

## 14 River Street, Salem

According to available evidence, this house was built for Joseph W. Stafford, cordwainer, in 1848.

On 1 Nov. 1847 an empty lot, fronting 40' on River Street, was sold for \$350 to Joseph W. Stafford, Salem cordwainer (shoemaker) (ED 389:241). The seller was Augustus Dickson, a North Salem housewright. The lot butted on the North River flats (south of flats owned by the Eastern Rail Road), and was bounded on the east by land of Shey, and on west by land of Phelps.

Joseph Warren Stafford, 30, proceeded to have a house built on the site, evidently in 1848.\* At that time, he had a wife, Mary, 37, and at least one child, William, three. The design of the house was retro, especially the integral leanto form. The Greek Revival style was favored in Salem at that time, but this house did not partake of that style's "temple" form (as at 121 and 123 Federal Street). Instead, the Stafford house followed the older "half-house" form popular among people of modest means for 200 years. The interior trim was relatively plain. In the parlor, the carpenters evidently recycled a "Federal" style chimney-piece (currently in situ), but upstairs they installed a very simple new "Greek" chimney-piece. The interior window frames, with their "corner block" trim, are typical of the 1840s. The chimney was well-built for the time, for other chimneys were sometimes set on wooden platforms rather than solid-brick construction at the cellar level.

Joseph W. Stafford was born in Salem in 1818, the son of William Stafford and Lydia Swasey.

William Stafford was a Dutchman (per 1850 census, ward two, house 325) or perhaps an Englishman (JWS death record) who had come to Salem and worked as a mariner in or before 1816. In that year, he married Lydia Swasey of Salem. Both were 29. Lydia was the eldest daughter of Richard and Rachel Swasey of Salem. She had brothers Benjamin, John, and William, and a sister, Hannah Silsbee Swasey.

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\* Joseph W. Stafford had little money of his own, but was able to get loans from family members to finance the construction and ownership of the house. Joseph Stafford mortgaged the premises two days after buying the empty lot (ED 389:241). The mortgagee was his father William Stafford, Salem laborer; and William would assign the mortgage, two years later (26 Nov. 1849), to his son William M. Stafford of Boston (ED 420:144). On 26 May 1849 Joseph W. Stafford mortgaged the premises again for \$159.07 to his father William Stafford, Salem laborer, and described it as the lot he had bought of Mr. Dickson, "a dwelling house having since been erected upon said premises" (ED 412:62). Mr. Stafford assigned this mortgage (like the first one) to his son William M. Stafford of Boston, also in November, 1849 (ED 420:143). William M. Stafford thus held mortgages by the end of 1849; and at the end of December, 1851, he gave Joseph another mortgage (ED 455:125). Joseph sold out his remaining interest in the premises on May 2, 1854, for a token \$1 paid by his father, William Stafford, who agreed to assume \$500 in mortgages and unpaid interest thereon (ED 531:265).

The Stafford family lived in Salem in the post-War of 1812 period when the Salem merchants rebuilt their fleets and resumed their worldwide trade, slowly at first, and then to great effect. Many new merchant partnerships were formed. The pre-war partisan politics of the town were not resumed, as the middle-class "mechanics" (artisans) became more powerful and brought about civic harmony, largely through the Salem Charitable Mechanic Association (founded 1817). Rev. William Bentley, keen observer and active citizen during Salem's time of greatest prosperity and fiercest political divisions, died in 1819, the year in which a new U.S. Custom House was built, on the site of the George Crowninshield mansion, at the head of Derby Wharf. Into the 1820s foreign trade continued prosperous; and new markets were opened with Madagascar (1820), which supplied tallow and ivory, and Zanzibar (1825), whence came coffee, ivory, and gum copal, used to make varnish. This opened a huge and lucrative trade in which Salem dominated, and its vessels thus gained access to all of the east African ports.

Salem's general maritime foreign commerce fell off sharply in the late 1820s. Imports in Salem ships were supplanted by the goods that were now being produced in great quantities in America. The interior of the country was being opened for settlement, and some Salemites moved away. To the north, the falls of the Merrimack River powered large new textile mills (Lowell was founded in 1823), which created great wealth for their investors; and in general it seemed that the tide of opportunity was ebbing away from Salem. To stem the flow of talent from the town and to harness its potential water power for manufacturing, Salem's merchants and capitalists banded together in 1826 to raise the money to dam the North River for industrial power, but the effort failed, and caused several leading citizens to move to Boston, the hub of investment in the new economy.

In 1830 occurred a horrifying crime that brought disgrace to Salem. Old Capt. Joseph White, a wealthy merchant, resided in the house now called the Gardner-Pingree house, on Essex Street. One night, intruders broke into his mansion and stabbed him to death. All of Salem buzzed with the news of murderous thugs; but the killer was a Crowninshield (a fallen son of one of the five brothers; after he was put in jail he killed himself). He had been hired by his friends, Capt. White's own relatives, Capt. Joseph Knapp and his brother Frank (they would be executed). The results of the investigation and trial having uncovered much that was lurid, more of the respectable families quit the now-notorious town.

