

THE CAPTAIN JOHN BUSSEY HOUSE

1203-1205 Adams Street, Dorchester



BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION STUDY REPORT

Petition # 228.07
Boston Landmarks Commission | Office of Historic Preservation
City of Boston

Approved by:



Elizabeth Sherva, Executive Director

June 17, 2025

Date

Approved by:



Bradford C. Walker, Chair

June 17, 2025

Date

BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION

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Report posted on June 17, 2025

Cover image: 1203-1205 Adams Street, Dorchester. June 9, 2025. Photo by Jennifer Gaugler.

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## 1. DESIGNATION

The Boston Landmarks Commission was established by Ch. 772 of the Acts of 1975 as amended to identify and safeguard the public's interest in preserving historic sites that represent distinctive features of the political, economic, social, cultural or architectural history of the city. As part of the process of designating a new Landmark or District, a Study Report is prepared to locate and describe the site; to provide a record of the rationale for creating the designation; to identify the character-defining features; and to list Standards and Criteria that will guide the Boston Landmarks Commission in evaluating proposed changes in the future.

The designation of the Captain John Bussey House was initiated in 2007 after a petition was submitted by 11 registered voters to the Boston Landmarks Commission asking that the Commission designate the property under the provisions of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended (hereinafter "Chapter 772"). The purpose of such a designation is to recognize and protect a physical feature or improvement that in whole or part has historical, cultural, social, architectural, or aesthetic significance.

The Captain John Bussey House meets the following criteria for designation as a Boston Landmark as established in Section 4 of Chapter 772:

C. Structures, sites, objects, man-made or natural, associated significantly with the lives of outstanding historical personages.

The Bussey House is significant to the city of Boston as one of few surviving properties from the 18<sup>th</sup> century associated with an officer from the Revolutionary War, Captain John Bussey (1751-1841). Bussey was also a well-known sea captain on trading vessels during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

D. Structures, sites, objects, man-made or natural, representative of elements of architectural or landscape design or craftsmanship that embody distinctive characteristics of a type inherently valuable for study of a period, style or method of construction or development, or a notable work of an architect, landscape architect, designer, or builder whose work influenced the development of the city, the commonwealth, the New England region, or the nation.

Despite alterations to the front elevation and an addition to the rear, the ca. 1792 house is sufficiently intact to indicate its 18th-century origins. A house of this age is a rarity in Boston; it may be one of the 50 oldest extant buildings in the city. The Classical Revival storefront for the reading room, as noted in a 1977 inventory form for the Boston Landmarks Commission, is architecturally noteworthy and has acquired significance as a later addition.

Therefore, Boston Landmarks Commission staff recommends that the Commission designate the exterior of the Captain John Bussey House as a Landmark under Chapter 772; and further recommends that the boundaries corresponding to the Assessor's parcel 1703550000 be adopted without modification. The effect of this designation shall be that review by the Boston Landmarks Commission and/or Commission staff shall be required for any proposed alterations to the following elements:

- The exterior envelope of the building.

If designated, the Standards and Criteria in section 7 of this report will serve as guidelines for the Commission's review of proposed changes to the property, with the goal of protecting the historic

integrity of the landmark and its setting. The designation would not regulate use or alterations to interior features or features that are not visible from a public way.

## 2. LOCATION AND ZONING

According to the City of Boston's Assessing Department, the Captain John Bussey House is located at 1203-1205 Adams Street, Boston MA 02124. The Assessor's Parcel Number is 1703550000.

The house is located in the Dorchester Neighborhood Zoning District and the Lower Mills Neighborhood Shopping Subdistrict.



**Figure 1.** Map showing the boundaries of parcel #1703550000.

### **3. OWNERSHIP AND OCCUPANCY**

According to the City of Boston's Assessor's records, the Captain John Bussey House is owned by RTN Federal Credit Union, with a mailing address at 600 Main Street, Waltham MA 02452. (In 2025, the name of the credit union was changed to BrightBridge Credit Union.)

According to the Assessor's records, the property has a total assessed value of \$690,900.00, with the land valued at \$347,900.00 and the building valued at \$343,000.00 for fiscal year 2025.

The structure was the long-term residence of the Bussey family from when they bought the house in 1795 until they sold it to the owner of the Walter Baker Chocolate Company in 1890. Sometime between 1905-1909, the company outfitted a reading room for their employees in the first floor of the building. During the 50-year ownership by the chocolate company, the building had various residential uses, including boarding rooms, a small hotel, and an apartment. After 1940, the building was occupied by catering companies and a single-family dwelling unit for several decades. It has been occupied by a bank or credit union since approximately 2010.

#### 4. IMAGES

All contemporary photographs taken by Jennifer Gaugler on June 9, 2025.



**Figure 2.** Front (south-facing) facade of the Bussey House.



**Figure 3.** Side (west-facing) facade of the Bussey House.



**Figure 4.** Rear (north-facing) and side (west-facing) facades of the Bussey House.



**Figure 5.** Rear (north-facing) facade of the Bussey House.



**Figure 6.** Side (east-facing) facade of the Bussey House.



**Figure 7.** Side (east-facing) facade of the Bussey House.

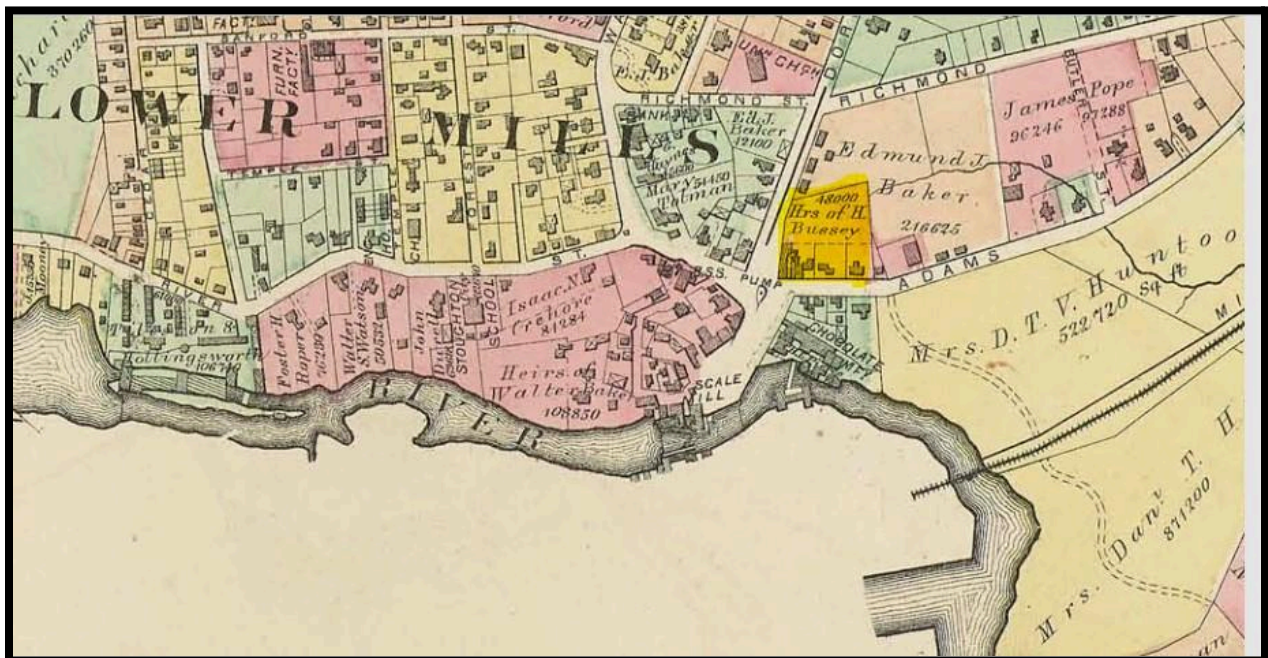


**Figure 8.** Detail of wood windows on ground floor of front facade.



**Figure 9.** Detail of wood windows on second story of front facade.

## Historical Images and Maps



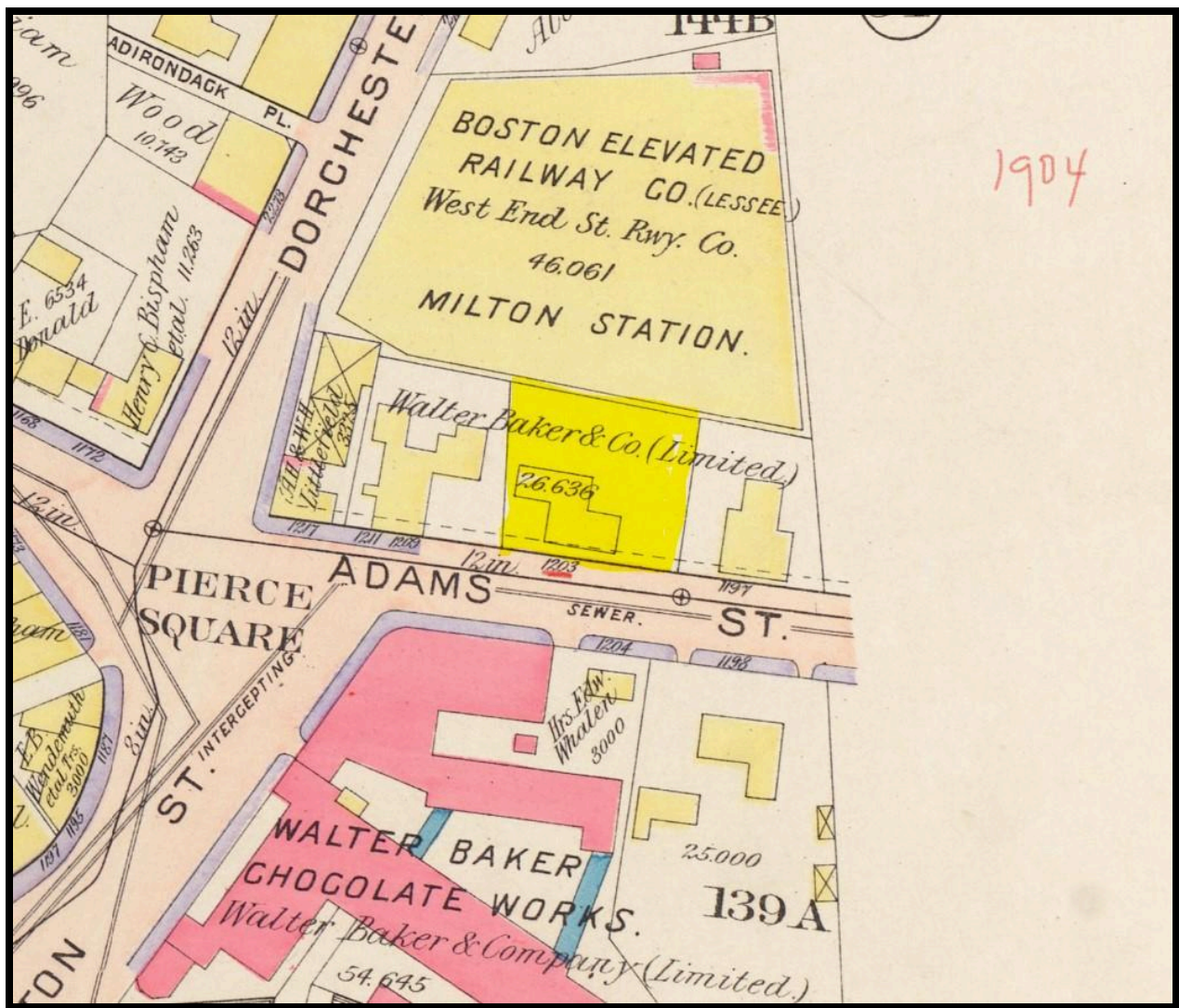
**Figure 10.** Excerpt from the 1874 Hopkins Atlas. The center parcel of the three highlighted parcels on Adams Street is the Bussey House.

*Atlas of the County of Suffolk, Massachusetts: Boston and Dorchester, Vol. 3 (G.M. Hopkins & Co., 1874).*



**Figure 11.** Excerpt from the 1889 Bromley Atlas. The final year that the house was in possession of the Bussey family.

Bromley, G.W. and W.S. Bromley, *Atlas of the City of Boston : Roxbury, Mass, Vol. 4* (Philadelphia : G.W. Bromley & Co., 1889)



**Figure 12.** Excerpt from the 1904 Bromley Atlas. Subject property is highlighted in yellow. Before the addition of the glazed storefront/reading room.

Bromley, G.W. and W.S. Bromley, *Atlas of the City of Boston : Dorchester, Mass*, Vol. 5 (Philadelphia : G.W. Bromley & Co., 1904)



*John Bussey*  
 Appears with rank of *2nd. Lieut.* on \_\_\_\_\_

**Company Return**

of Capt. *Pierce's* Co.,  
 Col. *Graley's* Regt.,  
 dated *September 29, 1775* #

Town to which soldier belonged  
*Dorchester*

Remarks: —  
*# At Roxbury Camp.*  
*\* Artillery regiment*

Coat Rolls — Eight Months Service.  
 Vol. 56, page 272

**Figure 14.** 1775 record of militia service for John Bussey (Nicholas Graley's, or Greeley, Regiment) during Siege of Boston. Bussey served with artillery regiments.

