

# HISTORIC SALEM INC

---

## **118 North Street**

Built for  
Joseph Baldwin  
Carpenter  
& the Misses Baldwin  
Harriet B. & Caroline Baldwin  
Bookkeepers  
c.1841

Research Provided by  
Amy Kellett

2020

Historic Salem, Inc.  
9 North Street, Salem, MA 01970  
978.745.0799 | [HistoricSalem.org](http://HistoricSalem.org)  
© 2020

**118 NORTH ST. SALEM, MASS.**

**SUGGESTED HISTORIC PLAQUE TEXT:**

Joseph Baldwin

c.1841

Carpenter

**OPTIONAL PLAQUE DETAILS:**

the Misses Baldwin

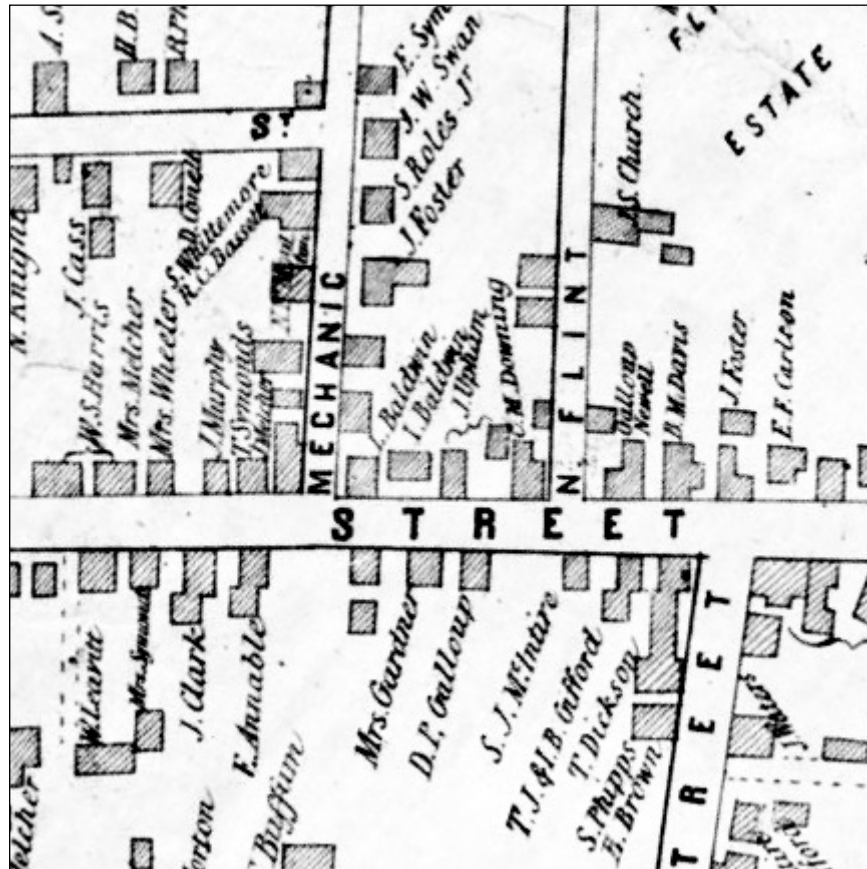
Harriet B. & Caroline Baldwin

Bookkeepers

**CHAIN OF TITLE (DEEDS) — SOUTHERN ESSEX CO. REGISTRY OF DEEDS**

1. 1840 — Book 318; Page 85 — Gorham BURNHAM to Joseph BALDWIN
2. 1940 — Book 3221; Page 450 — Est. of Harriet B. BALDWIN to Francis G. & Ruth G. HAYWARD
3. 1976 — Book 6302; Page 618 — Francis G. HAYWARD to (daughter) Ruth G. HAYWARD
4. 2001 — Book 16930; Page 81 — Ruth G. HAYWARD to Caroline LUCAS

The Greek Revival home now numbered 118 North Street was built between 1840 and 1842, but the story of the property begins decades earlier with the house located on the adjoining property, 120 North Street, on the corner of North and Osborne Streets in Salem, Massachusetts.



