

## 401- 405 Main Street (1865-1867)

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



405, 403, 401 Main Street

2015

Numbers 401-405 Main Street is a trio of bow front Mansard townhouses. The main façades have flat entrance bays and two-story, two bay, bow or curved segments. They have low granite basements and short flights of stairs lead to recessed entrances. Sills and lintels of 401 have been removed and reworked. Simple sills and cornice-headed brownstone lintels are mostly intact on 403 and 405, with signs of weathering.

Numbers 401 and 405 have 1/1 wood sash and 403 has its original 2/2 wood sash.

Original owner: Able E Bridge

These houses were built at some point between 1865 and 1868. Architecturally they are significant as rare Charlestown examples of bow front townhouse architecture. Although the sills and lintels of 401 have been reworked, the group's form, materials, elements, siting etc. is basically intact. This is one of the few segments of Main Street west of School Street that escaped 1960s urban renewal.

These houses were originally owned by Abel A Bridge, a leather dealer (127 Congress St., Boston). Bridge had extensive property holdings throughout Charlestown during the mid-19th century. Bridge purchased these lots at public auction on May 31, 1865. The lots had been part of the estate of James Hall, a silk dyer. Hall operated Hall Dye House-deeds locate this dye house at the corner of Auburn and Main streets, possibly 401-405's site. Bridge paid \$4307.72 for this land.

He held onto 401 as a house for his son, and sold 405 to Luisa J Fowler on January 1, 1869 (1051:79) for \$9500. Louisa J Fowler's husband, James L Fowler, was a pilot with his work located at Lewis wharf, Boston. By 1875 Fowler is listed as living in Somerville. The Bridge/Fowler deed describes 405 as "being the third house in a block of three from Mount Auburn Street."

Number 403 was purchased from Bridge by Jonathan P Loring on November 29, 1867 (1011:477). Loring's work is listed as "ladies and gents furnishing goods", 12 Tremont Row, during the early 1870s.

Bridge's heirs retained ownership of 401 until at least the early 1900s. Jonathan Loring owned number 403 from November 1867 until at least the mid-1870s. By 1901 an Emma L Coleman owned 403. James L Fowler owned 405 from January 1869 until at least the mid 1870s. By 1901 a Eugene D Brock owned 405.

Bibliography:

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

Charlestown directories-1834-1874

Boston directories-post 1875

Middlesex deeds-1051: 79

\*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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