



ONE OF FOUR PILASTER-CAPS OF PORTLAND STONE FROM THE
FAÇADE OF THE FOSTER-HUTCHINSON HOUSE, BOSTON, 1689-1692

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The Foster-Hutchinson House

By ABBOTT LOWELL CUMMINGS

“WE shall never be all of one mind in our political principles,” wrote Thomas Hutchinson the historian and future Tory governor of Massachusetts in 1767,¹ and surely, no one knew better than he the more bitter implications of such a statement. Two years earlier the fine house in Boston’s then fashionable Garden Court Street which had been his life-long home was attacked by infuriated revolutionists who tore it nearly to pieces. Looking back over the history of the ill-fated Foster-Hutchinson House, in fact, we are constantly reminded that its imposing architectural qualities and leading position (so far as we now know) as the first developed example of provincial Palladianism in New England, seem overbalanced at times by its role as part of the stage setting for the century-long political struggles in New England which prefaced the war for American independence.

In a tangible sense this three-story masonry pile symbolized from the very outset the weight of established authority. One must examine the period before it

was built, however, for a fuller understanding of the fact, and to explore, incidentally, the validity of certain statements made by Thomas Hutchinson in 1778 concerning its history. Writing about his great-aunt, Abigail Hawkins, and of her several marriages, he says of the second husband: “M^r Kellond built my dwelling house in Boston which he gave to his wife and she gave it to my father her nephew and he to me.”² In these same family memoranda the former governor tells us the approximate age of the house, which tallies with other documentary evidence. A careful study of Thomas Kellond’s life and activity in Boston and of the land records, however, makes it virtually certain that he did *not* build the Foster-Hutchinson House. Thomas Hutchinson, then an exile in England and recalling reports of events which had occurred before his birth, was apparently correct in one statement but not in the other. Thomas Kellond, nevertheless, is a useful starting point and helps in a colorful way to set the scene.

Born in England in 1638 he had come

to New England at the time of the Restoration coincidentally or perhaps actually in connection with the royal mandate of March 5, 1660, for the arrest of the Regicides, Whaley and Goffe, whose story in New England has always been one of popular interest. Hutchinson writes that "commission and instructions [were given] to two young merchants from England, Thomas Kellond and Thomas Kirk, zealous royalists, to go through the colonies as far as Manhadoes in search of them."³ Kellond and Kirk reported later to Governor Endicott that they had left Boston on May 7, 1661, for New Haven Colony and had met with continual frustrations in their search for the concealed judges. The two young men "seem to have been sincere in endeavouring to apprehend them," Hutchinson diplomatically concludes, "but care was taken that it should not be in their power."⁴

Later, in 1678, Thomas Kellond was one of several named as commissioners with the unpopular Edward Randolph to administer to the governor a galling oath "faithfully to execute the duty required by the act of trade,"⁵ and in 1666 he had joined in a memorial to the General Court with other loyalists who were concerned lest any proceedings of the Colony should "have given occasion to his Majesty to say that we beleave he hath no jurisdiction over us. . . ." The petitioners acknowledged the "abundant care and paines" of the Court in carrying on the government of the Colony, and claimed that they would "not be unwilling to run any hazard . . . for the regular defence and security of the same," but in this issue, "wherein the honour of God, [and] the credit of religion," as well as their own "persons and estates" were concerned they earnestly hoped that it

would not be necessary to address the throne directly in order "to clear themselves from the least imputation of so scandalous an evill, as the appearance of disaffection, or disloyalty to the person and government of their lawfull prince and soveraign. . . ."⁶

In the meantime, and before October 21, 1665, when their first child was born, Thomas Kellond had been married to Abigail, the daughter of an early ship captain, Thomas Hawkins, and widow of one Samuel Moore. Two of Abigail's sisters were married during these same years to prominent men with varied political opinions. Her youngest sister, Hannah, married Elisha Hutchinson, grandfather of the future governor, on November 9, 1665. "Col^o H. my grandfather had ever been in opposition to [the royalist governor] Dudley,"⁷ Thomas Hutchinson tells us, and in 1688 he "joined with M^r Nowell & M^r Mather as joint Agents in solliciting favour from King James" against the high-handed rule of Sir Edmund Andros.⁸ The oldest sister, Elizabeth, married first Adam Winthrop and then, in 1654, John Richards who reappears in our narrative at a later time. Edward Randolph in 1682 wrote spitefully to the Bishop of London that Richards was "a man of meane extraction, coming over a poore servant, as most of the faction were at their first planting heere, but by extraordinary feats and coussinadge have gott them great estates in land. . . ." With characteristic bias Randolph thought that Richards "ought to be kept very safe till all things tending to the quiett and regulation of this [provincial] government be perfectly settled."⁹ Nevertheless, he was employed as agent with Governor Dudley to provide the King with an answer to Randolph's complaints against the

New Englanders, and somehow, through it all, as Hutchinson felt, "remained steady to what was called the country interest."¹⁰ His death was sudden and climactic. Samuel Sewall reported on Monday, April 2, 1694, that Richards "din'd very well . . . and after that falling into an angry passion with his Servant Richard Frame, presently after, fell probably into a Fit of Apoplexy, and died." The funeral could have done little to soften the harsh impression of this inharmonious final scene, for on the following Friday when "Major Richards" was buried in his tomb in the North Burying Ground, continues Sewall, they were "fain to nail a Board across the Coffins and then a board standing right up from that, bearing against the top of the Tomb, to prevent their floating up and down; sawing and fitting this board," he complained, "made some inconvenient Tarrance."¹¹

Major John Richards and Thomas Kellond were near neighbors, enjoying portions of an estate which had belonged originally to Captain Thomas Hawkins, their father-in-law. Captain Hawkins' home lot in Boston had stretched from Hanover Street to the sea, bounded on the north by what later became Whitebread Alley, and on the opposite side by a line somewhat south of and parallel with the present Clark Street. Elizabeth (Hawkins) (Winthrop) Richards inherited a lot at the northern end of the property (on part of which the New North Church was ultimately erected). The portion which fell to Captain Thomas' daughter, Abigail (Hawkins) (Moore) Kellond, lay at the southern end of the property, on either side of North Street, and was augmented by an addition stretching out to Hanover Street at the rear when her mother's estate was

divided in 1676.¹² Here on the western side of North Street, about in the middle of the block bounded now by Clark and Fleet Streets, Thomas and Abigail Kellond lived in what must have been an unusually fine wooden house. The earliest reference to this building in the land records can be found in a deed for abutting property on July 3, 1677, which mentions "the Leantoo of sd. Kellond,"¹³ though the house was surely standing as early as 1665-1666 when the Mason-Carr affair took place (of which more later). The incomplete tax returns for early Boston locate Thomas Kellond here in 1676, and later, in 1687, his widow in the same location is assessed £40 on "Houseing & whar[ves]"—an evaluation exceeded by two others (at £50) and equalled by only six, including Peter Sergeant whose fine brick mansion of 1679, later the Province House, was among the leading houses of its day.¹⁴

