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ROGER WILLIAMS SPRING PARK

Providence, R. I.

Additional information and documentation about
Roger Williams and Rhode Island's record of
Religious Liberty, as well as claims of title for
the site of the Town Spring and Roger Williams
House.

Prepared by the
Providence Preservation Society
at the request of the
Providence City Plan Commission
for the
National Park Service

20 April 1960

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FOREWORD

The following report consists of statements concerning the importance of Roger Williams' contribution to American thought, documentation for Rhode Island's championship of religious toleration, and a summary and documented chain of title for the Roger Williams Spring site. A brief summary and chain of title is also included for Roger Williams' home site.

The documentation for the spring site is based upon (1) Howard Chapin's Report upon the Burial Place of Roger Williams, (R. I. Historical Society, Providence, 1918) and (2) exhaustive research undertaken in 1930 by the Providence City Engineer's Office at the time when the site of the Spring was given to the City of Providence for a park. A comprehensive series of maps of the spring site at various dates and the abstracts of all pertinent deeds and wills are filed as #73 in the City Engineer's Office and are available for perusal if needed.

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+ ask re
Wms run
writing

The unbroken chain of identification and the wealth of confirming material should be conclusive proof of the authenticity of the location of the spring within the present small and inadequate park.

The Spring Site and the Surrounding Area

In 1959, at the close of a Demonstration Grant Study of the historic district in Providence the detailed "College Hill Report" was released. This report, the result of eighteen months of careful analysis of the area, outlined proposals for renewing a body of historic architecture currently being submerged by city blight and institutional growth. One of the key proposals made was the recommendation that the city should develop a well integrated historic trail as an attraction to visitors. An enlarged Spring Park, dedicated to the memory of Roger Williams, and including a building housing a lecture room and a small historical museum was proposed as a starting point for the trail in order to: (1) Highlight the contribution made to our national ideal by Roger Williams' vigorous championship of freedom of religious belief and of government "only in Civill things" at a time in history when such a concept was considered both heretical and politically dangerous, and (2) emphasize the importance of the architectural heritage along the trail and points of interest in the historic area in general.

The several other proposals made in the study are all designed to improve the historic area, to remove slum conditions, encourage the investment of private capital, to solve problems of traffic and institutional growth and to make the city a more interesting and desirable place in which to live and work. All the proposals are interlocking and the final success of the project depends to a large extent on the successful accomplishment of the separate parts.

It is strongly felt that the development of the trail complex with its potential importance for students of American culture, historians, and as an attraction for visitors, has been the most significant of the proposals made. Indeed the desire to protect and make proper use of the cultural heritage of Providence was the primary reason for undertaking to renew and restore the College Hill area and hence for undertaking the College Hill Study.

In the attempt to put the early history of the city into proper perspective, the development of the park around the Roger Williams Spring is needed as the beginning of the historic trail where visitors can gather and be given an opportunity to become acquainted with the materials of United States and Rhode Island history and with the architectural heritage of the historic district.

An enlarged park is also needed to serve as an anchor for the surrounding residential area and to stop further deterioration of the historic neighborhood. The City of Providence has been fortunate in securing private capital to support the program. A sizable amount of private capital has already been invested in the houses one block to the east, along Benefit Street, by dedicated citizens who believe that these early houses are important as documents of the cultural heritage of Providence and the nation. It is important to protect this investment. The intent of the study has been not to create a museum city, but a city where its old architecture is used and cherished. With this approach, residential safeguards become of paramount necessity. The proposals made for improvement of traffic flow, playground facilities and parking are good for the city in general. Solutions for these problems are essential if owners and prospective buyers of the historic buildings are to be assured of desirable neighborhood conditions.

The proposed park will serve not only to memorialize Roger Williams fittingly, but to set the historic and cultural stage for the renewal of the historic neighborhood and be the beginning of the trail which is now in process of development. It will create a fine outlook along the northern part of the trail and will enhance the physical attractiveness of the surrounding residential area.

It should also be noted that the city has recently filed an application for an urban renewal program which will encompass the area proposed for a national historic park. As this program develops, it is expected that the entire neighborhood will be upgraded, along the lines set forth in the College Hill Study, and that an excellent setting will be made available for the park. The land for the park will be made available through urban renewal processes and the National Park Services will be able to secure property adequate for the creation of a park site.

Thus it can be summarized that a very comprehensive program is under way in the vicinity of the proposed Roger Williams Spring park site. However, the participation of the National Park Service is vital to the success of these efforts, as the key to renewal of the historic neighborhood in Providence lies in the creation of the park at the spring of Roger Williams, described in this report.

SOUL LIBERTY IN RHODE ISLAND

and

ROGER WILLIAMS

Scholar, Farmer, Trader, Friend of the Indian, Man of Lofty
Thought and Simple Life, Memorable

as a

Bold and Unselfish Colonizer, Champion of
Toleration and the Liberty of the Individual
Conscience in Religious Concernments, Determined
Advocate of the Separation of Church and State.

.....Lawrence C. Wroth
***** Librarian Emeritus
The John Carter Brown Library

"And having in a Sence of God's merciful
providence unto me in my distresse called
the place Providence I desired it might
be a shelter for persons distressed for
conscience." Roger Williams

In proposing a National Historic Park to memorialize the concept of freedom of religion embraced by Roger Williams and his colony in Rhode Island, the intent has been to give due credit to the fact that his policy of toleration was based upon a profound philosophy of human rights. Roger Williams set forth in clear terms his belief that the state should govern "only in civill things" and he saw his new colony at Providence as a "shelter for persons distressed for conscience."

Historians today consider Roger Williams an outstanding American statesman who deserves national recognition for his part in bringing about religious freedom in America and for his intrepid championship of the principle of seapartions of church and state at a time in history when such a separation seemed inconceivable to most people. The Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations remained true to these concepts, and Quakers and Jews, along with a "muster of opinionists", were given safe haven from the earliest years in the history of the Colony. The ideals of Roger Williams and the embodiment of them in the Providence Settlement were instrumental in establishing ideals that the United States stands for today.

Roger Williams never used his rights as colonizer for self-aggrandizement, but for the more than four decades of his life in Providence divided his property with other settlers, remained a friend to the Indians, mediated between the Indians and the colonists and between the heady individualists attracted by the liberal policies of the colony, visited England to protect the rights of the colonists and always maintained the principles of liberty of the individual conscience upon which the colony was first founded.

The following article, taken from the Providence Sunday Journal of April 10, 1960, gives timely information about the importance of Roger Williams' writings. Its author, Bradford F. Swan, of the Providence Journal Staff, is currently editing Roger Williams' letters to be published for the Brown-~~50~~ centennial, in 1963.

Roger Williams' Classic Will Be Sold at Auction

A copy of Roger Williams' classic book on religious liberty, "The Bloody Tenent," generally considered one of the most important works ever written by an American and a foundation stone in the battle for freedom of conscience, will be sold at auction at the Parke-Bernet Galleries in New York the afternoon of Tuesday, April 19.

The book was written by Williams during his stay in England in 1643 and 1644, when he had gone to London to get a patent for the struggling young colony of Providence Plantations. It was printed at London in 1644 and appeared there that summer.

It promptly incurred the wrath of the authorities and in August the House of Commons voted to order the book burned by the public hangman. This action undoubtedly contributed to the scarcity of the book, of which perhaps a dozen copies are known.

Copies of "The Bloody Tenent" are in the libraries of the Rhode Island Historical Society and Brown University and the John Carter Brown Library.

A few years ago "The Bloody Tenent" was made No. 2 on the Grolier Club's list of "One Hundred Influential American Books Printed before 1900." Two issues of the work, both dated 1644, are known. One has the title spelled "The Bloudy Tenet." The title of the issue which is being sold in New York is spelled "The Blovdy Tenent."

Williams wrote the book after he had been exiled from Massachusetts Bay Colony as the result of religious differences with the authorities there. It drew from the Rev. John Cotton, an eminent Massachusetts divine, a reply entitled "The Bloody Tenent Washed," to which Williams later replied with a second tract: "The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody."

ROGER WILLIAMS, RHODE ISLAND, AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Excerpts from some of the public utterances relating to religious toleration in Rhode Island.

