

# Historic Salem incorporated

OFFICE AT OLD TOWN HALL

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

15 Winter Street

Built for

HENRY MELLUS, merchant

in 1851

Research by,  
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March 1982

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

15 Winter Street

The history of Winter Street as given in the Essex Antiquarian, vol. 8, pg. 66: "Winter street was an ancient road. It was called a lane or highway in 1668; Road leading to Beverly ferry, 1705; Highway leading from the training field to Beverly ferry, 1705; Highway leading from the training field to Beverly ferry, 1760; the way to the ferry, 1769; Road 1771; Way leading to ferry lane, 1771; the ferry lane leading to Beverly, 1779; Ferry Lane, 1780; Ferry lane or the way leading to Essex bridge, 1793; and Winter street, 1795."

The house now standing at 15 Winter St. is the third dwelling to occupy the site. Benjamin F. Browne, an apothecary and ship-surgeon in the War of 1812, was born on this site in 1793. Mr. Brown wrote about his youthful recollections in 1869. These memories were later printed in the Essex Institute Historic Collections. Mr. Browne remembered, "The old Brace house, which stood on the land now occupied by Carleton Dole, Esq. was one of the oldest, if not the oldest in the street. In that house I was born and resided the first seven years of my life. It was owned by John Gardner, son of Jonathan G., and his sister, Mrs. Bowditch, resided in part of the house, who had an only child, Joseph, a clerk to E. Hasket Derby, Esq. John was a man of property and resided much of his time on his farm, on the Northfield road, now occupied by his grandson Henry. He was a deacon of the First church, but in his latter days

mostly attended the Universalist meeting. He married, April 13, 1769, Sarah, daughter of Richard Derby. She died Sept. 27, 1774, and he did not marry again. He was a highly respectable and respected man; died Jan. 3, 1816, nearly 86 years of age, leaving sons John and Richard, and had lost daughter Sarah, who married Hon. Jacob Crowninshield. This house was afterwards bought by Capt. James Brace, who lived in it many years, and thence it acquired the name of the Brace house. It was moved away, to make room for a house built by George C. Chase, and that too has been removed and Edward Payson built a house on the site. Capt. Brace was a very respectable shipmaster, a native of England, but came to this country young, married a Miss Doyle."

Although Mr. Brown credits Edward Payson as the builder, all legal records indicate that Henry Mellus, brother-in-law of Mr. Payson, was responsible for the construction. Mr. Mellus "of San Francisco, California" purchased the parcel of land, which included two dwelling houses (15 and 17 Winter), on May 1, 1849 from William H. Chase for the sum of \$10,000. (book 411 page 111)

Henry Mellus, the son of William and Amelia (Lyon) Mellus, was born in Dorchester, Mass. on Aug. 24, 1816. He came to Salem in March of 1848 and became a merchant. Mr. Mellus was granted a permit to build this house in 1851 (appendix A). As stated by Mr. Browne the house formerly at 15 Winter St. was moved to make way for the stately new residence.

While the title of ownership belonged to Mr. Mellus, Edward Payson and his family were the first to occupy the new house at 15 Winter St. as substantiated in the tax records:

Winter Street

- 1851 #15 ----- unfinished house Mellus
- #17 Henry Mellus
- Edward Payson
- Thomas Forrester
- Enos Dodge
- 1852 #15 Edward Payson "new house"
- #17 Henry Mellus
- Thomas Forrester
- Samuel F. Coleman

Some facts about Edward Payson can be gathered from a newspaper article written in Dec. of 1893 (long after he moved from the house) when Mr. Payson celebrated his 90th birthday:

"The stranger tarrying within the gates of ancient Salem, if upon the proper path, cannot have failed to notice with each returning morning, just after eight, be it storm or sunshine, a very sprightly and precisely punctual old gentleman walking with energetic step and rapid stride by the house in the direction of the centre of trade.

His dress, his air, his evident high breeding, indicate the true gentleman of that delightful "old school" of which so few genuine representatives are now left to us.

Were one asked his age, the estimate would not exceed 75, so alert is he, and yet he has been walking down town to his daily business every morning with such regularity that one might almost time his watch by his coming, for few less years than that, and today, still alert and vigorous, bears the burden of his 90 years of active,

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useful living but lightly on his shoulders.

