

Historic Salem incorporated

OFFICE AT OLD TOWN HALL

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

12 Oliver Street

Built for,

GEORGE C. CLARK, carpenter

in the year 1848

Research by,

Joyce King

July 1981

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

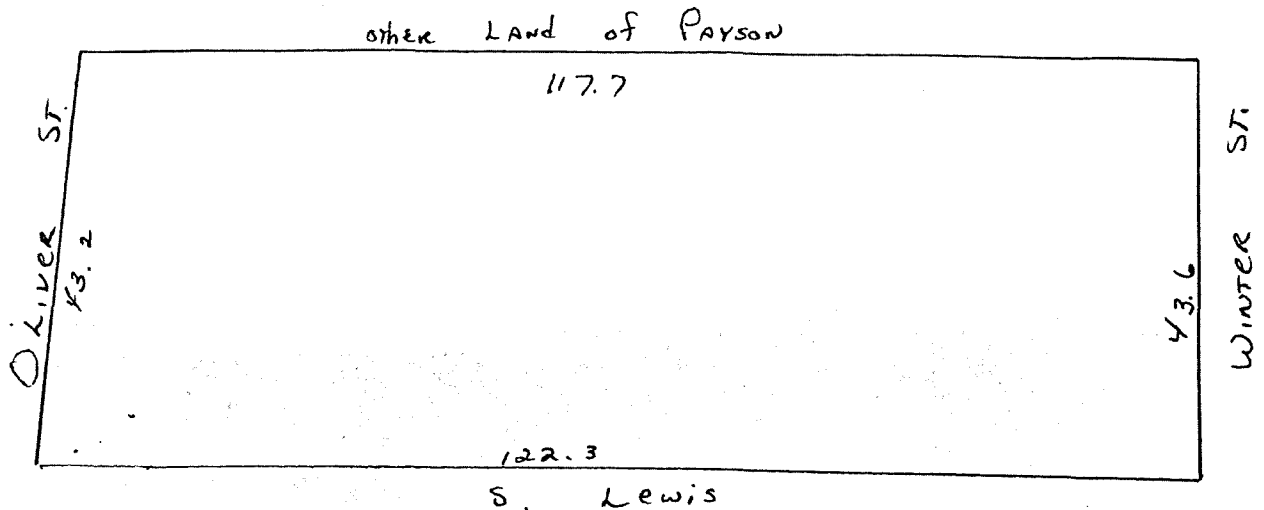
12 Oliver Street

The house at 12 Oliver Street is described in the Salem Historical Commission Report (1956) as: "This one-story plus pitch roof, wooden house has many details which give it style and interest. The five-bay facade on the street has a recessed central entrance above which there is a five-sided wooden lintel. The windows have similar lintels and appear to be French; the deception is caused by the fact that the usual six-over-six windows have closed shutters below them which are outlined in a white frame. Gothic overtones on this Greek Revival house include a central gable and hood or drip moldings above the dormer windows. The house is architecturally intact."

Very early the entire west side of Winter St. (including this lot) was owned by Jacob Pudeater, blacksmith. After the death of her husband, Mrs. Pudeater lived on this large parcel of land until the summer of 1692, when she was condemned as a witch and executed Sept. 22, 1692, being about seventy years of age. Later the land became the property of the Cheever family and at one time there was a tanyard located on it. (Essex Antiquarian, vol. 8 page 78)

The lot on which this house stands had been part of the estate of Benjamin Cheever, tanner in the early 1800's. After the death of Mr. Cheever, the large parcel was divided amongst his heirs. The lot called #2 in this division became the possession of Benjamin's daughter, Priscilla (Cheever) Howard, wife of John Howard Jr.

