



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

**GEORGE J. PROAKIS**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**PLANNING DIVISION**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

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**STEP 2: DETERMINATION OF PREFERABLY PRESERVED  
STAFF REPORT**

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**Site:** 21-23 Allen Street

**Case:** HPC.DMO 2021.02

**Applicant:** 19-27 Allen Street, LLC

**Owner:** Joan Martelli

**Proposal:** *Demolish all structures.*

**HPC Meeting Date:** March 16, 2021

The purpose of a staff report is to provide the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) with additional information and professional assessments regarding properties that are proposed for demolition. These assessments are based on the criteria allowed for consideration by the HPC in accordance with the Demolition Review Ordinance (DRO). A Staff Report is not a determination/decision nor does it constitute authorization in any form.

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**I. SUMMARY OF FEBRUARY 16, 2021 MEETING**

At their regular public meeting on February 16, 2021, the HPC voted all of the buildings at 21-23 Allen Street to be "Historically Significant". Due to this determination, 21-23 Allen Street moved on to the second step in the demolition review process, which calls for the HPC to determine whether or not the buildings should be "Preferably Preserved". A determination of "preferably preserved" does not permanently halt demolition of a building.

## **II. BUILDINGS UNDER CONSIDERATION**

21-23 Allen Street contains three residential structures. Two of the structures, 21 and 23, abut the public sidewalk. The third structure, which does not have a street number, is located at the rear of the lot, behind the two front buildings. The rear structure is difficult to see from the street. Photos of the buildings appear on the following page. The buildings will be referred to throughout the report as “21 Allen”, “23 Allen” and “Rear Building”.

***Right: 21 Allen Street***



***Right: 23 Allen Street***



***Right: Rear Building***







### III. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To see the historic map research regarding 21-23 Allen Street and a general history of the area, see the February 16, 2021 staff report on Historic Significance.

The MACRIS inventory form published by the State's Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) via the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) dates 21 Allen Street to as early as 1840-1850, having been built for laborer housing. Given that laborer housing was built cheaply – both in terms of labor and materials – it is a testament to the workmanship that the structure has survived this long.

Based on additional research, the period of significance for 21 Allen Street has been adjusted back to begin at 1840, 23 Allen Street to 1850-1869, and the Rear Building to 1892. Explanatory text follows throughout the staff report.

As Staff has reiterated numerous times over the years, one of the many things that sets the field of historic preservation in the United States apart from the practice in other countries, particularly in Western Europe, is that in the U.S. we do not emphasize merely high-style examples of domestic architecture or the supposed “high-born” architects and inhabitants of such structures. Instead, the historic preservation practice in the U.S. recognizes the historic built environment of all economic classes of people. The lives of people - builders and occupants, whether we know about them in detail or in passing - and the stories of their lives are imbued in these buildings. All of these lives, individually and collectively, have contributed to the rich, varied, and complex cultural fabric of the City.

On the first available map showing structures and property owner names, the 1874 Hopkins map, Patrick Mahoney was shown as the owner of the subject property. As of 1874, there were two structures on the lot: today's 21 Allen Street and 23 Allen Street, the two gable-fronted structures on this property (see above images for reference).

City Directory research shows that at least as early as 1869, Patrick Mahoney was listed as owning a house on Allen Street. His occupation is listed as “laborer”. Note that the location of his house is listed as “Allen near Milk” which refers to “Allen Street near Milk Street. Until 1875, Somerville Avenue was called “Milk Street”.

*Below: 1869 Somerville City Directory listing for Patrick Mahoney*

**TOWN, HOUSE NO. VERNON, near Broadway**  
 Magoun John C. farmer, house Broadway, near Central  
 Magrath Thomas, laborer, house Kent court  
 Mahan Patrick, laborer, house Allen, near Milk  
 Mahaney Daniel, shoemaker, b. P. Eberle's, Park, n. Milk  
 Maher Bridget Mrs. house Garden court  
 Mahoney Daniel, teamster, house Milk, corner Prospect  
 Mahoney Patrick, laborer, house Allen, near Milk  
 Mahoney Thomas, pedler, house Fitchburg, near L. R. R.  
 Mahony Wm. H. grocer, (Charlestown), house Sycamore,  
     near Foster  
 Maigson Thomas, laborer, house foot Lowell, 2d  
 Maigson William, lather, house foot Lowell, 2d  
 Mainn Michael, laborer, house Norfolk, cor. Webster ave.  
 Mains James, surgeon, house Lowell, near L. R. R.  
 Maitland Alexander, printer, boards Jos. Heald's, Milk,  
     near Elm [house 14 Myrtle  
 Makechnie Hiram L. salesman, (103 Devonshire, B.),  
 Makechnie Horace P. teacher Lincoln school, house Sac-  
     ramento, near F. R. R.  
 Mollahan Thomas Mrs. house Columbia, near the marsh

Other city directories that Staff was able to access were the 1873, 1875, and 1877 directories. In all of these directories, Patrick Mahoney is listed as the house owner on Allen Street. In 1875, the City Directory lists his home as being "Allen Street n. Somerville Avenue". The name change from Milk Street to Somerville Avenue had only recently occurred.

