

6 Salem Street Avenue (circa 1869)

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



6 Salem Street Avenue

1981

Number 6 Salem Street Avenue is an L plan, wood frame Italianate house. It has a 2-½ story main block with five bays and a center hall plan. The main block has a gable roof; there is a substantial three-story ell with a bracketed cornice and a flat

roof. The main block's principal façade is characterized by a high degree of symmetry. Above the door is a deep bracketed, pedimented door hood. The windows are simply enframed and have 6/6 wood sash. The ell windows have 6/6 wood sash.



6 Salem Street Avenue

2016

Architect: James H Rand (?)

Original owner: Joseph W Mallon

Together with 3, 4, and 5 Salem Street Avenue, number 6 forms a V shaped residential complex-an enclave within an enclave. It

was built circa 1869. Architecturally, it is a rare example of a five bay, center hall plan house. It is a late, for Charlestown, example of an Italianate vernacular wood frame house. Much of Salem Street Avenue's 19th century charm is derived from this house's presence. It may be the work of Charlestown architect James H Rand, who built the three unit Mansard House next door at 3, 4, and 5 Salem Street Avenue, in 1869.

On October 18, 1811, Nathaniel Ayer, a housewright, (see Middlesex 511:129), purchased 6 Salem Street Avenue's lot from a G W Nichols. On August 1, 1847 Ayer sold it to George C Stevens, who is listed as a "rigger" at East Boston in the 1860s, living at 17 Sullivan Street. (Stevens is not listed in the 1870 Charlestown directory.) On October 24, 1868 (see Middlesex 1041:262) George C and Mary Stevens sold the lot to Joseph W Maloon for \$2300. The Stevens/Maloon deed does not mention buildings on this property, dispelling nagging thoughts that the main block was built at an earlier date.

Joseph W Maloon, a mason, was the house's original owner, and may have played a role in its construction. He is first listed as a mason in Charlestown directories in 1866. At that time he lived at 65 Sullivan Street. He owned 6 Salem Street Avenue until at least the early 1900s.

James H Rand is one of the very few architects associated with a residential structure in the Charlestown survey area. He is listed in Charlestown and Boston directories from 1860 until the mid-1880s. In 1860 he lived at 31 Monument Square. By 1866 he lived at 22 Union Street; by 1872 he had an office at 18 Exchange Street, Boston and his house was at 18 Cordis Street, in Charlestown. He is listed in the early 1880s Boston directories at 77 Warren Street, Charlestown, but is not listed

in the 1890 Boston directory. James H Ryan was the architect of the Bunker Hill and Winthrop (later, Frothingham) Schools. In addition he was responsible for two early 1880s apartment buildings on Rutland Street, in Boston's South End, known as the "Garfield" and the "Rand". B P L files note that he may have been a partner in the firm of Weston and Rand.

Salem Street Avenue is a narrow L shaped lane linking Salem Street with High Street. Salem Street was set out circa early 1800s. It does not appear in 1818 map. Salem Street Avenue was originally called North Street until approximately the mid-1860s, and was set out in the early 1850s. Apparently it started out as a driveway to number 2 Salem Street Avenue.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1833, AC 39, 1848, 1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories-1834-74

Boston directories-post 1885

Middlesex deeds- 194:226, 511:129, 1040:262

BPL Architects File

*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