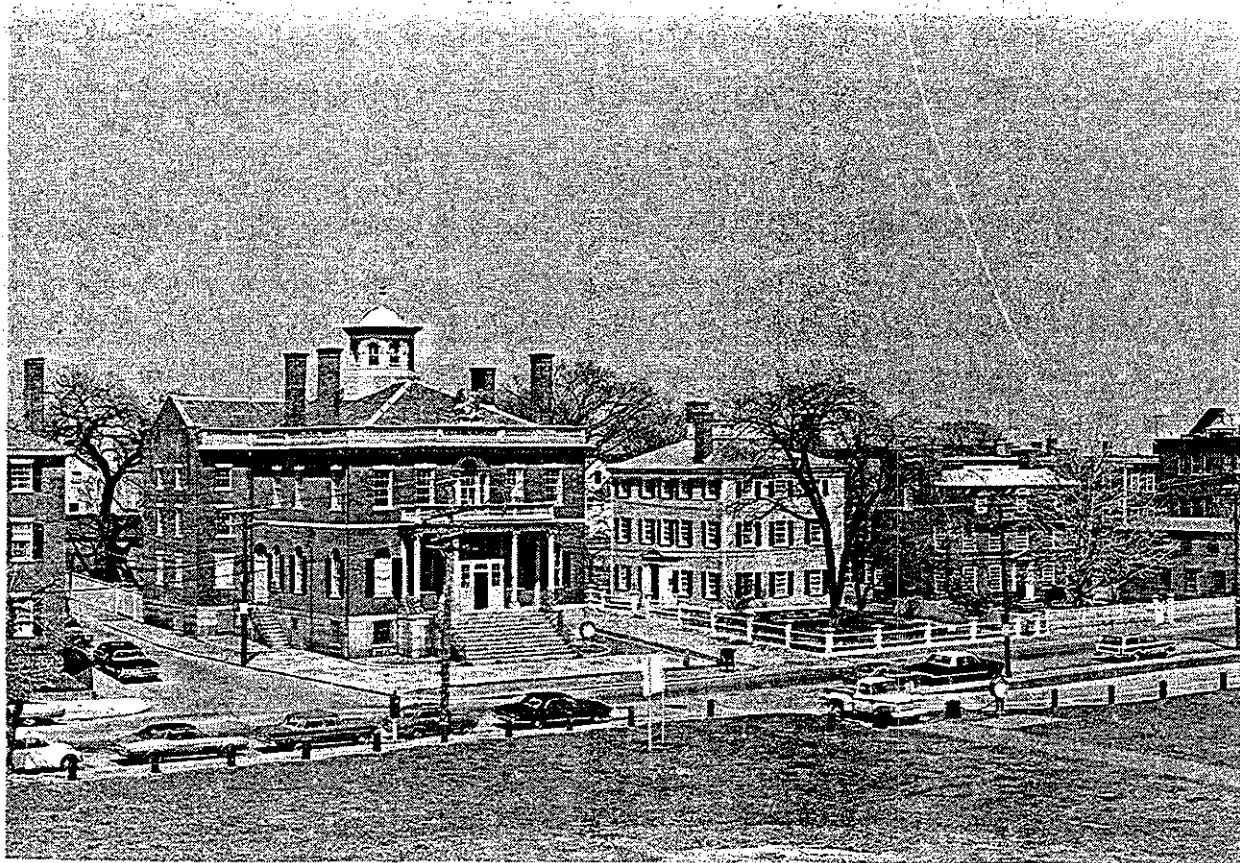


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ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY
OF THE
SALEM MARITIME
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



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Cover Photograph: Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Salem, Massachusetts, 1972.
Left to right: Custom House, Hawkes House, Derby House, and West India Goods Store, with
grass-covered wharves in foreground. (Courtesy National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center,
Richard Frear, Photographer.)

**Administrative History of the
Salem Maritime National Historic Site**

Prepared for the

National Park Service
North Atlantic Regional Office

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by

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PREFACE

It is fitting that the National Park Service, as the nation's leading historical agency, study its own history, and to that end the NPS North Atlantic Regional Office in 1990 commissioned this administrative history of the Salem Maritime National Historic Site. Salem's administrative history is a particularly interesting one for several reasons. First, as one of the oldest historic properties within the the parks system, it encompasses most of the development and changes in historic site administration within the National Park Service's history. Second, Salem more than most parks in the system, has been dependent on the cooperative efforts of other entities, public and private, for its development and operation. Third, as one of the earliest urban sites in the system, it encountered the need to interact with neighbors before this was common in the Park Service.

Even as these characteristics have made the administrative history of Salem Maritime interesting, they have also made it complex to pursue. Changes in administrative organization in the Park Service over the years have scattered NPS records pertaining to Salem, and some have disappeared. Among those organizations which have cooperated over the years in the development of the site, record keeping has varied greatly, from the extensive archives of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities to the uninformative records of the Salem Maritime Historical Association. And for the site's relationship to its surrounding community, virtually the only record is in newspaper files. This has made it challenging to assemble a balanced view of many important aspects of the site's history.

Our approach in documenting Salem Maritime's history, therefore, has been to work outward from the official NPS records, supplementing them where necessary with the records of cooperating organizations, municipal and state records, newspaper accounts, and interviews with people within and without the Park Service whose memories and views we thought would add useful perspectives. Along the way, we have received invaluable help from many people, without whose assistance, the task would have been much harder and the results less rewarding.

Salem Maritime Superintendent Cynthia Pollack was perhaps our most enthusiastic supporter, placing at our disposal her own time and that of her staff, and offering useful suggestions of people to interview. It is especially

unfortunate that her untimely death in 1992 as this history was being completed deprived her of the chance to see the final result of both this history and the Salem Project in which she had played such a key role. Staff Historian John Frayler was particularly helpful in tracking down elusive documents, and was also able to provide first-hand knowledge of the events of the past decade. David Kayser also helped answer some troublesome questions about the whereabouts of records.

At the regional level, Regional Historian Paul Weinbaum has not only provided expert assistance in tracking down documents and guiding us through the far flung NPS records system; as Project Supervisor his excellent criticism and suggestions throughout the project have played an important part in shaping the final product. Gail Homer, Chief, Operations Evaluation, also provided help in articulating various aspects of the regional/site relationship in the planning process.

In Washington, Barry Mackintosh, Bureau Historian, was extremely helpful in providing background on NPS administrative history, without which it would have been impossible to place Salem Maritime in a national perspective. He and former Regional Historian Dwight Pitcaithley also provided valuable comments on the draft. Two other former regional office members, NPS Associate Director for Planning and Development Denis Galvin and NPS Deputy Director Herbert Cables, took time from busy schedules to share their thoughts on the history of Salem Maritime as it relates to the Park Service as a whole.

Others who were especially helpful in tracking down elusive or missing documents and photos were David Nathanson and photo archivist Tom DuRant at the Harpers Ferry Center Library, and, at the National Archives in Philadelphia, Shaun Aubitz.

Annie Harris of the Salem Partnership was helpful in documenting that informal volunteer organization's history, and its first president, Stan Lukowski was generous with his time in shedding light on that side of the partnership and the origins of the Salem Project. And the late Anne Farnam, former director of the Essex Institute and long time observer of Salem's historical institutions, also provided useful insights from the community perspective.

We thank all of these people who helped make it an enjoyable as well as a challenging project.

Pauline Chase Harrell, Carol Ely and Stanley Moss

PART ONE
VISION AND CREATION

CHAPTER 1

LOCAL/FEDERAL CO-OPERATION CREATES THE PARK

Prologue

Salem in the 1930s was a city with a distant memory of glory. Deteriorating wharves falling further into the harbor with each storm tide, derelict warehouses and a few small stores dimly recalled better days. Near the greatest of the old wharves, Derby Wharf, the still-splendid U.S. Custom House and the declining mansions of the old merchant elite hinted at the former greatness.

Two centuries earlier, Salem had been one of America's most important ports, trading with the West Indies and Europe. Founded before the rival port of Boston sixteen miles to the south, Salem had a sheltered but shallow natural harbor on the rocky North Shore of Massachusetts. In the 1760s, England's enforcement of mercantilist policies threatened Salem's prosperity, making its merchants and mariners into patriots in the American cause. Merchantmen were fitted out as privateers, and the wealth of the shipping elite helped to finance the Revolution.

With victory and peace came economic stagnation for New England ports, shut out of the lucrative trade with the British imperial colonies. Salem's merchants had the imagination and willingness to take great risks, sailing into the unknown to trade with distant and untried ports. The risks paid off on a grand scale. The luxury trade with the Far East made Salem, in the years from 1786 to 1812, one of America's greatest and richest ports. Tea, pepper, spices, silks, china, and other exotic commodities filled the wharveside warehouses of the Derbys, Forresters, Crowninshields, and other merchant families. Through trade, manufacture and labor, people of all ranks in the city had a financial stake in the outcomes of the long voyages of the China Trade; and the duties collected on cargoes at the Salem Custom House were a crucial source of revenue for the new federal government.

The great years of prosperity ended with the Embargo of 1807, which closed English and French ports to American vessels, and the ensuing War of 1812, from which Salem never recovered. Hopes were high when a fine new brick Custom House was built at the head of Derby Wharf in 1819, but without the

advantage of the inland transportation system enjoyed by the competing port of Boston, and with a harbor too shallow for the larger seagoing vessels of the 19th century, Salem never regained its position, though its wharves were used for shipping until the end of the century. When writer Nathaniel Hawthorne worked as the Surveyor of the Port in the 1840s, he described a dusty and idle Custom House. Salem was becoming a manufacturing town, and the rundown waterfront neighborhoods would provide cheap housing for immigrants from Ireland, Canada, and Eastern Europe who worked in the mills and manufacturing plants.

As New England's economy declined in the early twentieth century, the tide of Salem's fortunes ebbed still further. The waterfront near the Custom House was a clutter of derelict and underused wooden sheds set on tide-washed heaps of stone that had once been solid masonry wharves. On land, once magnificent mansions served as stores and boarding houses. All were threatened by weather and neglect.

Through the joint resolve and resources of a uniquely broad partnership, this historic but run-down waterfront was transformed into the first national historic site designated under the Historic Sites Act of 1935. Local individuals, the City of Salem, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, preservation experts, and private organizations all worked with the National Park Service (NPS), implementing its new historical mandate, and with numerous other agencies of the federal government. Each of these entities brought specific abilities and different agendas to the task, and each left its stamp on the final creation.

This process took place during a heady time of change and growth in the federal government. The Roosevelt administration's aggressive New Deal was challenging long-held notions of the proper relationship of government to the people and of the federal government to the states. The Park Service was refining its standards, its procedures, and even its management structures for preserving historic properties. It had at its disposal a budget that grew even faster than the ability to spend it, and manpower, including both highly skilled and untrained workers, standing ready to perform nearly any task that could be invented. The New Deal work programs gave the Park Service unparalleled power in preservation at a time when newly hired NPS professionals were struggling to set standards for proper scholarly control.

The combination of unfamiliar partners, working with untested administrative mechanisms, and the sense of urgency to utilize special Depression-related funds while they were available necessitated an *ad hoc* planning process that proceeded concurrently with implementation. The result was a national historic site created expeditiously but retaining

ambiguities which would require future resolution. The Salem site faced issues of interpretive direction and site definition that would challenge planners throughout the process of site acquisition and early development.

The National Park Service Moves Into History

The National Park Service had a new interest in the 1930s in acquiring and developing historical parks in addition to its natural-area sites. In the late 1920s NPS Director Horace M. Albright had stated his intention to "go rather heavily into the Historical Park field," and acquired for the Park Service numerous historic battlefields formerly managed by other federal departments. In the early '30s, this new direction was intensified by Interior Secretary Harold Ickes' interest in developing recreational sites in the East to match the great wilderness National Parks of the West. Since the East had little wilderness to preserve, sites of historical interest seemed likely candidates. President Franklin D. Roosevelt himself had a personal appreciation of conservation and an interest in American history. Arno B. Cammerer, who succeeded Albright as NPS Director in 1933, carried on his efforts in conservation and historic preservation.¹

Historic sites also gained public popularity in the 1920s and '30s with the celebration of the 200th anniversary of George Washington's birth, and of the 150th anniversaries of American independence, the Revolution and the creation of the new republic. Across America, local and state historical organizations focusing on local sites formed a growing constituency for historical parks, museums, and governmental involvement in historic preservation. In Williamsburg, Virginia, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., had created a professionally researched and managed outdoor historical museum that provided a model for the Park Service to emulate.²

In 1931, a professional historian position was created in the NPS Washington office. To fill it came Verne E. Chatelain, a teacher and historian from the Midwest. Dynamic and ambitious, Chatelain had a clear vision of the Park Service's mandate to preserve and interpret the nation's history, and he got down to work implementing that vision. In addition to supervising the work of two historians hired the same summer to work on the sesquicentennial of the Battle of Yorktown and the creation of the Colonial National Monument in the Yorktown and Jamestown area, he had the task of sorting through the

¹ Charles B. Hosmer, *Preservation Comes of Age* (Charlottesville: 1981), I: 512.

² Edwin W. Small, "Historical Conservation and the Salem Maritime National Historic Site," an address before the Lynn, Mass., Historical Society, 9 March 1939, SAMA boxes, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

numerous proposals for new historic sites that came through Congress. Most of these involved preservation or reconstruction of structures associated with Presidents and other great men of American history. Many were buildings of purely local interest or in such bad state of repair as to make them unattractive propositions for the Park Service. Chatelain saw the need to systematize and professionalize the process of researching and accepting sites into the federal system to avoid partisan politics.

As a response to these needs, Chatelain participated in the drafting of legislation that became the Historic Sites Act of 1935. This act defined the Park Service's role in acquiring and managing historic sites and created a professional advisory board to review potential sites. It also authorized the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) to survey all properties of significance that were worth saving, whether or not the Park Service would eventually become involved in their administration. This Act initially set the stringent standards of historical significance and professionalism in historical research for which the Park Service has become known.³

When Civil War and Revolutionary War battlefields were transferred to NPS jurisdiction from the War Department at Albright's behest in 1933, the Park Service found itself in need of additional positions in its management structure for historical research and interpretation. The need for professional supervisory personnel was heightened by the Roosevelt administration's decision in 1933 to have the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) work with the Department of the Interior, and Albright's successful bid to direct some of this work force to restoration projects, notably in the battlefield parks. Positions for historians and historical architects were allocated in the CCC funding and Albright and Chatelain immediately hired as many as possible. In July 1935 the Branch of Historic Sites and Buildings was split off from the Branch of Research and Education, with Chatelain at its head.⁴

Among those hired through the CCC was Edwin W. Small, who was to be by far the most important individual in the history of Salem Maritime National Historic Site. Small, age 27 in 1935, was a historian with both B.A. and M.A. degrees from Yale who joined the Park Service (through the Emergency Conservation Work program of the CCC) directly out of graduate school. Throughout his career, he saw himself as a historian more than an administrator, preferring the academic title of "Historian" to the more elevated "Superintendent." He has been called "a most efficient and

³ Hosmer, I: 513-14; I: 562-76.

⁴ Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective* (National Park Service: 1986), 23; after 1938 Ronald F. Lee was head of this department.

diplomatic emissary for the Park Service in a region where the federal government was not trusted." In the crucial year of 1935, he was on the scene as the Regional Historian for New England in the CCC.⁵

This "efficient and diplomatic emissary" summed up, in an address to the Lynn Historical Society in 1939, his understanding of the federal role in historic site preservation:

The program of historical conservation outlined for the National Park Service in accordance with the Historic Sites Act of 1935 is in no sense to be regarded as an attempt to replace the work that is being done by state and local organizations. The purpose is rather to supplement and to expand the work of agencies already active in the field. To appraise and select a coherent system of historic sites and buildings which will portray all major themes of American history is truly a great undertaking. State and local participation as well as national action are essential to achieve that end.⁶

Local and Regional Preservation Interest

The Park Service's interest in new sites in 1935 coincided nicely with local ambitions in Salem. Two years earlier, in 1933, the Salem Planning Board had considered the idea of using federal emergency relief funds to restore derelict Derby Wharf (Fig. 1). One of the few remaining Revolutionary-era wharves in the nation, it was then owned by the Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway Company. Would it not make an attractive historic site? Local businessman and civic leader Harlan P. Kelsey, a member of the Planning Board, took up the campaign. Kelsey, a landscape architect and nurseryman who lived in East Boxford, had a strong interest in city planning, community improvement and conservation. He raised \$7,500 of his own money and that of a few wealthy subscribers from Salem's old families, and purchased the option to buy Derby Wharf. Kelsey was also a personal friend of Park Service Director Arno Cammerer. A board member of numerous state, regional, and national associations, he had an ability to get things done at the state and

⁵ Hosmer, I: 658; Small to Director, NPS, 27 July 1950, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

⁶ Edwin W. Small, "Historical Conservation and the Salem Maritime National Historic Site," an address before the Lynn, Mass., Historical Society, 9 March 1939, SAMA boxes, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

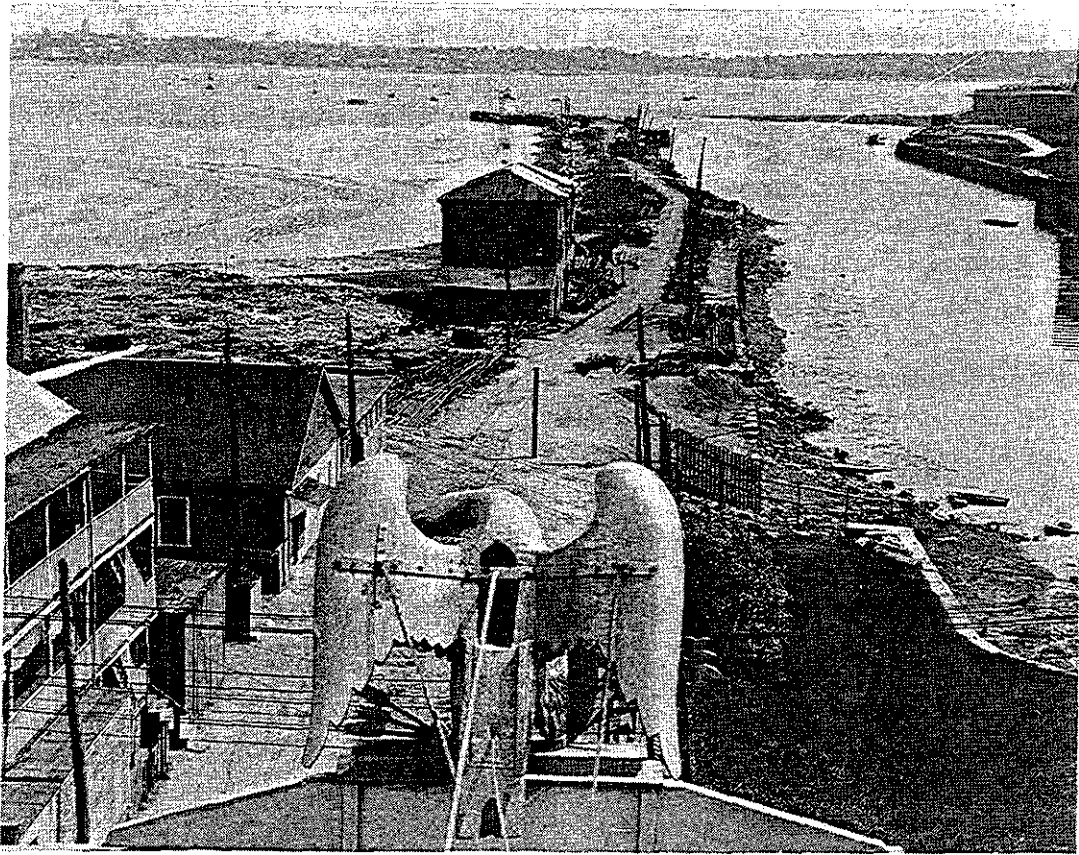


Figure 1. Derby Wharf from the Custom House, ca. 1930. The once-bustling center of Salem's foreign trade retained only crumbling remnants of its former appearance. (Courtesy Essex Institute Salem, Mass.)

things done at the state and local levels which would prove invaluable to the Park Service in its efforts to create the site.⁷

Kelsey was abetted in his efforts by Mayor George J. Bates. A state representative before he was thirty, Bates went on to become mayor of Salem from 1923 to 1937, then served as Congressman for the 6th District until his death in 1949. During his fourteen years as mayor, he managed to reduce the city's debt by nearly \$900,000 while carrying out an extensive program of public improvements, including new schools and library, new streets, and the restoration of the old Salem Town Hall. He was also one of the first mayors to obtain government approval for local WPA projects.⁸

Besides local pride, the City of Salem had in mind, of course, tourist dollars to revitalize a flagging local economy, as well as the short-term influx of federally-funded jobs while the major reconstruction work was done on the wharves and houses. While tourism in the postwar sense had not yet emerged, New England seacoast towns had long experienced an influx of "summer people" who arrived by train or trolley to enjoy the more picturesque parts of the coastline. The advent of the private automobile had augmented their numbers, and Salem hoped to attract a greater share of them. In addition, Derby Wharf as the centerpiece of a revitalized harbor could provide open space and recreation for the residents of the crowded waterfront community, as well as boating for locals and visitors. A newspaper article commented that "Anything that recalls this old life and beautifies our harbor will create a feature of great popular as well as world-wide interest."⁹

When Kelsey addressed a hearing on the Commonwealth's appropriation for land acquisition in 1936, the *Salem Evening News* reported, "He spoke of the tourist trade that comes to New England and of the splendid advertising that the city, state and New England would get out of this monument to maritime history. He stressed the necessity of the conditions being carried out jointly by the city and state." When Small spoke at the hearing, he highlighted the same theme:

⁷ "Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Salem Maritime National Historic Site" (1962), Salem Maritime National Historic Site Master Plan, 373/MPNAR Mission 66, vols. 1 and 3 (microfiche, NPS Denver Technical Service Center); Hosmer, I: 649-50; *Who's Who in America*, 5, s.v. Kelsey, Harlan.

⁸ *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, 34, s.v. Bates, George J.

⁹ *Salem Evening News*, 11 December 1935.

We're interested in having Derby Wharf in our custody. When developed, Derby Wharf should draw people to this section of the country as never before. If New England is to keep pace with other parts of the country as a vacation land, it must make the most of its assets. Massachusetts has a wonderful history but it needs to be interpreted to the public. It will be an advantage to have Derby Wharf under the National Park Service as it will have a national prestige and as part of the national historic site development program it will have significance in other parts of the country which it otherwise would not have.¹⁰

In addition to his contacts with local and state government, Kelsey could also call on a network of preservationists with valuable skills. Conservative and scholarly in approach, many preservationists were from New England's old families. They were not typically New Deal Democrats. But when urged by Kelsey and community leaders in Salem, New England's leading preservationists would break through their traditional distrust of government to work with federal and state agencies to create the site.

By the 1930s, New England preservationists had developed models and techniques for the documentation, preservation, and responsible restoration of historic properties, as well as an understanding of the maritime heritage of the region that would be useful in dealing with Salem's historic wharf area. Beginning in 1876 with the preservation of Boston's Old South Meeting House and five years later its Old State House, private preservation groups had successfully preserved and managed important historic sites in Massachusetts. The Trustees of Public Reservations, of which Harlan Kelsey was a Trustee, was founded by Charles W. Eliot in 1891 and had preserved areas of scenic beauty. The Ipswich, Massachusetts, Historical Society as early as 1898 had preserved the Whipple House for its architectural interest alone, the first such instance in the country.¹¹

Salem itself boasted two models, both bearing the stamp of George Francis Dow. One was at the Essex Institute, the nation's oldest county historical society and repository of outstanding archives and artifact collections. As secretary of the institute from 1898 to 1919, Dow had introduced the concept of carefully recreated period rooms, then a new idea in the United States. After this, he went on to install a group of period houses and shops on Essex Institute property, creating an "outdoor museum" on the Scandinavian

¹⁰ *Salem Evening News*, 28 May 1936.

¹¹ Jane Holtz Kay and Pauline Chase-Harrell, *Preserving New England* (New York: 1986), 41-45.

model. In 1930, in what was widely regarded as the most significant aspect of the Massachusetts Tercentenary celebration, Dow created "Salem, 1630" for the Salem Park Commission. At a time when the myth of the log cabin as a seventeenth century English building type in America was still strong, it contained accurate replicas of nearly every type of early building actually constructed in New England. As Pioneer Village, it remains as part of the Salem park system.¹²

Chief in influence and experience among New England preservationists, however, was William Sumner Appleton of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA). Founded in 1910 as the first regional preservation society in the country, SPNEA by the 1930s owned two dozen properties throughout New England, as well as important document and photograph archives to guide restoration. Appleton, founder of SPNEA, was the most influential preservationist in New England and the man who trained and set the philosophy for many of the region's preservationists. Appleton also had the Yankee's traditional distrust of the federal government and had made it plain that he disapproved of present government policies and involvement with historic sites. He was, however, savvy enough to respect the might of the dollars they could bring to some of his most persistent preservation problems.¹³

An important ally on the SPNEA Board was Louise du Pont Crowninshield, who lived in nearby Marblehead. She was the sister of Henry Francis du Pont, a serious collector of American antiques and founder of Winterthur in Delaware. She had been influential in the preservation of Kenmore in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and had worked with the Park Service in the restoration and furnishing of the George Washington Birthplace National Monument at Wakefield, Virginia. Her husband, Francis B. Crowninshield, was a Derby descendant and part of the Crowninshield family of the Salem merchant elite, and she had a firm commitment to Salem preservation efforts. As a board member of both the Essex Institute and the Peabody Museum, she could help influence these respected institutions to cooperate with the National Park Service's plans for Derby Wharf.¹⁴

In a 1936 letter she attempted to allay Appleton's fears of the Park Service:

¹² *Ibid.*, 45; Hosmer, I: 167-68.

¹³ Hosmer, I: 175.

¹⁴ Hosmer, II: 924; Small to Cox, 27 August 1937, file "Historian Letters 1937-1938", Vault, SMNHS; obituary, Mrs. Francis B. Crowninshield, *New York Times*, 12 July 1958.

I am much interested in what you say about the Federal Government project. I had heard rumors of it. I hope this economy wave which is going over the country now will not delay it. Wakefield, George Washington's birth place in Westmoreland County, Virginia, is under the commission of the Fine Arts of the Federal Government. Mr. Moore asked me to see about the furniture for it . . . That house is under the care of the Parks Service [sic]. They act as guides, look after the grounds and take full charge. When I cannot go there myself, I send things to Mr. Hough, who is head of the Park Service there, and he places them in the way I say. It all works very well and is an admirable arrangement . . . I think if the same thing could happen to the Derby House it would be ideal.¹⁵

Cooperation Creates a National Historic Site

While the Historic Sites Act was still under consideration by Congress, the Park Service was already carrying out an active search for appropriate sites for federal preservation, with candidates proposed by local preservation groups and scouted by NPS staff. A special emphasis was placed on sites in New England, where Park Service presence was limited to Maine's Acadia National Park. The Park Service wanted sites that were relatively intact, clearly of national interest and importance, and which were donated free of encumbrances.

Edwin Small was the man on the spot to scout out potential park sites in the New England states, and to contact local preservationists for their recommendations. He arrived in early August 1935 to take up his duties with the CCC in New England. One of Small's first tasks when he arrived at the office in Boston was to meet with William Sumner Appleton, who suggested several sites to Small that day and in subsequent conversations.¹⁶ Appleton's cooperation was important to Small, since SPNEA owned the Derby House, a key element of the potential park under discussion at Derby Wharf.

In response to Harlan Kelsey's request to his friend Arno Cammerer, Verne Chatelain toured the Derby Wharf area in April 1935 and was optimistic enough about Derby Wharf and the Custom House to send Director Cammerer to visit the area in August, when Kelsey accompanied him. NPS staff historian Alvin P. Stauffer did some background research on maritime history in New England as a whole and Salem in particular to guide Park

¹⁵ Louise du Pont Crowninshield to Appleton, 11 January 1936, SPNEA correspondence files on Derby House, microfiche, SPNEA, Boston.

¹⁶ Hosmer, I: 175.

Service acquisition decisions. Chatelain found Derby Wharf to be a very important site for the Park Service, if enough of the surrounding property could be acquired and cleared to put the wharf in its historical context. He saw Derby Wharf as a gateway for visitors, a "contact station" for future New England sites. Cammerer and Chatelain concurred that the site had "national significance," thereby performing the evaluation which, after passage of the National Historic Sites Act, would be performed by an advisory board.¹⁷

After the Historic Sites Act was approved on August 21, the task of locating sites became more urgent. The act required that the Park Service establish an advisory board and a process for approving sites, but this had not been completed by the end of the year. Meanwhile, the proponents of the Derby Wharf site were lobbying for acceptance immediately, and on December 9, 1935, Interior Secretary Ickes accepted Cammerer and Chatelain's recommendation and agreed to designate Derby Wharf National Historic Site as soon as the requisite deeds and land titles were given or transferred to the Interior Department.

Federal policy preferred that historic sites to be acquired by the Park Service be donated rather than purchased by the federal government. Derby Wharf may have appeared a more attractive site than others proposed because the federal government already owned the centerpiece building, the 1819 U.S. Custom House with its outbuildings, including the Bonded Warehouse (1819) and Scale House (1829). NPS acquisition of these sites required, however, the cooperation of the U.S. Customs Service of the Treasury Department. Moreover, manpower for restoration and preservation had to be guaranteed or ownership of the property would have been meaningless; so the Commonwealth of Massachusetts had to agree to apply some of its federal New Deal money to the site through the Public Works Administration (PWA) and the CCC. Negotiations on all of these fronts were ultimately successful but required time and lobbying by Kelsey, Bates, and others far beyond what they had anticipated.¹⁸

By May 1936, the legal work preparatory to land acquisitions was in place, though the site was not yet under the physical control of the Park Service. On May 26, an act of Congress officially recognized the plans to create a national

¹⁷ Alvin P. Stauffer, "The Maritime History of New England, More Particularly of Salem" (National Park Service, 1935); Hosmer, I: 653 (original reference: Chatelain to Cammerer, 31 October 1935, SMNHS, 0-36 Gen. Records of National Park Service, National Archives, Record Group 79).

¹⁸ Hosmer, I: 581, 655 (original reference Kelsey to Cammerer, 5 August 1936, SMNHS, 0-36 Gen. Records of National Park Service, National Archives, Record Group 79).

historic site at Salem and authorized the Treasury Department to turn the Custom House over to the NPS. They vacated on July 1, the beginning of the federal fiscal year.

Derby Wharf and the Custom House were the sea and land keystones of the site, but they needed an interpretive and visual context. Acquiring the rest of the properties required diplomacy, dollars, action by the city council, and the power of eminent domain. The other pieces of real estate under consideration to create a coherent historic site were owned by various entities: Derby House (1762) (Fig. 2) and the "Counting House" (c. 1800)¹⁹ belonged to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA); a part of Central Wharf (1791) and Forrester's Warehouse (pre-1832) was owned by the Home for Aged Women along with the historic Forrester mansion (not acquired by the park). The Derby Wharf Lighthouse (1871) was owned by the U.S. Coast Guard and was a later addition to Park Service management although it was always physically within the park's boundaries. Private owners, including the Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway Company, held the jumble of warehouses and shops that lined Derby Street on the land and water sides. These structures included only one building that would be retained as part of the park: the Hawkes House (1780), which at this time was being used as a warehouse. It was originally scheduled for demolition, until its historical and architectural significance was recognized by architect Stuart M. Barnette in a tour of the site in May 1937.²⁰ The property acquired for the original park consisted of about six acres.²¹

The City of Salem was the agent for transfer of title of properties from private parties to the federal government, and the process was not smooth. The banks making loans to the City required a decision of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court to establish the legality of the City's accepting private funds for the donation of property to the federal government.²² Fortunately, the court's decision in April 1937 was favorable, permitting Salem to buy private property "for a national historical site and as a memorial to the sailors of

¹⁹ This building was called the "Rum Shop" from 1941-1975 and the "West India Goods Store" from 1975 to the present.

²⁰ Small to Cammerer, 2 August 1937, file "Historian Letters 1937," Vault, SMNHS.

²¹ No other structures were added to the Park until the Narbonne House in 1963, which was scouted for eventual acquisition from the founding of the Park (see letter Small to Cammerer on contacts with Narbonne heirs, 5 January 1938, file "Historian Letters 1937-38," Vault, SMNHS).

²² "Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Salem Maritime National Historic Site" (1962), Salem Maritime National Historic Site Master Plan, 373/MPNAR Mission 66, vols. 1 and 3 (microfiche, NPS Denver Technical Service Center).

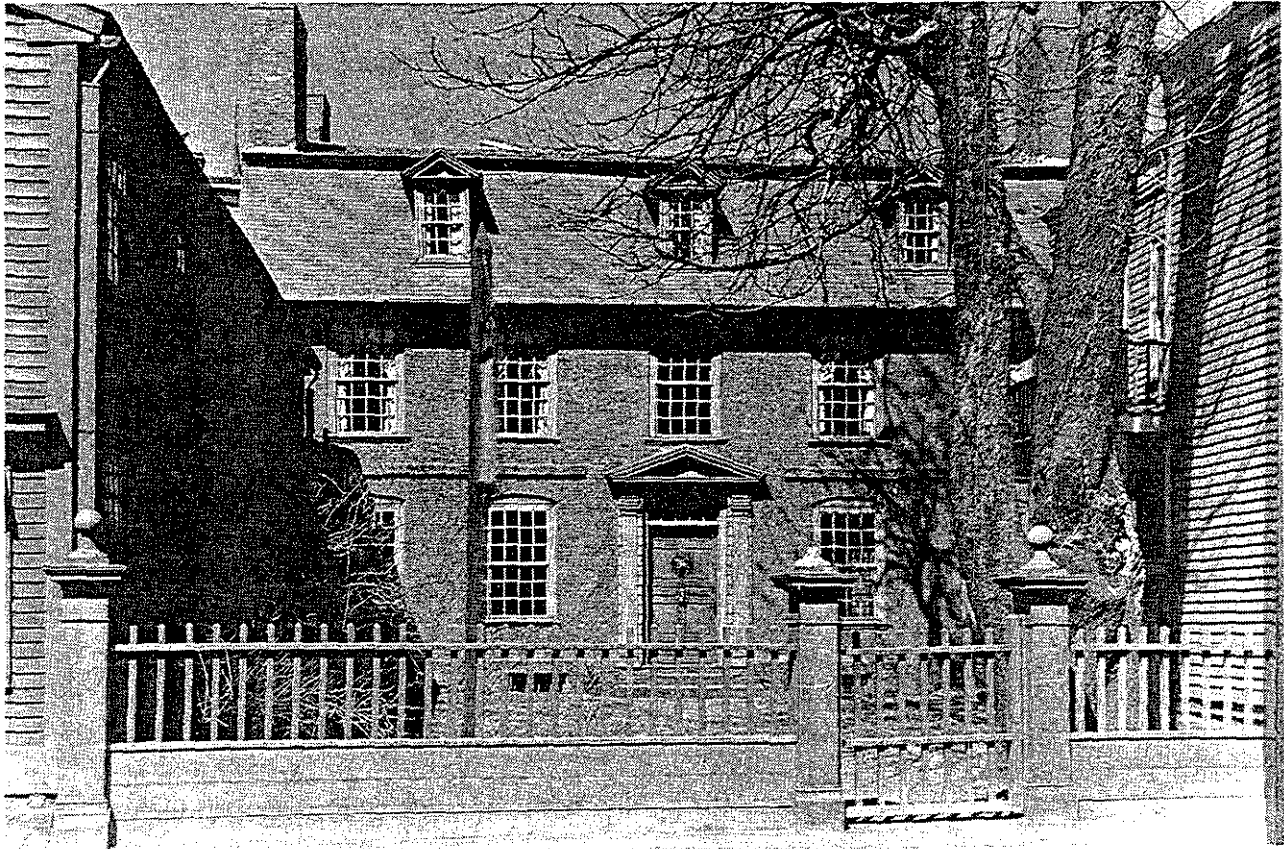


Figure 2. Derby House, Salem, ca. 1936. The colonial merchant's mansion was hemmed in by other less elegant structures on the crowded waterfront. (Courtesy Salem Maritime National Historic Site)

Salem."²³ Land purchases actually had been completed by November of the previous year, and the removal of this obstacle allowed the City to begin the transfer of properties to the federal government, though the transfer of a section of Central Wharf from the Home for Aged Women did not become official until a year later. The City had used its powers of eminent domain to acquire a few of the properties, and many of the structures on the lands purchased still had sitting tenants who would require eviction. The City used \$50,000 of municipal funds, which were matched by the Commonwealth, for land acquisition. On December 29, 1937, Interior Secretary Ickes accepted from the City all of the deeds for the properties it had acquired.²⁴

The acquisition of the Derby House was no less complicated. Appleton was fairly easily persuaded to donate it to the Park Service, but SPNEA could not turn over the Derby House until it could present it unencumbered by the mortgage that remained from its purchase in 1928, and it was not easy to find donors. The debt was finally paid by SPNEA members Mrs. William C. Endicott and Louise Crowninshield. SPNEA was also unsure what to do with the furnishings of the house, which had been assembled under the guidance of Mrs. Crowninshield; some could be used in other historic properties in the society's care, others had been loaned just for Derby House. Appleton announced his intention to remove all furnishings just before vacating the building, sending Small rushing to Boston to stop him, and leading the SPNEA board to clarify ownership of the pieces: the loans from the Essex Institute and Peabody Museum as well as pieces acquired through Derby connections would remain with the house. Another sticking point was the agreement for a live-in custodian at the Derby House. Miss Alice Meek had held this position for a number of years under SPNEA and its trustees wished to see her remain. Mrs. Crowninshield wrote to Appleton, rather oddly, "I think Miss Meek is an ideal custodian although she knows nothing about antiques or arrangement."²⁵ It took the Park Service a while to agree to retain her (unpaid) services. The board voted in October 1937 to convey Derby House, and transferred the title on July 1, 1938.²⁶

²³ Decision of 29 April 1937 as reported by Small in Superintendent's Monthly Report for April 1937, Vault, SMNHS.

²⁴ An act to authorize the transfer of the customhouse at Salem, Massachusetts, P.L. 74-620 (49 Stat. 1374), 26 May 1936; 1962 Master Plan.

²⁵ Louise du Pont Crowninshield to Appleton, 11 January 1936, SPNEA correspondence files on Derby House, microfiche, SPNEA, Boston.

²⁶ Small to Cox, 30 July 1937, file "Historian Letters 1937," Vault, SMNHS; Small reported that Miss Meek had been accepted as Custodian in his Superintendent's Monthly Report for July 1938; and a subsequent letter (5 October 1938) refers to a Cooperative Agreement with Miss Meek signed 23 July 1938.

Planning for Preservation, Restoration and Demolition

With acquisition of the properties underway, if slow, the Park Service in early 1937 began research and planning for the restoration work to come on wharves and buildings (Fig. 3). While engineers from the Washington office began mapping and probing the wharves, historians began assembling documents and drafting base maps to understand the changing uses of the site. Small was the chief in this, with student interns providing research skills.

The team assembled by the Park Service to carry out the preservation and restoration planning work was an impressive one. Team members came and went as needed, with the near-constant supervision of Small in consultation with Elbert Cox in Morristown, who in turn consulted with Cammerer and Associate Director Arthur E. Demaray in Washington. Norman Newton, the resident landscape architect (later a noted author on landscape design and professor of landscape architecture at Harvard), formally drew up a master plan in 1939 which included the maximum and minimum boundaries of the park. He was assisted by Assistant Landscape Architect Edmond Nash from the Emergency Relief Administration (ERA), who researched details of historic plantings and paths and fences. He consulted with Regional Landscape Architect V. Rosewell Ludgate.

Engineering studies of the wharves with estimates and technical drawings and advice were done after site study and research by Ross Sweeny, and later supervised by Chief Engineer Oscar Bray. Assistant Architect Stuart Barnette carried out architectural studies of the buildings to be retained by the park, with the consultation of an advisory board consisting of Frank Chouteau Brown of the New England HABS office, Robert P. Bellows of Colonial Williamsburg, and Edwin Hipkiss of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Kelsey continued to visit the site regularly and was referred to by Small as "our collaborator-at-large."²⁷

While planning to preserve major structures, the Park Service also had to decide which structures to eliminate. Once demolition was determined by the Park Service it was rapidly carried out by the City of Salem. About twenty "unsightly and unwanted"²⁸ buildings were demolished at the bases of Derby

²⁷ Hosmer, I: 656-57; Small in Superintendent's Monthly Report for April 1937, Vault, SMNHS, and elsewhere.

²⁸ Small, Superintendent's Monthly Report for August 1937, 17 September 1937, Vault, SMNHS.

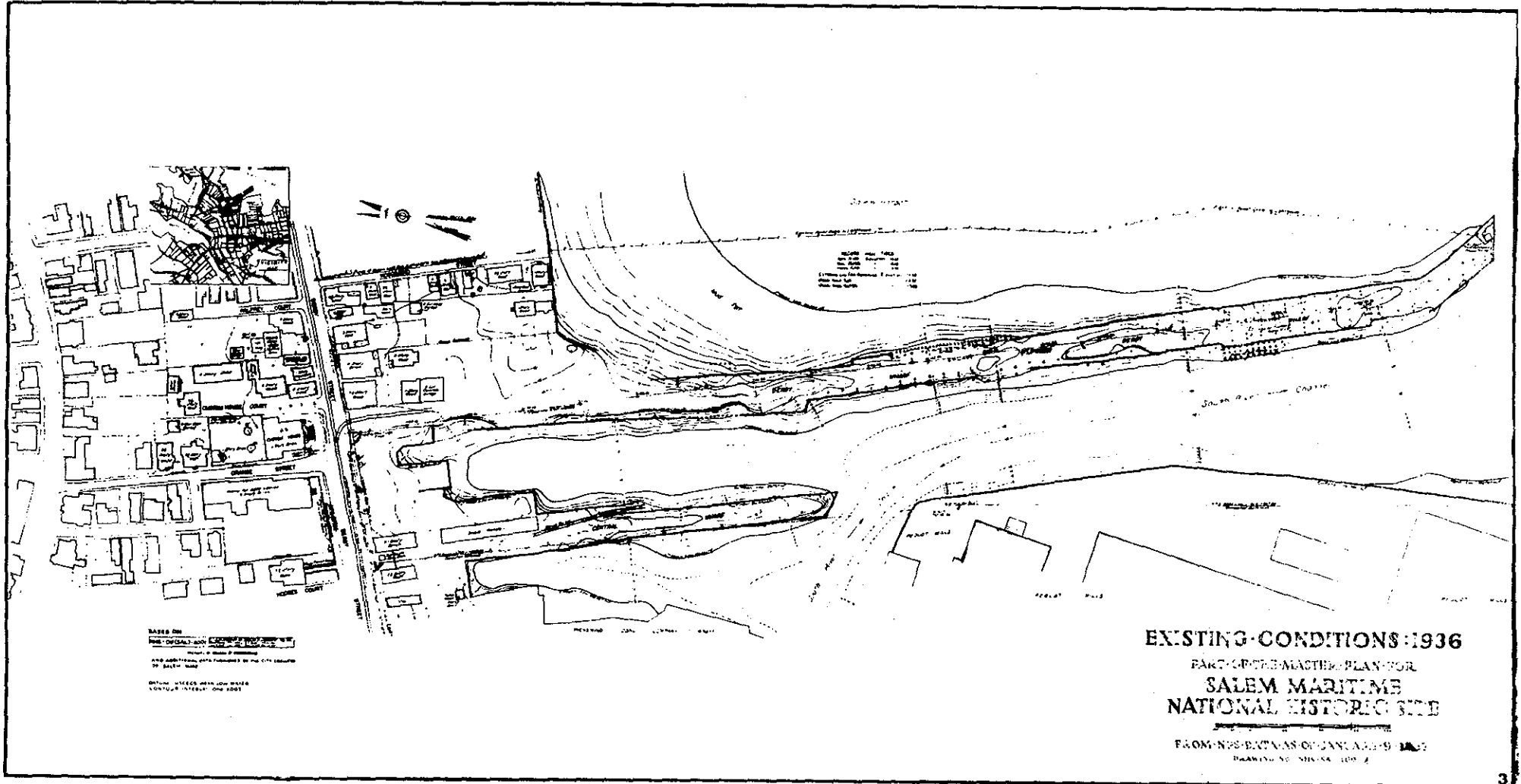


Figure 3. Base Map of Existing Conditions on and around the Site in 1936. Some twenty buildings shown here were soon to be demolished. (Courtesy National Park Service, Denver Service Center).

and Central Wharves and behind the Custom House on a short street called Custom House Court (Fig. 3). They were then considered to be unimportant to the history of the site, but in retrospect some might better have been saved.

From the beginning, those planning the park had assumed that demolition would be necessary, but no one was specific about the criteria for which buildings to save and which to demolish. In a January 1936 statement of chief considerations in the creation of the park, Verne Chatelain had proposed that Derby Wharf and Central Wharf "be protected and restored to whatever degree is feasible"; that the Custom House and the Derby House likewise be protected and restored;

... and that in so far as possible other extraneous and comparatively recent buildings be removed, thus leaving the visitor to see the historical situation as nearly as possible of the year 1830.

... Ultimately, plans include the eventual restoration of several wharf buildings to be used for museum exhibits showing the nature of the activity on Derby Wharf during the height of the shipping era.²⁹

Which buildings did Chatelain consider "extraneous"? What was the cut-off date for "comparatively recent"? And which "wharf buildings" were being considered for museum exhibits? Unfortunately, no more detailed discussion has survived to answer these questions. That they had not yet been carefully considered is suggested by an internal inconsistency in his statement: 1830 was considerably past the height of Salem's shipping era.

The working assumption appeared to be that all buildings acquired by the City on behalf of the site would be demolished. If the site wished to preserve any of them, they would need to be specifically exempted from the demolition order. The choice of which structures to exempt was determined by Architect Stuart Barnette as a result of a detailed inspection he made in May 1937 of all structures within the proposed site boundaries. His visit came after a request from Elbert Cox to Thomas C. Vint, chief architect, in Washington, for an architect to come to Salem to "... study the different buildings carefully to determine if possible what additions and alterations have been made to the original structures and to verify any conclusions involving repair or

²⁹ Verne Chatelain, Acting Assistant Director, NPS, "A Statement of the Chief Considerations in connection with the proposed Derby Wharf National Historic Site," 29 January 1936, SAMA, Box 4, Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

alterations." This letter made no specific mention of demolition of buildings.³⁰

Barnette's report, filed on July 15, 1937, stated:

It is recommended that of the thirty holdings included in the area to be designated as Derby Wharf National Historic Site, only seven be allowed to remain. Those recommended for temporary or permanent preservation are either valuable survivals of their respective period or, will serve in the development of the park area.

Assured of preservation were the Customs [sic] House; the Scale House; the "Counting House," later called the West India Goods Store; and the Derby House. He also identified among the city-owned buildings scheduled for demolition a "Two Family House," later called the Hawkes House, as appropriate to the historical period and therefore worthy of preservation. The Lighthouse and the Bonded Warehouse were not mentioned, and Barnette's expertise did not extend to study of the wharves. To survive for practical reasons only were a "machine shop," which was a a three-story flat-roofed brick structure, and "A Wharf Shed," deemed useful and aesthetically pleasing. The machine shop "has no architectural merit and and except for the aforementioned practical considerations would be included in the list of structures to be removed."³¹ This was the Forrester Warehouse, ca. 1832, the only surviving wharf building from Salem's period of maritime glory. Barnette, however, did not realize this when he ordered it saved.

The list of buildings to be removed was keyed to numbers drawn onto the base map. Barnette listed and briefly described twenty-two buildings, primarily frame and brick tenements. One structure, #14, was described: "Although this building may contain some few remnants of a middle 19th century structure, it has so suffered from ravages of fire, time, and remodelling and is so mutilated that it is valueless." Since Barnette had missed the significance of the Forrester Warehouse, this building as well might have had some importance to the site had it been saved or at least studied. ³²

³⁰ Elbert Cox, Coordinating Superintendent, to Thomas C. Vint, Chief Architect, 12 April 1937, file "SMNHS Jan.-June 1937," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

³¹ Stuart Barnette, Memorandum: Derby Wharf, Inspection of Buildings, 15 July 1937, file "SMNHS July-Dec. 1937," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

³² Stuart Barnette, Memorandum: Derby Wharf, Inspection of Buildings, 15 July 1937, file "SMNHS July-Dec. 1937," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

Most of the demolition work was completed in the early spring of 1938. Wharfside structures and warehouses that were important contextually if not architecturally were destroyed without documentation, and the waterfront ambience of the site was irretrievably lost in favor of an open public park that had never existed in that way in any historic period. Given the careful consideration of many more minor landscaping issues, such as whether or not to put the Derby House fence on a granite base, it is unfortunate that maritime industrial structures were so easily discarded, however timeworn and degraded they might have appeared at first.

Small explained thus:

Any attempt to present Derby Wharf to the public in a manner historically real is going to require a great deal of restoration. It has doubtless been assumed that Derby and Central Wharves would be soundly repaired so that buildings and objects reminiscent of shipping days can be revived in their proper position.

He went on to say that this was not the most feasible solution, and suggested that the wharf area become an open park-like space with monuments.

Following this scheme Derby and Central Wharves and Salem Harbor would present an appearance very attractive and more scenic from the Customs House . . . than if the wharves were loaded with warehouses. For if the Wharves are to be realistically restored they would need a number of large barn-like structures smelling of exotic cargoes, tar, hemp, and fish as affording a degree of human abandon and unkemptness inconceivable on a public reservation.

He urged emphasis on historic buildings on the land side which "affords the opportunity to show just the thing and not the thing just like it." 33

Once the existing wharf buildings were gone, his emphasis on the land-side structures was necessary, given the lack of anything to interpret on the water side when only the bare wharves remained. The hope for historic ships to tie up at the wharves, first expressed at this time, has been part of planning at Salem Maritime NHS ever since, and has never been satisfactorily realized.

Whether the haste in planning and the impetus to get on with the work for which PWA funds were waiting to be expended influenced the demolition

33 "Derby Wharf, Salem, Mass., by Edwin Small 1936," letter from Small to NPS Washington Office, 6 November 1936, SAMA boxes, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

decisions is unclear. Verne Chatelain's 1936 report to the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments, on progress at Derby Wharf reflecting the state of planning at that date for the Site focused on the individual major buildings without much consideration of the site as a whole. Taken together with Stuart Barnette's almost accidental 1937 "rescue" of the Hawkes House and the Forrester Warehouse from the demolition list, this suggests that the reasons lay more in the planning approach to the site than in the haste to expend funds.³⁴ Planning focused at first on the seminal structures: Derby Wharf, the Custom House, then the Derby House, and only gradually expanded to include their surroundings. The site was viewed as a compendium of significant individual structures united by a common maritime theme, each requiring interpretation, rather than as a maritime district in which most of the structures, and their relationships to each other, contributed to the meaning of the whole. Thus, those without individual merit were expendable.

At the time, Park Service policy on preservation was still subject to intense internal debate. One school of thought valued interpretation, including reconstructed buildings, over preservation per se. In the words of B. Floyd Flickinger, one of the first historians hired by the NPS (to work on the Yorktown Sesquicentennial in 1931),

... our program considers preservation as only a means to an end. The second phase is physical development, which seeks a rehabilitation of the site or area by means of restorations and reconstructions. The third and most important phase is interpretation, and preservation and development are valuable in proportion to their contribution to this phase.³⁵

On the other hand, during the meetings of the new Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments, Chatelain spoke against overhasty restoration and reconstruction work. "Otherwise intelligent people... seem not to see that in taking steps to effect the restoration of certain historic sites, they are making a decision which may mean the destruction of all the record of a certain period of history, irreplaceable in

³⁴ Verne Chatelain to Dr. Waldo Leland, member of Advisory Board, Memorandum, 25 August 1936, Salem Maritime Correspondence File, NPS Washington Office.

³⁵ B. Floyd Flickinger in a paper read before the American Planning and Civic Association in January 1936, quoted in Mackintosh, *Interpretation*, p. 19.

nature for all time to come."³⁶ At the same meeting Chatelain expressed the view that reconstruction was acceptable only when no alternative means existed to present a realistic historical scene.

Guidelines were drawn up by the Advisory Board and distributed to the field in May 1937. Among other provisions, the Board recommended that:

1. No final decision should be taken as to a course of action before reasonable efforts to exhaust the archeological and documentary evidence as to the form and successive transformations of the monument.
2. Complete records of such evidence . . . should be kept, and in no case should evidence offered by the monument itself be destroyed or covered up before it has been fully recorded . . .
4. It is ordinarily better to retain genuine old work of several periods, rather than arbitrarily to "restore" the whole, by new work, to its aspect at a single period . . .
9. Work on the preservation and restoration of old buildings requires a slower pace than would be expected in new construction.³⁷

If the guidelines were actually known and followed at Salem Maritime, they were apparently interpreted to exclude consideration of structures within the boundaries that had been determined to be undesirable. These structures were certainly not treated as "monuments," and were not accorded the respect to be given to park structures even to the extent of being recorded before demolition. As will be seen, during the period of implementing the original master plan, these guidelines would not be strictly observed, even for the monuments.

