

Historic Salem incorporated

P.O. BOX 865 SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS 01970 / PHONE (508) 745-0799

34 ENGLISH STREET
Built by
ROBERT HILL, boatbuilder
in 1812

Research:

Donna Vinson

August, 1992

34 ENGLISH STREET

Built in 1812 by Robert Hill, Boatbuilder

History of the property:

The present-day 34 English Street (formerly 10 English Street and 36 English Street) was built on the seventeenth-century land grant of Joseph Swasey, seaman. Swasey conveyed a parcel of his grant to his daughter Mary and her husband Thomas Mascoll, another mariner, after their marriage in 1688 (Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 18, leaf 9). The Mascolls immediately built a large house (pictured on the inserted map from Sidney Perley's "Salem in 1700. No. 22" Essex Antiquarian 10 (1906): 21-31) which stood until Hill's predecessor, Martha Rice, had it torn down in 1798-99.

English Street was laid out at the end of the seventeenth century by proprietors of adjoining property, including Philip English, who owned lots on both sides of the new path between Essex and Derby Streets, and Thomas Mascoll. The way was called English Lane throughout the eighteenth century, and English Street from 1799.

The sons and heirs of Thomas and Mary Mascoll, John and Joseph, divided the house between them in 1729 and moved their families into easterly and westerly halves (E.C.R.D. Book 52, leaf 87; Book 55, leaf 41). The westerly half of the house remained in the Mascoll family only until 1734, while the easterly half was retained by John Mascoll for twenty more years. From the mid-eighteenth century, both sides were conveyed to a series of mariner grantees (E.C.R.D. Book 68, leaf 114); Book 101, leaf 90; Book 112, leaf 167; Book 116, leaf 62; Book 150, leaf 167). At the end of the century Martha Rice, a widow who held adjoining property and had served as the administratrix of the lot's last proprietor, purchased the property and tore down the old Mascoll homestead (E.C.R.D. Book 164, leaf 80). On her newly-enlarged lot, Martha Rice constructed a new house for herself in 1800 and apparently used the Mascoll land for a garden.

Martha Rice sold the lot "running westerly by my other land thirty-three feet or more" to Robert Hill, boatbuilder, on April 15, 1812 (E.C.R.D. Book 195, leaf 256). There are no buildings mentioned in the deed. Robert Hill immediately erected a house for his family, who occupied the new house for the next thirty years. Following her husband's death in 1845, Lucy Hill conveyed the house and lot to Prince Farmer, a Salem landlord, merchant, shopowner, and purveyor of "oysters, etc..." (E.C.R.D. Book 376, leaf 283; Salem Directory, 1850). Farmer's residence was on Crombie Street, so he leased the house to a series of tenants until his death in 1853, after which it came into the possession of his daughter Sarah and son-in-law William Prescott.

From the 1850s until the 1920s 34 English Street was seldom owner-occupied. William Prescott moved to California shortly after his father-in-law's death, leaving his wife in Salem. Sarah Prescott petitioned the Essex County Probate Court to sell her inheritance in 1859, on the grounds that "her husband has resided for four years last past in said San Francisco, is engaged in business there and intends to make his permanent residence in said California....[and] said William has written to your petitioner desiring her to sell her estate aforesaid and join him in said California" (E.C.R.D. Book 596, leaves 77-78). The Court consented to the sale, and Mrs. Prescott conveyed her property to John H. Nichols of Salem, a member of the large, famous, and wealthy Nichols family who resided on Chestnut Street (E.C.R.D. Book 596, leaves 78-78; Salem Directories, 1860-1870). During the 1860s 34 English Street was uninhabited; perhaps Mr. Nichols did not need the rental income. When he moved to New York City in 1868 he sold many of his Salem properties, including 34 English Street, to his brother Charles, who also resided on Chestnut Street (E.C.R.D. Book 742, leaf 288).

