

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES HISTORIC DISTRICT

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: The House of the Seven Gables Historic District

Other Name/Site Number: Turner House

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 54 Turner Street

Not for publication:

City/Town: Salem

Vicinity:

State: MA

County: Essex

Code: 009

Zip Code: 01971

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X

Public-Local: \_\_\_

Public-State: \_\_\_

Public-Federal: \_\_\_

Category of Property

Building(s): \_\_\_

District: X

Site: \_\_\_

Structure: \_\_\_

Object: \_\_\_

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

7

1

\_\_\_

\_\_\_

8

Noncontributing

2 buildings

\_\_\_ sites

\_\_\_ structures

\_\_\_ objects

2 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 8

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing:

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**4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this \_\_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Certifying Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Commenting or Other Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

**5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- \_\_\_\_ Entered in the National Register
- \_\_\_\_ Determined eligible for the National Register
- \_\_\_\_ Determined not eligible for the National Register
- \_\_\_\_ Removed from the National Register
- \_\_\_\_ Other (explain):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

# HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES HISTORIC DISTRICT

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## **6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic:	Domestic Education Social Recreation and Culture	Sub:	Single dwelling School Civic Museum
Current:	Recreation and Culture Education Social	Sub:	Museum School Civic

## **7. DESCRIPTION**

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: COLONIAL: Postmedieval  
 LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

### MATERIALS:

Foundation: Stone and concrete  
 Walls: Wood  
 Roof: Wood  
 Other:

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**Summary**

The House of the Seven Gables is a seminal Colonial Revival restoration by a leading restoration architect, Joseph Everett Chandler, who restored many of New England's more famous buildings. Through his restoration, the House of the Seven Gables itself, and several other buildings in the district preserve several layers of architectural significance. The small complex of buildings brought together under a plan by Chandler and Caroline O. Emmerton, founder of the House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association, was an early effort in historic preservation that combined use as a museum site and adaptive reuse for specific purposes, in this case both as a settlement house and as a money maker to support the settlement house work. In addition, since at least 1870 the House of the Seven Gables has been associated in the popular mind with the building described in Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel of the same name.

**Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.****Location and Setting**

The 1668 House of the Seven Gables, the Colonial Revival garden, and the eight other buildings (six contributing and two non-contributing) that serve the House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association's dual functions of historic house museum and settlement house are located on a level parcel of land bounded on the south by Salem Harbor, on the west by Hardy Street, on the north by Derby Street and on the east by Turner Street. The complex is about a third of a mile southeast of the cultural center of Salem on Essex Street and five blocks east of the Salem National Maritime Historic Site on Derby Street.

The immediate area of the Seven Gables site, known as lower Derby Street, is characterized by wood frame houses on small lots, many of which date to the nineteenth century or earlier. These were originally occupied by workers in the maritime trades on the nearby waterfront. With the decline of shipping and the rise of manufacturing in the early nineteenth century, in particular the building of the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company in the late 1830s east of Turner Street, the area evolved into a neighborhood densely populated with foreign-born factory workers and their families. It was these families that the House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association was established in 1908 to serve. The settlement house continues to draw many of its clients from among the immigrant and working class residents of the immediate area.

The House of the Seven Gables, also known as the Turner House for its original owner, wealthy merchant John Turner, occupies the southeast portion of the property and faces south toward Salem Harbor and the Marblehead peninsula beyond. The house sits close to Turner Street on the east and is set back one hundred feet across an expanse of lawn from a seawall at the edge of the harbor. To the west and north is the campus-like complex of buildings assembled or created since 1909 for the preservation and settlement house purposes of the Association. A Colonial Revival garden occupies the central quadrangle of the site, and the south side is open to the sea.

Two historic houses, saved and moved to the property in 1911 and 1924, respectively, border the garden on the west. The northernmost of these two houses is connected on the second level to a structure with the exterior appearance of a barn, built in 1924, at the northwest corner of the quadrangle. An arched opening below the connector gives access to the western part of the site. With the completion of the barn and a one-story pavilion for a tea room along the north side of the quadrangle in 1924, the complex immediately surrounding the House of the Seven Gables achieved its present form.

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The rest of the site evolved gradually as other properties in the area bounded by Hardy, Derby and Turner Streets were purchased and torn down to make way for new needs of the Association, and two museum buildings were relocated west of the original complex along Hardy Street. The birthplace of Nathaniel Hawthorne, built between 1730 and 1745 on Union Street in Salem, was moved to the property in 1958. A small structure bordering the harbor, originally a shed, but since the 1920s remodeled and interpreted as a counting house, was moved from elsewhere on the property in 1971. North of these two buildings on Hardy Street is the late eighteenth century Phippen House that was purchased and retained for office and residential purposes. By the mid 1960s, the structures remaining on the north half of the site, with the exception of a building at 42 Turner Street, which is still privately owned, were purchased. The buildings on site were demolished and the whole area was turned into a parking lot. In 1972 the site and buildings became a National Register of Historic Places district. The final addition to the property was the Seamans Visitor Center built onto the north side of the barn and tea room in 1994.

**1. The House of the Seven Gables (Contributing Building)**

The present appearance of the House of the Seven Gables is the result of the restoration and enlargement of the structure in 1909 by restoration architect Joseph Everett Chandler. Chandler was directed by Caroline O. Emmerton, founder and benefactor of a nearby settlement house in 1908, who owned the property, to transform the house for three purposes: 1) to preserve an historic building as an appropriate setting in which to teach immigrants about American history and values; 2) to attract paying visitors in order to subsidize the settlement work by remodeling the building to specifically reflect aspects of Nathaniel Hawthorne's 1851 romance, *The House of the Seven Gables*, with which the house had long been associated; 3) and to provide housing for settlement workers.

The present house, sixty-two feet and seven inches by thirty-nine feet, nine inches in its greatest dimensions, is from the outside an imposing gabled structure redolent of its seventeenth-century origins in its steeply pitched roofs and overhangs ornamented with pendants. The building consists of three components. The central part is the original two-room plan, two-and-one-half story house, built in 1668 with a central chimney that had two façade gables, and, possibly, a gabled porch. The south part is the ambitious parlor wing built in 1677, a two and one half story structure with higher ceilings that had two cross gables on the roof.<sup>1</sup> Because of the large size of its rooms and their height, the wing dominates the massing of the building. The northern component is an ell and lean-to added in 1909 to house the settlement workers.

**Exterior**

The exterior, as restored by Chandler and Emmerton in 1909, represents the house as it appeared about 1720, a time when they believed that the structure still retained its overall Postmedieval appearance, but had lost the original leaded glass casements in favor of large vertically sliding sash windows of Georgian design. Their choice of the c. 1720 date was only speculative, as the date of installation of the Georgian windows has not been verified. They made the decision to keep Georgian windows because the windows were integral to Georgian interior woodwork that they wished to preserve. Since 1909, the exterior appearance of the building has been maintained.

The foundation, minimally visible on the outside, is of rubble stone, now partially cemented over. The walls are covered with clapboards with relatively narrow weathers, stained dark brown. Where the clapboards meet, their ends are skived to overlap each other. At the corners of the building, which, in the seventeenth-century manner, lack corner boards, the butts of the clapboards overlap in opposite directions from one row to the next. On the

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<sup>1</sup> The original house and the parlor wing were dated by dendrochronology in 2004. See D. W. H. Miles, M. J. Worthington and Anne Grady, "Development of Standard Tree-Ring Chronologies for Dating Historic Structures in Eastern Massachusetts, Phase IV," SPNEA (Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities) Dendrochronology Project Completion Report, March 31, 2005.

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south end of the parlor wing facing the sea is an eighteen-inch-wide framed overhang with pendants that was uncovered and restored in 1909. Its missing pendants were reproduced based on surviving examples elsewhere. The wood shingled roof with a slope of fifty degrees, includes eight gables, three of which are the façade gables restored in 1909 on the basis of physical evidence of their former existence in the building. On the parlor wing, a single flat board that marks the transition from gable to wall is a Chandler creation. The eaves, which are also dressed with plain boards, have a minimal projection. Chandler removed the projecting eaves on the street side visible in nineteenth-century photographs.

There are three chimneys: 1) the central chimney of the 1668 house, which was almost entirely rebuilt in 1909 with a pilastered exterior stack using a variety of old bricks and reproducing the “secret” stairway reported to have been present in the chimney before it was rebuilt in 1888; 2) the chimney stack serving the parlor wing that Chandler took down to its arched foundation while keeping the original 1677 parlor firebox with its curved jambs intact; and 3) the chimney, new in 1909, at the rear of the settlement workers’ quarters. In 1909, all three of the chimneys, were given corbelled brick courses and parged flue caps at the top, that were believed to represent their c. 1720 appearance.

The windows, new in 1909, are multi-paned vertically sliding sash, with the exception of a bank of casements in a dormer on the west side of the rear ell, two single casements in the east attic of the 1668 building, and a bay window on the east side. The windows were given simple sills and frames in 1909 with backband moldings mitered at the corners similar to those shown in the earliest photographs of the building. The gabled, two-and-one-half story porch was reconstructed in 1909 to reflect its conjectured original appearance, there having been a porch as early as 1693, according to documents.<sup>2</sup> The porch was given a hewn overhang and pendants similar to those restored on the parlor wing. The one story appendage east of the porch was constructed about 1915 to enlarge the part of the east room of the 1668 house that was being interpreted as the “cent shop” of Hepzibah Pyncheon, a leading character in Hawthorne’s romance.

The wide front door on the porch is composed of vertical boards on the exterior scored and studded with nails in a diamond pattern. In the process of repairing the building in 1909, a smaller door with vertical boards and similar studding and scoring was found reused as exterior sheathing. It is thought to have inspired the current door. Two shutters made of slim vertical boards and apparently added after the 1909 work fold back on either side of the door and a large granite step is placed in front of the door. Chandler added five new exterior doors, each fitted with lights in the upper half. A Dutch door put in on the Turner Street side of the building in 1909 opened into “Hepzibah’s cent shop.” On the west side of the building, Chandler constructed a small porch with gabled roof, chamfered posts and latticed sides for the use of the settlement workers. He put in a door and small vestibule leading from the porch to the dining room. Three doors on the north addition gave settlement workers access to their quarters.