When the studies of Derby and Central wharves were complete, and, beginning in December 1937, PWA workers moved in to carry out repair work the Park Service staff turned to the study of the land-based structures. Architects, archaeologists and landscape architects from the Washington

³⁶ Minutes of the Second Advisory Board Meeting, May 7-9, 1936, pp. 14-18, quoted in Barry Mackintosh, "National Park Service Preservation Policy: An Exposition and Analysis," April 1974.

³⁷ Arno B. Cammerer, Director, NPS, Memorandum to all Washington Officers and Field Officers, 19 May 1937, Office of the Director, NPS, Washington, quoted in Barry Mackintosh, "National Park Service Preservation Policy: An Exposition and Analysis," April 1974.

office were assigned to Salem to supervise planning for preservation and restoration of the primary buildings: the Custom House, the Derby House, and the Hawkes House, recently rescued from the demolition list by Stuart Barnette. The studies and plans were meticulous and exhaustive, considering the accelerated timetable the Park Service had to work within, with CCC workers standing by waiting to start digging and painting.³⁸

Planning for Management and Administration

Small became acting superintendent of what was then called the Derby Wharf National Historic Site in February 1937, operating on PWA funds. He was finally transferred to the Park Service payroll and given the title of superintendent in February 1938. The Park Service did not make a separate appropriation for Salem until fiscal 1939, beginning in July 1938, so the maintenance budget for park-owned structures was provided by the Branch of Buildings Management in New York. An interim cooperative agreement with SPNEA signed April 23, 1938, provided for maintenance of Derby House by the Interior Department until the transfer was final.³⁹

Small was supervised by Elbert Cox, superintendent of Morristown National Historical Park in New Jersey, who also supervised Statue of Liberty National Monument and Father Millet Cross National Monument in White Plains.⁴⁰ Cox had been hired in 1931, fresh out of graduate school at the University of Virginia, to work on the Yorktown Sesquicentennial and the creation of the Colonial National Monument in Virginia, and had moved to Morristown in 1934. He thus was one of the most experienced historian/ superintendents in the Park Service. Morristown handled the finances and other administrative needs of Salem, which operated for its first years under Cox's supervision. This early attempt at regional administration was a response by the Washington office to the phenomenal growth of the Park Service, which reorganized its management structures and organizational chart frequently, trying to strike the balance between centralization and site control, interpreters and preservationists, natural areas and historical areas.⁴¹

³⁸ Small, Superintendent's Monthly Reports, Fiscal 1938 series, Vault, SMNHS.

³⁹ Small, Superintendent's Annual Report Fiscal 1938, 12 July 1938, File "Supt. Reports Fiscal 1939," Vault, SMNHS; A. E. Demaray, Acting Director, NPS, to Edwin Small, 24 April 1937, file "SMNHS Jan.-June 1937," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

⁴⁰ The Father Millet Cross NM was decommissioned in 1949.

⁴¹ Cox to Director, 21 January 1937, File "Memoranda from Co-ordinating Superintendent Fiscal Year 1938," Vault, SMNHS.



Figure 4. View of Derby Street from Central Wharf, 1939. By the time the Salem Maritime National Historic Site came into the national park system, the unwanted buildings on the wharves had already been demolished, leaving broad open space in front of the Custom House and Hawkes House (far right). (Courtesy Salem Maritime National Historic Site).

Until 1938, the site was known as Derby Wharf National Historic Site after its principal resource. After all, it was the Salem Planning Board's drive to preserve the wharf that had initiated the entire project. But it had evolved into something more, an attempt to preserve and imaginatively recreate a historical seaport environment through several eras. So as formal designation as a Site approached, the issue of a name was discussed. Cox responded to Small's suggestion of "Old Salem Maritime National Historic Site" by offering "Old Salem National Historic Site" but was persuaded to accept Small's wording, without the word "Old." On March 17, 1938, the order was signed by Interior Secretary Ickes designating Salem Maritime National Historic Site, making it the first national historic site designated. As Small remarked, "this name is broad enough to include everything within the area and subordinates no part to another as was the case in the former designation — Derby Wharf National Historic Site."⁴² The naming of the site was crucial for its later development, since it allowed for a much broader interpretive mandate than the mere preservation and explication of a single focal resource, Derby Wharf.

Secretary Ickes' designation on March 17, 1938, made the Derby Wharf area the first national historic site brought into the national park system under the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (Fig. 4). Chatelain and Cammerer had certified its national significance in the absence of the advisory board provided in the legislation.⁴³

March 17, the day of the site's designation, was not marked by a grand public opening. In fact, on the site, most of the work was in mid-process. Some phases had been completed, but most were still in planning or construction and far from ready for public viewing. Major decisions had been reached, but the nature of the Park Service's work under New Deal funding was for implementation and planning to be concurrent, and there were many planning issues still to be resolved as the mandate was implemented in the next few years.

⁴² Cox to Director, 3 February 1938, File, "Memoranda from Co-ordinating Superintendent Fiscal Year 1938," Vault, SMNHS; Small, Superintendent's Monthly Report for March, 1938, Vault, SMNHS.

⁴³ Any doubt about SMNHS's claim to have been the first National Historic Site (challenged by Jefferson National Expansion Memorial) was decisively laid to rest by a memorandum from Barry Mackintosh, Bureau Historian, to Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian, 13 March 1986, files, SMNHS.

CHAPTER 2

IMPLEMENTATION BEGINS (1938 - 1941)

Pressure to proceed with physical work on Salem Maritime NHS was intense. Funds and manpower were available from an outside source, the federal emergency work programs, if only plans could be made ready before those programs ended. Plans were not a simple matter, however. The planning, restoration, and management of historic sites was not only new to the agency, but still in its infancy as a profession. These two facts not only determined the way implementation was carried out; but in so doing they affected what the site would become.

Considering the accelerated timetable of demolition and restoration, many aspects of research and planning for the site were thorough and meticulous. But other aspects of the site's restoration were done with what, judged by modern standards and practices, seems undue haste after inadequate research and deliberation. The site's *Master Plan*, drafted by Norman Newton, did not materialize until after most of the major decisions had been made and carried out.

The situation changed drastically with America's entry into war in 1941, however. While the appearance of the site today is little different from the vision that Small and his team began creating in the late 1930s, wartime budget limitations and manpower shortages froze the Site's appearance before that vision could be fully realized. This left the site for many years much barer and less evocative than the place that existed in the imaginations of the development team in this first phase of the Site's history.

Nevertheless, in those few years between the designation of the site in 1938 and the outbreak of war in 1941 much was accomplished. By creative use of short-term New Deal programs, skilled negotiations with other federal agencies, and diplomatic cultivation of voluntary help from local organizations and individuals, Small and Cox were able to complete the major tasks of reconstruction and restoration of the existing buildings and wharves. That they were not able before or during that process to develop a comprehensive approach to restoration and interpretation of the site is hardly surprising.

Coordinating Agencies for Reconstruction Work

Funds from federal work programs such as the Economic Recovery Act, the Public Works Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the Works Progress Administration were available to the site through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, by application, with stipulations as to the kinds of expenditures permitted, and to be used in a predetermined time period. The challenge for Small and his team was to coordinate these windows of opportunity with finished and approved Park Service restoration plans. This was not easy, given the lack of on-site design and engineering personnel and the consequent need to bring architectural and technical staff from Washington and from the Region One office in Richmond. Transportation funds to bring these experts to Salem, moreover, were not always adequately provided for in the site budget.

The Park Service had a commitment to collaboration between the site staff and the experts, but distance and other assignments made it rare for all parties to be able to meet to discuss an issue and review plans. The long-distance planning structure exacerbated the difficulties of simultaneous planning and implementation. When subsequent research added new information, revising plans already approved in order to expedite construction was particularly troublesome. This is illustrated by an exchange in 1938, when there must have been pressure on all parties to finally publish the *Master Plan*.

Architect Stuart Barnette had recommended preserving and restoring the rear ell of the Derby House, "contrary to the General Development Plan which will require revision."¹ Excavations had also unearthed a former cellar-way along the base of the east wall of the Derby House, which interfered with Landscape Architect Norman Newton's already-drafted plans for a ten-foot way from Derby Street beside the east wall of the house.² Rather than consulting Newton (who was based in New York, at the Branch of Buildings Management) first, Small and Barnette put their proposed changes in a memo to the director in Washington, with the notation that "This memo is presented in case such a recommendation is approved and other persons interested in the development of this area have submitted plans which will be affected by such a change."³

¹ S.M. Barnette to the Director, NPS, 21 September 1938, enclosure in letter below.

² Edwin Small to Norman Newton, Resident Landscape Architect, 30 September 1938, file "Historian Letters 1937-1938," Vault, SMNHS.

³ S.M. Barnette to the Director, NPS, 21 September 1938, enclosure in letter above.

A copy was sent to Newton, as one of the affected "other persons" and he was not pleased. He wrote back that he was coming up immediately and, "I shall be prepared to stay at Salem as long as may be necessary to discuss the tentative conclusions you and Mr. Barnette have apparently reached, and to determine that extent to which they should dictate a change in the approved plans." He continued,

... since memoranda are being circulated, I venture to suggest that the interests of good organization and effective collaboration in securing ultimately authoritative planning, to which I take it we are all equally dedicated, would be best served if we all adopted at least the following two policies of procedure: 1. To furnish each other, at the time of writing, copies of any recommendations we may individually have occasion to make. 2. To refrain, so far as may be possible and ethical, from advancing for general distribution such individual opinions or recommendation until all concerned have had an opportunity in the field to go over them and evaluate them jointly in good spirit.

I am sure the adoption of these policies of procedure will do much toward avoiding the kind of confusion that may well arise from a series of separate individual opinions, possibly varying one from another, presented *from* the field without prior conference *in* the field.⁴

The ell remained, the walkway was moved, and Newton's *Master Plan* had to be delayed again for revisions. Barnette and Newton continued to collaborate, and a minor disagreement two months later over the dimension of the support posts for signs shows a more congenial (even facetious) spirit, as well as the intensity of interest and discussion of details involved in the site restoration. Barnette wrote to Newton:

It is still my opinion that a six-inch square post will most satisfactorily solve the problems of design and construction for the proposed signs to be erected at Salem Maritime National Historic Site. If the muse of collaboration will be better served by a compromise size of seven inches, I am sure the revolt of my aesthetic soul can be placated by the studied selection of paint colors and champer [sic] details. My whole

⁴ Norman Newton to Edwin Small, 5 October 1938, file "Historian's Correspondence 1938," Vault, SMNHS.

being, however, bridles at your recommendations of eight inches for this member.⁵

With federal funds waiting and workers standing by, it was tempting to forge ahead with restoration and construction without the delay of having paper blueprints completed. The rush to demolition has already been discussed, but there were other instances as well where delay and further study could have improved the accuracy of the restoration. For example, at a 1937 meeting in Washington with many distinguished experts present, it was decided to go ahead with Derby Wharf repair before the *Master Plan* was done.⁶ The Hawkes House roof was reconstructed in what is now believed to be an inaccurate way after Barnette drew quick plans under deadline pressure. In fact, as will be seen below, it is miraculous that Hawkes House was saved at all and restored as well as it was, since they did not even know what they had until almost too late. The Custom House would have lost its cupola, an 1854 addition to the building, but for the conservatism of Elbert Cox.⁷ And even Derby House, which had the respect of all involved for its architectural merit, and the watchful eye of SPNEA, was started before study was completed. Cox wrote, "... it does appear that work on the Derby House proper could be started without the approval of the general plan for the development of buildings and grounds... Mr. Barnette is working now in the Washington Office on a definitive set of plans covering all repairs and restoration needed by the Derby House."⁸ It was this decision that precipitated the clash discussed above between what Barnette and Small discovered about the ell and cellar and Newton's plans for the exterior.

Even after plans had been mutually agreed upon, the problem of ensuring that they were properly carried out by labor unskilled in restoration techniques and a professional staff unfamiliar with building processes remained to be solved. Supervisor Elbert Cox, after an inspection trip to Salem, wrote to Thomas Vint, the chief architect of the Branch of Plans and Designs in Washington, who was Barnette's supervisor, asking him to make

⁵ S. M. Barnette to Norman Newton, 23 November 1938, file "Historian Letters 1938," Vault, SMNHS.

⁶ Edwin Small to Elbert Cox, 26 August 1937, file "Historian Letters 1937," Vault, SMNHS. While there is no evidence that mistakes were made as a result of proceeding, however, there is also little evidence of what was done in this restoration, which itself destroyed the evidence of existing conditions.

⁷ Elbert Cox to Edwin Small, 29 November 1938, file "Memoranda from Co-ordinating Superintendent Fiscal Year 1939," Vault, SMNHS.

⁸ Elbert Cox to Regional Director, Region 1, 14 March 1938, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS.

sure that Barnette left detailed plans unless he was able to be at Salem himself to supervise.

Associate Engineer Bray, who is in charge, is doing an exceptionally good job, but there are certain aspects of repairs to buildings that require a very specialized knowledge which Mr. Bray nor Acting Superintendent Small do not have [sic]. For example, Mr. Barnette raised certain questions on his recent visit concerning details of work done in moving the Rum Shop... I merely cite this incident to emphasize the importance of having full specifications or inspection of architectural work. I know that Mr. Bray concurs...⁹

Yet at this point, when major structural decisions such as moving buildings to other on-site locations were being made, the *Master Plan* was still in draft form, and decisions had to be made without a full understanding of their ultimate context in the larger picture.

This problem was further exacerbated with the onset of war in Europe, which cost the Park Service the use of some of its best young personnel who were called up for military service beginning in 1940. This included Barnette, who after drawing up the restoration plans for the Site's historic houses was unable to supervise the completion of the work. Small, who was soon to be called up himself, had the creativity to get around budget and personnel shortages. In this case he called on Frank Chouteau Brown of the Historic American Buildings Survey branch of the Park Service, who had expert knowledge of restoration practices and was in nearby Boston, to oversee Barnette's plans.

Brown had assisted Barnette before, particularly on the issue of appropriate historic paint colors for the buildings. Faced with Barnette's loss to the Navy Department, Small wrote to the director in Washington:

In view of the fact that Mr. Barnette will definitely be no longer available to assist with the technical phases of the work at the Site, it is urgently requested that Mr. Brown be authorized to render such further architectural service as may be essential... Mr. Brown is conveniently located in Boston where he can be reached on short notice and with little expense to the Service. Mr. Brown, furthermore, next to Mr. Barnette, has been in the closest touch with the architectural problems of the area as a whole... This matter has been

⁹ Elbert Cox to Thomas C. Vint, Chief Architect, Branch of Plans and Design, Washington, 6 June 1938, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS.

thoroughly discussed with Mr. Barnette . . . and he concurs in the above recommendation.¹⁰

Small also saw HABS as the solution to another problem, that of having architectural plans ready for the workmen who were on a timetable determined by the WPA rather than the Park Service. "During the past eight months [late 1939 and early 1940] no assistance of this nature has been available to the site, with the result that it has been out of the question to procure drawings of details where needed in requisitioning mill work and other materials." Brown's HABS staff had already drawn and measured Derby House and Hawkes House and had "the benefit of this background as a basis for contact with the problems of repair and restoration that each structure presents." Small had recently been advised that State WPA and ERA funds would be available to him for the summer and fall of 1940, and he was anxious to complete work that was already started on the two historic houses.¹¹ Barnette, though he relinquished his buildings to Brown, continued his concern for the site. A further memo noted that ". . . Mr. Barnette, for as long as he is stationed near Portsmouth, New Hampshire, will be glad to check in from time to time on the progress of the work at Salem, for 'auld lang syne'."¹²

Workers from the WPA and the PWA provided the manpower to rebuild the wharves, move buildings, and restore historic structures. Their numbers varied as different funding cycles allowed different tasks to be undertaken. At one point, several hundred workers were employed on two daily six-hour shifts to do rough landscaping and wharf reconstruction.¹³ These "emergency work" laborers also painted the interiors and exteriors of the Custom House, Derby House, and Hawkes House. As Cox explained the system to Small,

I do not know whether you are familiar with the set-up under ERA. I would hesitate to say that I am, although I have learned a great deal about it since the initiation of our project a couple of months ago. Essentially the plan is this. An allotment covering men and materials is made to the park. Projects are written in a manner similar to that

¹⁰ Edwin Small to the Director, NPS, 30 June 1940, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS.

¹¹ Edwin Small to the Director, NPS, 6 July 1940, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS.

¹² Thomas C. Vint, Chief of Planning, to Regional Director, Region I, 23 July 1940, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS.

¹³ Superintendent's Monthly Report for March 1938, Vault, SMNHS.

required for CCC. The laborers are secured from WPA but work on the project under the direction of supervisory personnel which is appointed by the Secretary in much the same way that CCC supervisory personnel is secured. The number of supervisory positions is limited to 5% of the total number of workers on the project. Materials have to be requisitioned through the Regional Office where procurement authority is located . . . ERA has an advantage over CCC in that skilled labor can be requisitioned from the WPA at their specified wage rates.¹⁴

The state imposed limits on the use of some of these grants, leading to certain decisions that might have gone otherwise without this pressure, such as preference for use of stone on Derby Wharf over timber, which would have to be purchased. Small wrote:

On account of serious limitations in the manner in which the PWA grant can be spent, it would be impossible to attempt a completely sound restoration even if it were known what that might be. It seems that something over \$40,000 of the allotment of \$110,000 must be expended on labor. For that reason it is urged by the engineers that as much stone as possible be used in reconstruction and that government labor be employed to quarry the stone. So long as it will be possible to restore in small sections the three or four types of construction revealed in the ruins, it is felt that there should be no serious objection to a compromise with the engineers. If Derby Wharf had all been built at one time and according to a precise plan, it would, of course, be necessary for an historian to take a more rigid view.¹⁵

The decisions on how to reconstruct the Wharf, therefore, in the absence of definitive historical information beyond what was visible in the remains of the Wharf as it stood (repaired, who knew how often or when), were driven by the practicalities of funding and cheap resources rather than purely scholarly or engineering hypotheses.

The Civilian Conservation Corps' camp at Breakheart, Massachusetts, provided workers chiefly for the unskilled labor of cleaning out the Hawkes House and digging for landscaping.¹⁶ As Small wrote to Cox in early 1938,

¹⁴ Elbert Cox to Edwin Small, 11 November 1937, file "Old Records from Vault," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

¹⁵ Edwin Small to Elbert Cox, 26 August 1937, file "Historian Letters 1937," Vault, SMNHS.

¹⁶ Elbert Cox to the Director, NPS, 1 April 1938, Memoranda from Co-ordinating Superintendent Fiscal Year 1938, Vault, SMNHS.

... concerning the amount of work remaining to be done and projects for which the C.C.C. can be used, it is necessary to point out that by far the greater part of the work is on wharves and buildings which require the use of machinery, material, and labor of a type that cannot be conveniently provided by the C.C.C. There is one aspect to the development of the Site however, which may be taken care of exclusively by the C.C.C. and that is the landscape work for the entire area. No very definite information about the time and scope of this work can be given now as the inception and completion of the same will depend to large extent upon the progress of the work upon wharves and buildings. Within the next year, however, it should be possible to do much of the landscape work on that part of the area that lies north of Derby Street — the grounds surrounding the Custom House, the Derby House, the Hawkes House, and the Rum Shop.¹⁷

Funds from the ERA program, however, could be used at least in part to pay Park Service staff directly for short periods of time in connection with particular projects. ERA funded Newton's assistant, Junior Landscape Architect Edmond Nash, who was able to be on site in Salem from October 1938 to February 1939, during which time he researched historic plant materials, made a list of appropriate types, and otherwise assisted in landscape planning.¹⁸

With the work progressing through 1937 and 1938 on the landscaping and building exteriors, Small faced a pressing problem with the U.S. Customs Service. Unexpectedly, the Customs Service had taken with them, when they vacated the Custom House, irreplaceable artifacts and archives that had been expected to remain.

It had been hoped that the articles could be recovered informally and by pointing to the suitability of keeping articles in the location with which they are associated and have meaning. But this is apparently a case where love is stronger than reason and attachment rather than good taste motivates a response. The excuse was offered that the articles are

¹⁷ Edwin Small to the Director, NPS, 25 February 1938, file "Historian Letters 1937-1938," Vault, SMNHS.

¹⁸ Superintendent's Monthly Report for October 1938; Superintendent's Monthly Report for February 1939, Vault, SMNHS.

the property of the Customs Service and as such cannot be abandoned or surrendered . . .¹⁹

After contacts between Small and the Deputy Collector of Customs failed, resolving this issue went to the highest levels. When the secretary of the Interior contacted the secretary of the Treasury, cooperation was forthcoming at last. The disputed objects consisted of: "The stencil Nathaniel Hawthorne used as Surveyor . . . Hawthorne's inkstand, A cane used by the author, A black and white woodcut of the author . . . A portrait of Joseph Hiller . . . A scrap book largely composed of newspaper clippings . . ." and other objects.²⁰ As if in apology for the error, the Customs Service also offered to return beams, chests, hooks, and other artifacts from the Scale House and the Bonded Warehouse. Possession of these objects associated clearly with the site and related to NPS themes for the site provided the Park Service with the foundations of a true museum collection.

Working with Local Individuals and Organizations

Despite the limitations of the methods imposed on Small and Barnette, all those connected with the site did their professional best to create a historically and architecturally accurate and vital restoration. They also had the advantage of remarkable existing repositories of information.

Small's in-depth research on the history of the Salem waterfront was made possible by the presence of two splendid scholarly institutions. The Essex Institute's outstanding documentary research collection was the focus of Small's background work on the history of Salem shipping, and its picture and map collections provided the foundation for understanding the history of the site from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. Its extensive collection of furniture and other artifacts also helped furnish the Derby House. The Peabody Museum also provided research materials and assistance as well as loans of furnishings and artifacts from their collection. These two long-established institutions, in fact, provided the public with an archive and a museum of Salem's maritime history which were lacking on the waterfront site of the Park Service. Their cooperation meant that Salem Maritime NHS, which would not have been able to compete with them in

¹⁹ Edwin Small to the Director, NPS, 7 July 1937, file "Historian Letters 1937," Vault, SMNHS.

²⁰ Stephen B. Gibbons, Acting Secretary of the Treasury, to the Secretary of the Interior, 1 September 1937, file "Old Records from Vault," Historian's Office, SMNHS. The objects were returned in April 1938 (Superintendent's Monthly Report, Vault, SMNHS).

collecting, has not had to, but has defined its museum function in the context of these other local institutions.

Salem itself was a repository of physical evidence of the Colonial and Federal styles, as students from McKim, Meade, and White to the editors of the influential "White Pine Series" had long since known. Barnette scoured Salem for examples of missing architectural elements to use as models in reconstructing the buildings at the site.²¹ Detailed drawings of reconstructed elements such as woodwork, fences and gates, and ironwork, were prepared by skilled architectural draftsman in the Region One office in Richmond.

Relations with SPNEA and William Sumner Appleton, still suspicious of the Federal government, were not smooth. When Small discovered that SPNEA was planning to empty Derby House of everything movable when transferring it, ensuring that the Park Service didn't acquire an empty and unfurnishable building required careful negotiations among various boards and agencies over furniture loans and caretakers. "With reference to the contents of the house we are planning removing everything before the transfer," Appleton informed Small,

I know nothing concerning the method of carrying on such properties but do know that the federal government is in the habit of driving hard bargains. Accordingly I should not feel it proper to leave as loans property of this Society taking a chance on our ability to prove they were ours in the case of the development of any bureaucratic red tape which might make it difficult for us to recover.²²

The Site's agreement to continue to employ Miss Meek as live-in caretaker mollified Appleton and left him assured of fair treatment of loaned artifacts.

Relations with individuals who volunteered their time to the site were carefully cultivated, but inevitably tension surfaced between them and the professional staff. Foremost among these, of course, was Harlan Kelsey. Kelsey had been the true founder of the site, and supported its early growth with his local and national lobbying efforts and his contacts in Salem. He had soothed the ruffled feathers of Appleton more than once to keep the project on track. Small referred to him as a "collaborator-at-large." As a nurseryman

²¹ S. M. Barnette to Edwin Small (no date, handwritten) requesting Small to photograph early 19th century gate hardware around Salem, file "Old Records from Vault," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

²² W.S. Appleton to Edwin Small, 12 June 1937, file "H.P. Kelsey Correspondence in re: Derby House chiefly with Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities," SMNHS.

he was especially concerned with the landscaping of the site. There are indications that understandable friction ensued as he passed his authority on to the professional staff at the site, but both he and Small were diplomatic enough to minimize it. When asked by an affronted Appleton at an early stage of their negotiation for Derby House just whom he represented, Kelsey had replied:

I have no official connection . . . with this Derby Wharf project. However, it is more or less my 'baby', and I personally raised subscriptions to the amount of \$7,500.00 to pay for the Wharf itself and to save it from destruction . . . I was an "unofficial coordinator" between all the parties concerned, namely, — the Federal Government through its National Park Service, Dept. of the Interior, the owners of Derby Wharf, your own Society, the Trustees of the Old Ladies Home who are giving a wharf property into the project, the State of Massachusetts, and the City of Salem, through its Mayor and City Solicitor . . . Just why is another question; perhaps because I got hold of the bear and couldn't let go of the tail!²³

Kelsey wore several hats at Salem, and his multiple roles led to some unpleasantness over landscaping issues. Kelsey owned a large nursery in East Boxford, outside Salem. His nursery business was able to participate in bidding on landscape contracts for the site, since his association with the site was unofficial. Simultaneously, however, Kelsey acted as an advisor to Small on all matters having to do with landscaping. Park Service Director Cammerer assured him in March of 1939:

. . . I agree with your suggestion that our Landscape Department might do the Historic Site a great deal of good by consulting Salem people who are interested in the landscape features of this development . . . Mr. Vint [Chief Architect, Region One] will arrange to have our Resident Landscape Architect, Mr. Norman T. Newton, get in touch with you during his next visit to Salem to discuss the development and landscape plans that have been prepared to date for this project.²⁴

²³ H.P. Kelsey to W.S. Appleton, 15 June 1937, file "H.P. Kelsey Correspondence in re: Derby House chiefly with Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

²⁴ Arno Cammerer, NPS Director, to H.P. Kelsey, 24 March 1939, file "H.P. Kelsey Correspondence in re: landscaping," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

Newton, at that time working to finish the *Master Plan* and a planting plan, did offer to consult with Kelsey when there was something concrete to discuss.

... in view of Mr. Kelsey's recognized keenness for colonial planting and learning therein it would be wiser to postpone any direct call upon his consultation until such time as we might have our general development well in mind and at least a basic planting plan on which to found our discussion... You may rest assured that Mr. Kelsey will have no reason to feel that we have failed to avail ourselves of his helpfulness and knowledge.²⁵

Later that year, Kelsey returned from a trip to discover that in his absence from the office Assistant Landscape Architect Nash had approached his son Seth about a price break on some Siberian Crab trees that he was seeking for Salem Maritime. He fired off a five page letter to Small, saying that he was "at a loss and rather embarrassed" by the request. Nash had also suggested the use of Park Service labor in digging and moving the trees to cut costs, which angered Kelsey even more. Kelsey wanted only his trained men to dig, and "it also gives employment which I feel it is not a proper function of Government to enter into competition with." The prices were already low, since he asked only his cost, and he reminded Small how much time he took away from his business to get the site established.

Some of my nurserymen friends do not feel very kindly because I have tried to get the planting done at Derby Wharf on an extremely economical basis just because of my personal interest in it. This has naturally taken away from them possible orders at a fair price, and I must admit that they are somewhat justified in their feeling as they do.

Now please understand me. On my own part I was perfectly willing to make any sacrifices to get the planting at Derby Wharf finished in the proper way...

... the Government is well able to and should pay a proper price for plant material, as they do for any other materials used, and it is unfair to the Nursery Industry for the Government to get into direct

²⁵ Norman T. Newton (writing from New York City) to Mr. Ludgate, 1 April 1939, file "H.P. Kelsey Correspondence in re: landscaping," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

competition with this Industry, however worthy the cause to be served may be.²⁶

He concluded that he must not only decline the request, but that Small and Nash should go elsewhere for landscaping materials. Like it or not, the Park Service was seen even by Kelsey as a representative of a rich (and anti-capitalist) central government that could destroy New England enterprise. Kelsey sent this letter with a cover letter to Cammerer that called Nash's action "chiseling" and repeated the theme of unfair competition, which he called "really a big and fundamental question in our American life."²⁷

To Small fell the task of placating Kelsey. In his response, he thanked him for his comments, thanked him and the industry for their help, and added:

To my mind there is no doubt that the policy used in securing plant materials has been far from satisfactory. It has been a case, however, of doing things as they have been done in lieu of doing nothing at all. This prospect of doing things well will not be bright again until we have a substantial grant with fewer restrictions on expenditures for materials. In the absence of funds for adequate spending on trees and shrubs it cannot be denied that Junior Landscape Architect Nash has been overzealous to achieve results by the methods you have described.²⁸

Kelsey was mollified, and wrote that he hoped that a firm policy would result, adding that he himself was "fully or more to blame than Mr. Nash for letting the whole affair drift as it did; and he is to be highly commended for his sincere desire and eager effort to complete, so far as possible, the planting at Derby Wharf." ²⁹

Small had to defend his handling of the landscaping to the regional director:

In defense of any plant materials secured by donation or by employment of project labor, it may be said that in all cases where Mr.

²⁶ H.P. Kelsey to Edwin Small, 26 October 1939, file "H.P. Kelsey Correspondence in re: landscaping," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

²⁷ Copy of above sent to Arno Cammerer, 27 October 1939, with cover letter, file "H.P. Kelsey Correspondence in re: landscaping," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

²⁸ Edwin Small to H.P. Kelsey, 28 October 1939, file "H.P. Kelsey Correspondence in re: landscaping," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

²⁹ H.P. Kelsey to Edwin Small, 1 November 1939, file "H.P. Kelsey Correspondence in re: landscaping," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

Kelsey had any claim to the business he was consulted in advance and no materials were moved without his consent . . . our pursuit of this policy did not deprive the nursery industry of any business, for the plant materials secured by donation were rare and exceptional varieties which the industry as a whole was not prepared to offer even had purchases been attempted . . . In all dealings with this office relative to plant materials Mr. Kelsey has always had the opportunity to exercise the right of refusal; in cases where this right has not been exercised, there would seem to be little ground for objecting to the acquisition of materials by gift or donation.³⁰

In this incident, Kelsey was balancing at least three incompatible roles: founder of and advisor to Salem Maritime, owner of a nursery competing for government contracts, and an official representative of the nursery industry.

When this controversy was settled, Herbert E. Kahler, who had replaced Elbert Cox as coordinating superintendent, commented to Small: "It seems to me that Salem is a typical case of a sponsor for a new area reluctantly, and not without a struggle, releasing his grip on what he has more or less considered his own brain-child."³¹

Salem Maritime was fortunate to have the assistance of Louise du Pont Crowninshield, preservationist and private collector, whose husband was a descendant of the family that had built the Derby House. She took on the task of furnishing the house, personally purchasing needed items as well as arranging loans and gifts from individuals and institutions, and exercising control over the final product. "In other words she will act as a committee of one to pass on all gifts, loans, or purchases of furnishings that go in the Derby House as well as their arrangement in the building," Elbert Cox described her role.³² She had assisted the Park Service before, in the furnishing of Wakefield, George Washington's birthplace in Virginia. In Salem, she had furnished the Pingree House and the Peirce-Nichols House for the Essex Institute. Her credentials as a preservationist included membership on the board of SPNEA, and she would later be one of the founders of the National

³⁰ Small to Regional Director, 14 November 1939, file "H.P. Kelsey Correspondence in re: landscaping," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

³¹ Herbert Kahler to Edwin Small, "Memoranda from Co-ordinating Superintendent Fiscal Year 1940," Vault, SMNHS.

³² Elbert Cox to Director, NPS (Cammerer), 5 October 1937, file "Memoranda from Co-ordinating Superintendent Fiscal Year 1938," Vault, SMNHS.

Trust for Historic Preservation, whose highest award for achievement is today named after her.³³

While her help with Derby House was invaluable, Mrs. Crowninshield was guided more by her own taste and the happenstance availability of certain furnishings than by a studied furnishings plan or a scholarly analysis of Derby family possessions. Without her help, Derby House would not have been the attractive house museum that it was, for there was no money to buy the kind of furnishings that she could donate or borrow with her social connections to old North Shore families; but her assistance may have postponed the time when a truly professional assessment of the Derby House's furnishings based on thorough documentary research and consideration of interpretive priorities could be made and implemented.

Mrs. Crowninshield also served as president of the Salem Maritime Historical Association, which published site materials and ran the sales concession until it was taken over by Eastern National Park and Monument Association in the 1970's. Her very connection to the site gave it credibility with Massachusetts "Brahmins" who tended to be distrustful of the federal government, as was Appleton. Since these were the people who sat on the boards of organizations from whom Salem Maritime needed cooperation and assistance for furniture loans, such as the Essex Institute, the Peabody Museum, and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, or the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for landscaping research, or the SPNEA, she was as essential to the flourishing of the site as Kelsey was to its planting.

Issues in Developing Preservation and Restoration Policies

Work on the *Master Plan* for the site, finally published in 1939, was underway through 1938 and 1939 (Fig. 5). Norman Newton, who was then beginning an illustrious career as a landscape architect and historian, was responsible for crafting the overall restoration approach to the site. He relied on Small's historical research, Barnette's architectural expertise, and Oscar Bray's engineering knowledge. The resulting *Master Plan*, which was signed off and published after much of the work on the site was completed or irrevocably set in motion, did not represent preliminary planning for the site in the way today's Park Service would consider essential. Rather than being a blueprint for development, it was an evolving document, that in part reported on work that had been completed.

³³ Obituary, Mrs. Francis B. Crowninshield, *New York Times*, 12 July 1958.

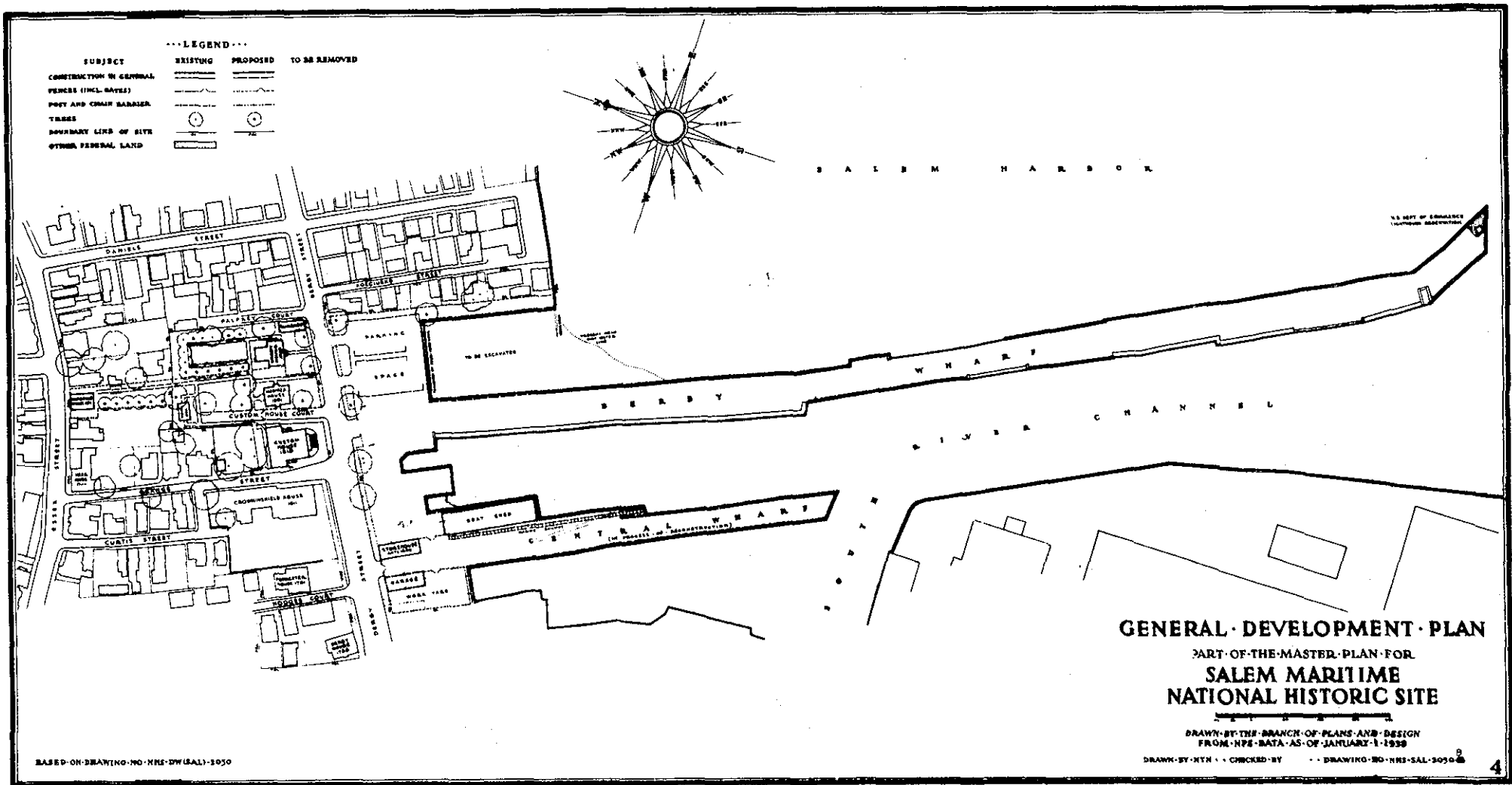


Figure 5. Master Plan for the Site, 1939. This plan shows much work that had already been undertaken, including reconstruction of wharves, demolition of unwanted buildings, and landscaping. (Courtesy National Park Service, Denver Service Center).

The narrative section of the plan (presumably written by Small) shows an awareness of the evolution from the original impetus to preserve individual structures to an appreciation of the environment of the waterfront as a unit:

The general problem of the area is . . . being approached less as one of thoroughgoing restoration to represent the minute details of any precise date than as an undertaking in which it is desirable to provide an appropriate setting for buildings and wharves which survive on the original locations and which require a certain amount of repair and restoration. In large part this setting, in the absence of anything more than fragmentary evidence as to the grounds about the buildings . . . must be conjectural. Every effort is made to recapture the spirit of that historic period . . .³⁴

Although Small emphasized the context of the restored buildings, by "setting" he appears to have meant the Colonial Revival-style domestic landscaping elements and plantings under discussion at that time, rather than the maritime industrial setting he had consciously rejected as impossible to recreate and unattractive, "inconceivable in a public reservation."³⁵

There seems never, in fact, to have been a discussion of the basic question of what role the landscaping might play in the overall interpretation of the site and the relationship of the buildings to each other. Nor were other basic questions addressed on a site-wide basis. Which buildings and structures should be demolished and which restored, as we have seen, was decided on the significance of the individual buildings rather than on what they contributed to the meaning of the site as a whole. The issue of whether the site should emphasize land-based or water-based resources was decided, as it were, by default; only land-side buildings remained. And no overall philosophy regarding the degree of restoration or reconstruction was articulated; this, too, was handled on a building-by-building basis. All of this, of course, is understandable in light of the haste to get work started and the still-emerging philosophies within the Park Service with regard to cultural resource management.

³⁴ Narrative to Accompany Drawing NHS-SAL-2050-A; Master Plan, Salem Maritime National Historic Site, 1939. It is presumable that this section, though unsigned, was written by Small since he produced most of the historical and descriptive literature about the site used in planning and interpretation, and because the style of the text is similar to other documents by Small.

³⁵ See for instance his comments, already quoted in Chapter 1, from "Derby Wharf, Salem, Mass., by Edwin Small 1936," SAMA boxes, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

The Site's Structures

"As each building is a problem by itself and will require treatment that bears considerable relationship to its use, it is thought best to discuss each separately,"³⁶ Small wrote in 1939. Indeed, it was quite true that at Salem, as in most historic preservation situations, each structure raised separate issues that required different resolutions and bore differently on its subsequent history. We will therefore discuss the preservation problems that arose in each case and relate them to the philosophy and approaches that evolved from experience at Salem.

Derby Wharf and Central Wharf

Derby Wharf, the original focus of the site, was in perilous condition, washed out in many places by the sea, with undistinguished buildings of mainly non-maritime uses at its head. As Small described the waterfront in a 1938 article:

Because of entire neglect in recent years and the absence of any substantial repairs since the decline of shipping nearly a century ago, the sea-walls of Derby Wharf have been severely damaged by tidal action, and, therefore, require extensive rebuilding. Central Wharf, lined on both sides with wooden planks supported by fender piles and filled in the center with earth, has been very badly washed and will have to be completely reconstructed.³⁷

There seems never to have been any question in the minds of the Site's planners about demolishing all of the buildings on the Wharves without recording or examining them for evidence of earlier structures or remains. The buildings were all believed to be modern and of no interest to the period to be interpreted. For reconstruction of the Wharves proper, historical research in the Essex Institute and a painstaking *Engineering Study* of the remains formed the basis for plans, one of the major projects undertaken with federal work program labor early in the Site's restoration. As already seen, requirements of the New Deal programs which supplied the labor dictated that this work be authorized to proceed before the overall site plan

³⁶ "Site Development," Edwin Small, file "Miscellaneous," Historian's Office, SMNHS. The copy is dated by hand "ca. Early 1940's"; I believe from internal evidence that it was written in late 1939; it appears to be a longer version of the narrative in the Master Plan of 1939.

³⁷ Article by Edwin Small for *Planning and Comment*, typescript, stamped date May 20, 1938, file "H.P. Kelsey Correspondence with Dora A. Padgett in re: article on Site, 1938," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

was completed; they also encouraged some expedient choices of materials and methods. On the other hand, Small stated that:

In the work of restoration pursued during the past year the object of the Derbys in the construction of their wharf has been rigidly followed. Stone has been used in the sea-walls wherever there was evidence of stone and timber cribbing has been replaced wherever vestiges of the old cob work remained. Because of the destructive evidences of marine borers in the waters of this part of the coast, all the timber cribbing and piling have been heavily treated with creosote.³⁸

The wharves were to be made functional, also — in fact, it could be said that the planners tried to preserve the *function* of the wharves as a mooring for shipping rather than restore the historical *appearance* of the wharves when lined with warehouses, cranes, and other cargo-related equipment. Small wrote:

Both wharves, when finished, will provide excellent mooring facilities for small water craft and in specified locations accommodation at high tide for vessels drawing up to fifteen feet of water. The wharves, consequently, can meet the requirements of a public landing for pleasure boats and at the same time serve as a base for larger cargo-carrying craft which might be introduced later for atmosphere.³⁹

The wharves were also used by local lobstermen and as a public park and beach. Derby Wharf was even used as a seaplane docking facility in 1940.⁴⁰ Small's idea of having "monumentation" on the Wharf was realized with stone monuments to early Salem missionaries and later to Mayor/Congressman Bates. But for visitors to envision the Derby Wharf of 1820 from what remained by 1939 would require interpretation. This would be the next challenge facing Small as the work of restoration came to a halt in the early 1940s.

³⁸ Edwin W. Small, "Historical Conservation and the Salem Maritime National Historic Site," an address before the Lynn, Mass., Historical Society, 9 March 1939, SAMA boxes, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

³⁹ "Site Development," Edwin Small, ca. late 1939, file "Miscellaneous," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

⁴⁰ Superintendent's Monthly Report for September 1940, Vault, SMNHS.

Custom House

The Custom House was the centerpiece of Salem Maritime NHS. It was architecturally bold, historically significant for its maritime theme, and had the added attraction of literary associations, having been the workplace of Nathaniel Hawthorne. It had continued in the same function from construction to transfer to the Park Service and contained artifacts and archives *in situ*, although the interior had been altered in 1873 to modernize its functioning. Small had detailed plans for the structure:

1. *Custom House* . . . merits special attention because of its architectural excellence as a public building of its period and the significance of its historical association. Restoration where correct details are missing or have been changed would be most desirable and should be approved without hesitation . . .

A. *First Floor* . . . proposed to be adapted for exhibits and museum space. Details of the three rooms of this story, chiefly floors, mantels, mouldings, and hardware should be corrected to the character of the original, or, if the original cannot be determined, to a suitable type contemporary with the building . . . In the case of *the room on the west front, first floor*, details which were changed before 1846 should not be restored . . .

B. *Second Floor*. The second floor is expected to be used as offices for personnel connected with the site . . . it is believed that no changes should be made . . . It is not expected that the public will make much use of the main stairway or pass to the second floor . . .

C. *Basement*. The basement of the Custom House is intended for the location of a central heating plant and to provide space for janitors headquarters, a photographic dark room, and toilets for personnel . . . no restoration is necessary.

D. *Cupola*. Last but not least of the problems at the Custom House is the cupola. This feature was not a part of the original building . . . Unless plans or photographs can be uncovered which indicate the appearance of the Custom House before its addition, it is proposed that this feature remain untouched . . . It is felt that the cupola adds to the

character of the Custom House and that under any circumstances more would be lost than gained by its removal.⁴¹

The Custom House was thus intended to include restored exhibit rooms, a museum, and "backstage" space for offices and site maintenance. Restoration included removing woodwork that had been added to the interior of the building, including moldings, counters, and cupboards believed to date from an 1873 renovation.⁴² The 1854 cupola, however, was to be retained. Small had initially favored removing it, but Cox felt that it had become associated with the building, gave a maritime flavor, and should remain. Restoration and basement alteration work on the building, including the installation of a central heating plant for the site, was done intermittently in 1939 and 1941. Although the Custom House was the only building on the site that had space for museum-type exhibits, the preparation of these would have to wait. In the meantime the return of the artifacts the Customs Service had removed, which the Secretary of the Interior had succeeded in negotiating, meant that the restored period rooms could have an authentic feel.

Derby House

After the Custom House, the Derby House was in the eyes of the planners the most important structure to the site. It was not only of architectural merit, it was the home of the family that built Derby Wharf and developed Salem shipping in its era of greatest glory. As a fine house of a great man, it presented preservation problems that were familiar to Park Service architects. The house, when finally transferred from SPNEA in July 1938, had "retained most of its features of architectural merit and requires less of restoration than repairs,"⁴³ Small noted. In December 1939 a group of noted architects and historians⁴⁴ met to discuss the restoration plans drawn up by Stuart Barnette, and the work began in the next year, supervised by Small and Frank Chouteau Brown. The original plan for the work had included removal of the rear ell, thought to be later than the period; this was changed at the last

⁴¹ Edwin Small, "Site Development," ca. 1939, in file "Miscellaneous," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

⁴² Superintendent's Monthly Report, July 1941, Vault, SMNHS.

⁴³ Edwin W. Small, "Historical Conservation and the Salem Maritime National Historic Site," an address before the Lynn, Mass., Historical Society, 9 March 1939, SAMA boxes, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

⁴⁴ Superintendent's Monthly Report for December 1939, Vault, SMNHS. The group included Frank Chouteau Brown and Robert Bellows of HABS; Russell Kittell of Concord Antiquarian Society; Architect Frank Owen; Edwin Hipkiss, Director of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts; and William Sumner Appleton of SPNEA.

minute, as we have seen, by Small and Barnette. Without this major alteration to the building, work consisted mainly of repairs and painting, and what Small called "correction of detail" in hardware, flooring, and fireplaces.⁴⁵

Derby House was from the first intended to remain a house museum, finely furnished, for group tours. A live-in caretaker, Miss Alice Meek, came with the house as part of the negotiation with SPNEA. She had small quarters with some modern conveniences and gave tours in return for her living accommodations under a formal cooperative agreement with the Park Service. When she died, another caretaker, Miss Helen Hagar, was found to replace her under a similar arrangement.

Though Appleton had so dramatically declared his intention to remove all the furnishings before turning over the house to the Park Service, he did not do so, in part because trustees such as Mrs. Crowninshield intervened. Mrs. Crowninshield then began to determine her own furnishings plan for the House, and contacted Appleton herself. "From Mrs. Crowninshield, I learn of various Derby House exhibits of ours that she would be glad to have remain and several that she would like to remove," he wrote Small. "I take it that everything that she does is being done with your approval and that you would wish to have go what she does and you would wish to have stay what she approves of."⁴⁶ Miss Meek had already prepared a list of the house furnishings at Small's request. This showed that at least eighteen pieces of furniture, including some of the finest, had been lent by the Essex Institute and the Park Service was able to arrange to continue the loans.⁴⁷

Hawkes House

The Hawkes House became part of Salem Maritime almost by chance. In the earliest surveys of the site in 1935 and 1936 the planners were aware of several early buildings in the vicinity of the Custom House, such as the Forrester House and the Richard Derby House, which were not available to become part of the park and were therefore not included in the minimum boundaries of the proposed park. They were also aware of many undistinguished buildings of varying age and use that were of no apparent significance and would be

⁴⁵ Edwin Small, "Site Development," ca. late 1939, file "Miscellaneous," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

⁴⁶ W.S. Appleton to Edwin Small, 20 September 1938, file "Historian's Correspondence 1938," Vault, SMNHS.

⁴⁷ Edwin Small to Elbert Cox, 30 July 1937, file "Historian Letters 1937", Vault, SMNHS.

demolished. The building now known as the Hawkes House was placed in the second category.

When Stuart Barnette visited the site in May 1937, he recognized the Hawkes House as being of the appropriate period and suggested its retention. He noted, however, that "the interiors are in a sad state of mutilation and disrepair . . . The appearance of abject poverty, the filth and squalor which now dominate the character of the interiors can scarcely be over-emphasized."⁴⁸ Small went to documentary sources for additional research on the House and discovered an early maritime connection — enough to justify retaining the building. In August he wrote to the Washington Park Service office to have the director halt a demolition authorization that had already been passed to the City of Salem's building inspector:

In this connection your attention is called to the visit of Assistant Architect Barnette from May 25-27 for the purpose of inspecting all buildings on the proposed site and of determining which possess sufficient value to be worthy of preservation . . . Mr. Barnette and I favored the retention of the following structures on property being acquired by the City:

No. 4 - Three-story wooden house on Custom House Place (since discovered by us to be the house occupied by Benjamin Hawkes, a Salem boatbuilder and merchant, from 1801-1830, and consequently designated by us the Benjamin Hawkes House) . . .

After also listing the Forrester warehouse, discussed below, and a shed on Central Wharf in temporary use for Park Service equipment storage, later demolished, Small concluded:

If it has been decided not to save the above buildings, the contents of this letter may be ignored. But if their preservation is desired, it is felt that the City of Salem should be officially notified before irreparable damage is done by wrecking contractors.⁴⁹

Eight days later Cammerer wrote to Mayor Bates and the house was preserved; though during the time it was in the City's possession the interior

⁴⁸ Stuart Barnette, Memorandum: Derby Wharf, Inspection of Buildings, 15 July 1937, file "SMNHS July-Dec. 1937," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

⁴⁹ Edwin Small to the Director, NPS, 2 August 1937, file "Historian Letters 1937," Vault, SMNHS; "No. 4" refers to the identifying number of the building on the site's base map of existing conditions drawn in 1935.

was stripped of historic woodwork and mantels (probably by the former owner) and vandalized. By the next spring, Small was able to have the house measured and studied by Frank Chouteau Brown of HABS. In March, Small wrote to the director that: "It is felt the recovery of the interior woodwork is necessary if the Hawkes House is to be restored? . . . an attempt to secure their return by donation is worth a try, but . . . the chances of success would be brighter if [I] could point to a definite time when work would actually be undertaken on the house."⁵⁰ The CCC was cleaning and clearing the house of debris, and work to stabilize the building was undertaken in the fall of 1938.

At this point Small and Barnette still did not know what they had in the Hawkes House, other than a typical Salem house of the federal period. With funds allocated for interior restoration in the summer of 1939, Small did more research and produced a short study he called "An Interpretation of What Has Happened to the Hawkes House,"⁵¹ in which he developed for the first time the thesis (still believed to be correct) that the house was the remaining portion of Elias Haskett Derby's unfinished "Great House" of 1780, designed by famous Salem architect Samuel McIntire. The house was altered in 1801 by the removal of the east front and converted into a double house with a new roofline. Small was thereby able to explain the puzzling layout of the floor plan.

Meanwhile, Barnette was proceeding quickly with restoration plans even as the research was coming in, and the errors made show the haste of the process. In May he sent Norman Newton a justification for "restoring" a roof deck, balustrade, and access stairs to the Hawkes House based on his examination of roof framing members, and similarity of these features to other McIntire work.

The design for the Hawkes House, therefore, is a composite solution based on an accumulation of field notes, photographs, and other information collected on a survey of the examples remaining in Salem . . . A more comprehensive and detailed memorandum on this type [sic] might be prepared were it not necessary that these plans be approved and expedited in time to permit the completion of this work before the scheduled close of the project. It is believed, however, that

⁵⁰ Edwin Small to the Director, NPS, 5 March 1938, file "Historian Letters 1937-1938," Vault, SMNHS.

⁵¹ Edwin Small, "An Interpretation of What Has Happened to the Hawkes House," 29 March 1939, typescript included in copy of *Historic Structures Report Pt. I - Hawkes House* (1959), NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

sufficient justification is included herein to authorize the inclusion of the work in the current program scheduled to cease July 1, 1939.⁵²

Unfortunately, later researchers believe that Barnette was wrong about the roof, which in 1801 was probably hipped with no deck or balustrade.⁵³

Even after this work was well underway, Small still was not sure how to present the house. In late 1939 he wrote:

The house is probably an enlargement of an earlier structure, receiving at the time of enlargement modification of the interior dictated by the style of MacIntire [sic]. Although the house was pretty much of a wreck when taken over, continuation of its existence is essential as part of the setting of the site. Moreover as meager facts come to light concerning the connection of Benjamin Hawkes with the maritime activity of Salem, the preservation of his residence becomes of increasing interest . . . repairs to the exterior have been started and . . . will be completed with present PWA and ERA funds . . .