1851 Salem, Mass. Map — North Street

Between 'Mechanic' and 'N. Flint' Streets (now 'Osborne' and 'Foster') — L. Baldwin & J. Baldwin — Loammi & Joseph Baldwin Homes, now 120 & 118 North St. (respectively)

The older of the two homes, (on the corner of North and Osborne Streets) stands as an example of the late-Georgian Style which was prominent in New England from the early-to-mid 18th century through the American Revolution (variations of the Georgian building traditions survived in vernacular examples through the early 19th century). Loammi Baldwin (1773-1851), a carpenter, moved from Tewksbury, Massachusetts to Salem, purchased land in the 'Northfields', now

North Salem, from Samuel Symonds in May of 1797, and set to work building a home for himself and future family. Upon his marriage in 1799 to Salem native, Sarah Swan (1778-1864), the couple lived in the Georgian home on the corner of North and Osborne Streets and raised eight children (born over the course of twenty years): Loammi Baldwin, Jr. (1799-1874), Sally Baldwin (1800-1867), Mary Baldwin (1803-1887), Joseph Baldwin (1805-1867) Benjamin Baldwin (1807-1886), Emeline A. Baldwin (1816-1885), Ebenezer S. Baldwin (1816-1862), and Annie M. Baldwin (1819-1885).

Joseph, the Baldwin's fourth child and second boy followed in his father's professional footsteps and became a trained carpenter. In 1840, at the age of 34, Joseph Baldwin purchased the lot adjacent to his father's home and built the more modern Greek Revival home which now stands at 118 North Street.

[...] I, Gorham Burnham<sup>1</sup> of Gloucester [...] victualler, in consideration of Four hundred dollars to me in hand paid by Joseph Baldwin of Salem [...] do hereby give, grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the said Joseph Baldwin, and his heirs and assigns forever, Two certain Lots of land situated in said Salem: The first lying in North Fields, so called, and bounded Westerly on the Main Road leading to Danvers forty two feet & six inches; Northerly on land of Sally the wife of Loammi Baldwin Eighty three feet; Easterly on land now or late of Jonathan M. Farnham forty feet & Southerly on heirs or assigns of James Symonds, deceased, Eighty three feet [...] The other lot adjoining, is bounded fronting Northerly on the Road or lane leading from North Street to the River by Stephen Osborns house, there measuring forty feet, Easterly on land of William P. Symonds, & extending Southerly to the land of the heirs of James Symonds, then bounding Southerly on said heirs forty feet, then Northerly bounding Westerly on land of Sarah Swan to the bounds on the land aforesaid [...]<sup>2</sup>

