

History of House & Occupants
One Hamilton Street

By Robert Booth

According to available evidence, this house was built in 1844 for Benjamin F. Browne, apothecary.

In March, 1844, for \$2700, heirs of George Osborne sold to Joseph Smith, stabler, their right to Lot 2 in the division of the George Osborne estate, fronting west on Hamilton Street (200') and north on Essex Street (41'), (ED 342:233). Next day, on March 23, for \$1500 Mr. Smith sold part of the same lot to Benjamin F. Browne, druggist (ED 342:238). This lot ran 41' west on Essex Street, 75' south on Hamilton Street, then east, then north on land of Frothingham (ED 342:238). On this lot, Mr. Browne had the present house erected, perhaps in the spring and summer of 1844.

Judging from the published reminiscences of various men, this was not the first building to stand here. In 1810 or so, the site was occupied by two stores: the one on the corner was occupied by grocer Henry Osborne downstairs and by Ames & Bulley, chairmakers, upstairs. The one to its north was occupied by grocer John Ferguson (see "Our Old Houses," by Jonathan Tucker, published in *Salem Gazette*, 17 Dec. 1875). Both were owned by George Osborne, who would die in 1811; he worked as a shoreman, meaning one who owned fishing vessels and cured their fish in fishyards, on flakes or fish-fences, for export.

In the 1820s, as recollected by Oliver Thayer, this stretch of land on Essex Street was occupied by "three two-and-a-half story shops extending to the corner of Hamilton Street. One was there as early as 1812 and was occupied by Mr. John Ferguson as a grocery store. The lower front of the one on the corner was the apothecary shop of Joseph D. Chandler. There was a school in the second story. On the site of these three houses, Dr. Benjamin F. Browne afterward erected his house." (see p.219, Oliver Thayer, "Early Recollections of the Upper Portion of Essex Street", *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, vol. 21). It is interesting to see that there was an apothecary store here, since Mr. B.F. Browne was himself a druggist and apothecary.

By the 1840s (per George Arvedson), Joseph Smith had his house and stable on this side of Hamilton Street back toward Chestnut "which always attracted the boys" while on the opposite side of Hamilton was a large greenhouse and other buildings. "On the corner of Hamilton Street" (and Essex) "Dr. Benjamin F. Browne built his brick house, for which I can remember a wooden store being taken away," recalled George Arvedson in his memoirs of

the 1840s, printed as *Walks to School Some Sixty Years Ago* in 1906 (see EA 795 1906 in J.D. Phillips Library).

Benjamin Frederick Browne (1793-1873) was one of the most interesting figures in Salem in the 19th century, and he left a fascinating written record. He was often called "Doctor" because of his knowledge of medicines. At the age of fourteen he began his apprenticeship in the apothecary shop of E. S. Lang in the East Parish. With only the interruption of the War of 1812, in which he served on board privateers, he worked as an apothecary in Salem for many decades. Of his privateer service, he would leave a book-length manuscript, later published as *Yarn of a Yankee Privateer* (some have said that Hawthorne edited it; but Hawthorne himself said he made only the slightest changes to Browne's splendid account)

Those who knew Browne best left a fine memoir (below). He married Sally Bott in 1825, when he was thirty-one and when he was serving as master of the lodge of Free Masons as well as commander of the Cadets military troop. He was a member of the Barton Square Church and of several social clubs; and he was an active Democrat and a friend of Nathaniel Hawthorne. Before moving into the new house at One Hamilton Street, he had resided nearby at 18 Chestnut Street, owned by his wife's family the Botts. In 1846 he became Postmaster of Salem.

VOL. XIII.

APRIL, 1875.

No. 2.

MEMOIR

OF

BENJAMIN FREDERICK BROWNE,

[READ MONDAY, FEB. 15, 1875.]

