



**HISTORIC
SALEM INC**

**52 Essex Street
Salem, Massachusetts 01970**

Built for Daniel Sage
Mariner and Merchant
c. 1800

Researched and written by David Moffat – January 2019

Historic Salem, Inc.

9 North Street, Salem, MA 01970

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I. The Property, 1680-1800

John Turner, mariner and builder of The House of the Seven Gables, owned this property by 1680. His father, Robert Turner, had arrived in Boston from England in the 1630s as an indentured servant. John Turner was born in 1644 and married Elizabeth Roberts of Boston in 1668, the year he moved to Salem and began construction of his grand mansion nearby on what is now Turner Street.¹ He owned the property which is today 52 Essex Street at the time of his early death in 1680. In his probate inventory that year, it was listed as “Land by Christopher Babidges,” valued at £40.² Essex Street began as a pathway used by the Naumkeag people who inhabited Salem for ten millenia before the arrival of English settlers and was one of the first streets in Salem. By the late seventeenth-century, it was already considered the main street of the town.³

When John Turner’s property was divided March 22, 1696/7, the lot (then worth £32 11s) was given to his youngest child, his daughter Abial.⁴ Abial Turner was born October 14, 1680, five days after her father’s death.⁵ Abial never married and lived until 1723, though she conveyed the property along Essex Street of Joseph Andrews, a yeoman from Boxford, on January 22, 1705 for £45.⁶

The land was along the creek which ran from the Salem Common into the cove which is today called Collins Cove. To the east was the land of Christopher Babbidge, a tailor, by 1683.⁷ His house, may survive on the other side of the old Bentley School, hidden between Essex and

¹ Moriarty, G. Andrews “The Turner Family of Salem,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, Vol. 48, 1912, p. 263

² Essex County, MA Early Probate Records, Vol. 3, p. 399, 1680.

³ Perley, Sidney. “Part of Salem in 1700: #19” *The Essex Antiquarian*, Vol. 9. 1905. p. 72.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 74.

⁵ Perley, Sidney. *The History of Salem, Massachusetts, Vol. 3: 1671-1716*. Salem, Sidney Perley, 1928. Print, p. 37.

⁶ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 18:146. 22 Jan 1705.

⁷ Perley, 1905, p. 74.

Forrester streets. Babbidge's son, Christopher, Jr., a cordwainer, conveyed the house and property to merchant Richard Derby in 1757.⁸

The property to the west, from what is today number 56 Essex Street to Washington Square East, was part of the parcel of land owned by John Turner. In 1695, Col. John Turner conveyed it to Thomas Beadle, a mariner and tavern-keeper for £16.⁹ Beadle's Tavern, where accused (and later executed) witches Reverend George Burroughs, George Jacobs, Sr., and Mary Easty were held before their pre-trial examinations during the Salem Witchcraft Trials of 1692, stood on the opposite side of Essex Street, near where number 65 is located today. His house remained until merchant Clifford Crowninshield acquired the land in 1791 and tore it down.¹⁰

After the death of Joseph Andrews in 1737, his dwelling house and lands in Salem were inherited by his sons, Nathaniel and John.¹¹

In 1777, Richard Derby purchased the present site of 52 Essex Street from mariner Daniel Conant along with the rest of Conant's "goods, chattels, and lands" for the enormous sum of £4,000 18s.¹²

II. Daniel Sage, 1800-1831

In 1800, Salem was the eighth largest city in the United States, with 9,457 residents according to the census conducted that year.¹³ After the Revolution, Salem's maritime trade flourished as privateers like the Derby family turned their sights on foreign trade which had been

⁸ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 105:16. 8 Nov 1757.

⁹ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 11:30. 4 Jun 1695.

¹⁰ Perley (1905), p. 74.

¹¹ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 73:135. 6 Jul 1737.

¹² Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 135:43. 29 Jan 1777.

¹³ Gibson, Campbell. "Population of the 100 Largest Cities and Other Urban Places in The United States: 1790 to 1990." United States Census Bureau, 1998. <https://www.census.gov/library/working-papers/1998/demo/POP-twps0027.html>

forbidden under the mercantilist British system. The first American ships to trade with ports in Russia, South Africa, Madagascar, Martinique, and India, left Salem in the period between 1781 and 1800. Salem is often considered the wealthiest city per capita in the United States in that period, and Elias Hasket Derby was the wealthiest American in the 1790s.

In 1800, the heirs of Samuel Derby (Richard Derby, Samuel Derby, Charles Derby, and Edward Preble) sold a parcel of land to Capt. Daniel Sage, who constructed 52 Essex Street not long afterwards.

The deed describes the property as such:

“three fourths parts and seven tenths of a fourth part of a piece of land in said Salem, bounded as follows, to wit, southerly by Essex Street, there measuring 78 feet, easterly by land of Mrs. Mary Elkins, there measuring two hundred & seven feet, northerly by east street there measuring seventy nine feet & six inches, westerly by land of Capt. Benjⁿ Ward, there measuring two hundred feet”¹⁴

Daniel Sage was born in 1758 in Greenock, a fishing port in Inverclyde in the west central lowlands along the Firth of Clyde.¹⁵ Greenock had a successful harbor and fishing industry since the middle ages, largely exporting salted cod. It is unclear when Sage came to the United States, but he was in Salem by the 1780s.

