

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Rev*



*1342*

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in ~~How~~ to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Gilman Block

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 207-219 Main Street \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city or town Worcester \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity \_\_\_\_\_

state Massachusetts code MA county Worcester code 027 zip code 01608

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Judith B. McDonough*

*9/21/2000*

Signature of certifying official/Title Judith B. McDonough, Executive Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I, hereby certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

*Patrick Anderson*

Date of Action

*11/20/00*

Gilman Block  
Name of Property

Worcester, Massachusetts  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	_____ building
_____	_____	_____ sites
_____	_____	_____ structures
_____	_____	_____ objects
_____	_____	_____ Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty stores/warehouse/offices

RELIGION/religious facility

INDUSTRY/bakery and confectionery manufacturing

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/music facility/night club

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Classical

Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

roof UNDETERMINED

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

(see attached)

Gilman Block

Name of Property

Worcester, Massachusetts

County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ETHNIC HERITAGE/Swedish-Finns/Danes

**Period of Significance**

1896-1950

**Significant Dates**

1896 - construction of building

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Cutting, Carleton & Cutting, architects, Worcester

J. W. Bishop & Company, builders, Worcester

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
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Gilman Block  
Worcester (Worcester), MA

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

**Location and Setting**

The Gilman Block is located on the east side of the north end of Main Street in the central business district of Worcester, Massachusetts. Situated in the approximate center of the state, Worcester is the county seat of Worcester County. It is the second largest city in New England, with a population of 166,350.

The Gilman Block is surrounded by a large-surface parking lot and is the only building left standing on the section of Main Street between Thomas and Central streets (photograph # 1). This section of downtown has suffered a severe economic decline over the past twenty-five years, with the resulting demolition of vacant and underused commercial buildings for parking lots. Although numerous other multi-story downtown commercial blocks of its period still survive in the city's central business district, this building is an increasingly rare example of its kind on the north end of Main Street.

**Description of the Building**

This four-story brick building is of bearing-wall brick construction. It is generally rectangular in plan and has a flat roof. Elements of both the Classical Revival and Romanesque Revival styles make up the design of its Main Street facade, the only facade intended to be seen from the street.

The ground floor is occupied by two storefronts, each of which houses a nightclub. There are two recessed store entrances at the ground floor level, with display windows on either side of each one (photograph # 2). To the left of the stores is a recessed entrance to the upper floors. The upper floors are currently vacant. Each of the upper floors is comprised mainly of a single large room in which brick walls and structural members are left uncovered and where little trim or adornment is seen (photograph # 3). The major ornamental feature of the interior is the stairway between the second and fourth floors (photograph # 4) that is lit from above by a skylight.

**Exterior**

Strongly Classical Revival in style, the main facade of the Gilman Block is treated as the facade of an Italian palace. Like an Italian palace, it is generally symmetrical in its organization and is divided into three distinct horizontal sections with a projecting cornice at the roof line (photographs # 1 & 2). Made of copper, the cornice is moulded with no added ornament except for a projecting bracket at either end. Although differing from the cornice shown in the original plans (Illustration # 1) by its lack of modillion brackets and reeded decoration, the present cornice appears to be original.

Typical of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Classical Revival style is the use of speckled, buff-colored brick on the main façade and limestone trim. These materials were popularly used for this style because they recall the light colored stone buildings of the Italian Renaissance and of Classical antiquity. The upper story of the Gilman Block facade is treated with brickwork of Roman-size, buff-colored bricks, patterned in a manner that gives the impression of the rusticated stone that was often

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Gilman Block  
Worcester (Worcester), MA

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used for the exteriors of Renaissance palaces. Classical detailing is also seen on the cast iron frieze and cornice above the ground floor display windows. Other Classical trim may survive on the original cast iron ground floor storefront surround, now hidden beneath a sheathing of panels probably added in the 1950's or 1960's in a modernization effort. Original drawings show that paneled and fluted cast iron Corinthian posts once marked the divisions between display windows. The current display windows and doors appear to date from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century modernization.

Incorporated into the Classical Revival style main facade is an elegant band of Romanesque Revival style windows at the fourth floor level (photographs 1 & 2). The most highly ornamental feature of the building, this band takes the form of four groups of repeated limestone Roman arches. Supported on smooth-shafted limestone columns with carved foliate

Romanesque style capitals, each arch is a true arch with voussoirs and a keystone (photograph # 2). Another Romanesque style detail is the subdivision of the other, rectangular, windows on the main facade into two parts -- a long lower section and a narrow transom above (photograph # 2). Window sash on the main facade are 1/1.

Alterations to the main facade include changes to the ground floor storefront surround, the installation of circa mid-20<sup>th</sup> century display window glazing and glazing supports, and the replacement of glazed wooden doors with modern glass and aluminum doors. Comparison of the present positions of the current store entrances with those shown on the original architects' plans of the building (Illustration # 1) indicate that they have been moved. At the second floor level a large display window now occupies the southernmost five bays (photographs 1 & 2, compare with Illustration # 1). Probably installed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it took the place of one double window and one triple window that echoed the windows that still exist on the floor above it.

The secondary side and rear facades of the Gilman Block are astylistic (photographs # 5). They are of simple, but substantial, appearance and are of red brick construction. Window openings are segmented arches with granite sills. Window sash are 6/6. Doorways are segmented arches, each containing a door with a transom above it (photograph # 5).

Interior

Numerous interior changes have been made over time to adapt the spaces to a variety of tenants. Interior partitions have been put up and taken down. Today there are relatively few interior divisions of space, especially on the upper floors. Two brick baking ovens that originally occupied part of the south wall on the second floor and the brick foundations below them on the ground floor have been removed. Ground floor alterations to the main staircase have also been made. The present main staircase begins at the second floor level. The 1896 plan (Illustration # 2) shows that it originally began at the ground floor level.

