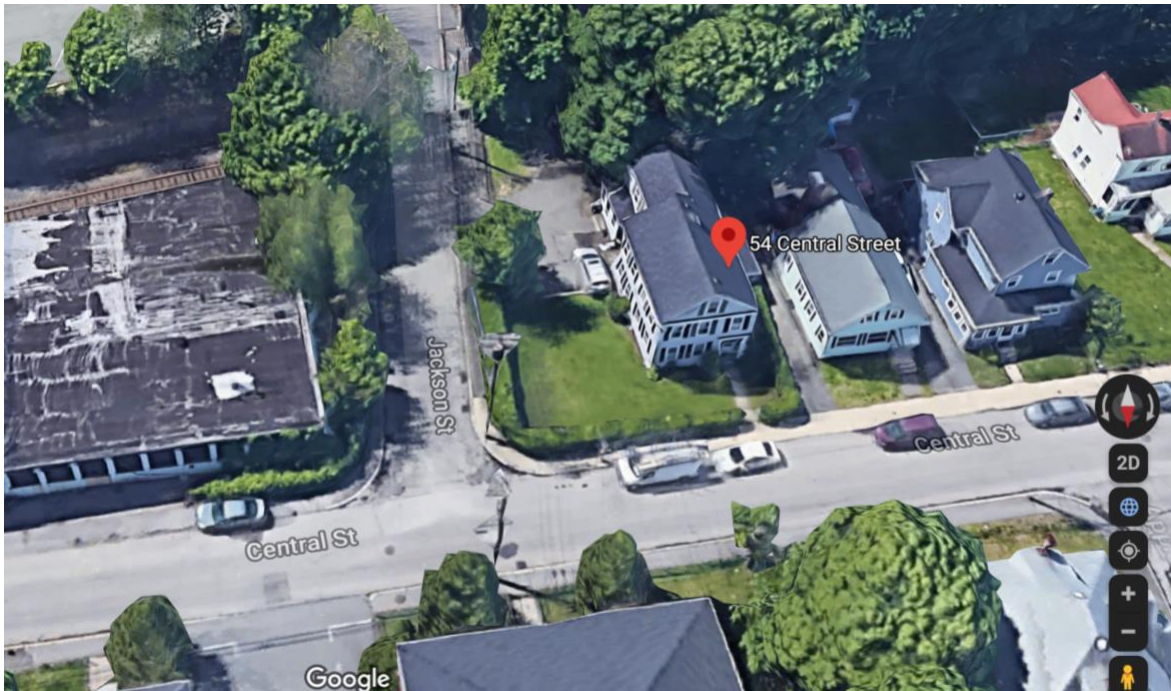
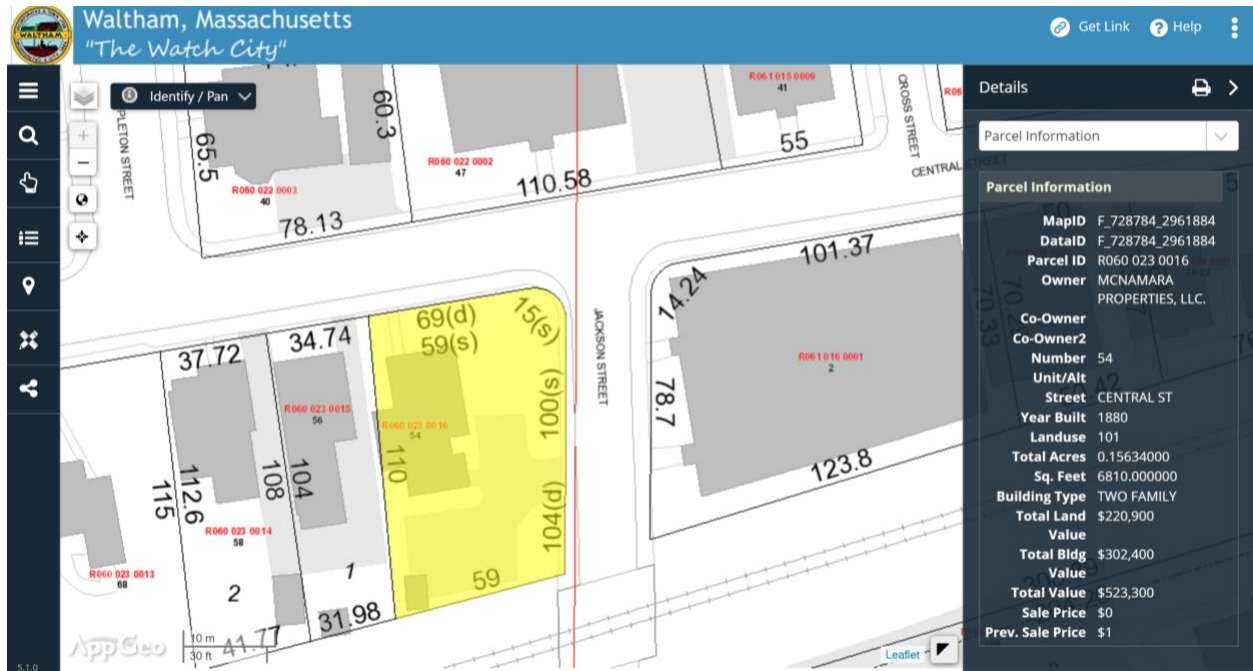


