

THE

ADAMS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Quincy, Massachusetts

ADAM 10

AUTHOR

Wilhelmina S. Harris

TITLE Furnishings Report of the
Old House

DATE	ISSUED TO
6/19/75	RAY BAKER
2/15/79	RAY BAKER

~~Adams National Historic Site
135 Adams Street, P. O. Box 531
Quincy, Massachusetts 02169~~

ADAM-10



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
LYRASIS Members and Sloan Foundation

<http://archive.org/details/furnishingsrepor10mass>

THIS IS THE FURNISHINGS
REPORT
OF THE OLD HOUSE
THE ADAMS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS

VOLUME X

PREPARED BY
WILHELMINA S. HARRIS
SUPERINTENDENT

THE ADAMS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

DATE: 1966 - 1974

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME X

	Page
Brooks Adams With His Family Relics	909 - 938
The Adamses as Diplomats	939 - 967
From Farmer to Gentry	967 - 998

Brooks Adams With His Family Relics was read for the 1971 Lecture Series at the Old House.

The Adamses as Diplomats was read for the 1972 Lecture Series at the Old House.

From Farmer to Gentry was read for the 1973 Lecture Series at the Old House.

PART I

BROOKS ADAMS WITH HIS FAMILY RELICS

Pages 909 - 938

Brooks Adams With His Family Relics was read for the 1971 Lecture Series at the Old House.



602

BROOKS ADAMS WITH HIS FAMILY RELICS

Mr. Brooks Adams was never more delightful than when he was at the Old House with his "precious" family relics. ¹ There was nothing too small or inconspicuous for him to be casual about. When friends came to see him, he generously shared his knowledge in whatever they showed an interest.

There was one particular occasion I wish could have been recorded. The son of an old and devoted friend, Mary Campbell Charlton of London, was stationed in Washington as Naval Attache to the English Ambassador, Sir Ronald Lindsay. The young man wrote that he would like to visit Mr. and Mrs. Adams as well as see the house on Elm Street where his mother as a young lady had visited Miss Elizabeth Adams, more intimately identified as "Cousin Lizzie". Mr. Adams was jubilant in anticipation of this visit. The young man turned out to be knowledgeable, charming, appreciative and actually affectionate to Mr. and Mrs. Adams. The result was that Mr. Adams outdid himself. United States history unfolded, family reminiscences and social divergences at the times when the young man's mother visited in Quincy were recalled with wit and charm. It was a day to remember.

However, the normal day was always exciting. Mr. Adams' appreciation of landscaping, architecture, handcrafts and every detail of home furnishings had interested him sufficiently for his study, observation and enjoyment throughout life.

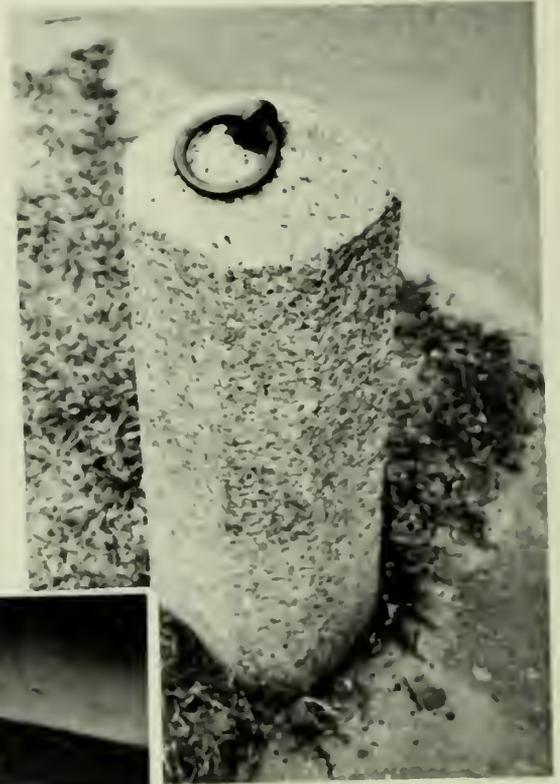
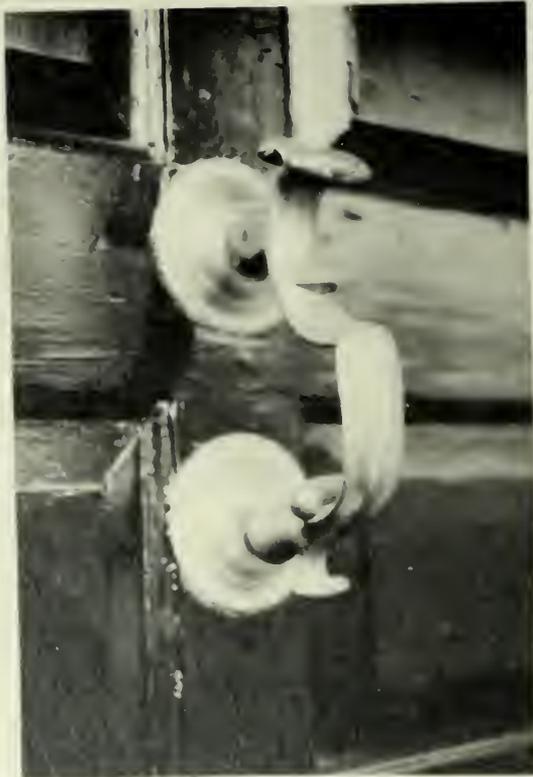
1. Illustration 602 -- Brooks Adams' portrait.



604



605



603

Upon the arrival of some invited guests, Mr. Adams might walk to the gate to greet them. If the guests showed a shade of interest in the surroundings, Mr. Adams would begin to recall his family life at the Old House. Yes, the six hitching posts² were still there as a reminder of the days of horse and carriage travel, "before the decline of civilization", he was apt to remark. Then the gates³ -- they were his own creation, but the design of the thumb latch⁴ was a copy of Abigail Adams' choice of design used for the thumb latch of the 1731 door.

Slowly passing by the historic lilac trees, Mr. Adams would reach the front door. Attention was called to the old S-shaped brass knocker⁵ attached to the door by a strong bolt going entirely through the door and fastened securely by a nut on the inside. The bottom plate upon which it banged was attached in the same way. There were several reasons to suppose that Daniel King of Philadelphia made this 18th century knocker. Mr. Adams said there was no craftsman in Boston at that period who designed and made S-shaped door knockers. Also, this type of installation had been initiated by King to prevent vandals from stealing door knockers to obtain the scarce and valuable brass. The third and last reason he attributed the knocker to Daniel King was that John Adams was in Philadelphia as Vice President and as President at just the time the King S-shaped knockers came into use. The thought of

-
2. Illustration 603 -- Hitching Post.
 3. Illustration 604 -- Gate for the 1731 entrance.
 4. Illustration 605 -- Gate Thumb Latch.
 5. Illustration 606 -- Door Knocker.

608



607

Abigail and home could have motivated the purchase of this handsome gift. At any rate, whether Mr. Adams was correct or not, this knocker is handsome and has been appreciated by generation after generation of the family.

6

The position of the knocker on the door has always evoked comment. It is not in the center of the door. When asked the reason, Mr. Adams would whimsically reply, "Because John Adams wanted it that way; it was his door and his knocker." But in a more thoughtful mood he would call attention to the panel being stronger at that point, thus making it more practical installed at this position.

Mr. Adams admired the 18th century ornamented brass thumb latch on the front door. This was Boston-made, he thought, since there were such craftsmen as John Clark, James Davis and William C. Hunneman who were known by his family. There was one very interesting characteristic of the front door; there was no keyhole. When I inquired about this, Mr. Adams explained that perhaps Leonard Vassall, the original builder, being from the West Indies had a household staff large enough that doors were always opened for him. Then Mr. Adams remarked that here in Quincy, the inside of carriages of that period had no handles. A lady or a gentleman would have a frontman who sat beside the coachman and it was his duty to dismount and open and close the carriage door after the occupant was in or out. At the Old House since the time of John Adams, ⁷ the door had always been opened by the butler or a parlor maid. As the door

6. Illustration 607 -- Knocker and thumb latch.

7. Illustration 608 -- The door in full view.



609



610



611



612



613



614

opened Mr. Adams was likely to say that Presidents of the United States, Presidents of Harvard, Governors of Massachusetts, educators, authors, foreign dignitaries, politicians and relatives by the dozen had crossed this threshold.

8

Inside the vestibule and to the left Mr. Adams would pause to look at the Santo Domingo mahogany Panelled Room -- the really fine room in the house.

9

Inside the Panelled Room there was John Adams' Chippendale sofa where he sat for the Stuart portrait in 1823-1824, the Queen Anne chairs and Abigail's small Chippendale sofa,

10

11

so rich in their association with his forbears. Most of all, however, this room had memories of his parents.

12

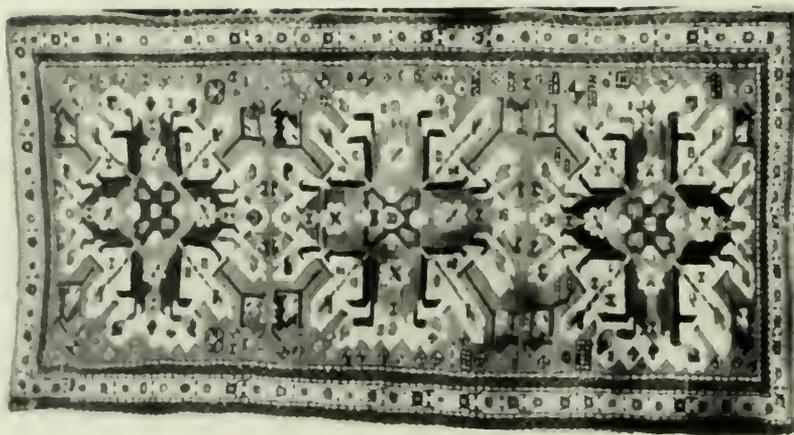
There was the brass tray with two candle snuffers, a match box and holder for one candle; as a child it had always intrigued him, but as an adult it astounded him to think how little light his forbears had available. There

13

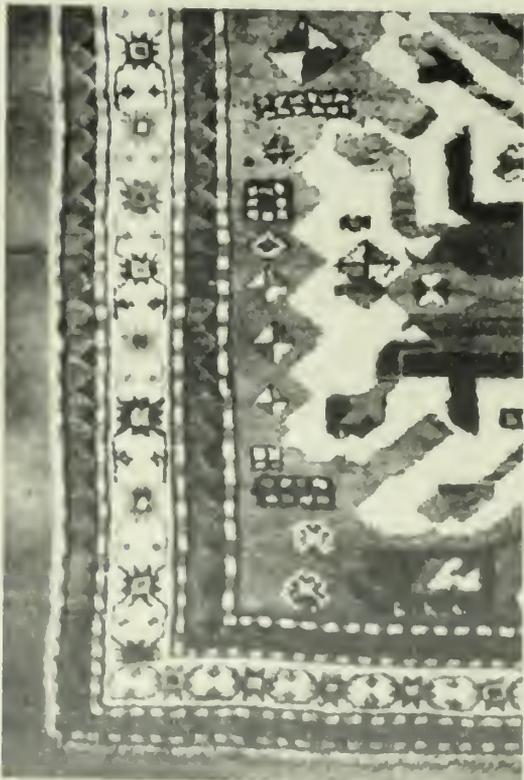
was the Victorian chair and footstool where his father sat during his last summers in Quincy. He could see in memory his mother kneeling beside her husband completely irreconcilable that he was slipping from this life. He could recall his brothers John and Charles making their daily visits as reassurance of family solidarity and affection. He remembered that in that room he had assured his parents that the life they had established would be carried on. This room more than all others expressed his own attachment to his family.

-
- 8. Illustration 609 -- A general view of the Panelled Room.
 - 9. Illustration 610 -- John Adams' Chippendale Sofa.
 - 10. Illustration 611 -- One of the Queen Anne Chairs.
 - 11. Illustration 612 -- Abigail's small Chippendale Sofa.
 - 12. Illustration 613 -- Candle holder.
 - 13. Illustration 614 -- Charles Francis Adams' Victorian Chair.

618



615



616

14

The two Caucasian Kazak rugs were ones he had purchased for his mother in the early 1880's. He thought that rug making was more than handicraft -- it was design, color and a motif expressing the weaver's native culture. These Kazak rugs had the Greek Cross, the blue for the sky, the white for the sun, the crab border, the reciprocal sawtooth and the barberpole borders. Each motif was significant in the life of the Tcherkess tribe who wove this type of rug. To distinguish from other Kazak rugs, this design was called the Palace or Sunburst. Mrs. Henry Adams had been at the auction in Washington when these rugs were purchased. His sister-in-law appreciated oriental rugs. He was happy that his mother enjoyed them for several years. Mr. Adams thought the rugs just right for the room.

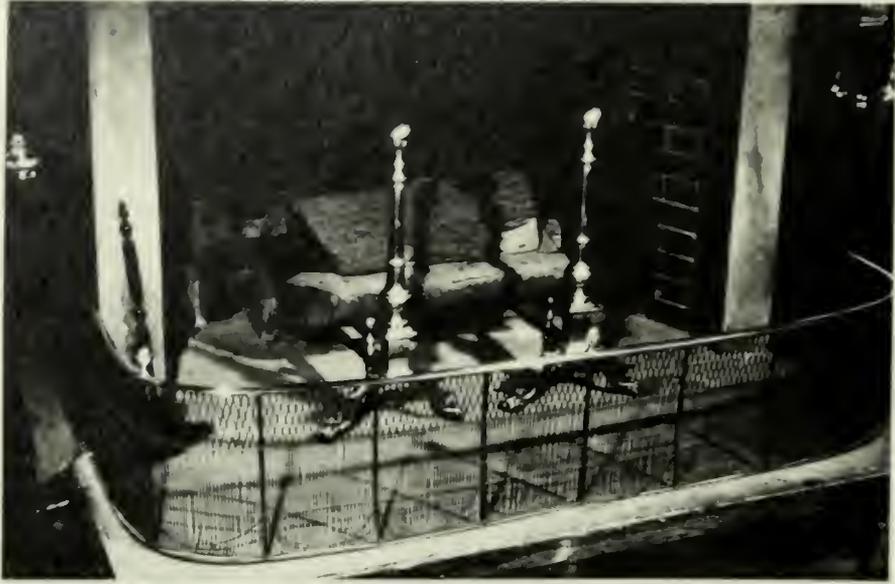
17

Mr. Adams was not really eloquent about the Panelled Room unless it was cold enough for a fire. At that time the light and shadows against the rich mahogany walls gave the room a definite medieval atmosphere. The oriental rugs glowed from the sheen of the panelling. The room seemed to breathe the story of the arts and customs of an age of civilization long past.

18

Mr. Adams was apt to call attention to interesting details. Take the fireplace: there was the wire fender -- simple wire running up and down about twelve inches in height and finished off by a narrow brass border

-
- 14. Illustration 615 -- A general view of the Caucasian Rugs.
 - 15. Illustration 616 -- A view of the Greek Cross of the Rug.
 - 16. Illustration 617 -- Detailed view of the Rug.
 - 17. Illustration 618 -- General view of the Panelled Room.
 - 18. Illustration 619 -- View of the Fireplace. see next page.



619



620

around the top and bottom. The only decoration was three urn-shaped brass ornaments. The measurements of this fender exactly fitted the reddish sandstone fire jambs. This prompted the speculation that the fender was made for this particular fireplace. Of added importance to Mr. Adams was that it was Abigail's.

The earliest andirons - or firedogs were made of cast iron. They were functional, but bulky. They were probably made by blacksmiths who were the first craftsmen to come to America. With the use of wrought iron the shaft was frequently decorated with a small brass finial. In mid 1700, there was still another transition to more decorative andirons. As wealth concentrated about Boston and the eastern shores of the United States, Queen Anne and Chippendale furniture came into use. The fireplace with a glowing fire was already recognized for its aesthetic contribution to the home, but more elegant fireplace appurtenances were essential for the Queen Anne and Chippendale furniture. Brass was especially suited for this decorative purpose. Brass had warmth, simplicity and adaptability to all types of fine furnishings.

19

This pair of andirons were the most beautiful Mr. Adams had ever seen. They measure twenty four inches in height. He thought the sandstone fireplace enhanced their beauty by providing a perfect setting.

When Mr. Adams found that I was unfamiliar with the process of making andirons, he eagerly assumed his best role -- that of teacher. First of all,

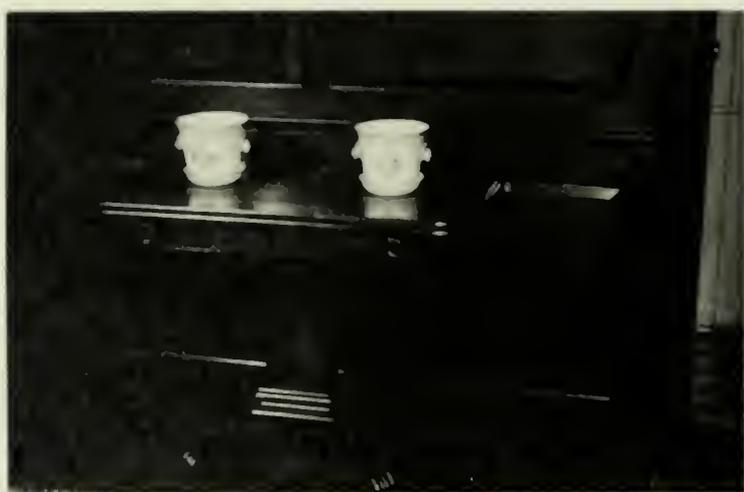
19. Illustration 620 -- Brass Andirons.

he liked to call them "fire dogs" instead of andirons--from the middle English term, aundiren. He explained that the design was the first step in making an andiron. The type of furnishing of the room and the size of the fireplace determined the design. The design was drawn by a cabinet-maker. Then a block of wood was carved by hand until the design was reproduced. Carvings were made for the shaft, the plinth, the cabriole legs and the feet--most often snake or ball and claw. With the design and pattern of the wood satisfactorily completed, each part of the pattern was split into two half lengthwise pieces. Next the inside of each piece was gouged out and scraped smooth by hand. Hot brass metal was poured into the moulds to cool and harden into the shape of the pattern. Finally, both hardened brass forms were removed from the wooden frame and brazed together before polishing. The shaft was moulded with all its graceful curves and sometimes with the finial. A square plinth was always moulded separately, but a round plinth was usually moulded with the shaft. The legs and feet were moulded in one piece. An iron rod held all of the parts together. The steel log irons were made strong enough to hold huge logs of wood--just the type of wood so easy to come by in Quincy in the late eighteenth century. Each pair of andirons had a brass wood stop of the same shape as the shaft but reduced in size. The wood stop was attached to the log iron from three to four inches away from the shaft. The wood stop had, of course, two purposes--to hold the wood away from the decorative shaft and to keep the wood just where the smoke could more easily be drawn up the chimney.

Mr. Adams continued his analysis by saying that andirons prior to 1790



621



622



623

might have had feet like a penny--that is, flat feet. He therefore attributed these andirons to John Clark, a craftsman who worked on*Newbury Street in Boston about 1790 and who had a brass foundry. There is no mark to verify his assumptions, but there are photographs of andirons made by Clark which are very similar to these. Every fine fireplace had jam hooks for the tongs

20

and shovels. The hook had a carved plate as did the thumb latch of the front door. The knobs of the tong and shovel are very like the finials of the andirons. Brass, he said, was used for a multitude of objects--for example, the decoration of the face of fine clocks, the hands of most clocks, keys for brass door locks, candlesticks, escutcheons for cabinet work, and indeed countless other of the decorative arts. He said that his knowledge of brass had come from reading and studying many old inventories at a time when he began to buy fireplace appurtenances for his own personal use.

In this room he also had reminders of England when he was a lad of twelve and his father was Minister to the Court of St. James's. His mother purchased many ornaments for her use in their house on Portland Place. Examples of her ornaments were the two Meissen cachepots on the empire table which were especially pleasing to him for they brought back happy memories of his parents at the height of their public service. So beautifully painted were the cartouches that Mr. Adams was reminded of an 18th century

22

painting. Upon leaving the Panelled Room, Mr. Adams would always stand

20. Illustration 621 -- Tongs and shovel.

21. Illustration 622 -- Empire Table and Cachepots.

22. Illustration 623 -- Cartouches.

* Newbury Street later became Washington Street, Boston.



625



626



624



627

23

in the door and comment upon the beauty of the old stairway. In those days I was too young and insecure to ask him why he considered it to be so fine. "Just look at it! Just look, it is as beautiful as I ever saw."

After looking at this stairway with regularity for more than fifty years, I turn to architects to answer the question I failed to pose to Mr. Adams years ago. The reply is that the carving on the top skirt board²⁴ and the carving on the three balusters of each tread give dignity and style not expected in such a small country house. As compared with the stairway of the 1800 section,²⁵ the carving of these balusters suggest more affluence and planning in 1731 than when the addition was built some 69 years later.

With all of this professional help, however, I am sure that his family pride, national historical association and a tangible identification with the past for more than a century and a quarter all added to the architectural beauty of this stairway for Mr. Adams, at least.

26

Then on into the middle room or Dining Room. Looking across the room is an engraving of the death of Lord Chatham²⁷ or William Pitt as he was known when as an English statesman he came into power about 1757. Mr. Adams, of course, was well versed on the French and Indian War and William Pitt was a favorite subject of his. This engraving shows him--then Earl of Chatham--

-
23. Illustration 624 -- View of the Stairway on the West Side.
 24. Illustration 625 -- Stairway on East Side--especially the carving on the second floor skirt board.
 25. Illustration 626 -- 1801 Stairway.
 26. Illustration 627 -- General View of the Dining Room.
 27. Illustration 628 -- Engraving of Lord Chatham. See next page.



628



629

630



as he collapsed (1778) in the House of Lords after making a speech begging Parliament to repeal not only the Stamp Act but to allay the fears and resentments of America. Some years previously inspired by the successes of the English during the French and Indian War, Fort Pitt in Pennsylvania had been named in honor of this famous statesman. Later a city grew up around the fort and it was called Pittsburg in honor of William Pitt. With emotion in his voice, Mr. Adams would remark: "Chatham, a dedicated Englishman--understanding of the United States, and John Quincy Adams, a great American, both stricken while pleading for great causes in their respective houses of government."

28

There was Abigail's English Chippendale mirror, large to her, small to her descendants--impeccable taste and just right to hang between the windows of this small room, he thought.

29

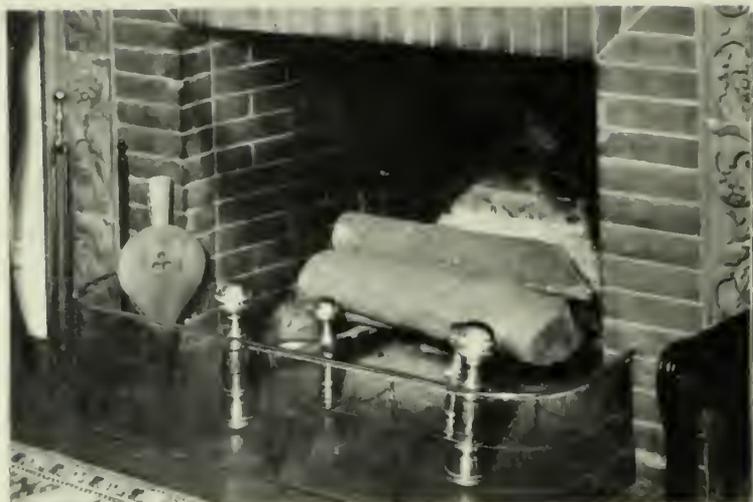
This picture shows two old favorites of Mr. Adams. The painting of George Washington, for which President Washington sat on two different occasions, was greatly admired by Mr. Adams before and after each meal. Some phase of Washington's career was recalled each time he observed the portrait. Then his eyes would fall upon the sideboard. That was Mrs. Adams' contribution to the house for it belonged to her parents. It was treasured by members of her family for many years. Then, the distinguished career of Admiral Davis would be recalled by Mr. Adams. Usually, Mr. Adams would conclude his remarks

28. Illustration 629 -- Abigail's English Chippendale Mirror.

29. Illustration 630 -- George Washington's Portrait and Sideboard.



631



632



633

with: "It is as fine as any piece in the house and completes the furniture the dining room needed."

On the table beside the sideboard were always kept several pieces of Chinese Export china--"Abigail's Chinese Lowestoft porcelain" he always called it. Upon the most important family occasions he used this handsome "Lowestoft," but never for casual guests. His theory was that it was worth the risk of breakage to inspire family pride, but not for "show."³⁰

A comparison of fireplace equipment was always a lively topic for discussion. The Dining Room had a different type of fireplace appurtenances to the Panelled Room. The fireplace fender³¹ was made of wire with brass border but the andirons were different. He thought Hunneman, a noted brass craftsman, must have made the andirons though they are unsigned. These andirons³² were more English in feeling than those in the Panelled Room. The curve to the side suggested the possibility of the use of grate for coal then being used in England. These andirons did not have the ball and claw feet but had a round column shaft for support. A curved brass bar connected the outside column with a second column of reduced scale. These two columns combined with the steel leg of the log iron provided support for the wood. These particular andirons, he thought, were about 1800 and were very similar to others made and signed by Hunneman, a brass craftsman in Boston for more than 30 years. Still, everything reflected perfect craftsmanship!

30. Illustration 631 -- Abigail's Chinese Export.

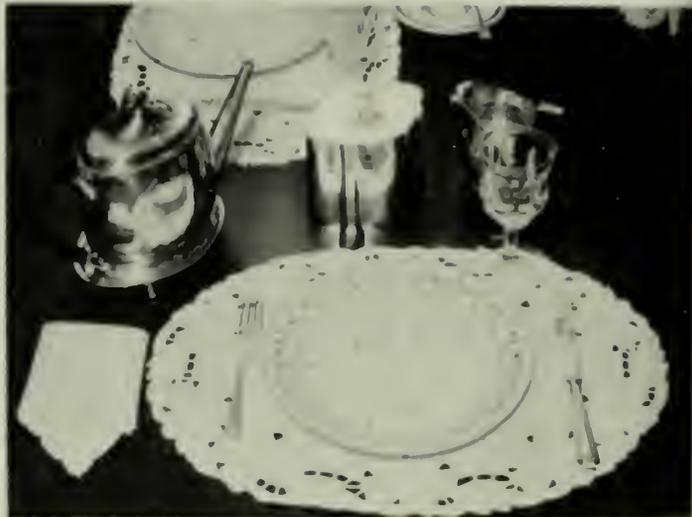
31. Illustration 632 -- Fireplace Fender.

32. Illustration 633 -- Detail of Andiron.

635



636



637



638

33

Mr. Adams admired the hearth rug. It is Turkish with the Greek meander border. A modification of the "tree of life" supports each end of the center panel. John Adams and Abigail Adams loved Turkish rugs. Mr. Adams allowed that "old Turkish rugs are impossible to buy." As that was a problem for him in 1920, the Turkish rugs in this house must be of extraordinary value in 1971.

34

This portrait of John Adams by William Williams had association for Mr. Adams for several reasons. When Mr. Adams thought of the Old House becoming an historical memorial to his family, he wrote various members of the family asking them to return to the Old House such objects as they could spare. He was happy that his memorial project had the approval of his brother Henry who promptly responded by sending this portrait painted by William Williams about 1798 and later engraved by Houston. It was the first object to be returned and it was from Henry which added significance for Mr. Adams. The portrait was also unusual because it is painted on wood, making it a rare item. Last of all, John Adams appeared reserved and confident in the painting just as Mr. Brooks Adams thought a President of the United States should appear.

The table set, as you see it, was the traditional setting Mr. Adams wished
 35 to remember. There were Louisa Catherine Adams' plates 36 which he always

-
- 33. Illustration 634 --Turkish Rug.
 - 34. Illustration 635 --John Adams by William Williams.
 - 35. Illustration 636 --Traditional table setting.
 - 36. Illustration 637 --Place setting.



638



639

called Dresden, but which are probably French. The cornflower decoration was originated by Marie Antoinette but used extensively in Dresden. However, the Bourbon sprig and the irregularly drawn mark on the back indicates French origin. At any rate, his grandfather had taken his bride to Prussia in 1797 and these plates were brought home by them in 1801. He felt privileged to use them.