A. It is proposed to make an authentic restoration of the first floor rooms of the house so that the same may be shown as period rooms or used for other museum exhibits. Three mantels, doors, and other woodwork which were removed from the building have been located and should be recovered for the purpose of the restoration . . .

B. The second and third stories of the house, it is proposed are to be used as living quarters for personnel of the site . . .⁵⁴

In February 1940 some of the woodwork stolen from the house in 1937 and mentioned above was returned to the Park Service by the local police; and the missing mantels had been located elsewhere and repurchased. Work on the interiors continued when funds allowed until 1942, but preparation of the house as a residence for the site superintendent was not completed until after the war. The Hawkes House was rarely shown to the public.

⁵² Memorandum of 10 May 1939, by Assistant Architect Stuart M. Barnette, Region 1 Office, Richmond, to the Regional Landscape Architect (SMNHS file).

⁵³ *Historic Structure Report, Derby/Hawkes House (Building 3), Historical Data Section*, SMNHS, Massachusetts, prepared by Charles W. Snell, 1983, 45-47.

⁵⁴ Edwin Small, "Site Development," ca. late 1939, file "Miscellaneous," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

Forrester's Warehouse

The warehouse then standing at the head of Central Wharf, since demolished, was the other important early building saved along with the Hawkes House after Stuart Barnette's 1937 visit to the site. Barnette, however, had recommended its preservation for utilitarian reasons only and made it plain that he thought that the structure had no merit of its own.⁵⁵ Small saw a greater potential and declared early in 1939 that "It is our intention to restore this substantial three-story building to its original form."⁵⁶ Later that year he elaborated:

Brick Storehouse, situated at the head of Central Wharf... When repaired [after the 1914 fire] the roof was rebuilt flat and unsightly factory windows have since been cut in the east and south walls.

A. It is proposed to restore the exterior of the Brick Storehouse to its original appearance with the exception of a few alterations made to meet the requirements for its suggested use... The first floor, it is proposed that it be used as a storage space for equipment, and the second as a workshop for the site. The unsightly factory windows... should be replaced by openings like those on the north and west walls...⁵⁷

But no money was ever forthcoming to finish this work, perhaps indicative of the low esteem in which preservationists of the era held maritime industrial structures.

Bonded Warehouse, Scale House

The Bonded Warehouse and the Scale House did not figure in the first stage of planning for the park as separate structures. They seem to have been included in the Custom House in general, but had no formal plans drawn up or research done.

⁵⁵ Stuart Barnette, Memorandum: Derby Wharf, Inspection of Buildings, 15 July 1937, file "SMNHS July-Dec. 1937," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

⁵⁶ Edwin W. Small, "Historical Conservation and the Salem Maritime National Historic Site," an address before the Lynn, Mass., Historical Society, 9 March 1939, SAMA boxes, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

⁵⁷ Edwin Small, "Site Development," in file "Miscellaneous," ca. late 1939, Historian's Office, SMNHS.

Rum Shop [West India Goods Store]

The building now known as the West India Goods Store, first called the Counting House, Grog Shop, or Rum Shop, was not seen as particularly significant by the Site's planners, despite the obvious relevance of a historic retail store to an authentic waterfront setting. Its perceived lack of importance is reflected in the fact that it was not researched or considered as an exhibit area, only as a concession area that might serve visitors while preserving an exterior appropriate to the site. Small wrote:

The Rum Shop (or store building) was moved back to its original position on the east front of the Derby House, serves as a convenient barrier against modern tenements and stores east of Palfrey Court . . . Because of its anonymity, it is believed that no special attention should be directed to this building. In the event it can be leased as a concession, provision of heat, light, and water will be desired.⁵⁸

Small's comment on the "anonymity" of the structure provides an insight into his philosophy on the site, in which the context provided by vernacular structures was not valued except as a kind of shield against more modern intrusions. Individual structures were assessed on their own merits. This was common thinking among preservationists at the time; the day of the historic district arrived too late to save the remnants of the wharveside neighborhood within the boundaries of Salem Maritime.

Landscaping

Much of the work done at Salem under New Deal work programs involved landscaping, from the early rough work using backhoes to fill in the cellar holes of demolished buildings to the more delicate task of planting appropriate trees. As in restoration of the buildings, the availability of workers and the need to use them brought pressure on the early planning process. Moreover, determining the appropriate fences, walkways, and other features was and is problematic; little or no evidence survived on the ground and comparable historical areas were few. Some documentary evidence has guided landscape planners at Salem from the beginning, but what there is requires interpretation. Added to these problems were the needs of modern visitors for level pathways, curb cuts, signs, and roads and parking lots.

⁵⁸ Edwin Small, "Site Development", in file "Miscellaneous," ca. late 1939, Historian's Office, SMNHS.

Planning for the design of landscape features such as fences was often exhaustive. An entire conference was convened, for example, to determine whether or not to put the Derby House fence on a granite base.⁵⁹ Architectural drawings from the Region One office in Richmond were elaborately detailed down to custom-designed lettering for painted signs. The style overall was a rich and elegant Colonial revival, reflecting the emphasis of the planners on the two "star" buildings, the Derby House and the Custom House (Fig. 6). It was the elegant and cosmopolitan world of Derby and not of his mariners that was to be presented at Salem.

Assistant Landscape Architect Nash researched historically appropriate plantings at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. In attempting to realize the plans he developed, Nash, Small, and Newton ran into friction with Harlan Kelsey, as we have seen. But in the main, by thoughtful research and thrifty purchasing, they were able, by the time funds were cut in the early 1940s, to achieve historically respectable landscaping around the key historic buildings on the land side of Derby Street at least.

Historic Ships

From the beginning, historic ships at Derby Wharf seemed a natural part of site development. There were daunting technical problems: the depth of water around Derby Wharf at low tide had been a problem even in the wharf's heyday, but after years of silting in it could barely float a dinghy. The paucity of surviving wooden ships was also a major issue. Small reported to Cox in the fall of 1937:

Dr. Ronalds was in New England from Saturday through Tuesday. He came especially to look at the Charles W. Morgan, the last ship of the New Bedford whaling fleet, built in 1841 and beached in the sand . . . near New Bedford. It is the perfect historical object and can be secured as a gift if wanted, but probably cannot be moved . . .⁶⁰

A few months later, however, he was still hopeful, telling local marine historian Howard Chapelle:

⁵⁹ Hosmer, II: 944-45.

⁶⁰ Edwin Small to Elbert Cox, 18 September 1937, file "Historian Letters 1937," Vault, SMNHS.

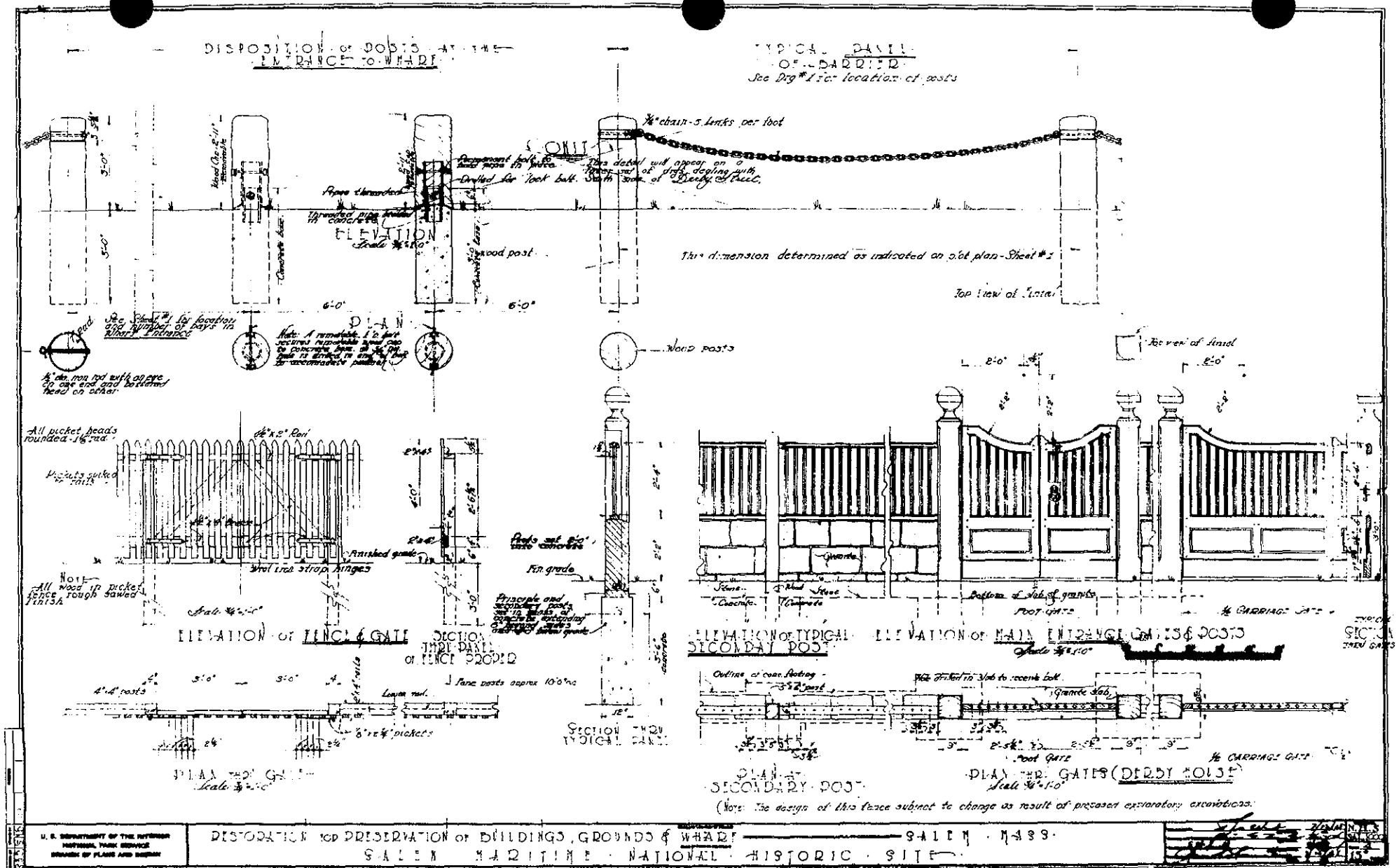


Figure 6. Stuart Barnette's Drawings for the Derby House Fences and Gates. Extensive research and collaborative thought preceded the design of landscape elements for the site. (Courtesy National Park Service, Denver Service Center).

... it has been thought proper to consider the prospect of securing one or two sailing ships, preferably square-riggers, dating as far back as possible or old enough at least to be of illustrative value to the site.⁶¹

Several ships were proposed, including replicas of doubtful authenticity, but none proved suitable. Park Service planners have always dreamed of tall ships at Derby Wharf, and they have always been disappointed.

* * *

The restoration of the site was not yet complete when the war interrupted funding and took away skilled workers. It was frozen in mid-course, destined to be unfinished and unrealized for nearly twenty years. Begun without a master plan, the site as it existed in 1941 was the product of a series of preservation choices, some considered and some hasty, that would for ever after determine the range of possibilities open to future interpreters and restorers of the site.

⁶¹ Small to Howard Chapelle of Ipswich, 30 November 1937, file "Historian Letters 1937," Vault, SMNHS.

PART TWO
OPERATION AND OBSTACLES

CHAPTER 3

WORLD WAR II SLOWS PROGRESS (1941-1946)

The beginning of American involvement in the Second World War in late 1941 effectively ended the New Deal programs that had enabled the Park Service to create a new and far-reaching system of natural and historic parks throughout the U.S. The war years were a period of programmatic stagnation and relative physical neglect at all parks, and Salem was no exception. With the era of restoration and reconstruction of the site over, at least temporarily, there was time for, and need for, a period of assessing the accomplishments of the previous five years. The war provided a hiatus, if not a time conducive to systematic review.

The temporary absence of Superintendent Small during his stint in the Navy brought other Park Service professionals to run Salem Maritime for short periods of time. Their viewpoints are revealing, for they saw the site as it actually was, and not, as Small and his collaborators did, as what it could become. In light of the lofty plans of the 1930s, the assessment of the site in 1944 by Acting Superintendent Arthur Kelly was brutally realistic:

As presently constituted, the area fails utterly to recreate any of the historical atmosphere appropriate for the purpose of effectively memorializing the early American seamen and the importance of this site for maritime history. This is the first impression in almost every case of many who visit or reside on or near the Site, many competent to give a sympathetic, interested, but critical statement of their reaction. There has been during the last two years a succession of new superintendents, who have been somewhat dismayed by the denuded and formless physical aspect of the Site. This is due, largely, of course, to the fact that the development program was suspended just at the stage where modern excrescences were removed, and before the canvas could be filled in with appropriate media designed to recreate some of the lost atmosphere.¹

¹ "Outline of Topics for Discussion with Coordinating Supt. Ronalds and Regional Landscape Architect Emerson on Aug. 17 at Salem Maritime," 8 August 1944, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS. This is written as an informal and unsigned note, but from internal evidence it must be by Acting Supt. Arthur R. Kelly.

While the war dampened tourism and obviated any major new initiatives, the public had begun to take note of the site's existence, and Salem Maritime now faced the challenge of reaching the public through interpretive programs. In addition, the site had become part of the waterfront neighborhood, and new attention had to be paid in this period to getting along with the neighbors — individuals, businesses, and cultural organizations.

Developing Interpretive Programs

During restoration, some interpretation of the site had begun almost haphazardly as the curious public began questioning CCC workers about the site. Small reported in the spring of 1940:

Temporary personnel was used part-time to supply information to tourists stopping along the street boundaries of the Site. This form of contact, thus tried for the first time, appears to be the key to the contact problem for the type of area concerned and one for which provision must be made when permanent or seasonal guide service becomes available.²

While thoughts about interpretation had been part of the earliest planning for the site, comprehensive implementation of these evolving plans would not begin until after World War II. In the late 1930s and early 1940s the more urgent priority of restoring and reconstructing the site's structures had pushed consideration of interpretive issues to the back burner, and now the war intervened. Systematic planning — the themes to be emphasized at the site, as well as the techniques to be used — awaited the emergence of the physical site from the construction phase.

For the Park Service, interpretation of historic sites that were not immediately associated with a famous individual or single event was still a challenge. The problem had arisen at Colonial National Historical Park at Jamestown and at Yorktown in Virginia, and the Washington office had hired a crew of historians in the late 1930s to work on interpretive issues. The approach that was evolving in Washington (and is still followed today) was to define for each site a set of major and minor themes to be emphasized in all public contacts. To communicate the themes of a given site, various media had been tried at other parks including guided tours by Park staff,

² Superintendent's Monthly Report for April 1940, Vault, SMNHS.

detailed signage, brochures and self-guided tours, exhibits and site museums, and models and dioramas.

Salem faced the additional dilemma that much of what had to be communicated to the public about the site was not there any longer. The waterfront consisted by 1939 of bare grassy wharves where once had been crowded warehouses, great ships unloading exotic cargoes, busy workers, and all the sights, sounds, and smells of a great seaport. On the land side of Derby Street, once the buildings had been restored and the landscaping begun, there was at least an approximation of the earlier look of the place. There was also the familiar format of the historic house tour, instituted without fanfare at Derby House, and led by either the custodian, Small himself, or by Mrs. Crowninshield for special visitors. But what to do with Derby and Central Wharves? Interpretation would have to solve the problems left by restoration and preservation choices made by the planners.

Interpretation, according to the Park Service philosophy of the time, was to be the guiding factor in site planning and restoration. The practice at SMNHS ran counter to that philosophy, if only because of the pressure to develop the physical site under federal work programs. The wharves were cleared before an interpretive plan was developed. Unlike "birthplace" or battlefield sites, the significance of Salem Maritime was not obvious and it required time and thought for its virtues and strengths to develop. By that time, the choices made by the early planners precluded some avenues of interpretation. The land side, not the sea side, was the focus, as Small saw it, and it is hard to see how he could have done otherwise. The wharves were left bare; the warehouses were not reconstructed. These were strong obstacles to building an effective interpretive program. Given the fact that no one involved seems to have questioned the wholesale clearance of the wharves, the interpretive emphasis might not have been different had it been planned first. Nevertheless, the chance to make a different decision had been lost.

The *Master Plan* of 1939 stated that:

The principal theme of the interpretive program is. . . The Maritime History of Salem and New England. As subsidiary themes contributing to the whole, the following are some already proposed: Nathaniel Hawthorne; The Derby Family; The Forrester Family; John Bertram; The Custom House and the Customs Service; Famous Voyages. . . ³

³ Narrative to Accompany Drawing NHS-SAL-2050-A; Master Plan, SMNHS, 1939

The broadness of the principal theme as stated reflected the intention of Chief Historian Verne Chatelain to find sites for the Park Service that would, taken together, cover the whole of the American experience. Salem was to stand not just for Salem but for all of maritime New England, apparently including such disparate places as the whaling city of New Bedford and the fishing town of Gloucester, as well as the great port of Boston and small villages from Long Island Sound to the Bay of Fundy. It is clear, from today's perspective of more historical parks and more detailed interpretation, that Salem never could have done all of this, but the broad intention explains why the early planners were relatively general in their choices. Any ship would do, for instance, not just one appropriate to Salem; any technique of wharfbuilding that could be historically justified, not just one used on the site itself.

The suggested subsidiary themes focused on the great merchants — the Derbys and Forresters, and on the romance of the sea — Famous Voyages. (Hawthorne's Salem experiences, as well as the literary aspects of his life, have always needed to be fitted into the interpretive scheme, though tangential to the main themes of the site.) But Small at least was aware of the need, and the difficulty, of providing a broader view of the past:

Our conception of history today is not simply a tale of battles, dates, presidential campaigns and past politics. History is also the chronicle of ordinary men and ordinary things. . . antiquarians as well as students of history know that it is much more difficult to find out about the everyday life of two hundred years ago than it is the extraordinary events.⁴

The federal government of the 1930s, however, conceived teaching the public about history as an essentially patriotic task, and themes for the National Parks and Historic Sites were chosen to advance the goals of national pride. There was little room for interpretation that might be seen as critical of great individuals, events, or activities. Preservation of historic sites was to "enhance the respect and love of the citizen for the institutions of his country, as well as strengthen his resolution to defend unselfishly the hallowed traditions and high ideals of America," Chatelain wrote in a letter that President Roosevelt delivered to Congress.⁵ With the economic and labor struggles of the 1930s and the threat of European war, historic sites were

⁴ Edwin W. Small, "Historical Conservation and the Salem Maritime National Historic Site," an address before the Lynn, Mass., Historical Society, 9 March 1939, SAMA boxes, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

⁵ Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective*, NPS, 1986, 23.

more than ever seen as essential to the goals of advancing citizenship and patriotism.

Edwin Small had consciously rejected an accurate portrayal of the sights and smells of old Derby Wharf as "inconceivable on a public reservation." ⁶ While he was too good a historian to try to sanitize the past, he still could choose to omit showing it too directly. And though his speech to the Lynn Historical Society quoted above stressed his interest in social history and "ordinary men," he in fact identified themes for Salem that focused more on the great merchants than on the mariners and warehousemen who had worked daily on the wharf itself. This was fully in keeping with the view of the Park Service of the time, and the need to stress uncritical patriotism would continue to operate in the background of interpretive planning for this and other Park Service sites until the 1970s.

In addition, Salem planners were not immune to the "Romance of the Sea" theme that has permeated the outsider's view of maritime endeavors throughout history. "Famous Voyages," exotic ports, and dashing privateers fill the imagination in a more satisfying way than the realities of underaged and underfed crews, loss of life at sea and the suffering it caused on land, impressment and piracy, or the humdrum coastal trade in timber and grain that occupied the wharves as well. Small was a thorough and careful researcher, as could be seen in the exhibits he created after the war, and his thoroughness served to mute the idealization of the maritime life. However, the pervasive tendency to romanticize the past permeated the site's interpretation, reflected in the high-style character of the restoration, preventing gritty realities from intervening in the public's view.

Beyond the guided tours of Derby House given by the caretaker on a limited basis, the first formal interpretive effort was the production of a small booklet about the site which was sold to visitors, available starting in February 1941.⁷ This sixteen-page booklet was illustrated with black-and-white photos of the site, reproductions of historic portraits and ship paintings, and maps. It told in detail the story of Salem's rise and decline as a mercantile power, with emphasis on privateering, the Derbys, and great voyages of ships such as the *Grand Turk* and *Astrea*. Directions for reaching Salem by car and train concluded the booklet, along with a map of the site. The booklet, revised from time to time, stayed in print for many years as the primary guide to Salem Maritime.

⁶ Edwin Small, "Derby Wharf, Salem Mass.," 6 November 1936, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

⁷ Superintendent's Monthly Report for April 1941, Vault, SMNHS.

Plans for a museum-type exhibit in the Custom House, begun with the restoration work, could not be realized until later: during the war years, the Custom House was fully occupied with offices of the site itself, the Coast Guard, and stored HABS files. Under William Lockett, acting superintendent from mid-1944 to mid-1946, research was undertaken and detailed plans made for a series of seven informative exhibit cases. The Region One Office in Richmond was responsible for designing and fabricating them, and they were installed after the war.

In the earliest days of planning for the site, Small had envisioned employing a variety of techniques:

From the educational standpoint this generous supply of original objects may be effectively supplemented by using the devices now employed by the National Park Service to illustrate what is not explained by originals or reproductions, namely - the model, the diorama, the chart and pictures. For instance, wouldn't a model of the original Derby Wharf with warehouses be as useful for educational purposes as an elaborate restoration *in situ*? Wouldn't models of sailing ships properly grouped tell more than could be told in one or two replicas?⁸

The techniques of interpretation actually in use at the site by 1941 included signage, which was used to identify and date structures within the park. Painted signs for Derby Wharf and the Forrester Warehouse included a few short sentences about their significance. The other site structures were identified but not described by signs, perhaps because site personnel were to be available to discuss them with visitors.⁹ Guided tours of the Custom House and Derby House were given by park staff when available. All involved realized that the site demanded interpretation in order to be at all comprehensible to visitors; but lack of resources, including adequate personnel, and the interruption of the war prevented them from effectively presenting the message of the site.

⁸ Edwin Small, "Derby Wharf, Salem Mass.," 6 November 1936, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

⁹ "Sign System Plan: Tabulation," SMNHS, no date (late 1930's), microfiche, NPS Denver Service Center.

Adapting to Wartime Conditions

Edwin Small was a lieutenant in the Naval Reserve and after the declaration of war expected to be called to active duty at any time; he was actually called in March 1943 and sent to Washington, D.C., as an intelligence specialist.¹⁰ Five months earlier he had lost half of his staff when two of his men, Clerk Joseph Conroy and Fireman/Laborer Francis Boyle, were inducted into the Coast Guard; Small was left with only a watchman/laborer to assist in managing the site. A replacement fireman/laborer, Salvatore Santangelo, began work in January 1943.

Small gave some thought to who could replace him at Salem. He suggested to the acting supervisor of historic sites, Herbert Kahler, that:

Frank Chouteau Brown, who has been associated with the Service for the last seven or eight years chiefly through the Historic American Buildings Survey, is near at hand in Boston. . . So far as I know Mr. Brown has had no definite employment since he completed a tour of duty at Vanderbilt Mansion last August. . .¹¹

Personally enthusiastic about Brown's abilities in preservation and administration, Small felt that Brown would be a particularly acceptable choice to the Park Service. The director's memorandum of November 6, 1942, had pointed to the acute personnel shortage within the Service and stated, "With a considerably broadened field of eligibles for War Service appointment, the use of local sources is logical and in harmony with the present manpower policy."¹²

However, the Park Service had other candidates in mind. When Small was called up in March 1943, he was briefly replaced by Alvin Stauffer, who was then the chief, Research and Survey Section, Branch of Historic Sites, at Park Service headquarters, which had moved from Washington to Chicago for the duration. Stauffer in turn was called up in June and sent to work as a historian in the Quartermaster General's Office in Washington. A more lasting temporary replacement was found in Arthur R. Kelly, who served as acting superintendent from June 1943 to August 1944, when William Lockett replaced him. Lockett remained at Salem until Small returned in July of 1946.

¹⁰ Small to Director, NPS, 27 July 1950, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

¹¹ Small to Herbert Kahler, 12 January 1943, file "Official Service Correspondence for Edwin W. Small," SMNHS box, NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

¹² Director's Memorandum, 6 November 1942, quoted in Small to Kahler, above.

During this period the site's coordinating superintendent was Francis Ronalds, who had replaced Herbert Kahler at Morristown when Kahler moved on to become acting supervisor of historic sites. Kahler was an able historian in his own right and was "a great stabilizing force" in the Park Service. Elbert Cox, who had been the first Coordinating Superintendent for Salem Maritime, had moved up to become Director of the Region One Office in Richmond.¹³ Thus, there were several men in high positions in the Park Service who were very familiar with Salem Maritime and available to advise the acting superintendents.

Interior Secretary Ickes had publicly called for national restrictions on tourism to save gas and other resources, and encouraged citizens to visit local historic and scenic areas instead of distant ones.¹⁴ Visitation at Salem Maritime, just beginning to rise with the visible improvement of the site, went down sharply in 1942 and 1943, as was the case at other National Parks. "Tourist travel by auto gradually declined to the vanishing point as the severe restriction under the new gasoline rationing plan began to be felt. . . [but] restricted conditions of travel tended to increase the amount of local interest and use. Visitors by train were as numerous," Small reported in 1942.¹⁵

The port of Salem had been closed for security reasons early in the war. No fishermen or lobstermen visited Derby Wharf, no pleasure craft tied up there. The local community used the park for swimming and other recreation; Park Service "policy has been to ignore recreational aspects as these facilities are not provided in an historical area, but actually these are considerable, and are almost inevitable under community conditions existing, especially in Spring and Summer."¹⁶

These benign uses were coupled with a rise in petty vandalism in the Park and growing concerns about law enforcement and protection of historic materials. Acting Superintendent Kelly first reported small acts of vandalism

¹³ Frederick L. Rath, Jr. "Reflections on Historic Preservation and the National Park Service: The Early Years," CRM, Supplement 14, no. 4 (1991).

¹⁴ *N.Y. Times*, 13 June 1943, 44:5.

¹⁵ Superintendent's Monthly Report, August 1942, Vault, SMNHS. Precise visitation statistics are not available for this period; they were given in some Monthly Reports and not in others, and tabulated in different ways. The figures that Small does give for this period are far lower than he reports in the late 1940s.

¹⁶ "Outline of Topics for Discussion with Coordinating Supt. Ronalds and Regional Landscape Architect Emerson on Aug. 17 at Salem Maritime," 8 August 1944, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS; this memorandum must be by Acting Supt. Arthur R. Kelly.

on the site in September 1943. He blamed this on wartime stresses causing an "abnormal psychological condition" that led to irrational violence and cruelty, which he observed all around the area.¹⁷ By the next spring, again reporting minor vandalism, he wrote that "we consider that these small depredations are the normal consequence of maintaining the site immediately within the confines of a large foreign community, who, for the most part, feel little personal connection with the history which the Site symbolizes."¹⁸ That community was largely Polish, with a thriving ethnic life of its own. Outreach to them to communicate the meaning and the reasons for the existence of a national historic site in their neighborhood might have been one approach to the problem of vandalism, as well as forwarding the cause of public education and patriotic goals, but there is no indication that the diminished staff at Salem Maritime attempted this in this period.

If only for security reasons, Acting Superintendent Kelly found it helpful for site staff to actually live within the boundaries as Park Service staff did in other parks. He recommended the finishing of the Hawkes House interior as a priority because of its potential usefulness as staff housing:

Experiences during the year demonstrate that there is real additional protection afforded the Site by having personnel live in and on the area; the element of protection must be recognized as extremely important because of the contiguity of a congested population which had little reason to identify itself with the historical antecedents of the physical structures which are preserved as a memorial.¹⁹

A happier relationship prevailed with local businesses. The Pickering Coal Company, whose rather unsightly wharf was adjacent to the park, offered to have its workers, temporarily idled, perform needed repairs on Derby Wharf without charge. They were "glad for something for their men to do during slack intervals."²⁰ Beyond this, they were also apparently considering a more active role in waterfront planning, as Kelly reported:

Both Pickering Coal Company and Pequot Mills have made casual reference that they have provisional ideas about restoring their

¹⁷ Superintendent's Monthly Report, September 1943, Vault, SMNHS.

¹⁸ Superintendent's Monthly Report, March 1944.

¹⁹ "Outline of Topics for Discussion with Coordinating Supt. Ronalds and Regional Landscape Architect Emerson on Aug. 17 at Salem Maritime," 8 August 1944, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS; this memorandum must be by Acting Supt. Arthur R. Kelly.

²⁰ Superintendent's Monthly Report, October 1943, Vault, SMNHS.

wharves in keeping with the historical atmosphere preserved at the government wharves. There is obvious need for coordination of private and public planning. Pickering Coal has even expressed some interest in the idea of having a coal barge or collier built with the exterior reproduction of an early Salem ship. . . would consider scheme as a desirable publicity stunt over and above purely utilitarian aspects.²¹

There is no evidence that anything ever came of this.

Relations with the Coast Guard

The duties of the U.S. Coast Guard expanded during the war years. Responsible for guarding coastal areas from German invasion, spying, or U-Boat attack, they patrolled New England waters with enlarged fleets. Small ports such as Salem were closed. The Coast Guard needed enlarged quarters to manage its activities, and in 1942 the Port Office and Coast Guard moved into the Custom House, where the offices of Salem Maritime NHS were also located. A special use permit, issued by the Department of the Interior on January 15, 1943, permitted occupancy of certain facilities at Salem Maritime by the Coast Guard, while requiring that they budget funds to restore the areas of the Custom House that were adapted for their offices.²²

It was an uneasy alliance. The Coast Guard's priorities in wartime were not directed to the careful preservation of the historic fabric of their temporary headquarters. In September 1942 Small reported that the Coast Guard was "difficult for the Service to keep under control." A few months later the new acting superintendent, Stauffer, had protective floor coverings laid to preserve the rooms used by the Guard. The Guard was expected to share the costs of heat, light, and janitor services, which, in a time of fuel rationing, was helpful to the site. In April 1943, the offices in the Custom House were again reshuffled when the records of HABS in Boston arrived for temporary storage.²³

²¹ "Outline of Topics for Discussion with Coordinating Supt. Ronalds and Regional Landscape Architect Emerson on Aug. 17 at Salem Maritime," 8 August 1944, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS; this memorandum must be by Acting Supt. Arthur R. Kelly.

²² Acting Assistant Secretary of the Interior Mastin G. White to the Secretary of the Interior, 22 January 1948, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," SMNHS Box 1, Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

²³ Superintendent's Monthly Report, September 1942; March 1943; April 1943; Herbert Kahler to Small, 18 January 1943, file "Official Service Correspondence for Edwin W. Small," SMNHS box, NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

The Coast Guard vacated the Custom House in October of 1944. Several years of negotiations between the Park Service and the Coast Guard concerning damage done during this wartime occupancy produced no satisfaction for the Service, and by June 1947 Small received final word that the Coast Guard simply was not going to pay for repairs. He remarked that the incident "gives rise to reconsideration of the terms on which permits may be issued to other governmental agencies in the future."²⁴

Competition with Local Sites

Salem Maritime now had to find its place within the context of the historical and cultural institutions of Salem and vicinity. As mentioned, both the Essex Institute and the Peabody Museum, both on nearby Essex Street, had outstanding maritime collections and exhibits that told the story of Salem with vividness and depth. Salem Maritime could not compete with them as a museum, nor did it try. Its existence complemented their stories. But it was a newcomer, and not always familiar or well regarded in the city. In October 1944 a visitor to the site complained that both a local hotel and a local museum couldn't direct him to the site: "they apparently did not associate 'a National Park Service Site' with such terms as 'Derby House', 'Derby Wharf', and 'Old Custom House' etc."²⁵ This complaint was taken quite seriously by park staff, and one of Small's first actions when he returned to the site as superintendent would be to try to remedy this situation.

Attracting the few tourists who came to Salem in the war years was difficult. While tourists were drawn somewhat by the maritime aspects of Salem, then as now a fascination with the notorious witch trials of 1692 dominated public attention. And somehow Salem Maritime's neighbor on the waterfront, the House of Seven Gables, managed to draw more interest than the Park Service site. Acting Superintendent A. R. Kelly observed of tourists that "We tend to get them either on their way, or after, they have visited the House of Seven Gables. I suspect that either the Gables are oversold, or we are undersold, possibly both."²⁶ Marketing Salem Maritime, establishing a clear identity, and positioning it among competing attractions was a pressing task for the near future and Superintendent Small's return.

²⁴ Superintendent's Monthly Report, June 1947; Acting Assistant Secretary of the Interior Mastin G. White to the Secretary of the Interior, 22 January 1948, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," SMNHS Box 1, Branch of History, NPS Washington Office. The Coast Guard had apparently tried to budget funds for repairs, but the line item was disallowed by the Bureau of the Budget.

²⁵ Superintendent's Monthly Report, October 1944, Vault, SMNHS.

²⁶ Superintendent's Monthly Report, March 1944, Vault, SMNHS.

Concessions

At many national parks, concessions provide a major enhancement to visitor services and a major headache for Park staff. At Salem Maritime, concessions have been less important due to the number of visitor services available in an urban setting.

The "Rum Shop" was planned from the start as a potential concession, preferably related to the site's themes. The exterior was to provide visual context for the other buildings. The planners were pleased to be able to lease it as an antiques shop, a use at least marginally related to the site's themes. Dr. Rushford, a Salem resident, successfully bid for the concession. He was concerned with historical continuity, and in the summer of 1943 installed a bar and a display of bottles to reproduce the flavor of an old Rum Shop. He did not, however, purvey rum.²⁷

There were many requests for wharf usage. Here the park was caught between demands for legitimate public access to the waterfront, the demands of commercial fishing and tour boating, and the need to maintain fragile historic wharf structures. Local fishermen and lobstermen were allowed to tie up and store some equipment on the wharves during the years when the harbor was open, under annually-renewable docking permits issued by the superintendent.

Some people saw great development opportunities in the Salem waterfront. One report written for the Washington office by a Col. White (not otherwise identified) who toured the site in late 1941 visualized a virtual maritime theme park at Derby Wharf: . . .

Here it seemed that stress should be placed rather on the wharf and opportunities for maritime development than on the Customs House [sic] and other buildings which are duplicated. . . in the Salem museums. . . At the Wharf there is opportunity for extensive landscaping. It should be planted to become a thing of beauty rather than the present drab and dilapidated area. Particularly should trees be immediately planted to screen surrounding commercial development and the wharf itself turfed and planted to form a pleasant promenade. There is opportunity for a unique presentation of the sailing ship era of our national life. A small brig of the privateer type so common at Salem in the early nineteenth century, with sailors in period costumes,

²⁷ Superintendent's Monthly Report, July 1943, Vault, SMNHS.

might take visitors on a cruise of the bay for a small fee. . . Then, too, rowboats might be rented and concessions buildings erected to resemble old warehouses, affording entertainment to visitors and a revenue for the area.²⁸

Asked to comment, Small replied diplomatically "I think we are all pretty much in agreement as to the need for a replica of a Salem ship characteristic of the heyday of Salem's ocean commerce and privateering" and disagreed with White's other remarks. The war, of course, fortunately precluded any need for immediate action on the report.

Just as the Rum Shop was used for the exterior local color it added to the setting, the unrestored Forrester Warehouse was considered to be a possible concessions site and various proposals were received. Kelly noted this debate:

Does historic importance justify retention of this structure as an indispensable adjunct to the Site? . . . My predecessor, Dr. Alvin Stauffer confided his doubts regarding the above, and my impressions. . . confirm the view. . . If building is to be retained as an integral and functional part of the historical exhibit, radical exclusion of modern excrescences and extraneous features must be provided for in reconstruction. Consideration [could be given to] the proposal of Hyman Marcus to reconstruct the building at his expense, in an historical setting, to provide additional concessionaire facilities, a restaurant to serve shore dinners . . .²⁹

Mr. Marcus' restaurant proposal was seriously considered, but ultimately rejected.

Assessment of the Site

An assessment of the site from a very experienced observer gives us a portrait of the status of Salem Maritime at the end of this difficult period in its history. Stuart Barnette, coming off wartime service and working again at the Branch of Plans and Design out of the temporary Park Service headquarters in Chicago, wrote a report on the site after an inspection tour in June and July

²⁸ Col. White, "Memorandum for the Director," report on visits in December 1941, enclosure in Small to Kelsey, 17 January 1942, file "H.P. Kelsey corresp. w. NPS officials in re: Derby Wharf"; White has been tentatively identified as John R. White, Supt. of Sequoia National Park, by NPS Historian Barry Mackintosh.

²⁹ "Outline of Topics for Discussion with Coordinating Supt. Ronalds and Regional Landscape Architect Emerson on Aug. 17 at Salem Maritime," 8 August 1944, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS; this memorandum must be by Acting Supt. Arthur R. Kelly.

1946, just prior to Small's return. He wrote: "I was immensely disappointed to find that like most other sites within the Park Service it has suffered neglect, due no doubt, to wartime administration conditions."³⁰

Some of his observations, however, concerned specific issues he had with decisions made at the site after his own departure for the military in 1940. At the Custom House, he was concerned with the appropriateness of the hardware installed, and also noted that the paint color either had faded or was wrong based on the historic sample. At the Hawkes House,

I was a little bit disturbed on going into the Hawkes House to find that Superintendent Small, or someone had taken the liberty of starting to restore the house within. While the work to date may have been conducted properly, it will be practically impossible at this stage to determine whether or not it was done correctly. Since I believe that no architect has worked there since my last visit, it would be well to have an understanding with Superintendent Small, who is shortly returning, so that we may be sure that whatever work of an architectural nature is done, will be done by trained architects so that the Branch of Plans and Design will not be subjected to criticism nor held responsible for work with which it had nothing to do.³¹

In contrast, he was pleased with the success of the Derby House restoration.

The Park Service has done a splendid job there in restoring this house, and also. . . Mrs. Francis Crowninshield has done an equally admirable one in furnishing it. The house just "lives", and I sincerely believe it may be well considered one of the finest house museums in the United States. . . The fireplaces are laid, flowers are in vases, and there is a general atmosphere of natural occupancy and life. . . Credit is also due Miss Hager who is the Custodian of the building. In her own right she is an authority on the stenciling and painting of early American furniture, tinware, and other similar antiquities."

But here, while he was satisfied with the work done, he found recent neglect. There were serious water leaks around chimneys which threatened to rot the floors and spoil the furniture. In his view, the problem was porous pointing

³⁰ Report of Stuart Barnette after inspection trip June and July 1946, enclosed in Elbert Cox, Acting Regional Director, to Small, 11 December 1946, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS.

³¹ This may refer to work supervised by Frank Chouteau Brown of HABS in late 1940 or work done in December 1941 and January 1942 when the recovered woodwork was reinstalled.

or flashing, which he believed needed the immediate attention of a capable architect. Barnette disagreed with the advice of Regional Landscape Architect Emerson who had recommended mastic pointing:

Since all of this work and work of a similar character was conducted with a great deal of pain, and the character of the mastic will not match the earlier pointing or even that which was done during the restoration. I suggested that the superintendent wait until an architect representative from this Office or the Regional Office could stay on the job and be there every minute the work was under way.

He also questioned a landscaping decision that was not in the *Master Plan*, a decision that is still in dispute today.³²

An item which some of our historically minded landscape architects should go into, I believe, is the later incorporation of a small garden which is put in a rather prominent part of the lawn in back of the Derby House. While it serves the utilitarian purpose of providing a place where one might grow herbs and flowers, it does not seem to quite fit into the picture. I believe the advisability of leaving it there should be examined. The grounds generally look fine. . .

Barnette had come to recognize the potential value of the Forrester Warehouse, which he had saved from demolition back in 1938, though it was still untouched by restoration.

I believe the region wants to tear it down, and also believe [Coordinating] Superintendent Ronalds would like to get rid of it. However, I believe that Superintendent Small, will disagree with their observation. In fact, I also am inclined to disagree, for I feel it may prove to have a very definite place in our program. It is not a handsome building, but when restored will present a true picture of the Maritime structure of the early 19th Century, and may well prove a place for a marine museum of some kind.

But he observed that the chimney bricks were falling, and the chimneys must therefore be removed immediately. He advised erecting barricades to protect the public. He also noted missing signs on the Wharves.

³² The origins of this garden are mysterious; it is not mentioned in the Superintendent's Reports of the period and it is not known how it was researched or designed. Its continued existence is still controversial.

In summary, he urged the Park Service central office to take charge of the physical repairs immediately, not trusting site personnel to achieve the degree of historical accuracy and thoroughness he felt were essential.

At the risk of being tiresome, I should like to point out that we should undertake these important repairs at Salem in the very near future, for unless we do so Superintendent Small, who is shortly to return, will no doubt undertake them himself. While if he does so, they will be done in a better than average manner, this is obviously a responsibility of the Branch of Plans and Design which we wish to discharge effectively.

I believe that a letter should be sent out to all superintendents, and custodians of National Park Service areas stating that they should solicit the advice and or assistance of this Branch before undertaking architectural work of any nature, except in instances of extreme emergency.

The balance of power between local site staff and regional and national experts is a theme that appears again and again in Park Service history. The relative autonomy of many parks in the early days of NPS historical park management, when professional staff had expertise in the content of the resources they were preserving and interpreting, was gradually eroded as the system grew by the concentration of expertise in regional offices and later in the national interpretation and planning centers established in the 1970s. Barnette's letter is an early expression of the expert consultant's notion that site staff was no longer an ally, as it had been perceived in the 1930s, but instead was a threat to the accurate historic preservation of site structures. This implication was naturally resented by local professionals such as Small.

But by the time Barnette's report was filed, Small was back and coping with the problems of his three-year absence. He wrote to Francis Ronalds, now his coordinating superintendent in Morristown,

I have neither the time nor the inclination to start a written discussion of the comments made in Stuart Barnette's report. . . As you know, I am always ready to accept whatever help I can get from the architects, but I am not going to wait a lifetime if things have to be done. I think in some respects his remarks are hypercritical and uncalled for. . . We

all know Stuart, I think, and his criticisms can be accepted and understood without reply.³³

Small faced the immense task of rebuilding the site in which he had invested so much vision, still tantalizingly unfulfilled. There would be no more New Deal jackpot to count on, only routine and inadequate Park Service funding. He must begin to interpret the site, which had yet to find and reach its audience. He had to repair the damage and neglect of the war years, physical and programmatic. Many of his former collaborator's comments about paint colors must have seemed petty indeed. This breach between two of the men who had assisted at the creation of Salem Maritime National Historic Site was unfortunate, and Barnette left the Park Service altogether for private practice in 1947. A very different future remained for Small; and he would face the tasks ahead with less than adequate support from the other levels of the Park Service for many years to come.

³³ Small, 9 January 1947 to Francis S. Ronalds, Co-Ordinating Superintendent at Morristown, file "Buildings 1938-1952," Kelsey Papers, SMNHS.

CHAPTER 4

THE POSTWAR PERIOD (1945 - 1955)

The postwar era at Salem Maritime was a frustrating period of reaction to external events, not of initiative; and of struggle to maintain the integrity of the site against encroachments and deterioration, not of progress in restoration. The intrusion of a modern military facility, the Naval Reserve Training Center, in the middle of the historic wharf area presented preservation and interpretive challenges. On the positive side, there was the opportunity to show off the site and implement interpretive programs for an ever-growing audience of tourists and local visitors. With the return of Superintendent Small from military service, site staff created new exhibits and other programs and developed a new master plan. In coping with all this, Small and his staff were sorely hampered by the lack of adequate funding and attention felt by the National Park Service at all levels in this period.

Administrative Shifts

When Small announced his availability to return to the Park Service as of July 1, 1946 (his return would actually be delayed until the 26th), the regional office in Richmond and the Washington Office had to shuffle staff to make room for him, as they were doing throughout the country with the return of staff members from military service. Wartime conditions had brought temporary promotions and transfers that would not have occurred in the normal staff development program of the Park Service, and the management now had to find ways to return to a new normality, place displaced workers, and to do it all without compromising standards or reputations. Regional Director Thomas Allen wrote to the director that "Acting Superintendent Luckett [of Salem Maritime] must be returned to Ockmulgee [Georgia] and Acting Custodian Kelly must be placed elsewhere." Luckett was in fact sent on to Mound City National Monument in Ohio, rather than returned to his former post in Georgia. Kelly, an archaeologist, was not, in Allen's opinion, "well-suited for administrative work" and was a problem to transfer within the region, hence the request for help from the Washington Office.¹

¹ Thomas J. Allen, Regional Director, Region 1, to Director, NPS, 5 April 1946, SMNHS box, file "Official Service Correspondence for Edwin W. Small," NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library; Superintendent's Monthly Report for July 1946, Vault, SMNHS.

During the war years when Salem Maritime had three different temporary acting superintendents, much of the work of maintaining planning and administrative continuity had fallen to the coordinating superintendents in Morristown and to the regional office. This *de facto* transfer of power away from the site was of concern to Small when he had the opportunity to tour Salem Maritime two months before his return to duty, and he observed:

I think the Site came through the period of the war satisfactorily and things were maintained as well as could be expected under prevailing conditions. I noted, however, that the Site has again been placed upon an entirely dependent status to the Coordinating Superintendent at the Morristown National Historical Park. While, doubtless, an expedient measure over the course of the war, I trust that at least the degree of independence achieved in the pre-war period may be revived in the not too distant future. Certain fiscal arrangements, especially the restrictions on issuing requisitions at the Site, have caused considerable and, at times, serious inconvenience, and if long continued, would seem to perpetuate a system that is needlessly cumbersome.²

The regional office, recognizing the need to re-orient returning and new staff, held a personnel instruction meeting at its Richmond headquarters. Small attended, and testified to receiving "fresh insight into the objectives, policies, and procedures of the National Park Service."³ Not only was he fully restored to supervisory independence at Salem, Small was given a new administrative challenge. He was now, in his turn, to become a coordinating superintendent of the new Adams Mansion NHS in Quincy, Massachusetts. Since his tenure with the CCC in the mid-1930s, Small had continued to be a kind of New England ambassador for the Park Service, visiting and reporting on potential sites for acquisition and listing, and answering New England-related preservation queries from all regions. The Adams Mansion was one of the sites whose development he had watched with interest.

His appointment to this additional post was announced in October 1947, and he first understood this to mean that the financial aspects of both sites would be handled at Salem. This was clarified the next month: "... co-ordination of activities at the Adams Mansion by this office is to include administrative, procurement, and personnel responsibilities, but not the actual accounting functions which are to be retained for both Salem and the Adams Mansion by

² Small to Thomas J. Allen, Regional Director, Region 1, 10 June 1946, SMNHS box, file "Official Service Correspondence for Edwin W. Small," NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

³ Superintendent's Monthly Report for January 1947, Vault, SMNHS.

the Chief Clerk at Morristown NHP." Small was now commuting between Salem and Quincy to keep matters moving. It was a relief to him when the paperwork of opening a new national historic site had progressed to the point where Adams could officially have its own staff.

Mrs. Harris is expected to enter on duty at the Adams Mansion on May 3 . . . That should not by any stretch of the imagination be interpreted to mean that the Mansion can be opened to the public right away . . . I hope we may be able to open not later than Wednesday, June 16 . . . We very definitely cannot open the Mansion until we have at least two people on hand to show it, and then for only five days a week . . . I am up to my neck on rehabilitation work at the Adams Mansion and naval operation at Salem.⁴

Mrs. Wilhelmina Harris, the first superintendent of Adams Mansion NHS, had been the secretary of Charles Francis Adams, who donated his family's estate to the NPS. Small continued to act as coordinating superintendent for the next six years, until this management system was phased out.

Meeting the Needs of New Audiences

Now fully operational though still only partially restored, Salem Maritime faced the continuing problem of a lack of visibility within Salem, and tried to attract visitors in cooperation and competition with other nearby sites such as the House of Seven Gables, the Peabody Museum, and the Essex Institute. Small wasted no time in calling to the attention of the City Planning Board and the Chamber of Commerce that tourists looking for Salem Maritime had experienced problems finding the site at all. He solicited their involvement in making city representatives and workers in tourist businesses more familiar with local Park Service resources. As late as 1955 Small noted that "People still come into the Custom House and try to transact customs business although the Customs Service moved out almost eighteen years ago."⁵

More visitors than anticipated arrived at all Park Service sites in the postwar years, however, straining interpretation to the limits of capacity at peak times, and Salem was no exception. At Salem Maritime, only the Custom House

⁴ Superintendent Small to Ronald Lee, 30 April 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

⁵ Superintendent's Monthly Report for August 1946; Edwin W. Small, "Exhibit Planning for the Main Floor, Custom House, SMNHS, January, 1955," file "E. Small's Exhibit Plan," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

and Derby House were actually open to the public, and the Derby House guided tours were staff-intensive. Small noted on his return that the lack of physical barriers to the rooms made it necessary to accompany all visitors closely, which was hard to do with the one or two guides he could make available.⁶ In the month in which Small made this complaint, the site logged 2,024 visitors, at least ten times the monthly number for the prewar and war years. In 1950 the annual attendance was reported as 28,378 persons, and by 1955 this had grown to 37,925.⁷

But visitors often moved too quickly through Salem Maritime to be able to absorb its complex message, which took time as well as effort on the part of the visitor to understand. Small noted: "... the problem of severe competition offered by earlier historic houses in the vicinity touched by the magic of witchcraft remains unsolved and is likely to so long as the witchcraft tradition retains its place with the visiting public as the popular symbol for Salem."⁸ As Acting Superintendent Kelly had also noted, visitors often breezed through Salem Maritime only because it was on the way to the House of Seven Gables, a privately-owned site that was vigorously promoted.

A series of seven detailed thematic exhibits on the early days of Salem shipping, planned during Small's absence, were installed in the Custom House. Text had been researched and written at Salem by Acting Superintendent Lockett and staff, and presentation designed by a team at the Region One headquarters in Richmond. The need for more interpretation, especially of the wharves and shipping, was acute, however. The wharves in particular were not well presented to the public, without much in the way of signage to aid in understanding what the now-empty spaces had once been.

Small was distressed by some of the recreational use the site was getting from the neighborhood and sought to control it by increasing the parking area planned for the head of Derby Wharf:

The problem of improvement and maintenance will be reduced to the extent that the area between the waterfront and the Street can be reduced in size. It is desirable especially to plan to reduce the area between the proposed dock east of Derby Wharf and Derby Street so that it will be too small to use for organized games by the neighborhood. Reduction is also significant to attempt to revive the

⁶ Superintendent's Monthly Report for August 1946, Vault, SMNHS.

⁷ "Museum Prospectus (draft)," 30 May 1958, by Superintendent Harold Lessem, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

⁸ Superintendent's Monthly Report for July 1947, Vault, SMNHS.

character of the waterfront during the former days of historical importance.⁹

Small made a distinction, apparently, between marine recreational uses of the site, such as boating, and unrelated neighborhood uses, such as ball-playing and swimming. He assured the new mayor in 1948 that:

The National Park Service is definitely interested in planning for the appropriate recreational use of Derby Wharf, which would consist basically of providing landing facilities for use by sail and other pleasure boat owners and only of such other incidental recreational use likely to add to the maritime atmosphere of the national historic site.¹⁰

Unfortunately, in the impoverished immigrant neighborhood bordering the site, pleasure boat owners were few.

Site and regional office staff and even the Park Service director himself suggested various schemes to present and explain the maritime story for visitors in this period, but none was ever carried through successfully. As early as 1947, Regional Historian Roy E. Appleman compared Salem Maritime to the other great maritime historical resource in Salem, the Peabody Museum. Appleman noted that there was a place for both:

Superintendent Small envisions a museum development at Salem built around good scale models of the four or five types of ships that made Salem famous as a maritime center . . . This would not duplicate the work of the Peabody Museum. The Peabody Museum is a great repository of objects. It does not tell the story of the trade that brought these objects to this country. The Salem Maritime museum should attempt to do this . . .¹¹

The new *Master Plan* for the site written between 1950 and 1952 contained some discrepancies and omissions concerning the interpretation of Derby Wharf when it was compared to the earlier plans for the site. Indeed, its goals

⁹ Small to Regional Director, Region 1, 18 August 1950, File No. 600-01, SMNHS, Master Plan file, National Archives, Philadelphia. The file does not actually contain the master plan, only official correspondence about some aspects of it. The Master Plan itself cannot be located in any NPS repository. See note 57.

