

Lorenzo Bull House

Lorenzo Bull House — 1550 Maine Street — Italianate — 1855 — architect unknown

Lorenzo Bull was born in Hartford, Mass. in 1819 of sturdy puritan stock. So strong-willed was Bull that at age 14 he came west on his own and found work immediately in Quincy as a clerk in various mercantile businesses. His independence and determination were to serve him well in business. In 1844, only 11 years after his arrival in Quincy, he opened his own business selling hardware and crockery. The business steadily and quickly expanded until it included machinery and implements, becoming the largest of its kind in Quincy.

In 1862 Bull sold out his business to open the Merchants and Farmers National Bank, and he was there after involved in banking in Quincy. He was one of the founders of the Quincy street car system and the water works. Later he became involved in railroading, first with the short-lived Northern Cross Railroad, establishing later a Quincy to Galesburg line, and finally the Quincy to Galesburg to Chicago line.

His home was built east of Quincy in 1850 as a farm estate commanding large barns and out-buildings and impressive grounds. It remained in the Bull family for seventy-five years, finally under ownership of Bull's daughters in Boston. They were members of the Women's City Club there which headquartered in a Beacon Street mansion. They wished their old Quincy home could serve a similar purpose here; but when the last daughter died in 1930, the house and grounds went up for sale.

By 1932 the property was still unsold, the grounds had been staked out for a possible bungalow development and was finally to be sold at public auction for want of a bona fide buyer. A busy, determined group from the women's clubs gathered pledges and subscriptions sufficient to secure a loan of \$10,000, the sale price set by the Bull heirs. Subsequently through a series of agreements the property was purchased through the Park Board. A lease agreement was then entered into that the Women's City Club would maintain the house and barn and the Park Board the grounds.

Furnishings of the house have largely been loaned or donated by interested citizens, and over the years every kind of project has been entered into by the Women's City Club to keep the Bull home the lovely and gracious center of activity it remains.

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