

**PPS MARKER REPORT FOR
19 BARNES STREET
(Assessor's Plat 10, Lot 503)**

MARKER TEXT: SABIN & HARRIET BRADFORD HOUSE, Built 1868.

TYPE OF MARKER: ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Style: Italianate

DESIGNATIONS:

National Register of Historic Places:

Listed in the College Hill Historic District as "House, 1857-1875."

https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs_zips_downloads/national_pdfs/providence/prov_college-hill-hd.pdf

City of Providence:

Located within the College Hill Historic District overlay zone.

<https://www.providenceri.gov/planning/phdc-lhd-info/>

PPS GOWDEY FILES:

(<https://gowdey.ppsri.org/>) These are research reports related to the nearly 1,600 markers that PPS has provided since the 1960s. Per current Marker Program protocols, if a Gowdey Files report was produced before 2000, then new research is conducted when a marker is approved. Researchers today can utilize a broader spectrum of sources than were consulted in the past, allowing for correction of any previous errors of fact or interpretation in the earlier report.

The Gowdey Files do not contain any previous reports for 19 Barnes Street.

NOTES:

Sabin Bradford, a pattern maker, purchased this property on June 12, 1868; no buildings were mentioned in that deed, but tax records indicate that the house was built as of July 1, 1868, so evidently it had been under construction prior to the deed being executed. Bradford lived at 19 Barnes Street until his death in 1879; his widow Harriet Bradford inherited the house and remained in residence until her own death in 1898. Ownership of the property then passed down through inheritance to Sabin and Harriet's daughter Mary C. Buffinton, then to Mary's daughter Harriet M. Buffinton, then to

Harriet's cousin Phebe A. Buffinton and several other people whose relationship to Harriet Buffinton could not be determined.

BRADFORD AND BUFFINTON FAMILIES

The following records of the Bradford and Buffinton families were found on Ancestry.com (or elsewhere as noted):

Medway, Mass. Birth, Marriage, and Death Records 1700-1850: "Harriott" Metcalf, daughter of Franklin Metcalf, married Sabin Bradford on November 13, 1839.

1860 U.S. Census for Providence, R.I.: Sabin Bradford (age 42, born about 1818), a pattern maker, lived with his wife Harriet Bradford (age 41, born about 1819) and daughter Mary C. Bradford (age 19, born about 1849). Their home address was not noted.

Rhode Island Marriage Index, 1851-1920: Mary C. Bradford married James M. Buffinton, November 7, 1864.

1870 U.S. Census for Providence: Sabin Bradford (age 52), a pattern maker, lived with his wife Harriet Bradford (age 50), their daughter Mary C. Buffinton (age 29) and her husband James Buffinton (age 29), a bookkeeper, and Mary and James's daughter Mabel Buffinton (age 4). Their home address was not noted.

Note: Harriet M. Buffinton's middle name was Mabel – this census record relates to her.

1875 Rhode Island Census: Sabin Bradford (age 60), a pattern maker, lived at 19 Barnes Street with his wife Harriet Bradford (age 57), daughter Mary C. "Buffington" (age 34, widow), and her daughter Harriet M. "Buffington" (age 9). [Buffinton was misspelled in this record.]

1880 U.S. Census for Providence: Harriet Bradford (age 63), widow, lived at 19 Barnes Street with her daughter Mary Buffinton (age 39), widow, and Mary's daughter Harriet M. Buffinton (age 14).

[1890 U.S. Census for R.I. was destroyed by fire.]

1900 U.S. Census for Providence: Mary C. Buffinton (age 59) lived at 19 Barnes St. with her daughter Harriet M. Buffinton (age 34).

1910 U.S. Census for Providence: Mary C. Buffinton (age 69) lived at 19 Barnes St. with her daughter Harriet M. Buffinton (age 44).

1920 U.S. Census for Boston, Mass.: Harriet M. Buffinton (age 53) lived in a lodging house on St. Botolph St.

1930 U.S. Census for Boston, Mass.: Harriet M. Buffinton (age 64), an advertising "solicitor," lived in a lodging house on Boylston St.

Note: city directories indicate that Harriet moved back to Providence in 1934.

Find A Grave Index & Website: Sabin Bradford, born 1814, died August 18, 1879 in Providence, is buried at North Burial Ground in a Bradford-Buffinton family plot. His wife Harriet Metcalf Bradford (born 1818, died April 14, 1898) is also buried there. A photo of their gravestone also includes the names James M. [Mitchell] Buffinton (1840-1872), his wife Mary Clark [Bradford] Buffinton (1840-1916) and their daughter Harriet M. [Mabel] Buffinton (1866-1936).

