

The Province House and its Occupants

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THE way to Roxbury, as Washington Street was called in the first century of Boston's history, was bordered north of West Street by the homes of some of the principal settlers. South of the Town House (the Old State House) was the South End of the town during these years, while the land behind the Old South Meeting House remained pasture for a century more. The west side of Washington Street was an excellent location for a house on the main street, with a fine prospect of the harbor and its islands.

The first great Boston fire destroyed these homes on January 14, 1653, among them that of William Aspinwall, town recorder, which stood near the present junction of Washington and Bromfield Streets. Half way between Aspinwall's house and School Street was the home of Thomas Millard with its garden and orchard in the rear. Millard's burned property came into the hands of Samuel Shrimpton, a large landholder who sold it on October 21, 1676 to Peter Sergeant, merchant of Boston.¹

This land had a frontage of eighty-six feet on the street and of seventy-six feet in the rear, with a depth of two hundred and sixty-five feet. On this Site Sergeant, a former London merchant of a Lancashire family, erected a house in 1679.

Here Peter Sergeant brought his first two wives, both daughters of prominent Massachusetts merchants. First, was Elizabeth Corwin of Salem, as indicated

¹ *Suffolk County Deeds*, VIII:309, X:144.

by the familial greetings of a letter from Sergeant to "Bro. Corwin, Bro. Jonathan and Bro. Browne" for John and Jonathan Corwin and William Browne who married their sister Hannah Corwin. Samuel Sewall noted in his Diary for December 23, 1681 "two of the chief Gentlewomen in Towne dyed, . . . viz. Mrs. Mary Davis and Mrs. Eliza. Sargent (sic)."² His second marriage, in 1682, was to Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Shrimpton.

In 1690 the deacons of the Old South Church met at Judge Sewall's house to arrange for documents and deeds relating to the church to be placed in a chest and deposited in Mr. Sergeant's house "it being of brick and convenient." Sewall also notes, after a hailstorm of April 20, 1695 that the hail broke 480 quarrels of glass in his new house and as many in that of Mr. Sergeant's.

During the governorship of the Earl of Bellomont, who arrived in 1698, Sergeant was prevailed upon to give up his home and occupy a house across the street. In the best chamber of the Sergeant house, as Sewall tells us, Governor Bellomont swore in the Judges on July 25, 1699 and treated the Council and other gentlemen with refreshments in November. Confirmation of Governor Bellomont's rental may be found in the Provincial records. The General Court

² *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, Fifth Series, VI:13. Hereafter reference to the Diary of Samuel Sewall will be indicated by dates in the text alone.

passed a resolve on March 23, 1700, that the rent was to be paid out of the treasury of the province, and on August 5 payment of £120.16.8 was allowed at the rate of £100 per annum for fourteen and a half months. Sergeant also received £20.3.0 for "dead rent of the house he hired of Wm. Gibbins for nine months at the rate of £25 per annum" and 25s.6d. for mending the windows of his own house.³

On November 14, 1700 Sewall notes that Madam Elizabeth Sergeant was entombed. Nearly a year later, October 9, 1701 he records, "Peter Sergeant Esqr. marries my Lady Mary Phips." The next day Sewall and other gentlemen visited the bride and groom, supping on roast beef, venison, pastry, cake and cheese. The Sergeants were living in the bride's house, the Governor Phips mansion at the corner of Salem and Charter Streets.

This marriage, Sergeant's third, lasted less than five years. Once again, Sewall's Diary comments, "My Dame Mary Phipps, Lady Sargeant, alias Phipps, dies about Sun-Rise" on January 20, 1706. A consolation visit on January 26 by the diarist adds to our knowledge of Sergeant's age:

I visit Mr. Sargeant, who takes my visit very kindly, tells me my Lady would have been 59 years old next March, and that he was two months older.

Sergeant's fourth and final marriage, to Mehetable Cooper, was duly recorded by Sewall on December 18 of that year. On December 23, 1706, he commented, "I visit Mr. Sargeant and his Bride; had Ale and Wine."

