

# Historic Salem incorporated

OFFICE AT OLD TOWN HALL

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

31 CHESTNUT STREET

Built for

PICKERING DODGE, merchant

circa 1828

Research by,  
Joyce King  
September 1986

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



### Carriage House/Garage

At the rear of the garden sits the Carriage House currently used as a 2 car garage. Entrance is from Warren Street.

The garden is large and privately landscaped containing an abundance of plantings as well as a brick floored arbor.



**HUNNEMAN  
& COMPANY**  
RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE

23 SUMMER ST.  
SALEM, MA 01970  
BUS (508) 741-4404  
FAX (508) 745-5706  
RES. (508) 745-1948



**JOYCE C. COOK, CRB**  
Real Estate Broker

**WALTER H COOK**  
Sales Associate  
(508) 488-6732 PAGER

### Geography

Walking distance to commuter rail

1 mile from Atlantic Ocean

5 miles from the finest Yacht and  
Country Clubs

18 miles to Boston

### Expenses

Assessed for \$389,500

Taxes are \$4,927.18

3 Gas Fired H.W. Systems

Main House       \$2,200

Apartment         \$600

Office              \$400

### Improvements

New paint and paper throughout

Copper gutters

Main house slate roof recently  
repaired

Rear section - asphalt/rubber,  
replaced 1990

Newer heating/electrical, plumbing and  
security

## Introducing



**31 Chestnut Street  
Salem**

**\$450,000**

In the heart of the McIntyre Historic District on one of America's most famous streets, this 1829 Federal Row Mansion evokes a style that is for most only a dream.

Why not let it be your reality!

### 31 CHESTNUT STREET

"The only triple block on Chestnut Street was built by Pickering Dodge about 1828 in what had been Judge Putnam's mowing field, and is said to have been for Dodge's daughters. His son-in-law, John Fiske Allen, took over the completion of the block when Mr. Dodge died in 1833 and lived in #31 for a long time. Mr. Allen was a horticulturist of note and had a greenhouse on Flint Street where the Bowditch School is. Since 1914, it has been the home of Dr. Walter G. Phippen.

The middle block was the home of Charles Sanders, Captain Charles Endicott and Pickering Dodge, Jr., until 1864, when the George Osgood family bought it and remained there until the 1940's. Endicott was master of the ship Friendship when it was savagely attacked by Malays in 1831 on the coast of Sumatra.

The western end was the home of Charles W. Upham, Mayor of Salem in 1852, and later of Asahel Huntington and his son Arthur, each of whom served as Mayor of Salem. It is probably the only house in Salem which has been home to three mayors.

The house is a three-story plus pitch roof, brick structure, the tallest on the street, and the only triple block; it represents the beginning of the kind of row housing which was to become common on city streets in later years. The rectangular, stone window lintels are reeded and the three

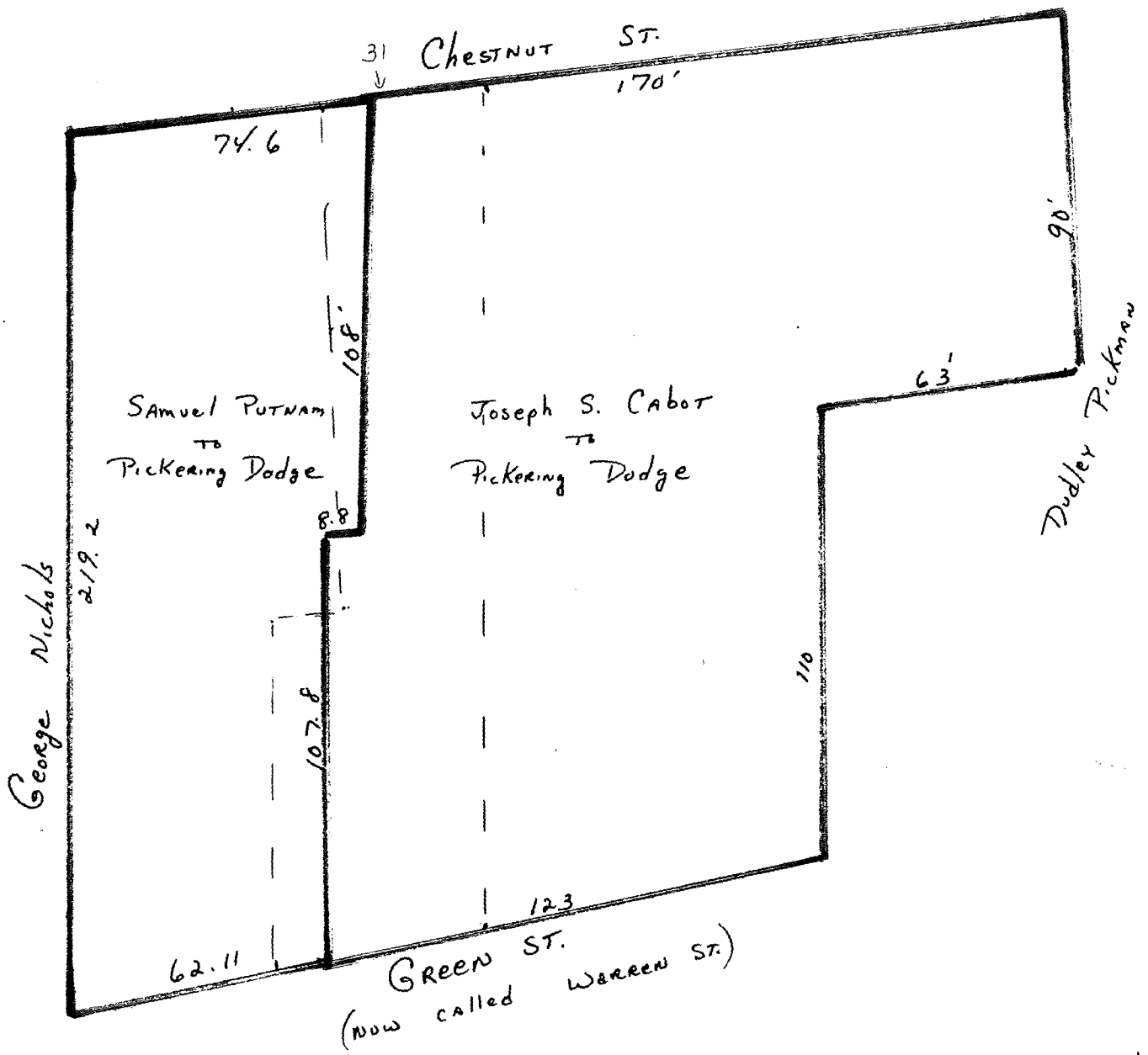
matching porticos have Ionic columns. The wooden cornice is a series of large wooden beads. In the yard of #35 there is a gable-end-to-the-street, wooden carriage house which was converted into a small house just before World War II; the old woodwork and pedimented entrance came from the Chase House which was at 21 Federal Street and demolished at that time." (Salem Historic District Study Committee Investigation)

