

## 18-26 Sullivan Street (1865 1867)

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



18- 26 Sullivan Street

2016

Numbers 18-26 Sullivan Street is a group of five three-story redbrick Italianate houses. Each house has a granite basement,

a three bay main façade and a side hall plan. They have dentilated and bracketed cornices and flat roofs. Low flights of granite steps lead to recessed entrances with bracketed door hoods supporting oriel windows with dentilated and molded cornices.

Builder: Joseph E Bray

Original owner: Joseph E Bray

Architecturally, 18-26 Sullivan Street is an attractive row of five Italianate houses. Situated on the southern slope of Salem Hill, this group's oriel windows and bracketed cornices produce an interesting rhythm and contribute a great deal to the mid-19th century charm of the streetscape. Numbers 18-26 represents a relatively late addition to Sullivan Street's collection of 19th century houses. The row was built circa 1865-67, presumably by Charlestown mason Joseph E Bray.

On April 29, 1865 Uriah K Mayo, a dentist, sold 18-26's lots to Joseph E Bray for \$7482.00. Bray sold 18 to George P Kettell, a Charlestown apothecary, for \$5000. Buildings are mentioned in the deed pertaining to number 18 Sullivan dated August 21, 1867 (see Middlesex 1001:488).

Bray was active in Charlestown building trades from circa 1860 until the early 1890s. In 1860 he is listed "Joseph E Bray, mason, 39 Soley Street". By 1870 Bray's employment is listed as "Joseph E Bray and Raymond Bray, mason, 220 Main Street, house 26 Pearl Street." Bray lived at 26 Pearl Street from the late 1860s until at least the mid-1880s. By 1880 his work is listed as Joseph E Bray and Company, painter, 296 Main Street, Charlestown. The 1890s listing for Joseph E Bray may be for that of a son, "Joseph P Bray, mason, Creek Square, house Carver Street."

In any event, Uriah K Mayo, grantor of 18-26's land in 1865, was a dentist who is listed at 36 High Street, Charlestown, in 1848, but is otherwise listed (1850s and 60s) at Boston addresses (110 Hanover Street).

Original owners of 20-26, whose names appear on the 1875 atlas, include John C Frye, "produce", 21 Faneuil Hall Square, Boston, at #20; William F Rand, a porter, 24 Central wharf, Boston, at #22; Charles Mitchell, a tinsmith, at #24, and C W Burnham, a blacksmith, 33 Hawkins, Boston, at #26. Rand's house is listed as 24 Webster Street, Charlestown in 1875.

George P Kettell is listed at #18 in 1875 but not in 1885. By 1901 Edward J Doherty, occupation not listed, lived at #18; John C Frye still owned #20; William T (?) Rand still owned #22; a Helen W Jack was at #24; and a Harriet J McMahan was at #26 Sullivan Street.

Sullivan Street was laid out circa 1805 and was originally known as Greaves or Graves Street. It was renamed Sullivan Street in honor of Richard Sullivan, Sr, a well-to-do Boston-based lawyer, land speculator, and partner in the Boston and Concord Boating Company (associated with the Middlesex Canal). During the early 1800s Richard Sullivan, Sr purchased land on either side of Sullivan Street, running from Main to Bunker Hill Street, from Oliver Holden.

#### Bibliography:

Atlases- 1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Maps-1818, 1833, 830, 1848, 1851

Boston directory-1860s, 1870

Middlesex deeds

*Wyman Genealogies*-volume 2, T B Wyman, 1879

\*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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