As these marriages suggest, Peter Sergeant was a prominent member of

Boston society, taking an active part in town and provincial affairs. As a town constable in 1674, he was an accuser of Governor Andros and was named as a Councillor under the second charter in 1692. He served on the council until 1703, when he was negatived by Governor Joseph Dudley, and again from 1707 to his death in 1714. The last six months of his life were marked by ill health, as Sewall's journal attests. On October 5, 1713 he was "confin'd to his house." By December several ministers were praying for him and on January 14, 1713/14 Sewall notes "Mr. Sargeant is so weak that he keeps his chamber."

On January 20, 1714, Sewall visited Sergeant who spoke passionately against Messrs. Dudley and Nowell's arbitration concerning his second wife's portion of her brother's estate. He also desired Sewall "to deal honestly as to a Stable he had built" for £60. "I have many times ask'd for the Writing I gave him, the Agreement," Sewall noted, "that I might take a Copy of it: But it cañot yet be found." The inventory taken of Sergeant's estate lists this as interest in stable and pasture land of Samuel Sewall near and adjoining land lately Peter Sergeant's, for term of years yet to come, as per agreement of Sewall and Sergeant.⁴

On February 12, 1714, "The Storm of Snow is so violent that Mr. Jno. Roberts gives notice Mr. Sargeant's Funeral will not be today." The next day Sewall also records that he was "Laid in his Tomb in the New Burying place [Granary] awhile before Sunset."

Sergeant's will ordered all his household goods to be delivered to his widow and that no appraisal be made of them, reserving from these a silk canopy bed in the tapestry chamber. His widow was

³ *General Court Records*, VII:64.

⁴ *Suffolk County Probate Records*, 18:279.

allowed to dwell in the house one year if she did not remarry, and the house was bequeathed to his nephew and executor, Thomas Sergeant, and other related heirs. In his absence, Thomas Palmer and William Hutchinson were to act as executors.⁵

In this capacity they placed the following advertisement in the *Boston News-Letter* for May 16-23, 1715:

A large fair Brick House formerly the Mansion House of Peter Sergeant, Esq. Deceased, with Out Houses and Gardens thereunto belonging, Together with a Lease of a Pasture, Coach-House and Stable near adjoining, for a term of years, is now to be sold by Thomas Palmer Esq^r and Mr. William Hutchinson, Executors in Trust for the said Estate.

At this time the General Court was in need of an official residence for the governor of the Province. Richard Coote, second Earl Bellomont, had been the first provincial governor to occupy the Province House. Phips, Stoughton and Dudley had been New Englanders and occupied their own mansions as governors. The appointment of Colonel Elisha Burgess in March 1714/15 presented the same situation which had confronted the Lords of Trades and the Provincial Assembly on Bellomont's arrival, the necessity of a governor's residence. Another appointment for Burgess delayed the matter for a year, until Samuel Shute was named in his place.

A committee under Captain Nathaniel Noyes was appointed to report on a residence for Governor Burgess. It recommended the purchase of the Sergeant house and the General Court voted £2,300 for the property. The house and land was conveyed to Jeremiah Allen, treasurer of the Province; Jeremiah Dummer, treasurer of Suffolk County;

⁵ *Ibid.*

Joseph Prout, treasurer of the town of Boston, and to their successors in the offices of treasurers forever. The transaction with numerous heirs in different parts of England was not actually completed until 1717, but a previous lease gave the Province early possession. The only other expenditure on the house in 1716 was £33 for the hangings of two rooms and two large looking glasses.⁶

When Governor Shute arrived in Boston on October 4, 1716, he was sixty-three years old. A man of military training, he was not well disposed to the opposition of the General Court over his salary, his rights as Governor and Commander in Chief of the militia, or the auditing of the Province accounts. Yet Cotton Mather spoke highly of the new governor, who "appears to have a singular Goodness of Temper, with a Disposition to do good reigning in him," adding "Our Governor was a person of Excellent Spirit, and I always thought he studied the welfare of the Countrey more than anyone person in it."⁷

Shute, on his arrival, stayed at Paul Dudley's house for a week, going to the Province House on October 13, 1716. In his speech to the General Court on November 7, 1716, he said:

I was also to recommend to you the Building of a House for the Governor; but I am prevented from it, by your having provided a very good One, for which I return you my Thanks.⁸

As an official residence, the Province House served many functions. On November 29, 1716, during Shute's first month in office, Sewall and other town fathers prevailed upon him not to attend

⁶ *Journal of The House of Representatives*, 1:16, 167.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

a public ball, but a year later on January 7, 1718, Sewall notes that the governor had a ball at his own house that lasted until three in the morning. The Council frequently met at the Province House and the judges also met there on a special occasion when Elisha Cooke was dismissed as Clerk of the Superior Court of Judicature for being an enemy of the King and Governor. As Cooke lived on the east side of Cooke's Court, off School Street (later Chapman Place), he and the governor must have cast many baleful glances from the rear windows of their houses.