### **Interior**

The interiors reflect Miss Emmerton’s wish to preserve the house as it would have appeared c. 1840, the period depicted in Hawthorne’s romance. Her intent was to interpret a number of rooms in the house in addition to the “cent shop” as the actual rooms that Hawthorne described. That meant retaining the Georgian woodwork present in the house in 1840 and furnishing the house with a mix of antiques. The current interiors combine surviving Georgian features in the major rooms, some of them restored or altered in period appropriate ways by Chandler, complementary Georgian treatments in secondary spaces that were added or refurbished by Chandler, and some spaces were specifically given a seventeenth-century character for interpretive purposes. Little of the

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<sup>2</sup> Only after the restoration was underway in 1909 was evidence discovered that there had been a porch. When a new porch was built, the building ended up with eight gables rather than the planned seven. See Caroline O. Emmerton, *The Chronicles of Three Old Houses* (privately printed, 1935), 34.

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actual seventeenth-century fabric remains visible except in the attic of the 1668 building and as an occasional exposed framing member on the lower floors.

### Parlor

The parlor, the most elaborate room in the house, retains a fireplace wall that is a distinguished example of the early Georgian style in New England, the result of an updating in the early eighteenth century. The wall is an assemblage of elements derived from Classical architecture as interpreted in New England. Symmetrical in arrangement, the wall features a chimney breast with two raised-field overmantel panels edged by bolection moldings and two arched doorways trimmed with bolection moldings and carved keystones. The arched portions of the accompanying doors are made with unusual pie-shaped panels. The door at the left of the chimney breast is a false door, while the one on the right opens to an elegant built-in cabinet with shell motif and curvilinear shelves that preserves original paint. Fluted pilasters set on high plinth bases flank the chimney breast and doors. At either end of the wall are sets of raised-filed panels edged by bolection moldings. Between the upper and lower panels of the end panels and the door panels are horizontal bolection moldings at the chair rail height. The pilasters terminate in simple caps below the chimney girt case. A modest Classical cornice runs across the side of the chimney girt case on this wall and continues along the cases of the two transverse summer beams in the room and the girts around the other walls.

Chandler reproduced woodwork that was deteriorated or missing in the parlor in 1909 by copying elements from elsewhere in the room or from other Georgian houses. He also removed a few later intrusions. On the fireplace wall, Chandler removed a Greek Revival mantelpiece, restored the lower of the two overmantel panels, and applied a period-appropriate bolection molding around the fireplace. He installed new multi-paned windows with inch-wide, Georgian style muntins. The east and west walls, plaster from baseboard to crown moldings, he left as they were. He brought the south wall forward into the room to accommodate Miss Emmerton's wish to recreate the window seat that had been a feature of the wall after the overhang had been closed in. He apparently reused the lower parts of the previous window seat and window trim, and reproduced the rest. He also created two false corner post cases at either end of the wall to replicate the wall's former appearance

In the absence of a specific documentary reference to the work, the exact date that the Georgian remodeling of the parlor took place remains unknown. Features, in particular the extensive use of bolection moldings, could place the room among the earliest surviving examples of Georgian interior woodwork in New England from the second decade of the eighteenth century, although similar examples survive from the following three decades.

### Parlor Chamber

The parlor chamber was also redone in the Georgian period, again at an unknown date, and could represent a second episode of remodeling in the period. Similar stylistic treatments in other New England houses date anywhere from the 1730s to the 1770s. The fireplace wall features a chimney breast with two raised-field overmantel panels trimmed with bolection moldings and a firebox surrounded by a bolection molding. The rest of the wall includes fielded paneling and two paneled doors. On the room's other walls, the lower walls are covered with paneled wainscoting in which two sets of panels, larger ones below and smaller ones above, are topped by a high chair rail. During the Georgian remodeling, the east, south and west walls were brought forward from their 1677 location so that window seats and paneled shutters that fold back into the window reveals could be installed. Even though the side walls were brought forward in front of the framing, the new walls were given prominent post and beam cases that reflect Georgian conventions of articulated framing members in elaborately trimmed cases.

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Chandler appears to have left the fireplace wall in the parlor chamber untouched in 1909, and elsewhere replaced deteriorated trim only as necessary. He gave both the parlor and chamber fireboxes a crisp finish of black-painted plaster. Each has a period-appropriate iron fireback likely to have been added by Chandler in 1909. Original paint colors have been reproduced on the woodwork in the parlor and parlor chamber, and period appropriate wallpaper has been installed recently.

### Dining Room and Stair Hall

The dining room and stair hall, part of the 1668 building, combine features installed in the Georgian period, a few subsequent alterations, changes made by Chandler in 1909, and one possible survival of seventeenth-century fabric. Notable among early Georgian elements in the house is the wall to the left of the fireplace in the dining room. Here a narrow arched doorway is surrounded by bolection-molded paneling. The arched door currently gives access to the storied secret staircase restored in 1909 on the basis of a tradition that there had been one previously. What the door's function was originally is unknown.

Three doors to the stair hall are of the earliest Georgian type with one upper and one lower panel edged by two-or-more-inch-wide feathers and applied bolection moldings. The four windows in the west wall of the dining room date from the late nineteenth century. A section of vertical sheathing covered with molded battens along the stairs may date from the seventeenth-century period, although this has not been confirmed.

In 1909, Chandler made certain adjustments to the woodwork in the dining room and hall to move access to closets, etc. He installed or restored a bolection-molded chimney breast and a glazed china cabinet to the right of it in the dining room. To match the early two panel doors in the stair hall, Chandler created a layered front door. On the interior the door has a Georgian appearance with two wide panels surrounded by bolections moldings. On the exterior, the door is a Postmedieval door made of vertical boards.

### Other rooms

The east room, thought to be the original parlor of the 1668 house, was divided in 1909. The northern two thirds of the original room were remodeled to represent a seventeenth-century kitchen with vertical shadow-molded sheathing on the walls and a large brick fireplace fitted, in the seventeenth century manner, with a rear oven and herring bone patterned brick below a smoke panel. The exposed framing members are, with the exception of the chimney lintel, the only original 1668 features in the room. The southern third of the original east room was remodeled to represent "Hepzibah Pyncheon's cent shop." The shop, which was extended to the south in 1915, has simple trim, cases enclosed with small-paned glass doors, and a prominent counter.

The attic retains portions of the framing for the westernmost façade gable of 1668 and early plaster on the remains of the gable and on the west end wall. The roof framing of the 1668 house is of principal rafters, common rafters and principal purlins, while the framing of the 1677 wing is of the more forward looking principal rafter/common purlin framing system that was introduced about that time. In 1909, Chandler enclosed a closet in the southwest corner of the 1668 attic with pieces of shadow-molded sheathing that he salvaged that had originally been the exterior finish of the parlor wing.

In the northern ell and lean-to, new in 1909, and in the second floor and attic rooms of the earlier parts of the house, Chandler created nine bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen and sitting room for the settlement workers. With the exception of the bedroom east of the chimney in the attic that received a seventeenth-century treatment and was designated as the room Hawthorne described as Clifford's room, the rooms were given or retained simple Georgian woodwork.



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The cellar, extending under the entire house, has walls of rubble stone. The cellar retains the 1677 chimney foundation intact, a brick arch set on stone piers, while the other two chimney foundations were later altered or rebuilt.

**Original Construction**

The 1668 house, a timber framed, clapboarded Postmedieval structure asymmetrical in plan, consisted of a hall, parlor, central chimney, and lobby entry. The entry was on the south and the parlor was likely the narrow room east of the chimney.<sup>3</sup> Though virtually none of the original interior features remain visible except in the attic and most of the frame is covered up, several distinctive features of the original building have been identified. The box frame includes raised sills and two story studs with bearers for the second floor joists, a framing pattern found in some of the earliest surviving houses that over time saw less use than the single story stud.<sup>4</sup> The ceilings were plastered between the joists, a refinement seen in a few upscale houses of the period. Further, the bottoms of the joists in the dining room were painted a rose red, a rare and early surviving example in New England of decoratively painted timbers. The rear plate displays an edge halved and bridled scarf joint, a variant English-derived scarf joint less commonly used in New England than the vertical bladed scarf joint. The framing of the façade gable, the only seventeenth-century cross gable framing remaining in situ in New England, indicates that the studs and rafters of the gable were mortised into the plate, while the gable's frame was not tied into the rafters of the main roof, but simply laid against the sheathing of that roof. Mortises for a similar façade gable were apparently present in 1909 on the east portion of the plate, which Chandler replaced, and they served as a model for the reproduction of the gable on that side. Clapboards, visible on the remains of the east gable where the two seventeenth-century structures joined, indicate that the 1668 building was finished with softwood clapboards.

**Building History Since Original Construction**Addition of the Parlor Wing, 1677

Nine years after the initial construction and three years before he died, John Turner built a large, high studded parlor wing, twenty-one feet, five inches by twenty-two feet in exterior dimensions, south of the hall of the original house and extending beyond the west wall of the hall by two feet. The wing increased the size of the house by almost two thirds. Although the original interiors of the parlor and chamber were concealed behind later Georgian finish materials and the original exterior treatment was concealed behind later clapboards, information uncovered during previous repairs and building archaeology in 2005 has provided some information about the wing's original appearance. John Turner's addition incorporated a number of progressive features. The exterior of the wing was covered with horizontal sheathing boards beveled at the top and bottom for weatherproofing and given shadow moldings along the lower edges. The somewhat weathered nature of the boards indicates that the sheathing remained the exterior wall finish of the parlor wing for a decade or two. The ceiling heights in the parlor and chamber of ninety-eight and one hundred and four inches, respectively, exceed those of the typical seventeenth-century house by a substantial amount. While we have no knowledge of the appearance of the fireplace wall in the parlor or chamber, the curved jambs of the original parlor fireplace that are visible in a closet are a stylish feature associated with finer houses of the late seventeenth century in New England.

The framing of the parlor consisted of girts along the four walls, two transverse (west to east) summer beams, story posts supporting the summer beams, posts in the corners of the room, and apparently two intermediate

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<sup>3</sup> The speculation that the parlor was the east room is based on evidence that, when a seventeenth-century New England hall/parlor house was asymmetrical in plan, the parlor was likely to be the smaller of the two rooms.

<sup>4</sup> Abbott Lowell Cummings, *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625-1725* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1979), 54.