He was the oldest bank cashier in the United States in active service until the present week, when he felt it incumbent upon himself to tender his resignation.

For length of service the career of Edward H. Payson as a bank officer is believed to be unequalled by that of any similar official in this country.

He was born in Roxbury, went to Salem as a boy, and began his business career in the, at that time, famous broker's office of Mr. Fenno.

At the age of 23 he left his employer to accept a position in the Commercial bank, the institution in which he has rounded out his life work.

He was appointed cashier to succeed the late George Osgood in 1826, and has continued to discharge the duties of the position up to the present week. With the introduction of the National banking system, the Commercial became the First National bank of Salem. It owes much of its success and standing to Mr. Payson's conservative judgment as a financier.

On the occasion of Mr. Payson's sixteenth<sup>\*</sup> anniversary as cashier a few years ago he was given a very notable dinner at the Somerset Club in Boston, at which the bank officers and his banking contemporaries and associates were present.

The directors will memorialize Cashier Payson's long and honorable career and his fidelity to his trusts in appropriate resolutions upon the books of the bank.

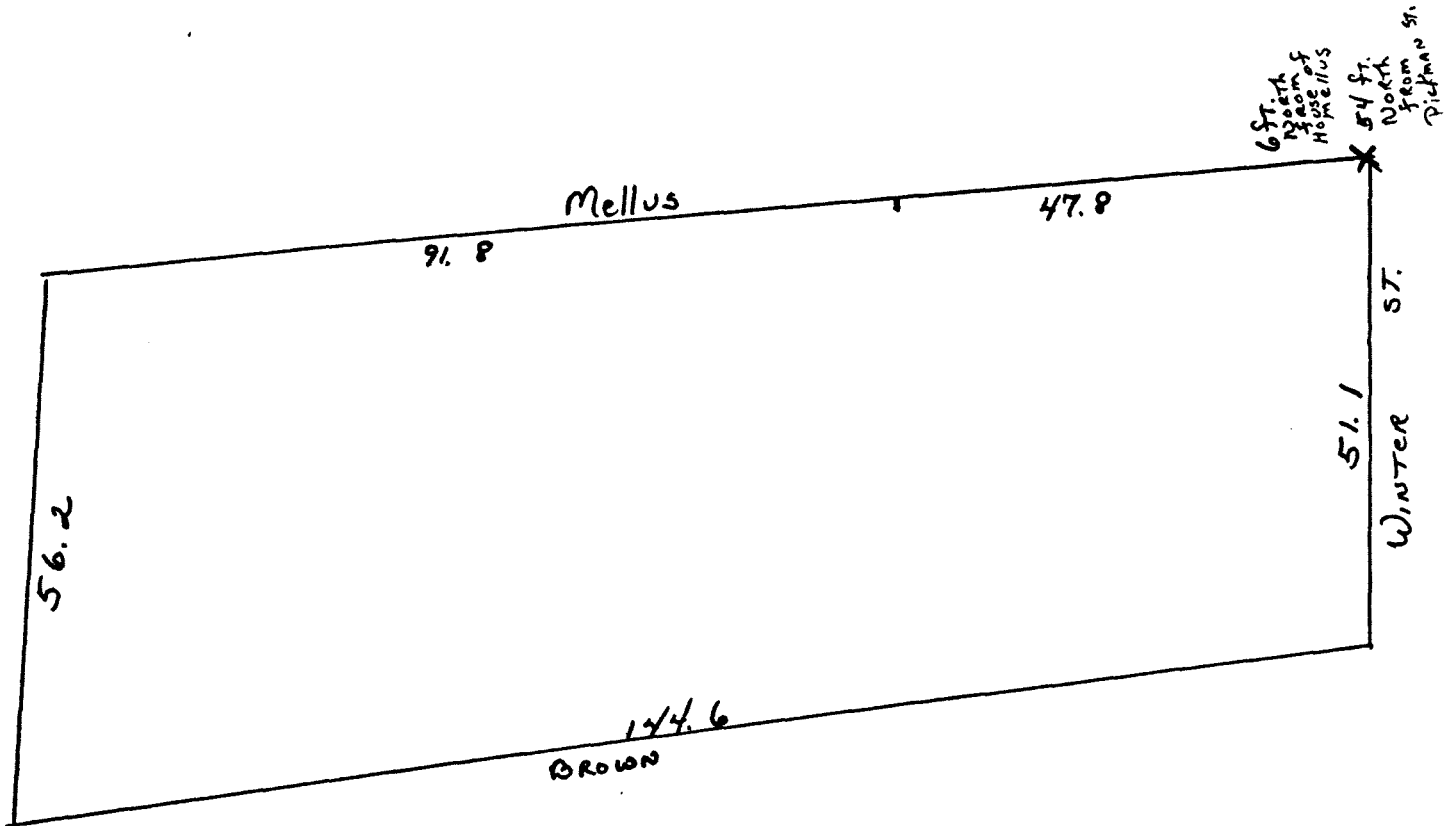
Mr. Payson has long been identified with the North Unitarian parish

