Aloysius Orphan Asylum site. There is still much more that needs to be done to return the neighborhood to a healthy state.

IV. PRESERVATION IN SOUTH PROVIDENCE

The revitalization of an area like South Providence does not lend itself to easy answers or stock solutions. Clearly, the problems of South Providence are not limited to structural deterioration; they also include demoralization and a feeling of hopelessness. No efforts at restoring the vitality of the area can meet with much success without a renewal of enthusiastic neighborhood support and the re-kindling of a desire on the part of the residents to stay in the area and create a desirable living environment.

There are already vital forces working to reverse deterioration in South Providence. An examination of these activities reveals that an effective program of neighborhood conservation requires a multi-faceted campaign waged on several fronts both in the public and private sectors.

Serious neighborhood-based efforts at revitalizing South Providence began about 1975 although it was not until May of 1976, when a conference on neighborhood conservation in Providence was held, that the revitalization campaign received a focus. This conference urged residents to take the initiative to improve their neighborhoods rather than depending upon government leadership; it resulted in a renewed interest and pride in South Providence. This new climate of enthusiasm and self-help has generated a variety of programs aimed at halting the decline of the area and putting it on the road to recovery.

HOME OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS

One of South Providence's most serious problems, and the one factor that has had the greatest single impact on the physical deterioration and disappearance of the building stock in the neighborhood, is absentee landlordism. The relatively small number of owner occupants has tended to keep the population more transient than is desirable and has inhibited efforts to revitalize the area. Since the key to the area's renewal is an enthusiastic corps of residents who are financially and socially committed to its future, a number of programs have been started to promote home ownership.

STOP WASTING ABANDONED PROPERTY (S.W.A.P.): S.W.A.P. grew out of the long-active neighborhood organizing group People Acting Through Community Effort (P.A.C.E.) in June, 1976, with the goal of finding new owners for abandoned houses as an alternative to demoli-

tion. Since that time, S.W.A.P. has become a highly visible and positive force in the area as a result of its successful disposition of many formerly derelict properties to new owners. S.W.A.P.'s role is primarily that of an intermediary between the owners of abandoned houses and would-be purchasers in setting a fair price and handling the closing procedures. S.W.A.P. also aids the purchaser in arranging financing and planning necessary renovations.

HOME MORTGAGE OPPORTUNITY COMMITTEE: S.W.A.P. and other neighborhood groups began a successful campaign against the red-lining of the South Providence area by local banks. When a neighborhood is red-lined it is considered by the financial community to be a risky investment zone and this generally leads to the denial of mortgages or home improvement loans for properties within the area. The formation of the Home Mortgage Opportunity Committee by five banks to promote private re-investment in formerly red-lined neighborhoods has again made the resources of the financial community available to bankable residents of South Providence. The agreement in February, 1977, by three local banks to mortgage the formerly abandoned S.W.A.P. houses for purchase and renovation was an important further development that has strengthened the S.W.A.P. program.

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (M.O.C.D.) HOME MORTGAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAM: The M.O.C.D. Home Mortgage Subsidy Program was begun at the urging of S.W.A.P. to make home ownership more accessible to low-income families. Under this program, qualified, bankable purchasers of S.W.A.P. houses are eligible for as much as \$3500 in purchase-renovation grants from the M.O.C.D. which can be considered as part of the down payment when applying for a conventional, bank, purchase-renovation mortgage.

COMSTOCK REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT: The Comstock Project, sponsored by the Providence Redevelopment Agency (P.R.A.), contains thirty-five parcels that are being developed with modern prefabricated houses. Under the terms of this project, the purchaser selects his house design to suit his needs and financial capability and the P.R.A. provides up to \$8000 in subsidies to offset the cost of the house. In addition, the P.R.A. pays for sitework, sidewalks, driveways and landscaping. The Comstock Project has been very successful and most of the thirty-five lots have already been purchased and built upon.

HOME-IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

As a result of their advanced age and decades of deferred maintenance, many buildings in South Providence are in need of renovation. The high pressure salesmanship, shoddy work, high cost and questionable financing arrangements offered by many private home-improvement companies have kept some residents from contracting for extensive home repairs. The Mayor's Office of Community Development Home Improvements Providence division and Stop Wasting Abandoned Property have addressed the problem with a series of programs offering financial assistance and professional expertise to take the worry out of home repair.

HOME IMPROVEMENTS PROVIDENCE (H.I.P.): The Home Improvements Providence (H.I.P.) division of the Mayor's Office of Community Development has been providing grants and conventional low-interest loans to home owners for the renovation of houses in South Providence since 1975, utilizing funds from the Federal Government Community Development Block Grant Program. Under the H.I.P. Program, qualified home owners can apply for grants and low-interest loans to perform specific renovation work on their dwellings of almost any necessary kind except for new construction or unnecessary luxury improvements, such as central air conditioning, wall-to-wall carpeting and so on. The H.I.P. staff will assist the home owner in determining the best method of repairing his dwelling, help select a contractor, review plans and specifications and inspect the completed work. This program is the largest and best funded single force active in bringing the buildings of South Providence up to minimum building code standards. Collaboration with the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission attempts to ensure that the work does not lessen the building's intrinsic and historic value by destroying its architectural character.

LOCKWOOD STREET REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT: Section 112 federally subsidized home-rehabilitation loans are available to property owners within the Lockwood Redevelopment project. This program is administered through the Providence Redevelopment Agency.

HISTORIC HOME IMPROVEMENT FUND: The Historic Home Improvement Fund of the Mayor's Office of Community Development makes grants and low-interest loans available to owners of historic or architecturally distinguished properties for exterior restoration. Types of work that might be eligible for these funds would include restoring

a house's clapboards, installing the proper window sash or exterior doors to correspond with a building's style, repairing deteriorated ornamental wood work and replacing corner boards or other missing trim.

S.W.A.P. TOOL-LENDING BANK: A program to assist home owners in repairing their own homes has been begun in South Providence by S.W.A.P. in cooperation with the Mayor's Office of Community Development. The aim of this program is to operate a tool-lending bank from which participating residents can obtain equipment to renovate their homes without having to invest in expensive, but seldom used, tools. Based on similar programs in other cities, the S.W.A.P. Tool Lending Bank should make it possible for enterprising home owners to perform much of the work necessary to rehabilitate their dwellings themselves, thus saving the high labor cost of contracted home repairs.

HOME REPAIR WORKSHOPS: A series of free public workshops with the theme "Fixing Up Your Old House and Fixing It Up Right" were held in the fall of 1976. These were conducted by construction experts from the Mayor's Office of Community Development and the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. The sessions were well attended, and more workshops aimed at the handy-man home owner are planned for the near future.

EMERGENCY HOME-REPAIR FUND: The City Code Enforcement Division has started an emergency home-repair fund to correct gross building-code violations. The object of this program is to repair damage that threatens the continued habitability or structural viability of a building when the owner is unwilling or unable to do so. In such extreme cases, the city would authorize the work done and then attach a lien to the property to satisfy the expense.

PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

South Providence gained a somewhat unsavory reputation in the 1960s that overshadowed its long history as a desirable residential area. As a result, it has become one of the forgotten corners of the city shunned by other residents. Many people in Providence have not ventured into South Providence in over a decade. Most of the residents of the neighborhood, on the other hand, have arrived too recently to understand or appreciate the history or rich architectural heritage of their surroundings. To overcome the general ignorance about the neighborhood and generate pride in its history and architecture,

a series of public education programs has been started.

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY (P.P.S.) WALKING TOURS: Providence Preservation Society, Providence's leading private preservation group, has expanded their field of interest to include neighborhoods such as South Providence and Elmwood. A walking tour of the Pine Street Historic District section of South Providence was held on May 1, 1977. This well attended tour was one of the first efforts to generate interest in South Providence history and architecture. Further programs on neighborhood history and architecture are planned.

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY (P.P.S.) MARKER PROGRAM: The Providence Preservation Society Marker Program has long been active on the East Side of Providence. The goal of this program is to familiarize the public with the city's historic architecture by marking well maintained or authentically restored buildings of historic or architectural significance with wooden plaques giving the name of the original owner and architect, if known, and the building's date of construction. Utilizing a grant from the Mayor's Office of Community Development, this program has been expanded to include buildings throughout the city rather than just the East Side. The plaques are placed on buildings selected by a P.P.S. committee at no charge to the building's owner. A considerable number of buildings in South Providence have already received markers and more are planned.

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A program is now being completed by the Ethnic Studies Program at Rhode Island College with the goal of introducing more local history into the public education system in Rhode Island. The Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission has contributed historical information about South Providence for use in a planned unit on the South Providence neighborhood.

CIVIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS

In addition to programs designed to increase home ownership, facilitate home improvement and publicize its history and architecture, the various governmental structures in Providence are also aiding neighborhood conservation in South Providence. The organization of the residents into strong block clubs to guide its rehabilitation and the re-orienting of sectors of city government to be supportive of neighborhood renewal efforts have strengthened South Provi-

• dence's revitalization campaign.

• BLOCK CLUBS IN SOUTH PROVIDENCE: For several years, People Acting Through Community Effort (P.A.C.E.) has been organizing the residents of individual streets and blocks into groups to deal with immediate neighborhood problems. These block clubs, which have been increasing in number, are the basis for united neighborhood action. A further step that now seems imminent is the organization of a community council with representatives from the block clubs as well as at-large delegates from unorganized areas.

THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE AND SOUTH PROVIDENCE: The city government is sympathetic to, and supportive of, neighborhood conservation efforts in South Providence. The City Building Inspection Department reflects this attitude in its code-enforcement activities. The Department of Planning and Urban Development (P.U.D.) is also neighborhood-conservation oriented. The Mayor's Office of Community Development expends the Federal Community Development Block Grants Funds in a manner conducive to preservation goals and is highly supportive of neighborhood-initiated projects.

V. PRESERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

In spite of the considerable progress that has been made in beginning a program of neighborhood conservation in South Providence, there are still important steps that need to be taken. Some of the recommendations apply to the entire neighborhood while others apply only to certain areas where existing physical conditions require special actions. As a result, each of the different sections that make up South Providence needs to be treated in a manner dictated by its own physical characteristics, since no single preservation plan would suit the unique needs of each of the five areas.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOUTH PROVIDENCE

1. Establish a strong community council, widely representative of the South Providence population, to guide the revitalization of the neighborhood in cooperation with existing community organizations. The establishment of such a council might begin with the election of delegates from the block clubs that already exist and at-large representatives from unorganized sections of the neighborhood.
2. Encourage further interest in, and familiarity with, the history and architectural heritage of South Providence through the Providence Preservation Society, the Office of the Mayor and all interested local organizations and churches.
 - a. Develop and publish a self-guided walking and driving tour of South Providence.
 - b. Conduct architectural tours of homes and buildings to emphasize the different living qualities of the buildings of South Providence; to acquaint residents with examples of well maintained, period interiors and exteriors as well as exemplary modernizations; and to acquaint potential new residents from outside the area with the fine architecture and neighborhood qualities South Providence has to offer.
 - c. Use mass media to encourage interest in South Providence history and preservation activities.
3. Encourage civic improvements and a cooperative attitude on the part of all governmental agencies that is sympathetic to, and supportive of, the

preservation of the South Providence area.

- a. Promote street and sidewalk improvements and regular street maintenance and cleaning.
- b. Encourage the city to sympathetically rehabilitate and re-use city-owned buildings in the areas as an alternative to new construction.
- c. Develop a technique to encourage new construction, particularly city-sponsored projects, that is architecturally sympathetic to the area.
- d. Encourage city planning efforts to coincide with preservation efforts, particularly with respect to the publicly owned vacant land

in South Providence.

4. Encourage the proper restoration and preservation of the buildings of South Providence.
 - a. Prepare and publicize an exterior home-improvement manual that illustrates some basic guidelines and considerations for rehabilitating old houses without destroying their architectural character.
 - b. Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of old privately owned buildings.
 - c. Encourage private investment in home improvement by creative financial incentives such as real-estate tax relief through a limited freeze on assessments or other mechanisms.



Figure 69: Aerial view of northern South Providence, looking northeast from Pearl Street. Broad Street is on the left, Rhode Island Hospital is at the upper right and Pine Street runs diagonally from the lower right into downtown Providence in the upper left-hand corner.

PRESERVATION IN NORTHERN SOUTH PROVIDENCE

DESCRIPTION:

The architectural character of this neighborhood is threefold. The Pine Street residential area is the oldest extant urban area in South Providence and contains many fine Greek Revival and Early Victorian buildings dating from 1840 to 1870. Most of the area is included in the Pine Street Historic District. The adjacent Summer and Stewart Street section contains industrial buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that are still in light industrial use as well as some plants built since the second World War. The Beacon Avenue sector contains quiet tree-lined streets of primarily late nineteenth-century, multi-family dwellings.

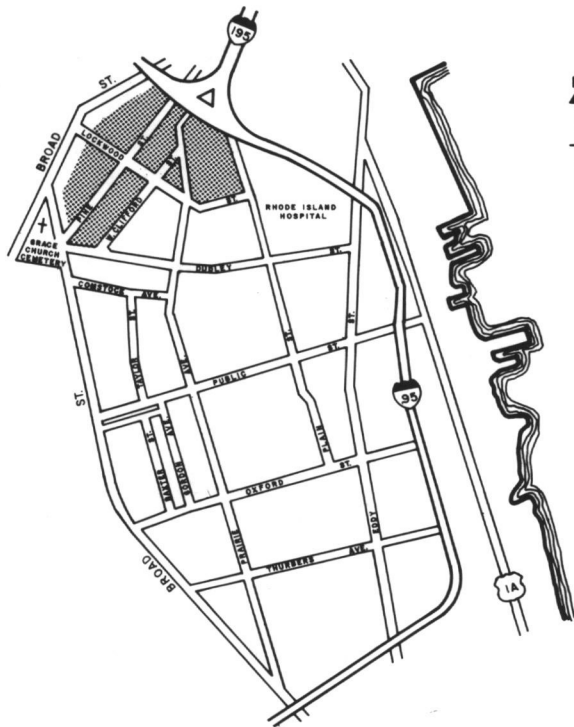


Figure 70: Map of northern South Providence.

PROBLEMS:

1. The area is the most deteriorated in South Providence and is rapidly becoming depopulated. Many of the buildings are vacant and vandalized, and the rate of demolition is very high.
2. The population is largely transient and many of the inhabited buildings are rooming houses.
3. The continued viability of the industrial area is doubtful.
4. The streetscape is cluttered with unattractive signs and street furniture that detract from the historic character of the area.
5. The large number of derelict vacant lots impairs the unity of the streetscape in the Pine Street area.
6. The large expanses of vacant land cleared for the Lockwood Redevelopment Project and the tracts cleared by Rhode Island Hospital for parking lots and future expansion have undermined the stability of the bordering residential areas resulting in increasing abandonment and demolition on previously stable streets.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Promote the S.W.A.P. program of urban homesteading to encourage the re-occupation of the vacant but habitable structures common in the area. In this neighborhood, the program should emphasize a group settlement approach, when possible, and relocate a cluster of families close together in a deteriorating area to facilitate cooperative effort and mutual support during the rehabilitation process.
2. Publicize the awarding of P.P.S. plaques and the nomination of the proposed Pine Street Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places to encourage a program of restoration of the buildings to an authentic period appearance. New construction should be carefully reviewed to promote design compatibility. It should be publicized that structures within the district will be eligible for funds of the grants-in-aid program of the National Park Service as administered by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission (see Appendix B) and also for loans through the Historic Home Improvement Fund of the Mayor's Office of Community Development.

3. Provide for the protection of the architectural heritage of South Providence by extending the jurisdiction of the Providence Historic District Commission, through approval by the Providence City Council, by granting it responsibility for review of all major alterations, demolition and new construction in the area of the proposed Pine Street Historic District in accordance with the state enabling legislation passed in 1959 (Chapter 45-24-1 as amended) and the local ordinance by the council in 1960. This historic district zoning is needed to protect architectural, social and environmental resources within the designated area and should be explained and promoted through the local press and neighborhood groups, including churches and other interested organizations. It should be made clear that the design of new structures, while expressing contemporary building and design methods and philosophy, should be sympathetic to the environmental scale and character of the National Register District.
4. Encourage additional street landscaping, more aesthetic street lighting and the use of historically appropriate paving materials and period street furniture in the historic district.
5. Relocate endangered buildings of suitable architectural character within South Providence to vacant sites in the Pine Street area to complete the streetscape.
6. Renovate some of the industrial buildings in the Summer and Stewart Street area for adaptive re-use as office, commercial, craft-industrial or residential spaces, as has been successfully done with old industrial buildings in other American cities.
7. Develop plans for the adaptive re-use of endangered neighborhood landmarks in the Beacon Avenue area such as the Beacon Avenue School and the old city wardroom at 103 Beacon Avenue.
8. Utilize more fully existing federal neighborhood conservation programs such as Section 8, the 312 Program and others.

