

DOCUMENTATION  
OF  
40 FELT STREET  
SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

*Sally Dee, 1973*



40 FELT ST.

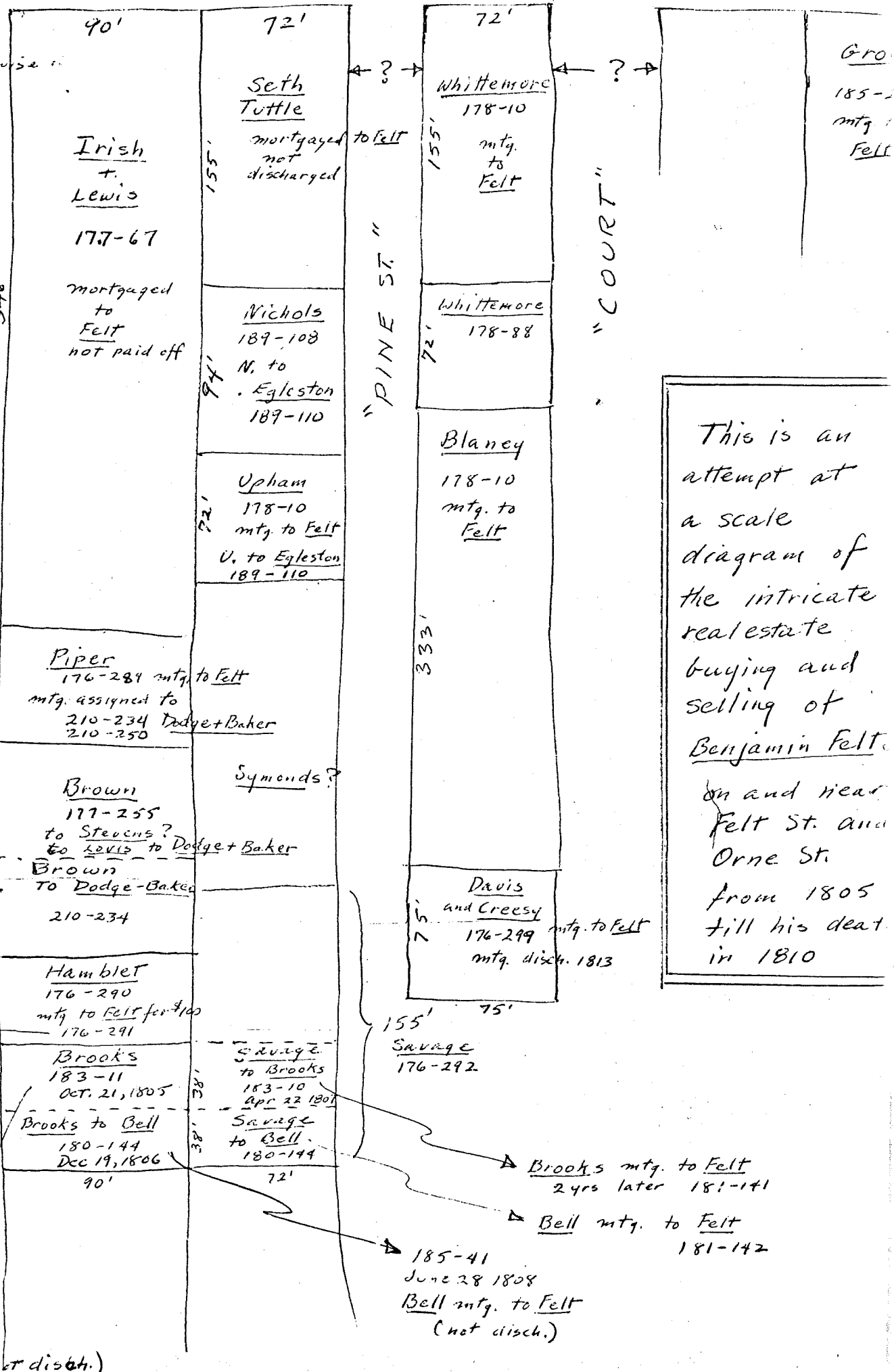
1807

built by James Brooks and John Bell

Grantor is Benjamin Felt unless otherwise noted

Road To Orne St

FELT ST. SEPT. 4, 1805



This is an attempt at a scale diagram of the intricate real estate buying and selling of Benjamin Felt on and near Felt St. and Orne St. from 1805 till his death in 1810

DOCUMENTATION

of

40 Felt Street

Salem, Massachusetts

by Sally Dee

for Robert Cahill

Because of the complexity of many of the bounds described in the following deeds, this documentation will begin with notes from the Essex Institute Historical Collection on how the street names changed in various years.