We have one impression at least of the Kellond House on North Street, and of the elegance of its furnishings, from an inventory taken at the time of Thomas Kellond's death in 1683. The "Pastur Yards, gardens, wharfes wth dwelling houses & warehouses" were valued at £1,500. There were "Cellars" with cooking implements, both a "Little Parlor" and "great Parlor"—each with fireplace equipment, a "hall" with "18 Turkey worke chaires" and brass andirons, and a "Lower Bed Roome" with fireplace tools, "2 bedsteeds" and "chamlett curtains." The "little Parlor Chamber" had a "p^r dogs" and "bayes curtains & bedstead," while in the "great Parlor Chamber" there were, in addition to the andirons and dogs, a pair of "Searge Curtains" and "6. Searge chaires." The "hall Chamber" was perhaps the most richly furnished room in

the house, including among other items "1. Feather bed, bolster, pillows, blankets, bedstead Silke Mohaire curtain's & silke quilt" valued at £50, "1 great chaire of Silke Mohaire," "Tapestry hangings" appraised at £20, "brass Andirons, Shovels, tongs" and "window curtain's," in addition to all of which there were several closets, another chamber, a "great Garrett," "little Garrett," and "other Garretts."¹⁵

Thomas Kellond did not live to welcome Governor Dudley's successor, the overbearing Edmund Andros, who was appointed following the revocation of the Charter, but several years earlier he had had a chance to share in one further episode that formed a part of the preamble to this period. Thomas Hutchinson describes fully the unwanted interference in the affairs of the Colonists from the oppressive commissioners appointed in 1664 by Charles II to investigate conditions in New England and to adjust all matters in dispute. The dramatic climax, involving one Arthur Mason, a Boston constable, is best told in the historian's own words:

The commissioners with other gentlemen meeting sometimes at a public house called the Ship tavern [which stood on the corner of Clark and North Streets], the constable expected to find them there upon a Saturday evening, which would have been a breach of law; but before he came, they had adjourned to Mr. Kellond's, a merchant, who lived opposite to the tavern. Another constable, who had been at the tavern before, had been beaten by them. Mason, who had more courage and zeal, went into the company with his staff, and told them he was glad to see them there, for if he had found them on the other side the street he would have carried them all away; and added, that he wondered they should be so uncivil as to beat a constable, and abuse authority. Sir Robert Carr said, it was he that beat him, and that he would do it again. Mason replied, that he thought his Majesty's commissioners would not have beaten

his Majesty's officers, and that it was well for them that he was not the constable who found them there, for he would have carried them before authority. Sir Robert asked, if he dare meddle with the King's commissioners? Yes, says Mason, and if the King himself had been there I would have carried him away. Upon which, Maverick cried out, Treason! Mason, thou shalt be hanged within a twelvemonth!¹⁶

The constable was duly charged with this "treason" uttered under Thomas Kellond's roof, but coming up for trial in the local provincial courts the case soon bogged down over technicalities, and in the end Mason was simply ordered to be admonished.

When with the accession of William and Mary to the throne the Colonists in New England saw their chance at last the odious Andros was served on April 18, 1689, with a summons forthwith to "surrender and deliver up the Government and Fortification to be preserved and disposed according to Order and Direction from the Crown of *England*, which suddenly is expected may arrive. . . ."¹⁷ Among the fifteen signatories occurs the name of John Foster who appears now in the present narrative for the first time, and with this name the first and second parts of our story are linked. When Thomas Kellond died in 1683 he left two young sons and a daughter. In the division of his estate Thomas Kellond, Jr., was "to have y^e Mansion house & Land belonging, as now fenced & backward to the back [Hanover] street," and his widow, Abigail, was to have "y^e use of the two Son's portions till they respectively come of age, and of convenient Roomes for her Selve in the Mansion house during her naturall life. . . ."¹⁸ Judging from the tax returns for scattered years she did continue to make her home here. The three children, however, died in rapid succession, and now, on

November 28, 1689, with the slate wiped clean, with Governor Andros freshly deposed and a new era in prospect, Abigail (Hawkins) (Moore) Kellond was married by Major John Richards, Assistant, to her third husband, John Foster.

According to Thomas Hutchinson, John Foster was a merchant "of the first rank, who came . . . from Ailsbury in England . . . [and] had a great share in the management of affairs from 1689 to 1692."¹⁹ Like most men of his class he recognized the necessity for order and stability in those relations with the mother country which made for profitable trade relations. Unlike certain other members of the family into which he married, however, he seems to have possessed an even temperament. It is almost impossible to imagine him falling into an angry passion with a servant or playing host to a treasonable fracas. He was warmly eulogized by both the Mathers, the Reverend Cotton Mather calling him "a Faithful *Magistrate*; A *Counsellor* continued by Annual Election with the esteem of the People at the *Board* . . . A *Judge* of Inviolable Integrity in the course of his proceedings on the *Bench* . . . One *Just* in his Dealings; & *Charitable* to the *Poor* . . . One who Loved both our *Liberties*, as an *English man*, and our *Principles* as a *New-English-man*; and often appeared for them."²⁰

Through his marriage to Abigail (Hawkins) (Moore) Kellond a double relationship was established for the future Thomas Hutchinson. John Foster had earlier been married to Lydia, daughter of the Boston Selectman, Daniel Turrell. Two daughters survived from this marriage, the older of whom, Sarah, on December 24, 1703, became the wife of Thomas Hutchinson, Sr., and thus John

