

# Historic Salem Incorporated

OFFICE AT OLD TOWN HALL

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23 Aborn Street  
Built for  
GENERAL WILLIAM SUTTON  
by 1839

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

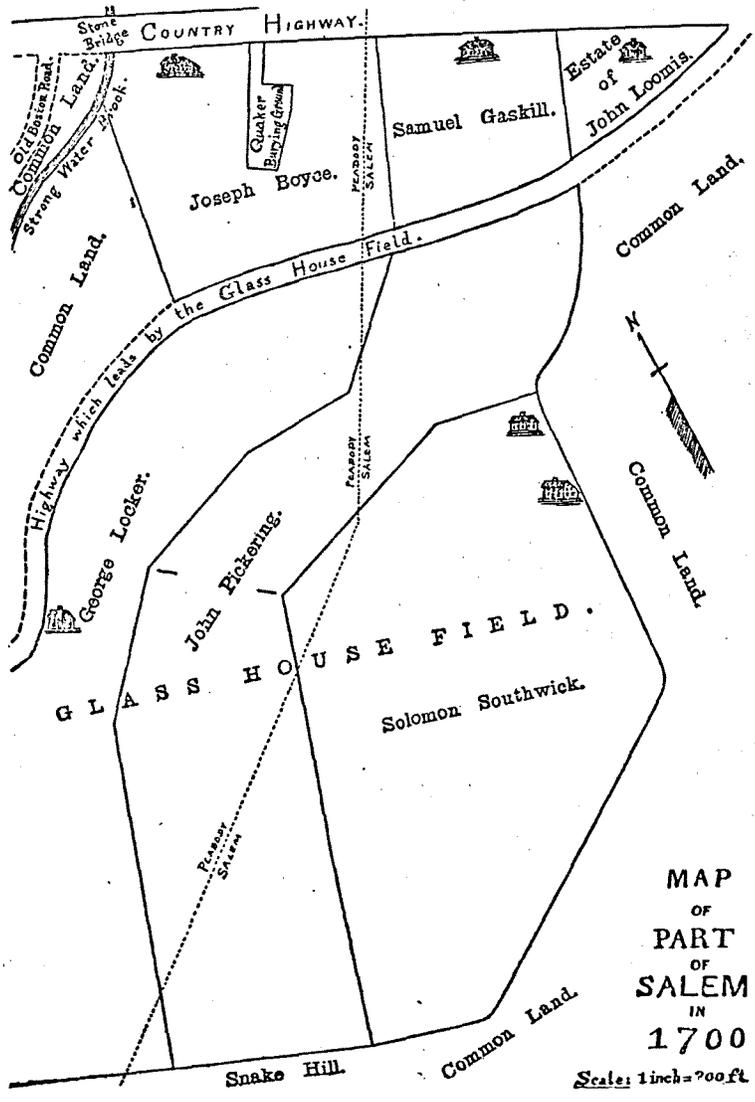
*file 6000*

23 Aborn Street

Aborn street was called a highway in 1660; and John Robinson, aged about eighty-eight years, deposed, in 1729, "that he very well remembers that there was a road by the dwelling house of Samuel Aborn and was improved as a road from Case's and Locker's to ye said Samuel Aborn's house and so over the brook for about sixty years and upward." It was called the highway which leads by the field called glass house field in 1707; country road, 1733; the way to glass house fields, 1735; way to Aborn's, 1735; lane in 1738; Shillaber's lane, 1760; way leading to Locker's run, 1767; way leading to Samuel Aborn's, 1770; a back road, 1774; and Aborn street in 1804. The Aborn house stood in what is now Peabody between the Locker lot and Strong Water brook on Aborn street. (Essex Antiquarian, vol. 6 page 97)

The section on the south side of Aborn street was the historic glass house field. Here glass was made by Lawrence Southwick, Ananias Concline, John Concline, and Obadiah Holmes in or before 1638. After 1645, the works apparently did not thrive, though they may have been continued a number of years. In a petition of the Conclines to the general court in October, 1645, it is stated that the undertakers or company have neglected the works for the past three years. Earthen ware is said to have been made here at the glass house by the glass men.

