

## “Identifying Architectural Gems from Gilman Square to East Somerville”

*Walking Tour Researched and Led by Edward Gordon, Architectural Historian and  
President of Victorian Society in America, New England Chapter*

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For nearly a decade, the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission and East Somerville Main Streets have co-sponsored walking tours of East Somerville. Each year every effort is made to design a route that differs from prior years and offers new insights and research regarding the buildings and sites along the way. For the first time this walk will approach East Somerville from the west, taking a path from the top of Central Hill down to Gilman Square, returning to Walnut Street, and then onward to Broadway, to complete the tour at the upper end of East Somerville. The two areas traversed around Gilman Square and the Winter Hill and East Somerville ends of Broadway share over 300 years of transportation advancements that have greatly shaped their patterns of commercial development and house construction.



1852 Draper Map detail

Transportation advancements over two centuries are the primary threads that tie together eastern Winter Hill and East Somerville. For example, both areas host segments of Broadway, which was a major Middlesex County highway set out in 1636 to link Charlestown with Menotomy (later known as Arlington). Both areas are circumscribed by range ways dating back to the 1680s. These eight north-south country lanes were initially 24' wide and set out at regular intervals, from Franklin Street in East Somerville to North Street in West Somerville. Their purpose was to provide access to interior agricultural lands and dairy farms situated between the major highways of Broadway and the corridor of Elm Street/Somerville Avenue/Washington Street (aka Milk Row). This tour is bracketed by the original range ways known as Cross Street (aka "Three Pole Lane") in East Somerville and Walnut Street in Winter Hill.



By 1803, the 27-mile-long Middlesex Canal had been completed from the Merrimack River Valley southward to the Sullivan Square section of Charlestown. The Canal, as it traversed northern Somerville, dipped south almost to Broadway in what is now Foss Park, then turned northeastward, extending along the northern incline of Mt. Benedict, now the States Avenues section of East Somerville. The Canal's primary purpose was to enable transportation of agricultural products, as well as

building materials, such as granite and lumber from Chelmsford to the Boston markets. Passenger transportation was apparently less of a priority, although there are accounts of families taking day trips to enjoy picnics at sites bordering the Mystic Lakes. The coming of the railroads during the mid-1830s to the Boston area marked the beginning of the end of the Canal Age. Over the next twenty years the Middlesex Canal faded from the scene, ceasing to function even marginally by the early 1850s.

The introduction of the Boston and Lowell Railroad through the valley separating Prospect/Central and Spring Hills from Winter Hill dates back to 1836. The East Somerville station was located at the intersection of Washington and Joy Streets, while the Gilman Square station was on the south side of the intersection of Medford and Pearl Streets.

Pearl Street was another shared transportation artery. It was set out during the 1840s when East Somerville, south of Broadway, began to develop as an upscale residential area, and it originally extended only as far as Cross Street (See the 1852 Martin Draper Map on page 1). By 1874, Pearl Street had been extended further westward, all the way to Gilman Square.

Sections of Broadway in both East Somerville and eastern Winter Hill were part of Paul Revere's famous Midnight Ride of April 18-19, 1775, to warn the colonists of the British Red Coats' march to Lexington and Concord, in search of supplies hidden by the colonists. Broadway was also where the first horse-drawn streetcar service was regularly scheduled between Boston and Somerville, beginning in 1858. Around 1890, the electric trolley was introduced to Broadway from Sullivan Square. This service accelerated commercial and residential growth in both eastern Winter Hill and East Somerville.

In contrast, the Northern Artery highway was built in 1928 over parts of Bridge Street (now eliminated), Somerville Avenue, and Medford Street, and continued north on a new roadway across Somerville. The highway provided a high speed connection between the Charles River and the Mystic River, and was one of several projects in the metropolitan area designed to relieve congestion for traffic coming into and out of Boston. This construction may have enhanced transportation efficiency, but it also cut a large swath through blocks of primarily residential properties, and essentially cut off East Somerville from its neighbors in Prospect Hill and Winter Hill. The Northern Artery was later re-named the Monsignor McGrath and Monsignor O'Brien Highway.

If the **Somerville Public Library at 79 Highland Avenue** seems reminiscent of the Boston Public Library (BPL) at Copley Square, it's with good reason. The architect of the Library (1914), Edward Lippincott Tilton (1861-1933), worked early in his architectural career for the firm of McKim Mead and White that designed the BPL in 1888-1896. Both libraries were designed to look like over-sized Renaissance palaces. This Central Library, like the two branches, was among hundreds of libraries that Andrew Carnegie funded in America. This was because he grew up as a poor boy in Scotland but was invited to study in the private library of a wealthy family. He ended up as a famous steel magnate based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and he ultimately credited his legendary success in business to his early access to books.



