

26 Dearborn Street, Salem

According to available evidence, this house was built by Robert Manning, nurseryman, for his sister Elizabeth C. Hathorne, widow, in 1828. It stood across the street when built (next to Mr. Manning's house at now-33 Dearborn Street) and was moved to its present spot in 1855.

Dearborn Street was laid out as a private roadway in March, 1810, by agreement of the owners of the land over which it ran, from North Street to the Danvers River (ED 203:94). Because of its generous, liberal 60' width it was called Liberal Street at first; and was re-named Dearborn Street by 1836.

On 30 April 1825, Robert Manning purchased from Messrs. Edwards and Roberts a tract of land bounded southerly 150' on Liberal Street, easterly on a way (later named Orchard Street), northerly on Flint, and westerly 300' on land of Osgood & Nichols (ED 239:172). On this lot he had already (1824) built his own house (the one standing at #33). In November, 1822, he had purchased for \$700 the "building" (probably a barn) and lot, fronting 150' on Liberal Street, immediately to the west of the 1825 purchase, from Isaac P. Foster, successor to Benjamin Osgood (ED 231:166). It was on this land, evidently, that he would proceed to have this house built.

Robert Manning (1784-1842) was a son of Richard Manning, a blacksmith of Herbert Street, who founded the Boston and Salem Stagecoach Line, which was very successful in the days before railroads. Robert grew up in the family house at 12 Herbert Street, near Salem's bustling commercial waterfront. During the 1790s, when he was an adolescent, Salem became one of the great ports of the world. The regular traffic between Boston and Salem was the source of the fortune of Richard Manning, who ran stagecoaches all day long. Robert showed an aptitude for business, helped his father, and, after the father's death, continued to operate the stage line quite profitably.

Like most of his many siblings, Robert remained unmarried for many years. He took a paternal role with the children of his sister, Elizabeth Clarke (Manning) Hathorne, the widow of a shipmaster, Capt. Nathaniel Hathorne, who had died on a voyage to the Caribbean in 1808. Among the children was Nathaniel Hathorne Jr., born in 1804. The boy, who lived in the Herbert Street house with Uncle Robert Manning and other members of the family, would grow to become Hawthorne, the author. As a young man, Hawthorne and his sisters and mother resided in Raymond, Maine, in a house belonging to Robert Manning; and it was Uncle Robert who sent his nephew Nathaniel to Bowdoin College and paid for his four years there.

Robert Manning took most of the responsibility for the family business. While running the stage line, he also managed the Mannings' vast acreage in Maine. At the time of the outbreak of the War of 1812, he belonged to the Salem Light Infantry (EIHC 26:273). By 1817 he had become very interested in the growing of fruit. His interests led him to purchase a parcel of land in North Salem in 1822, and to plant it with fruit trees. This parcel he called The Pomological Garden. By 1823, aged 39, he had renounced his bachelorhood, and was engaged to marry the apple of his eye, Miss Rebecca D. Burnham, 27. The wedding took place on 20 December 1824.

The fruits of the union of Robert & Rebecca Manning were Maria (1826), Robert (1827), Richard (1830), and Rebecca (1834). In the 1830 census this house is shown as being inhabited by the Robert Manning family and a woman in her 20s who was probably a "mother's helper."

As the children grew up, Mr. Manning acquired more property here and extended his pomological plantings and experiments. Eventually, he had 2,000 varieties of fruit tree growing hereabouts, many imported as seedlings from Europe. There were 1250 pear trees, 400 apple trees, and plums, peaches, and cherries too. As late as 1836 he was primarily a businessman, and was listed in the Salem Directory as a "stage agent, 4 West Place," residing on Dearborn Street. Before long, he was recognized as the leading pomologist in the United States (see appended sketch from the *Dictionary of American Biography*, see also the piece published by the Salem Garden Club in *Old Salem Gardens*, May, 1946, pp. 18-23, on the shelf at Salem Public Library). Robert Manning wrote *The Book of Fruits* (published 1838), with his neighbor, John M. Ives; and he trained his son Robert Manning Jr. as a pomologist when Robert Jr. was still a boy. By 1842, Mr. Manning was listed as the proprietor of a "nursery of fruit trees, Dearborn Street." It is not impossible that his nephew Nathaniel Hawthorne used him as a model for some of his (rather obsessive) scientific types, found especially in the short stories. Hawthorne appears to have held his famous uncle—his benefactor, in earlier days, and as close to a father as he had—in no special regard, and did not bother to attend his funeral.

