



Main Street looking south: Larch Row sign at left, Ben Young, George Alley and Elbridge Kimball houses (*right to left*), 1891. Photo courtesy Wenham Museum

# *History of* **Main St.**

*149 Main St. to Larch Row*

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Jack E. Hauck



# MAIN ST.

## 149 MAIN ST. TO LARCH ROW

We will start with the house and barn in the upper left-hand corner of the picture above. **149 Main St.**, the *Ralph Perkins house*, is a Cape style, which Perkins built in 1939. It sits back from Main Street. The house is on land once part of Henry Perkin's large property, and where he had his house. The house, long gone, was next to a barn, that is still standing <sup>1,4</sup>

The barn dates from at least 1664 and is likely much older. Around 1970, a side shed collapsed, revealing a beam in the barn that had 1796 engraved on it. The shed may have been built with beams salvaged from the original Henry Perkins house, which stood on the property, until between 1884 and 1910. The house belonged, at one time to a Nathaniel Perkins. <sup>1,4</sup>

To the left of the driveway leading to the barn, there is a well, capped by a millstone. This may have been the well to the original Henry Perkins house.

The Perkins brothers, Henry and Frederick, ran a meat and fish business, out of the barn. From Wenham to Beverly, they sold meat to people in Beverly. In Beverly, they bought fish that they sold on the way back to Wenham. <sup>1,4</sup>

Sarah B. Merrill in her reminisces of Main Street wrote, in 1900, that "a green cottage, with its barn and slaughter house was between the car stables and house of Mr. Whitney. In the open door, was a very old man, seated in an arm chair, with a huge, black bear chained a short distance from him. This was the home of renowned Sgt. Thorne Dodge; after his death, the house was removed to Arbor Street ... a fire burned the barn and slaughter house.

<sup>19</sup>



Perkins barn, 2011  
Photo J. Hauck



149 Main St., 2011  
Photo J. Hauck

It is not surprising, considering the many Perkins who once lived in this area, that close by is Perkins Street. Once called Nigger Lane, it led to Mingo's Corner. Mingo was a colored servant of Ebenezer Lovering.<sup>2</sup>

Yes, the New England town of Wenham had slaves.

Slaves were owned in several parts of the town. Jonathan Porter owned Pompey Black, who was for many years the sexton at the meetinghouse. There were benches in the meetinghouse for the slaves. In 1754, the census recorded sixteen slaves. Ten years later, there were thirty-one slaves.<sup>17</sup>

When Massachusetts became an anti-slavery State in the early 1800s, Pompey was told he was free to go. He replied, "I have worked hard to earn my property, and now I will remain and help spend it." Pompey out-lived his first master, was inherited by the son, Tyler Porter, and then descended to Dr. John Porter. He died in 1839, at the age of ninety.<sup>7</sup>

**151 Main St.**, the *Henry Perkins house* was built about 1875, upon land apparently purchased from Jason Clark. Previously the property was part of the 153 Main St. property.<sup>15</sup>



Henry Perkins house, 1891. 151 Main St.  
Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



151 Main St., 2011  
Photo J. Hauck



Ebenezer Batchelder house, 1891. 153 Main St. Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



153 Main St., 2011  
Photo J. Hauck

Henry Perkins built the house at **151 Main St.**, on the site of the Benjamin F. Johnson Drug Store, a small building, which was on the site, from 1865 and 1872. It was later moved to the rear of the Ralph Perkin's house at 145 Main St.<sup>13</sup>

Frank .E. Perkins enlarged his property to reach back nearly to the present School Street, by. It remained this way until the development of the back part of the lot into Ellis Avenue. At his time, 1939, the lot at 149 Main St. was also created, from the large property.<sup>1, 4</sup>

The *Ebenezer Batchelder house*, at **153 Main St.**, was built in 1751. In the mid 1800s, the house was known as the Jason Clark house.<sup>13</sup>

In the back is a small cottage, which had been a ten-footer shoe shop. Wellington Poole, the Wenham Town Clerk, used the cottage as his "office." He called it "The Hollyhock." The building is still at the rear of the house. Poole lived at the house with Clark relatives.<sup>2</sup>