\*Copy should read sixtieth

in Salem, and has been a very public-spirited citizen. His wife died a few years ago. He has a son, Lieutenant Albert L. Payson, a distinguished officer of the Engineer Corps, U.S.A., now in private life, living in California; a son, William S. Payson of Norton, Mass. and a married daughter.

To the happy contentment and enjoyment of serene old age, Mr. Payson will continue to reside in Salem."

On Oct. 1, 1856 Henry and Anita Mellus sold the property at 15 Winter St. to Annie C. Prescott wife of William C., for the sum of \$7,000. (In January of 1859 the Mellus family moved from Salem to Los Angeles, Calif.)



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William C. Prescott was born on October 23, 1821 in Gilmanton, N.H. He came to Salem with his wife Annie (Curtis) in 1851 where he practiced law. The tax records reflect the change in ownership for the 15 Winter St. property:

William C. Prescott age 35 house and land value \$6,500

The federal census of 1860 gives a close look at the Prescott household:

William C. Prescott	age 38	lawyer	born N.H.
Annie C.	" 30		" "
Gertrude	" 5	months	" Mass.
Mary Gogan	" 25	domestic	" Ire.
Mary A. McDonald	" 22	"	" Mass.
Kate Gogan	" 19	"	" Ire.

On July 18, 1860, shortly after the census was taken, William and Annie Prescott sold 15 Winter St. to Francis W. Pickman, for the sum of \$7,800, subject to a \$500 mortgage. (book 609 page 286)

"Francis Willoughby Pickman, son of Benjamin and Anstis (Derby) Pickman, was born in Salem, May 15, 1804. In his youth he established business connections in Annapolis, Nova Scotia, and there married on December 9, 1826, Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Walker, a resident of Annapolis. Of their ten children, born in Nova Scotia, the third son, William Rawlins Pickman, became Rector of St. Peter's Church in Salem in 1860. He served in that capacity until 1865 and also organized the Episcopal parish in Beverly. The return of Francis W. Pickman to Salem in 1860 was shortly followed by his election to the Salem Board of Aldermen on which he served for several terms. His death occurred in 1886 at St. John, New Brunswick.

whither he had removed in 1868. Mrs. Elizabeth (Walker) Pickman also died in St. John on May 24, 1870." (Portraits in the Essex Institute, page 163)

When the tax records were written in 1862 the males over the age of 18 were:

Francis W. Pickman	age 58	house val. \$5,200; land \$.800
Benjamin	" 33	
Hersy	" 19	(corporal in Salem Infantry)
John R.	" 24	at sea

On Oct. 22, 1866 Francis and Elizabeth Pickman sold the property to Carleton Dole of South Reading for the sum of \$8,050. "Also hereby selling and conveying to said Dole the double windows, storm door, gas burners and gas fixtures and the water back stove in and pertaining to the house." (book 712 page 44)

Carleton Dole died on April 6, 1870. His probate (#37755) contains an inventory:

Dwelling house 15 Winter St. (Homestead)	\$8,000
Furniture (belonging to him)	600
Personal estate	10,354

Heirs -

- Widow Eliza C. Dole
- Octavia Carleton Edwards wife of Justin, Brooklyn, N.Y.
- Eliza Jane Stanwood widow, of Boston
- Helen M. Perkins wife of Benjamin C.. of Peabody
- John Dole of Amherst
- Hannah Dole
- William Dole

Will - To each child which survives him \$25. To his wife all the tools, implements, household stuff, books, family stores and necessary. The rents and profits from the real estate were left to his wife and "should it not suit her taste and wishes she can dispose of it".