As with the previous occupants of the house, Sewall was a frequent visitor. His last visit to Governor Shute on January 16, 1722 was to present a ring made by Captain Winslow, the Boston goldsmith, valued at 35 shillings and three pence and inscribed "Post tenebras Lucem." On this occasion Shute received him "in Mr. Sergeant's Counting Room." Governor Shute sailed for England on December 31, 1722. Within a week of his departure, the Lieutenant Governor, William Dummer, moved into the Province House and occupied it until Governor Burnet arrived in the summer of 1728.

During the last two years of Shute's residence, necessary repairs to the Province House were made under the supervision of Edward Winslow, Sheriff of Suffolk County. Sheriff Winslow continued to supervise the repairs made during the occupations of the house for nearly a quarter of a century, for which he was allowed £3 a year. The expenses for 1721 and 1722 amounted to £60 in depreciated money, while various small sums during Dummer's occupation were paid to Boston craftsmen.

With the appointment in 1727 of Governor William Burnet, the General

Court gave orders for extensive repairs (see article by Fiske Kimball). On April 8, 1720, Sewall had written that Governor Shute "saw two [swallows] out of his casement in the Turret this morning." In the 1727 alterations ordered by the General Court, the "Lantern or Cupola" on top of the house, having grown very weak, was to be well and sufficiently repaired and made strong with new doors and sash windows.

Burnet arrived with his family and numerous servants on July 13, 1728. As the Province House was not yet completed, the entourage occupied the residence of Elisha Cooke. He seems to have been occupying the Province House by October 22, 1728, when Sewall "Went to his Excellency's [Governor Burnet] and carry'd home his Excellency's Jew-all." His occupation was to be brief, however, as the *New England Weekly Journal* for September 8, 1729 reported:

Last Tuesday, Governor Burnet was taken ill at his house in Boston, of a feverish Distemper which threw him into a degree of coma and last night at 25 after 10 expired in his 42nd year.

The cost of the funeral was £1,800, paid by the Province. This included mourning clothes for the Governor's household, mourning rings and gloves for prominent officials and Boston residents who took part in the funeral, and wine for the Boston Regiment who discharged the guns of the Castle and Battery.

The inventory of Burnet's estate discloses objects of a man with wide interests. He was of a literary and scientific bent, publishing in 1724 an essay on Scriptural prophecies and contributing astronomical observations to the Royal Society. Thus, listed in his inventory were a magic lantern valued at £1, and a large telescope with micrometer at £7.10.0.

His interest in music is indicated by a large bass violin, two treble violins, a harpsicord, a clapsicord, double courtell, bassoon, and a large violin or tenor fiddle. His inventory also listed Southack's map, Boston Harbor, four plans of Boston, a prospect of New York, and a prospect of Boston. The plans and prospect views were those of William Burgis dedicated to Burnet. Being of Scottish descent, Burnet also had "9 Gouff" or golf clubs and an iron valued at 4s. each for a total of £2. As his property was sold at auction, it would be interesting to know who continued this game in Boston.⁹

The Province House was occupied in rapid succession by William Dummer in 1729 who was superseded by William Tailor. Jonathan Belcher was commissioned governor in January, 1730, but did not arrive from England until August of that year. Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1682, he met the future George I while in Europe, which led to his appointment as governor while in England as the colony's agent. Just before his return to his native Massachusetts, the General Court appropriated several hundred pounds for more repairs to the Province House.