*Below: 1874 City Directory listing for Patrick Mahoney*

Mahoney Daniel, teamster, h. r. Broadway, n. City stables  
Mahoney Jeremiah, laborer, h. Webster av., n. Tremont  
Mahoney John, molder W. R. Bradford, h. at Charlestown  
Mahoney John F., laborer, h. Tyler, n. Dane  
Mahoney Patrick, laborer, h. Allen, n. Milk  
Mahoney Patrick, laborer, h. Linwood, n. London  
Mahoney Thomas, laborer, h. Fitchburg, n. Linwood  
Mahoney William H., grocer (87 Warren, Charlestown),  
h. Sycamore, n. Forster  
Makechnie Geo. W., clerk (B.), h. Lincoln, n. Perkins  
Makechnie Hiram L., salesman (B.), h. Austin, n. Broad'y  
Makechnie Horace P., teacher Lincoln school, h. Elm, n.  
Chester  
Malaney Thomas, laborer, h. Ward, n. Medford  
Mallahan Rosanna, widow of Thomas, h. r. Columbia, n.  
Conlon ct.

*Below: 1877 City Directory listing for Patrick Mahoney*

Maguire James, horse shoer, bds. Chas. Maguire's, Everett  
Maguire John, blacksmith, house Medford, near Lowell  
Maguire Mary A., widow, h. 6 Mossland, next Beacon  
Maguire Thomas F., lawyer (13 Court sq., B.), h. Wash.,  
near Union square  
Mahaney Patrick, laborer, h. Allen, n. Somerville avenue

*Below: 1875 City Directory listing for Patrick Mahoney*

SOMERVILLE [M] DIRECTORY. 119

Mahoney Daniel, teamster, h. r. Broadway, n. city stables  
Mahoney Dennis, laborer, h. Medford, c. South  
Mahoney Dennis, laborer, h. 17 Joy  
Mahoney Jeremiah, laborer, h. Webster av., n. Tremont  
Mahoney John, molder W. R. Bradford, h. at Charlestown  
Mahoney John, laborer, h. Medford, n. South  
Mahoney John F., laborer, h. Tyler, n. Dane  
Mahoney Patrick, h. Allen, n. Somerville av.  
Mahoney Thomas, laborer, h. 5 Bleachery court  
Mahoney William H., grocer (87 Warren, Charlestown),  
h. Sycamore, n. Forster [Florence  
Makechnie George W., clerk (97 Court, B.), h. 33 New  
Makechnie Hiram L., salesman (89 Chauncy, B.), h. Aus-  
tin, n. Broadway [Chester  
Makechnie Horace P., teacher Lincoln school, h. Elm, cor.  
Malaney Thomas, laborer, h. Ward, n. Medford  
Mallahan Rosanna, widow of Thomas, h. r. Columbia, n.  
Conlon court  
Malley Patrick, cooper, h. Linwood, n. London  
Malloy John, trader, bds. J. Malloy's, Somerville av.  
Malloy John, trader, h. Somerville av., n. Medford  
Malloy Lawrence, laborer, bds. J. Malloy's, Somerville av.  
Malone Bridget, widow, h. Washington, n. Beacon  
Maloney Andrew, gardener, h. Clyde, n. Cedar  
Maloney Daniel, laborer, h. Ward, n. Medford [Beacon  
Maloy James W., machinist (63 Beverly, B.), h. Vine, n.  
Maloy Mary, widow of George, h. Vine, n. Beacon  
Mandell Jonathan W., florist, Putnam, n. Summer, h. do.  
Manes James, laborer, h. Wyatt, n. Concord av.  
Manley Daniel, grease collector, h. foot of Willow pl.  
Mann Alfred E., lettercarrier, h. Washington av.  
Mann Christopher, caulker (B.), h. Broadway, cor. Bene-  
dict avenue  
Mann Henry, h. Sibley place  
Mann Jairus, city messenger and constable, City Hall, h.  
Berkeley  
Mann Vesta E. Mrs., dressmaker, bds. 7 Florence  
Manning Bernard, laborer, h. Somerville av., n. Bow  
Manning Daniel, laborer, h. rear Lowell, n. R. R.  
Manning George W., blacksmith (44 Lincoln, B.), house  
Prescott, n. Summer  
Manning James, milkman, h. Norfolk, n. Webster av.  
Manning John, teamster, h. Medford, n. Maple  
Manning John, laborer Middlesex bleachery, house Som-  
erville av., n. Beach  
Manning John F., glassblower Union Glass Co., h. Nor-  
folk, n. Webster avenue  
Manning Leighton W., upholsterer, h. 8 Berkeley  
Manning Michael, laborer, h. Norfolk, c. Webster av.

Federal census research provided further insight into Patrick Mahoney's life. The 1870 federal census shows that he was an immigrant from Ireland, as were countless residents of this part of the City at this time.

At the time of the 1870 census he was 70 years old and still working as a laborer as he continued to do through at least 1877 as noted in the City Directory. This means that at the time of the 1877 Directory, he was 77 years old and still working as a laborer. The life of a laborer was a difficult one; the work was hard, often dangerous, the hours long and the wages low. A laborer did not have a steady job but changed every few weeks or months. A laborer might work a few months helping to dig a canal, fill in a river, lay and repair rail lines, work as further "unskilled" labor in many of the numerous plants and factories in the area. That Patrick Mahoney, as a laborer, was able to purchase property was no small feat.

