

40 Chestnut Street (1872-73)

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



40 Chestnut Street

2016

Number 40 Chestnut Street is a substantial, two-story Italianate/Mansard masonry row house. It has a rusticated granite basement, a three bay main façade, and a side hall plan. The house has a straight-sided Mansard roof; asbestos shingles have replaced the original slate shingles. There is a deep cornice with paired saw-cut wooden brackets, and a pair of flat roofed dormers on the main façade. To the rear of the house is a deep, five bay long ell.

A short flight of stone stairs with low shoulders of granite leads to Victorian multipanel double doors with a glass transom. Flanking the slightly recessed entrance are heavy paneled pilasters, which support a broad segmental stone arch. A bracketed door hood, in turn, supports an oriel window, enlivened by apron panels and pilasters. A stone sill course runs beneath the first and second floor main façade windows. The windows have hood lintels.

Original owner: Francis Groll

Number 40 Chestnut Street is a solid, substantial well detailed example of Italianate/Mansard housing dating to circa 1872-1873. It is a part of Chestnut Street's interesting and varied collection of mid-19th-century residences. It's noteworthy architectural features include a rusticated granite basement, handsome Victorian double entrance doors, well executed stone enframements, hood window lintels, an oriel window which rests on a heavy bracketed door hood, and a steep sided Mansard roof with paired saw cut brackets, at its cornice.

Number 40's first owner was Francis Groll, "Sgt. Marines". In 1866 he is listed as living at 21 Mount Vernon Street. On March 27, 1872 Groll purchased 40's lot from Sarah L Hubbell, executrix of the estate of Peter Hubbell The purchase price was

\$4895.10. The Hubbell/Groll deed stipulated that "this conveyance is made upon the condition that when any buildings are erected upon said land they shall consist of one dwelling house... to be built of brick and to be equal in value, work and appearance to those built by S M Pook and B R Tinslar of said Chestnut Street and shall be set back at least 4 feet from the westerly line of said street and to be not less than 24 feet in width." Pook and Tinslar are known to have built 42-44 Chestnut Street. Peter Hubbell (husband, father? of Sarah L Hubbell), was a well to do Charlestown brick manufacturer.

By 1885, Joseph Q Lowell lived at 40 Chestnut Street. Later owners included Etta G Trott, 1892, Hunts Asylum for Destitute Children, 1901, and Elizabeth Gorman, 1911.

Bibliography:

Maps-1818, 1852

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

Charlestown directories-1860s-70s

Boston directories-post 1875

Middlesex Deeds-1202:245

*Digitized and edited, without change in content, from the scanned record in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System, and with 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.

R. Dinsmore