54 Central Street



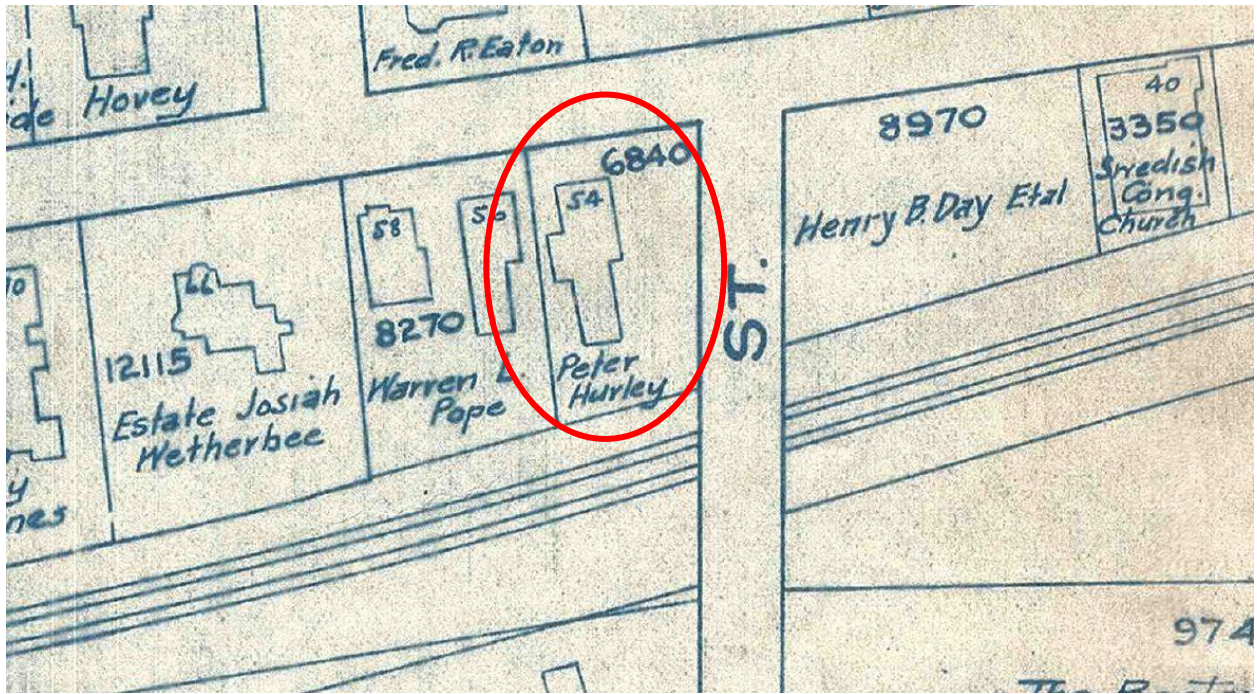
Google satellite



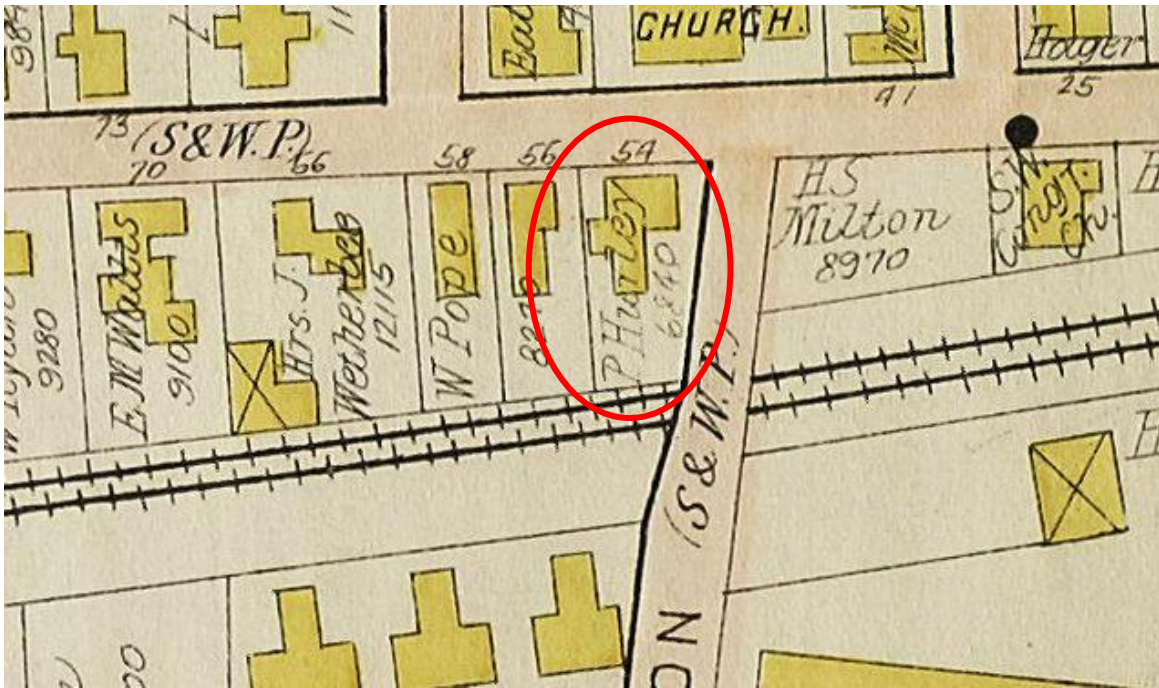
Google street view in 2011



Google street view in 2011, showing 3 chimneys; 2 have since been removed



1918 map



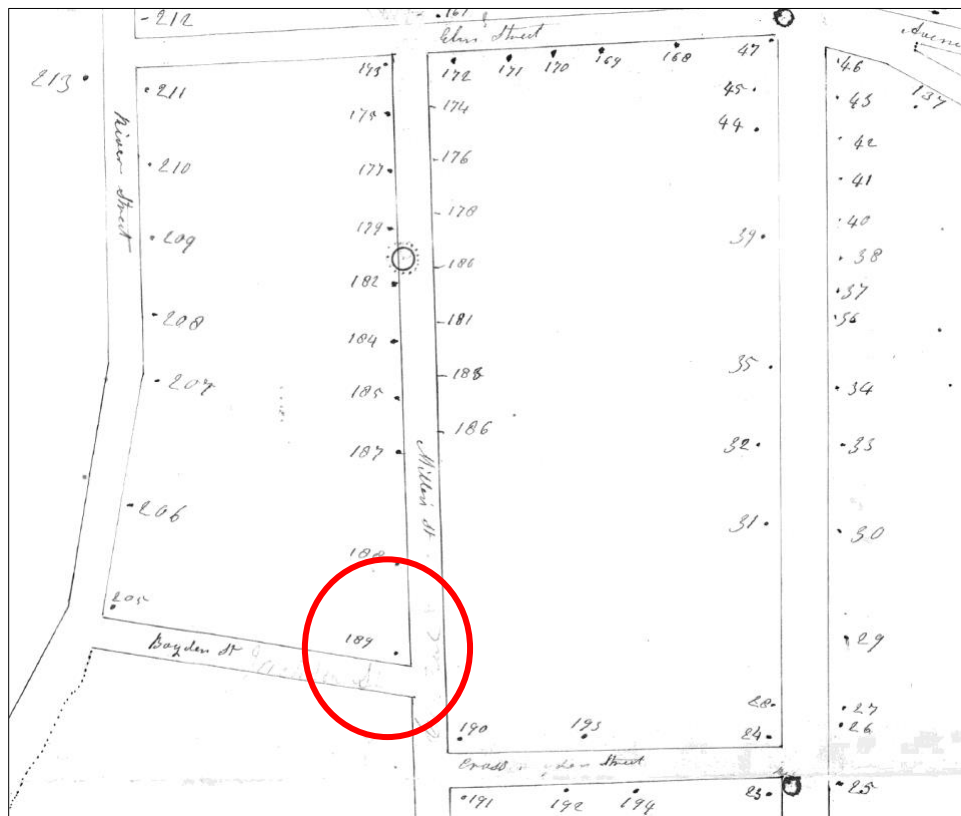
1900 map



1875 map



1854 map



1841 map

Timeline

- 1834: Deed, George Miller to Chauncy Newhall, who is noted in the deed as a manufacturer and had just purchased the next lot south on River Street. No house is mentioned. (MLR 333/370)
- 1841: Deed, Chauncy Newhall to George Lawton, no house is mentioned (MLR 403/429)