The 1870 federal census shows that his total worth was \$200, or the rough equivalent of \$3,993.62 today. It is almost certain that, due to his limited income as a laborer and the fact that there were two dwelling houses on the property, that he took in renters and boarders.

This same census shows that he was illiterate. He lived with a woman named Mary Mahoney who was 29 years old at the time of the census. She was also born in Ireland. She could have been his wife (significant age differences were not uncommon), daughter or other relative. Mary does not work outside the home. Three children also reside with Patrick and Mary Mahoney: Margaret (5) who is school-age, Kate (2), and Mary, an infant of 7 1/2 months who was born in November of the census year.

*Below: 1870 Federal Census – Patrick Mahoney*

Dwelling-house, numbered in the order of valuation.	Family, numbered in the order of valuation.	The name of every person whose place of abode on the first day of June, 1870, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.		VALUE OF REAL ESTATE OWNED.		Place of Birth, naming State or Territory of U. S.; or the Country, if of foreign birth.	PARENTAGE.		If born within the year, state month (Jan., Feb., &c.).	If married within the year, state month (Jan., Feb., &c.).	Attended school within the year.	Education.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.	CONSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS.
			Age of last birthday, if under 1 year, give month in fraction, thus, 1/2.	Sex—Males (M.), Females (F.).	Value of Real Estate.	Value of Personal Estate.		Father of foreign birth.	Mother of foreign birth.						
391 1672		Mahoney, Patrick	70	M	200		Ireland	/	/						
		Mary	29	F				/	/						
		Margaret	5	F			Mass	/	/						
		Kate	2	F				/	/						
		Mary	7 1/2	F				/	/						

As noted in the staff report on Historic Significance, C.R. Pope is listed as the owner of 21-23 Allen Street on the 1884 Hopkins map. No information was uncovered in either the federal census or City Directories for this owner. It is possible that Pope was not a resident of the City. As is common today in Somerville, the 19<sup>th</sup> century also saw absentee landlords who had investment properties for rent.

The 1895 Bromley map showed that ownership had changed to Charles O'Callahan and that a third residential structure, the "Rear Building" was now extant on the lot. It is unclear if the Rear Building was purposely built on the rear of the lot or if it was moved there from another location, a practice which was not uncommon in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

From records including City Directories, death certificates, and obituaries, there is much to learn of Charles O'Callahan and those who lived with him. The first time that he appears in records accessed to-date at 21-23 Allen Street is the 1890 City Directory where he is listed living at 21 Allen Street. The 1892 City Directory shows him living at 23 Allen Street. Prior to this he is shown as living at 6 Allen Street in 1889.



He was born in Ireland around 1854. His presence on Allen Street fits with the significant Irish immigrant presence in this area during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

It appears that, until the end of his life, O'Callahan worked as a laborer as did many of the residents of the area at this time (see earlier discussion of Patrick Mahoney). From the period of 1895 until his death in 1909, O'Callahan and his family members rotated among the three structures on 21-23 Allen Street. As seen in the staff report for 27 Allen Street, O'Callahan at one time owned that building as well, domiciling there for a short period of time.

Charles' wife, Rose O'Callahan, owned and ran a "variety store" at an address that is alternately known as 23 ½ Allen Street and 25 Allen Street. It is possible that a portion of the current 23 Allen Street building was converted to house this small commercial enterprise or that another structure, no longer extant, housed the business. Regardless, that property was also owned by the O'Callahans.

A variety store in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, much like variety stores today, sold an array of goods: canned food, coffee, tea, tobacco, dry goods, fruits and vegetables, and household items. Such stores served to provide some of the essentials residents and workers needed on a daily basis.

As the proprietor, Rose O'Callahan would have interacted with countless Allen Street and Union Square residents, area laborers and the workers of the nearby slaughterhouses, glassworks and other industries. Hers was an occupation that lent itself to being witness to the habits and personal stories of the people in this area at the time.

The 1897 City Directory shows Charles and Rose O'Callahan living at 21 Allen Street (see photos earlier in report for visual references). Note that all of the people listed under the "O'Callahan" name may or may not be related; a City Directory simply listed all people with the same last name under one heading. However, Rose O'Callahan, as noted above, was, indeed, Charles' wife. The "do." at the end of her entry stands for "ditto". Instead of writing "Allen" again after 21, "do." was used. Therefore, her entry shows that her variety store was at 25 Allen Street and her residence, which she owned, was at 21 Allen Street.

Multiple City Directory entries for the O'Callahans are included below. They often moved between all three buildings on the property.

***Below: 1897 City Directory entry***

O'Byrne Mary, widow of Austin, h. 42 Horace  
John F. laborer, b. 42 Horace  
O'Callahan Charles, laborer, h. 21 Allen  
John, laborer, b. 217 Cedar  
Patrick, laborer, b. 18 Maloy ct.  
Rose, variety store, 25 Allen, h. 21 do.