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ceiling beams, larger than joists, running longitudinally (north to south) that were framed between the transverse beams. Though much of the framing in the parlor has been cut back, replaced or reinforced, some inferences about their original finish treatment can be made. The ceilings were covered with plaster and lath below the joists. The major timbers, including the intermediate longitudinal members, projected below the ceiling, so that the ceiling would have had a coffered appearance originally. The original finishes of the beams where they projected below the ceiling were probably similar to those in the parlor chamber (see below). At least some of the posts were exposed and whitewashed originally.

In the parlor chamber, as in the parlor, some, if not all, of the posts were exposed and whitewashed. An intact molded and chamfered story post with remnants of whitewash can be seen through a view port in the east wall of the chamber. Surviving evidence suggests that the tie beams, where they projected below the ceiling, had whitewashed boards covering their sides and plaster covering their lower surfaces. The plates apparently were plastered on their sides and bottoms.

What may have been the sill or header of a leaded glass window was uncovered in a reused position on the south end wall of the parlor wing during repairs in 2005. Though there is no certainty that the reused piece was part of an original window frame in the parlor wing, the length of the header seems to match the width of the opening between two oversized studs in the wing's south wall. The studs likely define the width of the original window opening, and, at seventy-six inches, the opening would have been unusually wide for the period. Many pieces of the leads used to secure glass in the seventeenth-century casement windows have been found through archaeology and in the building itself, indicating that both the 1668 and 1677 buildings had leaded glass windows originally.

The attic of the 1677 addition, also ample in size and height, had cross gables facing east and west. Though the original gables did not survive evidence in the form of mortises in the east and west plates indicate that the gables were a feature of the original addition. Framing observed in the attic and end wall reveals that the 1677 wing was framed with ash timbers, while the frame of the 1668 house was of oak.

### Rear Additions Before 1693

Probate documents indicate that there was a rear addition to the building by 1693 that contained a new kitchen and kitchen chamber. The lack of brick nogging in the north wall, unlike in the other walls, is taken by some to suggest that enlargement on the north side was anticipated from the beginning. The rear additions were removed in the late eighteenth century.

### **Changes in the Eighteenth Century**

#### Georgian Remodeling

The Georgian remodeling of the interior of the house, much of which survives and is described above, was initiated by John Turner II, who inherited the property in 1697 and died in 1742. His son and heir, John Turner III may have added Georgian features during his ownership, which lasted until 1782.

The exterior was also remodeled at some point in the eighteenth century to conform to the Georgian style. The molded sheathing on the parlor wing was covered with clapboards, the façade gables were removed, and the overhang closed in. Extensive archaeology undertaken around the building in 1991 failed to answer the question of when the overhang was closed in, but did indicate that the change was made sometime in the eighteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Lorinda Goodwin, archaeologist, personal communication to Anne Grady, August 25, 2005.

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1742 Appearance

The probate documents relating to the settlement of John Turner II's estate give us a snapshot of the building at the time of his death in 1742. The room east of the chimney in the 1668 house had become a shop, and the rear of the building now included an accounting room and a lean-to in addition to the kitchen and chamber mentioned in 1693. A plan of 1769 shows that at least some of these rooms were housed in an ell off the center of the north wall of the earlier building. Knowledge that there had been an ell and lean-to previously prompted Emmerton and Chandler to include both an ell and lean-to in the north addition of 1909.

1794 Changes

Reverend William Bentley, Salem diarist, noted in 1794 that the "Back part [ell and lean-to]" of the "Old House of Col. Turner . . . was taken away, and the House repaired."<sup>6</sup>

**Changes in the Nineteenth Century**1857 Appearance

The earliest historic photograph of the house of c. 1857 indicates that by then the house had no trace of its earlier embellishment, but exhibited a plain clapboarded exterior with corner boards and a porch with shed roof and only three gables. The eaves on the sides of the house visible from the street were apparently extended at some point to give the house a more fashionable appearance.

Changes of the 1860s

By the 1860s, Horace Conolly, Susan Ingersoll's unofficially adopted son, who inherited the house upon her death in 1858, made further changes. He added window hoods supported on brackets and a front door with a bracketed hood.

Changes made between 1883 and 1908

In 1888, the Upton family, who had purchased the house in 1883, replaced the chimney in the 1668 part of the house, giving the exterior stack a slim profile. By the 1890s, the family, who were offering public showings of the house by then firmly associated with Hawthorne's book, made further changes. They added a porch across the east side of the parlor wing, a small porch on the north side, and put a small window north of the central window in the east end to display souvenirs that they were selling.

The Restoration of 1909

As stated above, Joseph Everett Chandler returned the exterior to a Postmedieval appearance, while enlarging the building to accommodate the needs of the settlement workers, and he restored or revised the interior in accordance with Caroline Emmerton's interpretive objectives. Knowledge of what was done to the building in 1909 comes from annotated plans and elevations made by Chandler and from a book, *The Chronicles of Three Old Houses*, that Caroline Emmerton wrote in 1935 describing the restoration of the House of the Seven Gables and the two other historic houses that she moved to the site. Chandler left no written or photographic record of the evidence he found or the work that was done.

Since 1909, the appearance of Chandler's restoration has been carefully maintained. When necessary, elements have been replaced in kind.<sup>7</sup> Most of the clapboards had become so deteriorated that they were replaced in the 1970s. Chandler applied oil to the clapboards in 1909 that had turned black. When the new clapboards were

<sup>6</sup> William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, Entry for September 4, 1794, Vol. 2 (Salem, Essex Institute, 1911), 463.

<sup>7</sup> The House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association hired Preservation Architect William Finch to oversee the work. The contractors chosen for the work were Napco Builders of Massachusetts (Joseph Napolitano) and Preservation Masons of Maine (Richard Irons).

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applied, they were stained dark brown to match the previous appearance. The front door was replaced in 1965.<sup>8</sup> In 2004, the exterior chimney stacks were rebuilt, a new roof of wood shingles was installed, and parts of the parlor wing were again reclapboarded. The new roof replicated the wood roof installed in 1909, though from the 1930s on, the house had a slate roof.

Given the careful preservation of the house and faithful adherence to the surroundings established in the early settlement house period, the House of the Seven Gables retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials workmanship, feeling and association to the period of Joseph Everett Chandler's restoration in 1909.

**2. Hooper Hathaway House (Contributing Building)**

The Hooper-Hathaway House, an important Postmedieval building in its own right, faces east toward the House of the Seven Gables across the garden. Built c. 1682 at 23 Washington Street in Salem, the house was on the point of being torn down in 1911 when, at the urging of William Sumner Appleton, founder of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), Caroline Emmerton purchased the house and moved it to the grounds of the House of the Seven Gables to provide additional space for the settlement house programs. The building was moved in three pieces representing its three building campaigns: the original structure, now the southern end, a single room plan house with chimney bay on the right-hand end; a file of rooms added to the other side of the chimney by 1784; and a two story lean-to with a Beverly jog built across the rear.

Once moved, the Hooper-Hathaway House was restored by Joseph Everett Chandler, who brought the original part back to a Postmedieval appearance inside and out. In the process he exposed and preserved some of the most important and unique examples of seventeenth-century decorative treatment of timbers to survive in New England. Across the front, a framed overhang that was never closed in is supported by the projecting ends of five beams (girts and summer beams) cantilevered out over the first floor wall. The beams, of which two are original, are shaped into a cyma profile and are further embellished with a double row of chiseled scallops. At either end of the overhang, the projecting girts support the posts of the second story wall above. At the north end, the original girt and post were left as found in 1911, and thus preserve unique evidence of their original c. 1682 configuration. The girt is tenoned into the post just beyond the cyma molding. The end of the post extends below the girt and retains the cut off remnants of what must have been a carved pendant at the bottom of the post. In two places, this assemblage is decorated with double rows of chiseled scallops.

Other original features were uncovered by Chandler on the inside of the building, notably molded and shouldered posts that also feature a scalloped design. In this house, the location of the original windows in the frame could be determined and leaded glass windows were reproduced in the appropriate locations. Further, evidence for a façade gable was found in the front plate and the gable was reproduced. The unusually wide wooden water table on the front of the building was refurbished or replicated as needed. The clapboarded exterior is stained dark brown to match the House of the Seven Gables. The land slopes down so that at the rear of the lean-to, the basement and foundation walls of rounded stones are above grade. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The building is currently used for educational purposes and offices of the Association.

The Hooper-Hathaway House, though moved, is a contributing building for its Postmedieval architectural features, its restoration by Joseph Everett Chandler, and its role in the settlement house work and as part of the setting that Caroline Emmerton and Chandler created for the House of the Seven Gables.

**3. Retire Becket House (Contributing Building)**

The Retire Becket House is named for a famous shipbuilder who lived in the house and built ships for leading merchants during Salem's heyday as a seaport in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It is the

<sup>8</sup> "The House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association Annual Report, 1964-1965."

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remaining half, without chimney bay, of a house built in the seventeenth century as a one room plan, two-and-one-half story house that was later enlarged on the other side of the chimney. The house was subsequently in divided ownership and the owner of the newer half tore down his half in 1850. Caroline Emmerton bought the house in 1916 in order to save it from destruction. The Becket House, which has framed overhangs on the front and left side, was moved and restored by Joseph Chandler in 1924 for use as a gift shop and lodging for overnight guests. The exterior is covered with dark brown-stained clapboards over a stone foundation; the roof is of asbestos cement shingles. Windows are double hung sash. On the interior crossed summer beams that support the two overhangs are visible, but no other original materials are seen in the rooms, which are now fitted up for a shop. Miss Emmerton added a lean-to in the rear that extended beyond the building to the south and wrapped around the southwest corner. She built the connector over an arch on the north end. The building continues to be used as a gift shop on the first floor and living quarters on the second.

The building is contributing for its restoration by Joseph Everett Chandler, and its role as part of the complex that Chandler and Emmerton created as a setting for the House of the Seven Gables and to support the settlement house activities.

The similar exterior treatment and color that Chandler gave the three seventeenth-century houses with their prominent overhangs, ties together these three oldest buildings on the site. Their arrangement facing each other across the garden, marks the first of at least four occasions on which Chandler was responsible for the layout of a group of relocated historic houses or for editing a group of standing houses. Storrowton Village in Springfield, Massachusetts, North Andover Green in Andover, Massachusetts, and Salem Pioneer Village in Salem, Massachusetts, are collections of buildings that were either edited, moved or restored by Joseph Chandler.