HEIRS OF HARRIET M. BUFFINTON

Four people came into possession of 19 Barnes Street after Harriet M. Buffinton died in 1936. According to records found on Ancestry.com, only one of these heirs had a familial connection to Harriet.

Phebe A. Buffinton – a first cousin once removed to Harriet M. Buffinton: her grandfather John E. Buffinton was a brother of Harriet's father James M. Buffinton. Lived in Fall River, Mass. in the 1920 and 1930 censuses.

Vera M. Purkis (nee Purton) – daughter of Francis J. and Mabel I. [Ide] Purton. She married twice: to Joseph P. Hetherington in 1910, with whom she had a daughter, Ruth I. Hetherington; and to Charles A. Purkis. Lived in Cranston in the 1920 and 1930 censuses. Relationship to Harriet M. Buffinton (if any) is unknown.

Ruth I. [Ide] Roper (nee Hetherington) – daughter of Vera Purkis. Lived with her mother and other relatives in Cranston in the 1920 and 1930 censuses. Lived with her husband Leslie B. Roper in Cranston in the 1940 census. Relationship to Harriet M. Buffinton (if any) is unknown.

Robert F. Purton – son of Francis J. and Mabel I. Purton. He married Iva E. Woodmancey in 1916. Lived in Cranston in the 1920 and 1930 censuses. Relationship to Harriet M. Buffinton (if any) is unknown.

RECORDS

Assessor's Plat Maps and Chain of Title Cards (Recorder of Deeds)¹

The current map for Plat 10 identifies 19 Barnes Street as Lot 503, a 4,750 sq.ft. lot on the south side of the street between Prospect and Brown Streets. No outbuildings.

Chain of Title Card for AP 10/Lot 503 – BARNES ST.

Harriet Bradford, widow, owned the property as of July 31, 1880.

Mary C. Buffinton, widow, owned the property as of November 1, 1898.

Harriet M. Buffinton owned the property as of January 2, 1917.

Harriet M. Buffinton & Vera M. Purkis owned the property as of February 1932.

Harriet M. Buffinton owned the property as of January 1934.

Harriet M. Buffinton Estate owned the property as of April 1937.

Robert F. Purton 1/8, Vera M. Purkis 1/4, Ruth I. Roper 1/8, & Phebe A. Buffinton 1/2 owned the property as of April 1937.

George R. McAuslan owned the property as of May 1937.

George R. McAuslan & wife Ethel B. McAuslan owned the property as of June 15 [date obscured].

Ethel B. McAuslan owned the property as of March [date obscured].

Margaret C. Kilvert owned the property as of December [date obscured].

Charles A. Kilvert owned the property as of December 6, [date obscured].

(Refers to Will Book 12/Page 509)

Jon M. Wigren & wife Barbara C. Wigren owned the property as of January 5, [date obscured] (Refers to Deed Book 1203/Page 286)

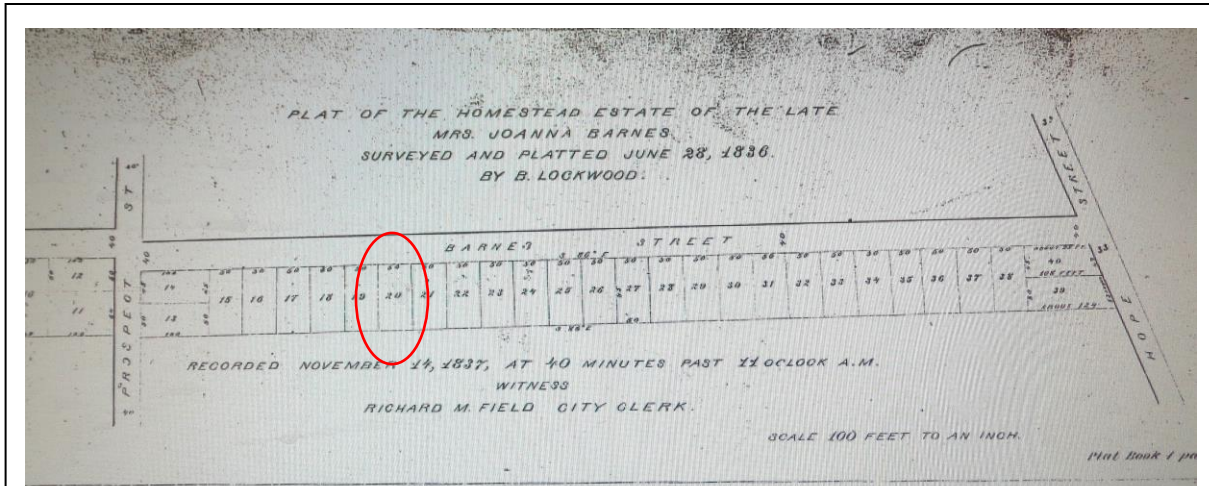
[Last entry on this card.]

