

Historic Salem incorporated

OFFICES AT 15 SUMMER STREET

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16 Hardy Street
Built for
MICHAEL DONAHUE AND HIS WIFE MARY
in the year 1870

Research by,
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Sept. 1979

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

16 Hardy Street

This house is described in the Salem Historic Commission report as follows:

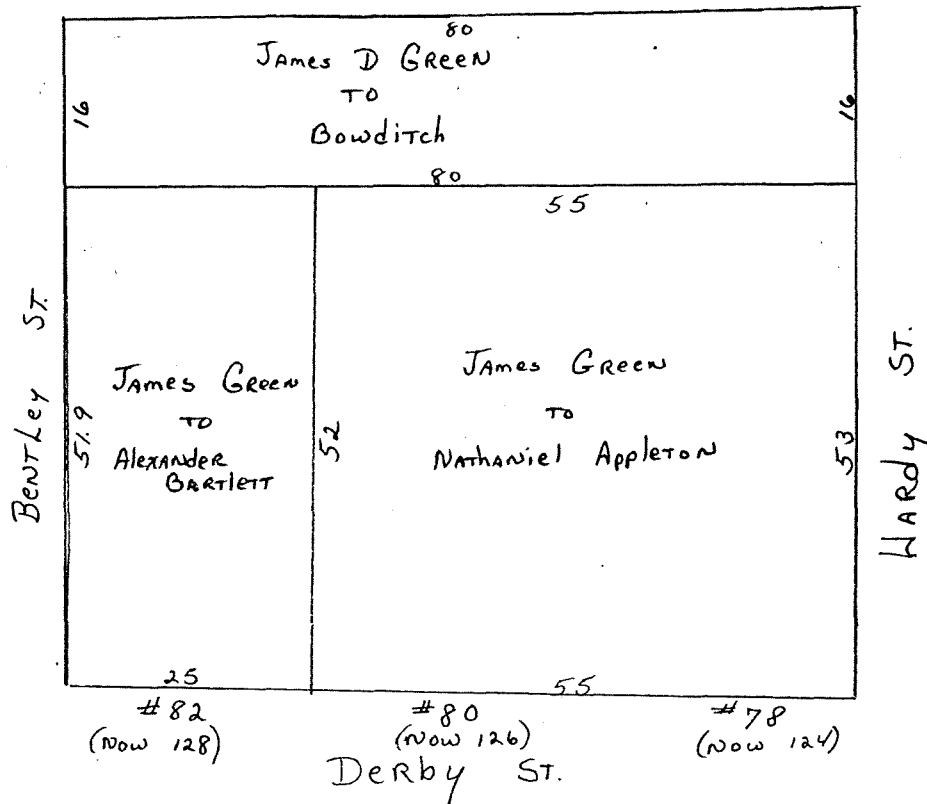
"This unusual building does not fall into a general pattern or style. It is a small one-story plus mansard roof, rectangular, wooden building on a low foundation. The roof does not seem to go with the very small building in terms of style, but the whole effect is pleasing. Perhaps originally this was a chaise house or similar outbuilding; which was enlarged by adding the mansard roof and converted into a dwelling. It seems to appear in the 1874 atlas of Salem."

A history of Hardy St. is given in the Essex Antiquarian vol. 10 page 16, part of which states:

Hardy street was laid out as far as Derby street by Joseph Grafton and John Grafton, by taking a strip of land ten feet in width from either of their lots between the years 1667 and 1670. Hardy street was called the lane or highway laid out by Joseph Grafton, sr., and John Grafton in 1670; "a highway or lane left for the use of severall of the neighbors scituate in ye said lane," 1671; a lane or highway, 1672; a small lane or particular highway, 1679; ye street or lane, 1692; Grafton's lane, 1709; ye lane yt leads down to ye South River by Mr. Grafton's, 1711; the lane that runs down to the South river, 1713; a lane or highway laid out through the land formerly of John Grafton and Joshua Grafton, 1722; a lane or highway leading from ye main street to ye harbor, 1728; Hardy's lane, 1747; and Hardy street, 1795.