The lot on which this house stands was a portion of what was called the John Pickering lot:



*John Pickering Lot.* Henry Rennalds and Ananias Concline, both of Salem, were probably grantees of this lot in separate parcels. Mr. Concline built a house before 1661, and it was gone before 1702. Mr. Rennalds owned the lot April 10, 1688, when he conveyed the four acres southwest of the dashes to Lt. John Pickering and Edward Flint.\* Mr. Rennalds conveyed the remainder of the lot to John Pickering, jr., of Salem July 6, 1689.† Mr. Flint apparently conveyed his interest in the southern part of the lot to John Pickering, jr., Nov. 14, 1693.‡ John Pickering, sr., died in May, 1694; and in his will he devised this land at the glass house field to his eldest son, John Pickering, who then owned the other part. The son died possessed of the lot in 1722, having devised it to his wife Sarah, for life, and remainder to his eldest son Theophilus Pickering.

MAP  
OF  
PART  
OF  
SALEM  
IN  
1700

Scale: 1 inch = 200 ft

This house was built by General William Sutton on land he purchased from the Osborn family in the early 1830's. Tracing this property is very difficult owing to the fact that General Sutton owned 400 acres of land at one time and was taxed for 7 houses in Salem (some of which are now in Peabody, the boundaries being changed in 1855). The General built at least 5 houses in this area and unfortunately the Sutton papers have not been preserved. The 1839 date was arrived at by a careful study of William Sutton's property valuations over a 30 year period. In this year he was taxed for a "new" house valued at \$1,200 and a lot of land valued at \$250. This was annexed by "school house" (now 7-9 Aborn St. Ct.) in 1841 and from that time on was "h(ouse) and sch(ool) h(ouse) l(and)" valued at \$1,500.

General Sutton was born on July 26, 1800 in a house situated on the north side of Main Street, Peabody. His father was William Sutton and the son is invariably referred to in the early records as junior. His mother was Elizabeth Treadwell of Salem.

The general was twice married. His first wife was Nancy Osborn of Salem and his second Mrs. Susan N. Stephens of Newburyport. He was first married when he was but 21 years old and his wife died 34 years later.

As a boy he was educated in the schools of Salem and Ipswich and entered his father's store in Salem at the age of 18. The elder Sutton was a merchant. The general not only married when he became of age, but he also took entire charge of his father's business and

remained as the active head up to his retirement when he was 78 years old. For a number of years he was a member of the firm Shepard, Bertram, Weston & Sutton, engaged in the African trade. He was also interested in the whaling business and in farming on a large scale.

He continually added to the wealth left him by his father. He became a director of the South Danvers National bank in 1832 and of the Salem Commercial bank in 1834. He became president of the latter institution in 1835 and retained the office through the changed of the First National bank up to 1880, a period of 45 years.

He was president of the Salem Aqueduct Co., vice president of the Salem Institution of Savings, president of the North Andover woolen mills and a director in the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Co. He served as president of the Salem Mechanic association from 1824 to his decease and was a member of the Salem Marine society from 1836 to his death.

The father died in 1832 and the son came into possession of the homestead and four acres of land in Danvers. It was situated in the West Peabody section.

To this homestead estate he added from time to time until he possessed in Salem and Danvers about 400 acres. Besides this he owned a farm of 300 acres in Ipswich and inherited about 1,000 acres in Middleton, Boxford and Andover. The latter acreage and the leather factories he entrusted to the care of his son, William and in his latter years he gave his personal attention to the management of his farms in Ipswich, Salem and Danvers. He was an active member of the Rockport, the Essex County and the State agricultural societies.

From 1832 to 1862 he was the active and official head of the Salem Fire Department and on his retirement was presented by the city of Salem with a handsome silver service. For eight years he was one of the overseers of the poor in Salem.

He was representative to the general court from Salem from 1833 to 1838 and state senator from South Danvers in 1855-56-57. He was a member of Gov. Clifford's council in 1853 and of Gov. Washburn's in 1854. He was a trustee of many state institutions.

His military record was remarkable, covering 47 years from a private in the Salem Independent Cadets to senior major general of the Mass. Volunteer Militia, which rank he held at the time of his retirement.

Enlistment in the Salem Cadets was in 1817 at the age of 17. Four years later he was elected first lieutenant in the Danvers Light Infantry and became captain in 1823. In 1836 he went back to the Cadets as captain.

In 1840, in the great reorganization of the militia, when the name "Massachusetts Volunteer Militia" was adopted, he was made colonel of the Sixth Regiment, which included his old command, the Danvers Light Infantry. Seven months later, Feb. 18, 1841, he was promoted to be a brigadier general and assigned to the command of the Fourth Brigade, Second Division, Feb. 2, 1850, he was made a major general commanding the Second Division.