BOOK 230 PAGE 170

DATE -	September 2, 1822
CONSIDERATION -	\$1,700
GRANTOR (seller) -	Samuel Putnam
GRANTEE (buyer) -	Pickering Dodge
DESCRIPTION -	Lot of land

BOOK 230 PAGE 171

DATE -	September 6, 1822
CONSIDERATION -	\$3,700
GRANTOR (seller) -	Joseph S. Cabot
GRANTEE (buyer) -	Pickering Dodge
DESCRIPTION -	Parcel of land



(Broken line indicates the 1833 bounds of 31 Chestnut St.)

Pickering Dodge died on August 16, 1833. The inventory of his real estate (probate #7950):

Mansion house Chestnut St. \$11,000  
Block of three houses \$10,000  
Block of two houses and lot of land Warren St. \$4,500  
Store and land Fish St. \$2,500  
Wharf and store South Salem \$400

BOOK 271 PAGE 140

DATE - November 16, 1833  
CONSIDERATION - None given  
GRANTOR (seller) - D. L. Pickman and A. Devereux  
executors to the estate of Pickering  
Dodge  
GRANTEE (buyer) - Lucy P. Dodge  
DESCRIPTION - The eastern tenement (boundaries as  
shown by broken lines on previous  
page). The middle and western  
tenements were conveyed to Pickering  
Dodge Jr.

Lucy P. Dodge married John Fiske Allen on December 16, 1833. The title, to 31 Chestnut St., was changed to include Lucy's new husband on December 28, 1833. (book 273 page 91) Lucy died on August 6, 1840. On April 1, 1841 the property was placed in trust for their only child Pickering Dodge Allen. Pickering Dodge Allen died in 1863 as a result of injuries received in the Civil War.

BOOK 667 PAGE 113

DATE - April 30, 1864  
CONSIDERATION - \$1  
GRANTOR (seller) - William A. Lander executor to the  
estate of Pickering Dodge Allen  
GRANTEE (buyer) - John F. Allen  
DESCRIPTION - Land and building

BOOK 2253 PAGE 411

DATE - March 28, 1914

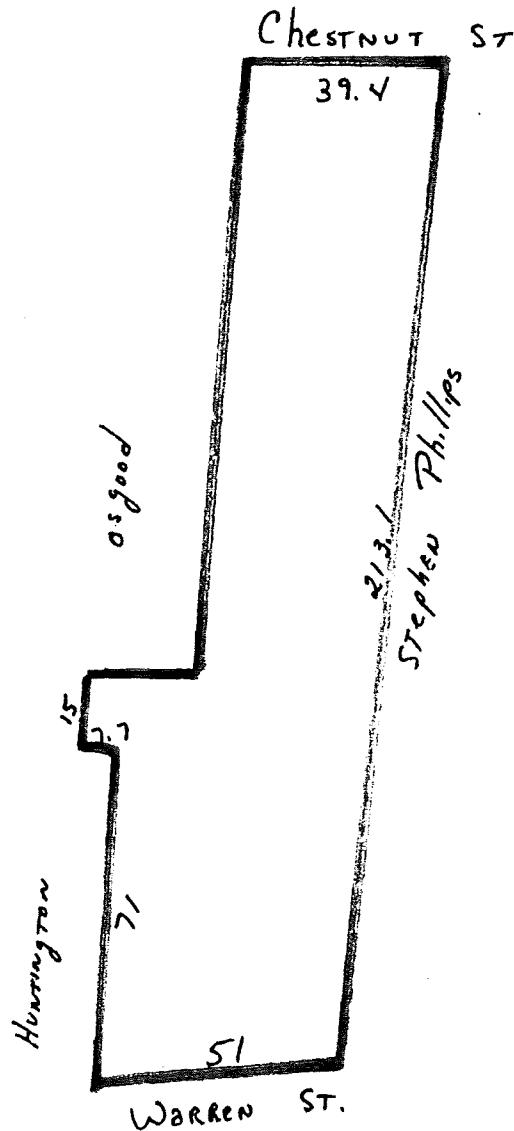
CONSIDERATION - \$1 and other valuable consideration

GRANTOR (seller) - Edward L. Millett, the duly appointed and qualified trustee under the will of John Fisk Allen

GRANTEE (buyer) - Walter G. Phippen

DESCRIPTION - Land and building

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - The same premises conveyed to said John Fisk Allen by deed of William A. Lander, dated April 30, 1864 and recorded in book 667 page 113. Also about seven square feet of land adjoining conveyed by Asahel Huntington November 21, 1853 book 486 page 75.



BOOK 5905 PAGE 683

DATE - September 15, 1972

CONSIDERATION - \$57,200

GRANTOR (seller) - Merchants Warren Bank, Franklin A. Hebard and Robert J. Phippen executors of the will of Ethel P. Phippen

GRANTEE (buyer) - Peter and Phyllis Cove

DESCRIPTION - Land and building

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Being the same premises conveyed to Walter G. Phippen from Edward L. Millett on March 28, 1914 recorded in book 2253 page 411.

BOOK 6820 PAGE 694

DATE - May 20, 1981

CONSIDERATION - \$168,000

GRANTOR (seller) - Phyllis and Peter M. Cove

GRANTEE (buyer) - Judith C. and Mark A. King

DESCRIPTION - Land and building 31 Chestnut St.

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Being the same conveyed to Phyllis and Peter Cove on September 15, 1972.



BOOK 7736 PAGE 391

DATE - April 30, 1985  
CONSIDERATION - \$333,000  
GRANTOR (seller) - Mark and Judith C. King  
GRANTEE (buyer) - Christopher and Susan Burns  
DESCRIPTION - Land and building 31 Chestnut St.  
PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Being the same premises conveyed by Peter and Phyllis Cove on May 20, 1981.

Reference to book and page are deed books at the Registry of Deeds. Probate numbers are cases at Probate Court. Both offices are located in the same building on Federal St. All maps in this report are not meant to be exact, just for illustration purposes.

