OFFICE AT OLD TOWN HALL

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POST OFFICE BOX 865 SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS 01970 / PHONE (617) 745-0799

21 BECKET STREET

Built for

ALEXANDER DONALDSON, blockmaker

in 1806

Research by, Joyce King July 1986

<sup>&</sup>quot;to preserve Historic Sites, Buildings and objects, and to work for the education of the community in the true value of the same."

### 21 BECKET STREET

BOOK 191 PAGE 109

DATE - March 28, 1794 (recorded Sept. 10,

1810)

CONSIDERATION - 23 pounds, 4 shillings

GRANTOR (seller) - The heirs of

GRANTEE (buyer) - William and Elizabeth Peele

DESCRIPTION - Piece of land, about 22 poles

North - Samuel Watkins East - Nathaniel Sparhawk

South - John Becket and Peele's other

land

West - Becket Lane

BOOK 191 PAGE 109

DATE - September 8, 1810

CONSIDERATION - \$700

GRANTOR (seller) - William Peele

GRANTEE (buyer) - Alexander Donaldson, blockmaker

DESCRIPTION - Piece of land

Alexander may have the right to erect a fence and gate on Becket Street and William reserves to himself the right

to use the gate in common.

Alexander Donaldson mortgaged the property to William Peele for \$700, on the same day. Mr. Donaldson took a second mortgage on October 3, 1810 from Clifford Crowninshield. Alexander Donaldson died in 1825 leaving both mortgages unpaid. Mr. Crowninshield assigned the second mortgage to William Peele in March of 1829.

BOOK 265 PAGE 208

DATE - June 21, 1832

CONSIDERATION - Mortgage for \$1,000

GRANTOR (seller) - William Peele, blockmaker

GRANTEE (buyer) - Thomas Saunders

DESCRIPTION - Piece of land with house

Also half interest in a strip of land 2 feet in width from Becket Street

running east north 54 feet

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - I purchased of Alexander Donaldson as

recorded in deed book 191 page 110,

with all improvements

BOOK 370 PAGE 173

DATE - July 16, 1846

CONSIDERATION - \$1,325

GRANTOR (seller) - Charles Saunders executor of the will

of Thomas Saunders

GRANTEE (buyer) - Thomas Barker, shipbuilder

DESCRIPTION - Land and building

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - All right conveyed to Thomas Saunders by William Peele on June 21, 1832 and all right since acquired by Thomas or his heirs or assigns by virtue of a writ of Haberi Facias issued in favor of said Thomas on November 28, 1842 and possession given under said writ to Thomas by Nehemiah Brown, Deputy Sheriff on November 29, 1842.

BOOK 1004 PAGE 103

DATE - August 29, 1878

GRANTOR (seller) - Charles A. Ropes and Henry M.

Barker trustees under the will of

Thomas Barker

GRANTEE (buyer) - Edward L. Barker, Harriet A. Blount,

B. B. Ropes and George A. Ropes

1/4 interest to each

DESCRIPTION - Land and dwelling house 21 Becket St.

(also a parcel on Allen St.)

North - Henry Barker East - William Gray South - Stephen Goss West - Becket Street

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Same estate conveyed to Thomas Barker

by deed of Charles Saunders exc. of

Thomas Saunders

BOOK 1004 PAGE 105

DATE - August 29, 1878

CONSIDERATION - None given

GRANTOR (seller) - Edward Barker, Eugene V. Blount and

Harriet Blount in her own right

GRANTEE (buyer) - B. B. Ropes and George A. Ropes

DESCRIPTION - Land and dwelling house at 21 Becket

Street

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - None given

BOOK 1618 PAGE 535

DATE - September 6, 1900

CONSIDERATION - TAX DEED

GRANTOR (seller) - Francis Newell collector, all property

assessed to B. B. Ropes

George A. Ropes released his rights

GRANTEE (buyer) - Harlow Rogers

BOOK 1700 PAGE 50

DATE - August 29, 1902

CONSIDERATION - RELEASE

GRANTOR (seller) - Harlow H. Rogers

GRANTEE (buyer) - B. B. Ropes

DESCRIPTION - Property acquired by tax deed

BOOK 1703 PAGE 389

DATE - April 29, 1903

CONSIDERATION - None given

GRANTOR (seller) - George F. Ropes

GRANTEE (buyer) - Albert Smerczynski

DESCRIPTION - Land and buildings

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - For title see deeds book 370 page 73

