Salem Rebuilding Commission

SALEM AFTER THE FIRE OF JUNE 25, 1914.
Photograph taken from an aeroplane over West Place.

(Courtesy of Boston Journal)

SALEM
REBUILDING COMMISSION

CREATED BY ACT OF MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE, CHAPTER 777, ACTS OF 1914. MEMBERS APPOINTED BY HIS EXCELLENCY, GOVERNOR DAVID I. WALSH, JULY 7TH, 1914. FOR THE TERM OF THREE YEARS.

EDMUND W. LONGLEY
DAN A. DONAHUE
EUGENE J. FABENS
EMILE POIRIER
MICHAEL L. SULLIVAN

SALEM, MASS.
NEWCOMB & GAUSS, PRINTERS
1917

REPORT OF SALEM REBUILDING COMMISSION

This commission was called together on the evening of July 8, 1914, at City Hall, Salem, by Edmund W. Longley, and Eugene J. Fabens was elected Chairman and John T. Quinn, Secretary.

On January 8, 1915, Mr. Fabens resigned as Chairman because of changed conditions in his business and Edmund W. Longley was elected Chairman.

The members of the commission have remained the same throughout the period of three years, and during that time all votes with one exception have been unanimous.

One hundred and sixty meetings and seventy formal hearings, besides many informal hearings, have been held.

Records of the meetings cover eight hundred pages.

The commissioners were all citizens of Salem and tax payers. They have served without pay, have met their own personal expenses and consider themselves honored through any opportunity that they may have had to serve their city.

On Tuesday, June 25, 1914, at 1.39 o'clock in the daytime began the great conflagration that burned for thirteen hours, and covered 256 acres, including the secondary fire in North Salem, covering five acres.

It began with an explosion in a sheepskin factory located in Blubber Hollow under the shadow of Gallows Hill, a most appropriate place of birth for a wild and unbridled fire that only ceased when it had burned itself out on the seashore.

The season had been dry, the day was hot, the breeze was fresh and increased in force, water and the fire equipment were insufficient for a conflagration, and worst of all, the wooden shingles fairly beckoned to the fire brands and sparks for the touch that they needed to burst into flames.

It was a clean sweep, with nothing left but crumbling brick walls and charred skeletons of trees.

It was a clean sweep but a chance for a fresh start.

The Salem Observer of July 11, 1914, in the gloom that was natural at the time, wrote saying the chances were that Salem would lay kindling wood for another big fire. But she has done nothing of the kind.

Not only is the new construction reasonably safe, but the fire department has been enlarged and improved, a new source of water supply has been provided, new engines have been placed at the pumping station, new equipment added to the fire department, a high pressure reservoir built and eighteen miles of iron water-pipe substituted for cement-lined.

For only a part of these great works is the Rebuilding Commission responsible, but it seems appropriate to also refer to work directed by Mayors John F. Hurley, Matthias J. O'Keefe and Henry P. Benson—the City Commissioners who were in office at the time of the fire—and the present City Council, when writing of the rebuilding and improving of the city, to which all have contributed.

July 10, 1914, Mr. C. H. Blackall was employed as advisory architect. His advice and services have been generously rendered and have been of great value. His report of July 1, 1917, accompanies this report. It states that 1,792 buildings were destroyed and that 828 have been rebuilt to June 1, 1917. The new houses are of very different type from the old. Notwithstanding the fact that only 65% of the burned area has been rebuilt, the present assessed value is 36% greater. When it is all rebuilt Salem will be more than compensated for her loss, financially.

In compiling the building code, Mr. Blackall has been of the greatest service.

The regulations have not prevented but have encouraged the building of residences, but the replacing of places of manufacture has been slow and it may be that regulations for such buildings may be safely modified somewhat through further careful study.

An interesting point brought out in Mr. Blackall's report is the apparent fact that the American people do not care for collective building, but would rather preserve their individual ideas and freedom of action even at an increased cost.

Anticipating much work in the lines of advice and assistance to citizens, the price agreed upon for compensation for Mr. Blackall's services was $5,000 for the three years or at the rate of $1,667 a year, but as time went by his work was mainly confined to services for the Commission, and in April, 1915, Mr.

Blackall voluntarily reduced his charge to $2,000 for the three years, a most reasonable charge.

Building Code.

At the time of the fire, Salem had only a fragmentary building code, but a Committee of the Salem Chamber of Commerce had nearly completed a new code for consideration, which was of great value to the Commission.

Immediately after the fire the City Council consisting of the Hon. John F. Hurley, Mayor and Director of Public Safety, Charles H. Danforth, Director of Finance, Patrick J. Kelley, Director of Public Works, Wallace L. Gifford, Director of Public Property and Thomas J. Lally, Director of Public Health passed an ordinance abolishing the use of wooden shingles, which provision was adopted by the Rebuilding Commission.

Building codes of numerous cities and towns were examined and great assistance in the way of investigation was rendered by many public spirited citizens.

Six days after appointment on July 13, 1914 a public meeting was held to secure the views of the citizens. At the end of nine days, on July 16, a preliminary code, allowing erection of buildings of first and second class construction was adopted. At the end of thirteen days, on July 20, a second code was adopted which further allowed the erection of wooden buildings having fire-proof coverings. At the end of twenty days, on July 27, a third code was adopted allowing buildings of first class or second class and wooden residences with wooden exteriors, except for the roofs. August 20, 1914, or forty-four days after the appointment of the Commission, the full building code which has been only slightly amended since was adopted. A shorter period of study before adopting a building code would have resulted either in an extreme code that would have checked rebuilding, or a weak one that would have replenished the tinder box of the city. The building code and the housing ordinance adopted later by the city outside of the burnt area was somewhat more drastic than the one adopted by the Rebuilding Commission for the burned area, but while mindful of the value of a strong building code and good housing ordinance, the Commission has considered that encouragement of building in the burned area was of great importance and has hesitated to place greater restrictions than those first adopted. Before retiring from office, however, it has adopted the later building code and housing ordinance, so that at the time of writing this report there is a single code for the entire city.

Rebuilding

On July 28, 1914, Mr. George F. Temple was appointed Superintendent of Construction for the burned area and in 1916 became Superintendent of Construction for the entire city.

He was chosen for the position because of ample previous experience and because of his reputation for sound judgment. Mr. Temple retires from his position, at the close of the term of office of the Commission to engage in private business. His tact in meeting the public, assistance which he has been able to give because of his knowledge of building and his impartial enforcement of the building code, has greatly assisted in the rebuilding of Salem.

The first permit to a citizen for a building in the burned area was granted on July 20, 1914 to George W. Pickering. The first permit for a residence that was erected was granted July 27, 1914, to Hannah D. Elwell at No. 4 Holly St.

Between that time and July 1st, 1917, the report of Mr. Temple shows that permits have been issued in the burned area for 828 structures, with an estimated value of $6,827,675. Outside the burned area permits have been issued for structures with an estimated value of $1,725,230, a total for the city of $8,552,905. The value of permits issued and not used is about $200,000.

The buildings erected under the new code are undoubtedly safer from fire and more sanitary than the old, and when the dressing of new trees and new grass has softened the lines of the new buildings, they will look at least as well as the old. It must be borne in mind, too, that the City before the fire was fast on the way to become a city of ugly and unsafe wooden three and four deckers.

Every new building of wood has a fireproof roof and gutters, so that sparks and embers falling from above cannot set them on fire.

A modern building for one or two families, which consequently has few lives to protect, may be built much as the owner wishes, but when a building must protect more than two families, it may be only two and one-half stories high.

No building to be used as a place of residence may be over four stories in height even if fireproof, and none of these buildings may occupy more than 75 per cent. or 80 per cent of the lot of land on which it stands.

Chimneys must be lined, cellar walls must be laid in mortar, heating apparatus in the cellar must be protected and, perhaps, as important as anything,

the walls of wooden buildings must be stopped off at every floor, so that fire cannot go from floor to floor through the side walls.

Types of buildings that have been erected are shown by illustrations on pages thirty-six to forty-two.

Engineering, Curbing, Sidewalks and Streets.

The bill under which the Commission was created gave the Commission the right "to require the service of such of the officers and employees of the city as it may think necessary" and in accordance with this provision, and following the theory that Salem was only one city and not two, the commission has made use of the regular organization and employees of the city while carrying on its work.

The chief engineer of the city, Mr. George F. Ashton, has served successfully in the capacity of chief engineer for the Commission.

