

## *194 Lafayette Street, Salem*

**According to available evidence, this house was built for Alfred T. LeBoeuf, a physician, in 1914. It stands on the site of the house built c.1852 for Benjamin A. West, merchant. The West house burned down in the Great Fire of 1914.**

On 16 January 1915 Alfred T. LeBoeuf purchased the property at 194 Lafayette Street, bounded easterly 59' 6" by Lafayette Street, southerly by Gardner Street 97', westerly by formerly West 59' 6", and northerly by Cassino 97' (ED 2290:22). The deed mentions that there were buildings on the land, so it is likely that Dr. LeBoeuf had already built this house thereon. Dr. LeBoeuf mortgaged the premises for \$2000 in March, 1915, to Henry M. Batchelder (ED 2290:23).

Alfred T. LeBoeuf (1883-1929) was born in Ashland, Mass., the son of Thomas LeBoeuf and Emma Paris. In 1888 the LeBoeuf family--mother father, one girl, four boys—moved to Worcester. That was the year of the great blizzard. Alfred attended public schools, excelled as a student, and was accepted at the University of Maryland Medical School in Baltimore, whence he graduated in 1908. He spent a year interning in Maryland and then returned to Massachusetts. He settled in Salem and passed his medical boards. He probably worked in the old Salem Hospital on Charter Street. From 1909 forward, evidently, he was in private practice in Salem, which by then had many French-Canadian families. In 1911 he married Elmina L. Nadeu, a nurse, the daughter of Fred E. Nadeau and Angel Martin. The couple would have children Jeannette M., George H., Alfred Jr., James H., and Margaret J.N. LeBoeuf.

In the late 1800s, French-Canadian families had come to Salem to work in the mills and factories, especially the huge Naumkeag Steam Cotton Mills off Congress Street. By 1880, those mills had employed 1,200 people and produced annually 14,700,000 yards of cloth. Tenements stood near the mills, and houses were built along Lafayette Street and the side streets, which soon became a primarily French-Canadian neighborhood. The French 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. Its politics were lively, and its economy was strong.

In the spring of 1914, the LeBoeufs resided at 154 Lafayette Street, a two-story apartment building where they had been living for two years at least (see Naumkeag Directories 1912-1914).

On the morning of June 25, 1914, in Blubber Hollow (Boston Street opposite Federal), a tannery caught fire, and this fire soon raced out of control, for the west wind was strong and the season had been dry. The next building caught fire, and the next, and out of Blubber Hollow the fire advanced easterly, a monstrous front of flame and smoke, wiping out the houses of upper Broad Street and sweeping through Hathorne, Winthrop, Endicott, and other residential streets. The LeBoeuf family, like many others, saw that their house lay in the path of the great fire; and they may have had time to remove their possessions. Sure enough, the massive fire crossed the railroad tracks into South Salem and destroyed the homes on and near Lafayette Street, including the LeBoeufs'. It leaped the street, and raged through the tenement district, and onward toward the immense buildings of the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company. Despite the combined efforts of heroic crews from many towns and cities, the fire could not be turned: it smashed across Congress Street, and the mill buildings exploded in an inferno. On went the fire, down Lafayette Street and across the water to Derby Street, where it threatened to wipe out the wooden houses of the Poles and Ukrainians in the historic area of the East Parish. There, at the old Richard Derby house, the fire was finally halted, just beyond Union Street, after a 13-hour rampage. It had consumed 250 acres, 1600 houses, and 41 factories, leaving three dead and thousands homeless. Some 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.

In the burnt-over section of Mill Hill and southward along Lafayette Street, new houses and apartment buildings were soon erected. Some, recalling the grandeur of houses that once stood there, may have prized certain lots; and it may be that Dr. LeBoeuf chose this lot, in part, for its having been the site of one of Salem's grandest houses, built in the 1850s for Benjamin A. West, a merchant and ship-owner.

As late as the 1840s Lafayette Street was a rural thoroughfare, which led out of the Inner Harbor past large farms toward Marblehead. Few families resided on

the street. Across from this site lived the family of George West, a cooper whose shop and wharf stood at the foot of Central Street (Fish Street section) on the Inner Harbor. Among George West's sons was Benjamin A. West (born 1820), who was probably trained as a cooper but soon showed a good head for business and was apprenticed to a merchant.