and book 1618 page 535

BOOK 1786 PAGE 203

DATE - July 11, 1905

CONSIDERATION - \$1 and other valuable consideration

GRANTOR (seller) - Albert Smerczynski of Ipswich

GRANTEE (buyer) - Mary E. Mooney

DESCRIPTION - Land and buildings

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - The same conveyed by George F. Ropes

on April 29, 1903

BOOK 1791 PAGE 329

DATE - August 21, 1905

GRANTOR (seller) - Mary E. Mooney

GRANTEE (buyer) - Joseph F. Quinn

DESCRIPTION - Land and buildings

North - Fanning and Berry East - Gauss and Chase South - Becket Street

West - Bennett

BOOK 1802 PAGE 68

DATE - November 10, 1905

CONSIDERATION - \$1 and other valuable consideration

GRANTOR (seller) - Joseph F. Quinn

GRANTEE (buyer) - Katie Sokol

DESCRIPTION - #21 Becket Street

North - Barker East - Barker

South - Gauss & Chase West - Becket Street

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Being the same estate conveyed by

deed of Mary E. Mooney on August 21,

1905

BOOK 1834 PAGE 463

DATE - July 31, 1906

CONSIDERATION - \$1 and other valuable consideration

GRANTOR (seller) - Nicholai and Katie Sokol

GRANTEE (buyer) - Rose Bik wife of Powel

DESCRIPTION - Land and building

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - The same conveyed to Katie Sokol by

Joseph F. Quinn on November 10, 1905

BOOK 2273 PAGE 510

DATE - September 10, 1914

CONSIDERATION - \$525, subject to mortgage of

\$2,009.72

GRANTOR (seller) - Paul Bik administrator of the estate

of Rose Bik

GRANTEE (buyer) - Max Shribman

DESCRIPTION - Land and building

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - None given

BOOK 2309 PAGE 237

DATE - October 11, 1915

CONSIDERATION - None given

GRANTOR (seller) - Max Shribman, unmarried

GRANTEE (buyer) - Rebecca Katz

DESCRIPTION - Land and building

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Being the same premises conveyed to

me by Paul Bik adm. of the estate of

Rose Bik

BOOK 2582 PAGE 524

DATE -December 6, 1923

None given (mortgage \$2,500) CONSIDERATION -

Rebecca Katz wife of Abraham B. Katz GRANTOR (seller) -

Helen Gesek wife of John GRANTEE (buyer) -

DESCRIPTION Land and building

PREVIOUS REFERENCE -Being the same premises conveyed to

the grantor by deed of Max Shribman

October 11, 1915

BOOK 7115 PAGE 549

DATE -April 8, 1983

CONSIDERATION -\$58,000

GRANTOR (seller) -Caroline H. Gesek of Danvers

GRANTEE (buyer) -Frances J. Wirta

DESCRIPTION Land and building 21 Becket St.

> North - Fanning and Berry East - Gauss and Chase South - Becket Street 27' 5"

West - Bennet

PREVIOUS REFERENCE -Being the same premises conveyed to

Helen Gesek by Rebecca Katz December

6, 1923

BOOK 7393 PAGE 492

DATE - May 1, 1984

CONSIDERATION - \$117,500

GRANTOR (seller) - Frances J. Wirta

GRANTEE (buyer) - David E. Williams and Sharon A.

