

48 DERBY STREET

Built circa 1800 by EPES COGSWELL, Housewright

History of the property:

The house presently bearing the address 48 Derby Street was built in 1800-1801 by and for Epes Cogswell, on land which formerly belonged to the celebrated English and Derby families of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Salem. This parcel is located in the most densely-settled area of colonial Salem, so it was probably the site of structures prior to 1800, but when Cogswell purchased the lot in that year it was referred to simply as "English's Field". Philip English, who escaped the witchcraft hysteria of 1692-1693, returned to Salem in 1694 to reclaim his considerable possessions and properties. In the early eighteenth century, he laid claim to 14 buildings in Salem Town, 21 ships, and a wharf and a warehouse on Salem Neck. Much of his real property was clustered around English Street, the way that presently bears his name.

In his seminal Salem in the Seventeenth Century, James Duncan Phillips sets the scene for the eventual construction of 48 Derby Street. At the end of that century, "all up and down both sides of English's Lane was English property and to a considerable distance easterly, but the other conspicuous house, besides Mr. English's house [at the easterly corner of Essex and English Streets] was the Blue Anchor Tavern kept by his mother-in-law, Eleanor Hollingsworth, with a large storehouse and a wharf in front of it. This was near the start of the Marblehead Ferry, handy to the fishing industries of Winter Island and to travelers entering the town by coastwise boats which did not take the time to go up the inner harbor. Most of the houses eastward to Winter Island were occupied by fishermen, mariners, and shipwrights." ¹

Epes Cogswell, a carpenter, was a notable exception to this maritime community when he built his house on former English land a century later. In the interim, the land passed from the English to the Derby family when Richard Derby, the father of "America's first millionaire" Elias Hasket Derby, purchased "a lot of land in the East Parish so called in said Salem being two lots lying contiguous formerly called Dicers and Parkers" from Mary Browne, the "daughter and one of the heirs of Phillip English formerly of

¹ James Duncan Phillips, Salem in the Seventeenth Century. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1933, p. 323.

said Salem Merchant Deceased" in 1761. ²

Seven years later "Derby Street" was laid out by the town of Salem. In late eighteenth-century deeds and records, it is referred to alternatively as a "new way" (1768), a "way leading from the Long Wharf to the ropewalk" (1770), "Fore Street" (1787) and finally "Derby Street" in 1799. The new street replaced an "ancient highway" closer to the shoreline.

A decade after Richard Derby's death in 1783, one of his heirs, John Derby, conveyed "a certain piece or parcel of land commonly called English's Field lying in Salem" to Edward Allen, captain of the Antelope, one of the Derby family's many ships. ³ Apparently Captain Allen did not build on the land, as he possessed a "dwelling house" elsewhere in Salem and transferred the property to Epes Cogswell seven years later by a deed which mentions no structures. ⁴

The Cogswell family owned the present-day 48 Derby Street for nearly seventy-five years, and supplemented its lot with adjacent parcels in 1818 and 1831. ⁵ There were occasional resident boarders, and it has the appearance of a two-family house in the Salem Directories. In 1874 Epes Cogswell Jr. and his siblings conveyed the family homestead, then designated 24 Derby Street, to John Kennedy of Salem, a laborer. ⁶ In addition to the present-day 48 Derby Street, the "John Kennedy Estate" included an additional structure in the later nineteenth century, as indicated on the 1897 Atlas of Salem. The Kennedy family occupied the main house, but also leased out rooms to long-term tenants such as Joseph Perkins, Jr., a Harbor pilot, and the widows Mrs. M.J. Brown and Mrs. Esther L. King. ⁷ After 1900 Mary Kennedy, herself a widow, lived at 48 Derby Street alone until her death. In 1930, a Kennedy family trust was created for then owner Timothy J. Kennedy, who assigned "all my right, title and interest....in and to a certain piece of real estate situate at 48 Derby Street in said Salem" to his relative Annie J. Noonan in return for the establishment of a trust fund from which he would be paid "the sum of on or about Seven Dollars each and every week and a further sum sufficient to pay his board, care and expenses at the Salem

² Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 107, leaf 169 (March 4, 1761).

³ E.C.R.D. Book 157, leaf 73 (December 18, 1793).

⁴ E.C.R.D. Book 165, leaf 278 (June 5, 1800).

⁵ E.C.R.D. Book 216, leaf 23 (March 9, 1818); E.C.R.D. Book 260, leaf 121 (March 31, 1831).

⁶ E.C.R.D. Book 916, pages 288-289 (November 21, 1874).

⁷ Salem Directories, 1875-1900.

