

74, 76 High St. (1848)

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



74, 76 High Street

1981

This building is an interesting variation on the Greek Revival double house. It has a long main block composed of a three bay side hall plan segment (number 74), and a five Bay center entrance segment (number 76). The building has broad two bay end wall gables, and a gable roof.

Number 74's recessed entrance is enframed by Doric pilasters and heavy entablature. There are fascia boards at the cornice.



74 High Street

2015

Number 76's recessed center bay entrance enframements consist of fluted pilasters with bosses containing an anthemion motif. In the center of the fluted entablature is a rectangular panel containing a sheaf of wheat motif. Still intact are the double multipanel front doors and granite front steps. The walls are clad with wood shingles and the first floor window

lintels have bosses. Number 76 has two widely spaced pedimented dormers.



76 High Street

2015

Original owner: Andrew K Hunt, Thomas Hooper

Architecturally, numbers 74 and 76 High Street are an interesting variation on the more typical Greek Revival double house type built in Charlestown during the 1840s. For one thing they are more substantial in terms of scale, standing two stories tall with broad end wall gables as opposed to 1 1/2 story, cottage scale double houses such as numbers 20 and 22 Russell Street. Usually, 1840s Charlestown double houses have paired entrances with six bay main façades. In this case the main block's segments consist of a three bay, side hall plan house and a five bay center entrance house. Number 76 has one of the finest Greek Revival entrance enframements in

Charlestown. Fluted pilasters are surmounted by bosses with a Greek floral motif and the entablature has a sheaf of wheat motif set within a rectangular panel.



76 High Street, entry detail

2015

Numbers 74 and 76 High Street were built circa 1848 for Thomas Hooper and Andrew K Hunt, respectively. Thomas Hooper is listed as a bank officer in the 1848 Charlestown directory but does not appear in the 1852 directory. Hunt was a cashier at the Suffolk Bank of Boston. Hooper and Hunt purchased 74 and 76's land from John Harriss of Manchester Massachusetts on October 16, 1847 (see Middlesex deed 511:367). This land is referred to in the deed as the "Souther lots" (named for Nathaniel Souther, deceased). Number 76 remained in the Souther family until at least the early 1900s. By 1866 William Hunt, a clerk at the Suffolk Bank of Boston owned 74. During the early 1860s, William Hunt was listed at 63 Pearl Street, Charlestown. By 1901, J J and Catherine J Coleman owned 74. J J Coleman evidentially owned this house as an investment property. The Andrew K Hunt's heirs are listed as the owners of 76 in 1901.

At the time of its completion in 1848, the building faced the Odin pasture, an area bounded by High, Elm, Summer, and School Streets. Next door, at the corner of High and School Streets was a wooden building which was the Homestead-estate of John M Fiske. The Fiske garden was large and

extended halfway down towards Main Street. Numbers 74 and 76 occupy what was the High street portion of the Fiske garden. Sawyer notes that Andrew K Hunt, Benjamin Bruce and Charles B Fessenden were the occupants circa 1850.

The section of High Street between Elm and Salem Streets was sent out circa 1790s, or early 1800s. High Street south of Elm Street was part of an old road system, at least mid-18th century, which included the Salem Turnpike, Adams Street, and Elm Street.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1833, 1839, 1848, 1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories-1834-1874

TT Sawyer, *Old Charlestown*, 1902. Chapter on "high Street, 60 years ago", page 448

*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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