



ELMWOOD, PROVIDENCE

This report is published by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission as part of the program set forth in Rhode Island's "Historical Preservation Plan," first edition (1970). It is jointly sponsored and funded as a planning tool by the Commission and the City of Providence. Commission activities are supported by state and local funds and by the Department of the Interior, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. City funding was provided through the Mayor's Office of Community Development.

The city and the state Historical Preservation Commission are jointly sponsoring a comprehensive historical survey of Providence. When complete, this planning study will include an overview report on the city as a whole and individual reports on historic neighborhoods. The recently completed South Providence report was the first publication produced through this cooperative effort; this Elmwood report is the second.

The Rhode Island Historical Society has made an invaluable contribution to the preparation of this report through the assistance of its staff and library.

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Cover: John McAuslan House (c. 1880); formerly at 544 Elmwood Avenue, drawing, c. 1886; demolished.

Title Page: Trinity Square; photograph, c. 1886.

This document is a copy of the original survey published in 1979. It has not been corrected or updated.

Since the original publication:

- >additional properties have been entered on the National Register;
- >some financial incentives referred to in these pages are no longer available;
- >some new financial incentives are available.

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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.

Elmwood, Providence
Statewide Historical Preservation Report P-P-3



Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
June 1979



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

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

June 25, 1979

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 Elmwood, Providence -- Statewide Historical Preservation Report P-P-3, the thirteenth publication in the Statewide Historical Preservation Report series.

This report provides an analysis of the historical and architectural growth of the Elmwood neighborhood of Providence and recommends a preservation program which should be incorporated into the city's overall planning effort.

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. Ten additional reports are now being prepared; their completion will contribute significantly toward the achievement of our goal of producing reports on all thirty-nine cities and towns in the state. Two reports have already been published concerning Providence neighborhoods: The West Side, Providence and South Providence; in draft form and scheduled to be printed are Smith Hill, Providence, and Downtown Providence; in addition an overview or "broadbrush" report for the entire city, Providence, Rhode Island will also be published.

The Commission believes that its effort, as represented by this and its other reports, will further the cause of historical preservation in Rhode Island.

Very sincerely,

Mrs. George E. Downing
Chairman



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

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

June 25, 1979

The Honorable Vincent A. Cianci, Jr.
Mayor
The City of Providence
25 Dorrance Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Mayor Cianci:

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission is pleased to submit in final published form this survey and report -- Elmwood, Providence -- Statewide Preservation Report P-P-3. The product of detailed study, chiefly by Robert O. Christensen of the Commission staff, it is in a true sense a joint effort on the part of the City of Providence, the State Commission, and the residents of the Elmwood neighborhood. Not only has the local financial match been supplied by your office through the city's Community Development program, but our work has been benefited by the generous efforts of many city officials and private citizens who have contributed time and shared information of great importance for this study.

Two reports have already been published concerning Providence neighborhoods: The West Side, Providence and South Providence, Providence. In draft form and scheduled to be printed are Smith Hill, Providence and Downtown Providence; in addition, an overview or "broadbrush" report for the entire city, Providence, Rhode Island will be published.

We hope Elmwood, Providence will prove of lasting value to the neighborhood and to the city as a whole as an educational and planning tool, serving as a guide to Elmwood's rich history and cultural heritage, and providing a vehicle to further stimulate neighborhood revitalization.

Yours very truly,

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 Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, United States Department of the Interior. Citizen members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor; serving as ex-officio members are the Director of the Department of Economic Development, the Director of the Department of Environmental Management, the Chief of the Division of Statewide Planning, the State Building Code Commissioner, and the Chairmen of the House and Senate Finance Committees of the General Assembly. 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 responsibilities 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 historic preservation, by undertaking special-project-review studies; the certification of rehabilitation projects under the Tax Reform Act of 1976; the review of federal, state, and municipal projects which may affect cultural resources; 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. During the survey, consideration is given to the total environment of the area being studied. 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.

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Mawney Street, photograph, c. 1896.

I. INTRODUCTION

This historical survey of a large section of southwestern Providence, including Elmwood, West Elmwood, and parts of the West End was undertaken for the city by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission with funds provided by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior, the State of Rhode Island, and the Mayor's Office of Community Development. The long-range goal of the city and Commission in helping to fund this survey has been to undertake a project aimed at increasing awareness within the survey area as well as the city at large of the significance and potential of these residential neighborhoods. For this reason, the results of the survey are presented in this publication, which will be distributed free of charge.

In addition, the Elmwood survey must be viewed in a city-wide context. In cooperation with the Mayor's Office of Community Development, the Preservation Commission has embarked on a survey program designed to document all of the city's historic areas and scattered, individual historic sites. Conducted over several years, this project will expand the coverage already provided by the landmark *College Hill* report first published in 1959, and by the 1976 *West Side* and 1978 *South Providence* reports published by the state Commission. The present coordinated effort will eventually produce a publication giving a summary overview on the entire city and, in addition to this *Elmwood* report, other neighborhood surveys on areas like Smith Hill and the downtown.

The Elmwood project was inaugurated in June, 1976. The survey area's northern and eastern boundaries correspond with the edges of the already completed West Side and South Providence historical surveys; in several cases, buildings on both sides of a major artery which forms the divider between Elmwood and one of these sections were investigated as part of the earlier project. Therefore, buildings fronting on the south and west sides of Westminster, Cranston, and Messer streets, for the most part surveyed as part of the West Side, are not discussed in this report—nor, in general, are the structures on the west side of Broad Street, which were investigated as part of the South Providence project.

To accomplish the goals of the project, several steps were necessary, including a field survey, historical research, preparation of maps, and the final survey report. A standard survey form, the "Historic Building Data Sheet," has been prepared by the Historical Preservation Commission for use throughout the state. This sheet includes both historical and architectural information and a photograph of each building or site. Historical information was obtained through the use of maps, street atlases, published and unpublished histories, guidebooks, manuscripts, newspapers, periodicals, directories, and public records. In many cases, deed research was necessary to establish dates of structures. Data from the survey forms was ultimately transferred to maps, to make information pertaining to historic preservation readily available for planning purposes. For the Elmwood survey approximately three thousand structures and sites have been surveyed and recorded. A detailed explanation of the methodology, together with a copy of the "Historic Building Data Sheet" and a sample detail from a survey map, appears in Appendix D.

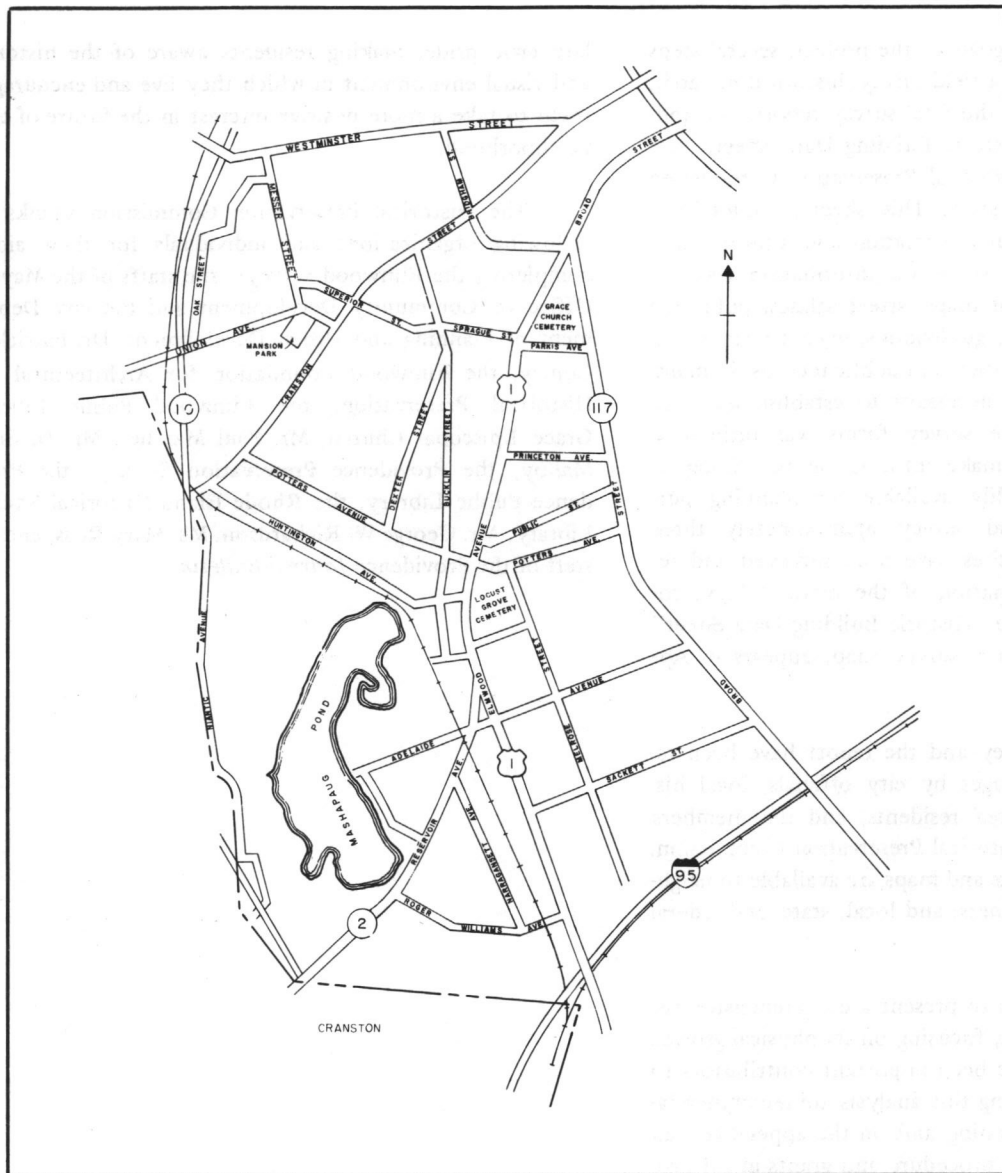
Results of the survey and the report have been reviewed at preliminary stages by city officials, local historians, knowledgeable area residents, and the members and staff of the state Historical Preservation Commission. Copies of the survey sheets and maps are available to neighborhood groups; city planners; and local, state, and federal officials and agencies.

This report attempts to present a comprehensive history of the Elmwood area, focusing on its physical growth and the events which have been important contributors to this development. Following this analysis are recommendations for preservation planning and, in the appendices, an explanation of the survey procedure and grants-in-aid program of the Historical Preservation Commission and an inventory of structures, sites, and monuments of particular significance to the historic character of the area covered in the report and of the city as a whole.

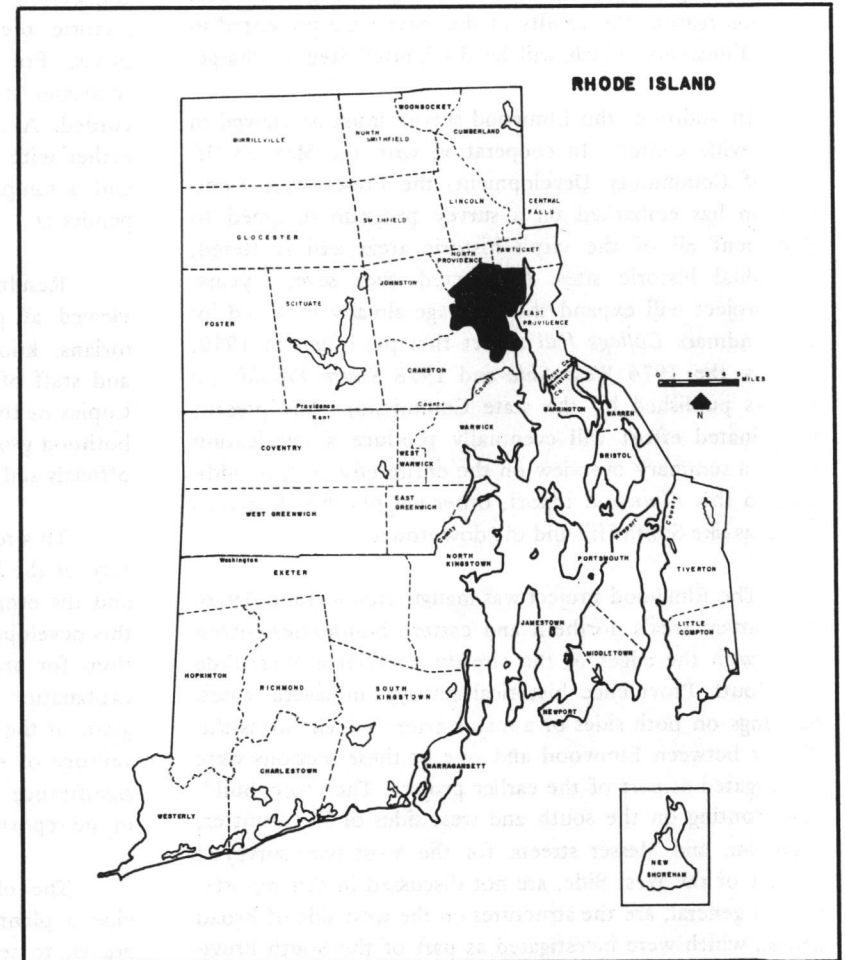
The objectives of this report are threefold: to provide a planning tool for neighborhood preservation programs; to serve as an academic and educational resource, useful in the study of local and state history; and to stimu-

late civic pride, making residents aware of the historical and visual environment in which they live and encouraging them to take a more positive interest in the future of their neighborhood.

The Historical Preservation Commission thanks the following organizations and individuals for their aid in completing the Elmwood survey: the staffs of the Mayor's Office of Community Development and the city Department of Planning and Urban Development, Dr. Patrick T. Conley, the Elmwood Foundation for Architectural and Historical Preservation, the Elmwood Public Library, Grace Episcopal Church, Mr. Paul Maixner, Mr. D. Scott Malloy, the Providence Preservation Society, the Providence Public Library, the Rhode Island Historical Society Library, Mr. George W. Richardson, Ms. Mary Ross, and the staff of the Providence *Journal-Bulletin*.



1) Map of Providence, showing the Elmwood survey area.



2) Map of Rhode Island, showing the location of Providence.

II. PHYSICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC SETTING

Located in the southwest corner of the city of Providence, the Elmwood survey area is a large irregularly shaped district containing the Elmwood section, including the West Elmwood neighborhood; two nearby sections of Providence's West End; and the Reservoir section surrounding Mashapaug Pond.

The survey area is bounded on the east by Broad Street, on the south by Interstate Route 95 and the city line, and on the west by the city line and State Route 10. The north boundary, extending between I-95 and Route 10, follows Westminster, Cranston, and Messer streets.

Originally an agricultural adjunct of Providence, Elmwood was part of Roger Williams' Great Purchase of 1636. It became a section of Cranston when that town was established in 1754. A rural district at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the area slowly grew in population as a suburb of Providence and was annexed to the city in 1868. The street pattern of the area was established by 1860. Derived from the system of colonial highways—Broad Street, Elmwood-Reservoir-Pontiac avenues, Cranston Street, and Potters Avenue—it also reflects the vagaries of early farm boundaries and the topography.

The Elmwood survey area is a nearly level plain, pockmarked here and there with shallow dips. Much of the land, especially in the southern end of Elmwood, was low and swampy. Shallow ponds, of which Mashapaug is the only survivor, formed the most significant features of the landscape. The largest of these now vanished bodies of water was Long Pond. Situated in the shallow hollow north of Potters Avenue through which Dexter and Bucklin streets now pass, Long Pond extended in serpentine form from Cromwell Street south to Daboll. It was filled-in about 1890. The smaller Duck Pond—which occupied the greater part of the block bounded by Potters Avenue and Salem, Waldo, Dexter, and Sherry streets in West Elmwood—was filled between 1882 and 1889. "Peat Swamp Pond," located directly east of Elmwood Avenue between Lenox Avenue and Sackett Street, disappeared in the 1920s. Benedict Pond, slightly smaller than Long Pond, lay

in a hollow south of Union Street and west of Cranston Street inside the curve of the Amtrak main line. It was obliterated in 1930.

The survey area consists of several sections. Elmwood is a large wedge-shaped neighborhood embracing all the territory between Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue south to I-95. Historically, the name refers to a much larger area which includes the section between Elmwood Avenue and Union Street, from the railroad tracks northward to about Ford and Cromwell streets. That part of Elmwood west of Dexter Street, the former site of Long Pond, is known historically as West Elmwood. Closely related to West Elmwood are two small pieces of the larger West Side which, located nearby, fall within the survey area: the old West End section north of Cromwell and Ford streets between Elmwood Avenue-Broad Street and Cranston Street and the area north of Union and west of Messer streets. The Reservoir section (which was not surveyed structure by structure) is located at the southwestern corner of the city, south and west of the Amtrak main line, and surrounds Mashapaug Pond.

Today Elmwood is primarily a racially mixed middle- and working-class residential area containing pockets of light industry and commercial development. Largely a neighborhood of one- and two-family houses built between 1865 and 1930, it was originally established as an upper- and middle-class suburb. Its principal artery, Elmwood Avenue, once a fine residential street lined with substantial houses, is now a heavily traveled commercial strip. Elmwood's western edge has become an industrial zone. West Elmwood, on the other hand, has always been a lower- and middle-income residential area of pre-1920, two-family dwellings. Its most important thoroughfare, Cranston Street, is a narrow, congested highway lined with two- and three-family houses and presently under-utilized commercial structures. The section of the survey area west of Cranston Street, a homogeneous neighborhood of two- and three-family dwellings, was built-up between 1890 and 1930. The majority of the West End, built-up between 1845 and 1900 as an industrial and working-class residential district, is now badly deteriorated. Large tracts have been razed to provide space for renewal projects such as the Wiggin Village housing project and the Classical and Central High School complex. The Reservoir section, closely

related historically to Elmwood and West Elmwood, is a neighborhood principally of one- and two-family, early twentieth-century homes. It also contains, however, the Huntington Expressway Industrial Complex.

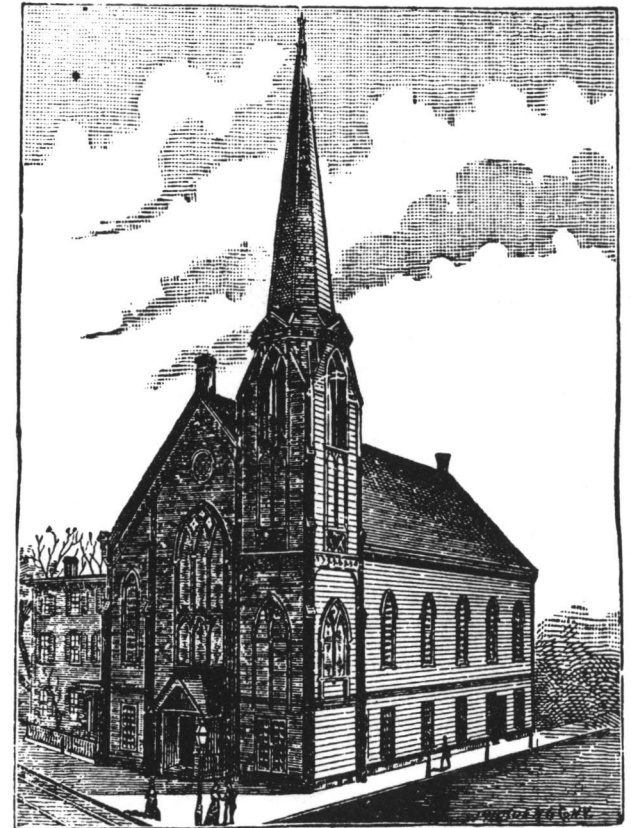


Fig. 1: Greenwich Street Free Baptist Church (1870-1871; demolished, early 1970s; formerly at northeast corner of Elmwood Avenue and West Friendship Street.

III. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

EARLY SETTLEMENT

Before English settlement, the Narragansett Indians, part of the great Algonquin family of tribes whose range extended from the Gulf of St. Lawrence southward to Georgia, held most of Rhode Island west of Narragansett Bay, south and southwest from Providence. A nomadic people, they built temporary villages of domical wigwams of poles covered with mats and hides. One such Narragansett village is said to have existed on the shore of Mashapaug Pond at the time of Roger Williams' arrival.

In 1636, Roger Williams and several others began the settlement of Providence. Included in the large tract they purchased from the Indians was the Elmwood section. Providence's earliest European settlers located along what is now North and South Main Street on the East Side. Across the large cove on the West Side the land was at first held in common and used for grazing. By the middle of the seventeenth century, however, much of the territory south and west of the cove, including all of Elmwood, was already privately owned.

Settlement of the Elmwood-West End area probably commenced shortly after the Indian uprising of 1675-1676 known as King Philip's War. The earliest residents established farms near Mashapaug Pond. This area was known locally as Mashapaug into the nineteenth century. Elmwood's first settler was probably John Sayles (1654-1727), the son of an early Providence settler of the same name. His large farm, located a short distance south of Potters Avenue, extended from Mashapaug Pond across today's Reservoir and Elmwood avenues eastward towards Broad Street. Bought in 1711 by John Payne, the farm remained in the hands of the Paine family until 1798.

Settlement took place very slowly. The land was sandy and dry, making it difficult to cultivate. As late as the middle of the eighteenth century only a few other farms existed in the area. The most prominent of them, established in the 1730s and 1740s by Joseph Williams—the grandson of Roger Williams' youngest son, Joseph—lay between Mashapaug Pond and Potters Avenue just

west of Elmwood Avenue. These were probably little more than subsistence farms, supporting the owner's family, but providing little surplus.

The first true road in the area, Broad Street, was originally part of an Indian trail called the Pequot Path which ran from Pawtucket to Westerly along the coast, following more or less the route of today's Post Road. Improved as a cartway by the earliest settlers to link Providence to its satellite village of Pawtuxet, it was long known as the Pawtuxet Road. In 1717, a second highway, now known as Cranston Street, was laid out from Westminster Street south to below Knightsville. In 1731, a cartway leading to a handful of farms located around the rich meadowlands southeast of Mashapaug Pond was realigned and extended. The resulting highway, following the routes of Elmwood, Reservoir, and Pontiac avenues, became in time the "Greenwich road," or Middle Road to East Greenwich. A "Cross road," today's Potters Avenue, connecting the other roads fanning out southward and westward from the town center, was laid out in 1737.

These roads leading southward from Providence served to tie rural sections, such as Mashapaug, more closely to the mother town of Providence. However, they also helped to open up the vacant lands for development. Within a few years the growth of population would lead to the area's separation from Providence.

Efforts to establish a new town in the part of Providence now known as Cranston began as early as 1660. Several early attempts at separation failed because of the settlers' lack of unanimity; one attempt, in 1732, failed because of dissension over the name of the proposed town. In 1752, however, the matter of separation was again revived, and in 1754 the General Assembly incorporated the town of Cranston. Nearly all of Elmwood and West Elmwood (as well as South Providence) was included in the new town and remained under its jurisdiction until 1868.

Few incidents connected with the American Revolution are known to have occurred in Elmwood, and at the conclusion of the war, the area remained a rural section of Cranston whose residents were tied to agriculture.

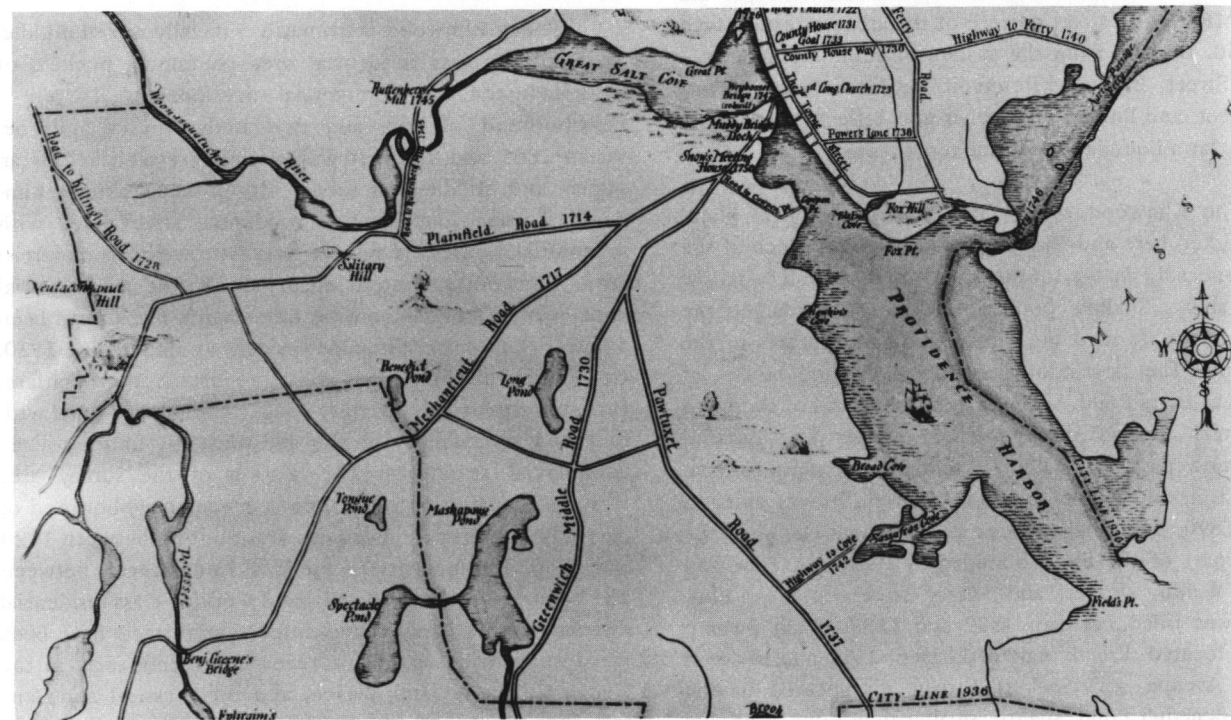


Fig. 2: Section of the J. H. Cady map of Providence in 1750.

COUNTRY FARMS AND SUBURBAN ESTATES, 1790-1845

Between the Revolution and about 1845, the Elmwood area underwent a transition from a generally self-sustaining rural section of Cranston to a suburb whose residents and business activities were tightly bound to Providence. This transformation came about as a result of Providence's rapid growth. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the city expanded rapidly to the south and west. The 1803 Daniel Anthony map shows that the built-up part of the town then reached only as far as Stewart Street, near present Interstate Route 95. By 1823, however, when Providence had a population of about 15,000, another Anthony map shows development reaching out toward Trinity Square. This growth was the result of the development of manufacturing and shipping interests and of the opening of better land communication with other cities over turnpikes. Typical of such privately built toll roads was the New London Turnpike, opened in 1816, whose route followed the old Middle Road (Elmwood and Reservoir avenues) through Elmwood.

In the light of this burgeoning growth, vacant lands near the city outskirts acquired new importance as sources of agricultural produce for the expanding Providence population and as prime locations for suburban estates. With a ready market for their produce, resident farm families prospered. One of the farmhouses built during this period, the large, two-story, flank-gable dwelling at 43 Calder Street, is the oldest structure in Elmwood. This house, now much altered and moved from its original location on the south side of Potters Avenue between Dexter and Plymouth streets, was probably built by Joseph Williams shortly after 1782.

Despite the continuation of the old colonial pattern of owner-operated farms, however, in the decades following the Revolution an ever growing share of the local real estate was acquired by speculation-minded Providence merchants, mariners, and professional people. They bought up old farms, such as the Sayles-Paine farm near Masha-paug Pond, and established new ones on previously vacant land, renting the property to tenant farmers. One early tenant farmhouse—a narrow, two-story, Federal structure probably built about 1814 by Providence merchant James



Fig. 3: Joseph Williams House (c. 1783); 43 Calder Street.



Fig. 4: James Rhodes Tenant Farmhouse (c. 1815); 137 Linwood Avenue.

Rhodes (1768-1818)—survives at 137 Linwood Avenue.

Beginning in the 1790s, prosperous members of Providence's upper-middle class also began to settle in the Elmwood area, establishing suburban estates and summer residences. The earliest was that of Colonel John Mawney. Mawney, one-time sheriff of Providence County and holder of various positions of trust in the colonial and state militias, had been one of the leaders in the Gaspee affair of June 9-10, 1772. He moved from Providence out to suburban Cranston in 1794 and before his death about 1830 had assembled a large estate along both sides of Elmwood Avenue between Potters Avenue and Whitmarsh Street. His house, demolished before 1875, stood on the west side of Elmwood Avenue just below Mawney Street.

By 1815, at least seven estate-farms existed in Elmwood, five of them along the Middle road (Elmwood and Reservoir avenues). Several belonged to merchants and manufacturers. Others were the residences of retired mariners such as Jonathan Donnison and the brothers Arthur M. and Anson Potter. Captain Donnison purchased land at what is now the southwest corner of Elmwood Avenue and Carter Street in 1801 and soon erected a house. He was something of a local celebrity, having commanded the ship *George Washington*, owned by Providence merchant John Brown, on her earliest voyage to China. Departing from Providence late in 1787, the ship had become the first from Rhode Island, and one of the first from the new republic, to dock at Canton. The Donnison house was demolished in 1938 when Saint Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church was built on the site.

The Potter brothers are both said to have been captains of ships seized as prizes by the British in the War of 1812. In 1798, Arthur bought a farm on the west side of Cranston Street opposite Potters Avenue and built the first brick house in the area. Standing on the site of 743-747 Cranston Street, the house was demolished about 1895. Between 1810 and 1815, Arthur's younger brother, Anson (1784-1865), built well back from Potters Avenue the "homestead" which gave Homestead Avenue its name. This house, located on the west side of Homestead when that avenue was platted in 1853, was demolished in 1974.



Fig. 5: Christopher Ellery House (c. 1807); 165-169 Peace Street.

While Elmwood's early nineteenth-century suburban estates have long since been obliterated by later development, two houses remain. The hip-roof, Federal house at 165-169 Peace Street was built by Christopher Ellery (1768-1840) soon after his 1806 appointment as federal Commissioner of Loans in Providence. Moved to its present site about 1895, the structure was originally located on the west side of Elmwood Avenue in line with Peace Street. Another dwelling—once moved, twice extensively altered, and now standing at 80 Plenty Street—was erected by Benjamin Dyer as a summer house after his 1797 purchase of the property between Elmwood Avenue and Broad Street now crossed by Peace and Plenty streets. In 1817, Dyer (1768-1831), a physician turned drug, chemical, and dyestuff manufacturer and dealer, bought a second farm located south and west of the Elmwood-Potters Avenue intersection and experimented with the raising of silk-worms. He is said to have owned a silk suit made from their production. Silk culture was a national mania from the early years of the nineteenth century until 1844 when a cold winter destroyed the last plantations of the not very hardy mulberry trees whose leaves were the worms' favorite food.

Between 1832 and 1837, William Valentine, a self-made man who had turned a Providence grocery into a small commercial and industrial empire, resided in the former Dyer summer house. In 1834, he and Gamalael Gay of Lisbon, Connecticut, and John F. Dyer of Providence bought part of the Dyer farm near Elmwood and

Potters avenues and established the Valentine Silk Company. The firm raised silkworms in a long, shedlike "cocoonery" on the grounds and manufactured silk cloth in rented quarters in Providence. Gay, the principal owner, went bankrupt in 1837, and the enterprise soon failed.

Such land-related businesses as the Dyer and Valentine silk farms were a common feature of early nineteenth-century Elmwood. Nurseries offering fruit and ornamental trees and shrubs began to appear in the 1830s. Between 1832 and 1840, Anson H. and Ferdinand Potter and Duty Greene established one on the land between

Elmwood Avenue and Updike Street roughly from Whitmarsh Street to Moore. Others were developed by Anson Potter on the south side of Potters Avenue near Cranston Street after 1836 and at the southwest corner of Elmwood and Potters avenues after 1838.

The establishment of nurseries supplying the Providence market was symptomatic of the transformation taking place in the area that became Elmwood. As the new suburban estate-farms supplemented the scattered colonial farmsteads, this northern part of Cranston became closely bound to Providence both economically and socially.

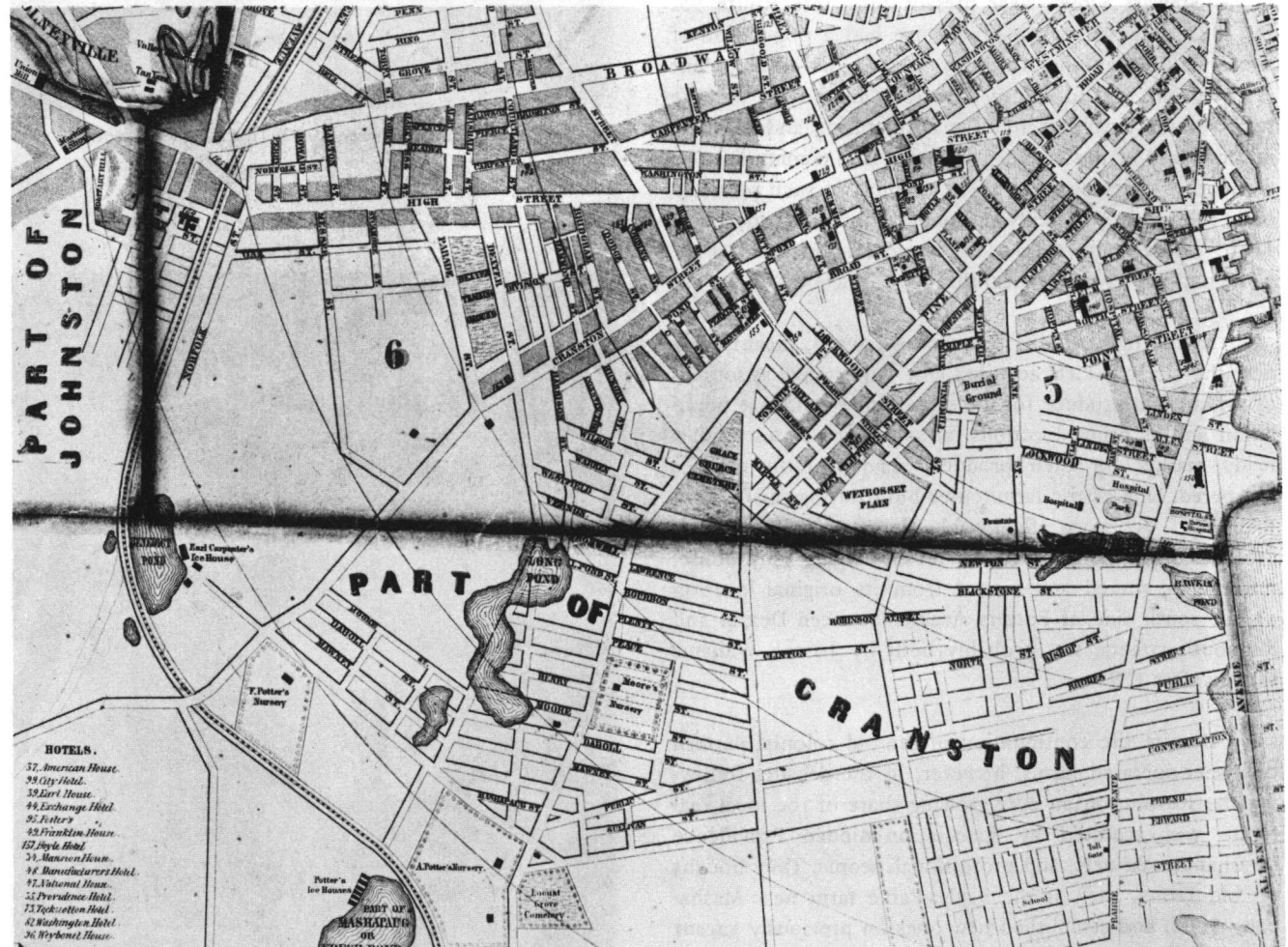


Fig. 6: Elmwood in 1849, from the 1849 Cushing and Walling map of Providence, showing Ferdinand Potter's nursery on the east side of Cranston Street and Anson Potter's nursery on the west side of Broad Street.

