

The Mary Ann Ropes House

373 Essex St. Salem

built in 1844

Sally Dee
1970

MARY ANN ROPES HOUSE

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

For interest's sake, this summary will begin over 100 yrs. before the Ropes house was built. By the late 17th Century, John Maule and his son Thomas held title to a large tract of land extending from the "main street" (Essex St.) south to what is now Broad St. This area was known as "meetinghouse field"; as the Quaker Maules permitted the erection of the small Friends' Meetinghouse on one corner. Richard Oaker is listed as buying part of this field from the Maules in 1710, but only 2 yrs. later he sold the land to James Bowdoin. 20 yrs. later when Samuel Stone bought it, there was a dwelling house and perhaps other buildings on it. For 30 yrs. Samuel Stone apparently lived here and, as a tailor operated a small tailor's shop in a front room. He was married to Mary Ulman in 1762, and later that same year he died, leaving his property to his bride. Probably because of debts, his estate was entailed by a lawsuit brought about by William Browne and son. By 1764 the widow Stone had married Samuel Ropes and had lost a good part of her homestead including the house to William B. Browne through the court judgment.

In 1766 John Bullock Jr. a Salem fisherman and his wife bought up both parts of the property and lived there for 11 yrs. Thomas Holmes, a mariner, bought it described as a "house and $\frac{3}{4}$ acre" in 1777: probably lived there with his family for the next 43 yrs. In 1820 for \$1 Sarah Holmes took possession. She was probably the sister-in-law of Thomas Holmes, and undoubtedly the mother-in-law

of Capt. Timothy Ropes, listed as co-owners in this sale. In later years this house was known as "Widow Holmes' house". Capt. Ropes and his wife and children lived next door. (375 Essex St.)

By 1835 the widow Holmes had died, and her grandson Timothy Ropes jr. administering her estate sold the property at a public sale to Tucker Daland. There is a curious succession of dates at this period. Tucker Daland was never listed in the early Directories as living in this house. (373 Essex St.)

The next deed transfer is dated 1848, when house and land were sold by Daland for \$675 to the 3 unmarried daughters of Capt. Timothy Ropes: Sarah, Elizabeth, and Mary Ann. Meanwhile however Mary Ann Ropes as early as 1842 is listed on the tax records for that address. In 1843 she is listed as owner of an "unfinished house" assessed at \$500.

The next year the valuation was \$1200: a figure unchanged for some years. Oliver Thayer in 1884 in his "Recollections of Essex St." relates that Mary Ann Ropes had the old widow Holmes house (by then about 120 yrs. old) torn down, and built the present house on its site. The tax records indicate that by 1844 the present house at 373 Essex St. was complete. The Salem Directory of 1846 lists Mary Ann and Elizabeth Ropes living in the new house next door to their parents.

In 1848, the year the Ropes daughters obtained title to the land and its new house, Mary Ann married John Bertram, and the succeeding years' directories list only her 2 unmarried sisters as living on at 373 Essex St. That same year brought the deaths (of "consumption") of the elderly Ropes' next door: Capt. Timothy and his wife Sarah. Succeeding tax years list the valuations of both houses (373 and 375

Essex St.) under the "estate of Timothy Ropes." This estate was administered by son Timothy Jr., a merchant who lived farther up Essex St. in his own house. Over the next years the title to the property at 373 Essex St. was involved in an Indenture between Timothy Jr. and his sisters plus John Bertram, Mary Ann's husband. By 1859 John and Mary Ann Bertram were living across the street at 370 Essex St. in the building which is the Public Library.

In 1882 the only surviving sister, Mary Ann Ropes Bertram paid off the last of the promissory notes to her deceased brother's Trustee, and obtained sole title to her house. She granted the property 8 yrs. later to her brother Timothy's daughter Sarah H. Ropes.

Sarah H. Ropes willed the house and land to her nephew John Bertram Ropes, who in 1915 transferred title (for \$1) to Elinor G. Ives. The Ives family lived at #373 for a few years until they purchased the more spacious Cabot house next door. (the intervening old Lang house was torn down in the 1890's) From 1926 to 1940 Marie Eleanore Webb owned the property. The next 4 yrs. saw several owners: Frances Morse, Nora Haran, Katharine O. Wright, until in 1944 Dr. and Mrs. Benjamin F. Cornwall bought the house. For 21 years the Cornwall family lived there until in 1965 a new young family, Gerard and Suzanne Papin bought and reside in the gracious Mary Ann Ropes house: now in 1970
126 years old.