Salem was fortunate in having a City Plans Commission. It was appointed April 27, 1911, being the first of such Commissions in the State. It had issued a report and plan for improvements December 26, 1912. Mr. Harlan P. Kelsey was its chairman. Many of the recommendations which the report contained became practical after the fire. In other words, Salem "was ready" with a plan when a plan was of the greatest value. With this plan as a basis and beginning his study of conditions immediately after the fire of June 25, Mr. Ashton was able to present plans and estimates for street widenings, extensions and improvements at the first meeting of the Commission held July 8, 1914. The actual costs incurred have not differed greatly from the estimates presented at this first meeting. On July 16, or within eight days of the first meeting the Commission was able to issue a list of the streets which were not to be changed and ready to approve locations and lines on those streets where owners might erect buildings. No other engineers have been employed except in a small way as consulting engineers, and the hard and long work of Mr. Ashton, together with his thorough and practical engineering knowledge, has saved the city thousands of dollars which the Commission would have been obliged to spend for architects and engineers, if the city had had a less valuable officer in the position of chief engineer. The plans for the culvert and retaining wall at Fairfield's dock and for the Congress Street bridge were drawn by him and these two

pieces of work alone saved the city $2500 in architectural services. His compensation in addition to his regular salary has been $1500 during the three years.

Report of the City Engineer dated July 1, 1917, is attached, showing 20,992 square yards of granolithic sidewalk and 63,000 feet of granite edgestone, placed in the burned area since the fire. 17,000 feet of old edgestones have been relaid.

1100 yards of granolithic sidewalks were constructed by contract in 1915 at $1.55 per yard, and 7,000 yards by contract in 1916 at $1.39 per yard, the City in 1916 furnishing the cement. The remaining sidewalks have been built by city labor. In connection with sidewalk work done in 1916, 3266 cubic yards of gravel and 1018 cubic yards of sand were taken and used from lot on Mill Street between High and Endicott Street in connection with street widening at that point.

A map showing street widenings and extensions is attached to Mr. Ashton's report.

Boston Street, which is the great connecting way between Peabody and Salem, has been widened from 50 feet to 70 feet. Plans have been approved and appropriation made for raising the hollow at Goodhue Street and widening the street and reducing the grade of the hill towards Peabody.

At the opposite end, Boston Street leads into Essex Street and Highland Avenue. For the traffic coming from Boston Street and to relieve Essex and Chestnut Streets, Jackson Street has been extended to Jefferson Avenue near the freight houses. Examination of the city's map will show that Jackson street points directly to Cedar Street, allowing at some future time of a way and bridge that will directly connect South Salem with the High School and Highland Avenue.

To provide another East and West Street that will supplement Essex Street, Broad Street has been extended from Flint Street to Highland Avenue. The other end of Broad Street points directly to Derby Street, with which it should be connected when the grade crossing plans are carried out. The city will then have a wide thoroughfare from Highland Avenue to Elm Street, and up that street to Washington Square.

In widening and paving Elm and Walnut Streets, removing the buildings between the two and creating a park for the Hawthorne Memorial, the County has generously done its part in the improvement of Salem. Beyond Elm,

from Derby to Peabody Streets the road and bridge abutments are new. The swinging bridge is a narrow though serviceable bridge, moved from Union Street, which has been closed. When no longer useful, it is contemplated that a new bridge will be the width of the street and one that will be raised, instead of swinging in front of the wharf property of the Electric Light Co.

Congress Street has been widened from 40 feet to 80 feet and extended to Palmer's Cove, where it must rest until the State or the City can continue the work. This is one part of the "Shore Boulevard" which has been contemplated for years. Its value to the State and City would be so great, and its cost so comparatively small, that the time must soon come, when the perspective and courage of some group of citizens will make this dream possible. Tons of old curbing, ruined for use on the streets, by the fire, have been dumped back of the Saltonstall School, for a retaining wall when the Boulevard is extended across Palmer's Cove.

On Lafayette Street a 10 ft. building line has been established between Leach and Dow Streets. Beyond Dow Street is Lafayette Park, an improvement that was much objected to, but which is fast being approved of by all citizens.

Beyond the park Washington Street has been regraded and the hill has been made much easier.

Near the point where Washington Street turns to the North on the hill, will probably be one end of a bridge when the grade crossing plan goes through. The other end of this bridge would rest on the little parkway that has been opened west of the railroad track between High and Endicott Streets.

Minor changes have been made on other streets, important in themselves, but of less general interest than the larger undertakings.

Trees.

Report of Mr. Warren J. Hale, Superintendent of Parks and Shade Trees, which accompanies this report, shows that 925 trees have been added in the burned area, or 353 more trees than were burned. Altogether 1,061 trees were placed, but there have been 136 losses from accidents and other causes.

Including the cost of the trees, loam ample for each tree and the tree guards, the cost has averaged $6.53 for each tree.

Photograph printed in connection with Mr. Hale's report shows how

even small trees trim up a street and when these trees are fully grown the streets in the burned area will present an attractive as well as a modern appearance.

Public Buildings Erected.

A new elementary school (Saltonstall school) has been erected on Lafayette Street. It contains 16 rooms for 672 pupils and is planned for enlargement to 24 rooms. It has an auditorium licensed to seat 1000 people and a large gymnasium. Report made at the time of its dedication November 20, 1916, accompanies this report. The land and building has cost $257,177.59. This school replaces the Saltonstall school at the foot of Holly Street and the Brown school on Brown Street, both of which were destroyed in the fire. The architect was James E. McLaughlin and the contractor was C. S. Cunningham & Sons Construction Company. Since the Saltonstall School has been the most important building erected by the Commission, the address of the chairman at the time of its dedication, certain details of its plan, building and costs are printed in connection with this report.

A new fire engine house has been erected in Ward 3 on Essex Street on the site of the old house destroyed in the fire, and 1250 feet east of the point where the fire started. The building is brick, Colonial in design, useful, and attractive in appearance. Its cost (no land) has been $30,923.03. The architect was Philip Horton Smith of the firm of Kilham and Hopkins, and the builders were Morrison & Young.

A new fire engine house on Loring Avenue is well under way, the estimate cost of which, including land, is $30,000. The building is of brick, Colonial in design, useful and pleasing in appearance. The architect is Frank S. Whearty and the contractor is Timothy W. Fitzgerald. The building replaces the burned engine house formerly at the junction of Lafayette and Washington Streets.

New Parks and Playgrounds.

A public park has been opened in the triangle between Lafayette, Washington and Harbor streets. Two small parks have been opened on Highland Avenue at the head of New Broad Street and an open space made at the foot of Endicott Street west of the railroad track. A play ground has been opened in the square between High and Endicott Streets.

Fairfield Dock.

In 1915 suits that had been running for years for damages against the City in connection with conditions at Fairfield Dock, were settled by the City Council through the City Solicitor, Hon. William D. Chapple. The amount paid was $50,000, covering damages to business and costs estimated at $25,000, and $25,000 for title in the flats within the dock and considerable upland. Soon after the fire, the Rebuilding Commission had purchased, through a third party, a piece of dock property necessary to the plan which, with costs and interest up to the time of taking over the deeds, amounted to $1,686.48. Cost of building a retaining wall and extending the culvert was $9413.17, while the cost of filling, mainly with city ashes, was $1,285.02, making the total cost of this property, exclusive of the damage settlement, $37,384.67. Through this settlement the City came into possession of 38,236 sq. ft. of land. Out of this land the Rebuilding Commission has sold 19,779 ft. for cash, $18,705.75, and exchanged 4,387 ft. having an estimated value of $3,290.25, for land taken on Derby St. to widen that street. By these transactions the City brought a large amount of taxable property into existence and acquired 14,070 sq. ft. of land, required for extending Derby Street to Lafayette, at the cost of $15,388.67, or $1.09 a ft. One lot of land sold at $1.15 a ft. but the other lots, because of the culvert and other reasons, sold for less.

Expenditures by the Commission July 7, 1914, to July 7, 1917, Outside the Tax Levy—Covered Either by Bond Issues or by Receipts from Sale of Land.