Y<sup>e</sup>se  
to  
Bulsey.

Know all Men by these presents, that I Thomey Veic of Dorchester in the County of Norfolk & Commonwealth of Massachusetts under consideration of five hundred & fifty pounds lawful Money, paid me by John Bulsey of Dorchester. Under the receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge, to hereby give, grant, sell & convey unto the P<sup>r</sup> John Bulsey, & to his heirs & assigns forever a certain piece of Land in Dorchester, containing by Estimation one Acre & three quarters be the same more or less with the dwelling thereon, bounded Northwest by partly on Land of John Preston, partly on Land of Isaac Blake & partly on Land of Daniel Veic Esq<sup>r</sup>, Northeast by on Land of P<sup>r</sup> Daniel Veic, South by & Southeast by on the lower Road leading from Milton to Boston, also one other piece of Land in Dorchester with a Shop & Store thereon containing four rods be the same more or less bounded Northwest by on a Road leading from Milton to Boston, Northeast by on Land of Isaac Brown, & on all other parts on Land of Benjamin Pierce. I have & to hold, the same to the P<sup>r</sup> John Bulsey his heirs & assigns, to his & their use & behoof forever. And I do covenant with the P<sup>r</sup> John Bulsey his heirs & assigns, that I am lawfully seized in fee of the premises, that they are free of all Incumbrances.

Figure 15.

1795 deed. Norfolk Co. Registry of Deeds, Book 3/p. 107. 550 pounds sterling approximately \$83,000 in 2024 U.S. dollars.

## Massachusetts, U.S., Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolutionary War

Volume 02

**BUSSEY, ISAAH** (also given **JOSIAH**), Stoughton. Private, Capt. James Endecott's co., Col. Lemuel Robinson's regt., which marched on the alarm of April 19, 1775; service, 9 days; *also*, Ensign, Capt. William Bent's co., Col. William Heath's (Suffolk Co.) regt.; list of officers [year not given]; *also*, Ensign, Capt. William Bent's co., Gen. Heath's regt.; list of officers dated May 20, 1775; stationed at Dorchester Camp; *also*, Capt. William Bent's co., Col. John Groaton's regt.; muster roll dated Aug. 1, 1775; enlisted April 27, 1775; service, 3 mos. 12 days; *also*, Capt. Bent's co., 36th regt.; company return dated Fort No. 2, Oct. 5, 1775; *also*, Captain Lieutenant, Col. John Crane's (Artillery) regt.; Continental Army pay accounts for service from Jan. 1, 1777, to Dec. 31, 1779; *also*, returns of officers for clothing dated Boston, May 26 and Sept. 25, 1778; *also*, Capt. Benjamin Frothingham's co., Col. Crane's regt.; muster rolls for Sept.-Dec., 1777; commissioned Feb. 1, 1777.

**BUSSEY, ISHMAEL**. Private, Capt. Nathan Watkins's co., Col. Edmund Phinney's regt.; muster roll dated Garrison at Fort George, Dec. 8, 1776; enlisted Jan. 1, 1776; reported deceased Oct. 11, 1776.

**BUSSEY, JOHN**, Milton (also given **Dorchester**). Matross, Capt. Daniel Vose's co. of the train in Milton, Col. Robinson's regt.; marched from Milton to Roxbury; service, 14 days, after battle at Concord and before the standing army was completed; *also*, receipt dated Roxbury, June 18, 1775, for rations for Capt. Pierce's co.; *also*, 2d Lieutenant, Maj. Thomas Pierce's co., Col. Richard Gridley's (Artillery) regt.; muster roll dated Aug. 1, 1775; enlisted May 8, 1775; service, 3 mos. 3 days; *also*, company return dated Roxbury Camp, Sept. 29, 1775; *also*, 1st Lieutenant, Capt. John Gill's (6th co.), Col. Thomas Crafts's (Artillery) regt.; engaged May 9, 1776; service to Nov. 1, 1776, 5 mos. 24 days; *also*, 1st Lieutenant,

## Massachusetts, U.S., Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolutionary War for John Bussey

Volume 02

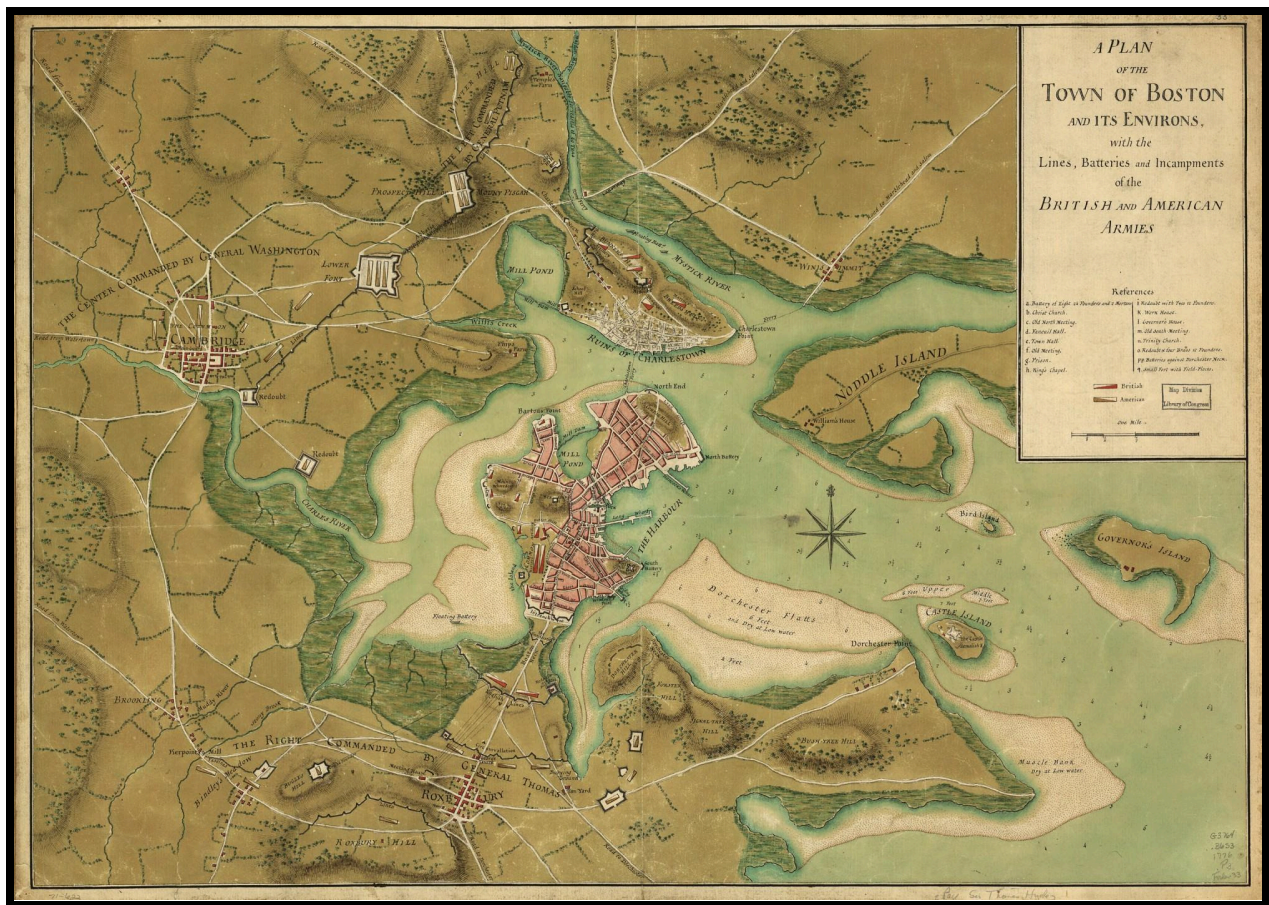
### 938 MASSACHUSETTS SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

**BUSSEY, JOHN**, *continued*.

Col. Crafts's regt.; list of officers of Mass. Line dated Boston, April 18, 1777; commissioned April 18, 1777; *also*, Lieutenant and Captain Lieutenant, Col. Crafts's regt.; Continental Army pay accounts for service from Jan. 1, 1777, to Feb. 26, 1779; reported as serving 19 months as Lieutenant, 6 mos. 26 days as Captain Lieutenant; *also*, 1st Lieutenant, Capt. Gill's co., Col. Crafts's regt.; service from Feb. 1, 1777, to May 8, 1777, 3 mos. 7 days; *also*, Captain Lieutenant, Capt. William Todd's (6th co.), Col. Crafts's regt., service from date of appointment, to Oct. 1, 1777, 4 mos. 25 days; *also*, same co. and regt.; pay abstract for Jan. and Feb., 1779; *also*, petition dated Boston, Feb. 26, 1779, signed by said Bussey, asking that he be allowed to resign his commission as Captain Lieutenant in Col. Crafts's regt.; resignation accepted in Council Feb. 26, 1779.

**Figure 16.** Full record of Bussey's service during the Revolutionary War. In the 18th century, a captain-lieutenant was a lieutenant, a junior rank officer, serving below captain and lieutenant colonel. They were given the title captain lieutenant when they also served as captains, while still retaining the rank of lieutenant.

"Untangling British Army Ranks," *Journal of the American Revolution*, accessed May 2024, <https://allthingsliberty.com/2016/05/untangling-british-army-ranks/>.



**Figure 17.** 1775 map with places associated with Bussey's service during the Revolutionary War, Siege of Boston and defense of Boston Harbor.

Page, Thomas Hyde, Sir. Boston, Its Environs and Harbour, With the Rebels Works Raised Against That Town in 1775. Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/gm71000623/>.

**WILLIAM STACKPOLE'S Store,**  
No. 26. STATE STREET. *Dec. 15.*  
**FIFTY POUNDS REWARD.**

**WHEREAS** a certain **JOHN PERKINS**, (a man about 37 years of age, speaks broken English, and says he was born in Germany) entered on board my Schooner **FLYING-FISH**, at *Annapolis*, on the eastern-shore of *Maryland*, partly as Commander, and, with my son **JOHN MILES**, (a lad about 18 years of age) as an assistant, sailed from thence, on the 12th of June last, for *Tobago*, loaded with corn, flour and shingles;—but in place of proceeding on his voyage, went to the Eastern states, where he has been cruising and trading most of the time, and was at *Musbias*, in October last, loading with plank:—Having reason to believe he will go from the Eastward, this winter, to some of the West-India-Islands, or *Surinam*; there dispose of the vessel and cargo, and not return here again; I, therefore, hereby offer the above reward to any persons, who will secure the above-mentioned **PERKINS** and the Schooner **FLYING-FISH**, together with what property they may find on board, and will pay all reasonable expenses, if they will assist said **JOHN MILES** in bringing her to **HENRY WILSON**, at

*Likewise, An assortment of West-India Goods and Groceries.* *Dec. 21. 1791.*

**TICKETS.**

**TICKETS**, and Quarters, in the last Class of *Charleston Lottery*, which will positively be drawn immediately after the prizes in the *Semi Annual Lottery* are published, may be had of **E. LARKIN, jun. No. 50, CORNHILL**.—Prizes in the *New-Haven Lottery* received in Nov. *Dec. 21.*

**TAKE NOTICE.**

**THE** Subscriber having lately taken the House known by the name of *Washington-Tavern*, near *Milton-Bridge*, seven miles from *Boston*, begs leave to acquaint the Publick, (and his friends in particular) that said House is accommodated with a spacious and elegant Hall, very suitable for *Dancing*, with every convenience requisite, where companies may be genteelly entertained at the shortest notice, and suitable attendance furnished by **JOHN BUSSEY.**

*Dec. 24. 1791.*

Figure 18. John Bussey takes possession of the house known by the name of Washington Tavern.

*Colombian Centinel, Dec. 31, 1791.*


**TO BE LET, and immediate possession**  
given, a Bake House, with rooms convenient for a small family, together with a Barn, and other necessary out buildings, situated near the lower mills in *Dorchester*. Said Bake House is worthy the attention of a new beginner, as it has been improved as such for more than 50 years. For further particulars, apply to **JOHN BUSSEY,** near the premises.

*May 9*

Figure 19. Bake house, possibly at 1203-1205 Adams St.

*Colombian Centinel, May 9, 1807.*

**For Liverpool,**




The regular fast sailing coppered ship **TRITON**, **John Bussey** master, will positively sail on Sunday the 15th October, weather permitting. For freight or passage, apply to **DAVID HINCKLEY**, No. 46. Central-wharf, or to the master on board.—Her cabins and state rooms are extended and improved purposely for the accommodation and comfort of passengers, and the best beds and bedding will be provided.

sept 20

**Figure 20.** Under different ownership, and sailing out of Baltimore, the Triton transported enslaved people from Virginia and Maryland to cotton-producing areas farther south. No evidence that Bussey was involved in the domestic slave trade.

1820 shipmaster of Triton. *Colombian Centinel*, Sep. 27, 1820.

**For Liverpool.**



The regular packet ship **TRI-TON**, **John Bussey** master, will sail on Sunday, the 9th inst. wind and weather permitting. For passage and freight of a few bales more of Cotton, apply to **DAVID HINCKLEY**, No. 46, Central-wharf, or the Captain on board, opposite.

