

Historic Salem incorporated

7 CAMBRIDGE STREET SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS 01970 / PHONE (508) 745-0799

16 Crombie Street

Built in 1834

for

Samuel Ferguson, Painter

Research by Donna Vinson
February, 1992

16 Crombie Street

The Ferguson-Fellows House
Built in 1834 for Samuel Ferguson, Painter

History of the Property:

The lot on which 16 Crombie Street now stands is part of a much larger lot which served as a pasture for the Corwin family in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Their house was (and is) located on the corner of Essex and North Streets, the present-day "Witch House". The patriarch of the family, Captain George Corwin, died in early 1685 and his executors inventoried his property and possessions shortly thereafter. Valued at ninety pounds was "the pastor, qt. about 3 acres and 1/2, considering a buriall place ther appointed" (George Francis Dow, "An Inventory of the Contents of the Shop and House of Captain George Corwin", Privately Printed in Salem, 1910, p. 5).

Captain Corwin bequeathed his house and a half part of the pasture to his son Jonathan, who served as one of the judges in the Salem Witch Trials seven years later. In order to distance themselves from his involvement, later generations of the family referred to themselves as "Curwins" and "Curwens" after the judge's death in 1718. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Reverend Bentley reports that the pasture located between Essex, Summer, Norman, and the newly-laid-out Crombie's "lane" or "court" was still called "Curwen's field" even though it had passed to a succession of unrelated owners, including members of the Cabot, Crombie, and Baker families.

"Curwen's field" remained undeveloped pastureland until Benjamin Crombie began laying out a lane to Norman Street on the land adjoining his Essex Street tavern, the "Sign of the Ship", after 1805. Nearly twenty years later, the "lane", "court", and finally "street", was completed. As the path gradually progressed southward, Crombie sold off parts of his property to various Salem grantees, "together with a right and privilege of free egress and regress of said way for themselves, their heirs and assigns, and their servants on foot and in carriages, for their cattle, carts, and otherwise, in as full and ample a manner as the Inhabitants of said Salem use the Streets of said Town" (Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 179, leaf 222). Joseph Baker, Salem merchant, appears to have been the largest purchaser of the new Crombie Street property (E.C.R.D. Book 179, leaves 221-223).

Baker sold part of his newly-acquired property to James Bott, Jr., saddler and son of the famed Salem chaisemaker and namesake of "Bott's Court", further west along Essex Street, in 1807 (E.C.R.D. Book 181, leaves 103-104). Bott purchased additional property on Crombie Street in the following year, financing both purchases with mortgages

granted by the sellers, Baker and Thorndike Deland (E.C.R.D. Book 182, leaves 285-287). Bott's mortgages apparently became so burdensome that he was compelled to sell his Crombie Street properties at a loss to his more established father in 1811 (E.C.R.D. Book 192, leaves 259-260). James Bott Sr. held the estate, one of many in Salem he possessed, until his death in 1829 at the venerable age of eighty-four.

The elder Bott possessed not only many properties in Salem but also many heirs, and so the settlement of his estate took several years. In 1833, one of Bott's grandchildren, Samuel Ferguson, bought the shares of his siblings in the Crombie Street property and erected a house on the consolidated estate in the following year (E.C.R.D. Book 274, leaves 51-52). Either he did not intend, or could not afford, to live in the new house as he sold it to Oliver Fellows, shipwright and "caulker", only a year later (E.C.R.D. Book 284, leaves 181-182).

The Fellows family remained in residence at 16 Crombie Street for over forty years. Mrs. Fellows lived there alone after her husband's death in the 1860s, and her heirs sold the property to Lydia Woodbury, widow of Stephen Woodbury of Salem, after their mother's death (E.C.R.D. Book 972, leaves 175-176). From time to time Mrs. Woodbury took in tenants and residents to live with her, and in her later years a niece, Miss H.P. English, was in residence. After Lydia Woodbury's death in 1900 her heirs sold the property to Mr. and Mrs. George A. Stevens of Salem (E.C.R.D. Book 1620, pages 57-58). George Stevens was a guard at the nearby Mercantile National Bank on Essex Street (Salem Directory, 1901). Della Stevens Bogart and her husband Harry, a clerk, came into possession of the house after her mother's death in 1921 (E.C.R.D. Book 2501, pages 435-437). The Bogarts also took in occasional boarders (Salem Directories, 1921-1931).