Through his interest in the town's early history, Poole was considered to be one of the best authorities on location of land and houses.<sup>2</sup>

The exterior of the present house is essentially the same as the Batchelder house; however, the interior was restored by Afton and Margarat Bezanon.<sup>13</sup>

*The Samuel and Benjamin Conant house*, at **155 Main St.**, was built before 1856. Originally close to Main Street, it is a cottage-farmhouse style, much like that of the houses at 161 and 163 Main St. It was owned, in 1856, by Samuel Conant, father of Benjamin H. Conant, who subsequently owned the house.<sup>1, 4</sup>

Benjamin H. Conant was a shoemaker, along with his father. He was an 8<sup>th</sup> generation descendant of Roger Conant, one of the founders of Salem, in 1626. Benjamin Conant is best known for his photographing the entire town, as well as South Hamilton, from 1890 to 1910. His large collection of glass-plate negatives is stored at the Wenham museum.<sup>1, 4</sup>



Benjamin H. Conant house,  
1896, 155 Main St.  
Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



155 Main St., 2010 Photo J. Hauck

Taking the pictures was an awesome task. Conant traveled about Wenham and Hamilton with two large cameras, a tripod, glass plates, and a record book. The cameras were about the size of a mailbox and very cumbersome. The tripod was very heavy, as were the glass plates that he kept in a fair-sized wood box. <sup>2</sup> All this he carried in a hand-pulled cart, on the dusty dirt roads of Wenham. Conant took most of his photos during the early 1890s, when he was in his late 40s and early 50s. Today, the glass-plate negatives are stored at the Wenham Museum.

One more thing to mention about Benjamin H. Conant: he was responsible for the care and maintenance of the town clock, until he died in 1921. <sup>2</sup>

In the 1950s, a long dormer was added to the front of 155 Main St. The barn and house were moved back from the street. <sup>1, 4</sup>

Across the street is **168 Main St.**, the *Capt. Jonathan Kimball, Sr. house*, which was built in 1759. Kimball held a number of town offices, and owned several houses, including the Clafin-Richards house, as well as a large strip of land along the east side of Main Street, and the Samuel Rogers house.



Jonathan Kimball Sr. house, 1893.  
168 Main St.  
Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



168 Main St., 1972. Photo 1972 Historic District

In architecture, the exterior of 168 Main St. closely resembles that of 167 Main St. which was built about ten years earlier (1750). On the interior, the two houses have the same floor plan of five rooms, with front and rear stairs.

Jonathan Kimball, Jr. inherited the property, in 1758. Ten years later, in 1768, and he transferred it to his son Isaac, who was the town clerk in the 1750s.<sup>18</sup>

In 1796, Uzziel Dodge owned the property. He was very involved in the town government, as well as church activities. His brother was Pond John Dodge, who took a much more laid-back approach to life in Wenham. (See *Cemeteries, chapter 11; and Main Street history, chapter 16a.*)

Dr. Samuel Dodge, Uzziel's son, inherited 168 Main St. Dr. Dodge was the town physician and surgeon for seven years, until he died in 1833: he was only 33 years old.

In 1942, James Reynolds, whose estate, the Larches, abuts the back of the property, purchased the property. Reynolds had the house remodeled into a two-apartment structure. Herdsmen for Reynolds' farm lived there.<sup>20</sup>

In 1971, James Fitzgerald acquired the property and remodeled the building back to a two-story, single-family house.

On the eastern section of this property (*in front of the house*), the Morocco factory was built between 1884 and 1891. (See *Main Street history, chapter 16c.*)



168 Main St., 2009. Photo J. Hauck



Morocco leather factory, 158 Main St., 1894.  
Photo courtesy Wenham Museum.



For the next portion of our walk along Main Street, we will start with **157 Main St.**, the George H. Perkins house. The house is typical of the late Victorian style, of houses built during the late 1800s and early 1900s.<sup>1,4</sup>

Originally, on the 157 Main St. site, there was the John H. Jones Livery Stable and his large, 3-story, white cottage. The house and stable burned in 1896.<sup>19</sup>

The land was vacant until 1896, when the George H. Perkins house was built. A large barn was built behind the house. The house remained in the Perkins family, until the 1940s.