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Gilman Block  
Worcester (Worcester), MA

### Archaeological Description

While no prehistoric sites are recorded on the Gilman Block property, it is possible that sites are present. One site is recorded in the general area (within one mile). The property is located in an area of urban development that makes it difficult to determine its original or natural environmental characteristics. As a result, other than its location in a level to moderately sloped area, little is known of the area's original locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, distance to wetlands). In general, however, the potential for archaeological resources at this location, either prehistoric or historic is low. Although an earlier multiple-unit commercial block existed on the site, construction of the Gilman Block with a full basement covering most of the lot has probably destroyed any prehistoric or historic resources that might have been present.

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A well preserved example of the work of the Worcester architects, Cutting, Carleton & Cutting, the Gilman Block is architecturally significant as a high quality example of late 19<sup>th</sup> century Classical Revival style commercial architecture. Historically, it is important for its association with the development of Worcester's central business district during the city's last great period of industrial expansion, between about 1890 and the end of World War I. It is also significant for its role in the city's ethnic history, as the early 20<sup>th</sup> century meeting place of Swedish-Finnish and Danish church congregations.

Built in 1896, the Gilman Block is significant under National Register Criteria A and C:

#### Criterion A

##### Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Business and Development, the Changing Face of Main Street, and the Gilman Block

When the Gilman Block was built in 1896, the face of Worcester's Main Street was undergoing a vast change. Between about 1890 and 1917, a period when the city's industries were booming, many earlier Main Street commercial buildings were replaced by larger and more imposing commercial blocks, like the Gilman Block, and by tall office buildings, like the State Mutual Building (1897) and the Slater Building (1907).

Part of the reason for this change was the whirlwind growth of the city. During this period the population more than doubled from 84,655 to 187,492 with the number of foreign immigrants also climbing rapidly. While earlier Main Street buildings had been from one to four stories tall, buildings built during this period typically ranged from four to eleven stories in height. In contrast to earlier red brick and wooden commercial blocks, the buildings built on Main Street in the 1890's were mostly of light colored masonry in expressions of the Classical Revival style. Because of the taller and more substantial buildings built on Main Street and in the downtown area during this period, the center city became much more dense and urban in its appearance.

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**Gilman Block  
Worcester (Worcester), MA**

The larger size of these new buildings reflected changes that were taking place in the institutions that influenced the lives of Worcester people around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In keeping with American trends of the day, daily life was increasingly based upon an economy of scale. In general, organizations grew to have influence over all aspects of life in Worcester while the influence of the individual declined. As city government grew in size and increased the level of its public services, the old city hall was replaced with the present one -- a large and imposing building with a tall tower proclaiming the size and wealth of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century city. An active Board of Trade (later renamed the Chamber of Commerce) assisted the city's businesses and worked to unify their effort to create a thriving business climate here. Independent specialty merchants began to be outstripped by larger businesses and department stores. Large corporations gradually replaced small companies. As the nation's economy expanded, business consolidation led to the acquisition of local Worcester businesses and industries by large outside conglomerates.

The Gilman Block and the Rogers-Young Company

The construction of the Gilman Block was a reflection not only of this late 19<sup>th</sup> century trend in Worcester toward bigger business, but also toward larger, more substantial commercial buildings along Main Street. Moses D. Gilman built the Gilman Block to replace an earlier multiple-unit commercial block he had owned on the same site. All of its four floors and an attached wagon shed were built to house a single, newly-expanded, large business, the Rogers-Young Company. Rogers-Young was the consolidation of two businesses, Charles M. Rogers, bakers, and F. E. Young Company, confectioners. At the time of the merger of the two enterprises, one of the businesses, the F. E. Young Company, occupied only one of several commercial spaces that existed in an earlier building on the site of the present Gilman Block. Charles M. Rogers, the other of the merged businesses, was located at 166 Pleasant Street. It is unclear whether or not either of these independent companies were wholesale companies. However, the new firm of Rogers-Young was apparently mainly a wholesale business, counting on large orders from retailers. The merger of the two companies appears to have created a much larger business than either of the two component companies themselves had been.

The 1896 city building permit for the construction of the present building describes the future Gilman Block as a "warehouse". A document filed in 1896 with the Massachusetts Inspector of Factories and Public Buildings shows that the first story of the building was to be occupied by a retail store and shipping room, the second floor by offices and a cracker bakery, and the third and fourth floors by confectionery manufacturing. In the basement were the boiler and engine room, general storage, and a bread bakery.

Moses D. Gilman

Moses Dudley Gilman (1846-1927), who commissioned the construction of the Gilman Block, was born in Quebec, Canada, the son of Roswell M. and Arathura (Heath) Gilman. He worked on his father's farm from the age of ten until 1864, when he enlisted in the Third Massachusetts Volunteer cavalry and served in the American Civil War. Before he was mustered out, his regiment was sent west to "Indian country". Gilman came to Worcester in about 1867. In 1870, he

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Gilman Block  
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married Amelia S. Burgess, the daughter of Alvin T. Burgess of Worcester, and lived here for the rest of his life. At the time of his death, Gilman was living with his wife at 6 Westland Street in the Hammond Heights section of the city, a neighborhood of large and stylish late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century houses. His house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Hammond Heights Historic District. Moses Gilman is buried in Rural Cemetery in Worcester.

Gilman got his start in the confectionery business working with L. R. Hudson in Worcester. In 1873, after six years with that firm, he bought the company. For the next twenty years he ran the company himself, until he sold out to F. E. Young. At that time he retired from active business, but remained a principal in the company.