Among the most interesting bills submitted for this work, were those of Robert Forrester, joiner. His numerous activities about the building from 1720 to 1740 record the changes made to the house. Certainly, the number of Forrester's bills suggests that the Province House provided him with an ample income. From other sources, however, his prices were often in contention. The repairs he made to Henry Dering's house and shop were questioned when Dering testified that Forrester was so nearsighted that

⁹ *Suffolk County Probate Records*, 27:341.

his nose was two or three inches from brads he was driving and that he had to have a boy helper finish the work. Despite this, Forrester asked 7s. 9d. a day, while others got 4s., although he finally bargained for 28s. a week. A similar case of his work on a ship's cabin resulted in an arbitration and Forrester was forced to deduct £2 from his bill. During Belcher's first year in the Province House, Forrester's work included:

putting up a large place in the yard for holding sea-coals, putting syde . . . to the dresser and shelves in the kitchine, making a large bottle rack to stand by the pump, cutting out a cart way in ye fence by ye coach-house and making a door for it, making a case for the large jack in ye great kitchine, making several small slips for chamber doors, boarding the hen-house, putting up several pieces of boards cut out in pigeon holes over the little house, mending two doors, on[e] by the little house the oyr by ye hen-house, putting on a plained board on each, mending cellar doors, nailling on hinges, making several large bolts & latches [?] of white walnut, making up one incloser in ye front cellar wt a door to it, making a door in the gang-way in the cellar, making a spout for the sink, putting on 3 or 4 locks, making a beacon-rack about 5 foot by 6 foot close up to the ceiling in ye kitchine

as well as many other large and small jobs about the property.¹⁰

The next year Forrester was paid for putting up a joist over the dresser to hang pewter covers on, taking down the bacon-rack and framing it smaller for the lesser kitchen, putting up more pigeon holes against the fence, and making general repairs to the cellars. His bill for work performed in 1733 included cleaning all

¹⁰ *Massachusetts Archives*, Vol. 244, folio 289. The many continuing bills for the work done to the Province House are all to be found on the microfilm copies of volumes 244 and 245 in the State Archives in the Statehouse, to which the student is directed for the following specific references in the text.

the lamp beacons and putting in wicks, filling them with oil, lighting and extinguishing them, as well as making a framed horse 12 feet long for liquors, cutting a door in the middle and making two doors, a step into the back kitchen, two doors in the upper front chamber, closet in the back chamber, taking down old gutters and making new ones like open boxes. He also put a new rack over the kitchen chimney for spits, a plank 10 feet long before the large dishes on the dresser, a door on the arch where the candles lay, doors with boards on each side of the arch in the wine cellar, shelves in the buttery cellar, as well as planing window shutters in two south chambers, making a new six-paneled gate, making a place for ashes with sliding doors in front and a place for sea coals in the cellar. During the same year, brickmason James Young was paid for building a stove on which to dress victuals and a large oven. His bill for materials, besides brick and mortar, included a half dozen tiles at 9 shillings and two dozen tiles at 12 shillings.

Extensive accounts for work on the Province House during Belcher's occupancy resulted from yearly expenditures for continual alterations and repairs. On June 30, 1734 the General Court ordered that the steps going up to the Province House be handsomely railed with an iron rail fence. The iron fence was made by Henry Tinsdale, while Nathaniel Emmes furnished two stone bases and set the iron posts and rails with lead. Edward Pell was paid for priming and painting 38 yards of iron banister, while John Gibb was paid for supplying a pearl color paint for the banisters and rails.

During the 1730s a number of bills for painting suggest the interior decoration

of Belcher's residence. In 1736 Edward Pell charged 22 shillings for priming and painting a mantelpiece. Thomas Gouge submitted a bill in 1737 for painting eleven yards of wainscot bright red and eight yards lead color, while James Young whitewashed five ceilings at 10 shillings each as well as two chambers, the Great Entry, two small rooms below, the back staircase and entry, and the kitchen staircase and entry. He also set 25 Holland tiles at 8 pence each. Among Young's work the next year was the removal of a stone chimney, taking down an iron chimney back, and the building of a new kitchen chimney of brick. In 1737 he charged 17 shillings for "whitewashing and spotting" the kitchen, while in 1738 and 1739 coloring and spotting the large kitchen cost as much as 26 shillings.

For the new kitchen chimney in 1736 Forrester made "a new mantelpiece about 10 or 11 foot long with a shelve and Cornish." He also provided a brass lock on the great parlor door and one for an upper chamber door, and fenced the yard about the coach house and kitchen garden. His bill in 1737 included building a place at the end of the house for broken bottles, a new front for the pantry cupboard, a new box for the pulley weight of the kitchen door, and two weather boards for the balcony door. More important, perhaps, for the subsequent appearance of the building, in July, 1737 he raised scaffolding "att ye north end of ye house, nailing spars to ye brick wall to clapboard on" and repeated the same process on the south end of the building.