Subsequently, Delano Kennard, a Wenham Selectman, owned the house. During his terms as selectman, 1956 to 1970, Kennard also was the Town Clerk.<sup>1,4</sup>



George H. Perkins house, 1896. 157 Main St., Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



157 Main St., 2011  
Photo J. Hauck



Samuel Hill house, 1898. 161 Main St.  
Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



161 Main St., 2011  
Photo J. Hauck

The *Samuel Hill house*, at **161 Main St.**, was built in about 1907, on the site of the George A. Lummus house, which was removed from the site in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1, 4</sup> When the Lummus house existed, there was an ox shoeing business, in the rear, complete with a blacksmith shop that was torn down soon after the death of George Lummus.<sup>19</sup>

The Samuel Hill house was occupied by the Hill family, until 1943.<sup>1, 4</sup> The original barn and other out-buildings on the Lummus lot remained on the property after the building of this house, but were removed in the 1960s.<sup>4</sup>

The original *John Riggs house*, at **163 Main St.**, was built before 1856. In style and conception, it was essentially identical to the Lummus house, at 161 Main St. Both were set up upon a mound of earth, probably to provide a dry cellar. Between 1906 and 08, Riggs replaced the original house, with a more modern dwelling.<sup>1, 4</sup>

In the early 1960s, dormers were added to the roof of the cottage-style farmhouse. Several other cottage-style cottages still exist on Main St. A porch, formerly on the front of the house, was removed.<sup>4</sup>



John Riggs house, 163 Main St., 1892.  
Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



163 Main St., 2009  
Photo J. Hauck



The house originally sat on a narrow lot, stretching along Perkins St., to the property of Andrew W. Dodge; the land subsequently was sub-divided and houses built.<sup>1,4</sup>

Between 1856 and 1872 the house was occupied by John Riggs.<sup>1, 4</sup> Riggs, in the 1860s and 1870s, was the town's caretaker of indigent travelers. In the cellar of the town hall, there was a lodging place for poor travelers. During this period, Riggs along with Henry Alley, John Riggs, along with Henry Alley and Henry Hobbs cared for as many as 400 persons a year.<sup>6</sup>

Between 1884 and 1957, the descendants of Jason Williams lived at 163 Main St.<sup>1,4</sup>

The *Samuel Rogers house*, at **167 Main St.** was built about 1750, and was an inn run by William Rogers. Selectmen held meetings at the Rogers Inn.<sup>13</sup> Samuel Rogers sold the property to Nathaniel Rogers, Sep. 17, 1751, 12+ acres, including houses, barn, cider mill and orchard.<sup>1</sup>

In 1753, Nathaniel Rogers married Hannah Bartlett, widow of Nathaniel Bartlett and moved to Marblehead and continued Bartlett's tavern business, the well-known Fountain Inn.<sup>12</sup>

In 1808, Col Paul Porter acquired the property and likely converted it into a house. He also built a country store on south side of the property. In 1813, David and Nathaniel Perkins bought property. Ten years later, 1823, Samuel Clarke acquired the property. In 1824, John S. Felton bought property, which he sold the following year, 1825, to Maj. David Starrett, who kept a grocery and dry goods store in a small building in front of the barn.<sup>19</sup> Starrett ran the store until he died Mar. 13, 1845, at the age of 45.<sup>9</sup>

Amos Gould, in 1846, bought the house, barn, store, and about 4 acres from Franklin Hadley, the guardian of David A. and Daniel W. Starrett, children of David Starrett.<sup>13</sup> Mary Starrett, Daniel's wife, died Sep. 6, 1839.