PORTRAITS IN THE PEABODY MUSEUM

45. PICKERING DODGE, 1778-1833. Copy by George Southward, 1868, of an oil portrait by James Frothingham, 1820. Canvas, 29½ in. x 24½ in. Half-length seated figure, three-quarters to left, eyes front, dark complexion, dark brown hair. White stock, high-cut white waistcoat, double-breasted dark coat, brass buttons. Left arm rests on arm of red upholstered gilt frame chair, left hand holds open letter. Dark background. M 315. Neg. 5037.

*Gift of the family of Pickering Dodge, 1868.*

Pickering Dodge, Salem merchant, was born 8 April 1778, the son of Israel Dodge and his second wife, Lucia (Pickering) Dodge. As a very young man he was interested in mechanical pursuits and Dr. Bentley, in describing "Dr. Oliver's organ, the first ever built in Salem" says that "a Mr. Pickering Dodge had begun one upon a smaller scale." Overseas commerce, however, soon engaged his attention and he became sole or part owner of a very large number of merchant vessels. Among them was the brig *Caravan* which carried Salem's first missionaries to India; the ship *Izette*, the first whaler fitted in Salem, which made five whaling voyages, 1831-1842; the *Palladium*, intended for use in establishing a merchant line to Liverpool; the ships *Bengal*, *Bonetta*, *Gov. Endicott*, *Mandarin*, *Rome* and *Venus*; the brigs *Ganges*, *Herald*, *Indus*, *Mary*, *Republican* and *New Hazard* and many other vessels. Mr. Dodge was associated with several other merchants in these ventures and was a most active, intelligent and honorable citizen, universally esteemed. He was a member of the Salem Marine Society, which he joined in 1817. He married 5 November 1801 Rebecca Jenks, born 19 February 1781, the daughter of Daniel and Mary (Masury) Jenks. She was a woman of rare excellence and beloved in all her social and domestic relations. Mr. Dodge died 16 August 1833 and his wife 30 March 1851.

[See *Salem Vit. Rec.* (printed), I, 255, III, 302, 304, V, 213; *E. I. H. C.*, XV (1878), 301, 302; *Salem Ship Reg.*, 17, 23, 28, 68, 74, 85, 91, 93, 113, 116, 133, 139, 155, 159, 193; *Laws S. M. S.*, 134; Bentley, *Diary*, I, 427, IV, 410, 582, 625, 627; Dodge, *Genealogy of the Dodge Family*, I, 94, 143; Ellery and Bowditch, *Pickering Genealogy*, I, 273.]

2. EDWARD ALLEN, 1735-1803. Oil by unknown artist. Canvas, 16½ in. x 13 in. Part of portrait mentioned by Dr. William Bentley as having been cut down by him in 1816. Head and shoulders, three-quarters face to left. Brown hair, white stock, turned-over collar. Blue coat and waistcoat. Gray background. M 371. Neg. 2253.

*Gift of Misses M. C. and E. O. Allen, 1891.*

Edward Allen, merchant and shipmaster, was born at Berwick-on-Tweed, England, about 1735. In 1757 he came to America, settling at Salem, and on 18 January 1759 married at Salem Ruth (Hodges) Gardner, widow of Israel Gardner and daughter of Gamaliel and Sarah (Williams) Hodges. Three children were born of this union. Mrs. Ruth Allen died about 10 October 1774, and in 1778 Captain Allen married Margaret Lockhart of North Carolina. Among the vessels commanded by Captain Allen were the schooners *Baltick* and *Industry*, the ship *Antelope*, the brig *Neptune*, and others engaged in coastwise and foreign trade. In 1793 it was recorded by Dr. Bentley that Captain Allen owned several negro servants and kept a shop for the sale of general goods. Captain Allen's mansion house on Derby Street, at the corner of Hardy Street, was an imposing building for its times, boasting a high turret which was blown over during a storm in 1781. He owned much other real estate in Salem, and a short time before his death purchased a farm at Salem Neck for summer occupancy. He joined the Salem Marine Society in 1766 and served as its Deputy Master from 1802 until his death, 27 July 1803. Mrs. Margaret (Lockhart) Allen died on 13 August 1808.

[See *Essex Co. Prob. Rec.*, Docket 394; *Salem Vit. Rec.* (printed), III, 45, 402, V, 43, 45; *E. I. H. C.*, IV (1862), 76; *Laws S. M. S.*, 121, 125; *Early Shipping*, 9, 10, 122; Perley, III, 330; Bentley, *Diary*, I, 49, 102, 109, 127, 332, II, 36, III, 24, 27, 34, 378, 395, IV, 383; Gardner, *Thomas Gardner and some of his descendants*, 147.]

3. EDWARD ALLEN, JR., 1764-1845. Oil by Charles Osgood, 1844. Canvas, 29¼ in. x 24¼ in. Half length portrait of elderly man. Head three-quarters to right, eyes front. Light brown hair tied at back, short side whiskers, white stock, double-breasted dark coat, buttoned up to stock. Dark background. M 1462.

*Gift of Mrs. Duncan Galbraith, 1909.*

Edward Allen, Jr., was born 21 March 1764, the son of Edward and Ruth (Hodges) Allen. He followed the sea at a very early age, sailing on many foreign voyages. He was part or sole owner of the brig *Jason* and the brigantine *Hector*, besides several other Salem vessels. He became a member of the Salem Marine Society in 1797, and on 2 October 1798 married Anna Fiske, born 12 June 1770, the daughter of John and Lydia (Phippen) Fiske. Captain Allen purchased the beautiful farm at Salem Neck formerly owned by his father and there planted a market garden and constructed an artificial fish pond, wharves and a summer house. By previous losses in Spain and by his business failure in 1810, Captain Allen's resources were greatly depleted and his more elaborate plans for the improvement of his farm could not be fulfilled. Captain Allen died at St. Michael's Island in the Azores on 5 December 1845, surviving his wife whose death occurred in Salem on 6 March 1826.

[See *Essex Co. Prob. Rec.*, Docket 394; *Salem Vit. Rec.* (printed), I, 34, 302, III, 45, V, 43; *E. I. H. C.*, IV (1862), 136, LXVII (1931), 301; *Salem Ship Reg.*, 37, 70, 95, 186, 194, 200; *Laws S. M. S.*, 129; Bentley, *Diary*, III, 395, 430, 432, 453, 455, 509-11; Pierce, *Fiske-Fisk Genealogy*, 103.]

