

6 Brighton Street** (circa 1846-47)

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



Number 6 Brighton Street** is a two story wood frame Greek Revival house. It has a temple form and a side hall plan. The main façade has three bays and is dominated by an Ionic columned porch and a pedimented attic.

The entry has heavy Greek Revival enframement and attractive, circa 1880s, Queen Anne double doors with stained glass panes. The windows have 6/6 wood sash and are simply enframed. The attic has an arched window.

The house is situated on an ample, tree shaded lot.



6 Brighton Street entry

2016

Builder: James Ritchie

Original owner: Israel Pruden

Architecturally, 6 Brighton Street is a relatively rare Charlestown example of a Greek Revival wood frame house with a fluted Ionic columned porch. This house, and the Ionic columned house at the opposite end of Brighton Street (number 28), brackets a (mostly altered) collection of wood frame vernacular mid-19th century houses. In addition to its porch, this house has handsome Greek Revival entrance enframements and late 19th century double doors with colorful stained glass.

The house was built circa 1846-47. A Middlesex County deed dated April 24, 1848 (521:401) indicates that the house was already standing when Israel Pruden purchased the property from Richard Sullivan Sr and Richard Sullivan Jr. Pruden paid the Sullivans \$2300 for this lot and the "the buildings thereon".

The house may be the work of Boston builder James Ritchie. Middlesex deeds indicate that he was responsible for the architecturally similar house at 28 Brighton Street, completed in 1847. Richie was active in Boston building trades from circa 1835 until his death in East Boston, in 1884. In 1840 he worked as a housewright on Haverhill Street, in Boston. At that time he lived at 10 Salem Street, and he is listed at 10 Salem Street in 1850. From 1860 to 1884 he lived on Webster Street, in East Boston.

Israel Pruden, the original occupant of 6 Brighton Street, was also the builder of the Italianate house next door at "6 Brighton Street"**, circa 1848. He is listed in Charlestown directories during the 1840s and 50s as a fish dealer in Boston. In 1845 he

lived on Russell Street in Charlestown. He is first listed on Brighton Street in 1848 (or, rather, Cambridge Road, near Maine Railroad). Pruden sold 6 Brighton to Salmon Whitney, of Boston on July 27, 1860 (see Middlesex deed 831:522, and also plan the of Richard Sullivan *et al*'s land by Alexander Wadsworth, lot 84, August 19, 1844). During the 1860s, Salmon Whitney was a fish dealer at 38 Long Wharf, Boston, his house at 21 Causeway Street. He paid Pruden \$3000 for this property. The Pruden/Whitney deed mentions that the house was "now occupied by Horace Walker and Reuss (?). Horace Walker was a clerk at 13 Union Street, Boston and lived at 2 Brighton Street, circa 1859-60. Salmon Whitney owned this house until at least the mid-1870s.

Later owners included Andrew C Slater, 1880s and 90s, and Edmund B Frye, early 1900s. Slater was a merchant at 560 Tremont Street during the 1880s and 1890s. Edmund B Frye was a physician on blue Hill Avenue during the early 1900s.

This house dates to the earliest phase of the Brighton/Parker/Perkin Street area's development. Richard Sullivan Sr had purchased large parcels in this area during the 1810s and 1820s. Richard Sullivan Sr, born June 17, 1779, was the fourth son of Massachusetts governor James Sullivan. Evidentially it was through James Sullivan's position as president of the Middlesex Canal Company (Completed in in 1803, the Middlesex Canal terminated just to the southeast of Sullivan Square) that Richard Sullivan Sr became involved in Charlestown real estate speculation. During the early 1800s he was a prominent Boston lawyer. By 1818 he operated a large tavern adjacent to what is now Sullivan Square, which catered to the Middlesex Canal trade, and by 1827 he was a copartner in the Middlesex Canal-associated Boston and Concord Boating

Company. After paying all expenses, Richard and his partner, William Sullivan, realized \$90,000 in 18 years.

During the 1840s to the 1870s the Sullivans, Richard Sr and Richard Jr, began to sell their extensive land holdings at Charlestown Neck. Richard Sullivan Jr was a Boston based commercial merchant. He lived on Mount Vernon Street, on Beacon Hill.