*From the Somerville Public Library head north on Walnut Street, stopping briefly to view the former Walnut Hill Garage at 297 Medford Street.*

Once the automobile was introduced to the Boston area in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the City experienced a rapid rise in garages, both commercial and residential, as well as of related uses, including gas stations and retail stores selling automotive products. One example is the former Walnut Hill Garage begun in 1907 by Albert C. Michie, a mechanic, who resided at 53 Bow Street, in Union Square. From the late 1910s until the 1940s, this garage was operated by Robert J.C. Michie, variously listed as the foreman and the manager. This early garage is a long rectangular, one-story, red brick building whose primary design interest lies in the placement and proportions of its garage bays and the restrained brick ornament at its cornice. The garage underscores Somerville's status as a leader in commerce associated with the early Automobile Age (1900-1930).

### **Gilman Square: The Evolution of a Commercial/Industrial/Residential Enclave (1885-1930)**

*Turn west onto Medford Street and enter Gilman Square.* The left/southwest side of Medford Street was once the site of the old Winter Hill stations for the Boston and Lowell Railroad which made its inaugural run through Somerville in 1835. By 1840, a wooden station house had been constructed with a residence for the station master and a waiting room for passengers. It would serve the community until a more stylish and substantial stone station replaced it in 1888. Reportedly the old wooden station survives as parts of two residences located further to the west, off Medford Street.



Despite the presence of an early railroad station, development in Gilman Square lagged for decades. Wealthy real estate developers, like Oliver Tufts, Rufus Stickney, and the Square's namesake Charles Gilman, retained their larger lots until after the Civil War, and then the financial Panic of 1873 further delayed building construction in the area until around 1880. Indeed Gilman Square did not assume a recognizable architectural identity as a commercial district until the 1890s when electric trolley service was introduced to the area around 1890. Its rise to prominence was also helped by the construction of the

Stickney Building at Medford and Pearl Streets, next door to the Knights of Malta Building.



Rufus Stickney was a partner in Stickney and Poor, a company with a national reputation for delicious mustard and spices. The completion in the late 1890s of St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church at Medford and Thurston Streets, although a bit outside the Square, also created a more substantial image for the Gilman Square area. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century it was also known for a newspaper called The Citizen with offices within the Citizens' Building (demolished), on the southeast side of the Square and a college.



Although important public buildings have been lost over time, resulting in major streetscape gaps in Gilman Square, **The Knights of Malta Building** still stands at **343 Medford Street** on the north side of the Square. It was built in 1896 to house a charitable organization with roots dating back to the Middle Ages in Europe. A yellow brick building with brownstone and galvanized iron trim, it is a major landmark on the north side of the Square by virtue of its 4-story height and distinctive angled main facade which follows the bend in the path of Pearl and Medford Streets. The main façade is enlivened by Classical Revival ornamental elements, and the equestrian bas relief near the top is particularly noteworthy, apparently alluding to the early good works of the Knights of the Order of St. John, also known as the Knights of Malta.

As early as 1085, this organization was founded on Malta, an island in the Mediterranean located between Sicily and Tunisia in North Africa. The original mission of the Knights was to provide protection for pilgrims travelling between Europe and the Holy Land during the Crusades. By the late nineteenth century, they were a multi-chapter organization in virtually every part of the U.S., focusing on aid to the poor and the sick of their communities. The Knights of Malta building typifies a late 19<sup>th</sup> century commercial/institutional block with interior space set aside as a meeting hall for many social/charitable organizations.

The Knights of Malta Building was also the first home of Fisher College (aka the Winter Hill Business College). Fisher College was located in the Square from 1903 until 1939 when it moved to its present location on Beacon Street in Boston's Back Bay. Originally called the Winter Hill Business College, its curriculum stressed vocational preparation. Currently the College also has campuses in North Attleboro and New Bedford.



The industrial building at **350 Medford Street** once housed the Reid and Monarch Company. Its planar tan brick façade is set off by cast stone trim and is



enlivened by piers. Its main entrance is surmounted by a striking terra cotta lions head set within a circular medallion. Reid and Monarch's plant was built in Gilman Square around 1929 where it was well-positioned near both rail and highway transportation to move its food products fast and efficiently. The workers in this complex produced a variety of nut butters, especially peanut butter. Indeed, Somerville has a long history of specializing in the manufacture and sale of food products, including dairy items, pickles, mustard, nut butters and now, most famously, Marshmallow Fluff. The Reid and Monarch Company began during the 1850s in Dubuque, Iowa where it outfitted wagon trains with food products bound for the Far West.

**The Litchfield Block, 249 Pearl Street**, at the corner of Marshall Street, was built in 1891. Named for the Civil War veteran and retail grocer James A. Litchfield, this building was constructed as a commercial concern at street level, with three floors of apartments above. Its primary design interest is the brick billet detail on the panels above the fourth story windows. Mr. Litchfield was born in Lunenburg, Massachusetts in 1844. At age 18 he enlisted in the Union Army's 4<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts volunteers and served until the war's end. He returned to Boston as a First Lieutenant and in 1866 became engaged in a retail grocery business on Leverett Street in Boston. In 1885 he moved his business to Somerville, setting up his store in an old wooden building (demolished) at Pearl and Marshall Street. When the Litchfield Block opened in 1891, it apparently attracted the attention of his colleagues who elected him to serve a two year term as President of the Boston Retail Grocers Association.

