

Historic Salem Incorporated

OFFICE AT OLD TOWN HALL

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

21 Briggs Street

Outbuilding from the ELIAS HASKET DERBY ESTATE

Built c. 1798

Moved to this site in 1856

Research by,
Joyce King
May 1984

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

21 Briggs Street

The history of this house begins in the center of the city, at what is called Derby Square. It was there that Elias Hasket Derby, the most successful merchant of Salem, erected "the most sumptuous mansion ever built in Salem." Many architectural drawings were secured by the Derbys in preparation for their ambitious project. From all evidence the final plan was one prepared by Charles Bulfinch which was modified and executed by Samuel McIntire during the years 1795-1799.

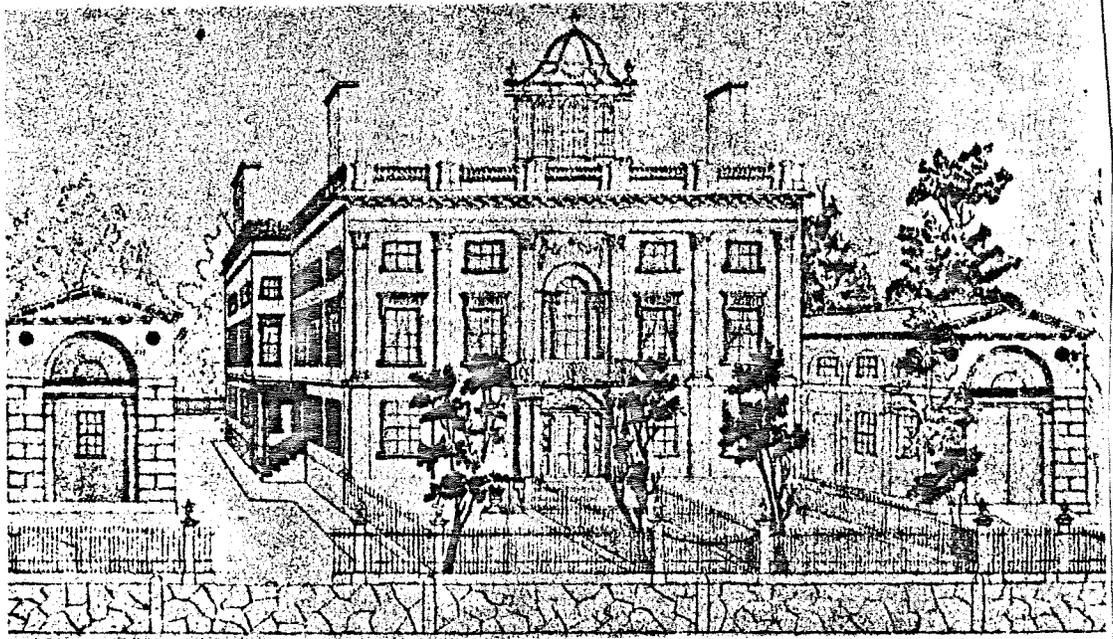
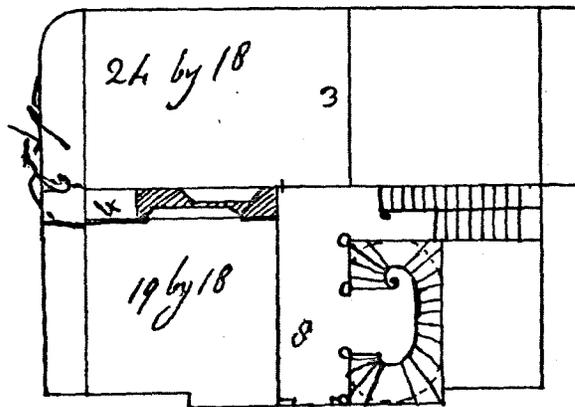


Figure 117. Preliminary study for the Derby Mansion, in perspective, by Charles Bulfinch.