Foster was to become the governor's maternal grandfather, while his second wife, Abigail, was a sister of the governor's paternal grandmother, Hannah (Hawkins) Hutchinson. Of Mrs. Abigail Foster, his great-aunt and step-grandmother, Thomas Hutchinson writes in 1778 that she was ten years older than her third husband, "a woman of good sense and great virtue" who "left an amiable character as a sincere christian as well as what was called in that day a complete gentlewoman and I remember to have heard my father say that Sir W^m Phips having married a woman of low condition when he was low himself, after he came to his fortune & title, she was put under M^rs Fosters instruction in order to learn polite & decent carriage."²¹ The Reverend Cotton Mather tells us that she was "an *Hater* of Differences, and an *Healer* of them. . . . One who kept up an Intimate Communion with God, especially in the *Prayer of the Closet*, where-to She not only Retir'd every Day, but sometimes Devoted *whole Dayes* for Interviews with Heaven."²² For John and Abigail Foster one can only envision a tranquil and pleasant companionship. As a "*Hater* of Differences" she would scarcely have relished the events which took place in her home on North Street the night Commissioner Carr was challenged by Constable Mason. The recollection of that event, as well as the deaths of her second husband and their three children, could not have made the Kellond House a place entirely of pleasant memories. Perhaps John Foster insisted upon a more fashionable house at the time of their marriage, yet it was Madam Kellond, as she was called after Thomas Kellond's death, who seems to have taken at least some of the initiative in the crea-

tion of their new home which was to become one of the finest residences built in Boston before the Revolution.

The land selected as a site for the new house stood not far from the Kellond's North Street home on that short lane-like thoroughfare called Garden Court Street which ran from North Square to Fleet Street. In the earliest years of the City's settlement this property had been owned by Thomas Clarke, merchant. A dwelling house had been built upon it by one John Shaw of Boston, butcher, between the years 1650 and 1670, as we learn from the deeds, during which period the land had been under lease from Clarke to Shaw.²³ Having acquired the land outright on December 9, 1670, John Shaw and his wife, Elizabeth, sold both the "dwelling house and land" a week later under a trust agreement to Anthony Checkley of Boston, merchant,²⁴ and fifteen years later, on April 4, 1685, Checkley sold this "parcel of land . . . Together with all edifices buildings" etc. for £295 "current mony" to Madam Kellond's brother-in-law, Major John Richards. The property was described as lying "neer unto y^e North meeting house," bounded south-easterly on the "street or high way runing between this said land & the land late Major Thomas Clarke's" (Garden Court St.) where it measured one hundred and twenty-three feet, south-westerly by the "land of m^{rs} Elisabeth Wensley widdow" (site of the future Clark-Frankland House) where it measured one hundred and twenty-six feet, "North Westerly upon Mill bridge street" (Hanover St.) where it measured one hundred and thirty-eight feet, and "North Easterly by another street or high way leading from the sd Mill bridge street downe to Halseys wharf" (Fleet St.), there measuring eighty-four and a

half feet.²⁵ These were essentially the bounds and measurements which this lot preserved until the Foster-Hutchinson House was demolished in 1833.

The deed from Checkley to Richards was executed during the period of Madam Kellond's widowhood, more than a year before the death of her last surviving child. There is no further mention of the property until Richards sold it on August 31, 1692, but this later deed fixes precisely the date of the Foster-Hutchinson House. In conveying the "parcel of Land," described as in the earlier deed of 1685, to John Foster, Esquire, and Abigail, his wife, John Richards tells us that it is "now in the Actuell Possession & occupation of the s^d John & Abigail Foster, on part of which they have erected a Brick dwelling house & other Edifices. . . ." If this building was indeed a joint venture then actual construction must have taken place between the period of their marriage late in 1689 and 1692. The deed goes on to specify, however, that the purchase price of £300 "Current money" for the land had been paid to Richards "in hand severall yeares Since by the s^d Abigail Foster then Kellond. . . ." ²⁶ It is this single statement which establishes the possibility of some initiative on her part. Whether Mrs. Kellond had a new house in mind when she contracted for the property belonging to her brother-in-law, or whether the initial payment represented merely a family business transaction we shall probably never know. In any event, the deed of August 31, 1692, clarifies a later statement by Thomas Hutchinson in 1778 that upon his father's marriage to Sarah Foster in 1703 "Col^l Foster and his wife . . . settled the Mansion house *the fee being in M^{rs} Foster* on M^r Hutchinson and his eldest son Foster [Hutchin-

son] the Survivor &c" (italics added).²⁷ Elsewhere, incidentally, in a letter of September 14, 1775, Hutchinson tells us that the house "exclusive of the land cost my Ancestors Two thousand pounds Sterlg."²⁸

In 1676, several years before the Foster-Hutchinson House was built, Edward Randolph, then about to embark for New England, was furnished with statistical estimates which he was to confirm or disprove. From these we learn that there were then, as it was supposed, some 1,500 families in Boston with fifteen merchants worth about £50,000 and five hundred persons worth £3,000 each. No house in New England contained more than twenty rooms, and not twenty in Boston had more than ten rooms each.²⁹ This statement was made before the building in 1679 of the Peter Sergeant (later the Province) House, which must have been one of the most ambitious residences which Bostonians had then seen on this side of the Atlantic. From what could be learned of its seventeenth-century appearance when the surviving walls were demolished in 1922 the house was fundamentally Elizabethan with Flemish gables and a great buttressing chimney whose flues were gathered into a cluster of stacks.

With the erection of the Foster-Hutchinson House between 1689 and 1692 Bostonians were to discover that the Glorious Revolution in their political affairs heralded a revolution in architecture as well. The building was thoroughly provincial, yet its three-story Ionic pilasters, its regularly spaced windows and circular-headed pediment in the second story were in all likelihood the first taste for New Englanders of the academic architectural ideas which had been introduced into England by Inigo Jones some

sixty years before. In 1922 Fiske Kimball wrote that although the pilaster-caps of the façade "were built two inches into the wall, it is almost inconceivable that these excellently understood Ionic capitals can date from the original erection of the house. . . . Possibly they were added after the fire which destroyed the cupola in 1748."³⁰ Professor Hugh Morrison of Dartmouth is the first scholar in more modern times to refute the notion that these elements were later intrusions. "It is possible that details such as the balcony and balustrade could have been products of an eighteenth-century remodeling," he writes, "but it seems highly improbable that the giant pilasters were. The sheer labor of chiseling two-inch deep channels into the 'very fine brickwork' to receive the wide pilasters; the fact that the window spacing was so opportune to receive them; the location of the chimneys . . . all these seem to belie the theory of a remodeling. . . . The conclusion seems inescapable that the exterior of the Hutchinson House was substantially the same when it was built as it appears in the engraving of 1836."³¹ The reference to "very fine brickwork" is taken from the statement of "an officer addressing the lords of trade" following the mob attack in 1765: "As for the house, which from the structure and inside finishing, seemed to be from a design of Inigo Jones or his successor, it appears that they were a long while resolved to level it to the ground: they worked three hours at the cupola before they could get it down, and they uncovered part of the roof; but I suppose, that the thickness of the walls, which were of very fine brick-work, adorned with Ionic pilasters worked into the wall, prevented their completing their purpose, though they worked at it till daylight."³²

