

LOT 29 I

May 14, 1671

Original Owner: Peter Wooderd

7 acres 10 rods

20 cow commons

IT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE that the south portion of Lot 29 (29 I), with its various edifices, has been the subject through the years of more scrutiny than any other houselot in Deerfield.¹ Charlotte Alice Baker (1833–1909) of Cambridge, who purchased the house in 1890, was led by George Sheldon, who was trying to save the disintegrating old house, to believe that it was built in 1698. She had iron numerals affixed to the chimney so stating. These were reversed by 1947 to read 1689.² Recent studies, based largely on land and probate records, and on the surviving account book of Salah Barnard (1725–1795), who bought the homelot in 1763, have tended to place later dates of construction on the two parts of the building.

Peter Woodward (d.1685) of Dedham was the original owner of the whole of Lot 29, which originally included seven acres. Land and probate records tell the early history of Lot 29, which was one of the largest lots in the town of Deerfield. According to Sheldon, Samson Frary (d.1704) removed from Medfield to Hatfield in 1668 and

owned Lot 29 by 1685, the year Peter Woodward died. Frary may have owned it even earlier, although no deed survives. In 1687 Frary sold four acres on the north side of the lot to John Catlin (c.1643–1704).

Frary and two of his children were killed in the French and Indian assault of 1704. His wife, Mary Daniels Frary (c.1642–1704) was captured and killed on the march to Canada, and the Frary house and barn on the remaining four and one-half acres not sold to John Catlin were burned to the ground.³

Samson Frary's only living son, Nathaniel (1675–1727), inherited the land but probably did not build a new house until about 1719. This date is based on two quitclaim deeds of 1719: one, on June 17, from the descendants of Peter Woodward, and the other, on December 10, from Mehuman Hinsdale (1673–1736) to Nathaniel Frary. Both named the lot as houselot 29. These quitclaims show that Nathaniel Frary was protecting his rights to the homelot, probably at a time when he intended to invest in the property by improving it with a house.

Nathaniel Frary's inventory of 1727 lists "a home Stead £178," meaning a lot with a house. In 1749 Nathaniel's son, Obadiah (1717–1804)⁴ sold half of the remaining homelot to William Williams (1713–1784). This lot stood between the parcel on the north sold to Catlin and the parcel that Nathaniel had retained on the south.

In 1752 Nathaniel Frary's heirs sold the remaining homelot to Joseph Barnard (1717–1785) being the "south half of that homelot that belonged to Nathaniel Frary late of Deerfield, together with a mansion house and Barn."⁵

The next owner, David Arms (b.1735), a joiner, sold the homelot with a dwelling house and barn to Salah Barnard in 1763 for the exact amount he paid for it in 1758.

At this point the account book of Salah Barnard has assumed a critical role in research, and still does. Beginning in 1765, Barnard made entries in his book for purchasing boards, bricks, lath, nails, brads, and the usual items for building a house. In 1765 he recorded, "Bought of Lieut Saml Ashley of Winchester [New Hampshire] 6000 feet of Bords...at the Mill." He paid workmen for their services as carpenters, masons, and joiners. He sold off a total of nine windows and frames from 1763 to 1767, which would suggest he was taking down a house prior to building. But Salah Barnard's accounts are possibly more important for what they fail to say as for what they include.



Lot 29 I.1 North side of house of Salah Barnard, restored by C. Alice Baker in 1890. (*Allen photograph c.1900*)