#### **4. Barn (Contributing Building)**

The Barn was built in 1924, as part of a tea room and restaurant at the time that the Retire Becket House moved to the site. The exterior walls are covered with vertical "barn board" sheathing. The wall facing the courtyard features transom lights over a large barn door and prominent strap hinges. Inside, the first floor is now part of the visitor's center, while the attic is living quarters.

#### **5. Tea Room (Contributing Building)**

The Tea Room, a long low building northwest of the House of the Seven Gables connected to the east end of the barn, was completed in 1924. The Tea Room has two gable-roofed components on either end. The central part is recessed so that that part of the building is only half as wide as the ends. An arbor covered with vines spans the space between the two ends and provides seating for visitors, where formerly patrons of the Tea Room were served. The roof is of asbestos cement shingles. The theme of dark stained clapboards is continued on the Tea Room.

In stating her intention, with Chandler's help, to create an appropriate setting for the House of the Seven Gables by grouping a set of harmonious buildings around an informal courtyard and garden, Caroline Emmerton said:

At the northern end, a barn and shed, which appear very ancient, serve to house the Tea Room. They are, however, only reproductions of the barn and shed which once stood there, and were built so that the Tea Room should be in harmony with its neighboring ancient houses.<sup>9</sup>

The Barn and Tea Room are contributing for their role in the design and functioning of the Settlement House and as part of the setting for the House of the Seven Gables created by Chandler and Emmerton.

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<sup>9</sup> Emmerton, *Chronicles of Three Old Houses*, 4.

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**6. Colonial Revival Garden (Contributing Site)**

The garden in the central quadrangle of the House of the Seven Gables site consists of two sets of U-shaped raised flower beds edged by boards and separated by gravel paths. At the center of each set is a rectangular bed in which is placed a seven-foot-high, vase-shaped iron rose trellis. The two trellises were imported from England in the 1920s and are believed to be reproductions of an eighteenth century design. The garden contains plants appropriate to the early twentieth century Colonial Revival period. Boxwood bushes are placed at the four corners of this formal garden. Less formal gardens next to the house also feature boxwoods, and a row of boxwoods separates the central garden from an arbor covered with wistaria to the west. A central gravel path runs through these features to a reproduction of "Maule's well" described in Hawthorne's story, which was relocated to its current position in 1954. Beyond the formal gardens to the south a curving boxwood hedge separates the garden area from the lawn adjacent to the harbor. Reproduction period garden furniture is placed around the garden. Elsewhere on the site a variety of trees, including an American Elm and a row of copper maple trees around the parking lot, provide shade and foliage to the property.

The formal garden is closely based on a garden plan that Joseph Chandler prepared in 1909, which Chandler intended perhaps to suggest the garden that plays a role in Hawthorne's romance. Chandler considered himself a landscape gardener and horticulturalist, and included a chapter on Colonial gardens in his 1916 book, *The Colonial House*. The garden was apparently not laid out until the 1920s when the installation of the Retire Becket House and the Barn and the Tea Room were completed. Later, Arthur Shurcliff, designer of the Colonial Revival gardens at Colonial Williamsburg in 1928, was credited as the designer of the garden, though he apparently retained the garden layout of Chandler's original plan.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps Shurcliff simply designed new plantings to replace those that had become overgrown.<sup>11</sup>

The garden is significant on a national level for its role as part of the setting of the House of the Seven Gables, and for the design contributions of two important landscape architects of the Colonial Revival period.

The completion of the garden and quadrangle in 1924 is a significant date in the history of the property. At that point the setting for the House of the Seven Gables, as envisioned by Caroline Emmerton and Joseph Everett Chandler, was completed. Features of the complex immediately surrounding the House of the Seven Gables have changed little since 1924.

**7. Counting House (Contributing Building)**

The building now interpreted as the Counting House was a woodshed and storehouse that stood from the late nineteenth century where the garden is now.<sup>12</sup> In its present location, the renovated building has a cement foundation, dark-brown-stained clapboards, a wood shingled roof, double hung sash windows and slim chimney. On the interior, the building has a Federal style mantelpiece and furnishings appropriate to its function of representing, as the sign says, as a "Counting House that sea captains would have had to use as an office located near their homes and wharves." Interpreted as a counting house since the early days of the House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association, the building contributes as part of the educational complex created for the settlement association as a museum attraction to emphasize the maritime history of the site.

**8. Nathaniel Hawthorne Birthplace (Contributing Building)**

The Nathaniel Hawthorne Birthplace, a two and one half story, four-room plan house with a central chimney

<sup>10</sup> George Taloumis, "The Seven Gables Garden," *American Horticulturalist* (October 1983): 25.

<sup>11</sup> Larry Simpson, "A Brief History of the Formal Gardens," *The House of the Seven Gables News and Calendar* (Fall 2005): 8.

<sup>12</sup> "Aunt Lizzie Lived in the House of the Seven Gables," Typescript in the House of the Seven Gables Archives, author and date unknown.

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and a gambrel roof, was built between 1730 and 1745 on Union Street in Salem. In 1958, the house was moved to the Hardy Street side of the House of the Seven Gables property where it sits with its gable end to the street. The house, covered with clapboards painted dark red, has regular fenestration and a simple doorway decorated with pilasters and an entablature above. Hawthorne (1804-1864) lived in the house until he was four years old.

Most of the present trim in the house is original. Only the right front room was updated with new fireplace wall in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, though the original wall survives behind the current one. At the time of the restoration in 1958, the house was repainted with original colors determined by paint research. Ceilings were restored to their original appearance and new double hung sash windows were installed. Since 1958, the house has been open to the public as a part of the museum. Plans call for installing an exhibit on the life of Nathaniel Hawthorne on both floors of the house in the near future. The building, though moved, has a high degree of integrity. It is a contributing building as the birthplace of one of America's foremost nineteenth-century authors, and as part of the educational complex created by the settlement association as a museum attraction and financial resource.

**9. Phippen House (Non-contributing Building)**

North of the Hawthorne Birthplace at 25 Hardy Street is the yellow clapboarded Joshua Phippen House, a three story, four-room-plan house in the Federal style with hip roof, two chimneys and one-story pedimented entrance porches on two sides. Purchased by the Association in 1965, the house was apparently begun in 1782 by Phippen, a cooper. However, the building shows signs of having been enlarged and updated twenty or more years later. The three story design, with smaller third floor windows, is more consistent with the Federal style of the later period, and the windows do not all align with the ones below. The building is used in the functioning of the settlement house, and is locally significant for its period architectural features. Because it was purchased by the Association after the period of significance it is considered non-contributing.

**10. Seamans Visitor Center (Non-contributing Building)**

The Seamans Visitor Center, named for long time trustee and donor Donald Seaman, was completed in 1994 to accommodate the needs of the average 120,000 people who visit the site each year. The design of the Visitor Center, a large, single story structure with full basement, draws on the theme of gables. Four prominently gabled red clapboarded buildings are joined together into a single structure that includes a gabled entrance porch. A reception area leads through the east portion of the building to the garden and the House of the Seven Gables. Restrooms and a small restaurant flank the south end of the reception hall. In the west part of the building are two large rooms that can function, separately or together, as classrooms, galleries, meeting or lecture rooms. Storage and the Association's Archives of the Museum, settlement house, and Hawthorne-related materials are located in the basement.

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**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally: X Statewide:    Locally:   

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A X B    C X D   

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):

A    B    C    D    E    F    G   

NHL Criteria:

1, 4

NHL Exception:

2

NHL Theme(s):

- III. Expressing Cultural Values
  - 1. educational and intellectual currents
  - 5. architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design
- VII. Transforming the Environment
  - 3. protecting and preserving the environment

Areas of Significance: Architecture

- Education
- Social History

Period(s) of Significance:

1668-1742; 1870-1958

Significant Dates:

1668, 1677, 1909, 1924

Significant Person(s):

Cultural Affiliation:

Architect/Builder:

Joseph Everett Chandler

Historic Contexts:

- XVI. Architecture
  - A. Colonial
- XXXIII. Historic Preservation
  - D. Regional Efforts: New England
  - F. The Emergence of Architectural Interest in Preservation – Antiquaries, Architects, and Museums



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**State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.**

The House of the Seven Gables property is nationally significant for its architectural merit relating to its Colonial Revival restoration in 1909 by noted restoration architect Joseph Everett Chandler, and its preserved Postmedieval and Georgian features. One of the earliest houses in the country to be restored to a full blown seventeenth-century exterior appearance, the building had a significant influence on later restorations. In addition, the small complex around the House of the Seven Gables was planned and designed by Chandler and Caroline O. Emmerton, founder of the House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association, in an attempt to provide an example of the simpler life of America's colonial past.

The House of the Seven Gables represents a unique melding of three important themes in American history: architecture, social reform, and literature. Its role in social reform is not known to be duplicated at any other historic site in the country. In what Joseph Conforti called "perhaps the most distinctive institutionalization of a useable past in the whole colonial revival period,"<sup>13</sup> the building was acquired and restored in 1909 to support the work of a settlement house both as a source of income and as a vehicle for teaching American values. After nearly one hundred years, income from the historic site still provides twenty-five percent of the funding of the House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association. The programs of the settlement house are carried out and administered in buildings on the property, and the House of the Seven Gables itself remains a resource that settlement workers use in a variety of ways in their programs.

As a literary shrine to Nathaniel Hawthorne, the property includes the author's birthplace, which was moved to the site, and the House of the Seven Gables, which since at least 1870 has been associated in the popular mind with the building described in Hawthorne's romance. The House of the Seven Gables may be the only house in the country that was specifically restored to reflect a fictional house described by an important author.

Also significant is the extent to which the property is embedded in the American imagination. One survey found it to be among the top ten favorite historic houses in the country.<sup>14</sup> At 120,000 visitors a year, it is by far the most visited house museum in New England.

**Historical Background****Postmedieval Architecture**

The original building of the House of the Seven Gables of 1668 and its substantial parlor wing added in 1677 represent, according to Abbott Lowell Cummings, "the most ambitious surviving seventeenth century framed house in New England."<sup>15</sup> In architectural significance, the house is the equal of three other noted seventeenth-century buildings: the stone and brick Spencer-Peirce-Little House in Newbury, Massachusetts (NHL, 1968); the stone Henry Whitfield House in Guilford, Connecticut (NHL, 1997); and the brick Bacon's Castle in Surrey County, Virginia (NHL, 1960).

The Postmedieval buildings of New England derived from English architectural precedents familiar to the first settlers, who came during the Great Migration in the second and third decades of the seventeenth century. As the century progressed, building practices in the region evolved to reflect innovations in construction and

<sup>13</sup> Joseph A. Conforti, *Imagining New England* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 249.