PRESERVATION IN WESTERN SOUTH PROVIDENCE

DESCRIPTION:

This area was developed between 1875 and 1900 as a middle- and upper-class residential neighborhood of primarily single family homes. Later, several

tracts of three-deckers were built, most notably on Saratoga Street. Western South Providence contains some of the finest Victorian residential architecture in the entire area, ranging from opulent millionaires' mansions to modest tract houses. The short, tree-lined streets vary greatly in their states of preservation from block to block, but still comprise the best remaining example of a late nineteenth-century, middle-class neighborhood in South Providence.

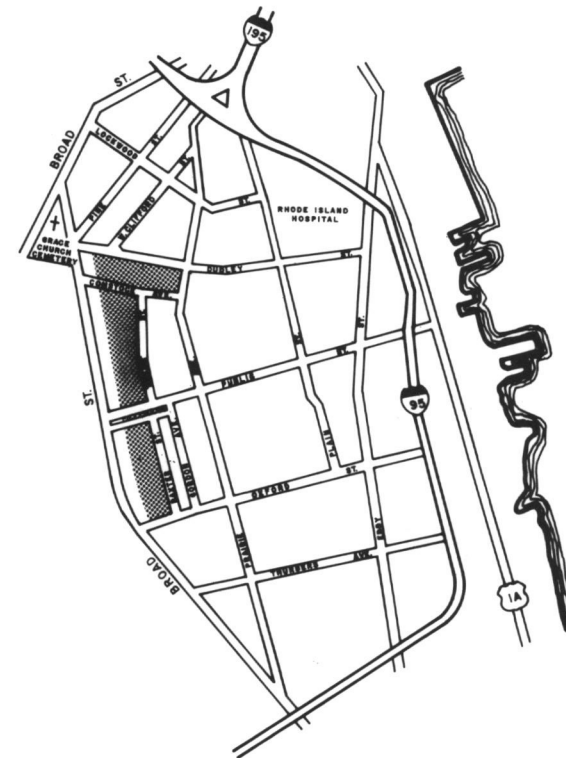


Figure 71: Map of western South Providence

PROBLEMS:

1. Most of the large single-family homes have been converted to apartments resulting in an increase in automobiles in the neighborhood that exceeds the on-site parking capacity of many of the properties.
2. Building maintenance is often very poor as a result of absentee landlordism.

3. The neighborhood is gradually being abandoned, and derelict buildings are increasing in the northern part.
4. The status value of the neighborhood is very low and most of the residents are renters with no long-term commitment to the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Make western South Providence the object of a program of major residential preservation with an emphasis on rehabilitating buildings that still exist in nearly original condition, while allowing unobjectionable later alterations to remain. Exacting restoration is not required, but a general program of neighborhood beautification and individual building maintenance should be promoted. Inappropriate modernizations of exteriors using unsympathetic modern materials should be discouraged and, when improvements are contemplated, a return to the original condition should be considered.
2. The city should provide small, unobtrusive, landscape-screened, common parking areas on vacant land throughout residential areas where on-site parking is impossible. This would reduce street parking and enhance the convenience and viability of old pre-automobile neighborhoods.
3. Promote new settlement in the area by publicizing the excellent environmental qualities of the neighborhood through walking tours, newspaper articles on the history of the area and a program of marking distinguished buildings.
4. Promote the S.W.A.P. program of urban homesteading to facilitate the re-occupation of vacant but habitable buildings.
5. Publicize the nomination of structures in the area to the National Register of Historic Places and the awarding of historical plaques by the Providence Preservation Society.
6. Publicize that owners of architecturally and historically significant buildings are eligible to apply for rehabilitation assistance through the Historic Home Improvement Fund of the Mayor's Office of Community Development.
7. Utilize more fully existing federally sponsored neighborhood improvement programs.

PRESERVATION ON BROAD STREET

DESCRIPTION:

Broad Street is the main commercial street and through-traffic artery of South Providence. It contains many commercial structures dating from 1915 to the present, interspersed with earlier residential buildings. The houses recall the period from 1865 to 1915 when Broad Street was one of the finest upper-class residential streets in Providence. There are excellent examples of mid- and late-nineteenth century domestic architecture ranging in scale from opulent millionaires' mansions to modest middle-class houses. Many former dwellings have been converted to professional or commercial uses and are in varying states of preservation. The commercial structures differ greatly in architectural quality but are mostly undistinguished, low rise, twentieth-century buildings.

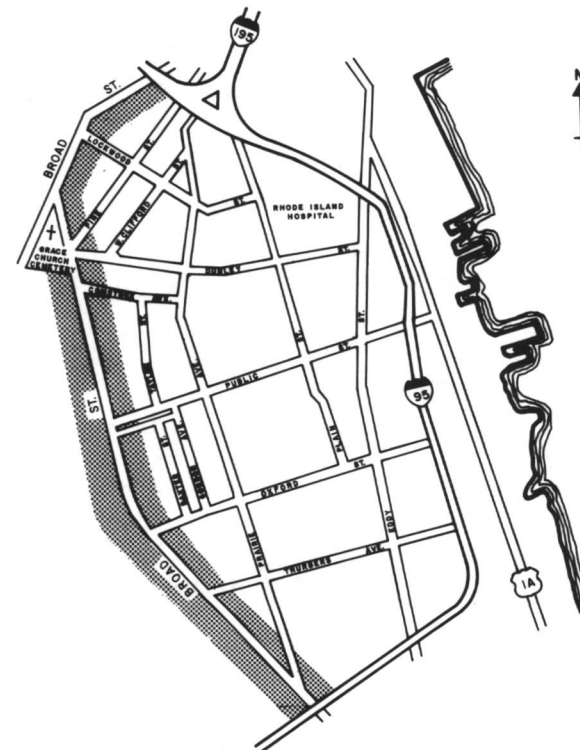


Figure 72: Map of Broad Street

PROBLEMS:

1. The architectural qualities of the old buildings are disguised by encrustations of modern store fronts, overabundant signs, incongruous awnings, drab paint schemes and inappropriate cladding materials.
2. Broad Street has a cluttered, forbidding appearance as a result of the loss of the street-side tree canopy, the proliferation of street-front parking lots and the abundance of unattractive street furniture.
3. The streetscape lacks unity and the commercial and residential land uses are not well integrated.
4. Broad Street lacks the type of retail enterprises necessary to make it a vital neighborhood shopping center.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Institute a program of commercial revitalization on Broad Street to include city-sponsored street, sidewalk, lighting and landscaping improvements. Store-front facade restoration (in a manner sympathetic to an overall block renewal scheme using appropriate materials and architectural designs) and sign control (through an improved city sign ordinance to eliminate obtrusive, overscaled or inappropriate signs) would enhance the visual unity of the street. A study of parking needs to consider new methods of accommodating automobiles that would minimize their visual presence and reduce street parking, while enhancing the commercial viability of Broad Street.
2. Encourage desirable retail enterprises that are currently lacking in Elmwood and South Providence, such as supermarkets, laundromats, drug stores and so on, to relocate to Broad Street to strengthen its role as a neighborhood shopping center.

PRESERVATION IN CENTRAL SOUTH PROVIDENCE

DESCRIPTION:

The building stock of central South Providence consists overwhelmingly of multi-family housing. There are relatively few architecturally distinguished buildings in this section with the exception of the eighteenth-century Mathew Lynch House at 120 Robinson Street, the Rhode Island Hospital complex and

the Saint Michael's Church complex at Prairie Avenue and Oxford Street. The area contains large three-decker complexes as well as the Roger Williams Housing Project. It also comprises most of the large tracts of cleared land in South Providence including the Lockwood Project and the Rhode Island Hospital parking complex. A large part of the area is made up primarily of vacant lots as a result of extensive demolition. Many of the industrial buildings in South Providence are within the boundaries of central South Providence. The architectural quality and environmental amenities of this section are generally poor as a result of the extensive clearance and the undistinguished, repetitive nature of much of the original, mass-produced architecture.

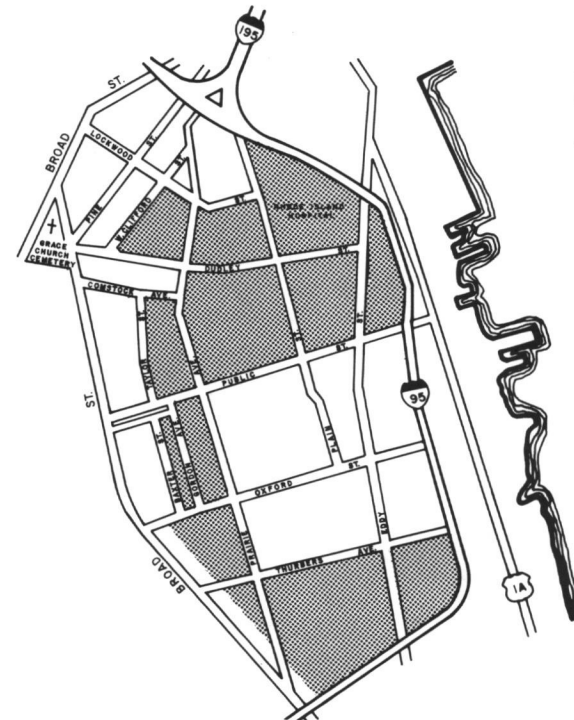


Figure 73: Map of central South Providence

PROBLEMS:

1. This section lacks cohesion as a result of its development pattern.
2. No neighborhood fabric can be said to exist since much of the land is

completely cleared and many of the streets are primarily composed of vacant lots interspersed among a few isolated houses.

3. The abundance of weed-choked, vacant land is demoralizing to the residents and has promoted the deterioration of adjacent neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Institute a program of new development in central South Providence to re-establish a unified community out of the scattered remnants of the past. New construction could be either residential, commercial or institutional. New low-cost housing, preferably of the cluster townhouse type or other compatible designs, could be used as infill on many partially intact blocks, while large new residential, commercial or institutional developments would be suitable for the areas of cleared land in central South Providence. The need for new retail facilities in the area, particularly commercial enterprises such as supermarkets, drug stores and laundromats, is acute. If these amenities could be located in the vacant heartland of central South Providence, as a unifying link between all of the neighborhoods, and incorporated into an integrated complex of new residential and commercial structures adjacent to the Social Service Center (the rebuilt Willard Center) it would provide South Providence with a much needed village center and focal point for community life. New light industrial construction would be suitable for the already industrialized portions of the Eddy Street corridor and the vacant land between I-95 and Eddy Street.
2. Make tracts of city-owned land available to developers who present sound programs for beneficial new neighborhood development — such as the proposed private redevelopment of the Lockwood Project Site, scheduled to begin in the fall of 1978.
3. Much of the vacant land in central South Providence already belongs to the city as a result of tax and demolition liens and acquisition for past urban renewal programs. Until conditions are ripe for new construction in South Providence, the city should manage its large holdings of vacant land in such a way as to lessen their negative impact on the neighborhood.
4. Special attention should be given to the design and landscaping of the vast parking lots of Rhode Island Hospital to lessen their visual impact on the area.

PRESERVATION IN EASTERN SOUTH PROVIDENCE

DESCRIPTION:

The character of eastern South Providence is determined by the mixture of single-family and two-family dwellings centered around the old Ocean Street and Eddy Street horsecar line routes. Eddy Street is the main thoroughfare of eastern South Providence today. It contains a significant concentration of industrial buildings as well as several handsome suburban houses of the pre-horsecar era. Most of the blocks from Eddy Street to I-95 are largely vacant, although some have scattered clusters of houses. The streets in the southern section are short, tree lined and have nearly complete buildingscapes, while the upper sections have suffered in varying degrees from spot demolition. Eastern South Providence has considerable potential as a viable neighborhood and has good environmental qualities.

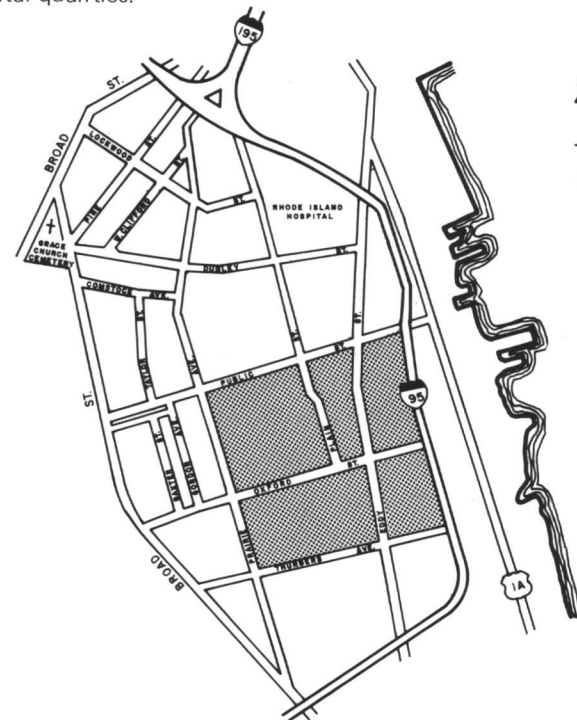


Figure 74: Map of eastern South Providence

PROBLEMS:

1. Many of the building lots are too small to accommodate automobile parking.
2. There are few neighborhood organizations to promote the revitalization of the area.
3. The decline of surrounding areas is eroding the stability of this section, and abandonment and demolition are increasing.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Begin a program of streetscape revitalization to promote neighborhood conservation in areas such as this where the architectural value of the individual buildings may be slight. The implementation unit for this approach is the entire block, rather than the individual building. The activities envisioned involve a cooperative block residents organization in combination with a program of city-sponsored public improvements to enhance the amenities of the streetscape. Home owners would be encouraged to repair their homes with only a peripheral emphasis on restoration, while buildings that have original features or exist in their original state should be maintained that way. The city should plant trees on streets where they are lacking and make other improvements including street and sidewalk repairs and better and more aesthetic street lighting. The key to this approach is the block organization. The greatest successes can probably be expected to occur on blocks where there is a high percentage of owner occupancy. Social activities which bring neighbors together such as block parties would play a large role in this program.
2. The city should construct unobtrusive neighborhood parking lots in residential areas where on-site parking is not possible because of small building lots.

APPENDIX A: THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The National Register of Historic Places is a record maintained by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, of structures, sites, areas and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology and culture. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as the official inventory of the cultural and historic resources of the nation, it includes historic properties in the National Park System, National Historic Landmarks and properties of national, state and local significance nominated by states or by federal agencies and approved by the Secretary of the Interior. It is an authoritative guide for federal, state and local government planners and private groups and individuals everywhere, identifying those properties which are worthy of preservation throughout the nation. Registered properties are protected from federally funded and licensed activities by a state and federal review process. Listing in the National Register is a prerequisite for eligibility for matching grants-in-aid funds administered by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission (see Appendix B).

Income-producing buildings, including commercial, industrial and residential rental properties, which have been nominated to the National Register individually, are also eligible for the tax incentives of accelerated depreciation provided by the Tax Reform Act of 1976. A taxpayer may now amortize over a five-year period any capital expenditures incurred in rehabilitating a National Register property which produces income or is used in his business or trade. The new law also provides that an owner or lessee cannot deduct amounts expended for demolition of a structure listed in the Register.

Christ Episcopal Church (Figure 44) and the Saint Michael's Church Complex (church, school, rectory and convent) (Figure 54) were entered in the National Register in June of 1976 and March of 1977, respectively, in recognition of their architectural importance and cultural significance in the South Providence neighborhood. In addition, the Israel B. Mason House at 571 Broad Street (Figure 41) was nominated to the National Register in the fall of 1976. Since that time, the Pine Street Historic District (Figure 75), the David Sprague House at 263 Public Street (Figure 3) and the Mathew Lynch House at 120 Robinson Street (Figure 21) have been nominated and are awaiting review and approval by the National Park Service.