- 1841: George Lawton to William Livermore, no house is mentioned (MLR 403/430)
- 1841: Map shows William Livermore, but no occupants
- 1845: William Livermore to George Lawton, "with buildings" (MLR 471/548)
- 1845: Marriage, Edward G. Plimpton of Waltham to Susan L. Richardson of Groton
- 1850: Census, Edward G. Plimpton, bookbinder (adjacent to William Pope); Elias Mann, tailor, in same building
- 1854: Map shows G. W. Lawton
- 1855: Census, William R. Thomson, carpenter; Elizabeth Locke, same building, separate household
- 1858: Marriage Lucius W. Lawton of Waltham to Georgianna A. Remick of Boston
- 1860: Census, Lucius W. Lawton, clerk (adjacent to William Pope)
- 1866: George Lawton to Moses Sewell of Boston (MLR 969/35)
- 1870: Census, J. L. Sewall, merchant
- 1874: Directory, John L. Sewall, paper hangings (Boston), h. 32 Central, cor. Jackson
- 1875: Map shows J. L. Sewall
- 1878: Death, John L. Sewall, merchant, Waltham, (son of Moses)
- 1880: Directory, Louisa Sewall (widow of John K. Sewall), Central St. cor. Jackson St.
- 1881: Heirs of Moses Sewall of Boston to Sarah Parker (MLR 1564/548)
- 1884: Directory, George A. Parker, farmer, house Central cor. Jackson
- 1890: Directory, George A. Parker, farmer, house 54 Central

