

60 Monument Avenue (1894)

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



60 Monument Avenue

2015

Number 60 Monument Avenue is a substantial Richardson Romanesque/Georgian revival townhouse constructed of red brick with brownstone trim. Key features of the main façade are polychromatic surface treatments (red brick, rock faced brownstone), wide Romanesque entrance, first-floor window arches, and a large well-detailed two-story copper oriel, which dominates the main façade. The building culminates in a deep copper cornice with dentils, egg and dart course and console brackets.

It has a side hall plan, and granite steps lead to the front door through a deeply recessed entrance, set off by rock faced brownstone vousoirs. The entryway has well crafted wood paneling. A multi-paneled front door is intact, with narrow sidelights. To the left of the entrance is a small, narrow and low secondary entrance.

An apron panel of the copper oriel's first level features floral motifs in high relief, and second-level panels have a raised baluster motif. The oriel windows are multi-paned. The oriel has a deep copper cornice.

The windows are surmounted by rock-faced wedge shaped Georgian Revival lintels with keystones.

Architect: CS Hallstrom

Builder: J O'Riordan

Original owner: Jeremiah O'Riordan

Architecturally, 60 Monument Avenue is significant as Charlestown's finest example of a Richardsonian Romanesque/Georgian Revival townhouse. It is a key component of the "wall" of masonry townhouses lining the north west side of Monument Avenue. It represents a late

addition to Monument Avenue's collection of primarily 1850s and 60s townhouses. (For story of Monument Avenue's development see form on numbers__Monument Avenue)



60 Monument Avenue oriel detail

2015



60 monument Avenue cornice detail

2015

It was designed by Charlestown/Boston architect Charles A Hallstrom. Charles A Hallstrom was active in Charlestown and Boston architectural practice from ca. late 1880s to early 1900s. He is first listed in the 1886 Boston directory at 58 Monument Street, Charlestown. By 1895 he was working at 7 Exchange Place and lived at 104 Main Street. He is not listed in the 1895 Boston directory. Hallstrom is credited with the following buildings in Charlestown: 461 Main, 1886; 49 Lawrence, 1891; 85 Elm, 1892; and 67, 69, 71 Baldwin, 1898 (see forms).

It is interesting to compare 60 Monument Avenue's design with that of 85 Elm Street built two years earlier. 85 Elm was in a sense a dress rehearsal for 60 Monument Avenue. At 85 Elm, the wood frame oriel spanning floors two and three anticipates 60 monument's copper oriel in terms of exaggerated breadth if not ornament. 85 Elm Street and 60 Monument Avenue provide the opportunity to compare the wood frame vernacular and high style masonry housing of a local late 19th century architect.



85 Elm, 1892 1980s photo

Late 19th century atlases show number 60's lot as vacant- actually part of the backyard of 43 Monument Square. This lot is labeled J B Thomas in 1875 and was owned by Patrick O'Riordan by 1892. He also owned 43 Monument Square. Patrick O'Riordan operated one of the largest contracting firms in New England during the late 19th century). He was originally from Lawrence Massachusetts. From 1852 1856 he lived in Richmond, Virginia where he worked as a shipper in a large wholesale house. He returned to Charlestown in 1857 and became an employee of the Navy Yard. In 1860, with only one horse, he became a Teamster and contractor. By the mid-1880s he was one of the leading contractors in Boston, "finding constant employment for 160 horses" (not to mention 300 men). Among his major projects was the widening of

Beacon Street in Boston/Brookline for the West End Land Company.

Patrick Riordan evidently built this house for his second son Jeremiah O'Riordan, Charlestown contractor/real estate speculator.

Bibliography:

Maps-1852

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

Charlestown Enterprise/Charlestown News-page 1 September 3, 1887-"Our self-made men"

B P L architect file

Boston buildings department

*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.

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