

104-114 Baldwin Street (circa 1869)

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



104- 114 Baldwin Street

2016

Numbers 104-114 Baldwin Street is a row of six two-story, flat front, brick Italianate houses. Each house has a three bay main façade with two small basement windows, and a side hall plan. They have flat roofs with bracketed (wooden?) Cornices.

The entrances have segmental arch cornices and three pane transoms. The Windows are set into recessed segmental arch openings with 2/2, and 1/1 wood sash. The lintels are composed of header bricks.

Original owner: John Cheever (?)

Architecturally, 104-114 Baldwin Street is a relatively late addition to Baldwin Street's collection of primarily 1840s and 1850s masonry row houses. Built circa 1869, these two story houses exemplify modest, solid examples of late 1860s-early 1870s Charlestown masonry row housing. They continue the preference on the part of Charlestown masons for flat front, rather than bow front, masonry row houses. The bow front was the preferred form of brick townhouses in Boston's South End from the late 1840s to the 1860s.

Middlesex deeds and Charlestown directories provide some conflicting evidence as to the date of construction for this group. A deed dated March 15, 1871 (1188:554) between John Cheever and Charles G Wolf (deed refers to 106 Baldwin) does not mention buildings on this lot. The low purchase price of \$250 also indicates the absence of buildings. Directories, however, locate Wolf at 66 Baldwin Street (later 106 Baldwin) in 1870. Wolf is not listed on Baldwin Street in 1868, hence a construction date of circa 1869. Wolf is listed as a civil engineer in 1870. During the 1870s a Charles G Wolf also lived at 106; his occupation is listed as "sugar house".

John Cheever started to buy up house lots along Baldwin Street as early as the 1840s. He is referred to as Dr. John Cheever in mid-19th-century deeds. He purchased his Baldwin Street-north of Bunker Hill Street- lots from a Samuel Bigelow. During the early 19th century Baldwin Street north of Bunker Hill Street, and adjacent house lots, was upland pasture belonging to a William Symmes (see 1818 map of Charlestown).

Baldwin Street existed in an informal state as late as 1837. By 1844 the section north of Bunker Hill Street was called Linden** Street. The section of Baldwin Street south of Bunker Hill Street was set out circa early 1850s. Both sections of this street were united under the name of Baldwin Street circa mid-late 1860s. It was named for the Charlestown and Woburn Massachusetts engineering family that included Loammi Baldwin and George R Baldwin. Initial house construction activity on Baldwin Street dates to circa late 1840s-mid-1850s.

Owners in 1875, possibly representing original ownership, included: Julia C Burbank-104, Charles G Wolf-106, (?) Kuhn-108, Mrs. E P Jewett-110, F A Ladd-112 and W McElrose-114.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1833, 1839, 1848, 1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories-1860s, 1870

Middlesex deeds-1188:554 (number 106)

*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

** Lincoln Street in the Felton and Parker map, 1848, and the McIntire map, 1852