

# THE MONOGRAPH SERIES

## Records of Early American Architecture

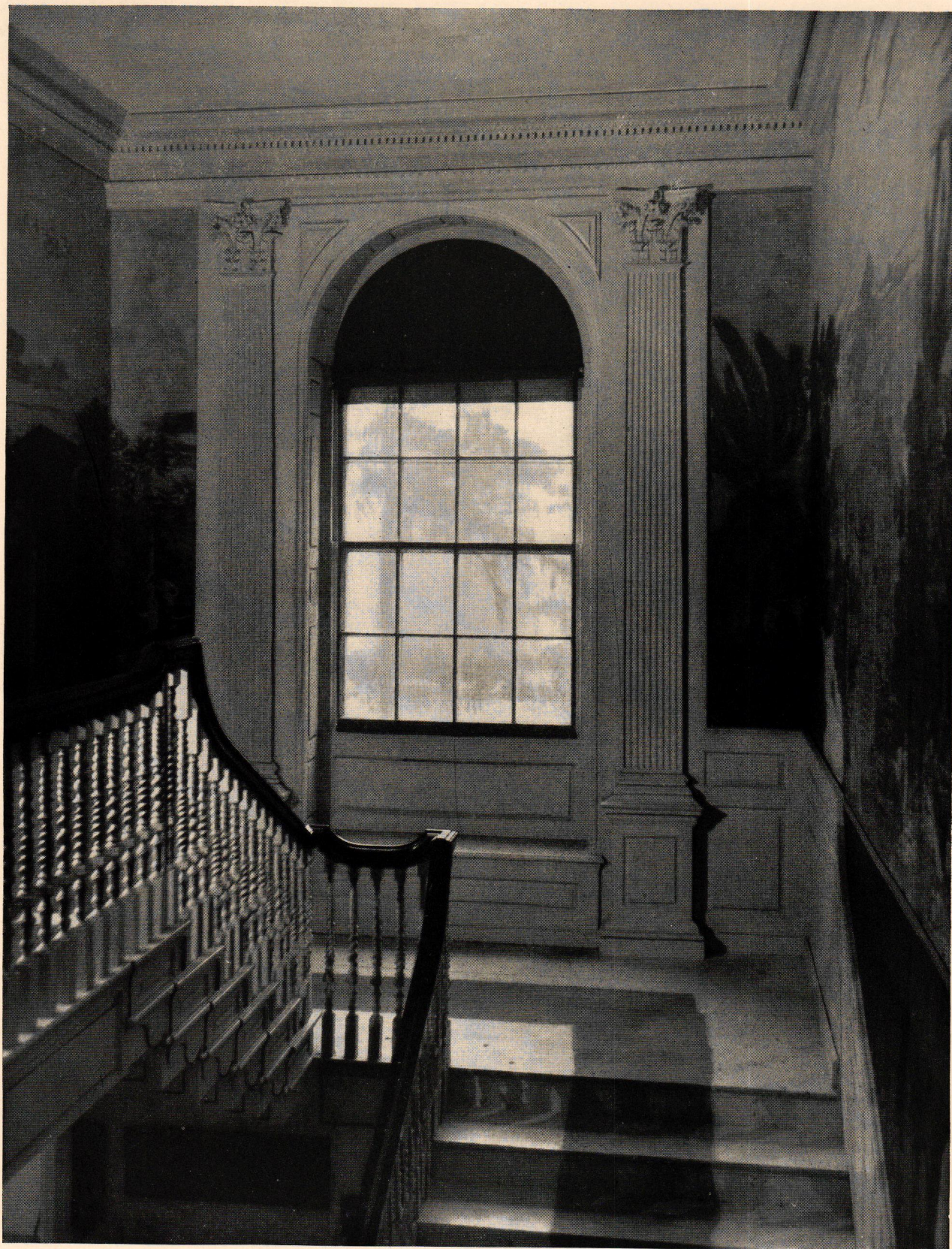
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*Volume XXV · Number 6*



TWENTY-FOUR-LIGHT WINDOW  
BEDROOM IN SQUIRE WILLIAM SEVER HOUSE—1760  
KINGSTON, MASSACHUSETTS





CIRCULAR TOPPED WINDOW ON STAIRCASE LANDING  
 "THE LINDENS"—1754—FORMERLY AT DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

[ 82 ]





## SOME EXAMPLES *of* PERIOD WINDOWS *with* DETAILS *of their* INTERIOR TREATMENT

*Photographs by* ARTHUR C. HASKELL

**I**N the North American colonies, the "double-hung" type of window came into use gradually from shortly after the beginning of the Eighteenth Century. We have knowledge of structures, built in the first years after 1700, with the casement framed sash (The Monograph Series, Vol. XXV, No. 4) then still in use, but probably by about 1720 to 1735 the newer double-hung sash style had been generally accepted, and the older buildings were being gradually changed over to agree with the new English fashion.

By then, too, many of the Glassworks on the new continent were becoming proficient enough to manufacture window glass that, while it still contained many imperfections in thickness and surface, was yet becoming commercially available in sizes that were growing gradually larger and clearer during the balance of that century until—by the early years of the Nineteenth—glass areas as large as 12 x 15 to 12 x 18 inches were in common use. By that time, too, the usually proportioned window openings were customarily being fitted with two sash, each probably having six lights, thus filling the entire opening with twelve lights of glass, three wide and four high. This arrangement and proportion continued to be employed until well into the latter half of that century, when windows having only four—or even, finally, but two—glazed areas, came into the market.

But with the period with which we are now concerned—the hundred years extending from about 1720 to 1820—the double-hung sash window was gradually increasing in its dimensions, along with the gradually enlarging rooms of the "Georgian" house, and the considerably higher ceilings that were then coming into vogue. In many cases the older dwellings, into which these new window frames were being built, had not previously been finished inside other than by walls faced with "feather edged" boards, even if they had not even been left without any inside surface finish whatever, as had often been the case with the first built structures. It was, therefore, compara-

tively easy to insert the new window frames, with their two sliding sash, and then—or a little later—refinish the entire interior with the different styles of paneled walls and dadoes; or the plaster walls and ceilings that were then beginning to be copied from the more imposing mansions of Georgian England. And this inner plaster facing, when it was added, could as easily be furred in some eight or ten more inches, thus completely concealing the heavy upright corner posts still found in the house framing and at the same time setting the window within a recess, the sloping and paneled reveals of which were in many cases the very shutters closing over the opening, now arranged to fold back upon either side when not in use. These shutters took the place of those that had previously hung exposed, as in the Short House (page 85), or slid back into the space at one or both sides of the window opening, as in the Wentworth house (page 93).

