

OFFICE AT OLD TOWN HALL

Historic Salem incorporated

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20 Pickman Street

Built for

WILLIAM B. PARKER, merchant

by 1842

Research by .

Joyce King

Dec. 1981

*"to preserve Historic Sites, Buildings and objects,
and to work for the education of the community
in the true value of the same."*

20 Pickman Street

This house is described in the Salem Historic District Study as:
"This small two-story plus gambrel roof house is very similar to #18 in character; it has a three-bay facade and boldly molded pediment over the doorway. The original clapboards are now (1956) covered with siding. On the west end a small stained-glass window has been installed, probably during the end of the 19th century. There is an ell at the back of the house."

The lot on which this house stands was part of a twelve acre parcel known as the Deliverance and Susanna Parkman Pasture or Ship Tavern Pasture. (appendix A) Benjamin Pickman was the owner of this land in the late 1700's.

Pickman Street derived its name from pasture lands improved by Colonel Pickman. The Pickmans were wealthy having in addition to a mansion on Essex Street and one on Washington Street, a large farm in South Salem. Pickman Street may have been a lane, reached from the bars near the Common at the southern end of Pleasant Street, when the Pickman family owned lands for pasturage and kitchen-gardening in that section of the town. Pleasant Street was carried through to Bridge Street in 1795 and Pickman Street East opened in 1805. The practice of that day, among persons of means, was not only to supply their tables from vegetable-gardens within easy reach of the mansion, but to depasture carriage-horses as well as work-horses and cows on their own grounds. (Essex Institute Historic Collections, vol. 39)

On Oct. 17, 1805 Benjamin and Mary Pickman sold, for \$3,000, to Samuel Archer, William B. Parker and John Andrew a large parcel of land extending from Pleasant Street to the flats (Collins Cove) which bounds includes both sides of what is now known as Pickman St. (book 176 page 278)

The three men put a street through and divided the land amongst themselves. Along with a parcel on the north side of the street, Mr. William B. Parker purchased the shares of his fellow speculators, on Aug. 5, 1806, to the parcel extending from Milk Street eastward 190 feet including the land 20 Pickman. (book 180 page 1)

The Diary of William Bentley D.D. gives this fascinating account of an event which is hard to envision as happening on this spot:

"April 1, 1817. I had the first view of the vessel building at the bottom of Pickman's street & a little northerly of the old Shallop Cove Harbour. Mr. Parker has undertaken. He has had all set up in frames, according to modern customs & about half planked. She has a birch keel, some oak, & much hackmatac. He expects she will draw six feet at launching & he thinks he can command that depth of water. He has all his carpenters (from) out of town & many of them from Charlestown. A great quantity of Snow is still upon the ground from the huge masses into which it was blown."

"May 30, 1817 This day was launched on the shore below Pickman street into Shallop Cove, a Schooner of 120 tons built for Mr. Parker near his mansion house. No part of Salem has changed so much as this

cove since I knew Salem. The filling up of the marshes & of East street, the great quantity of earth brought from the center of the town by the sluice emptying into it & the buildings & improvements around it has changed the depth very much. No house lot extended to it when I came & its shores were only for pastures."

Mr. Benjamin F. Browne, in his Youthful Recollections of Salem, also mentions this occurrence: "Mr. Wm B. Parker, who lived in the street (18 Pickman), had a vessel built on the low land on the south side of the street, which was successfully launched. I think she was 100 tons burthen or more, and was a West India trader." (Essex Institute Historic Collections)

As mentioned, the Parker family lived at #18 Pickman St. The tax records for 1839 list in detail the real estate held by Wm B. Parker:

"Lot of land \$100; house and land 18 Pickman \$1,200; 107 Essex 1½ house \$2,000; 3 March St. \$400; 12 acres of land North Salem \$500; land under shop 22 Pleasant \$500; 4 houses Parker's Ct. \$2,000; 2 lots of land Bridge St."

The first mention of a dwelling house at 20 Pickman St. appears in the 1842 tax listings:

William Parker - House 18 Pickman; 1½ house \$2,000; house and land \$600; 12 acres; land under shop \$500; ¾ houses in Ct. \$2,000; lot of land \$300; lot of land \$300; new house \$800.

