

LOWELL CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

IDENTIFICATION 163-165 ADAMS STREET MAP SHEET # 11
 1) CURRENT OWNER William Spanos of Acre Realty OWNER OCCUPIED no
 2) HISTORIC NAME Miss Mary M. Sullivan building
 3) CURRENT NAME same
 4) PROPERTY TYPE multiple dwelling 5) ZONING CLASSIFICATION B1
 6) TAXES: PAYMENTS delinquent since 1978 STATUS tax title
 7) WITHIN BOUNDARIES OF LHPD

HISTORICAL ABSTRACT

1) CONSTRUCTION DATE ca. 1890-1895
 SOURCE estimated
 2) ARCHITECT OR BUILDER unknown
 3) HISTORIC OWNER Mary M. Sullivan
 4) ORIGINAL USE: GF residential UF residential
 5) PREVIOUS BLDGS ON PROPERTY yes DATE ca. 1845-1890
 SOURCE circumstantial: 1850 map, 1879 atlas

DESCRIPTIVE DATA

1) ARCHITECTURAL STYLE 19th C. Res. Vernacular
 2) PRESENT USE:
 GF vacant
 UF vacant
 3) NO OF STORIES 3
 4) PROP SQ FT 3548
 5) PLAN rectangular
 6) ROOF flat
 7) STRUCTURAL SYSTEM
wood frame
 8) OUTBUILDINGS
none
 9) MATERIALS:
 FOUNDATION
F:concrete S:rubble
 FACADE all sides: wood clapboard
 TRIM wood
 10) NOTABLE SURFACE & LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS none



VISUAL ASSESSMENT

- 1) CONDITION OF BUILDING FABRIC needs minor repair
- 2) IF DETERIORATED, CAUSES vandalism, lack of maintenance
- 3) INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC BLDG FABRIC: GF intact with minor changes
UF intact original fabric
- 4) SURROUNDING LAND USES residential
- 5) INTEGRITY OF PROP'S HIST SETTING intact historic setting
- 6) IMPORTANCE OF PROP TO HIST SETTING integral to character

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION

This building, currently vacant, is a rather plain late nineteenth century vernacular residence. There is a recessed central entry on the ground floor. The second and third stories have been provided with two polygonal oriels flanking decorative porches. There are also porches running along the right side. The porches have been enriched with turned posts, sawn, shaped balusters and vaguely floral brackets. There is a projecting cornice with small, paired brackets.

This building is an early example of a building type which was to become exceedingly popular in the Acre and in Lowell in general in the early twentieth century. Characterized by polygonal bay windows or oriels, recessed porches and a projecting cornice, this type of building might be termed the Lowell variety of triple decker.

ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL INFORMATION

In the 1840s a double house was built on this site by Daniel White, a turner. The property was conveyed by White to F. G. McCurdy on May 10, 1864. On June 29, 1864 McCurdy sold the property to George L. Cady (North Middlesex Registry 39:327). George L. Cady sold the land and building to William K. Kimball on November 25, 1865 for \$2700 (Ibid., 46:241). After twenty years, William Kimball sold the property to John Goggin for \$4500 on July 19, 1886 (Ibid., 182:399).

On November 17, 1887 Goggin sold the property to Mary M. Sullivan for \$4800 (Ibid., 193:206) "together with the right to draw water as it is now drawn for the use of the tenants of the house herein conveyed from a well on the northerly lot adjoining." In addition seven feet were to be kept open for sidewalk on Adams Street.

There are several interesting aspects of this deed. First, the reference to tenants means that it was a rental property. Evidence from other sources (deeds, etc.) indicates that there were not many owner occupants on Adams Street at this time. Second, the owner is listed on the 1896 atlas as Miss Mary Sullivan. This is the only known case in which an unmarried woman who was not somebody's widow purchased property in her own right in the Acre.

It is difficult to tell from Atlas information just when the current building was constructed. The building configuration remains the same. It is also possible that the original double house was enlarged and changed. (A third story was added to the house at 51 Marion Street.) The recessed entry could be a remaining feature from the earlier form of the house. In any case ca. 1890-1895 the building took on its present form.

Sources

1841, 1850 maps.

1879, 1896, 1906, 1924, 1936 atlases.

See Research Report on the Acre for further information.

ARCHEOLOGICAL COMMENT

The first building activity occurred on this site ca. 1845-1850. Archeological remains which might be recovered from the very small yard would relate to the subsequent domestic use of the site.