***Below: 1898 City Directory entry***

O'BRYEN, William, h. 19 Robinson  
**O'BRYEN FULTON**, hay, grain and flour, 3 and 4  
Union square, h. 226 Summer. See back cover  
Jane H. widow of Edwin A. h. 226 Summer  
O'Bryan James, molder, 67 Washington  
O'Byrne Mary, widow of Austin, h. 42 Horace  
John F. laborer, b. 42 Horace  
O'Callahan Charles, laborer, h. 21 Allen  
John, laborer, h. 25 Murdock  
Rose, variety store, 25 Allen, h. 21 do.  
O'Connell Arthur, music printer, h. 74 Lawrence  
Bartholomew, laborer, h. 38 Mansfield  
Cornelius, at 169 Gore. E. C. h. 145 Medford

By 1899, the O'Callahans had at least two boarders living at the property, who may or may not be relatives; John and Patrick were found in earlier directories boarding at other properties in the City. The "b." refers to "boarder". A boarder, as opposed to a renter, lived in one room and had some meals included in the fee ("room and board") that they paid on a weekly or monthly basis. In 1899, all of the O'Callahans listed were living in the Rear Building on the property (identified by the "r."). Note that Rose's store is now listed as 23 ½ Allen Street. In 1900, the O'Callahans continue to have boarders at the Rear Building. Portions of the other two houses on the property were also likely filled with boarders and/or renters.

***Below: 1899 City Directory entry***

" see Burns and Byrne  
O'Callahan **Charles**, laborer, h. r. 23 Allen  
" John, vegetables, etc. b. r. 23 Allen  
" Peter, vegetables, etc. b. r. 23 Allen  
" Rose Mrs. variety store, 23½ Allen, h. r. 23 do  
O'Connell Arthur, music printer, h. 74 Lawrence  
" Bartholomew, laborer, h. 38 Mansfield

***Below: 1900 City Directory entry***

" see Burns and Byrne  
O'Callahan **Charles**, laborer, h. r. 23 Allen  
" James, tailor, B. h. 393 Washington  
" John, vegetables, etc. b. r. 23 Allen  
" Peter, vegetables, etc. b. r. 23 Allen  
" Rose Mrs. variety store, 23½ Allen, h. r. 23 do.  
O'Connell Arthur, music printer, h. 74 Lawrence

The listing for Rose Callahan's variety store at 21 ½ Allen Street appears in the Variety Store listing in the 1903 City Directory on the following page. Notice the significant number of female owners of variety stores in the listing.



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## SOMERVILLE BUSINESS DIRECTORY

*Type Mfrs.*

Palmer C. G. 92 Liberty ave.

*Typewriter Desks***DOTEN-DUNTON DESK CO.** 66 Pearl, B. See page 686*Umbrellas and Canes***LAMSON & HUBBARD,** 90 Bedford and 229 Washington, Boston. See page 22*Undertakers*

Barker Thomas J. 15 Dimick

**BRYANT CHARLES F.** 353 Medford and 15 Austin, Chasn. See page 7**BRYANT JOHN SONS,** 353 Medford and 15 Austin, Chasn. See page 7

Flaherty W. A. &amp; Son, 263 Wash.

**FRINK WM. A.** 17 Holland. See page 3**FUDGE DAVID & SON,** 332 Somerville ave. See p. 25  
Gill William T. 151 Glen**KAULER JOHN E.** 34 Lincoln. See page 7**LOCKHART W. L. & CO.** 191 to 206 Bridge, new building, 122 to 140 First, E. C. and 149 Staniford, B. See p. 6**MANN ALFRED E.** 4 Warren av. and 75 Washington. See p. 2**McGOVERN JOHN B.** 363A Highland ave. See p. 681

McGowen John S. 13 Stone ave.

McKenna George F. 292 Lowell

**RAFFERTY PATRICK H.** 387 Somerville av. and 60 Chambers, B. See page 6**WILSON F. M.** 103 Cross. See page 683**WINTERBOTTOM CHARLES J.** 671A Som. av. See page 7*Upholsterers***CALDWELL JACKSON & CO.** 53-55 Union sq. See bottom edge and opp. p. 226

Eccles William F. 366 Medford

Fitzpatrick P. J. 5 Bow

Flemming W. F. 245B Pearl

Goodrich L. H. 102 Perkins

**GRACEY & WEIR,** 79 Broadway. See p. 679**HURN GEORGE F. & CO.** CO. 52 and 52A Broadway. See p. 16

Lyman A. C. 364 Somerville ave.

Martin R. S. 63B Dover

*Variety Stores*

Anderson M. A. Mrs. 106 Linwood

Bellingham John, 412 Som. ave.

Bliss Henrietta M. 27C Summer

Burns Abbie Mrs. 7 Bedford

Carroll John, 6 Summer

Crisaphé M. M. Mrs. 155 Wash.

Daliusky Rose Mrs. 419A Som. av.

Demont Jacob, 186 Som. ave.

Dorney Mary Mrs. 78 Webster av.

Downey Mary Mrs. 95 Som. ave.

Doyle Bridget D. Mrs. 73 Joy

Fitzgerald C. Mrs. 117A Beacon

Francis Rebecca F. 218 Holland

Goldthwaite A. D. Mrs. 140 Willow ave.