On 3 December 1850 William F. Gardner for \$1512.50 sold to Benjamin A. West, merchant, a lot of land fronting 55' easterly on Lafayette Street, southerly 150' by a private way called Cabot Street (later, Gardner Street), westerly 55' by land of the grantor Mr. Gardner, and northerly 150' by land of the grantor Mr. Gardner (ED 441:162). Mr. Gardner soon died, and in December, 1851, his widow, Elizabeth G. Gardner, for \$1550 sold to Mr. B.A. West a lot of land adjoining the 1850 purchase and fronting 56' 6" on Lafayette Street (ED 454:193).

At that time, Mr. West, 30, a bachelor but engaged to be married, resided on the opposite side of Lafayette Street, in the house of his father, who had died in the 1840s. That house was 69 Lafayette Street (by the numbering system then), and he shared it with his mother, Deborah (Ayers) West, and his brothers Samuel and John (per Salem Directory listings).

Soon after purchasing the double lot, Mr. West proceeded to build an extraordinary house thereon, sometime between 1851 and 1855 (per Salem Directory listings). The chief features of the house were a two-story colonnade portico across the façade, which had a double bow front. A cupola surmounted the roof, and afforded a view to the Harbor and the Bay, where Mr. West's barks might be seen arriving from the ports of the east, particularly Manila. One of Mr. West's vessels would be the last ever to return to Salem from that port. In January, 1852, aged 31, Benjamin A. West married Nancy B. Downing. The new house was #72 Lafayette Street in 1855 (#74 by the numbering of the 1870s).

Benjamin A. West (1820-1877), b. 29 March 1820, s/o George West, merchant, and Deborah Ayers, died Pleasantville, NY, 3 Aug. 1877. He m. 14 Jan. 1852 Nancy B. Downing (d. 31 March 1883). Known issue:

1. Annie D., 1854, m. 1881 Robert W. Willson, Conn.
2. George, 2 June 1855, m. 1883 Sophia Harris
3. Arthur W., 1861, m. 1886 Emily Fessenden; pres. Naumkeag Trust Co.

In 1860 Benjamin A. West was credited with property worth \$38,000 (real estate, \$8,000); he resided here with his wife, daughter Anna, nine, and son George, eight, and two domestic helpers: Mary A. Graham, 18, and Mary A. Gilman, 30 (see 1860 census, Ward Five, house 2451). By the end of his life (1877), Mr. West had retired from business and from his position as Vice President of the Naumkeag Bank. He died while in Pleasantville, New York, in 1877, and his widow Nancy died in 1883. The house thereafter was the residence of their son George West.

In April, 1896, the West heirs sold the house and land to Henry K. Mansfield, a Salem druggist (ED 1476:42). In 1900 Mr. Mansfield, 30, a bachelor, resided there with his Aunt Annie Dean, 50, a lodger, Walter L. Harris, 48, who was in the fire insurance business, and servant Katie Joyce, 28 (see 1900 census, Ward Five).

Mr. Mansfield moved to Boston by 1908, and sold the house and land to Samuel E. Cassino, who moved in with his family and also rented out part of the house as apartments. Mr. Cassino owned the (Loring Ave.) S.E. Cassino Co., publisher of *Little Folks* magazine. By 1913, S.E. Cassino lived there with Annie L. Cassino, clerk, and Leslie P. Cassino, superintendent at S.E. Cassino Co. The house was valued at \$8000 and the land at \$4300. Mr. Cassino had insurance of \$5000 on the building and \$3000 on the contents (see Data On Burned District, Salem, Mass, 1914, at Salem Public Library).

Like the LeBoeufs, the Cassinos were burnt out when the Great Fire came roaring through on June 25, 1914; and the Benjamin A. West house was reduced to ash.

Dr. LeBoeuf appears to have had this house built right away, before the end of 1914, for the 1914 Naumkeag Directory notes that he had been burnt out of 154 Lafayette Street but had moved in at 194 Lafayette Street; the Cassinos, it noted, had moved to Shore Avenue. The house was built in the Colonial Revival style, and was a design that proved popular in the newer neighborhoods.