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On the side of his mother, Elizabeth Andrew, he was a descendant, in the seventh generation, from Rev. Francis Higginson, the first minister of the First Church, in Salem. Two of his ancestors, Rev. John Higginson, pastor of the First Church, and John Browne, ruling

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elder, were ordained at the same time, Aug. 29, 1660.¹ His education began in the school of Madame Babbidge, in Essex street, in 1797. Among the most vivid recollections of that time was the memory of the cuffs, kickings and chasings he endured from the Federalist boys, because, his father being a Republican, he wore no cockade in his hat. His first hat must have been an object of tender regard, for he bought it with five shillings earned by picking up scraps of old iron and pieces of junk, and selling them at the Hingham boat, which came to Salem several times a year with a cargo of boxes and pails. He was a pupil of Mr. John Southwick, and joined in the frequent fights with Master Lang's scholars, at the time when the almshouse stood on the common, and the common itself was a dreary place called the town swamp, and frequented by horses, cattle, ducks, geese, hens and pigs. The streets were unpaved and unlighted. There were no police, disorderly persons thronged the streets, and the boys of different sections of the town frequently fought pitched battles with brickbats and frozen snowballs.

August 3, 1807, he entered the shop of E. S. Lang, apothecary, and son of Master Lang. There, after the custom of the times, he served an apprenticeship of five years. He finished his apprenticeship and lost his occupation in 1812, when the war with England had destroyed the commerce of his native city. Being young, very small in stature and in feeble health, he seemed to be deprived of business at home and a share in the warlike pursuits which were engrossing the minds of his townsmen. But his experience as apothecary's clerk enabled him to obtain a position as surgeon's assistant on board the private armed ship Alfred, in which he sailed in Sep-

¹ See Hist. Coll., Vols. v and vii, for genealogies of the Brown and Higginson families.

tember, 1812, on a four months' cruise. Two English brigs were captured, having valuable cargoes of cotton, sugar and dye stuffs. The vessels and cargoes were confiscated, and the prisoners put on board a Portuguese schooner with bread and beef enough to last until they arrived in New York. In the third engagement a large armed merchantman was engaged, but as the captain doubted their ability to complete the capture, they sailed away and left her, much to the disgust of the crew. Three days after, the general dissatisfaction culminated when they fairly ran away from a large vessel, for fear it might be a man-of-war.

Benjamin was now nineteen years old, and, being neither fond of the sea nor eager for war, was at his wit's end in regard to the means of subsistence, when the owners of the privateering schooner "Frolic" offered him a place as captain's clerk. To this was added the duties of purser and sergeant of marines. They set sail with a motley crew, "hatless, shoeless, shirtless, graceless and unwashed," in a shapeless craft so singularly unfit for her work that, after the first "white squall," the sailors went aft in a body and promised to pay back their bounty money if the captain would only put them ashore again.

The vessel was remodelled, and again Benjamin, with a heavy heart and light pockets, went on board. The first capture was an American vessel sailing under a British license. Then, falling in with a fleet of English vessels in ballast, bound for Pictou and Merimachi for lumber, they captured ten or a dozen of them, and, after taking out the crews and the few articles of value, burned them. After a profitless voyage they refitted at Portsmouth, N. H., and were there when a large portion of the town was burned. They set sail on Christmas day, 1813, and after some exciting but profitless adventures, were chased

below the tropical line by the English man-of-war, Heron. After a desperate attempt to escape, the captain mounted the rigging and announced their surrender. Benjamin was now nearly twenty-one years old, and as he stood a prisoner of war upon the deck of the Heron, his worldly possessions consisted of the checked shirt and duck trousers in which he stood. With such resources for comfort he entered upon a captivity of fifteen months.

The prisoners were taken to Barbadoes and confined in jail for a week, when the officers were admitted to parole. They were sent to England in August of the same year, in the seventy-four gun ship Benbow. From Plymouth they marched sixteen miles over the desolate hills to Dartmoor. Breaking a thirty hours' fast with bread, water and pickled fish, the prisoners, in their wet and muddy clothes, lay down to sleep on the stone floor, and so forgot their miseries.

Each man received a hammock, bed, blanket, pillow, and a bunch of rope-yarns to sling his hammock with, a wooden spoon, a tin pot, and to every six men a three gallon bucket. The prisons were dark, damp and gloomy, built of stone, with no furniture but rows of posts from which to sling their hammocks in tiers two or three deep. The British government furnished clothing, a coarse, yellow woollen jacket and pantaloons, with the king's broad arrow and the letters T. O. stamped on the back, a coarse woollen cap and woollen list shoes with wooden soles.

