

House & Land at 6 South Pine Street, Salem, Mass.

This gambrel-roofed house was moved to its present site sometime between 1831 and 1851. Tradition has it (as reported by Mrs Irene Norton of the Essex Institute) that it was originally located in South Danvers (now Peabody, Mass.).

On 1 Jan 1806, four men (Edmund Johnson, cabinet-maker; Charles Cleveland, merchant; Jabez Smith, housewright; and Henry Osborne, merchant) made an indenture formalizing the laying-out of a "street or way (28' wide) by the name of Pine Street" through their respective land holdings (178:98). This road is now known as South Pine Street.

Edmund Johnson owned the land on the western corner of Pine & Warren Streets, running up Pine Street 143'; this land, along with a dwelling house & other buildings thereon, he mortgaged for \$2000 to Joseph Sprague, Salem merchant, on 27 Jan 1806 (177:136). Mr Johnson died in 1811, having paid off very little of the mortgage; Mr Sprague therefore became the owner of the property.

On 25 May 1826, Mr Sprague for \$524.15 mortgaged to Larkin Thorndike Esq, Salem, the lot, "together with all the stone and materials for building thereon" (evidently having razed or removed the dwelling house that had been there) (240:248). On 6 Oct 1830, Mr Sprague, then of Danvers, for \$334 sold his right to the empty lot to Abijah Chase, Salem gentleman (258:275); on 19 Nov 1830, Mr Chase bought Mr Larkin Thorndike's right to the same property for the same price, \$334 (258:276). And so by the end of fall 1830, Abijah Chase had come into full possession of the property.

Mr Chase, a wealthy merchant with extensive holdings in Salem, was a prominent Quaker, and served as an Overseer of the Salem Monthly Meeting of Friends. On 18 Mar 1831, for just \$334, he sold to Philip Chase, treasurer of the Salem Preparative Meeting, and to the Overseers of the Salem Monthly Meeting of Friends (meaning the Quakers) the piece of land that he had recently purchased of Messrs Sprague & Thorndike (this deed has evidently never been recorded at the Registry of Deeds; it may be found at the Essex Institute, in an envelope labeled "Salem, Mass. Churches Friends (Quakers), Miscellaneous Papers 1808-83" under the file of uncatalogued Essex County towns). This deed was more or less a gift, enabling the Quakers to build a new meeting house (the third in their history) on this land, which they did in 1832.

From 1831 to 1903 there are no deed transactions involving this property: it stayed in Quaker hands. Between 1831, when there was nothing on the land, and 1851, when McIntyre's atlas of Salem was published, this house was moved to its present site (it is clearly shown on the 1851 atlas, with outbuildings attached). It is almost surely an 18th century house, and may have been the gift of one of the Quakers from South Danvers (which had always been something of a Quaker stronghold). Or-

dinarily, the real estate assessments of the time would show the presence of a house on the site, but since the Quakers were a religious sect, their property was tax-exempt, and so was never assessed. Perhaps the house was used for visiting Friends or for poor Quakers.

By 1874, the Quakers were renting the house to Charles A Hobbs, a grocer whose place of business was 391 Essex Street; in the year 1874, the house was numbered 2 South Pine Street, while in the years following it was numbered 6 South Pine.

Since writing the above, I have discovered that starting in 1869 or before (but after 1866), George W Bennett, a harness-maker, lived in the house at 6 South Pine Street and served as the Quakers' sexton. He lived there up to 1872 at least.

Like Mr Bennett, Mr Hobbs acted as sexton while living in the house; he continued to live there until 1883, when Mr & Mrs Augustus Buxton and Henry Davidson Jr moved in; Mr Buxton died 16 July 1883, and his widow Abby J Buxton continued to live there, along with Mr Davidson, who was gone by 1890. In 1891 Mrs Buxton evidently lived there alone, but from 1893-1904 she shared the house with Milton Coffin. By 1905, Mrs Buxton (having lived there more than 20 years) was gone, and in that year and 1906 Mr Coffin had the place to himself. He was succeeded in 1907 by a Mrs Pitman (all of this may be found in the Salem Directories).

On 14 July 1903 the Overseers of the Salem Monthly Meeting of Friends (the Overseers) released the meetinghouse/dwelling house property to Messrs Paige, Buxton & Jones, trustees and members of the Salem Preparative Meeting (SPM), (1714:215); these trustees then mortgaged the premises to the Overseers (1714:217). On 5 Feb 1904, the Overseers released to the trustees all their rights as the mortgagee in this property (1734:183). Two weeks later, the trustees sold the premises to George H Jones of Salem (the premises being the dwelling house and outbuildings, with a lot of land fronting 50' on South Pine Street); evidently the Quakers retained possession of their meeting house and its land (1734:185).

On 1 Oct 1907, George H Jones of Salvers sold the house & land to W Carlton Jones, also of Danvers (1897:43). Mr Jones owned it two years, selling on 9 Dec 1909 to Rebecca S Miller, wife of William Miller of Salem (1996:376). Mr & Mrs Miller sold the premises to Mary C, wife of James J Kelley of Salem on 23 June 1913 (2217:283). Mr & Mrs Kelley, having moved to Marion, Mass., sold the place 16 Sept 1915 to John J Connelly of Salem (2308:446); that same day Mr Connelly (or O'Connolly) granted the property to Gertrude B Howley of Salem (2308:447). G.B. Howley owned it 20 years, granting it 31 July 1935 to attorney Elmer W Liebsch (3042:333); he immediately granted it to Gertrude B Howley and Agnes V Cragen, their survivor (3042:334). On 3 Aug 1959 their survivor, Agnes V Cragen, granted the property to herself and Hugh J O'Donnell, the present owner (4593:293).

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21 Jan 1977