

145 Glenwood Avenue
1927
Florence Mulcahy

David J. and Catherine Florence Mulcahy and their sons, Jack and Dave, were this home's first family. David Mulcahy (1894-1971) grew up on Tilley Street, the son of Irish immigrants, Elizabeth and John. John Mulcahy was a carpenter, and after his wife's passing, he lived with his son's family on Glenwood Avenue. Indeed, one wonders if Mr. Mulcahy helped to build the home. In the 1930 US Census, the house was valued at \$95,000! Judging from the values of surrounding properties at the time, this surely ought to have read \$9,500, still a good amount. The elder Mulcahy also appears in the 1940 US Census, aged 87. By that time, David Mulcahy was working as a liquor salesman.

The two Mulcahy boys graduated from Bulkeley High and both served in World War II. Jack Mulcahy (1922-2007) appears in the 1950 Census living at home on Glenwood, working as an insurance salesman, but later, after his marriage to Rita Peckham, he lived in Groton and was in sales for Sears for many years, according to his obituary (The Day, 17 Jan. 2007.)

Jack's younger brother, David Mulcahy (1927-2013), was in school when the war broke out. He ended up serving in the Navy before the end of World War II, and then in the Army in Korea, where he received the Purple Heart. After graduate school he became an English teacher in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He left a wife and children. (The Day 18 Oct. 2013.)

We discovered very little about Catherine Florence Malcahy, who died in 1963. She was born about 1897 in New York, perhaps with the last name Aiken. After her passing, her husband sold the property to Robert C. and Dorothy T. Hullivan. Bob Hullivan was a bar owner and likely a long-time friend of the Mulcahys.

Glenwood Park

In early colonial times, the south end of New London was known as the General Neck and was part of the town's common lands. Gradually the land was divided among the descendants of the original proprietors, sold and resold over generations, but the Neck remained largely rural until the mid-19th century when the area was developed as a summer retreat for people from Hartford, New York, Washington, D.C., and further afield. Real estate developers purchased chunks of land and sold lots for summer homes. Glenwood Avenue from Pequot Avenue to Ocean Avenue was laid out in 1872.¹

¹ From a pamphlet entitled "The Pequot" by Ann Hobart. New London Landmarks Archives.

The area wedged between Lower Boulevard and Parkway North was called Glenwood Park when it was first developed around 1910 by Thomas M. Waller, who himself built a number of homes in the neighborhood. Park-like grounds surrounded the houses in the early days, with alleyways, pedestrian walks, walls and pillared entrances. Gradually, the park was chopped up, subdivided, and built upon, and many of its landscape features were lost. Still, enough is left to get an idea of this early 20th-century garden subdivision.

Thomas McDonald Waller (1839-1924) served as New London mayor, Governor of Connecticut, Consul General to Great Britain, and Secretary of State of Connecticut. To his contemporaries, he was “a Democrat of the old school.” He was the developer of Ocean Beach Park and Neptune Park through the Post Hill Development Company. His real estate interests in Glenwood Park were small by comparison to these, but Glenwood Park was a departure in being modestly scaled overall. Like Waller’s other real estate projects, it was designed with public transportation in mind.²

In 1900, a trolley or street railway was added to the newly constructed road named Boulevard (now Montauk Avenue and Lower Boulevard) during the period when the former Pequot Colony of summer cottages and estates was being transformed into a suburban neighborhood. In the beginning, Waller evidently thought of Glenwood Park as a summer colony, a short trolley ride to Ocean Beach, but it quickly outgrew that category. Not surprisingly, a number of the earlier homes made no accommodation for automobiles, lacking driveways and garages.

The early homes in Glenwood Park were built with architectural character in mind, using stone, stucco, brick, rubble stone, and sometimes, slate roofs. These are in what is sometimes called the Storybook Style, an aesthetic particularly popular in Southern California in the 1920s. The houses are often asymmetrical, multiple gabled with dormers, some with half-timbered massing, with rounded and angled windows and doorways. The effect is organic, complicated, and unique, with no two alike. The house at 145 Glenwood, in contrast, is a straightforward colonial. It was a popular house form due to its traditional simplicity, comfort, and interior craftsmanship.

At least five houses in Glenwood Park were built by Gov. Waller before 1914, according to contemporary accounts in the Norwich Bulletin. The houses were designed

² Hand-written note in NLL file for 86 Lower Boulevard by then owner, P. Bela Ghormley, indicates that Waller’s idea for Glenwood Park was inspired by houses and lay-out he had seen in England. He pitched the idea to architect Morris Payne, who designed a number of the homes in the neighborhood. Mrs. Ghormley claims that originally the houses were meant to be summer homes only.

by Duffy-Payne, architects. An investor was John Campbell, a partner in the Reliance Worsted Company. It was from Campbell's estate that Jacob Linicus purchased a number of building lots in 1924, one of which would become 145 Glenwood.

Jacob Linicus (1859-1942) was the son of a German immigrant, Jacob Linicus, Sr. (1825-1903). Jacob, Sr., came to New London via New York in 1854 and started a cigar and tobacco business here. The cigar production aspect grew tremendously, and there was also a retail establishment. In 1866 he built a store and residence on State Street (No.147 State in some records). He went into partnership with his son and namesake, who bought him out in 1892. Jacob, Jr. is associated with the development of Neptune Park before 1920, and he seems to have owned a number of cottages on Mott Avenue. Here we see that he was also involved in the development of Glenwood Park.

The narrative above starts with the title chain researched by Thomas Couser. From there we looked at primary and secondary sources, including census records, city directories, newspaper accounts, local and family histories, cemetery and military service records, up to about 1950, when records become scarce. This is by no means an exhaustive search but is meant to give an idea of the people involved in the earlier history of the home.

– Mary Beth Baker for New London Landmarks, November 28, 2022.