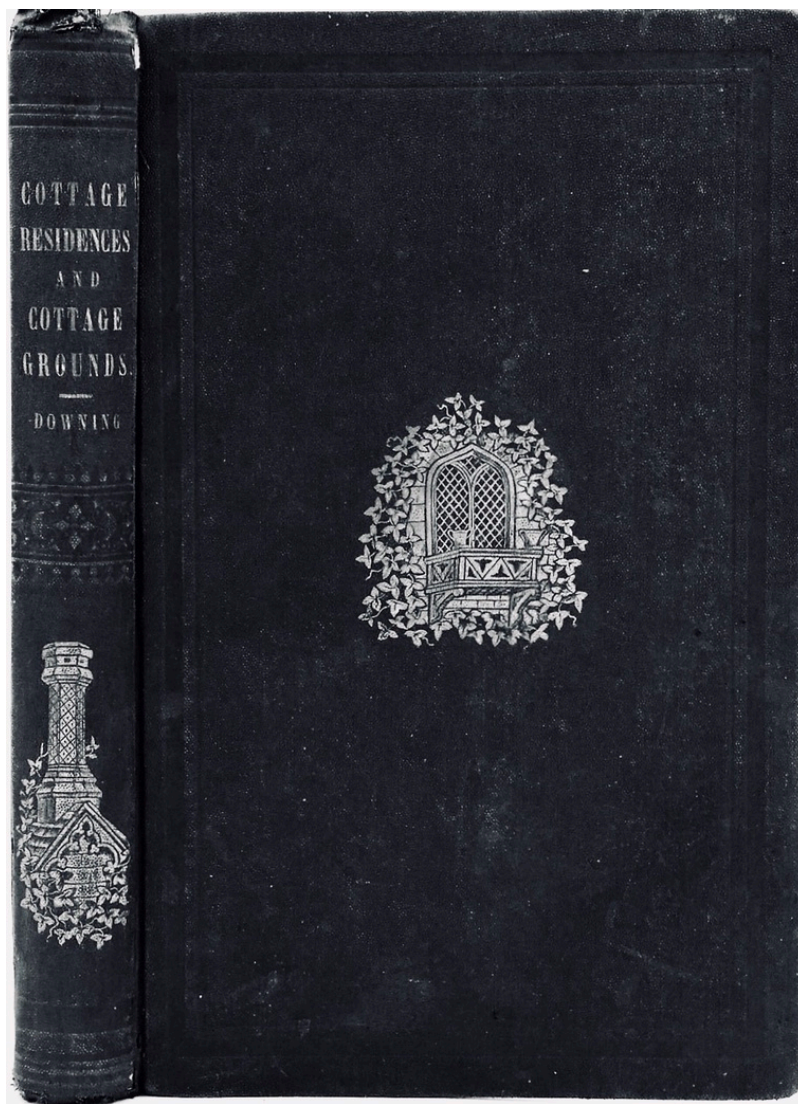
---

<sup>1</sup> Gorham Burnham (1799-1878); husband of Sally Baldwin (1800-1867); Son-in-Law of Loammi Baldwin, (1773-1851); Brother-in-Law of Joseph Baldwin (1805-1867)

<sup>2</sup> Southern Essex County Registry of Deeds; Book 318: Page 85

The following excerpts found in Virginia & Lee McAlester's text, *A Field Guide to American Architecture*, elaborate on the provenance, occurrence, details, and elaborations that define the Greek Revival Style:

By the 1840s, a new trend toward competition among several acceptable architectural fashions was taking shape. The harbinger of this movement was the publication in 1842 of the first popular pattern book of house styles with full-facade drawings—Andrew Jackson Downing's *Cottage Residences*. Downing illustrated several new fashions he considered suitable alternatives to the prevailing Greek classicism.



Original Print of Andrew Jackson Downing's '*Cottage Residences and Cottage Grounds*' — Published in 1842

Greek Revival was the dominant style of American domestic architecture during the interval from about 1830 to 1850, during which its popularity led it to be called the National Style.

The final years of the 18th century brought an increasing interest in classical buildings to both the United States and western Europe. This was first based on Roman models, but archeological investigation in the early 19th century emphasized Greece as the Mother of Rome, which, in turn, shifted interest to Grecian models. Two additional factors enhanced Greek influence in this country. Greece's involvement in a war for independence (1821–1832) aroused much sympathy in the newly independent United States; at the same time, the War of 1812 diminished American affection for British influence, including the still dominant Federal style in domestic architecture.

Most domestic examples date from the period from 1830 to 1860. Among the earliest was a Greek remodeling of the Custis-Lee House in Arlington, Virginia, completed in 1820. The style was spread by carpenter's guides and pattern books, the most influential of which were written by Asher Benjamin (*The Practical House Carpenter; The Builder's Guide*) and Minard Lafever (*The Modern Builder's Guide; The Beauties of Modern Architecture*). These illustrated building details rather than views of overall houses.

The wide band of trim beneath the cornice of both the main roof and the porch roofs is an almost universal feature of Greek Revival houses. Commonly the band is made up of undecorated boards, but complex incised decorations also occur. In gabled houses the trim band may be variously treated along the gabled walls.

As in the preceding Georgian, Federal, and Early Classical Revival styles, elaborated door surrounds are a dominant feature of Greek Revival houses. The door itself is either single or paired and is most frequently divided into one, two, or four panels. The door is usually surrounded on sides and top by a narrow band of rectangular panes of glass held in a delicate, decorative frame.<sup>3</sup>

Joseph Baldwin's purchase of land and subsequent home construction coincided with Jackson Downing's publication of *Cottage Residences*, no doubt which influenced the design of the early Greek Revival home, then numbered 64½

---

<sup>3</sup> McAlester, Virginia & Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses: Colonial Houses: Greek Revival*

North Street, in 1842. Shortly after the home was finished, Joseph Baldwin met, courted, and married Salem native Sarah L. Hood, daughter of James and Sally Hood. The newlywed Joseph and Sarah L. Baldwin welcomed two daughters in the years to come: Harriet B. Baldwin on May 30th, 1850, and Caroline Baldwin, born in December of 1852. Joseph, Sarah, Harriet and Caroline Baldwin lived a modest but comfortable life on North Street through the mid-19th century, residing adjacent to family on either side.