In general, the Charlestown Neck's accelerated mid-19th century development was due in part to Boston's population boom which was related to the wave of immigrants, Irish, German, etc., who came to Boston beginning circa mid-1840s.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1833, 1839, 1848, 1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories-1834-18's 74

Middlesex deeds

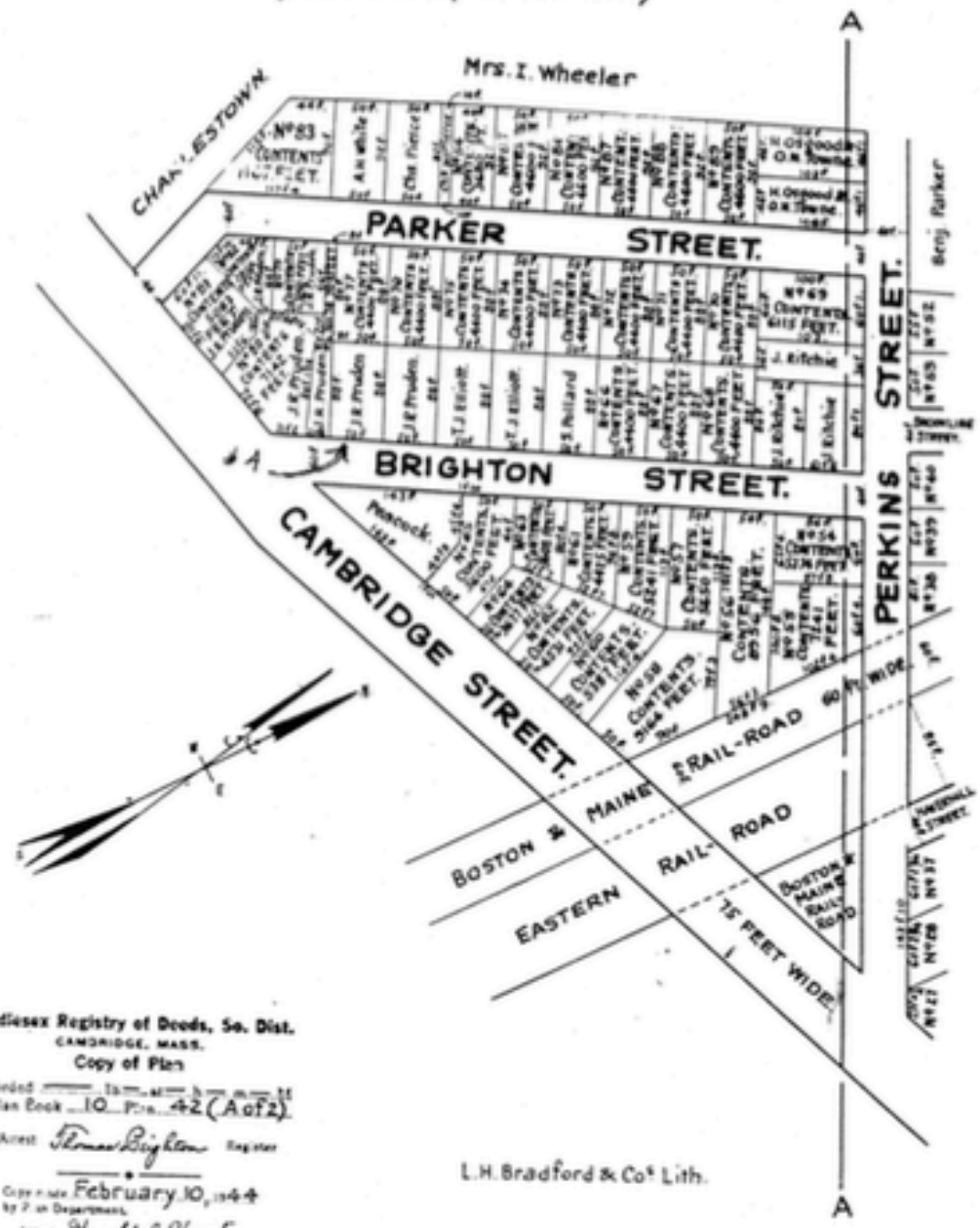
**The house described here is called 4 Brighton Street on the original survey form, but is now clearly 6 Brighton Street, as shown on the image of the entry. The house referred to above in the paragraph on Israel Pruden as "6 Brighton" (as well as in the original survey form as 6 Brighton street), was probably a since demolished house at 8 Brighton Street.

CHARLESTOWN

42

Scale, 50 feet to an inch.
Boston June 16th 1858.
Alex. Wadsworth, Surveyor.

(Original on file.)
(Scale of this plan: 1 in. = 100 ft.)



Middlesex Registry of Deeds, So. Dist.
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.
Copy of Plan

Recorded _____
Plan Book 10, Page 42 (A of 2)

Attest *Thomas Brighton* Register

Copy made February 10, 1844
by _____

Attest *Harold P. Flood*
Surveying Draftsman

L.H. Bradford & Co^s Lith.

*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