In further support of Professor Mor-

risson's contention it should be pointed out that Thomas Hutchinson himself, in the several references to the house which he makes in his family annals, says nothing of any alterations or enlargements. Moreover, it is clear from the William Burgis view of Harvard College in 1726 that the

Peter Sergeant House of 1679, home of a leading citizen, made little or no concession to recent English architectural trends in its conception and finish, but as early as February 20, 1692, Samuel Sewall wrote to England for "sixty small Blocks of Stone, two foot long, one foot

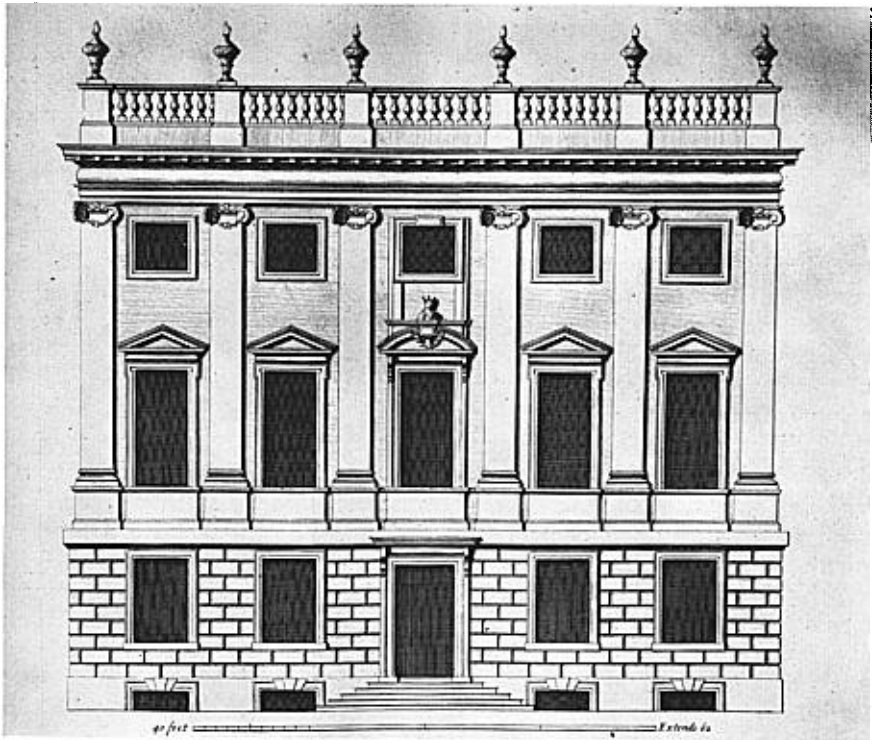


FIG. 1. LINDSEY HOUSE, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, LONDON,
DESIGNED ABOUT 1640 BY INIGO JONES OR ONE OF HIS FOLLOWERS

From Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* (London, 1715).

developed Renaissance had put in its appearance here certainly by 1699 with the well-documented erection of Stoughton Hall at Harvard in that year. In this near-contemporary picture one can see clearly the classical detail of the doorways with their circular-headed pediments, quoins at the corners of the building, and regularly spaced dormer windows. The

high, one foot upon the head, for coins. . . ."³³ This order for quoins to be used presumably in connection with his Boston house, newly enlarged in brick in 1693, would again suggest the use of academic detail, though mention elsewhere of both "Casements" and "Quarrels" of glass show that his windows were by no means new-fashioned.³⁴ The Sewall ref-

erence has further interest, for recent analysis of chips from the Foster-Hutchinson House pilaster-cap by both English and American geologists has identified the material as Portland stone, a fact of which Fiske Kimball was presumably unaware. Having thus been imported, these

school (Fig. 1). It is interesting that the "officer addressing the lords of trade" in 1765 recognized also the basic derivation from Inigo Jones, but certainly one can go no further except, perhaps, than to suggest that there may be an echo here of mid seventeenth-century Dutch-

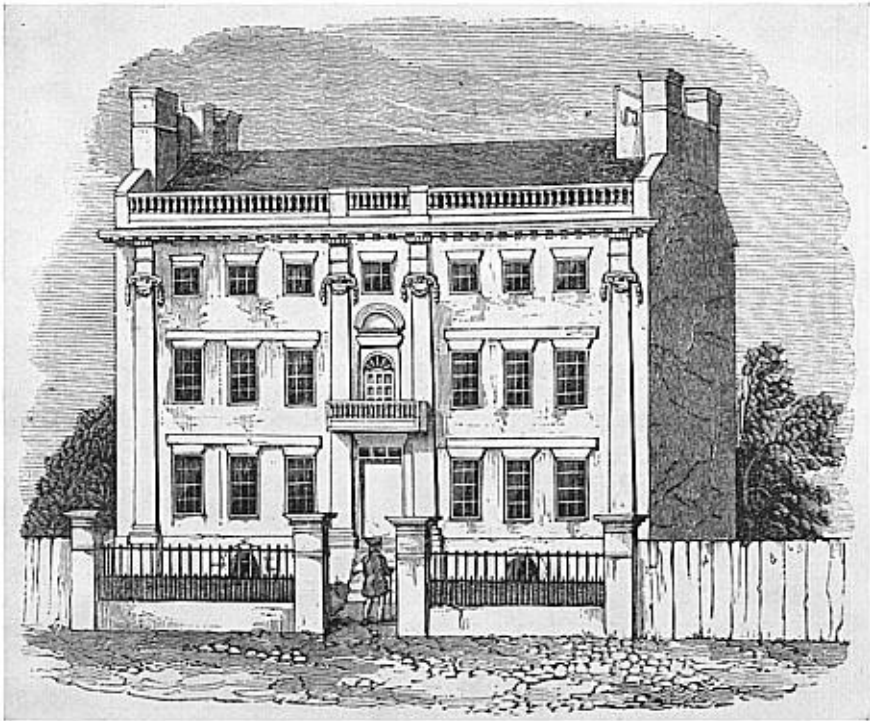


FIG. 2. FOSTER-HUTCHINSON HOUSE, BOSTON, 1689-1692

From *The American Magazine of Useful & Entertaining Knowledge* (February, 1836).

pilaster-caps in all likelihood were carved in England as well, which fully accounts for their "excellently understood" detail (see frontispiece).

