

50 Chestnut Street (circa 1857-1858)

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



50 Chestnut Street 20156

Number 53 Chestnut Street is a freestanding, three-story Italianate townhouse, constructed of red brick with brownstone trim. It has a hammered granite basement, a three bay main façade, and a side hall plan. The building has a deep-bracketed (metal?) cornice, and a flat roof.

The tall main entrance has replacement door and entrance enframements- originally a recessed entrance? The entrance is surmounted by a cornice-headed brownstone lintel, with badly weathered console brackets. The windows have 2/2 wood sash and badly rusted cast iron lintels with delicate floral and leaf motifs.



50 Chestnut Street lintel detail 2015

Original owner: Artemis Tirrell/Charlotte E Tay

Number 50 Chestnut Street is part of Chestnut Street's interesting and varied collection, in terms of style, materials and form, of mid-19th century residences. Architecturally, it is a straightforward example of Italianate masonry townhouse architecture. Number 50 Chestnut is a slightly less grand contemporary of the 1850s Italianate townhouses bordering nearby Monument Square.

Chestnut Street and adjacent lots lie just outside the southeastern boundary of the 150 acre Bunker Hill Monument Association tract developed beginning in 1839. Its lot was part of the mansion house estate of Nathan Adams. The Adams estate was divided into house lots beginning in circa 1840. On August 24, 1857, Henry B Ward, a "gentleman", sold 50 Chestnut Street's lot to Artemis Tirrell of Charlestown, a "gentleman", for \$2859.67. Tirrell, in turn, sold number 50 on

January 20, 1860 to his daughter Charlotte E Tay, wife of Rufus Tay of Charlestown, who was formerly a trader in Franklin, New Hampshire. The land and "buildings thereon" were conveyed to Charlotte Tay "in consideration of kindred and paternal affection".

Further research is needed in regard to Artemis Tirrell. Evidently he was heavily involved in Charlestown real estate speculation during the 1840s and 1850s. He bought and sold several lots along Lexington Street and Tremont Street during the early to mid-1840s.

The house remained under Tirrell/Tay family ownership until January 5, 1886 (Suffolk 1710:319). At that time Joseph N Tay sold 50 Chestnut to Lucy H Odell of Franklin New Hampshire. On July 1, 1903, Lucy H Odell sold it to John F Mulloy for \$6800, who owned it until at least 1911.

Bibliography:

Maps- 1818, 1852

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

Panoramic view-1848

Middlesex Deeds-432:324, 671:213, 771:90, 821: 522

Suffolk Deeds- t 1710:319, 2908:345

*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.

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