A year later, Charles Nichols conveyed the property, financing the sale himself, to John Wright of Salem, a trader, who occupied the house for the next twenty years, until he was unable to meet the mortgage payments. Samuel A. Potter of Salem, the assignee of Nichols' mortgage, took possession of the property on June 6, 1889 (E.C.R.D. Book 786, leaves 141-143; E.C.R.D. Book 1250, leaves 514-15; Salem Directories, 1869-1889). Several months later, Potter sold a half-

interest in the house to Calvin Ainsworth of Salem, thus transforming 34 English Street into a two-family house (E.C.R.D. Book 1260, leaves 302-303). Neither owner occupied the property; the Potters resided on Arbella Street and the Ainsworths on Federal Street. During the 1890s, both units of the property were leased to a series of leatherworking tenants (Salem Directories, 1890-1897). The heirs of Ainsworth and Potter sold their interests in the property to Mary E. Dwyer of Salem in 1897, though 34 English Street continued to function as a two-family house (E.C.R.D. Book 1514, pages 555-556). The Dwyer family leased both units out and resided elsewhere in Salem for most of their term of possession. In 1922 Mary Dwyer sold the property to Julian and Josefa Laskowski of Salem, who promptly took up residence in half of the house and leased out the other unit (E.C.R.D. Book 2520, page 18). Mr. Laskowski was a leatherworker, as were many of his neighbors at that time.

The Laskowski family owned and occupied (half of) 34 English Street for the next sixty years. After the death of Josefa Laskowski in 1982, her heirs and executors, Jane Latauskas and Stanley Laskowski, conveyed the property to Sophie B. Myslinski of Salem (E.C.R.D. Book 6944, page 732). Mrs. Myslinski resided at 34 English Street until her death, after which the administrators of her estate sold the property to its current owners, Gary M. Adams and Brian J. Power, Jr..

Documentation:

Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 101, leaf 90

Grantor: John Mascoll of Salem, Mariner

Grantee: Samuel Webb of Salem, Mariner

Consideration: £33.6s.8p.

Conveyance of: "...my late father's dwelling house with a piece of land thereunto belonging in Salem...on English's Lane."

Date recorded: December 6, 1754

E.C.R.D. Book 116, leaf 62

Grantor: Samuel Webb of Salem, Mariner

Grantee: William Crispin of Salem, Mariner

Consideration: £46.13s.4p.

Conveyance of: "the easterly end" of a dwelling house on English Street.

Date recorded: August 6, 1765

E.C.R.D. Book 150, leaves 167-168

Grantor: William Crispin of Salem, Mariner

Grantee: David Hilliard of Salem, Ropemaker

Consideration: £46.13s.4p.

Conveyance of: "the easterly end of a dwelling house with a small piece of land thereto belonging....by the lane called

English's Lane".

Date recorded: September 7, 1789

E.C.R.D. Book 164, leaves 80-81

Grantor: John Becket of Salem

Grantee: Martha Rice of Salem, Widow and Administratrix of the estate of David Hilliard

Consideration: \$180

Conveyance of: "the easterly end or half of a dwelling house with a small piece of land thereto belonging" on English Street.

Date recorded: June 5, 1798

E.C.R.D. Book 195, leaf 256

Grantor: Martha Rice of Salem, Widow

Grantee: Robert Hill of Salem, Boatbuilder

Consideration: \$150

Conveyance of: ".....a certain lot of land situate on English Street in S. Salem".

Date recorded: April 15, 1812

E.C.R.D. Book 376, leaf 283

Grantor: Lucy Hill of Salem, Widow

Grantee: Prince Farmer of Salem, Trader

Consideration: \$575

Conveyance of: "a certain two-story wooden dwelling house with the land under and adjoining situate by English Street in Salem...."

Date recorded: January 15, 1847

E.C.R.D. Book 596, leaf 78

Grantor: Sarah E. Prescott of Salem, wife of William H. Prescott of California

Grantee: John H. Nichols of Salem

Consideration: \$450

Conveyance of: a lot of land lying in said Salem on English Street with the buildings thereon.

Date recorded: October 19, 1859

E.C.R.D. Book 742, leaf 288

Grantor: John H. Nichols of New York

Grantee: Charles L. Nichols of Salem

Consideration: \$300

Conveyance of: a message on English Street in Salem.

Date recorded: April 9, 1868

E.C.R.D. Book 786, leaf 141

Grantor: Charles L. Nichols of Salem

Grantee: John Wright of Salem, Trader

Consideration: \$700

Conveyance of: an "estate" on English Street.

Date recorded: November 19, 1869

E.C.R.D. Book 1250, leaves 514-518

Grantor: John Casey of Salem (agent of transfer)

Grantee: Samuel A. Potter of Salem

Consideration: \$1300

Conveyance of: "all that lot of land in Salem, with the buildings thereon" recently defaulted upon by John Wright.

Date recorded: June 6, 1889

E.C.R.D. Book 1260, leaves 302-303

Grantor: Samuel A. Potter of Salem

Grantee: Calvin C. Ainsworth of Salem

Consideration: \$1 and other valuable considerations

Conveyance of: "one undivided half of a certain parcel of

land, with all buildings thereon, with is bounded easterly by English Street in Salem, sixty-three feet, two inches....".

