



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
**JOSEPH A. CURTATONE**  
**MAYOR**

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION*

---

**DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE STAFF REPORT**

---

Site:	108 Gilman Street
Case:	HPC 2018.013
Applicant Name:	Bonnie McCarthy
Date of Application:	February 15, 2018
Recommendation:	Significant
Hearing Date:	March 20, 2018

---

**I. Historical Association: See attached**

*Historical Context:* 108 Gilman Street can first be seen on the 1852 Draper Map which according to Charles Sullivan of the Cambridge Historical Commission was based on 1846 survey information. The house is located on land belonging to Charles E. Gilman, Town Clerk, 1882-1872 and City Clerk from 1872-1888.

The house across Walnut Street (razed) was also owned by Charles E. Gilman and where he lived from at least 1877. The City Directories are ambiguous as to which house was considered his home and who lived at 108 Gilman Street prior to that date. The 1882 deed from Charles Gilman to Enos Murray notes that the property also includes a building. Unfortunately the same deed does not reference how or when Charles Gilman acquired the land or when the house was built. It does cite an 1874 survey by Edward Foote, Surveyor for Mary A. Gilman.



108 Gilman Street was known as 101 Walnut Street prior to the early 1920s when a garage was constructed and a factory to make shoe blacking were added to the property. The factory was given the address of 108 Gilman Street while the house retained the 101 Walnut Street address, until such time as the factory was demolished.

See attached table of known ownership, tenancy of the property and alterations as found in maps, deeds, city directories and building permits.

*Architectural Description:* 108 Gilman Street is a simple 5-bay central entry house with double hung sash. It has been covered with vinyl siding since the building was surveyed in 1980. The building sits on a high concrete basement. It is unknown as to whether the concrete is parging or is part of the structure. The Applicant has heard that the original walls were insulated with corn cobs. From its description the building is possibly post and beam in structure. See attached photo.

*Summary:* 108 Gilman Street is associated with Charles E. Gilman, Town and City Clerk 1842-1888. The building may be old enough to predate the founding of the town.

### **Findings on Historical Association**

*For a Determination of Significance, the subject building must be found either (a) **importantly associated with people, events or history** or (b) historically or architecturally significant (Ordinance 2003-05, Section 2.17.B). Findings for (b) are at the end of the next section.*

**(a)** In accordance with the historic information obtained from *Findings on Historical Association*, which utilizes historic maps/atlasses, City reports and directories, and building permit research, and through an examination of resources that document the history of the City, such as *Somerville Past and Present*, Staff find 108 Gilman Street to be importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth.

The subject building is found importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to associations with Charles E. Gilman, Town and City Clerk, and with working class families from 1882 to the present.

---

## **II. Historical and Architectural Significance**

*The findings for historical and/or architectural significance of a historic property address the period, style, method of building construction and association with a reputed architect or builder of the subject property, either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures (Ordinance 2003-05, Section 2.17.B).*

The period of significance for 108 Gilman Street begins prior to 1846 with its construction near the time the town was incorporated.

### ***Integrity***

*The National Park Service identifies historic integrity as the ability of a property to convey significance. A property should possess sufficient integrity to convey, represent or contain the values and qualities for which it is judged significant; therefore, the following is an identification and evaluation of these qualities and alterations as they affect the ability of the subject property to convey significance.*

- a. Location: The Applicant has stated that the building was originally a barn and moved to the current location. There is no evidence in the maps and atlases to show this to be fact. See below.

- b. Design: The building is a simple vernacular design. The late Hopkins maps show the building to be T shaped. However the 1895 Bromley and subsequent maps show the building as rectangular.
- c. Materials: The wood-frame building has vinyl over wood clapboard as can be seen in the amount of exposure or reveal around the windows.
- d. Alterations: Documented alterations show changes in use beginning with the ownership of Morris Greenhood who used the property for automotive uses. Exactly how this affected the structure cannot be clearly deduced from the outside. A garage and a factory building both since demolished were also on the site could have been used for the more industrial purposes as Ada and Henry Harden appear in the 1927 City Directory as living at 101 Walnut Street.

*Evaluation of Integrity:* The building is unusual in its simplicity of design and size in a group of later larger late Victorian Era buildings. It retains the integrity and form of an early 19<sup>th</sup> century house. It is prominently located at the corner of Gilman and Walnut Streets across from the Ed Leathers Park.