The lot on which this house stands was a portion of Rev. James Diman's estate. Rev. Diman was the minister of the East Church, which stood on the south-west corner of Essex and Hardy Streets, from 1737 until his death in 1788. Rev. Diman lived at 8 Hardy St. and owned most of the west side of Hardy St. After the death of Rev. Diman the property descended to his daughters, Mary Diman and Lois Green, and then bequeathed by them to Ezra Green and James D. Green. On June 25, 1817 Ezra Green sold his share in the estate to James D. Green, a student at Harvard College. (book 214 page 100)

On Oct. 12, 1853 James Durell Green sold off portions of his estate. The lot now known as 16 Hardy st. was included in this sale. (book 484 page 295)



The portion conveyed to Nathaniel Appleton is described in the deed as a lot of land, the price \$639. At first glance this would appear to be a simple sale of a vacant parcel of land since the deed does not mention a building, but after a careful check of tax records and directory listings, a hidden bit of history is uncovered. It seems that Nathaniel Appleton had occupied a portion of this lot (now 126 Derby) for many years before purchasing the land, as the site of his carpenter's shop (at least since 1836). This type of transaction happened frequently. Owners of small shops would lease land for a period of years. If business was not good at the end of the time, the owner would move his store to a lot which would hopefully be in a more prosperous area. In this case the shop owner was able to purchase the land under his shop. Since the building was already owned by Nathaniel Appleton, and was considered personal property, there was no reason for the deed to mention a building.

The corner of this same lot, now number 124 Derby including what is now 16 Hardy Street, was the spot the city rented from Mr. Appleton as the site for its Engine House #1. This Engine House first appears in the tax record of 1858:

Derby Street (since renumbered)

#78 Engine House - City of Salem on land of Nathaniel Appleton

#80 Shop and land of Nathaniel Appleton and land above valued at \$600

Nathaniel Appleton, cabinetmaker, died Jan. 19, 1859. In his will he left all his estate both real and personal to his wife Susan Foster Appleton, for her natural life. After Susan's decease the shop and land on the corner of Derby and Hardy were to go to their three daughters Sarah Hale, Susan Woodbury and Ellen M. Brown. Mrs. Appleton retained the shop and land as indicated by the tax records:

Derby Street

1861 - #78 Engine House land Mrs Appleton - total value \$600

#80 Cabinet Shop " " "

1862 - #78 Engine House on land of Susan Appleton 2862 sq. ft. \$400

#80 Shop carpenter " " value \$200

The taxes remain the same until the year 1867 when the shop is then described as a fish store.

In 1868 a big change occurs. The tax records read:

Derby Street

#78 vacant lot Susan Appleton

#80 fish store " "

#82 Engine House City

A check of the 1867 City Documents (page 80) confirm this change:

"The Committee on Public Property purchased land on the corner of Derby and Bently Streets, for the use of Engine House #1, which was upon hired land on the corner of Hardy and Derby." (The Essex Institute has in their collection a photo of the Engine House as it stood on the corner of Bentley and Derby). The Engine House was probably moved over to its new site as no allocations were made for the building of a new Engine House during this time. The amount of \$29.30 was allocated to S. F. Appleton for rent owed by the city.

On Dec. 16, 1869 Susan F. Appleton, Henry Hale and his wife Sarah W. Hale, in her right; Susan A. Woodbury; and Frances Brown and his wife Ellen M. Brown, in her own right; sold to Michael Donahue the land and building (the fish store is still taxed on the land) the same conveyed to the late Nathaniel Appleton by James D. Green for the sum of \$1,325.

