

NEWTON LOCAL LANDMARKS PROGRAM

64 HANCOCK STREET

The Newton Historical Commission, with the assistance of preservation planner, Gretchen Schuler, prepared this landmark report, completed in June 1997.

The Newton Landmarks Program has been financed in part with federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, through the Massachusetts Historical Commission, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior, or the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

This program receives Federal funds from the National Park Service. The U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, gender or handicap in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: Office for Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street NW, Room 1324, Washington, DC 20240.

Auburndale Congregational Church - 64 Hancock Street

1. Name of Property

- a. *Historic Name:* Auburndale Evangelical Congregational Society
- b. *Common Name:* United Parish of Auburndale

2. Location

- a. *Street Address:* 64 Hancock Street
- b. *Zip Code:* Auburndale, 02166
- c. *Assessor's #:* 43-017-0010

3. Classification

- a. *Ownership of Property:* private non-profit
- b. *Type of Property:* building
- c. *National Register Status:* NR IND, NR MRA, 1986

4. Function or Use

a. *Historic Functions:* The Auburndale Congregational Church was built in 1857 as a house of worship for the Auburndale Evangelical Congregational Society that had been established in 1850. From the 1870s the Church also served as a meeting place for various local social groups and associations. Educational classes in religious instruction were held from the nineteenth century as well.

b. *Current Functions:* Presently the Auburndale Congregational Church continues to serve its original religious purposes, educational, and social as a meeting place for religious education classes and various social groups. Also the building now houses a daycare center and a pre-school not affiliated with the religious life of the church.

5. Zoning

The Zoning District is Single Family Residence 3 which requires a 10,000 square foot lot for single family use and frontage of eighty feet. The religious use in a residential district is allowed by right.

6. Description

a. *Neighborhood Description:* Located in South Auburndale the Church property is surrounded by late nineteenth century residences that are evidence of the transition of Auburndale from a rural agricultural area to that of a commuter railroad suburb of Boston. Also within two blocks of the Church property are two important educational institutions that also shaped the face of the area: Lasell Female Seminary (now Lasell College) founded in 1851 and the Walker Missionary Home established in 1868.

b. *Architectural Description:*

(1) *Materials:*

Foundation: fieldstone, rough faced granite block and mortar,
poured concrete (additions)

Walls: Wood clapboard *Roof:* Asphalt, slate (steeple)

Windows: Stained glass

Ornamentation: Romanesque and some Gothic detail

Vegetation: Large lot with mature trees

(2) *Verbal Description:*

Historical appearance: Originally constructed as a wood frame building with a gabled nave and a three-stage square tower, the building included that part built on the fieldstone and granite block foundation. The main facade with centered entrance in the gable front faces Hancock Street and has an informal circular drive in front. The central bay is defined by slightly projecting pilasters that frame the entrance and the tall roundheaded tri-partite window over the entrance. In the gable peak is a small roundheaded lattice light window and at the peak is a Latin cross with a circle known as a Celtic cross. The double entrance door, approached by three concrete steps and a giant granite stepping stone, is made of vertical oak beaded boards that are studded and hung by three sets of fleur-de-lis hinges. Over the door is a blind roundheaded fan of the same wood as the doors. The door surround is ornamented by paired colonettes on square bases from which spring two moldings encircling the roundheaded opening. One is a rope molding, the other an indented zigzag. To the right of the central bay is the projecting tower base and to the left is a long narrow round headed window of lattice lights at each level.

While the sanctuary opens up to a full two and one-half story space, the exterior delineation of a first- and second-story on the gable front facade only, indicates the more room like quality of the entrance space. The exterior horizontal banding is slightly projecting and has a small arched pattern with linen fold ends along the bottom of each tiny arch. This banding also wraps around the projecting corner tower but is not continued along the sides of the main church building, suggesting that the interior space of the sanctuary is opened to the rafters. Other exterior trim includes a wide water table that wraps around the entire original structure and a slightly projecting cornice that has the small roundheaded arch and linen fold detail.

The three-stage tower includes the square base which rises to just above the roof eave line, a squared second-tiered section topped by the polygonal spire. The first stage is divided by four horizontal bands; the first is in line with the first story banding on the gable front and there is one small narrow roundheaded window on the main and side elevations. The second section of the tower base has, on two sides, a tall roundheaded window which consists of two narrow roundheaded lattice lights separated by a colonette and topped by a stained glass rosette. The next two horizontal bands above appear to be slightly projecting and pitched to shed water. Above the top bands is a final section having three separate roundheaded lattice windows on each of three sides of the top of the first tower stage. A projecting cornice with dentil trim forms the top of the first stage.