4. JOHN FISK ALLEN, 1807-1876. Oval miniature in oil by unknown artist. Dimensions, 3¼ in. x 2⅝ in. Waist length portrait of young man, almost full face. Thick, dark, curling hair, parted near center, short side whiskers, dark eyes. High collar, white stock, frilled shirt, white waistcoat,

dark blue coat with brass buttons. Dark blue-gray background. M 372. Neg. 5001.

*Gift of Misses M. C. and E. C. Allen, 1892.*

John Fisk Allen, merchant and shipowner, the son of Edward and Anna (Fiske) Allen, was born in Salem on 14 July 1807. As a young man he entered the employ of Pickering Dodge, the eminent Salem merchant, and sailed as supercargo and also as master of various Salem vessels to India and other foreign countries. He joined the East India Marine Society in 1832 and the Salem Marine Society in 1836. On retiring from the sea, he entered mercantile life, and was at one time a partner with his brother Edward Allen. He was part owner of the barks *Cavalier* and *Trenton*, the brigs *Curlew* and *Gentleman*, the schooners *Virginia* and *William Penn*, and the ship *Gov. Endicott*. John Fisk Allen was an original member of the Essex Institute, and its Vice President from 1864 to 1867. He became greatly interested in horticulture, was a life member of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, and published a treatise on grape culture and a large folio monograph on the *Victoria Regia, the great water lily of America* (Boston, 1854). This great lily was among the many rare and beautiful plants he cultivated in his extensive greenhouses on Warren Street, Salem. On 16 December 1833 he married Lucy Pickering Dodge, born in Salem 17 March 1810, the daughter of Pickering and Rebecca (Jenks) Dodge. She died near Richmond, Virginia, on 6 August 1840, and on 13 October 1842 Mr. Allen married as a second wife Mary Hodges Cleveland, born 6 April 1817, the daughter of George and Elizabeth (Hodges) Cleveland. The second Mrs. Allen died at Salem 14 November 1873, and Mr. Allen died 18 October 1876.

[See *Salem Vit. Rec.* (printed), I, 35, III, 46, V, 44; *E. I. H. C.*, LXX (1934), 172; *Salem Ship Reg.*, 29, 37, 70, 74, 186, 194, 200; *History E. I. M. S.*, 63, 71; *Laws S. M. S.*, 136; *Salem Register*, 19 October, 9 November 1876; *Salem Observer*, 21 October 1876; Ellery and Bowditch, *Pickering Genealogy*, II, 461; Cleveland, *Cleveland Genealogy*, I, 502, II, 1078.]

5. NATHANIEL ANDREW, 1813-1864. Oval miniature by unknown artist. Dimensions, 2¼ in. x 1¾ in. Portrait of a young man, head and shoulders. Head three-quarters to right, dark hair, short side whiskers, dark eyes looking front. High collar, black stock, square gold and black enamel shirt pin. Dark gray coat and waistcoat, brass buttons. Reddish-purple background. M 3908. Neg. 5001.

*Purchase, 1933.*

Nathaniel Andrew, master mariner, the son of Samuel and Martha (Patterson) Collins Andrew, was probably born at Salem about 1813. He married on 23 May 1839 Abby E. Durgin of Boston, who was born at Sanbornton, N. H., about 1814, the daughter of William and Dolly (Weeks) Durgin. Mrs. Andrew died at Salem 26 March 1870. Captain Andrew joined the Salem Marine Society 1 June 1844. He sailed on many foreign voyages and commanded, among other vessels, the bark *Brazil* in 1843 and 1845, and the bark *Dragon* on two voyages to Buenos Ayres in 1850 and 1851. He also sailed with the same vessel to China in 1852. On 20 January 1864, while in command of the fine Boston-built ship *Elvira*, sailing with a valuable cargo from Calcutta to Boston, Captain Andrew was caught in a terrific hurricane in the Bay of Bengal. Out of a crew of twenty-five men all but three were drowned. Among those lost were Captain Andrew and the first mate, said to be his brother.

[See *Essex Co. Prob. Rec.*, Dockets 6042, 31407, 49384; *Salem Vit. Rec.* (printed), III, 51, IV, 443; *Salem City Hall Rec.*, VI, 263; *E. I. H. C.*, LXI (1925), 130-1; *Salem Ship Reg.*, 24; *Laws S. M. S.*, 138; *Salem Gazette*, 15 April 1864; Putnam, III, 74-5; Runnels, *History of Sanbornton, N. H.*, 237.]

6. WILLIAM AUSTIN. Oval pastel by A. Diezen, 1806. Dimensions, 11 in. x 9 in. Head and shoulders. Profile facing left. Dark hair tied at back of neck. High white stock, ruffled shirt, dark coat. Medium background. M 4063. Neg. 4999.

*Purchase, 1934.*

— ESSEX INSTITUTE  
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

4. MRS. JOHN FISKE ALLEN (Lucy Pickering Dodge Allen), 1810-1840. Oil, by Chatelaine, Rome, Italy. Canvas, 54 in. x 40 in. Standing figure of a lady, three-quarters length. Dark brown hair parted in center, low-cut black evening dress. Nearly full face, tilted to left, right hand raised toward shoulder, left arm and hand hang down. A thin scarf is held in both hands. Red curtain and landscape with columns in background.

*Gift of the Heirs of Miss Louisa Lander, 1920.*

Mrs. Lucy Pickering (Dodge) Allen, the daughter of Pickering and Rebecca (Jenks) Dodge, was born in Salem on March 17, 1810. She married on December 16, 1833, John Fiske, son of Edward and Anna (Fiske) Allen, who was born in Salem, July 14, 1807, and died in Salem, on October 18, 1876. Her father, Pickering Dodge, was a distinguished Salem merchant engaged in foreign commerce and was the sixth in descent from William Dodge, who came to Salem from Somersetshire, England, in 1629. Mr. Allen was a member of the East India Marine Society and in later life was a noted horticulturist, being the first in Salem to propagate the night-blooming cereus and the first in New England to flower the *Victoria regia*. Mrs. Allen died at Richmond, Virginia, on August 6, 1840, leaving one child, Pickering Dodge Allen, who was born in 1838 and died in 1863. [See *Essex Inst. Hist. Colls.*, vol. 2, pp. 166, 287, vol. 14, p. 272; Ellery and Pickering, *Pickering Genealogy*, vol. 2, pp. 461, 743.]



