

↳ Preservation at work

HISTORIC
SALEM INC

The following document is a collection of research on 18 Crombie Street. The document package includes the nomination to Preservation Massachusetts' Most Endangered list, the house history conducted by Rory Goff, the Holyoke Insurance house history (to deem the house insignificant in hope of tearing it down), and other articles of interest. A larger collection of documents concerning the preservation of this house can be found in HSI's files. Contact the office for more information.

SALEM

Preservationists, firm feud over old downtown house

Crombie Street home to be razed for parking lot

A News staff report

SALEM — The Historical Commission and the Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co. are locked in a battle over an old house on Crombie Street which the company wants to tear down for parking spaces and the commission wants to preserve.

The Historical Commission voted unanimously Wednesday night after a three-hour hearing to recommend against granting a waiver of the delay ordinance for demolition, requested by Holyoke. The commission can only delay demolition of the house for six months. The Salem Redevelopment Authority will make the decision whether it can be torn down.

Commission members and Holyoke representatives could agree on little about the house including its age and its structural soundness. Commission members contended it was structurally fine and maybe 220 years old while the company said it was 160 years old, falling down and of no historical importance.

Most of the neighbors on Crombie Street also opposed the demolition of the house, which abuts Joe's Auto Laundry, also owned by the insurance company. Holyoke is located across Norman Street from Joe's Auto Laundry.

Among the groups in favor of preserving the single family gam-



'We intend to press ahead to tear the house down.'

William J. Lundregan,
Holyoke attorney



This is a 'historically significant building.'

Anne Farnham,
Essex Institute

breel house are Historic Salem Inc. and the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Anne Farnham, on behalf of the Essex Institute, said the house is a "historically significant building" which is important to preserve. She noted it was part of the historic register.

Attorney William J. Lundregan, representing Holyoke, said the company originally wanted to turn the building into a conference center but it was in such poor shape that rehabilitation costs were too high.

"We intend to press ahead to tear the house down," Lundregan said.

Lundregan denied charges from opponents that the company, which employs 200 people, was threatening to leave the city if it didn't get its way.

He said the company could let the building decay to a point where city official would be forced to tear it down.

He detailed the company's 140 year commitment to downtown Salem. He said the company looks at nearby properties when they come up for sale if it abuts their property. Holyoke bought the house for \$169,000 four years ago.

Commission members and others tried to determine whether the company had any more plans for the house lot. Lundregan said



The Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company and the city's Historical Commission disagree over the age and significance of this old gambrel home on Crombie Street and neighbors say the company's plans to demolish the structure for a parking lot will be one more damaging blow to this downtown residential street which is a National Register district. View is looking north toward Essex Street. Out of view at left is former Joe's Auto Laundry property at corner of Crombie and Norman streets. *The Salem News/file photo*

Holyoke didn't have any immediate plans to develop it.

"We'd like to find out the company's strategic plans without any of the threats to leave the city," said David Pelletier, a Crombie Street resident.

Board of Appeal member Jane Stirgwort suggested that since the company had no immediate plans for the lot that it lease the house until it works out plans. Board members agreed that it was an option Holyoke should consider. Lundregan said the company had

already considered it.

Frank Montesi of 15 Crombie St. said it is another case of a corporation "bowling over" a Salem neighborhood. He said only four homes will be left on the street which was once filled with homes.

Stephanie Montesi said Crombie Street was the last residential street downtown, according to the Historic Register.

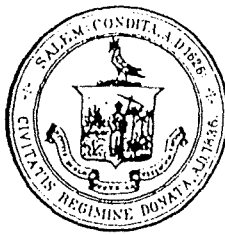
"I'm really frustrated about this back door approach," she said.

Commission member Russell

Slam said the demolition of the house would be a tragedy.

"The neighborhood has been under seige for the past 10 years. This neighborhood is being nickel and dimed out of existence," Slam said.

Commission Chairwoman Annie C. Harris said tearing down the house will only provide a few parking spaces. She mentioned other city plans to increase parking nearby. She said the property is listed under the Crombie Street National Register District.



Salem Historical Commission

ONE SALEM GREEN, SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS 01970
(617) 745-9595, EXT. 311

15 May 2001

Kathryn Coggeshall
Endangered Resource Program
Historic Massachusetts, Inc.
Old City Hall
45 School Street
Boston MA 02108

RE: 2001 List of Most Endangered Historic Resources/ 18 Crombie Street, Salem

Dear Ms. Coggeshall:

The Salem Historical Commission would like to support the nomination submitted to you by Historic Salem Incorporated, and urge that H.M.I. list 18 Crombie Street in Salem among the Commonwealth's 10 most endangered historic resources in 2001.

Built circa 1770 and moved to its present site in 1830, this building is a rare surviving example of a colonial period vernacular house in Salem's central business district. In contrast to the grand scale and high style of Salem's famous Georgian and Federal mansions, the diminutive size and setting of this property is deceptive, causing it to be easily overlooked and underestimated. In fact, compact closely spaced wooden houses of this type dominated 18th century Salem and the historical significance of the City's now more numerous surviving mansions cannot be fully understood without recognizing their common and traditional counterparts, such as 18 Crombie Street. Today, only three other comparable houses remain in Salem's central business district (See NR Nomination form, item 7, pp. 2-3).

In addition to its individual significance, 18 Crombie Street is the oldest and smallest of 6 historic buildings which constitute a substantially intact early 19th century urban streetscape and modern residential enclave. As a whole, this streetscape creates a historical setting for the prominent Crombie Street Church (1828), which is a focal point of the district and a notable early example of the Greek revival architectural style in Essex County. The combined impacts of 19th century commercial and industrial expansion, the Great Salem fire of 1914, and urban renewal clearance programs during the mid 20th century have all served to isolate Crombie Street today as an archaic and charming reminder of early settlement patterns in Salem's evolving central business district.

In 1983, this property was listed on the National Register as part of a Downtown Salem Multiple Resource Nomination. In 1990, the owner applied to the Salem Historical Commission for a waiver from the City's demolition delay ordinance and to the Salem Redevelopment Authority for a permit to demolish the building. Both applications were denied and since that time no permit has been issued for demolition. Furthermore, the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Architectural Conservation Trust for Massachusetts included this property on their respective lists of "most endangered" properties in 1990. As a result, 18 Crombie Street

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has been a subject of legal dispute and "demolition by neglect" for over ten years. During the past year, however, there have been renewed efforts to re-open negotiations toward preservation of this building. These efforts have been promoted by Crombie Street residents, Historic Salem Incorporated, the City Council, the Salem Harbor Community Development Corporation and the Salem Evening News.

The Salem Historical Commission fully supports these efforts and the nomination submitted by Historic Salem Incorporated. We urge H.M.I. to increase public awareness of this greatly underestimated and critically endangered property by including it on the list of 10 most endangered historic resources in the Commonwealth this year.

Please feel free to call if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lance Kasparian" followed by a stylized monogram "JK".

Lance Kasparian
Salem Historical Commission, chair

cc:

Joe Walsh, planning department
Jane Guy, SHC clerk
Joan Lovely, City Council
Tim Jenkins, H.S.I.
John Goff, H.S.I.

2001 MASSACHUSETTS' TEN MOST ENDANGERED HISTORIC RESOURCES NOMINATION FORM

SITE INFORMATION:

Property Name: Wendt House a/k/a Ferguson--Pike-Cate-Jefferson-Dane House
Property Address: 18 Crombie Street, City / State / Zip: Salem, MA 01970

NOMINATOR INFORMATION:

Applicant Name: Historic Salem, Inc.
Affiliation / Relation to the Property: Historic Salem, Inc. (HSI) is Salem's 501 (c) 3 community preservation advocacy organization. HSI in 2000 commenced designating list(s) of Most Endangered Historic Resources in Salem, following HMI and National Trust example. The Wendt House is *the most critically endangered* historic property on HSI's first "Most Endangered" historic resources list.

Applicant Address: Post Office Box 865, City / State / Zip: Salem, MA 01970
Applicant Telephone: [please include both day and evening numbers] (978) 745-0799 day and evening.
Applicant Fax: (978) 744-4536

PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION:

Owner Name: Holyoke Mutual Square, Inc., or Holyoke Square, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company, a/k/a Holyoke of Salem Insurance Agency, Inc.
Owner Address: Holyoke Sq., City / State / Zip: Salem, MA 01970
Owner Telephone: (978) 745-6420

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION :

Please provide additional information with attachments, if necessary.

1..DESCRIPTION OF THE ENDANGERED RESOURCE

Briefly describe the resource 's setting, structures, and/or major features.

Setting: Crombie Street is the core street in the Crombie Street Historic District, Salem's smallest National Register listed historic district. The Crombie Street District is composed of six remaining buildings in the last surviving residential enclave in the heart of Salem's downtown. The street is a paved narrow lane, lined with 18th and 19th century timber, brick, and stone buildings from the Georgian, Federal, Greek Revival, and Italianate periods and styles. It is only one block long. The district includes a cross-section of residential buildings from various periods of development, along with a church building originally built as a theatre. Wood is the dominant material, although the Crombie Street Church and the Bowker House are brick. All the buildings directly abut the sidewalk, suggesting high density, but placement on the lots is irregular, creating a neighborhood atmosphere.

The street runs from the old Ruck's Creek waterfront area at its low end (now Norman Street), up to Essex Street, which traditionally marked the high land, and "ye Main Street" forming the east-west spine of the peninsula upon which 17th century Salem was settled. The Wendt House anchors the west side of the low end of the street. It is widely exposed upon its south and west sides, due to the prior removals of other historic houses.

Structures and Major Features: The Wendt House is a small, handsome 18th century, Georgian Style, 2-1/2 story, gambrel roofed timber framed house. It is clad in old wood shingles, painted brown, and has 6/6 double hung windows, as well as a central brick chimney, impressive wood wainscot and interior details, and a small two story kitchen addition added to the south side as an ell

- Additional architectural description and plans and Overview, see **Section L**
- Photographs, see **Section B**
- Slides, see **Section C**
- Articles, see **Section H**

2. SETTING.

Does the immediate site retain its original character? Are there open space issues? Is there evidence of early landscape features and/or design?

The immediate site retains much of its original character from at least the 1830s decade, when it is believed that 18 Crombie Street was assembled from older houses, moved to and joined on the old waterfront site.

- Additional site description and documentation, see **Additional Old Maps Section N** and **Locator map, see Section D**
- National Register nomination forms, see **Section G**

Historic Landscape analysis and study has been hindered and prevented by Holyoke's deliberate efforts to demolish the building by neglect. Vestigial plantings remain, but are obscured by weeds, rubbish, and encroaching pavement. No archaeological study available.

3. CONTEXT

What does the surrounding area look like? Is it similar to the original setting? How has it changed? Please describe with details.

The Wendt House is located on the west side of Crombie Street in the old "Knocker's Hollow" neighborhood of Salem. It anchors the lowest and southernmost end of Crombie Street where it intersects Norman Street. Norman Street is part of Route 114 and Salem's dominant urban entry corridor from Route 128 and the north.

18 Crombie Street's surrounding area is Salem's last surviving early residential neighborhood in the western part of the central business district. It is part of a National Register district and former waterfront area.

The principal change over the centuries has been the filling in of the old stream and Ruck's Creek working waterfront, the demolition of many early buildings, including famed woodcarver and Salem architect Samuel McIntire's own home (to create the new Holyoke Building) located directly across Norman Street.

One block west is Summer Street, which forms the boarder between the CBD and the McIntire local historic district, where Norman Street continues as Chestnut Street, the site of Salem's finest collection of Federal period homes—The Wendt House is now the "end" building in the eroded historic Crombie Street neighborhood, pressure is now being exerted upon 18 Crombie Street to fall.

4. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Briefly state the historical significance of the resource and its relevance to the local community. Is the resource listed on, or eligible for listing on, the State or National Register of Historic Places?

Lance Kasparian, Chairman of the Salem Historical Commission characterized the Wendt House's historical significance as follows:

“Built circa 1770 and moved to its present site in 1830, this building is a rare surviving example of a colonial period vernacular house in Salem's central business district. In contrast to the grand scale and high style of Salem's famous Georgian and Federal mansions, the diminutive size and setting of this property is deceptive, causing it to be easily overlooked and underestimated. In fact, compact closely spaced wooden houses of this type dominated 18th century Salem and the historical significance of the City's now more numerous surviving mansions cannot be fully understood without recognizing their common and traditional counterparts, such as 18 Crombie Street. Today, only three other comparable houses remain in Salem's central business district (See NR Nomination form Section G).”

The decline of buildings in the Crombie Street Historic District from eight to six since the National Register nomination was first prepared, further underscores the rarity and significance of the few buildings which remain.

It is also important, historically, for many reasons including both its early occupation by William Pike (a U.S. Customs House official and personal friend of both US President Franklin Pierce and Salem's Nathaniel Hawthorne) and the Jefferson and Farmer families, important members of Salem's early Afro-American and maritime community. Circumstantial evidence suggests that 18 Crombie Street may possess additional significance as a circa 1840 local center of Afro-American liberation—one of the “stops” on Salem's Underground Railroad. It is an important core contributing element within a recognized National Register district.

- Letter in the Salem Evening News, January 24, 2001-“distinguished history”, see **Section H**

Beyond its individual significance, 18 Crombie Street is particularly important as an anchor structure in an intact historic neighborhood under redevelopment pressure. It supports and preserves Salem's only surviving early downtown neighborhood within the bounds of the CBD. This area has felt intense pressures of urban development and encroachment in the past. Older historic structures were formerly located up the hill, where the parking lot is now located at the head of Crombie Street, across the street where the White Hen Pantry is now located, immediately downhill on the asphalt parking surrounding Joe's Auto Laundry and also across Norman Street on the site of the Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company building

The Salem Historical Commission spoke to contextual associations as follows:

“In addition to its individual significance, 18 Crombie Street is the oldest and smallest of 6 historic buildings which constitute a substantially intact early 19th century urban streetscape and modern residential enclave. As a whole, this streetscape creates a historical setting for the prominent Crombie Street Church (1828), which is a focal point of the district and a notable early example of the Greek revival architectural style in Essex County. The combined impacts of 19th century commercial and industrial expansion, the Great Salem fire of 1914, and urban renewal clearance programs during the mid 20th century have all served to isolate Crombie Street today as an archaic and charming reminder of early settlement patterns in Salem's evolving central business district.”

The Wendt House is a "bookend" building in a threatened historic neighborhood. It needs to be saved to preserve the neighborhood as a whole. The Salem Evening News recognized this fact in December, 2000, when it reversed a long held pro-development position to advocate preserving the house upon its ancient site, because it illustrates the "check by jowl" density of urban downtown neighborhoods in centuries past.

- For additional documentation of 18 Crombie Street's importance as part of a small but significant district, under development pressure, see "Most Endangered" materials from 1990 [SHC reference, see **Section E**], also Historic Salem, Inc., Salem Historical Commission, City of Salem, Massachusetts Historical Commission, ACT for Massachusetts, Inc., National Trust for Historic Preservation and Crombie Street Neighborhood Association support letters, dating from 1990 through May, 2001 [Preservation Support Letters, **Section M**]

5. THREAT

What is the nature of the threat to the property? (Threats might include demolition, arson, neglect, inappropriate rehabilitation, over-development, vandalism, and/or pending sale or foreclosure without restrictions in place.) Please be specific about the threat over the next month, six months, one year and beyond.

The Wendt House suffers from a great number of threats.

The principal active threats to the Wendt House are: demolition, demolition by neglect, risk of arson, risk of accidental loss by fire, and risk of vandalism, all accelerated in recent months both by new damage to the building's weather envelope evidenced by broken and unboarded window(s), second floor level; also stepped up efforts on Holyoke's part to eliminate all problems by eliminating the building.

The Wendt House's chief threat derives from its current ownership. Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company, the current owner, seeks to remove the historic house by demolition. The building stands across Norman Street from the Company's main office building. It was erected in the late 20th century on the site of Salem architect and woodcarver Samuel McIntire's residence. McIntire's residence was destroyed by Holyoke to create a new site for a commercial office building in an essentially residential neighborhood, and now Holyoke wishes to remove the Wendt House to create a small number of downtown parking spaces.

In addition to all the factors listed above, the Wendt House is additionally physically threatened by its proximity to Salem's "dry" homeless shelter on Crombie Street which, when full, exacerbates homeless persons and vagrancy problems on Crombie Street most heavily, and to a lesser degree in the whole western part of downtown.

Architecturally, the Wendt House is further physically threatened by its proximity to Holyoke's ever-expanding asphalt parking lots, and Holyoke's policy of attempting to promote intense rental parking on land near the house. The close proximity of the new asphalt parking lots (combined with Holyoke's long standing desire to remove the historic building) allows now for large piles of snow to be piled against and near the house in the winter, providing more water damage and pollution run-off on the property, and opens the possibility for plows and heavy vehicles to collide with the long abandoned, timber framed house.

For the record, it should be noted that since the Wendt House preservation crisis was first started by Holyoke in the late 1980s, Holyoke, while being thwarted in obtaining a demolition permit for the house, has been successful in

- Destroying and removing wood picket fences and constructing additional parking spaces in the side and rear yards in 1993
- Demolishing the rear porch about 1995.

The abandoned nature of the house, as well as its sun dried exterior and occasional use as a teenage "hang out" area, due to its being an attractive nuisance, further increases fire risks, particularly in summer and warm weather months. There are no known fire alarms or smoke detectors in the building, and the building receives.

Due to the variety of threats and conditions associated with this property, the Wendt House is at active risk for loss year round, due to three primary factors:

- 1) Changing threat risks associated with changes in the season (e.g. highest vagrancy problems in winter; highest teenage hangout problems in summer), as well as
- 2) The constant desire of the owner to lose the building by any means, and
- 3) The slow but steady erosion which is occurring, due to the aging of the wood frame house, with complete non-provision of Owner-supplied maintenance.

Prior to becoming Executive Director of Historic Salem, Inc., HSI spokesman and preservation architect John Goff served for many years as Historic Massachusetts, Inc.'s Preservation Advocate for the Souther Tide Mills in Quincy, one of the first properties ever nominated to HMI's Most Endangered List. Mr. Goff has noted for our record that

"The Wendt House in Salem has many of the same architectural preservation problems associated with the Souther Tide Mills—typical of abandoned 18th century timber frame buildings left exposed to the elements for many years. Yet with the Wendt House, the problems are more shocking to perceive, because the building is located in the heart of an historic Massachusetts city, which prides itself upon its historic districts, and its heritage tourism attractions."

There is additional reason to believe that the Wendt House at 18 Crombie Street is now Eligible for Listing as Most Endangered at State Level in 2001, because, according to records on file with both Historic Salem, Inc. and the Salem Historical Commission,

"the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Architectural Conservation Trust for Massachusetts included this property on their respective lists of 'most endangered' properties [at State level] in 1990. see SHC letter Section E"

NOTE: The status of the 18 Crombie Street House thus begs the question "What happened to the State's Most Endangered Properties between 1990 and 1993 if the Wendt House was first listed upon both MHC's and ACT's lists in 1990—but NOT listed upon the first list created by HMI after it merged with ACT for Massachusetts, Inc. by 1993?"

Shouldn't the Wendt House NOW BE ON the list of State's Most Endangered—not only because of the current crisis and condition of the property—but also due to the fact that no preservation dangers were remediated or removed between 1990 and 2001?

A comparison of photographs of the Wendt House from the late 1980s—compared with those taken in 2001—demonstrate very real deterioration in the fabric of the building, due to its abandonment, deferred maintenance, and prolonged preservation problems over many years: **See and compare photograph 1 (2001), Section B with 1989 photograph Section H**

- The paint on the wood shingles has all but washed away completely on the upper portion of the front façade.
- The wood shutters have been lost in their entirety.
- A number of the window panes (with early, wavy glass) have been broken out. Many of the early window sash are rotted and decayed.
- The foundation has been deteriorated by the roots of 5 inch diameter sumac trees near the building which have grown 20 feet tall.
- Landscape and yard has been removed to create new rental parking spaces adjacent to the house.
- The rear porch was allowed to collapse, and was removed.
- The conditions of the roof, downspouts, gutters, sills and timber framing is unknown.

The Wendt House's deteriorations would not be so disturbing, were they not intentionally inflicted, as byproducts of a Demolition by Neglect land use strategy promoted by one of Salem's largest taxpayers, employers, and property casualty insurance company.

The Demolition By Neglect nature of the Wendt House situation is evidenced both by Holyoke's repeated efforts to tear the building down by legal means, combined with the prolonged abandonment, as well as by a 1990 admission by William J. Lundregan, the company's attorney, that:

"Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company...wants to tear down...an old house on Crombie Street...for parking spaces....[and should this request for a demolition permit be denied] the company could [still choose to] let the building decay to a point where city officials would be forced to tear it down" [see November 8, 1990 newspaper article, Section H]

In order to fully comprehend the multi-faceted, complex, challenging, and prolonged nature of the preservation problems associated with the Wendt House, it is necessary to look beyond and beneath all the physical manifestations and problems described above to attempt a better and more accurate understanding of the corporate mentality, and core "mindset" of Holyoke Insurance, which owns the house—as well as the nearby parking lots and the large office building.

- Holyoke's demolition of Salem architect Samuel McIntire's own house (formerly located on the site of the new office building) attests to a past disinterest in preservation.
- The company has rebuffed and/or ignored at least four proposed alternate preservation re-use options for the Wendt House over the last 12 years, see **Reuse proposals, Section K:**
 1. In December, 1990 (shortly after the Wendt House first became endangered by Holyoke) Pioneer Village in 1630--one of Salem's oldest outdoor educational and heritage tourism sites—proposed that the Wendt House be restored where it was—and used both for new "classroom facility and residence" by Pioneer Village—and "valuable reception, meeting and training space for the Holyoke Insurance Company."

2. In March, 1991 (about two years after the Wendt House was first endangered) the newly formed non-profit organization The Society for the Study of War and Culture, Inc. proposed purchasing 18 Crombie Street for use as its new headquarters. The Society proposed that "This headquarters building will contain our Offices and Library and provide storage space for the equipment used in our planned living history program, the Lewisburg Grenadiers Interpretive History Project." The Society's proposal was rebuffed.
3. In March, 2001, (shortly after the property became publicized on HSI's first Most Endangered List in December, 2000) Historic Salem, Inc. proposed that Holyoke either a) transfer the property to Salem Harbor CDC for ultimate renovation as a first-time homebuyer house; or b) transfer the property to HSI to arrange its transfer, after restoration, to "an appropriate family." HSI's March, 2001 proposal was rebuffed.
4. In March and May, 2001, the Salem Harbor Community Development Corporation proposed having "Holyoke...work...with the Salem Harbor CDC on renovating this property so that it could be re-sold to a first-time homebuyer." To date, Salem Harbor CDC's offer has been completely rebuffed.

In addition to rebuffing a number of appropriate preservation re-uses for the property, Holyoke has repeatedly pressured the City to issue it a demolition permit for razing the Wendt House, lost all attempts to secure a permit, appealed the denial in Court, lost the legal appeal—and yet still persisted in maintaining that it seeks no other options than to demolish the property—either outright, or through demolition by neglect.

All of this contextual history relating to the ongoing preservation battles over the last dozen years—indicates a tenacity and corporate stubbornness, which highlights and magnifies all the other threats listed above.

Because Holyoke is a large company, with significant financial resources, it can bring more "firepower" to the battle than can the neighbors, Ward Councilors, Historic Salem, Inc., even the City of Salem working without outside support. We seek active help now, to keep the Wendt House from following the example of the lost Salem Armory (Most Endangered at State Level), which was similarly neglected for many years, before becoming ultimately lost forever after a contrived preservation "emergency" last year.

Under the contrived "emergency" pattern, it is typical for maintenance and repairs to be suspended upon historic buildings, indefinitely, until (finally) *city officials would be forced to tear it down.*"

On the subject of contrived Salem "emergencies" it is important to note that increased public visibility of the Wendt House since it was listed on HSI's Most Endangered list last year may have actually served to increase the "emergency" situation with respect to 18 Crombie Street now.

Faced with the fact that 18 Crombie Street is now being called "Holyoke's House of Shame" in Salem Evening News Editorials—and that the neighbors have just organized a new Crombie Street Neighborhood Association (and cleaned up the property without obtaining permission) reports are coming in that Holyoke is exploring other options, including legal challenges on other fronts—as well as seeking to obtain permission from the Salem Fire Department to raze the house, citing hazardous situation.

6. COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

Is there community support for the preservation of the nominated resource? Has the local preservation commission taken a position on the issue? Are there any suggestions or plans for the reuse of the resource, if appropriate?

There is very strong Salem community support for the preservation of the Wendt House. At the neighborhood level, a Historic Crombie Street Neighborhood Association was just formed, on May 1, 2001, to "talk about the plight of the small historic house on our street" and to brainstorm new means and methods to repair and to preserve it. The Crombie Street Neighborhood Association's first publication (see Section I) concludes with the sentences:

"As a small neighborhood, we can not afford to lose one sixth of our critical mass to ruin and the eventual expansion of parking. We want our house back, with a yard and garden. We want people living in and appreciating the charm of this diminutive house. Holyoke has had the chance to use and preserve the property. They insult all of Salem and make mockery of their own tenets through their neglect. Please help us to save this small house with a large historic significance."

The Historic Crombie Street Neighborhood Association, (HCSNA) has been intensely active during its first month of May, 2001. Following organization on May 1st, it conducted a first CLEAN-UP of the Wendt House property on Sunday, May 6th, and is planning a "Peaceful Protest and Meditation in the Buddhist tradition" at both 18 Crombie Street and the Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company's headquarters on Sunday May 20th. The neighborhood association is also planning a Crombie Street Block Party for Friday, June 8th—and has begun a media campaign to get the preservation side of the story out to the public—to force Holyoke to take responsible and appropriate actions. "Hot off the press" in the Salem Evening News dated May 17, 2001, Robert Wall of the HCSNA fired off the group's first public salvo in a letter to the Editor, which was titled "Crombie Street Neighbors Plan to Keep Pressure On" (see Section H).

**Crombie Street Neighbors Plan to Keep Pressure On
[edited from Salem Evening News May 17, 2001]**

"Holyoke must be forced to take even the basic steps needed to maintain the house and the small piece of surrounding property that hasn't already been paved. They ignore their own advice to homeowners and their assurances of community support ring with hypocrisy.

Holyoke Mutual's neighbors are disgusted and taking matters into their own hands. They are actively responding to Holyoke's practice of demolition by neglect and applying the golden rule: They are banding together to clean up and repair the historic property. Homeless neighbors are pitching in to help. Everyone is working side-by-side and having fun getting to know each other.

It is all about building real community in the heart of one of America's oldest downtowns.

Robert Wall

NOTE: Upon May 17th, we also learned that William J. Lundregan, attorney for Holyoke Square, Inc., served legal papers on May 16th against the Walls, Pelletiers, and Lawrences of HCSNA for theft of vegetation, defacement of plywood covers with white paint, and trespass at 18 Crombie Street on May 6th. Holyoke, through Lundregan, promises to arrest members of HCSNA if further trespass occurs on June 8th. see Section P

At City level, the preservation of the Wendt House is also a high priority of City Council President Joan Loveley, as well as the City's Building and Legal departments, Historical Commission, as well as the Salem Evening News.

City Council President Joan B. Lovely has been working to keep the preservation of 18 Crombie Street in community awareness since, as a Ward Councillor, she heard her constituents complaining about the situation years ago—and since HSI nominated it to its Most Endangered List last year. The City of Salem has fought for the preservation of the Wendt House in court—and won.

The Salem Historical Commission has repeatedly written in favor of preserving the 18 Crombie Street house—and a number of its letters are attached.

In and outside of Salem, preservation organizations have advocated preserving the Wendt House over the last 12 years, see Section M, including:

Local:

- **The Crombie Street Neighborhood Association**
- **The Essex Institute**
- **Historic Salem, Inc.**
- **The Salem Historical Commission**
- **The Salem Harbor Community Development Corporation**
- **The Salem Redevelopment Authority**
- **The Society for the Study of War and Culture, Inc.**

State and National:

- **ACT (Architectural Conservation Trust) for Massachusetts, Inc.**
- **The Massachusetts Historical Commission**
- **The National Trust for Historic Preservation**

Historic Massachusetts, Inc.'s recognition and support is now needed, both to consolidate preservation support from all organizations listed above, as well as to help tip the ultimate fate of 18 Crombie Street towards preservation, rather than demolition.

Regarding current re-use proposals (see Section K) for the 18 Crombie Street property,

- Historic Salem, Inc. and its preservation advocates who live adjacent to, and across Crombie Street from the Wendt House would like to see the house either: 1) restored and retained as historic district quality housing; and/or 2) used for educational purposes as an historic site attraction, community education center, or other positive and productive purpose.
- The Salem Harbor Community Development Corporation (CDC) recently made an offer to Holyoke to work proactively and positively with Holyoke to have Holyoke donate the house to the CDC for restoration, renovation, and re-sale as a new first time homebuyer affordable housing project.
- These two proposed re-uses (HSI's and Salem Harbor CDC's) appear to be the major re-use proposals currently "on the table" although as recently as 1997, the City also harbored plans for historic house restoration and re-use. In footnote 4 of Holyoke's 1997 legal challenge (filed while Neil J. Harrington was Mayor), the Judge, after dismissing Holyoke's case, observed "The City seeks to preserve the building for historical purposes, but has declined to take it by eminent domain or even establish the area as an historic district under G.L. c. 40C. The City seems to hope that it can—unfairly in the Court's view—force Holyoke Square to do the public's work, at Holyoke Square's private expense, and repair and restore the building."

The property ranks highest on HSI's first Most Endangered Historic Resources List. The only listed property of equal or higher standing on HSI's Most Endangered List has been the Salem Jail and Jailer's House complex, which through being recognized also at State Level as Most Endangered, is now making a good recovery.

For additional information on the Wendt House, see the attachments, which include the following newspaper and newsletter articles, see Section H:

- "Neighbors Pledge to Block Razing of Crombie Street House" in Salem Evening News, 1989?
- "Preservationists, Firm Feud Over Old Downtown House" in Salem Evening News, Nov. 8, 1990;
- "Crombie Street House has its Day in Court" HSI Newsletter, Autumn / Winter 1997;
- "Group Lists Most Endangered Properties in Salem" in Salem Evening News Dec. 12, 2000;
- "Preservationists Fight to Save Old House" in Salem Evening News, Dec. 18, 2000;
- Editorial "Preserving the Character of Downtown Salem" in Salem Evening News Dec. 19, 2000;
- "Neighbors Hope to Save Neglected Historic Home" and "Neighbors want to Save old Home" in Salem Evening News January 19, 2001;
- "Holyoke's Action Threatens Company's Place in Salem 's History" in Salem Evening News January 23, 2001;
- "Crombie Street Dwelling has Distinguished History" in Salem Evening News January 24, 2001;
- "Nonprofits Want to Save House" in Salem Evening News March 27, 2001;
- "Neighbors Rally Around an Abandoned Historic House" in Salem Evening News, May 8, 2001;
- "Holyoke's House of Shame" Editorial in Salem Evening News, May 10, 2001;
- "Crombie Street Neighbors Plan to Keep Pressure On" in Salem Evening News, May 17, 2001;

7. FUTURE PLANS

If the resource were selected as one of Massachusetts' Ten Most Endangered, how would the listing be used?

Should 18 Crombie Street be listed as a Most Endangered Historic resource at State level, HSI would likely use that development:

- To promote public support of the Crombie Street Neighborhood Association's efforts to have their area become recognized as a Local Historic District;
- To begin to forward a proposal to effect a local Demolition By Neglect Ordinance;
- To engineer more public discussion about 18 Crombie Street options at its Fall, 2001 conference upon local Most Endangered properties;

In addition,

- Holyoke might re-visit the latest re-use proposal offered by the Salem Harbor CDC;
- The Salem Redevelopment Authority might be encouraged to exercise its significant authority and play a more influential role;
- A property transfer and house restoration project might be commenced, enabling the Wendt House to be transformed from a 12 year eyesore and perennial problem, to a restored landmark and new urban asset.

A successful "reversal of fortune" for this house could also potentially be used by Historic Salem, Inc. to

- Demonstrate the compatibility of historic preservation with affordable housing and open space restoration re the new Community Preservation Act;
- Increase preservation interest and awareness;

8. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Is there anything else you want us to know about the resource?

We hope HMI will respond positively to our application. Please call if you have any questions. For reference and further reading, we provide a number of attachments:

Sections:

- Nomination Form*
- Color Photographs*
- Color Slides*
- Locator Map*
- Salem Historical Commission Letters*
- Local "Most Endangered"*
- National Register Documentation*
- Newspaper Articles*
- Crombie Street Neighborhood Association Publications*

- J. *Historic Salem, Inc. Position Statements*
- K. *Re-Use Proposals*
- L. *Holyoke's "Overview Study"*
- M. *Preservation Support Letters with Legal Findings*
- N. *Additional Old Maps*
- O. *Pike – Hawthorne Connection*
- P. *Latest Legal Challenges*

To Be Considered for Selection, Please Include:

Three to five color snapshots

Three to five color slides

Documentation, if available, i.e. National Register of Historic Places inventory form or other study.

8-1/2 x 11 inch copy of a map (street or USGS) showing the location of the resource.

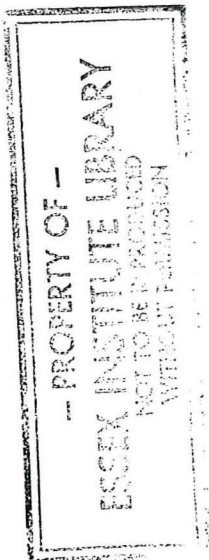
All application materials become the property of Historic Massachusetts. The nominator grants Historic Massachusetts unlimited use of all photographs and slides. Please provide the name of the photographer to be credited in all publications.

Authorization: _____ Margaret K.S. Twohey President, Historic Salem, Inc.
Signature Print or type name and title

Authorization: _____ John V. Goff, Executive Director, Historic Salem, Inc
Signature Print or type name and title

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM NO LATER THAN MAY 18, 2001 TO:
Endangered Resource Program, Historic Massachusetts, Old City Hall, 45 School Street, Boston, MA 02108
If you have any questions, please contact Kathryn Coggeshall at 617 723-3383.

Salem in 1700
No.2
Crombie Street,
east side
Nos.9-17
see also 26 Mill
& 31 Charter Sts.