The multitude of bills for large and small alterations to the Province House continued during the term of Belcher's successor, William Shirley. Shirley, an

Englishman who had practiced law in Boston for the previous seven years, was commissioned as Governor in May, 1741 and moved into the Province House the following summer. He found the house newly whitewashed as of March, 1741, John Kneeland whitening eight rooms and ceilings, six closets, coloring and spotting the kitchen, two large stairways and two small ones, and blackening the back of a chimney. In October Samuel Robinson submitted a bill for work done at the Province House, including "New Tacking the paper hanging above in the chamber & New papring one roome below stairs" with four rolls of painted paper supplied by Daniel Henchman.

Lady Shirley in July, 1741 had the kitchen chimney cleaned to prevent it smoking, and perhaps it was she who was most responsible for much of the new redecoration. In October Samuel Cutts painted the front lower room light blue, as well as a front chamber the same color, while the green chamber was decorated with more than six yards of vermilion, a back chamber and the counting room painted pearl color, a back lower room painted with 59 yards of wainscot color, and the iron rails and front fence painted white for a total cost of £128.

The Shirleys' redecoration was not limited to painting and papering. In August, 1741 the General Court received a committee report recommending a new kitchen floor and new floors for rooms adjoining the kitchen, new stairs into the chambers and the cellar, and that the top of the house and barn have something done to prevent their leaking. James Fosdick was paid for some slating and Samuel Cutts was paid for priming four pair of triangles made by James Simpson, carpenter, and for 11 yards of white

painting work on the top of the house. Ten years later, however, in the spring of 1751 a new roof was needed and the General Court appropriated £300 for this and other repairs, adding £100 the next year.

The renovations of the 1740s also effected several masonry alterations. In 1741 Robert Balls was paid for 2,200 bricks and workmen's board for five weeks, Michael Homer was paid for work on the hearths and chimneys. In February, 1743, Samuel Heath pulled down a wing of the chimney in the hall and built a stone chimney in the same. He also set 98 Dutch tiles and altered the flue of an oven. In another bill Michael Homer was paid for setting 24 Dutch tiles and for plastering and mending a chimney. Despite the change to sash windows in earlier renovations, some old casements must have survived in part of the building, as Joseph Wakefield furnished 13 quarrels of crown sash squares of glass and soldered them into a casement.

Shirley was one of the ablest of the colonial governors, and during his occupation of the Province House he planned military operations such as Louisburg in 1745, for which his term is famous. It was also here that Washington visited him in 1756 on his first visit to Boston. Absent in England and France from 1749 to 1753, the house was probably occupied by Spencer Phips, lieutenant governor and a native of Rowley who was nephew and heir to Sir William Phips. Spencer Phips administered the government again in 1756-1757 and died in office on April 4, 1757.

It was during Phips's occupancy that the General Court, in 1751, appropriated £400 to rebuild the coach house and

stable with brick. The history of this portion of the property must be traced back to the seventeenth century to clarify its relationship to the Province House. Samuel Sewall owned a pasture on the upper side of what was later Governor's Alley, now Province Street. From 1705 to 1708 he leased it with a stable to Mr. Nicholas Roberts. Sewall referred to it for a quarter of a century to the end of his life as "my Lord's stable." It had been occupied by the Earl of Bellomont and was the building built by Peter Sergeant referred to in Sewall's last visit with Sergeant. He charged £4 rent per year; in 1716 the Province paid Sewall £32 for the rent of the pasture for the previous eight years. From 1717 to 1724 Captain Jonathan Pollard paid £80 for eight years' "rent for my Lord's Stable."