In the 1850s, Amos Gould, with his son, Nathaniel, ran a shoe making business for several, in the adjacent barn and buildings. The barn, which



Samuel Rogers house, 167 Main St., 1893. Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



167 Main St., 2009  
Photo J. Hauck



Franklin Hadley house, 169 Main St., 1909. Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



169 Main St., 2009  
Photo J. Hauck

partly burned in the Autumn of 1862,<sup>19</sup> was very similar to the existing barn at 169 Main Street, which had a windmill on the cupola.<sup>13</sup>

Gould sold the property and moved away. The barn was moved to the rear of the small school house on the common and was rebuilt as a house.<sup>19</sup>

In 1855, reportedly 4,200 pairs of boots and 25 000 pairs of shoes were made, in Wenham.<sup>8</sup> The 1850 Wenham census reported that there were 122 shoemakers living in the town.<sup>16</sup>

Nathaniel lived across the street, at 176 Main Street. He married Sofronia A. Mildram, and they had four children, one of whom was Amos Gould II.

Amos Gould's daughter, Mary, married Henry L. Eaton, and from 1884 to 1910, lived in the house. Next, the property was sold to Henry A. Libby.<sup>13</sup>

The *Franklin Hadley house*, at **169 Main St.**, built with a Mansard roof, was erected before 1856. It is one of several houses that do not face onto Main Street. Franklin Hadley lived there between 1799 and 1877. The Conant map indicates that John Kilham originally owned the property and that he sold it to Charles Gott in 1653.<sup>13</sup>

In 1841, Hadley, a wheelwright, was the representative to the Great and General Court of Massachusetts (1841), from the town of Wenham. He also was a member of the committee that oversaw the construction of the town hall, in 1854.<sup>13</sup>

His daughter, Phebe Ann, married Dr. John L. Robinson, a Civil War surgeon, who kept his office at 169 Main St., until 1899. He also was president of the Monument Committee that erected the Civil War Monument.<sup>13</sup>



170 Main St., 2009  
Photo J. Hauck



James Perkins Sr. house, 1910. 172 Main St. Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



172 Main St., 2009  
Photo J. Hauck

The house later was owned by Ivory Quimby, a carpenter. He led the efforts to introduce the teaching of music into the schools.<sup>5</sup> His daughter, Mary Quimby, who later lived in the house, was town treasurer for many years.<sup>1,4</sup>

The *Nancy Spofford house*, at **170 Main St.**, previously was a chicken house. It was brought from Ipswich and placed on a lot vacant.<sup>13</sup>

Before 1865, however, there was a house on this site belonging to Francis Welch. Margaret Cole, who became the Town Tax Collector in 1962, later lived there.<sup>13</sup>

For many years, the property was part of the land of the Perkins estate, of 172 Main St.<sup>1,4</sup>

The house at **172 Main St.** was built circa 1809 by Moses Horne, a blacksmith, and Ebenezer James, a housewright. It was the home of Moses and Sally Horne.<sup>18</sup>

From 1829 to 1846, Adonmiam Dodge operated a wheelwright and harness shop on the property, which also served as the Post Office (1837-1846), as well as the District Library, from 1840-1853.<sup>18,19</sup>

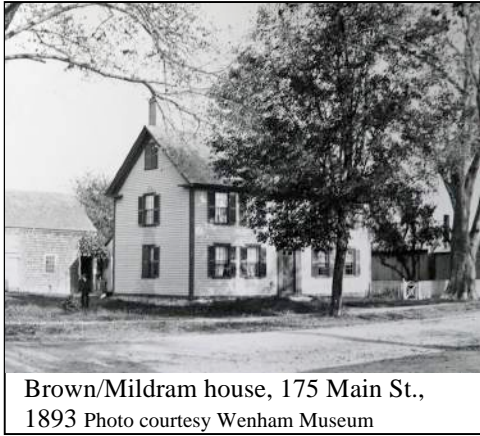
The house had three sections, one presumably used as the store. There also was a large barn, behind the house.<sup>1,4</sup>

As indicated on the Wallings map of 1856, James H. Perkins Sr. and his brothers, operated a dry-goods store on the property.<sup>1</sup>

Next door, at 172 Main St., Edward Perkins and Edward Foster had a grocery store and shoe factory.<sup>19</sup> This building was later sold and moved to Ipswich.<sup>19</sup>

Nathaniel Gould, who lived at 176 Main St., may have conducted a store at this site, for a while.<sup>1</sup>