The census of 1870 shows the Dole household at that time:

Winter Street				
Eliza Dole	age	69	keeps house	born Mass.
William "	"	34	no occupation	" "
Hannah "	"	36	no occupation	" "
Fanny Flander	"	24	servant	" "

On April 15, 1871 Eliza C. Dole widow of Carleton sold, for \$15,000, to Lucy W. Jenkins, wife of Charles T., "The house and land conveyed to Annie C. Prescott, wife of William C., by Henry Mellus per his deed Oct. 1, 1856 and to Francis W. Pickman by William C. Prescott and Annie C. on July 18, 1860 and to my deceased husband Carleton Dole by Pickman on Oct. 22, 1866." "Said message having ceased to "suit my taste and wishes" I have concluded to sell the same as authorized by the 4th section of my late husband's will." (book 825 page 29)

The valuation of the house had risen to \$8,000 and the land \$2,000 when Mrs. Jenkins purchased it. Mrs. Jenkins died on March 22, 1874 leaving her husband Charles and a son Clarence W. as her heirs. The inventory of her estate appears in probate #43524:

Money in Bank	\$300
Hall, entry, stair carpets etc.	200
Parlor furniture, carpets etc.	375
Kitchen " " "	20
Dining room " " "	125
2 front chambers furniture, carpets etc.	500
1 back chamber " " "	100
Bay window "	50
Attic "	25
China closet contents	75
Kitchen " "	5
Silver Plate	500

Charles T. Jenkins was born in N.Y. in 1827. He came to Salem from California in 1870 and was the director of the Naumkeag Street Railway Co. Mr. Jenkins sold the house on Nov. 7, 1874, to Ruth Ellen Benson, wife of Emery K., for \$10,600. "The same conveyed to Lucy W. Jenkins, wife of Charles T." (book 916 page 143)

Emery K. Benson was a merchant in the firm Benson Brothers, 50 State St., Boston, and moved into the house shortly after its purchase. Mr. Benson was granted a permit to build an addition to the dwelling house on Aug. 4, 1879. The Benson family is shown in the 1880

census:

Emery K. Benson	age	40	merchant	born	Mass.
Ruth Ellen "	"	36	wife	"	"
Charles "	"	13	son at school	"	"
Maria P. "	"	12	daughter at school	"	"
Albert "	"	10	son at school	"	"
Richard "	"	8	son at school	"	"
George "	"	6	son	"	"
Ellenir "	"	1	daughter	"	"
Fannie Sherman	"	36	(Mulatto) servant cook	"	Virginia
Annie Heeney	"	30	servant	"	Ire.
Kate M. Supple	"	25	servant	"	Ire.

Mr. Benson was elected to the Board of Aldermen in 1882 and to the Water Board in 1883-4. The Bensons decided to sell the house in Aug. 1884 and placed this ad in the Salem News:

VALUABLE REAL ESTATE ON WINTER STREET  
AT PRIVATE SALE

The valuable estate of Emery K. Benson Esq. number 15 Winter, consisting of three story dwelling house with land under and adjoining The house is in perfect order and has a large hall, parlor, library, dining room and kitchen, on the first floor.

The second floor has large sleeping chambers and bath room.

Third floor has four sleeping rooms. The house is supplied with



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to them by deed of Emery K. Benson in Sept. 1884. (book 2113  
page 357)

The 1912 Salem Directory listings:

J.F. Quinn	Justice of Superior Court	h. 15 Winter
Thomas C.	student	b. 15 Winter

On May 2, 1931 Lizzie E. Quinn otherwise called Elizabeth E. Quinn, widow of Beverly, sold to William J. Kiernan. "Being the same conveyed to me by deed of Walter C. Harris, Nov. 6, 1911." (book 2880 page 361)

The 1935 directory gives the occupants of 15 Winter St. as:  
William Kiernan (Jane C.) investigator (Boston)

The Kiernans did not own the house for an extended period for they sold the property on Aug. 31, 1936 to Joseph B. Harrington and wife Elizabeth C. "The same premises conveyed by deed of Lizzie E. Quinn on May 2, 1936." (book 3105 page 14)