<sup>14</sup> According to a *Builder Magazine* Reader's Choice Survey, March 2002, the top ten houses in order of preference were Falling Water, the Gamble House, Monticello, Taliesin West, Biltmore, Mar-a-lago, the Breakers, Hearst Castle (San Simeon), The House of the Seven Gables, and the Glass House.

<sup>15</sup> Abbott Lowell Cummings, "The House of the Seven Gables," Research paper in the possession of the author, n.d., p. 1.

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decoration and new social objectives. By late in the century, in what Cummings has called a “Golden Age”<sup>16</sup> of architectural embellishment, wealthy and prominent individuals were building houses elaborately decorated with façade gables, overhanging upper stories, and other sophisticated architectural treatments. Cummings sees this “exciting richness”<sup>17</sup> of detail as emblematic of the increased prosperity in New England at the end of the seventeenth century, for which those engaged in mercantile trade were primarily responsible.

John Turner I (1644-1680), who built the earliest part of the House of the Seven Gables in 1668 and the south wing that substantially enlarged the house just nine years later, was a prime example of such a merchant. Turner was the son of an English born shoemaker and hat merchant of Boston, who died when Turner was seven. His mother then married George Gardner, a wealthy Salem merchant. Like many successful merchants in the seventeenth century, family connections and inheritance gave John Turner a leg up into the heady world of mercantile trade. In Salem, Turner’s sister married Eleazer Gedney, a leading shipwright, in 1665.

John Turner was apparently well on his way to success when, at just twenty-four years old, he built the first part of his house at the time of his marriage. At two and one half stories, with two rooms per floor, the house was among the larger houses built at the time. Already it displayed certain features that set it apart from less ambitious houses. The façade gables, the plaster and lath applied to ceiling boards between the joists, and especially the rose red treatment of the timbers in the Hall are among the earliest surviving examples of these treatments. Similar treatments in the house of Turner’s brother-in-law, Eleazer Gedney, built three years earlier in Salem, may have inspired Turner to embellish his house in this manner. Cummings calls the paint schemes at the Turner and Gedney Houses “The most sophisticated [seventeenth-century] examples that have come to light.”<sup>18</sup>

Salem was second only to Boston in the Massachusetts Bay Colony as a center of mercantile trade in the seventeenth century, and had the largest population of any town in Essex County. Shipping included the transport of natural resources and other goods between ports on both sides of the Atlantic. In the decade of the 1670s the growth of shipping was particularly rapid in Essex County, where merchants’ investment in shipping vessels increased by seventy-eight percent a year, and of the thirty-two vessels owned in Essex County at the end of the decade, five were owned outright by John Turner and eight were owned by John Turner in shares.<sup>19</sup> In the hierarchical Puritan society, Turner’s wealth gave him access to public office and in 1679 he became a selectman in Salem. By the time of his death in 1680, John Turner was the wealthiest man in Essex County.<sup>20</sup> He left an estate of nearly 7,000 pounds.<sup>21</sup>

Perhaps the most remarkable reflection of Turner’s extreme wealth was the sophisticated and progressive parlor wing that he added to his house in 1677. Although many of the important features incorporated into the 1677 wing are concealed behind later finish materials, their presence, known from building archaeology, adds another layer of architectural significance to the building beyond its importance as a monument of the Colonial Revival movement and its preserved Georgian woodwork. Some of the features of the 1677 addition are the earliest surviving examples of their type in New England, preceding other surviving examples by a decade or more in some cases. These include: the arched chimney foundation, the shadow-molded exterior sheathing, and the framed overhang with decorative pendants.

<sup>16</sup> Abbott Lowell Cummings, *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625-1725* (Cambridge: the Belknap Press, 1979), 191.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>19</sup> William I. Davisson, “Essex County Wealth and Economic Growth in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Massachusetts,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 103 (1967): 303.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 304.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

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The Postmedieval concept of the original exterior gives way on the interior to tantalizing hints of the beginning influence of Classical architecture upon room treatment, arrangement and use. The ceiling heights in the parlor and chamber exceed those of the typical seventeenth century house by sixteen or more inches and match those of the finest Georgian houses of the first decades of the eighteenth century.<sup>22</sup> The plaster ceilings suspended below the joists precede other known examples in New England by a dozen or more years.<sup>23</sup> The boards that covered the sides of the ceiling beams where they projected below the plaster ceiling are similarly advanced, if not unique for the period. The coffered appearance of the ceiling occasioned by the two sets of articulated ceiling beams at right angles to each other is a treatment unknown elsewhere in the region. These features are in accord with the trend in Classical architecture to conceal structure, whereas in the previous Postmedieval period, structure had been exposed and celebrated with decorative treatments, such as chamfers on timbers. Without documentary specifics, it is difficult to know how John Turner acquired a taste for new and elegant architectural features apparently in advance of his contemporaries.

The elegant house of 1677 reflected not just new architectural forms, but new social rituals staged in the new spaces that were intended to distinguish their elite users from their less fortunate countrymen. Following English practices, which themselves derived from France, the new spaces allowed for a suite of rooms on each floor. Cary Carson analyzed the room by a room inventory of 1693, and made these observations:

The new wing raised the social ante enormously by creating pairs of complementary apartments on each floor. The former "Hall" became exclusively a dining room with a large table, twelve leather chairs, and a glass case full of glasses. The brand-new adjoining "Parlor" was fitted out as a sitting room with velveteen turkey work chairs and two small tables at which the family could take private meals. All beds were removed to the floors above. The revamped "Hall Chamber" played withdrawing room to a more private "Parlor Chamber."<sup>24</sup>

### Georgian Remodelings

The beginning hints of Renaissance-inspired architecture would be further elaborated in the Georgian remodelings of the house in the eighteenth century described in Section 7. John Turner II (1671-1742), who inherited the house in 1697, was even more prominent and wealthy than his father, and he established lucrative alliances with other mercantile families through the marriages of his sisters and children. Turner became one of the leading merchants of Massachusetts Bay and served the colony in a variety of ways. "His public career was capped in 1721 when, at the age of fifty-two, he was elected to the Governor's Council. The council was the highest elective office in the Commonwealth, and comprised the inner circle of provincial grandees who advised the royally-appointed Governor on matters of policy and politics."<sup>25</sup> John Turner II is likely to have initiated the Georgian remodeling of the house before his death in 1742, the date that marks the end of the house's first period of significance. The finely-crafted Georgian woodwork would have provided an elegant and up-to-date backdrop to the entertaining for which Turner was known.

Notable among the distinguished survivals from the Georgian period is the built-in cabinet in the parlor, and in particular the preservation of its original paint. Paint analysis in 2002 revealed that the cabinet had never been repainted since the first application of paint, although parts of the surface were later touched up. The original

<sup>22</sup> Cummings, *Framed Houses*, 191.

<sup>23</sup> The next earliest example of ceilings plastered below the joists are found in the Spencer-Peirce-Little House in Newbury, Massachusetts, built c. 1690.

<sup>24</sup> Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert, *Of Consuming Interests: the Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville, VA: United States Capital Historical Society, 1994), 621.

<sup>25</sup> Christopher M. Jedry, untitled paper on the Turner Family, n. d., p. 6. The House of the Seven Gables Archives, Salem, Massachusetts.

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paint scheme of Prussian blue, now greatly darkened and yellowed, and the accents of gilding remain.<sup>26</sup>

The extensive inventory of the possessions in John Turner II's estate in 1742, listed room by room, when compared with his father's inventory of 1693, made it possible for Cary Carson to track the evolving room use that reflected new refinements in social practices among eighteenth century elites:

The alterations further refined the family's use of the apartments in accordance with international gentry practice. Formal dining and tea taking moved from the hall into the parlor, renamed the "Best Room." A long table and the old leather chairs stayed behind in the hall for lesser occasions. The social center of the house removed upstairs to the "Great Chamber," which, besides its lavishly appointed tester bed, contained seating furniture, pictures, garniture, sconces and other fashionable gear three times more valuable than the similar bed-sitting equipment next door in the hall chamber.<sup>27</sup>

John Turner III (1708-1787), who inherited the house in 1742 and owned it for forty years, may have added Georgian features to the house. The date of installation of woodwork in the parlor chamber is unknown, but comparable treatments are found in houses dating from the 1730s through the 1770s. Turner inherited his father's business interests, but was not apparently disposed to take advantage of them. Instead he devoted much of his time and fortune to building an elegant new house in a more fashionable part of town beginning in 1745. By 1760 Turner's fortunes were in such decline that he had to sell his new house and return to the Turner Street mansion. About that time, Turner was able, through family connections, to obtain the post of Naval Officer of Salem. In 1772 Turner's political views as a Tory resulted in losing his Naval post. In 1782, Turner was forced to sell the mansion on Turner Street to pay his debts.

### **Nathaniel Hawthorne's Connection with The House of the Seven Gables, and the Growth of the House's Reputation as the Building Depicted in Hawthorne's Romance**

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) participated in a remarkable outpouring of literary creativity in New England in the mid-nineteenth century, often described as the "American Renaissance" or "The Flowering of New England," after two important twentieth century evaluations of the phenomenon bearing those titles by F. O. Matthiessen and Van Wyck Brooks, respectively. American Romanticism is a more inclusive term for the period that acknowledges the parallel Romantic Movement in Europe at the time. Both were a reaction to the rationalism of the Enlightenment, but in America a new confidence and a desire for a distinctly American literature were elements of the movement:

Throughout the 1840s, an increasingly confident temper was to grow partly through [Ralph Waldo] Emerson's stimulation, in American writing; in 1841 William Ellery Channing spoke of the age's "new tendency in all its movements to expansion, to diffusion, to universality." By mid-century this sense of innovation, [and] intuitive discovery had reached its peak.<sup>28</sup>

Between 1850 and 1855 a group of literary masterpieces "were produced in one extraordinarily concentrated moment of expression . . . when America came to its first maturity and affirmed its rightful heritage in the whole expanse of art and culture."<sup>29</sup> Two of these masterpieces were Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*

<sup>26</sup> Chris Thompson, "The House of the Seven Gables, Phase II Parlor Paint Study," 2002. Robert Muzzey Associates, Boston, Massachusetts. The House of the Seven Gables Archives, Salem, Massachusetts.