According to the Tax Assessor's online data base, the current owners are Jon M. Wigren & Barbara C. Wigren.

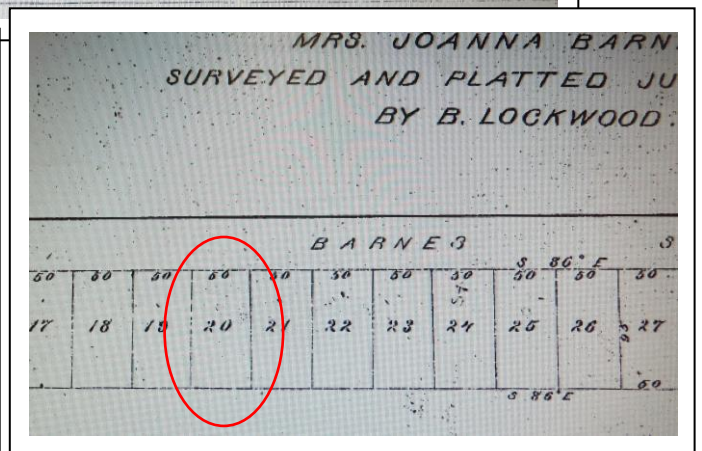
Maps and Atlases (SELECT MAPS ATTACHED; all at City Archives unless otherwise noted)

Maps indicate that the house was constructed between 1857 and 1875.

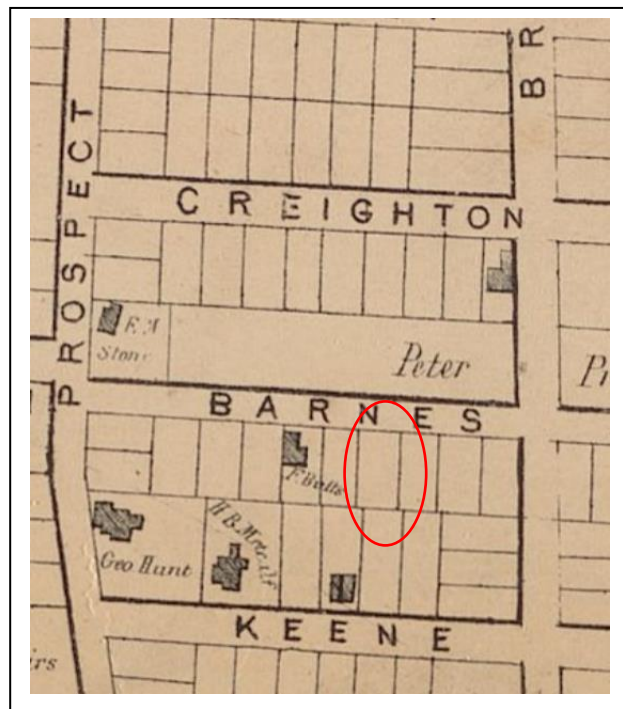
¹ Chain of Title Cards typically list owner names beginning in the late 19th c.; earlier ownership is identified through deed research. The cards are only available as scanned digital images, and the scanning sometimes did not fully reproduce the original card, so some names or dates can be incomplete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