The very earliest and simplest type of double-hung window is, perhaps, only represented by the single example of the dormer treatment shown upon the next page. In the small early cottage, the nicest possible adjustment of harmony in scale and composition is essential for their successful employment, both within and without the building. No attempt has been made, in this issue, to cover other than the usual window usage, save in a couple of examples of stairway landing windows, both employing an arched, or semi-circular, top. One is from the Sarah Orne Jewett House, pages 87 and 88; and the other, from the somewhat more pretentious "Lindens," formerly at Danvers, Massachusetts, is shown on pages 82 and 86.

In other cases, this central Second Hall window is only marked by being somewhat shorter or longer than others with which it lines upon the house exterior, except in those cases where it provides an outlet, perhaps, upon a porch roof or balcony, as happens with the example from the Woodbridge-Short House, at Salem (pages 91 and 92), where the third sash was introduced to obtain the length necessary for that purpose.



A considerable part of the interior effectiveness of these windows depended upon the importance of their molded or recessed framing. In earlier and simpler examples this was often very slight—sometimes the wooden reveal of the opening ended only with a beaded edge, left projecting slightly beyond the plaster wall face. Often the facing was widened by another strip of molded finish. Sometimes this framing of the window opening was extended down to the floor below or connected with the cornice above. In the first case, a different panel of woodwork, or perhaps a seat fitted into the recess, might fill the space beneath the window. Or the bottom of the window might line with the top of a plain wooden dado carried about the room (pages 89, 92 or 95); or even break down into a higher dado, to fit into its paneled arrangement (page 88). Where the window trim did not merely cope into the cornice above; where it was mitred across over the top of the opening, or brought up against the under side of the cornice with an intermediate frieze; the cornice might be broken out to mark more distinctly the window location. It was then often broken out in a similar manner over a door, or mantel, upon another side of the room, even when it had no actual physical connection with either one.

All this emphasis of the interior architectural framing of the window opening was a gradual development that accompanied the greater wealth of the new builders and owners of homes in the principal coastal cities of the Colonies, but still did not much affect the continuing use of the simpler, earlier forms of double-hung windows in the smaller villages, cottages, and farmhouses of the countryside. There the older low ceilings continued in use, and the smaller scaled glass areas that were relative to their more modest dimensions continued to be employed; and so the smaller glass sizes were carried along in use up to a comparatively late time, just as they were, during the same period, gradually increasing in size and diminishing



INTERIOR OF RECESSED DORMER WINDOW  
 "HOUSE AT HEAD OF THE COVE"—BEFORE 1750—  
 ANNISQUAM, MASSACHUSETTS

in number, in the larger and more pretentious dwellings of pre-Revolutionary and Revolutionary times.

In the illustration on page 95, showing the window and curtaining from a chamber in the Concord Antiquarian House, the window, which is glazed with twenty-four small lights, does not extend to touch the McIntire type cornice at the top of the wall, although it is treated in the manner characteristic of his work of about 1810-11 in Salem—even though there usually employed in rooms of more ample height. The recess and the side architraves framing the opening are carried down to the floor below. The bottom of the window still lines with the top of the plain dado design, but the space above the window panel under the opening (which also lines in height with the cap of the dado) is enriched with a jig-sawn pattern applied upon the wood back—as was so often





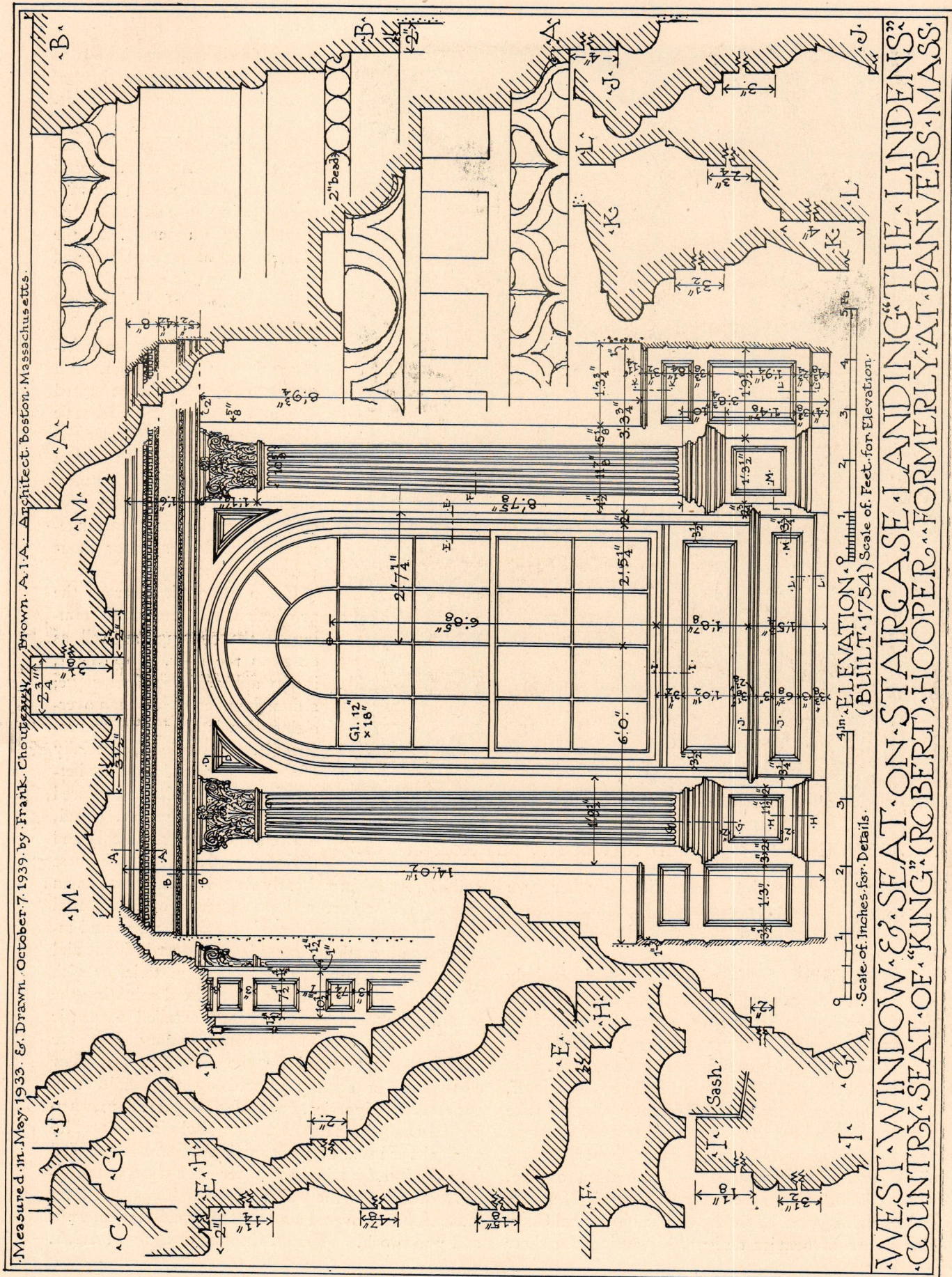
TWENTY-FOUR-LIGHT WINDOW IN FIRST STORY ROOM  
SHORT HOUSE—C. 1732—OLD NEWBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

McIntire's custom with his decoration, whether sawn or carved—as it may be seen in the Woodbridge-Short and Pingree, or other of the houses in Salem of his later design.