Several apothecary shops were in Wenham, in the mid to late 1800s. The first shop was opened by Calvin B. Dodge, in 1862. He built his shop on Henry Perkins' land (151 Main St.). In 1864 he sold out to Benjamin F. Johnson, who, after a few years, moved the shop across from the first engine house (150 Main St.).<sup>9</sup>



Brown/Mildram house, 175 Main St.,  
1893 Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



175 Main St., 2010  
Photo J. Hauck

The house remained in the Perkins family until 1936, when it was remodeled and rented.<sup>1,4</sup> Horace Pauling acquired the house in 1943.<sup>1</sup> Muriel Pauling lived there in 1999.<sup>20</sup>

A 1972 photo shows a screened-porch on the east end of the house. The porch later was enclosed and a fireplace added.

*Pelietiah (Pelatiah) Brown-Moses Mildram house*, at **175 Main St.**, was built in about 1764, by Capt. Pellitiah Brown.

During the Revolution, Brown was a member of the Committee of Safety; and a member of the committee to examine the town stock of ammunition, guns and intrenching. For a number of years, he was moderator at town. By trade, he was a blacksmith and a housewright. He was a distant relative of Nathaniel Brown, loyalist, who lived in the Hobbs House.

During the life of Pellitiah Brown, there were other buildings on the site, including a barn and his blacksmith shop.

His wife, Hannah, who died, at 61, in 1801, has one of the more haunting epitaphs on her gravestone, In the Wenham cemetery:

*Pass on my friends, dry up your tears  
I must lye here till Christ appears  
Death is a debt to nature due  
I've paid the debt & and so must you*

By 1856, 175 Main St. was owned by Moses Mildram; and by 1872, Abram R. Fisk lived in the house and maintained a shoe shop, on the land between 173 and 175 Main St.

By 1884, Benjamin F. Young owned the house.

As originally built, the Brown house was close to the roadway. Years later, a central brick chimney was removed. and new chimneys erected on the rear wall of the house. Additions were made to the rear to enlarge the house.

In the mid 1900s, Clarence Lunt purchased 175 Main St. The house was moved back.<sup>1,4</sup>



George Alley house, 1892. 179 Main St.  
Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



179 Main St., 2009  
Photo J. Hauck

Today, 175 Main St. from the street, appears similar to the 1884 house, other than the extended entrance way, and the enclosed porch on the left side.

Next door, the *George Alley farmhouse*, at **179 Main St.**, was built before 1856. The property size is 0.23 acre, the smallest of any on Main Street.

No name is attached to the property, on maps of 1856 and 1865; however, Conant map of 1865 shows a house on this location, with the label "Farmhouse."

In 1872 George Alley was the owner. In the 1870s, he was one of the town's caretakers of "poor travelers," who were provided with a place to sleep in the basement of the town hall. The very small room later became the town's jail cell.

By 1910, Alley's son, Henry, had inherited the property. However, Henry Alley rented the house. He lived on Larch Row, and became quite well known for raising queen bees. Henry Alley started the "Bay State Apiary." In 1885, he wrote beekeeper's handy book, "Twenty-two Years Experience in Queen Rearing."

Between 1892 and 1906, to the front of the house, two dormers were added; the front entrance was slightly extended, and the kitchen roof was raised. Two large Maple trees were removed.<sup>1,4</sup>

Up to 2007, there was an open field between the Alley house and the next house, 175 Main St. That year, the property (5 acres) behind 185 and 187 Main St. was sold to build The Boulders, a senior-housing community of 24 houses.

Wallis Street was built off of Main Street into The Boulders property. The street is named after Beatrice Wallis Dodge, a former owner of the property, who with her family lived at 187 Main St.



Perkins/Foster house, 1972. 176 Main St.  
Photo 1972 Historic District Study



176 Main St., 2010  
Photo J. Hauck

The *Perkins/Foster house*, at **176 Main St.**, a federal style structure, was built well before 1856. By 1865, the house was owned by Nathaniel Gould, son of Amos Gould, who, with his wife Sophronia, lived across the road, at 167 Main St., where he ran a shoe manufacturing operation.<sup>13</sup>

Amos Gould II and Austin Patch operated a tanning factory (*the Morocco factory*), in the late 1800s, at 158 Main St.

