

Land and House, 6 North Pine Street, Salem, Massachusetts

This, the "Higginson House", was moved here by 1847.

On 5 July 1845 the Naumkeag Bank, for payment of \$4017, sold to Nathaniel Frothingham Jr and James C Stimpson, both of Salem, a tract of land "with all the buildings thereon except such as may belong to John Ward," fronting about 90' on Essex Street and running back 250-300' towards Federal Street (356:267). Messrs Frothingham & Stimpson soon laid out a private way through this tract; by 1854 this way was known as North Pine Street.

In the 17th century Henry Reynolds of Salem owned the tract; on 6 July 1689, for 40 shillings paid to him annually for the rest of his life, he sold to John Pickering (1658-1722) of Salem his dwelling house and one acre of land (8:154). Mr Reynolds died soon after, whereupon Mr Pickering came to own the premises outright. About 20 years later, on 29 Jan 1716/17, Mr Pickering (who evidently lived here at the time) sold the westward side of his homestead (fronting about 42' on Essex Street) for 45 li to Robert Buffum, a blacksmith (41:44). In 1722 Mr Pickering died possessed of the remainder of the estate; by his will of 20 Nov 1721 he specified that this property, after the death of his wife Sarah, was to go to their son Timothy. On 7 May 1739 Deacon Timothy Pickering, his mother Sarah and his wife Mary, for 650 li granted the homestead to Henry Williams, Salem mariner; it fronted about 79' on Essex St, ran back by the "Quaker meeting house land" about 230', and amounted to 90 poles of land with the dwelling house (which stood close to the street at the west side of the estate) and outbuildings (76:53).

Mr Williams died possessed of this estate, which descended to his son Samuel Williams, merchant, who on 28 Mar 1794 mortgaged it for 332 li to his brother George Williams Esq; it was Samuel's residence and included a dwelling house, barn, store and other buildings; this mortgage was discharged on 9 Nov 1814, after the death of the Williams brothers (157:151). On that date, 9 Nov 1814, Israel Williams, merchant and administrator of his father Samuel's estate, for \$2600 granted the premises (fronting about 93' on Essex St, and including the "dwelling house and all the buildings thereon") to William Wait Oliver, Salem merchant (205:18). Mr Oliver mortgaged the premises 25 years later, 23 Sept 1839, for \$2500 to Elizabeth King, Salem widow (315:78). By 1 July 1845 Mrs King owned the property outright, for on that date for \$2500 she assigned the mortgage and sold the estate to the Naumkeag Bank (355:230).

As has been mentioned, the Naumkeag Bank sold the premises four days later, 5 July 1845, for \$4017 to Messrs Frothingham and Stimpson (356:267).

This house was moved to its present site sometime between 1845, when North Pine Street was laid out, and 14 Dec 1847, when James C Stimpson twice mentions it in a deed of adjacent property to Nathaniel Frothingham Jr (391:169). By 1849 it was numbered 7 North Pine Street and was rented out to Mr Ebed S Bowditch, Boston expressman (see Salem Directory of 1850, compiled in 1849). Mr Bowditch was still living there in 1850, but by 1852 he had moved down to 402 Essex Street (see Salem Directory for 1853).

Further confirmation of the location of this house by 1849 is provided in Nathaniel Frothingham Jr's deed of 10 Mar 1849 to Bernard Maguire, wherein Mr Frothingham reserves to the "owners and occupiers of the Higginson House" certain rights to a nearby reservoir (408:243); by Mr Frothingham's deed of 9 June 1860 to Mrs Sheridan, it is clear that this is definitely the same house referred to in 1849 as the Higginson House (608:146).

On 19 June 1854 James C Stimpson for \$1330 granted to his partner Nathaniel Frothingham Jr his right to a lot (now the lots at #4 and #6 North Pine Street) "with the two dwelling houses and all other buildings thereon" (505:230). Eight years later, on 9 Dec 1862, Mr Frothingham for \$1000 granted to Susan K Rogers, wife of Albert Rogers, Salem laborer, the "dwelling house and all other buildings" on a lot of land fronting 35' 7" on North Pine Street (645:83). This is the first conveyance in which 6 North Pine Street was sold as a separate entity.