**FROM SUBURB TO CITY NEIGHBORHOOD:
THE MAKING OF ELMWOOD, 1845-1945**

The years from 1845 to 1945 form the major era of Elmwood's development. In this century-long period, this thinly populated district on Cranston's northern periphery was slowly transformed into today's densely built-up Providence neighborhood. Most of the area's physical form—its streets, housing, and commercial and institutional structures—date from these years.

Even the name "Elmwood" is a product of the times. The term was first used by Joseph J. Cooke to name a large farm he bought in southern Elmwood in 1843. It is said to have been Samuel S. Halliday, a minister and religious-tract dealer and newly settled resident, who, about 1850, suggested calling the entire section "Elmwood." By 1860 "Elmwood" referred to the area bounded by the Providence line on the north, Broad Street on the east, Cranston Street and Mashapaug Pond on the west, and the Roger Williams Park area on the south.

The history of Elmwood during its era of development may be divided into three periods: 1845-1868, 1868-1910, and 1910-1945. The years from 1845 to 1868 saw the beginnings of urban development. During this period, Elmwood's road grid was laid down and, with the beginning of settlement, its neighborhood character established. The beginning of development of what was still at that time the northern section of Cranston, including adjacent South Providence, was tied to the southward expansion of Providence. By 1840 the city's population had risen to over 23,000. Ten years later it passed the 40,000 mark and, by 1860, 50,000. In the 1840s and 1850s the built-up part of the city crept inexorably southwestward along Broad, Cranston, and Westminster streets. By 1857 Broad Street as far as Pearl Street and the West End as far south and west as Bridgham Street were thickly built up.

Development of Elmwood and the nearby part of the West End, located a mile and more from the central business district, was promoted by the establishment of omnibus lines in the 1850s. The Elmwood Omnibus Company, organized in 1855 by several Elmwood developers, operated a line of omnibuses (horse-drawn coaches), running



Fig. 7: Residences on Adelaide Avenue; photograph, c. 1876.

from Market Square out Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue probably as far as Potters Avenue. By 1860 a Cranston Street line, running from the Arcade out Broad and Summer streets to Cranston Street, was also in operation. In an age when few city dwellers possessed horses, public transportation was the major means of traveling beyond walking distance. Its establishment in this period paved the way for future urban growth.

This first period ends in 1868, with the successful conclusion of efforts to annex Elmwood and South Providence—which had been part of Cranston since 1754—to Providence. The movement to annex these areas, for years tied to Providence economically and socially, began in earnest in 1854. Cranston voters defeated this initial effort but did vote to locate the town clerk's office in Elmwood. By the 1860s, the rapid growth of Elmwood and South Providence, particularly the burgeoning Irish popu-

lation in South Providence, with its Democratic allegiance, was viewed as a threat to the continued domination of Cranston politics by the Republicans. In 1868, the town of Cranston, with the blessing of the Republican-dominated state government, authorized return of Elmwood and South Providence to Providence.

In the 1868-1910 period, between the annexation of the area to Providence and the advent of the automobile, Elmwood underwent its greatest period of urbanization and assumed in large measure its present form. This rapid growth was a reflection of the tremendous industrial and commercial expansion of Providence, as a result of which the city's population swelled from 69,000 in 1870 to 176,000 in 1900 and 225,000 in 1910. It was into Elmwood and other newly established residential sections around the city's outskirts that most of the population growth was funneled.

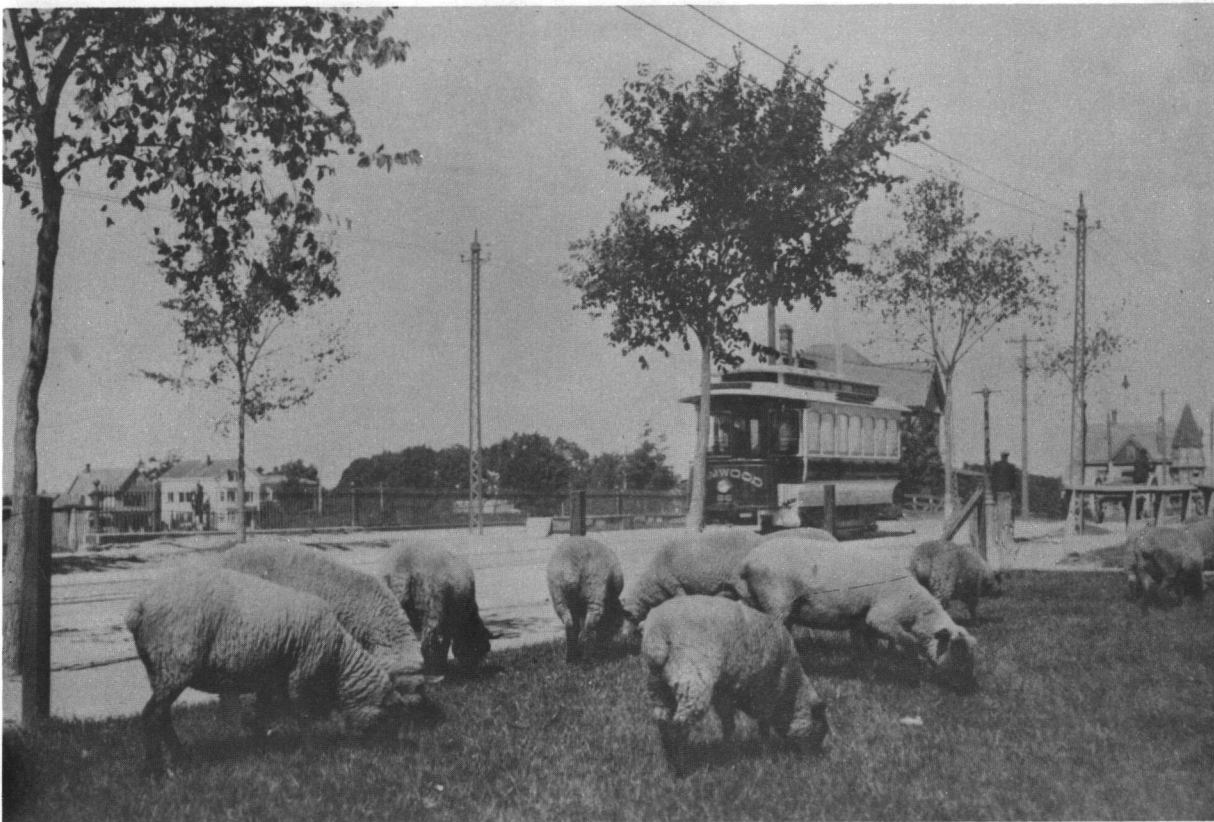


Fig. 8: Bucolic days along Elmwood Avenue near the turn-of-the-century.



Fig. 9: Commuter rush on Elmwood Avenue in 1936.

A second explanation for Elmwood's rapid development in this period was the continued improvement of public transportation. In 1864 and 1865, the slow-moving omnibuses were replaced by horse-drawn cars pulled along tracks. The Union Railroad Company was formed in 1865. It took over the Cranston Street horse railroad, established in 1864, which ran to Knightsville, and in 1865 built a line from Exchange Place out Elmwood Avenue and Earl Street to Bucklin, where a large brick stable, car-barn, and depot building was erected. By 1872 the Elmwood Avenue line was extended to Roger Williams Park, and in 1879 a horse-car line was established on Broad Street.

In the early 1890s more rapid trolleys replaced the horse-car lines. The Union Railroad Company electrified its Broad Street line in 1892 and by 1894 had replaced all the horse railways. In the 1890s, after the filling of Long Pond, a trolley line was installed over Dexter Street, Potters Avenue, and Calhoun Street down to a densely populated area west of Mashapaug Pond (now redeveloped as the Huntington Expressway Industrial Complex).

Another impetus to urbanization in the 1868-1910 period was the development of heavy industry in the West End and near Long Pond after the Civil War and the opening of the Gorham factory near Mashapaug Pond by 1890. The establishment of factories led directly to the settlement both of workers and supervisory personnel.

The period 1910-1945 saw the conclusion of the process of urbanization, as new developments filled the last of Elmwood's open spaces. The area's growth in this period was spurred by the coming of the automobile. Its advent permitted residential development in areas farther from trolley lines and work places and fostered the decentralization of business from downtown. In the 1910s and 1920s, the automobile was a major factor in shaping Providence's expansion—accelerating commercial and residential construction in the previously undeveloped areas along the city's outskirts.

Elmwood's development was largely finished and its supply of vacant land nearly exhausted by 1930, only five years after Providence reached its all-time maximum population of 268,000.

Platting and Road History

Before the beginning of platting, Elmwood possessed only a few roads: the old Pawtuxet road (Broad Street), the Middle or Greenwich road (Elmwood Avenue from Trinity to Columbus Square, and Reservoir Avenue southward from Columbus Square), the Knightsville road (Cranston Street), and the Cross road (Potters Avenue). Messer Street was opened about 1800. The farms and estates which adjoined these roads formed the basis of the nineteenth-century plats.

The platting history of Elmwood began as early as 1801, when Benjamin Dyer opened Peace and Plenty streets and sold a number of forty-foot-wide lots along them. It was in 1845, however, that the platting of streets and lots began in earnest. In that year Daniel Field subdivided the area between Elmwood Avenue and Harrison Street from Sprague Street to the backs of the lots north of Arch, including the southern half of Constitution and Gilmore streets. By 1850, a number of other large subdivisions had been made. In the 1850s, most of the remaining farms in the area were subdivided; by 1860 the street pattern as we know it today was largely in place.

The developers were commonly Providence businessmen, merchants, and professional men who dabbled in real estate as a side venture. These investors, having purchased a farm, would have it laid out in a straightforward fashion that would yield the maximum number of lots of forty- or fifty-foot frontage. The lots were sold off as rapidly as possible—and often sold and resold several times before a buyer interested in putting up a house appeared. In general, the developers took little interest in trying to control the final character of their subdivisions.

A major exception to the common practice, however, was the planning of that part of lower Elmwood between Congress Avenue and Sackett Street. Its platting and subsequent development, begun in 1854 as a cooperative venture by Joseph J. Cooke and other owners, was carried out with unusual forethought. Cooke and his partners followed the grid pattern of east-west and north-south streets used earlier in the platting of a small farm located roughly between Hamilton, Broad, and Public streets and Lexington Avenue. In 1857, Cooke platted the first part of a new Elm-



Fig. 10: Elmwood in 1870; from the 1870 Beers Atlas of Rhode Island.

wood Avenue, running from the old Middle Road southward two blocks to Adelaide Avenue, and the following year he extended it southward as far as Sackett Street. By 1872, it reached Roger Williams Park and beyond. Cooke donated Elmwood Park—today's Columbus Square—in 1864.

The owners of this part of lower Elmwood, particularly Cooke, had in mind the creation of a model suburban neighborhood. They platted unusually wide streets and lined each with carefully nurtured shade trees. Cooke used conditional deeds as an instrument of planning. Deeds executed by him often contained the requirement that construction of a house costing no less than a specific figure (mentioned in the deed) must be undertaken within five years and, in addition, prescribed minimum setback requirements for house and outbuildings. These conditions were designed to ensure the establishment of a quiet, middle-class neighborhood. Development did not, however,

take place rapidly. By 1865, only a handful of houses had been built on the tract, all of them facing Elmwood Avenue.

The naming of Elmwood's principal roads during this initial period of development reflected the urbanization of the area. Broad and Cranston streets acquired their present names in the 1825-1850 period. The "Cross road" became Potters Avenue in the 1840s and 1850s, when platting began along it. The part of the Greenwich road between Trinity and Columbus squares, called New London Avenue in some of the early plats, was renamed Greenwich Street in 1868 (when Providence annexed Elmwood). In 1892, the name Elmwood Avenue—which first referred only to the road laid out by J. J. Cooke southward from Columbus Square—was extended to include the Greenwich Street section as well. This name change was a belated acknowledgment of the fact that, since the 1870s, these two roads had formed Elmwood's most important single artery.

Physical Development

By 1845, Elmwood was ripe for development; the beginnings of a building boom followed almost immediately the start of platting. The first developments in the 1845-1865 period tended to take place in the West End section between Elmwood Avenue and Cranston Street; the triangle east of Elmwood Avenue, formed by Potters Avenue and Public Street; and along side streets such as Wadsworth and Benedict, off Potters Avenue between Dexter and Cranston streets. By 1868, the Elmwood area probably contained several hundred dwellings.

By 1890, most of the West End section was solidly built up. The lower West Elmwood streets from Waldo to Huntington Avenue were virtually completed by 1900. Developmental activity along the blocks from Ford Street to Linwood Avenue began about 1865 and was nearly ended by about 1910.

The section of Elmwood between Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue began to grow about 1855. By 1900, Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue were well built up. Development of the side streets between them followed the establishment of omnibus and horse-car lines. By 1910, most of northern Elmwood was filled.

Much of southern Elmwood was owned by J. J. Cooke, whose high land prices and stringent deed restrictions impeded settlement; by the time of his death in 1881 no more than two dozen homes had been built in his plat. Under the management of Cooke's less demanding heirs, however, building activity thrived. By 1900, much of the area from Congress to Lenox avenues was built up. By 1930, nearly all of southern Elmwood was thickly settled.

Most of the streets in the large Chapin plat—west of Cranston and Messer streets, from Hudson Street on the north to Benedict on the south—which contained only a few dozen homes in 1890, were also thickly developed by 1930. Although Long Pond, occupying the lowlands between Sprague and Daboll streets now crossed by Dexter and Bucklin streets, was filled-in about 1890, the area's main development took place in the 1920s, when a commercial and industrial zone was established. By 1930, in the Chapin plat and Long Pond areas, and in all of Elmwood,



Fig. 11: Southern end of Elmwood Avenue; photograph, c. 1913. The proliferation of roadside billboards, a product of the automobile age, was already underway.

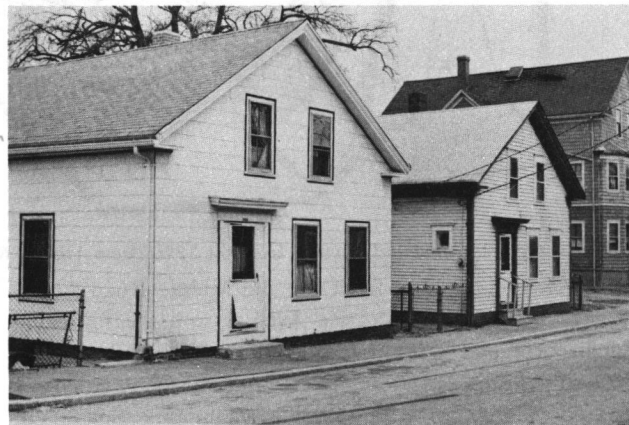


Fig. 12: William Butler Cottages (c. 1865); 161 and 165 Stanwood Street.

only small areas of vacant land remained; most disappeared by 1945.

In the early stages of Elmwood's suburban development, when land was plentiful and, for the most part, relatively inexpensive, single-family houses predominated. In the 1850s and 1860s, many, such as the c. 1865 William Butler cottages at 161 and 165 Stanwood Street, were owned as rental property. Beginning about 1865, however, the rapid growth of the city's population and the increasing cost of land made more intensive land use expedient. As a

result, houses with more than one living unit became common.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, more often than not these multi-family houses were built for owners who planned to occupy one unit themselves (and rent the rest). Throughout the period, however, many multi-family houses were owned by absentee landlords. Typical of the absentee landlords were carpenter-contractors such as Damase Bouchard of Linwood Avenue, who owned at least six triple-deckers and a large building containing stores and flats on Potters Avenue and Hamilton Street, and city merchants and businessmen such as Andrew B. Keily, vice-president of the Eagle Brewing Company, who erected the triple-deckers at 11-13 and 69-79 Moore Street (c. 1905-1907). A number of contractors specialized in building two- and three-family dwellings on speculation, selling each as it was completed. One such was Samuel Bomes, who constructed the two-family houses at 22-24, 26-28, and 94-96 Gallatin Street (c. 1921-1922) and the four triple-deckers at 117-131 Bellevue Avenue (c. 1923-1924).

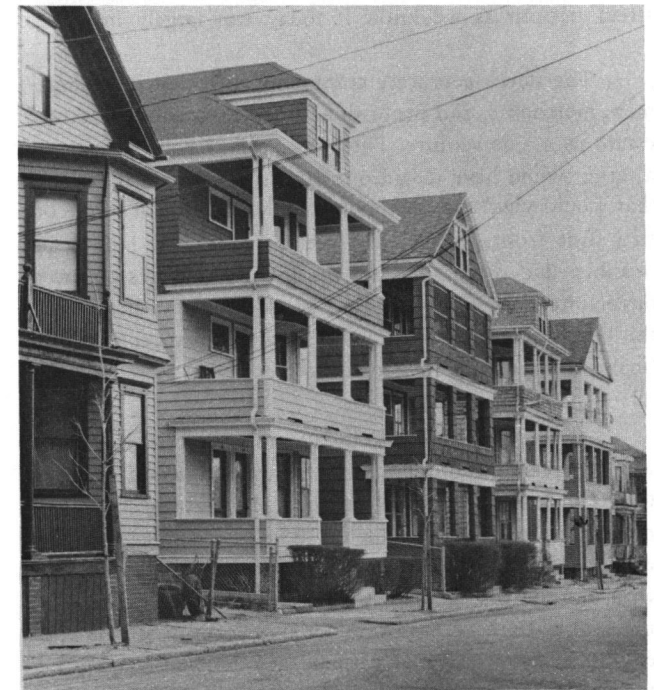


Fig. 13: Samuel Bomes Three-deckers (c. 1923-1924); 117-131 Bellevue Avenue.

Population Growth and Diversity

The West Elmwood section and the remainder of Elmwood were socially and culturally divergent neighborhoods in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While West Elmwood has always been an ethnically and racially complex section, the part of Elmwood between Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue was for the most part an ethnically homogeneous neighborhood in the early years of its development. Although this eastern part of Elmwood began to witness a small influx of people of diverse background in the 1880s and 1890s, not until the 1920s did the area's population become truly heterogeneous in its ethnic make-up.

Native Yankees, the descendants of old New England families, formed the largest ethnic group in the Elmwood area in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although the Yankee stock was pervasive in Elmwood into the twentieth century, from the first it was centered in the section of Elmwood between Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue and in the West End between Elmwood Avenue and Cranston Street. Elmwood's Yankee residents were predominantly of the middle class. Many were carpenters, masons, house painters, and others involved in the building trades; jewelers and other craftsmen; and grocers and shopkeepers. Those who were factory workers often held the most skilled jobs.

However, as early as the 1850s, some of Providence's thoroughly Yankee commercial, financial, and industrial upper class, abandoning the old residential streets in the downtown because of the rapid commercial development taking place there, were beginning to move out to the new suburbs of South Providence, the West End, and Elmwood. Lured by Elmwood Avenue's upper-middle-class character, established early in the nineteenth century and reinforced by high land prices, several built homes in Elmwood in the late 1850s. By 1890, the estates of upper-middle-class Yankees virtually lined Elmwood Avenue from Trinity Square to Columbus Square and Broad Street from Trinity Square to Public Street.

Between the Civil War and about 1910, upper-class developments spread from Elmwood Avenue and Broad Street into many of the side streets. Enclaves were es-

tablished in Parkis Avenue and the sections of Mawney, Daboll, and Burnett streets near Elmwood Avenue in the late 1860s, 1870s, and 1880s, and in Princeton Avenue and Whitmarsh Street, located nearby in upper Elmwood, between 1885 and 1905. A third upper-class district, centered on Adelaide Avenue and Melrose Street in J. J. Cooke's lower Elmwood subdivision, grew up between 1870 and 1910.

Elmwood's upper-class residents were typically wholesalers and retailers; real-estate, commodity, and investment brokers; insurance agents; professional and managerial people; and building contractors. Many of the most prominent were industrialists. In the 1880s and 1890s, Elmwood became the home of numerous jewelry and gold-and-silver-products manufacturers. Adelaide Avenue alone contained the residences of six manufacturing jewelers, two gold-and-silver refiners, and one silverware manufacturer. George Wilkinson, general superintendent of Gorham, lived at 153 Ontario Street.

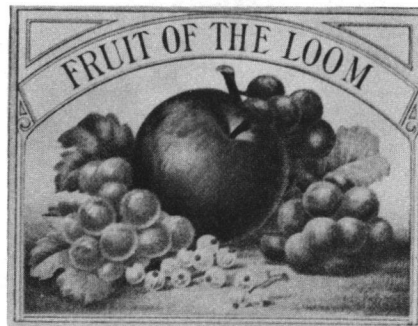
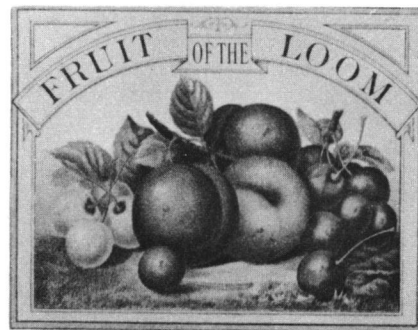


Fig. 14: Fruit of the Loom labels used by B. B. & R. Knight, Inc.; drawing, c. 1920.

Among Elmwood's most prominent residents were Robert Knight and William V. Daboll. Robert Knight (1826-1912), who lived after 1863 in a long-ago demolished villa at 297 Elmwood Avenue, was a highly successful cotton manufacturer. Between 1852 and 1890, he and a brother, Benjamin B. Knight (1813-1898), established a cotton-manufacturing empire. At its height in 1890, the B. B. & R. Knight firm operated twenty-one mills in Rhode Island and Massachusetts and was one of the world's largest cotton-manufacturing concerns. It originated the "Fruit of the Loom" trademark. Two of Robert Knight's sons, Webster Knight (1854-1933) and C. Prescott Knight (1856-1933), learned the process of cotton manufacturing in the Knight mills and ran the B. B. & R. Knight firm from the time of their father's death in 1912 until the sale of the company to New York interests in 1920.

William V. Daboll, another leading manufacturer, lived at 315 Elmwood Avenue after 1847. One of Elmwood's first suburbanites, Daboll (1810-1890), settled in the area in 1838. Working for a cotton-goods manufacturing concern, he rose rapidly and in 1866 became agent and superintendent of the newly established Elmwood Cotton Mills at Dexter and Daboll streets. Daboll retired after running the Elmwood Mills for thirteen years and in 1879 established a carpet-sweeper manufacturing business.

In the late nineteenth century, the focal point of Yankee Elmwood was the section of Elmwood Avenue from Trinity to Columbus squares. The avenue's aesthetic quality was determined by the large elms with which its route was lined, the frequent open spaces, and the large estates which fronted on it. Trinity Square, a spacious plaza edged by large Victorian churches and homes and focusing on the tree-framed superintendent's cottage of Grace Church Cemetery, formed a dramatic entrance to Elmwood from the downtown. The square was named about 1875 after the nearby Trinity Methodist Church. Columbus Square, a triangular park surrounded by some of the neighborhood's most opulent residences, was an equally impressive gateway. The square, opened to the public in 1864, was known as Elmwood Park until 1894, when it was given its present name in honor of the Columbus Monument donated that year by Elmwood residents.



Fig. 15: Robert Knight Mansion (1863); formerly at 297 Elmwood Avenue; demolished.



Fig. 16: William V. Daboll House (1872-1873); formerly at 315 Elmwood Avenue; demolished.

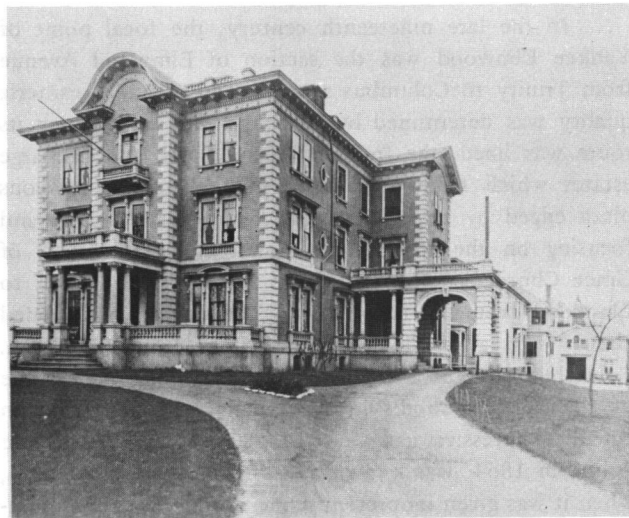


Fig. 17: George H. Slade Mansion (c. 1877); formerly at 533-541 Elmwood Avenue; postcard view, 1906; destroyed by fire, 1919.

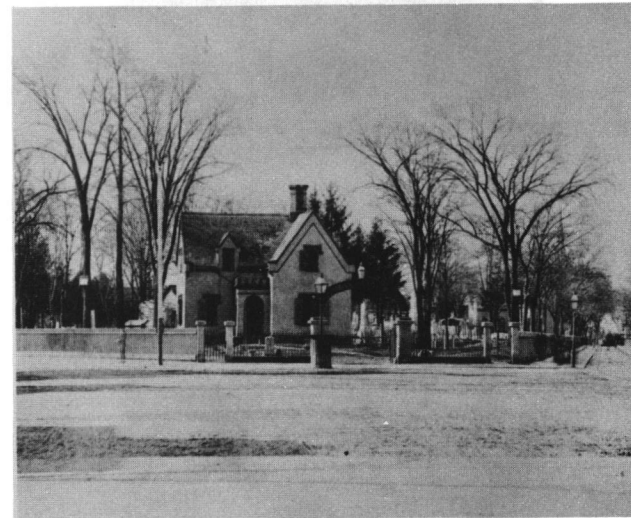


Fig. 18: Grace Church Cemetery Lodge; detail from photograph of Trinity Square, c. 1896.

Shaded by a canopy of mature elms, Elmwood Avenue contained most of Elmwood's finest estates, with their elaborate villas and ample grounds. One of the most notable was Robert Knight's estate which occupied the block bounded by Elmwood and Princeton avenues and Daboll and Dexter streets. Its central element was a square, cupola-topped, mansard-roofed mansion designed by local architect Clifton A. Hall and built in 1863. The house was demolished c. 1949. The Daboll estate filled the Elmwood Avenue and Daboll, Bucklin, and Mawney Street block. In 1872-1873, William Daboll replaced an earlier house at 315 Elmwood Avenue with a far more imposing Swiss-style mansion. This dwelling, occupied by him only until 1880, when he erected the more modest house which still stands at 73 Mawney Street, was subsequently the home of manufacturing jeweler Charles Sidney Smith before its destruction about 1928.

Elmwood's two largest homes faced each other across the northern corner of Columbus Square. At Elmwood and Reservoir avenues, on the site of the Star Market, was the c. 1877 home of the retired wholesale grocer George H. Slade. This largest and most opulent of Elmwood's Victorian mansions burned in 1919. On the north corner of Lexington Avenue was the immense, c. 1880, Queen Anne residence of John McAuslan (see cover), one of the owners of the prosperous Boston Store. Designed by the city's leading architectural firm of the period, William R. Walker and Son, this many-gabled, elaborately trimmed extravaganza was demolished about 1947.

Cemeteries also contributed to Elmwood Avenue's spacious visual quality. In 1834, the corporation of Grace Episcopal Church purchased land at the junction of Elmwood Avenue and Broad Street and established Grace Church Cemetery. (At that time the area remained nearly rural and was thought far enough out of town to remain so permanently.) A second purchase of land in 1843 nearly doubled the acreage of the grounds. In the following decades, the cemetery was systematically improved. Trees were planted, a decorative iron fence installed, and a receiving vault and superintendent's cottage constructed. The vault, a Greek Revival-style, granite structure, was erected c. 1850; the lodge, a Gothic cottage, c. 1859. With its large, old trees, Gothic lodge, and rich display of nine-

teenth-century funerary architecture, Grace Church Cemetery remains one of Elmwood's foremost visual assets.

Locust Grove Cemetery, at the intersection of Elmwood and Potters avenues, was established in 1848 by Amos D. and James Y. Smith, William V. Daboll, and other Elmwood real-estate speculators. The cemetery, though laid out on a grid pattern, was designed to be rustic. The grounds were extensively planted with shrubs and surrounded by a hedge. Perhaps because of its plebeian origin as a thinly disguised commercial venture and its lack of church affiliation, Locust Grove never acquired the status of Grace Church Cemetery. In the late nineteenth century, sales of plots lagged, maintenance declined, and the grounds and plantings took on a wild and unpruned aspect. Long neglected and now virtually bereft of its plantings, Locust Grove Cemetery is nevertheless significant today as a park-like oasis in the center of a densely built-up neighborhood.

The most tangible embodiment of Elmwood's Yankee community, its Protestant churches, were also for the most part located along and near Elmwood Avenue. The earlier Yankee residents in the area attended services downtown or in South Providence, where a number of churches already existed by 1850. The first Protestant church here, Elm-



Fig. 19: Elmwood Christian Church, now First Presbyterian Church (1914-1915); 353 Elmwood Avenue.

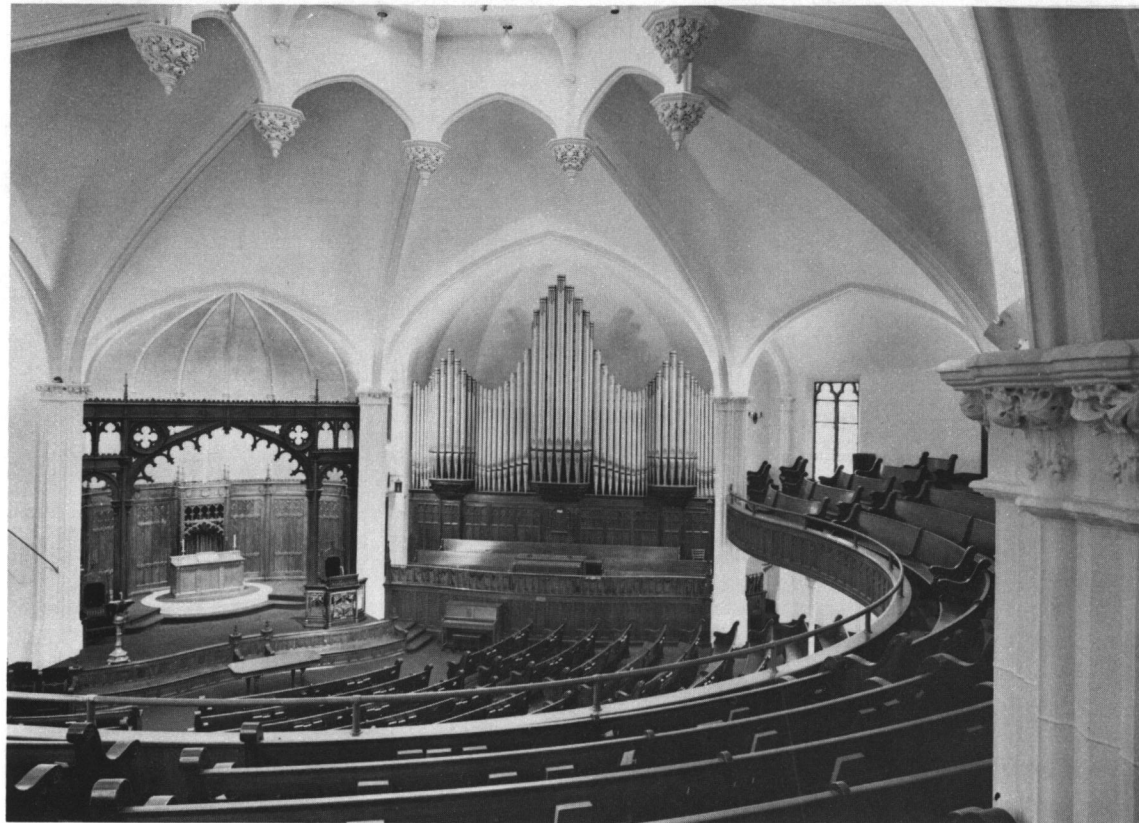


Fig. 20: Sanctuary of Calvary Baptist Church (1905-1907); 743 Broad Street.

wood Congregational, was formally constituted in 1851. In 1912, the congregation merged with the Broad Street Christian Church to form the Elmwood Christian Church. This united church constructed a new structure at 353 Elmwood Avenue—on the site of the former Congregational building—in 1914-1915. A second Protestant church, Trinity Methodist, was founded in 1859. In 1864-1865, the present Gothic-style, brick structure—a local landmark and key visual element in the Trinity Square area—was built at the intersection of Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue.

Other Protestant groups were established in the area after 1870; by the early twentieth century, Yankee Elmwood was well provided with churches. Several of the most distinguished of the church buildings which Protestant Elmwood constructed in these years have survived. The yellow-brick Calvary Baptist Church complex at 747 Broad Street was built between 1897 and 1907; the 1905-1907 church

proper is perhaps the finest auditorium-type church in Rhode Island. The Gothic-style, stone church at 126 Adelaide Avenue, a more modest, auditorium-type structure, was built in 1901-1907 to house the Westminster Unitarian Society.

Other equally handsome churches have disappeared. The Greenwich Street Free Baptist Church, a Gothic-style, frame structure erected in 1870-1871, was a landmark at the northeast corner of Elmwood Avenue and West Friendship Street until its demolition in the early 1970s. The 1923-1924 Universalist Church of the Mediator, a modern Gothic, brick building designed by Providence architect Gorham Henshaw, stood at the northwest corner of Elmwood Avenue and Peace Street; it burned in 1971.

Nearby on Elmwood Avenue was the home of the Elmwood Club, a men's club founded in the late 1880s in



Fig. 21: Elmwood Club (c. 1875-1882); 344 Elmwood Avenue; postcard view, c. 1906.

which many prominent Elmwood businessmen held membership. The double house at 344 Elmwood Avenue which became their clubhouse in 1890 contained bowling alleys, billiard and card rooms, parlors, a library, and a "dancing parlor." It served as the social center for upper-class, Yankee Elmwood until 1910.

The year 1910 also marks the beginning of Elmwood's decline as a Yankee neighborhood. By this time, Elmwood's upper-class sections were largely built up; the presence of previously existing middle-class developments surrounding them and the proliferation of two- and three-family houses on the new southern Elmwood streets precluded the establishment of new upper-class areas. Moreover, while the new developments swelled Elmwood's population, growth even of the middle-income Yankee element no longer kept pace with that of other groups, such as the Irish, Germans, Jews, and Swedes. Although most of Elmwood's Yankees preferred to stay on in the neighborhood, few of their children followed in their footsteps. The decline of the Yankee community took place slowly and almost imperceptibly as old residents died and their children moved to the suburbs. The pattern was well under way by 1945.

Although Providence's Germanic population was concentrated in South Providence, Germans were to be



Fig. 22: St. Paul's German Evangelical Lutheran Church (1899); formerly at Union Street at Huntington Avenue; photograph, c. 1935; demolished.

found in all parts of the city as well as suburban areas such as the Edgewood section of Cranston. In the 1880s and 1890s, Elmwood and West Elmwood became the home of a number of Germans. One of the first to reside in the area was Valentin Gernershausen, an engraver, who moved into 25-27 Adelaide Avenue about 1884. Like Gernershausen, Elmwood's Germans were, for the most part, skilled artisans, often working in the city's jewelry shops. The opening of the Gorham Elmwood plant about 1890 was a major impetus to the growth of the German population in the area. Many of the skilled craftsmen Gorham employed, including a number of Germans such as the modeler A. Herman Staf who moved to Lenox Avenue about 1902, lived in lower Elmwood and West Elmwood.