2

*one 20th. of an inch -
to a foot.*



50

Figure 130. McIntire's first study for the Derby Mansion.

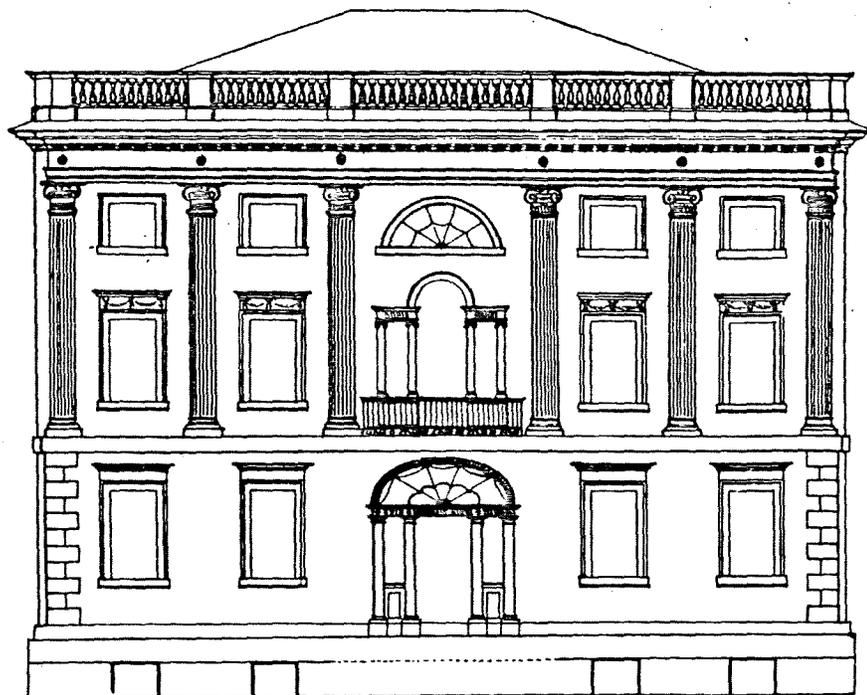


Figure 131. Study for the elevation of the Derby Mansion. Unidentified authorship.

Mrs. Derby died on April 19, 1799 just as the house was completed. Her husband outlived her by a mere five months, his death occurring on Sept. 8, 1799. The estate was left to the Derby children in seven shares. The eldest son, Elias H. Derby Jr., occupied the house until 1811 at which time he moved to Charlestown. The mansion was later offered for sale in order to settle the estate.

AUCTIONS.

Valuable Real Estate at Auction.

On **MONDAY** the 4th day of September next, at 11 o'clock, A.M. (if fair weather, if not, the next fair day) will be sold at public auction, if not previously disposed of at private sale,

That elegant Situation in Essex Street, late the residence of *Hon. Elias Hasket Derby, Esq.* containing 173 poles and 167 feet of Land, bounded on Essex Street one hundred and thirty feet seven inches, on Dr. Holyoke's land three hundred and twenty-nine feet, and on Front Street one hundred fifty-seven feet six inches— with all the Buildings thereon — The sale to be on the premises, where conditions will be made known. For particulars, as to title, and a plan of the land, &c. apply to **JOHN PRINCE, jun.** Esq. at his Office in Court-street.
Salem, Aug. 15, 1815. (11)

No purchaser appeared, so this magnificent home was demolished. Rev. William Bentley records the destruction on Nov. 20, 1815:

I took my last view of the mansion of the late eminent merchant E. H. Derby, situated easterly from the Old Meeting House in Essex Street & going back with its gardens to Front Street. It was the best finished, most elegant, & best constructed House I ever saw. It was entirely of wood with an excellent façade in the Ionic order, with a noble flight of marble steps to the top of the basement story. Its stucco work had nothing like it in the rotunda on the south side & the buildings and gardens were in exquisite taste. It had fallen to the oldest son who had left it. The heirs could not agree to occupy it & the convenience of the spot for other buildings brought a sentence of destruction on it & before the world it was destroyed from its foundations. I saw the front demolished and left in ruins [IV, 362].