Having outlived his wife, Sarah Ropes (Gray), Nathaniel Frothingham died in 1867, leaving a total estate worth \$94,000 to many brothers and sisters; evidently he and his wife had no children (#39770). Mrs Rogers owned 6 North Pine Street at the time of her death, which occurred 29 May 1879; she willed the house to her husband Albert for his lifetime, and to her daughters, Susan Kendall Rogers and Martha Lamson Rogers; at that time the house & land were appraised at \$1000 and the furnishings of the house (of which there is a detailed list) at \$77.70. (#52031).

Martha L Rogers died 11 Dec 1921, at which time her right to the house passed on to her only heir-at-law, sister Susan K Rogers. Susan K Rogers died possessed of the premises on 18 Mar 1936; by the terms of her will, the estate passed to both the Salem Hospital and the Salem Seaman's Orphan and Children's Friend Society (#184467). On 18 Aug 1937 these two organizations sold the estate to Eva E Marchant, wife of Henry J Marchant, of Salem (3130:580). Mrs Marchant owned the premises for 38 years, selling on 12 Aug 1975 for \$19,000 to Mr & Mrs William C Cody of Beverly (6172:400). Mr & Mrs Cody in turn sold the estate on 9 Sept 1976 for \$35,900 to Don C Ridgway and his wife Jeanne P Ridgway, of Salem, the present owners (6277:700).

Clearly, this 18th-century style gambrel-roofed house was moved to this spot by 1847--but from where? The only clue to its origin is the name "Higginson House," which implies that it was identified with the Higginsons, for 200 years one of Salem's leading families. The last male Higginson in Salem, Lt. Col. John Higginson, the Essex County Register of Deeds, died in 1774 at the age of 54 years. His widow, Mehetable (Robie) Higginson survived him until her death in 1818, aged 94 years. The Higginsons had just one surviving child, Mehetable (1764-1846), who inherited her parents' house, which stood where the Salem Public Library stands today, at 370 Essex Street. Like her mother, Miss Higginson conducted a private school; she died 19 July 1846, aged 82 years, the last Higginson in Salem.

In her will of 29 Jan 1818, Miss Higginson left her Salem estate to Joseph Sewall of Boston (#42244). On 30 Sept 1846 Mr Sewall sold this estate for \$2720 to Caroline Plummer of Salem (375:55). Ten years earlier, 21 Ap 1836, Miss Plummer had bought the estate next easterly of Miss Higginson's for \$4000 from the Dodge family (295:162). The combined purchases gave her an estate of two dwelling houses on a lot fronting 106' 8" on Essex Street. Sometime between the purchase of 1846 and Miss Plummer's death in 1854, one of these two houses was removed from its original lot, for on 4 Dec 1854 Miss Plummer's estate was sold for \$8000 to John Bertram, Salem merchant, and at that time there was only one dwelling house on the combined Higginson and Dodge lands (505:203). It is reasonable to believe that Miss Plummer would have retained the more valuable of the two houses: since she paid \$4000 for the Dodge place and only \$2720 for the Higginson estate, the Dodge house was probably the more valuable. Incidentally, John Bertram, after his purchase of 1854, removed Miss Plummer's house and erected the brick mansion that now serves as the Main Library.

I believe that Miss Plummer purchased the Higginson estate in 1846 in order to add its land to the Dodge estate, to make for a large, spacious, landscaped estate. The Higginson house itself did not fit into her plans, and so, rather than destroy it, she sold the house to Messrs Frothingham and Stimpson, who removed it to their new development just a few blocks up Essex Street. It has stood on North Pine Street ever since. I cannot prove this to be true, but it seems to me to be entirely possible and even probable.

If this house did indeed come from 370 Essex Street, it may be that it dates back to the days of John Ruck, a Salem blacksmith whose family had owned the property since the 17th century. On 6 Dec 1730 Mr Ruck sold a house and land to Joseph Cook Jr. a

fisherman (61:226). On 6 June 1734 Mr Cook sold the premises to Samuel Sibley, a cordwainer (64:189); Mr Sibley died in 1749, and from 1762-70 his heirs released & granted their rights to the homestead to Jane Ropes, widow of John Ropes (107:259; 113:24; 124:171; 122:136). On 7 Nov 1772 Mrs Ropes granted the house and its land for 320 li to John Higginson, Esq (122:269).

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