

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

This house is a fine example of the Federal domestic architecture that has made High Street famous. The house has the three story form with hipped roof so characteristic of the Federal period. The small nearly square windows on the third floor and the simple classically inspired cornice and window lintels, are also typical of the style. The doorway was altered during the Greek Revival period and the Greek entrance portico was added at that time.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

Thomas Emery purchased this parcel of land at the corner of High and Oakland Street from Moses Moody shortly before his marriage in November 1796. He built the three story Federal home shortly thereafter. Emery's first wife died in 1803 but he remarried and lived in the house until his death in 1860. At that time the estate was left to his grandson Rufus Emery. Apparently Rufus Emery did not live in the house. He is not listed in the city directory for 1871. In 1886 Rufus Emery, of Newburgh, New York sold this house to James Parton.

James Parton was born in Canterbury, England in 1822. Parton attended school in New York City and later taught school in both New York and Philadelphia. Parton was a regular contributor to the Home Journal in the 1840's. In 1855 he published a biography entitled "The Life of Horace Greeley." It was a great success and Parton devoted the rest of his life to literary efforts. He contributed articles to the New York Leger and in 1857 published "The Life and Times of Aaron Burr." He also wrote a biography of Thomas Jefferson.

Parton moved to Newburyport in 1875 and lived in the house at 270 High Street. In 1886 he moved into the house on the other corner of High and Oakland, 272 High Street. Parton published many volumes while in Newburyport. He lived in this house until his death in 1891.

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