For the house itself one would be hard pressed to find an exact English model. It is perhaps more to the point to suggest that the ultimate archetype is to be found in such a building as Lindsey House in Lincoln's Inn Fields in London, designed about 1640 by Inigo Jones or one of his

Palladian influence coming into England after the Restoration in which the use of brick with stone trim played a conspicuous role. Whatever the specific source, the interpretation is strongly provincial, particularly in such details as the discontinuance of the entablature (which appears in fragmented form above each pilaster) in order to accommodate the third-story windows.³⁵ Similarly, the celestial crown and Maltese cross (an unfamiliar heraldic

combination) which surmount the egg and dart motif of the Ionic pilaster-cap are not to be found in any of the contemporary European architectural publications, and must represent either the whim of the carver or his American client.

Our limited knowledge of the plan and interior of this house is derived for the main part from two principal sources. First and most important is the inventory which Thomas Hutchinson compiled of household furnishings destroyed when the mob entered the house on August 26, 1765.⁸⁶ This schedule, for which there exists both a rough and finished draft, was intended to serve as the basis of his claim for indemnity, and is valuable today for the picture it creates of a sumptuously furnished house and for the fact that the contents were catalogued room by room and include items which give at least some impression of architectural features. Mr. Hutchinson lists the various rooms in the following order: "the great room below" (called "Parlour" in the rough draft) with mention of fireplace tools, "2 Glass sconces at y^e side of the mantlepiece," and certain objects "In the closet;" "the Hall," with fireplace tools, "buffatt" and "5 large busts on the mantle piece;" "the little room," again with fireplace equipment and mention of a "window cushion" which suggests a window embrasure; "the Entry," to which the rough draft adds an "entry closet;" and "the great chamber" ("parlour chamber" in the rough draft) and "hall chamber," both with fireplace equipment. Next in order are the "back chamber," "my lodging chamber" and "the kitchen chamber" in none of which does there happen to be any mention of fireplace furnishings. Hutchinson tells us elsewhere that the mob made a thorough job of destroying and casting into the street

his money, plate and "every other article in the house & cellars . . . the furniture of a kitchen only excepted"⁸⁷—which accounts for the absence of that room in the inventory. Passing to the third story he mentions the "upper entry" and "the chamber over great chamber," but follows this with "the cellar" and "my son Thomass chamber" (which contained fireplace tools), to which may be added from the rough draft an unlocated "press chamber"—perhaps on the third floor, judging from its position in the document following "the chamber over parlour [or great] chamber."

The second source, while found in a work of fiction, has generally been accepted as a factual account of the interior. In *The Rebels, or Boston Before the Revolution*, the author, Lydia Maria Child, describes a visit to the "Lieutenant Governor's elegant mansion" in the early evening when "the dim light of a lamp suspended from the roof, gave a rich twilight view of the interior, and displayed a spacious arch, richly carved and gilded, in all the massy magnificence of the time, and most tastefully ornamented with busts and statues." On the right hand was a "dimly-lighted parlour. The pannelling was of the dark, richly-shaded mahogany of St. Domingo, and ornamented with the same elaborate skill as the hall they had just quitted. . . . On either side of the room there were aches surmounted with the arms of England, in the recesses of which the company were soon seated. . . ." One room she calls a "library" which "contained the finest collection of books then in the Colonies. . . . It was hung with Canvass tapestry, on which was blazoned the coronation of George II., here and there interspersed with the royal arms. . . ."⁸⁸ These tapestry hangings, if correctly described,

would suggest that Mrs. Child (who was not born until 1802) drew upon some earlier source of information for the appearance of the rooms before their destruction in 1765, but the question can have no cut and dried answer. The house, as we know almost for a certainty, was repaired, and the statement made at the time of its demolition in 1833 that "most of the work of the interior was of red cedar" may easily refer to the period following these repairs. The same report, incidentally, furnishes approximate dimensions for the house. "Its front was upwards of fifty feet," we are told, "and its breadth forty,"³⁹ making the ground plan a fraction larger than that of the Royall House in Medford.

Before turning to that most dismal hour in the life of this celebrated building, we should pick up the thread of its later history. Despite the fact that the house was settled on his parents in 1703, as Thomas Hutchinson tells us, it would appear that John and Abigail Foster continued to be its only principal occupants. Affectionately linked in life, their deaths occurred within a month of one another. Colonel John Foster was the first to go on February 9, 1711, "between 11 and 12 m.," as Sewall tells us. "His place at the Council Board and Court will hardly be filled up," the diarist lamented. "I have lost a good Left-hand man. The Lord save New-England!" On Thursday, February 15, when Colonel Foster was entombed, Governor Dudley, Sewall himself and other notables of the period were among the bearers, and "Many great Guns were fired." Within three weeks Sewall recorded Mrs. Foster's death on March 5, "between 11 and 12 at Noon." The Governor and the diarist were again among the bearers which were "the same that were for Col.

Foster this day was three weeks." Burial took place "at the North, in the Tomb of Mr. Kellond, her former Husband."⁴⁰ On the last day of that same month, March 31, the Reverend Cotton Mather recorded in his diary that he had, on the preceding Wednesday, kept a day of prayer and fasting "with a great Company of Christians, who mett at the House lately forsaken by the Death of the two most eminent Persons in my Neighborhood."⁴¹

The settlement of the mansion house was confirmed in Mrs. Foster's will drawn on March 1, 1711, in which she gave "my present Dwelling or Brick Mansion house in Boston . . . with all the Land [and] buildings . . . unto my Loving Nephew Captⁿ Thomas Hutchinson and to his Son Foster Hutchinson forever."⁴² Captain Hutchinson apparently took up his residence here at this time. Several children having been born to Thomas and Sarah Hutchinson, of whom Foster was the oldest, the future governor tells us himself, that he was "born in Boston Sunday September 9th 1711 about 11 o'clock in the evening and was the first person born in the house which had been built between twenty & thirty years and which afterwards came to him by inheritance."⁴³