The situation of the prison was unhealthy, and during the year about one in thirteen of the four thousand died, while those who were considered well suffered continually from toothache, neuralgia and like ailments.

The prisoners had a market every day from eleven to two o'clock, and had liberty to buy whatever their scanty

funds would permit. The British government allowed each man per day half a pound of beef, a pound and a half of bread, some turnips or onions and one-third of an ounce of salt. On Wednesdays and Fridays the bill of fare was one pound of herrings or codfish and one pound of potatoes with the bread. In addition to this the American government allowed each man two-pence half penny a day, paid in monthly instalments. In various ways about eighteen thousand dollars a month were in circulation among the six thousand prisoners, or about three dollars apiece. In such a community this amount of money allowed them to practise upon a small scale all the commercial virtues and rascalities of the larger world outside. To some the pittance was made less valuable by inefficiency and unthrift, while others by industry, ingenuity and usury were able to take the cream of prison life. Young Browne by good fortune found a friend in one of those jolly, good-tempered spendthrifts who was always at his wit's end for money, but was always on good terms with those who had it. "The little captain" brought to their mess fabulous amounts of good cheer, beefsteak, saltfish, onions, potatoes, white bread and brandy. The brandy he kept, but the provisions he dealt out with bountiful hands. Impressed by the opportunities for gain, the two set up a shop for the sale of rum, butter, tobacco, coffee, tea, potatoes, etc. Trade prospered. The stock was sold at remunerative prices. But when the Tavistock grocer called for a settlement, the "little captain," like many another jolly fellow, had lost the run of the accounts, and, as he was cashier and treasurer, the burden of bankruptcy and subsequent payment fell upon Browne.

By the usual devices of prisoners, the dreary months of imprisonment were whiled away or endured at least,

until worn by suffering, exasperated by petty oppressions and thoroughly convinced that their keepers were cold-blooded murderers, the prisoners became mutinous. The battle of New Orleans had been won. Peace had been declared, and men who thought they ought to be free were little inclined to endure the brutal treatment to which they had been subjected. Instead of attempting to conciliate them, Captain Shortland, the commanding officer, ordered out seven or eight hundred soldiers, who kept up a murderous fire upon them for more than ten minutes. Then the dead and wounded were gathered up and life went on as before for another month. On the first of May, 1815, Browne was released from prison, a poor, feeble, emaciated youth, weighing just ninety-four pounds on the scales at Plymouth. In all the time of his imprisonment no tidings of him had reached home. Arriving in New York, he took sloop to Providence and stage-coach thence to Salem, arriving at sunrise in his native city, from which he was never long absent afterwards.

The foregoing account has been condensed, and by that process the interest has been taken out, from notes written in leisure hours by Mr. Browne, and published through the agency of Nathaniel Hawthorne. Dr. Browne (as we shall now call him by virtue of apothecaries' brevet) showed to him the narrative he had written for his own amusement, and Mr. Hawthorne, then a resident of Salem, was so much interested in it that he procured its publication in the "Democratic Review," in successive numbers, during the year 1846.

Dr. Browne gladly returned to the pursuits of peace, and during the ensuing fifty-eight years was known and honored as one of our most genial, honorable and trusty citizens.

He went into business as an apothecary with William

Stearns, Nov., 1816, in the corner store of the Union street building. Jan. 1, 1823, he set up a drug store on the corner of Essex and Washington streets, in the brick building belonging to John Daland, now demolished to make way for the Eastern railroad. He moved thence, in 1828, to the shop on the west side of Court, now Washington street, opposite the city hall.

In April, 1833, he removed to a store standing on the spot now occupied by the brick building No. 226 Essex street, opposite the First Church. That store was burned March 27, 1862. Jan. 1st, 1850, he took Charles H. Price, a former clerk, into a partnership which lasted until Jan. 1st, 1860, when he finally retired from business.

Dr. Browne was married Jan. 23, 1825, to Miss Sally Bott, daughter of John Bott and Lydia Henfield.