When John and Priscilla sold lot #2 to Edward H. Payson in 1844, for the sum of \$975, it extended back from Winter to Oliver Streets:



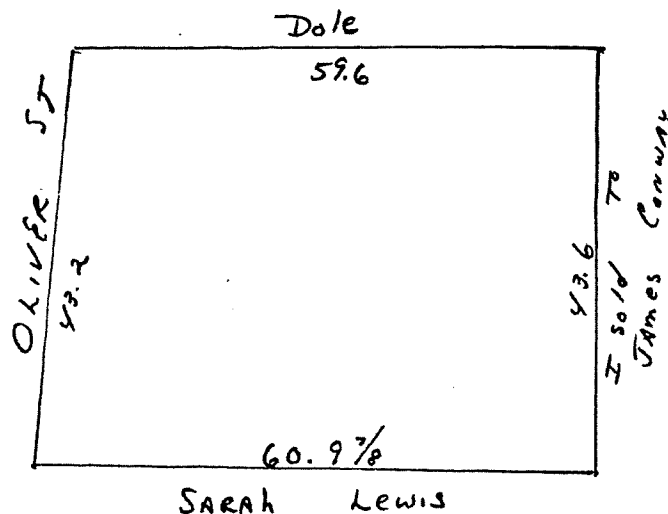
(book 347 page 278)

Mr. Payson sold the land to George C. Clark, carpenter of Salem, on Nov. 1, 1847 for the sum of \$1,200, "The whole of the lot of land #2 in the division of the estate of Benjamin Cheever which I purchased of John Howard and wife on Nov. 14, 1844". (book 390 page 2)

Ten days later George Clark divided the lot in half and sold the eastern part to Rev. James Conway (book 390 page 3). Mr. Clark retained the western portion and set to work towards the completion of a new "cottage" during 1848. A list of buildings erected during the year March 1847 thru March 1848 has the entry "Cottage - George C. Clark - Oliver St." (Essex Institute). The tax list for 1848 confirms Mr. Clark's construction effort - "G. C. Clark - residence Andrew St.- unfinished cottage - value \$1,000 on Oliver St." (Salem City Hall).

In 1849 George C. Clark was taxed for a "new dwelling house 12-14 Oliver St. (The enumeration of this house varied from 8 thru 14 during its history as will be shown.)

Mr. Clark was born in Salem on May 17, 1815. He was married on April 5, 1843 to Lydia Hill. The couple with their children George W. (b. 1843) and Agnes S. (b. 1845) moved into their new house shortly after its completion. A daughter Frances L. was in all probability born in the 12 Oliver St. house, on Sept. 10, 1848. The Clark's stay at 12 Oliver St. was a relatively short one. It appears that late in 1849 George Clark was among the 100,000 people who were caught up in the excitement of "gold fever". On Sept. 15, 1849 the dwelling house and land were sold to Sarah Ditmore, a widow, for the sum of \$1,750:



(book 417 page 38)

The money was apparently used to finance the long trip to California and to support the family during Mr. Clark's absence. George Clark departed for California on Nov. 13, 1849. He sailed from N.Y. and took the route overland by the Isthmus of Panama, arriving in California Dec. 30, 1849. (Records of the Society of California Pioneers at the Essex Institute.)

Since Mr. Clark was back in Salem by Aug. 2, 1850 (federal census) and distinctly not rich, it can be assumed that he was among the thousands of forty-niners who did not find gold. An obituary notice printed at the time of his death, Aug. 4, 1890, gives this summation:

"George C. Clark, (of 138 Bridge St.) well known in Salem for his connection with the financial institutions as an appraiser, died suddenly at Asbury Grove yesterday morning of heart disease, at the age of 74. He was a carpenter by trade, and went to California at the breaking out of the gold excitement in 1849. He had been complaining of pain in the vicinity of the heart for a few days, but was able to be out Saturday evening, greeting his acquaintances at the Grove, where he has passed the summer for the past 15 years, in his usual cheerful way. Returning to the house he was taken more severely ill, and it was proposed to send for a physician, but he said, "Wait until morning". Shortly after daylight he fell dead. Mr. Clark was known as a man of sterling integrity. He leaves a family.

Mr. Clark was for years a summer resident at Asbury Grove, and extremely fond of the place. He was in the habit of spending a good deal of time at the grocery store, talking with the people as they came and went, and a special chair was always reserved for his use. On hearing of his death his friend draped the chair in the morning."

Sarah, widow of Frederick Ditmore, aged 52 and her daughter Abby W. Ditmore, age 29, were settled in their newly purchased cottage by Aug. 2, 1850 (federal census). Little has been uncovered about the two women except what can be gleaned from the tax records:

Oliver Street

no #	1850	Sarah Ditmore	cottage	2 females
#8	1855	Mrs. Sarah Ditmore		value \$1,000

Oliver Street

#8	1863	Mrs. Sarah Ditmore	owner	(tax $\frac{1}{2}$)	house \$800	
					land 2623 sq. ft. 400	
						<u>1,200</u>
#8	1868	Sarah Ditmore	owner		house \$600	
					land 500	Untaxed ?

