

97, 99 Baldwin Street (circa 1849-1850)

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



99, 97 Baldwin Street

2016

Numbers 97, 99 Baldwin Street is a double Greek Revival masonry house. It has a low granite basement, and there are two broad brickwork bands beneath a dentilated brickwork cornice. Surface treatments are similar to those of 101/107 Baldwin Street. Each half has a three bay main façade and a pair of pedimented dormers.

There are paired entrances and large multi-pane transoms above the front doors- which were probably originally treated as open, recessed entryways- and simple stone sills and lintels with 2/1 and 1/1 wood sash.

Builder: William W Sandford and that Hartford Mayers
Original owner: Sandford and Mayers

Built in 1848-1850, 97 and 99 Baldwin are solid, well crafted examples of mid-19th century masonry row housing. Stylistically, these houses may be classified as Greek revival, with the use of granite at the basement level, planar surfaces, and pedimented dormers.

Along with 84, 86; 88-96; 91, 93 and 101-117 Baldwin Street, numbers 97 and 99 rank among the earliest masonry row houses built northwest of Elm Street. These houses are the work of Charlestown masons William W Sandford and Hartford Mayers. They date from the earliest phases of the street's residential development. Although the part of Baldwin Street northeast of Bunker Hill Street was set out as early as 1837 (as Coggins Street), it was not until the mid--late 1840s that the street was being built up with row houses. This section of Baldwin Street (between Bunker Hill Street and Medford Street) was called Linden** Street from 1844 until circa the late 1860s. The segment of this street between Bunker Hill

Street and Main Street was set out circa early 1850s and was from the start called Baldwin Street.

The 1818 map shows what is now Baldwin Street from Bunker Hill Street to Medford Street as an upland pasture belonging to a William Symmes. By circa 1840 Samuel Bigelow owned this parcel, and 97 and 99's lots were part of a larger parcel sold by Samuel Bigelow to John Cheever, a physician, during the mid-1840s. Cheever, in turn, sold 97's lot William W Sandford and Hartwell Mayers for \$594.79 on October 20, 1847. Presumably Sandford and Mayers built these houses circa 1849-1850.

William W Sandford was active in Charlestown building trades from circa late 1840s to early 1860s. In 1848 he is listed as a mason at 25 Pearl Street. By 1852 is listed at 7 Pearl. During the 1860s he is listed as a mason boarding on School Street. From 1860 to 1875 he lived at 17 Polk Street. From circa 1875 until the early 1900s he is listed as a mason, house 78 School Street. Directories do not indicate that Sandford and Mayers were ever associated in a formal partnership. Similarities in surface treatments between 97 and 99 and 101-117 Baldwin Street suggest that Sandford and Mayers may have collaborated with Benjamin Page, a mason, on 101-117 (and vice versa).

In any event, Sandford and Mayers sold 97's lot "with the buildings there on" to James Damon, a trader, for \$3000 on February 20, 1851 (561:425). Damon is listed as a grocer, house Bunker Hill, in 1848, and worked as a glassmaker by 1852. He sold 97 to Samuel Foster Damon, a clerk, on December 3, 1851 for \$2500 (581: 194). Samuel Foster Damon, in turn, sold this property to Jeremiah Stimpson of Medford on July 21, 1854 for \$2700. This property is described as "being the northwesterly part of lot 21 on a plan of lots on Bunker Hill

by James H Shearer dated January 1844". Stimpson, in turn, sold it to Edwin a Hinckley of Boston on December 3, 1868 for \$3300. This deed refers to the wood frame Italianate house next door at number 99, e.g. "the partition wall separating the premises, 97, hereby conveyed, from my wooden house adjoining"

By 1885 number 97 was owned by a G A Fisher. In 1901 it belonged to a B M McLaughlin.

Further research is needed on the early history of number 99. It was owned by a D Mahoney during the 1880s to early 1900s.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1833, 1839, 1848, 1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories-1834-1874

*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.

R Dinsmore

** Lincoln Street in the Felton and Parker map, 1848, and the McIntire map, 1852