Vol. 48, p. 173 beginning

North St. was called "road from Salem to Danvers"

"Highway to the New Mill" 1810

"Main St. to Danvers" 1811

"North St." 1836

Liberty Hill Road

a very ancient way

"Way leading to Cold Spring" 1793

"Way leading to Goodale's Spring" 1820

"Liberty Hill Rd." 1859

Orne St. was

a common highway 1679

"Way that goes to the horse pasture" 1723

"Road leading to Massey's pt." 1748

"Road to Elizabeth Orne's land" 1794

"Road to Orne's Point" 1801

The road across Orne St. (to Kernwood) was

"road to the horse pasture" 1754

Walter St. was laid out in 1801 by Mrs. Walter

Orchard St. was laid out by 1874

Felt St. Laid out 1805 by Benjamin Felt, Jr. (see deed below)

Dearborn St. (see deed below) was laid out in 1810, 60' wide, called "Liberal St.," "Generous St." and in 1836, "Dearborn."

Notes from "Old Northfields" by E. B. Symonds, 1916

1744 Bridge over North River built: 860' long.

Liberty Hill and Cold Spring were set apart to be held in "common."

Kernwood used to be the "horse pasture."

A bridle path, or "ribbon lane" extended from North St. across Liberty Hill to the horse pasture.

Cold Spring used to be called "Peter's" and "Goodale Spring."

The old horse pasture was bought and beautified by Francis Peabody, who christened it "Kernwood."

Following the river from Cold Spring was Leavitt's woods, and beyond to the north, Gardner's woods.

150 years ago (this was written in 1916) the farm house at Cabot's point and on the place where the Babies Hospital now stands were road houses, well patronized by the sporting fraternity. (He lists some houses built between 1805 and 1820, no mention of any house on Felt St.)

There is a diagram of sorts at the end of the documentation, with an attempt to locate different lots and grantees, and their relationship to Felt St.

Book and Page of Deeds

173 - 141, 142            1804

Benjamin Felt buys the undivided inherited rights of the children of John Felt, dec., to a 10 acre lot bounding NW on the way leading to the horse pasture; NE on land late of George, John, and Benjamin Beckford; SE on the North River; SW on land of Joseph Felt and land of John Skerry, with fish house thereon, being same land conveyed to John Felt, dec. by Joshua and Samuel Browne in 1765, Book 115 p.142.

173 - 142 January 31, 1904

Benjamin Felt releases for \$221 to George Washington Felt land bounded NW on road leading to Orne's point, NE on land late of John Felt, dec; SE on land of Ebenezer Beckford; SW by a way leading to North River (total  $1\frac{1}{4}$  acres) being part of land bought by John Felt, Book 134, p. 76.

173 - 170 March 13, 1904

Benjamin Pickman, Jr. sells for \$2,250 a parcel of land 17 acres more or less to Benjamin Felt, Jr., bounded: beginning at the NW corner, E on land of widow Elizabeth Orne; S on the river; W on land late of heirs of John Felt, dec; N on land of Ebenezer Beckford; and E on Beckford's land, and land late of said Felt's heirs till you come to the road, thence as the wall runs to 1st mentioned bound. Being land conveyed to me by Thomas Lee in 1801, Book 167, p. 296.

181 - 140 July 9, 1805

John Barr sells for \$450 to Benjamin Felt, Jr. a piece of land called horse pasture (total  $3\frac{1}{4}$  acres) bounded on W by John Treadwell; on N by William Symonds; on E by Porter River; on S by land of Joseph Felt.

176 - 240 September 4, 1805

"Felt St." laid out

Benjamin Felt, Jr. blockmaker, John Skerry, yeoman, and Joseph Felt, housewright agree to lay out a road 38' wide through their lands, extending from the way leading to the horse pasture south to the river. (Benjamin Felt conveys a strip  $18\frac{1}{2}$ ' wide from the SW side of his land, where it adjoins land of Skerry and J. Felt, to the river. Skerry and J. Felt convey a strip  $18\frac{1}{2}$ ' wide from the NE side of their land;

Joseph Felt's land lying between river and Skerry's.)

By these above deeds it can be seen that Benjamin Felt now owns all the land on the NE side of Felt St.