Soon enough, houses were built all through Salem's burnt-out districts, and businesses were re-established; and several urban-renewal projects, such as Hawthorne Boulevard, and the re-location of Salem Hospital, were effected. By the 1920s, Salem was once again a thriving city; and its tercentenary in 1926 was a time of great celebration. From that time forward, Salem boomed right through to the 1960s,

Rather late in his professional life, in 1927, Dr. Alfred LeBoeuf became a specialist in the treatment of problems of the eye, ear, and nose, with a certificate from Mass. General Hospital and the Mass. Ear & Eye Infirmary. He practiced in that treatment area for three years. In early January, 1929, he contracted pneumonia, which grew worse for 12 days until he died. He was only 45 at the time, and left his wife and five children.

By his will (1920) he left all of his property to his wife Elmina.

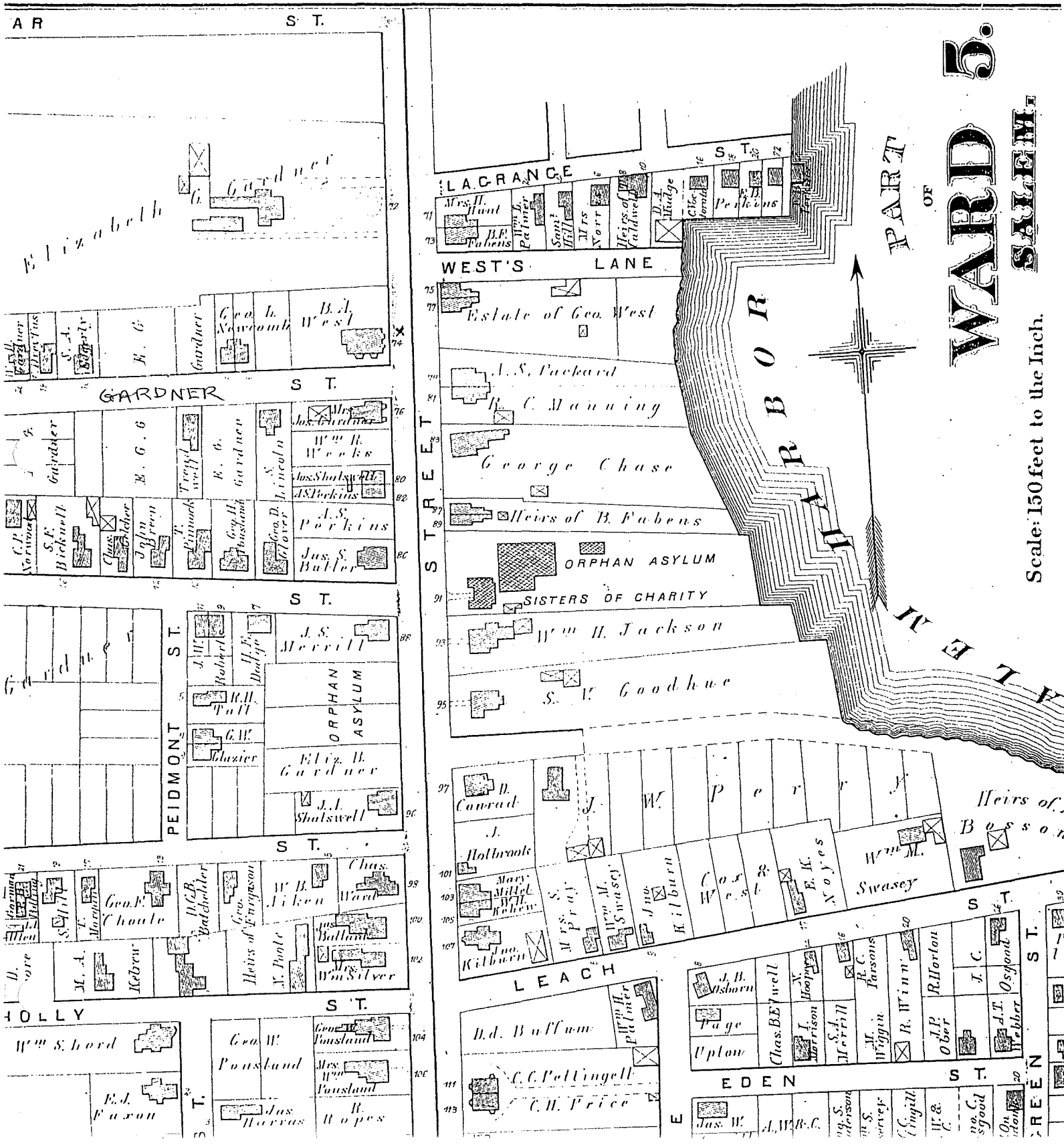
For many years, she resided here with her children. In 1947 Mrs. Elmina LeBoeuf sold the premises, and moved to the grounds of Salem Hospital, where she served as house mother to the resident nurses into the 1950s.

