

2 CONGRESS ST – THE JOSEPH ALLEY HOUSE



Location

2 CONGRESS ST

MBLU

51/ 66/ / /

Owner

HERLIHY THOMAS TRS

Assessment

\$1,013,000

PID

3453

Building Count

1

Current Value (2024)

Assessment

Valuation Year	Improvements	Land	Total
2025	\$665,300	\$347,700	\$1,013,000

Owner of Record

Owner HERLIHY THOMAS TRS
Co-Owner THOMAS HERLIHY DECLARATION OF TRUST
Address 2 CONGRESS ST
 NEWBURYPORT, MA 01950
Sale Price \$0
Certificate
Book & Page 36999/0413

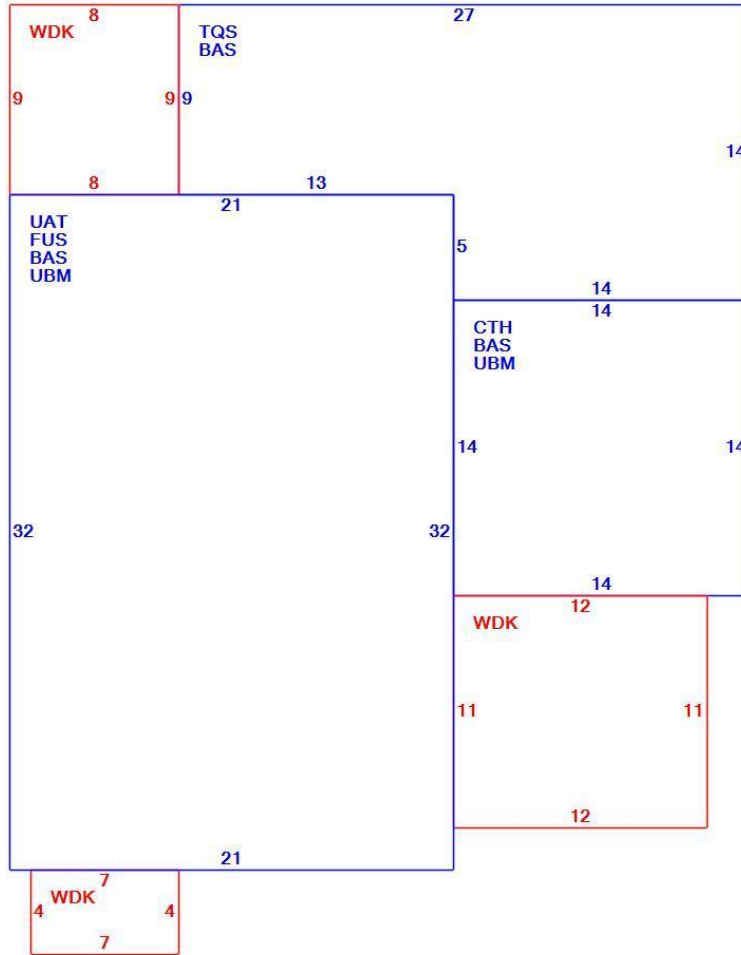
Sale Date 09/10/2018
Instrument 1F

Ownership History

Ownership History

Owner	Sale Price	Certificate	Book & Page	Instrument	Sale Date
HERLIHY THOMAS TRS	\$0		36999/0413	1F	09/10/2018
HERLIHY THOMAS	\$549,900		36611/0387	1O	03/29/2018
HARDIN MAUREEN E	\$0		36581/0316	1H	03/12/2018
HARDIN J DAVID	\$1		09515/0206	1A	05/16/1988
HARDIN JAMES D JR	\$0		6396/0624		09/26/1977

Building Layout



Valuation History

Assessment

Valuation Year	Improvements	Land	Total
2024	\$635,100	\$316,100	\$951,200
2023	\$544,400	\$274,900	\$819,300
2022	\$455,700	\$229,100	

House History:

Joseph Alley the Organ Maker

Known Actual Builder of a Newburyport House!

Joseph Alley built 2 Congress Street in 1845,. Most homes in Newburyport tend to have unknown builders, or the builder's information was lost. A later modern addition to the original house was put on in 1988.