¹⁰ Small to Mayor Joseph B. Harrington, City of Salem, 11 June 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

¹¹ Roy E. Appleman, Regional Historian, to Regional Director, Reg. 1, 10 October 1947, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

were quite modest: "The improved orientation facilities might be simply a larger sign or device to give a better integrated picture of what comprises the site and what there is for visitors to see, or they might go so far as to take the form of a small orientation station or museum that could also be devoted to some measure to interpreting the story of Derby Wharf."¹²

In his comments on the *Plan* made to Assistant Director Ronald F. Lee, Chief Historian Herbert Kahler, who had been the coordinating superintendent for Salem during the late '30s and early '40s, quoted the 1939 *Plan* on interpretive proposals for Derby Wharf: "... pending: question of including replicas of ships and partially conjectural restoration of warehouses on wharf for museum exhibits." Kahler added:

During the war period, which followed the preparation of this statement in 1939, it does not appear that any steps were taken to carry out the proposal to secure replicas of ships or to restore the warehouses on the wharf to include museum exhibits. At present the only interpretive device to explain the significance of the Derby Wharf to the public is a large sign with a brief narrative legend standing parallel to Derby Street... The revised Interpretation Section of the Development Outline for this area, dated January 1952, includes no references to proposed interpretive development involving the use of sailing ships, sailing gear, etc. along Derby Wharf.¹³

On checking with the Design and Construction Division, however, he learned that the parking and other landscape improvements were not even scheduled for 1953 or 1954, and "No PCP project exists for a proposed orientation station on Derby Wharf."¹⁴ The need for visitor information and orientation, to be accomplished partly through having visitors arrive at a central parking area, had been clear since 1939, but nothing had been done or even planned to implement this rather simple improvement in the visitor experience.

When Kahler made this observation on the *Master Plan's* interpretive omissions to Ronald Lee, newly retired Park Service Director Arthur Demaray had recently written Lee to criticize Salem's presentation:

¹² Herbert Kahler, Chief Historian, to Assistant Director Lee, 21 October 1952, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1949-1959," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

¹³ Herbert Kahler, Chief Historian, to Assistant Director Lee, 21 October 1952, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1949-1959," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

¹⁴ Herbert Kahler, Chief Historian, to Assistant Director Lee, 21 October 1952, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1949-1959," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

After seeing Mystic Seaport I realise how barren Derby Wharf seems. Here was the home port of the great sailing vessels of that day and there is nothing on Derby Wharf to indicate that there ever was any sailing activity. Really something ought to be done, even though sailing ships of the period can not be secured. If real effort were made some old ships could be found and ships stores, barrels, boxes, anchors and other appropriate articles could be placed on the wharf. Perhaps this would create a protection problem but what doesn't. Salem ought to be an exhibit of the sea and not just some old houses.¹⁵

Demaray obviously underemphasized the importance of the protection problem, which under this plan would have necessitated an expensive round-the-clock guard on the wharves, or alternatively a staff large enough to daily assemble and nightly stow an exhibit. But his final comment foreshadowed a turn in direction that Salem Maritime would in fact make in the coming decade.

Lee responded:

I was very glad to have your letter . . . in which . . . you comment on the contrast between the marine display at Mystic, Connecticut, and our own display at Salem, Massachusetts. I am looking into what our Master Plan calls for, and as soon as I find out, I am going to see if I can't stir up some interest and activity so that more can be done along the waterfront at Salem . . . I certainly agree with you that we should make greater effort than we have in the past to bring back more of the picture of sailing vessel days than can be seen now at Salem.¹⁶

Part of Lee's effort involved research of his own into the feasibility of authentic or reproduction sailing vessels for Derby Wharf. He wrote to Howard Chapelle, one of the country's foremost marine historians, about availability of historic ships and whether good plans existed to use for reproductions, and what building replicas might cost. Chapelle warned him of the difficulties, which Small had already discovered. ". . . There is now no old ship, nor any reproduction, that would be in any way suitable for use as part of the Derby Wharf site . . . It will be necessary to have such a craft built . . . a very costly undertaking." Chapelle suggested that if this course

¹⁵ Arthur Demaray to Ronald Lee, 24 September 1952, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1949-1959," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

¹⁶ Ronald F. Lee, Asst. Dir., to Arthur Demaray (to his home address), 13 October 1952, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1949-1959," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

were chosen, a replica of an Essex County Chebacco Boat of forty to forty-five feet might be built for about \$12,000 to \$20,000.

If however, a full rigged ship is desired, the plans of the Salem ship privateers of the Revolution RATTLESNAKE and OLIVER CROMWELL are available . . . at cost somewhere between \$75,000 and \$100,000 . . . no plans of a merchant ship built at Salem or owned there have been found for the period 1764-1830.

Chapelle concluded that: "It is my observation that the use of a good replica is the only possible economical solution . . . The use of some old craft . . . entails huge expense in upkeep and the work must be done under unfavorable conditions." He suggested that "It may be possible, however, to reconstruct one of these ships using pictures and a half-model . . ."17

Despite this interest and intervention in the affairs of Salem Maritime at the highest levels, no ships were found or waterfront display built at the site in this period. The general budget difficulties of the Park Service might have been to blame, but Salem apparently was not a high enough priority for the Park Service to justify allocating money to finish the job started in 1936 in a very different political and economic climate. While visitation increased precipitously in all national parks, the Service, without sufficient money to do its job, had to make hard choices.

After completion of the *Master Plan*, Small began preparing a new exhibit plan for the cases in the Custom House, to replace the exhibits installed in 1946. The earlier scheme of seven cases was partially retained, and their topics were to be: The Founding of Salem — The Fisheries and Early Trade; The Derbys — The Derby House — Derby Wharf; Privateers and Privateering; The World-Wide Trade of Salem, Vessels of the Fisheries and Commerce, The Commodities of World-Wide Trade, and The Last Days of Salem Shipping. He suggested the use of portraits, illustrations from historic sources, maps, flags, and an electric map to trace trade routes. Small considered this map the most appealing and important part of the display. Full-rigged models of ships were dismissed as desirable but too expensive.

He planned to include samples of trade commodities such as pepper and spices, Canton ware, ginger, bandannas, gum arabic, and more. Photographs

17 Howard I. Chapelle (Marine Architect, Cambridge, MD) to Ronald Lee, Asst. Director, 3 March 1953, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1949-1959," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

could be used for the last display on the decline of Salem. He also suggested treatment of the east front room

... as a period customs office as in Hawthorne's day with emphasis on his work there and concurrent literary activity... The room would not have to be set up in a conjectural way as a period office, but if it is done at all should correspond exactly with the description Hawthorne provides in the introduction to *The Scarlet Letter* entitled "The Custom-House." The problem as we see it would be : Do we want deliberately to revive the unkempt and seedy conditions Hawthorne describes?

Small concluded that perhaps a diorama could better show the dilapidated conditions, with a display of the Hawthorne desk, and the General Miller chair and desk, and other authentic pieces that had been returned to Salem Maritime by the Customs Service.¹⁸

Small's reference to the "unkempt" conditions that he did not want to recreate is reminiscent of his aversion to an authentic recreation of the sights and smells of the wharves; it perhaps helps to explain his continued inaction in spite of requests from above to improve the representation of historic maritime activity on the wharves. The cases for the Custom House were planned in detail in the summer of 1955 by Frank Buffmire and Ralph Lewis of the Museum Branch in Washington using Small's research and specifications, and built the next winter in the Museum Laboratory.¹⁹

Challenges to Site Integrity: Hawkes House

Due partly to a change in mayoral administration in Salem, the City itself in this period ceased to be a friend and partner to Salem Maritime. In 1947, the City wanted the Hawkes House back.

The new mayor was Democrat Joseph B. Harrington, who had been elected largely on the promise of providing veterans' housing at low cost in the city of Salem. In searching for sites, he was untroubled by historic preservation concerns. Harrington was quoted in the *Salem Evening News* of December 4, 1947, declaring: "that he would seek the assistance of Congressman George J. Bates to approach the federal government for a lease on the three story frame

¹⁸ Edwin W. Small, "Exhibit Planning for the Main Floor, Custom House, SMNHS, January, 1955," file "E. Small's Exhibit Plan," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

¹⁹ Acting Chief, Division of Interpretation to Regional Director, Region 5, 15 July 1955, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1949-1959," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

dwelling on Derby Street, adjacent to the old Customs House, which property is under control of the maritime national park division . . ." This dwelling, the mayor-elect informed the City, could provide six apartments after renovation.²⁰

Small quickly wrote to the Washington office about this threat to the Hawkes House:

We are passing this information along as we believe that if Congressman Bates is approached . . . he will most likely get in touch with the Director's Office rather than with us here. If the matter comes up for further discussion, it should be kept in mind that the Hawkes House is largely a shell on the interior and that if any work is to be done, it should be to complete the restoration of the interior . . . We have anticipated that under the present pressure for housing at any cost that the Hawkes House, not unattractive to behold on the exterior, would come under fire as a possibility for veterans' housing. The housing committee appointed by the present mayor, we understand, had pointed to it as a possibility prior to our return in July 1946, but dropped any interest as soon as the facts as to its interior condition were fully known.²¹

He believed that the City would again see reason and would decide not to pursue it. But the mayor did make a formal request in March 1948 that the property be transferred back to the City. Small, on advice from the Washington office, responded:

I regret to advise that the request to use the Hawkes House for veteran's housing cannot be approved since the National Park Service is without authority to put this property to any use other than the national historic site purposes specified by the Historic Sites Act of 1935 . . . the Hawkes House would be impractical for the City to consider, both from the standpoint of type of structure and expense, even if authority existed . . .²²

²⁰ Small to Regional Director, Region 1, 5 December 1947, file "Buildings 1938-1952, Kelsey Papers," SMNHS, quoting *Salem Evening News*, 4 December 1947.

²¹ Small to Regional Director, Region 1, 5 December 1947, file "Buildings 1938-1952, Kelsey Papers," SMNHS.

²² Superintendent Small to Mayor Joseph B. Harrington, City of Salem, 11 June 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

Thus, this threat was averted; but another challenge to the site's integrity was coming from the federal government itself.

Challenges to Site Integrity: Naval Reserve Armory

Fresh from victory in the Pacific, but remembering the humiliation of Pearl Harbor, the Navy proposed an extensive postwar naval reserve system, to maintain military units in readiness for any subsequent hostilities. Seeking sites to establish reserve training centers and armories in seacoast and river port cities, it naturally looked first, in order to control land acquisition costs, at land already owned by the federal government.

By September 1946 the Navy had identified the wharves at Salem Maritime, obviously underutilized, as a potential site for a training facility (Fig. 7) Edwin Small, who was himself in the Naval Reserve, was dismayed at the prospect of the intrusion of a modern facility on a historic wharf that he still had dreams of restoring to its nineteenth century glory. Perhaps to his surprise, he got very little support for this viewpoint from the upper levels of the Park Service and none at all from the City of Salem. He also got none from Congressman George Bates, who as the former mayor of Salem had helped with the initial land acquisition for the site. Bates was now in an important decision-making position with his seat on the House Subcommittee of Naval Affairs.

Harlan Kelsey, however, was still on the side of preservation and called on his former association with Bates:

The desirability of having a Naval Reserve station in Salem or vicinity is perhaps unquestionable, but frankly it seems to me it would be a great mistake to use any part of the Salem Maritime National Historic Site for this or any purpose other than the one for which it was established . . . You well remember the long and strenuous campaign you and I had to bring about the saving and preservation of this noble addition to the historic shrines of America. We are all now hoping that with the close of the war the National Park Service will be enabled to complete its development . . . Surely in Salem there must be other suitable harbor sites which would adequately serve the Naval Reserve.²³

Bates was completely unsupportive.

²³ Harlan Kelsey to George Bates, 17 October 1946, file "Kelsey Correspondence in re Naval Reserve on Central Wharf," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

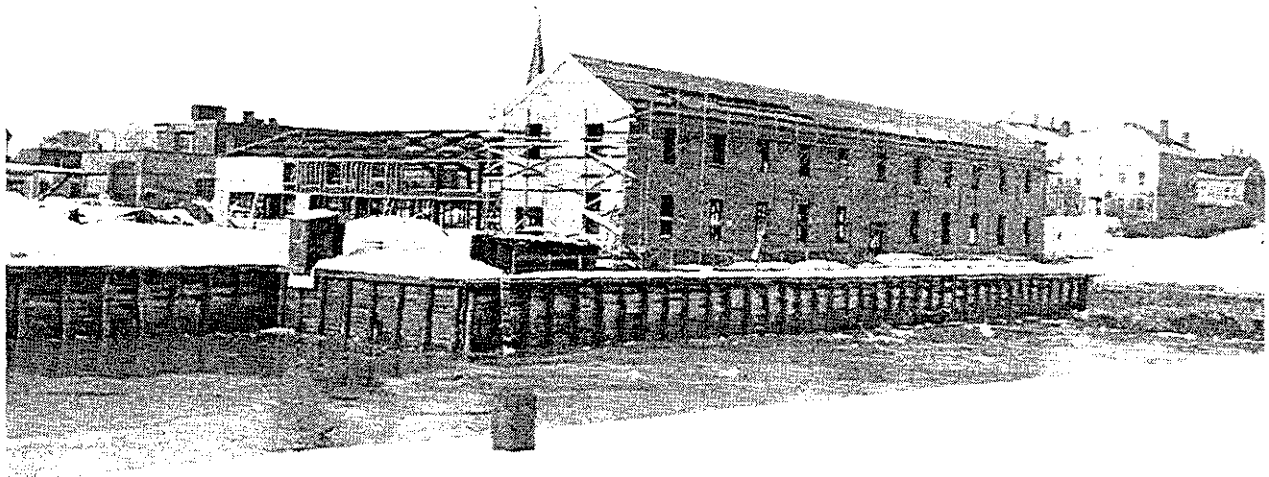


Figure 7. The Naval Reserve Training Facility Rises on Central Wharf in 1948. NPS staff and site supporters were divided about the appropriateness of the facility, which would dominate the wharf for more than two decades. (Courtesy Salem Maritime National Historic Site.)

It is my opinion that Central Wharf might be utilized to meet the emergency need of the Government in its Naval Reserve Program. In fact, I am strongly of the opinion that it would give a good deal of color to an area that has had such an historic maritime history . . . I note your comment in regard to the objection of the Old Ladies Home in having their view of Central Wharf cut off. In my opinion, it would be a decided improvement over what they now enjoy, with an old dilapidated building [the Forrester Warehouse] . . . which looks to me as though it might fall over at any time . . .

I think in this emergency . . . the Government Agencies must cooperate with each other rather than look to the City for a site that would not be as satisfactory, and far more expensive than those already owned by the Government.

The Congressman went on to make a valid point that must have been frustrating to Kelsey and Small:

If the National Park Service had a definite program laid out and the necessary appropriations available to complete the development of Derby Wharf, that would be one thing but of course we know that it will be many many years before we can hope that the project will be developed along the lines planned when I originally turned over all of this property to the Federal Government . . . ²⁴

Nor did other Park Service officials agree to keep the Navy away. Rather they seized on the naval presence as a cheap way to bring some kind of maritime activity to the Salem wharves. It is surprising that so few questions were raised within the Service about the historical and aesthetic appropriateness of that activity. After all, Salem had never been a naval port like Annapolis. But the Park Service historians and preservationists did not hold, as Small and Kelsey did, to the greater vision of what Salem Maritime could be, and supported a reasonable expedient, thought to be temporary. In fact, the "temporary" Armory would disfigure Central Wharf for thirty years.

Regional Historian Roy Appleman, reporting on the site in September 1947, wrote:

²⁴ George Bates to Harlan Kelsey, 18 October 1946, file "Kelsey Correspondence in re Naval Reserve on Central Wharf," Historian's Office, SMNHS.

I believe the navy project at the site will benefit Salem Maritime National Historic Site in that it will bring suitable activity to the site, and will help in the policing and maintenance of this part of the site which has always been difficult to keep in a respectable condition.²⁵

Historian Ronald Lee also visited Salem to review the construction, and his views were summarized by the acting director, Hillory Tolson:

While in Salem May 30, Chief Historian R. F. Lee examined carefully the present status of the Naval Reserve Armory project. In his opinion the presence of the Armory on the waterfront with its attendant activities will contribute life and movement to the wharf area which has for long been a rather desolate sight. It is fortunate that the new uses continue the seafaring tradition the National Historic site commemorates... The armory itself... harmonizes well with the surroundings.²⁶

Pile-driving to support the new structure began before the special use permit from the Interior Department to the Navy was signed on October 6, 1947. An official ground-breaking ceremony was held on October 27. The permit was operative from July 1, 1947 to June 30, 1952. Under it, the Navy was authorized

... to use and occupy the following described land in the Salem Maritime National Historic Site for the purpose of constructing, maintaining, and operating a temporary Naval Reserve Armory: The area is the northwest corner of Salem Maritime National Historic Site between the returns of Central Wharf and Derby Street consisting of approximately 37,500 sq. ft., excepting and reserving therein for use by Salem Maritime National Historic Site a section approximately 100 feet by 75 feet enclosing the Forrester Warehouse and adjacent to Derby Street on the west.

All plans were subject to prior approval by the director of the National Park Service, and a number of conditions were added, notably Navy construction of a service road on Central Wharf, moving the existing Park Service garage to Navy property, prior approval for the dredging that would be required, and two preservation considerations: "... if so requested, the Navy Department

²⁵ Roy E. Appleman, Regional Historian, to Regional Director, Region 1, 10 October 1947, SMNHS 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

²⁶ Hillory A. Tolson, Acting Director, NPS to Regional Director, Region 1, 7 July 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

will cooperate in the reduction and stabilization of the Forrester Warehouse to the extent requested by the Director," and "That strict precautions shall be taken to preserve and protect all structures, remains, or objects of an historical nature."

And, as a bonus, "That prior to the termination of the use of the site by the Navy Department, such buildings and structures or portions thereof as it may be desirable or expedient to retain shall be transferred to the Department of the Interior."²⁷ The Washington office thought this a very attractive idea, as Acting Director Demaray wrote: "the Naval Reserve Armory occupies almost the exact site of a former historic warehouse building and . . . in the future, should the Navy no longer need the structure, it will fit very well into the proposed interpretive program of the National Park Service." ²⁸

As plans progressed, some of the supporters became less enthusiastic. In mid-July Congressman Bates wrote to Lee:

To say the least I was quite disappointed at its architectural features . . . I well recall the Navy's intention of giving it a Colonial perspective . . . I am tremendously interested in the beautification of this whole area, that is the thought I had in mind when I recommended to the City Government originally, after spending \$450,000 on the rehabilitation of the area, including the acquirement of much property that the entire area be turned over to the Federal Government to be developed as a national historic maritime monument.²⁹

Another problem related to the Armory was the question of the current users of Central Wharf. An inordinate amount of time and effort was spent resolving the claims of lobstermen for access to and storage on Central Wharf. Superintendent Small, the regional office, the Washington office, the City of Salem, and a member of Congress spent years in the resolution of this issue, entirely out of proportion to the cause.

The Navy, for security reasons, now needed the lobstermen off Central Wharf where they had been tolerated, though not welcomed, since the site's

²⁷ Department of the Interior Special Use Permit (no date on document, but 6 October 1947 from other evidence), SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

²⁸ A.E. Demaray, Acting Director, National Park Service to Cong. George Bates, 21 July 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

²⁹ George Bates to Ronald Lee, 15 July 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

founding. Derby Wharf was temporarily used as a substitute. This was considered by Small to be a blot on the historic setting and a possible danger to visitors.

The Washington office countered:

We are entirely agreeable to the removal of the fishermen from Central Wharf as soon as the Navy finds alternate facilities for them . . . we are willing to provide a location on Derby Wharf to take care of the fishermen's needs, provided a gear house of suitable design will be constructed by the Navy Department . . . the fishermen's bait and the 1,500 lobster traps, which are now temporarily deposited on Derby Wharf, are objectionable to visitors . . . We have deferred issuing a new permit for the larger area on Central Wharf to the Navy until the question of the fishermen . . . can be satisfactorily settled.³⁰

The Navy, however, could not legally use its funds on a structure for civilian use. Furthermore, as Small pointed out,

. . . relating to the problems of fishermen at Central Wharf . . . it is probable that the Navy will oppose, eventually if not immediately, the use of Derby Wharf as well as Central Wharf by fishermen . . . the Navy's medical officer will comment adversely on having such odors as fishermen create in such close proximity to the naval establishment.³¹

The obvious solution appeared to be to simply require that the lobstermen move elsewhere in the harbor, since their permits to use Salem Maritime's wharves for storage and their docking permits could be revoked or simply not renewed. But, as Small explained to the regional director, there were political reasons for accommodating the lobstermen, who appealed directly to Congressman Bates, an old acquaintance.³²

Small had hopes that this would change, however, when building materials stolen from the Navy's contractor were found concealed under lobster traps

³⁰ A.E. Demaray, Acting Director, National Park Service to Cong. George Bates, 21 July 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

³¹ Small to Regional Director, Region 1, 30 April 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

³² Small to Regional Director, Region 1, 30 April 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

on Central Wharf.³³ The police were ready to accuse the lobstermen. In a personal note to Ronald Lee, Small added:

The type of thieving I describe has gone on more or less since the Navy has been here . . . With the family I mention gone, no real necessity would exist for providing a building on Derby Wharf . . . if the culprits are convicted, Congressman Bates cannot very well continue to go to bat for them.³⁴

But even the combined pressure of the Park Service and the Navy did not succeed in removing the lobstermen. Several years later, in reporting on concessions in the new *Master Plan*, Small noted with unusual frankness:

Special Use Permits, Nos. I-23np-100 through I-23np-103 inclusive, grant to four fishermen the privilege of using an enclosed plank platform on the west wall of Derby Wharf as a storage area and base from which to conduct lobster fishing operations and the mooring of power boats used in the business. These permits are issued on an annual basis each fiscal year and are the outcome of expediency and the economic and political pressure of outside interests rather than bearing any relationship to service or accommodations necessary or desirable for the public.³⁵

The "temporary" Naval Reserve training facility was dedicated June 21, 1948, and remained until 1977. The lobstermen were still on Central Wharf in 1992.³⁶

Ongoing Preservation Issues

Closely related to the issue of the naval facility was the question of how to treat the remains of the Forrester Warehouse, which stood derelict and unrestored next to it, and which even its supporters admitted was difficult to interpret in the context of the site as it was (Fig. 8). Bates wanted it removed entirely. He wrote to Ronald Lee in 1948: "It appears to me that the walls of

³³ Small to Regional Director, Region 1, 30 April 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

³⁴ Superintendent Small to "Ronnie" (Ronald Lee), 30 April 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

³⁵ Small to Regional Director, Region 1, 6 May 1952, File No. 600-01, SMNHS Master Plan file, National Archives, Philadelphia.

³⁶ Superintendent's Monthly Report for June 1948; "Feds Evict Fishing Family", *Salem Evening News*, 4 April 1992.

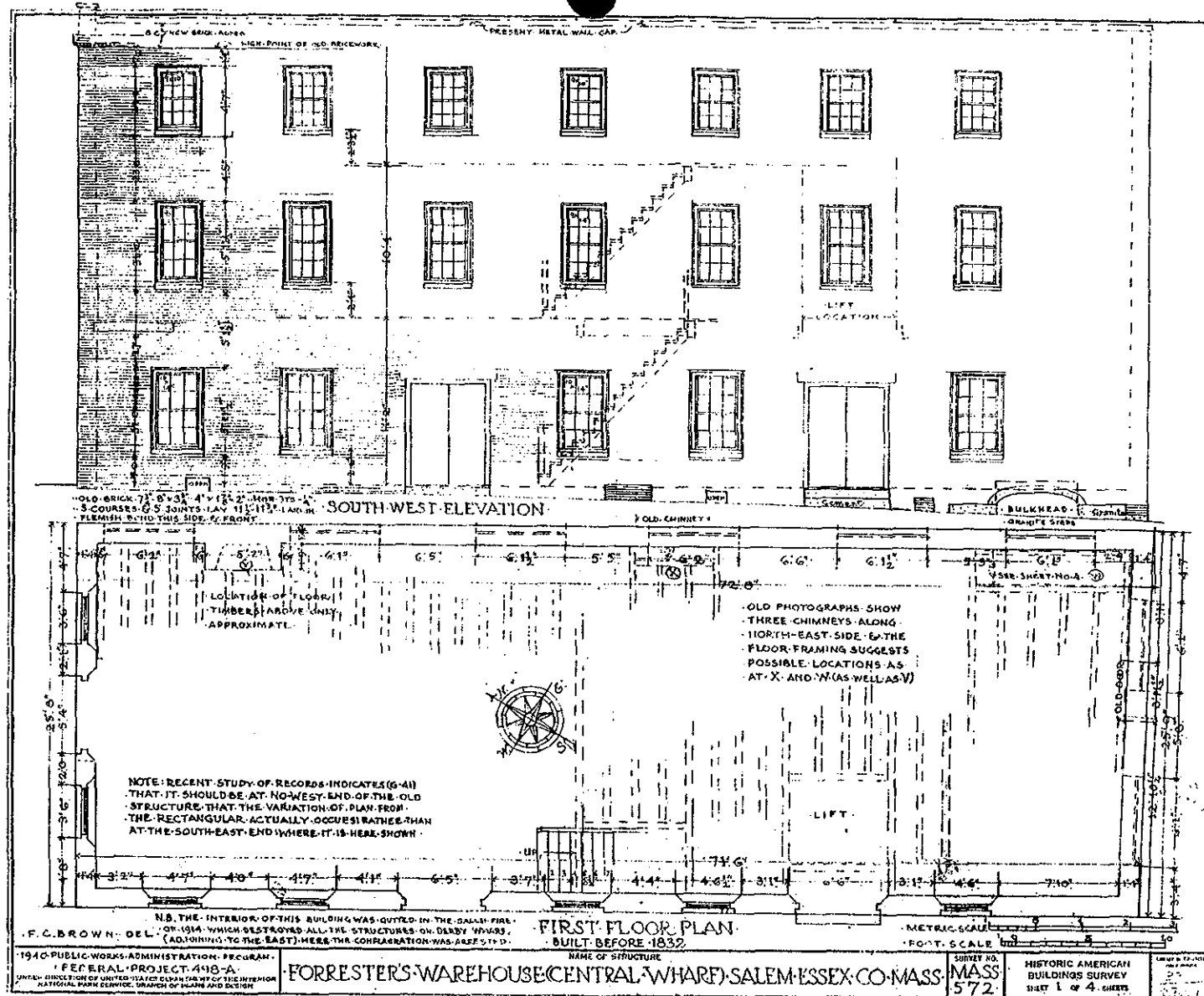


Figure 8. The Forrester Warehouse As Documented by the Historic American Building Survey in 1940. Rescued from demolition by Stuart Barnette in 1937, the only surviving maritime industrial structure on the site fell victim to decay and was finally demolished after the war. (Courtesy NPS Denver Service Center).

the Forrester Warehouse now standing are very unsightly . . . I therefore write to you to inquire as to your thoughts in the removal of the wall, or a substantial portion of it and inserting a plaque denoting the location of the warehouse.³⁷

Acting Director Tolson noted that " . . . the remains of Forrester's Warehouse . . . are unattractive and the reasons for their retention cannot be understood by the public . . . Mr. Vint [Regional Architect] agrees with Mr. Lee that the present appearance is bad and that something must be done about it." Two ideas were suggested: the site could be disguised with plantings, or the building could be entirely demolished to grade level with corner markers. The regional office preferred the plantings option.³⁸ The interim decision was to demolish the modern and the unstable parts of the structure, and this translated to first saving only the lower eight to ten feet of parts of the exterior walls, and later the complete demolition of the structure leaving only the foundation.

Regional Historian Appleman provided one of the few dissenting voices.

I am sorry the decision has been made to demolish Forrester's Warehouse . . . The walls seem to be very solid . . . This is the only warehouse on the site and once torn down it is unlikely that it will be rebuilt. As long as it stands, there is freedom of action concerning its use in the development of the site. I think it a mistake to demolish a structure of this kind in an historic site when there is no compelling reason to do so. I gathered that Superintendent Small feels the same way about it.³⁹

Thus the sole surviving maritime industrial structure and only historic wharf building at Salem Maritime was gone. The most important preservation battle of this period was over without a skirmish, as Small apparently gave in to the loss of Forrester's Warehouse. He had once hoped to use it for site storage or at least to maintain its appearance as a wharf warehouse, but it was by this time in very poor condition.

³⁷ George Bates to Ronald Lee, 15 July 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

³⁸ Hillory A. Tolson, Acting Director, NPS to Regional Director, Region 1, 7 July 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

³⁹ Roy E. Appleman, Regional Historian, to Regional Director, Region 1, 10 October 1947, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

Soon after Small's return to Salem, the New England preservation community had been rocked by the deaths, only days apart in October 1947, of SPNEA's William Sumner Appleton and HABS' Frank Chouteau Brown. Both men had been important presences in the founding of Salem Maritime, as well as the mainstays of historic preservation and documentation in New England. Appleton's death left SPNEA in shock; Brown's death of cancer was expected but came suddenly. When SPNEA took stock after Appleton's death, HABS records that had been left in the care of SPNEA turned up stored in various warehouses and repositories. With Brown gone, too, Small was probably the man in New England most familiar with the pioneering efforts to document historic architecture, and he volunteered to retrieve and sort the records.⁴⁰

The major preservation task at the site that was completed in this period was the renovation of Hawkes House as a hybrid historic house museum/staff residence. It had been left for years in a state of partial restoration planned but not completed under Stuart Barnette. With new plans drawn by architect A. J. Higgins, the house was to be worked on in stages from 1950 to 1954. The first floor was to be entirely devoted to period rooms, with restored original and reproduction woodwork. Public access was through the west door and hall, facing the Custom House. The east door and hall were private, giving access to newly created apartments on the upper floors. The second floor included a period room in the southwest corner, but the rest became a two-bedroom apartment with added kitchen and bath for use as staff quarters. The top floor had two period rooms on the south side of the building, towards the wharves, and a new one-bedroom apartment with kitchen and bath for site staff.⁴¹

The wharves needed constant repair and maintenance, especially after severe winter storms. In addition, Small and Park Service preservation experts had to work to protect the wharves from damage during the construction of the Naval Reserve training facility. Small wrote to Ronald Lee, "Architectural engineers who are studying the dredging for the Navy have just been in and concluded as we have that sheet piling will be necessary along the east wall of Central Wharf. They are inclined to think it will also be required along the

⁴⁰ Small to Thomas C. Vint, Chief of Development, 3 January 1949, SMNHS box, file "Official Service Correspondence for Edwin W. Small," NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

⁴¹ "Hawkes House Rehabilitation," Drawing NHS:SM 2015-A, 5-5-50, microfiche, NPS Denver Service Center.

west wall of Derby Wharf."⁴² Fears that the dredging might seriously undermine and destroy Derby Wharf, however, proved exaggerated.

The Custom House, which was being used as a museum with a few period rooms, acquired some appropriate furnishings as loans from the Essex Institute. These were the desk and rocker of General James Miller, long-time customs collector for the port.⁴³ The golden eagle on the building's front was not holding up well, and Appleman noted that "Superintendent Small is of the opinion that the eagle on the Custom House will have to give way to a new one."⁴⁴ Apparently a way was found to stabilize it in place, although no records have been found concerning what was done.

The Narbonne House, not yet a part of the site but a hoped-for addition, was the subject of a preservation dispute on paper only. Back in 1945, when acting Superintendent Luckett was in charge, the Park Service had requested an update on proposed boundary changes for the site. Luckett had obliged with a boundary status report that was concurred in at the regional level by Regional Landscape Architect Emerson; it advised, among other suggested changes: "The Narbonne House (1671) should be acquired, along with a lane approximately 30 feet wide connecting it with the Hawkes House property. This house could be preserved on the exterior and modernized to the extent that it could be utilized as quarters to provide night protection . . ."⁴⁵ Of those familiar with the site, only Regional Historian Appleman noticed that this proposal would destroy the interior of one of New England's most important early buildings, and Small apparently did not catch this when the report on boundaries was approved in 1947.

This boundary status report sheds light, if somewhat indirectly, on the philosophy at this time regarding preservation, demolition, and the way the extant buildings on the site related to their surroundings. Small himself had been involved in researching the costs of potential land acquisitions for the site. The wish list for inclusions comprised eighteen properties on Derby Street, Kosciusko Street, Hodges Court, Herbert Street, Orange Street, and Essex Street. With the exception of the Narbonne House, the other properties

⁴² Small to Ronald Lee, 30 April 1948, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

⁴³ Superintendent's Monthly Report, June 1947, Vault, SMNHS.

⁴⁴ Roy E. Appleman, Regional Historian, to Regional Director, Region 1, 10 October 1947, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

⁴⁵ Boundary Status Report, SMNHS, 14 August 1945, file "Boundaries (General)," SMNHS.

were almost all owned by Polish-Americans.⁴⁶ Perhaps it was fortunate that there was no money available then or later to acquire these properties, many of which Small intended for demolition in the style of 1938.

The next official boundary status report five years later repeated many of the same recommendations for acquisition and demolition. This time, however, Small noted the error with the Narbonne House interior and went through layers of official paperwork to correct it. The report still reflected Small's attitude about demolition of secondary structures to provide an appealing setting for his "star" buildings:

Acquisition of these houses [on Kosciusko street, the southeastern site boundary] with land is desirable not only as a slum clearance proposition, but also to widen the perspective of the waterfront. By removal of these houses the prospect of Salem Harbor from the steps of the Customs House would be increased as much as 100 per cent. Kosciusko Street would provide a suitable buffer and natural boundary, and could also be effectively utilized in connection with solving the parking problem . . . the [northern] boundary should be run northward to Essex Street in order to provide for eventual inclusion . . . of the Narbonne House . . . It should be preserved intact as an historic house museum and . . . should be added to the Site unless its preservation by other means or sources is assured . . .

North of Derby Street, however, the aspect of the maritime setting and atmosphere of the Site as a whole would be vastly improved by eventual acquisition of the Forrester house, originally designed by Samuel McIntire in 1791, and Richard Derby's Old Mansion House, 1738, at the northeast corner of Derby and Herbert Streets. A house which stands between the Forrester House and the Derby Mansion House at the northwest corner of Derby Street and Hodges Court should be removed and with the two houses identified above by name and date would provide an adequately protected frontage and setting westward on Derby Street as far as Herbert Street.⁴⁷

In a letter to Regional Director Cox enclosed with the report, Small emphasized :

⁴⁶ "Breakdowns in Value for Land and Buildings procured from City Assessor's Office Feb. 5, 1947 EWS," file "Boundaries (General)," SMNHS.

⁴⁷ Boundary Status Report, SMNHS, 11 June 1952, file "Boundaries (General)," SMNHS.

We cannot endorse, however, the views expressed concerning the Narbonne House which appear in the Report approved April 1, 1947, and for that reason submit at this time a revision, consisting primarily of changes in objectionable phrasing and objectives relating to the House. The matter of modernizing the structure or utilizing it as quarters should not enter the picture at all, and any reference to preserving the exterior without concern for the interior is to miss the point for considering the House at all.⁴⁸

The Derby House remained one of the star attractions of the site. In 1947 Regional Historian Appleman had enthusiastically declared that "The Derby House is in excellent condition. It is probably the best historic house museum in the Service..." He observed that its kitchen was being used for staff quarters and recommended that it be converted to a period room. Appleman was also pleased at the results of the exterior repainting that had been part of a postwar effort to spruce up the site, and he noted "The several buildings had just been painted under the rehabilitation program and they looked very good. Their exteriors had a picture-card type appearance."⁴⁹ No one, including Appleman, questioned whether or not a working maritime environment would have appropriately exhibited a "picture-card" appearance.

However, the Derby House roof, replaced by Barnette in 1939, was deteriorating.

... [when] Architect Smith was at this area on June 15 we discussed with him the problem of the most suitable material for the permanent roofing of the historic buildings. The problem relates to roofing for the Derby House, the Hawkes House and the Rum Shop which received new roofs of Mohawk cement-asbestos shingles during the period 1938-1940. Because of serious breakage and leaks in the brittle Mohawk product it was necessary for us during 1947 and 1948 to replace the upper hips of the gambrel roof of the Derby House and all of the roofs of the Hawkes House and Rum Shop with asphalt composition strip shingles.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Small to Regional Director Cox, Region 1, 11 June 1952, file "Boundaries (General)," SMNHS.

⁴⁹ Roy E. Appleman, Regional Historian, to Regional Director, Region 1, 10 October 1947, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

⁵⁰ Small to Regional Director, Region 1[Cox], 28 August 1953, 079-64-A-46, P-8435, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

Smith suggested using slate, but Small questioned the historic precedent for slate roofing on a building as early as the Derby House. Use of wood shingles, which were in period, was not permitted by Salem's fire code.

Good historian that he was, Small turned to research. He investigated Derby family primary documents at the Essex Institute, and was thrilled to report:

We . . . have established a precedent for the use of slate. Our memorandum of March 9 provided evidence that slate was used on the two brick houses erected by the Derbys in Salem in 1763 and 1772, and on this basis we feel that the precedent for slate on the first brick house, the present Derby House . . . is as good if not stronger than that for wood.⁵¹

The Regional Office approved the use of slate, but Small had to make his budget, allocated with cheaper materials in mind, stretch to pay the cost of slate. He realized that if a good source of used slate could be found, it would be cheaper, and he succeeded. He wrote to Supervising Architect Charles Peterson: "I had the choice of going ahead with the slating job on the Derby House or losing the money . . . It was a very tight squeeze financially, but by buying the slates separately I was able to get a bid for the slating and furnishing and installing the copper sheeting just under \$2,000."⁵²

Small kept Mrs. Crowninshield informed about all matters relating to Derby House. She was quite pleased with the results of his research. She wrote: "What a wonderful discovery you have made about the slate roof! I have always hated those asbestos shingles that Mr. Barnette put on."⁵³

A New Cooperating Association

In early 1946, when William Lockett was acting Superintendent, Louise Crowninshield had raised the idea of a cooperating association, legally distinct from Salem Maritime, to be formed under her leadership. She may have been influenced by her experiences with other Park Service sites, but the legal basis to approve such an association puzzled the Washington office.

⁵¹ Small to Regional Director, Region 1, 7 May 1954, 079-64-A-46, P-8435, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

⁵² Small to Charles E. Peterson, Supervising Architect, 4 August 1954, SMNHS box, file "Personal and Informal Correspondence for Edwin W. Small," NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

⁵³ Louise Crowninshield to Small, 22 March 1954, SMNHS box, file "Personal and Informal Correspondence for Edwin W. Small," NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

Apparently there was some precedent in the natural history associations formed at some western parks, but in the east the only analogy that presented itself was to concessions.

She requested a permit to sell post cards, books, and pamphlets at Salem Maritime on a nonprofit basis. The Park Service Director, Newton B. Drury, queried the regional director on procedure.

If a permit were issued, it would be necessary, according to the provisions of the Historic Sites Act, to advertise for bids, as was the case in granting a permit to Dr. Edward A. Rushford . . . We should appreciate information on how this proposal came into being. Did Mrs. Crowninshield make the original proposal, or was it done after discussion of the need for such services with National Park Service representatives? As the operation is to be on a non-profit basis, perhaps Mrs. Crowninshield would be willing to consider the organization of a non-profit organization similar to the natural history associations, out West, and the association that was formed at Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site. If such a procedure were followed, Mrs. Crowninshield would not have to bid in the open market, nor engage directly in business.

Drury concluded with a request for the constitution of the organization and a list of officers. "The Chief Counsel's Office is considering whether it will be necessary to submit the request of such a nonprofit organization to operate within the area to Secretary Ickes for approval."⁵⁴ Legal basis for such an association was found, and the Salem Maritime Historical Association began operation in 1946, just after Small's return.

The first meeting was held at Derby House on August 22, 1946, and Mrs. Crowninshield was elected president. The association took over the site sales concession and was able to return profits for the use of the site. The 1949 financial report submitted to Washington declared: "The activities of the Association embrace the sale of post cards and 16-page illustrated booklets . . . The net worth of the Association on December 31, 1948 stood at \$127.33, and on December 31, 1949 at \$224.67 . . . During the past year the Association made payment on the insurance of valuable loans of furniture from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston . . ." ⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Newton Drury, Director, to Regional Director, Region 1, 6 February 1946, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

⁵⁵ Memo from Small to Regional Director, Region 1, 27 January 1950, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1949-1959," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

Ten years later the Commonwealth of Massachusetts chartered the association as a nonprofit corporation under Chapter 180. Its charter stated that:

Activities of the association are primarily of an historical, educational, and interpretive nature and include the procurement, distribution and sale at the historic site of literature, post cards, color slides and other appropriate items. Among other things, the association may also assist by acquiring suitable objects for exhibit and accept donations for the purpose of advancing its aims.

The officers and directors included as president, Louise du Pont Crowninshield, who was now also the vice chairman of the National Trust for Historic Preservation; as vice president, Derby descendent Robert I. Peabody; as treasurer, Lawrence W. Jenkins, the director emeritus of the Peabody Museum; as executive secretary Edwin Small; and Ernest Dodge, current director of the Peabody Museum; Helen Hagar, resident custodian of the Derby House; and Derby descendent Mary P. Scott.⁵⁶

The Association provided a legal way for Salem Maritime to raise and spend money without the cumbersome and often politicized apparatus of the Government funding procedures. Private donations, as well as earned income, could be accepted through this group. Unexpected needs of the site could be met, and sudden opportunities could be grasped, such as the chance to purchase a piece of furniture offered for sale. Mrs. Crowninshield may have conceived of the auxiliary association as a way to get funds to furnish Derby and Hawkes Houses in the absence of adequate Park Service budgeting for furnishings and maintenance of interiors.

A New Master Plan is Created But Not Implemented

A new *Master Plan* for the site was developed between 1950 and 1952 but it appears that most of its recommendations were simply not instituted for lack of funding and staff.⁵⁷ The boundaries were reviewed, as seen above, and new acquisitions were suggested, but nothing was done. The existing

⁵⁶ *Salem Evening News* clipping file at SMNHS, dated only 1956.

⁵⁷ We have not been able to locate a copy of this plan in any of the repositories that might be expected to have it. The National Archives in Philadelphia contains a file called "Master Plan" for this period, but it contains only correspondence about the plan and not the plan itself. Neither the Denver Service Center, nor the Harper's Ferry Center Library, nor the site itself, has a copy of the Plan. This section is therefore based on correspondence about the Plan, drafts of sections of it, and other tangential material, and is subject to revision should a copy of the plan be located. File No. 600-01, SMNHS Master Plan file, National Archives, Philadelphia.

concession, that of Rushford and a partner to operate the Rum Shop as an antique store, was deemed satisfactory.

As noted above, the interpretation section of the *Plan*, according to the critique of Chief Historian Herbert Kahler, added nothing to the site to explore the maritime theme that had been identified by the Washington staff as inadequately presented. The absence of off-street visitor parking was presented in the *Plan* as the main block to effective interpretation of the area. Even this problem was not scheduled for resolution in the coming years.⁵⁸

Small was short of staff and funds throughout the period, making him unable to realize or even to formulate bold plans. "I am so short-handed here I doubt if I can take in all of the tour with the group," Small wrote in 1954 to Architect Charles Peterson, who had arranged a tour of the site for the visiting Society of Architectural Historians.⁵⁹ He complained to Peterson as well that "We are so badly off here that we have no mimeographing equipment, whatever, so we are unable to run off copies of the notes on the Custom House and the Derby House . . ." Even more seriously, he had to struggle to stretch the allocation to fix the Derby House roof simply in order to obtain historically appropriate materials.

The Park Service itself was in the doldrums between 1945 and 1955, aware of the problems but unable to make changes. Budgets that had been cut during World War II were reduced again during the Korean War. Smaller sites like Salem were left to struggle along and deteriorate despite the best efforts of a dedicated staff. Ironically more popular than ever with the public, national parks were underfunded and overutilized. Change would come, but not until Park Service Director Conrad L. Wirth was able to mobilize Congress for a massive national renewal campaign.

By the mid-1950s the increasing number of Park Service sites demanded reorganization on a large scale. Region One, headquartered in Richmond, Virginia, had supervised Salem Maritime as well as all of the eastern half of the United States. A new system of smaller units implemented in 1955 put Salem Maritime in Region Five, with Philadelphia as headquarters.

⁵⁸ Herbert Kahler, Chief Historian, to Assistant Director Lee, 21 October 1952, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1949-1959," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

⁵⁹ Small to Charles E. Peterson, Supervising Architect, 4 August 1954, SMNHS box, file "Personal and Informal Correspondence for Edwin W. Small," NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

Before this reorganization, the old system of coordinating superintendencies had been abolished. Small no longer formally supervised Adams Mansion, now renamed Adams NHS, and Morristown had no more responsibility for Salem or Adams. Regional Director Elbert Cox, who had been Salem's first coordinating superintendent, wrote:

The changes in the matter of Coordinating Superintendencies have been made objectively, wholly without relation to superintendents as individuals because of a conclusion reached after careful consideration upon a Service-wide basis as to the most effective scheme of organization . . . I would deeply regret to have anyone feel that the change is in any way a lack of appreciation of the very helpful work which Coordinating Superintendents have done in so many years in the past — not infrequently with handicaps to their own areas in advising and assisting the smaller areas in many ways. I feel sure that the same willingness and readiness to assist with both advice and material resources will still be found on the request of one superintendent to another. That has always been the spirit among park men. The only change will be the clarification of responsibilities . . . Possibly some special question may arise with regard to the administrative procedures involved in effecting the announced changes . . . It is my purpose to make certain that the needs and problems of the small areas shall receive prompt and understanding consideration by the administrative and professional personnel of the Regional Office.⁶⁰

Edwin Small had been at Salem since 1937, with the three-year interruption of World War II. It was not Park Service policy to maintain a superintendent at a site for very long terms of service. The exceptions were the extraordinary people who developed an affinity for an area so that it became home.⁶¹ Small apparently was such an exception, highly valued as well for his wide and deep understanding of history and architecture in New England. In 1947, Appleman had commented on Small for the Regional Office: "Finally, I want to say that I think the Salem area is under excellent administrative supervision, and at the same time under one that understands its historical assets and their potentialities in development and interpretation."⁶² By 1956, Small was ready for a change of vision. So was Salem Maritime.

⁶⁰ Regional Director, Region 1 [Cox] to Small, 18 June 1953, SMNHS box, file "Official Service Correspondence for Edwin W. Small," refers to Director's memorandum FO-62-53 on Coordinating Superintendencies, NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

⁶¹ Conversation with Barry Mackintosh, NPS Historian, 20 December 1991.

⁶² Roy E. Appleman, Regional Historian, to Regional Director, Region 1, 10 October 1947, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1941-1948," Branch of History, NPS Washington Office.

CHAPTER 5

"MISSION 66": SHIFTING EMPHASIS (1956-1969)

In 1959 the superintendent of Salem Maritime NHS, Harold Lessem, wrote a report entitled "Salem Maritime National Historic Site: A Problem in Shifting Emphasis."¹ The title was prophetic, aptly summarizing circumstances at the site from 1956 to 1969, when interpretive goals began to be shifted from land-based to sea-based resources. This shift was accomplished haltingly and with some difficulty, influenced by national priorities, local politics, changes of administration, and outside advisors. The issue was not fully resolved in this period, but old assumptions were rethought, experimentation began, and the groundwork was laid.

Nationally, the era encompassed the dynamic "MISSION 66" program of 1956 to 1966, and the changes it brought throughout the system in the late 1960s. As the MISSION 66 initiative reached its conclusion, passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 would give the Park Service new roles in historic preservation.² Both MISSION 66 and the Historic Preservation Act brought changes in the overall Park Service organization.

At Salem a new superintendent brought new ideas, the addition of the seventeenth-century Narbonne House expanded the site's boundaries for the first time since its founding, and new recreational uses joined what had been viewed previously as a purely historical park.

National Initiative: MISSION 66

The problems experienced by Salem Maritime in the postwar years — overuse, underfunding, and inadequate staffing — affected the entire National Park System. By the mid 1950s, ten years of enthusiastic public use of national parks combined with consistent underfunding of the Park Service had led to shabby and even unprofessional conditions in many parks.

¹ Harold Lessem, "Salem Maritime National Historic Site: A Problem in Shifting Emphasis" (1959), SMNHS box, NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

² Edwin C. Bearss, "The National Park Service and Its History Program: 1864-1986 - An Overview" in *The Public Historian* 9, no. 2 (Spring 1987): 15; Barry Mackintosh, *The National Parks: Shaping the System* (Washington, 1991), 62.

Director Conrad Wirth, with the support of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, successfully appealed to Congress in January 1956 for a new ten-year plan of park restoration and revitalization to be called "MISSION 66." MISSION 66 constituted a massive infusion of cash — nearly a billion dollars over ten years — and public and private expertise to revitalize the parks in time for the fiftieth anniversary of the Park Service in 1966.

Every aspect of park operations could be tackled under the auspices of MISSION 66.

The purpose of MISSION 66 is to review all operations and plans of the National Park Service and to present a constructive and sound program to bring the presently inadequate development for operation, protection, and public use into harmony with the visitation and use demand anticipated by 1966.³

A team of senior managers in the Washington Office was responsible for developing programs and monitoring progress. Each park or site was asked to submit a "prospectus" of its own long-range goals and plans at the beginning of the program in 1956, and future work was to be in accordance with the approved prospectus.⁴

MISSION 66 money funded the increased staffing required for thoughtful planning and improved visitor services. It provided historic sites such as Salem Maritime with staff historians to supplement the work done by superintendents. Research could be undertaken where warranted, publication programs expanded, and interpretive aids, such as the audio-visual programs favored by the Service at the time, installed and run. Museums and visitor centers were constructed at many sites.

At Salem, MISSION 66 funding provided necessary repairs and refurbishment of historic structures, additional staff, improved publications and exhibits, and audio-visual devices and programs. In addition, the coordinated national, regional, and site effort in research and planning

³ From text of "Departmental Unit Award for Meritorious Service" in Roy E. Appleman, "History of the National Park Service MISSION 66 Program," January 1958, History Division, NPS Washington Office, 95.

⁴ The "MISSION 66 Prospectus" for Salem Maritime cannot be located at any repository — not at the Site, nor NARO, nor Harper's Ferry (where other MISSION 66 documents are filed), nor at the Denver Service Center (where the MISSION 66 file for Salem contains the 1962 "Master Plan - MISSION 66 edition" only). The contents of this document can be partially inferred from other correspondence and documents that refer to it.

encouraged by MISSION 66 can be partially credited with the change in interpretive philosophy of the site in this period.

Regional Growth: The Boston National Historic Sites Commission and The Boston Group

MISSION 66 also set in motion changes to the regional context in which the Salem site operated. As part of MISSION 66, the Park Service resumed the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings begun in the 1930s but not funded through the 1940s and early 1950s. This survey was intended to provide for the orderly expansion of the National Park System, as well as to recognize as National Historic Landmarks significant structures that other agencies or individuals might be encouraged to preserve.⁵

As a part of this effort, Superintendent Edwin Small left Salem Maritime in 1956 for a position, considered to be temporary, on a new survey of the historical resources of Boston. He fully intended to return to his old position and sought assurance that the job would be held for him.⁶ Small wrote to his friend and former coordinating superintendent, Francis Ronalds:

You may be interested to know that I have been hornswoggled into taking the job as Historian and Chief of Party to the Boston National Historic Sites Commission. I was voted in by the Commission at their meeting on Monday and I will go on their payroll toward the end of this month . . . I shall spend most of the time in libraries and out doing field work. I plan to use the Essex Institute here as much as I can, also the Boston Athenaeum where I have been given some space by Walter Whitehill . . . The work of the Commission is supposed to expire June 16, 1957 . . . an attempt to prolong its life another year would be wise and may be requested at the next session of Congress.⁷

In the event, Small's work in Boston lasted several years and provided the background research and planning for what would later become the Boston National Historical park, as well as several other Park Service sites in the greater Boston area. Small had officially and unofficially acted as a feasibility

⁵ Barry Mackintosh, *The National Parks: Shaping the System*, (Washington: 1991), 62.

⁶ Regional Director Daniel J. Tobin to Superintendent, SMNHS, February 1956, SMNHS box, file "Personal and Informal Correspondence for Edwin W. Small, Superintendent," NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

⁷ Small to Dr. Francis S. Ronalds, Morristown NHP, 10 February 1956, SMNHS box, file "Personal and Informal Correspondence for Edwin W. Small, Superintendent," NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

committee of one in scouting potential Park Service sites in New England since his CCC days, and so was well suited to his new responsibilities. He did not return to Salem Maritime in a full-time capacity.

The Boston National Historic Sites Commission was chartered by Congress to begin work in March 1956 and expire in June 1957, and was later renewed for another year. The commission was a public/private partnership supervised by the NPS Philadelphia regional office, and consisted of Chairman Mark Bortman of Boston, Senator Leverett Saltonstall, Congressman Thomas P. O'Neill of Boston, Mrs. Francis B. (Louise du Pont) Crowninshield, NPS director Conrad Wirth, and Walter Muir Whitehill, preservationist and director of the Boston Athenaeum. The commission office was in the Post Office Building in Boston's Financial District. Its mandate was to inventory the pre-Revolutionary and Revolutionary era sites in the Boston area, though this was later expanded to include some early Colonial and 19th century sites as well.⁸ The commission worked in a political climate that supported urban renewal in Boston, which would eventually include the demolition of large sections of the historic downtown area. The Boston Redevelopment Authority, chartered by the City in 1957, had vast powers to condemn antiquated structures and would permanently alter the historic landscape of Boston.⁹

The work of the Boston Historic Sites Commission in identifying and researching historic buildings set in motion the establishment of several new parks and sites in the immediate Boston area and eventually led the Park Service to develop a new administrative entity. In August 1964, Small, since 1960 the superintendent of Minute Man National Historic Park in Lexington and Concord, received this memo from Northeast Regional Director Ronald Lee:

It has been determined that grouping several areas in metropolitan Boston in one field unit for administrative purposes and assigning administration and management to one single field organization will be in the interest of efficiency and economy and, particularly, more effective utilization of manpower. You are designated as Acting Superintendent of the Group in addition to your responsibility for

⁸ Small to Acting Chief, EODC, 23 May 1958, box SMNHS #1, file "SMNHS 1949-1959," History Division, NPS Washington Office; Small to Dr. Francis S. Ronalds, 10 February 1956, SMNHS box, file "Personal and Informal Correspondence for Edwin W. Small, Superintendent," NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

⁹ Walter Muir Whitehill, *Boston: A Topographical History*, second edition (Cambridge: 1968), 201.

