



In the photograph to the left (circa 1895), the building on the left was an apartment building with stores on the first floor at the corner of Dorchester Avenue and Dorchester Street. The building in the middle was at the triangular piece of land at Preble Street and the John A. Andrew School can be seen just behind it. Above is John Andrew.

Andrew Square named after abolitionist "War Governor" John Andrew

by Anthony Sammarco

Andrew Square is the intersection of Dorchester Avenue and Preble, Southampton, and Dorchester Streets, and is a busy intersection that was named for Governor John A. Andrew.

Originally a part of Dorchester, this area was known as "Washington Village," and though most of Dorchester Neck was annexed to Boston in 1804 and renamed "South Boston," the area of Washington Village would not be annexed to Boston until 1855.

John Albion Andrew (1818-1867) was born in Windham, Maine, a son of Jonathan and Nancy Green Pierce Andrew. Educated at Gorham Academy and graduated from Bowdoin College, Andrew settled in Boston where he studied law in the office of Henry Fuller. After a period of time, he was admitted to the bar and according to the *Memoir of John A. Andrew* by Peleg Chandler, "Andrew became active in politics, an energetic and enthusiastic member of the Whig Party, often speaking 'on the stump,' and thoroughly in earnest."

In 1859, Andrew was elected to the Legislature and became an active and devoted representative. His nomination a year later as Governor of Massachusetts was greeted with mixed feelings, as he was not politically

mature and his outspoken opinions on slavery was thought to be too vocal. However, he was elected, and in his inauguration he stated that due to mounting problems with the South, that "in the possible contingencies of the future, the State might be ready, without inconvenient delay, to contribute her share of force in any exigency of public danger." His stand on full support of the Union in the conflict with the South led to his being named "The War Governor." His abilities as Governor won him widespread support, and in 1863 he obtained, in a personal interview with the Secretary of War, authority to raise volunteer companies of artillery for duty in the forts of Massachusetts, and elsewhere,... and may include persons of African descent organized into separate corps, to which the Secretary assented.

ANDREW WAS WELL AWARE of Boston's many African American citizens, most of whom lived on the western slope of Beacon Hill, and the vital part they could play in the Civil War. Establishing the 54th and the 55th Regiments, these African American soldiers went on to fight for the Union, and to free the United States of slavery. The allowance of these two regiments to augment the

Union forces made a critical difference, and though the 54th suffered large losses, they proved that African Americans were as fervent in their wish to abolish the institution of slavery. Retiring as Governor in 1865, Andrew continued his career as an attorney and on the day previous to his death in 1867, he was engaged in court.

By 1870, Dorchester was annexed to Boston and the former Washington Village was renamed "Andrew Square" in honor of Governor Andrew.

Named for the Governor, the Andrew School was a public school on Dorchester Street at the corner of Rogers Street. Along Dorchester Avenue were a horse drawn delivery wagon, and on the right a "watering cart", that sprinkled water on the dusty dirt streets to keep down a cloud of dust as carriages passed through the streets. In naming the intersection, the city honored a prominent statesman who today is still remembered, more than a century after his death.

Anthony Sammarco's award-winning history columns are a regular feature of Dorchester Community News.