

Historic Salem incorporated

OFFICE AT OLD TOWN HALL

POST OFFICE BOX 865 SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS 01970 / PHONE (617) 745-0799

5 SCHOOL STREET

~~PICKERING SCHOOL~~ COGSWELL SCHOOL

built in 1862

GEORGE C. LORD, architect

SIMEON FLINT, mason

Research by,
Joyce King
July 1987

*"to preserve Historic Sites, Buildings and objects,
and to work for the education of the community
in the true value of the same."*

5 SCHOOL STREET

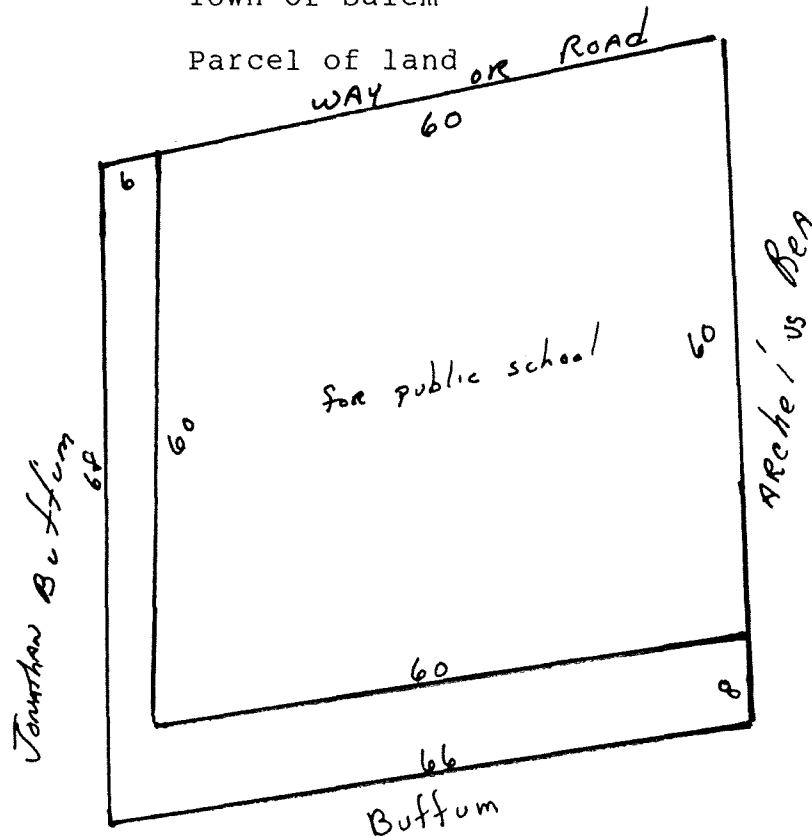
School street is a very early highway. It was called ye highway in 1685; the path in 1707; a lane or highway in 1790; Dark lane in 1798; the road leading from Obadiah Groce's corner to Frye's mills in 1801; street from North street to Frye's mills in 1808; schoolhouse lane in 1833, and School street as early as 1851. (Northfields, Salem, in 1700 by Sidney Perley)

BOOK 181 PAGE 231

DATE - May 5, 1807
CONSIDERATION - Twenty five cents
GRANTOR (seller) - Jonathan Buffum
GRANTEE (buyer) - Town of Salem
DESCRIPTION - Parcel of land for the purpose of the town to erect a building on it for a public school

BOOK 1818 231

DATE - May 5, 1807
CONSIDERATION - \$52
GRANTOR (seller) - Jonathan Buffum
GRANTEE (buyer) - Town of Salem
DESCRIPTION - Parcel of land



As required, a school was built and occupied by August 24, 1807 when the Rev. William Bentley reports, in his diary, that Mr. Dodge's new school in North Fields has 55 pupils. His next report, on November 16, 1807, states "The New School in Northfields had about 50 Scholars present. The Master's list is greater. Mr. Dodge has made a good beginning. The School house cost about a 1000 Dollars & the Subscribers have given about half that sum."

In 1841 a more commodious building was erected on the corner of North and Dearborn streets. The land on School street being sold to Devereux Dennis on February 28, 1842. This new school, on North street, stood until 1861 when it was destroyed by fire. After the fire, arrangements were made for the students to attend the Fowler street school.