The federal census taken in 1870 gives this listing:

Sarah Ditmore age 75 keeps house born in Maine

Widow Ditmore died a short time after the census on June 3, 1871.

In her will (probate #37482) Sarah Ditmore bequeathed all her property to her only daughter Abby W. Ditmore (appendix A). The inventory of the estate consisted of "Cottage home on Oliver St. and land" \$2,250
Salem Savings 1,000

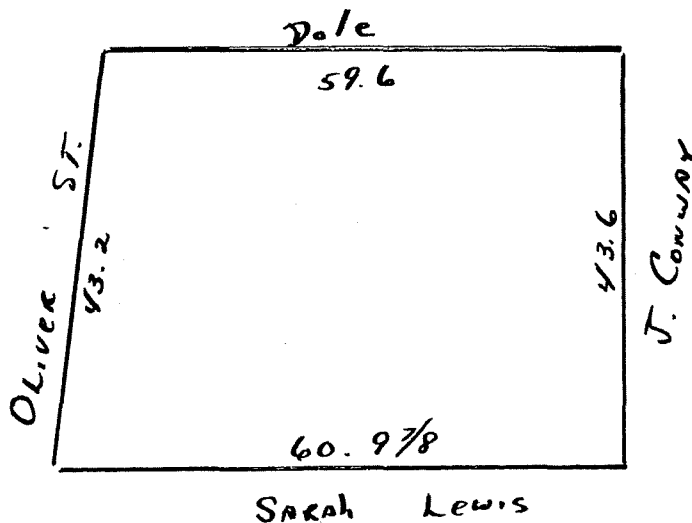
In 1872 the tax listing stated:

8 Oliver St. no man at home heirs of Sarah Ditmore

Abby Ditmore died on March 25, 1875. Among the bequest in her will (probate #37481) were \$3,000 to the Essex Institute; \$1,000 to William Mack; \$400 each to her cousins Eben and Frederick Perkins; \$500 to the proprietors of Harmony Grove "in trust to keep mother's burial place in perfect order, if it neglects to do, the same shall go to the Essex Insitute and the proprietors of the cemetery take it with that understanding; \$1,000 to the Salem Hospital. The household stuff and wearing apparel to my friends Mrs. Mary Burton, Mrs. Mary Ingersoll and Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson, the rest to the Essex Institute. In a codicil written Aug. 23, 1874 she revoked the gift of \$3,000 to the Essex Institute and instead \$1,000, the balance of \$2,000 to the Salem Hospital upon condition that said hospital shall pay \$65 semiannually to my

cousin Elizabeth Caulfield of Salem for and during her life. To the executor \$250 and request him to use the same for a headstone for lot #930. Three hundred dollars to Mrs. Bertha C. Taylor wife of George; \$2,000 to the Salem Hospital as an additional bequest to the \$2,000 named in the will. The rest to the Essex Institute. "My will is now that the said Institute shall take the same upon the condition it pay over the income of the said residue to my cousin Frederick Perkins payable for his lifetime." (see also appendix B, C and D)

On July 20, 1875 John I. Hutchinson exc. of the will of Abbie W. Ditmore, singlewoman, sold the real estate at auction to Oscar B. Hurlbut machinist, for \$2,300, the land and dwelling house. The same conveyed to Sarah Ditmore, of whom said Abbie W. Ditmore was sole heir, by deed of George C. Clark Sept. 15, 1849":



(book 932 page 203)

The taxes for 1875 verify this transaction:

8 Oliver St. - Oscar B. Hurlbut	age 38	owner	house \$1,200
			land 500

The federal census of 1880 gives a closer look at the Hurlbut family:

Oscar B. Hurlbut	age 43	machinist	born Conn.
Harriet B. "	" 38	keeps house	" N.H.
William W. "	" 13	son - at school	" Mass.
Clarence E. "	" 7	son	" "

For some unknown reason the 1882 valuation shows a drop:

12 Oliver St. - Oscar B. Hurlbut	owner	house \$1,000
		land 500

Oscar Hurlbut lived at 12 Oliver St. for 40 years until his death which occurred on Nov. 10, 1915. The Salem News carried his obituary:

Nov. 11, 1915 "Oscar Bradley Hurlbut, for the last 50 years a citizen of Salem, died at his home, 12 Oliver St., yesterday. He was born in New Britain, Conn., the son of the late Enos S. and Clarissa (Gorham) Hurlbut, and was in his 74th year. He was a machinist by trade and he was employed first at the typesetting machine of Charles W. Felt on Bridge St., and later at the jute mills in this city, the Standard Thermometer works in Peabody and the United Shoe Machinery in Beverly. He was a skillful mechanic and always a good citizen. He leaves a widow, a son William Wallace and three brothers."

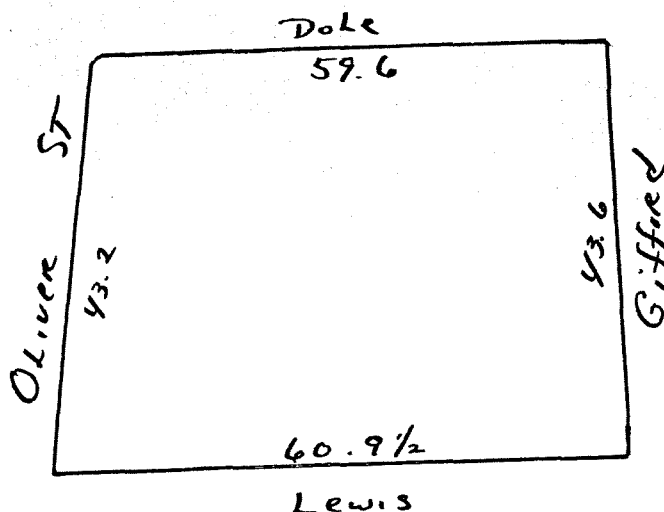
His funeral was held at his late home, 12 Oliver St., with the Rev. De Witt S. Clark D.D. of the Tabernacle Church officiating. Burial was in Greenlawn cemetery.

Mrs. Hurlbut remained in the house until her death on Feb. 21, 1930. This simple obituary appeared in the Salem News:

"Mrs. Harriet C., widow of Oscar B. Hurlbut died at her home, 12

Oliver street today, in her 89th year. She was born in Newport, N.H., the daughter of the late William and Elizabeth (Endicott) Carter. She leaves a son William W. of Salem and a brother J. Henry Carter of Salem."

The house was left to William W. Hurlbut (probate #166719) the only son of the couple. Mr. Hurlbut kept the house until Nov. 14, 1942 when he sold it to Anna Louise Russell:



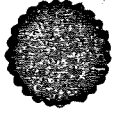
(book 3318 page 261)

On Oct. 11, 1950 Anna Louise Russell sold to Elizabeth M. Price "The same conveyed by deed of William Wallace Hurlbut". (book 3776 page 250)

Elizabeth M. Price, unmarried, sold the land and building at 12 Oliver St. to the present owners (1981) Henry A. and Theresa M. Belanger on May 17, 1960. (book 4667 page 168)

(A)

I Sarah Dittmore of Salem in the county of Essex
 feeling the uncertainty of life, and being of sound mind
 and memory, do make this my last will and testament
 in manner and form as follows that is to say. First I
 direct that all my just debts and funeral charges be
 paid by my Executor. Second I give devise and bequeath
 all the remainder of my property to my only daughter
 Abby W. Dittmore should she survive me, but should
 she die before my decease, then and in that case I give
 to the Essex Institute of Salem the sum of Three
 Thousand dollars to be used as the President Dr
 Phealland shall think best. I give to the Old Ladies
 Home of Salem the sum of One Thousand dollars. I
 give the sum of One Thousand dollars to Dr Black of
 Salem I give my real estate to my nephews Eben and
 Frederick Perkins. I give my clothing and the sum of
 five hundred dollars to Hannah wife of James
 Caulfield. I give the residue of my estate to the Essex
 Institute of Salem above mentioned. and lastly
 I do constitute and appoint Mr Francis Brown of
 Salem Sole Executor of this my last will and testament
 In testimony whereof I do herewith set my hand and
 seal, This eighth day of October eighteen hundred
 and sixty nine.