1870 tax records:

#78 Derby owner Michael Donahue - land \$800 - buildings \$800

80 " (of Appleton) " "

1871 -

Michael Donahue two houses

The Salem directory of 1869 shows the Donahues as living at 36 Mill St. The federal census of 1870 also shows the Donahue family at the Mill St. address:

Michael Donahoe	age 38	teamster	born Ire.
Mary	" 38	keeps house	" "
David	" 13	attends school	" Mass.
Thomas	" 11	" "	" "

Since this census was taken in the month of June, the Donahues most likely moved to their new home late in 1870.

On Nov. 20, 1871 a straw deed was drawn using Owen Sullivan and thus put the property into Mary Donahues's name. (book 840 page 220-221)

The federal census of 1880:

Michael Donahue	age 50	laborer	born Ire.
Mary	" 50	"	" "

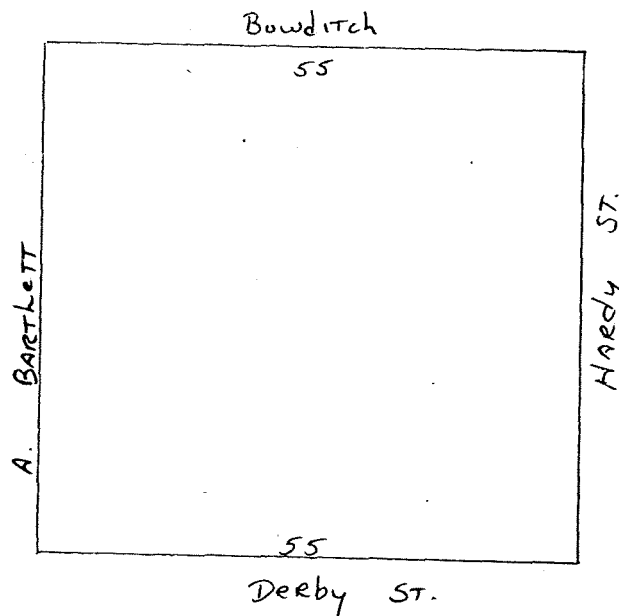
During the next few years the tax records are the same as previous listings. A slight change does occur in 1886 when the house was listed as:

16 Hardy street taxed on Derby
 78 Derby. - Michael Donahue, house value \$300 - land value \$400

Mary Donahue died March 21, 1904. In her probate, docket #94204, Mary's heirs are given as:

Michael Donahue	of Salem	husband
Thomas Lundregan	" "	brother
James Lundregan	Lyrefoame, Ire.	"
Mary Lundregan	Brookline, Mass.	niece

Mary's real estate consisted of a lot of land with two dwelling houses viz: #126 Derby, valued at \$800 and #16 Hardy valued at \$700.



On May 20, 1904 William J. Sullivan, administrator of the estate of Mary Donahue sold the property to Michael Donahue.

Michael Donahue died on Nov. 21, 1907, at the age of 75. His obituary gives some insight into Mr. Donahue's life:

Michael Donahue a well known downtown man died at City Hospital, yesterday. He was born in Ireland, and was formerly a contractor and builder. As a member of the firm of Donahue and Mangan, he laid the first main pipe line of the Salem water works from Wenham Lake to Salem; helped to build the narrow gauge railroad from Lynn to Boston and to lay the Lynn sewer, and also to build roads in Marblehead and other parts of Essex County. For several years he suffered terribly with rheumatism, and when able to move at all required the use of canes and crutches. Notwithstanding all of his sufferings he always had a pleasant word for everybody. His wife and children died several years ago.

This account was written the next day:

The funeral of Michael Donahue was held this afternoon in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, requiem high mass being celebrated. The attendance was very large. The burial was in St. Mary's cemetery.

On April 24, 1905, two years before his death, Mr. Donahue sold the property to Michael Piecowicz. (book 1774 page 150) He then went to live as a boarder at the home of Elizabeth Walsh on Daniels St.