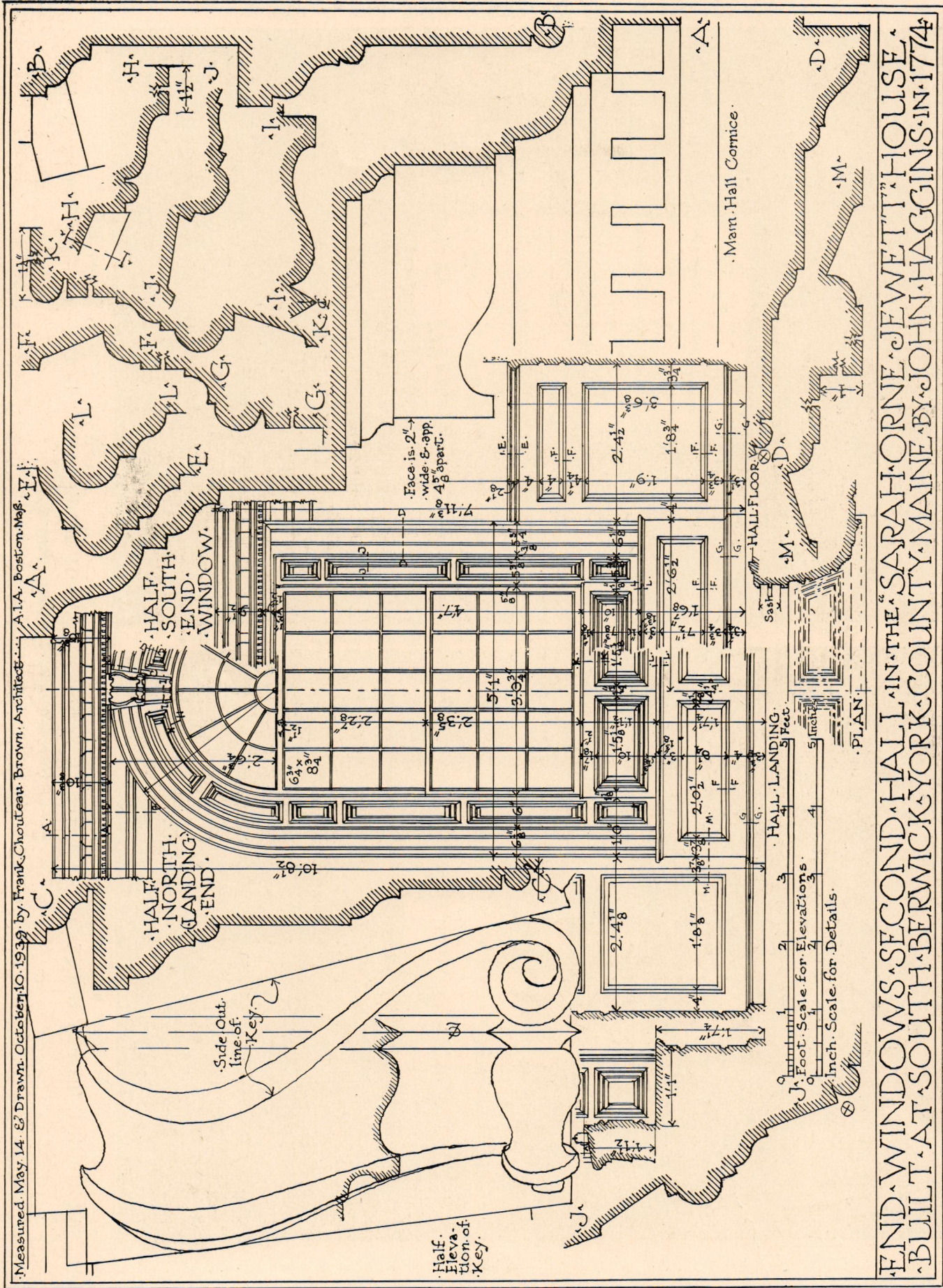
The curtaining of this window, while it entirely hides all the enframing wooden trim about the recessed opening (rather a pity, when well conceived and proportioned!) is yet nevertheless to be approved for its restraint in pattern and arrangement. As shown here it is made of a plain dusty blue stuff, velvet-like in quality, and sufficiently thin to take pleasant folds where back-tied with strips of the same velvet. It hangs from behind a formal boxed heading of the material, emphasized by a braided outline, while it is set off by an equally simple pair of muslin sash curtains (often advisedly omitted in formal Georgian rooms of heavier design), suggesting the sheer

and dignity of formal early American interiors, as an over-draped and eccentric arrangement of the material—except perhaps the use of over-emphasized and incongruous brocaded patterns, or an over brilliant and glaring color contrast, either in the material or with the walls and color scheme otherwise dominating the room. Even the most elaborately detailed authentic Georgian interiors of pre-Revolutionary date are usually much bettered by the simplest of window curtaining, or equally injured by the addition of unnecessary fripperies. Particularly in these days, when careful analysis and research are disclosing that white was neither invariably the original paint color applied over the interior trim, nor paper even the usual original treatment of the walls! We now know that later fashions have covered a mass of early coloring on walls and woodwork. FRANK CHOUTEAU BROWN, A.I.A.



