



# **Margaret Maginley (1831–1921): A Woman in Amesbury’s Industrial History**

by

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# Margaret Maginley (1831 - 1921): A Woman in Amesbury's Industrial History

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This essay is presented in recognition of the many women that have contributed to the industrial history of Amesbury. The history of Amesbury – like many other towns – is filled with stories of women who were pioneers in their own way. Their efforts paved the way for female ownership and operation of businesses. One of these women was Mrs. Margaret Maginley (McGinley). After Margaret's husband John passed away in 1878 she took the over the operations of the business and ran the family's coach or "hack" service herself for about 15 years.

**Coach Notice.**  
The subscriber will run a Coach to and from the Depot in this village, upon the arrival and departure of every train, taking passengers to ~~any point near or remote~~ from the station.  
He will also hold himself in readiness to attend to all calls, whether for pleasure drives to Salisbury or Hampton beach, or for any purpose where a Coach and a good team is required.  
JOHN MCGINLEY.  
Salisbury, July 1, 1869.

John McGinley (Maginley) placed this advertisement in an Amesbury newspaper (The Villager) in 1871.

"Hack" is an abbreviation of "hackney," a service similar to today's taxi. In the old days it provided carriages, drivers and horse teams used to transport people. A hack service could often accommodate large groups with a vehicle that was like a horse-drawn school bus.

Margaret (Behan) was born in Lowell, Mass., on December 16th, 1831. She came to Amesbury as a child with her father Edward and siblings. She married John McGinley, an Irish immigrant, on August 27, 1853, and they settled in what was then called the Salisbury Mills and is now Amesbury.

John McGinley was born in Ireland on Oct 24, 1828, immigrated to America in 1849 and became a citizen in 1857. He served in the Civil War in Co. E 1st Battalion MA H.A. as a private.

The McGinleys bought their home on Elm Street (now 103-105 Elm) in 1860. Interestingly, only Margaret is listed on the deed to the property. Soon after, they began their hack service.

The stable that housed their horses was built alongside the McGinley house, originally 41 Elm. Later the house numbers changed and it became 105 Elm St. The stable is no longer there, but

it was set back from the road and ran the long way on the right side of the driveway. The property abutted Clark's Pond. This location also allowed easy access for transporting people to and from the mills and the train depot.

Margaret was a well-liked and well-known woman who ran a successful business. Her carriages were considered very comfortable with nice horses, she provided safe drivers at reasonable prices. One of her most beautiful carriages was a piano box buggy manufactured by James Hume, an Amesbury carriage maker. (These buggies were named "piano box" because they resembled 19th century square pianos.)

Her service accommodated parties of up to 15 and specialized in funerals and pleasure rides to Salisbury and Hampton beaches. Her teams could be rented by the hour or by the day, allowing people without a horse and carriage a way to travel beyond the train's reach. In January of 1886, Margaret's business became one of the first to be connected by telephone.

Newspaper reports say Margaret was a cheerful and kind lady with many friends. She maintained a well for public use and kept a drinking cup nearby. She welcomed those that stopped. Those young and old quenched their thirst there, chatted and admired the big beautiful blue hydrangea that graced the front of her house.

She had no children of her own and never remarried. She passed away on April 17th, 1921, after a short illness. Until then she was rarely sick. She is buried at Mt. Prospect Cemetery in Amesbury with her husband. Margaret's house is now listed with the Massachusetts Historical Commission as the "Frost-McGinley House."

