

William Guy Gilmore at Woodlawn Cemetery

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Studio 1: Woodlawn

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The story of William Guy Gilmore is an exceptional example of the upward social and economic mobility of immigrants moving to the United States in the late nineteenth century. William immigrated from Ireland in 1864 as a teenager. According to the 1880 census, at the age of thirty-two, William worked as a grocery salesman. He, his wife, Mary J., four sons, and Mary's aunt, Mary J. O'Neal resided in a humble neighborhood in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.<sup>1</sup> A few years after their fourth son, Richard, was born, the family (except for Aunt Mary J.) moved to Brooklyn, New York. Over the course of the following three decades, William Guy made numerous social and economic gains by transitioning from ordinary means to wealth and privilege.

By 1886, William and his family lived at 414 Classon Ave. in Clinton Hill, Brooklyn.<sup>2</sup> After four years, the family moved down the street to 408 Classon Ave; while living at this location, William Guy began working for the coffee industry.<sup>3</sup> By the end of his career, he had moved up the corporate ladder and had secured prominent positions at various companies, the most well known being the coffee and sugar company, Arbuckle Brothers. In 1903, William Guy moved his family to 24 Prospect Park West, a prominent street in Brooklyn, while working as a broker at 45 Wall Street. According to the Brooklyn City Directory, there was one other gentleman named Albert Gilmore living at this address; a possible relative who was working as a clerk.<sup>4</sup>

By 1910, William Guy moved a few houses away, into the home at 18 Prospect Park West. He purchased this residence and resided there with his wife, his three youngest sons, and three servants; residing in a more extravagant townhouse implying a prestigious lifestyle compared to a decade prior.<sup>5</sup> William Guy Gilmore, like many men of affluence, was active in local life with a focus on finance and law. He was a member of the Brooklyn Chamber of

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<sup>1</sup> 1880 U.S. Census, Pittsburg, 142

<sup>2</sup> 1886 Brooklyn City Directory

<sup>3</sup> 1889 Brooklyn City Directory

<sup>4</sup> 1903 Brooklyn City Directory

<sup>5</sup> 1910 U.S. Census

Commerce, the Downtown Club, and the India House Club in Manhattan.<sup>6</sup>

William Guy Gilmore's success allowed the family to purchase a summer home in 1899 in Babylon, Long Island. During their later years, William And Mary resided at this home until their death.<sup>7</sup> Their youngest son, Robert, also resided here in his later years.<sup>8</sup> William Guy Gilmore, his wife, Mary J. Gilmore and all four sons were laid to rest in Woodlawn Cemetery.<sup>9</sup>

Sometime between 1910 and 1920, William Guy Gilmore Jr. moved out of the family home on Prospect Park West and married Olive Candee.<sup>10</sup> The three younger sons continued to reside with their parents.<sup>11</sup> Edward the second eldest was a clerk, while Hugh and Robert were lawyers with their own practices. Out of the four boys, Robert was arguably the most successful. Graduating from New York Law School he entered politics and began running in local elections; even serving as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Eastern District during the Woodrow Wilson administration. Robert Gilmore became active in local politics, running for office in Suffolk County. He held his bar membership for seventy years, letting it retire ten years before his death at the age of ninety-one.<sup>12</sup>

The mausoleum on lot 12158 was commissioned by William Guy Gilmore. Three generations of Gilmores rest at this location in Woodlawn Cemetery; William Guy Gilmore, his wife Mary J. Gilmore, his four sons, two of the son's wives, and four grandchildren. Resting within the mausoleum are the immediate family members of William Guy Gilmore and a single grandchild who died in infancy. Interest in the family increases by observing the dates of death of the Gilmore family members. William Guy Gilmore died on October 31, 1921, followed by his wife Mary J. Gilmore who died on April 18, 1934. Their eldest son William Guy Gilmore Jr. died

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<sup>6</sup> New York Times, *William Guy Gilmore Obituary*

<sup>7</sup> New York Times, *Mary J. Gilmore Obituary*, April 20, 1934

<sup>8</sup> New York Times, *Robert N. Gilmore Obituary*

<sup>9</sup> Woodlawn Mausoleum Record

<sup>10</sup>New York Times, *William Guy Gilmore Jr. Obituary* December 11, 1934

<sup>11</sup>1920 U.S. Census

<sup>12</sup>New York Times, *Robert N. Gilmore Obituary*

the same year as his mother on December 12, 1934; it can be assumed this was a difficult year for the family. His wife, Olive Candee Gilmore died on October 29, 1931. The wife of their second son Edward, Edith R. Gilmore, died on September 9, 1911, presumably due to difficulties during childbirth, only thirteen days after their infant child died on August 27, 1911. Robert's wife, Mildred Koch, is buried in the ground outside the mausoleum with two of their children.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Woodlawn Cemetery Records, lot 12158

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