

# Historic Salem incorporated

OFFICE AT OLD TOWN HALL

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

98 ESSEX STREET

Built for

JOHN GRAY, schoolmaster

Circa 1808

Research by,  
Joyce King  
March 1987

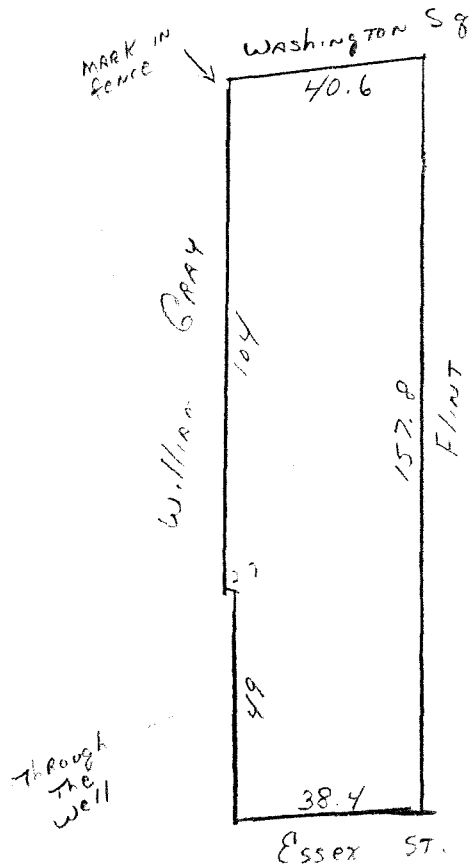
*"to preserve Historic Sites, Buildings and objects,  
and to work for the education of the community  
in the true value of the same."*

98 ESSEX STREET

BOOK 181 PAGE 15

DATE - January 10, 1807  
CONSIDERATION - \$1,000  
GRANTOR (seller) - William Gray Jr., painter  
GRANTEE (buyer) - John Gray, schoolmaster  
DESCRIPTION - East part of land adjoining the mansion house of our Honoured father late of Salem deceased

John Gray mortgaged the property to Richard Manning, on January 10, 1807, for the sum of \$500 (book 181 page 15). Mr. Gray took a second mortgage, on January 8, 1808, from Ebenezer Beckford for \$1,000 (book 183 page 102). He was unable to make payment of monies due and the executors of the will of Ebenezer Beckford took possession on February 24, 1817.



In the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventeen.

signed sealed & delivered  
in presence of us  
Amos Choate  
Augustus Choate

John Joseph... seal  
Essex ss. October 22. 1817. Then the abovenamed  
John Joseph acknowledged the above instrument  
to be his free act and deed.

before me Amos Choate Just. of Peace  
Essex ss. Rec. October 22. 1817. recorded and exam. by Amos Choate

Ephraim Stevens  
to  
Elizabeth Stevens

Know all men by these Presents That I Ephraim Stevens  
of Haverhill in the County of Essex and Commonwealth of Massachu-  
setts Blacksmith in consideration of three hundred dollars to me paid  
by Elizabeth Stevens of said Haverhill spinster the receipt whereof I do here  
by acknowledge do hereby give grant sell and convey unto the said Elizabeth  
Stevens all the right and title which I have in the following described pre-  
mises, to wit, a certain lot or parcel of land situated in said Haverhill  
and bounded as follows viz. Northerly on the highway Easterly on land of  
Abijah Kelley Southerly on land of Capt. Isaac How and Westerly on land  
of John Mitchell containing twenty four square rods with the dwelling  
house and shop standing on the same with all the privileges & appurte-  
nances to the premises belonging. SO Have and SO Hold the  
aforegranted premises to the said Elizabeth her heirs and assigns to her &  
their use forever. And I do covenant with the said Elizabeth her heirs &  
assigns, that I am lawfully seized in fee of the premises, that they are  
free of all incumbrances that I have good right to sell and convey the same  
to the said Elizabeth and that I will warrant and defend the same premises  
to the said Elizabeth her heirs and assigns forever, against the lawful  
claims and demands of all Persons. In witness whereof I the said  
Ephraim Stevens have hereunto set my hand and seal this twenty  
second day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hun-  
dred and seventeen.

signed sealed & delivered  
in presence of us  
Francis Eaton  
Distran Pillsbury

Essex ss. October 22. 1817. Then the above  
named Ephraim Stevens acknowledged the  
above instrument to be his free act and deed  
before me Israel Bartlett Just. of Peace

Essex ss. Rec. October 28. 1817. 30. minutes past 3 o'clock in the morning  
recorded and examined by Amos Choate Jus

Assignment  
Nathan Robinson  
to  
William Silsbee

To all People I Nathan Robinson of Salem in the County of Essex mes-  
sant surviving executor of the last will and Testament of Ebenezer Brook-  
ford late of Salem aforesaid Esq. dec. send Greeting, Whereas John Gray  
of Salem aforesaid School master by his deed dated the eighth day of Jan-  
uary one thousand eight hundred and eight, and recorded in the  
Registry of deeds of said County Book 103. Leaf 102 did convey to said Eben-  
ezer Robinson

consists in mortgage a certain parcel of real estate in Salem aforesaid  
consisting of a piece of land with a dwelling house thereon, bounded south  
eily on Essex Street thirty eight feet four inches, westerly on land of William  
Gray about one hundred and four feet, northerly on Washington Square  
about forty feet six inches and Easterly on land of Hunt about one hun  
dred and fifty seven feet and eight inches to Essex Street aforesaid  
together with all the other buildings thereon and the privileges and  
appurtenances thereof, (there being on the said land another dwelling  
house erected by said Gray subsequently to the execution of said deed  
and the mortgaged premises being subject to a prior mortgage given  
to Richard Manning Esq. dec.) all which by reference to the first mention  
ed mortgage deed will more fully appear. The condition of which mortgage  
deed first above mentioned was, that if the said John Gray his heirs exec  
tors or administrators should pay said Ebenezer Beckford his heirs or  
assigns the sum of one thousand dollars on or before the eighth day of  
January lighteen hundred and nine with lawful interest then the  
same deed of mortgage and also a certain Bond of even date therewith  
given by said John Gray to said Ebenezer Beckford conditioned to pay the  
same sum and interest should both be void. NOW Know ye, that I  
the said Nathan Robinson surviving Executor as aforesaid in con  
sideration of the sum of nine hundred and sixty dollars, the receipt  
whereof, acknowledged in my assignment of even date herewith en  
dorsed on the Bond above mentioned and also for the further consid  
eration of the sum of one dollar to me paid by said William Slobbe, the receipt  
whereof is hereby acknowledged do hereby grant bargain sell assign  
transfer and set over to the said William Slobbe and his heirs executors  
administrators and assigns, all the said mortgaged lands and tenements  
with the appurtenances, and also the said deed of mortgage first  
mentioned, TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the bargained and assigned  
premises with the appurtenances to him the said William Slobbe  
and his heirs executors administrators or assigns forever, subject however  
to my right in law or equity which the said John Gray has or may  
have to redeem the same, and I do covenant with the said William  
Slobbe his heirs and assigns that he and they shall hereafter forever  
quietly and peaceably have hold and enjoy the bargained and assigned  
premises without any lawful claim or demand made or to be made  
by me or by any person claiming or who may claim the same by from  
or under the said Ebenezer Beckford or his heirs. In witness where  
of I the said Nathan Robinson executor as aforesaid have hereunto  
set my hand and seal this twentieth third day of October in the year  
of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventeen.

Witness my hand and seal this twentieth third day of October in the year  
of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventeen.

Nathan Robinson Ex<sup>r</sup> or to the  
will of Eben<sup>r</sup> Beckford Esq. dec. } seal

BOOK 214 PAGE 179

DATE - October 23, 1817

CONSIDERATION - \$960 (subject to other mortgages)

GRANTOR (seller) - Nathan Robinson, exc. of the will of Ebenezer Beckford  
John Gray also released his rights

GRANTEE (buyer) - William Silsbee

DESCRIPTION - Real estate - land with two dwelling houses

BOOK 247 PAGE 156

DATE - October 29, 1827

CONSIDERATION - \$2,800

GRANTOR (seller) - William Silsbee, Hannah Hodges  
and Elizabeth Hodges

GRANTEE (buyer) - Joseph Dalton and Eleazer M. Dalton

DESCRIPTION - Parcel of land, 2 dwelling houses and out buildings (the land to the east was also conveyed to the Daltons at this time)

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - None given for the parcel at 98 Essex

BOOK 325 PAGE 84

DATE - May 12, 1841

CONSIDERATION - \$2,035

GRANTOR (seller) - Joseph Dalton, Eleazer M. Dalton  
Ichabod Nichols, Lydia Boardman  
and Ingalls Kittridge of Beverly

GRANTEE (buyer) - George Wheatland

DESCRIPTION - Land and buildings  
West - Elkins  
South - Essex Street  
East - Wheatland as fence stands in  
rear and so far from the east  
wall of house and out building  
herein conveyed as to allow  
good and sufficient space for  
eaves dropping  
North - Wheatland as fence stands

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - None given

BOOK 324 PAGE 237

DATE - May 21, 1841

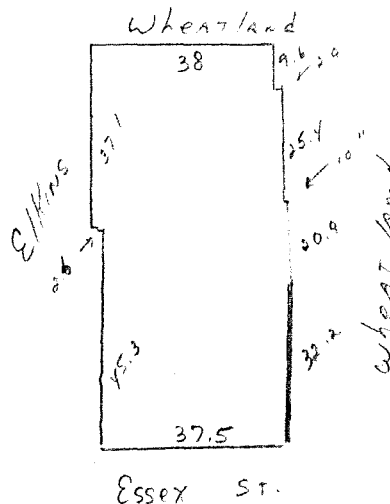
CONSIDERATION - \$2,032

GRANTOR (seller) - George Wheatland

GRANTEE (buyer) - Thomas Barker

DESCRIPTION - Messuage

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Being the same premises conveyed by  
Lydia Boardman et al this day.



BOOK 463 PAGE 278

DATE - July 9, 1850  
CONSIDERATION - None given (subject to mortgage of \$500)  
GRANTOR (seller) - Thomas Barker shipmaster  
GRANTEE (buyer) - Edward Putnam merchant  
DESCRIPTION - Messuage  
PREVIOUS REFERENCE - The whole of the estate conveyed to me by George Wheatland on May 21, 1841.

BOOK 466 PAGE 29

DATE - September 7, 1852  
CONSIDERATION - \$3,000  
GRANTOR (seller) - Edward and Margaret Putnam  
GRANTEE (buyer) - William H. Johnson  
DESCRIPTION - Messuage  
PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Being the same estate conveyed to me by Thomas Barker on July 1, 1850.

BOOK 582 PAGE 240

DATE - February 5, 1859  
CONSIDERATION - \$3,000  
GRANTOR (seller) - William Henry Johnson  
GRANTEE (buyer) - Henry Lambert  
DESCRIPTION - Messuage  
PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Being the same premises conveyed to me by Edward Putnam on September 7, 1852.

BOOK 2235 PAGE 367

DATE - October 31, 1913  
CONSIDERATION - None given  
GRANTOR (seller) - Salem Hospital  
GRANTEE (buyer) - Hannah F. Denehy  
DESCRIPTION - 98 Essex St.  
PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Same that was devised to grantor by will of Laura Lambert. See deed of William H. Johnson to Henry Lambert on February 15, 1859 as recorded in book 582 page 240.

BOOK 3514 PAGE 325

DATE - April 22, 1947  
CONSIDERATION - \$5,100  
GRANTOR (seller) - Thomas Hennessey of Beverly exc. of the will of Nora F. Denehy otherwise known as Hanorah F. Denehy  
GRANTEE (buyer) - Antonio and Theresa Costa  
DESCRIPTION - Land and buildings

BOOK 3528 PAGE 12

DATE - May 29, 1947  
CONSIDERATION - None given (mortgage \$4,500)  
GRANTOR (seller) - Antonio Costa and Theresa Costa  
GRANTEE (buyer) - Albin J. and Gertrude L. Jarzynka  
DESCRIPTION - Land and buildings  
PREVIOUS REFERENCE - The same premises conveyed by deed of Thomas Hennessey exc. of will of Dora Denehy.