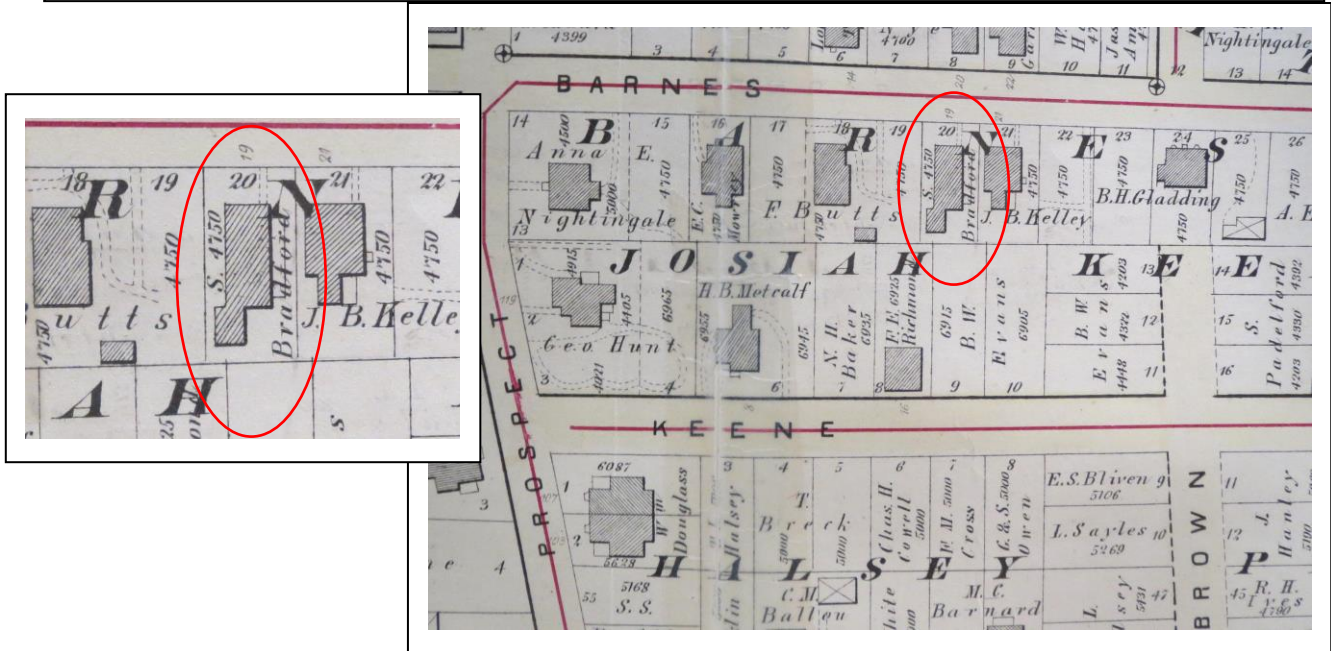
1836: "Plat of the Homestead Estate of the Late Mrs. Joanna Barnes, surveyed and platted June 28, 1836 by B. Lockwood," recorded in Plat Book 1/Page 30 and copied on Plat Card 10. Shows the future site of 19 Barnes Street within Lot 20, a vacant lot on the south side of the street between Prospect and Hope Streets (Brown Street did not yet exist). Lot 20 had 50 feet of street frontage and measured about 95 feet in depth. (Recorder of Deeds)



1857: "Map of the City of Providence," by H.F. Walling. Shows the future site of 19 Barnes Street as a vacant lot. Note that Brown Street has been laid out between Prospect and Hope Streets. (Online at <https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:cj82m801m>)



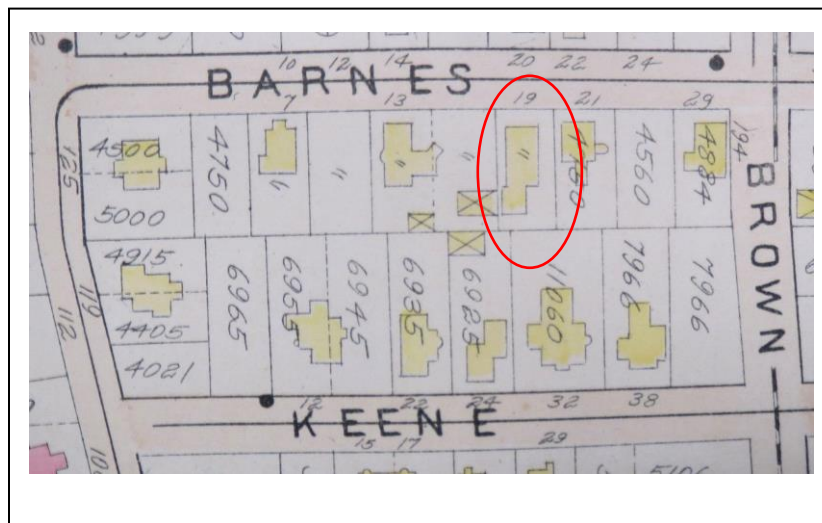
1875: "City Atlas of Providence," by G.M. Hopkins, Vol. 1, Plate E. Shows the house, with the address 19 Barnes, standing on a 4,750 sq.ft. lot owned by S. Bradford. The number "20" inside the lot lines refers to the lot number in the Joanna Barnes Plat. Brown Street has been partially built through this block.