**Balch, James, (B. & Lamson) watchmakers, 234 Essex**  
**Baldwin, Ann, Mrs. 15 Pleasant [h 21 Federal**  
**Baldwin, Ebenezer, S. cordwainer, 66 North**  
**Baldwin, Joseph, carpenter, 64 1-2 North**  
**Baldwin, Loami, farmer, 72 North**  
**Ball, William, baker and flour merchant, 22 Central, h**  
**18 Central**

1846 Salem City Directory — Page 10

Three Baldwin brothers, Ebenezer S. (cordwainer) at 66 North; Joseph (carpenter) at 64½ North, and Loammi, Jr. (farmer) at 72 North St.

When the property at 118 North was constructed in the early part of the 1840s, Salem was in flux — the Town had officially become a City in 1836, and the economy, once supported by the booming maritime trade of earlier decades, had waned sharply since the 1820s. Long-established traditions of trade for Salem natives, such as rope-making, sail-making, and other maritime occupations gradually declined and eventually disappeared altogether. To the North, the falling waters of the Merrimack River powered new textile mills in Lowell, Massachusetts (incorporated 1823), and later mills in Manchester, New Hampshire (incorporated 1846), and Lawrence, Massachusetts (incorporated 1847). A handful of Salem capitalists saw potential of manufacturing in Salem and established various types of mills throughout Salem, including cotton sheeting, leather tanning, lead mills, and other production plants. As the 1830s wore on,

Salem’s remaining merchants took their equity out of wharves, warehouses and ships, instead investing their remaining fortunes into manufacturing and transportation, as the advent of railroads and canals diverted both capital and trade away from the coast. Salem’s leaders struggled to rebuild an economy that was sustainable for the City’s population, and the changing dynamics of life in the late 1830s forced Salem to start anew. By 1838, the Eastern Railroad (then headquartered in Salem began transporting people and goods between Boston and Salem, giving the local population a direct route to New England’s largest market. New railroad tracks ran over the middle of the Mill Pond; the tunnel under Washington Street built in 1839; and in 1840 the line extended to Newburyport.

**SALEM.**

**This is one of the shire towns in Essex County, the oldest and largest seaport in Massachusetts but one. Its Indian name was *Naumkeag*. The first settlement was made in 1626. In 1692 the witchcraft delusion prevailed in Salem, and 19 persons were hanged as witches. Gallows Hill, said to be the place of their execution, is a beautiful elevation of land in the westerly part of the city, and from its top is presented a grand view of the surrounding country.**

**Salem became a city in 1836. Railroad from Boston to Salem was opened in 1838. First Stage run between Boston and Salem was in 1782; it went to Boston one day, and returned the next.**

**POPULATION OF SALEM AT VARIOUS PERIODS.**

1762,.....	4,123
1790,.....	7,921
1800,.....	9,457
1810,.....	12,613
1820,.....	12,731
1830,.....	13,886
1840,.....	15,083
1845,.....	16,762

**BOUNDARIES OF WARDS.**

**WARD 1.** That portion of the city south of Essex street, east of Washington street, excepting South Salem.

**WARD 2.** All north of Essex street, east of Washington street.

**WARD 3.** South Salem, and all west or south of Washington, Essex, and Boston streets, as far as the town bridge.

**WARD 4.** Includes all north of Essex street west of Washington street, North Salem, and all above the town bridge on Boston street.



As a carpenter, Joseph Baldwin no doubt had a hand in constructing the rapidly developing urban landscape of Salem's earliest years as an incorporated city. The 1840s proved to be a decade of explosive growth in Salem's population and industry, including leather, textile manufacturing, and the like. In 1847 the world's largest steam-powered cotton factory building was completed along the inner-harbor shoreline of Salem: the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company. Thousands moved to Salem's newly developing neighborhoods from throughout New England, as well as a large influx of Irish immigrants fleeing the potato famine, and a developing French Canadian population in South Salem.