Minute Man. The Group is to consist of the Boston National Historic Sites Project, Minute Man National Historical Park Project, Salem Maritime National Historic Site, and the attached list of Registered National Historic Landmarks . . . ¹⁰

That full list encompassed Historic Districts (Beacon Hill), privately managed sites such as the Paul Revere House in Boston and the Fairbanks House in suburban Dedham, municipally-owned sites such as Lexington Green, churches including Old North and Old South, the Saugus Iron Works, the Frederick Law Olmsted House, and even engineering landmarks such as Boston Light and the earliest part of the Boston subway system.

As director of the Boston Group, Small found himself also the temporary acting superintendent of Salem Maritime from 1966 to 1968 when it was between regular superintendents. The Boston Group was administratively subordinate to the Park Service Region 5 office in Philadelphia, but its establishment foreshadowed the creation in the next decade of the Boston National Historical Park, a confederation of public and private sites. It also set the administrative groundwork for the new regional structure created in 1973, when the Boston Group became a new North Atlantic Regional Office .

Administrative Changes at Salem: Harold Lessem and MISSION 66

At Salem, Small's 1956 replacement was Harold Lessem, who came from the position of historian at Fort McHenry in Baltimore.¹¹ He had already logged sixteen years of experience in the Park Service. Brought to Salem in April 1956 as a temporary replacement for Small, he remained the superintendent of SMNHS for more than seven years, until September 1963. He lived on the site with his family in the staff quarters of Hawkes House.

Lessem brought a fresh point of view to the site. Since he had not been there at the founding, he was willing to question and to try to reverse some of the original choices made in the 1930s. Hence, his paper "A Problem in Shifting Emphasis," prepared for a national interpretive conference held in Washington in 1959, laid out the problem of basing programs on the historic buildings on the land side of Derby Street instead of on the wharves and warehouses of the maritime community. The mistake in the site's

¹⁰ Ronald Lee, Regional Director, Northeast Region, to Superintendent, Minute Man NHP, 28 August 1964, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

¹¹ Small to Dr. Francis S. Ronalds, Morristown NHP, 10 February 1956, SMNHS box, file "Personal and Informal Correspondence for Edwin W. Small, Superintendent," NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

orientation, he said, needed to be corrected. He proposed a focus on Derby Wharf, by beginning an experimental series of "trailside" exhibits along the length of the wharf. The design of the exhibits themselves would incorporate visual elements associated with maritime life, including dock pilings, bollards, barrels, and hatch covers. The simple expedient of laying a walk from the parking area to the wharf would help, and guided tours would be instituted.¹²

Despite increased funding under MISSION 66, Lessem felt that the staffing of Salem Maritime was inadequate to effectively interpret and maintain the site. In particular, he found it difficult to retain the Historian's position, which was not always funded even though authorized, and experienced relatively high turnover due to staff transfers to other sites. He noted in 1961 that: "... the continuing failure to receive funds to engage a permanent historian poses a serious obstacle to our planning for essential developments."¹³ Things did not improve, and the next year he again complained, "... the lack of permanent interpretive personnel presents a difficult handicap..."¹⁴ He pointed out the difficulty of managing while simultaneously handling direct visitor services: "Since the Site lacks permanent interpretive personnel the administrative members do double duty. For this reason May and June are rough, tough months due to the heavy visitation. The return to duty of our capable seasonal ranger historians was thus a joyous occasion."¹⁵

The personnel shortages persisted: in 1963 Lessem was unable to find any candidates for the open historian and guide positions and was virtually without trained research or interpretive staff. He had to hire contract researchers in order to continue site planning. In this case the problem was not money, but the Park Services's inability to recruit acceptable historians and trained guides willing to locate in Salem.¹⁶

Lessem left Salem to become superintendent of Antietam National Battlefield Site in the fall of 1963. His replacement was Arthur L. Sullivan, former historian of Minute Man NHP, where he had worked under Edwin Small. Sullivan remained for only two and a half years until March 1966, when he

¹² Harold Lessem, "Salem Maritime National Historic Site: A Problem in Shifting Emphasis" (1959), SMNHS box, NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

¹³ Annual Narrative Report, 1961 Fiscal Year, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

¹⁴ Annual Narrative Report, 1962 Fiscal Year, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

¹⁵ Superintendent's Monthly Report for June, 1961, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

¹⁶ Superintendent's Monthly Report for June, 1963, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

was promoted and sent to Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park.¹⁷ For the next two and a half years, Small, working from the Boston Group office, again became acting superintendent of Salem Maritime in addition to his other responsibilities.

Interpretive Planning: Looking Back to the Water

The fresh perspective of Lessem's tenure allowed the return of attention in preservation and interpretation to the waterfront. The MISSION 66 emphasis on research and reassessment of existing site problems also facilitated this shift.

Although the desire to save Derby Wharf had been the original inspiration for the site, Salem Maritime's original physical planners, Norman Newton and Stuart Barnette, had concurred, as we have seen, in Edwin Small's emphasis on the land-based features of the site; Small had focussed on the relatively easy to restore and interpret Custom House and Derby House rather than the messy and unevocative wharves. The warehouses that had originally lined Derby Wharf were gone, as were the ships that had tied up there, and only the most strenuous reconstruction program, based on incomplete evidence, could have replaced them. Despite their key role in the site's creation, Derby and Central Wharves were seen as secondary in the visitor experience.

This evaluation of the relative significance of the site's resources was reassessed in the late 1950s, and in both preservation and interpretation attention turned towards the sea. This shift in interest may be attributed in part to Superintendent Lessem's receptiveness to hints that had long been coming from the regional office about the relative neglect of the Wharves. Lessem wrote:

The Site's most obvious "maritime" remain is the Derby Wharf, one of this country's few surviving pre-revolutionary port facilities. To its everlasting credit, the National Park Service rescued this structure from total disintegration. Unfortunately, it has received practically no interpretive development although much serious thought has been devoted to this subject.

This situation has permitted two attractive buildings, the Customs [sic] House and the Derby House, to overshadow the Wharf. Both

¹⁷ Superintendent's Monthly Report, October 1963, Philadelphia Federal Records Center; Annual Narrative Report, 1966 Fiscal Year, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

structures, though related to the maritime story, have strong secondary values (architectural and Nathaniel Hawthorne) which tend to absorb visitor interest. The site is thus, interpretively speaking, confronted with a problem of inversion of park values, and the paramount consideration is to eliminate this anomaly by focusing attention on our most significant physical asset, the Derby Wharf.¹⁸

In the brief plan outlined with this statement, Derby Wharf would become an exhibit in itself, labeled with a series of wayside markers that would be used to tell the maritime story of Salem. This interpretive device, it was hoped, would also encourage visitors to walk the length of the wharf, which few currently did. The wayside exhibits were to be temporary in construction in order to allow some experimentation with effective ways to present the story the wharf was to tell.

This approach complemented the museum concept outlined the previous year in the *Museum Prospectus* for the site. In the late 1950s museum-building was the latest interpretive enthusiasm from the Washington Office, and nearly all parks were busy drawing up plans for them. Historic houses such as Derby House and structures such as the Custom House were already seen as "museums" in Park Service nomenclature, but did not allow space for the up-to-date displays and interpretive technology favored under MISSION 66. The draft plan for Salem Maritime, prepared by Superintendent Lessem, called for an ambitious permanent collection of maritime-related artifacts and an archive of documents, along with changing exhibits. To justify the need for such a museum, Lessem argued that:

It is manifestly impossible for the National Park Service to provide its visitors with a trip to distant Sumatra on an early 19th century vessel . . . For this reason, it is necessary to employ every possible means and approach to treat the visitor and stimulate his intellectual curiosity. The proper interpretation of the park story provides opportunities for the use of displays, trailside exhibits, interpretive panels, electric maps, message repeaters, and admatic [slide/tape] machines.

Well-trained, competent interpretive personnel will always remain the back bone and mainstay of the program. The human element is the sine qua non . . . However, the value of a well-contrived, continuing exhibit program cannot be over-emphasized . . . Apart from the

¹⁸ Harold Lessem, "Salem Maritime National Historic Site: A Problem in Shifting Emphasis" (1959), SMNHS box, NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

interpretive function, the museum will serve to preserve valuable items from damage, loss, or destruction. It will provide storage space and facilities for treating objects and records. It will house a modest library for general visitors and offer to the scholar and student a large study collection of Customs Service documents.¹⁹

Lessem called Derby Wharf the site's "most valuable physical structure," but in weighing the various interpretive themes competing for the attention of the visitor, he suggested that to allow a coherent presentation "... it will be necessary to stress the purely foreign commerce aspects ... to narrate and interpret the park story primarily in terms of commodities and Customs Service statistics ... in the main the very quantity of the material in the park story compels the interpretive planner to adhere closely to the commodities and statistics approach." He was also quite satisfied with the status quo on Central Wharf, with the Naval Reserve continuing to occupy its "temporary" training facility.²⁰

Lessem's innovative approach to the site did not end with his recommendations for new emphasis on the wharves. On the land side of Derby Street, Lessem proposed to expand the display space in the Custom House to at least temporarily meet the need for improved visitor orientation. Indeed, the Custom House was called the "Visitor Center" in the *Prospectus*, an indication of the Park Service's attempt to standardize visitor experience at varied sites (Fig. 9). MISSION 66 provided funds for visitor centers, in the belief that the visitor orientation function could best be carried out in distinct buildings rather than on the site. Lessem also proposed the opening of the Bonded Warehouse (to be used for audio-visual presentations) and the Scale House. "Both of these structures will interpret the functions and daily routine of a Custom House." Foreshadowing the interest in vernacular architecture and social history that was to come, Lessem also suggested that: "Two rooms of the Hawkes House may be opened to illustrate the interior of a relatively plain federalist home in comparison to the panelled Derby House."²¹

¹⁹ Salem Maritime Museum Prospectus, Preliminary Draft, 6/58, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library. Research has not uncovered a final version of this document, which may not have reached the final approval stage.

²⁰ Salem Maritime Museum Prospectus, Preliminary Draft, 6/58, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

²¹ Salem Maritime Museum Prospectus, Preliminary Draft, 6/58, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

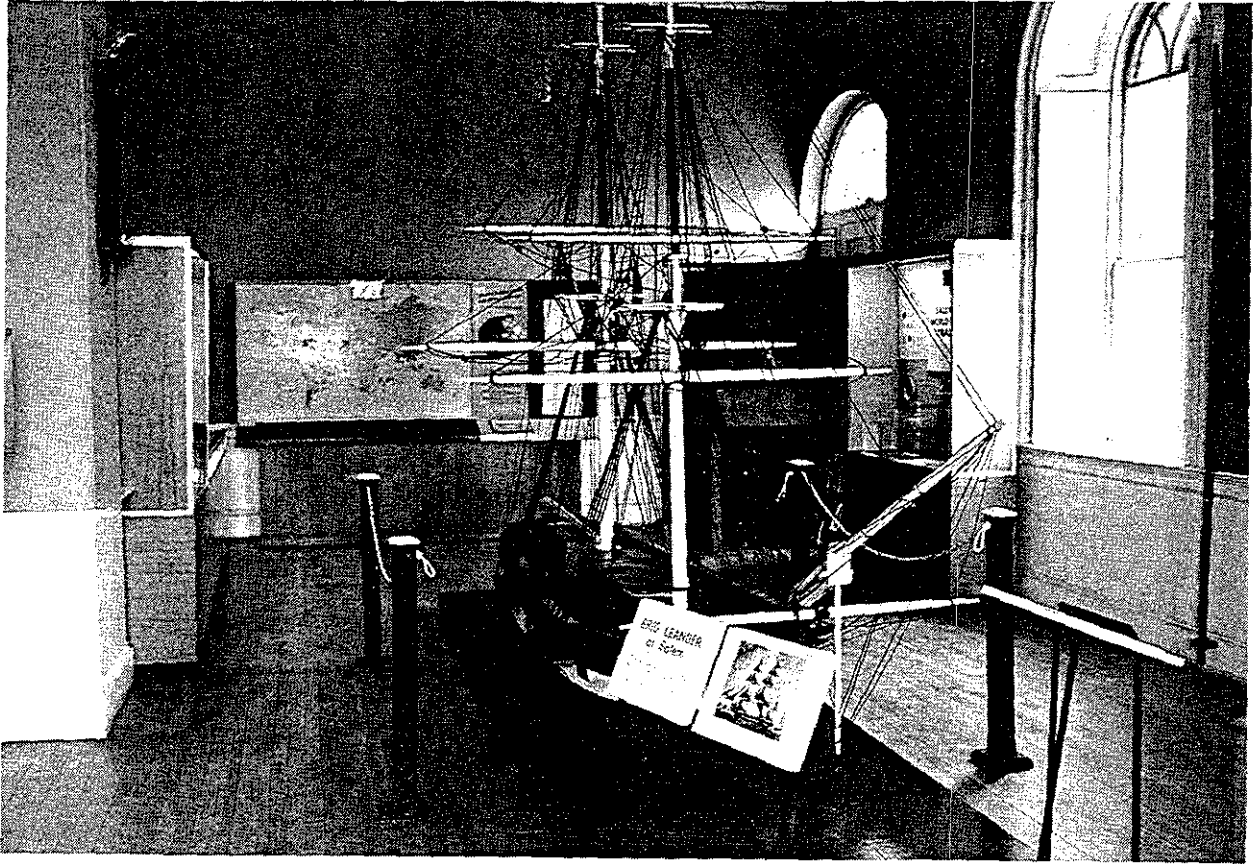


Figure 9. Interpretive Display inside the Custom House in 1968. Under the MISSION 66 plans, the Custom House became the visitor center for the site, using the latest interpretive techniques. (Courtesy National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center.)

Most daringly, Lessem suggested reconstruction of a wharf building for interpretive purposes. The Park Service was wary of the fakery implicit in bad reconstructions, and Small had always argued that the lack of evidence about the warehouses precluded thoughts of rebuilding them. Yet in the face of bare wharves that failed to speak eloquently of maritime greatness, the idea was tempting and at least deserved some consideration.

Perhaps the most significant development will take place on our most important feature, the Derby Wharf. A path will be installed to lead visitors from the parking facility to the wharfhead. A series of experimental exhibits of a trailside nature will be installed on either side of the wharf from Derby Street to the lighthouse on the southern extremity of the wharf . . . It might also prove feasible in the future to erect a visitor center on the site of an old warehouse. Architecturally, I would suggest a type wharf building of the period of 1800.²²

In the spirit of openness to new ideas promoted by the Washington planners of MISSION 66, discussion of reconstructions, long in disfavor, had begun again. The initial planning documents for the program had repeated a suggestion from a survey of park staff: "There should be more lifesize exhibits in historical parks . . . This idea favors more reconstructions. People are showing an ever-increasing preference for life size reconstructions in the places they visit."²³

Lessem hoped for the staff needed to make all this possible and requested a senior and a junior historian, a Derby house guide, and four ranger-historians for the permanent staff, as well as temporary use of three researchers, a layout man, and a museum preparator.

Comments on the *Prospectus* draft show the range of opinion operative within the management structure of the Park Service on preservation and interpretive issues. Park Service Chief Historian Herbert Kahler, who was very familiar with the problems of the site through his past experiences as coordinating superintendent, was intrigued by the suggestion of a rebuilt warehouse: "To us, the outstanding proposal of this prospectus is the one which suggests that a period warehouse be reconstructed on the site of an original building of this type for ultimate use as the visitor center of the area . . ." But he had a plan of his own to offer: ". . . the Navy's present use of

²² Salem Maritime Museum Prospectus, Preliminary Draft, 6/58, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

²³ Roy E. Appleman, "History of the National Park Service MISSION 66 Program," January 1958, National Park Service, History Division, NPS Washington Office, 26.

the warehouse on Central Wharf could be terminated at any time, why not consider, as an ultimate plan, the alteration of this warehouse, which is a modern structure, for visitor center purposes?" 24

George A. Palmer of the regional office wanted to know specifically how the themes were to be presented, and offered ideas of his own for extending a maritime flavor over the entire enterprise.

We agree that a reconstructed warehouse, preferably near the base of the Derby Wharf, is highly desirable . . . we approve the proposal to use part of the Bonded warehouse for audio-visual programs . . . We would especially recommend the use of other parts of the building, or the second floor of the Customs [sic] House, for full-scale exhibits of a ship's hold stowed with cargo from the Far East, as a forecastle or a Captain's cabin. We believe, too, that a number of large, free-standing, in effect "open" museum exhibits would add interest and enlightenment, such as figure-heads, anchors, ship's guns, an actual diagrammatic model of a typical Salem brig whose lines, capstan, etc. could actually be worked by visitors . . .

Mr. Lessem, in revising this prospectus, [should] indicate any preferences he might have as to dioramas, models, costumed dummies, illuminated maps, walk-in exhibits, such as the forecastle suggested above, etc., etc.²⁵

But Acting Chief of Interpretation John Doerr, who might have been expected to approve of reconstruction for interpretive ends, disagreed.

We believe also that the prospectus should aim, as it does, to maintain the high standard of historic integrity which exists in Salem Maritime and in the work and philosophy of other institutions in Salem. In a place where so much of the past is preserved in authentic original structures and furnishings, we feel it would be a mistake for the Park Service to use full scale reconstructions of warehouses, ships or ship interiors. With the original structures now preserved and restored in Salem Maritime and the wealth of visual and audio-visual means that

24 Chief Historian Herbert E. Kahler to Chief, Branch of Museums, 9 July 1958, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

25 Acting Regional Director George A. Palmer to Director, 18 June 1958, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

can be used to interpret them, the Salem story can be told in an accurate, fitting and strongly effective manner.²⁶

Kahler also took exception to Palmer's freewheeling interpretive inventiveness: "... the second floor should definitely be exploited for interpretive use, through the use of appropriate devices, but we do not believe that 'Costumed Dummies', are in keeping with Service display policies." ²⁷

No final version of the 1958 *Prospectus* appears to exist; either the document never reached final approval, or no copies were saved. In practice, the warehouse was not reconstructed, but the wayside exhibits were set up, the Custom House continued to bear the burden of acting as visitor center for the site, and the *Bonded Warehouse* did double duty as an exhibit and as the home of the site's slide/tape presentation for large groups. Historians, senior and junior, were appointed, though staff levels never reached what Lessem had wished for.

A few years later, in 1962 and 1963, the master plan was revised in a "MISSION 66 Edition" to incorporate some of these changes in policy and approach. Lessem wrote:

... [the site's] Mission is to develop among its visitors a sense of the reality of a bustling international seaport in the days when wind-driven, canvas-clad sailing vessels were the sole carriers of our water borne commerce and thereby deepen understanding, pride and appreciation of the significant contribution made by Salem Maritime's enterprise to the growth and development of the young American Republic.

Fundamental to proper Park development is the crucial need for interpretive treatment of the area south of Derby Street, including the Derby Wharf, as part of the Site's most valuable asset, the waterfront. The Wharf with its tremendous survival value is the single most important facility for interpreting the Park Story. Serious consideration should be directed to the feasibility of reconstructing replicas

²⁶ Acting Chief, Division of Interpretation, John E. Doerr to Regional Director, Region 5, 23 July 1958, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

²⁷ Chief Historian Herbert E. Kahler to Chief, Branch of Museums, 9 July 1958, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

of the old warehouses which once lined the wharf and also of mooring to the facility a reconstruction of a merchant vessel of the 1781 era.²⁸

The primary contact point for visitors, the visitor center, was to remain in the Custom House, supplemented by use of the Bonded Warehouse for group presentations. Site offices would remain in the Custom House, and staff quarters in the Hawkes House. A parking lot and turnaround occupied the foot of Derby Wharf where the demolished warehouses had stood (Fig. 10).

In a further move toward exploiting the "secondary" buildings on the site, the plan suggested a new direction for the Rum Shop, which was no longer to be used as a concession and was to be turned over to interpretive uses, inside and out. The plan called for the addition of property to the site extending the boundaries to Essex Street on the north and Herbert Street on the west, specifically the acquisition of the Narbonne, Meek, and Richard Derby Houses, "To further the Park Story and broaden the appreciation of the influence of the maritime enterprise on the community . . ." The plan did not specify in what way those three structures could accomplish this goal.²⁹

Interpretive Experiments

The sheer numbers of visitors passing through the site (most of them staying less than one hour) necessitated attention to orienting them and communicating with them as never before. "Personal services," or human beings as interpreters, has long been understood by the Park Service as the best way to reach people of varied interest levels, for varying times, and seize their interest. But hiring and training and supporting visitor contact personnel has often taken a back seat to the latest technological or philosophical trend, and this was especially true in the 1950s and 1960s when audio-visual presentations seemed to be the most effective and efficient answer to educating the public in the parks. Park Service Naturalist Donald Erskine warned in 1958 that:

There is some danger that those doing interpretive planning may become so enthusiastic about audio-visual devices that they will

²⁸ 1962 Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of SMNHS, microfiche, NPS Denver Service Center (approved 1963).

²⁹ 1962 Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of SMNHS, microfiche, NPS Denver Service Center (approved 1963).

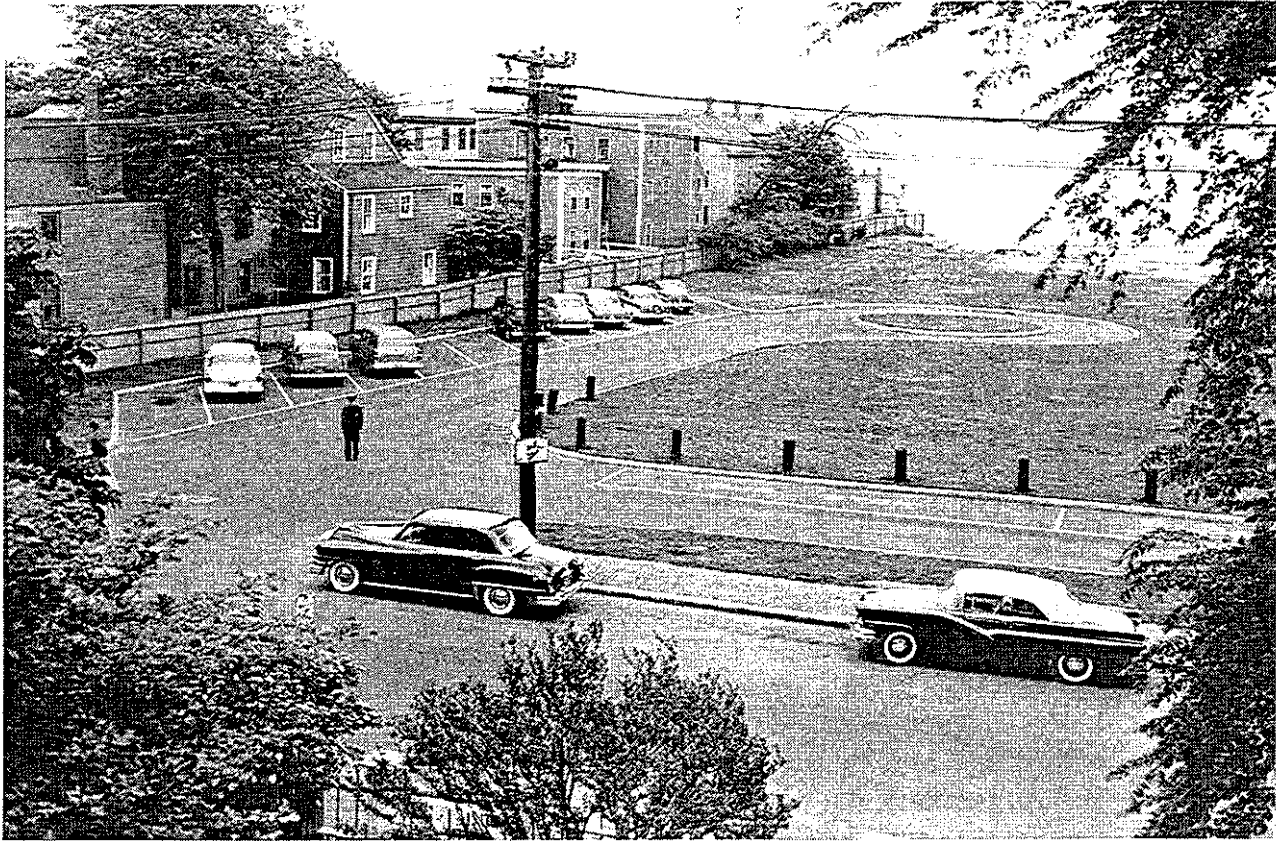


Figure 10. View of the Parking Lot on Derby Wharf in the 1960s. Beyond it stand the buildings on Kosciusko Street, which SMNHS planners had long hoped to acquire and demolish. (Courtesy Salem Maritime National Historic Site.)

attempt to use them in situations where they are not really needed. We must recognize that personal service is almost always best . . . ³⁰

MISSION 66 planners had picked up a warning from the field as well in their early interviews: "Mechanical and audio-visual devices cannot answer visitor questions." Yet the overwhelming efficiency of these devices could not be ignored. By the early 1960s, the Park Service response to field complaints of inadequate visitor services staff was to encourage the parks to develop and install audio-visual programs as part of orientation programs, preferably to be part of a visitor center/museum. This would enable a carefully-developed message or "Park story" to be widely and consistently presented to increasing numbers of visitors without the need to increase staff. In some parks, audio-visual programs were effective, in others disastrous, but nearly all had some difficulties.³¹

With MISSION 66 support, Salem joined the audio-visual bandwagon. Audio tape equipment was first installed in the "Hawthorne Room" on the first floor of the Custom House. In May 1959, Lessem reported that "We were extremely happy to observe that the revised shortened tape definitely attracts and holds visitor attention." (By implication, the former unrevised and longer tape failed to do so.)³² Another problem was the not-uncommon one of technical breakdowns of the "Admatic" slide/tape machine, causing a cost in personnel time as well as money. Salem Maritime also had the problem of lack of appropriate space for large groups to view the program in any of its historic buildings. A room on the second floor of the Custom House was converted, but the staff did not consider it especially suitable. Eighty percent of Custom House visitors bypassed it.³³

By November 1962 slide talks were used for visitor orientation and information.

Due to the large influx of school groups, we began to give slide talks on the first floor of the warehouse. Reaction to the talks was most gratifying. We are the only local tourist attraction that features this service and the teachers are most appreciative. Our problems in this

³⁰ Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective*, History Division, NPS, Washington, 1986, 40-41.

³¹ Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective*, History Division, NPS, Washington, 1986, 39-40.

³² Superintendent's Monthly Report for May 1959, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

³³ Superintendent's Monthly Report for July, 1965, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

respect are threefold, lack of proper slides, inadequate facilities and personnel shortages.³⁴

The personnel shortages that perennially plagued Lessem made this approach a logical one. Yet the site's admissions figures show that only 20% of the visitors to the Custom House saw the slide/tape, which was intended to be the primary method of visitor orientation and to give a background for all the other interpretive devices — and not all site visitors went into the Custom House. In July 1965, the site counted 42,786 visitors to the entire site, of whom 1,454, only 3%, saw the slide/tape. Derby House tours drew 1,054 visitors — only 2% of visitors.³⁵ These primary means of interpreting the site clearly were not successful, being neither attractive to visitors nor effective in educating them, yet the site continued to depend on the "slide/tape in the visitor center" concept of visitor services that was the mandate from Washington under MISSION 66.

Ralph Lewis of the Branch of Museum Services visited Salem in that year and had minor comments on the interpretive devices used. In the Custom House, the electric map showing trade routes, a favorite device of the 1950s,³⁶ needed refurbishment; and he pointed out that the Hawthorne Room "audio label," a visitor-activated tape, referred to objects that were not present in the room and should be supplied if possible. His faith in the efficacy of audio-visuals remained strong:

We gave some thought to the interpretation of Derby Wharf. The present wayside exhibits have perhaps outlived their usefulness . . . If the exhibits and AV in the Custom House do their job adequately, words and simple illustrations rather than elaborate exhibits should work well out on the wharf.³⁷

Perhaps Lewis was not aware that only a tiny percentage of visitors to the wharf had seen the AV presentation in the Custom House.

In the next year, 1964, with Edwin Small again the acting superintendent, a new slide/tape program was made and installed in the second floor room of the Custom House. Staff Historian Holden revised it with suggestions from

³⁴ Superintendent's Monthly Report for June, 1963, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

³⁵ Superintendent's Monthly Report for July, 1965, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

³⁶ Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective*, History Division, NPS, Washington, 1986, 39.

³⁷ Chief, Branch of Museum Operations Ralph H. Lewis to Regional Director, Northeast Region, 9 November 1965, SMNHS "Exhibit Rehab" files, NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

the interpretive divisions in Washington and the Northeast Regional Office.³⁸

Small was not willing to rely on audio-visual devices alone to tell the park story, and in 1966 he began to consider better ways to interpret the wharves.

Preparations were under way for the installation of granite monuments to outline the location of six of the historic warehouses that once stood on Derby Wharf. With assistance from the Museum Laboratory, steps were also initiated for the design of signs fully to spot and orient for the visiting public the Site as a whole, and also Derby Wharf and the Customs [sic] House.³⁹

In 1966 the Park Service celebrated its fiftieth birthday and completed the MISSION 66 initiative, but the energy put into improved visitor services continued. By the late 1960s the newest wave in interpretation was "living history," which included several techniques for having interpretive staff act out episodes or characters from the past. George B. Hartzog, Jr., the energetic and forward-looking director of the Park Service, was a particularly enthusiastic partisan of the approach. When well thought out and sensitively presented, as at Old Sturbridge Village, living history proved remarkably effective and popular. All Park Service sites were asked to study the potential of this technique in their own interpretive programs. Many sites rushed to present ill-conceived or unsuitable programs, while other programs were quite successful.⁴⁰

Salem Maritime was not quite ready for living history. In January 1968 Acting Superintendent Small responded to the regional office's request to "... [evaluate] conditions at Derby Wharf in the light of their suitability for initiating a program in 'Living History' during the coming summer. Conclusions were presented to the effect that neither a sufficiently controlled environment nor adequately developed setting and paraphernalia yet exist to insure making such an undertaking an immediate success." It could be interpreted that Small was still resisting attempts by the Regional Office to highlight Derby Wharf interpretation. Small did however go so far as to send Management Assistant Ives to Sturbridge Village and Mystic Seaport to study

³⁸ Annual Narrative Report, 1966 Fiscal Year, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

³⁹ Annual Narrative Report, 1966 Fiscal Year, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

⁴⁰ Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective*, History Division, NPS, Washington, 1986, 60.

their interpretive methods and noted that: "The visits proved to be of considerable value and some challenging ideas were received."⁴¹

Cultural Resource Planning: More Basic Research

Comprehensive professional studies of the major structures as a basis for preservation and interpretive planning were undertaken for the first time at Salem during the late 1950s. They began with historic structures reports for the Custom House (1959 and 1964), Derby House (1959 and 1963) and Hawkes House (1959), written by park staff with outside scholars. Studies followed on the Rum Shop and Scale House in 1964, and the Narbonne House in 1965. Despite the renewed concern about interpreting the water-based resources, however, the wharves were not examined in a historic structure report until 1973 and 1974.

While architectural planning and detail had long been taken seriously by the Park Service, attention to interiors had lagged far behind. Furnishings and the decorative arts had been a secondary concern, a matter of tasteful decor evocative of the period to be interpreted, and the Park Service had been happy to let someone else take the initiative. At the Derby House, considered to be a showplace restoration by the Service, Louise du Pont Crowninshield had been given a free hand to decorate with appropriate antiques, with very little oversight by the superintendent and virtually none by specialists in the regional office or design offices. Her knowledge and taste were widely respected by the preservation world, but it is not clear that she or others undertook any specific documentary research to guide the furnishing of Derby House. When Crowninshield died in 1958, the Park Service lost the assistance of one of their earliest and most generous supporters. Several years later, in 1965, a formal furnishings study of the Derby House was undertaken for the first time, preparatory to an effort to renovate and refurnish the house. This represented a move away from reliance on knowledgeable private collectors to a new emphasis on research and ultimately to a more profound questioning of how such furnishings related to interpretation of the daily material life of the site's past.

New administrative procedures announced in 1960 called for furnishings studies for all historic structures, to be based on approved interpretive prospectuses. Furnishings plans were to be prepared by a "furnishings

⁴¹ "Log of Events and Contacts" for January 1968, June 1968, Waltham Federal Records Center.

specialist" working with the site historian and site superintendent.⁴² Ralph Lewis, the chief of the Branch of Museum Operations, provided the impetus for the change at Salem. In his 1965 inspection report he noted that:

While the Derby House always offers a very satisfying experience . . . [t]he house does need a furnishing plan. It is difficult to people the rooms consistently in one's imagination in terms of the present furniture arrangements. This situation naturally requires the interpretation to emphasize furniture more than the life it should illustrate.⁴³

Acting Superintendent Small hired Marjorie Drake Ross, a well-known Boston writer and lecturer on American decorative arts and history, to do a furnishings study, and her report was finished in December 1967. She was then asked to give more specific details on suggestions to replace withdrawn loan items and their probable costs. Apparently this report was unsatisfactory, for Small noted that in a meeting he attended with Ralph Lewis of the Division of Museums and Frank Barnes, regional chief of interpretation and visitor services, "some aspects of the report were discussed adversely and in detail. In any case, funds to implement any part of the report's recommendations will not be forthcoming soon." Lewis recommended a new report, and Mrs. Richard W. (Sally Johnson) Ketcham was hired to do the study, which was completed in 1970.⁴⁴

Refurbishment of physical site resources was part of MISSION 66 funding as well, and nearly every building at Salem Maritime was repaired or painted between 1956 and 1966. More extensive preservation and restoration projects on the Derby House and Hawkes House were undertaken in the early and mid-1960s. In 1961 the ell of the Derby House was excavated and the foundation shored up, with some sensitivity to historical evidence *in situ*, though apparently without consideration of archeological remains.

Just a few informal words to let you know that we are starting to clean out the cellar [sic] beneath the ell . . . Behind the staircase is a brick pier

⁴² Acting Director E.T. Scoyen [? illegible] to all field offices 2 September 1960, on new National Park Service Administrative Manual v. 4, pt. 5, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

⁴³ Ralph H. Lewis, Chief, Branch of Museum Operations to Regional Director, Northeast Region, 9 November 1965, SMNHS "Exhibit Rehab" files, NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library.

⁴⁴ "Log of Events and Contacts" for December 1967, February 1968, June 1968, Waltham Federal Records Center; Mrs. Ketcham added another section to the study in 1978; and another historian undertook a similar study in 1974.

which is rather loose and which will have to be either reset or replaced by a column. Around the base of the staircase is a low brick wall about 4 bricks high. I told the boys to leave it there until someone could inspect it . . . We did notice the remains of a brick arch on the back wall of the Derby House foundation . . .⁴⁵

Rehabilitation of the ell continued into 1963, when Lessem noted that during the clearing of the attic under the floorboards, "All debris was sifted before disposal. Nothing of value was found." Original trim paint colors were discovered and reproduced, considered by Lessem to be an important achievement.⁴⁶

The Hawkes House, intended primarily for staff quarters after the 1950-54 renovation, was the subject of debate. As a structure originally considered of secondary importance to the site, and physically much altered, it had not received the research and planning consideration given to the site's "star" structures. Chief Architect Charles Peterson was disturbed by the lack of information about original conditions of the house and about the changes made under Park Service ownership. After a visit through the house with Superintendent Lessem and carpenter Robie Mehlman in May of 1958, Peterson wrote that:

One floor plan print from a set of seven drawings prepared in the Richmond Office about eight years ago was all that could be found on the premises. Mr. Mehlman said that he had been given no detailed drawings to work from and had improvised on the job much of the architectural woodwork . . . No substantial historical account of the house seems ever to have been written . . . My own impression of the house is that it is not important enough architecturally or historically to justify its treatment as an exhibition building and that the original intention of using at least the upper floors as employees quarters should be carried out . . .⁴⁷

Peterson believed that a historic structure report on the building was called for before any more restoration work was done, especially if Edwin Small

⁴⁵ Harold I. Lessem to Hank Judd, 23 March 1961, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1960-1972," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

⁴⁶ Superintendent Monthly Report for March 1963, Superintendent's Report for June 1963, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

⁴⁷ Acting Chief, EODC, Charles E. Peterson to Supervising Architect, Historic Structures, 19 May 1958, Box 1, SMNHS, File "SMNHS 1949-1959," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

could be enlisted in the project to research the historical background (and perhaps to contribute his own observations on changes made in the building twenty years earlier). Small, working still as chief of party to the Boston National Historic Sites Commission, defended the uses made of the Hawkes House. He pointed to non-Park Service research by noted architectural historian Fiske Kimball in the context of his study of Samuel McIntire.

I would like to add that at the time the Hawkes House was saved the opinion with regard to its value was not very different from that now expressed by Mr. Peterson. The building survived as a slum in a dilapidated condition, but its worth as an appropriate component of the waterfront setting was readily recognized and appreciated. From the exterior at least, the purpose of retaining and rehabilitating it has long been established. In this condition, however, it is clear that the structure cannot be regarded as an historic house museum in the same sense as the more outstanding Derby House next door.⁴⁸

However, when completed in 1959, the historic structure report, written by Harold Lessem and noted decorative arts historian Nina Fletcher Little, suggested a change from the use of Hawkes House as staff quarters only, and recommended restoring and opening the ground floor rooms as a period museum. This plan was logical, based on the renovation work done in the early 1950s creating modern apartments on the upper floors and leaving space for period rooms on the lower. Objections came from the Eastern Office of Design and Construction in Philadelphia: "We don't feel that the ground floor as completed is authentic enough as a 'restoration' to justify going to the trouble and expense of furnishing it as a museum and keeping it open to the public."⁴⁹ The regional office concurred. Planners in Washington, however, felt that this would be in conflict with the direction they had thought was expected for the Hawkes House:

It has long been our understanding that the funds spent over the years on the rehabilitation of the Hawkes House, including the sum of \$7,000 specified in the MISSION 66 Prospectus, would be directed to the objective of placing part of the first floor in shape for furnishing and exhibition . . . Such an objective is clearly implied in the MISSION 66

⁴⁸ Chief of Party, Boston National Historic Sites Commission, Edwin Small to Acting Chief, EODC, 23 May 1958, Box 1, SMNHS, file "SMNHS 1949-1959," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

⁴⁹ Acting Chief John B. Cabot, Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction, to Regional Director, Region Five, 23 March 1959, Box 1 SMNHS, File "SMNHS 1949-1959," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

Prospectus and the MISSION 66 Brief and must have been so construed by Superintendent Lessem, or otherwise he would not have come forward with such a well prepared furnishings section for the parlor and kitchen of the Hawkes House . . . we believe that the proposed furnishing and exhibition of this part of the first floor should proceed, in order to complete this important interpretive feature of the structure. If this part of the first floor is not to be devoted to interpretive purposes, the Service may find itself subject to criticism for the expenditure of funds for the purpose of creating authentic architectural details in the interior of these rooms.⁵⁰

In the end, the house continued to be used as quarters for the site superintendent, and visitors viewed the house only from the outside. Those with a special interest in architectural history could view the interior by pre-arrangement.

Comments on the Derby House made in the early 1960s by Eastern Office of Design and Construction architect Henry Judd show the more meticulous approach to preservation being followed at this time. As a result of higher standards within the Park Service and of the luxury of time to plan before executing, the methods used now included careful research in documents and physical remains before starting work; preparation of formal historic structure reports; documenting restoration work for future researchers as it was done; and understanding of the whole history of a structure, including changes, as worth preserving.

I have asked Architect [Russell V.] Keune to make a brief Historic Structures Report of the building listing items that now need attention . . . Some thought has been given to restoring the house again. I feel this is unwise at this time. The house has been restored and we don't know what was removed and why the restoration was done the way it is. Unless we get a great deal further information, we should accept what we have. If, in the future, time permits, a careful study of the house might be profitable.⁵¹

Thus, in this MISSION 66 period, historic structure reports, many of them multi-volume, were completed for all the major buildings on the site (excluding the wharves and associated structures). This gave planners for the

⁵⁰ Chief Historian Herbert Kahler to Chief Architect, 13 April 1959, Box 1 SMNHS, File "SMNHS 1949-1959," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

⁵¹ Architect Henry A. Judd to Chief of EODC, 5 December 1962, Box 1 SMNHS, file SMNHS "1960-1972," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

first time the kind of detailed information needed to undertake accurate restoration projects and to interpret the site more completely than before. The background research of this era laid the foundation for changes that would be more obvious in the 1970s, when the "shift in emphasis" towards the sea was at least partially realized on the site.

Expanding the Boundaries

The acquisition of the seventeenth century Narbonne House, which fronted on Essex Street and bordered the Hawkes House in the rear, had been envisioned by the site's early planners. As long as the house remained in private hands the Park Service was content to let it be. But in 1961, just as urban renewal planning began in Salem, word came that the owners would like to sell the house and the Park Service moved as quickly as possible to acquire it. The contact was initiated by Abbott Lowell Cummings of SPNEA, one of the foremost authorities on first-period New England architecture, who had remained in touch with the Narbonne House owners through his scholarly interest in the building. Cummings and SPNEA brought to preservation an appreciation of the science and technology of buildings as well as the aesthetics, and based their preservation decisions on a very close and painstaking study of physical conditions as well as detailed understanding of historical antecedents and local traditions. Cummings' connection with the Narbonne House from the beginning of Park Service involvement with it, as well as the Park Service's new standards of documentation, influenced a preservation approach which took very different directions from the other historic buildings on the site.

First acquiring and then interpreting the Narbonne House presented a challenge to Salem Maritime because it did not naturally fit the thematic program for the site. Its maritime connections were tenuous. Yet its historical and architectural importance were undeniable. In early 1961, when Abbott Cummings advised Superintendent Lessem that the house was going to be put up for sale, Lessem pondered the problem in a memo to the regional director:

Of course, there are "pros" and "cons" involved. Our maintenance staff is limited; our interpretive staff non-existent. The acquisition will inevitably divert attention and energies from the development of the maritime aspects of the Park Story. Furnishing the house properly will be a long, drawn-out process. On the other hand, expansion northward

is highly desirable... The House per se definitely merits preservation.⁵²

Meanwhile, local preservation groups were undertaking an inventory of Salem's historic architecture in order to counter a survey being done for urban renewal that was expected to threaten historic neighborhoods in central Salem. Cummings headed up the survey team for Ward I, and so was working in the neighborhood of the Narbonne House. Lessem hired Cummings to prepare a report on the Narbonne House to assist the site in making a case for acquisition and to plan for restoration and use. The report was ready in 1962.⁵³

Purchase of the Narbonne House would require funds directly from Congress, as Assistant Regional Director George Palmer advised Lessem in May 1961. The House was outside the boundaries approved for the park in 1938. A formal, detailed proposal needed to be prepared. Lessem discussed the funding problem with Congressman Bates, who agreed that legislation was the only solution. This decision moved the acquisition problem out of the administration of Salem Maritime and past the regional office directly to the Washington Office, which handled congressional matters. Lessem would be a consultant to Washington on this matter.⁵⁴

Congressional hearings raised the expected question of whether funds could be raised locally to donate the Narbonne House to the United States, but the Park Service representatives responded in the negative.⁵⁵ The representatives had an anxious moment during the meeting of the Senate Public Lands Subcommittee:

Senator Bible asked to see a photograph of the house. When Senator Gruening saw it he commented that the house is ugly — just an old shack! He questioned its worth as an addition to the site. He added that he thought the existing Site is a fine area and that the Narbonne house would be an unnecessary appendage. Senator Gruening graduated

⁵² Superintendent Lessem to Regional Director, Region 5, 25 May 1961, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

⁵³ Sept. Lessem to Regional Director, Region 5, 25 May 1961, Philadelphia Federal Records Center; Superintendent's Monthly Report for April 1962, May 1962, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

⁵⁴ Asst. Regional Director George A. Palmer to Superintendent, Salem, 17 May 1961, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

⁵⁵ Assistant Director of Resource Planning (no name given) to Director, 19 June 1963, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

from Harvard College and the Harvard Medical School and made it known he was familiar with Salem, Massachusetts, and opposes the addition of the Narbonne House to Salem Maritime.⁵⁶

However, the subcommittee referred the bill with favorable comments. The Narbonne House, with its 0.187 acre of land, was officially added to Salem Maritime NHS on December 12, 1963, the first addition of property since the founding of the site in 1938.⁵⁷

The Narbonne House was not immediately scheduled for restoration and public use. A fragile structure of limited appeal to most tourists, it was simply stabilized and studied. The original and early fabric of the house was found to be remarkably intact. It has remained an unrestored "study house" to this day. A historic structure report was prepared in 1965 by Daniel R. Kuehn, Walton Stowell, and Superintendent Arthur Sullivan, and added to in 1972 by Morgan Phillips and Abbott Cummings of SPNEA. Archeological studies were done during later work in the 1970s.⁵⁸

Another possible addition to the site was broached and studied but did not materialize. This was a house that stood on a summer estate owned by the Derbys in nearby Danvers, which was proposed to be moved to Salem Maritime. Charles Peterson was enthusiastic about the structure:

... Supt. Lessem mentioned that he has been approached to see if the Park Service would take the "Derby Summer House" if offered. We went out to look at the building, which is now several miles away on the Endicott estate at Danvers. It originally stood on a farm of the Derbys... It was bought by the late Mr. Endicott years ago and re-erected in his fine formal garden. Recently the property has been sold to a redeveloper, and is about to be intersected with superhighways. Mr. Endicott's widow — who died this year — left the house to the Danvers Historical Society, which seems to feel that it cannot take care of it...

It is a square frame structure, almost eighteen feet to a side, on a low cut-granite foundation. The superstructure is two stories high, the

⁵⁶ Chief of Boundary Studies Robert K. Bergman to Director, 14 October 1963, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

⁵⁷ An Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire and add certain lands to the Salem Maritime National Historic Site, P.L. 88-199, 77 Stat. 359.

⁵⁸ Historic Structure Report: Architectural Data Section on the Narbonne House (Abbott Lowell Cummings and Morgan W. Phillips), NPS 1972.

upper story being pedimented over pilasters and the whole surmounted with fine carved figures and urns. On the ground floor there is a central passageway with two small rooms on one side and a stairway on the other. The second floor is one room with a parquet floor, wainscoted walls, and a coved ceiling. The structure is famous among architectural connoisseurs as a design by the Salem woodcarver-architect, Samuel McIntyre . . .

If the Park Service wishes to develop a reputation as a preserver of important early architecture, I believe it should accept this building, if offered. It is not large and could be erected on the grounds of the Hawkes House at some distance behind it. It certainly is a splendid example of what resulted from prosperity on the Salem waterfront.⁵⁹

While preservation of this building was worthwhile, it was determined not to be really appropriate to the waterfront setting. In the end, interpretive appropriateness and contiguity won out over isolated preservation of important architecture. Salem Maritime turned down the offer.

Concessions and Local Relations

Until the 1960s, Salem's major concession was in the Rum Shop, an antiques business carried out by Dr. Edward Rushford. This was considered to be an appropriate use for the building. In 1958, George Palmer wrote: "Among the items considered by the Management Survey Team in its study of Salem Maritime National Historic Site was the need to continue the Rum Shop Concession operation . . . The present concessioner has been carrying out the terms of his Concession Permit in a very satisfactory manner." The concession was renewed for a five year period ending in 1963.⁶⁰

But within that five year period the growing body of research on site structures raised again the question of the role of concessions at the site: could they be made to serve interpretation?

The Rum Shop was studied in a historic structure report in 1964 and plans were made to restore and re-interpret it as a "West India Goods Store." This use would expand the opportunities for the site to interpret the commercial

⁵⁹ Supervising Architect, Historic Structures, Charles Peterson to Chief, EODC, 10 October 1958; Box 1 SMNHS, File "SMNHS 1949-1959," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

⁶⁰ Acting Regional Director George A. Palmer to Director, 19 September 1958, Philadelphia Federal Records Center; Regional Director Daniel J. Tobin to Director, 19 January 1959, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

life of the waterfront. The building was still to be a concession, and still run to sell items to visitors, but would approximate the feel of a waterfront storefront selling exotic goods.⁶¹

The Park Service had always made distinctions among types of parks — some were natural parks, some historic; some were recreational, some educational. By the 1960s, however, the tendency was to mix uses within one park. Therefore, when the City of Salem proposed building floating docks for small pleasure craft on Derby Wharf, this recreational use of the site was considered appropriate, while in the 1930s, recreational uses would have been discouraged.

The City and the Park Service signed a cooperative agreement in 1966, in which the Service allowed construction of public boat landing facilities and public access to them, and the City promised that "access will not impair (or will cause the least possible impairment to) the historic values of the Derby Wharf and its environs and [will not] interfere with the interpretive program of the Salem Maritime National Historic Site."⁶²

The Army Corps of Engineers dredged the channel around the dock, raising concern about the possibility of undermining Derby Wharf, but this was successfully avoided. A walkway was installed on the wharf for the convenience of dock users, and two of the three docks authorized were built. Construction of the floating docks and moorings took longer than expected and the docks finally opened in the summer of 1968. There was immediate pressure to enlarge the facility. There may have been some public perception that this was an elite project for a few boaters: the *Salem Evening News* referred to the area as a "yacht landing site" and "yacht center" in stories on the project. The Park Service and City never used the word "yacht" in any documents on the project.⁶³

Meanwhile, the longstanding issue of the lobster fishermen with concession permits to use Derby Wharf was apparently settled when the chairman of the Salem City Council Harbor Development Committee and the Salem harbormaster requested the termination of the permits after discussions with

⁶¹ Historic Structure Report: Part I, The Rum Shop (Arthur Sullivan, Walton Stowell, and Daniel R. Kuehn), NPS 1964.

⁶² Acting Regional Director, Northeast Region, to Director, 8 July 1966, enclosing Cooperative Agreement, Philadelphia Federal Records Center.

⁶³ Acting Regional Director, Northeast Region, to Director, 8 July 1966, Philadelphia Federal Records Center; "Log of Events and Contacts" for June 1968, Waltham Federal Records Center; *Salem Evening News*, 27 August 1966; *Salem Evening News*, 17 June 1966.

Acting Superintendent Small. Congressman Bates "who in the past has interceded on behalf of the fishermen using space on the wharf" was informed, and Small was able to report that "it now appears that the Congressman will not sustain the fishermen if they approach him." Small had temporarily won this battle, but in so doing had replaced a maritime industrial use of the wharf with a recreational use that was even less historically appropriate.⁶⁴

During the late 1950s and 1960s, the cooperating Salem Maritime Historical Association was a great help to the site, particularly in the acquisition of furnishings for the historic houses and in operating a modest sales concession. It was able to purchase and donate the borrowed set of 120 pieces of chinaware on display in the Derby House, and provide new parlor curtains of Scalamandré fabric. It purchased an eighteenth-century settle for the ell, and studies on antiques for the site library. It took care of more prosaic needs as well, buying storage boxes, paying insurance premiums on loan items, and paying for expert assistance in classifying historic documents. The Association was able to make major purchases when special items became available:

The SMHA took steps to retrieve important items associated with the Derby Family. The sum of \$300 was spent to procure a cupboard with two pairs of glass doors that a Salem collector took out of a warehouse on DW during the 1920's. The cupboard was saved as the warehouse was undergoing demolition. The cupboard and glass doors are of a type that very likely were installed in one of the warehouses built during the 1790's.⁶⁵

* * *

MISSION 66's conclusion with the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service in 1966 coincided with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which represented popular support for the concept of preserving history through architecture after a decade of urban renewal's disdain for artifacts of the past.

⁶⁴ Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report for April 1967, May 1967, Waltham Federal Records Center. The lobstermen removed themselves to adjacent Pickering Wharf and squatted there until removed by developers in 1977 (*Salem Evening News*, 24 January 1978). They returned to Central Wharf, with Park Service permission, but were asked to leave again in 1992 (*Salem Evening News*, 29 April 1992).

⁶⁵ Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report for May 1967, Waltham Federal Records Center.

MISSION 66 had succeeded in thoroughly bureaucratizing the Park Service, with professionals now managing park functions formerly turned over to volunteers, and an elaborate hierarchy of specialists who supervised a detailed planning process. It removed some authority from local site superintendents and placed it with the regional offices or urban "groups" of sites such as Boston and New York, and with the new national planning and design centers which would open in 1970. The ten years of long-range planning and expansion comprised by MISSION 66 raised Park Service funding, visibility, popularity, and professionalism to new heights — and also raised public expectations.

During this period, Salem Maritime re-examined its founding principles, and saw the neglect of the site's original reason for existing, Derby Wharf. MISSION 66 provided an opportunity to refocus attention on all of the resources themselves as the basis for the story to be told in the park.

There were changes in the air to which the Park Service was beginning to respond in the early 60s, including an interest in the everyday lives of the common people and the material artifacts related to them. Urban culture was newly prized, and the seafaring experience no longer romanticized in the same way. Salem, with its maritime commercial history, could be seen in a new light, no longer primarily the story of the powerful Derbys and other merchants. As part of the working waterfront setting, the grittier wharf side of the site could finally receive proper attention. These trends were not fully realized during this period, but were finding expression through research directions and interpretive experimentation. "Shifting emphasis" was indeed a problem at Salem, a problem the site continued to grapple with in the coming decades.

