

# A Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Maine



## Thomas Eaton (Active 1794-1831)

The unparalleled growth and prosperity of the District of Maine between the end of the Revolution and statehood in 1820 created unprecedented opportunities for the building trades. Among the housewrights attracted to Maine during this period were John Kimball, Sr., (1758-1831) and Alexander Parris (1780-1852) who removed from Massachusetts to Portland, Bradbury Johnson (1766-1819) of New Hampshire who worked in Saco and Irish-born Nicholas Codd (1754-1824) in the Damariscotta region.<sup>1</sup> In other areas a growing standard of living derived from increasing commercial activity gave local talent the means to build in ways not open to their forebears. Prominent among these native joiners were Samuel Melcher III (1775-1862) of Brunswick and Thomas Eaton, whose career began in York County in the 1790s.

Thomas Eaton's life remains one of the least documented of his contemporaries; neither the date of his birth nor the date or place of his death is certain. He is believed to be the son of Joseph Eaton of Wells, the ninth of eleven children born to two wives.<sup>2</sup> From his place in the birth order of his siblings whose dates are known and the fact that Thomas Eaton's wife Pheobe is known to have been born in 1769, he was probably born between 1765 and 1770.<sup>3</sup> The particulars of Eaton's apprenticeship are unknown. He may have been trained locally, perhaps in York where his earliest work is thought to have been done. Or he may have received his professional training farther afield. Several of Eaton's early works show a direct dependence on Boston models, and at least one Maine-born joiner of the Federal Period, Nathan Nutter, Jr., of Otisfield, is known to have been trained in Boston and returned to his native place to work.<sup>4</sup>

The earliest building associated with Thomas Eaton is the house built for Judge David Sewall at York in 1794-96, known as "Coventry Hall." (Figure 1) Its L-shaped plan is of a type common in eighteenth century York, but its detailing ranks Coventry Hall among the first Maine houses to show an appreciation for the Adam-derived Federal Style then ascendant in Boston and other urban centers.<sup>5</sup> The flush-boarded front of the Sewall House displays four full-height Ionic

pilasters, each carrying a section of frieze containing a single patera. The order is nearly identical with that employed by Bulfinch on his Tontine Crescent in Boston of 1793-94, but the manner of its application to mark the ends and central bay of the facade represents an older tradition in Boston-area architecture dating back to the late seventeenth century.<sup>6</sup> This arrangement is hardly sanctioned by classical precedent, but is wonderfully expressive of the house's frame construction with each pilaster corresponding to a post of the facade wall.

What is unique about the Sewall House facade is the way in which the pilasters are grouped by the main cornice. Unlike a conventional Palladian arrangement which frames and enhances the center of a design, Coventry Hall's pilasters are grouped to emphasize the rooms flanking the entrance, which is de-emphasized by the recession of the cornice above. This same emphasis can be seen more forcefully in the main doorway where coupled pairs of Ionic half-columns and piers flank the opening. The doorcase is based on another Boston work by Bulfinch, the Joseph Coolidge, Sr. House of 1792 and shares with it the curious arrangement of a fanlight wider than the door itself with no sidelights between the pairs of supports below. A third unusual feature which makes the Sewall House such a singular design is the way in which the dormers of its hipped roof have their windows let into the encircling parapet in place of balusters, a device almost Jeffersonian in its cleverness.

Inside, the house is distinguished by a fine triple-run stair with square balusters and a columnar newell quite different from the traditional massive handrails of the earlier eighteenth century. Under the upper run a door with a broad arched top leads to the rear of the house. The hall, the parlor which occupies most of the depth of the block to the left of the entry, and the two front chambers all contain elements of trim enriched with composition ornament. This use of composition ornament is the earliest surviving in the state and was probably imported from England via Boston or possibly Salem where similar examples are known.<sup>7</sup>

There is no proof that Thomas Eaton was the designer of Judge Sewall's house, but it seems certain that Eaton must have been employed on its construction if not as its principal contractor.<sup>8</sup> Certain details such as the almost Baroque coupling of classical orders, the stair lay-out and use of composition ornament seen at