His Masonic record was likewise remarkable. He was made a Mason in Jordan lodge of Danvers in 1823, later transferred to Essex lodge of Salem and still later returned to Jordan lodge. He was district

deputy grandmaster for six years from Dec. 29, 1859, and was senior grandwarden of the grand lodge in 1866. (Salem Evening News)

The Sutton family did not live in the house at 23 Aborn St. but made their home in a mansion located in the rear of Main Street, Peabody with an access road on Aborn St. Just who the first tenants of 23 Aborn St. were has not been determined. The first documented tenants were:

1844 (at this time the house was called #13 Aborn)

- John Baker
- Asa Baker
- Winthrop Brown
- Isaac Cowdery

1850 census

Winthrop Brown	age 38	wool puller	born Mass.
Louisa	" 34		" "
Mary A.	" 14		" "
Louisa M.	" 13		" "
Thomas B.	" 10		" "
James M.	" 7		" "
Abby M.	" 5		" "
Elizabeth	" 3		" "
Anna	" 2		" "
2nd family			
Isaac Allen	" 27	tanner	" "
Diana	" 22		" Vermont
3rd family			
Asa Baker	" 61	farmer	" Mass.
Chancey F. Holman	" 28	woolpuller	" Vermont
Emily	" 27		" "
Edwin	" 4		" Mass.

1855 tenants:

Winthrop Brown  
Asa Baker  
Henry Williams

1856 tax records indicate the house was owned by William Sutton and valued at \$1,500. The occupants were Winthrop Brown age 43 and Levi Brown age 21.

1858 tenants:

Winthrop Brown, wool puller age 45  
William Lummus, morocco dresser age 25  
Abraham Lummus, carpenter age 30

1860 census:

Winthrop Brown	age 47	wood dealer	born Mass.
Louisa J.	" "	44	" "
Thomas	" "	19 clerk	" "
James M.	" "	17	" "
Lizzie	" "	13	" "
Anna	" "	12	" "
Emma	" "	10	" "
George	" "	7	" "
Charles	" "	2	" "
Abby M.	" "	15	" "
2nd family			
William Lummus	" "	26 morocco dresser	" "
Louisa M.	" "	23	" "
Anna	" "	2	" "

1863 tax records:

<u>Occupant</u>	<u>Owner</u>
Winthrop Brown age 55	William Sutton
James Brown age 20	house val. \$800
William Lummus age 30	land val. 600
	barn val. 100

1866 tax records:

<u>Occupant</u>	<u>Owner</u>
Winthrop Brown	William Sutton
William Lummus	house val. \$800
William Manning	land val. 400
	barn val. 100

1867 - the value of the house had increased greatly to \$1,600; land \$500; barn \$100. A new tenant, George R. Felt, had moved into the house.

1870 census

George R. Felt	age 38	bank clerk	born Mass.
Annie E.	"	37 keeps house	" "
Sarah E.	"	15 at school	" "
Mary	"	12 " "	" "
George	"	10 " "	" "
Ann	"	6	" "
Alice B.	"	1	" "
2nd family			
Ephraim Felt	"	75 no occupation	" "
Elizabeth	"	72 " "	" "

Some information has been found regarding the life of Ephraim Felt. He was born in Salem on Dec. 31, 1802, the son of John and Mary

(Porter) Felt. Mr. Felt married Elizabeth Ropes on Oct. 6, 1822. In early life he was a merchant and entered the counting room of Pickering Dodge. Afterward he carried on the dry goods business in Salem until 1828, at which time he moved to Utica N.Y. where he engaged in the same business. He returned to Salem in 1834 where he entered the office of the Eastern R.R. as bookkeeper and clerk. Later he was ticket seller until 1858. He was inspector of the Salem Customhouse from 1861-1869. Interested in the militia he performed guard duty at an early age in the war of 1812 with the Salem Light Infantry. Ephriam Felt died on Dec. 7, 1872. Elizabeth died on Nov. 28, 1873.