CHAPTER 6

NEW WINDS, NEW GOALS (1970-1983)

The 1970s brought major changes at the national and regional levels of the Park Service, as well as at Salem Maritime. The increasing concern with professional leadership in Park Service management planning, historic restoration, and interpretation seen in the early 1960s led to the centralization of planning and interpretation at the national level, lessening local autonomy at the parks and sites themselves. In New England, the growing number and importance of parks led to the formation of a new Park Service region, the North Atlantic Region, with offices in Boston. At Salem Maritime NHS, the research of the previous decade culminated in a major shift of preservation and interpretive emphasis, from the land to the sea. Working with the expertise of the Denver Service Center and Harpers Ferry Center, Salem Maritime commissioned new detailed research studies of site structures and buildings, and created a new master plan between 1974 and 1978.

During this period, nearly every building and structure on the site experienced some changes in use or interpretive function. Even the grounds were relandscaped. The interpretive direction had decisively changed, and the site physically began to show the results of two decades of emphasis on its maritime aspects. Yet the bright visions of the *Master Plan* for a revitalized waterfront remained out of reach. At the end of this period, the site drifted under a succession of temporary superintendents.

Administration: National

The establishment of the Denver and Harpers Ferry Centers gave all of the scattered parks access to concentrated expertise in planning, preservation, and interpretation. The creation of the centers was an outgrowth of MISSION 66, a quest for efficiency and the highest professional standards. This concept had emerged during the initial planning stages of MISSION 66:

Concentration of technically trained personnel in the parks often is inefficient. Stationed in a regional or central office they could be used in a more diversified manner and wherever and whenever their

talents and skills are required . . . the technically trained personnel in the higher grades should be stationed in central offices and assigned to park work as needed. Smaller parks, particularly, would benefit from such an arrangement.¹

The unfortunate byproduct, however, was the de-professionalization of the staff at the sites, including Salem, and a general loss of morale among NPS workers in the field.

The Denver Service Center, which was the new home of the combined Eastern and Western Offices of Design and Construction, opened in late 1969; it supervised and consulted on historic preservation, restoration, archaeology, and long-range planning. The new Harpers Ferry Center, which opened in 1970, housed several departments, including the interpretive center and the historic files and archives of the Park Service. Teams of specialists at Harpers Ferry now wrote and designed exhibits and audiovisual productions in order to present a coordinated and professional look to all Park Service interpretive materials. Sites were now forbidden to produce their own materials.²

The reorganization was the product of the Field Operations Study Team, or FOST, of the late 1960s. Among other consequences, it weakened interpretation by transforming interpreters into "park technicians," a sub-professional category not requiring background in the discipline of history or archaeology. At the same time, the research, planning, and preparation of interpretive publications and exhibits were removed from the site interpretive staff, leaving little incentive for talented individuals to remain in the parks. Under George Hartzog's tenure as director in the mid-60s, most park-based research had already been stopped. The need to request and requisition aid from the new centers made rapid responses to new situations impossible for the parks, and cost them in time and flexibility.³

By the late 1970s the generally poor quality of Park Service interpretation had become a matter of concern within and without the Park Service. A conference convened at Harpers Ferry in January 1979 concluded:

¹ Roy E. Appleman, "A History of the National Park Service Mission 66 Program," January 1958, History Division, NPS Washington Office, 25.

² Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective* (Washington: 1986), 97.

³ Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective* (Washington: 1986), 96.

The Service is receiving active criticism of its interpreters in historical and archeological areas. Knowledgeable people have been critical of living history programs, both as to accuracy and appropriateness. Others have pointed out misinformation being disseminated and the lack of depth in knowledge by interpreters of the park story.

Some parks emphasize secondary interpretive themes and neglect or give short shrift to the park's primary theme . . . Many of the problems in park interpretation can be traced to the adoption of the communication-over-content concept, whereby the Service decided that an interpreter did not need knowledge, but rather needed communication skills . . .⁴

The conference recommended requiring academic backgrounds in history for interpreters along with specific training in subject matter. It also called for reevaluation of budget priorities that placed expenditure on equipment and audiovisual productions over expenditure on personnel.

Matters were especially bad in urban parks, a 1980 study of the North Atlantic Region found:

Interpreters as well as their supervisors seem at a loss to comprehend what they are there for . . . the experience was to find many interpreters who had neither the subject matter expertise nor communication ability.⁵

Administration: Regional

The increased regulatory role of NPS as a result of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 led to expansion of professional staff at the national and regional levels. The Boston Group, the subregional NPS unit of the Philadelphia regional office, created in the 1960s to oversee New England sites, became the new North Atlantic regional office in December 1973. In 1974, the Boston National Historical Park, a confederation of federally-owned, privately-owned, and city-owned sites was established. Nearby, the Lowell National Historical Park, a new model for state/federal/city/private

⁴ Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective* (Washington: 1986), 99-100 quoting from "Report and Recommendations, Cultural Resources Management Conference, Jan. 8-10, 1979, at Harpers Ferry, W. Va."

⁵ Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective* (Washington: 1986), 100, quoting from Paul H. Risk, "Final Narrative Report, Evaluation of Interpretive Services in Thirty Selected Sites in the North Atlantic Region," 1980.

partnerships, was created in 1978. These exciting new parks diverted energy and attention from the region's existing parks.

The new regional office came into being at a time when reorganization of responsibilities within the NPS as a whole was giving regional offices increased authority and visibility in all planning efforts and in evaluation of park activities. Standards and expertise in preservation, archeology, and curatorial matters was the domain of the region, and it was the regional office that contracted with the Denver Service Center and outside agencies for consulting services on behalf of the park under study.

The extent of the new supervisory powers of the regional office is reflected in the solution to a complaint by Salem Maritime Superintendent John Dobrovolny in 1975 about the longstanding tradition that required him to give the designation of "acting superintendent" during his absences from the site to the maintenance chief. He felt that it would be more appropriate to have his interpreter in that role. The region instead recommended that someone from the regional office become familiar with Salem's operations and be ready to serve as acting superintendent at Salem.⁶ This insistence on removal of autonomy from the site would play a part in several major issues at Salem Maritime throughout the decade.

The regional office supervised and monitored sites through visits and annual reviews. In the case of Salem Maritime it went a step further, however, and convened a special task force in 1979 when it perceived that the effort to orient the site towards the sea, as directed by the *Master Plan* and the *Interpretive Prospectus*, was "beginning to bog down." The task force was charged with reviewing operations and recommending "ways that the interpretive development can be put back on track."⁷

The group consisted of Regional Chief of Interpretation Bruce McHenry, Regional Historian Dwight Pitcaithley, Regional Architect Jim Skelton, and Superintendent Lee Hanson of Fort Stanwix. After review of the site and the planning documents, they concurred on the primacy of the maritime theme, which should be implemented through agreements with owners of historic ships, and with associations with similar goals such as the Maritime Education Association and the Gloucester Fisherman's Museum. The

⁶ Jerry D. Wagers, Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, "Park Review - SMNHS," 17 January 1975, Waltham Federal Records Center.

⁷ John C. Raftery, Assistant to the Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, to Regional Director, 2 November 1979, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

Interpretive Prospectus of 1970 still seemed valid, and they urged the renewal of demonstrations at places such as the proposed reconstructed boatyard.⁸

The task force saw interpretive potential in the West India Goods Store, and recommended "active interpretive support" with signs and tours ending there, and suggested that the regional Public Affairs Office should be called on for help in getting TV publicity or feature stories. In general, they felt that attention to public relations and publicity was important for Salem Maritime. They concluded that "With a good interpretive program and public affairs program, Salem Maritime National Historic Site can grow to have the same or greater prominence in Salem than the House of Seven Gables or the Witch House."⁹

Administration: Site

After a period with no superintendent other than the Boston Group administrator from 1966 to April 1969, Salem Maritime finally reached a period of stability with the tenure of Superintendent H. John Dobrovolny, former historian at Fort Sumter, from 1969 to 1979. Throughout his tenure, staff levels remained low. In 1973, the site staff consisted of only four permanent employees and thirteen intermittent, part-time, seasonal, or volunteer employees.¹⁰

The administrative restructuring of 1973 which ended the Boston Group's role in overseeing aspects of Salem's management replaced it with the new North Atlantic regional office. While the regional office assumed responsibility for many aspects of park management, tasks such as procurement, formerly handled for member parks by the Boston Group, were moved back to the site. No increase in funding for administration within the parks accompanied these changes:

In administration, there was more centralization under the Boston Group. The park has a heavier workload now as a result of the reorganization of the Boston Group. One employee spends about 80%

⁸ John C. Raftery, Assistant to the Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, and Task Force, to Regional Director, 6 March 1980, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

⁹ John C. Raftery, Assistant to the Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, and Task Force, to Regional Director, 6 March 1980, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

¹⁰ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1973, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

of her time on administration. Given her other interpretive duties, this is excessive¹¹

In 1975, the staff (then consisting of fourteen full and part-time people) was reorganized according to new federal guidelines intended to encourage on-the-job training for employees who were initially less qualified. Titles and GS-rankings were changed in some cases. The superintendent noted the difficulty of "getting certain specialized continuing work accomplished with temporary employees, work such as curatorial" and requested more help from the region in this area.¹²

When the Park Service adopted the popular management style of the 1970s, management by objectives, it added a cumbersome and time-consuming amount of paperwork to the formal park reviews conducted annually by the regional office. Detailed goals, sub-goals, and objectives were to be identified and broken down by discrete time periods and constantly monitored. The superintendent was also required to break down all aspects of site operations by man-days per budget category, estimating how much staff time was needed for patrolling the site, sales desk visitor contact, maritime cultural demonstrations, meetings, and so on, to justify the use of time, and to state how this time could be reduced. In an understaffed park such as Salem Maritime, this was a frustrating exercise. In justifying the use of a "roving ranger" to control access to the parking area, the superintendent wrote that: "Without a Roving Ranger we can effectively reduce total park visitation substantially because large numbers of people will not be able to park close enough to the Site."

Under the heading of "tours," Dobrovolny wrote:

Once the decision is made to operate at less than an acceptable full coverage there seems to be no point at which an acceptable "sub-standard" level can be established for tours. If we are not going to provide services to virtually all interested visitors, then it is only a matter of degree if we decide to provide services to 75% of the visitors or to 50% of the visitors.

And when required to state how "park management" time was spent:

¹¹ Jerry D. Wagers, Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, "Park Review-SMNHS," 17 January 1975, Waltham Federal Records Center.

¹² Superintendent's Annual Report, 1975, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

Supervising a staff of four permanent and thirteen seasonal employees in a nine acre park with two wharves, four historic brick buildings, three historic wooden buildings, one historic ruin, and two modern wooden buildings with an interpretive story that runs from 1626 to 1937, includes the major ports and oceans of the world, is significant in two major wars, and besides the primary maritime themes... has architectural and literary subthemes... is time-consuming... These are in addition to more routine activities such as typing this thing.¹³

Dobrovoly was transferred in 1978, and a four-year period of relative stagnation and lack of direction for Salem Maritime followed, with no long-term superintendent. During that time, the momentum for change that had developed in the 1970s died out, and grand plans lay dormant.

From 1979 until a long-term superintendent was finally appointed in 1983, the Park Service moved a procession of short-term administrators in and out of Salem Maritime. First was Byron Hazeltine, who came in September 1978 and retired from the Park Service in December 1979. The site then was used as a proving ground for the development of new superintendents. First came Genevieve Riley (who had been the site's chief interpreter) in early 1980, then Elaine D'Amico from April 1980 to August 1982, then Cynthia Pollack (who would return later as permanent superintendent) to the end of 1982, followed by Diane Jung for the first four months of 1983, and Angela C. Reid for the the next four months of 1983. The Service's goal of training and promoting junior staff, particularly women, to higher administrative positions was laudable, but the burden of inexperienced management and rapid turnover fell heavily on Salem Maritime in this period.

Interpretation

In the 1970s, interpretive planning at the site reflected the trends in historical thinking in the nation as a whole which followed the social and political upheavals of the 1960s. Renewed interest in maritime resources accompanied a new emphasis on social history and on the site as a workplace and place of commerce, rather than on the history of the elite merchants and their houses.

An *Interpretive Prospectus* developed in 1971 reflected this shift. Research that had been done on the site since the late 1950s was incorporated, as well as

¹³ "SMNHS - Contingency Plans - Justifications/Explanations," appendix to Jerry D. Wagers, Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, "Park Review-SMNHS," 17 January 1975, Waltham Federal Records Center.

new waves in interpretation favoring living history over static exhibits. Imaginative (sometimes overly so) and far-ranging in scope, it placed interpretation firmly at the center of all site planning.

The interpretive planning team was composed of Alan Kent, team captain and senior interpretive planner, Eastern Service Center (HFC); John Dobrovolny, park manager, SMNHS; Douglas Sabin, park technician, SMNHS; Gengean Riley, park technician, SMNHS; Frank Barnes, interpretive specialist, Northeast Region; and the Salem Maritime master plan team of the Denver Service Center.

This prospectus aims at tying the physical features of the site more closely to the sea. Emphasis is on recreating the atmosphere and paraphernalia of Salem's great days as a world port. The visitor facility should be removed from the Custom House and transferred to the Naval Reserve Training Center. Interpretive features on Derby Wharf should dominate the interpretive presentation . . . Reconstructed warehouses . . . reproduction of a sailing vessel of the Revolutionary era . . . Costumed demonstrations in the warehouses, on the wharf, and aboard ship . . .

Since Park Service interpretive planning relied on defined and developed themes to unify the visitors' understanding, two major themes were identified for Salem Maritime. The first was the approaching Bicentennial of the American Revolution, emphasizing privateering. The second was the "interdependence theme": "A clear understanding of the significance of the site to the Nation's history must also be imparted. This has to do with the contribution of private citizens and private enterprise to public good or Federal Government." At Salem, this meant an emphasis on privateering, again, and revenue collection.

The *Prospectus* did not hesitate to recommend major changes in building functions at the site:

A key to the effective interpretive development of the park is getting the information, orientation, sales, and introductory interpretation out of the Custom House and into a facility better located to provide these important elements. The present Naval Reserve Training Center on Central Wharf would make a good visitor facility for the park.

The new facility could have audio-visual programs in a room seating 100, with a twenty-minute film on the theme of "Salem Helped Build a Nation" and, in deference to the current pressure to include environmental themes in

all Park Service presentations, "There can be a strong environmental message throughout."

The main attraction would be a rebuilt Derby Wharf, outfitted with reconstructed warehouses, one from 1776, and another from 1800, with demonstrations by concessioners or Park Service employees.

Shipboard demonstrations might include knot tying, line heaving, painting and swabbing decks . . . mending of sails, ship's carpenter's work, cooking (hardtack, soups, salt beef, fish . . .), scrimshaw carving, ringing of ship's bell, sea chanties, ocarina playing, shooting the sun at noon with a quadrant . . . Role-playing offers additional possibilities - some with an environmental message, as, for example, having a seaman caught dumping ballast overboard with the resulting argument and upbeat ending.

A reconstructed shipyard would offer even more interpretive possibilities: "Closer to Derby Street, the art of shipbuilding might be demonstrated. Perhaps an expert shipwright could work on a 16-footer . . ." In addition, a wide variety of educational kits and "sea chests" for schools and other groups were proposed.

All of this activity would require additional staff. The *Prospectus* proposed a staff increase from the present 7 person/days in summer and 3.5 in winter to 12.25 person/days in summer and 5.5 in winter. This apparently assumed that volunteers would also be used, since the numbers projected were inadequate just to present the programs suggested. And no time was built in to research, develop, construct, maintain, evaluate, or market the activities; perhaps it was assumed that this would be done at Denver or Harpers Ferry.

As a final grace note to the *Prospectus*: "Concerts with nautical themes could be held outdoors in the park on summer evenings, including rock and roll extravaganzas with a nautical flavor."¹⁴

The 1971 *Prospectus* responded to the requirement to program for national interpretive initiatives in the early 1970s, particularly on the theme of the Bicentennial of the American Revolution, which was fortunately quite appropriate for Salem. The environment, another long-term theme promoted by Washington, was more problematic. From 1974 to 1976, Bicentennial theme programs focusing on privateering met with partial success. The Bonded Warehouse and Derby Wharf were the centers for this

¹⁴ "Interpretive Prospectus: SMNHS," NPS, 1973.

interpretation. A special "Quero Day" held on June 1, 1975, commemorated the 1775 voyage of the Derby ship *Quero* to England with news of the battles at Lexington and Concord. The celebration was a joint venture of the site, the Continental Navy of Newburyport, and the Salem Bicentennial Commission, and was attended by 1300 people.¹⁵

Living history, popular with the Service in the 1970s, and encouraged by George Palmer of the regional office, proved difficult to implement at Salem. The concept was an important part of the *Master Plan* of 1974-78. As early as 1973, a consultant, Chris Motz, met with site staff to develop ideas for waterfront living history. His written proposal was accepted, then ignored.¹⁶

In the summer of 1974, the site did experiment with "maritime cultural demonstrations" on Derby Wharf, as outlined in the *Interpretive Prospectus*. The summer was to be spent "developing demonstrations, making contacts, securing equipment, recruiting and organizing VIP's [Volunteers in the Park], and conducting a variety of activities leading to full-scale programs in the Bicentennial years." These programs were not successful:

Shortage of staff plagued the project all summer . . . volunteers in a low-income neighborhood and City such as the park is located in do not respond well . . . a physical focal point on Derby Wharf is still needed, and numbers of people are no substitute . . . the activity must be as close to the Custom House as possible to gain visitors' attention.¹⁷

In 1975, Dobrovolny stated that "One emphasis is to encourage visitors to participate in as many living interpretive programs as possible." The timing and nature of interpretive offerings was gauged to appeal to the public's patterns of use, and the park switched from duty station assignments to functional assignments as needed, (a "constant Orientation Ranger" and a "constant Roving Ranger").¹⁸

The goal to "Adapt park interpretive programs to assume a Bicentennial emphasis through the theme: American privateers" was also difficult in practice. The staff commented: "First effort at revision of Interpretive

¹⁵ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1975, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

¹⁶ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1973, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

¹⁷ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1973, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

¹⁸ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1975, SMNHS box, Harper's Ferry Center Library; Jerry D. Wagers, Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, "Park Review-SMNHS," 17 January 1975, Waltham Federal Records Center.

programs emphasizing the new theme produced disappointing results. Interpreters exhibited strong opposition to change . . . "19

Progress and Fiasco on the Wharves

Planning teams from the Denver Service Center produced during the 1970s several complex "packages" of proposals to reconsider and rehabilitate site structures. These proposals required preliminary studies such as base maps, historic structures reports, archaeological surveys, or furnishing studies, before any physical work was done. The focus of the research was on the wharves, especially Central Wharf, and on the Narbonne House. Additional extensive studies were done on the Derby House furnishings and the Rum Shop.

The Central Wharf studies were timely. In 1973, the Navy decommissioned the thirty-year old "temporary" Naval Reserve Training Facility, opening the way for repair and reuse of Central Wharf and for reinterpretation of the site to emphasize water-based resources.

Research by historical architects from the Denver Service Center, and knowledge gained from site excavation done by archeologist Geoffrey Moran, revealed important information about early wharf construction techniques as well as a better understanding of the role of Central Wharf in launching Salem's glory days. Its historical importance for the site was reappraised, since it was felt to be more representative of a Revolutionary-era wharf than was Derby Wharf.²⁰

The physical investigation of this structure along with the historic documentation and archeological investigation have indicated that Central Wharf is a much more significant resource than recognized by the Master Plan and in the interpretive plan for the Park.²¹

The wharf was in serious disrepair, due both to neglect and to damage from construction of the Naval Reserve building (Fig. 11). Repairs began in the summer of 1975:

¹⁹ "Quarterly Status Report on Goals, Period: July 1, 1974 - September 30, 1974," SMNHS, 7 October 1974, Waltham Federal Records Center.

²⁰ "Package No. 111: Restoration of Central Wharf, Salem Maritime National Historic Site," October 1973, Denver Service Center, Waltham Federal Records Center.

²¹ Harry W. Pfanz, Acting Assistant Director, Park Historic Preservation, to Manager, Denver Service Center, 30 May 1974, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office.



Figure 11. Central Wharf in 1972. Although visiting ships still occasionally tied up at the wharf, it was in need of extensive repairs due partly to neglect and partly to damage from construction of the Naval Reserve Facility.
(Courtesy National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center.)

Remains of the 1939 work and some of the 1898 work on the east bulkhead were pulled out and replaced with steel sheet piling . . . Deadmen were installed near the center of the wharf and tie rods connected to the steel sheet piling. The east bulkhead was mostly repaired, duplicating the 1939 work, and the blow-out was being pulled back into line by end of 1975; new tie rods were installed between the east bulkhead and the new deadmen. Care was taken not to destroy remaining evidence of the earlier wharves buried within Central Wharf.²²

Just prior to the demolition of naval structures, archaeologist Geoffrey Moran investigated evidence of the wharf's early history in 1973. He was able to locate two corners and a section of solid wharf construction dating to at least 1791, plus the base of a hexagonal post for a crane, the end of the solid wharf and beginning of the cob wharf about half-way out, and a section of the cob wharf including the ballast floor about three quarters of the way out.²³

As the Navy left Central Wharf in early 1974, it let a demolition contract for the partial removal of the training facility, with NPS approval and handled through the Denver Service Center. The facility's main building and one wing were to be left for site use as a visitor center. Shortly after the demolition contract was approved, the NPS requested additional demolition, and the contract was changed by the DSC to enlarge the scope of work and specifications, including removal of concrete slabs not specified before.

On March 8, Historical Architect Merrill Wilson Koppe of the Denver Service Center's Historic Preservation Team, visiting the site in conjunction with preparation of the historic structure report, saw the demolition activity. She had not been informed that the Navy had another contract for the additional work.

She found that huge pieces of old timbers and blue-grey fill were being excavated and destroyed by the demolition crew. The timber and fill were similar in nature to the evidence of the early wharf discovered by Archeologist Geoffrey D. Moran . . . No provisions had been made for obtaining the services of an archeologist to supervise the initial or the additional phase of the demolition. Indeed, Dr. Moran was informed of the work only after the damage had been done.

²² Superintendent's Annual Report, 1975, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

²³ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1973, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

Koppe reported: "I was particularly shocked at the great depth of the excavations, and the fact that the concrete was being buried by the back hoe operator. It seemed incredible to me that there was neither a construction supervisor, nor an archeologist on site." She met with Superintendent Dobrovolny. "He was not aware that this phase of the work has begun, and was surprised at my report of the buried concrete." The following day she toured Central Wharf with him, and he agreed to speak to the construction supervisor, who was supposed to be present.²⁴ Koppe then contacted the Denver Service Center, Ross Holland at the regional office, and Hugh Miller in the Washington Office.

On March 22, a delegation including Regional Historian Ricardo Torres-Reyes, Regional Chief of Maintenance Richard J. Volpe, Maurice Kowal of Minute Man NHP, with Dobrovolny, Koppe, and Moran, visited the site. All agreed "that the historic fabric of the wharf was indeed being destroyed."²⁵

The regional office began investigating, and it got worse: "In checking further into the events, we found that the demolition contract was implemented without complying with Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966." This was embarrassing for an agency with the specific mandate to protect historic structures and sites. The Regional Director concluded that:

The above irregularity in the demolition contract occurred because there was no proper coordination between the Navy and the National Park Service and the lines of communication between the persons concerned were closed . . . Most important, also most damning, is the fact that virtually everyone concerned with the demolition work exhibited an extreme lack of sensitivity to the important and historic remains of old Central Wharf. In hindsight it is evident that several key steps were not followed in letting the contract. One was the failure to involve the Historic Preservation Team in this work. A second was the ignoring of the law in not following Section 106 procedures. Not providing for an archeologist to be present during the demolition work was a third error.²⁶

²⁴ Merrill Wilson Koppe, Historical Architect, Denver Service Center, memorandum and trip report, 1 April 1974, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

²⁵ Jerry D. Wagers, Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, to Assistant Director, Park Historic Preservation, 29 April 1974, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

²⁶ Jerry D. Wagers, Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, to Assistant Director, Park Historic Preservation, 29 April 1974, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

Archeologist Moran found this to be part of a pattern:

I am truly dismayed that on two separate occasions this year, demolition activities being sponsored by one branch of Federal government should proceed with reckless disregard of preservation activities underway on the same site by another branch of the government. In January of this year, two archaeological investigations on Central Wharf were backfilled and a third was seriously interfered with. At this time, archaeological tools and artifacts were removed from the site by demolition crew members. I was not informed that demolition work was underway, and that the security of these materials, and indeed the site itself, would be in danger . . . I fully share Merrill's distress and concern about the lack of coordination in concurrent programs at Central Wharf. I am further amazed that the Park Service should fail to provide more effective safeguards for historic materials on its property, and in its keeping.²⁷

A candid exchange of correspondence in the Washington Office suggested another reason for the fiasco on Central Wharf. Merrill Mattes of the office wrote to Hugh Miller, Director of Park Historic Preservation, that "Ross Holland [of NARO] has indicated that he is 'taking appropriate steps'. The only step I can think about would be (1) what management controls should be instituted to prevent a recurrence, and (2) what action can be taken against the offending parties." But in a handwritten postscript, Mattes stated: "Part of the problem was (or is) an incompetent Superintendent. He should be removed."²⁸

Dobrovolny had indeed been remarkably unaware of events happening under his nose. On the other hand, the Park Service had let all responsibility for the Central Wharf project rest with the Denver Service Center and the regional office. In a way, they had made Central Wharf none of the site superintendent's business. While diffusion of responsibility was certainly one factor, this event happened at a time when policies and procedures for implementing compliance with Section 106 were not yet well defined within the Park Service as a whole. The incident was taken very seriously at all levels once discovered, and may have helped clarify for the Service steps that needed to be taken to better articulate policy and educate parks.

²⁷ Geoffrey P. Moran, Archaeological Investigator, Central Wharf Project, Memo, 22 March 1974, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

²⁸ Merrill J. Mattes to Hugh Miller, Park Historic Preservation, Washington Office, 3 April 1974, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

The Naval Reserve building itself was originally to be partially retained and remodeled into a visitor orientation and interpretation center, with rest rooms, a sales area, and a small auditorium. However, a better opportunity presented itself.

Two former warehouse buildings, built circa 1815 on Salem's Front Street, stood in the way of urban renewal, and the City of Salem offered to donate them to the site if they could be moved. Though Park Service policy was generally against moving buildings for preservation, this was seen as an exception because the buildings, believed to be two of only three nineteenth century warehouses left in the city, would be destroyed unless moved, and also because Salem Maritime was seeking just such structures. The regional office encouraged their acceptance and rehabilitation as part of the rehabilitation of Derby Wharf.²⁹

After studies by the Denver Service Center, the way was cleared (literally) to move the warehouses to the site, and they were brought to the wharves in 1977. One was relocated on Derby Wharf and used for storage, and the other was moved to Central Wharf to be rehabilitated for a visitor center for the site and also for maintenance storage. Moving the warehouses to the wharves required formal amendment of the recently developed site master plan, which had called for a portion of the Naval Reserve building to be retained for use as a visitor orientation facility.

The warehouse at 33 Front Street will be moved to Central Wharf (as well as the warehouse at 31 Front Street being moved to Derby Wharf). The Central Wharf building will be demolished, and the maintenance-visitor-administrative functions planned for that building will be distributed among the two warehouses and the Custom House.³⁰

While a debate on the use of the warehouses - maintenance, storage, interpretation, visitor's center, restoration³¹ - dragged on, no funds were

²⁹ Jerry D. Wagers, Regional Director, to William J. Tinti, Chair, Salem Redevelopment Authority, 4 November 1974, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office; Superintendent's Annual Report, 1975, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

³⁰ H. John Dobrovolny, Superintendent, SMNHS, memo for files, 16 May 1977, Waltham Federal Records Center.

³¹ Richard L. Stanton, Regional Director to Sydna Carr (response to her complaint letter), 20 March 1980, Waltham Federal Records Center; Hugh Miller, Historic Architect, to Chief Architect (Historical), "Trip Report-Boston Group" 5 October 1973, SMNHS Box 1, file

available for maintenance, repair, or protection. They stood empty for several years, meanwhile subject to vandalism and ultimately arson. The wharves were impossible to police with existing park staff. In 1975 Dobrovolny had confessed that "... Derby Wharf remained out of control after dark."³² On July 31, 1982, the structure on Derby Wharf, never restored, burned in a suspicious fire.

The Derby Wharf Lighthouse, the only historic structure remaining on the wharf itself, was within the park boundaries but owned by the Coast Guard. It was decommissioned and transferred to the Park Service in 1979.

Even the deteriorating foundation of the Forrester Warehouse received preservation attention in this period, aiming towards preservation of the foundation walls "which are the only physical remains now from the many warehouses once on Derby and Central Wharfs. The brick foundation walls have suffered many alterations in past efforts to repair and stabilize them..."³³ The proposal called for removing the earth fill inside the walls to eliminate lateral pressure, rebuilding the collapsed section, and repointing the brickwork.

The 1978 Master Plan

From 1971 until 1978 a team from Denver, the regional office, and the site developed a new *Master Plan* to incorporate the seaward shift in focus. The plan was approved by 1975, but no funds were immediately available to print it. It was revised several times, for instance in 1977 to accommodate the moving of the two Front Street warehouses to the wharves, and finally published in 1978. The 1978 *Master Plan* emphasized the "Maritime" in the name of the site and called for interpretation (including enhanced signage) to focus on the wharves and water-based resources of the site.

The overall theme and significance of the site was stated thus: "Salem Maritime National Historic Site will be developed as the foremost place where Americans come to appreciate the significance of maritime enterprise as part of our national heritage."³⁴

"SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office; "Development/Study Package Proposal," package #154, 2 March 1978, Waltham Federal Records Center.

³² Superintendent's Annual Report, 1975, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

³³ Jerry D. Wagers, Regional Director, to Robert Garvey, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, 20 May 1974, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

³⁴ "Master Plan," SMNHS, May 1978, North Atlantic Regional Office.

One of the important findings of the *Master Plan* team was the need to reconnect Salem Maritime to the other historical and recreational resources in the city. They found that "A meaningful and satisfying visitor experience at the Park depends greatly upon the quality of the visitor's experience in the rest of the city."³⁵ An especially important consideration was the need for better marking of access routes from highways into the city and from one site to another.

The plan concluded that:

Total reconstruction of an 18th century seaport at Salem is neither economically nor physically feasible . . . However, sufficient property in and around the park remains to give a decided seaport flavor and feeling, and an atmosphere can be created that will allow the visitor to direct his interest toward the wharves and the associated waterfront.³⁶

To achieve the appropriate setting for the site's structures, it was important to protect existing historic structures nearby and work with the City of Salem on compatible uses for neighborhood buildings. The venerable idea of expanding park boundaries was yet again suggested to safeguard the Richard Derby, Forrester, and Crowninshield houses along Derby Street. But a remarkable departure was the suggestion to preserve a group of structures that the site had previously wished to acquire and demolish:

The private multifamily dwellings along the west side of Kosciusko Street also contribute to the park's historical atmosphere. About half of the structures date from the Federalist period, and one is probably a relocated pre-Revolutionary War house. Like the houses along Derby Street, the locations of these houses make their preservation critical to the overall preservation of the park's historical atmosphere . . . The structure at the end of Kosciusko Street is in a bad state of repair and currently serves no useful purpose. It will be acquired and removed to open an excellent view from the historic core to the open sea . . .³⁷

³⁵ "Master Plan," SMNHS, May 1978, North Atlantic Regional Office.

³⁶ "Master Plan," SMNHS, May 1978, North Atlantic Regional Office.

³⁷ "Master Plan," SMNHS, May 1978; steps had already been taken to contact the property owners about Park Service interest in some of the properties at the end of the street (F. Ross Holland, Jr., Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation to Chief, Lands Division, 28 January 1977, Waltham Federal Records Center).

Visitor orientation was a primary concern. The *Plan* called for moving the visitor-services functions to a new visitor center along Derby Street. New parking on Central Wharf next to the proposed facility would "enhance circulation by enabling visitors to proceed logically . . . through the orientation/interpretation facilities to the waterfront and wharf . . ." The Custom House would thereby be freed from administrative use except for the second floor offices. The site's original parking area on Derby Wharf, near the fence separating the site from the houses on Kosciusko Street, could be removed, enhancing the historic setting and improving the view from Derby House.³⁸

The wharves were to be enlivened by a large historic shipbuilding exhibit on Derby Wharf between the wharf itself and Kosciusko Street, two reconstructed long warehouses on Derby Wharf, a reconstructed sailing vessel berthed along side, plus the two relocated warehouses facing Derby Street.

The plan stressed privatization, with a faith in concessioners' commitment to the park "story" that would not be borne out in practice.

Development of the park will be accompanied by the granting of special-use permits and/or licenses to concessioners who are willing to offer services to the park visitor. Concessions will be appropriate to the basic maritime theme. A concessions-management plan will be prepared to study the feasibility and practicality of providing space in existing and proposed structures for workshops, arts-and-crafts shops, storage, and any maritime-related activities that will increase the interpretive value of the park.³⁹

Like the earlier *Interpretive Prospectus*, the *Plan* was bold and imaginative, calling for extensive and visible changes in the presentation of the site and its themes to the public. Interpretation based on living history was front and center, with wharfside demonstrations and role-playing, period sailing vessels, reconstructed warehouses, artifacts as props, and even a working 18th-century shipyard for Forrester's Wharf between the two larger wharves. This animated recreation of a historic setting, a kind of Sturbridge-by-the-sea, was a complete departure from the previous tradition of subdued signage and small-scale exhibits at the site.

The innovations, however, were largely unrealized, and seem to have been understood even by the team that created the *Master Plan* as planning for an

³⁸ "Master Plan," SMNHS, May 1978, North Atlantic Regional Office.

³⁹ "Master Plan," SMNHS, May 1978, North Atlantic Regional Office.

ideal situation and not for reality, since the personnel estimates by Superintendent Dobrovolny included in the plan were nowhere near adequate to research, develop, and undertake such an extensive interpretive program, even with assistance from Denver and Harpers Ferry. Why were plans made that no one really expected to see carried out? Was it a fault of the planning process itself? Was creating a master plan an abstract process, not seen as part of the real world? Was lack of support from the regional office in obtaining funds to realize it due to the pull of attention and funds to other newer parks, such as Boston National Historical Park and Lowell National Historical Park? Or the regional office's apparent willingness to use Salem for a number of years as a training ground for temporary superintendents so that no continuity or progress could be achieved? A lack of will on the part of the superintendent and his staff? A misreading by Denver planners of the kind and extent of support available for Salem Maritime? A misreading of Park Service preservationists' willingness to allow reconstructed historic settings?

The 1978 *Master Plan*, with so much effort behind it, did not succeed in making Salem Maritime all it could be. Building use changes were recommended to give interpretation a space to operate on the wharves, but the buildings themselves were only partially changed over to new uses, and even that came several years later. Interpretation still stayed inside, and despite all of the maritime emphasis, the wharves remained bare and unused.

Historic Preservation and Restoration

The mid-seventies saw an intense period of research and study of the major and minor structures and buildings of the site, new furnishings and landscaping, archeology and specialized studies.

Narbonne House

Throughout the 1970s, the Narbonne House interpretative plan, influenced by national trends in historic preservation, emphasized architecture and building technology. The Consulting Services Group of SPNEA, including architectural historians Abbott Lowell Cummings and Morgan Phillips, and under contract with SPNEA, archaeologist Geoffrey Moran from Bradford College, extensively studied and documented the house. The Park Service was fortunate and wise to call upon the services of SPNEA, which had the foremost experts in seventeenth century building technology and the most advanced techniques for studying early buildings.

The original intent was to use the house as employee housing rather than as an exhibit space, a viewpoint maintained by Superintendent Dobrovolny even as the Washington Office recognized the special features of the building that meant it should not be further adapted for modern use but preserved.

He argued that, "A piecemeal approach to operating a park is, I think, what sometimes gets us into unnecessary problems; every Specialist looking at individual portions of the park without sufficient awareness of the overall park needs." The *Master Plan* team rejected the Narbonne House as a museum, Dobrovolny stated, because it was not relevant to the maritime theme, there already were five seventeenth-century house-museums open in Salem, there were not enough personnel to maintain and show the house, and because period furnishings and exhibits would be needed.

As a museum, the house would be vacant at nights and beyond the effective observation of park personnel living in the Hawkes House; while used as a residence it could add extra protection to the house and that end of the park. I fail to see where modification of the interior of the house for residence purposes to the extent planned would detract from the preservation of the house . . . The maritime theme of the park cannot be much helped by an interior interpretation of the house, and most likely will divert attention from the more important wharves and waterfront.⁴⁰

The director of the Northeast Region declined to get involved, and the Boston Group superintendent showed "resistance to the idea of museum use."⁴¹ The Denver Service Center agreed with SPNEA's recommendation:

We realize that the contract calls for development of the house for use as a modern residence. We feel that the adaptive interior rehabilitation portion of the study would be rewritten to state the uniqueness of the structure and to indicate the adverse effects of required alteration . . . There are less than ten houses of this early plan type in New England. This is the only survival of the type that retains all its basic architectural characteristics . . . We suggest that

⁴⁰ H. John Dobrovolny, Superintendent, Salem Maritime NHS, to General Superintendent, Boston Group, 16 February 1973, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

⁴¹ Robert M. Utley, to Dr. Connally, 10 April 1973, note attached to Robert M. Utley, Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation to Director, Denver Service Center, 1 February 1973, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

consideration be given to preserving the Narbonne House in an essentially 'as-is' condition for an architectural exhibit.⁴²

In 1975 work was done to repair the wood rot in the house's frame and sheathing in order to make "solid and watertight a house that was going to ruin."⁴³ In accordance with the latest preservation practice, all replacement wood was thoroughly marked on large-scale diagrams prepared by the NARO architect. The collapsing seventeenth-century chimney stack was stabilized with grout and tie-rods. When the decision was finally made to preserve and interpret the House in "as-is" condition, SPNEA's Morgan Phillips concluded:

Throughout our acquaintance with the Narbonne House, we have felt that it was an almost unique example of a completely unrestored house of ca. 1670. Whereas virtually all seventeenth-century houses in New England have been heavily restored, Narbonne somehow escaped, preserving its entire continuum of later materials . . . A most important aspect of the unrestored character of the house is that it gives the serious student an opportunity that one never has in a neatly restored (and largely new) first period house: the chance to study the kind of untouched evidence that Chandler, Appleton, Isham and the other early restorers saw when they first confronted the buildings they restored. Only at Narbonne and one or two other first period houses (all later than Narbonne) can one peer down through all the overlay of carpentry, masonry, paint, plaster, and wallpaper.

Thus it is with great satisfaction that we learn that the Park Service intends to leave Narbonne exactly as it is now, only providing for some conveniences to the viewer.⁴⁴

According to the SPNEA proposal, the house was to be interpreted through graphic displays and photos, with spot lighting focused on certain features to be pointed out, and the parts of the original house labeled as in an exhibit, with labels on the early framing members and cases for display of archaeological remains.

⁴² Robert M. Utley, Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation to Director, Denver Service Center, 1 February 1973, SMNHS Box 1, file "SMNHS 1973-4," History Division, NPS Washington Office.

⁴³ Morgan W. Phillips, *The Narbonne House: Basis for an Interpretive Display*, June 1978, North Atlantic Regional Office, 24.

⁴⁴ Morgan W. Phillips, *The Narbonne House: Basis for an Interpretive Display*, June 1978, North Atlantic Regional Office, 32.

The Narbonne House and yard also presented the Service with a unique archeological opportunity which they were able to use to uncover valuable evidence about the past owners of the house and about life in early Salem. Beginning in April 1973, it was studied for three seasons in widening circles of investigation (Fig. 12) as the site proved unusually rich in artifacts, "one of the richest and most demanding domestic sites excavated and reported in North America."⁴⁵

Because of incongruities and conflicts between the documentary record and surviving architectural fabric, the architectural consultants originally subcontracted for an archaeologist to fill in the gaps. In this subsidiary and hand-maiden role, the archeological investigations at the Narbonne house had their beginning. Four years and 150,000 artifacts have brought about a certain professional parity, with the archaeology program developing its own research goals.⁴⁶

One of the most striking findings was the quantity, range, and quality of the ceramics associated with the site, from local redware to fine imported porcelain. Since the house had never been associated with the wealthy of Salem, this was evidence of the widespread availability of imported wares for all classes in this seagoing town. Used in combination with architectural and documentary evidence, the archeological findings enhanced understanding of the inhabitants and the structures of the site. The Park Service, recognizing the value of this work, followed up with published studies of the archeological investigation and the handling of the associated artifacts.⁴⁷

Problems with archeology at the Narbonne House show that the Service had still not adequately resolved the communications issues raised a year earlier at Central Wharf. In May 1975, Geoffrey Moran, the contract archeologist, discovered that soil beneath the floor boards of the lean-to had been removed to a depth of two feet without any archeological supervision. He had previously told several Park Service staff members that he was eager to

⁴⁵ Geoffrey P. Moran, Edward F. Zimmer, Anne E. Yentsch, *Archeological Investigations at the Narbonne House, Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Massachusetts*, Cultural Resources Management Study No. 6, Division of Cultural Resources, North Atlantic Regional Office (Boston: 1982), 187.

⁴⁶ Geoffrey P. Moran, Edward F. Zimmer, Anne E. Yentsch, *Archeological Investigations at the Narbonne House, Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Massachusetts*, Cultural Resources Management Study No. 6, Division of Cultural Resources, North Atlantic Regional Office (Boston: 1982), 1.

⁴⁷ Moran, cited above, and Alan T. Synecki and Sheila Charles, *Archeological Collections Management at Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Massachusetts*, ACMP Series no. 1, Division of Cultural Resources, North Atlantic Regional Office (Boston: 1983).



Figure 12. Archaeological Investigations at the Rear of the Narbonne House, 1974. The site proved to be an unusually rich one, uncovering much useful information about the lives of the past occupants. (Courtesy NPS Harpers Ferry Center, Richard Frear, Photographer.)

investigate that area, which was expected to be rich in cultural deposits, if it were ever to be uncovered. Site architects had agreed to notify him.⁴⁸

NARO's Ross Holland blamed the Denver Service Center Historic Preservation Team:

I am aware of Geoffrey Moran's complaint . . . I would like, however, to call your attention to the fact that the restoration of the Narbonne House is a Denver Service Center Historic Preservation Team project, and it would seem to me that the coordination of this work should be undertaken within your group . . .

The decision not to call Archeologist Moran at the time of the excavation was made, we presume, by the Project Supervisor and from what I have heard, I would support him in that decision . . .⁴⁹

Almost ludicrously, the letter Holland was responding to, from the Denver Team, had been sent in error to the Mid-Atlantic regional office (MARO) not the North Atlantic regional office, as if Denver did not even know where Salem was. MARO forwarded a copy of the letter to NARO — but also answered it anyway themselves:

In response to Acting Manager, Historic Preservation Team, John F. Luzader's memorandum of June 4 on the above subject, we are advised by Dr. John L. Cotter, MAR Regional Archeologist, who is familiar with the Narbonne House problems, that Mr. Geoffrey Moran, should by all means be allowed to retrieve whatever data may still remain in situ . . .⁵⁰

Meanwhile, back at Salem, Dobrovolny was justified in remarking: "What I do not understand is why MARO is getting involved in the Narbonne House archeology."⁵¹

⁴⁸ John F. Luzader, Acting Manager, Historic Preservation Team, Denver Service Center, to Regional Director, Mid-Atlantic Region, 4 June, 1975, Waltham Federal Records Center.

⁴⁹ F. Ross Holland, Jr., Associate Regional Director, Professional Services, North Atlantic Region, to Manager, Historic Preservation Team, Denver Service Center, 9 June 1975, Waltham Federal Records Center.

⁵⁰ David A. Kimball, Acting Associate Regional Director, Professional Services, Mid-Atlantic Region, to Manager, Denver Service Center, 12 June 1975, Waltham Federal Records Center.

⁵¹ Memo from Dobrovolny to North Atlantic Regional Office, attached to copy of David A. Kimball, Acting Associate Regional Director, Professional Services, Mid-Atlantic Region, to Manager, Denver Service Center, 12 June 1975, Waltham Federal Records Center.

Custom House

Scheduled repairs were made in 1975 to the Derby House, the Custom House, and the Bonded Warehouse roofs, but a fire, probably started by workmen, in the Custom House roof required the complete reroofing of the Custom House and warehouse, with new and reused slates, and new rafters for the warehouse.⁵²

The Custom House was re-restored and re-interpreted as the working office of the U.S. Customs Service and no longer used as museum exhibit space. Research was done to determine the probable appearance during the late 19th century, after the building had been renovated by the Customs Service, and plans were undertaken to restore and replace appropriate fixtures and furnishings. Visitor orientation functions were removed to the new Central Wharf warehouse, but the upstairs rooms continued to be used for site offices.⁵³

Derby House

The Derby House was refurnished to more accurately reflect the complex history of the structure. Furnishing plans prepared in the 1960s had assumed that the entire structure should attempt to portray its appearance during the Revolutionary-era occupancy of Elias Hasket Derby. However, it was now proposed, after the HSR and a new furnishing study was completed by Charles Snell of the Denver Service Center in 1976, to restore and furnish the rear ell to the post-Revolutionary era, when it was added to the house. (This is the ell that had been saved by architect Stuart Barnette in 1939 after the original master plan called for its removal). A new furnishing plan for the ell kitchen and two other rooms was drafted by Sally Ketcham, author of the 1970 study. The process of actually obtaining the new furnishings fell to the regional office Curator Ed Kallop, who handled the \$18,000 allocated to refurnish the site.⁵⁴

⁵² Superintendent's Annual Report, 1975, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

⁵³ Charles W. Snell, Specifications for Repair and Alteration of the U.S. Custom House and Public Store at Salem, North Atlantic Regional Office, 1977; Charles W. Snell, U.S. Custom House and Bonded Warehouse at Salem, Mass. (Building no. 1) (Draft), North Atlantic Regional Office, 1977; Orville W. Carroll, Furnishings Study and Plan: Collector's Business Office and Fireproof Vault, Custom House, North Atlantic Regional Office, 1978.

⁵⁴ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1975, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center; David H. Wallace, Chief, Branch of Reference Services, to Regional Director, North Atlantic Regional Office, 6 July 1976, Waltham Federal Records Center.

Why so many furnishing studies for one building in such a short span of time?

The Derby House at Salem has a long and checkered history as a furnishing project. About 1968 a plan was written under contract by a Boston area furnishing specialist [Marjorie Drake Ross], but it was rejected by Salem Maritime as insufficiently documented. In 1969 Parts C and D of a Furnishing Plan (the equivalent of today's Furnishing Study) were prepared, under contract, by Sally Johnson Ketcham and were approved. Parts A and B, the statement of purpose and operating plan were prepared by Unit Manager Dobrovolny in collaboration with the Branch of Museum Operations. Part E and F, the actual furnishing plan, were prepared by Ms. Ketcham in 1970 and approved. No funds were ever programmed to carry out the approved plan.⁵⁵

The Snell studies included the new dating and interpretive purpose for the ell rooms and were based on a late eighteenth century Derby inventory that had been judged by Ketcham to be too late to be relevant for the pre-Revolutionary period. Ketcham had relied on a close comparison with other Salem inventories of the appropriate period. Snell, it appears, was not informed of the existence of other furnishing studies for the house when he drafted his plan. Ketcham's work was first brought to his attention during the review process. This is another example of the communications problems experienced by the site in working with NPS planners in remote Denver - the wheel tended to be reinvented often.⁵⁶

The new plan was used as a basis to begin acquiring new furnishings and for deciding the future of existing loans. With inappropriate furniture and draperies removed, the house began to seem rather bare. Historian Harold L. Peterson was pleased with the effect:

John [Dobrovolny] tells me that some visitors complain about the starkness of the right front room . . . but that is the way rooms looked at that period, not the 1930's decorator approach we see so many places. It gives us a chance to do some real interpretation on 18th century life.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ David H. Wallace, Chief, Branch of Reference Services, to Manager, Harpers Ferry Center, 30 Sept. 1974, Waltham Federal Records Center.

⁵⁶ David H. Wallace, Chief, Branch of Reference Services, to Manager, Harpers Ferry Center, 30 September 1974, Waltham Federal Records Center; Harold L. Peterson to David Wallace, 17 August 1974, Waltham Federal Records Center.

⁵⁷ Harold L. Peterson to David Wallace, 17 August 1974, Waltham Federal Records Center.

Peterson concurred in Dobrovolny's wish to see "sufficient navigational and nautical gear around to indicate an interest in ships and the sea," recommending a telescope, a globe, and charts, but "I have some doubts about the sailmaker's palm now on one of the mantels, though. I doubt that Elias or any of his guests sewed canvas."⁵⁸

Hawkes House

The Hawkes House was used as quarters for the superintendent, whose presence on site after hours was believed to contribute to security. Visitors viewed it only from the outside. In 1979, Dobrovolny, who was leaving the site and moving out of the house, suggested to the regional office that it would make a good location for administrative headquarters, thus freeing the Custom House for interpretation.⁵⁹ The idea was accepted, but not implemented until the 1980s, after an interim period without a long-term superintendent.

Historic Cultural Landscapes

By the 1970s, the importance of historic cultural landscapes was well enough accepted for the Park Service to turn its attention to landscape design as more than just decorating the site appropriately. From 1973 to 1975, a relandscaping of the grounds to their historical appearance was researched and carried out at Salem Maritime. A team from Denver, including historians, a historical architect, an archeologist, and a historical landscape architect was assembled. The planning directive called for the team to:

Restore the historic appearance of the grounds within the Salem Maritime National Historic Site . . . the grounds should reflect the appearance of the period of the major structure they surround: Derby House front yard, 1775; Derby House rear yard, 1810; Narbonne House yard, Revolutionary War period; Hawkes yards, park-like early 19th century; Derby Wharf, 1800; Central Wharf, park-like early 19th century.

Their work began with an archeological examination to locate outbuildings, wells, walls, drives, fence lines, and any evidence of historic plantings. Next came a historic structures grounds report, complete with documentation, and a site examination by a landscape architect. Finally, the team would establish

⁵⁸ Harold L. Peterson to David Wallace, 17 August 1974, Waltham Federal Records Center.

⁵⁹ John C. Raftery, Assistant to the Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, to Regional Director, 2 November 1979, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

a period of restoration, establish lot and fence lines, reconstruct fences, recommend appropriate plant material, and create a maintenance plan.⁶⁰

Concessions

Rum Shop/West India Goods Store

In 1973 Edward Rushford's permit to operate an antique shop in the "Rum Shop" building expired. The site was planning to try to add "some West India Goods Store type of merchandise" to the antiques he sold, but lack of research information postponed this innovation and the store continued as it was. When Rushford died in November 1975, there was finally an opportunity to change the direction of the enterprise.⁶¹

The importance of the building to the park is its earliest known use: the store built by Captain Henry Prince while he lived in the Derby House, as a place to sell his imports. Later uses and alterations to the building for such purposes as a hair-dresser's shop or hypothetical "rum shop" are inconsistent with the maritime purpose of the park.

A five-year concessions permit was issued on October 1, 1976, for operation of the store as a West India Goods Store by the partnership of Connolly and Wellington.⁶² It was not an overwhelming success:

The West India Goods Store currently under concessions permit is a marginal operation. It needs to be given more interpretive emphasis and some business counseling to improve its interpretation effectiveness and profit margin.⁶³

The renewal of interest in how this structure helped to tell the "maritime story" of the site led to the commissioning of an HSR, completed in 1978. The regional office had resisted this study, apparently in the belief that the only surviving commercial building on the site was irrelevant to interpretation: "... we are concerned about the amount of money which will be spent on

⁶⁰ "Package No. 102: Historic Grounds Restoration of the Salem Maritime National Historic Site," September 1973, Denver Service Center, Waltham Federal Records Center.

⁶¹ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1973, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library; Superintendent's Annual Report, 1975, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

⁶² H. John Dobrovolny, Superintendent, SMNHS, to Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, 27 January 1978, Waltham Federal Records Center.

⁶³ John C. Raftery, Assistant to the Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, to Regional Director, 2 November 1979, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

studying a building of third order significance which will continue to be operated as a concession."⁶⁴

Retail Sales

When the Salem Maritime Historical Association voted to disband in 1970, after twenty-three years of assistance to the site, the Eastern National Park and Monument Association took over the retail sales operation. ENP&MA is a separate non-profit organization that handles sales and publications at member national parks, and donates profits back to the parks through grants for specific projects and acquisitions. Site staff continued to handle actual sales to visitors at the visitor's center, while the association paid the cost of the merchandise and returned profits, in the form of donations, to Salem Maritime.⁶⁵

Brig Republic

Having sought a ship to dock at Derby Wharf since the 1930s, Salem Maritime NHS staff must have been pleased to declare in 1977 :

The National Park Service proposes to implement a provision of the Master Plan for Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Salem, Massachusetts, that requires the docking of a historic period sailing vessel at Derby Wharf. A proposal for a concession permit for such as vessel has been received from R. E. Walker and A. M. Johnston.⁶⁶

The vessel, the *Brig Republic*, was a reproduction 18th-century brigantine. It was to be docked to the west of the west bulkhead of Derby Wharf, near the southern end of the 1762 wharf, about eight hundred feet south of Derby St. It met the *Master Plan* requirements and its appearance was technically acceptable to the Peabody Museum, who were asked to advise.