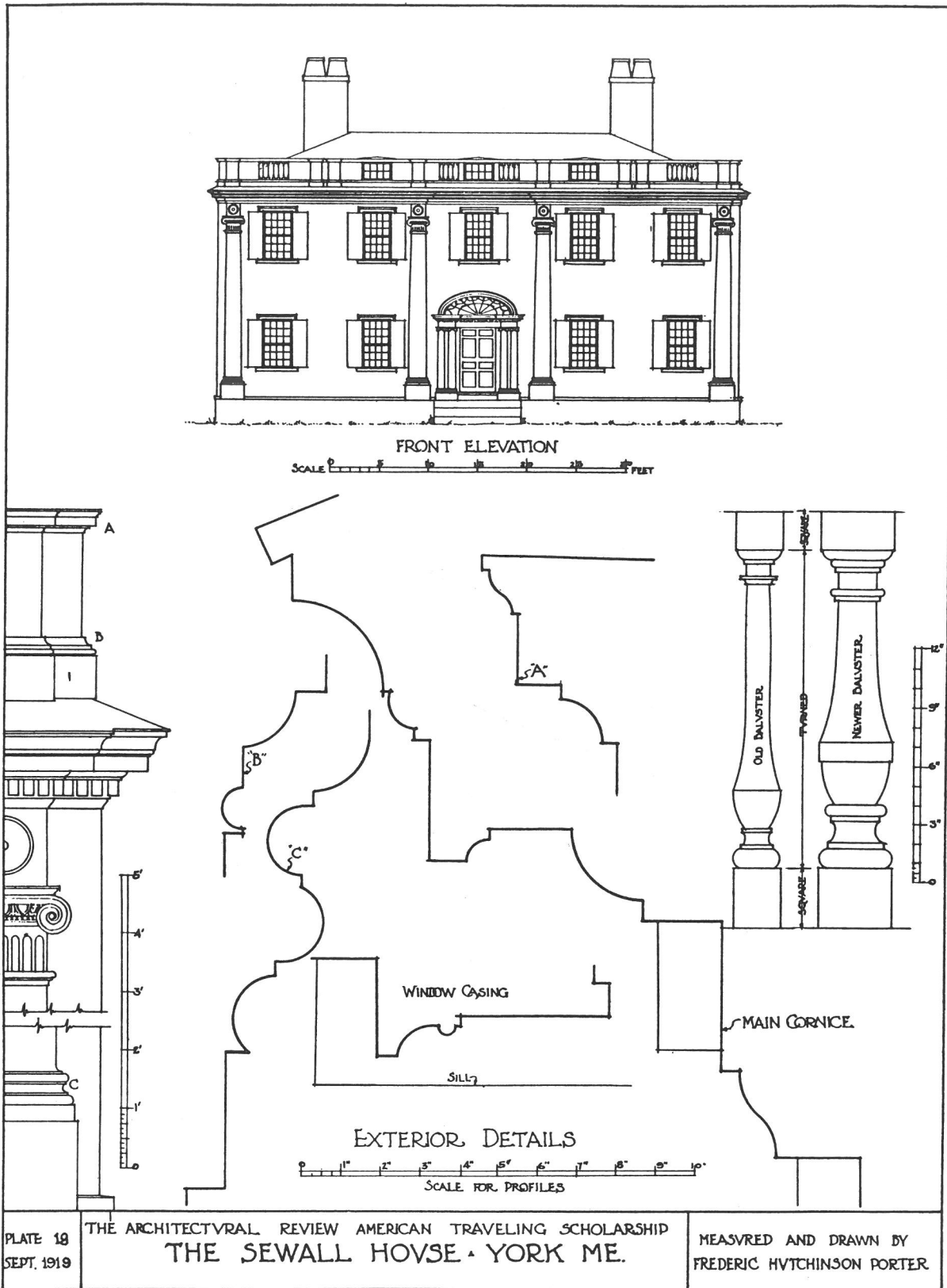


Figure 1. Judge David Sewall House, York, sheet of drawings by Frederic Hutchinson Porter, *The Architectural Review*, 1920 (MHPC).

Coventry Hall reoccur throughout Eaton's career. The precocious use of up-to-date Boston models and techniques evident in the Sewall House is echoed in later Eaton houses to such a degree that it is not hard to regard it as the first "masterwork" of a talented and ambitious joiner. Its florid nature is very similar to the earliest houses of Alexander Parris in Massachusetts and Maine or Russell Warren (1783-1860) in Rhode Island, all works by talented young men just out of their indentures.

The first group of buildings that reasonably can be assigned to Eaton were built from 1799 on in what was then the Second Parish of Wells, incorporated as the Town of Kennebunk in 1820. Eaton resided in the village from about 1799 to 1807,<sup>9</sup> and in that time according to the diary of Andrew Walker he built at least four houses besides being the "architect and head carpenter in enlarging...the First Parish Church and building its steeple."<sup>10</sup>

The first house was for Nathaniel Frost on Main Street in 1799. It is an L-shaped two story structure with a low hipped roof once concealed by a balustrade. Its only noteworthy feature is a slightly projecting, flush-boarded, one-bay pavillion in the center of the facade. This contains a Palladian window at the second floor level above the main entrance which takes the form of a fanlight opening framed with Doric pilasters which also enframe the detached sidelights, all under a continuous entablature. The sidelights are particularly novel with their arched heads.

An even more conventional exterior is found on the Summer Street house built by Eaton for William Taylor in 1803, now known as the Taylor-Barry House and owned by the Brick Store Museum. Taylor's house was hip-roofed, almost square, and possessed four nearly identical doorways. These entrances are of a typical early Federal type which lack sidelights, are flanked by pilasters, and are topped with a triangular pediment partially enclosing a fanlight like those seen in the books of William Pain or Asher Benjamin's *County Builder's Assistant* of 1797.

The relative plainness of the Taylor House's exterior is at odds with the lavishness of its interior. The principal stair is nearly identical to that of Coventry Hall but with the added feature of a handrail respond along the walls of the stairwell which swoops up and down between pilasters echoing the curves of the handrail and newells in a delightful manner. The hallway has cornices and overdoors with composition ornament and preserves a colorful early stenciled wall treatment. The parlor and parlor chamber also contain a considerable amount of composition ornament.

