

Eight Carpenter Street
Salem, Massachusetts 01970

On July 2, 1808, Joseph Edwards, a Salem housewright, purchased a plot of land on Carpenter Street from Jacob Lord for \$450.00.¹ Having just completed the construction of a federal house across the street at Five Carpenter, Mr. Edwards immediately commenced building his own residence at Eight Carpenter Street. The three-story gambrel was finished in 1809, and Mr. Edwards had occupied it less than a year when he decided to sell it to Joshua Beckford in 1810.² Mr. Beckford, an established cordwainer, paid \$1300.00 cash for the plot of land, newly-built house and rights to half the well water located on the northern boundary of the property. Mr. Beckford died in 1844 and Eight Carpenter Street was passed by the laws of intestacy to Daniel R. Beckford, his minor son. Being unable to hold real property in the Commonwealth as a minor, Daniel's guardian, Sarah P. Beckford, sold the house at public auction for \$78.57 to Jonathan S. Bryant in 1845.³ Mr. Bryant, also a cordwainer by trade, died in 1859, and devised Eight Carpenter Street in his will to his brother, Hiram K. Bryant, a shoe manufacturer.⁴ During his tenure in the house, Hiram made certain improvements to the structure, primarily evidenced by a two-story addition affixed to the Eastern end of the house.⁵ Hiram died intestate in 1883, and the property passed to his three sons, Charles, George and Edward as tenants in common.⁶ Due to the geographic separation of the tenants (Charles in Massachusetts, Edward in New York, George in California) a petition to partition was filed for the division and sale of the interests at Eight Carpenter Street in 1885.⁷ Theodore M. Osborne, an appointed commissioner, sold the property to Jennie C. Emmerton on April 24th for \$2500.00.⁸ In 1904, Mrs. Emmerton sold the property as well as some additional land she already owned on the east end of the lot, to another widow, Caroline C. Johnson.⁹ The house and its present land boundary was passed to Robert and Esther Apthorp in 1923, who occupied the house until 1934.¹⁰ On December 10th of 1934, the Apthorps conveyed Eight Carpenter to Thomas F. Sullivan.¹¹ Mr. Sullivan lived in the house but three years when he sold it to Mary F. Levesque.¹² Mrs. Levesque sold the house after World War II to Bertha J. VonSaltza, the wife of a well-known Salem artist.¹³ After some transferring of the house between Mr. and Mrs. VonSaltza, first to defeat curtesy and then to guard against Mr. VonSaltza's advancing age,¹⁴ the house was conveyed to its present owners, Amy C. Burbott and Kathleen A. Karydis, on June 27, 1979.

All references to the South Essex Registry of Deeds and Probate

- 1 Jacob Lord to Joseph Edwards, Book 184 Page 62, July 2, 1808. Deed
- 2 Joseph Edwards to Joshua Beckford, Book 189, Page 228, April 10, 1810. Deed
- 3 Sarah P. Beckford as guardian for Daniel R. to Jonathan J. Bryant, Book 354 Page 160, May 1, 1845. Deed
- 4 Estate of Jonathan Bryant, Probate Docket No. 33927, April 5, 1859. Administration
- 5 See the mortgages and discharges:
Hiram K. Bryant to Edward C. Bryant, Book 642 Page 271, September 20, 1862. Mortgage
George H. Bryant to Hiram K. Bryant, Book 650 Page 186, April 22, 1863. Discharge
J. H. Nichols to Hiram K. Bryant, Book 707 Page 113, July 18, 1886. Discharge
Hiram K. Bryant to Charles M. Bryant, Book 844 Page 168, January 9, 1872. Mortgage
- 6 Estate of Hiram K. Bryant, Probate Docket No. 60248, November 19, 1883. Administration
- 7 In Re Bryant, Probate Docket No. 61875, March 16, 1885. Petition to Partition
- 8 Theodore M. Osborne to Jennie C. Emmerton, Book 1149 Page 151, April 24, 1885. Deed
- 9 Jennie M. Emmerton to Caroline C. Johnson, Book 1741 Page 128, May 24, 1904. Deed
- 10 Caroline C. Johnson to Robert and Esther Apthorp et ux, Book 2570 Page 165, September 22, 1923. Deed
- 11 Robert and Esther Apthorp et ux to Thomas F. Sullivan, Book 3019 Page 471, December 10, 1934. Deed
- 12 Thomas F. Sullivan to Mary F. Levesque, Book 3121 Page 563, September 18, 1937. Deed
- 13 Mary F. Levesque to Bertha J. VonSaltza, Book 3503 Page 473, December 27, 1946. Deed
- 14 Bertha J. VonSaltza to Bertha J. and Philip VonSaltza, Book 4732 Page 41, December 23, 1960. Deed
Philip and Bertha VonSaltza to Bertha J. VonSaltza, Book 5844 Page 464, February 14, 1972. Deed
- 15 Bertha J. VonSaltza to Amy C. Burbott and Kathleen A. Karydis as Tenants in Common, Book Page , June 27, 1979. Deed