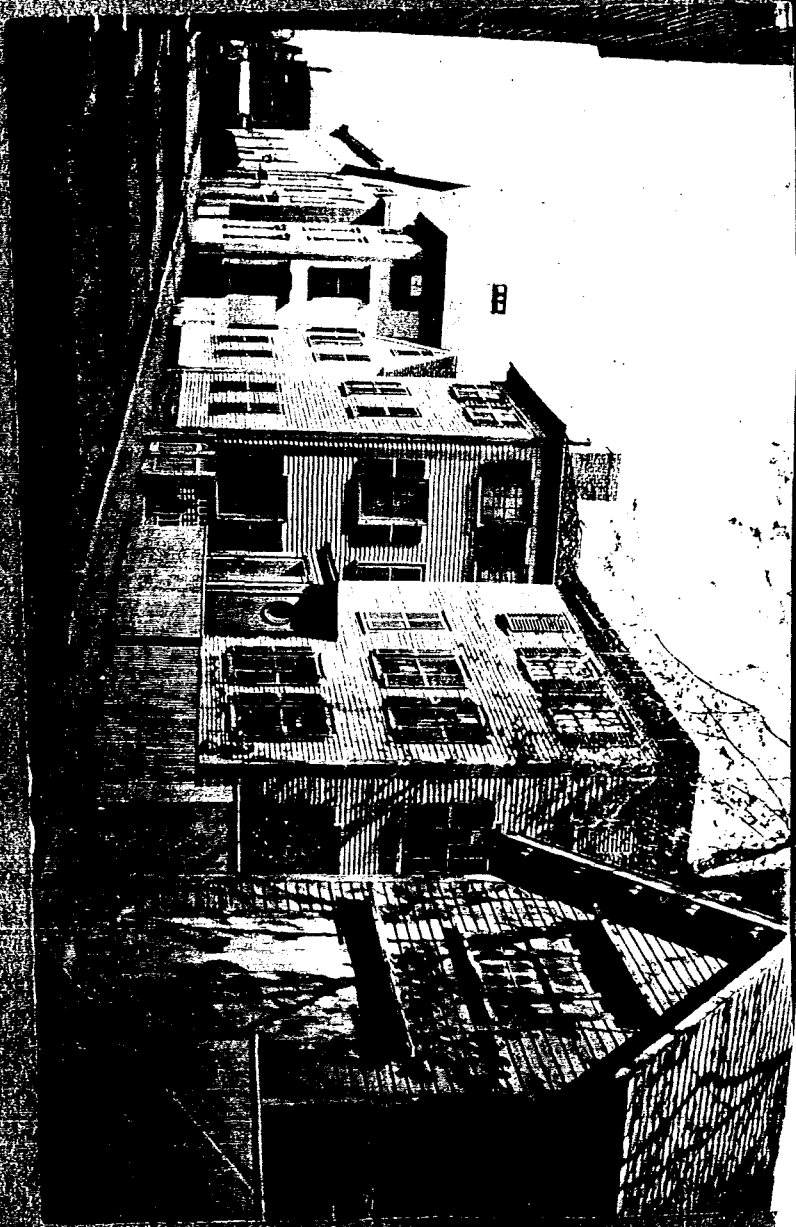
Starting from the Essex street end, the corner lot was owned by Colonel John Hathorne and by him conveyed to Benjamin Marston in 1699. Possibly part of the Crombie street Church is on the southern edge of Marston's land. No 9 is certainly on the western side of the Jonathan Corwin property whose grandson George owned the eastern side on the present Washington street. There was a house on the southern corner of the George Corwin land and his tomb was in the southeastern corner of Jonathan's land. George was the Sheriff in the witchcraft trial and they did not dare to put his body in the tomb until the furor had abated. Jonathan had no house on his land but Benjamin Marston probably built one about 1708. Benjamin, born in 1651 was the son of John and Mary (Chisholm) Marston and he married Abigail, baptized in 1655, daughter of Hilliard Veren who died after 1692. He married again Patience, ... and he died in Ireland in 1720. In 1837 and certainly earlier Joel Bowker jr, born in 1806, son of Joel, born in 1775, died in 1830, married in 1802, Eunice Pearson, born in 1780, died in 1808, was living here. His father had married in 1808 Margaret Rogers of Ipswich, born in 1780, died in 1818 and he died in 1830. Joel jr married in 1828 Leafy Curtis of Scituate, daughter of Joseph and Polly Bowker. Joel jr was there until 1859 or 1860 when he died and the widow and his sons George and Charles, the former born in 1824, the latter's birth not recorded, lived here with their mother who seems to have died before 1868 and Charles at that time had removed to 44 Essex street. George, who does not appear to have married, probably died about 1903/4 and Charles in 1913, unmarried. The family is numerous in Scituate. The map of 1874 shows George as the owner of No. 9 with a large plot of land to the east and south of the house, still standing.

No.13 & 15

In the south west corner on Crombie street are two narrow lots, the northern one owned by the heirs of Joel Bowker, the southern one by P(emberton) Hale of Newburyport, who lived at 111 Cambridge street. He was born in 1805, married in 1830 Martha Ford, parents unknown. She died in 1842 at 31 and he married in 1845 Lydia Toppan Hale, born in 1811, daughter of Moses and Susanna (Toppan) Hale of Newburyport. In 1881 Samuel Pearce Richardson, born in 1827, son of Rev. Phineas and Sarah (Pratt) Richardson of Methuen (and as a Baptist minister, of many other places) married in 1858 Susan Rogers, daughter of John and Leafy (Curtis) Bowker, was living with Mrs George Bowker. Richardson died in 1906 and the family still live there (1939).

No.17

On the 1874 map No.17 is said to be owned by the heirs of T(imothy) Bryant. He, however, lived in his house at 31 Charter street until his death about 1869 (q.v.), and the house here was occupied by brief tenants.



Subject:

ROMBIS ST

Description:

*110 West 11th St
HARRISBURG*

Date: *1984*

NEG. NO. 2455

Neg. Size 5x7

ESSEX Neg. Type LIBRARY

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED
WITHOUT PERMISSION

Positive Size 5x7

Subject:

CROMBIE ST

Neg. No. 5435

Neg. Size 5x8

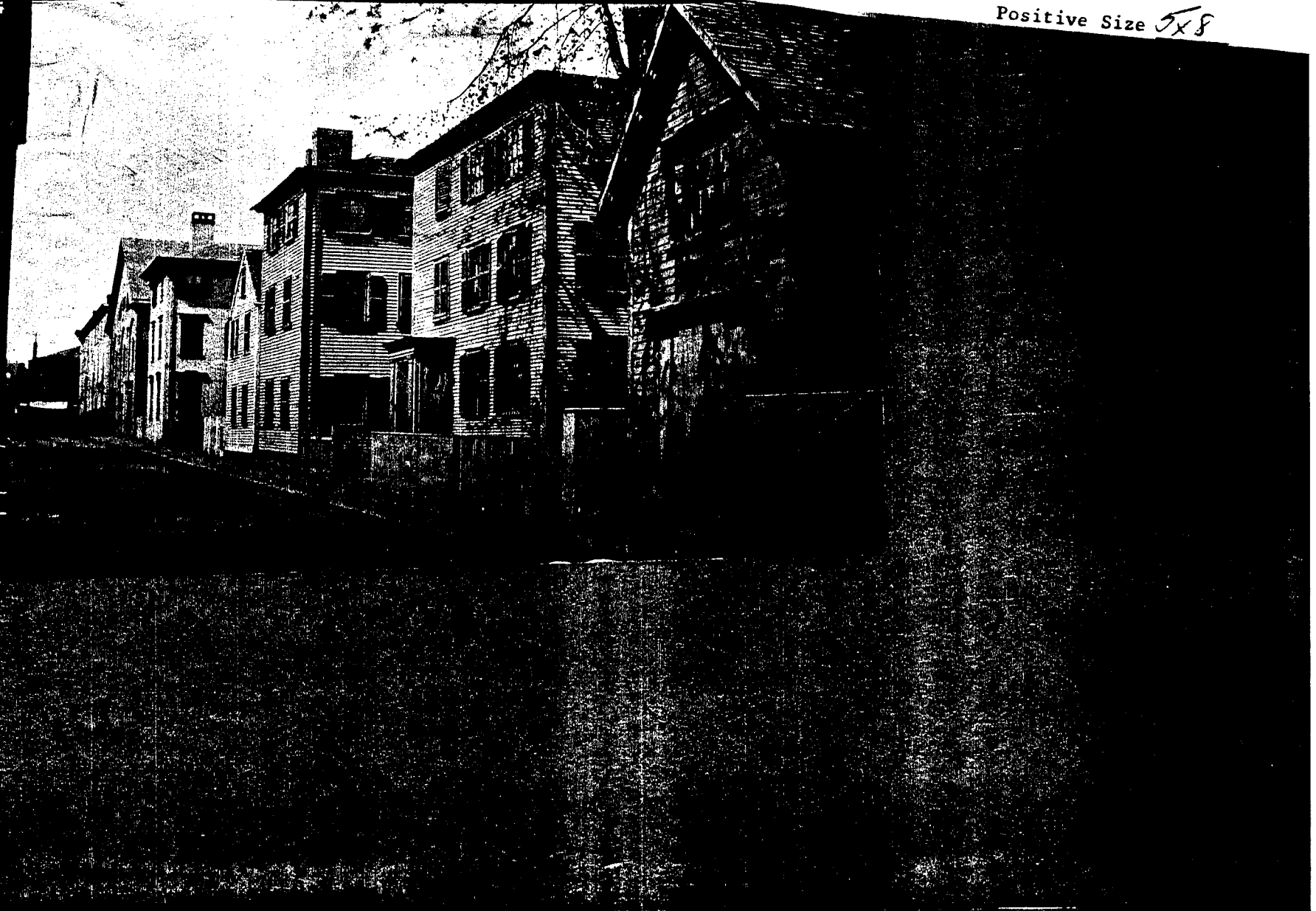
Neg. Type _____

Description:

VIEW FROM NORMAN ST
HISTORY (OVER)

Date: 1884

Positive Size 5x8



**18 CROMBIE STREET
SALEM, MA
OVERVIEW STUDY**

prepared for

**HOLYOKE MUTUAL INSURANCE CO. OF SALEM
Holyoke Square
Salem, MA 01970**

by

**DEMARCO/JAREK PARTNERSHIP
Architects and Planners
223 Derby Street
Salem, MA 01970**

*what are their historical
credentials?
Do they still exist?*

September 1990

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I. INTRODUCTION

DeMarco/Jarek Partnership has been enlisted by Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co., Inc. to review the condition of their property at 18 Crombie Street, Salem, MA. In particular, DJP has been charged with determining the disposition of the dwelling at said location with respect to historic relevance, present physical characteristics and "ultimate value".

In order to accomplish our goals, various techniques have been employed including intensive site inspection work, historic research, cost estimating, mapping and appraisal/assessment evaluation.

The following summary details DJP's findings along with overall conclusions and recommendations.

II. OVERVIEW

In order to ascertain what "ultimate value" the dwelling at 18 Crombie Street has, DJP conducted a multi-prong investigation, comprehensively covering each of the factors which contribute to "value".

1. HISTORIC VALUE

Historic perspective - the enclosed report (See Attachment "A") chronologizes the dwellings history from original parceling of the land, initial construction through to present day ownership.

A. Dwelling

During the entire 160 year history of 18 Crombie Street's existence there has not been a major historically significant tenancy. However, for 24 years from 1852 to 1876, William Pike, a politically active individual resided there. Before and after that tenancy the occupants, often including a boarding tenant, were simply residents of the community. Except for the fact that the dwelling is old, no aspect of the house (fireplace, moulding, doors or finishes) is of historic significance. As a result, there is no redeeming historic value associated with the tenancy or the residence perse.

B. Neighborhood

Theatre

The original neighborhood at the time of construction tended to relate to the activities of the adjacent church and/or fraternal/alliances in the immediate vicinity. 18 Crombie Street is one of the peripheral homes within the block of land that fostered these activities.

The value of the building as a blocking element against commercial development, prior to or since zoning has been established is non-existent. The ability for this residence to spawn residential activity in this area is not likely, as the present zoning ordinance indicates that area as B-3 (Business Central) making 18 Crombie a non-conforming use (in spite of the fact that it is in a redevelopment area).

Only 1 is new

Today, while the few homes remaining in an otherwise commercially developed district are old, they are not necessarily "Historic" which has direct bearing on their values.

2. Value-Cost effect vs. repair potential

A. The following estimate (Attachment D) of repair established by DJP's office is a projection of present costs to bring the existing facility into a habitable condition but does not establish any additional cost expenditures that would be necessary to make the dwelling suitable for a specific purpose, i.e. apartments, offices, or retail stores. The enclosed home inspection report (Attachment B) establishes in very specific terms, all of the positive and negative aspects of the present condition at 18 Crombie Street, but does not focus on the specific circumstances leading to its present condition. However, while researching the present construction evolution, it was noted that the present dwelling was originally built on or directly adjacent to a stream bed. Apparently it was built in the location of a former work shed but there is no visible evidence that either the original shed foundation or timbers were incorporated in the present structure.

Unfortunately the footings at 18 Crombie Street were placed on soil of questionable bearing capacity, coupled with the fact that limited to no engineering was used to establish footing sizes in those days, has ultimately lead to the present footing/bearing wall settlement problems. In addition, the original builder chose brick as the below grade foundation wall material. Subsequently, the freeze thaw cycle along with a wet basement from construction onset to present has contributed to the crumbling brick condition that we see today. (See Attachment E Photographs).

These aspects of the present condition, if left unchecked (i.e. without launching an underpinning operation) would result in condemnation of the property. The gambrel frame portion of the building (with the exception of limited sill deterioration due to wood boering insects) is in reasonable structural condition. Unfortunately, the additions (porch and corner rooms) are failing due to insect and wet rot problems. However, if it were not for the existance of these additions acting as buttresses against the main house, the degree of settlement encountered at the worst two corners of the foundation coupled with the pulling away of the notched first floor frame could have caused the frame to collapse by now. It is essential that these areas be repaired in order to avoid eventual failure due to racking.

*W. P. King
3/10/2004*

Article 22 of the Massachusetts State Code controls the degree to which a dwelling shall comply with present code requirements. As evidenced by the enclosed floor plans (See Attachment F) the layout, stairway, fireplace and framing are all subject to varying degrees of noncompliance. In order to use 18 Crombie Street for something other than a single family residence, would cause the full effect of the code requirements to be imposed. As a residence, there is still significant repair work necessary to be completed in order to achieve a negotiated (with Salem Building Department) compliance with Article 22. The stairs are substandard, bathrooms are in need of code related updating, layout is counter to present standards and roofing/roof construction could use maintenance help.

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6 { B. The repair costs must be judged inevitably from a cost benefit view point. If the repair cost is out of sync with the value of the house on the market, the cost for repair becomes a "labor of love" rather than an investment. It is not likely that this neighborhood would draw such a benefactor. If the house is not stabilized its value will continue to diminish until a cross over point is reached where condemnation or failure occurs at which point the residence has no value. Prudent investment now to stabilize the foundation will not add to value but will prevent the likelihood of a building failure or further decrease of non-market driven value.

3. Market Value

The primary method of establishing the absolute market value of the residence located at 18 Crombie Street is to be establish what dollar amount the market will bear at the given time of sale by offering the residence for sale. Two other methods of establishing market value are available, A.) being an appraisal, and B.) being an assessment. While the latter two methods are not 100% accurate, they certainly give a general indication of value. In the case of 18 Crombie Street, the assessed value is approximately \$30,000 more than the appraised value of the property. Presently the city has assessed the residence as follows:

Check Footprint is 1,000 sq. FT

LAND USE TYPE:	101 Single Family House
<u>LAND AREA:</u>	<u>1,800 SF</u>
LAND VALUE:	\$ 86,000.00
BUILDING VALUE:	\$ 68,600.00
TOTAL VALUE:	\$154,600.00

Past and present day City Zoning has established the area in which the residence is located as "Business Central District". This situation has not necessarily made the house more valuable, only the land. As of this writing, the present depressed economic conditions have further lead to the decline of the property.

Just as important as economic considerations are the social implications of the area. Indigent and homeless persons who frequent the area daily are perceived as a negative influence which has contributed to driving the assessed value of the property down. It is likely that the same property at another location would attain a higher appraisal and/ or market value.

4. ALTERNATIVE USES

There are four broad range "use" strategies or possibilities for the 18 Crombie Street dwelling as it presently exists.

- A. Based on the poor condition of portions of the dwelling, razing the structure is logical and economical as it enables the land to be used for commercial development.
- B. Repairing the structure to serve as a residence is possible, but unlikely as the costs to repair it surpass its potential value.
- C. Relocation to another site is a reasonable alternative for the building as it allows the land to rise to its "highest and best use" while saving the dwelling which is repairable and of interest as "a place in time structure".
- D. Repairing the structure to serve as a commercial building is possible, but unlikely as the cost to repair it surpasses its potential value.

The Conclusions/Recommendations section herein included further explains the ramifications of choosing any one of the four alternative uses described above.

III. EXISTING DWELLING

- A. Existing Conditions
 - 1. A home inspection report documents our observations during several site visits to 18 Crombie Street, Salem, MA, from July 1990 through August 1990. The entire report and its supplements have been included as "Attachment E".

2. Photographs have been taken as part of the home inspection process. Forty-five of the most significant areas of deterioration and/or structural difficulty, along with existing condition shots have been included.

B. An independent appraisal has been completed by Longval Associates which is included as a tool for comparison of value against assessment, estimated repairs and alternative use considerations. See "Attachment C".

C. The assessed value set by the City of Salem Assessors Office is established at \$154,600.

It has been included as a tool for comparison of value against appraisal, estimated repairs and alternative use considerations.

D. The following Zoning Map/Locus Plan has been included to establish both B-3 area of inclusion and definition of Central Business permitted uses. See "Attachment G".

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The City of Salem Zoning Ordinance is supplemented by the Heritage Plaza West Urban Renewal Plan. This plan encourages preservation and adaptive reuse which serves the best interest of the city and the owner/developer of a particular property.

IV. HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE

A. By following the included (See Attachment A) report tracing 18 Crombie Street from initial parceling to present day, it is obvious that the residence provided a home for some 15 families over the course of time but, none of the residents or the building played a role in history to the point of being considered significant. 18 Crombie Street can be characterized succinctly as having 1.) non-noteworthy owner/tenant residents and 2.) non-noteworthy architecture.

- B. The enclosed map/locus plan is included for reference.

V. CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing the condition of the residence at 18 Crombie Street, delving into its history, establishing its market value, and estimating the construction costs and code deficiencies associated with its repair, alternative use "C", relocation of the core building to a remote site is a practical and sympathetic approach to the present and/or future disposition of the residence. If a consensus can not be achieved to relocate the original Gambrel Frame residence, leaving the land to obtain its highest and best use, then, the present structure, which has out lived its economic value should be razed (Alternative Use A) in order to allow the land to achieve its highest and best use. The remaining alternatives (housing or business) would be better served by creating a better core building specifically suited to contemporary standards for each of the uses desired.

Furthermore, we recommend that the Building Department from the City of Salem be invited in to review the condition of the premises. In addition, we recommend that a definitive step be taken related to the condition of the home in order to stave off concerns for safety in the vicinity of the residence.

ATTACHMENT A

18 CROMBIE STREET:
THE WILLIAM B. PIKE HOUSE
BUILT BY 1831 FOR SAMUEL FERGUSON, PAINTER

Researched by Rory Goff
Salem, Massachusetts
July, 1990

BOOK 1 PAGE 62

DATE- July 1, 1659

CONSIDERATION- £30

GRANTOR- Charles Gott of Wenham, attorney for Hugh Peters,
"sometymes pastor of the Church of Christ" [First
Church], Salem

GRANTEE- George Corwin of Salem, merchant

DESCRIPTION- "... four acres of pasturage, be it more or less, lying
and being situate in Salem aforesaid, adjoining to
the land of Mr. Raulph Fogge on the north side, and
of Mr. George Emery on the south, and being
bounded on the east with the river [South River,
now Washington Street] and on the west with the
highway [now Summer Street]"

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- None

NOTE- Hugh Peter or Peters, Salem's second pastor, came
to Salem in 1636 and was probably allotted this
four-acre pasturage by the town shortly thereafter.
Peters was instrumental in promoting Salem's
economic prosperity, but returned to England in
1641, became Chaplain of Oliver Cromwell's
Parliamentary Army, and was executed as a
regicide after the Stuart Restoration of 1660, soon
after conveying this property by attorney to Capt.
George Corwin [or Curwen].

After Corwin's death on January 3, 1684-5, the
pasture was divided between his son Jonathan
(western portion, underlying No. 18 Crombie St.)
and the heirs of his son John (eastern portion).
Hon. Jonathan Corwin (1640-1718), merchant and
judge at the witchcraft trials, married Elizabeth
Sheafe and had daughter Elizabeth (1678-1706,
married Deacon James Lindall, merchant), and son
Rev. George Corwin (1683-1717, married
Mehitabel Parkman). The western pasturage was

NOTE (Continued)-

divided between the heirs of these two children; the land beneath No. 18 Crombie St. fell to the two surviving sons of Rev. George: Samuel (1715-1802) and George (1717- 1802, married Sarah Pickman). (Essex Antiquarian, "Part of Salem in 1700," Vol. 3, p. 68; Perley, History of Salem, Vol. 2, p. 299 n.)

BOOK 81 PAGE 123

DATE-

March 16, 1740

CONSIDERATION-

£57, and "other Lands released to me by my Brother George Curwen of Salem aforesaid Gentleman"

GRANTOR-

Samuel Curwen of Salem, gentleman

GRANTEE-

George Curwen of Salem, gentleman

DESCRIPTION-

"The second lot butts Westerly on a Highway [Summer St.] & there measures four pole, Northerly on land set out to Elizabeth & Mary Lindall, Easterly on land of Mr. Saml. Browne there measuring four pole, & Southerly partly on land formerly Rucks & partly on land of James Lindall Esqrs. ..."

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- None

BOOK 89 PAGE 199

DATE-

December 22, 1746

CONSIDERATION-

£257, old tenor

GRANTOR-

Sarah Curwin of Salem, widow, administratrix of the estate of her late husband George Curwin, late of Salem, gentleman, dec'd intestate

GRANTEE-

John Dampney of Salem, butcher

DESCRIPTION-

"... a certain piece of land in Salem afsd. Containing about one hundred & five poles butting Westerly on the street leading to the Almshouse [Summer St.] sixty-six feet & an half, Northerly on land of

DESCRIPTION (Cont'd)- Mary Lindall & Eliza. Gray a minor about twenty-five poles, Easterly on land of the heirs of Saml. Browne late of Salem Gent. deceased sixty-six feet & an half, & Southerly partly on land of Francis Smith & partly on land of James Lindall Esqrs. about twenty-five poles ..."

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- None

NOTE- John Dampney built a house fronting on Summer Street, and sold some of his backyard (including frontage of No. 18 Crombie Street) to Samuel Gardner in the following deed.

Gardner had bought an estate including the house on Essex Street (at what would become the east corner of Crombie Street) built by Benjamin Marston, Esq, High Sheriff of Essex, who sold it to Capt. Timothy Orne, who conveyed it in 1748 to Gardner [Book 95, Page 40].

Gardner next bought land abutting to the south, along what would become Crombie Street: This field had belonged to the children of Hon. Jonathan Corwin's daughter, Elizabeth Lindall: viz., Elizabeth (Lindall) Gray and Mary Lindall, and was partitioned to Elizabeth (Lindall) Gray's daughter, Elizabeth (Gray) Cheever in 1755 (Book 102, Page 90) and sold to William Pynchon (Book 110, Page 132), who resold it 11 days later to Samuel Gardner on April 26, 1762 (Book 110, Page 148).

Four months later, Gardner bought the abutting property next south, the portion of John Dampney's backyard which included (at its west end) what would become the east frontage of No. 18 Crombie Street, to a depth of twelve - fifteen feet back from the street:

BOOK 112 PAGE 68

DATE- September 4, 1762

CONSIDERATION- £29.6.8

GRANTOR- John Dampney of Salem, slaughterer [and Penelope, his wife]

GRANTEE- Samuel Gardner of Salem, Esq.

DESCRIPTION- "A piece of land in said Salem containing twenty-seven poles & an half bounded Easterly on land by me this day ... sold to Elizabeth Higginson four poles and three links ..., Southerly on lands of Nichols, Luscomb & Dodge six poles & twenty-two links ..., Westerly by my own land four poles and two links ..., & Northerly on said Gardner's land formerly Lindall's six poles & fourteen links ..."

NOTE- In the following deed, Dampney sold the remainder of the Crombie Street lot to Abigail Ives:

BOOK 117 PAGE 161

DATE- June 7, 1766

CONSIDERATION- £213.6.8

GRANTOR- John Dampney of Salem, slaughterer

GRANTEE- Abigail Ives of Salem, spinster

DESCRIPTION- "... my Mansion House with the land under & adjoining to the same in said Salem, bounded Westerly on the highway leading from the Main-street to the Alms-House so called [Summer Street] sixty-six feet, Northerly on land of William Pynchon Esquire as the fence stands where it is fenced, Easterly on land of Samuel Gardner Esqr. sixty-six feet, and Southerly on land of George Dodge as the fence stands so far as it is fenced..."

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- None

BOOK 123 PAGE 161

DATE- August 22, 1768

CONSIDERATION- £253.6.8

GRANTORS- John Foster of Salem, mariner, and Abigail (Ives), his wife

GRANTEE- Matthew Mansfield of Salem, shopkeeper
DESCRIPTION- "All that Mansion House [then same boundaries as above]"
PREVIOUS REFERENCE- John Dampney to Abigail Ives, June 24, 1766; Book 117, Page 161

BOOK 177 PAGE 118

DATE- November 11, 1805
CONSIDERATION- \$4,665
GRANTOR- Daniel H. Mansfield of Salem, merchant [and Mercy, his wife, for \$1]
GRANTEE- Joseph Baker of Salem

DESCRIPTION- "... a dwelling house & brick store with the land under & adjoining the same, situated in Summer street & bounded as follows, vizt. westerly on said Summer street and there measures sixty-six feet, northerly on land of James King as the fence there stands where it is fenced, easterly on land of Benjamin Crombie, formerly the late Weld Gardner's, and there measures sixty-six feet, & southerly on land of Capt. William Orne's as the fence there stands where it is fenced ... "

NOTE- Joseph Baker next bought the Crombie St. frontage, in the following deed:

BOOK 178 PAGE 247

DATE- May 23, 1806
CONSIDERATION- \$462
GRANTOR- Benjamin Crombie of Salem, innholder [and his wife Elizabeth, for \$1]
GRANTEE- Joseph Baker of Salem, merchant

DESCRIPTION-

"... a certain piece or parcel of land bounded as follows, to wit northerly by a line beginning on land of said Baker running twelve feet & eight inches to a way hereinafter described [Crombie St.] thence running southerly on said way sixty-six feet, one inch & three-quarters of an inch to land of Joseph Wiggins, bounding northerly on land of James King & easterly by said way, southerly by a line running westerly on said Wiggins' land to land of said Baker fifteen feet ten inches, thence westerly by a line running northerly sixty-six feet, six inches and one quarter on said Baker's land to the first-mentioned bound, together with a right & privilege of a way ... for the said Baker, his heirs, assigns & servants ... for themselves on foot or in carriages & for their cattle carts & otherwise, in as full & ample a manner as the Inhabitants of said Salem use the streets of said town, into & out of & over a certain court way [Crombie St., bounded] easterly by a line running southerly from Essex street along the westerly end of said Crombie's house about three hundred & seventy-two feet to land of M. Larrack, then southerly by a line running westerly on land of Mr. Wiggins twenty feet, westerly by a line running northerly at the distance of twenty feet from the first-mentioned line and parallel therewith about three hundred & seventy-two feet to Essex street, thence by a line on Essex street running easterly to the first bound."

NOTE-

This was a small portion of the old Samuel Gardner estate that Benjamin Crombie had purchased from the heirs of George and Weld Gardner in 1802 [Book 172, Pages 34-36]; Crombie converted the old Marston-Gardner house (on the east corner of Essex and Crombie Sts.) into a tavern, and it remained an inn for many years thereafter (it is labelled the "City Hotel" on the 1851 Map of Salem). Crombie then sold plots along his newly-established private way, which at this time extended south only through No. 18 Crombie St.

With this purchase, Joseph Baker extended his "Mansfield" property east to Crombie Street, which he then subdivided to form two house lots fronting on Crombie Street. He sold the southern lot in the following deed:

DATE- March 13, 1807

CONSIDERATION- \$1100

GRANTOR- Joseph Baker of Salem, merchant [and Nancy, his wife, for \$1]

GRANTEE- Francis Quarles of Salem, trader

DESCRIPTION- "... a certain piece or lot of land situate in said Salem, bounding Easterly on a private way [Crombie St.], which runs Southerly from Essex street along the western side of Crombie's house about three hundred and seventy-two feet to land of Larrack & Wiggins, measuring on said way thirty-three feet, Southerly partly on land of Wiggins and partly on land of Orne there measuring ninety-six feet and six inches, Westerly on my own land there measuring thirty-two feet, North-erly on land of James Bott, Jr. ninety-three feet six inches..."

NOTE- The deed includes a right to use the private way [Crombie St.], but is also subject to an encumbrance of a ten-foot private way along James Bott's lot to the north (Agreement between James Bott, Jr. of Salem, saddler and chase maker, and Joseph Baker of Salem, merchant, September 10, 1806; Book 179, Page 222).

DATE- January 26, 1808

CONSIDERATION- \$1200

GRANTOR- Francis Quarles of Salem, merchant

GRANTEE Thorndike Deland of Salem, merchant

DESCRIPTION- "... a certain lot of land situate in Salem ... bounding easterly on a private way [Crombie St.], measuring on said way thirty-three feet, southerly partly on land of Wiggins & partly on land late of Orne now

7

DESCRIPTION (Cont'd)- of sd. Deland, there measuring ninety-six feet six inches, westerly on land of Joseph Baker thirty-two feet, northerly on land of James Bott, Jr. ninety-three feet six inches..."

NOTE- Included is the right to use the private way [Crombie St.]. The deed is also subject to the same encumbrance as in the previous deed, but which was discharged on April 13, 1808 [Book 182, Page 286]. Deland subdivided the property into east and west lots, conveying the east lot in the following deed:

BOOK 182 PAGE 286

DATE- April 14, 1808

CONSIDERATION- \$500

GRANTOR- Thorndike Deland of Salem, merchant [and Mehitable Deland, his wife, for \$0.10]

GRANTEE- James Bott, junr. of Salem, saddler

DESCRIPTION- "...a parcel of land situated in said Salem and bounded as follows, viz. beginning at the North-easterly corner thereof on a private way commonly called Crombie's Court and thence running South-erly bounding Easterly by said Court thirty-two feet ten inches, thence running Westerly bounding Southerly on land of Joseph Wiggins thirty-one feet ten inches, thence running Northerly bounding Westerly on other land of me the said Deland thirty-two feet nine inches, thence running East-erly bounding Northerly on land of said Bott twenty-eight feet seven inches to the first bound in Crombie's Court aforesaid, together with the right and privelege to use said private way ..."

NOTE- James Bott, Jr. erected a workshop on the land, presumably for use in his trade as saddler and chaise maker. He sold the land and shop to his father, and died at his residence on Sewall Street, of "intemperance," on May 4, 1822, aged 40. He was survived by his widow, Priscilla, and several children.

DATE- February 14, 1811

CONSIDERATION- \$142

GRANTOR- James Bott, junior of Salem, saddler & chaise maker [and Priscilla, his wife, for \$0.10]

GRANTEE- James Bott, senior of Salem (late saddler) now merchant

DESCRIPTION- "... a parcel of land situated in said Salem and bounded as follows: to wit beginning at the northeasterly corner thereof on a private way now called Crombie street [and then same bounds as above], together with the right ... to use said way or street ..., together with the work shop thereon standing..."

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- "... being the same land I purchased of Thorndike Deland ... Book 182 Leaf 286"

NOTE- James Bott, Sr. died December 31, 1829. The Salem Gazette (Jan. 1, 1830) lists "Deaths. In this town, last evening, Mr. James Bott, aged 84, a native of Tudbury, England, but has been a resident of this town more than sixty years. He was an honest and worthy man in every relation of life, and his loss will be severely felt by his numerous descendants and connexions ..."

He had seven children, whose children inherited the nine dwelling houses and other properties he owned at his death: the children of James Bott, Jr. received the house on Sewall street and the "West Estate;" the children of Hanna (Bott) Ferguson received the "Pickering House" and a brick dwelling in Charlestown, and "all my land and Building in Crombie Street." (Will of James Bott, Sr.) The children of Hannah (Bott) Ferguson and her husband John Ferguson included Thomas B. Ferguson, Margaret (Ferguson) Saunders, Dolly (Ferguson) Potter, and Samuel Ferguson.

Land & Building A!

James Bott Sr. Same person owned "Pickering House & Crombie st House"

DATE- March 16, 1831

CONSIDERATION- \$50 to each of the devisees

GRANTORS- Thomas B. Ferguson, cordwainer [and Mehitabel D., his wife], Eben. S. Saunders, farmer, and Margaret his wife in her right, Daniel Potter, blacksmith, and Dolly his wife in her right, all of Salem, "the said Thomas B., James, Margaret and Dolly being Grandchildren of James Bott, deceased, and devisees named in his last Will and Testament..."

GRANTEE- Samuel Ferguson of Salem, painter, "another Grandchild of said James, and also devisee named in said Will"

DESCRIPTION- "... the following lot of Land on Crombie Street in said Salem, with the Building thereon and priveleges & appurtenances, bounded Easterly on said Street thirty-two feet and ten inches, Southerly on Farmer and Colman thirty-one feet and ten inches, Westerly on George Osborn thirty-two feet and nine inches, and Northerly on other land of the grantees twenty-eight feet and seven inches ..."

NOTE- Samuel Ferguson was born in Salem, baptised April 6, 1800. He married Mercy Lawrence and later died of consumption on April 29, 1856, aged 56.

He built the house at No. 18 Crombie Street either in 1830 or in 1831; the Tax Valuation for 1830 has pencilled in for Saml. Ferguson: "new house in Crombie St., \$1000," and his Tax Valuation for 1831 lists "2 houses - Crombie - \$1800 [raised to \$2500 in 1833];" these are No. 16 and No. 18 Crombie Street. We cannot tell which was built first, though No. 18 certainly looks older, and may even incorporate James Bott, Jr.'s old workshop within its rather unusual structure.

*Nonsense
It's obvious*

In 1836 Samuel Ferguson lived at No. 41 Summer Street., and his painting business occupied No. 340 Essex Street.

NOTE (Continued)-

No. 18 Crombie Street successively housed Wm. Kimbal, Jr. (1843); Israel Shepard, grocer on Front St. (1844); Reuben Floyd (1845-46); George Blinn (1847- 48); "No Man" (1849); Mrs. Floyd and — Cook (1850); and "No Man" (1851). 1852 again shows "No Man," but is amended to list William B. Pike and Connor Swasey.

Prince Farmer, a Black dealer in oysters at Derby Square, was also shown at No. 18 Crombie St. in Street Books 1844-45, but at No. 20 Crombie St. in 1846; the 1842 Directory lists him at No. 18 1/2 Crombie Street.

One of the more prominent members of the Abolition movement in Salem

BOOK 484 PAGE 140

DATE-

October 1, 1853

CONSIDERATION-

\$1300

GRANTOR-

Samuel Ferguson of Salem, painter [and Mercy, his wife]

GRANTEE-

William B. Pike of Salem, weigher & gauger

DESCRIPTION-

"... a certain parcel of land in said Salem with the buildings thereon, bounded and described as follows, viz. easterly on Crombie street, thirty-two feet & ten inches; southerly on land of the late Prince Farmer, thirty-one feet & ten inches; westerly on the other lot herein described, thirty-two feet & nine inches or thereabouts; and northerly on land of Oliver Fellows, twenty-eight feet & seven inches ... also a certain other parcel of land in the rear of the above described lot & bounded and described as follows viz. Commencing at the northeast bound, & running southerly by the above described lot, thirty-three feet & five inches; thence westerly by land of late Prince Farmer, five feet & six inches; thence northerly by land of said Farmer three feet & six inches, thence westerly by said Farmer twenty-four feet & six inches, thence northerly by land now or late of Osborn & Archer thirty feet & six inches; thence easterly by land of Fellows thirty feet to the point begun at, containing nine hundred and thirty feet."