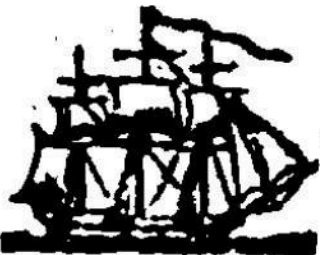
N. B. 50 tons superior Cannel Coal, for sale on board ship Milo. Apply as above.

sept 3                      epislw

**Figure 21.** Triton, under Captain Bussey, transporting cotton to Liverpool.

*Boston Daily Advertiser*, Sep. 4, 1821.

**Freight for Liverpool.**

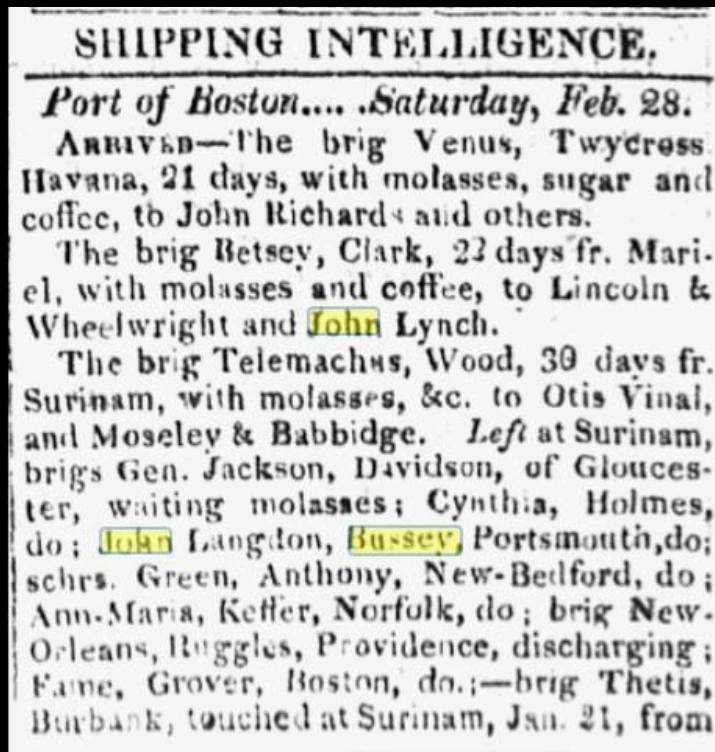


150 Bales cotton are wanted  
for the packet ship  
**AMETHYST,**  
Capt. **Bussey,**  
and 100 bales for the fast sailing ship Tri-  
ton, Capt. J. G. Dickson, to sail on the  
28th inst.

**JOHNSTON, HILLS & CO**  
dec 22 24u

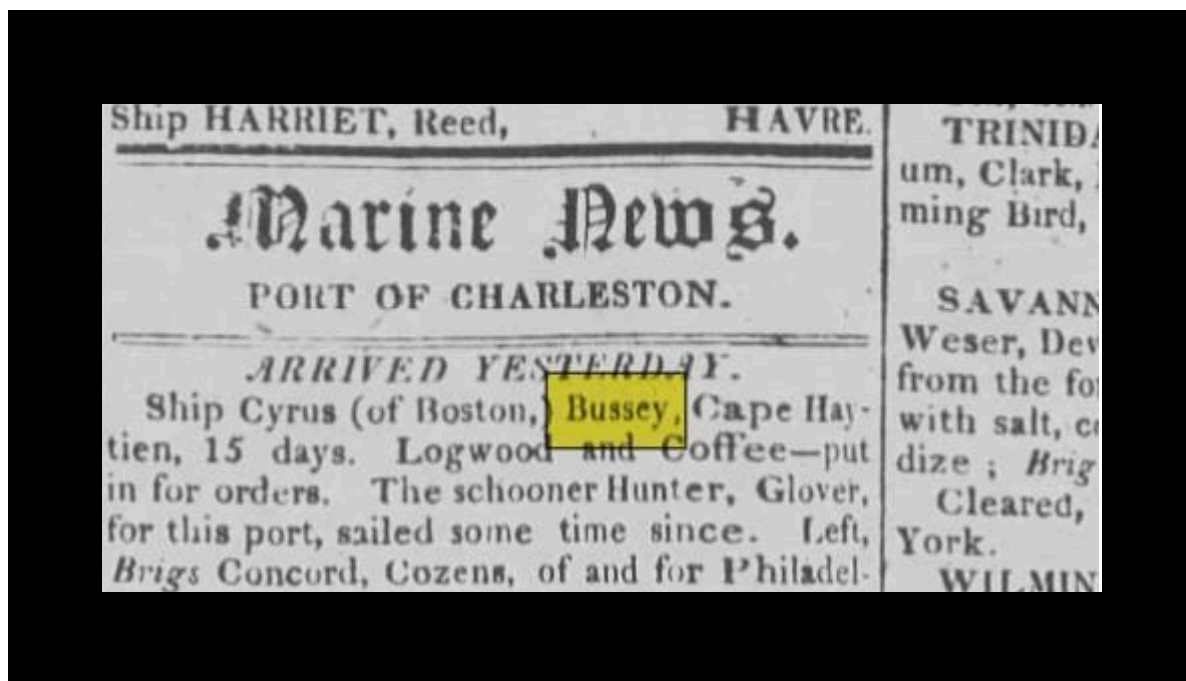
**Figure 22.** Later in the 19th century, Savannah became the busiest cotton seaport on the Atlantic, annually exporting over 2 million bales of cotton.

*The Georgian* (Savannah), Dec. 25, 1823. "Old Savannah Cotton Exchange," Georgia Historical Society, [https://www.georgiahistory.com/ghmi\\_marker\\_updated/old-savannah-cotton-exchange/](https://www.georgiahistory.com/ghmi_marker_updated/old-savannah-cotton-exchange/).



**Figure 23.** After a decade of embargoes, blockades, and warfare during the Napoleonic Wars and the War of 1812, shipping in New England port towns had revived by 1818. The New England mariners were “a people whose sails whitened every sea.”

*The Repertory* (Boston), Mar. 3, 1818. Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts 1783-1860*, 1941 ed., 211.



**Figure 24.** Bussey was captain of the *Cyrus* transporting logwood (used as a source of dyes for wool) and coffee from port of Cap-Haitien, Haiti to Charleston, S.C. Coffee was a leading export crop in Haiti, which, following independence in 1804, had abolished slavery. The United States extended formal diplomatic recognition to Haiti in 1862.

*Charleston Mercury, Mar. 22, 1823.*



**Figure 25.** Lord Street and St George's Church, Liverpool, 1828 (during the time when Bussey frequently visited Liverpool as captain of the *Amethyst*)

*Watercolor by Robert Irving Barrow.*

<https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/stories/evolution-of-liverpools-iconic-waterfront>



**Figure 26.** View of the Port of Liverpool, c. 1811.

*Watercolor by Robert Irving Barrow.*

<https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/stories/evolution-of-liverpools-iconic-waterfront>



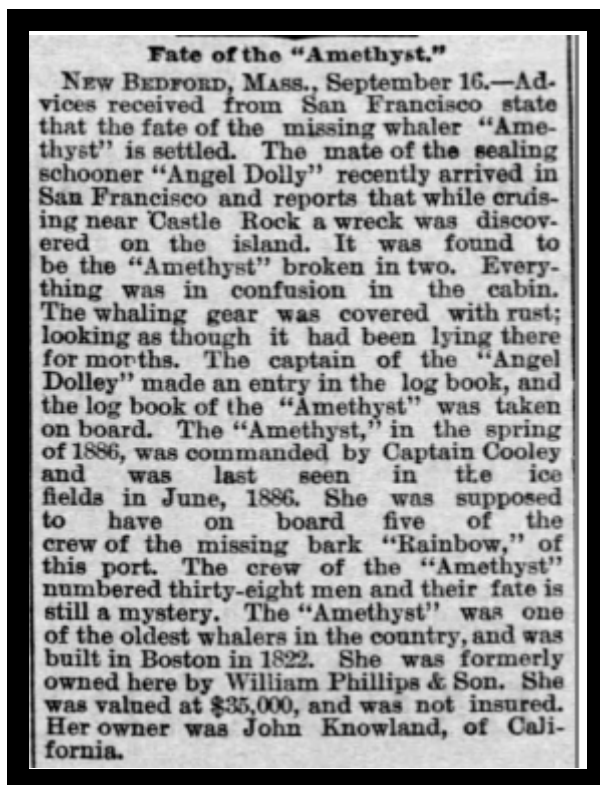
Enslaved people working at a Suriname plantation, 1850. Credits: Th. Bray, [Wikimedia Commons](#) (public domain)

**Figure 27.** Harvesting sugar cane, about 30 years after Bussey captained ships transporting molasses from Suriname to Portsmouth, N.H. The Dutch abolished slavery in the colony of Suriname in 1863.



**Figure 28.** Modern-day representation of sailing ships loading cotton outside the Exchange (custom house) Building in Charleston Harbor, c. 1820, at a time when Bussey began traveling to Charleston to transport cotton to Liverpool.

John Stobart, artist. *Charleston: Landing Cotton Alongside The Exchange c. 1820*. Painted in 2007.  
<https://www.scrimshawgallery.com/product/charleston-landing-cotton-alongside-the-exchange-c-1820/>



**Figure 29.** 1887 account of the wreck of the Amethyst, Capt. John Bussey was shipmaster from its launch in 1823 to the dissolution of the Boston-to-Liverpool Packet Company about 1827. In 1832, the Amethyst was based in New Bedford and used as a whaling vessel. More than 2,700 American sailing vessels were engaged in whaling. By then, in 1832, Bussey was 81 and no longer appears in shipping records as a sea captain.

*The Western News (Stockton KS), Sept. 21, 1887.*

Wednesday. Room 205, 387 Washington st. \*

WANTED—All-round cook in small hotel,  
1205 Adams st, Dorchester. WILLIAM R.  
MATTHEWS, Prop, tel 676-2 Milton. \*

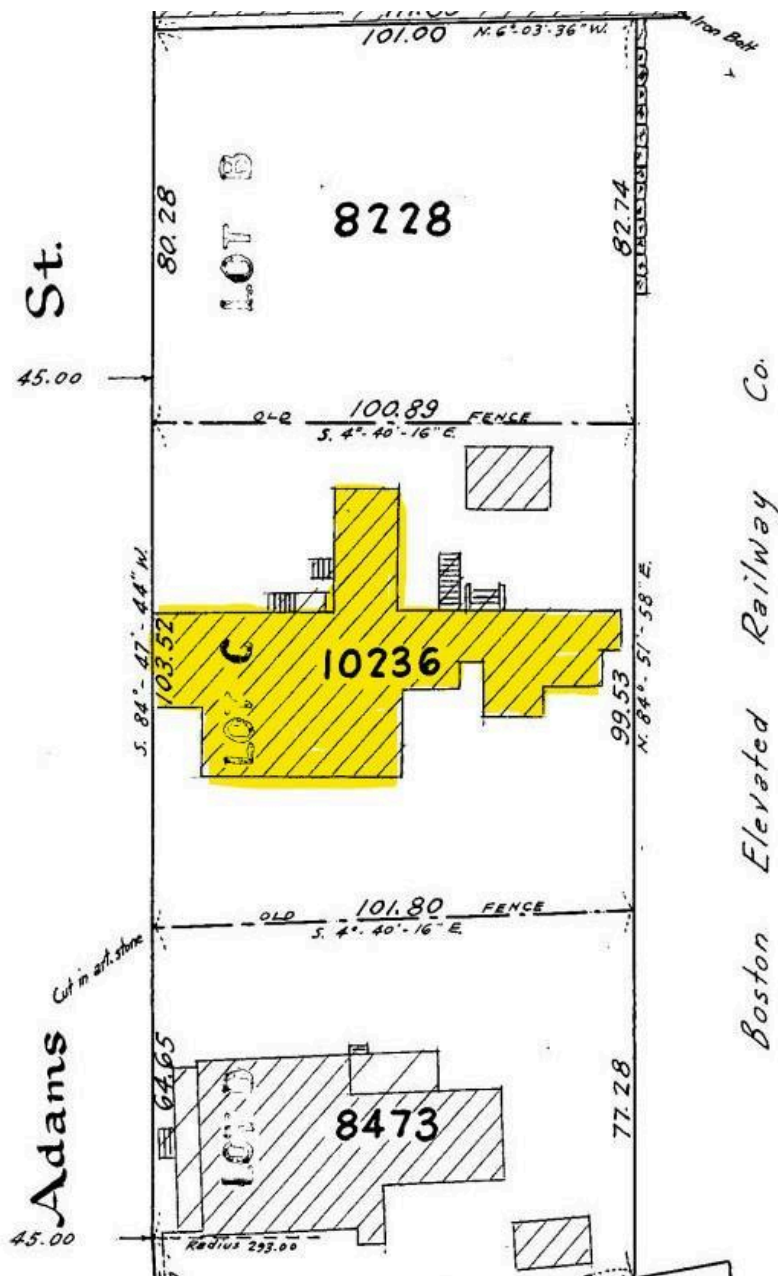
WANTED—Girl in bakery, young girl with  
little experience, give reference and wages ex-  
pected. J 47, Globe office. \*

WANTED—Ex table girl, \$6. DOYLE'S, 139  
Emerson st, S. B. \*

WANTED—Woman to do scrubbing in lunch  
room. HUNTER'S LUNCH, 203 Tremont st. \*

**Figure 30.** The Walter Baker & Co. chocolate factory owned the property at this time. It leased some rooms for boarders and had one apartment. This advertisement is the only record of a “small hotel” at 1205 Adams Street.