### **Findings for Historical and Architectural Significance**

*For a Determination of Significance, the subject building must be found either (a) importantly associated with people, events or history or (b) historically or architecturally significant (Ordinance 2003-05, Section 2.17.B). Findings for (a) can be found at the end of the previous section.*

**(b)** In accordance with the *Finding on Historical and Architectural Significance*, which addresses period, style, method of building construction, and association with a reputed architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures, as well as integrity, which assess the ability of the property to convey significance, Staff find 108 Gilman Street historically or architecturally significant.

The subject building is found historically and architecturally significant due to its possible post and beam construction, early 19<sup>th</sup> century form and massing.

### **III. Recommendation**

*Recommendations are based upon an analysis by Historic Preservation Staff of the permit application and the required findings for the Demolition Review Ordinance, which requires archival and historical research, and an assessment of historical and architectural significance, conducted prior to the public meeting for a Determination of Significance. This report may be revised or updated with a new recommendation and/or findings based upon additional information provided to Staff or through further research.*

*For a Determination of Significance, the structure must be either (A) listed on the National Register or (B) at least 50 years old.*

(A) The structure is NOT listed on or within an area listed on the National Register of Historic Places, nor is the structure the subject of a pending application for listing on the National Register.

**OR**

(B) The structure, circa 1846, is at least 50 years old.

**AND**

*For a Determination of Significance under (B), the subject building must be found either (a) importantly associated with people, events or history or (b) historically or architecturally significant.*

- (a) In accordance with the *Findings on Historical Association*, which utilizes historic maps/atlasses, City reports and directories, and building permit research, and through an examination of resources that document the history of the City, **Staff recommend that the Historic Preservation Commission find 108 Gilman Street importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth.**

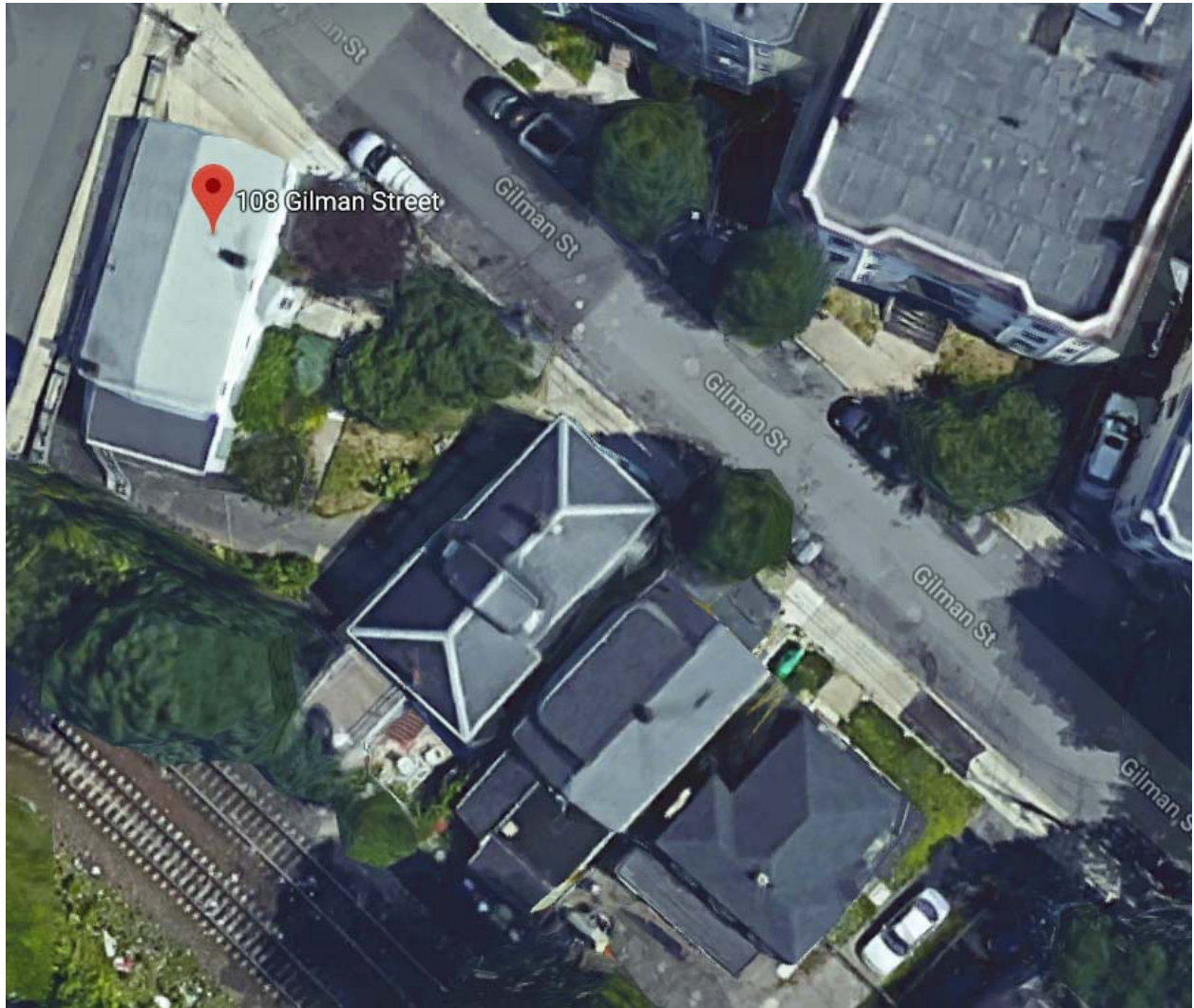
The subject building is found importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to associations with Charles E. Gilman, Town and City Clerk, and with working class families from 1882 to the present.