Active in civic affairs and a Republican by political affiliation, he served for two years as a representative to the Massachusetts legislature for Ward 2. He was also a member of the Worcester Common Council for four years, Alderman for three years, and served as a member of the city license commission. He was a member of several fraternal organizations and was a 32<sup>nd</sup> degree Mason. He was a member and president of the Sportsmen's Club, served as vice commander of the George H. Ward post of the Grand Army of the Republic, and was a trustee of the Worcester Mechanics Association for three years.

Later Occupants of the Gilman Block

By 1904 the use of the Gilman Block had changed from single-occupant to multiple-occupant. Rogers-Young's attempt to function on a large scale appears to have been relatively short-lived, since by 1904 it had sold out and the operations of its successor company, Gilman & Moffett, occupied only a small portion of the entire building. The 1904 Worcester House Directory shows that the ground floor housed three separate businesses: the Gilman & Moffett Company, successors to the earlier Rogers-Young Company; a men's clothing store; and a dry goods store. The upper three floors were rented for a variety of other uses, including a real estate office, an insurance office, a dentist's office, a pool room, two churches, and a piano refinisher-furniture repairer. Both the ground floor and the upper floors continued to be occupied by a variety of businesses through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The Gilman & Moffett Company still occupied part of the building as recently as 1940. A 1980 newspaper article refers to the Gilman Block as the former home of the Gilman Chocolate Company, suggesting that part or all of the production of the Gilman & Moffatt Company, perhaps during the latter years of its existence, was chocolates.

The Gilman Block and Worcester Ethnic History

During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this building was home to three churches representing two of the city's new immigrant groups, the Swedish-Finns and the Danes. The Swedish-Finnish Baptist Church, the Swedish-Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church all held church services in the Gilman Block for several years. That these groups met in a commercial building rather than in a church was not unusual. Before they were well established enough to build their own church buildings, Worcester's newly formed immigrant religious

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congregations needed places to meet. Although some groups found cooperative congregations that allowed them to meet in existing church buildings, many others rented space in downtown commercial buildings like the Gilman Block. This section of Main Street was attractive to Scandinavians, since a number of Swedish and Scandinavian businesses and organizations were concentrated here. This area was also located only a short distance from Belmont Street where many Swedes and other Scandinavians had settled. Both the Swedish-Finish Baptist Church and the Swedish-Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church met in the Gilman Block for a few years during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Soon they left to occupy their own church buildings nearby on Belmont Street. The First Swedish-Finnish Baptist Church (no longer standing) was built about 1908-1910 at the corner of Belmont and Edward streets. In 1908 the Swedish-Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church was built at 21 Belmont Street (MHC form # 103X-B). The Danish congregation remained in the Gilman Block for the greatest part of its life, from about 1907 to about 1920. It appears no longer to have existed after about 1920.

Late 19<sup>th</sup>-Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Immigrant History in Worcester

After 1890, the city's thriving industries attracted more and more workers, many of whom were foreign immigrants. During this period, new immigrant groups were added to Worcester's already large immigrant population, which was dominated by Irish, French Canadians, and Swedes but which included many other nationalities, as well. During the 1890's sizable numbers of Lithuanians, Poles, Finns, Swedish-Finns and English immigrants arrived in Worcester. Small numbers of Danes, Assyrians, Syrians and Greeks also began settling here at the same time. A sizeable Italian immigration and an Albanian immigration began about 1900. By 1910 over one-third of the city's population was foreign born or of foreign parentage.

Like the earlier waves of immigrants, the new arrivals to Worcester attempted to adapt themselves to life in a strange land while clinging to remnants of their own cultures. To do this they clustered together in their own neighborhoods and formed their own native-language organizations and churches. Ethnic churches were not only religious institutions but, perhaps more importantly, they were also the major cultural and social institutions. For most Worcester ethnic groups, the ethnic church or synagogue was center of the community. Every one of Worcester's immigrant ethnic groups that numbered more than only a few persons formed at least one church or religious congregation. Depending on the diversity of religious groups among a particular nationality or cultural group, several churches were sometimes formed, as was the case with the Swedish-Finns.

As groups became assimilated into the language and culture of the new country, these churches often folded or gave up the language of the country of origin. It appears that Worcester's Danes, who were few in number, were one of these groups that was quickly assimilated into the larger American population, making a separate Danish church no longer necessary or viable.

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Gilman Block  
Worcester (Worcester), MA

Worcester's Swedish-Finns

The Swedish-Finns were Finns of Swedish ancestry who retained their Swedish language and customs despite having lived in Finland for centuries. Swedish-Finns began to settle in Worcester in about 1885 when Finnish immigration to the city began. Both the Finns and Swedish-Finns settled in the Belmont Street neighborhood where the city's Swedish population lived. In 1917 about half of Worcester's Finnish population was made up of Swedish-Finns. The 1920 census reported 3,787 white foreign stock Finns living here. So, about half of that number were probably Swedish-Finns. The population of Swedish-Finns was large enough during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries to support their own newspapers. The Nya Ostern Weckoblad (called Osterns Weckoblad after 1911) was published from 1896 through 1917. The Finska Amerikanaren existed only from 1897 to 1898.

Worcester's Swedish-Finns were Lutherans, Congregationalists, and Baptists. The Swedish-Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church (MHC form 103X-B) was established in 1900 from the First Swedish Lutheran mother church. The Swedish-Finnish Baptist Church was gathered in the same year. The Swedish-Finnish Congregational Church was established in 1916 with the assistance of the City Missionary Society of the Congregational Church. Their church was built on Stanton Street (MHC form 104X-A).