The sugar bowl, tea caddie and tea pot were family silver. The white cup and saucer with gold band was his mother's. Mr. Adams made the tea at the table using the copper alcohol stove. ³⁷ Tea making was quite a ceremony, and when made looked to be just slightly colored water. One guest had the courage to comment upon the strength of the tea. Dr. Paul Thorndike, a noted surgeon and a close friend, once said: "This is the weakest tea I ever saw, try again." sending his cup back. Mr. Adams' reply was: "You operate upon your patients as you think best and they take it or leave it. The tea is the way I think it should be made." What Dr. Thorndike did not know was that this special tea direct from Mr. J. P. Morgan's plantation in China looked weak, but actually was delicious. The doctor did not give it a try. ³⁸ Lest you imagine this scene over the tea was the end of their friendship, let me add, a couple of years later Mr. Adams was to have an operation. When he was asked who the surgeon would be, he answered-- "Paul Thorndike, of course."

37. Illustration 638 -- Copper alcohol stove placed at Mr. Adams' right.

38. Illustration 639 -- General View of the Table.



640



641

39

In the Butler's Pantry you see the dessert service set up in preparation for luncheon just as it was prepared for use each luncheon and dinner. Notice the Waterford finger bowl with a doily underneath, also the fork on the left and the dessert spoon on the right of the finger bowl. This afforded a choice of a spoon or fork to use for dessert. A teaspoon was never used for dessert. The plate with the handsome rose in the center, the bamboo inner border with four roses and gilt spearhead outer border is Chinese Export and was Abigail Adams' so called "Rose Lowestoft".

40

Mr. Adams always enjoyed the East Long Hall. When the north and south doors were opened there was a delightful freshness which he said gave life to his "wilting spirits". No place in the world, he thought, offered sweeter perfume of the blossoms of the apple, pear and cherry trees, the pleasant smell of the newly mowed hay and the view of various shades of green on the ancient trees.

Natural scenery was not all which gave him pleasure as he stood in the Long

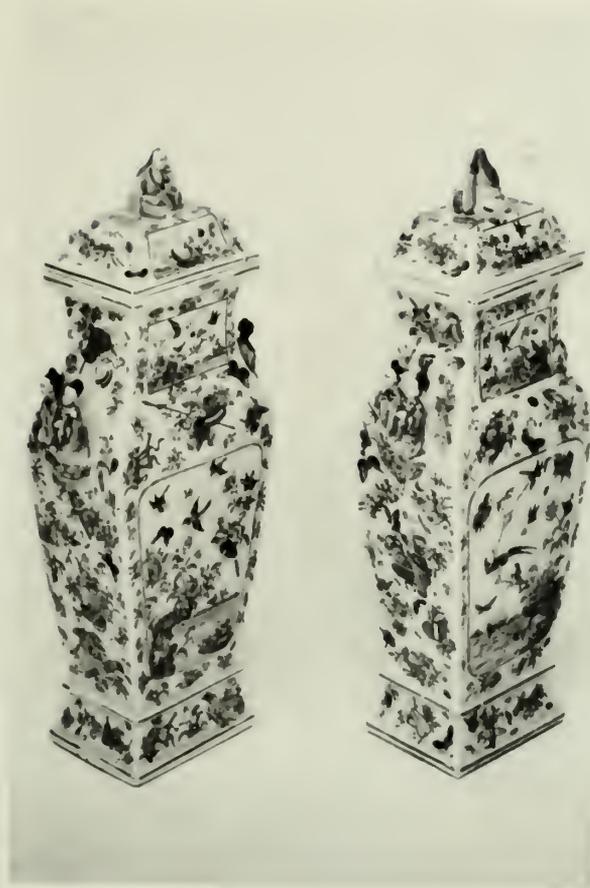
41

Hall. The marble top table recalled John Adams at the Hague--the delicate

42

Chinese Export vases evoked memories of his parents at the Court of St. James's almost a century after John Adams established the Embassy at the Hague. To all present with Mr. Adams every nook and corner seemed to be full of American history. It was a natural setting for him.

-
39. Illustration 640 -- Butler's Pantry.
 40. Illustration 641 -- View of East Hallway.
 41. Illustration 642 -- Marble Top Table. (Ills. 642, 643 are on next page.)
 42. Illustration 643 -- Chinese Export vases.



643



642



645



646



644

The Long Room, Mr. Adams thought, was dark and damp with the piazza on the east side. ⁴³ He always spoke of this room as the "tomb", but such a title from anyone else would evoke his rage. There is a description in the family papers of Mary Adams' wedding to Dr. Henry Quincy which took place in this room. Mr. Adams had comments also. He said when his parents discussed wedding plans, his father was reluctant to have a big wedding for fear of showing bad taste as Dr. Quincy's father had just died. Mrs. Charles Francis Adams said she would properly recognize the joining of the two really important families regardless of the danger of showing bad taste. Mrs. Adams ordered from the South rubber plants in number--enough to go around the edge of the front piazza. The east piazza always had tubs of palms but she wished orange trees with real oranges interspersed--to digress, one orange tree was still living at the time of Mr. Adams' death in 1927. His father was distressed at the expense of the passion flowers used in such quantity to hang from the ceiling in front of the two long mirrors in the room. ^{44,45}

There were also ferns, smilax, roses and every available blooming flower. An altar was made of green branches and placed where the sofa now stands. The minister's back was to the Copley portrait of John Quincy Adams; the bride and groom faced the portrait. Members of the family all appeared in "appropriate finery". His sister's wedding gown was made at home. The dressmaker called attention to the plain, flat appearance of the blouse. It needed something, she said. Mrs. Adams thought it would be attractive, especially as she said: "As long as there is cotton batting for sale, no

43. Illustration 644 -- General View of the Long Room.

44. Illustration 645 -- South Mirror.

45. Illustration 646 -- North Mirror.



647



648

daughter of mine will be flat-chested on her wedding day." Just recalling this would make Mr. Adams laugh heartily.

All portraits were important, but Mr. Adams was more eloquent when he looked at the unfinished portrait of General Warren by Copley.⁴⁶ He repeatedly remarked that the finished one at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts was not half so fine. I am happy to say that recent authorities on Copley have agreed with Mr. Adams' judgment.

When Mr. Adams criticized his brother Henry, it was worthy of note. Henry, like the Old House, was beyond reproach! This portrait of Governor Nathaniel Gorham by Peale⁴⁷ recalled what Mr. Adams thought was a myth invented by his brother. Henry wrote and said that his mother's side of his family had bad taste and lacked culture. Mr. Adams took exception to this. When guests asked who this portrait was, Mr. Adams would elaborate that Governor Gorham was his mother's grandfather--the same relationship to his generation as was John Adams. Then he added with his own historical logic that Governor Gorham was President of the Continental Congress and really superceded⁴⁸ Washington as the first President of the United States. Were any of the family present he would speak in additional praise of his mother's heritage. Even so, it did not take for when a descendant gave this painting to the Old House about fifteen years ago, she said: "The Old House can have the Peale

46. Illustration 647 -- General Warren by Copley.

47. Illustration 648 -- Nathaniel Gorham by Peale.

48. Mr. Adams always said an imaginative lawyer must always be able to vindicate "that 2+2 = 5".



619

portrait of that pompous man, whoever he may be!"

49

This portrait of Alice Mason gave Mr. Adams something to reflect upon. His family tradition was that it was little John Quincy who was born in 1689. The date written on the portrait was 1670. Research was done by Miss Louisa Dresser in 1934 and she found the portrait to be of Alice Mason aged two. It is regrettable that Mr. Adams never knew this for he was puzzled by the two conflicting dates.

50

Mr. Adams admired the rim locks, as he called them, on the doors. Rim locks, he explained, were attached to the side of the door rather than within the room. Pride in craftsmanship was evident in the intricate carving of the keys. There are a dozen of these fine locks in the house. The design of the door in the 1800 section of the house he called "cruciform" and, of course, the hinges he called H L. Architects question the descriptive word "cruciform", but since this is a recall of Mr. Adams in his family house, I wish to use his designation, right or wrong.

53

Mr. Adams especially liked this japanned William and Mary highboy which had been purchased from Mrs. Tufts of Weymouth. It was a very old chest--around 1740, he thought. He had not seen another with such beautiful

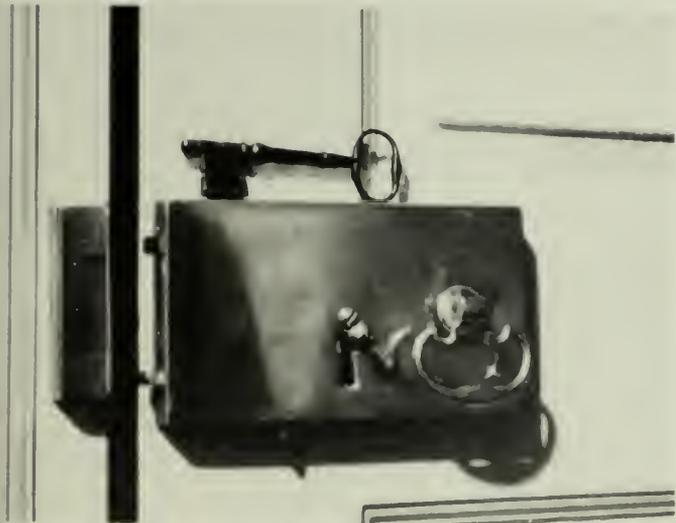
-
49. Illustration 649 -- Portrait of Alice Mason.
 50. Illustration 650 -- Rim Lock. (Ills. 650 - 653 on next page.)
 51. Illustration 651 -- Keys.
 52. Illustration 652 -- Southwest Door to the Long Room.
 53. Illustration 653 -- Japanned William and Mary Highboy.



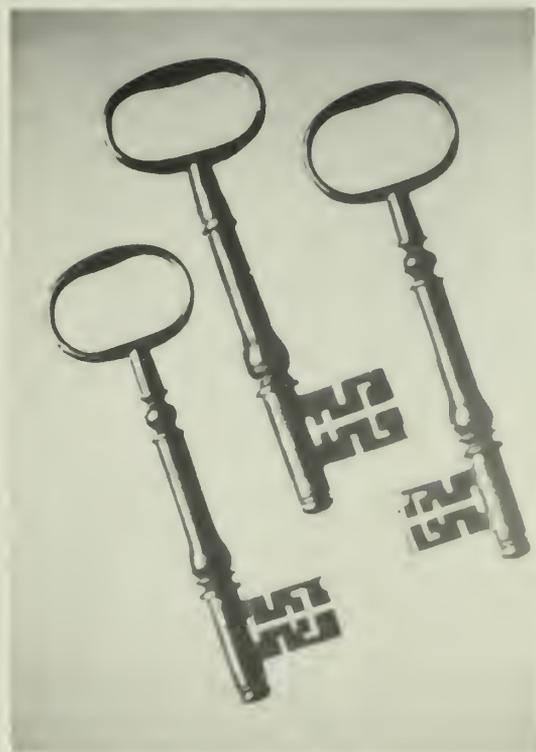
653



652



650



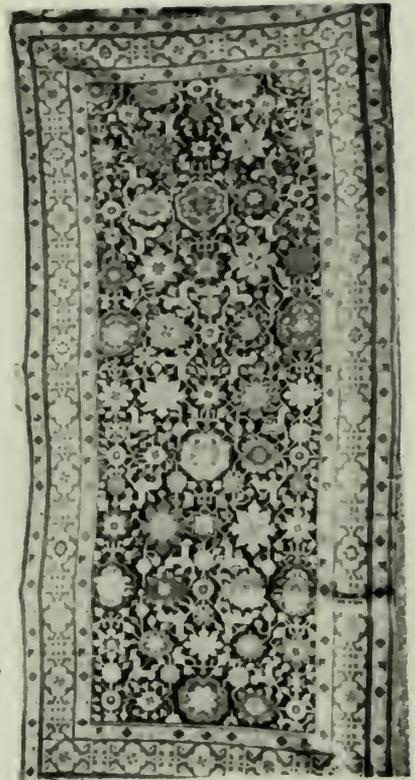
651

64



655

656



japanned work done in Boston. Note how it was assembled with the stretcher out of place. Mr. Adams was always amused by it, but never wished to correct the error.

54

This large room was used by the gentlemen of the family. Mr. Adams did not consider it as a symbol of a haunting past, but as the place where the minds of his forbears had produced ageless theories and recorded ideas he was proud to claim as his heritage.

55

The secretary or escritoire, as he called it, recalled his great-grandfather John Adams in Paris sacrificing the joys of Abigail and the children in Braintree to find the way for the recognition of our new nation. He could imagine John Adams sitting at this desk preparing the briefs for important negotiations in Paris.

56

Of special interest to Mr. Adams was this Caucasian, Kuba rug. The center has a geometric design and small flowers scattered about showing Persian influence. There are octagon-petaled rosettes with serrated edges, but predominantly the field is dark blue and the decorations are largely white. The

57

wide border is known as the Holbein. It came by this name because in Holbein's paintings a similar design was found in the background. The two narrow borders consist of eight-pointed stars. It is a classical type rug of the

-
- 54. Illustration 654 -- General View of the Study.
 - 55. Illustration 655 -- Secretary or Escritoire.
 - 56. Illustration 656 -- View of Kuba Rug.
 - 57. Illustration 657 -- Detail of Kuba Rug.



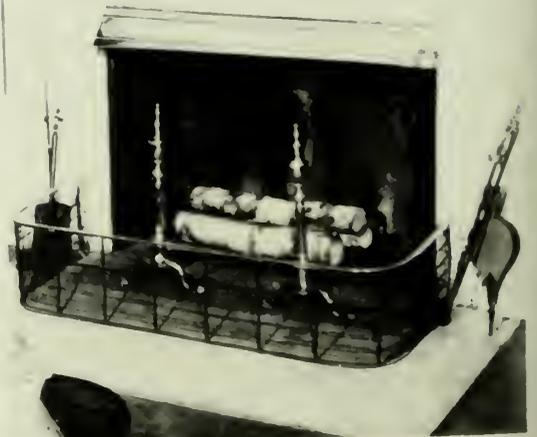
658



659-A



659-B



mid eighteenth century. He thought it fine enough to have been made in mid seventeenth century.

Mr. Adams identified with this rug very closely. It was regularly in the Old House, but he moved it to Boston each winter where he could see and enjoy it. At his death it was at his Boston house and his niece, Mrs. Robert Homans, who inherited the house, gave the rug to me. Upon the advice of Mr. Mustaphor Avigdor, the noted rug authority, that it was too scarce and too fine a rug to walk upon, my sons and I returned it to the Old House. To me it reflected the sensitive, impeccable taste of Mr. Adams. In addition, I hope that the visitors will enjoy its rare beauty for years to come.

In all of Mr. Adams' travels in England he never found anything to even compare with this Queen Anne highboy. There are several finials missing, but to try to restore them would be presumptuous, indeed. As guardians of the collection, we are here to preserve all Adams' atmosphere. The sheen of the walnut and the proportions of the highboy make it grow in beauty with each advancing year. Mr. Adams never allowed the brass to be polished lest it might detract from the sheen of the old wood.

58

The marble around the fireplace gives this room a special point of interest. Abigail had the marble cut in Philadelphia and sent to Quincy in a trunk. She wrote Mr. Bates the carpenter to have the size of the fireplace conform to the amount of marble she had sent. These brass andirons are different in

58. Illustration 658 -- Queen Anne Highboy.

59. Illustration 659 -- Fireplace. photograph A and B.



660



(61)

one respect from those downstairs--they have steeple type finials which were very popular in New York at that period. Abigail could also have purchased them for her new fireplace.

60

Another rug Mr. Adams prized is this Turkish Ghiordes. Because of his special study of the near east he was especially interested in rugs from this area. It was woven in the section of Turkey nearest to Asia. It is not exactly a prayer rug in that it has no mirab or prayer niche, but it has many features of a prayer rug. Let us begin in the center panel ⁶¹ for it interested Mr. Adams very much. The red center is surrounded by a green hook border. This rich red was obtained by boiling the roots of the madder plant or by boiling dried insects which lived on oak trees. Either method produced the bright red color which remained brilliant and yet did no harm to the fabric. The Moslem custom of performing ablutions in only running water before entering the mosque was carried out by pouring water from the Umbrechts. Notice the two yellow and two white umbrechts which were used for this purpose. The black colors were made by soaking iron filings in vinegar and pomegranite rind. This soon destroyed the fabric of course and in this rug the black and brown have been rewoven.

The inner green triangle is bordered by white floral rosettes. Serrated leaves alternating yellow and brown decorate the floral rosettes. The

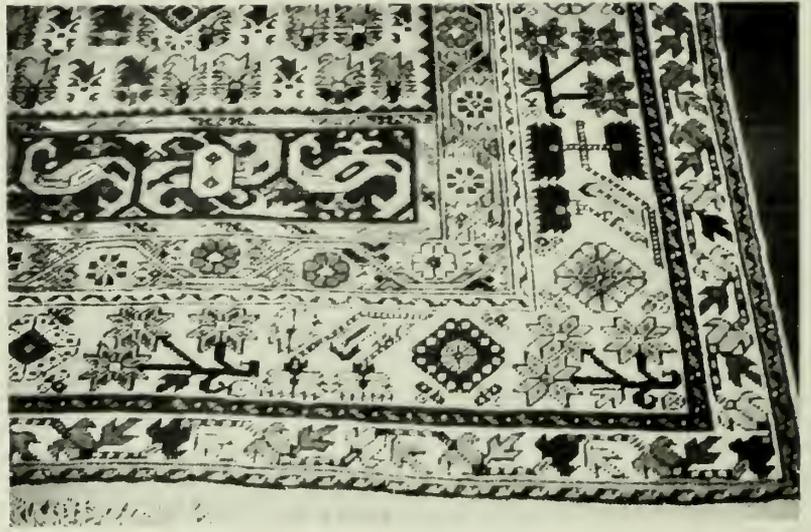
60. Illustration 660 -- Ghiordes Rug.

61. Illustration 661 -- Center of Ghiordes Rug.

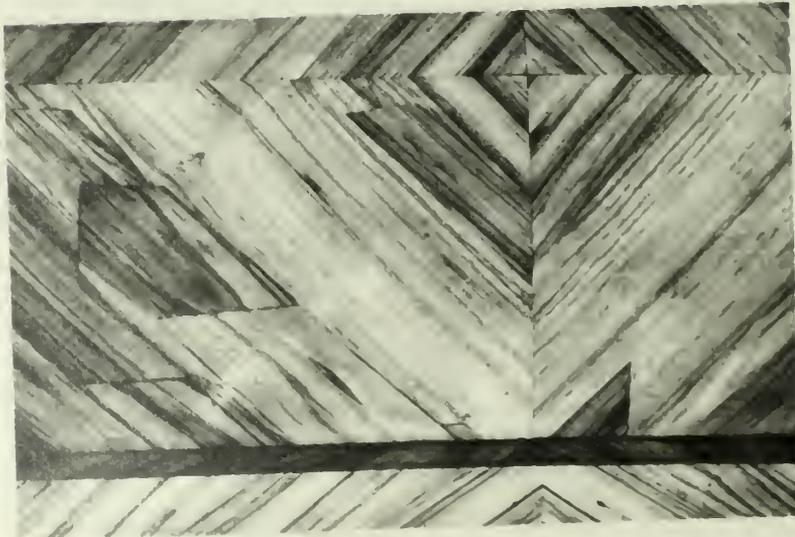


663

662



664



inner most square of red completes the center panel. The borders are inter-
 62
 esting. The two narrow borders are mir borders, called after the village
 where this type border originated. The inner border has medallions of differ-
 ent colors with an undulating vine. The outer border has leaves with the undulat-
 ing vine. The wide border has medallions of different colors. It has the
 brown stem and three-petaled stylized flowers occurring over and over. This
 motif was used in many of the ancient Ghiordes rugs. There are examples of
 this historic border in the Turkish rugs in the Corcoran Gallery in Washington
 and in the Metropolitan. So far as is known, the rug was in the house about
 1804. The effect of this rug is always one of cheer and exuberance. It is
 in such excellent condition today that I predict it will afford visitors the
 opportunity to enjoy it for another hundred years or so.

63

The English tulipwood desk (1765) was a favorite of Mr. Adams. As a small
 boy he had recognized his mother's special admiration for this beautiful
 chest. Upon those rare occasions when his mother punished him, he would
 slip into the room and pick off bits of the wood veneer of the desk to, so
 to speak, get even with her. In his later years ⁶⁴ he engaged the best of
 cabinetmakers to try to restore his vandalism, but without complete success.
 In 1911, he had extensive work done on the desk and it was shown at a well
 known antique store on Boylston Street. He wrote his brother Henry that he
 was offered \$3800 for it at that time. Today, 60 years later, of course,

62. Illustration 662 -- Border of the Ghiordes Rug.

63. Illustration 663 -- English Tulipwood Chest.

64. Illustration 664 -- Detail of the Tulipwood Desk.



665



666



668



667

the amount would be really dazzling. Mr. Adams always said it came from John Adams' mother's family--the Boylstons.

65

For a number of years, Mr. Henry Adams kept an apartment in Paris. This toilet set was used there until he became ill and the Paris apartment was dismantled. Since this room was used by Henry Adams as a young man, his brother Brooks placed the French toilet set here. Note the small can. Hot water was brought from the kitchen for the occupant to use in preparation for breakfast and dinner. This student lamp was also used by Mr. Henry Adams. Brooks Adams enjoyed standing in front of Henry's North American Reviews and turning the pages recalling those years when both he and his brothers were so busy with important questions before America.

Mr. Adams as a small child had a nurse named Rebecca. His early memory of the Old House was being on the Third Floor in Rebecca's room watching the fire. There is no hearth as you see, and his mother forbid a fire for fear of burning down the house. Even so, Rebecca built a fire to please her young charge who found it exciting. He did not care for the furniture as he grew older, but while Rebecca was occupying the room, he said that he thought it beautiful. This room had tender childhood memories for him.

69

Mr. Adams' introduction to the Guest Room was simple: "Just settle in,

65. Illustration 665 -- Henry's French Toilet Set.

66. Illustration 666 -- Henry's Student Lamp and North American Reviews.

67. Illustration 667 -- Rebecca's Fireplace.

68. Illustration 668 -- Rebecca's Bureau.

69. Illustration 669 -- General View of the Guest Room. See next page.

669



672



671



670

but don't disturb anything for it is as it was when my mother was alive."

This meant that you kept all personal things in the drawers and the chairs in the same positions as you found them. I am glad that he did not warn me of the danger of breaking the toilet set, ⁷⁰ because in my desire to be careful I might have dropped the pitcher or bowl. Though this set was used constantly, not one piece is broken. It is Minton stoneware with the bleeding heart decoration and was brought from England by his mother in 1868. It is, so to speak, a part of the "diplomatic" furnishings at Portland Place.

71

Another item Mr. Adams prized was John Adams' mahogany washstand with the Chinese export bowl and pitcher. The design of the bowl and pitcher resembles the Imari pattern. Besides being John Adams' and, therefore, historically significant, Mr. Adams thought the bowl and pitcher handsome.

72

The Italian mirror over the fireplace was sent to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Francis Adams by their son-in-law, Charles Kuhn, in memory of his wife, Louisa. Mr. Adams spoke of his sister, Lou, as the brightest, most charming member of the family. When she died her family considered it their greatest loss from which none of them ever became reconciled. A proud possession of Mr. Adams' was the photograph in color which he always carefully kept from light lest it fade. ⁷³

-
- 70. Illustration 670 -- Toilet Set.
 - 71. Illustration 671 -- John Adams' washstand.
 - 72. Illustration 672 -- Fireplace in Guest Room.
 - 73. This photograph (1971) is kept in the cabinet in the Memorial Room-- away from the light.



673



674

74

On each side of the mirror are small pictures which John Quincy Adams bought in Berlin in 1799 as a reminder of his diplomatic assignment to Prussia. These pictures were painted by Cipriani and engraved by Bartolozzi. Mr. Adams considered it a mark of his grandfather's good taste to have bought so many engravings by Bartolozzi.

75

The Sadler tiles around the fireplace in this room as well as in the Presidents' Bedroom were brought from England by John Quincy Adams in 1801 at the time of his return from Prussia. Mr. Adams said that he attributed these andirons to John Molineux, one of the important craftsmen in Boston around 1800. Molineux's andirons were most often designed with a square plinth and had turns around the shaft similar to those of Hunneman--indeed, Molineux had the same address as Hunneman. The cabriole legs of Molineux's andirons always had snake feet. There are examples of his andirons at Essex Institute and the Museum of Fine Arts. The pierced brass fender is an early one and has been attributed to Abigail Brooks Adams. The warming pan seems to be standard but of an earlier period than the andirons--about 1750 and probably made by Richard Collier⁷⁶ of Boston and Providence. The design of the etching is similar to that of the warming pan in the Presidents' Bedroom.

On the second floor landing, Mr. Adams always pointed to the Benjamin Willard longcase clock.⁷⁷ Of special note was the brass face. Brass, he

74. Shown in Illustration 672 -- They hang on each side of the Italian mirror.

75. Illustration 673 -- Fireplace showing fender, andirons and warming pan.

76. Collier had a workshop in Boston and Providence in 1750.

77. Illustration 674 -- Willard Clock.



675

677



678

78

said, was always decorative when used with rich mahogany. On each side of the mahogany hood are fluted bases for brass ball finials. Mr. Adams always had his clocks wound by a clock maker. Every Friday a gentleman from the old firm, Pettingils, remembered by some of you, came to wind the clocks. When he reached the Benjamin Willard, he always knocked on the study door to ask if Mr. Adams wished to supervise the winding of the "great clock", as he called it. Of all the luxuries Mr. Adams had, the winding of the clock by a professional seemed to me the most amazing. I know now that he was wise, for there is a special touch needed in clock winding.

79

There are not many rooms which could excel the beauty of the Presidents' Bedroom. Green trees and the garden still obscure the busy street. It is truly a magnificent room. Everything has interesting family associations--
 above the mantelpiece are two engravings^{80,81} of Silesia brought back from Prussia by John Quincy Adams in 1801. Mr. Adams rated John Quincy Adams' Letters on Silesia as a fine description of the Giant Mountain Range. He had never read anything of the kind that was better. As he read the letters describing the muddy roads and the bogging down of the carriage which carried his ailing grandmother to a health resort, he would shake his head saying, "And Abigail thought her daughter-in-law too frail for her son." These pictures were brought home to the family by John Quincy Adams and give a clear picture of the Giant Mountain Range referred to in the Letters

78. Illustration 675 -- Face of the Willard Clock.

79. Illustration 676 -- General View of the Presidents' Bedroom.

80. Illustration 677 -- Engravings of Silesia.

81. Illustration 678 -- Engravings of Silesia. Detailed View.



679



680

on Silesia. The artist was Reinhart, a close friend of President John Quincy Adams, and the engraver was Berger, also a personal friend. The engravings have always had a personal story treasured by the family.

82

The tiles are by Sadler of Liverpool and were a present to Abigail from her son John Quincy Adams.

83

The date of the Adams' first occupancy of the Old House, written in the back of the fireplace, was a stroke of genius, Mr. Adams thought--not buried in a deposit box in some bank with other important papers, but available at a glance.

This brass fireplace set is different from those used in the Panelled Room, Long Room, Study and Guest Room. The bedrooms were equipped with andirons having shorter shafts. James Davis of Boston made attractive fireplace appurtenances beginning in 1803 which suited the usual bedroom fireplaces. Mr. Adams thought his mother purchased several sets in 1837-1838 for her house on Presidents' Lane; when she moved back to the Old House he thought she brought the andirons now in this room, the Brooks Adams Bedroom, the maids' Sewing Room and the Library. The Davis andirons had the round plinth supporting a large, turned ball with a smaller ball for a finial. He thought that Davis must also have made the andirons in his own bedroom, the Sewing Room and the Library. Each had the snake feet common to those made by Davis.