BOOK 5933 PAGE 450

DATE - December 12, 1972

CONSIDERATION - \$22,000

GRANTOR (seller) - Albin J. Jarzynka survivor of the  
entirety with Gertrude L. Jarzynka

GRANTEE (buyer) - Donald Koleman and Laurence C. Post  
trustees of Old Salem Realty Trust

DESCRIPTION - Land and buildings

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - The same premises conveyed to me by  
deed of Antonio Costa et ux on May  
29, 1947.  
Northwest - Dalton  
Northeast - Ashby  
Southeast - Essex St.  
Southwest - Johnson

BOOK 6175 PAGE 629

DATE - August 26, 1975

CONSIDERATION - None given

GRANTOR (seller) - Laurence C. Post Jr. and Donald  
Koleman trustees

GRANTEE (buyer) - Nancy L. Witham trustee of 98 Essex  
Street Realty Trust

DESCRIPTION - Land and buildings

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Being the same premises conveyed to  
us by deed of Albin J. Jarzynka on  
December 12, 1972.

BOOK 6277 PAGE 653

DATE - August 13, 1976

CONSIDERATION - None given

GRANTOR (seller) - Nancy L. Witham trustee of 98 Essex Street Realty Trust

GRANTEE (buyer) - Le Roy L. Smith II trustee of The Phillis Knoche Realty Trust, recorded in Manassas, VA

DESCRIPTION - Land and buildings

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Being the same premises conveyed by deed of Laurence C. Post Jr. and Donald Koleman trustees of Old Salem Realty Trust as recorded in book 6175 page 629.

BOOK 6780 PAGE 435

DATE - December 27, 1980

CONSIDERATION - None given

GRANTOR (seller) - Charlotte S. Post, trustee of the Phyllis Knoche Realty Trust

GRANTEE (buyer) - Charlotte S. Post in her individual capacity

DESCRIPTION - 98 Essex Street the said premises are more fully described in deed from William H. Johnson to Henry L. Lambert on February 5, 1859, recorded in book 582 page 240.

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Meaning to convey the premises conveyed to the Phillis Knoche Realty Trust on August 13, 1976.

BOOK 7383 PAGE 33

DATE - February 28, 1984  
CONSIDERATION - Nominal  
GRANTOR (seller) - Charlotte S. Post  
GRANTEE (buyer) - Charlotte S. and Richard A. Clemens  
Trustees of the Flint Realty Trust  
DESCRIPTION - Land and buildings #98 Essex St.  
PREVIOUS REFERENCE - The same conveyed by Phyllis Knoche  
Realty Trust on December 27, 1980 as  
recorded in book 6780 page 435.

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.

98 ESSEX STREET

PERIOD: FEDERAL

"This is a three-story plus a hip roof rectangular house with its narrow end on the street. Some of its old clapboards have been covered with shingles. A pedimented enclosed porch in the yard on the west is the main entrance to the house. The porch is trimmed with reeded pilasters and a dentil cornice - typical Federal details. There is a small rear ell attached to the main house." (Salem Historic District Study Committee Investigation)

The lot on which this house stands was part of the land granted to Joseph Gray in 1672. It remained in the Gray family for many years. William Gray died in 1805, having devised his mansion house and land to his sons William and John. The original lot was divided by the brothers, in January 1807. John Gray received the east portion of land, now called 98 Essex St. The Gray family "mansion" was on the west, or William's half.

A mortgage from John Gray to Richard Manning, on January 10, 1807, states that the land was conveyed with the building that is or may be erected thereon (book 181 page 15). The mortgage to Ebenezer Beckford (book 183 page 102) mentions one dwelling house in 1808, while the assignment of the same mortgage in 1817 states that there are two dwelling houses on the lot (book 214 page 179).

The tax records for John Gray:

1807 pt h(ouse) 600, new house \$500

1808 h 1500, h on Bath street (now Washington Sq.) 400

1809 h 1500

The tax remains the same until 1818 when he is taxed for pt. h and school room

John Gray, the son of William, was born on January 12, 1761. He married Elizabeth Archer on November 18, 1783. She died on August 17, 1814. Mr. Gray married 2nd Mary Holman on February 19, 1815. For many years he was the master of the Centre Grammar School, and subsequently an active town constable. In 1801 he was the collector of private subscriptions to improve the common. John Gray died on December 9, 1838 at the age of 78.

October 7, 1817

To be sold at Public Auction on Saturday Oct. 19, at 12 o'clock AM

All that well known pleasant Real Estate occupied by Mr. John Gray, situate between Essex and Bath streets; measures on Essex street about 38 1/2 ft. - running North by land of Wm Gray jr., about 153 ft. to Bath street; thence easterly about 40 1/2 ft. to land of Susan Flint; thence by said Flint's land 147 to Essex street - The house on Essex street is well calculate for boarders or a shop in front - being near the center of business. The house on Bath street is a neat pleasant tenement for a small family - The sale to be on the premises, where conditions will be made known - The houses can be examined in the afternoon of Saturday the 12 inst. - on day of sale.

T. Deland auct.

May 1841

Dwelling House at Auction

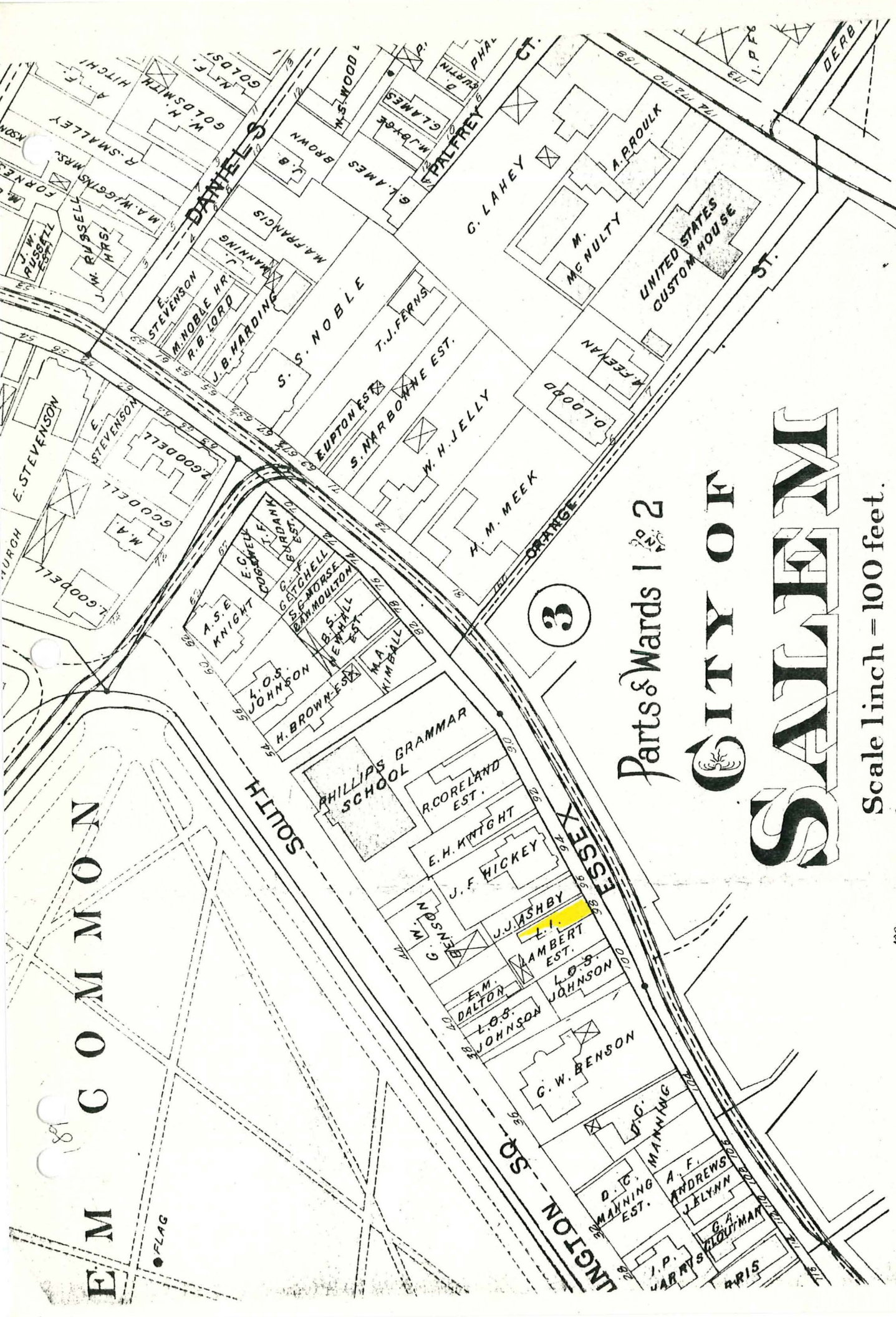
The three story dwelling house #98 Essex street, with the land under and adjoining now occupied by Capt. Bridges. The house is in good repair, and very convenient. For terms and particulars apply to

G. G. Newhall auct.



1874

of a part of Congress in the year 1874 by G. M. Hopkins in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington, D.C.



Parts of Wards 1 & 2

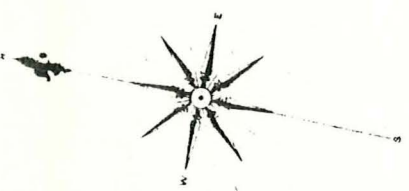
# CITY OF SALEM

Scale 1 inch = 100 feet.



**3**

10



9

WASHINGTON SQ. E.

DANIELS

2

ORANGE

CURTIS

HODGES

HERBERT

SQ. S.

PHILLIPS SCHOOL  
BUILT 1933

ESSEX

U.S. PROPERTY

HOME FOR AGED WOMEN  
(PRIVATE)

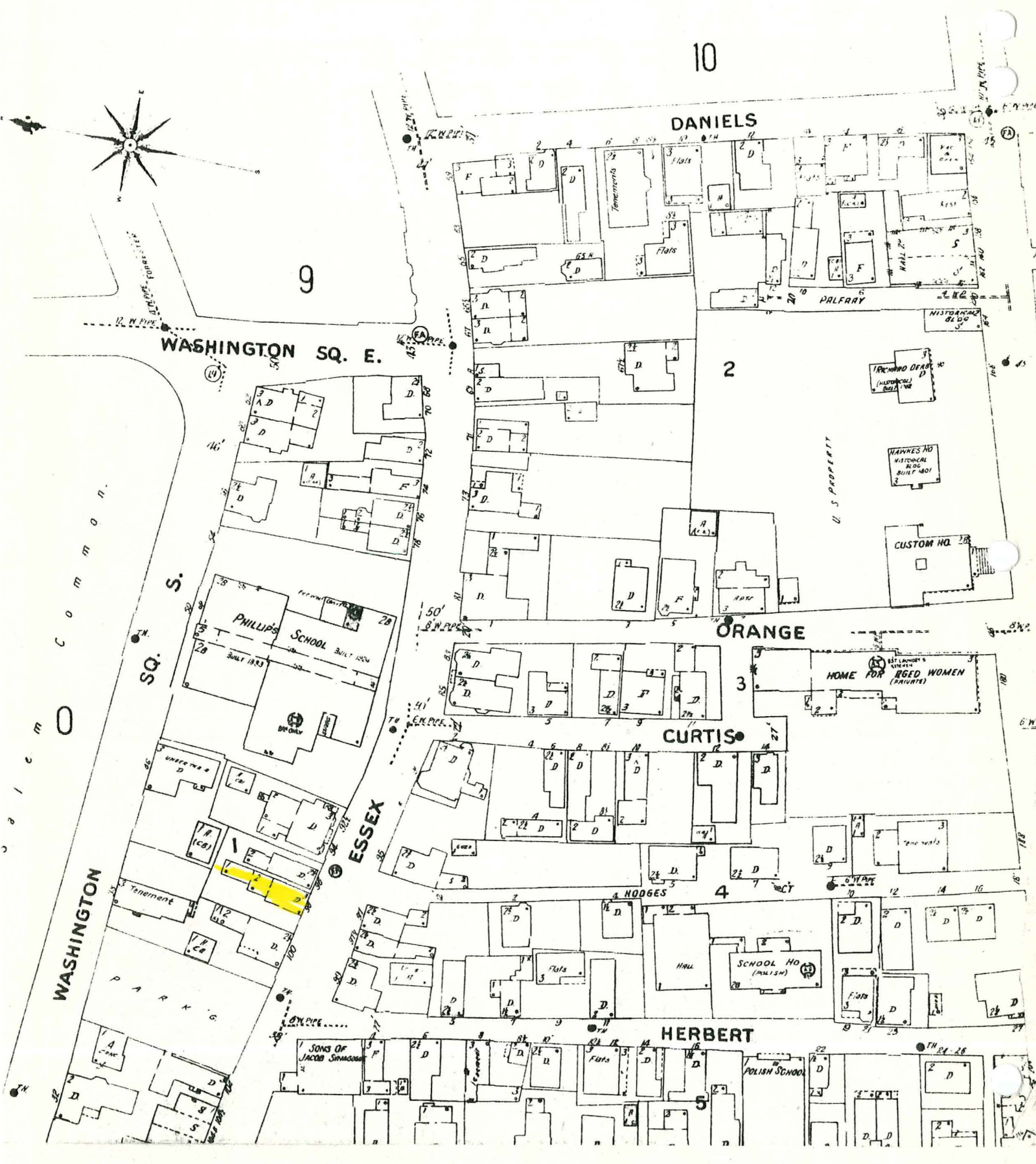
SCHOOL HO.  
(POLISH)