*Boston Globe, May 11, 1910.*



**Figure 31.** 1939 subdivision, showing large rear addition, most of which no longer exists. There are no building permits for construction or demolition of this addition.

1939, Suffolk Co. Registry of Deeds, Bk 5839, p. 369.





**Figure 34.** River Street, Dorchester, near Pierce Sq., about 1895. The late-18th c./ c. 1800 two-story house in this photo, with low hipped roof, five-bay by two-bay, probably resembled the appearance of the nearby Bussey House before the alterations in the early 20th c.

*"Dorchester Illustration no. 2155 Looking from River Street toward Pierce Square," Dorchester Historical Society, accessed May 2024.*

## 5. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Bussey House is a two-story, five-bay Federal-style house with a Classical Revival shopfront addition and a drive-through porte cochere on the side. While the building has seen some significant alterations to accommodate different uses, the main block retains much of its Federal-era identity, and the Classical Revival shopfront is a significant architectural feature in its own right.

The house is prominently sited on Adams Street, with the Classical Revival shopfront directly abutting the sidewalk. It is surrounded on three sides by paved driveway and parking. Non-historic stone bollards connected by metal chains protect the building and demarcate the edge of the parking lot.

The building is clad in non-original clapboards with simple corner boards and sills. A stringcourse wraps around the building between the first and second floors.

The roofs over the original main block, the rear addition, and the porte cochere are all hipped, while the Classical Revival shopfront is gabled. All of these roofs are clad in asphalt shingles. A brick chimney protrudes from the western slope of the main block's roof. There is also a flat roof over the first story of the northeast corner of the building, creating an occupiable roof deck surrounded by a wooden balustrade.

The original Federal-style architecture can be read clearly at the second story of the main block. The second story of the front facade shows the classic five-bay symmetrical arrangement common to many Federal-style residences at the time, with one exception: the window that is second from the left is slightly shorter, and was likely altered to accommodate the construction of the shopfront addition. The second story of the east-facing side of the main block has a two-bay arrangement, while on the west-facing side of the block there is an extra (third) window. All of the windows on the second story of the main block are six-over-six double-hung wood windows with black shutters.

The first story of the main block has been more heavily altered in order to accommodate different business functions. The most prominent change to the front facade is the addition of a Classical Revival shopfront addition in the early twentieth century. This addition has Ionic columns at all four corners, surmounted by an entablature with dentil molding and a deep cornice. The front pediment also contains dentil molding, along with three light fixtures attached to the tympanum. The south and west sides of this addition are glazed storefront windows above wood paneling; the transoms at the top of the windows and above the front door contain patterned glass. The front door is a modern three-quarter lite door with modern hardware. The east side of the addition is solid wall clad in clapboard.

The windows on the first story of the main block have been infilled on the west side, with the exception of one six-over-six double-hung window which matches the upper windows in scale and proportions, although its atypical position and alignment indicates that it may have been moved from its original location (see **Figure 5**). On the front facade and east side, the original windows have been replaced. On the front facade there is now a tall two-over-two window with one-over-one sidelights. On the east side of the building, there is a tall triple window with two-over-two operable sash. The triple window is set into a surround of flat trim with paneled pilasters on either side and a dentiled cornice above. Based on the architectural detailing and the fact that the sashes are made of wood, it is presumed that these windows may have been installed around the time of the Walter Baker Company renovations in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Behind the main block there is a large two-story addition believed to have been constructed between 1918 and 1933 (see **6.1 Historic Significance**). There is also a one-story addition at the northeast corner; further research is needed to confirm the date of its construction. The windows

on the rear additions are all one-over-one operable metal sash with simple trim surrounds and sills. There is a door leading out to the roof deck over the one-story addition.

The back (north side) of the building has a half-lite door covered by a small shed roof clad in asphalt shingles.

On the west-facing facade of the rear addition, a drive-through porte cochere was added to accommodate a drive-up ATM and pneumatic tube system.

## 6. HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

### 6.1 Historic Significance

The Captain John Bussey House, at 1203-1205 Adams Street, in Lower Mills section of Dorchester, is significant to the city of Boston as one of few surviving properties from the 18<sup>th</sup> century associated with an officer from the Revolutionary War, John Bussey (1751-1841). Bussey was also a well-known sea captain on trading vessels during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The c. 1792 building, with its later additions, is on the ancestral homeland of the Neponsett people, a tribal group of the Massachusetts confederation, who lived autonomously along what is now known as the Neponset River.<sup>1</sup> The Neponsett used the river for fishing and for trading. In the 1630s, the area attracted English Puritan settlers because the river was navigable to the rapids, and the rushing water could be used to power mills.<sup>2</sup> The settlement, first known as Neponset Village, later became Milton Village (Milton) and Lower Mills (Dorchester), with the river dividing the two towns. Flour, paper, and sawmills and ship building were prominent industries in the area.

The Vose family, descendants of Robert Vose (Vause or Vaux), who had migrated to Milton from England sometime between 1650 and 1668, owned large tracts of land on both sides of the river. In Dorchester, they owned land along what was known in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as the “main road, or “lower road,” present-day Adams Street, connecting Braintree to Boston. By the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, the family ran several successful businesses along the river: taverns, blacksmiths, distilleries, and cabinetmakers. They also operated a paper mill and a small shipyard building sloops.<sup>3</sup>

In 1788, Ebenezer Vose (1766-1813), a cabinetmaker and native of Dorchester,<sup>4</sup> inherited land and buildings on both sides of the “main road” from his father, Ebenezer Vose (Sr.), a blacksmith. In 1791, Vose sold a one and three-quarter acre portion of this land, described as “tillage,” or cultivated farmland, with no buildings, on the west side of the road. Two years later, he again owned the property with “dwelling houses thereon,” until selling it in 1795 to John Bussey (1751-1841).<sup>5</sup> The land records, therefore, indicate that the existing house was constructed in 1792 and possibly completed in early 1793.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Heath, “The Converging Cultures of the Neponset River Estuary,” Dorchester Athenaeum, 2007, <https://web.archive.org/web/20070524182110/http://www.dorchesteratheneum.org/page.php?id=679>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.neponsetgreenway.org/neptime.htm>. In Neponset Village, “Stoughton’s mill [dating to 1634] is one of the earliest documented grist mills in the English colonies and probably was preceded in New England only by the Roxbury Mill of 1633.” “Settled in 1640, Milton, Massachusetts was once a part of Dorchester, Massachusetts and was referred to as “Unquety” the term used by the Neponset Tribe of the Massachusetts...as meaning “Lower Falls,” which was translated into the Lower Mills after the establishment of the Stoughton Grist Mill in 1634.” “Dorchester/Milton Lower Mills Industrial District,” Dorchester Athenaeum, accessed March 2024, <https://www.dorchesteratheneum.org/project/dorchester-milton-lower-mills-industrial-district-2/>. The history of Neponset Village area is like that of Lawrence, Lowell, Manchester, and Concord on the Merrimack.

<sup>3</sup> Isaac Vose (1767-1823), the highly regarded and pre-eminent cabinetmaker in Boston in this era, whose shop was in the South End, most likely apprenticed in the family cabinetmaking business (or with Benjamin Frothingham in Charlestown). Isaac Vose moved from Milton to Boston at age 21, the age when many trade apprenticeships ended: Robert D. Mussey, Jr., and Clark Pearce, “Classical Excellence in Boston: The Furniture of Isaac Vose, 1789-1825,” Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 2017, <https://www.colonialsociety.org/publications/3297/classical-excellence-boston-furniture-isaac-vose-1789-1825>. Robert D. Mussey Jr. and Clark Pearce, *Rather Elegant Than Showy: The Classical Furniture of Isaac Vose* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society in association with David R. Godine, 2018).

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Craftspersons File, 1600-1995. Ellen F. Vose, *Robert Vose and His Descendants* (Boston: Privately Printed, 1932), 153.

<sup>5</sup> Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 3, pp. 107-108. Vose lived in Vose family homestead on the “east” side of Adams Street and did not live in the houses across the road. He likely built the Bussey House as speculation.

<sup>6</sup> In March 1813, during the War of 1812, Vose, at age 47, volunteered for the Massachusetts militia. With his regiment, he was stationed at the Greenbush Cantonment in Rensselaer County, New York, the major army post defending lakes Niagara and Champlain and the northern United States. A father of seven, he died in Greenbush

Born in Stoughton (present-day Canton), Bussey was the son of William Bussey (1706-1777), a farmer and native of England, and Olive Jordan (1713-1763) of Dorchester. His early life is undocumented. His oldest brother Benjamin (1734-1808) was a farmer in Canton who in the 1790s became a merchant and, possibly, a ship captain. Benjamin Bussey eventually acquired over 100 acres in Stoughton, Canton, and Dedham.<sup>7</sup> A reasonable conjecture is that John Bussey, like his brother, was a farmer in Canton or Stoughton—growing hay, corn, sea kelp, apples, and pumpkins--and then, coinciding with a move to Lower Mills, “followed the sea” to work as a mariner and trader.<sup>8</sup>

In April 1775, following the battles at Lexington and Concord, Bussey joined the local militia company in Milton, under the command of Daniel T. Vose, as a matross.<sup>9</sup> Between 1775 and 1779, he served in artillery regiments for the Massachusetts militia mostly in defense of Boston harbor. He was in active service in Roxbury during the Siege of Boston and the Battle of Bunker Hill<sup>10</sup> and again in March 1776 during the evacuation by the British. In 1777, with rank of captain-lieutenant, he served in Colonel Thomas Crafts's Regiment at Castle Island (then known as the Castle).<sup>11</sup> In this regiment, Bussey most likely participated in its major activities: refortifying Castle Island after the British had destroyed the fort during the March 1776 evacuation; successfully repulsing several British ships that had remained in Boston harbor after the evacuation and capturing 700 prisoners; escorting Hessian mercenary prisoners from upstate New York to Boston after the British surrender at Saratoga; and twice venturing to Newport to buttress its defenses against fears of an invasion of that port town. This regiment was riven with conflicts and dissent mostly over alleged mismanagement of provisions for the army, meager allowances for clothing, boredom, desertions, and low pay. These grievances prompted a mass resignation in February 1779 by Col. Crafts and nearly all the officers including Bussey. Notably, Lt. Col. Revere was one of four officers who did not resign.<sup>12</sup>

Three of John Bussey's four brothers-- Isaiah, Thomas, and Benjamin--also served as officers in the Massachusetts state militia or Continental Army during the War for Independence.

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in May or June of 1813. His son, also named Ebenezer, followed his father's example, and joined the state militia in June 1813. He died soon after reaching the fort at Greenbush. Digital Public Library of America. Record Group 94: Records of the Adjutant General's Office Series: Letters Received File Unit, Vose, Ebenezer - State: [Blank] - Year: 1818 - Folder Number: 12909, accessed April 2024, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/56332928?objectPage=3>.

<sup>7</sup> “Financial Ties: Harvard and the Slavery Economy, Benjamin Bussey, Jr.,” *Harvard and the Legacy of Slavery*, 2002, 26, accessed March 2024: <https://legacyofslavery.harvard.edu/>. Daniel T. V. Huntoon, *History of the Town of Canton, Massachusetts* (Boston: Ebenezer Clapp, Jr. 1859; Ebenezer Clapp, Jr. 1859. Reprinted Cambridge, MA: John Wilson & Son, Riverside Press, 1893), 352. Benjamin Bussey Collection, William L. Clements Library, The University of Michigan, accessed March 2024, <https://findingaids.lib.umich.edu/catalog/umich-wcl-M-1016bus>. No other source, other than a short biographical narrative by Benjamin Bussey (Jr.) supports the claim that his father Benjamin was a sea captain. In land deeds, Benj. Bussey's occupation is merchant, which could include a sea captain.

<sup>8</sup> One example was the White family in Salem, contemporaries of the Busseys. Robert Booth, *Death of an Empire: The Rise and Murderous Fall of Salem, America's Richest City* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2011), 24-27.

<sup>9</sup> “A soldier who assists artillery gunners in loading, firing, sponging, and moving the guns.” “Glossary of Revolutionary War Terms,” American Battlefield Trust, accessed March 2024, <https://www.battlefields.org/glossary-revolutionary-war-terms#M>.

<sup>10</sup> Bussey is not listed among the 125 survivors of the battle who attended the 1825 laying of the cornerstone for the monument. Survivors of Bunker Hill in 1825, accessed March 2024, [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Survivors\\_of\\_Bunker\\_Hill\\_in\\_1825](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Survivors_of_Bunker_Hill_in_1825).

<sup>11</sup> Paul Revere (1734-1818), a lieutenant colonel, also served with Bussey as a fellow officer in the same regiment at Castle Island, and the two undoubtedly knew each other. See, Chapter 4, “Seeds of Discontent”; for an account of the artillery regiment tasked with defense of Boston Harbor, see: Michael Greenburg, *The Court-Martial of Paul Revere* (Lebanon, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2014), 64-68. There is no evidence that Bussey, after resigning his commission, participated in the Penobscot Expedition, led by Revere, in the summer of 1779.