- 1891: George & Sarah Parker to Peter Hurley, who is listed as a carpenter in the deed (MLR 2087/586)
- 1900 Census, two families listed – Peter Hurley, carpenter & children; & Bridget Hoffman & son.
- 1906 Death, Peter E. Hurley Sr.
- 1940 Census, Joseph, Edward, Peter Hurley. Joseph owned a fruit store
- 1945 Directory, Joseph Hurley, grocer, 1 Jackson, residence 54 Central
- 1950 Directory, Joseph Hurley, grocer, 1 Jackson, residence 54 Central
- 1965 Quitclaim deed, Peter E. Hurley et al. to Mary Alice Whalen et al. (MLR 10811/80)
- 1965 Annual listing, Patrick Whelan, Mary A. Whelan, Joseph Hurley, 54 Central
- 1967 Quitclaim deed, Lenore Shea to Mary Alice Whalen et al [MLR 11310/512]
- 1975 Directory, Joseph Hurley, 54 Central; Mary A. (widow Patk J), rear 54 Central
- 1980 Affidavit of Paul J. Connolly, attorney. Peter E. Hurley, Sr. died intestate in 1906, so the estate was divided evenly among his seven children. Some of the children remained single while others married and had children. Some of these heirs died intestate also, so that the estate was divided into thirty-fifths, and eventually quitclaimed to Mary Alice McNamara, daughter of Mary Alice Whalen (MLR 14027/93)
- 1988 Deed, Mary Alice McNamara (daughter of Mary Alice Whalen) to Thomas and Mary Alice McNamara (MLR 19437/342)
- 1990 Directory, Cheryl Boehmer, saleswoman, Cellular, 54 Central
- 1996 Quitclaim deed, Mary Alice McNamara to McNamara Properties, LLC (MLR 26941/387)
- 2009 Death, Mary Alice (Whalen) McNamara
- 2020 Quitclaim deed, McNamara Properties, LLC to Haixin Li & Lin Xiao (MLR 75462/585)

Summary

The house at 54 Central Street was likely built in 1841. Shortly after the Boston Manufacturing Company (BMC) acquired the Bleachery site near Willow Street, in 1819, Patrick Tracy Jackson, the BMC's agent in Waltham, bought up, from many different land owners, most of the land along the north side of the river between the original mill site near Moody Street and Willow Street (MLR 235/393-6). He then promptly sold these lands to the BMC. This included about 25 acres between Elm Street and Newton Street (MLR 235/397), which extended from the river up to the house lots immediately along Main Street. In 1827, the BMC sold the eastern part of this land back to Jackson for his private estate (MLR 273/283). Then, in 1833 the BMC sold much of the western part of this land to George Miller (MLR 328/91). This was a strip of land about 330 feet wide (including the future house lots on both sides of Central Street, which did not yet exist) and stretching about 650 feet east from Elm Street. The western part of Central Street was probably laid out at this time. Then, in 1834, with the help of Micah Maynard, whom he soon bought out (MLR 333/367), Miller bought a good portion of the eastern part of the former BMC land from Jackson (MLR 332/134). This was a roughly "L" shaped lot (turned on its side, facing down) bordering a reduced Jackson estate on the north and west. The leg of the "L" on the north had a width of about 450 feet along Newton Street (roughly centered on where Central Street now stand) and a length of about 850 feet running west from Newton Street; and the other leg had a width of about 250 feet along River Street, with today's Jackson Street at its eastern end, and connected the northern leg to River Street along Jackson Street. As part of the deed, Miller was required to build a passageway that later became Jackson Street. Miller's two lots (the one from 1833 and other from 1834) butted together, and he probably laid out the eastern part of Central Street at this time. Cross Street was also laid out about this time. George Miller's father, Thomas Miller, had owned the land where Cross Street would later be located, along with the house lots on either side of it, for about 350 feet south from Main Street, since 1801 (MLR 142/477). George Miller now subdivided his land into house lots along Central Street up to Jackson Street and sold them off. Most of the original houses along Central Street were built in the 1830s and 1840s, and many of these still remain. Originally the house

lots along Central Street had a frontage on the street of 70 or 100 feet, so that the original houses were not crowded together. Only later were these lots subdivided. Many of the original homeowners were professionals or trades people, and, in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Central Street formed a respectable residential core of a thriving industrial village.

William Livermore, 1841 – 1845

The house at 54 Central Street first appears on maps in the 1841 map of Waltham, which shows William Livermore at the corner of Miller (Central) and Boyden (Jackson) Street. Unlike for other listed houses, the map key does not list any inhabitants, so the house may have been under construction. William Livermore had been born in 1809, and was the son of Jonas Livermore and Louisa Stearns. He lived on Central Street for only four years.