82. Illustration 679 -- Fireplace.

83. Illustration 680 -- Date in Fireplace.



681

682



84

A warming pan was a highly regarded household object during the 17th century, 18th and until the mid-19th century. Mr. Adams said that in mid 1700, Richard Collier was the best known craftsman for making warming pans and he attributed this one to him. The lid is beautifully chased and there are six small holes for the smoke. The inscription around it reads: "Abigail Adams, 23rd October, 1764." The band around the top edge holds the lid firmly in place. This pan is copper as was the usual custom but the lid is brass. The handle is long so as to make it possible to move it around the full length of a bed. Mr. Adams kept Abigail's warming pan hung on the north wall of the second floor passageway at the head of the stairs. The Adams Memorial Society placed it at the fireplace which is more traditional. Mr. Adams thought it so decorative he wanted it in a more conspicuous place.

85

The wing chair was closely associated with Mrs. Charles Francis Adams. Mr. Adams enjoyed his mother's reminiscences of England when her grandchildren came to see her. He recalled her detailed description of King Edward's wedding, of her account of a formal dinner when to her delight she was escorted into the dining room on the arm of Gladstone and of the family friendship with Jenny Lind. She recalled how delightful it was when Jenny Lind informally dropped in for tea, and after tea what an experience to have the famous singer sit down at the piano in their drawing room and sing such songs as "A Lass With a Delicate Air". All of these and many other

84. Illustration 681 -- Warming Pan.

85. Illustration 682 -- Wing Chair.



633



631

experiences Mr. Adams recalled his mother telling her guests as she sat in this wing chair. Mrs. Adams always wore a plain white cap in her bedroom, but her son said that when she prepared to go downstairs, it was exchanged for a lace cap as seen in this fine portrait by Hunt.

86

Most any time of the day Mr. Adams could be found standing in the second floor North Passageway in front of Abigail's kitchen cupboard which he had promoted to the use of a bookcase. He would read a few pages of his old familiar books. I so often explained to his staff that he was visiting with his literary friends. The laundress Nora Schofield, who had a great talent for observation, would often remark, "He is into those books again--trying to learn--he never gives up."

87

The Adams Memorial Society was generous in giving to the people of the United States so many intrinsically and historically valuable personal things, but there is one article I have missed. In the Long Room closet was kept an ouija board inscribed with the alphabet and other characters with a metal pointer resting on casters which would spell out messages when the finger tips were resting lightly upon the board. It was the subject of heated controversy and discussion between Mr. and Mrs. Brooks Adams. For many years Mrs. Adams and her brother-in-law Henry had manipulated this ouija board. Mr. Henry Adams had passed on but Mrs. Brooks Adams remembered

86. Illustration 683 -- Portrait by Hunt

87. Illustration 684 -- North Passageway.



685



686

how successfully she and her brother-in-law had obtained information from this, to quote Mr. Brooks Adams, "stupid board". Mrs. Adams explained to me that it was something which responded when the participants had superlative concentration. Mr. Adams simply could not believe that his wife and his brother could have found interesting such an activity. The ouija board incident gives a picture of the very light moments at the Old House!

88

No day was complete without going to the Stone Library. Invariably Mr. Adams would stop at the mantelpiece to look again at the "household gods",⁸⁹ as they were known in the family. They are small bronze busts of Demosthenes and Cicero, Socrates and Plato, and Homer and Virgil which, President John Quincy Adams recorded in 1832, were kept on the mantle in the Study. Henry inherited them from their father but later returned them to the Old House.

I have omitted other pieces of sculpture in the house. Briefly, let me say that when Mr. Adams began discussion of any form of art in the Old House, he became inspired to go beyond. He might order his "motor", as he called the automobile, to go into Boston to the Public Gardens to see the equestrian statue of Washington and on to see other old favorites. Once he became so interested that he went to Rome to see once more the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius installed in the square on Capitoline Hill. I remember the day well for I never ceased to be amazed at his accuracy in finding his old

88. Illustration 685 -- Stone Library.

89. Illustration 686 -- Fireplace.

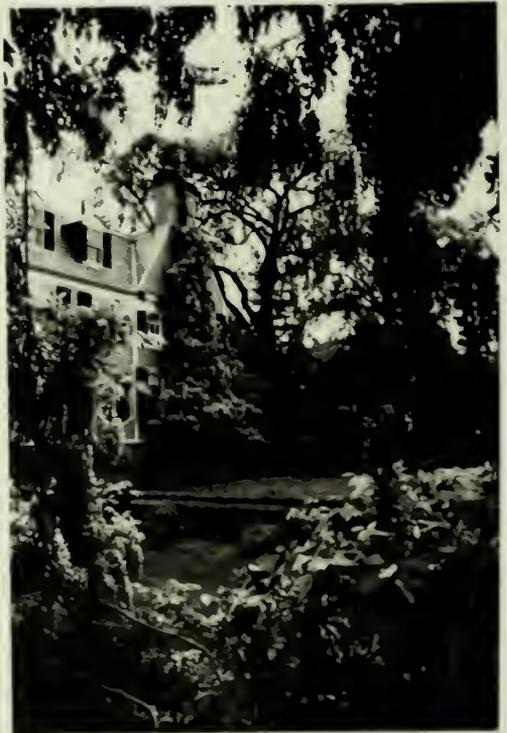


687

688



689



favorites. After looking at Marcus Aurelius, he suggested that we go into the museum on the opposite side of Capitol Square and only a few feet away to see the Dying Gaul. Without any help from the guard he walked straight to the room where it was. The masterpiece "appeared" to be just waiting for him.

Mr. Adams had a great many other interests. His enjoyment of birds might astound many informed individuals--perhaps not all birds, but such as were visitors to the orchard and garden. These birds became a part of his family and were observed by him each morning. He was glad he had the Lilacs⁹⁰ in which they might nest and he enjoyed seeing them seek shelter in the Rhodo-⁹¹dendron. He wondered what more delightful place any birds could want than⁹² the Wisteria in the spring, so full of blossom and later so dense with foliage. One summer the 1731 entrance was closed because a robin had built her nest in the Dutchman's Pipe Vine at the corner of the front piazza and Mr. Adams was afraid to disturb her lest the eggs not be kept properly attended. The westerly gate was locked and the easterly gate left open to suggest a change in the entrance!! This event was important enough to deserve his personal attention.

All of his life Mr. Adams had found interest and pleasure in expanding his mind. Whatever was said to be "beautiful", he made an honest effort to find out "why". Is it surprising then that he frequently remarked, "My only success in life is my appreciation of things which are beautiful."

90. Illustration 687 -- Lilacs.

91. Illustration 688 -- Rhododendrons.

92. Illustration 689 -- Wisteria.

PART II

THE ADAMSES AS DIPLOMATS

Pages 939 - 967

The Adamses as Diplomats was read for the 1972 Lecture Series at the Old House.



690

THE ADAMSES AS DIPLOMATS

From about 1636 when Henry Adams settled in the part of Massachusetts Bay known as "Mount Wollaston", each generation contributed to the welfare of the citizens seeking a new life. More than a century and a quarter passed before the progress of the colonists called for talents to negotiate for independence from Great Britain and for recognition among all the nations of the world. When the time came, it was to John Adams, the son of a sturdy New England farmer and cordwainer, that the Continental Congress entrusted this task of negotiating an honorable peace. From his colleagues John Adams had won the title of having "the clearest head and the firmest heart of any man in Congress." He served as Commissioner to France, Minister to Holland and was our first Minister to the Court of Saint James's.

From Abigail Adams' knee her son John Quincy Adams learned his first lessons in preparation for a life of public service. In one way or another he served his country for 54 years -- in foreign service as Minister of Holland, Prussia, Russia and England. About 31 years previously his father had served in the same capacity in Holland and England. John Quincy Adams signed the Treaty of Ghent in 1814, an awesome assignment as it was a reminder of his father's signing of the 1783 Treaty of Peace.

When the Civil War came, history repeated itself for the third time. It appears to actually have become the custom in time of war to approach the

1. Illustration 690 -- Birthplaces painted by Frankenstein in 1849. .



691

Adams family for a representative for these delicate negotiations. After the close of the hostilities, it was to this same family that the Arbitrations of the Alabama Claims were assigned to Charles Francis Adams who served as an arbitrator with distinction. John Adams, John Quincy Adams and Charles Francis Adams, each remembered in history as able diplomats in time of crisis.

While at the Continental Congress in 1777, John Adams asked for and received a leave of absence to visit his family. He wrote Mr. Gerry:

"You must expect for the future to find in me situated as I am by a blissful fireside, surrounded by a wife and a parcel of ² chattering boys and girls, only a dealer in small politics."

He continued:

"all my involvements as a member of Congress for four years had not been sufficient to pay a laboring man upon my farm."

By this, one would suppose that he expected to return to his law practice.

He had hardly settled down when word came that he was to replace Silas Deanne as Commissioner in France with Arthur Lee and Dr. Franklin. The frigate Boston was ordered made ready for the journey to France.

During the several weeks required to put the frigate in order, Abigail Adams gathered together travel equipment for her husband John and her son John Quincy Adams. The crossing took six weeks and each passenger provided most of his requirements. Abigail started with cambric for making shirts. The material was \$45 per yard and difficult to obtain at that price. She also

2. Illustration 691 -- View of the town of Quincy by Eliza S. Quincy.



692

693



included 2 mattresses, bolsters and quilts for father and son. In the food line she assembled:

- 14 dozen eggs
- 1 barrel of apples to prevent scurvey
- 1 fat sheep for slaughter
- 6 live chickens to supply eggs or to eat
- an unspecified amount of fresh meat
- 5 bushels of corn
- 2 bottles of mustard
- 30 weights of brown sugar
- 2 weights of tobacco
- 2 dozen clay pipes
- 1 bushel of Indian corn meal for Johnny cakes and hasty pudding
- 1 case of rum

For his work she included:

- 3 reams of good rag paper (still in excellent shape at Adams Papers)
- 1 diary book
- 25 quill pens
- 1 large bottle of home-made ink

She also included:

- 30 bottles of port wine
- 3 dozen bottles of madeira

There were other things, but these serve to give the requirements of travel in 1778. Finally John Adams and John Quincy Adams were ready for the journey.

3

A portrait of John Adams which hangs in the Dining Room of the Old House (1974) was painted on wood by William Williams. It gives you some idea of his appearance when he went abroad to serve as Peace Commissioner even though the portrait was painted several years later. Before sailing on February 13, 1778, John Adams gave his wife Abigail a little remembrance -- a locket, the picture of which is made with human hair. It is on view at the Old House.

3. Illustration 692 -- Portrait of John Adams painted about 1798.

4. Illustration 693 -- Abigail's locket.

After a long, rough voyage, John Adams reached Paris only to find many complications. The appointment by the Continental Congress to serve on the Commission with Arthur Lee and Benjamin Franklin was of short duration and John Adams returned to Braintree within a year. He was not at home longer than four months when Congress elected him to return to France to await a favorable time to negotiate a peace treaty and a treaty of commerce with Great Britain.

Waiting for a favorable time to negotiate for peace meant a certain degree of idleness. Not being a lazy man, this was a hard role for John Adams and he cast his mind about for some constructive way to serve his country, especially regarding its association with other European countries. He decided to go to Holland as Amsterdam was the financial center of Europe. It offered the added advantage of being an international listening post. With some difficulty John Adams obtained passports for himself and his two sons to travel to Holland. Upon arrival in Rotterdam, a kindly Dutchman offered him a carriage in which he and the boys could see the city. Then they went on to Delft, The Hague and Leyden. John Adams was charmed with the Dutch people, their canal boats -- so pleasing to his boys -- and the natural scenery which they all thought was extraordinarily lovely. In due course he and his sons continued on to Amsterdam. He had no letters of introduction, so was invited to few of the formal banquets given for distinguished visitors to Amsterdam. But, there was a language to learn, newspapers to be read and a nation of people to study. Finding the people affable, he set out to tell them about America, about the meetings of the American Philosophical Society, the





694

American Academy of Arts and Sciences, which he had proposed to be organized, and about the Massachusetts Constitution which he helped to draft and which provided free public education. He also submitted several installments of the Massachusetts Constitution for print in the Dutch newspapers. All of this was for the purpose of counteracting the British propaganda of panic in America and of showing the American people as confident and intellectually alive. John Adams was ever conscious of representing his fellow Americans as a determined people enjoying a well-ordered way of life.

In a short time John Adams gained a limited knowledge or, at least, an appreciation of the Dutch arts. He purchased three cachepots which are of superb quality as the factory markings on them indicate. They are now and have been for at least ninety years in the Long Room on the table next to the southwest door.

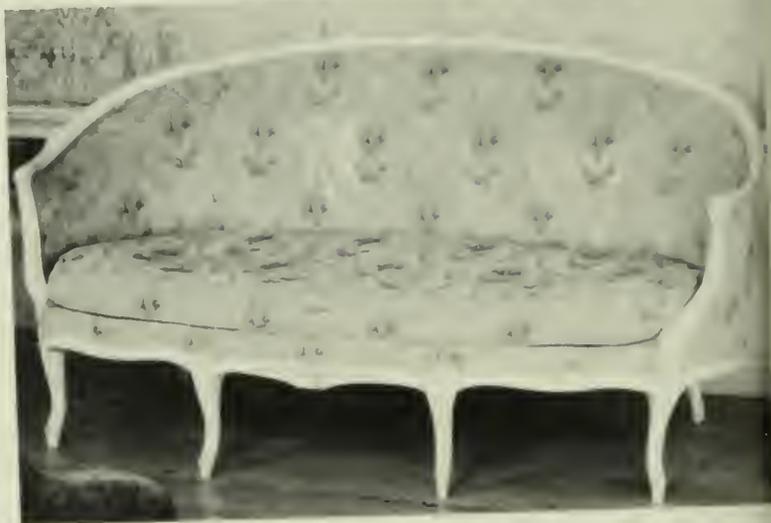
The years 1781-1782 were fruitful ones for John Adams. He submitted requests for Dutch recognition of American sovereignty and he was successful. Congress elected him to be first among the five joint commissioners (Adams, Franklin, Jay, Laurens and Jefferson). In April of 1782 he was recognized as Minister Plenipotentiary to the Netherlands. Immediately afterwards, he bought the Hotel des Etats-Unis at The Hague. This was the first American legation building in Europe. This original American Legation was demolished between 1824 and 1830. Also, about the same time he signed a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with Holland and secured a loan of five million guilders

5. Illustration 694 -- Dutch Cachepots.

6. Illustration 695 -- The Hotel des Etats-Unis stood on the "site of the one-story wall and doorway to the left of the center of the picture." Courtesy of the Adams Papers. (Next page.)



695



696

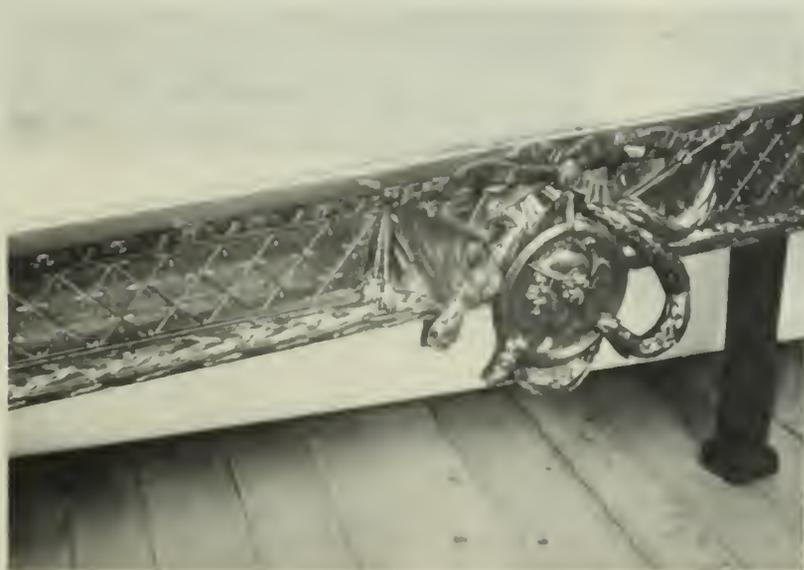


697

698



699



700

701



702

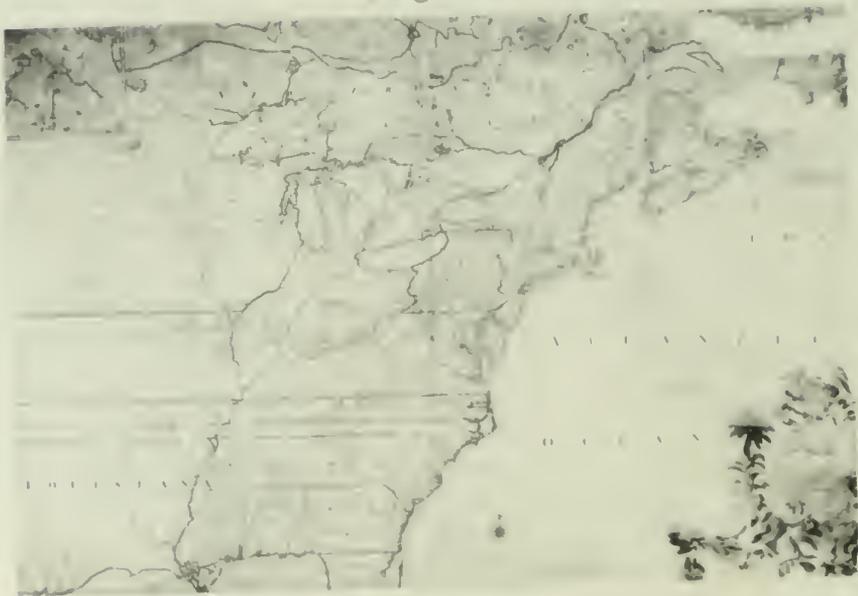


703

704



705



The accomplishments in Holland were not all which took place in this eventful year of 1782. In October John Adams returned to Paris to negotiate for the preliminary treaty for peace with Great Britain. His assignment by the Continental Congress had mentioned, especially, the right to fish off the Newfoundland or northeast boundary. In his study John Adams must have used the map drawn by Mitchell in 1755 since it was the official map used by both the English and American delegations. It was preserved by the family because of its association with John Adams. It hangs in the Old House, a reminder of John Adams' great diplomatic accomplishments. John Adams had waited two years for a favorable time for serious peace negotiations with Great Britain. Finally, the preliminary treaty was signed on November 30, 1782 at which time John Adams was hailed "Le Washington de la negociation."

In commemoration of the signing Benjamin West painted the famous "American Commissioners at the Preliminary" West made sketches of John Adams from life and Franklin from a miniature. The English delegation was not shown in this painting as both Richard Oswald and Caleb Whitefoord, the British delegates, died before West could make a sketch of them. There are several recognized copies of the American Peace Committee.

Things moved more rapidly after the preliminary treaty was signed and in less than a year the Definitive Treaty of Peace with Great Britain was signed on September 3, 1783. For this great event there was no official seal, but

16. Illustration 705 -- Mitchell Map

17. Illustration 706 -- "American Commissioners at the Preliminary Peace Negotiations" painted by Benjamin West. Mr. J. P. Morgan had this copy made. A few years ago it was given to the Old House by his daughter-in-law Mrs. Louisa Catherine Adams Morgan. (Next page.)



706



707

Benjamin Franklin had set the custom of using his own personal seal for signing public documents; so, quite understandably, John Adams used his mother's family seal. This was the Boylston Seal -- after it was used on September 3, 1783 for the treaty signing, it has been known as the Treaty Seal. What a privilege for all of us to be able to see this precious part of our heritage.

It is kept in the Adams Memorial Room in the rear of the Old House. John Adams was gratified that the treaty included "the right to fish off the north-east coast -- so essential to the North, and that the west boundary included the Mississippi -- so essential to the South, and each so essential to both."¹⁸¹⁹

John Adams was so thrilled over his success that he had a special seal made to commemorate this accomplishment. It has the pine tree, the deer and the fish. There was no inscription in 1783, but after his son John Quincy Adams on December 14, 1814 signed the Treaty of Ghent, which also involved both boundaries and fisheries, John Adams had the inscription added: "Piscemur, venemur, ut olim," which freely translated means: "We will fish and hunt as usual."²⁰

John Adams had hoped to return home to Abigail and his children, but such was not the case. There were more Dutch loans needed and at least twenty-three additional treaties of amity and commerce to be negotiated. He wrote Abigail and daughter Nabby requesting they come to Paris. John had been away almost five years. In the meantime he was so exhausted from his hard,

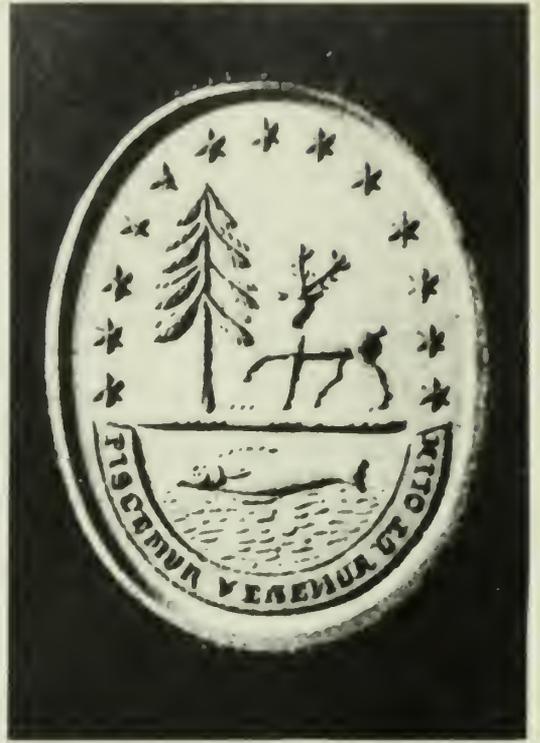
18. Illustration 707 -- Treaty Seal.

19. The Life and Works of John Adams edited by Charles Francis Adams.

20. Illustration 708 -- Pine tree, deer and fish decorated seal. (Next page.)



709



708



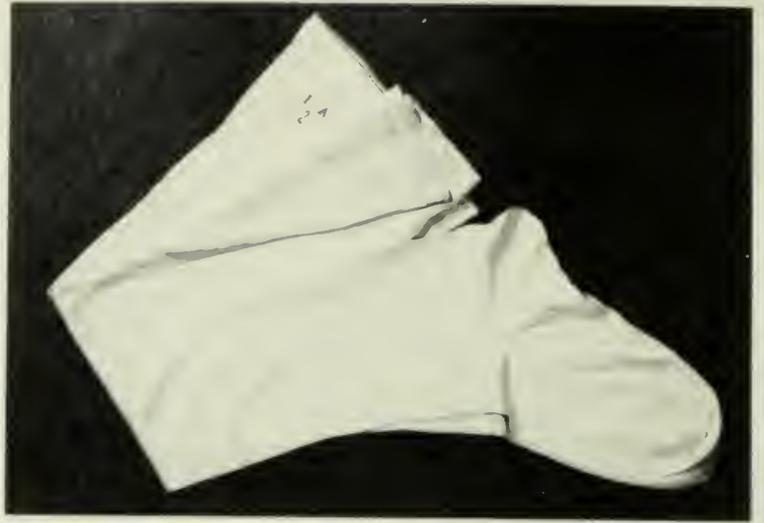
710

long sessions negotiating for loans, for recognition by the Dutch, and for an acceptable treaty with Great Britain that he decided to go to London for a change in routine. The American artist Copley was in London painting such masterpieces as *The Death of Lord Chatham* and he requested to paint the newly world-recognized statesman who led his country both into and out of the Revolution. The Old House has a poor copy of that portrait but Harvard University has the original in full length. Fortunately, we have the silver buttons you see on the coat, the stockings and the buckles on the shoes shown in this portrait. The portrait shows a scroll in his hand which Abigail said represented the Peace Treaty, a map of America on the table and a world globe at his feet. The female figure at the upper left is holding the laurel symbolizing peace. His pose, showing his exuberance over his recent successes for his country, perhaps justified John Adams referring to the portrait as a "Piece of Vanity".

Abigail and Nabby were sailing from Boston on the ship Active, and when word got around, friends gathered in Abigail's Braintree parlor to wish them well. There was "the honest yeomanry", their hands made rough and hard by honest toil; the old; the poor and the sick all dressed out in their best clothes to wish the lady who had befriended them a safe journey and a speedy return. Abigail and the stolid farmers wept together as they contemplated their separation.

-
21. Illustration 709 -- Copy of the Copley portrait of John Adams.
 22. Illustration 710 -- Copley portrait of John Adams, courtesy of Harvard University.
 23. Illustration 711 -- John Adams' stockings. (Ills. 711, 712 on next page.)
 24. Illustration 712 -- John Adams' shoe buckles.

711



712



713

For the trip Abigail gathered together the same necessities for a sea voyage as she had for her husband more than five years previously, with one exception. Being a great milk, cream and butter user, Abigail took a live cow aboard the Active to supply fresh dairy products. Her traveling party consisted of daughter Nabby, John Breisler the man who acted as manservant and Esther Field a personal maid to Abigail. Abigail Adams left her house in Braintree on June 20, 1784 and arrived in England about four weeks later. Nabby wrote her brother John Quincy Adams in July of 1785 referring to Mather Brown as "Painter to the American Ambassador's family". A portrait of Abigail by Mather Brown is now in the New York Historical Association's collection.

After a short stay in London, she proceeded to France. She went directly to Auteuil to a forty-room furnished house which had been rented for them. The size of the house and its sparse furniture must have been hard for Abigail, especially, as she knew of the very adequate furnishings at the Hotel des Etats-Unis at The Hague. High cost of moving prevented it from being shipped to Auteuil, so, Abigail made the meager rented furnishings do. She bought lots of linen and hemmed tablecloths and many table napkins. She also bought quite a lot of table silver. At the Old House we frequently speak of the silver as having been used at the White House, but it was also used several years previously at Auteuil and London.

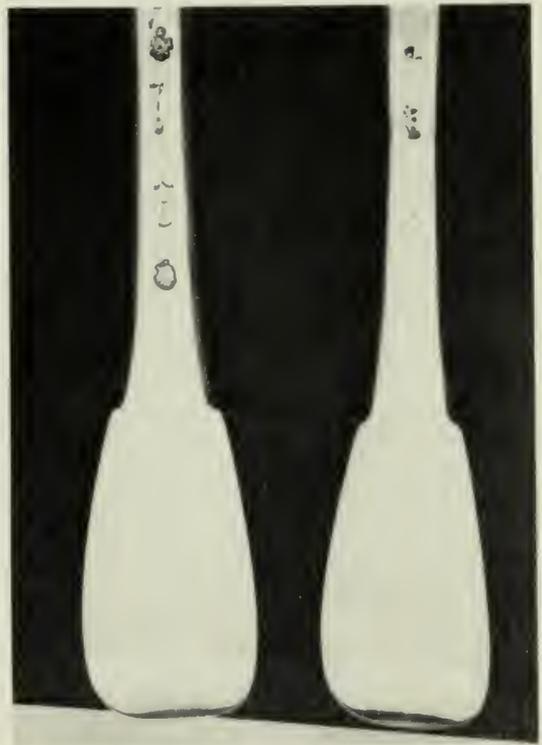
In the five years John Adams was alone in Europe Abigail wrote him repeatedly

25. Illustration 713 -- Portrait of Abigail Adams by Mather Brown, 1784, courtesy of the New York Historical Society.

26. Illustration 714 -- Abigail Adams' silver knives, forks and spoons. (Next page.)



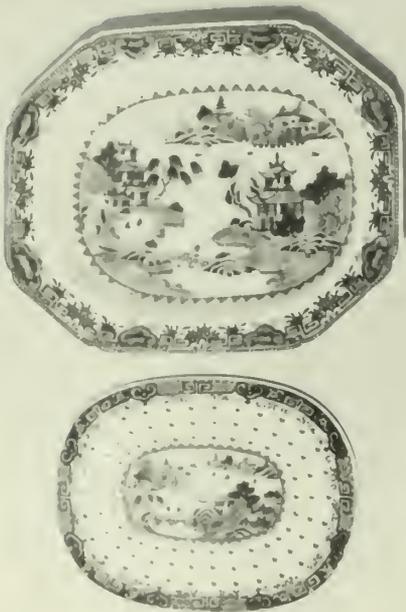
714



714



715 A



716



715 B

27

to buy some blue china. Some of it exists today and is shown as a part of
 28
 her Chinese Export china at the Old House. The platter with the drain was a
 fish platter, as fish gravy was not as nourishing as gravy from meat. As far
 as we know, Abigail purchased only linen, silver and a pair of Vincenne wine
 29
 coolers while in France. Only one cooler has survived. It dates back to
 1753 just before the Vincenne factory became the Sevres factory.

