



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

GEORGE P. PROAKIS, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE STAFF REPORT

Site:	15 Woodbine Street
Case:	HPC 2019.054
Applicant Name:	Sal Querusio
Date of Application:	August 7, 2019
Recommendation:	Significant
Hearing Date:	September 17, 2019

I.



Historical Association

Historical Context: Woodbine Street was originally called Alpine Street and dead-ended against land belonging to the Stearns family. The 1884 Hopkins Atlas shows only six houses on the street with 3 of them on the property of Daniel Simonds. 15 Woodbine Street was constructed at some time between 1884 and 1895. By 1895, most of the north side of Woodbine Street was fully built up with workers cottages. The ownership of the parcels on both sides of the road is shown to the ownership of Nathan Simonds. In the 1900 census, 76 year-old Simonds is listed as a landowner

boarding at 73 Albion Street which abuts the properties he owns on the south side of Woodbine Street. Neither he nor Daniel Simonds are found in Somerville for the 1880 census. Due to the continued ownership of the land from the 1874 through 1900 by the Simonds family, it is likely that all the workers cottages were constructed by them for rental. Nathan Simonds also owned rental property on Campbell Park in Davis Square.

There is no census material available for Massachusetts in 1890. There are also no searchable City Directories online after 1884 making it impossible to find the tenants of Somerville homes before 1903. Therefore it cannot be known for whom the Simonds family built these workers cottages. See Table below for known ownership, tenancy and building permit records of 22 Woodbine Street.

Architectural Description: The house is a 1 and ½ story side-gable cottage with an enclosed front porch. Neighbors have told the Staff that there is no foundation, just a concrete slab. The roof is three-tab asphalt.

Summary: The workers cottage located at 15 Woodbine Street was constructed between 1884 and 1895 on land belonging to Daniel Simonds, 1884 and Nathan Simonds, 1895. The street is predominantly 1 and ½-story workers cottages on the land originally owned by the Simonds family while the older houses are a full two stories. Throughout the 20th century the house was tenanted by working class families.

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 15 Woodbine 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 its associations with the working class development of the City in the Albion Magoun neighborhood.

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 15 Woodbine Street begins before 1895 with its construction in a neighborhood of similar buildings owned by the Simonds family and inhabited by working class families.

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 house has not been moved. It is located on a quiet side street amid a grouping of similar houses near the Lowell Railroad.
- b. Design: The building is a simple wood workers cottage with a center entry and side gables. A gable-ended vestibule was added to the front and a salt-box addition is on the rear.
- c. Materials: The building is constructed of wood with asphalt roof shingles and modern windows.
- d. Alterations: A gable-ended vestibule was added to the front and a salt-box addition is on the rear. The windows on the east side have been altered.

Evaluation of Integrity: Despite the alterations to the building, the retention of form and location give a very good sense of this type of working-class housing in the 19th century.

Does the subject parcel represent a distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction?

This house is centrally located among a small collection of similar working class houses on Woodbine Street constructed by the Simonds family between 1884 and 1895.

Does the subject parcel represent an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or region due to its singular physical characteristics or landscape?

Woodbine Street is a small street that links Lowell Street with Central Street through the Somerville Junction Park and the Cambridge Health Alliance Parking Lot. While the street is not much used by automotive traffic, pedestrians and cyclists find it a preferred route parallel to the rail corridor. 15 Woodbine Street is set among many similarly sized and shaped buildings. The house is centrally located on the street.

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 22 Woodbine Street historically or architecturally significant.

The subject building is found historically and architecturally significant due to its place within a group of similarly important buildings. The subject building is found historically and architecturally significant as an intact representative of 19th century working- class housing stock and represents some of the earliest residential development on this neighborhood.

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 1884-1895, is at least 50 years old.

The period of significance for 15 Woodbine Street begins before 1895 with its construction in a neighborhood of similar buildings owned by the Simonds family and constructed for working class families.

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.