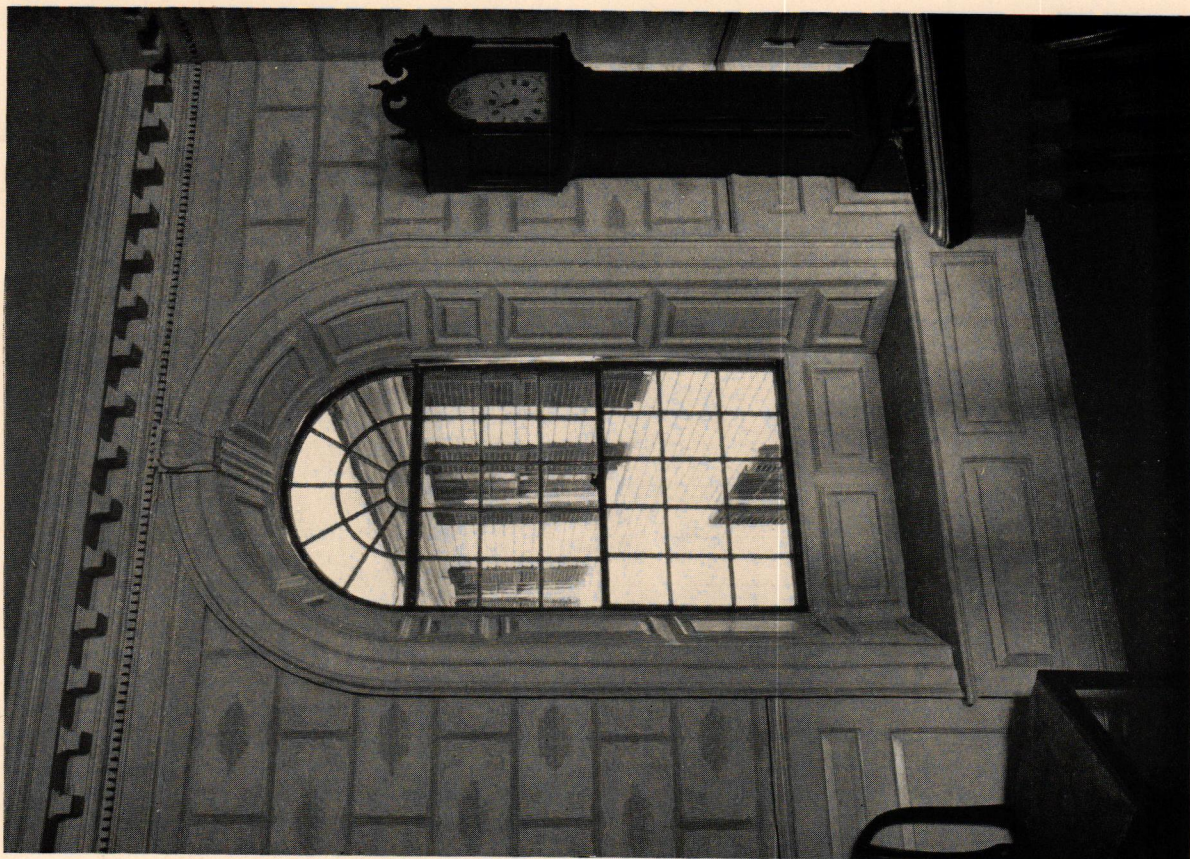






END·WINDOWS·SECOND·HALL·IN·THE·"SARAH·ORNE·JEWETT"<sup>77</sup>·HOUSE·  
·BUILT·AT·SOUTH·BERWICK·YORK·COUNTY·MAINE·BY·JOHN·HAGGINS·IN·1774·





WINDOW ON STAIRCASE LANDING

SARAH ORNE JEWETT HOUSE—1774—SO. BERWICK, MAINE

(See Measured Drawing, Page 87)