Danes in Worcester

There were enough Danes in Worcester in 1900 to allow the establishment of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church. In 1904 there were believed to be between 250 and 300 Danes living here. By 1914 there were 108 Danish-born males 21 years of age or older living in the city. According to Nutt's History of Worcester, there never was a large Danish immigration because Danes were "satisfied with the conditions of government and business in their own country." Nutt described Worcester's Danish population as "highly educated as a rule, skilled in many trades and among those of this city are many of high standing in all walks of life." He added, "No people from abroad finds a warmer welcome here." There seems to have been no specifically Danish neighborhood in the city. Because of their small number and high level of education they were quickly assimilated into American society and seem never to have existed as a strongly coherent group. During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century there were two Danish fraternal organizations in the city, Niels Finsen Lodge #192, Danish Brotherhood and Denmark Lodge, Danish Sisterhood. However the Danish Lutheran Evangelical Church was the major center of social affairs for the city's Danes. Niels C. Aaberg was the pastor of the church from 1907 until 1920, when it went out of existence.

Criterion C

The Gilman Block: a Stylish Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Commercial Block

The Gilman Block is significant under Criterion C for the high quality of its design and for the predominantly Classical Revival style of its architecture (with influences of the earlier Romanesque Revival style). Although smaller in overall size, less costly, and less elaborate than some of the largest downtown Worcester buildings of its period and style, the Gilman Block can be included among the city's finest and most high style examples of the Classical Revival. The

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**Gilman Block  
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Gilman Block is also notable for its relatively early date of construction, in comparison with the dates of other high style examples of the style, built both in Worcester and elsewhere. That the designer of the Gilman Block was well in harmony with the latest architectural trends of the day can be seen in the fact that his building was among the first wave of Classical Revival style buildings built in downtown Worcester.

The Classical Revival style and the size and substantial urban appearance of the Gilman Block are characteristic of downtown Worcester business blocks built during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some of the Worcester's most important buildings, commercial and non-commercial alike, are representatives of this style. Among them are the State Mutual Office Building (Peabody & Stearns, Boston, 1894-7), the Central Exchange Office Building (William G. Preston, Boston, 1895-6, City Hall (Peabody & Stearns, Boston, 1898), the Worcester County Court House (Andrews, Jacques & Rantoul, Boston, 1898-9), Fuller & Delano, Worcester, 1902), the Slater Office Building (Frost, Briggs & Chamberlain, Worcester, 1907), and Union Station (Watson & Huckel, Philadelphia, 1909). Like the Gilman Block, these buildings are found in the city's central business district, mostly along Main Street.

The Classical Revival was the most popular style for commercial buildings in downtown Worcester and elsewhere in the city between the 1890's and the 1920's. The popularity of the style was not limited to Worcester, nor to New England alone, since it was made widely popular across the entire United States by the imposing buildings seen along the "Great White Way" of the 1893 Columbian World's Exposition in Chicago. This style is characterized by Classical and Italian Renaissance building forms, Classical decorative motifs, and by light colored brick or limestone used in imitation of the marble of Classical buildings of antiquity and of the light-colored stone buildings of the Italian Renaissance.

Both the Classical Revival and Romanesque Revival styles, and combinations of the two, were widely used for American commercial buildings during the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The combination of both styles, as seen in the Gilman Block, is not an oddity of this building alone. In the 1890's even the country's finest architects combined the Romanesque style with the Classical Revival. This combination can be seen in Worcester not only in the Gilman Block but also in two much larger Classical Revival style, Main Street buildings -- the Central Exchange and the State Mutual buildings -- designed by well-known Boston architects. Built in limestone during the very same period as the Gilman Block, these two office buildings are both predominantly Classical Revival in style with a strongly Romanesque feature blended nearly seamlessly with it. The Gilman Block and these two buildings all have in common numerous Classical Revival characteristics, including light colored exteriors, the Renaissance palace form, Classical detailing, and rectangular windows on the lower floors that are grouped together in two's and three's. All also share a similar treatment of the upper floor that is derived from the American Romanesque Revival style: a strip of groups of repeated, narrow, round-arched windows. Although the Classical Revival style continued to be popular for commercial buildings for most of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the blending of Romanesque Revival elements with it, as was common in the 1890's, fell out of common practice after about 1900.

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**Gilman Block  
Worcester (Worcester), MA**

Cutting, Carleton & Cutting, Architects

Also under Criterion C the Gilman Block is significant as an example of the work of the well-known Worcester architectural firm, Cutting, Carleton & Cutting. This firm was the partnership of Amos P. Cutting (1839-1896), Elbridge S. Carleton (d.1932) and Frank H. Cutting. Amos P. Cutting, the senior member of the original partnership, died in 1896 only a short time after the founding of the partnership. Frank H. Cutting was his son. Active from 1896 through 1931, this firm designed numerous schools, libraries, residences and other buildings, mostly in Worcester and the surrounding towns.

It is not known whether the senior partner, Amos P. Cutting, had a hand in the design of the Gilman Block, since he died in the same year of its construction. However, the high quality of the detailing and the finish of the building suggests that he may have had a hand in its design. Amos Cutting was one of several experienced and highly skilled architects practicing in Worcester during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. During his architectural career, he is said to have designed seventy-five churches in the eastern United States. He also designed numerous libraries, residences, commercial buildings, and factories. Several of his buildings, located in various Massachusetts cities and towns, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. At the time of his death, his most important building was considered to be the 1894 New Hampshire State Library at Concord. His obituary was published in two important architectural journals of the day. Inland Architect called his work "correct and scholarly." American Architect and Building News called him "one of the best known architects of central Massachusetts."