"And having in a Sence of Gods mercefull providence unto me in my destresse called the place providence I desired it might be for a shelter for persons distressed for conscience." Roger Williams.
(Early Records of Prov., Vol. 5, p. 307)

1637 The Providence Town Compact of c 1637 stated that:

"We whose names are hereunder do promise to subject ourselves in active or passive obedience to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for publick good of/or body in an orderly way..... only in civill things." (underlining supplied)
(Early Records of Prov. I, 1)

1644 The Charter of Civill Incorporation, to be known by the name of the Incorporation of the Providence Plantations in Narragansett Bay in New England granted to Roger Williams by the Board of Colonial Commissioners in London in 1644, declared that all men were to be free to

"walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the fear of his God."
(R. I. Colonial Records I, 143-146)

1656 Governor Benedict Arnold replied to the Massachusetts threat of a trade boycott against Rhode Island colonists if they continued to allow sanctuary to Quakers, as follows:

"We have no law among us whereby to punish any for only declaring by words their minds and understandings concerning the things and ways of God."
(R. I. Colonial Records I, 374-380)

1663 The Royal Charter to the Rhode Island Colony, granted by Charles II in 1663 guaranteed that no man should be

"any wise molested punished, disquieted or called in question for any differences of opinion in matters of religion"

The Charter also set forth the intent of the Rhode Island constituents

"To hold forth a livelie experiment... that a most flourishing civill state may stand

and best be maintained... with full libertie
in religious concernments."

The text for the charter is thought to have been written by John
Clarke of Newport. (R. I. Col. Rec. II, 3-21)

1684 The General Assembly, in answer to questioning of the rights of
citizenship of Jews, replied that

"they (Jews) may expect as good protec-
tion here as any stranger residing among
us in His Majesty's Colony, ought to have,
being obedient to His Majesty's law."

(R. I. Colonial Records III, 160)

1790 President George Washington visited Newport in 1790. At that time
he visited the Jewish Synagogue and listened to an address by
Mosès Seixas, Reader. In reply he wrote a letter to the Hebrew
Congregation of Newport which contains the following words:

"For happily the government of the United
States which gives to bigotry no sanction,
to persecution no assistance, requires
only that they who live under its protection
should demean themselves as good citizens
in giving it on all occasions their effectual
support."

The original letter is framed and hung, in the Synagogue.

For Authentication of the Site of Roger Williams Spring.

SUMMARY OF HISTORY OF ROGER WILLIAMS SPRING SITE

In June of 1636 Roger Williams and his colleagues settled by a fresh spring of water near the mouth of the Mosshasuck River. Elder James Brown, (born 1666, died 1732), who was a young man in 1683, the year Roger Williams died, wrote that "Roger Williams came to a spring since called Scott's spring, where he settled near" (Ill. #1, p. 11). (Scott did not live on the spring lot, but like Roger Williams built his house on the east side on the Main Street. It stood next north of Williams' and directly opposite the spring site location shown in Ill. #6, p. 22.)

The spring is located approximately on the southern part of the lot between Church Street and Alamo (formerly Allen's) Lane on the west side of North Main Street. (Assessor's Plat 10 Lot 10). Neither Roger Williams, Scott, nor any other first settler owned the spring lot, and it remained town property until 1721. In that year Gabriel Bernon, who had built his house on the spring lot in 1717, received a deed for the lot from the Proprietors which stipulated that "liberty is reserved for the inhabitants to fetch water at said spring forever." A map (Ill. #2, p. 14) made in the City Engineer's Office shows the location of this lot and other early lots in relation to the present street layout.

In the later eighteenth century the spring was sometimes referred to as Tripe's Spring, because the Tripe family (Bernon heirs) owned the spring lot from 1771 to 1816. It was also often called Roger Williams Spring and Ezra Stiles called it so in his diary entry about a visit to Providence in 1785. In the nineteenth century it was consistently known as Roger Williams Spring and Zachariah Allen described it as being a "large boiling spring" in 1801.

Nehemiah Dodge bought the property from the Bernon heirs in 1816. He tore down the old house and built a brick house on the line of North Main Street. He also built a pump from the spring for the use of the public. This pump stood between North Main and Canal Streets on the northern line of Alamo Lane. It is shown in a map of Nehemiah Dodge's estate made in 1856 (Ill. #5, p. 20). Jacob T. Seagrave bought the estate in parcels in 1856 and 1865.

In 1875 North Main Street was widened and the house Dodge built was moved back over the site of the spring and pump. At about that time the water from the spring was piped to a pump on a Canal Street building wall and to a watering trough. The new house location, the spring, and the trough are shown on a map made in the City Engineer's Office in 1898 (Ill. #6, p. 22). The pump was removed in 1900, at the direction of the Commissioner of Public Works, and the waters of the spring were thereafter until 1930 sent through a drain into the sewer at Canal Street. A map made in 1930 shows the drain (Ill. #7, p. 25).

In 1906 a bronze tablet was placed on the Seagrave house reading:

Under This House
Still Flows
the
Roger Williams
Spring

The seagrave house was torn down in 1921 and another building erected on the site. The tablet was transferred to the new building.

In 1930 Judge Jerome Hahn gave the site to the City of Providence for a park in memory of his father. The building was razed and the land between Alamo Lane and North of Church Street was made into a small park. The waters of the Roger Williams Spring were piped into a fountain constructed in the center of the area. *as be ne*

A Documented chain of title follows herewith.

CHAIN OF TITLE FOR ROGER WILLIAMS SPRING AND LOT

Northwest corner of North Main Street and Alamo Lane, house number (before razing) #242-244. Plat 10 Lot 10 (formerly 566). The pump for the spring was formerly located between North Main Street and Canal Street near the north line of Alamo Lane, formerly Allen's Lane.

DOCUMENTATION

Early references to the Spring.

Before
1732

Elder James Brown, (born 1666, died 1732)

Mss. labeled "in the hand and writing of Elder James Brown who died October 20th, 1732 in the 66th year of his age, James Brown's account of the settling of Providence." Manuscript in the R. I. Historical Society, Moses Brown Papers, #116, MATERIALS FOR THE HISTORY OF PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS preserved by Moses Brown. Roger Williams died in 1683, and James Brown born in 1666 would have known him.

Extract "The first settling of the town of Providence was on this wise...Mr Thomas Olney, Mr Richard Waterman and another man made their escape and came to Mr Williams. These men were got out of Boston Government but Plymouth claimed a jurisdiction there and sent to Mr Williams to move from thence, but treated him civilly telling him that he might move over the water since called Seekonk River and would be out of their jurisdiction which he did and by the help of the Indians came to a spring since called Scott's Spring, where he settled near, where he lived until his death.... It appears of Record that Freeborn Williams was born at Salem in the latter end of October 1635 after her father removed thence. About that time Mr Williams made the first purchase of land in the town it being made only to himself called the Old Town Evidence and the Deed to the 13 (men) was signed the 8th month, the 8th day of the month in the year 1638." (Ill. #1, p. 10) (underlining supplied)

Moses Brown, verified the handwriting of the above document, and copied the text in a letter to Elisha Brown dated 1822. (#118, Materials for the History of Providence Plantations preserved by Moses Brown, R.I Hist Soc.) as follows:

1822

Extract, Letter, Moses Brown to Elisha Brown.