Green Martha R. Mrs. 18 Maple

Gillette W. F. 260 Summer

Greenfeldt F. Mrs. 44 Linwood

Grierson James, 208 Summer

Gross S. S. 45 Washington

Guild Charles T. 23 Dane

Haggett J. M. 518 Medford

Harding A. M. Mrs. 11 Mt. Pleasant

Harding L. A. E. Mrs. 669 Som. ave.

Holman M. H. Mrs. 44 Kingston

Hughes Arthur, 285 Beacon

Jarvis Addie S. 138A Pearl

Jarvis William H. 47 Cross

Leach A. F. Mrs. 365A Som. ave.

Le Cain L. A. 380 Highland ave.

Libbey L. M. 6 Holland

Lovitt J. W. 257 Highland ave.

Lowrey Mary, 131 Pearl

Lynch Catherine Mrs. 30 Linwood

MacIntosh A. Mrs. 375 Beacon

McCabe Marjory Mrs. 192 Tremont

McLeod Annie, 73B Pearl

Messervy A. C. Mrs. 214 Pearl

Morrison E. Mrs. 80 Highland av.

O'Callahan **Rose** Mrs. 234 Allen

Moulton Ada K. 404 Medford

Phillips George B. 18 Union sq.

Pickell Margaret M. 504 B'way

Piper W. C. 246 Elm

Riker S. A. Mrs. 518 Som. ave.

Robie Albert E. 31 Vernon

Romanow M. 254 Elm

Sanborn Mary Mrs. 19 Allen

Shea Mary Mrs. 19 Allen

Sheekleton Jennie Mrs. 52A Cross

Simon Fannie Mrs. 34 Wash.

Smith Ada Mrs. 350A Som. ave.

Spence Ellen A. 58 Willow

Stackpole Bessie G. 20 B'way

Stuart E. &amp; H. N. 38 Cross

Tatten M. H. 436A Som. ave.

Walker Jennie 44A Broadway

Wentworth Frank T. 169 Wash.

White Agnes M. 203 Medford

Rose O'Callahan dies at age 45 in 1904 after a month of suffering from "paralysis" with a secondary cause of death being meningitis. "Paralysis" in this time period was typically caused by the polio virus and death from paralysis tended to occur in older individuals. The virus would have infected the muscles associated with breathing; essentially Rose would have likely suffocated to death. The meningitis caused by the viral infection would have created a swelling of the protective membranes around the brain and spinal cord. Staff provides this information not to dwell on the macabre, but to underscore just how difficult both life and death were at that time, particularly for the working class. There was also a lack of meaningful treatment for a multitude of medical ailments. Rose's death certificate appears below:

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
CITY OF SOMERVILLE

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## RETURN OF A DEATH

FULL NAME Rose O'Callahan Registered No. 727

Place of Death 23 Allen St. Somerville Date of Death Oct. 4 1904  
(Name of Hospital or Institution if any) (No.) (Street)

Place of Residence 23 Allen St. Somerville, Mass. Age 45 years  months  days  
(No.) (Street) (Town or City and State)

STATISTICAL DETAILS			PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE
SEX <b>Female</b>	COLOR <b>White</b>	SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED <b>Married</b>	<p>I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended deceased during last illness, from <u>190</u> to <u>190</u>, that to the best of my knowledge and belief death occurred on the date stated above, and that the CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows: (If a soldier or sailor who served in the war of the rebellion both the primary and contributory causes of death must be given.)</p> <p>Primary: <u>Paralysis</u></p> <p>(DURATION) <u>One month</u> DAYS</p> <p>Contributory: <u>Meningitis</u></p> <p>(Signed) <u>William P. Hammond</u> M.D.  (Address) <u>47 Monument Sq., Charlestown, Mass</u>  <small>(No.) (Street) (Town or City)</small></p> <p><b>SPECIAL INFORMATION</b> only for Hospitals, Institutions, Transients, or Recent Residents.</p> <p>How long at Previous Residence <u></u> Years <u></u> Months <u></u> Days</p> <p>Place of Death? <u></u> Years <u></u> Months <u></u> Days</p> <p>Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? <u></u></p> <p>Received <u>Oct. 6</u> 190<u>4</u> <u>William P. Mitchell</u>  Agent of Board of Health, appointed to issue burial permits</p> <p>Filed <u>Oct. 6</u> 190<u>4</u> <u>George J. Vincent</u>  City Clerk</p>
MAIDEN NAME <u>Rose Reagan</u> <small>If a married or divorced woman, or widow</small>			
HUSBAND'S FULL NAME <u>Charles O'Callahan</u>			
BIRTHPLACE <u>Ireland</u> <small>Give state or country; also city, town, or county, if known</small>			
NAME OF FATHER <u>Peter Reagan</u>			
BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER <u>Ireland</u> <small>Give state or country; also city, town, or county, if known</small>			
MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <u>Rose Dolan</u>			
BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER <u>Ireland</u> <small>Give state or country; also city, town, or county, if known</small>			
OCCUPATION <u></u>			
INFORMANT'S NAME <u>Charles O'Callahan, Husband</u> <small>Person giving statistical details</small>			
ADDRESS <u>23 Allen St., Somerville</u> <small>(No.) (Street) (Town or City)</small>			
PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL <u>Holy Cross</u> <small>(Cemetery)</small>		DATE OF BURIAL <u>Oct. 6</u> 190 <u>4</u>	
Malden <small>(Town or City, and State)</small>			
UNDERTAKER'S NAME <u>William A. Flaherty</u>			
ADDRESS <u>261 Washington St., Somerville</u> <small>(No.) (Street) (Town or City)</small>			