183 - 11 October 21, 1805

Benjamin Felt, Jr. for \$250 sells to James Brooks, housewright, land on Felt St. 75', and 90' deep to the E. 176 - 299 Mtge. on this lot to Felt, discharged June 30, 1808.

177- 255 October 22, 1805

Benjamin Felt, Jr. sells for \$380 to Edward Brown, housewright, land bounded on W by Felt St. 112', and 90' deep. All other sides bounded by Felt's land.

177 - 67 October 30, 1805

Benjamin Felt, Jr. for \$1,153 sells to Reuben Irish and Amasa Lewis land bounded on N by highway leading to Orne's point 90' on W by Felt St., 346'. Other sides correspondingly equal, bounded by Felt's land. Also mortgaged to Felt.

176 - 289 October 31, 1805

Benjamin Felt, Jr. sells for \$200 to Nathaniel Piper, housewright, land bounded on W by Felt St. 60'; on S by Edward Brown's lot 90'; on E by land of Felt; on N by lot of Irish and Lewis. Mortgaged to Felt; 176 -291.

176 - 290 October 31, 1805

Benjamin Felt, Jr. sells for \$160 to Philip Hamblet, Mason, land land bounded on W by Felt St. 45'; on S by James Brooks' land 90'; on E by Felt's land, on N by Edward Brown's lot. Mortgaged to Felt; 176 - 291.

176 - 292 November 1, 1805

Benjamin Felt, Jr. sells to James Savage a lot 155' x 72' bounded on E by "Pine St," and on W by lots of Brown, Brooks, and Hamblet.

176 - 292 November 1, 1805

Benjamin Felt, Jr. for \$200 sells to John Davis and Josiah Creesy, housewrights, land 75' x 75' bounded on W by "Pine St," on E by "Court off road to Ornes Pt." on N and S by Felt's land, the N side 630' S of the road to Orne's Point. Mortgaged to Felt.

176 - 292 November 1, 1805

Benjamin Felt, Jr. sells for \$400 to Seth Tuttle, housewright, land bounded on N 72' by road to Orne's Pt., on W 155' by lot of Irish and Lewis; on E by "Pine St," on S by Felt's land. Mortgaged to Felt.

178 - 10 November 2, 1805

John Whittemore mortgages for \$400 land bought same day from Benjamin Felt; bounded on W by "Pine St." 155'; on N by road to Orne's Pt 72'; on E by the "Court."

178 - 10 November 5, 1805

Joshua Upham mortgages for \$200 to Benjamin Felt, Jr. a lot 72' x 72' bought from Felt the same day, bounded E on "Pine St;" S on Felt; W on Irish and Lewis; N on James Nichols.

189 - 108

Benjamin Felt, Jr. sells for \$230 to James Nichols a lot bounded on N 72' by Seth Tuttle; on E 94' by "Pine St;" on W by Irish and Lewis; on S by Upham.

180 - 144 December 19, 1806

James Brooks, housewright, sells for \$175 to John Bell, mariner, half the lot sold him by Benjamin Felt. This piece being 37½'



along Felt St., and bounded on N 90' by land of grantor.

Bentley's Diaries, Vol 3 p. 308

July 1807 (Bentley is going through the Northfields and mentions "Felt's" large square house of three stories.)

183 - 127 January 29, 1808

John Bell and James Brooks have divided the house which they have built together standing partly on land of Bell and partly on land of Brooks. Bell shall possess the S end and Brooks the N end, sharing the entry.

183 - 254 April 18, 1808

James Brooks, housewright, for \$200 sells  $\frac{1}{2}$  his lot and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the house to John Perley, trader. This being  $\frac{1}{2}$  the lot bought from Felt 183- 10; the lot bordering W on Felt St 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' and 90' deep.

185 - 40 June 28, 1808

John Perley mortgages the above property to Benjamin Felt Jr. for \$125 (no note of mortgage being discharged.)

185 - 41 June 28, 1808

John Bell mortgages his piece of land (180 - 144) for \$125 to Benjamin Felt, Jr. (mortgage not discharged.)

Now, Benjamin Felt, Jr. has regained control of the land and the only house built on Felt St.

185 - 208 November 12, 1808

John Perley mortgages for \$100 to Benjamin Felt, Jr. land (38' on "Pine St." 72' on N by Savage, on W by Brooks, on S by Bell.) he bought from Savage; part of what Savage bought from Felt earlier.

