



HISTORIC SALEM INC

House History and Plaque Program

For Valerie and Stephen Fox

4 Chestnut Street

Salem, Massachusetts 01970

Research and Writing Provided By

Kimberly Whitworth

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House History of 4 Chestnut Street

According to available records, the house at 4 Chestnut Street was built around 1826 by Deacon John Stone.¹ In the book *Architecture in Salem*, Bryant Tolles, Jr. states that the house at 4 Chestnut Street was built on the same site as Mrs. Dowst's one-story candy shop, which was in business around the year 1800.² John Stone was a third-generation distiller and a deacon of the First Unitarian Church in Salem.³ On January 10, 1829, John Stone conveyed the lot on which 4 Chestnut Street sits to his three children, John H. Stone, Lucy P. Stone and Henry O. Stone.⁴

Located in the McIntyre Historic District, the residences at 2 and 4 Chestnut Street were built in the late Federal Style as a high-quality three-story brick double row house, sporting a pair of interior chimneys at either end. The most significant features of the building include its semi-circular fan lights over the front door and its symmetrically placed windows and entrances along its façade. Major alterations to the structure occurred between 1851 and 1874 when a rear ell was added, and then in the late 19th or early 20th century when a window was added on the east end of the third level.⁵

Bryant Tolles states that Deacon Stone lived at 4 Chestnut Street until his children sold the house on March 29, 1839 to the Salem merchant, John Robinson.⁶ John Robinson married Deacon Stone's daughter, Lucy P. Stone on June 6, 1839. The conveyance of the house to John Robinson may have been in anticipation of the wedding.⁷ John and Lucy had two children, daughter Lucia (born and died in 1845) and son John (born in 1846). John, Jr. would later become the curator of the Peabody Academy of Science.

John Robinson, Sr. died on April 24, 1846, and his estate was administered in trust for many years thereafter.⁸ On June 1, 1857, Lucy Robinson married Dr. Samuel Johnson, who was originally from Andover, Massachusetts. He attended Harvard College and Harvard Medical School, graduating from medical school in 1817. Dr. Johnson was a successful physician in

¹ Essex South County Registry of Deeds (hereinafter ESCRD) Book 241, Page 195 and Book 244, Page 119.

² Bryant F. Tolles and Carolyn K. Tolles. *Architecture in Salem*. The Essex Institute, 1983, p. 187.

³ Donna Seger, "Demon-Made Rum in Salem" Streets of Salem, February 23, 2011, <http://streetsofsalem.com/2011/02/23/demon-made-rum-in-salem/> (Accessed August 31, 2015).

⁴ ESCRD Book 251, Page 215

⁵ MACRIS <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?MhcId=SAL.1489> (Accessed August 31, 2015); Virginia & Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002., esp. pgs. 153-167.

⁶ ESCRD Book 312, Page 137.

⁷ Town and City Clerks of Massachusetts. *Massachusetts Vital and Town Records*. Provo, UT: Holbrook Research Institute (Jay and Delene Holbrook).

⁸ Essex County Probate Court Docket No. 51891, Estate of John Robinson.

Salem for near fifty years. Lucy and Samuel had no children together. He died on May 26, 1876, leaving Lucy a widow for a second time.⁹

Lucy P. Johnson died on May 9, 1893. Based on deeds and records located at the Essex County Probate Court, Lucy acquired the 4 Chestnut Street property from the estate of her first husband, John Robinson. On January 3, 1898, the Essex County Probate Court issued a license for her son, John Robinson, Jr., to sell the house to Mary K. Wheatland, wife of Richard Wheatland.¹⁰ The deed from Lucy's estate to Mary Wheatland was recorded at the Essex South County Registry of Deeds on February 1, 1898.