The Stafford sons were beginning their apprenticeships in these years. The older boys, William and Joseph, were bound out to learn the handicraft trade of a cordwainer (shoe-maker), each at the age of thirteen or so. The younger boys would be apprenticed as sailors, starting as cabin boys. It was not apparent to many people, in the 1830s, that the future did not lie in the areas of handicrafts or seafaring.

Salem had not prepared for the industrial age, and had few natural advantages. The North River served not to power factories but mainly to flush the waste from the 25 tanneries that had set up along its banks. As the decade wore on, and the new railroads and canals, all running and flowing to Boston from points north, west, and south, diverted both capital and trade away from the coast. Salem's remaining merchants took their equity out of local wharves and warehouses and ships and put it into the stock of manufacturing and transportation companies. Some merchants did not make the transition, and were ruined. Old-line areas of work, like rope-making, sail-making, and ship chandleries, gradually declined and disappeared. Salem slumped badly, but, despite all, the voters decided to charter their town as a city in 1836—the third city to be formed in the state, behind Boston and Lowell. City Hall was built 1837-8 and the city seal was adopted with an already-anachronistic Latin motto of “to the farthest port of the rich East”—a far cry from “Go West, young man!” The Panic of 1837, a brief, sharp, nationwide economic depression, caused even more Salem families to head west in search of fortune and a better future.

Throughout the 1830s, the leaders of Salem scrambled to re-invent an economy for their fellow citizens, many of whom were mariners without much sea-faring to do. Ingenuity, ambition, and hard work would have to carry the day. One inspiration was the Salem Laboratory, Salem's first science-based manufacturing enterprise, founded in 1813 to produce chemicals. At the plant built in 1818 in North Salem on the North River, the production of alum and blue vitriol was a specialty; and it proved a very successful business. Salem's whale-fishery led to the manufacturing of high-quality candles at Stage Point, along with machine oils. The candles proved very popular. Lead-manufacturing began in the 1820s, and grew large after 1830, when Wyman's gristmills on the Forest River, at the head of Salem Harbor, were retooled for making high-quality white lead and sheet lead. These enterprises were a start toward taking Salem in a new direction. In 1838 the Eastern Rail Road, headquartered in Salem, began operating between Boston and Salem, which gave the local people a direct route to the region's largest market. The new railroad tracks ran right over the middle of the Mill Pond; the tunnel under Washington Street was built in 1839; and the line was extended to Newburyport in 1840.

William Stafford may have worked as a mariner (sailor) before 1830, but eventually he became a laborer, working on the docks perhaps, or for the town's farmers. Between 1830 and 1836 the family moved to the section of Bridge Street then known as Forrester Street, opposite the foot of Rust Street and Ash Street. The Staffords resided there, on the banks of the North River, for about twenty years. William and Lydia had several children, evidently four boys and three girls. By 1840 the Stafford family consisted of William and Lydia, in their forties, a woman in her seventies (perhaps Mrs. Rachel Swasey, Lydia's mother), two teenaged boys, two men in their twenties, and three teenaged girls (per 1840 census, ward two). Of the (probable) seven children, the names of the following are known: William M., Joseph Warren, Benjamin S., Timothy P., Eliza Ellen,

and Lydia M. Joseph was named in honor of the patriot, Dr. Joseph Warren, killed at the Battle of Bunker Hill (1775).

**William Stafford** m. (Salem) 8 Dec.1816 **Lydia Swasey** (1787-1855), born 1787, d/o Richard and Rachel Swasey of Salem, died 16 Jan.1855. Issue, surname Stafford:

1. William M., 1817?, Boston shoemaker
2. **Joseph Warren**, 1818, m. Mary S.
3. Lydia M., 1822, m. 1849 Henry S. Johnson of NJ.
4. Benjamin S., 1823, mariner
5. Eliza Ellen, 1827, m. in 1850s.
6. Timothy P., 1829, mariner
7. daughter

Some members of Salem's waning merchant class continued to pursue their sea-borne businesses into the 1840s; but it was an ebb tide, with unfavorable winds. Boston, transformed into a modern mega-port with efficient railroad and highway distribution to all markets, had subsumed virtually all foreign trade other than Salem's continuing commerce with Zanzibar. The sleepy waterfront at Derby Wharf, with an occasional arrival from Africa and regular visits from schooners carrying wood from Nova Scotia, is depicted in 1850 by Hawthorne in his sardonic "introductory section" to **The Scarlet Letter**, which he began while working in the Custom House.

