#8

Original Technical features of the George Pierce House -

House has had no structural changes except as noted. Ell to rear original integral part as shown by boarding in its attic never having clapboards.

Built ca. 1846. Up-&-down sawn boards & timber throughout. Circular saw evidence confined to rebates of door panels; cf. case parts of Connecticut clocks, same period. Front rooms just over 13' square. Narrow closets in every room in extensions of chimney space. Some flooring shows primitive machine planing (processes patented in 1840's). Although a cheap house, high-quality close-grain virgin pine was used in fancy work such as window sills and mantles.

Full cellar made for this house - no evidence of second use from Gregory's 1820 house, except perhaps granite foundation tob slabs. Present two slender chimneys for stoves original.

Woodwork decoration very limited: baseboards with bevel-topped ogee (cyma) used in the two parlors and staircase. Other rooms have plain baseboards. "Best parlor" has pilastered window casings with recessed wooden panels under the flush sills. Bead-edged stops appear to continue downward to pediments (the second of only three moldings used).

Stair case has coves applied under treads, plain round spindles, unusual for deliberate entasis (more than an uncorrected natural result of long slender work in the lathe). The newell posts are unusual and excessively quaint.

Four principal gound floor rooms have imitation fireplace frames and mantles, in graduated detail and importance. Large dining room has extensive china closet (two doors), about 60 ft. of shelves.

Window sash (6/6, 9" x 13") and door latches almost all original, also about 30 four-panel doors. (12/12, 7" x 9" windows in ell and rear attic gable may be second use salvaged from Gregory's 1820 house.) Four doors have knob latches with "mineral" knobs; lock latches made by Nashua Lock Co., est. 1836. Seven-piece lift latches all cast iron, early Blake type. A number of original cast window catches survive. All wood screws in cast butt hinges and latches are blunt-tipped, as made before wide use of pointing threading process.

Many plastered areas unpainted until now; no original painted plaster. First wall decoration must have been paper. All floors original random width pine (6" to 12" approx.) without half-lap joints, but all are double, i.e. with sub floor and staggered joints.

Modern changes up to 1990: add front porch and bay window, evidently at same time, late Victorian;remove second cellar stairs to provide a ground-floor inside toilet; move a short partition rear of second floor central hall to accomodate a full bath. Attic stairs originally there moved to ell attic, and adapted for access to third floor chamber. (Series of changes to wood shed, etc. not considered.)

Paint decoration: four doors survive with bold dark graining. At least one has a different light graining. One floor has primitive marbled painting, center area never painted since first ~~rugs~~ linoleum used.

Notes & Observations by C. P. Fisher, 1991