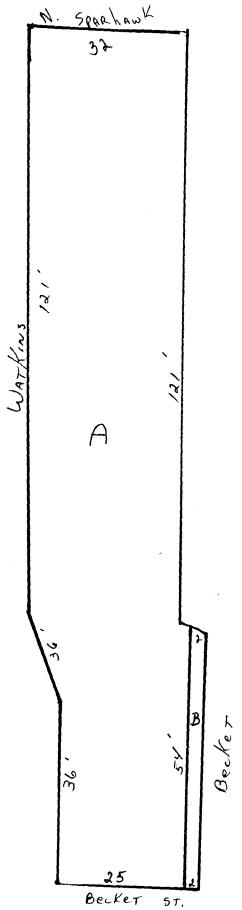
Hughes

DESCRIPTION - Land and building 21 Becket St.

PREVIOUS REFERENCE - Meaning to convey the premises

described in deed of April 8, 1983

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.



A - Sept. 8, 1810 Book 191 page 109

B - June 21, 1832 Book 265 page 208

## 21 BECKET STREET

#### NOTES:

The house at 21 Becket Street first appears on the Salem tax rolls in 1806:

Alexander Donaldson "new h(ouse)" valued at \$800

It is apparent that William Peele allowed his son-in-law, Alexander Donaldson, to build a house on the land he purchased in 1794. Since the land remained in the family they evidently did not deem it necessary to draw up legal papers.

Alexander Donaldson, son of Alexander and Elizabeth (Graham) Donalson, was born in Belfast, County of Antrim, Ireland on December 23, 1773. He arrived in Salem on August 8, 1795 and married Elizabeth Peele on December 14, 1800. Mr. Donaldson died in Salem on March 5, 1825. (Essex Institute Historic Collections)

The first Salem directory, published in 1837, gives a list of occupants for that year:

Daniel Bray 3rd, mariner
Mrs. Elizabeth Donaldson
Samuel King, grocer
Robert Peele, revenue boat
Robert Peele 4th, pump and block maker

Momento mori
In Memory of
Mrs Alice Wood,
Confort of
Mr Thomas Wood,
who died Feb. Ys 23d 1795,
Ætat. 47.

In MEMORY OF Mr MARY THE WIFE OF Mr EDWArd WOOD WHO DIEd DECETHE 26h 1779 In THE 89h YEAR OF HIS AGE

MEMOrY OF MEHITabLE Mr WOOD THE WIFE MOSES OF  $\mathbf{M^r}$ WOOD WHO DIED MarcH THE IIp 1781 THE 64h YEaR HER AGE

Mr Moses Wood, departed this life March, 5<sup>th</sup> 1799, Ætat. 82.

Memento mori

Sacred to the Memory of
Mrs Ruth Wood,
Confort of Mr Samuel
Wood, who died May the
15th AD. 1790, Ætat. 80.

Hear what the voice from heaven proclai

For all the pious dead,

Sweet is the favour of their names,
And foft their fleeping hed

They die in Jefus and are blefs'd,
How kind their flumbers are!

From fufferings and from fins releaf'd,
And free'd from ev'ry fnare.

Far from this world of toil and ftrife,
They're prefent with the Lord;

The labours of their mortal life
End in a large reward.

Memento mori
In Memory of
Mr SAMUEL WOOD
who departed this life
Oct. 3c 27th AD 1792.
Etat. 71.

HERE LIES THE BURIED BODY OF MR<sup>8</sup> SUSANNA THE WIFE OF Mr JOHN WOOD WHO DIED MARCH 28 1759 IN Ye 33rd YEAR OF HER AGE

#### WILL OF WILLIAM WITTER.

The will of William Witter was proved in June, 1661. The following is a copy of the original instrument on file in the office of the clerk of courts at Salem, volume VI, leaf 142.

1659 50

The last will and testament of william witter being in perfit memory and first I commit my foule to god who gaue it and my body to the earth from whenc it was taken. I give to my wife Annis halfe my lands, housing and chattels: but in case she chang her name, I bequeath to her but the thirds: and to my fonn Iofia I giue the other halfe of my lands, houfing, and chattels: but in cafe my wife mary, then I begeath a duble portion to my fonn Josia and his mother my wife shall have but the thirds, as aforesaid, prouided that my fonn shall not sell this his inheritanc, but in case hee die wth out isseu: then I will that this inheritanc shall bee instated upon Robert Burdin and my daster Hanna, for there posteritis I will my dafter Hanna Burdin shall have a ew, and lamb this time twelfe mounts and I will that my wife Annis bee my fole executor in witnes here of I haue caused my hand to bee set.