The yellow brick structure at **2-6 Bradley Street** (now partially housing the **Mad Oyster Artist Studios**) was built in 1904 and designed by Densmore, LeClear and Robbins. Its façade presents a pleasing severity with simple cast stone sills and lintels, and a continuous lintel course above the basement windows. A deep galvanized iron cornice encircles the flat roof. The building was the main exchange for the New England Telephone Company from 1904-1933. The Bradley Street Exchange handled 14,250 calls per day. The first exchange was located in a drug store at Temple Street and Broadway.



**The remaining Kemp Nuts Factory** building, at **226 Pearl Street**, at the corner of Skilton Avenue, has boxy brick walls pierced by casement windows. It was built between 1916 and 1919 in a utilitarian aesthetic reminiscent of the German Bauhaus and Art Deco style. This enterprise was founded in 1913 at 172 School Street in Somerville, and relocated to Skilton Avenue by 1917. The Company's new Pearl Street building reportedly briefly served as both Kemp's residence and his workplace, until he moved to Carlisle in 1929. An illustrated ad in the 1927 Somerville Directory depicts an amusing image of a nattily attired golfer swinging his golf iron into a tree, causing a large nut to fall on his head. Kemp's nut products were sold in Boston area chain stores called the "Golden Glow Shops." Edward F. Kent manufactured "Golden Glow Salted Nuts and Nut Candies." Kemp's Nuts remained in business until at least the 1950s.

*Continue east on Pearl Street to pass the former Prospect Hill Building, at Pearl and Walnut Streets. Although considerably altered, it retains its basic form with wall surfaces enlivened by bowed oriel windows. No longer in evidence are the large plate glass windows of the original storefronts and trim elements.*

**Walnut Street** was one of Somerville's ancient range ways dating back to the 1680s. The stretch both south and north of Highland Avenue was bordered on both sides by undeveloped land until as late as the 1840's. The initial residential development on the street occurred during the decades before the Civil War, when Somerville was establishing its independence as a town separate from Charlestown, beginning in 1842. Most of the development took the form of generously proportioned mid 19<sup>th</sup> century residences with architectural features associated with the Italianate and Mansard styles. Houses were designed for the new town's business elite, and boasted granite and fieldstone walls, as well as granite posts. One noteworthy exception to the predominantly residential streetscape of Walnut Street was George Skilton's Pickleworks (ca.1860, demolished) on the west side of Walnut between Pearl Street and Broadway, near the





intersection with Sargent Avenue. Interestingly, Somerville became renowned during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for its delicious pickles, notably *Powder House*, *Puritan*, and Skilton's *Bunker Hill Pickles*.

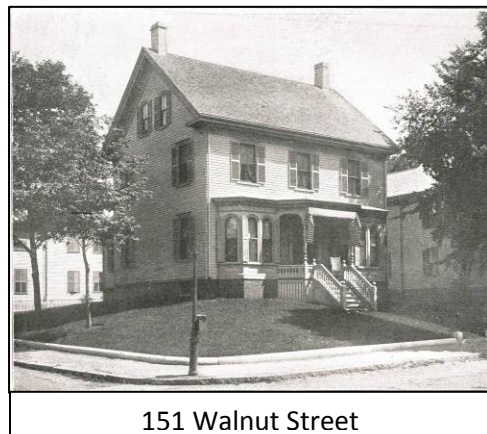
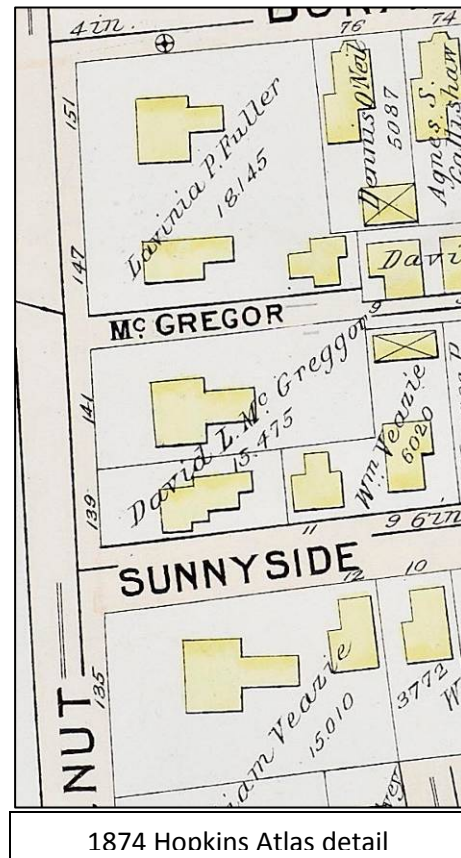
**135 Walnut Street** was built ca.1859-1860 for William Veazie, a book seller in Somerville, who paid a colleague, William Lee of South Bridgewater, \$3,000 for land and a dwelling. Veazie was a native of New Hampshire, born in 1829 and who came to Somerville in 1852. For many years he was associated with John Wilson & Sons, a Cambridge printing and publishing house, and he was also the developer in 1889 of a row of five wooden houses at the corner of Central and Medford Streets. Mr. Veazie lived at 135 Walnut Street until the early 1900s. The house was subdivided into a two-family during the late 1920s. It is an end gable Italianate altered by a large elliptical one-story addition projecting from its northwest corner. Vinyl siding hides original trim elements, but the house's impressive siding atop a rise enclosed by a fieldstone wall helps envision the original appearance of the Veazie House