Yet in his sick bed, to one who had
... with him, carried in jellies and
... into him, the doctor re-
... eadly—"How sad it is that
you and I will not meet in Heaven,"
meaning that as his visitor was a
Unitarian there was no hope of salva-
tion for other than one of his own
orthodox faith. However, they are
both there now and the good doctor
may have long since found another
view point.

At all events the congregation of
his church are just now very happily
sharing with a Unitarian church, the
use of its auditorium; we are all of
us getting a little nearer than we were
in Doctor Worcester's day. He was a
grand old man just the same, true to
his convictions.

Lightning rods became a hobby in
our neighborhood when I was a boy
and although our old house had never
had one, nor ever been struck, Ben
Cutts, the blacksmith who lived near
us, persuaded father to let him put on
an iron rod. I was intensely interested
and read Ben Franklin's experiments
thoroughly. I supervised the entire
work, boylike, studying especially the
deep grounding of the rod in the earth
and the diverting of it away from the
underpinning. Ben Cutts was a very
serious man, but it was hard to tell
whether he was perpetually grinning
at you, for he had a nervous affection
of the facial muscles that gave him
the appearance of smiling in rather
startling fashion at times, when he
evidently felt very far from it, as the
emphasis of his utterance showed.

Farrington's Strange Stroke

Dr. George P. Farrington, the drug-
gist, was our neighbor in the house
at 112 now occupied by the Sargents.
He was a great chum of my father,
and had never had a lightning rod
on his own, neither had the house
ever been struck. The doctor decided
on a copper rod and the men had put
it on, all but the ground connection,
when Doctor Farrington came home
to dinner on one sizzling hot day.
He sat down at table in his shirt
sleeves. Behind him was an open
window, to the whole height of the
sash. The house then as now fronted
directly upon the sidewalk and the
blinds of that house were partially
closed, leaving but a space for the ad-
mission of light, and making a perfect
camera obscura as Doctor Farrington
said afterward.

Well, there broke that hot noon, just
the blackest thunder squall that this
old city had seen in years. There was
a terrific crash, a dazzling ball of fire
burst right into the room over the
dining table. Every one of the family
was affected but the doctor was plucked
up insensible from the floor—they
thought he was dead and worked over
him for hours. When his clothing
was stripped off and he was turned
over upon his bed, there upon his
back, as though photographed, was a
perfect reproduction of the maple tree
that stood in the street directly be-
hind Doctor Farrington as he sat at
the table, the tree being in direct line
with the opening between the window
blinds. Every branch, twig and leaf
of that tree was distinctly reproduced
on the doctor's back and they did not
entirely fade, it was narrated, for up-
wards of two hours. Then Doctor
Farrington began to show some signs
of vitality. It was a long time before
he came to and the first sound from
him was: "Take that damned thing
off my house!"

It appeared that the lightning had
followed the rod down to where it
ended, some feet above the ground,
and then had jumped through the
clapboards to descend into the din-
ing room on the gas pipe, dropping in
the ball of fire over the dinner table
in the centre of the room. Those rods
came off a deal quicker than they
went on. "Ump," said the doctor years
afterward, my house was never
struck before and never has been
since."

Charles F. W. Archer.

BRYANT'S GREAT DISCOVERY OF LIFE'S ELIXIR

April 15, 1922
Carpenter Street Cobbler Be-
came Famous and Prosper-
ous; 10 Salem Handtubs in
Muster Recalled by Archer

Editor of The Salem News:—"Doc-
tor" Hiram K. Bryant was a shoe-
maker, who, before the Civil war,
cobbled and tapped footwear at 8 Car-
penter street, in the little shop that
stood in the yard next door to the
Rev. Dr. Samuel Worcester's house.
Yet while the "Doctor" waxed his
thread and hammered his shoe pegs
into the tap, he was dreaming all the
while of "Bryant's Great Discovery,"
the elixir which was to astonish the
medical world, put new energy into
heart and lungs and cause the halt
and lame to throw away their
crutches; for the "Doc." was almost
persuaded that he was what the real
old folks used to call a "natural phy-
sician"—prefix with an "N" and not
a "Q."