MRS. JOHN FISKE ALLEN  
Lucy Pickering Dodge Allen  
No. 4

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of July, 1853, flowered in the green-house of J. Fiske Allen on Chestnut Street, a plant of the Victoria Regia, the great water lily of the Amazon, the seed having been obtained of Caleb Cope of Philadelphia, and planted in the early part of the December previous. The following season, 1854, Mr Allen enlarged his house and tank, and flowered several plants of this lily - the seed of some were obtained from England and planted in March previous, the others from the American plant. The climate in this house being so modified by the surroundings that it was admirably fitted for the growth of other tropical plants; and Mr Allen arranged a collection of fine orchids, Amaryllis, Calla, Nelumbium and other species of lilies which grew well and produced beautiful flowers, and thus adding greatly to the attraction of this structure, which was for several weeks thronged with many visitors to witness the first blooming of the Victoria in the New England States. Mr Allen has published the result of his observations on this plant in a beautiful folio volume, finely illustrated by W. Snare, from specimens grown at Salem.

In 1843, Mr Allen commenced the erection of his greenhouses on Dean Street, which soon were greatly extended. To us to embrace several hundred feet of glass, and in which were grown about three hundred varieties of grapes, including several Valuable seedling table peaches, cherries and other fruits.

# GIANT TROPICAL LILY GROWN HERE DESPITE ITS DELICATE NATURE

Pads Strong Enough to Hold a Child and 60  
Pounds More Cultivated by John Fiske  
in Chestnut Street Garden *May 22, 1924.*

Editor of The News: Imagine a pond lily with pads averaging four or five feet across; a leaf five inches in thickness, so big and strongly ribbed underneath that the gardener at Kew Royal Gardens placed his little daughter, a child weighing 42 pounds, on one, together with a counter balance of 57 pounds more and the great leaf supported both "extremely well."

Some lily—what!

Yet such a lily grew and budded, and blossoms one summer of the long ago, in the garden behind the present home of Dr. Walter G. Phippen on Chestnut street, to the intense wonder and amazement of hundreds of Salemites, not alone, but men, women and children from all around, even from beyond Boston, who thronged the garden every afternoon and evening all that summer until, as estimated, their number must have exceeded thousands who saw that wonderful lily pushing its way up through the water till at last the immense broad pad floated on the surface and there upon it unfolded and burst into bloom the most magnificent flower measuring 15 inches across its hundred petals—exhaling a delicious perfume resembling the fragrance of the pineapple.

And the wizard who produced it was John Fiske Allen, a much respected retired merchant, shipmaster and supercargo, who, having sailed the seas with profit to himself and his father-in-law, Pickering Dodge, most eminent of Salem merchants, gave up the quarter deck and counting room to devote himself to administering his late chief's affairs, completing the brick block which Mr. Dodge had begun next west of the present residence of Dr. Octavius B. Shreve—originally the Pickering Dodge mansion.

Mr. Allen took for his own home the western dwelling in the block which Dr. Phippen now occupies and there in his gardens and hot houses he raised the

**Lovely Night Blooming Cereus**  
orchids, amaryllis, camelias, callas, reulumbin, and other species of lilies.

It was E. Hasket Derby, famous merchant of Salem, who first produced the night blooming Cereus Grandiflora here in the hot houses at his mansion. That was on Monday evening, July 9, 1810, but J. Fiske Allen bloomed the second of that rare, delicate flower in his hot houses in Salem. When I was a boy it was quite the thing for the fortunate possessor of a Cereus about to bloom to invite his or her chosen intimates to a night blooming Cereus party to watch the unfolding of the flower after sundown until the full bloom filled the room with its dainty, delicious perfume. Even then, this nocturnal blooming was considered a great rarity, although now the plants are more common.

Turning down old Dean street from Essex, to go to the ancient Hacker school, there was the high fence round Joe Pond's yard, from whence the snakes escaped that set all up-town shivering, on one corner, and "Billy" Stearns' house on the other. Willard Goldthwaite built his new house, the present modern residence, on the site of Joe Pond's family mansion; the old Stearns house still remains. The Stearns garden occupied all the eastern side of old Dean street down to John Culliton's new house at the corner of Dean and Federal streets. Behind the Goldthwaite house still stands the two and one-half storied wooden dwelling that was there when I was a school boy. Then there was a small court leading in from Dean street and a yellow wooden house at the head of the court, as I recall. Next beyond, standing back from the street, was an old black house, which gave no sign of even an acquaintance with the painter's brush. In this house lived upstairs "Mrs." Jane Bretteny, whose appearance and dress was that of "a real old maid, although in the directory

She Styled Herself "Mrs. Bretteny." She had at one time lived on Boston street. Downstairs in this old black house, "Tom" Ashby, Thomas W., shoemaker, had his cobbler's shop. He was a brother, I believe, of Elias Ashby, the tanner who lived on Federal street.

And then there was the long yellow painted wooden hot house that covered in J. Fiske Allen's "graperies." Van Amburgh's or P. T. Barnum's big top hid no greater mysteries than did this yellow building in Allen's hot-houses. How we boys would have revelled at a peep inside that mysterious enclosure; for here, under its hundreds of feet of glass, as Mr. Robert Manning—a brother of Richard C—who lived in Dearborn street, told the Massachusetts Horticultural society, Mr. Allen tested and raised 400 varieties of foreign grapes, which was believed to be a greater number than had been tested under glass by any other one cultivator in the world, which led to a remark that "we have no occasion to hold Mr. Allen's memory in grateful remembrance." J. Fiske Allen was very successful in his hybrids. He brought out upwards of 200 varieties of grapes, among which is the famous Salem grape, some times known as the "Allen grape."

And then there were luscious peaches galore, apricots and nectarines and an infinite variety of other fruits which Mr. Allen had so arranged in the planting, that when one group had done ripening, another took its place. With all this information seeping out between the clapboards of that old yellow wooden wall, what wonder that boyish curiosity was stimulated and that my

nation invested the long rapery with undreamed poetry of fruitage under its glass roofs.

Gone is the yellow house up the lane, the old black house where Mrs. Jane Bretteny used to entertain her young neighbors of the days when she was young. In their place stands the unromantic prosaic big brick Bowditch schoolhouse, and where those wonderful grapes and luscious peaches were raised with so much care is the arid and

Dusty Yard of the Big School. Between the Bowditch and the northwestern corner of Dean and Federal streets there has been no material change; the Rufus B. Gifford house and its neighbor still remain.

