

2, 4 Mason Court (circa 1859)

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



2, 4 Mason Court

2016

Numbers 2, 4 Mason Court is a two-story wood frame Greek Revival/Italianate double house. It has a six bay main façade with intact clapboards, and paired center entrances with

distinctive enframements, including slender, almost Federal-like pilasters. The front doors are surmounted by multi-pane transoms and a heavy Greek Revival entablature with projecting cornice. The windows are simply enframed and have 1/1 wood sash.



6, 8 Mason Court

2016

Builder: David B Weston and Rufus Mason

Original owner: Westin and Mason

This double house, situated on the northeast side of a narrow cul-de-sac, faces an identical but altered house. Built circa

1859, 2, 4 Mason Court is a remarkably intact example of modestly scaled, mid-19th century Greek Revival/Italianate wood frame vernacular Charlestown housing. It retains its boxy Italianate form and Greek Revival elements, including entrance enframements, which are unusually delicate and formal for this type of housing. Numbers 2 and 4 Mason Court, and the altered but once identical double houses across the court, are similar to those of nearby Bolton Place, which was built in the early 1860s, also by Weston and Mason.

Mason Court was a late addition to a street pattern that was developed over the land of Oliver Holden and Richard Sullivan Sr, approximately between 1800 and 1818. It is the work of prolific Charlestown painters/builders David B Westin and Rufus Mason, and was evidently named for Rufus Mason. Westin and Mason are listed separately as "painters", and almost certainly builders, as early as 1842. At that time Weston resided at 2 Mill Street, and Mason was living "at Green Street". The Westin and Mason partnership came into existence circa 1852, when they were listed as painters living at 1 Crystal Place, off Mead Street (see form). By the early 1860s Weston and Mason are listed as "painters and glaziers" living next door to each other at 216 and 218 Bunker Hill Street, respectively.



Apparently Westin and Mason dissolved their partnership circa 1863. By 1864 Weston is listed as "Secretary and Agent, Overseers of the Poor" and by 1880 he worked as "Visitor for Overseers of the Poor", Charity Building, Chardon Street, Boston. He is listed at 274 Bunker Hill Street in 1890 but is not listed in 1895.

Rufus Mason continued to work as a painter/builder after 1863, in partnership with his son George, as Rufus Mason and Son, circa 1863-early 1870s.

Mason Court, and this double house, date to circa 1859 (see T J Doane Jr plan dated June 8, 1859). They were apparently built shortly after Stephen H Perkins of Milton bought this house lot from Weston and Mason for \$1351.91 on July 8, 1859 (Middlesex deed 821:281). This deed mentions "the court called Mason Court and the passageways as laid out by Doane's plan."

Over time, owners of Mason Court have included Thomas Waldron, a caulker, 1859; Samuel C Lund, occupation unlisted, 1859-1866; George H Webster, a locksmith and plumber, 253 Bunker Hill Street, house at 67 Sullivan Street, 1866-1870; Sidney R Chase, a baker, 1870-73; Charles O Stront, a mason, 1873-circa 1890; and a Michael J Rogan, after 1890. W W Webster, a clerk, lived at 2 Mason court from circa 1873 to the early 1890s.

Other examples of Weston and Mason's work include the Italianate masonry row at 360-368 Main Street, circa 1855 (they may have been just the developers on this group); 7-19 Wall Street, an Italianate wood frame row, circa 1857; the Italianate wood frame row at 19-35 Russell Street, 1857; Forest Place, a Greek revival wood frame row off Eden Street;

and the wood frame Italianate houses of Bolton place, circa early 1860s.

Bibliography:

Maps-1851

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories-1834-1874

Boston directories-post 1875

Middlesex deeds-811:479, 821:281, 971:274, 1133:29,
1253:56

*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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