

File

Historic Salem Incorporated

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5 CHESTNUT STREET

Built for
JOHN DEACON STONE, Gentleman,
1828

Childhood Home of Ernest Fenollosa
Japanese Imperial Commissioner of Fine Arts

Research: Donna Vinson
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FIVE CHESTNUT STREET

Built by John Deacon Stone, Gentleman, 1828
Childhood Home of Ernest Fenollosa,
Japanese Imperial Commissioner of Fine Arts

History of the Property:

The double house presently bearing the addresses Five and Seven Chestnut Street was completed in 1828 by carpenter William Lummus, working to the orders of John Deacon Stone, the "developer" of lower Chestnut Street. Both halves of the house were identical upon its completion; later additions and modifications to Seven Chestnut Steet have altered its appearance and thus the uniform facade of the building. Stone commissioned the construction of Five and Seven Chestnut Street for income rather than residential reasons; he and his family occupied Two and Eight Chestnut Street successively while leasing out their other properties to a variety of monied tenants in the 1820s and 1830s.

The lot on which Five and Seven Chestnut Street stands is part of the seventeenth-century land grant of Jonathan Neale (See inserted

"Part of Salem in 1700"). The Neale homestead was partitioned among his sons Jonathan Jr. and David in 1753, with the latter heir receiving the northern parcel (Essex Country Registry of Deeds, Book 100, leaf 14). At the end of the eighteenth century, the combined Neale properties were partitioned among eight Neale heirs, and Jonathan Neale, Jr., a yeoman and son of David, received the "third part", roughly equivalent to the land on both sides of Chestnut Street from Summer to Cambridge Streets. Chestnut Street was then in the process of being laid out, and land from fifteen Salem families, including the Neale's, was taken for the effort. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Jonathan Neale's Chestnut Street land appears to have been left largely undeveloped, although the Lee Manuscripts in the Essex Institute Library indicate that there was a "two-story house with pitched roof and blacksmith's shop" belonging to Brackley Peabody either on or near the site of Five and Seven Chestnut Street. Whatever the case, Jonathan, now a merchant, conveyed three parcels of land fronting Chestnut Street "reserving all the buildings on the above described land to their respective owners and a reasonable time to remove them" to John Deacon Stone in 1824 (E.C.R.D. Book 238, leaf 247).

Following John Deacon Stone's death in 1839, his heirs-at-law sold Five Chestnut Street, then designated Number Three, to Luther Upton, a Salem merchant (E.C.R.D. Book 312, leaf 273). The Upton owned and occupied the property until 1854, when it was transferred to the Fenollosa family (E.C.R.D. Book 492, leaf 244). Manuel Fenollosa, a Spanish emigrè, musician, and music instructor to Salem's leading families, had recently married one of his former pupils, Mary Silsbee,

of the wealthy mercantile family. The Fenollosa's first child, Ernest, was born in 1853, and consequently the family sought more space. Mary Silsbee Fenollosa's trust fund enabled the family to purchase Five Chestnut Street and thus move to the most fashionable neighborhood in town, close to her family and friends. Ernest Fenollosa, renowned scholar of Japanese culture, Japanese Imperial Commissioner of Fine Arts, and distinguished "musician, poet, painter, dreamer, prophet, philosopher and mystic" in the words of his Harvard classmate (Nathan Haskell Dole in the Ninth Report of the Class Secretary of the Class of 1874 of Harvard College (1909), p. 42), spent the next sixteen years of his life, his entire childhood, at Five Chestnut Street, until he departed for Harvard College in 1870.

Ernest Fenollosa retained ties to Five Chestnut Street in particular and Salem in general as his younger brother William took possession of the house in 1878, after his recently-widowed mother moved to Lafayette Street. Apparently too young to settle down, William Fenollosa leased the house to the Reverent Fielder Israel, Minister of the nearby First Church, from 1879 to 1887 (Salem Directories, 1878-1890). The following year, William took up residence and occupied Five Chestnut Street until 1916, when he, too, moved to Lafayette Street. From 1917 until 1922 the house appears to have been alternatively left vacant or leased to short-term tenants of good families, and in 1923 Fenollosa sold the property to Henry and Katharine Wright of Salem (E.C.R.D. Book 2580, page 570).