Of the three noteworthy substantial mid-19<sup>th</sup> century houses located on the east side of Walnut Street, **141 Walnut Street** is in the most original condition. Here, symmetry is emphasized, in the very balanced main façade, with a central entrance bay and flanked by two-story polygonal bays. The columned porch exhibits paired, possibly replacement, columns. The house is surmounted by a steeply pitched mansard roof with its original slate shingles. Brackets at the cornices of the bay windows and at the roof eaves reflect the Italianate style, sometimes known as the Bracketed style, which was popular in the United States between 1850-1885. A low field stone retaining wall capped by slabs of granite is still intact.

**141 Walnut** was the residence of John F. Ayer, a partner in a Charlestown lumber dealership during the 1860s and early 1870's. Although not firmly dated, it was likely built during the late 1860's. Members of the Ayer family lived here until ca. 1880, followed by members of the David L. McGregor family until the early 1900s. Mr. McGregor's "leather" work could mean owning or working in a tannery or boot and shoe dealership. From the early 1900s until the 1930s, a carpenter named G. Wallace Gunter is listed at this address, followed by a salesman named Willis F. Ledieu during the 1940s.

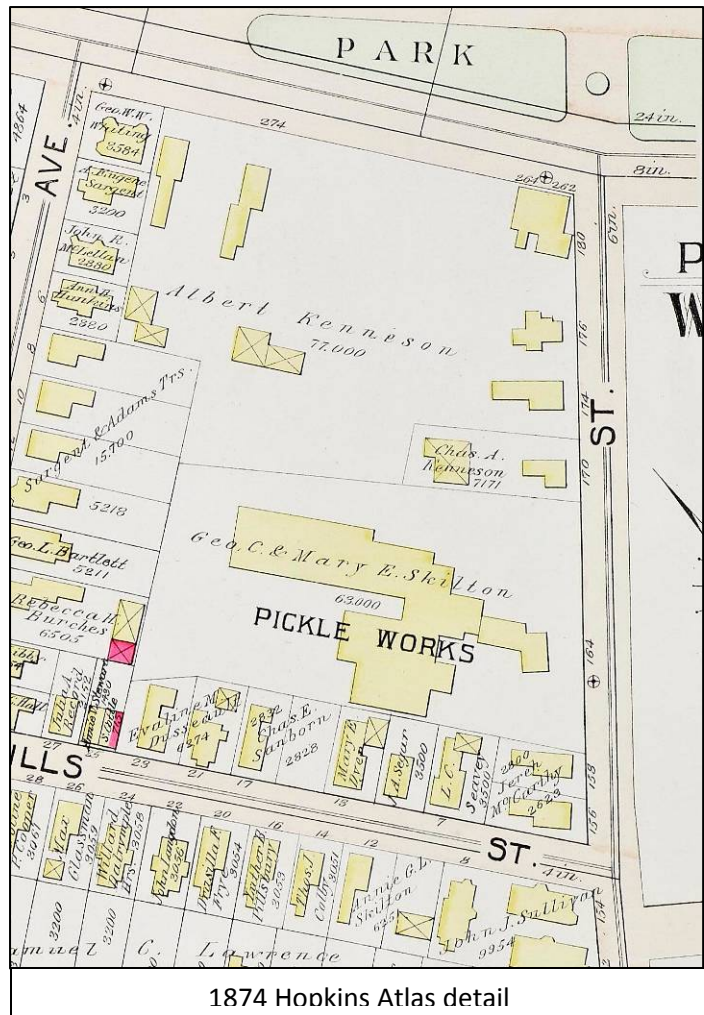
*Take a slight detour and turn onto McGregor Avenue to see two outbuildings, which may represent one of the most picturesque streetscapes in Somerville. Note the early 20<sup>th</sup> century garage, complete with a bank of paneled doors on the north end gable. It was likely used as a residence for many decades, due to the leaded glass windows on the west wall—a once utilitarian building now appearing as a charming cottage. Next door to the garage is a barn that may date to the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century!*

**151 Walnut Street** was built in 1861 for lumber dealer Stephen W. Fuller. Although the house retains its original L-shaped form, the square bays flanking the main entrance may represent expansions of the original, narrower polygonal bays. The Italianate style is still evident in the octagonal bay on the



second story at the center of the main facade, as well as in the return eaves of the house's side gables.