To serve the city's widely scattered German residents, a church was founded in 1866. In 1899, Saint Paul's German Evangelical Lutheran Church, the outgrowth of the dormant 1866 body, erected a clapboard and shingle, Gothic-style church, designed by the local firm of Angell & Swift, at Union Street and Huntington Avenue. The congregation maintained German-language services until about 1930, and dropped the word "German" from its name only in 1932. Saint Paul's constructed its present building at 445 Elmwood Avenue in 1938-1939.

In the 1880s, Providence's Germans and others es-

tablished the Providence Turne-Verein, a social and musical society. The organization erected a large, frame clubhouse and beer hall, known as Turne-Verein Hall, on a site central to the city's Germans, at Niagara Street and Atlantic Avenue. Opened in 1890, the clubhouse contained a large dining hall, a concert hall, and bowling alleys. The society, reorganized in 1898 as the Deutsche Gesellschaft, used the hall until 1920, when Prohibition put it out of business.

Elmwood's German community, never very large, received few additions after World War I and soon lost its cultural identity.

Although a colony of Jews existed in Newport in the seventeenth century, none are known to have lived in Providence until 1838, when Solomon Pereira, a Dutch immigrant tailor, arrived with his wife. A Jewish cemetery was established on Reservoir Avenue near Mashapaug Pond in 1849, and the city's first synagogue was founded in 1854, but Providence's Jewish community numbered only about one hundred fifty families as late as 1880. Most were immigrants from German-speaking areas such as Germany and Austria.

Between 1880 and 1910, however, the community was swelled by an influx of Russian and, to a lesser extent, Romanian and Polish Jews, driven from their homelands by intense persecution. Locally, these Eastern European Jews settled in the Constitution and Smith Hill areas, north of downtown, and in South Providence. In 1901 there were about 3,500 Jews in Providence; the number rose to 11,000 within a decade.

The 1895 city directory lists only three Jewish households in Elmwood and West Elmwood. In 1910 the number remained small and consisted mostly of grocers, peddlers, variety and clothing store owners, and tailors. They lived along Broad Street and Cranston Street and nearby streets in lower West Elmwood. By 1920, however, a migration of upwardly mobile, second-generation Jews from the older established Jewish community of South Providence to lower Elmwood was under way. In the 1920s, the developing neighborhood from Adelaide Avenue to Sackett Street became heavily Jewish.

Although Elmwood's middle-class Jews in the period

after 1920 represented the full range of occupations, many were merchants and grocers. Typical of the successful Jewish merchant families were the Wiesels. Nathan Wiesel came to Providence about 1895 and first lived on Willard Avenue in South Providence. Originally a peddler, he was able to open a grocery at the corner of Potters Avenue and Niagara Street about 1906. In 1920 he established a variety store at 515 Elmwood Avenue. Nathan's sons, Morris and Harry, opened the Blackstone Pharmacy at 187 Elmwood Avenue about 1922.

The Wiesels and many other prosperous Jews were important to the twentieth-century transformation of Elmwood because of their extensive real-estate investments. In the 1920s, Nathan, Harry, and Morris Wiesel built and owned the store structures at 181-A, 187, 193, 334-342, 511, 597-609, and 600-604 Elmwood Avenue.

In the 1910s, no synagogue existed in Elmwood and local Jews worshipped either at the Moderate Reform Temple Beth-El, built at Broad and Glenham streets in 1910, or at one of the many Orthodox synagogues on Willard Avenue in South Providence. In the Teens, however, many second-generation, middle-class Jews, seeking a middle ground between the Orthodox and Moderate Reform positions, found the answer in Conservative Judaism. Conservative services were held in South Providence for a short time in 1914, and in 1921 Providence's first Conservative congregation, Temple Beth-Israel, was established. The congregation purchased the unused Turne-Verein Hall at Niagara Street and Atlantic Avenue. The building was reopened as a synagogue in 1922 after alterations planned by local architect Harry Marshak and served until its destruction by fire in 1941. A new temple was built on the same site soon thereafter.

Elmwood's Jewish neighborhood was a part of a larger community which spanned South Providence and Washington Park as well. Growth of the Jewish population in southern Elmwood between Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue continued from before 1920 to about 1950, when the last housing to be built in the area was completed. In 1951, southern Elmwood contained the homes of 1,850 Jews.

Unlike the affluent section of Elmwood between

Broad and Bucklin streets, West Elmwood was from the first an ethnically and racially mixed neighborhood. A considerable Yankee population existed in the area, especially along the upper West Elmwood streets, into the twentieth century. A small Black community was established by 1870. By 1890, numbers of Germans and French Canadians were settled. In the early twentieth century, these groups were joined by small numbers of Italians, Jews, and Armenians. It was the Irish, however, who dominated life in West Elmwood from 1845 to 1945.

Even before 1800, Irish immigrants began to arrive in America. But the great wave of Irish immigration took place between 1830 and 1870. In those years, religious persecution and poverty, hunger and disease, intensified in the late 1840s by the blight-caused failure of the potato crop which formed the basis of the Irish diet, drove hundreds of thousands of Irish from their homeland to America.

Providence's Irish community, established in the early nineteenth century, remained very small as late as 1830. By 1839, however, it was thought to comprise two-thirds of Providence's 1,700 Roman Catholic residents and, four years later, two-thirds of the city's estimated 2,000-2,400 Catholics. The 1840s and 1850s saw the beginnings of Irish neighborhoods in the West End near Olneyville and in the Prairie Avenue-Robinson Street area of South Providence.

The Irish began to settle in Elmwood and West Elmwood in the 1850s. While high land prices for the most part kept them out of upper West Elmwood and the section of Elmwood east of Long Pond, low prices in the four George W. Crocker and two Elmwood Nursery plats along Potters Avenue encouraged their settlement in that area. By 1870, lower West Elmwood from Waldo Street to Huntington Avenue and south along the west side of Mashapaug Pond, and from Madison to Cranston Street, was a predominantly Irish neighborhood.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, West Elmwood's Irish, in common with the Irish city-wide, were low on the economic ladder. Often poorly educated and lacking marketable work skills, they obtained the least desirable menial and unskilled jobs. Some of the more for-



Fig. 23: Michael Noon House (1850s); 23 Calder Street.

tunate—such as Thomas Cormick and Hurbert Cullen, listed in the 1870 directory as weavers, and Bernard Boyle, a spinner—having probably learned their skills at home in the old country, worked in the Elmwood Cotton Mills, the area's largest employer, and lived nearby in company housing.

The great majority of West Elmwood's Irish workingmen, in 1870 and for the remainder of the century, however, were laborers. Nevertheless, many local Irish were eventually able to own their own homes. Laborer Michael Noon built the comfortable house at 28 Calder Street in the 1850s. Michael Cooney, a bricklayer, lived at 13 Puritan Street by 1868, while the teamster Philip Denby built his home at 82 Wadsworth Street about 1873.

Until 1871, West Elmwood's Irish possessed no Roman Catholic church of their own. Local residents belonged to the West Side parish of Saint Mary's, founded in 1853. Elmwood Avenue was the parish boundary. The sparsely settled section of Elmwood between Elmwood Avenue and Broad Street was (and remains) a part of the South Providence parish of Saint Michael's, established in 1859.

In 1870 Father Michael McClune, then connected with Saint Mary's, began collecting funds for an Elmwood church. In 1870-1871, the first home of the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a large, "Carpenter

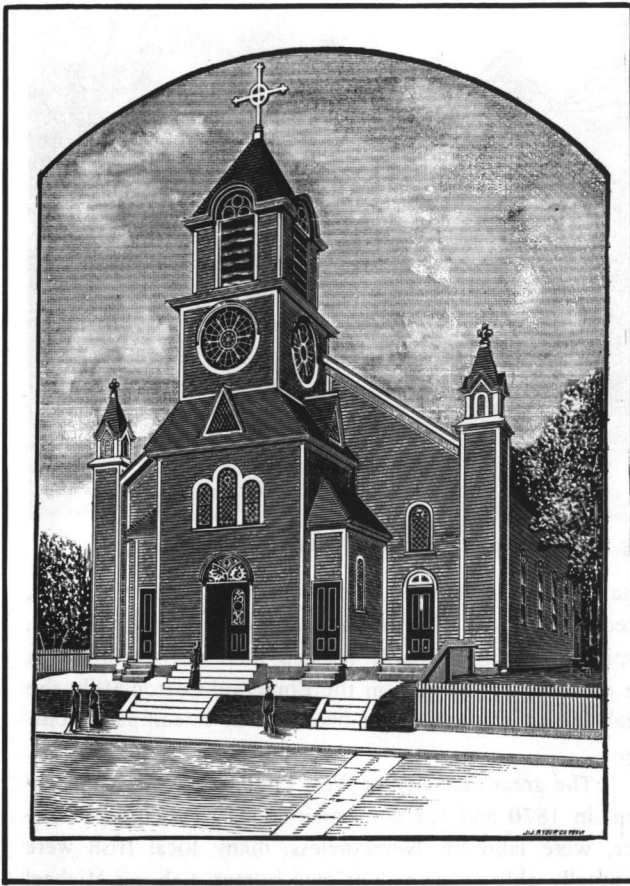


Fig. 24: Church of the Assumption (1870-1871); formerly at 805-807 Potters Avenue; drawing, c. 1893; demolished.

Romanesque" structure located on Potters Avenue next door to the present church, was erected. Father McClune served the new parish from its inception in 1871 until 1888.

In the 1910-1930 period the church, like many parishes in Providence, undertook an ambitious building program. In 1910-1912, an imposing, Gothic-style, yellow brick church was erected beside the old sanctuary. An area landmark and symbol of Irish West Elmwood, it is the finest structure in West Elmwood. The old church was turned into a church hall and survived until the early 1970s. The Assumption parish school at 626 Potters Avenue and a convent at 528 Dexter Street for the Sisters

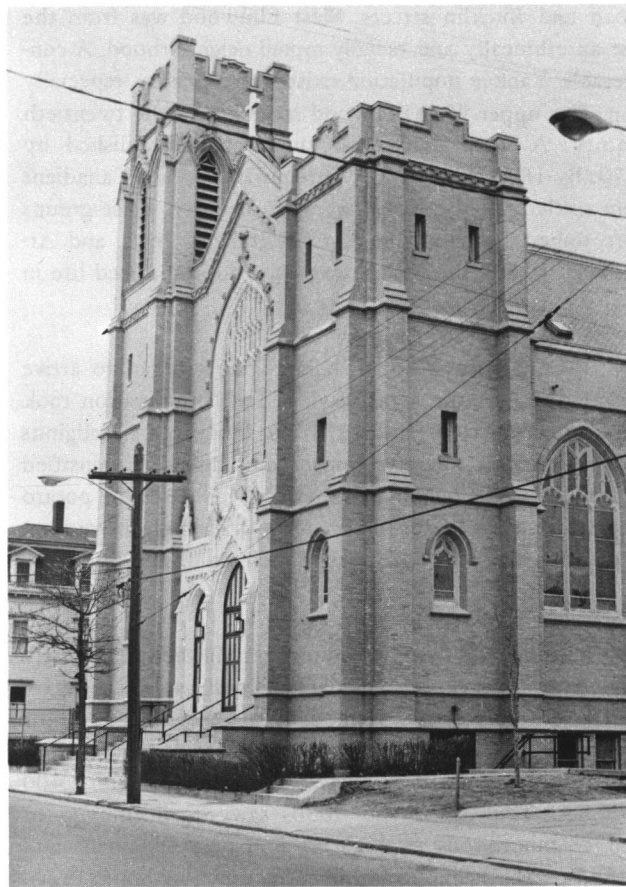


Fig. 25: Church of the Assumption (1910-1912); 805-807 Potters Avenue.

of the Cross and Passion who taught there were erected in 1925-1926.

In the years after the founding of the Church of the Assumption, the West Elmwood and South Providence Irish spread slowly into the developing Chapin plat west of Cranston Street and the surrounding, predominantly Yankee streets of upper West Elmwood and Elmwood; after 1900 they were present in considerable numbers throughout the area on all but the most upper-class of Elmwood's streets. The Irish, who throughout the area's century-long period of development formed the backbone of West Elmwood's population, probably were the largest ethnic group in Elmwood in 1945.

By 1870 a small Black settlement became established in the predominantly Irish section of West Elmwood between Cranston Street and Long Pond, from Waldo Street south to Huntington Avenue. While information is difficult to obtain, it appears that local Blacks, at least down to the early twentieth century, were near the bottom of the economic ladder, serving in such occupations as laborer, coachman, porter, and peddler. Nevertheless, as early as 1861, the West Elmwood Black community established the Mount Zion Methodist Church. After meeting two years in private homes, the congregation built a small frame structure on Wadsworth Street near Cranston in 1863. A second structure was built on the same site in 1886.

A large French-Canadian community became established in Providence's West Side in the period between the Civil War and World War I, when thousands deserted the impoverished Quebec countryside for the comparative prosperity of New England's cities and factory towns. In 1878, these *Canadiens* formed their own parish, one of only thirteen French Catholic parishes in Rhode Island. The present parish church of Saint Charles Borromeo, a handsome, yellow-brick, Renaissance-style structure, was built in 1915 on Dexter Street, just outside of West Elmwood.

West Elmwood's French-Canadian community expanded rapidly in the 1890s. The *Canadiens* at first lived principally along and near Cranston Street and Potters Avenue, where rents were cheaper; by 1900 they were moving into the upper West Elmwood and Chapin plat streets. While many worked as tailors, hairdressers, and barbers, and as porters and laborers, a number were carpenters and masons.

Preeminent among West Elmwood's French Canadians were the Bouchards. Octave Bouchard, a carpenter, arrived in Providence by 1873 and by 1878 was living on Potters Avenue in West Elmwood. About 1889 he took his sons Eusebe and Peter into partnership; Octave retired about 1895. Eusebe and another brother, Damase, then established Bouchard Brothers, for years a successful carpentry as well as doors, sash, and blind business. In addition, Damase Bouchard built and owned a number of rental properties, including the large, frame, commercial-

flats block at 742-752 Potters Avenue. Octave Bouchard's own 1894 Queen Anne residence, one of the finest homes in West Elmwood, survives at 162 Linwood Avenue. Eusebe Bouchard built the house at 172 Linwood Avenue in 1895, and Damase built 164 Linwood Avenue c. 1905.

Residential Architecture

Elmwood's housing stock dates almost exclusively from the 1845-1945 period. Urban housing, designed with the limitations of the city lot (generally about forty by eighty feet) ever in mind, it nevertheless reflects a broad range of contemporary architectural types and styles in use throughout Rhode Island and eastern America.

Single-Family Housing

The single-family dwelling was the first house type to appear in Elmwood. With its connotation of suburban spaciousness, it remained popular in Elmwood nearly to the end of the era of development. Many of the earlier single-family dwellings were unpretentious structures which reflected traditional house types and architectural tastes. Some of the earliest, such as the 1840s house at 121 Willow Street, constructed with narrow, gabled flanks and a broad front facing the street, retained the flank-gable format commonly adopted for country farmhouses since the seventeenth century. More common, however, are one- or one-and-a-half-story, end-gable houses—structures built with the front entry in one of the narrow, gabled ends facing the road. This end-gable house type was well adapted for use in narrow city lots. Many of the early end-gable cottages of Elmwood and the West End are small-scale imitations of the portico-fronted, Classical Revival and Greek Revival mansions in vogue in America between about 1820 and 1850. Typically, they are modest structures, such as the c. 1851 Hoel House at 192 Stanwood Street, in which cornices with returns and plain, wide-board-framed entrances provide the only suggestion of classical styling.

While the great majority of houses in Elmwood and the West End before 1865 were modest and plain-trimmed, flank- and end-gable structures, a few more pretentious dwellings began to appear in the late 1850s and



Fig. 26: Octave Bouchard House (1894); 162 Linwood Avenue.



Fig. 27: Eusebe Bouchard House (1895); 172 Linwood Avenue.



Fig. 28: William H. Hoel House (c. 1851); 192 Stanwood Street.



Fig. 29: House (1840s); 121 Willow Street.

early 1860s. This handful of structures heralded the arrival of the Victorian styles of architecture. Named for England's Queen Victoria, whose long reign coincided with the height of their popularity, the Victorian styles dominated the architecture of the English-speaking world and persisted until 1900. This period saw the rejection of the standards

of clarity and order—the ideals upon which the classical architecture of the recent past was based—in favor of a new emphasis upon irregular massing and intricate detailing. Elmwood's elaborate, late nineteenth-century domestic architecture is the visible manifestation of this Victorian-era fondness for picturesque effects.



Fig. 30: Butts-Davis Mansion (c. 1860); formerly at 194 Elmwood Avenue; demolished, c. 1912.

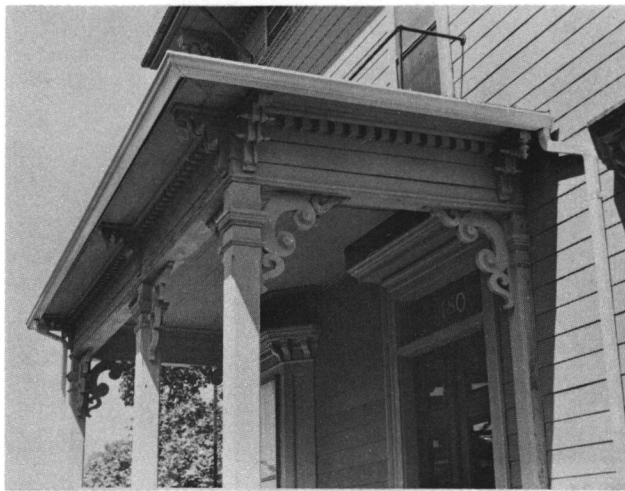


Fig. 32: Potter-Downes House (c. 1859); 480 Elmwood Avenue; detail of main entrance porch.



Fig. 31: Charles F. Phillips House (c. 1857); 539 Potters Avenue.



Fig. 33: Gothic Cottage (1850s); 146 Peace Street.

Elmwood's Early Victorian dwellings of the late 1850s and early 1860s are designed in the Italianate, Bracketed, and Gothic styles. The most familiar of a broad range of Early Victorian stylistic choices, these styles were popularized in Providence and much of America by the Newburgh, New York, horticulturalist and architectural critic Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1851), by means of his widely read house-plan books, *Cottage Residences* (1842) and *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850).

Among Elmwood's larger Early Victorian dwellings, Italianate structures predominate. The Elmwood Italianate houses of the late 1850s and early 1860s were clapboard versions of the Italianate mansions on Benefit, Hope, and Prospect streets on Providence's East Side designed but a few years earlier. Such dwellings derived their basic form and detail from Italian Renaissance city palaces built in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Elmwood "palazzos" are boxy structures with low hip roofs and widely projecting eaves. The finest was that built c. 1860 for the banker, George W. Butts, and occupied after 1864 by William D. Davis, a woolen-goods manufacturer. Demolished about 1912, the house was located at 194 Elmwood Avenue. An excellent extant Italianate dwelling is the c. 1857 Charles F. Phillips House at 539 Potters Avenue. A square structure with corner quoins, eaves trimmed with console brackets, and molded window caps, it possesses a delicately scaled, arcade-like front veranda.

Elmwood's early bracketed houses are characterized by a profusion of oversized and elaborate brackets of fanciful outline located beneath the eaves and doorway and porch lintels. These brackets invariably perform only a decorative function. The area's earliest example remaining is the c. 1859 Potter-Downes House at 480 Elmwood Avenue. Though square and possessing widely projecting eaves like an Italianate palazzo, the structure lacks any trim which may be described as Italian. A more modest early bracketed house is the c. 1861 structure at 37 Greenwich Street—an otherwise simple end-gable cottage with bracketed eaves and bay-window and door-porch cornices. Brackets remained popular decorative elements into the 1880s. Many otherwise nondescript structures of the 1860s, 1870s, and 1880s were given a semblance of architectural distinction by the application of the relatively

inexpensive bracketed ornament that became available on a mass-produced basis in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The domestic phase of the Gothic Revival, despite its nationwide popularity in the 1840-1865 period, made little impact upon Elmwood. However, Elmwood did possess a major Gothic monument in the much battered structure which stood at 243 Elmwood Avenue until June, 1978. Built in the mid-1840s and moved to its present location in 1871 from a site downtown, it was notable as one of a very few Gothic villas in the Providence area. Other, more modest Gothic cottages which remain in the area are the 1860 Grace Church Cemetery lodge and the 1850s house at 146 Peace Street.

A phenomenon especially of the 1850s was the octagonal house. The inspiration for its sudden popularity was the publication in 1848 by the New Yorker, Orson S. Fowler of *A Home for All*. In it he advocated the octagon as a most efficient and economical house form in that it provided more floor space per wall length than even a square or rectangular house. The book touched off a short-lived craze for polygonal houses throughout the country. Providence possessed no less than seven octagonal homes,



Fig. 34: Miles B. Lawson Octagon (c. 1856); 669 Public Street.



Fig. 35: Louis H. Comstock House (c. 1869); 47 Parkis Avenue.

more than any other American town is known to have had. Of the four remaining, the Elmwood area has three: the 1855 Dix House at 36 Crescent Street, the c. 1856 Lawson House at 669 Public Street, and the c. 1857 Field House at 63 Elmwood Avenue. Plain-trimmed structures whose exteriors were originally designed in the Italianate style, they constitute a unique survival.

Domestic architecture in Elmwood and the West End between 1865 and 1900 forms a catalogue of Late Victorian architectural tastes. Characteristic of the larger Elmwood houses of the late 1860s and 1870s was the use of the mansard roof, a roof with two slopes, the lower generally much steeper than the upper. This roof type, named for the seventeenth-century French architect who popularized it, became a hallmark of architecture in France's Second Empire period in the mid-nineteenth century. It came to America about 1850 and quickly gained wide acceptance because of the additional space it allowed. In Elmwood, the finest mansard homes were concentrated along Elmwood and Parkis avenues and Burnett and Mawney streets.

Many of Providence's earliest mansard-roofed houses are, except for their steep roofs, typical Italianate or Italianate-bracketed structures. The c. 1869 L. H. Comstock House at 47 Parkis Avenue is one of the finest of these mansard-roofed Italianate residences. In the mansard



Fig. 36: John R. Cory House (c. 1876); 37 Mawney Street.

homes of the 1870s, however, the Italianate styling is often replaced by a far more eclectic decorative vocabulary. The facades of dwellings such as the c. 1870 Richard H. Deming House at 66 Burnett Street and the c. 1876 John R. Cory House at 37 Mawney Street—Elmwood's two finest mansard residences—contain a combination of some authentic French and Italian details; other elements retain the proportions but little of the form of genuine historical ornament and much purely inventive Late Victorian trim. Such detailing often has the appearance of having been designed for execution in stone. The same supremely rich and showy trim can be seen in many other elaborate dwellings of the same period without mansard roofs, such as the c. 1883 Andrew S. Southwick House at 205 Linwood Avenue. Although mansard houses enjoyed their greatest popularity in the late 1860s and 1870s, they continued to appear sporadically as late as the 1890s in Elmwood.

During the heyday of the formal mansards, another variety of house appeared, which contrasted sharply with it in its predilection for irregular house forms and unclassical decoration which asserts rather than belies its wooden character. The Swiss-style dwelling, inspired by the mountainside chalets of Switzerland, with their widely projecting eaves, low gable roofs and heavily decorated gables, verandas, and balconies, first appeared in America about 1850. Although a few true chalets were erected in America in



Fig. 37: Daboll House (c. 1879); 172 Daboll Street.



Fig. 39: Samuel A. Otis House (c. 1896); 203 Adelaide Avenue.



Fig. 38: Joseph G. Birch House (c. 1885); 49 Princeton Avenue.

the 1850s and 1860s, wider acceptance of Swiss styling came only in the late 1860s and 1870s with its adaptation to more typical house forms. Elmwood's earliest and most pretentious Swiss dwelling, the c. 1873 William V. Daboll



Fig. 40: Charles E. Hancock House (c. 1892); 239 Adelaide Avenue.

House at 315 Elmwood Avenue, has been demolished, but two excellent structures have survived: the c. 1875 Valleau House at 130 Moore Street and the c. 1879 Daboll House at 172 Daboll Street. Both have typical, Swiss-

inspired detailing, such as scalloped-bottom, vertical-board, gable and under-eaves trim and decorative, slat-work porch railings.

After 1880, the same interest in surface variety and assertive "woodiness" which inspired the Swiss houses found more full expression in the Queen Anne. Derived from the asymmetrical, steep-roofed English country houses of the 1860s and 1870s, America's Queen Anne houses often substituted clapboard and shingle for the masonry construction commonly used in England. High-roofed, multi-gabled Queen Anne dwellings, with their English sixteenth- and seventeenth-century trim, were suggestive of America's unpretentious Colonial architecture. First introduced here during the centennial of American independence, when Americans began for the first time to look with nostalgia at the colonial past, Queen Anne was an instant success.

Between 1880 and 1900, the Queen Anne style dominated residential design in Elmwood. The larger Queen Anne homes of the 1880s often have irregular plans and high roofs broken by gables and dormers. The decorative scheme contains few, if any, Early American elements. One of Elmwood's best remaining 1880s Queen Anne structures is the c. 1885 Joseph G. Birch House at 49 Princeton Avenue. The pattern of protruding and receding wall planes, the combination of clapboard and plain and patterned shingling, and the lattice-work and turned-post porch trim together give this house a rich and varied appearance typical of the better Queen Anne houses of that decade. Other fine examples stand at 260 and 638 Elmwood Avenue, 20 Moore Street, and 30 Daboll.

The later Queen Anne houses of the 1890s are often more subdued and regular in plan and form and more Early American in their styling. Queen Anne-Colonial Revival dwellings of the 1890s, such as the c. 1892 Charles E. Hancock House at 239 Adelaide Avenue or the c. 1897 George S. Smith House at 125 Princeton Avenue, possess much more of the feeling of the eighteenth-century American house in their compact, often box-like form and extensive use of colonial decorative devices such as hip roofs with railed-in roof decks, thin-column classical porches with turned-baluster railings, molded window caps, and palladian

windows. The c. 1896 Samuel A. Otis House at 203 Adelaide Avenue, the c. 1900 Edmund D. Chesebro House at 421 Elmwood Avenue, and many other later Queen Anne structures also possess turreted corner towers. Elmwood's most notable Queen Anne-Colonial Revival dwellings are to be found on Adelaide and Princeton avenues and Melrose and Whitmarsh streets.

More typical of Elmwood's Queen Anne residences than these large and elaborate structures, however, are the modest, one-and-a-half-story, clapboard houses with shingled gables and, sometimes, a spindle-work porch. The c. 1895 structures at 81 Congress Avenue and 112 Emerson Street exemplify the more common Elmwood single-family houses of the period.

Just before 1900, the mature Colonial Revival house, in which the proportions and detailing more faithfully reflect early American prototypes, arrived on the scene. The Webster Knight mansion at 118 Princeton Avenue, the first full-blown Colonial Revival dwelling in Elmwood, was built c. 1897. A gambrel-roofed, center-entrance structure patterned after the finest mid-eighteenth-century New England houses, it presents a lavish display of Georgian and Federal decoration on the exterior, while paying homage to Colonial models in its central-hall-plan interior arrangement and double-flight staircase. Designed probably by Angell & Swift, one of the city's leading architectural firms, the Webster Knight House is one of the earliest and finest Colonial Revival homes in Providence. Other pretentious Colonial Revival dwellings, such as the c. 1908 Chase House at 183 Lexington Avenue or the c. 1911 Hussey House at 179 Ontario Street, were erected in Elmwood into the 1910s.

Another product of the movement toward directness and simplicity in plan and decoration which appeared at the turn of the century was astylar houses in which the roof pitches were lessened, wings and gables and other extensions of the basic form kept to a minimum, and unnecessary ornamentation avoided. The earliest of these simple and direct houses in Elmwood, the c. 1905 brick and stucco-walled Smith-Malmstead House at 77 Princeton Avenue, has an exterior that is suggestive of some of the Midwest houses designed by some of Frank Lloyd Wright's contemporaries.



Fig. 41: Edmund D. Chesebro House (c. 1900); 421 Elmwood Avenue; photograph, c. 1904.



Fig. 43: Webster Knight Mansion (c. 1897); 118 Princeton Avenue.



Fig. 42: Edwin O. Chase House (c. 1908); 183 Lexington Avenue.



Fig. 44: Smith-Malmstead House (c. 1905); 77 Princeton Avenue.

Between 1910 and 1930, this interest in straightforward planning and restrained decoration manifested itself in the bungalow. Bungalows—modest and unpretentious, one-story dwellings with shingled or stuccoed wall surfaces

and, often, with eaves displaying exposed rafter ends or open triangular brackets—are found scattered throughout the survey area. They appear in Elmwood and the West End in three principal types: narrow and deep, hip-roof



Fig. 45: John Blair, Jr. House (c. 1911); 100 Gallatin Street.



Fig. 48: Jacob Horvitz House (c. 1922); 127 Gallatin Street.



Fig. 46: David D. Gilman House (c. 1916); 172 Gallatin Street.



Fig. 49: Samuel Littman House (c. 1930); 233 Warrington Street.



Fig. 47: C. Albert Johnson House (c. 1914); 131 Warrington Street.

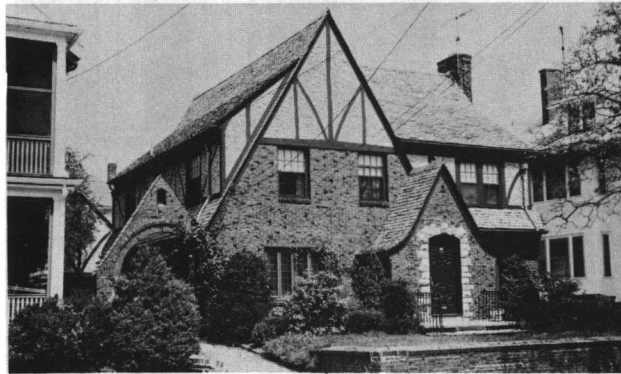


Fig. 50: Harry Goldenburg House (c. 1939); 169 Sumter Street.

structures with front porches, of which the c. 1911 John Blair, Jr. House at 110 Gallatin Street is a particularly fine example; flank-gable dwellings with a half- or full-width front porch, such as the c. 1916 Gilman House at 172 Gallatin Street; and, occasionally, end-gable dwellings, such as the c. 1914 Johnson House at 131 Warrington Street.

By 1920, broad-fronted, two-story, rectangular, hip-roof houses, minimally decorated with bay windows, Colonial Revival door porches, and other stock elements were becoming popular. Exteriors, enlivened by the now ubiquitous double or tripartite picture window, were often clad in weatherboarding or clapboarding of unusual width. The c. 1922 Jacob Horvitz House at 127 Gallatin Street and the 1925 John F. Kelley House at 199 Atlantic Avenue are good examples of this type.

The 1920s and 1930s were the final years of large-scale home building in Elmwood. In these decades, although the bungalow and other astylar house types remained popular, dwellings modeled upon Early American and English medieval prototypes also staged a revival. Most common among the modest, single-family homes of the period are Dutch Colonials, such as the c. 1930 Samuel Littman House at 233 Warrington Street. One-and-a-half-story, flank-gambrel structures, inspired by the colonial farmhouses built by the Dutch in New York and New Jersey, they usually possess prominent shed dormers in the front and back to permit use of the attic for bedrooms. Homes with jerkin-head roofs, distinguished by their flattened gables patterned after the thatched roofs of English medieval cottages, are also common. The c. 1922 Johnson House at 145 Warrington Street and the c. 1929 Smith House at 238 Warrington Street are handsome examples. Three brick-and-stucco and half-timbered "Stockbrokers' Tudor" dwellings also exist in Elmwood, at 13 Kipling, 169 Sumter, and 252 Warrington streets. Modest reflections of English, sixteenth-century, half-timber (or Tudor-style) houses, they all date from the late 1930s.

Two- and Three-Family Houses

The two-family house, a two-story structure in which the living space is divided horizontally into two units, was

one of the most common house types throughout Providence in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, down to the beginning of the Great Depression. In Elmwood and the West End these houses began to appear in the 1850s. The typical two-family house built between 1850 and 1880 or 1885 is a two-story, end-gable, clapboard structure, built on a side-hall plan with a single front entrance giving access to a single, common stair hall.

The West End's surviving 1850s end-gable, two-family houses are flat-fronted, plain-trimmed, Greek Revival-inspired buildings. The pair at 38 and 39 Gilmore Street are typical of them. By the mid-1860s, however, dwellings with bracketed cornices, entrances displaying hoods supported by heavy, ornate brackets, and bay windows projecting from both stories of the facade became the standard form. Typical of the many structures erected in Providence between 1865 and 1885 is the c. 1873 structure at 71 Burnett Street. Although never as popular as the less expensive end-gable dwellings, mansard-roofed, Second Empire, two-family houses, such as 59 Burnett Street, were constructed from the late 1860s into the 1880s.

In the 1880s and 1890s, major changes were made in the two-family house form. By 1890, separate entrances for the two units had largely replaced the old common hall, and two-entrance, side-hall-plan structures, as exemplified by 101-103 and 105-107 Wadsworth Street, began to appear for the first time. Often, one- or two-story front porches appeared. More steeply pitched cross-gable roofs replaced the simple, end-gable roofs of earlier days.

By 1890, transformations in the house form were matched by basic changes in decoration, as Queen Anne replaced bracketed trim. Queen Anne dwellings exhibit great variety in their fenestration and detailing. Usually constructed with clapboarded first stories and shingled upper stories, they often possess elaborate turned-post porches, sometimes, as in 171-173 Hanover Street, highlighted by a delicate, valance-like, spindle-work band across the top. Many are characterized by robust, sculptural gable treatments. In the c. 1887 Prince A. Potter House at 15-17 Burnett Street, one of Elmwood's earlier and finer Queen Anne two-family houses, the lofty front and side gables are ornamented with applied sunburst-pattern wood-

work. The structures at 21-23 and 25-27 Adelaide Avenue, built between 1884 and 1892, have triangular, pargeted gables decorated with naturalistic forms.



Fig. 51: Alonzo and Edward Stanley House (c. 1873); 71 Burnett Street.



Fig. 52: Fred J. Marcy House (c. 1885); 59 Burnett Street.

By the turn of the century, more restrained, Colonial Revival-inspired structures, often with hip roofs, began to supplant the florid Queen Anne houses. Decorative gable



Fig. 53: Two-family House (c. 1890); 171-173 Hanover Street.



Fig. 54: Nathan Landy House (c. 1927); 90-92 Sackett Street.

treatments disappeared and the Queen Anne porch, with its turned supports and spindle-work, gave way to reserved porches with thin classical columns, usually of the Tuscan order. A typical 1900s and 1910s structure is the c. 1905 house at 594-596 Public Street.

By 1920, however, while this type remained popular, changes in the basic form and style began to appear. Characteristic of the 1920s was the introduction of the sun room, a glassed-in alcove-extension of the living room, as in 90-92 Sackett Street and 110-112 Moore Street. At the same time the aesthetic of simplification at work in single-family house design came into play here as well. The low hip roof became the almost invariable rule. Window units became increasingly numerous and wide. What little ornament as was still present consisted commonly of stock Colonial Revival trim.

Three-deckers (three-story, three-family structures planned along the lines of two-family houses, with separate entrance halls for the first floor and upper stories) first appeared in Providence about 1890 and in Elmwood about 1900. Typical examples are at 11-13 Moore Street (c. 1905) and 12-14 Atlantic Avenue (c. 1921). Construction of three-deckers, however, was not common in relatively un-congested Elmwood.



Fig. 55: Samuel Strauss House (c. 1921); 12-14 Atlantic Avenue.



Fig. 56: The Whitmarsh (1913); 86 Whitmarsh Street.