Buildings built after the death of Amos P. Cutting listed in the Massachusetts Historical Commission's MACRIS files as the work of Cutting, Carleton & Cutting are mostly public schools and public libraries. Still existing today in a variety of cities and towns in Massachusetts, they were built between the 1890's and the 1920's.

Recent History of the Gilman Block

After the opening of the Worcester Center Shopping Mall in the early 1970's, the occupancy level of the Gilman Block fell off, just as it did in other commercial buildings all along Main Street. Due to vacancies, subsequent deterioration, and plans for future development, many downtown buildings were demolished, especially along the northern end of Main Street where the Gilman Block is located. Today the Gilman Block is the lone surviving building in the city block between Central and Thomas streets. It has avoided demolition by having found a long-term successful use by two popular nightclubs.

Future Plans

The present owner of the Gilman Block is planning a rehabilitation project for the building using the Federal Historic Preservation Investment Tax Credits. The project will include the renovation of the existing ground-floor night clubs and the expansion of the clubs to the now vacant second floor. The vacant third and fourth floors will be converted to office space. The exterior portion of the project will include the removal of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century sheathing from the storefront

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number   8   Page   8  

**Gilman Block**  
**Worcester (Worcester), MA**

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area. If original storefront detail is found to survive substantially intact beneath the sheathing, it will be repaired and retained. If it does not survive, the feasibility of creating a replica storefront based upon the original architectural drawings (Illustration # 1) will be considered. If replacement with a replica is not feasible, a new storefront treatment compatible with the original design of the building will be installed. The feasibility of restoring the altered windows on the south end of the second floor of the main facade will also be considered as part of the project.

**(end)**

Gilman Block  
Name of Property

Worcester, Massachusetts  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one acre

### UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. Zone 19 Easting 269000 Northing 4683 080

2. Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan McDaniel Ceccacci, preservation consultant with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization for Liberty Square Development Trust date September 2000

street & number 360 Causeway Street telephone (508) 829-6640

city or town Jefferson state MA zip code 01522

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Judith Shwachman, Liberty Square Development Trust, by its Trustee Worcester Capital Corp.

street & number 11 Pleasant Street, P. O. Box 16689 telephone (508) 798-8844

city or town Worcester state MA zip code 01601-6689

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503. NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Gilman Block  
Worcester (Worcester), MA

### MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

#### Public Records

City of Worcester Buildings Department, Index to Building Permits, New Buildings, 1896 # 604 and 1897 #157  
Massachusetts Department of Public Safety, Building Inspection Record and Architects' Drawings of Building,  
October 26, 1896.

#### Maps and Atlases

1870 Atlas of the City of Worcester, Massachusetts. New York: F. W. Beers & Co., 1870.  
1896 Atlas of the City of Worcester, Massachusetts. Springfield, Ma.: L. J. Richards & Co., 1896.  
1911 Atlas of the City of Worcester, Massachusetts. Springfield, Ma.: L. J. Richards & Co., 1911.  
1922 Atlas of the City of Worcester, Massachusetts. Springfield, Ma.: L. J. Richards & Co., 1922.  
1971 Insurance Maps of Worcester, Massachusetts. New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1971.

#### City Directories

Worcester City Directories, 1894, 1896, 1897, 1900  
Worcester Street Directories, 1894, 1896, 1897, 1900, 1904, 1906, 1914, 1922, 1927, 1934, 1940, 1960

#### Photographs

Worcester Historical Museum, Main Street Views

#### Clippings

Clipping File, Worcester Historical Museum, Business Clippings: Gilman Chocolate Co. and Biographical Clippings:  
Moses D. Gilman, obituary, 1927.

#### Unpublished Works

Pfeffier, Brian and Ceccacci, Susan McD. Massachusetts Historical Commission B Form, Gilman Block, Worcester  
# 116-CBD-12 & 116-CBD-12(X), 1977 & 1983  
Pfeiffer, Brian. Narrative History, Worcester Multiple Resource National Register Nomination, 1978.  
Ceccacci, Susan McD. Massachusetts Historical Commission, National Register Criteria Statement, Gilman Block, 1999.  
Ceccacci, Susan McD. Historic Preservation Certification Application, Part I, Gilman Block, 1999.  
Ceccacci, Susan McD. Narrative History, Worcester Ethnic Survey, 1983.  
Massachusetts Historical Commission MACRIS files: buildings designed by Amos P. Cutting and by Cutting, Carleton  
& Cutting, 1999.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9/10 Page 2/1

Gilman Block  
Worcester (Worcester), MA

### Published Works

Knowlton, Elliott B., ed. Worcester's Best: A Guide to the City's Architectural Heritage. Worcester: Worcester Heritage Preservation Society, 1984.

(end)

### 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

#### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Gilman Block lot are same as those recorded on the City of Worcester Assessor's Map 2 Block 8 Section 20.