SONS OF JACOB SIMONSON

POLISH SCHOOL

WASHINGTON PARK

WASHINGTON COMMONS





***98 Essex Street, Salem***

Built 1807 for  
John Gray  
Schoolmaster

Girlhood home of  
Fidelia Bridges,  
Artist

At right: photocopy of  
her 1873 watercolor,  
*Apple Blossoms & Sparrows*



## ***98 Essex Street, Salem***

**According to available evidence, this house was built for John Gray, schoolmaster, in 1807. In the 1840s it was the girlhood home of Fidelity Bridges, who became a famous painter of birds, flowers, and landscapes.**

By the end of 1806 the brothers John Gray, a schoolmaster, and William Gray Jr., a painter, had decided on a division of their deceased father William's homestead property fronting on Essex Street and running back to the common. John wanted the empty lot, worth \$1000, to the east of his father's old house; William wanted the old house and its lot, valued at \$1650. On 10 Jan. 1807 John Gray took possession of the lot fronting 38' 4" on Essex Street thence running northerly 49' through the well to a point, thence running westerly 2' 7", thence running northerly 104' on the land set off to William, bounded north 40' 6" on Washington Square, and bounded east 157' 8" on land of Susannah Flint (ED 181:15). On the same day William Gray became the owner of the mansion house of their deceased father, with land fronting 43' 4" on Essex Street, bounded east on the land set off to John Gray, north 40' 6" on Washington Square, west on land of Benjamin Webb (ED 181:14).

On his newly acquired lot, John Gray, schoolmaster, proceeded to have a house built as his family residence.

In 1806 Salem valuations, John Gray was assessed for "part of a house" worth \$600, stock worth \$300, and income of \$400. On 10 January 1807 John Gray took out a loan with Richard Manning, of Herbert Street, a stable-keeper and stage-line operator, and secured it with his newly acquired lot of land here, together "with (the) building that is or may be erected thereon" (ED 181:15). This shows an intention to build on the lot. In that year, 1807, he was assessed for the same "part of a house" (\$600) as in 1806 but also for a "new house" (\$500) whose low value probably reflects its unfinished state. By the next year, 1808, the new house was listed as a "house" worth \$1500; and he also owned a house on Bath Street, valued at \$400 and occupied by Moses Marshall. This evidence points toward this house (#98 Essex) having been built in 1807.

In 1808 John Gray took out two more loans (with Ebenezer Beckford and Mrs. Hannah Hodges), for \$1700, and secured them with the "dwelling house and other buildings" that stood on the lot at that time (ED 183:102, 185:96). With the additional money, he paid off the contractors and also had the other, smaller, house built on the part of the lot that fronted on the

common. To the west of his house was the old house of his brother William Gray, painter; to the east was a house and land belonging to Susannah (Webb) Flint, widow, who died in 1809.

### ***John Gray (1761-1838)***

John Gray was born in Salem on Jan. 12, 1761. His twin brother, Benjamin, died within two weeks. John was the son of a painter, William Gray (1727-1805), and the grandson of a chairmaker, Benjamin Gray. John's mother was Sarah Mattoon (1729-1801), originally of Newmarket, NH. John grew up with two older siblings, William and Sarah, and a younger brother, Richard. The Gray family homestead was here on Essex Street. As a painter, William Gray made his own paint as well as did the work of painting the insides and outsides of buildings and sailing vessels; and he may have raised his sons in this trade, although not all followed it.

All during John Gray's boyhood, relations between Massachusetts and Britain deteriorated. Salem was still pursuing its main business, overseas trade. Salem's main export was salt cod, which was caught far offshore by Salem and Marblehead fishermen and brought back to the local fishyards, where it was "cured" until it was hard and dry and could be shipped long distances. This was a staple food in Catholic Europe (Spain and Portugal especially) and also in the Caribbean, where it fed the slaves. To Europe went the fish that was "merchantable" (high-grade), and to the Caribbean went the "refuse" (low quality). Either sort, put into a pot of boiling water, would turn into nutritious food. Lumber, horses, cattle, and foodstuffs were also sent to the Caribbean, whence came molasses, sugar, cotton, and mahogany. From Europe came back finished goods (made in India and England), iron, wine, fruit, feathers, and leather. There was also some trade between Salem and the Chesapeake Bay area, which provided corn, wheat, and tobacco, while South Carolina provided rice.

Most merchant vessels were small, under 60 tons. The salt water came in as the South River along Derby Street and all the way to the present Post Office; and in this secure deep-water inner harbor were most of the wharves and warehouses, although some wharves were built along the North River too. William Gray, as a painter, probably painted the houses and the vessels of the merchants, mariners, and artisans of the town. Salem's colonial commerce was active but the imperial authorities limited the Salem merchants to trade with designated British possessions. To the extent that the Salem merchants broke the rules by smuggling and trading with un-approved partners, they made good profits.

Starting in the 1760, after Canada and the Ohio Valley were taken from the French, the English decided to pay for the costs of war and of sustaining an American administrative bureaucracy by squeezing tax revenues out of the colonials' trade. Although they had been under royal governors for two generations, the Americans had been self-governing by town meetings at the local level and, at the provincial level, through an elected legislature. William Gray and his townsmen regarded themselves as a free people, and not as dependents of a far-away mother country. Merchants and mariners had always traded with the Spanish and Dutch in Europe and the various islands of the Caribbean, regardless of their national affiliations; and they deeply resented the British crack-down on this trade, accompanied by privateering against American vessels by both the French and the British.

In 1761, a group of Salem and Boston merchants sued to prevent the use of search warrants ("writs of assistance") by the Customs officials who were trying to inspect their vessels and warehouses. In the courtroom, attorney James Otis Jr. electrified the audience with his attack on British arrogance and his argument for American rights and liberties—an event that John Adams later identified as the birth of "the child independence." Later in the decade, Salemites were roused against the Stamp Act, and applied tar and feathers to a couple of men who disagreed. In Boston, the opposition was even larger and more determined, as mobs attacked the royal officials' houses and beat up their flunkies. The British authorities were surprised at the Americans' resistance to their policies, and feared an insurrection. In 1768, they sent over a small army of occupation and installed it in Boston. Now the Americans were forced to see themselves as misbehaving colonials, and to realize that they were not free. They did not like this picture, and the result was bitter public opposition and more street violence in Boston. The Boston Massacre took place in March, 1770; in short order, all of Massachusetts turned openly against the British, and the clouds of war gathered on the horizon.

Pre-revolutionary Salem had more than its share of Tories; but the Sons of Liberty were in the majority. Wealthy scions of families like the Curwens, Pickmans, and Brownes, stayed loyal to the King, as did many others who had married into the merchant families. In 1774, military rule was imposed from England as Gen. Thomas Gage became governor of Massachusetts and the port of Boston was shut down in punishment for the Tea Party of December, 1773. On June 2, 1774, Salem became the new capital of Massachusetts, as a reward for its supposed loyalty. Governor Gage and his officials relocated to the North Shore, and the

Customs operation was conducted from Marblehead, while Salem became the major seaport of New England, handling virtually all of the business that Boston had done. Hundreds of new people moved to Salem, and the legislature met in Salem's Court House. In short order that legislature, led by Sam Adams, turned into a rebel body, and voted to ignore British laws and to send delegates to a continental congress. Gage tried to shut it down, but it was too late: he had lost control of Massachusetts to the rebel assembly gathered in Salem. All of this must have been very interesting and exciting to thirteen-year-old John Gray and his brothers and friends.

The town still had a powerful and outspoken group of loyalists, led by Peter Frye, a prominent merchant and magistrate whose wife was a Pickman. One night in October, Judge Frye learned just how far the rebels were willing to go: his fine house on Essex Street was burned down and his family barely escaped with their lives as half a block of houses and stores and a church all went up in smoke. Next day, the rebel assembly met again and voted to move their proceedings to Concord. Gage and his officials moved to Boston, and many of the loyalists followed. Outside of Boston, all of Massachusetts was under the control of the rebels.

By January, 1775, loyalists had been purged from the Salem militia regiment, and Col. William Browne was replaced by Col. Timothy Pickering, who was writing a book on military drill. One Sunday in February, 1775, the Revolutionary War almost began in Salem. When everyone was in church, Col. Leslie's redcoats marched overland from Marblehead and arrived in downtown Salem, hoping to seize cannon and munitions in North Salem. They came to a sudden halt at the North Bridge—the Salem men, alerted by a Marblehead rider, had pulled up the draw of the bridge. Rev. Thomas Barnard Jr., of the North Church, engaged Col. Leslie in discussion; and Capt. John Felt, warned Leslie that blood would flow if he did not turn back. Negotiations followed, and agreement was reached: the draw went down, Leslie's men advanced a short distance into North Salem, faced about, and marched back through Salem's South Fields and Marblehead, whose own regiment, led by Col. Jeremiah Lee, could have slaughtered them. Instead, the Marbleheaders fell in behind them, marching in mockery of Leslie's Retreat as the British made their way back to the beach and boarded their whaleboats to return to the transport vessel.

With the battle at Lexington & Concord, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1775, the die was cast. Of course no one knew how the war would end, and there was little to indicate that the colonials could actually defeat the King's army and navy, but virtually every able-bodied Salem man and boy gave himself

over to the cause. Salem's regiment participated in the siege of Boston, as George Washington took command of the army in Cambridge. The British left Boston in March, 1776, never to return. Washington's army was pushed southward from Long Island in a series of defeats, during which Salem's Col. Timothy Pickering became one of the General's most trusted officers, and Quartermaster General of the army. Washington's first victory was the Battle of Trenton, on Christmas Day, 1776, made possible by the Marblehead regiment of Gen. John Glover. Eventually most of the Salem men came home and sailed in privateers for the duration of the war, which continued at sea until 1783.

John Gray may have served in the revolution as a soldier or privateer (I have not found a record of such service).

John Gray was first employed by the town as an English teacher, as of June, 1782, while the war was still being fought at sea (Felt, I:452). He may have taught at the brick centre school house, which stood (until 1785) in the middle of Washington Street, opposite Lynde. On 25 Oct. 1783 John Gray, twenty-two, married Elizabeth Archer (1767-1814), then just sixteen; and in 1784 they had their first child, a daughter whom they named Sarah. They would have many more children, with a new baby coming every two years or so.