The house remained in the Gould family, until it was purchased by Harry G. Dodge, in 1944.<sup>1, 4</sup> A side el was added to the original structure, the barn in the back removed, as was the fencing.

We now come to the intersection of Main Street and Patch Avenue. The name avenue has a much grander impression than what Patch Avenue originally was, i.e., a narrow dirt wagon path. Patch Avenue dates back as early as 1856. It is a left-angle path connecting Larch Row and Main St. The Austin C. Patch house sits well back from Main Street.



Patch Ave., 1905  
Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



Patch Ave., 2012  
Photo J. Hauck

The Patch house has a small barn, at the rear of the property. In the late 1890s, a porch was added to the side of the house. There have been no other major structural changes. There was a ballroom on the second floor. <sup>1,4</sup>

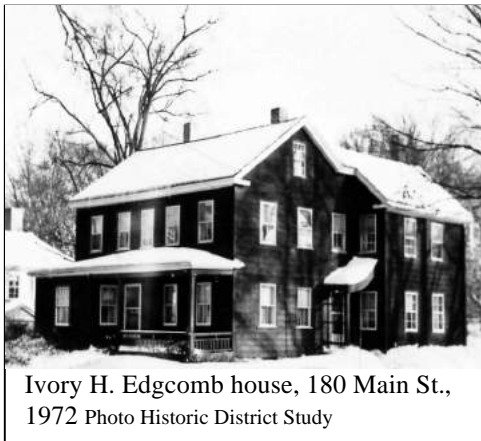
In the late 1800s, Austin Patch along with Amos Gould II owned the Morocco leather tanning factory on Main Street. (See chapter 17.)

The house at **180 Main St.** was built well before 1850. <sup>1</sup> Some records refer to it as *Ivory H. Edgcomb house*. A shoemaker, he did not live there and likely rented the house, in 1850, to Edward Perkins, a boot maker. In 1853, Perkins and his partner Daniel J. Foster, built a factory a little west of the house of Mrs. Sophronia A. Gould (176 Main St.). <sup>9</sup>

In 1857, the property was seized from Edgcomb, by the sheriff, for unpaid debt. Dr. Nathan A. Jones acquired the house. In 1860, Dr. Jones, who had moved to Beverly, willed the property to his sons, Nathan and John. In 1865, they sold the property to Jeremiah Kavanagh (*Kavavaugh*), who sold ice in town, most likely getting the ice from the Addison Gage and Co., at Wenham Lake. He willed the property to his sons, John and James. In 1917, James bought his brothers' share. <sup>1</sup> James Kavanagh was Wenham's tax collector from 1920 to 1935.

180 Main St. is a three story, farmhouse style, similar to several other houses found on Main St. that were built during the 1850s to 1870s. These are: the Henry Tarr farmhouse, 98 Main St. (*built in 1867*); the John Durgin house, at 101 Main St. (*built around 1850*); the Samuel Evens house, at 108 Main St. (*built in 1856*); the Daniel Bradbury house, at 130 Main St. (*built around 1840*) and the Henry Perkins house, at 151 Main St. (*built about 1875*). <sup>1</sup>

An open front porch was added in 1894 and, later, the left side was enclosed. A barn, also built in 1894, was removed in 1940. <sup>1</sup> Later additions were a two-story ell, at the back right corner of the house. and a two-car garage. For many years, 180 Main St. has been a two-family structure.





Harriet Dodge Fiske house , 182 Main St., 1893. Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



182 Main St., 2010  
Photo J. Hauck

The *Harriet Dodge Fiske house*, at **182 Main St.**, may have been built around 1836, on land formerly owned by Franklin Hadley. It is similar in design to 180 Main St., next door, and 186 Main St. In 1856, the house belonged to Harriet Dodge Fiske.<sup>20</sup> In 1884, 182 Main St. was owned by Austin Clough.<sup>1, 4</sup> His wife was one of the founders, in 1893, of the Wenham Village Improvement Society.

To the original house a front porch was added, and shutters placed on the windows. It had a large barn at the rear of the property, and a large apple tree, with a seat around it. The front porch has had one side enclosed to make additional living space.

