

## 48 Soley Street (1806)

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



48 Soley Street

1981

Number 48 Soley Street is a wood frame, two-story Federal house with a five by two bay main block and a small two-story ell projecting from the north wall. It was originally clad with clapboards- it now has wood shingles. It has a boxy, rectangular form and stands with its narrow south wall facing the street. The edges of the house are accented by narrow corner boards. A well-crafted wood cornice projects above the

second-floor windows and it has a low hip roof. There is a tall brick chimney at the east wall. The 1868 Atlas indicates that a larger two-story wooden ell projected from the present small ell's north wall-this ell was removed circa \_\_?

The house's center entrance may retain its original semicircular fan light-this area above the front door is presently obscured by an open porch's gable roof. The Windows are fully enframed with raised outer moldings and have 6/6 wood sash.

The house has an ample, well-maintained side yard.



48 Soley Street

2015

Builder: John Fosdick

Original owner: John Fosdick, Gershom Teal?

Architecturally, 48 Soley is at an unpretentious, center hall plan, five by two bay Federal house. It was originally clad with clapboards and is presently covered by wood shingles. Its main façade overlooks a relatively ample yard. This house's land originally constituted two house lots. Typically Federal is the house's orientation, with its narrow east wall facing Soley Street. Built circa 1806, number 48 Soley is the oldest house on Soley Street.

This house's land was part of the estate of Isaac Carlton, a Charlestown "gentleman". Carlton's land was subdivided into at least five lots during the early 1800s. Early 1800s deeds refer to number 48's land as lot "number five according to a plan by Isaac Carlton."

This house's lot was purchased from Carlton by Gershom Teal, a blacksmith, on 13 February 1804 for \$550. Between 1804-1810, the property was sold back and forth between Teal, John Fosdick, a housewright, and Joseph Gurney, a caulker and engraver. Fosdick ended up owning it from 1810-1822. Evidently he was responsible for the house's construction. Deeds variously referred to him as a housewright and ship joiner. Although a Fosdick/Teal deed of February 1806 mentions "all the buildings thereon" the sale price of \$570.00-\$20 more than the 1804 sale price for just the lot suggests that number 48 had not as yet been built. The house was almost certainly standing by February 1807, the date of Teal's sale of the property to Joseph Gurney for \$1640. By June 1822, it had been purchased by another housewright, Nathaniel Ayer, who paid David Fosdick, merchant, \$1300 for the property.

Later owners include Thomas Rice (circa 1830s?) and Samuel Rice. The latter sold this house and land to James Brown, a trader, on October 13, 1857. Samuel Rice is referred to in this

deed as a yeoman, of Burlington Massachusetts. Brown in turn sold this property to Kyren Manning, a lamplighter, Navy Yard, for \$1800 on November 17, 1865. The house was owned by Kyren Manning until at least the early 1890s. During the early 1900s it was owned by an Annie E Cody.

Solely Street was originally a 14 foot wide way known as Henley's Lane. Set out circa 1790s, it is shown on the 1818 Peter Tufts map of Charlestown as having a more crooked path than its present straight east-west configuration. The east-west streets between Soley and School streets were apparently set out circa 1790s-1810. Soley Street's development mirrors that of Cordis Street, with pastureland being subdivided into house lots during the early 1800s.

Residential development in Charlestown during the early 1800s was triggered in part by the establishment of the Charlestown Navy Yard in 1800, completion of the Middlesex Canal in 1803, and expansion of the wharves along the Charles River etc.

#### Bibliography:

1818 Peter Tufts map of Charlestown  
 Atlases-1868, 1875, 1885, 1892, 1901, 1911  
 Charlestown/Boston directories-19th century  
 Middlesex deeds-155:305, 164:390, 168:524, 173:1923,  
 188:120, 236:453, 243:123, 285:228, 771:459, 931:562

\*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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