

LANDMARK STUDY
FOR THE

Durant-Kenrick Homestead

COMPILED BY
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AS PART OF COURSEWORK FOR
NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION
TAUGHT AT BOSTON UNIVERSITY
BY SALLY ZIMMERMAN

MAY 7, 1997

NEWTON LOCAL LANDMARKS PROGRAM

286 WAVERLY STREET

The Newton Historical Commission, with the assistance of Boston University Preservation Planning student, Rachel Gakenheimer, prepared this landmark report, completed in June 1997.

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I. Name of property

- A. Historic Names: Captain Edward Durant House, the Kenrick Place, the Kendrick House, Durant-Dewing House, Durant-Kenrick Homestead
- B. Common Name: Durant-Kenrick Homestead

II. Location

- A. Street Address: 286 Waverly Avenue, Newton, MA
- B. Zip Code: 02159
- C. Assessor's S/B/L #: 73/9/17 (Map ID - 048SW)

III. Classification

- A. Ownership of property
 private public (federal, state, local) other
- B. Type of Property
 building structure site landscape other
- C. National Register Status
Listing and Date Awarded May 13, 1976

IV. Function or Use

A. Historic Function(s)

Over the centuries the house has been used mainly as a residence, but has also served to house the local grammar school, and the property was used for several years as the Kenrick's tree nursery.

B. Current Function(s)

The Durant-Kenrick Homestead, located on the eastern side of Waverly Avenue, comprises 26,354 sq. ft. in an SR1 zoning district, (which today ensures that a maximum of 20% of the property is built up, and that 65% be dedicated to open space). The house is lived in by a caretaker, Gretchen Eckhardt, and is managed by two descendants of Edward Durant, Mary S. Morain and Rosemary Avery. The descendants also share information about the house

regularly with other descendants and interested parties via a Newsletter. The house is open eight Sundays during the spring and summer months. It is being maintained as an historic structure and museum.

V. Description

A. Neighborhood

The Durant-Kenrick Homestead is a one family residence set back on the property from a major tree-lined street. The neighborhood surrounding it is moderately built up area filled with other single family residences.

B. Architectural

The house was originally built as a two story wood-frame and clapboard Georgian style building on a fieldstone foundation with a five bay facade. It had a gambrel roof with a long ridge line and a narrow cornice. There were two chimneys, one located at the 2nd bay and one at the 4th. On the western side, facing Waverly Avenue, was the main entryway, a central door flanked by fluted pilasters and topped by a 5 light transom and a simple entablature. The house had a four room plan with central passage, two parlors, kitchen and keeping room. There were two more rooms above the parlors and a third, in the upper attic, appears to have been used as well. This house had a grand air boasting 10 ½ foot ceilings on the first floor and 8 ½ feet on the second. The 6/6 windows were tall and slender with lintels that echoed the front door's entablature. Circa 1830, the lean-to roof was raised to accommodate additional rooms on the 2nd floor at the rear of the house. At this time a small stair hall was added behind the front stairs, and on the southern end of the house they inserted a "coffin door" flanked by sidelights. The door, topped with molding and cornerblocks supported another simple entablature. In 1923 there was a front porch which spanned the entire length of the house and was supported by four simple rounded columns. Some time after this an ell was added off the rear (east) of the house in a couple of stages. Although the ell is of uncertain date, part of the it was in place when Dewing bought the house in 1923. Later the Dewings added a second floor sleeping porch and removed the front porch and built one on the back.

C. Verbal Description

Historical Appearance

The house sat at the western edge of approximately 91 acres of countryside in Newton, covering most of "Nonantum Hill". It was a country house of grand proportions boasting 10 ½ foot ceilings on the first floor and 8 ½ feet on the second, two chimneys, and wainscoting in both of the first floor front rooms. In addition, the windows were tall and slender 6/6s with lintels that echoed the front door's entablature. It also had several outbuildings and was set

among gardens. It is believed that the original colors of the house were red with white trim, although at the time the Dewings bought the house in 1923, it was all white. Also at that time, there was a driveway that came up from Waverly Ave. and encircled a large old tree (maybe of Kenrick fame). In 1912 the deed for the sale of the land from F. Clark Durant to Agnes Holden described the perimeters as: "Beginning at a point on the southeasterly line of Waverly Avenue two hundred feet distant from Kenrick Street at land now or late of Haley, thence running southeasterly by said Haley land and land now or late of Seager, two hundred and forty-one and 90/100 (241.90) feet to Kenrick Terrace, at a point on the northwesterly line of said terrace two hundred feet distant from said Kenrick Street, thence turning and running southwesterly by said Kenrick Terrace one hundred and one (101) feet, thence turning and running northwesterly on land of Katherine T. Holbrook two hundred and forty and 36/100 (240.36) feet to said Waverly Avenue one hundred and one (101) feet to the point of beginning."

Current Appearance

The Durant-Kenrick house is set back from Waverly Avenue with the primary entrance facing the street (westwards) on a plot of land comprising some 26,354 square feet. It is set slightly up on a hill with land falling away on all sides. The house has been maintained as a two story, wood frame and clapboard building with a five bay facade; however, the rear elevation shows irregular fenestration. The windows are 6/6 and are set within frames that jut out from the clapboards and support simple entablatures similar to those over the doors. The main entrance has a single stone step and is framed by fluted pilasters supporting a simple entablature; immediately above the door is a 5 light transom. It has a half gambrel roof and a salt box shape. There are two chimneys, set back on the rear portion of the roof at the 2nd and 4th bays. Off the back of the house are two protrusions, the porch which spans almost the entire length of the house, and at the northeast end, the ell which has attached to it a small garage-like structure. On the southern end there is a door with sidelights and molding with cornerblocks which support a simple entablature. The house is painted a brick red with white trim, possibly the original colors. The 1930s garage remains at the southeast end of the property and there is one other building which has been used for various purposes, including hosting dances. There is an old Beech tree on the south side of the property which is believed to be one from the Kenrick business. Worthy of note is that the interior of the house contains a lot of family furniture, gathered by the many generations and donated over time.