<sup>27</sup> Carson, et al. *Of Consuming Interests*, 621.

<sup>28</sup> Richard Roland and Malcolm Bradbury, *American Naissance of Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature* (New York: Viking Press, 1991), 104.

<sup>29</sup> F. O. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941), vii.

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(1850) and *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851).<sup>30</sup>

Nathaniel Hawthorne was born in Salem in 1804 to a family descended from seventeenth century settlers, among them, John Hathorne (1641-1717), a magistrate involved in the Salem witch trials.<sup>31</sup> After graduation from Bowdoin College in 1825, Hawthorne spent over a decade in seclusion honing his skills as a writer. In 1839, after becoming engaged to Sophia Peabody, he returned to active life and became a custom's officer in Boston to earn money in anticipation of his marriage. In April of 1841, Hawthorn spent a few months at the Transcendentalists' experiment in communal living at Brook Farm in West Roxbury, before marrying Sophia and moving to Concord. The 1840s and 1850s were Hawthorne's most prolific period as a writer. He was one of the first American authors to receive acclaim in England and on the Continent. Salem was the setting of several of his writings in addition to *The House of the Seven Gables* and his experience in Salem in his formative years surely influenced the themes and characters of his fiction. His sense that the historical past informs our actions is a theme that is particularly evident in *The House of the Seven Gables*. "Today we read Hawthorne for the pure beauty of his style and his deep perception of human nature."<sup>32</sup> Early on Hawthorne assumed a place in the American literary canon that continues to this day.

Nathaniel Hawthorne was related by marriage to the wife of Captain Samuel Ingersoll, a successful ship's captain, who purchased the property from John Turner III in 1782. Ingersoll, who died in 1804, served as a colonel in the American Revolution. Rev. William Bentley, noted Salem diarist, was a friend of the Ingersolls. He recorded that when Samuel Ingersoll's widow died in 1811 without a will, the surviving daughter, Susan, much to her distress, was "beset by the Col.'s family with the ferocity of tigers,"<sup>33</sup> who were intent upon securing the contents of the house for themselves. Susan Ingersoll, for unknown reasons, subsequently became a recluse. She did, however, invite a group of friends to her house to play cards with her regularly. Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864), Susan's second cousin, seventeen years her junior, was part of the group. It is not a stretch to think that Hawthorne, aware of Susan's encounter with her father's relatives and subsequent withdrawal from society, might have modeled Hepzibah Pyncheon's plight in *The House of the Seven the Gables* on Susan's story.

Susan Ingersoll had an unofficially adopted son, Horace Conolly, to whom she left her considerable estate when she died in 1858. Conolly, first a minister, then a lawyer, and finally a "quack doctor,"<sup>34</sup> was part of the group that played cards at the Ingersoll house. He was also a sometime friend of Hawthorne's, though Hawthorne apparently came to dislike him. Conolly, who changed his name to Ingersoll after Susan Ingersoll's death, managed to squander his inheritance and in 1879 he sold the house.

Perhaps most significantly for the future of the Turner House, Conolly may have spread the story that the house was the one described in Hawthorne's romance, *The House of the Seven Gables*, published in 1851. In the preface to the book, Hawthorne denies that the fictional house is based on any specific structure, saying that, in keeping with a romance as opposed to a novel, he is not aiming for strict fidelity to external reality, but is "appropriating a lot of land which had no visible owner, and building a house of materials long in use for

<sup>30</sup> The other masterpieces cited by Matthiessen were Emerson's *Representative Men* (1850), Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851) and *Pierre* (1852), Thoreau's *Walden* (1854), and Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1855).

<sup>31</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne added a "w" to his last name as a young man.

<sup>32</sup> Norman Holmes Pearson, "Introduction," *The Complete Novels and Selected Tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1937), vii.

<sup>33</sup> William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley, Pastor of the First church in Salem, Massachusetts*, Entry for December 8, 1811 Vol. 4 (Salem, Massachusetts: Essex Institute, 1911), 71.

<sup>34</sup> Caroline Emmerton, *The Chronicles of Three Old Houses* (privately printed), 25.

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constructing castles in the air.”<sup>35</sup>

Much has been written about potential sources of the house described in the romance, there being three or more houses still standing in Hawthorne’s youth that would have been as likely, if not more likely, as prototypes. The Turner House, by the time Hawthorne knew it, had only three gables and no visible overhang. In spite of Hawthorne’s disclaimers in his preface and in later disavowals to friends, people continued to speculate about the source of the house. One person reminisced about the speculations fifty years later:

[Instead of] the commonplace house in Turner Street, which crowds of worshipping tourists flock to see. . . I am sure that all old Salem people, if there are any left except myself who remember the coming out of the book and the great excitement it produced in Salem in April 1851, will agree with me in believing that the old [Philip] English house was, perhaps unconsciously to Hawthorne, the inspiring cause of the description of The House of the Seven Gables.<sup>36</sup>

Other noted Salem houses that had specific features described by Hawthorne: the roughcast of the Browne House or Sun Tavern, the balcony of the Philip English House, the façade gables of the Deliverance Parkman and the Hunt Houses. Very soon, however, the Turner House became firmly associated with Hawthorne’s romance and was already known as the House of the Seven Gables. In 1870 it was so identified in a guidebook. In 1897, the *Atlas of Salem* identifies the property as the “The House of Seven Gables” in addition to naming the owner.<sup>37</sup> Possibly local people first made the association because they knew that Hawthorne and Susan Ingersoll were related.

More importantly, however, Horace Conolly produced a copy of a letter purportedly written to him by Hawthorne in 1840 describing a visit to Susan Ingersoll, in which he mentions being taken to the attic to view the truncated remains of one of the original gables and being told that there had been seven gables originally. Hawthorne supposedly wrote “the expression [seven gables] struck me very forcibly, and I think I shall make something of it.”<sup>38</sup> The authenticity of the letter cannot be verified because the letter only survives as Conolly’s copy. Hawthorne experts find that the letter has more in common with Conolly’s writing style than Hawthorne’s.<sup>39</sup> One can speculate that Conolly saw a way to exploit the house for profit by associating it with Hawthorne, though there is no evidence that he charged admission to tourists. Perhaps he was only trying to enhance his own prestige through his association with Hawthorne at a time when the author’s fame was ascending.<sup>40</sup>

The story of Hawthorne being shown the remains of the gable was frequently quoted. For example, architect Arthur Little cited the story along with the drawing of the beaufat in the Parlor that he included in his book of 1877, *Early New England Interiors*.<sup>41</sup>

There continued to be skeptics throughout the nineteenth century and later, as guide books and other writings

<sup>35</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne, Preface to *The House of the Seven Gables* in *The Complete Novels and Selected Tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1937), 244.

<sup>36</sup> Carolyn Howard King, *When I Lived in Salem 1822-1866* (Brattleboro, VT: Stephen Daye Press, 1937), 103.

<sup>37</sup> *Atlas of the City of Salem, Mass.* (Springfield, MA: L. J. Richards & Co, 1897), Plate 4.

<sup>38</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne, letter fragment (?) written in Boston in May 1840 to Horace Conolly in Philadelphia included as Letter No. 157 in Thomas Woodson, L. Neal Smith, Norman Holmes Pearson, eds. *Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, vol. 15, The Letters 1813-1843 (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1984), 456-457.

<sup>39</sup> Woodson, et al., *Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, 62.

<sup>40</sup> Conolly’s obituary, entitled “Hawthorne’s Companion,” appeared in the *Salem Gazette* on September 13, 1894. It quotes an interview in which Conolly describes his “intimate” friendship with Hawthorne.

<sup>41</sup> Arthur Little, *Early New England Interiors Sketched in Salem, Marblehead, Portsmouth and Kittery* (Boston: A. Williams and Company, 1978).

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debate and describe the sources of the dwelling depicted in the romance. Whatever its ultimate association, the house became a shrine to the romance and its author to the point that how it got that way now seems less important than recognizing how profound the connection became in the popular mind. As a thoughtful journalist put it in 1911, "Perhaps because the house stands so deep in imaginations and memories it is hard not to believe it the very spot."<sup>42</sup>

After changing hands three times, the House of the Seven Gables property was purchased by the Henry O. Upton Family in 1883. For the next twenty-five years, the family took advantage of the house's by then firm reputation as the setting of Hawthorne's romance in several ways. Henry Upton, a teacher of music and dancing, composed dance music in 1892, which he called the "House of the Seven Gables Series." He also gave dance lessons in the parlor. His daughter, Ida, an artist, developed a line of souvenir china that she painted with various depictions of witches. The china was displayed in a small shop window that the Uptons added to the Turner Street side of the house to attract patrons to their version of Hepzibah's shop inside. Family members gave tours for a twenty-five-cent fee, pointing out rooms named in Hawthorne's story, such as Hepzibah's parlor, as they went. They even took visitors to the attic to see the remains of the façade gable that was covered when the parlor wing was built.<sup>43</sup> Caroline Emmerton, describing her reasons for purchasing the house in 1908, noted that "hundreds" of people already came to see the house every year.

### **The Colonial Revival Movement**

Progressivism took many forms in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. All, like the settlement house movement, were intended in some way to reform American society, and to restore "proper balances between . . . moral values, capitalistic competition and democratic processes."<sup>44</sup> One aspect of progressivism was the desire to return to a simpler, pre-industrial past. To many native-born Americans who felt threatened by the influx of immigrants, this desire found expression in an affinity for Colonial architecture that symbolized to them the values that they viewed as in decline. This desire was embodied in the Colonial Revival movement. In its most extreme form, mere exposure to Colonial buildings was thought to promote the early American virtues that the building's early owners represented. For example, when the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art opened in 1924, the authors of a book about the wing said:

The tremendous changes in the character of our nation, and the influx of foreign ideas utterly at variance with those held by the men who gave us the Republic threaten, and unless checked, may shake its foundations. . . . Here for the first time is a comprehensive realistic setting for the traditions so dear to us and so invaluable in the Americanization of many of our people, to whom much of our history is little known.<sup>45</sup>

Caroline Emmerton expressed similar thoughts when she said, "The historical and literary associations of the old houses [on the House of the Seven Gables site] must surely help in making American citizens of our boys and girls."<sup>46</sup> Indoctrination to American values was just one of the many meanings the Colonial Revival movement had in the Progressive Era. A respect for craftsmanship, a desire for a national architecture and national identity, and association with Anglo-Saxon ancestors were among the other meanings.