185 - 240 December 17, 1808

Benjamin Felt, Jr. sells for \$600 to Daniel Grace a large tract

bounded on N. by road to Orne's Point; on E by Orne's land; on W by Felt; on S by river. Also mortgaged to Felt, same page.

203 - 94 March 14, 1810

(A new street 60' wide is laid out in the Northfields, abutters to give enough of each one's land. These grantors are listed in succession as the street goes over their land from "the street leading to Danvers," i.e. North St., to the eastern end) from John Barr's and John Osgood's land to run in a straight line toward Benjamin Felt's barn. (Next landowners are) Widow Symonds, and Butman, B. Balch, across Walter St., land of heirs of Stephen Osgood, heirs of Benj. Osgood, land of John Osgood, heirs of Benj. Osgood, heirs of Samuel Silsbee, until it comes to a cove, and over which cove Benj. Felt agrees to build a bridge at his expense, and said street to pass through the land of Joseph Felt and his land eastward of said cove until it comes to the river.

191 - 100 August 22, 1810

Seth Tuttle for \$800 sells to Benjamin Felt, Jr. (same lot he bought from Felt 176 - 292) and another lot fronting W on Felt St. 120'; S on Felt's land 90'; E on Felt's land and N on Felt's land; this last conveyed to Tuttle Jan. 3, 1806.

According to Felt Genealogy:

Benjamin Felt, Jr. blockmaker, died in 1810. His first wife was Sarah Waters, his second, Mary Byrne. His son Benjamin Felt, born in 1761, acc. to E.I.H.C. Vol. 75, p. 2 "took over his father's business," and also, just to confuse matters, married a Sarah or Sally Ward. However, the son is listed as "Benjamin Felt," formerly "Benjamin Felt, Jr." in deeds. The following "Benjamin Felt" deeds

were drawn by the son.

195 - 87 December 13, 1811

Enoch Dow sells for \$1100 to Benjamin Felt, blockmaker, a 30 acre tract with house and barn, bounded on SW by Great Cove, N and W by Joseph Felt, SE on land of B. Felt. (This land had been conveyed from Treadwell to Grace to Treadwell to Dow.) This land was sold in 1813 (202 - 142) to Edward Brown and G.W. Felt, mortgage discharged 1816.

210 - 250 June 8, 1816

Nathaniel Piper, for \$8 releases to John Dodge and Barker Baker his right to the lot bounded 60' on the W by Felt St, 90' on S by Brown; E and N by land of Dodge and Baker.

209 - 258 June 26, 1816

Benjamin Felt, blockmaker sells for \$7250 to John Dodge, merchant, and Barker Baker, mariner (a great deal of real estate in Northfields--many complicated lots, some of them on the E side of Felt St. with "dwelling houses and other buildings on above described parcels").

210 - 234 June 28, 1816

Edward Brown, housewright for \$60 sells to John Dodge and Barker Baker both of Boston ( the S half of his lot, 56' on E side of Felt St. and 90' deep) being  $\frac{1}{2}$  of land conveyed to me by Benj. Felt, Jr.

177 - 255.

210 - 234, 235 June 28, 29 1816

Benjamin Felt, Jr. now Benjamin Felt assigns for \$45 and \$35 mortgages (176 - 211) held on lots of Piper and Hamblet to John Dodge and Barker Baker of Boston.

9.  
Note on margin of deed: Sept. 4 1818, John Dodge by open and peace-  
able entry took possession of above property.

211 - 276 February 5, 1817

Nathaniel Stevens, housewright, for \$200 sells to Grace Lovis land  
bounded W on Felt St., 56'; on S by Brown 90'; E by Joshua Symonds;  
on N by N. Piper. Same page: Grace Lovis sells same for \$60 to Dodge  
and Baker.

216 - 261 August 24, 1818

Barker Baker, mariner, of Salem, sells for \$5620 to John Dodge of  
Salem, merchant, his undivided half of (a great deal of land with  
buildings thereon) in Northfields, including a parcel bounded on the  
SE by (Dearborn) St; on SW by Felt St.; on NW by way leading to horse  
pasture; and on NE on a private way. All the parcels being the same  
conveyed by Benj. Felt; 209 - 254; 210 - 234, 235; also by Edward  
Brown 210 - 234 and by Piper 210 - 250 and Grace Lovis 211 - 277.