Adjoining the Taylor-Barry House Eaton built a house for Judge Jonas Clark whose facade is his most complex undertaking in Kennebunk. (Figure 2) It may have been begun as early as 1801 and is really an elaborate wing appended to an enlarged 1760s house already on the site.<sup>11</sup> As Judge Clark was a colleague of Judge Sewall, it is not surprising to find some suggestion of Coventry Hall, namely the flush-boarding and pilasters,

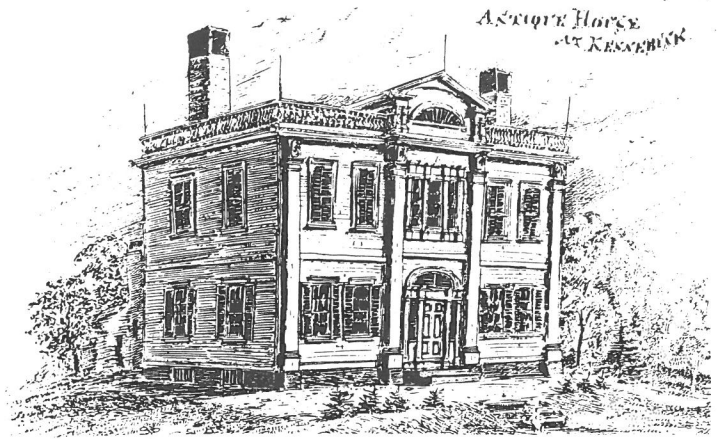


Figure 2. Judge Jonas Clark House, Kennebunk, 1874 sketch by William E. Barry (MHPG).

Doric in this case. But the Clark House also has a prominent belt course and a pedimented attic story over its slightly projecting central bay. These features are almost certainly modeled after a house of 1800 in Roxbury, Massachusetts, called "Grove Hall."<sup>12</sup> Also like Grove Hall, the Clark House features a modified Palladian window with sidelights but without an arched center, a type introduced into Portland by Alexander Parris at about the same time. The front of the attic pavillion has an arched opening now covered by a louvered fan framed by diminutive coupled Doric half-columns. The rear repeats these framing elements but with an open recess between them forming a covered balcony that must have commanded a superb view down to Kennebunk Landing. This romantic little loggia, if it is original, is unique in the canon of Maine's Federal period architecture.

Inside, the Clark House has surprisingly plain woodwork but with a stairhall similar to those in the Sewall and Taylor Houses. The large parlor or "assembly room" that Clark was "advised to have" as he began his ambitious dwelling occupies the entire depth of the new wing and recalls the equally spacious parlor of Coventry Hall and that of the George Wallingford House in Kennebunk which shares other features with the Clark House.<sup>13</sup>

George Wallingford built his house south of the Mousam River below the center of the growing village, perhaps as early as 1804, but more probably in 1805-06.<sup>14</sup> The facade of "Wallingford Hall" recalls the Clark House with its flush-boarding, prominent belt course and modified Palladian window, but without pilasters and attic story. Its L-plan links it to both Coventry Hall and the Frost House. Attached to the south side of the house is an arcaded ell leading to a handsome barn forming one of the earliest and best-preserved examples of this type of extended layout that became so common in nineteenth-century Maine.<sup>15</sup>



Figure 3. First Parish Church, Kennebunk, 1909 view (MHPC).

The principal work for which Thomas Eaton has been remembered is the First Parish Church of Kennebunk. (Figure 3) In 1773 the Second Parish of Wells erected a meetinghouse of traditional plan measuring 44 by 56 feet, with a projecting porch on the long side opposite the pulpit. In 1803 it was sawn apart and the northern half moved back 28 feet, the porch removed and a belfry erected on the south end re-orienting the structure to a church form. The next year a three-stage tower was completed.<sup>16</sup> (Figure 4) The lowest stage is square with an arched opening on each side joined at the impost by a belt course. The middle stage is octagonal with pairs of collonettes with projecting entablatures on the original sides. The upper stage is also octagonal with elongated oval "windows" rendered in black paint with a domed top and spirelet.

The overall dimensions of the enlarged structure can be ascribed to a vote taken by the parish as can the decision to have the belfry constructed entirely outside the body of the meetinghouse in the typical eighteenth-century manner rather than riding atop a projecting pavillion as at the contemporary Saco Meetinghouse erected by Bradbury Johnson. To Eaton must go the credit for the design of the steeple itself, one of the handsomest of its time in New England. It is a unique creation and owes little to contemporary published sources.<sup>17</sup> Typical of Eaton are the paired collonettes which contrast so effectively with the simpler forms of the stages above and below. Eaton almost did not live to build the steeple. As the enlargement of the body of the building was being completed, he slipped and nearly fell from the roof. As a nineteenth century history relates:

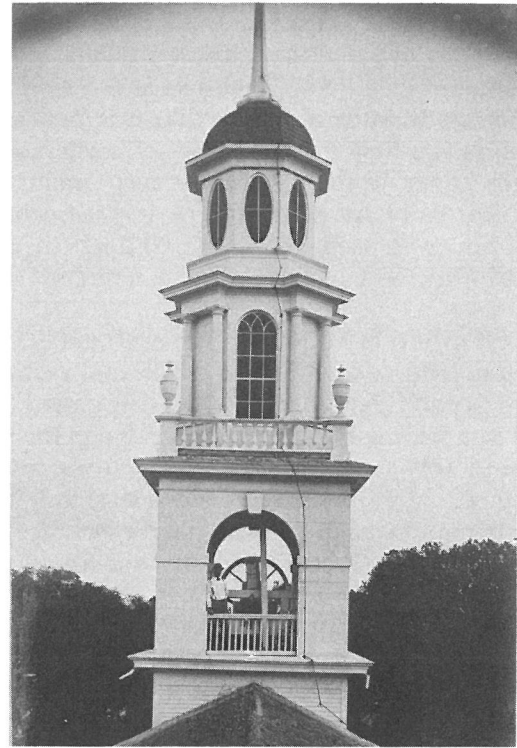


Figure 4. Spire, First Parish Church, Kennebunk, c. 1910 view (Courtesy of Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk).

"Mr. Eaton succeeded, by judicious use of his arms and legs, in slaking his speed, but still continued to descend until his feet were beyond the roof's edge, when he stopped. A shingle nail had not been driven home and this, catching in his pantaloons, arrested his progress."<sup>18</sup>

The enlargement of the Kennebunk church may not have been Eaton's first ecclesiastical commission. In 1800 a Baptist congregation in the Merriland section of Wells had raised a meetinghouse. As Thomas Eaton's first cousin Joseph Eaton was the society's minister, it is possible that he erected that costly structure. However, no image can be located that shows the Baptist meetinghouse before its destruction by fire in 1930 that might suggest Eaton's hand.<sup>19</sup>

Another possible Eaton work in Kennebunk before 1807 is the remodeling of his father's house that Joseph Storer undertook prior to his marriage in 1808. Before it was further remodeled in the Greek Revival style about 1850, the house featured a pilastered front and side elevation. The roof had a low balustrade.<sup>20</sup> No contemporary source directly links Eaton with the Storer House, but Eaton was buying land in Wells from Storer in several transactions between 1800 and 1811, and such relationships are not unknown between other builders and clients in Maine at the same period.<sup>21</sup>

Thomas Eaton next appears in Portland in 1807 as the builder of a house on State Street for lawyer Prentiss Mellen. According to one source Mellen brought his builder from Biddeford. However, Eaton cannot be documented as having worked outside of Kennebunk before 1807, and it is likely that the author has confused the fact that Mellen had himself removed from Bidde-

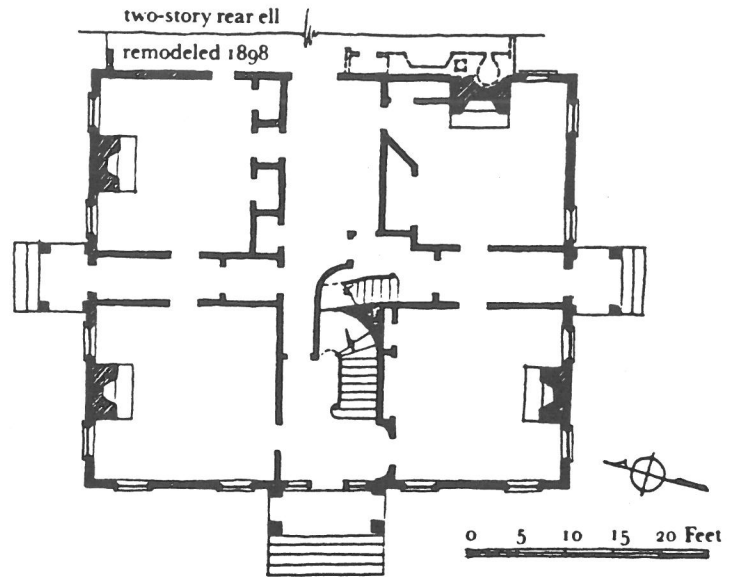
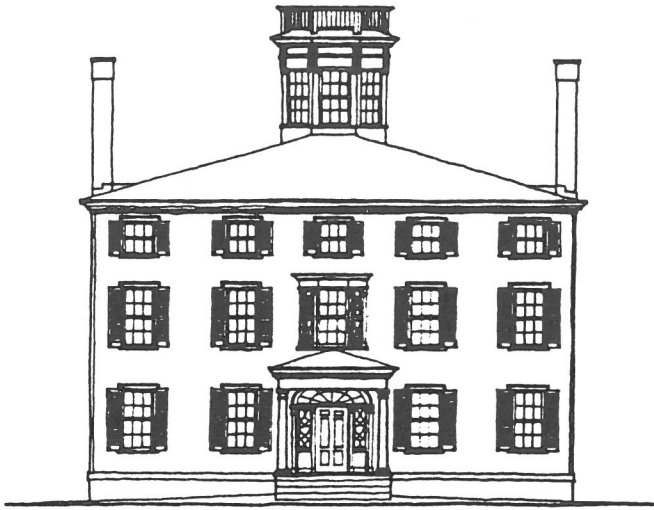


Figure 5. Front elevation of the Nathaniel Lord House, Kennebunkport, Drawing by Scott Benson (Courtesy of the Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk).

