

51 Waldeck Street, Dorchester, MA 02124

Research and Report
Dorchester Historical Society
December 6, 2020

Questions

What is known about the original owner?

Did an architect design the house? If so, who was it and what is known about him/her?

Who else has owned or lived in the house over the years and what is known about them?

What alterations (structural or cosmetic) have been made to the house since it was built?



In the 1890s John M. E. Morrill acquired a large tract of land, once part of the Walter Baker estate. He commissioned a subdivision plan in 1897 and proceeded to sell off lots to developers and home builders.

On September 13, 1889, Morrill sold the parcel that became 51 Waldeck Street to Susan F. Stanley with restrictions: "Subject to the following restrictions which are to be placed upon all the lots facing on said Waldeck Street for a term of ten years from June 14, 1897. No house built to accommodate one family shall cost less than thirty five hundred (\$3,500); No apartment house, no house to accommodate more than two families are to be built, and two family houses shall cost not less than forty five hundred dollars

(\$4,500) . No stores, factories, livery stables or workshops shall be built; all houses shall be set back not less than twenty feet (20 ft.) from street line and all other buildings shall set back not less than forty (40) feet from said street line, which the lot faces; and corner lots shall not have the houses less than twenty feet from the side street; No houses are to be built with flat roof."

Also

"Subject to a mortgage to W. Sidney Baker and Florence M. Bridgman ... which mortgage can be released on payment of twenty cents per foot."

In May, 1900, Stanley sold to Levi Chadbourne, who also built the new two-family home in 1900, to a design of architect Cornelius A. Russell. The house was to be 28 feet wide and 48 feet deep, with a probable cost above land of \$4,500.

Russell was a well-known regional architect, especially of apartment blocks. When he first came to Boston, he was a carpenter, but by 1890 he had established himself as an architect with offices in Roxbury. In 1892 he designed the Goldsmith Block at 746-750 Shawmut Avenue. He designed Walton and Roslin Halls at 702-746 Washington Street, Dorchester, in 1897. He designed the Russell Building in Egleston Square, a mixed-use building for thirteen families and two stores. The building was completed in December, 1897, for \$40,000.

Chadbourne sold the property with the new home to Joseph Massell in April of 1901. In December of 1902 Massell sold the property to Morris Solomont, then Solomont sold the property to Pauline Massell in January, 1903. The Massell family lived in the house until the 1930s. Joseph and Pauline had three children listed in the census for 1910. The 1920 census listed four children. Joseph and Pauline were born in Russia, and the 1920 census indicates that their tenants were also from Russia. Joseph was a dentist.

In the 1930s, the number of people living in the house increased, probably a result of the Depression. It appears that adult children delayed moving out on their own. Some of the residents are listed below in the Sources section, where entries are given from the Boston Resident lists of the first half of the 1930s. The lists include residents 20 years of age or older on April 1st of the year.

James A. Weeks, a painter, bought the house by 1933, as shown in the 1933 atlas. The Weeks family was living in the property by 1930. The 1935 Boston Resident list of persons 20 years of age or older on April 1st of that year has an entry for 51 Waldeck:

Clara I. MacDonald, secretary, 36
Helen M. MacDonald, teacher, 31
James MacDonald, plasterer, 69
Katherine B. MacDonald, housewife, 64
Helen Kenney, clerk, 30
James A. Weeks, retired, 69
Maria Weeks, housewife, 62
Mildred Weeks, bookkeeper, 29

The 1940 Census listed the people in the house:

tenant apartment

James Macdonald, 74,

Katherine Macdonald, 0

Clara I. Macdonald, 41, secretary in real estate

Helen M. Macdonald, 3, teacher in public school

owner's apartment

James A. Weeks, 75

Mildred Weeks, 34, daughter, cataloger, medical library for WPA

Helena Kenney, 40, lodger, cataloger, medical library for WPA

There do not seem to have been major structural changes. The building permits available at Inspectional Services reveal that a garage was built in April, 1926. On February 15, 1934, as a result of an inspection due to a fire, the building inspector recommended repair of the chimney, where bricks were loose and repair of the mortar gone near the roof beams. On February 16, 1934, there was an application for a permit to replace all burned timbers on the roof; shingle it with asphalt shingles and make the rear stairway from the attic satisfactory to the building department