✱

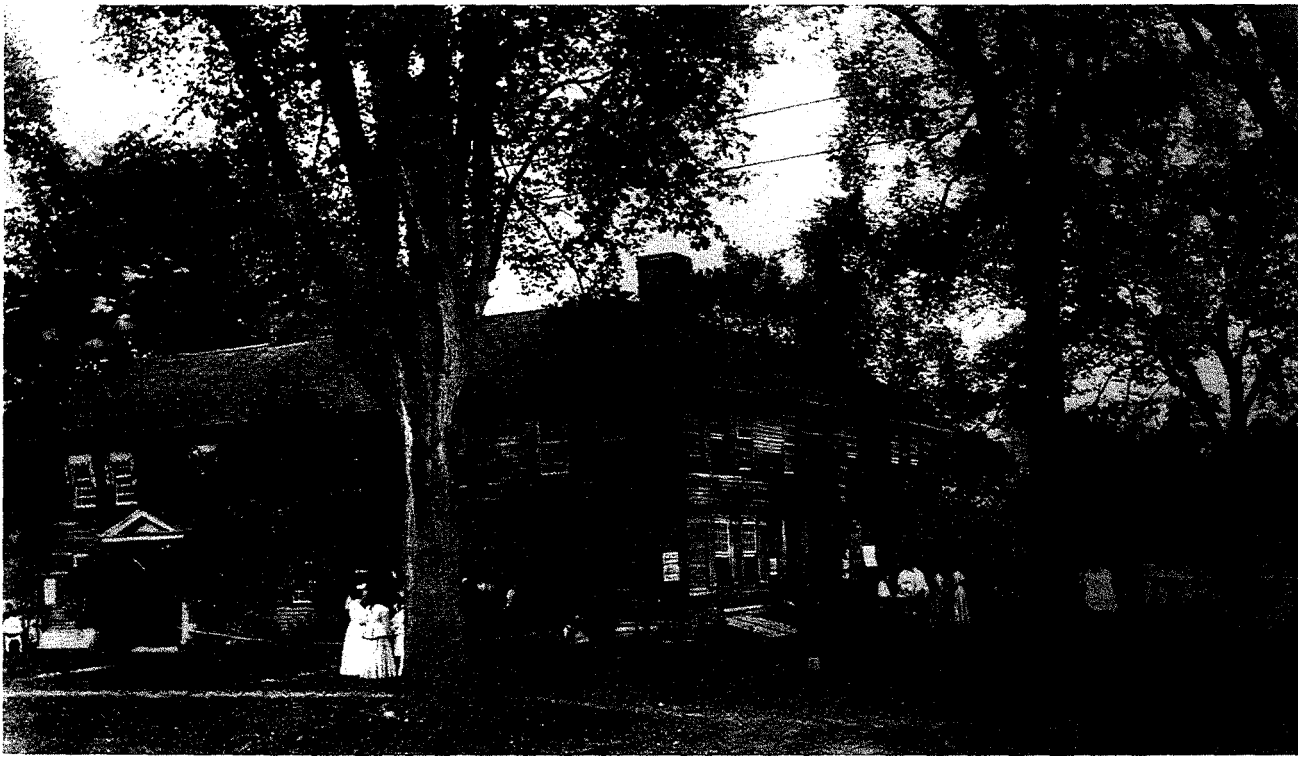
Salah Barnard, who was meticulous enough to note when a man who intended to work a full day was sick part of the time, did not record, in regard to his house, any expenses for stone, for digging a cellar, for major framing, or for a house raising. He did pay the mason, Abraham Billings (b.1745) five shillings in 1768 for “pointing my cellar,” and he credited David Harrington, a joiner, on July 19, 1766, for two and one-half days framing, but a duplicate reference records that Harrington was framing a woodshed. Barnard accounted for only small amounts of brick bought.

In 1765 Salah Barnard seems to have begun reworking the c.1719 house of Nathaniel Frary, perhaps to the extent of stripping it down to a skeletal frame and chimney, and making use of the earliest cellar and foundation. He employed the joiner John Graves (1739–1826)⁶ for forty-nine and one-fourth days work beginning on May 29, 1765, and Francis Munn (1743–1814), his assistant, for forty-three and one-fourth days. He paid Abraham Billings and his brother, Thomas (b.1735), who had moved from Stoughton to Sunderland, for lathing and other unspecified work, which was probably plastering. Barnard purchased a “Harth Stone” on December 11, 1766.

Some years later, on March 11, 1772, Salah Barnard recorded “this Day Mr Lock began to work at the North Roome.”⁷ It was not uncommon for a family to delay the fine finishing of rooms, particularly the north rooms, for several years and even for a generation or more, after moving into a house.

Before he moved into the house, Salah Barnard boarded with his brother, Joseph Barnard (1717–1785), on Lot 31,32, from July 1, 1762 to June 6, 1763.⁸ He then boarded with Elijah Williams (1712–1771) “fore part of ye Sumer in ye year 1764.”⁹ From December 6, 1764 to April 19, 1765, he lived with his father-in-law to be, Jeremiah Nims (1721–1797) in his house on the next lot south.¹⁰ In 1764 Salah Barnard’s accounts with Mrs. Abigail Hall, widow of Ebenezer Hinsdale, (1707–1763) read “By Rent of part of yr homelot at ye North End of the Town” (Lot 40, 41, 42).¹¹ In 1766, presumably while the construction of his house was underway, he once again rented Mrs. Hall’s homelot.¹²