<sup>42</sup> Eunice Fuller, "Restoring the Gables: Hawthorne's Famous House Given its Original Seven," Unidentified newspaper clipping, dated Aug. 3, 1911. Historic New England Archives, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>43</sup> Unidentified newspaper clipping, Henry M. Brooks Scrapbook of Newspaper clippings, p. 52-55, Phillips Library Collection, Peabody-Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts. The clipping can be dated to 1888 because it mentions that the chimney was in the process of being taken down.

<sup>44</sup> Mina Carson, "Reader's Companion to U. S. Women's History: the Settlement House Movement." Online publication of the Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005.

<sup>45</sup> R. T. H. Halsey and Elizabeth Tower, *The Homes of Our Ancestors as Shown in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1925), xxii.

<sup>46</sup> Emmerton, *Chronicles of Three Old Houses*, 39.

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**Joseph Everett Chandler**

It was in this cultural environment that Joseph Everett Chandler rose to prominence as an architect and restorer of Colonial buildings. By 1912, he had acquired a national reputation for his restorations.<sup>47</sup> Between 1906 and 1916, in addition to the House of the Seven Gables, Chandler restored eight of the most important historic properties in the Boston area including the Dorothy Quincy House in Quincy in 1906 (NHL, 2005), the Paul Revere House in Boston in 1907 (NHL, 1961), the Old State House in Boston in 1908 (NHL, 1960), the Rebecca Nurse House in Danvers in 1909, the Cooper-Frost-Austin House in Cambridge in 1912, the Isaac Royall House in Medford in 1913 (NHL, 1960), the Stevens-Coolidge House in North Andover beginning in 1914, and the Hooper-Lee Nichols House in Cambridge in 1916. By the end of his career, he had restored more than two dozen Colonial buildings. In addition to his work on restorations, Chandler had a healthy career as architect of new Colonial Revival houses, and played a role in saving historic buildings from destruction.

Chandler (1866-1945) was born in Plymouth, Massachusetts and educated in a special two year course in architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1885 to 1887. He worked briefly for several architectural firms including McKim, Mead and White, and Burnham and Root before setting up a practice of his own. Although Chandler's work as a landscape gardener and horticulturalist is little known, he is recognized for several larger planning schemes, including plans for the House of the Seven Gables site, Old Sturbridge Village, Storrowton Village in Springfield, and the Green and its surroundings in North Andover.

Chandler's rise can be attributed to several qualities. First and foremost, he made himself an authority on historic buildings, by examining them in great numbers, not just in New England, but all along the eastern seaboard. He published widely with articles in newspapers and magazines, architectural monographs and several books beginning in 1892, when his book of photographs of buildings in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia came out just six years after he left architectural school.<sup>48</sup> Even as a young man at MIT, Chandler sketched old houses and with his classmates founded a sketching club.<sup>49</sup> In 1916 he produced a lengthy resource book for homeowners and architects wishing to build in the Colonial Revival style called *The Colonial House* that included chapters on the architecture of Post-medieval, Georgian and Federal periods. He drew upon the houses that he restored to illustrate the text.

Chandler examined buildings with an architect's eye for aesthetic quality, plan and detail. He considered certain techniques essential for understanding historic buildings, and stated in *The Colonial House*:

It is not enough for the architect to be conversant with material in a way of knowing houses and their details from his collection of Colonial prints and drawings. The only way for the architect to imbue himself with the spirit of the old work will be found in the making of measured drawings of numerous good examples of old work even as he would do by famous European examples he admired . . . in the course of his travels.<sup>50</sup>

Along with Isham, Chandler:

pioneered the archeological approach to investigating and understanding early buildings. Murray

<sup>47</sup> *Bulletin of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities* Vol. 3, No. 2, Serial No. 7 (July 1912): 8.

<sup>48</sup> *The Colonial Architecture of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia*, Photographed and arranged under the direction of Joseph Everett Chandler (Boston: Bates, Kimball & Guild, 1892). This was, according to William B. Rhoads, along with a similar book published in 1891 by Corner & Soderholtz, "the first photographic documentation of Colonial architecture in book form." See William B. Rhoads, "The Colonial Revival" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1974), 79.

<sup>49</sup> Joseph Everett Chandler, *Diary*, 1886. Historic New England Archives, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>50</sup> Joseph Everett Chandler, *The Colonial House* (New York: Robert McBride & Company, 1916), 6.



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Course, a New York architect, wrote of Chandler to William Sumner Appleton in 1919 "... He seems to be far and away the ablest of our archeologists, for he has not only knowledge and experience, but what is so often ignored, architectural skill and artistic appreciation." Chandler, along with Isham, worked closely with William Sumner Appleton as an advisor and co-investigator in the restoration of the Abraham Browne House in Watertown, perhaps the most thorough archeologically-based restoration of the period.<sup>51</sup>

Chandler in his writings pays tribute not just to the craftsmanship and beauty of Colonial buildings, but to the lifestyle they embodied. His ardent if romanticized view of Colonial life was very much in keeping with the times, and must have struck a chord with his clients, perhaps especially the women:

The houses of our forefathers bespoke a fearless honesty characteristic of themselves, -- a lack of pretence and sham, but with a diffident expression of a love for the beautiful which, if somewhat severe and subdued, was their rightful heritage, and made their homes express the limitations early forced on them by the country of their adoption. It would, however, be well to-day if the rank and file of our nation could return in a marked degree toward this simplicity and again live a life approximating the sane life of our Colonial forebears.<sup>52</sup>

In conjunction with this appreciation for simplicity, Chandler was strongly critical of many of the Colonial Revival buildings for the early period of its revival in 1880s and 1890s. He considered these buildings overblown and over decorated.

Chandler's overriding concern as an architect was to create a pleasing, if not entirely accurate, environment for his clients while retrofitting historic buildings for modern use, though he certainly drew upon his extensive knowledge of early buildings in designing his restorations. Given the climate of the time, clients were completely in accord with this view. He was widely recognized for his artistic taste, and to him artistic taste was more important than authenticity. This view was shared by the few other men who undertook restorations or offered opinions on them. Norman Isham and George Francis Dow as well as Chandler returned buildings to conjectured original appearances, and endowed them with decorative features for which there was no physical evidence. While the over restoration of buildings is contrary to current preservation philosophy, at the time it was an accepted part of the restoration practice. George Francis Dow was later criticized for his "excessive hand in restoring the Parson Capen House in 1913."<sup>53</sup> Chandler was accused of over restoring the Paul Revere House, where he removed a third story in order to take the building back to a seventeenth century appearance unrelated to what was there when Paul Revere was alive. Chandler restored the Harlow House ("Old Fort") in Plymouth in 1920, giving the building a version of clay plaster with an exaggerated amount of straw and installing a plaster cove to support a non-existent hearth above, apparently just for its looks. Norman Isham restored the Whipple-Matthews House in Hamilton with a seventeenth century exterior in 1914, based on physical evidence, but then put elaborate Georgian woodwork on the interior, apparently purely for reasons of aesthetics. It took William Sumner Appleton of SPNEA to eventually promote more scientific and less intrusive preservation measures.<sup>54</sup>

One thing Chandler did not share with others such as Isham and Appleton was an antiquarian's interest in recording physical evidence found in buildings. Norman Isham made careful drawings and published books that are still a resource for architectural historians in New England. While Chandler did base his restorations on

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<sup>51</sup> Stachiw, Myron O., *Quincy Homestead National Historic Landmark Nomination* (Washington, DC: National Historic Landmarks Program files, National Park Service, 2004), 23.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>53</sup> Donald Millar, as quoted in James Lindgren, *Preserving Historic New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 138.

<sup>54</sup> See Lindgren, *Preserving Historic New England*, 134-152.

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evidence he found in a house, if he could, he left little record of what he found. With regard to Chandler's restoration of the House of the Seven Gables, William Sumner Appleton of SPNEA had this to say:

Your findings with reference to Joe Chandler are exactly in line with mine. He is a different type of architect from Isham, for our deceased friend in Rhode Island [Isham] was a superb antiquarian and would never in the world have allowed information of an antiquarian character or containing evidence of the past get away from him. To Chandler this didn't so much matter, and accordingly knowledge about the original House of the Seven Gables, or Turner House, is now lost forever.<sup>55</sup>

Joseph Everett Chandler, by positioning himself as the foremost restoration architect of the Boston area, was in a unique position to influence future restorations. The House of the Seven Gables was the first free-standing house in the country to be restored to a full blown Postmedieval appearance complete with façade gables and an overhang decorated with pendants. As such it influenced a group of restorations of important seventeenth century houses that succeeded it, which are among the few vivid reminders of the region's original architecture in its "Golden Age."<sup>56</sup> Although New England has hundreds of Postmedieval houses, few are restored on the exterior to a seventeenth century appearance.

**Caroline O. Emmerton and the Establishment of The House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association**

The settlement house movement began in 1884 with the founding of Toynbee Hall in the slums of East London. The movement was an outgrowth of concerns among educated young people about the welfare of the country's poor, which were influenced by the ideas of John Ruskin and William Morris. The idea was soon taken up in America, where the progressive movement was promoting social reform in a variety of ways. In America, the focus was on improving the welfare of foreign born workers who came in large numbers to the country during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and on teaching them American ways. The immigrants' presence troubled many Americans, who, on the one hand, felt that old American values were at risk, and, on the other hand, perceived that new immigrants needed help to cope with life in a new country. Implicit in the settlement house movement was that settlement workers should live in the slums themselves, for, as Dr. William Tucker, the founder of Andover House in Boston, said, "Personal identification with the lives of those who need help is the characteristic of the movement."<sup>57</sup>

In 1887, Vida Scudder, "a sensitive and impassioned young English instructor at Wellesley who had returned two years before from Oxford, where John Ruskin and others had 'awakened her to the realities of modern civilization,' and 'kindled the flame of social passion,'" founded with others the College Settlement Association.<sup>58</sup> Soon there were chapters at Smith, Wellesley, Vassar, Bryn Mawr, and Radcliffe. Members of the association and like-minded people of similar backgrounds, many of them women, founded settlement houses in major cities, including New York, Chicago, and Boston. Notable among them were Jane Addams, who founded Hull House in Chicago in 1889, and Robert Woods, who in 1891 was the first director of Andover House in Boston's South End.