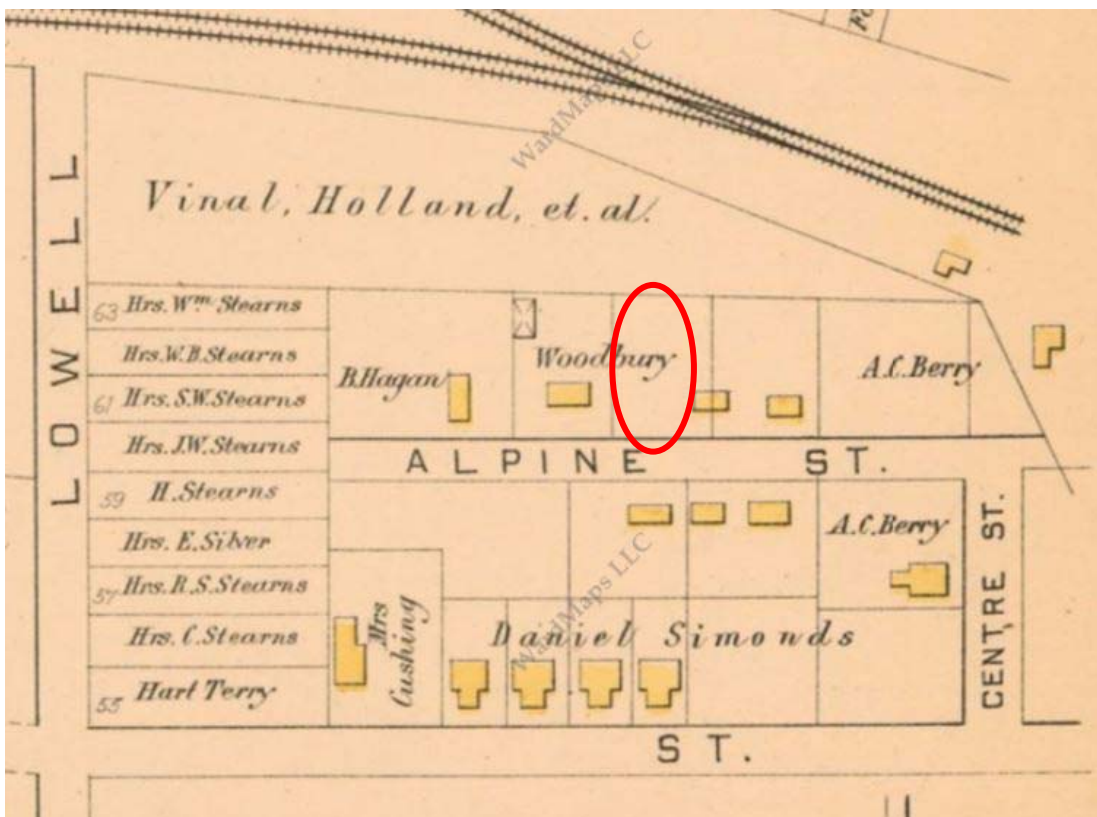
(a) In accordance with the *Findings on Historical Association*, which utilizes historic maps/atlas, City reports and directories, and building permit research, and through an examination of resources that document the history of the City, **Staff recommend that the Historic Preservation Commission find 15 Woodbine 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 its associations with the working class development of the City in the Albion Magoun neighborhood.

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 15 Woodbine Street historically and architecturally significant.**

The subject building is found historically and architecturally significant due to its place within a group of similarly important buildings. The subject building is found historically and architecturally significant as an intact representative of 19th century working-class housing stock and represents some of the earliest residential development on this neighborhood.