1873 tax (the house was called #21 at this time)

<u>Occupant</u>	<u>Owner</u>
George R. Felt	William Sutton
	house val. \$1,800
	land val. 400
	barn val. 200

1880 census

Joseph Warner	age 68 mill agent	born Mass.
Martha W. "	" 66 keeps house	" N.H.
Alvah "	" 31 currier	" Mass.
Mary E. "	" 23 daughter-in-law	" "
Anna L. "	" 22 school teacher	" "
Ethel "	" 1 grand daughter	" "

1882 tax

<u>Occupant</u>	<u>Owner</u>
Joseph A. Warner age 70	Sutton
Alvah H. " " 33	house val. \$1,400
Annie " "	land val. 400
	barn val. 200

GENERAL WILLIAM SUTTON died on April 18, 1882



William Sutton

DEATH OF GEN. SUTTON.

Brief Sketch of the Life of an Eminent Man.

William Sutton died at his home in Peabody at half past five o'clock this morning at the age of 82 years. His father, Wm. Sutton, carried on the wool and hide business in that town, and at his death the business, together with a large amount of property for those days, reverted to his two sons, Eben and William. At the death of his brother, a number of years later, Wm. inherited a large amount of property, amounting to \$1,500,000. He was the first commander of the Danvers light infantry, and was afterward commissioned general of the Massachusetts militia, which position he held during its existence. He was president of the old Commercial bank, now the First national bank of Salem, for over forty years, and resigned his position about two years since, on account of failing health. He took an active part in Free Masonry during his life. He joined Jordan lodge, July 31, 1822, and has since filled many important positions in that body. He has been an honorary member in nearly every lodge hereabouts including Washington K. A. chapter Salem, Salem council R. & S. M., Salem body of perfection, and was founder of and first eminent commander of Winslow Lewis commandery of Knights Templars. He has been a member of the grand lodge of Massachusetts and the grand encampment of Massachusetts and Rhode Island for a number of years, and has held many important trusts. Mr. Sutton formerly carried on the wool business quite extensively in Peabody, but later, has given a greater portion of his time to the care of his property. He was a man of very generous impulses, and gave a large sum of money for benevolent objects. His loss will be deeply felt in the community at large. The deceased leaves a widow, three sons and three daughters.

A few months before his death the affairs of the general were in such shape that he conveyed, for \$60,000, to Eben Sutton "all my rights and title in land in Essex county, and particularly in Peabody, Ipswich, North Andover, Middleton, Boxford and Salem." Dated Nov. 30, 1881. (book 1072 page 42)

1882 June 20 - Eben Sutton, of North Andover, sold a large parcel of land and the buildings on it (23 Aborn included) to Lyman Holman for the sum of \$3,400. (The general had mortgaged this property to Mr. Holman in 1880.) (book 1085 page 161)

1883 May 28 - Lyman Holman died. His obituary appeared in the local papers:

"Lyman Holman, the well known building mover, died at his residence on Boston Street, last Thursday evening, from heart disease. He had retired a half hour previously apparently in his usual health. He was in his 69th year, and had a large circle of friends who will lament his sudden call from our midst."

1884 tax (the house was numbered 23 Aborn at this time)

<u>Occupant</u>	<u>Owner</u>
Simeon Whipple age 51	Heirs of Holman
Martin McQuade age 28	house val. \$1,200
	land val. 300
	barn val. 200

1887 tenants

Francis J. Brennan, currier age 51  
Samuel B. Hilleker, currier age 38  
Joseph G. Hilleker, cooper age 21  
Eugene Poor age 24  
Francis J. Brennan, gluemaker age 22

1895 tax

<u>Occupant</u>	<u>Owner</u>
John H. Leonard, morocco dresser	Estate of L. Holman
Francis Brennan, currier	house val. \$1,200
James E. Leonard, moulder	land val. 300
Joseph W. Leonard	barn val. 200
Thomas Brennan, teamster	

1898 March 26 - The Holman estate was divided. Mr. Holman's daughter Fannie, wife of Joseph E. Harris, was granted this house and land as a portion of her inheritance. (book 1542 page 564)

Tax records:

1900	<u>Occupant</u>		<u>Owner</u>
	Thomas F. Tobin, currier	age 39	Fannie Harris
	J. Thomas Tobin, clerk	" 19	house val. \$1,200
			land val. 300
			barn val. 200

1905	<u>Occupant</u>		<u>Owner</u>
	John Shannahan, laborer	age 44	same value as in 1900
	Arthur D. Beckford, laborer	" 40	
	David Coons	" 38	
	Patrick F. A'Hearn	" +19	
	John A'Hearn	" 52	

1907 May 9 - Fannie Harris, wife of Joseph E., sold the land and buildings, being lot 14 on plan (appendix A) together with a portion of the 20 foot way shown on the plan, to Mary Hanson. "The same having been inherited from my father the late Lyman Holman." (book 1873 page 456)

1927 April 8 - Mary Hanson died. Her obituary appeared in the Salem Evening News:

"Mrs. Mary, widow of Frank S. Hanson, and daughter of the late Michael and Margaret (Sullivan) McGrath, died at her home, 18 Nichols St. yesterday. She is survived by a daughter, Miss Mabel Hanson and a son Frank."