Although Hawthorne had no interest in describing it, Salem's transformation did occur in the 1840s, as more industrial methods and machines were introduced, and many new companies in new lines of business arose. The Gothic symbol of Salem's new industrial economy was the large twin-towered granite train station—the "stone depot"—smoking and growling with idling locomotives. It stood on filled-in land at the foot of Washington Street, where the merchants' wharves had been; and from it the trains carried many valuable products as well as passengers. The tanning and curing of leather was very important in Salem by the mid-1800s. On and near Boston Street, along the upper North River, there were 41 tanneries in 1844, and 85 in 1850, employing 550 hands. The leather business would continue to grow in importance throughout the 1800s. In 1846 the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company completed the construction at Stage Point of the largest factory building in the United States, 60' wide by 400' long. It was an immediate success, and hundreds of people found employment there, many of them living in tenements built nearby. It too benefited from the Zanzibar and Africa trade, as it produced light cotton cloth for use in the tropics. Also in the 1840s, a new method was introduced to make possible high-volume industrial shoe production. In Lynn, the factory system was perfected, and that city became the nation's leading shoe producer. Salem had shoe factories too, and attracted shoe workers from outlying towns and the countryside. Even the population began

to transform, as hundreds of Irish families, fleeing the Famine in Ireland, settled in Salem and gave the industrialists a big pool of cheap labor.

William Stafford worked as a laborer through the 1830s, and in the 1840s became a sexton for one of the Salem churches. As such, he was in charge of burials, bell-tolling, notifications, and janitorial work. By 1849 he was no longer a sexton, but one of the city lamplighters (information from directories). Many of his children continued to live in the house on "Forrester" (now Bridge) Street, but the older boys, William M. and Joseph W., both cordwainers (shoemakers) left home in the 1840s. William M. Stafford went off to Boston, while Joseph Warren Stafford married by 1844, and in 1845 was residing in the River Street neighborhood, sometimes known as Driver's Point. He and his wife Mary became parents of a son, William, in 1845. They resided at 12 River Street (with others) in 1845 and 1846 (per valuations); and in 1847 they moved into Benjamin Cutts' house at 4 River Street (per 1847 valuation).

In 1848 Joseph W. Stafford had the new house built at 14 River Street as his family residence; and in the 1848 and 1849 valuations it was identified as "house, 14 River," valued at \$200. By the spring of 1850, Mrs. Stafford was pregnant again. The family unit consisted of Joseph, 33, a cordwainer, Mary S., forty, and William, five (per 1850 census, house 572). The baby was born in summer: she was named Lydia, and she would die of scarlet fever in 1852, before reaching her second birthday.

**Joseph W. Stafford** (1818-1884) son of William Stafford & Lydia Swasey of Salem, died Beverly 10 Nov. 1884 in his 66<sup>th</sup> year. He m/1 **Mary S. Elkins**. He m/2 (Salem) 2 Nov. 1869 **Mary Grush** (b. 1823, Beverly, d/o Benjamin & Mary Grush). Known issue:

1. William, 1845, m. Mary \_\_\_\_; v. Beverly in 1890s.
2. Lydia M., 1850, died 21 May 1852, scarlet fever, aged 1¾ years.

Joseph Warren Stafford never had a very firm grip on the ownership of his homestead at 14 River Street. In 1854, he signed over the title to his father, the mortgagee, William Stafford. At that time, evidently, William Stafford and his wife Lydia Swasey Stafford moved in, and the J.W. Staffords continued to reside here with them. By late 1854 Mrs. Lydia S. Stafford was very ill; and on Jan. 16, 1855, she died, probably here, at the age of 67 years. The others continued to reside here through the 1850s. The 1855 census listed just Joseph and Mary, and William, ten (per 1855 census, ward 4, house 131), and the 1857 and 1859 Salem Directories show both William and Joseph W. Stafford as heads of households here at 14 River.

In March, 1859, William Stafford, of Salem, sold his right in the premises to his son William M. Stafford of Boston (ED 613:23), who thus became the owner. It may be that old William Stafford moved to Boston at that time. Joseph W.

Stafford continued to reside here at 14 River with his wife Mary and their son William, who was fifteen in 1860 (see 1860 census, ward four, house 2086). They would soon move away, for on 8 May 1861 for \$400 William M. Stafford of Boston, who had never lived here, sold to Charles McCarthy of Salem the lot on River Street with "the dwelling house and all other buildings" (ED 622:171). The Charles McCarthy family moved in, and the Staffords had no further connection with the premises.

It should be noted that Joseph W. Stafford moved out of Salem, and on to Manchester and then Beverly, over the course of years. In 1870 he was in Manchester, described as a laborer, aged 51, residing with his wife Mary, 56, in the home of Joseph Allen, 30 (see Manchester census, 1870, house 256). He became a Beverly stone-mason in his later years, and in the fall of 1884, in his 66<sup>th</sup> year, he injured his leg and died of the infection on November 10<sup>th</sup>.