Shade Trees,	$ 6,947.78
Saltonstall School Land,	44,257.68
Saltonstall School Building, Furnishing, Grading and Planting,	212,919.91
Fire Engine House, Ward 3,	30,923.03
Fire Engine House, Ward 5, land,	2,000.00
Fire Engine House, Ward 5, Building and Furnishing,	8,950.94
(Estimated Cost when Completed, $30,000.)	
Fairfield Dock, Retaining Wall, Culvert and Filling,	10,698.19
Fairfield Dock (Land $25,000 plus $1,686.48),	26,686.48
Lafayette Park Land,	33,200.00
Lafayette Park, Grading, Planting and Sidewalks,	4,065.70

Congress St. Extension, Land,	21,207.14
Roadway, Bridge Abutments and Moving Bridge from Union St.	56,211.17
Damages, Flint Block and Land at Corner of Washington and New Derby Sts. (Land and Building $25,422.55),	25,448.68
Damages, Other land purchased for Street Widenings, etc.,	179,199.11
All other expenses, including sewer and water pipes, street surfacing: 20,992 sq. yds. granolithic paving, 63,000 ft. of new curbing and resetting 17,000 ft. of old curbing,	193,327.41
Motor Fire Engine,	8,500.00
Total Expenditures,	$864,543.22

273 pieces of land, in connection with the new school and engine house street widenings and extensions and the establishing of new parks have been acquired, together with one building. The cost included in the foregoing has been $331,972.96. Deeds giving full possession to the City have been secured in every case.

Agreements have been reached in three other cases upon payment of $9,429.08. It is not known why one award of $13.50 has not been taken and two others amounting to $137.10, are now outlawed. The City will therefore make 279 land settlements at a cost of $341,552.64. There have been no lawsuits.

Expenditures given in the foregoing table are divided into the following classes:

Labor,	$ 94,534.64
Freight, Cement Pipe and Other Supplies, Teaming, etc.,	90,156.09
Amounts paid Contractors,	331,719.79
Purchase of Land and Payment of Damages in Connection with Street Widenings and Extensions and Land Used for Public Buildings,	306,972.96
One-half cost of settlement, Fairfield Dock,	25,000.00
Sundry Expenses, mainly in connection with Land Taking,	7,659.74
Motor Fire Engine,	8,500.00
	$864,543.22

The amount of labor, $94,534.64, represents the cost of labor paid through the payrolls of the City. It will be noticed that the work of the Rebuilding

Commission has given employment to Salem labor to the extent of $31,500 a year. This large employment of Salem labor after the fire has probably been of distinct assistance in the relief of suffering caused by the fire, through the keeping of a large number of men employed.

In General.

The Salem public has shown a constant interest in the rebuilding of the City, and has assisted the Commission freely. Directly after the fire Mrs. Emma S. Almy contributed $500. for plans for the best low priced double and single residences and later demonstration houses were erected on Winthrop Street by the Salem Rebuilding Trust from these plans.

The Rev. James L. Hill secured the assistance of Dr. J. Ackerman Coles of New York, who generously contributed a beautiful flag staff and flag that was erected on Lafayette Park and dedicated February 22, 1916. Dr. Coles also bore the expense of a handsome and appropriate commemorative bronze tablet which was placed on the flag staff.

Citizens owning land required by the City for street widening and other purposes, have bargained with the City in an entirely fair spirit. No law suits have resulted and all land has been covered by deeds, so that the City has acquired the land outright and not simply obtained easements of the land for specific purposes. To the City Solicitor, Hon. William D. Chapple, the Commission is indebted for valuable advice and assistance.

The leading newspapers of the City all through the life of the Commission have reported its actions fairly and thoughtfully.

A strong building code has prevented speculation in land which might have increased prices temporarily and added largely to rental of tenants for years to come.

Salem was ready when the opportunity presented itself and has had courage in days of great trial to improve the City for the generations to follow.

The Commission extends its thanks to all those employees of the city and to the many citizens of Salem and others who have so freely contributed their assistance.

SALEM REBUILDING COMMISSION,

Edmund W. Longley, *Chairman*,
Dan A. Donahue,
Eugene J. Fabens,
Emile Poirier,
Michael L. Sullivan.

Salem, Mass., July 7, 1917.

REPORT OF THE ADVISORY ARCHITECT TO THE SALEM REBUILDING COMMISSION JULY 1, 1917.

Mr. E. W. Longley, Chairman Salem Rebuilding Commission,
Salem, Mass.,
Sir:

I hereby make a final report as Advisory Architect to your Commission.

The Salem fire started on Thursday, June 25, 1914, at 1 o'clock in the day time. The causes of the fire, condition of the water supply, the rapidity of the spread and the extent of the conflagration are matters of public record elsewhere and will not be gone into in detail in this report. Suffice it to note that, starting in a group of factory buildings near the Peabody line, the fire swept across the city, widening as it progressed and extending to include the factories in the opposite side of the city on the harbor front, stopping in its course not because of any human exertion, though the fire department fought most heroically against impossible odds, but simply when there was nothing more to burn in that direction. The burnt district was approximately half a mile at the widest part and a little over a mile long. The business portions of the city were untouched and none of the historic mansions so typical of Salem were even threatened, the fire destroying, however, a number of very delightful houses, wiping out a densely built up district of tenements and low cost houses, and leaving nothing of the vast Naumkeag cotton mills. Most of the structures were of wood, and after the fire practically nothing was left in the path of the conflagration except a multitude of precarious chimneys, the blackened towers of one church, the tottering walls of the Naumkeag mills and two buildings only which withstood successfully the conflagration, the Salem Electric Light building and a one-story mill store house.

The fire offered two constructive lessons. The first was that combustible roof coverings, and especially wood shingles, are a serious menace in a city, because of the rapidity with which a fire will spread from house to house by catching on the roofs. Had the Salem of then been as well equipped with incombustible roofs as it is now, the loss would not have been a tenth of what it was, as was demonstrated by the resistance of the two or three structures which were covered with slate. The second lesson was that it is perfectly feasible to construct a building which will be proof against even a conflagration, as was proved by the two buildings previously referred to, which were exposed to

the fury of the fire at its highest without suffering any structural or internal damage. Not that these lessons were new. They simply emphasized the lessons of conflagrations elsewhere, but they made possible some of the reforms by virtue of which Salem is a safer city than it was before.

On Monday, June 29, 1914, a meeting of 100 representative citizens was held at the City Hall, and as a result of this meeting and the legislative acts which speedily followed, the Salem Rebuilding Commission was appointed by the governor and given complete control over the whole burnt district and over all reconstruction or other work there. This Commission consisting of Edmund W. Longley, Dan A. Donahue, Eugene J. Fabens, Emile Poirier and Michael L. Sullivan, retained the undersigned on July 10, as its Advisory Architect.

The conditions at this time were such as required pretty careful handling. The city was a good deal discouraged as a result of the terrible calamity, many inhabitants and manufacturers had left the city, and it was a grave question whether the city would recover materially for many years. On the other hand, it was felt that the opportunity was worth using to produce a better Salem and that whatever should be done should be subject to reasonable restrictions which would insure at least a lessening of the chance of another fire devastating this city. The building regulations in force over the whole city were not sufficiently explicit nor worked out enough in detail to insure even an elemental protection against fire, and the housing laws were in a very fragmentary state, though a very good beginning towards a revision had been made by a commission in existence at the time of the fire. As the act under which the Commission was created conferred upon it practically unlimited power within the burnt district, the Advisory Architect was instructed to formulate the necessary building regulations, which was done, and presented for discussion. The code as finally worked out was adopted by the Commission August 20, 1914 and this building law has been in operation ever since. On July 28 Mr. George F. Temple was appointed superintendent of construction and all the work in the burnt district has been under his direct supervision. The Mayor and City Council and all departments of the city of Salem at all times co-operated with the Rebuilding Commission and its executives and the improvements which were prescribed for the fire zone have had a very material influence in raising the standards of fire resisting construction and better building throughout all the city.

Having in mind the possibilities of improvement in housing conditions,

it was at first thought that the function of the Advisory Architect might be extended to the securing of certain uniformity in rebuilding and a possible improvement of the details of construction and design, and it was at one time thought possibly advisable to organize a draughting office and give direct architectural assistance to those who were intending to rebuild. But after careful study, this scheme was entirely abandoned, and with a very few exceptions, hardly more than 3 or 4, all of the rebuilding within the burnt district has been due to private initiative. It was appreciated that if the Commission undertook to furnish architectural service gratis, quite aside from the injustice which might be wrought to architects who might otherwise be employed in connection therewith, the results might easily tend to an unpleasant uniformity, to an absence of any individual initiative and to a monotony of type which might be quite as undesirable as the mixture of styles and methods which prevailed before the fire, and the result as manifested by the Salem today justifies the feeling that in a city of this sort private initiative can be trusted with more safety and the results are apt to be better than if the government either directly or indirectly undertakes to exercise a paternal hand in matters of architecture, and though at first it was a disappointment to see many obvious possibilities ignored by the early rebuilders, and though there were mistakes made which might have been prevented by judicious steering on the part of the Commission and its advisers, it is my own conviction, and a conviction which I find is shared by many experts, that the Commission took the right course and that any such thing as a city architect, or any such arrangement as municipal co-operation in the architecture of private improvement is not desirable and will not accomplish good results.