Compared to the Fenollosa family and later twentieth-century owners, the Wrights owned Five Chestnut Street for a relatively short

time and occupied it for an even shorter time. In 1925 they moved to Topsfield and began leasing their Salem house to John and Frances Kunster. John, a paper company executive, and his wife purchased the property in 1928 (E.C.R.D. Book 2772, page 359). The Kuster family owned Five Chestnut Street for the next twenty-two years, during most of which Mrs. Kuster lived alone in the house as she was widowed in 1931. Twenty years later, Frances Kuster conveyed the house to Henry DeMers of Salem, who appears to have utilized it primarily as income property.

Henry DeMers sold Five Chestnut Street to John and Elise Gordon of Salem in 1960 (E.C.R.D. Book 4646, page 57). John, an executive at New England Telephone and Telegraph Company, died in 1975, and after his widow's death two years later the executor of her estate conveyed the property to Philip and Mary Bourne of Beverly (E.C.R.D. Book 6321, page 154). Eleven years later Mary Bourne, then of Bedford, and Philip Bourne's court-appointed guardian conveyed Five Chestnut Street to Blake and Nina Anderson, its present owners (E.C.R.D. Book 9617, page 223).

Documentation:

Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 100, leaf 14

Partition of Neale Family estate among Jonathan Neale Jr. and David Neale.

Date recorded: May 26, 1753

E.C.R.D. Book 166, leaf 70

Partition of David Neale's and Jonathan Neale's "homesteads" into eight parcels.

Date recorded: September 30, 1799

E.C.R.D. Book 238, leaf 247

Grantor: Jonathan Neal of Salem, Merchant

Grantee: John Stone of Salem, Gentleman

Consideration: \$6000

Conveyance of: Three parcels of land on Chestnut Street.

"The first parcel is on the southerly side of Chestnut Street, and is bounded as follows, viz. beginning at the southeasterly corner thereof on Summer Street by land now or late of Edward Smith, then running westerly partly by his land and partly by land of Edward W. Morse one hundred and fifty-two feet and six inches to a fence by land of the Proprietors of the South buildings, then running northerly partly by their land and partly by Chestnut Street ninety-three feet and three inches, then running northeasterly by Chestnut Street about one hundred and sixty-eight feet to the first bounds."

Date recorded: October 11, 1825

E.C.R.D. Book 312, leaf 273

Grantors: John H. Stone of Calais, Maine, Lucy P. Stone and Henry G. Stone, both of Salem

Grantee: Luther Upton of Salem, Merchant

Consideration: \$2600

Conveyance of: "a dwelling house and the land under and adjoining the same, situate in Salem, bounded as follows: beginning at the northwest corner thereof on Chestnut Street at the middle of the front of the whole building by land sold to George Cleveland: thence running southerly 101 feet through the middle of the whole house and by the fence; bounding westerly on said Cleveland's land to land of Edward W. Morse: thence running easterly as the fence stands by his land and woodhouse 16 feet: thence northerly 25 feet on Frothingham's land: and thence easterly 22 feet 6 inches on his land, to land sold to John Perkins: thence northerly 89 feet by land of said Perkins as the fence stands to Chestnut Street, and thence westerly 50 feet 2 inches on said street to the corner begun at...."

Date recorded: April 24, 1839

E.C.R.D. Book 492, leaf 244

Grantor: Luther Upton of Salem, Merchant

Grantee: Benjamin H. Silsbee, Trustee for Mrs. Mary Fenollosa, of Salem

Consideration: \$4500

Conveyance of: "a dwelling house and the land under and adjoining the same situate in Salem" numbered Three Chestnut Street.

Date recorded: April 14, 1854

E.C.R.D. Book 2580, page 570

Grantor: William s. Fenollosa of Salem

Grantees: Katharine D. Wright, wife of Henry W. Wright of Salem

Consideration: paid

Conveyance of: "the land with the buildings thereon now numbered 5 on Chestnut Street in said Salem....being the same premises conveyed by Luther Upton to Benjamin H. Silsbee, Trustee for the benefit of Mary Fenollosa, my mother, dated April 11, 1854 and recorded with the Essex South Registry of Deeds Book 492, page 244."