Abigail was at Auteuil less than a year when the Continental Congress elected
 John Adams to be the first Minister to represent the United States at the
 Court of St. James's. When he called upon King George III for that epoch-
 making event, tradition is that on his suit were beautifully etched silver
 30
 buttons. This probably accounts for why twelve of the silver engraved buttons
 were preserved by the family and are on display in the Memorial Room. During
 the time when John Adams was representing his country in Holland, France and
 31
 in England, he carried the official papers in a brief case. It, too, is now
 preserved at the Old House. It bears the initials "I. A.", I being the old
 form of writing J.

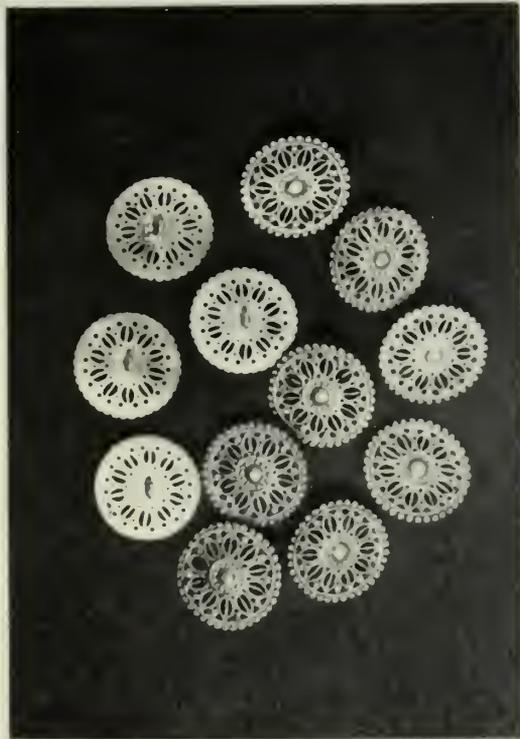
Unlike her few purchases in Paris, during the four years in London, Abigail
 32
 bought many things. She purchased several Waterford glass bowls; a pair of
 33
 34
 candlelabra; a demi-lune Hepplewhite card table; four mirrors, the first

-
27. Illustration 715 -- Abigail Adams' Chinese Export china. A and B.
 28. Illustration 716 -- Abigail Adams' Chinese Export platter.
 29. Illustration 717 -- Abigail Adams' Vincenne wine cooler.
 30. Illustration 718 -- Silver buttons from "Court Suit" of John Adams.
 31. Illustration 719 -- Brief case of John Adams used 1781 to 1788.
 32. Illustration 720 -- Waterford glass bowls 1783. A and B.
 33. Illustration 721 -- Waterford candlelabra.
 34. Illustration 722 -- English card table.

(Iills. 717 - 722 are on the next pages.)



717



718

719

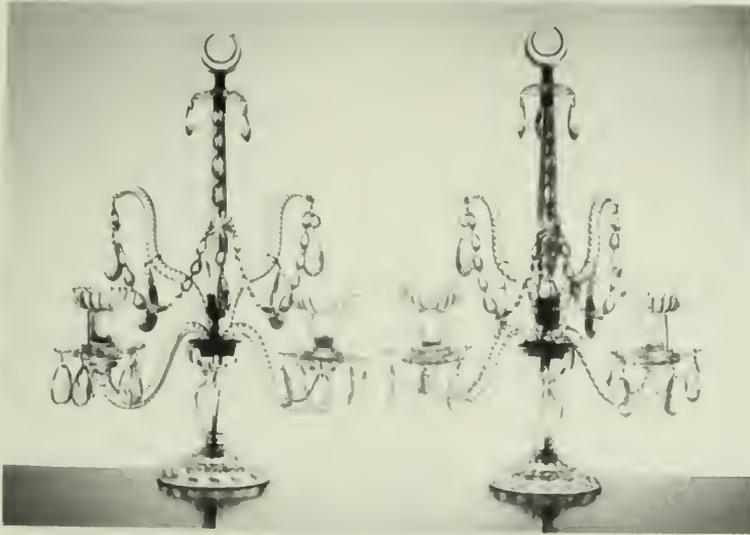


720 A

720 B



721



722

723



724



725



35

hangs in the Dining Room, the pair of English Adams-style hang on the east
³⁶ stairway, and the fourth on the second floor stair landing of the 1731 part
³⁷ of the House; a Staffordshire fruit bowl and a pair of handsome wall brackets. ³⁹
 Not everything associated with diplomatic history was for the house. Abigail
 also thought of her garden. In 1788 she purchased in England a simple white,
⁴⁰ single-petaled rose which is called the York Rose. It was planted near the
 south window of the Long Room until, after a number of years, it ceased to
 bloom. In 1915 Mr. Brooks Adams consulted rose authorities who tested the
 ground around the house and chose the spot where it stands now (1974). The
 instructions at that time were that a rose would cease to bloom unless the
 location was changed every one hundred and fifty years! She also brought a
 red Lancaster rose but the red roses have died and the one now in the garden
 was given the area by the well-known librarian Willman Spawn of the American
 Philosophical Society.

Only nine years after John Adams' missions were successfully completed, his
⁴¹ son John Quincy Adams began his diplomatic career. This portrait of John
 Quincy Adams painted by Copley shows how he appeared at that time. In 1794
 President Washington appointed John Quincy Adams Minister to the Netherlands.
 The Secretary of State Edmund Randolph made it plain to the twenty-seven
 year old budding diplomat that his appointment was only to report changes

-
35. Illustration 723 -- Chippendale mirror.
 36. Illustration 724 -- English mirrors on the east stairway.
 37. Illustration 725 -- English mirror, circa 1740.
 38. Illustration 726 -- Abigail's staffordshire fruit bowl.
 39. Illustration 727 -- Abigail's wall brackets.
 40. Illustration 728 -- Abigail's York Rose planted in 1788.
 41. Illustration 729 -- Portrait of John Quincy Adams, copy of the original
 painted by John Singleton Copley.

(Ills. 726 - 729 are on the next pages.)

726



727

728



729



730

and trends of the Dutch government which he observed. In other words, it was not an important assignment. On the other hand, his father Vice-President John Adams viewed it as a great opportunity to learn diplomacy, for he still considered The Hague as the listening post of all Europe. On the way to The Hague John Quincy Adams stopped in London. For land travel by carriage the young diplomat purchased a traveling case.⁴² It is preserved at the Old House as a memento of the beginning of more than fifty years of distinguished service to our country rendered by John Quincy Adams.

After two years at The Hague, John Quincy Adams was given a temporary mission to London to negotiate a Treaty of Amity and Commerce. This appointment led to an important event in John Quincy Adams' career. He renewed his friendship with the family of Joshua Johnson, the American Consul to England.

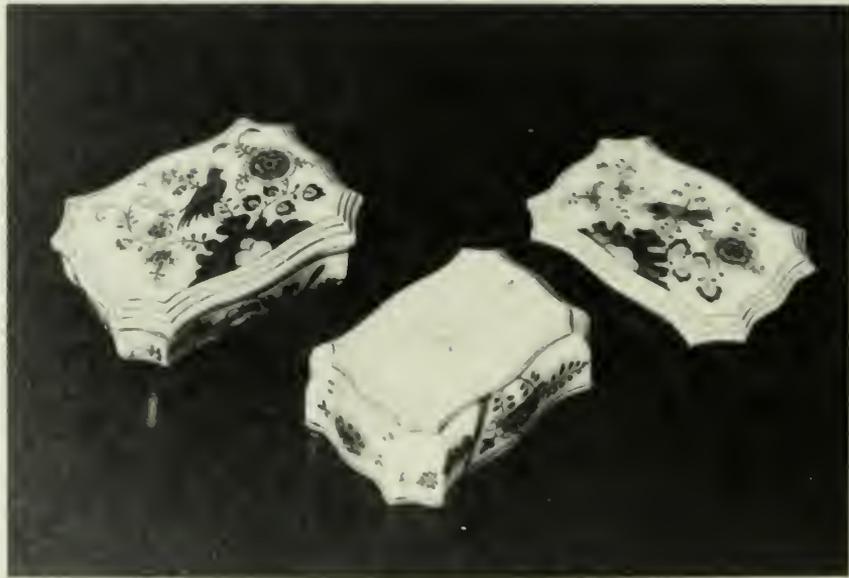
Before John Quincy Adams returned to The Hague, he was betrothed to Louisa Catherine, Mr. Johnson's second daughter. About a year later he was in London again -- this time to be married in All Hallow's Church on July 14, 1797 to delicate, beautiful and cultured Louisa Catherine Johnson. At that time or shortly afterwards, the artist Barber painted a miniature of Louisa Catherine Johnson Adams.⁴³ At the Old House is a beautiful miniature; many say it is a copy, but all agree that it is lovely.

John Quincy Adams' second diplomatic appointment was to Prussia. Naturally, Louisa Catherine accompanied her husband. The purpose of this mission was to negotiate a new Treaty of Amity and Commerce since the ten-year treaty of

42. Illustration 730 -- Traveling case purchased by J.Q.A. in London, 1794.

43. Illustration 731 -- Miniature of Louisa Catherine Adams. (Next page.)

731



732

1785 had expired. The new treaty with Prussia was signed on John Quincy Adams' thirty-second birthday, July 11, 1799. At that time he and his bride had been in Germany for two years, but it was not until after the treaty was signed that Mr. and Mrs. Adams began to travel around the country. In 1799 they visited the art galleries of Dresden and went into Saxony and Bohemia. At the Old House are reminders of these trips. For example, in the Presidents' Bedroom are a pair -- not identical -- of Meissen pin trays and there are some Bohemian glass objects on the bureau in the Guest Room. In Berlin during the years of 1799-1801, our inventory shows that John Quincy Adams bought more than a dozen engravings by well-known artists, the most notable being those engraved by Bartolozzi after the paintings of Angelica Kauffman which hang in the Guest Room. The Birth and Tomb of Shakespeare are other examples of the Bartolozzi engravings. While on the trip to Dresden, Louisa Catherine was inspired to visit the factory at Meissen, a distance of only twelve miles. She purchased a set of the Meissen onion pattern, a dozen Meissen after dinner coffee cups, and a set of handsome plates with the Bourbon sprig border and corn flower decoration.

In 1800 as a health measure for Mrs. Adams they drove by carriage over the Giant Mountains to Silesia. The trip is beautifully described in the Letters on Silesia written by John Quincy Adams to his brother Thomas Boylston Adams

44. Illustration 732 -- Meissen pin trays.
 45. Illustration 733 -- Louisa Catherine Adams' Bohemian glass.
 46. Illustration 734 -- Engraving by Bartolozzi.
 47. Illustration 735 -- "Birth of Shakespeare" by Bartolozzi.
 48. Illustration 736 -- "Tomb of Shakespeare" by Bartolozzi.
 49. Illustration 737 -- Meissen china bought by Louisa Catherine Adams.
 50. Illustration 738 -- After dinner Meissen coffee cups.
 51. Illustration 739 -- Louisa Catherine Adams' plates. Probably of French origin, though family tradition is that they are Dresden.
 (Ills. 733 - 739 on next pages.)

734



733



735



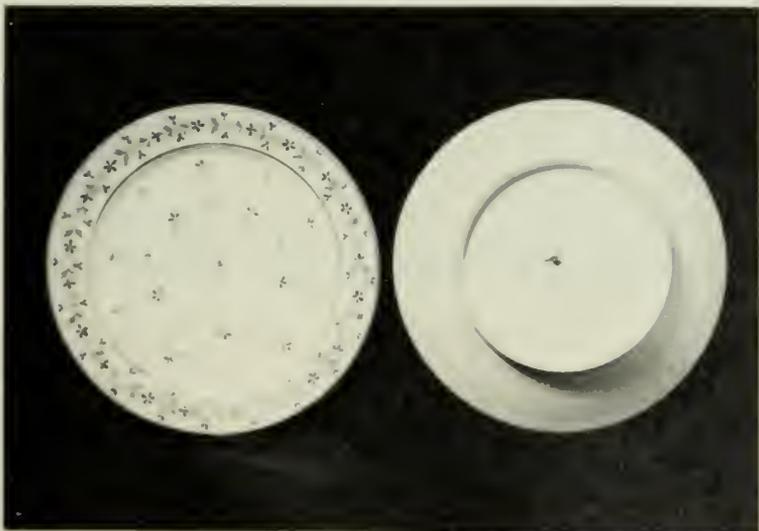
736



737



738



739



740



now preserved in the Library. He bought four colored engravings of the mountain range over which they traveled. Three of these engravings are preserved at the Old House and two hang in the Presidents' Bedroom. The artist was Berger, a close friend of John Quincy Adams. These color engravings have been held in high regard by Adamses of each generation. Charles Francis Adams, John Quincy Adams' son, took a trip to Lenox, Massachusetts in July, 1844 and noted:

"The short ride to Lenox delighted us exceedingly. The setting sun threw such picturesque tints upon the Mountains and the glassy lake that I was involuntarily struck with the resemblance which the scenery bore to the colored engravings of Silesian views which I have seen and admired at my father's."

Upon the defeat of President John Adams for re-election, John Quincy Adams returned to America. On the way home Mr. Adams purchased some Sadler tiles in Liverpool to bring home as a present to his mother. They were set in the fireplace in what is now called the Presidents' Bedroom.

When James Madison was elected President in 1809, he recalled John Quincy Adams to the diplomatic service -- this time to be Minister Plenipotentiary to Russia and later to negotiate and sign the Treaty of Ghent. That in itself was extraordinary American history; father and son each had signed peace treaties with our mother country. The Stone Library contains books and maps bought during the years in Russia. Professor Morris from the University of New York is publishing a catalog of John Quincy Adams' German books in the Stone Library. It is his opinion that John Quincy Adams' library was the

52. Illustration 740 -- Engravings of Giant Mountains.

53. Illustration 741 -- Sadler Tiles. (Next page.)



741



742



743

54

finest in America during his era. Also kept in the library is a cartouche, a part of the famous "One Hundred Sheet Map" used by John Quincy Adams in Russia. After signing the treaty, he proceeded to London to be Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain. While in Paris he bought a French clock which still ticks the time off as it stands upon the mantelpiece in the Old House Study.

56

Many visitors enjoy the two staffordshire platters Louisa Catherine bought while in London. Each is decorated with the usual cathedral scene. At Adams National Historic Site are many wine glasses which are attributed to Mr. and Mrs. John Quincy Adams. Also displayed is a silver tea set purchased in London and some Sevres tea cups bought in France. Henry Adams in his Education recorded his remembrance of his grandmother serving tea in the Panelled Room using these items.

57

58

59

A considerable part of the Old House furnishings associated with the years of foreign service of John Adams and John Quincy Adams has been mentioned. That is not all, for there is another generation important in our history. The Adams family is the only one in America to send three successive generations to the Court of St. James's and each at a time of crisis. This time the Civil War was on, or perhaps, more appropriately, it should be called the War Between the States.

-
54. Illustration 742 -- Cartouche of the "One Hundred Sheet Map".
 55. Illustration 743 -- French clock.
 56. Illustration 744 -- Staffordshire platter.
 57. Illustration 745 -- Green wine glasses.
 58. Illustration 746 -- Sheffield silver tea set.
 59. Illustration 747 -- Louisa Catherine's Sevre tea cups.
 (Ills. 744 - 747 are on the next pages.)



744

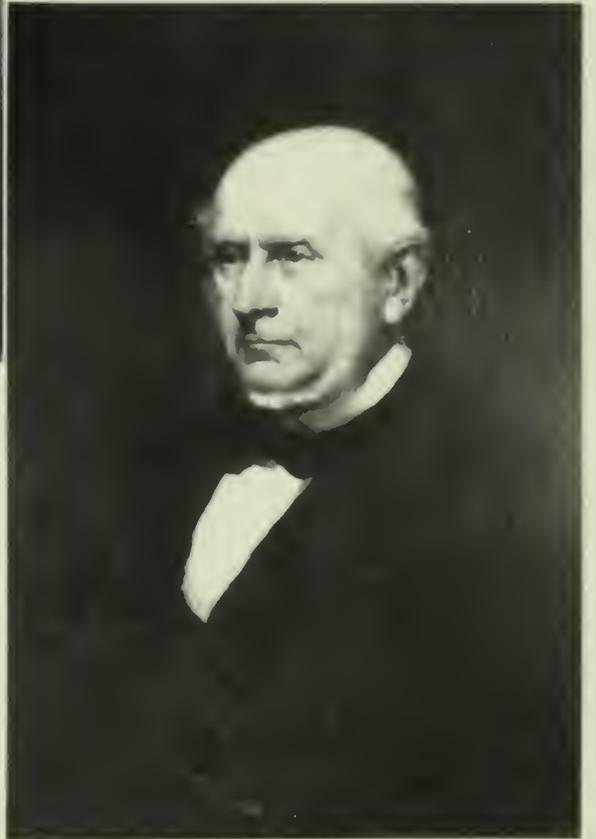
745



746 + 747



749



740

60 61

Charles Francis Adams, his wife, daughter Mary and sons Henry and Brooks sailed on May 1, 1861 from East Boston on the steamer Niagara. As they sailed out of the harbor, a large group of friends and officials gathered to witness the firing of canon and observe the ship decked out in colors. At Fort Independence on Castle Island Charles Francis Adams recorded that he had been given a thirteen-gun salute. There was also an impressive demonstration and salute as he passed Fort Warren. After his arrival in London, Charles Francis Adams had a suit designed and made for his first formal meeting with Queen Victoria. The suit and the drawing for it are in perfect condition at the Old House.

Mrs. Charles Francis Adams bought many objects of art and a few pieces of furniture while in England. She selected a beautifully built English, empire-style, fall-front secretary, a four-seated ottoman now in the center of the Long Room, a round table made about 1830, also in the center of the Long Room and two hall chairs typical of hall chairs used in the foyers of English country houses. If she brought other furniture from England, our research has not revealed it. Evidently, porcelain was her great love. Among her many purchases are the pair of Chinese Export vases of superb quality which are in the Long Hall, a whole set of more than a hundred pieces

-
60. Illustration 748 -- Portrait of Charles Francis Adams painted by Vinton.
 61. Illustration 749 -- Portrait of Mrs. Charles Francis Adams by Hunt.
 62. Illustration 750 -- The "court suit" and drawing made in London. Note the oak leaf and acorn decoration. (Ills. 750 - 755 are on next pages.)
 63. Illustration 751 -- Fall-front English secretary.
 64. Illustration 752 -- Four-seated English ottoman.
 65. Illustration 753 -- English round table.
 66. Illustration 754 -- English hall chairs.
 67. Illustration 755 -- Pair of Chinese Export vases.



750



751



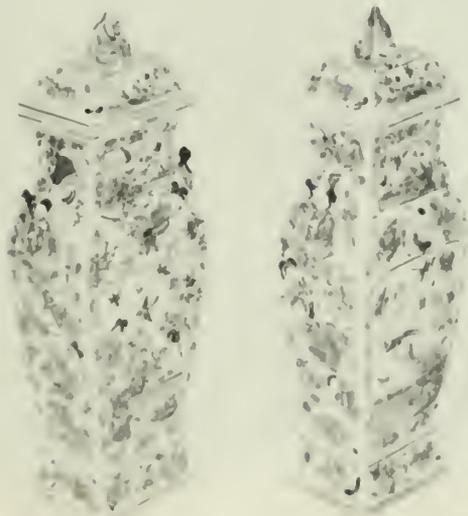
752



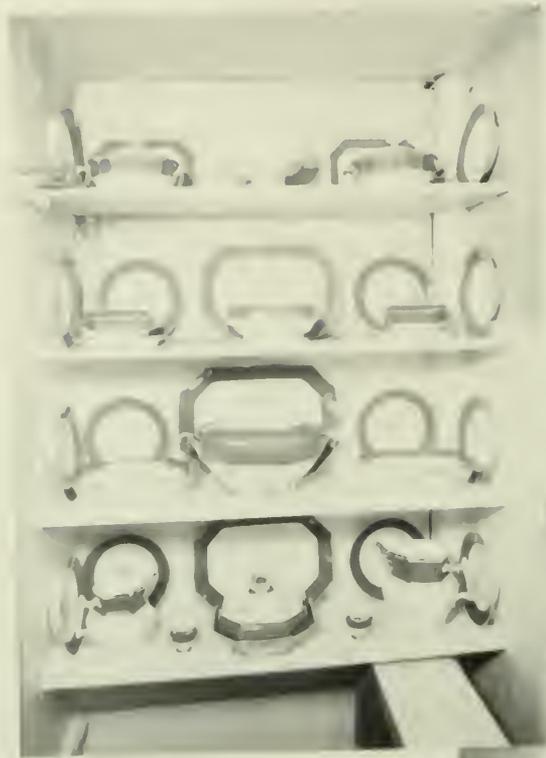
753



754



755



756

757



758



of the 1840 period Coalport china, a French gilded bronze fruit bowl and
 bon bon dishes, a dozen or more Waterford finger bowls, a Staffordshire plat-
 71 72
 ter decorated in grapes and vine and a handsome English water pitcher etched
 73
 about 1840. She also bought two unusual Japanese porcelain bowls as deli-
 cate as an egg shell; the larger one depicts a Tokyo monastery, the smaller
 bowl has a view of a famous spot in Tokyo called Nihonbashi. In the Guest
 74
 Room is a Minton stoneware toilet set with bleeding heart design decoration.

On June 22, 1863 Charles Francis Adams and his son Henry attended the offi-
 cial opening of the Atlantic Cable. As a memento of the linking of our
 75
 country and Great Britain, Charles Francis Adams was given a link of the
 cable. It stands on the table in the Panelled Room.

When Mr. and Mrs. Adams were ready to return to the United States, forty-
 76
 eight ladies of their English friends gave Mrs. Adams a gold bracelet set in
 77
 diamonds and pearls. The card has a circle with lines outgoing signed by the
 forty-eight ladies. It represents a circle of friends as well as equality of
 friendship. One name appears -- Godlsmidt -- who was better known as Jenny
 Lind.

-
68. Illustration 756 -- Pieces of the 1840 period English Coalport china.
 69. Illustration 757 -- French gilded bronze fruit bowl.
 70. Illustration 758 -- Waterford finger bowls belonging to Mrs. Charles
 Francis Adams.
 71. Illustration 759 -- Staffordshire platter.
 72. Illustration 760 -- English water pitcher.
 73. Illustration 761 -- Japanese porcelain bowls.
 74. Illustration 762 -- Minton stoneware toilet set.
 75. Illustration 763 -- Link of the Atlantic Cable.
 76. Illustration 764 -- Gold bracelet given to Mrs. Charles Francis Adams.
 77. Illustration 765 -- Card accompanying the gold bracelet.
 (Ills. 759 - 765 are on the next pages.)

759



760

762



761



763



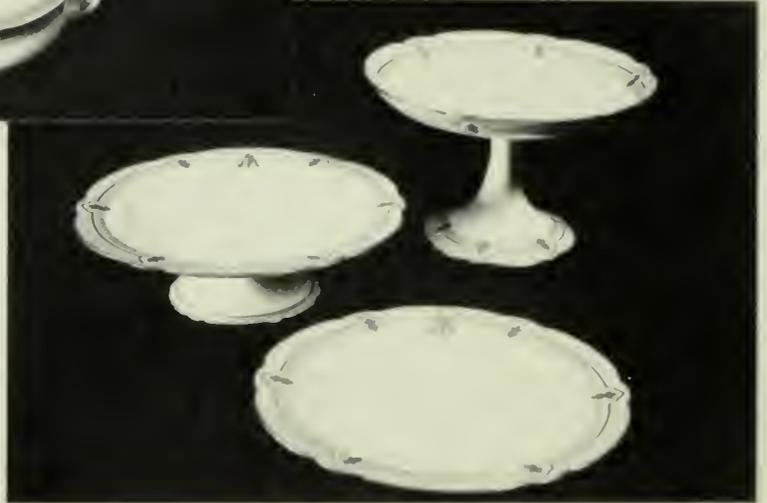
THE
 ACCOMPANYING PARCELLET
 IS PRESENTED TO
 M^{rs} ADAMS
 ON THE OCCASION OF
 HER LEAVING ENGLAND
 AS A PRESENT OF
 ESTEEM & REGARD BY 18 OF
 HER ENGLISH FRIENDS,
 APRIL 1846



764



766



767



768



769

Charles Francis Adams and his family returned to America in 1868 after seven years at the Court of St. James's. About a year later he received a commission from our government to serve as arbitrator of the Alabama Claims in Geneva. He and his son Brooks set out alone for this assignment in 1870. Things moved slowly with the arbitration and finally Mrs. Adams, being disconsolate without her husband, went to Geneva. Knowing the necessity of lavish official entertaining, Charles Francis Adams sent Brooks to Paris to purchase adequate dinner and dessert services. Each design had just won a gold medal in Paris, so Brooks Adams purchased a complete set of each design. At the Adams National Historic Site there are so many finely etched wine glasses that one wonders if they were not purchased at the same time as the large dinner service. While in Switzerland Mrs. Adams bought a Zurich porcelain tea service. China experts place the date as 1770 and rank it first of all the china collected by the Adams family.

With peace in the United States and the Alabama Claims settled, Charles Francis Adams' diplomatic career came to a close. He had preserved the Union which his grandfather in 1783 and his father in 1814 had helped to create.

Mrs. Adams was so impressed with the way English nobility lived with service entrances and lodges at the gate that she and her husband had a carriage

78. Illustration 766 -- Dinner service used in Geneva.

79. Illustration 767 -- Dessert service used in Geneva.

80. Illustration 768 -- Etched wine glasses attributed to Mrs. Charles Francis Adams.

81. Illustration 769 -- Zurich porcelain tea service.

771



770 A



770-B

82

house designed with a service entrance and lodge for an attendant. Their instructions were that all the small buildings should be incorporated in the one building regardless of expense; Charles Francis Adams reluctantly carried out this plan.

83

Hanging on the east wall of the Study is a drawing of the Old House made in 1798 by John Adams' secretary, Mr. E. Malcom of New York. The house probably looked the same as when John and Abigail Adams bought it ten years earlier. Perhaps, as contrasted with Windsor Castle, Abigail Adams was disappointed in the house and described it as a "wren's house" with ceilings too low for a lady with plumes on her hat or for a gentleman "with high heels" to stand upright. It was here that she had cider and cheese prepared for storage in the cellar for winter use. The land to the South and North was where John Adams planted his corn, harvested his hay and where he took daily rides on his mare Cleopatra. The world-recognized diplomat John Adams called the Old House "Peacefield", a reminder of the 1783 Treaty which he had negotiated and which gave our country independence from Great Britain. The seventy-five acres surrounding the house he called a "rustic farm of a patriot".

To other generations the Old House was a place of freedom from the responsibilities of political office and of academic life. It was where they walked the hills, usually accompanied by their dogs, or rode horseback in the woods of Merrymount or Mount Arrarat. It was where they studied horticulture and

82. Illustration 770 -- Carriage House designed in 1873

83. Illustration 771 -- Appearance of the east lawn before the construction of the Carriage House. A and B.

planted trees; where they gave of their intellectual acumen to Quincy's school system; and where each Adams gentleman indulged his insatiable desire to read, study, write, fish or just relax. Here they entertained interesting friends from both home and abroad. While it was to the 18th century garden, hedges and roses that they confided their hopes, aspirations and disappointments, it was to the "Old House" that each generation gave their hearts.

The style of furnishings in this rambling house has always been genteel and of high quality. It reflects the character and taste of those who lived here. The furnishings were and are what each generation accepted when they moved into the house. Oh yes, they added to, but they kept what their forbears had used. Period style was foreign to such individualists as the Adamses. They used whatever style the Old House offered only adding such items as were needed for their personal comfort.