In April, 1947, Dr. Israel Kaplan purchased this homestead (ED 3547:346), and here he would reside for the rest of his life. As noted in his obituary, Dr. Kaplan was a beloved physician whose interest in public health was unswerving. In 1932 and 1933 he served as City Physician, treating patients on general relief. He served for more than 30 years on the Board of Health, and was the first to administer the polio vaccine in Salem. He died at the age of 83 on 4 December 1986, much lamented. His widow, Shirley, continued to reside here.

After her death, in 1996 the homestead was sold to Peter Morneau and David Kelly (ED 13408:150); and in February, 2001, they sold the same to the present owners, John V. Goff and Janice Skillings-Goff.

--18 July 2001, Robert Booth for Historic Salem Inc.

1874  
Atlas



Scale: 150 feet to the Inch.

# WARD 5.

SALEM.

Know all men by these presents, That I, William F. Gardner, of Salem, in the County of Essex and State of Massachusetts, in consideration of fifteen hundred and twelve  $50\%$  dollars to me paid by Benjamin A. West of said Salem, Merchant, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby give, grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the said Benjamin A. West. — The following described lot of land situate in said Salem viz bounded Easterly fifty five feet by Lafayette Street; Southerly one hundred and fifty feet by a private way of fifty feet in width, called <sup>Garner</sup> Cabot Street, Westerly fifty five feet by other land of mine, Northerly one hundred and fifty feet, by my land, containing eight thousand two hundred and fifty square feet of land. Do have and to hold the above granted premises, with the privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging to the said West his heirs and assigns, to his & their use and behoof forever And I the said Gardner for myself and my heirs, executors and administrators do covenant with the said West his heirs and assigns that I am lawfully seized in fee of the aforegranted premises; that they are free from all incumbrances, That I have good right to sell and convey the same to the said West as aforesaid; and that I will, and my heirs, executors and administrators shall warrant and defend the same to the said West his heirs and assigns forever, against the lawful claims and demands of all persons. In witness whereof, see the said William F. Gardner and the undersigned his wife, who hereby relinquishes her right of dower in the premises have hereunto set our hands and seals, this third day of December in the

162.

W. F. Gardner

to

B. A. West.

441:162

the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and  
fifty.

Wm F. Gardner. seal

seal

Executed and delivered

Elizabeth G. Gardner. seal

seal

in presence of us,

Essex ss. December 5<sup>th</sup> 1850. Then:

Jno. H. Nichols, witness to Wm F.

personally appeared the above

W. S. Cleveland to E. G. G.

named William F. Gardner and

acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be his free  
act and deed. before me Jno. H. Nichols, Justice of the peace.

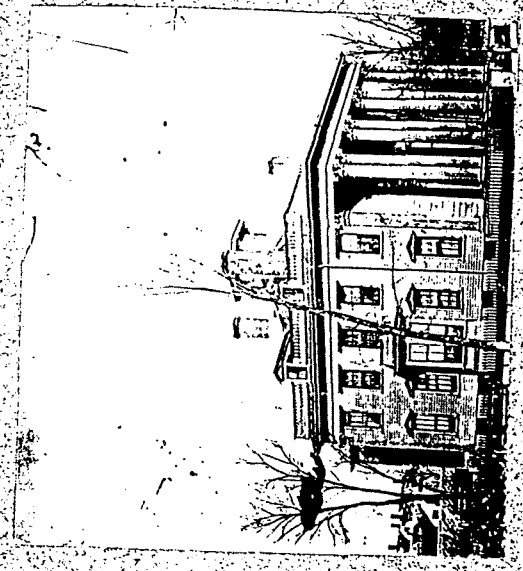
Essex ss. Dec. Feb 4 27 1851. 15m. past 8. a. m. J. H. Nichols J.