The "new house" listed in the tax records 1842 correspond with the 1842 Street Books at City Hall which list a house at 20 Pickman St. for the first time. The Parkers evidently liked the style of their house at 18 Pickman St. so much that they used it repeatedly. In an advertisement for one such house (7 Union St.) Mr. Parker Jr. described it as "a convenient and good style house".

The tenants of 20 Pickman St. were:
1842 Ebenezer Pulsifer Jr. age 37
Henry Collins age 30

1843 same

1844 same

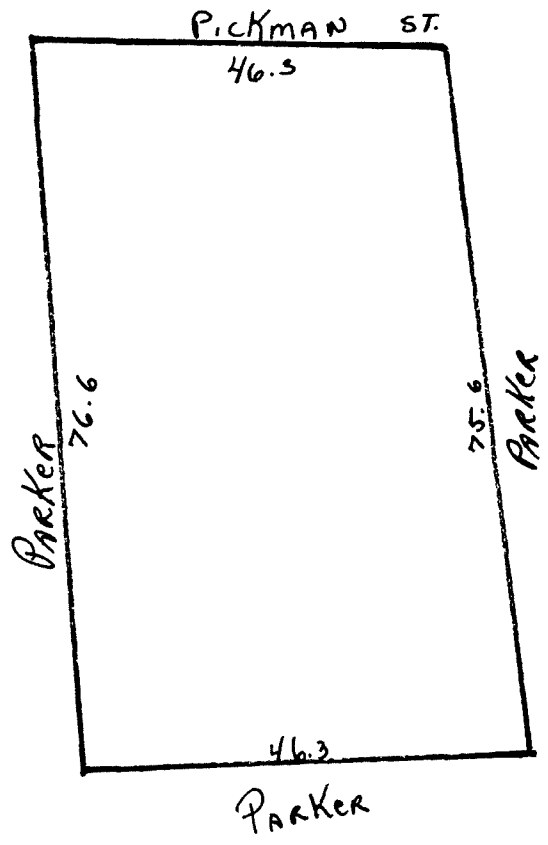
William B. Parker died on May 1, 1844 at the age of 72. An inventory was filed in Mr. Parker's probate (#49190):

Real estate -
Dwelling house and land Pickman and Milk streets residence of the deceased \$1,750
house and land on Pickman St. adjoining \$1,200
lot of land and flats with barn at foot Pickman St. \$400
lot of land by Pleasant St. \$700
house and land by March St. \$450
lot of land " " 175
lot of land by Bridge St. \$275
 $\frac{1}{2}$ undivided lot land North Salem 12 acres \$475

The federal census for 1850 gives a close look at the occupants of 20 Pickman St. at that time:

Charles Brown	age 63	shipwright	born Mass.
Mary W.	" 64		" "
2nd family			
James Harris	" 35	clerk	" "
Mehitable F.	" 32		" "

The Brown and Harris families remained in the house until 1857. On May 22 of that year the heirs of William B. Parker sold, for the sum of \$1,050, the land, dwelling house and out building to John H. Davis and Desire C. wife of said John in her right and sole use in equal undivided parts:



(book 555 page 190)

John H. Davis married Desire C. Dyer on April 22, 1846. For several years prior to their purchasing the house at 20 Pickman St. the Davis' lived across the street at 25 Pickman. The tax record for 1857 reflects the change in ownership:

20 Pickman

John H. Davis	owner house valued at \$1,000
Cyrus Scott	

The Street Books in 1858 indicate a change of tenants:

20 Pickman

William H. Sibley	age	36	carpenter
John H. Davis	"	39	owner
John Davis	"	77	

The 1860 census reveals the entire household:

John H. Davis	age	40	junk dealer	born	N.H.
Desire C. "	"	42		"	Mass.
Harriet F. "	"	9		"	"
John P. "	"	6		"	"
2nd family					
William Sibley	"	42	carpenter	"	"
Mary P. "	"	42		"	"

A trace through the Street Books reflect a change in value:

20 Pickman

1860	John Davis	age	41	owner	value \$1,000	-house, 1 barn
						1 cow, 1 swine
	William H. Sibley			carpenter		

1862-3 same

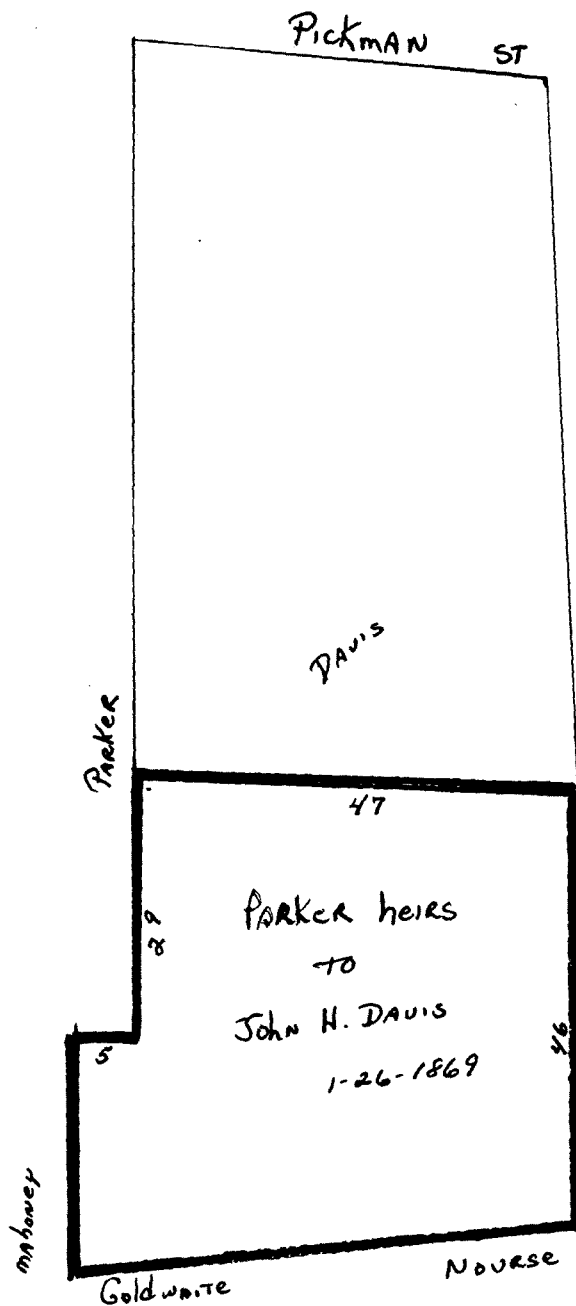
1864-6 John Davis house \$700, barn \$50, land \$250

1867 John Davis house \$700, barn \$50. land \$300

1868 John Davis house \$800, barn \$100, land (46x75 ft.) \$300

1869 John Davis house \$1,100, barn \$100, land \$600

The jump in land value is explained by a deed dated Jan. 26, 1869. when the heirs of William Parker sold a parcel of land in the rear of 20 Pickman St. to John H. Davis for the sum of \$200. This is the portion of the property on which the barn now stands. In all probability this was filled land. Benjamin Brown in his recollections mentions that when he was young, water came up to Milk St. occasionally and that there was a spring east of the street and a stone wall at the end of it by Collins Cove (Webb St. did not exist then).



(book 764 page 201)

