Samuel Parkman c.1751, was a wealthy ship owner and East India merchant, who had a spacious house and garden between Chardon and Green Streets in Bowdoin Square. He had made his money in land speculation by first buying up much of the low-lying lands in the West End (including the Mill Pond), then buying up property all over the country. Parkman was the epitome of the Boston Brahmin uniting in marriage his 11 children with the Beacon Hill families of Blake, Cabot, Mason, Sturgis, Tilden, and Tuckerman. He commissioned Gilbert Stuart to do an oil portrait of his friend George Washington and had Charles Bulfinch design a mansion in the West End for his daughters; the Blake Tuckerman Houses in 1815.

Of his eleven offspring, Samuel chose George as the one to administer the Parkman estate. Despite George's wealth, he was inspired by a lecture given by patriot/physician Benjamin Rush on the terrible state of asylums for the mentally ill. Parkman believed that psychiatric institutions should reflect a residence-like setting, where patients could enjoy hobbies and socializing and participating in household chores, as permitted. Parkman encouraged the faculty of Massachusetts General Hospital about having a lunatic hospital connected to it and the McLean Asylum for the Insane was established.

When his father died in 1824, George took complete control of the family estate and bought vast amounts of land and real estate in Boston; including many poorly maintained tenements. Money lending and real estate augmented his income; he also sold the land for the Charles Street Jail and the new Harvard Medical School and. Parkman Street is located off Blossom Street in the West End, but is far more famous for another reason to be revealed in a Members Gallery exhibit at a later date in 2013!