DOCUMENTATION

Book 61 p. 215 Feb. 20, 1732

James Bowdoin of Boston sells to Samuel Stone tailor of Salem for £170 land described below which he bought Sept. 20, 1712 from Richard Oaker, who bought the land in 1710 from Thomas Maule, atty. to John Maule of Phila. Land described: messuage and tenement with approx. 105 poles of land; 31' from Quaker meetinghouse, E. half the length of meetinghouse field, bounded on the N. by the main street, on E. by land of John Maule, on W. by land of Widow Derby.

Probate # 26741 Oct. 25, 1762

Samuel Stone in will names his wife Mary Stone executrix, and leaves all property to her. Inventory includes dwelling house, barn, + land worth £220.

Book 121 p. 124 Aug 22, 1766

William Burnett Browne and Judith his wife for £97 4 sh 11 p sell to John Bullock jr. of Salem, fisherman, the dwelling house and land, part of the estate of Samuel Stone late of Salem, tailor dec., which was set off to me as exec. of will of Wm. Browne late of Beverly dec., to satisfy a judgment against the estate of said Sam'l Stone in the hands of Samuel Ropes and his wife Mary Bairn, she being exec. of will of Sam'l Stone dec.

(description of bounds follows)

Book 121 p. 124 Aug. 22, 1766

Samuel Ropes of Salem, cordwainer, and Mary Barbara his wife for £33 6 sh sell to John Bullock jr. part of the homestead land of Samuel Stone, dec., former husband of said Mary Barbara.

(description of land, + legal judgment. By these 2 documents John Bullock takes poss. of all Samuel Stone's former property.)

Book 135 p. 157 May 30, 1777

John Bullock fisherman of Salem and wife Barbara sell for £200 to Thomas Holmes mariner of Salem his homestead where he now lives consisting of a house and $\frac{3}{4}$ acre more or less bounded: on E. by land of Lang; on S. partly on land of J. Newhall, partly on land of Jos. Symonds; on W. by land of Ford; on N. partly by main St. and partly by land of Ford.

Book 225 p. 117 Sept. 21, 1820

Timothy Ropes mariner of Salem, Sarah his wife, and Thomas Holmes mariner of Salem, for \$1 and considerations sell to Sarah Holmes widow 2 pieces of land; one on Chestnut St. and the other house + land mentioned above.

Book 235 p. 196 April 28, 1824

Sarah Holmes widow of Salem buys at public auction land of the late John Jenks. (this is the house and land next door to the W.)

Book 398 p. 19 Sept. 9, 1835

Timothy Ropes Jr. adm. of estate of Sarah Helmes widow, dec. of Salem, sells at public auction for \$375 to Tucker Daland the following messuage in Salem: bounded on N. by Essex St.; W. by land late of Rev. Dan'l Hopkins dec.; S. by brick barn and fence of West; E. by land of Lang.

Book 398 p. 19 May 20, 1848

Tucker Daland and wife Eliza sell for \$675 to Sarah G. Elizabeth G. and Mary Ann Ropes all single of Salem a certain messuage in Salem bounded: on N. by Essex St.; on W. by land of Rev. Dan'l Hopkins dec.; on S. by a brick barn and fence of West; on E. by land now or late of Lang.

Book 519 p. 11 June 23, 1854

An indenture betw. John Bertram merchant of Salem, Mary Ann his wife, Sarah G. Ropes and Elizabeth G. Ropes both single (parties of 1st part) and Timothy Ropes merchant (party of 2^d part) for \$1 convey to said Timothy a certain messuage bounded on N. by Essex St.; W. by land of Dr. Hopkins dec.; S. on brick barn and fence of West; E. by land now or late of Lang. (promissory notes involved also, and when 2 of sisters are dec. trust is terminated and surviving sister receives estate.)