Figure 6. Floor plan of the Nathaniel Lord House, Kennebunkport, Drawing by Scott Benson (Courtesy of the Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk).

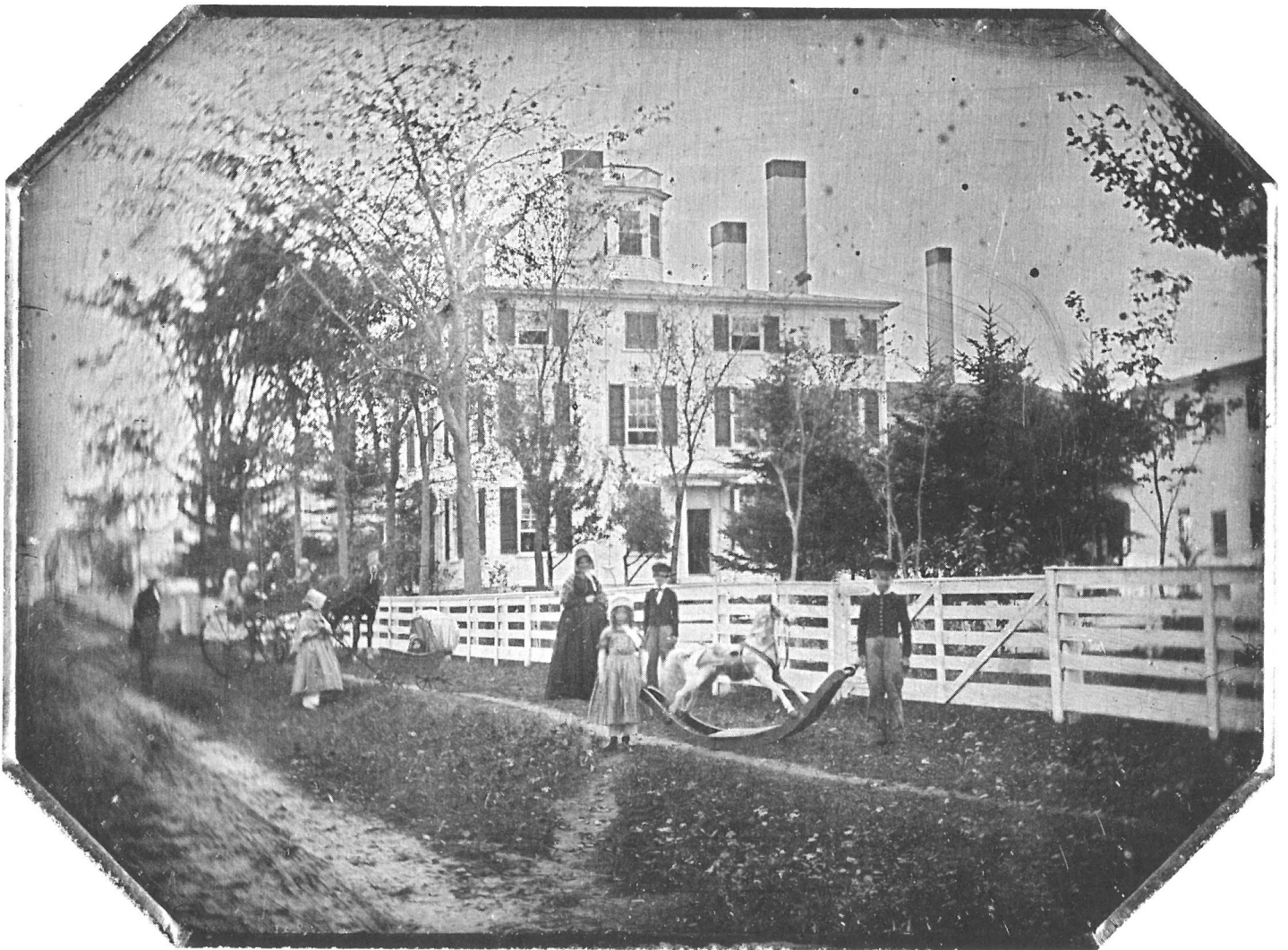


Figure 7. Nathaniel Lord House, Kennebunkport, c. 1850 daguerrotype view (S.P.N.E.A., Boston).

ford and assumed that he brought the builder of his new house from the same place.<sup>22</sup> This suggests, however, that Eaton must have gained a reputation outside of his home to be called to build in Portland.

