

Historic Salem incorporated

OFFICE AT OLD TOWN HALL

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

145 Federal Street

Built for

JOHN CULLITON, tanner and currier

in the year 1859

Research by,

Joyce King

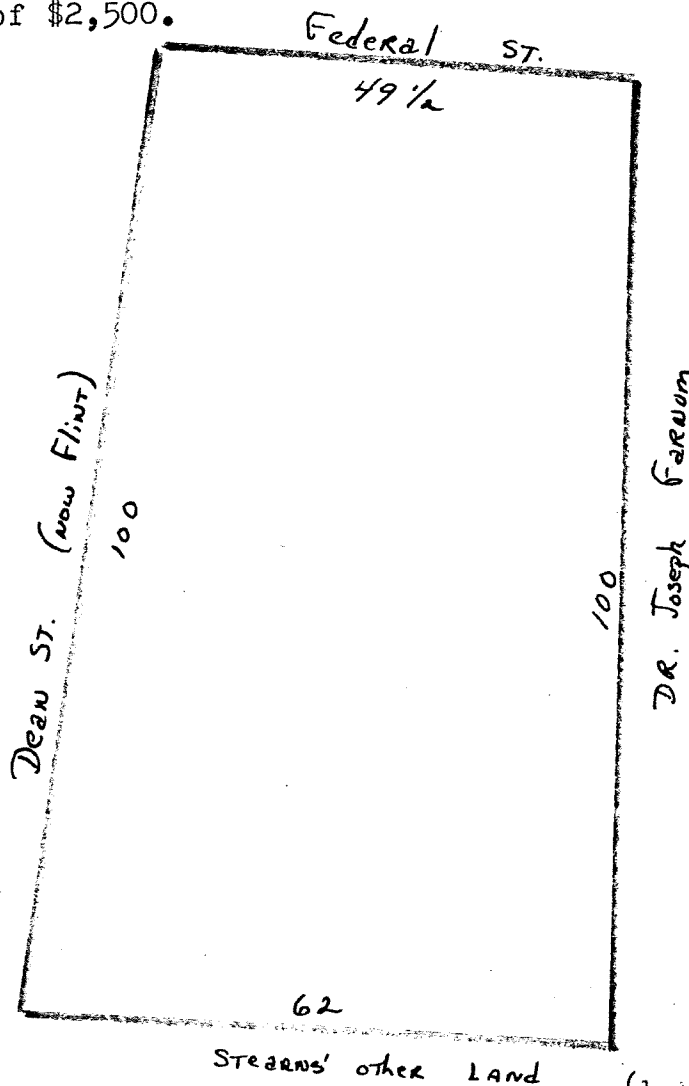
May 1981

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

145 Federal Street

This large two-story plus hip roof house has many of the features which were popular when it was built (1859) such as pedimented windows, paired brackets and a square columned portico and balustrade above. The house has a handsome iron fence in front of it. (Salem Historic Commission District Study, 1956)

The land on which this house stands was once part of the Stearns estate (384 Essex St.) which extended from Essex to Federal Streets. The Stearns family used this land as their garden for many years. In May of 1859, to settle the estate of Sarah W. Stearns, the heirs sold a portion of their land to John Culliton tanner and currier, for the sum of \$2,500.



(book 589 pages 6-8)

John Culliton was born in Ireland in 1817. He landed in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1834, where he worked at printing for a short time. (It was common for Irish immigrants, who were unable to pay the fare for regular passage to the United States, to book passage on Canadian lumber ships which would otherwise return home empty. Once in Canada the Irish would save their money and work their way down the coast into the United States. This could be the route taken by Mr. Culliton.) Mr. Culliton arrived in Salem in 1835 and began as a journeyman to invest in small purchases of hides which he tanned and curried himself in his off hours and sold on his own account. It was in this way that Mr. Culliton said he laid the foundation of his subsequent fortune. His speciality was light African matemoras and Central American kip. (Salem News Oct. 14, 1887 and July 8, 1923)