Robert Manning, foremost among America's pomologists, died of palsy on 10 October 1842, aged 58 years. He left his widow Rebecca and four children, aged 16 to eight.

Mrs. Elizabeth C. (Manning) Hawthorne and her children were all living together in an apartment in the large Manning family home on Herbert Street in the period 1825-1828. The son, Nathaniel, had graduated from Bowdoin College in 1825, and in 1826 had published the novel *Fanshawe*. This was evidently the first novel written by a native of Salem, and the author instantly regretted publishing it. He succeeded in buying up and destroying almost every copy. In that same

year his grandmother Mrs. Miriam Lord Manning died, and the Herbert Street house came into the ownership of her various children, including Mrs. Hathorne. For about two more years she lived there with her daughters Elizabeth (b. 1800?) and Louisa (b. 1808) and her son Nathaniel (b. 1804), who held no regular job but spent much of his time writing stories (most unpublished) and taking long walks (especially at night). In the summertime, Nathaniel went on horse-buying trips up-country with his bachelor uncle, Sam Manning.

In his article, *Maria Louisa Hawthorne*, published in the *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, Manning Hawthorne writes, "...Robert Manning started building a house next to his for Mrs. Hathorne and her children. By December, 1828, the Hathornes were in their new home. Mrs. Hathorne's ill health continued, but it was hoped that the colder weather would cure her." The Hathornes resided here from 1828 until 1832, when they moved back to the family house on Herbert Street. During the years 1833 and 1834 the house may have been rented out; and late in 1835 it became the residence of the family headed by John M. Ives, a publisher and horticulturalist.

John Mansfield Ives (1799-1883) was born in Salem, the second child of Capt. William Ives (1756-1814) and Polly Bradshaw (1768-1820). Capt. Ives was a seafaring man, the master of ships and a member of the Salem Marine Society. By the time of the War of 1812 he and Polly had four sons and a daughter; and in April, 1814, Capt. Ives died in Savannah, probably from malaria or some other fever. John M. Ives was then fourteen, and probably had been apprenticed to learn the trade of printer and bookbinder. When released from his indenture, about 1820, he went into the book business; and he worked as a publisher, stationer, and book-seller for about 20 years. In 1821 he purchased the 3,000-volume Essex Circulating Library (no public library in those days), which he would conduct through 1835. His shop, in Holyoke Place, was known as the Globe & Harp, and he had a painted sign of the same out front (info from H. S. Tapley's *Salem Imprints, 1768-1825*, Salem, 1927).

The Salem in which John Ives began his career was a busy place, still looking to the sea for its riches. After the War of 1812, the Salem merchants had rebuilt their fleets and resumed their worldwide trade, slowly at first, and then to great effect. Many new partnerships were formed. The pre-war partisan politics of the town were not resumed, as the middle-class "mechanics" (artisans) became more powerful and brought about civic harmony, largely through the Salem Charitable Mechanic Association (founded 1817). Rev. William Bentley, keen observer and active citizen during Salem's time of greatest prosperity and fiercest political

divisions, died in 1819, the year in which a new U.S. Custom House was built, on the site of the George Crowninshield mansion, at the head of Derby Wharf. Into the 1820s foreign trade continued prosperous; and new markets were opened with Madagascar (1820), which supplied tallow and ivory, and Zanzibar (1825), whence came coffee, ivory, and gum copal, used to make varnish. This opened a huge and lucrative trade in which Salem dominated, and its vessels thus gained access to all of the east African ports.

Despite these new markets, the overall level of Salem's foreign commerce fell off sharply in the late 1820s. Imports in Salem ships were supplanted by the goods that were now being produced in great quantities in America. The interior of the country was being opened for settlement, and some Salemites moved away. To the north, the falls of the Merrimack River powered large new textile mills. Manufacturing towns like Lowell, founded in 1823, created great wealth for their investors; and in general it seemed that the tide of opportunity was ebbing away from Salem. In an ingenious attempt to stem the flow of talent from the town and to harness its potential water power for manufacturing, Salem's merchants and capitalists banded together in 1826 to dam the North River for industrial power. The project, which began with much promise, was suspended in 1827, which demoralized the town even more, and caused several leading citizens to move to Boston, the hub of investment in the new economy. John M. Ives resolved to stay. He and Lois A. Southwick, an artist, married in September, 1827, and had their first child, Rebecca, in 1828. They resided in North Salem, evidently, in the 1820s (in ward four, anyway; per valuations) and would have six more children between 1830 and 1848 (two of them died young).