Bentley's Diaries, Vol. 4, p. 520 May, 1818

A Mr. Dodge who married a Creole from the West Indies, and lives in  
our Northfields on a farm belonging to Felt, formerly.

p. 518, May 1818, Capt. Israel Foster, 88 had the Orne farm alias  
Peter's, in Northfields.

231 - 67 August 24, 1811

John Dodge, merchant of Salem, for \$5600 mortgages to Benjamin  
Pickman, esq. of Salem (a great many lots with buildings thereon in  
the Northfields on (Dearborn) St., Felt St., and Orne St.) Being  
premises conveyed to me and Barker Baker by B. Felt 209 - 251, and  
one undivided half conveyed to me by Baker 216 - 262 also a lot  
conveyed by Grace Lovis to Barker then to me, and (lots of Piper,  
Brown, Hamblet; mortgages transferred by Felt.) This mortgage was

due Aug. 24, 1824 and not noted as discharged.

256 - 82 April 6, 1830

Benjamin Fickman esc. of Salem, for \$3910 conveys to Daniel Wild, broker of Boston (same lots of land and buildings: see the item above; 209 - 259, 216 - 262, 231 - 67)

Next page: Wild mortgages this property to Pickman for \$2600.

261 - 104 July 27, 1831

Daniel Wild, broker of Boston, for \$2600 sells to James Andrews, merchant of Boston, his title to (all the many lots with any buildings thereon) being same conveyed to Wild by Pickman. Also lots fronting W on Felt St. 60', 56', 45' (formerly of Piper, Brown, Hamblet)

261 - 103 August 5, 1831

Benjamin Pickman for \$2600 assigns his share of titles in the above described land to James Andrews of Boston.

338 - 13 June 15, 1853

Benjamin Andrews, exec. of James Andrews dec. of Boston, (acc. to his will) sells for \$7600 to Abraham Kimball and Winthrop Sargent of Salem, cabinetmakers, the estate, lands and tenements in Northfields (on Felt St., Dearborn St., Orne St., etc.) premises believed to be the same conveyed to the late James Andrews by deeds of Daniel Wild and others.

344 - 33 April 1, 1844

Abraham Kimball of Salem sells for \$1600 to John C. Lee of Salem a certain message bounded; beginning at NW bound, running SE by Felt St. 529', then NE by Dearborn St., 299'; then NE 546' to the Beckford estate; then SW 1 rod by a way; then NE 46' by said way; then SW by

land of Upton 291 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' (parallel and 5' from the barn) to the beginnings.  
493 - 262 December 14, 1853

John C. Lee of Salem, for \$2800 sells to John Bertram a message  
(same as above) being same estate conveyed Book 344-33.

493 - 263 December 16, 1853

John Bertram for \$800 sells to James Upton a certain message (see  
above) being same estate conveyed by John C. Lee Dec. 14, 1853.

495 - 216 May 15, 1854

James Upton of Salem for \$2700 sells to Alfred Peabody of Salem a  
message bounded beginning at NW bound, running SE by Felt St.  
529'; then NE by Dearborn St. 299'; then NW by land of James Ropes  
556' to land late a private way; then SW 1 rod by private way; then  
36' by said way to a bound stone/ then SW by land of James Upton,  
291 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' on a line parallel to the NW side of barn on premises hereby  
conveyed, and 5' distant. Being same estate conveyed me by John  
Bertram with the addition of a 10' x 1 rod long strip at NE corner,  
which was formerly a private way.

596 - 236 November 1, 1859

Alfred Peabody of Salem sells for \$2800 to Lucinda W. Ropes a mes-  
sage (described above). Being same estate conveyed to me Book  
495 - 216.

Probate 98522 Lucinda W. Ropes, dec. 1906, will drawn 1903 divides  
estate among children. Real estate listed:

Estate foot of Dearborn St.  
Estate 6 Felt St. (there was only the one house on Felt  
St. all this time)  
Lot of land Ives St.  
Lot in Mt. Auburn Cemetery

3044 - 51 July 27, 1935

Willis Ropes, Mary R. Cate, Emilie Ropes, Reuben Ropes, Charles F. Ropes, Lucinda W. Ropes, all of Salem, sell to James H. and Anna R. Hall land and buildings on Felt St. See copy of "Plan of Part of Ropes Estate" June 1935, said lot containing 5,440 sq. ft. Grantors are heirs of Lucinda W. Ropes. Next page - Halls mortgage property to Ropes; discharged Book 3823 - 553.