Mr. Brooks Adams remarked with settled frequency that the Old House was furnished with souvenirs associated with the diplomatic careers of three generations of his family. His conclusions are more and more vindicated as our research progresses. I would like to pursue Mr. Adams' theory of diplomatic association with the most treasured items in the Old House and the attractive combination of foreign and American furnishings.

The furnishings of the Old House reflecting diplomatic experiences were brought back to Quincy having been bought by the Adamses' private funds. The combination of these various furnishings from abroad was a task which



772

773



774



the family solved quite naturally -- they placed the furniture where it served their purposes. Perhaps the Old House, more than the voluminous diaries written by each of the Adams family, reflects the merging of the best of foreign culture into the most basic and lasting culture of the new world. As one visits the various rooms, European and American objects compliment each other to a surprising degree and have countless associations with the making of United States history. A good example of this is the very pleasing combination of the European furnishings brought to the Old House by John and Abigail in 1788 with the furniture made around Boston and the brass fixtures bought in America after their return. The handsome
 84
 knocker on the front door, for instance, was undoubtedly purchased by John Adams in Philadelphia while he was Vice-President. The installation of the knocker was a replica of the method used in Philadelphia to discourage thievery. This was accomplished by the bolt going through the door and secured by a nut on the inside. Brass, then, as today, was scarce and valuable.

85, 86

Looking at this Santo Domingo mahogany Panelled Room, it requires little imagination to recall the pride and joy Abigail and John must have radiated as they welcomed President Monroe who had so recently appointed their son to serve as Secretary of State. What a pang of loneliness John Adams must have felt as he sat down without Abigail to share Sunday dinner with General

-
84. Illustration 772 -- Brass door knocker bought by John Adams.
 85. Illustration 773 -- View of the Panelled Room.
 86. Illustration 774 -- View of the Panelled Room.



775



778

87

Lafayette. In his eighty-ninth year, as he sat for his portrait to be painted by the great American master Gilbert Stuart, he must have recalled his beloved Abigail being painted by the same artist twenty-five years previously. One can picture Abigail Adams receiving Reverend William Bently in the Panelled Room while she shelled her beans for the family dinner. Abigail's superb
88
brass andirons added a rich glow to the room and the open fire gave it an oriental atmosphere of exceptional charm.

Since the Panelled Room was used as a dining room, it was probably the room in which John Quincy Adams had ices and champagne on his eightieth birthday at which time he gave this toast:

"...I thank you all for your good wishes, which I reciprocate, by hoping you will all live to be eighty years of age, and then be surrounded by friends as near and dear to you, as those I see around me."

Interesting, indeed, is that all of the American furniture harmonizes so agreeably with the decorative art effects, all of which came from abroad during their diplomatic years.

89

Across from the original old oak stairway with its carved skirt board and
90
ballusters is the Dining Room which was originally Abigail's formal parlor.

Ann Royall, the newspaper reporter from Alabama who called upon John Adams twice, wrote that this parlor was like a Quaker lady's dress -- plain but
91
fine. The portraits of President Washington and his wife Martha painted by

-
87. Illustration 775 -- American sofa.
88. Illustration 776 -- Fireplace and Abigail's brass andirons.
89. Illustration 777 -- 1731 oak stairway. (Ills. 777 - 779 on next pages.)
90. Illustration 778 -- View of the Dining Room.
91. Illustration 779 -- Portraits of George and Martha Washington.



777



778



779

780



781



782

Edward Savage of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1790 have always hung in this room. John Adams commissioned Savage to paint them because he wished to remember his chief as he looked when they served together. President Washington sat for the portrait so that it might be a true likeness.

When Charles Francis Adams inherited the house in 1848, he made plans to make this room into a dining room and so it has been since 1852. If the beautiful mahogany table so well preserved with its mellow sheen could speak, we might be awestricken by the conversation of Charles Francis Adams and his four brilliant sons. Mr. Brooks Adams used to recall that in the 1870's and 1880's his brothers John and Charles, both of whom lived in Quincy, often dropped in for a visit with their father the Ambassador while he was still at his breakfast table. The latest books or the latest political developments were always the topics of their conversations. In this room are two unusual oriental rugs, one added by John Adams and the other by his great-grandson Brooks.

In the East Hallway in the corner stands a handsome Philadelphia long case clock. This American clock stands close to the chests, the table and decorative objects all of which came from abroad -- a pleasant combination of Chinese, English, Dutch and American history. From the Long Hall there is a door leading to Abigail's drawing room which is spacious for a simple country house. It

-
92. Illustration 780 -- Mahogany dining room table.
 93. Illustration 781 -- Turkish Ghiordes Rug.
 94. Illustration 782 -- Caucasian Dagistan Grave Rug.
 95. Illustration 783 -- East Hallway. (Ills. 783 - 785 on next pages.)
 96. Illustration 784 -- Long case clock.
 97. Illustration 785 -- View of the Long Room.



783



784



785



786

is a pleasing combination of French, English and American furniture which gives the room a family-style appearance. It was a room for weddings, christenings, funerals, receptions, for church choir rehearsals and for coffee after the formal evening dinner. The most interesting of the portraits, perhaps, are General Warren painted by the talented American artist John Singleton Copley and Alice Mason, a distinguished example of early American art.

100

Up the white, easy to climb stairway is the Study -- "the room of thought", so called by Mr. Mark Anthony de Wolfe Howe. The Study was undoubtedly where John Adams carried on the famous correspondence with his old comrade President Thomas Jefferson and where President John Adams died on the golden jubilee of the Declaration of Independence associated with both great Presidents. Perhaps, because of the placing of this fine Boston-made highboy, this room appears American; and, yet, there is the French excretoire and John Adams' Ghiordes Rug which is outstandingly beautiful and contains many symbols meaningful to the Turks. To many visitors this room equals the Panelled Room in beauty and in a recall of America's past. Abigail Adams planned it to be the gentlemen's room and so it has been.

104

The third floor northeast bedroom was a guest room in 1869 when James A.

-
- 98. Illustration 786 -- Portrait of General Warren painted by Copley.
 - 99. Illustration 787 -- Portrait of Alice Mason. (Ills. 787 -792 on next pages.)
 - 100. Illustration 788 -- East stairway.
 - 101. Illustration 789 -- Northeast view of the Study.
 - 102. Illustration 790 -- Southwest view of the Study.
 - 103. Illustration 791 -- John Adams' Ghiordes Rug.
 - 104. Illustration 792 -- Henry Adams' Bedroom.



787

785



786



790



791

792



793



794

Garfield visited Mr. and Mrs. Charles Francis Adams and during the occupancy of Brooks Adams it continued to be the Guest Room. In the interim it was occupied by Henry Adams and even today it has many reminders of this able
 105
 historian and author. Among the books here is an unbroken set of the North American Review extending from 1815 to 1877. Beside the bed is Henry Adams'
 106
 student lamp and to the left is his toilet set which he used in his Paris apartment.

On the landing of the second floor of the 1731 section is the historic
 107
 Benjamin Willard long case clock. It has been ticking off the time since about 1770. President John Quincy Adams made such references in his Diary as: "Heard the Willard Clock in the entry striking 11, 12, 1, 2, 3 and 4." In addition to striking the hour it registers the day of the month. How well the oriental rug goes with this American clock. It is a Caucasian
 108
 Kelim Rug made of a flat stitch and expressing a primitive mood reminding one of our Navajo Indians.

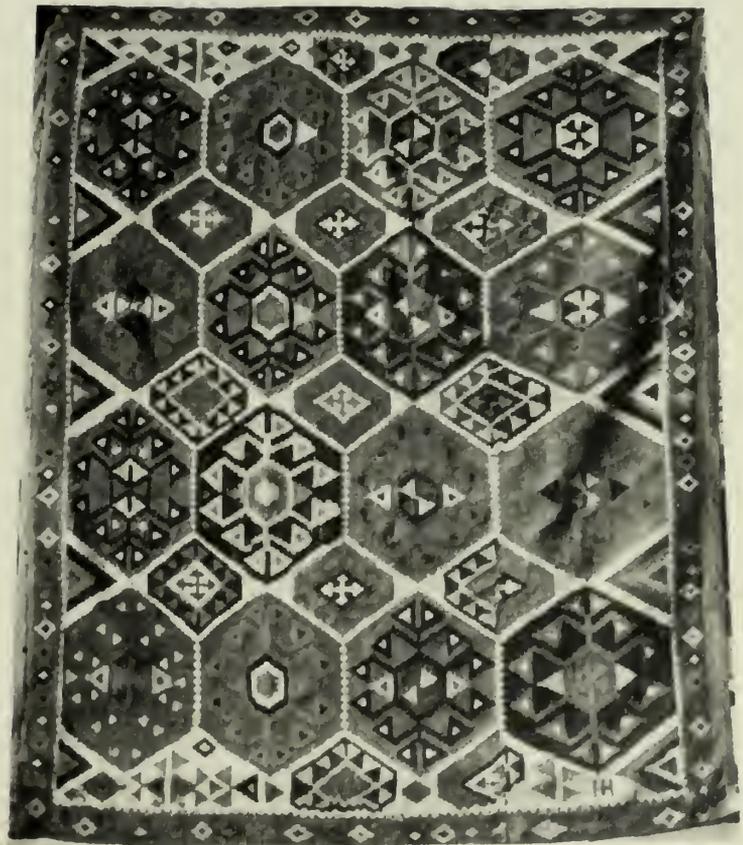
109

To the left of the Willard clock is the Guest Room, so it was called by the last two generations who occupied the house. This might be called the diplomatic room since most of the furnishings were used by Adamses while they served their country abroad. For example, the chairs from The Hague,
 110
 the Bartolozzi engravings from Prussia and the Chinese Export rose medallian

-
105. Illustration 793 -- Henry Adams' books. .
 106. Illustration 794 -- Henry Adams' toilet set.
 107. Illustration 795 -- Willard long case clock. (Ills. 795 - 798 on next pages.)
 108. Illustration 796 -- Caucasian Kelim rug.
 109. Illustration 797 -- General view of the Guest Room.
 110. Illustration 798 -- Bartolozzi engraving.



795



796

797



798



799

111

bowl and ewer which harmonizes quite naturally with the American-made table
 upon which it is placed. Close by is the American French-style bed formerly
 owned by the distinguished Daniel Webster. The Chinese Export bowl and
 pitcher could hardly look more natural than on this 18th century American
 wash stand. In this room are reminders of more than ninety years of United
 States foreign relations influenced by the Adams men.

112

113

John and Abigail Adams could not have wished to be remembered by a more
 beautiful specimen than their Turkish Ghiordes rug -- a beautiful hearth
 rug with its soft Greek meander border and red center panel. The collection
 of Turkish rugs at the Old House are of superb quality and add distinction
 to this unpretentious house.

114

115

Across the hall is a spacious, cheerful room which must have been a favorite
 of President John Adams' for he received a number of distinguished visitors
 here during his later years. In 1825 Ralph Waldo Emerson came to congratu-
 late the old President upon the election of his son John Quincy Adams as the
 sixth President of the United States. He was received in this room where
 John Adams was sitting dressed in his immaculate dressing gown. Interestingly,
 the Dutch bed, the Turkish rugs, the Silesian engravings and the English tiles
 combine with the American writing desk, chairs and the handsome American

116

117

-
111. Illustration 799 -- Chinese Export rose medallion bowl and ewer.
 112. Illustration 800 -- Daniel Webster's bed.
 113. Illustration 801 -- John Adams' Chinese Export bowl and pitcher.
 114. Illustration 802 -- Turkish Ghiordes Rug.
 115. Illustration 803 -- General view of the Presidents' Bedroom.
 116. Illustration 804 -- Dutch bed.
 117. Illustration 805 -- Silesian engravings.

(Ills. 800 - 805 are on the next pages.)

800



801

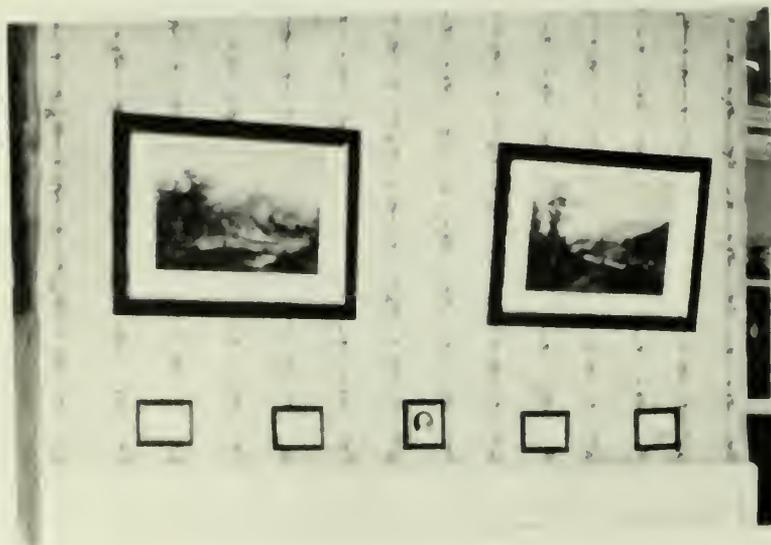


803



802

804



805



806

118

mahogany wardrobe to reflect the international culture of the occupants.

119

The bedroom of Brooks Adams mirrors his interest in the furniture of his forbears. On the walls are pictures of gems of architecture which he studied with such pleasure. His oriental rugs had association dear to his heart.

120

His great-grandmother's American chest of drawers and his grandfather's

121

English traveling case were admired and enjoyed by him; but, most of all, he

122

enjoyed the view from the west window of the ever changing picture of the 18th century English garden. Abigail Adams' garden -- the yellowwood of his grandmother and the flower beds started by his mother. What a luxury, he

often remarked, to be able to go to the window even before others in the

123

house awoke and see the dew still sparkling on the foliage of the flowers as

the sun rose. Mr. Adams always spoke with gratitude that again in the

124

evening when he was dressed for dinner, he was able to go to his window and

125

take a satisfying glimpse of his garden at the beginning of the twilight hour.

Such descriptive words for the garden as "majestic", "sublime" or "inspiring"

were thoughts he often brought to the dinner table which was frequently set

126

with his great-grandmother's pink rose Chinese Export plates.

The Adamses were not adverse to American-made products, but their purchases

118. Illustration 806 -- Mrs. Charles Francis Adams' mahogany wardrobe.

119. Illustration 807 -- General view of Brooks Adams' Bedroom.

120. Illustration 808 -- Abigail's American chest of drawers.

121. Illustration 809 -- John Quincy Adams' traveling case.

122. Illustration 810 -- View of the garden from Brooks Adams' Bedroom!

123. Illustration 811 -- View of the garden from Brooks Adams' Bedroom.

124. Illustration 812 -- Evening view of the garden from Brooks Adams' Bedroom.

125. Illustration 813 -- Twilight view of the garden from Brooks Adams' Bedroom.

126. Illustration 814 -- Abigail's Chinese Export plates.

(Ills. 807 - 814 are on the next pages.)



807



808

809



810



811



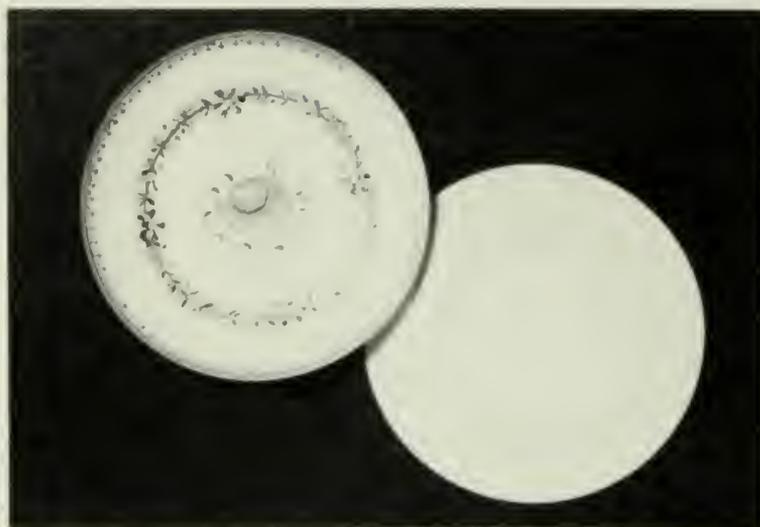


813



812

814



815

abroad consisted of things they could use for everyday life in America. In Quincy there was enough china from abroad to satisfy all of their needs. The result is that we have practically no American china in the collection. The one exception is a very handsome Tucker pitcher made in Philadelphia around 1830. During the Brooks Adams era it was used each evening to refill water glasses at the dinner table. From a letter written by Thomas Tucker to the Philadelphia Exhibition in 1876, I quote:

"My brother, William Ellis Tucker of Philadelphia, was the first manufacturer of fine porcelain in the United States. He commenced at the ...northwest corner of Schuylskill Front and Chestnut Streets about the year 1825. In 1827 he received a silver medal from the Franklin Institute of the state of Pennsylvania and a similar award from the American Institute of New York in 1831... he manufactured large quantities of fine porcelain... my brother died in 1832."

This pitcher is a very rare example of Mr. Tucker's work and compares favorably with the finest of the European china at the Adams National Historic Site.

Looking at the European furnishings is truly a review of our national diplomatic history from 1782 to 1874. And so, the Old House, like the nation, became a melting pot. It was natural that each generation of this distinguished American family allow the Old House to play its own role in American history. They realized that it was a visual example of their national heritage. Fortunately, in 1946 it was so designated by our national government to be preserved for future generations to see, to enjoy, to receive inspiration and from it increase pride in our national heritage.

127. Illustration 815 -- Tucker Pitcher.

128. Illustration 816 -- View of the Old House. (Ills. 816 and 817 on next page.)

129. Illustration 817 -- View of the Old House from the garden.



816



817

PART III

FROM FARMER TO GENTRY

Pages 967 - 998

From Farmer to Gentry was read for the 1973 Lecture Series at the Old House.

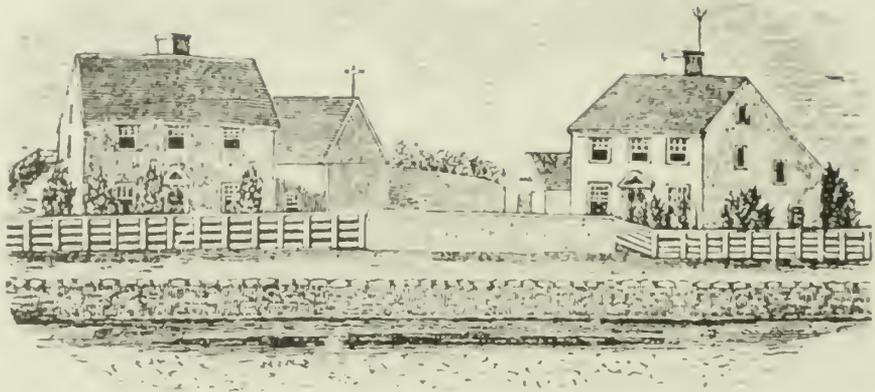
FROM FARMER TO GENTRY

From the birth of John Adams in 1735 to the death of his great-grandson Brooks Adams in 1927, each generation of Adamses had similar goals in the pursuit of literary and cultural studies. Also, each generation was dedicated to the use of his talents in the field of public service for the advancement of his country. However, the mode of life gradually changed from farming as the primary use of their land to a more sophisticated and decorative use such as growing specimen fruit and shade trees, the laying out of a park-like lawn, constructing a hot house for supplying rare and specimen plants for the formal garden and the building of granite walls to insure privacy. The transition is an interesting and informative study. It is the aim of this short paper to give an outline of the part each generation played in the process of establishing the homestead property into an estate as it exists today.

Unlike Edmund Quincy, William Coddington and Atherton Hough who had land grants of more than 200 acres each, Henry Adams received a land grant of only 40 acres when he arrived on the shores of Boston about 1636.¹ The Quincy-Coddington-Hough land was largely waterfront property extending from Squantum to Weymouth Fore River. The Henry Adams land was of less value² being inland near the intersection of what is today South and Elm Street. The Adams family bought additional land and one parcel was at the foot of

1. Andrew N. Adams, Adams Genealogy, 1898.

2. Henry Adams 2nd, The Birthplaces of Presidents John and John Quincy Adams, 1936, pg. 1.



Penn's Hill on what is today Franklin Street. Here Deacon John Adams lived
 3
 and here President John Adams was born. An old daguerreotype on the round
 table in the Long Room of the Old House shows the appearance of Deacon John's
 cottage surrounded by farm land which remained unchanged for more than a
 century.

After his wedding date was set for October 25, 1764, John Adams -- always a
 farmer at heart -- set out to improve his precious acres. The house where
 he was to take his bride was a scant 75 feet from his birthplace. In the
 southeast corner room John Adams had his law office. When his clients came,
 they were likely to find him digging ditches to drain his farm land, plough-
 ing acre after acre for future plantings of corn and clover, sometimes build-
 ing a stone wall, pruning the apple trees or planting potatoes, onions,
 cabbage and other vegetables.

On January 16, 1766, two years after John and Abigail were married, they went
 4
 to Boston to visit the Nicholas Boylstons. There they saw fine furniture
 which must have cost a thousand pounds. The handsome carpets, the crimson
 damask window hangings and the walls covered with oil portraits of the family
 created the most magnificent setting Abigail and John had ever seen. But,
 that was not all -- there was a beautiful garden and spacious grounds where
 John Adams strolled as he conversed with other interesting guests. A well
 ordered garden and farm was the ambition of most New Englanders. Like fine
 furniture and china, it was a taste brought from across the ocean.

3. Illustration 818 -- Woodcut made in 1838, The Birthplaces of Presidents
 John and John Quincy Adams by Henry Adams 2nd.

4. Adams Papers, Diary of John Adams, Volume I, pg. 294.

Time had a way of changing John Adams' plans. Much as he loved his farm, he always accepted his civic responsibility. In June of 1774⁵ he was elected a Massachusetts delegate to the Continental Congress. During the time of his election until he left for Philadelphia on August 10, 1774⁶, he attended the Eastern Circuit of the Superior Court. It was a quiet time in the court and he had time to reflect upon his loved ones on the farm. From Falmouth, Maine on July 9, 1774⁷ he wrote Abigail: "My fancy, wishes and desires are in Braintree, among my fields, pastures and meadows, as much as those of the Israelites were among the leeks, garlic and onions of the Land of Goshen." Then he added that his thoughts were "continually with you and in the neighborhood of you, and with your little prattling Nabby, Johnny, Charles and Tommy.... Pray remember me to my dear little babes, whom I long to see running to meet me and to climb upon me."⁸

With the court sessions over he returned to Braintree to await his departure for Philadelphia. During this interval he helped his hired men with the mowing, raking and carting. As he forked the hay and spread the manure, he speculated on the revolutions in France which would follow the death of Louis XV. He tried to imagine how Pitt, Demosthenes or Cicero would have reacted to the American spirit of independence. He surmised it would have been with militant vigor, "yet patience, prudence, resignation, candor and all that" must be the American path.

5. Adams Papers, Diary of John Adams, Vol. IV, pg. 260.

6. Familiar Letters of Abigail Adams.

7. IBID.

8. Page Smith, John Adams, Volume I, page 162.

On September 5, 1774 he arrived at the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia. During each session of the Continental Congress Abigail Adams assumed full responsibility of the farm and the children. Upon his return John Adams walked about his farm and decided upon a new field to clear. He knew that food for both animals and family must be raised at home. He noticed that the frost had upheaved some large stones in the clover field. He set this in order. Abigail had harvested a large sweet apple crop and had pressed all of it into cider except enough for apple pies which she dried. She had kept the accounts, paid the taxes and was frugal enough to send 100 dollars to Boston to purchase Continental Loan Certificates. Abigail had become a successful farmer in her own right. During his visits at home, their evenings were passed in talking over the proper form of government and in exploring additional books for John's library. They called upon Parson Wibird, the Warrens in Plymouth and Reverend and Mrs. William Smith, Abigail's parents. John Adams did steal away on occasion to go to Thayer's Tavern where he was treated as a great man in the council of the nation.

Then in November, 1777 came the appointment to France for the purpose of negotiating a Treaty of Peace with Great Britain. John Adams and son John Quincy Adams sailed for France from Boston aboard the frigate Boston in 1778.⁹

Abigail, with her usual sound judgment, assumed the full responsibility of the land and with her meager funds managed to buy seven additional acres of land at the foot of Penn's Hill.¹⁰ It had been family owned land and John Adams had expressed a desire for it. Abigail estimated there would be

9. Adams Papers, Volume 4, page 262, ed. Lyman H. Butterfield.

10. Letter to John Adams, May 7, 1783.



819

forty-five cords of wood on the rocky soil. That was not John Adams' memory, for he enthusiastically described it as a fine grove which he had loved and admired from his cradle.

After the Peace Treaty was signed by John Adams, he and Thomas Jefferson in April, 1786¹¹ toured the English countryside. They were both impressed with the magnificance of the large estates and open countryside. They examined the soil, enjoyed the spring foliage and for the moment were farmers, not diplomats. John Adams was estatic over the giant trees, the hedges and the pools. The long range views of hills and grazing animals were his delight. Two months later Jefferson received a letter from his old friend inquiring¹² about French gardens in comparison to the English. It was with that interest and observation of beautiful English and European gardens that John and Abigail Adams decided to purchase the Vassall house and 75 acres of land while they were still in London. They had remembered visiting the John Borlands and knew of its 18th century English garden and the Santo-Domingo mahogany room.

John Adams had been ten years abroad and Abigail Adams for approximately four years. Upon arrival in Boston there had been a warm public welcome, but what pleased Abigail more, she was to be united once more with her sons, her sisters and other near and dear friends. Upon seeing the Old House¹³ for the first time, Abigail was dismayed at the size and the dilapidated condition

11. Jefferson Papers, edited by Julian Boyd, Vol. IX, pages 369-73.

12. Adams-Jefferson Letters, edited by Lester J. Cappon, page 137.

13. Illustration 819 - Malcolm Drawing of the Old House (Vassall House).

of this house purchased for them by their brother-in-law Richard Cranch. Before her foreign sojourn she had compared the Vassall House to their small house on Franklin Street where her children were all born, and it had impressed her as spacious. At that time the Vassall House was occupied by the Borlands, descendants of the original owner. Now she had Auteuil and the Grosnevor Square houses for comparison -- the Old House was but a "wren's nest." She had no place to unpack her trunks and the furniture from the Hague Embassy was too crowded to enjoy. Even so, she was happy to be in her "wren's nest" and she remarked that the birds sang more sweetly in her garden than any French nightingale or English lark.

John Adams' reaction was that of complete happiness. He was at long last going to be a farmer again. As he looked at his land, he recalled Voltaire's remark that, "the best thing we have to do on earth is to cultivate it."

John Adams proposed to do just that! There was only one small barn of sorts on the newly purchased property, but that did not deter him from immediately buying six cows as a present to his distraught Abigail. She concealed her exasperation but wondered where the cows could be housed, especially during the winter.

Within a month two foreign dignitaries arrived by ship in Boston and came out to pay their respects. John Adams welcomed them to, as he called it, the "farm of a patriot."¹⁴ Farmer Adams and Abigail became depressed as they saw their savings dwindle and more repairs to the house and farm needed. To

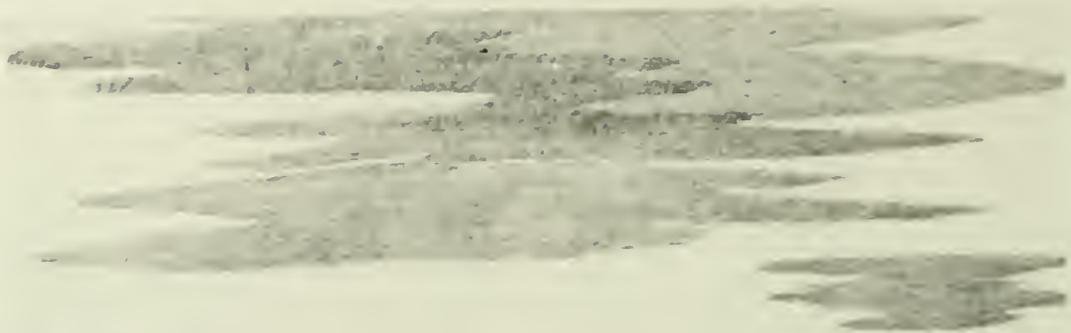
14. The Adamses at Home, Editors of the Adams Papers, page 10.

add to this, their son John Quincy Adams had a severe attack of nerves and came home to recuperate. Father and son walked in the Blue Hills, pitched manure in the barnyard, but during the evenings discussed law and politics as they sat by the fire in the mahogany pannelled room. Both improved by being together -- John's spirits soared so high that he bought 15 more heifers without a thought of proper housing.