On April 10, 1862 an order appropriating \$10,000 for the erection of a brick building for the Pickering Grammar School was read a second time and passed. Many sites for this new school had been discussed by the Committee in Public Instruction. The corner of Dearborn and Walter, the corner of North and Orne and the "Old School House Lot" on the corner of School and Buffum streets were among those mentioned. The order was passed and was subsequently adopted, so the location was finally settled. This was the site of "Master Dodge's School."

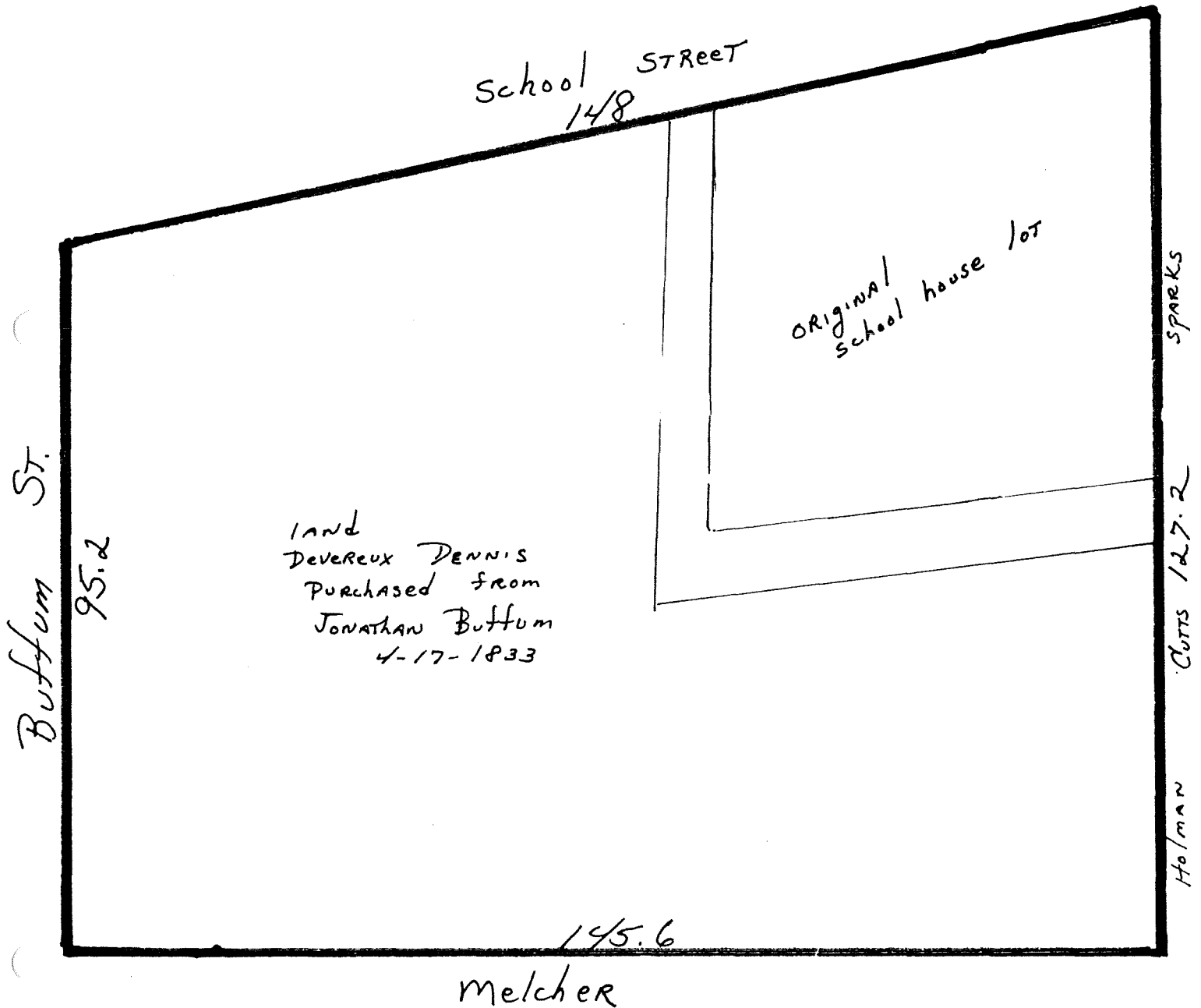
BOOK 636 PAGE 117

DATE - April 11, 1862

CONSIDERATION - \$1,300

GRANTOR (seller) - The heirs of Devereux Dennis

GRANTEE (buyer) - The City of Salem



December 15, 1862 - "The New Pickering School House, in School street, North Salem, is completed, and only requires a little interior preparation and clearing up to be ready for the scholars; and two classes will enter on Monday next and occupy the first floor. This school house cost less than ten thousand dollars, and less than half the amount required for the Bentley School House. It is nevertheless a neat, comfortable and well built structure, convenient in its arrangement, and in every way satisfactory to the people of the district. There is a spare apartment in the basement which will be finished into a Ward room. It contains four school rooms - two on the lower and two on the second floor - each 29 by 31 feet. The dressing rooms are convenient, accessible, and abundantly commodious. The land is rather limited, though the street room is ample, and the amount of travel such as to endanger neither life nor limb. A little more grading will probably be required, for the descent from the entrance to the yard is somewhat steep. The schoolhouse is finely situated, and will receive all the pure air there is going. There is no other school house in the city (and few other buildings, in fact) that command so fine a prospect as that to be obtained from the rooms on the second floor. The houses and spires of the city, the town of Beverly, Salem Harbor, and lots of other sights are spread out in pleasant profusion. Gaz. (The Salem Register)

The Gazette's comparison of the cost of the Pickering School house with that of the Bentley, conveys an erroneous impression. The latter building is twice as large as the former, contains double the number of rooms, and will accommodate twice the number of scholars. Estimating the cost of the two buildings at the rate per pupil, the Bentley was a little the cheapest. However, this is not of great consequence. Both are fine buildings, admirably adapted to educational purposes, and each section may well be proud of its own, and admire its neighbor's. The Pickering School house was designed by G. C. Lord Esq. architect, of Salem, and was built by Simeon Flint, mason, and McIntyre & Barker, carpenters. The mechanical execution of the edifice is unusually good, and has been very prompt. The cost of the building including furniture, is little within \$10,000. Obs. " (The Salem Register)