Apartment Houses

The Teens saw the advent of the apartment house. While a few tenement houses had appeared along Cranston Street and Potters Avenue in the 1880s and 1890s, middle- and upper-middle-income families began to accept apartment living only as a result of the increasing cost of single-family houses and the scarcity of domestic help about the time of World War I. Providence's first large apartment house, the eight-story Minden at 123 Waterman Street on the East Side, was erected in 1912. The Whitmarsh at 86 Whitmarsh Street, built in 1913, is the earliest large apartment house in Elmwood. It is a brick and stucco, Tudor-style structure, with short arms flanking the ends of a broad courtyard. Other apartment houses built in the 1910s and 1920s, such as the four-story, U-shaped, c. 1928 Stephens Apartments at 315 Elmwood Avenue, reflected Georgian styling.

No less than a dozen apartment complexes existed in Elmwood by the early 1930s. Their further proliferation in the 1930s and 1940s was prevented by the Great Depression and World War II, and it was not until about 1946 that the next complex, the five-building Auburn Apartments at 35-67 Thackeray Street, was erected.

Commercial and Industrial Development

Although peripheral to the main story of Elmwood's growth as a residential section, considerable commercial and industrial development did take place in the neighborhood.

No stores or shops are known to have existed in Elmwood in the eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries. It was only in the wake of the rapid population growth



Fig. 57: Elmwood Avenue-Public Street intersection; photograph, April, 1936. Building at right, now demolished, was erected in 1854 as Elmwood's first schoolhouse. 1897 Knights of Pythias Hall building (center) is still standing.

in the years after 1845 that the beginnings of commercial development took place. One of Elmwood's earliest commercial establishments was the short-lived Elmwood Bank, which in 1854 erected a brick building at 373 Elmwood Avenue next to the Cranston town clerk's office. The bank, established by William V. Daboll and others in May, 1854, closed in 1865.

With the exception of the bank, Elmwood's early commercial development consisted almost entirely of small neighborhood groceries. By 1875 a number were established near the Elmwood Avenue-Public Street and Cranston Street-Potters Avenue intersections. These small groceries, made necessary by the realities of home food storage and preparation in the pre-refrigeration era, con-

tinued to proliferate throughout Elmwood in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The gradual population rise and consequent growth of the local market, however, led to the development of more specialized businesses such as dry-goods stores, pharmacies, fish markets, and coal and hay businesses. At 557 Public Street is the structure Alfred Barth erected c. 1894 to house his pharmacy, and at 690 Public Street is the c. 1886 building which contained Clarence Redding's fish market and Jacob Redding's hay and grain business. By 1900 the section of Elmwood Avenue between Public Street and Potters Avenue and the area near the corner of Potters Avenue and Cranston Street was lined with stores.

The earliest of Elmwood's commercial structures were probably end-gabled, frame buildings like the bracket-trimmed, false-fronted, c. 1875-1882 market at 716 Potters Avenue or the c. 1876 Charles B. Jenks dry-goods store at 701 Cranston Street. In the 1875-1900 period, however, the demand for more intensive land use led to the development of the commercial/residential block—a two- or three-story structure, usually with a flat or slightly sloping roof, which contained several stores on the street floor and apartments upstairs. The finest are the c. 1888 Humes Block at 644-650 Potters Avenue, the c. 1892 Damase Bouchard building at 742-752 Potters Avenue, and the 1895 Josephine White Block at 737-739 Cranston Street. The White Block with its elaborate stamped-metal facade is, in fact, one of Providence's finest surviving nineteenth-century commercial structures.



Fig. 58: Josephine A. White Block (1895); 737-739 Cranston Street.



Fig. 59: Elmwood Avenue north of Daboll Street before its reconstruction in 1936; photograph, c. 1936.



Fig. 60: Elmwood Avenue north of Daboll Street following its reconstruction in 1936; photograph, c. 1937.

Several other late nineteenth-century buildings contained public halls—rented for lectures, entertainments, and public gatherings of all sorts—in their second floors. Such public halls—particularly Elmwood Hall, a long-ago-demolished, pre-1875 structure which stood at the southwest corner of Elmwood and Potters avenues—served as the centers of neighborhood community life and provided the first home for many local churches and other organizations. At 841 Potters Avenue is the last of the area's public halls—the modest, 1880s, Gorton's Hall.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, Elmwood's small commercial clusters were transformed into extensive strip developments along Broad and Cranston streets and, especially, Elmwood Avenue. Such strips, which became established on major arteries in all the rapidly growing outskirt sections of Providence in the 1910s and 1920s, were a development in which the coming of the automobile played a key role.

Automobile traffic became more and more important in the Teens, Twenties, and Thirties. The increase was especially apparent on Elmwood Avenue, which, designated a part of U.S. Route 1 before 1918, carried considerable through as well as commuter traffic. As a concession to the needs of the automobile, Elmwood Avenue was widened in 1936 and 1938, when bus service replaced the trolleys, and the canopy of elms was removed.

In Elmwood's early twentieth-century commercial development, auto-related businesses played a conspicuous part. Garages, car salesrooms, and, slightly later, service stations became essentials in a motoring age. An early manifestation of the growing role of the automobile before 1910 was the development of the automobile garage, a building containing facilities for auto storage, rental, and repair, often combined with a gasoline service station and car salesroom. One of the first such garages was the 1907 brick and reinforced-concrete Elmwood Garage at 450 Potters Avenue.

Automobile salesrooms and service department buildings began to proliferate along Elmwood Avenue in the middle teens. In 1913, the Foss-Hughes Company built their Pierce-Arrow showroom at 194 Elmwood Avenue. A one-story, flat-roof, utilitarian, brick struc-

ture with a glassed-in front section, it was typical of the larger Elmwood Avenue showrooms. In the late teens, the first filling stations appeared. Their numbers swelled rapidly in the 1920s. A lone survivor of these early filling stations is the much altered Colonial Revival structure which the Beacon Oil Company built at 19 Elmwood Avenue in 1930.

In the 1920s, the commercial block, previously a rare intrusion, became a common fixture along Elmwood Avenue. Typically it is a one-story, flat-roof, utilitarian, brick structure with large plate-glass windows and, often, when the building has a corner location, an angled corner doorway. One of the best preserved is the c. 1928 block at 597-609 Elmwood Avenue.

The redevelopment of Elmwood Avenue between 1910 and 1930 led to the avenue's final decline as an upper-class residential street. Many of Elmwood Avenue's finest homes, such as the Daboll mansion, were demolished; others were converted into apartment or rooming houses. The Potter-Downes House at 480 Elmwood Avenue, for example, was made over as a rooming house about 1910. Still others became funeral homes. The Carpenter-Jenks Funeral Home at 131 Elmwood Avenue was established in 1914 and the Olson-MacKenzie Funeral Home at 638 Elmwood Avenue opened about 1924. By 1930, the Elmwood Avenue streetscape of today was largely in place. Commercial growth since then has served to reinforce, rather than redefine, the character of this early twentieth-century strip development.

Elmwood's earliest industry was the ice industry. The business of cutting, storing, and selling ice from the local ponds for refrigeration purposes thrived in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The pioneer in the local ice business was Earl Carpenter (1794-1863). About 1820, he began the manufacture and sale of spruce beer, which required a steady supply of ice. In 1822, Carpenter built an icehouse on Benedict Pond, and in 1849 he erected a series of them at the north end of Mashapaug Pond. Carpenter's Mashapaug houses are said to have been among the first in which steam power was used to operate a conveyor belt which carried the blocks of ice up from the



Fig. 61: Trolley days on Elmwood Avenue; photograph, 1936. The street had just been widened; shown is a fine Gothic villa (right) which stood until recently at 243 Elmwood Avenue.

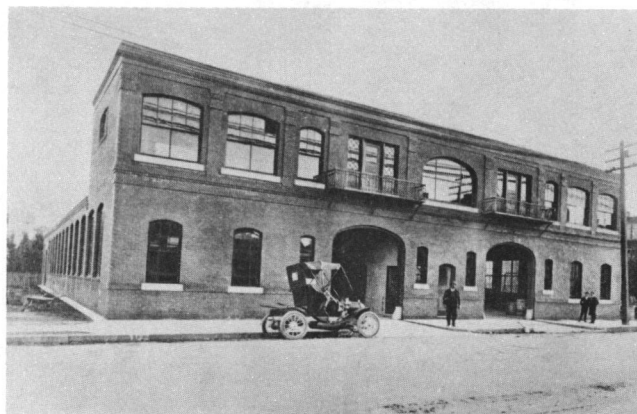


Fig. 62: Elmwood Garage (1907); 450 Potters Avenue; photograph, 1907.



Fig. 63: Beacon Oil Company Service Station, now a used-car dealership (1930); 19 Elmwood Avenue.

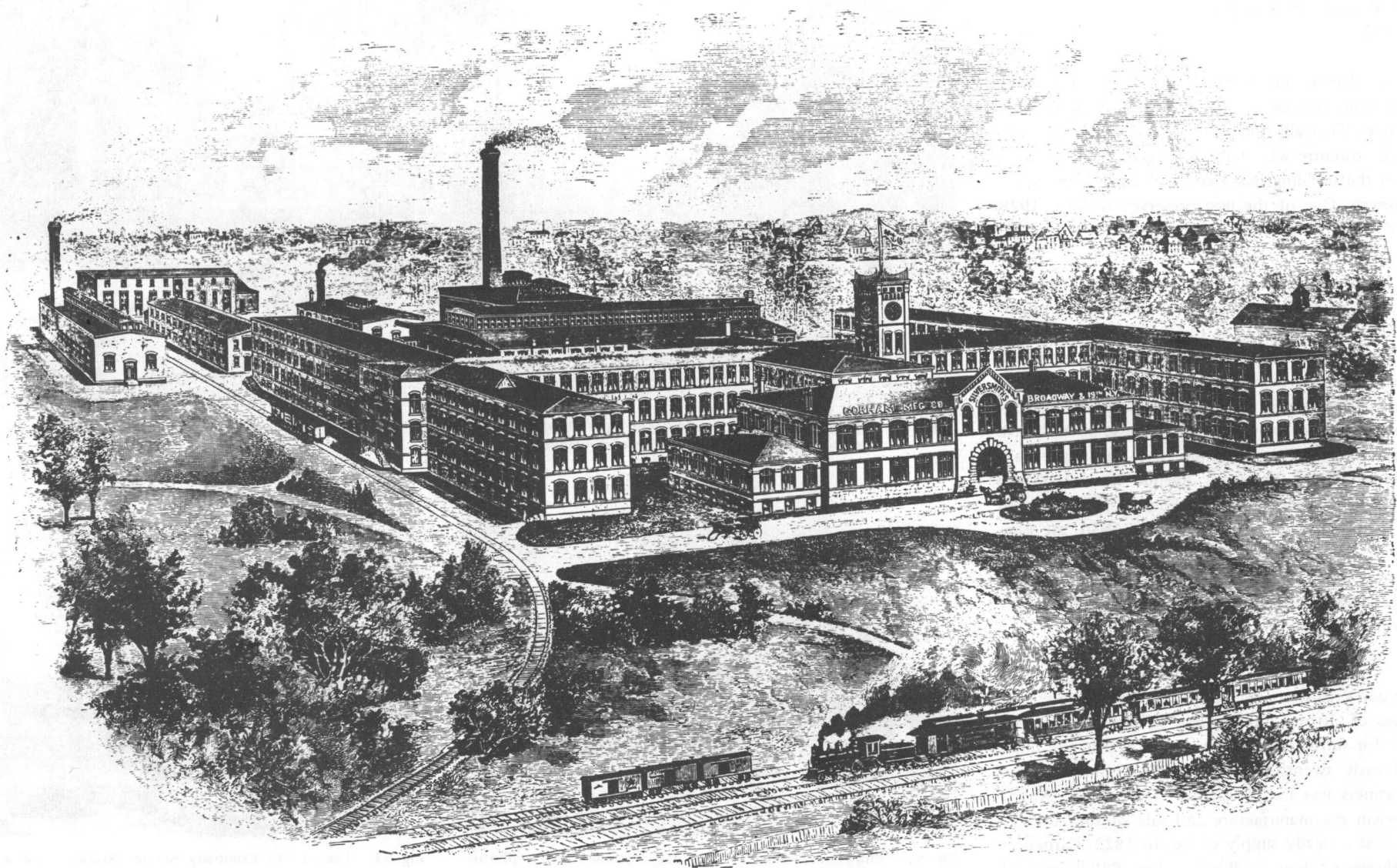


Fig. 64: Gorham Manufacturing Company complex (1889-1890), 333 Adelaide Avenue; drawing, c. 1893. As the company intended, the Gorham complex presented a picturesque view to the passing railroad traveler.

pond. In Elmwood, other icehouses were established by the Potters on Mashapaug Pond about 1848 and by Robert Knight and others somewhat later on Long Pond. The annual harvest of ice from Mashapaug, Benedict, and other local ponds continued until about 1920, when the more efficient, year-round production of ice in ice-making plants finally led to its abandonment.

In the Elmwood-West End area, heavy industry first made its appearance in the West End section between Broad and Cranston streets. By 1849 the New England Butt Company established a small factory in the block bounded by Pearl, Perkins, and Rice streets. In 1865, the company built several new structures, including the brick buildings on Pearl and Perkins streets. Other early structures in this industrial area include the early 1860s monitor-roofed gun manufactory which Winsor and Brown built at 63 Central Street and the Romanesque-style, storage warehouse at 49-59 Central Street, built for Orrin E. Jones and designed by Gould, Angell and Swift. Begun in 1896 as one of the first modern storage facilities in Providence, a six-story fireproof addition in the same style replaced the three-story building shown in the photograph below.

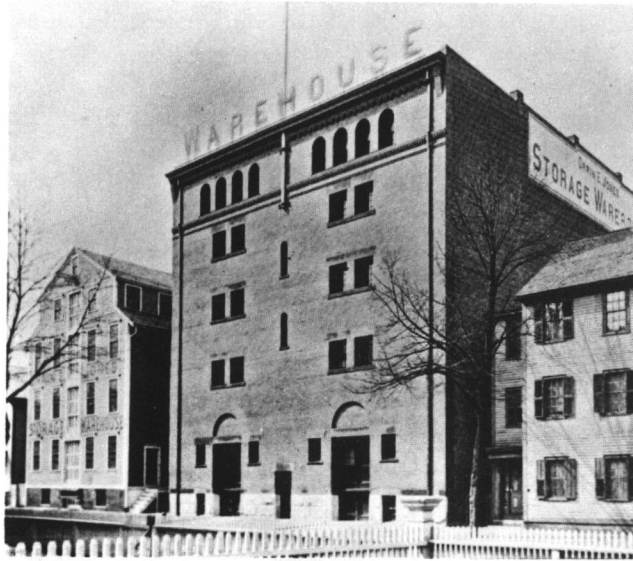


Fig. 65: Orrin E. Jones Storage Warehouses (1860s, 1895-1896), 49-63 Central Street; photograph, 1896, showing the former Winsor and Brown gun manufactory on the left.

In the 1860s the lowlands near Long Pond became a center of industrial activity in the Elmwood-West End section. At the south end of the pond, on Dexter Street between Mawney and Daboll, is a large complex of stone and brick structures begun in 1866 as the Elmwood Cotton Mills and largely completed between 1900 and 1908 by Elmwood Mills, a shoelace and braid manufacturer. The north end of the pond was heavily industrialized between 1860 and 1875 with the erection of a Providence Gas Company gasometer at 42 Westfield Street and a factory complex in the block between Cromwell and Sprague streets for several iron-products firms owned by A. & W. Sprague, the nineteenth-century Rhode Island industrial colossus. Its last remnant is the c. 1869 Sprague Mowing Machine Company building at 55-69 Sprague Street. Most of the Sprague complex was replaced in the mid-1880s by the Mechanical Fabric Company's brick buildings at 40, 50, and 68 Sprague Street. The firm manufactured rubber card cloth, rubber thread, and bicycle tires. In the same area in the late 1880s and early 1890s, Charles H. Perkins built several structures designed for multi-firm use, including the 1892 Ada Building at 85 Sprague Street.

Providence has always been the center of the nation's costume-jewelry industry. The business began to develop in the first decades of the nineteenth century and was concentrated for the most part along North Main Street. By the 1850s, the shops had begun to relocate farther to the west, to the downtown area and nearby South Providence; in the late nineteenth century, several jewelry and precious metals firms located in Elmwood. The most prominent was and is Gorham, the internationally known silversmithing firm. Now part of the Providence-based Textron conglomerate, Gorham was founded in 1817 by Jabez Gorham. In 1889-1890, Gorham's old plant on North Main Street became outgrown and the company constructed a new complex on Adelaide Avenue overlooking Mashapaug Pond. The new Gorham plant presented a handsome, somewhat picturesque facade and landscaped grounds to the traveler on the railroad from New York to Providence and Boston. One of Providence's finest nineteenth-century industrial complexes, Gorham remains a key architectural monument and visual landmark in Elmwood and has been approved for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

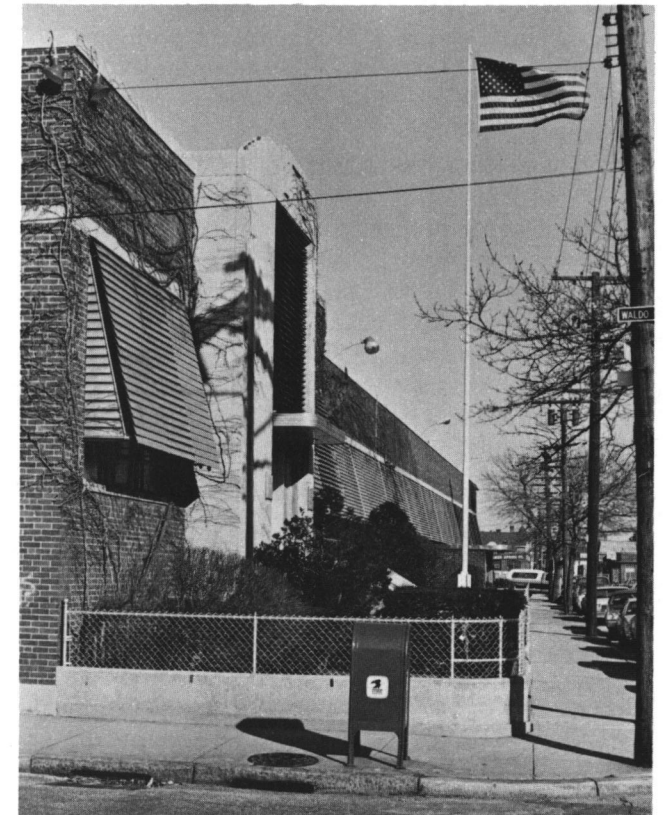


Fig. 66: American Standard Watch Case Company, now American Standard Division of Bulova Watch Company (1942-1943); 425 Dexter Street.

Public Institutions

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the growth of population in Elmwood led to the establishment of public services such as schools, police and fire protection, and a library.

Elmwood's first school was established by Cranston's Fourth School District, which in 1854 constructed a two-story, frame schoolhouse on the Elmwood and Potters Avenue site now occupied by the Merit Service Station. Between the 1868 annexation of the area to Providence and 1900, the city built no fewer than seven more schools to serve Elmwood's burgeoning population. Of the few which have survived, the most imposing is the Vineyard Street School at the corner of Vineyard Street and Potters Avenue. Originally known as the Elmwood Grammar School, it was built in 1882-1883 and enlarged to the north to twice its original size in 1913. The Vineyard Street School, a complex of two, connected, three-story, brick structures, with high, slated, hip roofs, is the oldest school building in Elmwood and one of the finest nineteenth-century schoolhouses left in Providence.

In the early twentieth century the continued growth of Elmwood required further expansion of the school system. The Lexington Avenue School, a three-story, brick structure with round-head upper-story windows was erected at the corner of Lexington Avenue and Niagara Street in 1905, and in 1922-1923 the red-brick, institutional Georgian-style Sackett Street School was constructed. In 1931 the Neoclassical Gilbert Stuart Junior High School at 160 Bucklin Street was built. A monumental three-story (plus basement), yellow-brick structure, fronted by a four-column portico, it is Elmwood's largest and most impressive twentieth-century school.

The annexation of Elmwood to Providence in 1868 was soon followed by the establishment of city police and fire services. The local police station, first housed in the old Cranston town clerk's office at the northwest corner of Elmwood and Potters avenues, moved in 1895 to a brick building at Public and Burnett streets. In 1902 the city erected the three-story, neo-Georgian, brick police station and adjacent hip-roofed stable at the corner of Potters Avenue and Hamilton Street. They housed the local police

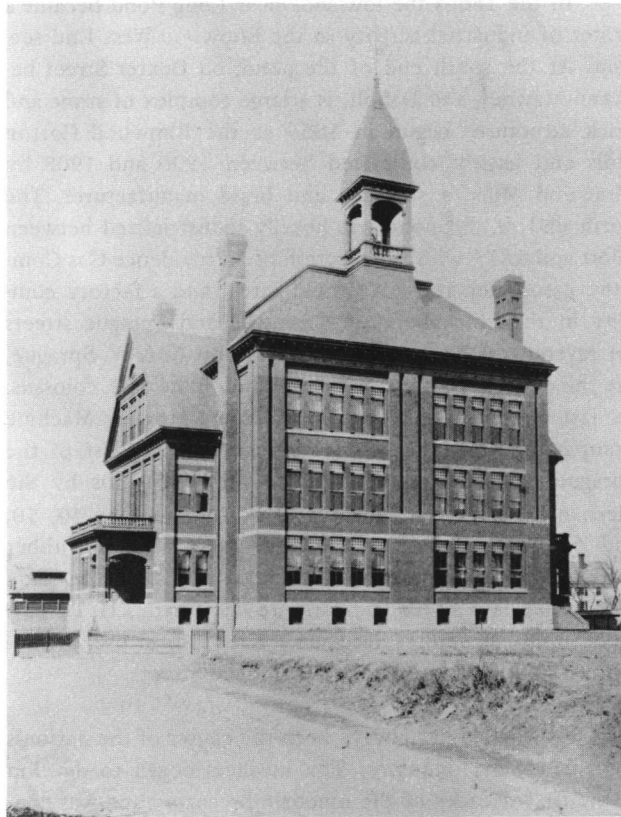


Fig. 67: Elmwood Grammar School, now the Vineyard Street Elementary School (1882-1883), 1-33 Vineyard Street; photograph, c. 1886.



Fig. 68: Elmwood Police Station, now Opportunities Industrialization Center (1902); 45 Hamilton Street.

precinct until 1953, when all police functions were consolidated downtown.

By 1875, two fire companies were located within the Elmwood-West End area. Brick fire stations were erected by Engine Company Thirteen at 39 Central Street in 1875 and by Company Eleven at the northwest corner of Public and Burnett streets in 1885. Both stations were closed about 1950, when the Mansion Park fire station on Messer Street was opened; only Company Thirteen's firehouse, now much altered, survives.

No library existed in Elmwood until 1915, when a group of women organized the Elmwood Public Library Association and established a library in the Public Street Firehouse. In 1923-1924 the Knight Memorial Library was built at 271 Elmwood Avenue. Donated in memory of Robert and Josephine Knight by their children, this impressive Renaissance-style structure of Indiana limestone was designed by Edward S. Tilton, a New York architect who specialized in library work. In its refined design, grand scale, and lavish use of fine materials, and in its siting well back from the street line, the Knight Memorial Library is one of Elmwood's crowning achievements. This landmark building, distinguished by its copper-clad hip roof with ornamental cresting of Grecian acroteria, has been recommended for entry in the National Register of Historic Places.

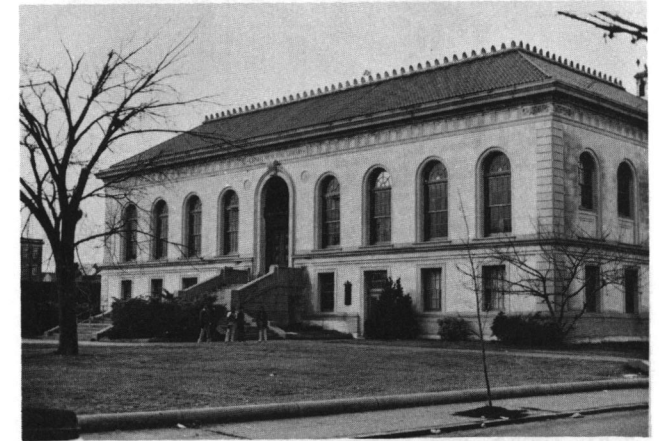


Fig. 69: Knight Memorial Library (1923-1924); 271 Elmwood Avenue.

Recreation

In the late nineteenth century, with the installation of horse-car and, later, of trolley lines along the major roads leading to the suburbs, undeveloped sections of Providence became playgrounds for city residents. Southern Elmwood and the Mansion Park section of the West End became the site of such recreational activities as picnicking, amusement parks, and sporting events. In the 1870s and 1880s, Adelaide Grove, bounded by Elmwood and Adelaide avenues and Sackett and Hamilton streets, was a popular picnic area.

In 1878, a thirty-acre tract bounded by Broad, Sumter, Niagara, and Sackett streets was transformed into Park Garden, a summer amusement park landscaped with lawns, gardens, lakes, and paths and dotted with Japanese-style pavilions. A small lake near Sackett Street served as an open-air theater in which light Victorian operettas such as *The Ambassador's Daughter* and *H.M.S. Pinafore* were presented. The patrons were seated in chairs set up along the wooded shores across the narrow lake from the stage. At night, electric lights, gas jets, and fireworks lit up the sky. Park Garden lasted only a few years; the area was growing so fast that the land it occupied quickly became too valuable to remain open. In the 1890s, it was platted into house lots and sold. A part, however, survived as Adelaide Park until about 1905.

Baseball became the national pastime in the post-Civil War years and quickly gained a following in Provi-

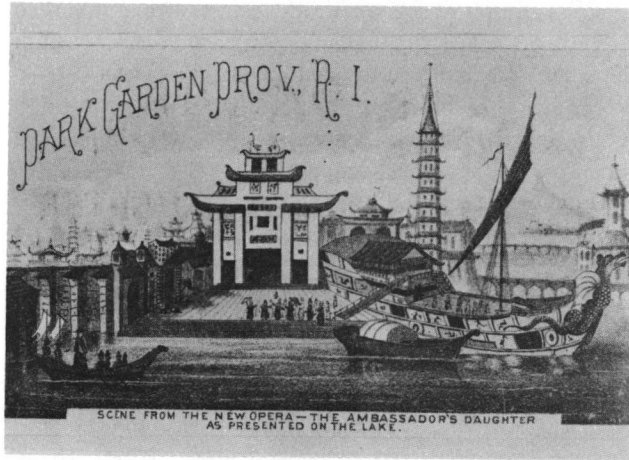


Fig. 70: Advertisement card for Park Garden (c. 1880); showing a scene from *The Ambassador's Daughter* as presented there.

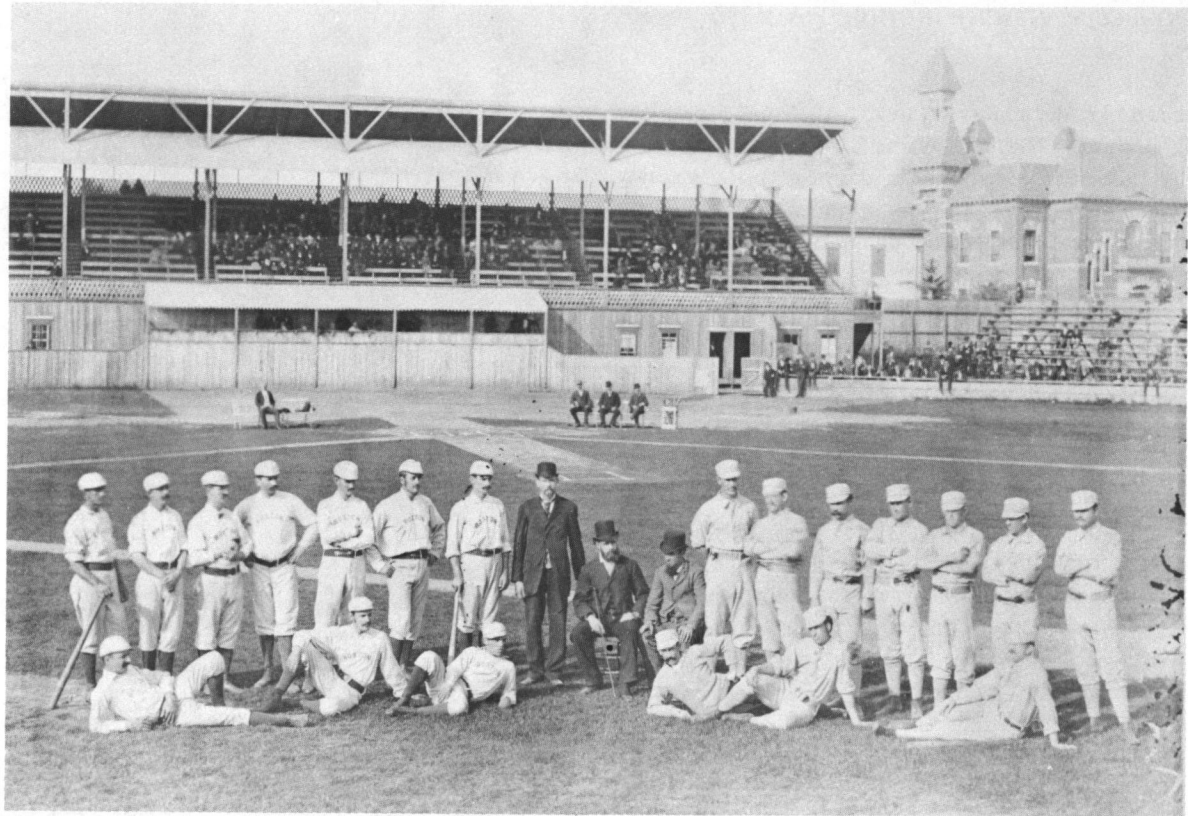


Fig. 71: Messer Park (1877-1878); formerly at Messer and Willow streets; photograph, c. 1880, demolished, c. 1889. Unfortunately, the occasion here recorded is not known. The building in the background (right) is the Messer Street School (1875, E. L. Angell, architect), now demolished.

dence. In the 1870s, the city fielded its own National League team, the Providence Grays. In 1878, the Providence Base Ball Association opened Messer Park. Located southwest of Messer and Willow streets in the West End, the stadium had bleachers and a large, frame grandstand behind home plate. Despite the popularity of the team and the convenient access to the park over the Westminster Street horse-car line, Messer Park was nevertheless demolished about 1889 and replaced with houses.

In the 1890s an Adelaide Park ball field served as the home of the Providence Grays baseball team. In April, 1904, the Grays moved into Melrose Park, a field with a wooden grandstand and bleachers. Located on the south side of Thackeray Street west of Melrose, it served the Grays for fifteen years before its sale and demolition in 1920. Melrose Park's finest moments came late in the Grays' 1914 season when George Herman "Babe" Ruth joined the team and played some of his first games as a

professional there. Ruth quickly demonstrated his ability and was called up to join the Boston Red Sox at the end of the season.

About 1900 the Melrose Golf Club, an organization whose membership consisted mainly of upper-class Elmwood residents, established a course in the area between Elmwood Avenue and Melrose Street from Lenox Avenue south to Roger Williams Park. The course evidently survived only a few years before the construction of Melrose Park and development of housing in the area forced its closing.

Of much longer duration was the use of the lowlands south of Sackett Street and between Niagara Street and Elmwood Avenue as the site of the annual visit of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus. The circus used these "Melrose Street grounds" from the late nineteenth century until the 1940s. Since that time nearly all of the area has been developed for housing and industry.

AN INNER-CITY NEIGHBORHOOD, 1945 TO THE PRESENT

Since 1945, the Elmwood area has become an inner-city neighborhood. The change was a gradual one; it began in the 1920s and ended only in the post World War II years. This radical transformation of the neighborhood's character was the result of the disappearance of vacant land and the increased population and building density in the area. In the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, Elmwood's last large open spaces—the park-like area south of Sackett Street, the territory around the former site of Long Pond, the western side of the Chapin plat, and the numerous vacant lots which provided garden plots, playgrounds, and elbow room—finally disappeared.

The neighborhood's population density was increased dramatically beginning in the late 1940s with the further subdivision of many of the numerous two- and three-family dwellings. Conversion of the larger single-family houses, which had begun as early as 1910, accelerated rapidly in the 1940s, when such homes as the Cory House at 37 Mawney Street and the Richardson House at 14 Parkis Avenue became apartment houses. Most dwellings were placed on small lots. By the 1950s, the demands for parking spaces caused by the invasion of increasing numbers of automobiles were in many cases reducing the already small yards to meaningless vestiges.

A new spate of apartment house construction which began in the late 1940s and continued into the early 1970s further increased the density of the neighborhood. Large apartment structures, such as the c. 1962 building at 211 Adelaide Avenue, often replaced single houses or clusters of houses containing a far smaller number of residents. These new buildings, moreover, were often too large for their lots and out of scale with the homes around them.

The same years that saw this burgeoning population density also witnessed a rapid increase in the density of commercial development along Elmwood Avenue. In the late 1940s, after a long hiatus caused by the Depression of the 1930s and World War II, new commercial structures again began to appear along the avenue. Two branch bank structures appeared in 1949: the Providence Institution for Savings office at number 520 and the Industrial National



Fig. 72: Apartment House (c. 1962); 211 Adelaide Avenue.



Fig. 73: Old Stone Bank, formerly the Providence Institution for Savings (1949); 520 Elmwood Avenue.



Fig. 74: Texaco Service Station (1949); 591 Elmwood Avenue.

Bank building at 582 Elmwood Avenue. In 1948, the Rhode Island Co-operative, Inc. erected its department store at number 544 (the co-op failed within a few years and the building has been used for offices ever since). The Elmwood Theater was constructed in 1948-1949 and the United Public Market (the first, large, area supermarket) opened at 541 Elmwood Avenue in 1950. Several of these structures are important visual assets to the neighborhood because of their handsome architecture and tasteful landscaping.

Office and professional buildings and glass-fronted, one-story stores—modernized versions of the early twentieth-century structures which line the avenue—have formed the bulk of Elmwood Avenue's dense commercial development since World War II. Gasoline service stations have also proliferated. The early post-war stations are typified by the sleek and boxy, 1949 Rubier's Texaco Super Service Station at Elmwood and Adelaide avenues; the more recent ones by the Colonial-inspired, c. 1971 Sunoco station at 327-339 Elmwood Avenue. This dense, post-war, commercial development has brought about the destruction of much of what remained of the historic character of Elmwood Avenue; it represented the final stage in the street's urbanization.

In the Elmwood area, the period since 1950 has been marked by a gradual decline of neighborhood vitality and the beginnings of physical deterioration. Elmwood's decline began as a result of social attitudes which favored suburban over urban living. The area was settled in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by people seeking an alternative to the dirt, noise, and congestion of older neighborhoods closer to the city center. They found in Elmwood open spaces and peace and quiet. Through much of its one-hundred-year period of development (down at least to the late 1920s), Elmwood remained a suburban mecca for inner-city residents.

Elmwood's decline began with overcrowding, the result of the rapidly increasing apartment and rooming-house market. It was also spurred by the aging of the housing stock. In 1950, much of the housing in the West End area, the older sections of West Elmwood near Cranston Street and Potters Avenue, and the upper end of Elmwood had passed the age of fifty, sixty, or seventy-five

years; major structural repairs were required. Moreover, in the post-war period, just as the need for major repairs was becoming more pressing, labor and material costs began to escalate sharply.

Overcrowding and aging housing in the older sections served to discourage settlement by new residents and encouraged the emigration of old. This development was also promoted by the availability of low-cost Veterans Administration loans. As a result, many families moved to the new suburbs in Cranston, Warwick, East Greenwich, and other towns. The movement of upwardly mobile, middle-class residents from Elmwood to suburbs more distant from Providence, picked up momentum in the late 1950s and 1960s as Interstate routes 95 and 195 made long-distance commuting more feasible.