The Salem Gazette carried this notice on November 14, 1815 -
"The Mansion House, late Gen. Derby's in Essex St., is now taking down, and the materials are for sale as they come to hand and may be purchased of Captain Edward Brown, on the premises."

A detailed list of "The most valuable of the Materials of the house lately taken down" was also published in the Gazette:

On WEDNESDAY, 20th day of December inst.
At the Buildings adjoining the late Mansion of Gen.
E. H. Derby, Essex Street at 10 o'clock.

The most valuable of the Materials
of the house lately taken down:

Among which are

24 round and half-do Columns—Ionic Capitals—12 Pilasters with Capitals—40 half and quarter doric, ionic and fancy Capitals—5 Glass Doors—About 60 round and square top brass and Window Frames with Sashes, Glass 12 by 18 inches—4 Iron frame handsomely ornamented Fan Lights—14 sets Window and Door Blinds—6 large sliding Windows, 12 by 18 inch glass—24 Urns—Draws—14 cap eleganty ornamented Door Frames—Pedestals for four large rooms and Cornices—Mouldings—the Cupola Frame, Windows, &c. complete—8 richly ornamented Chimney Pieces—18 large Window Caps—50 Doors—50 Window Shutters—4 reflecting Windows, 53 squares, 12 by 18 inch—Mahogany Railing for stairs—6 large Pilasters with Capitals—2 large door Frames, containing 4 columns with Capitals handsomely ornamented and connected—30 Mortice Locks of an excellent kind—Brass and common Hinges—3000 lb sheet and window Weights of Lead—500 lb Sheet Copper—11 set Stone Jambs—2 marble Chimney Pieces, one very elegant—1 dark marble Hearth, 5 inches thick—Marble Slips for 6 fire places—Marble Tile—White Marble Steps, viz. 5 pieces 1 ft. 3 in. by 16 ft. and top 2 pieces 5 by 8 ft.—Iron Railing, about 40 feet, 3 1/2 ft. high—Front Steps with end pieces—Potts and Chains—7 Iron Backs—1000 lb. old Iron—15000 Nails—Lightning Rod, 100 feet—Set Rumford Apparatus complete—and many articles well worthy attention.

Also, at 12 o'clock,

The two Buildings, viz. one 57 by 18 feet—the other 90 by 18, with an L of 22 feet.

—AND—

The Summer House, 12 feet square, 10 ft. stud, having 6 windows, &c.

The articles may be examined two days previous to the sale.

