

86- 98 High Street (1871)

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



86-90 High Street

2015



92-98 High Street

2015

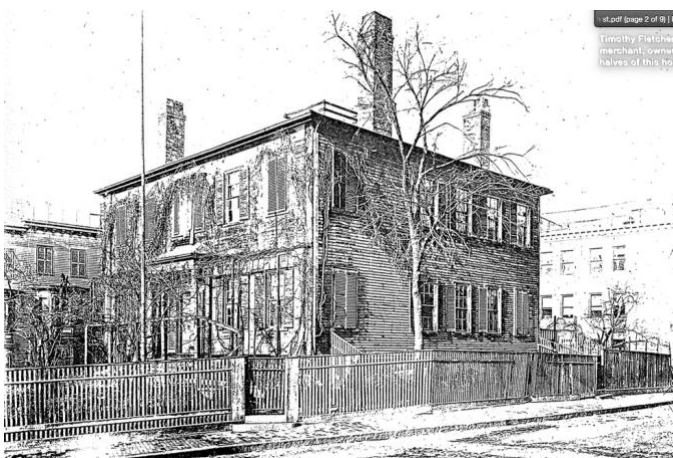
Numbers 86-98 High Street is a seven-unit row of Italianate/Mansard houses. The main façades have two-story octagonal bays and flat entrance bays. Number 90 is the most intact of this group. The cornices have floral brackets interspersed with dentils. The houses have double dormers with saw cut floral motifs at the center, with dentils and small center pediments.

Short flights of stairs lead to recessed paired entrances. Still intact are bracketed door hoods with pendants.

Original owner: Frederick Clapp

Number is 86-98 High Street is at an attractive group of wood frame Italianate/Mansard row houses. This row adds considerable interest to the streetscape via repetition of octagonal bays, bracketed door hoods, dormers etc. It was built by Frederick W Clapp of Framingham circa 1871 and was subsequently known as "Clapp's block". On December 30, 1870 Clapp purchased these lots from George R and Catherine Baldwin (Middlesex deed 1145:225) for \$65,000.

Clapp's block is located on a portion of the old James Harrison estate. The Harrison mansion stood in the center of the block bounded on Main Street, 114 feet, and 126 feet on High Street. James Harrison, well to do merchant and real estate speculator, built this mansion in 1799-1802. Harrison died in 1812. In 1817 the mansion house was sold to Capt. Thomas Beckford, a merchant. He died in 1820 and his widow owned this estate until 1828. During the 1830s Laommi Baldwin, called the "father of civil engineering" lived here. In 1870 the estate was divided into house lots by Frederick Clapp. Numbers 86-98 was evidently built the following year on what had been the site of Harrison's small orchard, which was an enclosed by "a high rough fence".



Harrison mansion

date (?)

In 1871 Lawnwood Place, the cul-de-sac to the rear of "Clapp's Block" was laid out and the old Harrison mansion was moved to 16-18 School Street until it was finally demolished in June 1964. Frederick Clapp retained ownership of Clapp's block until the early 20th century. During the 1910s and 1920s the houses of this row were sold to various individual owners. Number 94, for example was sold to the Avon Home on November 16, 1920.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1833, 1839, 1848, 1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories-1834-1874

James F Hunnewell, *A Century of Town Life* pp.96 – 97

Timothy T Sawyer, *Old Charlestown*, pp. 117-118

*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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