Fuller was a native of Charlestown, born on January 1, 1836. From his parents' home in Thompson Square, it was but a short walk to the Prison Point Lumber Yard (now part of the Bunker Hill Community College campus) where young Fuller commenced his first job in 1858. In 1860 he married Lavinia P. Turner of Lyme Hill, Maine. 151 Walnut was certainly an impressive "starter house" for the new couple, with an encircling granite block retaining wall and a substantial L-shaped form. In 1860 he also started his own lumber dealership with John F. Ayer who became his next door neighbor on Walnut Street. The Fuller/Ayer partnership ended in 1875. By 1882 Fuller's Company is listed at 482 Rutherford Avenue in Charlestown, where it was well-positioned adjacent to a rail line to bring him lumber "from all parts of the country." Fuller lived at 151 Walnut Street until his death around 1900 and his widow resided here until the early 1910s. By the 1920s, the house had been subdivided into apartments and was home to a manager, book keeper, carpenter and paymaster. By 1940 tenants with British surnames including Barrows, Nickerson, Green and Cheever lived here.



*Dairy farming took place in Somerville at least as far back as the late eighteenth century, with Milk Row, (aka Elm*

*Street/Somerville Avenue) and Washington Street serving as the main route for eastern Middlesex County dairy farmers to bring their products to and from Charlestown and Boston markets. Kenneson's dairy farm was strategically located at Broadway and Walnut Street, while Hood Milk began on Spring Hill during the early 1850's. It is probably Somerville's most famous dairy business, and by the first quarter of the twentieth century, it had become regionally known as an important dairy enterprise. It survives to this day, but now as a business based in Charlestown.*

### **Kenneson Farm Compound**

As early as 1847, Albert Kenneson of Cambridge purchased a 63,000 square foot parcel at the corner of Walnut Street and Broadway from John Beddoe of Charlestown. During the course of the next half century he conducted a dairy farm on the premises, and during the early 1900s Charles A. Kenneson of 174 Walnut Street conducted a storage facility business.

Four Kenneson Farm houses survive to provide a glimpse of a family compound which encompasses the L-shaped Italianate cottage at **172 Walnut Street**, a late Federal house located directly behind it (**172 R Walnut**), an Italianate house (**174 Walnut**), and a Late Federal House (**7 Kenneson Road**).



**174 Walnut Street** was probably built during the 1860s and was extant by 1874. The main block of this end gable house exhibits fully enframed and pedimented windows, and corners accented by paneled Doric pilasters—making the modest Italianate cottage at **172 Walnut Street** apparently the original “starter” house for the Kennesons until their dairy business prospered enough for them to build a more substantial and ornate house at **174** which became the residence of Charles A. Kenneson during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is of considerable interest because of its multiple rear ells – with at least one perhaps part of one of the three L-shaped barns depicted on late 19<sup>th</sup> century atlases). During the early 1900s, Charles A. Kenneson transitioned from being a milkman in the family dairy business to owning and operating a storage warehouse, called the Winter Hill Store House. An advertisement in the 1910 Somerville Directory notes that Kenneson “stores furniture and merchandise and contains safe rooms throughout.” His store rooms are described as “clean and locked and are of various sizes and prices.”



172 Walnut Street

The house at **172 R Walnut Street** is U-shaped and moved here from an undetermined site during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It has a five-bay-by-one-bay main block, and two short ells project from its rear (west) wall. The flanking sidelights at the center entrance appear to have been reduced in size while the original clapboards have been obscured by modern siding.

Kenneson Road was set over Albert Kenneson’s tract ca. 1911-1912. **7 Kenneson Road** is probably the house indicated as 274 Broadway on late 19<sup>th</sup> century Atlases, and initially it was numbered 21. In 1913, the occupants included George E. Carter, horse collar maker, and Patrick A. McCarthy, liquors. By 1920, Herbert Vickery and Eugene O. Stinson resided here, while the following decades brought many different occupations, including an auto painter, shipper, teamsters, a crane man and a retiree.

*Leave Kenneson Road and cross Broadway towards the southern edge of the Ten Hills Neighborhood. The interior of this area, which extends all the way to the Mystic River, was part of the Ten Hills Farm which Governor John Winthrop of the Puritan Bay Colony established and on which he lived during the 1630s. Winthrop’s farm was owned by a succession of prominent men, including Elias Haskett Derby of Salem and Patrick Tracy Jackson of Lowell. By the 1830’s the Ten Hills area encompassed the extensive brickyards of the Jacques family. Given the significant expansion of commerce along Broadway during the period of 1890-1930, it is perhaps surprising that the north side of Broadway, between Grant Street and Fellsway West, retains the appearance of a late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential streetscape of single- and multi-family residences. The streetscape is further enhanced by the striking Broadway Methodist Episcopal Church.*

The **Elizabeth Peabody House, 277 Broadway**, at the corner of Grant Street, occupies the former Broadway Methodist Episcopal Church, which evolved from a small religious society founded in 1872. Apparently, the early worship services were held in private residences until they built this Colonial Revival Church during the early 1900s. The church retains its original form and some of its initial architectural elements. Vintage photographs from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century indicate that similar to the King’s Chapel in Boston, the congregation never completed a multi-stage steeple. The building now houses the non-profit social services agency named for Elizabeth Palmer Peabody (1804-1894) of