FRONT WINDOW, SECOND HALL

SARAH ORNE JEWETT HOUSE—1774—SO. BERWICK, MAINE





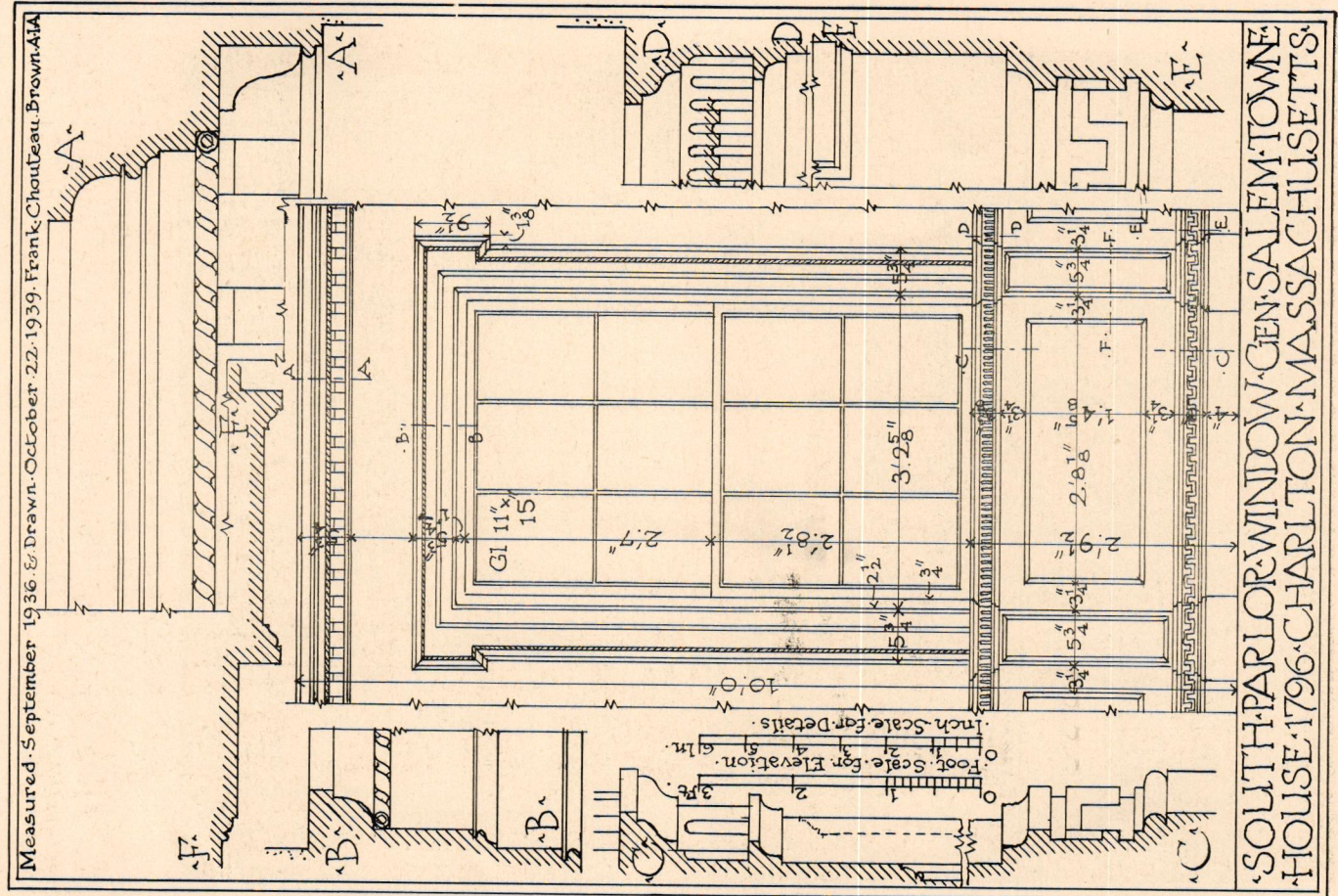
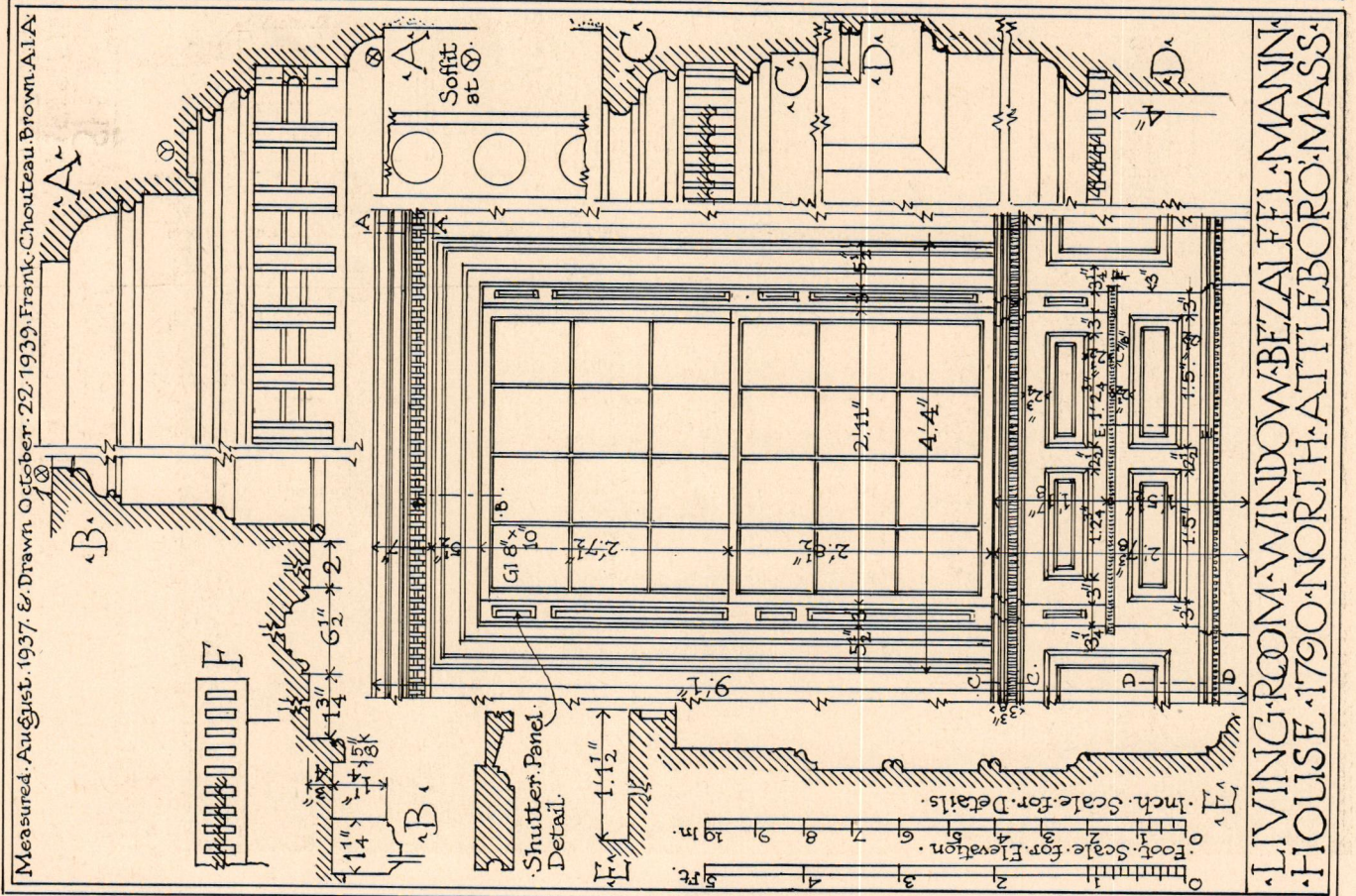
WINDOW IN LIVING ROOM  
BEZALEEL MANN HOUSE—1790—NORTH ATTLEBOROUGH,  
MASSACHUSETTS



