

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Q-08-99	Boston North		
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Town/City: Medford

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Medford Square South

Photograph



Address: 12 George Street

Historic Name: Benjamin and Effie L Richmond House

Uses: Present: Two-family residential

Original: single-family residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1888

Source: deeds, maps

Style/Form: Queen Anne

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: parged

Wall/Trim: vinyl/ vinyl

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: none

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Expand ell with second-story addition, add dormer and finish attic, 1906; porch removal and front addition, conversion to two-family occupancy, 2004.

Condition: fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.17 acre

Setting: Dense mix of late-19th through early 20th century residential use.

Locus Map (*north is up*)



Recorded by: John D. Clemson

Organization: Medford Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): March 2023

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MEDFORD

12 GEORGE STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The Richmond House, built ca. 1888, is an altered but legible and elaborate example of the Queen Anne style. This two-and-a-half story pile under a high side-gable roof is expanded by an octagonal corner tower with a bell-cast roof on the left and a large wall gable filling the right half of the front roof slope. A shallow but broad gabled bay expands the rear pile in the right elevation. In 1906 a gabled dormer was added between the tower and wall gable, and in 2004 an open porch filling the right half of the façade was removed and a deep front pile resembling an enclosed porch that partially overlaps the corner tower was added. The right elevation also appears to have undergone minor expansion at this time. At the same time the house was covered in vinyl clapboards and the sash and doors were replaced. Other recent additions include a ramp and exterior secondary egress stair on the left side.

Despite alterations the house remains a legible component of Medford Square South's initial period of development during the second half of the 19th century and contributes to a grouping of similar well-preserved houses on the south side of George Street built for a local professional class. Evidence of original building fabric likely survives beneath later layers of covering, including wood siding, trim, and a decorative brick chimney centered on the wall gable in the façade.

The house is centered on its original minimal residential lot at a moderate setback. Open lawn fills the front garden and the left side yard has been paved with asphalt for parking.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The Richmond House was constructed ca. 1888 within a small subdivision undertaken by shipwrights Ebenezer Waterman, Ryan Cushing and Benjamin R. Teele between ca. 1848 and 1855. In 1848 the trio purchased a parcel of land from Ruth Tidd, then owner of the Royall Estate immediately to the north (see MDF.29 and MDF.BG, Royall Block). Although the deeds do not reference a plan, the parcel's description matches a subdivision depicted on the 1855 Walling map of Medford reproduced below. At the same time two of the grantees, Cushing and Waterman, purchased individual lots within the larger parcel for their own use (Waterman House, 27 Pearl, MDF.61; evidence indicates Teele also shortly afterward purchased a lot). These deeds spelled out extensive conditions and restrictions including the prohibition of a long list of industrial uses for 30 years, the orientation of houses toward the street (which appears to have been disregarded early on with the subject building), and the erection of fences and their height. It also specified that the grantees would provide for a right-of-way that later became Pearl Street.¹

In 1887 the subject parcel was purchased by Deborah H and John B Richmond from Benjamin R Teele. Consideration was not specified and no mortgage was recorded. By 1889 a building was depicted in brick on the lot in the ownership of "Mrs. Roundy." Although deeds do not reflect ownership by a person by this name, Deborah (Roundy) Quiner Richmond (born ca. 1824) was a daughter of Benjamin and Ruth Roundy of Marblehead, who may have acquired title through a mortgage at another time (Deborah and John Richmond's 1858 marriage was the second for both). John Bours Richmond (1818-1906), born in Newport, RI, was a son of prominent Lowell paper manufacturer Perez Otis Richmond (1786-1854) and practiced as an Episcopal minister during a long career in Lancaster, VA, Swansea, MA, St Michael's in Marblehead, Illinois, Dover, NH and in Medford, where he served as assistant rector at Grace Church (MDF.73). He was educated at Trinity College, Hartford, CT and the Alexandria, VA Theological Seminary.²

¹ MCSRD 548:202-205, Dec. 15, 1848.