Date recorded: December 1, 1923

E.C.R.D. Book 2772, page 359

Grantors: Henry and Katharine Wright of Topsfield

Grantees: John F. and Frances Kunster of Salem

Consideration: paid

Conveyance of: Five Chestnut Street

Date recorded: July 25, 1928

E.C.R.D. Book 3796, page 69

Grantor: Frances Kuster, Widow, of Salem

Grantee: Henry E. DeMers of Salem

Consideration: paid

Conveyance of: Five Chestnut Street

Date recorded: January 15, 1951

E.C.R.D. Book 4646, page 57

Grantor: Henry E. DeMers of Salem

Grantees: John W. Gordon and Elise H. Gordon of Salem

Consideration: paid

Conveyance of: "land and buildings thereon located at number 5 Chestnut Street, in said Salem"

Date recorded: February 25, 1960

E.C.R.D. Book 6321, page 154

Grantor: Edmund H. Kendrick of Wenham, Executor under the will of Elise H. Gordon, late of Salem

Grantees: Philip W. and Mary E. Bourne of Beverly

Consideration: \$63,000

Conveyance of: Five Chestnut Street

Date recorded: February 1, 1977

E.C.R.D. Book 9617, page 223

Grantors: Mary E. Bourne of Bedford, Wife of Philip W.

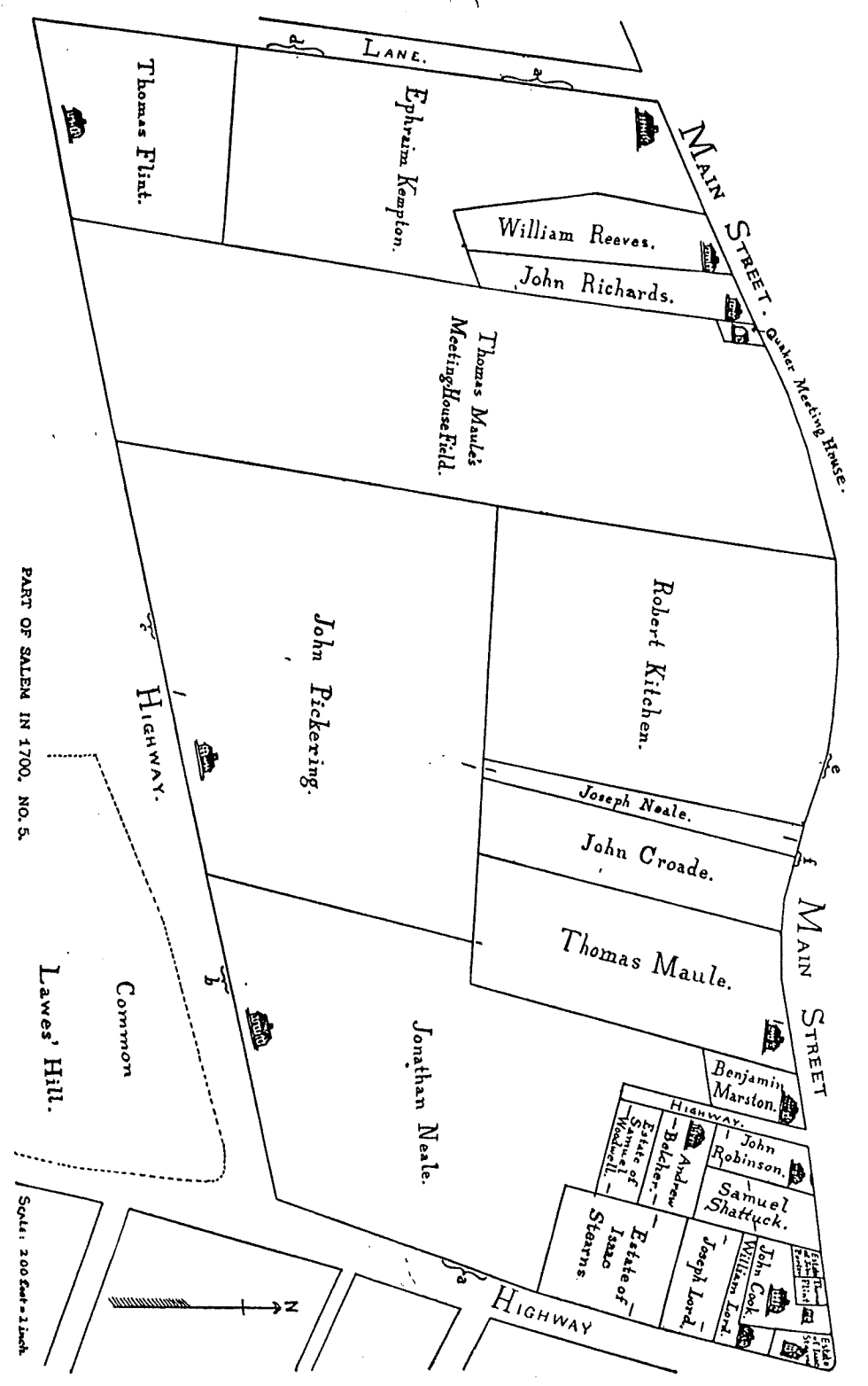
Bourne, and Carter H. Harrison, Guardian of said Philip W. Bourne

Grantees: Blake and Nina Anderson of Salem

Consideration: paid

Conveyance of: Five Chestnut Street

Date recorded: July 18, 1988



PART OF SALEM IN 1700, NO. 5.

