

Adams Street*



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Adams Street, bordering the northeastern edge of the Training Field, extends in a southeasterly direction from Winthrop Street, then turns in a northeasterly direction, to Mount Vernon Street. It was "staked out by selectmen from Mr. Townsend's corner to Mr. Breed's dam pasture and approved by the town in 1797." The 1818 Peter Tufts map suggests that the segment of Adams Street between Common Street and Winthrop Street may then have been part of High Street, with Adams Street beginning at the corner of the present Common Street/Adams Street intersection, continuing as Adams Street to Chelsea Street.



Peter Tufts, 1818

It was then part of an old highway, the Salem Turnpike, which dates to at least the mid-18th century. Extending to Charlestown by 1802, the Salem Turnpike linked the Boston area with Salem and other North shore communities. It passed from Bunker Hill Street to Elm Street, then High Street to Adams, Chelsea, and Henley Streets, terminating at City Square. At that time the Training Field area was at the fringes of settlement, with the upland pasture/battlefield of Breed's Hill located to its northeast.



Adams Street, between Winthrop (rt arrow) and Chestnut (lt arrow) Streets, Mallory Panoramic View, 1848

According to an article in the *Charlestown Enterprise* dated August 30, 1919, Adams Street was named after "the distinguished Massachusetts family of presidents and statesmen."

During the early 19th century, the Charlestown Almshouse stood at the corner of Adams and High (the segment of High which later became Winthrop), Streets, probably near the entry to Wallace court. The almshouse was demolished in 1824, relocated to Elm Street, near Bunker Hill Street and moved to Alford Street in 1848.

Fifteen houses on Adams Street were included in the survey, ranging from a Federal double house built in 1827 to a mansard House built in 1874.

A row of four Greek Revival houses, built in 1828, are evidently the earliest substantial row of masonry townhouses in Charlestown.

The remaining houses include:

Five Greek revival houses built between 1848 and 1849

A Greek/Italianate pair built in 1850

An Italianate house, in 1855.

*Information drawn from Boston Landmark Commission's Charlestown Historic Resources Study 1981 (E. W. Gordon, Consultant), with the addition of photographs and images from early maps and/or the Mallory Panoramic View of Charlestown, when appropriate.