With Foster Hutchinson's death in 1721 Thomas Hutchinson, Jr., stood next in line, and received the property by bequest under the will of his father, dated October 10, 1739. He was then twenty-eight years of age, and had two years earlier been elected a Representative for the Town of Boston. From this time forward his interests were centered almost entirely in the government of the Province of Massachusetts Bay and in its political affairs. He was elected to the Council in 1749, having been Speaker of

the House of Representatives for the three preceding years, and in 1752 succeeded his uncle, Edward Hutchinson, as Judge of Probate for Suffolk County. His appointment as lieutenant governor came in 1758. It is not easy for the lay person who reads the correspondence, and, for the later years, the diaries of Thomas Hutchinson, to comprehend entirely the violence of the reaction against him on the part of the American patriots. While standing firm on all his loyalist principles, he seems nevertheless by temperament to have been both reasonable and objective, and even as an older man dispassionate. In a letter from London to a friend dated November 2, 1774, he promises to write "no Politicks unless it be Politicks to tell you that I bear not the least ill will to my Milton Neighbours for the share they have at last taken in the general confusion. . . . I shall yet live & die among them & I trust recover their esteem."⁴⁴ Earlier, in the Preface to the second volume of his celebrated History, he had declared "I desire no more candour from those who differ from me, than I ever have been, and ever shall be ready to shew to them." By long inheritance, however, his outlook was altogether that of the mercantile aristocracy to which he belonged. This fact—of which his house was an outward visible symbol—and his central role in the growing political turmoil, combined to make him a particular target.

Under Thomas Hutchinson, Sr.'s, will of October 10, 1739, his widow, Sarah, "my Dearly beloved Wife," was given the "Use and Improvem^t" of the mansion house during her lifetime, and all the "Houshold furniture of every sort . . . Excepting the furniture belonging to the Parlour Chamber," together with "my Coach & Harness with the Two Horses

and my Servant Man Peter."⁴⁵ Sarah (Foster) Hutchinson lived on with her son and his growing family until her death on November 6, 1752. Even before this time, however, there had been unpleasant incidents which must have given some sense of foreboding to the family. Thomas Hutchinson tells us, for example, that he was threatened "more than once . . . with destruction by some of the People of the Town and his house taking fire on the top the Lanthorn being in a blaze some of the lower class cursed him & cried let it burn."⁴⁶

The storm which raged in Boston over the Stamp Act in the mid 1760's is familiar to every American schoolboy, and Lieutenant Governor Hutchinson's role in the events which led up to the fateful evening of August 26, 1765, has been thoroughly rehearsed by a number of writers. Hutchinson himself gives the most vivid account of the attack (from which he very narrowly escaped personal injury) in a letter written a few days later on August 30 to Richard Jackson:

I came from my house at Milton with my family the 26 in the morning After dinner it was whispered in town there would be a mob at night & that Paxton Hallowell, & the custom house & admiralty officers houses would be attacked but my friends assured me the rabble were satisfied with the insult I had received & that I was become rather popular. In the evening whilst I was at supper & my children round me somebody ran in & said the mob were coming I directed my children to fly to a secure place & shut up my house as I had done before intending not to quit it but my eldest daughter repented her leaving me & hastened back & protested she would not quit the house unless I did. I could not stand against this and withdrew wth her to a neighbouring house where I had been but a few minutes before the hellish crew fell upon my house with the rage of devils & in a moment with axes split down the doors & entred my son being in the great entry heard them cry damn him he is upstairs we'll have him. Some ran immediately as high as the top

of the house others filled the rooms below and cellars & others remained without the house to be employed there. Messages soon came one after another to the house where I was to inform me the mob were coming in pursuit of me and I was obliged to retire thro yards & gardens to a house more remote where I remained until 4 o'clock by which time one of the best finished houses in the Province had nothing remaining but the bare walls & floors. Not contented with tearing off all the wainscot & hangings & splitting the doors to pieces they beat down the partition walls & altho that alone cost them near two hours they cut down the cupola or lantern & they began to take the slate & boards from the roof & were prevented only by the approaching daylight from a total demolition of the building. The garden fence was laid flat & all my trees &c^r broke down to the ground. Such ruin was never seen in America.⁴⁷

And following this lurid night's work—silence. People came from the country to see the ruins, writes Hutchinson, but almost as though the subject were too painful to mention, he tells us nothing of what happened to the house from the night of August 26 until he sailed permanently for England nine years later. From his correspondence we learn that he retired within a day or two of the attack to his summer home in Milton, and remained there, apparently, through the winter. His papers show clearly, however, that he was living in Boston during the years which followed. Later, for example, on July 1, 1774, he said to King George III in a personal interview "I have lived in the Country Sir in the summer for 20 years but except the winter after my house in town was pulled down I have never lived in the Country in winter until the last" (i.e., the winter of 1773-1774).⁴⁸ There had been no thought of exile in 1765, and at least two statements made by Hutchinson later in life can be construed to show that his residence during these years between 1766 and 1773 was indeed the family mansion

on Garden Court Street whose battered shell he must have had repaired during the winter of 1765-1766.⁴⁹ Concerning any such repairs we have but a single mute piece of evidence. Among the collections of the Bostonian Society are three fireplace tiles of the Sadler variety, salvaged from the Foster-Hutchinson House at the time of its demolition in 1833 (Fig. 3). These can be dated to the so-called Sadler and Green period (1761-1770) or later, with a good possibility that they are no earlier than 1764,⁵⁰ and would thus in all likelihood have figured in the rehabilitation of the house. At the time of Hutchinson's death, incidentally, we find a record of receipt on April 30, 1779, "for Rent of Daniel Martin for year 1779 Agreeable to Resolve of y^e Gen^l Court of y^e Mansion House," and on May 8, 1779, cash was paid to Joseph Eustice "for Mend^e Front Gates & Fence of Mansion House in Boston" during the preceding February.⁵¹

The Foster-Hutchinson House remained standing until 1833. Having been confiscated by the Province of Massachusetts Bay on April 30, 1779, the property passed through several hands, and was acquired on February 4, 1792, by William Little, a Boston merchant, for £935 lawful money, and henceforth became his home.⁵² At the time of the Direct Tax in 1798 Mr. Little was described as owner and occupier, the building covering 1,836 square feet of land and having fifty-two windows.⁵³ One Henry Lee who knew the house as a boy, reported to the members of the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1881 that William Little's family "remained there till its downfall," and that both this building and the Clark-Frankland House next door were then "festooned with Virginia creeper, behind their green court-

yards. . . ." These "rival mansions," as he calls them, were each three stories in height, although the Clark-Frankland House, begun presumably in 1712 and

part of the real estate whereof I shall die seized. . . ." ⁵⁵ According to the terms of this provision, promptly carried into execution, ⁵⁶ the once proud mansion, styled