The new owner, Charles McCarthy, an Irishman, was 36 in 1861 and was a tanner and currier by trade, meaning that he worked in Salem's booming leather-making industry. At the time of the purchase, he was living with his parents and siblings at 24 River Street, a house that no longer exists. In those days, River Street dead-ended on the shoreline of the North River. The house at #24 was the last in the row (site of Bridge Street today), and was occupied by Charles' brother John McCarthy and family in 1865 and perhaps later (per 1865 census, which does not include #14).

Charles McCarthy probably came to America as a young man in the 1840s, with his parents and siblings, fleeing from the Famine in Ireland and looking for a chance to make a better life. In the 1840s, Ireland, a very poor country then under English rule, was hit with an epidemic of fungus that ruined the potato crop. More than half the population was dependent on potatoes as the staple of their diet as well as their main cash crop. The poorest people soon found themselves without money and with little to eat. The English government was slow to respond to the crisis, which soon became a widespread famine; and people died by the hundreds and then the thousands. Country people flooded into the cities to get relief, which was largely unavailable, and disease from overcrowding added to Ireland's miseries. Massachusetts, among other places, sent over shiploads of free food to the starving people; but still they died. Among the country people and the poorer working people, America loomed as the promised land: if they could only get passage on a ship to the New World, they and their families would survive. By the thousands, Irish families sold off their possessions and booked passage for America. Boston was a main port of entry, and, virtually overnight, the Irish filled up parts of the city. Some moved on to places like Salem, Lowell, and other industrial towns and cities where they might find work. Being country people, few of them had any skills that were useful in the cities, and so most men had to work as common laborers rather than factory operatives.

Some of the Irish families had settled in Salem in the late 1840s. By 1848, there were about 200 recently arrived Irishmen in Salem, some of them heads of families. Salem was probably of interest to them because there was an extant Roman Catholic church, located at the foot of Mall Street; and there were a very few Irish families who had settled in Salem in the 1820s and 1830s, of whom Martin Connell, a trunk-maker of Williams Street (off the Common, near the church), was among the most notable.

**Michael McCarthy** (1783-1866), born in Ireland 1783, died in Salem, 29 Jan. 1866, laborer, of old age, at 82 years, buried in Catholic Cemetery, McCarthy lot. He m. (Ireland) **Julia** \_\_\_\_\_ (1789-1866), born Ireland 1789, died Salem on 26 Feb. 1866, aged 76, of influenza, widow of Michael, buried Catholic Lot. Known issue, all born in Ireland:

1. **Charles**, 1824, m. c.1861 Ellen \_\_\_\_\_.
2. John, 1828, m. Celia \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Michael, 1831
4. Eugene, 1835

In 1846 Rev. James Conway became the new pastor of St. Mary's Church (on Bridge Street, corner of Mall). Large numbers of Irish families poured into Salem; and most, if not all, became members of this congregation. The Salem Irish quickly formed neighborhoods in the Union-Water Street area (the men probably worked on the wharves and around the mills); High Street area (formerly Knocker's Hole, in the vicinity of the present U.S. Post Office); and Harbor Street and environs. A few Irish families lived on upper Boston Street and Aborn Street; probably more lived across the boundary in South Danvers (Peabody). While most of the men worked as laborers, some worked as skilled carriers in Salem's booming leather industry. In general, the native Salem residents seem to have welcomed, or at least tolerated, the newly arrived Irish.

The 1850s brought continued growth: new churches (e.g. Immaculate Conception, 1857), schools, streets, factories, and stores. New housing was constructed in North Salem, Stage Point, and the Gallows Hill areas to accommodate the workers. As it re-established itself as an economic powerhouse with a sizable population, Salem took a strong interest in national politics. It was primarily Republican in politics, and strongly anti-slavery, with its share of outspoken abolitionists, led by Charles Remond, a passionate speaker who came from one of the city's notable black families. At its Lyceum and in other venues, plays and shows were put on, but cultural lectures and political speeches were given too. By 1860, with the election of Abraham Lincoln, it was clear that the Southern states would secede from the union; and Salem, which had done so much to win the independence of the nation, was ready to go to war to force others to remain a part of it.

The Civil War began in April, 1861, and went on for four years, during which hundreds of Salem men served in the army and navy, and many were killed or died of disease or abusive treatment while imprisoned. Hundreds more suffered wounds, or broken health. The people of Salem contributed greatly to efforts to alleviate the suffering of the soldiers, sailors, and their families; and there was great celebration when the war finally ended in the spring of 1865.

Through the 1860s, Salem pursued manufacturing, especially of leather and shoes and textiles. The managers and capitalists tended to build their new, grand houses along Lafayette Street (these houses may still be seen, south of Roslyn Street; many are in the French Second Empire style, with mansard roofs). A third factory building for the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company was built in 1865.

The McCarthy men were all engaged in the leather business, as tanners and curriers. In 1865, the house at 14 River Street was full of McCarthy family members: Charles McCarthy, currier, brother Michael McCarthy Jr., currier, and father Michael McCarthy, and their spouses (per Salem Directory 1866).