VI. History of Property

A. Deed History

From	To	Date	No. (if will)	
			BK	PG*
Edward Durant bought property (~91 acres)		1732		
Edward Durant	Judith Durant (wife)	Jan. 16, 1740	6545	

(will; 1/3 prop. went to JD (30 acres incl. 286), 2/3 to children- EDII rest of original prop. and to receive his mother's portion at her death)

Thomas Durant	Edward Durant (1/5 property)	Mar. 16, 1753	51	171
(TD may have been the executrix of JD's will)				
Cornelius Durant	John Kenrick, Jr. (18 acres)	April 9, 1793	117	138
(CD may have been executrix of ED's will)				
John Kenrick (Jr.?)	John A. Kenrick (1/5 prop.)	1833		13131
John A. Kenrick	Sarah Frances Kenrick (wife)	Oct. 9, 1896		42526
(will-on hold for daughter Jeannie B.; notification in <i>Newton Graphic</i> Sept. 18, 1896 and obit. Mar. 14, 1896)				
Sarah Frances Kenrick	Jeannie B. Kenrick	?		
	Austin Holden	~1900		
Austin Holden	Agnes Howard Holden (wife)	Nov. 3, 1903		62999
(will; notification in <i>Newton Journal</i> Nov. 13, 1903)				
Agnes Howard Holden	F. Clark Durant (3/4 acre)	June 17, 1912	3701	528
F. Clark Durant	Clara E. Durant	Dec. 26, 1916	4107	357
Clara E. Durant	Arthur S. Dewing	April 2, 1923	4611	471
Arthur S. Dewing	Frances R. Dewing (wife)	Jan. 23, 1926	4937	545
Frances R. Dewing	Mary S. Morain	Feb. 5, 1954	8211	341
Mary S. Morain	Durant Homestead	Dec. 27, 1985	16668	577

(Property in indentured trust w/ Mary, Abigail D. Avery & Ruth Dewing as trustees)

* all book and page numbers correspond with entries in the deed books kept at the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds in Cambridge, MA.

B. Development History

Although there is no definitive date for the building of the additions, around 1830 the lean-to roof was raised in order to permit the addition of a second story. Much of the original roof, including weather boards, shingles and flashing, survives today in the lower attic, an area created by raising the rear roof line.

In 1925, during the Dewing residence at 286, restoration was begun by opening up the four fireplaces whose open hearths had been closed off and attached to Franklin stoves to make heating more efficient. It was also at this time that the stenciled floors were redrawn. Also in 1925 the Dewings built the back porch and the garage, and then in 1930 altered the ell. The Dewings made two major structural alterations to the house, both to ensure its safety and survival. In the first instance, a beam was being burdened by the weight of a heavy old bathtub. They replaced the tub with a modern "shower bath" and strengthened the supporting construction. The second instance was the replacement of a beam in the library in there was a large crack. In 1949 the Dewings applied for a permit to alter the roof on the back porch, changing it to a "pitch with asphalt shingles." During the summer of 1991, the Durant-Kenrick Homestead arranged for some major repairs to the house. The roofs of the main house and rear shed were replaced and the roof of the kitchen addition was repaired. New gutters,

downspouts and end caps were added to prevent further water damage. Cedar shingles were used on the two flat upper roofs facing Waverly Avenue and asphalt shingles were used on the sides facing the rear. Substantial insulation was installed during the winter of 1997.

C. Historic Pictures: (see addendum)

VII. Significance of Property

A. Period of Significance

This house is testimony to the early days of Newton's history when it was a small town surrounded by hundreds of acres of open land. It also provides clues to an era when 'gentlemen farmers' existed and built grand houses amid that countryside. This particular house is significant for some of the primary architectural features of the Georgian style in which it was built. It is also significant because of both the Durants and the Kenricks who inhabited the house and were significant in early Newtonian, as well as early American, history.

B. Historical Significance

What is now known as 286 Waverly Avenue was originally the home of the wealthy and prominent Edward Durant, who built this house with the express desire to live in it as a gentleman farmer. It is one of the oldest houses in Newton and one of the only remaining examples of a second period Georgian house; there are not many houses left which predate the Revolution. It is an early example of a "four room plan with central passage," and is extraordinarily grand for a mid-18th century country house. For example, both of the front rooms display wainscoting and the height of the ceilings reach some 10 ½ feet on the first floor and 8 ½ feet on the second. Some of the most exceptional features of this property are inside the house, including stenciled floors, circa 1790, of yellow ochre, indian red, verdigris green, white and black, beautiful original woodwork, including several window seats and interior shutters, and a leaded casement window in the dining room which came from an 18th century house in Canterbury, England, bought on one of Edward Durant II's trips abroad for furnishings.

Edward Durant II was born in 1695, the third son of Edward and Anne Hall Durant. His father kept the "Inn at the Sign of the Lamb," a famous Boston public house located on what is now Washington Street in Boston. Young Edward was a blacksmith and also held a variety of public offices in Boston. He is referred to as "Captain" in several documents and his raised pew at the Old South Church bespoke his position of prominence in the city.

In 1732 Edward purchased approximately 91 acres of countryside in Newton on which he built a "Dwelling House, with two barns and other out houses." The house itself had two

VIII. Recommendations

The purpose of Landmark Designation is stated in Sec. 22-90 of Ordinance T-288 as being:

... to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation... of the distinctive architecture... of buildings... and places significant in the history... of... Massachusetts and the City of Newton through the maintenance... of such buildings... through the encouragement of compatible development and the discouragement of destruction of or damage to such resources.

A. Preservation Recommendations

Maintenance of the integrity of the Georgian architecture, method and style of construction are fundamental to retaining the essence of the Durant-Kenrick House. Specifically the original part of the house that is two stories with gambrel roof and five bay facade. Also important is the maintenance of the central doorway with its fluted pilasters, 5 light transom and simple entablature. The tall, slender 6/6 windows add to the original grand air of the house and therefore should be preserved.