Joseph Alley was born in Kennebunk, Maine in 1804. He began making reed organs at the age of eighteen and is believed to be self-taught. He moved to Newburyport in 1826 and married Lucy B. Knowles. His son Joseph Alley II (1832-1870) followed in this father's footsteps and worked for him as an organ pipe maker.

Alley was backed by local business men and built several organs between 1826 and 1850, three or four of those were located in Newburyport churches. It is reported that at his death that he had built 37 organs, but only one is still in existence, and it is at the First Religious Society of Newburyport on Pleasant Street in Newburyport. It was originally built in 1834, and has been rebuilt twice, but still contains much of his work.

In 1849 and 1851 along with Henry Ward Poole (1826 - 1890), Joseph Alley built two experimental "enharmonic" organs, with the hope of being able to achieve perfect pitch. Unfortunately only two of these organs were ever made, and both were sold at a loss.

Backyard used to make organ pipes!

Alley gave up his workshop on Brown's Wharf in 1866, and spent the remainder of this life making pipes in a shed behind his Congress Street home for other organ builders. He died in Newburyport in 1880.

References:

www.historynewburyport.org, by Mary Baker Eaton

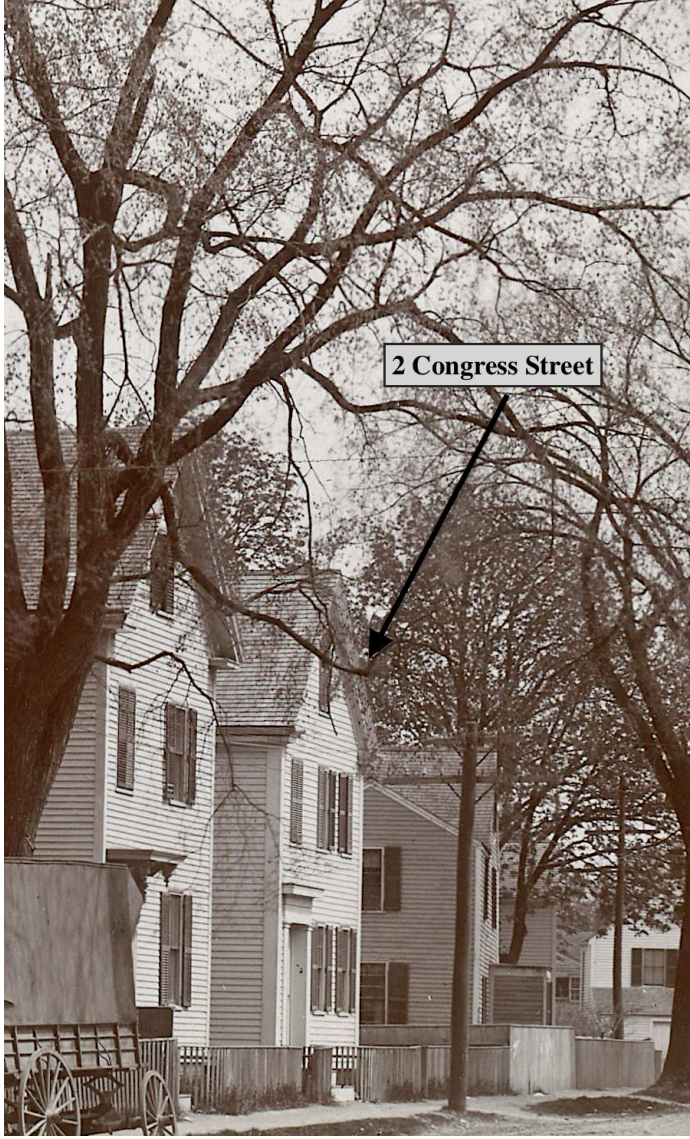
*Salem Deeds (2 Congress Street)

City of Newburyport Assessor's Office (2 Congress Street)

"*Joseph Alley (1804-1880)*," by Barbara Owen, *The Encyclopedia of Keyboard Instruments, the Organ*, edited by Douglas E. Bush and Richard Kassel

"Joseph Alley and Richard Pike Morss, Early Organ builders of Newburyport," by Barbara Owen, *The Journal of the Organ Historical Society*, Volume 31, Number 1, 1987

[The Life and Times of Joseph Alley, Organ Maker](#), by Jonathan Gregory Reed, August 9, 2024



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