Beginning about 1868, Charles McCarthy and James White went into business together as grocers, with their store on North Street at Bridge Street. James White, also an Irishman, lived at 10 River Street. In 1870 this house was occupied as a two-family: in one unit lived Charles McCarthy, 45, grocer, and wife Ellen, forty; in the other lived Ellen Graham, fifty, an Irishwoman, and her daughter Mary E. Graham, twelve, born in Massachusetts (per 1870 census, ward four, house 149). The grocery partnership lasted until about 1874. After that, Mr. White carried on a grocery on Lynn Street, and Mr. McCarthy went to work as a laborer.

In 1870 Salem received its last cargo from Zanzibar, thus ending a once-important trade. By then, a new Salem & New York freight steamboat line was in operation. Seven years later, with the arrival of a vessel from Cayenne, Salem's foreign trade came to an end. After that, "the merchandise warehouses on the wharves no longer contained silks from India, tea from China, pepper from Sumatra, coffee from Arabia, spices from Batavia, gum-copal from Zanzibar, hides from Africa, and the various other products of far-away countries. The boys have ceased to watch on the Neck for the incoming vessels, hoping to earn a reward by being the first to announce to the expectant merchant the safe return of his looked-for vessel. The foreign commerce of Salem, once her pride and glory, has spread its white wings and sailed away forever" (Rev. George Bachelder in *History of Essex County*, II: 65).

Salem was now so densely built-up that a general conflagration was always a possibility, as in Boston, when, on Nov. 9, 1872, the financial and manufacturing district of the city burned up. Salem continued to prosper in the 1870s, carried forward by the leather-making business. In 1874 the city was visited by a tornado and shaken by a minor earthquake. In the following year, the large Pennsylvania Pier (site of the present coal-fired harborside electrical generating plant) was



completed to begin receiving large shipments of coal. Beyond it, at Juniper Point, a new owner began subdividing the old Allen farmlands into a new development called Salem Willows and Juniper Point. In the U.S. centennial year, 1876, A.G. Bell of Salem announced that he had discovered a way to transmit voices over telegraph wires.

In this decade, French-Canadian families began coming to work in Salem's mills and factories, and more houses and tenements were built. The better-off workers bought portions of older houses or built small homes for their families in the outlying sections of the city; and by 1879 the Naumkeag Steam Cotton mills would employ 1200 people and produce annually nearly 15 million yards of cloth. Shoe-manufacturing businesses expanded in the 1870s, and 40 shoe factories were employing 600-plus operatives. Tanning, in both Salem and Peabody, remained a very important industry, and employed hundreds of breadwinners. On Boston Street in 1879, the Arnold tannery caught fire and burned down. In 1880, the house was occupied as a three-family. In one unit lived Charles McCarthy, 55, laborer, wife Ellen, 50, and nephew John Barrett, eleven. In another unit lived Michael Ryan, sixty, a laborer, and wife Catherine, sixty. In a third unit lived Bridget Grant, fifty (per 1880 census, ward four). All were born in Ireland except for John Barrett.

By 1883 the house was occupied by Charles McCarthy (and wife Ellen) in one unit, and by Miss Ellen Callahan, a dressmaker, who had her shop and residence in the other unit (per directories). This arrangement continued for many years, until about 1894, when Miss Callahan moved on. Mr. McCarthy worked as a gardener and choreman for Mrs. Mary Ann (Ropes) Bertram, the widow of John Bertram, a wealthy merchant who had donated his mansion to the city to be used as a public library (and so it is used today). Mrs. Bertram resided at 138 Federal Street, where Mr. McCarthy did much of his work, although he may have tended other Bertram properties.

In the 1880s and 1890s, Salem kept building infrastructure; and new businesses arose, and established businesses expanded. Retail stores prospered; horse-drawn trolleys ran every which-way; and machinists, carpenters, millwrights, and other specialists all thrived. In 1880, Salem's manufactured goods were valued at about \$8.4 million, of which leather accounted for nearly half. In the summer of 1886, the Knights of Labor brought a strike against the manufacturers for a ten-hour day and other concessions; but the manufacturers imported labor from Maine and Canada, and kept going. The strikers held out, and there was violence in the streets, and even rioting; but the owners prevailed, and many of the defeated workers lost their jobs and suffered, with their families, through a bitter winter.

By the mid-1880s, Salem's cotton-cloth mills at the Point employed 1400 people who produced about 19 million yards annually, worth about \$1.5 million. The city's large shoe factories stood downtown behind the stone depot and on Dodge and Lafayette Streets. A jute bagging company prospered with plants on Skerry

Street and English Street; its products were sent south to be used in cotton-baling. Salem factories also produced lead, paint, and oil. At the Eastern Railroad yard on Bridge Street, cars were repaired and even built new. In 1887 the streets were first lit with electricity, replacing gas-light. The gas works, which had stood on Northey Street since 1850, was moved to a larger site on Bridge Street in 1888, opposite the Beverly Shore.