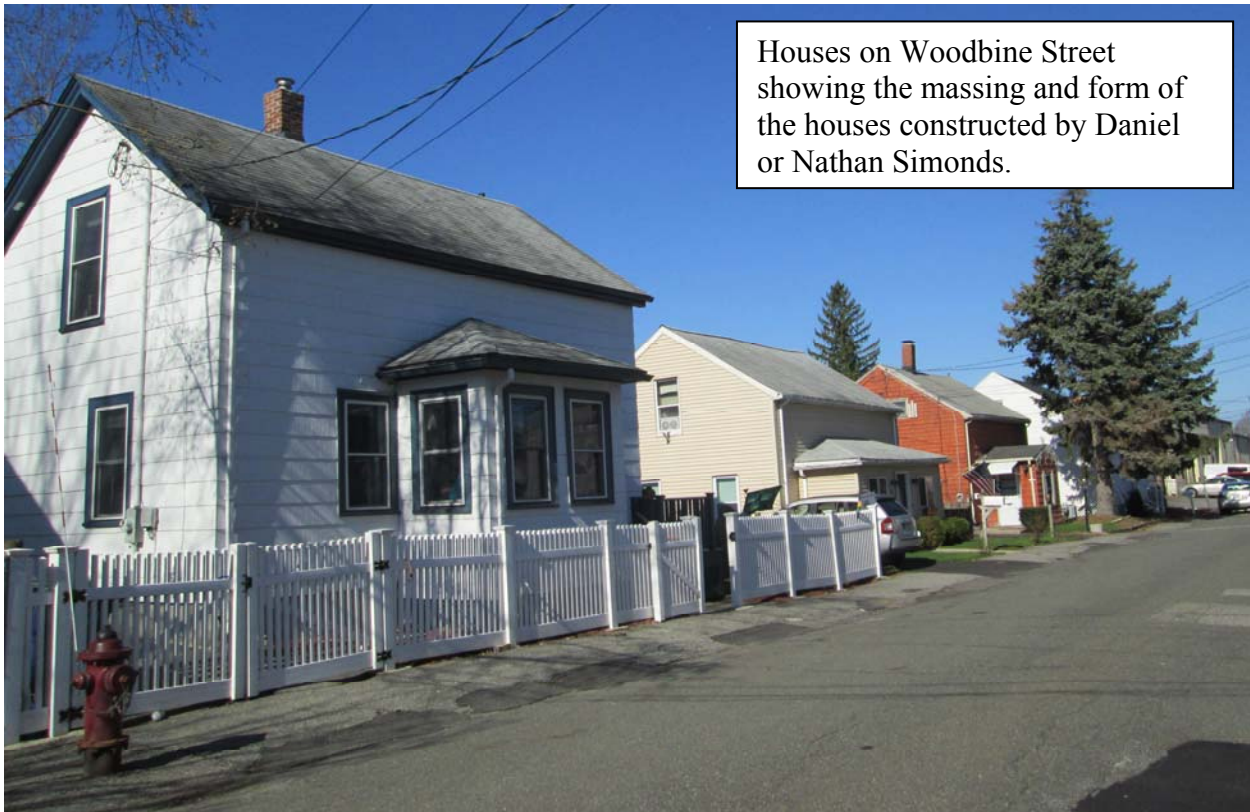
22 Woodbine Street

1884 Hopkins Plate 12





15 Woodbine Street



Houses on Woodbine Street showing the massing and form of the houses constructed by Daniel or Nathan Simonds.

Census #	LOCATIO N	O/R	NAME	AGE/DAT E	OCCUPAT ION	PLACE OF BIRTH	IMMIGRA TION YEAR	SOURCE	NOTES
<u>Woodbine Street</u>									
		O	Daniel Simonds					1884 Hopkins Atlas Plate 12	Vacant land
		O	Nathan Simonds					1895 Bromley Atlas Plate 3	22,672 S F, 4 houses on N side & 34,660 SF, 7 houses on S side
	Woodbine Street		John A. Collings		Carpenter			1890 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		Harry Clifford		Silver Plater (28 Sudbury, Boston)			1893 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		Harry Clifford		Silver Plater (28 Sudbury, Boston)			1894 City Directory	
		O	Nathan Simonds					1895 Bromley Atlas Plate 3	
	Woodbine Street		George J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker			1895 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		Edward J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker			1895 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		Catherine Heiser		Widow			1895 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		Mary Heiser		Sweater Knitter			1896 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		George J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker			1896 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		Edward J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker			1896 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		George J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker			1897 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		George J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker			1898 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		Catherine Heiser		Widow of Paul			1898 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		Edward Heiser		Cabinet Maker			1899 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		Catherine Heiser		Widow of Paul			1899 City Directory	
211/295	Woodbine Street		Kate Heiser (mother)	59		Ireland		1900 Census	
211/295	Woodbine Street	R	Edward Heiser (head)	29	Cabinet Maker	Massachusetts		1900 Census	
211/295	Woodbine Street		George Heiser (brother)	27		Massachusetts		1900 Census	
					Stitcher, Shirt factory				
211/295	Woodbine Street		Mary Heiser (sister)	20		Massachusetts		1900 Census	
	Woodbine Street		George J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker			1900 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		Edward J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker			1900 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street		Catherine Heiser		Widow of Paul			1900 City Directory	

