

1-3 Tremont Street (circa 1845-1847)

From Boston Landmark Commission's Charlestown Historic Resources Study 1981 (E. W. Gordon, Consultant)*:



1, 3 Tremont Street

2016

Numbers 1, 3 Tremont Street is a two-story double Greek Revival house. It has a flat front of red brick, with granite trimming, and a granite faced basement. Each house has three bays and a side hall plan, with paired entrances. The building has a cornice with a brickwork dentil course, and a gable roof. There are two pedimented dormers for each house. There is a long ell to the rear of number 1 and a narrower ell to the rear of 3.

The entrances have later-altered doors and transoms; originally, they were open and recessed. The windows have simple stone sills and lintels (with more substantial lintel bars over the entrances) and 6/6 sash.

Builder: Isaac C Cushing

Original owner: #1- Artemas Tirrell?, #3-Ezra Brown

Architecturally 1, 3 Tremont Street is significant as a handsome example of a circa mid-1840s masonry Charlestown double house. The house is characterized by planar wall surfaces, a highly symmetrical main façade, crisply rendered fenestration, and rhythmic repetition of pedimented dormers.

Numbers 1-3 Tremont street's lots appear on an M Parker plan dated July 1844. This duo was almost certainly built shortly after Ezra Brown's purchase of number three's lot from Isaac C Cushing, a mason, on March 25, 1845. The building appears on the 1848 Panoramic View of Charlestown. It was built circa 1845-1847 and evidently is the work of Cushing. Cushing was active in Charlestown building trades from circa 1840-186_. He is listed as boarding at 54 Main Street in 1842 and is last listed as a mason in 1858. At that time he resided at 36 Winthrop Street. Isaac Cushing was responsible for 98-114 Elm Street (Note-by 1860 Cushing lived in Somerville, Massachusetts)

Ezra Brown, a caulker, was number 3's original owner, and he owned number 3 from 1845 until his death on March 3, 1888. Mr.

Brown was a native of Duxbury. He came to Charlestown circa 1835 to work as a caulker in the Navy yard. By 1876 Mr. Brown had "assumed management of a one island in the west Indies for the Pacific Guano Company, passing much of the time there, returning at intervals." From 1888 until at least 1911, John Henry Brown, mason", place of work, 170 Main Street (ed note-sentence fragment-was he the owner at that time?).

Number 1 Tremont's early ownership needs further research. It seems to have been owned by Artemas Tirrell, of Boston, and Charlotte E Tay, wife of Rufus L Tay of Franklin, New Hampshire, prior to circa 1860. It would appear that Artemas Tirrell was the original owner.

By the late 1860s, number 1 was owned by Alexander Campbell. He was involved in the plumbing and gas fitting trade during the 1860s to the mid-1880s. Initially, Alexander Campbell was employed in a Boston plumbing establishment. It is interesting to note that prior to circa 1850 "there were really no plumbing establishments in Charlestown, orders for such work being taken by stove dealers and sublet to plumbers in the city property". Campbell saw an opportunity to establish a plumbing concern similar to one he worked for in Boston. When Charlestown's water mains were first laid his services were secure as an inspector without pay. He later accepted a contract for making the necessary connections between the water mains and stores and residences. Mr. Campbell "attended to all branches of his business, making a specialty of gas fitting and repair of defective furnaces"

Later owners of number 1 Tremont included a CF Gilman-1885, Isaac Klous- 1892, and John and Mary Bassett, 1901.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1852

Atlases-1865, 1875, 1885, 1892, 1901, 1911

Charlestown directories-1834-74

Boston directory-post 1875

Middlesex deeds, #1-1196:105, 1061:382, 821:521, 406:494; #3-446:195, 460:156

Newspaper articles: *Charlestown enterprise*, December 19, 1885, page 2-"Alex Campbell"

Charlestown enterprise, March 3, 1888, page 1 "The iron Hand of Death"-Ezra Brown obituary

*Digitized and edited, without change in content, from the scanned record in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System, with the addition of current photographs. In the case of houses that have been altered since the survey, these photographs may not entirely correspond to the architectural description. If earlier photographs of suitable quality are available, these have been included.

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