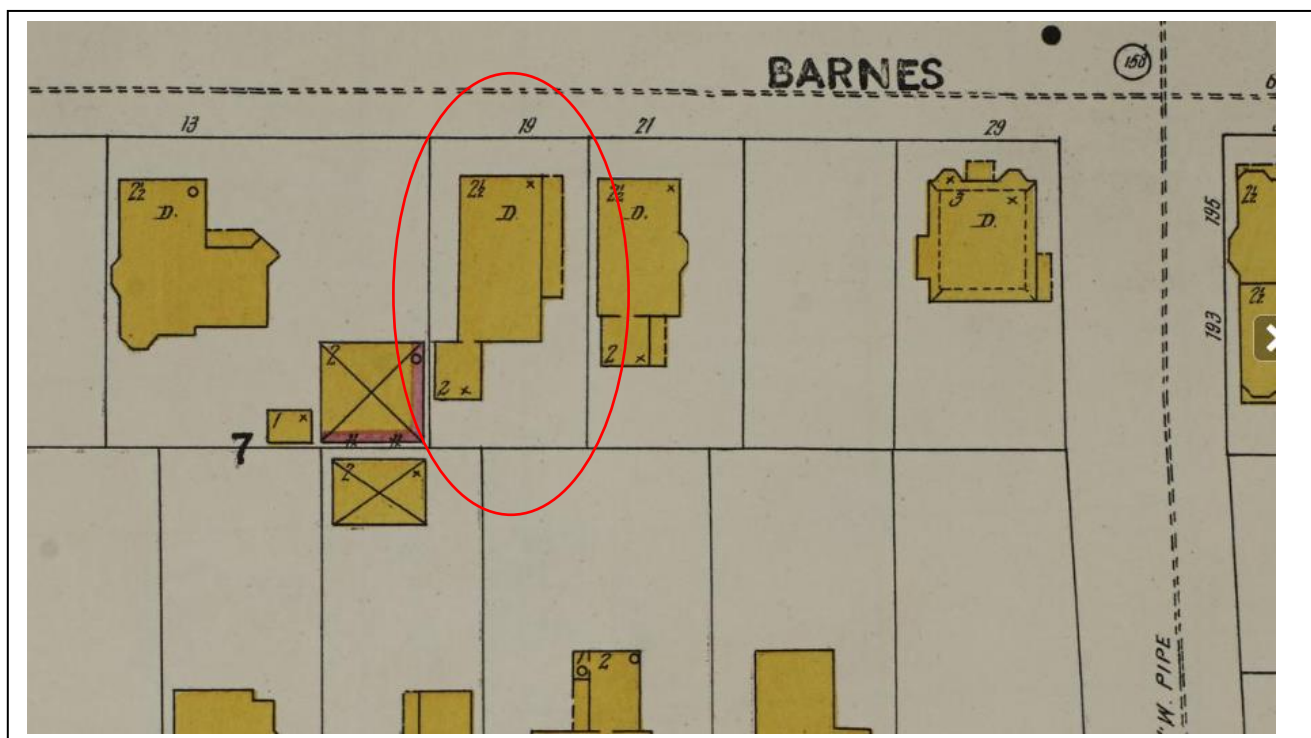
1882: "Atlas of the City of Providence, R.I. and Environs," by G.M. Hopkins Co., Plate 2. Shows a wood-frame building standing on Lot 20 on the south side of Barnes Street between Prospect and Brown Streets. Address number, owner name, and lot size not indicated. Brown Street had not yet been extended fully through this block.



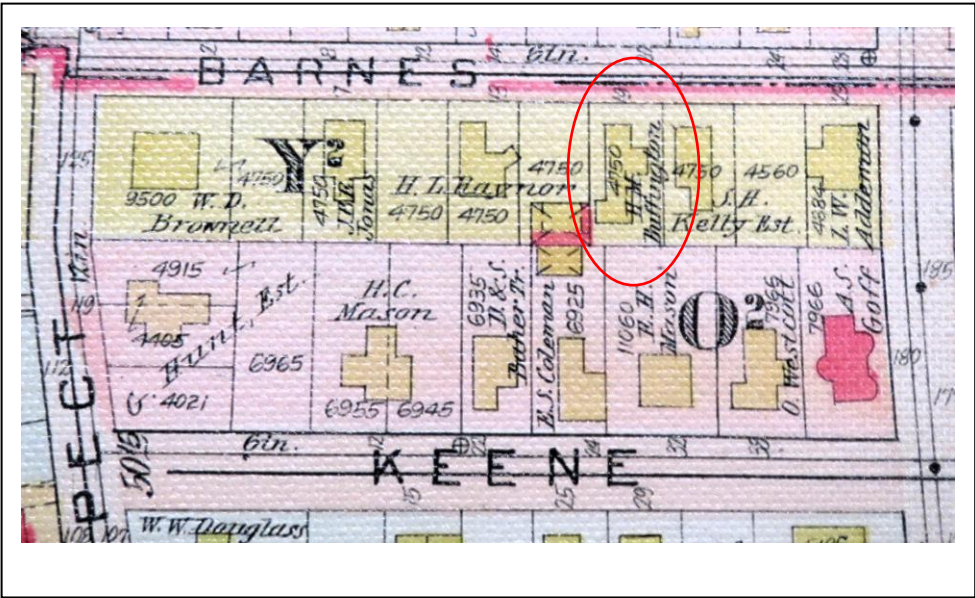
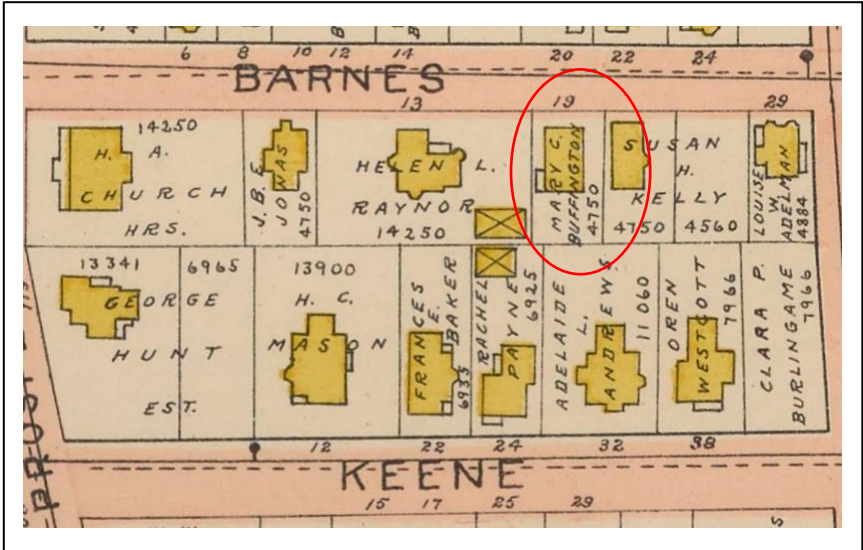
1895: "Atlas of the City of Providence, R.I. and Environs," by Everts & Richards, Plate 5, pp. 28-29 Shows the wood-frame house at 19 Barnes Street, standing on a 4,750 sq.ft. lot. Owner name not indicated.