3460 - 241 March 26, 1946

Willis Ropes, Mary Ropes Cate, Emilie Ropes, Lucinda Ropes, Anna R. Hall (all of Salem) John Ropes of Boxford, Charles Ropes of Cleveland, Ohio, Margaret Klein of Penn. devisees under will of Lucinda W. Ropes for a consideration grant to Laura C. Brotherton land, see copy of Plan of Part of Ropes estate 1946 lot shown as C<sup>1</sup>  
Same page: Laura Brotherton sells this lot to James H. and Anna R. Hall.

3857 - 74 November 5, 1951

James H. and Anna R. Hall of Salem sell to John B. Hooper of Marblehead, land and buildings on Felt St. bounded: on SW by Felt St. 66.15'; on SE by a way as shown on "Plan of Part of the Ropes Estate" Book 3 4 60 - 241; 179.2'; on NE by lot C<sup>2</sup> on same plan 77.69'; on NW by land formerly of City Orphan Asylum 179.2'. Being premises conveyed with right of way in aforementioned deed and 3044 - 51. John Hooper in 2 deeds, 4094 - 209, 210 changes ownership to John B. and Joan C. Hooper.

5333 - 324 January 13, 1966

John B. and Joan C. Hooper of Marblehead sell to Robert E. and Sandra H. Cahill land and buildings on Felt St. bounded: running

SE by Felt St. 66.15' to a 30' way; then NE by way 79.39' to land late of Ropes estate; then NW by said land 71.21' to land late of City Orphan Asylum; then SW by said land 79.2' to bound stone begun at. Containing 5,440 sq. ft. Being premises conveyed Book 3857 - 74.

Additional notes from Bentley's Diaries

Vol. 2, p.197

Sept. 1796 "Northfields do not appear in a flourishing condition. The fields belong chiefly to non-residents, and the houses are occupied not by the most industrious citizens."

Vol. 3, p.366

June 1808 (Bentley was visiting in Northfields) "Passed by Felt's and the new lanes laid out on his lands. Northfields promises to be a very pleasant settlement."

SUMMARY

Because of the length and complexity of many of the descriptions of land, these long descriptions in some deeds have been omitted, and an abbreviated description substituted. The history of this house, until the 20th century, the only house on Felt St., has been difficult to disentangle from the maze of land transfers. The overall pattern emerges from the mass of documents as follows: Benjamin Felt, Jr., a blockmaker, lived on or near Curtis St., off Derby St. in 1804. When he was 74 years old, he began buying up large tracts of land in Northfields. (Incidentally, if he was related to either the John Felt or Joseph Felt of many of the deeds, it was as a cousin or