In 1728 the Province paid £90 for rent of a coach house that Governor Shute had used for the six years previous at £15 per year. In 1731, £750 was appropriated by the General Court for the purchase of Sewall's tract of land near the Province House with the stables and buildings for the Governor's coach, chariot, horses and furniture to be deeded jointly to Jeremiah Allen, Province Treasurer, Samuel Checkley, County Treasurer, and Joseph Wadsworth, Town Treasurer. With the exception of a six-foot passageway which became Governor's Alley and a part of the pasture sold to Edward Bromfield in 1733 by Sewall's heirs, it was this property for which the General Court appropriated funds in 1751 for rebuilding in brick. In 1763 they voted to sell the west side of the Province stable yard and in 1765 sold William Dennie, who abutted the property on the west, a strip of land if he would build a stone and brick fence be-

tween the properties seven and a half feet high and one hundred and four feet long.¹¹

Thomas Pownal, who succeeded Shirley when Phips died in 1757, was born in Lincoln, England and educated at Cambridge University. He was Lieutenant Governor of New Jersey in 1755 and his term in Massachusetts was short, ending in 1760. He was followed by Sir Francis Bernard, whose term of office from 1760 to 1769 included the beginnings of the American Revolution. The Stamp Act and its repeal, the landing of British troops in 1768, and the affair of the sloop *Liberty* all sent various groups to the Province House to interview the Governor.

Bernard's daughter Julia, says, in her reminiscences, that the Province House was his official residence or government house. She says they had a great number of servants, both black and white. A public day each week, a dinner for gentlemen, and a drawing-room in the afternoon, when all persons of either sex who wished to pay their respects were introduced; various refreshments about and some cards. . . . "My father though not tall, had something dignified and distinguished in his appearance and manners. He dressed superbly on all occasions. My mother was a tall and a very fine woman. Her dresses were ornamented with gold and silver and ermine and fine American sable. My father had a pleasant house in Jamaica Plain, chiefly built by himself, and we generally moved to it in May."¹²

Thomas Hutchinson, who had acted as Lieutenant Governor after Pownal and Bernard, was commissioned Governor in November, 1770. He lived, however, in his own house in North

¹¹ *Journal of The House of Representatives*, 41:266.

¹² Annie H. Thwing, *The Crooked and Narrow Streets of the Town of Boston* (Boston, 1920), pp. 155-156.

Square. He was superseded by General Thomas Gage, who arrived in May, 1774. During the Siege of Boston, the Province House was occupied by General Gage and later by Lord Howe. It is this period of the house's occupation that Nathaniel Hawthorne sketched in the "Province House Legends" of his *Twice Told Tales*.

After the evacuation of Boston, the house was used by the state government, especially for the Secretary and Treasurer. In 1776 it was occupied by the Committee on Accounts. In 1778 the General Court ordered the Board of War to permit Peter Boyer and his family to occupy any part not used for public purposes, for which he paid rent. Boyer was the treasurer of the town of Boston and was connected with the Committee on Accounts. In 1779 Henry Gardner, State Treasurer, was authorized to occupy the house for an office and for his family, he paying a reasonable rent and reserving a room for the Committee to settle accounts of the State. He resided there until 1783, when Thomas Ivers became State Treasurer. During the occupancy of Alexander Hodgdon, from 1787 to 1792, it became necessary to accommodate other officers and the Council. In 1789 John Avery, Jr., State Secretary, had the room adjoining the Council Chamber; Hodgdon had the room under the Council Chamber, and town treasurer Peter Boyer had the room over the Council Chamber.

By a resolve of the General Court on February 16, 1795, Edward Hutchinson Robbins, Thomas Dawes and Charles Bulfinch were made a committee authorized to sell part of the Province House Estate to pay for the building of the new State House. This they did by selling to

Henry Jackson. He in turn sold to Stephen Higginson and Samuel G. Perkins. It was finally conveyed to Major James Swan, who had been a long time French prisoner, and in 1798 consisted of the brick stable 54 feet by 22 feet, one of wood 30 feet by 15 feet, and a chaise house 30 feet by 14 feet. The lot was valued at \$4,000 and fronted 60 feet on Rawson's Lane and 139 feet on Governor's Alley.¹⁸

Under the same resolve the Province House was sold to John Peck for \$4,000 and an agreement to pay an additional \$12,000. He faulted in the larger payment and reconveyed the property to the State for his original down payment in 1799. In 1798 the building was occupied by Peleg Coffin, State Treasurer. *The United States Directory* for that year described the building as a three-story brick dwelling, covering 2,442 square feet, with forty windows. Coffin occupied the house until 1801 when he was succeeded by Jonathan Jackson as Treasurer, who held the office until 1806. The house was advertised to be leased for a year in the *New England Chronicle* of July 7, 1806. In 1809 Joseph Bradley, who had kept a boarding house in Brattle Street in 1805-1806, was using the Province House for the same purpose and was succeeded by Thomas Adams. In that same year Benjamin Crombie, who had kept a tavern at the Sign of the Ship in Salem in 1803, also opened a boardinghouse in the Province House. *The Columbian Centinel* for June 29, 1811 advertised:

The friends of invention and economy are hereby notified that there has been erected in the Province House kept by Mr. Benjamin

¹⁸ *A Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston, Containing The . . . Direct Tax of 1798* (Boston, 1890), p. 90.