In 1892 a new Pickering School was built on North Street. This building was abandoned for grammar school use and was occupied by one primary class and a kindergarten.

(City Documents)

The school was renamed in honor of General William Cogswell (1838-1895). He was a brigadier general in the Civil War, twice mayor of Salem, and member of Congress.

GEORGE C. LORD

Obituary - April 13, 1903

George C. Lord died at his home, 269 Bridge street, last night, after a long illness. He was born in Salem September 18, 1835, and was a son of the late Andrew and Mary (Horton) Lord. He was an architect by profession, and for many years a member of the firm Lord and Fuller of Salem. He was a veteran of the war, and served his country as a member of Co. I Sixth Ma. reg. enlisting July 15, 1864 and being mustered out October 7, 1864.

He was a invalid in his home several months ago when the dwelling caught fire, and before he could be removed his hair as burned off his head, his neck scorched, and his hands blistered. He leaves a widow.

Age 67 years, 6 months, 26 days.

SIMEON FLINT

Obituary - July 14, 1876

The death of Col. Simeon Flint, which took place on Wednesday afternoon, is an uncommon calamity, and one that will not soon be forgotten. The circumstances attending his death are so distressing, the sacrifice of his life was so wanton and unnecessary, that the public mind is deeply stirred. Our readers already understand, that, on the morning of the fourth, a pistol shot from the police boat, on the North river, hit Col. Flint in the leg, while he was sitting near North Bridge. He was immediately taken to his home, and laid upon what proved to be his death bed. The wound in itself was not threatening to life, but erysipelas and typhoid soon set in, and no medical skill could save him, and after eight days of suffering he expired.

The loss of Col. Flint to our community is not a light one. He was an honorable specimen of that valuable class in the community, now unfortunately becoming too rare, a mechanic who had passed through all the stages of apprentice and journey work to that of master workman. As a mason and builder he had been an employer here many years, and of late years had been largely engaged in the manufacture of concrete pipes for drain and aqueduct work, and had undoubtedly obtained a comfortable competency. As a military man, commander of the Mechanic Light Infantry, Colonel of the Salem regiment, and holder of intermediate commissions in earlier life, his services were

much valued; and as an honest, intelligent and independent member of both branches of our City Council, he won the universal regard of his associates. In the Masonic and Odd Fellow associations also, he had many friends; and all together, the circle which will miss him is very wide. Col. Flint was descended from the North Reading branch of the family, but was a native of Winchester, N.H., where he was born January 18, 1817.

