

## 43, 45, 47 High Street (circa 1853-1854)

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



43-47 High Street

date?

Numbers 43-47 High Street are a trio of flat front, three-story plus basement Greek Revival row houses with Italianate updating via oriel windows at numbers 45 and 47. They are constructed of red brick and trimmed with granite and brownstone. There are star shaped tie rod ends visible between floors two and three of the 43 and 45. The building has a shallow brickwork table below a raised brickwork

cornice. It is enclosed by a flat roof. Each house has a side hall plan, three bay main façade, and a granite-faced basement.

Granite steps lead to recessed entrances, with well-crafted entry paneling. There are replacement front doors and the original rectangular transom above 45 is missing. Evidently all first-floor window lintels were originally pedimented (evident at 45 and less so at 47); lintels and brickwork are completely reworked at 43. Cornice-headed oriels with apron panels, added circa 1860s, project above the entrances of 45 and 47. In general the windows of the upper floors have simple brownstone sills and lintels and 2/2, 2/1, and 1/1 wood sash.



43- 47 High Street

2015

Builder: Edward Pratt, Carpenter; Dolphin D Taylor, Mason  
Original owners: Pratt and Taylor

Built circa 1853-54, these houses are part of High Street's well-crafted collection of mid 19th-century row houses between Monument Square and School Street. Architecturally they are solid and straightforward examples of Greek Revival Charlestown housing. The severely plain facades of numbers 45 and 47 have been enlivened by the addition of oriels above the entrances.

Apparently this trio is the work of Edward Pratt, a carpenter, and Dolphin D Taylor, a mason. Edward Pratt was active in Charlestown building trades from circa early 1830s to mid-1850s. Evidently he was related to Charlestown carpenter Caleb Pratt (see form on 28 High Street). In 1834 both Edward and Caleb are listed at what is now 28 High Street. They probably had some sort of informal working relationship, although mid-19th century Charlestown directories do not advertise the Pratts as a single company like John B Wilson and his brother Charles Wilson. From circa 1845 to circa 1856 Edward Pratt lived at 26 Green Street.

Dolphin D Taylor was active in Charlestown building trades from circa 1845 to early 1890s. In 1845 he is listed as mason at 20 Green Street, three houses away from that of Edward Pratt. By 1860 he lived at 10 Summer Street in Charlestown, and from circa late 1860s to 1890s he live at 31 Oak Street. Examples of Taylor's work in Charlestown include 23 and 25 Oak Street, circa 1865, and 46-60 Baldwin Street, Italianate red brick townhouses circa 1849-50.

Evidently a "dwelling house and other buildings" was located on 43-47's lots before their circa 1853-54 construction. The

1852 McIntyre map, not always entirely reliable, indicates a building on this site but apparently not the present masonry row houses. On November 22, 1853 Moses Wingate of Haverhill Massachusetts Esq. sold 43-47's land "with the buildings thereon" -but evidently not the present buildings- to Edward Pratt and Dolphin D Taylor for \$4000. Moses Wingate had purchased the land on High Street, with a dwelling house and public buildings which were occupied by Harrison Wingate on November 15, 1848, for \$4000. Evidently Pratt and Taylor built this trio (43-47) between November 1853 and March 1854.

On April 1, 1854 Pratt and Taylor sold 45 High Street to Mary Thompson of Charlestown for \$5600. On December 2, 1865 John and Mary A Frothingham, heirs of Mary Thompson, sold 45 to Alonzo Burbank for \$6000. He was a "marble worker". His purchase of 45 High Street may have been influenced by the proximity of another marble trades person-Everett Torrey of 31 High Street. Number 47 High Street was evidently owned as an investment property by Edward Pratt from 1854 to 1866 and in that year he sold it to Sophia Vanderbilt Morse for \$7000. Further research is needed on 43's pre-1875 ownership history.

By 1875, this trio's owners included George A Whiting, manufacturer of "Mystic Ruffling and Trimming", 140 Harrison Avenue, Boston-43, Alonzo Burbank, a marble worker, 17 Haverhill, Boston-45; and Rufus A White, postmaster-47.

By 1885 the owners were Mary J Day-43, N and A Fosdick-45 and George Kelso, partner in Cooper and Kelso, Ventilated Boot Company, 79 Milk Street, Boston, room 9, -47. The same ownership roster remained for 1892 and 1901.

The 1911 owners were Emma Harvey-43, J Watchmaker-45 and N A Cummings-47.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1852

Atlases-1868, 1875, 1885, 18, 1901, 1911

Charlestown directories-1834-74

Boston directories-1875

Middlesex deeds-numbers 45, 47, and 43: 531:168, 601:347.

Number 45: 671:146; 931:550; number 47: 941:150, 981:348, 1193:288

\*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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