**OR**

- (b) In accordance with the *Findings on Historical and Architectural Significance*, which addresses period, style, method of building construction, and association with a reputed architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures, as well as integrity, the ability to convey significance, **Staff recommend that the Historic Preservation Commission find 108 Gilman Street historically and architecturally significant.**

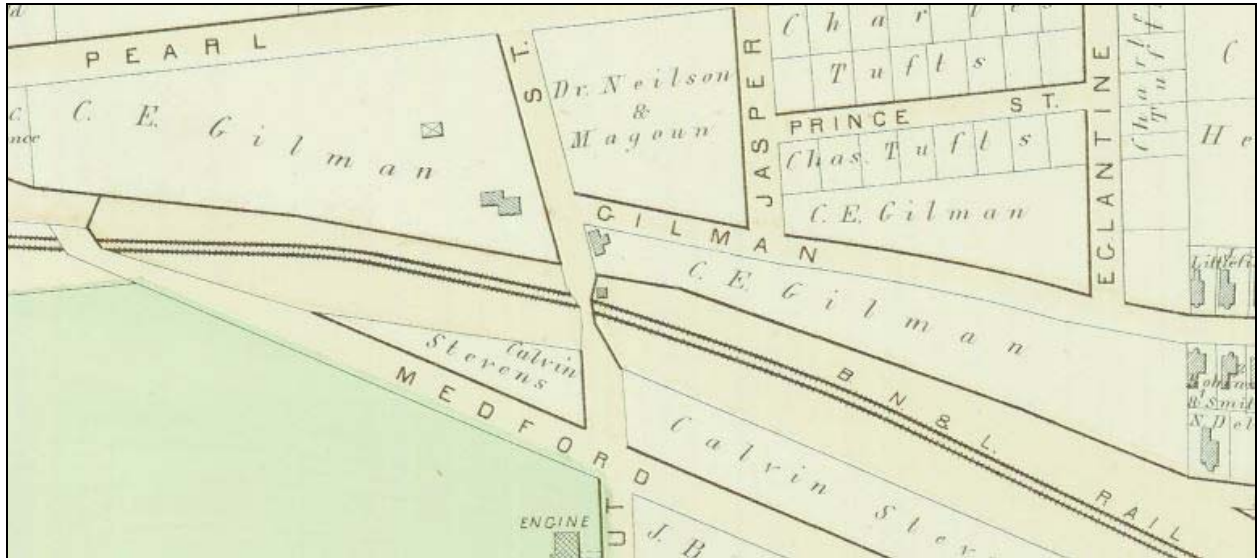
The building is unusual in its simplicity of design and size in a group of later larger late Victorian Era buildings. It retains the integrity and form of an early 19<sup>th</sup> century house. It is prominently located at the corner of Gilman and Walnut Streets across from the Ed Leathers Park.

The subject building is found historically and architecturally significant due to its possible post and beam construction, early 19<sup>th</sup> century form and massing.