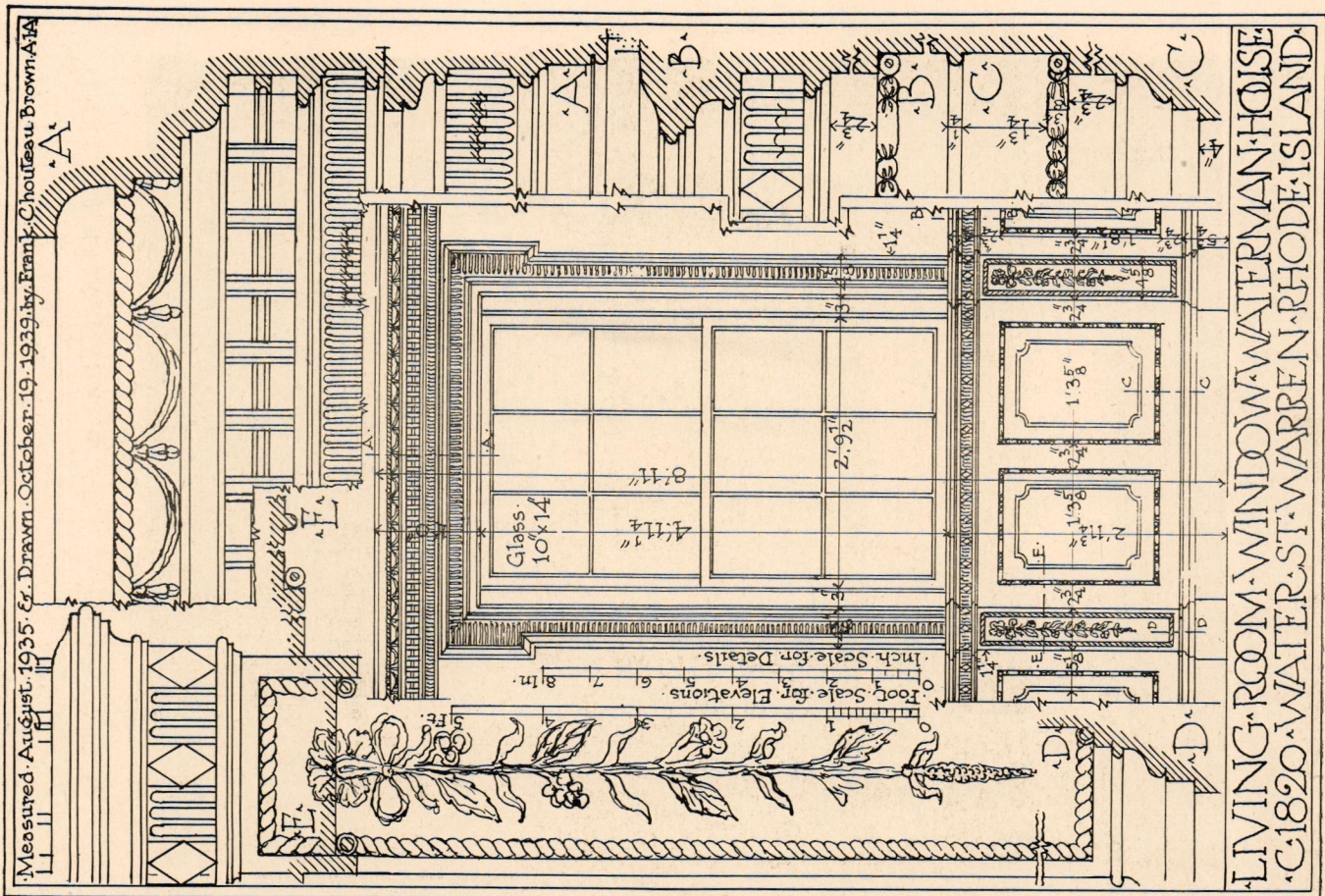
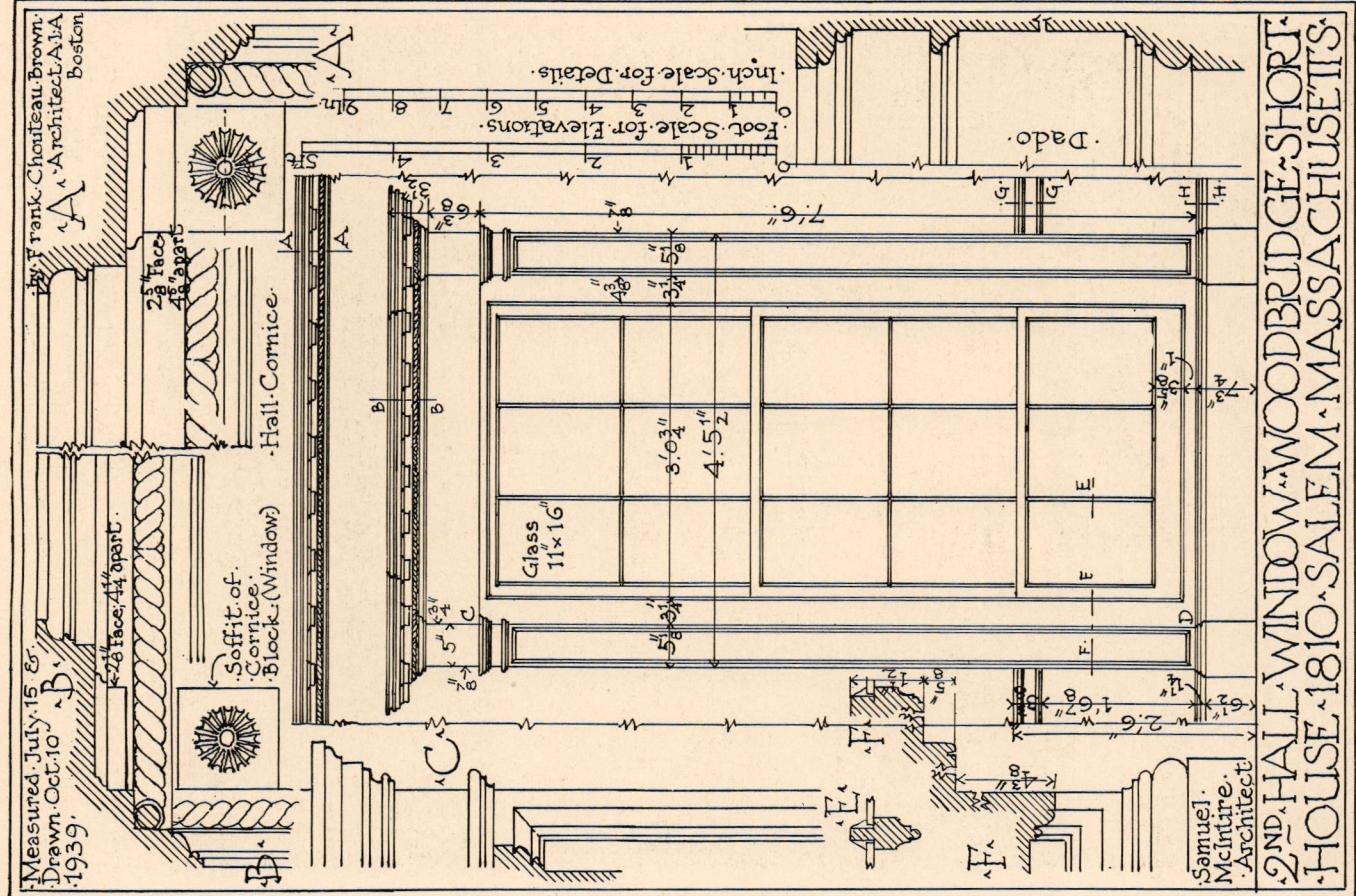
WINDOW IN SOUTH PARLOR  
GEN. SALEM TOWNE HOUSE—1796—CHARLTON,  
MASSACHUSETTS