This survey has identified a number of additional structures and sites as potential National Register entries.

Rhodes Street Historic District

The proposed Rhodes Street Historic District contains seventeen nineteenth-century residential structures of historical and architectural importance. Among the notable buildings on this one block of Rhodes Street between Eddy and Plain streets are the William C. Rhodes House (231), the Asahel Herrick House (236), the Alpheus B. Slater House (251) and the John Smith House (252).

Individual buildings proposed for nomination to the Register include:

- Aylesworth Apartments, 188-194 Broad Street
- Home for Aged Men, 807 Broad Street (Figure 49)
- Calvary Baptist Church, 747 Broad Street (Figure 64)

As part of its ongoing program, the Review Board of the Historical Preservation Commission has reviewed and approved these properties for nomination. The Commission staff is now preparing the nomination forms. Persons desiring to have a property entered in the Register by a certain date, either for grant eligibility or because the property is threatened, should contact the Commission to request that action be initiated. The more historical data the owner of a property and other interested parties can supply, the more expeditiously the nomination forms can be prepared.

The listings here are based on the material collected during the course of the survey; as additional research is conducted, new information may come to light which would justify additional proposals for the Register.

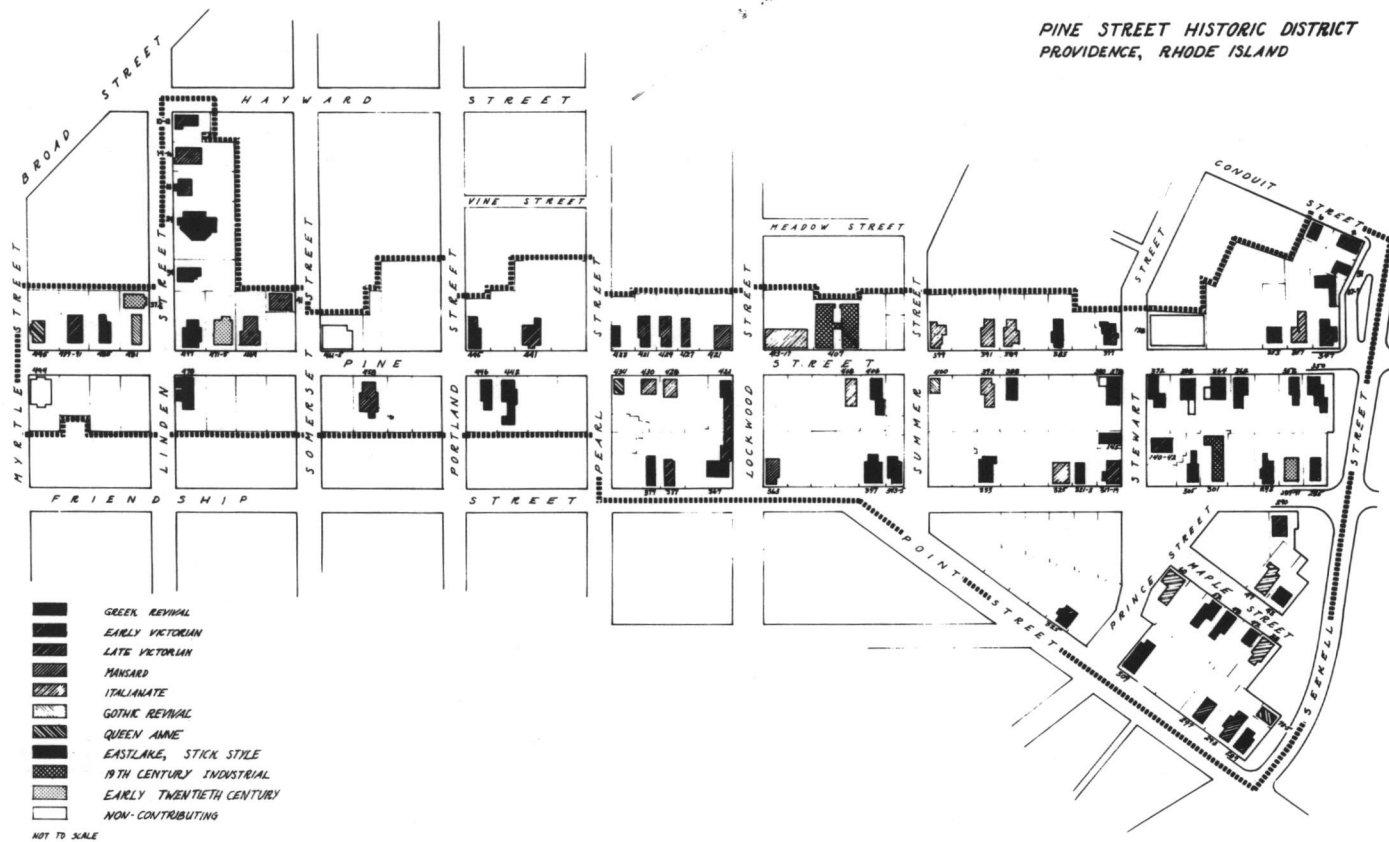


Figure 75: Map of proposed Pine Street Historic District.

APPENDIX B: GRANTS-IN-AID PROGRAM

Since 1971, the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission has awarded, through the National Park Service, 50 per cent matching grants for the restoration or acquisition of properties listed in the National Register. To date, over one hundred grants have been awarded to local historical societies, community organizations, the State of Rhode Island and private individuals for projects throughout the state. These grants have usually ranged in amount from \$1,000 to \$50,000 with the grantee providing an equal sum. Grantees also benefit from consultation with architectural and historical professionals working on the Commission staff.

Allowable work under this program includes exterior and interior restoration, installation or updating of utility systems, architectural fees, research, archeology, structural repairs and the installation of protective systems. New construction, furnishings and modern landscaping are not allowable costs. To ensure an accurate restoration and a high standard of work, an architect must be engaged to prepare plans and specifications and supervise the project work. The Historical Preservation Commission has the responsibility of selecting, based on analysis, all paint and mortar colors. The high standards of the National Park Service and the cost of older building materials and methods mean that the program sometimes increases the total cost of the project. Applicants should, therefore, be interested in obtaining professional guidance for their projects as well as financial assistance.

An easement designed to protect the property after project completion and to ensure its continuing public benefit must be signed by the owner of the property receiving a grant. This agreement is for a minimum of twenty years and requires the owner to maintain the building and grounds, make no alterations without the prior approval of the Commission and allow the public to view the property at least twelve days a year. When the grant work is limited to the exterior, these restrictions apply only to the exterior.

Matching funds may come from either private, local or state sources. Also, funds available under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 are eligible for matching purposes. Grant applicants are urged to submit requests for the maximum amount for which they have matching capability. This will enable Rhode Island to secure a large apportionment of grant funds from the federal government.

For further information about the grants-in-aid program, applicants are encouraged to telephone (277-2678) or write the Grants Administrator at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 150 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. Owners of historically significant properties which are not yet listed in the National Register but who desire aid should contact the Commission about nomination so as to be eligible for this program in subsequent years.


HISTORIC BUILDING DATA SHEET RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE SURVEY		COUNTY Providence	
FILE NO. _____ PLAT 23 LOT 50 LUS _____ ADDRESS <u>24 Linden Street</u> OWNER <u>Willa Bessette & Leo A. Bessette (1963)</u>			
PRESENT USE: 1 fam <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 fam _____ multi _____ pub _____ comm _____ indus _____ rell _____ agr _____ mixed _____ other _____			
NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE: res <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> comm _____ indus _____ pub _____ agr _____ woods _____ other _____		CITY/TOWN Providence	
PERIOD/STYLE: P C F GR EV (LV) ET MT LT <u>stick style</u>		ROAD Linden Street	
DESCRIPTION: Stories: <u>2½</u> Roof: gable (flank _____ end _____ cross <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>) gambrel (flank _____ end _____ cross _____) hip _____ monitor _____ mansard _____ flat _____ other _____		HISTORY & SOURCES: Maps: 1882 Atlas--- Not on map 1889 Atlas--- Appears on map History: William H. Crins had lived on Pine Street for several decades--his last home being 477 Pine--as a successful paint dealer with his business on North Main Street. In 1879 he became President of Gorham Manufacturing Co, a post he held until 1894. During this time Gorham grew into a giant in the jewelry industry and relocated from North Main Street to the present plant in Elmwood. Crins built this house in 1882 adjacent to his former home at 477 Pine Street. He lived here until his death in 1904.	
Walls: clapboard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> brick _____ stone _____ shingle _____ wood, 2nd _____ modern comp _____ other _____		MAP NO. 24	
Foundation: height _____ stone <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> brick _____ other _____		EVALUATION: Physical Condition structure (5) 3 2 0 grounds (2) 1 0 neighborhood 3 (2) 0	
Alterations: good _____ poor _____ none <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rare bldg. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Typical of its area _____		Architectural value (38) 30 20 10 0 4A	
COMMENTS: Within the Pine Street Natl. Register Historic District Excellently preserved Stick Style house with fine Modern Gothic detailing. Large well landscaped site.		Importance to neighborhood (14) 10 5 0	
SURVEYOR AV Checked SUPERVISOR HV Checked		PRIORITY	
DATE: _____		Historical value 38 30 (20) 10 0 2	
		Total Score 81	

Figure 76: Sample survey form.

APPENDIX C: SURVEY FORM

A standard form, the "Historic Building Data Sheet" (Figure 76), has been prepared by the Historical Preservation Commission for use throughout the state. Each surveyed property is identified by plat and lot numbers, address, ownership at the time the survey was conducted, present use, neighborhood land use and at least one photograph.

A property is also identified by one or more broad period time frames, which denote the original construction period: P = prehistoric (before 1636), E = early (1636-1715), C = Colonial (1700-1800), F = Federal (1775-1840), GR = Greek Revival (1825-1865), EV = Early Victorian (1840-1870), LV = Late Victorian (1865-1910), ET = early twentieth century (1900-1940), MT = mid-twentieth century (1940-1975) and LT = late twentieth century (1975-present).

The "COMMENTS" section is used for brief notations regarding a building's style, structure, details, function, present condition, architectural significance and relation to its physical environment.

The "HISTORY & SOURCES" section includes notes on individuals, organizations and events associated with the building; dates and nature of significant additions or alterations; and selected bibliographical references, including identification on historical maps and in city directories.

The four "EVALUATION" sections appraise various aspects of a property's preservation value. The numerical ratings used for historical evaluation are the same as those used for architectural evaluation, but, for the purpose of this survey, these ratings should be kept separate. In general, the key reason for preserving a structure should be its visual significance, recorded as "Architectural value" and "Importance to neighborhood." A low "Historical value," for instance, should not militate against the preservation of buildings deemed of architectural significance or of importance to the neighborhood's fabric. However, a building of little architectural interest, but of great historic significance, should also be preserved.

The evaluation of a building's exterior physical condition is rated on a 0,2,3,5 scale, without regard to its architectural merits. These ratings are based upon observation of the exterior only and do not reflect interior appearance or structural, electrical and mechanical conditions.

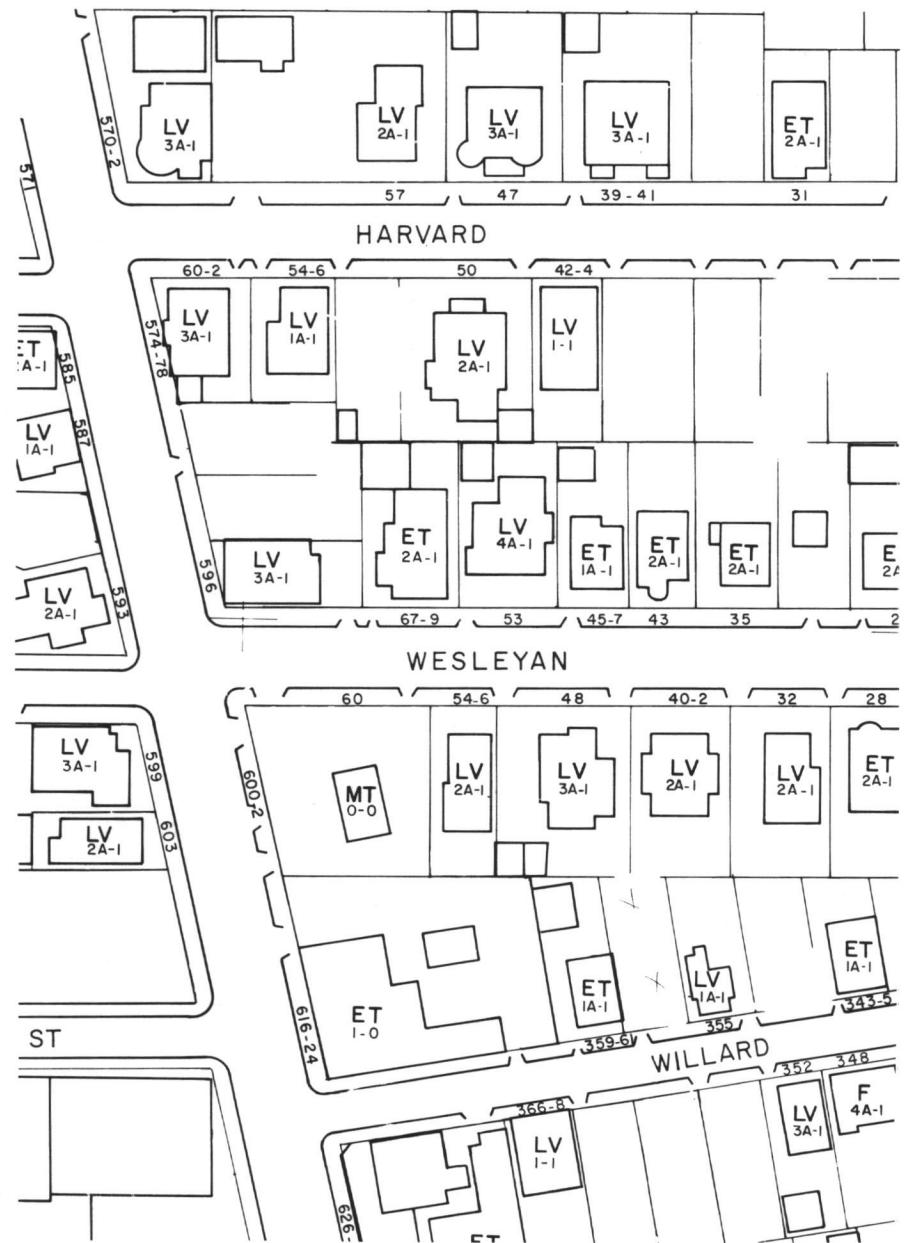


Figure 77: Sample preservation value map.

The evaluation of the grounds, either of a building or a site, is rated on a 0,1,2, scale. Those that are in good condition and are a visual asset to the environment are assigned "2." The "1" rating indicates that the grounds do not detract from the surrounding area. The "0" rating applies to grounds that have a negative impact on their environs.

The evaluation of the neighborhood's physical condition is based on a 0,2,3, scale. "Neighborhood," in this context, denotes the immediate area surrounding a surveyed property and does not necessarily reflect physical features such as street blocks or demographic boundaries. Neighborhoods rated "3" are characterized by a uniformly high standard of maintenance of both buildings and grounds. Those assigned a "2" have well kept properties in much of the area but also have sections where the need for improvement is readily apparent. The "0" ratings are used for areas which, for the most part, detract from the visual quality of the community as a whole.

Architectural ratings are assigned on a 0, 10, 20, 30, 38 scale. Such ratings are made in the context of Providence and do not imply that these buildings have been judged against a national or statewide standard. The "38" rating is reserved for a generally small number of buildings deemed of outstanding importance to the community and which, in most cases, are also of at least regional significance. The "30" rating indicates a building of meritorious architectural quality, well above the local norm. The "20" and "10" ratings are of local value by virtue of interesting or unusual architectural features or because they are good representatives of building types which afford an index to the community's physical development. Buildings rated "30" and "20" are essential to the historic character of Providence. They provide a visual context which defines the historic quality of the city and create an important background to the key structures rated "38." Buildings rated "0" are undistinguished architecturally and make no positive contribution to the physical environment. Structures that have been extensively and unsympathetically altered are given lower ratings than similar buildings in their original state.