Sources

Title History

Date	Seller	Buyer	Citation
September 13, 1899	John M. E. Morrill and John W. Emmons	Susan F. Stanley	2632.385 parcel of land
May 12, 1900	John E. Stanley and Susan F. Stanley	Levi Chadbourne	2683.297
April 12, 1901	Levi Chadbourne	Joseph Mansell	2747.429
December 23, 1902	Joseph Massell	Morris Solomont	2870.429
January 1, 1903	Morris Solomont	Pauline Solomont	2872.398
Gap in research	The last working backward below does not give a reference for previous deed	To find the intervening deeds would require a trip to the registry of deeds	
October 30, 1963	James F. and Margaret G. Hourihan	Walter S. and Lillian Kabachus	7792.575
November 29, 1976	Walter S. and Lilian Kabachus	George A. and Joyce T. Graham	8917.188
March 5, 1980	George A. and Joyce T. Graham	Mark Block and Terrie Winograd	9393.236
October 17, 1986	Mark Bock and Terrie Winograd	Donnad D. Zielinski and Steven H. Redisch	12969.217
Master deed for condominium	Waldeck Street Condominium 51 and Steven H. Redisch	Donnad Zielinski	13625.230
Unit 1 December 1, 1995	Donnad Zielinski	Sandy L. and Wandag Cody	20224.216
Unit 1 March 31, 1999	Sandy L. and Wandag Cody	Rendae Mott	23600.110
Unit 1 November 12, 2003	Rendae Mott	Keith Hofman	33232.70
Unit 2 November 16, 2014	Donnad Zielinski and Waldeck Street Condominium 51	Jeffrey T. Hall	53758.183
Unit 1 February 19, 2016	Keith Hoffman	Timothy Corsi and Janelle Nanos	55734.53

Owners from Atlases

1898 land (lot 45) owned by John M. E. Morrill among many other lots

1904 Pauline Massell

1910 Pauline Massell 5,945 sq ft

1918 Pauline Massell

1933 Jas. A. Weeks

Building Permits

Building permit application May 16, 1900; permit granted May 23, 1900; construction apparently complete November, 1900

Owner: L. Chadbourne, 19 Harvard Ave. Dor

Architect: C. A. Russell, 54 Warren St

Builder: owner builds

Two family; 28 feet wide and 48 feet deep

Probable cost above land \$4,500

April 29, 1926 permit for garage

Feb. 15, 1934 As a result of an inspection due to a fire, the building inspector recommended repair of the chimney, where bricks were loose and the mortar gone near the roof beams.

Feb. 16, 1934 Permit to replace all burned timbers on roof and shingle with asphalt shingles; rear stairway from attic to be satisfactory to the building department

Ancestry.com

Census 1910

51 Waldeck Street

Joseph Massell, 38, dentist

Pauline Massell, 31

Lillian I. Massell, 8

Ruth Massell, 6

Benedict F. Massell, 3

Emma Mahoney, 22, b. Canada, servant

Census 1920

one apartment

51 Waldeck Street

Isadore J. Husson, 39, b. Russia, manager, coat factory

Celia C. Huson, 37, b. Russia

Helene M. Huson, 7, b. Massachusetts
Ralph S. Huson, 6, b. Massachusetts

owner's apartment
Joseph Massell, 48,
Pauline Massell, 40, b. Russia
Lillian Massell, 18, b. Russia
Ruth Massell, 16, b. Russia
Benedict F. Massell, 13, b. Massachusetts
Helen A. Massell, b. Massachusetts
Emma Lena Malone, 27, b. Canada, maid
Maretta A. Pinto, 21, b. Jamaica, servant

Census 1930

James A. Weeks, 64
Marie Weeks, 58
Mildred A. Weeks, 30
Mary McCann, 36, boarder

Morris Massell, 50, Mechanical Dentist, own business
Esther Massell, 44,
Eli Massell, 20
Cicellia D. Massell, 18, training at hospital
Ada S. Massell, 10,
Anna Dework, Esther's sister, 26, Bookkeeper in Dental Laboratory

Census 1940

tenant apartment
James Macdonald, 74,
Katherine Macdonald, 0
Clara I. Macdonald, 41, secretary in real estate
Helen M. Macdonald, 3, teacher in public school

owner's apartment
James A. Weeks, 75
Mildred Weeks, 34, daughter, cataloger, medical library for WPA
Helena Kenney, 40, lodger, cataloger, medical library for WPA