Sage was a shipmaster, captaining the *Patty*, a Newbury-built schooner in 1794 for Nathan Richardson.¹⁶ In July of 1795, he carried £3,425 17s 2d worth of provisions to the army of Joseph-Geneviève de Puisaye at Quiberon in Brittany.¹⁷ De Puisaye was leading a counter-revolutionary

¹⁴ Essex Country Registry of Deeds. Deed 166:240. 28 May 1800.

¹⁵ Salem Vital Records, Deaths, p. 204.

¹⁶ Hitchens, A. Frank, with Stephen Willard Phillips. *Ship Registers of the District of Salem and Beverly, Massachusetts, 1789-1900*. Salem: Essex Institute, 1906. p. 142.

¹⁷ Emmerton, James A. *A Genealogical Account of Henry Silsbee and Some of his Descendants*. Salem: Essex Institute, 1880. p. 31.

invasion of France backed by British, which lasted from June 23rd to July 23rd, 1795. Two days after Sage delivered provisions, the counterrevolutionary forces were routed at the Battle of Quiberon.

In 1796 he captained the *Elizabeth*, for William Gray.¹⁸ In 1800 he supervised the building of the *Laurel* for Gray. Built in Danvers, the *Laurel* was 425 tons, the fourth-largest ship in Salem at that time.¹⁹ He travelled to India aboard the *Laurel*.²⁰

In 1809, he was part owner with Nathaniel Silsbee, Robert Stone, Jr. Joseph Ropes, Thomas Whitteridge, Jeremiah Briggs, Daniel Sage, James Devereaux, Moses Townsend, Joseph White, Jr., Joshua Ward, Joseph J. Knapp, Archelaus Rea, Richard Crowninshield of the brig *Romp*, which was confiscated at Naples on her first voyage.²¹ There is a half-hull model of the *Romp* in the collection of the Peabody Essex Museum.²² Regarding its capture in Naples, there is a “Naples claim” in Sage’s probate valued at \$1592.59.²³

Sage married Deborah Silsbee October 8, 1786.²⁴ Silsbee was born in April of 1767, the daughter of carpenter Samuel Silsbee.²⁵ The Silsbees were descendants of Henry Silsbee, who came to Salem by 1639.²⁶ Samuel was the son of After his marriage, Sage lived in the Silsbee family house on the corner of Derby and Essex streets for nearly thirty years according to family genealogist, James A. Emmerton.²⁷ That house was the Stephen Daniels house, one of the oldest in Salem, built 1667 and still standing at 1 Daniels Street.²⁸ Samuel’s mother, Mary Daniels

¹⁸ Hitchens and Phillips, 1906. p. 50.

¹⁹ Hitchens and Phillips, 1906. p. 104.

²⁰ Emmerton, 1880. p. 31.

²¹ Hitchens and Phillips, 1906. p. 159.

²² Ibid.

²³ Essex County Probate Records, Probate 24516.

²⁴ Salem Vital Records, Marriages, p. 283.

²⁵ Emmerton, 1880, p. 19.

²⁶ Emmerton, 1880. pp. 5-6.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 32.

²⁸ MHC MACRIS, SAL.2616, “Daniels, Stephen House”

Silsbee, was Stephen Daniels' daughter. She married Nathaniel Silsbee, who died in 1731 when he killed during a construction project when the staging collapsed.²⁹ Samuel Silsbee built the northern half, third floor, and leanto in 1756 and lived in the home his whole life.³⁰ Two Silsbee houses of the era survive in the immediate neighborhood at 69 Essex Street,³¹ and 27 Daniels Street.³²

Somewhere around 1800, Capt. Sage built a three and a half story Federal house, five bays wide, on the land he had purchased from the Derby heirs. Architectural historian Bryant F. Tolles identifies 52 Essex Street as "unusual" as "the only house in Salem with brick ends incorporating paired chimneys."³³ Sage constructed a small store on the western end of the property, today 54 Derby Street, and owned a lot across the street with a barn.

Capt. Daniel and Deborah Sage had 12 children, only five of whom survived to adulthood, two sons and three daughters. Joseph Prince, aged 18 months, died September 23rd, 1795, of fever. Fever claimed two more children within 12 days. Daniel died of fever at age four September 26th, followed by Hannah, age six, on October 4th. 1802 was a similarly dark year for the Sages, with Hannah, aged five, and Daniel, aged three, dying of fever on May 28th and 29th. Deborah, aged 19, died of dysentery on July 30th of that year.³⁴ Martha Silsbee, aged one, died of dysentery on September 26th, 1808.

John Sage, the oldest son, was born in July 1787 and became a mariner. William Sage was born in September 1803 and became the Secretary of the Union Marine Insurance Company and is listed in the probate with the profession of gentleman. Mary Ann Sage was born in April 1805.

