

Caleb Roffee House  
92 Williams Street  
Providence  
Providence County  
Rhode Island

HABS No. RI-257

HABS  
RI,  
4-PROV,  
154-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

## CALEB ROFFEE HOUSE

HABS  
RI,  
4-PROV,  
154-

Address: 92 Williams Street, Providence, Providence County,  
Rhode Island. Plat 16, Lot 203. 33 Williams Street in  
1836.

Present Owner  
and Occupant: John H. Wells

Present Use: Dwelling

Brief Statement  
of Significance: This is an example of a simple frame house of the  
1820's

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Original and Subsequent Owners:

- 1824 Samuel W Greene and wife Polly R Greene sell for \$600 to Caleb Roffee painter. Bounded: N on land sold this day to Edward Carrington by said S Greene and Polly 70'; E by Edward Carrington 85'; S by Williams Street; W by Polly R Greene land..(the barn to be removed) 70'. - Deed Book 49, page 20 in Providence City Hall.
- 1824 Roffee paid mortgage of \$625 to T P Ives
- 1824 Roffee, painter and glazier, lived here. - Providence Directory
- 1836 Alice Roffee, widow, Joshua Cahpin, Rev. Seth Moses lived here. - Providence Directory
- 1840 FIRE RECORD: Alice Roffee...E side of Street... wood...32' x 30'...2 stories high in front and rear... occupied as a Dwelling House..Policy Records. - Mss. fire insurance records of the Providence Mutual Insurance Company at the Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, R. I. Vol. #10, policy #8163.
- 1854 Taxed to Caleb Roffee heirs
- 1855 Taxed to John Carter Brown Est.
- 1888 John N Brown trustees
- 1932 Property taxed to John H Wells

B. Date of erection: 1824

Prepared by Antoinette F. Downing and Elvira Gowdey  
for the Providence Preservation Society  
May 1963

PART II ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: This is an example of a simple frame house of the 1820's.
2. Condition of fabric: Good. The house was originally six feet narrower and was enlarged on the east side making the present large parlor.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Over-all dimensions: 38' (five-bay south front) x 30'; two-and-a-half stories high, plus small kitchen wing to the rear.
2. Foundations: Fieldstone, faced with ashlar on the front and brick in the rear.
3. Wall construction: Frame, covered with clapboards.
4. Porches, stoops: High wood stoop with double flight of steps. Later screen porch on the rear.
5. Chimneys: Two original brick chimneys - in west wall for southwest rooms and between main block for northwest rooms of main block and for rear wing. Later chimney in east wall of main block.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doors and doorways: Paneled door with side lights, pilaster trim, deep bracketed cornice - a typical doorway of the period.
  - b. Windows and shutters: Double-hung windows, later two-light sash. Simple window frames with wide facing boards. Adjustable louvered shutters.
7. Roof:
  - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof, asphalt shingles.
  - b. Eaves: Boxed molded eaves
  - c. Dormers: Small, shed-roofed dormer in the rear.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: Central hall, long parlor on the east, study at the southwest, dining room at the northwest, kitchen in rear wing. Bedrooms on second floor in similar layout. Third floor finished for maid's room and storage.
2. Stairways: Open well, open string stairway in central hall to second floor, straight run with turn at the top with winders, light proportions, turned rail, rectangular balusters, carved and drilled fan ornament on step ends. Rear stairs, U-shape, to cellar and attic.
3. Flooring: Wide board floors in some rooms, covered with later flooring in other rooms.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster, some simple molded chair rail and ceiling cornices.
5. Doors: Six-panel doors, flat panels, small moldings.
6. Trim: Dining room wainscot made of old interior window shutters.
7. Hardware: Some case locks with brass knobs removed to third-floor doors.
8. Lighting: Electric.
9. Heating: Gas. Original one-story mantel in southwest room (study) with engaged colonettes, paneled entablature, small-scale moldings. Simple wood mantels or later ones elsewhere.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: House faces south on sidewalk line at the front, very narrow level lot, small garden in the rear.
2. Enclosures: Wood fences.
3. Walks: Brick walk on east side of house to the rear.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby  
Yale University  
May 1963