The fire extended over an area of 251 acres, including the streets, and 1792 separate buildings were destroyed, classified roughly as follows:

Brick dwellings	4
Wooden dwellings for not more than 2 families	582
Brick apartment houses	11
Wooden apartment houses	233
Business premises, or combination business and dwelling houses	929
Factories	18
Public buildings	15
	1792

Up to date of July 1, 1917, a period of very nearly three years, about 65% of the whole burnt area has been rebuilt. The classification of the new buildings is approximately as follows:

Brick dwellings	6
Wooden dwellings for not more than 2 families	496
2½ story 4-family wood dwellings	37
Brick apartment houses	105
Business premises, or combination business and dwelling houses	174
Factories	8
Public buildings	2
	828

The assessed valuation of the whole property within the burnt district at the time of the fire was about $5,000,000. The assessed valuation of the same area as of May 1, 1917 is about $6,800,000, so notwithstanding the fact that 35% of the burnt district still remains unimproved, the value of the property as a whole has increased about $1,800,000. Before the fire the valuations on the whole were low. The present valuations are somewhat higher, which would account for a part of the increase; but it should be remembered that the former valuations included only nominal allowances for the old buildings, many of which had practically no market value, whereas every structure in the burnt district is a new building and no depreciation has been marked off, consequently the increased valuation means a real and very large addition to the city's wealth.

Contrary to the expectations of many who were studying the situation, land values fell but very little after the fire, and soon recovered, and have steadily advanced as a whole. There has been very little speculation in land, or buying to hold for a rise, and considering how many small properties were totally wiped out as far as concerns earning capacity, there has been a surprisingly small amount of readjustment of land holders. Probably this is owing to fair restrictions under the building laws with a consequent absence of cheap building for speculative purposes. And while 1792 buildings were destroyed and only 828 new ones have been constructed, the figures by no means tell the whole story. What has been done has been on the whole well done. There is a noticeable absence of overcrowding, or of jerry building, and there is practically none of the kind of work which before the fire was

almost the rule beyond Lafayette Street, and while exact comparative statistics have not been obtained, there is hardly a doubt that the 828 buildings are collectively worth more than the 1792 which were destroyed.

The total population of Salem at the time of the fire was 47,000. This number fell off to 37,000 immediately after the fire, many of the families of small means moving to other cities in search of labor; some of the more well-to-do being unable to find satisfactory housing in the city also departed, and out of the total number of manufacturing establishments in the city 56% simply disappeared. Since the first loss in population the city has been steadily gaining, and the population of June 1, 1917 is estimated at 43,000, making the net loss to date only 4,000, and there is every prospect that this difference will be made up in a very few years. But a calamity of this kind was too fundamental in its disturbances not to be felt very severely in business lines and in ways that would react immediately upon the numbers of the population. The neighboring cities have profited to a considerable extent by the exodus from Salem and manufacturing has not yet come back to an extent desired, partly on account of the general sociological conditions, but quite as much because the building regulations would not permit the cheap, inflammable type of construction for factories and mills which is so largely the rule in our New England cities, and while this seems like a loss to the city, it is a question whether it is not a gain, for such factories as do come within the city limits are better equipped and less liable to prove a fire menace to the future.

The fire offered an excellent opportunity for a realignment of the streets and for an opening up of some sections of the city which were over congested. One of the most notable improvements has been the Broad Street extension and the extension of Jackson Street on the West, both of which have aided materially in constructing a very desirable class of buildings quite in keeping with the spirit of the Salem traditions. A part of the burnt district between High and Endicott Streets has been taken for a public park, which is quite needed in this location.

On the opposite side of the city Derby Street leading from the station has been opened up to a wide thoroughfare and a part of the harbor has been filled in, allowing this street to extend to its intersection with a boulevard intended to connect Washington Square with Congress Street and the South Salem district.

The most important building operation in the burnt district was in con-

nection with the Naumkeag mills, which have been rebuilt on a greatly enlarged scale, providing for a largely increased manufacturing capacity and more sanitary conditions for large numbers of employees.

The district which has profited most conspicuously by the lessons of the fire is the residential portion immediately adjoining the Naumkeag mills. This has been built up as closely as any portion of the burnt district, and on the whole with a class of structures that are a great improvement over what was there before. Before the fire nearly all the houses were wood; now most of them are masonry and better arranged with more open spaces and are more suitable from a practical standpoint of habitations for operatives of medium means. These houses have been erected almost entirely by private initiative, although the Naumkeag Company has erected a few attractive multiple family houses.

Two churches were destroyed by the fire, one of which was the French Roman Catholic Church of St. Joseph. The towers of this edifice are still standing, though the entire interior of the church was consumed. The congregation has rebuilt the lower story of the church, put on a temporary roof for school purposes, and has retained the towers in their existing shape, where they form a very conspicuous landmark. There has also been built in connection with the church a rectory and a convent, but there is no immediate prospect that the church as a whole will be rebuilt for some years to come. The Rebuilding Commission has very wisely created a small park in front of this church, and when the time comes for rebuilding, there is here a most excellent opportunity which should not be neglected. No other building in the City has so commanding a site.

The other church in the fire district was that of the Society of Friends, which has been rebuilt.

Two schools were destroyed in the burnt district. These have been combined in a single new elementary school located on Lafayette Street. In the desire to obtain the very best results, a public competition was instituted for the selection of an architect in which over 70 firms took part. The competition was absolutely anonymous, the sets of drawings being numbered, with nothing to indicate the author and the successful number was publicly announced before the Commission had any means of knowing who was the author of the prize set. Mr. James E. McLaughlin, of Boston, the architect whose plans were first placed in the competition, was employed to design and super-

vise the construction of the building. The School as built is more than merely a school: it constitutes a civic centre and includes a large auditorium and gymnasium which is sufficiently distinct from the school to serve for public gatherings without interfering with the school work, and at the same time is used for exercises of the school children. The building is of brick, sprinklered throughout, is two stories high, every consideration of safety and convenience has been considered and in appearance it is simple, dignified and a credit in every respect to the City.

Two fire engine houses were destroyed by the fire. These have been rebuilt, one in the mill district at the West and the other in the South Salem district. Both of these have been carried out in the Colonial style which is so peculiar to Salem, and while they are eminently serviceable and practical fire engine houses, they are also a distinct addition to the City's appearance.

The building law approved by the Commission applied only to the burnt district. As previously explained, this law did not undertake to deal specifically with housing problems as such, as a commission was already in existence which was considering the matter for the whole city and had already made an admirable report, but there were a number of customs which had grown up in the burnt district before the fire which the Rebuilding Commission felt justified in abolishing and in substituting provisions more in accordance with modern ideas. The calamity of the conflagration suggested at once the desirability of reconstructing the City in fireproof materials. One or two schemes were considered for community action in this respect and it was hoped that reinforced concrete in various combinations might prove sufficiently economical to permit of applying it throughout the district. To awaken an interest in fire resistive materials an exhibition of constructive products was held in the Armory. It was quite liberally contributed to by the manufacturers, and aroused a good deal of interest, but it seemed to lead nowhere. Concerted constructive action through the City proved to be wholly impracticable and never got any further than the discussion period. The idea that the City should build or directly formulate the plans for private building is so foreign to the idea of the American city or town that it could not be accepted here, notwithstanding the terrible lesson of the fire. Nor was it found practicable to insist upon so-called second class construction, namely, limiting materials of exterior construction to masonry or other incombustible products. There were some measures taken, however, which have had effect upon the housing

problem and incidentally upon the problem of fire prevention. The wooden three-decker existed in large numbers in Salem before the fire, which is the cheapest and least desirable form of housing which the last 25 years has developed, both from the standpoint of health, of social ethics and of fire hazard. The regulations adopted by the Commission prohibited the construction of a wooden three-decker, and while there has been opposition to this, on the whole the regulations have been accepted loyally and lived up to, and though 2½ story multiple dwellings are allowed by the law, even they have not been very numerous in this district. The building regulations have also introduced the protection of stairways with fire resisting enclosures, a measure pretty generally adopted in all cities, in which Salem was behind the times. The rapid spread of the fire was in part due to the almost universal use of wooden roofs. This is a form of construction which is rapidly being done away with by law in all our cities, and the building regulations of the burnt district insisted on non-combustible roofing materials throughout. This has naturally aroused a good deal of opposition from those who are interested in the use of shingles of combustible material, and the manufacturers of the so-called asphalt shingles, made of a combination of felt and asphalt, were especially strong in their opposition to this feature of the law. The statement was freely made that by insisting upon non-combustible roofs the Commission was making it hard for the poor man to own a house, and unnecessarily increasing the cost of construction. The answer to this is given by the figures previously quoted in this report giving the extent of rebuilding. Since the adoption of this rule by the Commission nearly all the Metropolitan District has followed the lead and only in the smaller towns and suburban districts are wooden shingles tolerated. This one change has done more to diminish the possibility of a future fire than anything else.