²⁹ Emmerton, 1880. p. 17.

³⁰ MHC MACRIS, SAL.2616, "Daniels, Stephen House"

³¹ MHC MACRIS, SAL.2591, "Silsbee, Nathaniel, Jr.-Upton, Mercy House."

³² MHC MACRIS, SAL.3449, "Silsbee, Capt. Nathaniel House."

³³ Tolles, Bryant F. *Architecture in Salem: An Illustrated Guide*, University of New England Press, 2004. p. 40.

³⁴ Vital Records, Deaths, pp. 204-5.

She married the mariner and merchant Ephraim Emmerton.³⁵ Sarah Sage was born in October 1809 and married Charles Fisk Putnam, merchant and grocer, in 1828. Margaret Sage was born in December 1811 and married Charles' younger brother, Edward Putnam in 1839. Edward was involved in the Brazil trade, particularly in the importation of rubber, and with Charles shipped a steam sugar mill to Brazil.³⁶

Sage owned pew number three in the East Meeting House, at the corner of Essex and Hardy streets.³⁷ The East Church had been established in 1718 and took on Unitarian leanings with the ministership of the famous Reverend William Bentley between 1783 and 1819. Bentley married Deborah and Daniel in 1786.³⁸ In 1812, Bentley notes in his diary that he received "Lady blush apples" from Sage.³⁹ In 1817, a subscription was taken to cover deficiencies in the salary of Rev. Bentley. Capt. Sage contributed \$15, ranking number 16 among the donors. The other contributors were wealthy merchants of the harbor and common neighborhood.⁴⁰ After Bentley's death in 1819, the minister of the East Church was Dr. James Flint, from 1821 until 1855.^{41,42}

A standing clay figure of Daniel Sage is in the collection of the Peabody Essex Museum, by an unknown face maker in Canton, 1798. This is the last known example of this art (known

³⁵ The Genealogical Magazine, Vol. 3, Dec. 1915-September, 1916, Boston Mass, Google Books. p. 211

³⁶ Putnam Family Papers, Phillips Library, MSS 153, Finding Aid.

<http://phillipslibrarycollections.pem.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15928coll1/id/3002>

³⁷ Essex County Probate Records, Probate 24516.

³⁸ The Genealogical Magazine, Vol. 3, Dec. 1915-September, 1916, Boston Mass, Google Books. p. 211

³⁹ Bentley, William. *The Diary of William Bentley, Vol. 4: 1811-1819*. Salem: The Essex Institute, 1914. p. 123.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 529. The others Benjamin William Crowninshield, Nathaniel Silsbee, Joseph White, Gamaliel Hodges (?), Robert & Anstiss Stone (?), J. Dodge, Zachariah F. Silsbee, Moses Townsend, Henry Prince, and Jonathan Archer.

⁴¹ Colman, Henry. A Sermon, preached at the Installation of the Rev. James Flint, in the East Church in Salem. Boston, Thomas B. Waite, 1821.

⁴² Clapp, Dexter. *A discourse occasioned by the death of Rev. James Flint, D.D. : senior pastor of the East Church in Salem : with an address delivered on the day of his burial, March 7, 1855.*

figures are from 1710 to 1798, and the only known depiction of an American. Most depict Englishmen and there is one known figure of a Frenchman.⁴³⁴⁴

Deborah Silsbee Sage preceded her husband to the grave by a month, on April 13, 1836.⁴⁵ When Daniel Sage died May 18, 1836, he was 77 years old and had amassed the large fortune of \$42,396.33.⁴⁶⁴⁷ Of that figure, \$5,076 was in real estate. 52 Essex Street, called “The Homestead” in the probate, was worth \$4,000. The lot across Essex Street was valued at \$675. There are two lots of land along Liberal Street in the North Fields worth \$225.⁴⁸

Sage’s furnishings and possessions came to \$523.97. The inventory gives some sense of the furniture that Sage had in his home. A green sofa and a black sofa, a Turkish rug, bamboo couch, straw carpet, and a square dining table are listed among less descriptive items of furniture. Other possessions included a spyglass, two looking glasses, a compass, scales and weights, a musket, a sword, money scales, and twelve pictures. He owned a Bible and a number of books, as well as charts and bound newspapers.⁴⁹

In 2016, a lot of eight mahogany dining chairs carved by Samuel McIntire around 1800 was auctioned by Sotheby’s. The catalogue notes that similar chairs can be found in the Sage-Webb-Wilkins House in Salem.⁵⁰

⁴³ Schokkenbroek, Joost C.A. “Figuring Out Global and Local Relations: Cantonese Face Makers and Their Sitters in the 18th Century.” *Navigating History: Economy, Society, Knowledge, and Nature: Essays in Honour of Professor C.A. Davids*. Eds. Pepijn Branden, Sabine Go, Wybren Versteegen. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2018. p. 182.

