

85 Warren Street (circa 1800-1804)

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



85 Warren Street

1971-72

Number 85 Warren Street is a boxy, rectangular five by two bay wood frame Federal house. The main façade has a center entrance and a storefront at the Warren/Pleasant Street corner. The edges of the house are defined by substantial corner boards, and it has a hip roof. The corner storefront consists of an entrance flanked by large multi pane display

windows. Below the display windows are apron panels with raised rectangular moldings. The storefront door and windows are surmounted by a continuous cornice-headed lintel.

There is a multi-panel front door flanked by multi-pane/solid sidelights and Doric pilasters. The front door is surmounted by a cornice-headed entablature with modillion blocks. In general the windows are fully enframed with raised outer moldings and sills extended just beyond the vertical segments of the enframing. The windows have 6/6 wood sash. There are small square windows at the third floor



85 Warren Street

2015



85 Warren Street entry



85 Warren Street entry detail

Original owner: Andrew Kettel?

Number 85 Warren Street is prominently sited on a corner lot, part of a cluster of early 19th century wood frame dwellings. It is part of Charlestown's rich collection of late 18th century/early 19th century freestanding wood frame Federal houses. No other Boston neighborhood contains as many wood frame houses from the 1790s/1800s as Charlestown. Together with the Federal, narrow end wall to street house at 81 Warren and of the late Georgian gambrel house at 23 Pleasant, 85 Warren forms a node of early 19th century wood frame houses.

Built circa 1800-1804, this house is mentioned in a deed dated 18 April 1804 (156:185) between grantor Andrew Kettel of Charlestown, a tanner, and grantee William Bolton, a merchant. At that time Bolton paid Kettel \$2500 for this house and land. What Bolton purchased was and is a substantial, well-crafted

example of early 1800s Federal wood frame vernacular housing. Particularly noteworthy is this house's straightforward boxy form, crisp lines, and handsome entrance enframements. Further research is needed to determine the date of the storefront.

Middlesex deeds indicate that Bolton owned this house for only a short time. On December 22, 1804, by that time living in Easton Massachusetts, he sold 85 to Edmund Munroe of Boston, a merchant, for \$2133. During the 1800s Edward Harriss of Philadelphia, a merchant, and Nathan Adams, a Charlestown merchant, were evidently co-owners (closer reading of Middlesex the 160:31 and 191:77 is required here). In any event, Isaac W Blanchard, a Charlestown bricklayer, owned the house from June 7, 1811 (194:80) until October 9, 1867. From 1867 until at least 1911, Mary Burke, a widow, owned this house.

Warren Street is a very old thoroughfare. For many years it was called Back Street-it was set out as early as the 1630s. Pleasant Street is referred to as "a new Street" in the Kettel/Bolton deed dated 22 December 1804. This deed notes that Kettel owned land on two sides of 85 Warren.

Note: The 1868 atlas shows this house with a two-story ell to the rear. Further Charlestown directory research (1834-74) would determine if Blanchard occupied as well as owned this house.

Bibliography:

Maps- 1818, 1852

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

Middlesex Deeds-160: 31, 194:77, 1011:374

Bostonian Society photo file-Robert Severy, photo dated May 17, 1975

*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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