

## 78 Warren Street (circa 1837-38)

From Boston Landmark Commission's Charlestown Historic Resources Study 1981\*:



78 Warren Street

1980s Photo

Number 78 Warren Street is a five by two bay Greek Revival house with a narrow street-facing gable and a south facing main façade, with a center hall plan. Clad with wood shingles, originally clapboards, its corner boards have been covered with wood shingles. Heavy fascia boards appear beneath the eaves of the main and rear façades. The house has a gable roof. A two-story ell projects from the southwest wall.

The front door is flanked by narrow multi-pane sidelights and Doric pilasters with variation on a triglyph motif at the top and base of the pilaster. (A similar motif is to be found on pilasters of 49 Park St.). The front door is surmounted by a multi-pane transom and a cornice-headed entablature. In general the fully enframed windows have 1/1 wood sash on the first floor, and 6/1 wood sash on the second floor. The Pleasant Street façade features one center window with, 6/6 wood sash, at the attic level, representing the original sash configuration.



78 Warren Street

2015



1980s



78 Warren entry 2015

Original owner: David Brown

Standing with its narrow two bay end wall gable facing Warren Street, this solid well-crafted house combines a Federal structural orientation and center hall plan with Greek revival stylistic elements. Particularly noteworthy are the main entrance's Doric pilasters, with modified triglyph motifs at the base and top of the pilasters. Although part of the town Hill historic districts rich collection of late 18th-late 19th century residences, it stands somewhat isolated within its immediate area, surrounded by yards and vacant lots, and awaits the construction of buildings that are sympathetic with the scale, materials, elements etc. of all of the older architecturally significant structures in this area, particularly on its Pleasant Street side.

78 Warren Street is associated with several 19th century Charlestown fish dealers. It was built circa 1837/38 for David Brown, a fish dealer. No buildings are mentioned in the deed of September 7, 1837 (Middlesex deeds 368:48). At that time Peter Gassner of New York City sold David Brown 78 's lot for \$700, a price that indicates a lack of buildings on the property. Gassner had acquired this lot from Edward Soley in 1836. Evidently it was part of Soley's considerable Soley Street and vicinity landholdings. Buildings are mentioned in a deed dated August 20, 1838 (Middlesex 373:514)- actually a mortgage with Kendall Bailey, a Morocco dealer. In 1859, 78 Warren was acquired by another fish dealer, George Jacobs (Middlesex deeds 821: 81, July 18, 1859).

From 1863-69 this house was owned by Russell F and Susan K Sanborn (881:655). On June 9, 1869, Simeon C Chase, a metre

maker, purchased this property for \$3300. Prior to this time Chase had lived in Cambridge.

The 1885 atlas indicates that 78 was one of eight contiguous parcels owned by Francis B and James W Austen. The Austens had extensive landholdings in 19th century Charlestown. Number 78 Warren is the only structure to have survived from the Austen's multi building tract-no longer extant are numbers 97, 99 Main Street, 1, 3, 5 Pleasant Street, and 80 Warren Street. Frances B Austen lived in the handsome Italianate/Mansard House at 58 High Street. His business is listed as "metals." Austens owned this house until at least 1911.

Bibliography:

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

Middlesex deeds-353: 60, 368:48, 373:514, 821:81, 881:655, 1061:400

*Charlestown Enterprise*, July 18, 1903, page 2-"Changes in Streets"

\*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.

R. Dinsmore