

10R Putnam Street (1798-1799)

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



Number 10 Putnam Street is the rear ell of a two story, late 18th century house. It has been extensively reworked, and recently re-clad with clapboards, and a modern bay window addition. It has a low gable roof. Its edges are defined by narrow corner boards. The ell is missing its main block and the ell itself seems to have been rebuilt. It is set back from Putnam Street, facing a well-landscaped yard and borders on its southeast side a cobblestone a passageway of considerable age.

Builder: Benjamin Turner, Isaac Wheeler

Original owner: Ebenezer Clough

Number 10 Putnam Street is of interest as a remnant of a circa 1798-99 Federal house. It originally served as the ell of a hip roofed main block. It is difficult to determine if this ell was part of the original house or a circa mid-19th century addition. It is set back from Putnam Street, facing a well-landscaped garden covering the site of the original house. Its lot is wedged in between the rear ell of the circa 1806 Federal house at 14 Common Street and the late Federal double house at 12, 14 Putnam Street. Over time, the missing main block and possibly the surviving ell has been owned by a "paper stainer", "brick maker alias tanner", "shipwright", "trader", "laborer", "rope maker", "inspector", "coal dealer", etc.

The main block stood on this lot until 19___. On October 11, 1798, Aaron Putnam of Charlestown, "Esquire," and the probable namesake for Putnam Street (although General Israel Putnam is said to have been the Putnam Charlestown Street Commissioners had in mind when they named this street), sold 10 Putnam Street's land to Ebenezer Clough, of Boston, a "paper stainer", for \$400. Number 10's parcel is referred to in the Putnam/Clough deed as "land for a house lot." Buildings are mentioned for the first time on this lot in a deed of 25 September 1799. At that time Clough sold it to Nathan Tufts of Charlestown, a "brick maker alias tanner". The Clough/Tufts deed refers to "the new dwelling house thereon".

During the early 1800s number 10 was owned by two shipwrights, Benjamin Turner and Isaac Wheeler. The possibility remains that Turner and Wheeler were responsible for 10's construction. From 1804 to 1809 it was owned by a Jesse Davidson, a trader, and from 1813 to 1836 by Benjamin Adams, a "rope maker". Adams' heirs sold it to Matthew Rice of 16 Common Street in 1852. From the late 1850s until at least 1875 the house was owned by Rufus and Charlotte E Tay. Mr. Tay was a coal dealer.

Further research is needed on late 19th century ownership of 10 Putnam Street.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1852

Panoramic View of Charlestown/Boston, R Mallory, 1848.

1875 Atlas

Middlesex deeds-130:186, 134:134, 159:255, 184:338, 201:518, 354:405, 591:317, 591:537, 781:194

*Digitized and edited, without change in content, from the scanned record in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System, with the addition of current photographs. In the case of houses that have been altered since the survey, these photographs may not entirely correspond to the architectural description. If earlier photographs of suitable quality are available, these have been included.

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