At the time of the 1910 United States Census, Mary and Richard were living at 2-4 Chestnut Street with their children—2 boys and 3 girls. At the time of the census, Mary and Richard were both 38 years of age and Richard's occupation was listed as "own income."¹¹ By 1920, Richard and Mary had moved to Topsfield, Massachusetts. On March 4, 1920, they sold the house at 4 Chestnut Street to John Chester Crandell.¹²

No census or street directory entries could be found under the name John Chester Crandell, but he was listed in *The Accountants' Directory and Who's Who 1920*. This directory states that John Chester Crandell lived at 4 Chestnut Street, was employed as a C.P.A. in Boston. The *Who's Who* entry also notes Crandell was the author of *A Manual of Household Accounts*, which he appears to have written with his wife, Mercy Frye Crandell.¹³ In this work, the Crandells offer a manual for managing family finances.

They "advocate an equal family partnership between husband and wife," and suggest that this is the only way to keep accounts accurately and successfully. Not only is the housewife considered an equal in this endeavor, she is also learning professional methods of accounting as part of her domestic work. The authors state that their book offers methods "available for the average family or individual ... heretofore ... possible only for the trained accountant."¹⁴

John Chester Crandell died at some time prior to 1969. Evidence of this is found in a document recorded at the Essex South County Registry of Deeds that reveals his son, John Chester Crandell, Jr., consented to certifying the house at 4 Chestnut Street a Massachusetts

⁹ *Lucy Stone Robinson Papers*, Peabody Essex Museum, http://www.pem.org/library/finding_aids/MSS317_LucyStoneRobinsonPapers.pdf (Accessed August 31, 2015).

¹⁰ Essex County Probate Court Docket No. 51891, Estate of John Robinson; Essex County Probate Docket No. 74232, Estate of Lucy P. Johnson; ESCRD Book 1538, Page 195-197.

¹¹ Year: 1910; Census Place: Salem Ward 3, Essex, Massachusetts; Roll: T624_587; Page: 1A; Enumeration District: 0462; FHL microfilm: 1374600.

¹² ESCRD Book 2443, Page 493.

¹³ *The Accountant's Directory and Who's Who, 1920*. The Forty-Fifth Street Press, 1920; John Chester Crandall, C.P.A. and Mercy Frye Crandall. *A Manual of Household Accounts*. Boston: Whitcomb & Barrows, 1917 (Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum Call # E/ C890/1917).

¹⁴ *Salem in History*: <http://teh.salemstate.edu/IndustriousPeople/UPSTAIRSdownstairs/primarysources.htm> (Accessed August 31, 2015).

Historic Landmark.¹⁵ On January 31, 1985, John Chester Crandell, Jr., as trustee under the will of John Chester Crandell, sold the house to Herbert B. Weston and Barromee A. Dube as joint tenants.¹⁶ A joint tenancy will pass title to property by operation of law to the surviving joint tenant. Herbert Weston died on February 23, 2001, leaving Barromee as sole owner of the house¹⁷ Shortly thereafter, Barromee died on December 30, 2002.¹⁸

Pursuant to a power of sale contained in the Will of Barromee A. Dube, her co-executors, Lucille Kulisich and Lee Weston sold the property on March 17, 2004 to Hugh Kerr and Johanna Ingham.¹⁹ Hugh Kerr died on August 27, 2013. On February 6, 2014, Johanna Kerr (formerly Johanna Ingham) sold the house at 4 Chestnut Street to its current owners, Stephen M. Fox and Valerie Kanaley-Fox.²⁰

Kimberly A. Whitworth, J.D., M.A.
Historic Salem, Inc.
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¹⁵ ESCRD Book 5605, Page 477.

¹⁶ ESCRD Book 7649, Page 52; Essex County Registry of Probate Docket No. 195500, Estate of John Chester Crandall (will and other documents missing at the time of this writing).

¹⁷ ESCRD Book 23790, Page 407.

¹⁸ ESCRD Book 23790, Page 408; Essex County Registry of Probate Docket No. 03-P-0405.

¹⁹ ESCRD Book 22530, Page 342

²⁰ Essex County Registry of Probate, Docket No. 13P 2877, ESCRD Book 33106, Page 293.