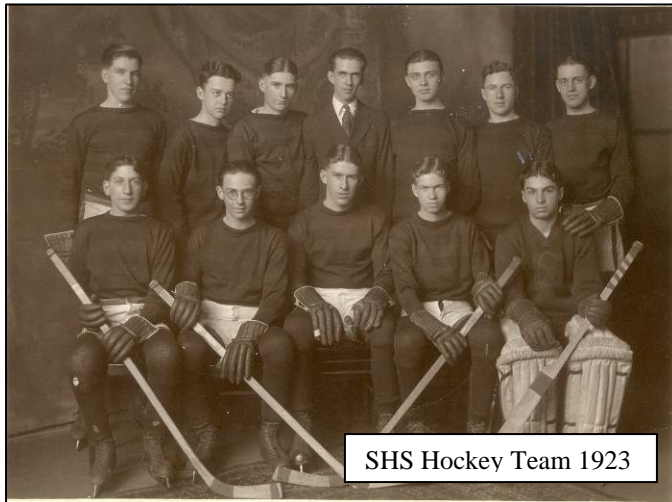




Salem and Boston. She was an educator, historian, friend of the Transcendentalists, and a sister-in-law of the novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne. She founded the first kindergarten in the United States in 1860, based on the model pioneered in Germany by Friedrich Froebel.

**257 Broadway** is a well-preserved example of a single-family Mansard style house, clad with clapboards and enclosed by a hip-on-mansard roof that retains its slate shingles. It was built ca.1877 for brick maker Chauncy Holt, and now serves as a veterinary clinic. This single-building Local Historic District exhibits a Queen Anne porch with turned posts that may have been added a decade or more after it was built. Its noteworthy original elements include paneled corner pilasters, a two story polygonal bay, and saw cut brackets at the eaves of the bay window and roof.

*Briefly turn to where **256 Broadway** on the south side where the boyhood home of Somerville and college hockey sports legend Eddie Jeremiah was located.*



Eddie Jeremiah (1903-1977) entered Dartmouth in 1926 following graduation from Somerville High School where he earned nine letters, in football, hockey, and baseball. After earning two football, three hockey, and two baseball letters at Dartmouth, Jeremiah entered the professional hockey ranks as a member of the New Haven hockey team of the Canadian-American League. He then split the next season between the New York Americans and the Boston Bruins of the National Hockey League. He also spent the 1933 season with both the Boston Cubs and the New Haven team, again in the Canadian-American League.

His last

year of playing was the 1935 season with a Cleveland team that competed in the International League.

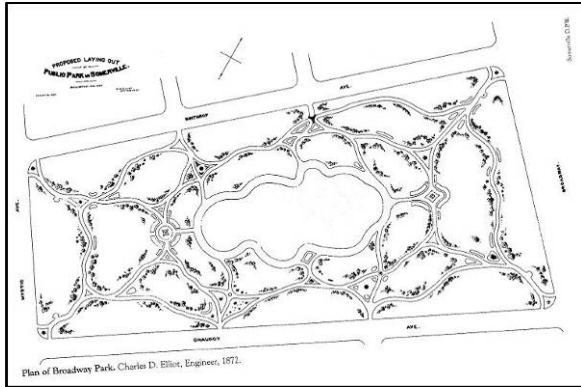
Once his playing days were over, he started coaching the Boston Olympics hockey team and guided them to the National Amateur Athletic Union Championship in 1936. He became varsity hockey coach at Dartmouth a year later, and served continuously, except during service in World War II, until his retirement in 1967. In the decades as Dartmouth's head coach, Jeremiah directed his teams to 308 victories, 247 losses, and 12 ties.



*Before moving onto Foss Park, it is important to note a significant transportation innovation-- the **Middlesex Canal**-- that was extended across the southern third of the park.*

Built at a cost of \$528,200, between 1792 and 1803, the 27-mile long **Middlesex Canal** was organized and operated by one of the first public corporations in America. In 1792, Massachusetts Governor John Hancock approved the Canal's charter, making it only the second waterway of its kind in America, with the first being the Santee Canal in South Carolina. The Middlesex Canal was built under the guidance of Loami Baldwin, the "Father of American Civil Engineering" who went on to design granite sea walls and the great dry dock at the Charlestown Navy Yard during the 1830s. Lumber transported down the Canal from Chelmsford on the Merrimack River was used to repair ships such as Old Ironsides during the War of 1812 and was used in the enlargement of Faneuil Hall Market by Charles Bulfinch in 1805. Granite was also carried via the Canal to construct University Hall at Harvard in 1815.