The building law of the fire district has also provided for a greater amount of open spaces around wooden buildings and multiple dwelling houses than existed before. This also, it was claimed, would be a hardship. It has not so proven, and what slight drawback some speculative builders might find in such provisions is more than offset by the added safety of the city and the increased social and sanitary conditions.

Before the fire most of the foundation walls under residences were built of stone laid up without any mortar in the joints, many of them simply thrown

at random against the earth wall and lightly pointed on the face towards the cellar. The new regulations provide that all foundations shall be laid up in cement mortar and filled solid. No dry wall ever is dry. It is hard enough to keep the dampness out of a house at the best, and though this feature was objected to as imposing a financial hardship, it has been accepted and there can be no reasonable question about its value to the health of the occupants of the building.

Among the minor provisions of the law was one requiring the licensing of all builders. The fee was only $5.00, but it was felt this would at least protect the public to a certain extent, and it is felt that this has proven a wise provision.

The administration of the law in its details was left in the hands of the superintendent, Mr. Temple, subject to appeal to the Commission. The law was not what could be called in any sense drastic; it simply applied to Salem the ordinary provisions of safety and fire protection which have been tested out and approved nearly everywhere, but inasmuch as Salem had practically no such regulations before the fire, anything of this nature would inevitably arouse opposition, and when the law was first drafted there were many objections, but time has shown that these objections were not well founded and in the administration of the law there have been very few appeals of any sort, and though the development of the city leaves much to be desired in some directions, the laws have certainly resulted in a better class of construction and have decidedly lessened the chance of a general conflagration. It is not practicable in a city of this kind and size to secure the maximum of protection which modern building methods can afford. The Commission investigated the cost of fireproof and second class construction, and while a building with a brick or incombustible exterior costs only from 7% to 15% at the most more than a similar building of wooden exterior, that amount it was felt was sufficient to deter many who would build with the cheaper construction and who would not be able to finance even that added load. It is impossible to make exact comparisons, but in a general way it may be said that the regulations introduced and put in force by the Commission have added at the most 3% to the cost of the ordinary wooden building and have resulted in a degree of improvement which was certainly justified by this expenditure. So far as it is known, there have been no cases where building in the burnt district has been abandoned or checked by reason of any alleged severity either in the law or in its application.

The fire started in a factory, and in forming the regulations, a great deal

of attention was given to this class of buildings. It was easy to devise a maximum protection, but this would involve also a maximum of expenditure, and from the standpoint of encouraging industry, it was felt that a liberal concession must be made to the buildings for manufacturing, storage or mill purposes. The regulations provided that they must be equipped with sprinklers, must have two satisfactory means of egress, one of which shall be a tower stairs entered independently from each story from without, and enclosed by fire resisting partitions. It also provides that all vertical openings between floors shall be fire stopped. All openings in walls nearer than 7 feet to an adjoining lot, or nearer than 15 feet to any other building on the same lot must be fitted with metal frames and sash, or doors and wire glass, and the whole building must be of first or second class construction or of a mill frame, that is to say, framed in wood, using large timbers only and no cellular construction, and the exterior must be covered with slate, tile and metal, or some other equally incombustible material. These are by no means drastic provisions. They are essentially elementary, and if the manufacturing interests have not returned to Salem to the extent that it was hoped, it is not because of the restrictions so much as because adjoining towns have none whatever and land elsewhere will be cheaper.

When the building law was first adopted, the prediction was freely made that as soon as the Commission went out of office the city would abolish all of the restraints on cheap building and revert to the conditions before the fire. It is of interest, therefore, to note that the building law of the city which will be in force after the Commission ceases its labor, includes all of the provisions which have been applied to the burnt district, together with many added ones relating to strength of material, housing, etc., and that whatever value may lie in the requirements which the Commission has made will continue to apply to the construction in the future and that Salem will not go backwards in matters of building construction. It should be borne in mind always that the regulations issued by the Commission were in no sense excessive and that in accepting them Salem is simply putting itself in line with the point of view regarding building construction adopted by nearly all of our cities.

It was inevitable that the fire should affect a change in the character of the city. Lafayette Street has not on the whole recovered well since the fire, although there are some notably fine houses. The streets leading off of it are quite different in their character from what they were before. The streets

towards the East have been improved. There has been a good deal of building in which the first consideration was rentals and speed in construction, and the quaint, old fashioned flavor which was so characteristic of Salem has in a large degree disappeared from this part of the city and from most of the burnt district, excepting, however, that the extension of Broad Street and Jackson Street on the West is on the whole more artistic in character than the work which preceded it and looks like the Salem of old. But the change can hardly be regretted, for while we would miss the Colonial work, mere reproduction of it would not be the real thing, and personally it is felt that the expression of the city's needs as they are today and the incorporation of modern methods of planning and details of construction are more important than a clinging to mere tradition. So that while we regret the irrevocable loss of the old work, we would not wish it to be reproduced as mere servile copy, and from a mere money standpoint, as previously stated, the new buildings outrank what has gone.

Your advisory architect, in terminating his official connection with the Rebuilding Commission, would call attention to the excellent services which have been rendered by your superintendent, Mr. George F. Temple. He was chosen for the post from many whose names were presented, only after careful investigation of his experience and his record, and the city has been indeed fortunate in the choice. His unflagging interest, his tireless tact and his insistence on the right construction, while allowing every man a square deal, have made him many friends and no enemies, and the fact that Salem is today a better built and a safer city than most of its neighbors is due in no small degree to the manner in which he has met the complicated structural and administrative problems.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) C. H. Blackall,

Advisory Architect.

Direction of Wind

N E W S

Estimated value of property loss including buildings and contents - $15,000,000
Insurance paid was $11,737639.00

PALMER'S COVE

Fire started here 1.37 P.M.

Compiled from Sketch Made by The Underwriters Bureau Of New England.

= Wooden Bldgs.
= Brick "
= Fireproof "

CONFLAGRATION-SALEM, MASS.

June 25-26, 1914.

AREA BURNED 250 ACRES.

George T. Ashton
City Engineer

REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT OF CONSTRUCTION JULY 1, 1917.

Mr. E. W. Longley, Chairman,
Salem Rebuilding Commission,
Salem, Massachusetts,

Dear Sir:—

The estimated cost of buildings has been $6,827,675 in the burnt district since July, 1914.

It may be of interest to the Commission to know that since July, 1914, up to July, 1917, there have been $8,552,905 worth of building in the entire City; of this amount $439,217 was for alterations and repairs, making an amount of $1,286,013 for new buildings outside of the burnt district in three years.

There have been a few permits issued which have not been used, but the amount would not exceed $200,000 which would make the assessed value in the burnt district very close to $6,627,675. Of course these figures are approximate values and in all probability would be assessed higher by the board of assessors. A report in detail of permits issued is herewith submitted.

Very truly yours,

GEO. F. TEMPLE,

Superintendent of Construction.

CITY OF SALEM, MASS.
SALEM REBUILDING COMMISSION.
PERMITS FOR BUILDING
Within the Burned Area, July 7, 1914, to July 1, 1917.