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- Front lot: Deed of Thomas B. Ferguson and others, recorded in Book 276-148.

NOTE-

William B. Pike's portrait is included in Portraits in the Essex Institute, which also provides a biography (pp. 76-77): "William Baker Pike was a native of Salem, born in 1811, the son of Jacob and Mary (Floyd) Pike [and nephew of the Misses Floyd, living at 18 Crombie St. since 1845]. His education was obtained in Salem's public schools and he chose the carpener's trade for his means of livelihood. He was, however, a deep thinker and a strong Democrat, writing and speaking on party politics with great vigor. In 1838 he occupied for six weeks the editorial chair of the *Commercial Advertiser*, a newspaper published in Salem, but did not continue in this calling. He received an appointment at the Boston Custom House and later, in 1857, accepted a position as Collector of the port of Salem and Beverly. This position he held throughout President Buchanan's administration. Among his friends was Nathaniel Hawthorne, with whom he was on terms of great intimacy. In his later years when he had retired to his farm in South Groveland, he began his *Memories of Hawthorne*, which, however, he destroyed before publication, possibly feeling he had dealt too intimately with his subject. While living at his farm which was on the borders of Johnson's pond, he often entertained many of his Salem friends. Among this coterie were Dr. George B. Loring, Zachariah Burchmore, and on several occasions [ex-President] Franklin Pierce. These gatherings were delightfully informal and politics were freely discussed and national affairs criticised. Mr. Pike's home in Salem was successively on Lafayette, Pond and Broad Streets, but his residence was longest at 18 Crombie Street. Here he died, unmarried, on April 26, 1876." At his death, he was attended by physician Shadrach M. Cate, who had bought No. 18 Crombie St. but two months previously.

Connor B. Swasey, listed in the Street Book as living with Pike at 18 Crombie Street from 1852 (aged 22) through 1855, also worked at the Custom House, as Public Storekeeper.

DATE- February 2, 1860

CONSIDERATION- \$900

GRANTOR- William B. Pike of Salem

GRANTEE- Benjamin B. Neal of Salem

DESCRIPTION- Same as above

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- "Both said lots were conveyed to me by Saml. Ferguson by his Deed of Oct. 1, 1853, ... B[ook] 484, L[leaf] 140 ..."

NOTE- In this deed, William Pike stipulates that the "above bargained premises are conveyed to said Neal, subject to the right of my aunts Sally, Hannah and Abigail Floyd or of either of them to hire and occupy the same during their lifetime ..., paying therefor the annual rent of Seventy-Five Dollars (\$75)." While Pike sold the house in 1860, he himself continued to live here until his death in 1876.

Benjamin B. Neal, mariner, was born in Salem on April 14, 1807, of David Neal and Mary (Elliott) Neal. He is listed as "captain" in the 1861 Directory, and as "fire brick maker" in 1864. He resided at No. 9 Cambridge Street through 1866; but was living at 13 School Street at the time of his death, on November 18, 1868.

DATE- February 9, 1863

CONSIDERATION- \$900

GRANTOR- Benjamin B. Neal of Salem

GRANTEE- Abby H. Burnett, wife of William Burnett of San Francisco

DESCRIPTION- Same as above, except "northerly by land of said Farmer three feet & six inches" has been copied erroneously as "southerly ...three feet & six inches"

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- "Both said lots were conveyed to me by William B. Pike by his deed of Feb. 2d. 1860, ... B[ook] 601 L[eam] 77"

NOTE- Abby Burnett donated the portrait of William B. Pike to the Essex Institute in 1900.

BOOK 948 PAGE 276

DATE- February 19, 1876

CONSIDERATION- \$1878

GRANTORS- William Burnett and Abby H. Burnett, wife in her right, of Washington, D.C.

GRANTEE- Shadrach M. Cate of Salem

DESCRIPTION- "... the message in said Salem which is bounded beginning at the northeast corner on Crombie street and thence running southerly by said street thirty-two feet and ten inches; thence westerly by land late of Prince Farmer thirty-one feet ten inches; thence southerly by land late of Farmer nine inches; thence westerly by land late of Farmer five feet six inches; thence southerly [sic; should be "northerly"] three feet six inches; thence westerly by land late of Farmer twenty-four feet; thence northerly by land of Osborn thirty feet six inches; and thence easterly by land now or late of O. Fellows fifty-eight feet seven inches to Crombie street and the point begun at."

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- "Being the same premises conveyed to said Abby H. by deed from Benjamin B. Neal, ... Book 647 leaf 59"

NOTE- The Salem Directory of 1881 lists "Shadrach M. Cate, physician, 65 Washington St, house ditto." The Salem Evening News (April 23, 1898) provides the following obituary: "Danvers, April 23 -- Dr. Shadrach M. Cate died very suddenly at his home,

corner of Holton street and Peabody avenue, at 5 o'clock last evening, from apoplexy. ...

"Dr. Cate was born in London, N.H., October 2, 1823. He studied medicine when quite young and was one of the pioneers of homeopathic theory. He attended the Western Reserve college in Cleveland, Ohio, and graduated in 1854 from the Western Homeopathic medical college. He practised in Akron and Columbus, Ohio, in Augusta, Me., and Salem, Mass., where he had an extensive business, covering a period of 25 years. He was an occasional contributor to the medical journals and was a member of the Massachusetts Homeopathic society and was its president in 1867.

"In 1849 he married Miss Martha J. Messer, who survives him, together with two sons and a daughter ...

"He has always been a prominent member of the Swedenborgian church in Salem and was one of the founders of that society. He was a member of the Masonic fraternity of Salem. He has lived in Danvers for about two years, and was esteemed by all who knew him here as elsewhere. ..."

On February 24, 1879, Dr. Cate made an agreement with the Farmers to smooth out the south boundary line of No. 18 Crombie Street, "whereas the parties are about to remove the fence between their respective lots. Now it is agreed that the dividing line between said estates is and shall be as follows, beginning at a point on Crombie Street, nine inches Northerly from the water table of said Farmer's house and thence running Westerly thirty-four feet and ten inches to a point three inches from the water table of said house, then turning and running Northerly three feet and six inches and thence Westerly twenty-four feet and six inches to a point distant South thirty feet and four inches from the Northwest corner of said Cates' land and twenty-eight feet and four inches from the Southwest corner of said Farmer's land...", with both parties paying each other \$1 for any land taken from the other (Book 1018, Page 11; see enclosed Plan).

DATE- May 13, 1880

CONSIDERATION- \$1500

GRANTOR- Shadrach M. Cate of Salem [and Martha J. Cate, his wife]

GRANTEE- Leonard J. Jefferson of Salem

DESCRIPTION- Same as above

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- Deed from Wm. Burnett and wife, Book 948 leaf 276

NOTE-

*Sexton of First Church
Slave. ?*

Leonard J. Jefferson was Black, born in South Carolina c. 1845, of mother Catherine and father unknown. He was a carpenter, and was sexton of the First Church for many years before buying No. 18 Crombie Street. He died October 8 that same year, of Bright's Disease, while living at No. 7 Cambridge Street.

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Beaver Inst.
Coll.
102-121*

His widow Rufina M. Jefferson, a native of the Cape Verde Islands, inherited No. 18 Crombie St. and lived there for the next forty years, working in her house as a seamstress and taking in boarders: Thomas F. Williams, laborer (1882-83); William A. Smith, clerk at D. B. Gardner & Co., Grocers, 127 Washington St. (1884-89); Mrs. Lucinda Fennimore, widow and Christian Scientist, and Addie Fennimore, clerk at Frank Cousin's Dry Goods Store (1890-98); Alexander McCabe, coachman (1901-08); Frederick C. Larrabee, machinist (1909); Joseph F. Dechene, insurance collector (1910-13); Emil E. Deschene, carpenter (1914-16); and Thomas F. and Elizabeth Nolan (1918-50). Rufina M. Jefferson died there aged 77, on November 4, 1920.

Steven Hall

She had no children, and willed her property first to the Home for Colored Women, but changed her will with a codicil, leaving it instead to Joseph A. Dane and Abbie A. Dane.

DATE- May 17, 1924 *Almost a 4 yr gap*

CONSIDERATION- Unspecified ?
o

*English Prof of Med. literature
@ Columbia (current) ^{five}*

GRANTORS- Joseph A. Dane and Abbie A. Dane, his wife, in her right, of Newton, Massachusetts
36 Islington Rd. Auburndale

*Why was it willed
William Gray
Dr. Edward Holyoke
Nathan Dane 3 Principals
of Salem Turnpike & Chelsea Bridge*

GRANTEE- Sarah W. Shepard of Salem

DESCRIPTION- "... the land in Salem, ... together with the buildings thereon, bounded and described as follows: northerly by land formerly of Fellows, now or late of Stevens, 54 feet, 7 inches; easterly by Crombie Street, 32 feet, 10 inches; southerly by land formerly of Farmer, now or late of Freedman, 34 feet, 10 inches; westerly by the same land, 3 feet, 6 inches; southerly by the same land, 24 feet, 6 inches; and westerly by land now or late of Osborn, 30 feet, 4 inches."

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- Deed from S. M. Cate to L. J. Jefferson, May 13, 1880; Book 1037, Page 115, and wills of Leonard Jefferson and his wife Rufina M. Jefferson

Note- Tenant Thomas F. Nolan, general jobber, continued living here through 1931, and his widow, Elizabeth Nolan, remained through 1950.

Sarah [or Sally] W. Shepard resided at No. 23 Summer Street through 1937, but lived at No. 18 Crombie Street from 1939 until 1951, when she sold the property and moved to No. 384 Essex Street. At the time of her death, November 2, 1953, she was 92 years, 5 months, 18 days of age.

The Salem Evening News (Nov. 2, 1953) gives the following obituary: "Miss Sally W. Shepard, who made her home at 384 Essex street, died today in Salem hospital.

"Mrs. Shepard was born in Salem, the daughter of the late Michael W. and Eliza D. (Osborne) Shepard. She was a member of the Busy Bees and attended Grace Episcopal church. ..."

NOTE (Continued)-

In 1944, No. 24 Crombie St. is razed; in 1947, the buildings along the east corner of Crombie and Norman Sts. (Nos. 26-30 Norman St.) are demolished to make a parking lot.

BOOK 3806 PAGE 586

DATE-

March 22, 1951

CONSIDERATION-

Unspecified

GRANTOR-

Sarah W. Shepard of Salem, unmarried

GRANTEE-

Maude C. Staples of Lynn

DESCRIPTION-

Same as above

PREVIOUS REFERENCE-

Deed from Joseph A. Dane and Abbie A Dane, dated May 17, 1924; Book 2600, Page 276

NOTE-

Maude Staples operated a telephone answering service from No. 18 Crombie St., where she lived from 1951 until 1957.

In 1957, No. 20 Crombie Street is destroyed, and the buildings at the west corner of Norman and Crombie Sts. are razed, including No. 34 Norman St. (Bridal Shoppe), No. 36 Norman St. (North Shore Babies' Hospital Thrift Shop and Auxiliary), and No. 38 Norman St. (Thomas J. Cadorette, general merchandise, and John Reagan, used furniture, through 1953; Mallard & Pappalardo, plumbing & heating, 1954-56). In the 1958 Directory, No. 38 Norman St. is Eddie Hefferman's Texaco Station.

Gave 1/2 of her estate to PEAM Est. worth \$100,000 + in 1953

BOOK 4366 PAGE 105

DATE-

May 8, 1957

CONSIDERATION-

Unspecified

GRANTOR-

Maude C. Staples of Lynn, unmarried

GRANTEE-

Frances H. Wendt of Wenham

DESCRIPTION- Same as above

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- Deed from Sarah W. Shepard, March 22, 1951; Book 3806, Page 586.

NOTE- Mrs. Frances H. Wendt, widow of Henry O. Wendt, was manager of the Girls' Club of Lynn. She lived here from 1957 to 1986.

In 1969, the parking lot at the east corner of Crombie and Norman Sts., No. 24 1/2 Norman St. (Crombie St. Parking), becomes No. 28 Norman St. (Paul's 66 Gas Station in 1969; North Shore Towing, 1970-1973; Vacant, 1974-1983; White Hen Pantry, Domino's Pizza, Video Village, and Uniglobe Travel by 1986).

BOOK 8487 PAGE 1

DATE- August 29, 1986

CONSIDERATION- Paid, and in full consideration of \$1

GRANTOR- Frances H. Wendt of Salem
GRANTEE- Naumkeag Trust Company, Trustee of the Frances H. Wendt Realty Trust, u/d/t dated Aug. 29, 1986, recorded herewith, of 18 Crombie Street, Salem

DESCRIPTION- Same as above

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- Deed dated May 8, 1957; Book 4366, Page 105

BOOK 9403 PAGE 44

DATE- February 16, 1988

CONSIDERATION- \$169,000

GRANTOR- Naumkeag Trust Company [Trustee -- see above]

GRANTEE- Holyoke Square, Inc.

DESCRIPTION- Same as above

PREVIOUS REFERENCE- Deed dated August 29, 1986; Book 8487, Page 1.

?

8

14

NOTE-

Book 9430, Page 327, contains a confirmatory deed, dated March 9, 1988, reflecting the change in name of the Naumkeag Trust Co. to Eastern Bank and Trust Co.

ATTACHMENT B

HOME INSPECTION REPORT OF EXISTING CONDITIONS 18 Crombie Street, Salem, MA

ROOF

The inspection was conducted from on top of the roof. The roof style on the main part of the house is a gambrel style and the addition is a gable style. The pitch is steep on the main house and of medium pitch on the addition. The exposed roof consists of one layer of asphalt shingles. The approximate age of the roof is 18+ years. Flashing material is a combination of copper and lead. (Pictures 17-20) The absence of an attic ventilation system in either roof requires the installation of a continuous soffit and ridge vent system, which will reduce excessive attic humidity. There is also evidence of a pre-existing ice damming problem. The lower left gabel roof valleys should have been lined with metal. The lower rear roof was incorrectly flashed to the abutting wall of the house. The rear plumbing vent has been installed on the outside wall which does not meet building codes. The vent should run internally and protrude above the roof a minimum of twelve (12) inches.

CHIMNEY

The inspection was conducted from the ground. There are two chimneys in the house. Chimney #1 is located in the center of the house. The exterior, flue lining and chimney are all brick and in marginal condition (Pictures 9-12). The chimney cap is in need of rebuilding and the flues need to be lined. All chimney flashings are deteriorating.

Chimney #2 is located on the left side of the house. The exterior flue lining and chimney cap are all brick. While the exterior is in marginal condition, the flue lining and chimney cap are in satisfactory condition.

EXTERIOR WALLS

The exterior walls, fascias, soffits and trim are all wood. The cedar shingle siding is in marginal condition and is cupping and splitting on most sides of the house (Pictures 23-28). There is also a layer of clapboard siding under the shingles. The trim is in marginal condition. Paint has been peeling from all wood surfaces. Facias and soffits are rotten as well as all corner boards. The electrical entrance cables are in poor condition. Service cables entering the house, which are buried on the exterior, show evidence of rotting. The basement presently does not have vents for cross ventilation. This would have prevented some of the

wet rot of the wood sills. Of notable significance is the collapsing of the brick and block foundations on the front and left side of the house (Pictures 21-28).

DRAINAGE

The gutters are of two types: wood and copper. They are in poor condition. The wooden gutters are rotting and the copper gutters should have been spaced away from all fascias. The galvanized downspouts are in marginal condition exhibiting evidence of splitting. Grading around the foundation does not slope away from the house, consequently allowing water to pond. To avoid drywell back up proper drainage is recommended. Sloping grade away from the foundation a minimum of 1 inch per foot for 5 feet where ever possible is necessary.

GROUNDS

The walks are brick and in marginal condition. Steps are stone at the front of house and the rear steps leading up to the porch are made of wood. The front stair was not flashed against the sill and as a result the sill has rotted. The rear wooden stairs are rotting. The rear patio is brick and is in marginal condition as well. Of major concern is the wood porch structure including, but not limited to the roof rafters, the corner post and porch decking (Pictures 25-28). Floor joists and decking have been severely damaged by wood rot and wood boring insects (the wood boring insects were identified as carpenter ants). In addition, many slats on the fence need to be replaced.

DOORS AND WINDOWS

The exterior window style is double hung, and all are in poor condition. Entry doors are not square and window thresholds are rotting. There are no storm doors located on all exterior doors. Some windows are fitted with aluminum combination storms/screens. The window sashes are loose in their casings. All flashing around windows and door heads are in poor condition, and the bulkhead is unsafe and should be rebuilt.

BASEMENT

The existing full basement structure consists of brick walls, a concrete floor, wood timber beams, and a Merrimack brick chimney arch as a central support. A crawl space exists under the addition section of the house. The brick walls are in poor condition, note that the right and rear foundation

walls are collapsing. The existing first floor is in satisfactory condition with the exception of a moisture barrier which should be added to the crawl space floor. On the front and right side, the sills are in poor condition; evidenced by rot and wood boring insect damage. The floor joists are in satisfactory condition with the exception of the right side, which has been damaged by wood boring insects. The left side of the merrimack chimney arch has settled approximately 6-8" and the foundation has settled 4-6" (Pictures 38-45). The brick support posts are in poor shape showing signs of deterioration. There are also signs of basement flooding. It is interesting to note that the original house was built on a creek bed which the City filled and later became known as Crombie Street.

HEATING SYSTEM

The entire house is heated by a 15+ year old Waltham oil burner. The hydronic (hot water) system is a gravity system with galvanized and copper piping. The estimated rated capacity is 90,000 BTU/HR output. At the time of inspection the boiler was not operational. The pipes, which are covered with asbestos, have been cut. The boiler shows a heavy soot buildup and appears to have frozen over the winter months which may have damaged the unit beyond repair. A qualified heating technician would be required to evaluate the damage. In general, the heat exchanger test result was marginal, the flue pipe is in such poor condition, evidenced by rotting, that all the exposed pipes should be replaced.

PLUMBING

The water source and waste disposal are provided by the City of Salem. The water supply pipes are copper and the waste and vent pipes are a combination of copper, brass and cast iron. At the time of inspection, the plumbing system was inoperative due to the water being shut off at the main. Visual inspection provided the following information: all visible supply, waste and vent pipes are in poor condition. The water meter has been removed and the main line from the street is also deteriorating. Several fittings have blown due to freezing. The cast iron waste lines are not correctly vented and the vent line in the attic has split. The waste lines and traps under the sink are also not properly vented.

WATER HEATER

The water heater is a Waltham Everhot tankless system. The approximate age of the unit is 15+ years and the tank capacity is 25 gallons. At the time of the inspection the water heater was inoperative.

ELECTRICAL SERVICE

The house is set up with 60 AMP service and the fuse box is located on the left side of the basement. The main service wire is tin coated copper and branch wiring is copper and tin coated copper. Fuses provide overload protection and branch protection. Branch wiring is a combination of romex cable and knob and tube. The system is grounded at water pipes. At the time of inspection the service was shut off. It should be noted that the service is antiquated and should be upgraded, in particular, the knob and tube wiring should be replaced with romex. The service entrance cable is also deteriorated and should be upgraded and replaced. Additional receptacles are needed throughout the house to serve today's needs. In general, wiring at the main box and throughout the house is in marginal condition. Grounding, bushings, knock out plugs, and fuses are in satisfactory condition (Picture 40).

INTERIOR ROOMS: GENERAL INFORMATION

Walls and ceilings in the house are dry wall and plaster. The floors are either hardwood or vinyl. Hydronic radiators heat the house and there is no cooling system.

KITCHEN

The general structure of the kitchen is not squared and the floor is not level. At the time of the inspection there was no running water or electricity. Electrical circuits are very limited. The sink basin is in satisfactory condition, as are the cabinets and countertops with the exception that they were not fitted properly when they were installed. The walls, ceiling, floor, and electrical switches, outlets and fixtures are all in marginal condition. A room heater is located on the inside wall. (Picture 29)

HALLWAYS AND ENTRIES

The house has two stair wells: one runs off the kitchen up to the second floor bathroom and is meant for secondary use, the front stair starts at the front door and runs up to the third floor with three winders at the top. The front stair well is in satisfactory condition and the rear stair well is considered marginal because of the steepness of the risers. Walls and ceilings are in satisfactory condition, but the plaster finish was loosened in the front stair well due to water damage. Electrical switches, outlets and fixtures were inoperative at the time of inspection.

LIVING ROOM (FRONT)

The walls and ceiling are satisfactory, although the ceiling does sag due to the settlement in the foundation. The hardwood floor is in satisfactory condition, but it is also not level. Electrical outlets are in poor to marginal condition and are limited. The windows are marginal with excessive peeling of paint. The doors are also marginal and are not square. The fireplace is in marginal condition and in need of flue lining. The room is heated with a radiator located on the inside wall. (Picture 30)

DINING ROOM

The walls, ceiling and floor are in marginal condition. The ceiling sags and the structure has settled to the left. Electrical outlets and fixtures are in poor condition and receptacles are limited. All windows stick and need adjusting. The fireplace is in marginal condition and the chimney flue is in need of lining. The room is heated by a radiator located on the inside wall. (Picture 31)

CLOSED-IN PORCH (REAR RIGHT)

The floor, walls and ceiling are in satisfactory condition but the floor and ceiling sag. The windows stick and need adjusting. Receptacles are inoperative and limited. The room heat is heated by a radiator located on an inside wall. (Picture 32)

BEDROOM - SECOND FLOOR FRONT

The walls and ceiling are in marginal condition. The plaster is cracking and the ceiling is sagging. The floor is in marginal condition and not level. There are no electrical outlets, fixtures or switches. The door is not square and the windows need to be adjusted. The fireplace is also in marginal condition and the flue is not lined. The room is heated by a radiator located on an inside wall.

BEDROOM - SECOND FLOOR REAR

The walls and the ceiling are in marginal condition. The plaster has cracked in various places. Electrical outlets and fixtures are inoperative and the ones that exist are limited. The windows and doors are also in marginal condition. The room is heated by a radiator located on the inside wall. The fireplace is in marginal to poor condition. The hearth needs rebuilding and the flue needs to be lined.

BEDROOM - THIRD FLOOR FRONT

SAME AS SECOND FLOOR REAR

BEDROOM - THIRD FLOOR REAR

SAME AS SECOND FLOOR REAR

BATHROOMS

Bathrooms are located on the second and third floor. Neither was operative at the time of inspection since the water and electricity has been shut off at their respective mains. All bathroom fixtures are in marginal condition.

ATTIC

The attic was observed through the hatch. It is insulated with batt fiberglass, 3 1/2" thick, with an approximate "R" value of 11. The framing and sheathing are considered to be in satisfactory condition. The insulation and ventilation systems are in poor condition. There is no side wall insulation and what insulation exists was installed upside down. The chimneys and flues are in marginal condition. The left chimney is in need of repair and there is evidence of leakage at the chimney flashings. The roof is in need of soffit and ridge venting.

ATTACHMENT C

ATTACHMENT D

ESTIMATE OF REPAIR

1st Floor = 608 SF
2nd Floor = 608 SF
3rd Floor = 512 SF

TOTAL = 1,728 SF

Roof Flashing	\$ 1,600
Gutter	800
Ventilation	1,500
Plumbing Vents & Built-in	1,200
Chimney Flue Linings	4,000
Chimney Caps	700
Replace Fascia & Soffits	2,400
Trim Boards - Windows	1,800
Trim Boards - Doors	600
Trim Boards - Corners	1,000
Basement Vents	600
Service Entrance	800
Wet Rot Wood Sills	3,800
Grading Around House	3,000
Repair Brick Patio	1,800
Repair Brick Walks	1,000
Rebuild Porch (include foundation)	16,500
Insect Extermination	500
Fense Repair/Replace	500
Window Replacement/Repair	9,800
Door Replacement/Repair	2,400
Bulk-head Replacement	1,200
Wall and Roof Insulation	2,000
Repair and Stabilize Foundation	3,500
Replace Brick Support Posts	2,500
Replace Boiler	3,000
Repair Plumbing (Heat)	2,000
Repair Water Piping	1,600
Replace Vent Piping	1,200
Replace Water Heater and Piping	800
Upgrade Electrical Service	2,200
Additional Outlets/Code	1,500
Review per Code	1,000
Kitchen Fixtures	2,000
Repair Walls/Ceiling-Kitchen	500
Stairs/Halls-Patch and Plaster	500
Living Room-Repair Walls/Ceiling	800
Replace Wood Trim	2,400

ATTACHMENT D

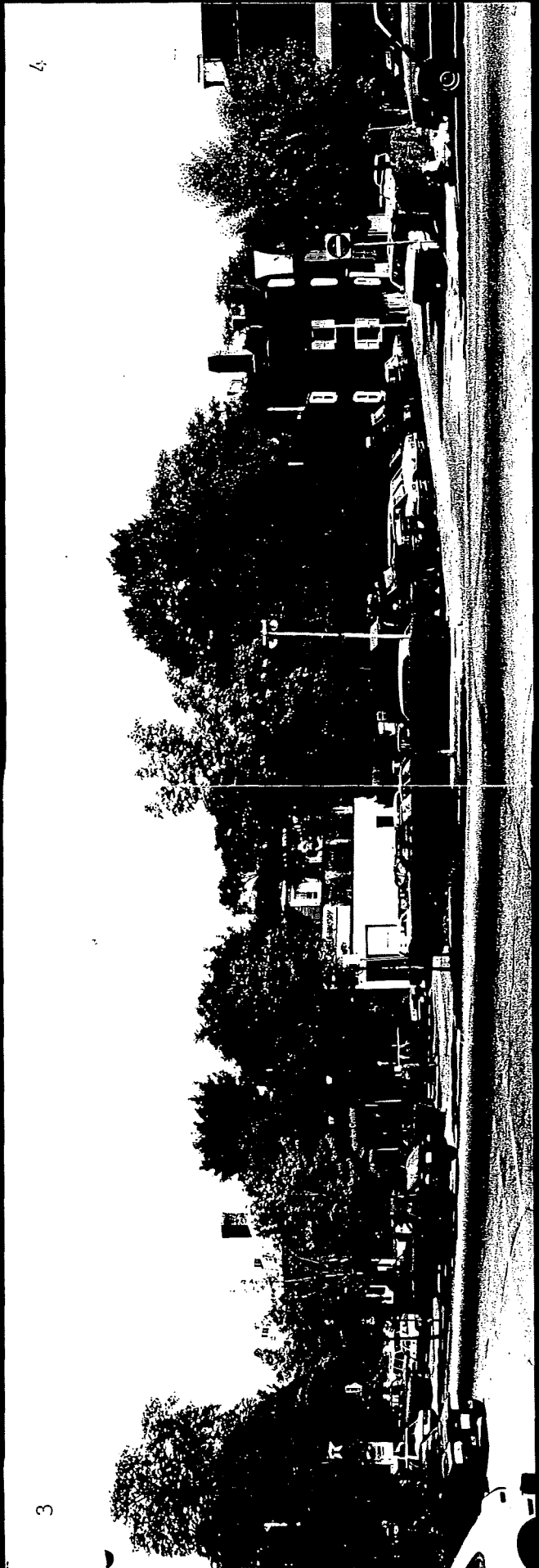
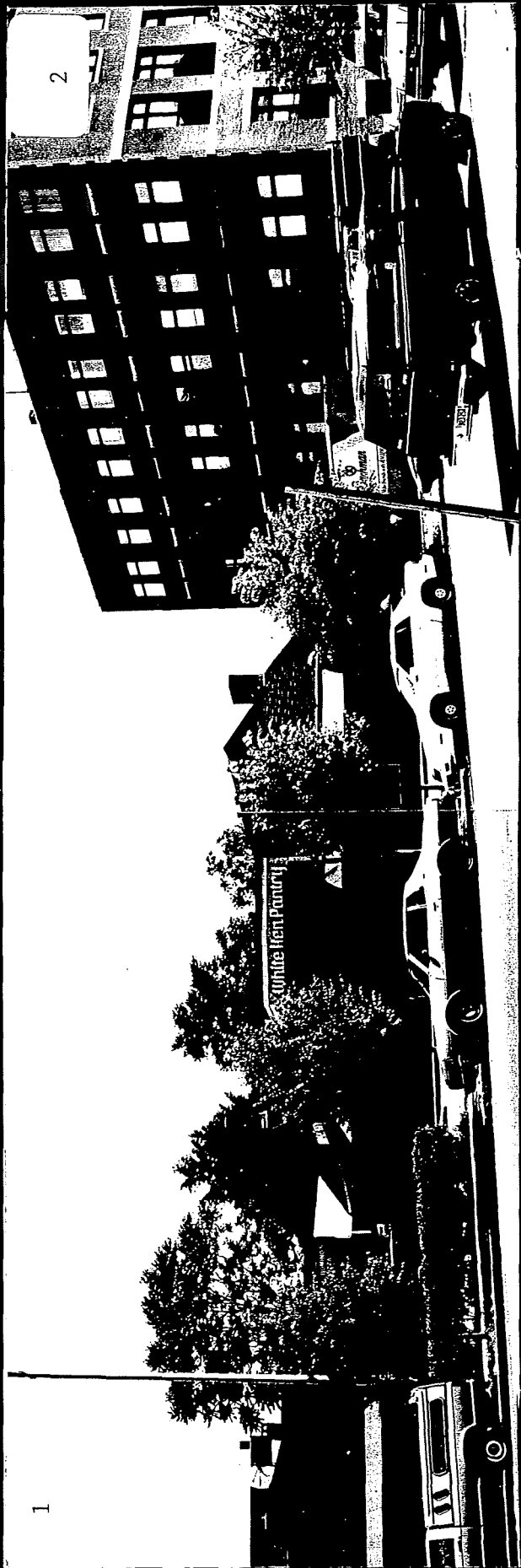
ESTIMATE OF REPAIR

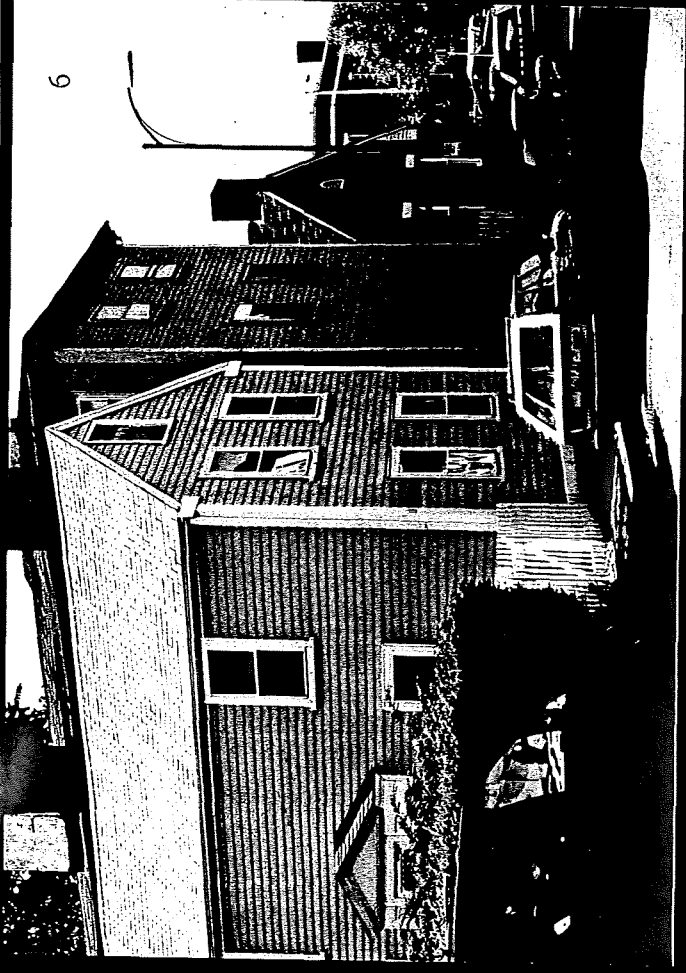
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Service Entrance	800
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Repair Brick Walks	1,000
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Insect Extermination	500
Fense Repair/Replace	500
Window Replacement/Repair	9,800
Door Replacement/Repair	2,400
Bulk-head Replacement	1,200
Wall and Roof Insulation	2,000
Repair and Stabilize Foundation	3,500
Replace Brick Support Posts	2,500
Replace Boiler	3,000
Repair Plumbing (Heat)	2,000
Repair Water Piping	1,600
Replace Vent Piping	1,200
Replace Water Heater and Piping	800
Upgrade Electical Service	2,200
Additional Outlets/Code	1,500
Review per Code	1,000
Kitchen Fixtures	2,000
Repair Walls/Ceiling-Kitchen	500
Stairs/Halls-Patch and Plaster	500
Living Room-Repair Walls/Ceiling	800
Replace Wood Trim	2,400

Repair Fireplace	500
Dining Room-Repair Walls/Ceiling	800
Replace Wood Trim	2,000
Repair Fireplace	500
Floor Sanding and Refinish	300
All Bedrooms-Repair Walls/Ceilings	3,200
All Floor Sanding	1,200
Repair Fireplace	500
Floor Sanding and Refinish	500
All Bathrooms-Reapir Walls/Ceilings	800
Fixture Replacement	3,000
Tile Work - Floor	1,800
Lead Paint/Asbestos Removal	<u>13,000</u>
	\$113,100