Mrs. Hanson's probate (#157897) listed her personal property value as \$1,296.83. The real estate 23 Aborn St. (house \$3,000; land \$400; shed \$100), 12 Aborn St. and 14 Aborn St. (\$1,600).

1928 Nov. 3 - The Hanson heirs conveyed the land and buildings at 23 Aborn St. to Frank Harris. (book 2785 page 360)

1929 Aug. 28 - Frank Harris mortgaged the property to the Warren 5¢ Savings Bank. The bank foreclosed on this mortgage on Dec. 1934. (book 2816 page 569 and book 3024 page 587)

1938 Sept. 1 - The Warren 5¢ Savings Bank sold the land and buildings at 23 Aborn St. to Rose Y. Messinger. (book 3155 page 339)

1942 Sept. 16 - Rose Y. Fisher (maiden name Rose Messinger) of Peabody sold the property to Nathan Messinger. (book 3313 page 19)

1958 March 12 - Nathan Messinger, of Peabody, died. His real estate (probate #259926) was listed as:

- Land and building 106 & 108 Boston St.
- Land and building 28 & 28½ Aborn St.
- Land and building 23 Aborn St. (valued at \$5,100)
- Land and building 175 Boston St.
- Land and building 67-69 Aborn St., Peabody
- Land and building 47-47½ Washington St., Peabody
- Land and building 29 Holten St., Peabody

All of this property was bequeathed to Mr. Messinger's son Samuel.

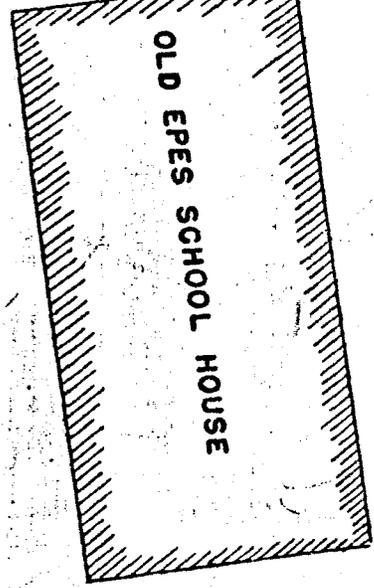
1964 Nov. 3 - Samuel Messinger, of Peabody, sold the land and building at 23 Aborn St. to Warren M. and Gertrude Scott, of Peabody. (book 5220 page 715)

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.