A property's importance to its neighborhood is rated on a 0,5,10,14 scale, with "neighborhood" used according to the above definition. The "14" rating denotes a property that is a key visual landmark, of the utmost importance to the visual integrity of its environs. Those rated "10" make an important visual contribution either by virtue of individually distinguished qualities or due to characteristics of form, scale and massing which help maintain the visual continuity of the surrounding area. The "5" rating indicates a minor, but positive, contribution in either of the above respects or a property

which may be of visual interest unto itself, but one which is not especially compatible with its physical environment. The "0" rating applies to properties which have a decisively negative effect on the neighborhood.

Historical value is rated on a 0, 10, 20, 30, 38 scale. The "38" rating is assigned to properties associated with individuals (including architects), organizations or events which are of historical significance on the national level. Those of regional or primary local importance are rated "30." The "20" rating applies to buildings related to less significant local developments and also includes buildings about which little is known at present but which, by virtue of their age, are considered to make a major contribution to the community's historic environment. The "10" rating denotes limited local historical value. The "0" rating is used to designate properties of no known historical interest at the time the survey was undertaken.

For planning purposes, surveyed buildings, monuments and sites are depicted on a map of South Providence. The map (see Figure 77) shows every structure within the district regardless of date or historical importance, in order to portray the present context of the historic fabric of the South Providence neighborhood. For quick reference, each building is identified by its address, period and style designation and by architectural and historical ratings. If an "A" has been added after a building's architectural rating, the property is deemed important to the neighborhood's visual fabric and its loss would result in damage to the environment.

Upon completion of the survey, duplicate copies of all materials are submitted to the Historical Preservation Commission. After final approval, one set of the survey forms and map is placed on file at the Commission's office (150 Benefit Street, Providence) and another set is placed at the Providence Department of Planning and Urban Development (40 Fountain Street, Providence). Map copies will also be on file at the Division of Statewide Planning (265 Melrose Street, Providence).

APPENDIX D: PERTINENT AGENCIES

Many organizations and agencies — both public and private — have made valuable contributions toward historical preservation in Rhode Island and several offer their resources and aid to individuals interested in the preservation and maintenance of historic properties.

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission (150 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903) is the state agency charged with conducting the statewide survey, nominating structures to the National Register of Historic Places and administering grants in aid. The Commission staff is able to answer most questions about preservation in the state and stands ready to assist citizens in a variety of ways. The Commission has compiled and published a guide to historical organizations in Rhode Island, which lists organizations and agencies concerned with historical properties and programs. In addition, the Commission publishes a series of reports on individual cities and towns and issues a bi-monthly newsletter.

The following is an abbreviated list of local, state and federal organizations and agencies which may be valuable as a source of aid and information in dealing with preservation and historical issues in the South Providence neighborhood.

Local

COMSTOCK REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT, 40 Fountain Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. This subsidized housing project is sponsored by the Providence Redevelopment Agency. Located between Comstock, Prairie and Chester avenues and Taylor Street, this site is now being redeveloped in thirty-five parcels with modern, single-family, owner-occupied houses. In addition, the Comstock Project, together with Model Cities funds and a neighborhood facilities grant, rehabilitated the Martin Luther King Center (originally the Wilard Center) as a multi-purpose, neighborhood center.

LOCKWOOD STREET REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT, 40 Fountain Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. This project of the Providence Redevelopment Agency controls a large tract of cleared land near Lockwood Street in South Providence. A private group, Lockwood Associates, will begin developing this site in the fall of 1978. The project will consist of 100 units of housing for the elderly in six-story blocks mixed with 100 two- and three-story townhouses containing family units.

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, 44 Washington Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. This city agency administers the funds of the Federal Community Development Block Grant Program. In addition to the H.I.P. Program described in section IV, the M.O.C.D. has an historic building restoration fund, which provides grants for restoration work on buildings in Community Development target neighborhoods, and has other neighborhood-oriented programs.

PEOPLE ACTING THROUGH COMMUNITY EFFORT (P.A.C.E.), 557 Public Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02907. P.A.C.E. is a private, local group involved in neighborhood organizing in the South Providence, Elmwood and West End-West Elmwood areas. The organization is involved in a wide range of social service and neighborhood activist efforts.

PEOPLE'S REDEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, Nancy Whit, Saint Michael's Rectory, 239 Oxford Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02905. This non-profit group was established with the goal of re-developing the old Saint Aloysius Orphan Asylum site between Prairie and Gordon avenues and Oxford and Gallup streets with housing for the elderly. The first units are now under construction.

PROVIDENCE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION, 40 Fountain Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. This branch of the city government deals with all municipally involved planning projects in the city. The structure of the agency is neighborhood oriented and sympathetic and supportive of neighborhood conservation.

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY (P.P.S.), 24 Meeting Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. Since its founding in 1956, the Providence Preservation Society, a private organization, has been involved primarily in promoting neighborhood conservation on the East Side, through its Consultants' Bureau offering free advice on the proper restoration of old buildings and its public education programs. Since 1976, the Providence Preservation Society has expanded its activities into other parts of the city and now offers periodic walking tours, the services of its Consultants' Bureau and its historic building marker program to other city neighborhoods, including South Providence.

STOP WASTING ABANDONED PROPERTY (S.W.A.P.), 25 Mystic Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02905. S.W.A.P. was founded in 1976 with the goal of finding new owners for abandoned residential properties throughout the city, but especially in South Providence. S.W.A.P. acts as agent between the

building's owner and the buyer to establish the selling price and negotiate the sale. It regularly publishes a list of available properties.

State

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION, State House, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. The Division of Public Buildings, within this department, maintains state-owned buildings, many of them historically significant.

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS, 150 Washington Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. This department coordinates local government programs and offers planning assistance to the cities and towns of the state. It encourages the inclusion of historical preservation programs in comprehensive community plans. The director of this department is also the State Historic Preservation Officer.

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, 1 Weybosset Hill, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. The Tourist Promotion Division of the department distributes material on Rhode Island's historic assets.

RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 52 Power Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02906. Since its founding in 1822, the Society has collected books, newspapers and manuscripts relating to Rhode Island history. This unique collection is located in its library at 121 Hope Street, Providence, which also contains an archive of film relating to Rhode Island. Its quarterly publication is *Rhode Island History*.

RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, 130 Sessions Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02906. This private organization collects documents relating to Jewish life in Rhode Island. Its publication, *The Jewish Historical Society Notes*, frequently contains articles and illustrations about the Jewish Community in South Providence.

RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM, 265 Melrose Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02907. This agency is responsible for preparing plans for the development of the state, for providing planning services to agencies and officials of the state and for coordinating public and private actions with the state's development goals. This area of concern includes preservation.

National

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION, 1522 K Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20005. The Advisory Council, whose members include the secretaries of many federal departments, the heads of other governmental agencies and citizens appointed by the President, is an independent agency which reviews and comments upon the effects of projects undertaken, funded or licensed by the federal government on National Register properties.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY (AASLH), 1400 Eighth Avenue South, Nashville, Tennessee 37203. The AASLH was founded in 1940 and is a private, educational organization open to people interested in local history. Its members include historical agencies and amateur and professional historians. Among its professional services, the AASLH serves as a clearinghouse for questions, provides consultant services to local historical societies, makes annual awards for contributions to the field of local history and co-sponsors an annual training seminar for historical administrators as well as regional workshops. Among its many publications are *History News*, a monthly magazine of news and ideas, and the Technical Leaflet Series which helps to solve particular problems.

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, 740-748 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20006. The National Trust is a nationwide organization which was chartered by Congress in 1949 in order to "further the national policy of preserving for public use America's heritage of historic districts, sites, structures, and objects." Both individuals and organizations may become members of the National Trust. In addition to owning and maintaining a number of historic properties and offering a variety of training programs, the National Trust provides advice and services to preservation groups and planning officials and disseminates information on preservation legislation and projects. The Trust publishes *Preservation News* each month. The National Trust's New England Regional Field Office is located at 141 Cambridge Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02114.

SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF NEW ENGLAND ANTIQUITIES (SPNEA), 141 Cambridge Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02114. SPNEA was founded in 1910 by William Sumner Appleton. Besides owning a number of historic buildings, SPNEA co-sponsors with the National Trust a Field Service Office which is a clearinghouse for information and advice about preservation issues. In addition, SPNEA's Consulting Services Department can provide technical assistance and recommendations for owners of historic buildings.

- U. S. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (NPS), 18th and C streets, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20240. The National Park Service is a bureau of the Department of the Interior and has special responsibilities and powers in the field of preservation. Within the NPS's Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, several divisions have charge of particular programs. The Division of the National Register administers a list of the nation's important districts, structures, sites and objects. The Division of Historic and Architectural Surveys operates the Historic American Buildings Survey (which graphically documents especially important buildings), the Historic American Engineering Record (which conducts surveys of engineering works, such as dams, bridges and mill complexes) and the National Historic Landmarks Program (which maintains a list of properties of nationwide significance).

URBAN REINVESTMENT TASK FORCE, 1120 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036. This agency is a joint effort of H.U.D., the Federal Home Insurance Corporation, the Comptroller of the Currency and the Federal Reserve System. It was formed in 1974 to promote neighborhood preservation programs by stimulating private reinvestment by the local financial community in inner-city neighborhoods. Its major activity, Neighborhood Housing Services (N.H.S.), is a nationwide affiliation of non-governmental, non-bureaucratic, self-help, neighborhood-centered programs operated at the local level to deal creatively with the causes of neighborhood deterioration. The typical N.H.S. Chapter is a coalition of local government, lenders and neighborhood residents united to accomplish specific neighborhood conservation goals in a particular area.

APPENDIX E: INVENTORY

The inventory is a list of sites and structures of cultural significance in South Providence. Each of these entries has historical or architectural significance, either in itself, by association with an important person or group or as a representative example of a common architectural type.

In reviewing this list of important structures, it should be recognized that they represent those properties most essential to South Providence's historical and architectural identity. Surrounding and supporting these properties are many other buildings which enhance the overall historic and visual character of the city and contribute to understanding its growth and development.

The name associated with each building is either its current name or the name of the earliest known owner or occupant, taken from the street directories. More extensive research may indicate that another name would be more suitable. Most buildings' dates are based on stylistic analysis, map histories, deed research and street directories.

Entries are listed alphabetically by street and then in numerical order by street number. Entries having no street number (parks, sites, and so on) have not been assigned a number but have been included in their normal sequence. All buildings are of clapboard, frame construction unless otherwise specified.

- * Structures within the Pine Street National Register Historic District.
- ** Structures listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places.
- † Structures proposed for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

ASHMONT STREET

- 35 **Macedonia Armenian Methodist Episcopal Church** (1893) (Figure 46). A 1½-story, Late Victorian chapel with a bracketed steeple. Originally built for the People's Evangelical Church, which had previously met on Oxford Street, it is an unusually handsome small Victorian church building.

BEACON AVENUE

- 73-75 **Mary C. Dyer House** (1890). A 2½-story, Queen Anne, 2-family house with an interesting spindle-work porch and fan-gable ornament. The house was built as a rental property by Mary C. Dyer, a carpenter-housewright's widow, who owned a number of houses in this area. Albert and William Safford, partners in Ettlinger and Safford Jewelry Manufacturers on Point Street, were the first tenants. The jewelry industry became heavily concentrated in northern South Providence in the late 19th century, and the neighborhood housed many jewelry workers and manufacturers.
- 86-88 **George Dickinson House** (1890). A 2½-story, Queen Anne, 2-family house with a handsome porch decorated with floral bosses in the pediment. George Dickinson, a roll coverer employed in a factory at Borden and Clay streets, lived on Gallup Street for years before building this house in the elegant Beacon Avenue area.
- 103 **City Wardroom** (c. 1888). A 1-story, false-front hall with a stepped pediment and a large lunette window over the entrance. One of the few surviving city wardrooms in Providence, this building was used as a polling place and meeting hall for the various functions related to the ward political system of the 19th century.
- 104-106 **Beacon Avenue School** (c. 1885) (Figure 51). A 2½-story, brick-and-brownstone, Romanesque Revival schoolhouse with a rusticated-stone base. This building is notable for its excellent stone and brick detailing and powerful massing.

BISHOP STREET

- 60 **Joseph R. Ballou House** (1847-1849). A 1½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival cottage with a classically enframed door and corner pilasters. The house was built by Richard O. Moulton, a speculative builder-housewright who sold the completed structure to Ballou in 1849 for \$2000. Ballou was a roll coverer employed on Eddy Street.

BLACKSTONE STREET

- 350 **Dwight Baldwin House** (1887). A 2½-story, mansard-roofed house notable for its coved cornice and handsome, spindle-work corner, porch. Baldwin, a carpenter and pattern maker, probably executed the elaborate exterior carpentry himself (see 1002 Eddy Street).
- 356 **George William Smith House** (1886). A 2½-story, bracketed house with Italianate detailing. The Queen Anne semi-circular gazebo that was added to the Italianate veranda at a later date is an interesting feature. Smith was a clerk — equivalent of an executive today — who worked on Broad Street.
- 359 **Wendell P. Anthony House** (1887). A 2½-story, Queen Anne house notable for its complex massing, fancy shingling and fine oriel window. Anthony and his wife, Lora, began constructing this house in July of 1887 when they apparently encountered financial difficulty. In return for a life tenancy and the funds to complete the house, they deeded the property to Ruth Slater, wife of Alpheus B. Slater, who had recently completed her own new home at 251 Rhodes Street. Anthony was employed as the superintendent of the Elm Street Machine Shop before moving to Philadelphia in 1891. The house was built on land that had previously been part of Oxen Pond.
- 396 **Nellie Acly House** (1894). A Queen Anne, clapboard-and-shingle, 2½-story house notable for its handsome spindle-work porch and elaborately capped windows. This house, built as a rental property, was first occupied by Warren F. Howe, a clerk, and Wilbur A. Scott, a lawyer.

BRIGGS STREET

- 169 **Mason W. Tillinghast House** (1875). A 2½-story, Stick Style house with a handsome joinery porch and a massive, square, corner tower terminating in a copper finial. Mason Tillinghast was a cabinetmaker when he built this imposing mansion, and the elaborate detailing is probably his own craftsmanship. By the 1880s, he was a successful restaurateur at 12 Weybosset Street.

BROAD STREET

- 160 **Young Mens Christian Association** (1913). A 9-story, brick-and-limestone, hotel-type building with terra-cotta trim designed in the modern Beaux-Arts style by Shattuck and Hussey of Chicago. The building has a 2-story, flat-roofed, lobby wing in the front which was enlarged by a 2-story addition of modern design by Creer, Kent, Cruise and Aldrich in 1954-1956. The Providence YMCA was founded in 1854 at 56 Weybosset Street. After several moves, in 1889 the organization erected a building in the French Romanesque style designed by Stone, Carpenter and Willson at Jackson and Westminster streets. The Jackson Street building was demolished in 1912 when the present structure was begun.
- 188-194† **The Aylesworth Apartments** (c. 1889). A 2½-story, chateau-roofed, brick-and-shingle, Queen Anne apartment building. This, one of the handsomest of the few surviving 19th-century apartment buildings in Providence, was built as an investment by Eli Aylesworth, president of the Westminster Bank on Weybosset Street. The four large luxury apartments were first occupied by a physician, a drug store owner, a provisions merchant and a school teacher.
- 266 **Joseph R. Budlong House** (1849). A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with a classical entablature and front-door motif. The bracketed bay window is a later addition to this rare survivor of early residential settlement on Broad Street. The store front was added in the 20th century when Broad Street was becoming a commercial district. Budlong, a housewright in partnership with Joseph C. Fanning (see

684 Eddy Street), undoubtedly built the house himself. The Budlong and Fanning firm constructed a great many houses similar to this one throughout the city in the mid-19th century. Budlong's family continued to live here well into the 1880s.

- 342 **Trinity Battery Service Building** (1924). An unusually handsome, 1-story, flat-roofed, commercial structure with a deep wooden entablature and patterned brick walls. This building was constructed at a period when upper Broad Street was becoming a major automotive sales and retail accessory center in Providence.