The presentation planned for the ship turned out to be another matter entirely. As a concession, the interpretive program was completely out of the hands of any Park Service supervision. The intention was stated as: "The ship will be operated as a museum depicting the true adventures of a vessel

⁶⁴ Leonard A. Frank, Acting Regional Director, North Atlantic Regional Office, to Associate Manager, Denver Service Center, 4 May 1978, Waltham Federal Records Center.

⁶⁵ Herbert Kahler, *Eastern National Parks and Monuments Association: Its First Twenty-Five Years* (NPS: 1977) .

⁶⁶ Jack E. Stark, Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, to Elizabeth Amadon, State Historic Preservation Office, 8 December 1977, Waltham Federal Records Center.

which sailed from Salem in the 1800s to engage in the pepper trade." In practice, it was highly unsatisfactory, inaccurate, commercialized, and a source of visitor complaints.

There appeared unanimous agreement that the Brigantine *Republic* is not doing the job that is desired. There have been oral complaints recorded in incident reports from visitors. The general conclusion seems to be that the presentation is not very good and it is overshadowed by the sound and light presentation "Voyage of the India Star" at Pickering Wharf.⁶⁷

The NARO task force convened to study Salem Maritime in 1980 felt it necessary to advise terminating the agreement on *Republic* at the end of the concessioner's contract or before if possible. Regional Chief of Interpretation Bruce McHenry observed that:

The Brigantine Republic is a serious problem . . . I think visitors feel "taken" by us and we should make certain they know what they are in for by better signing or literature. I would prefer that we encourage the concessioner to leave or somehow end his contract. If he stays on we have an obligation to have it cleaned up, painted, and new scripts or tapes worked up. The most damaging part of the "show" is its nearly total lack of historical accuracy. This is almost obscene.⁶⁸

McHenry proposed another solution that in fact recalled the unimplemented 1971 *Interpretive Prospectus* and the 1978 *Master Plan*:

The Wharf needs ships. We should look into incentives we might use to entice period vessels to birth [sic] there . . . There is another way to get a ship or ships along the Wharf, build our own. I have always felt we should develop a living history shipyard utilizing VIPs [Volunteers-In-the-Park] and donated lumber.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ John C. Rafferty, Assistant to the Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, and Task Force, to Regional Director, 6 March 1980, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

⁶⁸ Bruce McHenry, Acting Chief, Interpretation, North Atlantic Region, to Assistant to the Acting Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, 5 December, 1979, Waltham Federal Records Center.

⁶⁹ Bruce McHenry, Acting Chief, Interpretation, North Atlantic Region, to Assistant to the Acting Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, 5 December, 1979, Waltham Federal Records Center.

Yet, ironically, even while regional panels of experts were calling in the strongest terms for the termination of the *Republic*, a routine concessions evaluation, signed by Acting Superintendent Genevieve R. K. Riley, rated the Brig *Republic* as "satisfactory." Finally, Superintendent Elaine D'Amico canceled the permit in the summer of 1981, and found the concessioner agreeable since he had found the arrangement unprofitable.⁷⁰

* * *

By the end of this period, nearly every building and structure at Salem Maritime NHS had been worked on in some way, producing many visible changes. Derby and Central Wharves had been placed at the center of all park planning and operations for the first time, and had been extensively repaired. The Naval Reserve building had been replaced by the Front Street warehouse, to be the new visitor center for the site. Derby Wharf had temporarily had and then lost a warehouse, and had hosted a ship as the planners had always dreamed, inadequate though it was. The Derby Wharf Lighthouse had been added to the park. The ruins of the Forrester Warehouse were stabilized.

On the landward side, the Narbonne House had undergone a pioneering non-restoration and was open to special visitors. The Rum Shop had metamorphosed into the West India Goods Store. Derby House had been partially refurnished and reinterpreted with the theme of historical continuity. The Custom House had been freed from serving as the Visitors Center and housed only administration besides its museum function.

Serious mistakes had been made, notably in the realm of archeology. Other mistakes had been averted, such as the threatened alteration of the Narbonne House for quarters. Both these problems were related to the larger issue of administration and the chaos created by the division of function, and therefore of responsibility, among the site, the regional office, and the planners in Denver. No one on the site had the knowledge or apparently the duty to stop the Navy's destruction of archeological evidence on Central Wharf. Those who knew were in Denver. Those responsible were in Boston.

There was a price paid for the downgrading of site responsibilities and skills. On the other hand, the Narbonne House might have lost its unique value to preservation if the Salem superintendent and the regional office in Boston had followed the original plan and turned it into quarters. It was knowledgeable preservationists in Washington, Denver, and from SPNEA in the private realm who had the vision to preserve it as it was.

⁷⁰ Concessions Evaluation, 11 January 1980, Waltham Federal Records Center; Superintendent's Annual Report 1981, SMNHS box, NPS Harper's Ferry Center Library.

Attempts to privatize interpretation through concessions such as the Brig *Republic* and the first version of the West India Goods Store had failed, as was inevitable, because of the difference between commitment to educating the public and interest in entertaining them. The far-ranging and imaginative *Interpretive Plan*, integrated into the *Master Plan*, was not carried out in full, due to a failure of will, imagination, and funding, that may have had its origins in the division of duties, and in the deliberate removal by the NPS of individuals of talent and understanding to the new centers in Denver and Harpers Ferry. Those left behind in the field had an uphill struggle to accomplish anything at all once the planners went back home.

PART THREE
RENEWING THE VISION

CHAPTER 7

PUBLIC/PRIVATE INITIATIVES TO THE FORE AGAIN (1983-1991)

From the doldrums of the early 1980s, Salem Maritime National Historic Site embarked on a new course that in many ways recalled the early hopeful plans for the site of the 1930s. With a new activist superintendent in office, and the success of the nearby Lowell National Historical Park as a model, the quest to improve SMNHS led to the revival, in a new form, of the initial concept of public/private partnership in preserving and interpreting historic resources. During the 1980s the creation of a new kind of consortium that united cultural organizations, businesses, and governments to promote and develop Salem profoundly affected Salem Maritime.

Out of this new energy came the Salem Project, which viewed the site in the context of all the region's resources, and proposed a plan to carry the site and its surrounding area into the 21st century. This major new undertaking represented a renewal of the founding vision of the site as a gateway to the region, and saw the NPS as one partner in a multi-faceted effort involving other organizations, local governments, businesses, and citizens.

A Long Term Superintendent

By all accounts, Salem Maritime NHS reached the lowest point in its history in the early 1980s. When Cynthia Pollack arrived as site superintendent in the fall of 1983, the empty warehouse on Derby Wharf had just been burned by vandals and stood boarded up and abandoned. The Central Wharf warehouse, slated to become a new visitor center, was at risk of the same fate. With staff members no longer living on the site to keep watch after hours and no protection budget, the wharves were given over at night to drunks and vandals. In 1982 alone, vandalism had cost the site an estimated \$40,000, with thefts, forcible entries, and armed robbery occurring within site boundaries. Derby Wharf itself, already suffering from years of underfunding and neglect, and heavily damaged in flooding during a severe blizzard in 1978, needed extensive — and expensive — repairs.¹

¹ Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991; Interview with John Frayler, Historian, SMNHS, 19 September 1991; Memo, Supt. Pollack, SMNHS, to Position Review Board, North Atlantic Region, 19 October. 1982.

Staff offices were in historically furnished rooms in the Custom House, and "all but one other building were boarded up." Trash filled the first floor rooms of the Hawkes House, and on the upper floors, in the former quarters "every roof leaked, the chimneys leaked." The poor condition of the park's physical resources and visitor services astonished Pollack. She later recalled: "It was very difficult for me to understand . . . why the Park was in this kind of physical condition and why the staffing and funding was so deprived."²

The staff, inadequate in number to the tasks at hand and leaderless for several years, was understandably demoralized. As Pollack realized:

We were losing historic fabric, and . . . it was so depressing for the staff. They were sitting here in this place . . . they just didn't really feel they were part of the Park Service . . . I felt that anything that we could open up and put a little Park Service image in would help them in their endeavors.³

Pollack set to work immediately with the goal of getting as much of the site open to visitors as possible. The Regional Office's Preservation Lab provided help in setting up a series of one year programs to get buildings restored and reopened. To protect the Central Wharf Warehouse, Pollack negotiated funds from the City of Salem and the Peabody Museum to open it as a temporary visitor center. This in itself was a coup, since community relations had not been a priority under previous administrations. Pollack observed, "It had been like a closed-down site, and the Park Service in this area until very recently has not been very visible," an opinion shared by community leaders.

Help also came from a new organization called the Friends of Salem Maritime, established in August 1983. The first project this volunteer group undertook was the restoration of the Derby Wharf Lighthouse, which had been deteriorating since being decommissioned by the Coast Guard in 1976. Under the chairmanship of Stanley J. Usovicz, the "Friends" combined their donated labor with donated materials from local businesses and succeeded in restoring and relighting the Derby Wharf Lighthouse beacon in October 1983. The group next organized an effective Community Park Watch Program in conjunction with the site's Protection Officer, Peter LaChapelle, helping to fight vandalism on the wharves.⁴

² Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991.

³ Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991.

⁴ Superintendent's Annual Report for 1983, NPS Harpers Ferry Center; Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991; Interview with Stanley Lukowski,

With Pollack's appointment as superintendent had come approval to increase the staff, enabling her to add two permanent full-time park technicians, and fill the positions of park historian and maintenance supervisor. "The focus of attention throughout 1984 was to lay the groundwork for reactivation of the site with primary stress on increasing visitor access . . . major emphasis was placed on bringing the site back to life and setting forth basic new methods of action." A new site brochure and handbook developed by the Harpers Ferry Center gave a new look to interpretive materials.⁵

Disaster led to opportunity for the West India Goods Shop in the aftermath of a car accident that seriously damaged a corner of the building in November 1983, just after Pollack arrived as superintendent. At the time it was a coffee shop that sold West India goods, run as a concession by a private firm, Connelly and Wellington, and not fully satisfactory in its dual role in retail and interpretation. Pollack used the opportunity to have the building studied and rehabilitated. The decision was made to retain the 1928 SPNEA restoration on the exterior while making accommodations for modern retail needs on the interior.⁶

The store would now be operated by Eastern National Park & Monument Association as a retail outlet offering goods representative of the West India trade. Historical Architect Orville Carroll outlined the preservation considerations to Pollack:

There would be no attempt to reproduce an interior reflective of an early nineteenth century store since little information exists from this period. Store interiors from this era . . . had shelving and base cabinets along the walls fronted by sales or display counters which separated the bulk of goods from the customer. Today, merchandising places the customer in direct contact with the goods and encourages browsing and inspection of the sales merchandise. The latter approach appeals more to the ENP&MA employees and is probably a valid approach . . .⁷

President, Salem Partnership, 3 October 1991; Interview with Anne Farnam, Director, Essex Institute, 19 September 1991; Memo, Superintendent, SMNHS, to Management Efficiency Program Manager, North Atlantic Regional Office, undated (1984 "Blue Copies" correspondence file, SMNHS).

⁵ Superintendent's Annual Report for 1984, NPS Harpers Ferry Center.

⁶ Orville Carroll, Historical Architect, NAHPC, to Chief, Historic Preservation, North Atlantic Region, 27 August 1985, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

⁷ Orville Carroll, Historical Architect, NAHPC, to Superintendent, SAMA, 21 January 1985, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, Boston.

Eastern National was a partner in this redirection for the structure. Superintendent Pollack reported that "Eastern National Park and Monument were very, very, good to me," with her effort to simply get the buildings open in the mid-80s, contributing \$1,000 to reopen the West India Goods Store as well as other funds for staffing help.⁸

Later, it was suggested that a small exhibit be added to interpret the roles of the Park Service and of Eastern National at the Store, and that it be clarified that "... this is not an exact replication of a West India Goods Store," lest visitors be misled by the mix of modern and period merchandise displays.⁹

From 1983 to 1984 the entire site received a general maintenance and upkeep overhaul - exterior painting, new fences, and small repairs. Unfortunately the contractors chosen produced substandard work. Their inability to satisfy the Park Service criteria led to litigation over the inferior work.¹⁰

Derby House received an unplanned new roof when a hurricane blew off the existing copper sheath roof. The replacement slate was an improvement because it was more historically appropriate.¹¹

Having made some progress towards the physical rehabilitation of the site and improved staffing levels, Pollack began to focus on local relations and interactions with community groups, a neglected area for the site in past years. One result was the development in 1984 of the Salem Heritage Trail, a self-guided tour of Salem's attractions, which unified several diverse cultural organizations to work on a project with mutual benefits. Salem Maritime staff also became active in the Museums Collaborative, an ongoing planning group consisting of representatives from the major historical institutions of the city, founded in 1979.¹²

⁸ Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991.

⁹ Interpretive Prospectus, SMNHS, 1990, Division of Interpretive Planning, NPS Harpers Ferry Center.

¹⁰ Interview with John Frayler, Historian, SMNHS, 19 September 1991; Orville W. Carroll, "Completion Report: Rebuild Fences, Repair Balustrade and Window Blinds, Paint Exterior of Buildings, Fences, and Walkways, SMNHS," North Atlantic Regional Office, 1985.

¹¹ Annual Report 1986, SMNHS, 1986 "Blue Copies" correspondence file, SMNHS.

¹² Superintendent's Annual Report for 1985, Harpers Ferry Center Library.

The Salem Partnership

From these early cooperative projects grew the idea of creating a consortium comprising the business community, cultural organizations, and government entities to promote and develop Salem for mutual benefit. One model for this kind of public/private development partnership was the nearby Lowell National Historical Park, created in 1978 as part of the "Lowell Plan." This plan, which united the city, state, private interests including banks, and federal government in a program to revitalize the decaying mill city, was drawing national attention by reversing Lowell's long economic decline.

Former Congressman Michael Harrington first conceived the idea for the Salem Partnership in 1986. As created, it brought together private individuals, businesses, non-profit and community organizations, cultural groups, educators, and media organizations, to work for the cultural and economic development of the Salem area. The City of Salem and Essex County participated, as did the federal government through the National Park Service. Former Senator Paul Tsongas, who had pushed the Lowell legislation through Congress, was the speaker at the first formal Salem Partnership meeting.

Banker Stanley Lukowski served as first president of the organization, beginning in 1987. Senior representatives of participating organizations — presidents of banks, owners of businesses, directors of museums — sat on the board of the partnership. Funding came at first from several banks. Salem State College cooperated by lending its Business Resource Center director for staff, and gave space. The City was able to give clerical help and find grant money for projects. Later, using money from the banks and other businesses, the partnership hired a new full-time director, Maureen Johnson.¹³

The partnership's goal was ultimately the economic renaissance of Salem, with promotion of culture a pragmatic means to an end. Some cultural leaders, while admitting the utility of the partnership in fulfilling their own agendas, were nonetheless wary. Essex Institute Director Anne Farnam expressed the frustration of early meetings: "...nobody who understood economic development understood cultural development. And vice versa."¹⁴

¹³ Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991; Interview with Stanley Lukowski, President, Salem Partnership, 3 October 1991.

¹⁴ Interview with Anne Farnam, Director, Essex Institute, 19 September 1991.

SMNHS Superintendent Pollack was an early and enthusiastic member of the partnership, and from the beginning, the group focused attention on the site. As Stanley Lukowski explained, "One of [the] common purposes got to be the Salem Historic Site, because of its importance to the city as a tourist site, as an integral part of its history and culture."¹⁵

One of the partnership's first important projects was a detailed marketing survey of visitors to cultural attractions in Salem. Various organizations had a sense of who their own audience was, but a city-wide survey enabled everyone to see the bigger picture, and to prove to business leaders the unfulfilled economic potential of cultural tourism in the City. It was equally helpful for cultural institutions to see how they stood with the public. Farnam said that: "The visitor's survey . . . was probably the most useful document for the community, or for us . . . It was very thorough."¹⁶

The *Visitor Study* was funded by the Park Service and conducted by the Resource Center for Business of nearby Salem State College. Among other conclusions, the study found that Salem tourists were most often day visitors making a side trip from Boston or stopping on the route north, rather than seeing Salem as an end destination. This meant that the hotel and restaurant business potential for the City was as yet undeveloped, until Salem could present itself as a travel destination on its own. The accessibility of the city from major transportation routes was found to be poor, and circulation within the city and between sites confusing for visitors. The recommendation for improved signage had already been partially addressed by the installation of new highway markers in the mid-1980s, but these were insufficient and visitor orientation was seen as a high-profile problem.¹⁷

Salem visitors were well educated, the *Study* showed, and interested in themes of "Witchcraft" and "Early American History." A minority were primarily interested in "Maritime History" before they arrived, but more had come to appreciate this theme when they left Salem. There was potential to improve on this audience segment. Moreover, local visitors were not reached well by local historic sites, including Salem Maritime.

¹⁵ Interview with Stanley Lukowski, President, Salem Partnership, 3 October 1991.

¹⁶ Interview with Anne Farnam, Director, Essex Institute, 19 September 1991.

¹⁷ "Visitor Study of Salem, Massachusetts and the Salem Maritime National Historic Site, 1989," prepared for the National Park Service by the Resource Center for Business, Salem State College, May 1990, SMNHS; Interview with Stanley Lukowski, President, Salem Partnership, 3 October 1991.

The *Study* recommended a joint visitor information center, and a look at traffic patterns pointed to an area around the Essex Street pedestrian mall, near the Essex Institute and the Peabody Museum. In fact, an appropriate building existed in exactly that location: the historic but burned-out Salem Armory.

In addition to pinpointing the problems, the *Study* allowed leaders of cultural, historical, and tourist service organizations to see the vital necessity of working together on a unified presentation that would clarify the experience of Salem for visitors and locals alike. Out of this realization grew several important initiatives, including improved signage and transportation routes, a joint visitor center and other programs, many of which would ultimately be encompassed in the Salem Project.

Participation in economic development projects was not entirely new for the Park Service or even for the North Atlantic Regional Office, since Lowell NHP had led the way in the late 1970s. Many other communities across the country had in fact proposed similar municipal/private/NPS developments to the Park Service, but only two others — the Blackstone Valley Project in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and the American Industrial Heritage Project in western Pennsylvania — had been accepted, and were in the early study stage. Salem, however, already had a park in place and was a unique candidate for increased federal attention under such a plan.¹⁸

Some within the Park Service were not entirely comfortable with this highly visible role in promoting community development. However, former Associate Regional Director Denis Galvin, who went on to become NPS Associate Director for Planning and Development and the Washington contact for the Salem Partnership, stated that: "I am not uncomfortable with [Park Service participation in economic development] at all as long as it involves the preservation of nationally significant resources . . . if it's also good economics, I don't see anything wrong with that." The New Deal was after all an economic development program, Galvin pointed out, and the existence of Salem Maritime NHS grew out of New Deal funding. "The intertwining of economic ideas in parks is as old as the National Park System."¹⁹ And at Salem, of course, it was as old as the idea of the Maritime NHS.

¹⁸ Interview with Denis Galvin, former Associate Regional Director, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, 23 March 1992.

¹⁹ Interview with Denis Galvin, former Associate Regional Director, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, 23 March 1992.

The cooperative effort proceeded apace. Only three years after the initial partnership meeting at which Senator Tsongas spoke of Lowell, Senators Edward M. Kennedy and John F. Kerry could declare that "The cooperative relationship between the National Park Service and the Salem Partnership has evolved into a successful historic preservation effort. Since its formation in 1987, the Salem Partnership has attracted private investments totaling \$63 million — a private/public ratio of 15:1."²⁰

Initiating the Salem Project

The Salem Partnership became a collaborator with Salem Maritime NHS in conceiving, planning, and raising funds for their joint venture, the Salem Project. The Salem Project was initiated by the park to address a serious problem: if the wharves were ever to be restored, Pollack needed money for the project on a scale far beyond anything that had been budgeted for Salem Maritime since the 1930s.

The first attempt at establishing an outside-the-budget source to fund wharf rehabilitation was a proposal to lease the wharves to a private developer who would do the repair work in exchange for potentially lucrative development rights. An NPS system-wide Historic Leasing Program, authorized by the 1980 revisions to the National Historic Preservation Act, designed to maximize use of underused and peripheral resources within parks, made such a lease possible. Since the Act had not been designed to apply to resources as central to a park's mission as Derby and Central Wharves were to Salem Maritime, the regional office drew up very stringent guidelines for development. A request for proposals was sent out in September 1984, and a lease with a private firm, the Derby Development Corporation, was signed in December 1986. However, the lease allowed an escape clause for the developer, who determined after doing economic studies that under the conditions required by the NPS for accurate wharf rehabilitation and minimal new construction, the marina proposed would not be profitable. The lease was terminated in January 1988. A new RFP went out the same month, though it seemed unlikely, given the terms required by the NPS and the results of the economic analysis, that another developer would take a risk on a similar lease.²¹

²⁰ Senators Edward M. Kennedy and John F. Kerry to Sen. Robert Byrd, 22 June 1990, files, SMNHS.

²¹ Herbert S. Cables, Jr., Regional Director, to David T. Zussman, President, Derby Development Corporation, 12 December 1987; Memo, "SAMA Budget Briefing", Myra F. Harrison, Chief, Cultural Resources, North Atlantic Regional Office, 2 March 1988; Memo, Associate Director, Cultural Resources, to Regional Director, North Atlantic Regional Office, draft, no date; Request for Proposals, RFP-NARO-8-0025, 25 February, 1988; all in "Building" files, SMNHS.

It now seemed to Superintendent Pollack that direct Congressional appropriation was the last realistic route for saving the wharves. An expanded regional plan with broad benefits to the local community that would draw the active support of Congressman Nicholas Mavroules and Senators Edward Kennedy and John Kerry would be the only way to get such an appropriation. Thus, Salem Maritime and the Salem Partnership put forward a plan that provided for the cooperative interpretation of a network of historic sites and other resources in Essex County, at last making SMNHS a gateway to the region and a catalyst and focal point for the development and promotion of the region's historic resources. Here was the opportunity to provide the visibility that had eluded the park since its establishment in the 1930s.

Support for the idea of the Salem Project came from all areas of the Park Service. NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr., was enthusiastic, and NARO Associate Regional Director Denis Galvin and Regional Director Herbert Cables, then at NARO and later in Washington, gave active help, contacts, and ideas. On a practical level, John Albright of the Denver Service Center assisted with the administrative, legal, and financial procedures for organizing a complex project of this scope. His first visit to the site in December 1987 marked the real beginning of the project.²²

The official agenda of the Salem Project, as stated in the introduction to the published study, encompassed all of these goals:

The Salem Project is a joint venture of governments and private citizens working together to preserve the rich cultural heritage of Salem and related sites in Essex County and to stimulate cultural awareness and economic development through tourism. The project is part of a larger effort initiated by the Salem Partnership, a consortium of businesses, private institutions, government agencies, and elected officials working to revitalize the city of Salem . . . The two complementary purposes of the project are to enhance the story to be told at Salem Maritime by preserving and interpreting closely related resources throughout the county and to use the national historic site as a catalyst for expanding the county's tourism industry.²³

²² Supt. Pollack to Robert Shelley, Associate Manager, Denver Service Center, 10 December 1987, 1987 "Blue Copies" file, SMNHS.

²³ *The Salem Project: Study of Alternatives*, January 1990 (NPS), 1.

Superintendent Pollack was always very clear about her own agenda for the Salem Project: to save the wharves, and by saving them, to save Salem Maritime. Since nothing less than a massive effort could succeed, and direct Congressional appropriation was only possible if the problems of the wharves could be placed in the larger context, Pollack was ready to make alliance with those who would support these goals, whatever their own agendas might be.²⁴

In addition to restoring the wharves, the Salem Project offered great interpretive richness and depth through alliances with other historic sites and museums, county-wide. Pollack recognized the need, for the visitor's sake, to connect Salem to the rest of the world and take a broader approach to maritime history. Derby Wharf could not tell the whole story:

Saugus Iron Works was making iron for the ships in Salem, and the ships were being built in Essex, and there's a museum there that shows you that, and there's a whole ship sitting there . . . and when you go along the Merrimack River . . . and you see them making . . . dories and [see] the fishing there in Newburyport, the whole thing comes together.

With a deep commitment to interpretation, she saw public understanding and support as vital to preservation as well:

What we're trying to do is show that . . . we have so much, and it's nationally significant, and it's all tied together . . . People need to see; it's the only way it will get preserved. People need to see that their history was really vital and alive, and it's still alive . . . I would like to see this as a living history.²⁵

A sign that Salem Maritime had indeed come back to life was the very public celebration of the 50th birthday of the site in March 1988. Buildings had reopened, and the Salem Project was beginning to come together. Superintendent Pollack saw the day as the opportunity to declare a new beginning for Salem Maritime, announcing: "This is day one." The publicity surrounding the celebration was educational in itself, since many local people

²⁴ Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991; Interview with John Frayler, Historian, SMNHS, 19 September 1991.

²⁵ Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991.

of this generation, even including Anne Farnam of the Essex Institute, were not aware of Salem Maritime's importance as the first national historic site.²⁶

With the active support of Congressman Mavroules and Senators Kennedy and Kerry, and lobbying in Washington by members of the Salem Partnership, millions of federal dollars could be appropriated for Salem Maritime under the rubric of the Salem Project. In October 1988, Congress appropriated the first \$1.1 million to initiate planning (*Study of Alternatives, Transportation Plan, and Visitor Study*), and to acquire and rehabilitate the Polish Club building on Derby Street, long on the site's wish list, for site collections, archives and offices. In the following year, Congress voted an additional appropriation of \$2.96 million for site planning, design and construction documents for wharf rehabilitation; design and construction documents for the Visitor Center; and for exhibits.²⁷

The Denver Service Center sent specialists to Salem to create the initial planning documents for a county-wide analysis of cultural resources. First a temporary staffer, Dennis Piper, was sent to set up the project. Then Michael Spratt, planning director, was sent to live in Salem for the three-year anticipated duration of the planning for the project. Spratt was able to work well with all the other collaborators: "He was very instrumental in getting the kinds of things a person like myself can visualize . . . [he] just painted the picture, everyone could see it," the Salem Partnership's Lukowski said. Spratt was joined by DSC Landscape Architect Ann Moss, who wrote the *Site Development Plan* and the *Study of Alternatives*.²⁸

Working out an organizational structure that could balance the needs of the park and those of the Salem Project, housed at the park, took some time. It was all too easy for Superintendent Pollack and staff to become immersed in the great demands of the Project, when the site was as needy of attention as ever. The two entities, park and project, often intertwined. The periodic Operations Evaluation conducted by the regional office in 1990 pointed out the urgency of defining the separateness of the two entities, recommending the establishment of a Project Director position for the Salem Project, and suggesting the need to "Review and revise, if necessary, park Superintendent

²⁶ 1989 Annual Report, Salem Maritime National Historic Site, office files SMNHS; Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991; Interview with Anne Farnam, Director, Essex Institute, 19 September 1991.

²⁷ Conversation with Cynthia Pollack, 19 June 1992; "The Salem Project: Budget Analysis," December 1990, SMNHS files; "Status Report: Salem Project," 1990 "Blue Copies" correspondence file, SMNHS.

²⁸ Interview with Stanley Lukowski, President, Salem Partnership, 3 October 1991.

position to insure priority is placed on park management and operations including community relations."²⁹

Relations with Other Government Agencies

While both the Denver Service Center team and Salem staff members focused thoughts and energy on the future through the Salem Project study phase, Pollack's attempts to address the site's problems continued. In fact, significant progress occurred on several fronts. One of the most important and visible of these was interpretation of the wharves.

The U.S. Customs Service had a natural interest in the Salem Custom House, one of the few places in the country where the public could learn about the vital role the Service had played in raising the revenue to support the fledgling American government. In commemoration of its bicentennial in 1988, the Customs Service paid for a series of wayside exhibits on the history of the Customs Service as well as other aspects of the park.³⁰ The waysides, designed by the Harpers Ferry Center, proved to be a popular and effective way of interpreting the historic landscape, particularly the wharves. Historian John Frayler found them to be useful:

Before we had those [waysides] you basically had to take people out there and say to them: "Think busy. Think ships. Think many buildings. Think on the other side of that island with the lighthouse is the rest of the world."³¹

Now visitors standing near the tip of Derby Wharf looking out towards the open ocean could also have in front of them historic illustrations of the ships and the view from long before.

Relations were less happy with another government agency, the National Archives and Records Administration, as a disagreement arose over the fate of the old Customs Service archives. The historical records of the Customs Service in Salem, owned by the National Archives and Records Administration, were held by the Essex Institute, a private organization, so that they could be used for study in Salem. Custody of these records had been transferred by Salem Maritime to the Essex Institute in 1973 on a long-term

²⁹ *Operations Evaluation, Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Final Report*, May 15, 1990, NPS.

³⁰ 1989 Annual Report, Salem Maritime National Historic Site, office files, SMNHS.

³¹ Interview with John Frayler, Historian, SMNHS, 19 September 1991.

loan basis.³² The Park Service now felt that it was more appropriate for Salem Maritime NHS, as a governmental entity, to have custody of the records once a suitable location was arranged. The new facility at the Polish Club was intended to have space for archives, so the Park Service requested of the National Archives that custody of the Customs Service records be transferred to Salem Maritime. The Archives did not agree. In a letter to NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr., Acting Archivist of the United States Frank G. Burke declared that:

It would be most appropriate for these records to be united with related records of Massachusetts customs houses [sic] that are part of the Archives of the United States . . . The National Archives has both the professional staff and conservation facilities to ensure that the records are appropriately arranged and preserved. We also have the legal responsibility and personal commitment for ensuring that historical Federal records, one of our nation's primary cultural resources, will be available for use of future generations of Americans.³³

After much wrangling, in May 1988 Congress decided the issue, which at that level became ensnared in complex political rivalries within the Massachusetts delegation, and the records were finally sent out of Salem entirely, to the Waltham, Massachusetts, branch of the National Archives. This was a loss for Salem researchers, who could no longer easily compare the extensive private maritime archives at the Essex Institute with official Customs documents. The same bill that decided the fate of the documents also approved the acquisition of the Polish Club for the Park, though this building now lost much of its justification as an archive for Salem Maritime. The National Archives agreed to mitigate the impact of the decision on Salem Maritime by microfilming the records and providing a copy to the park, allowing stack access for NPS researchers, and allowing the park to borrow items for exhibit.³⁴

³² Loan contract, Salem Maritime National Historic Site to Essex Institute, 6 August 1973, file SAMA Customs Documents Correspondence and Related Materials, Acc. #1, Curator's Office, SMNHS; Letter of Loan Acceptance, Mrs. Charles A. Potter, Librarian, Essex Institute, to Kathleen Catalano, Curator, Boston Group, NPS, 7 August 1973, file SAMA Customs Documents Correspondence and Related Materials, Acc. #1, Curator's Office, SMNHS.

³³ Acting Archivist of the United States Frank G. Burke to NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr., 2 June 1986, file "SAMA Customs Documents Correspondence and Related Materials," Curator's Office, SMNHS.

³⁴ Interview with Anne Farnam, Director, Essex Institute, 19 September 1991; Diane R. Pardue et al., *SMNHS Collection Management Plan*, Curatorial Resources Division, WASO, May 1990; Memo, Herbert Cables, Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, to Director, NPS, 9 January 1989; Senate Report 100-357, 18 May 1988.

Interpretation and Preservation

The interpretive "period of significance" for the site was expanded in the 1980s to include the entire period of the history of the site from prehistory to the 1930s, and extended geographically outward to include the history of the waterfront neighborhood. As Pollack noted, "These nine acres don't tell the whole story, but the city does tell the whole story."³⁵ People were now to be emphasized as well as buildings, ships, cargoes, and customs revenues. The nineteenth century immigration of Poles and French Canadians to the wharf area, and the long-gone buildings they lived and worked in, were to be discussed along with the Derbys and Derby House. The Polish Club building, with its own immigrant heritage, was a possible venue for an exhibit on "Salem's rich immigration story."³⁶

Pollack found this approach entirely consistent with the inclusive goals of the Salem Project, to provide context to make history accessible to the widest possible range of people, including locals as well as tourists: "You can talk about immigration, the waves of people coming through . . . some political, some economic, and it's not new." Through understanding of the changing ethnic populations of the past, contemporary immigration would be seen in context and be perceived as less threatening. Pollack's staff felt that they had a special obligation to try to find ways to connect with the children who came to the site. As Pollack declared, "Kids have a tough enough time. We need to inspire them — not me personally, the National Park Service. That's their business; not saving everything and saying 'Oh, my God, don't touch anything.'"³⁷ Her staff worked hard to reflect this philosophy.

A 1985 "audit" of the site by the Inspector General's Office of the Department of the Interior spurred changes in collections management and use of buildings. The audit surveyed seven sites in the North Atlantic region and found problems in all of them with accounting controls, security, and storage facilities for museum objects, which were addressed in an *Audit Report*. Salem Maritime responded with an accelerated accessions program and began seeking more adequate collections storage facilities. In addition, the inspector found the use of the Custom House for administrative offices to be "inappropriate". In response, the staff quickly worked to implement an

³⁵ Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991.

³⁶ Interview with John Frayler, Historian, SMNHS, 19 September 1991; Memo, Supt. Pollack to Acting Regional Director, North Atlantic Region, 11 May 1989, 1989 "Blue Copies" correspondence file, SMNHS.

³⁷ Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991.

existing plan by moving staff offices to the Hawkes House and refurnishing the Custom House as period offices.³⁸

The inspector was also disturbed by the apparently underused Narbonne House: "Keeping an idle building and property is an unnecessary financial burden for the park... We believe the property should either be appropriately developed or sold." Acting Director of the National Park Service Mary Lou Grier defended the Narbonne House by explaining that it was shown to the public by request, that plans existed for its interpretation, and that "The house is valuable as an exhibit-in-place and will not be restored and developed into another historic house museum." This apparently satisfied the Inspector General's Office. The site, in conjunction with the Harpers Ferry Center, began developing an exhibit plan for the house.³⁹

Now freed from Park Service administrative use for the first time in almost fifty years, the Custom House received a new furnishing plan from Harpers Ferry that was carried out in 1987-88 using existing and loaned objects (Fig. 13).⁴⁰ Three rooms were entirely redone. On the first floor, the Collector's Business Office was restored to its early-twentieth-century appearance, and on the second floor, the Collector's Private Office and the Collector's Private Room were redone. The Hawthorne Room was changed from a repeating audio tape for interpretation to a visual exhibit panel with similar text, and the emphasis was placed more clearly on Hawthorne as a government official rather than on Hawthorne as a man of letters.⁴¹

Other buildings underwent more subtle shifts of focus. The West India Goods Store, as we have seen, also changed to specialize more exclusively in West India-type sales items, with a stronger interpretive presence. "The West

³⁸ "Audit Report", Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Audit of Museum Collection Management, National Park Service, November 1985, "Audits and Fiscal Examinations" file F42, SMNHS. The reference to "inappropriate" use of the Custom House was made verbally to Park staff and does not appear in written reports or correspondence, as per interview with John Frayler, Historian, SMNHS, 19 September 1991.

³⁹ Memo, Asst. Inspector General for Auditing Robert W. Benely, Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, to Director, NPS, June 7, 1985. Acting Director, NPS, Mary Lou Grier, to Robert W. Benely, Asst. Inspector General for Auditing, Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, no date (1985), "Audits and Fiscal Examinations" file F42, SMNHS.

⁴⁰ Diane R. Pardue et al., *SMNHS Collection Management Plan*, Curatorial Resources Division, WASO, May 1990; *Interpretive Prospectus*, SMNHS, 1990, Div. of Interpretive Planning, Harpers Ferry Center.

⁴¹ John Brucksch, "Historical Furnishings Report: The Salem Custom House" (Harpers Ferry Center: 1986)

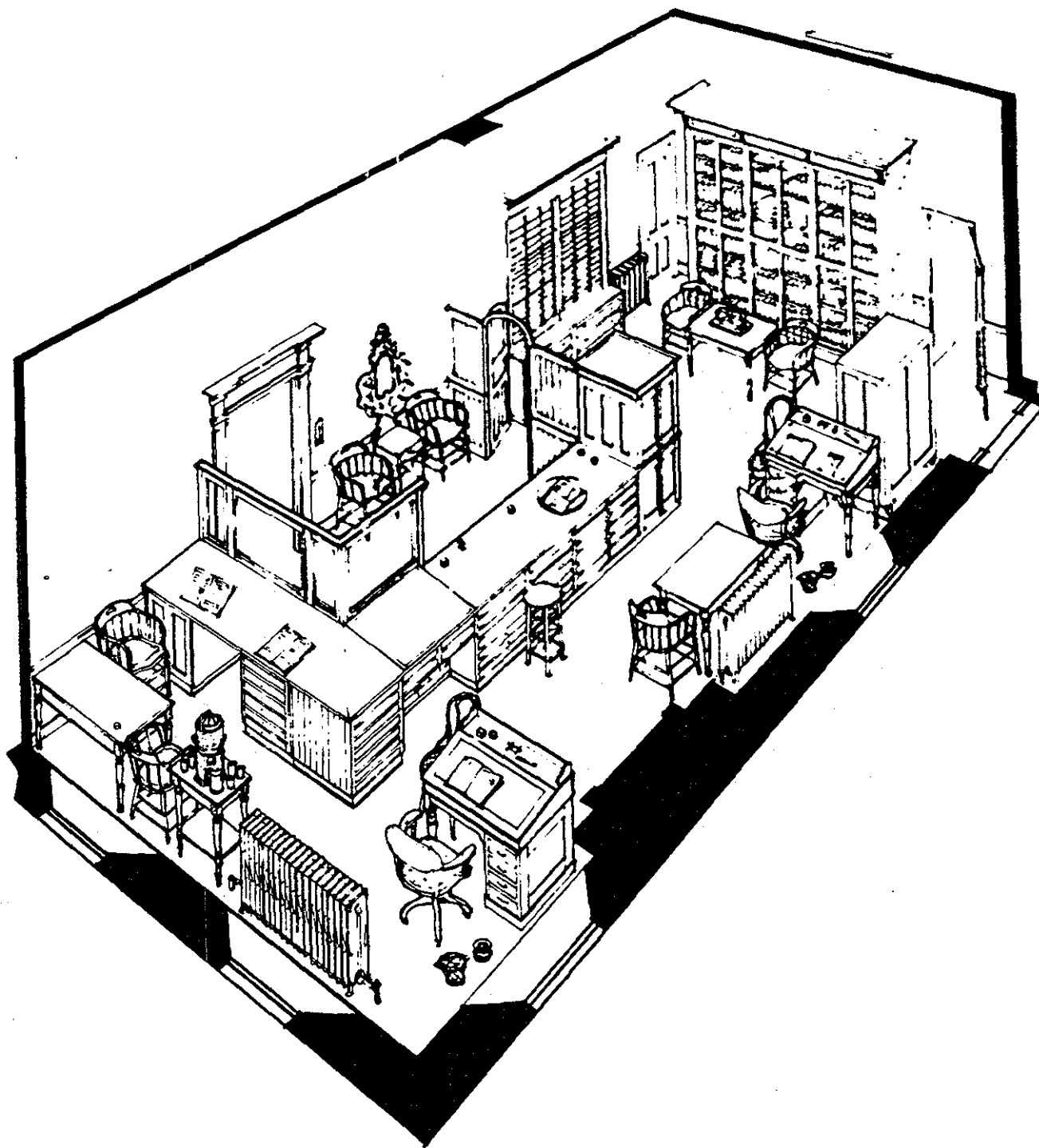


Figure 13. The 1986 Furnishings Plan for the Large First Floor Room of the Custom House. With staff offices removed to the Hawkes House, the Custom House Collector's Office could be restored to its early twentieth century appearance. (Reprinted from National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center, "Historical Furnishings Report: The Salem Custom House," by John Brucksch (1986).)

India Goods Store is representative of the retail stores that, 200 years ago, sold imported consumer goods from around the world."⁴²

In addition to these physical changes, the site published a handsome, illustrated park handbook in 1987 as a cooperative venture with other Salem sites. This provided in depth information on the site's background and resources to any visitor who wished to go beyond the basic content presented in the wayside exhibits or by interpreters, and included detailed artist's renderings of a projected view of the wharves in the late 18th century. Coordinated by Vincent Gleason of the Division of Publications, Harpers Ferry Center, the publication marked the first cooperative publishing venture of its type for the Park Service, using the talents of Harpers Ferry designers, writers, and editors, the research and interpretive skills of site staff, and the rich collections of the Essex Institute and the Peabody Museum. A grant from the Eastern National Park and Monument Association paid for commissioning the artist's renderings of wharf scenes. The resulting handbook, entitled *Salem: Maritime Salem in the Age of Sail*, pleased all parties and won a merit award for outstanding publications from the American Association of Museums in 1988.⁴³

The Salem Project Emerges

By 1988, the period of fundraising and coalition-building for the Salem Project moved into high gear with the first Congressional appropriation and the start of research and planning. In early 1990, the team of Denver planners led by Spratt and Landscape Architect Ann Moss produced a study called *The Salem Project: Study of Alternatives*, for public discussion and Park Service use. Organizations committed to the Project included the Salem Partnership, the U.S. Congress, the City of Salem, the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Departments of Coastal Zone Management and Environmental Management, the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.⁴⁴

⁴² Interpretive Prospectus, SMNHS, 1990, Div. of Interpretive Planning, Harpers Ferry Center, 16.

⁴³ Files, "Salem Correspondence", Office of Bill Gordon, Division of Publications, Harpers Ferry Center; file, "Gengean Riley - Notes and Production Correspondence with Bill Gordon re: The Salem Handbook #126," SMNHS; *Salem: Maritime Salem in the Age of Sail*, National Park Service, Division of Publications, U.S. Dept. of the Interior (Washington: 1987).

⁴⁴ *The Salem Project: Study of Alternatives*, January 1990 (NPS).

Surveying the historical resources of Essex County, the *Study* identified three major interpretive themes: "Early Settlement," "Maritime," and "Textile and Leather Industries." The study noted that:

Salem Maritime National Historic Site has excellent resources to initiate a nationally significant story of America's early settlement, maritime era, and textile and leather industries. However, the resources available at this 9-acre site do not fully express these themes. Many aspects of this story could be brought to life for visitors much more vividly and effectively through the preservation and interpretation of a great variety of related resources found throughout Salem and Essex County.

The *Study* set forth for discussion four alternative approaches to developing these themes into a unified interpretive and marketing plan. Alternative one was to cover the city of Salem only, but address all three themes. Alternative two was to focus on the coastline of the North Shore communities only, and address only the themes of "Early Settlement" and "Maritime." Alternative three expanded the territory to include all of Essex County and all three themes; and alternative four was similar but proposed additional interpretive and visitor centers in the mill cities of Lawrence (textile) and Haverhill (leather).

The *Study of Alternatives* also examined the optimal management structure for developing these proposals. Management alternative one was the existing arrangement, a partnership coordinated by the Park Service. Alternative two proposed a state commission, and alternative three a federal commission, created specifically for the Salem Project.

At Salem Maritime itself, project funds were used for a wide variety of planning, preservation, and administrative needs. In 1991, the direct Congressional appropriation for Salem Maritime under the Salem Project funded work on the joint visitor center at the Armory; restoration of the historic wharves; the development of the St. Joseph's Polish Club; the design and construction of interpretive exhibits; audio-visual equipment and signs; completion of the general management plan; historical research and documentation; and an increase in personnel.⁴⁵

Despite the project's dual goals, to restore SMNHS and to revitalize Salem and Essex County, and the heightened expectations they created within the

⁴⁵ Senators Edward M. Kennedy and John F. Kerry to Sen. Robert Byrd, 22 June 1990, files, SMNHS.

community, the emphasis of the early phase was clearly on the site itself. Cynthia Pollack had seen the Salem Project as a means to the end of saving the park. In order to get the kind of money the park needed for rehabilitation, it had to be put in the context of a bigger problem or a bigger project. Thus her original goals were achieved.

Members of the Partnership sensed this. The former Essex Institute director Anne Farnam observed:

All this Congressional money, there's a lot come into Salem, and there's been a lot of talk about how it's for the community . . . I understand it as internal money for the planning and restoration of that site, and I . . . have no problem with that; that's where the money should go. But to call it economic development for Salem — maybe I'm not looking at economic development broadly enough . . .

Nevertheless, an improved Salem Maritime site was recognized as a major plus for Salem.

A New Visitor Center for the Armory and Other Acquisitions

The first result of the Salem Project to actually be undertaken was to be the renovation of the former Salem Armory building into a collaborative visitor center for the city. This had been a proposal of the visitor survey, which suggested exactly the location finally chosen, on the Essex Street pedestrian mall adjacent to the Essex Institute and across the street from the Peabody Museum, a few blocks from Salem Maritime.

The NPS would lease 12,000 square feet in the Armory for the center. The Armory building itself would be owned by the Essex Institute and Peabody Museum, which were in the process of merging, and developed with the help of a federal Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) given to the City of Salem. The space to be leased to the Park Service was legally equivalent to a condominium. The space was considered to be part of SMNHS, although since it lay outside the approved site boundaries special legislation was required before the NPS could sign the long-term lease. Within the Park Service space, a sales concession would be operated by Eastern National Park and Monument Association, to be the main sales facility for Salem Maritime.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Public Law 101-632 (28 November 1990) authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire property or an interest therein in the City of Salem for use as a visitor center; a change was made from the original lease arrangement to direct purchase; *Congressional Record*, 28 June

Again, there was some skepticism from the Partnership members about just how deep Park Service commitment to true joint programming really was. Noting that the first Salem Project report "didn't mention another agency in the entire county . . ." the Essex Institute's Anne Farnam remarked: "That's what I'm afraid of in the visitor's center, that they could build a visitor's center . . . right between us and the Peabody and never mention us."⁴⁷

Nor was sharing credit the only problem of the public/private partnership. Complexities of ownership and leasing delayed the project well beyond its hoped-for opening in the spring of 1992. Groundbreaking finally took place in February 1992, with completion anticipated for the 1993 tourist season.

The addition of the off-site Armory visitor center was only one of several acquisitions for the site at the end of the 1980s. The acquisition in 1988 of the St. Joseph's Polish Club on Derby Street adjacent to the West India Goods Store had given the park long-needed space for additional offices, a library, workspaces, and museum collections; and in 1992 the site was authorized to add a strip of land at Tucker's Wharf adjacent to Derby Wharf at the end of Kosciusko Street in order to protect an important view of the harbor from development.

The purchase of the Polish Club demonstrated the usefulness of the public/private partnership. As in the original acquisition of Derby Wharf in the 1930s and the more recent visitor center situation, the cumbersome mechanism of Congressional appropriation made a timely real estate transfer difficult. When delays threatened to scuttle the purchase, a group of banks within the Salem Partnership purchased the building from the St. Joseph's Polish Roman Catholic Society to hold it for park acquisition. It was then transferred to the National Park Foundation, a nonprofit corporation chartered by Congress, and finally conveyed to the Park Service in December 1988 after Congress passed the official boundary change legislation.⁴⁸

1990, S9191, Mr. Kerry, files, SMNHS; Interview with Stanley Lukowski, President, Salem Partnership, 3 October 1991; Interpretive Prospectus, SMNHS, 1990, Div. of Interpretive Planning, Harpers Ferry Center; Conversation with Cynthia Pollack, 19 June 1992.

⁴⁷ Interview with Anne Farnam, Director, Essex Institute, 19 September 1991.

⁴⁸ Interview with Stanley Lukowski, President, Salem Partnership, 3 October 1991; Act of June 27, 1988 (P.L. 100-349, 102 Stat. 659).

The 1909 three-story brick building, while always intended for adaptive reuse, contained some locally significant features that were to be partially retained in the rehabilitation for Park Service use.⁴⁹

Planning for the Future: New Interpretive and Site Plans

In the light of the new directions and opportunities for the site the Salem Project generated, existing plans and goals for the site were rewritten in the late 1980s. A new *Interpretive Prospectus* was prepared in 1990, updating the 1986 plan. This document's adoption for use on-site of the three principal themes defined by the project for use on-site integrated participation in the project into the interpretive approach for the site. The 1990 *Prospectus*, however, covered only the most site-specific maritime theme, leaving open the option of later planning and developing other themes at the Visitors' Center. This planning document was a joint venture of the Harpers Ferry Center and site staff including the curator, Dave Kayser, the chief of visitor services, Peter LaChapelle, and the supervisory park ranger, Sheila Cooke-Kayser, with technical assistance from NARO.

As had been the trend through the late 1980s, the *Prospectus* allowed for a broad temporal sweep: "Interpretation treats the historical continuum from the founding of Salem in 1626, through Salem's Maritime Era (1783-1807) and into the 20th century."⁵⁰ Assessing existing conditions in site interpretation, the *Prospectus* found that "The park's interpretive theme, Salem's maritime history, is inadequately covered. The only subtheme adequately covered is the Derby House . . . This is due more to a lack of interpretive facilities than to poor interpretation."⁵¹

The absence of an adequate visitor center was felt to be a major limitation. The *Prospectus* suggested that the presentation of the Bonded Warehouse could be improved: "A furnishing exhibit is recommended to show visitors the varied cargoes that once arrived on Salem's wharves." New exhibits and hands-on demonstrations were suggested for the second floor room used for group orientation.⁵²

⁴⁹ Marie L. Carden, *Historic Structure Report, St. Joseph Hall - The Polish Club*, revised draft May 1989.

⁵⁰ *Interpretive Prospectus*, SMNHS, 1990, Div. of Interpretive Planning, Harpers Ferry Center, 1.

⁵¹ *Interpretive Prospectus*, SMNHS, 1990, Div. of Interpretive Planning, Harpers Ferry Center, 7.

⁵² *Interpretive Prospectus*, SMNHS, 1990, Div. of Interpretive Planning, Harpers Ferry Center, 9-10.

There was need for additional planning as well. Until 1991, Salem Maritime still officially operated under the 1978 *Master Plan*, although many of the recommendations of that plan were still unfulfilled. Changes at Salem in the intervening decade called for new planning documents that included the Salem Project and other philosophical and practical changes. The site now needed an overall plan for use of the physical site itself, a "Site Plan", as well as a "General Management Plan" for the park within its locality.

The process of creating a site plan for Salem Maritime began in 1990, led by a team from the Denver Service Center. Several private planning, engineering, architectural, and preservation consultants worked on the plan, which also involved contacts with federal, city, and state government agencies and private organizations. Planning for Salem Maritime was no longer an inside-the-Park Service process.⁵⁴

The major planning goals are to revitalize the site, rehabilitate the deteriorating historic wharves, provide adequate maintenance facilities, and integrate the site with the city of Salem and related resources. The vision for the park is to capture the spirit of the maritime era.⁵⁵

The *Site Plan* presented a variety of options for the future development of the site. It expanded on the intent of the 1978 plan to bring life back to the wharves, in light of the new possibilities brought about by the Salem Project and its expanded funding. This *Plan* went well beyond that of 1978 by considering in detail options for new construction on the wharves.

Four development alternatives were proposed for discussion. The first was the no-action alternative of retaining the existing level of development. In the second,

A lively, active, and participatory maritime atmosphere would be created by adding complete and partially enclosed warehouses, a reconstructed period vessel, a shipbuilding exhibit, and visiting wooden sailing vessels at the site. The wharves would be rehabilitated, and the new structures and vessels would allow visitors to use all their

⁵⁴ SMNHS: Site Plan - Environmental Assessment (draft, April 1991), Salem Project office, SMNHS.

⁵⁵ SMNHS: Site Plan - Environmental Assessment (draft, April 1991), Salem Project office, SMNHS, iii.

senses to experience how the warehouses, wharves, and vessels looked, felt, and smelled during the height of the maritime era.⁵⁶

Alternative three would utilize wharf demonstrations and audio programs, with no reconstructions, and the fourth, like the second, "would add the form and functions of vessels and warehouses to the site, but primarily in a museum on Derby Wharf."

The language in which the *Site Plan* framed the alternatives made clear the planners' enthusiasm for alternative two, which echoed the 1978 *Master Plan*. This alternative included the additional options of using either fully reconstructed or "ghosted" warehouses (Fig. 14). "Ghosting," installing a bare framework to represent a building no longer extant that could not be reconstructed for lack of historical documentation, was a dramatic and popular Park Service innovation at Franklin Court in Philadelphia in the 1970s.⁵⁷ Alternative four, which avoided attempting reconstructions altogether, was likely to prove more acceptable to those in the Park Service who disagreed with reconstruction either on principle or for the practical reason of lack of adequate information about the warehouses. In this alternative, favored by Superintendent Pollack, a museum designed to suit the wharfside context would dominate the head of Derby Wharf.⁵⁸

These alternatives were presented as solutions to the ever-present problem of maritime focus:

The park staff has tried to resolve this problem with waysides, on-grade warehouse outlines, personal interpretation with props, a single warehouse, and a non-period vessel. All of these attempts have been weak in their conception, and none have provided the appropriate sensory experience.⁵⁹

While the idea had surfaced as early as the *MISSION 66 Interpretive Prospectus*, proposing reconstructions in order to recreate the historic appearance of the wharves was still a bold move. The Park Service manual *Management Policies* stipulated that:

⁵⁶ SMNHS: Site Plan - Environmental Assessment (draft, April 1991), Salem Project office, SMNHS.

⁵⁷ The concept is attributed to the architects Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown.

⁵⁸ Supt. Cynthia Pollack, note to Michael Harrington, undated, attachment to "Salem Project Status Report," SMNHS 1990 "Blue Copies" correspondence file.