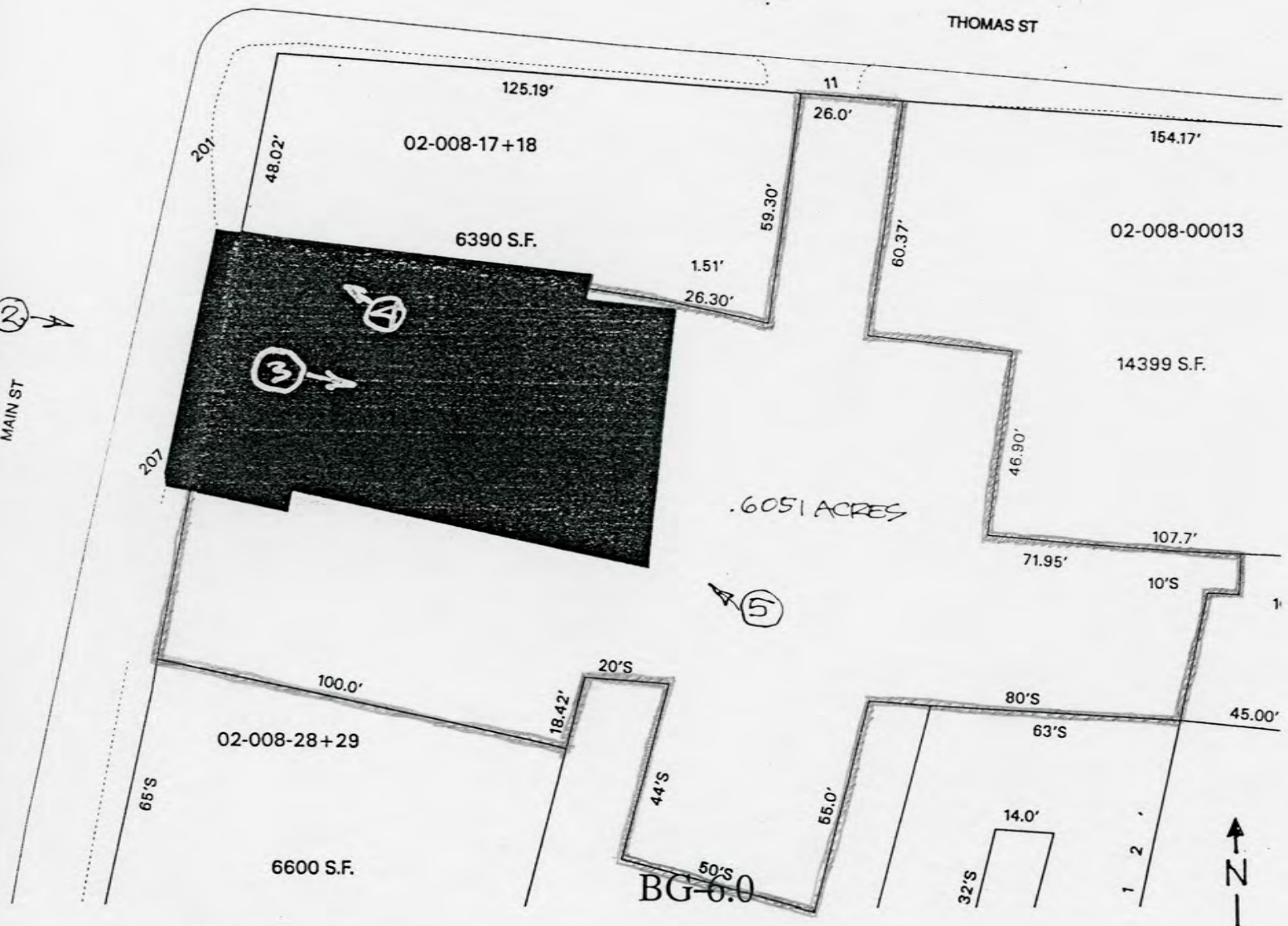
#### Verbal Boundary Justification

The lot included in the nomination comprises the entire piece of property now listed with the Worcester Assessor as pertaining to the Gilman Block. Land behind the building included as part of the lot was historically associated with the Gilman Block. It was the site of an outbuilding, no longer standing. The portion of the lot immediately to the south of the building was not historically part of the property, but was the site of an adjoining commercial block, no longer standing. Both of these portions of the property are currently paved as parking lots.

(end)

① ↗

② ↖  
MAIN ST



GILMAN BLOCK  
 207-219 MAIN STREET  
 WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA  
 ASSESSORS MAP # 2/8/20

