

172-176 Bunker Hill Street (172:1868-69; 174/176:1870)

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



172, and 174-76 Bunker Hill Street

2015

Numbers 172, and 174-176 Bunker Hill Street is a trio of Mansard houses constructed of wood.

Number 172 appears to have been recently renovated. It has a three bay main façade with clapboards, and a side hall plan. The entrance is flanked by pilasters and topped by a door hood, which supports an apron-paneled oriel. The edges of the building are accented by narrow base, corner, and fascia boards. There are paired brackets at the cornice, and there is a

straight-sided Mansard roof with a pair of dormers with segmental cornices.

Numbers 174 and 176 are a two story double Mansard house with brick basements, three bay main facades with modern shingles, and brick sidewalls. They have a fascia board with paired brackets at the cornice and a straight-sided mansard roof. Number 176 retains its slate shingles. Each has a pair of dormers, crowned by pedimented gables. The dormers at 176 have curving side enframements, a relatively rare dormer treatment for Charlestown.

They have side hall plans and recessed entrances. Entrance enframements consist of paneled pilasters and bracketed door hoods, which support octagonal oriels with bracketed cornices.

Builder: H C Stevens

Original owner: 172-H P Gardener, 174-Meigs and Headley, 176-H C Stevens

Together with the Greek Revival house at 170 Bunker Hill Street (see form), this trio of Mansard houses provides a good introduction to Trenton Street's interesting collection of mid-late 19th century wood frame row houses. Numbers 172, and 174-176 Bunker Hill Street are good examples of circa late 1860s-early 1870s wood frame Mansard/Italianate houses. Number 176 Bunker Hill Street's dormers, with their curvilinear side enframements and pedimented gable rank among the more elaborately rendered 19th-century dormers in Charlestown.

These houses may represent the work of H C Stevens, a mason. Directory work is needed on H C Stevens. In 1817 he is listed as

a mason at 4 Polk Street, Charlestown, and is listed at 176 Bunker Hill Street by 1875.

As early as 1818, 172-176's lots are shown to be part of a much larger tract of pasture land belonging to Joseph Hurd. On November 2, 1867, number 172's lot was purchased from William Hurd by Henry P Gardener, a "rope maker, Navy Yard." Gardener is first listed at 172 Bunker Hill Street in 1870. Number 172 was evidently built circa 1868-69, while 174-176 was apparently built at some point between June and November 1870.

On June 1, 1870, Charles W H Meigs and Arthur Angers Headley, both of Charlestown, (occupation?), paid William Hurd \$1140 for 174's lot. The Hurd/Meigs etc. deed does not mention buildings on this property but does mention a party wall to be shared with Mrs. Adeline Gardener. Meigs and Headley sold 174 "with the buildings thereon" to Freeman S Atkins of Charlestown for \$6000 on November 19, 1870. Thus 174 and Presumably 176 were built between June-November 1870.

By 1892 this trio's owners included Ellen Powers-172, Charles F Atwood-174, Frank R Tackaberry, a cutter, 44 North Street-176. During the early 1900s Powers and Tackaberry are still listed as owners, while 174 was owned by Mary O Atwood.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1852

Panoramic view of Bunker Hill, 1848

Atlases-1868, 1875, 1885, 1892, 9001, 1911

Charlestown directories-1834-74

Boston directories-1875-1911

Middlesex deeds-number 172-1011:365; number 174-1101:259, 1137:359

*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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