W. B. Reed

40



194 Lafayette St.

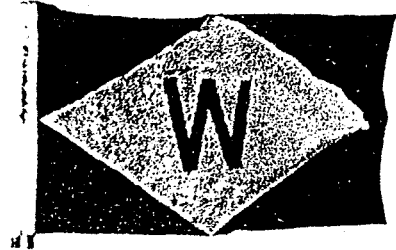


E. J. Neg. # 6793.  
(3 3/8 x 6 3/4.)

Fr. P. B. Dy. - Essex Mass. coll.



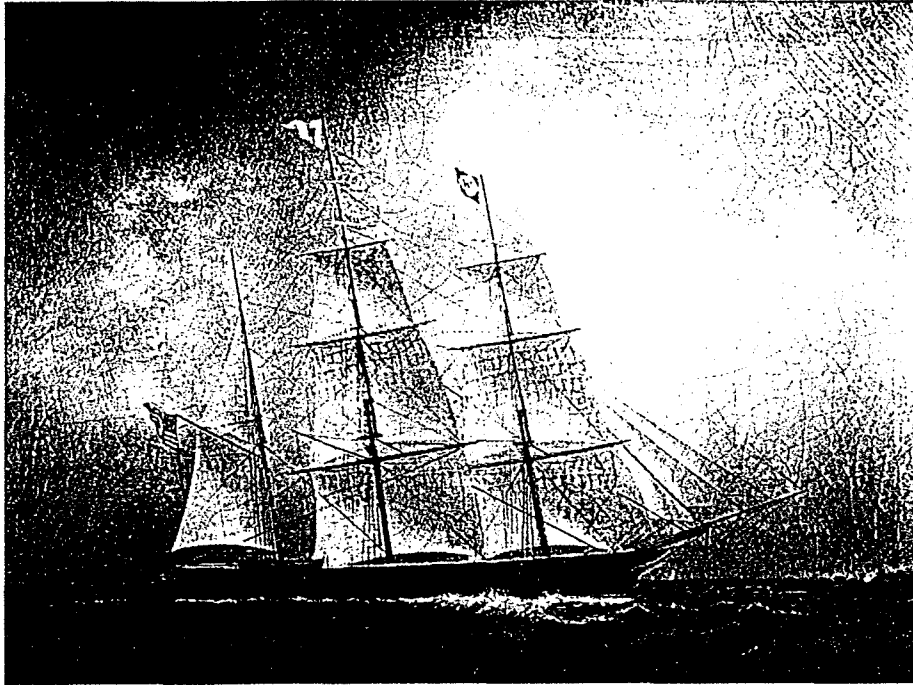
BENJAMIN A. WEST, MERCHANT (1820-1877). Courtesy of the *Peabody Essex Museum*, Salem. Neg. No. 6035



