



The house, currently owned by Riddell Noble and Charles Rollins, is built on Quincy's historic Maine Street at the corner with 18th Street.



Newspaper clippings tell colorful story about 'palatial home' at 1677 Maine

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When Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Emery served tea at their "palatial home" at 1677 Maine, The Quincy Daily Whig of 1910 noted every detail of the "gladsome occasion."

The same "beautiful residence" was celebrated when the Frank Daytons entertained 300 "prominent citizens of Quincy, accompanied by their ladies" in 1885.

Current owners Riddell Noble and Charles Rollins delight in reading such tales from yellowed clippings that confirm that their gracious Queen Anne/Eastlake home was made for entertaining.

Built in 1880 by Eaton Littlefield, the house was commissioned by Ebenezer and Agnes Baldwin to "treat themselves" on the success of Pope and Baldwin, the company behind the National Hand Held Corn Planter and other farm machinery.

Their triumph was short-lived, however, as Ebenezer died within two years and Agnes a year after that.

Subsequent owners — notably the Daytons and Emerys — were more fortunate, as Rollins and Noble have been pleased to learn. The home's signature wrap-around porch was added in 1901 at the insistence of May Newcomb Emery, whose childhood home had featured a generous verandah.

Today, Noble and Rollins employ that porch to view the passing scene at the corner of 18th and Maine — "parades, vintage cars, and people walking their dogs" — and they are pleased to be at the crossroads of historic Quincy.

They arrived here by an indirect route, leaving behind two beautiful homes — a four-story beauty in downtown Baltimore and a beach house at the nearby Maryland shore.

While attending his class reunion in Iowa, Riddell Noble had commented on his fondness for older homes and antiques. A friend suggested a detour through Quincy and gathered information about the homes there.

Soon Rollins and Noble found themselves packing up "two 18-wheelers of furniture," and after several additional trips by van, they were

Two patterns are introduced at the entrance — a unique diamond motif and intricate rosettes — and reappear throughout the house. A timbered ceiling and gleaming floors and woodwork celebrate the finest materials of the day: Walnut and oak on the main floor, butternut and maple upstairs.

"German craftsmanship — it just spells it out," Noble says.

The home boasts many closets, some quite specialized, "unusual for the time period and because of the tax," Noble points out. Although the home was divided into two apartments for a time in its history, it suffered few lingering effects.

One wall has been moved in the kitchen, and part of the front staircase was stored in the attic for 40 years. Several fireplaces were removed, but Noble notes that the three that remain are distinctive.

The many beautiful 19th century antiques that traveled from Baltimore fit perfectly into the home, with its 12-foot ceilings on both floors and the 7-foot tall windows in the second-floor library.

Since arriving in 2004, the owners have completed extensive work on the home's exterior.

"This is the first summer without a scaffold outside," Noble says.

They engaged architect Nathaniel Brooks and Fisher Builders to restore the home's summer kitchen as a garden room, and they have created a tranquil patio area nearby.

The basement too has been remodeled with a cozy look, and it plays home to "The Village of Peabody Heights, a Christmas Garden with Pennsylvania Dutch Origins."

This elaborately detailed miniature recreation with its 382 jolly residents is permanently on display for the enjoyment of guests of all ages.

Like those who lived there before them, Charles Rollins and Riddell Noble find great satisfaction in sharing their lovely home. They have hosted local groups such as Quincy Preserves and have welcomed visitors from 25 states and several foreign countries.

"An older home has so much more livability and thrill of living, especially if you go to the trouble of finding out a little about the people who lived there," Noble says.