B. Important Features

One of the most important features of this house is that it retains some of the original 1730s roof construction, including weather boards, shingles and flashing. Worthy of note are also the original wainscoting panels and the 1790s stenciled floors, albeit redrawn in the 1920s.

C. Further research

It would be interesting to find the plan of the Kenrick Terrace made by E. S. Smilie, surveyor, September 11, 1894; however, the original has been torn out of its appropriate deed book at the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds. Also, an important asset to this house would be an historic structures report.

IX. Standards for Design Review

A. General

The priority is to maintain the integrity of the Georgian style of architecture and method of construction. The 19th century alterations, including enlargement of the back portion of the house, are also important in the history of this structure.

B. Specific

Maintain trees thought to be part of the Kenrick legacy, specifically the Beech at the southern end of the property and the one at the corner of Waverly Ave. and Kenrick St., currently also part of the Homestead Trust. Also, preserve the original roof line and existence of the 1730s craftsmanship of the roof, including weather boards, shingles and flashing.

Exterior Walls

- No new openings should be allowed on the main and side facades.
- No existing openings should be filled so that the original opening is not recognizable. Thus a change in an existing opening should be done in such a fashion as to still read as an opening.
- Wood siding should be retained and replaced in kind.

Windows

- All windows on the main and side elevations should be preserved if possible.
- Original window design and arrangement of openings should be retained with the exception of the rear elevation which has been altered and would benefit from treatment consistent with other fenestration.
- Deteriorated and missing window elements and architectural features should be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation.

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Property Address: 286 Waverly Avenue, Newton, MA 02159

Entrances/Doors

- The original entrance design and arrangement of door openings on the main and side facades should be retained.
- When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical and documentary evidence.

Roof

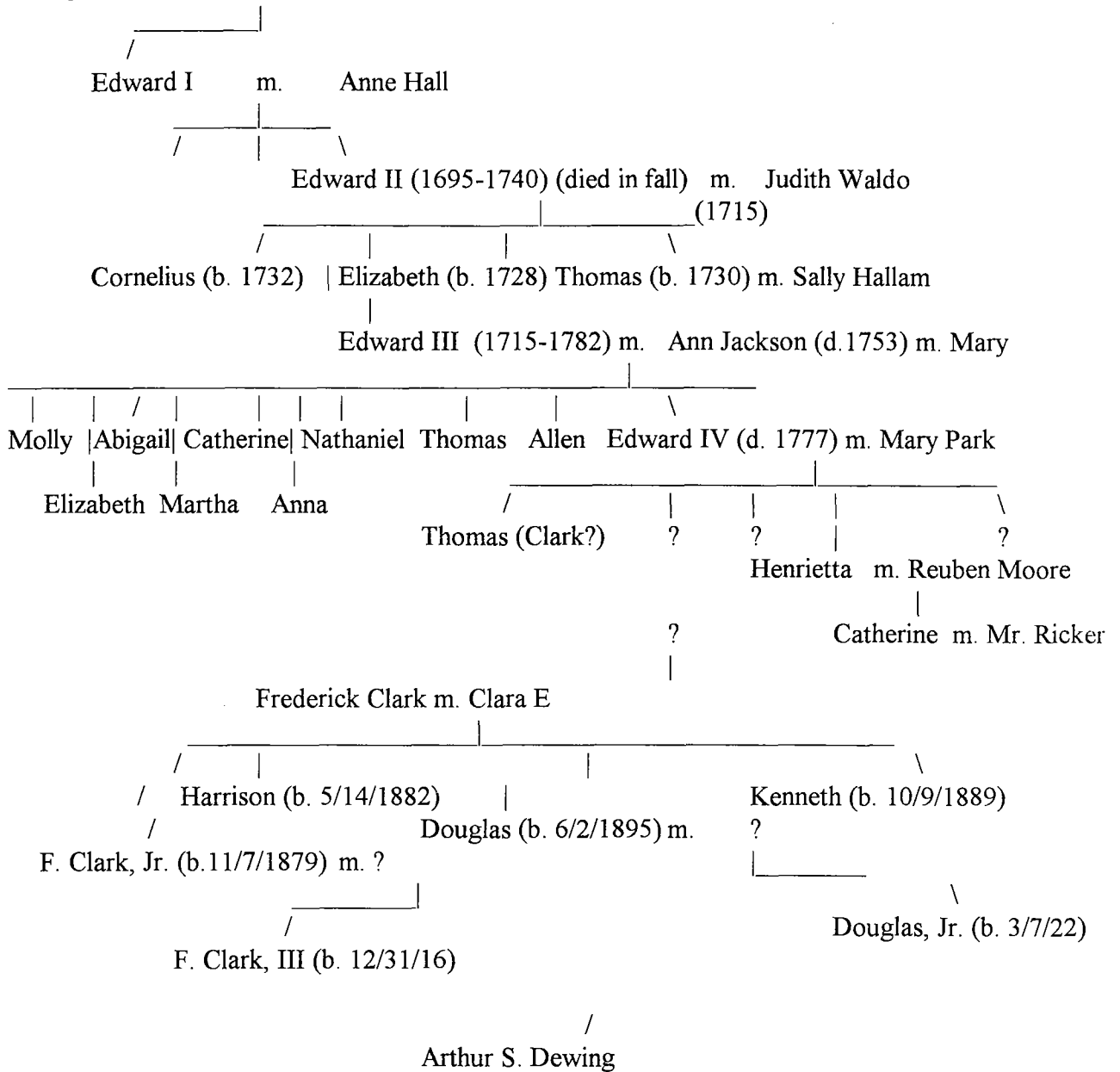
- Roof elements and shape should be preserved. This is a critical element of this property.