He always took great interest in the public organizations of his native city. He was for nearly fifty years connected with the Independent Congregational Church in Barton Square. As one of the marshals he assisted at the installation of Rev. Henry Colman, the first minister, and helped in the making and distribution of the punch which flowed freely on that occasion. He was master of the Essex Lodge of Free Masons from 1824 to 1827; commander of the cadets from 1825 to 1828; representative to the general court in 1831; state senator in 1843; postmaster of Salem from 1845 to 1849, and several times candidate for the office of mayor. He belonged to the democratic party for many years, and all of his public political life was spent in the service of that organization. But before the war of the rebellion he had grown into sympathy with the Republican party with which he quietly coöperated during the remainder of his life. In the legislature he showed skill as a debater, especially in the

use of dry humor and an effective wit, manifested in caricatures of his opponents, which gave his logic edge and force.

The later years of his life, being blessed by a fortune adequate to his wants, were spent in comfort and leisurely quiet. He never lost his habits of regular attendance at his place of business until disabled by his last illness. He retained his desk, and, sitting in his comfortable arm-chair he watched, with genial interest, the passing of the busy crowds, received the greetings of his numerous friends, and kept himself in close and cheerful communication with the world about him. He was not left behind in his old age forgotten and forgetful, but made himself the special friend and patron of worthy young men, knowing the names, occupations and merits of all who came regularly under his notice, and often giving unobtrusive and valuable assistance with counsel, money or credit. He also indulged in literary and historical pursuits which showed that had his early life been devoted to them as his later years were, he would have become much more than an ordinary historian, and possibly a poet with claims to distinction. "The Papers of an Old Dartmoor Prisoner" had such peculiar merits, not merely from the interesting subject matter but also for the singular skill in narration and vivacity of style that it seemed as if Nathaniel Hawthorne, their gifted editor, must have added much from his own genius. But a careful comparison of the original manuscript with the printed copy shows that the narrative owes nothing whatever to the accomplishments of the editor except some slight use of the pruning knife.

In the fire, which burned his store in 1862, he lost notes containing the work of many years, in which he had put on record the contents of his wonderful memory of

the men and events which had passed under his notice during eighty years of remarkably shrewd attention. Had it not been for this misfortune these "Collections" would have been enriched by many contributions and this sketch would have been unnecessary.

Dr. Browne was stricken with paralysis on the morning of Sept. 6, 1873. His mental powers were for a considerable time unimpaired, and he watched the progress of his disease with philosophic calmness and the cheerfulness of a strong religious faith; until, after repeated shocks, his powers gave way, and he died, Nov. 23, 1873, in the eighty-first year of his age.

In addition to his lengthy privateering memoir, B. F. Browne wrote antiquarian pieces that were published in the Essex Institute Historical Collections (see attached). Other pieces of his writing were unfortunately burned in a fire at his drugstore at 226 Essex Street.

Benjamin F. Browne (1793-1873) m. 1825 Sarah Bott (b. 1804). Known issue:

1. Benjamin F., 1826, died 23 Aug. 1830, hydrocephalus.
2. Sarah, 1831, died 9 May 1831, aged 3 months.
3. Sarah, m. Mr. Cloutman
4. John Bott, died 1835 young.
5. Ellen, 1838, m. William R. Cloutman
6. John Bott, died 20 July 1841 young.
7. Frances, 1840.

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.

In the face of 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 mega-port 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 cranky "introductory section" to **The Scarlet Letter**, which he began while working in the Custom House.

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.

In 1851, Stephen C. Phillips succeeded in building a railroad line from Salem to Lowell, which meant that the coal that was landed at Phillips Wharf (formerly the Crowninshields' great India Wharf) could be run cheaply out to Lowell to help fuel the boilers of the mills, whose output of textiles could be freighted easily to Salem for shipment by water. This innovation, although not long-lived, was a much-needed boost to Salem's economy as a port and transportation center. 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, 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).

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. In that year, the house here was listed as occupied by Mr. Browne, 70, apothecary, wife Sally, 59, daughters Ellen, 22, and Frances, 20, and servant Ellen Welsh, 20, born in Ireland (see 1860 census, h. 2978).