*(See Measured Drawings on Page 90)*

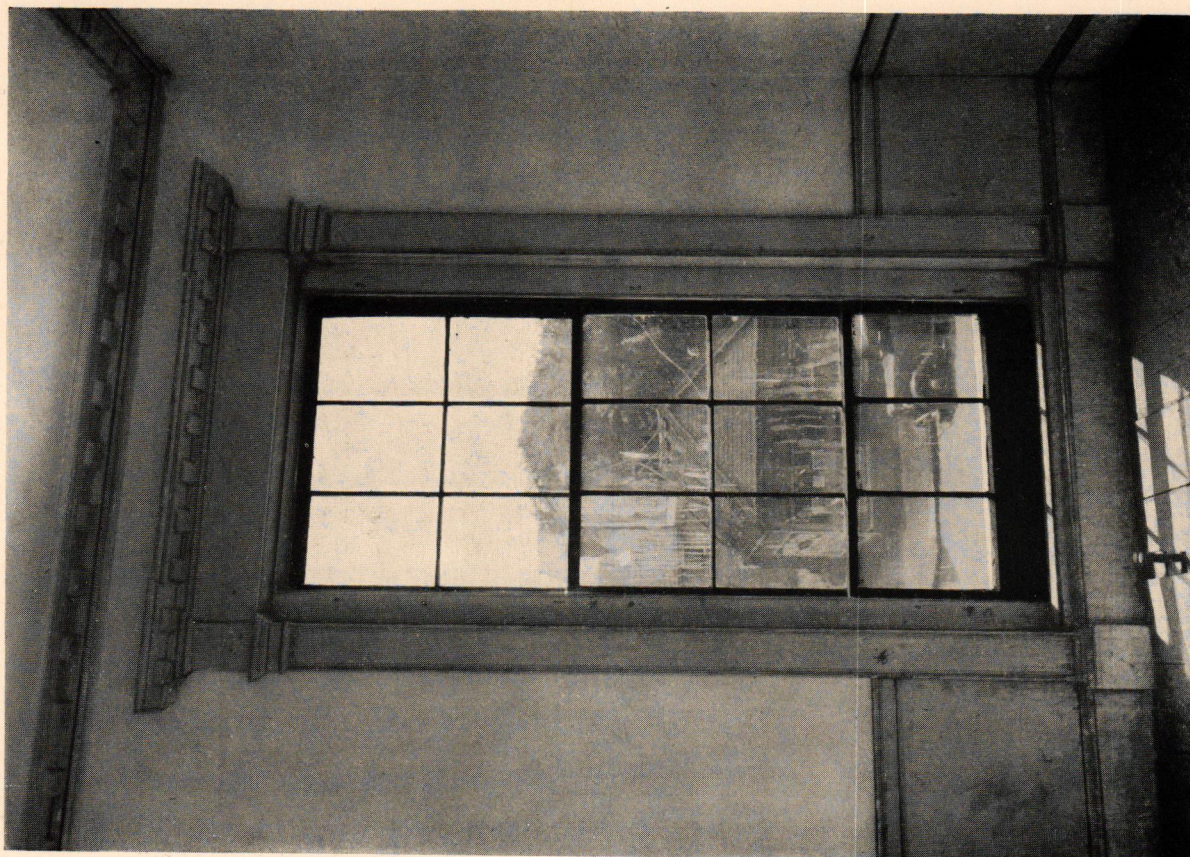












FRONT WINDOW IN SECOND HALL

WOODBIDGE-SHORT HOUSE—1810—SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

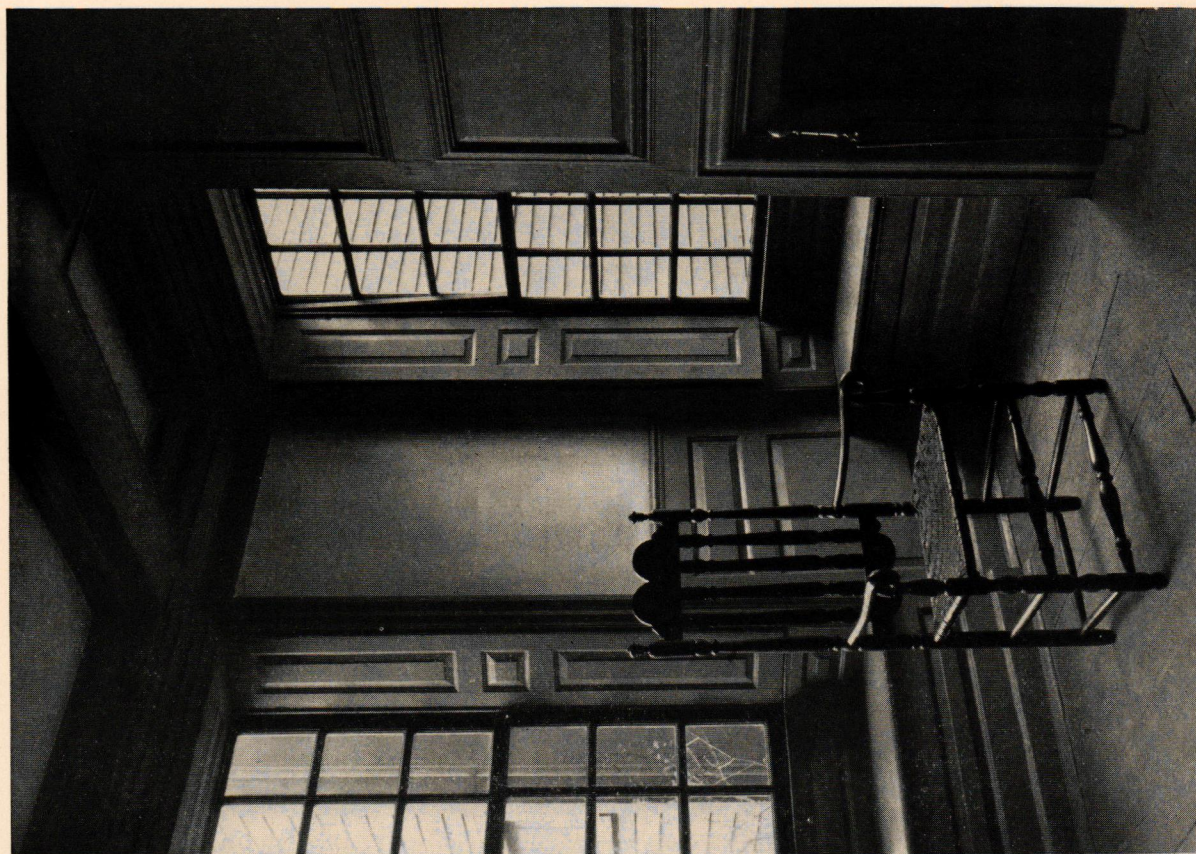
(See Measured Drawings on Page 91)



