

## 23 Albion Place (1845-48)

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



23 Albion Place

2015

Number 23 Albion Place is a 1½ story Greek Revival cottage with a more substantial 2½-story ell. The main block is situated on a granite block foundation. The three bay main façade, facing the street, is an end wall gable.

The entrance has Greek Revival enframements with pilasters, which are partially obscured by modern siding. The front door is topped by a six-pane transom band and cornice-headed entablature.

The southwesterly side porch has makeshift posts, probably replacements for Greek Revival Doric or Tuscan columns, a smaller version of number 20 Albion Place's porch. Four tall windows with 9/12 wood sash open onto the porch. Similar to 20 Albion Place, the porch roof is an extension of the main block's slope and has a heavy entablature.

Builder: William and George Johnson?, "Lumber dealers"

Original owner: George Johnson.

Architecturally 23 Albion Place is an interesting Greek Revival survival from the mid-1840s. Its form, with a distinctive side porch which at one time had Greek Revival columns, and broad street-facing gable are not elsewhere repeated in Charlestown, although 20 Albion Place is somewhat similar, being a more monumental variation on this street-facing gable, main façade with side porch theme.

Built circa 1845-48, this house's residents included lumber dealers and the principle of the Bunker Hill School. The house was built for William Johnson circa 1845-48. It may have been built by William and George Johnson, lumber dealers. The occupation of lumber dealer sometimes encompassed house building during the mid-19th century in New England. William

Johnson is listed as boarding at 2 Main Street in 1845, occupation unlisted, and as a "lumber dealer, Neck, house, Albion Court" in 1848. (Albion Court is the earlier name for Albion Place.) Apparently, George Johnson was this house's first owner. William Johnson purchased 23 Albion Place from George Johnson on October 1, 1857 (Middlesex deed 841:545) for \$3300. The deed mentions buildings on this lot. George Johnson is first listed as a West India goods proprietor (85 main Street, house 93 Main) in 1834. During the 1840s and 1850s he lived at 246 Main Street, corner Albion Court. His business is listed as "at Johnson's Wharf" in 1842 and lumber dealer, Neck, by 1845. Johnson's Wharf is listed as 417 Medford St. during the 1850s. In any event, 23 Albion Place remained in the Johnson family until 1867.

On March 31, 1867, Alfred P Gage paid William Johnson's wife Amelia \$5500 for this house. Alfred P Gage is listed in 1866 at 40 Russell Street as Principal of the Bunker Hill School. By 1875 he is listed as "teacher, high school." A P Gage owned the house until the 1890s. By the early 1900s it was owned by a Mary O'Conner.

This house is part of Albion Place's extremely interesting collection of 1830s- 1850s houses. Albion Place is one of the oldest streets southwest of Walker Street and may date to as early as the 1810s.

Note: Further research may reveal that this house dates to as early as the 1830s. The number of grantee listings for George and William Johnson precludes more specific dating via deeds.

#### Bibliography:

Maps- 1818, 1833, 1837, 1848, 1851  
Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown Directories- 1834- 1874  
Middlesex deeds- 841: 545, 991: 224

\*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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