FIG. 3. ONE OF THREE SADLER FIREPLACE TILES, *Circa 1765*, WHICH WERE SALVAGED FROM THE FOSTER-HUTCHINSON HOUSE IN 1833

Courtesy of the Bostonian Society.

furnished with dormer windows, is described unexplainably by Mr. Lee as "looking down upon its two-storied neighbor. . . ." ⁵⁴

William Little's death occurred in the summer of 1831, and his executors were directed by will to dispose of "all or any

by its most distinguished owner as "one of the best finished houses in the Province," was ignominiously swept away. The event did not go entirely unnoticed at the time. On April 2, 1833, the Boston *American Traveller* observed that "Gov. Hutchinson's Old Mansion in Garden

Court and Hanover street, is now about being taken down. It was built upwards of a century since.⁵⁷ Antiquarians, as well as others, would do well to make a visit to the immense pile alluded to, before its thick massy walls, with its Ionic pilasters, shall be levelled with the ground." Two months later, on May 29, the *Columbian Centinel* reported that the building "is now taking down by Messrs. Ritchie & Myers, who have presented to the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Capital of one of the pilasters wrought in Portland Stone, to be placed in the Society's room over the Savings Bank in Tremont street, as a Pedestal for the Bust of Washington, copied in Plaster of Paris, from the one in Marble by Houdon, and presented to the Society by our late Consul, Mr. Lee."

Students of architectural history will ever be grateful to "Messrs. Ritchie and Myers"⁵⁸ for their gift of this pilaster-cap which but though a single element in a large structure nevertheless adds significantly to our knowledge of the building. While there may have been some semblance of dignity in its initial use as a pedestal for the plaster bust of Washington, it had succumbed to a wretched fate one hundred years later when William Sumner Appleton found it in 1936 forlornly exposed to a discharge of rusty water in the rear courtyard of the Historical Society's headquarters. A spirited correspondence sprang up between Mr. Appleton and the Society's director which revealed that the pilaster-cap had been removed to the courtyard at the behest of a member (tactfully unnamed) whose sense of patriotic decency was offended by this bit of Tory memorabilia!⁵⁹ Time is on the side of the antiquarian, and ultimately the pilaster-cap was restored to a dignified position in the Society's rotunda

where it remained until 1960, when, under the terms of a special arrangement, it was transferred to the architectural museum of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

Later historians have dealt much less harshly with Thomas Hutchinson than did his contemporaries. When, in fact, we shift attention from the highly charged political writings of the period to the governor's diaries and personal correspondence, a thoroughly different picture emerges. He lived in England a broken-hearted exile, and until his death in 1780 never gave up hope of a return to America. On January 9, 1775, some six months after arriving in England, he wrote to his son, Thomas, who had staid behind at the family summer home in Milton, "I long to return to you which I say little about and not only put on the best appearance but take every method most likely to keep up my spirits and chiefly for that purpose I made a journey here [to Bath] but I meet with no diversions or entertainments that are so agreeable to me as what I could find at home. Indeed I had rather live in obscurity there than in pomp and splendor here."⁶⁰ The question of their future in England must have been one of the common staples of conversation among the expatriated Tories. A few years later on May 15, 1779, Hutchinson noted in his diary that "Doctor Gardiner & Col^o Pickman called on me from Bristol & dined with two Auchmutys Col^o Chandler & Treas^r [Harrison] Gray. They are all anxious to return to America except Gray. He & Ch. Just Oliver and Secretary Flucker wish to have some Provision in England & never much think of America. I can see reasons which are personal for each of them. I have more of the old Athenians in me & though I know not how to reason

upon it, I feel a fondness to lay my bones in my Native Soil and to carry those of my dear [deceased] daughter with me." A few months before his death he wrote tersely on February 1, 1780, "The prospect of returning to America and laying my bones in the land of my fore fathers for four Preceding generations . . . is less than it has ever been. God grant me a composed mind, submissive to his will. . . ."⁶¹

The rancor inspired by divided loyalties at the time of the American Revolu-

tion has now been largely forgotten, but as a result of the intense bitterness which erupted into violence, and as a result of a nineteenth-century lack of concern, we of the twentieth-century have a continuing share in the sense of loss and exile experienced by Thomas Hutchinson, separated forever from this house on Garden Court Street which must always rank as one of the finest dwellings erected in Boston during the early years of its settlement.

NOTES

¹ Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of Massachusetts* . . . (Boston, 1795), II, viii. The first and second volumes of Hutchinson's History (as hereafter cited) were published in Boston in 1764 and 1767 respectively. The third volume was published posthumously in London in 1828. All quotations of material to be found in volumes I and II are drawn from the third edition, published in Boston in 1795.

² Family record, genealogical and biographical, entitled "Hutchinson in America," written by Thomas Hutchinson in 1778 at the end of the fifth volume of his diary, p. 28. Quotations from this source, cited hereafter as Hutchinson in America, have been taken from a microfilm (Massachusetts Historical Society) of the original document preserved in the Mss. Dept. of the British Museum.

³ Hutchinson's History, I, 199 n.

⁴ Thomas Hutchinson, *A Collection of Original Papers Relative to the History of the Colony of Massachusetts-Bay* (Boston, 1769), p. 334 and footnote. (Hereafter cited as Original Papers.)

⁵ Hutchinson's History, I, 297.

⁶ Original Papers, pp. 512-513.

⁷ Hutchinson in America, p. 34.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁹ Original Papers, p. 533.

¹⁰ Hutchinson's History, II, 21 n.

¹¹ Diary of Samuel Sewall, *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, Fifth Series, V, 389-390.

¹² See Hutchinson in America and Suffolk

County Deeds where conveyances for abutting property determine the ownership: X, 223, 331; and plan filed in the Massachusetts State Archives, Third Series, III, 25.

¹³ Suffolk County Deeds, X, 223.

¹⁴ Massachusetts State Archives, CXXVI, 286-306.

¹⁵ Suffolk County Probate Records, IX, 156-158.

¹⁶ Hutchinson's History, I, 232-233. The historian has reported the conversation substantially as recorded in the original deposition taken in 1666 which describes the altercation (see Suffolk County Court Files, case no. 791).

¹⁷ Nathaniel Byfield, *An Account of the late Revolution in New-England* . . . (London, 1689), p. 20.