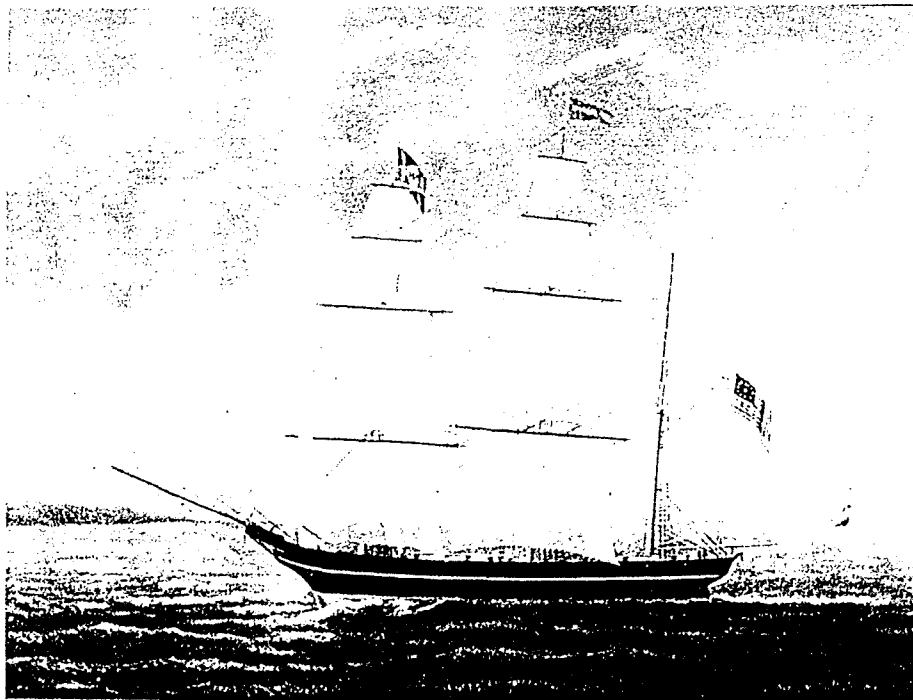
COMMERCIAL FLAG OF BENJAMIN A. WEST It was flown from the foremast.

PEABODY ESSEX MUSEUM

fr The West Family  
at Peabody Essex Mus. Lib.



BARK DRAGON OF SALEM Built In 1850. Owned by Benjamin A. West (1820-1877) and others. Painting attributed to Benjamin F. West. Courtesy of the *Peabody Essex Museum*, Salem. Neg. No. 683a



THE BARK IMAUM OF SALEM, built in 1850. Owned by Benjamin A. West and others. Note the West commercial flag on the foremast. Painting attributed to Benjamin F. West. Courtesy of the *Peabody Essex Museum*, Salem. Neg. No. 16,110



LIBRARY

Pr. Phady Esser - Mus. Coll.

Cassino  
to  
LeBoeuf

Three \$1. R. Stamps  
Documentary  
Canceled

2290:22

I, Samuel E. Cassino, of Salem, Essex County, Massachusetts, for consideration paid, grant to Alfred T. LeBoeuf, of said Salem, with warranty covenants the land in said SALEM, with the buildings thereon, bounded easterly by Lafayette Street fifty nine feet six inches, southerly by Gardner Street ninety seven feet, westerly by land now or late of George West and others fifty nine feet six inches, and northerly by land formerly of Fitch now owned by me ninety seven feet; being the same premises conveyed to me by deed of Henry K. Mansfield, dated December 9, 1907, and recorded with Essex So. Dist. Deeds Book 1899 Page 379. Said premises are conveyed subject to the taxes for the year 1914. I, Melvina K. Cassino, wife of said grantor, release to said grantee all rights of dower and homestead and other interests therein. WITNESS our hands and seals this sixteenth day of January 1915.

Samuel E. Cassino (seal)

Guy C. Richards to both )

Melvina K. Cassino (seal)

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS Essex, ss. January 16, 1915. Then personally appeared the above named Samuel E. Cassino, and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be his free act and deed, before me.

Guy C. Richards Justice of the Peace.

Essex ss. Received Mar. 8, 1915, 40 m. past 1 P. M. Recorded and Examined.

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS THAT I, Alfred T. LeBoeuf, of Salem, Essex County and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, being of sound and disposing mind and memory, but knowing the uncertainty of this life, do make this my last WILL AND TESTAMENT, hereby revoking all wills heretofore made by me.

After the payment of my just debts and funeral expenses, I give, devise and bequeath as follows:-

To my beloved wife, Elmina M. LeBoeuf, all my property, whether real, personal, equitable or mixed, which I may be possessed at the time of my decease.

I purposely omit any bequest to my children, namely:- Jeanette; George; Henry; or any child born to me hereafter, as I am confident my wife will properly take care of them.

I hereby nominate and appoint Clement C. Desaulniers, of said Salem, the executor of this will, and I request that he, or his successor be exempt from furnishing surety or sureties on his official bond as such.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF I hereunto set my hand and seal this

*5<sup>th</sup>* Day of *March* 1920.