X. Notification (date list prepared: March 22, 1997)

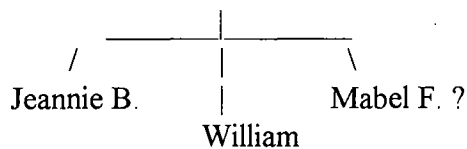
<u>Name</u>	<u>Address and S/B/L</u>
Durant Homestead Foundation, Inc.	10 Kearney Street Suite 301, Needham, MA 02194 (286 Waverly Avenue)
Durant Homestead Foundation, Inc.	10 Kearney Street Suite 301, Needham, MA 02194 73/9/1
Feinerman, Arnold & Myrna	394 Kenrick Avenue 73/9/2
Kantar, William & Constance G.	382 Kenrick Avenue 73/9/3
Farnese, John & Lina	300 Waverly Avenue 73/9/16
Farnese, John & Lina	294 Waverly Avenue 73/9/18
Munkelwitz, Richard W. & Virginia M.	275 Waverly Avenue 73/8/13
Stalwood Properties, Inc.	301 Waverly Avenue 73/8/14

Richard Durant (1553 - 1632)

George Durant (b. @ 1632)



John A. Kenrick m. Sarah Frances





SOUTH ELEVATION



MAIN FACADE

286 Leavenworth Avenue

Main facade



Detail of Main Entrance





Side of rear ell

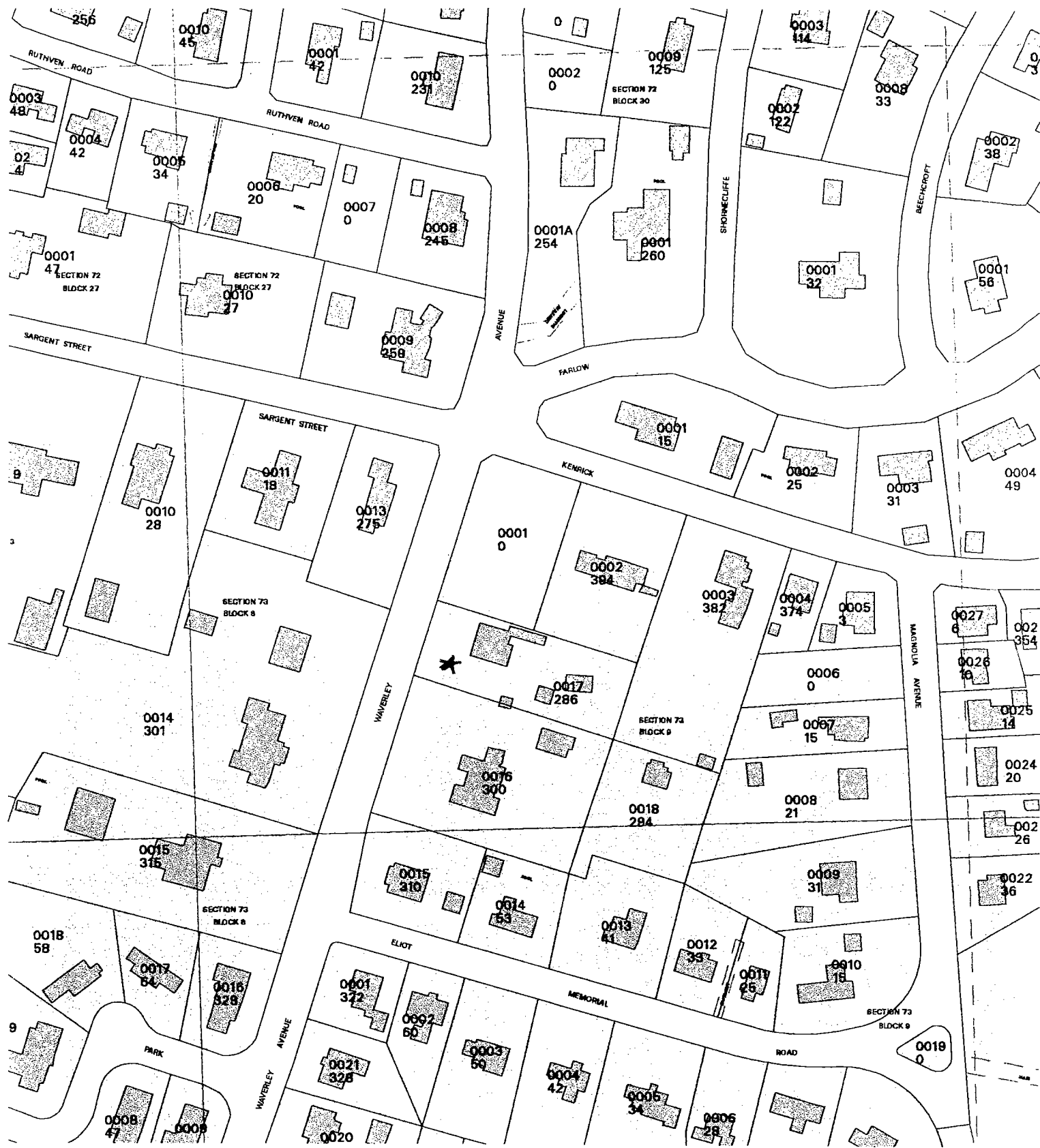


Rear elevation

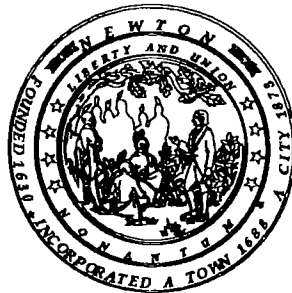
286 Leaverly Avenue

rear view





Newton Assessor's Sheet

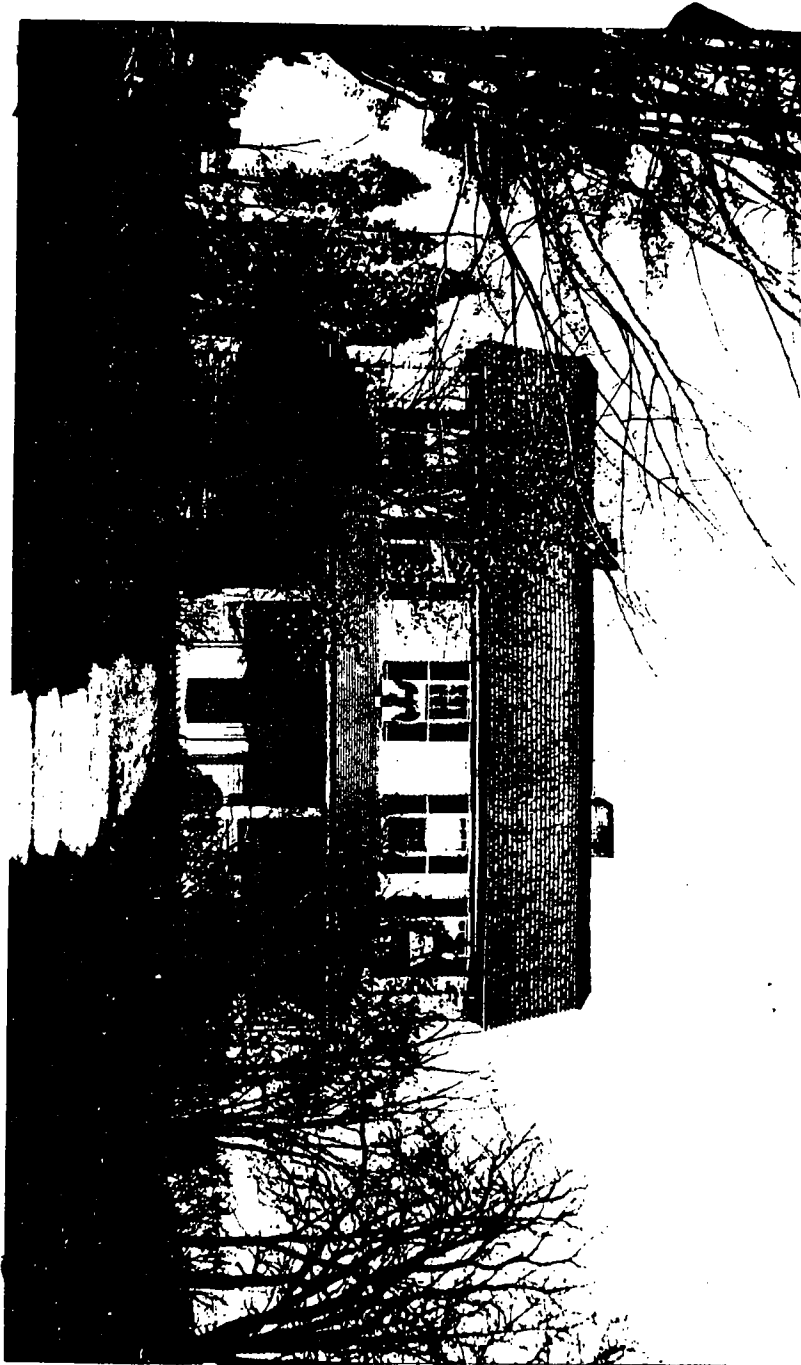


Addendum A.

Historic Pictures



Durant - Kerrick House
286 Waverly Ave, Newton



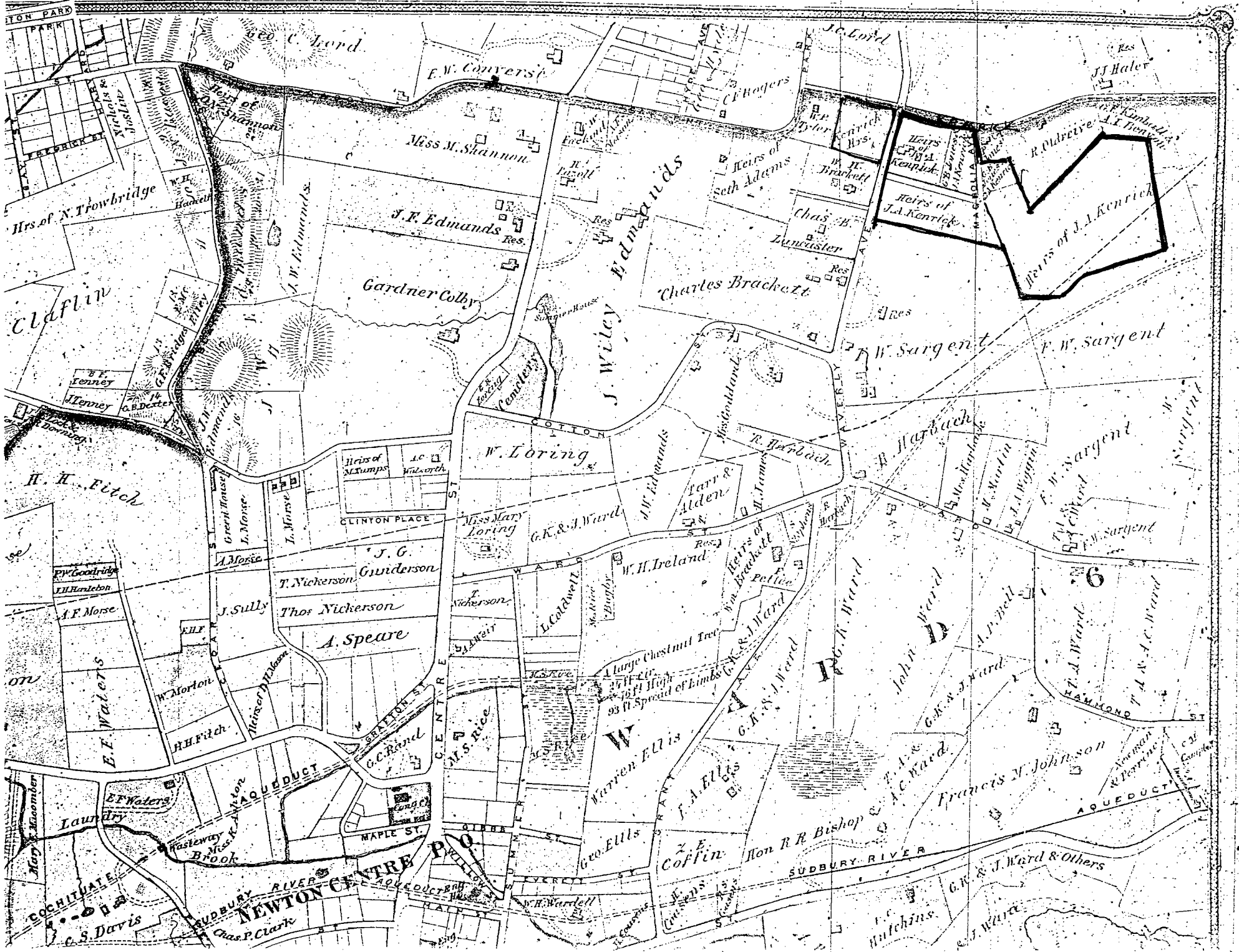
Durant - Kennick House
286 Waverly Ave, Newton