Then in 1789 came the call to serve as Vice-President. Though he enjoyed working with President Washington, so many letters seeking his influence to obtain government jobs came to John Adams that his pleasure was lessened by these requests. Even his old friend Mercy Warren and brother-in-law Cranch asked his aid to obtain employment. He longed more and more for a life on the farm with Abigail. Letters from Quincy mentioned the fields sown in barley, the lilac in full blossom perfuming the air and the pussy willows ready to burst. Abigail had planted the asparagus and she had prepared the small plot in front of the house in anticipation of her nastursiums and "daffies." In one letter she wrote of Black's Creek overflowing and of applying "goose oil" to the throat of a newborn lamb stricken with mumps. She frequently mentioned the need of better housing for her farm products and livestock.

Vice President Adams never remained in Philadelphia longer than was absolutely necessary. When Congress adjourned, he left at once for home, Abigail

15. Abigail Adams to John Adams, May 31, 1789.



820

and the farm. In November, 1792, after a heart-warming visit of about six months on the farm, he made preparations to return to his official duties. He assembled a pile of books to take along for reading during his tedious drive to Philadelphia. Briesler his man servant was given instructions by Abigail to build a fire, warm the blankets and do what he could to dry out the cold, damp beds in each tavern where they stopped for the night. In the confusion of packing John Adams' books were forgotten. This was a real tragedy and Abigail's confidence in Briesler was shaken. The sight of the forgotten books and the thought of John Adams without reading material caused Abigail concern. She even feared Briesler would forget to warm the bed, ect! ¹⁶

The journey was made more unpleasant by a heavy snowstorn in Hartford which delayed them several days. This same storm reached Quincy within forty-eight hours. Abigail was happy to be able to write her husband that the sheep were warm in their shed and that the horses had ample hay to keep them warm. She also wrote John Adams that work on the farm was not delayed by this storm as the hired man had hauled by sled the timbers cut for the new corn crib. Perhaps even Abigail did not realize that 1793 was to be the beginning of an extensive building program for the farm.

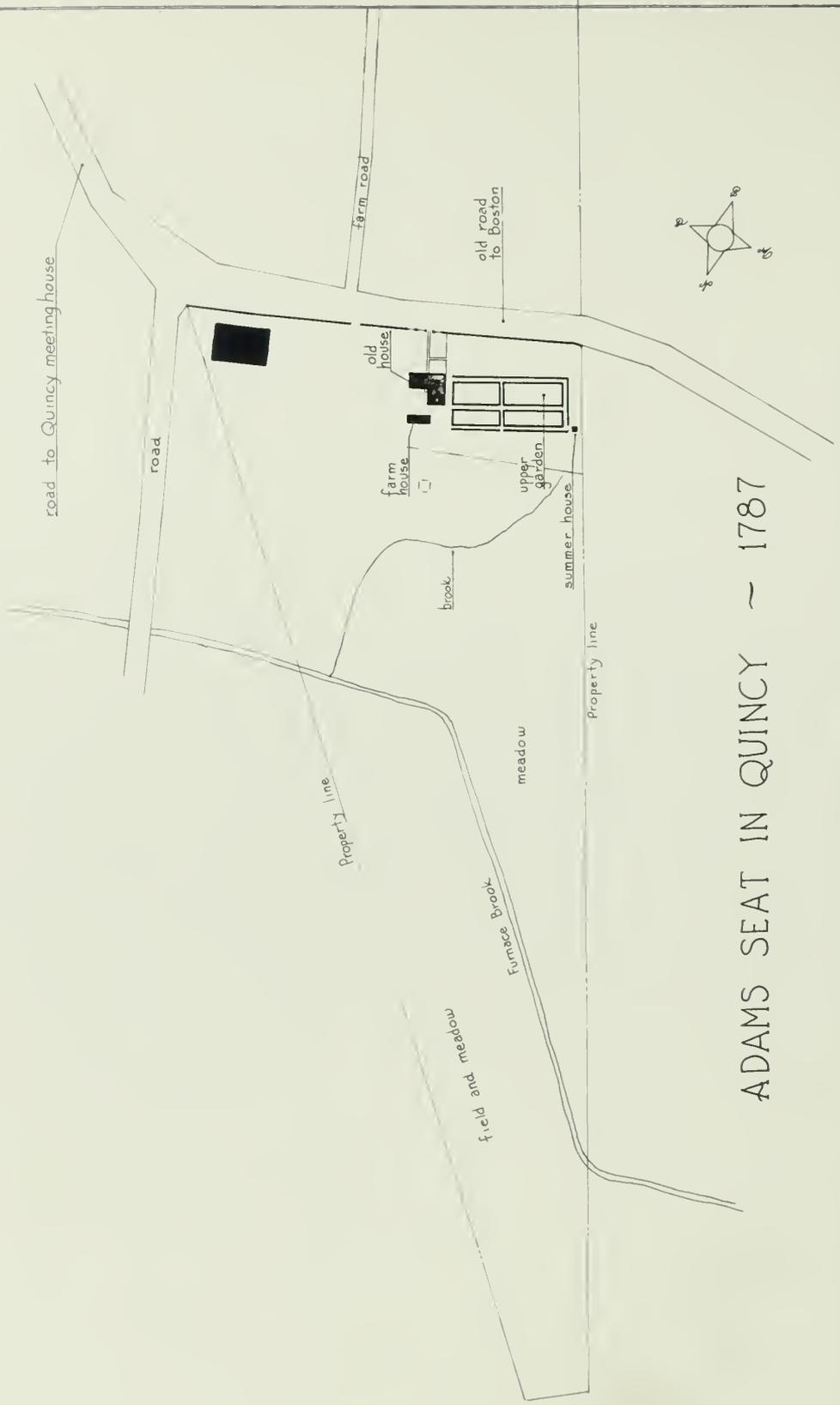
The corn crib was badly needed for storage of the farm products. It was completed in the spring of 1793. Five years later the tax evaluation gave the dimensions as 30' x 18'. In Mrs. Whitney's drawing the sloping sides, two ¹⁷

16. Page Smith, John Adams, page 838.

17. Illustration 820 -- Drawing by Mrs. Whitney, 1828.

windows, a door and a chimney (an unusual appurtenance for a corn house) are visible. This building was only mentioned briefly thereafter. Cotton Tufts wrote John Adams on November 3, 1797, "the Harvesting is finished and the corn is in the crib." Two years later on December 14, 1799 he wrote that 100 bushels of "Indian Corn" were stored in the crib. During the absence of Vice President John Adams, Abigail kept him informed of the spring ploughing, of the fields being fertilized with seaweed and manured as well as other day to day activities. On March 14 and 26 and April 11, 1794 she sent him lists of things she needed, such as: 5 cows, the whole apparatus for a dairy and for making cheese, 2 wheelbarrows, 2 spades, 2 forks, 2 shovels, 2 work oxen and 2 hoes. She needed wagon wheels, the old ones being too worn to haul the hundred loads of manure to be spread on the fields. The trees were tarred as he had suggested, though the bugs still plagued them. Money was scarce and she found it difficult to make ends meet. Since John Adams found government procedure fatiguing, he must have enjoyed her farm news.

John Adams came home after an absence of only six months and was delighted to have the ~~summer~~ and early fall of 1794 on the farm. What a pleasant experience to have a chance to see the corn picked, the pumpkins showing their rich yellow glow in the fields, to see the trees loaded with St. Germain and St. Michael pears, the Russett apples ready for him to eat as he walked in the fields. And, of course, he was delighted to see the Mackintosh apples ripening for pies, applesauce and for the cider press. There was an abundance of crabapples, quince, plums and grapes for making jelly. All summer he had enjoyed home-grown asparagus, cucumbers, cossack cabbages, onions and



ADAMS SEAT IN QUINCY ~ 1787

18

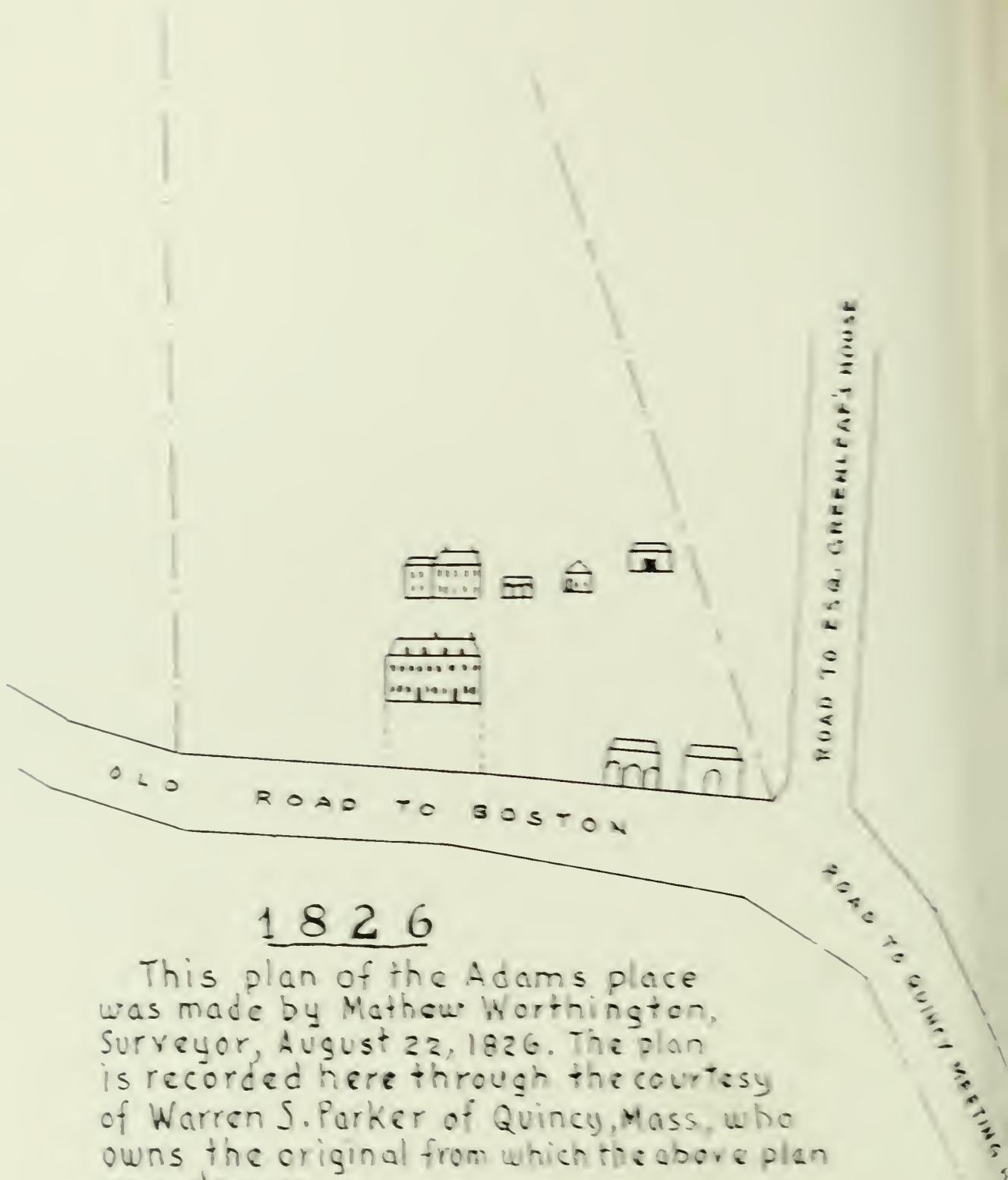
squash. On November 4 Abigail wrote her husband that "90 Bushels of potatoes" had been dug and on November 23 that 60 loads of seaweed had been spread upon the clover and orchard. An abundance of food was a joy for the Adams farmers.

Progress did not stop with increased efficiency as a farmer since the comfort of the family was always Abigail's first thought. It had then become urgent to have additional living accommodations. The Old House had only four large chambers, two attic rooms and a kitchen with sleeping quarters above. Being President required more space for guests and family living. The deed in 1787 mentioned "other buildings." Just North of the kitchen was a building 54' x 15½', perhaps one of the so called "other buildings." In this building at the west end bordering the formal garden was a section 22'7" x 15½' used as the wash house. It had a fireplace, and by 1800 Abigail had installed a washing machine.

"Parson Weld has obtained a Patent for a Washing Machine, which he calls a Lavator; We have several of them amongst us and are highly useful, as the Cloaths may be washd with great Dispatch, without exposing the woman to warm suds or wearing their Hands - further than wringing the cloaths after they are wash'd - a wringer has been made for the Purpose, but those that have been made here have not answered. A Boy or Girl of 12 years old may manage the Lavator, and in Three Hours wash the Cloaths of a large Family..."²⁰

The remaining 31'5" of this building contained the wood shed and office. The three arched doors marked the section used as the woodshed and the door and two windows, the part used as an office. Soon this building was to be changed

-
18. Nelson, Documented Narrative of Buildings and Grounds -- Appendix V.
 19. No changes had been made from Leonard Vassall's time though Royal Tyler in 1788 had paid 1000 pounds down on the purchase of the property only to forfeit it after his broken engagement to Abigail Adams 2nd.
 20. Cotton Tufts to Abigail Adams, February 25, 1800 (Adams Papers - reel 397).



1826

This plan of the Adams place was made by Mathew Worthington, Surveyor, August 22, 1826. The plan is recorded here through the courtesy of Warren S. Parker of Quincy, Mass., who owns the original from which the above plan was drawn.

for the use of the servants.

There was much correspondence with Dr. Cotton Tufts about arranging this building to accommodate additional staff. She wrote him from Philadelphia on June 14, 1797:

"I could wish you sir if possible to accomplish it to have the Chamber over the office finish'd as I know not what I shall do for lodging rooms for Men Servants. ...We shall have four men Servants with us --...the Chamber I know will be the work of only ten days or a fournight."

She wished more space to avoid the mixing of families on the President's staff. She proposed to remove the woodshed, turn that section into a farm kitchen and add $15\frac{1}{2}$ feet on the north side of this section making the dimensions 22'7" x 32'. This created a 15' jog on the north side since the wash house width remained unchanged. On November 24, 1797 Dr. Tufts wrote Abigail approving of her plan to extend the width of the woodshed and office. On March 31, 1798 he suggested an additional change to the roof line, eliminating the old sloping roof thus allowing for four upright chambers and two new ²¹ chimneys. Two of the rooms could even be combined into a spacious library for the President. Abigail was delighted with the idea of a library for the President and was enthusiastic that it be done as a surprise to him. This seems to have been accomplished for the northeast corner room was later referred to as the President's study and office during the last three years he was President.

The original woodshed section was changed into a farm kitchen. This was

21. Illustration 821 -- Drawing of the farm house after all alterations. This same drawing will be referred to on future pages.

accomplished by removing the decorative arched doors and replacing them with windows. The old first floor office and the farm kitchen were combined into quarters for Mr. Porter the tenant farmer. In the Eaton Survey of 1849 the building was listed as having 23 windows, 552 squares of glass and 2 large chimneys.

Abigail's building program continued in 1799. She was not well and did not return to Philadelphia for 15 months. This gave her ample opportunity to plan and execute changes and additions to the farm. The three decorative arches in the old woodshed must have been saved because of the scarcity of lumber and the frugality of Abigail. This appears a reasonable assumption though it has not been documented. The new woodshed was the same design as
22
the old one which leads one to believe the arches were reused. The new woodshed was erected close to the house for convenience, of course. It is well to note that the woodshed exists today (1974) and is situated on the east boundary of the property next to the service entrance gate.

The summer of 1799 was an interesting time for President John Adams and Abigail Adams. Though there still exists tangible evidence of their attractive woodshed, it was only one of four buildings which they erected that year. A cider house and barns were the next buildings to be built. As early as
23
September 7 and 8, 1796 John Adams mentions "picking apples and making Cyder." He also noted that his "farm hands were preparing the Cyder Mill, Press, and

22. See the woodshed arches in Illustration 821 on page 977.

23. Diary of John Adams, Volume 3, pgs. 246 and 247, ed. by Lyman Butterfield.

Casks." Later the cider house was only briefly mentioned. The building was completed in the fall of 1799 since Abigail wrote her husband on October 24, 1799:

"They expect to finish the cider house and Barn within the course of a week..."

On November 13, 1799 Abigail Adams wrote to Cotton Tufts:

"The President hopes you will not omit to have 8 or 9 Barrels of good late made cider, put up in the cellar for his own particular use..."

Cider was a favorite drink of John Adams. In 1796 John Adams recorded in his Diary his practice of a morning glass of cider:

"In conformity to the fashion I drank this Morning and Yesterday Morning, about a Jill of Cyder. It seems to do me good, ²⁴ by diluting and dissolving the Phlegm or Bile in the stomach."

He further justified the use of cider as causing "no ill but some good ²⁵ effect." Thereafter the cider house was rarely mentioned.

The building of a stable and barn was discussed in correspondence much more ²⁶ frequently than had the cider house. At first it was considered practical to use the old Borland barn for hay and build only a new barn for the coach house. President John Adams wanted a modest structure as indicated in his letter to Abigail on December 14, 1798 from Philadelphia:

"The barn must not be a monument of Foppery. I should be content to have it 16 foot Post. But if it is thought advisable I suppose we can get ...new Posts long enough for twenty feet. I protect against two buildings and all expensive ornaments."

24. John Adams' Diary, Volume 3, pg. 234, ed. Lyman Butterfield.

25. IBID, page 235.

26. See Illustration 821 on page 977.

On January 4, 1799 Abigail Adams wrote her husband:

"...With respect to the Barn, I cannot conceive that any thing more is necessary than a Building calculated to keep the Hay secure, and accommodate the stock which may be kept upon the place - like the one you built upon French place, only larger - if it is your intention that the Stables make a part of it, they certainly must be of the same height. Accordingly there are 16 foot posts procured for them. I do not pretend to be any judge myself, but tis said by those who are, that it will be a very Heavey looking Building & quite unaccommodating for Stables - which will require to be tighter than the Barn. I should therefore think a plain Building for stables separate would be the best, but as you will very probable be at Home before any thing will be done, you will judge for yourself."

Evidently, she convinced her husband of the advantage of two buildings for John Adams gave his permission. That Abigail was very pleased can be gathered from her letter to her son Thomas on June 15, 1799.

"I have not any subject of consequence to communicate except ...the rising of our two buildings which are to my mind. -- they look very stately. B. Adams says if any body should ask who owns the best house in Quincy, or rather who is best lodgd, he shall reply the President's horses."

1799 can be called a banner year for farmer Abigail -- a cider house, barn, stable and, most importantly, that very solid woodshed still standing as a reminder of this colorful, resourceful and intelligent American lady.

The influence of living in the forty-room mansion at Auteuil, France and at the Embassy in London had given Abigail a glimpse of life beyond the farm though she was remarkably well adjusted to simple living. Her last building efforts and change of life style was in 1800 when she added a drawing room for her Louis XV furniture, a large room above for the President to use as a study and two family bedrooms on the third floor. The drawing room and study were quite spacious measuring 19' x 27'. The fireplaces in both the Long

Room and the Study were planned by Abigail while she was in Philadelphia.

In a letter to Cotton Tufts written April 30, 1800 Abigail said:

"by this vessel we propose to send the marble for the herths and the sides and front of the chimney which I request may be made to conform to them. Mr. Bates is to make a mantle peice in both the rooms & the chimneys to be both alike for bigness -- the sides of the Jams will also send which will be of cast Iron. the backs you will provide. I propose that there should be a portico over the back door the same as the front."

27

On May 3 of the same year she wrote her sister:

"Yesterday I sent some Trunks on Board a vessel with my Hearths and Jams. When they arrive and are to be put up, I will thank Mr. Cranch to be present with his advice. I would have the chimneys made to conform to them. I am much affraid of having the Chimneys contracted too small, which in a Room so large would look bad. I have mentiond to the Doctor the method in which I am told the Hearths & fronts must be put up. I will thank you when the Rooms new painted are quite dry to have the furniture replaced."

Once completed, Abigail placed her Louis XV furniture and it is there today (1974) just as she planned it to be.

Mr. Brooks Adams always said that Abigail connected the 1800 East Hallway to the kitchen at the time the Drawing Room was built. When the rehabilitation in 1965 was done, research did not reveal him to be in error. The second floor has always been attributed to John Quincy Adams. This has been documented, but it does not really negate Mr. Brooks Adams' theory about the first floor. I quote a couple of references which appear to strengthen Mr. Brooks Adams' theory. The first is a letter dated April 28, 1800 from

27. New Letters of Abigail Adams, page 250, ed. Stewart Mitchell.

Mary Cranch to Abigail Adams:

"I told Mr. Bates how you would have your house done I read him the directions and talk'd with the masons & painters. You have no way to get from your new room to the Kitchin but by going out of the back entry door or thro your other rooms. I see but one way you can have it -- you may have an small entry from where your window next to your Kitchin Dresser is to the new entry. it would darken the back window in your north room but you might have another in this little entry & opposite to it which would admit the light from the yard. the door would open in the side of the great entry facing the kitchin window this need not prevent a door to open from the great entry into the back yard. I have talk'd with Mr. Bates upon the subject he says it can easily be done but he had no orders for it. I think a passage some how or other is what you will want -- The Rooms will be beautifully pleasent."

28

From Philadelphia on May 5, 1800 Abigail wrote to Mary Cranch:

"I should like much to have a passage to the Kitchin from the entry; My intention was to have a closset taken of where the dressers now are, & to have taken in the other closset into the kitchin. I care very little about the North window, which must be darkned by the other building, but as you observe a window may be made opposite. The cellar door might be removed if necessary and my Liquors were removed, but that is not practicable at Present. If Mr. Cranch, Dr. Tufts or Mr. Bates can contrive such a communication, it would be very desirable."

With the East Hallway, a beautiful drawing room, a spacious study and two family bedrooms on the third floor, Abigail's building program came to a close. Her interest in improving the grounds continued. On April 30, 1800 she ordered 50 Lombardy poplars set out as an experiment. They were used to mark the line between the Adams and Beale properties.

"...the President has autherised me to have a number of Lombardy poplars sit out opposite the House near the wall which was new sit two years ago he says he will have them extended from the gate against Beals to the corner against Mr Blacks. I am first

28. New Letters of Abigail Adams, page 251, ed. Stuart Mitchell.



822



823

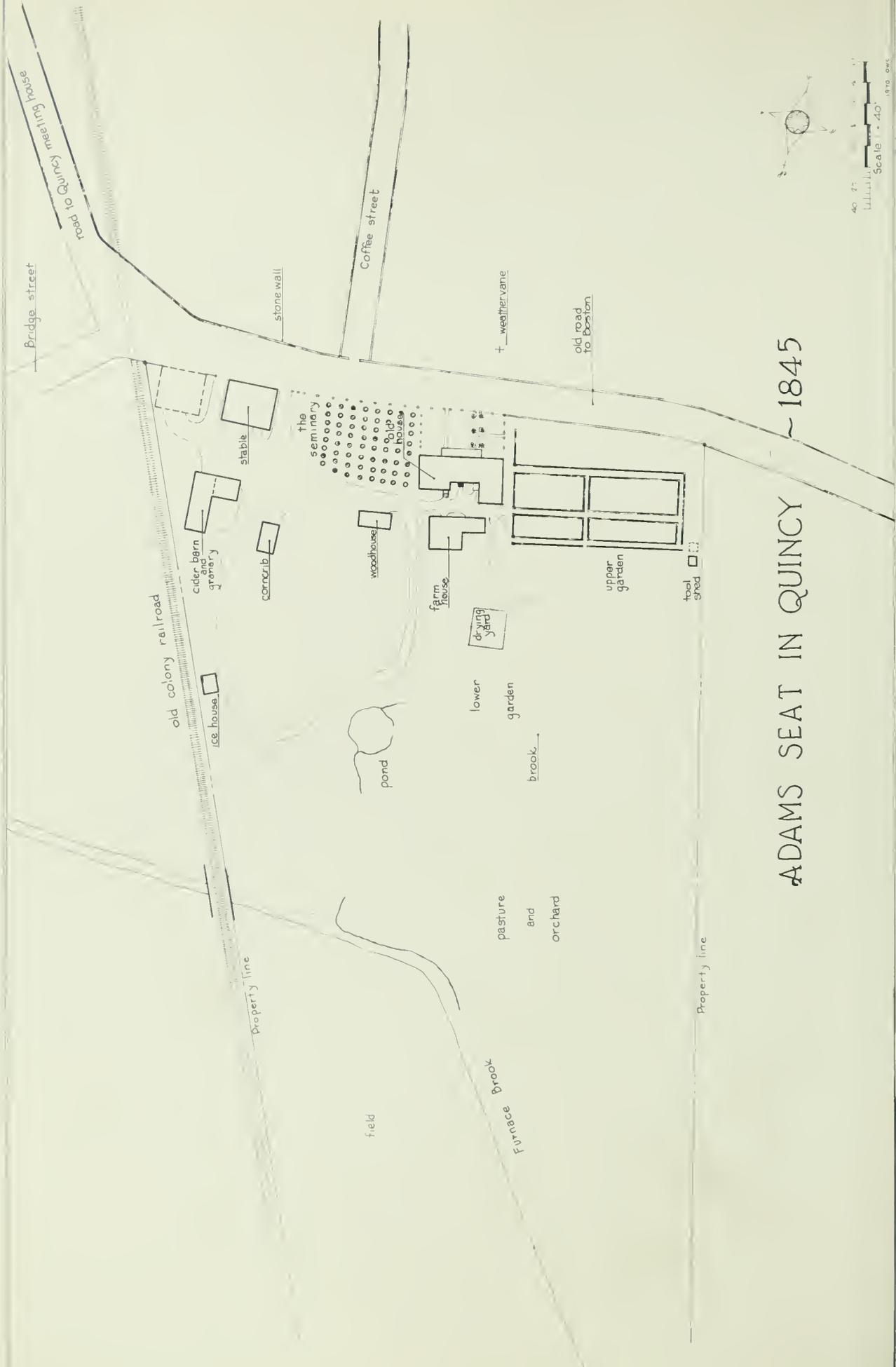
for making an experiment of about 50 as far as they will extend in front - and that those should be of the same size. ..."

While John Adams was both Vice President and President, it was not always possible for Abigail to accompany him. For example, when he was inaugurated President, Abigail was in Quincy nursing her husband's dying mother; therefore, did not witness this great inaugural event. When she did go away, her letters home were full of instructions to plant beans, peas, cucumbers, cabbage, onions, squash, pumpkin, asparagus and a special charge to care for the fruit trees, her four o'clocks, stusions, colombine, larkspur and foxtail. After retirement, John Adams wrote Skelton Jones in 1809 that he passed his time in his library, in his garden and on his farm. John Adams lived in the Old House the year around until his death, July 4, 1826, his beloved Abigail having predeceased him by eight years.

We read much of the Industrial Revolution and its effect upon American life, but there was an equally important Agricultural Revolution of which John Adams was a part. He and Abigail had fertilized their soil, planted many different kinds of crops and for their day were versitile farmers. But there was no substitute for wood to burn as fuel. John Adams cut all the trees around the house for heating purposes and the result was that Wollaston Hill on the North and the wooded area on the south side of the Old House were
29 & 30
completely deforested.

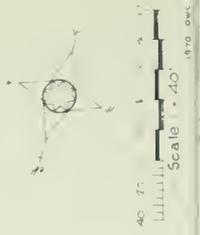
29. Illustration 822 -- Drawing by Eliza Susan Quincy in 1822.

30. Illustration 823 -- Drawing of the Old House and Wollaston Hill by Sarah Apthorp in 1837. Each drawing illustrates the deforestation of the land at this time in the history of the farm.