George Lawton and Edward G. Plimpton, 1845 – 1855

The house and lot were sold to George Lawton in 1845. Edward G. Plimpton, a Medway native and bookbinder, listed his residence as Waltham in his 1845 marriage record. He worked for Josiah Hastings in this period. He appears in the 1850 census with his wife and children in an adjacent building to William C. Pope (who is shown on the 1854 map as adjacent to the 54 Central Street house). The house also had a small apartment in which Plimpton's friend from Medway, Elias Mann and his wife lived. By 1855, Plimpton had moved to Holliston, and the census listed William R. Thomson next to William Pope. Elizabeth Locke lived in a small apartment in the same building.

Lucius W. Lawton, John H. Sewall, and Sarah Parker, 1860 - 1891

George Lawton's son, Lucius W. Lawton married in 1858 and in 1860, he and his wife are listed in the census as living adjacent to William Pope. In 1866, George Lawton sold the house and property to Moses Sewall, a wealthy rope manufacturer from Boston. He probably intended the purchase for his son, John L. Sewall, who appears at the corner of Central and Jackson Streets in the 1869 and 1874 directories, and in the 1870 census. John L. Sewall was a wallpaper merchant in Boston, and he died in Waltham in 1878. His widow continued to live in the house until the Moses Sewall heirs sold it to Sarah Parker, wife of George Parker. George Parker was listed in city directories as a farmer, although his farm fields must have been located elsewhere. The Parkers stayed in the house for ten years, and sold the house and lot to Peter Hurley, a carpenter, in 1891.

Peter Hurley and heirs, 1891 – 2020

Peter Hurley had immigrated from Ireland in 1876, and married in Waltham Anne Kelly in 1883. He purchased 54 Central Street in 1891, and he and his wife had seven children. In 1900, there was a Bridget Hoffman and her son George living in the house also. Annie Hurley died in 1895 and Peter Hurley died in 1906. Peter died intestate so the estate, including the property was divided among the seven children. Many of the children did not marry, and they continued to live at 54 Central Street. Some did marry. Some of the children died intestate as well, so the estate was divided by 35 shares. Some of the Hurley heirs continued to live in the house. In 1965, Joseph Hurley and Mary Alice (Hurley) Whalen lived in the house, and in 1975, Joseph Hurley lived at 54 Central, and Mary Alice Whalen lived in the rear.

Obituary, Mary Alice (Whalen) McNamara



Waltham - Mrs. Mary Alice (Whalen) McNamara, of Waltham, died Friday, September 11, 2009 at the University of Massachusetts Memorial Hospital in Worcester. She was 82. Mary Alice was born in Waltham on August 16, 1927, the only child of the late Patrick and Mary Alice (Hurley) Whalen, and had been a lifelong resident. She was a graduate of Saint

Mary's High School in Waltham and from Emmanuel College in Boston. She taught at the Plympton Elementary School in the early years of her marriage and after that became a piano instructor for most of her life. She was the pianist at the 'hospital shows' produced by the staff of the Waltham Hospital and also played at the shows and recitals put on by several area dance studios and at Saint Mary's Church. The wife of the late Thomas H. McNamara, she leaves her children, Thomas W. McNamara and his wife, Rosemary, of Hampton, New Hampshire, Jane McNamara of Waltham and Michael J. McNamara and his wife, Sally, of Wellesley and her grandchildren, Teresa L., Anne E., Megan S., Molly C. and Patrick J. McNamara. She was also the mother of the late Joseph P. McNamara. Family and friends will honor and remember Mary Alice's life by gathering for calling hours in The Joyce Funeral Home, 245 Main Street (Rte. 20), Waltham on Tuesday from 4 to 8 p.m. and again at 8 a.m. on Wednesday morning before leaving in procession to Saint Mary's Church, 133 School Street, Waltham where her Funeral Mass will be celebrated at 9 a.m. Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery, Waltham. Memorial donations may be made to the St. Vincent dePaul Society, c/o Saint Mary's Church, 133 School Street, Waltham, MA 02451.