- 514 **Nehemiah K. Sherman House** (1867). A 3-story, flat-roofed, Italianate style house with widely bracketed eaves and a paneled soffit. Although altered by the addition of a modern store front, this house is an interesting example of stepped-plan design made to accommodate its angled site at the corner of Friendship Street. Sherman acquired this lot from Thomas Snow in 1866 for the considerable sum of \$1000, an indication of high valuation of this prestige location at the intersection of two major thoroughfares. By 1867, he had occupied his new house and within the year moved his grocery business, Sherman and Andrews, into it.

- 543† **Edwin A. Grout House** (1867). A 2½-story, mansard-roofed, Second Empire house with quoined corners and a Palladian window. This imposing house stood across the street from the Jonathan (now demolished) and Andrew Comstock houses and within a block of the Nehemiah K. Sherman House and the first Israel B. Mason House (now 12 Dartmouth Street). All of these men were engaged in the provisions industry, Grout being a wholesale meat dealer. Broad Street at this period might well have been known as Butcher's Row. Grout was apparently caught in the Panic of 1873 and sold the house to S. G. Allen II for \$20,000. By 1875 his firm had been absorbed by his neighbors, the Comstocks.

- 550† **Andrew Comstock House** (1864) (Figure 29). A 2½-story, Second Empire house with a mansard roof and a hooded Palladian window. Comstock was a prominent Providence businessman who built this house with the proceeds of

his Civil War era fortune in the meat-packing industry. It was erected across the street from the house (demolished) of Jonathan Comstock, Andrew's brother and business partner, which was being built at the same time on the northeast corner of Broad Street and Comstock Avenue. This site was probably chosen because of its proximity to the Comstock's slaughterhouses on Willard Avenue. The two Comstock houses were built by master carpenter Lorenzo Vaughn at a cost of \$14,500 and were among the first houses built on Broad Street below Trinity Square.

- 570-572† **Charles Atwood House** (1897) (Figure 43). A 2½-story, Queen Anne house with a corner tower and a broad Colonial Revival veranda dating from the period when Broad Street was a prestigious residential area. Atwood, a real-estate agent with his office at 72 Winter Street, had inherited a fortune in rental real estate from his father. He had previously lived at his father's mansion at 1 Bridgman Street (demolished) before building this opulent home for himself.

- 571** **Israel B. Mason House** (1888) (Figure 41). A 2½-story, brick-and-slate, multiple gable-roofed, Queen Anne style mansion designed by Stone, Carpenter and Willson for prominent Providence meat packer Israel B. Mason. This excellently maintained house is lavishly detailed with an ornate Romanesque Revival veranda, scrolled window heads and magnificently decorated interiors with extensive paneling and ornamental plaster work. When it was completed, it was one of the finest and most expensive houses in Providence. The house has been used as a funeral home since Mason's death in 1916. Mason's earlier house on the site, erected about 1868, was moved to 12 Dartmouth Street in 1887 when construction began on his new mansion. Mason, like the Comstocks, had his first slaughterhouses nearby on Willard Avenue.

- 576 **Mary Carty House** (c. 1894). A 2½-story, Queen Anne, cross-gable-roofed house with a bracketed coved cornice, an indented-arch motif in the gable and a large Colonial Revival veranda. Mary Carty, a dressmaker who lived with her large family at 88 Blackstone

- Street, must have built this fine 2-family house as an investment.
- 593† **Edward E. Darling House** (1881). A 2½-story, Stick Style house with gable timbering, Eastlake window detailing and sawn porch ornament. Darling was a bookkeeper employed on South Water Street at the offices of the Rumford Chemical Works. Many of the fine houses built on or near Broad Street in the 1880s were owned by men whose occupations were listed as bookkeeper, or clerk, an indication of the high status and salaries of management-level workers at that period.
- 596† **George H. Busiel House** (1900). A 2½-story, Queen Anne house with a corner tower and a fine Colonial Revival veranda, notable for its very complex massing. Busiel was a bookkeeper who became treasurer of both the American Wood Paper Company and the Continental Steamboat Company as well as secretary of the Earl P. Mason Land Company before building this elaborate house in 1900.
- 601† **Robert E. Smith House** (1882). A 2½-story, elaborately ornamented, Stick Style house with iron cresting, extensive pseudo-structural gable timbering and a jigsaw work porch. One of the finest suburban houses on Broad Street, it was built by the prosperous owner of the R. E. Smith Coal and Wood Company at South Water and Weybosset streets. Smith was active in city politics and served as Commissioner of Public Works during the period when Elmwood Avenue was rebuilt and Blackstone Boulevard was planned. Recent alterations have obscured much of the fine detailing.
- 603† **George H. Smith House** (c. 1899). A 1½-story, gambrel-roofed house notable for its Colonial Revival detailing including Palladian windows and gambrel-roofed dormers. George Smith was a partner in Beamen and Smith Machine Tool Manufacturers whose plant at 20 Gordon Avenue is now part of the Providence Lithograph Complex. Smith was related to his neighbors, the R. E. Smiths, and his house was built on part of the original grounds of their house.
- 671 **Samuel Gray House** (1858). A 3-story Italianate palazzo style house with widely bracketed eaves that has had its fenestration unsympathetically modernized. Gray bought fifteen
- lots of land from W. S. Burgess and W. W. Updike for \$5,524 in 1857 with the express condition that he build, within eighteen months, two houses near Broad Street, each to cost at least \$3000 and be at least two stories high. Gray built this imposing mansion for himself and another smaller house that still stands at 27 Princeton Avenue. The conditions outlined in the deed were not unusual for the time and were designed to encourage further upper-class settlement in this undeveloped region and raise the property values of the land still owned by the Burgess and Updike company. Few people seem to have followed Gray's example, however, and several more decades were to pass before any extensive building occurred in the area. In 1858, this house was probably the only house on Broad Street below Trinity Square except for a few old farmhouses, since demolished, and was considered to be a country estate. Gray, whose occupation is unknown, sold the house to Albert D. Lippitt for \$14,000 in 1867. Lippitt, a partner in Lippitt and Harkness Dry Goods Company at 85 Westminster Street, in turn sold the estate to Benjamin B. Bogman in 1871. Bogman operated the Railroad Depot Saloon in Providence at the time.
- 677 **Frank W. Marden House** (1895). A 2½-story, cross-gabled, clapboard-and-shingle, Queen Anne house with elaborate gable bosses and a spindle-work veranda. Marden was a partner in Marden and Kettlety Jewelry Manufacturers. He and his partner, Kettlety, who built a house next door on Princeton Avenue in 1896, shared a carriage house across Broad Street (see Marlborough Avenue).
- 688 **Temple Beth El (Congregation of Shaare Zedek)** (1911) (Figure 55). A 2-story, Corinthian-classic, brown brick synagogue with a portico in antis. This building, designed by Banning and Thornton, replaced an earlier synagogue on Pine Street and served the congregation until 1954 when a new Temple Beth El was built on Orchard Avenue. It is now occupied by another Jewish congregation.
- 708 **Horatio N. Angell House** (1891). A 2½-story, Queen Anne, cross-gabled, 2-family house
- with a bossed, pedimented spindle-work porch, imbricated gable shingling and articulated fenestration. Angell sold Ochee Water — bottled spring water from Johnston — at his store at 22 Peck Street until his death in 1896 after which his wife Amie continued the business.
- 726 **James H. Hagan House** (1891) (Figure 41). A 2½-story, clapboard-and-shingle, Queen Anne house with a paneled pedimented front porch, spindle-work side porch and conical-roofed, octagonal corner tower. Hagan built this house for his own residence and 728-730 next door as a rental property in 1891 when he was a successful importer and bottler of liquors at 333 Richmond Street.
- 728-730 **James H. Hagan House** (1891) (Figure 37). A 2½-story, clapboard-and-shingle, cross-gabled, Queen Anne, two-family house notable for its elaborate spindle-work porch and paneled gable trim (see 726 Broad Street).
- 747† **Calvary Baptist Church** (1905) (Figure 64). Architect Arthur Eaton Hill's yellow brick, neo-Gothic church with an irregular plan and fine Gothic detailing. A notable feature is the copper lantern at the peak of the roof.
- 804-806 **Henrietta Westlock House** (1901). A 1½-story, clapboard-and-shingle, gambrel-roofed, Shingle Style double house notable for its spindle-work porches and numerous bay windows.
- 807† **Home for Aged Men** (1895) (Figure 49). A 3½-story, brick, Colonial Revival style building with three tetrastyle porticoes designed by architects Stone, Carpenter and Willson. A home for aged men had existed since 1874 at other locations until Henry J. Steere, millionaire owner of the Wanskuck Mills, died, leaving a bequest of \$150,000 to build a new structure. A site was selected on Broad Street and construction began about 1891. Within a few years of its completion in 1895, the facility was expanded to accommodate aged couples and the building was subsequently enlarged in the rear several times to its present size. It continues to serve its original purpose and currently houses about seventy persons.
- 814 **Frederick R. Young House** (1903). A rambling, Shingle Style, 1½-story house notable for its multiple gambrel roofs. Young was an insurance

agent and had his office in the Butler Exchange Building.

Jethro Hawes House (1897) (Figure 42). A 2½-story, Colonial Revival house with a tall, hipped roof. The handsome, semi-circular portico with ramped railings and the large Palladian windows are notable features. Hawes was a partner in George Hawes and Sons, manufacturers of steam traps at 23 Dyer Street. Hawes died within a few years of moving to his imposing new mansion from 168 Cypress Street and the house was sold to William McQuirk, a physician, who occupied it from 1913 until 1944. In 1948 it assumed its present occupancy by the Frank P. Trainor Funeral Home.

Harry Weiss Tract (1908-1910). Harry Weiss, a contractor and builder, constructed one of the largest and most remarkable residential and commercial developments of its day in Providence. The complex, originally consisting of twenty-two buildings, of which sixteen survive today, was a mixture of three-deckers and larger apartment houses created by combining two three-deckers into a single large building. At the most visually prominent part of his site, on the corner of Broad Street and Thurber's Avenue, he built a large commercial building with flats above.

Not much is known about Weiss today. He first appeared in the Providence Directory in 1906 as a painter and decorator at 160 Willard Avenue in the heart of the Jewish section. By 1907, he had branched into contracting in addition to painting and in 1908 was working only as a contractor at 377 Prairie Avenue. At this time, he began developing one of the last large tracts of vacant land in South Providence, between Pennsylvania and Thurber's avenues east of Broad Street.

Weiss also dabbled in the jewelry industry which was heavily concentrated in South Providence at the time. In 1910, he was listed both as a contractor and as a dealer in diamonds at 984 Broad Street, one of his own newly completed buildings. There are no further listings for Weiss after 1910 in Providence, Cranston or Pawtucket City Directories indicating that he must have died or

964-970

973

974-984
(Even Nos.)

1014

left the area.

Harry Weiss Block (1909). A 3½-story, Queen Anne commercial and residential block with a corner tower and arcaded loggias. The building has stores on the ground floor and apartments above, one of which was occupied by Weiss in 1909.

James A. Searle House (1874). A 2½-story, mansard-roofed house with bracketed bay windows and door hoods. Searle was a carpenter-builder when he built his well trimmed house in the latest mansard-roof style on the rural, lower end of Broad Street in 1874. By 1879 he was using his large country lot to grow produce for sale in Providence. Adjoining his property was the Park Garden Amusement Park.

Harry Weiss Tenements (1909). Two, 3½-story, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival apartment houses with handsome colossal porticoes and Colonial Revival detailing. These houses were designed by combining two standard three-deckers into a single structure unified by a monumental common entrance. Weiss occupied an apartment at 984 as a diamond merchant in 1910.

Harry Weiss Three-deckers (1908-1910). (Located at: 9-11, 13-15 and 17-19 Meni Court; 328-330, 340-342, 344-346, 348-350, 352-354 and 356-358 Thurbers Avenue; and 5-7, 9-11 and 13-15 Weiss Court.)

Twelve, clapboard-and-shingle, gable-roofed, three-deckers with projecting gabled bay windows, Tuscan-columned double porches and Queen Anne detailing. These identical houses are the remains of one of the largest three-decker tracts built in South Providence after the electrification of the streetcar lines made the southern end of Broad Street accessible to the working class. Weiss made this style house his trademark and repeated it throughout his South Providence tract without variation.

Plymouth Union Congregational Church (1915). An English Gothic style brick church with a handsome corner tower and traceried windows. Plymouth Congregational Church had been organized in South Providence in 1878 and had moved to Richardson Street (now Pennsylvania Avenue) in 1881. With the increasing settle-

ment in Elmwood, lower South Providence and Washington Park the congregation prospered and, in 1915, constructed the present building on Broad Street. In 1922, Union Congregational Church on upper Broad Street (Figure 46) merged with the Plymouth congregation. The resulting Plymouth-Union Congregational Church closed after its congregation moved to the suburbs in the 1970s. The building is currently occupied by the Holy Cross Church of God in Christ.

Liberty Theater (1921). A small, Beaux-Arts ornamented, brick theater with terra-cotta trim. This theater was part of the Bomes Chain and is typical of the small neighborhood theaters built after World War I when silent pictures became a popular and respectable family entertainment.

Willis L. Doe House (1903). A 1½-story, Shingle Style-Colonial Revival double house with elaborate Federal Revival detailing. It was built by a sergeant in the Providence Police Department.

New England Telephone Company (1930). A 2-story, brick-and-limestone, Georgian Revival building notable for its sophisticated composition and detailing. The Providence Telephone Company, which had been in existence since 1879, established an exchange on Broad Street in 1903 to service the affluent Elmwood, Washington Park and Edgewood areas. Years later, after it had been absorbed by the New England Telephone Company, this elegant Georgian Revival building was constructed.

CAHILL STREET

Ansel Sweet House (1887). A 2½-story, end-gable, two-family house with imbricated shingling on the bay window and a gabled door hood supported on elaborately scrolled consoles. This house was built as a rental property by a partner in Sweet, Fletcher and Company, Jewelry Manufacturers, who lived nearby. (See 174 Potters Avenue.)

William H. Midwood House (1894). A 2½-story, end-gable, Queen Anne, two-family house with a bracketed cornice, scalloped bargeboards and a spindle-work porch. Midwood, a partner in H. Midwood and Sons, Wholesale Grocers at

1017

1045-47

1096

359

439-441

100 Dyer Street, lived in one of the units with his family.

CHESTER AVENUE

100 **David W. Pettet House** (c. 1865). A 3-story, flat-roofed, Italianate house with a bracketed cornice and an elaborate door hood. One of the earlier houses on one of the first streets laid out in this part of South Providence, it belonged to a carpenter who probably built it as a rental property, since he himself lived on Broad Street from the mid-1860s until his death about 1890.

116 **Edwin Tetlow House** (1886). A 2½-story, Queen Anne house with handsome carpentry trim. The turned porch columns are unusually elaborate. Tetlow was listed as being a manager when he built the house.

COLFAX STREET

146-148
150-152
162-164 **The Arnold Lawton Houses** (c. 1885). Numbers 146-148 and 150-152 are a pair of 2½-story, slate-mansard-roofed, two-family houses with clapboards and octagonal, red-slate cladding and numerous, bay windows. Number 162-164 is similar to the above pair with a brick ground floor and a bay window terminating in a conical roof. Lawton who had lived on Colfax Street since the 1860s when he was a butcher, built these houses as rental properties about the time of his retirement from business.

COMSTOCK AVENUE

73-75† **Willard Manchester House** (1883). A 2½-story, mansard-roofed house notable for its elaborate double galleries with octagonal corner turrets. Manchester was a bookkeeper for Manchester and Hudson Building Supply Company which undoubtedly supplied much of the rich wooden detailing.

87† **John T. Cranshaw House** (1888). A 2½-story, clapboard, Queen Anne house notable for its fine, bowed spindle-work porch, stained-glass oriel window and rusticated brick foundation. Cranshaw was a clerk with Brown and Sharpe, the equivalent of an executive today, when he acquired this newly completed house at the mortgage foreclosure sale of its builder, Lemuel H. Foster, a lawyer, Cranshaw later became

a major factor in the firm and was an important benefactor of Rhode Island Hospital in 1922 when he helped establish the Jane Frances Brown unit for private patients.

113† **Charles E. Godfrey House** (1887). A 2½-story, Victorian house with Stick Style elements and wrought-iron cresting on the porch and roof peak. The Palladian window on the west elevation, the octagonal corner turret and the porch are among the many handsome features. One of the finest eclectic Victorian houses in South Providence, it was first occupied as the home of a teller at the National Bank of Commerce on Market Square. In the decade after its construction it changed hands several times in an incredibly complex series of bankruptcies and mortgage foreclosures until the mid-1890s when Freeloove Glines acquired it at the bankruptcy sale of its previous owner. The Glines family broke the house's jinxed reputation by their long term of ownership.