Broadway Park was set out over 16 acres of low-lying wetlands called Happy Hollow during the early 1870s. It extended northward from Broadway to Mystic Avenue, with its eastern and western edges defined by Fellsway East (McGrath and O'Brien Highway) and Fellsway West (originally called Chauncy Street). Real estate developers such as Seman Klous pressured the City to clean up these wetlands and find the funds to create a park that would ultimately cost over \$200,000. Traversed by meandering paths, the centerpiece of the park was a shallow pond that would serve both wading children and rowers in small



boats. The park's landscape architect was Charles D. Elliot, hired as the City Engineer in 1874, and perhaps best remembered as the landscape architect for the Alewife Brook Parkway during the 1890s. Sooner after creation of the park began, controversy erupted over tales of city employees padding their hours, while others were accused of fiscal irresponsibility. Mayor George Brastow, developer of Spring Hill in the 1840's and 1850's, actually lost his position in part due to his pro-park position. The anti-park faction, however, were later defeated by citizens in favor of the new park, even though it was not centrally located and

lacked significant historical associations with Revolutionary War era encampments.

This swath of green space provides much needed park land for recreational activities within one of the most densely built up cities in the Commonwealth. Broadway Park was renamed Foss Park in 1920 in honor of Private Saxton Conant Foss who sacrificed his life for America and its allies during World War I. He was the son of the revered Somerville librarian and poet Sam Walter Foss. Saxton C. Foss was a Harvard graduate and a newspaperman who was once a reporter for the *Christian Science Monitor* and the *Boston Globe*. One of 5400 casualties of "the Great War," he managed to survive the horrific battle of Belleau Woods in France, only to be mortally wounded by enemy fire near Champagne on October 8, 1918. In 1919, his family was given the Distinguished Service Cross in his honor.

*Leaving Foss Park, cross the McGrath and O'Brien Highway, and enter into East Somerville.*

**193 Broadway** is a towered Queen Anne house that is part of a collection of late Victorian era residences on Broadway between Cross Street and McGrath and O'Brien Highway. By 1874, its lot was within the extensive real estate holdings of Seman Klous, who owned most of the land on the north side of Broadway between Austin Street and Foss Park. The house was constructed in 1891 for George W. Maddox. It could be called 'the house that ice built' as Maddox was an ice dealer with a business in Charlestown. By 1915, Maddox had moved westward in Somerville, to 18 Liberty Avenue, and 193 was converted into a two-family residence.

**181 Broadway** is a well-preserved Queen Anne single-family residence, converted in the late 1990s to an assisted living residence. The lot appears on the 1884 Somerville Atlas as part of a large undeveloped tract between Garfield Avenue and Kensington Avenue that was owned by Niles and Littlefield. The wood-frame residence was built in 1888 for a prosperous local milk dealer, Joseph Warren Litchfield. It is noteworthy for its asymmetrical massing and typical Queen Anne mix of clapboards and shingles. It originally had a large barn in the back yard that presumably housed horses and wagons associated with Litchfield's milk delivery business. By the early 1900s, however, Litchfield's business is listed as "livery stables at Medford", while Litchfield lived at 181 Broadway until the early 1910s.





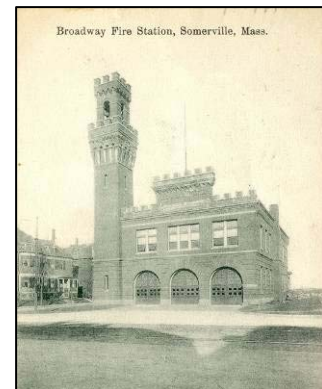
From 1914 until 1919, Gustav A. Towle, manufacturer, is listed at this address, while a Grace and Samuel Lombard, manager, lived here briefly during the early 1920s. By 1924, this house was unoccupied and by 1927, the Elwood G. Bryant family began its long period of ownership. He was either the son or more likely grandson of John Bryant who began providing funeral services as early as 1852 in Charlestown. By the 1920s the Bryants had funeral homes at 15 Austin Street, Charlestown and 181 Broadway. John Bryant was the proprietor until at least the early 1940s. By 1950, Bryant Funeral Services was owned and operated at 181 Broadway by Elwood G. Bryant and his wife Louise. Evidently the house was both the Bryants' residence and work place. By 1960, Ruth A. Bryant, housewife, and perhaps their 39 year old daughter are the sole family members listed here.

Since the late 1990s, 181 Broadway has been owned by CASCAP, Inc, a local organization that builds and operates assisted living facilities. Their renovation of the Joseph Warren Litchfield House restored many of the original features and the fine craftsmanship of the property, including beautiful woodwork and stained-glass windows.



**Row Houses at 8-16 Cross Street East (LHD)** This red brick row was constructed at the request of Seman Klous, previously noted as a brick maker and significant land owner and developer. He owned the first building to catch fire in the Great Fire of Boston in 1872, as well as all the land in Somerville between the rear lot lines of Austin Street and Broadway Park from 1865 to 1880. Although these row houses have suffered over time with multiple ownerships and prolonged disinvestment, one can still see the fine bones and Mansard style essence of this circa 1880 row.

**165 Broadway, current Senior Center & former Fire Station** This red brick building was built in 1895 as Fire House Engine No. 2, although it may be difficult to envision due to the removal of its crenellated tower and battlements, making it resemble more of an Italian palazzo. The construction of a fire station in this area presents strong evidence of the high density level in East Somerville after 1890, which corresponded with the introduction of the electric trolley. Toward the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the building became a recreational facility to serve both seniors and the youth in the community.