The area's most prosperous residents were the first to depart. Elmwood's Yankees made their final exit from the Elmwood scene in the 1950s. Their churches either followed them out to the suburbs, as the Westminster Unitarian Society did in moving to East Greenwich in 1959, or closed. In 1953 and 1954, the Elmwood Avenue Free Baptist and Elmwood Christian churches both dissolved. The Jews also began a move to the suburbs in the 1950s. In 1951, lower Elmwood contained about 1850 Jews; by 1963 the number was reduced to 1000.

During the 1950s and early 1960s, the effect of these losses was in part ameliorated by the settlement of middle-class Swedes and others from South Providence. Their migration resulted from population shifts caused by urban renewal in the Prairie-Willard Avenue area and by the demolition required for the construction of Interstate Route 95. At the same time two of South Providence's Protestant churches, the First Presbyterian, established in 1872, and the Friendship United Methodist, a predominantly Swedish organization founded in 1883, followed their membership to Elmwood. The Presbyterians purchased the Elmwood Christian Church at 353 Elmwood Avenue in 1954, and, in 1959, the Swedish Methodists moved into the former Westminster Church at 126 Adelaide Avenue.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, large numbers of Blacks, driven from South Providence by redevelopment



Fig. 75: The trackless-trolley storage yard at the Elmwood Garage in 1949, surrounded by early twentieth-century triple-deckers.

and the redevelopment-caused urban decay which followed, migrated to Elmwood. Settling first in the older sections such as upper Elmwood and West Elmwood, they became intermixed with the white population throughout most of Elmwood by the mid-1970s.

The growth of the Black population has been reflected in the Elmwood and West Elmwood churches. Formerly predominantly white churches, such as Calvary Baptist and Trinity United Methodist, have acquired substantial Black memberships. Several other white churches have been closed. In 1964 the Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints followed its congregation to Warwick. The sanctuary on Bellevue Avenue was sold to the Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church. The Friendship United Methodist Church dissolved in September, 1977, the congregation having in large part dispersed to the suburbs. Their

large church complex on Adelaide Avenue has become the home of the Hood Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the descendant of Black Methodist congregations which had met at 148 Wadsworth Street since the early 1860s.

Hispanics began to settle in Elmwood in the middle 1970s. Mostly Puerto Ricans and Dominicans who came to Providence from New York City, they now comprise a significant part of Elmwood's population.

By the 1970s, Elmwood had entered a period of real urban decay. The cause can be traced to urban renewal. Elmwood itself has been affected by urban renewal only once, by the Huntington Expressway Industrial Complex project. Begun in 1960, the project displaced a racially mixed neighborhood in West Elmwood south of Hunting-

ton Avenue and west of Mashapaug Pond and rammed the obtrusive and noisy Huntington Expressway through an adjacent section south of Potters Avenue. Despite the severe environmental damage this project caused to the West Elmwood neighborhood, however, its effect upon the rest of Elmwood was not great.

Far more significant in its impact upon Elmwood has been the large redevelopment program begun in 1967 in the section of northern South Providence along Prairie Avenue. Uprooting the largely Black local population and pushing much of it into Elmwood, urban renewal also spurred the deterioration of the surrounding area. From the wasteland core along Prairie Avenue, the zone of urban decay spread out, cancer-like, block by block, and soon reached into Elmwood. The process starts when residents begin to abandon an area for a more inviting environment. Then landlords, unable to reap a satisfactory return in an increasingly competitive rental market, neglect their properties. Eventually, abandonment, followed by vandalism and demolition, takes place.

Elmwood has not suffered from urban decay to the extent that South Providence has. However, spot demolitions of structures have taken place along many of the older streets, leaving weeds and junk-filled vacant lots as visual blights. Abandoned and vandalized housing, scattered throughout the survey area, but more common in upper and middle Elmwood, the nearby West End, and the streets near Cranston Street, has depressed property values. Unless these trends can be reversed, a chain reaction of neglect, decay, abandonment, and demolition may be in the making in some of the older sections of Elmwood.

Elmwood now stands on the threshold either of a renaissance or of a lingering period of disintegration. Its aging housing stock is often deteriorated and occasionally abandoned. The residents for the most part lack a sense of neighborhood consciousness and community pride. Nevertheless, the area's fundamental character remains intact.

In recent years a small but continuing trickle of middle-class families, attracted by the inherent quality of the structures and the relative cheapness of real estate, have established themselves in Elmwood. Old and new residents have banded together to form several neighborhood improvement groups. The oldest is People Acting



Fig. 76: Stanton B. Champlin House (c. 1888); 36 Parkis Avenue; photograph, before a 1976 fire and subsequent restoration.

through Community Effort (PACE), a coalition of south and West Side block groups established in 1971. In 1976, Stop Wasting Abandoned Property (SWAP) was founded; it works to promote the sale of deteriorated and vacant houses to people who will repair and occupy them. Another offshoot of PACE is Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc. Established in 1977, this local neighborhood housing service is a cooperative effort of city agencies, banks, and local residents, designed to promote stability in property values by encouraging private and public investment in Elmwood and other areas on the city's south side. The Elmwood Foundation for Architectural and Historical Preservation, an organization whose title explains its goals, was founded in February, 1975. It has helped to initiate the recent Columbus Park restoration project and the Princeton and Lenox Avenue streetscape refurbishing projects currently being planned by the city. Elmwood

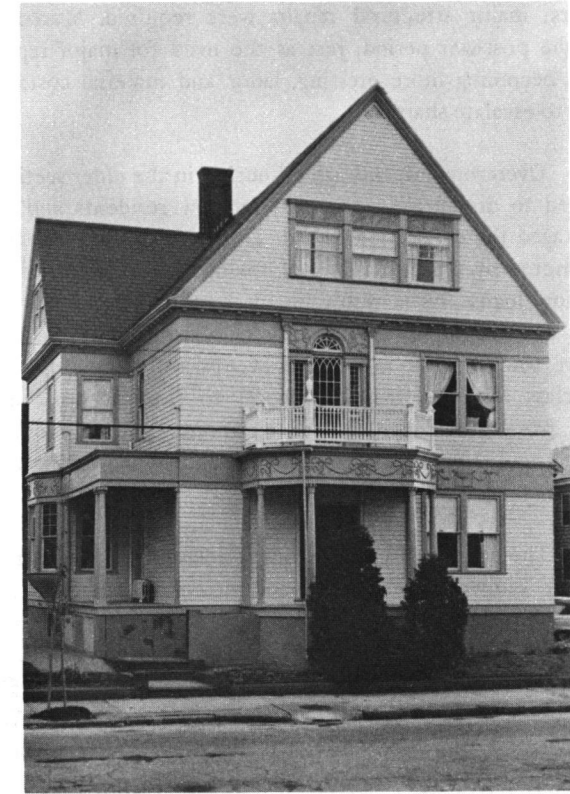


Fig. 77: Stanton B. Champlin House (c. 1888); 36 Parkis Avenue; photograph, after a 1978 restoration that was financed in part by the Mayor's Office of Community Development.

Renaissance, Inc. was organized by several members of the Elmwood Foundation in May, 1976. Using funds raised through the issuance of stock to area residents, it purchases and rehabilitates rundown properties before they become a blight on the neighborhood. The corporation now owns structures on Adelaide and Lenox avenues. The efforts made by these groups have been matched by individual improvement projects.

In the 1970s, with the ending of large-scale renewal projects, Elmwood has the opportunity to again become a stable neighborhood and a vital community. The area possesses an advantageous location close to downtown; it has pleasant, tree-lined streets and solid and appealing, if often dilapidated, houses. The local residents need to capitalize on these assets and find the practical measures to transform Elmwood's potential as a fine residential neighborhood into reality.

V. SUMMARY

Streets, public spaces, and buildings form the visible evidences of Elmwood's past; through them the neighborhood's history can be traced. Most of the area's principal arteries—Broad and Cranston streets; Elmwood, Reservoir, and Pontiac avenues; and Potters Avenue—date from colonial times. The local street pattern, largely established in the mid-nineteenth century, reflects in many cases colonial-era farm boundaries. A few homes survive as reminders of Elmwood's years as an almost rural section

of Cranston, dotted with farms and suburban estates.

Most of Elmwood's man-made fabric, however, dates from the 1845-1945 period during which the area's development as a predominantly residential section of Providence took place. In those years the character each section still possesses was established. The many large and elaborate Late Victorian homes between Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue serve as reminders of the prosperous merchants, businessmen, and industrialists who made this area their home. West Elmwood's less flamboyant street-

scapes of (for the most part) modest and unpretentious houses reflect that area's nineteenth- and early twentieth-century character as a working-class neighborhood.

Although some of the best of Elmwood's Late Victorian residential sections, particularly that which existed along Elmwood Avenue, have been sadly ruined over the years, most of the area's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century neighborhoods remain intact. Elmwood's quiet streets, with their distinguished architecture, form a precious legacy for the future.



Fig. 78: Elmwood Avenue looking south from Princeton Avenue in 1889 showing proposed improvements.

V. PRESERVATION PROGRAMS IN ELMWOOD-WEST END

The revitalization of an area like Elmwood-West End does not lend itself to easy answers or stock solutions. Clearly, the problems are not limited to structural deterioration; they also include demoralization and widespread apathy about the neighborhood's future. No efforts at restoring the vitality of the area can meet with much success without a renewal of enthusiastic neighborhood support and the rekindling of a desire on the part of the residents to stay in the area and create a desirable living environment.

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

Serious neighborhood-based efforts at revitalization began about 1972. Through organizations like People Acting through Community Effort (PACE), The Elmwood Foundation, and others, the interest in renewing the area was focused upon the solution of specific problems. The enthusiasm engendered by such groups encouraged residents to take the initiative in improving their neighborhoods rather than depending upon government leadership. The renewed pride in the neighborhoods has generated a variety of programs aimed at halting decay and putting the area on the road to recovery.

HOME OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS

One of Elmwood-West End's most serious problems, and the one factor that has had the greatest single impact on the physical deterioration of the building stock in the neighborhood, is absentee landlordism. The relatively small number of owner-occupants in some areas has tended to keep the population more transient than is desirable and has inhibited revitalization efforts. 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 expand 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 demolition. 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 redlining by local banks. When a neighborhood is redlined 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 redlined neighborhoods has again made the resources of the financial community available to bankable residents of Elmwood-The West End. 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 proposed by S.W.A.P. as a way of making 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.

HOME-IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

As a result of their advanced age and decades of deferred maintenance, many buildings in Elmwood-West End are in need of renovation. The 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. A number of groups have addressed the problem with a series of programs offering financial assistance and professional expertise to take the worry out of home repair.

E.N.H.S. REVOLVING LOAN FUND: The Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services Chapter (E.N.H.S.) has established a revolving loan fund. Seventy-five per cent of the fund is reserved for use within a specific target site (currently Congress Avenue) to correct building-code violations. The remaining 25 per cent is available to other residents of Elmwood for use in correcting emergency situations which threaten to make structures unlivable or unsafe.

HOME IMPROVEMENTS PROVIDENCE (H.I.P.): Since 1975, utilizing funds from the federal Community Development Block Grant Program, 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 homeowners for the renovation of houses in the area. Under the H.I.P. program, qualified homeowners can apply for grants and low-interest loans to perform specific renovation work of almost any necessary kind except for new construction or unnecessary luxury improvements. The H.I.P.

staff will assist the homeowner 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 buildings up to minimum building-code standards. Collaboration with the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission has helped to ensure that the work does not lessen the building's intrinsic and historic value by destroying its architectural character.

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

S.W.A.P. TOOL-LENDING BANK: A program to assist homeowners in repairing their own dwellings has been begun 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 homeowners to perform much of the work necessary to rehabilitate their dwellings themselves, thus saving the high labor cost of contracted home repairs.

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.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

In addition to programs designed to increase homeownership and facilitate home improvement, various groups are also aiding neighborhood conservation in Elmwood-West End by improving the streetscapes and parks. The organization of residents into strong block clubs to guide rehabilitation and promote city involvement in neighborhood renewal efforts has resulted in the initiation of several demonstration projects.

PRINCETON AVENUE AND LENOX AVENUE PROJECTS: In 1976, The Elmwood Foundation initiated two demonstration projects of historic streetscape renewal on Princeton and Lenox avenues. Funded by the City using Community Development block-grant funds, these projects call for the formulation of an overall streetscape revitalization plan for each street including new paving, period street lights, underground wiring, tree planting, the construction of a model neighborhood parking lot on a vacant site, and a demonstration residential landscaping project—all highlighted by extensive publicity.

CONGRESS AVENUE TARGET SITE PROJECT: Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services (E.N.H.S.) has established Congress Avenue as the initial focus of their neighborhood-renewal activities. The E.N.H.S. is a locally managed, neighborhood-conservation organization established under the auspices of the nationally based Urban Reinvestment Task Force. E.N.H.S. seeks to upgrade Congress Avenue and then move on to Hamilton Street and other areas. It is negotiating with the city to get public improvements including street and sidewalk repair, tree trimming, experimental trash collection, and the sale of city demolition-lien property. A full-time, city building-code inspector assigned to the target site will work to promote the upgrading of the structures to meet building-code requirements.

COLUMBUS PARK: In 1978, Columbus Park—at the intersection of Elmwood and Reservoir avenues—was rebuilt to enhance its visual appeal. The new design included brick sidewalks, benches and new landscaping surrounding the statue of Columbus for

which the park is named. The project was partially financed with a grant sponsored by the Elmwood Foundation.

TRINITY SQUARE: The Elmwood Foundation, Trinity Church, Grace Church and others have sponsored a proposal for redesigning Trinity Square to give it a more parklike quality. Construction is tentatively planned for 1980.

ELMWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS: In 1977, the Department of Planning and Urban Development of the City of Providence, published *Elmwood Neighborhood Analysis, Part One*. This comprehensive study of the Elmwood neighborhood examines the architectural, historical, and physical characteristics of the area and analyzes its overall residential character. This publication has been distributed in the neighborhood and widely used by organizations working to revitalize Elmwood. In addition the city is using it as a basis for its improvement activities in Elmwood. A second volume, *Elmwood Neighborhood Analysis, Part Two*, which will deal with socio-economic issues, evaluation, and planning recommendations, is now in preparation.

PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

The revitalization of Elmwood-West End has suffered from a general lack of knowledge about the neighborhood by the greater community. Many city residents only know of the neighborhood from occasional newspaper articles or glimpses from Elmwood Avenue, Cranston, or Broad streets as they are driving by. On the other hand, most of the current residents have moved to the area too recently to understand or appreciate the history or rich architectural heritage of their surroundings. To overcome the widespread ignorance about the neighborhood and generate interest in its history and architecture, a series of public-education programs has been started.

THE ELMWOOD FOUNDATION FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION: This group has promoted public interest in Elmwood by distributing information about its history and architecture, by participating in walking tours, and by

hosting events intended to bring new people into the neighborhood as well as to familiarize current residents with the area's rich heritage. It has been the fountainhead of the renewal efforts in the Elmwood neighborhood through its sponsorship of the Princeton and Lenox avenue projects, the Columbus Park project and the proposed redesign of Trinity Square (see Neighborhood Improvement Programs). In addition, the Elmwood Foundation was instrumental in supporting the application to establish Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services. The Elmwood Foundation has grown from a small group of historically minded concerned citizens into a multifaceted neighborhood revitalization organization.

PROVIDENCE PRESERVATION SOCIETY (P.P.S.): The Providence Preservation Society, a private preservation group active throughout the city, is involved in the revitalization of Elmwood-West End. It periodically sponsors walking tours of Elmwood. In addition, through its Marker Program, P.P.S. designates well maintained or authentically restored buildings of historic or architectural significance with plaques giving the names of the original owners and architect, if known, and the building's date of construction. This program is funded by a grant from the Mayor's Office of Community Development. The plaques are placed at no charge to the owner on buildings selected by a P.P.S. committee. To date, approximately fifty buildings in Elmwood-West End have received markers and more are planned. The Preservation Society is also sponsoring a series of seminars on specific facets of historically appropriate home improvements to be held at the Elmwood Library.

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 Elmwood-West End for use in a planned unit on the neighborhood.

VI. ASSESSMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In spite of the considerable progress that has been made in beginning a program of neighborhood conservation in Elmwood-West End, there are still important steps that need to be taken. Some of the recommendations apply to all of the neighborhoods. Since no single preservation plan would suit the unique needs of each of the eight areas, however, more specific recommendations are made for certain areas where existing physical conditions require special actions.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ELMWOOD-WEST END

1. Protect the heritage of the Elmwood, West Elmwood, and West End neighborhoods—including their important buildings, residential areas, commercial districts, streetscapes, and open spaces—by continuing to nominate structures and districts to the National Register of Historic Places.
2. Expand the activities of People Acting through Community Effort (P.A.C.E.) to form a strong community council, widely representative of the neighborhood's population, to guide its revitalization in cooperation with the city and existing community organizations.
3. Encourage interest in the history and architectural heritage of Elmwood-West End through the Elmwood Foundation, the Providence Preservation Society, the Office of the Mayor, the Providence School Department, and all interested local organizations and churches by the following actions:
 - a. Develop and publish a self-guided walking-driving tour.
 - b. Conduct architectural tours of homes and buildings to emphasize the different living qualities of the buildings; to familiarize residents with examples of well maintained, period interiors and exteriors as well as exemplary modernizations; and to acquaint potential new residents with the fine architecture and environmental qualities the neighborhood has to offer.
4. Encourage the proper restoration and preservation of the buildings.
 - 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. Publicize sources of advice, information, and funding available to homeowners in restoring or improving their buildings.
 - d. 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.
 - e. Conduct workshops dealing with home repairs, redecorating and remodeling, energy conservation, and other topics of interest to Elmwood-West End residents.
5. Study methods of crime prevention to reduce the area's high rate of burglary and street crime by securing expanded police protection and exploring techniques of citizen participation in neighborhood security.
6. Establish a zoning board of review comprised of neighborhood residents and businessmen in each area to advise the city zoning board on proposed zoning changes.



Fig. 79: Key Map: Subneighborhoods of Elmwood.

PRESERVATION IN NORTHERN ELMWOOD

DESCRIPTION:

The section of Elmwood north of Potters Avenue was primarily built-up between 1875 and 1900 as a middle-class residential area of one- and two-family houses. This area contains some of the city's finest Victorian mansions as well as many handsomely detailed two-family houses. The character of each street is different. Some streets such as Parkis and Princeton avenues are lined with extraordinarily fine single-family houses while others, such as Daboll, contain closely spaced, modest, two-family houses. In the last twenty years this area has suffered from considerable deterioration. Today, although still in transition, it is one of the centers of neighborhood renewal efforts in Elmwood.



Fig. 80: Northern Elmwood.

PROBLEMS:

1. Most of the large single-family homes have been converted to apartments and many two-family houses further subdivided, 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 and deferred maintenance.
3. Few of the houses are owner occupied with the result that most of the residents are renters with no long-term commitment to the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Make Northern Elmwood the object of a neighborhood-organized program of major residential preservation. 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. Provide small, unobtrusive, landscape-screened, common parking areas on vacant land throughout residential areas where on-site parking is impossible to enhance the convenience and viability of old pre-automobile neighborhoods.
3. Promote new settlement in the area by publicizing the qualities of the neighborhood through walking tours and newspaper articles on the history of the area and on people who have bought and restored homes in the area.
4. Encourage 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 and districts to the National Register of Historic Places and the awarding of historical plaques by the Providence Preservation Society.
6. Utilize fully the Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services and the Elmwood Foundation programs to revitalize the area.
7. 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.
8. Conduct workshops on preservation topics in local homes and churches.

PRESERVATION IN SOUTHERN ELMWOOD

DESCRIPTION:

The section of Elmwood south of Potters Avenue was built-up mostly between 1885 and 1930 as a middle-class residential area of one-, two-, and some three-family houses. The most architecturally significant buildings are generally to be found west of Melrose Street and on Adelaide Avenue. The area south of Adelaide Avenue was primarily developed between 1900 and 1930, although many streets contain a few older houses. Today the central part of Elmwood between Potters Avenue and Adelaide Avenue east of Melrose Street is the most rapidly decaying part of the neighborhood. Abandoned, vandalized houses are now appearing in this section. The neighborhood south of Adelaide Avenue is beginning to show signs of decay and property values have fallen.

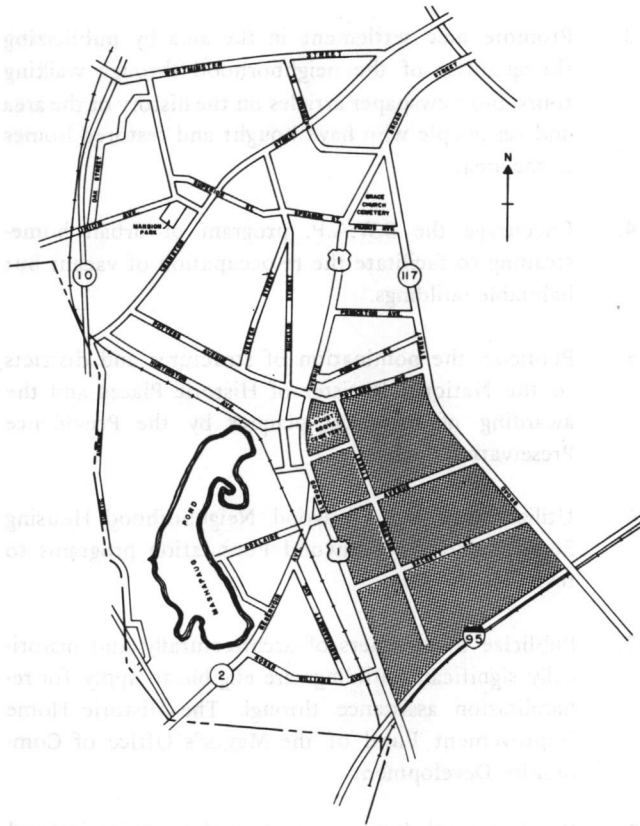


Fig. 81: Southern Elmwood.

PROBLEMS:

1. Most of the large houses 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. Parts of the neighborhood are seriously deteriorating and derelict buildings and vacant lots are increasing in the northern part.
3. The residential desirability of certain streets such as Potters Avenue, Adelaide Avenue, and Sackett Street is seriously impaired by the heavy through traffic.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Begin a program of streetscape revitalization to promote neighborhood conservation in areas such as the Potters Avenue section 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. The city should plant trees on streets where they are lacking, especially on Potters Avenue, 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. Social activities which bring neighbors together, such as block parties, would play a large role in this program.
2. Construct unobtrusive neighborhood parking lots in residential areas such as this where on-site parking may not be possible in some cases because of small building lots.
3. Begin a program of major residential preservation. Homeowners 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. 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. Where large, old, single-family houses have been converted to apartments, such as on Adelaide Avenue, a reduction in the number of units to provide fewer, larger, apartments should be considered.

4. In areas such as the southern part of Elmwood where the houses are not particularly old or deteriorated, the core of owner-occupants should organize to combat decay and maintain property values by vigorously encouraging absentee landlords to keep up or sell their property. In extreme cases, residents might form a corporation to jointly purchase properties that detract from the neighborhood (such as has already been done by Elmwood Renaissance on Lenox Avenue) and sell them to new owners, preferably owner-occupants, willing to rehabilitate them. The corporation might partially rehabilitate seriously deteriorated houses before putting them up for sale.
5. Promote the S.W.A.P. program of urban homesteading.
6. Utilize fully Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services and the Elmwood Foundation programs to revitalize the area.
7. Restore and refurbish the deteriorated Locust Grove Cemetery. This badly neglected tract is impairing the viability of the surrounding residential area. A new gate and plantings are needed to dispell the barren appearance.
8. Publicize the nomination of individual buildings and districts to the National Register of Historic Places to encourage a program of restoration of the buildings to an authentic period appearance. It should be publicized that structures within districts will be eligible for funds of the grants-in-aid program of the

Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service as administered by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission and also for loans through the Historic Home Improvement Fund of the Mayor's Office of Community Development.

PRESERVATION ON ELMWOOD AVENUE

DESCRIPTION:

Elmwood Avenue is the principal thru-traffic artery of Elmwood. In the late nineteenth century, Elmwood Avenue became lined with the large houses of Providence's mercantile and industrial elite. In the twentieth century, as a part of Route 1 through Providence, it was a heavily traveled local commuter road as well as an important link in the national highway system before the completion of

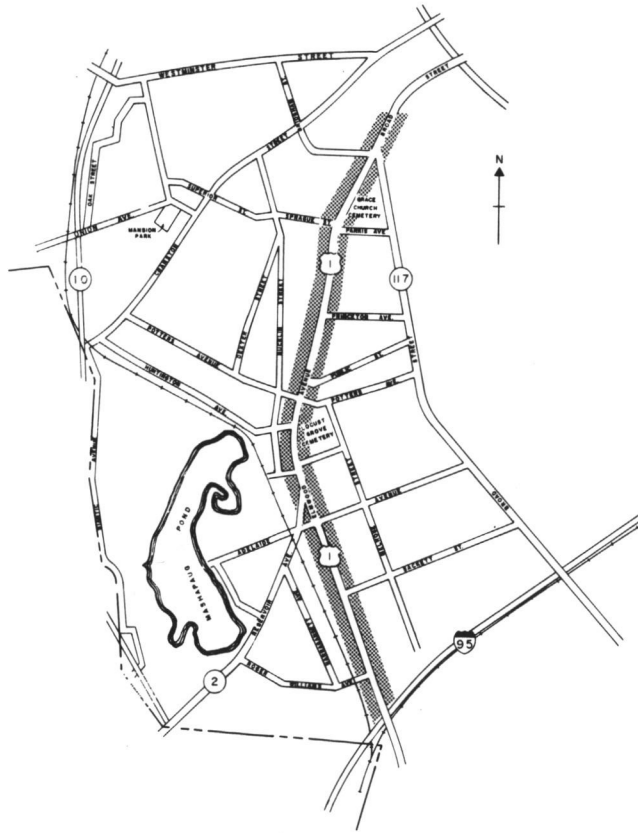


Fig. 82: Elmwood Avenue.

Interstate 95 in the 1960s. Its role as a major traffic route to the downtown resulted in its commercialization. Today Elmwood Avenue is about half commercial and half residential. Many fine nineteenth-century mansions have survived although some are seriously deteriorated and are used as commercial structures or marginal income properties divided into small apartments. The two major intersections are each marked by a public space: Trinity Square where it merges with Broad Street, and Columbus Park where Reservoir Avenue branches off. The widening of the street in the 1930s resulted in the loss of Elmwood Avenue's landscaped medians and even its streetside elm trees so that today it has a barren appearance.

PROBLEMS:

1. The architectural qualities of the old buildings are disguised by encrustations of modern store fronts, over-abundant signs, incongruous awnings, drab paint schemes, and inappropriate cladding materials.
2. Elmwood Avenue has a barren and forbidding appearance as a result of the loss of the streetside 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. Elmwood Avenue lacks the type of retail enterprises necessary to make it a vital neighborhood shopping center.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Institute a program of commercial revitalization on Elmwood Avenue to include city-sponsored street, sidewalk, lighting, and landscaping improvements. The visual unity of the street would be enhanced by store-front facade restoration in a manner sympathetic to an overall block-renewal scheme using appropriate materials and architectural designs and by improved sign control through an improved city sign ordinance to eliminate obtrusive, overscaled, or inappropriate signs and billboards.

2. Conduct 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 Elmwood Avenue. A study of design methods for screening existing parking areas to reduce their visual impact is also needed.
3. Change the zoning to prevent the further proliferation of gasoline service stations and fast-food restaurants along the upper part of Elmwood Avenue. To this end consideration might be given to rezoning from C-4 to C-2 the fronts of the blocks between Westfield and Woodman streets on the west side of the avenue, which now possess no business uses requiring the present C-4 designation.

PRESERVATION IN THE WEST END

DESCRIPTION:

The neighborhood between Elmwood Avenue and Cranston Street north of Superior and Sprague streets was developed between 1840 and 1890 as a mixed residential-industrial area. The oldest portion, north of Pearl Street, has been entirely redeveloped as a high school complex and public housing. The rest of the area contains a mixture of interesting one- and two-family houses dating mostly from the 1850s to the 1880s and brick industrial buildings of various sizes, types, and periods. The irregular street plan of narrow winding lanes is a reflection of its mid-nineteenth-century platting. This section has been deteriorating as a residential area for decades although it is still in active use for light manufacturing.

PROBLEMS:

1. The area is one of the most deteriorated on the West Side and is gradually losing population. Many of the buildings are vacant and vandalized.
2. The population is largely transient and there are few owner-occupied buildings.

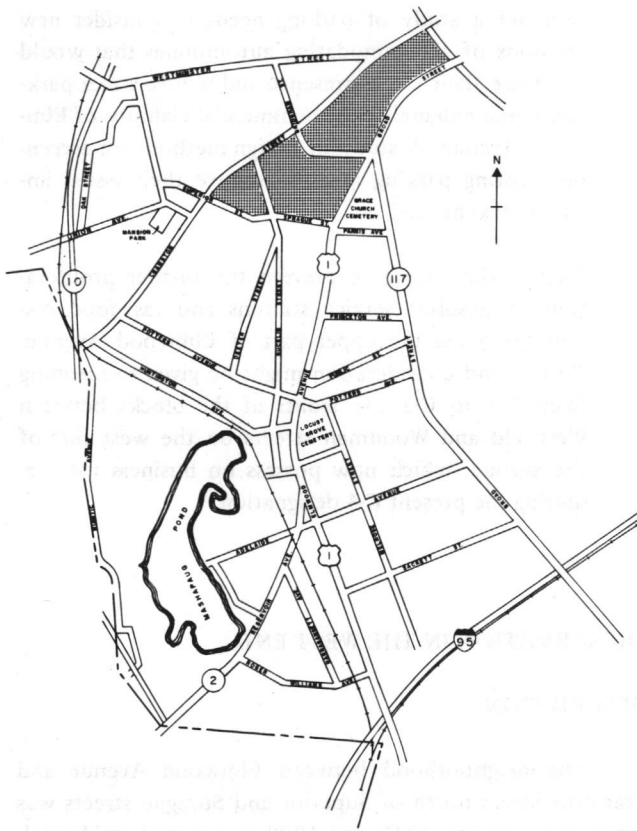


Fig. 83: The West End.

3. The continued viability of the industrial area is doubtful.
4. The large number of derelict vacant lots impair the unity of the streetscape on some streets and serve as dumping grounds for trash and debris.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Expand the S.W.A.P. program of urban homesteading to encourage the re-occupation of the vacant but habitable structures common in the area. Such a 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. Relocate endangered buildings of suitable architectural character to vacant sites in the area to complete the streetscapes.
3. Renovate the industrial buildings that are no longer viable for manufacturing 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.
4. Fully utilize the subsidized home-improvement-loan programs available to aid homeowners in the area.

PRESERVATION IN WEST ELMWOOD

DESCRIPTION:

The section between Elmwood Avenue and Cranston Street south of Superior and Sprague streets has traditionally been known as West Elmwood. It was developed between 1860 and 1910 as a middle- and a working-class area of two- and three-family houses although there are some fine single-family dwellings scattered throughout the neighborhood which is divided into two parts by the triangle formed by Bucklin and Dexter streets and Potters Avenue. These streets approximately define the extent of Long Pond (filled in about 1890). The Long Pond area contains most of the neighborhood's one- and two-story, brick industrial buildings. Many of the streets between Elmwood Avenue and Bucklin Street were built-up in the early twentieth century. These contain one- and two-family houses, typical of the first three decades of the present century. The modest area between Potters Avenue and Huntington Avenue contains the sparse remains of a working-class neighborhood that once continued across the railroad tracks into what is now the Huntington Expressway Industrial Park. West Elmwood today is a seriously deteriorating section where abandonment and demolition have increased markedly in recent years. The unintersected layout of the blocks between Dexter and Cranston Street has helped contain the spread of decay from one street to another, to some extent, and the condition of the neighborhood varies a good deal from one street to the next.

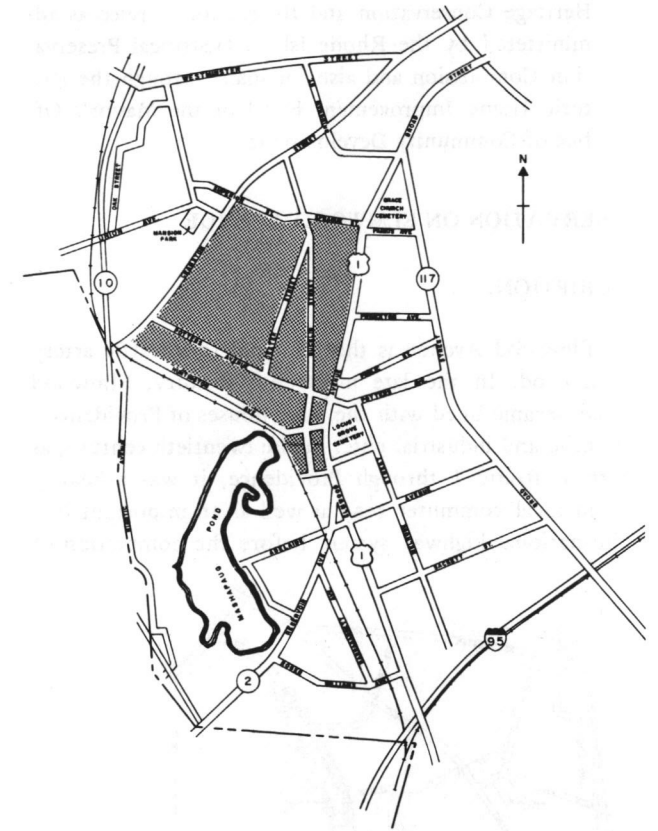


Fig. 84: West Elmwood.

PROBLEMS:

1. The rate of deterioration is increasing.
2. Many of the buildings belong to absentee landlords who have little faith in the neighborhood's future or much incentive for improving their property with the increasing cost of maintenance, taxes, fuel oil, and the highly competitive rental situation.
3. Many of the streets are so densely built-up that there is not adequate on-site parking.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Begin a block-by-block renewal effort aimed at arresting blight and initiating revitalization by forming

block organization to address the specific problems of each street. The long-block layout of the neighborhood lends itself to this piecemeal approach. Neighbors should organize to deal with absentee landlords whose properties detract from the area by encouraging them to fix-up their buildings or to sell them. The expansion of owner-occupancy should become a major neighborhood goal.

2. Expand the activities of the S.W.A.P. urban home-steading program.
3. Fully utilize the various home-improvement loan subsidy programs available.
4. Construct small, unobtrusive, neighborhood parking lots on vacant sites to alleviate the shortage of on-site parking on many streets.
5. Change the zoning of the eastern half of the block bounded by Brattle, Wadsworth, Salem, and Benedict streets and of the northeast corner of the next block south. The present M-1 zoning fosters a great deal of uncertainty about the future of these and adjoining sections of the historic West Elmwood neighborhood and hinders efforts towards rehabilitation. Consideration should be given to changing this designation to R-3 which corresponds with the present designation of the remainder of the area.

PRESERVATION ON CRANSTON STREET

DESCRIPTION:

Cranston Street originated in a colonial highway, the Meshanticut Road (1714). It never became a fashionable residential area or a particularly important highway. In the later nineteenth century, this narrow thoroughfare to the farms and mills outside of town became lined with tenements, some containing stores on the first stories. The most architecturally significant buildings are the monumental Cranston Street Armory (1907) and the Ebenezer Baptist Church (1892). Today, Cranston Street is a fading commercial strip with many vacant stores, apartments, and poorly maintained tenement houses.