WINDOW IN LIVING ROOM

WATERMAN HOUSE—C. 1820—WARREN, RHODE ISLAND





CORNER OF FRONT PARLOR

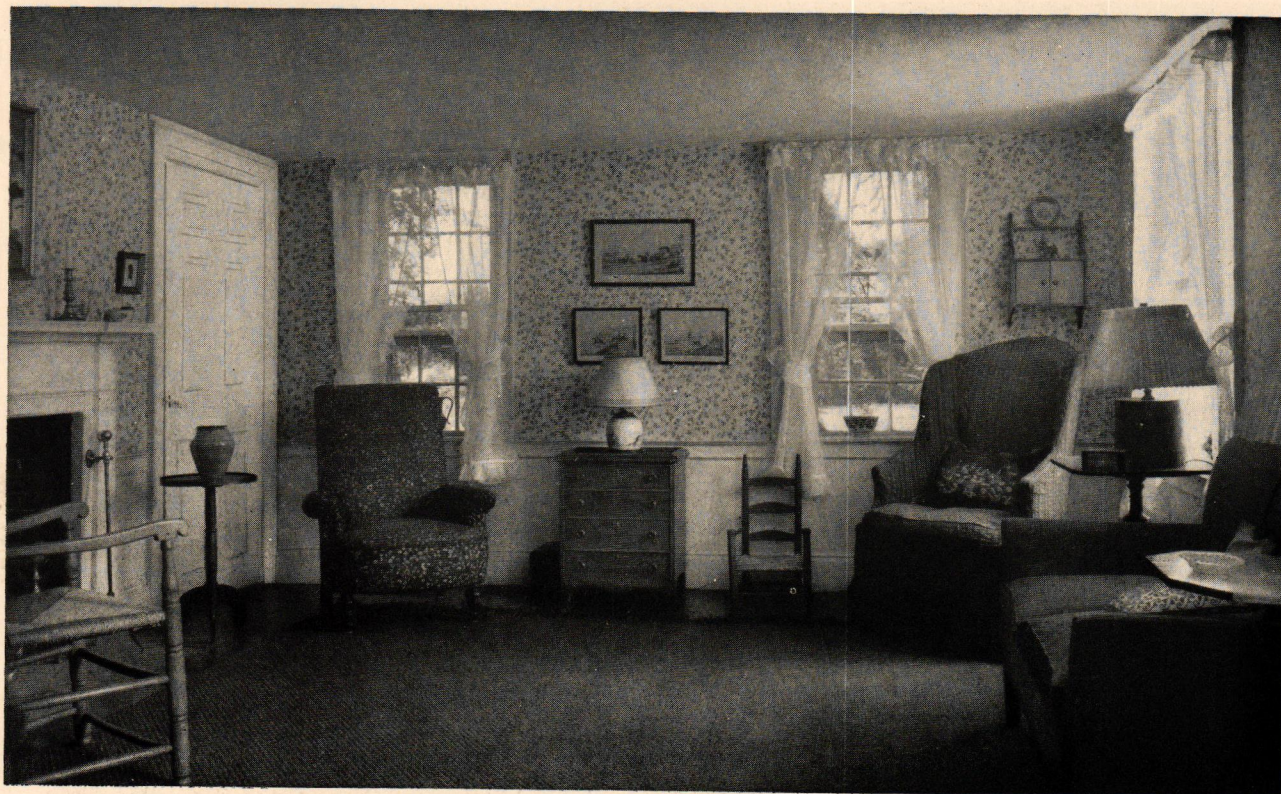
RICHARD DERBY HOUSE—1761—DERBY STREET, SALEM,  
MASSACHUSETTS



WINDOW IN PINE PARLOR

COL. PAUL WENTWORTH MANSION—1701—SALMON FALLS,  
NEW HAMPSHIRE





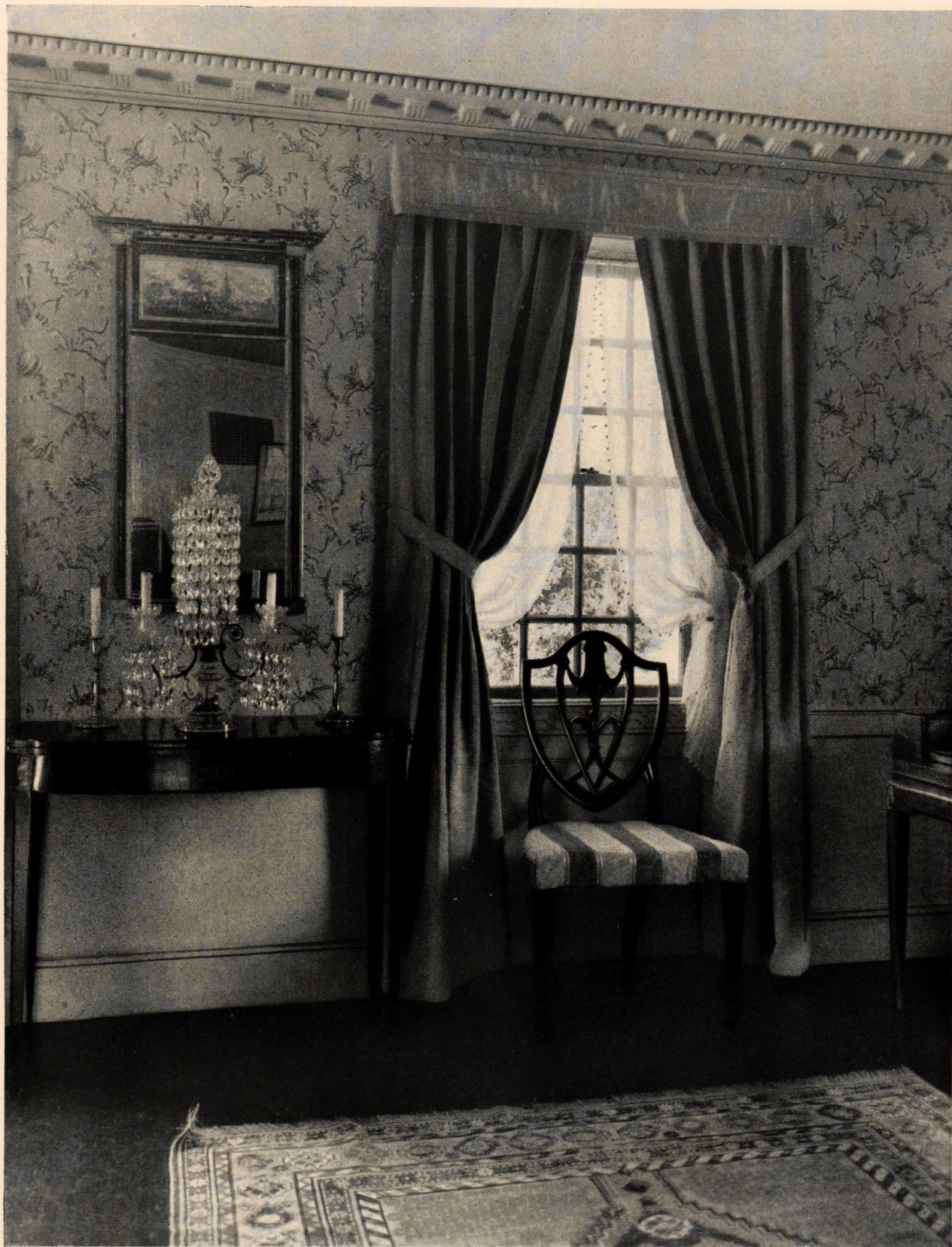
FIFTEEN-LIGHT WINDOWS IN PARLOR END, LATER PORTION  
ELIAS ENDICOTT PORTER FARMHOUSE—C. 1815—DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS



WINDOWS IN SOUTH CHAMBER  
HOUSE OF JOHN TURNER ("SEVEN GABLES")—1668—SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

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TWENTY-FOUR-LIGHT WINDOW, AND DRAPERIES, OF EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY  
ANTIQUARIAN HOUSE, CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS

[ 95 ]





WINDOW IN LIVING ROOM  
DURANT-KENRICK HOUSE—1732—NEWTON, MASS.



WINDOW IN LIVING ROOM  
DR. PETER OLIVER HOUSE—1762—MIDDLEBOROUGH, MASS.