117† **Edward Stanley House** (1878). A 1½-story, slate-mansard-roofed, Second Empire cottage with an elaborate door hood with granite responds, a bracketed cornice and round-head dormers with engaged colonnettes. Stanley, a clerk at the Third National Bank, only occupied the house for one year although he continued to own it until 1886 when he sold it to Edward C. Almy, owner of Edward C. Almy and Company, Clothiers, at 116 Westminster Street. At the time Almy acquired the house, Stanley subdivided the original acreage, creating the lot on which number 113 was subsequently constructed.

118† **Frank P. Comstock House** (1887). A 2½-story, Queen Anne-Shingle Style, gambrel-roofed house exhibiting complex geometric massing and rich baroque ornamentation. Of note is the conical-roofed turret. Frank, the son of Andrew Comstock, had lived at his father's mansion at 550 Broad Street before building this house upon the occasion of his marriage. (See 550 Broad Street.) His lavish home was built in the backyard of his father's house. Frank was an executive with J. F. Comstock and Sons at 206 Canal Street, the family wholesale meat packing firm, and became a prominent Providence businessman and

socialite.

CRARY STREET

Site of the Gasometer (1872) (Figure 24). Prior to 1857, the Providence Gas Company erected a gasometer, a gas storage tank, near the intersection of Crary and Hospital streets. This small, round, brick structure was supplemented by one of the largest gasometers in New England in 1872. Designed by architect Clifton Hall, it was a 7-story, 142-feet-in-diameter, metal-lined, brick silo with a tall dome crowned by a lantern. This imposing landmark stood between Crary and Borden streets east of Clay Street until 1938 when, after having been abandoned for years, it was demolished for a playground. Its site is now occupied by I-95.

CROYLAND ROAD

5-7
9-11
10-12
22-24
21-51
(Odd Nos.) **Nathan Wiesel Three-deckers** (1907-1915). Four, 3-story, hip-roofed, clapboard-and-shingle, three-family houses with Tuscan-columned porches. This group of identical houses is representative of the South Providence work of this important, early 20th-century, speculative builder. Wiesel came to Providence about 1895 when he settled on Willard Avenue and began his career as a peddler. It was not unusual for Russian Jews to become peddlers soon after immigrating and settling in a Jewish neighborhood. Wiesel remained in the Jewish commercial section of South Providence, moving to various addresses on Willard and Prairie avenues, before establishing himself as a grocer at 371 Prairie Avenue about 1906. Later he became a fruit dealer. He developed this tract on Croyland Road between 1907 and 1915 as a part-time speculative venture. Wiesel's life and activities were typical of many Jewish immigrants to South Providence at the turn of the century.

DUDLEY STREET

8-12 **United States Gutta Percha Paint Company** (c. 1906). A large 4-story, brick, pier-and-panel, industrial building notable for its long, rhythmical facade and widely bracketed cornice. The plant was used for the manufacture

of house paint until the 1950s.

156-170 **Sigmund Rosen Three-deckers** (c. 1901, 1906). Six, 3½-story, cross-gabled, three-family houses with Queen Anne design features. These nearly identical houses are typical of the work of this early 20th-century speculative builder who lived at 12 Robinson Street before moving to 158 Dudley Street in 1904 and completing this tract. Rosen, like other developers in the area, pursued speculative building as a part-time occupation while continuing to work at the jeweler's trade.

232-234 **John F. Deary House** (1903). A 2½-story, brick-and-clapboard, end-gable, two-family house with Colonial Revival detailing. Deary was a sewer contractor who moved his residence and business to this house in 1903. The handsome carriage house was probably used to store building supplies and equipment for his contracting company.

EDDY STREET

593 **Rhode Island Hospital** (1864-1976). Although a hospital had been established near this site before the Revolution, the present Rhode Island Hospital complex was not begun until 1864 (Figure 47). After completion of the main building in 1868 few additions were made (with the exception of improvements to the 1862 Laundry-Power Plant) until the turn of the century. The Royal C. Taft Outpatient Building (Stone, Carpenter and Willson, 1891), a free-standing, brick, Renaissance Revival structure built near Eddy Street, was one of the first additions. It was a gift of Thomas P. I. Goddard. The first nurses home was built about 1893 as a result of a gift from Mr. and Mrs. George I. Chace. It stood near Lockwood Street (which at that time formed the northern boundary of the hospital grounds) until it was demolished in 1963. After 1900, numerous gifts and benefactions (particularly from the Sharpe, Brown, Metcalf and Ives families) enabled Rhode Island Hospital to expand its facilities. The Southwest Pavilion for women and children (Stone, Carpenter and Willson, 1900) was constructed in the eclectic Victorian Gothic style of the original 1864 Building and is still easily identifiable amidst modern encrustations by its high, dormered

roof and tall tower. In 1917 the Metcalf addition to the Taft Outpatient Building was constructed, followed by the Jane Frances Brown Building for private patients (1922 and extensively renovated 1959-1961); two employees' dormitories given by Mr. and Mrs. Jesse H. Metcalf (1926, 1929); Aldrich House, a nurses dormitory (1927); Peters House, an interns' residence given by Jesse H. Metcalf (1931); and the Samuels Dental Clinic, given by Colonel Joseph Samuels (1931). In spite of the large amount of new construction in the first three decades of the 20th century, the actual bed capacity of the hospital expanded very little, since practically all of the new buildings were employees' residence halls. It had long been the policy of Rhode Island Hospital that employees should live on the grounds. By the mid-1920s, Rhode Island Hospital served as the hospital for Providence and its surrounding area. Over 65 per cent of the patients were from Providence and about 70 per cent were treated free of charge, with the remainder paying only nominal fees. During the 1930s and 1940s, the physical plant of the hospital changed very little. The addition of the Josephine E. Potter Building for children in 1941 was the only major addition to the hospital complex between 1931 and 1955, with the exception of the enlargement of Peters House in 1948 to house more staff. In 1950, the administration recognized the pressing need to modernize Rhode Island Hospital—both its physical plant and its medical program. Although the hospital was still the largest and best equipped in southeastern New England, it was decided to institute a master plan to incorporate more facilities for medical education and research and to increase the service area to a larger region. The emphasis in the succeeding decades shifted from public patients to private ones, until by 1960, 70 per cent were private and 30 per cent were ward patients—an exact reversal of the situation in the early 1900s. The realization of the new master plan was partially made possible by large gifts from George H. Norman of Newport and Charles J. Davol of Providence in 1952

and 1953. By early 1956 the new main building, a 10-story X-shaped structure designed by Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson and Abbott of Boston, had been occupied. A gift from Daniel H. George made possible the construction of the George Building for the care of cancer victims, completed about 1959. Unfortunately, its construction necessitated the demolition of the entire original hospital building in 1956. Further progress in the 1950s and 1960s resulted in the construction of the Crawford Allen Memorial unit for children, adjacent to the Potter Building, in 1958; the Physician's Office Building, in 1961; the new nurses education building, on the former site of the Chace Building, in 1963; and a new emergency unit and nurses dormitory, both also about 1963-1964. The construction of the new center building in the late 1960s and additions to the Jane Brown Complex rounded out the Hospital's expansion. By the 1970s, Rhode Island Hospital had extended its boundaries north to Borden Street and across Plain Street to Beacon Avenue, resulting in great physical changes to the surrounding neighborhoods. From a small city hospital, it has grown into the major regional medical complex it is today, treating over 20,000 patients a year.

684 **Joseph C. Fanning House** (1853-1866). A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with paneled corner pilasters, a full entablature and a classically enframed entrance with transom and side lights. This house, a remnant of early residential development along the Pawtuxet Turnpike, was built by Fanning, a carpenter-builder in partnership with Joseph R. Budlong (see 266 Broad Street). The house was valued at \$3000 when it was sold to Jabez Gorham in 1866.

865 **George A. Rickard House** (1872) (Figure 28). A 2½-story, mansard-roofed, Second Empire style house with a handsome cupola and Gothic Revival side porch. Rickard was a grocer at 268 Benefit Street who constructed his elegant house as a twin to the house being erected next door by Edwin A. Briggs, a fruit and confectionery merchant whose business was located at 87 Weybosset Street. The Rick-

ard house is the sole survivor of the pair built when Eddy Street was a fashionable residential area. The carriage house, now converted into a residence, still stands behind the house.

909**

Christ Episcopal Church (1888) (Figure 44). A brick and brownstone, Victorian Gothic church designed by the prominent Providence architectural firm of William R. Walker and Son. The carved-brick detailing on the tower is especially fine. The congregation had been established in the area since 1864 and had erected a wooden chapel (Figure 31) designed by Clifton Hall on the corner of Oxford and Eddy streets in 1867. This building was moved to a site across Eddy Street when the present building was begun. The church is well preserved and continues to serve the congregation.

957-969
(Odd Nos.)
970

George A. Youlden Houses (1896-1898). See 12-52 Glenham Street.

Abram S. Goddard House (1863). A 2-story, Italianate house with especially fine pendant brackets and a matching door hood. The bracketed cupola is one of the finest in South Providence. This well detailed house, which is notable for being only two stories instead of the usual three, is an example of the fine suburban homes built on Eddy Street in the mid-nineteenth century. Abram Goddard, who operated a planing and molding shop on Potters Avenue, probably produced the elaborate brackets himself. He sold the house soon after completing it in January of 1863 for \$3500 to John Steere, a merchant. Goddard apparently used the profits from its sale to open a wholesale grocery business in 1863 on Exchange Place (now Kennedy Plaza). The Steeres stayed on in the house until the 1890s.

1002

Willard Johnson House (c. 1845-1853) (Figure 5). A 1½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with corner pilasters, a pedimented end gable with a deep entablature and a classically framed door with side lights. Johnson was a pattern maker at the Phenix Iron Foundry at Eddy and Elm streets. Pattern makers, skilled craftsmen who produced the original design after which mass-produced copies were modeled, were highly paid artisans in the 19th century.

FRIENDSHIP STREET

285* **Walter E. Gladding House (1888)**. A 2½-story, end-gable, Queen Anne house with a projecting bay window and a lattice-arch, recessed porch. Gladding operated a stable on Arsenal Lane and had lived nearby on Pine Street before building this house.

301* **Jonathan S. Angell Building (1847-1857)**. A 2½-story, end-gable, brick, factory building trimmed with granite. Of note is the brick pendant cornice. Angell, a partner in the carpentry firm of Angell and Sampson, owned this property from 1847 to 1886. Although this structure was erected prior to 1857, its first known use was as the Woodley Soap Company in 1887.

305* **Lucien B. Kendall House (1846)**. A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with classically enframed fenestration, corner pilasters and a portico that is now missing its original columns. Kendall, a carriage painter on Dorrance Street, bought this house from builder George A. Kenyon in 1846 for \$2000.

325* **Thomas Peck House (c. 1870)**. A 3-story, Italianate house with a widely projecting, bracketed cornice and a recessed entrance. Peck was a carpenter.

333* **Jonathan P. Helme House (1845)**. A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with corner pilasters and a portico that has had the original columns replaced with turned posts. Helme, a printer with his shop on Market Square, bought this house from its builder, Silas Weston, for \$2100 upon its completion in 1845.

347* **William Brand House (1887)**. A 2½-story, assymetrical, Eastlake style house with a fine bracketed oriel window. Brand was a manufacturer of hair goods on Mathewson Street.

367* **Samuel D. Wickes House (c. 1842-1844)**. A large, 2½-story, flank-gable Greek Revival house with fine interiors. The corner pilasters on the front of the house have been removed, as have the portico columns. The Wickes family operated a teaming business from the sheds adjoining the rear of this house in the 1840s and 1850s. (See 422 Pine Street.)

478-480

Henry Becker House (1889). A 2½-story, 2-family, Queen Anne house interesting for its rich surface articulation and geometric intricacy. Becker, a partner in Hancock, Becker and Company, jewelry manufacturers at 40 Clifford Street, moved here from 19 Hospital Street.

483-485

Thomas H. Rhodes House (1853-1855). A modest, 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house notable for its handsome, shallow portico. Rhodes purchased this house from its builder, William Clark, in 1855 for \$3000. Rhodes, a cashier at the State Bank on Westminster Street, must have acquired the house for rental purposes since he continued to reside at 31 John Street.

13-53
272-300
(Even Nos.)

GLADSTONE STREET POTTERS AVENUE

Powder House Plat Houses (1888-1889) (Figure 38). Twenty-eight, 1½- and 2-story, clapboard-and-shingle cottages built on speculation by East Providence builder Thomas Ray. This complete tract of houses illustrates Ray's genius for varying the architectural treatment of the facades by using different detailing and elements to create a diverse blockscape. Ray, who built primarily in East Providence, was notable for introducing the monthly payment plan in speculative building, thus making modest houses such as these easily affordable for working-class families. Between 1885 and 1895, Ray's company was engaged almost entirely in tract building in South Providence and Elmwood.

12-52
(Even Nos.)

GLENHAM STREET

George A. Youlden Plat Number Four (1896-1898). Thirteen, 1½-story, end-gable, Queen Anne cottages with spindle-work porches. Youlden built and sold these houses while a real-estate and mortgage broker at 199-201 Weybosset Street. Youlden, who lived at 296 Washington Avenue in Washington Park where he also built many similar houses, became a screen manufacturer at 48½ Peck Street in 1899. At this time he sold his real-estate interests and moved his residence to Edgewood. These speculator-built cottages are typical of

- the modest, standard-plan, Victorian tract houses erected for the middle class in the late 19th century. Youlden was one of South Providence's most prolific builders and several other tracts of his houses survive today, including: 957-969 (odd numbers) Eddy Street built about 1896-1898; George A. Youlden Plat Number Two, 291-307 (odd numbers) Potters Avenue built in 1894; and George A. Youlden Plat Number Three, 481-501 (odd numbers) Public Street built in 1896-1897.
- 76-78** **George H. Greene House** (1885). A 2½-story, end-gable, 2-family house with imbricated shingling in the gable and on the window hoods. The house is unusual for its two identical entrances flanking a paired center window. Greene was a floor manager for the Boston and Providence Clothing Company at 108 Westminster Street.
- 82-126** **GORDON AVENUE**
(Even Nos.) **Benjamin Rakatansky Three-deckers** (c. 1925) (Figure 57). Sixteen, 3½-story, clapboard-and-shingle, gable-roofed, three-family houses. Typical of the work of this important speculative builder in his developments, this is one of the largest remaining three-decker tracts in South Providence, although a number of the houses have been demolished. Benjamin Rakatansky came to Providence to work in the metals industries about 1914, probably soon after emigrating from Russia. He lived with relatives at 8½ Robinson Street in the heart of the Jewish neighborhood. About 1924, he became an independent contractor and within a short time was erecting three-deckers on Croyland Road and Gordon Avenue. His contracting business prospered and, in 1927, he moved from the family homestead on Robinson Street to a new suburban home at 95 Shaw Avenue and, in the 1930s, to another house at 158 Bluff Avenue, both in Edgewood. Contractors like Rakatansky, Rosen, Weiss and Wiesel were responsible for much of the 20th-century three-decker construction that has given South Providence its present character. (See Harry Weiss Tract, Broad Street; 5-7 Croyland Road; 156-170 Dudley Street.)
- 141-151**** **Saint Michael's School** (1925). A 2-story, flat-roofed, brick, school building designed by Ambrose Murphy. The school is notable for its historical importance as the focus of Irish Catholic parochial education in South Providence.
- HARVARD AVENUE**
Harvard Avenue (1875-1878). This street contains one of Providence's finest and most imposing collections of Second Empire style houses. These houses exemplify the upper-middle-class ideal in residential architecture after the Civil War. The large lots on Harvard Avenue were purchased by wealthy Providence merchants who vied with each other in building dignified houses with an appearance of formality and solidity that symbolized middle-class respectability and propriety at the period.
- 20-22** **William H. H. Butts House** (1878). A 2½-story, slate-mansard-roofed double house notable for its elaborately arched double entrance, hooded window, bracketed trim and gabled dormers. Butts was a card engraver and printer with his shop at 3 Weybosset Street.
- 39-41** **William Halton House** (1875). A large, 2½-story, mansard-roofed, double house with elaborate carpentry. The front additions are later. Halton was a dry-goods merchant at 214 High Street.
- 50** **Hiram B. Aylesworth House** (1875). A 2½-story, slate-mansard-roofed house notable for its elaborate fenestration, bracketed cornice, paneled corner boards and ornate dormers. The brick entrance pavilion was added when this large house was divided into apartments in the 1930s or 1940s. Aylesworth was a partner in Congdon and Aylesworth (Boot and Shoe Merchants at Pine and Peck streets), a judge and a prominent businessman.
- 57** **Charles H. George House** (1875). A 2½-story, mansard-roofed house notable for its elaborate carpentry and imposing formality. Of note is the Queen Anne spindle-work porch turret added at a later date. George was a partner in Charles H. George and Company, hardware dealers at 43 Weybosset Street. The fine carriage house, now converted to a garage, still stands on the property.
- 60** **H. B. Ellis House** (1900). A 2½-story, Colonial Revival house with carved floral ornament, a large veranda and a cove cornice. Ellis was a stockbroker with his office in what is now the Amica Building when he built this elaborate house.
- HASWELL STREET**
18 **Thomas W. Camm House** (1860). The unusual, 2½-story home of a prominent merchant, important for its historical value as a remnant of the mid-19th-century Burgess Cove suburban community. Camm was a wigmaker and hairdresser with a shop near Turk's Head who moved from Union Street to South Providence in 1861, so that he could keep his small yacht, *Henrietta*, at the foot of his lawn in now-vanished Burgess Cove. The projecting second story on the facade may have originally been an open loggia.
- HYLESTEAD STREET**
6 **Edward R. Mitchell House** (1847-1853). A 1½-story, Greek Revival cottage with corner pilasters, a deep entablature and a classical entrance with side lights. Mitchell owned a large number of house lots in the area and probably built this modest cottage on speculation. In 1853, he sold it for \$900 to Samuel G. Lorraine, a tailor with his shop at Market Square.
- LILLIAN AVENUE**
1-50 **Lillian Avenue**. An intact middle-class neighborhood built almost entirely between 1900 and 1908. The architecture of the modest single-family houses represents the late Queen Anne, the Colonial Revival and the Shingle Style types popular at the time. Lillian Avenue, with its interesting mix of standard plan and individually designed houses along this pleasant, tree-lined street, presents a picture of prosperous middle-class life in Providence at the turn of the century.
- 44** **Isaac H. Sisson House** (1896). A large, 2½-story, Victorian, clapboard-and-shingle house with a handsome porch and a prominent corner tower. This house, the first one built on the street, contrasts with the smaller, turn-of-the-century cottages built around it after