1914	1st Class No.	1st Class Amount	2nd Class No.	2nd Class Amount	3rd Class No.	3rd Class Amount	4th Class No.	4th Class Amount	5th Class No.	5th Class Amount	6th Class No.	6th Class Amount	Totals Per Month	Totals since July, 1914	Permits Issued per month	Total Permits	No. of Families for which Permits were granted by Classes of Buildings. 3rd Class	4th Class	5th Class	Total	Total since July, 1914
July & Aug.,	3	$192,200	6	$ 38,835	3	$ 44,000	55	$228,955	3	$ 27,700	10	$ 16,300	$ 547,990	.....	80	.....	28	66	6	100	.....
September,	.....		2	55,000	3	18,500	60	269,861	10	100,700	2	6,000	450,061	$ 998,051	77	157	13	93	26	132	232
October,	2	13,000	5	90,500	19	164,900	46	203,951	8	97,100	1	3,000	572,451	1,570,502	81	238	85	83	16	184	416
November,	.....		2	6,200	15	105,400	26	106,200	2	18,700	2	5,800	242,300	1,812,802	47	285	58	41	6	105	521
December,	2	705,000	5	40,700	9	77,100	25	112,355	4	118,000	1	300	1,053,455	2,866,257	46	331	45	45	30	120	641
1915																					
January,	.....		2	73,000	2	12,500	4	16,200	1	5,000	1	450	107,150	2,973,407	10	341	10	8	.....	18	659
February,	1	400,000	1	4,000	11	106,500	8	60,700	1	40,000	1	200	611,400	3,584,807	23	364	60	9	22	91	750
March,	2	53,000	2	31,500	9	79,000	31	133,375	7	72,300	.....		369,175	3,953,982	51	415	62	41	26	129	879
April,	.....		7	243,276	9	84,000	28	121,200	3	38,000	1	500	486,976	4,440,958	48	463	36	46	7	89	968
May,	.....		3	24,000	9	133,700	16	68,800	3	29,000	2	17,000	272,500	4,713,458	33	496	73	27	.....	100	1068
June,	.....		3	8,250	8	109,000	10	44,400	2	17,800	1	4,000	183,450	4,796,908	24	520	45	19	7	71	1139
July,	1	1,500	.....		8	85,900	22	86,250	3	48,000	2	36,000	257,650	5,154,558	36	556	53	42	21	116	1255
August,	.....		2	4,500	3	37,000	14	53,800	2	25,500	.....		120,800	5,275,358	21	577	10	32	9	51	1306
September,	.....		3	72,500	5	102,000	12	87,650	1	16,000	1	15,000	293,150	5,568,508	22	599	49	18	6	73	1379
October,	.....		3	3,850	3	17,500	12	52,200	.....		1	150	73,700	5,642,208	19	618	8	23	.....	31	1410
November,	.....		1	4,500	3	38,000	9	41,700	1	14,000	2	4,000	102,200	5,744,408	16	634	22	17	4	43	1453
December,	.....		4	29,750	1	14,000	12	53,000	.....		.....		96,750	5,841,158	17	651	12	22	.....	34	1487
1916																					
January,	.....		1	300	1	5,000	2	10,500	.....		.....		15,800	5,856,958	4	655	4	4	.....	8	1495
February,	.....		.....		1	10,000	1	4,500	.....		.....		14,500	5,871,458	2	657	6	2	.....	8	1503
March,	.....		1	600	2	19,000	14	64,500	.....		.....		84,100	5,955,558	17	674	23	10	.....	33	1536
April,	.....		2	61,000	2	13,500	13	70,200	.....		.....		144,700	6,100,258	17	691	8	22	.....	30	1566
May,	.....		2	5,300	1	7,000	11	42,995	.....		.....		55,295	6,155,553	14	705	4	13	.....	17	1583
June,	.....		5	99,800	4	36,800	13	51,100	2	49,000	2	1,350	238,050	6,393,603	26	731	22	26	23	71	1654
July,	.....		.....		1	7,000	3	9,200	.....		.....		16,200	6,409,803	4	735	4	4	.....	8	1662
August,	.....		1	6,000	2	12,000	9	32,400	.....		.....		50,400	6,460,203	12	747	8	16	.....	24	1686
September,	.....		1	30,000	2	10,000	11	45,600	.....		2	8,350	93,950	6,554,153	16	763	8	21	.....	29	1715
October,	.....		4	27,200	2	16,500	7	23,200	1	4,500	.....		71,400	6,625,553	14	777	8	9	1	18	1733
November,	.....		3	1,750	2	12,500	9	26,150	.....		.....		40,400	6,665,953	14	791	8	16	.....	24	1757
December,	.....		1	250	1	11,000	3	11,400	.....		.....		22,650	6,688,603	5	796	8	6	.....	14	1771
1917																					
January,	1	2,300	1	36,000	1	7,000	5	3,900	.....		.....		49,200	6,737,803	8	804	4	9	.....	13	1784
February,	.....		1	33,000	.....		3	10,000	.....		.....		43,000	6,780,803	4	808	.....	6	.....	6	1790
March,	.....		.....		.....		2	9,500	.....		3	1,672	11,172	6,791,975	5	813	.....	3	.....	3	1793
April,	.....		.....		.....		2	2,100	.....		2	2,100	4,200	6,796,175	4	817	.....	1	.....	1	1794
May,	.....		2	300	1	400	4	22,400	.....		.....		23,100	6,819,275	7	824	.....	9	.....	9	1803
June,	.....		1	2,000	.....		2	6,000	.....		1	400	8,400	6,827,675	4	828	.....	3	.....	3	1806

CLASSIFICATION OF BUILDINGS.

1st Class—Fireproof Material throughout.
2nd Class—External walls of self-sustaining incombustible material; limited to 5 stories and 65 ft. in height.
3rd Class—Residence to accommodate more than two families; limited to 4 stories and 55 feet in height.
4th Class—Residences to accommodate one or two families; stories and height not limited.
5th Class—Building used for both residential and commercial or manufacturing purposes. Limited to 4 stories. If accommodating only one family and not more than 2 1-2 stories in height, building may be of wood, but walls covered with incombustible materials.
6th Class—Buildings for manufacturing, storage, or mill purposes, Construction, 1st or 2nd class, or of mill construction with exterior covered with incombustible material.

STREET CHANGES WITHIN BURNED AREA

SALEM MASS.

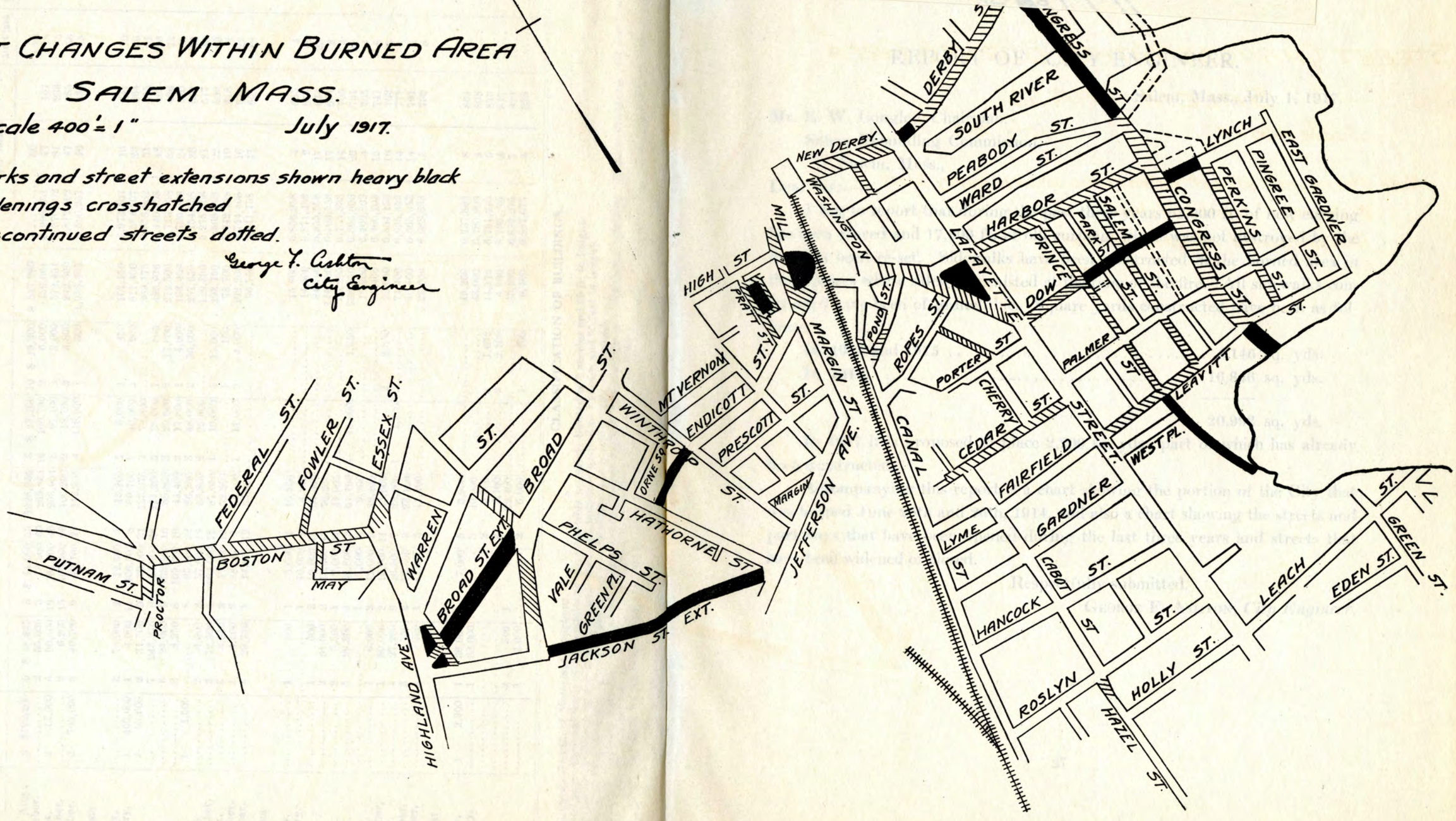
Scale 400'= 1" July 1917.