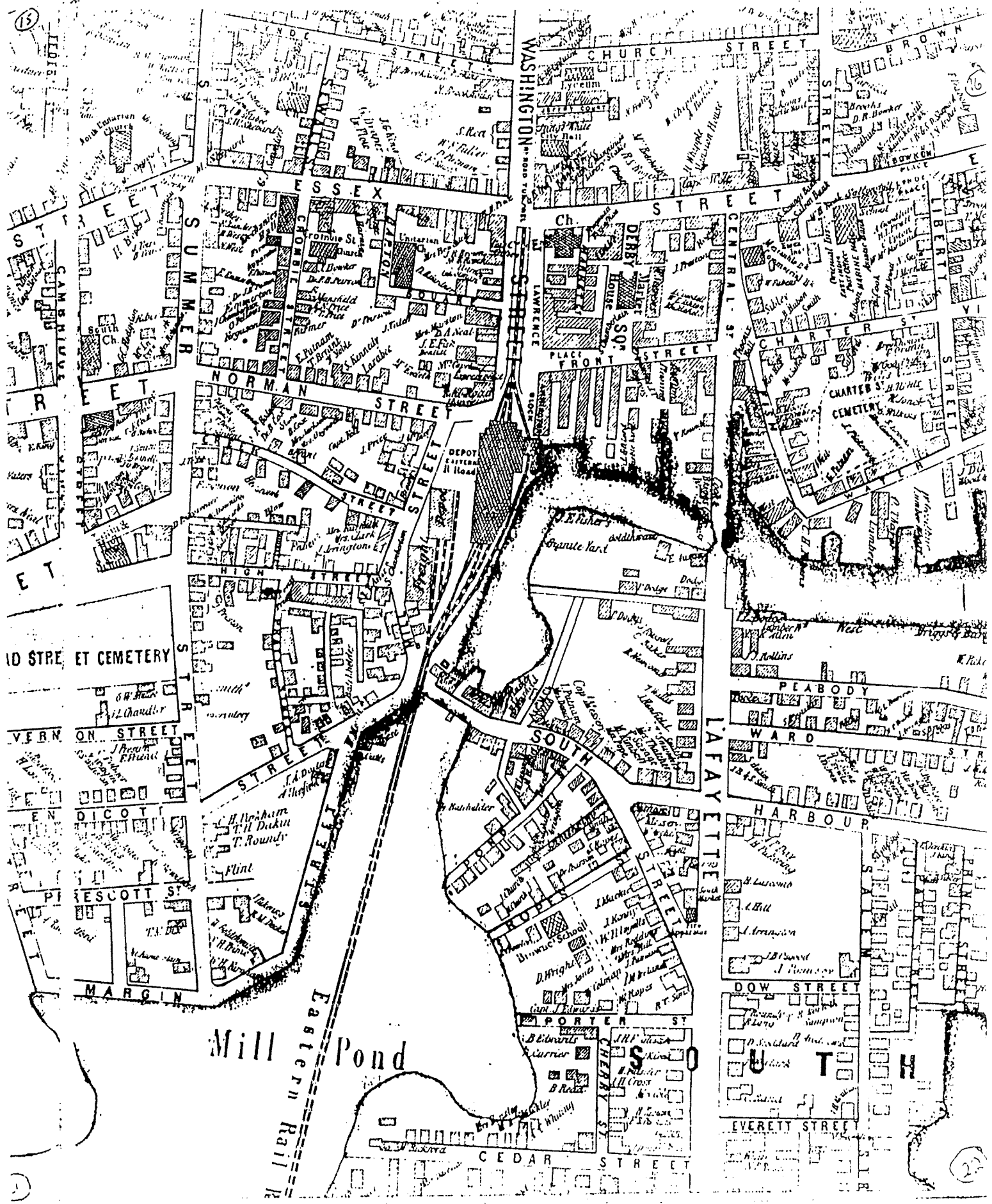
LAWES' HILL.

SCALE: 200 Feet = 1 Inch.



Fig. 1.

1851 Map of Salem





Fenollosa:

The Far East and American Culture

BY LAWRENCE W. CHISOLM

NEW HAVEN AND LONDON, YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1963