Boston Resident Lists

1928

no entry for this property

1929

1930

Esther Massell, housewife, 44

Maurice Massell, dentist, 54

James A. Weeks, 62, painter

Marie Weeks, housewife, 57

Mildred Weeks, stenographer, 26

1931

Eli Massell, student, 21

Esther Massell, housewife, 48

Morris Massell, mechanic, 55

James A. Weeks, painter, 60

Marie A. Weeks, housewife, 56

Mildred A. Weeks, bookkeeper, 26

1932

Eleanor R. Barrett, detective, 45, moved here in the last year from Wollaston

Mary A. Winn, housekeeper, 73, moved here in the last year from Wollaston

Rose G.Kessler, house housekeeper, 45

Samuel Kessler, agent, 50

Louis R. Walpe, agent, 72

1933

Anna Dework, bookkeeper, 28

Cecilia Massell, student, 21

Eli Massell, student, 23

Esther Massell, housewife, 50

Morris Massell, dentist, 55

Helen Kenney, stenographer, 28

James A. Weeks, salesman, 77

Maria Weeks, housewife, 57

Mildred A. Weeks, bookkeeper, 26

1934

no entries for 51 Waldeck

1935

Clara I. MacDonald, secretary, 36

Lelen M. MacDonald, teacher, 31

James MacDonald, plasterer, 69

Katherine B. MacDonald, housewife, 64

Helen Kenney, clerk, 30

James A. Weeks, retired, 69

Maria Weeks, housewife, 62

Mildred Weeks, bookkeeper, 29

Boston Directory

1900

Cornelius A. Russell , architect, 54 Warren, Rox. h. 2 Brenton

Cornelius A. Russell, architect on

<https://backbayhouses.org/cornelius-a-russell/>

Russell designed a remodeling of 334 Commonwealth Avenue in 1909

Cornelius A. Russell was born on October 20, 1855, in Nova Scotia.

He married on July 10, 1894, in Chicago, to Alice Burgoyne (b. 1861-1863 in OH), daughter of Erastus McNeill Burgoyne and his wife, Sarah Cummins.

Cornelius Russell died on September 15, 1927, in Boston, killed in an automobile accident.

Career

Cornelius Russell came to the United States in the early 1870s and received his citizenship in October of 1887.

When he first came to Boston, he was a carpenter. He may have worked as a pianomaker in the early 1880s, but was again a carpenter by 1885, in partnership with Alexander B. Pinkham. He continued as a carpenter in 1889, but by 1890 had established himself as an architect with offices in Roxbury.

By the mid 1890s, Fred Newton Russell, probably his nephew, had joined his office as a draftsman. In about 1903, they formed the firm of C. A. and F. N. Russell, architects and real estate developers. They remained partners until about 1918. Most of their work appears to have been residential buildings in the Roxbury area, where they offices were located. By 1919, he was a sole practitioner, working out of his home in Jamaica Plain.

Goldsmith Block on

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goldsmith_Block

The building at 41 Ruggles Street, 746-750 Shawmut Avenue was built in 1892 by Samuel Goldsmith to a design by Cornelius Russell, a regionally notable designer of apartment blocks.

Walton and Roslin Halls on

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walton_and_Roslin_Halls

Walton and Roslin Halls is a mixed-used commercial and residential building that was built in two parts. They are located at the corner of Washington and Walton Streets in the [Dorchester](#) neighborhood of [Boston, Massachusetts](#), and extend south along Washington Street. The first of the two buildings, that at 3-5 Walton Street and 702-708 Washington, is a three-story brick and wood frame structure built in 1897 to a design by Cornelius A. Russell; the southern portion was completed a year later. The building housed a commercial space on the ground floor, and residential units above

The Architectural History of Egleston Square on

<https://www.jphs.org/locales/2005/9/30/egleston-square-by-richard-heath.html>

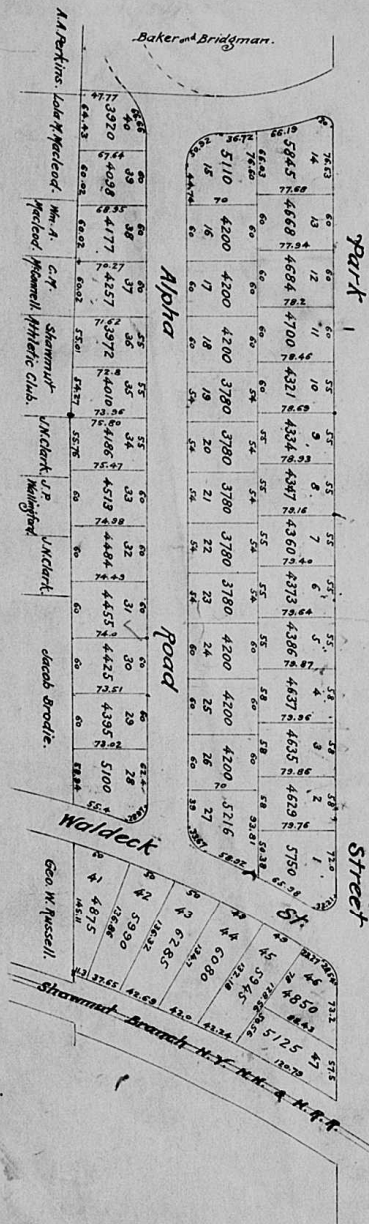
The Littlefields hired the notable architect Cornelius Russell to design the handsome, corner apartment house at 3118-3122 Washington Street, replacing a Cox building which had one of the first ground-floor stores. The Russell building was completed in December 1897 for \$40,000. It also had a doorway at 87 School Street. It was built for thirteen families and two stores.