In some places, the post-war loss of the former colonial connections and trade routes was devastating, for Americans were prohibited from trading with most British possessions; but in Salem, the merchants and mariners were ready to push their ships and cargoes into all parts of the known world. They did so with astonishing success. For a period of about 25 years, Salem was a famous center of commercial enterprise: by virtue of competing fiercely, pioneering new routes, and opening and dominating new markets, Salem won a high place in the world. Hasket Derby, William Gray, Eben Beckford, and Joseph Peabody were the town's commercial leaders. In 1784, Derby began trade with Russia; and in 1784 and 1785 he dispatched trading vessels to Africa and China, respectively. Voyages to India soon followed, and to the Spice Islands and Pepper Islands (Sumatra, Java, Malaya, etc.).

On March 14, 1785, the inhabitants voted that a new Centre School House should be 24 by 36 feet, and that members of the town private Social Library (which used part of the building) would "pay for such a proportion of its cost as they shall occupy room" (Felt I:453). While teaching at the town school, Mr. Gray also conducted a private school. In those post-war years, there was great enthusiasm for education, as one of

the great opportunities of the new republican society, in which all people were promised opportunities. On 9 Jan. 1786 John Gray advertised that he had begun “a school for reading, writing, and arithmetic, near Mr. Prince’s meeting house” (Felt, I:454), which stood just in from the corner of Essex and Washington Streets. In 1790, Mr. Gray’s proficiency was rewarded with his hiring as master of the town’s Centre School. In this position, he taught up to 100 students, with assistants. Perhaps he gave up his private school at that time, and perhaps turned it over to his brother, for on Dec. 6, 1791, in the newspaper William Gray notified the public that “he will teach both sexes reading, writing, and arithmetic in Mr. Blaney’s chamber” (Felt, I:455). In 1796 (and probably before) John Gray resided in a house on Elm Street (now Hawthorne Boulevard) owned by his father, William Gray, who advertised it for sale in 1796. Evidently it did not sell, for John Gray was residing in a house owned by his father in 1798 (per 1798 direct tax listing); and he was still there in 1800 (per census). Likely he resided there through 1805, the year his father died.

Once again, Salem was a boom-town, fueling much new construction. By the 1790s, the new foreign-trade markets—and the coffee trade, which would be opened in 1798 with Mocha, Arabia—brought great riches to the Salem merchants, and raised the level of wealth throughout the town: new ships were bought and built, more crews were formed with more shipmasters, new shops and stores opened, new partnerships were formed, and new people moved to town. In 1792 Salem’s first bank, the Essex Bank, was founded, although it “existed in experiment a long time before it was incorporated,” per Rev. William Bentley. From a population of 7921 in 1790, the town would grow by 1500 persons in a decade. At the same time, thanks to the economic policies of Alexander Hamilton, Salem vessels were able to transport foreign cargoes tax-free and essentially to serve as the neutral carrying fleet for both Britain and France, which were at war with each other.

In the late 1790s, there was agitation in Congress to go to war with France, which was at war with England. After Pres. Adams’ negotiators were rebuffed by the French leaders in 1797, a quasi-war with France began in summer, 1798, much to the horror of Salem’s George Crowninshield family (father and five shipmaster sons), which had an extensive trade with the French, and whose ships and cargoes in French ports were susceptible to seizure. The quasi-war brought about a political split within the Salem population. Those who favored war with France (and detente with England) aligned themselves with the national Federalist party, led by Hamilton and Salem’s Timothy Pickering (the U.S. Secretary of State). These included most of the merchants, led

locally by the Derby family. Those who favored peace with republican France were the Anti-Federalists, who later became aligned with Pres. Jefferson and his Democratic-Republican party; they were led locally by the Crowninshields. For the first few years of this rivalry, the Federalists prevailed; but after the death of Hasket "King" Derby in 1799 his family's power weakened.

In 1800, Adams negotiated peace with France and fired Pickering, his oppositional Secretary of State. Salem's Federalists merchants erupted in anger, expressed through their newspaper, the *Salem Gazette*. At the same time, British vessels began to harass American shipping. Salem owners bought more cannon and shot, and kept pushing their trade to the farthest ports of the rich East, while also maintaining trade with the Caribbean and Europe. Salem cargos were exceedingly valuable, and Salem was a major center for distribution of merchandise throughout New England: "the streets about the wharves were alive with teams loaded with goods for all parts of the country. It was a busy scene with the coming and going of vehicles, some from long distances, for railroads were then unknown and all transportation must be carried on in wagons and drays. In the taverns could be seen teamsters from all quarters sitting around the open fire in the chilly evenings, discussing the news of the day or making merry over potations of New England rum, which Salem manufactured in abundance." (from Hurd's *History of Essex County*, 1888, p.65).

The Crowninshields, led by brother Jacob, were especially successful, as their holdings rose from three vessels in 1800 to several in 1803. Their bailiwick, the Derby Street district, seemed almost to be a foreign country: in the stores, parrots chattered and monkeys cavorted, and from the warehouses wafted the exotic aromas of Sumatran spices and Arabian coffee beans. From the wharves were carted all manner of strange fruits and blue and red patterned china and piles of gorgeous silks and figured cloths. The greatest of the Salem merchants at this time was William "Billy" Gray—no relation to John Gray—who, by 1808, owned 36 large vessels: 15 ships, 7 barks, 13 brigs, 1 schooner. Salem was then still a town, and a small one by our standards, with a total population of about 9,500 in 1800. Its politics were fierce, and polarized everything. John Gray appears to have been a Federalist in his politics. The two factions attended separate churches, held separate parades, and supported separate schools, military companies, and newspapers. Salem's merchants resided mainly on two streets: Washington (which ended in a wharf on the Inner Harbor, and, above Essex, had the Town House in the middle) and Essex (particularly between what are now Hawthorne Boulevard and North Street). The East Parish (Derby Street area) was for the seafaring families,



shipmasters, sailors, and fishermen. In the 1790s, Federal Street, known as New Street, had more empty lots than fine houses. Chestnut Street did not exist: its site was a meadow.

The Common was not yet Washington Square, and was covered with hillocks, small ponds and swamps, utility buildings, and the alms-house. As the 19<sup>th</sup> century advanced, Salem's commercial prosperity would sweep almost all of the great downtown houses away (the brick Joshua Ward house, built 1784, is a notable exception). One day in the spring of 1801, Col. Elias Hasket Derby (Jr.) sat down and drafted a subscription paper, and put his name at the head of the list, with a pledge of \$100 next to it, for the purpose of leveling the common, filling in its ponds, planting it with grass and poplars, putting up a painted fence, laying out a handsome gravel walk, and in general "decorating it in such a manner as will make it both elegant and convenient, and highly conducive to the health of the inhabitants." Colonel Derby gave the paper to the schoolmaster, John Gray, to do the real work; and Master Gray made the rounds of rich men and middling men and even some poor men and widows, and everyone donated something to make the Common beautiful and to build four arched gateways with Washington's profile emblazoned on each. In November, 1801, the work began, and by 1802 the Common had been transformed, exactly as envisioned (see B.F. Browne's article on the Common in EIHC).

The town's merchants were among the wealthiest in the country, and, in Samuel McIntire, they had a local architect who could help them realize their desires for large and beautiful homes in the latest style. While a few of the many new houses went up in the old Essex-Washington Street axis, most were erected on or near Washington Square or in the Federalist "west end" (Chestnut, Federal, and upper Essex Streets). The architectural style (called "Federal" today) had been developed by the Adam brothers in England and featured fanlight doorways, palladian windows, elongated pilasters and columns, and large windows. It was introduced to New England by Charles Bulfinch in 1790. The State House in Boston was his first institutional composition; and soon Beacon Hill was being built up with handsome residences in the Bulfinch manner.

Samuel McIntire (1757-1811), who was self-educated and who made his living primarily as a wood-carver and carpenter, was quick to adapt the Bulfinch style to Salem's larger lots. McIntire's first local composition, the Jerathmeel Peirce house (on Federal Street), contrasts with his later Adamesque designs. In place of walls of wood paneling, there now appeared plastered expanses painted in bright colors or covered in bold

wallpapers. The Adam style put a premium on handsome casings and carvings of central interior features such door-caps and chimney-pieces (McIntire's specialty). On the exterior, the Adam style included elegant fences; and the houses were often built of brick, with attenuated porticoes and, in the high style, string courses, swagged panels, and even two-story pilasters. The best example of the new style was the Elias Hasket Derby house, co-designed by Bulfinch and McIntire, and built on Essex Street in 1797-8 (demolished in 1815), on the site of today's Town House Square, near the school-house where John Gray presided.

A student would later recall that, c.1800, "beside Mr Lang's (East school), there were two town schools, Master John Gray taught one on the lower floor of the Grammar school house, and Master Isaac Hacker the other, on the spot where the present Hacker school house is (Flint Street)" (EIHC 5:202, memoir of Benjamin F. Browne). The Grammar School House (the building in which Mr. Gray taught) was used also as a private school for preparing Salem boys for college—a different course of instruction altogether from what Mr. Gray provided.

A new bank, the Salem Bank, was formed in 1803, and there were two insurance companies and several societies and associations. The fierce politics and commercial rivalries continued. The ferment of the times is captured in the diary of Rev. William Bentley, bachelor minister of Salem's East Church and editor of the *Register* newspaper. His diary is full of references to the civic and commercial doings of the town, and to the lives and behaviors of all classes of society. He had high hopes for the future of a republican America, with well educated citizens. He observed and fostered the transition in Salem, and wrote in his diary (2 Dec. 1806), "While Salem was under the greatest aristocracy in New England, few men thought, and the few directed the many. Now the aristocracy is gone and the many govern. It is plain it must require considerable time to give common knowledge to the people." On Union Street, not far from Bentley's church, on the fourth of July, 1804, was born a boy who would grow up to eclipse all sons of Salem in the eyes of the world: Nathaniel Hawthorne, whose father would die of fever while on a voyage to the Caribbean in 1808. This kind of untimely death was all too typical of Salem's young seafarers, who fell prey to malaria and other diseases of the Caribbean and Pacific tropics.

In 1806 the Derbys extended their wharf far out into the harbor, tripling its previous length. This they did to create more space for warehouses and ship-berths in the deeper water, at just about the time that the Crowninshields had built their great India Wharf at the foot of now-Webb

Street. The other important wharves were Forrester's (now Central, just west of Derby Wharf), and Union Wharf at the foot of Union Street; and then, farther to the west, a number of smaller wharves extended into the South River (filled in during the late 1800s), all the way to the foot of Washington Street. Each had a warehouse or two, and shops for artisans (coopers, blockmakers, joiners, etc.). The waterfront between Union Street and Washington Street also had lumber yards and several ship chandleries and distilleries, with a Market House at the foot of Central Street, below the Custom House. The wharves and streets were crowded with shoppers, gawkers, hawkers, sailors, artisans ("mechanics"), storekeepers, and teamsters; and just across the way, on Stage Point along the south bank of the South River, wooden barks and brigs and ships were being built in the shipyards.

It was at this time, a high-water mark in Salem's prosperity, that Master Gray chose to build his new house (and add a separate tenement on the land in the rear). The house was finished in fine style, with handsome doors, moldings, and chimney-pieces. It may be that Gray retained the services of Samuel McIntire, the town's pre-eminent carver and finish-carpenter. The downstairs parlor, closest to the street, was completely remodeled c. 1900; but its counterpart upstairs has its original features, including a chimney-piece that resembles known work from McIntire's shop (note: compare with plates in Fiske Kimball's *Mr. Samuel McIntire*: fig. 317, from Jabez Baldwin house, 92 Wash. Sq., 1809-12; Woodbridge house, fig 308; John Gardner house chamber, fig. 246; Frye's tavern, 94 Boston St, fig 338; etc.)