"The following account is taken from an half sheet in the handwriting of Elder James Brown, son of John Brown and grandson of Chad Brown who came to Providence in 1637 one year after Roger Williams, William Harris, John Smith, miller, Joshua Verin, Thomas

The first settling of the towne of providenc was on this wise
of boue the year 1634 Mr Roger Williams was banished
from ^{Salem} Boston, hee differing from them in sum religius points
was forced stay in the winter seson. by reason thereof hee
was forced to great hardships so that if the Indians which
were the natives of the Land had not loved him hee
might have suffered death but they was very kind to him
and kept him a long in his burne til hee came to a place sence
caled mantons neck where hee had much kindes showed
him from the Indians there hee abode the latter part of that
winter now gruely after Mr Williams left Boston there
being great filling there hearts with ^{preaching} other men and few
under there Lash Mr Thomas Olney Mr Richard Welferman
and a nother man made there escape and came to Mr Williams
these men were got out of Boston government but plimath clemed
a jurisdiction ther and to Mr Williams to moue from there but
breated him snellly telling him that hee might moue ouer the
water sence caled second river and would be out of there burts
sation which hee did and by the help of the Indians came to a
spring sence caled scots spring where hee settled near
where hee lived until his death by this time Mr Williams being
a scoleer and expert in the tonges had got the Indian langage
which proued a key to them hee being a heuenly minded man
takeing notes of the ^{various} ^{languages} ^{of} ^{Gods} ^{bringing} ^{of} ^{him} ^{hether}
ialed the name of the towne Providence and the other three men
before mentioned were saue with him and quicky others came all
the first settlers in this towne came w liberty of there concience
It appears by record that freborn Williams was born at selam in
ye later end of october in the year 1635 after hee father Mr
Roger Williams removed from there about that time Mr
Williams made the first purches of land in this towne being made
only to him self caled the old towne Providence and the deed
to the 13 was signed 8th month 8th day of the month in the
year 1638 the first settling of this towne was with great difeculte for though the
Indians was kind at the first yeat afterwards they grew more sircle sum times the
cheaning to make war the English being but few was a feare of them beside that they
were apt to steal what they could lay there hands on at the first was great seedy
of poruison one cow was sold for 22 pound in sifure and good as I haue bin cred-
ably informed I haue heard sum of the first settlers speake of a feast in those
dayes and there they found was a boiled bass with out aney butter worrich
beseged and taken by a company of men from boston in a way like manner
Mr Williams kept in with the indians all a long and the towne in great prosperitie
and though the indians threatned a war against the English did not breake out
the year 1675 in June

The first settling of the towne of providence was on this wise
At about the year 1634 Mr Roger Williams was banished
from ^{Salem and} Boston. hee referring from them in sum religious points
was forced to stay in the winter season. by reason thereof hee
was forced to great hardships so that if the Indians which
were the natives of the Land had not loved him hee
might have suffered death but they was very kind to him
and loved him a long in his burne till hee came to a place sence
called mantons neck where hee had much kindes showed
him from the Indians there hee abode the latter part of that
winter now quickly after Mr Williams left Boston there
began great filling there hearts with ^{preaching} other men and see
among these last Mr Thomas Olney Mr Richard Waterman
and a nother man made there escape and came to Mr Williams
these men were got out of Boston government but plimath claimed
a Jurisdiction they and to Mr Williams to move from there but
treated him sinfully telling him that hee might move over the
water sence called second river and would be out of there by
a season which hee did and by the help of the Indians came to a
Spring sence called scots spring where hee settled near
Boston Mr Williams

Ill. #1. Manuscript in the Rhode Island Historical Society collections in the handwriting of Elder James Brown (1666-1732). It gives an account of the settling of Providence. An arrow points to his reference to the Spring. See p. 10.

Angell and Francis Wickes. The two latter were under age. These six came together the first to this town in the spring or summer of 1636 across Seekonk River and first landed at the spring afterwards called Scott's Spring. This account corresponds with records and papers of Roger Williams and others in my possession, which I thought best to insert before the following account mentioned above, which is without date or name, but is no doubt written by our grandfather James Brown, who was born in or about the year 1666 and after a pious life of about 66 years he expired the 28 of October 1732." The copy of James Brown's document described above follows here.

1710 The Spring Lot was Town property until 1721. Map now lost, dated about 1710. This map is described in an article on "Roger Williams Spring", by William C. Brennan, (Publ. of the R I Historical Society, New Series Vol VII, No 2., July 1899, pp. 135ff) as follows:

"The only ancient map showing this spring was found by the late Zachariah Allen in 1875 among the papers of the Historical Society. Mr. Allen ...withdrew the map...to show...friends...and the city engineer, who caused a copy to me made," (Note; neither map can be found, AFD 1960) "The ...map shows the 'Ware House Lots' on the west side of North Main Street from Mill Street south-erly to beyond Transit Street...and was probably made about 1710. On the lot now numbered 242 North Main Street the words 'Scott's Spring' appear. This would seem to show that what is now called Roger Williams Spring...was known as 'Scott's Spring'."

"Neither Roger Williams nor Richard Scott owned the land whereon the spring stood, but, before 1712, the Scotts owned the land directly opposite and the spring evidently took its name from this fact."

"Scott was Williams nearest neighbor on the north, having bought the home lot of Joshua Verin, one of the five who accompanied Williams on his voyage around Fox Point....Scott's home lot stood directly opposite Scott's Spring, and was sold to Charles Dier in 1712...(See Ill #2, p. 14)

DEED HISTORY

1721 First purchase of Spring Lot, formerly Town Property.

Gabriel Bernon purchased the Spring Lot September 15, 1721
Indenture between Nicholas Power, Capt James Olney and Ensign Stephen Dexter at the meeting of the Proprietors of the

the lands on the east side of the seven mile line in Providence July 3, 1721, and Gabriel Bernon for 9 L in lawful money confirm and sell a parcel of land.....
"on the west side of the Town Street whereon Gabriel Bernon's house standeth, (underlining supplied) 30 feet to saltwater with all privileges excepting only to the inhabitants of said town free liberty to pass and repass to and from the Spring at the bottom of the hill within said land which liberty is reserved for the inhabitants to fetch water at said spring forever. (underlining supplied) (DEEDS 5/98)
Gabriel Bernon's house was built in 1717 before purchase of lot.

A map (Ill. #2, p. 14) made in the City Engineer's Office shows the location and early owners of the Warehouse Lots. Bernon's purchase from the Proprietors is shown on this map together with other purchases he made.

1723/4 Gabriel Bernon purchased lot adjoining south January 15, 1723/4

James Whipple to Gabriel Bernon for L 40 a 40 ft lot of land on the west side of the Town Street by the waterside and bordering upon the south side of a gangway that leadeth from the said Towne Street to a spring which is under the hill by the waterside near the said Bernon's dwelling house where he hath now a well (underlining supplied) the said 40 ft lot is in that which was in the original right of Christopher Smith deceased^v bounded:

N. by said gangway
E. Towne St. 40 ft south from gangway
W. Water 40 ft. (DEEDS 5/357)

1736 Gabriel Bernon's will was dated February 17, 1736.

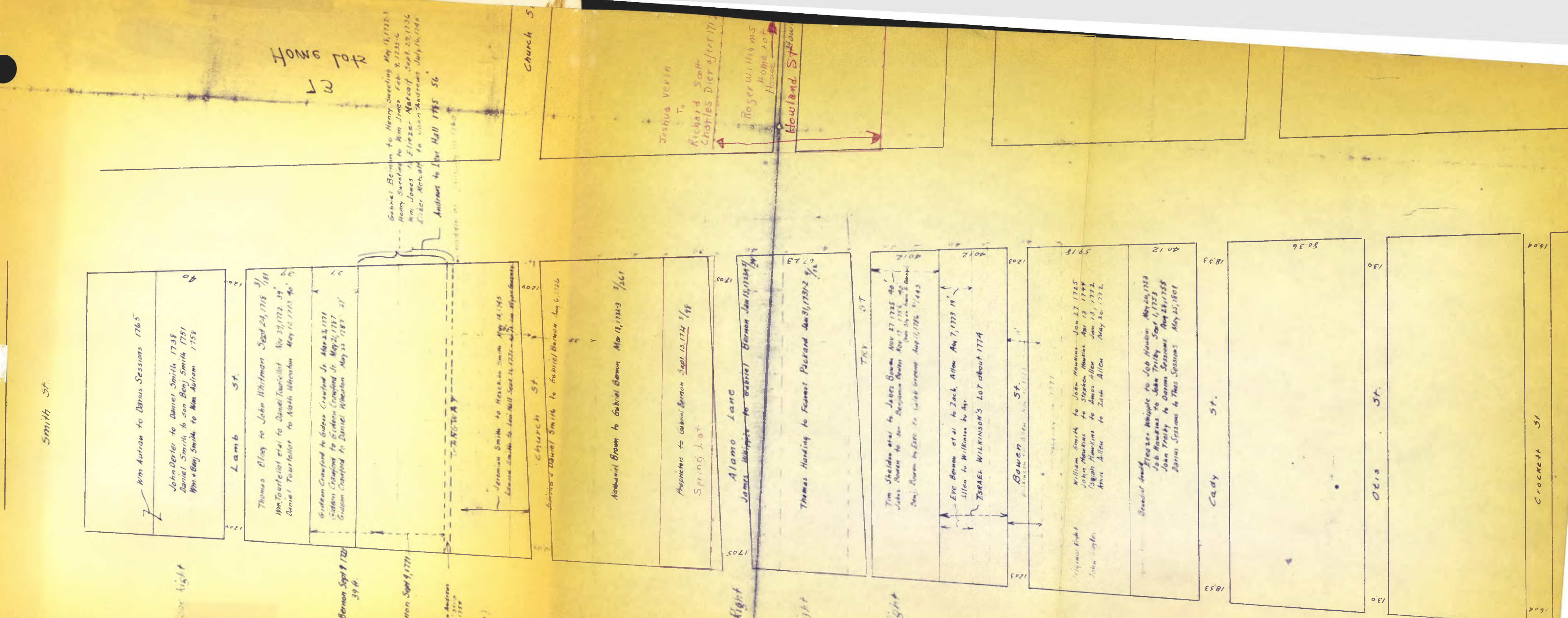
Heirs: Joseph Crawford and Susanah (dau. of Gabriel and Mary Bernon); Gideon Crawford and Mary (Dau. of Gabriel and Mary Bernon), Eve Bernon, spinster....
(WILLS 3/259.)