To an ardent enthusiast like John Fiske Allen, the word from Philadelphia that for the first time in this country Caleb Cope had succeeded in raising from seed the imperial lily of the Amazon, the Queen Regia, was enough to electrify his ambition—to stir his soul. What Philadelphia could do, Salem, in spite of its bleak New England location and its distance north of the equator would attempt. It was Cope's boast that he had the first flower of this beautiful lily cultivated in the United States when the Victoria bloomed for the first time in North America, Aug. 21, 1851, at his estate at Springbrook, Philadelphia. Great was the popular interest. It was declared to be the farthest north that this magnificent tropical water lily could be grown and bloom in full maturity.

It was Haenke, the famous botanist, sent by the Spanish government to investigate as a botanist the vegetable productions of Peru, floating in a canoe with Father La Cueva down the Rio Mamero, one of the great tributaries of the Amazon, discovered in the marshes beside the stream, a flower so extraordinary that he fell on his knees in rapture. Yet it was well nigh 40 years later that the world knew of its existence, which seemed to our botanists remarkable, in that so strange a plant which is now familiar to the explorers in all the rivers east of the Andes, should not have been noticed by the ordinary traveller and "yet," as remarked, "it is without any exception, if we take it as a whole—leaves, flowers, size, color and graceful position in the water, especially when viewed with the usual accompaniments of tropical American aquatic scenery,

#### The Most Beautiful Plant known to Europeans."

M. D'Orbigny, French botanist. In 1823, journeying with Gurani Indians on the Parana, 900 miles from the River Platte notice the sedge covered with green which the Gurani told him was plant, "Krupe," literally "water platter."

The ladies of Corrientes, a town not far from the work of the Parana and Paraguay rivers, regarded as a great luxury cakes made from the farina obtained from grinding the dried seeds of the Victoria Regia after the plant had ripened.

It was the English botanist, Sir R. H. Schomburgh, who first brought the Victoria Regia to London, England. In his travels in South America, he discovered one leaf of the Victoria Regia that measured six feet, five inches in diameter; its rim five and a half inches high; the calyx from 12 to 23 inches and on it rests the magnificent flower which covers the calyx completely with its hundred petals which open white with pink in the centre; a color which gradually spreads over the whole flower. The

latter measured 52 inches across. Aquatic birds, walked with perfect ease from leaf to leaf up and down stream. The plant grows in four to six feet of water. Schomburgh found this lily 120 miles from the coast. The Regia was first successfully cultivated in England at Chatsworth, seat of the Duke of Devonshire and then later at New gardens.

At Kew it was first plunged into a bed heated to 85 degrees and after one week was turned out into a hillock placed in the centre of a tank, the latter being 18 feet, eight inches by 19 feet, one inch in dimensions. In 79 days the lily had completely filled the tank, showing that the plant must have added 647 square inches to its size daily.

Caleb Cope of Philadelphia got his Victoria Regia seed from the gardens at Kew and J. Fiske Allen, journeying to Mr. Cone, received at his hands some of his American seed that had ripened at Springbrook, Philadelphia, and some of the seed from Kew Royal gardens. These were planted. A

#### Good Sized Tank Was Constructed.

In the Allen garden in the rear of the residence, 31 Chestnut street, where Dr. Phippen now lives and the water heated to 75 degrees. The location of the tank was most excellent as regards the heating, not requiring the intensity used at Kew or at Philadelphia. The plant began its growth January 13, 1853 and the first flower was seen emerging July 3 and on July 13, six months from the time it germinated, reached the surface of the water.

But Mr. Allen's visitors began to grow in numbers before that. At first confined to his intimate friends and neighbors, as soon as the news spread abroad of the wonderful lily they had over in Salem the botanists began to pour into the Allen garden from near and from far and the people followed them till they came in throngs. The news had hardly got round that the Victoria Regia had actually started to grow than everybody wanted to see it. They crowded about the tank, for the plant, once started, grew very steadily. There was a fascination in watching the crimson bud pushing its way up from the bottom in its rise to the top of the water; it was several days in reaching the surface after it was first seen and it was eagerly watched in its progress. As described by one newspaper writer of the time, "the bud threw off its extensive investment in the evening, soon after which white flower petals suddenly unfold—their expanded bosom like a mammoth magnolia floating upon the surface of the water decked in virgin white and exhaling a powerful and peculiar fragrance which was compared to the mingled odors of the pineapple and the melon.

"On the morning of the second day another change was observed and the outer petals were found moved backward, reflexed, leaving a central portion of conical shape surrounded by a range of petals white on the outside and on the inside red. There was a slight tinge of pink through the inversion of the petals which increased as the day advanced.

"Finally came a third change marked by the spreading of the petals to afford the fructifying organs liberty to expand. The seed ripens in a round ball and is taken by the South Americans, picked out and dried. It is from these seeds, when ground, that the

#### Finest Farina in the World

is obtained.

"This was the first flower of the Victoria Regia that had bloomed north of Philadelphia. The bud came to the surface of the water six months from the first starting of the seed. As the seed vegetated in mid-winter and no fire heat or artificial warming of the water was used after the first of June, the result may be considered satisfactory. The fruit is half as big as the human head when ripe, full of rounded farinaceous seeds."

Mr. Allen's bud was planted in a depth of four or five feet of water; the flower bed being of large size with from 50 to 60 petals. At 2 P. M. a peculiar pineapple odor filled the house over the tank and between 4 and 5 P. M. the petals had expanded; by 7 o'clock the bud assumed the appearance of a huge magnolia; at 9 o'clock inflorescence being usually perfected, after that hour, the closing process commences. On July 21 at 4 P. M. the petals, pure white, began to unfold. Soon after 7 A. M. the outer petals expanded wide, showing the centre yet erect and winged or spotted with crimson. At this moment the flower measured 13 inches across, its circumference measuring 39 inches, or more than three feet around it.

It was literally the spectacle of a life time for those who saw this wonderful mammoth lily, of which Theodore Roosevelt writes in his "Lost river explorations" of the Amazon. Very few there are living in Salem today who saw John Fiske Allen's masterpiece and triumph in floriculture in his gardens on Chestnut street. Very soon after the ripening of the huge lily, its decay began and it was found impossible to arrest it or to keep the plant over winter. It cost too much to continue the cultivation in this climate and it happened that though never seen before growing in Salem it has

#### Never Been Seen Here Since

but great was the fame of J. Fiske Allen by the miracle which he succeeded in achieving, by dint of his enterprise and pertinacity in reproducing in the land of blizzards and north-easters the flower empress of the Amazon just as it grew and bloomed in its stately beauty and magnificence in the sedge of its mighty river, its tropical home below the equator.