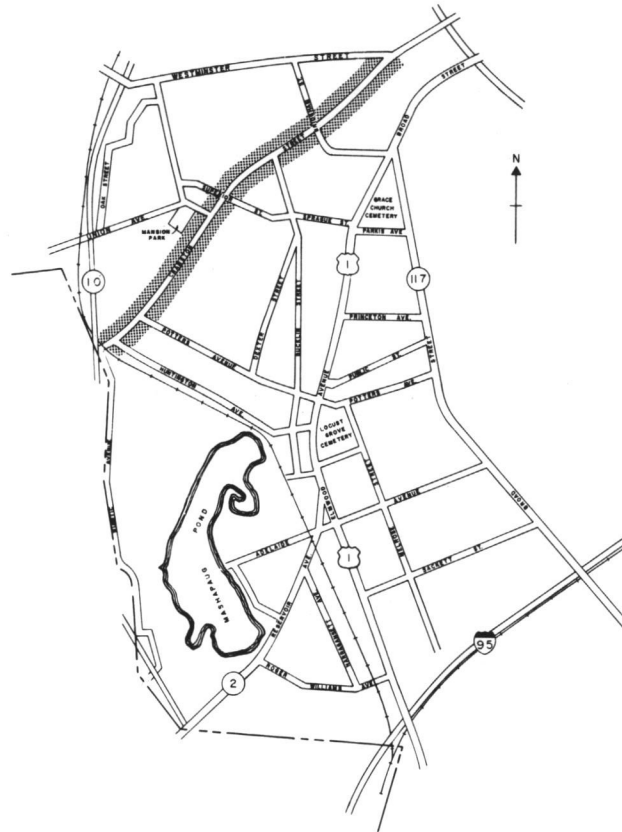


Fig. 85: Cranston Street.

PROBLEMS:

1. The streetscape is drab and unattractive and lacks focal points to stimulate commercial activity.
2. Security problems (vandalism, burglary, and street crime) are undermining its commercial viability.
3. Cranston Street lacks many of the kinds of retail enterprises necessary to make it a vital neighborhood shopping center.
4. There has been little investment in the old commercial buildings with the result that many of them are shabby and outmoded. Their architectural qualities

are disguised by encrustations of modern store fronts, overabundant signs, drab paint schemes, and inappropriate cladding materials.

5. Off-street parking is inadequate.
6. The area has little appeal as a residential area and many of the apartments over the stores are vacant and deteriorating.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Promote a program of commercial revitalization on Cranston Street to include city-sponsored street, sidewalk, lighting, and landscaping improvements. Store-front facade restoration in a manner sympathetic to an overall street-renewal scheme using appropriate materials and architectural designs and improved sign control through an improved city sign ordinance to eliminate obtrusive, overscaled, or inappropriate signs would enhance visual unity. Conduct a study of design methods to create activity generating focal points for the street.
2. Conduct a study of parking needs to consider new methods of accommodating automobiles that would minimize their visual presence and reduce street parking while enhancing commercial viability. Study methods for screening existing parking areas to reduce their visual impact.
3. Encourage desirable retail enterprises that are currently lacking in West Elmwood and the Armory area, such as supermarkets, drug stores, and so on, to relocate to Cranston Street to strengthen its role as a neighborhood shopping center through the Providence Business Development Organization (P.B.D.O.) and the Cranston Street Merchants Association.
4. Expand police protection to combat crime and vandalism by instituting a foot patrol.
5. Encourage the adaptive re-use of residential units that are no longer viable as housing.

PRESERVATION IN MANSION PARK

DESCRIPTION:

The neighborhood bounded by Cranston, Messer, and Oak streets and State Route 10 takes its name from Mansion Park at the corner of Waverly and Sorrento streets. This area developed mostly in the early twentieth century when it was rapidly built-up with three-deckers as well as some one- and two-family houses. It is a highly architecturally consistent section where examples of many types of housing popular between 1895 and 1930 can be found. Mansion Park contains virtually no industrial or commercial buildings with the exception of a few neighborhood stores located on the ground floors of multifamily tenements. Today it is still a fairly well maintained residential area, but its continued viability is threatened by the decay of the adjacent West Elmwood and Broadway-Armory neighborhoods. The first signs of deterioration are now appearing in this section in the form of scattered, abandoned, vandalized houses.

PROBLEMS:

1. Some property owners are allowing their buildings to deteriorate to the point where they require major renovations and are then abandoning them. This kind of contagious blight can lead to the decay of an entire street.
2. Many of the building lots are too small to accommodate adequate automobile parking.
3. There are no strong neighborhood organizations to promote the revitalization of the area and combat blight.
4. The decline of the surrounding areas is eroding the stability of this section.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Neighbors should organize and pool their resources to force recalcitrant property owners to maintain their buildings or to sell them. If necessary, individual property owners or a corporation formed of neigh-

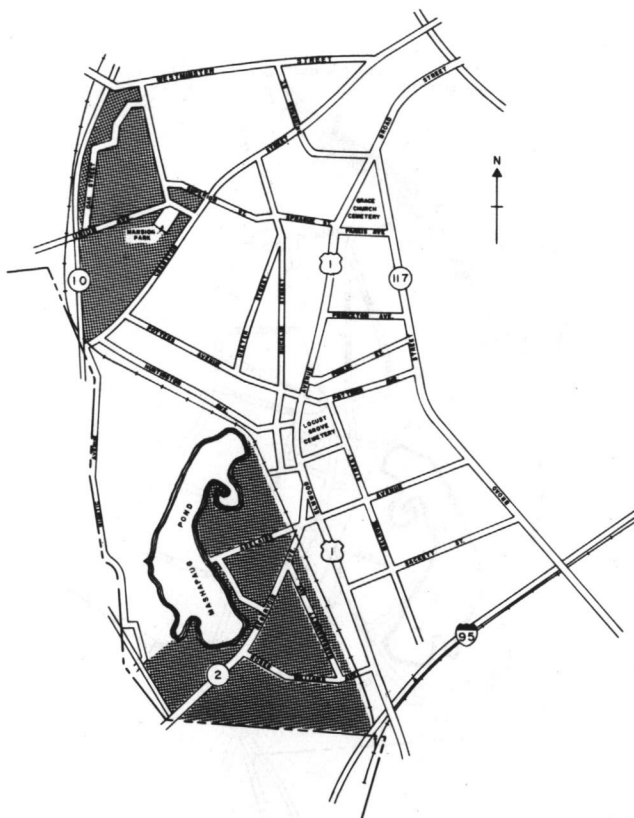


Fig. 86: Mansion Park and Mashapaug.

borhood residents should buy derelict buildings and perhaps renovate them before reselling them.

2. Begin a program of streetscape revitalization to promote neighborhood conservation. 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. Homeowners would be encouraged and aided in repairing their homes by utilizing the home-improvement programs now in existence. 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 organ-

ization. Social activities which bring neighbors together such as block parties would play a large role in this program.

3. Construct unobtrusive neighborhood parking lots in residential areas where on-site parking is not possible because of small building lots.

PRESERVATION IN MASHAPAUG

DESCRIPTION:

The small residential area west of the Amtrak railroad tracks and south of Mashapaug Pond near the Cranston city line was developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a middle-class neighborhood of one- and two-family houses. It is a pleasant area of tree-lined streets and ample, well-kept yards.

PROBLEMS:

1. This section does not have a strong neighborhood organization to address problems that threaten the area's future.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Organize a neighborhood group to monitor developments that will affect the area's continued viability.
2. Develop the east shore of Mashapaug Pond into a recreation area for hiking, bicycling, or picnicking. Prevent further land-fill operations which will reduce the size of the pond.

APPENDIX A: NATIONAL REGISTER PROGRAM

The National Register of Historic Places is a record maintained by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation 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 historical areas within the National Park System, National Historic Landmarks, federal properties nominated by federal agencies, and properties of state and local significance nominated by each state and approved by the Service. It is an authoritative guide for federal, state, and local governments and private groups and individuals everywhere, identifying those properties which are particularly worthy of preservation throughout the nation. Registered properties are protected from federally funded and licensed activities by a state and federal review process. Listing on the National Register is a prerequisite for eligibility for federal matching grants-in-aid funds which are administered within the state by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission.

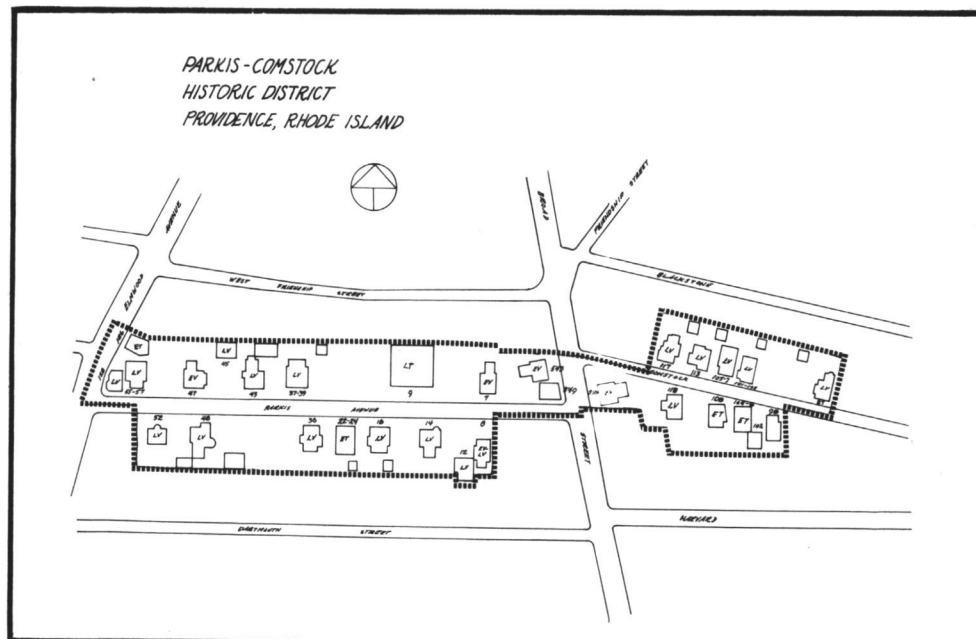


Fig. 87: Parkis-Comstock Historic District.

The following districts and structures in the Elmwood survey area have been approved by the Rhode Island Review Board for nomination to the National Register:

Elmwood Historic District, to include a number of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century residential streets.

Parkis-Comstock Avenue Historic District, including contiguous segments of Parkis and Comstock avenues, two Late Victorian residential streets.

Trinity Square Historic District, including Trinity Square, Trinity United Methodist Church and two houses on the west side of the square, and Grace Church Cemetery.

All Saints Memorial Church, 674 Westminster Street.

Calvary Baptist Church, 747 Broad Street.

Richard Henry Deming House, 66 Burnett Street.

Gorham Manufacturing Company complex, 333 Adelaide Avenue.

Jones Warehouses complex, 49-63 Central Street.

New England Butt Company complex, 304 Pearl Street.

Josephine White Block, 735-737 Cranston Street.

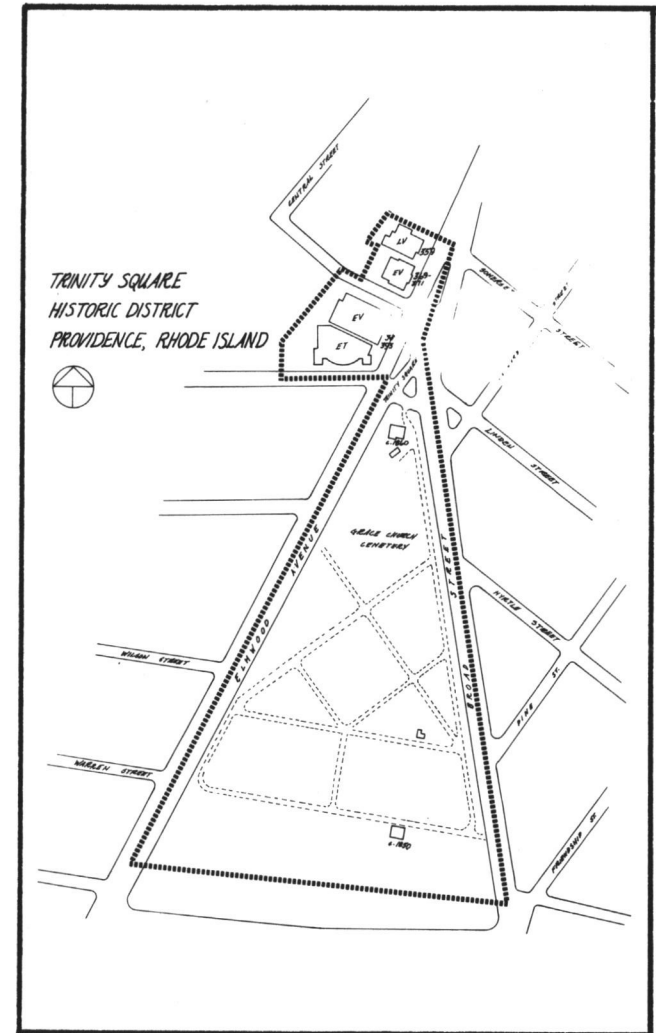


Fig. 88: Trinity Square Historic District.

APPENDIX B: TAX REFORM ACT OF 1976

The Tax Reform Act of 1976 contains important new tax incentives for preserving historic income-producing properties and alters provisions in the federal tax code which have worked against historical preservation. Commercial, industrial or rental residential properties that qualify as “certified historic structures” are entitled to tax advantages under the new act. A “certified historic structure” is defined in the law as a depreciable structure which is (A) listed in the National Register, (B) located in a National Register historic district and is certified by the Secretary of the Interior as being of historic significance to the district or (C) located in a local historic zoning district certified by the Secretary of the Interior to be controlled by design review procedures which will substantially achieve the purpose of preserving and rehabilitating buildings of historical significance.

One provision of the Act permits the owner of a certified historic structure to write off, over a five-year period, expenditures which are part of a certified rehabilitation of the property. Before passage of the Tax Reform Act, property owners were required to spread deductions over the life of the property. The new law allows larger tax savings in shorter time, thus encouraging owners to rehabilitate historic commercial properties. Another provision allows taxpayers to depreciate “substantially rehabilitated historic property” as though they were the original users of the property, entitling them to use accelerated depreciation which could previously only be used for new buildings.

The code discourages demolition of historic properties in two ways. Demolition costs can no longer be deducted, and any new building replacing a demolished historic structure is denied accelerated depreciation. Although the Tax Reform Act of 1976 needs further analysis and clarification, it will clearly make the preservation of historic buildings more economically feasible. Any property owner interested in learning more about the historical preservation provisions of the Act should contact a tax analyst or the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission.

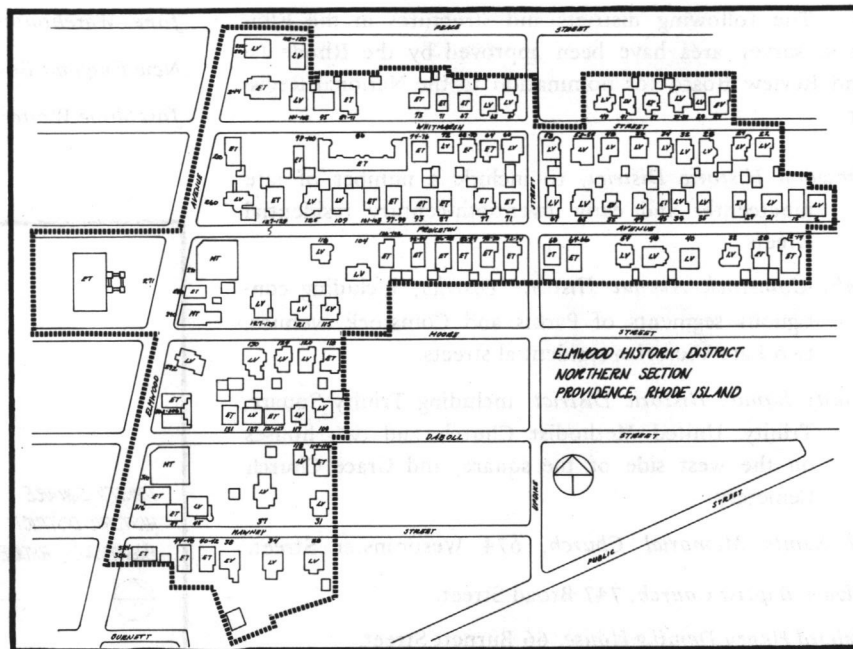
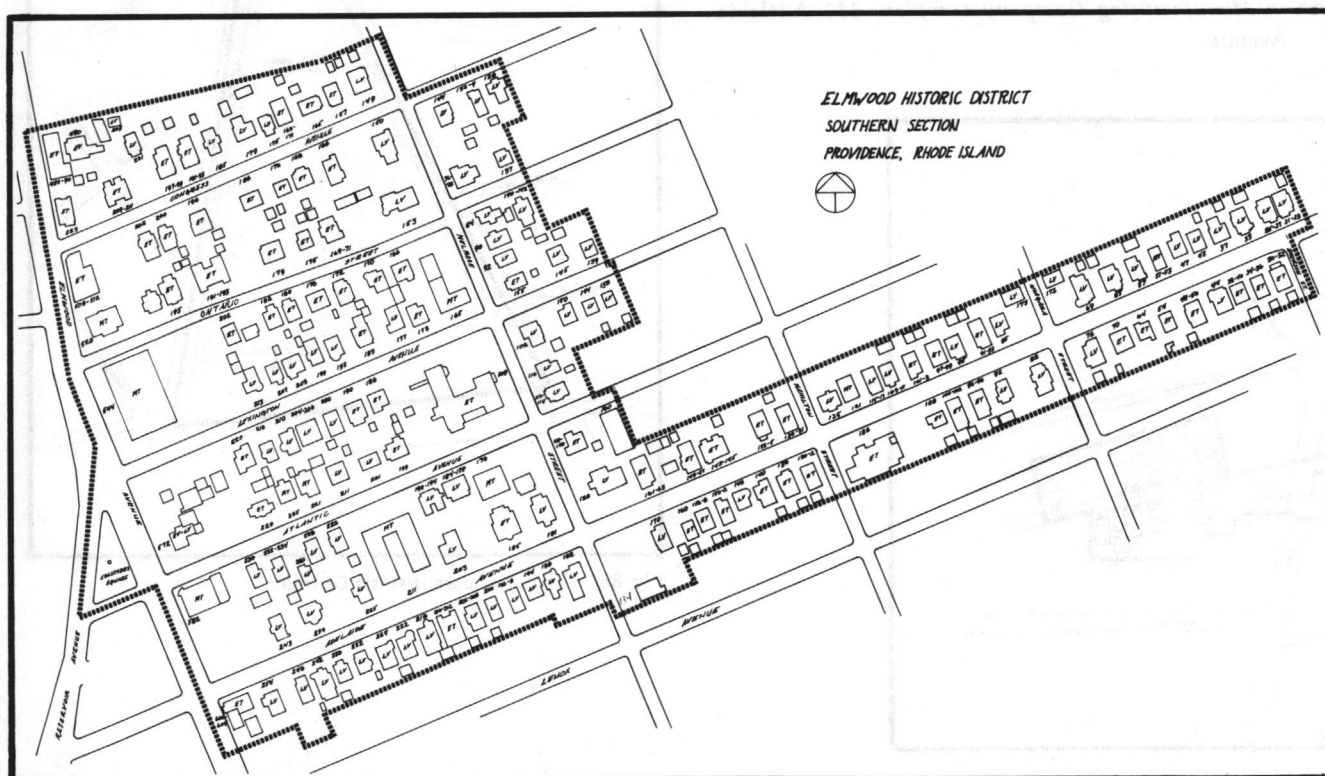


Fig. 89: Northern Section and Southern Section of Elmwood Historic District.



APPENDIX C: GRANTS-IN-AID PROGRAM

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 established a program of matching grants-in-aid for the acquisition and development of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Once a year, the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission accepts applications from individuals, public and private organizations, and state and local governmental units who own properties listed on the National Register.

Matching grants-in-aid can be used to acquire, protect, stabilize, rehabilitate, restore, or reconstruct National Register properties. Allowable work under the program includes exterior and interior restoration, structural repairs, installation or updating of utility systems, architectural fees, archeology, historical research, and the installation of protective systems. New construction, furnishings, and modern landscaping are not allowable costs.

The Commission receives many more applications each year than it is able to fund. The applications are evaluated according to the following criteria: the architectural and historical significance of the property; the degree to which the proposed use and treatment respect the historical and architectural values of the building; the urgency of the proposed work; the public benefit of the project, both educational and economic; the degree to which the property is threatened; and the geographical location of the property. The Commission may fund up to half the cost of a project. The grants awarded by the Commission have generally ranged in size from \$3,000 to \$50,000.

Once the Commission has selected the projects to be funded, the grantees must submit professionally prepared specifications and drawings developed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects. The Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service in the Department of the Interior must review and approve the individual projects before any work can begin.

Financial assistance for the acquisition and development of National Register properties is provided for the

benefit of the general public. Therefore, upon accepting a grant, the property owner must sign a preservation easement which is recorded with the deed to the property. The easement states that the owner agrees to maintain the property and not make any visual or structural changes without prior approval from the Commission. The number of years this agreement is in effect depends on the amount of the grant. Unless the grant-supported work is visible from a public right-of-way, the property must be open for public view twelve days a year.

Matching funds can come from any non-federal source; from Community Development Block Grant funds; and in the form of donated services, real property, or equipment. Grant applicants are urged to submit requests for the amount which they can actually match and realistically complete in one year.

Beginning in 1979, applications will be accepted by the Commission during March and April each year. The applications are reviewed during May and June and the Commission selects the projects in July, after Rhode Island is notified of its annual federal appropriation for the grants-in-aid program. Those selected are first awarded funds to have the necessary specifications and drawings prepared. Development grants are officially awarded once the specifications have been accepted by the Commission. Project work may begin when the project has been approved by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service after the start of the federal fiscal year—the first of October. Project work must be completed within a year.

APPENDIX D: SURVEY FORM AND MAPS

A standard survey form, the "Historic Building Data Sheet," has been prepared by the Historical Preservation Commission for use throughout the state. On the form a property is identified by plat and lot numbers, street number, ownership at the time the survey was conducted, present use, neighborhood land use, and a photograph.

Each property is also identified by one or more broad period time-frames, which denote the original construction date, and date(s) of major additions or alterations: 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, and architectural significance. The "HISTORY & SOURCES" section includes notes on individuals, organizations, and events associated with the building; dates and nature of significant additions or alterations; selected bibliographical and pictorial references; and identification of the building on historical maps and in street directories.

The four "EVALUATION" sections are intended as tools for quick reference to appraise various aspects of a property's preservation value. In general, the key factors that indicate the reason for preserving structures have to do with their visual significance—that is, "Architectural value" and "Importance to neighborhood." Other factors, such as condition, should be seen as pluses. Nor should a low historical rating be allowed to militate against the preservation of buildings deemed of architectural significance or those important in the neighborhood context.

The evaluation of a structure's exterior physical condition is rated on a 0, 2, 3, 5 scale, without regard to its architectural merits. Buildings assigned "5" are in excellent physical condition (original or altered). Those rated "3" are in good condition, with only slight evidence of

the need for improvements, such as repainting or minor repairs. Structures rated "2" are in fair condition and may require substantial work, such as resheathing or repairs to porches, fenestration, and so on. Buildings rated "0" are in poor physical condition and probably require extensive work if they are to be retained. These ratings are based upon observation of the exterior only and do not reflect interior appearance or structural, electrical, and mechanical conditions.

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 the 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" rating is 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. 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 structure of meritorious architectural quality, well above the local norm. The "20s" and "10s" constitute the majority of buildings surveyed. They 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 and define the visual character of its building stock. Structures rated "20" and "30" are essential to an area's historic character. They provide a visual context which defines the historic quality of Elmwood and create an im-

portant 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. Monuments, markers, and civic sculpture are assigned ratings on the basis of general visual and associative qualities which do not necessarily reflect artistic integrity.

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 com-


HISTORIC BUILDING DATA SHEET RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE SURVEY		COUNTY	
FILE NO. <u>PLAT 52 LOT 90 LUS</u>			
ADDRESS <u>153 Ontario Street</u>			
OWNER <u>Joseph Arruda, d/b/a Allied Investments</u>		CITY/TOWN	
PRESENT USE: 1 fam _____ 2 fam _____ multi <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> pub _____ comm _____ Indus _____ rel _____ agr _____ mixed _____ other _____		NEGATIVE NO. <u>P-E-18,22</u>	
NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE: res <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> comm _____ Indus _____ pub _____ agr _____ woods _____ other _____		KNOWN AS _____	
PERIOD/STYLE: P C F GR EV (LV) ET HT LT		ARCHITECT <u>E. I. Nickerson</u>	
DESCRIPTION: Stories: <u>2-1/2</u> Roof: gable (flank _____ end _____ cross <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>) gambrel (flank _____ end _____ cross _____) hip <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> monitor _____ mansard _____ flat _____ other _____		DATE & SOURCES <u>c. 1888-89 Dir.</u>	
Walls: clapboard _____ brick <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> stone _____ shingle <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> modern comp _____ other <u>stucco & half-timber</u>		ORIGINAL USE <u>Res.</u>	
Foundation: height _____ stone <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> brick _____ other _____		ORIGINAL OWNER <u>George Wilkinson</u>	
Alterations: good _____ poor _____ none <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rare bldg. _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Typical of its area _____		HISTORY & SOURCES: George Wilkinson (1819-94), born in Birmingham, Eng., came to the U.S. at about age 30. He was apprenticed as a die-sinker to age 21, and then worked at this trade on his own, finally going into business for himself. In 1857 he joined Gorham, and served afterwards as General Superintendent. Wilkinson had a direct hand in planning the new Gorham plant. (Men of Progress, pp. 258-59). Died 12-28-1894.	
COMMENTS: <u>One of the largest of the Elmwood mansions</u>		ROAD <u>153 ONTARIO STREET</u>	
SURVEYOR _____ ROC _____ AV Checked _____ HV Checked _____		MAP NO.	
DATE: <u>6-22</u>		PRIORITY	
		EVALUATION: Physical Condition structure 5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 0 grounds <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 0 neighborhood <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 0	
		Architectural value 38 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20 10 0	
		Importance to neighborhood <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 14 10 5 0	
		Historical value 38 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20 10 0	
		Total Score 82	

Fig. 90: Sample survey form.

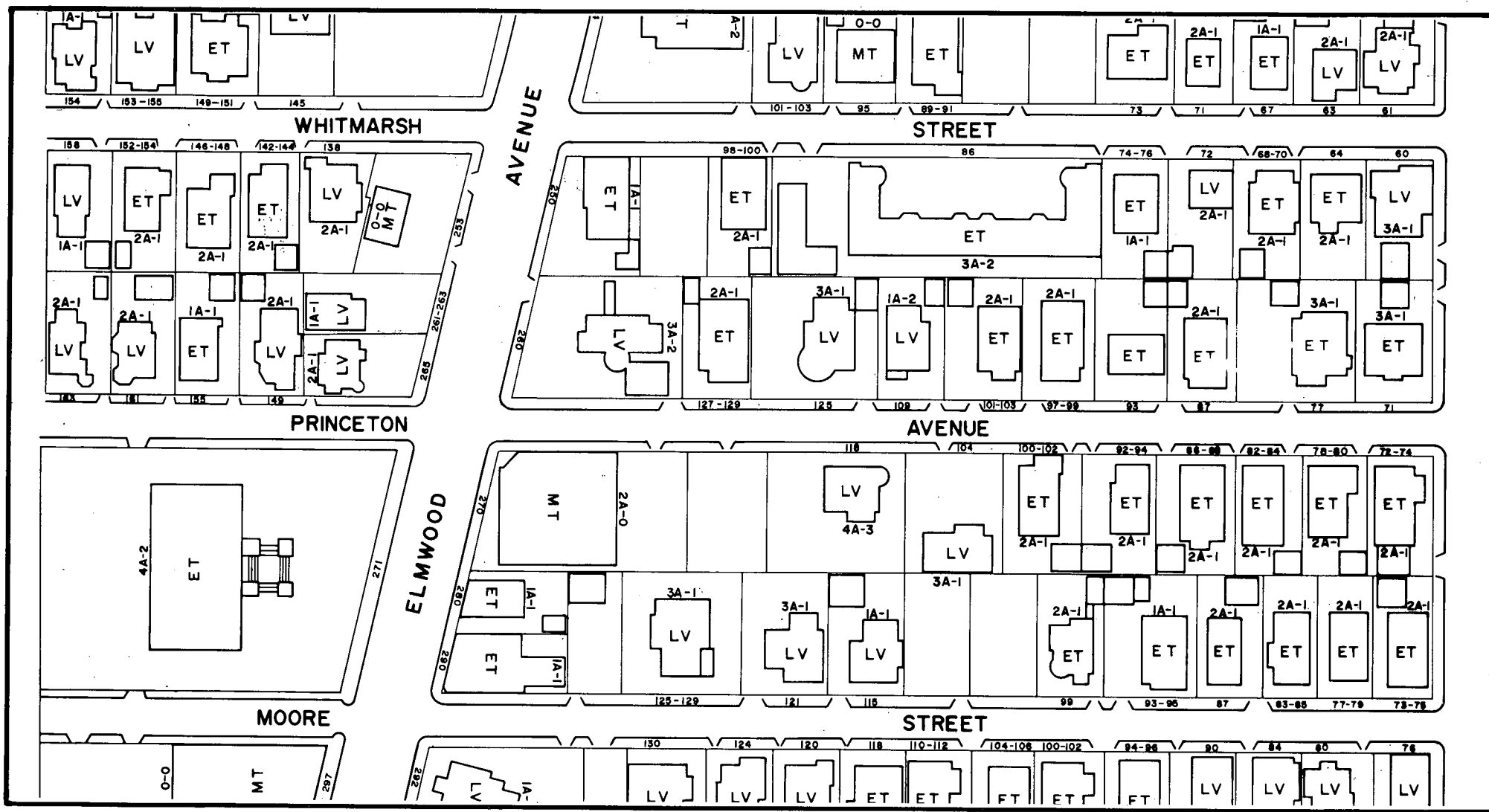


Fig. 91: Sample section of survey map.

patible with its physical context. The "0" rating applies to properties which have a decisively negative effect on the neighborhood.

Historical value is also 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 historic significance on the national level. Those of regional or state importance are rated "30." The "20" rating applies to entries related to note-

worthy local developments and also includes buildings 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 historic interest at the present time.

Data from the survey sheets has been transferred to a series of detailed maps, drawn on a 1" = 80' scale. These maps depict every structure, regardless of date or histori-

cal importance, along with the address, a code for period or style, and the architectural and historical ratings. They make information pertaining to the cultural resources of the Elmwood area available for all planning purposes.

Upon publication of this report, a set of all materials will be on file at the Commission's office (150 Benefit Street, Providence) and another set 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 F: INVENTORY

The Inventory is a list of sites, structures, and objects of cultural significance in the Elmwood survey area. Entries have historic or architectural significance either in themselves, by association with an important person or group, or, in the case of some buildings, as representative examples of a common architectural type.

The names given most buildings (such as 43 Calder Street, the "Joseph Williams House," or 353 Elmwood Avenue, the "Elmwood Christian Church") refer to the earliest known owner or occupant, taken, for the most part, from street directories and deed records; more extensive research could change some of these designations. The majority of the building dates are based on stylistic analysis, map histories, and street directories, supplemented in some cases by deed research. Unless otherwise indicated, all buildings are of frame construction.

Entries are listed alphabetically by street and then in numerical order by street number. Entries having no street number (such as Columbus Park) have not been assigned a number, but have been included in their normal sequence. Entries for the west side of Broad Street from Trinity Square to I-95 will be found in the South Providence report. Those structures and sites recommended for nomination to the National Register individually or as parts of historic districts (see Appendix A) are marked by an asterisk(*).

ADELAIDE AVENUE

Containing some of Elmwood's finest Late Victorian houses, Adelaide Avenue was one of the lower Elmwood streets platted by J. J. Cooke and his partners in 1854. The Queen Anne and Queen Anne-Colonial Revival residences which give the avenue its character are located primarily in the easternmost and westernmost blocks and date from the 1880s and 1890s.

- 21-23, 25-27* **Valentine Gernershausen Houses (c. 1891, c. 1884):** These nearly identical, reversed-plan, cross-gable, Queen Anne, two-family houses display pargeted gable ornaments, bracketed cornices, and elaborate porches. Gernershausen, an engraver, occupied part of 25-27 as his own residence. In 1895 he was the president of the Providence Turne-Verein.
- 65* **William H. Luther House (c. 1894):** Sculptural massing and crisp forms characterize this broad, 2½-story, end-gable dwelling. Built for the senior partner in William H. Luther and Son, manufacturing jewelers, it has a semi-octagonal corner pavilion tucked under the roof.
- 76* **Frank B. Reynolds House (c. 1895):** This Colonial Revival, flank-gambrel structure has a Roman brick first story and shingled gables. Stylistically similar to 220 Lexington Avenue, it possesses richly detailed, pedimented front dormers and a semicircular, balustraded front porch. Reynolds was a partner in Cory and Reynolds, a jewelry manufacturing firm.
- 89* **Thomas B. Cory House (c. 1891):** One of Elmwood's earliest Colonial Revival houses, this high, end-gambrel structure, with its turreted side tower and matching carriage house, was built for the secretary of the jewelry manufacturing firm of Cory and Reynolds.
- 126* **Westminster Unitarian Church (1901, 1906-1907):** This complex was erected by the Westminster Unitarian Society, a parish founded in 1828. In 1901 the congregation, compelled by the commercialization of the area to vacate its venerable Mathewson Street church, erected the modest, shingle and stone chapel at the corner of Hamilton Street. This Woodbury Memorial Chapel, named for Augustus Woodbury, pastor of the church from 1857 to 1892, was designed by Howard K. Hilton. The cross-gable, stone, auditorium-type, Gothic sanctuary, also designed by Hilton, was completed in 1907. In 1959, the Westminster Society moved to East Greenwich. The property was sold to the Friendship United Methodist Church, a predominantly Swedish group founded in 1883 in South Providence. This church was dissolved in September, 1977. The church complex has become the home of the Hood Memorial Church, the descendant of Black Methodist congregations which had met since the early 1860s at 148 Wadsworth Street in West Elmwood.
- 181* **Samuel H. Bailey House (c. 1893):** Broad, 2-story, Colonial Revival dwelling, with a high hip roof and balustraded roof deck and an elaborately trimmed, 2-story front porch. Bailey, a partner in the firm of Foster and Bailey, manu-

facturing jewelers, lived here until about 1903.