Shortly before he died in 1795, Salah Barnard built a large addition on the south side of his house for the purpose of operating a tavern. In the division of Barnard’s real estate, “the new house,” or addition, was set to his son, Erastus (1768–1852), and the earlier portion of the building to the widow Elizabeth Nims Barnard (1745–1827) for her dower. Erastus had a tavern license from 1796 to



Lot 29 I.2 View of Frary House and adjoining Barnard Tavern, labeled "Miss Coleman's fair." (photograph date unknown)

1804; in his second floor assembly hall, the first meeting of the trustees of Deerfield Academy was held on April 18, 1797.¹³ This eight-year period represents the only time when the building was a legally licensed tavern. Erastus Barnard moved to Canandaigua, New York, in 1805. His mother, the widow Elizabeth Barnard, continued to live in the earlier, north portion of the building until her death in 1827.

From 1796 to 1860 the house and the tavern addition were inhabited separately, and both saw a rapid succession of owners. When the direct tax of 1798 was levied, the two parts together were valued at \$1600, the most expensive real estate on the main street of Deerfield at that time.

After the death of the widow Elizabeth Barnard in 1827, Salah's heirs sold to Elisha Wells (1792–1866), a blacksmith. Wells sold in 1833 to Horatio N. Forbes (b.1807), who sold in 1834 to his brother, John M. Forbes (1809–1894). In 1835, John M. Forbes sold it back to Elisha Wells. That same year Wells sold to Consider Dickinson (1761–1854). Dickinson kept the property until 1852, when he sold it to his niece, Clarissa Dickinson (1794–1862), the youngest daughter of his brother, Thomas Wells Dickinson (1751–1835).

Erastus Barnard sold the south, or tavern, part of the house to Hezekiah Wright Strong (1768–

✱

1848) in 1805, prior to moving to Canandaigua. Strong sold to Ebenezer Hinsdale Williams (1761–1838) in 1811. Jackson Dickinson (1790–1816) owned it in 1816 and, following his death that year, his widow, Harriet J. Dickinson (b.c.1795) sold it in 1818, to Seth Nims (1762–1831), her neighbor to the south. A year later, in 1819, Nims sold to Augustus Lyman (1769–1829), a blacksmith whose home and shop were on Lot 14 III. In 1828 Lyman mortgaged the property to his mother-in-law, the widow Eunice Arms (1744–1838). The mortgage was not redeemed and, after her death, the lot was first held by all of her heirs-at-law, and then solely by her son, Pliny Arms (1778–1859) until his death. Pliny Arms's son, Jonathan Dickinson Arms (1823–1885), was the owner until 1860, when the south part of the house was purchased by Clarissa Dickinson, who had bought the north part in 1852. With Clarissa Dickinson's purchase of 1860, the north and south portions were joined and continue so today (1995).

After 1795, when the 1795 addition was no longer used as a tavern, the front room facing the street began to be used as a store and, about 1812, a small building was put up in front of it also for store purposes. Pliny Arms, who owned the former tavern from 1843 to 1859, moved the small building to the rear for a kitchen. Again



Lot 29 I.3 Back of Frary House. (Coleman photograph after 1890)



according to Sheldon, about 1839 there was a wagon shop at the rear of the house.¹⁴

When Clarissa Dickinson died unmarried in 1862, Lot 29 I was inherited by her brother, Richard Dickinson (1798–1871). He sold the property in 1868 to Samuel Partridge Billings (1819–1902) of Hatfield, whose brother, Israel Williams Billings (1817–1891) had purchased Lot 9 in 1860. Samuel P. Billings, unlike his brother, probably never moved to Deerfield, but rented to farm workers until he sold to John Kelleher (c.1838–1886) and Abby McAuliffe Kelleher (c.1846–1882), his wife. John Kelleher left the property in trust to his sister-in-law, Margaret O'Brien McAuliffe (c.1849–1907).¹⁵ In 1890 heirs of John Kelleher sold to C. Alice Baker of Cambridge.

Had it not been for C. Alice Baker, who restored the building in 1890, the house probably would not have survived to the twentieth century. On July 12, 1890, the Greenfield newspaper¹⁶ reported that she had purchased the house “for the purpose of preservation.”

