

## 25 Carruth Street, Dorchester, MA 02124

Research and report by Kayla Skillin, Dorchester Historical Society  
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Questions to be answered:

- What is known about the original owner?
- Who else has owned or lived in the house over the years and what is known about them?
- What alterations (structural or cosmetic) have been made to the house since it was built?

### The House

In June of 1887, the first owner of 25 Carruth Street, George G. Quincy, commissioned the architectural firm of Allen and Kenway to build a home at the corner of Carruth and Fuller Streets (today's Rowena Street). Quincy had bought the land in September of 1886 from Herbert S. Carruth; Carruth was one of the largest landowners in the area. The house was built by F. M. [Frederick M.] Severance of Milton and the building inspector signed off on its completion on January 17, 1888 [attachment 1].

If the City of Boston building records are accurate, there are no records of any major alterations to the house since it was built over 120 years ago until 2015. Of course, work could



have been performed without a permit, in which case, there would be no documentary evidence of it. The first alterations recorded are from 1944. The owners at the time, the DeStefanos, appeared to have done a kitchen remodel. Another permit was pulled in 1965 by Richard P. Mullin to replace some treads on the rear staircase.

Then, no permits were pulled until 2015 when the current owners began their own renovations. In 2014, when it was last on the market, 25 Carruth Street was featured as a “Home of the Week” in the Boston Globe. The article claimed that the house still retained many of its original details such as “carved oak spindles” that separated the living and dining rooms as well as “10-foot ceilings, rectangular windows, pocket doors, and five unique fireplaces.”



The First Owner



The first owners of 25 Carruth Street were George G. Quincy and his wife, Maria who went by Elizabeth (left). George was a “manufacturer of fancy goods” and had a shop in downtown Boston operating under the name “Willard & Quincy.”

George was born in Chelsea, MA but census records show that he was raised in Newton. His father, George H., was also a merchant who amassed a small fortune after he and his partner, George S. Harwood, invented a new method of oiling wool, a part of the woolen machinery manufacturing process. George, Sr. was a philanthropic member of Boston society and he and his wife,

Mary (Sweetser), were frequently found in the society pages of the local newspapers. When he died, his obituary stated, “For more than a quarter of a century he has been associated with

**THE CELLULOID CO.**  
 (Geo. G. Quincy & Co.  
 Selling Agents for New England)  
**BRUSHES, COMBS, MIRRORS**  
**FANCY GOODS, COLLARS and**  
**CUFFS, SHEETING, Etc.**  
**11 OTIS ST. - BOSTON**

every charitable enterprise in the city, and many a man prominent in business circles in Boston today owes his start in the world of enterprise to the sound advice, and generous assistance of Mr. Quincy.”



In 1878, George G. moved to Providence, Rhode Island. This is presumably where he met his future wife, [Maria] Elizabeth Salisbury. They were married in Chicago on October 26, 1878. The new Quincy family moved back to the Boston area and settled on Longwood Avenue in Brookline, near today’s Coolidge Corner. Their first child, Wilbur (left), was born in August 1879, followed by Julia (left) in 1881, and Caroline (right) in 1885. Perhaps the growing family was the reason for George’s commission of a new house at 25 Carruth Street in the



“streetcar suburb” of Dorchester. The family moved to the new house in 1888.

The Quincys stayed at 25 Carruth Street for almost 20 years; all three children grew up there. While they were living there, the family also had multiple live-in servants. Newspaper articles show that George and Elizabeth became active members of the Dorchester community. George was a member of the Ward 24 Ward Committee, and he became involved with the Burnap Free Home for Aged Women at 38 Pleasant Street in Dorchester, eventually becoming the treasurer of the organization. By 1906, however, it seems like the house had become too big for the family. All three children had married and only George and Elizabeth were left in the house. In April of 1906, George sold the house to Mary R. Wardner and the next year, was found living in the Back Bay.

### The Residents

After buying 25 Carruth Street from the Quincy family, Mary R. (Rankin) Wardner and her husband, G. [George] Philip Wardner, moved to the house with their three children: Isabel, Elizabeth, and Philip. (Another daughter, Lois, was born in October of 1907.) They did not have to move too far; the previous year, they were living about six blocks away at 116 Beaumont Street.

Philip was born in New Jersey but he moved to Boston, his mother’s hometown, when he was young. He attended Roxbury Latin School, Harvard College (1890) and Harvard University School of Law (1893). Mary was originally from St. Johnsbury, Vermont, and was a graduate of Smith College. Philip was admitted to the Massachusetts bar in 1893 and began practicing law in Boston. He was also an instructor at the Boston University School of Law from 1896 to 1900. In 1901, he was admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court, which allowed him to argue before the Court. When he bought 25 Carruth Street in 1906, he was a partner in the law firm of Carver, Wardner, and Goodwin, whose offices were on State

Street in Boston. While living at 25 Carruth Street, the Wardners were active members of the Parish at All Saints, Ashmont. Philip was elected as a warden of the church in 1916 and held that position for 34 years, eventually becoming senior warden. 25 Carruth Street was the Wardner family home for nearly twenty years and many family milestones occurred there; Isabel Wardner (right) held her wedding reception there in 1920. Sometime in late 1923 or early 1924, they sold the home to Harold and Teresa (Walsh) Donaghue.