1900: Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. Maps, Vol. 2, page 103. Shows the house at 19 Barnes Street as a 2-1/2 story wood-frame house ("D" = dwelling; yellow = wood), with 2-story ell at the rear southwest corner, and an open porch along the east side elevation. Owner name and lot sizes not indicated. (*Online at the Library of Congress*)



1908: "Atlas of the City of Providence" by L.J. Richards Co., Plate 6. Shows a wood-frame house at 19 Barnes Street, standing on a 4,750 sq.ft. lot owned by Mary C. "Buffington" [misspelled Buffinton].



1918: "Atlas of the City of Providence" by G.M. Hopkins Co., Plate 22. Shows the wood-frame house at 19 Barnes Street, standing on a 4,750 sq.ft. lot owned by H.M. "Buffington" [misspelled Buffinton].

1926, 1937: "Atlas of the City of Providence" by G.M. Hopkins Co., Plate 22. Both maps show the wood-frame house at 19 Barnes Street, standing on a 4,750 sq.ft. lot owned by H. or H.M. "Buffington." These maps refer to the Mrs. Joanna Barnes Homestead Estate Plat on Plat Card 10.

Deeds (Recorder of Deeds, unless otherwise noted)

Deeds indicate that Sabin Bradford purchased this property as a vacant lot in 1868 from Ann E. Burgess. No deeds were found for this property from 1868 to 1937, so it was apparently conveyed through inheritance from Sabin Bradford (died 1879) to his wife Harriet Bradford (died 1898), to their daughter Mary C. Buffinton (died 1916), to her daughter Harriet M. Buffinton (died 1936), and to Harriet Buffinton's heirs as of 1937. Harriet Buffinton briefly transferred and then re-acquired the property between 1932 and 1933, and her heirs also performed similar brief exchanges in 1937 before selling the property to George R. McAuslan.

Deed Book 182/Page 493: On June 12, 1868, Ann E. Burgess of Providence sold to Sabin Bradford of Providence, for \$1,200, a lot of land on the south side of Barnes Street on which it measures about 50 feet, and holding that width extends back southward about 95 feet, bounding east on other lands of this grantor and west on land of Franklin Butts. Being Lot 20 on a Plat of the Homestead Estate of the Late Mrs. Joanna Barnes, recorded in Plat Book 1, Page 30.

Note: no buildings were mentioned in this deed; however tax records indicate that the house had been built as of two weeks later, so construction apparently began before this deed was executed.

DB 758/308: On January 25, 1932, Harriet Mabel Buffinton of Providence, unmarried, conveyed to Elizabeth Root of Providence, "for consideration paid," a lot of land with buildings and improvements on the south side of Barnes Street, being Lot 20 in the Joanna Barnes Plat recorded in Plat Book 1/Page 30 and copied on Plat Card 10.

DB 758/309: On January 25, 1932, Elizabeth Root of Providence, unmarried, conveyed to Harriet Mabel Buffinton and Vera M. Purkis of Providence, "for consideration paid," a lot of land with buildings and improvements on the south side of Barnes Street, being Lot 20 in the Joanna Barnes Plat (PB 1/30, PC 10).