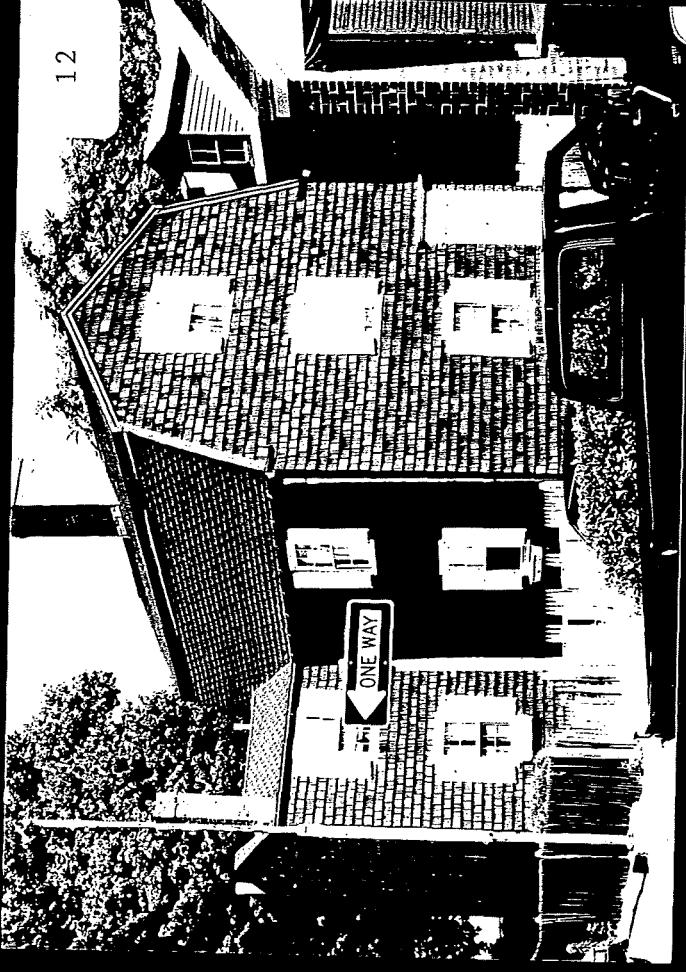




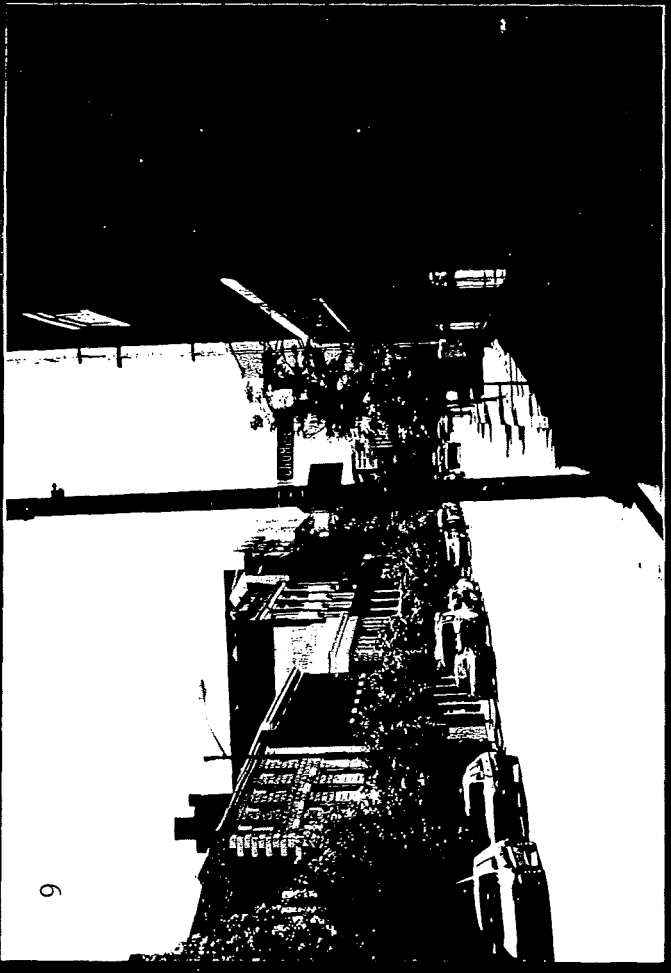
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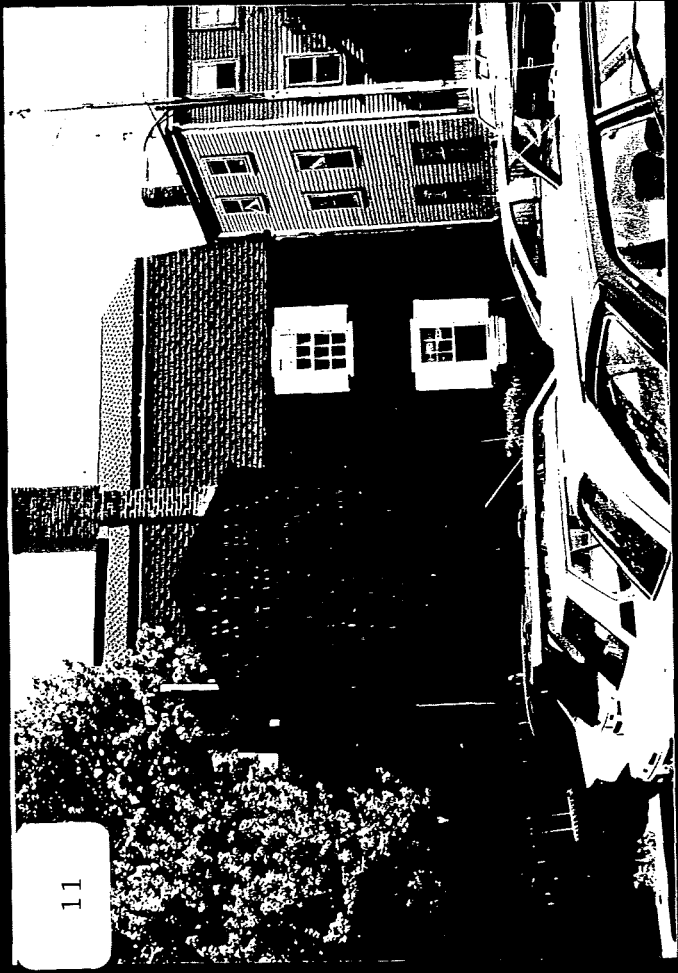
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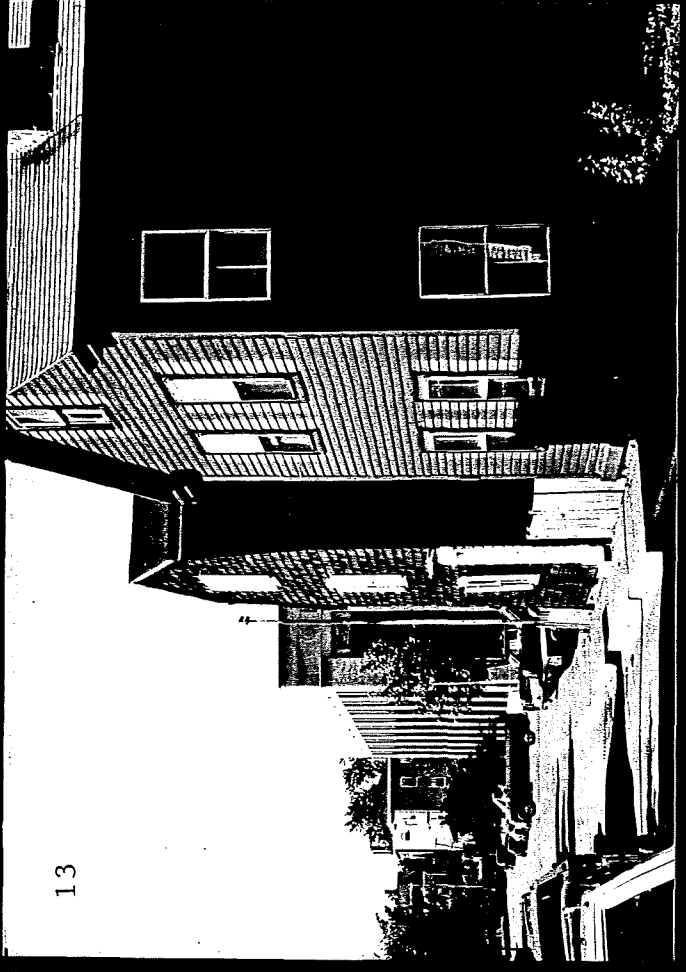
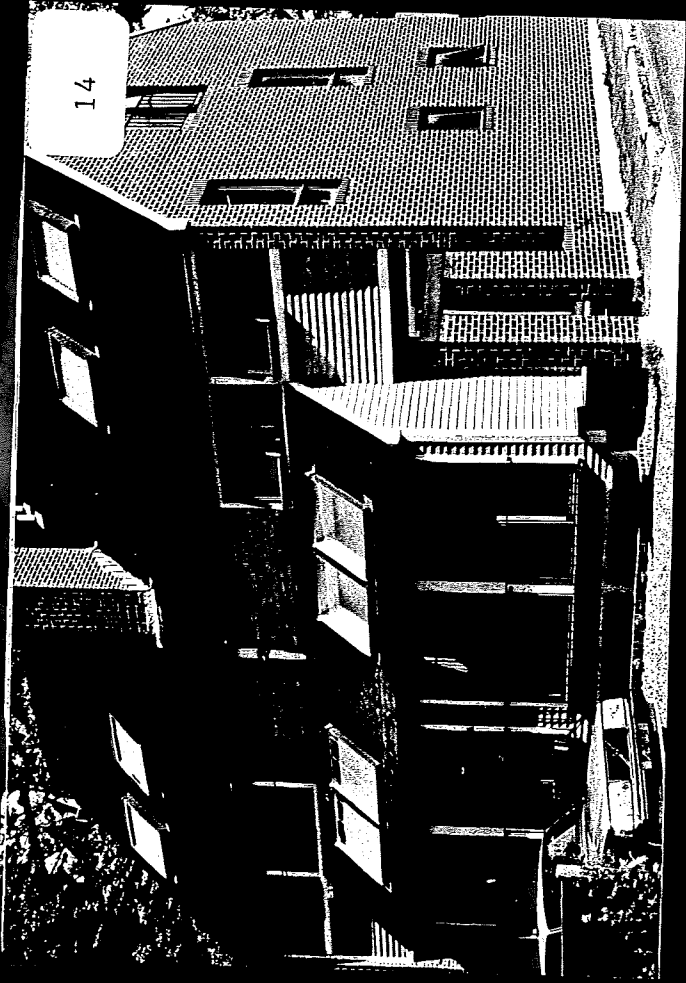


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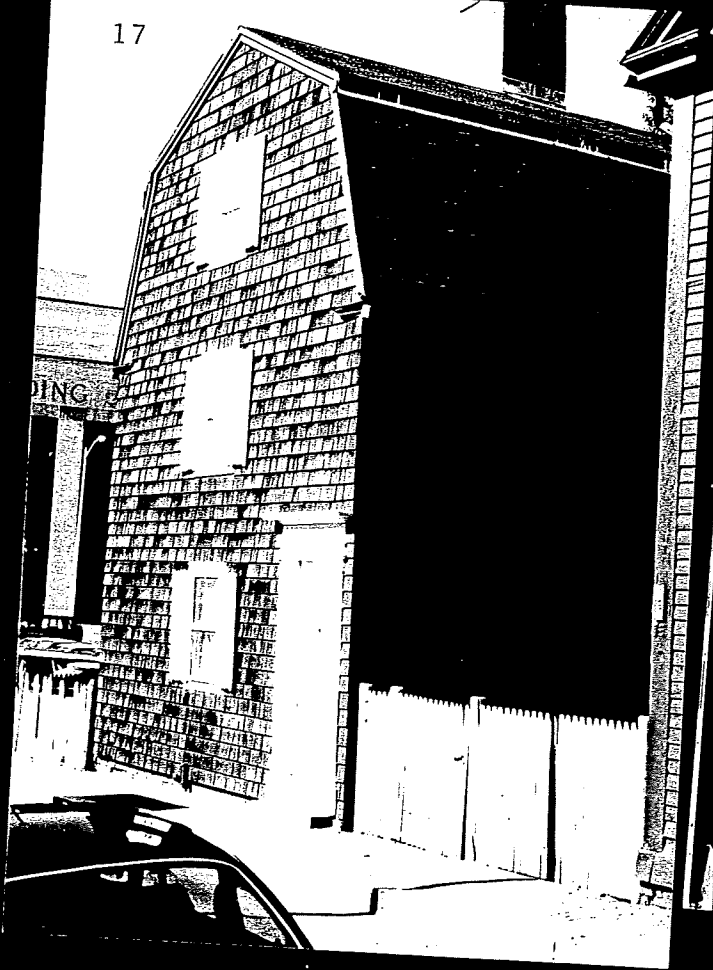


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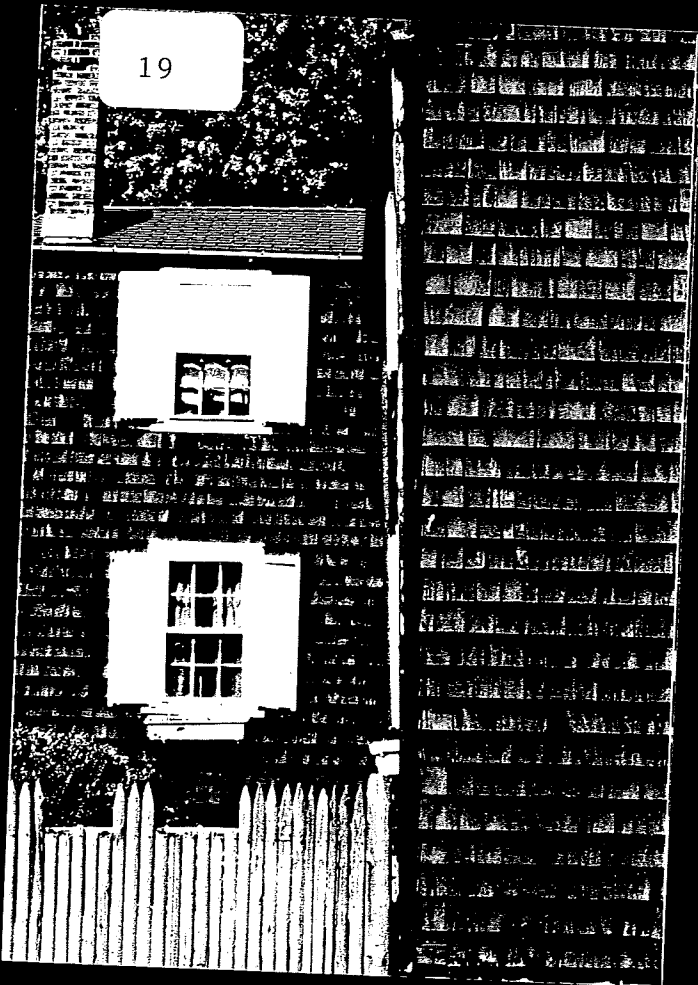
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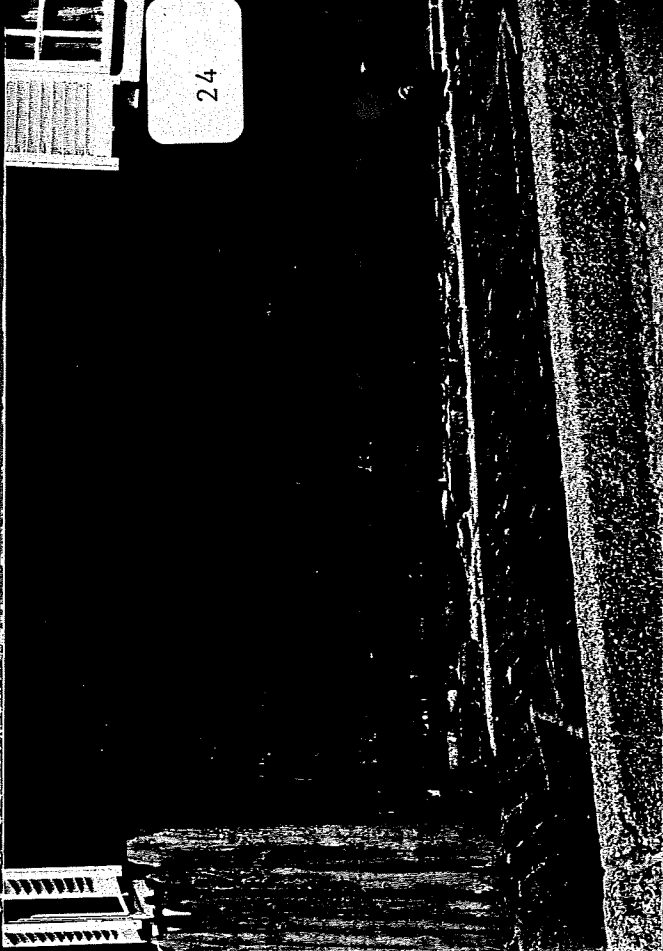


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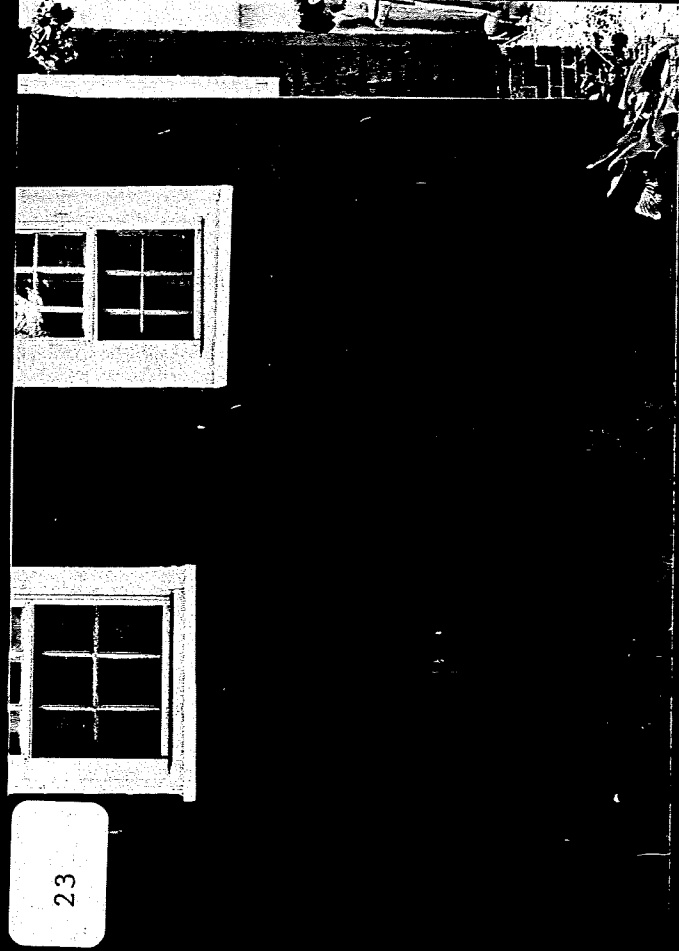
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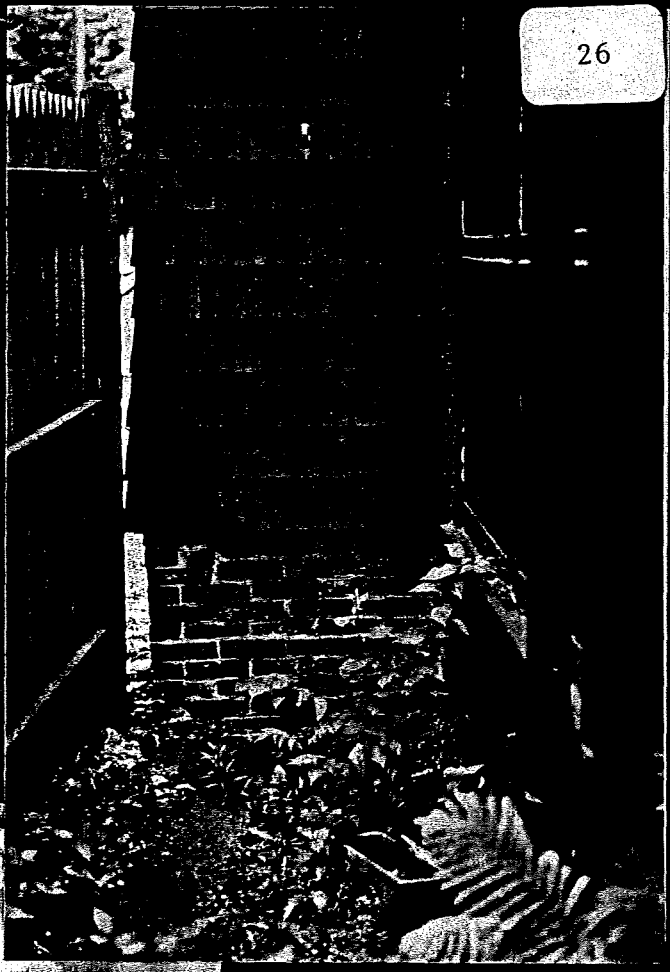


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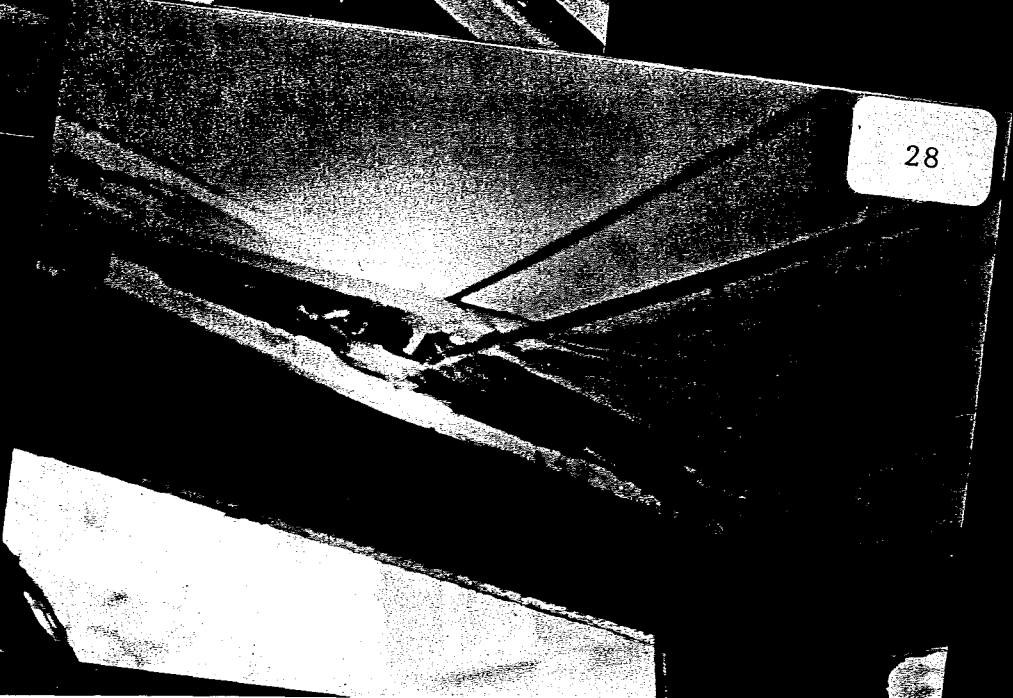
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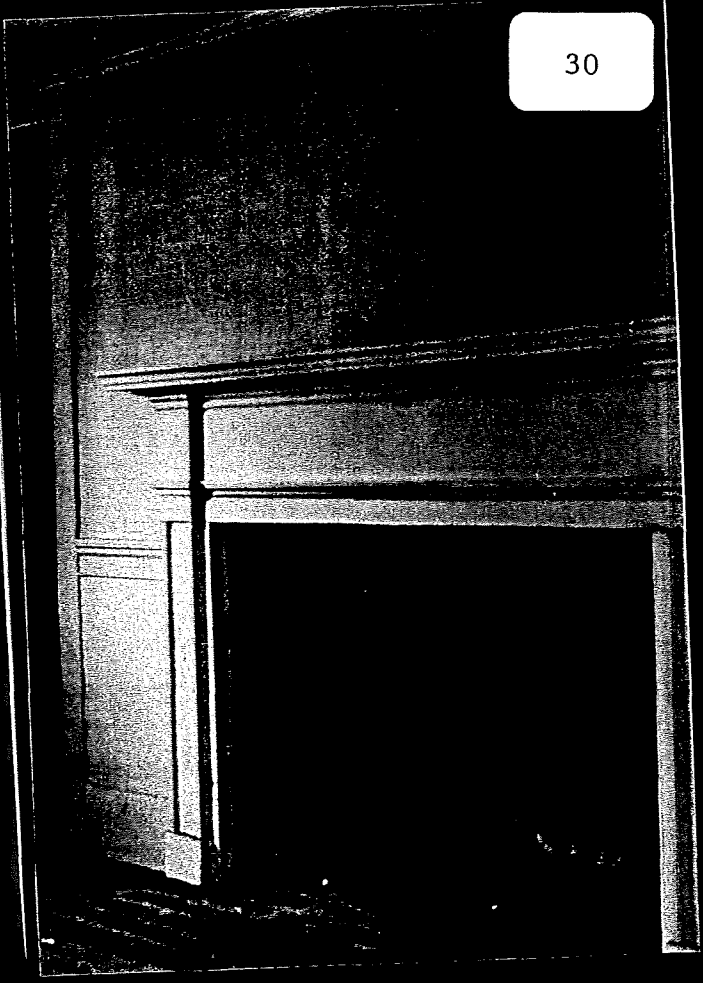
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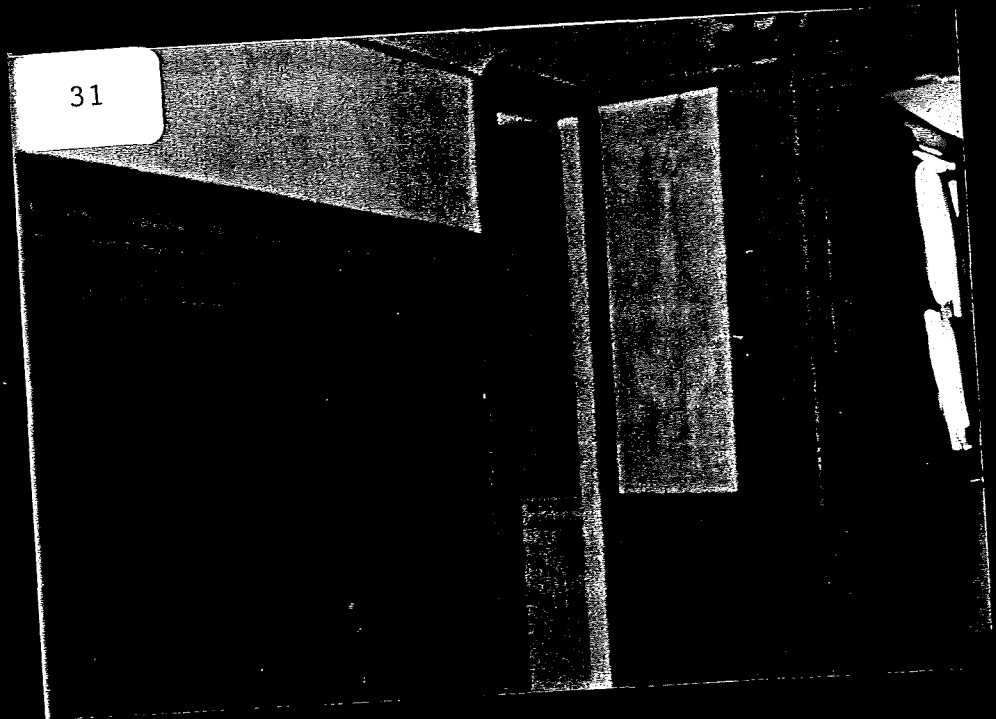
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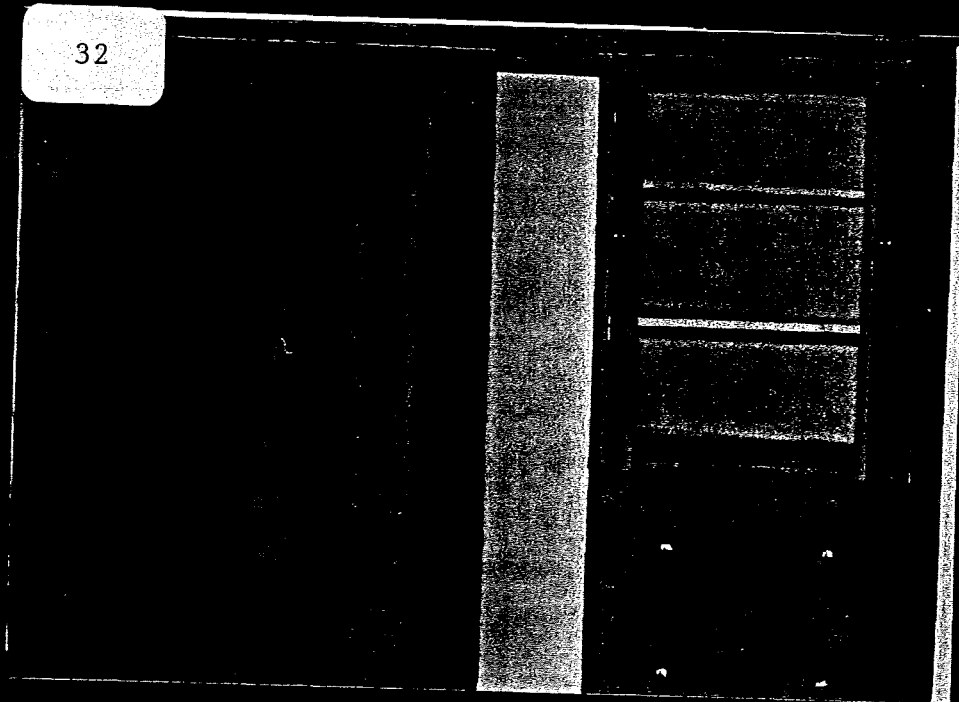
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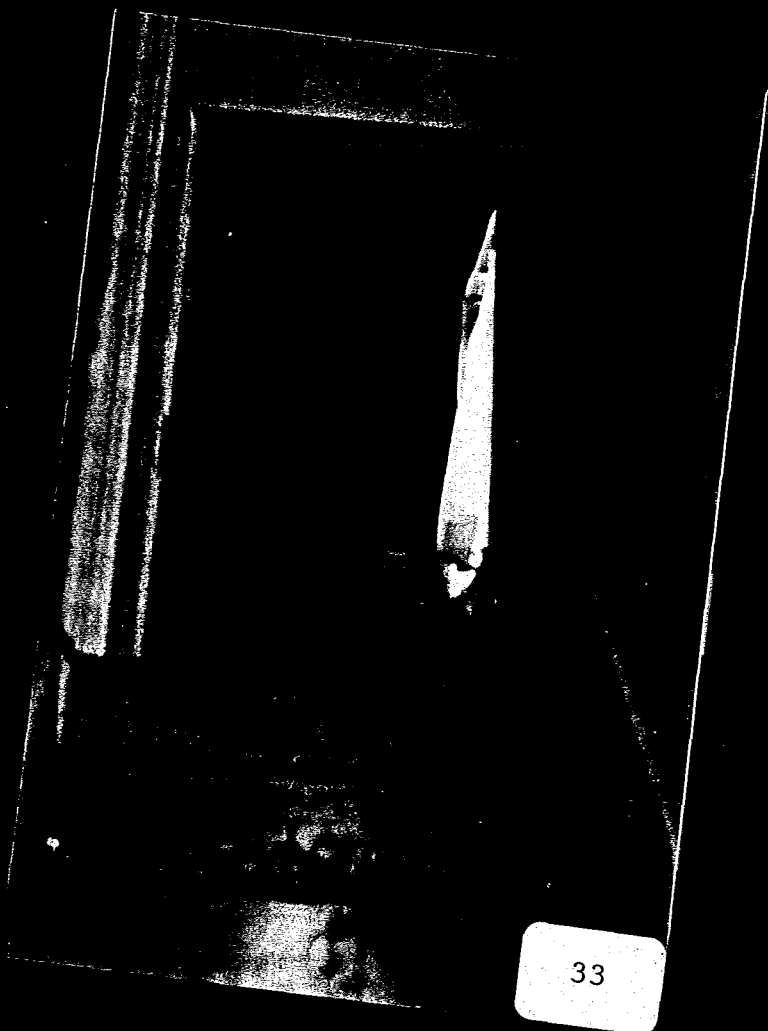
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MAGNATH