² MCSRD 1801:438 (1887; in 1888 the property was conveyed to Dorothy H Richmond: 1862:549 and in 1907 to Benjamin Richmond: 3284:227); for a detailed profile of Perez Otis Richmond see: D. Hamilton Hurd, *History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (JW Lewis & Co., 1890, p. 100; *Boston Daily Globe*, Feb. 10, 1906, p. 11, obituary, Rev. John B Richmond; Ancestry.com: vital records, marriage, death; 1890-1905 Medford city directories, inclusive.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MEDFORD

12 GEORGE STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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There is no record of Deborah and John Richmond's residence at the subject house; period records, including census and directory listings, placed them in a large frame house at the northeast corner of Main and Brooks Park (not extant, replaced by Mulclær Hall, 208 Main, MDF.1532 in 1926). The Main Street house, according to maps, was also owned by "B Roundy," possibly Deborah's father. But by 1900 the subject house was occupied by their son Benjamin Richmond (1865-1954). During the early 1890s Richmond owned Richmond & Co, apothecaries, which was located in the Odd Fellows' Building at 14 High Street (MDF.1108), but by 1895 and afterward he worked as a shipper for a felt company (1910), a woolen company (1920) and by 1930 was head shipper at a shoe company. His household included his wife, Effie L (Libby, born ca. 1865), a daughter of Albion KP and Maria W Libby of Medford, and eventually five children born between 1892 and 1905 (including twins Paul and Paulina born ca. 1905) and one domestic servant, Florence M Chisholm, a native of Canada.³

In 1929 Benjamin Richmond sold the house to Carlo and Ester Patturelli. Carlo Patturelli (born 1877) was a native of Naples, Italy, as was his wife, Ester (born 1879), where they married in 1900. They immigrated to Boston in 1907 with three sons born in Italy, Ferdinand (1902), Peter (1904) and John (1906). Throughout the 1930s through 1940s Carlo Patturelli worked as a leather cutter in a shoe factory; during the early 1940s he was employed by Elliz Gott at 205 A Street, South Boston. In 1930 their ten-member household included two sons, a daughter-in-law and five grandchildren. By 1950, by which time Ester had died, the nine-member household included children, grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Descendants still own the property.⁴

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Maps and atlases:

- 1855 H.F. Walling. "Map of Medford...."
- 1875 F. W. Beers, *County Atlas of Middlesex, Massachusetts*.
- 1880 O. H. Bailey [Bird's Eye View of] Medford.
- 1889 Geo. H. Walker & Co., *Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts*.
- 1898 Geo. W. Stady & Co., *Atlas of the City of Medford...*
- 1900 Geo. W. Stady & Co., *Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, Volume 1*.
- 1892, 1897, 1903, 1910, 1936, 1936-1950 Sanborn Insurance Atlases.

Ancestry.com: see footnotes

Charles Brooks and James M. Usher, *History of the Town of Medford, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, From its First Settlement in 1630 to 1855; Revised, Enlarged and Brought Down to 1885* (Rand, Avery & Co., 1886)

Middlesex County South Registry of Deeds, in notes as MCSRD book:page (date).

³ Ancestry.com: vital records, marriage, Mason membership card; 1900-1930 Federal Census, inclusive; 1890-1905 Medford city directories, inclusive.

⁴ MCSRD 5393:389 (1929); 10156:417 (1962); 33857:464 (2001); 50148:185 (2007); Ancestry.com: US Naturalization Records; US WWII Draft Registration Cards; 1930-1950 Federal Census, inclusive.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MEDFORD