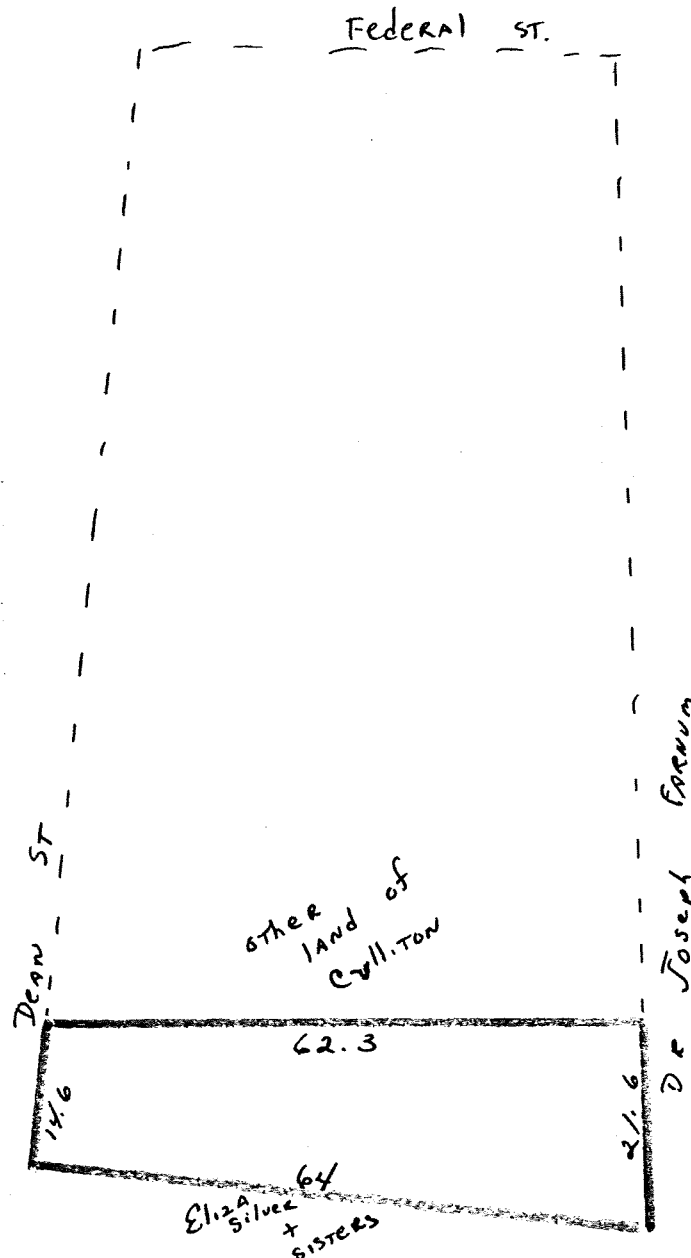
John Culliton, described as a quiet reserved man, was married in Salem to Lucy D. Johnson on Dec. 31, 1848. The couple made their home at 9 Friend St. until the completion of their beautiful new mansion house at 145 Federal St. The Culliton family was settled into their new residence by June 1860 when the federal census was taken:

John Culliton	age 42	currier	born in Mass	(?)
Lucy	" 36		" "	
Catherine	" 11		" "	
John	" 7		" "	
James	" 6		" "	
Willie	" 2		" "	
Carrie Grant	" 17	servant	" "	

The tax records for 1860 list John Culliton as the owner of 147 (now 145) Federal St. valued at \$6,500; currier shop and tannery at R91 Mason St. valued at \$3,400; one horse (no value given).

