

315 Main Street (circa 1851)

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

Number 315 Main Street is a well-maintained and handsomely painted Greek Revival wood frame house. It has a three bay main façade, a brick basement, and a side hall plan with a three bay sidewall and a two-story ell to the rear. The house has a gable roof with two dormers on the front façade.

It has interesting Greek Revival entrance enframements, with a three-pane transom and pedimented entablature. The windows are simply enframed with 6/6 wood sash.



315 Main Street

2015

Original owner: John Perkins

Number 315 Main Street is a charming, well-preserved example of mid-19th century Greek Revival domestic architecture. It recalls the type of housing, in terms of scale and materials, that was more prevalent along Main Street prior to 1960s urban renewal.

On May 14, 1851, Benjamin Phipps of Charlestown, a harness maker, sold 315 Main's lot to John Perkins, a blacksmith. Although deeds mention that Perkins was a resident of Charlestown, mid-19th century directories do not list Perkins. Presumably 315 was built during the summer of 1851. Perkins owned this house until at least the mid-1870s. His heirs sold it to Charles Slack, "Officer, Suffolk County Jail", in November 1883.

Main Street is a very old road that dates to the 17th century. Maps showing Charlestown at the time of the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775 indicate that structures were scattered along Main Street's entire length with a node of houses at "Mill Village" (at or near the junction of Main, Mill and Eden streets. The completion of the Middlesex Canal at Charlestown Neck in 1803 and construction of the State Prison in the vicinity of what is now Bunker Hill Community College, encouraged development along Main Street during the early 1800s. During the 1840s Charlestown experienced a building boom inextricably bound to the waves of Europeans-particularly the Irish-who settled in Boston and vicinity.

Note: Benjamin Phipps, grantor of 315's lot to John Perkins, was born in Charlestown on October 18, 1797 and died April 7, 1878. He was apprenticed to John Frothingham, a carriage trimmer and harness maker, and later succeeded to Mr.

Frothingham's business. He was one of the founders and first treasurer of the Winchester Home for Aged Women. He was an alderman in the city of Charlestown during the years 1850, 1855, 1856, and 1857.

Bibliography:

Maps-1775, 1818, 1833, 1839, 1848, 1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charles town directories-1834-1874

Boston directories-post 1875

Middlesex deeds-531: 271, 571:351

Suffolk deeds-2161: 538

*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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