Mr. Charles S. Rea, president of the Salem Savings bank, was one of those specially favored ones now living, who recalls distinctly as a boy seeing the Victoria Regia blooming in J. Fiske Allen's garden behind his house more than 70 years ago. Mr. Allen's pew in the old First church was directly in front of the Rea family pew, on the southwest side of the ancient auditorium and the families were intimate. Mr. Rea saw the great lily and it made a deep impression on his memory.

In my own boyhood, I remember John Fiske Allen as long a pillar of the First church, a member of the standing committee at the period my father served upon it and continuing, I think, until age and infirmity compelled him to retire, but long after my father had left to return to the North church. Mr. Allen was a man of medium height, not short; he wore a close cropped beard, was of dark complexion and his hair was inclined to curl. He was not always in good health in his latter years, and a weakness of the legs caused him some difficulty in walking. He was born in Salem, July 14, 1807, the son of Edward and Anna Fiske Allen. His grandfather, Edward Allen, came here from Bernice, on



Tweed in 1819, and a prominent and successful merchant, passing on July 27, 1802, at the age of 68. John Fiske Allen was early sent to sea. His father, Edward Allen, merchant of Salem, passed away in the Azores at St. Michaels in December, 1845. The son married first, December 16, 1833, Lucy Pickering, daughter of Pickering Dodge, and their son, Lieut. Pickering Dodge Allen, died of wounds in the Civil war, at Brashear City, La., 1862. Mrs. Allen passed on near Richmond, La., in 1849, and J. Fiske Allen married Mary Hodges Cleveland of Salem as his second wife. Their two daughters, the Misses Marianne and Lizzie Allen, went to the First Church Sunday school, of which I was a member. Their father kept books for Pickering Dodge, then commanded one of the latter's vessels and later went into mercantile business with his brother, Edward Allen, from which he retired to his hot houses and grape culture. John Fiske Allen passed away very suddenly in his sleep, being found in his bed, in the rest that knows no waking here October 18, 1876.

Charles F. W. Archer.

Particularly beloved by Salem folks were the box hedges, grown from slips brought in by sea. These were used frequently to enclose an especially choice tree and often as friendly hedges; sometimes growing so high children could not see over the top. Probably the finest at the present time is in Miss Laight's garden at 41 Chestnut Street.

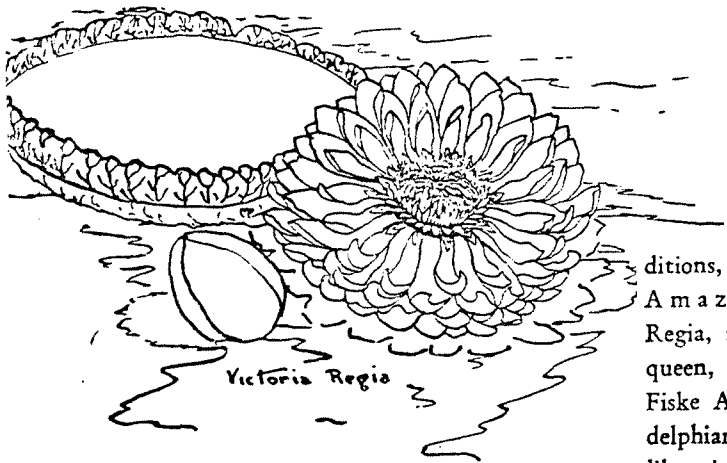
One cannot fully separate a garden from its house. These houses were, and are, outstanding and much has been written of them. Their gardens were unusual too.

At 19 Chestnut Street the Cleveland-Williams-Peabody-Rantoul garden with its flower bordered path has a fine specimen of *virgilia* with its drooping white blossoms.

The original brick walled garden of the Pickman-Shreve-Little house at No. 27 was at the rear, between Warren and Broad Streets. It had good fruit trees and a greenhouse. After Mr. Kelsey built on this lot, he planted *virgilia*, *stewartia*, *cornus kousa*, *hamamelis mollis*, the latter the only one flowering in Salem.

The Phillips-Cabot-Shreve house at No. 29 has fine trees and many gay tulips in the spring. In the olden days there was a large greenhouse; the brick wall end of it has been retained and is part of the garden today. Outstanding in memory is a night blooming *cereus* and a wonderful *camellia*, which lived on for sixty years. This is one of the gardens extending through to Warren Street with an entrance into an old-time cobbled stable court with its saddle blocks.

The Dodge-Allen-Phippen garden at No. 31 is the setting for the most amazing of the flower traditions, that of the famous Amazon lily, *Victoria Regia*, named for a great queen, purchased by John Fiske Allen from a Philadelphian. It was a giant lily with leaves six feet in



diameter, growing one half an inch an hour, with such strength that a child might stand thereon. Its blossoms, twelve to eighteen inches in diameter, gave forth a pineapple fragrance (the emblem of hospitality). The lily grew so rapidly that both greenhouse and tank had to be enlarged. From 1852-1856 it matured over 200 flowers. At its first blooming Mr. Allen opened the house to a throng of visitors for several weeks. During the evening hours, lighted tallow candles, set upon the lily leaves, cast their reflection and glimmering light over this rare plant. Also in this greenhouse were his collections of orchids, callas, *amaryllis*, *nelumbium* and other lilies. As early as 1838 he had on display the second night blooming *cereus* and from about that time he devoted himself to horticulture, principally to the cultivation of grapes and other fruits. He published his findings in several volumes.

In 1843 he erected graperies on Dean Street (now Flint Street) in which he grew three hundred varieties, also peaches and other fruits. Year after year he was awarded the prize for the best display of grapes by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society at the exhibitions in Boston.

Proceeding east, at No. 35 the Allen-Huntington-Butler property has a very attractive garden house with an old fashioned garden as a setting.

At No. 41, there is one of the finest old gardens, where Miss Laight specializes in growing rare plants from seeds. Added attractions are the Japanese cherry, a summer house and an historic millstone, with the choicest box-border waist high.

There are three houses built by Thomas Sanders (Saunders), No. 39 which he occupied, now the home of W. G. Barker; No. 41 and No. 43 built for his daughters. There was originally but one garden. No. 43 the Saltonstall-Sanders house built in 1805, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. J. Frederick Hussey, has a very charming walled garden, designed by Herbert J. Kelloway; there is a brick path and delightful pool with iris, umbrella plant and cotoneasters softening its edges. A beautiful hawthorn, a horse-chestnut of the drooping variety, and a tree peony are all thought to be one hundred years old; rhododendrons and Japanese yew are growing here today while tradition holds in memory the box of other years. This garden received a certificate in 1929 from the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.