Mellen's house was brick, three stories in height with a four-bay front to the street; the entrance was on the right side, probably reached by a porch. The plan is similar to some in the drawings of Alexander Parris, which has sometimes caused the attribution of the Mellen House to him. However, none of the Parris plans fit exactly, and it is more likely that Mellen's house was based on Parris's house for Commodore Edward Preble on Congress Street designed in 1806 and under construction in 1807.<sup>23</sup> The Mellen House was extensively remodeled in the 1850s and subsequently has been enlarged. Little beyond the walls of the main block survive from Eaton's day.

Eaton apparently established permanent residence in Portland at the time of the Mellen House's construction. He appears as an addition to the 1808 Tax Rolls and remains on them until 1811.<sup>24</sup> Eaton, like Kimball and Parris before him, may have been attracted to Portland by the rapid rise in its population and the subsequent erection of hundreds of new buildings in the 1790s and early 1800s. By 1808, however, the effects of the Embargo Act had virtually put a stop to new construction and, consequently, to Eaton's prospects for employment.

By June of 1811, Eaton was back in Wells, probably in connection with the building of a house for John U. Parsons in Kennebunk Village.<sup>25</sup> The only three-story residence in the village, the Parsons House has been given a construction date of either 1812 or 1814.<sup>26</sup> As Eaton is known to have been engaged on a similarly ambitious house at the latter date, the earlier seems more correct. The Parsons House is reputed to have been built "in all particulars, size, interior and exterior finish, after the plans used in the erection of the house in which Mrs. Parsons dwelt in in Newburyport."<sup>27</sup> The truth of this statement may be that it was Mrs. Parsons who supplied the impetus for this sizeable new dwelling based on her experience in her native place, for the Parson House's detailing and layout are more reminiscent of contemporary work in Portland, most notably the semi-elliptical stair which rises three stories against the rear wall not unlike examples that can be seen in Alexander Parris's portfolios. Eaton's personal touch can be seen in the fanlighted front door and Palladian window directly above, which have boldly coupled collonettes. Inside, the stairhall is the focus of decoration and contains composition elements, most notably the reeded surround of the arched niche set into the rounded well of the stairs between the first and second floors which, remarkably enough, may have originally contained a tall case clock.<sup>28</sup>

Newly discovered documentation proves that Thomas Eaton was the builder of Nathaniel Lord's great three-story mansion in Kennebunkport begun in the spring of 1814.<sup>29</sup> (Figures 5 & 7) The main block is nearly square with a fanlighted front entrance and side entrances

sheltered by small porticos with Doric columns. The present front entrance portico is a twentieth century addition.<sup>30</sup> A tripartite window with characteristic Eaton details further embellishes the main front at the second floor level. A tall octagonal cupola with its own balustrade crowns the roof.

Inside, the Lord House is notable for its cross-axial plan with major transverse hall and two minor side halls. (Figure 6) The semi-elliptical stair rises just inside the front door rather than against the back wall as at the Parsons House. The stair, the floor-length recesses in the front hall, and the room to its right along with other complexities of planning suggest that Eaton had observed some of Alexander Parris' work in Portland.

The house was unfinished at the time of Lord's death in 1815, and his heirs were still paying Eaton as late as January, 1816, for his "contract on stairs and blinds."<sup>31</sup> Eaton had already moved back to Portland according to the 1815 Tax Rolls, leaving the job to be finished by others including local cabinetmaker Edward White, who was paid in November, 1816, for "making stair railing in the large house contracted for with T. Eaton."<sup>32</sup>

Eaton's later years in Portland are wrapped in obscurity. He appears in successive Portland tax records up to 1831, which is the latest the author has been able to examine. He is listed in the 1820 Federal census in Portland, but not in the 1830 one. Both directories published in Portland in 1823 list Thomas Eaton, one as "joiner" and the other as "housewright."<sup>33</sup> The 1827 directory lists him as joiner, but he is not in the following one published in 1831. No Portland buildings of the period can be identified as the work of Thomas Eaton. Probably the slower rate of growth and the relatively few buildings built as compared to the palmy days before the Embargo did not provide sufficient employment for a man of Eaton's ability, and he may have worked as a journeyman or day-laborer on other people's jobs rather than undertaking larger contracts himself. Whether he died or moved away about 1831 cannot be proved at this time. However, it is known that Phoebe Eaton, Thomas's wife, died at the age of 90 in 1859 and was buried in Portland's Western Cemetery, suggesting that Eaton remained in Portland where his son, Stephen W. Eaton, is known to have lived as well.<sup>34</sup>

There does exist a tantalizing possibility that Eaton may have built at least one notable building in his later years, returning to York County to do so. In 1824 the Congregational Society at Kennebunkport erected a new meetinghouse. Before the present portico was added in 1912, its front was a shallow pavillion with three entrances with pointed, fan-filled tops, which, along with the side windows, are among the earliest Gothic Revival touches to be found in Maine. The steeple is very similar to that on Kennebunk's First Parish Church. According to an old tradition the designer and builder of the steeple (at least) "was taken from the poorhouse in Portland that this monument of his skill might be constructed."<sup>35</sup> If this person was

Thomas Eaton, it is unlikely that he was an inmate of the Portland Alms House at the time of the church's construction; but the legend may contain a germ of truth about Eaton's lack of apparent work during his later Portland years. Perhaps he ended his days in the Alms House and was buried in its separate lot, which may account for his not showing up in the records of burials in either of Portland's regular cemeteries then in use. The lack of contemporary records of the Portland Alms House makes this a mystery which may never be solved. Yet Portland's tax records do show a sharp but temporary rise in Eaton's income for 1825, which does lend some credence to the idea that he was the contractor of the Kennebunkport Church built the previous year.