12 GEORGE STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

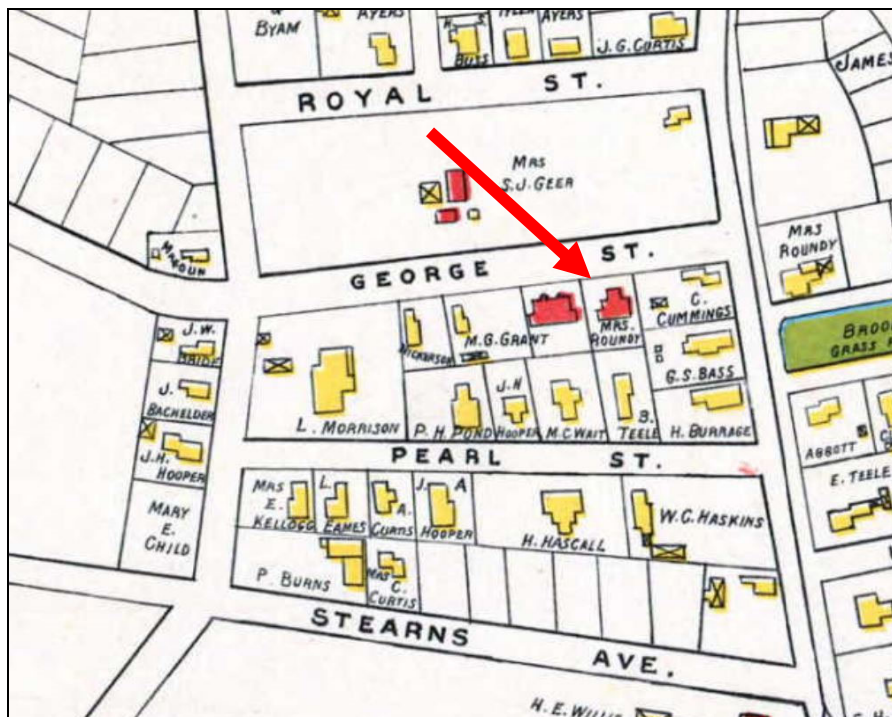
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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1855 Walling map of Medford depicting the Waterman/ Cushing/ Teele subdivision on George, Pearl and Stearns. The future location of the subject building is indicated by a red arrow. North is up.



1889 Walker county atlas showing the initial depiction of the subject house in brick owned by "Mrs. Roundy," possibly the mother of initial owner Deborah H Richmond, indicated by a red arrow. North is up.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MEDFORD

12 GEORGE STREET

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220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

--	--



Third owner Carlo Patturelli (Ancestry.com: 1936 application for citizenship).



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Area(s) Form No.

--	--



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Area(s) Form No.

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[If appropriate, cut and paste the text below into an inventory form's last continuation sheet.]

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible Eligible **only** in a historic district
- Contributing to a potential historic district Potential historic district

Criteria: **A** **B** **C** **D**

Criteria Considerations: **A** **B** **C** **D** **E** **F** **G**

Statement of Significance by John D. Clemson and Claire W. Dempsey
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

Benjamin and Effie L Richmond House, ca. 1888, 12 George Street, would contribute to a potential NR District identified for recommendation in 2018.

The George/ Pearl/ Stearns Area (MDF.BC) is located on the west side of Main Street in Medford Square South, including houses on these three streets as well as College Avenue and Main Street. The area is located on the west side of Main Street in Medford Square South, running west as far as College Avenue, with George Street to the north, Pearl running through the center, and Stearns Street to the south. There are 54 major buildings in the area constructed between 1850 and 1936. The block was part of the far-larger farm that was first established as Ten Hills by John Winthrop in 1631 and became Isaac Royall's in 1732, when it included 504 acres. The history of this area, and several of those around it, traces the incremental subdivision of this large farm as Medford changed from a rural community to a dense city. This area was one of three mid-19th-century subdivisions in this neighborhood and represents an early phase in the suburbanization process. It therefore meets Criterion A and is significant in the area of community development and social history. The houses were built here over a long period, a characteristic of many of Medford's mid-century subdivision that were slow to fill out and therefore created a complex landscape of many styles and forms. This subdivision also meets Criterion C and is significant in the area of architecture. Though some of the buildings here employ new materials, they retain integrity of location, design, workmanship, setting, feeling and association. Three of these houses are of sufficient historical importance and retain enough integrity to also be individually eligible, including 27, 38, and 42 Pearl; the five postwar buildings may be non-contributing depending on the period of significance. One building has likely been moved, 72 College Avenue, and Criteria Consideration B would need to be addressed.