Harold and Teresa Donaghue were both originally from Dorchester; Harold lived on Adams Street and Teresa on Moseley Street. Harold was the son of a prominent labor attorney and state representative Peter J. Donaghue; he attended Boston Latin School and then Harvard College (1915). While in his third year of law school at Northeastern

University, Harold enlisted in the aviation branch of the United States Army. He trained in Louisiana and went overseas in 1918, but not before marrying Teresa on July 24, 1918 (left). He was honorably discharged in 1919 and went back to finish law school. Harold's father, Peter, was an attorney for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, and Harold would eventually follow in his footsteps. Before his father's death in 1933, Peter and Harold worked together at their father-son law practice on Tremont Street in Boston. Harold and Teresa raised their family at 25 Carruth Street, and lived there for over 20 years. They sold the house sometime in 1945 or 1946 to Domenico and Maria



DeStefano.

Domenico and Maria (Nutile) DeStefano moved to 25 Carruth Street from nearby Ashmont Street. Domenico was originally from Italy, and had immigrated to the United States in 1893; Maria was born in Boston. The DeStefano family would grow to include eight children; five of those children moved with them to 25 Carruth Street, including two of their widowed daughters and their daughters' own children. By this time, Domenico was already a successful business man; he owned 25 Carruth Street as well as a summer home in Norwell, MA. He was a self-made man; in the early 1900s, Domenico had founded the D. DeStefano Co., a paper supply company, on Damrell Street in South Boston that went on to sell at a national level. The DeStefanos lived at 25 Carruth Street until their deaths, Maria in June of 1954 and Domenico in September of 1954. According to Domenico's obituary, he was very generous with his fortune and donated to multiple philanthropic causes, such as the Italian Home for Children in Jamaica Plain. When Domenico and Maria died, their children inherited



the property at 25 Carruth Street. They stayed at the home until 1959 when, in November, they sold the property to Richard and Jeanne Mullin.

Richard and Jeanne (Rothwell) Mullin had moved into 25 Carruth Street by 1960. Richard was originally from Dorchester, he grew up on Emrose Terrace and had attended English High School (his 1947 yearbook photo is on the left). Jeanne Rothwell was born in Cambridge, but her mother died when she was young and Jeanne was sent with her sisters to a Catholic orphanage in East Boston. Not much else is available about the Mullin family. They had at least one child: Amy, born in 1966. Richard was a lawyer and had been admitted to the Massachusetts bar in 1955. According to city directories, Jeanne's father, Richard Rothwell, lived with them until his death in 1966. Richard's parents, Peter and Beatrice, also lived with Richard and Jeanne until at least 1969 when Peter passed away. Richard and Jeanne divorced in 1978, and Richard remained at the house. In 1985, the house was deeded to Richard and by 1989, he had sold the house to a married couple: Ronald J. Wilkison and Patricia A. McCarty.



Ronald Wilkison was originally from California and Patricia McCarty was from Kansas. They were both musicians in the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO). Ronald was a self-taught violinist who joined the BSO in 1971. He played the violin until 1982 when he switched to the viola. Patricia was also a violist who had studied at the University of Michigan and toured with a number of prominent musical ensembles. She joined the BSO in 1979 and eventually made it to the position of Assistant Principal Viola. Patricia left the BSO in 1993, but Ronald remained until 2009. While living in Dorchester, Patricia produced multiple CDs of her performances on her own music label, "Ashmont Music." Ronald and Patricia stayed at 25 Carruth Street until 2015, when they sold the property and moved to the Adirondacks in New York where Patricia teaches at the Meadowmount School of Music. They sold 25 Carruth Street to its current owner: Gregory Leach.



Title search:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Book/ Page</b>	
2015 January	53942 /276	Ronald J. Wilkison and Patricia A. McCarty (husband and wife) to Gregory Leach
1989 September	15845 /293	Richard P. Mullin to Ronald J. Wilkison and Patricia A. McCarty (husband and wife)
1985 August	12252 /170	Jeanne R. Mullin to Richard P. Mullin (due to 1978 divorce proceedings)
1959 November	7442/ 33	Henry S. DeStefano et al to Richard P. Mullin and Jeanne R. Mullin
		Estate of Domenico DeStefano (Probate No. 377480)
		Estate of Maria (Nutile) DeStefano (Probate No. 376284)
c. 1945/1946		Donaghue to DeStefano
c. 1923/1924		Wardner to Teresa M. Donaghue
1906 April	3117/ 287	George G. Quincy (husband of Maria E. S. Quincy) to Mary R. Wardner (wife of G. Philip Wardner)
1886 September	1740/ 595	Herbert S. Carruth (husband of Annie S. Carruth) to George G. Quincy

**Attachments:**

1. City of Boston, Building Inspector's Report, 1888, volume 23, page 12.

## References:

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<https://scerisecm.boston.gov/ScerIS/CmPublic#/Home>

"Domenic DeStefano," *The Boston Globe*, September 20, 1954, 10.