Whatever the circumstances of his later years or the date of his death, Thomas Eaton's career spanned nearly a quarter of a century with him involved with many of the major domestic and ecclesiastical undertakings in York County. That so many of his known and presumed works survive in such a good state of preservation is especially fortunate, and it can only be hoped that more will eventually be known about the remarkable talent that brought them into being.

Arthur J. Gerrier

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> To this list could be added Ebenezer Dunton (1764?-1809), Ebenezer Alden (1774-1862) and Tileston Cushing (1767-1847) who came from Boston to work on General Henry Knox's "Montpelier" in Thomaston, 1793-96. Dunton built in Thomaston for some years before removing to Demerary, now Guyana, South America, where he died. Alden removed to Union where he built a house for himself, and Cushing, after a period in Freeport, settled in Bath where he became a prominent builder and erected the Lincoln County Courthouse in Wiscasset, 1824. Alexander Troup (1750?-1797) came from Salem and worked in Wiscasset ca. 1792 until his death. At a slightly later time Aaron Sherman (1789-1881) of Duxbury, Mass., worked in Washington County.
- <sup>2</sup> William S. Thompson, "Records of Kennebunk and Kennebunkport Families," 1927, typescript at Maine Historical Society, Portland, pp. 371-72. It cannot be established who Thomas Eaton's mother was.
- <sup>3</sup> The date of 1769 for Pheobe (Young) Eaton is based on her record of burial in Portland's Western Cemetery in 1859 at the age of 90. See William B. Jordan, *Western Cemetery, Portland, Me., Part 1, A-L*, Portland, 1982, p. 101.
- <sup>4</sup> James H. Mundy and Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., *The Flight of the Grand Eagle*, Augusta, 1977, p. 2.
- <sup>5</sup> Others include the Silas Lee House in Wiscasset, 1792 and "Montpelier" in Thomaston, 1793-96.
- <sup>6</sup> The first of this line was the Foster-Hutchinson House, Boston, built circa 1690. A brick house, it had three-story Ionic pilasters of Portland stone at the ends of its seven-bay front and flanking the entrance bay. Wooden houses with this feature include the three-story west front of the Royall House in Medford, Mass., 1747-50 and the Vassall-Longfellow House in Cambridge, 1759, under Palladian influence with a projecting central pavillion. The closest this mode appeared to York in the 18th century is at the Lady Pepperrell House, Kittery Point, circa 1760, a design closely related to the Vassall-Longfellow

House and which was probably an influence on Judge Sewall's house. The Silas Lee House in Wiscasset also has facade pilasters.

- <sup>7</sup> The Harrison Gray Otis House, 1795, in Boston by Bulfinch has similar composition detailing. In Salem even Samuel McIntire used compo detail to augment his woodcarving, perhaps carving the molds, however. The Edward Emerson, Jr. House in York, directly across from "Coventry Hall", enlarged and remodeled circa 1795, has composition detailing identical with the Sewall House, while the Taylor-Barry House in Kennebunk, 1803, has details that appear to be identical with those found on mantels from the Commodore Edward Preble House, Portland, 1806-08, now installed in the McLellan-Sweat House, Portland Museum of Art. See Frederick Hutchinson Porter, "A Survey of Existing Colonial Architecture in Maine, Part VIII, *The Architectural Review*, 1920, p. 73.
- <sup>8</sup> The similarities of Coventry Hall to other houses known by him has long led it be attributed to Thomas Eaton. See Denys Peter Myers, *Maine Catalogue Historic American Building Survey*, Augusta, 1974, pp. 34-35, and Richard M. Candee, "The Appearance of Enterprise and Improvement: Architecture and the Coastal Elite of Southern Maine", *Agreeable Situations: Society, Commerce, and Art in Southern Maine, 1780-1830*, pp. 75-78. The traditional attribution of Coventry Hall to Samuel McIntire is scarcely tenable given the well-documented facts of his career.
- <sup>9</sup> George A. Gilpatric, *Kennebunk History*, Kennebunk, 1838, p. 8, gives the contents of a 1799 tax list for Kennebunk Village which lists Eaton as a resident. He is first listed on the Portland tax rolls in 1808. Various deeds, 1793-1811, at the York Co. Courthouse in Alfred, list Eaton consistently as being "of Wells," which is what one would expect of any resident of Wells or Kennebunk prior to 1820. No house can be associated with Eaton personally, although Daniel Remich in his *History of Kennebunk from its Earliest Settlement to 1890*, p. 352, speculates that Eaton and his wife may have lived with his brother-in-law Joseph Young on the outskirts of the village.
- <sup>10</sup> Andrew Walker Diary, Vol. VII, p. 398, 2/20/1888, in possession of Kennebunk Public Library. Remich, cited above, notes too that Eaton "contracted with the Second Parish in Wells, (now First in Kennebunk) to enlarge the meeting-house and to add a belfry in 1803." He calls Eaton "a nice workman" and adds "He appears to have been a very respectable man."
- <sup>11</sup> The date for Clark's addition is given variously as 1800-1803 (Porter, p. 73) and 1804-05 (Gilpatric, p. 67).
- <sup>12</sup> Francis S. Drake, *Town of Roxbury*, Boston, 1905, pp. 222-23. There is a sketch of "Grove Hall" in William E. Barry, *Pen Sketches of Old Houses*, Boston, 1874.
- <sup>13</sup> Gilpatric, pp. 84-85.
- <sup>14</sup> Candee, pp. 79-80, gives a date of 1804, based on an incised brick in the building. While the date on the brick clearly dates the brick, the exterior of the house can hardly have been finished prior to 1806, as the fanlight tracery of the front entrance is from a design in Asher Benjamin's *American Builder's Companion* published that year.
- <sup>15</sup> See Thomas A. Hubka, *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England*, Hanover, N.H., 1984.
- <sup>16</sup> Edward E. Bourne, *History of Wells and Kennebunk*, Portland, 1875, p. 622.
- <sup>17</sup> Candee, pp. 78-79, and Myers, pp. 52-53, both suggest that the steeple is based on a plate of a meetinghouse given by Asher Benjamin in his *Country Builder's Assistant*, 1797. Aside from octagonal upper stages and a domed top, Eaton's steeple at Kennebunk bears little resemblance to the often-copied Benjamin design (c.g. First Unitarian Church, Belfast, 1818, Samuel French, builder). If not derived from some unrecognized prototype, the closest published designs are the alternate steeples for St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London, given