1769 Estate of Gabriel Bernon divided among heirs.

Partition Deed 19/50:

1. Joseph and Susanah Crawford inherited part of tenement consisting of mansion house. Their share; southwest rear quarter of house and strip of land 9' wide bounding S along gangway to channel, W 9' on channel.
2. Gideon and Mary Crawford inherited part of tenement consisting of mansion house. Their share; the southeast (front) quarter of house and strip of land 9' wide bounding S on 9' strip W 9' on channel set aside to Joseph and Susanah Crawford.

111. #2 Map showing the location and early owners of the warehouse lots on the west side of North Main Street in relation to the present layout of streets. The Spring lot and Roger Williams house lot are shown in red. From the City Engineer's Office.



3. Eve Bernon, spinster, inherited a part of the tenement consisting of mansion house and lot. Her share: lot bounded E on North Main Street 30' with N $\frac{1}{2}$ of mansion house S on share set off to Gideon and Mary Crawford; W by channel 30'

Heirs of Gabriel Bernon to Samuel and Mary (Crawford) Tripe.

- 1771 March 22
Gideon Crawford to Samuel Tripe and wife Mary (dau of Gideon and Mary Crawford)
Lot of land with dwelling house, the share Gideon and Mary Crawford inherited from Gabriel Bernon as in 19/50 above. (DEEDS 18/427)
- 1775 August 1
Eve Bernon wills to "friend and kinsman Zachariah Allen my lot with dwelling house thereon on west side of Main Street now occupied by widow Yeates if he pays all the legacies." as in 19/50 (WILLS 6/147)
- 1776 April 16
Zachariah Allen to Samuel Tripe
Lot of land with dwelling house, the share Eve Bernon inherited from Gabriel Bernon as in 19/50.. (DEEDS 20/373)
- 1776 September 23
Samuel Tripe died. Gives estate to wife Mary during life, then to children: Joanna, Samuel G., Bernon, Mary, John, Crawford, Sarah... (WILLS 7/47)
- 1775)
1776) NOTE: The spring was still in public use and was sometimes known
1777) as Tripe's Spring during these years.

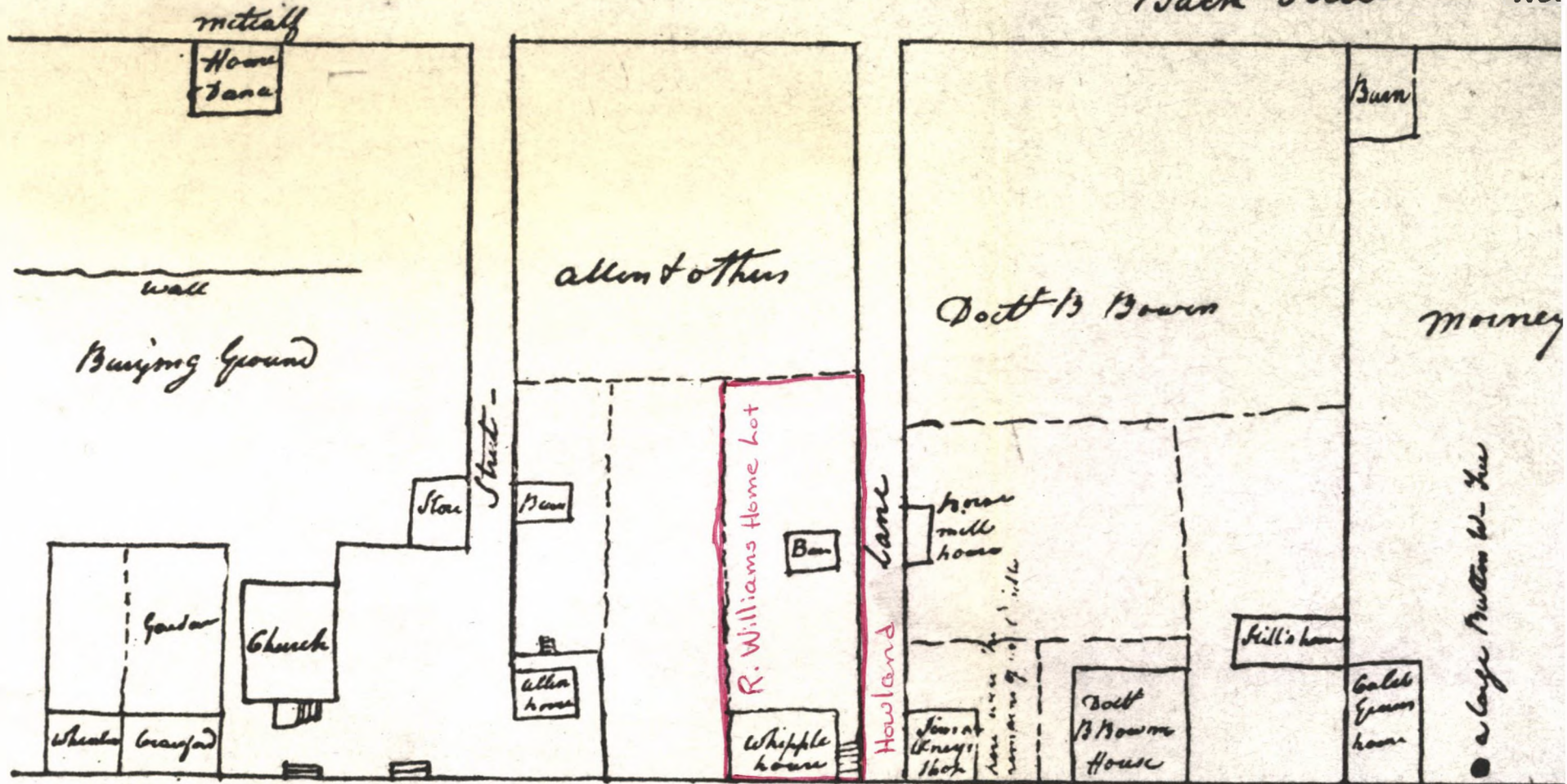
T M Sumner, (in a letter dated 1834...original in R I Hist Soc. Mss V 10 p 76) reports as follows:

"My father lived near Tripe's Spring, I should say three years of the time we were in Providence say (17)75, 76, and 77) in a house belonging to Captain Packard near the River...and chief of the water we used in the house was got at this same Tripe's Spring"
Sumner made a map of the site (Ill #3, p. 15.)