Note-Parks and street extensions shown heavy black
Widenings crosshatched
Discontinued streets dotted.

George T. Ashton
City Engineer

Correction:

On this map Prince Street should read Salem Street and Salem Street should read Prince Street.



REPORT OF CITY ENGINEER.

Salem, Mass., July 1, 1917.

Mr. E. W. Longley, Chairman,
Salem Rebuilding Commission,
Salem, Mass.,

Dear Sir:—

I beg to report that during the past three years 63,000 ft. of new curbing has been placed and 17,000 ft. of old curbing, which was not destroyed by the fire, has been re-set. Sidewalks have been constructed in the burned area in those places where sidewalks existed at the time of the fire. All sidewalks constructed have been of granolithic. Square yards constructed have been as follows:

In 1914 and 1915	4,146 sq. yds.
In 1916,	16,846 sq. yds.
	20,992 sq. yds.

In 1917 it is proposed to place 2,200 sq. yds., part of which has already been constructed.

Accompanying this report is a chart showing the portion of the City that was burned June 25th and 26th, 1914, and also a chart showing the streets and parkways that have been opened during the last three years and streets that have been widened or closed.

Respectfully submitted,

GEORGE F. ASHTON, *City Engineer.*

REPORT OF THE SHADE TREE DEPARTMENT.

Salem, Mass., July 1, 1917.

To the Rebuilding Commission,

Gentlemen:—

I herewith submit report of the work done by the Shade Tree Department for the Commission during the past three years. The following is a list of streets with the numbers and kinds of trees alive on these streets at the present time:—

Street	*No.*	*Species*	*Street*	*No.*	*Species*
Barr	11	S. Maples	Highland Ave.	11	Elms
Broad	13	Elms	Holly	29	S. Maples
Broad St. Ext.	54	Pin Oaks	Jackson Triangle	6	Pin Oaks
Cabot	7	N. Maples		6	S. Maples
	4	S. Maples	Lafayette	64	Elms
Canal	84	Sycamores		58	Poplars
Cedar	20	N. Maples	Lafayette Place	10	Catalpa
Cherry	8	Sycamores	Lafayette Park	15	S. Maples
Congress	42	Elms	Leach	26	Sycamore
	12	Poplars	Margin	8	N. Maples
Dow	6	S. Maples	Mt. Vernon	21	S. Maples
Downing	9	N. Maples	Piedmont	12	S. Maples
Eden	20	S. Maples	Prescott	27	Sycamores
Endicott	16	N. Maples	Roslyn	56	N. Maples
Essex	7	Elms	Salem	24	Poplars
Fairfield	22	S. Maples	Summer	13	S. Maples
Federal	6	S. Maples	Summit Avenue	4	S. Maples
Flint	12	Horse Chestnut	Warren	18	Elms
Gardner	26	S. Maples	Washington Hill	12	S. Maples
Glover	11	Lindens		7	Sycamores
Green	12	Lindens	Winthrop	34	N. Maples
Hancock	26	S. Maples			
Hathorne	36	Elms		925	

Live trees within the burnt district at present time..925

Trees killed by fire 572

Total gain, 353

HOLLY STREET
All new houses, but no trees

HOLLY STREET
New trees are seen in this picture

LAFAYETTE STREET
Immediately after the fire of June 25, 1914. All trees in the picture were killed

LAFAYETTE STREET
Rebuilt and with new trees

The following tabulation shows the number of each species planted:—

Sugar Maples	233
Norway Maples	150
Lombardy Poplars	94
Elms	191
Sycamores	152
Catalpa	10
Lindens	23
Horse Chestnut	12
Pin Oak	60
Total,	925
Losses from various causes 1915	46
Losses from various causes 1916	23
Losses from various causes 1917	67
Total,	136

The above losses added to the trees now standing on the streets would make a total of 1061 trees planted.

There still remains in our nurseries the following kinds of trees, purchased by the Rebuilding Commission for replacements and future planting:—

Sycamores	52
Poplars	6
Elms	18
Pin Oaks	10
Total,	86

The average cost per tree for the complete planting with guard is $6.55. Trimming, repairs to guards and care during the starting period is included in this cost.

Special work has been done in parking several streets with loam, grading and constructing fences.

Respectfully submitted,

WARREN F. HALE,

Supt. of Parks and Shade Trees.

THE SALTONSTALL SCHOOL.

Lafayette Street, Salem, Massachusetts

ADDRESS BY EDMUND W. LONGLEY, *Chairman*
At the Dedication of the Building, November 20, 1916.

Any new school building is sufficiently important to a community to warrant writing its history, but the Saltonstall School is more than an ordinary school. It is the first large public building erected by the City of Salem after the conflagration and located as it is in the middle of the path of that great fire, it will serve as a memorial of that disaster.

But more than a memorial of a disaster should this school stand as a symbol of hope and be a message to the people saying that Salem is entitled to the best in all things and that her citizens may have them, when they work together, keep to a definite plan for improvements and spend their public money bravely as well as wisely.

The Saltonstall School has not been constructed as a cheap school, but as a good school. It is not the makeshift of a bankrupt city but a permanent building erected for comfort, safety and utility, by a city that is fully solvent and believes that its greatest prosperity is ahead of it, a healthy city that believes in its future, not only in spite of, but because of its deserved chastening that it does not propose to suffer again. (Deserved because of lack of water and a proper building code at the time of the fire.)

Public buildings which had been destroyed included the old Saltonstall School, a wooden structure at the foot of Holly Street, accommodating 363 pupils, and the Brown School, a brick structure on Ropes Street, accommodating 255 pupils, both in Ward Five. Besides these two schools the Fowler Street School in Ward Four was partly burned.

It was early agreed, mainly for economy and efficiency of administration, that one school building should be erected in Ward Five instead of two. A site for this school bounded by Lafayette Street, Lafayette Avenue, and West Place, was proposed by the School House Commission and on September 10, 1914 that Commission, having been asked for a recommendation, unanimously voted as follows:

"That the Schoolhouse Commission desire at present a building to cover the requirements for the next three or four years, said requirements being as follows: Sixteen classrooms capable of seating 42 pupils each, so constructed

that eight more classrooms of the same capacity may be added thereto without injuring the architectural beauty or unity of the structure; a hall capable of seating 1000 persons; a kindergarten with separate toilet facilities and a kindergarten teachers' room; rooms for industrial teaching; a room for teaching of domestic science; a principal's office; a retiring room for teachers; a library room; a storage room for books and supplies; a modern heating and ventilating plant."

The Rebuilding Commission gave long consideration to the question of a proper site. Opposition to a Lafayette Street site developed, the argument being presented that young children would be in danger if obliged to cross that street. It appeared, however, that wherever the school was located, about one-half the pupils would be obliged to cross Lafayette Street, and on October 27, 1914 a committee of the Chamber of Commerce and Civics, after a public hearing, endorsed a site on Lafayette Street.

The site recommended by the School House Commission was owned by six parties. It contained 101,700 feet of upland and 166,000 feet of flats.

Owners with lots facing on West Avenue did not generally wish to sell, but a total price of $44,048 was finally fixed at which they would sell. By giving up the lots on West Avenue, however, and substituting the Chase land next south of the proposed site it was found that it would be necessary to deal with only two owners who were willing to sell for $44,898, their land containing 113,100 feet of upland and 175,000 feet of flats. Considering upland and flats together the first site would have cost $44,048 for 267,700 square feet or 16.5 cents per foot, while the second site cost $44,898 for 288,100 square feet or 15.6 cents per foot. The second site was chosen and the rapidly increasing value of the flats indicates that a wise choice was made. It should be said, before leaving this subject of site, that a good development of Lafayette Street had been a grave concern of the Commission and a potent reason for choosing a site on Lafayette Street was the belief that a school of good Colonial type would eventually encourage the building of good residences on Lafayette Street.

The Commissioners determined that this school they were about to build should meet the following requirements:

It should protect the lives of the scholars and teachers against danger from fire and panic.