⁴⁴ William R. Sargent, “A figure of Captain Daniel Sage discovered.” Sept. 2015 issue of *Antiques Magazine*. Vol. 182, issue 5, p. 54.

⁴⁵ Salem Vital Records, Deaths, p. 204.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Essex County Probate Records, Probate 24516.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Sotheby’s, “Important Americana,” 22-23 January, 2016. Sale #N094056.

Lastly, he had investments and other assets valued at \$36,796.36. These included shares in five banks (Merchant, Exchange, Mercantile, Commercial, and Salem) three insurance companies (Oriental, Marine, Union Marine), the Essex Marine Railway Corporation, the Salem and Danvers Aqueduct Corporation, and the Marine Hall Corporation.⁵¹ His son, William, was secretary of the Union Marine, of which he had more than twice the number of shares than the other two firms.

The subscribers to his estate were Charles F. Putnam, John Sage, Margaret Sage, and Ephraim Emmerton. William Sage was initially named the administrator, but he died February 19, 1838, before completing the probate and on April 3, Ephraim Emmerton was named administrator in his place.⁵²⁵³ Daniel Sage's papers are in the Phillips as part of the Emmerton Family Papers, MSS 24.⁵⁴

III. The Webbs, 1831-1902

William Webb purchased Daniel Sage's mansion on Essex Street on July 26, 1836, less than two months after the captain's death.⁵⁵ Webb paid only \$100 less than the estimated value of the property in Sage's probate.⁵⁶ Webb was a trader and an apothecary.

Webb was born in October 1783 to Benjamin Webb and Hannah Bray.⁵⁷ He married in 1825, the much younger Isabella (or Isabel) Donaldson, who was born in 1800 to Alexander Donaldson and Elizabeth Peele.⁵⁸ William and Isabella had four children, three of whom survived

⁵¹ Probate 24516.

⁵² Salem Vital Records, Deaths, p. 205.

⁵³ Probate 24516.

⁵⁴ Emmerton Family Papers, Phillips Library, MSS 24. Finding Aid.

<http://phillipslibrarycollections.pem.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15928coll1/id/2114>

⁵⁵ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 291:262. 26 Jul 1836.

⁵⁶ Probate 24516

⁵⁷ Salem Vital Records, Births, p. 405.

⁵⁸ Salem Vital Records, Births, p. 258.

to adulthood. Isabella, the firstborn, died in December 1834 at the age seven.⁵⁹ Benjamin was born in May 1829.⁶⁰ His first marriage was to Lizzie Brown. Elizabeth Donaldson was born in 1831.⁶¹ She married George Whipple, secretary of the Essex Institute and a writer on local history, such as the history of the Salem Light Infantry.⁶² Lastly, William, Jr. was born in September 1833.⁶³ He moved to Winchester, Massachusetts by 1874.⁶⁴

Webb ran his apothecary out of the little shop constructed by Daniel Sage which is today 54 Essex Street.⁶⁵ In the 1840s, Gardner Barton, an apothecary with a shop at 6 Newbury Street resided with the Webbs at 52 Essex Street.⁶⁶ In 1842, there were only seven apothecaries listed in the Salem Directory, including Barton and Webb.⁶⁷

In 1846, Isabella died of consumption in January 1846.⁶⁸ Henry McIntyre's 1851 map of Salem depicts the home as the property of "W. Webb."⁶⁹ William Webb died April 29, 1870.⁷⁰ Webb's son, Benjamin Webb, purchased the property in July of 1870 for \$2,666.⁷¹ In the 1874 atlas of Salem, Benjamin Webb is listed as the owner and the store at number 54 is located at the center of the lot, with more property to the west.⁷²

⁵⁹ Salem Vital Records, Deaths, p. 313.

⁶⁰ Salem Vital Records, Births, p. 401.

⁶¹ Salem Vital Records, Births, p. 402.

⁶² Whipple, George Mantum. *History of the Salem Light Infantry, 1805-1890*. Salem: Essex Institute, 1890.

⁶³ Salem Vital Records, Births, p. 405.

⁶⁴ Booth, Robert. "54 Essex Street, Salem History of the Building and Occupants" Salem: Historical Salem, 2007. P. 7.

⁶⁵ Salem Directory, 1846. p. 121.

⁶⁶ Salem Directory, 1842. p. 7.

⁶⁷ Salem Directory, 1842. pp. 7, 29, 41, 95, 115, 116,

⁶⁸ Salem Vital Records, Deaths, p. 313.

⁶⁹ McIntyre, Henry. "Map of the City of Salem, Mass. From an actual survey By H. Mc. Intyre. Cl. Engr." Map, 1851. Henry McIntyre, Salem, MA. Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, Boston Public Library.

<http://www.leventhalmap.org/id/15108>

⁷⁰ Booth, 2007. p. 7.

⁷¹ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 813:299. 5 Jul 1870.

⁷² Busch, Edward. *Atlas of the City of Salem, Massachusetts. From actual Survey & Official records*. G.M. Hopkins & Co. Philadelphia, 1874.