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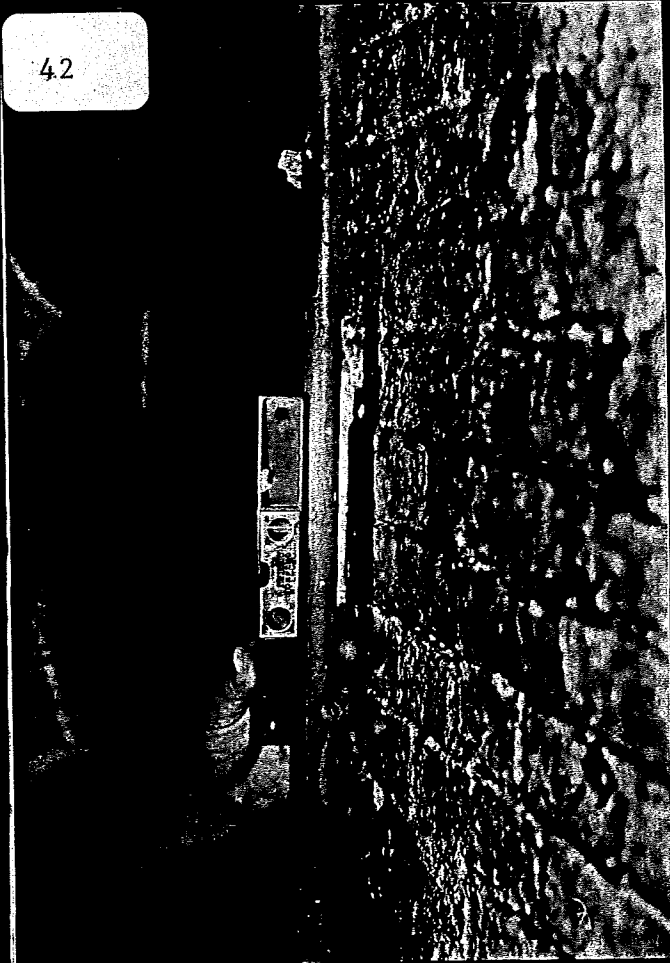
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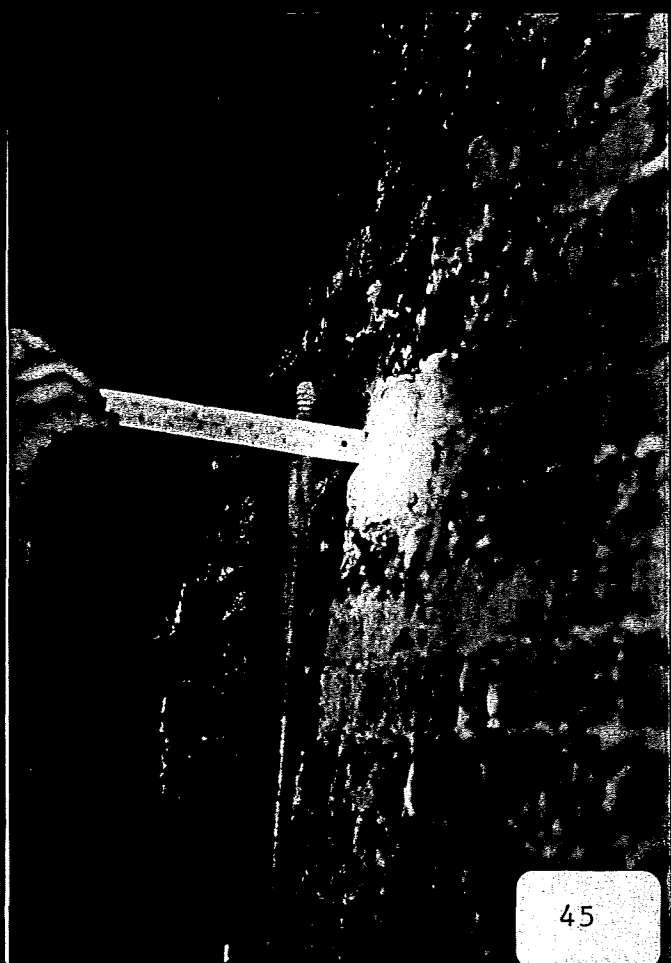
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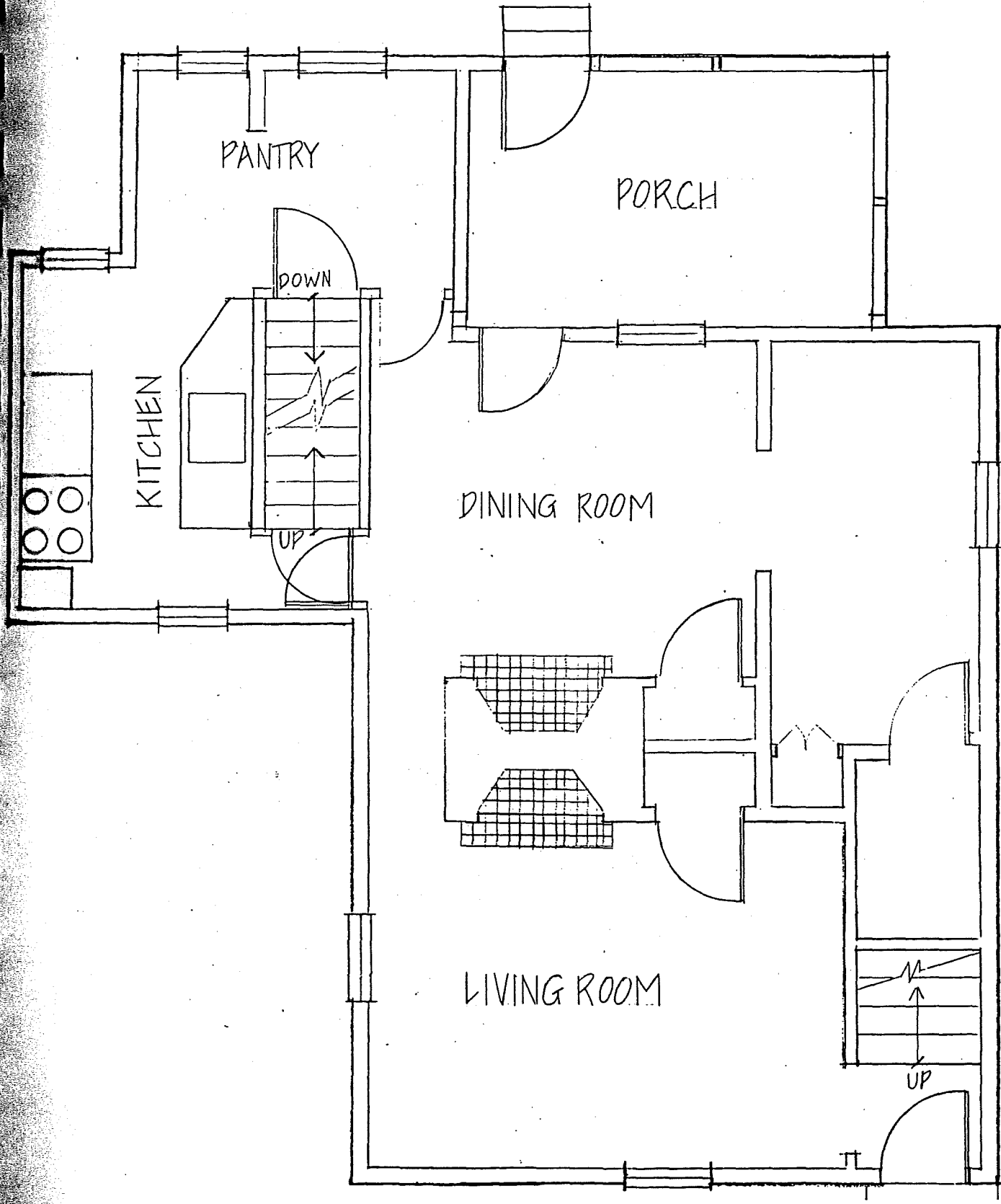


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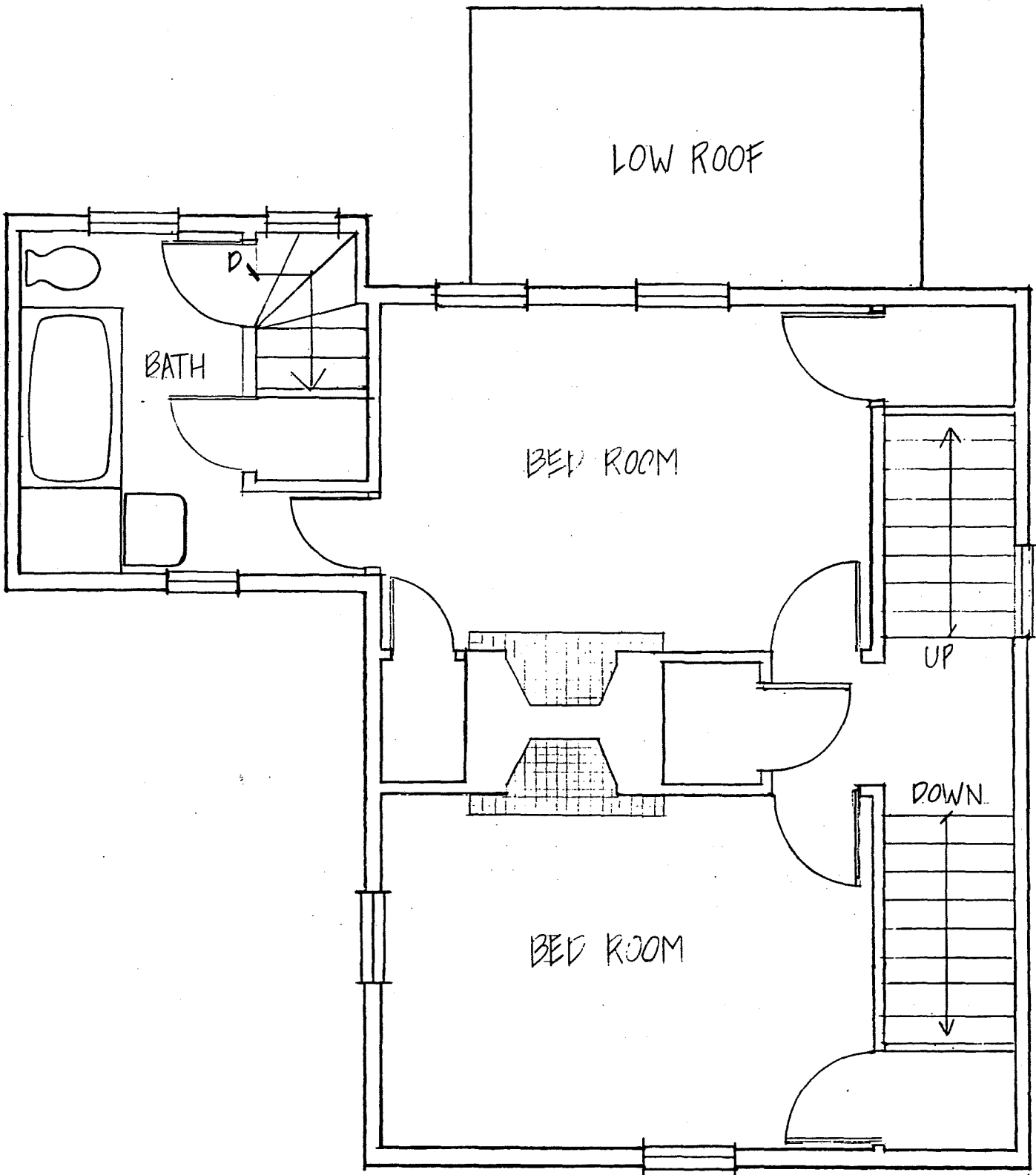


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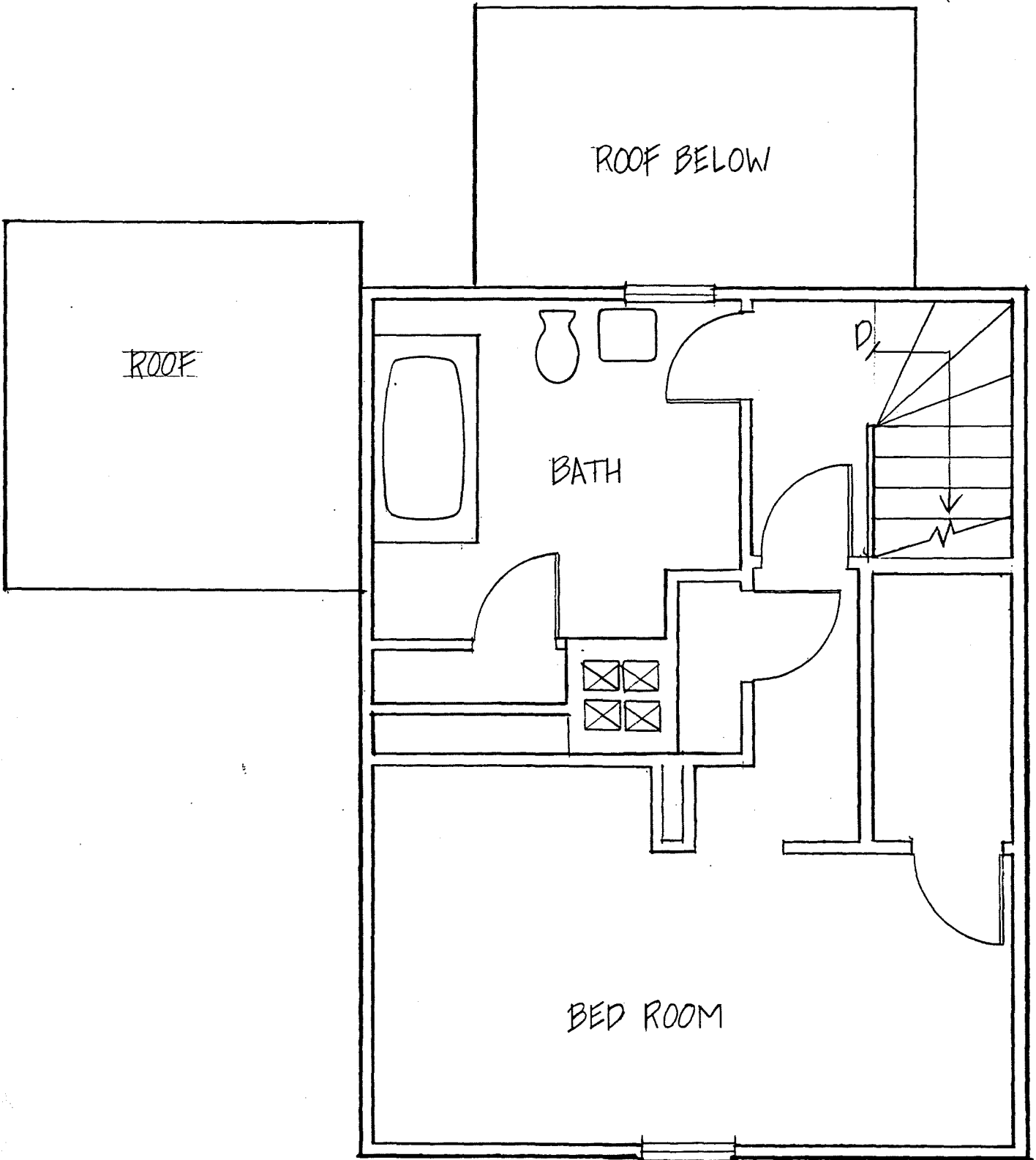
ATTACHMENT F



FIRST FLOOR

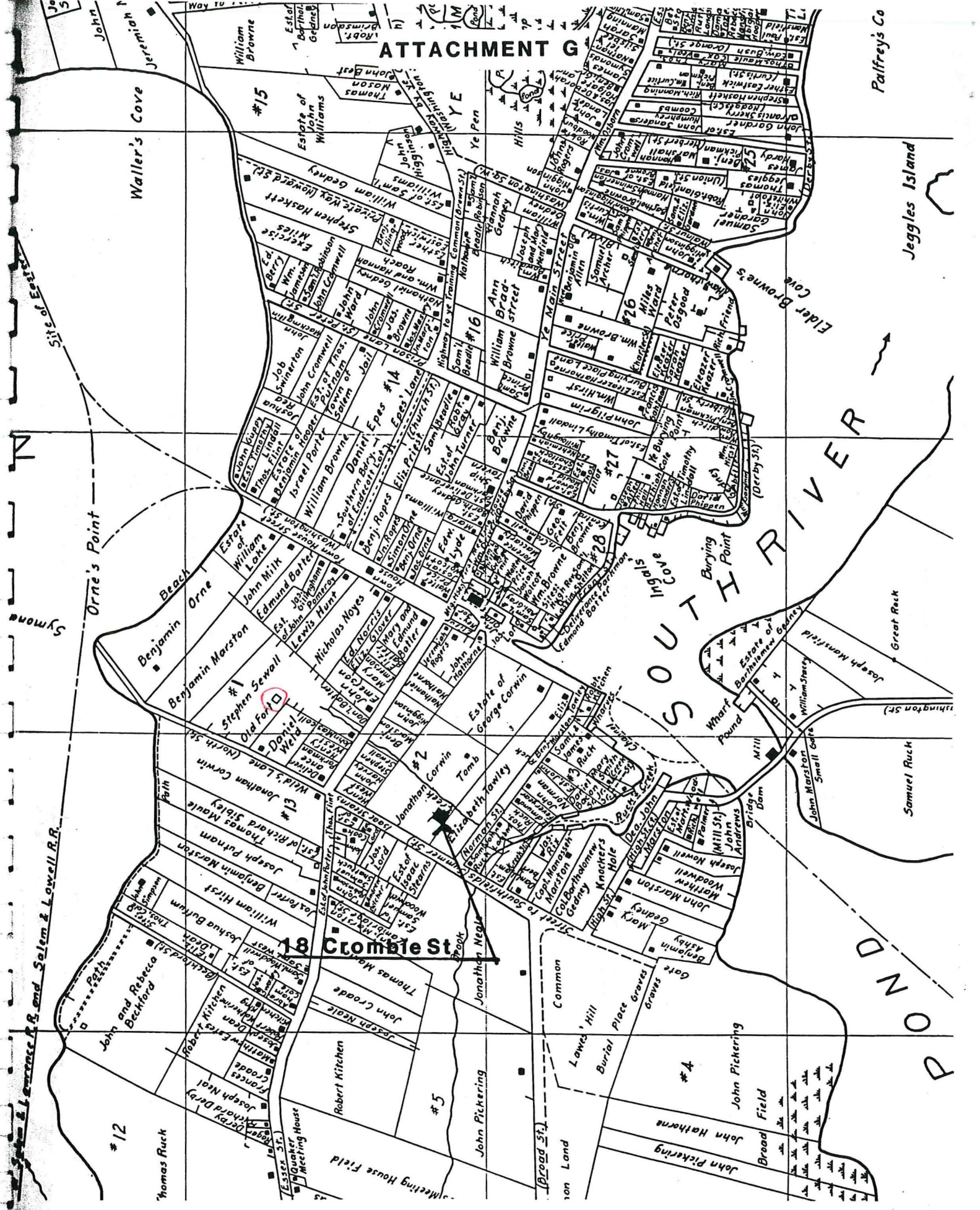


SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR

ATTACHMENT G



ATTACHMENT G



CITY OF SALEM 1700

1"=400'





CITY OF SALEM 1851

1" = 300'



LAND OF OSBORN

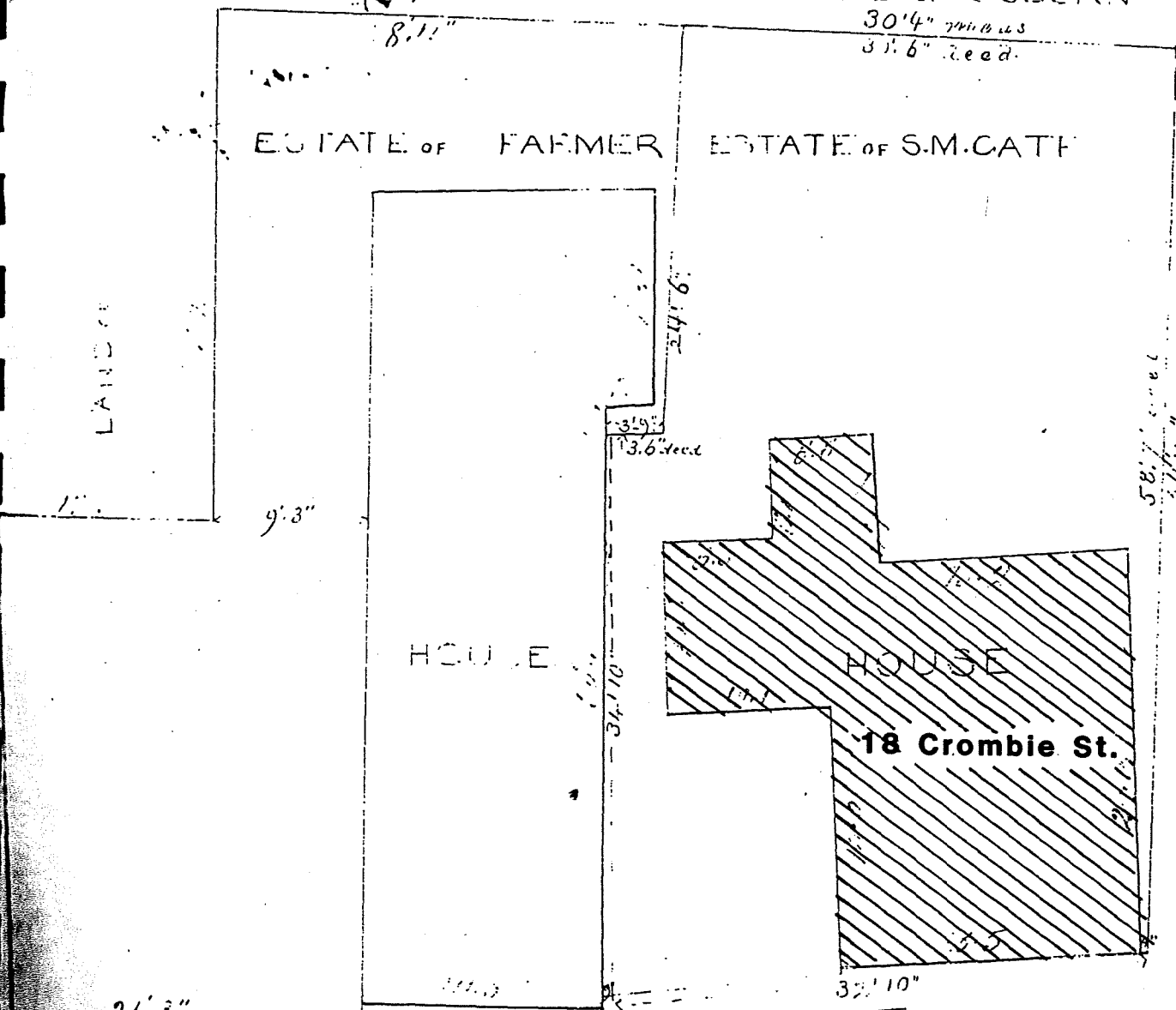
30'4" minus
3'6" read.

ESTATE OF FARMER

ESTATE OF S.M. CATH

LANE

LANE & FILL WALL



18 Crombie St.

CROMBIE STREET

CROMBIE

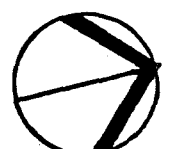
Salem May 21. 1879. 15 m past 11 a.m. Rec. vent? with Essex side
So. Dist. facing agreement between Shadrach M. Cole & others
Book 1018 leaf 11. att. *Chas. S. Goods Reg.*

PLAN OF ESTATES ON CROMBIE ST.

SCALE 10 FT. TO AN INCH

C.A. FUTNAM, SURVR.

JAN. 29. 79.





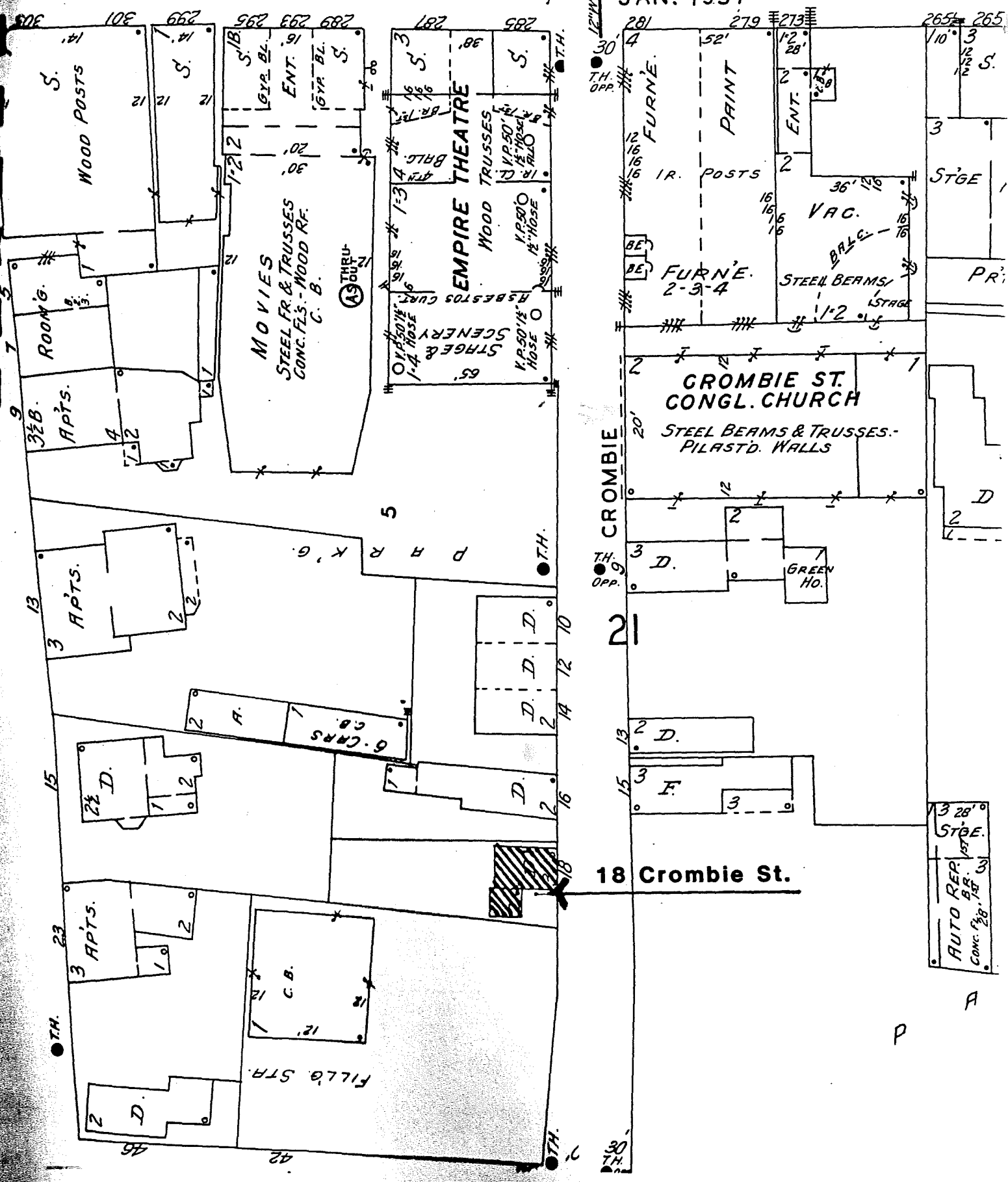
CITY OF SALEM 1897

1"-100'



21 ESSEX

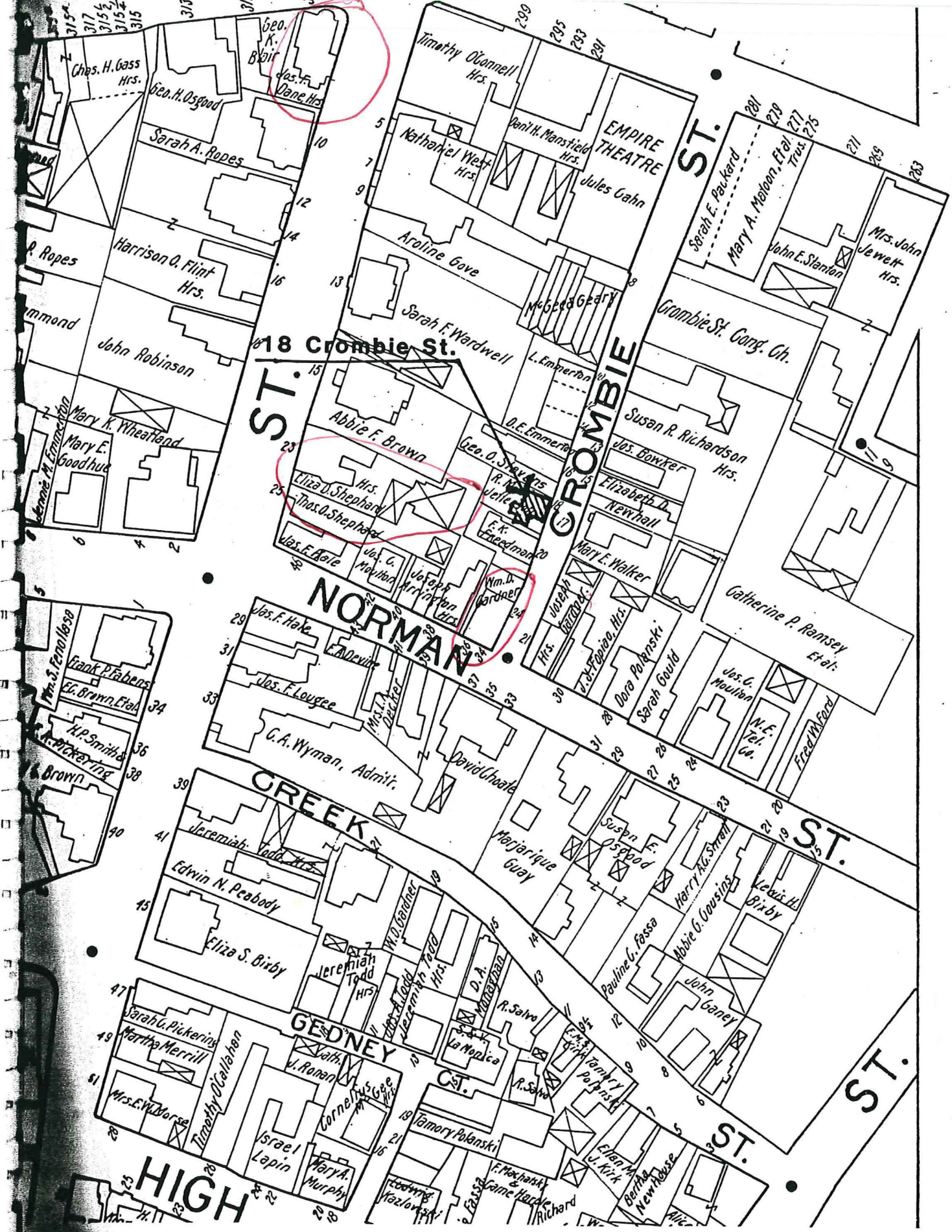
(21) "NE"
JAN. 1957



CITY OF SALEM 1957

1"-50'







Neighbors are worried about the future of this 18th-century house on Crombie Street in Salem.

The Salem News/Jonathon M. Whitmore

Neighbors pledge to block razing of Crombie St. house

By ANDREW BRENGLE
News Staff

SALEM — Concern for the future of a small, 18th century house on Crombie Street, next door to Joe's Auto Laundry, has neighbors pledging to fight any effort to knock it down.

The Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co., located nearby on Norman Street, bought the house six months ago. Crombie Street residents, sensitive to rumors that the company will raze the house, say the three-story dark-brown, shingled structure should be preserved for its historic value.

The house was built in 1783, according to city records, and was moved from Chestnut Street to its present location in 1830. Frances H. Wendt, its former long-time owner, now lives in Manchester.

The house is not an official historic monument and the street has no standing as part of the city's

HOUSE

(Continued on page 8)

Historic District. However, the street has been recognized by the National Register of Historic Places because of its status as one of the last primarily residential streets in downtown Salem.

"I'm worried about the house," said Ruth Wall of 13 Crombie St. "We want to keep what's left of the neighborhood. Everybody knows each other here."

Replying to a rumor that the insurance company will replace the building with parking spaces, Holyoke Vice President Patrick Grieco said, "At this stage of the game, I'd say it's not true. We are just starting to investigate our different options."

Grieco said it was premature to say what the company will do with the house, but added "at this point we can't rule anything out." Other options include using the house as office space or remodeling it and selling it, he said.

Grieco said the company does not need more parking space because it already owns the auto laundry parking lot across the street and has a two-level garage underneath its own building.

But 15 Crombie St. resident Frank Montesi disagreed.

"This is just another little block for them," Montesi said. "They get enough land, and they can build another building. It wouldn't surprise me if they put a parking garage in its place."

Montesi, a contractor who lives across the street, said he put a \$75,000 bid down on the six-room house. He wanted to refurbish it. Holyoke, he said, paid \$168,000. The house has structural rot, needs a new heating system and new windows, Montesi said.

The city's opinion is that the house should stay.

"I'd hate to see anything torn

down," said Mayor Anthony V. Salvo. "This street was full of historic homes, but many of them were torn down during the days of urban renewal."

City Planner Gerard Kavanaugh said his department was researching the history of the house to determine its significance. If the house is to be demolished, Holyoke must go before the Historical Commission for a review.

The commission, under the demolition delay ordinance, has six months to make a ruling. However, it cannot prevent demolition if it cannot prove the house is historically significant.

Historical Commission chairwoman Annie Harris said the house has significance despite its size.

"It's important in its location," she said. "It is in the only really

residential portion of the street. One of Salem's most important assets is its old houses. And that includes its smaller houses, not just the large ones on Chestnut Street."

The owner of Joe's Auto Laundry did not share the sentiment.

"It's not a historic building," said Joseph Palamara. "It's a barn from Chestnut Street. Mrs. Wendt tried to get a plaque for it and couldn't."

He said residents should tend to their own homes and stop prying into others' business. Palamara said the insurance company did well to keep the Crombie street area clean and well-maintained.

"You look at some of these other places and they're a mess," he said. "I've been in this city 53 years and it's the same people squawking about the same things."

SALEM

Preservationists, firm feud over old downtown house

Crombie Street home to be razed for parking lot

A News staff report

SALEM — The Historical Commission and the Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co. are locked in a battle over an old house on Crombie Street which the company wants to tear down for parking spaces and the commission wants to preserve.

The Historical Commission voted unanimously Wednesday night after a three-hour hearing to recommend against granting a waiver of the delay ordinance for demolition, requested by Holyoke. The commission can only delay demolition of the house for six months. The Salem Redevelopment Authority will make the decision whether it can be torn down.

Commission members and Holyoke representatives could agree on little about the house including its age and its structural soundness. Commission members contended it was structurally fine and maybe 220 years old while the company said it was 160 years old, falling down and of no historical importance.

Most of the neighbors on Crombie Street also opposed the demolition of the house, which abuts Joe's Auto Laundry, also owned by the insurance company. Holyoke is located across Norman Street from Joe's Auto Laundry.

Among the groups in favor of preserving the single family gam-



'We intend to press ahead to tear the house down.'

William J. Lundregan,
Holyoke attorney



This is a 'historically significant building.'

Arne Farnham,
Essex Institute

breil house are Historic Salem Inc. and the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Anne Farnham, on behalf of the Essex Institute, said the house is a "historically significant building" which is important to preserve. She noted it was part of the historic register.

Attorney William J. Lundregan, representing Holyoke, said the company originally wanted to turn the building into a conference center but it was in such poor shape that rehabilitation costs were too high.

"We intend to press ahead to tear the house down," Lundregan said.

Lundregan denied charges from opponents that the company, which employs 200 people, was threatening to leave the city if it didn't get its way.

He said the company could let the building decay to a point where city officials would be forced to tear it down.

He detailed the company's 140 year commitment to downtown Salem. He said the company looks at nearby properties when they come up for sale if it abuts their property. Holyoke bought the house for \$169,000 four years ago.

Commission members and others tried to determine whether the company had any more plans for the house lot. Lundregan said



The Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company and the city's Historical Commission disagree over the age and significance of this old gambrel home on Crombie Street and neighbors say the company's plans to demolish the structure for a parking lot will be one more damaging blow to this downtown residential street which is a National Register district. View is looking north toward Essex Street. Out of view at left is former Joe's Auto Laundry property at corner of Crombie and Norman streets. *The Salem News/file photo*

Holyoke didn't have any immediate plans to develop it.

"We'd like to find out the company's strategic plans without any of the threats to leave the city," said David Pelletier, a Crombie Street resident.

Board of Appeal member Jane Stirgwoit suggested that since the company had no immediate plans for the lot that it lease the house until it works out plans. Board members agreed that it was an option Holyoke should consider. Lundregan said the company had

already considered it.

Frank Montesi of 15 Crombie St. said it is another case of a corporation "bowling over" a Salem neighborhood. He said only four homes will be left on the street which was once filled with homes.

Stephanie Montesi said Crombie Street was the last residential street downtown, according to the Historic Register.

"I'm really frustrated about this back door approach," she said.

Commission member Russell

Slam said the demolition of the house would be a tragedy.

"The neighborhood has been under siege for the past 10 years. This neighborhood is being nickel and dimed out of existence," Slam said.

Commission Chairwoman Annie C. Harris said tearing down the house will only provide a few parking spaces. She mentioned other city plans to increase parking nearby. She said the property is listed under the Crombie Street National Register District.

Wine tasting gala: A success by all accounts

On Friday, September 26, close to 250 HSI members and friends converged on the Museum Place mall to sample a selection of wines and hors d'oeuvres. The event was hosted by HSI and the Salem Common Neighborhood Association. We raised close to \$1,500 to benefit the Bowditch House.

Bob Marchand of Audet's Liquors sponsored the wine tasting and brought together nine wine distributors with wines from all over the world.

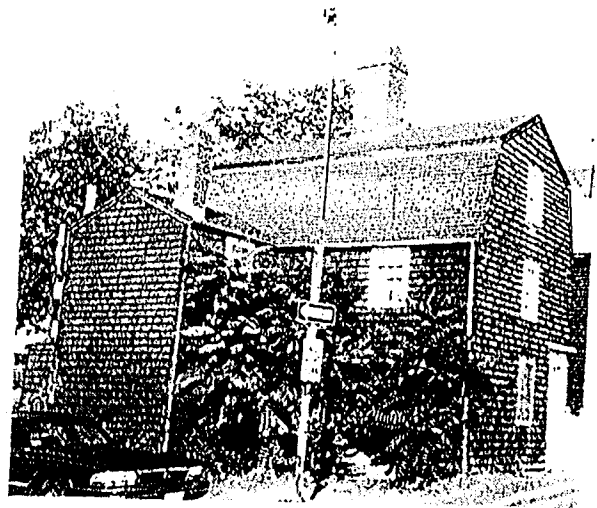
Wonderful food was provided by caterers and distributors including Fond Memories, The Grapevine Restaurant, Hawthorne Catering, Hellas International and Lantern Hill Catering. Lots of hard work made the evening a success.

