

76 & 78 Essex Street

This house was built by Joseph Danforth, Salem housewright, in 1832.

In 1700 this land was in the Cheever family of Salem; on 7 Mar 1727/8 widow Mary Cheever sold a part of it with "a small old house" thereon for 85 li to her son James Cheever, Salem turner (46:167). Towards the end of the 18th century it was owned by Capt Timothy Wellman; in the partition of his estate in 1818, his son George received the \$800 "Wyatt lot," so-called, bounded southerly 54' on Essex St, westerly on Frye & Mansfield 155', northerly 45' on "Washington Square or Bath Street," and easterly on Sarah Johnson 160'; the southerly half of this piece is the present house lot (217:230). Five years later 30 June 1823 George Wellman, Salem mariner, for \$600 sold the whole piece to William Silsbee, Salem merchant, who lived across the street (232:176). On 26 Ap 1831 Mr Silsbee for \$582.50 granted the tract to Joseph Danforth, Salem housewright (267:60).

Joseph Danforth (1782-1840) was born in Newbury, but moved to Salem by 16 Oct 1810, when he married, here, Phebe Kimball of Bradford. They had seven children, all sons, between 1811-33, and all but one of these boys survived to adulthood. Mrs Phebe D died 11 Oct 1835, whereupon Mr Danforth married, secondly, 12 Jan 1836 Mrs Mary Russell, with whom he apparently did not reside. He died 26 Jan 1840, in his 58th year.

He probably built the house by late 1832, for on 22 Jan 1833 Mr Danforth for \$300 mortgaged to widow Mercy Upton of Salem the land "with a dwelling house and outbuildings standing thereon" (273:156). The 1833 Salem tax valuation shows the value of his property next to Joseph's name in ward 2; the notation "lot land, \$500" is crossed out, with "house, \$3000" substituted in its place, although he was not taxed on the value of the new house until the 1834 valuation. On 4 Ap 1834 Mr Danforth was given a \$950 second mortgage loan from Mrs Upton; it was discharged ten years later (271:225).

Joseph Danforth died 26 Jan 1840, at which time his estate (including "a two story dwelling house 76 & 78 Essex St, \$3200) descended to his six sons (#7143). Four years later, 2 May 1844, two of the brothers, George F and Joseph A, released their rights in the premises for \$1066 to brother John K Danforth, Salem tailor (344:147, 147). John K thus came to own an undivided half of the premises. He successfully petitioned to have the property partitioned, and on 28 Mar 1845 the court set off to him the western half of the house and grounds, being #78 Essex Street (354:261). John K Danforth owned this property at his death on 11 June 1863, at which time it (worth \$2000) descended to his three minor children, with widow Cornelia's dower right therein (#36924). On 29 Ap 1865 Mrs Danforth and her three sons sold #78 to Sarah Baxter Endicott, wife of Charles Endicott, of Salem, for a total of \$1935.95 (682:252, 252, 253).

Meanwhile, back at the eastern half of the house, #76 Essex Street: on 21 Mar 1848 Samuel G Danforth sold his one-third interest therein to his brother William H (395:49). William then mortgaged his 2/3 right on 7 June 1855 to brother John K (514:35). On 15 Mar 1858 John K foreclosed the mortgage and took possession of the premises (567:49). He sold this 2/3 share on 1 July 1859 to the owner of the remaining 1/3, youngest brother Edward F Danforth (589:292). On 16 Dec 1858 William H had lost his right in equity to redeem the mortgage to his brother Samuel G (584:52), and on 2 July 1859 Samuel G sold the equity to Edward F (589:291). Thus Edward F Danforth came to possess the eastern half, which he mortgaged 5 Feb 1863 to brother Samuel G (647:211). This mortgage was not redeemed, and on 4 Ap 1866 Samuel sold #76 out of the family to Benjamin S Newhall of Salem (702:68). Nine years later, 22 June 1875, Mr Newhall bought the western half, #78, from Mrs Endicott (930:267). And so Mr Newhall came to own both halves of the double house.

Benjamin S Newhall died on 3 Ap 1886, willing the premises to his wife Caroline M for life (#63363). Mrs Newhall was deceased by 16 Ap 1901, when the Newhall heirs granted 76 & 78 Essex St to John H Holt of Salem (1640:3). Fourteen years later, 31 Aug 1915, Mr Holt conveyed to Mrs Katherine M Rushford of Salem (2505:589). On 20 Oct 1916 she conveyed to Harry E Jackson of Danvers (2344:499). On 22 Dec 1916 Mr Jackson conveyed to Mrs E Isabel R shford of Danvers (2354:51).

Mrs Rushford sold the premises on 26 July 1921 to Charles Aronson of Salem (2489:384). Two years later, 25 July 1923, Mr Aronson conveyed to Mr & Mrs Delbert R Jones as joint tenants (2562:100). Nearly twenty years later, 25 July 1942, Mrs Margaret A Jones (Mr Jones having died) conveyed to Mary f Evans of Salem (3308:177) and she immediately re-conveyed to Mrs Jones, Catherine M Tracey, and Mary D Buckley as joint tenants (3308:178). On 30 Jan 1957, Mrs Jones being deceased, C.M. Tracey and M.D. Buckley conveyed to Mr & Mrs Richard C Copeland of Salem (4779:189).

On 12 June 1961 Mr & Mrs Copeland granted the double house to the present owners, Mr & Mrs Richard D Anderson of Salem (4779:189).

Robert Booth
27 July 1977

Notes:

In the first Salem Directory, printed in 1837 but based on facts as of 1836, Joseph Danforth was listed as a "ship-joiner" with a place of business at 15 Neptune Street and a house at 15 Carlton Street. The Carlton Street house was the family residence, and after Mr Danforth's death his eldest son (and probably other sons) lived here; by 1846 his two eldest sons Joseph and John lived at 15 Carlton Street. John continued to live there until 1854, when he moved into 78 Essex Street, where he and his family lived until his death. None of the other Danforth brothers ever lived at 76-78 Essex Street, according to the records.

This house bears a striking resemblance to the double house at 55-57 Federal Street, which was built in 1836. It seems likely that Joseph Danforth was the builder of the Federal Street house as well.

A figure such as (12:34) refers to Southern Essex County deed book 12, page or leaf 34. A figure such as (#1234) refers to Southern Essex County Probate docket #1234.

DANFORTH

Joseph (1782-1840) m. (1) 1810 Phebe Kimball of Bradford (1788-1835), m. (2) 1836 Mrs Mary Russell of Salem. Children:

- 1) Joseph Augustus, 1811, m. 1838 Sarah Nichols (1819-94), d. 1877.
- 2) John Kimball, 1813, m. 1842 Cornelia Dunlap; d. 1863.
- 3) William Henry, 1817, d. Boston 1870. Carpenter & inventor.
- 4) Samuel Gray, 1819, m. 1845 Elizabeth Abbot; d. 1867.
- 5) George Frederick, 1822, m. 1847 Martha J Gwinn; d. 1855.
- 6) James Albert, 1830, d. 2 Mar 1832 "from the effects of vaccination."
- 7) Edward Francis, 1833, m. 1856 Louisa M Wood, lived Beverly.

Genealogical information from the Danforth Genealogy by John J May, Chas H Pope, Boston, 1902; pages 394 and 406-7.

Rough Plan of House Lots, #74 and #76-78 Essex Street