<sup>12</sup> Jayne E. Triber, *A True Republican: The Life of Paul Revere* (Amherst : University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), 131, 134; Greenbury, *Court Martial of Paul Revere*, 64; Records of the Boston Laboratory, 1776-1785, Massachusetts Board of War, Archivegrid, accessed May 2024, <https://researchworks.oclc.org/archivegrid/data/78253091>.

In 1777, while serving in the state militia, Bussey married Mary (Polly) Davenport (1756-1814), a widow from Dorchester. They had five children. (In 1822, eight years after the death of his first wife, he married Sally Spring, 1777-1846, from Roxbury.)<sup>13</sup> About 1785, he moved with his family from Milton to Dorchester.<sup>14</sup>

In 1791 and 1792, Bussey was the proprietor of an inn, the Washington Tavern in Dorchester, “near the Milton Bridge.” He posted advertisements in the *Columbian Centinel*, the leading newspaper in Boston, that “the said house is accommodated with a spacious and elegant Hall suitable for dancing.”<sup>15</sup> The inn apparently failed because the advertisements ceased after 1792. Three years later, in the deed for his house, he listed his occupation as “trader,” most likely procuring cargo and crews for ships and sailing on them as well.

The first record of his maritime activity is in 1806. A Charleston newspaper listed Bussey (surname only) as shipmaster of a brig (Maria Jane) arriving from Boston.<sup>16</sup> Either John or his brother Benjamin, who was 72 years old in 1806, could have been the shipmaster, though scant evidence exists that Benjamin Bussey was at sea as a shipmaster.

In 1813, following expulsion from the Congregational Second Church (originally South Church) for Unitarian beliefs, he and other dissenting members of the Second Church founded the New South Meeting-House, later renamed the Third Religious Society of Dorchester. This Trinitarian-Unitarian split was a comparatively early instance of Unitarians forming a separate church.<sup>17</sup>

In 1818, Bussey is listed in newspaper notices as master of the brig John Langdon in Suriname and soon after arriving in Portsmouth, New Hampshire with 260 casks of molasses.<sup>18</sup> The rum distilleries in Massachusetts and Rhode Island relied on imported molasses, produced by enslaved Africans on sugar plantations, and to support this industry there was a lively trade between Boston and Suriname.<sup>19</sup> This notice is the only one connecting Bussey to trade with Suriname.

As a shipmaster, Bussey would have had many years of experience navigating ships in all conditions and surviving the perils of ocean crossings in the age of sail. Ship owners held them accountable for profits, and they were responsible for acquiring cargo in foreign ports, finding laborers to load and unload cargoes, negotiating prices with brokers, hiring and managing crews, and recruiting passengers. With these responsibilities, ship captains in this era “were the finest men whose services

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<sup>13</sup>In 1825, at age 74, Bussey and his second wife Sarah had a son John, who died in infancy. At the time, Bussey also had an older son named John, John Bussey, Jr. (1785-1846) from his first marriage.

<sup>14</sup> “Strangers in Dorchester,” *New England Historical and Genealogical Record*, XL (1906): 388. <https://archive.org/details/newenglandhisto55unkngoog/page/n2/mode/2up>. In the 1790 census, he is a resident of Stoughton.

<sup>15</sup> His occupation, however brief, as a tavern keeper—earning a livelihood from convivial patrons engaged in drinking, playing cards, dancing, and gambling—was unusual in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century for a church member and pew proprietor, in Bussey’s case in the Second Church of Dorchester. Mariners, however, were well acquainted with taverns in port cities. The tavern was near the house which he bought three years later from Ebenezer Vose and could have been the same building.

<sup>16</sup> *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, Charleston, S.C., Sept. 13, 1806. Brig was term used for brigantine, a two-masted sailing ship. Ship notices almost always referred only to the last name of the masters (captains). Maria Jane transported sugar and other cargo mostly from Martinique to Charleston and Portsmouth, and then to Rotterdam and Amsterdam.

<sup>17</sup> The Third Church, Dorchester Atheneum, accessed April 2024, <https://www.dorchesteratheneum.org/project/third-church/>. The Third Church commissioned a Greek-Revival church, designed by Asher Benjamin, on Richmond Street at Dorchester Avenue. It was dedicated in October 1840 while Bussey was alive.

<sup>18</sup> *The Repertory* (Boston), Mar. 3, 1818, Apr. 28, 1818. See addendum.

<sup>19</sup> Describing scenes from 40 years earlier, “...North American skippers and sailors were not only a regular sight in the city of Paramaribo [capital and chief port of Suriname], but that they were an integral part of it, relying on local slave owners to rent out their workers for sundry jobs to be done on the arriving vessels.” K. J. Fatah-Black, “Suriname and the Atlantic World, 1650-1800,” (2013), 197, accessed April 2024, <https://scholarlypublications.universiteitleiden.nl/handle/1887/21912>.

money could secure, and to their care were entrusted the lives of eminent men and women, government despatches [sic], the mails and specie.”<sup>20</sup>

Bussey may have begun his career as a mariner on trading and passenger ships while working for his brother in a family business or for his enterprising and prosperous nephew, Benjamin Bussey, Jr. (1757-1842). Bussey Jr., a sugar, coffee, and cotton merchant, began his trading business in 1798.<sup>21</sup> If affiliated with his Bussey nephews, by 1806 and certainly by 1818, John Bussey would have been well equipped for the position of shipmaster after numerous trips to the Caribbean and to ports in the American South and England.<sup>22</sup>

His principal years as a sea captain were between 1820 and 1826, when he was shipmaster of two packet brigs, the *Triton* and the *Amethyst*. The business model of swift packet ships, connecting New York to Liverpool, began in 1818 with the Black Ball Line. Boston merchants soon followed with their own locally built packet ships carrying cargo, passengers, and mail across the Atlantic to Liverpool. Bussey first appears in 1820 as master of the “fast-sailing” ship *Triton*.<sup>23</sup> Between 1823 and 1826, while in his 70s, he was then shipmaster of the copper-hulled packet ship, *Amethyst*.<sup>24</sup> The *Amethyst* was one of four ships in the fleet of the short-lived Boston & Liverpool Packet Company, a competitor with the Black Ball Line.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Arthur H. Clark, *The Clipper Ship Era: An Epitome of Famous American and British Clipper Ships, Their Owners, Builders, Commanders, and Crews 1843-1869* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1911), 39.  
[https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The\\_Clipper\\_Ship\\_Era/Chapter\\_3](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Clipper_Ship_Era/Chapter_3).

<sup>21</sup> Benjamin Bussey, Jr., was in business with his brother Jaanaziah, under name of B&J Bussey. Like his uncle and father, Benjamin was a veteran of the Revolutionary War. He was also close in age to his uncle. Conceivably, he may have hired him to work on ships or as a trader in wharves on the waterfront in Boston. Bussey, Jr., was a major philanthropist, farmer, silversmith, horticulturalist, and friend of John Q. Adams. Much of his wealth came from trading from slave-produced commodities. For this reason, he is prominently cited in the 2002 report, *Harvard and Slavery*. Bussey left a sizable share of his fortune and his property in West Roxbury (now the Arnold Arboretum) to Harvard. Archival records on Benj. Bussey, Jr. are at Harvard University and the University of Michigan.

<sup>22</sup> As early as 1799, and periodically through the Jeffersonian Embargo and the War of 1812, ships with the master (captain) “Hussey” appear in several newspaper notices (e.g., Liverpool to New York, *Commercial Advertiser*, N.Y., Apr. 16, 1799; Savannah to Portsmouth, NH, *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, Charleston, Aug. 4, 1813, Lisbon to New York, 1813). On Nantucket, there were sea captains and mariners from the Hussey family, but they were whalers, not international or coastal traders. A few of these references between 1799 to 1813 may have been to John Bussey, misspelt as Hussey, because the destinations correspond to documented trips by John Bussey as a sea captain (and because of the scarcity of the surnames Hussey/Bussey in newspaper records).

<sup>23</sup> *Boston Commercial Gazette*, Oct. 2, 1820.

<sup>24</sup> *Triton* is almost certainly the same ship cited in Calvin Schermerhorn, “Capitalism’s Captives: The Maritime United States Slave Trade, 1807-1850,” *Journal of Social History* 47, no. 4 (2014): 901, 905.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/43308821>. There is no evidence that Bussey participated in these voyages based out of Baltimore or that he worked in domestic trading of enslaved laborers. The *Amethyst* was built in Boston in 1823 and remained in service into the 1880s in the Pacific. Stan Grayson, *A Man for All Oceans: Captain Joshua Slocum and the First Solo Voyage Around the World* (Thomaston, ME: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017). *New York Evening Post*, Mar. 25, 1823.

<sup>25</sup> Following the Napoleonic Wars, Liverpool became the leading port in the world and a center for people emigrating from Europe. Robert Scally, “Liverpool Ships and Irish Emigrants in the Age of Sail,” *Journal of Social History* 17, no. 1 (1983): 12; Immigrant Ships, Ship *Amethyst*, Liverpool, England to Boston, Massachusetts, 3 August 1826, accessed April 2024, <https://www.immigrantships.net/1800/amethyst18260803.html>. “Boston was considered the natural terminus of the Liverpool trade.” Charles Francis Adams, “Boston,” *The North American Review*. 106, no. 218 (1868): 3, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25108129>.

The *Amethyst* carried passengers, mail, and cargo between Boston and Liverpool. To increase profits, it also carried cotton, from Charleston (and Savannah) to Liverpool because its Boston-based cargoes could not compete in value with those sent from New York (and with the larger size of the brigs based in New York).<sup>26</sup> The diversionary trips to Charleston reduced the demand for passenger service and further weakened the profitability of the business.<sup>27</sup> After the failure of the Boston-to-Liverpool packet line, the *Amethyst* continued as an immigrant ship.<sup>28</sup> On at least one trip in 1826, Bussey was master of the *Amethyst* when it carried Irish immigrants from Liverpool to Boston.

After 1826, Bussey, then age 75, no longer appears in shipping notices. He may have continued sailing the *Amethyst* until 1828, when it was still carrying immigrants to Boston.<sup>29</sup> Sometime before 1841, he opened a store in his house in Dorchester.<sup>30</sup> Obituaries at the time of his death cited his distinction as an “officer of the Revolution.” An anecdotal piece in 1885 described him as a “noted man of his day,” who was “known for quick passages between Boston and Liverpool.”<sup>31</sup>

In his will, Bussey left the house and store to his eldest daughter Mary.<sup>32</sup> His son, John Bussey, Jr.,<sup>33</sup> routinely described, like his father, as Capt. Bussey, also appears to have lived in the house with his sister Mary, his wife Hannah, his two daughters, and his stepmother. After Mary Bussey’s death in 1857, the house passed to the heirs of Hannah (Preston) Bussey, the widow of John Bussey, Jr. In 1890, the surviving Bussey heirs sold it to Henry Lillie Pierce (1825-1896), the owner of the Walter Baker & Company.<sup>34</sup> Pierce had worked for the Water Baker & Company for 42 years ascending from manager to eventual owner of what was the largest chocolate manufacturing company in the country.

Improbably, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the house had survived the rapid expansion of the chocolate factory, which grew to cover 14 acres, and the increasing industrialization of Lower Mills. Atlases and insurance maps illustrate how new construction, including the Pierce Mill to the east and an Elevated Railway storage yard to the west, crowded the house on all sides, engulfing it visually and with the noise of wagons, trains, factory whistles, teamsters, steam engines, furnaces, and construction.

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<sup>26</sup> In 1822, cotton accounted for 40% of the exports from New York City. Cotton was the leading export of the United States from 1803 to 1937. Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Consequences of Economic Power* (New York: Ivan R. Dee, 2009), x, 86. As late as 1820, South Carolina produced more than one-half the nation’s cotton. “Cotton,” *South Carolina Encyclopedia*, accessed May 2024, <https://www.scencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/cotton>.

<sup>27</sup> Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts 1783-1860* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1921, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1941), 232, 234. Even though Boston-to-Liverpool passage was 24 hours shorter than a similar trip to New York, the New York cargoes were more valuable, and in the 1820s passenger and merchant vessels from Boston were unable to compete with ships from New York. With the faster speeds of clipper ships and steam-powered ships, Boston regained its competitive position. Charles Francis Adams, “Boston,” 3.

<sup>28</sup> Robert Scally, “Liverpool Ships and Irish Emigrants in the Age of Sail,” *Journal of Social History* 17, no. 1 (1983): 3. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3787237>. A diary of an 1823 trans-Atlantic voyage of the *Amethyst*, though with scant information, is at the Massachusetts Historical Society. Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild, Ship *Amethyst*, Liverpool, England to Boston, Massachusetts, 3 August 1826, [accessed March 2024](https://www.immigrantships.net/1800/amethyst18260803.html), <https://www.immigrantships.net/1800/amethyst18260803.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Scally, *Liverpool Ships and Irish Emigrants*, 12.

<sup>30</sup> “The Walter Baker & Co. reading room, opposite the Pierce Mill, was then the Bussey store.” John R. Chaffee, *The History of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, Dorchester, Massachusetts* (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1917), 42, <https://archive.org/details/historyoffirstme0000chaf/mode/2up>.