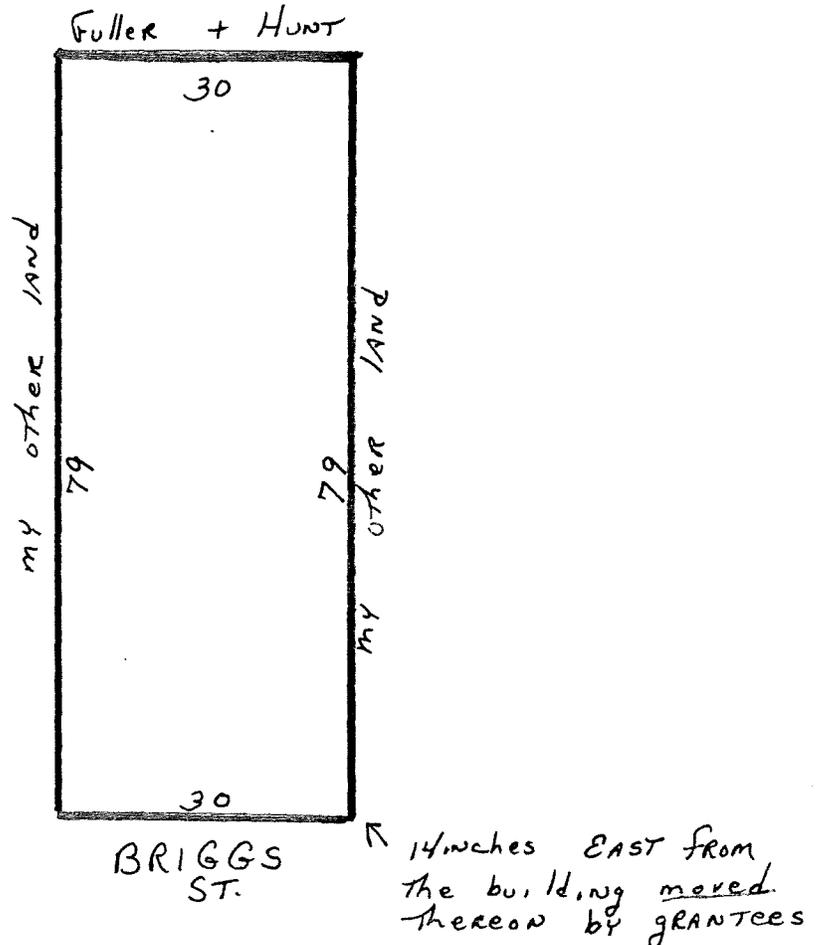
JONATHAN P. SAUNDERS, Aucr.

The two buildings mentioned leads us to the house now known as 21 Briggs St. The connecting link was found in an article entitled "Our Old Houses" from the reminiscences of Jonathan Tucker Esq.

Market Square.—House and garden from Essex street to Front street. Gen. Elias Hasket Derby, who removed to Derry, in New Hampshire, and was engaged in sheep-raising, having imported from Spain the merino breed. It proved an unsuccessful experiment to all concerned. Gen. Derby died on his farm. The managers of his estate gave the centre of the lot to the town of Salem for a market house, which was erected in 1816. Three corners were retained, and the brick stores now owned by Chas. M. Richardson, Wm. Kimball and Messrs. Gardner, were built at that time. The two barns that were on each side of the house on Essex street were changed to dwelling-houses, and now remain,—one on Briggs street, owned by George Brown, the other in Peabody, a few houses west of the monument. They present the same elaborate finished front as in the original. This was the most elegant mansion ever built in Salem, in all its surroundings,—built and first occupied for a few years by the elder E. Hasket Derby. A good plate view of this may be seen at the Essex Institute rooms.

It may never be known if this building went directly from Derby Sq. to Briggs St., but even while on this street it was moved at least once.

The history is picked up on July 3, 1856 when Anna Baldwin sold a lot of land to George A. Brown, Theodore Brown and Charles Brown, all of Salem, for the sum of \$711:



It was at this time that the building was transformed into a dwelling house. (George and Theodore Brown were carpenters doing business at 158 Derby St.)

The move is confirmed by a permit issued in 1856 for "G.A.F. Brown to move a building from one location on Briggs St. to another."

One can only guess as to its original location on this street. It surely was one of the buildings advertised on May 1, 1856:

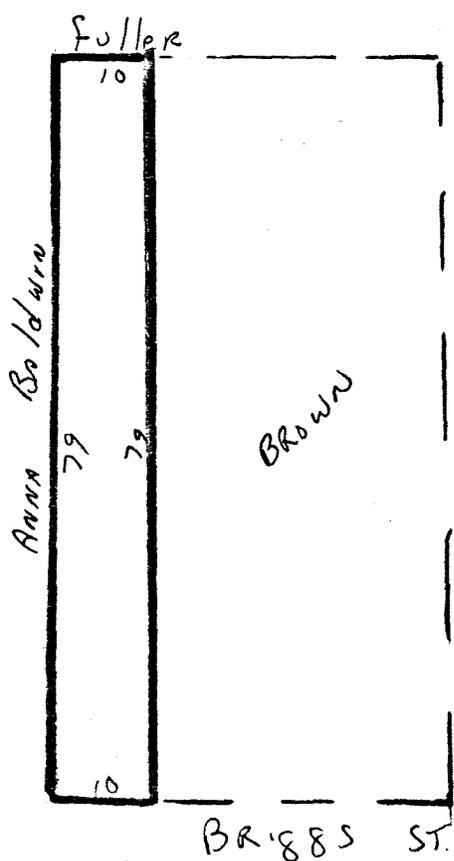
"4 cottage buildings No. 2, 4, 6 & 7, 8 to 12 on the south side of Briggs street - to be removed.