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; 800,000 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 1866 B.F. Browne's drugstore caught fire.

In 1870 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 Batchelor 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.

Benjamin F. Browne died on Nov. 23, 1873, aged eighty.

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.

After the deaths of their parents, the Browne daughters, Sarah (Mrs. Cloutman) Ellen (Mrs. William R. Cloutman), and Frances, inherited the property. In July, 1880, Mrs. Ellen Cloutman conveyed her interest in the homestead to her sister, Miss Frances Browne, then forty (ED 1040:209).

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, 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.

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.

Mrs. Sarah (Browne) Cloutman was deceased by April 1901, at which time Mrs. Ellen (Browne) Cloutman, now a widow, sold an interest in the homestead to her sister, Miss Frances Browne. They would reside here for two decades more.

Salem kept growing. The Canadians were followed in the early 20th 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.

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. After the deaths of the Browne sisters, the premises were conveyed to Mrs. Jennie M. McMath, wife of Joseph A. McMath of Salem (ED 2265:596). The McMaths became joint owners in 1924 (ED 2585:268) and perhaps owned the house for many years more.

Salem's 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 merchants, mariners, apothecaries, and mill-operatives are all honored as a large part of what makes Salem different from any other place.

--Robert Booth for Historic Salem Inc., Oct. 22, 2010

Know all Men by these Presents, That We,

George Osborne, of Danvers, County of Essex, Physician, and Eliza O. Archer, of Oswego, in State of New York, Widow. -

in consideration of twenty seven hundred dollars paid by - Joseph Smith, of Salem, in the County of Essex, State of Massachusetts, Stabler: -

the receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge, do hereby give, grant, sell and convey unto the said

Smith and his heirs and assigns forever all our right in a piece of land situated in Salem aforesaid and described as lot No 2. by the Commissioners appointed by Probate Court in their partition of the real estate of George Osborn, late of Salem, Shoeman, deceased, dated 24th. day of October A.D. 1811 as follows. Viz. beginning at a stake thirty feet distant Westerly from the Northwest corner of Bott's land on Essex Street, thence running Southerly one hundred and seven feet to a stake, thence running Easterly to Bott's land bounding Easterly and northerly on lot No one, thence running Southerly bounding Easterly on Bott's land one hundred and ten feet to a stake, thence running Westerly to Hamilton Street at a right angle with said Street bounding Southerly on land set off to No. one, thence Northerly to Essex Street, bounding Westerly on Hamilton Street about two hundred and twenty feet, more or less, thence running Easterly bounding Northerly on Essex Street about forty one feet, more or less, to the stake standing thereon -

To Have and to Hold the afore-granted premises to the said Smith

and his heirs and assigns to his and their use and behoof forever. And We do covenant with the said Smith and his heirs and assigns that We are lawfully seized in fee of the afore-granted premises; that they are free of all incumbrances; that We have good right to sell and convey the same to the said Smith, in the manner aforesaid: - And that We will warrant and defend the same premises to the said Smith and his heirs and assigns forever, against the lawful claims and demands of all persons.

In Witness Whereof, We the said George and Eliza together with Sarah W. the wife of said George in relinquishment of dower to said Smith, have hereunto set our hands and seals this twenty second day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty four: -

Signed, sealed and delivered in presence of us, first causing the words for myself and as attorney for, J. Hardy Prince, Mathew W. Coverly, witness to Sarah W. O.

Geo. Osborne seal.

Eliza O. Archer, by Geo. Osborne her atty. } seal

Sarah W. Osborne. seal.

Essex, ss. March 22nd - 1844 - Then the above-named George Osborn for himself and as attorney of the above-named Eliza O. Archer acknowledged the above Instrument to be their free act and deed,

before me, J. Hardy Prince, Justice of the Peace.

Essex, ss. Received March 21. 1844, 15 m. before 7. by

6 o'clock, P.M. Recorded and examined, N.H. French Register.

342:
233.

Osborne heirs
to Jos. Smith
22 Mar. 1844