"Dorchester District," *The Boston Globe*, January 18, 1916, 4.

"Dorchester District," *The Boston Globe*, August 12, 1919, 6.

"Funeral Today of George G. Quincy," *The Boston Globe*, November 14, 1927, 11.

"Geo. H. Quincy Dead: He Was a Well Known Retired Merchant," *The Boston Globe*, May 27, 1895, p. 12.

"Home of the Week," *The Boston Globe*, March 9, 2014, H6.

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"Photograph of Caroline Quincy," undated,

<https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/72666740/person/30372565475/media/5a0e0c19-da76-40ed-a42b-61be5c732f61>.

"Photograph of Elizabeth Lizzy Salisbury," undated,

[https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/collection/1030/tree/72666740/person/30372506205/media/5a7fd68f-8d29-44d5-81f3-27168777dade?\\_phsrc=Zuo34784&usePUBJs=true](https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/collection/1030/tree/72666740/person/30372506205/media/5a7fd68f-8d29-44d5-81f3-27168777dade?_phsrc=Zuo34784&usePUBJs=true).

"Photograph of Teresa Mary Walsh and Harold Rhynes Donaghue on their Wedding Day," July 24, 1918, Boston, Massachusetts.

[https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/67147321/person/32163587523/media/0f2ba21e-72a7-4ffa-8048-3d0d8ecf79da?destTreeId=173137407&destPersonId=332248673525&\\_phsrc=Zuo33430&\\_phstart=default](https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/67147321/person/32163587523/media/0f2ba21e-72a7-4ffa-8048-3d0d8ecf79da?destTreeId=173137407&destPersonId=332248673525&_phsrc=Zuo33430&_phstart=default)

"Photograph of Wilbur and Julia Quincy," undated,

[https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/72666740/person/30372565473/media/595dc065-5fa5-4c92-af21-aaffaf5b0549?destTreeId=173105462&destPersonId=142250154531&\\_phsrc=Zuo32048&\\_phstart=default](https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/72666740/person/30372565473/media/595dc065-5fa5-4c92-af21-aaffaf5b0549?destTreeId=173105462&destPersonId=142250154531&_phsrc=Zuo32048&_phstart=default)



Shield over furnace? *Plastered Ceiling* Hot-air pipes, single or double?  
 Register boxes cased? *Yes* Space between collars and hot-air pipes on all sides?  
 Hot-air pipes passing through floors and partitions, how protected? *lined 7" to 12"*  
 Steam " " " " " " " " " " " "

RANGES, Etc.

Brick or portable? Supported on trimmer arch? Thickness of arch?  
 Brick or stone hearths? Thickness of hearth-stone? Grates properly set?  
 Fire-places properly built? Recess around smoke-pipe, size of?

GENERAL PARTICULARS.

No. of operatives, 1st story ; 2d ; 3d ; 4th ; 5th  
 " " stairways? *2* Width? *4.6'* ; 3' Straight or winding? *Cur of each*  
 Material of stairways? *Wood* Enclosed in brick walls? *No* Thickness of same?  
 External means of egress? *Stairs*  
 Are there any means of escape from roof to roof of adjoining buildings? *No* How protected?  
 No. of hoistways or elevators?  
 What are the facilities for extinguishment of fire on the premises? *Water*  
 Chimneys plastered inside? *Yes* Outside? *Yes* Quality of bricks? *Hard*  
 Trusses in roof, how constructed? Length of chord?  
 Of what material are they built? How many support roof? Size of principals and heads?  
 Size of chord? Built or solid? Size of bolts? Length of purlines?  
 Size of purlines? Length of purlines?  
 Foot of principals, how framed and secured to chord? Length?  
 Size of strut? How framed?  
 Size of foot pieces and material of same? Diameter?  
 Length of strain bolts?  
 Floor or ceiling timbers framed into or rest on top of chord?  
 No. of bay windows on first story *2* ; 2d *2* ; 3d ; 4th ; 5th  
 Wall over openings, how supported? *girt*  
 Ever complained of? *No* Nature of complaint? *X*  
 Complaint removed? Estimated cost of building (without land) \$ *14,000*  
 General condition? *A. N. O. I.*  
 Completed *January 17th* 1888.

REMARKS.

*App. made June 13th 1888*  
*Permit granted June 14th 1888*

*Hartford Davenport* Assistant Inspector