1:240 SCALE

LEGEND

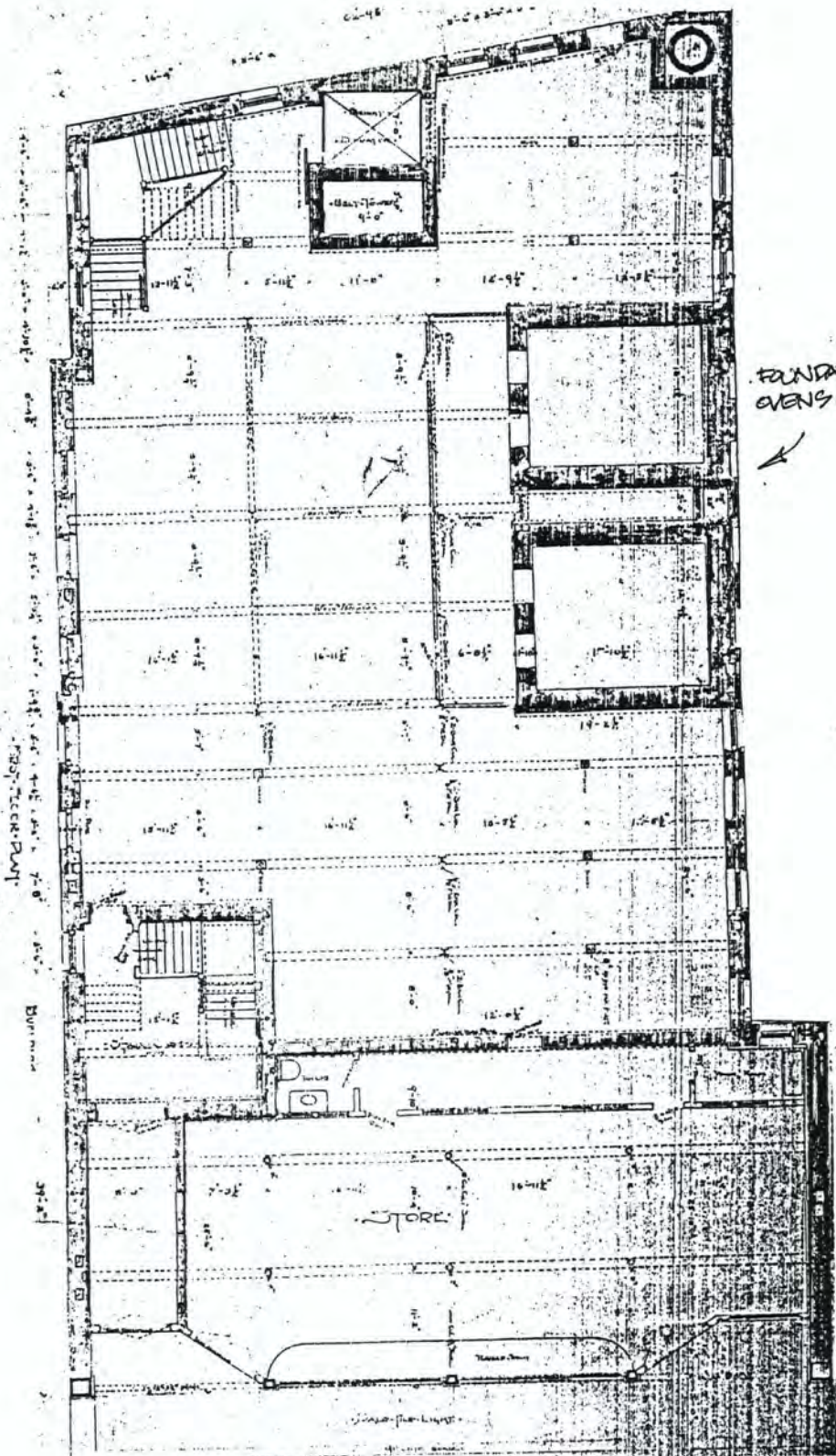
③ ↗ NUMBER + DIRECTION OF PHOTOGRAPH

— PROPERTY LINE



ORIGINAL 1896 ELEVATION, MAIN FACADE GILMAN BLOCK, CUTTING, CARLETON & CUTTING ARCHITECTS

Cutting, Carleton & Cutting  
Architects  
Worcester,  
Mass.



FOUNDATIONS FOR  
OVENS ABOVE

FIRST FLOOR PLAN, 1896  
GILMAN BLOCK, WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS  
CUTTING, CARLETON & CUTTING, ARCHITECTS

ILLUSTRATION #2

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Gilman Block

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 10/12/00      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/23/00  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/08/00      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/26/00  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 00001342

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

     ACCEPT         RETURN         REJECT    \_\_\_\_\_ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Historically and architecturally significant 19th century  
Commercial building*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept AEC

REVIEWER Fatimah Andrus      DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_      DATE 11/20/00

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



PARK

HOTEL

DO NOT BLOCK DRIVE

PARK

STAGE DOOR

DO NOT BLOCK DRIVE

DO NOT BLOCK DRIVE

GILMAN BLOCK

207-219 MAIN STREET

WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. CECCACCI

DATE: JANUARY 1999

NEGATIVE: OWNER

VIEW: EAST SIDE OF MAIN STREET, LOOKING SE, WITH GILMAN BLOCK ON LEFT

PHOTO # 1



18 GILMAN 26

POLLY ESTA'S

STOP

GILMAN BLOCK  
207-219 MAIN STREET  
WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. CECCACCI

DATE: JANUARY 1999

NEGATIVE: OWNER

VIEW: MAIN FACADE LOOKING EAST

PHOTO # 2



GILMAN BLOCK  
207 - 219 MAIN STREET  
WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. CECCACCI

DATE: JULY 1999

NEGATIVE: OWNER

VIEW: 2ND FLOOR, LARGE OPEN ROOM, LOOKING EAST

PHOTO # 3



GILMAN BLOCK  
207-219 MAIN STREET  
WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. CECCACCI