1900. Sisson was the superintendent of the Anchor Pearl Company at 92 Westfield Street.

LINDEN STREET

14-16*

Emilie Schmid House (1889). A 2½-story, mansard-roofed, two-family house notable for its exceptionally elaborate porch and imbricated shingling over the windows. The Schmid, who lived next door, owned the J. M. Schmid and Sons Cutlery Manufacturing Company on Westminster Street. This house was a rental property and was first occupied in 1890 by Henry C. Hay, pastor of the Church of the New Jerusalem Swedenborgian Congregation.

24*

William H. Crins House (1882). A 2½-story, Stick Style house on a well landscaped site that is notable for its elaborate detailing and excellent state of preservation. Crins had been a successful paint merchant on North Main Street and had lived at various addresses on Pine Street, the last being 477 Pine, for several decades before becoming president of Gorham Manufacturing Company in 1879. He continued as Gorham's chief executive until 1894 and built this house in 1882.

LOCKWOOD STREET

236

Josiah Tappan House (1866). A 3-story, flat-roofed, Italianate house with a widely bracketed cornice and an elaborate door hood. Nathan B. Fenner, a speculative builder and roofing contractor, built this house for Tappan, a Boston resident, for \$5000.

240

Nathan B. Fenner House (1882-1889). A 2½-story, slate-mansard-roofed house with an unusual roof turret and a spindle-work porch. The weather vane on the turret is notable. Fenner, who built several houses on Lockwood Street, left this one to his daughter, Adeline Read, upon his death in 1893.

MAPLE STREET

38*

William B. Remington House (1859). A 3-story, flat-roofed, Italianate house with widely bracketed eaves, window caps and an elaborate door hood. It is one of the best preserved houses of its kind in the neighborhood. Remington, a partner in Bentley and Remington

Merchant Tailors, built this house after acquiring the land from the Beneficent Congregational Church which had owned the lot as part of the West Burial Ground.

47*

John Henry Childs House (1869). A 3-story, flat-roofed, Italianate house with widely bracketed eaves and a door with side lights and a transom. This house, typical of the once numerous Italianate Palazzo style houses in the neighborhood, belonged to Childs, a carpenter, who probably had a hand in building it.

60*

William H. Dyer House (c. 1855). A square, 3-story, Italianate house with widely projecting eaves. This house was built and owned as a rental property by a housewright who constructed several of the finer houses in this neighborhood in the 1850s. (See 378, 389 and 391 Pine Street.)

MARLBOROUGH AVENUE

32-34

James A. Foster House (c. 1906). A 1½-story, duplex with multiple gambrel roofs and an elaborate festoon frieze on the porch entablature. Foster, owner of James A. Foster and Company, Jewelers, at Weybosset and Dorrance streets, built the house as a rental property.

Marden and Kettlety Carriage House (c. 1895). A large, brick and slate, carriage house with an elaborate, dormered roof, crowned with a cupola ventilator. This fine building was the carriage house for the F. W. Marden and C. L. Kettlety houses at Broad Street and Princeton Avenue (see 677 Broad Street). Although it was originally accessible from Broad Street, it now stands isolated in the middle of the block off Marlborough Avenue.

MENI COURT (See Broad Street, Harry Weiss Tract.)

MINER STREET

92-106
(Even Nos.)

Houses (c. 1875). A row of five, identical, 1½-story, end-gable cottages with bracketed door hoods. This row of modest laborers cottages, built and sold on speculation about 1875, is the oldest extant example of tract building in South Providence.

OXFORD STREET

136

Mary D. W. Searcy House (1870) (Figure 31). A 3-story, hip-roofed house that originally had a cupola. Although this house has been considerably altered, it appears in its original form in a pre-1885 photograph. Once part of a row of five, this house and 130 Oxford (now heavily altered) are the only survivors of a group of identical buildings that may have been early three-deckers. James McKenna, a carpenter at Ocean and Oxford streets, built these houses in 1870. He sold number 136 to Thomas Wyatt, owner of the New England Chain Works at Wyatt and Plain streets, in 1871 for \$3000. Wyatt, in turn, sold the house to widow Mary Searcy in 1872 who owned it until her death in 1885.

212-216

Luther Brothers' Factory (1872) (Figure 25). A 2-story, gable-roofed, industrial building. This simple factory, one of the first in the area, promoted settlement in this part of South Providence. Luther Brothers acquired the building in 1877 and moved their jewelry manufacturing business from Orange Street the same year. The building was constructed by the St. Michael's Total Abstinence and Benevolent Society; however, it is not known how the structure was utilized by this temperance organization.

239**

Saint Michael's Rectory (1925). A 3½-story, brick, gable-roofed building designed by architect Ambrose Murphy to house the parish offices and priests of Saint Michael's Church.

251**

Saint Michael's Roman Catholic Church (1891-1915) (Figure 54). An English Norman style, brick-and-brownstone church designed by architects Martin and Hall and decorated by Murphy, Hindle and Wright. The powerful massing of the church is complemented by the lavish, but somber, interiors. This church was the center of Irish community life in South Providence throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The congregation was founded near this site in 1857 in a wooden building, which was subsequently replaced by a brick church in 1867. These earlier churches have been razed.

265**

Saint Michael's Convent (1929). A 3½-story, brick-and-brownstone, cross-gabled, convent

with Tudor detailing. A wing was added to the west in 1957. This structure was designed by Ambrose Murphy to house the nuns who taught at the adjacent Saint Michael's School. The green terra-cotta tile roof is an unusual feature. The building is currently used as an alcoholics' rehabilitation center.

PAVILION AVENUE

Site **The Pavilion Hotel Site (1835-1857).** On a hill near Pavilion Avenue and Towner Street is the site of the 2-story, Greek Revival hostelry that served travellers on the Providence-Stonington Railroad at its terminus at Burgess Cove. The hotel was abandoned after the railroad moved its terminus to the foot of Lockwood Street in 1837 and it subsequently burned in 1857. The site of the village of Burgess Cove and the cove itself have been eradicated by Route I-95 and landfill. (See Thurbers Avenue.)

PEARL STREET

78 **James Mathewson House (1890).** A 1½-story, end-gable, Queen Anne cottage with patterned shingling and handsome wood detailing. This well preserved house, originally one of a row of similar houses, was first occupied by a jeweler when the long vacant Weybosset Plain Tract belonging to the heirs of Hope Ives was finally developed in the 1890s.

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

34 **James Fitzpatrick House (1902).** A 2½-story, Queen Anne, single-family, cross-gable house notable for its patterned-wood gable ornaments and fine spindle-work veranda and trim. Fitzpatrick was a partner in Fitzpatrick Brothers Restaurant at 59 Weybosset Street.

PINE STREET

350* **Olney Read House (1842)** (Figure 11). A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with paneled corner pilasters and a fine classically pedimented door. Olney Read was a coach and chaise maker with a shop on Richmond Street.

351* **Peleg W. Gardiner House (c. 1843-1845).** A 2½-story, flank-gable house with a handsome Italianate hood. This is one of the oldest surviving houses in South Providence. The door

hood was a later addition. Gardiner was a cotton merchant who lived farther downtown on Pine Street. The architecture of this house suggests an earlier date than 1843 and it is likely that Gardiner moved this building from a downtown location to his newly acquired lot, as he did several other houses later. (See 344 and 348 Willard Avenue.)

353* **Otis W. Potter House (c. 1843-1845)** (Figure 12). A 2½-story, 4-bay, flank-gable, Greek Revival house, unusual for its asymmetrical facade treatment. The fine pedimented door and window architraves are handsome features. The house, which once had paneled corner pilasters, was built by Peleg W. Gardiner and sold to Otis Potter, a clergyman, in 1845.

362* **Rufus Greene House (c. 1843).** A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with classically enframed fenestration and corner pilasters. Rufus Greene, a shipping merchant on South Main Street, apparently owned the house as an investment. He sold it to John W. Greene in 1866 for \$6000. The house remained in the Greene family until 1927.

372* **George A. Jenks House (c. 1844-1847).** A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with classically enframed fenestration and corner pilasters. Jenks was a prosperous machinist whose family continued to occupy this excellently preserved house into the 20th century.

377* **Stanton B. Champlin House (1869).** A 2½-story, bell-cast mansard-roofed house with a handsome modillion cornice and an unusual 3-tiered bay window. Champlin was a provisions merchant when he moved to this fine house from Stewart Street in 1869, although he later became a successful jewelry manufacturer.

378* **William H. Dyer House (1842)** (Figure 10). A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house notable for its excellent detailing. The Ionic portico, corner pilasters and 2-panel doors with anthemions are especially fine. William H. Dyer, a housewright who built this and other houses in the area for speculation, sold the house to his brother, George, in 1857.

389* **William H. Dyer Houses (c. 1855).** A pair of

391* 3-story, Italianate houses with widely brack-

eted eaves and Italianate door hoods. These houses were built as investments by William H. Dyer, a housewright, who also built and owned several other similar houses in the area in the 1850s and 1860s. (See 60 Maple Street.)

392* **Charles W. Holbrook House (1869)** (Figure 15). A 3-story, flat-roofed, Italianate house with a corner tower and widely bracketed eaves, built by a manufacturer of textile machinery and leather goods. This is one of the handsomest towered Italianate houses of its kind in Providence.

399* **Joseph P. Haskins House (1857-1862).** A 2½-story, end-gable, transitional Greek Revival-Italianate house. The form of the house is Greek Revival but the high eaves line, bracketed cornice, door hood and round-head gable windows are Italianate features. Haskins was a box manufacturer whose factory was nearby at Summer and Meadow streets.

413-417* **John B. Wood House (1857)** (Figure 16). A 3-story, brick, widely bracketed, Italianate double house notable for its fine masonry and handsome porticos. This is one of the finest brick Italianate houses in the city and is one of the only double houses of this type extant. It was the most expensive house in the neighborhood when it was built in 1857 by Wood, a jewelry manufacturer, and was valued at over \$13,000.

422* **Samuel D. Wickes House (1843-1857).** A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with corner pilasters and a pedimented door. Wickes, who probably built this house at the same time he built 367 Friendship Street (which was between 1843 and 1845), also built the sheds connecting the two buildings to house his teaming business. It is believed that his drivers were housed in these buildings. (See 367 Friendship Street.)

427* **D. Russell Brown Houses (1880).** A matched pair of 2½-story, mansard-roofed houses. Number 427 is closest to original condition and shows the paneled wall surfaces, cove cornices, pedimented windows and ornate porches that distinguish these designs as among the most elaborate houses of their kind in Providence.

431* **D. Russell Brown, a partner of Brown Brothers and Company, a machinery and mill supply**

- firm, who later served as Governor of Rhode Island from 1892-1895, built these houses on speculation in 1880 when he was a city councilman.
- 428*** **Thompson-Hawes House** (c. 1863) (Figure 14). A 3-story, hip-roofed, Italianate house notable for its rich architectural treatment. George S. Thompson, who built the house, was an ornamental carpenter who lavished his skill on his own house before selling it to Amos B. Hawes, a famous 19th-century Providence dentist, in 1869. This excellently preserved building is the most ornate of its kind in South Providence.
- 430*** **George Bourn House** (1859). A 3-story, flat-roofed, Italianate house with widely bracketed eaves and an unusual door hood surmounted by an oriel. The house originally had corner pilasters. George Bourn was a grocer at Richmond and Ship streets who occupied the house until 1888 when he moved next door to 434 Pine Street and rented out his former residence.
- 433*** **Esek Tallman House** (1864). A 1½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with dentil-work trim. This house is an interesting late Greek Revival cottage, with a Victorian side porch, that is unusual for its three, large, end chimneys. Tallman, a carpenter-builder, built this house as his own home although he sold it in 1877 to Mary S. Cole, a widow.
- 434*** **George Bourn House** (1859 and 1888). A 2½-story, Queen Anne house with a corner turret and an Italianate entrance treatment. George Bourn, who lived next door at number 430, totally rebuilt this portion of his property in 1888 in the fashionable Queen Anne style for his own residence. The core of the building was constructed between 1859 and 1875. Although it is not known what it was originally used for, it has always been connected by a wing with number 430. Bourn occupied number 434 until his death about 1900.
- 442*** **Caleb C. Greene House** (c. 1859). A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with corner pilasters and a massive transitional Italianate door treatment. Greene, a grocer at Hospital and South streets, first occupied the house in 1860.
- 446*** **John Congdon House** (1850-1854). A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with corner pilasters and a classical door treatment. Of note is the Gothic Revival rear porch and the carriage house with cupola. Congdon, a carpenter, only occupied the house until 1857 when he sold it to Joshua Gray, a watchmaker and jeweler, who lived here until the 1890s.
- 458*** **Stanton B. Champlin House** (c. 1885). A 2½-story, slate-mansard-roofed house with window caps, a bracketed cornice, gabled dormers and a side loggia. This large, excellently detailed house was built by Stanton Champlin, a successful jeweler, who lived at 377 Pine at the time. (See 377 Pine Street.)
- 477*** **William H. Crins House** (c. 1850). A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with corner pilasters. It was occupied by William H. Crins, President of Gorham Manufacturing Company, before he built 24 Linden Street in 1882. He subsequently rented number 477 until the early 20th century when it was converted into a 2-family house and the current pair of doors replaced the original single entrance. (See 24 Linden Street.)
- 478*** **Henry Simon House** (1850). A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with corner pilasters and a classical entrance motif. The store front was added about 1900. Simon, a jeweler employed at 259 Friendship Street, bought the house from its builder, Allen Chilson, a carpenter-housewright, in March of 1851 for \$3000.
- 481*** **Joseph W. Davis House** (1852). A 1½-story, Gothic Revival cottage on a granite base with two handsome trellis-work porches and a gabled center pavilion with an attenuated bay window. One of South Providence's few Gothic Revival cottages, this is an excellently proportioned building that probably originally had barge-board trim. Nothing is known about Davis' occupation although he shared the house with Richard B. Davis, a painter, in 1854, and it is possible that both men were in the construction trades. In 1865, the house was sold to Edward H. Harris, a saloon keeper who had lived next door at number 485 since at least 1849, and it remained in the possession of his daughter until 1920.
- 498-502** **Harold Gordon Service Station** (1926). A 1-story brick-and-stone building with a stone, 2-story, conically roofed, hexagonal, corner tower. This unusual building is important as an example of an individualized service station before the standard designs of the major oil companies became predominant.
- PLAIN STREET**
- 111** **Fifth District Police Headquarters** (1886). A 3½-story, brick-and-granite, hip-roofed building now used for offices. It housed the South Providence Precinct Police Station until 1947.
- POINT STREET**
- 297*** **John Freeborn House** (c. 1882). A shingle-and-clapboard, 2½-story, mansard-roofed house with an Eastlake style porch, patterned wall shingling, a diagonal, corner-bay window, patterned-slate roof, dentil cornices and belt courses. This massive square house is a very original design, incorporating elements of several of the styles current in the early 1880s. Although Freeborn owned this house until 1905, he primarily lived in Newport.
- 309*** **Benjamin Bogman House** (1854). A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with a deep entablature, corner pilasters and an Italianate door hood that was probably added later. Bogman was a surveyor of lumber when he built this house.
- POTTERS AVENUE**
- 174** **Ansel L. Sweet House** (1879). A 1½-story, cross-gabled house with a modillion cornice, window caps and square bay windows flanking an entrance with an ornate door hood supported on scrolled consoles. Sweet was a partner in Sweet, Fletcher and Company, jewelry manufacturers. (See 359 Cahill Street.)
- 272-300 (Even Nos.)** **Powder House Plat Houses** (1888-1889). See 13-53 Gladstone Street.
- 291-303 (Odd Nos.)** **George A. Youlden Plat Number Two Houses** (1894). See 12-52 Glenham Street.
- PRAIRIE AVENUE**
- 281** **Oscar N. Bender House** (1889). A 2-story, clapboard-and-shingle, Queen Anne, cross-gabled house notable for its handsome spindle-

work veranda, gable timbering and copper roof cresting. This unusually handsome example of a small Queen Anne house was built by a manufacturer of cable supports and hangers.