In January 1877, Benjamin Webb sold the western half of the lot to John Stevenson, an engineer living at 2 North Pine Street, for \$1,973.97.⁷³⁷⁴ John Stevenson constructed a double house on the lot in 1877, which is today 56-58 Essex Street.⁷⁵

In the 1878 directory, Benjamin Webb, is listed with his shop at 54 Essex and his house at 52 Essex.⁷⁶ In the 1893-4 Directory, an advertisement for Benjamin Webb, Apothecary lists the following specialties: “‘Old Dr. Webb's Cough Mixture,’ a cheap and effectual remedy, try it! ‘Old Dr. Webb's Worm Powders,’ Successful through years of trials. A sure remedy! and ‘Dr. Little's Green Ointment’ positively cures eczema and all skin diseases. Also pills.”

Webb’s second wife, Angie, received the property in September 1897 for \$1 and other considerations.⁷⁷ He was listed as a chemist and a druggist in the 1899-1900 Directory, with his shop at 54 Essex and his home at 52 Essex.⁷⁸ In that year, there were 14 druggists listed in Salem, and 26 apothecaries, with all the druggists listed as apothecaries.⁷⁹ Benjamin Webb died in November 1900.⁸⁰

IV. The Wilkins, 1902-1951

Marietta B. Wilkins purchased the property in April 1902 for \$1 and other considerations.⁸¹ Marietta was the wife of S. Herbert Wilkins, of Briggs & Wilkins, “proprietors of dry and fancy goods,” 221 Essex street.⁸² In 1903, number 54 was the bakery of the Pierce Brothers, and in 1904,

⁷³ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 970:258. 27 Jan 1877.

⁷⁴ Salem Directory, 1878. p. 180.

⁷⁵ MHC MACRIS, SAL.2664. “Stevenson, John Double House.”

⁷⁶ Salem Directory, 1878, p. 196.

⁷⁷ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 1524:86. 20 Sep 1897.

⁷⁸ Salem Directory 1899-1900, p. 395.

⁷⁹ Salem Directory, 1899-1900, pp. 365, 369.

⁸⁰ Booth, 2007. p. 7.

⁸¹ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 1679:447. 17 Apr 1902.

⁸² Salem Directory, 1904. pp. 116, 394.

home bakery of S.F. Martinage,⁸³⁸⁴ The 1911 Salem atlas shows Marietta B. Wilkins as the owner of the property, with the part of the lot to the west now occupied by the Stevenson double house.⁸⁵

V. The Harringtons, 1951-1977

In April 1951, Paul P and Mary E. Harrington purchased 52 Essex Street from the estate of Marietta B. Wilkins for \$10,000.⁸⁶ The couple immediately took out a mortgage in that amount from Roger Conant Co-Operative Bank. Paul and Mary Harrington were born in 1905. Paul P. Harrington was a city worker. Their two sons, Patrick J. and Paul P., Jr., born in the early 1940s, were in the Merchant Marine.⁸⁷ Mary transferred the house to Patrick J. Harrington in August of 1975.⁸⁸

The Harringtons had a number of boarders or tenants living at 52 Essex Street. Charles A. O'Connell, a laborer, and James Connell, a city worker, and in 1964 and 1975, respectively. Lucian L. St. Amand, a laborer, and his son, Lucian R. St. Amand, Jr, a maintenance worker, lived in the house from 1964 until 1975. Others included Frank Wroblewski, a leather worker, Robert D. Bouvre, an assistant electrician, Kasimierz A. Lisaj, Michael Krulisky, a leather worker, Louis Maynard, a train driver, and Conrad J. Verrette, a laborer. John I. Kozak, Edward Shea, Edward McCoy, Henry S. Klosowski, Joseph Esko, and William Conovan, are listed, all five of them retired.⁸⁹

⁸³ Salem Directory, 1904, p. 115.

⁸⁴ Booth, 2007. p. 12.

⁸⁵ *Atlas of the City of Salem, Massachusetts Based on Plans in the Office of the City Engineer*. Walker Lithograph & Publishing Company, Boston, 1911.

⁸⁶ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 3813:542. 26 Apr 1951.

⁸⁷ Street List of Persons, 1973, 1975.

⁸⁸ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 6174:95. 20 Aug 1975.

⁸⁹ Street List of Persons, 1954-1975.

In 1975, Gerald Labonte, a firefighter, and his wife, Patricia, lived at the house.⁹⁰ A year later, Robert F. Quinn, retired, is listed.⁹¹

VI. The Sets, 1977-2002

April 11, 1977, Patrick J. Harrington sold the property to Set Ming Fong and Set Ngor Shun How for \$53,000.⁹² Set Ming Fong, also called Set Hing Fong, was the proprietor of the Soe Hoo Laundry at 54 Essex Street. He and his wife, Set Ngor Shun How, were born in 1917.⁹³ Set Den Jin (written in legal documents Den Jin Set) was born in 1956, was a student when his father bought the property, but the laundry owner by 1990. Set Gen Yu, a housewife born in 1962, may be Set Den Jin's wife.