This source is the only reference to the reading room; future research may find more information.

<sup>31</sup> *Boston Courier*, Mar. 9, 1841; *Boston Budget*, July 26, 1885.

<sup>32</sup> George Robert Twelves Hewes, who was born in Boston in 1742 and died 1840, a year before Bussey, “was one of the last survivors of the American Revolution.” <https://www.bostonteapartyship.com/george-robert-twelves-hewes/> A small number of survivors lived in the 1860s: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/ppmsca.35335/>.

In his will, Bussey left his portrait to his wife. If the portrait survives, its location is unknown.

<sup>33</sup> See addendum for discussion about which of the two Captains Bussey was the shipmaster in the 1820s.

<sup>34</sup> Suffolk Co. Registry of Deeds, Bk. 1953, p. 353; Bk. 2286, p. 545.

Sometime between 1905-1909, the management of the company outfitted the first floor of 1203-1205 Adams into a reading room for its employees. Sometime between 1918 and 1933, a large addition was constructed to the rear of the 1792 house (see addendum).<sup>35</sup> With 872 employees in 1911, the company at that time was large enough to issue an in-house newsletter and support a reading room.<sup>36</sup> Factory reading rooms, offering newspapers and books, were a common amenity for employees who, in the case of Baker Chocolate, worked 56-hour weeks<sup>37</sup> and mostly lived near the factory.

Lower Mills had a reading room as early as 1813 and a branch of the Boston Public Library in 1876.<sup>38</sup> The giant cotton mills in Lowell had circulating libraries in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, and factories in English mill towns introduced reading rooms in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>39</sup>

The refined proportions and Classical Revival detailing of the projecting reading room suggest that it was designed by the Boston architectural firm of Winslow & Bigelow (Walter Thacher Winslow and Henry Forbes Bigelow--or if 1909, Winslow, Bigelow & Wadsworth). In the early 1900s, Winslow & Bigelow designed the Ware Mill (1902) and Preston Mill (1903) for Baker Chocolate. A reasonable conjecture is that the firm was also responsible for the reading room. Between 1900-1910, Winslow & Bigelow were also working in a Classical Revival idiom in commissions such as the American Antiquarian Society building in Worcester (1910).<sup>40</sup>

Census records, directories, and newspapers confirm that the building had residential uses--rooms for boarders, a small hotel, and an apartment--during the 50-year ownership of the Walter Baker & Company.

In 1939, the company divided the former Bussey property into three lots and in 1940 sold 1203-1205 Adams St. to Ethel F. Kiley (1895-1971). A caterer and antiques dealer, Kiley operated her catering business from the building for 28 years until selling the property in 1968.<sup>41</sup> The longevity and the success of her business at a time when women were often denied loans and financing is a notable chapter in the 20<sup>th</sup>-century history of the Bussey house. After Kiley sold the property, another catering company run by Elizabeth Sherman occupied the space.<sup>42</sup> In 2006, Sherman sold the property, and the building appears to have sat vacant for a few years. The property was sold again in 2010, and a permit was filed to change its occupancy and convert it to a bank. In 2012, it was bought by RTN Federal Credit Union. (In 2025, the name was changed to BrightBridge Credit Union.) The credit union continues to operate out of the building today.

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<sup>35</sup> There is no building permit for the addition, and as part of the Walter Baker & Co. complex 1203-1205 Adams Street does not appear in city directories during these years. Historical Permits, City of Boston, 1203 Adams Street, Dorchester. A 1911 permit for a rear addition has no plan or dimensions. The glazed storefront appears on a 1910 atlas.

<sup>36</sup> Irene Costello, "Edible Traditions, Boston and the Chocolate Factory: Baker's Chocolate Reminisced," accessed April 2024, <https://www.edibleboston.com/edible-boston/edible-traditions-502>.

<sup>37</sup> Reduced to 52 hours in 1909. Anthony Sammarco, *The Baker Chocolate Factory, A Sweet History* (Charleston, S.C.: The History Press, 2009), 80.

<sup>38</sup> In Lower Mills, the "Dorchester Reading Room" was in the back room of a barber shop. "The Third Church," Dorchester Athenaeum, accessed March 2024, <https://www.dorchesteratheneum.org/project/third-church/>.

<sup>39</sup> Harriet Hanson Robinson, *Loom and Spindle or Life Among the Early Mill Girls* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Company, 1898), 43. <https://archive.org/details/loomspindleorlif00robi/mode/2up?q=library>. The Weston Colville Reading Room, accessed April 2024, <https://thereadingroom.org.uk/>.

The Christian Science Church opened the first of its many reading rooms in Boston in 1888:

<https://www.marybakereddylibrary.org/research/the-history-of-christian-science-reading-rooms/>.

<sup>40</sup> Architect George F Shepard, Jr. (1873-1955), who lived in Milton, and who later with Frederick Baldwin Stearns designed the Baker Administration Building (1919), was a draftsman for Winslow & Bigelow in 1909. He may have been responsible for a small project like the reading room. Boston Transcript, June 19, 1909.

<sup>41</sup> Suffolk Co. Registry of Deeds, Bk. 5838/369; 4919/369. Kiley also expanded her business to Milton and Quincy.

<sup>42</sup> Boston Economic Development and Industrial Corporation, "Guide to Boston Employers 1979-1980"

In 2007, the Boston Landmarks Commission delayed an application for demolition under Article 85.<sup>43</sup> The 90-day demolition delay expired but the building was not demolished.

## **6.2 Architectural Significance**

Despite alterations to the front elevation and an addition to the rear, the 1792 house is sufficiently intact to indicate its 18th-century origins. A house of this age is a rarity in Boston.<sup>44</sup> The Classical Revival storefront for the reading room, as noted in a 1977 inventory form for the Boston Landmarks Commission, is architecturally noteworthy and has acquired significance as a later addition. The refinement of the design suggests that it is the work of an estimable design firm. The later additions to the rear do not appear to have historic value, though portions of the addition may date to the late 19th century.

## **6.3 Archaeological Sensitivity**

The current lot for the building at 1203-1205 Adams (following subdivisions in 1927 and 1939) is only a fraction of the original one-and-three-quarter acre site. The house, however, has had open space on all four sides for its 232-year history. Much of that open space is currently used as surface parking. The primary disturbances to the immediate surroundings of the house have been for construction of the rear additions and the front storefront. Apart from those changes, the flat areas have not been repeatedly disturbed and could have archaeological artifacts from the years when the property was a farm, followed by the century-long occupancy by the Bussey family and the “Bussey store” in the mid-19th century. The open spaces may also have value for investigating the habitat of the original Neponsett people.

In 1807, John Bussey had an advertisement seeking someone to rent a “bake house with rooms for a small family” near Lower Mills in Dorchester. This structure was probably close to his house and may have been on his property. An archaeological investigation may find a portion of that structure or a stable.

## **6.4 Planning Context**

In 2007, the Boston Landmarks Commission delayed an application for demolition under Article 85.<sup>45</sup> The 90-day demolition delay expired but the building was not demolished.

Prompted by fear of losing the building, local advocates submitted a petition to the Boston Landmarks Commission to designate the building a Landmark. The petition was accepted by the Commission for further study on November 13, 2007.

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<sup>43</sup> Emily Sweeney, “Pieces of History Chopped to Bits,” *Boston Globe*, Mar. 29, 2009.

<sup>44</sup> See the book *Boston’s Oldest Buildings and Where to Find Them* by Joseph Bagley (Brandeis University Press, 2021), which identifies the 50 oldest buildings in Boston that were known as of its date of publication. Had the date of the John Bussey House been known at the time of publication, it would have qualified to be listed as one of the 50 oldest extant buildings in the city.

<sup>45</sup> Emily Sweeney, “Pieces of History Chopped to Bits,” *Boston Globe*, Mar. 29, 2009.

## 7. STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

### 7.1 Introduction

Per sections 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the enabling statute (Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended) Standards and Criteria must be adopted for each Designation that shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the historic resource. The Standards and Criteria both identify and establish guidelines for those features that must be preserved and/or enhanced to maintain the viability of the Designation. The Standards and Criteria are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.<sup>46</sup> Before a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption can be issued for such changes, the changes must be reviewed by the Commission with regard to their conformance to the purpose of the statute.

The intent of these guidelines is to help local officials, designers and individual property owners to identify the characteristics that have led to designation, and thus to identify the limitation to the changes that can be made to them. It should be emphasized that conformance to the Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily ensure approval, nor are they absolute, but any request for variance from them must demonstrate the reason for, and advantages gained by, such variance. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing, in accordance with the statute.

Proposed alterations related to zoning, building code, accessibility, safety, or other regulatory requirements shall require the prior review and approval of the Commission.

In these standards and criteria, the verb **Should** indicates a recommended course of action; the verb **Shall** indicates those actions that are specifically required.

### 7.2 Levels of Review

The Commission has no desire to interfere with the normal maintenance procedures for the property. In order to provide some guidance for property owners, managers or developers, and the Commission, the activities that might be construed as causing an alteration to the physical character of the exterior have been categorized to indicate the level of review required, based on the potential impact of the proposed work.

- A. Routine activities that are not subject to review by the Commission:
  - 1. Activities associated with normal cleaning and routine maintenance.
    - a. For building maintenance, such activities might include the following: normal cleaning (no power washing above 700 PSI, no chemical or abrasive cleaning), non-invasive inspections, in-kind repair of caulking, in-kind repainting, staining or refinishing of wood or metal elements, lighting bulb replacements or in-kind glass repair/replacement, etc.
    - b. For landscape maintenance, such activities might include the following: normal cleaning of paths and sidewalks, etc. (no power

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<sup>46</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, et al. *THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES WITH GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, RESTORING & RECONSTRUCTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*, Secretary of the Interior, 2017, [www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf).

washing above 700 PSI, no chemical or abrasive cleaning), non-invasive inspections, in-kind repair of caulking, in-kind spot replacement of cracked or broken paving materials, in-kind repainting or refinishing of site furnishings, site lighting bulb replacements or in-kind glass repair/replacement, normal plant material maintenance, such as pruning, fertilizing, mowing and mulching, and in-kind replacement of existing plant materials, etc.

2. Routine activities associated with special events or seasonal decorations that do not disturb the ground surface, are to remain in place for less than six weeks, and do not result in any permanent alteration or attached fixtures.

B. Activities that may be determined by the staff to be eligible for a Certificate of Exemption or Administrative Review, requiring an application to the Commission:

1. Maintenance and repairs involving no change in design, material, color, ground surface or outward appearance.
2. In-kind replacement or repair.
3. Phased restoration programs will require an application to the Commission and may require full Commission review of the entire project plan and specifications; subsequent detailed review of individual construction phases may be eligible for Administrative Review by BLC staff.
4. Repair projects of a repetitive nature will require an application to the Commission and may require full Commission review; subsequent review of these projects may be eligible for Administrative Review by BLC staff, where design, details, and specifications do not vary from those previously approved.
5. Temporary installations or alterations that are to remain in place for longer than six weeks.
6. Emergency repairs that require temporary tarps, board-ups, etc. may be eligible for Certificate of Exemption or Administrative Review. In the case of emergencies, BLC staff should be notified as soon as possible to assist in evaluating the damage and to help expedite repair permits as necessary.

C. Activities requiring an application and full Commission review:

Reconstruction, restoration, replacement, demolition, or alteration involving change in design, material, color, location, or outward appearance, such as: New construction of any type, removal of existing features or elements, major planting or removal of trees or shrubs, or changes in landforms.

D. Activities not explicitly listed above:

In the case of any activity not explicitly covered in these Standards and Criteria, the Landmarks staff shall determine whether an application is required and if so, whether it shall be an application for a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption.

E. Concurrent Jurisdiction

In some cases, issues that fall under the jurisdiction of the Landmarks Commission may also fall under the jurisdiction of other city, state and federal boards and

commissions such as the Boston Art Commission, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the National Park Service and others. All efforts will be made to expedite the review process. Whenever possible and appropriate, a joint staff review or joint hearing will be arranged.

### **7.3 List of Character-defining Features**

Character-defining features are the significant observable and experiential aspects of a historic resource, whether a single building, landscape, or multi-property historic district, that define its architectural power and personality. These are the features that should be identified, retained, and preserved in any restoration or rehabilitation scheme in order to protect the resource's integrity.

Character-defining elements may include, for example, the overall shape of a building and its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details and features, as well as the various aspects of its site and environment. They are critically important considerations whenever preservation work is contemplated. Inappropriate changes to historic features can undermine the historical and architectural significance of the resource, sometimes irreparably.

Below is a list that identifies the physical elements that contribute to the unique character of the historic resource. The items listed in this section should be considered important aspects of the historic resource and changes to them should be approved by commissioners only after careful consideration. The Commission acknowledges that some changes to the character-defining features may be necessary or beneficial; the standards and criteria established in this report are intended to make the changes sensitive to the historic and architectural character of the property.