In 1867 Joseph Baldwin passed away from a 'Disease of the Stomach' at the age of 61 leaving a widow, 53-year-old Sarah L. Baldwin, and two teenage daughters, Harriet B., then aged 17, and Caroline, aged 15. The Widow and Two Misses Baldwin remained living in the Greek Revival home on the easterly side of North Street.

More factories and more people required more space for buildings, more roads, and more storage areas. This space was created by filling in rivers, harbors, and ponds. The once-broad North River was filled from both shores, and became a canal along Bridge Street above the North Bridge. The large and beautiful Mill Pond, which occupied the whole area between the present Jefferson Avenue, Canal Street, and Loring Avenue, finally vanished beneath streets, storage areas, junk-yards, rail-yards, and parking lots. The South River also disappeared under the pavement of Riley Plaza and New Derby Street, and some of its old wharves were joined together with much in-fill and subsequently turned into coal-yards and lumber-yards.

While the home now standing at 118 North Street witnessed the rapid industrialization that took place in Salem, the residents therein participated fully in the changing culture and dynamics during the second half of the 19th century. The Widow Baldwin's mother, Sarah Hood, lived with her daughter and two granddaughters. The Misses Baldwin, Harriet and Caroline, finished their education and entered the work force, making them among the first women in Salem with an occupation and place of work listed by their names in the City Directory. Historic records indicate that both young ladies went to work by the ages of 18 and 20; in the 1870 US Federal Census, both are listed as 'Book Keeper[s] in Store'. Neither of the Misses Baldwin ever chose to marry (nor did the Widow Baldwin ever remarry), instead the young ladies chose to build careers for themselves with Almy, Bigelow, & Webber, located by that time at 188 Essex Street in Downtown Salem.

**ALMY,  
BIGELOW &  
WEBBER,  
SALEM,**

Invite ladies of New England to inspect their

**NEW, SPACIOUS AND EL-  
EGANT STORE.**

**THE BEST STOCK OF LADIES'**  
Rich, Medium and Low-Priced

**FURNISHING GOODS**

To be found in the city.

**188 ESSEX STREET,  
SALEM.**

1875 Boston Globe Advertisement

Almy, Bigelow & Webber advertising their recently renovated store space at 188 Essex Street, which had been the store's location since c.1860, where it remained in business until 1985.

The Misses Baldwin's employer, James F. Almy, had opened the original Almy's location in Salem at the end of 1854. A 1908 publication recalling the first half-century of business at 188 Essex Street, the Proprietor is described as a pillar of the community during the latter half of the 19th century in the City of Salem:

He was always ready to recognize ability in others, and by his advice, encouragement and practical assistance led many young men and women toward success in life.

He loved Salem and had great faith in her future. So much so, that he turned away from opportunities for success elsewhere, and by self-sacrifice and constant effort built up a business remarkable in size and strength for a city of the population of Salem.

But not only as a merchant was he loyal to the city. He was active in advancing her prosperity in many ways. In 1867 he with two associates bought the Derby estate of more than a hundred acres in South Salem from the heirs of Elias Haskett Derby, the famous ship owner. This immense estate he laid out in streets and house lots which he offered for sale.



c.1908 Photo | 188 Essex St. Salem, Mass.  
Almy, Bigelow & Washburn (formerly Webber)

The bringing into the market of this tract of unproductive and unimproved property was a great stimulus in the buying of land and building of homes in that section of the city. It brought new residents to Salem, enlarged the city, increased its beauty and added greatly to the amount of taxes to flow into its treasury.<sup>4</sup>

Eventually, Almy, Bigelow & Webber (which became Almy, Bigelow & Washburn after 1885) opened four other department store locations outside of the City, and offices in Switzerland, Germany, England and New York City, all while maintaining and growing the original Almy's location in Salem.

Harriet B. Baldwin and Caroline Baldwin began working for Almy's department store shortly after their father, Joseph Baldwin, passed in 1867. It is of significant note that these two young, single women worked and supported themselves (as well as their aging mother and grandmother) in the latter half of the 19th century and into the first decades of the 1900s.

