

46-48 Purchase Street - Major David Coffin, Captain Caleb Woodbury House



Location

46 PURCHASE ST UNIT 1-4, Back Buildings 5 & 6

MBLU

25/ 25/D //

Owner

SALO JOHN & MELISSA J/T (Unit 4)

Assessment

\$646,300

PID

103303

Building Count

1

Current Value

Assessment

Valuation Year	Improvements	Land	Total
2026	\$646,300	\$0	\$646,300

Owner of Record

Owner SALO JOHN & MELISSA J/T

Co-Owner

Address 46-48 PURCHASE ST UNIT 4
NEWBURYPORT, MA 01950
Sale Price \$589,000
Certificate
Book & Page 41191/0138

Sale Date 09/15/2022
Instrument 00

Ownership History

Ownership History

Owner	Sale Price	Certificate	Book & Page	Instrument	Sale Date
SALO JOHN & MELISSA J/T	\$589,000		41191/0138	00	09/15/2022
SENZAMICI KATHRYN E	\$378,000		33364/0334	00	06/26/2014
THIBEAULT CONNIE A	\$351,000		32188/0450	00	02/06/2013
WHITE PAUL W	\$332,875		30563/0586	00	08/01/2011
PONTREMOLI EDWARD J	\$340,000		26128/0121	00	09/28/2006

Building Information

Building 1 : Section 1

Year Built: Ca 1810

Living Area: 1,027

Building Attributes

Field	Description

Style:	Condominium
Model	Res Condo
Stories:	1
Grade	Average +20
Occupancy	1
Interior Wall1	Drywall/Sheet
Interior Wall	
Interior Floor	Pine/Soft Wood
Interior Floor2	
Heat Fuel:	Gas
Heat Type:	Forced Air-Duc
AC Type:	Central
Ttl Bedrms:	2 Bedrooms
Ttl Bathrms:	2 Full
Ttl Half Bths:	0
Xtra Fixtres	
Total Rooms:	5 Rooms
Primary Bldg Use	
Atypical	
Fireplaces	
Num Part Bedrm	
Base Flr Pm	
Pct Low Ceiling	
Unit Locn	
Exterior Wall 1:	Clapboard
Exterior Wall 2:	
Roof Structure	Gable/Hip
Roof Cover	Asph/F Gls/Cmp

Foundation	
Security:	
Cmplx Cnd	
Xtra Field 1:	
Remodel Ext:	
Super	
Grade	

Building Sub-Areas (sq ft)Legend

Code	Description	Gross Area	Living Area
FUS	Upper Story, Finished	1,027	1,027
		1,027	1,027

Extra Features

Extra FeaturesLegend

Code	Description	Size	Value	Bldg #
FPL4	FIREPLACE, MNF	1.00 UNITS	\$1,400	1

Land

Land Use

Use Code 1021
Description CONDO

Land Line Valuation

Size (Acres) 0
Depth

Assessed Value \$0

Valuation History

Assessment

Valuation Year	Improvements	Land	Total
2025	\$613,400	\$0	\$613,400
2024	\$575,400	\$0	\$575,400
2023	\$649,300	\$0	\$649,300

History of the House:

Architecture: Federalist, Italianate Features later added.

In 2006 the house was renovated into 46-48 Purchase Street Condominium. It included a full Greek Revival House in the backyard, with the servant quarters converted into additional units.

History of the Structure:

There are two portraits by a now very famous artist, John Brewster Jr. of Major David Coffin and his wife Elizabeth Stone Coffin (Elizabeth is referred to as Betsy in the 1810 deed to Captain Caleb Woodbury).

David Coffin was born in Newbury in 1763, he was the son of Major David Coffin (b. 1733), who was lost at sea in the year after his namesake was born. His older brother, Nathaniel was also lost at sea in 1781. David married Elizabeth Stone in Newburyport in 1786, and between that time and 1805 the couple had 11 children. Their eighth child, Ebenezer Stone Coffin, was born in October 1801, meaning that Elizabeth Coffin was several months pregnant when she sat for her now famous portrait. David Coffin was a ship owner. He filed a claim in 1798 for \$7800 for the loss of a schooner, the "Betsy and Lucy," which was confiscated by the French in the war with England (Newburyport Herald, July 27, 1798). At the time of his death, Major Coffin was described as "one of the most active merchants and ship owners in this town" (Newburyport Herald, Nov 20, 1838). Major David Coffin bought the land on which 46 Purchase Street was built sometime in the mid 1790s.

The 1810 deed from Major Coffin to Captain Woodbury talks about a "new street" that Coffin had laid out. This is the big news. This is the first laying out of what will eventually become Purchase Street. The new street became Adelphi Street around 1825 and then became Purchase Street in 1851 when the City of Newburyport annexed that portion of Newbury.

In the deed of 1810 it states that the “premises” was sold by Major Coffin to Captain Caleb Woodbury. It is unclear exactly when the house was built and who built it, Coffin or Woodbury. However, in 1812, a year and a half after buying the property, there was an advertisement in the Newburyport Herald and Country Gazette where half the house and land were to be sold at auction, which Caleb Woodbury had the right to redeem, which he obviously did. So that means that the house definitely existed in 1812, a year and half after the sale.

It is clear that Captain Caleb Woodbury, like so many people in Newburyport in the shipping business, was under financial strain because of the Embargo of 1807-1809, the disastrous fire of 1811, followed by the war of 1812. It is also possible that the Embargo is why Major David Coffin sold the “premise” in 1810 (he too could have been under financial strain). One of the major stories of Newburyport was how the Embargo, compounded by the fire of 1811 created such havoc for the town. The good news is that both Major David Coffin and Captain Caleb Woodbury survived and obviously flourished, unlike some of there contemporaries like Captain Offin Boardman IV who was in debt at his death



Portraits of Major David Coffin and Elizabeth Stone Coffin, by John Brewster Jr. courtesy of Sotheby's

References:

History courtesy of the current (August 2019) owner of 46 Purchase Street