- 203* **Samuel A. Otis House (c. 1896):** Massive, 2½-story, clap-board structure, with a Tuscan-column front porch, steep-roofed dormers, and a prominent, 3-story, round, turreted, corner tower. Like many Queen Anne residences of the 1890s, it reflects an eclectic approach to design, combining Queen Anne steep roofs and pargeted gables (derived from English late medieval houses), Colonial-inspired trim and exterior simplicity and restraint, and, in this case, a round corner tower inspired perhaps by French chateaux. Otis was a partner in Harvey and Otis, a jewelry manufacturing concern. His son, William P. Otis, became president of the firm after his father's death in 1902 and lived here until 1937.
- 218* **Gustave F. Mensing House (c. 1897):** Richly decorated, 2½-story, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival structure, with a hip roof, turreted corner pavilion, and semielliptical Tuscan-column door porch. Mensing was the superintendent of the Narragansett Brewing Company plant located nearby in the Arlington section of Cranston.
- 225* **John S. Tripp, Jr. House (c. 1878):** Adelaide Avenue's first large home is a square, 2-story dwelling with bracketed cornices and a low-pitch mansard roof. A large, semi-octagonal, turreted, side projection has a massive panel-brick chimney stack rising from the ground beside it. Tripp, a tailor, occupied the house only three years. Other early owners were Benjamin F. Vaughan, a cotton dealer who lived here from 1881 to 1884, and William H. Perry, a scrap-metals dealer who lived here until 1891.
- 239* **Charles E. Hancock House (c. 1892):** An elliptical porch and a broad front dormer, with a delicate, swirl-pattern, pargeted gable, are distinguishing features of this restrained, 2½-story, hip-roofed, Colonial Revival structure. It was designed by the Providence architect Howard K. Hilton (1867-1909). Hancock, a partner in Hancock, Becker and Company (reorganized about 1899 as Charles E. Hancock Company), a jewelry manufacturing concern, resided here until 1926.
- 242* **George W. Robinson House (c. 1900):** Robinson, a machinist, occupied one of the three units in this large 2½-story, cross-gable, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival structure. It possesses a 3-story, turreted, octagonal corner tower and wide, 2-story, Colonial porch with a 2nd-story gallery.
- 254* **Leroy A. Sayles House (c. 1885):** Square and unusually ornate 2-story, flank-gable, Queen Anne structure, whose first floor has been much altered for a doctor's office. A large pargeted gable facing the street takes the unusual form of an ogee pediment and perhaps was inspired by the John Brown House on South Main Street. Sayles was a wool broker.
- 333* **Gorham Manufacturing Company (1889-1890 and later):** Gorham, since 1967 a division of Textron, was founded in 1818 by Jabez Gorham, who at first produced beads, earrings, breast pins, rings, and gold chains. In 1831 the manufacture of silver spoons was begun, and soon other silver items were being produced. Jabez's son, John, joined the firm in 1841, and, after his father's retirement in 1847,

greatly expanded the business. He installed steam power and began the manufacture of flat silver and holloware by machine. Gorham Manufacturing Company was chartered in 1863 and organized as a corporation in 1865. A separate department for the manufacture of sterling silver, gold, brass, bronze, stone, and wood articles for churches was established in 1885. As a result the company soon found itself handling large orders for statuary and memorials, chiefly bronze, and architectural bronze work. In 1889-1890, the old plant on North Main Street becoming outgrown, the company erected the Adelaide Avenue complex overlooking Mashapaug Pond. The new Gorham plant was designed by Frank Perry Sheldon of Providence, a prominent New England mill architect. However, its plan also embodies many suggestions made by long-time plant superintendent George Wilkinson. The complex consists of a group of 2- and 3-story, brick factory structures, with low hip or pitched roofs, grouped for the most part symmetrically beside and behind a 3-story, hip-roof office building (originally only two stories), with a gabled, Romanesque, central entranceway. All the structures possess uniform corbeled brick cornices and window sills and other trimmings of rock-faced granite. A large, bronze statue of Vulcan, cast at the plant, was erected in front of the office building between 1893 and 1896. A short distance to the north of the principal complex is a brick, cross-gable carriage house and stable structure, erected in 1890, and a long, porch-fronted, Colonial Revival structure called the Casino (erected in 1898-1899 and enlarged in 1907), containing the former Board of Directors room, dining rooms, and dormitories. The complex is one of the finest 19th-century industrial plants in Providence.

ALEXANDER STREET (at Rutherglen Avenue)

Waterman and Henry Cemetery (Rhode Island Historical Cemetery, City of Providence, No. 7): Small burial ground containing the graves of members of the Paine, Waterman, Henry, and Jennings families who lived on farms in the area, with headstones dating from 1807 to about 1890.

ARCH STREET

- 15 **James M. Anthony House (c. 1900):** Flank-gambrel, 2½-story, Colonial Revival dwelling, designed by Stone, Carpenter & Willson. One of Providence's most important architectural firms in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, they also furnished the plans for the James A. Potter House at 359 Broad Street, the Israel B. Mason House at 571 Broad, and the Home for Aged Men at 807 Broad. Anthony, a co-owner of the James M. Anthony and Company cigar store, resided here until his death in 1918.
- 17 **Charles H. Sprague House (c. 1874):** Alpheus C. Morse was the architect of this 2-story, square dwelling. A rare (for Providence) and late example of the French Academic phase of the Second Empire style, it possesses a low-pitched

mansard roof, symmetrical facade, and correct, classical, door porch and window trim. Sprague (1844-1900), who lived here until about 1895, was a partner in S. S. Sprague and Company, a wholesale grain-shipping business founded by his father.

- 22 **William E. Lovegrove House (c. 1879):** Elaborate 2-family house, with a dormer-pierced, slate, mansard roof; modillioned cornices; and understated front and side porches. Lovegrove, a stove and tinware dealer, was one of the original occupants.
- 45 **John E. Potter House (1875):** Two-story, end-gable structure, with an entry porch and bay windows in front and elaborate, bracket-supported, open timberwork decoration in the front and subsidiary side gables. Potter (1845-1897), who moved to Providence in 1873, came to own two prosperous drug stores, one at Cranston and Gilmore streets, the other at Elmwood Avenue and West Friendship Street.

AVON STREET

- 4-6 **Henry A. Potter House (1840s):** Potter built this 2½-story, flank-gable dwelling as a farmhouse on land he had purchased in 1834 from his father, Arthur M. Potter. In 1862, Henry sold the property for a token sum to a son, Arthur M. Potter. Set in spacious surroundings, this plain-trimmed and veranda-fronted structure is now—since the 1965 demolition of the house at 389 Elmwood Avenue built by Henry's uncle, Anson Potter—Elmwood's largest Greek Revival residence.

BENEDICT STREET

- 17 **William Smith House (c. 1855):** Modest, 1½-story, flank-gable dwelling, whose vernacular Greek Revival detailing includes cornice returns and a plain-board door frame. It is one of the oldest suburban homes in West Elmwood.

BROAD STREET

- 359-371* **James A. Potter House (c. 1889):** Opulent, 2½-story, Queen Anne structure, designed by the prominent Providence architectural firm of Stone, Carpenter & Willson, who also conceived the James M. Anthony House at 15 Arch Street. The Potter House has a first floor of brick, trimmed in brownstone, a pink-slate-clad second floor, and gray slate gables with gable ornaments. Its handsome Colonial Revival interior finish includes classical mantelpieces, staircases with varied baluster types and intertwining-vines-motif newell posts, and paired-Ionic-column doorway openings. James A. Potter was one of the proprietors of the James A. Potter and Company lumber yard.
- Clifton A. Hall Duplex (c. 1856): Two-story, brick, Italian palazzo structure with a symmetrical front. Its slightly recessed central portion containing two entrances is fronted by a wide door porch upheld by paired, cast-iron, Ionic columns. Hall, a prominent local architect, lived in the south

half until about 1909; he designed many of Elmwood Avenue's finest Victorian structures, including the nearby Trinity United Methodist Church and the Robert Knight mansion which once stood behind 297 Elmwood Avenue.

- 389-393* **Trinity United Methodist Church (church, 1864-1865; parish house, 1915):** Patterned after English parish churches, Trinity is a red-brick, Gothic Revival structure, with a nave and side aisles and a spired, wood tower at one corner. Clifton A. Hall was the architect. The chancel was redesigned with Gothic furnishings in 1949 by Arland A. Dirlam. The 1915 parish house building, with its round auditorium, is the only part ever constructed of a unified church and parish house complex designed by George W. Kramer of New York, one of the nation's leading church architects at the turn of the century. Cost limitations forced the abandonment of the new church project and compelled the substitution of cheaper brick construction and institutional Georgian styling for the stone construction and Gothic styling originally contemplated. Presiding over the intersection of Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue which was named Trinity Square in its honor in 1875, Trinity Church was founded in 1859 through the missionary activities of the Mathewson Street Methodist Church. In 1899, the church merged with the Chestnut Street Church, the city's original Methodist parish. Throughout the last quarter of the 19th century, Trinity had the largest congregation and Sunday school of any church in the Southern New England Conference of the Methodist Church.

Other Broad Street entries are to be found in the inventory section of *South Providence*, published by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission in 1978.

BUCKLIN STREET

- 160 **Gilbert Stuart Junior High School (1931):** Now used as a middle school, this mammoth, 3-story, yellow brick, Neo-classical structure has a pedimented front portico. One of the finest schools of its time in the city, it was designed in the office of the Commissioner of Public Buildings.
- 215 **House (c. 1860):** One of Elmwood's few Italianate dwellings, this narrow and deep, 2-story, hip-roof structure has an arcaded porch and projecting eaves supported on console brackets. The original owner, William Sanford Hoyt, a wood engraver, probably never lived here.
- 333 **Union Railroad Company Depot, Stable, and Car Barn (front part, 1865):** The original section, a plain, 2½-story, flank-gable, brick structure, with a prominent, subsidiary front gable and a small cupola, was designed by James C. Bucklin. In 1865, the Union Railroad Company, under whose auspices all the horse railroads in Providence were consolidated, built a horse-car line down Broad Street, Elmwood Avenue, and Earl Street to this depot.

BURNETT STREET

15-17 **Prince A. Potter House (c. 1887):** One of Elmwood's earliest and finest Queen Anne dwellings, this exuberant cross-gable, double-entrance, 2-family house has broad bay-window units and a gabled entry porch. The gables display in bold relief the "sunburst" or "rising sun" motif so popular in the 1880s.

66* **Richard H. Deming House (c. 1870):** One of Elmwood's two largest and most lavish Second Empire residences, along with the Cory House at 37 Mawney Street, this 2½-story, asymmetrical mansion is set in ample grounds planted with large old copper beeches. It has bracketed window hoods and cornices and an exuberant modified-academic-classical entrance porch with a paneled ceiling. Unfortunately, the exterior is clad in aluminum. The interiors contain excellent Late Victorian mantelpieces and other woodwork and much fine ornamental plasterwork. Deming (1842-1902) was a cotton broker, at first in the firm of George H. Hoppin and Deming and later as senior partner in R. H. Deming and Co.

CALDER STREET

43 **Joseph Williams House (c. 1783):** The oldest building in the Elmwood survey area, this long, 2-story, flank-gable structure, with its ell in back, was probably built by Joseph Williams, a great-great-grandson of Roger Williams' son Daniel, shortly after his 1782 purchase of an 80-acre farm from the heirs of his distant cousin of the same name, the grandson of Roger Williams' youngest son, Joseph. The farm included most of the land between Elmwood Avenue and Cranston Street from Potters Avenue south to Mashapaug Pond. The part of the property on which the house stood was last farmed by Paul Coffin, who in 1849 sold it to George W. Crocker. Crocker immediately subdivided it. The house itself, which originally stood on the south side of Potters Avenue between Dexter and Plymouth streets, was moved to its present location between 1852 and 1859. The flank-gable front portion was extended to the north and the interior largely rebuilt between 1859 and 1875; a 2-story bay-window unit was added to the front probably at the turn of the century.

CENTRAL STREET

49-59* **Orrin E. Jones Storage Warehouse (1895-1896; enlarged before 1900):** Jones Warehouses, Inc., a moving and storage company founded by Orrin E. Jones, still uses this massive, 5- and 6-story, flat-roof, brick structure for the storage of household goods. It was designed by Gould, Angell & Swift. The dignified Richardsonian Romanesque facade, faced with glazed terra-cotta brick and trimmed in brownstone, possesses handsome corbeled brick cornices.

63* **Gun Manufactory (c. 1861-1865):** Originally owned by Winsor and Brown and used as a gun factory, this plain, 3½-story, end-gable structure has a clerestory-monitor roof. Since 1893, the building has served as one of the

Jones Warehouses, Inc. storage warehouses.

CONGRESS AVENUE

128* **Henry M. Mason House (c. 1874):** Narrow, 2½-story, flank-gable, Stick Style dwelling, with a projecting, gabled central pavilion and wide front porch. The wall surfaces are articulated with vertical and horizontal banding and a decorative apron above the 2nd-story windows. Mason was co-owner of Mason and Coppel, a masonry and contracting firm.

144* **Frank J. Huston House (c. 1890):** A 2-story, cross-gable, Queen Anne dwelling with a corner turret and porch wrapping around two sides. Huston, an insurance agent, lost the house in 1891, and it was soon purchased by George T. Brown, an attorney.

149* **George B. Darling House (c. 1869):** Decorated bargeboards and gable ornaments and a broad porch distinguish this 1½-story, L-plan, Stick Style dwelling. Darling, a lapidary, resided here until his death in 1902.

CRANSTON STREET

693 **Cranston Street United Methodist Church (1883-1884):** Somewhat plain, Queen Anne structure, with a pyramid-roof corner tower and steep, end-gable roof (exteriors now faced with asbestos shingles). The congregation was founded in 1881.

737-739* **Josephine White Block (c. 1894):** This well preserved 3-story, flat-roof structure, with brick and clapboard end walls, has an unaltered and elaborately decorated metal front, fabricated by Mesker Brothers of St. Louis, Missouri, a firm specializing in the manufacture of prefabricated metal store fronts; this particular design was patented in 1887. This is one of the most handsome (and least known) Victorian commercial buildings in Providence. The structure, first owned by Josephine A. White, a widow who lived at 675 Cranston Street, originally contained the F. W. Simmons and Company dry-goods store, Edgar C. Grinnell's bakery, and several flats.

CRESCENT STREET

36 **Eliza H. Dix House (1855):** Standing in a large yard overlooking Mashapaug Pond, this 2-story octagon house possesses bracketed cornices and a stuccoed, octagonal, central chimney. The house was reshingled and a small Colonial Revival porch installed c. 1900.

CROMWELL STREET

16-18 **House (c. 1882-1889):** Richly decorated, mansard-roofed, 2-family structure, with a symmetrical facade and separate, bracketed door porches flanking a centrally positioned, semi-octagonal, pavilion-like bay window. The original owner, Aldrich B. Gardiner, was a co-partner in the jewelry manufacturing firm of J. W. Richardson and Company. He lived nearly opposite this house, on the north corner of Elmwood

Avenue and Cromwell Street.

DABOLL STREET

17-19 **House (c. 1894):** Built for Alfred Barth, this picturesque 2½-story, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival, 2-family dwelling possesses an open, 2nd-story porch supported at one end by a shingled bracket and a paneled frieze across the front below the pedimented gable. The earliest tenants were N. B. Sprague, a music teacher, and George Ellis, a stable owner. The nearly identical houses at 561-563 and 565-567 Public Street were also built c. 1894 for Barth, whose residence and pharmacy were both located nearby in the structure at 557 Public Street.

39 **House (c. 1892):** Rambling, 2-story, Queen Anne house whose flank-gable roof sweeps down to cover a delicate, 1-story, spindle-work front porch. The gables are ornamented with lightly decorated wide vergeboards. Built for Joseph A. Latham, the house was first occupied by Charles F. Pierce, a dealer in wool waste and yarns.

118 **William C. Hammond House (c. 1893):** This narrow-fronted, 2½-story, Queen Anne structure, with its swag-decorated bay window, is notable for its late use of the mansard roof. Hammond was the owner of a Cranston Street carriage factory.

172 **Daboll House (c. 1875):** Built for William V. Daboll, this elaborately trimmed, 2-story, L-plan, Stick Style structure with its front porch and dormers, is reminiscent of Daboll's own mansion which once stood nearby at 315 Elmwood Avenue. It is not known for whose use this building was erected. By 1892, however, it was the residence of a daughter, Miss Floride Daboll.

222 **Elmwood Mills (stone buildings at west end 1866; other buildings c. 1900-1918):** One of Elmwood's largest industrial plants, the Elmwood Mills complex contains several 2- and 4-story stone and brick structures with flat and low-pitched roofs. The two stone buildings were erected as the Elmwood Cotton Mills by the James Y. Smith Manufacturing Company, manufacturers of "cotton cloths, prints, sheetings, and fancy goods." The owner of the firm, James Y. Smith, was Governor of Rhode Island from 1863 to 1866. He and his brother, Amos D. Smith, were the developers of the large 1847 Locust Grove subdivision, on part of which this complex stood. The two buildings were taken over by the William E. Joslin Company, a shoelace manufacturer, in 1895. Elmwood Mills, another shoelace and braid manufacturer, replaced the Joslin Company in 1900 and, by 1908, built most of the remaining buildings in the complex. In 1912, the factory became the Elmwood plant of the International Braid Company. The firm, which completed the complex between 1912 and 1918 with the construction of the easternmost building, sold the factory to its present owner, Cable Electric Products, Inc., in 1948.

DARTMOUTH STREET

- 12 **Israel B. Mason House (c. 1868):** Striking, symmetrical, mansard dwelling with a cupola. The 3-bay facade has a pedimented central entrance pavilion. The ogee motif is repeated in the cupola roofline and in the "gingerbread" bonnet-like hood over the 2nd-floor central window. Mason, who came to Providence in 1850 from East Killingly, Connecticut, owned a prosperous provisions business in South Providence. About 1887, he had this house moved to its present location from its original site at Broad and Dartmouth streets; he then erected a new house on the old site, an immense Queen Anne affair, which since 1917 has been the Bell Funeral Home (see *South Providence*).
- 84 **J. H. Palmer House (c. 1880):** Ostentatious, mansard-roofed, 2-family house, with bracketed eaves, front and side porches, and front and side bay windows.

DEXTER STREET

- 189 **Samuel Howard Hopkins House (c. 1857):** The home of a die-sinker, this modest, 1½-story dwelling, ornamented with bracketed cornices and a small veranda, is one of the earliest and least altered structures in its area. It is also one of the first local examples of a flank-gable house type common from the 1850s to the 1880s. Designed for the narrow and deep city lot, houses of this type are turned ninety degrees on the lot, so that one of the gabled ends faces the street. A porch is extended from the principal entrance, still located in one of the building's long sides and now facing the side yard, to the gabled end nearest the street.
- 425 **American Standard Watch Case Company Plant (c. 1942-1943):** Large, 1-story, brick factory, whose entrance is embellished with a few Art Deco touches. The firm, incorporated in 1920 and formerly housed in rented quarters on Sprague Street, has been since 1948 the American Standard Division of the Bulova Watch Company.
- 527 **Convent of the Assumption (1925):** Three-story, symmetrical, hip-roofed, Italian Renaissance structure of brick. The convent was built to house the Sisters of the Cross and Passion who taught in the Church of the Assumption parochial school at 626 Potters Avenue.

ELMWOOD AVENUE

- 10* **Grace Church Cemetery:** Level, triangular, 9-acre burial ground located in the angle between Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue. The Corporation of Grace Episcopal Church purchased four acres running southward from the Broad Street-Elmwood Avenue intersection in October, 1834; in November, 1843, the remainder of the tract was bought. By 1842, the initial purchase was laid out symmetrically into diamond-shaped sections separated by avenues named after trees. In the center a small diamond-shaped area was set aside as an open space known as "Cemetery Square." The south section was laid out in May, 1848, by Cushing &

Walling, local surveyors, in a simple grid pattern. A receiving vault, built into a raised mound in the southern section, probably was erected c. 1850. Its granite front, consisting of ramped retaining walls flanking a pedimented central section with paneled pilasters and a richly carved paneled door, is a handsome piece of Greek Revival architecture. In 1859 or 1860 the gate lodge or superintendent's cottage at the Trinity Square end was built. A modest, Gothic Revival cottage of the type popularized by A. J. Downing's *The Architecture of Country Houses* (see Design IV, which this resembles), it is now clad in wood shingles.

- 63 **Silas M. Field House (c. 1857):** Elmwood's largest octagonal house is a 2-story, stuccoed structure, to which a rear wing and mansard roof were added in the last twenty years of the 19th century. Field, a jeweler, resided here until his death in 1886; a son, Silas E. Field, also a jeweler, lived here until 1900.

155; 163 **Aldrich B. Gardiner Houses (c. 1886):** Pair of two-story, 3-family Queen Anne structures with high mansard roofs; 155 has a spire-topped octagonal corner tower; while 163 has a square, diagonally positioned corner bay window rising a full three stories. They are similar in plan to the nearby structure at 179-181 Elmwood Avenue, and to 412-414 Angell Street on the East Side. In 1892, tenants of 155 were Frank A. Chase, cashier of the Rhode Island National Bank; Lucy A. Burke, widow of the jeweler Daniel B. Burke; and George T. Hart, a clerk at the Providence Gas Company. Frank T. Pearce, a gold pen and pencil case manufacturer; Mrs. Etta Belcher, an artist; and Newell W. Belcher, co-owner of the Belcher and Loomis hardware store on Weybosset Street, were the occupants of 163.

179-181 **Stillman P. Doane House (1896):** High-shouldered, mansard-roofed, 2-family house, with a spire-topped, octagonal corner tower trimmed with iron crestings. The facades display a mixture of Queen Anne, incised, floral decorations and swags and other Colonial Revival motifs. Doane, a fish wholesaler, lived on the first floor. His first tenants were Daniel S. Parkhurst, an engraver, and Edward C. Parkhurst, a clerk.

244* **Second Church of Christ, Scientist (1927-1928):** One-story, broad-fronted, flat-roofed, yellow brick church designed in the Roman Classical style so characteristic of Christian Science churches, with a tetrastyle Ionic portico and three entrances. Charles H. Lockwood was the architect.

260* **Jeffrey Davis House (c. 1888):** Restrained, 2-story, hip-roofed, Queen Anne structure with front and side gables, a semi-octagonal wing on the Princeton Avenue side, and an elaborate door porch with turned columns. Davis, in 1889 treasurer of the Lippitt Company, became in time president of the Quidnick Manufacturing Company; both were major textile manufacturers. In 1937, the house became the Ray O. Page Funeral Home.

265 **Duty S. Salisbury House (c. 1893):** Hip-roof, 2½-story, Queen Anne structure, with front and side gables and a very prominent 3-story, octagonal corner tower. The exterior,

though clad in aluminum siding, retains its delicate spindle-work entrance and 3rd-story gable porches. The original owner was a partner with A. W. Bullock in Duty S. Salisbury and Company, a cloth remnants concern at 119 Union Street.

271* **Knight Memorial Library (1923-1924):** Elmwood's finest structure, the Knight Memorial Library was designed by Edward L. Tilton, a New York architect who specialized in library planning. Sited well back from the street, the library is a 1-story, Italian Renaissance structure of Indiana limestone set on a high, granite basement and entered through an arched portal at the head of a grand staircase. Its copper-clad hip roof has an ornamental cresting of Grecian acroteria. Inside, high-ceilinged reading and reference rooms, illuminated by large round-head windows, flank a central lobby containing the main desk. This lavish and imposing structure was built to house the Elmwood Public Library, founded in 1915. Occupying ground that was formerly a part of the Robert Knight estate, the library was given in memory of Robert and Josephine Louisa Webster Knight by their children, Edith Knight, Webster Knight, Clinton Prescott Knight, and Sophie Knight Rousmaniere. The Knight heirs also provided a large fund for the upkeep of the building.

315 **Stephens Apartments (c. 1928):** A 4-story, U-shaped, dark-brown brick structure whose arms flank a small central courtyard. This Georgian structure, the largest and most impressive apartment house built in Elmwood in the 1910s and 1920s, replaced the mansion built in the early 1870s by William V. Daboll, then the agent or plant superintendent of the Elmwood Cotton Mills. The mansion—from 1879 to 1923 the home of Charles Sidney Smith and his son Roswell D. Smith, manufacturing jewelers—then served as the first convent of the Sisters of the Holy Cross and Passion (who taught in the Assumption Parish School at 626 Potters Avenue) until its demolition.

344 **The Elmwood Club (c. 1875-1882):** Built as a duplex for Benjamin F. Aldrich, this large and ornate 2-story, mansard-roofed, Stick Style building became the home of the Elmwood Club in 1890. Founded as a men's club in the late 1880s, when such organizations were much in vogue throughout the city, the club closed in 1910. Named The Princess in 1910, the structure has since served as an apartment house.

353 **Elmwood Christian Church (1914-1915):** Brick, English Tudor-style, auditorium-type church and parish house complex designed by Gorham Henshaw, a local architect who specialized in churches. The Elmwood Christian Church was formed in 1912 through the merger of the Elmwood Congregational and Broad Street Christian churches. The Congregational church, the first church in Elmwood, was organized in 1851 and in that year built a small frame church at the northeast corner of Elmwood Avenue and Burnett Street. In 1867, the building was moved to 353 Elmwood Avenue and enlarged to four times its former size. The resulting Gothic sanctuary, practically a new structure, was

the creation of the prominent local architect, Clifton A. Hall. It served the Congregational church until 1912 and the Christian church until 1914, when the present building was begun on the site. In 1954, with the decline of the Yankee population which made up the membership, the church closed. The building has since been the home of the First Presbyterian Church, a South Providence group established in 1872.

- 421 **Edmund D. Chesebro House (c. 1900):** The home of a prosperous physician, this rambling, 3-story, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival dwelling has a brick first floor and frame upper stories. A turreted corner tower and prominent gables—the front one displaying a palladian window—virtually conceal the hip roof.
- 445 **Saint Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church (1938-1939, addition in 1949):** Designed by Frederick Ellis Jackson of Jackson, Robertson & Adams, the church is a modern Gothic structure, with a stone facade and brick flanks. The second home built by a congregation which was founded in 1866 and reorganized in 1895, it stands on the site of a small estate established about 1810 by Captain Jonathan Donnison. Captain Donnison had commanded the ship *George Washington*, owned by Providence merchant John Brown, on her earliest voyage to China. Departing from Providence late in 1787, the ship had become the first from Rhode Island, and one of the first from the new republic, to dock at Canton. The Donnison house was demolished in 1938.
- 480* **Potter-Downes House (c. 1859):** Two-story, square, Italian-palazzo dwelling with delightfully curvilinear, bracketed, eaves and porch trim. The original owner, the manufacturing jeweler Christopher C. Potter, sold the house in 1861 to Lewis T. Downes. A merchant, Downes subsequently held important positions in several local insurance firms. Soon after his death in 1910, Mrs. Rosa E. Godfrey converted the structure into a rooming house named The Godfrey.
- * **Joseph J. Cooke Estate Site:** Now entirely built up, the tract bounded by Elmwood, Congress, and Lexington avenues, and extending east nearly to Melrose Street, was the home of the leading spirit behind the development of lower Elmwood. Cooke (1813-1881) was a Providence native who had been a successful merchant in New York until his conversion at a Baptist revival meeting. In the spring of 1843 he returned to Rhode Island and purchased a 110-acre section of the 17th-century farm established by John Sayles. The tract included much of the western half of Elmwood south of Locust Grove Cemetery. Cooke intended to support himself by farming. Within a few years, however, his career as a farmer ended in failure, and he went into business with his brothers, operating a store in New York from his Elmwood home. When Cooke began the platting of the farm in 1854, he reserved as his estate the Elmwood, Congress, and Lexington Avenue block. On his land, Cooke grew fruits and vegetables for the Providence market. It is said to have been through his efforts that the tomato, whose food value had never before been accepted locally, became popular in Providence. Cooke's estate was subdivided shortly after

his death.

- 520 **Providence Institution for Savings Branch Office (1949):** Square, 1-story structure—now used by the Old Stone Bank—whose smooth-finished, limestone-block walls and large, plate-glass windows reflect the influence of the International Style. Designed by the Providence firm of Harkness and Geddes, this structure is the finest post-World War II commercial building in Elmwood.
- * **Columbus Square:** This small triangular plot, originally known as Elmwood Park, was deeded to the town of Cranston in 1864 by J. J. Cooke. In the late 19th century, it became one of Elmwood's focal points, when several of the area's finest homes were built fronting it. In 1893, the park was renamed Columbus Park when the Columbus Monument, donated by the Elmwood Club and the local citizenry, was dedicated. The bronze figure of Columbus is a replica of a silver statue designed by Auguste Bartholdi, the famed French sculptor of the Statue of Liberty, and exhibited at the Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1892 to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the New World. Like the original silver statue, the bronze copy was cast at the nearby Gorham foundry.
- 638 **Cyril A. Babcock House (c. 1887):** One of Elmwood's best Queen Anne dwellings, this exuberant 2-story dwelling has a cross-gable roof and square corner tower. Babcock was the secretary and treasurer of the Union Railroad Company and later the comptroller of the Rhode Island Company before his death in 1920. Between 1924 and 1976 the structure was used as a funeral home.
- 750 **Car Barn (1901-1902; c. 1918-1921; 1947-1948):** This block-long, 1- and 2-story, brick structure, constructed in three parts, has served as a storage and repair facility for trolley cars and, since the 1930s, buses. The Elmwood Avenue end of the complex was erected in 1901-1902 by the Rhode Island Suburban Railway Company, the successor to the Union Railroad Company which pioneered local trolley service in the 1890s; it replaced the former facility at 333 Bucklin Street which, inherited from the Union railway, had recently been damaged by fire. Between 1918 and 1921, a repair shop—now the southeastern corner of the complex—was constructed, and in 1947-1948—ten years after the replacement of the trolleys with buses—the eastern section was added. The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority acquired the property in 1966.
- 775 **Elmwood Diner (1946):** A Worcester diner, this modest, center-entrance, steel structure has a bowed, trolley-car roof. The interior contains its original chrome cooking area; ceramic tile floor and wall surfaces; and wooden booths. Established by Ralph Narducci, the structure—then called the Central Diner—was originally located at the corner of Aborn and Fountain streets downtown. It was moved to its present location by Narducci about 1953.
- GREENWICH STREET**
- 37 **Edwin Turner House (c. 1861):** One of Elmwood's first bracketed dwellings, this crisply detailed, 1½-story, cross-

gable cottage possesses bracketed trim under the eaves, bay-window cornice, and door lintel, but lacks the soon-to-be-ubiquitous door hood, with its ponderous supporting brackets. Turner was the secretary of the Gaspee Fire and Marine Insurance Company.

HAMILTON STREET

- 45 **Elmwood Police Station (1902):** Two Georgian-style buildings of brick: the police station proper—a symmetrical, 3-story, hip roof structure, with an elaborate, slightly projecting, classical entrance pavilion—and a 1-story stable, with a steep, cupola-crowned, hip roof. The complex served the local police precinct until 1953. Its uses since that time have reflected the ethnic changes in the South Providence-Elmwood area. Between about 1955 and 1967, it served as the South Side Jewish Community Center. Since 1967 it has functioned as the Opportunities Industrialization Center.
- 130 **Walter E. Randall House (c. 1894):** This hip-roof, 2½-story, Queen Anne dwelling is noteworthy for the octagonal, gazebo-like treatment of its corner porch. Its front and side gables have windows set in the back of arched recesses. Randall was a carpenter.

HANOVER STREET

- 26 **Charles F. Phillips House (c. 1911):** Unusual 2-story, shingle, bungalow-style home, with a pergola front porch and a hip roof with exposed, rounded rafter ends.

LENOX AVENUE

- 259-261 **Thomas R. Reynolds House (c. 1891):** Large and ornate 2-family house, with a mansard roof and Stick Style and Queen Anne trim. First owned and in part occupied by the proprietor of the Hotel Dorrance downtown, the building originally faced Elmwood Avenue.

LEXINGTON AVENUE

- 145* **William R. Babcock II House (c. 1893):** Flank-gable structure, with a rubble-stone facade, 2-story, turreted, octagonal corner tower and shingled flanks and rear. It was built for a partner in Taylor, Symonds and Company dry-goods store on Weybosset Street.
- 183* **Edwin O. Chase House (c. 1908):** Pretentious, 2½-story, monitor-roof, Georgian residence, with a symmetrical facade displaying engaged Ionic pilasters at the corners, and a formal, balustraded, classical front porch. Chase was a partner in Burrows and Kenyon, a lumber company. Since 1975 the house has been the rectory of the Orthodox Cathedral Parish of the Holy Spirit.
- 220* **Harry F. Huestis House (c. 1907):** Large and rambling, cross-gable, Colonial Revival dwelling in which the 2-story-high, wood-shingle, gambrel-roofed upper part overshadows a Roman brick first story. Huestis, a real-estate broker and speculator, lived here only three years. The next occupant

was Leopold Dimond, principal owner of L. Dimond and Sons, Inc., a downtown department store.

LINWOOD AVENUE

- 137 **James Rhodes' Tenant Farmer's House (c. 1815):** A 2½-story, Federal-style, 4-bay, 1-room-deep, flank-gable dwelling. It retains its original cornices and pilaster-framed front entrance, with a console-supported, flat lintel. This is one of only two pre-suburban buildings in the neighborhood. Rhodes, a Providence merchant, built the house as a tenant farmhouse on the land through which Linwood Avenue now passes. The property, sold by Rhodes' heirs in 1826, remained a farm until 1860, when Robert Stevens platted Linwood Avenue through it. In 1861, the house, which stood in the path of the new street, was moved to its present location.
- 162 **Octave Bouchard House (1894):** One of West Elmwood's finest Queen Anne single-family houses, this 2½-story, cross-gable dwelling has a wrap-around, turned-post, bracketed porch and heavy, sculptural, round-bottom gable ornaments. Bouchard, one of West Elmwood's first French Canadians, was a carpenter.
- 205 **Andrew S. Southwick House (c. 1883):** One of West Elmwood's most imposing single-family homes, this 2-story, hip roof, L-plan structure has bracketed trim and a Venetian window in the second story. With Joseph Harris, Southwick owned Harris and Southwick, a jewelry manufacturing company located at 47 Sprague Street.

MADISON STREET

- 41 **John Barbour House (1850s):** One of the most delightful of a large class of smaller single-family houses in Elmwood which combine vernacular Greek Revival trim with the recently introduced hooded entrances and bay windows, this 1½-story, cross-gable dwelling has dentiled cornices and cornice returns. In 1869, John F. Barbour, an ice-cart driver, Rachel Barbour, the widow of the original owner, and Robert F. Barbour, a house painter, resided here.

MASHAPAUG POND

Mashapaug Pond: Crescent-shaped, three-quarter-mile-long body of water. The north and east shores remain largely wooded and undeveloped, but the west side has been much injured by development of the Huntington Expressway Industrial Complex. Filling operations connected with that project have narrowed the pond's width and given the west shore an all-too-regular outline. Mashapaug Pond has considerable archeological potential, a fact which should be taken into consideration during planning for any projects which may affect it. A large Narragansett Indian village is said to have existed on its banks at the time of Providence's settlement. The village's precise location is not known, but Indian artifacts discovered during construction of the rail-

road on the pond's north shore point to what may exist along other parts of the shoreline. Two other early industrial sites also possess archeological potential. A cotton mill complex, containing a six-hundred-spindle mill and other subsidiary buildings, was established at the pond's outlet about 1814 by William Potter. Sold to the Bellefonte Manufacturing Company in 1819, the complex vanished before 1850. At the northeast corner of the pond, north of the Gorham complex, the large Earl Carpenter and Sons ice-house—the first locally in which steam-powered machinery was used—stood from 1849 into the twentieth century. The last of five ponds, which once existed in the Elmwood area, Mashapaug still possesses great potential aesthetic and recreational value.

MAWNEY STREET

- 28* **Charles B. Goff House (c. 1871):** Square 2½-story, mansard house. The window to the right of the front entrance has been enlarged by the addition of Queen Anne, stained-glass side-light units on either side. Goff, with next-door-neighbor William A. Mowry, founded in 1864 the English and Classical School, an institution combining business or college preparatory courses with daily military drill. The school merged with the University Grammar School in 1898 to form the University School, absorbed by Moses Brown in 1904.
- 31* **Daniel Burrows House (c. 1880):** Narrow and deep, 2½-story, cross-gable and hip-roof structure, with iron roof crests, simple Stick Style gable ornaments, and a turned-post entrance porch capped by a semioctagonal, 2nd-story, bay window. Burrows was Rhode Island's first public accountant.
- 34* **William A. Mowry House (c. 1870):** Square, 2½-story, mansard house featuring an impressive central pavilion facade with a Venetian-inspired, twisted-column central porch, tripartite round-head windows in the second floor, and a central ogee gable. Mowry, a co-founder of the English and Classical School, moved to Elmwood in 1860 and first resided in the octagonal house at 669 Public Street. In 1864, he bought the lot next-door-east, using it for a vegetable garden. On the site of 34 Mawney, Mowry originally had a strawberry patch.
- 37* **John R. Cory House (c. 1876):** Very large and opulent, 2½-story, asymmetrical, Second Empire residence, with handsome porches; a high mansard roof; and rich, French-inspired detailing. Cory, along with a brother, Zephaniah, operated Cory Brothers Music Store on Westminster Street. George W. Ladd, founder of the Ladd Watch Case Company, purchased the house in 1882, and resided there until 1889. William H. Rodman (1840-1904), a dry-goods merchant, was the next occupant. In 1942, the house was cut up into apartments.
- 45* **Joseph C. Johnson House (c. 1878):** Johnson, secretary and treasurer of the Union Bank, erected this 2½-story, square, mansard-roofed structure with its unusual octagonal, gazebo-like porch at the right-hand corner.
- 73 **William V. Daboll House (c. 1880):** Plain, 2½-story, L-plan

structure, with a front veranda. Daboll (1810-1890), a native of Groton, Connecticut, came to Elmwood in 1838. He served as the agent and superintendent of the nearby Elmwood Cotton Mills from 1866 until the Spring of 1879, when he founded the Union Carpet Sweeper Company. After Daboll's death in 1890, the structure became the residence of cotton broker Francis W. Reynolds.

