

James B and Rebecca Endicott Curwen

James B Curwen born 1818 is said by family historians to be the son of Samuel Curwen, a 6th generation settler in Salem MA and also part of the Corwin family of the same town. The original settler came as part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the mid-1600's James first married Rebecca H Endicott of the ever present Endicott family. Their pedigrees are filled with prominent and successful names.

James and his brother Samuel lived in Salem and made a fortune in foreign trade and the shipping business. James is listed in the town records as owning numerous ships out of Salem and / or their cargos. In 1870 he declared his worth at about \$60,000 in the census reports. In the early 1870's his sometime partner Captain John Bertram put up the money and a mansion for the first hospital in Essex County, and James Curwen became the first president of that venture—Union Hospital, Salem. Their home—the Curwen House-- at 331 Essex Street still stands as a historical treasure of the town of Salem. The Curwens, like many other successful—and rich—of the Salem upper class enjoyed summering in North Andover, and in 1874 are found summering at Mrs. Houston's- the finest summer residence in North Andover. This is the same year that Rev Gray began his Episcopal services, the front runner of St Paul's. One would bet that James and Rebecca, and their children, were there. As an added attraction to the town, in 1875, their daughter Caroline would marry the widowed James H Davis, now a partner in his father's Davis and Furber Company. In 1883 Curwen and his son-in-law, James Davis would purchase the Osgood farm on Osgood Street, and Curwen is credited with designing the grand home that still stands at 676 Osgood Street—now the Rockwell-Curwen house.



James and Rebecca Curwen were at the first organizational meeting and they are listed as members on the first parish register. They attended the early Mission annual meetings. James did not hold any offices in the early church and is not prominent in the records. Rebecca gave the Eagle lectern to the church at its founding in 1882 in memory of his mother Priscilla Curwen of Salem. That lectern has proclaimed the Word of God for over 130 years. James and Rebecca brought stature and money to the fledging new mission. Unfortunately shortly after its founding in 1883, Rebecca Curwen died and James seems to have turned back to Salem, giving up his interest in the home on Osgood Street, and



turning his full interest as president of Union Hospital in Salem. He remarried to Mary Osgood of Salem and he died there in 1894. Their two children, Caroline and George would be members of note at St Paul's for their lifetimes. A picture of Rebecca Curwen has not been found.