DB 773/230: On October 13, 1933, Vera M. Purkis of Providence, unmarried, conveyed to Harriet Mabel Buffinton of Providence, a lot of land with buildings and improvements on the south side of Barnes Street, being Lot 20 in the Joanna Barnes Plat (PB 1/30, PC 10).

Note: Harriet Buffinton was living in Boston in 1932-33. No familial relationship was found between her, Vera Purkis, and Elizabeth Root.

DB 800/131: On January 9, 1937, Phebe A. Buffinton of Fall River, Mass., unmarried; Vera M. Purkis, unmarried, Ruth I. Roper, and Robert F. Purton, all of Cranston, "for consideration paid," conveyed to Philip A. Gory of Providence, a lot of land with buildings and improvements on the south side of Barnes Street, being Lot 20 in the Joanna Barnes Plat (PB 1/30, PC 10).

DB 800/132: On January 9, 1937, Philip A. Gory of Providence, unmarried, conveyed to Phebe A. Buffinton of Fall River, Mass., "for consideration paid," an undivided one-half interest in and to that certain lot of land with buildings and improvements on the south

side of Barnes Street, being Lot 10 in the Joanna Barnes Plat recorded in Plat Book 1/Page 30 and copied on Plat Card 10.

DB 800/132-133: On January 9, 1937, Philip A. Gory of Providence, unmarried, conveyed to Vera M. Purkis, Ruth I. Roper, and Robert F. Purton, all of Cranston, “for consideration paid,” one undivided one-quarter interest to Vera, one undivided one-eighth interest to Ruth, and one undivided one-eighth interest to Robert, in and to that certain lot of land with buildings and improvements on the south side of Barnes Street, being Lot 20 in the Joanna Barnes Plat recorded in Plat Book 1/Page 30 and copied on Plat Card 10.

Note: Phebe Buffinton, Vera Purkis, her daughter Ruth Roper, and Vera’s brother Robert Purton were apparently heirs of Harriet M. Buffinton (see Notes, p. 3). No familial relationship was found between Vera, Ruth, Robert and Harriet, or between and of them and Philip Gory.

DB 796/426: On February 25, 1937, Phebe A. Buffinton, single woman, of Fall River, Mass., Vera M. Purkis, single woman, Ruth I. Roper and Robert F. Purton, all of Cranston, sold to George R. McAuslan of Providence, for \$10, a certain lot of land with buildings and improvements on the south side of Barnes Street, being Lot 20 in the Joanna Barnes Plat recorded in Plat Book 1/Page 30 and copied on Plat Card 10. Said lot bounds northerly 50 feet on Barnes Street and holding that width extends southerly about 95 feet, bounding east on land now or lately of Thomas E. Steere & wife; south in part on land now or lately of Edward H. Mason and in part on land now or lately of Earl S. Colman; and west on land now or lately of Elmer J. Rathbun. Mr. Leslie B. Roper, husband of Ruth, and Mrs. Iva E. Purton, wife of Robert, released all their rights of “curtesy” and dower, respectively, in and to said premises.

Tax Records (Archives)²

Tax records indicate that the house was built between April 1867 and July 1868.

Ledger A1/Page 102: As of June 1, 1856, Ann Eliza Burgess, widow, owned AP 10/Lot 503, containing 4,750 sq.ft. Land value: \$760; building value: \$0.

Ledger A6/Page 374: As of January 1, 1864, Ann Eliza Burgess, widow, owned AP 10/Lot 503, containing 4,750 sq.ft. Land value: \$760; building value: \$0.

² **Tax Records:** Prior to 1854, Providence tax records only identified the name of the taxpayer and the amount of tax paid – not the location of the taxable property. As of August 1, 1854, the City Tax Assessor began using a system of plats and lots to identify individual parcels of real estate (although records did not indicate how many buildings were on any given lot, or distinguish between primary buildings and outbuildings, until the late 20th century). Tax records from the latter half of the 19th century are indexed by plat number, and recorded in a series of ledgers labeled “A” through “E.” The Assessor’s office has its own unique numbering system for plats and lots, so the city’s lot numbers may not match lot numbers in land evidence records (e.g., deeds and development plat maps).