More factories and more people required more space for buildings, more roads, and more storage areas. This space was created by filling in rivers, harbors, and ponds. The once-broad North River was filled from both shores, and became a canal along Bridge Street above the North Bridge. The large and beautiful Mill Pond, which occupied the whole area between the present Jefferson Avenue, Canal Street, and Loring Avenue, finally vanished beneath streets, storage areas, junk-yards, rail-yards, and parking lots. The South River, too, with its epicenter at Central Street (that's why there was a Custom House built there in 1805) disappeared under the pavement of Riley Plaza and New Derby Street, and some of its old wharves were joined together with much in-fill and turned into coal-yards and lumber-yards. Only a canal was left, running in from Derby and Central Wharves to Lafayette Street.

Salem was hit by a big blizzard on Feb. 18, 1902; and on the morning of the next day Charles McCarthy died here at home. In his brief obituary, it was noted that he had long worked as a gardener for Mrs. John Bertram, and that he was "an aged and well-known resident in the upper part of the city." His funeral was held from this house, after a service at Saint James Church on Federal Street (see Salem *Evening News*, 19 Feb. 1902).

Charles' widow, Ellen, resided here for a while; and then, by 1904, she moved to Boston (per Directory). On 30 March 1905 the homestead was sold to Bernard T. and Daniel F. Kenney, brothers (ED 1773:433). The lot fronted 40' on River street, butted 45' on Bridge Street, and bounded easterly 113' on land of Moynahan and westerly 93' on land of Little. The Kenney brothers mortgaged the place for \$700 to Victor F. Scher.

The Kenneys—Daniel was 32, Bernard 24—moved in here with their sister Katherine I. Kenney and with their parents, Patrick Kenney and Ann M. Kenney (per 1906 Naumkeag Directory). Daniel Kenney was a morocco dresser (leather worker) by trade, while Bernard Kenney was a stiffening moulder at a shoe factory. In the 1890s and perhaps before, the Patrick Kenney family had resided at 23 River Street: in 1894 Daniel was a painter, and Patrick J. Kenney, Daniel's brother, was a shoemaker. Patrick Kenney, the father, was an Irish immigrant, as was his wife Annie (nee Murphy) Kenney. His parents were Daniel Kenney and Bridget Fallon; possibly came to America with them; perhaps in the 1840s or 1850s. Mr. Patrick Kenney, 65, was retired by the end of 1906; and he was here at home on January 18, 1907, when he suffered a stroke and died (per Salem Vital

Records). His widow Ann M. Kenney lived on here for a while. Katherine married Willard Pratt in 1907 and had a child who died young.

In 1910 (census, ward 4, house 96) the house was still crowded with Kenneys: Daniel, 37, ironer in a morocco shop, brother Patrick, 35, a florist, brother Bernard, 29, counter moulder in a shoe factory, and sister Katherine I. (Kenney) Pratt, 32 (but not Mr. Pratt), and niece Anna K. McGrath, 21, a stitcher in a shoe factory. Bernard evidently married in 1910, and moved to Federal Street; and in 1911 Daniel (who also likely had married) moved to Elm Street (site of Hawthorne Boulevard). The brothers continued to own the River Street house but did not reside there; instead, it remained the home of their brother, sister, and niece.

Mrs. Katherine I. (Kenney) Pratt was considered the head of household here by 1914. Her brother Patrick J. Kenney lived here too; and her husband Willard Pratt came and went.

Salem kept growing. The Canadians were followed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by large numbers of Polish and Ukrainian families, who settled primarily in the Derby Street neighborhood. By the eve of World War One, Salem was a bustling, polyglot city that supported large department stores and large factories of every description. People from the surrounding towns, and Marblehead in particular, came to Salem to do their shopping; and its handsome government buildings, as befit the county seat, were busy with conveyances of land, lawsuits, and probate proceedings. The city's politics were lively, and its economy was strong.

On June 25, 1914, in the morning, in Blubber Hollow (Boston Street opposite Federal), a fire started in one of Salem's fire-prone wooden tanneries. This fire soon consumed the building and raced out of control, for the west wind was high and the season had been dry. The next building caught fire, and the next, and out of Blubber Hollow the fire roared easterly, a monstrous front of flame and smoke, wiping out the houses of Boston Street, Essex Street, and upper Broad Street, and then sweeping through Hathorne, Winthrop, Endicott, and other residential streets. Men and machines could not stop it: the enormous fire crossed over into South Salem and destroyed the neighborhoods west of Lafayette Street, then devoured the mansions of Lafayette Street itself, and raged onward into the tenement district. Despite the combined efforts of heroic fire crews from many towns and cities, the fire overwhelmed everything in its path: it smashed into the large factory buildings of the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company (Congress Street), which exploded in an inferno; and it rolled down Lafayette Street and across the water to Derby Street. There, just beyond Union Street, after a 13-hour rampage, the monster died, having consumed 250 acres, 1600 houses, and 41 factories, and leaving three dead and thousands homeless. Some people had insurance, some did not; all received much support and generous donations from all over the country and the world. It was one of the greatest urban disasters in the history of the United States, and the people of Salem would take years to

recover from it. Eventually, they did, and many of the former houses and businesses were rebuilt; and several urban-renewal projects (including Hawthorne Boulevard, which involved removing old houses and widening old streets) were put into effect.