Robert Driver william witter william Harker

## THE OLD HOUSE. BY ANNA M. TUTTLE.

It stands in idle silence by the way,
The bare old house, neglected, gaunt and gray,
Low settled in the turf, yet reaching high
A sagging roof-line, bold against the sky.
Through its uncurtained windows, dim and small,
Moonlight and sunlight, both unheeded fall;
Bleared, sightless eyes, whence life has fled
away;
No hearth fire's gleam, no cheering candle ray

No hearth fire's gleam, no cheering candle ray Looks forth at night. The doors are barred and dumb,

The scuttling rats retreat will answering come
To all who knock, welcome is there no more;
The fallen plaster on the slanting floor,
The unsafe stairs and beams, the steps restrain
When peering eyes invade the still domain.
Yet how confidingly wild roses press
Against the window their pale loveliness!

# SALEM IN 1700. NO. 22. BY SIDNEY PERLEY.

The map on page 23 represents that part of Salem which is bounded by Essex and English streets, the harbor and a line about midway between Carlton and Turner streets. It is based on actual surveys and title deeds, and is drawn on a scale of two hundred feet to an inch. It shows the location of all houses that were standing there in 1700.

Essex street was called ye street or highway in 1668; ye lane or street, 1670; ye towne street, 1701; the main street, 1711; and Essex street, 1797.

English street, which was originally called English's lane, was laid out by Philip English over land of himself and the owners of the lots shown on the map as bounding on the street about 1697, as far as the present Derby street, the dividing line of the lots having been midway of the street. That part lying southerly of Derby street was laid out by agreement of the adjoining owners, George Crowninshield and Retire Becket, April 13, 1802.\*

Becket street is partly modern. The ancient highway shown on the map as running near the water existed from the first settlement of the town by Endecott. That part of Becket court that runs paral-

lel with the water to the foot of English. street is the only portion of it that survives. A lane from this highway to the site of the early Becket house was laid out by John Becket and Edmond Bridges before 1681: and the same way is still in use. When John Becket conveyed the Samuel Phippen lot, Sept. 15, 1675, he described it as being bounded easterly by "the highway that shall be backward through the whole breadth "of the grantor's homestead." July 2, 1675, Mr. Becket called it "a particular highway of ye said Becket."\* When Philip Cromwell purchased the lots of the Estate of Edmond Bridges and Abraham Purchase, he bought of Mr. Becket a right of way from the front side of the old Becket house to Essex street in the same place in which it is now located. The deed is dated Feb. 1, 1676, and describes the passage as "a cartway from the comon town street in Salem begining its entrance from ye house and ground of Michaell Combes on ye westerne side, & Thomas Sollas, his house & ground on ye easterne side to run through the land of ve said Beckett, home to the land which was formerly the land of Goodman Harwood & since the land of Jeremiah Booteman, but now in ye possession of ye said Cromwell."† Mr. Cromwell conveyed the Estate of Edmond Bridges and Abraham Purchase lots to Edmond Bridges Sept. 21, 1680, and the next day he conveyed to him this grant of a right of way.† In Mr. Becket's will, in 1683, he provides that the lane shall be left as "a convenient highway" " for the use of my children to go to the high street." That part of the street from Essex street to Becket court was called the lane or highway in 1681; the lane or highway that leads into ve main street, 1687; ve lane that runs down by William Becket, sr.'s, 1716; a by eway goeing down to Beckets, 1721; Becket's lane, 1726; and a lane leading from ye main street to Mr. John Beckett's, 1734. In 1795, the street was extended to Derby street, and named Crom-

<sup>\*</sup>Essex Registry of Deeds, book 170, leaf 179.

<sup>\*</sup>Essex Registry of Deeds, book 4, leaf 136. †Essex Registry of Deeds, book 6, leaf 29.

well street. It was first called Becket street in 1799, and has ever since been so called. Becket court, or avenue, as it is now called, has been a highway since 1680.