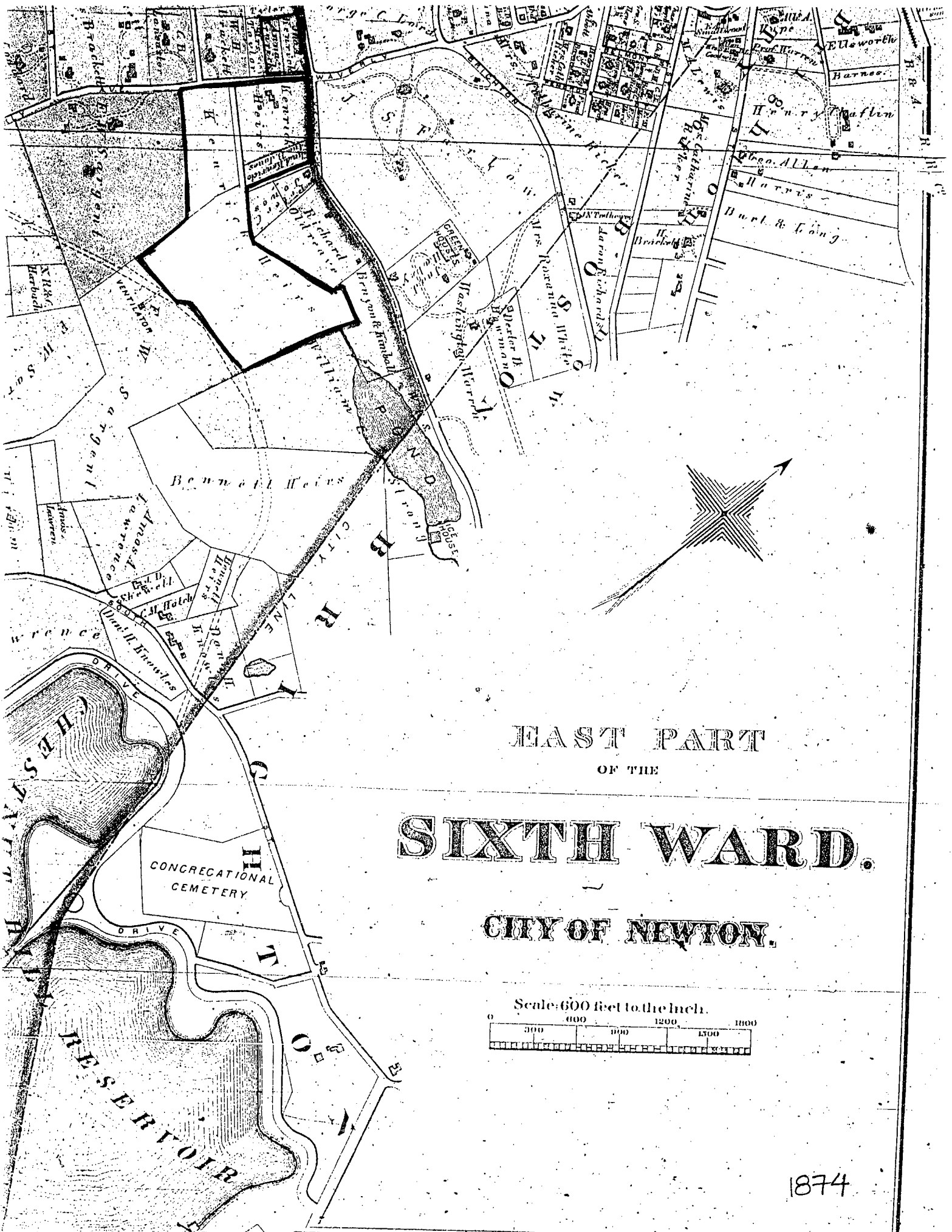


Durant - Kenick Ave 286 Wavelly Ave, Newton
Source: SPNEA



Durant-Kennich House
Source: SPNEA

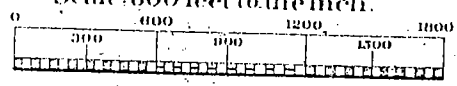




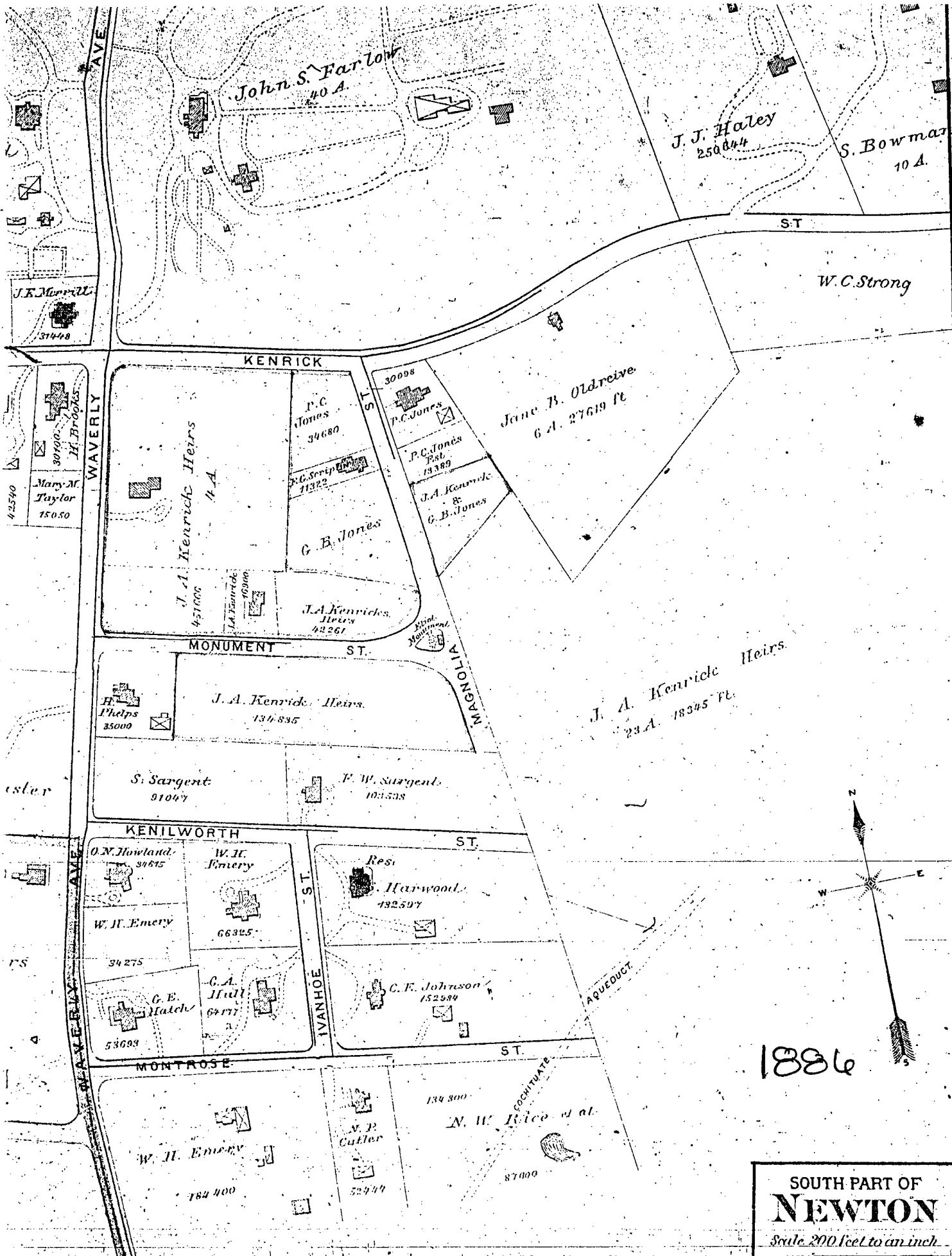
EAST PART
OF THE
SIXTH WARD.

CITY OF NEWTON.

Scale: 600 feet to the Inch.



1874



SOUTH PART OF
NEWTON
 Scale 200 feet to an inch

1886

1886



S.72B.24
Maria M. Gay
3 a. 9480

Dev. of John S. Farrow

3.9 a. 25.550

7

S.73B.1
Marion R. Lord
574.800

KENRICK

Dev. of John A. Kenrick
4 a. 8500
S.73B
43100

MAGNOLIA

John A. Kenrick
54450
F. S. Rodden
John A. Whitman
29960
John A. Kenrick
42261
Ina A. Starnick
Geo. B. Jones
31730