He came to Salem when quite young, and has resided here during all of his mature life. He leaves a wife, four sons and one daughter, to mourn his untimely end.

Age 59 years, 5 months, 24 days.

NOTES:

The recollections of E. Symonds gives this note of interest:

"Of the new Pickering School house on School street, I recall that when the walls had been raised about ready for the roof timbers, that a bunch of us were playing about the building, when one boy started to run across the upper layer of bricks; the mortar was soft and while the boy caught himself, the bricks came down with a crash that quickly collected a crowd. Next morning when Mr. Simeon Flint, the mason, showed up, he announced he would pay ten dollars for the name of the boy who did it. No information was coming, and the incident was closed. Recently in looking at the top near the north corner on School street, I could see where the bricks fell off."

(Northfields)

REPORT ON THE GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.

The Second Visiting Committee, having oversight of the Grammar Schools, respectfully present their Annual Report.

The Table prefixed presents a condensed statement of the general organization and arrangement of our Grammar Schools, no essential change in this respect having been made since the Phillips School was established in 1842.

It is thought by some who are well experienced in such matters that we have too many Grammar Schools; that if the number were reduced and the several schools thus made larger, not only would a reduction of expense be effected, but greater efficiency would result from the superior facilities for classification and supervision which a large school presents as compared with a smaller. There are two ways in which this object might be effected: the present districts might be enlarged, or in those sections of the city where separate schools for the sexes are established these might be united; or both methods might be combined. With regard to the second, we believe that the present arrangement is so generally and properly satisfactory in this particular as to render the proposed change extremely undesirable. Without venturing to decide the much-vexed question—whether “mixed” or “separate” schools are preferable—we will only say that an undue fastidiousness in this respect seems more natural and more excusable than that fanciful theorizing upon the advantages of educating the sexes together, which, to us at least, seems to lack a reasonable foundation, either in the results of actual experience or in a knowledge of human nature. And, although believing that the evils as well as the benefits of the “mixed system” are often exaggerated and sometimes imaginary, we give it as our conviction that whenever in a given locality separate schools can be gathered, of such size as to admit of convenient classification, this method is decidedly preferable. With regard to our own schools we do not find such disadvantage in any case, resulting from either plan, so serious as to indicate the expediency of a change.

It is worthy of consideration, however, whether the Epes School may not, at some time not very distant, be properly discontinued. The

building now occupied by this school is an unsubstantial structure, in ill-repair, upon leased land, almost without the limits of the city. It is hoped that whenever the return of peace and prosperity shall justify the requisite outlay, a new edifice may be so located and built as to accommodate this, united with the Hacker School, which now occupies an ancient and inconvenient building, very badly situated.

The new building erected for the use of the Pickering School was occupied, without formal ceremony, on the 15th of December, a little more than a year having elapsed since the destruction of its predecessor by fire. This is a neat and substantial brick building, standing upon the elevated ground in School street, the site being the same that was occupied by the first house erected for this school. The edifice has two stories besides a basement. There are in all four school-rooms, two in each story, each measuring 31x29 feet, and 14 feet in height, with very convenient dressing-rooms and entries. Each room is intended to accommodate about fifty pupils under the charge of one teacher. The building is in every respect suitable and convenient; being well warmed, lighted and ventilated,* properly furnished, and pleasantly located. It is an ornament as well as an advantage to the district, and highly creditable to the liberality of the City Council, to the wisdom of its building committee, and to the skill and faithfulness of the architect and builders. The cost of the building and its appurtenances was about \$10,800; of the land \$1,300.

This school was established in 1807, in which year the first building, mentioned above, was erected. This was removed in 1841 to the lot on the corner of North and Dearborn streets, where it still stands, close by the site of the second building, which was burned, as stated above, in 1861.

