

## 8 Brighton Street (1848)

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



8(?) Brighton Street\*\*

1980s

Number 8 Brighton Street\*\* is a two story wood frame Italianate house. The foundation is of stone and corners are accented by paneled pilasters. It has a three bay main façade with a side hall plan and an altered, small front porch. The sidewalls have four bays and sideboards. The house has a gable roof with paired brackets at the cornice, and return eaves. The windows are fully enframed. There is a two-story ell at the rear.

Original owner: Israel R Pruden

Number 8 Brighton\*\* is part of the street's collection of mid-19th century single-family wood frame houses. Built circa 1848, it is one of the oldest houses in the Charlestown Neck/Sullivan Square area. It dates to the Charlestown-wide building boom of the 1840s. Although altered, in terms of front porch and first floor fenestration, it retains its original form and elements, such as corner boards and brackets. A photograph by Robert Severy dated 12 173 shows the house's original front porch with paneled Italianate porch posts.



Robert Severy photo, 1973, before alterations

This house's lot was once part of Richard Sullivan Sr and Richard Sullivan Jr's extensive land holdings. Richard Sullivan Sr was evidently introduced to Charlestown real estate speculation by his father, James Sullivan, who was governor of Massachusetts in 1807, and was president of the Middlesex Canal Company. The canal, completed in 1803, linked the Merrimack Valley with the Charles River in Boston. Its terminal was at Charlestown Neck. Richard Sullivan Sr bought numerous parcels at Charlestown Neck and opened a tavern at Sullivan Square by 1818.

Richard Sullivan Sr and his son Richard Jr, a commercial merchant in Boston, began selling off their extensive landholdings during the 1840s. On April 24, 1848, the Sullivans sold 8(?)\*\* Brighton Street's lot with "the dwelling house" to Israel R Pruden of Charlestown, a merchant, for \$2310. (See Middlesex 521:400). This house was probably completed shortly before Pruden's purchase of 6 Brighton. He is first listed in 1848 as a "fish dealer, Boston, house Cambridge Road, near Maine Railroad".

On May 23, 1851 Pruden sold 8 Brighton to John Peck of Charlestown, a trader, for \$2437.50. Peck is listed on Brighton Street beginning in 1852 and is listed as a grocer. Peck, in turn, sold number the house to Louisa H Merrick, wife of William W Merrick of Charlestown for \$4000 (971:544) on September 26, 1866. By that time, Peck was living in Somerville. Merrick's occupation is listed as "leather", 55 Elm Street, Boston.

Later owners included Merrick's heirs, to the mid-1880s, and Mary a Johnston, in the 1890s and 1900s.

\*\*The buildings between the temple-form Greek Revival house now labeled #6, and 10 Brighton, i.e. the site of the house

described above, is shown in the figure below. The original house was presumably demolished or greatly altered.



#### Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1833, 1839, 1848, 1851

Atlas-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories-1834-1874

Bostonian Society picture 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.

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