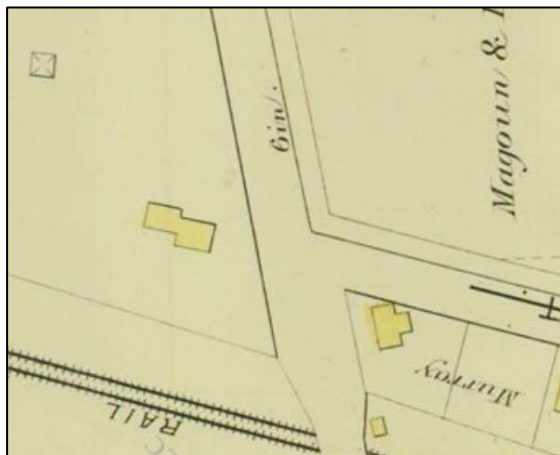


1852 Draper with current boundaries overlaid – House  
existant at this time. The house across Walnut Street was also owned by Charles E. Gilman.

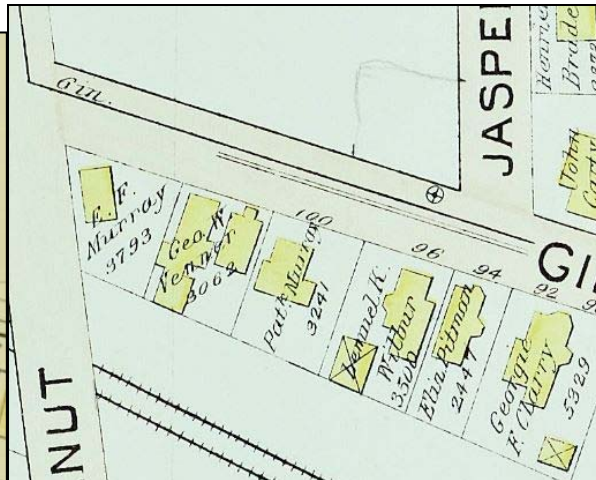




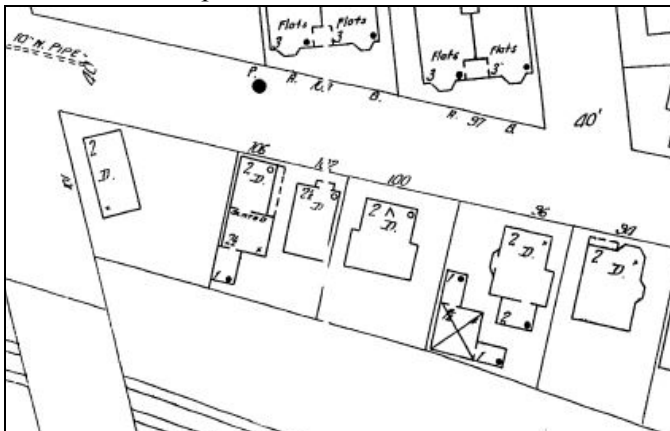
1874 Hopkins Plate 33



1884 Hopkins Plate 3



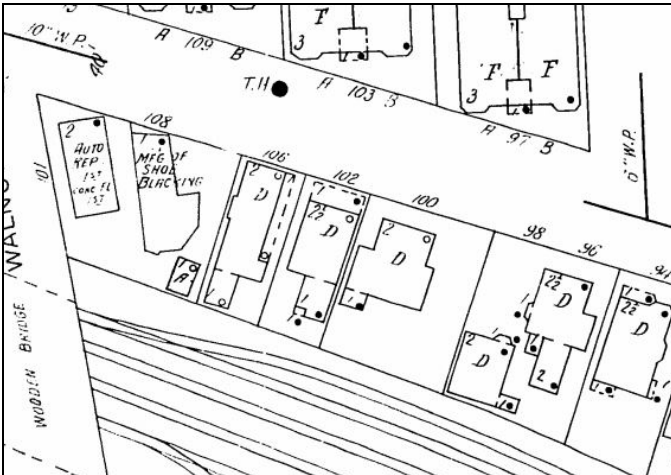
1895 Bromley Plate 9



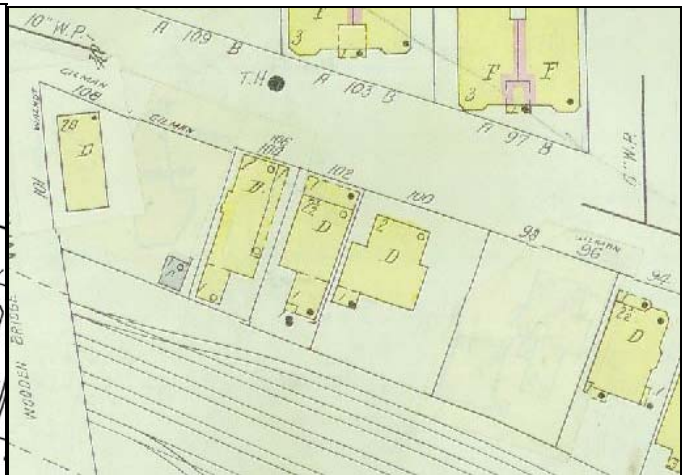
1900 Sanborn Plate 86



1925 Sanborn Plate 86



1933 Sanborn Plate 53



1958 Sanborn Plate 37



Charles E. Gilman





108 Gilman Street, 1980 photo









108 Gilman Street

	LOCATION	O/R	NAME	AGE	OCCUPATION	PLACE OF BIRTH	SOURCE Immigration Year	NOTES
53	Location not specified		Susanah G. Taylor	80		New Hampshire	1850 US Census	
53	Location not specified		Mary A. Gilman	43		Maine	1850 US Census	
53	Location not specified		Charles E. Gilman	41	Clerk	Massachusetts	1850 US Census	
53	Location not specified		Bridget Lillen	22		Ireland	1850 US Census	
53	Location not specified		Charles Lord	21	Machinist	New York	1850 US Census	
53	Location not specified		Edward L. Gilman	13		Massachusetts	1850 US Census	
53	Location not specified		Anna G.L. Gilman	10		Massachusetts	1850 US Census	
	Buildings on both sides of Walnut Str		Owner not identified				1852 Draper Map	
536/583	Location not specified		Lucy Gilman	67		Massachusetts	1860 US Census	
<b>536/583</b>	<b>Location not specified</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Charles E. Gilman</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>Clerk</b>	<b>Massachusetts</b>	<b>1860 US Census</b>	
536/583	Location not specified		Mary A. Gilman	50		Maine	1860 US Census	
536/583	Location not specified		Bridget Niland	30	Domestic	Ireland	1860 US Census	
536/583	Location not specified		Edward L. Gilman	23	Photographer	Massachusetts	1860 US Census	
536/583	Location not specified		Anna S.L. Gilman	20		Massachusetts	1860 US Census	
	Walnut nr LRR		Charles E. Gilman		Town Clerk		1869 City Directory	
1728	Location not specified		Lucy Gilman	81		Massachusetts	1870 US Census	
<b>1728</b>	<b>Location not specified</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Charles E. Gilman</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>Town Clerk</b>	<b>Massachusetts</b>	<b>1870 US Census</b>	
1728	Location not specified		Mary A. Gilman	60	Keeps house	Maine	1870 US Census	
1728	Location not specified		Edward L. Gilman	32	Reporter on Paper	Massachusetts	1870 US Census	
	Walnut nr LRR		Charles E. Gilman		City Clerk		1873 City Directory	
	Walnut nr LRR		Charles E. Gilman		City Clerk		1874 City Directory	
	<b>Buildings on both sides of</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Charles E. Gilman</b>				<b>1874 Hopkins Atlas Plate 33</b>	
	Walnut nr Gilman		Charles E. Gilman		City Clerk		1875 City Directory	
	Walnut opp Gilman		Charles E. Gilman		City Clerk		1877 City Directory	
	Walnut opp Gilman		Charles E. Gilman		City Clerk		1879 City Directory	
281/390	Walnut Street		Chas. Gilman	71	City Clerk	Massachusetts	1880 US Census	
281/390	Walnut Street		Edward L. Gilman	42	Inventor	Massachusetts	1880 US Census	
281/390	Walnut Street		Sarah E. Coles	38	Housekeeper	New Hampshire	1880 US Census	
281/390	Walnut Street		May A. Campbell	21	Domestic	Nova Scotia	1880 US Census	
		<b>O</b>	<b>Enos F. Murray</b>				<b>1882 Deed 1604/555</b>	<b>from Charles E. Gilman</b>
		<b>O</b>	<b>Murray</b>				<b>1884 Hopkins Atlas Plate 3</b>	
	164 Walnut		Charles E. Gilman		City Clerk		1885 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Enos Frank Murray		Laborer		1885 City Directory	