The school has suffered during the past year from the want of proper accommodations, having been scattered in various parts of the city, which inconvenience seriously affected its welfare in many respects. But, these difficulties being happily obviated, we feel assured that, under its faithful and competent teachers, with the co-operation of parents and the fostering care of the Board, it may soon regain its former excellent condition.

* Robinson's ventilators are used, and are recommended to all who desire a simple and effective method of supplying public buildings with pure air.

This is the second Grammar school-house,—the Bentley being the first,—which has been constructed with a separate room for each teacher. We agree in the opinion, expressed by the committee of last year in their report, that this plan is decidedly preferable to that in which recitation rooms are connected with large halls; and we concur with them in recommending that such of our other school buildings as are worth remodelling should be so altered as to conform to this plan. In the Phillips School especially, we believe that the discipline would be so greatly facilitated and improved by such a change, that we hope the report of next year will chronicle the fact accomplished.

How should parents co-operate in the work of education? None are more deeply interested in the solution of this problem than are parents themselves, by one of whom we will suppose the question to be put; and we would most earnestly, though respectfully, thus reply:—

Let your children be punctual and constant in their attendance. The evils of irregularity in this respect are too little understood or considered. A half-day lost—or even a single recitation omitted—may often, like a “dropped stitch,” cause a serious weakness, an unsightly blemish, in the fabric of education, increasing, as the work, or the wear, goes on. It is a still greater injury to the school or class, which should move on with steady step, and unbroken ranks. If one drops behind, the whole class must wait, or the laggard must be left to his fate. Provide promptly and cheerfully, as you would food or clothing, whatever books or other conveniences may be needed for use at school. The want of these is sometimes almost as detrimental as the absence of the pupil himself.

Be a friend to the teacher. Visit him in his school, and give him your sympathy, encouragement, and approval. Whatever may be your own position, treat him as at least your equal. You need not be *intimate*: perhaps better not so. But be cordial, affable, and deferential. Confer freely with him concerning your child, nor forbid him to speak of frailties as well as perfections. *Trust and respect the teacher.* Exhort your child at home to honor his teacher, as you would have him taught at school to honor his father and mother. Teachers are but human: they must have their share of faults and weaknesses; but do not dwell upon these, nor make them a theme for discussion, either in the family or more publicly. It can do no good: it will do much harm. If you think you have serious cause of complaint, suspend your judg-

ment until you have made full enquiry, and have, courteously and calmly, sought an explanation from the teacher himself. If you are still dissatisfied, you have the right, and it may be your duty, to submit your case to the committee.

Uphold the teacher's authority; it is his right. You have devolved upon him the most important of your duties; you cannot withhold the power and the rights which pertain to that duty, and still hold him responsible for its faithful performance. When the pilot assumes the direction of a ship, the prudent commander yields to him the deck and the helm, himself only seeking to enforce the pilot's orders. Do the same by the teacher who is to guide your child across the shoals of ignorance.

With this trite and homely advice, often given, too often unheeded, yet never needless, we close this subject.

Three faithful and efficient assistant teachers have retired from service in our Grammar Schools in the course of the year. The place of one of these it was thought unnecessary to fill. The other vacancies were supplied by the appointment of two graduates of the Salem Normal School, one of whom had done good service in one of our Primary Schools; and the other had approved herself in a similar manner in an adjoining town.

To say that the value of our public schools depends upon their usefulness were to utter a truism offensive to common sense. Yet there are those who sneer at every doubt that may be expressed with reference to the *use* of any study or exercise which may be pursued in our schools. They tell us that Education is not merely the acquirement of useful knowledge or art, but that it has a higher purpose,—that it disciplines and strengthens the mind, and produces enlarged views, and they conclude by denouncing that narrow utilitarianism which recognizes dollars and cents as the only standard of value. Yet they seldom condescend to explain to us *how* those desirable results are produced, or whether the same degree of benefit may not be gained, at the same time and by the same methods, which are used for imparting instruction of a directly practical value. A competent authority, Secretary Boutwell, says, “It may well be doubted whether studies that are purely disciplinary should ever be introduced into our schools. There are useful occupations for pupils, that, at the same time, tax and test the

COGSWELL

The Cogswell is a two story building with a masonry veneer and an all wood frame interior. Built 94 years ago, the Cogswell serves grades K-2 in four rooms. Three other schools, the Pickman, the Pickering, and the Sheridan are within two blocks of the Cogswell.