SARGENT

S.73B

MONUMENT

Dev. of John A. Kenrick
134.956
John A. Kenrick
91810

KENILWORTH

Lucy E. Howard
W. Rice
Nehemiah S. Hatch
Alice B. Emery
Marion L. Hatch

VANHOE

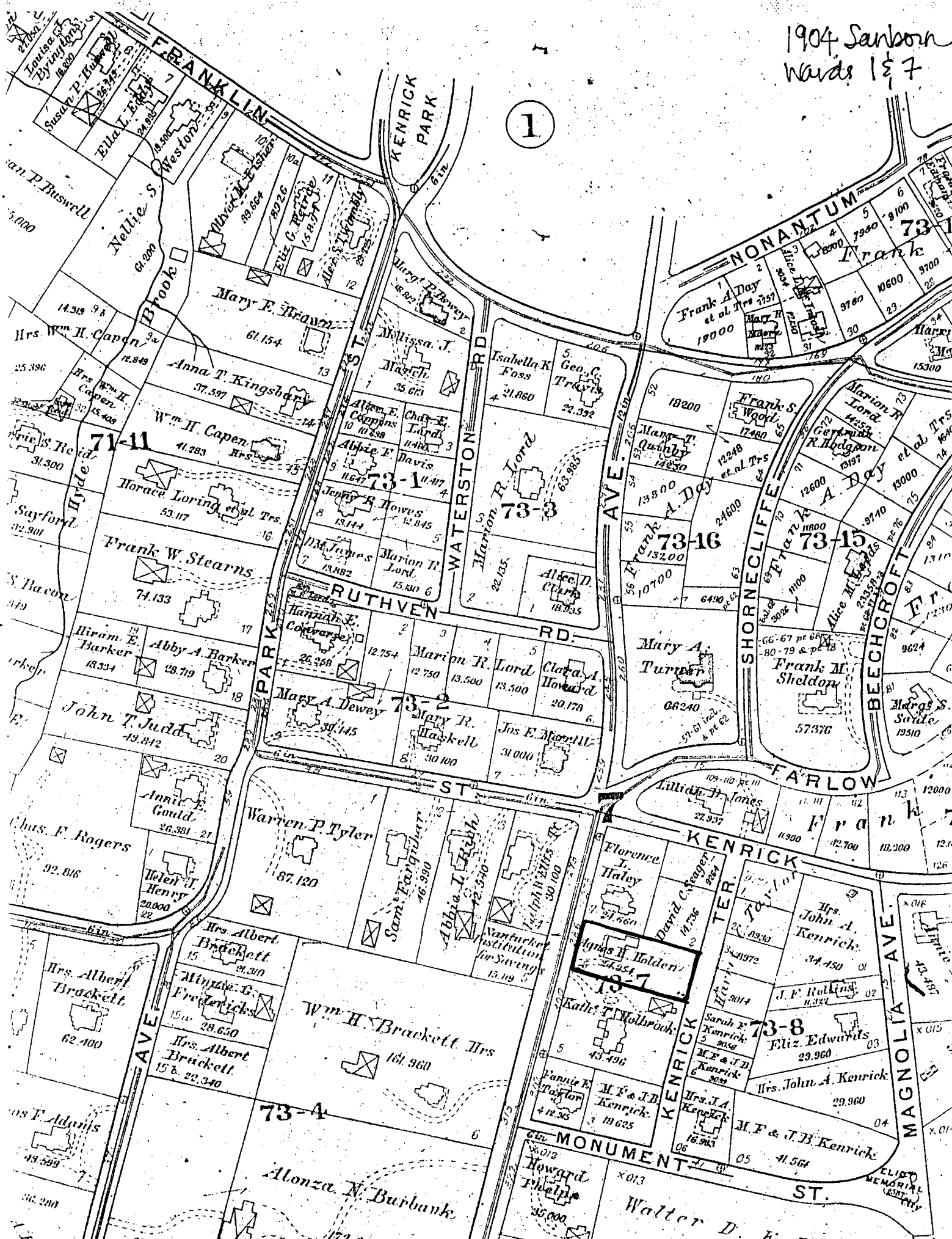
MONTROSE

6

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Southern 1895

1



FRANKLIN

KENRICK PARK

NONANTUM

WATERSTON RD

AVE

SHORNECLIFFE

BEECHCROFT

FARLOW

KENRICK

MAGNOLIA AVE

MONUMENT ST

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RUTHVEN RD

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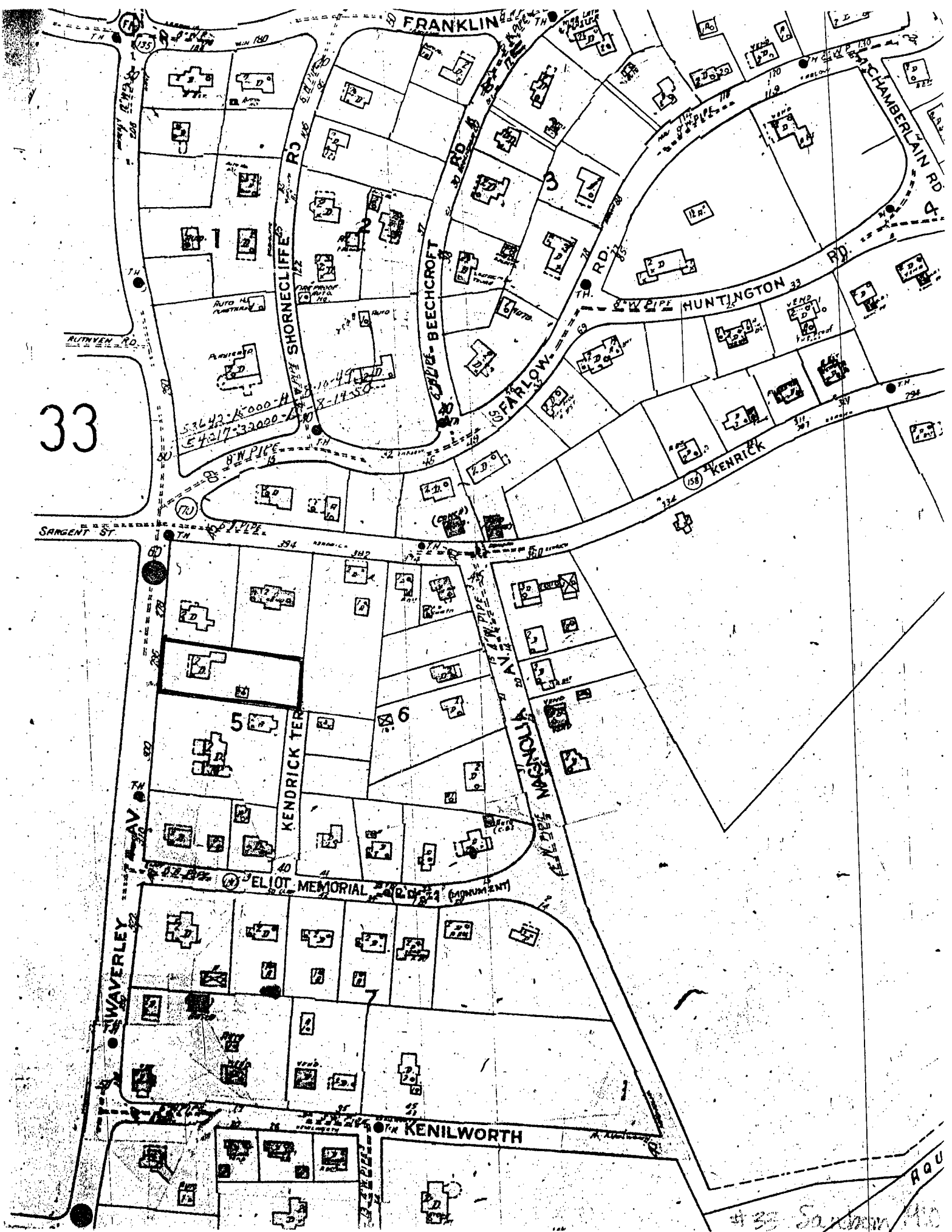
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#33 Sanborn 110