The *Esther Barnes/Rufus A. Dodge house*, at **186 Main St.**, was built about 1836. In 1851, it was purchased by Rufus A. Dodge from Esther Barnes, a widow. The parcel of land contained the dwelling house, a barn, and a shoemaker's shop. 184 Main St. is typical of town houses built in Wenham, during the 1820-30 period.<sup>1, 4</sup>

Rufus Dodge was a carpenter, as well as the secretary and treasurer of Wenham's first fire company.

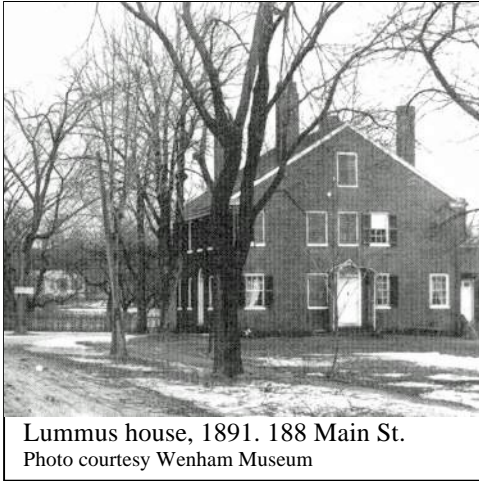


Ester Barnes/Rufus Dodge house, 1893.  
186 Main St., Photo courtesy Wenham Museum

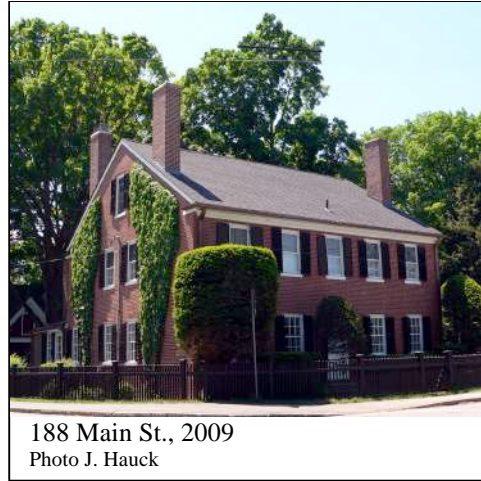


186 Main St., 2009  
Photo J. Hauck





Lummus house, 1891. 188 Main St.  
Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



188 Main St., 2009  
Photo J. Hauck

It took a long time for Wenham to realize it needed a fire company. Apparently, it was felt that fires were infrequent, and when there was a fire, volunteer fire fighters would be sufficient. In 1835, a fire company of 25 members was organized. After fourteen years, 1849, the first fire company disbanded and a second company was organized.<sup>5</sup>

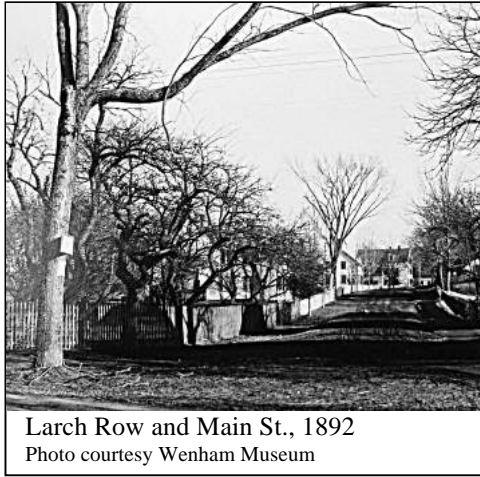
On the corner of Larch and Main is a large brick house, **188 Main St.** A Federal-style structure, it was built around 1810. The property belonged to land granted, in 1636, consisting of 150 acres to Samuel Smith, whose farm was The Larches, located on Larch Row. In 1638, Smith was granted an additional 200 acres; one of these pieces of property is part of the present 188 Main St. lot.<sup>1, 10</sup>

In 1694, there was a house on the site, at which Robert Symonds, Jr., had a tavern. The house was removed circa 1776.<sup>18</sup>

Around 1820, Ezra Lummus bought the land from Pelietiah Brown, who lived across the street, at 175 Main St. In 1826, he built a two-story brick tavern and inn.<sup>21</sup>

In 1827, the Lummus Tavern opened. It was a way stop for stage coaches traveling between Boston and Newburyport. It also was the site of Mason meetings. The Lummus sign had the Masonic square and compass symbols.<sup>6</sup> (*The Lummus sign is now in the Wenham Museum.*) Travelers entered the tavern through the door, on the west side. There was a parlor on one side of the building, and the tavern on the other side.