~ 1845

ADAMS SEAT IN QUINCY

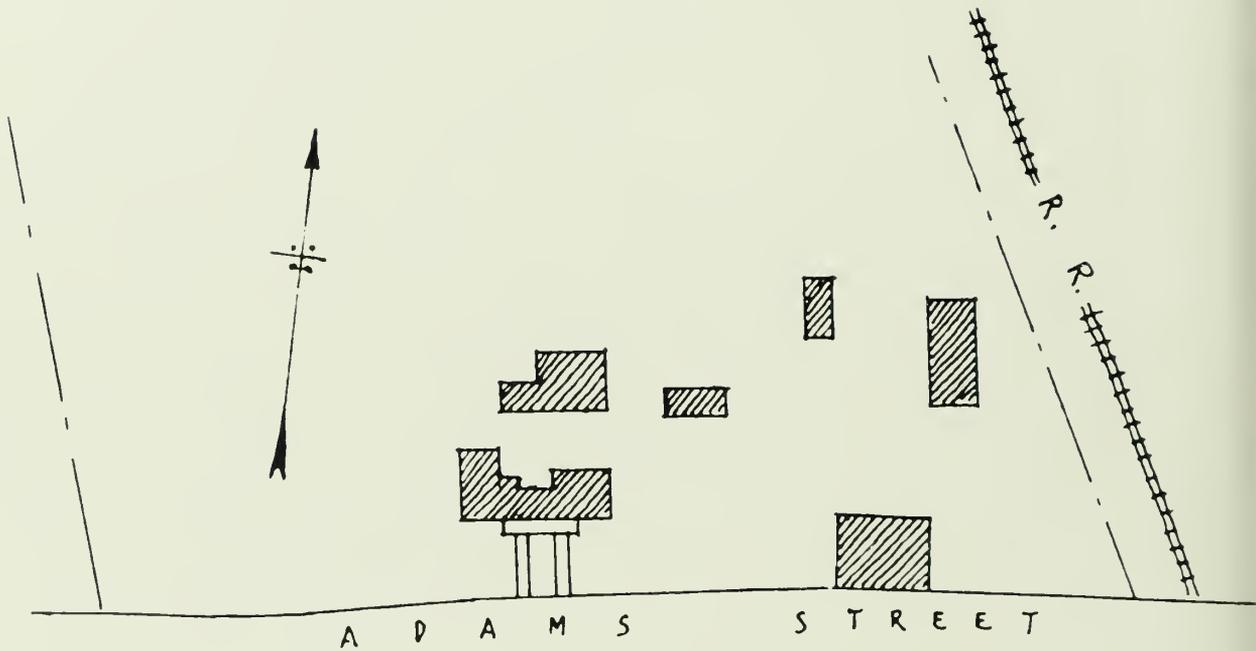


Scale 1" = 40'
1910 O.W.

Such were the conditions when President John Quincy Adams took over the Old House after his father's death. Using the farm for summer only, he was not in need of so much wood for fuel. He wanted to restore his land to its original wooded state and began at once to plant trees. Haying, spreading manure and growing farm products were of secondary interest to the sixth President. The science of farming was his specialty. He had a greenhouse in the northwest corner of the present 18th century garden where he planted seeds of all types of trees. In this nursery, as he called it, he had dozens of seedlings of oaks, elms, maple, catalpha, willow and buttonwood, to name only a few. He planted a variety of fruit trees such as: apple, peach, pear, plum, lime, whortleberry and persimmon. Then there were nut trees such as chestnut and walnut. Horticulture was his main interest. The farm as a field of clover, hay, ect. could not interest him. According to his Diary of September 13, 1839, he converted a part of the east lawn into beds of fruit trees. He called this section a "seminary" for seedlings. There were eight rows of eight rings in which each had a peach, cherry or black walnut seedling planted. These rings were surrounded by grass. John Quincy Adams had little interest in flowers and so expressed it in his Diary of August 24, 1835 as follows:

"I cannot bring myself to take much interest in flowers because they pass off and perish leaving nothing behind -- but the trees now seemingly as evanescent as the petal of a rose, and which one hundred years hence will bear delicious fruit or afford a shelter and a shade of after ages of men; these yield me delight."

31. Illustration 824 -- The Adams' grounds plans showing the completed "Seminary" arranged by President John Quincy Adams. Description taken from Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, ed. by Charles Francis Adams.



1849

This plan is a tracing of a portion of the survey made by S. D. Eaton, Surveyor, June 1849. Recorded through courtesy Henry Adams II. See also notes and plan of 1826, this sheet.

He had a very special personal interest in two white mulberry trees. They were grown for his wife's silkworms which was of absorbing interest to her. Whether consciously or unconsciously John Quincy Adams recognized that reforestation was an important part of the Agricultural Revolution, he regretted that his interest in trees had developed so late in life.

At the death of President John Quincy Adams in 1848, his son Charles Francis
32
Adams took over the Quincy property though his mother had life estate according to the terms of her husband's will. The property and its problems were familiar to Charles Francis Adams for he had acted as official agent at an agreed salary since February 20, 1832. From the time of his marriage Charles
33 & 34
Francis Adams and his wife divided their summer months between Quincy and Medford. Louisa Catherine Adams and her daughter-in-law got along well together. The people and customs of Quincy were strange to Mrs. Adams after passing the most of her life abroad. Her daughter-in-law Mrs. Charles Francis Adams was companionable; she adapted well to Quincy and made the early 1830's pleasant years for Louisa Catherine Adams to remember.

Even so, they must have been difficult visits for Mrs. Charles Francis Adams
35
considering her lifestyle at the large, spacious Brooks estate in Medford and even her own very small house at 3 Hancock Avenue, Boston which her father Peter C. Brooks had bought and largely furnished for her use after her

-
32. Illustration 825 -- Plan of the property of the late President John Quincy Adams showing the new railroad on the east boundary.
33. Illustration 826 -- Mrs. Charles Francis Adams by Willaim Edward West.
34. Illustration 827 -- Charles Francis Adams by Charles Bird King.
35. Illustration 828 -- Brooks' Home in Medford courtesy of The Adams Papers.
(Ills. 826 - 828 are on the next page.)



826



827



828

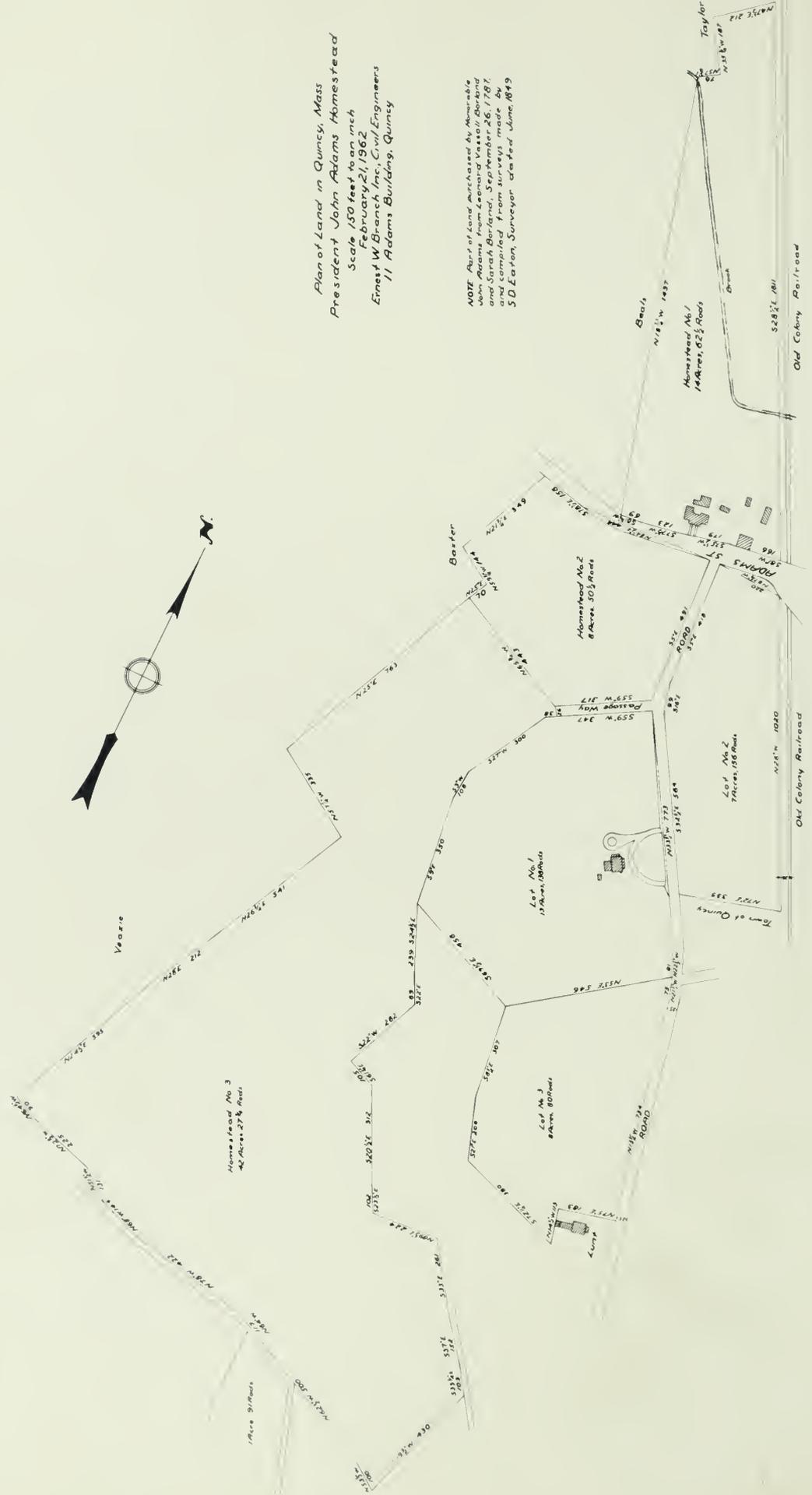
marriage. Conveniences at the Old House were nil and space was inadequate for two families. While the ladies were enjoying themselves with the children and in watching the spinning of Mrs. John Quincy Adams' silk worms, Charles Francis Adams was busy with his father's horticultural venture. One day in May, 1833 Charles Francis Adams did so much physical work that his hands were blistered and he was so fatigued at the close of the day that any intellectual efforts were impossible. The conflict between the farm life as his forbears had known it and the affluent style of life to which his wife had been accustomed was of concern to him. Another very vital part of his thinking was the political advantage of a large circle of influential friends he and Mrs. Adams were enjoying in Boston.

In 1837 Charles Francis Adams built a house on Presidents Lane in Quincy. Here his large family had more space than at the Old House, but housekeeping was still more primitive than in Boston. Charles Francis Adams continued to be active in farm improvements of every kind. On March 23, 1846 he met the stone mason and made a plan for the building of a granite wall on the south side of Adams Street opposite the Old House. He called it an experiment, but it evidently was satisfactory, for on Friday, November 6 that same year he recorded in his Diary that the stone wall was completed. Charles Francis Adams continued to build stone walls until they were erected on the south and east sides of the Old House property and on each side of Presidents Lane.

In 1848 after his father's death and 1849 after his father-in-law's death,

Plan of Land in Quincy, Mass
 President John Adams Homestead
 Scale 150 feet to an inch
 February 21, 1962
 Ernest W. Branch, Inc., Civil Engineers
 11 Adams Building, Quincy

NOTE Part of Land purchased by Annable
 John Adams from Leonard Vassall, Boston
 and Sarah Ballard, September 21, 1771,
 and compiled from various sources by
 J.D. Eaton, Surveyor dated June 1879

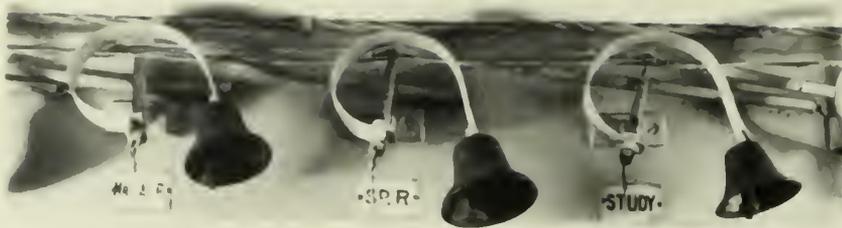


the inheritance from both sides of the family gave Mr. and Mrs. Charles Francis Adams sufficient financial resources to consider improvements at 57 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston where they had lived during the winters since 1841 and the Old House where they were to live in the future during the summer. Both Mr. and Mrs. Adams had been dissatisfied in Boston because the house was badly arranged -- only one room was pleasant and Mrs. Adams had given it, according to their son Brooks, to his father for his library and for a place for him to converse with his political friends.

On February 2, 1849 Charles Francis Adams recorded that the city of Boston had introduced a water supply system. Up to that time, even in Boston, cisterns filled with rain water caught from the roof of the house had supplied water for family use. This was unsatisfactory because the rain water was impregnated with smoke and cinders. In Quincy it was even less convenient. With a desire to make life easier Charles Francis Adams installed a force pump and brought running water into the kitchen of the Old House in 1850. However, there was no sink until 1852 when he put in the two soapstone sinks still in use. Mrs. Adams employed maids but had no way of easily communicating with them. Charles Francis Adams had the row of bells in the kitchen installed in 1852. Mrs. Adams was then able to call her staff from each room in the whole house. Bedrooms were inadequate for both family and the

36. Illustration 829 -- The extent of the Adams property in front of the Old House. They had additional land in other sections of Quincy.

37. Illustration 830 -- Bells for each room installed in the kitchen.
(Next page.)



830



831

domestic help. Mrs. Adams was troubled over this situation. Of more than a passing problem was the dry rot which had set in and made the Long Room in the 1800 section of the Old House unsafe for use. This was completely rebuilt in 1852. The grounds were not forgotten -- Mrs. Adams removed some of the fruit trees from the old garden as she preferred flowers. Indeed, fruit trees, clover fields, seaweed, ect. were not her style of life.

By this time during the winter in Boston their daughter Louisa was having dancing parties. Charles Francis Adams was taking the family to the theatre, concerts and opera. He was pleased with the cultural advantages of the city. Quincy offered family sea bathing and picnics; relaxation for him to do political writing and to explore his father's, grand-father's and grand-mother's books; and, of course, still inspired by filial devotion, an opportunity to carry on his father's horticultural program. But he found Boston life more stimulating.

Mrs. Adams did little to the interior of the Old House. She changed the door hinges in the Mahogany Room to silver-plated hinges and in 1855 remodeled the dining room. Considering her available means to bring the Old House up to her standards, this was a modest change. The Adams men and women of each generation seemed to have realized that the Old House was too important as an historic picture of our national life to needlessly alter what had gone before. Each generation showed restraint in maintenance and a great respect

38. Illustration 831--- Silver-plate door hinges in the Panned Room.

for preservation of the historic message the Old House had to offer.

In 1858 Charles Francis Adams was elected to the U. S. Congress. Mrs. Adams was reluctant to leave Boston and delayed her departure until about November 28, 1859 with Congress to assemble in approximately twelve days. Life in Washington was interesting for Charles Francis Adams and Mrs. Adams soon found herself in the middle of what she could do best -- receiving and entertaining those people with whom her husband had political and literary association. Mrs. Adams' heart was heavy though, for her family unit which gave her real happiness had been torn apart by this separation. Happily, Mrs. Adams' return to Quincy in the summer was even more pleasant than she had appreciated before going to Washington. After using lamps and candles to light the Old House, in August, 1860 a real milestone occurred; gas lighting was installed. Charles Francis Adams noted in his Diary on Friday, August 17, 1860... "This is the march of civilization into the rural districts."

Mr. Lincoln was inaugurated President on March 4, 1861. To the complete surprise of the Adams family the following March 19, the morning newspaper arrived in Boston about breakfast time stating that Charles Francis Adams had been named by President Lincoln to the post of American Minister to the Court of St. James's. Of this Charles Francis Adams recorded in his Diary:

"... In one sense it flatters my pride that I make the third in lineal descent in my family on whom that honor has been conferred by his country, an unprecedented case in American annals."

His mind turned then to the effect it would have on his future:

"Turning from this to merely domestic questions, this event



832

833



involves great changes in our household which I dare scarcely look in the face -- An abandonment of all my pursuits at home, of my literary labors and perhaps of my duty to my father's memory. I turn my eyes away from these prospects of green fields and shady pastures and strive to remember that I owe a duty of my own age and country too."

One of the heaviest burdens for him must have been the interruption of his study of Greek which he began in 1844 and, to use his words, "I shall now pursue Greek resolutely until I can thoroughly master it."

While in England from 1861-68 and in Geneva from 1871-72, Mrs. Charles Francis Adams, according to her son Brooks who was his father's secretary in Geneva, entertained freely and very handsomely. Her son also gave her credit for a large share of the success his father had as Minister to Great Britain and Arbitrator of the "Alabama Claims" in Geneva. That her husband recognized her contributions to his success can best be understood from the following entry in his Diary in London on April 25, 1868:

"Mrs. Adams is this day sixty years old. I think she has been steadily gaining in health during the last year, for which I feel much encouraged. She received today from a circle of forty eight ladies, being most of her most intimate lady friends a little testimonial of their regard for her which gave us both the highest gratification. It was a quiet spontaneous tribute to her excellent nature in which I feel the highest pride, as well as to her discretion through all the trials of which her situation has been full. How little I could have done in society here without her aid... Indeed my father's prediction that I should be a hermit secluded in my own cell all my life might have been verified but for her."³⁹ & ⁴⁰

Upon their return from England Mr. and Mrs. Adams were met on July 8, 1868

-
39. Illustration 832 -- The bracelet given to Mrs. Charles Francis Adams.
40. Illustration 833 -- The card and bracelet.

at the Quincy railroad station by Miss Elizabeth Adams and a few friends.

Of the Old House Charles Francis Adams had this to say:

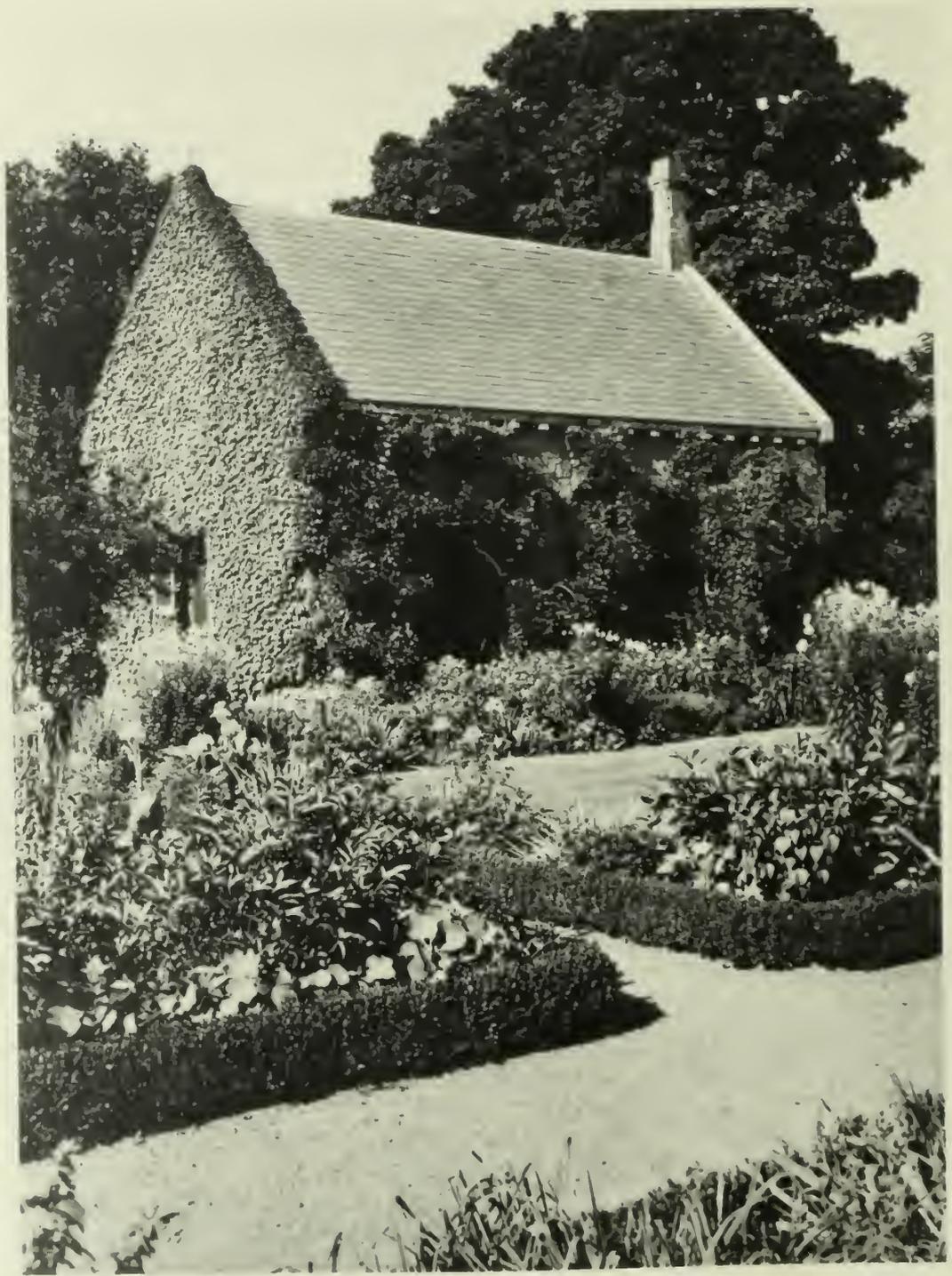
"The Old House looked much as it did. The trees all around have grown so that the whole aspect of the scene is more elegant and cultivated than ever before."

Interest in farm improvements was scarcely mentioned in the letters Mr. and Mrs. Adams had received from home while they were in England. Son Charles who occupied the Old House briefly in order that, according to Brooks Adams, his oldest child would be born in the house so full of traditions, wrote his mother on June 8, 1868:

"The farmhouse is the same fearful old rat-hole and tinder box that it has been since my recollection, only a trifle more decayed... It is the terror of my life for fear of fire."

Charles Francis Adams was so overjoyed to be in Quincy that he could overlook the lack of conveniences. He was eagerly awaiting the opportunity to resume his literary interests and continue his father's horticultural projects. But for Mrs. Adams it was different. She wanted to expand the 18th century garden, make the east lawn more attractive by removing the clutter of a half-dozen farm buildings, provide a service entrance so that guests and delivery men would not use the same front gate, ect. and provide quarters for a proper staff of servants. She was irreconcilable on these points.

To cooperate with his wife, Mr. Adams engaged the architect Charles Edward Cabot to plan a servant wing on the north side of the kitchen. It included a hallway and west exit door to line up with the walk in the old garden.



234

(The garden was considered by the family as an outdoor room.) Then there was a large laundry with fireplace on the first floor, two bedrooms with fireplaces on the second floor and two bedrooms on the third floor. The two rooms over the original kitchen section were connected to the new quarters by means of a hallway. This provided Mrs. Adams with rooms for six maids. She usually employed only five, but an extra room was available for any lady's maid who might accompany a guest. The 1869 addition was separated from the main house by a firewall (still existing in 1974). The entire house was recovered in slate thus reducing the fire hazard. When this was completed, Mrs. Adams was only partially satisfied. Family bedroom space, the east lawn and the old garden still weighed heavily upon her mind. She was not satisfied with walks and boxwood hedges for she liked blooming flowers.

John Quincy Adams had left stipulations in his will that when convenient he hoped his son would erect a building where all his precious books could be together. 1870 seemed an appropriate time for Charles Francis Adams to accomplish the building of such a library. By the addition of a special library building Mrs. Adams would have an extra room for the family, the second floor study being lined on three walls with shelves installed to hold the sixth President's books. Upon the completion of the Stone Library, Charles Francis Adams moved his father's books out of the second floor room. However, Mrs. Adams did not get another bedroom out of this move, for her husband

41. Illustration 834 -- View of the Library.



835



836



837

found it pleasant to edit the family papers in the Stone Library during the
^{42 & 43}
 day and retain his old study for quiet evening study and reading. Since he
 read aloud to Mrs. Adams with regularity, his personal retention of the study
 was perhaps not too displeasing to her.

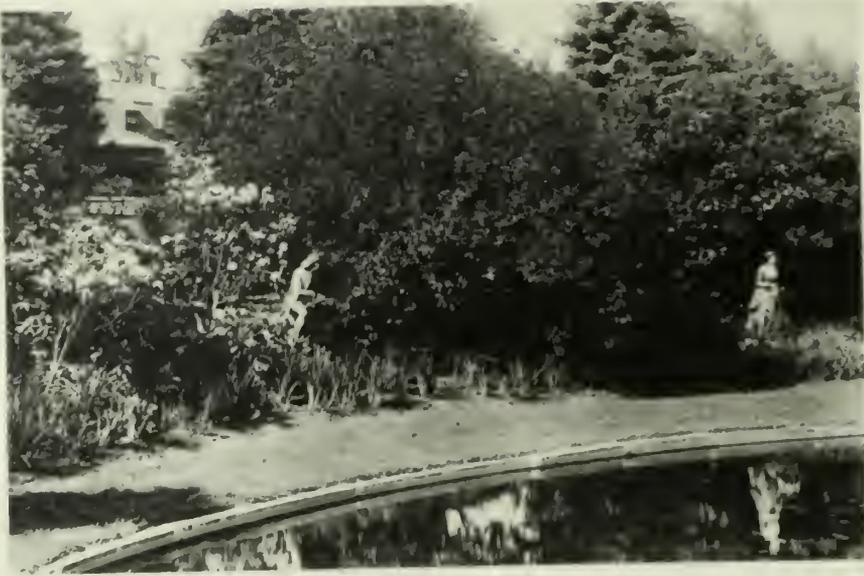
It was the custom of Mrs. Adams to sit on the east piazza and recount her
 English social experiences to the fascination of her son Brooks and such
⁴³
 other family as might be present. She spoke to them of Lord and Lady Russell,
 Lady Goldsmith (Jenny Lind), Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone and Prime Minister
 D'Israeli, to name a few. Still very conscious of the beauty of the English
 country estates and how handsomely their friends maintained them, she was
 all the more distracted and unhappy with the clutter of farm buildings on her
 own east lawn. Her husband too wanted to make these changes since their re-
 turn from England. It was about 1845 that his cousin Andrew J. Downing sug-
 gested the park-like possibilities to the east side of the Old House.

On September 10, 1868 Mr. Adams had gone to Medford to look at improvements
 his brothers-in-law had made to their property. Of this visit he wrote in
 his Diary: "I suppose I ought to build some stables myself." In his finan-
 cially diary he also recorded, "buying a \$1,000 carriage" for Mrs. Adams
 though he had no place to house it. Mr. Adams was called to serve his coun-
 try once more -- this time to serve as one of the arbitrators on the "Alabama
 Claims" in Geneva which interrupted his schedule of improvements on the

42. Illustration 835 -- View of the Interior of the Library.

43. Illustration 836 -- View of the detail woodwork of the Library

44. Illustration 837 -- East piazza removed in 1920.



A

839



B

the property. He went without Mrs. Adams on his first trip to Geneva. Both he and Mrs. Adams were so disconsolate that his son Brooks, who accompanied him, and his son Henry, who stayed at home with his mother, suggested that Mr. Adams return to America. He was in Quincy only briefly when, accompanied by Mrs. Adams, he returned to Geneva. Of course, during this time they were unable to give instructions necessary for further changes at home.

Not being satisfied with the attention architect Cabot had given the Stone Library, he engaged the firm of Cummings and Sears to design a building of a size to accommodate all the family needs. Discussion with Cummings and Sears began sometime in 1871, but Mr. Adams found objections to the design, the size, the expense and the fear of the structure being too elaborate. March, 1872 found a meeting of minds; but because of being in Geneva, ground was not broken until the spring of 1873.⁴⁵ It was completed late that year and the livestock was put into the new building in January, 1874 (just 100 years ago).