Book 7076 p. 265 March 18, 1882

Edward D. Ropes trustee acting for Timothy Ropes dec. to fulfill terms of an Indenture (Book 519 p. 11) betw. John Bertram his wife Mary Ann, Sarah G. Ropes, Elizabeth G. Ropes and said Timothy Ropes all of Salem in 1855 in consideration of

payment in full of 3 promissory notes of \$366.67 each
 release to Mary Ann Bertram my right to an estate des-
 cribed in said Indenture as follows: a messuage in Salem
 bounded N. on Essex St.; W. on land late of Rev. Dan'l. Hopkins
 dec.; S. on brick barn and fence in line of West; E.
 by land now or late of Daniel Lang. (Sarah G. and Elizabeth
 G. Ropes are dec.)

Book 1616 p. 400 July 31, 1900

Mary Ann Bertram of Salem, widow of John Bertram, grants
 to her niece Sarah H. Ropes land and buildings at 373
 Essex St. described: beginning at W. corner thereof on
 Essex St. running NE on said St. 72'-8" to land late of
 Endicott, now of Low; SE by land of Low 73'-1" to an
 angle, then more S. 71'-10" to land of Webb; then SW by
 land of Webb 68' by a brick barn; then NW 72' to an
 angle; then more N. 8'-4" to another angle; then NW
 40'-10" to Essex St. and point begun at. The last 3
 courses being by land of Gifford.

Book 2292 p. 285 March 31, 1915

John Bertram Ropes of Salem sells for \$1 and considerations
 to Elinor G. Ives of Salem wife of Oscar J. Ives land
 and buildings at 373 Essex St. (same description as
 above) being premises conveyed to me by will of my
 late aunt Sarah H. Ropes.

Book 2691 p. 575 Sept. 3, 1926

Oscar J. and Elinor G. Ives sell to Marie Eleanore Webb

wife of Albert E. Webb land and buildings at 373 Essex St. described: beg. at W. corner thereof on Essex St. running NE by said St. 72'-8" to land late of Endicott, now of grantor; then SE by said land of grantor 73'-1" to an angle; then more S. 71'-10" to land now or late of Webb; then SW by land of Webb 68' and by a brick barn; then NW 72' to an angle; then N. 8'-4" to another angle; then NW 40'-10" to Essex St. and point begun at, the last 3 courses by land now or late of Gifford.

Book 3220 p. 473 June 19, 1940

Marie Eleonore Webb widow of Salem sells to Frances L. Morse of Salem land and buildings at 373 Essex St. (same description as above)

Book 3319 p. 54 Nov. 20, 1942

Frances L. Morse of Salem wife of Frank P. Morse Jr sells to Nora Haran of Salem land and buildings at 373 Essex St. (same description as above.)

Book 3334 p. 33 June 12, 1943

Nora Haran unmarried of Salem sells to Katharine O. Wright, widow of Salem land and buildings at 373 Essex St. (same description as above)

Book 3385 p. 153 Sept. 30, 1944

John C. Coughlin, exec. of will of Katharine Osgood Wright of Topsfield sells to Benjamin F. and Mary P. Cornwall of Swampscott land and buildings at 373

Essex St. described: beginning at W corner thereof on Essex St. running NE by said St. 72'-8" to land now or late of Low; 73'-1" to an angle, then more S by said land of Low 71'-10" to land now or late of Webb; then SW by land of Webb 68' by a brick barn; then NW 72' to an angle; then N 8'-4" to another angle; then NW 40'-10" to Essex St. and point begun at.

Book 5257 p.481 April 6, 1965

Benjamin F. and Mary P. Cornwall sell to Gerard A. and Suzanne M. Papin land and buildings thereon at 373 Essex St. Salem described: beginning at the W. corner thereof on Essex St. and running N.E. by Essex St. 72'-8" to land now or late of Low; turning and running SE by said land of Low 71'-10" to land now or late of Webb; then SW by said land of Webb by a brick barn 68'; then NW 72' to an angle; then about N 8'-4" to another angle; then NW 40'-10" to Essex St. and point begun at.

Essex Institute Historical Collections Vol. 21 p.221

"Early Recollections of the Upper Portion of Essex St." by Oliver Thayer, 1884

(proceeding next after Judge Endicott's and the Lang house)

"- Next was the old Holmes house, so called, a

2 story old building with a pitched roof, end to the street, occupied by several families. The front room was a small shop kept by Sally Bacon for years. This was taken down some years since by Miss Mary Ann Ropes, now Mrs. John Bartram who built the present house on its site. The house next above was the home of Capt. Timothy Ropes."