by James Gibbs in his *A Book of Architecture*, 1728. The steeple design was admired locally; versions of it appear on the First Congregational Church, Kennebunkport, 1824; the First Parish Church, Wells, 1831; and the Kennebunk Academy, 1834 (destroyed).

- <sup>18</sup> Remich, pp. 310-11.
- <sup>19</sup> Bourne, pp. 352-58. The church cost \$3,000.
- <sup>20</sup> Candee, p. 73.
- <sup>21</sup> York County Deeds, Vol. 67, p. 121, 3/07/1800; Vol. 77, p. 44, 4/20/1804; Vol. 81, p. 190, 7/12/1806; and Vol. 84, p. 241, 6/27/1811, record land sales in Wells from Joseph Storer of Wells and Clement Storer of Portsmouth, N.H., to Thomas Eaton. Alexander Parris had similar dealings with one, possibly two, of his clients in Portland.
- <sup>22</sup> William Goold, "The Judge Mellen House and its Owners", *Portland Daily Press*, August 17, 1877.
- <sup>23</sup> The Hopkins House at Danforth and Brackett Streets in Portland, built in 1807, is also a variant of the Preble House by an unknown builder.
- <sup>24</sup> Portland Tax Records for 1802-11 and 1815-31, at Maine Historical Society, Portland, Coll. 257.
- <sup>25</sup> York County Deeds, Vol. 84, p. 241, describes Eaton as "of Wells" on a deed made June 27, 1811. He is listed in the 1811 Portland Tax Records, but may have relocated after the assessment was made.
- <sup>26</sup> Gilpatric, pp. 89-91.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.
- <sup>28</sup> William E. Barry, *Pen Sketched of Old Houses, Boston*, 1874, shows a tall-case clock in a staircase niche that is almost certainly the one in the Parsons House.
- <sup>29</sup> Candee, p. 84. Laura Fecych Sprague discovered the documentation in the probate records of Lord's estate at the York County Courthouse in Alfred.
- <sup>30</sup> Barry's sketch of the house shows the portico on the south side, but none on the front. The rear ell was probably added to the house in 1824. See Candee, p. 87, n. 44.
- <sup>31</sup> Candee, p. 84.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- <sup>33</sup> 1823 Portland Directories, Maine Historical Society, Portland.
- <sup>34</sup> Jordan, p. 101.
- <sup>35</sup> Joyce Butler, *The South Congregational Church, Kennebunkport, Maine: An Architectural History*, Portland, 1974, p. 1.

## LIST OF KNOWN COMMISSIONS IN MAINE BY THOMAS EATON

"Coventry Hall", Judge David Sewall House, York, 1794-96, Extant.  
Nathaniel Frost House, Main Street, Kennebunk, 1799, Extant.  
Judge Jonas Clark House, Summer Street, Kennebunk, 1801, Extant.  
Remodelling of First Parish Church, Main Street, Kennebunk, 1803, Extant.  
William Taylor House, Summer Street, Kennebunk, 1803, Extant.  
Wallingford Hall, George Wallingford House, Route 1, Kennebunk, 1804-06, Extant.  
Prentiss Mellen House, State Street, Portland, 1807, Altered.  
John U. Parsons House, Kennebunk, 1812, Extant.  
Nathaniel Lord House, Kennebunkport, 1814-16, Extant.

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