

William Church House
22 Arnold Street
Providence
Providence County
Rhode Island

HABS No. RI-177

HABS
RI,
4-PROV,
77-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. RI-177

WILLIAM CHURCH HOUSE

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Address: 22 Arnold Street, Providence, Providence County,
Rhode Island.

Number 21 in 1844, 22 in 1848. Flat 16, Lot 336

Present Owner
and Occupant: Mrs. Florence B. Morse

Present Use: Dwelling.

Brief Statement
of Significance: This is an example of an early nineteenth century,
small brick house, with various later alterations.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners:

- 1801 Sarah Godfrey sells for \$300 to William Church . . .lot on the S side of Arnold Street. Bounded: N by Arnold Street; W by Zachariah Carpenter; S by John Warner and Thomas Thayer; E by Chris Arnold and is Lot #9 S side of Arnold Street in the Arnold heirs division of land. . . Deed Book 28, page 185, in Providence City Hall.
- 1807 FIRE RECORD William Church. . .S side of street. . . Brick..2 stories hi..4 chimneys..plastered on the inside of roof..well of water nigh the door. . . Arnold Street. . .Mss. fire insurance records of the Providence Mutual Insurance Co. at the offices of the Providence Washington Insurance Co., Providence, R. I., Vol. 1, policy #137.
- 1814 Mss. tax descriptions in the Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, for the 1814 Providence direct tax to the federal government..William Church..1 lot of land 45' front. . .back 80' with a 2-story Brick House 35' x 30'.
- 1822 William Church to Joseph Hodges, merchant, for \$3500 . . .lot #9 with Dwelling house. . .Deed Book 49, page 151, in Providence City Hall.
- 1829 Joseph Hodges heirs sell to Ebenezer Kelly and Jeremiah Cole, assignees, the above property. . . Deed Book 57, page 207, in Providence City Hall.

- 1829 Kelly and Cole sell the above property to Abby Mauran, wife of Josua being the highest bidder being Lot #9 with buildings recorded in Deed Book 49, page 151. . .Deed Book 57, page 306, in Providence City Hall.
- 1874 Edward C Mauran et al sell for \$5,028 to William G Weeden that lot of land with Brick Dwelling House on the S/ly side of Arnold Street being the same conveyed to Abby Mauran by deed from Ebenezer Kelly and J J Cole assignees of Joseph Hodges in 1829. . .Deed Book 248, page 461, in Providence City Hall.
- 1882 Emma G Weeden et al. sell for \$3900 to Leander F Pease a lot of land with brick building, bounded: N by Arnold Street 45'; E by John Gibbs 80'; S by Robert Morrow 45'; W by Mary T Gladding 80' being the same conveyed to William G Weeden by deed from Edward C Mauran in 1874. . .Deed Book 248, page 461, in Providence City Hall.
- 1945 Leander F Pease 2nd sells to Florence B Morse. . . Deed Book 880, page 28, in Providence City Hall.
- 1945 Property taxed to Florence B Morse

2. Date of erection: Between 1801 and 1807
3. Notes on alterations and additions: The house has undergone various alterations as noted in the description, notably the enlarging of the third floor with a steeply pitched gambrel roof, and the rebuilding and redecorating of the present dining room which was probably two rooms originally.

Prepared by Antoinette F. Downing and Elvira Gowdey
for the Providence Preservation Society
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PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: This brick house was built in the early nineteenth century as a small two-story, five-bay house, with a central hall and apparently a five-room plan. The house has been altered both on the interior and the exterior, probably during the second half of the nineteenth century, and preserves examples of original, as well as of later, detail.

2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: 35' (five bays) x 30', two-and-a-half stories (later attic on third story in gambrel roof), facing north; brick rear wing, about 18' long; short wood wing beyond.
2. Foundations: Stone, regular coursed ashlar in front, fieldstone elsewhere.
3. Wall construction: Brick, common bond. Thin, projecting brick belt course between stories.
4. Chimneys: Four brick chimneys in end walls of main block, one in rear wing.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: six-panel main entrance door, flat panels with Greek Revival moldings, plain stone doorway, semicircular top light. Later entrance hood, gable roof on large scrolled brackets.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Six over six light double hung windows, simple stone sills, splayed stone lintels in front, flat brick arches sides and rear. No shutters, but shutter hardware in place.
6. Roof:
 - a. Shape and covering: Later steeply pitched mansard-like, gambrel roof, asphalt shingles.
 - b. Cornice: Complex cornice with molded, bracketed upper wood section, denticulated lower brick section.
 - c. Dormers: Three gabled dormers, front and rear.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor Plans: Central hall plan, probably five rooms plus well originally. Now, two rooms on east joined by a wide archway, large dining room on southwest of main block may have been two rooms originally. Parlor, apparently largely original, on northwest of main block. Kitchen in rear wing.
2. Stairways: Main stair in central hall, continues to third floor, straight run with winders turning 90° at

the top, open well, open string, scroll step end ornaments, molded handrail, turned newel (apparently with a later knob on the top), three slender rectangular balusters per step. U-shaped rear stairs.

3. Flooring: Original wide boards in some rooms, later flooring in other rooms.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster, painted or papered.
5. Doors: Four-panel doors, some raised panels, some flat panels with Greek Revival moldings. Some doors, including early types, have later finish with graining. Molded door trim in northwest room and east rooms of first apparently original. Wide door at rear of central hall with semicircular top light.
6. Trim: Original trim appears to include: reeded chair rail and ceiling cornices in hall and northwest parlor, folding paneled interior shutters, and possibly the archway between the east rooms with fluted columns. Dining room, with beamed ceiling, has later, dark stained trim.
7. Hardware: Later.
8. Lighting: Electric
9. Heating: Central plus fireplaces. Original mantels in northeast and northwest rooms, engaged colonettes, paneled architraves, molded mantel shelves. Later mantels in dining room (oak) and northwest bedroom on second floor (marble). Kitchen fireplace entirely rebuilt.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: Small lot, on sidewalk at front, driveway on west, small garden in rear.
2. Enclosures: Wood or wire fences.
3. Outbuildings: Later concrete block garage at southwest corner of yard.
4. Walks, driveways: Brick sidewalk in front, concrete driveway.
5. Landscaping: Small rear yard with lawn, two trees, shrubs, and flowers.