From 1980 to 1984, tenants at 54 Essex Street included Robert A. Bergeron, a veteran, Ken Gibbs and Joseph Labonte, machinists, Kenneth R. Barr, a taxi driver, Heather Crofts, a bank teller, and Christine Bak, a processing supervisor, Matthew Macfatee, a surveyor and engineer, and four students.⁹⁴

Ngor Shun How transferred the property in April 1985 to Set Ngor Shun How, Den Jin Set, and Moy Ching Sezto for nominal consideration.⁹⁵ From 1985 to 1990, the Sets occupied Unit #1 and rented the second and third units. The tenants included Richard Bush, and Jeff Western, roofers, Susan Harmon, a student, Heidi J. Gage, a therapist, Jeffery D. Summers, a painter, and Donna A. Frenette, a housewife.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Street List of Persons, 1976.

⁹¹ Street List of Persons, 1977.

⁹² Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 6361:149. 11 Apr 1977.

⁹³ Annual Listings, 1980, 1986.

⁹⁴ Annual Listings, 1980-1984.

⁹⁵ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 7735:541. 26 Apr 1985.

⁹⁶ Annual Listings, 1986-1990.

Den Jin Set gave his share of the property to Set Ngor Shun How for nominal consideration in September of 1990.⁹⁷ 52 Essex Street was listed as unoccupied in 1991 and 1992.⁹⁸ In 1993, 1994, and 1995, there were several residents: Richard Holder in Unit #2 in 1993 and 1994, Marillis D. Brooks, Randy C. Hills, both in retail, in Unit #2 in 1995, and Alez Gurreo, a banker, and Edward I. Reeves, a government worker, in Unit #3 in that latter year. From 1996 to 2002, the property was not listed in the Annual Listings of Salem.⁹⁹

VII. Condominiums, 2002-Present

Moy Ching Szeto Chew, Den Jin Set, Tsang Mei Shung sold 52 Essex Street to Jon M. Cahill in April 2002 for \$298,000.¹⁰⁰ Cahill subsequently drew up a condo association agreement and sold the property as three units. In January 2003, he sold Unit #3 to Robert E. O'Brien.¹⁰¹ In February, he sold Unit #2 to Daniel P. and Donna M. Thompson.¹⁰² In April of the same year, he sold Unit #1 to Madeleine Saunders.¹⁰³

In 2005, the Thompsons sold Unit #2 to Robert and Laura Brooks.¹⁰⁴ In 2008, Madeleine Saunders and her heirs sold Unit #1 to Dorothy Malcolm, a writer and editor.¹⁰⁵

In 2016, the residents of the building were Karen Barter, the director of development at The House of the Seven Gables, in Unit #1, Laura L. Brooks, a graphic designer, and her husband,

⁹⁷ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 10605:120. 28 Sep 1990.

⁹⁸ Annual Listings, 1991, 1992.

⁹⁹ Annual Listings, 1996-2002.

¹⁰⁰ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 18627:242. 25 Apr 2002.

¹⁰¹ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 19935:199. 3 Jan 2003.

¹⁰² Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 20237:132. 26 Feb. 2003.

¹⁰³ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 20486:311. 1 Apr 2003.

¹⁰⁴ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 24179:489. 15 Apr 2005.

¹⁰⁵ Essex County Registry of Deeds, Deed 27863:408. 20 Jun 2008.

Robert L. Brooks, a counselor, in Unit #2, and Paul F. Dolimpio, a data collector, and Julia M. O'Brien, a designer in Unit #3.¹⁰⁶

VIII. Conclusion

Called the Sage-Webb-Wilkins House, this classic Salem house has a storied history and is a fine example of Federal architecture in the harbor neighborhood. Captain Daniel Sage, a native of the western coast of Scotland, came to America as a young man. In 1786 he married Deborah Silsbee and lived in her ancestral home, the First Period Stephen Daniels House on Daniels Street. In 1800, Sage purchased the property at 52 Essex Street from the Derbys and began construction of the present building. Sage had success as a shipmaster and later as a merchant. When he died in 1836, he had amassed considerable assets. The house was sold immediately to William Webb, an apothecary. Webb used 54 Essex Street next door as his apothecary shop. When he died in 1870, his son, Benjamin Webb, took over the shop and home, living there until 1900. Benjamin's widow, Angie, sold the property to Marietta B. Wilkins, the wife of a dry goods merchant.

Paul P. Harrington and his wife, Mary, purchased the house in 1951. Their two sons were in the merchant marine. Parts of the house were rented to various working-class tenants, many of them of Polish or French-Canadian heritage.

The Sets, proprietors of a Chinese laundry next door at 54 Essex Street, purchased the house in 1977, living in it off and on until 1990 and renting parts of the house to various young and working-class tenants.

¹⁰⁶ Annual Listing for the City of Salem, 2017.

After the building was turned into condominiums in 2002, it has been the home to a few couples of urban professionals. The home remains an important landmark of Salem's maritime and architectural legacy.