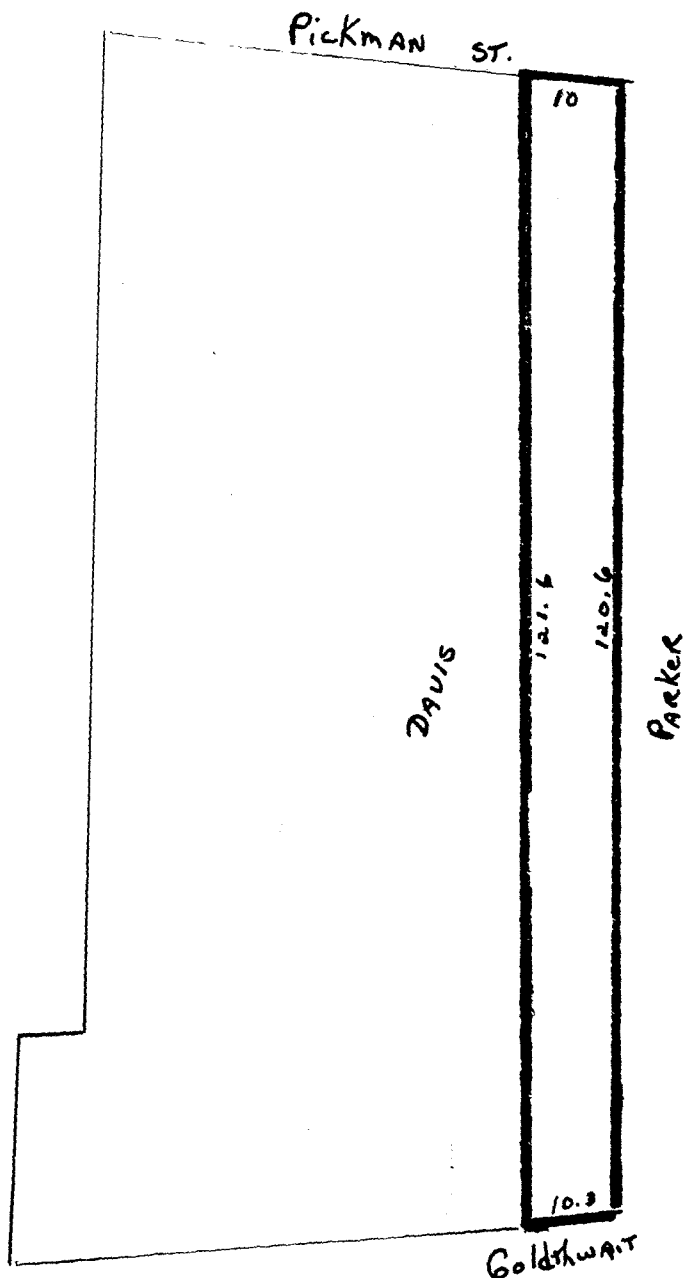
The census of 1870 shows new additions:

John H. Davis	age 50	junk dealer	born N.H.
Desire "	" 50	keeps house	" Mass.
Hattie "	" 19	no occupation	" "
John P. "	" 16	at school	" "
Maria Francis	" 60	nurse	" "
Rachel Davis	" 84	no occupation	" N.H.
2nd family Benjamin Mc Murphy	" 43	gas worker	" N.H.
Mary J.	" 41	keeps house	" "
F.	" 8	at school	" Mass.

By following the Street Books for the 1870's one can see the changes in value and the construction of new barns:

1870	-	John H. Davis	house \$1,100; barn ³⁰⁰ \$100; land \$600
1871	-	"	house \$1,000; "new barn" \$400; land \$600
1872	-	"	house \$1,000; "new barn" \$700; land \$600
1873	-	"	house \$1,000; barn \$700 \$800; land \$600
1874	-	"	same
1875	-	"	house \$1,100; barn \$800; land \$800
1876-7	-	"	same
1878	-	"	house \$1,000; barn \$700; land \$600
1879	-	"	house \$1,000 \$900; barn \$500; land \$600

On June 8, 1879 the heirs of William Parker sold, for the sum of \$84.71, a small strip of land adjoining:



The 1880 census shows many changes:

John H. Davis	age 60	junk dealer	born N.H.
Desire C. "	" 62	wife, keeps house	" Mass.
John "	" 26	son, junk dealer	" "
Walter Norwood	" 31	son-in-law. broker	" "
Harriet "	" 29	daughter	" "
Edith "	" 3	grand daughter	" "
Herbert "	"	born in Feb.	" "
Rachel Davis	" 94	mother	" N.H.
Charles Gates	" 22	boarder	" Mass.