On July 3, 1906 Michael Piecowicz sold the land and buildings to Martin Witkos. Mr. Witkos lived in the building #126 Derby St. and rented out the house at 16 Hardy St. Some of the tenants were:

1907 William Tarrant, driver

1910 Frank Butka, laborer
Wactaw Butka, morrocco worker

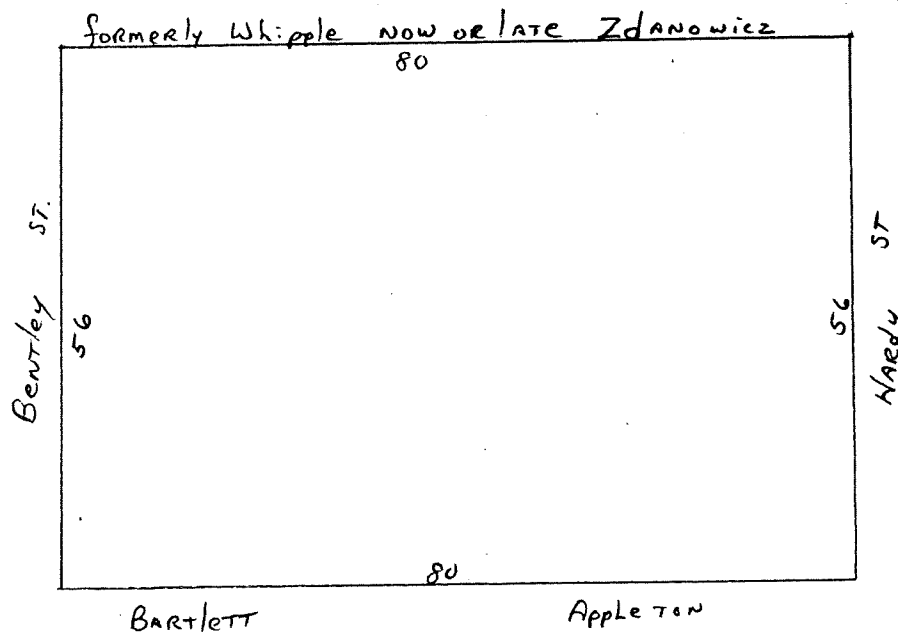
1912 Mrs. Josephine Swiderski, widow of Frank
Frank Butka
Wactaw Butka

1913 Joseph Kielbasa

1914 A. Lazdowsky
F. Ruman

1915 Julian Obrinski, laborer
Frank Obrinski

On June 12, 1916 the Witkos purchased the adjoining property from the Bowditch family. A small portion of which now belongs to the house at 16 Hardy St. (book 2334 page 65).



The Witkos family then made their home at 17 Bentley Street and continued to rent out the house at 16 Hardy. Martin Witkos died in 1932 leaving his widow Antonina all his estate. Antonina successfully conducted the grocery business established by her husband until her death April 1, 1947. The property remained in the Witkos family until Oct. 1978, when it was divided into five lots, 16 Hardy St. being named lot C. The heirs of the Witkos sold this lot and building to Robert C. Bramble, trustee of Allyn Realty Trust at this time. Mr. Bramble, as trustee then sold this lot to Martin H. Randall on Oct. 31, 1978, for the sum of \$16,000. (book 6534 page 479 and book 6534 page 488)

Mr. Randall made several improvements according to the permits filed at the building inspectors office:

- Nov. 10, 1978 - remodel existing kitchen, add new bath 2nd floor, insulate, sheetrock etc.
- Feb. 6, 1979 - strip and reroof, new clapboards, strip and shingle mansard sidewall, new panel door for second exit.

On June 29, 1979 Martin H. Randall sold the property known as lot C, as in plan book 150 page 81, to Joseph M. Centorino and Diana E. Waterous as tenants in common for the sum of \$38,000. (book 6606 page 671)

Reference to book and page are deed books at the Registry of Deeds, all probate numbers can be found in Probate Court, both are located in the same building on Federal St., Salem.

All maps in this report are not meant to be exact - just as an illustration.

