

Cook-Oliver House
Salon, Massachusetts

HABS No. MASS-333

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Massachusetts

Historic American Buildings Survey
Frank Chouteau Brown, District Officer
76 Chestnut Street, Boston, Mass.

ADDENDUM TO
COOK-OLIVER HOUSE
14? Federal Street
Salem
Essex County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-333

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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Addressed to:
COOK-OLIVER HOUSE

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HABS No. MA-333

Location: 142 Federal Street, Salem, Essex County, Massachusetts.

Significance: One of four structures designed or remodeled by Samuel McIntire, architect and woodcarver, on Federal Street.

Description: Samuel Cook built a wood house with clapboard siding; its ends were built of brick. However, the corners are undecorated. Also at the ends were two interior chimneys. Cook's three story house is capped by a hip roof. Its five bay front facade has a central entrance portico. Emphasizing the entrance, the workmen applied swags and bellflower ornament to the wooden door surround. Similar ornament appears over the second floor windows and along the second floor belt. The cornice is trimmed by modillion blocks. The windows have six-over-six lights. Architect Samuel McIntire did the interior woodwork.

The "finest fence in Salem" encloses the Cook-Oliver dwelling. The four fence posts are topped by urns and decorated with bellflowers reminiscent of those around the entrance door. Samuel McIntire designed the Cook-Oliver fence.

On the property, there is also a garage outbuilding and a garden. The garden grew behind the house; it had fruit trees, hoxwood, flowers, and grapes.

In 1850, the Cooks added an ell to the west side of the house. This addition stood two stories tall. It housed the kitchen. Visually, the ell's style is of a Greek Revival nature.

History: Captain Samuel Cook purchased land with river frontage; on this property he built the house. Construction began ca. 1802-03. Cook's fortunes were tied to the sea; he suffered losses and could not pay for the house's completion. The workmen finished the building; apparently, they had faith in Cook's ability to regain solvency. Additional work was done to the house in 1808. There is no record that the workmen were paid for their labor. In 1812, Samuel Cook lost property at sea for the fourth time. This loss cost Salem insurers more than twenty thousand dollars.

Cook's daughter, Sarah, married Henry K. Oliver in 1825. Oliver came from Lawrence; there he is to have had an essential role in planning Lawrence parks, public buildings, and churches. His role in shaping the Lawrence landscape came through his actions as agent for the mills, a position Oliver maintained until 1859. In Salem, Oliver taught school, became a member of the State Board of Education, served as State Treasurer, and was elected mayor of Salem for the years 1876-1880. Oliver dabbled in music; he wrote "Federal Street" as well as several church hymns. Oliver and his family occupied the house until 1918.

Sources: The Colonial Architecture of Salem. Little Brown and Company, 1919.

Inventory Form, Massachusetts Historical Commission, September 1974.