MELROSE STREET

One of the key Late Victorian residential streets of lower Elmwood, Melrose Street was platted in 1854 by J. J. Cooke and his partners. Its main development took place between 1870 and 1900. The street's most important section architecturally is bounded by Mitchell Street and Lenox Avenue and contains fine Stick Style and eclectic Queen Anne residences.

- 92* **Charles A. Eddy House (c. 1892):** Built for an engraver, this noteworthy 2½-story, hip-roof, shingled structure possesses a 2nd-story side porch flanked by 2-sided bay windows and supported in part by a massive shingled bracket.
- 102* **Frederick E. Field House (c. 1890):** Field, an architect, probably designed his most unusual, 1½-story, flank-gambrel home, with its red and gray slate roofs, stucco and half-timbered wall surfaces, and octagonal turret. It remains one of the finest and best maintained major homes in Elmwood.
- 109* **Saint Elizabeth's Home (1915-1916):** Clarke & Howe, architects, planned this complex of 3-story, gable-roof, brick structures, designed in a style described as an "adaptation of Elizabethan architecture." Saint Elizabeth's Home, an organization founded in 1882 by Grace Church for the care of incurably ill women, moved to Elmwood in 1888. The 1915-1916 structure replaced an earlier building that burned.
- 126* **Frederick E. Shaw House (c. 1894):** This massive, square, 2½-story, hip-roofed, stone-trimmed brick structure features Dutch stepped gables crowned with delicate copper finials, a large front entrance porch with Tuscan columns executed in brownstone, and a copper cornice with dentils and modillions. Shaw was a prominent building contractor who specialized in large municipal projects such as sewers, waterworks, and bridges.

MESSER STREET

Mansion Park: Handsome, rectangular, 2½-acre open space, whose edges are sharply defined by the rows of closely packed, turn-of-the-century, 2- and 3-family houses which surround it. Bounded by Messer, Kenwood, Waverly, and Sorrento streets and Union Avenue, the park was established in the late 1890s. It occupies the site of the homestead of Josiah Chapin. Chapin (1788-1881) became Providence's leading cotton merchant and retired with a large fortune in 1844. In 1849 he began to acquire an estate in the West End that eventually comprised all the territory from Cranston and Messer streets west to Route 10 and from Benedict Street on the south to Hudson on the north. The Chapin

homestead, which was demolished about the turn-of-the-century, stood nearly on the site of the fire station.

MOORE STREET

- 20 **George W. Howland House (c. 1889):** Picturesque, 2-story, hip-roof, Queen Anne dwelling, with patterned shingling above the first floor and a 2nd-story, turreted, bay window at one corner. The fanciful, gabled, turned-post porch has a valance-like spindle-work band under the cornice. Howland, a "commission traveler," lived here until 1904.
- 25 **Henry C. Field House (c. 1896):** Imposing and refined, cross-gable, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival, 2-family house, with Tuscan-column porches and a checkerboard-pattern gable ornament. The Fields resided here, along with William McDonald, a merchant tailor.
- 125-129* **Mrs. Thomas A. Whitman Duplex (c. 1882):** T-plan, 2½-story, mansard-roofed building, with a large central block flanked by well designed Stick Style porches and 2-story wings. Mrs. Whitman was one of the original occupants.
- 130* **Henry Valleau House (c. 1875):** One of Elmwood's two finest Stick Style dwellings, this somewhat remodeled 2½-story, L-plan structure possesses elaborate gable ornaments; vertical and horizontal applied wall timbering; and crisp, iron, porch crestings. Built as the second Elmwood residence of Henry Valleau (1829-1903), a partner with Shirley A. Elsbree in Elsbree and Valleau, a men's furnishings store on Westminster Street, it now serves as the Moore Apartments.

ONTARIO STREET

- 120 **Frank E. Farnham House (c. 1898):** This Queen Anne, 2½-story, hip-roof dwelling has elaborately trimmed front and side gables and a Colonial Revival, turreted, octagonal, corner porch. Farnham, a tool-maker and die-sinker, lived here until 1941.
- 137* **House (c. 1876-1882):** T-shape, 1½-story, cross-gable structure with Stick Style gable ornaments and an extensive 3-sided, timber-bracketed porch. Built as rental property by Horatio L. Bassett, this dwelling is virtually identical to Bassett's own house next door at 76-78 Melrose Street. A modern brick chimney cuts through the gable trim on one side.
- 153* **George Wilkinson House (c. 1890):** Lavish, rambling, 2½-story, cross-gable and hip-roof, "Olde English" building, with walls faced in brick, shingle, stucco, and half-timbering. Wilkinson (1819-1894), born in Birmingham, England, came to the United States in the early 1850s. In 1857, he became general superintendent of the Gorham Manufacturing Company. He had a direct hand in the planning of the new Gorham Elmwood plant, built in 1889-1890, and moved to this new house at the same time. Both in historic and architectural terms, this is one of the key buildings in Elmwood.
- 179* **George R. Hussey House (c. 1911):** This 2½-story, shingled, flank-gambrel dwelling, with its broad, paired-Ionic-colonnette front veranda, was one of the last large, single-family homes erected in Elmwood. Hussey was the president of

the Baird-North Company, jewelry manufacturers. Ruth Hussey who starred in the movies *Stars and Stripes Forever* and *Cheaper by the Dozen*, spent her childhood here.

PARKIS AVENUE

One of Elmwood's most significant Late Victorian residential streets, Parkis Avenue was platted in 1853 by Arnold Saunders and sold in its entirety in 1857 to John S. Parkis, who, like Saunders, was a butcher; Parkis began development in the late 1860s. The Parkis Avenue streetscape, containing large Second Empire and Queen Anne homes, was largely completed by 1890. The following is a selection of the most outstanding houses on Parkis Avenue.

- 14* **Richardson-Waite House (c. 1878):** The largest and most pretentious of Parkis Avenue's mansards, this square, 2½-story, Second Empire structure has a narrow, slightly projecting central block whose roof, broken by a Venetian-window dormer, pushes up slightly above the main roof. The most prominent element of the facade is the bracketed porch with its twisted colonnettes. The original owner, Josiah W. Richardson, a partner in the costume jewelry firm of Josiah W. Richardson and Company, died in 1881. From 1882 until his death in 1929, the manufacturing jeweler William H. Waite lived here. The structure was converted into apartments in 1943.
- 36* **Stanton B. Champlin House (c. 1888):** One of Elmwood's earliest and most important Queen Anne-Colonial Revival homes, this 2½-story, cross-gable dwelling has elaborate Colonial Revival porches and doorways richly trimmed with urns and swags. Champlin ran a jewelry manufacturing firm under the name of Stanton B. Champlin and Son. Severely damaged by fire in 1976, this house has been rehabilitated through aid provided by the Mayor's Office of Community Development.
- 43* **Marsh-Dyer House (c. 1872):** Built for Henry C. Marsh, this ample, squarish, 2-story structure, with its low mansard roof and octagonal side turret, came into the possession of John F. Dyer, a real-estate broker, in one year. The house has a symmetrical, 3-bay facade, and small, central, bracketed entrance porch, with an ornamental hood over the windows above it.
- 47* **Louis H. Comstock House (c. 1869):** The first of the large houses on Parkis Avenue, this 2½-story, mansard structure has quoined corners, bracketed cornices and front and side porches, and a prominent Venetian-window dormer. Comstock, a partner in Comstock and Company, dealers in meat and provisions, moved to East Greenwich about 1915. Fred S. Comstock, a son who eventually became president of the firm, continued to live in the house until his death in 1948.
- 48* **Joseph Davol House (c. 1872):** L-plan, 2½-story, mansard dwelling, with bracketed porch and eaves. Davol was in 1872 affiliated with Ebben Simmons and Company, owners of the City Planing Mill. In 1878, he took charge of the Perkins Manufacturing Company whose establishment he had previ-

ously financed. Reorganized as the Davol Manufacturing Company, in 1882, and renamed in 1885 the Davol Rubber Company, this rubber-products concern is still in business at Point and Eddy streets.

- 52* **House (c. 1875):** Phebe Whipple was the original owner of this 2½-story, 3-bay, mansard building. It has a projected, central-entrance pavilion elaborated with a rounded, tower-like, porch-bay, window-loggia assembly capped by a conical roof and an equally quixotic gazebo-like, arcaded, corner porch. Both the tower and porch are later 19th-century additions.

PEACE STREET

- 118-120* **Cohen House (c. 1897):** Steep-roofed, cross-gable, 2-family house, with scalloped-edge bargeboards and an octagonal, turreted, corner tower. Rich Colonial Revival detailing ornaments the front porch. The original occupants were Frank W. Bodwell, a foreman, and, upstairs, Joseph B. Cohen, a hardware dealer, Mollie Cohen, a milliner, and Sarah Cohen, a widow.
- 165-169 **Christopher Ellery House (c. 1807):** Plain, 2-story, hip-roof, Federal, central-hall-plan house, whose walls are now clad in shingles. The original exterior trim which remains is simple and includes a pilaster-framed doorway with a fanlight-pierced pediment, now partially concealed behind a modern door porch, and molded window caps. Within, several mantel-pieces and the original central staircase remain intact. Before 1846, a rear ell was added. Christopher Ellery (1768-1840), a native of Newport and a nephew of William Ellery (a signer of the Declaration of Independence), was a lawyer and Jeffersonian Democrat; he served from 1801 to 1805 as a Representative in Congress. In 1806, having been appointed by President Jefferson to the post of Commissioner of Loans in Providence, Ellery bought a tract running from Elmwood Avenue west to Long Pond, where Peace and Hanover streets and Bellevue Avenue now exist. He probably soon built this house. He continued to live here until 1814, when, his term as Commissioner having ended, he sold out to William Peckham. Peckham, a Providence merchant, occupied the house until his death about 1830. George Field owned the property from 1830 to 1840, when it was purchased by Gershom Turner. Walter S. Burges, an Associate Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court from 1868 to 1881, purchased the estate in 1850 and resided here until his death in 1892. About 1894 the estate was subdivided and the house moved to its present site from its former location on the west side of Elmwood Avenue in line with Peace Street.

PEARL STREET

- 304* **New England Butt Company Complex (1850s, 1865, 1951):** The New England Butt Company, organized in 1842, established a small complex at Pearl, Perkins, and Rice streets before 1849. The firm, which originally manufactured cast-iron butt hinges, turned to the manufacture of braiding machinery

about 1880, when the introduction to the market of less costly stamped-metal butts rendered cast-iron ones obsolete. The company continues to manufacture braiding machinery under the New England Butt Company name; it was purchased by the Wanskuck Company, another local firm, in 1955. Much of the factory complex predates 1875. The front building, at 304 Pearl Street, was erected in 1865 from the designs of Providence builder-architect Spencer P. Read. Originally the machining and assembling building, it is now used for offices. It is a handsome, 3-story, brick structure, with a trap-door monitor roof, corbeled brick cornices, and brick window caps and arched door surrounds. Exterior changes have been minimal. A long wing, originally two stories in height, but since raised to three, extends along Perkins Street. Although its brick window caps correspond with those in the Pearl Street building, part of the structure may predate 1865. Perhaps the oldest structure in the complex is the much altered, 2-story, monitor-roof, frame building in the center of the block on Perkins Street. It was probably in existence in 1865, and may have been constructed between 1849 and 1857. The factory complex also contained a foundry, which was closed in 1948. A large, flat-roof, glass-brick structure, replacing the foundry and occupying the rest of the block, was erected in 1951.

PLENTY STREET

- 80 **Dyer-Bourn House (late 18th or early 19th century; remodeled c. 1854 and 1863):** Square, 2½-story, mansard-roofed dwelling, with an Early Victorian veranda. Built as a summer house by Benjamin Dyer after his 1797 purchase of a large tract nearby, the structure served as the residence of Providence merchant and cotton manufacturer William Valentine from 1832 to 1837. The next owner, David Sisson, sold the estate to the manufacturing jeweler Christopher C. Potter in 1854. Potter probably added the front veranda before losing the house through a foreclosure action. The next resident, Augustus O. Bourn, was a rubber goods manufacturer who took over his father's business in 1859, the same year he moved in. Bourn founded the National Rubber Company in Bristol in 1864 and in 1874 moved there; he later served as Governor of the state. The house, to which a mansard roof and new exterior and interior trim, designed by Providence architect Clifton A. Hall, were added after an 1863 fire, originally stood in the center of a large estate located on Elmwood Avenue between Peace and Plenty streets; it was moved to its present site c. 1908-1918.

POTTERS AVENUE

Locust Grove Cemetery (1847): One of Elmwood's largest public spaces, this level, trapezoidal, 10-acre burial ground is laid out in parallel, north-south tiers of lots. The principal roadway, running from west to east, divides near the center of the cemetery to form a small oval. Locust Grove was established in 1847 by Amos D. Smith, James Y. Smith, Wil-

liam V. Daboll, and other Elmwood developers. The grounds were platted by Cushing & Walling. The Locust Grove Cemetery Corporation, the original owner, went bankrupt in 1975; since then ownership has been vested in the city. Locust Grove contains some elaborate examples of Victorian funerary art, including several late nineteenth-century, zinc monuments. Several, handsome, early nineteenth-century, slate headstones which are also present may have been moved here from the William T. Grinnell burying ground which existed from 1815 until about 1870 on the south side of West Friendship Street east of Elmwood Avenue. The victim of years of neglect and vandalism, Locust Grove is now being rejuvenated by the city and remains a significant cultural resource.

- 450 **Elmwood Garage (1907):** Notable as one of the first public garages in Providence, this broad-fronted, reinforced-concrete structure has a brick exterior and consists of a large, 1-story garage fronted by a smaller, 2-story block containing the offices. Advertised at the time of its opening as Rhode Island's first fireproof garage, it was designed by the Boston firm of Adolph Suck (Adolph Suck, engineer, and Henry Suck, Jr., architect), one of the pioneers of reinforced-concrete design in New England. Constructed for the Crane Automobile and Garage Company—a partnership formed by William J. Braitsch and Harold C. Crane—the building was designed for automobile storage, rental, and repair and also contained the exclusive Rhode Island dealership for the Atlas Motor Car. The structure is now used by Specialty Pipe and Fitting, Inc.
- 539 **Charles F. Phillips House (c. 1857):** Elmwood's finest remaining Italianate residence, this square, 2-story, palazzo-type structure has a low hip roof, quoined corners, console-decorated eaves, an arcade-like front porch, and molded window caps. Phillips, a jeweler, resided here only until 1859 when he sold the property to Henry Flagg, a merchant. Between 1873 and 1898, Samuel L. Blaisdell, one-time partner in Frederick L. Brown and Company, wholesale grocers, lived here. A son, Bertram S. Blaisdell, a lawyer and clerk of the Rhode Island Supreme Court, lived here until his death in 1949.
- 542 **Church of the Epiphany (1879-1881):** Designed by Stephen C. Earle, this unpretentious, parish-church-type, modern Gothic edifice (now clad in aluminum siding) was built for an Episcopal church founded in 1875 as an outgrowth of a mission dating back to 1868. An organ alcove was erected on the east side in 1885, parish rooms were added on the west in 1886, and the church was extended toward the street in 1889-1890. The interior was entirely refurbished in 1939-1940, but the original scissors-truss-with-king-post roof construction and dark-stained, narrow-board ceiling remain. In 1912-1913, a stone parish house, designed by J. Howard Adams of Providence, was constructed behind the church proper.
- 552 **Thomas Hope House (c. 1860):** The best of Elmwood's end-gable, Greek Revival houses, this 1½-story cottage, with its

cornice returns, is, nevertheless, modest in size and unpretentious in style. Its unusually wide cornerboards and plain-framed, recessed doorway are merely suggestive of the pilaster and entablature treatment seen in more fully developed examples such as 121 Willow Street. The house stands on property given by Anson Potter in 1859 to his daughter, Elizabeth, the wife of manufacturing jeweler Thomas Hope.

- 572 **James M. Johnson House (c. 1861):** Lacking the elaborate trim of palazzo houses, this more modest, 2-story, L-plan dwelling retains only the low hip roof and widely projecting eaves associated with the Italianate idiom. Built for a stair-builder, it possesses a delicate porch with open-work supports characteristic of the 1850s and early 1860s.
- 626 **Assumption Parish School (1925-1926):** Two-story, brick, Roman Catholic parochial school of the standard 1920s type. It has a French Romanesque-inspired front entrance and flanking windows.
- 805-807 **Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (1910-1912):** One of a series of early 20th-century Catholic churches in the area designed by the Providence firm of Murphy, Hindle & Wright, the twin-towered, yellow brick structure is a modern adaptation of English Perpendicular Gothic architecture. Built by a predominantly Irish congregation established in 1871 to replace a clapboarded, Gothic Revival-style building of 1870-1871, the church is the visual focal point of West Elmwood.

PRINCETON AVENUE

Containing some of Elmwood's most notable Queen Anne and Colonial Revival homes, the avenue was platted in two sections—the eastern block in 1857 by Walter S. Burges and Walter W. Updike, the western in 1866 as part of the Eagle Nursery Plat. Although the first house, number 27, appeared c. 1858, no other dwellings were built until after 1875. Extensive development took place between 1885 and 1905.

- 35* **Anthony B. Day House (c. 1885):** This 2-story, cross-gable, L-plan dwelling is one of Elmwood's earliest and best Queen Anne residences. The original owner was a partner in Thurber and Burns, a jewelry-manufacturing concern on Eddy Street.
- 49* **Joseph G. Birch House (c. 1885):** Elmwood's most imposing Queen Anne residence is a 2½-story, hip-roof structure whose elaborate detailing includes a turned-column, 1st-floor, side porch; a recessed, 2nd-story, front porch framed by an arched opening; and large dormers with restrained gable ornaments. Birch was a partner with T. C. Leavens in Leavens and Birch, a hats, coats, and furnishings store on Westminster Street.
- 67* **Isaac Liscomb House (c. 1884):** Narrow and deep, 2½-story, cross-gable, Queen Anne dwelling with a 1st-floor bay window and handsomely detailed door porch. The wall surfaces are treated as horizontal bands of clapboard and shingle. Liscomb was a member of T. F. Pierce and Company, dealers in boots and shoes in the Arcade.

- 71* **Henry E. Nickerson House (c. 1903):** Two-story, clap-boarded, Colonial Revival dwelling, whose square shape and hip roof, crowned with a balustrade, are suggestive of the most pretentious 18th-century New England houses. It was built for the one-time secretary and vice president of the Congdon & Carpenter Company, dealers in iron and steel supplies for contractors and carriage makers.
- 77* **Smith-Malmstead House (c. 1905):** This square, 2½-story, hip-roof structure has a heavy, colonnaded front porch and a clean-cut exterior clad in brick up to the 2nd-story window sills and stuccoed above. With its simple massing and astylar decoration, the dwelling is significant as an early example of the early 20th-century reaction against Victorian complexity and picturesqueness. The original owner, George H. Smith, was a partner with Elmer A. Beaman in the Beaman and Smith machine shop. Gustaf T. Malmstead, owner of the Providence Public Market, the city's first supermarket, purchased the house in 1915.
- 104* **Carriage House and Stable for Webster Knight Estate (c. 1897):** Probably designed by Angell & Swift, this large, 1½-story, cross-gambrel structure has Colonial Revival details matching those of the Knight mansion next door (see number 118).
- 109* **Robert Grieve House (1899):** Unpretentious, 2½-story, end-gable, Colonial Revival house, whose front porch has been inappropriately altered. Grieve (1855-1924), a printer and reporter who came to the United States from Scotland in 1866, obtained a measure of fame as the historian of the textile industry in Rhode Island. He wrote a number of books and pamphlets, including *The Cotton Centennial, 1790-1890; An Illustrated History of Pawtucket; and The Commercial Opportunities and Possibilities of Providence.*
- 118* **Webster Knight House (c. 1897):** One of the earliest and finest Colonial Revival residences in Providence, this imposing 2½-story, flank-gambrel structure, with its symmetrical front and central-hall-plan arrangement, is reminiscent of some of the larger mid-18th-century homes of New England. Probably designed by the local firm of Angell & Swift, it possesses a front entrance with fanlight and sidelights, a semicircular, Corinthian-column front porch, and an Ionic-column side porch with an ornate, Chippendale-inspired upper railing. Webster Knight (1854-1933), son of Robert Knight, one of the founders of the B. B. & R. Knight cotton manufacturing empire, assumed major management responsibilities in the B. B. & R. Knight firm in 1898 and became senior partner in 1912.
- 125* **George Sharpe Smith House (c. 1897):** Typical of the later Queen Anne houses of the 1890s and 1900s in its union of Colonial Revival detailing with a rambling, asymmetrical house form, this 2½-story, hip-roof structure contrasts sharply with the severely rectangular, symmetrical-fronted Knight mansion—its contemporary—across the street. Its facade, with its broad, semicircular projection to the left of the entrance, is fronted by an Ionic-column veranda. The house was built for the owner of the George S. Smith Engraving Company.

PUBLIC STREET

- 649 **John Bezely House (c. 1847):** This 1½-story, 5-bay, flank-gable, vernacular dwelling is the oldest suburban house in all of Elmwood. The shingle siding and flat-roof door porch are early 20th-century additions.
- 669 **Miles B. Lawson House (c. 1856):** One of three octagonal houses in Elmwood, this modest, 2-story, low-roofed, bracketed structure, with its center chimney and hooded doorway, originally belonged to a house painter. Its walls are now clad in asbestos shingling.

RESERVOIR AVENUE

Jewish Cemetery (Rhode Island Historical Cemetery, City of Providence, No. 6): Now hemmed-in by a Route 10 exit ramp, this 1-acre burial ground is enclosed by an iron railing. The property was purchased for cemetery purposes in 1849 by Solomon Pareira, Leonard Gavitts, and Morris Steinberg and was conveyed to the Congregation of the Sons of Israel in 1857. The cemetery continued in use into the 20th century when it was filled.

SACKETT STREET

- 20 **George W. Miller House (c. 1870):** Square, 2½-story, Second Empire dwelling, whose symmetrical facade displays prominent bay-window units and a centrally positioned, triple-window, Italianate dormer. Miller was a safe manufacturer.

SUMTER STREET

- 169 **Harry Goldenberg House (c. 1939):** Cross-gable, brick and stucco and half-timber structure, with stone trimmings. Built for the president and treasurer of the Paramount Cornice Company, it is the best of the three "Stockbrokers' Tudor" houses in Elmwood.

SUPERIOR STREET

- 112 **Edward Hooker House (c. 1860):** A broad, 2-story, Early Victorian structure with a low hip roof, full-width front veranda, and plain, vernacular trim. Edward Hooker (1822-1903), a native of Farmington, Connecticut, early in life went to sea and at the age of twenty-three commanded a ship. Entering the U. S. Navy in 1861 as a volunteer acting master, he was three times wounded and twice promoted for gallantry. He retired from the Navy in 1884. Hooker worked for twenty-five years on the Hooker family genealogy which, completed by Margaret Huntington Hooker, was published in 1908. Number 112 Superior was owned by Edward's oldest brother, John Hooker (a Hartford lawyer), until 1875.

VINEYARD STREET

- 1-33 **Elmwood Grammar School (south wing, 1882-1883; north wing, 1913):** Designed by William R. Walker and Son and

given a matching north block in 1913, the school is a complex of two, side-by-side, square, 3-story, hip-roof structures of brick—with slate, brownstone, terra-cotta, and stamped-metal trimmings in abundance. A cupola which once crowned the south building has been removed. Constructed as an intermediate school for graduates of all the primary schools in Elmwood, the structure is now known as the Vineyard Street School.

WADSWORTH STREET

- 72 **Hart House (early 19th century):** Ranking with the houses at 43 Calder Street and 135 Linwood Avenue as one of the oldest dwellings in West Elmwood, this modest, 1½-story, flank-gable structure possesses early, plain cornerboards and projecting window frames, and simple, mid-19th-century doorway trim. Moved to its present location about 1900, it is said originally to have stood along Cranston Street. In 1901, Peter Hart, a grinder, was the owner-occupant.

WARRINGTON STREET

- 131 **C. Albert Johnson House (c. 1914):** Broad, 1½-story, stuccoed bungalow, with a low, end-gable roof whose widely projecting eaves are supported on triangular brackets. Johnson, a teacher at the Technical High School, lived here until 1922.
- 227, 228, 233, 237, 238, 248 **George Fuscellaro Houses (c. 1928-1932):** Among the finest 1920s single-family homes in Elmwood, these dwellings were the work of Fuscellaro, a builder-developer who also constructed many of the 2-family houses on Ruskin and Kipling streets nearby. Numbers 227, 228, and 248 are compact and square, 2-story structures, with low hip roofs and stock Colonial Revival porches and other trim. Number 227, purchased late in 1930 by Abraham Horowitz, a garage owner, has an asymmetrical facade. Numbers 228, occupied in 1930 by Jesse H. Goldberg and his wife Jennie (owner of Jean's Dress Shop on Westminster Street), and 248, bought by Benjamin Press in 1932, have symmetrical fronts with tripartite 1st-floor windows flanking the front entrance. Number 233, Elmwood's finest Dutch Colonial, was bought late in 1930 by Samuel Littman, superintendent of the American Insulated Wire Corporation Providence plant. Number 237, a 2-story dwelling purchased in 1929 by Max F. Herberdt, a hairdresser, is an end-gable, Georgian-Colonial home. Number 238, an elegant 1½-story, weatherboarded cottage, with a jerkinhead roof, was bought late in 1929 by Frank H. Smith, a salesman.

WESTMINSTER STREET

- 674* **All Saints Memorial Episcopal Church (1869-1872):** Designed by Edward Tuckerman Potter of New York, one of the nation's leading architects in the post-Civil War period, All Saints is a massive, high-style, Gothic structure of brownstone. A flat-topped corner tower has never been given the spire designed for it by the architect. The interior

has a nave and side aisles. Thin, iron, cluster columns support a low clerestory and an open timberwork roof center has a nave and side aisles. Thin, iron, cluster columns support a low clerestory and an open timberwork roof construction whose crisscrossing members are suggestive of 4-part groin vaulting. A Tudor-style parish house, designed by Gorham Henshaw, was added in 1909. All Saints, the second home of a parish organized in 1847, was erected as a memorial to the Right Reverend John Prentiss Kewley Henshaw, Bishop of the Diocese of Rhode Island, who died in 1852.

- 770 **James L. Hanley Educational Center (1923; 1966-1970):** Containing the Classical and Central high schools, the center is the first educational park in Rhode Island. It is a complex of modern, flat-roofed, 2- and 3-story, brick and concrete structures surrounding the Tudor-style Central High School, a 3-story, brick building with a symmetrical front. The Central High School was erected in 1923. The architects, Hoppin and Field, followed preliminary plans drawn under the direction of William E. Hartwell, Commissioner of Public Buildings, of the city Public Buildings Department. The educational center, constructed between 1966 and 1970, was designed by the Providence firm of Harkness and Geddes, in association with The Architects Collaborative of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and replaced an older group of educational buildings considered outmoded in the 1950s.

WHITMARSH STREET

Like Princeton Avenue, its near neighbor to the south, Whitmarsh Street was platted in two sections, the eastern block in 1857 and the western in 1866. Number 27, the first house, was erected c. 1857 for Edwin B. Whitmarsh, for whom the street was subsequently named; it remained the only dwelling as late as 1875. Like Princeton Avenue, Whitmarsh Street contains fine Queen Anne and Colonial Revival residences, built for the most part between 1885 and 1905.

- 24* **Myron H. Fuller House (c. 1883):** A round, 1-story, turreted, turned-post porch which projects from one corner of the house is the highlight of this 2½-story, cross-gable Queen Anne dwelling. Fuller was a partner in the button firm of Royce, Allen and Company, and in F. A. Chase and Company, manufacturers of ring travelers, belt hooks, wire goods, and wood rim pulleys.
- 31-33* **James B. Law House (c. 1888):** Late Victorian structure whose form owes something to the modern Gothic homes of the previous twenty years, this 2½-story, L-plan, cross-gable dwelling has bracketed, Queen Anne-style, turned-post porches, and shingled gables and window hoods. Law was treasurer of the James Hill Manufacturing Company, a galvanizing and tinning firm located on Sprague, Fuller, and Westfield streets.
- 32* **Charles E. Hancock House (c. 1886):** Deep, 2½-story, cross-gable, Queen Anne dwelling, with a door porch and 2-story bay window unit in front and paraged, floral-pattern gable

ornaments. Hancock, a partner with George and H. Becker in Hancock, Becker and Company, jewelry manufacturers, moved to 239 Adelaide Avenue by 1893.

- 36* **Anthony J. Rausch House (c. 1890):** This 2½-story, hip-roof, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival dwelling has a side entrance fronted by a turned-post porch. The stair hall is illuminated by an immense, virtually all glass, 2-story-high, octagonal, bay window at the front corner. Rausch was a confectioner and caterer on Westminster Street.
- 37* **Frank H. Swift House (c. 1901):** Large and handsome end-gambrel, Colonial Revival dwelling, whose front porch is elaborately trimmed with paired Ionic colonnettes. This was the residence of one of the members of the architectural firm of Angell & Swift.
- 41* **Alfred M. Williams House (c. 1889):** Gable-fronted, 2½-story, hip-roof, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival structure, with a Colonial Revival, Ionic-column, corner porch. Williams was Editor of the *Providence Journal*.
- 52-54* **Arthur L. Peck Double House (c. 1896):** Remarkable, asymmetrical, 2½-story, flank-gable structure, with an orange brick first floor and shingled upper stories, and a large, asymmetrical, central gable. The building has a well conceived facade in which a gable-roof entrance porch with a hip-roofed bay window unit above it in one residence unit is matched by a hip-roofed porch and gable-roofed bay window unit in the other. Peck, a partner in Benjamin W. Peck and Son, a firm of painters, resided here.
- 58* **Walter Gardiner House (c. 1888):** Flank-gable, 2½-story, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival dwelling with a semioctagonal, turreted corner porch at one end and a small, octagonal, turreted, corner tower at the other. Gardiner was a partner in Dutee Wilcox and Company, manufacturing jewelers.
- 60* **Herbert D. Nickerson House (c. 1890):** Broad-fronted, 2½-story, flank-gable, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival house with a prominent front gable and a palladian, upper-stair-hall window. The structure's outstanding feature is its wrap-around, paired-Ionic-column, 1st-floor porch. Nickerson and Arthur Knowles operated the Nickerson and Company 5-cent store on Westminster Street downtown.
- 86* **The Whitmarsh (1913):** This Tudor-style, 3-story, brick and stucco apartment house, grouped about a broad and shallow court, is notable as the first large apartment house in Elmwood and one of the earliest in Providence. The architect, Frank W. Wood, designed other apartment houses in Providence, including the 8-story Minden on Waterman Street, erected the preceding year. The Whitmarsh's original owner, Manuel F. Williams, was a manufacturing jeweler.

WILLOW STREET

- 121 **House (1840s):** One of the few true Greek Revival houses in the survey area, this flank-gable dwelling has pilastered corners, a full entablature, pedimented gables, and a recessed front entrance. The house was moved to this site between 1882 and 1895.

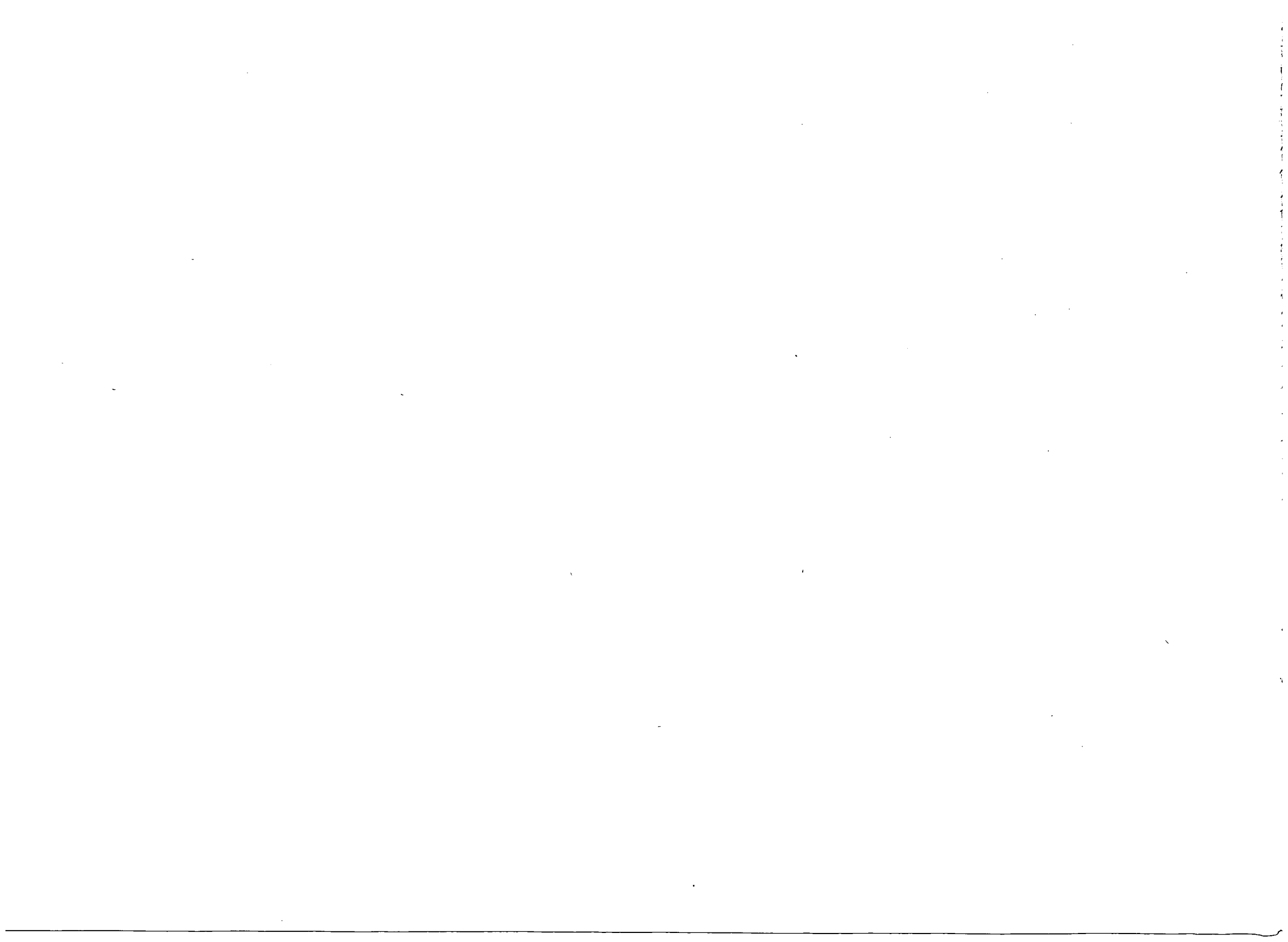
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