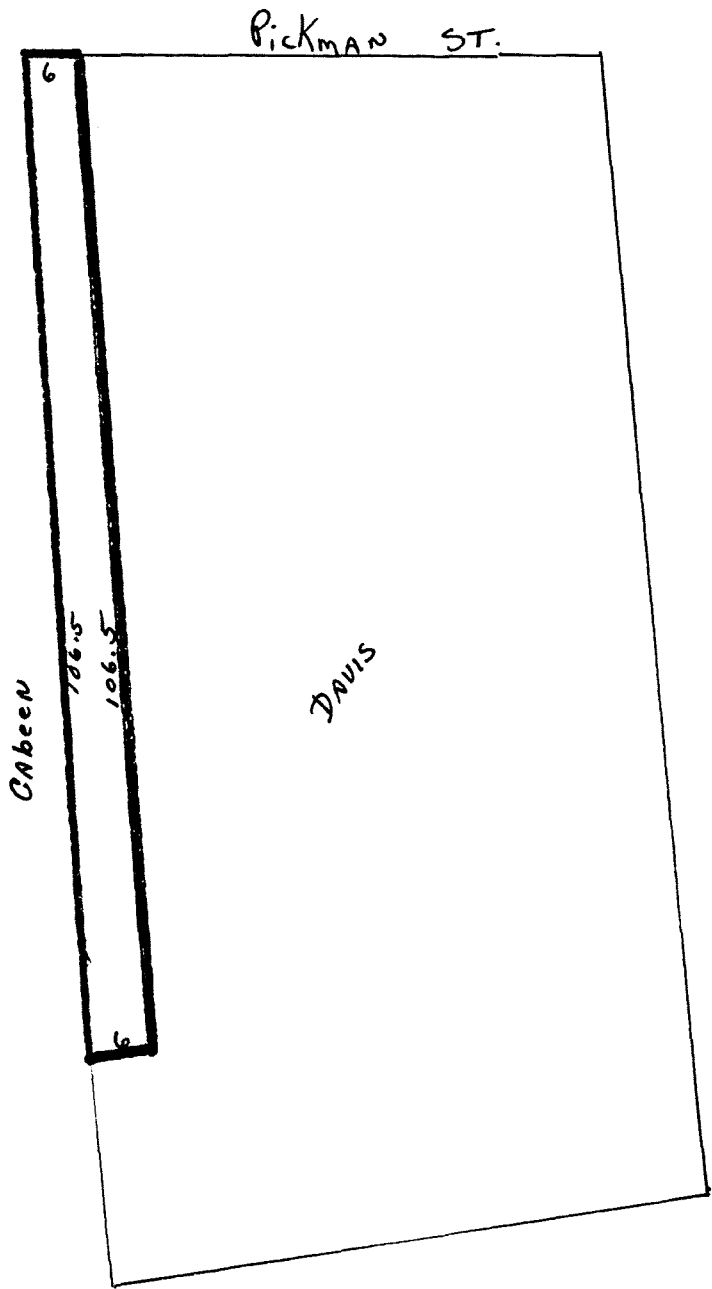
Mr. Davis died on April 12, 1888. His obituary appeared in the local papers:

"Mr. John H. Davis, an esteemed citizen of Salem, died the 12th instant, aged 68. He had been an invalid for two years. Mr. Davis was the senior member of the firm of John H. Davis & Sons, dealers in metals and paper stock. He built up a large and successful business and was so noted for his square dealing that he was known to all his fellow-citizens as "Honest John Davis".

Mr. Davis was a useful citizen, although not an aspirant for public office. He served in the Common Council in 1872, 73, 74, 75 & 76 and in the Aldermen in 1877, and was a member of Bass River Lodge of Odd Fellows. He leaves a wife and two children. "

In his will, written May 13, 1880, Mr. Davis bequeathed \$5 to each of his children, Harriet F. Norwood, wife of Walter and John P. Davis. The rest and remainder to his "beloved wife Desire".

On April 28, 1898 John and Hannah Cabeen sold a small strip of land, for \$1 and other valuable consideration, to Edwinna B. Davis, wife of John P. Davis:



(book 1545 page 479)

Mrs. Davis died on July 15, 1901. This obituary notice was printed in the Salem Evening News:

"Mrs. Desire C. Davis, widow of ex Alderman John H. Davis, died at her home, 20 Pickman street yesterday, in her 84th year. She was an excellent woman, and she leaves a son John Davis and a daughter Mrs. Harriet F. Norwood, and several grandchildren."