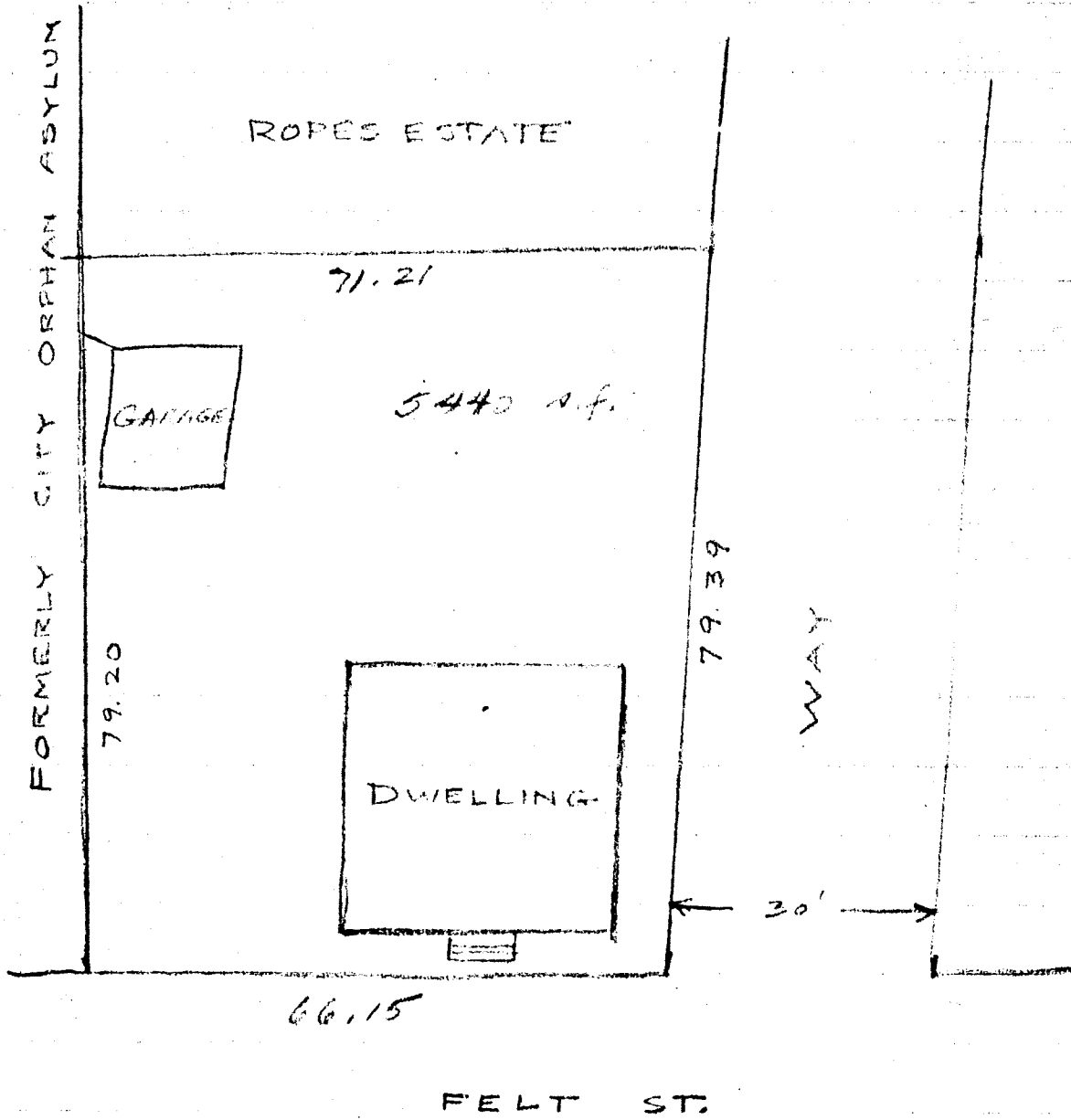
even more distant relation.) In 1805, he as owner of all the land on the east of Felt St., plus Joseph Felt and John Skerry, who owned land on the west side, laid out the street that bears his name. Apparently in the hopes of a major housing development, he also laid out, parallel to Felt St. and further east, "Pine St." and a "Court." Then he proceeded to sell off house lots all along these three streets, or ways, and at the same time, holding the mortgages that the new lot buyers had to take out. In 1806, James Brooks sold half his lot to John Bell. Brooks was a housewright. In 1807, Bentley mentioned "Felt's" large square house. Because of the recent and complex land sales, it doesn't seem unreasonable that Bentley still spoke of what had been Felt's land as "Felt's". In January of 1808, Brooks and Bell legally divide the "house which they have built together," partly on each one's land. This is the only reference to any house in that whole group of lots Felt sold, except for reference to a "barn" apparently down near the cove where Dearborn St. was put through. This house, indeed, on city maps was the only house built until recent years, and this is also the recollection of people living in that area. It seems certain that it was built in 1807.

Benjamin Felt, Jr. apparently by foreclosing on mortgages, regained ownership of all the land he had previously sold off. After his death in 1810, his son sold off the enormous holdings to Baker and Dodge. John Dodge may well have lived in the house, with his "Creole wife" for a few years. But except for Dodge, no evidence can be found that any owner of the house lived in it until the Halls

in 1935, bought the rundown structure and restored it.

Salem City Directories published at irregular intervals beginning in 1837, shed a little light on who lived in the Felt St. house, although often names were listed as living in "North Salem," no street given. In 1850, Thomas Farrell, a laborer lived on Felt St. (as there was only one house, there can be no doubt which house.) In 1857, Farrell is listed again. The next directory in 1853 lists Edward Warren, currier, as living on Felt St., but two years later, Warren was living on North St. In 1876 and 1879, Charles B. Currier, farmer, was the occupant. By 1881, when the Directory began indexing by streets, #5 (still the only house) was the home of Charles H. Currier, and Charles H. Howe. In 1884-86, James Gillooly lived there. The Ropes family, long owners of the house, had a mansion at the "foot of Dearborn St.," and John C. Lee, another owner, lived on Chestnut St. As mentioned before, Benjamin Felt and his son lived on Curtis St.

