

11 Mystic St. (circa 1855)

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



11 Mystic Street

2016

Number 11 Mystic Street is a three-story wood frame house with Italianate elements. It has a brick basement, three bays, and a side hall plan. The house has a flat roof, and a deep-bracketed cornice. The entrance has a deep-bracketed door hood with carved pendants, supporting a second floor oriel window. The windows are fully enframed and have cornice-headed lintels.

Builder: Benjamin Harmon

Built in 1855, 11 Mystic Street is a well-preserved example of mid-19th century wood frame Italianate housing in Charlestown. Its deep-bracketed door hood, second floor oriel, fully enframed windows with cornice-headed lintels as well as a deep-bracketed cornice are all intact and constitute a lively, highly plastic façade.

It is the work of Charlestown carpenter Benjamin Harmon. He purchased 11 Mystic Street's lot from the city of Charlestown on June 28, 1855 for \$624. Number 11's land is lot number 10 on "a plan for the Alms House estate, Bunker Hill, Charlestown" by Alexander Wadsworth November 24, 1848. This lot was sold on the condition that "no building which shall be erected thereon shall be used for any purpose other than for a dwelling house or store (see Middlesex 711:401). Benjamin Harmon is first listed in Charlestown directories in 1848. At that time he lived at 45 Allston Street, where he continued to live until the mid 1860s. By 1875, his address is listed as 11 Mystic Street, which he owned until at least the late 1880s. His heirs owned this property until at least the early 1900s.

Mystic Street was laid out through the center of the former "Alms House estate" circa late 1840s/early 1850s. With the notable exception of numbers 26-60, Mystic Street was developed with primarily wood frame structures. The 1818 map indicates that the early 1800s Alms House was located on or just to the north of the 11 Mystic Street site. Until as late as the 1840s the area between

Elm and Short Streets, and Bunker Hill and Medford Streets, was upland pasture belonging to various owners.

Bibliography:

Maps 1818, 1833, 1839, 1848, 1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories-1834-74

Middlesex deed-711:401

*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