The measure of the successful efforts of Miss Baker is shown in tax records. In 1890 the large structure was valued at only \$300 and in 1892, when work was completed, the value was \$1600. The restored assembly hall, or ballroom, was the

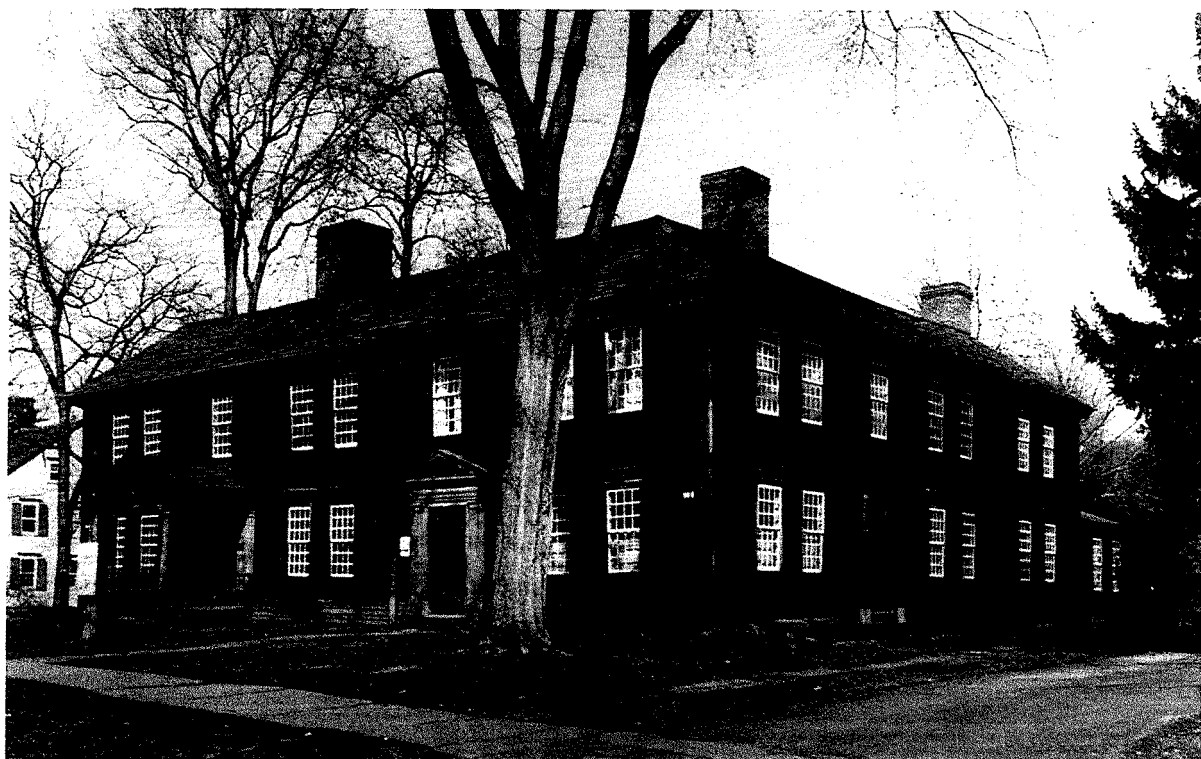
scene of Miss Baker's entertainments where guests danced in eighteenth-century dress.

Never in the time of Miss Baker's occupancy or after was the homelot used for agricultural purposes, so it is not surprising that a large old barn on the grounds was taken down in 1916. The removal was noted in the Greenfield newspaper.¹⁷

Miss Baker left her Deerfield real estate “‘Frary House’ and ‘Barnard House,’” together with all other buildings on the lot and all furnishings in the house to the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association “subject to the use, occupation and enjoyment of...Emma L. Coleman during the term of her natural life.” Miss Coleman (1853–1942) frequently spent her summers in the house.

In 1969 Memorial Hall was in need of major structural repairs. To make these repairs possible, PVMA sold the entire Frary property, with contents, to the Heritage Foundation (Historic Deerfield, Inc.).

Miss Baker's restoration of Frary House and Barnard Tavern, inspired by the Colonial Revival, was reinterpreted by the Flynts in 1949. By 1950 the interior had been once again rearranged to create a colonial setting believed by the Flynts to be a more accurate interpretation for the eighteenth-century building.



NOTES: LOT 29 I

1. In 1947 Amelia F. Miller studied the Frary House before C. Alice Baker's 1890 renovations were removed by the Flynts. In 1970, C. J. Muenchinger, an Historic Deerfield, Inc. summer fellowship student, studied the property. In 1979 another summer student, Randy Jeffrey, also worked on the history of the lot.