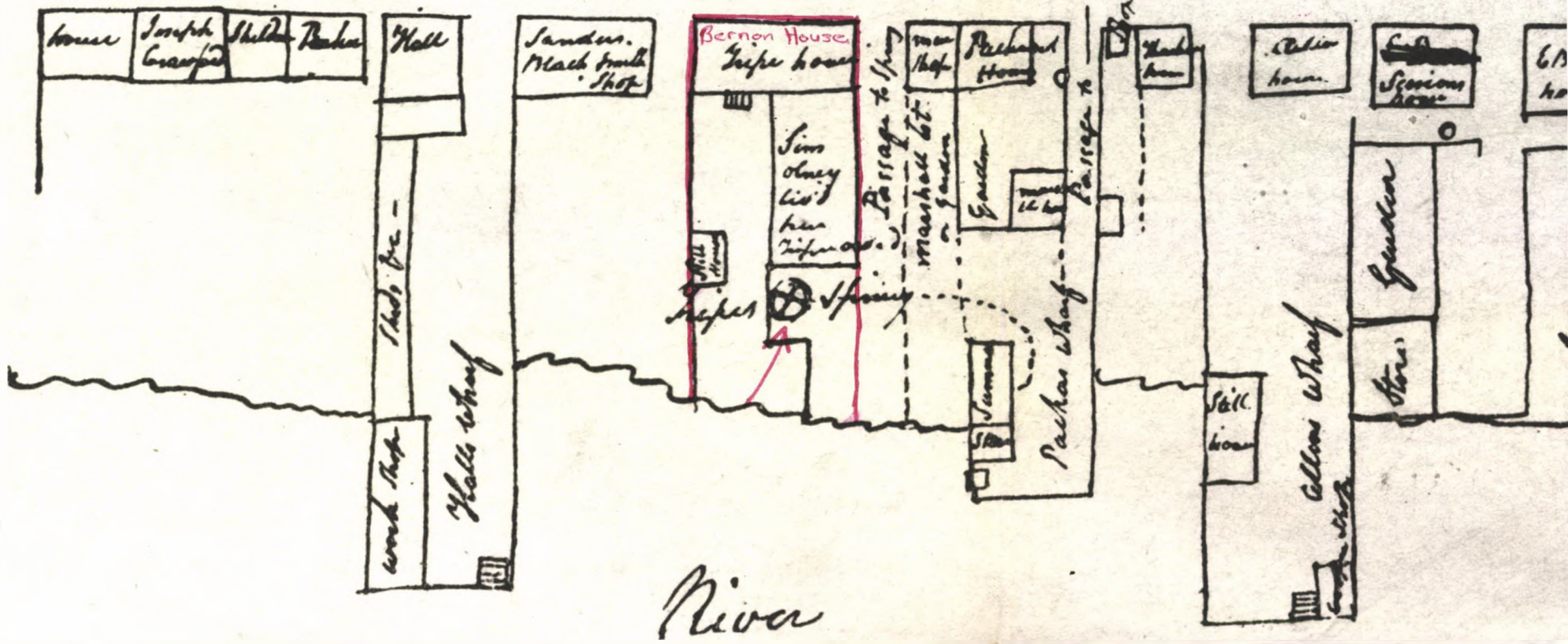
Spring known as Roger Williams Spring.

- 1785 Ezra Stiles visited Providence, wrote in his Diary (Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, 1785, Vol III p 191 as follows:

"At Provid. Oct., I visited the Place of Roger Williams Lands, House, Spring, and Grave. There



Main or Four Street — now North main



Williams Home Lot are outlined in Red. See p. 15.

note river line

is some uncertainty as to the last, although the grave may be ascertained within Ten Rods.

1785 Map. Stiles made a map showing the spring, the cellar pointed out to him at that time (erroneously) as Roger Williams) and the location of the grave. (Ill. #4, p. 18)

1801 Description of the spring written in 1880 by Zachariah Allen, at the age of eighty-five. His family residence was within a hundred yards of the Spring, immediately south of Alamo Lane. He wrote that as late as 1801,

"There was a living stream constantly flowing from a large boiling spring, curbed and covered with stones, and overflowing into a trough for conducting the water into a tub formed of a half-hogshead set in the ground conveniently for cattle to drink therefrom. Thence the water continued its course to the river adjacent; so that in passing the outlet in a boat the stream was manifest."

1810 April 26.

The share of the estate of Gabriel Bernon set off to Joseph and Susanah Crawford as in 19/50 and inherited by their daughter, Ann (Crawford) Allen, was set off in the division of her estate to Crawford Allen... (DEEDS 33/169)

1816-1818

Transfer of Spring Lot from heirs of Gabriel Bernon to Nehemiah Dodge.

1816 February 23

Mary Benson, wife of William P R Benson for \$750 to Nehemiah Dodge for share in estate west side of Main Street devised by father Samuel Tripe, same estate conveyed by grandparents Gideon and Mary Crawford to Samuel Tripe, March 22, 1771 Book 18, p 427... (DEEDS 38/318)

1816 February 24

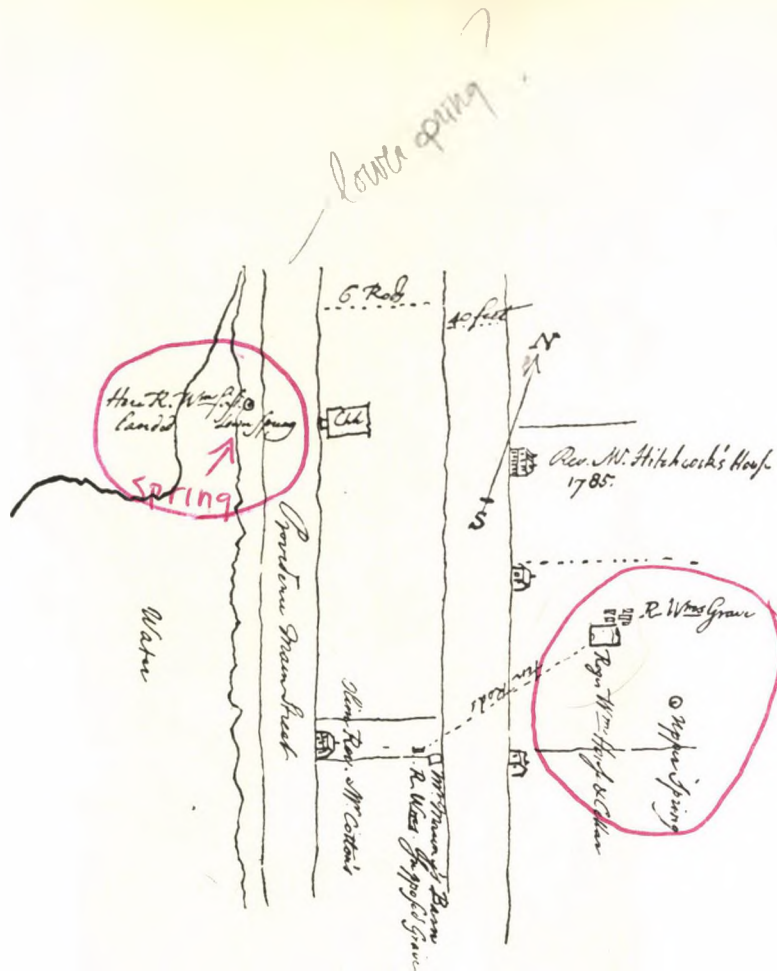
Bernon Tripe to Nehemiah Dodge, share of estate as in 38/318... (DEEDS 38/335)

1816 May 20

Job Sheldon and Joanna to Nehemiah Dodge, their share of estate as in 38/318... (DEEDS 40/30)

1818 February 5

Crawford Allen to Nehemiah Dodge, Estate set off to grantor in division of Ann Allen's estate as 33/169... (DEEDS 41/194)



STILES' MAP

SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE TWO GRAVE YARDS

Original is in Stiles' Papers, Yale University Library

Ill #4. Map made by Ezra Stiles in 1785
 Showing the Spring, grave sites on Roger Williams land and the cellar
 site pointed out (erroneously) to him as that of Roger Williams
 (See pp 15 and 17 under date of 1785)

- 1818 February 9
 Agreement between Nehemiah Dodge and Philip Allen. For \$94 paid by Philip Allen, Dodge agrees to release 3 feet on southern bound of his land to widen gangway between the two properties... (DEEDS 42/55)
- 1818 Gabriel Bernon's mansion house built in 1717 was torn down.
- 1818 Nehemiah Dodge built a brick house on the line of North Main Street. Dodge also built a pump for public use of the spring waters. The pump stood between North Main Street and Canal Street, on the northern side of Allen's (Alamo) Lane. Map (Ill #5, p. 20.)
- 1834 Map and Letter T M Sumner wrote about the house his family lived in while in Providence during the years 1775, 1776, and 1777. He made a map showing the spring, Roger Williams house ruins, and the Williams graves. (See entry under 1775, p. 15 and Ill #3, p. 16)
- 1843 Spring evidently generally known as Roger Williams Spring.