After ten years in residence, the Bogarts sold 16 Crombie Street to Franklin and Margaret O'Brien of Salem, who occupied the house until 1946 (E.C.R.D. Book 2870, page 333; E.C.R.D. Book 3132, page 487). That year, 16 Crombie Street and other properties in the immediate vicinity, including the Empire Theater on the corner of Essex and Crombie Streets, were conveyed to Naumkeag Insurance Company, Inc. of Salem and its real estate associate, Salem Realty Company, by various grantors, including the O'Briens (E.C.R.D. Book 3477, page 108; E.C.R.D. Book 3518, pages 349-353. See inserted "Plot Plan of Property on Summer St., Salem, Mass. for Salem Realty Co., 285 1/2 Essex Street, Salem, Mass.). In 1958 Salem Realty Company sold 16 Crombie Street to Mary W. Cass and Joanna M. Cass, mother and daughter (E.C.R.D. Book 4523, page 52). Joanna Cass Bennett and her husband James Bennett are the present owners of the property.

Documentation:

Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 181, leaves 103-104

Grantor: Joseph Baker of Salem, Merchant
Grantee: James Bott Jr. of Salem, Saddler
Consideration: \$1100

Conveyance of: "....a certain parcel of land situate in said Salem....on a private way which runs Southerly from Essex Street along the Western end of Crombie's House....together with a right and privilege of said way, with free ingress, egress, and regress, for the said Bott Junior his heirs and assigns, and their servants for themselves on foot, and in Carriages and for their cattle, carts and otherwise, in as full and ample a manner as the Inhabitants of said Salem use the streets of the Town."
Date recorded: April 4, 1807

E.C.R.D. Book 182, leaves 286-287

Grantor: Thorndike Deland of Salem, Merchant
Grantee: James Bott Jr. of Salem, Saddler
Consideration: \$500
Conveyance of: "....a parcel of land situated in said Salem
Date recorded: April 23, 1808

E.C.R.D. Book 192, leaves 259-260

Grantor: James Bott, Jr. of Salem, Saddler
Grantee: James Bott, Sr. of Salem, late Saddler, now Merchant
Consideration: \$1452.87 and \$142.00
Conveyance of: Crombie Street properties previously purchased of Joseph Baker and Thorndike Deland, the latter "with a workshop thereon standing [and] being subject to a mortgage amounting in principle and interest to \$585.00."
Date recorded: February 15, 1811

E.C.R.D. Book 274, leaves 51-52

Grantors: Thomas B. Ferguson, Cordwainer, James Ferguson, Painter, Ebenezer Saunders, Tanner, and Margaret his wife in her right, Daniel Potter, Blacksmith, and Dolly his wife in her right, all of Salem. "The said Thomas B., James, Margaret, and Dolly being grandchildren of James Bott deceased and devisees named in his last will and testament."
Grantee: Samuel Ferguson of Salem, Painter, "another grandchild of said James and also a devisee named in said will".
Consideration: \$50 to each of said devisees
Conveyance of: four-fifths of Bott's land on Crombie Street, "and the said Samuel, as devisee, claiming the other fifth."
Date recorded: October 22, 1833

E.C.R.D. Book 284, leaves 181-182

Grantor: Samuel Ferguson of Salem, Painter
Grantee: Oliver Fellows of Salem, Shipwright
Consideration: \$2300
Conveyance of: "....a certain messuage, consisting of a Dwelling House, and other Buildings, with the land under and adjoining,

situated in Crombie Street in said Salem...."

Date recorded: August 31, 1855

E.C.R.D. Book 972, leaves 175-176

Grantors: John F. Fellows, of Chelsea, and John L. Marks and Mary A. Marks, his wife in her own right, of Topeka, Kansas

Grantee: Lydia O. Woodbury, of Salem, Widow

Consideration: \$3200

Conveyance of: property on Crombie Street, "descended at the death of Oliver Fellows to his children John F. Fellows and Mary A. Marks, the grantors aforesaid, who now hold the same as tenants in common."