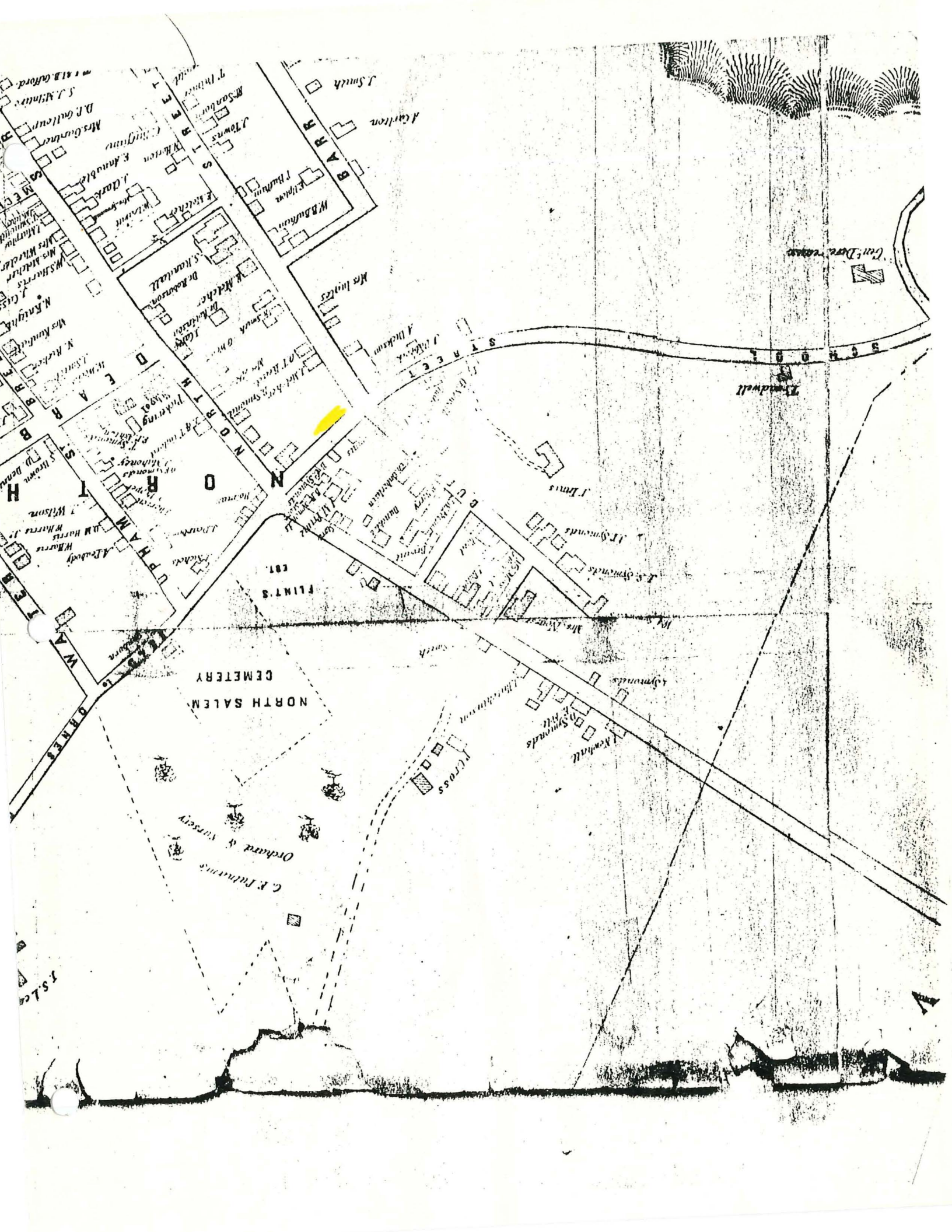
During the 1930's, the Cogswell was renovated and an additional staircase was added. The interior of the building has been recently painted.

The Cogswell is served by an outmoded, hand-fired coal and manually controlled heating system. Rooms are lighted by incandescent bulbs in globe type fixtures. The toilet rooms are in the basement and the drinking fountains are in these rooms.

The classrooms have movable furniture but are deficient in tackboard, storage space, book shelves, and work space. No lunch room or all-purpose room is available.