The character-defining features for this historic resource include:

- A. Two-story, five-bay Federal-style original house.
  - a. Hipped roof
  - b. Brick chimney
  - c. Clapboard siding
  - d. Second-story windows on the original house, which are currently six-over-six double-hung wood windows.
  - e. Classical Revival triple window set into a surround of flat trim with paneled pilasters and dentiled cornice on the east facade
- B. Classical Revival shopfront addition:
  - a. Ionic columns
  - b. Entablature with dentil molding and deep cornice
  - c. Pediment with dentil molding
  - d. Glazed storefront windows including patterned glass

The rear additions and the drive-thru porte cochere are not considered to be character-defining features for this property.

### **7.4 Standards and Criteria**

The following Standards and Criteria are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.<sup>47</sup> These Standards and Criteria apply to all exterior building alterations that are visible from any existing or proposed street or way that is open to public travel.

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<sup>47</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, et al. *THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES WITH GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, RESTORING & RECONSTRUCTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*, Secretary of the Interior, 2017, [www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf).

#### **7.4.1 General Standards**

Subject to review and approval under the terms of this report, the following standards shall apply:

1. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided. See the list of Character-Defining Features in the previous section.
2. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, shall not be undertaken.
3. The period of significance is not determined by this study report. However, proposals for alterations to the property should be presented to the Commission with a clear argument for how they fit the most current understanding of the property's period or periods of significance and their impact on historic or existing fabric of the building.
4. Changes and additions to the landmark that have taken place over time are evidence of the history of the property and its context. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right; if so, that significance should be recognized and respected. (The term "later contributing features" will be used to convey this concept.)
5. Distinctive or significant historic and architectural materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature should match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. If the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Replacement of missing features should be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. The use of synthetic replacement materials is discouraged, except when substituted for perishable features exposed to the weather or when necessary to accommodate the effects of climate change.
8. Chemical and/or physical treatments (such as sandblasting) shall not be used in a manner that damages historic materials. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible and the results should preserve the patina that characterizes the age of the structure. Applications of paint or masonry preservative solutions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis; painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.
9. Demolition of a designated structure can be allowed only as a last resort after all practicable measures have been taken to ensure preservation, or unless required to comply with requirements certified by a duly authorized public officer to be necessary for public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition.
10. Creating new openings in exterior walls should be avoided when possible. Where necessary to accommodate new uses or for achieving accessibility, new openings or changes to existing openings will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

11. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of a property and its environment.
12. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
13. Original or later contributing signs, marquees, and canopies integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be preserved, excluding references to building ownership, operations, tenants.
14. New signs, banners, marquees, canopies, and awnings shall be compatible in size, design, material, location, and number with the character of the building, allowing for contemporary expression. New signs shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features. New signs may attach to the building if approved by the Commission. The method of attachment shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and should cause the least damage possible to the building. (See the Masonry section for guidelines on penetrating masonry.)
15. Property owners shall take necessary precautions to prevent demolition by neglect of maintenance and repairs. Demolition of protected buildings in violation of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended, is subject to penalty as cited in Section 10 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended.
16. Should any major restoration or construction activity be considered for a property, the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the proponents prepare a historic building conservation study and/or consult a materials conservator early in the planning process. The Boston Landmarks Commission specifically recommends that any work on masonry, wood, metals, or windows be executed with the guidance of a professional building materials conservator.
17. Should any major restoration or construction activity be considered for a property's landscape, the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the proponents prepare a historic landscape report and/or consult a landscape historian early in the planning process.
18. When reviewing an application for proposed alterations, the Commission will consider whether later addition(s) and/or alteration(s) to the building can, or should, be removed on a case-by-case basis. Since it is not possible to provide one general guideline, the following factors will be considered in determining whether a later addition(s) and/or alteration(s) can, or should, be removed include:
  - a. Compatibility with the existing property's integrity in scale, materials and character.
  - b. Historic association with the property.
  - c. Quality in the design and execution of the addition/alteration.
  - d. Functional usefulness.

#### **7.4.2 Archaeology**

1. Staff archaeologists shall review proposed changes to a property that may impact known and potential archaeological sites. All below-ground work within the property shall be reviewed by the Boston Landmarks Commission and City Archaeologist to determine if

work may impact known or potential archaeological resources. An archaeological survey may be required to determine if significant archaeological deposits are present within the area of impact of the proposed work. An archaeological survey shall be conducted if archaeological sensitivity exists and if impacts to known or potential archaeological resources cannot be mitigated after consultation with the City Archaeologist.

2. Significant archaeological resources shall be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be required before the proposed work can commence. All archaeological mitigation (monitoring, survey, excavation, etc.) shall be conducted by a professional archaeologist. The professional archaeologist should meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology.

#### **7.4.3 Masonry at exterior walls (including but not limited to stone, brick, terra-cotta, concrete, adobe, stucco, and mortar)**

1. All original or later contributing masonry materials shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing masonry materials, features, details, surfaces and ornamentation shall be repaired, if necessary, by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the masonry using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated masonry materials, features, details, surfaces, and ornamentation or missing components of masonry features shall be replaced with materials and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. If the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement of existing materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Sound original mortar shall be retained.
6. Deteriorated mortar shall be carefully removed by hand raking the joints.
7. Use of mechanical hammers shall not be allowed. Use of mechanical saws may be allowed on a case-by-case basis.
8. Repointing mortar shall duplicate the original mortar in strength, composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile, and method of application.
9. Sample panels of raking the joints and repointing shall be reviewed and approved by the staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission.
10. If the building is to be cleaned, the masonry shall be cleaned with the gentlest method possible.
11. A test patch of the cleaning method(s) shall be reviewed and approved on site by staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission to ensure that no damage has resulted. Test patches shall be carried out well in advance. Ideally, the test patch should be monitored over a sufficient period of time to allow long-range effects to be predicted (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
12. Sandblasting (wet or dry), wire brushing, or other similar abrasive cleaning methods shall not be permitted. Doing so can change the visual quality of the material and damage the surface of the masonry and mortar joints.

13. Waterproofing or water repellents are strongly discouraged. These treatments are generally not effective in preserving masonry and can cause permanent damage. The Commission does recognize that in extraordinary circumstances their use may be required to solve a specific problem. Samples of any proposed treatment shall be reviewed by the Commission before application.
14. In general, painting masonry surfaces shall not be allowed. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some significant point in the history of the property.
15. New penetrations for attachments through masonry are strongly discouraged. When necessary, attachment details shall be located in mortar joints, rather than through masonry material; stainless steel hardware is recommended to prevent rust jacking. New attachments to cast concrete are discouraged and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
16. Deteriorated stucco shall be repaired by removing the damaged material and patching with new stucco that duplicates the old in strength, composition, color, and texture.
17. Deteriorated adobe shall be repaired by using mud plaster or a compatible lime-plaster adobe render, when appropriate.
18. Deteriorated concrete shall be repaired by cutting damaged concrete back to remove the source of deterioration, such as corrosion on metal reinforcement bars. The new patch shall be applied carefully so that it will bond satisfactorily with and match the historic concrete.
19. Joints in concrete shall be sealed with appropriate flexible sealants and backer rods, when necessary.

#### **7.4.4 Wood at exterior walls**

1. All original or later contributing wood materials shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing wood surfaces, features, details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, piecing-in, consolidating, or reinforcing the wood using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated wood materials, features, details, surfaces, and ornamentation or missing components of wood features shall be replaced with materials and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. If the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement of materials is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Cleaning of wood elements shall use the gentlest method possible.
6. Paint removal should be considered only where there is paint surface deterioration or excessive layers of paint have coarsened profile details and as part of an overall maintenance program that involves repainting or applying other appropriate protective coatings. Coatings such as paint help protect the wood from moisture and ultraviolet light; stripping the wood bare will expose the surface to the effects of weathering.
7. Damaged or deteriorated paint should be removed to the next sound layer using the mildest method possible.

8. Propane or butane torches, sandblasting, water blasting, or other abrasive cleaning and/or paint removal methods shall not be permitted. Doing so changes the visual quality of the wood and accelerates deterioration.
9. Repainting should be based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

**7.4.5 Architectural metals at exterior walls (including but not limited to wrought and cast iron, steel, pressed metal, terneplate, copper, aluminum, and zinc)**

1. All original or later contributing architectural metals shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing metal materials, features, details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, or reinforcing the metal using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated metal materials, features, details, surfaces, and ornamentation or missing components of metal features shall be replaced with materials and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. If the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Cleaning of metal elements either to remove corrosion or deteriorated paint shall use the gentlest method possible.
6. The type of metal shall be identified prior to any cleaning procedure because each metal has its own properties and may require a different treatment.
7. Non-corrosive chemical methods shall be used to clean soft metals (such as lead, tinfoil, terneplate, copper, and zinc) whose finishes can be easily damaged by abrasive methods.
8. If gentler methods have proven ineffective, then abrasive cleaning methods, such as low pressure dry grit blasting, may be allowed for hard metals (such as cast iron, wrought iron, and steel) as long as it does not abrade or damage the surface.
9. A test patch of the cleaning method(s) shall be reviewed and approved on site by staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission to ensure that no damage has resulted. Test patches shall be carried out well in advance. Ideally, the test patch should be monitored over a sufficient period of time to allow long-range effects to be predicted (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
10. Cleaning to remove corrosion and paint removal should be considered only where there is deterioration and as part of an overall maintenance program that involves repainting or applying other appropriate protective coatings. Paint or other coatings help retard the corrosion rate of the metal. Leaving the metal bare will expose the surface to accelerated corrosion.
11. Repainting should be based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

#### **7.4.6 Windows (also refer to Masonry, Wood, and Architectural Metals)**

1. The original or later contributing arrangement of window openings shall be retained.
2. Enlarging or reducing window openings for the purpose of fitting stock (larger or smaller) window sash or air conditioners shall not be allowed.
3. Removal of window sash and the installation of permanent fixed panels to accommodate air conditioners shall not be allowed.
4. Original or later contributing window sash, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
5. Deteriorated window sash, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation or missing components of window features should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
6. When replacement of sash, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, or ornamentation is necessary, it shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
7. Exterior combination storm windows shall have a narrow perimeter framing that does not obscure the glazing of the primary window. In addition, the meeting rail of the combination storm window shall align with that of the primary window.
8. Storm window sashes and frames shall have a painted finish that matches the primary window sash and frame color.
9. Repainting of window frames, sashes, and, if appropriate, shutters, should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

#### **7.4.7 Entrances/Doors (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Porches/Stoops)**

1. All original or later contributing entrance elements shall be preserved.
2. The original or later contributing entrance design and arrangement of the door openings shall be retained.
3. Creating new entrance openings should be avoided when possible. Where necessary to accommodate new uses or for achieving accessibility, new entrance openings will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
4. Enlarging or reducing original or later contributing entrance/door openings for the purpose of fitting stock (larger or smaller) doors shall not be allowed.
5. Original or later contributing entrance materials, elements, details and features (functional and decorative) shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
6. Deteriorated entrance elements, materials, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation or missing components of entrance features should be replaced with

material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

7. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
8. Original or later contributing entrance materials, elements, features (functional and decorative) and details shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
9. Storm doors (aluminum or wood-framed) shall not be allowed on the primary entrance unless evidence shows that they had been used. They may be allowed on secondary entrances. Where allowed, storm doors shall be painted to match the color of the primary door.
10. Unfinished aluminum storm doors shall not be allowed.
11. Replacement door hardware should replicate the original or be appropriate to the style and period of the building.
12. Buzzers, alarms and intercom panels, where allowed, shall be flush mounted and appropriately located.
13. Entrance elements should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building/entrance.

#### **7.4.8 Porches/Stoops (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, Entrances/Doors, Roofs, and Accessibility)**

1. All original or later contributing porch elements shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be retained if possible and, if necessary, repaired using recognized preservation methods.
3. Existing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation that become deteriorated or missing should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Original or later contributing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
6. Porch and stoop elements should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building/porch and stoop.

### 7.4.9 Lighting

1. There are several aspects of lighting related to the exterior of the building and landscape:
  - a. Lighting fixtures as appurtenances to the building or elements of architectural ornamentation.
  - b. Quality of illumination on building exterior.
  - c. Security lighting.
2. Wherever integral to the building, original or later contributing lighting fixtures shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, piercing in or reinforcing the lighting fixture using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated lighting fixture materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation or missing components of lighting fixtures should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Original or later contributing lighting fixture materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
6. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
7. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches as appropriate to the building and to the current or projected use:
  - a. Reproductions of original or later contributing fixtures, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - b. Accurate representation of the original period, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - c. Retention or restoration of fixtures that date from an interim installation and that are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.
  - d. New lighting fixtures that are differentiated from the original or later contributing fixture in design and that illuminate the exterior of the building in a way that renders it visible at night and compatible with its environment.
8. The location of new exterior lighting shall fulfill the functional intent of the current use without obscuring the building form or architectural detailing.
9. No exposed conduit shall be allowed on the building.
10. Architectural night lighting is encouraged, provided the lighting installations minimize night sky light pollution. High efficiency fixtures, lamps and automatic timers are recommended.
11. On-site mock-ups of proposed architectural night lighting may be required.

**7.4.10 Storefronts (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, Windows, Entrances/Doors, Porches/Stoops, Lighting, and Accessibility)**

1. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Storefront section).