	Walnut opp Gilman		Charles E. Gilman		City Clerk		1887 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Enos Frank Murray		Laborer		1887 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Patrick Murray		Laborer		1887 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Enos Frank Murray		Laborer		1890 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Enos Frank Murray		Laborer		1892 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Francis B. Murray		Printer		1892 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Dennis Murray		Laborer		1893 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Francis B. Murray		Printer		1893 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Enos Frank Murray		Laborer		1894 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Francis B. Murray		Printer for the "Citizen"		1894 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Enos Frank Murray		Laborer		1896 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Francis B. Murray		Printer		1896 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Enos Frank Murray		Laborer		1897 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Francis B. Murray		Printer		1897 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		John J. Murray		Printer		1897 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Enos Frank Murray		Laborer		1898 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Francis B. Murray		Laborer		1898 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Enos Frank Murray		Spice worker		1899 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Francis B. Murray		Spice worker		1899 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		John J. Murray		Transitman, City Engineering Office		1899 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Enos Frank Murray		Spice worker		1900 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Francis B. Murray		Spice worker		1900 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		John J. Murray		Transitman, City Engineering Office		1900 City Directory	
<b>281/358</b>	<b>101 Walnut Street</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Emes P. Murray (head)</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>Spice manufacturer</b>	<b>Ireland</b>	<b>1867</b>	<b>1900 US Census</b>
281/358	101 Walnut Street		Margaret Murray (wife)	51		Ireland	1878	1900 US Census
281/358	101 Walnut Street		Marcus (Marius) V. Murray (s	26	Salesman	Massachusetts		1900 US Census
281/358	101 Walnut Street		Mary L. Murray (daughter)	23	Milliner	Massachusetts		1900 US Census
281/358	101 Walnut Street		John J. Murray (son)	21	Civil Engineer	Massachusetts		1900 US Census
281/358	101 Walnut Street		Henry P. Murray (son)	19	Salesman	Massachusetts		1900 US Census
281/358	101 Walnut Street		William A. Murray (son)	16	School	Massachusetts		1900 US Census
281/358	101 Walnut Street		Margaret Murray (daughter)	15	School	Massachusetts		1900 US Census
281/358	101 Walnut Street		James A. Murray (son)	12	School	Massachusetts		1900 US Census
	101 Walnut Street		William Barry		Teamster			1902 City Directory
	108 Gilman Street		Horace G. Sylvester		Baggage master, B&M			1903 City Directory
	101 Walnut Street		William Barry		Teamster			1904 City Directory
	101 Walnut Street		William Barry		Teamster			1905 City Directory
	101 Walnut Street		William Barry		Teamster			1906 City Directory
	101 Walnut Street		William Barry		Teamster			1907 City Directory
	101 Walnut Street		William Barry		Teamster			1910 City Directory
	101 Walnut Street		John J. Sullivan		Driver			1915 City Directory
	101 Walnut Street		John J. Sullivan		Driver			1916 City Directory