The event was chaired by Dick Lindeman and Tod Johnson, with help from committee members Michele Collins, Peter Farrow, Joan and David Fix, Regina Flynn, Paul Harriek, David Henry, Steve Kesselman, Darrow Lebovici, Arlene O'Shea, Chip Tuttle, Meg Twohey, and John Wathne. HSI's office manager, Ann Busted, ably dealt with a myriad of details ranging from insurance to publicity. The result was a great evening for guest and sponsors.

*Bob Marchand of Audet's
Liquors sponsored the
wine tasting and brought
together nine wine
distributors with wines
from all over the world.*



BY DICK
LINDEMAN



Endangered house at 18 Crombie Street sits neglected by its owner.

Crombie Street house has its day in court

By Kim Withers Brengle

Essex Superior Court ruled in September that 18 Crombie Street cannot be demolished. Despite the good news that the Crombie Street National Register Historic District will remain intact, the ruling cannot prevent the continuing deterioration of the vacant building. The legal action by Holyoke Square Inc. (a subsidiary of Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co.) appealed the 1991 and 1992 decisions of the Salem Redevelopment Authority and the Salem Building Inspector to deny permission to demolish 18 Crombie Street, and of the State Building Code Appeals Board to uphold the City's rulings.

Eighteen Crombie Street stands in the tiny Crombie Street district, where it is one of seven significant buildings. The district is important as the last surviving 19th century residential area in downtown Salem, and illustrates a noteworthy range of architectural styles. Moved to the site in 1830, the house at 18 Crombie Street was likely built in the late 18th century, making it the oldest building in the district.

In 1988 the house was purchased by Holyoke Square, whose parent company headquarters are nearby on Norman Street. Holyoke explored various uses for the building, including use as a conference center or as offices, and concluded that the cost of rehabilitation would be prohibitive.

The controversy began in 1991, when Holyoke proposed to demolish 18 Crombie Street to create eight parking spaces. The request was denied first by the Salem Building Inspector because it was not a "dangerous building." The permit was also denied by the SRA because of its historical significance, structural integrity, and because of Holyoke's lack of a plan for the land. Hearings before both the Salem Historical Commission and the SRA aroused tremendous concern from supporters of preservation in Salem. Many letters were written, and the turnout at public meeting was large and vocal.

In his ruling on the recent case, Superior Court Justice Allan van Gestel dismissed all counts of Holyoke's complaint. While this ruling is important for supporting the authority of the SRA to protect historic buildings within its jurisdiction, van Gestel points out the unfortunate reality that the problem of 18 Crombie Street remains unsolved. Holyoke will not be allowed to demolish the building, but they can continue to demolish by neglect, which may eventually lead to the loss of the building.

Editor's note: Kim Withers Brengle is a partner in Tremont Preservation Services, and testified on behalf of the City of Salem as an expert witness in this case.

SEN 12/12/2000

Group lists most endangered properties in Salem

By TOM DALTON
News staff

SALEM — A deserted house, an abandoned jail and a condemned factory all made the first Most Endangered Historic Resource List selected by Historic Salem Inc.

The eight historic sites in bad shape and in need of private or public assistance were jointly announced by HSI, a local preservation group, and by Mayor Stanley Usovicz.

The Salem Jail complex topped the list of endangered properties. It also was first on a list published by Historic Massachusetts Inc.

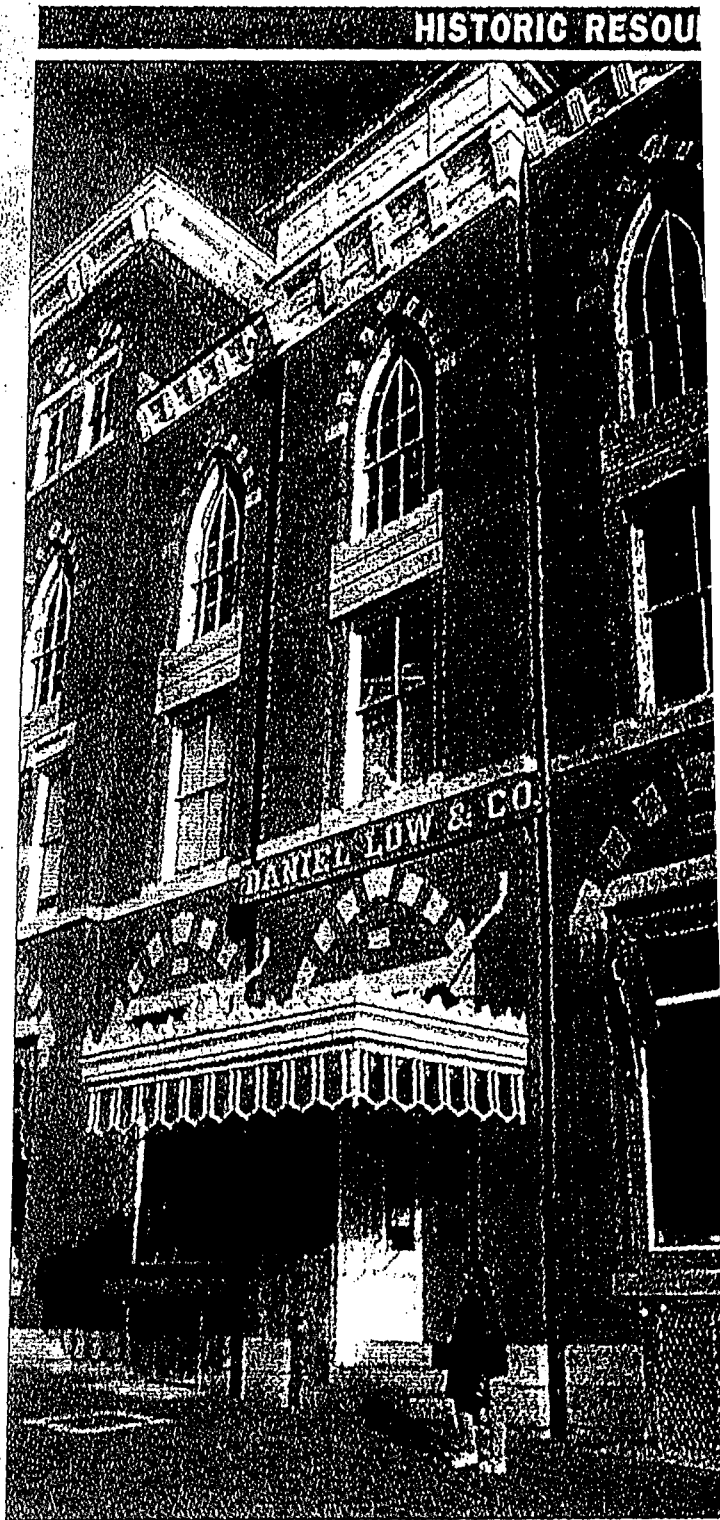
There were a few surprises, most notably a cluster of old city cemeteries.

HSI said it assembled this list in the hope people would stop and think before demolishing old buildings, or act now to save property that is deteriorating.

"Our objective is to ensure that Salem's heritage is not lost, while helping with the economic revitalization of Salem," Meg Twohey, president of Historic Salem Inc., said in a prepared statement.

"What puts (Salem) on the map is the incredible collection of historic structures and the history of the city, ..." said Tim Jenkins, co-chairman of HSI's preservation committee. "We cannot allow these important resources to fall apart."

BUILDINGS, page A18



News staff photos/Paul

DOWNTOWN RETAIL DISTRICT, including the Daniel Low Building, which Historic Salem Inc. says "is visibly deteriorating."

Bisen-
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...retail district on its list, and cited the Daniel Low building, 227-231 Essex St., as the "poster child for the decline of Salem's retail shopping district." Since the list was selected, a buyer has been found for the 1826 building, which is the former meetinghouse of the

Coast Guard hangar
racks/mess hall.
Old Salem Police
Central St. — Built in
vacated in 1993 by
Police Department and
victim to vandals and

Buildings: Group lists Salem properties

Continued from page A1

Although HSI has been discussing this project for years, it was the loss of a city landmark, the Salem Armory wall, that helped spur the preservation group into action. HSI went to court last spring in an unsuccessful attempt to block the Peabody Essex Museum from taking down the remaining facade of the 1908 Armory.

"It definitely inspired us," said Jenkins.

The Most Endangered Historic Resource List includes several buildings the city or others are working to save. A few properties were the focus of public attention in recent weeks. HSI applauded those efforts.

For example, HSI put the downtown retail district on its list, and cited the Daniel Low building, 227-231 Essex St., as the "poster child for the decline of Salem's retail shopping district." Since the list was selected, a buyer has been found for the 1826 building, which is the former meetinghouse of the First Church.

The old police station on Charter Street, which has been vacant for seven years, also made the list. Just days ago, the Salem Redevelopment Authority designated a developer for the 1913 building.

The state also has come to the city's aid on one of these endangered sites. In response to a request from the Usovicz administration, the Massachusetts Historical Commission awarded a \$76,000 grant to stabilize the jail

Salem's most endangered buildings

SALEM — The first Most Endangered Historic Resource List includes:

Salem Jail Complex, 50 St. Peter St. — Built in 1811-13, it is one of the oldest correctional facilities in the country and includes the jail, jailer's house and barn.

Wendt House, 18 Cromble St. — Built in 1783 and moved to its present location around 1830, this boarded-up house is owned by Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co., which has tried to demolish it, only to be blocked by the city.

Wintor Island — The public park includes several structures that have been neglected or are in disrepair: Fort Pickering, the former U.S. Coast Guard hangar and a barracks/mess hall.

Old Salem Police Station, 17 Central St. — Built in 1913, it was vacated in 1993 by the Salem Police Department and has fallen victim to vandals and the weather. It has recently been targeted for redevelopment as a hotel.

Downtown Retail District — While citing concerns about the Daniel Low building and, in general, neglected downtown properties, HSI also noted the recent revitalizations of the Peabody Block and other sites.

Helburn Thompson Leather Factory Complex, 28 Goodhue St. — Built before the Great Salem Fire of 1914, this building was condemned last year by the city, forcing the relocation of several business tenants. HSI suggested "renovation and reuse" for the old wooden building.

Historic Burial Grounds — HSI cites problems of "deferred maintenance and vandalism" at the Broad Street Burial Ground, The Burying Point on Charter Street, Friends Cemetery on Essex Street and the Howard Street Burial Ground.

Burbeck House, 160 Boston St. — Built in 1869, this residential structure is being used as a warehouse and "faces an uncertain future."

keeper's house at Salem Jail, which was badly damaged in a fire last year. Usovicz also has set up a committee to look into the future use of the jail site.

Its aim in creating this list, HSI said, is not "to point an accusatory finger," but to encourage city officials, residents, businesses and others "to get involved in

these preservation efforts."

HSI put together its list after seeking nominations from the public.

John Goff, HSI's director, said the list is both a warning and a call for help.

"It's kind of like a traffic light blinking yellow," he said. "The time is running out."

Election: Candidates await court's ruling

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Preservationists fight to save old house

By DAVE GERSHMAN
News staff

SALEM — To some, it's just a small house at the end of a small downtown street. But to others, the brown clapboard home at 18 Crombie St. is the center of a decade-long controversy.

The home, built in the mid-18th century, has an impressive lineage.

"There is a very rich history to the house," said John Goff, executive director of Historic Salem Inc.

Many residents were happy when Holyoke Square Inc., a subsidiary of Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co., bought it for less than \$100,000 in 1988. But then Holyoke determined that renovating the vacant house for another use would be too expensive.

The company asked the city for permission to demolish it to make way for eight parking spaces.

Preservationists rallied to protect the house, which was built in the mid-18th century. The city found Holyoke did not have sufficient grounds to demolish it, sending the dispute into court, where the city prevailed.

But some fear the little house has won only a stay of execution. Four years, it has been boarded up. Neighbors and preservationists complain it has become shabby. They believe Holyoke is trying to demolish the building by neglect.

"It's a lot of money to spend on a property to let it go to waste in order to get permission to demolish it," said Tim Jenkins, who has researched the house for Historic Salem.

Yet, when a building inspector recently entered the home, he found the structure was in good structural shape. That means the standoff could go on for some time.

A Holyoke representative referred comment, this week, to the company's lawyer, who did not re-

turn a phone call.

Hoping to resume discussion of the issue, Ward 3 Councilor Joan Lovely has submitted a council order to hold a meeting sometime this winter. Neighbors are anxious to see something positive happen at the house, she said.

"HSI feels it has value, as do the neighbors," Lovely said. "It's a house that is boarded up and sitting vacant. It certainly doesn't add any value to the homes. It takes away value."

Jenkins can show off a thick folder full of his research on the house. It was actually built somewhere near Chestnut Street, then moved to its current location a hundred years later, in the mid-1700s. The area was one of the original neighborhoods of Salem, and the house miraculously survived the great fire in 1914.

"It was a very active area of early Salem — first period Salem," Jenkins said.

One owner of the English Georgian-style house, William Pike, was a friend of Nathaniel Hawthorne.

"I think (Hawthorne) used to visit there almost daily," Jenkins said.

Then, in 1845, a black man from South Carolina, Leonard Jefferson, who may have been a freed slave, bought the house. He became a sexton at the First Church, but died within a year. The house passed to his wife, Rufina, who lived there and rented out rooms for 40 years.

"A whole interesting cast of characters rented out rooms from her," Jenkins said.

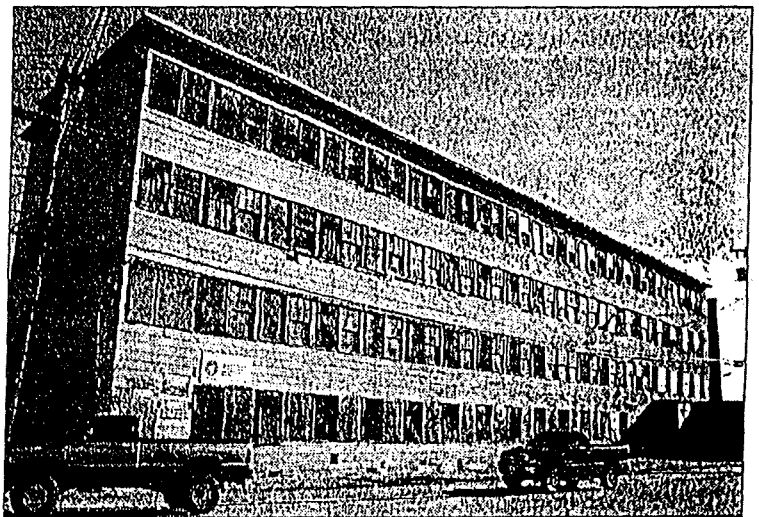
Holyoke bought the house from a subsequent owner. Jenkins wonders whether Holyoke can renovate the house or sell it to somebody who will. Perhaps the house could be turned into apartments, he added.

"Maybe now is the perfect time for them to cut their losses," Jenkins said. "I think it's been going on for too long."



News staff photo/Paul Bilodeau

Historic Salem Inc. hopes to save this house at 18 Crombie St. from being demolished.



News staff photo/Paul Bilodeau

A large vacant building on Goodhue Street.

Preserving the character of downtown Salem

Two recent developments threaten to alter the character of downtown Salem, and not for the better. Fortunately, neither will take place without a fight.

• The Licensing Board last week turned down an Essex Street businessman's request to keep five arcade-style games in his store. He's threatened to take the issue to court, and may have precedent on his side given the fact there all manner of arcade games at the Salem Willows and the board had previously authorized a smaller number downtown when a movie chain made that a condition of its opening a theater at the Museum Place mall.

The theater has since learned to survive without the games, however, and most would agree it has helped improve the atmosphere but within and outside the mall. In fact, a video arcade is probably the last thing the downtown area needs right now as it struggles to attract new visitors.

"I don't think this is ... the direction we want to go in," Ward 3 Councilor Joan Lovely told the board, and she's right. While the honky-tonk element asserts itself every Halloween, one would just as soon limit it to that one month. For the city's central business district needs to reestablish itself as a year 'round destination, not only for tourists, but for residents of the North Shore who might be lured by its restaurants, cultural institutions and other activities.

So long as the Licensing Board retains the legal authority over the placement of video games, it ought to exercise that power to keep them away from downtown.

• Just around the corner, on Crombie Street, there's concern about the deteriorating state of a 150-year-old dwelling owned by the Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co.

The insurance company, located across the street, purchased the home in 1988 and planned to a parking lot. When that plan encountered opposition (our position then was that demolition should only be allowed if Holyoke planned to put another structure on the site), they simply boarded up the building and let it sit there.

Now neighbors and Historic Salem Inc. fear there's a purpose behind Holyoke's allowing the place to deteriorate: At some point there might not be any choice but to take it down. But there are a bunch of people, including the ward councilor, who are determined they are not going to let that happen.

A short, unassuming little lane, Crombie Street offers a glimpse of what downtown Salem looked like back in the 19th century when residents live cheek by jowl with churches and businesses. The house at 18 Crombie Street is an important part of this streetscape which ought to be preserved.



Letter

Peo

To the Editor:

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SEN 1/19/2001 p 1, A-10.

Neighbors hope to save neglected historic home

By DAVE GERSHMAN
News staff

SALEM — The city is looking at ways to save a historic, 18th century home from the clutches of what neighbors say is a neglectful owner before the house has to be demolished for safety reasons.

It's a scenario that has played out several times in Salem's colorful history, yet perhaps never has it involved one of the city's most respected companies.

Yesterday, members of a City Council committee met with a dozen historic preservationists and neighbors who want Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co. to sell the small, brown clapboard home at 18



18 Crombie St. in Salem

Crombie St., which has been vacant for some 12 years.

"They're such hypocrites," said Ruth Wall of 13 Crombie St., alluding to the company's efforts to

HOUSE, page A10

House: Neighbors want to save old home

Continued from page A1

promote itself as a good neighbor in Salem. "It's a sham."

The home has had an intriguing history. Its owners included a friend of Nathaniel Hawthorne and a freed slave who became a sexton at the First Church and whose wife later ran it as a rooming house.

It also is one of only a few homes to survive in one of the city's oldest residential neighborhoods.

Aside from its historic value, the vacant house could be filled with a new family and brighten up a section of Crombie Street. The home is located across from the city's homeless shelter. For years it has been boarded up.

"These neighbors are being held hostage to a large corporation," said Meg Twohey of Historic Salem Inc.

Right now, Holyoke and the city are locked into a stalemate. The company can't knock the house down. But city officials believe the company has a long-term plan to demolish it by neglect, meaning the house will be allowed to fall apart until the city has to step in and order it made safe or knocked down.

In 1988, the company bought the home with the intention of turning it into a conference center. Its offices are a block away. But the price of renovations turned out to be too high, so the company pitched a plan to knock it down and replace it with parking spaces.

But the building inspector and Salem Redevelopment Authority found Holyoke did not have sufficient grounds to demolish it, sending the dispute into court,

where the city prevailed. But the wrangling took several years. The company's appeal was only dismissed this summer.

Meanwhile, neighbors complain the home gets shabbier and shabbier while the company has no plans for it.

"Day by day, week by week, and Holyoke doesn't really want to do anything," City Solicitor John Keenan said.

Despite its looks, said Building Inspector Peter Strout, the home is actually in good structural condition. It is not dangerous. Holyoke requests the city inspect it twice a year.

"It's no more dangerous than a house that's left empty during the day," Strout said. "... At this point, I see it being in this same structural condition for the next 5-to-10 years."

However, many say the house is an eyesore. The paint is peeling and the yard is overgrown. And in the past, neighbors have complained of people sleeping in the yard.

News the stalemate could go on for a decade left some city councilors and residents fuming. Tim Jenkins of HSI said the historic preservation group wants to work with Holyoke to find a solution for the home, but has so far been rebuffed.

"For the sake of four parking spaces, we'll lose a significant part of this city's history," Jenkins said. "... Everyone who has contacted Holyoke has seemingly gotten nowhere."

(The company was invited to send a representative to the

meeting but declined.)

Jenkins said the company's actions contradict its mission. It sells home insurance, but is letting a historic home fall apart until it becomes unsafe.

David Pelletier of 12 Crombie St. said the home has deteriorated since Holyoke bought it. Its loss would be a blow. "We are not a city that makes postcards out of parking lots," Pelletier said.

The meeting was held at the urging of Council President Joan Lovely, who heard neighbors' complaints about the situation when she campaigned for her seat three years ago.

At the end of the night, the Committee on Government Services voted to recommend city staff to explore three suggestions: Ward 5 Councilor Kim Driscoll said a nuisance ordinance could be used to prompt repairs; Jenkins said the Salem Redevelopment Authority could order restoration of the home; and Ward 2 Councilor Scott LaCava asked for a cost-benefit analysis of the city acquiring the property.

It was not specified in the recommendation, but LaCava wanted to talk about taking the property by eminent domain, and then selling it to a family.

Keenan agreed to look into the matters, but he did not give the councilors much hope.

"We can't force someone to spend money on their property if they don't want to," he said. And Holyoke doesn't want to sell it. "They're not looking to turn a buck

...ing his presi-
dency hoping to repeal it or something.

So I continued the campaign, lobbying against killer amendments, doing campaign follow-up interviews, and participating in forums about the new law's implementation.

The first few years of the new law re-

Fortunately, one of the people in that audience was Ar-
rd, who leapt to his feet and said I was absolutely right, but perhaps he could rephrase my explanation in a way that was easier to understand. So Andy went to a microphone and outlined the whole thing, while I nodded in agreement, or whatever, all the while thinking,

honor my debt by just writing this admiring column.

Thanks, Andy, for the support 20 years ago, and for helping run the country now.

■ ■ ■
Barbara Anderson, a Marblehead resident and regular Viewpoint columnist, is still executive director of Citizens for Limited Taxation.

Letter

SEN 4/23/01

Holyoke action threatens company's place in Salem's history

To the Editor:

Since 1843, the Holyoke Insurance Company has been led by only nine visionaries including its current president. They include John Williams, Augustus Story, Thomas Johnson, Alfred Abbot, Charles Price, Walter Harris, Carlos Faunce, Nelson Knowlton, Raymond Morrison, and now, Douglas Ryder of Marblehead.

Holyoke has been a strong builder in Salem. First of office buildings for itself and then of homes and businesses to replace those destroyed in the 1914 fire.

Recently, we have had to meet with members of the Salem City Council, not to discuss something that Holyoke wants to add to Salem, but something it wants to take away.

I have observed this neighborhood business' attempts to let a 230-year-old, little, brown house at 18 Crombie Street deteriorate for the past 14 years. It did not look the way it does today when Holyoke bought it for \$169,000 to allegedly turn into a "conference center." It was in "move-in" condition back then.

In fact its attorney (and until recently, city solicitor) was reported to have said at a Historic Commission meeting in the Nov. 8, 1990 Salem News that "the company would let the building decay to a point where city official(s) would be forced to tear it down." And that is exactly what our neighbor has done for the past 11 years.

If you did that to your house and Holyoke supplied your homeowner's policy, they would probably cancel it.

Why is Salem's historic fabric under siege by institutions that should know better?

Even the former Essex Institute director, the late Anne Farnham, spoke on behalf of saving this house, acknowledging that it is "historically significant" and has been part of the historic register since 1983, long before Holyoke purchased it.

Why is Salem's historic fabric under siege by institutions that should know better? Holyoke wants to sacrifice this irreplaceable piece of Salem's historical context so it can create four more rental parking spaces. It will speak volumes about our paucity of character as a historic city if our leaders allow this to happen. It will be one more step in the wrong direction.

Will our heritage eventually consist of postcards of parking lots?

Holyoke can make history, instead of destroying it, by doing the right thing and selling this property to someone who will preserve it and return it to its rightful place as a witness to Salem's and Holyoke's long history together.

It is a shame that we never got know numbers 20 and 22 Crombie Street, as well as numbers 30, 32, 34 and 36 Norman Street. They were all demolished and their lots are now

part of a chain gas station that can be found anywhere.

It is my opinion that this corner could do well with five more houses like the one at 18 Crombie and one less generic gas station, especially since it is located directly across from Salem's most historic residential street.

It is indeed unfortunate that the 10th and current president of Holyoke is trying to create a situation where the 11th and 12th and future Holyoke presidents will never see this authentic complement to their company's long and distinguished history. That is, if the company actually remains here and doesn't disappear like Sylvania and Parker Brothers did once they came under external influence, as Holyoke has recently.

Salem's leadership should do whatever is within its means, including using the power of eminent domain, to encourage Holyoke to become a better citizen in regards to this matter. We can forgive them for tearing down Samuel McIntyre's historic residence at 31 Summer Street in order to build their addition in the 1970s; but now that we all should know better, there is no excuse for their current behavior.

And if they eventually follow the path of Parker Brothers and Sylvania out of town, then at least we will still have that little, brown house at 18 Crombie Street to serve as a reminder of the positive things that Holyoke once stood for in Salem.

David Pelletier
Salem

(Editor's note: David Pelletier is a longtime resident of Crombie Street.)

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Letters to the editor

SEN 4/24/2001

Crombie Street dwelling has distinguished history

To the Editor:

I was pleased to read that "Neighbors hope to save neglected historic home" (Salem Evening News, Jan. 19, 2001, page 1) and that you concluded "the house at 18 Crombie Street is an important part of this streetscape which ought to be preserved" (Editorial, Dec. 19, 2000).

When the local building inspector says he sees no reason to destroy a perfectly good antique house — and common sense also suggests it can be repaired and restored — one wonders why Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company of Salem believes this "Most Endangered Historic Resource" must be demolished.

I believe there is a simple explanation for Holyoke's stance. They were seriously misled by a local "consultant" who proposed that "there is no redeeming historic value associated with the tenancy or the residence per se" in an overview study prepared in 1990. This "consultant" further proposed that "during the entire 160-year history of 18 Crombie Street's existence, there has not been a major historically significant tenancy."

Through a simple matter of bad scholarship, Holyoke Insurance was led over 10 years ago to categorically dismiss a number of historical associations which potentially make this property individually eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

I refer of course to the property's early ownership by the First Church of Salem; its early ownership by Samuel Curwen, the famed Salem Loyalist who built the Bowditch House; its early associations with Benjamin Crombie who ran the Sign of the Ship tavern at the head of Crombie Street; as well as its important early occupancies and associations with Prince Farmer, William B. Pike, Dr. Shadrach M. Cate, and Leonard J. and Rufina M. Jefferson.

William Pike's portrait hangs in the Peabody-Essex Museum; he is best remembered as a U.S. customs collector both for Boston and for



18 Crombie Street, Salem

Salem. He was a personal friend of U.S. President Franklin Pierce and of Nathaniel Hawthorne — Salem's most famous author.

Dr. Cate was a distinguished, 19th-century Salem physician, and a founder of the Swedenborgian Church in Salem.

Prince Farmer and the Jeffersons are particularly important to remember while we celebrate January as Black History Month here in America.

Prince Farmer was one of Salem's early Blacks who was recently recognized in the Salem Afro-American Heritage Trail booklet published by the National Park Service. A cook aboard the ship George, and an oyster retailer at Old Town Hall, Mr. Farmer was on the building committee of Salem's first church erected for blacks, and was a close associate of many 19th-century abolitionists, including the famed Remonds of Salem.

The Jeffersons were also strong advocates for civil rights and black equality in Salem's formative years. They were probably "conductors" or associates on the "shoreline" branch of the Underground Railroad which carried southern slaves

to freedom in the north.

For further documentation of all these facts, I refer you to the Essex County Registry of Deeds, and to a 20-page report which I prepared on 18 Crombie Street in July 1990, which was reproduced as "Attachment A" in the 1990 overview. This document has been public record since Holyoke applied to the city for permission to raze the house. Additional supporting material on Salem's black history was compiled by the National Park Service, and information on the Salem Underground Railroad was compiled by the late Miss Eleanor Broadhead.

The facts speak very well for themselves. This lovely little building is a unique and most important Salem historic landmark, which should be repaired and restored immediately upon its ancient site to improve its blighted neighborhood and downtown Salem. Thank you for supporting us in these recognitions.

Rory Goff
Merrymeeting Archives
Saco, Maine

(Editor's note: Rory Goff was a house researcher for Historic Salem, Inc. in 1990.)

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Nonprofits want to save house

By DAVE GERSHMAN
News staff

SALEM — The historic but crumbling home at 18 Crombie St. could have a new savior.

Historic Salem Inc. and Salem Harbor CDC are talking of teaming up to buy the house and renovate it for a family. But as with other chapters in the house's saga, the plans may never get off the ground.

The company that owns the house, Holyoke Square Inc., may have no intention of selling it.

"At this stage, I understand there's been no change in Holyoke's position," said Tim Jenkins, a member of HSI who has researched the home's past.

The Wendt House was built in 1783 and moved to its Crombie Street location in 1830. The small, brown clapboard house is part of one of the smallest, but oldest, neighborhoods in Salem. It miraculously survived the fire of 1914.

Several months ago, neighbors and members of HSI brought their concerns to the City Council. The home has been vacant since Holyoke bought it in 1988, and its appearance has become shabbier and shabbier.

Holyoke initially wanted to renovate the home as a conference center, but balked when the price tag rose too high. Then it sought to



18 Crombie Street

knock it down to make eight parking spaces, but the city has blocked the company.

Now, neighbors and HSI fear the company is waiting until the home crumbles to such an extent that the city has no choice but to allow its demolition for safety reasons.

"We think it's an important historical house, with a great history to it," Jenkins said. "We hope that

under the right terms it could be restored, and reused, ideally as a residential property. But there might be some other alternatives."

Jim Haskell, executive director of Salem Harbor CDC, said he has met with HSI and neighbors. The nonprofit is the city's biggest landlord, and has renovated similar properties for first-time home buyers.

Neighbors rally around an abandoned historic house

By DAVE GERSHMAN
News staff

SALEM — Here's what's going on in Salem neighborhoods this week:
Cromble Street

Big things are happening on Cromble Street.

A group of neighbors are organizing because of their frustration with Holyoke Mutual Insurance, the company that owns the abandoned house at 18 Cromble St.

A dozen neighbors went to the property on Sunday — in honor of the citywide cleanup — and filled 30 trash bags of weeds, litter and leaves. They also painted the boards that cover the windows and doors.

The property, known as the Wendt House, was built in 1783 and was moved to Cromble Street in 1830, miraculously surviving the fire of 1914. In 1983, Holyoke bought the house to renovate it into a conference center, then changed its



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

mind. Then it sought to demolish it for parking spaces, but was blocked by the city. Since then, a standoff has endured.

Neighbors want to save the house and fear the company is waiting for it to deteriorate until the city allows it to be razed for safety reasons.

"We have no active plan under way for the moment," said Douglas Ryder, president of Holyoke Mutual Insurance, yesterday. "Obviously, they can't do anything with it unless we're interested in selling it. At the present time, we're showing no interest."

Ryder happened to be driving by the house on Sunday when he saw the neighbors in the yard without

the company's permission. He refused to comment on what happened next, but one neighbor claims Ryder called the group "vandals."

"For whatever reason he's not happy getting free labor for repairing a property he owns," said Tim Jenkins, a resident who is interested in preserving the house.

Outside the house, neighbors found bottles and evidence that homeless people were on the property. While they are critical of the company, they still want to work with it.

"We wanted everybody, including Holyoke, to be proud of our neighborhood that we all live in," said neighbor David Pelletier. "And the only people that seemed to appreciate (the house) were the dogs who were using it on a regular basis. It was getting unsanitary even for dogs."

Sick of looking at an eyesore, Jenkins said, neighbors had to take matters into their own hands.

"This is not how you treat your neighbors," Jenkins said of the company. "... I wouldn't want to be a property casualty insurance company insuring people's homes that doesn't know how to take care of its own property."

Federal Street

The Federal Street Neighborhood Association meets Tuesday, May 15 at 7:30 p.m. at the Cotting-

Smith Assembly House.

Topics include the recent change in street lighting by Massachusetts Electric, the number of cars stored at the auto sales companies on Bridge Street, and planning for the neighborhoodwide yard sale set for Saturday, May 19. All neighbors are asked to help out.

In addition, Ray Shea of the Salem Citizens Alliance will speak about the group's effort to gather enough signatures to put a question asking if residents want to form a Charter Review Committee on November's ballot.

Ultimately, the committee can recommend any number of changes to the City Charter, though the group only wants one: the elimination of the elected mayor in favor of a city manager appointed by the City Council.

South Salem

The South Salem Neighborhood Association meets tonight at 7 p.m. at the Saltonstall School. Salem State College President Nancy Harrington will discuss the college's plans for a 450-student dorm, and Superintendent Herb Levine and Mayor Stanley Usovich will talk about plans for a new Horace Mann School.

Both projects would be built at the same site, the 37-acre former Sylvania plant on Loring Avenue, which is owned by the college.

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Older adults can get free hearing tests.

The North Shore Hearing Center, in celebration of our 25th year of service, will offer free hearing health screenings for people aged 40 and over in our Peabody and Salem locations. Test dates are Wednesday, May 9, Thursday, May 10, and Friday, May 11.

**ATTENTION:
TIME HOME BUYERS!**

THE SEMINAR SERIES

Sponsored by The Beverly National Bank

Each seminar includes four workshops presented by local experts to help you with your first home buying experience.

Tuesday, May 15 and Thursday, May 17

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Kaalman of Salem. Grandparents
are Robert MacDonald of Danvers
and Mildred Kaalman of Daisy
Hill, Bolton, England.

Peterson — Born at Salem Hos-
pital April 26, a daughter, Kasey
Elizabeth, to Keith Peterson and
Michelle Perry of Salem. Grand-
parents are Maxine Phillips of
Lady Lake, Fla., Edwin Peterson
III of Nahant, and Mr. and Mrs.
Garland Perry of Salem. Great-
grandparents are Mr. and Mrs.
Edwin Peterson Jr. of Nahant.

Klein — Born at Lawrence Gen-
eral Hospital April 27, a daughter,
Janel Faith, to Holly and Chris
Klein of Lawrence. Janel is wel-
comed home by her sister, Alexis
Leigh. Grandparents are Sharon
Hoyt of Lawrence, Sheree Klein
and Steve Doherty, both of Salem.

Meimeteas — Born at Salem
Hospital April 27, a daughter,
Maria, to Angelo and Amy Meime-
teas of Salem. Grandparents are
Christos and Maria Meimeteas,
and Esther Newton, all of Salem.

Another way to tax the poor

5/10/01

Will a 50-cent increase in the cigarette tax cause people to give up smoking? Senate President Thomas Birmingham better hope not, and the same goes for the 35,000 Bay State residents whose access to health care will depend on the revenues it generates.

As the number of people using tobacco decreases — and it should, as people go out of state to avoid what will be the highest-in-the-nation tax — and they will; the revenues generated by this “sin” tax will disappear. And then what?

Do we stop the subsidization of health insurance costs for those in need and aid to hospitals that this particular tax increase is supposed to fund?