Date recorded: March 16, 1877

E.C.R.D. Book 1620, pages 57-58

Grantors: Hannah P. English and Philip English of Hyde Park, Elizabeth Strickland of Waltham, Widow, Rebecca B. Woodbury of Concord, N.H., Widow, and William English of Los Angeles, California

Grantees: George A. Stevens and Margaret H. Stevens, of Salem

Consideration: \$1 and other valuable considerations

Conveyance of: 16 Crombie Street, the former estate of Lydia O. Woodbury

Date recorded: September 14, 1900

E.C.R.D. Book 2501, pages 435-437

Grantor: David Frye of Salem (agent of transfer)

Grantees: Harry Bogart of Salem, Executor of the Will of Margaret H. Stevens, late of said Salem, and Della W. Bogart

Consideration: \$3500

Conveyance of: 16 Crombie Street

Date recorded: November 29, 1921

E.C.R.D. Book 2870, page 333

Grantors: Harry H. and Della W. Bogart, of Salem

Grantee: Margaret G. O'Brien, of Salem

Consideration: paid

Conveyance of: 16 Crombie Street. "This conveyance is made subject to a mortgage in the sum of \$2700 held by the Salem Five Cents Savings Bank which the grantee assumes and agrees to pay."

Date recorded: January 3, 1931

E.C.R.D. Book 3477, page 108

Grantor: Franklin O'Brien of Salem

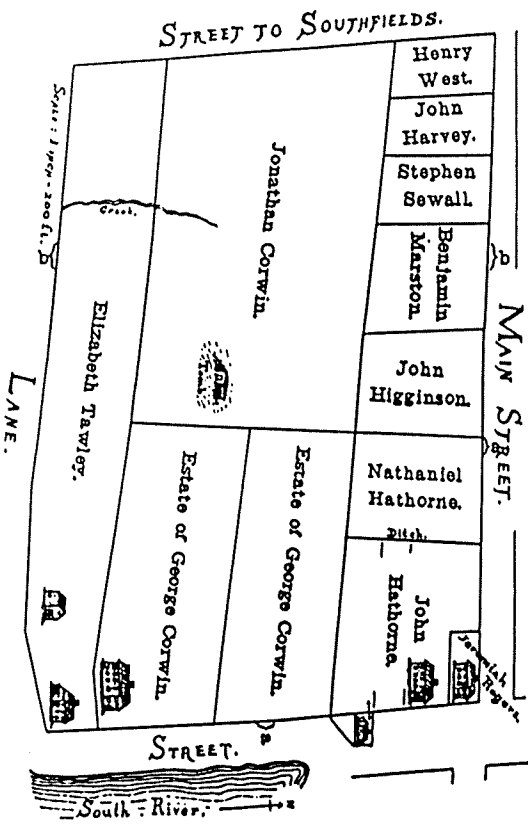
Grantee: Naumkeag Insurance Agency, Inc., of Salem
Consideration: paid
Conveyance of: 16 Crombie Street
Date recorded: September 3, 1946

E.C.R.D. Book 3518, pages 351-352

Grantor: Naumkeag Insurance Agency, Inc., of Salem
Grantee: Salem Realty Company of Salem
Consideration: paid
Conveyance of: 16 Crombie Street and other adjoining properties
Date recorded: December 9, 1946

E.C.R.D. Book 4523, page 52

Grantor: Salem Realty Company
Grantees: Mary W. Cass and Joanna M. Cass
Consideration: paid
Conveyance of: 16 Crombie Street, "being a portion of the premises conveyed to the grantor by deed from the Naumkeag Insurance Agency, Inc...."
Date recorded: December 12, 1958



PART OF SALEM IN 1700. NO. 2.



1851 Atlas of Salem

1874 Atlas of Salem

ESSEX

S. T.

SUMMER

CROMBIE

BARTON

BARTON

SQUARE

S. T.

NORMAN

S. T.

CREEK

MILL

GEDNEY

CT.

S. T.

HIGH

S. T.

HIGH ST. CT.