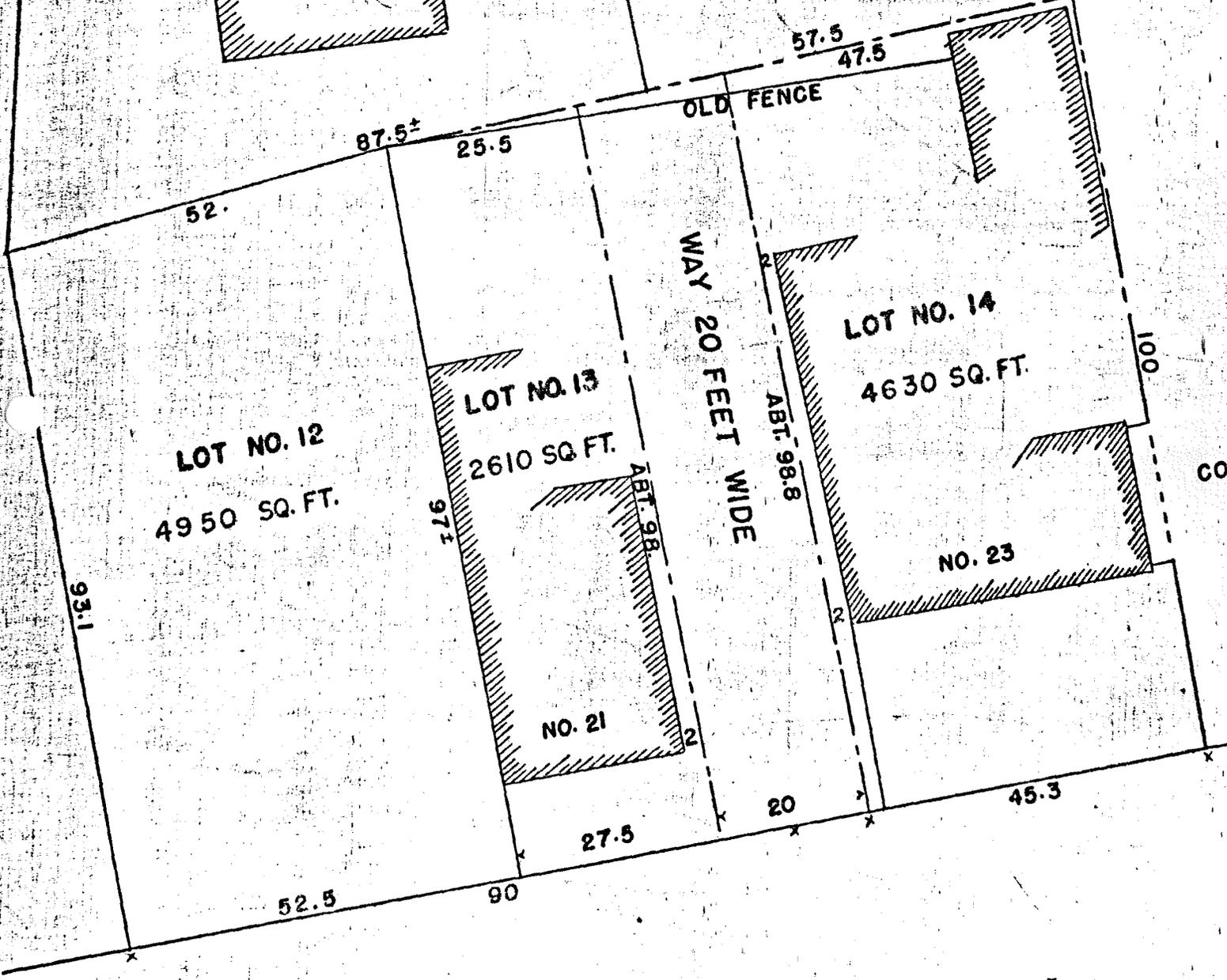
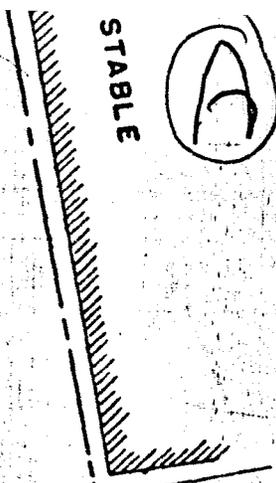
Book 1542  
Page 564

(A)

STABLE



OLD EPES SCHOOL HOUSE



LOT NO. 12  
4950 SQ. FT.

LOT NO. 13  
2610 SQ. FT.

LOT NO. 14  
4630 SQ. FT.