Here in the brand-new house, the Gray family filled all the rooms. The neighborhood was a good one: just to the east, in the Crowninshield house, Rev. William Bentley was a boarder; and across the street lived shipmasters and merchants like the Silsbees and the Knapps. A bit farther down, the neighborhood turned rougher: "Wapping Lane was Daniels Street, but the whole district on the south side of Essex Street, extending from Daniels Street to the Neck Gate, was familiarly called Wapping" and was full of the families of sailors, fishermen, laborers, and maritime artisans; and it was served by the east Church, which stood at the corner of Hardy Street, on Essex (William Bentley was minister) (see B.F. Browne memoir of c.1800, EIHC 5:200).

The Grays were Federalists and members of the uptown Tabernacle Church, which they attended with their large brood filling a pew or two. In 1807 Mrs. Elizabeth Archer Gray was forty, with a family of ten surviving children, ranging from Mary, who was two, to Sarah, 23.

Elizabeth, who had been having children since she was seventeen, was not done yet: she and John became the parents of a daughter, whom they named Emily, on July 22, 1808; and they would have a son, Benjamin Archer Gray, on July 6, 1811.

Master Gray was not the only schoolmaster in this neighborhood: just down Essex Street, same side, lived John Southwick, a fellow pedagogue. Mr. Southwick, a Quaker, kept a private school for 80 scholars, well managed and well instructed, some young seamen whom he taught navigation, a stammerer whom he cured, two boys from Portland who boarded with him, and some foreign boys, one Lauriat later a chemist & aeronaut, one an East Indian. Master Southwick taught French as well as more usual subjects. He also “kept an evening school for large boys, in the winter. They were mechanics’ apprentices, clerks, and the like.” Everything went on smoothly enough, till the last evening of the term, when, according to the custom of the times, “confusion reigned—a perfect saturnalia” of throwing things and letting loose, followed the next day by a lot of cleaning-up at school (B.F. Browne, EIHC 5:201).

Salem’s boom came to an end with a crash in January, 1808, when Jefferson and the Congress imposed an embargo on all shipping in hopes of forestalling war with Britain. The Embargo, which was widely opposed in New England, proved futile and nearly ruinous in Salem, where commerce ceased. As a hotbed of Democratic-Republicanism, Salem’s East Parish (Wapping) and its seafarers, led by the Crowninshields, loyally supported the Embargo until it was lifted in spring, 1809. Shunned by the other Salem merchants for his support of the Embargo, the eminent Billy Gray took his large fleet of ships—fully one-third of Salem’s tonnage—and moved to Boston, whose commerce was thereby much augmented. Gray’s removal eliminated a huge amount of Salem wealth, shipping, import-export cargos, and local employment. Gray soon switched from the Federalist party, and was elected Lt. Governor under Gov. Elbridge Gerry, a native of Marblehead. Salem resumed its seafaring commerce for three years, but still the British preyed on American shipping; and in June, 1812, war was declared against Britain.

Although the merchants had tried to prevent the war, when it came, Salem swiftly fitted out 40 privateers manned by Marblehead and Salem crews, who also served on U.S. Navy vessels, including the frigate *Constitution*. Many more local vessels could have been sent against the British, but some of the Federalist merchants held them back. In addition, Salem fielded companies of infantry and artillery. Salem and Marblehead privateers were largely successful in making prizes of British supply

vessels. While many of the town's men were wounded in engagements, and some were killed, the possible riches of privateering kept the men returning to sea as often as possible. The first prizes were captured by a 30-ton converted fishing schooner, the *Fame*, and by a 14-ton luxury yacht fitted with one gun, the *Jefferson*. Of all Salem privateers, the Crowninshields' 350-ton ship *America* was most successful: she captured 30-plus prizes worth more than \$1,100,000.

Salem erected forts and batteries on its Neck, to discourage the British warships that cruised these waters. On land, the war went poorly for the United States, as the British captured Washington, DC, and burned the Capitol and the White House. Along the western frontier, U.S. forces were successful against the weak English forces; and, as predicted by many, the western expansionists had their day. At sea, as time wore on, Salem vessels were captured, and its men imprisoned or killed. After almost three years, the war was bleeding the town dry. Hundreds of Salem men and boys were in British prison-ships and at Dartmoor Prison in England. John Gray Jr., twenty-three in 1814, probably served in the war, perhaps on a privateer or as a soldier at the fort (he would later make a career in the military).

**John Gray (1761-1838)**, b. 12 Jan. 1761, twin, son of William Gray & Sarah Mattoon, died 9 Dec. 1838. He m/1 (pub. 25 Oct. 1783) **Elizabeth Archer (1767-1814)**, d/o Benjamin Archer & Elizabeth Holman, died 17 Aug. 1814. He m/2 19 Feb. 1815 **Mary Holman (1768-1844)**, b. 11 March 1768, d/o William & Mary Holman, died 2 Oct. 1844. Known issue, all by Elizabeth:

1. Sarah, 1784, d. 6 May 1830.
2. Betsy, 1787, d. 7 Jan. 1792, in her fifth year.
3. Lucy, 1789, m. Francis H. Boardman
4. John Jr., 1791, died at Eastport, Maine, 20 Jan. 1824.
5. Elizabeth, 1793, v. 1839
6. Eliza, 1795, d. 11 July 1864.
7. George, 1796
8. Edward, 1798, d. 1 April 1800, in his 2<sup>nd</sup> year.
9. William Browne, 1799, m. 1822 Hannah Collins; had issue.
10. Caroline, 1800, d. 1838
11. Edward, 1803, v. 1839
12. Mary Needham, 1805, d. 15 April 1836.
13. Emily, 22 July 1808, m. Samuel D. Stanwood
14. Benjamin Archer, 6 July 1811, m. 1835 Martha Ann Agge
15. William Augustus, 16 Aug. 1814, v. 1839

At the outset of 1814, in her 47<sup>th</sup> year, Mrs. Elizabeth Archer Gray discovered she was pregnant again. On August 16, 1814, she gave birth to William Augustus Gray; and on August 17<sup>th</sup> she died. One can only imagine the grief that her sudden death brought to her husband, children, and large circle of friends and family members. With so many children to care for, John Gray did the customary thing: he looked for a new wife within the range of his late wife's relations; and he married her cousin, Miss Mary Holman, 46, on Feb. 19, 1815. Mrs. Mary Gray, who would have no children of her own, became the stepmother of thirteen children, and raised them all to adulthood

The war continued, much to the dismay of the Federalists. At the Hartford Convention in 1814, party delegates met to consider what they could do to end the war and restore the region's commerce. Sen. Timothy Pickering of Salem led the extreme Federalists in proposing a series of demands which, if not met by the federal government, could lead to New England's seceding from the United States; but the Pickering faction was countered by Harrison G. Otis of Boston and the moderates, who prevailed in sending a conciliatory message to Congress.

At last, in February, 1815, peace was restored.

Master John Gray, the excellent and long-serving schoolmaster of Salem's public Centre Writing School, taught for a few years more. During most of his long tenure (1782-1817), the curriculum of the public schools included spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic, but not grammar or geography, introduced in 1816, the last year that John Gray served as master of the Centre School. It was later noted that, for lack of instruction in grammar, "the larger portion of our prominent townsmen, educated in the public schools, betrayed, in their speech and composition, a want of grammatical acquaintance with their native tongue" (Felt, I:464.0). In 1817, the Centre School building (the Town House on Washington Street) was torn down, and a new Town House built in Derby Square. Master Gray decided to resign as Centre School master (after 27 years in his position); and on Sept. 1, 1817, Mr. Amory Felton took the place of Mr. John Gray in the Centre school. "The latter gentleman has held this station over twenty years. In this period, he faithfully performed much service for the benefit of hundreds under his tuition. He soon opened a private school" (Felt, I:465).

In addition to resigning as public schoolmaster and opening a private school in 1817, John Gray decided to move his family from 98 Essex Street. As was usual for those days, he put his homestead up for sale with

an auctioneer; and on 14 Oct. 1817 the following notice appeared in the *Salem Gazette*: “To be sold at public auction, on Saturday, Oct. 19, at 12 o’clock, all that well known pleasant real estate occupied by Mr. John Gray, situated between Essex and Bath Streets; measures on Essex Street about 38½ feet, running northerly by land of Wm. Gray Jr. about 153’ to Bath Street, thence easterly about 40½’ to land of Susan Flint, thence by said Flint’s land 147’ to Essex Street. The house on Essex Street is well calculated for boarders, or a shop in front, being near the centre of business. The house on Bath Street is a neat pleasant tenement for a small family... T. Deland, auctioneer”

The Gray property was sold to the principal mortgage-holders, merchant William Silsbee and his sisters Hannah & Elizabeth, for the value of the mortgages that were on it, on 23 October 1817 (ED 214:179). That was the end of John Gray’s connection with the house he had built ten years before; but he himself lived on for another 21 years.

John Gray started up a private school, in Brown Street, by April, 1818, advertising that “the most important and useful branches of an English education will be taught, and his best endeavors exerted for the improvement of his pupils” (see *Essex Register*, 4 April 1818). Eventually, in his old age, became a town constable, or police officer, keeping the watch. In 1830, aged 69 years, he resided nearby, on Essex Street, just west of Elm (Hawthorne Boulevard); and in the 1830 census his household (p. 458, 1830 census) was still a busy one: himself, two boys 15-20, a girl 15-20, two women in their 20s, a woman in her 30s, and his wife, Mary, in her 60s). He evidently occupied the Daniel Ropes estate, with house and shop (see 1831 valuations). By 1836 (per 1837 directory): John Gray was listed as “constable, 13 Mall St.” where he and Mary lived with their sons William A. Gray, a fancy goods dealer at 139 Essex, and Benjamin A. Gray, who had a clothing store at 16 Neptune, and their families

Mr. John Gray died of lung fever, after a short illness, on Sunday, Dec. 9, 1838, in his 78<sup>th</sup> year; and the funeral was held from his residence in Mall Street (per 11 Dec. 1838, *Salem Gazette*).

### ***Anna (Fiske) Allen (1770-1826)***

The new owners, the Silsbees, resided nearby in 1817, the year they took possession. Their home was the large house at the corner of Orange Street, and they used this house for rental income. In 1820, the tenant here

was Mrs. Anna (Fiske) Allen and her children (see 1820 census, p. 57). She had moved in here after residing on Neptune Street (lower Charter Street), in a large house (it stood below the present Immaculate Conception Church) that belonged to her late father, Gen. John Fiske, who had been a prominent shipmaster and merchant in his day.

Anna Fiske (1770-1826) had grown up in relative luxury, and in 1798 had married Capt. Edward Allen Jr. (1764-1845), a shipmaster who had been raised in the Wapping neighborhood. His father, Capt. Edward Allen (1735-1803) had a large mansion on Derby Street and a fine farm out on the Neck, down near the Willows. Edward Allen Jr. was a shipmaster at an early age, and a member of the Salem Marine Society as of 1797. He was quite prosperous, and was able to purchase the Allen farm, and to raise his young children in the same comfort that he and his wife had enjoyed; but the Embargo of 1807-8 proved damaging to his interests, and he lost heavily in business in Spain; and then he experienced total business failure in 1810. This must have been nightmarish for the Allens, who had only to think back to Mrs. Allen's father, General Fisk, who, after a long career as a successful merchant, had suffered terrible business reverses that had driven him into a deep depression and early death.

His own reverses were more than Capt. Allen could handle, and he left Salem to start over elsewhere (see EIHC 73:173). His wife and children he left behind, to be supported by relatives and by whatever he could send home. Mrs. Anna Fisk Allen brought up her children on her own, and seems to have done quite well, raising three daughters and at least two sons who became merchants.

Mrs. Allen could buy things locally, for the street was full of stores and shops. One man, recalling things as they were c. 1820, wrote that in the fine brick building, corner of Elm and Essex (site of Hawthorne Hotel), the eastern store was at one time occupied "by Josiah Dow with dry goods and it was known as Dow's long rooms. Then came Peter E. Webster and Timothy Brooks, who did a large business in groceries in 1825" (per Augustus J. Archer, *Salem Gazette* 7 Feb. 1890). Mr. Webster was a neighbor of Mrs. Allen here on Essex Street.

