

31- 35 Walker Street (1847- 1848)

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



35, 33, 31 Walker Street

ca. 1980s



35, 33, 31 Walker Street

2015

Numbers 31- 35 Walker Street is a trio of modestly scaled, two story wood frame Greek Revival dwellings, with brick basements and gable roofs; each has a pedimented dormer.

Numbers 33 and 35 retain original narrow entrance pilasters and cornice headed entablatures; number 31's pilasters are partially covered. The windows are simply enframed and have 2/2 wood sash.

Builder: Caleb Pratt

Original owner: Caleb Pratt

Numbers 31, 33 and 35 Walker Street are part of Salem Hill's collection of modestly scaled the Greek Revival dwellings. Built circa 1847/48, this trio retains its original form, if not fabric. Still intact are its classically derived entrance enframements (pilasters and cornice headed entablatures).

These houses represent the work of prolific 1830s, 40s-early 50s Charlestown housewright, Caleb Pratt. He purchased 31-35's lots from Ebenezer Pratt of Boston for \$400 (Middlesex 511:429) on August 31, 1847. Presumably, Pratt built this group in the fall of 1847 or the spring of 1848. Pratt may have waited to build on this land until as late as 1853. He sold number 35 to Samuel Pendall, a Charlestown trader, for \$1000 on November 10, 1853 (661:222). The house is described as "being the northeasterly house on the block of three houses". Samuel Pendall is first listed at 35 Walker Street in 1854. In 1858 he is listed as a provisions dealer at 175 Main Street (house 173 Main).

By 1875 Griffin Gibson, dealer in stoves and tin ware, 12 Warren Avenue, house 34 Sullivan Street, owned 31 and 33 as well as 35 Walker Street. From 1877 until at least the early 1900s, a Mary Keppel owned 35. Griffin Gibson owned 31 and 33 until at least the early 1900s.

Caleb Pratt was active in Charlestown building trades from circa 1830 until 1853. He is listed in the 1834 Charlestown directory at 28 High Street. From the early 1840s, to 1852 he lived at 7 Franklin Street, Charlestown. He moved to Chelsea, Massachusetts circa 1853. Examples of Pratt's work include: 132 High Street, (circa 1834), and 32-36 Pearl Street, (circa 1843), cottage scale Charlestown houses similar to 31-35 Walker.

Walker Street was named for late 18th-early 19th century Charlestown merchant Capt. Timothy Walker. Walker's wharf, once located on the Charles River side of Main Street, was a continuation of Walker Street. Walker Street was set out circa early 1800s and was part of the pattern of streets bounded by

Elm, School, Main, Walker, and Bunker Hill streets. This street system was developed by Oliver Holden, Richard Sullivan Sr, presumably Timothy Walker, and others during the 1790s to circa 1815 (see 1818 map).

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1833, 1839, 1848, 1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories

Middlesex deeds

Old Charlestown, Timothy T Sawyer

*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.

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