NO. 21

NO. 23

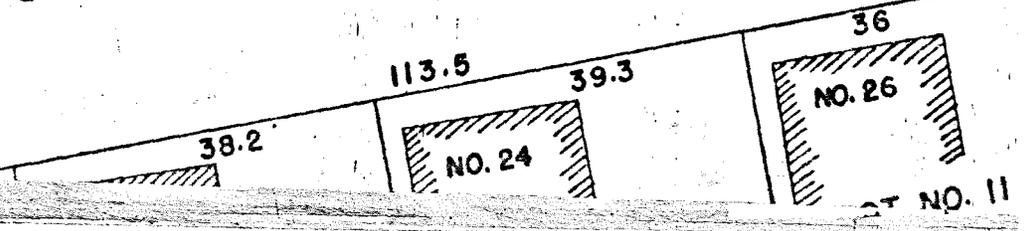
WAY 20 FEET WIDE

OLD FENCE

ABORN STREET

STREET

CO



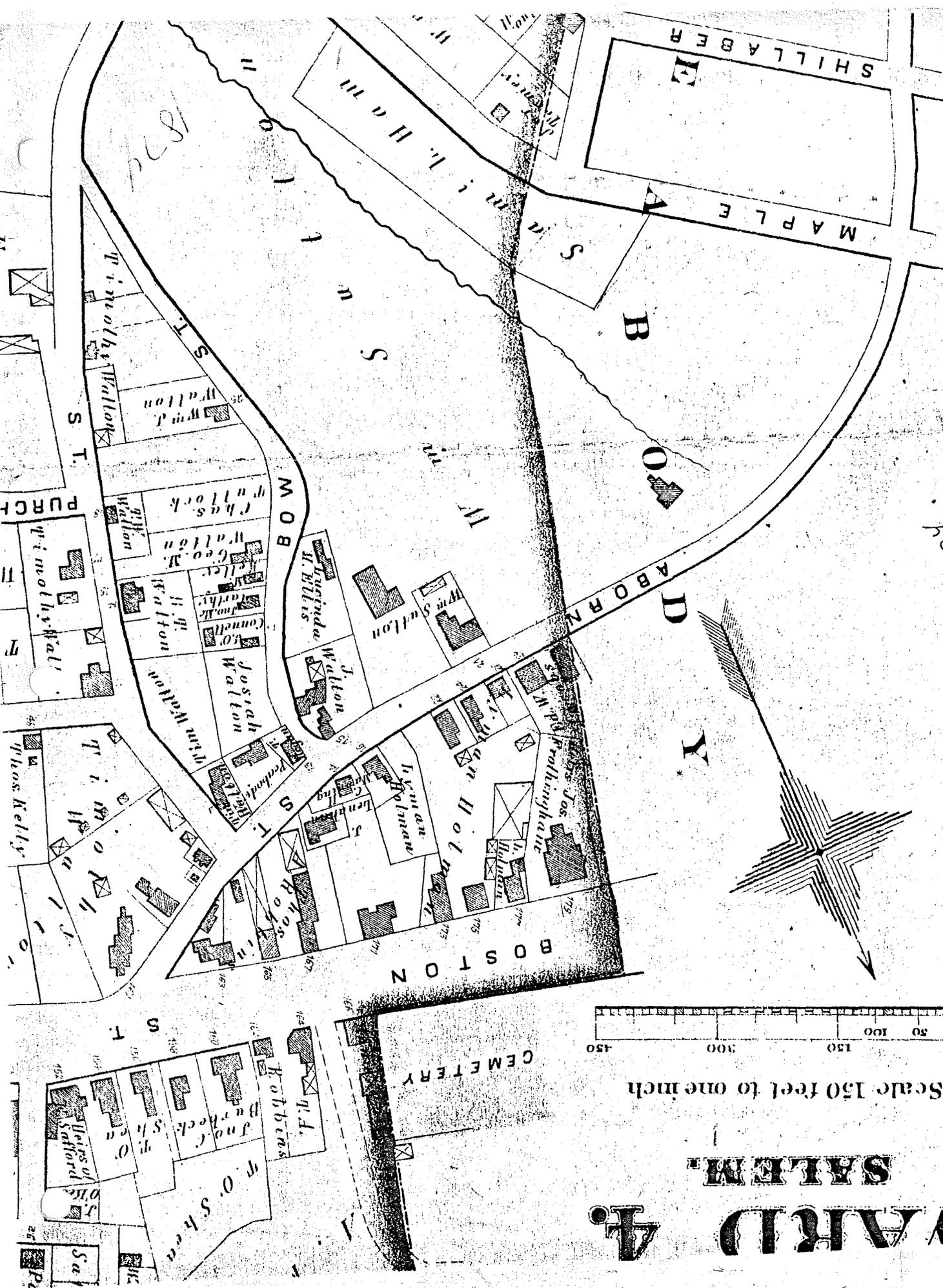
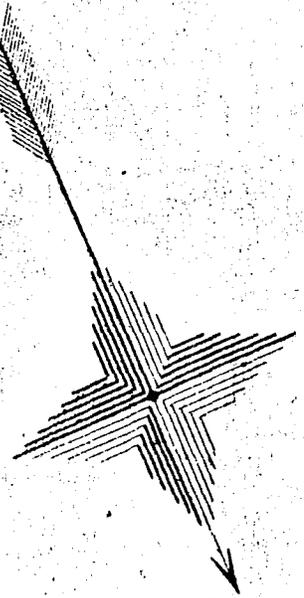
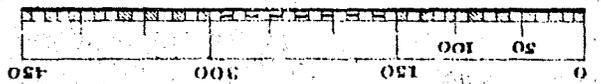
NO. 24

NO. 26

ST NO. 27

# WARD 4. SALEM.

Scale 150 feet to one inch





1956