In 1862 the tax was - 5,300 ft. of land \$2,000 - barn \$100 - house \$4,400- Total \$6,500

On March 21, 1866 John Culliton purchased, for \$452, a small parcel of land adjoining his from the heirs of Lydia P. Stearns. This was the same land conveyed to Lydia by the heirs of Sarah W. Stearns:



(book 701 page 88)

In 1868 John Culliton's worth was given as:

stock	\$20,000	
machinery	1,000	
3 horses	500	
carriages, carts, etc.	300	
furniture	1,000	
house 145 Federal	6,500	land \$2,000
tan yard and 3 buildings	1,500	land 1,200
vats	700	
house 87½ Mason St.	400	land 200
land #3 and 4½ Friend St.	500	

The 1870 census shows one addition and one correction*:

John Culliton	age 53	tanner & currier	born Ire.*
Lucy D.	" 46	keeping house	" Mass.
Katie E.	" 21	no occupation	" "
John F.	" 17	at school	" "
James E.	" 15	" "	" "
William H.	" 10	" "	" "
Edward J.	" 8	" "	" "
Carrie L. Grant	" 26	servant	" "

The tax value had risen in 1870 to - \$8,000 for the house and \$1,300 for the land. By 1876 the house was valued at \$9,000 with the land at \$1,800. The value dropped in 1880 to \$7,800 for the house and \$1,600 for land. In 1880 another census was taken:

John Culliton	age 62	leather manf.	born Ire.
Lucy D.	" 56	wife - keeps house	" Mass.
James E.	" 26	son - student	" "
William	" 21	" - brokers clerk	" "
Edward J.	" 19	" - currier	" "
Caroline L. Grant	" 37	niece	" "
Bridget Carey	" 19	servant	" Ire.

In the 1881 directory John Culliton was a currier at R109 Mason St. and at 91 High St., Boston. His house was 145 Federal St.

Mr. Culliton died at his residence on Oct. 13, 1887 at the age of 70. This obituary appeared in the local paper:

Mr. JOHN CULLITON, also a member of the South Society, died on Thursday, aged 70. He was born in Ireland, and in Halifax in 1834, came to Massachusetts and worked at his trade as a printer in the office of the Boston Post. He came to Salem in 1835, and worked in the office of the Salem Landmark. He learned the trade of a currier with the late David Roberts of Peabody, as an apprentice, laying the foundation of his future competency by working overtime at night upon hides purchased by himself and sold by him as his own venture to his employer. He accumulated wealth rapidly during the war, and for several years was at the head of the firm of Culliton, Treadwell & Co., 88 High street, Boston. He embraced the Protestant religion and was a member of the South Church Parish Committee. He was a Director in the Naumkeag Bank and Salem & South Danvers Oil Company. A man of generous impulses, he was one of the best friends the workmen ever had. He leaves a widow and four sons and a daughter.

In his will (probate #65503) Mr. Culliton left his widow, Lucy D., "a share as she is entitled to at law", to his son William H. the sum of \$100, 1/4 of the remainder to Charles Tuttle to hold in trust for John F. Culliton of Peabody, and the rest to children James, Edward and Kate. (see also appendix A)

On Sept. 21, 1888 Charles H. Tuttle, trustee under the will of John Culliton transferred the 1/4 share of the dwelling house at 145 Federal St. to Lucy D. Culliton (book 1233 page 505).

Lucy D. Culliton died on June 25, 1893. The Salem News carried this obituary:

"Lucy D., widow of the late John Culliton, died at her residence on Federal St. yesterday noon, after an illness of some duration.

The deceased was born and always resided in Salem. She was an

attendant at the South church, and although never conspicuous in charitable work, gave a large amount of money to the poor and deserving.

The deceased was in her 70th year. She leaves a daughter Catherine, wife of C. H. Tuttle, and three sons James, William and Edward."

On July 29, 1893 the heirs of Lucy D. Culliton conveyed their shares of the dwelling house 145 Federal St. and the land on the corner of Federal and Flint, "the same conveyed to John Culliton as by deeds of Stearns" to William H. Culliton. "The same inherited by us from our late mother Lucy D." (book 1395 page 145).

The 1895 tax shows that the valuation had dropped to \$7,300 for the house and \$2,100 for the land. 1913 shows a further drop to \$6,700 for the house and \$2,100 for the land.

William H. Culliton died on July 3, 1914. His obituary as it was printed in the Salem News:

"William H. Culltion died at his home, 145 Federal St., Saturday, after a long illness. He was a note broker, and was born in Salem, Oct. 24, 1857. His father was John Culliton, a large leather manufacturer. He leaves a brother Edward J. and a sister Mrs. Charles H. Tuttle. His funeral was held this forenoon at his late home. Rev. Thomas G. Langdale of the South church officiating. The burial was in Harmony Grove."