Since 1935, the house has been owner occupied; restored and cared for by appreciative families, and now in 1973 this 164 year old house graces Felt St. with the simple dignity of an era long past in history.

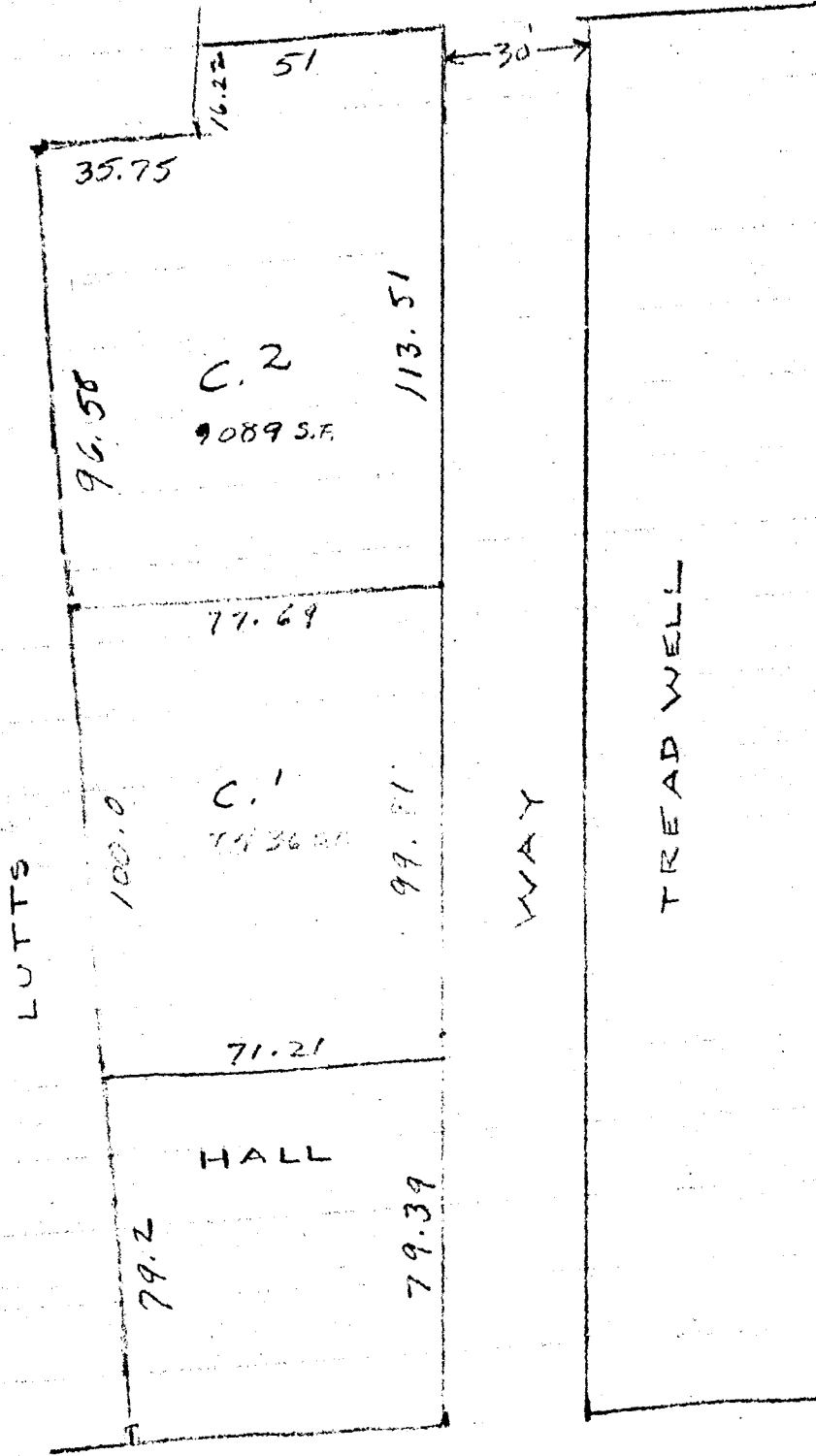
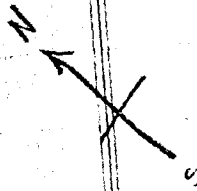


PLAN OF PART OF ROPES ESTATE

SALEM

JUNE 1935

NORTH SHORE BABIES HOSPITAL



FELT ST.

PLAN OF PART OF ROPES ESTATE

NOV. 1945