For conditions, apply to J. Vincent Brown, at the Salem 50 Savings Bank, or to the auctioneer."

Joseph V. Brown had purchased almost the entire south side of Briggs St. from W. B. Vincent. Evidently, unhappy with the makeup of the street, Mr. Brown was determined to change it by starting all over. Thus the building, now known as 21 Briggs, came to be rescued by George, Theodore and Charles Brown.

1857 - Now at its new location, the house was occupied by Charles Brown and tenant John Norfolk. (Theodore Brown later released all rights to George and Charles.)

On Sept. 23, 1869 Anna Baldwin sold a small adjoining parcel to the Browns:



The chain of title from this time is as follows:

Book 841 page 79
Dec. 6, 1871
\$1,169

George A. Brown sold his interest in the land and buildings to Charles E. Brown. "Meaning to convey my portion of the same estate conveyed by deeds book 536 page 169 and book 785 page 81.

Book 1092 page 87
July 18, 1882

The heirs of Charles E. Brown sold half of the estate #13 Briggs St. (number changed in 1888) to Salome Brown, wife of George A. The same estate conveyed to Charles on Dec. 6, 1871 and recorded in book 841 page 79.

Book 1335 page 227
Feb. 20, 1892
\$1,200

The heirs of George A. and Salome R. Brown sold their half of the land and building to Ada M. Burns, wife of William F. "For further reference see deeds book 536 page 169, book 785 page 181 and book 1092 page 87."

Book 1393 page 562
Nov. 6, 1893

Ada M. Burns sold the land and building to William A. Clapp. Half she inherited from parents Charles E. and Rebecca Brown, the other half conveyed by deed book 1332 page 165.

Book 1973 page 59
July 1, 1909

William A. Clapp sold the land and building to Peter Kieran. The same conveyed by deed book 1393 page 562.

Book 1971 page 338
July 1, 1909

A straw deed was drawn up to transfer title to Peter J. and Alice A. Kieran.

Book 3081 page 137
August 15, 1936

Peter J. and Alice A. Kieran sold the land and building to Alice A. Rybicki. The same property conveyed by deed book 1971 page 338.

Book 3437 page 198
Jan. 12, 1946

Alice A. Rybicki sold the land and building to Anna Rybicki. The same conveyed by Peter J. Kieran on August 15 1936.

Book 5057 page 425
May 3, 1963

Anna Rybicki sold the land and building to Anna and Joseph Rybicki. The same conveyed by deed book 3437 page 198.

Book 5311 page 794
Oct. 20, 1963

Joseph F. Rybicki conveyed the property to Anna Rybicki. "The same conveyed to me and the grantee on May 3, 1963."