In 1917, Mrs. Katherine Pratt resided here; and by 1920 she was joined (see 1920 census SD 5, ED 267, w4) by Fred Sullivan, 30, tinsmith at a roofing company, his wife Anna, 30, and their daughter Natalie, 4½, living in one unit, while in the other unit lived Willard R. Pratt, 46, glazier in leather shop, wife Katherine 43, and her brother Patrick J. Kenney, 46, heelmaker in a shoe-heel shop. The Sullivans and Pratt-Kenneys would live here for many years more.

By the 1920s, Salem was once again a thriving city; and its tercentenary in 1926 was a time of great celebration. The Depression hit in 1929, and continued through the 1930s. Salem, the county seat and regional retail center, gradually rebounded, and prospered after World War II through the 1950s and into the 1960s. General Electric, Sylvania, Parker Brothers, Pequot Mills (formerly Naumkeag Steam Cotton Co.), Almy's department store, various other large-scale retailers, and Beverly's United Shoe Machinery Company were all major local employers. Then the arrival of suburban shopping malls and the relocation of manufacturing businesses took their toll, as they have with many other cities. More than most, Salem has navigated its way forward into the present with success, trading on its share of notoriety arising from the witch trials, but also from its history as a great seaport and as the home of Bowditch, McIntire, Bentley, Story, and Hawthorne. Most of all, it remains a city where the homes of the old-time merchants, mariners, and mill-operatives are all honored as a large part of what makes Salem different from any other place.

--Robert Booth, 13 Nov. 2004, for Historic Salem, Inc.

## Glossary & Sources

A figure like (ED 123:45) refers to book 123, page 45, Essex South registry of Deeds, Federal Street, Salem.

A figure like (#12345) refers to Essex Probate case 12345, on file at the Essex Probate Court, Federal Street, Salem, or on microfilm at Mass. Archives, Boston, or at the Peabody Essex Museum's Phillips Library, Salem.

MSSRW refers to the multi-volume compendium, *Mass. Soldiers & Sailors in the Revolutionary War*, available at the Salem Public Library among other places.

MSSCRW refers to the multi-volume compendium, *Mass. Soldiers, Sailors, & Marines in the Civil War*, available at the Salem Public Library among other places.

EIHC refers to the Essex Institute Historical Collections (discontinued), a multi-volume set (first volume published in 1859) of data and articles about Essex County. The indices of the EIHC have been consulted regarding many of the people associated with this house.

The six-volume published Salem Vital records (marriages, births, and deaths through 1849) have been consulted, as have the Salem Directory and later Naumkeag Directory, which have information about residents and their addresses, etc.

Sidney Perley's three-volume *History of Salem, 1626-1716* has been consulted, as has the four-volume *William Bentley's Diary*, J. Duncan Phillips' books, some newspaper obituaries, and other sources.

Salem real estate valuations, and, where applicable, Salem Street Books, have also been consulted, as have genealogies.

There is much more material available about Salem and its history; and the reader is encouraged to make his or her own discoveries.

--Robert Booth



389:241

Know all men by these presents, That I, a. Dickson  
 of Salem, in the County of Essex and State of Mass.  
 sachetts Housewright, in consideration of three hundred  
 fifty dollars to me paid by Joseph W. Stafford of said Salem,  
 Concordance the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged,  
 do hereby give, grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the  
 said Stafford — The following described lot of land  
 situate in said Salem Viz, bounded southerly by River Street  
 forty feet, Westerly by land of Phelps. Northerly by the North  
 River, forty feet; Easterly by land of Shey, Together with  
 that portion of the State adjoining the premises lying  
 southerly of the State owned by the Essex Rail Road Cor-  
 poration. To have and to hold the above granted  
 premises, with the privileges and appurtenances thereto  
 belonging, to the said Stafford his heirs and assigns, to his  
 and their use and behoof forever, And I the said Dickson  
 for myself and my heirs, executors and administrators, do  
 covenant with the said Stafford his heirs and assigns, that

a. Dickson  
 to  
 J. W. Stafford  
 J. W. Stafford  
 to  
 See  
 B. 455. N. 185

g





I am lawfully seized in fee of the aforequanted premises; that they are free from all incumbrances that I have good right to sell and convey the same to the said Stafford as aforesaid; and that I will and my heirs, executors and administrators, shall warrant and defend the same to the said Stafford his heirs and assigns forever against the lawful claims and demands of all persons, In witness whereof, we the said Augustus Jackson and the undersigned his wife, who hereby relinquishes her right of dower in the premises, have hereunto set our hands and seals this first day of November in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and forty seven.