George C. Hodgson, 1850-1857, and later occupants were Captain Daniel H. Mansfield, 1861-1869, and the Reverend Edwin C. Bolles, 1872-1887.

*Nos. 31-33-35* This brick block was built by Pickering Dodge in 1828 to 1829. He died in 1833 before it was finished and it was completed by his son-in-law, John Fiske Allen. Mr. Allen was a noted horticulturist who grew many varieties of exotic plants and specialized particularly in grape culture. He had a garden on Flint Street where he grew some three hundred varieties of grapes, some of them almost unique in this part of the country. The first occupant of No. 31 was Mr. Tucker Daland, 1830-1832; John Fiske Allen about 1837 to 1878, and other members of the Allen family to 1912; Mrs. Samuel R. Curwen, 1840-1842, and later by the Misses Allen. It is now occupied by Dr. Walter G. Phippen, 1914-1939.

No. 33 was occupied by Mr. Charles Sanders and then by Charles M. Endicott by 1837; Pickering Dodge, Jr., 1842-1855, and William H. and Wm. E. Greeley, 1855-1861. In 1864 it was occupied by George P. Osgood until his death in 1889, then by Mrs. C. P. Osgood, and for many years by her daughter and her husband, Louis F. Cutter, 1905-1939, who still live there.

No. 35 was first occupied by Charles W. Upham, then by John Clarke Lee about 1830 to 1835; Mrs. Rebecca Dodge from before 1837-1850, and the Honorable Asahel Huntington in 1853. Mr. Huntington was later mayor of Salem and his daughter, Miss S. Louisa Huntington, lived there until 1936. It is now occupied by Warren Butler, 1937-1939. Before the block was built, the land was a mowing field belonging to Judge Samuel Putnam.

*No. 13* This house, where Dr. Kittredge lived, for many years on the corner of Cambridge Street, was built on the site of an earlier house which was occupied by Mr. Amos Towne. The present house was standing in 1837, and was probably built in 1832 or 1833 and the carpenter was William Lummus. It was probably built and first occupied by Mrs. Elizabeth King, who was living there in 1837, and occupied the house until she died in 1854. She was followed by Mrs. W. H. Neal, 1857-1884. Dr.

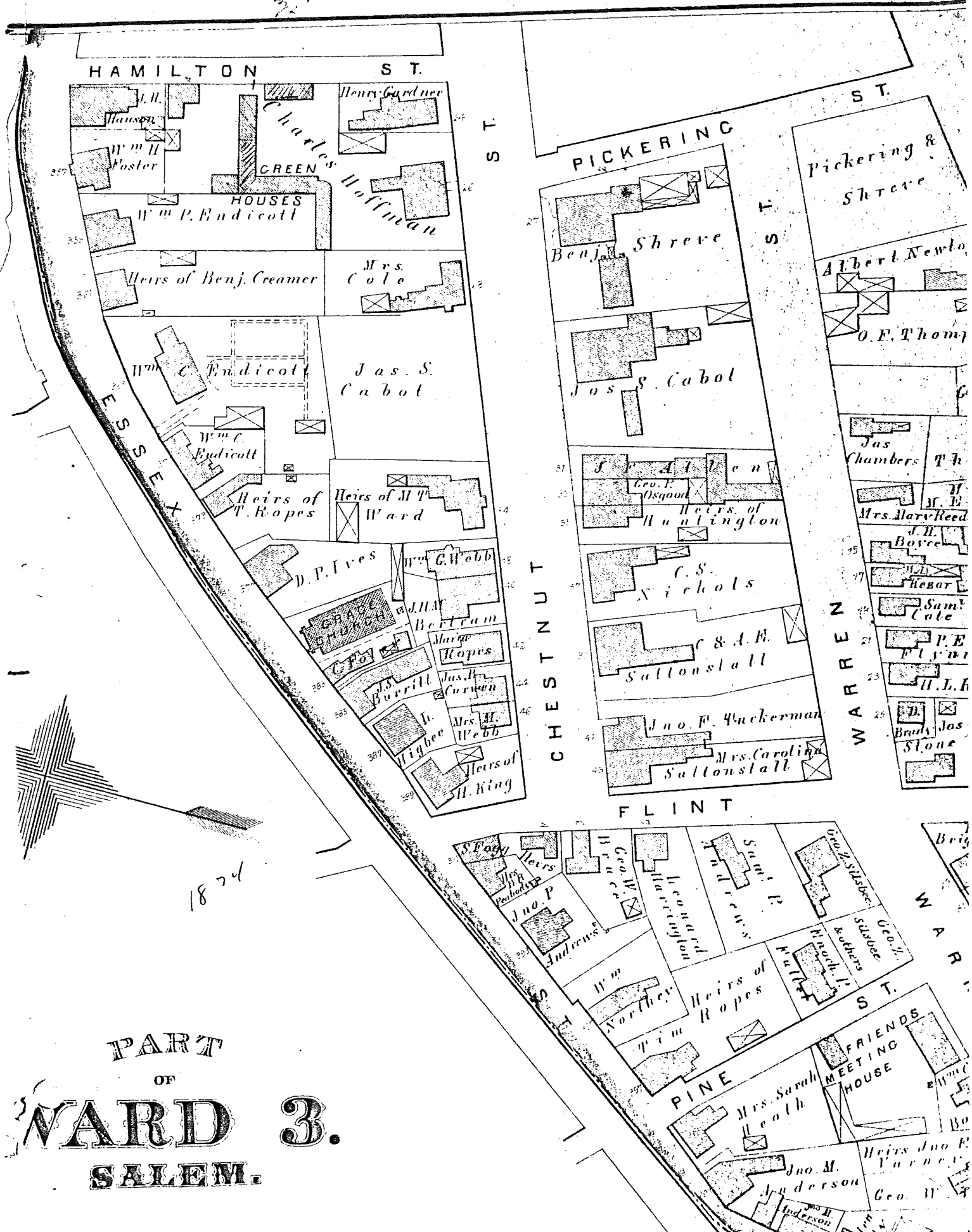


NUMBER 14

— ESSEX INSTITUTE —  
JAMES GORDON PHILLIPS LIBRARY



1531



PART  
OF  
**WARD 3.**  
SALEM.

1874



42

HAMILTON

43

PICKERING

45

ESSEX

WARREN

FLINT