Carlton street was laid out through land formerly of Samuel Carlton in or before 1801, when it was called the new highway, and also the same year Carlton street, which name has ever since distinguished it. The brace marked "b" on the map shows where it begins.

Derby street was laid out in or before 1768. The braces marked "a" show where it runs. It was called a new town way in 1768; a way leading from the Long wharf to the ropewalk, 1770; the new lane, 1781; Fore street, 1787; and Derby street, 1799.

White street was laid out in 1770 by John Turner, esq. It was called in 1770 land of John Turner, esq., left open for a way; and in 1771 a way opened by John Turner, esq. The city laid it out as a public way and named it White street July 8, 1872.

Blaney street was laid out by Joseph Blaney, esq., and accepted as a public way by the town March 11, 1799.

The ancient way by the water was in use until Derby street was laid out about 1768, and some portions were used a few years later, that portion now a part of Becket court being still in use. The ancient way was called the highway against the South harbor in 1664; and the way by the South river or harbor in 1770.

The South river or harbor was called ye harbor in 1659; the South harbor, 1664; Salem harbor, 1669; ye sea, 1676; ye sea or harbor, 1679; the river, 1682; ye harbor or salt water, 1697; the salt water, 1706; and South river, 1741.

The lots of John Swasey, Joseph Swasey, William and Abigail Masury and Thomas and Mary Mascoll, as shown on the map, comprised the original lot of Joseph Swasey.

Samuel Archard of Salem, carpenter, conveyed to John Becket of Salem, ship-wright, for sixteen pounds, a house and three acres of land behind it, lying between

land of Edward Harnett and Ric: Lambert, April 9, 1655.\* This lot included the lots of Mary Webb, Sarah Bartoll, John Becket, Samuel Phippen, John and Mary Marston, Jacob Fowle, Daniel Webb and Estate of Job Hilliard, as shown on the map. The dwelling house stood on the Mary Webb lot on the street, where its site is marked on the map. This land was a field, called, in 1671, "Job's field."

In the sketches that follow, after 1700, titles and deeds referred to pertain to the houses and land adjoining and not always to the whole lot, the design being, after that date, to give the history of the houses then standing principally.

John Swasey House. Joseph Swasey of Salem, seaman, owned this lot and the lots of Joseph Swasey adjoining, of Abigail Masury, and of Thomas Mascoll, as early as 1658. Upon this lot he built a dwelling house before 1661. He conveyed the house and lot to his son John Swasey of Salem, mariner, April 2, 1689.‡ John Swasey died in 17—; and the house was gone before 1763, when his heirs disposed of the land.

Joseph Swasey Lot. This lot belonged to Joseph Swasey as early as 1658. He died in or before 1709, and his administrator, for fifteen pounds, conveyed the lot to Joshua Tyler of Salem, mariner, May 10, 1717.§

William and Abigail Masury Lot. This lot was owned by Joseph Swasey as early as 1658, and he conveyed it, in consideration of love, to his daughter Abigail Masury and her husband William Masury and to the heirs of the body of Abigail April 21, 1688. Mr. Masury died before 1717, and she continued to own the lot in 1734.

Thomas and Mary Mascoll House. This lot was owned by Joseph Swasey as early as 1658, and he conveyed it, in consideration of love, to his daughter Mary Mascoll and her husband Thomas Mascoll of Salem,

YE TOWNE STREET Site of House Mary Jacob Webb. Foula John and Mary Marstyn. John Samuel Phippen 5 John Becket. Joseph Lord. Hannah Sterns Sarah Bartoll Mary Webb. English. John Wharf. SCALE: I inch= 200 ft. HARBOR

PART OF SALEM IN 1700. NO. 22.

<sup>\*</sup>Essex Registry of Deeds, book 1, leaf 26. †Essex Registry of Deeds, book 3, leaf 114. ‡Essex Registry of Deeds, book 24, leaf 244. §Essex Registry of Deeds, book 32, leaf 137. ||Essex Registry of Deeds, book 16, leaf 7.