Ledger B1/Page 287: As of April 1, 1867, Ann Eliza Burgess, widow, owned AP 10/Lot 503, containing 4,750 sq.ft. Land value: \$760; building value: \$0. Transferred to Silas Bradford as of July 1, 1868 (DB 182/493)

Ledger B1/Page 225: As of July 1, 1868, Silas Bradford owned AP 10/Lot 503, containing 4,750 sq.ft. Land value: \$760; building value: \$3,000. **[Indicates construction of the house.]**

Ledger C1/Page 311: As of November 1, 1872, Silas Bradford owned AP 10/Lot 503, containing 4,750 sq.ft. Land value: \$950; building value: \$3,500. Transferred to Harriet Bradford, widow, as of July 31, 1880. **[The slight increase in building value may refer to construction of the 2-story rear ell, seen in the 1875 and later maps.]**

Ledger C1/Page 311: As of July 31, 1880, Harriet Bradford, widow, owned AP 10/Lot 503, containing 4,750 sq.ft. Land value: \$950; building value: \$3,500.

Ledger D1/Page 451: As of March 1, 1881, Harriet Bradford owned AP 10/Lot 503, containing 4,750 sq.ft. Land value: \$1,188; building value: \$3,500. Re-valued as of January 15, 1886: land value \$1,425; building value \$3,500.

Ledger E2/Page 12: As of January 1, 1889, Harriet Bradford owned AP 10/Lot 503, containing 4,750 sq.ft. Land value: \$1,425; building value: \$3,500. Re-valued as of March 2, 1891: land value \$1,663; building value \$3,500.

Intent to Build Records (Archives)³

No records found.

Directories (Archives)⁴

This house first appeared in the 1870 city directory “on Barnes near Prospect.” It had the address 19 Barnes Street as of 1871. The widowed Harriet Bradford and her

³ **Building Permits** of the late 19th and early 20th c. are in two sets of volumes: one indexed by street and the other indexed by property owner name.

⁴ **Providence City Directories** were published intermittently beginning in 1824, and annually as of 1850. Until 1892, these volumes contained a street directory (listing the names and locations of all existing streets), and an alphabetical listing of residents and businesses. Residents’ professions and business addresses (if any) were noted before home addresses. As of 1892, city directories also included a section listing residential buildings by street address; this was published separately as a House Directory from 1895-1935. The notation “(h)” indicates home or a head of household; “(b)” indicates a boarder.

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

daughter and granddaughter shared the residence with various tenants as of 1892 (if not earlier).

City Directories

- 1867-1869 Sabin Bradford, pattern maker, (h) 32 Arnold St.
- 1870 Sabin Bradford, pattern maker 373 South Main St., (h) Barnes St. near Prospect St. **[First listing for this house.]**
James Buffinton, bookkeeper (h) Barnes St. near Prospect St.
- 1871 Sabin Bradford, pattern maker, (h) 19 Barnes St. near Prospect St.
[First mention of this address.]
- 1871-1879 Sabin [sometimes misspelled "Sabine"] Bradford, pattern maker, (h) 19 Barnes St.
James Buffinton, bookkeeper, (h) 19 Barnes St. through 1872
Mary C. Buffinton, widow (h) 19 Barnes St. as of 1873
- 1880 Harriet Bradford, widow Sabin, (h) 19 Barnes St.
Mary C. Buffinton, widow James, (h) 19 Barnes St.
- 1890-1898 Harriet Bradford (h) 19 Barnes St.
Mary C. Buffinton (h) 19 Barnes St.
Harriet M. Buffinton, (b) 19 Barnes St.
- 1899 Harriet M. Bradford, widow Sabin, died April 14, 1898
- 1899-1915 Mrs. Mary C. Buffinton (h) 19 Barnes St.
Miss Harriet M. Buffinton (b) 19 Barnes St.
- 1916 Mrs. Mary C. Buffinton removed to Boston
Harriet M. Buffinton (h) 19 Barnes St.
- 1917-1919 Harriet M. Buffinton (h) 19 Barnes St.
- 1920 Harriet M. Buffinton removed to Boston. She lived there until 1934.
- 1934-1936 Harriet M. Buffinton (h) 19 Barnes St. [Died October 12, 1936.]

House Directories

- 1892 19 Barnes Street – Harriet Bradford, widow (h)
Miss Harriet M. Buffinton (b)
Mrs. Mary C. Buffinton (b)

James Snow, clerk (h) [tenant]

1893-1898 19 Barnes Street – Harriet Bradford, Harriet Buffinton, and Mrs. Mary C. Buffinton, usually with one other tenant.

1899-1917 19 Barnes Street – Harriet Buffinton and Mrs. Mary C. Buffinton, usually with one other tenant.

1919 19 Barnes Street – Edward C. Finley, salesman (h)
Miss Rosland Peterson, genealogist (b)
Note: Harriet M. Buffinton is not listed, although she is in the 1919 city directory at this address.

1920-1935 19 Barnes Street – occupied by various tenants while Harriet Buffinton lived in Boston.

1937 19 Barnes Street – William L. Bryant, director; Harriet M. Buffinton

Research compiled by Kathryn J. Cavanaugh, May 2024