

21 Prescott Street (ca 1835, altered by 1868)

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



21 Prescott

2015

Twenty-one Prescott Street is an L-shaped, three story Italianate house with a main façade clad with clapboards and sidewalls constructed of brick. The house has a three bay main façade and a granite block basement. It has a flat roof with a deep Italianate cornice exhibiting paired brackets.

It has a side hall plan and a deeply recessed entrance with an Italianate bracketed door hood with pendants. The front door is flanked by sidelights with one half solid panels and one half glass. The entrance has paneled pilasters with small circular bosses at the corners. The windows are simply and fully enframed with 6/6 wood sash.



Entry detail

The house is flanked by the enormous bulk of the high Victorian Gothic/Second Empire Harvard School (1871), and the Gambrel roofed Lott Pool house at number 23 Prescott (1824).

Builder: Lott Pool?

Original owner: Thomas M. Cutter?

Architecturally, this house's present Italianate appearance may belie its original structural and stylistic treatments. Number 21 Prescott appears to be a circa 1850s or 60s three-story Italianate house with clapboard-clad main façade and brick sidewalls. Salient Italianate features include a saw-art bracketed door hood with pendants and a deep cornice with paired brackets. However, it may have been built as a two-story Greek Revival house with a gable roof-its inner entrance enframements lean toward a Greek revival stylistic sensibility while its present bracketed door hood may have been installed over a simple cornice headed Greek Revival entablature.

Middlesex deeds suggest a construction date of circa 1835 with the house achieving its present Italianate appearance by circa 1868. On 10 September 1835, Lott Pool of Boston, a "gentlemen" (formerly a Charlestown carpenter) sold 21 Prescott's land "with the buildings thereon" to Thomas M Cutter, a merchant, for \$4400. Pool owned the gambrel house next-door at 23 Prescott, which he had evidently built, circa 1824. Number 21 Prescott, (at least the first two stories) may represent the work of Lott Pool.

In any event Thomas M Cutter owned 21 Prescott from 1835 until September 8, 1868-at that time Ann Eliza Parker, wife of Jerome W Parker of Boston purchased 21 Prescott from Cutter for \$4800. Jerome W Parker is listed in the 1874 Charlestown directory as the owner of Jerome W Parker and Company, Provisions Dealer, 15 Main Street. By 1885 21 Prescott was owned and lived in by Hein Tomfohrde, "lager beer", 28 Hanover Street, Boston (see 1884 Boston directory). He lived

here until the late 1890s. Born in Hanover, Germany on May 1, 1850, he came to Boston with his parents in 1868. Mr. Tomfohrde conducted a restaurant at 28 Hanover Street, Boston. The "lager beer" reference in the 1884 Boston directory for Mr. Tomfohrde's occupation probably indicates that he operated a saloon on his restaurant premises. He was a member of Troop D Roxbury Horse Guards and was a member of the Boston Lodge of the Knights of Pythias.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1852

Atlases-1868, 1875, 1885, 1892, 1901, 1911

Middlesex deeds-345: 310, 1041:83

Charlestown directory-19th century

*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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