On March 28. 1946 Joseph B. and Elizabeth K. Harrington sold the house to Thomas L. Cadoret. "The same conveyed to us by deed of William J. Kiernan Aug. 31.1936." (book 3457 page 15)

On Jan. 19, 1953 Thomas L. Cadoret sold to Hendrik Niilend and Liidi his wife, of Rockport, the same premises conveyed by deed of Joseph B. Harrington et ux on March 28, 1946. (book 3954 page 257)

March 28, 1957 Liidi Niilend widow sold the same property conveyed to the grantor and her late husband by deed on Jan. 19, 1953, to Raymond J. and Theresa Denis, of Beverly. (book 4356 page 261)

March 6, 1964 Raymond J. and Theresa M. Denis sold the property to G. Marshal Goldberg. "The same conveyed to us by deed of Liidi Niilend on March 28, 1957." (book 5154 page 105)

June 1, 1964 G. Marshal Goldberg, of Marblehead sold the property at 15 Winter St. to Jack "C" Baker as he is general partner doing business as Baker, Ltd. (book 5176 page 578)

Oct. 15, 1965 Jack "C" Baker, as general partner doing business as Baker, Ltd. and G. Marshal Goldberg Limited Partner sold 15 Winter St. to Jo T. Ryan. (book 5312 page 200)

Oct. 15, 1965 Jo T. Ryan of Boston sold to Jack "C" Baker Trustee of Linville Realty the property at 15 Winter St. (book 5312 page 207)

Aug. 12, 1966 Jack C. Baker Trustee of Linville Realty Trust sold the land and buildings at 15 Winter St. to Frederic W. Haskell Trustee (after his death to daughter Barbara H. Lamprey and her husband Edward A.) (book 5385 page 64)

Sept. 11, 1970 Edward A. Lamprey, of Georgetown, Trustee of N.E. Realty Trust sold the land and building at 15 Winter St. to John D. McShane of 1133 Commonwealth Ave., Boston. (book 5712 page 387)

April 15, 1973 John McShane, of Swampscott sold to Robert Bramble Trustee the land and building 15 Winter St. (book 5965 page 681)

Nov. 17, 1975 Robert C. Bramble Trustee of Allyn Realty Trust sold to Forrest E. and Marjorie E. E. Randall the land in Salem with the building or buildings at 15 Winter St. The same premises conveyed by deed of John D. McShane. (book 6197 page 180)

Reference to book and page are deed books at the Registry of Deeds. Probate numbers are cases at Probate Court. Both offices are located in the same building on Federal St. All maps in this report are not meant to be exact, just for illustration purposes.

123  
 Buildings which have been Erected in  
 the City of Salem the last year, that is to  
 say from March first 1851 to March first 1852  
 with the Names of the Owners & the Names of  
 the Streets Erected in or by;

(A)

Names of Owners	Description of Buildings	Streets erected in
James Mc Geary	Dwelling House	Mason Street
Benjamin West	" "	Lafayette
Henry Mellus	" "	Winter
Thomas Day	Cottage	Near School Street
Samuel Stice	Stable for Horses	Back Lafayette
William Tucker	Dwelling House	Congress Street
Joseph Wilm	Dwelling "	Everett Street
Daniel Stoddard	Addition to his house	Harboun "
George Nichols	Story on his House	Federal "
Lytle Buffum	Store (Grocery)	Buffum "
John Masary	Dwelling House	Becket "
Daniel Haskell	Store & Carriage Shop	Mason "
Amos Kenfield	Chaise House	Endicott "
William B. Bates	Dwelling House	Bridge "
G. H. Stanford	" "	Barn "
Lewis Bond	" "	Boston "
James Fairfield	" "	Carlton "
William B. Parker	Dwelling House	Pleasant "
Richard G. Goss	" "	North "
" "	Bakehouse	" "
Samuel McIntine	Dwelling house	Breed "
Benjamin G. Odell	" "	Marlboro "
Samuel Brown	Addition to House	" "

# PRINCE

1851

Eastern Rail Road

SKERRY

PEARL

SAUNDERS

BALCON

CROGG

BRIDG

WINE

PICK

STREET

HOWARD STREET  
CEMETERY

WASHINGTON  
SQUARE

BRIGGS