In his will (probate #118985) William bequeathed \$500 to his cousin Caroline L. Grant and several pieces of jewelry to the Tuttle family. The rest and remainder to Charles C. Tuttle to pay brother Edward J. Culliton all the income (see also appendix B).

The directory for 1915 states that the house was vacant at the time those listings were made.

On Sept. 21, 1915 Charles C. Tuttle, trustee under the last will of William H. Culliton, sold for \$6,600 to Catherine Ronan "the same conveyed to John Culliton by deeds of Stearns (book 2311 pages 450-1).

Catherine Ronan was the wife of a prominent leather manufacturer, James Ronan. The property was apparently put in Catherine's name for legal purposes. The 1915 tax valuation shows Catherine Ronan as the owner of 145 Federal St. - house valued at \$5,600; land \$2,400. The Ronans moved, from 44 Holten St., Peabody with their impressive family, to the Federal St. house immediately after the purchase as indicated in the 1916 directory:

	<u>works at</u>	<u>lives at</u>
Bartholomew J. Ronan, clerk (Peabody)		145 Federal St.
Catherine F.	" dentist - 114 Washington St.	"
Francis J.	" student	"
James J.	" lawyer - 252 Essex St.	"
John J.	" lawyer - 118 Washington St.	"
James (wf. Catherine)	morocco dresser	"
William J.	" "	"

(daughter Helen Ronan, dentist was listed along with the others in 1918)

The year 1925 brought sadness to the 145 Federal St. household, for on May 8th Dr. Helen E. Ronan died:

Salem News - May 10, 1925

"Dr. Helen E. Ronan, one of the best known of the younger dentist of this city, passed away Saturday after an illness of only a few days duration. She was a native of this city. After completing her High School course in three years, she entered Tufts Dental School, from which she graduated with honor and distinction in 1919.

Her great zeal and enthusiasm for her work, and her marked ability and skill in executing the same, soon attracted the attention of the college authorities who upon her graduation, made her a member of the faculty. She held this position for a few years and until the practice established by her sister, Dr. Catherine F., became so large as to require her attention. Thereupon, she associated with her sister and the two have since been actively engaged in the practice of their profession.

Endowed with a bright and happy disposition, Dr. Helen Ronan always had a kind and pleasant word for everyone with whom she came in contact. She was a great favorite with the children, especially those who were numbered among her patients. Dr. Ronan was only 25 years of age. She was in her usual good health and spirits and about her duties as late as last Thursday. Her demise was entirely unexpected and was a distinct shock to the community.

Besides her grief stricken parents and sister, Dr. Ronan leaves six brothers."

Just two years later another death stunned the family.

Salem News - Nov. 7, 1927

"The many friends of John J. Ronan a well known attorney were shocked to learn that he passed away at his home 145 Federal St., yesterday afternoon after an illness lasting but a few days. He was about his duties until Thursday when he complained of a slight indisposition. He was apparently recovering when a heart condition developed which culminated in his death.

Mr. Ronan was born in Salem, but moved as a child with his parents to Peabody. He was educated in the public schools of that city, graduated from Peabody High in 1912. He continued his studies at the Boston University law school, received his degree from that institution in 1915. He began the practice of his profession in Salem, but his duties were interrupted by his enlistment in the navy in 1918.

After serving most creditably under Lt. Comm. David Little, until the armistice was signed, then returned to his office and resumed his law practice.

He had a particular aptitude for probate and real estate law and devoted himself almost exclusively to the practice of those two branches. At the time of his death he was conveyancer for the Roger Conant Co-op Bank.

Attorney Ronan was a man of reticence and unassuming disposition but his earnestness and integrity and sympathetic understanding endeared him to all who knew him. He was a member of the Essex Bar Assc. and the American Legion.

Besides his mother and father he is survived by five brothers and one sister Katherine."