Both are worthwhile endeavors that ought to be supported by more progressive taxes like those based on income and purchases. Should this increase pass over the objections of acting Gov. Jane Swift and others, Massachusetts can probably lay claim to be a national leader in taxing to the max those who, as a class, can afford it the least — people who play the lottery and people who smoke.

Holyoke's house of shame

The Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co. has a long and proud history. In fact, the company's president, Douglas Ryder, even commissioned a book about it several years ago.

As is typical with such works, author John J. Fox of Danvers acknowledged in the foreword his intention “to insure that no one would be hurt or embarrassed by anything that is included within the pages of this book.”

Fortunately for him, his story ended in 1993 — Holyoke's 150th birthday — for he would have had considerable difficulty dealing with recent events on Crombie Street. There, a 218-year-old house which Holyoke wants to demolish for parking, has been allowed to deteriorate so that it has become both an eyesore and safety hazard.

Frustrated neighbors took it upon themselves last weekend to spruce up the yard and exterior. We understand Ryder dropped by; but, sadly, it was neither to help nor make a record of the cleanup for posterity.

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ALL

Letters to the editor

Crombie Street neighbors plan to keep pressure on

To the Editor:

We all remember the terrible fire in Worcester and the firemen who lost their lives. The fire was apparently accidentally started by homeless couple living in the abandoned warehouse.

Salem's only homeless shelter is located only a hundred feet from an abandoned home owned by a wealthy, locally-based property and casualty insurance company — Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company.

Holyoke Mutual bought the property 13 years ago. While it said originally that it wanted to convert the house into a small conference center and to lodging for visiting executives, Holyoke later applied to the city for permission to demolish and expand an adjacent parking lot. It is a small home and only a few more spaces would result.

The home is located in a seven-building National Register district, the last historic residential district in the heart of Salem's downtown. One of Nathaniel Hawthorne's closest friends, William Pike, once lived in the home. He was also a close friend of President Franklin Pierce.

The house was probably a stop on the Underground railroad and was owned by a former slave and his widow for 40 years. It is a handsome, 18th-century, gambrel-roofed home with a history far richer than its diminutive size would indicate.

City officials have refused to condemn the entire property as it is structurally sound. The seemingly endless odyssey moved to the courts and Holyoke has lost all legal challenges to date.

Recently, the City Council and local preservationists have started to rally behind the neighbors who are mad as hell. Historic Salem Inc. included the property on its inaugural Most Endangered Historic Resource list.

Holyoke must be forced to take even the basic steps needed to maintain the house and the small piece of surrounding property that hasn't already been paved. They ignore their own advice to homeowners and



their assurances of community support ring with hypocrisy.

Holyoke Mutual's neighbors are disgusted and taking matters into their own hands. They are actively responding to Holyoke's practice of demolition by neglect and applying the golden rule: They are banding together to clean up and repair the historic property. Homeless neighbors are pitching in to help. Everyone is working side-by-side and having fun getting to know each other.

It is all about building real community in the heart of one of America's oldest downtowns.

Robert Wall
For the Historic Crombie Street
Neighborhood Assoc.
Salem

(Editor's note: Residents of Crombie Street and their supporters will gather this Sunday, May 20, from 5 to 6 p.m. for what's being described as a "peaceful protest and meditation in the Buddhist tradition," at the property Holyoke owns at 18 Crombie Street and the company's headquarters across the street. The neighborhood is also planning a block party for Friday, June 8 from 4 to 9 p.m.)

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Keeping house

Salem residents step up efforts to save the historic Wendt House — nonviolently, of course

The battle over Salem's Wendt House took a funky turn last Sunday, when the newly founded National Historic Crombie Street Neighborhood Association staged a nonviolent action in the Buddhist tradition. Their target? The perceived intransigence of Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company, which owns the home in question.

The Wendt House, which is located at 18 Crombie St., has long been a source of acrimony between Holyoke Mutual and the broader Salem community. Holyoke Mutual, whose headquarters are just across the street, bought the Wendt House 13 years ago. The company wants to tear down the house to expand an adjacent parking lot. Salem officials have refused to condemn the property as structurally unsafe, however, and demolition plans remain on hold.

Up to this point, HMI's legal challenges have been unsuccessful. But **Rob Wall** of the Crombie Street association, and **John Goff** of Historic Salem Incorporated, charge the company with practicing demolition by neglect — allowing the Wendt House to gradually deteriorate, since they can't actually tear it down.

"Holyoke has systematically and intentionally gone about letting it fall down, fall into ruin," Wall says. "[Holyoke] remains really intransigent. They won't come when summoned to meetings that the city councilors have asked them to come to, [but] the neighborhood comes. They just show a real arrogance and disrespect — I think believing, narrowly, that they're homeowners and they can do whatever they want with their house."

The stakes are fairly high. The Wendt House, which was built around 1770 and was moved to its Crombie Street location circa 1830, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building in the Crombie Street National Historic District. **William B. Pike**, a close friend of **Nathaniel Hawthorne** and **Franklin Pierce**, lived there; so did **Leonard** and **Ruffina Jefferson**, an African-American couple thought to have been conductors on the Underground Railroad.

Then there's the fact that the Wendt House belongs to an almost-vanished architectural category that's indigenous to Salem. As if all that weren't enough, the Wendt House is a stone's throw from the Crombie Street homeless shelter. Crombie Street residents



STAFF PHOTO BY MIKE MERGEN

Tim Jenkins sits with a giant sumo banner at last Sunday's protest at the Wendt House in Salem. The sumo is a symbol of 'power and controlled aggression,' says Jenkins.

contend that abandoned buildings and homeless persons are a risky combination, and cite the 1999 Worcester fire to support their argument.

On May 6, Wall and several other activists cleared overgrown vegetation from around the Wendt House and covered the first floor window coverings with bright white paint. Subsequently, in a letter dated May 16, Salem attorney **William Lundregan**, who represents Holyoke Mutual, accused the group of trespassing, malicious destruction of property, and theft (of the aforementioned vegetation). Lundregan

warned the recipients to stay away from the Wendt House and other Holyoke property, and suggested that legal action would be taken if they didn't.

That's the context in which the Buddhist nonviolent action took place. Before the event, Wall provided a written explanation of its rationale. "The purpose is to increase mindfulness and bring awareness to the larger process of what preserving this house and our neighborhood is all about," Wall wrote. "It is dedicated to and on behalf of our ancestors. They are our greatest teachers and because they are often unaware, suffer greatly by their slightest, destructive choices."

Under the watchful eye of a Salem police officer who said he was doing detail work for Holyoke, about 14 people showed up. They started with silent meditation, stayed in the zone for a slow walk around Holyoke's headquarters and the rest of the block, and closed with a bit more stationary meditation. Despite periodic exhortations and gong-ban from Wall, not everyone in the group seemed focused. While some participants looked mindful throughout, others sipped coffee and smoked clove cigarettes, or lounged casually with their arms folded behind their head.

The reaction of passers-by was mixed. One man who drove down Crombie Street looked irritated and another appeared curious. At one point, a disheveled man wearing an Orlando Magic baseball cap, a cut-off green T-shirt stating that "There's 1 and then there's all you losers," and paint-splattered pants walked up, watched for a while, and read the posted explanation of what was going on. "You guys oughta have me restore it," he said as he walked away. "I'm good at stuff like that! God bless."

It's hard to say if the nonviolent action actually increased the mindfulness of their adversaries at Holyoke Mutual (whose Web site, www.holyokemutual.com, plays up a hometown feel and touts the company's promise to fulfill its "corporate responsibility to the community"). Last Monday, Holyoke CEO **Doug Ryder** declined comment on the Wendt House, stating only that all inquiries should be directed to attorney Lundregan.

Lundregan, like Ryder, had nothing to say on the subject.

— Adam Rei

Effort to preserve 18 Crombie St. continues

Dear Editor:

On Saturday, May 5, Mayor Usovicz' annual cleanup took place. Many individuals and groups took part to show their pride in our city and to ensure that it was a cleaner and healthier place to live. Wherever there was debris and decay, you could find T-shirted team members attending to the improvement of those areas.

One of these locations was 18 Crombie St., which, until that day the owner had allowed to become surrounded by an overgrown, poorly maintained lot. It had become hazardous to the health and wellbeing of the neighborhood.

On that Saturday morning, to my surprise, I found a team of YMCA volunteers removing bags of debris, vegetation, broken bottles, etc. They worked very hard, and when I asked them who had instructed them to clean up this area, they responded that they were doing so at Mrs. Usovicz' request.

When they were done they had filled almost 10 bags, which were later picked up by city trucks. On behalf of the Crombie Street His-

torian Neighborhood Association, I would like to offer them our thanks for performing a thankless job.

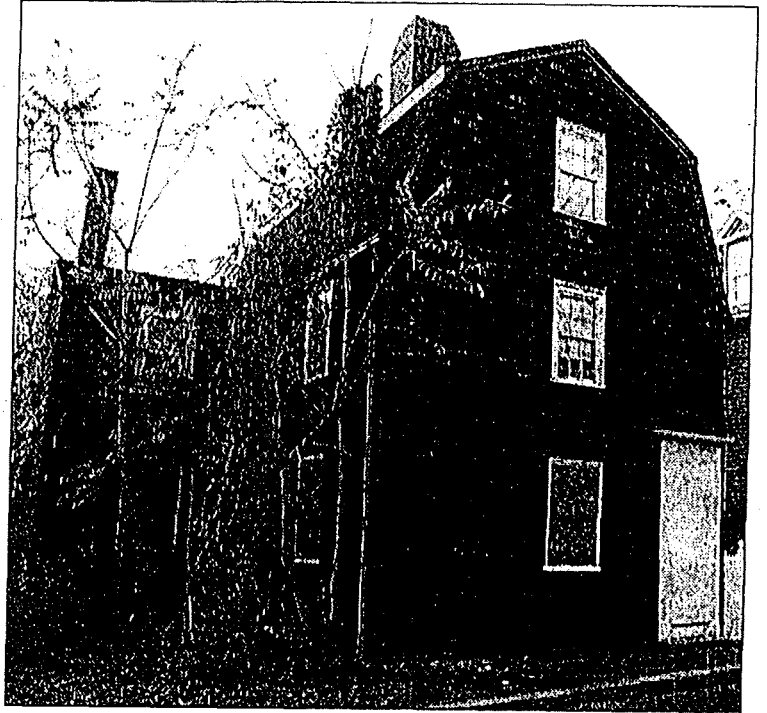
The next day many of the residents were thrilled to see what the mayor's wife and her team had accomplished. But there was still so much more to be done. It was too big of a job for one small team on one day.

Weeds, broken glass and compacted leaves were still everywhere. It smelled. It was unsanitary and it was becoming a neighborhood fire hazard due to the owner's neglect.

Not wanting to have the efforts of the mayor's cleanup team go to waste, our entire neighborhood responded to finish the job. It became a point of community pride to be involved in this effort.

For two hours the next day, all of the residents and children of Crombie Street, as well as others disgusted by the long-lasting dereliction of this property, supplied tools, paint and muscle power to finish the job.

Twenty-five more bags of debris were removed; including a disgusting collection of flammable underbrush, garbage, leaves and dirt saturated with bodily fluids as well as potentially dangerous sumac weeds which had grown to the size of trees, despoiling the brick sidewalk and foundation. The bare, rotted plywood boarding up the



18 Crombie St., owned by the Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company.

When it was all done you could see the pride on everyone's face. It is true that a police officer had to warn us that we were technically trespassing, but he declined to intervene further as he could see we were doing a good thing.

Our dilemma is this: When a property owner systematically and intentionally creates a safety and health hazard increasing the likelihood of fire and crime, decreasing property values and the quality of life, and furthermore flaunts and disrespects calls by the city and historic interests to repair the property; can thoughtful persons decide, without any vandalism nor breaking and entering, to take it upon themselves to improve the security and safety of the neighborhood by cleaning up the exterior? There are times when the effort to reduce crime and hazard in a neighborhood come into conflict with a property owner's intransigence.

Everyone was delighted that this blight on our neighborhood had been transformed. Everyone that is, except for one.

Just as we finished, a representative of the owner happened upon the scene and threatened to have us arrested for trespassing, describing the activities of the past two days as "vandalism." We were made to feel like criminals because of our efforts to improve the slum-like conditions created and endorsed by his company. Holyoke Insurance

sat unused and allowed to deteriorate for 14 years across the street from the city's homeless shelter.

In the past they have stated, through their attorney, that they would "allow the house to fall into disrepair until the city demanded that it be torn down." But recent inspections by the city engineer have found the structure to be sound and it can be restored.

Lastly, I would like the citizens of Salem to visit 18 Crombie Street and bear witness to the "vandalism" caused by members of our neighborhood. You will find a cleaned-up lot, a brick driveway that we found buried under debris, and newly painted boarded-up windows on a little brown house that witnessed the birth of our nation, 218 years ago.

You be the judge. Will Salem be better off with four more rental parking places or worse, perhaps a larger edifice; or should this historic survivor be allowed to be rebuilt and reach its fourth century? We have a plan by which this can happen and all of us, including the present owner, can come out ahead. Tell the mayor and City Council how you feel. Let 18 Crombie Street become your point of civic pride, as it is ours.

Robert B. Wall
Salem

(Editor's note: A "Save 18 Crombie St. block party," featuring music, food, and hay rides, will be

wellbeing of the neighborhood.

On that Saturday morning, to my surprise, I found a team of YMCA volunteers removing bags of debris, vegetation, broken bottles, etc. They worked very hard, and when I asked them who had instructed them to clean up this area, they responded that they were doing so at Mrs. Usovicz' request.

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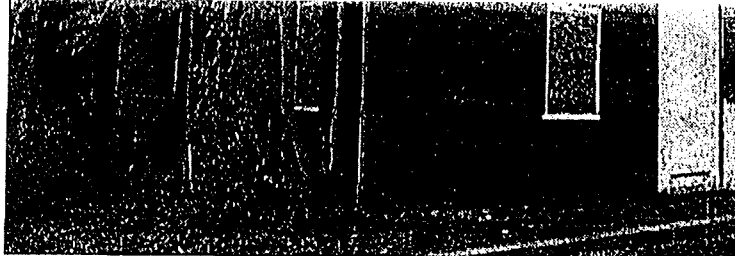
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Twenty-five more bags of debris were removed; including a disgusting collection of flammable underbrush, garbage, leaves and dirt saturated with bodily fluids as well as potentially dangerous sumac weeds which had grown to the size of trees despoiling the brick sidewalk and foundation. The bare, rotted plywood boarding up the windows was touched up with white paint; a new down spout was installed to prevent dangerous ice dams; and a new "18" was put on the front door so the Fire Department would know where to go if ever they were needed.



18 Crombie St., owned by the Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company.

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Just as we finished, a representative of the owner happened upon the scene and threatened to have us arrested for trespassing, describing the activities of the past two days as "vandalism." We were made to feel like criminals because of our efforts to improve the slum-like conditions created and endorsed by his company, Holyoke Insurance Company, in our neighborhood.

It is ironic that the company that owns the property keeps it in a condition that would never be insured by one of its competitors.

To make matters worse, what was a perfectly good structure has

sat unused and allowed to deteriorate for 14 years across the street from the city's homeless shelter.

In the past they have stated, through their attorney, that they would "allow the house to fall into disrepair until the city demanded that it be torn down." But recent inspections by the city engineer have found the structure to be sound and it can be restored.

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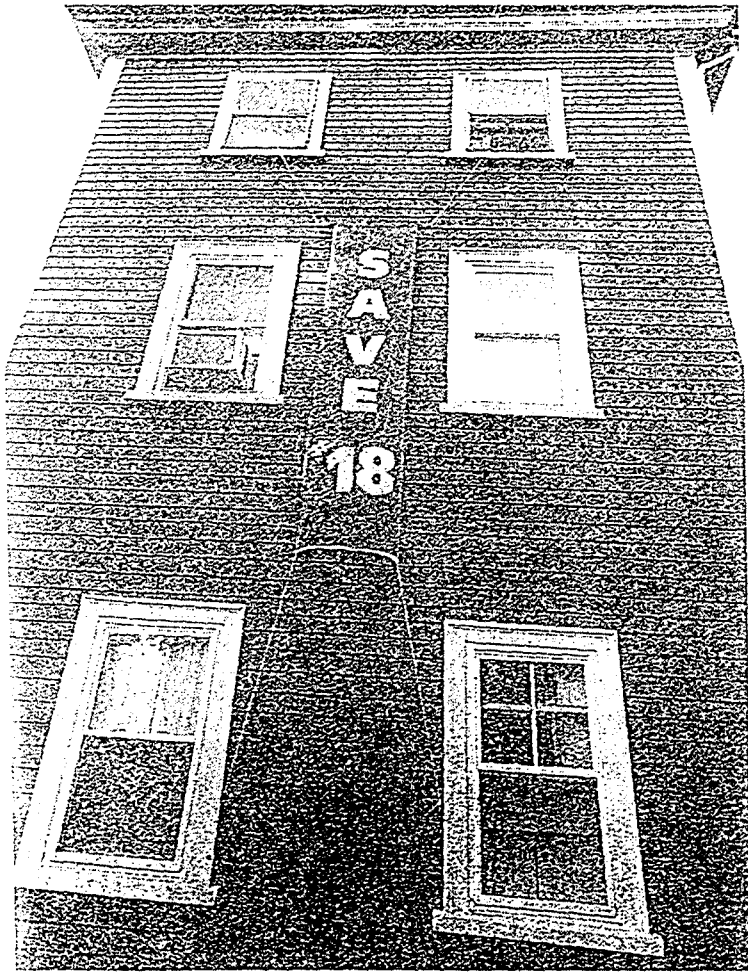
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Robert B. Wall
Salem

(Editor's note: A "Save 18 Crombie St. block party," featuring music, food, and hay rides, will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. today, sponsored by the Crombie Street National Historic District Association. Attendees are requested to bring a pot luck contribution. More information can be obtained by calling 978-745-3806 or 978-744-2654.)

Noteworthy

LISA CAPONE



GLOBE STAFF PHOTOS/EVAN RICHMAN

Neighbors (above) protest an insurance company's plan to raze the Wendt house, 18 Crombie St. in Salem. At left, a detail of the building, with local sentiments expressed on a banner.

had also ordered a larger recycling container for glass and paper that will be installed at Mount Hood, the city-owned golf course, which includes a restaurant.

District. According to **William J. Lundregan**, Holyoke's lawyer, the company had originally planned to refurbish the home — which residents say played host to **Nathaniel Hawthorne** — as work

Holyoke's offices, a gas station, and a small strip mall. Residents point out that the vacant house is also across the street from a homeless shelter.

The Salem City Council president, **Joan Lovely**, whose district includes Crombie Street, said that Building Commissioner **Peter Strout** told her recently that he didn't believe the city would have reason to condemn the house for another dozen years. Concerned

small gambrel-roofed house was built around 1780 and was moved to its current location about 150 years ago. Past owners have included **William Pike**, a friend of both Hawthorne and President **Franklin Pierce**, and former slaves who may have used it as a stop on the Underground Railroad, they said. Historic Salem, Inc. placed the house on its "most endangered" historic properties

rehabilitating it for low-income first-time home buyers, but Ryder wasn't interested in seeing the home refurbished in its current location.

Lundregan said the public debate over 18 Crombie St. often overlooks "how important a cog Holyoke is in the life of the community." The company's 150-year history in Salem has been marked

includes a restaurant.

Wendt House future is still in dispute

A long-standing dispute between a Salem insurance company and a group of Salem residents is headed for a new chapter. City officials are considering a range of legislative, regulatory, and perhaps legal avenues for compelling the company to maintain an 18th-century home that it wants to raze.

In 1988, Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co. bought the so-called Wendt House at 18 Crombie St., one of six buildings that comprise the Crombie National Historic

district home — which residents say played host to Nathaniel Hawthorne — as work space for visiting salesmen.

When the firm found renovation costs “economically unfeasible,” Lundregan said, it moved to demolish the house, but was blocked by the Salem Redevelopment Authority. The company appealed, but lost in Essex Superior Court.

Crombie Street residents fear that the company is neglecting the empty, boarded-up property until the city is forced to condemn it and to allow its demolition, paving the way for more commercial development in a residential enclave already invaded by asphalt. The neighborhood is flanked by

didn't believe the city would have reason to condemn the house for another dozen years. Concerned that the house shouldn't just rot in the meantime, Lovely said the council has asked City Solicitor John Keenan to “look into” drafting an ordinance prohibiting owners from neglecting their property. She said proponents would “start pushing the issue” at the end of the summer.

“We're still looking at that and, actually, we are also looking at some other options regarding that property on Crombie Street, including Board of Health enforcement and other issues through the building inspector,” said Keenan, adding that the city might again “end up in litigation” with Holyoke Mutual. “It's a priority of the city. We are taking a look at it and hopefully within the next couple of months we'll be able to take some action on it.”

That could bring relief to the newly formed Crombie Street National Historic District Neighborhood Association, which manned a cleanup of the property in May that netted 40 bags of weeds and trash. Lundregan subsequently slapped the residents with a no-trespass order that threatened legal action if they entered the property again. Association members also held a June “block party” to draw attention to the issue, and have gathered on Sunday evenings for several weeks for “silent vigil protests.”

According to several Crombie Street residents, including Ruth and Robert Wall and David Pelletier, and John Goff and Tim Jenkins of Historic Salem, Inc., the

road, they said. Historic Salem, Inc. placed the house on its “most endangered” historic properties list last year, said Goff, the group's executive director, and the Salem Historical Commission petitioned Historic Massachusetts, Inc. in May to place the home on its most endangered historic resources list, as well.

Holyoke Mutual disputes the home's historical significance, Lundregan said, but has nonetheless offered to move it for free for a nonprofit group willing to put it elsewhere. That “perfect compromise,” he said, would preserve the house and allow Holyoke to retain the lot — part of which already is paved for parking.

“Holyoke has no plans” to expand, “but if they did it would be nice to have a square lot,” he said, noting that Holyoke owns an adjacent lot.

Residents say that moving the house, like tearing it down, would sap the integrity of the neighborhood.

“It's the devaluing and the ignoring of history for something that's commercial. Expansion could put a building in that spot that's the same size as the one across the street,” Wall said. “I don't see moving the house in order to square the lot to put in a six- or seven-story building to be a compromise.”

Lundregan also suggested that neighborhood residents “could get together and make an offer” to buy the house. Salem Harbor's Community Development Corp. executive director, Jim Haskell, said he had spoken with the company president, Douglas Ryder, about acquiring the property and

Holyoke is in the line of the community.” The company's 150-year history in Salem has been noted by contributions to several community organizations, including Salem Hospital and the YMCA, he said.

Middleton library gains on growth

The long-awaited expansion of Middleton's Flint Public Library cleared an important hurdle last month, when a state agency approved the library's proposal for a \$2.4 million grant that would cover about 40 percent of the project's cost.

Middleton residents are expected to vote on funding the \$6.88 million project at a special Town Meeting in November, according to library director Adele Carter. The state's share, approved June 7 by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, is dependent on the Legislature's passage of a \$75 million bond proposal for library projects and subsequent appropriation of Middleton's funds, Carter said. She said private fund-raising would offset the amount funded by local taxpayers.

The construction would be the library's first expansion since a 1980 renovation that converted the building's basement into a community/children's room. The building, which still occupies the same 5,000 square foot footprint as when it was built in 1891, would grow to just over 20,000 square feet, she said. Library officials hope to have a final design in place within a year and break ground by early 2008, Carter said.

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Student of a polar-bear legacy

By Diana Brown
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

male polar bears in captivity in North America. He weighed most of his sculptures to the Peabody Li-

number of alleged victims of the dog.

The lawsuit, which alleges negligence and assault by Gonyea, said the dog was allowed to roam "freely and unleashed" when it attacked Vasquez on June 5, leaving him with permanently disfiguring injuries. Vasquez was visiting Gonyea at the time.

Vasquez's lawyer, Jeremiah Joyce of Salem.

Six days later, on June 11, the suit alleges, Gonyea went to Vasquez's home with Floyd and "verbally threatened to unleash his dog on the plaintiff as the dog barked, growled and pulled on its leash in the direction of the plaintiff," putting Vasquez (and two

attorney to prepare a lawsuit against him, according to the complaint and Vasquez's attorney.

Joyce said Vasquez will require ongoing medical care, including more surgery to try to repair the damage to his lip.

The lawsuit seeks compensation for Vasquez's medical costs as well as damages for the emotional distress.

DOG, page A10

The cruiser was moving at a "very low" rate of speed, possibly 2 to 3 mph, when the elderly man "came in contact" with the cruiser, Carney said.

Many officers routinely park their cruisers and visit businesses located in the plaza in the course of patrolling their beat, police said. There are numerous shops in the plaza, including Dunkin' Donuts,

Anyone could have been driving the car."

Marblehead police called in specially trained state troopers to help investigate. Keating said the call was made largely because the accident involved a local police cruiser and serious injuries to a pedestrian.

"We didn't want any appearance of non-objectivity," she said.

SALEM EVENING NEWS 7/27/01

hopeful of th intact

keep his pledge to reconsider his redistricting plan, allowing both Democratic incumbents to keep the cores of their districts.

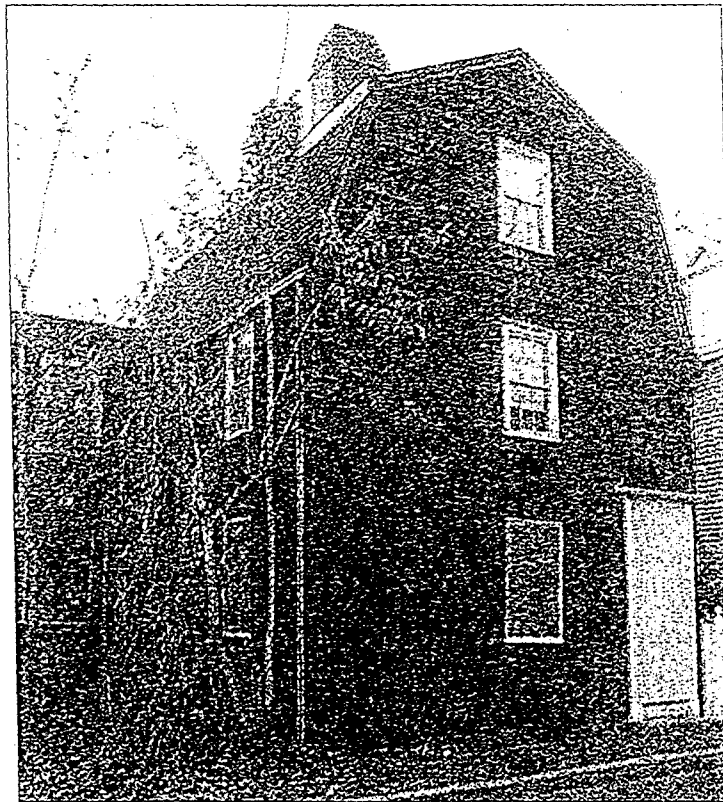
"I'm hoping that (Meehan's decision) provides an opportunity to revisit the issue and craft a district for each of the incumbent congressmen and, more importantly, recognize the common interests that exist in the 6th (Congressional District) now and have existed for 200 years," Tierney, of Salem, said in an interview yesterday.

"I think we should take (Finneran) at his word."

Finneran's redistricting plan sparked many on the North Shore by taking Lynn from Tierney in the 6th and replacing the city with four Merrimack Valley communities from Meehan's 5th, including Meehan's hometown of Lowell.

Critics say the plan, which Finneran released July 11, would
TIERNEY, page A10

Salem moves to save 18th century house



The building at 18 Crombie St. in Salem.

By DAVE GERSHMAN
News staff

SALEM — Saying they're sick of watching an abandoned, 18th-century home rot away, city councilors are turning up the heat dramatically on its powerful owner.

City Council President Joan Lovely has asked her colleagues to formally request the Salem Redevelopment Authority to take the property by eminent domain.

Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co. bought the home at 18 Crombie St. about 12 years ago. It has been empty ever since.

"They're just going to let it rot into the ground," Lovely said. "And we're not going to let them do it."

The home's historical significance is in dispute. But neighbors want it saved, brought back to life and sold to someone who will maintain it.

They want the company to abandon its previous plan to knock down the house and put in a parking lot. The city has successfully blocked that plan in

court, but the result has been a stalemate.

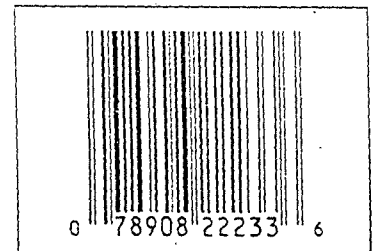
Critics say the company has switched to more a long-term strategy of demolition by neglect — letting the house deteriorate until the city has no choice but to allow it to be demolished.

Lovely wants to send the company a message: It's time to listen to the neighbors.

"It's a very unique little neighborhood, it's a very strong neighborhood," Lovely said. "They deserve the same rights as the other historic neighborhoods, or any neighborhood, for that matter."

Lovely's request was welcomed by neighbors, who have staged peaceful demonstrations outside

CROMBIE, page A10



Meanwhile, lawmakers from the

likely be an important factor when

table, something has to go... something is going to have to give."

SEN 7/27/01

Crombie: City moves to save house

Continued from page A1

the house and hung banners on surrounding homes.

"We're thrilled," said Ruth Wall, who lives next door. "But I know it's just the beginning of a long fight."

Lovely's request came in the form of an order she sponsored at Thursday's City Council meeting, and it received some support from her colleagues.

The order was sent to the Committee on Community and Economic Development. Privately, some acknowledge that taking a building by eminent domain would be a drastic step and should be used in the event that all other remedies have failed.

City Solicitor John Keenan is reviewing some of those options. Some cities have passed laws prohibiting owners from neglecting maintenance of their buildings, for example.

"There's actually a lot of options out there that we're trying to take a look at," Keenan said.

Keenan expects to share information with city councilors by the time they take up discussion of

"There's actually a lot of options out there that we're trying to take a look at."

—City Solicitor John Keenan

Lovely's request this September, after their summer recess is over.

"Certainly, I would expect that in the early fall we'd be taking some additional action," Keenan said.

Lovely's request hinges on the inclusion of Crombie Street in one of two city zones that fall under the jurisdiction of the Redevelopment Authority. Though the agency lacks the budget and muscle it had in the 1970s, it has been growing in importance in recent years.

Mayor Stanley Usovicz, for instance, sought to revive the SRA to redevelop the long-dormant former police station. The SRA is now working with a local developer on plans for a hotel at the site.

Tim Jenkins, a local preserva-

tionist and member of Historic Salem Inc., has researched the issue and believes the SRA does have the power to wrest control of the Crombie Street property away from Holyoke Insurance. The SRA's mission is to preserve and enhance the viability of the city's downtown, Jenkins notes, and it can step in when a property is not being kept up.

"It had the power," Jenkins said. "It's actually exercised that power as well in the past. And it's all codified in the enabling legislation. If the city chooses to do that, it has the option."

What the city eventually does may depend on Holyoke. So far, the company has not responded to requests by neighbors and city officials to discuss the status of the property.

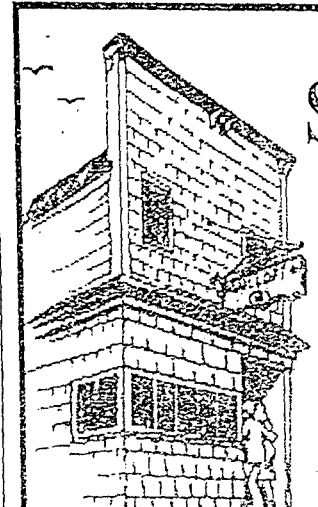
This week, the silence continued. Douglas Ryder, the company president, referred all comment to the company's attorney, William Lundregan, who did not return a phone call.

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SA... The B... Ki... Wee... "Cl... boiled to corn on the baked stuff... 15 Sta

Beaches: Big boats eyed

Continued from page A1

slick of raw waste surrounded his boat. According to his report, he could not determine which, if any of those two large vessels, had illegally discharged the raw waste in the harbor.

At an emergency meeting of the City Council yesterday, city officials shared some of the same con-

There are concerns some boaters do not wait until they're three miles outside the harbor to dump their waste. "We have some concerns

WINE & DINING guide

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votes from people confusing him with the current or former district attorneys.

And Grundy's late start tests two pieces of conventional wisdom: that he got in too late, and that he will get a boost from the notoriety of the Greineder case.

The Essex County clerk of courts, Thomas H. Driscoll Jr., said it would be a challenge for Grundy to catch up to Blodgett, who has been campaigning since

port of Suffolk County District Attorney Ralph L. Martin Jr.

Grundy is only now putting his team in place and making a serious quest for funds and support.

"There is still time" for Grundy to become competitive, Driscoll said. But he said Blodgett and Burke "are really organized . . . I hear more and more people talking about Blodgett vs. Burke. People are starting to identify with who's running. So it's time to step

BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE 7/29/01

Salem council directs Crombie to be taken

Update SALEM — Before recessing until September, the Salem City Council last month referred to its Committee on Community and Economic Development an order requesting the Salem Redevelopment Authority take by eminent domain an 18th-century home owned by Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company.

The July 19 order, which cites "continued neglect of the property by its owner," was offered by City Council President Joan Lovely, said Assistant City Clerk Cheryl LaPoint. Lovely's ward includes 18 Crombie Street, a house that neighbors want to preserve for its historic significance, but which

Holyoke would like to demolish or move to square a lot for possible future development.

The council is not scheduled to meet again until Sept. 13, LaPoint said. According to City Solicitor John Keenan, his office is considering a range of options regarding the so-called Wendt House, including an earlier City Council request to draft an ordinance prohibiting owners from neglecting their properties. Crombie Street neighbors fear Holyoke is neglecting the house until the city is forced to condemn it and allow its demolition.

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SEN 7/30/01

Powers of eminent domain: Crombie Street

It would be an unfortunate turn of events indeed if Salem officials had to resort to eminent domain proceedings in order to prevent demolition of the house at 18 Crombie Street.

While historians can argue about the true significance of the 18th century structure itself, there's no questioning the fact that it is an important part of what is the last residential neighborhood within the city's central business district.

Certainly there's been a revival of residential uses downtown in recent years which has brought new energy to the area. But these dwelling units are located primarily in renovated or newly constructed edifices. Of traditional streetscapes with a church and homes intended for a family or two, there's but one left within the area roughly bounded by Rt. 114, New Derby Street, Hawthorne Boulevard and Bridge Street — Crombie Street.

It's an anachronism to be sure, with a White Hen Pantry at one end and a parking lot at the other. But that part of it's charm, and the minute or so it takes to walk it's length is a journey back into another era.

Yet the Holyoke Insurance Co., which is seemingly oblivious to the black eye this dispute has given it, seems determined to allow the vacant 18 Crombie St. house to deteriorate to the point it must be taken down. And for what purpose? So it can install a parking lot capable of accommodating a few more cars across from its headquarters in Holyoke Square.