Walking by the Lummus', in the early 1800s, we likely would have heard some loud discussions. This was, at the time, the only tavern in Wenham. The tavern also was said to have been used as the District School, at one time. The upper floor had a large open area. Many dance parties also were held on the upper floor.



Larch Row and Main St., 1892  
Photo courtesy Wenham Museum



Larch Row and Main St., 2012  
Photo J. Hauck

The upper floor, for a few years, was a private schoolroom, with S. M. Trow being the teacher.<sup>21</sup>

From 1830 to 1837, Lummus' was a post office.<sup>2</sup>

Ezra Lummus was a Wenham Selectman, from 1833 to 1836, in addition to being a blacksmith, postmaster and tavern keeper.<sup>6</sup>

In the mid 1830s, a "dry" movement gathered force, in this country. Many of Wenham's towns-people were ardent supporters, and frowned on the popularity of Lummus'. It appears that the last time Wenham had a tavern, was in 1835, when the Lummus Stage Tavern closed and the building sold.<sup>6</sup>

There is a rather colorful poem about three Wenham Selectmen – Stephen Dodge, Warren Peabody, and Ezra Dodge – who served from 1833 to 36 that perhaps describes what brought the Lummus Stage Tavern to its end.<sup>6</sup> (*See next page.*)

Squire T. Dodge acquired the property and ran it as a tenement house for a number of years.<sup>21</sup>

By 1856 the building had come into the possession of the Patch family and was used as a dwelling by different members of the Patch family for many years. In 1856 Mrs. Daniel Patch occupied the house, and in 1872, the house was in the possession of Austin Patch.<sup>20</sup> A 1978 article in the Salem Evening News reported that the Patch house was the first in New England to have carpeting.<sup>21</sup>

Here's how 188 Main St. looks today. It's a private residence. Many of the old-timers in Wenham refer to this as the brick house. The exterior has not changed very much, other than the ivy growing on the eastern side.

At this point along Main St. – the corner of Main Street and Larch Row -- the sidewalk ends on the east side of the street. So, we'll cross over to the other side to complete our walk along Main Street.

Originally, Larch Row was called the Way to Manchester.

In 1806, Thomas Pickering had Larch trees shipped from England and planted on his grounds, and on the road leading to it. <sup>2</sup> The trees are much higher now, and most of them are gone.

Updated 06/21/14

## References

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- 19 – Reminiscences of this Main Street of Wenham, c. 1900. Sarah M. (Bradbury) Merrill (1845-1905)
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## Three Selectmen

*One at the "Neck" one at West End,  
Stephen Dodge and Peabody,  
And Ezra Lummus made the three.  
A committee had selected.  
These three men who were elected;  
The first held to temperance views,  
The third sold liquor, when he chose.  
  
One night a party met before  
Our worthy townsman Lummus' door,  
Rufus Dodge among the lot.  
"Lummus how much rum've you got?"  
Says Lummus, "Well I guess,  
'Bout eight gallons, more or less."  
Says Rufus, "We'll pass round the hat,  
Collect the chink and buy him out."  
They let friend Ezra prize his rum,  
They out with purse and raised the sum.*

*Then, Rufus gave the bar a rap,  
While with his hands he held his cap.  
Now there's no game that two can't play it,  
This is a fact, although I say it.  
  
Behind the counter stood some rum,  
Drawn in a bowl, which quickly come;  
Friend Ezra turned it bottom up,  
And Rufus caught it in his cup.  
Old alcohol was in the keg.  
  
They bought him out – pulled the peg,  
And o'er the earth his blood did flow,  
While his spirit went below;  
And from that night, until this minute,  
This town has had no tavern in it.*

*Allen Peabody, The Bard of Enon, 1868*