

52, 54 (circa 1870), and 56 Monument Avenue (1867)

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



52, 54 Monument Avenue 2015

Numbers 52 and 54 Monument Avenue is a substantial three-story masonry double house with high Victorian Gothic elements (e.g. pointed lintel arches) and a Mansard roof, which retains its slate shingles. The houses are characterized by flat front, three bay main façades, and side hall plans. Horizontal accents at the main façade are provided by brownstone sill courses between basement/first floor, first floor/second floor, and second-floor/third-floor. "Wall dormers" at 52 and 54 are carried through the roofline from the third floor and open onto shallow iron balconies.

Granite steps lead to recessed entrances with Victorian multi-panel front doors with transoms and paneled entries. The entrances have stone arches with brackets beneath oriels. The oriels have stick style surface treatments and pediments with suggestion of king posts.

The first-floor windows have high Victorian Gothic lintels with pointed arches, and bosses with a circular motif.



54 Monument Avenue first floor lintel detail 2015



52 Monument Avenue, oriel, entry detail

2016



56 Monument Avenue

2015

Number 56 Monument Ave. is a substantial three-story masonry Mansard townhouse. It has a flat front, three bay

main façade and a rusticated brownstone basement. Horizontal accents at the main façade are provided by brownstone sill courses between basement/first floor, first floor/second floor, and second-floor/third-floor.

A recessed entrance, with a side hall plan, has a segmental keystone arch. Still intact are Victorian double doors. The windows are set within round keystone arches and contain 2/2 wood sash. There is an oriel window at the second floor center. Second-floor windows have raised, curved lintel moldings and third-floor lintels have incised detail.

The cornice is bracketed with panels displaying raised circular motifs. A trio of dormers appears at the mansard roof's main façade.

Original owners: #52- T R B Edmands (?); #54-Nelson Bartlett (?); #56-Silas Davis

Architecturally, numbers 52 and 54 Monument Avenue are significant as a highly eclectic mansion scale double house exhibiting elements of Mansard, High Victorian Gothic, and stick styles. They were built circa 1870.

Number 56 Monument Ave. is architecturally significant as a felicitously designed Mansard townhouse of considerable style and substance. It was built circa 1867.

For many years 52 Monument Avenue was the home of Thomas R B Edmands. He was the owner of "Thomas R B Edmands and Company", manufacturers of drain pipes. This company was located at 41 Medford Street, Charlestown. T R B Edmands owned number 52 until the early 1900s. By 1911, 52 was owned by Ellen F Lewis.

Number 54 Monument Avenue was the long-hime home of Nelson Bartlett. He was treasurer of the Boston Ice Company. Born in Stanstead, Québec, he was the son of Collins B and Sarah Brown Bartlett. Nelson Bartlett came to Boston in 1846 and in 1851 he settled in Charlestown. In addition to his work as treasurer of the Boston Ice Company, he was for seven years director of the Warren Institution for Savings and the Bunker Hill National Bank. Before the annexation of Charlestown to Boston Mr. Bartlett was for two years a member of the Board of Aldermen, 1872-73 and for 15 years a member of the Mystic Water Board. He was also a director of the Middlesex Street Railway. By the early 1900s Frank J Bartlett owned number 54.

Number 56 Monument Avenue's land (no buildings) was sold to Silas Davis by a George A Whitney on April 29, 1867 for \$3300. Whitney had acquired this lot from Isaac P T Edmands on June 11, 1860. The I P T Edmands/Whitney deed stipulates that "no buildings be erected thereon but a dwelling house of brick or stone not less than 2 1/2 stories high with suitable outbuildings for the same". During the 1870s and 1880s Silas Davis, "salesman", owned 56 Monument Avenue. By the early 1890s Nelson Bartlett owned 56, and by 1911 it was owned by his heirs.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1852

Atlases 1868, 1875, 1885, 1892, 1901, 1911

Charlestown/Boston directories-19th century

Middlesex deeds-831: 423, 991:499

Charlestown enterprise-special edition June 1893-"Charlestown citizens past and present"

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