108 Gilman Street

	LOCATION	O/R	NAME	AGE	OCCUPATION	PLACE OF BIRTH	SOURCE Immigration Year	NOTES
	101 Walnut Street		John J. Sullivan		Driver		1917 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		John J. Sullivan		Driver		1918 City Directory	
		O	Morris Greenhood				1920 Deed 4351/110	from John J. Murray et al. heirs of E
	101 Walnut Street		M. Greenhood				1920-1-69 Building Permit	2nd floor to be used for sale of auto supplies
	101 Walnut Street		M. Greenhood				1922-1-74 Building Permit	1 shed, storage paint stoc wood covered w/ metal
	108 Gilman Street		M. Greenhood				1923-1-510 Building Permit	Erect 1 storage (mfg) warehouse
	108 Gilman Street		M. Greenhood				1926-2-1033 Building Permit	1 car garage, metal bldg, concrete found, pitched rf
	101 Walnut Street		M. Greenhood				1926-2-930 Building Permit	1 addition in rear for foundation. Flat roof
	101 Walnut Street		Ada F. Harden		Wife of Henry		1927 City Directory	
	101 Walnut Street		Henry G. Harden		Automobile repairing		1927 City Directory	
	108 Gilman Street		vacant				1929 City Directory	
		O	William M. Riordan & Lydia B. Riordan				1958 Deed 7576/348	from Morris Greenhood
		O	Joseph L. Whitlock & B. Janet Whitlock				1968 Deed 11538/419	from Lydia B. Riordan
	108 Gilman Street		J. Whitlock				1986-1-18 Building Permit	Close hole in side