 William R Staples, writing in Annals of Providence (Coll. of the R I Hist Soc of Providence 1843 Vol 5 p 21) says: "Tradition says that they (Williams and band)...pursued their voyage around Fox Point and up Providence River to a point a little south of St John's Church. A fine spring of water there, which has ever since borne the name of Williams Spring, is supposed to indicate the place of their first settlement."
- 1856 Map of the Estate of the late Nehemiah Dodge shows location of the pump built by Dodge. (Ill #5, p. 20)
- 1856-1865
Transfer of house lots from Dodge heirs to Jacob T Seagrave
- 1856 May 15
 John C. Dodge and Edward Dodge for \$6000 to Edward Pearce.. Lot E side of Canal Street bounded:
 W. Canal Street 48½'
 N. Nightingale Estate 85.2'
 S. 17 10/12 gangway, 91 10/12 ft
 E. Lot conveyed to Seagrave (DEEDS 144/197) with dwelling house and improvements. (The lot with the pump) (DEEDS 144/93)
- May 15
 John C. Dodge and Edward Dodge to Jacob Seagrave..2 lots on west side North Main Street. bounded:
 (1) S. Gangway 17 10/12 ft wide, 90 ft
 N. Nightingale Estate
 W. Other lot hereby conveyed, 46.9'
 E. North Main Street

Plot
of the late
Nehemiah Dodge

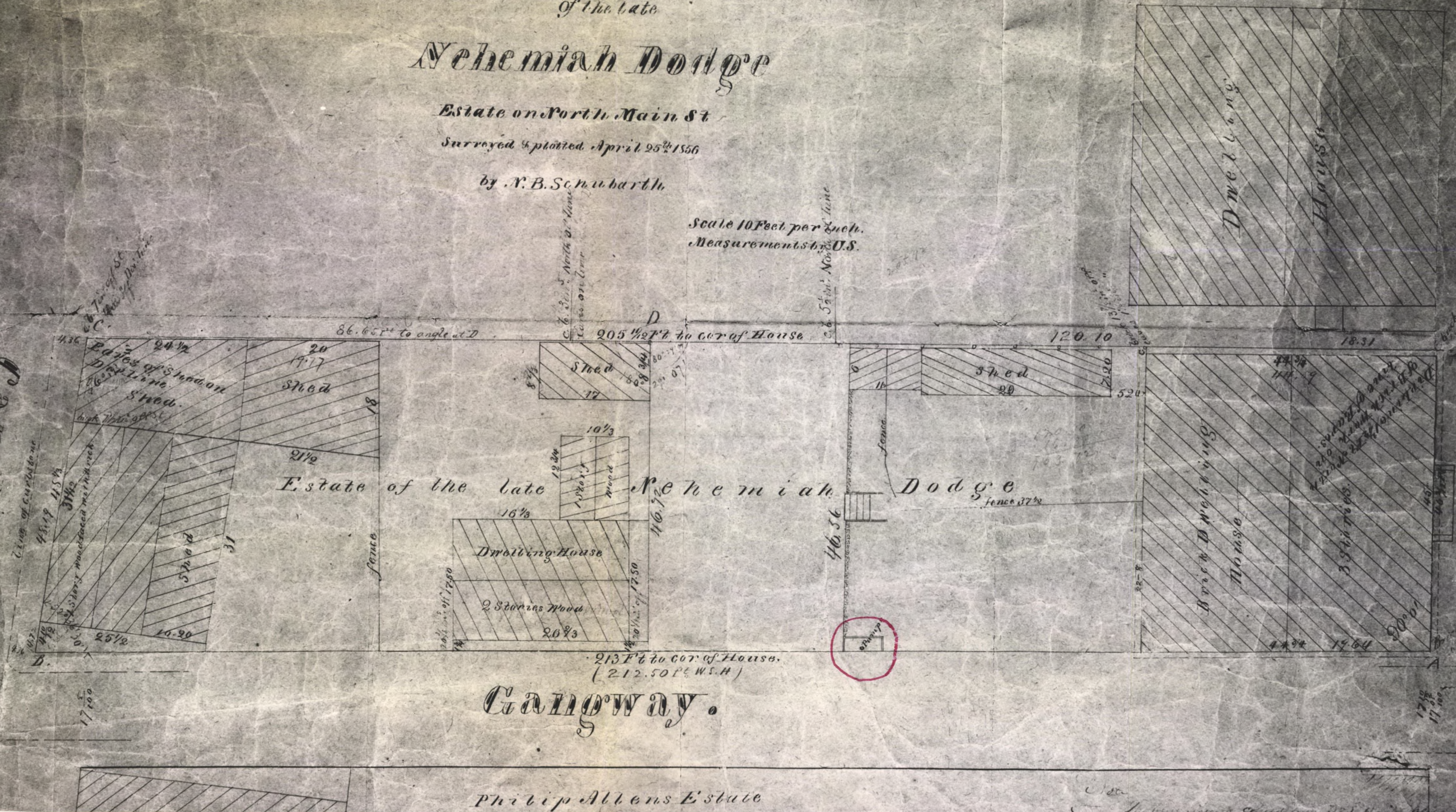
Estate on North Main St

Surveyed & plotted April 25th 1856

by N. B. Schubarth

Scale 10 Feet per Inch.
Measurements by U.S.

CORNELIUS



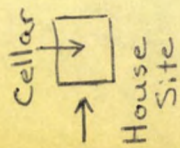
Ill. #5. Map of the Spring Lot in 1856 Made when Nehemiah Dodge's property was being sold. The pump constructed by Dodge for public use is shown. Circled in red.

- 1860 (2) E. Lot above hereby conveyed 40 ft
S. Gangway 17 10/12 ft wide
N. Nightingale Estate
W. Lot conveyed to Edward Pearce in 144/93.. (DEEDS 144/97)
- 1860 Research into the location of Roger Williams Spring, house site and grave was undertaken. The results were shown on a map made by S. B. Cushing in 1860. This map has been reproduced in Report 4, p. 6 of The Roger Williams Spring Park of the College Hill Demonstration Grant Project. Copies of this report have been forwarded to the National Park Service together with other material about the proposed park. A copy is also appended here.
- 1865 October 28
Indenture, between Edward Dodge and wife Ellen parties of the first part and Jacob Seagrave, party of the second part for \$5000 for lot bounded:
- W. Canal Street 48 ft
N. Nightingale estate 85.2 ft
S. Gangway 91.10/12 ft
E. Seagrave lot, same lot John Dodge granted to Edward Pearce May 15, 1856 and Edward Dodge conveyed to Sarah Clark (Book 145/493) and Sarah Clark conveyed to Edward Dodge (Book 154/493) with all tenements, also dower rights, subject to all claim that the City of Providence may have to a certain pump now standing on the line of the adjoining lot and the gangway south of the premises which may be claimed by the City of Providence to maintain the same... (DEEDS 172/382)
- 1870 September 24
Jacob T Seagrave died. Probate Court A9991, November 8, 1870. Heirs: Mary, widow; Jacob, son; Mary, daughter, wife of Sylvanus Lewis.
- 1872 June 7
Jacob T Seagrave for \$100 paid by Mary B Seagrave and Mary J Lewis, wife of Sylvanus, for his right in property inherited from father Jacob Seagrave. Premises bought by Seagrave from John and Edward Dodge, May 15, 1856 (144/97) and Edward Dodge October 25 1865 (172/382)... (DEEDS 237/145)
- 1875 North Main Street was widened in 1875 and the Seagrave House was moved back to the new street line. In the new location it stood over the spring and pump site. About this time the water from the spring was piped to a new pump placed to a side wall on Canal Street and a watering trough in Canal Street. A map made in 1898 shows the spring's location in the cellar of the Seagrave house and the watering trough in Canal Street. (Ill #6, p. 22)

December 7, 1898.

