

## 25 Washington Street (circa early 1830s, ca. 1860s)

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



25 Washington Street

1980s

Number 25 Washington Street is a three-story Late Federal/Italianate house with clapboard clad, three bay main façade with a side hall plan. The main façade has pilasters and a granite-faced basement. Brick sidewalls exhibit “ghosts” of an original gable roof line at the second story level, most visible on the wall abutting number 25. The third floor is a later addition, added circa late 1860s (check Sanborn Atlas of 1868). A curious feature is projecting brownstone brackets located at

either end of the main façade just above the level of the second-floor windows. These may be remnants of the original cornice of a gable roof. At present, the building culminates in a well-crafted Italianate cornice with widely spaced wooden brackets, and has a flat roof. The Devens Street wall features a single bay at the center of the brick wall including a side door. The building has a side hall plan.



25 Washington Street

2015

A granite step and flight of four wooden steps lead to a front door with handsome, essentially Greek Revival enframements. Slender fluted pilasters and a deep elliptical arch flank the front door. Sidelights are 2/3 glass, 1/3 wood panel. The front

door is surmounted by a multi-pane transom and entry walls are faced with flush boards. The windows are fully enframed with raised outer moldings and 6/6 wood sash.

Builder: Isaac Kendall?

Original owner: Isaac Kendall?

Adjacent to a charming triangular tree shaded garden at the Devens/Washington Streets corner, 25 Washington Street may have originally been part of a trio of a gable roofed houses which included numbers 27 and 29 Washington Street. Number 25 provides a good introduction to the early mid 19th century houses of Washington Street.

Evidently, this single-family house was originally only two rather than three stories tall. It was enclosed by a gable roof rather than the present flat roof with its Italianate bracketed cornice. Further research is needed to pinpoint its date of construction. Judging by the residential development pattern of Washington Street, this house was built circa early 1830s. According to TT Sawyer, 25 Washington Street was built by Isaac Kendall and an early occupant was Rev. Dr. Fay of the First Church. Evidently Benjamin Thompson owned this house as an investment property in the mid 1840s.

Number 25 Washington Street was for many years the residence of George Hyde, a prominent mid-19th century wholesale grocer. On 2 July 1847 George Hyde and Amos T Frothingham purchased 25 Washington's lot from Benjamin Thompson of Boston, a merchant. (Number 25's lot appears as lots 1 and 2 on a plan drawn by Benjamin Badger dated 19 September 1826). Hyde lived at 25 Washington Street until circa 1885-at that time he and his family moved to 41 High Street (see form on 29-41 High Street).

George Hyde was the son of Enoch and Susan (Wales) Hyde. He was born in Charlestown January 29, 1814 in Stetson's Court (see form on 47, 49 Park Street for information on Stetson's Court). At age 14, Hyde was apprenticed to Samuel Abbott whose grocery store was situated on Main Street at the foot of Union Street. After 4 1/2 years with Mr. Abbott, he joined the wholesale grocery firm of Dana and Evans in 1833 (subsequently known as Dana, Evans, and Company, Dana Farra and Hyde, and Hyde Southworth, Wholesale Grocers.) Mr. Hyde was vice president of the Warren Institute for Savings and director of the Market National Bank of Boston.

During the late 19th century a James F Dacey owned 25 Washington Street.

Note: Sawyer mentions that "the little triangular plot of land between Bow (now Devens) Street and the house (number 25 Washington Street) .....was always, in growing season, smiling with flowers, telling continually of the taste and interest of their cultivator, and hinting of comfort and refinement within doors". - *Old Charlestown*, page 81).

#### Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1852

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901, 1911

(Check 1868 Sanborn)

Middlesex deeds-511: 1

Suffolk deeds-1469: 16

TT Sawyer-*Old Charlestown*-chapters on Washington Street

\*Digitized, and edited without change in content, from the scanned record in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System, and with 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