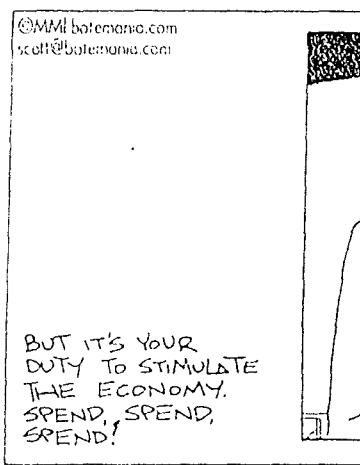
Residents of Crombie Street have been ordered off the property when they have tried to remove some of the debris or otherwise improve the exterior of the place. But they have been gratified by the support they've received in other quarters of the city in their effort to force Holyoke to do something other than tear the place down.

Now the City Council has a chance to take this fight to another level as a result of Ward 3 Councilor Joan Lovely's proposal last week that it request the Salem Redevelopment Authority to take the property by eminent domain.

Granted, this is a rather extreme measure which will be subject to further review by the council's Committee of Community and Economic Development before coming to the floor for a vote. But in our mind, the preservation of a unique neighborhood such as this is worthy of this radical move.

Holyoke, despite the intransigence and indifference it has displayed to this point, can still emerge a hero by doing the right thing. If company officials choose not to, the council and SRA should do it for them.

The Trovas case



Letters to the editor

Lynn should

To the Editor:
Although I was in Washington for votes in the House last Monday, I have heard and read numerous accounts of the rally at Lynn City Hall in support of keeping Lynn united with other North Shore communities within the 6th Congressional District.

It is easy to see why people are so proud to live and work in this area and why we all recognize the strong community bonds that cut across all of the North Shore's cities and towns. The several hundred people who attended the rally, representing so many different neighborhoods and organizations, sent a powerful message about the

Missile defense

To the Editor:
The national missile defense program is senseless, expensive, and highly dangerous. It is unproven. The July 14 "successful" missile defense test was only the second success out of four such tests and did little to reflect reality.

It is outrageously expensive. Bush's \$8.3 billion request for "Star Wars" next year (a 57 percent increase) will siphon billions from domestic and environmental programs.

Most importantly, the program threatens global security by

State plight of race

To the Editor:
I am writing this letter to alert

o send lucky Buffett fans ert, help Special Olympics



News staff photo/Jonathon M. Whitmore

Members of the Parrothead Club of Eastern Massachusetts, Mark Donnelly, left, and Jonathan Reardon are helping to raise money for the Special Olympics by auctioning off tickets to see Jimmy Buffett.

Crombie Street highlights cause by using a cool idea

By **DAVE GERSHMAN**
News staff

SALEM — Here's what's going on in Salem neighborhoods this week:

Crombie Street

A dozen people marched in the Heritage Days Parade on Sunday, holding banners and accompanying a float, to call attention to the abandoned house at 18 Crombie St. And they hit on a novel idea to raise support among the spectators. They gave out "Save No. 18" fans.

"Everybody wanted a fan because it was so hot," said Miranda Wall, 17, who marched. "You turned back and you could see all these fans."

Many of the participants are members of the newly formed Crombie Street Historic Neighborhood Association. Others live elsewhere but are supporters of the cause.

The float fit in well with the theme of the parade, which was "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." It featured a replica of the small 18th century house, surrounded by flowers.

Multi-colored flags hung on either side. Three children, Amore Douglas, 3, Alexander Pelletier, 7, and Daniel Wall, 15, marched in front of the float holding a banner.

The house was bought by Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co., more than a



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

dozen years ago. Initially, the company wanted to restore it for use as a conference center but switched gears and sought to knock it down for parking. The city successfully blocked those plans, leading to a stand-off.

The neighbors fear the house will deteriorate to such an extent that the city will have no choice but to allow it to be demolished.

Salem Common

The Salem Common Neighborhood Association wants to hear from members and non-members about issues or concerns that are important to the neighborhood.

Contact the group by Sept. 15 by writing to SCNA at P.O. Box 8608, Salem, Mass. 01970, or e-mailing the group at SCNA@mail.com.

Cleanup news

Today marks the beginning of a new city effort, dubbed "Clean it or lien it."

A group of inmates from the Essex County Sheriff's Department, supervised by city staff, will remove litter, debris and overgrown vegetation from several vacant properties on Bridge Street.

Last week, Mayor Stanley Usovich announced the new effort, which is designed to improve the appearance of vacant lots. The cooperation of the Essex County Sheriff's Department makes it economical, he said.

Right now, private landowners are receiving letters making them aware they are responsible for the appearance of their lots. They have 30 days to clean up their properties, or the city will have the inmates do it for them and attach any costs as a lien on the deeds to the properties.

Today's work focuses on publicly-owned properties because the city obtained permission to do the work more quickly. The MBTA and state owns several parcels along Bridge Street.

The mayor's top aide, Tom Philbin, said about 30 inmates will be working today with two lawn mowers, 4 weed whackers, 16 hedge pruners, rakes and brooms, and one wood chipper. The inmates will be back to finish this part of the job on Thursday.



Welcome to
SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS
The City Guide

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Crombie Street Historic District

Listed on the **National Register of Historic Places** since 1983, this small district includes the following properties: 7 - 15 Crombie Street, 16-18 Crombie Street, and 13 Barton Street. It is on the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation.



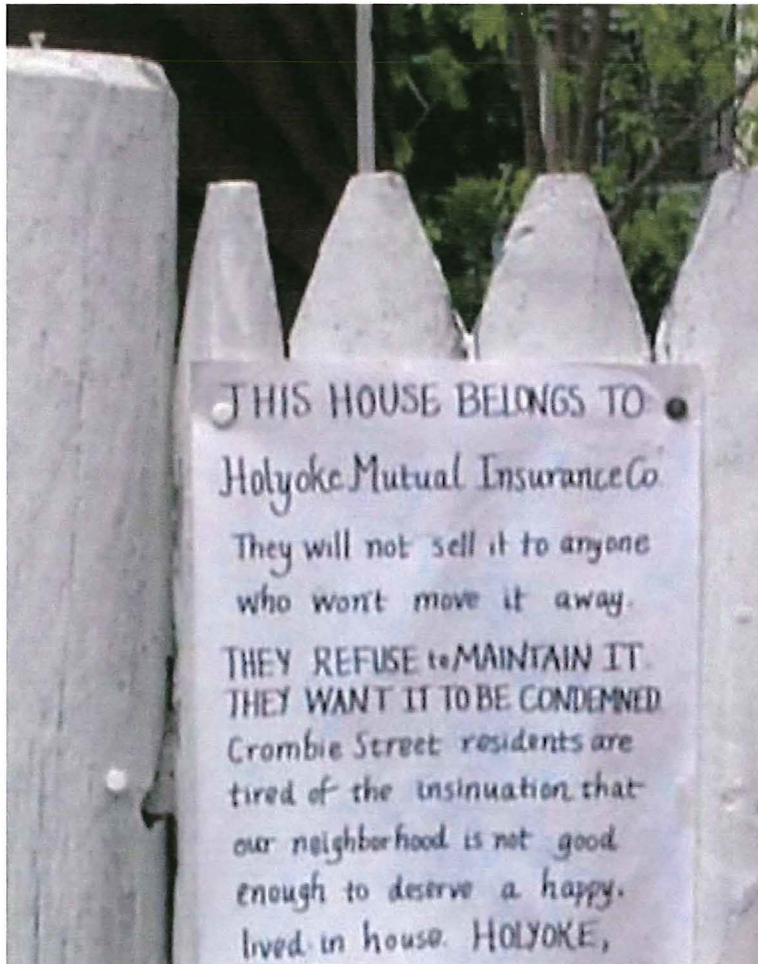
The Street was laid out by Benjamin Crombie in 1805 and this district is what remains of the extensive residential areas that surrounded downtown, after the urban renewal programs of the 1960's and '70's. This residential district sits between Essex Street and Norman Street, in the heart of downtown Salem, and it is home to a church and a number of families.

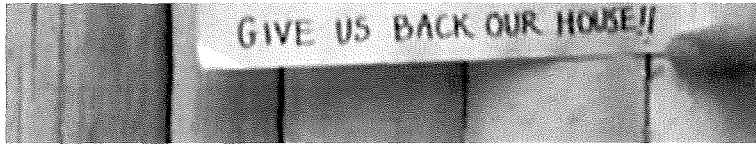


The Wendt House, 18 Crombie Street, c. 1783, is currently vacant and threatened with demolition by neglect. Once the home of a friend of Nathaniel Hawthorne, this little brown house has been called "home" by many different people for two centuries. This house has a very interesting history. Last year, the house was nominated to **Historic Salem, Inc.'s Most Endangered Historic Resources List**.



The residents and neighbors of the district are working hard to save the little brown house. It has been the topic of discussion on the SalemWeb **Message Board** in the Community Issues/Holyoke Mutual section. **Here's what you can do to help!**





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Last Updated August 2001



NATIONAL TRUST
for HISTORIC PRESERVATION™

May 16, 2003

John Goff
Historic Salem, Inc.
P.O. Box 865
Salem, MA 01970

Dear John Goff:

On May 29, the National Trust for Historic Preservation will release its 2003 list of *America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places*. As always, the selection is very difficult because every site is well deserving and in need of attention. I am sorry to inform you that we were unable to put **Wendt House** on the list this year.

We appreciate your efforts in submitting an entry and keeping us abreast of developments throughout the selection process. We encourage you to explore other avenues to resolve the threat or bring some assistance to your site. Please refer to the National Trust's Web site at www.nationaltrust.org/help for information regarding the National Trust's grant and loan programs, which have assisted thousands of innovative preservation projects that protect the continuity, diversity, and beauty of our communities.

We also encourage you to contact our regional offices, also listed on the National Trust Web site, to keep them apprised of your situation. They can put you in contact with the appropriate statewide organization if you haven't done so already. You may also want to visit the Web site of the National Council of State Historical Preservation Organizations (SHPO) at www.sso.org/ncshpo. A complete and up-to-date list of SHPOs is readily available from that site.

While we hope that each and every site is saved, we also know the reality of preservation efforts. If your site is still endangered next year, we encourage you to re-nominate it. Nomination forms for 2004 will be available this fall and the deadline will be in early January 2004.

Thank you for your interest and support. Please feel free to contact our Communications Office at 202-588-6141 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Beth Newburger
Director of Communications

Protecting the Irreplaceable



18 Crombie
- poss. dems. see attached

street in America. McIntire designed two buildings here, Hamilton Hall (9 Chestnut Street, 1805-1807) and the Hodges House (12 Chestnut St., 1805), but the fine detailing and consistency of excellent design in the remaining Federal houses on the street leaves little doubt that they are the work of master builders, as well. The district also contains significant structures of the later 19th century, for instance the First Unitarian Church (316 Essex Street, 1833-36), the Salem Public Library (370 Essex St., 1850), and Greymoor (329 Essex St., 1871/72), Salem's most elaborate example and high Victorian Italianate domestic architecture.

Crombie Street Historic District

The Crombie Street District is composed of the eight remaining buildings of this downtown residential enclave. The district includes a cross-section of residential buildings from various periods of development, along with a church building originally built as a theater. The boundaries include the six buildings that face Crombie Street and the two buildings at the west end of Barton Square, adjacent to Crombie Street on the west.

Crombie Street was laid out in 1805 by Benjamin Crombie, proprietor of a tavern called the Sign of the Ship, that stood on Essex Street east of his new street. Between 1805 and 1815, Crombie sold four house lots behind his tavern, as well as narrow strips of frontage on the street to three other landholders to the west. Only two of the houses standing today were built before Crombie sold the remaining property in 1819, but the district is shown intact on the 1851 map of the city.

As the only surviving downtown residential group from the early 19th century, the houses on Crombie Street provide important information about the character of the city at that time. All the buildings directly abut the sidewalk, suggesting high density, but placement on the lots is irregular, creating a rural atmosphere. Wood is the dominant material, although the Crombie Street Church and the Bowker House (9 Crombie Street) are brick, as is the Prince house (267-273 Essex St., not in the district), which predates Crombie's activity.

While architectural quality within the district is variable, three buildings clustered at its north end are all individually noteworthy. The Crombie Street Church built as a theater in 1828, is the architectural highlight of the district. The monumental relieving arches of the facade define its composition and suggest the Federal style, but the panelled detailing of the broad piers separating these arches, introduce a newer Greek Revival influence.

Neighboring the church stands the substantial Bowker House, built in the Federal style around 1810, and modernized by overlaid brownstone trimmings in 1860. The hybrid design is very successful, reinforcing the central importance of this house to the district. The Pierson House (13 Barton Square) is an unusually graceful vernacular Italianate residence, typical of the houses that lined Barton Square in the mid-19th century.

Derby Waterfront Historic District

The Derby Waterfront Historic District is located in Salem's Waterfront area and includes both sides of Derby Street between Herbert Street to Block House Square, and the streets to the south of Derby Street from the Salem Maritime National Historic Site to Blaney Street.

Buildings of the Federal period predominate in this densely settled area; although a number of structures are of the eighteenth, late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and three properties date as far back as the seventeenth century. Whereas most of the buildings are clapboard, there are also some outstanding examples of brick construction.

The development of the area is closely tied to the history of the nearby wharves which began in

18 Crombie St**Historic Salem, Incorporated**

From: rory goff <rorygoff@hotmail.com>
To: <nbenton@ecnews.com>
Cc: <hsi@nii.net>; <rorygoff@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2001 4:45 AM

January 22, 2001

Editor
Salem Evening News
155 Washington Street
Salem, MA 01970

CROMBIE STREET HOUSE HAS REMARKABLE HISTORY

To the Editor:

I was pleased to read that "Neighbors Hope to Save Neglected Historic Home" [Salem Evening News, January 19, 2001, page 1] and that you concluded "The house at 18 Crombie Street is an important part of this streetscape which ought to be preserved." [Editorial, December 19, 2000]. When the local building inspector says he sees no reason to destroy a perfectly good antique house -- and common sense also suggests it can be repaired and restored -- one wonders why Holyoke Mutual Insurance Company of Salem believes this "Most Endangered Historic Resource" must be demolished.

I believe there is a simple explanation for Holyoke's stance. They were seriously misled by a local "consultant" who proposed that "There is no redeeming historic value associated with the tenancy or the residence per se" in an Overview Study prepared in 1990. This "consultant" further proposed that "During the entire 160 year history of 18 Crombie Street's existence, there has not been a major historically significant tenancy." Through a simple matter of bad scholarship, Holyoke Insurance was led over 10 years ago to categorically dismiss a number of historical associations which potentially make this property Individually Eligible for Listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

I refer of course to the property's early ownership by the First Church of Salem; its early ownership by Samuel Curwen, the famed Salem Loyalist who built the Bowditch House; its early associations with Benjamin Crombie who ran the Sign of the Ship tavern at the head of Crombie Street; as well as its important early occupancies and associations with Prince Farmer, William B. Pike, Dr. Shadrach M. Cate, and Leonard J. & Rufina M. Jefferson.

William Pike's portrait hangs in the Peabody-Essex Museum; he is best remembered as a U.S. Customs Collector both for Boston and for Salem. He was a personal friend of U.S. President Franklin Pierce and of Nathaniel

Hawthorne -- Salem's most famous author. Dr. Cate was a distinguished 19th-century Salem physician, and a founder of the Swedenborgian Church in Salem.

Prince Farmer and the Jeffersons are particularly important to remember while we celebrate January as Black History Month here in America. Prince Farmer was one of Salem's early Blacks who was recently recognized in the Salem Afro-American Heritage Trail booklet published by the National Park Service. A cook aboard the ship GEORGE, and an oyster retailer by Old Town Hall, Mr. Farmer was on the building committee of Salem's first church erected for Blacks, and was a close associate of many 19th-century Abolitionists, including the famed Remonds of Salem. The Jeffersons were also strong advocates for civil rights and Black equality in Salem's formative years. They were probably "conductors" or associates on the "shoreline" branch of the Underground Railroad which carried Southern slaves to Freedom in the North.

For further documentation of all these facts, I refer you to the Essex County Registry of Deeds, and to a 20-page report which I prepared on 18 Crombie Street in July 1990, which was reproduced as "Attachment A" in the 1990 Overview Study. This document has been public record since Holyoke applied to the City for permission to raze the house. Additional supporting material on Salem's Black History was compiled by the National Park Service, and information on the Salem Underground Railroad was compiled by the late Miss Eleanor Broadhead.

The facts speak very well for themselves. This lovely little building is a unique and most-important Salem historic landmark, which should be repaired and restored immediately upon its ancient site to improve its blighted neighborhood and downtown Salem. Thank you for supporting us in these recognitions.

Sincerely,

Rory Goff
Merrymeeting Archives
Saco, Maine

(1990 historic house researcher for Historic Salem, Inc.)

**Underground Railroad Initiative
Meeting Notes
January 17, 2001**

Attendance: Deb Benvie, Dr. Gloria Bowens, Barbara Brown, Anne Check, Peter deGrandpre, Ellen DiGeronimo, Jennifer Gaudio, Meridy Giles, Merrill Kohlhofer, Peter Laraba, Frank Luz, Joe Makkers, Solange Marchand, Mr. & Mrs. Roger Parker, Pam Peterson, Dori Phillips, Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Ruggles, Bonnie Smith, Louise Sandberg, Glenn Steen-Johnson, Nancy TenBroeck, Rae Emerson, Tina Cross, Bruce Jones

The public response was incredible, as a record twenty- three people attended the meeting! Rae welcomed the group, gave an overview of the project, and turned the proceedings over to Bruce and Tina.

Bruce apologized for not having enough info folders for everyone and went over the contents. He gave a short description of how the Underground Railroad Initiative was organized within the National Park Service, and stated we didn't yet know what our final product will be (a brochure, a map, bibliography, presentation, etc.) and welcomed everyone's input.

Tina asked the gathering to offer any information they might have about the Underground Railroad, or ask questions concerning the topic.

The attached listing covers much of what was discussed during the next hour.

Note that several research sources were identified and listed. Thanks to Pat Durkee, Bruce and Tina will contact Salem resident Margaret Hill to arrange for an interview concerning her families' 4 generations in Salem and her Grandfather who was a slave.

Also attached for your information is a copy of an October 8, 1999, New York Times article concerning Nova Scotia Blacks with historical connections to the American Revolution and the Underground Railroad. This article was provided courtesy of Bonnie Smith.

There was also enthusiastic support by group members to contribute towards an exhibit on Essex National Heritage Area Underground Railroad/Abolitionist activity in the Visitor Center for Black History Month.

An open house will be announced once the exhibit is installed and all attendees to the UGRR meetings, along with the public, will be invited.

Next meeting: March 14, 2001 at 7:00 p.m. in the Salem Regional Visitor Center.

January 17, 2001 UGRR Meeting Notes

Locations identified by attendees to be researched for documentation of UGRR activity:

26 or 27 Beckford St., Salem - way station
House of the Seven Gables, Salem - hidden Staircase
Chestnut St., Salem - two houses, address unknown
Rockaway St., Marblehead - tunnel to harbor
Old North Church, Stacy St., Marblehead - attic hiding place
Training Field Ground, off of Washington St., Marblehead - grave sites of runaway slaves
11 Hewitt St., Marblehead - hidden staircase
Hearth and Eagle house, Franklin St., Marblehead - way station
Asa Orne House, Orne St., Marblehead - hidden staircase

Research sources identified:

Margaret Hill, Salem - African American Octogenarian; 4 generations in Salem
William Bowditch records - abolitionist
"The Liberator"
Free Baptist Church records, Lawrence
Essex County Anti Slave Society minutes
WEB: Dred Scott
Marblehead Historic Society: "History of Where I Live school project -
Story describes hidden cupboard
Park Service of Canada: Nova Scotia
Levy Coffin diary
Ship hopping records
North side Stories: Book of interviews with freed slaves in Canada
Quilts
Local newspapers throughout ENHA
Haverhill Historic Society: Archives and Collections

February Visitor Center Exhibit Contributors:

Lynn Museum: Abolitionists in Lynn
Dr. Bowens: Quilts
H7G: Excerpt of abolitionist/slave experience
Greater Lawrence UGRR Committee: Greater Lawrence UGRR Exhibit
Marblehead Historic Society: photographs of Dodge family
Pat Durkee, 2 Andover St., Salem: copy of family will showing slave ownership

NY Times Oct. 2, 1999

For Nova Scotia Blacks, Veil Is Ripped From Past

By JAMES BROOKE

BIRCHTOWN, Nova Scotia — As a mechanic with the Canadian Air Force, Everett S. Cromwell traveled the world. But as a black man born in Nova Scotia, the wind-blown Atlantic province typically associated with Gaelic cod fishermen, he recalled, "I never had a clue where we actually came from."

The mystery lifted when investigators from a new provincial black history project showed him the "Book of Negroes" — a list of African-Americans who had escaped slavery to fight with the British during the American Revolution. On the list, prepared because George Washington demanded British compensation for lost slaves, he said, "We discovered that Cromwells, our ancestors, disembarked here."

This tiny village, where Mr. Cromwell now routinely strolls along a quiet cove, was once the largest settlement of free blacks outside of Africa. A boomtown in the late 18th century, it was named after Samuel Birch, a British general. He issued "Birch Certificates," the prized traveling papers that allowed black men and women to escape New York City to freedom in Nova Scotia.

After two centuries of neglect bordering on denial, Nova Scotia now is unearthing its black history. In Halifax, a 250-year-old city dotted with museums celebrating white colonial history, Nova Scotia Museum researchers won a \$114,000 federal grant to research black history. A black history slide show has toured traditionally black communities. "Loyalties," a movie on the 18th-century black migration, was on national television in mid-September.

"There was collective amnesia, no memory, no stories," said Carmelita Robertson, a museum researcher who brought the slide show to Tracadie, the historically black community where she was born. "There was only a very superficial knowledge

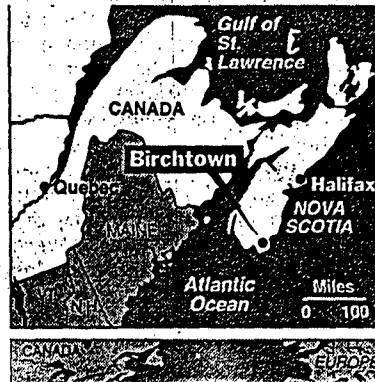


Uly P. Biele for The New York Times

Everett S. Cromwell now knows his ancestors were among blacks evacuated from America to Nova Scotia in the Revolutionary War era. He stood near the site in Birchtown where archeologists found 16,000 artifacts.

Ms. Robertson, who has traveled to South Carolina to meet lost family members, said: "To find these missing cousins can only enrich families. For black Americans, they possibly do have relatives who escaped north during slave times."

The Book of Negroes, which the Nova Scotia Museum hopes to post on the Internet, is a rare and valuable document for black history. It was produced 80 years before Emancipation and lists 2,700 surnames of escaped slaves, as well as first names, ages, appearances, previous owners and places of residence. At



black communities. In 1788, a British royal counselor visited Birchtown and reported of the black loyalists: "Their huts are miserable to guard against the Nova Scotia winter. I think I never saw such wretchedness and poverty."

With black communities bitterly calling this cold, rocky province "Nova Scarcity," residents and church leaders responded enthusiastically in 1791 to a plan by a London philanthropist to create a free black colony on the west coast of Africa. In January 1792, 1,196 free blacks set

PAGE 1
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I

"Loyalties," a movie on the 18th-century black migration, was on national television in mid-September.

"There was collective amnesia, no memory, no stories," said Carmelita Robertson, a museum researcher who brought the slide show to Tracadie, the historically black community where she was born. "There was only a very superficial knowledge that people were slaves and came up from the states on boats."

Here in Birchtown, archeologists have dug into the cellar hole of Stephen Blucke, a colonel in the "Black Brigade," a British unit that waged guerrilla war against rebels in New Jersey. Digging 200 yards from Mr. Cromwell's house last year, they found a trove of 16,000 artifacts, including Revolutionary era military buttons, a shoe buckle and a bayonet.

Nearby, at Shelburne, people of African descent telephone daily from across Canada, and, increasingly, from the United States, to register with Teena Paynter, secretary of the Black Loyalist Heritage Society, a new genealogical project.

during slave times."

The Book of Negroes, which the Nova Scotia Museum hopes to post on the Internet, is a rare and valuable document for black history. It was produced 80 years before Emancipation and lists 2,700 surnames of escaped slaves, as well as first names, ages, appearances, previous owners and places of residence. Although the British compiled the lists and rebel inspectors boarded each ship to verify passenger manifests, the British never paid the compensation demanded by the man who became the first American President.

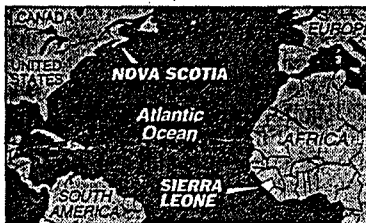
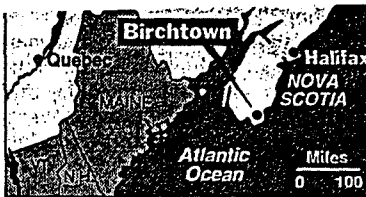
For people of African origin, about 5 percent of Canada's population, uncovering the saga of the black loyalists has proved to be both uplifting and dispiriting. Those who went over to British lines in the late 1770's were not monarchists, but freedom-seekers, their descendants say.

"When they fought the Americans for the British, as far as they were concerned, they were fighting for their freedom," said Mr. Cromwell, 77, who fought alongside American units in Europe in World War II.

During the American revolution, in a strategy they repeated in the war of 1812, British commanders offered freedom to slaves of rebel masters who would come over to fight with the British Army. The offer was not valid for slaves of Loyalist masters. As a result, thousands of African-Americans fled slavery, and crossed over to British lines, where they often worked digging trenches and building gun emplacements.

In the chaos following the British military collapse, some officers enriched themselves through betrayal. When African-Americans got out to the high seas, they found that their ships were heading south to sugar plantations in the Caribbean, instead of north to freedom in Nova Scotia.

But at the insistence of General Birch, about 3,500 free black veter-



The New York Times

Birchtown, Nova Scotia, was a boomtown in the 18th century.

ans were evacuated from New York to Nova Scotia in 1783 and 1784. The policy resulted from a mix of compassion and realpolitik. Determined to hold on to Canada, the British populated Nova Scotia with people hostile to the American Revolution — decommissioned British soldiers, white Tories, and black loyalists.

On arriving here, freed blacks encountered a wall of racism. White authorities apparently wanted cheap labor. Within two years, surveyors had allotted farming plots to virtually all white arrivals but to fewer than 15 percent of the blacks. White plots averaged twice the size of the black plots, which were often on thin, rocky soil distant from town.

Without the promised land, tools, or food, desperate black workers became indentured servants or agreed to work for radically lower wages. In 1784, this depression in wages prompted North America's first modern race riot, in Shelburne. Benjamin Marston, a surveyor, wrote: "Great riot today. The disbanded soldiers have risen against the free negroes to drive them out of town."

Two winters later, famine hit

think I never saw such wretchedness and poverty."

With black communities bitterly calling this cold, rocky province "Nova Scarcity," residents and church leaders responded enthusiastically in 1791 to a plan by a London philanthropist to create a free black colony on the west coast of Africa. In January 1792, 1,196 free blacks set sail from Halifax for Sierra Leone, where they helped to establish the capital city, now Freetown.

"In Sierra Leone, they are still called the Nova Scotians, although they really are African-Americans," Joe Opala, an American anthropologist, said of Freetown's founding families. Through research into 18th-century shipping records, scholars have determined that about 50 of those who moved to Freetown were actually West Africans who had been kidnapped from their villages for the slave trade.

"One man had been stolen from the coastal area" near where Freetown is now, recalled Mr. Opala. A few days after he returned on the British ship, his mother saw him walking down a trail. She nearly collapsed.

In modern Nova Scotia, the rediscovery of history has enhanced the self-esteem of the province's long isolated black minority of 18,000 people. Still, recognition remains slow. Ms. Robertson says that 216 years after her ancestors settled here, white Nova Scotians still assume she just arrived from the Caribbean, asking "what island I am from."

Here in Birchtown, Elizabeth Cromwell, Everett Cromwell's wife, was locked in negotiations one recent afternoon with donors for a proposed black history center.

"All our history was shut off, as if we never existed," Mr. Cromwell recalled of growing up black in Nova Scotia. "We just want to put ourselves on the map, to show that we weren't born on a rock."

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SOUTH AMERICA **SIERRA LEONE**
The New York Times
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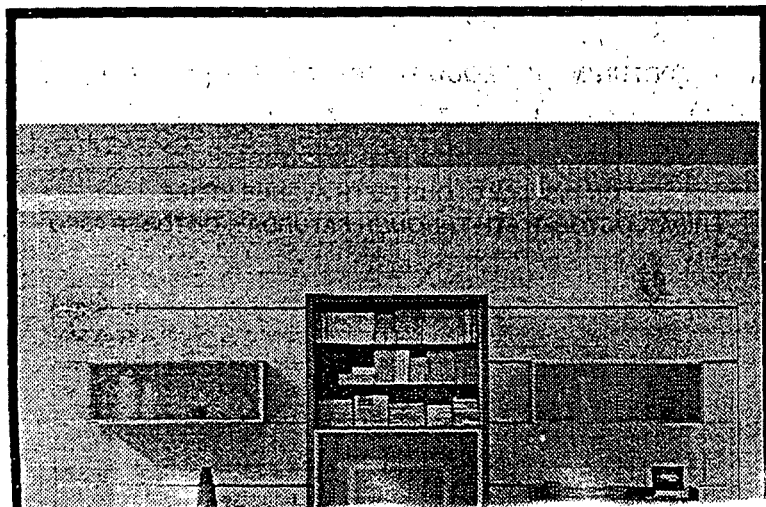
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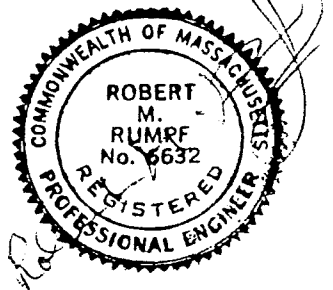
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STRUCTURAL REPORT
18 CROMBIE STREET
SALEM, MASSACUSETTS
March 18, 1991



STRUCTURAL REVIEW OF EXISTING RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

Submitted to: Salem Planning Department
One Salem Green
Salem, Massachusetts 01970

INTRODUCTION

This report is confined to the present structural condition of the above-referenced building; general descriptions of repairs and construction are listed with associated approximate costs. Observations and recommendations are drawn from the following:

- * site visit and visual inspection of the existing building interior.
- * review of the OVERVIEW STUDY prepared by Demarco/Jarek Partnership, Architects and Planners, dated September 1990.
- * prior experience with similar building types and typical construction procedures for structural rehabilitation.

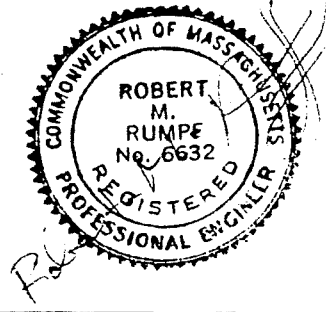
While we generally agree with the Demarco/Jarek report, we have addressed only the structural aspects of the building: foundation, framing, and related components. Remedies to structural problems are discussed later; included in our repair estimate is a line item which covers the cost of cutting and patching required for the structural improvements only. Anticipated renovation costs which are not warranted by the structural condition of the referenced building are considered - and presented - by others.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

We find that the condition of the superstructure of the original building and the addition is acceptable to good with the exception of the sills and various aspects of the first floor framing (as discussed in the Architects' report).

ROBERT M. RUMPF & ASSOCIATES
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101 DERBY STREET
SALEM, MASS. 01970

STRUCTURAL REPORT
18 CROMBIE STREET
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March 18, 1991



The condition of the back porch is such that it should be torn down entirely.

The original building has a very severe lean to one side which we partly attribute to the way it was built and added to, but mostly to problems with the foundation.

The condition of the foundation is fair to poor and likely to further deteriorate due to disintegration of its brick masonry components. In addition, severe settlement at two corners and at the chimney supports has occurred while lateral movement of some of the walls is evident (consistent with the description in the Architects' report).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Pursuant to the above description of observed structural problems, we recommend the following corrective measures:

- * Shore superstructure and replace building sills entirely.

budget \$ 6,280.00

- * Jack-up the superstructure where required to level position to properly facilitate resting sills on a new foundation. Some improvement in the presently excessive leaning of the building may result from this operation.

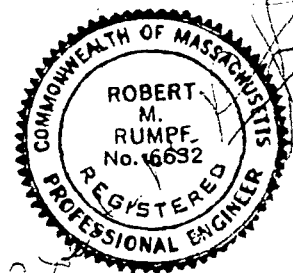
budget \$ 4,860.00

- * Provide miscellaneous first floor framing reinforcing, connections, and supports. Repair chimney foundation.

budget \$ 970.00

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* Remove porch completely and replace rear access with new stairs from exterior grade to first floor.

budget \$ 710.00

* Remove existing concrete floor and replace with a new reinforced slab on vapor barrier with construction joints on suitable, compacted gravel base. Install sump pit with pump to prevent damage from possible future flooding conditions.

budget \$ 3,230.00

* Remove the existing foundation and excavate the perimeter to allow installation of new cast-in-place concrete foundation walls and footings; dampproof foundation exterior. Include code-required vents or windows.

budget \$ 7,130.00

* Provide improved interior access to basement: install new stairs and rails. Provide new exterior bulkhead, bulkhead stairs, and weatherproof doors for exterior access.

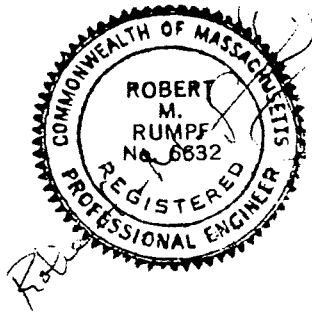
budget \$ 1,670.00

* Remove all unused piping, wiring, conduits, miscellaneous obstructions, etc., in basement. Clean and treat areas exposed to moisture or adjacent rot.

budget \$ 480.00

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* Cut and patch as necessary for disturbed areas, caused by these specified structural improvements, to match original or adjacent exposed construction: interior and exterior.

budget \$ 960.00

Also, although not absolutely required structurally, we recommend that the addition be torn down in its entirety and properly rebuilt. In doing so, this structure would contribute to the stability of the original building while following an improved architectural design.

CONCLUSION

The above-listed observations and subsequently devised recommendations are rendered to show the reasonable minimum requirements to adequately rehabilitate the structure and allow architectural and related utility improvements to follow. While the superstructure needs work as specified to be restored to level and near-plumb condition, the general intent of the Engineer is to require a new, structurally sound foundation and in doing so, achieve the additional benefit of a clean, dry, and usable basement.

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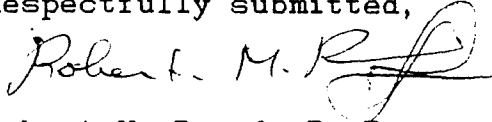
Mr. William Luster
Salem Planning Department
One Salem Green
Salem, Massachusetts 01970

Dear Mr. Luster:

Enclosed herewith please find our report on the structural condition of the above-referenced building per your request. ~~Some~~ report outlines the remedial construction necessary to prevent further deterioration of the structure and assure greater safety to its occupants.

If you require additional information relevant to this matter - or our services in another project - please advise.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert M. Rumpf, P. E.