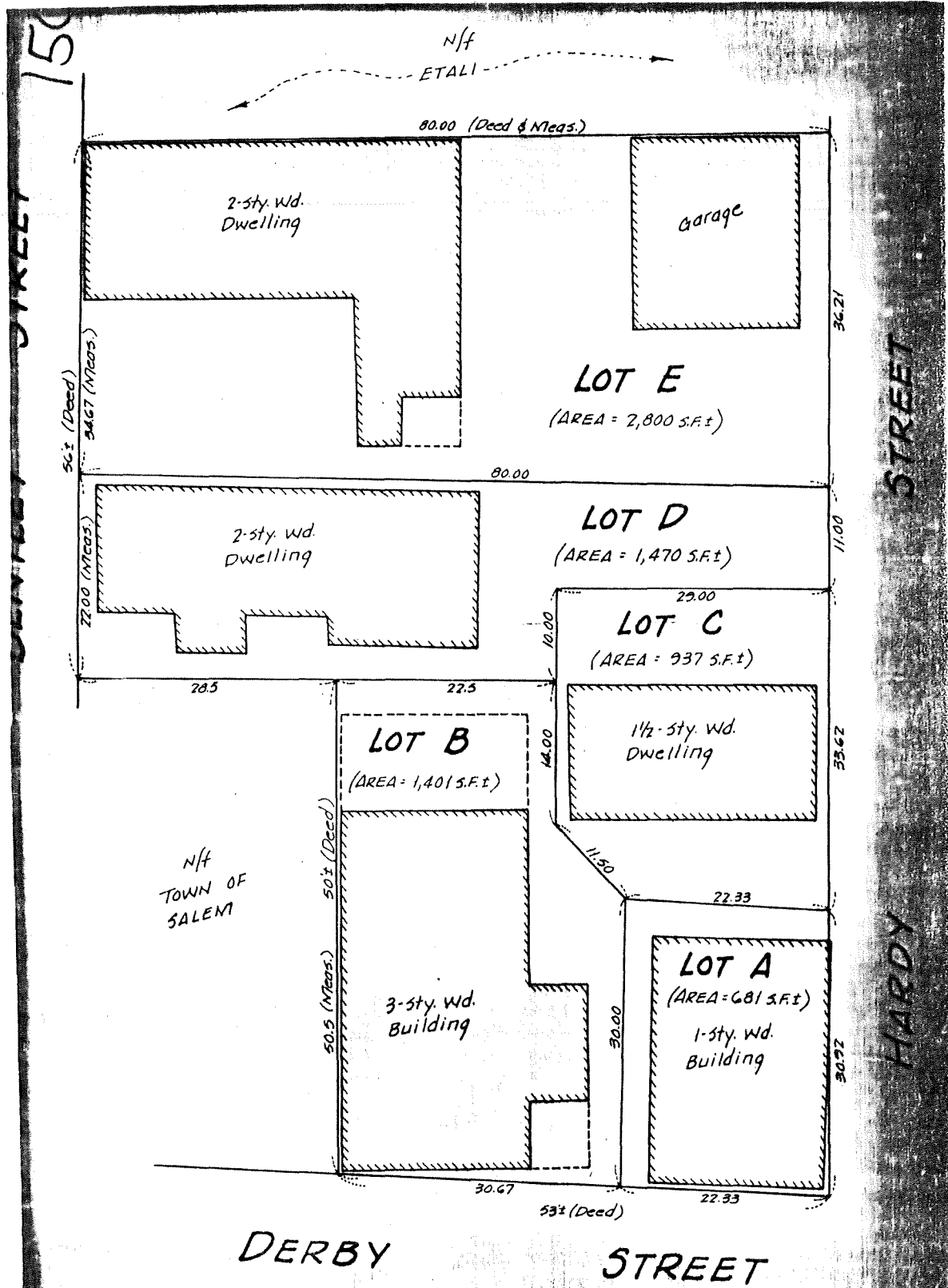


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1956

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Nov 1, 1978



PLAN 150