Book 5329 page 66
Dec. 24, 1965

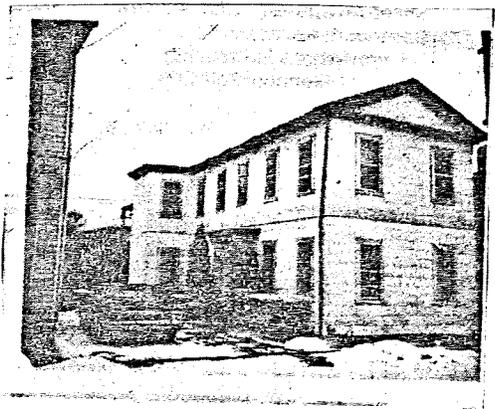
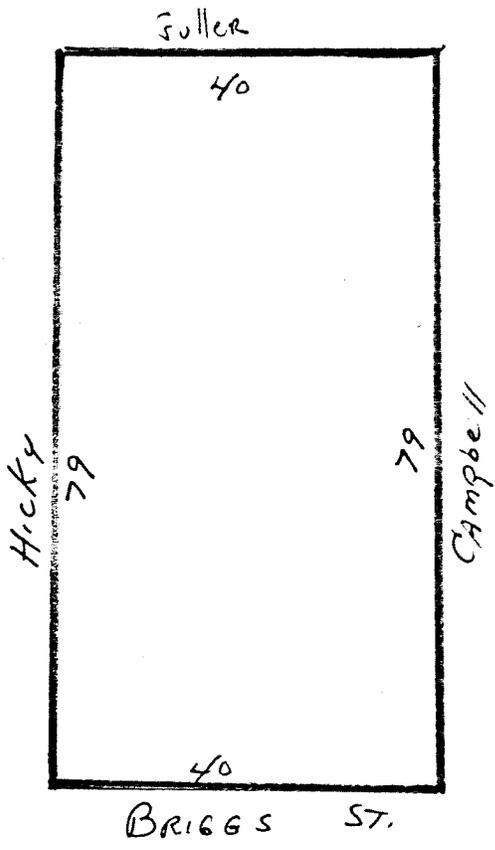
Anna Rybicki sold the land and building to George L. Innis of Danvers. The same conveyed by Joseph Rybicki on Oct. 20, 1965.

Book 5376 page 134
July 11, 1966

George L. Innis conveyed the property to George L. Innis and Ursula H. Fisher. The same premises conveyed by deed of Anna Rybicki on Dec. 24, 1965.