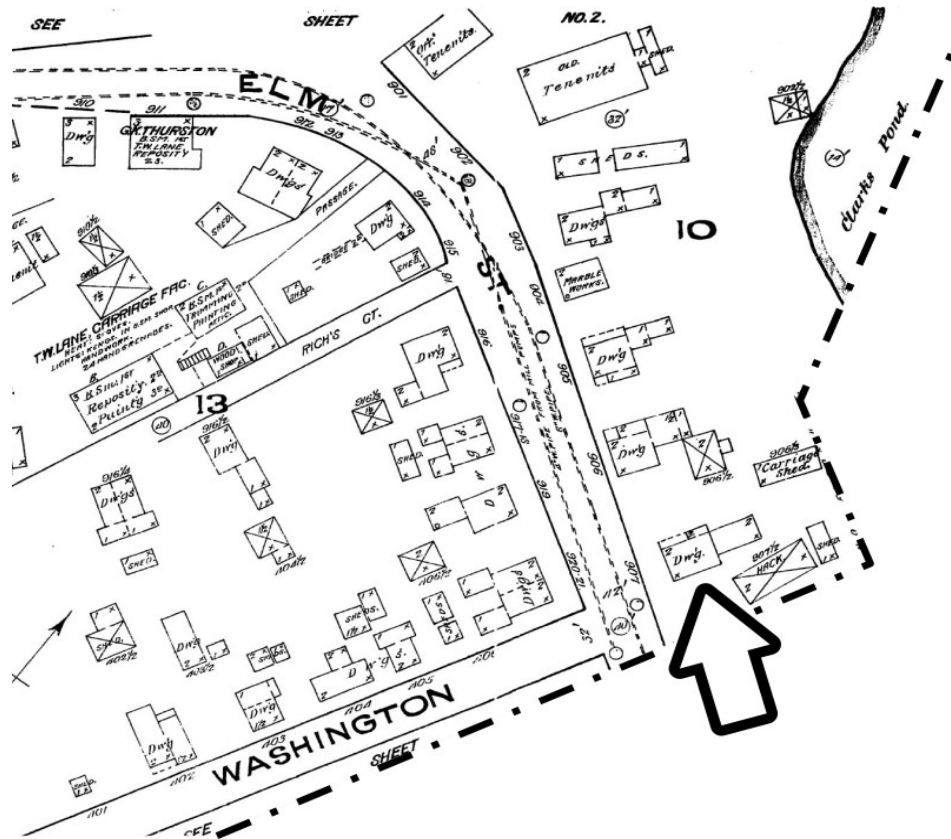
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**MRS. J. MAGINLEY,**  
*41 Elm St., Salisbury Mills,*  
**TEAMS TO LET,**  
with Driver, by the hour or day.  
**HACKS,**  
as many as required, for Parties and Funerals.  
Connected by Telephone at E. L. Bartlett's  
Grocery Store aug11f

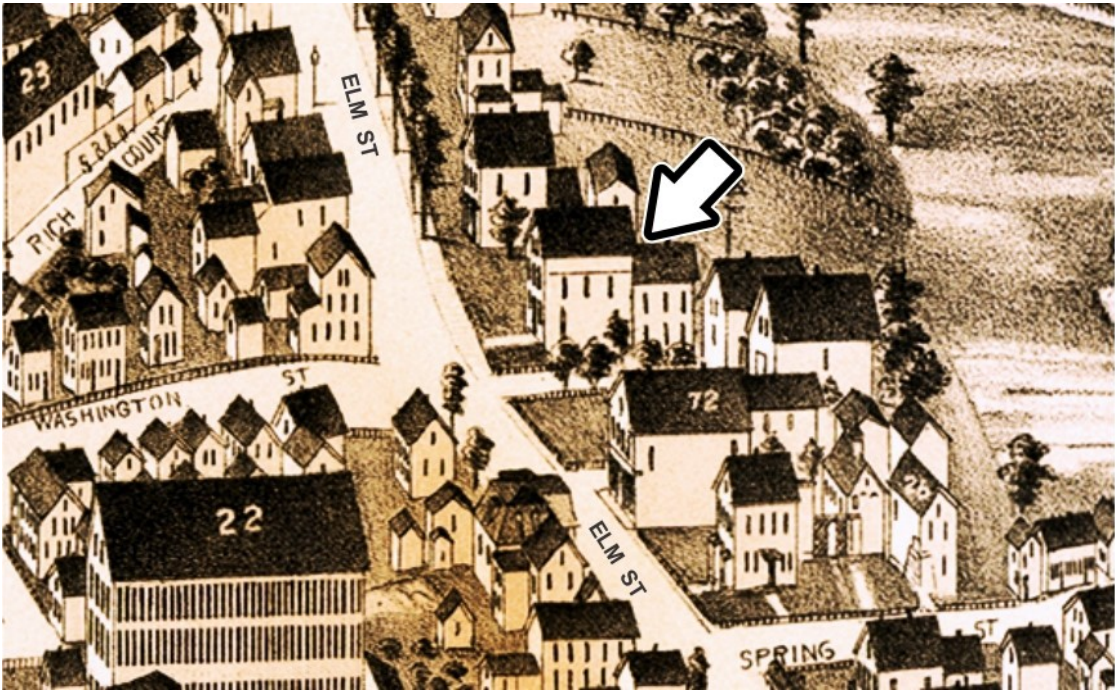
Margaret Maginley's advertisement in The Amesbury News, July 2, 1886.



Maginley house in 2022. (Photo by Joyann Reynolds.)



Arrow indicates Maginley house facing the intersection of Elm and Washington streets on an 1885 Sanborn insurance map.



Arrow indicates Maginley house shown on an 1890 map by E. H. Bigelow.

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