⁵⁹ SMNHS: Site Plan - Environmental Assessment (draft, April 1991), Salem Project office, SMNHS, 5.

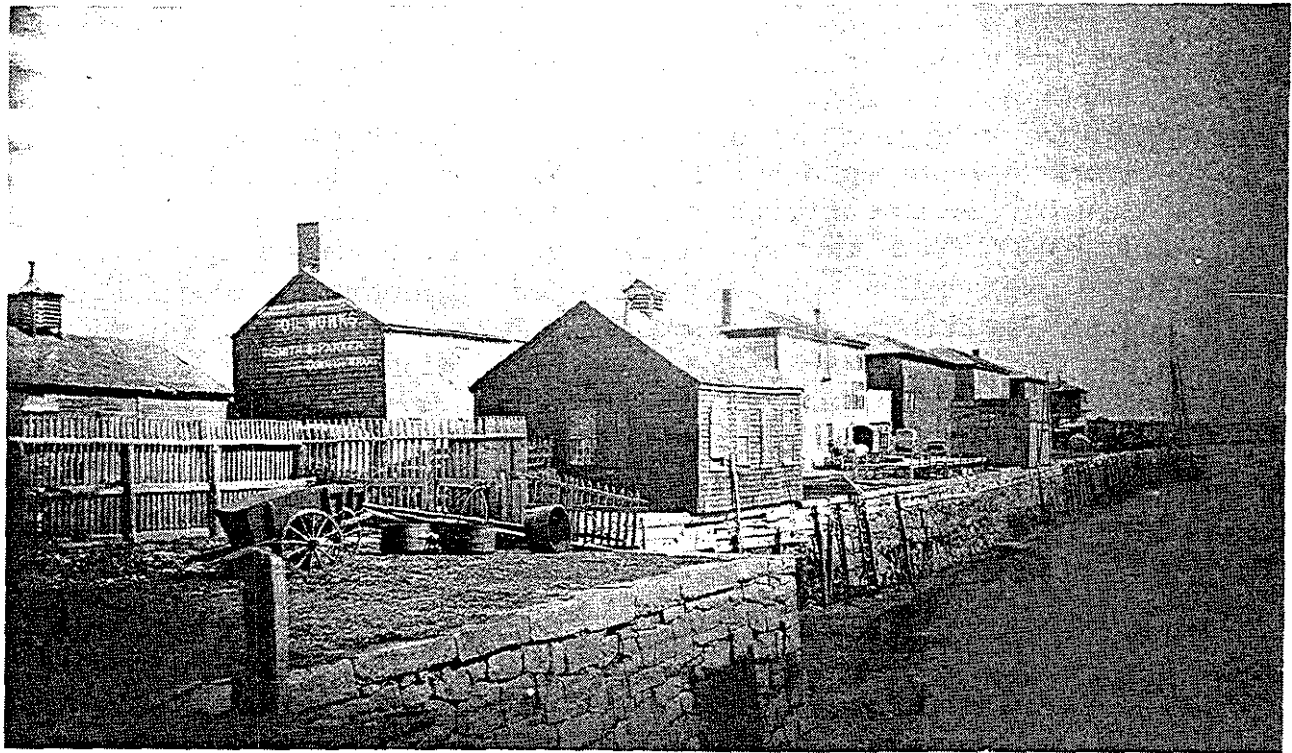


Figure 14. Derby Wharf, ca. 1885 After years of struggling to interpret the bare wharves, the Park Service in the 1991 *Site Plan* contemplated reconstructions to recreate the crowded feeling of the old Salem waterfront. (Courtesy Essex Institute Salem, Mass.)

A vanished structure may be reconstructed if (1) reconstruction is essential to public understanding of the cultural associations of a park established for that purpose, (2) sufficient data exist to permit reconstruction on the original site with minimal conjecture... Generalized representations of typical structures will not be attempted.⁶⁰

While adequate evidence existed to reconstruct ships, one aspect of the plan, not enough information existed to ensure an accurate recreation of the wharf warehouses.⁶¹ The Park Service had been embarrassed in the past by poorly researched reconstructions, such as at Wakefield, George Washington's birthplace. However, several Park Service sites with few or no historic remains relied on reconstructions, such as Fort Stanwix and Fort Union Trading Post. Current policy was to allow reconstructions only if it was made explicitly clear to visitors that they were just that.⁶²

The emphasis placed on recreating for visitors the sensory experience of the wharves shows a 180-degree turn from the philosophy of the 1930s, when Edwin Small had written: "... if the Wharves are to be realistically restored they would need a number of large barn-like structures smelling of exotic cargoes, tar, hemp, and fish and affording a degree of human abandon and unkemptness inconceivable on a public reservation."⁶³ Historic sites had changed; what the public found acceptable had changed; and what was deemed undesirable in 1936 was cutting-edge interpretation in 1990.

The *Site Plan's* other goals included wharf stabilization, integration with other local resources through the Salem Project, and provision of a maintenance facility off-site.

During the 1980s, a new understanding of the value of "cultural landscapes," landscapes created by human action, developed in the Park Service and in the preservation field.⁶⁴ By 1990 the Park Service disseminated regulations regarding planning for landscapes in national parks and historic sites

⁶⁰ *Management Policies*, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 1988, p. 5:7.

⁶¹ SMNHS: Site Plan - Environmental Assessment (draft, April 1991), Salem Project office, SMNHS.

⁶² *Management Policies*, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 1988, 5:5.

⁶³ "Derby Wharf, Salem, Mass., by Edwin Small 1936," letter from Small to NPS Washington Office, 6 November 1936.

⁶⁴ Melody Webb, "Cultural Landscapes in the National Park Service," *Public Historian*, 9, no. 2 (Spring 1987), 84.

reflecting new philosophies, and calling into question existing landscape plans.

The plantings and pathways at Salem Maritime were essentially survivals of the 1939 *Master Plan*, which had regraded and replanted the entire site. At issue was whether to retain features of the 1939 *Plan*, as historically significant in themselves or to attempt to research and reconstruct a more accurate historic landscape from a given period. A focus of contention between the site and the regional office was expansion of the existing herb garden behind the Derby House. The 1939 plan stated "Grass or *vinca minor* now, vegetables & herbs later" without specific plot plans for the beds. A garden was, however, planted in the early years of the site. In the 1970s the backyard garden had expanded to include chickens and ducks, as well as vegetables. It had been replanted as recently as 1986, with help from the Salem Garden Club. However, as the regional office pointed out, there really was no evidence at all for what Elias Derby had done with his back garden. With no evidence, perhaps it was better to have only lawn, lest visitors assume that the Park Service was presenting an accurate reconstruction of Derby's garden. Site staff, however, argued that while there was no evidence for or against this particular kind of garden, there certainly would not have been lawn there in the 18th century, therefore it would be preferable to retain the garden as it was and interpret it as conjecture.⁶⁵

* * *

Salem Maritime was a very different place in 1992 from the dilapidated site that had greeted Superintendent Pollack in 1983. A larger and better-trained staff interpreted reopened and refurbished buildings. The Custom House was a museum in and of itself rather than a convenient place for visitor orientation and displays. The West India Goods Store provided interpretation as well as appropriate merchandise. A visitor center on the Wharf provided visitor services and audio-visualse. Waysides describing the historic scene led visitors to stroll the wharves. For visitors who wanted more, a fine handbook for the site provided it handsomely.

More important, after decades of disappointment a spirit of adventure and renewal pervaded the air. Though the wharves still needed work, a plan and funding were in place to do the restoration at last. Though interpreting the wharves still required much imagination from interpreters and visitors alike,

⁶⁵ Basic Guide Planting Plan, Drawing # SAL-2055, 1939 (copy in SMNHS "Grounds" file); Supt. Pollack to Dorothy Curran, President, Salem Garden Club, 16 June 1986, 1986 "Blue Copies" correspondence file, SMNHS; Interpretive Prospectus, SMNHS, 1990, Div. of Interpretive Planning, Harpers Ferry Center, 15; Interview with John Frayler, Historian, SMNHS, 19 September 1991.

the concept of livelier restored maritime activity had been developed and awaited implementation. Perhaps most important of all, an alliance with the community had been reforged, and site and community were working together to achieve a revitalized vision of what Salem Maritime National Historic Site could be. In 1992, the groundwork had been laid, and the site was anticipating the most important developments since its establishment in the 1930s.

CONCLUSIONS

Created as the National Park Service began to assume greater responsibility for the preservation and management of historic sites — and indeed, not long after the concept of preservation of historic sites had emerged generally in the United States — Salem Maritime National Historic Site constitutes an interesting case study of NPS historic site administration. While the site and its problems are in several ways unique, Salem Maritime reveals over its fifty-plus year history the effects of Park Service policies, philosophies, and practices as they evolved.

In the three major areas of Park Service activity — administration, preservation and interpretation — one can see the shifting balance of site, regional and national responsibility as the national organization grew and experimented with different management structures, and the effects “on the ground” of those shifts. In the latter two areas, it is also possible to trace the impacts of actions taken early on, when basic policies were still being framed, on the subsequent development of the site. And perhaps most importantly, the history of Salem Maritime highlights both the problems and the potential of public/private partnership in the development and management of national parks.

Administration

When the Salem site was created, the Park Service effort in historic sites administration consisted of a few recently hired young historians and architects setting up the rules — even drafting their legislative mandate — as they went along. Senior personnel in the Service were veterans of the older natural areas management mission, which had been concentrated in the West. By the time the Salem site turned fifty, historic preservation activities in the Park Service comprised management of a vast network of more than two hundred historical parks and administration of a complex federal preservation program involving registration and protection of all of the historically significant properties in the country. Naturally, with that growth, the administrative structure had changed.

At Salem, one can see the Park Service administrative structure at work in the field. Creation of the site was handled by the early informal arrangement in which the young, energetic historians and architects, funded by opportune

use of various New Deal funding sources and with the direct involvement of the most senior personnel, stitched together the complicated arrangements which secured the site. Planning and implementation in the early days proceeded under the same small, informal management network. The fact that formal policies concerning master plans, the types of documentation that should precede restoration work, and other such systems were not fully in place allowed the flexibility to take advantage of the job-creation funds available; but it also meant that mistakes could be made, and were.

After the interruption of the war, efforts to regather the momentum of the early years at Salem faltered, in no small part because of growing pains in the Park Service. Funding simply did not keep pace with the escalating interest in and use of the national parks, and it took ten years for the funding shortfall to be redressed, at least temporarily. When funds became available again under MISSION 66, they were allocated through a much more developed bureaucracy with national goals for what the money was to provide.

After MISSION 66, with the number of historical parks continuing to grow and responsibilities for preservation outside the System expanding under the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the national management structure grew larger, more specialized and more centralized. While the increased role of the regional offices and the creation of the Denver and Harpers Ferry Centers provided a range of expertise which was often useful, they also brought growing pains as both site and Service tried to adjust to the new systems. The archeological debacle on Central Wharf, when demolition of the Naval Reserve building, done without benefit of archeologist, destroyed valuable historic fabric, was perhaps the most egregious but not the only instance of the difficulties in sorting out lines of authority under the new organizational structure.

Against this context of changing administrative structure, the role of the superintendent is thrown into perspective by Salem's long history. In its five decades, the site has had a number of superintendents with varying abilities and talents, and with greatly differing tenures. In several cases, Salem has been an exception to the general Park Service policy of frequent rotation of superintendents. It has also had a large number of acting superintendents. What a detailed look at the administrative history of the site makes clear is that progress in achieving the Site's goals has taken place under long-term superintendents.

Two superintendents have been key in the development of the site: Edwin Small and Cynthia Pollack. Both brought to the site considerable organizational skills and great energy as well as dynamic personalities. Small

served as superintendent during the formative years for a total of fifteen years, interrupted by three years of service in World War Two; and later served as acting superintendent for two-and-a-half years while he was directing the Boston Group. In the early years, the superintendent was all things to the site — historian and interpretive planner as well as administrator. Small clearly left the stamp of his philosophies of restoration and interpretation as well as his great enthusiasm for and extensive knowledge of the site and its context. As one reads though his correspondence over his long tenure, it is hard to escape the conjecture that one aspect of his imprint on the site was a lack of enthusiasm for the wharves, which may have contributed to the landward tilt of interpretation and restoration through much of the Site's history.

Cynthia Pollack came to the site at perhaps the lowest point in its history in terms of preservation, staff morale, and community image. In nine years as superintendent she succeeded in revitalizing the site and making great strides toward the ultimate goals for it which have for so long eluded achievement. With increased professional staff, Pollack could devote her time more effectively to administration and community outreach. One of her major contributions to the site was surely her energetic attack on what she perceived to be its most overwhelming problem: the wharves. In promoting the Salem Project as a means of resolving that problem, she rekindled enthusiasm in both Park Service and community for making the site fulfill the original vision.

Other relatively long-term superintendents have left their marks on the site as well, although to a lesser extent. Harold Lessem, who served for seven years after Edwin Small left, provided a fresh evaluation of the site after Small's long and intense involvement. During his tenure, he succeeded in shifting the focus of planning back to the wharves which had been the original impetus for creation of the site. John Dobrovolny, who served as superintendent for nine years in the 1970s, was a conscientious administrator who, while perhaps lacking the vision of the site of Small, Pollack or Lessem, nevertheless accomplished much in the way of thorough study of the individual structures including the wharves, and reorientation of several of the buildings.

Preservation/Restoration/Reconstruction

The history of Salem Maritime provides an interesting insight into the evolution of NPS philosophy and practice concerning preservation, restoration, and reconstruction of historic resources. In the early days, we have seen the young historians, architects and landscape architects struggling

to understand the site and its structures, determine what they represented and decide how they should be preserved and restored, all the while feeling the hot breath of impatient construction workers at their backs. It is clear that they worked conscientiously, adhering to the professional standards of the day and to emerging Park Service policies of documentation and planning. As one follows the path of succeeding generations of building studies and restorations, however, it also becomes clear that those policies and professional standards have changed since the creation of the site. One has only to compare the approaches to the Derby and Hawkes Houses and to the Narbonne House to appreciate the differences.

When Salem Maritime was being created, historic preservation and interpretation were still in their infancy in the United States. Not only was the concept new to the Park Service; Colonial Williamsburg was just being created, and the American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum had only recently opened. Indeed, the serious study of American architectural history was barely fifty years old. Within this context, the work done at Salem in the early years must be viewed. Had he had all the time in the world to study the buildings at Salem before deciding what the workmen should do to them, Stuart Barnette would still have lacked the extensive body of knowledge so important for comparison and evaluation which decades of study have since produced.

Succeeding generations of study of both the buildings and the wharves thus produced more and more accurate information about the resources. They were hampered in this, of course, by the obscuring or destruction of evidence which had occurred in earlier restorations. It was perhaps this direct experience in successive restorations which demonstrated the necessity of meticulous attention to the documentation of existing conditions and restoration intervention, thus causing Park Service standards to evolve.

One area in which it is clear standards have become much more sophisticated over the years of the Site's history is archeology, both for its own sake and as a tool in understanding the evolution of structures. Although problems of integrating archeological study into the planning and restoration process have persisted, as on Central Wharf and at the Narbonne House, as a matter of policy the necessity for archeological investigation has been solidly established, and it has provided much valuable information about the site.

Another area of increasing sophistication and professionalism since the early studies at SMNHS is interior restoration. Here, both the standards of scholarship and the philosophy of interpretation have changed. As in architectural history, generations of study of inventories and objects, as well as

creative new approaches to the study of material culture, have produced a body of comparative information that was not available to Louise du Pont Crowninshield's generation. The Park Service, too, has come to take interiors more seriously as they have come to be seen as a tool for interpreting daily life more than as tasteful recreations of a bygone ambiance or an enhancement of architectural detail.

Perhaps no other issue has been as troubling both for Salem Maritime and for the Park Service as that of reconstruction; and ambivalence over reconstruction has undoubtedly played a part in delaying resolution of Salem's primary problem: what to do with the wharves. From Verne Chatelain's 1936 description of plans for the site on, site planners have wrestled with the desire to have something evocative of the Site's major theme on the wharves which should have formed its focus. Park Service philosophy, undoubtedly influenced both by disastrous early experiences such as the inaccurate reconstruction at Wakefield, and by a sense of different mission from Williamsburg, from the beginning eschewed reconstruction, especially where documentation of what had been there was insufficient to support an exact recreation. As interpretive priorities have changed to emphasize living history and the working relationships within districts rather than individual structures, however, reconstruction has been reevaluated as a tool which may be useful if clearly identified as such. The impact that this evolution in Park Service thinking will ultimately have on Salem Maritime remains to be seen in execution, but it is already evident in the current *Site Plan* and *Interpretive Prospectus*. It may also be that the long struggle over what to do with Salem's wharves has had an impact on Park Service thinking in this matter as well, as individuals familiar with Salem have gone on to higher positions in the Service.

Throughout the history of Salem Maritime, the site and its stewards have benefited in the area of preservation and restoration from local philosophy and expertise, especially from a long series of collaborations with the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities and individuals, such as Louise du Pont Crowninshield and Abbot Lowell Cummings, associated with SPNEA. Beginning with the acquisition of the Derby House, which had already undergone initial restoration, furnishing and interpretation under the guidance of Appleton, through Small's continuing contacts over various projects with SPNEA, to the close collaboration of the two institutions on the Narbonne House, SPNEA has worked closely with site staff and Denver experts on resources at Salem Maritime. The role played by its collegial influence in the evolution of Park Service preservation philosophy is a matter of conjecture, but its influence on specific decisions at Salem, such as the preservation and interpretation of the Narbonne House, is clear.

Interpretation

With Colonial National Monument in Virginia, Salem Maritime was one of the first historical parks in the East designated not for its association with one great event or great man, but for a theme, for its significance in some aspect of America's history.¹ How to interpret these more amorphous themes to the public became a problem to which the Park Service, and the Salem staff in particular, would devote much time and effort over the years. And interpretation is a driving force in many decisions on restoration and reconstruction. This can be seen at Salem not only with the wharves, but with many aspects of planning for the major as well as the minor buildings, and especially with the landscaping.

When the site was created, as noted above, both historic preservation and historic site management were in their infancy in the United States. What philosophy there was in the field had evolved with the Colonial Revival in architecture out of the interest in American history generated by the Centennial together with a growing concern about preserving American values in the face of ever-increasing waves of immigration from increasingly different cultures. The preservation of historic shrines associated with the founding fathers and founding events of the country came to be seen as a valuable means of educating citizens new and old in American values and patriotism. The Great Depression and the Second World War merely underscored this need.

Salem Maritime, with its wharves redolent of both American enterprise and Revolutionary daring, and its elegant landside buildings evoking the benefits of these virtues to both country and individual, fitted nicely into this philosophy. Thus, the original interpretive themes at Salem emphasized these aspects; thus, too, it was necessary to be concerned about the appropriateness of the Site's appearance for public consumption: too much clutter and realism were "inconceivable in a public reservation."

At the beginning, then, Salem Maritime's planners focused attention on the "star" buildings of the site, the Derby House and the Custom House. Both architectural historical knowledge and interpretive philosophy dictated their approach to the surrounding landscape on and off the site. They would clean it up to the extent possible, eliminating later intrusions and creating a landscape setting for the major buildings which reflected not what the actual

¹ Several parks in other regions, established earlier, faced a similar challenge, among them El Morro, Sitka, and Tumacacori.

surroundings had been, but what existing scholarship, likewise focused on high style buildings, told them had typically surrounded such buildings.

This approach to the site also influenced the issue of demolition, not only on the wharves, but in the area immediately surrounding the site. Intent on weeding out what was "extraneous" to the site — i. e., whatever had not been there in the period defined as significant — planners focused on the main buildings and on the water, which they logically saw as the most important characteristic of a maritime site. Thus, they eliminated the remaining buildings on the wharves, save for Forrester's Warehouse, which had utilitarian value as a storage facility, and long desired to remove the buildings on the park side of Kosciusko Street. It did not seem to bother them that in removing buildings that were not exactly what was there in the period of significance, they were creating open space which was even less characteristic of the historic waterfront. As long as interpretive philosophy focused on the "star" buildings and their inhabitants, this was not a problem, although it did make interpreting the wharves difficult.

When interest in history shifted, gradually after World War Two and more rapidly in the 1960s and '70s, to ordinary people and their daily existence, however, it became a problem. The Park Service, reflecting both professional attitudes in the field of history and the interests of their ultimate clients, the American people who came to the parks, began to focus on the restoration of what came to be called "historic cultural landscapes" rather than landscapes as settings for major buildings. At Salem, planners sought in these years to move the emphasis of the site back to the wharves, and to the people who had worked on the wharves and the ships. In this period, the ordinary buildings remaining on the site — the Bonded Warehouse, the Scale House, the Rum Shop/West India Goods Store, the by-now ruins of the Forrester Warehouse — received increasing attention. But decisions made under the interpretive philosophy of an earlier day regarding the structures on the wharves limited their options. Fortunately, the site had never been able to acquire and demolish the buildings on Kosciusko Street, regarded in recent plans as typical waterfront patterns of building which enhance rather than detract from the site.

In the last analysis, the defining problem of Salem Maritime was in the beginning and continues to be the wharves. Originally envisioned as Derby Wharf National Historic site, it was created as a means of saving Derby Wharf, and grew almost by happenstance to include the elements which thus far have been most successfully restored and interpreted: the Custom House and the Derby House and their surrounding buildings. The wharves as they were

when the site was first conceived would have been a problem; the early demolition decisions exacerbated the problem.

To quote former Associate Regional Director Denis Galvin:

The wharves are a puzzle, and have always been a puzzle. They are undeniably historic, and they are undeniably dull . . . the visualization of what Salem was like at the peak of its history compared to the current physical resources is very difficult . . . The ability of [the Site's] resources to tell the story . . . because of a mismatch between the character of the resources and the story limits the effectiveness of the interpretive program . . . The story of Salem is on the wharves, and unfortunately the wharves are very passive.²

The 1990 *Interpretive Prospectus* and the 1991 *Site Plan* provided the most sweeping attempts in the long history of Salem Maritime to correct the problem.

Public/Private Partnership

Salem Maritime was created by a pioneering partnership of public and private effort comprising local, state and federal agencies, non-profit institutions, and private citizens working together to assemble the site and fund and assist its restoration. Without that joint effort, the site would not have been created. Over the years, however, as original instigators and supporters at the local level died, and Superintendent Small, who had had the experience of working with that complicated constituency, moved on to other positions, the heritage of that public/private partnership dwindled. Later superintendents, for whatever reason, were not able to sustain it.

In the 1980s, with the arrival of Superintendent Pollack and the creation of the Salem Partnership, the spirit of public/private partnership was rekindled at Salem, with results which promise to be as consequential for the site as the original collaboration. The revival of this phenomenon, and the painfully slow progress — some would say lack of progress — in the interim period, raise interesting questions about the relationship of historical parks to the communities within which they exist.

Since the Park Service budget is a creature of Congress, money to create a park comes only when a constituency exists for that park, and the same is true of

² Interview with Denis Galvin, former Associate Regional Director, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, 23 March 1992.

major expansions or restoration expenditures. Thus, politics become a crucial factor in the creation and maintenance of parks, making an alliance between the park and local citizens important to its success. This, according to Herbert Cables, deputy director of the Park Service and former North Atlantic regional director, is especially true of small parks:

Unless there is political support in the form of Congressional involvement, you tend to become a number in the bureaucratic malaise . . . In the case of Salem, they've been fortunate in having a Congressman who has been very active and supportive; Congressman Mavroules . . . has enough seniority to influence the budget deliberations in a way that has now focused attention on Salem.³

Such attention is especially necessary in a case like Salem, where the park contains resources expensive to maintain and likely to exceed the capacity of normal Park Service operating funds. The feeling has persisted at Salem, among staff and community alike, that the site has long been short-changed; understaffed and underbudgeted. Is this true? According to Galvin, "yes and no." Although he admits that large new parks in the region — "Gateway, Statue of Liberty, Boston, Lowell" — absorb much of the regional staff's energy, "If you compare Salem to, say, Hyde Park or if you compare it to . . . Acadia, then I'm not sure Salem has been overlooked." Cables agrees, pointing out that smaller parks often feel like stepchildren in all regions, because they are less competitive in the struggle for the limited development dollars.

The wharves may be at the base of Salem's perception of being overlooked. While Salem Maritime may indeed be a small park, it has one very large problem; as Galvin points out, "maintenance of wharves is occasionally very expensive."

Pollack, from the superintendent's viewpoint, describes the problem more starkly:

Because the wharves required such an enormous amount of attention and dollars, no one knew where that kind of money would come from. Even I began to focus my attention on nibbling away at things I could do, because some of the problems were just insurmountable, even for the regional office.⁴

³ Interview with Herbert Cables, Deputy Director, NPS, 24 March 1992.

⁴ Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991.

In the years when the early public/private partnership which had created the site had fallen away, the vital link to Congressional appropriations was broken, and funds for wharf restoration were not forthcoming. Pollack brought to Salem a background of community involvement, both in her private life and at her previous post at Saugus Iron Works, and she understood what made things happen:

These were always political decisions. The places that had a lot of attention, a lot of local interest, a lot of connections in Washington . . . moved ahead. The ones that were sleepy, didn't bother anybody, sat there . . .⁵

Recognizing the need for community support, especially if she was ever to get money to restore the wharves, she was willing and able to exploit the tide of enthusiasm and cooperation in the community that swelled into the Salem Partnership to create a constituency once more for Salem Maritime.

As the country becomes more urbanized, urban parks, of which Salem is the second oldest,⁶ are more common in the National Park System, rather than the oddity, and even natural-area parks are increasingly subject to local regulation and community friction. Historical parks brought the National Park Service face to face with urban neighbors for the first time. As we have seen, most Park Service personnel in the early days of NPS responsibility for historical parks came from a background of managing wilderness parks, and thus had little experience in relating to urban problems — or even to close neighbors.

The Salem Project, an example of a progressive public/private partnership, promises to at last make Salem Maritime what its creators envisioned. It could also constitute an important precedent for the Park Service as it operates in an increasingly urbanized setting, and in an increasingly entrepreneurial society. Denis Galvin comments that the Salem Project coincides with Park Service thinking on the need to reach out to communities in order to save the parks, and points to the new ten year American Heritage Landscapes program, expanding on the Salem idea to save regionally significant landscapes without owning them.⁷

⁵ Interview with Cynthia Pollack, Superintendent, SMNHS, 31 July 1991.

⁶ The oldest is considered to be Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis, proclaimed 1935.

⁷ Interview with Denis Galvin, former Associate Regional Director, NPS North Atlantic Regional Office, 23 March 1992.

In the 1930s the Salem community led the way in seeking help from the federal government through the National Park Service to save its historic wharves. Today, more and more communities across the nation are seeking a similar solution to their problems, especially with complex industrial sites. What fifty years of NPS management at Salem Maritime National Historic Site has made clear is that the Park Service cannot save these sites alone. The ultimate survival and success of such sites requires an ongoing partnership between Park Service and community.

APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGY: SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Before the Site Was Established

- 1927 SPNEA buys Derby House when it is threatened with being dismantled and moved elsewhere; the society takes a \$5000 mortgage as part of the purchase
- 1928 Derby House restored by William Sumner Appleton and George Francis Dow
- 1928 Horace Albright becomes Director of NPS, and states desire to "go rather heavily into the historical park field," inspires change of direction of the NPS towards history and architecture and a shift of focus from West to East (until 1933)
- 1930 Massachusetts Tercentenary reconstruction of "Pioneer Village," including a reconstructed ship and examples of New England house types, in a park near Salem Harbor under the direction of architectural historian George Francis Dow
- 1928 and 1934 Failed attempts to buy and restore Derby Wharf as park
- 1930's Local businessman Harlan P. Kelsey launches campaign to preserve and restore Derby Wharf area of Salem; purchases an option to buy Derby Wharf itself
- April 6, 1935 Verne Chatelain, Chief Historian of NPS, visits Salem to report on Derby Wharf and its feasibility as a National Historic Site
- August 8, 1935 Initial meeting between William Sumner Appleton of SPNEA and Edwin Small, new NPS regional Historian for New England in the Emergency Conservation Work of the Civilian Conservation Corps

Mid-Aug, 1935	Arno Cammerer, Director of NPS, tours Derby Wharf area with Kelsey
August 21, 1935	Historic Sites Act passed by Congress
Dec. 9, 1935	Secretary Ickes signs letter designating Derby Wharf National Historic Site as part of Park Service (before NPS has officially set up Advisory Board and process for approving Historic Sites under the Act)
1936	<i>A Statement of the Chief Considerations in Connection with the Proposed Derby Wharf National Historic Site</i> (Verne E. Chatelain)
1936	<i>Derby Wharf, Salem, Mass.</i> (Edwin W. Small)
January 1936	City of Salem agrees to provide \$50,000 for land acquisition if Commonwealth of Massachusetts will match it; WPA sets aside \$97,000 for repairs if area comes into National Park system
May 26, 1936	(P.L. 74-620, 49 Stat. 1373) Act authorizes establishment of a National Historic Site at Salem; official transfer of Custom House from Customs Service of Treasury Department to National Park Service of Interior Department
July 1, 1936	Treasury Department moves out of Custom House
November 1936	Last parcels near wharf purchased for park
Nov. 9, 1936	Engineering study begins on wharves
1937	<i>Report, Derby Wharf Survey, Salem, Mass.</i> (Ross F. Sweeney)
February 1937	Edwin Small becomes acting superintendent of Derby Wharf NHS (coordinating superintendent is Elbert Cox in Morristown as of January 1937); site initially operated on funds provided by PWA
	Home for Aged Women transfers part of Central Wharf to NPS

April 29, 1937	Massachusetts Supreme Court approves use of state funds for assembling the land for the site
Spring 1937	NPS architects begin to study restoration of Custom House and Derby House
May 1937	Architect Stuart Barnette tours site with Small and makes recommendations for restorations and demolitions
June 1937	City of Salem finishes land takings for the site
July 1937	Hawkes House interior woodwork, attributed to McIntire, illegally removed and stolen from the house
August 1937	Plans developed and work begins on demolition on wharves, and at rear of Custom House
Dec. 31, 1937	Ceremony marking beginning of reconstruction of Derby Wharf
Jan.-March 1938	Buildings moved from in front of Derby House; Rum Shop moved to corner of Palfrey Court, final demolition on wharfs of "unsightly and unwanted buildings"
February 1938	Acting Supt. Small transferred from PWA to NPS payroll

After the Site Was Established

- March 17, 1938 (3 FR 787) Congress designates Salem Maritime National Historic Site. Site includes:
Custom House (1819) (from Treasury Department)
Bonded Warehouse (same)
Scale House (1829) (same)
Derby House (1761-2) (from SPNEA)
Hawkes House (c.1770's-1801)
Rum Shop (later called West India Goods Store) (pre-1815)
Derby Wharf (1760's - 1806)(private owners)
Lighthouse (c. 1871) (owned by Coast Guard)
Central Wharf (1791) (part from Home for Aged Women; part from private owners)
Hatch's Wharf
Forrester's Warehouse (later demolished, now foundation only)
- March-Nov, 1938 Main repairs to Derby Wharf (work on wharf continues for several years), work done by CCC and WPA; repairs to Hawkes House begin by CCC
- April 23, 1938 Cooperative agreement signed with SPNEA for care of Derby House (site has no official NPS appropriation for fiscal 1938)
- July 1, 1938 Federal funds appropriated for site, fiscal year 1939, for first time
- October 1938 Mrs. Louise Crowninshield formally invited to take over furnishing of Derby House
- Nov. 16, 1938 Small officially becomes superintendent
- October 1939 Painting and repair work on Custom House
- December 1939 Architects' group approves Derby House restoration plan
- 1939 Herbert Kahler replaces Cox as coordinating superintendent

1940	Restoration of Derby House begins
February 1940	Woodwork stolen from Hawkes House in 1937 is located by police in Danvers and returned to the NPS
June 1940	Central Wharf repairs complete, used for lobster boats
September 1940	Derby Wharf approved for use as seaplane docking facility
1941	Continued repairs to Custom House, Derby House
August 1941	Custom House interior woodwork and moldings, counters and cupboards, from 1873 removed; construction begins on a "comfort station" in rear yard
February 1942	Derby House restoration complete
May 15, 1942	End of WPA involvement with NPS sites due to war effort
June 1942	Salem Harbor closed for duration of war
August 1942	Coast Guard moves local office into second floor of Custom House
March 3, 1943	Supt. Edwin W. Small on leave-of-absence while a Lieutenant in U.S. Naval Reserve in Washington
April-June, 1943	Alvin P. Stauffer, formerly in Branch of Historic Sites, Chicago, is named acting superintendent
July 1943 - Oct., 1944	Arthur R. Kelly is acting superintendent
1944	Rum Shop concession awarded to Dr. Rushford, who has been operating it as an antique shop under a temporary permit, and has installed a bar and other interiors to recreate an 18th c. rum shop
Oct. 1944-July 1946	William W. Lockett, formerly of Ockmulgee National Monument, is superintendent

October 1944	Coast Guard vacates the Custom House, leaving some damage, which Coast Guard later refuses to repair, leaving NPS wary of any future such arrangement
July 1946 - April 1956	Edwin W. Small returns as superintendent
September 1946	Salem Maritime Historical Association is formed to support the work of the NPS, Mrs. Crowninshield is President; they take over responsibility for retail sales at site
October 1947	Construction begins on "temporary" Naval Training Center built on Central Wharf over protests of NPS; requires demolition of Forrester Warehouse (which had been substantially rebuilt already)
November 1947	Supt. Small is assigned to be coordinating superintendent for Adams Mansion NHS in Quincy as well as Salem; fiscal functions for both sites to be handled by Morristown
1950 - 52	Master Plan for site developed
1955	NPS Region 5 Office, Philadelphia, now supervises Salem
April 1956 - Sept. 1963	Harold I. Lessem is superintendent
Oct. 1963 - March 1966	Arthur W. Sullivan is superintendent
December 12, 1963	(P.L. 88-199, 77 Stat. 359) Narbonne House (ca. 1670) (from private owner) added to site (acquired 0.187 acres); saved from Salem urban renewal plans
1964	The Boston Group formed as subregional office to oversee Boston area National Parks
1966	National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
March 1966 - Nov. 1968	Edwin W. Small is superintendent

August 2, 1966	Concession agreement with City of Salem allows building of three floating docks on Derby Wharf (two actually built)
April 1969 - Sept. 1978	H. John Dobrovolny is superintendent
Late 1969	Denver Service Center opens
1970	Harper's Ferry Center opens
1971	Interpretive Prospectus written
1973-1975	Relandscaping of grounds to historic appearance researched and performed
December 1973	NARO office established in Boston, replaces former Region 5 office in Philadelphia as Regional Office for Salem Maritime
July 1976	Bicentennial of American Revolution celebrated
1977	Naval Reserve Training facility, on wharf since 1947, removed, opening the opportunity to re-use/reinterpret the waterfront
1977	Two historic warehouses, formerly on Front Street, moved to Central Wharf
May 1978	Site Master Plan published
Sept. 1978 - Dec. 1979	Byron Hazeltine is superintendent
1978 - 1983	Concession agreement for mooring the Brig <i>Republic</i> at Derby Wharf
Nov. 10, 1978	(P.L. 95-625, 92 Stat. 3475) authorizes land acquisition (acquired 0.15 acre) - Central Wharf Warehouse (c. 1815) at SE corner of site moved from Front St. and donated by city for NPS use in maintenance, repairs, visitor orientation
Jan. 1980-April 1980	Site administered by NARO in absence of superintendent

April 1980-August 1982	Elaine D'Amico is superintendent
January 1982	Historic Resources Management Plan approved
July 31, 1982	Unused historic warehouse acquired earlier and moved to Derby Wharf burns in arson fire
August 1982-Dec. 1982	Cynthia Pollack is acting superintendent
January 1983-April 1983	Diane Jung is acting superintendent
May 1983 - October 1983	Angella C. Reid is acting superintendent
Oct. 1983-Nov. 1992	Cynthia Pollack is site superintendent
November 1983	West India Goods Store damaged by car; restored 1983 - 85 and reopened by ENP&MA
1984	New interpretive plan for site
1986	Inspection by the GAO criticizes use of Custom House for offices
August 1987	The Salem Partnership formed, a group of representatives from business, government, non-profit organizations, to revitalize Salem
1987	Park handbook published as co-op venture with other Salem sites
1987	Custom House reopens with historically furnished rooms; site offices move to the Hawkes House
June 27, 1988	(P.L. 100-349, 102 Stat. 659) authorizes land acquisition of St. Joseph Polish Club from Polish-American Veterans Association
1988	200th anniversary of U.S. Customs Service -- new wayside exhibits installed at Park
1988	50th birthday of site celebrated

28 November, 1990

(P.L. 101-632) authorizes acquisition of property or an interest therein in a visitor center in the city of Salem.

APPENDIX B

PARK SUPERINTENDENTS: SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Edwin W. Small	2/1/38 - 3/3/43
Alvin P. Stouffer	4/1/43 - 6/8/43 (acting)
Arthur R. Kelly	7/1/43 - 10/3/44 (acting)
William W. Lockett	10/3/44 - 7/25/46 (acting)
Edwin W. Small	7/25/46 - 4/21/56
Harold I. Lessem	4/21/56 - 9/14/63
Arthur W. Sullivan	10/27/63 - 3/13/66
Edwin W. Small	3/13/66 - 11/17/68
Admininistered by Project Co-ordinator, Boston Group	11/17/68 - 1/25/69
Admininistered by General Supt., Boston NPS Group	1/26/69 - 4/15/69
H. John Dobrovolny	4/16/69 - 9/9/78
Byron Hazeltine	9/10/78 - 12/29/79
Genevieve R. K. Riley	1/1/80 - 4/12/80 (acting)
Elaine M. D'Amico	4/13/80 - 8/15/82
Cynthia G. Pollack	8/16/82 - 12/31/82 (acting)
Diane A. Jung	1/2/83 - 4/30/83 (acting)
Angela C. Reid	5/1/83 - 10/1/83 (acting)
Cynthia G. Pollack	10/2/83 - 11/15/92

APPENDIX C

VISITATION STATISTICS: SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The following visitation statistics, provided by Salem Maritime NHS for the years 1977 to 1991, include estimates and double-counting. For the years 1977-81, the number of visitors to Derby Wharf was estimated at five times the number recorded at the Custom House, based on observation and counting. The number for 1981 comprises visitors to the Custom House, roving contacts, and tours to the Derby House and Warehouse, but does not include an estimate for Derby Wharf. After 1981 the counting policy was changed to include persons visiting all buildings including the Orientation Center, and those on the grounds and wharves. A single visitor might be counted several times in different locations.

1977	252,612
1978	300,150
1979	454,545
1980	364,883
1981	418,262
1982	105,586
1983	565,898
1984	788,510
1985	669,983
1986	686,256
1987	931,021
1988	744,790
1989	696,622
1990	621,228
1991	790,242

APPENDIX D

LEGISLATION: SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

An Act to authorize the transfer of the Customhouse at Salem, Massachusetts, from the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department to the Department of the Interior, Pub. L. No. 74-620 (26 May 1936).

Order designating the Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Salem, Massachusetts (3 F.R. 787, 17 March 1938)

An Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire and add certain lands to the Salem Maritime National Historic Site in Massachusetts, and for other purposes, Pub. L. 88-199 (12 December 1963)

National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, Pub. L. 95-625 (10 November 1978)

An Act to revise the boundaries of Salem Maritime National Historic Site in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and for other purposes, Pub. L. 100-349 (27 June 1988)

An Act to provide for a visitor center at Salem Maritime National Historic Site in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Pub. L. 101-632 (28 November 1990)

[CHAPTER 454.]

AN ACT

May 26, 1936.
[H. R. 10934.]
[Public, No. 620.]

To authorize the transfer of the customhouse at Salem, Massachusetts, from the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department to the Department of the Interior.

Salem, Mass.
Transfer of custom-
house to Department
of Interior, authorized.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Treasury be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to transfer to the control and jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior the customhouse at Salem, Massachusetts, and such adjoining property, both real and personal, as may now be under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Treasury.

SEC. 2. That the Secretary of the Interior be, and he is hereby, authorized to acquire the above property for the purpose of establishing same as an historic site or otherwise preserving the buildings and grounds in connection therewith: *Provided,* That the Secretary of the Treasury may retain sufficient space in the building for the necessary operation of the Bureau of Customs.

Preservation of, as
an historic site.

Provido.
Space for Customs
Bureau.

Approved, May 26, 1936.

12. Salem Maritime National Historic Site

Designation of certain lands to comprise the site: Order of March 17, 1938...

ORDER DESIGNATING THE SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, SALEM, MASS.

[March 17, 1938—3 F. R. 787]

WHEREAS the Congress of the United States has declared it to be a national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings, and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States, and

WHEREAS certain lands and structures in Salem, Massachusetts, including Derby Wharf, the Richard Derby House, and the Custom House, by reason of their relationship to the maritime history of New England and the United States, have been declared by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments to be an historic site of national significance, and

WHEREAS the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the City of Salem, the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, the Home for Aged Women, and certain citizens of Salem have made possible the donation of the necessary property to the United States;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, under and by virtue of the authority conferred by Section 2 of the Act of Congress approved August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666), do hereby designate the following-described lands, with the structures standing thereon, to be a national historic site, having the name "Salem Maritime National Historic Site":

PARCEL 1

Beginning at a point, the northeast corner of Derby and Orange Streets; thence N. 14°02'10" W. 73.64'; thence N. 11°15'30" W. 28.07' to the northwestern corner of the Custom House; thence N. 7°57'20" W. 95.79'; thence N. 78°01'10" E. 6.36'; thence N. 76°48'00" E. 20.45'; thence N. 83°38'10" E. 56.93'; thence N. 5°45'30" W. 48.44'; thence N. 5°03'50" W. 21.41'; thence N. 86°09'30" E. 44.63'; thence N. 86°19'30" E. 42.92'; thence N. 82°57'50" E. 52.66'; thence N. 81°34'40" E. 25.61'; thence S. 7°18'30" E. 11.32'; thence S. 9°07'50" E. 40.39'; thence S. 7°18'50" E. 85.71'; thence S. 7°00'30" E. 31.65'; thence S. 7°08'20" E. 68.84' to a point, the N. W. corner of Polfrey Court and Derby Street; thence along the northern side of Derby Street S. 75°54'20" W. 74.34'; thence S. 77°57'20" W. 22.05'; thence S. 76°06'40" W. 27.45'; thence S. 77°25'10" W. 25.21'; thence S. 78°19'40" W. 29.70'; thence S. 78°39'20" W. 62.68' to point of beginning.

PARCEL 2

Beginning at a point at south edge of Derby Street and east edge of 40 ft. right-of-way to Derby Wharf, shown as point A² on map "Land Takings for National Park Derby Wharf and vicinity, Salem, Massachusetts, scale 1"—20', dated December 1936"; thence N. 75°25'50" E. 31.05'; thence N. 79°00'20" E. 15.99'; thence N. 78°44'40" E. 6.2'; thence N. 77°53'00" E. 43.83'; thence N. 74°03'50" E. 17.05'; thence N. 78°21'10" E. 30.37'; thence N. 73°17'00" E. 15.09'; thence N. 71°17'00" E. 19.26'; thence S. 6°56'30" E. 31.36'; thence S. 7°11'00" E. 88.84'; thence S. 6°26'50" E. 23.51'; thence S. 7°19'10" E. 53.93'; thence S. 9°40'00" E. 39.85'; thence S. 7°15'30" E. 40.84'; thence S. 6°32'30" E. 38.89'; thence S. 7°01'10" E. 34.77'; thence S. 8°51'20" E. 40.99'; thence S. 81°52'30" W. approximately 40' to mean high water line; thence southwesterly along mean high water line approximately 42' to property line of land formerly owned by East Massachusetts Street Railway Company; thence S. 6°23'30" E. approximately 18'; thence S. 82°47'20" W. approximately 12' to mean high water line; thence southwesterly along mean high water line approximately 164' to east line of Derby Wharf; thence southerly along east edge of Derby Wharf to the northerly corner of lighthouse property of the United States; thence westerly at right angles to wharf edge 26' to westerly corner of lighthouse property of the United States; thence southeasterly parallel with east edge of Derby Wharf 22.5' to south edge of Derby Wharf; thence westerly along south edge of Derby Wharf to an angle in Wharf; thence northerly along western edge of wharf to line of property, formerly owned by Association for Relief of Aged and Destitute Women; thence westerly along edges of Wharves to line of property formerly owned by Andrew J. Abdo, which is also east edge of Central Wharf; thence S. 10°43'40" E. to channel; thence northwesterly along south edge of Wharf 146' to a point; thence N. 9°46'00" W. 474.0'; thence N. 11°04'40" W. 120.22'; thence N. 8°47'10" W. 145.83' to a point on the south edge of Derby Street; thence along the south edge of Derby Street N. 76°21'10" E. 301.22'; thence easterly approximately 40' to point of beginning.

The administration, protection, and development of this national historic site shall be exercised by the National Park Service in accordance with the provisions of the Act of August 21, 1935.

Warning is expressly given to all unauthorized persons not to appropriate, injure, destroy, deface or remove any feature of this historic site.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the Department of the Interior to be affixed, in the City of Washington, this 17th day of March 1938.

[SEAL]

HAROLD L. ICKES,
Secretary of the Interior.

SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

PUBLIC LAW 88-199; 77 STAT. 359

[H. R. 976]

An Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire and add certain lands to the Salem Maritime National Historic Site in Massachusetts, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That:

In order to preserve, as a part of the Salem Maritime National Historic Site, one of the few substantially unaltered houses of seventeenth century Massachusetts, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to procure by purchase, donation, or purchase with donated funds certain lands and interests in lands situated in Salem, Massachusetts, being known as the Narbonne House, and consisting of approximately 0.187 acre, the same being the premises conveyed to Margaret Hale by deed dated November 5, 1958, and recorded with the Essex County deeds, book 4511, page 575. When acquired, said lands shall be administered as a part of the site under the laws and regulations applicable thereto.

Sec. 2. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated such sums, but not more than \$18,000, as may be necessary to acquire the property described in section 1 of this Act.

Approved December 12, 1963.

PUBLIC LAW 95-625 [S. 791]; Nov. 10, 1978

NATIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION ACT OF 1978

An Act to authorize additional appropriations for the acquisition of lands and interests in lands within the Sawtooth National Recreation Area in Idaho.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

National Parks
and Recreation
Act of 1978.

SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1. This Act may be cited as the "National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978". 16 USC 1 note.

TITLE III—BOUNDARY CHANGES

REVISION OF BOUNDARIES

SEC. 301. The boundaries of the following units of the National Park System are revised as follows, and there are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary, but not exceed the amounts specified in the following paragraphs for acquisitions of lands and interests in lands within areas added by reason of such revisions:

Appropriation
authorizations.

(15) Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Massachusetts: To add approximately fifteen one-hundredths of an acre as generally depicted on the map entitled "Salem Maritime National Historic Site Boundary Map", numbered 373-80,010, and dated February 1978: \$67,500.

Public Law 100-349
100th Congress

An Act

[Polish Club]

To revise the boundaries of Salem Maritime National Historic Site in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and for other purposes.

June 27, 1988
[H.R. 2652]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Conservation.

SECTION 1. BOUNDARY REVISION OF SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE.

(a) BOUNDARY REVISION.—The Salem Maritime National Historic Site (hereafter in this Act referred to as the "national historic site"), designated on March 17, 1938, under section 2 of the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666), and located in Salem, Massachusetts, shall consist of lands and interests in lands as generally depicted on the map entitled "Boundary Map, Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Salem, Massachusetts", numbered 373-80,011, and dated April 1987. The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

Public information.

(b) ACQUISITION OF LANDS.—The Secretary of the Interior may acquire lands or interests therein within the boundary of the national historic site by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange. Any lands or interests in lands owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or any political subdivision thereof may be acquired only by donation. Lands and interests therein acquired pursuant to this Act shall become part of the national historic site and shall be subject to all the laws and regulations applicable to the national historic site.

Gifts and property.

Approved June 27, 1988.

PUBLIC LAW 101-632 [H.R. 4834]; November 28, 1990

SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE,
MASSACHUSETTS: VISITOR CENTER

An Act to provide for a visitor center at Salem Maritime National Historic Site in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. VISITOR CENTER FOR THE SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE. 16 USC 461 note.

Section 1(b) of the Act entitled "An Act to revise the boundaries of Salem Maritime National Historic Site in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and for other purposes" (102 Stat. 659) is amended—

(1) by striking "LANDS.—The" and inserting "LANDS.—(1) The"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(2)(A) Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary may acquire under this subsection property or an interest therein in the city of Salem for use as a visitor center for the national historic site. The Secretary shall conduct an economic analysis of the costs and benefits of acquiring such property or interest therein. Funds appropriated for the development and operation of the visitor center may be expended on property in which the Secretary has acquired less than a fee simple interest.

"(B)(i) Any acquisition under this paragraph shall provide that—

"(I) under any lease, the leased period shall not be less than 25 years and shall contain an option to renew for an additional 25 years;

"(II) the owner of the property shall maintain the property to a standard acceptable to the Secretary;

"(III) under any lease, rental amounts paid by the Secretary may not exceed the fair market value of the leased premises, as determined by an independent party acceptable to both the lessor and the Secretary; and

"(IV) under any lease, rental payments be reduced by the fair market value of improvements in the leased premises made by or at the expense of the Secretary.

"(ii) The Secretary may not acquire an interest in more than 12,000 square feet under this paragraph.

"(iii) The Secretary shall submit the economic analysis, together with any proposed acquisition, to the appropriate committees of Congress for their review at least 120 days before the effective date of such acquisition."

Approved November 28, 1990.

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A Note on Sources

Materials chronicling the history of Salem Maritime National Historic Site are scattered and unfortunately incomplete. Ironically, the earliest years of the Site's history were more thoroughly documented (and those documents saved more systematically) than more recent periods. As with many other Park Service sites, documentation of the period of the late 1940s to early 1960s is particularly elusive.

The Site itself has archives for the 1930s to the present in its "Vault" storage area in the Custom House. Other materials, including the more valuable files, are kept in the Historian's office in the Hawkes House and in a basement storage area of the Custom House. Published and other widely disseminated reports on the Site are located at the North Atlantic Regional Office as part of the collection indexed as the Cultural Resources Management Bibliography (CRMBIB). A variety of unpublished correspondence and reports on the site over a long period of time can be found in the files of the History Division of the Park Service's Washington Office.

Other records are located in the Federal Records Center in Philadelphia (covering the years approx. 1953-1967) and in Waltham, Massachusetts (1967-present). These records are difficult to retrieve and poorly indexed from a historian's point of view. A few records on the Site are at the National Archives Philadelphia Branch. Records for New England parks in the WPA years and the Boston Group years are filed at the National Archives, Waltham branch, but were being catalogued when research for this study was being done and could not be consulted.

The NPS Technical Information Center, Denver Service Center, makes available on request xerographic and microfiche copies of approved and some draft site plans and drawings. This series is nearly complete, but some records apparently were never filed with Denver and are unavailable. The NPS Harpers Ferry Center Library holds miscellaneous Salem Maritime files, including material in the "Exhibit Rehab." files, as well as in the photo archives.

Interviews were conducted with the Site staff and observers of Salem Maritime, and whenever possible interview material and documentary sources were used together.

Several problems emerged. The most important was the absence of certain key documents, whose preparation was the object of much correspondence and whose implementation affected the Site. Most notable here are the *Master Plan* of 1952, and the *MISSION 66 Prospectus for Salem Maritime*. Both of these were created in the 1950s, when overall documentation is scarce. It is difficult to believe that no one kept these important plans, but we have not been able to turn up a copy of either.

We found the Superintendent's monthly narrative reports, required up through 1967, to be immensely useful in our research, and recommend a return to this reporting format. These reports provide a check for researchers that nothing major has been missed by examining other more detailed documents, and provide a firm chronology for what actually was done on the Site rather than merely planned and discussed. They are invaluable for providing a framework in which to understand correspondence, in which the correspondents often understand references which are difficult to decipher without knowing in detail what was underway at the time. Annual reports tend to be unduly upbeat, focusing on the great accomplishments of the year. Monthly reports are more honest, contemporaneous, and revealing of the telling details.

Another small frustration was the approved memo format which allows titles to be used instead of names. A memo that says "yes, by all means tear the building down," signed "Acting Assistant Regional Chief of Resources" or some such, leaves the researcher baffled about who is responsible, and hides evidence of continuities and discontinuities in policies and personalities as job titles change and individuals move through the system. Names and titles would be most useful to posterity.

A Note on the Bibliography

Park Service documents consulted for this study span a wide range from letters intended for one reader to published books. In between are reports of varying length and degree of permanency, intended for a variety of readerships within and without the Park Service. Some originated on site, some from the Regional Office, some from the Denver Service Center, some from the Division of Publications. Others simply state "National Park Service" on the title page, often with no date. The advent of desktop publishing in the late 1980s has further muddied the distinction between

"unpublished" and "published" documents. Given this array of sources, we have grouped all such documents into a single bibliographic category, and have given as full a citation as possible with the goal in mind of enabling future researchers to identify and locate these documents. Our bibliographic format therefore must be somewhat inconsistent given the inconsistency of author attribution and dating on the documents themselves.

The National Park Service is part of the Department of the Interior, whose title often appears on NPS reports; we have omitted this except when "Department of the Interior" is the only author or publisher attribution on the title page. In the following listing, items are listed alphabetically by National Park Service division and office, and by title of the report.

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