FILL OUT WITH INK—THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD  
ALL NAMES TO BE IN FULL

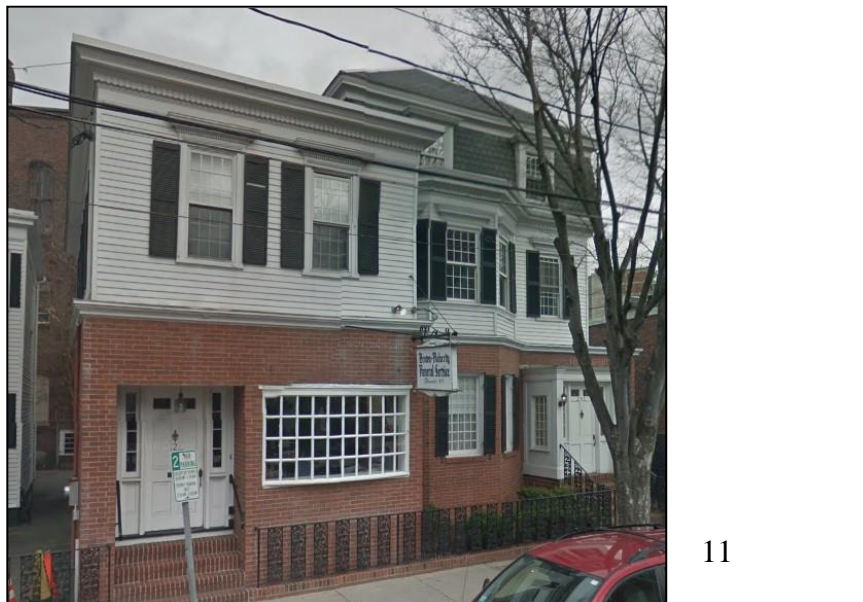


Her obituary listing in the Boston Globe shows that her arrangements were handled by the Flaherty Funeral Home on Washington Street. This funeral home was still operating (as Brown-Flaherty Funeral Home) as late as 2016. (It has now been converted to residential condos. The funeral itself was held at Saint Joseph's across the street. At the time of Rose's death, the church still retained its steeple which was removed in 1978 due to structural instability.

**Below:** Rose O'Callahan's obituary in the Boston Globe, 1904. Call-out of same. Staff provides a fuller page of the newspaper to provide historical context. (Zoom function will be needed.)

[illegible]

**O'CALLAHAN**—In Somerville, Oct 4, Rose, beloved wife of Charles O'Callahan. Funeral from her late residence, 23 Allen st, Thursday, Oct 6, at 8:30 a m. Solemn high mass of requiem at St. Joseph's church at 9 o'clock. Relatives and friends are invited to attend.



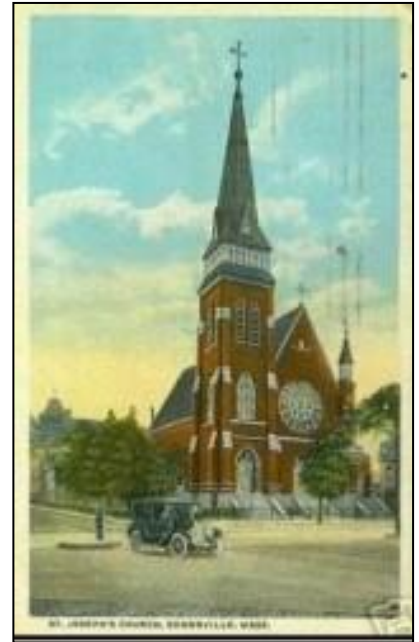
**Right:** Former (Brown-) Flaherty Funeral Home



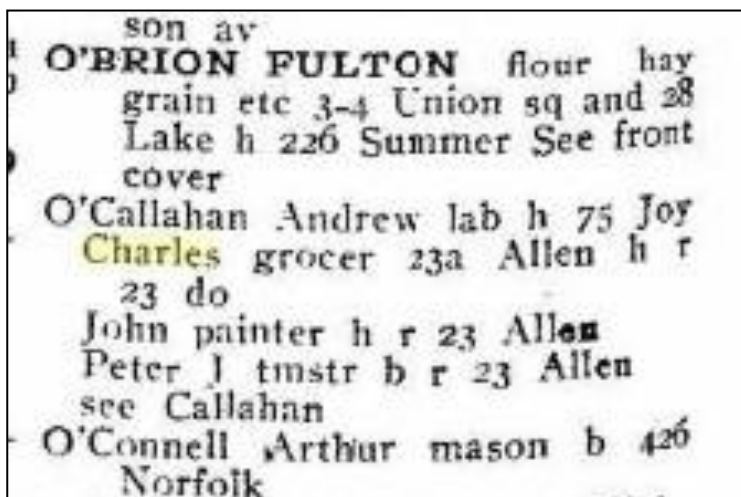
Note the close proximity of these services to the O'Callahan's properties; this was neighborhood life/living.