¹⁸ Suffolk County Probate Records, IX, 158-159. Thomas Kellond's widow, Abigail, retained possession of the Kellond House and she and John Foster conveyed it under the terms of a trust agreement to Thomas Hutchinson, Sr., Jan. 29, 1704, the house then being rented, as the deed explains (Suffolk County Deeds, XXI, 478). On Jan. 16, 1715, the Second Church in Boston voted to hire "the House of Mr. Thomas Hutchinson in Ship [North] Street, now vacant," for Dr. Cotton Mather until other provision could be made for him (*Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, Seventh Series, VII, pt. 2, p. 299 n.), and on July 14, 1715, Samuel Sewall records, "I visited Dr. C. Mather and his new Wife at the house that was Mr. Kellond's." (*Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, Fifth Series, VII, 49.) This

house passed as a part of Thomas Hutchinson, Sr.'s, residual estate in 1739 to Thomas Hutchinson, Jr. (Suffolk County Probate Records, XXXIV, 520), and was sold by him in halves on Jan. 17, 1759 (Suffolk County Deeds, XCII, 188, 192).

¹⁹ Hutchinson's History, II, 21 n.

²⁰ Cotton Mather, *Orphanotrophium* . . . [sermon] (Boston, 1711), p. 67.

²¹ Hutchinson in America, pp. 36, 28-30.

²² Cotton Mather, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

²³ Suffolk County Deeds, VII, 60, 58.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, VII, 61.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, XIII, 299.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, XV, 201.

²⁷ Hutchinson in America, p. 40.

²⁸ Thomas Hutchinson, Letter-book, Vol. II, microfilm (Massachusetts Historical Society) of the original document preserved in the Mss. Dept. of the British Museum. Cited hereafter as Hutchinson's Letter-book.

²⁹ *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, 1675-1676* . . . (London, 1893), p. 362.

³⁰ Fiske Kimball, *Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and of the Early Republic* (New York, 1922), p. 65.

³¹ Hugh Morrison, *Early American Architecture* . . . (New York, 1952), p. 477, quoted with permission of the publisher, Oxford University Press.

³² Caleb H. Snow, *A History of Boston* . . . (Boston, 1825), p. 261.

³³ Letter-book of Samuel Sewall, *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, Sixth Series, I, 130.

³⁴ Diary of Samuel Sewall, *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, Fifth Series, V, 388, 402. It has seemed puzzling to some students that the Foster-Hutchinson House, if so noteworthy a landmark in style, should have escaped contemporary comment. This argument has no relevance, however, for the almost equally imposing Peter Sergeant house, the Shrimpton and Clark-Frankland Houses are all unmentioned by visitors to Boston during this same period, to say nothing of such leading local diarists as Sewall and Cotton Mather.

³⁵ For this observation the author is indebted to Miss Priscilla Metcalf of London who has been helpful as well with suggestions of equally

provincial buildings, not unlike the Foster-Hutchinson House, built at about the same time in England, see for example those buildings erected following a fire in 1694 on Church St. in Warwick, shown in Fig. 3, p. 725 of "Warwick and its Architecture—II," *Country Life* (Sept. 7, 1951).

³⁶ Massachusetts Archives, VI, 301 ff.

³⁷ Hutchinson in America, p. 77.

³⁸ Lydia Maria Child, *The Rebels, or Boston Before the Revolution* (Boston, 1825), pp. 8, 10, 35 and 36.

³⁹ *The American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge*, II (Boston, February 1836), 237. Dating also perhaps to the period of repairs and rehabilitation is a single interior modillion block (Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities) with an unsupported claim of having come from the Foster-Hutchinson House. Taking the various statements of Thomas Hutchinson at face value it is hard to understand how even the smallest scrap of earlier architectural finish escaped the fury of the mob.

⁴⁰ Diary of Samuel Sewall, *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, Fifth Series, VI, 300-301, 303.

⁴¹ Diary of Cotton Mather, *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, Seventh Series, VIII, ii, 54.

⁴² Suffolk County Probate Records, XVII, 298.

⁴³ Hutchinson in America, p. 45.

⁴⁴ Hutchinson's Letter-book, Vol. I.

⁴⁵ Suffolk County Probate Records, XXXIV, 521-522.

⁴⁶ Hutchinson in America, p. 58. The context would suggest a date in or about 1748 for this event.

⁴⁷ Massachusetts Archives, XXVI, 146.

⁴⁸ Diary of Thomas Hutchinson, Vol. I, microfilm (Massachusetts Historical Society) of the original document preserved in the Mss. Dept. of the British Museum. Cited hereafter as Hutchinson's Diary.

⁴⁹ Hutchinson's Diary, Vol. IV, Sept. 1, 1778, and Letter-book, Sept. 14, 1775 (to a friend). In the closing years of this period Thomas Hutchinson may have lived briefly in the Province House, official residence of the Colonial governors, but the evidence in sup-

port of any such claim is both slender and conflicting.

⁵⁰ E. Stanley Price, *John Sadler . . .* (W. Kirby, England, 1948), pp. 54-55.

⁵¹ Suffolk County Probate Records, LXXIX, 119 and LXXXI, 777.

⁵² See Suffolk County Deeds, CXLV, 126, 129 and CLXXII, 36.

⁵³ Boston Record Commissioners Report, No. 22, p. 175.

⁵⁴ *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (February, 1881), pp. 346-347. Another member of the Mass. Hist. Soc., Mr. Edwin L. Bynner (1842-1893), reported that the house "was built of brick and painted; the plainness of the façade being relieved by a representation of the British crown over every window" in addition to those which appeared in the pilaster-caps. Mr. Bynner, however, does not reveal the source of his information. (See Justin Winsor, *The Memorial History of Boston . . .*, II (Boston, c1881), 526.

⁵⁵ Suffolk County Probate Records, CXXIX², 164. An interesting room by room

inventory is on file, presented Oct. 17, 1831, the rooms, however, being numbered only and not named (CXXIX², 295).

⁵⁶ See Suffolk County Deeds, CCCLXVIII, 267 (with plan), CCCLXXIX, 180, CCCLXXVIII, 123, etc.

⁵⁷ An error based apparently on ignorance of the facts. Similarly, the *Columbian Centinel* reports on May 29 that the "mansion of the late Gov. Hutchinson in Garden Court street, [was] built by his father about the beginning of the last century. . . ."

⁵⁸ Actually, as recorded in the *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* under date of May 30, 1833, it was voted "That the thanks of the Society be forwarded to Messrs. Thayer and Ritchie for the donation of the capital of one of the pillars of Governor Hutchinson's house."

⁵⁹ See Hutchinson House, Correspondence Files, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

⁶⁰ Hutchinson's Letter-book, Vol. II.

⁶¹ Hutchinson's Diary, Vols. IV, VII.