In 1830 occurred a horrifying crime that brought disgrace to Salem. Old Capt. Joseph White, a wealthy merchant, resided in the house now called the Gardner-Pingree house, on Essex Street. One night, intruders broke into his mansion and stabbed him to death. All of Salem buzzed with the news of murderous thugs; but the killer was a Crowninshield (a fallen son of one of the five brothers; after he was put in jail he killed himself). He had been hired by his friends, Capt. White's own relatives, Capt. Joseph Knapp and his brother Frank (they would be executed). The results of the investigation and trial having uncovered much that was lurid, more of the respectable families quit the now-notorious town.

While others struggled in Salem, John M. Ives was successful in the book business. In December, 1831, for \$3000 he, bookseller, purchased from his friend Robert Manning, gentleman, a homestead on Pickman Street that had formerly belonged to John Dike, Mr. Manning's brother-in-law (ED 312:94). The

Ives family moved to Pickman Street and resided there for a few years. In 1833 Mr. Ives was a founding member and secretary of the Natural History Society of Essex County, through which he was able to pursue his interests in botany, ornithology, and horticulture. In May, 1834, Mr. Ives for \$250 purchased another lot on Pickman Street (ED 276:75).

Mr. Ives took John P. Jewett as a partner in 1836, and Ives & Jewett, books, did business at 193 Essex Street in that year, which is when Mr. Ives crossed the river and took up residence on Dearborn Street. On 19 November 1835 his friend Robert Manning, gentleman, sold to John M. Ives, bookseller, for \$1500, the dwelling house and land in North Salem bounded 10 poles one link on Liberal Street, easterly (running northerly) on land of Robert Manning 18 poles 5 links, northerly 9 poles 19.5 links on land of Buxton, and westerly 18 poles 5 links on land of Perkins and Stocker (ED 312:93). The house thus conveyed was the one in which the Hathornes had resided; and the land was part of the parcel that Mr. Manning had purchased in 1822.

J.M. Ives had become fascinated with horticulture, and wished to expand his holdings in order to create new orchards. In May, 1837, for \$812 he purchased from Mrs. Rebecca Silsbee a tract of land farther down Dearborn Street (ED 312:145). Land in the neighborhood was increasing in value; and in June, 1839, Mr. Ives purchased two house-lots as a speculation (ED 313:247). In June, 1839, and by 1841 had left the book business and opened an agricultural store at 38 Washington Street. He served in various civic positions, including trustee of the new Seaman's Chapel on Herbert Street (ED 320:103).

While Mr. Ives had flourished in the 1830s, others had not been so fortunate. Salem's remaining merchants had taken their equity out of wharves and warehouses and ships and put it into manufacturing and transportation, as the advent of railroads and canals diverted both capital and trade away from the coast. 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.

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. 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, active for many years in the early 1800s, led, in the 1830s, 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 were retooled for making high-quality white lead and sheet lead (the approach to Marblehead is still called Lead Mills Hill, although the empty mill buildings burned down in 1960s).

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. The railroad brought with it profound changes, including the end of the Manning stagecoach enterprise, which had sustained the Manning-Hawthorne family for several decades.

In the 1840s, as more industrial methods and machines were introduced, new companies in new lines of business arose in Salem. The tanning and curing of leather was very important 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. 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 changed, as hundreds of Irish families, fleeing the Famine in Ireland, settled in Salem and gave the industrialists a big pool of cheap labor.

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, standing on filled-in land at the foot of Washington Street, where before had been the merchants' wharves. In the face of all this change, some members of Salem's waning merchant class continued to pursue their sea-borne businesses; but even the conditions of shipping changed, and Salem was left on the ebb tide. In the late 1840s, giant clipper ships replaced the smaller vessels that Salem men had sailed around the world; and the clippers, with their deep drafts and large holds, were usually too large for Salem and its harbor. The town's shipping soon consisted of little more than Zanzibar-trade vessels and visits from Down East coasters with cargoes of fuel wood and building timber. By 1850 Salem was about finished as a working port. A picture of Salem's sleepy waterfront is given by Hawthorne in his mean-spirited “introductory section” to **The Scarlet Letter**, which he began while working in the Custom House.