While Mr. Adams was settling the Library project and later studying the designs and working drawings submitted by Cummings and Sears, Mrs. Adams was expanding the 18th century garden.⁴⁶ Her project started in 1870 and continued to 1874. She added flower beds along the English boxwood hedge, planted rhododendrons in the southeast corner (were removed or died after 1927), another in the southwest (still beautiful in 1974) and a third in the northwest corner (these never did well and died before 1846). In the flower beds she had

45. Illustration 838 -- View of the south side of the Carriage House used as a coachman's house. (See page 996, Ill. 844.)

46. Illustration 839 -- The Brooks' Garden in Medford courtesy of The Adams Papers. Pictures A and B show the contrast between the Brooks' Medford garden and the Adams' Old House garden.

840



841

842



peonies, daylilies, iris, delphinium and larkspur. There may have been other plants such as oriental poppies. She wanted a greenhouse which Charles Francis Adams built though he commiserated over the expense.

1873 was truly the year of transition from a country farm to that of a gentleman's estate. The carriage house consisted of a coachman's living house, a large room for carriages, six horse stalls and a tack room on the first floor, a huge loft for hay in the attic and stalls for the cows and goats on the ground floor with a separate entrance for the cattle on the north side.

47

The brick, field stone and granite U-shaped structure measured about 95 feet by 55 feet. It was to be a combination in Victorian English Gothic and Norman style. The north section of this large U-shape was used for the horses, cows and goats. The center section for storing and cleaning the carriages and the south section of the U-shape was the coachman's quarters. The east side of the building affords a fine view of the combined sections. Of special interest are the decorative brick bands at the bottom and near the top of each window.

48

The south, east and north roof design has regular gray slates with two-tone stripes of straight and pointed light gray slates. The north elevation has a large center door for the entrance of the goats and cows. Note the

49

-
47. Illustration 840 -- The west side of the Carriage House.
 48. Illustration 841 -- The east side of the Carriage House.
 49. Illustration 842 -- The north side of the Carrriage House.

843



844

dormer near the roof ridge which served as a ventilator. The duct leading down all three floors was of wood and ventilated each floor including the cow stalls.

The roof design of each gable and the tower differed from the regular roof.

50

This detailed photograph of the west side is of the hipped gable and is typical of the four gables. Note the lower timber with its serrated lower edge, scrolled brackets, half timbers with tongue and groove finish, barge boards with lower serrated edge and the four gothic quatrefuils adding architectural interest.

The hipped roof is very attractive with its fishscale slates and recurring bands of straight and pointed slates of a lighter gray breaking the solid pattern. On the center tower can be seen four of these decorative stripes. Note the ventilator in the tower. The tower is topped with a weathervane. A reproduction of the original could not be made as no pictures could be found. This outline of the weathervane is all that was left of the original and was reproduced in 1967. On the peak of each gable is a graceful wrought iron finial. Each finial should have three branches and at the end of the graceful branches is a four-leaf flower.

The front entrance of the coachman's cottage is marked by an overhang and a

51

Gothic type twin windowed gable. The interior of the carriage house is

50. Illustration 843 -- Detail of gable and tower.

51. Illustration 844 -- South view of the Carriage House.



845



846

interesting. The large center room afforded places for carriages and sulkeys, ect. In 1920 the writer used to drive a sulkey drawn by one of the beautiful bay mares. The sulkey was cleaned and shined up in this large room..

52

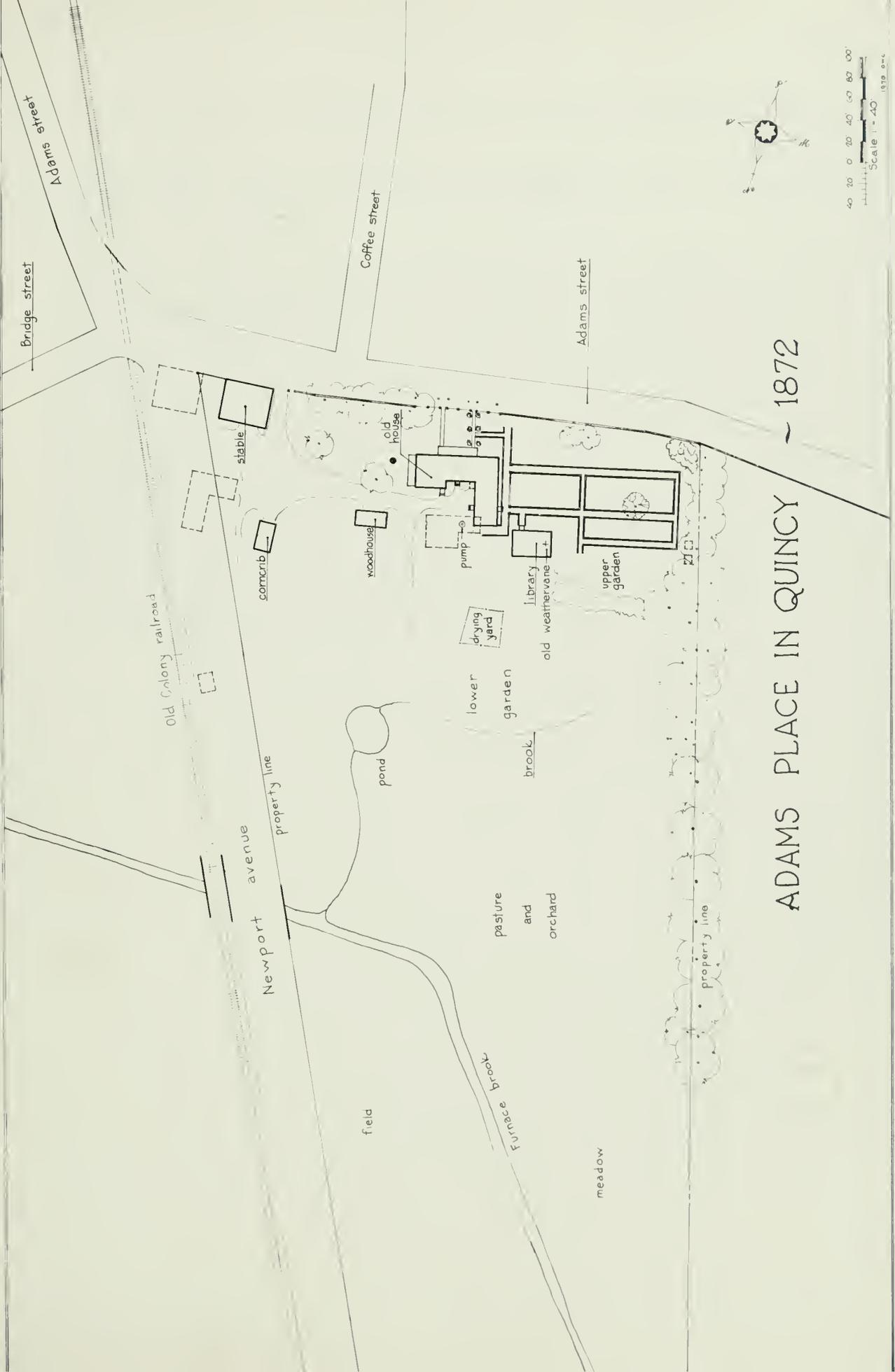
The four open stalls for the work horses and the two large square stalls with decorative gates allowing the carriage horses freedom to move about open out upon a wide passageway. At the east end of the open space is the tack room which has two large windows, walls and ceiling finished off in tongue and groove wainscotting and a cabinet for carriage harnesses protected by glass doors. There was also a place for saddles since every Adams gentleman was a skilled horseman. On the ground floor were the cows and goats. In 1920 milk for the table came from the cows milked in the dairy part of this building.

53

The spring and summer of 1974⁸ saw all of the buildings removed from the east lawn and it became as Mr. Downing (a cousin) had recommended for so many Hudson River estates -- a park of trees. The farm had gone. An estate compatible with this distinguished family's accomplishments had taken its place. By 1890 each member of the fourth generation was established as educators, writers or financiers with a winter residence in Washington or Europe, a summer residence in Lincoln or Beverley and Brooks Adams presiding over the Old House with all the dignity of a cultured gentleman. By 1890 each member of the Adams family was a devotee of the arts and literature and as much at home in Europe, Africa, the Near East and the Far East as in the Blue Hills of

54

-
52. Illustration 845 -- Stalls in the Carriage House.
 53. Illustration 846 -- Tack room in the Carriage House.
 54. Illustration 847 -- Drawing of the east lawn before the construction of the Carriage House. (Next page.)



Bridge street

Adams street

Coffee street

Adams street

Old Colony railroad

Newport avenue

property line

field

pond

Furnace brook

meadow

pasture and orchard

brook

lower garden

drying yard

woodhouse

old house

stable

comcrib

pump

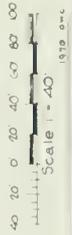
library

old weather vane

upper garden

property line

ADAMS PLACE IN QUINCY ~ 1872



Quincy. Their writings had assured them each a place in American History.

At last John Adams' dream of 1780 had been fulfilled. In April of that year he wrote his wife as follows:

"It is not indeed the fine arts which our country requires; the useful, the mechanic Arts are those which we have occasion for in a young country as yet Simple and not far advanced in Luxury, although perhaps much to far for her Age and Character. I could fill volumes with descriptions of Temples and Palaces, Paintings, Sculptures, Tapestry, Porcelain, &c &c &c -- if I could have time. but I could not do this without neglecting my duty. The science of Government it is my duty to study, more than all other Sciences; the art of Legislation and Administration and Negotiation ought to take Place of, indeed to exclude, in a manner, all other Arts. I must study Politics and War, that my sons may have liberty to study Mathematics and Philosophy. My sons ought to study Mathematics and Philosophy, Geography, natural History and Naval Architecture, navigation, commerce and Agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study Painting, poetry, Music, Architecture, Statuary, Tapestry, and Porcelain. Adieu."

By the courtesy of the Boston Public Library we are able to include this set of drawings taken from architectural drawings of 1876.

THE ARCHITECTURAL SKETCH-BOOK.

VOLUME IV. — No. II. — AUGUST, 1876.

PLATE No. V. — DESIGN FOR A PROPOSED GATE AND RESTAURANT TO BE BUILT AT OAK BLUFFS, ISLAND OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD.

MESSRS. HARTWELL and SWASEY, Architects.

PLATE No. VI. — DESIGN OFFERED IN COMPETITION FOR A CHAPEL FOR THE EPISCOPAL CITY MISSION, TO BE BUILT AT SOUTH BOSTON.

Mr. HENRY RICHARDS, Architect.

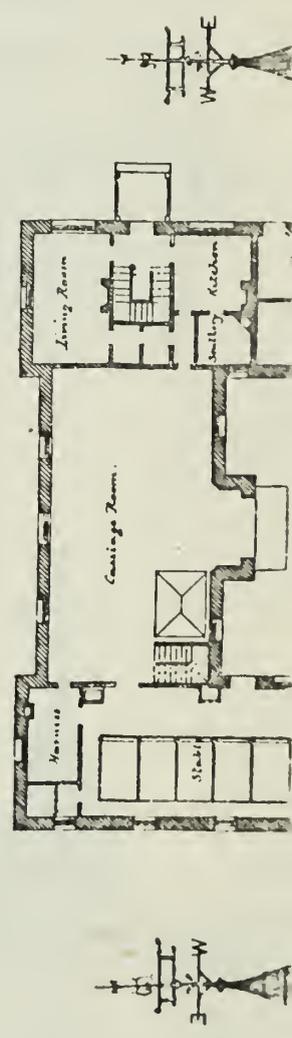
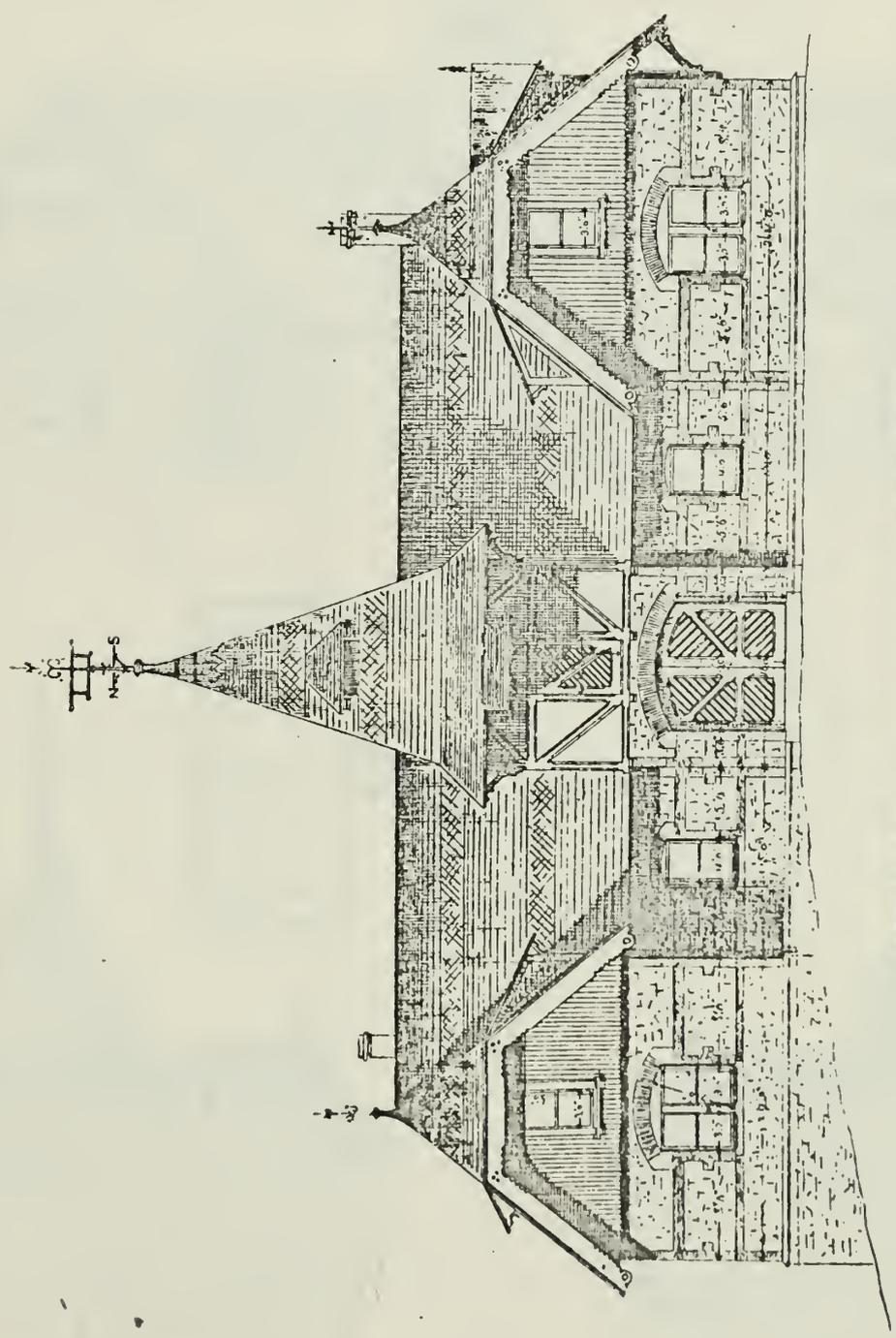
PLATE No. VII. — DESIGN FOR LADIES' PAVILION IN CEMETERY AT CONCORD, N.H.

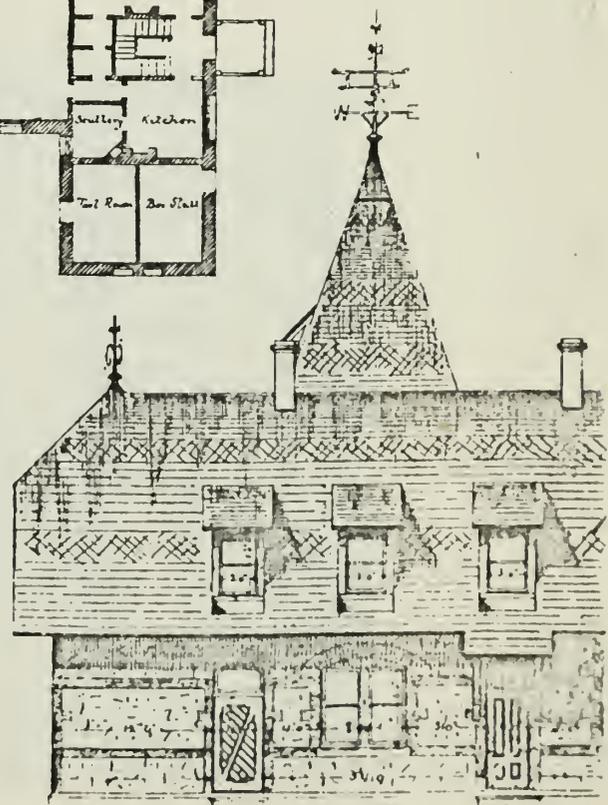
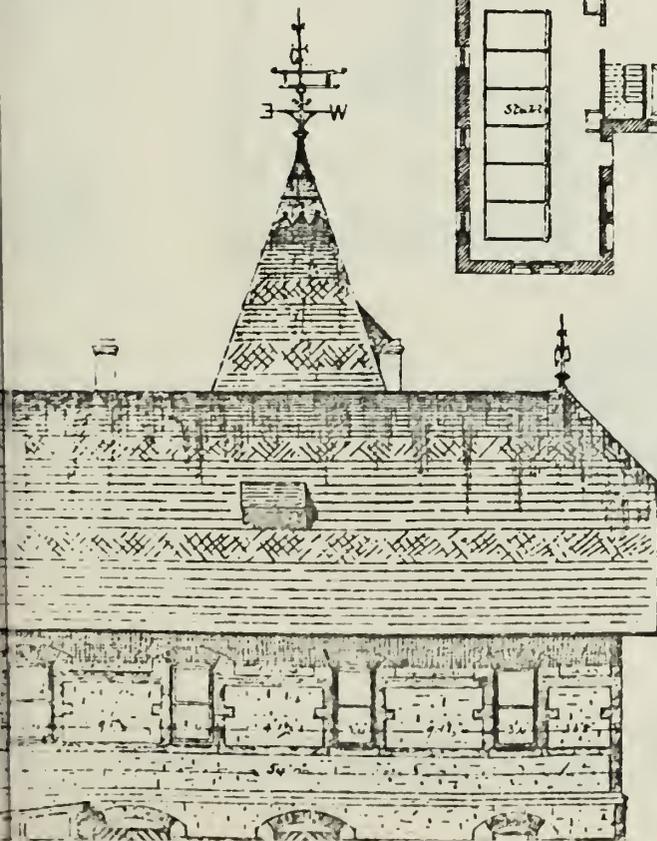
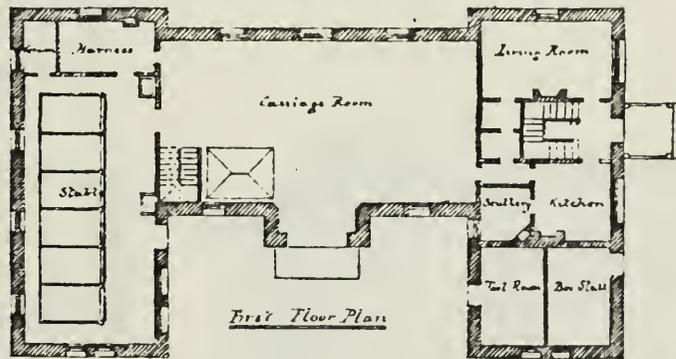
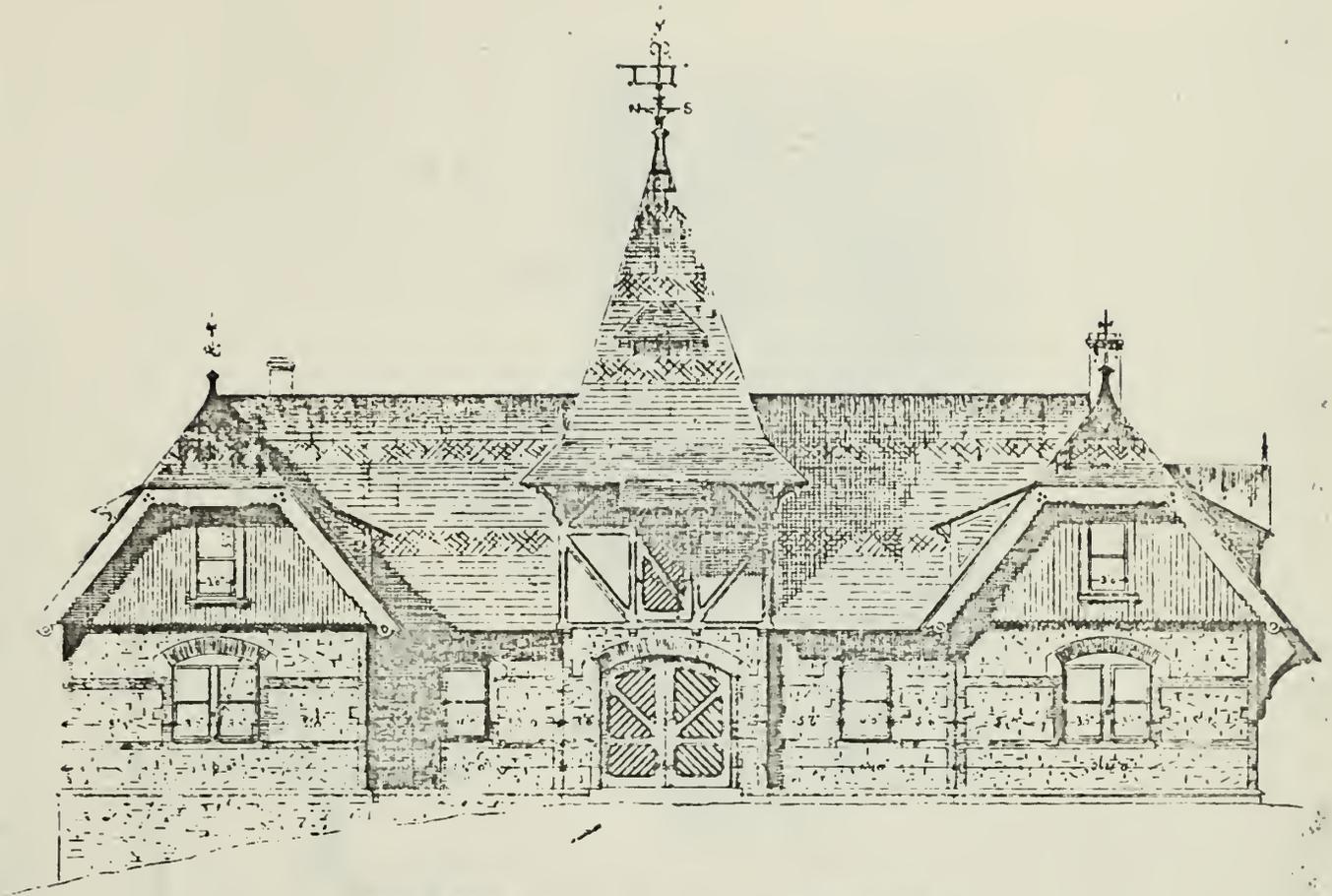
Mr. GEORGE T. TILDEN, Architect.

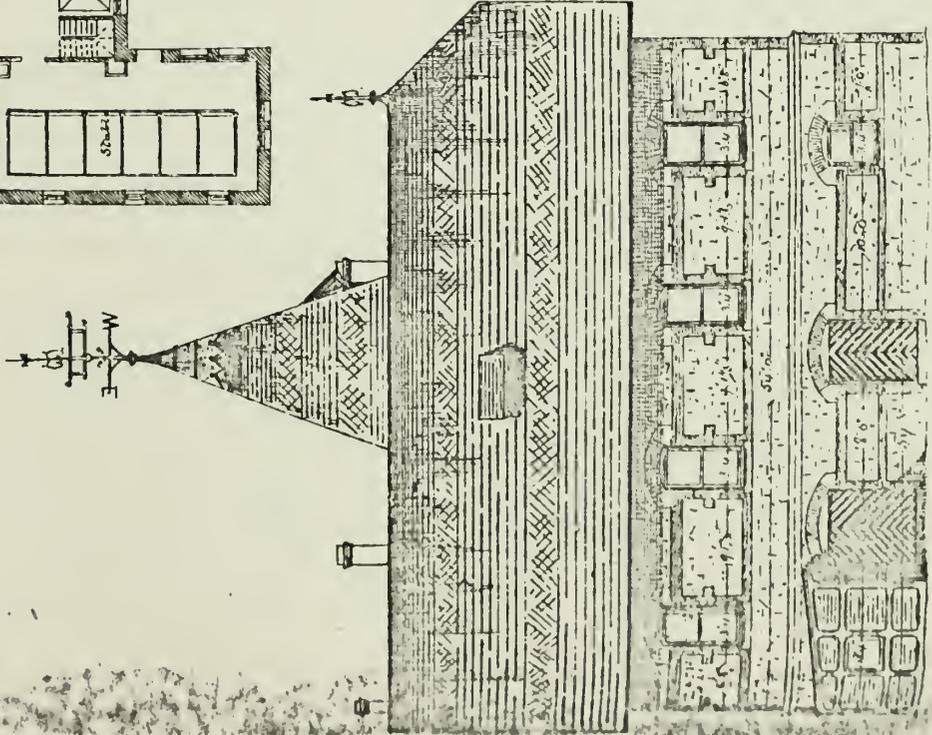
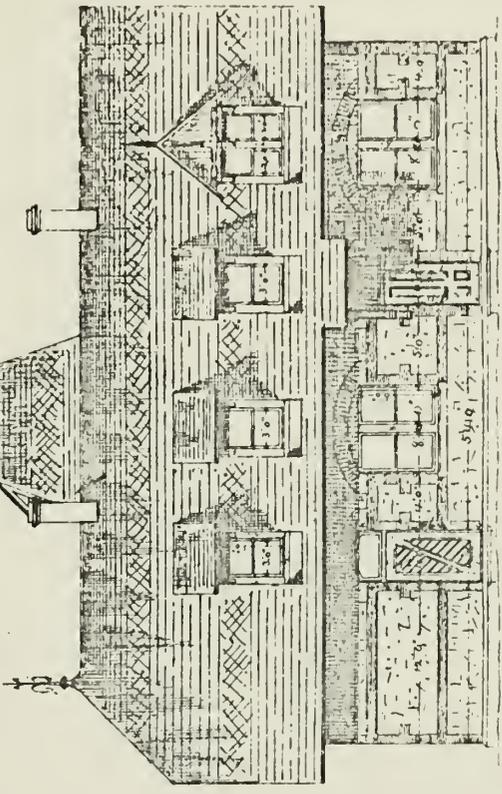
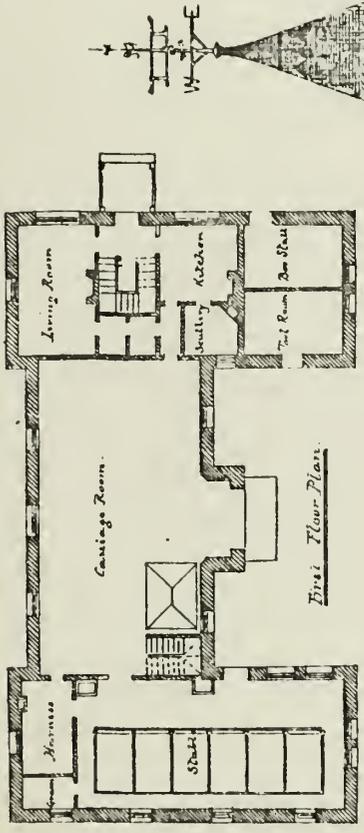
PLATE No. VIII. — STABLE AND CARRIAGE-HOUSE FOR HON. C. F. ADAMS, AT QUINCY, MASS.

MESSRS. CUMMINGS and SEARS, Architects.

THIS building, fifty-four feet by ninety-four feet, was finished three years ago, at a cost of about twelve thousand dollars. The walls are built of granite rubble up to the eaves, with quoins, belts, and window-heads of brick. The front gables shown in the sketch are sheathed vertically with narrow boarding, battened, and set forward from the face of the wall. The rear gables are filled in with slap-dash between the framing timbers. The south wing contains a house for the gardener; the basement of the north wing, a cow-house, cart-shed, and manure pit.







WELLS BINDERY INC.
ALTHAM, MASS.
JAN 1975