**Below, left:** St. Joseph's Church today.

**Below, right:** St. Joseph's church largely as it would have looked during the time of Rose and Charles O'Callahan



After Rose's death, Charles continued working as a laborer until 1909, the year of his own death. In 1909 his occupation in the City Directory is listed as a "grocer". He opened a grocery at 23a Allen Street. It is likely this is the same location as the 23 ½ Allen address where Rose operated her variety store. The boarders, John and Patrick, from several years earlier still live at the Rear Building on the property along with Charles. John now owns the property in part with Charles (the "h." is the indicator in the directory). Patrick remains a boarder. John and Patrick's jobs have changed to painter and Teamster.



**Left:** 1909 City Directory listing, the year of Charles' death.

Charles dies in 1909 at the age of 55 of “pernicious anemia”<sup>1</sup> from which he suffered for a year-and-a-half. Pernicious anemia is a condition whereby the body is unable to produce enough red blood cells due to the lack of vitamin B12. This condition leads to fatigue, shortness of breath, jaundice (yellowing of the skin) or pallor (severe paleness), bleeding gums, irregular heartbeat, mental confusion, personality changes and permanent damage to the nervous system.

A secondary cause of death is listed as “gastritis”<sup>2</sup> which is the inflammation of the lining of the stomach.

While these conditions are treatable today, this was not the case in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries; antibiotics had not been discovered and medical treatments and procedures were still crude, particularly by today’s standards.

His death certificate appears below:

[2-1-1906-5,000]  
J 423

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
CITY OF SOMERVILLE

## RETURN OF A DEATH

**77**

FULL NAME Charles O'Callahan Registered No. 372  
Place of Death 23 Allen street Somerville Date of Death April 29, 1909  
(Name of Hospital or Institution if any) (No.) (Street)  
Place of Residence 23 Allen St., Somerville, Mass. Age 55 years 2 months — days  
(No.) (Street) (Town or City and State)

STATISTICAL DETAILS		PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE
SEX <b>male</b>	COLOR <b>white</b>	<p>I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended deceased during last illness, from <u>Jan.</u> <u>1909</u> to <u>April 29, 1909</u>, that to the best of my knowledge and belief death occurred on the date stated above, and that the CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows: (If a soldier or sailor who served in the war of the rebellion both the primary and contributory causes of death must be given.)</p> <p>Primary: <u>Pernicious Anaemia</u></p> <p><u>about 1 1/2</u> years (DURATION) DAYS</p> <p>Contributory: <u>Gastritis</u></p> <p>(DURATION) DAYS</p> <p>(Signed) <u>Edward J. Dailey</u> M.D.</p> <p>(Address) <u>5 Summer</u> <u>Somerville</u>  <small>(No.) (Street) (Town or City)</small></p> <p><b>SPECIAL INFORMATION</b> only for Hospitals, Institutions, Transients, or Recent Residents.</p> <p>Previous Residence _____</p> <p>How long at _____</p> <p>Place of Death? _____ Years _____ Months _____ Days</p> <p>Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? _____</p> <p>Received <u>April 30, 1909</u> <u>Wm. P. Mitchell</u>  Agent of Board of Health, appointed to issue burial permits</p> <p>Filed <u>April 30, 1909</u> <u>City Clerk</u></p>
MAIDEN NAME <small>If a married or divorced woman, or widow</small>		
HUSBAND'S FULL NAME		
BIRTHPLACE <small>Give state or country; also city, town, or county, if known</small> <u>Ireland</u>		
NAME OF FATHER <u>John O'Callahan</u>		
BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER <small>Give state or country; also city, town, or county, if known</small> <u>Ireland</u>		
MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <u>Ann Welsh</u>		
BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER <small>Give state or country; also city, town, or county, if known</small> <u>Ireland</u>		
OCCUPATION <u>Grocer</u>		
INFORMANT'S <small>Person giving statistical details</small> NAME <u>Mary O'Callahan</u>		
ADDRESS <u>23 Allen St., Somerville</u> <small>(No.) (Street) (Town or City)</small>		
PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL <u>Holy Cross</u> <small>(Cemetery)</small>	DATE OF BURIAL <u>May 1, 1909</u>	
<u>Malden, Mass.</u> <small>(Town or City, and State)</small>		
UNDERTAKER'S NAME <u>William A. Flaherty</u>		
ADDRESS <u>261 Washington St., Somerville</u> <small>(No.) (Street) (Town or City)</small>		

MARGIN RESERVED FOR BINDING  
FILL OUT WITH INK.—THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD  
ALL NAMES TO BE IN FULL

<sup>1</sup> Pernicious anaemia: [https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/pernicious-anemia#:~:text=These%20symptoms%20include%20nausea%20\(feeling,B12%20deficiency%20and%20pernicious%20anemia.](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/pernicious-anemia#:~:text=These%20symptoms%20include%20nausea%20(feeling,B12%20deficiency%20and%20pernicious%20anemia.)