Desire C. Davis by a will (probate #88729), written April 25, 1898, bequeathed to her son John P. Davis "the dwelling house and land #22 Pickman St., with a strip of land 10 feet square near and adjoining. but nevertheless, to hold said real estate for the use and benefit of my daughter Harriet. If Harriet is deceased then to her children until the youngest is 21 years of age. If all children are deceased then to my son John P. Davis, and at his death to his wife Edwinna B." Her son and daughter were to divide the furniture and all the rest and residue of the estate was willed to John P. Davis.

An inventory of the estate was described as:

Personal estate:

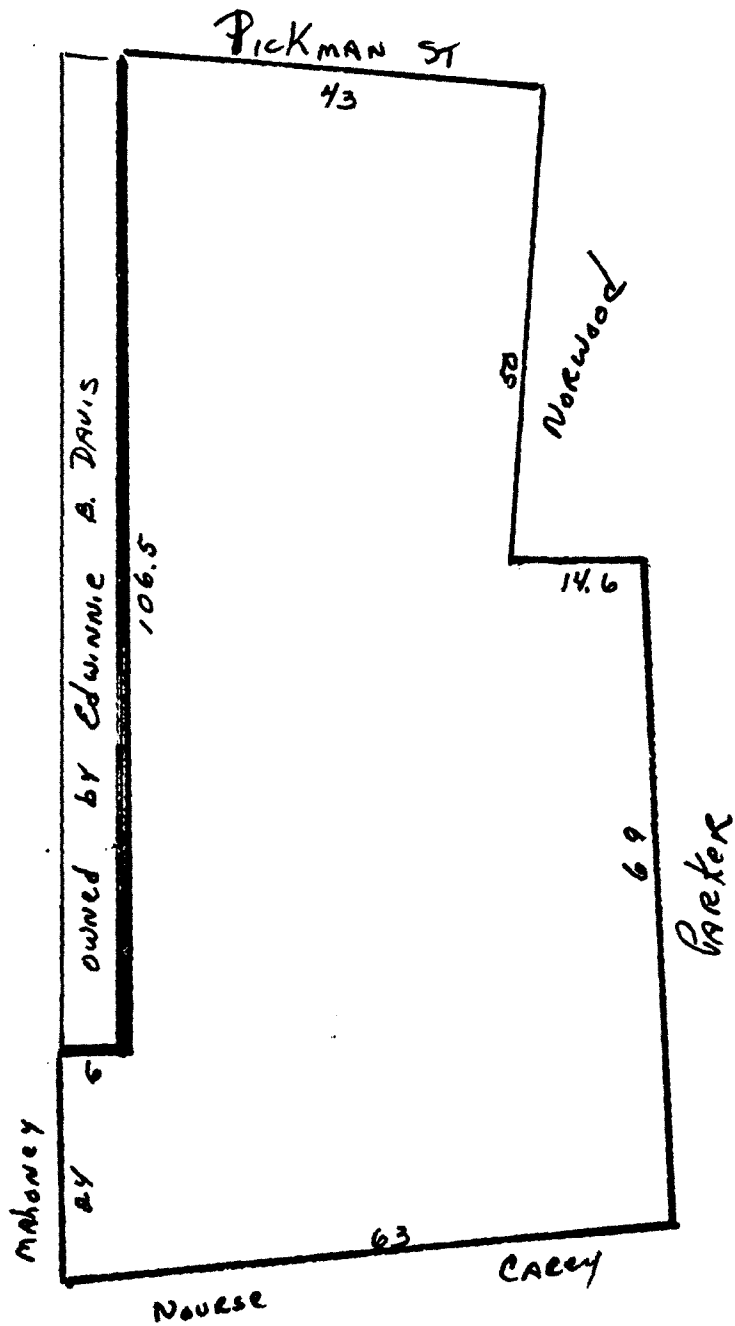
Three shares in the Naumkeag Bank	\$375
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Real estate:

Dwelling house at 20 Pickman St.	900
Dwelling house at 22 Pickman St.	700
storehouse and two barns	800
6,800 feet of land	<u>1,200</u>
	3,600

On Sept. 25, 1901 John P. and Edwinnie B. Davis sold to Charles H. Gates "the same estate bequeath to me by will of mother Desire C. Davis. (book 1652 page 360)

On the same day Charles H. Gates, unmarried transferred the title to Edwinnie B. Davis. (This is called a straw deed and was done frequently in order to put the property in the name of the wife and thus free the husband from legal attachments) (book 1652 page 361)