Anna Fiske Allen died in 1826, aged 56 years, and may have been residing here at the time of her decease. She had the comfort of knowing that her children were headed for some level of success in life.

As a lad, her son John Fiske Allen (1807-1876) was a clerk and bookkeeper for the wealthy merchant Pickering Dodge, whose office was



on Fish Street, just west of the Burying Point. Fiske then became a shipmaster, and then had a partnership with his brother Edward. In 1833 he married Mr. Dodge's daughter, Lucy Pickering Dodge, and through her became independently wealthy. They resided on Chestnut Street, and Mr. Allen devoted himself to horticulture, building greenhouses on Flint Street, and studying the grape, on which he published scientific articles beginning in 1847. Their only child, Pickering Dodge Allen (1838-1863), would become a gallant officer in the Civil War. He saw much combat, and died of wounds in Louisiana. Lucy would die in 1840; and by a second wife, Mary H. Cleveland, Mr. J. F. Allen would have two daughters (see EIHC 14:272-275).

The Silsbee owners rented it out for a while, and then decided to sell. On 9 October 1827 the Silsbees (William, Hannah, and Elizabeth) for \$2800 sold to brothers Joseph Dalton and Eleazer M. Dalton, Salem traders, the two houses and the land that they had bought in 1817 from John Gray, plus a small lot adjoining to the east (ED 247:156).

### ***The Daltons***

Joseph Dalton (b. 1787) and Eleazer Moses Dalton (1795-1886) were in the shoe business together. Natives of Salem, they were sons of an Irish mariner, Edward Dalton, who settled in Salem, married Sarah Moses in 1778, and served in the revolutionary war as a privateer crewman: in 1782 he was a gunner on board the privateer *Junius Brutus*, Capt. John Brooks (EIHC 1:112). Joseph and Eleazer had a sister and four brothers, three of whom were impressed into the British navy in the War of 1812 and never returned, and one of whom, Samuel, a seaman on board the ship *George*, died on her passage to Calcutta (see Salem *Gazette*, 14 Oct. 1817). In the War of 1812, it would seem that the Daltons actually fought in the army (most Salem men served as a garrison at the local forts and did not see action): Eleazer served in Colonel Wright's regiment, and Joseph served in Col. McCobb's regiment (EIHC 1:112).

Post-war, the Salem merchants rebuilt their fleets and resumed their worldwide trade, slowly at first, and then to great effect. Many new partnerships were formed. The pre-war partisan politics of the town were not resumed post-war, as the middle-class "mechanics" (artisans) became more powerful and brought about civic harmony, largely through the Salem Charitable Mechanic Association (founded 1817). Rev. William Bentley, keen observer and active citizen during Salem's time of greatest prosperity and fiercest political divisions, died in 1819, the year in which

a new U.S. Custom House was built on the site of the George Crowninshield mansion, at the head of Derby Wharf. Into the 1820s foreign trade continued prosperous; and new markets were opened with Madagascar (1820), which supplied tallow and ivory, and Zanzibar (1825), whence came coffee, ivory, and gum copal, used to make varnish. This opened a huge and lucrative trade in which Salem dominated, and its vessels thus gained access to all of the east African ports.

In 1820 (p. 48, census) Eleazer Dalton lived in the vicinity of County Street (now Federal Street, near St. Peters St.). He and his brother Joseph were in the shoe business by 23 Oct. 1818. A typical advertisement is the one from the 1 Feb. 1820 front page of the *Salem Gazette*: "Ball Shoes. J. & E.M. Dalton have for sale, at their shop in Essex Street nearly opposite the Sun tavern, and assortment of ladies' English kid slippers. Also, ladies' misses', boys' and children's morocco and kid leather boots and shoes, of every description. Gentlemen's boots, shoes, over-shoes, and pumps, comprising as complete an assortment as can be found in town, made of the best stock, and in a neat and elegant style. J. & E.M. D. return thanks for the liberal encouragement they have received, and flatter themselves that by keeping an assortment of the best stock—having their work executed in a superior style, and by strict attention to business, to merit a continuance of the patronage so very liberally bestowed upon them. N.B. Ladies' cord and over-shoes made at short notice."

Joseph Dalton married Rebecca Driver; and they had surviving children Thomas D. (1809), Joseph A. (1816), Samuel M. (1818), Rebecca D. (1820), Edward H. (1821), Eleazer M. (1825), and Mary, born 4 April 1833, probably in this house. Joseph's younger brother and partner, Eleazer M. Dalton, married Harriet Boardman in 1822, and they had Edward E., Lydia, and others.

Salem's general maritime foreign commerce fell off sharply in the late 1820s. Imports in Salem ships were supplanted by the goods that were now being produced in great quantities in America. The interior of the country was being opened for settlement, and some Salemites moved away. To the north, the falls of the Merrimack River powered large new textile mills (Lowell was founded in 1823), which created great wealth for their investors; and in general it seemed that the tide of opportunity was ebbing away from Salem. To stem the flow of talent from the town and to harness its potential water power for manufacturing, Salem's merchants and capitalists banded together in 1826 to raise the money to dam the North River for industrial power, but the effort failed, and caused several

leading citizens to move to Boston, the hub of investment in the new economy.

By 1828, the Daltons were shoe manufacturers; and they mortgaged their property in December to Miss Lydia Boardman of Marblehead (ED 250:117). This was the first of several mortgages they would take out over the years. In 1830 Joseph Dalton and his family were the residents in this house (#98), while it seems that Eleazer and family lived in the smaller house fronting on Washington Square (see 1830 census, p. 451, and 1831 valuations, p.56). In that year, 1830, Salem was rocked by the murder of old Capt. Joseph White, in his bed at home on April 6<sup>th</sup>. The killers were sought high and low, and Salem was gripped in fear until the murderers were identified: Joe and Frank Knapp, kinsmen of the Captain, who resided just across and down the street in a large house on Essex between Curtis and Orange Streets. They had planned the murder, and hired Dick Crowninshield as the killer. Among the less infamous local notables were Nathaniel Hawthorne, the writer, who grew up in this neighborhood and resided in a house on Union Street; and John M. Ives, the noted bookseller and private library proprietor—later a leading pomologist and author—dwelt with his family in a house just to the east in 1830.

Salem had not prepared for the industrial age, and had few natural advantages. The North River served not to power factories but mainly to flush the waste from the 25 tanneries that had set up along its banks. As the decade wore on, and the new railroads and canals, all running and flowing to Boston from points north, west, and south, diverted both capital and trade away from the coast. Salem's remaining merchants took their equity out of local wharves and warehouses and ships and put it into the stock of manufacturing and transportation companies. Some merchants did not make the transition, and were ruined. Old-line areas of work, like rope-making, sail-making, and ship chandleries, gradually declined and disappeared. Salem slumped badly, but, despite all, the voters decided to charter their town as a city in 1836—the third city to be formed in the state, behind Boston and Lowell. City Hall was built 1837-8 and the city seal was adopted with an already-anachronistic Latin motto of “to the farthest port of the rich East”—a far cry from “Go West, young man!” The Panic of 1837, a brief, sharp, nationwide economic depression, caused even more Salem families to head west in search of fortune and a better future.

Throughout the 1830s, the leaders of Salem scrambled to re-invent an economy for their fellow citizens, many of whom were mariners without

much sea-faring to do. Ingenuity, ambition, and hard work would have to carry the day. One inspiration was the Salem Laboratory, Salem's first science-based manufacturing enterprise, founded in 1813 to produce chemicals. At the plant built in 1818 in North Salem on the North River, the production of alum and blue vitriol was a specialty; and it proved a very successful business. Salem's whale-fishery led to the manufacturing of high-quality candles at Stage Point, along with machine oils. The candles proved very popular. Lead-manufacturing began in the 1820s, and grew large after 1830, when Wyman's gristmills on the Forest River, at the head of Salem Harbor, were retooled for making high-quality white lead and sheet lead. These enterprises were a start toward taking Salem in a new direction. In 1838 the Eastern Rail Road, headquartered in Salem, began operating between Boston and Salem, which gave the local people a direct route to the region's largest market. The new railroad tracks ran right over the middle of the Mill Pond; the tunnel under Washington Street was built in 1839; and the line was extended to Newburyport in 1840.

Amid these changes, some members of Salem's waning merchant class continued to pursue their sea-borne businesses into the 1840s; but it was an ebb tide, with unfavorable winds. Boston, transformed into a modern megaport with efficient railroad and highway distribution to all markets, had subsumed virtually all foreign trade other than Salem's continuing commerce with Zanzibar. The sleepy waterfront at Derby Wharf, with an occasional arrival from Africa and regular visits from schooners carrying wood from Nova Scotia, is depicted in 1850 by Hawthorne in his mean-spirited "introductory section" to **The Scarlet Letter**, which he began while working in the Custom House.

The Daltons sometimes struggled with their shoe business, and had to give up pieces of their property to satisfy the mortgage-holders. The national Panic of 1837 no doubt damaged their finances. In 1838 they rented out this house to Capt. Henry G. Bridges, who would live here for several years. Joseph Dalton moved out to Boston Street and became a tanner, while Eleazer continued to live in the small house on Bath Street (Washington Square). Finally, in May, 1841, the Daltons sold this house (#98) and its own parcel of land to George Wheatland Esq. (ED 325:84). Mr. Wheatland for \$2035 sold to Thomas Barker, gentleman, the house and land occupied by the bridges family, who would continue there throughout the 1840s (ED 324:237).

Although Hawthorne had no interest in describing it, Salem's transformation did occur in the 1840s, as more industrial methods and

machines were introduced, and many new companies in new lines of business arose. The Gothic symbol of Salem's new industrial economy was the large twin-towered granite train station—the “stone depot”—smoking and growling with idling locomotives. It stood on filled-in land at the foot of Washington Street, where the merchants' wharves had been; and from it the trains carried many valuable products as well as passengers. The tanning and curing of leather was very important in Salem by the mid-1800s. On and near Boston Street, along the upper North River, there were 41 tanneries in 1844, and 85 in 1850, employing 550 hands. The leather business would continue to grow in importance throughout the 1800s. In 1846 the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company completed the construction at Stage Point of the largest factory building in the United States, 60' wide by 400' long. It was an immediate success, and hundreds of people found employment there, many of them living in tenements built nearby. It too benefited from the Zanzibar and Africa trade, as it produced light cotton cloth for use in the tropics. Also in the 1840s, a new method was introduced to make possible high-volume industrial shoe production. In Lynn, the factory system was perfected, and that city became the nation's leading shoe producer. Salem had shoe factories too, and attracted shoe workers from outlying towns and the countryside. Even the population began to transform, as hundreds of Irish families, fleeing the Famine in Ireland, settled in Salem and gave the industrialists a big pool of cheap labor.

### ***Capt. Henry G. Bridges (1789-1849)***

Henry Bridges was born 1789 in Andover, the son of James Bridges and Elizabeth Gardner (1750-1834). He had an Andover cousin of the same name. Henry's mother was born in Salem in 1750, the daughter of the opulent merchant Samuel Gardner (a Harvard graduate) and his wife Esther Orne Gardner. Elizabeth Gardner had married, first, Nathaniel Dabney, a Salem apothecary who, as a Tory, had fled abroad at the time of the Revolution, and was lost at sea in 1784 as he was returning to America. By him, she had a son, Nathaniel G. Dabney, who was Henry's older half-brother. In 1787 Elizabeth (Gardner) Dabney married James Bridges, a prosperous farmer and retailer of Andover; and there she resided with him. In 1788 she gave birth to a daughter, Fidelia; and on May 11, 1789, she gave birth to a son, whom they named Henry Gardner Bridges. The baby would never grow to know his father, who died on Nov. 23, 1789, aged 38 years. With three children to care for, Mrs. Bridges remained in Andover. In 1793 she married a third husband, Ebenezer Stevens (d. 1821), with whom she had a daughter, Elizabeth

Stevens. Mr. Stevens was Henry Bridges' step-father and presumably raised him as a son.