2. Amelia F. Miller remembers the numbers from 1947.

3. Table of Losses 1704. Mary Daniels was probably the daughter of Robert Daniels of Watertown. If so, she was born in 1642, and was the sister of Samuel Daniels, who was the original owner of Lot 26.

4. Sheldon has mistakenly printed that Obadiah Frary, born in 1717, died in 1777. The Obadiah who died in 1777 was Obadiah, Jr.

5. Nathan (1719–1794), son of Nathaniel, moved to Muddy Brook (South Deerfield) about 1750 where he kept a tavern. Nathan's brother, Obadiah, a furniture maker and clock maker, moved to Southampton before 1745. A puzzling entry in Joseph Barnard's account book dated July 1738 states, "Nathan Frary of Deerfield Goldsmith." Nathan Frary was born in 1719, and was only nineteen years of age at the time. No further reference to this occupation has been found.

6. John Graves, who was born in Deerfield and died in Greenfield, was a joiner and was so designated in land records.

7. Barnard, Salah account book. "Mr Lock" was Jonas Locke (1727–1812), a carpenter and housewright, and not his cousin, John Locke (1752–1837), who was a mason and stone carver.

8. Barnard, Joseph account books.

Lot 29 I.4 Frary House and Barnard Tavern showing reproduction pedimented doorway at Tavern entrance (right). (photograph 1995)

*

9. Barnard, Salah account book.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Deerfield Academy treasurer. The treasurer, Jonathan Arms, recorded on April 18, 1797, "To paid yr Bill to Erastus Barnard 16.33."

14. Sheldon may have been referring to the building used as a wagon shop of Hiram McKee, which was built on Lot 17 in 1816, and which was moved to Lot 27 in 1833. McKee was taxed for it from 1833 to 1840.

15. Daniel Kelleher (1871–1960), a son of John, was living in Greenfield in 1947 where he was interviewed by Amelia F. Miller.

16. *Gazette and Courier*.

17. Ibid., May 13, 1916.

WHEN COL. WILLIAM WILLIAMS (1713–1784) purchased land north of the Frary’s house in 1749 from Obadiah Frary (1717–1804), the land was unimproved. By 1752, when Williams lost his lot of about three acres in a foreclosure, land records show that he had a house and a shop there. Williams’s account book indicates that he sold general merchandise.¹ Colonel Williams had left his home in Deerfield by 1753 to settle in Pontoosuck, now Pittsfield.²

A creditor, Henry Bloomfield of Boston, merchant, sold to Elijah Williams (1712–1771) in 1757. The shop, but not the house, remained on the lot until 1768, when the property was sold by Elijah Williams to Wendell Phillips of Boston. Salah Barnard (1725–1795) purchased the lot in 1774. Salah left the lot with only a shop on it, by will to his son, Ebenezer, Jr. (1766–1843). Ebenezer Barnard, Jr. had married in 1787 and a house was probably built for that occasion. In 1802, Ebenezer, Jr. sold to Justin Ely, Esq. of West Springfield. In 1804, when Ely sold to Hezekiah

Wright Strong (1768–1848), the sale included a dwelling house.

Ebenezer Barnard, Jr. moved to Northampton about 1810 where he was employed in the office of the Clerk of Courts. Here he became acquainted with the Northampton historian Sylvester Judd (1789–1860). In 1833, Judd interviewed Ebenezer for a lot survey of Revolutionary Deerfield homeowners and their political leanings, as well as other information concerning the history of the Deerfield houselots. For Lot 29 II, Judd wrote “Ebenr Barnard built the house where tavern is... (my informant).”³

John Bennett of South Hadley⁴ purchased the lot from Strong in 1805. Shortly thereafter Bennett applied for a tavern license. From this time on, in nearly unbroken succession, from 1805 until 1935, except following the fires of 1877 and 1881, Lot 29 II was the site of Deerfield taverns and hotels. After the fire of 1877, a new hotel was built almost immediately, but after the second fire, the lot stood empty until 1912.

John Bennett owned the lot and kept tavern until 1808. He sold to Oliver Cooley (b.1772), who had a tavern license from 1809 until 1816. The next owner, Augustus Lyman (1769–1829), kept the tavern from 1816 until 1818. Seth Nims (1762–1831)

Lot 29 II.1 Pocumtuck House, built 1853, burned 1877.
(stereoscopic view, date unknown)

