

101-117 Baldwin Street (circa 1849-1850)

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



117- 101 Baldwin Street

2016

Numbers 101-117 Baldwin Street is an attractive red brick, granite-trimmed row of eight Greek Revival townhouses. They have three bay main façades with flat fronts, low granite basements, and side hall plans. There are two rows of brickwork banding beneath the cornice, and a gable roof. Each unit has one pedimented dormer with a gable roof.

The front doors are surmounted by large multi pane transoms with various sash configurations. These houses probably originally had open recessed entryways. They have simple stone sills and lintels.

Builder: Benjamin Page

Original owner: Benjamin Page

These houses, built circa 1849-1850, date to the earliest phase of Baldwin Street's residential development. They are charming, well-crafted examples of the Greek Revival style, and are stylistically similar to 1840s row houses in Bay Village, the South End (e.g. Bond Street, Ringold Street), and East Boston.

The row is the work of prolific Charlestown mason Benjamin Page. Benjamin Page was active in Charlestown building trades from 1845 until the late 1850s. He is first listed as a mason, with his house on Bunker Hill Street in 1845. By 1852 he was living in one of the three row houses he built circa 1850 at 227 Bunker Hill Street. He is credited with the double red brick townhouses at 284-286 Bunker Hill Street, circa 1855-56, and the 1850 Italianate brick house at 285-289 Bunker Hill Street.

On January 2, 1849, Page paid James Cooper of Cambridge, a soap manufacturer, \$2308 for 107-117 Baldwin's lots (531:370). This parcel was part of the land conveyed to Cooper by John Cheever on December 8, 1847 (521:16). At any rate, Page sold 101's lot "with the buildings thereon" to Dexter King, a clergyman, for \$3000. Dexter King is not listed in 1850s Charlestown directories. On October 8, 1851, King sold 101 to Elbridge Fisk for \$3000. At that time King is listed as a Boston trader (581-291). Fisk was a mechanic. Later owners of 101

included an Ethan A Elliot (981:64) and John H Riley, in the 1880s-early 1905.

William A Byam, who lived at 115, was perhaps this group's most prominent resident. He was the son of "the pioneer of match manufacturers" Ezekiel G Byam. He was the junior member of the firm of Rand and Byam of Chelmsford, Massachusetts where he was born July 20, 1820. He came to Charlestown in 1855.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1833, 1839, 1848, 1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories-1834-1874

Middlesex DA's

"Souvenir of Charlestown and Bunker Hill Monument-1843-1893, published by *the Bunker Hill time's*

*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.

R Dinsmore