



George Beckford House
20 Beckford St. Salem

GEORGE BECKFORD HOUSE

SUMMARY

This lovely Federal home presents an interesting paradox. It is listed by Samuel Curwen as having been built in 1764, but the land on which it stands wasn't acquired until twenty (20) years later: 1784. The Beckford (or Bickford as it was often spelled) family owned a large amount of land, most of it lying West and Northwest of what is now Beckford Street. The father of the builder of this house, also named George, had built his own house on this land, as had at least two of his four sons. The father died in 1761, his wife died in 1774, and his property was divided among his heirs, with the son George receiving half of his father's "mansion house".

This son George was born in 1729, married in 1751 to Eunice Cook, daughter of Joseph Cook. Cook was a neighbor who lived just across Beckford Street, and who owned a sizable amount of land, including the land on which the house #20 Beckford Street was built. George and Eunice had three (3) daughters; Eunice, Hannah and Elizabeth. Joseph Cook died in 1770. In his will, drawn up in 1769, he mentions as a boundary of a piece of land willed to his grandson, "bounded North on land in occupation of George Beckford". By this we can assume that his son-in-law George had built his own house (#20 Beckford Street) and was probably living there with his family. George's wife Eunice died, and he subsequently married Lucy Morgan, nine (9) years younger than he was. His oldest

daughter Eunice, four (4) years later, in 1775 married her step-mother's younger brother, Andrew Morgan. Andrew Morgan, along with three (3) of his brothers, is listed as having served in the Revolutionary war for two (2) years. Probably at this time, George let his daughter and her husband have the house at #20, while he, his second wife and children moved back to his deceased parents' house across the street.

George Beckford died without a will in 1780, and his real estate consisted of half of his father's house with the land around it, and a "house, necessary house, and barn but no land" with these; "standing on land of Joseph Cook". In the administration of Beckford's will, the above mentioned house, privy, and barn were sold to son Andrew Morgan. That same year brought the final administration of Joseph Cook's estate, and his granddaughter Eunice Beckford Morgan received the lot of land her house was on. So Eunice and Andrew Morgan finally owned both their house and their land.

Andrew Morgan was a mariner. He and Eunice had three (3) sons: Andrew, Benjamin and Dixey. Only four (4) years after they became owners of their house and land, Andrew Morgan died, aged thirty-eight (38) years. His widow lived on there until her death at the age of eighty-one (81) in 1834. She was blind in her later years, and her son Benjamin and his family lived at #20 Beckford with her. In her will, she left \$1 to her son Dixey, \$1 each to the eight (8) children of her deceased son Andrew (who died of intemperance) and the rest of her estate, consisting of her home and land, to her son Benjamin. Benjamin himself died only four (4) years later, aged 56. In 1852, his widow and heirs (four (4)

surviving children, two (2) spouses) petitioned the court to sell the property to pay debts dating back to the old widow, Eunice. So, after 3/4 of a century the house passed out of the Morgan family.

The next owners were the Johnsons, then the Hills: both of whom also owned #22 Beckford Street. After them, the Skinners and the the Tanchs possessed the house. In 1914 the heirs of John Tanch sold the property to Caroline O. Emmerton, who had inherited the large Essex Street mansion her parents had bought from George B. Loring. The Gallaghers who bought the Emmerton estate sold #20 Beckford Street in 1946. The Nelsons, Belleaus, Dubois' and Cooneys have successively owned this lovely house, now in 1971, 207 years old.

GEORGE BECKFORD HOUSE
DOCUMENTATION

Samuel Curwen's List "Houses Built in Salem": George Bickford 1764

Historic District Study Committee, Report 1968
#20 Beckford Street Federal Period

Probate 6249 Joseph Cook February 6, 1770
Will drawn July 18, 1769

I give to my grandson Joseph Daland --- a piece of land it being part of my homestead bounded West on a highway called Bickford's Lane --- North on land in the occupation of George Bickford by a strait line running 8' South of the center of the well from said lane to the land of Dr. Toppan's heir --- the North side of the premises running parallel with the South side line of the land of Benjamin Punchard.

Salem, May 13, 1784

Division of the real estate of Joseph Cook - assigns to Eunice Morgan the lot of land, part of said Testate's estate lying North of the piece given to Joseph Daland, bounded West on a lane and there measures about 40'-7"; is the same width at the East end; and about 177' deep from West to East --- Eunice Morgan to have sole property of the well on the piece of land assigned to her.

Probate 2269 George Beckford, int. April 4, 1780
Lucy Beckford, widow

Inventory lists:

Half a house with land under and adj.; privilege of ye well, formerly his father's Mansion house £ 180.0.0 a home and necessary house but no land £ 170.0.0. a barn but no land £ 12.0.0.

a mortgage from John, brother, of his part of real estate from his father, April 1769.

1784 widow Lucy has 1/3 part of real estate set off for her use as dower for her life.

Account of the administration of the estate of George Beckford, December 9, 1784, lists "dwelling house, necessary and barn standing on land of Joseph Cook". "the above dwelling house, necessary house, and barn sold to Andrew Morgan for £ 110.

Book 175, Page 202, May 31, 1784

Lucy Beckford, of Salem, widow, adm. of estate of George Beckford, late of Salem, dec. for £ 110 sells to Andrew Morgan of Salem, mariner, a dwelling house, barn and necessary in Salem, they all standing on land belonging to the estate of Joseph Cook, late of Salem, dec. The land on which they stand is bounded West on a lane, North on land lately Punchard's; East and South on other land of said Joseph Cook's estate: said house and other building were erected by said George Beckford, dec.