Henry had little interest in farming, but wished to follow the sea like his Salem ancestors. He was a mariner by the time of the War of 1812; and in 1814 he was enlisted in a Salem militia company. In April 1815 he was described as an Andover mariner when he mortgaged some of his property (ED 206:266). His sister, Fidelia (1788-1854), married Capt. John Endicott of Salem; and in May, 1815, Henry sailed as mate with Capt. Endicott on board the Salem ship *Janus*, owned by Joseph Peabody and Gideon Tucker, on a voyage to Anjer and Manila (Henry kept the logbook). He sailed from Salem again with Capt. Endicott on the *Janus*, voyaging from November, 1817, to April, 1819, round-trip to Sumatra, Malaya, and Manila (see logbooks at PEM). Henry moved to Salem, for in March, 1820, he was a Salem mariner when he sold some land in Andover (ED233:177). By then he was thirty, and still unmarried.

Henry G. Bridges received his shipmaster's papers by July, 1822, when he commanded the brig *Cambrian* of Salem, owned by Joseph Peabody. At that time he joined the East India Marine Society. He made a voyage to the Mediterranean and then to South America, returning in 1823. He soon set out in command of the same vessel, and sailed to France and then Cuba, returning to Salem in March, 1824 (see logbooks, PEM). By these voyages, he was, evidently, able to make enough money to marry his fiancée, Eliza Chadwick of Salem. The wedding took place on 12 May, 1824. Eliza Chadwick (1791-1850) was the daughter of a Salem merchant, Gilbert Chadwick, and his wife, Elizabeth ("Betsy") Kimball (she came from Andover). The Chadwicks lived on Essex Street, west of Elm Street (Hawthorne Boulevard), on the south side, opposite the mansion of Joseph Peabody, owner of the *Cambrian*.

Capt. Henry G. Bridges remained an active commander of large merchant vessels for the next 25 years, during which he was more often at sea than at home in Salem. Henry and Eliza Bridges had seven children, and three of them died young, two in the year 1831, to the terrible grief of the family members. The family lived in the Chadwick house, with other Chadwicks, in 1830, having moved that year from a house on Summer Street (see notice in *Salem Gazette*). In 1833 (per *Yankee India* by Susan Bean) Captain Bridges succeeded Capt. James B. Briggs as master of the East India merchant ship *Apthorp*, out of Boston, in trade with Calcutta.

In April, 1834, in Andover, Capt. Bridges' mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Stevens, died at the age of eighty-four. One month later, in May, 1834, a

daughter, Fidelia, named for Henry's sister, was born to Henry and Eliza; but two weeks later the baby's brother, Henry Jr., five, was carried off by scarlet fever. By 1836 the Bridges family resided at 17 Pickman Street (per 1837 directory); and then they moved to a house in ward one. In 1838, Captain Bridges took a lease on this house at 98 Essex Street (it was called #96 in valuations for 1838 and 1839; #98 in 1840 & 1841; #96 in 1842; and #98 in 1844 onward—it was all the same house, with different numbers recorded by the assessors).

The Bridges family would reside here for twelve years, into the spring of 1850.

***Henry Gardner Bridges (1789-1849), born in Andover, 11 May 1789, son of James Bridges & Elizabeth Gardner; he died in Whampoa, China, on a voyage, on 21 Dec. 1849. He married May 1824 Eliza Chadwick (1791-1850), dtr. of Gilbert Chadwick & Elizabeth Kimball; she died 19 March 1850, of a liver complaint. Known issue, baptized at the North Church; buried at Broad Street graveyard, surname Bridges:***

1. *Eliza Chadwick, 10 Jan. 1826, teacher, died 1856, Brooklyn, NY.*
2. *Gilbert Chadwick, June, 1828, died 8 July 1831*
3. *Henry G., 28 April 1829, died of scarlet fever, 1 June 1834.*
4. *Anna, 1830, died 26 June 1831.*
5. *Elizabeth Gardner, 21 Feb. 1831*
6. *Fidelia, 19 May 1834, artist.*
7. *Henry G., 27 Dec. 1835*

Capt. Henry G. Bridges was master of Gideon Tucker's 277-ton ship *Janus* (and her successor of the same name, for the first one was sold as a whaler in 1833) on some of twelve voyages from 1820 to 1845, and William Brown was master on the other voyages (GGP 3:154) (Ship Registers, p.239). The first *Janus* was built in Salem in 1804, for owners Joseph Peabody & Gideon Tucker, and Capt. John Endicott was her first master.

He commanded the ship *Navigator* in 1839, and the ship *Isaac Hicks* in 1842. As master of the ship *Brenda* in 1845 he made the last entry into Salem from an Indian port, with a cargo of pepper and cordage. He made a voyage to China in 1849, and was in port at Whampoa when he died on December 21<sup>st</sup>, aged sixty years. The news of his death took months to get back to Salem, during which his wife Eliza fell fatally ill. She died on March 19, 1850, aged 56 years, just a few hours before the news of the Captain's death arrived. The Salem *Gazette* noted that "Capt. Bridges was one of the best specimens of the most truly respectable class of our

citizens, the veteran shipmasters, a class combining higher requisitions of the manly qualities of courage, presence of mind, honor, fidelity, and honesty, for the proper performance of their duties, than any other in our community. His muscular frame was the fit tabernacle, and his mild and open countenance, the fit expositor of a noble soul. These bereavements have carried desolation into a most interesting family, and mourning into a wide circle of warmly attached friends and relatives.”

The Bridgeses left four children: Eliza, 24, a teacher, and three minors: Elizabeth, 19, Fidelia, 15, and Henry, fourteen. The minors were placed under the guardianship of their widowed aunt, Mrs. Fidelia (Bridges) Endicott; and they moved to upper Essex Street to reside in a house with some of their Chadwick relatives. Fidelia, evidently, briefly resided with a Payson family as well, perhaps that of Edward Payson on Winter Street. In short order, Eliza was offered a teaching position in Brooklyn, New York, and the whole family moved there. Fidelia, already a talented artist, came under the tutelage of professional artists, and blossomed into a painter of real renown. She specialized in watercolors of natural landscapes and wildlife, and eventually attained fame. She spent most of her life in Connecticut (see attached article). Fidelia Bridges, who grew up here, was, with Benjamin Blythe, Samuel McIntire, George Ropes, Charles Osgood, John Rogers, and Frank Benson, among the foremost artists to have come from Salem. At a time when few women achieved widespread recognition, Fidelia bridges was a national figure in the arts, whose paintings were acquired both by private collectors and art museums; and her work is still exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art New York and in other major museums.

### *The Later Owners*

In July, 1850, Thomas Barker, Salem shipwright, sold the premises for \$1945 and a mortgage to Edward Putnam, merchant (ED 463:278). Mr. Putnam sold the property in September, 1853, for \$3000 to William H. Johnson of Salem (ED 466:29).

Mr. Johnson, wife Caroline, and family resided here for some years. In 1850 William Henry Johnson, twenty-eight, was a bachelor clerk residing at the Essex House hotel, Essex Street (see census, ward two, house 527). He married Caroline, became a bookkeeper, and took a job in Boston (see 1857 and 1859 directories). In February, 1859, Mr. Johnson sold the premises for \$3000 to Henry L. Lambert of Salem (ED 582:240). Capt. Lambert, a clerk at the Custom house, resided elsewhere in Salem; and he



died in 1860, whereupon the property descended to his sister, Miss Laura Lee Lambert, who had been residing at the Crowninshield-Bentley house, 110 Essex Street. She moved into this house in 1860.

Salem's growth continued through the 1850s, as business and industries expanded, the population swelled, new churches (e.g. Immaculate Conception, 1857) were started, new working-class neighborhoods were developed (especially in North Salem and South Salem, off Boston Street, and along the Mill Pond behind the Broad Street graveyard), and new schools, factories, and stores were built. A second, larger, factory building for the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company was added in 1859, down at Stage Point, where a new Methodist Church went up, and many neat homes, boarding-houses, and stores were erected along the streets between Lafayette and Congress. The tanning business continued to boom, as better and larger tanneries were built along Boston Street and Mason Street; and subsidiary industries sprang up as well, most notably the J.M. Anderson glue-works on the Turnpike (Highland Avenue).

### ***Laura Lee Lambert (1810-1895)***

***Laura Lee Lambert*** (1810-1895) was the daughter of Capt. Samuel Lambert & Priscilla (Lambert) Lambert. She grew up in the Crowninshield-Bentley house (moved but still standing, next to the Gardner-Pingree house), owned by her uncle, Capt. Ben Crowninshield, husband of Mary Lambert Crowninshield, who was sister of Laura's mother Priscilla (Lambert) Lambert. Rev. William Bentley lived in the east side of that house, and the Lamberts in the west. Mr. Bentley died when Laura was nine. Her father, Capt. Samuel Lambert (1768-1832), the son of Capt. Jonathan Lambert, was a mariner who grew up on Court (now Washington) Street, next to the Tabernacle Church; her mother, Priscilla Lambert (1770-1852), was the daughter of Capt. Joseph Lambert. Capt. Samuel was a mate on voyages to the Orient and later a trader in Salem who taught navigation and drafted maps too; and he was a shipmaster before that. His brother, Laura's uncle, Capt. Jonathan Lambert (1772-1813), "a man of real genius and intrepidity" (per Bentley) left his wife in Salem and set himself up as the king of the island of Tristan da Cunha, in the middle of the ocean, with a little colony of his friends.

Laura Lambert almost certainly attended the famous school for girls run by Mrs. Abigail Rogers, for her younger sister was christened Abigail Rogers Lambert (1810-1811). Laura had five older siblings but all evidently died young. Only her younger brother, Capt. Henry L. Lambert,

born c.1812, survived to marry (Abbie W. Moore); and he died, just after purchasing this homestead, on 28 February 1859 (see EIHC 54, H.W. Belknap's Lambert Family article).

During the many years that Miss Lambert lived here, her servant and companion was Ellen Birmingham, born in Ireland in December, 1834, the daughter of Walter Birmingham and Mary Clifford. In 1860 (per census, ward 2, house 2062) Miss Lambert, fifty, lived here with Miss Birmingham, 25, a "domestic." The two of them resided there together for many years more.

As it re-established itself as an economic powerhouse, Salem took a strong interest in national politics. It was primarily Republican, and strongly anti-slavery, with its share of outspoken abolitionists, led by Charles Remond, a passionate speaker who came from one of the city's notable black families. At its Lyceum (on Church Street) and in other venues, plays and shows were put on, but cultural lectures and political speeches were given too.

By 1860, with the election of Abraham Lincoln, it was clear that the Southern states would secede from the union; and Salem, which had done so much to win the independence of the nation, was ready to go to war to force others to remain a part of it.

The Civil War began in April, 1861, and went on for four years, during which hundreds of Salem men served in the army and navy, and many were killed or died of disease or abusive treatment while imprisoned. Hundreds more suffered wounds, or broken health. The people of Salem contributed greatly to efforts to alleviate the suffering of the soldiers, sailors, and their families; and there was great celebration when the war finally ended in the spring of 1865, just as President Lincoln was assassinated. The four years of bloodshed and warfare were over; the slaves were free; a million men were dead; the union was preserved and the South was under martial rule. Salem, with many wounded soldiers and grieving families, welcomed the coming of peace.

Through the 1860s, Salem pursued manufacturing, especially of leather and shoes and textiles. The managers and capitalists tended to build their new, grand houses along Lafayette Street (these houses may still be seen, south of Roslyn Street; many are in the French Second Empire style, with mansard roofs). A third factory building for the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company was built in 1865.