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					1900 Stadley Atlas Plate
O N. Simonds					
Woodbine Street		George J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker	1901 City Directory
Woodbine Street		Edward J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker	1901 City Directory
Woodbine Street		Catherine Heiser		Widow	1901 City Directory
Woodbine Street		Edward J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker	1902 City Directory
Woodbine Street		Catherine Heiser		Widow	1902 City Directory
Woodbine Street		Edward J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker	1903 City Directory
Woodbine Street		Catherine Heiser		Widow	1903 City Directory
Woodbine Street		George J. Heiser		Cabinet Maker	1904 City Directory
Woodbine Street		W. J. Kennedy		Plumber	1906 City Directory
Woodbine Street		W. J. Kennedy		Plumber	1907 City Directory
Woodbine Street		Frank M. Doyle		Carpenter	1909 City Directory
Woodbine Street		Forrest Siggins		Laborer	1909 City Directory
Woodbine Street		Frank Vanderstuvf		Tile Setter	1910 City Directory
Woodbine Street		James Adams		Carpenter	1911 City Directory
Woodbine Street		James Adams		Carpenter	1911 City Directory
Woodbine Street		James Adams		Carpenter	1912 City Directory
Woodbine Street		James Adams		Carpenter	1913 Directory
Woodbine Street		James Adams		Carpenter	1914 City Directory
Woodbine Street		James Adams		Carpenter	19 City Directory
Woodbine Street		James Adams		Carpenter	1919 City Directory
165/265	Woodbine Street	R James J. Adams (head)	55	House Carpenter	Canada, English
165/265	Woodbine Street	Mary E Adams (wife)	54		England
165/265	Woodbine Street	James A. Adams (son)	17	Machine Operator, Candy Factory	Massachusetts
165/265	Woodbine Street	Edna Adams (daughter)	16	Filing Clerk, Office	Massachusetts
165/265	Woodbine Street	John M. Adams (son)	14		Massachusetts
	Woodbine Street	O Norman D. Scheffreen			1920 Census
	Woodbine Street	O Maurice L. Marcus			1920 Deed 4369/213
	Woodbine Street	O Minnie M. Taillon			1920 Deed 4369/213
					1921 Deed 4445/73

from Arthur H. Spenser et al

from Norman D. Scheffreen

from Maurice L. Marcus

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	Woodbine Street	H. Willis				1924 Building Permit	Erect 1 shed for dead storage/auto.
	Woodbine Street	Minnie Taillon		Seamstress		1924 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street	Minnie Willis		Wife of Henry J. Willis		1925 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street	Henry J. Willis		Cabinet Maker		1925 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street	Minnie Willis		Wife of Henry J. Willis		1927 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street	Henry J. Willis		Cabinet Maker		1927 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street	Henry J. Willis & Minnie M. Willis				1928 Deed 5245/360	
	Woodbine Street	O Willis				1928 Deed 5245/360	from Gertrude E. McCarthy from Minnie M. (Taillon) Willis
	Woodbine Street	O Gertrude E. McCarthy		Wife of Henry J. Willis			
	Woodbine Street	Minnie Willis				1929 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street	Henry J. Willis		Cabinet Maker		1929 City Directory	
	Woodbine Street	Gilbert E. Taillon		Radio Worker		1929 City Directory	
3/3	Woodbine Street	Minnie M. Willis (wife)	43		Massachusetts	1930 Census	
3/3	Woodbine Street	O Henry J. Willis (head)	40	Stock Fitter, Desk Factory	Massachusetts	1930 Census	
3/3	Woodbine Street	Gilbert E. Taillon (son)	19	Assistant Cook, Restaurant	Massachusetts	1930 Census	Jobs ascribed to the person on the line below, however it is unlikely that a 12 yr-old would be working as a saleslady.
3/3	Woodbine Street	Gladys M. Taillon (daughter)	16	Saleslady, Drygoods	Massachusetts	1930 Census	Jobs ascribed to the person on the line below, however it is unlikely that a 12 yr-old would be working as a saleslady.
3/3	Woodbine Street	Evelyn F. Taillon (daughter)	12		Massachusetts	1930 Census	
3/3	Woodbine Street	Harold G. Willis (son)	5		Massachusetts	1930 Census	
		Minnie M. Willis (wife)	53	Seamstress, Ladies Dress Factory	Massachusetts	1940 Census	
58	Woodbine Street	O Henry J. Willis (head)	50	Wood Cutter, Box Mill	Massachusetts	1940 Census	
58	Woodbine Street	Edward Willis (son)	25	Laborer, Contractor	Massachusetts	1940 Census	
58	Woodbine Street	Evelyn Willis (daughter)	22	Hairdresser, Beauty	Massachusetts	1940 Census	