The 1935 valuation for Catherine F. Ronan was listed as:

House 145 Federal St.	\$6,000
Garage	500
Factory (3 Waters St.)	9,000

On Oct. 16, 1937 James Ronan succumbed to a long illness:

Salem News - Oct. 16

"James Ronan died this morning at his home 145 Federal St., following a long illness. A native of Salem he spent many of his early years in Peabody where, for a long time he conducted a large tannery, retiring from business 15 years ago.

Mr. Ronan devoted his life chiefly, in the interest of his family and home, yet was kindly and helpful to all whom he met bearing his lingering illness with patience.

He married Catherine Doody of Salem more than 50 years ago in the old St. James church, the ceremony being performed by Rev. Fr. Gray. Besides his widow he is survived by one daughter Dr. Catherine F. of Salem and five sons. Funeral from his late home."

On July 12, 1950, after the death of their mother in 1949, James, William, Bartholomew, Arthur and Frank sold their shares in the land and building on the corner of Federal and Flint Streets to Catherine F. Ronan. "All we inherited from our mother Catherine F. Ronan. For title see Charles Tuttle to Catherine F. Ronan 1915". (book 3762 page 297)

Catherine and Frank remained in the house until for some unknown reason they moved to 366 Essex St. in 1954. The house remained vacant during 1954 and 1955.

It may be of interest to make note of some members of the Ronan family after their departure from 145 Federal St.:

Bartholomew practiced law for 45 years and was the vice president and director of the Merchants Warren National Bank of Salem.

James Ronan became Justice of the State Supreme Court

William and Frank were the proprietors of "Ronan's" restaurant at 40 Boston St. for many years.

Catherine continued to practice dentistry in Boston, Wakefield and Salem. She died on March 22, 1976 at the age of 82.

On Jan. 19, 1955 Catherine Ronan, unmarried, sold to Arthur Thomas Cyr the land and buildings at 145 Federal St. "For title see deed of James Ronan et al to me July 12, 1950, also probate of Catherine Ronan #228016" (book 4135 page 293).

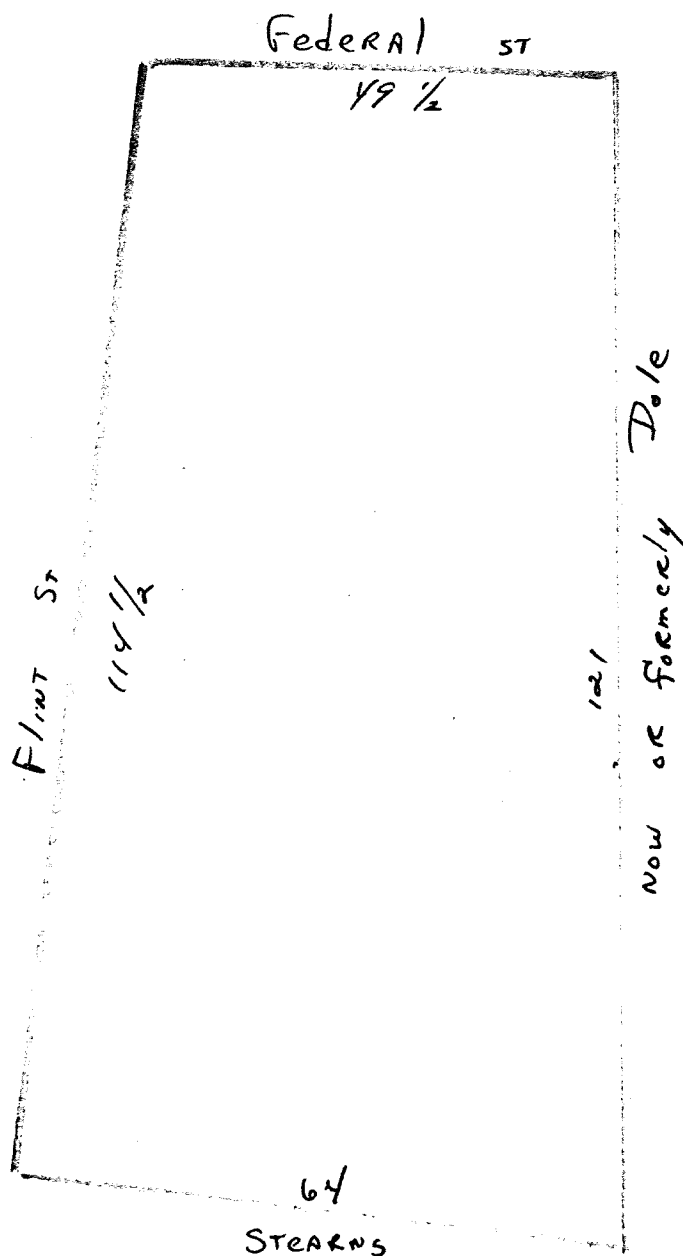
On Oct. 9, 1956 Arthur T. Cyr secured a mortgage from the Roger Conant Bank for \$2,200. The property was also subject to a prior mortgage for \$16,300 (book 4314 page 132). The bank took possession of the property on Feb. 11, 1958 (book 4442 page 154).