364 **Saint Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church-The Sons of Abraham** (1888, 1938). A red brick, High Victorian Gothic, Protestant church built in 1888, that was remodelled by Dmitri and Dmitri, Architects, in 1938 to its present Neoclassical appearance when it became a synagogue. Since 1967 it has housed a Black Protestant church, the Mount Calvary Church of the Deliverance. The various tenants of this building parallel the changes in the ethnic composition of South Providence.

445 **South Providence Branch Library** (1930). A 1-story, brick, Georgian Revival building with an elaborate Palladian door treatment, round-head windows and a modillion cornice designed by Howe and Church. The siting of this building adjacent to the Saint Michael's church complex firmly established it in the cultural center of South Providence.

546 **United Electric Railways Car Barn** (c. 1900). A 1-story, brick building with multiple, garage-door openings built for the storage and servicing of trolley cars. The brick corbelling at the cornice and the pier-and-panel wall motif are the building's chief ornament. The original car barns for the South Providence horsecars were established on this site in 1865. The building erected at that time was identical to the still extant Elmwood car barn on Bucklin Street and was designed by James Bucklin. It was replaced by the present structure after the electrification of the system in 1892 required larger and more modern facilities.

PUBLIC STREET

252 **Public Street Grammar School** (1908). A 3-story, brick, public school building with classical features including arched fenestration, a massive, quoined, round-head window, a modillion cornice and a classical entrance motif. In the 1920s, this grammar school, which somewhat corresponded in educational level with today's junior high school, became a primary school. The building later became known as the Temple Street School and was most re-

cently used as a Project Head Start Facility. It is one of the few surviving old school buildings in South Providence today.

263**

David Sprague House (c. 1840) (Figure 3). A handsome, 1½-story, Federal dwelling with a side-light entrance. This house, probably the oldest indigenous building in South Providence, was built by a meal dealer whose daughter continued to occupy it until 1932.

347

Ephraim Richmond House (c. 1865). A plain, 2½-story, end-gable house with a vestigial Greek Revival entablature and corner boards. The door hood, supported on elaborately scrolled consoles, may be a later addition. Richmond, a grocer, sold this house and the adjacent lot to Charles S. Randall who subsequently built number 355 and continued to own both properties into the 20th century.

355

Charles S. Randall House (c. 1870). A 1½-story, cross-gabled cottage with a dentil cornice, a trellis-work side porch and an elaborate scroll-saw ornamented door hood.

356

William H. Luther Hook and Ladder Company Number Five (1885) (Figure 52). A 2-story, brick, Victorian firehouse with an elaborate parapet and a bracketed cornice. This, the oldest surviving fire station in South Providence, was named in honor of a neighborhood jewelry manufacturer who donated the fire fighting equipment. (See 212-216 Oxford Street.)

421-423

James J. Harden House (1904) (Figure 56). A 3½-story, cross-gabled, Queen Anne three-decker with a spindle-work porch and patterned, gable ornaments. One of the most elaborate three-deckers in the Queen Anne style, it was built by a watchman and laborer.

437

Walter H. Johnson House (1884) (Figure 34). A 2½-story, clapboard-and-shingle, 2-family house notable for its variety of wall surface treatments, excellently detailed porch, sash bordered with small multi-color panes and pent-gable roof. Johnson, a patternmaker dealing in office furniture on Pine Street, bought this newly built house as rental property (see 1002 Eddy Street).

481-501
(Odd Nos.)

George A. Youlden Plat Number Three (1896-1897). See 12-52 Glenham Street.

221-223†

RHODES STREET

Patrick Gaffney House (1894). A 2½-story, end-gable, Queen Anne, 2-family house notable for its handsome wood detailing, cove cornice and paneled gable treatment. Gaffney was a retail liquor dealer with his shop at 495 Eddy Street.

231†

William C. Rhodes House (c. 1860) (Figure 13). A 2½-story, Italianate house with a dormered, low-hipped roof. This house is notable for its extraordinarily rich architectural treatment, including quoined corners, bracketed cornice, handsome Palladian window, elaborately hooded entrance treatment and round-head dormers. The house was actually constructed on the Caroline Rhodes Estate at the southeast corner of Eddy and Rhodes streets about 1860 and was moved to this lot about 1889 by William C. Rhodes when its original site was subdivided. Since Rhodes lived at 200 Hope Street, he rented this house to Henry J. Alfreds, a registered pharmacist dealing in drugs, medicines, chemicals and paints at 811 Eddy Street.

236†

Asahel Herrick House (c. 1855). A 2½-story, cross-gabled, bracketed, Italianate house. It is an unusual example of the style because of its long rectangular shape and cross-gable roof. The door hood and cupola are handsome features and the house originally had quoined corners. Asahel Herrick was a machinist. When he built his large house about 1855, Rhodes Street was part of Cranston. Asahel lived in the house with his family, one of whom was George L. Herrick, a musician with his office at 87 Westminster Street, who acquired the house and occupied it into the 20th century. George, however, must not have been as successful as Asahel because throughout the late 19th century he took in ever increasing numbers of boarders—at times as many as fourteen. (See Figure 53).

251†

Alpheus B. Slater House (1882-1889). A handsome, 2½-story, brick-and-shingle, Queen Anne house set on well landscaped grounds. The house, which replaced Slater's earlier house on the site, is one of the finest examples of this style in South Providence. Slater, who was the Treasurer of the Providence Gas Company whose offices were in the What Cheer

Building (demolished) near Market Square, moved to Rhodes Street in 1865 and built a low-hip-roofed, 2-story house with bay windows and Italianate detailing. (It is across the street from the Smith House in Figure 53). Between 1882 and 1889, probably closer to the latter date, he built this lavish new house on the site of his earlier home. It was not unusual for a successful man to build a new home at the time of his retirement from business in the 19th century; and, shortly afterwards, Slater left his position with the Providence Gas Company.

252† **John Smith House** (c. 1868). A 2½-story, cross-gabled, bracketed house with Italianate detailing. This house has been little altered from its original condition and is an excellent example of an upper middle-class suburban house in the Italianate bracketed style. Smith was a partner in William Smith and Company, jewelry manufacturers at 118 Dorrance Street, when he moved to Rhodes Street and built this house.

120** **ROBINSON STREET**
Mathew Lynch House (c. 1750-1770) (Figure 21). A 1½-story, gambrel-roofed, Colonial house moved to South Providence about 1865 by Irish immigrant Mathew Lynch. The house reportedly stood on Westminster Street near Grace Church and was moved to its present site when Robinson Street was developing as an Irish immigrant neighborhood called Dogtown.

31* **SEEKELL STREET**
William H. Hudson House (1839-1857). A 2-story, end-gable, vernacular house. This house is one of the oldest in South Providence and was built by Hudson, a carpenter-housewright, on a lot subdivided from the Providence Aqueduct Company Tract. Although typical of many modest houses built in the 1830s and 1840s in Providence it is one of the very few surviving today. Hudson himself never actually occupied this house, but lived nearby at 173 Pine Street. Later in life, he became a grocer and a policeman.

8 **SOMERSET STREET**
Frederick I. Marcy House (1875). A 2½-story, mansard-roofed house with elaborate bay windows and wrought-iron roof cresting. The well kept lawn is surrounded by a wrought-iron picket fence. Marcy was a partner in Sturdy and Marcy, jewelry manufacturers at 95 Pine Street, when he built his large home near Broad Street.

107† **STEWART STREET**
Electric Building (1882, 1890). A 4-story, brick-and-granite, industrial building built for the manufacture of electric engines. This unusually handsome factory with its bands of windows unified by granite courses still maintains its architectural value even though it has had much of its cornice removed and modern sash installed. The building housed the American Electrical Works Company until 1892 when the firm moved to Phillipsdale.

109-111† **SUMMER STREET**
J. P. Haskins Building (1888). A handsomely detailed, 4-story-and-basement, brick, factory building with a corbeled cornice and hood molds. J. P. Haskins who manufactured wooden kegs and packing boxes, lived nearby. (See 399 Pine Street.)

Site **THURBERS AVENUE**
Rotten Row (c. 1830-1960) (Figure 4). The site of "Rotten Row," officially known as Kay Street, the former main street of the early 19th-century village of Burgess Cove. After the Providence and Stonington railroad terminus moved up the harbor in 1837, Kay Street became a colorful Irish and Yankee working-class neighborhood. The site is now occupied by the I-95 Thurbers Avenue Interchange, and Burgess Cove has been filled in. It was named for the generosity of the Irish residents who gave so freely to the Church that a 19th-century priest of Saint Michael's parish exclaimed that he felt as if he were on Rotten Row, one of the most fashionable streets of London, rather than on a street of poor laborers. Kay Street subsequently became informally

198 known as Rotten Row.
Roger Williams Housing Project (1942-1944) (Figure 60). Twenty-eight, 3-story, red brick, flat-roofed, apartment buildings with simple detailing consisting of bands of raised brick and semi-circular corner porches. The 744 units were built by the Housing Authority of Providence to house low-income families, defense-industry workers and returning World War II veterans during Providence's brief wartime boom. The grounds include a day-care center (c. 1970) and an administration building (1942). The regimented blocks of buildings on pleasantly landscaped grounds were an early experiment in garden apartment planning in Providence. Maximilian Untersee of Brookline, Massachusetts, was the consulting architect.

278 **Roger Williams Middle School** (1932) (Figure 61). A 4-story, brick-and-limestone, flat-roofed, Georgian Revival school building with a colossal portico designed by the Office of the Commissioner of Public Buildings.

15 **TRASK STREET**
David J. Burgess House (1856). A 1½-story, end-gable, transitional Greek Revival-Victorian house notable for its fine carpentry on the front porch and bay window. The house's builder, William H. Wood, a woodworker at the Providence Machine Company (Figure 23) on Eddy Street, lavished his skill on the detailing of this ornate cottage. Wood sold the house to David J. Burgess upon its completion in 1857 for \$1500. Burgess, a clerk on Canal Street at that time, opened a restaurant at 5 Canal Street in 1861.

9, 15† **WESLEYAN AVENUE**
Eugene M. Sawin Houses (1890). A pair of identical, 2½-story, clapboard-and-shingle, Queen Anne houses notable for their complex massing, gable ornaments and oriel windows. The importance of surface texture is emphasized by the imbricated shingling and rusticated brickwork. Sawin was a partner in John M. Dean and Company, dealers in house furnishings, at 321 High Street when he built number 15 for his own residence and

number 9 for rental purposes.

25† **Augustine H. Downing House** (1910). A 2½-story, shingled, pent-gable-roofed house notable for its elaborate neo-Gothic entrance vestibule. This is an interesting example of the plain boxy houses typical of World War I era suburban architecture, but rare in South Providence. Downing was a lawyer with his office in the Grosvenor Building.

40-42† **Herbert W. Greene House** (1881). A 1½-story, mansard-roofed, double house notable for its elaborate entablature, hip-roofed dormers, bracketed bay windows and Stick Style porch. This is an unusual example of a mansard-roofed double house with very elaborate trim. Herbert W. Greene was a partner in A. Crawford Greene and Son, Printers and Publishers, who published the *General Advertiser*, *The Weekly Gazette*, *The City Tax Book* and the *Rhode Island Farmer's Almanac*.

48† **Amanda G. Harris House** (1883). A 2½-story, cross-gabled house notable for its sawn bargeboards, bracketed bay windows and ornate window hood. The unusual massing of this house is accentuated by fine trim. The patterned, slate roof is another handsome feature. Amanda Harris, a widow, shared this house with a relative, Jabez G. Harris who was Treasurer of the Providence Lithograph Company at 31 Pearl Street.

53† **Samuel B. Darling House** (1885) (Figure 39). A 2½-story, cross-gabled, Stick Style house notable for its elaborate trim. This house, with its patterned, slate roof, rusticated granite foundations and neo-Gothic porch, was built for Darling, a partner in Brown and Sharpe, who moved here from Prospect Street. He retired from business in 1894 and devoted his time to campaigning against compulsory vaccination until his death in 1900. His only child, Mary Ella Jackson, subsequently inherited the house.

WEST CLIFFORD STREET

100 **House of the Intercessor Mission Church** (1870). A 2-story, end-gable building with a 5-bay, center-entrance facade built as an Episcopal Mission. The building retains its original windows although the porch is probably a later addition. It is now used as a residence.

WILLARD AVENUE

140 **House** (c. 1850). A 2½-story, end-gable, Greek Revival house with corner pilasters, classical door treatment and a classical entablature. Little is known about the early history of this house which was moved to this site in 1889 from an unknown location. In the early 20th century, it was abutted by the small synagogue of the Linnath Hazedek Congregation, which still stands next to the house. At this period, Willard Avenue was the center of a large, flourishing Jewish community and contained four synagogues. The Linnath Hazedek building, no longer used, is the only one remaining today.

344 **Peleg W. Gardiner House** (c. 1835). A 2-story, end-gable, vernacular house with 6-over-6 windows, a hooded door with side lights and transom and a side door with a transom. This is an interesting early house that was moved here between 1856 and 1875 during the period when this area was being settled by the Irish. Gardiner, a cotton merchant, owned a number of rental properties in South Providence (see 351 Pine Street). All of these houses are conspicuous for their architectural styles which invariably pre-date the development of the neighborhoods in which they are located. Since Gardiner owned considerable real estate in the West Side business district, it is possible that he moved these buildings from downtown sites that were being more intensively developed in the 1860s. Both 344 and 348 Willard Avenue are older houses that were relocated to their present sites when the demand for cheap housing in the growing Dogtown Irish community made it profitable to do so.

348 **Peleg W. Gardiner House** (c. 1815) (Figure 22). A 2½-story, 5-bay, center-chimney, flank-gable, Federal style house with quoined corners, a pendant cornice and splayed window lintels. This well detailed house with its later side-light door and Italianate hood was also moved here between 1856 and 1875 when the Irish began to settle in the area. Moving houses in the 19th century was much cheaper than new construction and was a very common practice. (See 344 Willard Avenue.)

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