Almshouse, in Salem, in said County of Essex." ⁸

For the remainder of the twentieth century, 48 Derby Street has been the address of a succession of residents, including Frank Gajewski, a laborer (1930s-1950s), James Cooper, a busdriver for the MBTA, and his wife Elizabeth (1960s-80s), and, more recently, Brian and Karen Condron and William and Francine Dearstyne.

Transfers of title:

Essex County (South) Registry of Deeds, Book 107, leaf 169

Grantor: Mary Browne of Salem, Daughter and one of the Heirs of Phillip English, formerly of said Salem Deceased

Grantee: Richard Derby of Salem, Merchant

Consideration: 43 Pounds, 6 shillings, and 8 pence Lawful Money

Conveyance of: "A Lot of Land in the East Parish so called in said Salem being two lots lying contiguous formerly called Dicers and Parkers, containing about an acre and five poles which was assigned to me in the Division of the Real Estate of my Father Phillip English deceased and is bounded Westerly on said Derby's land formerly Hollingsworth's and there measures four hundred and eight feet Northerly on Land now or late of Touzel's in part and partly on land late of Joseph Browne Deceased measuring against said Touzel's land fifty-five feet against said land of Joseph Browne fifty-two feet and so in the whole one hundred and seven feet easterly by land in the occupation of Samuel Whitford measuring from said Browne's land Southerly three hundred and twelve feet where this piece of land now granted is over one hundred and thirty feet in breadth and thence this East side line continues in about one hundred and forty feet together with the wharfe thereto belonging and the flats and land on the front of said piece of land and on the South side of said way and belonging to said lots with the privileges and appurtenances thereof."

Date recorded: March 16, 1761

E.C.R.D., Book 143, leaves 30-32

Divisional deed: of Richard Derby's property to his heirs. John Derby receives a "piece of land commonly called English's Field bounded southwesterly on English's Lane so called southeasterly on Salem Harbour."

Date recorded: January 11, 1785

⁸ E.C.R.D. Book 2840, pages 438-439 (April 15, 1930).

E.C.R.D., Book 157, leaves 73-74

Grantor: John Derby of Boston, Merchant
Grantee: Edward Allen of Salem, Mariner
Consideration: 100 Pounds Lawful Money
Conveyance of: "a certain piece or parcel of land commonly called English's field lying in Salem aforesaid bounded southwesterly on English's Lane so called" and on all other sides by Derby land.
Date recorded: December 14, 1793

E.C.R.D. Book 165, leaf 278

Grantor: Edward Allen of Salem, Merchant
Grantee: Epes Cogswell of Salem, Housewright
Consideration: \$300
Conveyance of: "a piece of land situate in said Salem, and is bounded as follows, to wit, southeasterly on Derby Street, there measuring sixty-three feet, west southerly on land of Josiah Gatchell one hundred and five feet, northwesterly on my other land sixty feet and eight inches, and northeasterly on my other land one hundred and five feet, with the privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging."
Date recorded: June 5, 1800

E.C.R.D. Book 260, leaf 121

Grantor: James Perkins of Salem, Blacksmith
Grantee: Epes Cogswell of Salem, Housewright
Consideration: \$8.50
Conveyance of: "a narrow strip of land in said Salem taken from the Western side of that land which said Perkins and myself purchased of Joseph Webb....The strip hereby conveyed is one foot wide and one hundred and five feet long bounding Northerly on Allen Street one foot Easterly on land of said Perkins and Cogswell one hundred and five feet Southerly on Derby Street one foot and Westerly on land of said Cogswell one hundred and five feet to the first bounds."
Date recorded: March 31, 1831

E.C.R.D. Book 916, pages 288-289

Grantors: Epes A. Cogswell, Harriet E. Cogswell and Ebenezer Cleaveland, Guardian of Arthur C. Cogswell, all of Salem
Grantee: John Kennedy of Salem, Laborer
Consideration: \$1100
Conveyance of: three undivided third parts "of a certain piece of land with a two-story dwelling house thereon, situated on Derby Street in said Salem."
Date recorded: November 19, 1874

E.C.R.D. Book 2831, page 479

Grantors: Annie J. Noonan of Beverly, Dennis F. Sweeney of Boston, and James P. Sweeney of Peabody, "heirs of John Kennedy, formerly of Salem, in the County of Essex, deceased."

Grantee: Timothy J. Kennedy of Salem

Consideration: paid

Conveyance of: "all our right, title and interest" in 48 Derby Street.