Crombie a new and usefull *Cooking Apparatus*, which combines two very essential objects, viz., economy in erecting when compared with the Rumford or any other plan heretofore known, and in the using an actual saving of more than half the fuel generally made use of, the same fire keeps a large oven hot for baking at the same time keeps 30 to 60 gallons of water boiling, &c., &c.

The July 27, 1811 issue of the same newspaper advertised, "*The Roxbury and Brookline Stage* will run as usual from *Brookline* to *Boston*. A Slate will be kept for the reception of Passengers names, at the Province House, No. 24 Marlboro Street in Boston. . . ."

In 1820 the boardinghouse was kept by R. Barnum and in 1825 it was taken by Temperance Cook and her sister Mercy. According to tradition, they were two masculine-looking old maids from Cape Cod. Their boarders were mostly skippers of vessels from that region and they were well looked after. "On cold wintry nights the landladies used to warm their beds with warming pans and then, in guileless simplicity, tuck them up for the night in good old fashioned style." The sisters were succeeded in 1835 by Thomas Wait, who kept the house known as the "Old Province House" as a drinking place which was noted for the

quality of its liquors. As described by Hawthorne in these years, he was testy and irritable and the subject of many practical jokes.

In 1851 the property was leased by Doctor J. P. Ordway and the interior torn out and made into "Ordway Hall." Entertainments given by the Ordway Brothers included such exponents of Negro minstrelsy as the Bryants, Pell, Trowbridge, Eph Horn, the Morris Brothers and others. On Tuesday evening October 25, 1864 a fire gutted the interior, leaving only the walls. The building was then turned into an office building.

In December, 1876 Mrs. Emily W. Appleton presented to the Massachusetts Historical Society the copper molded Indian weathervane which had surmounted the cupola of the Province House. It was said to have been made by Shem Drowne, who made the grasshopper on Faneuil Hall. The 48-pound Indian figure was made of two sheets of copper hammered into a mold, soldered lengthwise and had glass eyes. It had been in the possession of Doctor John Collins Warren, Mrs. Appleton's father, since the alterations of 1851 which completely altered the building for an amusement hall.