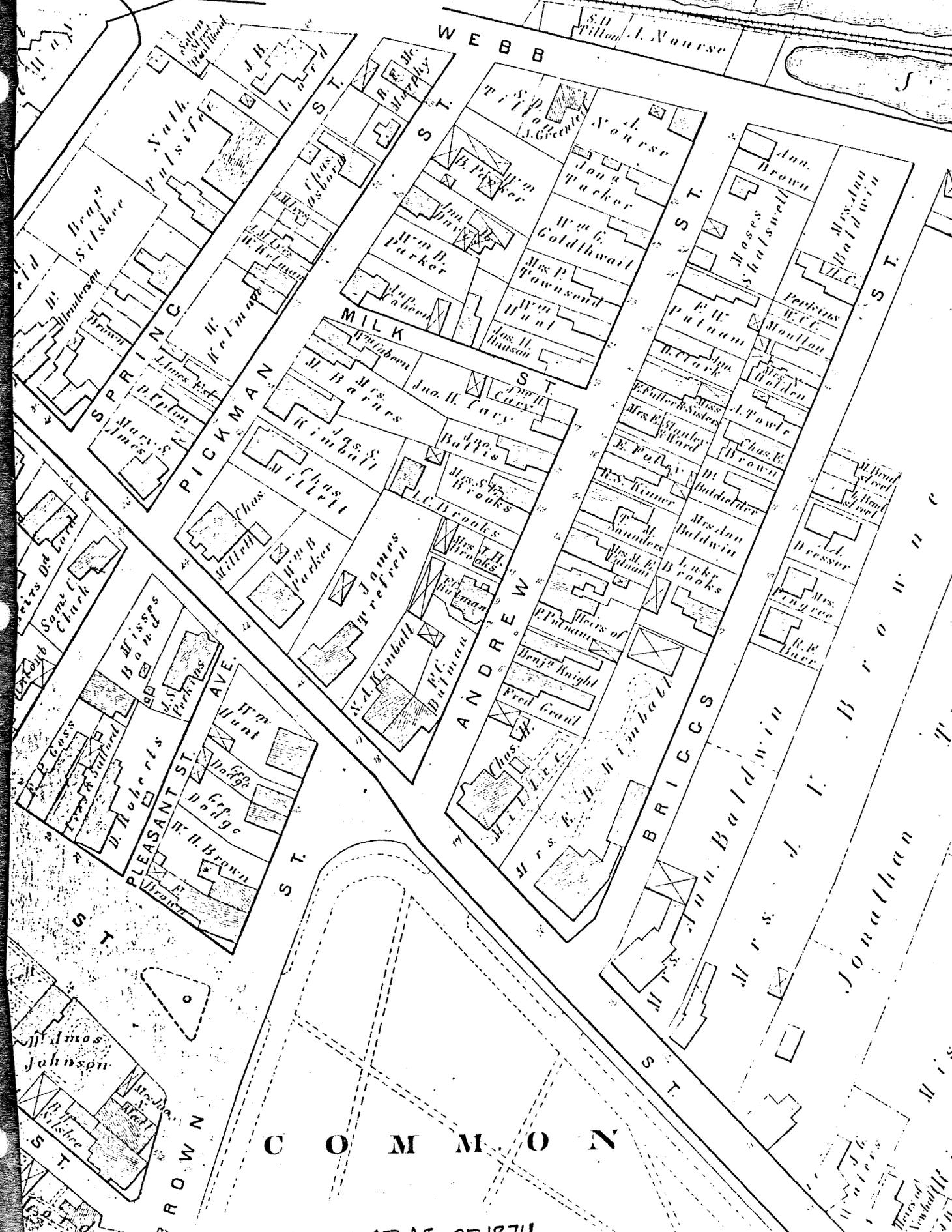
Book 7368 page 589
April 2, 1984

Ursula H. Fisher sold the property
at 21 Briggs St. to Robert Bramble,
trustee.



Notes: For detailed description of the Derby Mansion see Mr. Samuel McIntire, Carver, the Architect of Salem --- by Fiske Kimball

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



SALEM ATLAS OF 1874



105

ANDREW

CHARLES

SINGCLAIR

WASHINGTON

GRIGGS

MRS. F. D. KIMBALL

EAST

FORESTER

ST.

ST.

FORESTER

ST.

ST.

ST.

ST.

ST.

ST.