(book 1652 page 361)

On Oct. 11, 1935 Edwinnie B. Davis, widow, sold the land and buildings 20 Pickman St. The property was sold in two parcels the first being the "same conveyed by deed of Charles H. Gates Sept. 25, 1901." The second "the same premises conveyed by deed of John Cabeen on April 28, 1898." The new owner was Wanda M. Ciesinski. (book 3053 page 70)

On Dec. 28, 1950 Wanda M. Ciesinski sold to Thomas B. Ciesinski the property 20 Pickman St. "For title see book 3053 page 70". (Along with the Pickman St. property two other parcels were sold, one on Essex and Carleton and the other in Essex, Mass.) (book 3793 page 50.)

On June 22, 1954 Thomas B. Ciesinski sold the same three parcels to William I. Mahoney Jr. "For title see book 3793 page 50." (book 4077 page 467)

On the same day William L. Mahoney Jr. sold to Thomas B. and Stella Ciesinski. The same three parcels. (book 4077 page 468)

On Aug. 5, 1964 Stella A. Ciesinski, widow, sold the property to Thadeus and Adela Kulik. "For title see deed of William L. Mahoney Jr. to Thomas B. and Stella Ciesinski June 22, 1954." Thomas B. died on July 7, 1963. (book 5194 page 692)

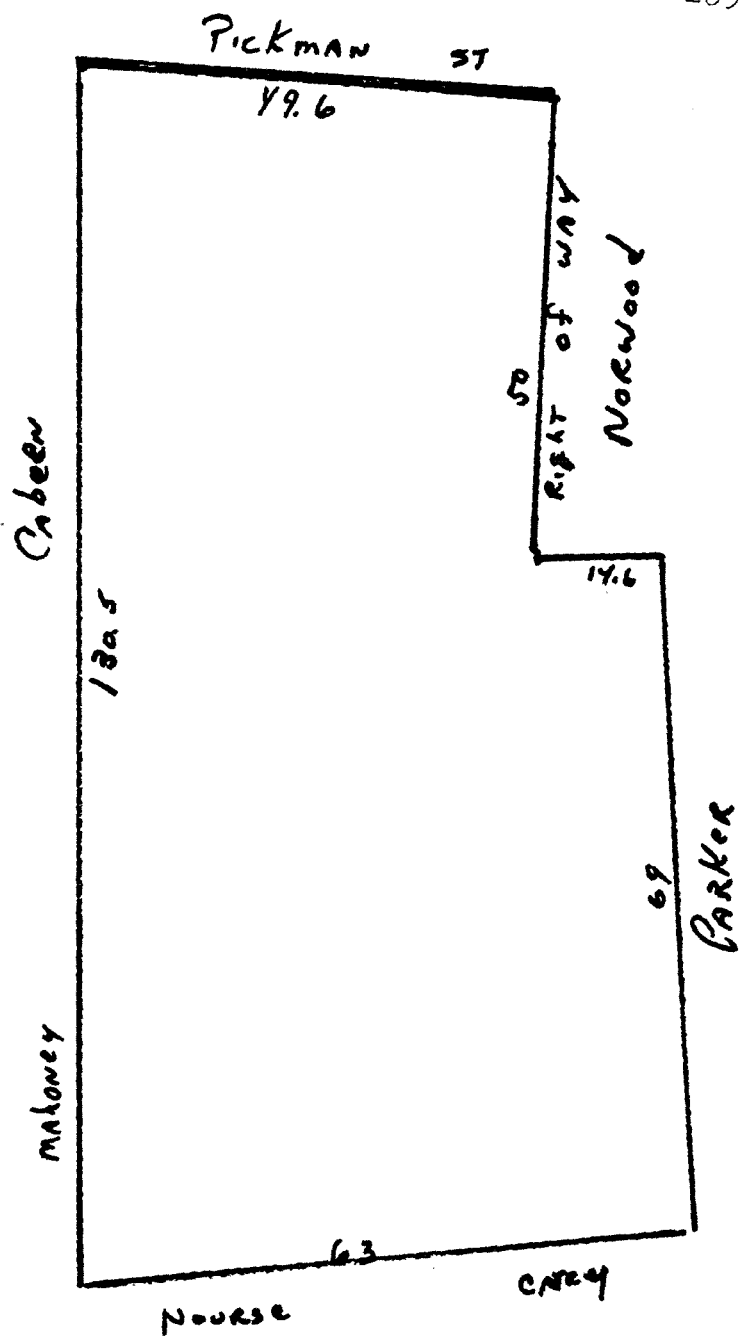
On Aug. 30, 1971 Thadeus and Adela Kulik sold the same property to Roger E. and May F. Knowlton. "Being the same premises conveyed to us by deed of Stella A. Ciesinski." (book 5797 page 466)