To this end it should be only two stories in height.

All rooms should receive the largest possible amount of natural light.

They should be well heated and ventilated and conveniently arranged and fitted for reasonable comfort.

Also, the entire structure should be as pleasing in appearance as practical and of Colonial type, which type is the most appropriate for Salem.

Fireproof construction was carefully considered and regretfully discarded as too costly.

Finally, second-class construction was determined upon and the somewhat unusual expedient for a school house, that of a sprinkler system throughout, was adopted.

How safe the completed building is as a fire risk is indicated by the rate of fire insurance, which is 12 cents per $100. per year, probably the lowest rate on any similar building in this vicinity.

There are tower stairways at both ends of the building, doors of rooms open into adjoining rooms, exits to out of doors are numerous, and exit doors are provided with panic bolts, which will cause them to fly open if pressure comes against them from excited crowds.

Altogether, it is our belief that people within this building are safe from danger from fire.

On November 9, 1914 the Commission voted to ask architects to enter a competition with plans for the school building. The winner of the competition was Mr. James E. McLaughlin of Boston, who thereby was chosen as the architect for the school. The second prize of $250 was awarded to Walter Atherton, John W. Ames and Edwin S. Dodge, Associated Architects, of Boston, and the third prize of $150. was awarded to Walter W. Cook, also of Boston. The plan of competition was arranged by Mr. C. H. Blackall, advisory architect to the Commission, and in his requirements for this competition, the building first began to take shape and secure the dimensions of its rooms and corridors.

A gymnasium was not contemplated by the original recommendation of the School House Commission, nor did one appear in the form of competition, but was added later by the Rebuilding Commission.

The polling booth was the clever suggestion of Mr. Wallace L. Gifford, at that time one of the five commissioners forming the City Council. To him the Commission is indebted for many other practical suggestions and great help.

In the competition, plans were submitted by eighty-five architects. The Commissioners were publicly criticized for arriving at a decision in a single afternoon, and it is fair to say how it was arrived at and why an immediate decision was made.

The assistance of Mr. Blackall was obtained and at his suggestion all of the drawings (which by the way were numbered only, leaving the names of competitors unknown to the Commissioners) showing the perspectives of the building were covered up, to avoid the temptation to choose merely a good looking plan. The plans then presented showed only the arrangements of the rooms, floors and auditorium. So presented, faults of arrangement in many plans were apparent and such plans discarded. By following this method, floor by floor, it was comparatively easy to eliminate all but three plans. These three plans were considered with great care, now bringing in the perspective plans as well as those of the interior, and it was possible to reach unanimous agreement as to the winners who stood first, second and third. It was a fair examination of many plans, made in a short time by business men accustomed to reach conclusions quickly as well as fairly. The Commissioners believe that the constructed building has justified their choice of design and architect. It should be said also that the Commissioners desired a prompt choice in order to avoid the pressure of interested individuals which would have been unavoidable had action been delayed.

Bids were called for and on April 17, 1915 contract for erection of the building was awarded to the C. S. Cunningham & Sons Construction Co. of Boston and Lynn. The plumbing contract was awarded to Driscoll & Co., Inc. of Salem. The electrical contract was awarded to the E. C. Lewis Co. of Boston, and contract for heating and ventilating to the P. J. Sullivan Co. of Boston.

From the time of awarding the contracts the work has progressed in an orderly and efficient manner. Relations with the contractors have been pleasant and business like. The inspector on the job appointed by the Commission, Mr. Henry V. Mack, has been efficient and faithful. From the digging of the cellar to the completion of the finish, the progress of the building has been a matter of almost daily concern and interest to the Commissioners. To feel that this structure no longer requires our thought and attention is much like the feeling of a father when his daughter is married and in the future is to be

cared for by another. We believe that the building is going into the hands of those who will care for and cherish it and we relinquish our responsibility, hopefully.

On June 1, 1916, the building was completed, but let no man think who is interested with a similar job that when the house is finished his work is done. The structure is then to be furnished, and that task is the most trying of them all.

I could wish no more to a critic than to impose on him the task of securing the furniture and fittings for a large school at a reasonable price, in a reasonable time and to the fair satisfaction of those who were to use them.

As far back as December 18, 1915, at the request of the Commission the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. W. W. Andrew, prepared and presented a list of the articles required for the furnishing of the school, including their specifications. The list was carefully and well made. It contained no fewer than 3,291 articles, ranging all the way from a moving picture outfit through a grand and two upright pianos to a set of poland tumblers and two vinegar bottles.

On April 17, 1916 bids were opened. These bids were for two groups of furniture; first, for all furniture except that in the Auditorium, and second, for furniture in the Auditorium. Three bids were requested, but two of them were the same, except that one called for 48 seats in a room and the other for 42 seats. The lowest bid was for $12,339.53 and the next for $13,737.00.

It was decided, however, that the specifications should be further divided, so that a dealer might submit bids on his single line of goods. The first bids were rejected and on May 12th new bids in seven parts were asked for. The lowest bids then obtained totaled $10,681.65 or $1,657.88 less than the lowest earlier bid.

This loss of time, however, between the bids was the primary cause for delay in installing the desks, which resulted in the opening of the school a month late.

Upon the opening of spring, the questions of planting and grading became matters of study. The very attractive plan of planting and its successful execution are the work of Mr. Harlan P. Kelsey. In the examination of the plan, Mr. John Robinson assisted the Commission with his valuable advice.

The plan for treatment of the land in the rear of the school, providing for an upper playground of brick and a lower playground of gravel, surrounded

by a grass banking that forms a stadium, is the plan of Mr. Harlan P. Kelsey of the Salem Planning Board, who gave his services for this purpose without charge to the City.

In the process of grading, gravel removed from the surface has been used in filling the flats and 17,660 feet of new land has been made for the City.

The Saltonstall School was occupied by the teachers and scholars October 9, 1916.

The Commission wishes to congratulate and compliment the architect, Mr. James E. McLaughlin, upon the success of his plans and earnest work. It wishes also to acknowledge the good services of the contractors and to express its thanks to the many others who have given most freely of their advice and assistance.

May the City of Salem cherish this beautiful building in its keeping as we have loved it in the making, and may the young children who spend their hours here, learn to treat it carefully and affectionately, and in so doing also learn to care for and well treat their own possessions in their later years.

EDMUND W. LONGLEY,
Chairman Salem Rebuilding Commission.

COST OF SALTONSTALL SCHOOL
Including Land and Furniture.

Charlotte Chase, Land	$29,000.00
Bessie Goldberg, Land	15,257.68
C. S. Cunningham Sons Construction Co., General Contract	128,851.00
C. S. Cunningham Sons Construction Co., Grading	12,807.29
Driscoll & Co., Inc., Plumbing	12,018.94
E. C. Lewis Co., Electrical Work	8,034.70
P. J. Sullivan Co., Heating & Ventilating Plant	20,243.00
Ralph S. Bauer, Furniture	5,654.75
J. L. Lougee Co., Furniture	4,428.21
Boston Metal Fire-proofing Co., Lockers,	930.05
Other Parties, Furniture	3,109.01
J. E. McLaughlin, Architect	12,797.38
Henry V. Mack, Inspector	1,038.60
Cost of Competition for Architect	428.99
Harlan P. Kelsey, Planting	1,091.20
Sundry Costs, including Tools and Machinery	1,480.79
	$257,177.59

SALTONSTALL SCHOOL
Lafayette Street, Salem

TYPE OF APARTMENT HOUSES ON HARBOR STREET

TYPE OF FOUR FAMILY HOUSES BUILT BY THE NAUMKEAG STEAM COTTON CO.

CONGRESS STREET, SOUTH FROM THE BRIDGE

All buildings erected since the fire. Street in the immediate foreground is new and the remainder widened to eighty feet.

FRONT OF SIXTEEN FAMILY BLOCK, SALEM STREET
All the buildings in the distance have been erected since the fire.

GARDENS BETWEEN 34 AND 38 PARK STREET
This was a dangerous alley way before the fire. All buildings seen in the picture are new.

PLENTY OF LIGHT, AIR AND HEALTHY CHILDREN BETWEEN 52 AND 56 WARD STREET

Compare with picture on opposite page of types of construction before the fire. Both pictures were taken in the "Point" district.

BEFORE THE FIRE

1. Flimsy "Fire-trap" construction at Bertram Park off Derby St.
2. The "Point District" Ward 5, showing wooden fourdeckers.
3. Too narrow for shade trees.
4. Back and front yards combined.
5. Typical yard and playground in Ward v.