Probate 18714, February 18, 1834 Eunice Morgan

Will drawn in 1830, son Benjamin, exec. Son Dixey gives \$1; 8 grandchildren (of late son Andrew) given \$1 each. All remainder of her estate to son Benjamin.

Adm. of will in 1852, Benjamin now deceased. House and land valued at \$2100, debts were \$575, it was petitioned that this real estate be sold. Petitioners: widow Lucy, 4 children and 2 spouses.

Book 465, page 169, August 23, 1852

John Clifton of Salem, adm. of the estate of Eunice Morgan late of Salem, widow, dec. sells for \$2515 to Elizabeth Johnson, wife of Samuel S. Johnson, (she being the highest bidder) land and buildings bounded as follows: on North by land of S.S. Johnson' East by land of Pickman; South by land of Innis, West by Beckford Street.

Book 529, page 1, March 31, 1856

Samuel Johnson of Salem and Elizabeth, his wife, for \$900 and considerations sell to William Hill of Salem a certain lot of real estate bounded as follows: North by land this day conveyed by us to Avis W., wife of William Hill; East by land of Pickman, South by land of Innis; West by Beckford Street. Being the same estate conveyed to Elizabeth Johnson by deed from John Clifton, adm. of estate of Eunice Morgan dec. Book 465 P. 169.

Book 563, page 292, January 5, 1858

Charles F. Eaton of Boston for \$1500 sells to Avis W. Hill wife of William Hill of Salem, real estate (described above). Being same estate conveyed to me by said William Hill, Book 529 P. 1.

Book 725, page 152, June 3, 1867

Avis W. Hill of Salem, widow, for \$3700 sells to Mary J.

Skinner, wife of Stephen S. Skinner land and building on Beckford Street (same as above). Being the same estate conveyed to me in a deed Book 563, page 292.

Book 868, page 199, November 1, 1872

Mary J. Skinner of Salem, widow, sells for \$5300 to John Tanch of Salem, land and buildings on Beckford Street described: commencing at the Northwest corner by land now or late of Hill, running East by said land and land of Chapman 176'-4" to land now or late of Pickman; then running South by said land 40'4" to land of Jelly; then running West by land of Jelly 177'-4" to Beckford Street, then North by street 40' to first bound. Being same estate which Avis W. Hill conveyed to me. Book 725, p. 152.

Book 2247, page 118, January 26, 1914

Agreement between Dwight W. Vaughan, trustee for Sarah Tanch and others, and Caroline O. Emmerton. She pays \$1200 of the total \$5500 toward a parcel of land on Beckford Street.

Book 2249, page 497, January 26, 1914

Dwight W. Vaughan, trust apt. by Probate Court to sell certain real estate for benefit of Sarah E. Tanch and others sells for \$5500 to Caroline O. Emmerton (property described above, except depth of plot is 137'-4" instead of 176'-4") Being part of same premises conveyed to John Tanch late of Salem, dec. by Mary Skinner, Book 868, p. 199.

Book 3334, page 45, June 9, 1943

Merchants National Bank of Salem, adm. of will of Caroline O. Emmerton late of Salem, sells for \$9000 to Frank A. and Mary V. Gallagher land and buildings bounded: beginning at Southeast corner of land formerly of Price, now or late of Batchelder, running North bounded West by Batchelder's land and Jelly's land 269.46'; then running West by said Jelly's land 177.41' to Beckford Street; then North about 40' to a point 56.70' South of Northwest corner of Elizabeth Daland's land; then running East bounded by lands of Daland, Moulton, Curtis and Shreve 189.9' to land now or late of Felt' then running South bounded on East by lands now or late of Felt and Ropes Memorial 276.33' to Essex Street, then running Southwest by Essex Street 97.14' to point begun at.

Book 3362, page 392, March 6, 1944

Frank A and Mary V. Gallagher of Salem for consideration grant

to Frank E. Gallagher of Salem, land and buildings #20 Beckford St. and bounded: West by Beckford Street on 2 courses, 19.88' and 21.68'; South by land of Jelly 84'; East by land of grantors 41'; North by land of Daland 84'. Being (a portion of premises) conveyed to us. Book 3334, p. 45

Book 3482, page 574, October 11, 1946

Frank E. Gallaher of Salem, unmarried, sells to Frank A. and Mary V. Gallagher of Salem, land and buildings (described above). Being same premises granted me. Book 3362, p. 392.

Book 3482, page 574, October 11, 1946

Frank A and Mary V. Gallagher sell to Robert H. and Marjorie E. Nelson (same property described above) with a right of way (12' wide along South boundary) from Beckford St. to our property. Mortgage Book 3880, p. 573.

Book 3880, page 573, March 13, 1952

Robert H. and Marjorie E. Nelson of Salem, for consideration, grant to Theophile and Albina Belleau land and buildings (same as above) being premises conveyed to us. Book 3482, p. 574 Subject to (12' right of way).

Book 4098, page 173, September 1, 1954

Theophile and Albina Belleau of Salem sell to George and Stephanie M. Dubois of Salem, land and buildings bounded (same as above) being subject to a right of way (12' on South side from Beckford St. to Gallagher's land) deed book 3482, p. 574 Also subj: to mortgage Book 4050, p. 240.

Book 4616 page 203, November 3, 1959

George L and Stephanie M. Dubois of Salem sell to Joseph F. and Geraldine Cooney of Salem land and buildings thereon, bounded (same as above) subject to (the same) right of way, as in deed Book 3482, p. 574. Being same premises conveyed to us. Book 4098, p. 173