**160-166 Broadway** is a major landmark in East Somerville by virtue of its substantial rectangular, three-story, gable-roofed form. It was built between 1885 and 1894 as an investment property for Samuel Langmaid. He was a major real estate developer in Somerville during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and best known for constructing Langmaid Terrace at 359-361 and 363-365 Broadway on Winter Hill (1892). While the Langmaid Terrace row is characterized by distinguished red brick and Queen Anne design, 160-166 Broadway was originally built as an unpretentious wood-frame row of 2-1/2 stories identical to the row around the corner on Cross Street. During the early 1920s this nine-bay-by-two-bay row was hoisted atop a new commercial first story. Interestingly, the tan brick walls of the rear walls and the Cross Street first stories were constructed in 1948, even though brick of tan coloration was typically used in the construction of commercial concerns during the 1910's or 1920's. This row illustrates a fairly common solution in the Boston area for gaining commercial square footage during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

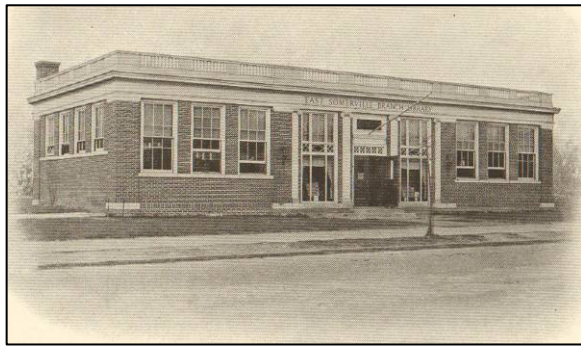
Although further research is needed to determine the original occupants, these houses, by the early 1900s, were occupied by Mrs. Finet Crandall and James E. Thompson, clerk (160), Anthony A. Waterman, postal clerk (162), Frank S. Whiton, foreman teamster who worked in Quincy Market's North Market building (164), and Robert F. Garland who was associated with a laundry (166). At some point between

1920 and 1924, 160-166 Broadway acquired a new commercial first story. In 1925 160-166 Broadway's commercial tenants included David Larkin's Dry Goods (160), Joseph DeGurlotta's provisions (162), M. O'Keefe Inc.'s Groceries (164), and both Adams Brothers Confectioners and a dentist office of Merill A. Dorion were located at 166. The upper floors were occupied by tenants of Irish, Italian, French and English heritage.

**161 Broadway, Park Garage Company, 1914** This circa 1914 building is a typical early 20<sup>th</sup> century garage primarily used to store cars. Features include pick-up and delivery services, a gas pump, and waiting rooms. The original owners were Arthur N. Park and Fred R. Curtis. The structure has space for 40 cars, a machine shop located in the basement for repairs, two 500-gallon gas tanks, a car rental business, and also a showroom for Ford, Marmon, and Marathon cars. The garage even had a 1914 Packard limousine for rent!



**The East Somerville Branch Library, 115 Broadway** At the corner of Broadway and Illinois Avenue, this circa 1918 Branch Library is a satellite of the Central Library atop Central Hill. Somerville's public library system began in 1871, the same year that the community was incorporated as a city. The East Somerville branch was organized in 1912 in a commercial space located at 153 Perkins Street. Formal establishment of the East Somerville Branch was associated with the explosive residential growth that occurred during the World War I era when two-family dwellings were built in mass numbers along the streets that were named after American states. Its



establishment may also have been a by-product of the early Automobile Age when people began to rely on cars to perform errands such as returning library books. Architecturally, this Library is noteworthy for the simple rectangular masonry form and Classical Revival style ornamentation that includes Ionic and Doric pilasters, and a heavy entablature below the cornice of the roof.

*Thank you for your interest and for becoming a bit more knowledgeable about the richness of this area's past. Both neighborhoods are in transition and are becoming more and more popular, diverse and vibrant.*

*This East Somerville Walking Tour is jointly sponsored by East Somerville Main Streets (ESMS) and the City's Historic Preservation Commission (SHPC) as part of May Preservation Month in Somerville. Most of the research is based upon survey work by architectural consultants, Ed Gordon and Arthur Krim.*

*The ESMS was initiated in 2006 by Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone to help build East Somerville as a thriving, safe, friendly neighborhood and commercial district that welcomes cultural diversity and offers a variety of businesses, to both serve and employ residents. East Somerville Main Streets can be reached via (617) 623-3869 or [carrie@eastsovervillemainstreets.org](mailto:carrie@eastsovervillemainstreets.org).*

*The SHPC was established in 1985 by City Ordinance to administer historic districts, advise homeowners, and provide historic and technical information. The Commission also sponsors events and develops programs and written materials as part of its public outreach and educational mission. The Staff can be reached via 617-625-6600, ext. 2500 or [www.somervillema.gov/historicpreservation](http://www.somervillema.gov/historicpreservation).*