Date recorded: October 5, 1889

E.C.R.D. Book 1514, pages 555-556

Grantors: Martha B. Potter, Singlewoman, of Salem, Annie M. Ray, Widow, of Everett, and Mary A. Ray, Wife of Jesse R. Ray, of Boston, "being the heirs-at-law of Samuel A. Potter, late of Salem, deceased, and Calvin C. Ainsworth of Salem."

Grantee: Mary E. Dwyer of Salem, Wife of John P. Dwyer

Consideration: \$1 and other valuable considerations

Conveyance of: 34 English Street

Date recorded: June 10, 1897

E.C.R.D. Book 2520, page 18

Grantor: Mary E. Dwyer, Widow, of Salem

Grantees: Julian and Josefa Laskowski of Salem

Consideration: paid (\$2300 mortgage obtained)

Conveyance of: 34 English Street

Date recorded: June 17, 1922

E.C.R.D. Book 6944, page 732

Grantors: Jane Latauskas and Stanley Laskowski, executors
of the estate of Josefa Laskowski (by Probate Docket #353649)

Grantee: Sophie B. Myslinski of Salem

Consideration: \$45,000

Conveyance of: 34 English Street

Date recorded: June 15, 1982

E.C.R.D. Book 11056, page 333

Grantors: Genevieve Bencal and Stanley J. Laskowski,
co-administrators of the estate of Sophie B. Myslinski

Grantees: Gary M. Adams and Brian J. Power, Jr.

Consideration: paid

Conveyance of: 34 English Street

Date recorded: December 16, 1991

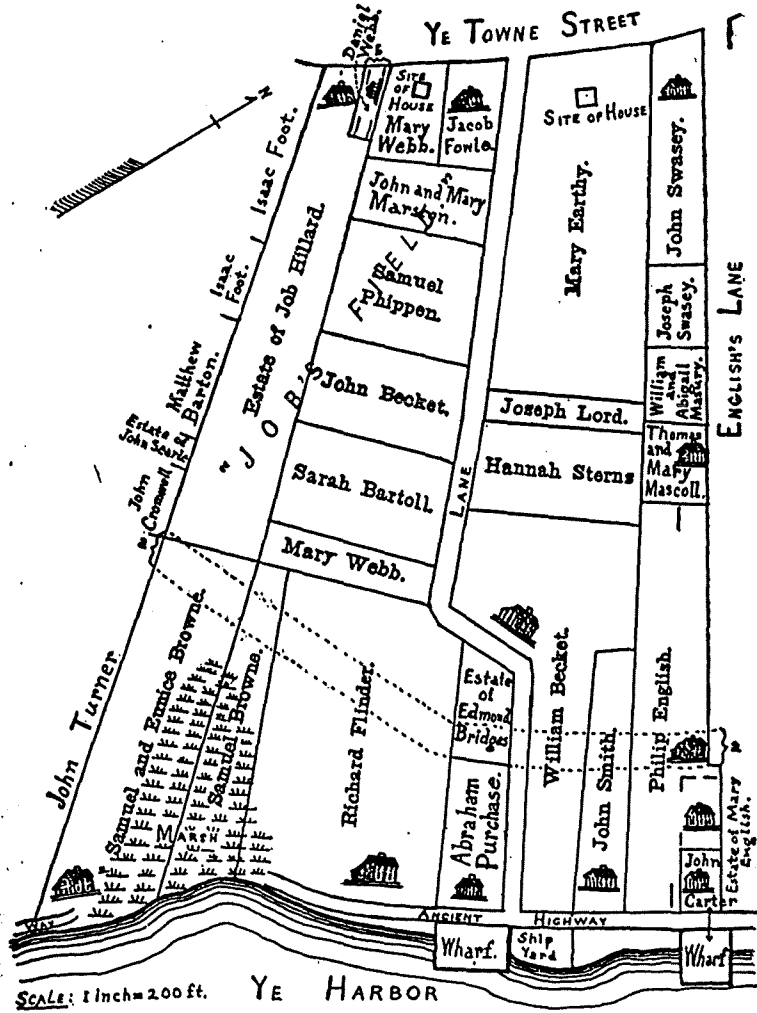
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1, leaf 26.
3, leaf 114.
24, leaf 244.
27, leaf 137.
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PART OF SALEM IN 1700. NO. 22.