Caroline O. Emmerton (1866-1942), who was instrumental in establishing the settlement house on Turner Street and who purchased the former Turner House in 1908, came from a wealthy family whose members for several generations were known for their philanthropies. Miss Emmerton's father, George Emmerton, and her mother,

<sup>55</sup> William Sumner Appleton to Donald Millar, August 28, 1943. Historic New England Archives, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>56</sup> The houses include The Ward House in Salem, restored in 1910, the Corwin House in Salem, restored in 1945, and the Iron Works House in Saugus (NHL, 1963), restored in 1915.

<sup>57</sup> Eleanor H. Woods, *Robert A. Woods, Champion of Democracy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1929), 45.

<sup>58</sup> Allen F. Davis, *Spearheads of Reform: the Social Settlement and the Progressive Movement 1890-1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 10.

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Jennie Bertram Emmerton, who inherited substantial wealth from her father, Captain John Bertram, and was known as the richest woman in Salem, made significant contributions to the welfare of the citizens of Salem. Miss Emmerton inherited her parents' philanthropic leanings. A single woman, Caroline Emmerton devoted her considerable energy and organizational talents to a surprising number of social welfare organizations on a local and eventually a national level. Her first known appointment was to the board of managers of the Carpenter Street Home in 1894, at the age of twenty-eight.

Some of Miss Emmerton's papers are preserved in the House of the Seven Gables Archives. They document her wide range of interests and abilities. Included are papers on scholarly subjects that she apparently presented to literary clubs, plays on historical themes that she wrote for the settlement house children to perform, scripts for guides to the house, drafts of her book of 1935, *The Chronicles of Three Old Houses*, and writings on charity and social reform. A few papers relate to the historical pageant that Miss Emmerton wrote and masterminded that was produced in Salem in 1913. The pageant, attended by 11,000 to 12,000 people at \$1 each, was a fund raiser for the House of the Seven Gables.<sup>59</sup> Miss Emmerton believed that direct appeals for money were less effective than offering a tangible benefit of some kind.

What sort of education Miss Emmerton received to prepare her intellectually for her achievements in later life is unknown. Where and even if she went to college remains uncertain, though both Miss Emmerton and her mother were members of the Society for the Higher Education of Women. It would also be natural to think that her exposure to social reform ideals came through college contacts, since colleges and universities were the setting from which the earliest proponents of the settlement house movement emerged.

Somehow, Caroline Emmerton absorbed the Settlement House idea, whether through associations made at college or through her general concern for social welfare, and began to promote the possibility of a settlement house in Salem. She also, apparently, visited Toynbee Hall in London while on a tour of Europe in 1892.<sup>60</sup> "Interest in the Settlement began," Miss Emmerton noted, "quite independently of the House of the Seven Gables with a committee of ladies who decided to try out the idea of whether a settlement was needed in Salem."<sup>61</sup> She added that further "interest was aroused in our work by parlor meetings which were addressed by some of our good friends from Boston. Mr. [Robert] Woods, I remember and, Miss [Esther] Barrows [of the South End Settlement House] were kind enough to come down and help us in our work of starting a settlement."<sup>62</sup>

Miss Emmerton described the prime objective of the Salem settlement thus:

When the immigrants arrive today, they find the great cities already [built] . . . . For the most part they come from countries where however poor they may have been, they usually had a home of their own and a family life. But in this new land all . . . is changed. The home influence counts for little. Their children through the advantage of a public school education soon usurp the place of their fathers and mothers in the eyes of the younger children; and they are easily enticed away from their parents' authority by every form of commercialized amusement which often gives them a false idea of American life and ideals.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Mrs. Rufus D. Adams, President of the House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association, "Fourth Annual Report, 1913-1914," quoted in David Goss, "Outline For a Lecture, "The Life and Times of Caroline Emmerton," n.d., p. 7.

<sup>60</sup> Thomas A. Denenberg, "History in the Service of Reform: Joseph Everett Chandler and the Restoration of 'Old' New England," a paper delivered at the House of the Seven Gables in 1994, p. 5. The House of the Seven Gables Archives, Salem, Massachusetts.

<sup>61</sup> Caroline Emmerton, "The beginnings of the Settlement House and the Acquisition of the Turner Mansion," manuscript in the House of the Seven Gables Archive, n.d.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> "The House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association Annual Report for the Years 1913-1914," 5.

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After deciding to establish a settlement house on lower Derby Street, a neighborhood of recent immigrants primarily from Poland, Russia, and Italy, the committee was fortunate to be offered the use of the Seaman's Bethel, a little-used chapel for sailors that had been built between the House of the Seven Gables and the harbor in 1888. Classes for neighborhood children, mostly girls, began in the winter of 1908 and included sewing, handicrafts, dancing and gymnastics. They were taught by volunteers and one half-time paid worker. Meanwhile, the House of the Seven Gables was offered for sale. Miss Emmerton, who had visited the house several times as a tourist, said, "In passing and re-passing the House of Seven Gables on my way to and from the Bethel, the idea occurred to me that the old house would have many advantages as a settlement headquarters."<sup>64</sup> Miss Emmerton, aware that the Uptons had collected \$200 a year for showing the house, recognized the financial potential of the building. She also recognized its educational potential. "If, as is generally conceded, the settlements do the best Americanization work, should not this settlement excel whose home is the ancient House of Seven Gables, the foundations of which were laid by the first immigrants who came here long ago, strangers in a strange land."<sup>65</sup>

The House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association was the first settlement house to be established on the north shore of Massachusetts. The settlement house movement expanded rapidly during the Progressive Era. By 1918, there were four hundred settlement houses in the U.S. and, today, there are approximately nine hundred.<sup>66</sup>

The work of the House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association for today's immigrants and other low income families of the area maintains the spirit and objectives of the original organization, characterized by Caroline Emmerton as first and foremost, "fellowship."<sup>67</sup> Although the Association has evolved since 1908 to include more buildings, more types of programs, more attendees, a larger budget and now includes services for elders, "The services are very similar to what Emmerton had in mind," according to the current settlement house director, Karen Pelletier. The funding of the Settlement Association has also evolved to include public monies, and the programs are geared to filling in the gaps between other government-funded services.

Caroline Emmerton, despite her references to the controversy over whether the house was the single prototype for the building in Hawthorne's romance, had a stake in presenting the house as the scene of the romance because she saw that it would increase the commercial viability of the site. Tellingly, she wrote a preface to the 1913 Houghton-Mifflin edition of the book in which she presented the uncertainty about the fictional building's source. However, the book is illustrated with twelve views of the restored House of the Seven Gables, many of which are labeled as rooms depicted in the story. Her architect, Joseph Everett Chandler, was willing to help Emmerton create this stage set.

Caroline Emmerton, in addition to her role in social welfare, was an early supporter of Historic Preservation. In 1910, she was an incorporator of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), now Historic New England. With the support of William Sumner Appleton, founder of SPNEA, she saved two other seventeenth century houses in Salem and moved them to the House of the Seven Gables property. They were also restored by Chandler. In arranging them according to Chandler's plan, into a quadrangle around the Colonial Revival garden she sought to create a congenial atmosphere that would encourage visitors to linger and spend money at the antique and souvenir shop or in the Tea Room. She may have been consciously or

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<sup>64</sup> Emmerton, *Chronicles of Three Old Houses*, 30.

<sup>65</sup> Caroline Emmerton, manuscript on the purpose of the settlement, House of the Seven Gables Archive.

<sup>66</sup> Barbara Trainin Blank, "Settlement Houses: Old Idea in New Form Builds Communities," *The New Social Worker* 5, no. 3 (Summer 1998).

<sup>67</sup> Caroline Emmerton, manuscript on the purpose of the settlement, House of the Seven Gables Archive, Salem, Massachusetts.

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unconsciously reproducing the arrangement of Toynbee Hall and its architectural source. As one visitor to the London settlement house observed:

Toynbee Hall is essentially a transplant of University life. . . . The quadrangle, the gables, the diamond paned windows, the large general rooms.<sup>68</sup>

**Conclusion**

Seven Gables is a seminal Colonial Revival restoration by a leading restoration architect, Joseph Everett Chandler, who had restored many of New England's most famous buildings. Through his restoration, the House of the Seven Gables and several of the other buildings in the complex preserve several layers of architectural significance. The small district of buildings brought together under a plan by Caroline O. Emmerton and Joseph Chandler was an early effort in historic preservation that combined use as a museum site and adaptive reuse for specific purposes, in this case both as a settlement house and as a money maker to support that settlement house work. In addition, as a house restored to represent a fictional dwelling now recognized as a famous historic house by large numbers of Americans, it is unique in the history of preservation and restoration.

The property also embodies a complex set of cultural meanings and agendas that arose in the early twentieth century. The progressive era gave us both the social reform movement and the Colonial Revival, which is in some ways the defining idiom of American culture.<sup>69</sup> Both movements were a reaction to the excesses of the preceding Age of Enterprise, which was perceived as fostering extremes in the exploitation of immigrants and in architectural display. Concern over the great numbers of foreigners coming into the country and a desire to return to the moral values associated with the pre-industrial age are strongly associated with the period and with the House of the Seven Gables. The house's association, real or imagined, with the novel, *The House of the Seven Gables* is also inherent in the property's significance. "Over the centuries, layers of truth, myth, fact and fiction have built up around this place, making it one of the most storied homes in the country,"<sup>70</sup> that is already a landmark in the American imagination.

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<sup>68</sup> Davis, *Spearheads for Reform*, 7.

<sup>69</sup> Richard Guy Wilson, *The Colonial Revival House* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2005), 10.

<sup>70</sup> Lorinda Goodwin, "Salem's House of the Seven Gables," in *Salem: Place, Myth and Memory* edited by Dane Anthony Morrison and Nancy Lustignan Schultz (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004), 300.

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## Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register.
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

## Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository): House of Seven Gables Settlement Association Archives, Salem, MA; James Duncan Phillips Library, Peabody-Essex Museum, Salem, MA; Historic New England Archives, Boston, MA.

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreage of Property: 1.7 acres

UTM References:	<b>Zone</b>	<b>Easting</b>	<b>Northing</b>
	19	344800	4709212

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property, as depicted on Salem Assessor's Map No. 41, consists of the land and buildings bounded by Salem Harbor on the south, Hardy Street on the west, Derby Street on the north, and Turner Street on the east, with the exception of parcel # 41-0301.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries encompass all the land, buildings and sites associated with the property during its period of significance and which maintain their integrity.

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DESIGNATED A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK  
March 29, 2007