Augustus Jackson. seal

Signed, sealed and delivered,

Eliza B. Jackson. seal

in presence of us,

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Jno. St. Nichols witness to Augustus

Essex, November 3<sup>d</sup>. A. D. 1847

Mary L. Dearborn.

Then personally appeared the

above named Augustus Jackson, and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be his free act and deed,

before me Jno. St. Nichols Justice of the peace

Essex, Dec. Nov 8, 1847, 17m. before J. H. H. by A. H. H. H.



412.62

J. M. Stafford  
to  
William Stafford

Assigned  
see  
Ch. 420. Sec 143

Know all men by these presents, that C. Joseph  
M. Stafford of Salem in the County of Essex &  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, hereinafter,  
in consideration of one hundred and fifty  
nine dollars & seven cents paid me by Wil-  
liam Stafford of Salem aforesaid, hereinafter, the  
receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge,  
do hereby give, grant, sell and convey  
unto the said William a certain messuage  
situate in Salem aforesaid and bounded as  
follows, viz. Southernly by River Street forty  
feet, Westernly by land of Phelps, Northernly  
by the North River forty feet Easternly by  
land of Shery, together with that portion of  
the flats adjoining the premises, lying South-  
easterly of the flats owned by the Essex Rail Road  
Company, it being the same land which  
was conveyed to me by Augustus Dickson

Wm. Stafford

Wm. Stafford

Witness my hand and seal this 9th day of August 1860. at the City of Salem, Mass.



by his deed of November 1<sup>st</sup> 1847, a dwelling 63.  
house having since been erected upon said  
premises. To have and to hold the above  
granted premises, to the said William and  
his heirs and assigns, to his & their use  
and behoof forever. And I do covenant with  
the said William and his heirs and as-  
signs that I am lawfully seized in fee of  
the aforesaid premises, that they are  
free of all incumbrances except a prior mort-  
gage to said William that I have good right  
to sell and convey the same to the said  
William and that I will warrant and de-  
fend the same premises to the said William  
and his heirs and assigns forever, against  
the lawful claims and demands of all  
persons. Provided nevertheless that if the  
said Joseph N. Stafford, his heirs, executors,  
or administrators, pay to the said William  
his heirs, executors, administrators or assigns,  
the sum of one hundred & fifty nine dollars  
& 7/100 in one year from date with interest  
then this deed, as also a certain note bear-  
ing even date with these presents, given  
by the said Joseph N. Stafford to the said  
William promising him to pay the same  
sum and interest at the time aforesaid  
shall both be void, otherwise shall re-  
main in full force. In witness whereof  
I the said Joseph N. Stafford, and Elvira,  
the wife of said Joseph, wife in consideration  
of one dollar to her paid, releases all her  
right of dower in said premises hereunto.



Wm. Stafford  
to  
Chs. McBarthy  
622:171

Know all men by these Presents, That I William M. Stafford  
of Boston in the County of Suffolk and State of Massachusetts in con-  
sideration of Four hundred dollars to me paid by Charles McBar-  
thy of Salem in the County of Essex the receipt whereof is hereby ac-  
knowledged do hereby give grant, bargain, sell and convey unto  
the said Charles McBarthy the following described lot of land with  
the Dwelling House and all other buildings thereon situate in said  
Salem viz. bounded southerly by River Street forty feet, westerly by  
land now or late of Phelps, northerly by the North River forty feet  
easterly by land now or late of Shea together with that portion of  
the adjacent flats lying southerly of the flats owned by the Essex  
Rail Road Corporation or however otherwise the premises may be des-  
cribed or bounded. I have and to hold the above granted premises  
with all the privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging to the said  
Charles McBarthy his heirs and assigns to his and their use and  
benefit forever. And I the said Stafford for myself and my heirs,  
executors and administrators, do covenant with the said McBar-  
thy his heirs and assigns, that I am lawfully seized in fee simple  
of the aforegranted premises; that they are free from all incumbrances;  
that I have good right to sell and convey the same to the said  
McBarthy his heirs and assigns forever as aforesaid; and  
that I will and my heirs, executors and administrators shall war-  
rant and defend the same to the said McBarthy his heirs and  
assigns forever against the lawful claims and demands of all per-  
sons. In witness whereof I the said William M. Stafford being  
unmarried have hereunto set my hand and seal this eighth day  
of May in the year of our second eighteen hundred and sixty one,  
signed sealed and delivered, Wm. Stafford Seal  
in presence of Chas. S. Nichols. Essex ss. May 9<sup>th</sup> 1861. Then personally  
appeared the above named William M. Stafford and acknowledged  
the above instrument to be his free act and deed.

Before me William Galley Justice of the Peace  
Essex ss. Recd. May 9. 1861. Subscribed and sworn to before me  
Ephraim Down





1874