Appendix One: Probate Inventory of Capt. Daniel Sage, 1838

Real Estate

The Homestead, with the buildings thereon situated upon the North side of Essex Street-- \$4,000
A lot of land with a barn thereon situated opposite upon the south side of Essex Street-- \$675.
A lot of land in North Fields situated upon the south side of the road leading to Ornes Point & part of barn thereon-- \$175
A lot of land in North Fields situated upon the South side of Liberal Street— \$150
A lot of land in North Fields situated upon the North side of Liberal Street -- \$75
Pew No. 3 in East Meeting House-- \$1

Total-- \$5,076

Personal Estate

Furniture &c. Green Sofa \$10 Two Tables & Seven Chairs \$9.50-- \$19.50
Brass Fire Set \$4 Looking Glass \$5 Turkey Carpet & Two Rugs \$20-- \$29
Five pieces Plated Ware \$10 Sideboard \$9 Black Sofa \$9--\$28
Six Chairs \$2.40 Clock Case & Book Case \$10-- \$12.40
Table & Writing Desk \$4.50 Set of Chartes & Bound News Papers \$3--\$7.50
Bible Lot of Books & Pictures \$10 Spy Glass \$8 Watch & Case \$5—23
Money scales Old Buckels, Reel, Sand Box \$0.50 Looking Glass \$3- \$3.50
Carpet \$5 Square Dining Table \$4 Stair Carpet, Rods & Lamp \$12--\$21
Bed, Bedstead & Bedding \$25 Easy Chair \$7-- \$32
Two trunks containing Sheets, Pillow Cases &c \$15 Set of Blankets, Bed Quilts & Bed Dress \$30-- \$45
Two Baskets \$1 Lot Napkins, Table Linins, & Cloths \$20-- \$21
Carpet & Rug \$7 Two Tables, Wash Stand Bowl & Pitcher \$4-- \$11
Six Chairs \$1.50 Twelve Pictures \$3 Light Stand \$1-- \$5.50
Bedstead & Bedding \$10 Bureau \$5.50 Table 25 cts. Seven Chairs 70 cts. – \$16.45
Carpet \$3 Looking Glass \$2 Two Trunks \$5-- \$5
Bureau and Case of Drawers \$7 Cot bedstead \$3 Thirty Chairs \$5—\$15
Bamboo Couch and Straw Carpet \$1.50 Light Stand & Paint Box 75 cents—\$2.25
Bedstead \$1.50 Three Looking Glasses \$1.50-- \$3
Two Beds, Pillows, and Bolsters-- \$20 Sword, Musket & accoutraments \$1.50-- \$21.50
Lot of Sticks—12 cents Bed Bedstead & Bedding \$5 Rocking Chair \$2.50-- \$5.37
Chest Drawers & Cot 25 cts. Chest 50 cts. -- \$.075
Bed, Bedstead, Bedding, Case drawers and Carpet \$4.50 Chest, Case Drawers Bed Bedstead & Bedding \$6.50-- \$11
Desk \$5 Round Table & Work Stand \$3.50 Easy Chair \$1-- \$9.50

Three Chairs 50 cts. Lot of wooden Ware \$2-- \$2.50
 Two brass fire Sets \$5 Two Tea Caddies sugar Box & Knife Case \$1-- \$6
 Three Lanthornes Two foot Stoves \$1.25—\$1.25
 Two Cases bottles and box of Vials \$1.25 Three Demijons \$1.50 Four Jars China Ware \$1.50--
 \$4.25
 Nine preserve Pots \$1— \$1
 Lot of China & Crockery Ware consisting of Dining & Tea Sets \$18 Looking Glass & Lot of
 Glass Ware \$7.50-- \$25.50
 Fire buckets & a lot of Baskets \$2-- \$2
 Lot of Waiters, Compass and a reflector \$1.50 Lot Knives & forks \$7.50--\$9
 Chest Drawers and Table \$1.50 Lot of Tin & Pewter Ware \$5--\$6.50
 Iron & Copper Ware \$5 Steel Yards Scales & Weights \$1.50 --\$6.50
 Lot of Stone and Potters Ware 50 cts. Five Kitchen Tables & five chairs \$2 -- \$2.50
 Lot of Brass Ware \$1.50 Kitchen Fire Set \$1 Lot Bottles \$4.50--\$7
 Lot of empty Barrels & Boxes \$6.50—\$6.50
 Ladders, wheelbarrow and Sled \$1.50 Lot old Tools, old bow, & Rubish \$5 half ton Coal \$3—
 \$9.50
 Grind Stone & Cloaths line \$1.50 Two stoves with funnels \$5-- \$6.50
 Seventy four & a quarter ounces Silver @ \$1 per oz. -- \$74.25

Stocks, Debts Due to the Estate, & Viz.