On Feb. 26, 1958 the Roger Conant Co-op Bank sold the property to Elmer H. Warner (book 4442 page 155-7). The title was changed on April 29, 1958 to read Elmer and Eleanor Warner (book 4456 page 292).

Dec. 10, 1959 Elmer H. and Eleanor C. Warner, husband and wife, sold to Israel Frisch, of Beverly. "The same conveyed by the Roger Conant Bank (book 4628 page 382).

On Dec. 31, 1966 Israel and Minnie Frisch, husband and wife, of Beverly changed the title of this property as well as three other parcels to "Israel Frisch as he is trustee of the Federal St. Realty Trust of Salem" (book 5417 page 512).

Oct. 29, 1980 Minnie Frisch surviving spouse of Israel Frisch and the successor trustee of the Federal St. Realty Trust of Salem sold for \$100,000 to Harkness and Wick Development Corp., business at 7 East St., Ipswich the land and building on the corner of Federal and Flint Sts. For title see book 5417 page 512 (book 6756 page 338):



(B)

Schedule of Real Estate in Detail.

Personal
Schedule of Real Estate in Detail.

House
and land 145 Federal St. Salem.

Dollars
6000 Cts.

Household Furniture
 Fur coat
 Diamond collar button
 " Turquoise ring
 " Sapphire "
 " Crescent pin
 " Pearl "
 Horsehead pin
 Rooster "
 Jergeson Gold Watch
 Watch chain.
 Gold handled Knife
 Deposit in Old Col. Trust Co. Boston

Dollars
 275 35 Cts.
 125
 85
 200
 100
 35
 25
 150
 10
 350
 15
 350
 792 85

6000 00

2018 20

Schedule of Real Estate in Detail.

	DOLLS.	Crs.
corner Dean & Federal Sts.	9000	
41 Florist St.	6000	
corner Mason & Friend Sts.	1000	
102 Friend St.	1280	
every property.	4000	
	<u>21280</u>	

[This Schedule should be divided into at least four classes: 1st, household furniture; 2d, shares in corporations; 3d, promissory notes and other securities; 4th, property employed in business, etc.]

Schedule of Personal Estate.

	DOLLS.
Household furniture	500
13 Shares Kawerkiag Fall BK	1820
10 " Salerny & Sod. Oil Co	500
4 " Mechanic Hall Corp	200
Notes secured by mortgage	
Andrew Synak	350
Margaret Synak	2700
Jarvis Riley	3500
Interest	<u>12250</u>
	667250
Samuel Pittman secured by cost of life ins.	3500
Cash in Everett Fall BK	13674.78
Less corr. to credit ^{Estate} of ^{Admors} <u>4173.31</u>	9501.47
Cash in Kawerkiag Fall BK	710.45
Accounts Receivable	11536.92
Hides in process & leather finished	103032.94
Materials at tannery	1000
Machinery, tools, horse wagon, etc	1639
Office furniture	150
	<u>140763.28</u>

(D)