The site area of about 4/10 acre provides very little space for outdoor play.





NORTH SALEM
CEMETERY

FLINT'S
EST.

WATSON STREET

ELM STREET

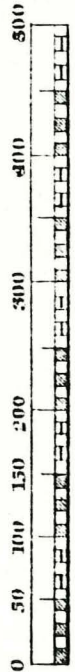
NORTH STREET

Brookwell

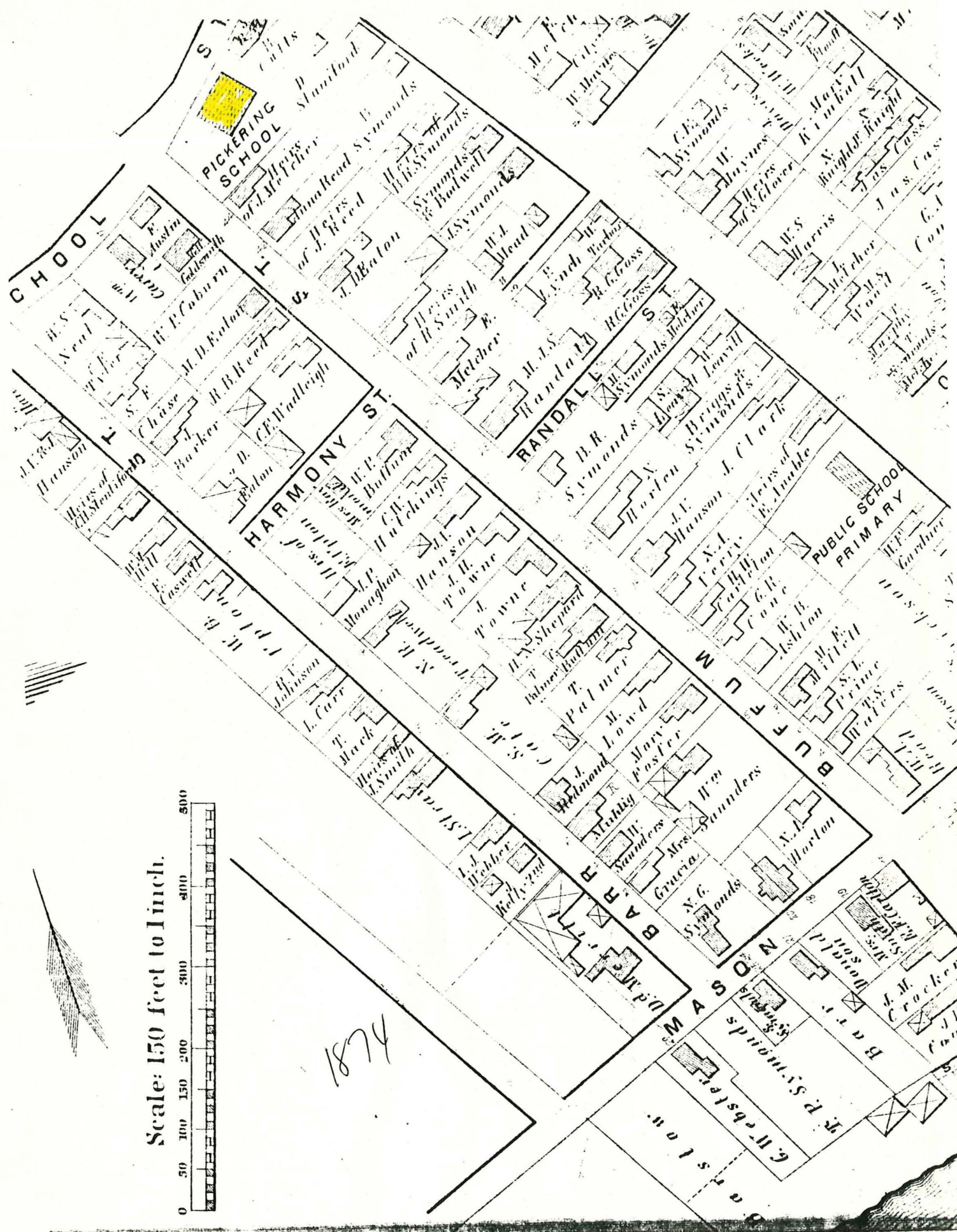
Cal. Dore

1854

Scale: 150 feet to 1 inch.