<sup>2</sup> Gastritis: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/gastritis/symptoms-causes/syc-20355807>

## **IV. DETERMINATION**

The HPC must determine one of the following for each of the buildings at 21-23 Allen Street:

- a. That the building is Preferably Preserved.
- b. That the building is not Preferably Preserved.
- c. That the building is not Preferably Preserved *with Conditions*.

See the following section V “Findings” for guidance.

## **V. FINDINGS**

Since each building must receive its own separate determination, Staff has provided thumbnails of each of the buildings for ease-of-reference when the Commission makes its findings:



21 Allen Street



23 Allen Street



Rear Building

### **a. Preferably Preserved**

For a determination of *preferably preserved*, the HPC must make the following finding:

- *That the demolition of the buildings at 21-23 Allen Street would be detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City.*

If the HPC makes the above finding, the Commission must state their reasons why they take either position for EACH building separately.

### **b. Not Preferably Preserved**

If the HPC makes the above finding, the Commission must state their reasons why they take either position for EACH building separately.

### **c. Not Preferably Preserved with Conditions**

For a determination of *NOT preferably preserved with Conditions*, the HPC must make the following finding:



- *That the building(s) at **21-23 Allen Street** do not meet any of the criteria to be “preferably preserved.”. The HPC may add any or all of the following as conditions to this determination:*
  - 1. photographic documentation of the building to be demolished;*
  - 2. architectural renderings of the building to be demolished;*
  - 3. identification of materials for salvage of material; and/or,*
  - 4. a plan for installation of historic or interpretive signage at or near the site.*

If the HPC makes the above finding, the HPC must state their reasons why they take this position.

## **VI. VOTE**

When bringing the matter to a vote, the HPC must include the reasons why each of the buildings at **21-23 Allen Street** is or is not “preferably preserved”.

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

<b>Inventory No:</b>	SMV.368
<b>Historic Name:</b>	
<b>Common Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	21 Allen St
<b>City/Town:</b>	Somerville
<b>Village/Neighborhood:</b>	Ward Two - Cobble Hill
<b>Local No:</b>	
<b>Year Constructed:</b>	r 1845
<b>Architect(s):</b>	
<b>Architectural Style(s):</b>	No style
<b>Use(s):</b>	Single Family Dwelling House
<b>Significance:</b>	Architecture
<b>Area(s):</b>	
<b>Designation(s):</b>	
<b>Building Materials(s):</b>	Wall: Aluminum Siding; Wood Foundation: Concrete Unspecified



The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has converted this paper record to digital format as part of ongoing projects to scan records of the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places nominations for Massachusetts. Efforts are ongoing and not all inventory or National Register records related to this resource may be available in digital format at this time.

The MACRIS database and scanned files are highly dynamic; new information is added daily and both database records and related scanned files may be updated as new information is incorporated into MHC files. Users should note that there may be a considerable lag time between the receipt of new or updated records by MHC and the appearance of related information in MACRIS. Users should also note that not all source materials for the MACRIS database are made available as scanned images. Users may consult the records, files and maps available in MHC's public research area at its offices at the State Archives Building, 220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, open M-F, 9-5.

Users of this digital material acknowledge that they have read and understood the MACRIS Information and Disclaimer (<http://mhc-macris.net/macrisdisclaimer.htm>)

Data available via the MACRIS web interface, and associated scanned files are for information purposes only. THE ACT OF CHECKING THIS DATABASE AND ASSOCIATED SCANNED FILES DOES NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LOCAL, STATE OR FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS. IF YOU ARE REPRESENTING A DEVELOPER AND/OR A PROPOSED PROJECT THAT WILL REQUIRE A PERMIT, LICENSE OR FUNDING FROM ANY STATE OR FEDERAL AGENCY YOU MUST SUBMIT A PROJECT NOTIFICATION FORM TO MHC FOR MHC'S REVIEW AND COMMENT. You can obtain a copy of a PNF through the MHC web site ([www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)) under the subject heading "MHC Forms."

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

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FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108



Area Ward II	Form no. 368
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Roll 34: 5

Somerville

P1. WARD II

21 Allen Street

USGS BOSTON

Name

SEB B

ginal

sent

p: ☐ Private individual  
Private organization

Public

ginal owner

ION:

Date ca. 1840-50

Source

Style Greek Revival

Architect

Exterior wall fabric

Outbuildings

Major alterations (with dates)

removal of returns at eaves; new concrete steps.

Moved Date

Approx. acreage

Setting

Recorded by Mary Bennett/C.Z.

Organization Landscape Research

Date 10/80

(Staple additional sheets here)



ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

21 Allen is representative of the simplest most cheaply constructed dwelling of the period. Window openings were kept to a minimum: only one at the front elevation, with a sidehall plan and entrance. Some of the 6/6 windows still intact.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

Once a marshy site, this house was built or moved near the site of the C. Bennett rope walk.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Draper, Martin, Map of Somerville, 1852.  
Hopkins, G.M. Atlas of the City of Somerville, 1874