Sarah Dittmore 

[This must be filed in the Probate Office within one year after the sale.]

I, do testify and say that, being authorized by the Probate Court for the County of Essex, on the ^{seventh} day of ^{June} ~~July~~, A. D. 1875, to make sale of the real estate of Abbie W. Ditmore, late of Salem, singlewoman, deceased, for the purposes in the license set forth, I gave public notice of the time and place of sale, by causing notifications thereof to be posted thirty days before the sale, at ~~where the deceased last dwelt, on the~~ ~~day of~~ ~~A. D. 186~~, at ~~an~~ adjoining town, on the ~~day of~~ ~~A. D. 186~~; at ~~another adjoining town, on the~~ ~~day of~~ ~~A. D. 186~~; and at ~~where the real estate lies, on the~~ ~~day of~~ ~~A. D. 186~~; and by publishing a notification thereof, three weeks successively in the newspaper called the Salem Observer, printed at Salem, commencing on the ^{twenty} ~~twenty~~ ~~with~~ day of ^{June} ~~July~~, A. D. 1875, and the following is a true copy of said notices:

FOWLER & KENDALL, Auctioneers.
 128 Washington Street, Salem.

Executor's Sale of Real Estate.

Pursuant to a license from Probate Court, dated the 7th day of June, 1875, will be sold at Public Auction, on the premises, on WEDNESDAY, July 14, at 11 o'clock A. M.:

The estate of the late **ABBIE W. DITMORE**, on Oliver street, (No. 12), Salem, consisting of a Cottage House, slated roof, thoroughly built, in fine order, high stud, containing 6 rooms and lower kitchen. The land measures about 33 feet on Oliver st., by 35 feet deep. Conditions made known at sale.

JOHN L. HUTCHINSON, Executor.

Particulars of **FOWLER & KENDALL, Auctioneers.**

Je 28

John L. Hutchinson

Essex, ss: *John L. Hutchinson*
affidavit by him subscribed.

A. D. 1875. Personally appeared the above named and made oath to the truth of the above

Before me,

Charles Furbull Justice of the Peace.

DOLLS. CTS.

DOLLS. CTS.

Amount of personal estate according to inventory, 776972

Balance of former account

Amount received from gain on sale of personal estate over appraised value, and from

Other property as follows:

Sale of U.S. Govt Bonds more than appraised	2850
House & Land No 12 Oliver St. Salem	230000
Life Policy in Holyoke Ins. Co unexp. paid time	500

Amount paid out and charges, as follows:

Geo. E. Taylor	board & care for "Agreement"	5.00	
A. Story	writing codicil to Will	5.00	
C. Kimball	Clerk of Atty Gen. J. H.	2.00	
City of Salem	Watch Rent	1.35	13 35
J. B. Taylor	sunday bills	16.80	
Mrs. Sawyer	making	1.00	
Buffum	undertaker	47.00	
Supt of Burials		9.00	
S. Mo	Coaches	24.00	
Dr. Mack		82.50	
Thomas	Grave stone	50.00	
Loreesy	Brick grave	30.00	260 30
Francis	moving Furniture	11.25	
Fowler Kendall	Auctioneer	32.25	
Holyoke Ins Co	Pol. 9412	8.00	
Foster	care of home	2.00	
Register pub. City & Co.		4.50	
Appraisers		15.00	
Do. Atty sale of home		1.50	
Witnesses to Will		9.00	
Observer	City sale of home	3.00	86 50
C. Kimball	Services & advice settling estate		45 00
Allowance to Executor for services			372 07
Gold Watch & attachments del. per order interested parties apprais			25 00
Household Stuff & Wearing Apparel del. agreeably to Will			411 00
Paid F. J. Perkins agreeably to Will			400 00
" Essex Institute	" " "		1000 00
" William Mack	" " "		1000 00
" Salem Hospital	" " "		1000 00
" Bertha S. Taylor	" " "		300 00
" Eben S. Perkins	" " "		400 00
" Curbing Lot Harmony Grove	" " "		250 00
" Harmony Grove Cemetery	" " "		500 00
" Salem Hospital to Colfield benefit agreeably to Will			2000 00
" Essex Institute F. Perkins benefit	" " "		2040 00

\$10,103.22

\$10,103.22

J

