

2 Salem Street Avenue (circa 1826? 1828?)

From Boston Landmark Commission's Charlestown Historic Resources Study 1981*:



2 Salem Street Avenue

1981

Two Salem Street Avenue is a two story Federal wood frame house with a five bay main façade and low brick basement. A baseboard spans of the length of the main façade and narrow corner boards accent the main block's edges. There is a well-molded cornice above the second floor windows, and the house is enclosed by a gable roof. It has a two-story side ell.

A single granite step leads to a center entrance flanked by pilasters with recessed panels. Above the front door are two recessed rectangular panels. The entrance enframements are

surmounted by a cornice-headed entablature. The windows are fully enframed with 6/6 wood sash.



2 Salem Street Avenue entry detail

1981



2 Salem Street Avenue

2015

Builder: Thomas Osgood?

Original owner: Capt. Thomas Rice

Most houses in the survey date to the Charlestown building booms of the 1790s/1800s, late 1830s/1840s, or late 1860s/early 1870s. Number 2 Salem Street Avenue is a relatively rare Charlestown example of a circa mid-1820s wood frame Federal house. Its main façade continues the Georgian format of symmetrical five Bay Center entrance main façades. Still intact is the front door's handsome enframements including paneled pilasters and cornice-headed entablature.

Salem Street Avenue probably began as a driveway to this house. This house's land had been part of number 8 Salem's

house lot. Number 8 Salem was built ca. 1799-1800 by Thomas Osgood, housewright (see form). Number 2 Salem Street Avenue was probably built around the time Osgood's heirs sold number 8 Salem to Capt. Thomas Rice, occupation unspecified in the 1834 directory. A plan dated June 22, 1883 indicates that 2 Salem Street Avenue's lot was part of number 8 Salem Street's house lot. Rice's purchase was described in 285:280-283, July 12, 1826, as "a certain dwelling house with the land under and adjoining"- presumably the land adjoining refers to 2 Salem Street Avenue. The possibility remains that this house was built after Capt. Rice's death in 1828.

In any event 8 Salem Street and 2 Salem Street Avenue were sold to Daniel E Hayes et al in 1843. During the 1860s, Samuel Rice, a Charlestown builder, rented this property. During the 1870s and 1880s a Doctor E Hayes owned the house and 8 Salem. Dennis A Madeiros owned this house in 1901.

Salem Street Avenue assumed its present L-shaped configuration by 1851, linking Salem Street with High Street. It was originally called North Street.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1833, 1839, 1848, 1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories

Middlesex deeds

*Digitized, and edited without change in content, from the scanned record in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System, and with addition of current photographs.

R. Dinsmore