*Alfred T. LeBoeuf*

On this *5<sup>th</sup>* Day of *March* 1920, personally appeared the above named Alfred T. LeBoeuf, who signed this instrument in our presence, declaring it his last WILL AND TESTAMENT, and at his request, in his presence, and in the presence of each other, we three do now sign our names as attesting witnesses.

*Allen C. Stevens*

*Horace Poitier*

*Clement Desaulniers*

# Salem mourns its 'family doctor'



DR. ISRAEL KAPLAN

SALEM — Dr. Israel Kaplan, 83, physician to generations of Salem families, long-time chairman of the Salem Board of Health, and, most recently, chairman of the board of trustees of the Shaughnessy Rehabilitation Hospital, died in Salem Hospital Thursday following a brief illness.

He was the husband of Sarah E. Kaplan, of 194 Lafayette St.

Born in Russia, Dr. Kaplan came to Salem 76 years ago. He was educated in the public schools, graduating from Salem High School, where he was a star quarterback at 135 pounds, as well as a standout in baseball

and basketball.

Dr. Kaplan graduated from Tufts Medical School in 1928, and also did post-graduate work in the study of allergies at the Pratt Diagnostic Center.

He started practicing in Salem in 1930, after his internship and residency at Mt. Auburn Hospital in Cambridge.

Mayor Anthony V. Salvo paid the doctor a tribute Thursday, saying, "He will be missed greatly by everyone. Dr. Kaplan was a solid citizen and his name was a household word."

"To know him was to love him — he had charm and wit

and he was dedicated to the city and gave more than 100 percent, especially through his efforts at Shaughnessy Hospital."

"The city has lost an outstanding physician and a great public servant," District Court Chief Justice Samuel E. Zoll said this morning. Zoll, when he was mayor of Salem in the early 1970s, worked closely with Kaplan on the plans for a new chronic care hospital.

According to Zoll, Kaplan always "brought a sense of humor and a sense of purpose to everything he did."

Kaplan was a leader in the

KAPLAN  
(Continued on page 10)

## KAPLAN

(Continued from page 1)

use of CAT scans for diagnostic purposes, and also administered the first polio vaccine in the city.

From the time he began his practice, Dr. Kaplan was more than just a family physician. From 1932 to 1933 he served as the city physician, treating patients on general relief. His salary was \$1,000 per year.

He began serving on the Board of Health in 1941, and was appointed chairman in 1950, serving in that position for more than 30 years.

He was first president and chief of the Shaughnessy medical staff, served on the city-owned hospital's board of trustees since 1975, and was appointed chairman of the board this year.

In a private capacity, Dr. Kaplan was appointed to the medical staff of Salem Hospital in 1941, and stayed an active staff member for more than 45 years. He also served as a incorporator of the hospital in later years.

Dr. Kaplan's greatest honor, however, came when the Shaughnessy Rehabilitation Hospital was dedicated in 1975, and he found that the adjacent Israel Kaplan Public Health Center had been named in his honor.

Thursday, Dr. Shaughnessy remembered "Kappy" as "a very devoted and sincere guy. He wanted to do what he could for people, and that was his thing."

"He was a guy who was not out to make a fortune," Shaughnessy said. "He has always shown an interest in public welfare and the care of people who are usually deprived of hospital care and so forth."

Outside of his professional and civic activities, Dr. Kaplan was best known as a funny man, who could always break up a board meeting, or ease a patient, with laughter. Shaughnessy said, "He always had that ability to joke about everything, for some reason. That was one of his great assets."

He was an avid golfer and liked walking along Lafayette Street.

A pint-sized quarterback in a football era when there was no free substitution, he played both offense and defense and often hailed teammate Cy Wentworth as the best football player in Salem High history.

He was associated with the Boys Club of Salem and was a board member of Temple Shalom of Salem. He was a member of the Kernwood Country Club. His professional affiliations included the Essex County Medical Society, the Massachusetts Medical Society and the American Medical Society.

In addition to his wife, he leaves a daughter, Eleanor Goldman of Swampscott; a brother, David Kaplan of San Francisco; and two grandchildren.

Services will be held Sunday at Temple Shalom, 287 Lafayette St. at 12 noon.