484	Koones George	50	M	M	Laborer	U		Mass
485	Gordon Abram	50	M	M	Dyer	U		New Hamp
	" Emma	48	F	M	Keeping House			Mass
	" Emma	19	F	M	At School			Mass
	" Franklin	19	M	M	Revision Store Clerk			Mass
486	Hood Sarah	78	F	M	Keeping House			Mass
	Baldwin Sarah	52	F	M	As Occupation			Mass
	" Harriet	20	F	M	Book-keeper in Store			Mass
	" Caroline	18	F	M	Book-keeper in Store			Mass
487	Rice Caroline	47	F	M	Keeping House			England
	" Richard	18	M	M	Man in Steel			New Jersey
	" Eliza J	14	F	M	At School			New Jersey
	" Doris J	12	M	M	At School			New Jersey
488	Thompson Robert	52	M	M	Garage Port	1900	1900	Mass

1870 US Federal Census I Ward 6, Salem, Essex, Massachusetts

Household number 486 marks 118 North Street — the Widows Mrs. Hood & Mrs.

Baldwin, as well as the Misses Harriet & Caroline Baldwin, Bookkeepers

<sup>4</sup> 1908 Publication. *Almy, Bigelow & Washburn: Fifty Years 1858-1908*, Digital Commons at Salem State University

Sarah 'Sally' Hood, maternal grandmother to Harriet B. & Caroline Baldwin, and mother of the Widow Baldwin lived to the age of 86, passing away from an influenza infection exacerbated by the cold winter months in January of 1879. The Widow Baldwin, Sarah L., remained living in the home at 118 North Street for fifteen more years after the passing of her mother, herself dying in March of 1895 of 'paralysis of [the] brain'. The Baldwin Sisters worked their way up through the bookkeeping department at Almy, Bigelow, & Washburn at 188 Essex Street, and by the beginning of the 20th century Harriet B. Baldwin is listed in the Salem City Directory as the department store's head bookkeeper.



c.1908 Photograph — 'Employees of Almy, Bigelow & Washburn, Inc.'

For the celebration of the company's 50th anniversary, the employees of the downtown department store posed for a group portrait. Undoubtedly pictured (but not identified) are the Baldwin Sisters, Harriet and Caroline.

Caroline Baldwin passed away, unmarried and childless, at the age of 73 in 1925 — her older sister Harriet had retired some ten years before and remained living in the home at 118 North Street, while also renting the house to other single women, including widows and fatherless daughters. Harriet Baldwin lived to the

age of 89, passing away on the 26th of June, 1939, at which point her estate passed to the Sisters' relatives on their father's side, siblings Roger F. Nichols (1881-1966) and Marion W. Nichols (1883-1978). The circumstances regarding the property at 118 North Street and a portion of the Baldwin's history is detailed in an affidavit recorded in 1940 with the Southern Essex County Registry of Deeds:

[...]I, Marion W. Nichols of 153 Federal Street, Salem [...] do on oath depose and say that I am the grand-niece of Joseph Baldwin, who purchased the property situate at 118 North Street in said Salem from Gorham Burnham by deed dated April 10, 1840 [...] I know from my own knowledge and from family records that the said Joseph Baldwin died in Salem December 5, 1867; that he left a widow, Sarah L. Baldwin, and two daughters, Caroline and Harriet B. Baldwin, as his only heirs at law; that Sarah L. Baldwin died March 21, 1894 never having remarried, and leaving as her only heirs at law the said Caroline Baldwin and Harriet B. Baldwin; that Caroline Baldwin died March 22, 1925 never having married, and leaving as her only heir at law the said Harriet B. Baldwin; that the said Harriet B. Baldwin died June 26, 1939 and her estate has been probated [...] Harriet B. Baldwin at the time of her death was the sole owner of the premises situate at 118 North Street in said Salem.<sup>5</sup>

Recorded on the same day, husband and wife Francis G. & Ruth G. Hayward purchased the property for twenty-five hundred dollars through the Executor of Harriet B. Baldwin's estate, Roger F. Nichols. For the first time since the property was built a century earlier in 1840, the home at 118 North Street no longer belonged to the Baldwin family. The house evidently proved to be a comfortable home for the Hayward family too, as it remained in the family through the remainder of the 20th century until it was finally sold in 2001 to Caroline Lucas.

---

<sup>5</sup> Southern Essex County Registry of Deeds; Book 3221: Page 449