027934

Map
showing location of
ROGER WILLIAMS SPRING.



Formerly the Home Lot of
Joshua Verin and later of
Richard Scott

A line of Home Lot of
Roger Williams

Howland st.

Formerly the Home Lot
of Roger Williams

Bowen st.

North Main st.

Church st.

SPRING

Allens lane

Try st.

Bowen st.

Canal

street.

Watering
Trough

Moshassuck River

Scale of feet.

Ill #6, Map, 1898, showing location of Roger Williams Spring, and the home lots of Richard Scott and Roger Williams. The drain and watering trough are also shown. See p. 21. Map made in the City Engineer's Office.

- 1885 Zachariah Allen described the spring as he remembered it in 1801. See under that date on p. 17.
- 1890 May 7
Mary B Seagrave died. Will recorded (WILLS 33/433)
- 1898 Map, made in the City Engineer's Office, City Property Department, shows location of Roger Williams Spring in the cellar of the Seagrave house after the house was moved to its new location on the line of the widened North Main Street. The map also shows part of the drain (by dotted line) and the watering trough in Canal Street. Across North Main Street is shown the boundary line between the home lot of Roger Williams and the lot to the north owned first by Joshua Verin and then by Richard Scott directly east of the spring lot. (See entry p. 21 under 1875. (Ill #6, p. 22)
- 1900 Pump on Canal Street was removed by order of the Commissioner of Public Works. The water from the spring was thereafter until 1930 sent through a drain into a sewer in Canal Street.
- 1906 A bronze table, to mark the site of the spring was placed on the Seagrave house and another bronze tablet was placed on the house at 233-237 North Main Street to mark the site of Roger Williams house. Mr Norman Morrison Isham gave the dedication address on October 2, 1906. The text of the tablet reads:
 Under this House
 Still Flows
 the
 Roger Williams
 Spring
- 1921 Heirs of Jacob Seagrave sell property to Joe Levye
 Henry B Lewis et al (heirs of Jacob Seagrave) to Joe Levye
 w.d. bounded:
 E. North Main Street 46.71 ft
 N. Now or formerly Alice Bridge
 S. Alamo Lane
 and also in the right of the grantor to maintain
 in and under said portion of said Alamo Lane the
 drain thereon connecting above described estate
 with sewer in Canal Street, to repair, rebuild,
 and forever maintain... (DEEDS 610/170,1,2)
- 1921 July 19
 Cutting from the Providence Journal entitled "Building Covering Historic Spring to be Torn Down.", filed in the R I Hist Soc., Scrap Book vol. 25, p. 36. The article resumed here gives history of spring etc., as follows:

"... 244 North Main Street, the old building over the site of Roger Williams Spring has been bought by Joseph Levye to be razed. The structure still bears a bronze tablet giving the history of the spring over which it stands. The bronze tablet will be placed on the new building. Gabriel Bernon conveyed the property to Nehemiah Dodge in 1816. Dodge built the house conveyed to Levye, and he also built the pump for the spring which was used by the public for such a long time. The pump stood about one-third of the way between North Main Street and Canal Street in what is now Alamo Lane. The pump remained there until North Main Street was widened in about 1875. Then the house was moved over the spring and pump site; the water was piped to a side wall on Canal Street near the Armour Company Provision House. The pump was removed in 1900 at the direction of the Commissioner of Public Works. Since that time the water has been sent through a drain into the sewer in Canal Street."

1926 June 4

Joseph Levye died. In his will he gave the unspecified residue (including the spring site property) to his wife Annie Levye... WILLS 219/339

1928 July 24

Heirs of Joseph Levye to J Jerome Hahn

Annie Levye to Jerome Hahn, lot northwest corner of Alamo Lane and North Main Street bounded:

N. Partly Hyman Katz, partly John J Rourke
E. North Main Street 46.71 ft
W. John J Rourke 47 ft.
S. Alamo Lane.

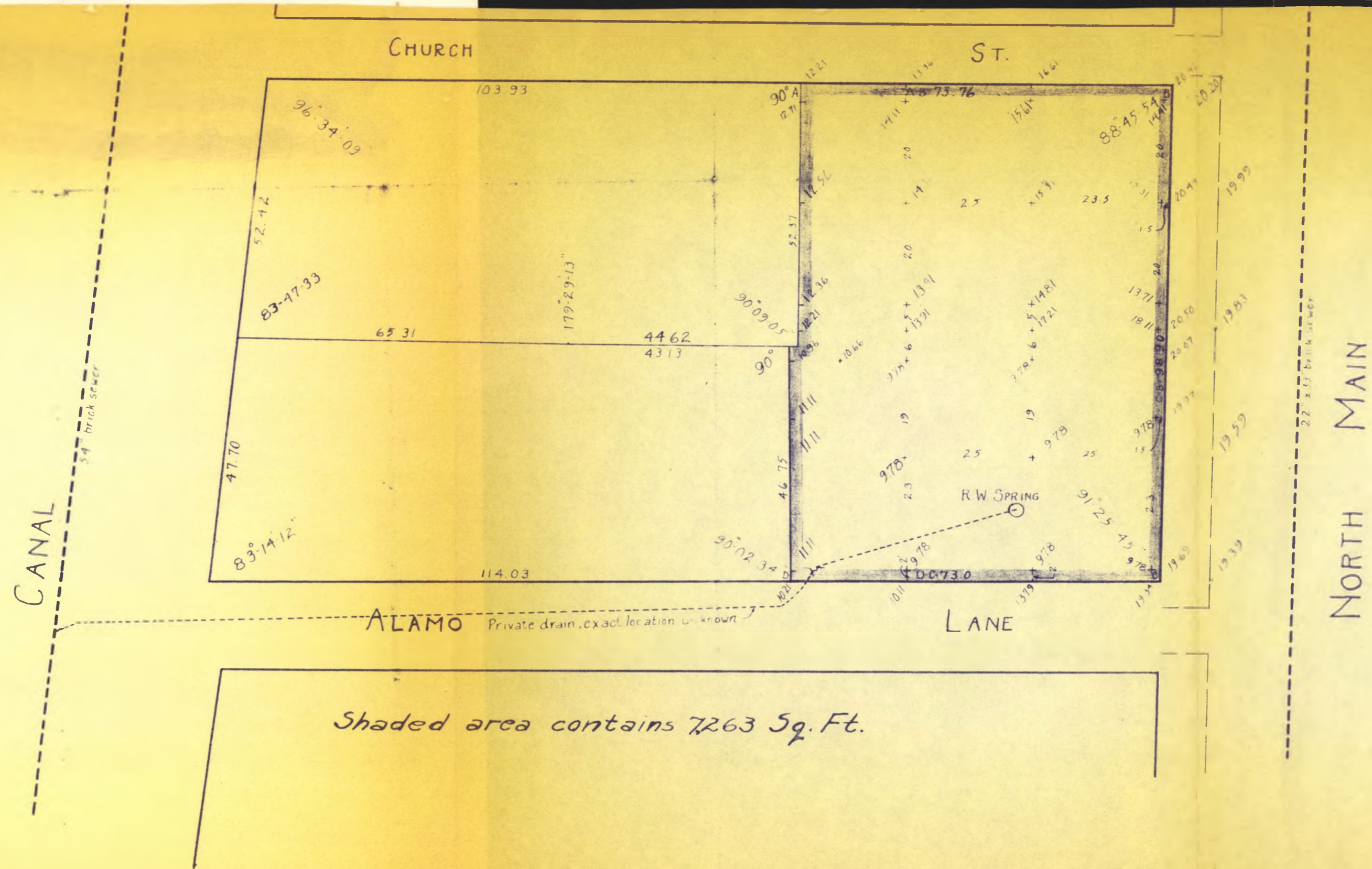
The same conveyed to Joseph Levye in two parcels and 3 deeds dated May 27, 1921 (610/170,1,2,) from Henry B Lewis and from John R Rourke, December 8, 1921 (620/14) and also in the right of the grantor to maintain drain as above (610/170,1,2)... (DEEDS 714/310)

1930 March 8

Judge J. Jerome Hahn to the City of Providence for a public park in memory of his father.