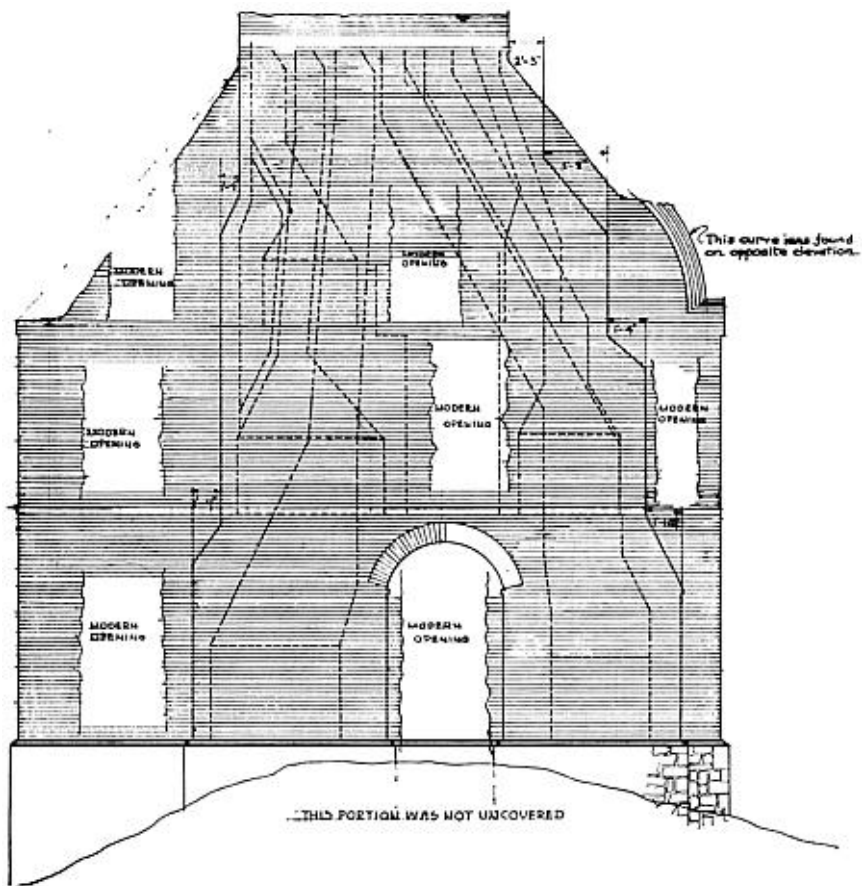


FIG. 4. THOMAS T. WATERMAN: MEASURED DRAWING OF THE NORTH WALL
Recorded 1922.

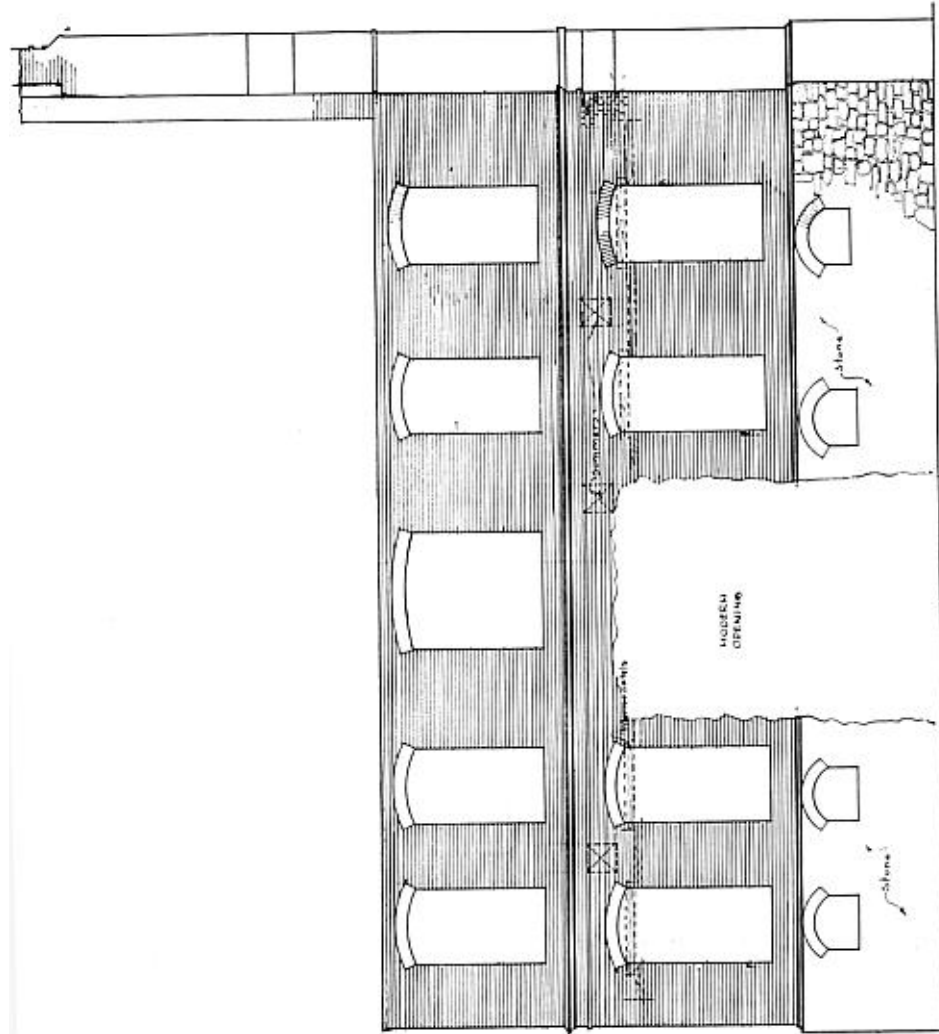


FIG. 5. THOMAS T. WATERMAN: MEASURED DRAWING OF THE EAST FRONT WALL
Recorded 1922.