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Parlor

58	Woodbine Street		Harold G. Willis (son)	Massachusetts	1940 Census	
			Edward J. Gorman & Mary E.		1962 Deed	from Arthur W. Ramey &
	Woodbine Street	O	Gorman		10075/390	Gladys Ramey
			Arthur W. Ramey & Gladys		1962 Deed	
	Woodbine Street	O	Ramey		9979/591	from Henry J. Willis
			Walter J. Collete & Margaret P.		1973 Deed	from Edward J. Gorman &
	Woodbine Street	O	Collette		11999/121	Mary E. Gorman

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		O	Daniel Simonds?						1884 Hopkins Atlas Plate 12	Vacant land
	15 Woodbine Street		John A. Collings			Carpenter			1890 City Directory	
	15 Woodbine Street		Harry Clifford			Silver Plater (28 Sudbury, Boston)			1893 City Directory	
	15 Woodbine Street		Harry Clifford			Silver Plater (28 Sudbury, Boston)			1894 City Directory	
		O	Nathan Simonds						1895 Bromley Atlas Plate 3	
	15 Woodbine Street		George J. Heiser			Cabinet Maker			1895 City Directory	
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211/295	15 Woodbine Street		Kate Heiser (mother)	59			Ireland		1900 Census	
211/295	15 Woodbine Street	R	Edward Heiser (head)	29		Cabinet Maker	Massachusetts		1900 Census	
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211/295	15 Woodbine Street		Mary Heiser (sister)	20		Stitcher, Shirt factory	Massachusetts		1900 Census	
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	15 Woodbine Street		Catherine Heiser			Widow of Paul			1900 City Directory	
		O	N. Simonds						1900 Stadley Atlas Plate 15	
	15 Woodbine Street		George J. Heiser			Cabinet Maker			1901 City Directory	
	15 Woodbine Street		Edward J. Heiser			Cabinet Maker			1901 City Directory	
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165/265	15 Woodbine Street		Mary E Adams (wife)	54			England		1920 Census	
165/265	15 Woodbine Street		James A. Adams (son)	17		Machine Operator, Candy Factory	Massachusetts		1920 Census	
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	15 Woodbine Street	O	Maurice L. Marcus						1920 Deed 4369/213	from Norman D. Scheffreen
	15 Woodbine Street	O	Minnie M. Taillon						1921 Deed 4445/73	from Maurice L. Marcus
	15 Woodbine Street		H. Willis						1924 Building Permit	Erect 1 shed for dead storage/auto.
	15 Woodbine Street		Minnie Taillon			Seamstress			1924 City Directory	
	15 Woodbine Street		Minnie Willis			Wife of Henry J. Willis			1925 City Directory	
	15 Woodbine Street		Henry J. Willis			Cabinet Maker			1925 City Directory	
	15 Woodbine Street		Minnie Willis			Wife of Henry J. Willis			1927 City Directory	
	15 Woodbine Street		Henry J. Willis			Cabinet Maker			1927 City Directory	
	15 Woodbine Street	O	Henry J. Willis & Minnie M. Willis						1928 Deed 5245/360	from Gertrude E. McCarthy
	15 Woodbine Street	O	Gertrude E. McCarthy						1928 Deed 5245/360	from Minnie M. (Taillon) Willis
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58	15 Woodbine Street		Evelyn Willis (daughter)	22		Hairdresser, Beauty Parlor	Massachusetts		1940 Census	
58	15 Woodbine Street		Harold G. Willis (son)	15			Massachusetts		1940 Census	
	15 Woodbine Street	O	Edward J. Gorman & Mary E. Gorman						1962 Deed 10075/390	from Arthur W. Ramey & Gladys Ramey
	15 Woodbine Street	O	Arthur W. Ramey & Gladys Ramey						1962 Deed 9979/591	from Henry J. Willis
	15 Woodbine Street	O	Walter J. Collete & Margaret P. Collette						1973 Deed 11999/121	from Edward J. Gorman & Mary E. Gorman