1930 Map prepared by the City Engineer's Office shows the location of the spring and the approximate location of the drain (Ill. #7, p. 25)

The present Roger Williams Spring park was built soon after acquisition of the lot between Alamo Lane and Church Street and a lot north of Church Street. The water from the spring is now piped to the newly constructed fountain.



Shaded area contains 7,263 Sq. Ft.

CITY OF PROVIDENCE
 ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
 Showing X Structures
 Drawn by Morrill
 Checked by Cahill
 Scale 20
 Date Dec 1, 1930
 Corrected by G. W. & J. P. Blodgett Assn. Eng.
 Approved A. Frank Notain City Eng.

Ill #7 Map of the Spring Lot made in 1930 showing Location of the Spring and the approximate location of the drain. Providence City Engineer's Office.

A tablet placed in the new park at this time reads as follows:

THE
SPRING ON THIS LOT
THE ORIGINAL WATER SUPPLY
AROUND WHICH
ROGER WILLIAMS
GATHERED
THE FIRST SETTLERS
WAS IN 1721 BY RESERVATION
IN THE DEED FROM THE
PROPRIETORS OF
PROVIDENCE
MADE ACCESSIBLE TO
THE TOWNSPEOPLE
FOREVER

THIS PLOT OF GROUND WAS IN 1931 GIVEN TO THE CITY
OF PROVIDENCE BY J. JEROME HAHN IN MEMORY OF HIS
FATHER ISAAC HAHN THE FIRST CITIZEN OF JEWISH FAITH
TO BE ELECTED TO OFFICE BY THE VOTERS OF PROVIDENCE.

Although Roger Williams' house site has not at this time been included in the proposals for the Historic Spring Park, its location nearly across the street has given it an important place in the plans for the beginning of the historic trail. The chain of title for this site is therefore included here.

The grave site is not included here. For further reference see Report no. 4 Roger Williams Spring Park, College Hill Demonstration Grant Project, p. 5 and map, p. 6. A copy of this report is included herewith.

CHAIN OF TITLE FOR ROGER WILLIAMS HOME LOT

S U M M A R Y

Roger Williams was granted lot #14 in the first allotment of lands in Providence in 1636-1637. The lot was bounded west on the Main Street, east what is now Hope Street, north between Howland and Church Streets and south on a line between Bowen and Howland Streets.

Roger Williams house, built soon afterward, disappeared very early and it is thought that it was destroyed when the Indians burned most of Providence in the summer of 1676.

The site of the house has been identified. It is located part way up Howland Street on the north side of the Street. Wheeler Martin, in a letter published in the Rhode Island American, of July 20, 1819 reported that Nathaniel Packard (born 1730 died 1801) located the site as follows:

"Captain Nathaniel Packard told me that when he was a boy he used to play in a cellar which was situated on a lot back of his house built by Thomas (he meant Joseph) Owen, father of the late Honorable Daniel Owen, afterwards owned by Levi Whipple, and now owned by the heirs of the late Simeon N Olney, directly north of the house owned by Ezra Hubbard, and near where an outbuilding now stands. The people at that time called it Roger Williams cellar."

Captain Packard owned the lot just east of this property after 1767, so the location of the site is nearly fixed.

In 1860, S. B. Randall, using this tradition and other similar ones, began to dig in the area. He found a fragment of a wall, and was satisfied that he had uncovered the foundations of Roger Williams' house. (See map made by S. B. Cushing in 1860 for Zachariah Allen, illustrated in Report #4 "The Roger Williams Spring Park." p. 6). In 1887 a stable on the estate was built. In digging for a drain another piece of the wall was exposed.

In 1906 Norman Morrison Isham, Rhode Island authority on early building, continued the excavation and exposed the shallow stone foundations and chimney base of a one-room stone end house. These findings were described, the evidence for the exact location of the house and the chain of ownership of the Roger Wil-

liams Home Lot, were given in an address titled "The House and Home Lot of Roger Williams," read on the occasion of marking the site of the house in 1906. (Published in The Report of the Committee on Marking Historical Sites in Rhode Island, The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations 1914, 31-44). Measurements and photographs of the remains of the cellar were published in the R I Historical Collections, Vol XVIII April 1 1925 #2.

DOCUMENTATION

An abstract of the chain of ownership for the Roger Williams Home Lot based on Mr Isham's research and further verified by the file of data collected in the Providence City Engineer's Office (#175) follows:

- 1636 Roger Williams was granted lot #14 in the first allotment. Research indicates that he built his house on what is now the north east corner of North Main and Howland Streets, set some way up Howland Street. (See p. 28 above)
- 1683 Roger Williams died in 1683 and the property descended to Providence (21) Williams, son of Daniel (2) Williams, then after Providence Williams' death, in 1685, to Daniel (22) Williams, elder brother of Providence.
- 1712 Daniel Williams died and the home lot descended to Peleg (31) Williams, his son, who deeded the lot to his younger brother, Roger (32) Williams.
- 1742 Roger Williams, grandson of Roger Williams (1) began to sell land in the home lot in 1742.
- 1748 July 22
Roger Williams sold a lot 40x60 ft west on the Towne Street to Nehemiah Sprague "the northwest corner of that lot that was my Hon. Grandfather Roger Williams here he dwelt." (DEEDS 12/261) This lot is just west of the lot where the foundations of a one room stone end chimney house were uncovered in 1860 by Stephen Randall. See map in "The Roger Williams Spring Park". Report #4, College Hill Demonstration Grant Project. p. 6. See p. 28 of this report.
- 1748 Dec 28
Nehemiah Sprague sold this 40 x 60 foot lot fronting on the Main Street to Simeon Hunt... (DEEDS 12/262)

- 1749 October 25
Simeon Hunt sold the lot to Joseph Owen who built a house on the property soon afterward... (DEEDS 12/308)
- 1754 July 13
Roger Williams sold to his son-in-law, Jonathan Tourtelot, a strip of land 4 feet wide (which became part of a gangway) south of Owen's lot and east of Owen, a piece 44 x 80 feet. (DEEDS 13/379). This is the lot described by Nathaniel Packard to Wheeler Martin, and it was on this lot that the foundations of the house were uncovered. (See p. 28 above)
- 1754 July 19
Tourtelot sold the above lot to Joseph Owen, who now owned the property from North Main Street eastward for 140 feet... (DEEDS 13/389)
- 1761 In 1761 Joseph Owen sold the whole lot, with dwelling house to Levi Whipple. The gangway now Howland Street is described in this deed and fixes the location of the lot henceforward... (DEEDS 16/103)
- 1762 July 19
Levi Whipple sold to Joseph Hart... (DEEDS 16/201)
- 1762 October 23
Joseph Hart mortgaged the property to John Dennie... (DEEDS 16/204)
The mortgagee assigned to Devonshire and Reave of Bristol, England and from there it came to Moses Brown... (DEEDS 19/419)
- 1783 November 25
Moses Brown sold it to Simeon Hunt Olney. (DEEDS 19/419.) From Olney the property went to his daughter Anstis, wife of Samuel Brown.
- 1840 April 9
Samuel Brown sold to James Hazard, a colored man, who built the stone house still standing on the property... (DEEDS 76/215)
- 1842 August 4
Hazard sold to Dr Samuel B Tobey... (DEEDS 83/231)
- 1843 February 20
Dr Tobey sold to Arba Dike... (DEEDS 84/228)
- 1843 Arba Dike sold the property to Benjamin R Almy... (DEEDS 84/232)
- 1855 B R Almy sold to his brother Humphrey Almy.
- 1860 Stephen Randall excavated the spot indicated by Nathaniel Packard and others. He uncovered the foundations of a one room house.