In 1844 Mr. Ives published an edition of Robert Manning's **The New England Fruit Book**, “enlarged by John M. Ives”. In that year too he bought more land in North Salem, in the Horse Pasture Lot, so-called (ED 342:294; see also 393:77), and by 1845 he was listed as a horticulturalist, residing at then-12 Dearborn Street (1846 Directory). He published seed catalogues and grew seed-plants on three farms in North Salem, and had his seed store at 281 Essex Street, which he ran with his son John (see p.23, **Old Salem Gardens**, 1946). In 1847 he published his own book, **The New England Fruit Book**, with Robert Manning's descriptive catalog appended; and he also published his own pamphlet, “An Essay on the Cultivation of the Apple.” In 1848 and 1849 he resided at the same, then re-numbered 31 Dearborn (see 1848 street book, 1850 Salem Directory). In 1850, having developed his other North Salem holdings into orchards and a gentleman farmer's estate, he moved out of this house and into a new one he had built nearby; and the family resided on Pickman Street seasonally as well (see 1851 Salem Directory). At that time, the Iveses' youngest child, Charles, was one year old, and the eldest, Rebecca, was 21 (she would marry Gilbert Streeter, editor of the Salem *Observer* newspaper, in 1854). Mr. Ives would live until 1883, and would write and publish other works, including the book **Culture & Treatment of Flowers** (1855) and the pamphlet *Essay on Open Air Grape Culture*.

In the spring of 1850, this house, still standing next to the Manning house, was evidently rented out to John Wheeler and his son-in-law Temple Dodge and their families (1850 census, h. 89, house southwesterly of the Manning house). Mr. Wheeler, 53, was a policeman, and Mr. Dodge, 25, was a painter. The other Wheelers here were John's wife Phebe, 46, and children Mary, 15, John H. 12, Harriet, ten, and Lucy, nine. Mr. Dodge's and wife Phebe A., 22, had a baby daughter Elizabeth, one. Earlier, the Wheelers had resided off upper Boston Street and in 1849 at 8 Breed Street (now the part of Upham Street southeast of Dearborn), while Temple Dodge had resided on Buffum Street (source: 1850 Salem Directory). From the 1851 McIntyre Atlas of Salem, it is clear that this house still stood next to the Manning house: its distinctive "footprint," with the projecting entry porch, is unmistakable.

On 14 November 1850, Mr. Ives, Salem gentleman, for \$3800 sold to George F. Brown the dwelling house, barn, and land fronting 10 poles and 1 link (about 166') on Dearborn Street (ED 436:176). Mr. Brown, a lumber merchant, resided here briefly with his family. In 1844, he had moved from Marlborough Street (now Federal Street, across from the Court House) to a house on Dearborn Street (see 1844 Street Book). He would remain a resident of North Salem, and expanded his lumber yard, which fronted on the North River. After a while he decided to build a new house on the site of this one. Rather than have it demolished, he paid a crew to jack the house up and move it across the street to a new foundation, where it stands today. The new lot fronted northwesterly 50' on Dearborn Street and ran back 100' deep. Mr. Brown had bought it for \$225 in July, 1849 (ED 414:86).

Mr. Brown proceeded to build his new house next to the Mannings'. He must have rented out this one across the street for a few years; then, on 14 May 1855, Mr. Brown for \$1200 sold to James Ropes the dwelling house, all other buildings, and land fronting northwesterly 50' on Dearborn Street, northeasterly on Gifford land 100', southeasterly 50' on Davis land, and southwesterly 100' on Heard's land (ED 512:115). The "dwelling house" was the one that Mr. Brown had caused to be moved across the street to his 50" x 100" lot here, so that he could build a new house on its former site. The #26 Dearborn lot had been purchased in April, 1844, by Archelaus P. Coffrain for \$206.25 (ED 369:139); and Mr. Coffrain had sold the same in July, 1849, for \$225 to Mr. Brown (ED 414:86). The lot was a small part of the three-acre tract purchased in November, 1843, by Mr. W.O. Andrews for \$1150 from William Osborn (ED 340:114).

That tract had fronted 315' on Walter Street and 400' on Dearborn Street, and Mr. Andrews had subdivided it and sold off several house-lots in 1844.