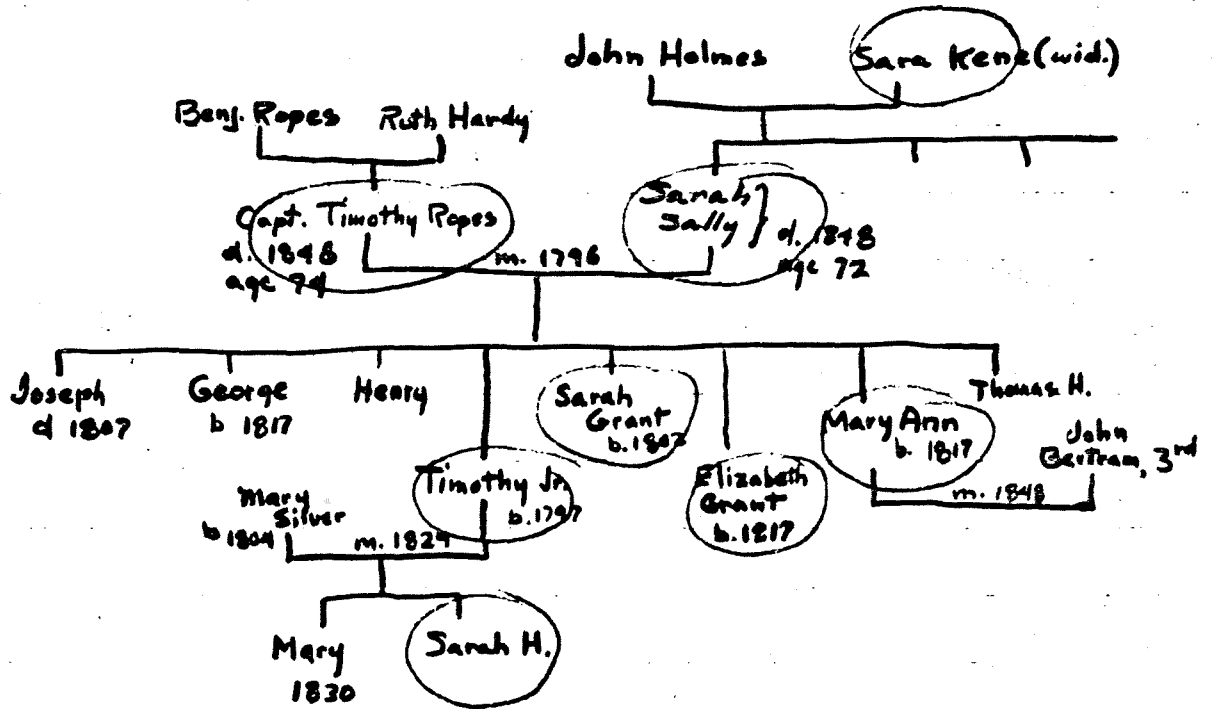
Salem Directories

1837	Timothy Ropes	375 Essex St.
1842	Timothy Ropes	375 Essex St.
	Mary Ann Ropes, teacher	"
	E. G. Ropes	"
1846	Mary Ann Ropes	373 Essex St.
	E. G. Ropes	"
1850	Sarah G. Ropes	"
	E. G. Ropes	"
1851 + 1853	same two)	"

City of Salem Tax Records: Valuations

1839	Wid. Holmes (listed)	
1840 and 1841	(no owner or tax mentioned)	
1842	Mary Ann Ropes (listed, but no tax valuation)	
1843	" " " unfinished house \$500	373 Essex St.
1844	" " " 373 Essex St. \$1200	Tim. Ropes, 375 Es. St. \$800
1845 } 1846 }	" " " 373 Essex St. \$1200	Tim. Ropes 375 Essex St. \$800
1847 } 1848 }	Mary Ann Ropes " " "	Estate of T. Ropes 1 house \$700
1849 } 1850 }	(no listing of M.A. Ropes) Estate of Timothy Ropes	2 houses \$2200
1851	Mary Ropes (name only) Est. of T. Ropes	2 houses \$3000
1852 } 1853 }	Estate of Timothy Ropes	2 houses \$3000
1854	" " "	373 Essex St. \$2000 375 Essex \$1200

from VITAL STATISTICS 1640-1850



1807
1817
1824
1830
1848