H. G. PERKINS EST.

U. S. JOHNSON

E. FOLEY ET AL

L. P. FULLER

L. H. WARD

E. STANLEY EST.

E. FOLEY

R. SHINNER EST.

C. L. PHILDRICK

M. STEVENS

E. PUTNAM

B. KNIGHT EST.

F. GRANT EST.

E. L. BROWN

E. C. MOULTON EST.

N. J. HOLDEN

H. CAMPBELL

W. A. CLAPP

M. HICKEY ET AL

R. RAREY

A. MODELL

G. E. CURTIS

H. F. FOLSON

L. F. DRESSER

S. R. PINGREE

R. F. RARR

S. W. FEASE

H. A. DAVENPORT

J. YOUNG

S. B. SIMONDS

J. A. BEZLYMAN

J. A. BEZLYMAN EST.

G. E. CURTIS

H. F. FOLSON

L. F. DRESSER

S. R. PINGREE

R. F. RARR

S. W. FEASE

H. A. DAVENPORT

J. YOUNG

S. B. SIMONDS

J. A. BEZLYMAN

J. A. BEZLYMAN EST.

S. J. GOODSPEED

S. S. MERRILL

MRS. W. L. BOWDOIN

MRS. W. L. BOWDOIN

L. I. LIEBSCH

R. DIEGELL

J. R. TREADWELL

M. M. SMITH

W. A. CLAPP

W. A. CLAPP

W. A. CLAPP

JAS. FANNING

A. J. TUFTS

J. J. DONOVAN

J. W. HART

F. L. PORTER

W. A. CLAPP

S. J. GOODSPEED

S. S. MERRILL

MRS. W. L. BOWDOIN

MRS. W. L. BOWDOIN

MARY ROSE

G. W. LOVETT

E. C. STEVENSON

S. W. NEWHALL

G. E. JELLY

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

G. A. HILL

B. F. HILL

W. M. HART

W. A. CLAPP

G. A. NEAL

T. W. ARNOLD

JAS. FANNING

A. C. BARKER

C. W. BROWN

C. E. FAIRFIELD

G. L. WHIPPLE

C. R. WATERS

G. W. LOVETT

E. C. STEVENSON

S. W. NEWHALL

G. E. JELLY

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

G. A. HILL

B. F. HILL

W. M. HART

W. A. CLAPP

G. A. NEAL

T. W. ARNOLD

JAS. FANNING

A. C. BARKER

C. W. BROWN

C. E. FAIRFIELD

G. L. WHIPPLE

C. R. WATERS

S. W. NEWHALL

G. E. JELLY

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

G. A. HILL

B. F. HILL

W. M. HART

W. A. CLAPP

G. A. NEAL

T. W. ARNOLD

JAS. FANNING

A. C. BARKER

C. W. BROWN

C. E. FAIRFIELD

G. L. WHIPPLE

C. R. WATERS

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

G. A. HILL

B. F. HILL

W. M. HART

W. A. CLAPP

G. A. NEAL

T. W. ARNOLD

JAS. FANNING

A. C. BARKER

C. W. BROWN

C. E. FAIRFIELD

G. L. WHIPPLE

C. R. WATERS

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

G. A. HILL

B. F. HILL

W. M. HART

W. A. CLAPP

G. A. NEAL

T. W. ARNOLD

JAS. FANNING

A. C. BARKER

C. W. BROWN

C. E. FAIRFIELD

G. L. WHIPPLE

C. R. WATERS

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

G. A. HILL

B. F. HILL

W. M. HART

W. A. CLAPP

G. A. NEAL

T. W. ARNOLD

JAS. FANNING

A. C. BARKER

C. W. BROWN

C. E. FAIRFIELD

G. L. WHIPPLE

C. R. WATERS

C. R. WATERS

C. R. WATERS

C. R. WATERS

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

G. A. HILL

B. F. HILL

W. M. HART

W. A. CLAPP

G. A. NEAL

T. W. ARNOLD

JAS. FANNING

A. C. BARKER

C. W. BROWN

C. E. FAIRFIELD

G. L. WHIPPLE

C. R. WATERS

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

G. A. HILL

B. F. HILL

W. M. HART

W. A. CLAPP

G. A. NEAL

T. W. ARNOLD

JAS. FANNING

A. C. BARKER

C. W. BROWN

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

G. A. HILL

B. F. HILL

W. M. HART

W. A. CLAPP

G. A. NEAL

T. W. ARNOLD

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

G. A. HILL

B. F. HILL

W. M. HART

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

W. A. CLAPP

C. R. CHOATE

H. PAGE

A. M. DRIPPELL

G. A. HILL

B. F. HILL

W. M. HART

W. A. CLAPP

G. A. NEAL

T. W. ARNOLD

JAS. FANNING

A. C. BARKER

C. W. BROWN

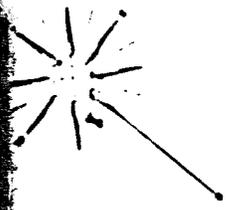
C. E. FAIRFIELD

G. L. WHIPPLE

C. R. WATERS

COLLINS

COVE 1956



6

5

WEBB

ANDREW

BRIGGS

BOARDMAN

PICKMAN

PLEASANT

MILK ST.

BROOKS CT

FURS

APTS

Tenements.

Tenements

4

EXP.

EXP.

EXP.

EXP.

EXP.

EXP.