DATE: JULY 1999

NEGATIVE: OWNER

VIEW: MAIN STAIR, 2ND FLOOR LOOKING UP → NW

PHOTO # 4

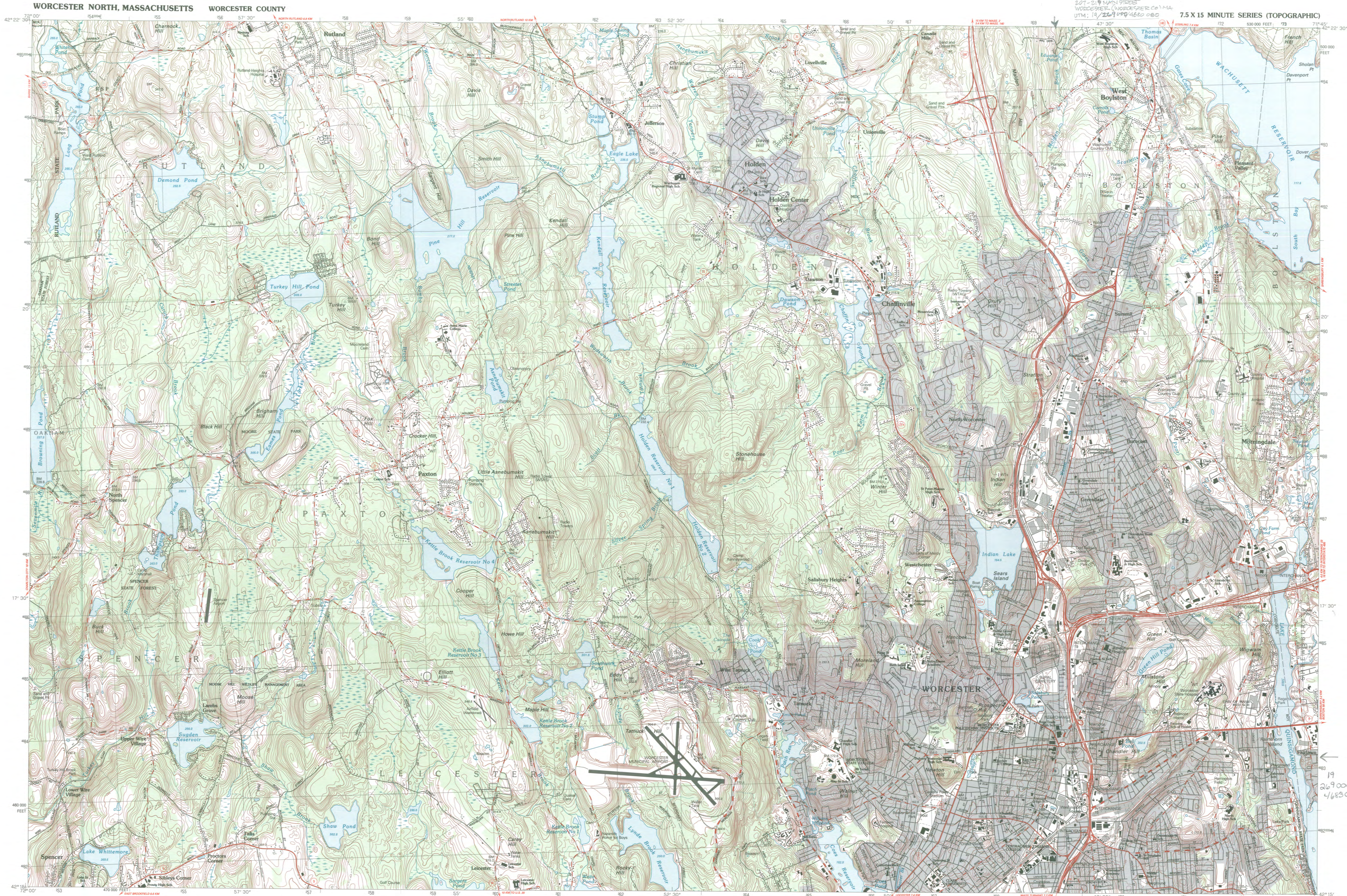


GILMAN BLOCK  
207-219 MAIN STREET  
WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. CECCACCI  
DATE: JULY 1999  
NEGATIVE: OWNER

VIEW: EAST (REAR) FACADE & SOUTH FACADE, VIEW LOOKING W

PHOTO # 5



GILMAN BLOCK  
 207-219 MAIN STREET  
 WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS  
 UTM: 19/269 000 4683 000

# Worcester North

**MASSACHUSETTS**  
 1:25 000-scale metric  
 topographic map

**7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE**  
 SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names

Leroy S. Preston Co.  
 (503) 535-4517

**GEOLOGICAL SURVEY**  
 1983

Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
 in cooperation with Massachusetts Department  
 of Public Works

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey  
 Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
 taken 1960. Field checked 1982. Map edited 1983.  
 Supersedes Paxton and Worcester North 1:25,000-scale  
 maps dated 1965 and 1974.

Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19: Universal  
 Transverse Mercator  
 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate  
 system, mainland zone. 1927 North American Datum  
 To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983  
 move the projection lines 6 meters south and 40 meters  
 west as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of  
 the National or State reservations shown on this map

**CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS**  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
 CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER  
 OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.3 METER

**THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS**

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM		ADJOINING MAPS	
Meters	Feet	Diagram showing magnetic declination from true north.		1	2
1	3.2808			4	5
2	6.5617			6	7
3	9.8425			8	8
4	13.1234				
5	16.4042				
6	19.6850				
7	22.9659				
8	26.2467				
9	29.5275				
10	32.8084				

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808  
 To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048

UTM grid convergence (GTM) and 1983 magnetic declination at center of map Diagram is approximate

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
 DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

### Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface	Secondary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	Unimproved road, trail	Route marker: Interstate, U. S., State	Railroad: standard gage; narrow gage	Bridge: drawbridge	Forthbridge; overpass; underpass	Built-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown	Boundary: National, with monument	State	County, parish	Civil township, precinct, district	Incorporated city, village, town	National or State reservation; small park	Land grant with monument; found section corner	U. S. public lands survey: range, township; section	Range, township; section line: location approximate	Force or field line	Power transmission line, located tower	Canal	Canal with lock	Cemetery, grave	Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument	Windmill; water well; spring	Main shaft; prospect; shaft or cave	Control: historical castle; location approximate	Contour: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression	Distorted surface: strip mine, lava, sand	Barrenness contours: index; intermediate	Personal line and stream: intermittent lake and stream	Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small	Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp	Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland	Scrub; meadow	Orchard; vineyard
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OCT 12 2000

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

September 21, 2000

Ms. Carol Shull  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Mail Stop 2280, Suite 400  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Gilman Block, 207-219 Main Street, Worcester (Worcester), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property in the Certified Local Government community of Worcester were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 60 to 90 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Peter Viles, Bruce Bunke, Worcester Historical Commission  
Susan McD. Ceccacci, Preservation Consultant  
Hon. Raymond Mariano, Mayor, City of Worcester  
Philip Shwachman, Liberty Square Development Trust  
Joanne Kennedy Velade, Worcester CLG  
Kevin Cahill, Worcester Office of Planning and Development  
Thomas Hoover, Worcester City Manager