Seventy shares in the Merchants Bank-- \$7,000
 Twenty shares in the Exchange Bank—\$1333.33 1/3
 Forty-Five shares in the Mercantile Bank— \$4500
 Ten shares in the Commercial Bank—\$666.66 2/3
 Fifteen shares in the Oriental Insurance Co.—\$1500
 Five shares in the Marine Insurance Co.—\$1000
 Thirty-Four shares in the Union Marine Insurance Co.—\$1360
 Four shares in the Salem Bank—\$400.
 Seven shares in the Essex Marine Railway Corporation—\$1330
 Four shares in the Salem and Danvers Aqueduct Corporation— \$2000
 Two shares in the Marine Hall Corporation—\$190
 Deposite in the Grand Bank, present value—\$7720.
 Deposite in the Nahant Bank, present value—\$3777.77
 Deposite in the Naumkeag Bank, present value- \$1300
 Naples claim valued at—\$1592.59
 Cash on hand—\$1126.

Personal Estate: \$37,320.33

Total Estate: \$42, 396.33

Appendix Two: Table of Ownership

Date	Conveyed by	Conveyed to	Amount	Book	Page
1800, May 28	Richard Derby, Samuel Derby, Charles Derby, and Ebenezer Preble, Merchants	Daniel Sage, mariner	\$747.40	166	240
1836, Jul. 26	John Sage, mariner, William Sage, gentleman, Margaret Sage, singlewoman, Ephraim Emmerton, and Mary Ann Emmerton, Charles F. Putnam, trader, and Sarah Putnam	William Webb, trader	\$3,900	291	262
1870, Jul. 5	George M. & Elizabeth D. Whipple	Benjamin Webb, Jr., apothecary	\$2,666	813	299
1897 Sep. 20	Benjamin Webb, Jr., apothecary	Angie Webb, wife of Benjamin Webb	\$1 and other considerations	1524	86
1902 Apr. 17	Angie Webb	Marietta B. Wilkins, wife of S. Herbert Wilkins	\$1 and other considerations	1670	447
1951, Apr. 26	Estate of Marietta Wilkins	Paul P. & Mary E. Harrington	\$10,000	3813	542
1975, Aug. 20	Mary K. Harrington	Patrick J. Harrington	\$1 and other good and valuable consideration	6174	95

1977, Apr. 11	Patrick J. Harrington	Set Ming Fong, Set Ngor Shun How,	\$53,000	6361	149
1985, Apr. 26	Ngor Shun How, widow of Set Ming Fong,	Set Ngor Shun How, Den Jin Set, Moy Ching Sezto	Nominal consideration	7735	541
1990, Sep. 28	Den Jin Set	Set Ngor Shun How	Nominal consideration	10605	120
2002, Apr. 25	Moy Ching Szeto Chew, Den Jin Set, Tsang Mei Shung,	Jon M. Cahill	\$298,000	18627	242

Unit # 1

Date	Conveyed by	Conveyed to	Amount	Book	Page
2003, Apr. 1	Jon M. Cahill	Madeline E. Saunders	\$268,000	20486	311
2008, Jun. 20	Madeline E. Saunders, Charles M. Saunders, Miriam J. Phelan, Hobart P. Saunders,	Dorothy Malcolm	\$241,200	27863	408
2016, Jun. 29	Dorothy Malcolm	Karen C. Barter	\$275,000	35045	213
2018, Jul. 25	Karen C. Barter	Lisa Marie Mendelson	\$379,900	36887	114

Unit # 2

Date	Conveyed by	Conveyed to	Amount	Book	Page
2003, Feb. 26	Jon M. Cahill	Daniel P. & Donna M. Thompson	\$278,900	20237	132
2005, Apr. 15	Daniel P. & Donna M. Thompson	Robert L. & Laura Lynn Scheer Brooks	\$329,900	24179	489
2017 Sep. 29	Robert L. & Laura Lynn Scheer Brooks	John R. & Sandra N. Pittinger	\$345,900	36216	259

Unit # 3

Date	Conveyed by	Conveyed to	Amount	Doc	Book	Page
2003, Jan. 3	Jon M. Cahill	Robert E. O'Brien	\$285,400	Deed	19935	199
2015, Nov. 16	Robert E. O'Brien	Julia M. O'Brien	\$1 and consideration paid	Deed	34524	38



SOE HOO
LAUNDRY

SOE HOO
LAUNDRY

NO
PARKING

The Sage-Webb-Wilkins House

This fine brick-end structure with four chimneys, three stories, and an attic, was built on Essex Street by Daniel Sage. Contracts for the construction have been found, but the exact date of the house is still a matter of conjecture. Sage, a Scotsman, married Deborah Silsbee, whose great-grandfather, Stephen Daniel, had built a sturdy house across the street more than a century before. Benjamin Webb was a subsequent owner of the house, which appears to date from about 1800. For almost half a century it has belonged to the Wilkins family, and it is now the home of Judge Raymond S. Wilkins.



The mantel in the parlor of the Sage-Webb-Wilkins house is the twin of one in the dining-room, except for the wide shelf, a later addition. A pair of old leather firebuckets, emblazoned "Naumkeag," flank the fireplace. To the left stand a grandmother's clock and one of three Sheraton chairs carved by McIntire.