On May 22, 1974 Roger E. and May F. Knowlton sold to John L. Hyland Jr. of 20 Pickman St. "The same premises conveyed to us by deed of Thadeus Kulik et ux on Aug. 30, 1971." (book 6067 page 797)

On Nov. 25, 1975 John L. Hyland Jr. sold to Alan J. and Florence K. Doksansky of 10 Thorndike St. the land and buildings at 20 Pickman St. "Being the same premises conveyed to me by deed of Roger E. Knowlton

and May F. Knowlton on May 22, 1974." (book 6199 page 430)

On Aug. 15, 1979 Alan J. Doksansky and Florence K. Doksansky sold to Kevin M. and Mary Lynn Kiley, husband and wife, the land and buildings at 20 Pickman St. "Subject to and with benefit of a right of way 11 feet wide and 50 feet deep from Pickman St. adjoining said land of Norwood." For title see deed book 1699 page 430.



(book 6622 page 370)

Reference to book and page are deed books at the Registry of Deeds. Probate numbers are cases at Probate Court. Both offices are located in the same building on Federal St. All maps in this report are not meant to be exact, just for illustration purposes.

ING DEPARTMENT.

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PROVISIONS,
59 and 61 MASON STREET,
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O'KEEFFE,
—DEALER IN—
Mutton, Hams,
EGGS, Etc.



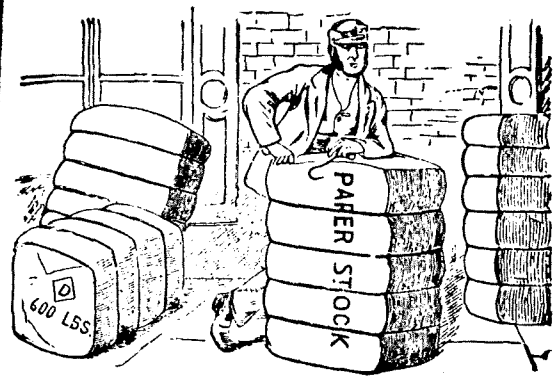
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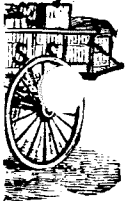
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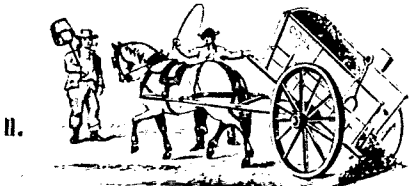
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1851

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CONANT

PEARL

SAUNDERS

CROSS

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WINTER

ST. JOHN

ST. PETER

WASHINGTON SQUARE

Wass

Mrs. Sims

J. Collier

Cap. Brodhead

Cap. Johnson

J. D. Hoge

Wm. Leavine

Wm. Knight

F. Duten

B. Smathers

Mrs. Brown

S. H. Morrison

J. W. Perkins

Wm. Taylor

J. F. Miller

Mrs. Stickney

Wm. H. Miller

S. W. Moore

J. F. Poiram

N. Gardner

Ingersoll

J. L. Thorndike

Rickford

Wm. Jackson

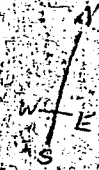
Wm. H. Miller

Wm. H. Miller

Wm. H. Miller

Wm. H. Miller

Wm. H. Miller



1851

FORRESTER
ST. PETERS
COUNTY STREET

HOWARD STREET
CEMETERY

BRIGGS

Mrs. Brown

Mrs. Rodger

Mrs. Brown

Mrs. Brown