Boston Directory on Ancestry.com

1932 Morris Massell pres. Colonial Dental Laboratories, Inc. 120 Boyston rm 619, h. 51 Waldeck, Dor
1935 Morris Massell (Esther) pres Colonial Dental Laboraories, Inc., 123 Boylston rm 619, h. 12
Charlotte Dor

Plan of
House Lots in Dorchester,
belonging to
John M. E. Morrill et als.
Chas. F. Baxter, Civil Engineer.
July 1897.

Scale of feet
0 10 20 30 40 50



2500
289

The original of this Plan was left
for Record in the Suffolk Registry
of Deeds, and is on file.

True Copy.

Henry W. Wilson C.E.

Each building on separate Application Blank.
Plans must be submitted with this Application.
Write legibly. OWNERSHIP and detail must be complete. No.

REFERRED



Application for Permit to Build.

(3d CLASS BUILDING.)

To the

Boston,

May 16 1900

BUILDING COMMISSIONER:

The undersigned hereby applies for a permit to build, according to the following specifications:—

PERMIT MUST BE RECEIVED BEFORE COMMENCING WORK.

900 MAY 16 1900

1. If in a block, how many buildings will be erected? 1

2. Material of building is? Wood

3. Owner of building is? L. Chadbourne Address 19 Harvard Ave Dor.

4. Architect " " E. A. Russell " 54 Warren St

5. Builder " " owner builds " "

6. Location " " 51 Waldeck " " Ward 24 1/2

7. Nearest street? Park St

8. Purpose of building is? Dwelling

9. If a dwelling, for how many families? 2

10. Is there to be a store in lower story? no

11. Size of lot, No. of feet front, 50; No. of feet rear, 42; No. of feet deep, 127

12. Size of building, No. of feet front, 28; No. of feet rear, 28; No. of feet deep, 48

13. No. of stories, front, Two; rear, Two

14. No. of feet in height from the level of the ground to the highest part of the roof? 41' 0"

15. The proposed structure stands how near to the lines of adjoining premises? 4' 0"

If within the distance allowed by ordinance, what is the thickness of the wall to be built? —

16. Distance from surrounding buildings, front, 20' feet; side, 10' feet; side, 100' feet; rear, 700 feet.

17. Distance back from line of street is? 20' 0"

18. What is the height of nearest building? 40' 0". What is nearest building used for? Dwelling

19. Will the building be erected on solid or filled land? Solid

20. Will the foundation be laid on earth, rock, or piles? Earth

21. If on piles, No. of rows? — distance on centres? — length of —

22. Diameter, top of? — diameter, bottom of? —

23. Size of posts? 4" x 8"

24. " girts? 4" x 8"

25. " floor timbers? 1st floor 2x9, 3x9, 4x9, 2d 2x9, 3x9, 4x9, 3d —, 4th —

O. C. " " " " 16" " 16" " "

Span " " " " See framing plans, " "

26. Braces, how put in? Spiked

27. Building, how framed? Knee & Tenon

28. What is the material of foundation? Mort. thickness of 1' 8". Will the foundation be laid with half cement mortar? Yes

29. Underpinning, material of Stone height of 4' 0"

30. Will the roof be flat, pitch, mansard, or hip? Pitched Material of roofing? Shingles

31. Will the building be heated by steam, furnaces, stoves or grates? Furnaces Will the flues be lined? Yes

32. Will the building conform to the requirements of the law? Yes

33. No. of brick walls? — and where placed? —

34. Probable cost above land? \$4500

35. What kind of firestop is to be used? Buck & Salamander

Plans submitted Yes Received by —

Show location by diagram on back of this form, giving relative distances from adjoining buildings.

[SIGNATURE OF OWNER OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE.]

[ADDRESS.]

NOTICE.

To obtain permission to occupy the street or sidewalk during construction, present your permit to build at office of Superintendent of Streets, 28 Court Square.

Service upon adjoining owners must be filed with Building Commissioner before permit is granted.

Deed Submitted saw deed not recorded Libro. Folio. Year.