Mrs. Bryant, energetic little woman
that she was, kept the "botanical"
kettle a billin' on the kitchen stove till
one day the "Doctor" shouted "Eu-
reka"; squalled the tap hammer and
all the old shoe derelicts with it out
through the open door, and emerged a
full fledged disciple of Esculapius; to
give to the world henceforth "Bryant's
Great Discovery—an Elixir to thrill
the blood and banish all the ills that
mortal flesh is heir to."

Flashed from that little shop win-
dow, in glistening array, the well filled
bottles, filled with a dark liquid most
invigorating and by no means un-
palatable to the taste. Those were
the happy days when no percentages
as to contents or formula were re-
quired on the label, which perhaps will
account for the immediate popularity of

"Bryant's Elixir—
excellent as a preventive as well as
a cure"

A shingle appeared on the yellow
house that stood end to the street
with the front door in the yard. The
letters "M. D." modestly showed for
a short time after the name, but were
removed when the old school prac-
titioners objected and gave him a very
cold shoulder. Then "physician" was
substituted and for 20 years thereafter
appeared after his name in the di-
rectory, although in later years the
word "Lorillard" was used in the list
of physicians, referring to the "Doc."

He had office hours when he first
started, but he became so intensely
enwrapped in the "discovery" and
was so everlastingly on the go all
day, that soon he had no time at
home. Before long he opened an of-
fice in Boston and though there might
not have been "millions in it," Bry-
ant's elixir sure was voted great stuff,
especially as soon as it was learned
that it should be taken as a preven-
tive—a tonic as it were. The "Doc's"
fame spread far and wide and greatly
did he prosper by all appearances.

Jim Lindergaard, an old sailor,
lived in the rear of No. 10, in a little,
old house that stood behind a small
garden that extended from Mr. Lin-
dergaard's residence out to the front
fence. As I remember him, he was

A Typical Old salt
with a broad roll to his gait, and, as
I always thought, a wooden stump, al-
though he wore his trousers long and
the stick didn't show, but he certain-
ly had a roll and a decided limp. Old
man Lindergaard we called him; he
did chores for the neighborhood and
summer evenings used to sit smoking
his black short cutty in quiet con-
tent, while he watched his vegetable
garden in front. He was a friend to
all his neighbors.

The Ferragons lived in No. 10 Car-
penter, which was really next beyond
old Lindergaard's garden. Samuel was
the father, and there were four boys—
John F., Samuel D., Edward A. and
George B. Ferguson; who lived with
their mother, a widow, when I came
on the stage. The two last named
were machinists, the others painters.
I think they all got into the Civil
war before it ended.

General Oliver moved into the
brick house in Carpenter street
the first year after he took
office as state treasurer. Then
followed the Plokmans and af-
ter them the Machados, a very tal-
ented family, whose father, Jose, was
an exiled Cuban Don before the
Spanish war. He taught Spanish and
was an official government interpre-
ter.

On the opposite corner of Carpen-
ter street from our house was the
residence of Joseph G. Sprague, who
was the cashier of the Naumkeag
bank. Benjamin Wheatland, agent
and treasurer of the Newmarket
Manufacturing company, moved into
this house after the Spragues and in
my boyhood his widow and daughter,
Miss Martha Wheatland, lived there.
With the passing of the latter, the
house became the

South Church Parsonage
and the home of the Rev. Edward B.
Atwood, pastor of that church. His
son, Dr. Frank S. Atwood, now lives
in what was the Robert Gould house
on the lower corner of Munroe and
Federal streets, opposite the house
of Captain Samuel Emery.

Our next door neighbor in the dou-
ble house opposite Munroe street was
Judge Jonathan C. Perkins of the old
Court of Common Pleas, who married
a daughter of Robert Brookhouse,
merchant. In the lower half of this
house lived Benjamin Shreve of the
famous silverware and jewelry Bos-
ton store of Shreve, Ball & Co. and
the present house of Shreve, Crump
& Low. He was the father of Dr.
Octavius B. Shreve.

Rev. Dr. Robert C. Mills, pastor of
the First Baptist church, lived in one
side of the double house on the op-
posite side of Federal, just below
Lynn street, and Nancy Curtis in the
other half. My father's family were