**7.4.11 Curtain Walls (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, Windows, and Entrances/Doors)**

1. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Curtain Walls section).

**7.4.12 Roofs (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Roof Projections)**

1. The original or later contributing roof shapes and original or later contributing roof elements (visible from public ways) of the existing building shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing roofing materials such as slate, wood trim, elements, features (decorative and functional), details and ornamentation, such as cresting, shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching or reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated roofing materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation or missing components of roof features should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Original or later contributing roofing materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.

**7.4.13 Roof Projections (includes satellite dishes, antennas and other communication devices, louvers, vents, chimneys, and chimney caps; also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Roofs)**

1. New roof projections shall not be visible from the public way. (This does not apply to solar panels, which shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis; see 7.4.16 Renewable Energy Sources.)
2. New mechanical equipment should be reviewed to confirm that it is no more visible than the existing.

**7.4.14 Additions (also refer to General Standards above)**

1. Additions can significantly alter the historic appearance of the buildings. An exterior addition should only be considered after it has been determined that the existing building cannot meet the new space requirements.
2. New additions shall be designed so that the character-defining features of the building are not radically changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

3. New additions should be designed so that they are compatible with the existing building, although they should not necessarily be imitative of an earlier style or period.
4. New additions shall not obscure the front of the building.
5. New additions shall be of a size, scale, and materials that are in harmony with the existing building.

#### **7.4.15 Accessibility**

1. Alterations to existing buildings for the purposes of providing accessibility shall provide persons with disabilities the level of physical access to historic properties that is required under applicable law, consistent with the preservation of each property's significant historical features, with the goal of providing the highest level of access with the lowest level of impact. Access modifications for persons with disabilities shall be designed and installed to least affect the character-defining features of the property; modifications should be reversible when possible and preserve as much of the original materials as possible. Modifications to some features may be allowed in providing access, once a review of options for the highest level of access has been completed.
2. A three-step approach is recommended to identify and implement accessibility modifications that will protect the integrity and historic character of the property:
  - a. Review the historical significance of the property and identify character-defining features;
  - b. Assess the property's existing and proposed level of accessibility;
  - c. Evaluate accessibility options within a preservation context.
3. Because of the complex nature of accessibility, the Commission will review proposals on a case-by-case basis. The Commission recommends consulting with the following document, which is available from the Commission office: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, Preservation Assistance Division; Preservation Brief 32 "Making Historic Properties Accessible" by Thomas C. Jester and Sharon C. Park, AIA.

#### **7.4.16 Renewable Energy Sources**

1. Renewable energy sources, including but not limited to solar energy, are encouraged for the site.
2. Proposals for new renewable energy sources shall be reviewed by the Commission on a case-by-case basis for potential physical and visual impacts on the building and site.
3. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings for general guidelines.

#### **7.4.17 Building Site**

1. It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has character, scale and street pattern quite different from what existed when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition between the historic property and its newer surroundings.
2. Grade levels should not be changed if it would alter the historic appearance of the building and its relation to the site.

3. The building should not be relocated if it would diminish the historic character of the site.
4. When they are required by a new use, new site features (such as parking areas, driveways, or access ramps) should be as unobtrusive as possible, retain the historic relationship between the building or buildings and the landscape, and be compatible with the historic character of the property.
5. When they are necessary for security, protective fencing, bollards, and stanchions should be as unobtrusive as possible.
6. The Boston Landmarks Commission recognizes that the designated property must continue to meet city, state, and federal goals and requirements for resiliency and safety within an ever-changing coastal flood zone and environment.

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## ADDENDUM

### Chronology

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mid 18 <sup>th</sup> c. | Ebenezer Vose (Sr.), a blacksmith, owns land, property used for tillage (farming).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 1788                    | Ebenezer Vose (Jr.) inherits land.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 1791                    | Vose sells land, without buildings, to Jesse Fenno.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 1793                    | Fenno appears to have forfeited the transaction because Vose is owner again in 1793. The property deed refers to land with “buildings,” indicating a construction date of 1792.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1795                    | Vose sells property to John Bussey.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 1841                    | After Bussey dies, his daughter Mary inherits the house and the “Bussey store,” which appears to have operated in the 1840s.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1890                    | Henry Pierce of Walter Baker & Company buys property from Judith Bussey and other family descendants.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 1896-1939               | Subsequent owners of Walter Baker & Company use a portion of the house as a reading room and the remainder for residential use including leasing an apartment. Boarders are listed in 1904 and 1905 city directories. An addition to front elevation and recladding of first floor on the exterior appeared sometime between 1905-1909. In 1910, William R. Matthews advertises in Boston Globe for a cook to work in a small hotel at 1205 Adams Street, Dorchester. An optician, Lawrence W. Lunt, lives in house with his family from about 1905 to 1915 (his office is nearby at 1177 Washington St.). A printed history in 1917 is only reference to reading room. 1920 census lists Harry Philipott, a chauffeur, living in the house. A Baker Company watchman, David A. Wheland, lives in the house with his wife and a boarder in the 1930 census. |
| 1940                    | Property sold to Ethel F. Kiley, a caterer and occasional antique dealer. Periodically, Kiley also lives in the house.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 1968-2006               | Kiley sells house to Alton and Elizabeth Sherman of Dorchester. In 1974, Shermans live in the house, and Kiley Catering continues as a tenant. In 2007, Elizabeth Sherman sells it to Liam and Caroline Lydon.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

### Known Ships Captained by John Bussey

Mary Jane—1808 (during Jeffersonian embargo)

Cyrus—1823

John Langdon—1818

Triton—1819-1823

Amethyst—1823-1831

## Known Seaports Visited by John Bussey as a Sea Captain

Charleston, S.C.

Savannah, Georgia

Cap-Haitien, Haiti

Paramaribo, Suriname

Liverpool, U.K.

Portsmouth, N.H.

Boston, Massachusetts

## Which John Bussey Was the Sea Captain of the Packet Ships? John Bussey or John Bussey, Jr.

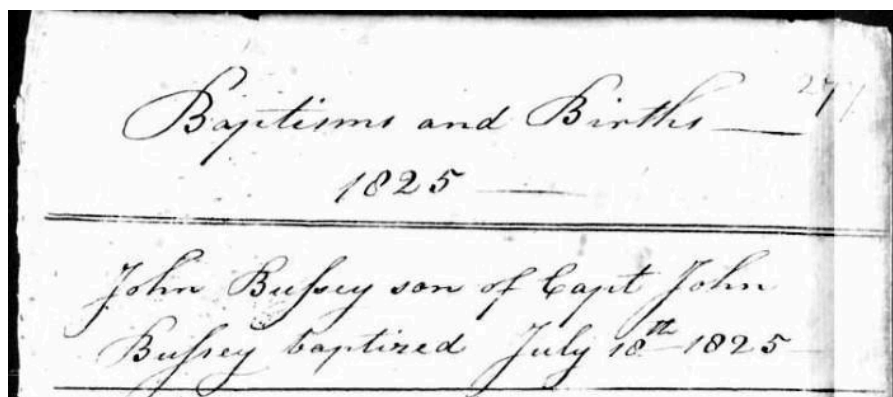
The evidence, while inconclusive and incomplete, suggests that John Bussey, not his son, was the “Capt. Bussey” in the many notices of arriving and departing ships during the 1820s. Both Bussey and his son were captains, traders, and merchants in probate records, land deeds, and newspaper notices.<sup>48</sup> Both were members and pewholders of the Unitarian church (Third Religious Society) in Dorchester. Both lived in Lower Mills (and probably in the same house). Of the two, however, the elder Bussey had substantially more experience, along with the prestige as an officer of the Revolution, to be at the helm of the fast-sailing trans-Atlantic ships with valuable cargoes and wealthy passengers. The elder Bussey seemingly acquired the title captain after his military service, where pension records list him as lieutenant and captain-lieutenant. (There are no military records for Bussey, Jr.). Unlike his son, he also owned real estate.<sup>49</sup> Bussey was listed as living with his son (at 1205 Adams Street) when he applied in 1832 for a pension as a soldier from the Revolutionary War.

One possibility is that Bussey Jr. worked with his father as a trader and eventually captained coastal trading vessels. Another possibility is that Bussey Jr., not his father, “went to sea” at a young age and was the shipmaster in the 1820s, that his father was a land-based merchant and trader, who adopted the title captain from his military service. In this scenario, Bussey Jr. would have been a shipmaster at age 23. The elder Bussey, however, listed his occupation as trader up to his late seventies, and there is no evidence that his son acquired a house or other possessions (e.g., mahogany table and silver in will of Bussey Sr.) customarily associated with a sea captain. Similarly, an 1885 reminiscence of the “noted” Capt. Bussey omits the “jr.” and refers to the captain’s house (“Dorchester Lower Mills, Some Interesting Recollections Concerning Some of Its Residents,” *Boston Budget*, July 26, 1885). All references in shipping notices to a “Capt. Bussey” vanish after 1826, at which age Bussey was 43. (It was common for sea captains to retire at an early age.)

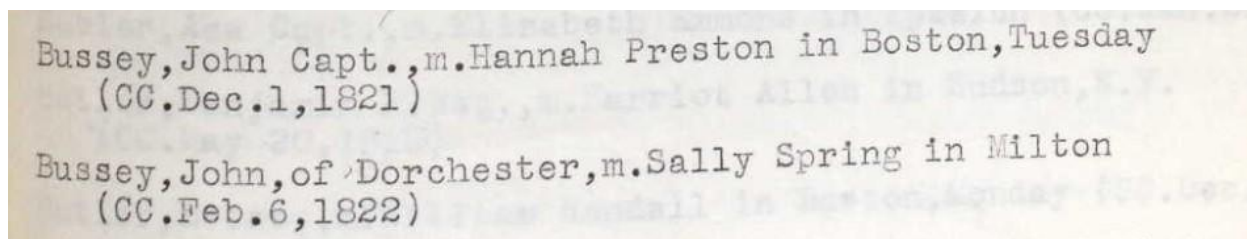
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<sup>48</sup> In the 1820s, the occupations were interchangeable. Trader, “One engaged in trade or commerce; a dealer in buying and selling or barter; as a *trader* to the East Indies; a *trader* to Canada; a country *trader*.” Merchant, “1. A man who trafficks or carries on trade with foreign countries, or who exports and imports goods and sells them by wholesale. 2. In popular usage, any trader, or one who deals in the purchase and sale of goods.” Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language*. <https://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/>

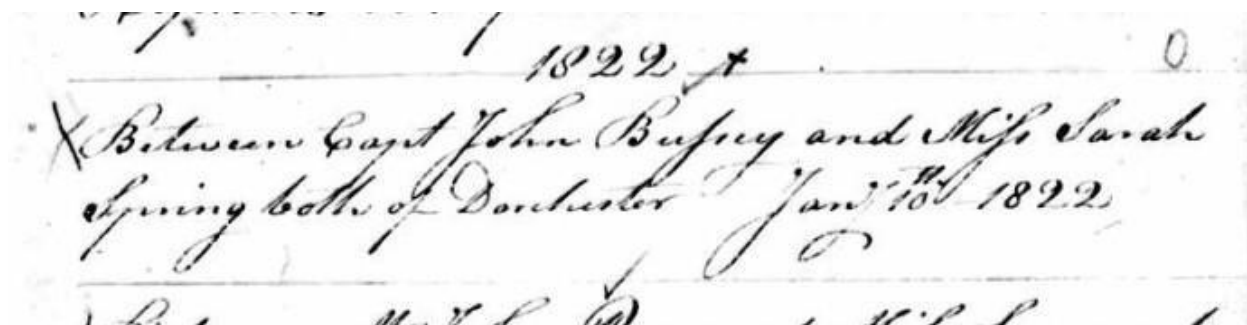
<sup>49</sup> In 1837, Bussey sold the property on Adams Street to his son for \$6,000 (Norfolk Co. Deeds, 117/170). Four years later, at the time of his death, Bussey had retained ownership of that property and left it to one of his daughters. Bussey, Jr., was an investor in one small real estate transaction (88/504).



John Bussey, Sr., here cited as Capt., was the father of this child, his only child with his second wife Sally Spring and his second son with the name John. This child died in July 1825. Bussey was 74 yrs old. (Bussey, Jr., and his wife Hannah had a son John Francis who died in 1837 at age 2 and two daughters who lived into adulthood.)



Index of marriage records from Colombian Centinel. John Bussey, Jr., is with the title Capt., while his father has none.



Record of second marriage of the elder John Bussey, cited here as Capt.

|                   |        |    |     |    |              |                        |
|-------------------|--------|----|-----|----|--------------|------------------------|
| Widow Lydia How   | Female | 96 | 1   | 25 | Old age      | Widow of John How died |
| East John Bussey  | Male   | 61 | 7th | 25 | Sudden death | son of East of Bussey  |
| Miss Patsie Smith | Female | 57 | 7th | 25 | Consumption  | wife of the Smith      |

1844 death record for Capt. John Bussey (Jr.), son of Col. J. Bussey. There is no evidence that Bussey attained the rank of colonel during the Revolutionary War. The obituary for his first wife Polly also listed him as colonel.

Sources: Ancestry.com. U.S., Newspaper Extractions from the Northeast, 1704-1930; Ancestry.com. Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988 Ancestry.com. Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988