Date recorded: January 6, 1930

E.C.R.D. Book 2840, pages 438-439

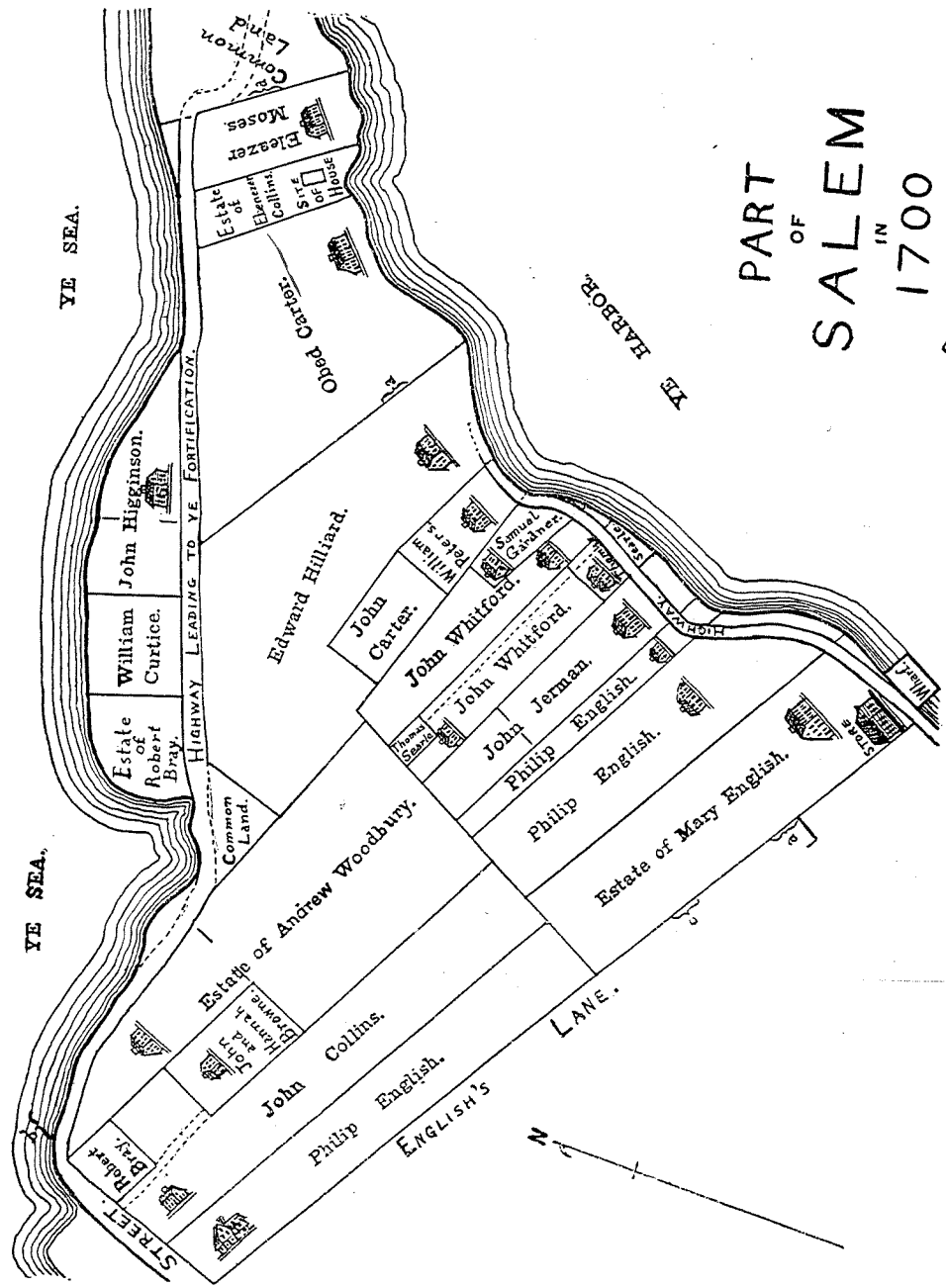
Trust Agreement: Timothy Kennedy assigns to Annie J. Noonan "all right, title, and interest that I may have in and to a certain piece of real estate situate at 48 Derby Street.... I further set over unto said Annie J. Noonan all money and sums of money that may be coming to me or that I may be entitled to from said sale to said Annie J. Noonan, but the same, nevertheless, is to her upon trust for the following purposes and conditions: That the said Annie J. Noonan will deposit all balances of any and such moneys after necessary expenses have been deducted in some bank or banks in said Salem, as trustee for the aforesaid Timothy J. Kennedy, and that out of said trust fund the aforesaid Annie J. Noonan hereby covenants and agrees that she will pay unto the said Timothy J. Kennedy or cause to be paid to him the sum of on or about Seven Dollars each and every week and a further sum sufficient to pay his board, care and expenses at the Salem Almshouse, in Salem, in the County of Essex."

Date recorded: April 15, 1930

E.C.R.D. Book 2842, page 501

Notice of Disposal of [above] Petition

Date recorded: April 18, 1930



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