MILL



3518

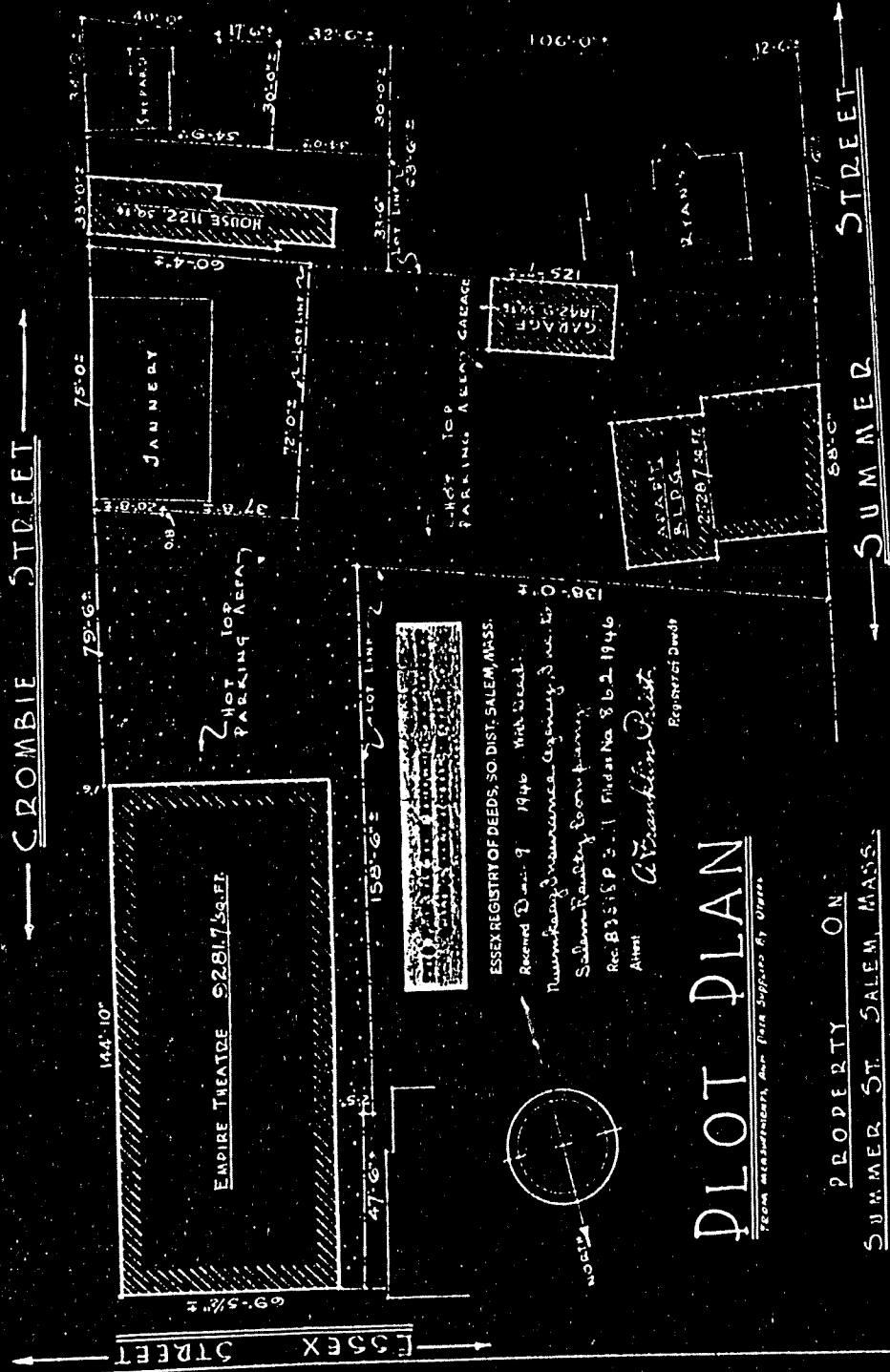
3518

E.C.R.D Book 3518 Page 351

... of ... Deed - Naumkeag Insurance Agency, Inc., a corpo-
... organization under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Naumkeag
Insurance
Agency, Inc.

862
1146



SCALE 1" = 30'-0"
NORTH ARROW

PARKING AREA	17,332.2	SQ. FT.
BUILDING AREA	14,775.3	SQ. FT.
TOTAL AREA	32,107.5	SQ. FT.

ESSEX REGISTRY OF DEEDS, SO DIST. SALEM, MASS.
 Received Dec. 9 1946 With Deed
 Naumkeag Insurance Agency, Inc. to
 Salem Realty Company
 Rec. B3518P 5-1 Filed Nov. 8 1946
 Attest *W. Franklin Brist*
 Registry Clerk

PLOT PLAN

FROM MEASUREMENTS AND DATA SUPPLIED BY OTHERS

PROPERTY ON
 SUMMER ST. SALEM, MASS.

FOR
 SALEM REALTY CO.
 285 ESSEX ST. SALEM, MASS.

JAMES H. BOULGER, JR. ARCHT. SALEM,

ty
 Co.
 50' &
 10'
 ry

eight (158) feet to Summer Street and the point begun at. Be all of said
 measurements more or less. The within granted premises are shown on "Plot
 Plan Property on Summer St. Salem, Mass., for Salem Realty Co. November 16,