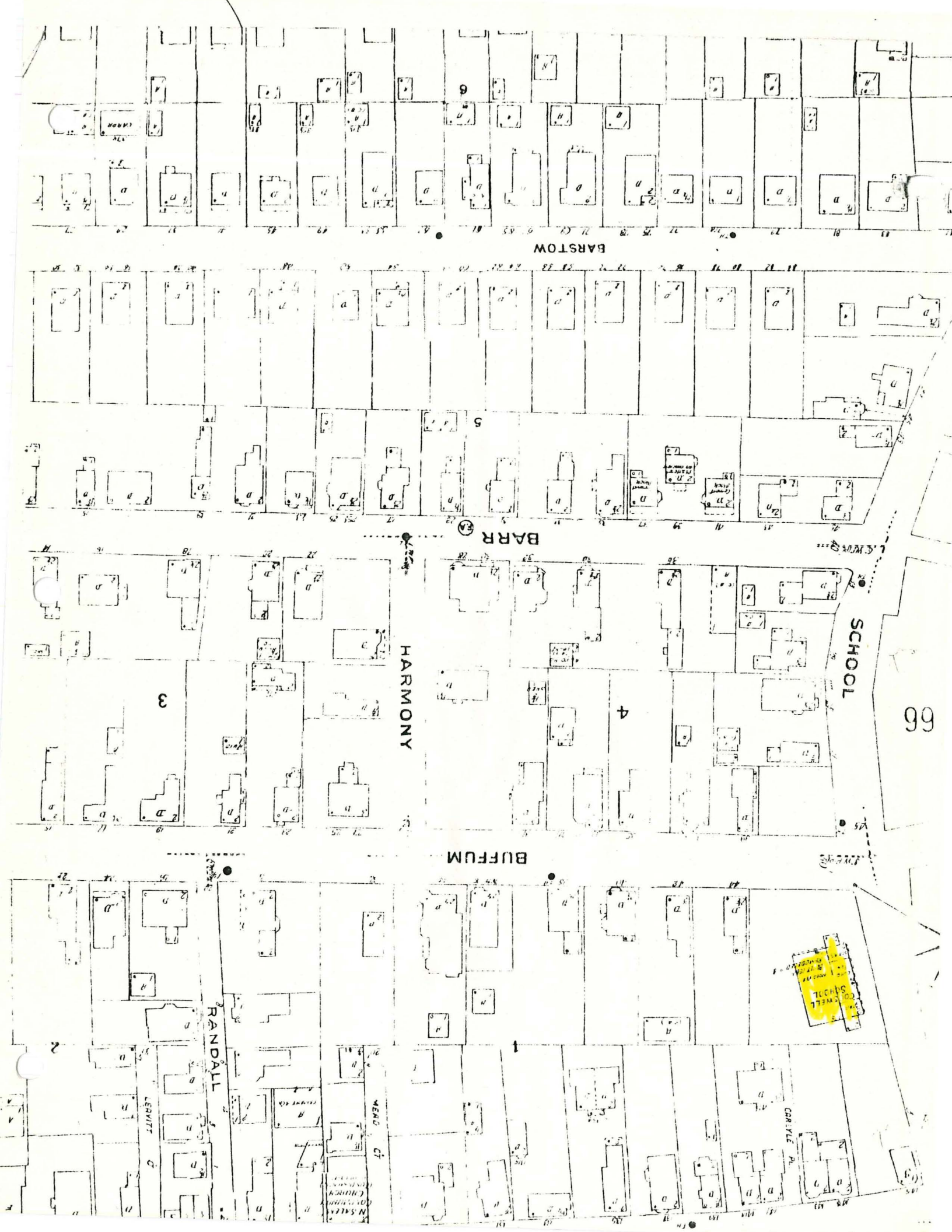
1874



8

1893





BARSTOW

BARR

BUFFUM

HARMONY

RANDALL

SCHOOL

66

SCHOOL

N. S. L. CHURCH

LEVITT

W. S. C.

CARVILLE

5

4

3

1

SALMON - 5, SCHOOL ST.



PICKERING SCHOOL, 1861. ^[2] Later, Cogswell School.