James Ropes, the new owner of the house and lot as of May, 1855, immediately purchased adjoining land. On May 16 for \$350 he purchased a piece to the northeast of the house-lot, fronting 45' on Dearborn Street and running back 100'; and on June 16 for \$300 he purchased a lot in the rear, fronting 70' on "Dodge Street" (now Souhwick Street) and running 90' northwesterly to the back line of the #26 house-lot (ED 513:46, 514:185)

James Ropes (1805-1875), a local and county office-holder, was Assistant Register of Probate at the time of the purchase of the house. James Ropes Jr. was born in Salem on 12 March 1805, the son of a trader, James Ropes (d.1840), and his wife Lucy Groce. James Jr.'s mother's family, the Groces, owned large tracts of land in North Salem, which is where the Ropeses settled. Growing up, he had five sisters and a brother; but their mother died in 1821. In 1826 the father married, second, Hannah Perkins, who thus became stepmother, raising the younger children. James Ropes Jr., also a trader or grocer, was hard-working and successful in his business. In the 1820s and 1830s he purchased from his Groce relatives various lots of land in the Northfields (North Salem), including (in 1836) half of his grandfather's house on Laboratory Street, so called, in North Salem (ED 295:43). His only brother, Samuel G. Ropes, a mariner, was lost at sea in 1836, and his father, who lived in the 1830s on Dearborn Street, died in 1840. James Ropes resided on Laboratory Street through the 1840s and worked as a farmer and an office-holder. By 1850 he owned real estate worth \$2000, and he was still unmarried.

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, down 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).

At the time he purchased this house, in May, 1855, James was engaged to marry Susan Maria Colby, the daughter of Judge Simon Colby of Weare, NH. Mr. Ropes was 47, a bachelor, and his bride was nineteen. The wedding took place on 13 August 1855, and the couple resided here. Their first child, Elizabeth Maria Ropes, was born in 1856; and in 1858 they had a son, James Ropes. In 1860, the Ropes family resided here with a servant-helper, Celia Doherty, 30, then 30, born in Ireland, who was still with the family in 1865 (see 1860 census, wd. 4, house 1670, 1865 census wd. 4 h. 139).

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 (census)...

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.

During the war, the Ropes family had kept growing. Twins came in 1861 (Samuel G. and Susan), then a son William in 1863 and finally a daughter Lucy in 1866. Susie died in 1867, aged six; and in 1868 a daughter was born and given again the name Susan, and a daughter Alice in 1871, the year in which Lucy died at the age of five. James Ropes conveyed the homestead to his wife Susan in October, 1869 (ED 784:137).

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 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 Bachelder 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. 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.

James Ropes died on 4 March 1875, after 20 years of marriage, aged seventy. He left his wife and six children, the youngest only four and the eldest eighteen. Of the children, Lizzie and James never married; Samuel became a Baptist minister in Pennsylvania, William died a bachelor in New Hampshire in 1901, and Susan and Alice also died unmarried—six adult children and not one had a child of his or her own. The family stayed together here.

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.

In 1880, James Ropes (Jr.), 21, worked as a bill collector and Samuel George, 19, worked in a store, and they supported their mother and the other children (see 1880 census ED 240, house 160). By the 1890s, James was a traveling salesman (living here when in Salem), Samuel the minister had moved away, William was in New Hampshire, and Mrs. Susan Ropes lived here with Lizzie and Susan, who was a substitute teacher, and Alice.

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, junkyards, 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.

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.

Mrs. Susan M. (Colby) Ropes died on 26 Sept. 1910, aged 74 years. In 1911 her daughter Alice died, aged forty. By Mrs. Ropes' will, the homestead went to her daughter Lizzie M. Ropes.

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.

In November, 1919, Miss Lizzie Ropes, 63, sold the premises to Walter T. Berry (ED 2430:519). In December, 1920, Mr. Berry sold the house and the southwesterly half of the homestead land to Carlton G. Lutts of Salem (ED 2472:154). In April, 1923, Mr. Lutts purchased the easterly half of the homestead land (the property remains in the ownership of the family).

By the 1920s, Salem was once again a thriving city; and its 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, and mill-operatives are all honored as a large part of what makes Salem different from any other place.

--3 Dec. 2003, Robert Booth for Historic Salem Inc.