In 1870, Miss Lambert, sixty, and Miss Birmingham, thirty-something, were residing here (per census, w2, 462). In that year Salem received its last cargo from Zanzibar, thus ending a once-important trade. By then, a new Salem & New York freight steamboat line was in operation. Seven years later, with the arrival of a vessel from Cayenne, Salem's foreign trade came to an end. After that, "the merchandise warehouses on the wharves no longer contained silks from India, tea from China, pepper from Sumatra, coffee from Arabia, spices from Batavia, gum-copal from Zanzibar, hides from Africa, and the various other products of far-away countries. The boys have ceased to watch on the Neck for the incoming vessels, hoping to earn a reward by being the first to announce to the expectant merchant the safe return of his looked-for vessel. The foreign commerce of Salem, once her pride and glory, has spread its white wings and sailed away forever" (Rev. George Bachelder in *History of Essex County*, II: 65).

Salem was now so densely built-up that a general conflagration was always a possibility, as in Boston, when, on Nov. 9, 1872, the financial and manufacturing district of the city burned up. Salem continued to prosper in the 1870s, carried forward by the leather-making business. In 1874 the city was visited by a tornado and shaken by a minor earthquake. In the following year, the large Pennsylvania Pier (site of the present coal-fired harborside electrical generating plant) was completed to begin receiving large shipments of coal. Beyond it, at Juniper Point, a new owner began subdividing the old Allen farmlands into a new development called Salem Willows and Juniper Point. In the U.S. centennial year, 1876, A.G. Bell of Salem announced that he had discovered a way to transmit voices over telegraph wires.

In this decade, French-Canadian families began coming to work in Salem's mills and factories, and more houses and tenements were built. The better-off workers bought portions of older houses or built small homes for their families in the outlying sections of the city; and by 1879 the Naumkeag Steam Cotton mills would employ 1200 people and produce annually nearly 15 million yards of cloth. Shoe-manufacturing businesses expanded in the 1870s, and 40 shoe factories were employing 600-plus operatives. Tanning, in both Salem and Peabody, remained a very important industry, and employed hundreds of breadwinners. On Boston Street in 1879, the Arnold tannery caught fire and burned down.

In the 1880s and 1890s, Salem kept building infrastructure; and new businesses arose, and established businesses expanded. Retail stores prospered; horse-drawn trolleys ran every which-way; and machinists, carpenters, millwrights, and other specialists all thrived. In 1880, the

census shows that Laura Lambert, 70, and Ellen Birmingham, 40, were residing here. In that year Salem's manufactured goods were valued at about \$8.4 million, of which leather accounted for nearly half. In the summer of 1886, the Knights of Labor brought a strike against the manufacturers for a ten-hour day and other concessions; but the manufacturers imported labor from Maine and Canada, and kept going. The strikers held out, and there was violence in the streets, and even rioting; but the owners prevailed, and many of the defeated workers lost their jobs and suffered, with their families, through a bitter winter.

By the mid-1880s, Salem's cotton-cloth mills at the Point employed 1400 people who produced about 19 million yards annually, worth about \$1.5 million. The city's large shoe factories stood downtown behind the stone depot and on Dodge and Lafayette Streets. A jute bagging company prospered with plants on Skerry Street and English Street; its products were sent south to be used in cotton-baling. Salem factories also produced lead, paint, and oil. At the Eastern Railroad yard on Bridge Street, cars were repaired and even built new. In 1887 the streets were first lit with electricity, replacing gas-light. The gas works, which had stood on Northey Street since 1850, was moved to a larger site on Bridge Street in 1888, opposite the Beverly Shore. In the 1880s, Ellen Birmingham married Charles Shortell and moved out of the house into a home on Park Street for some years.

Laura Lee Lambert lived a long life as a single woman; and she died on April 5, 1895, of the after-effects of an accident, in her 85<sup>th</sup> year. Evidently Miss Lambert devised the property here to Salem Hospital, with a lifetime tenancy to go to Mrs. Ellen Shortell.

### ***Mrs. Ellen Birmingham Shortell (1835-1913)***

Ellen Birmingham had lived here starting in 1860 or so, when she was twenty-five and serving as a domestic servant to Miss Lambert. She evidently became Miss Lambert's companion as well as house-keeper. In the 1880s Ellen married Charles Shortell, a Liverpool-born policeman. They resided at Park Street, at the Point. Mr. Shortell was, by all accounts, a zealous, large, strong, and much-respected policeman, who single-handedly cleaned up the Point and patrolled its streets. He was man of commanding presence. As a youth, he had been a mariner, and arrived in America at age eighteen, in 1856. He sailed from Salem as a crewman with Capt. John Bertram in the trade with Africa and Zanzibar. Eventually he rose to the rank of shipmaster, and commanded vessels

owned by John F. Brooks and by Robert Brookhouse in the gold trade. Capt. Charles Shortell's last command was the ship *Sea Gull*. He joined the police force in 1868, aged thirty. Evidently he had an earlier marriage, and a son. He died on Sunday evening, March 17, 1889, of a lingering illness, aged 51 years. His widow, Ellen, continued to reside at 4 park Street until Miss Lambert's death, after which she moved back into 98 Essex Street.

In 1900, Ellen Shortell, 55, a widow, lived here alone (per census, ED 443, sheet 7). She remained here until 1905, when she moved elsewhere in Salem, and this house was rented out to Dr. Martin T. Field (see 1906 directory); but she was back here by 1907 (see 1908 directory).

More factories and more people required more space for buildings, more roads, and more storage areas. This space was created by filling in rivers, harbors, and ponds. The once-broad North River was filled from both shores, and became a canal along Bridge Street above the North Bridge. The large and beautiful Mill Pond, which occupied the whole area between the present Jefferson Avenue, Canal Street, and Loring Avenue, finally vanished beneath streets, storage areas, junk-yards, rail-yards, and parking lots. The South River, too, with its epicenter at Central Street (that's why there was a Custom House built there in 1805) disappeared under the pavement of Riley Plaza and New Derby Street, and some of its old wharves were joined together with much in-fill and turned into coal-yards and lumber-yards. Only a canal was left, running in from Derby and Central Wharves to Lafayette Street.

Salem kept growing. The Canadians were followed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by large numbers of Polish and Ukrainian families, who settled primarily in the Derby Street neighborhood. By the eve of World War One, Salem was a bustling, polyglot city that supported large department stores and large factories of every description. People from the surrounding towns, and Marblehead in particular, came to Salem to do their shopping; and its handsome government buildings, as befit the county seat, were busy with conveyances of land, lawsuits, and probate proceedings. The city's politics were lively, and its economy was strong.

Mrs. Ellen Shortell died on 12 April, 1913, aged "68," (she was listed as 25 in 1860) at 98 Essex Street. The newspaper noted that she was the widow of Capt. Charles Shortell, "a former shipmaster who, after his giving up the sea, was a fearless and faithful Salem police officer." (Salem *Evening News*, 14 April 1913). Her funeral mass was held nearby at Immaculate Conception Church; interment was at St. Mary's cemetery.

She was publicly remembered as “one of the kindest and most charitable of women, and her disposition was most lovable. She leaves a very large circle of friends to mourn her death” (Salem *Evening News*, 14 April 1913).

After her death, the owner under Miss Lambert’s will, Salem Hospital, sold the premises to Nora F. Danehy, Mrs. Shortell’s niece. She lived here, a singlewoman, with her sister, Miss Mary E. Danehy, from 1913 forward.

On June 25, 1914, in the morning, in Blubber Hollow (Boston Street opposite Federal), a fire started in one of Salem’s fire-prone wooden tanneries. This fire soon consumed the building and raced out of control, for the west wind was high and the season had been dry. The next building caught fire, and the next, and out of Blubber Hollow the fire roared easterly, a monstrous front of flame and smoke, wiping out the houses of Boston Street, Essex Street, and upper Broad Street, and then sweeping through Hathorne, Winthrop, Endicott, and other residential streets. Men and machines could not stop it: the enormous fire crossed over into South Salem and destroyed the neighborhoods west of Lafayette Street, then devoured the mansions of Lafayette Street itself, and raged onward into the tenement district. Despite the combined efforts of heroic fire crews from many towns and cities, the fire overwhelmed everything in its path: it smashed into the large factory buildings of the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company (Congress Street), which exploded in an inferno; and it rolled down Lafayette Street and across the water to Derby Street. There, just beyond Union Street, after a 13-hour rampage, the monster died, having consumed 250 acres, 1600 houses, and 41 factories, and leaving three dead and thousands homeless. Some people had insurance, some did not; all received much support and generous donations from all over the country and the world. It was one of the greatest urban disasters in the history of the United States, and the people of Salem would take years to recover from it. Eventually, they did, and many of the former houses and businesses were rebuilt; and several urban-renewal projects (including Hawthorne Boulevard, which involved removing old houses and widening old streets) were put into effect.

By the 1920s, Salem was once again a thriving city; and its tercentenary in 1926 was a time of great celebration. The Depression hit in 1929, and continued through the 1930s. Salem, the county seat and regional retail center, gradually rebounded, and prospered after World War II through the 1950s and into the 1960s. General Electric, Sylvania, Parker Brothers, Pequot Mills (formerly Naumkeag Steam Cotton Co.), Almy’s department

store, various other large-scale retailers, and Beverly's United Shoe Machinery Company were all major local employers. Then the arrival of suburban shopping malls and the relocation of manufacturing businesses took their toll, as they have with many other cities. More than most, Salem has navigated its way forward into the present with success, trading on its share of notoriety arising from the witch trials, but also from its history as a great seaport and as the home of Bowditch, McIntire, Bentley, Story, and Hawthorne. Most of all, it remains a city where the homes of the old-time schoolmasters, merchants, mariners, and mill-operatives are all honored as a large part of what makes Salem different from any other place.

—Robert Booth, 16 March 2005, for Historic Salem, Inc.

## Glossary & Sources

A figure like (ED 123:45) refers to book 123, page 45, Essex South registry of Deeds, Federal Street, Salem.

A figure like (#12345) refers to Essex Probate case 12345, on file at the Essex Probate Court, Federal Street, Salem, or on microfilm at Mass. Archives, Boston, or at the Peabody Essex Museum's Phillips Library, Salem.

MSSRW refers to the multi-volume compendium, *Mass. Soldiers & Sailors in the Revolutionary War*, available at the Salem Public Library among other places.

MSSCRW refers to the multi-volume compendium, *Mass. Soldiers, Sailors, & Marines in the Civil War*, available at the Salem Public Library among other places.

EIHC refers to the Essex Institute Historical Collections (discontinued), a multi-volume set (first volume published in 1859) of data and articles about Essex County. The indices of the EIHC have been consulted regarding many of the people associated with this house.

The six-volume published Salem Vital records (marriages, births, and deaths through 1849) have been consulted, as have the Salem Directory and later Naumkeag Directory, which have information about residents and their addresses, etc.

Sidney Perley's three-volume *History of Salem, 1626-1716* has been consulted, as has the four-volume *William Bentley's Diary*, J. Duncan Phillips' books, some newspaper obituaries, and other sources.

Salem real estate valuations, and, where applicable, Salem Street Books, have also been consulted, as have genealogies.

There is much more material available about Salem and its history; and the reader is encouraged to make his or her own discoveries.

--Robert Booth



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(978) 745-0799  
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**Historic House Plaque Application**

**If interested in commissioning a written history of your Salem house and having a plaque to identify its construction date and early owner(s), please fill in the blanks below.**

The fee for a professionally prepared house history and plaque is \$350.00. Please send a check for that amount, made out to Historic Salem, Inc., with this application, to the above address.

Name: Hawthorne Hotel

Name of Owner (if different from above):

3 Corners Realty Trust - H:C Service Corp  
Julie Lederhaus, G.M.

Contact Information:

Home Phone: 978-744-4080 main hotel switchboard

Work Phone: 978-825-4300 - direct line

e-mail: Julie@HawthorneHotel.com

Mailing for Hotel

Street Address: 18 Washington Square West

Address of Home for History & Plaque - 98 Essex St.

Date Purchased & From Whom: Salem 01970

Nov. 13, 2003 Ronald Eklind, Gail Eklind  
and Scott Eklind

Helpful Information about the Building (append copies if necessary):

The House is known as The Suzannah  
Flint House. We would love to know  
how it came to be called that.