The squared second stage of the church tower has four identical sides forming the belfry. Each side has three roundheaded arched openings with colonettes separating each and from which spring the arches. The columns are rimmed at the base and have composite capitals supporting the ends of the arches which are squared and chamfered. Above the arches the small arched and linen fold pattern at the cornice of the gable end is repeated. The four corners of the belfry stage are squared and carry the polygonal steeple and each has a decorative capital, repeating the small arches and linen fold design. The cornice of the belfry stage, which is elaborated with a dentil molding, is broken on each side by a black clock face set in a rectangular section that rises above the cornice and is topped by a pyramidal slate roof section which blends into the steeple. Each of these triangular or pyramidal roof sections is topped by a small cross. The polychromatic spire has decorative diamond shaped slates set in three bands with scalloped slates as the main spire shingle.

The nine-bay sides of the main original block display a series of long roundheaded stained glass windows each set between slightly projecting pilasters which define the bays. The stained glass windows were added in 1907 and replaced clear lattice lights. The north side has a lattice window up and down in the first bay marking the stair hall to the balcony at the rear of the sanctuary. On the south side the same bay is the corner tower. Also on the south side is the side entrance to the sanctuary in the form of a one-story projecting pedimented entrance porch. This

entrances. Stained glass windows from the Central Street Methodist Church were reused in these additions to mark the joining of the two congregations in 1986. The 1988 additions and remodeling were designed by another local architect, Sam Streibert.

7. *History of Property*

a. *Deed History* Book 16785, Page 134, of 1986 is the transfer of the property from the Auburndale Congregational Church to the United Parish of Auburndale reflecting the merging of two Auburndale congregations, the Auburndale Congregational Church and the Centenary Methodist Church of Auburndale (Central Street).

The original one-acre parcel of land was purchased in 1853 Joseph Partridge, treasurer of the Congregational Society in Auburndale from Homer Bartlett of Lowell (Book 654, Page 321). In 1858, the same parcel with meetinghouse was conveyed by James Gordon, then treasurer of the Society, to the Auburndale Congregational Society (Book 796, Page 75).

b. *Development History* On October 17, 1850, eighteen men organized to form the Congregational Society of Auburn Dale. The religious organization rented space from the Educational Society of Auburn Dale which had constructed a school or hall on Lexington Street near Auburn. By 1853 a committee had been appointed to look for land on which to build a church. The chosen lot cost \$1,020, the funds for which were raised by subscription. Two years later the Building Committee began the task of raising the funds to build the church.

The architect, Charles Edward Parker, was from Auburndale. He first designed a building which also included a chapel. Due to the high cost estimate the chapel was eliminated and the Romanesque Revival church was constructed for \$9,700 in 1956. Thus the total cost including the lot, the church construction, furnishing and grading of the property was \$12,796.61. The bell tower was part of the original construction and the 3550 pound bell was cast by Henry N. Hooper and Company of Boston in 1857.

The church was dedicated on July 1, 1857 and six days later the pews were sold at auction. On July 20, 1857 the Auburndale Congregational Society was incorporated and soon thereafter the Congregational Church of Auburndale was invited to unite with the Society. The new Society owned the church building and the old Congregational Society of Auburndale held title to the land until 1858 when it was conveyed to the new Society.

In 1862 the steeple (third stage of the tower) blew over and was immediately reconstructed according to new plans also by Charles Edward Parker which resulted in a taller tower.

8. *Significance of Property*

a. *Period of Significance* The period of significance for this property extends from its construction date in 1856-1857 to 1907 for the purposes of the National Register nomination due to the time in which the nomination was completed. However, for the purposes of understanding the importance of the property in Newton's history and for the Landmark Program the period of significance continues as the church building continues to be used for the original purposes and for the consistency with which additions have been designed.

b. *Historical Significance* The history of the Auburndale Congregational Church embodies all the forces which converted Auburndale from a rural agricultural community to a residential streetcar suburb of Boston. Until 1845 the area had outlying farms of the West Parish which was West Newton, a mile away. Only a few streets, such as Lexington and Woodland, existed leading to Weston and to Waltham. The introduction of the Boston and Albany Railroad was pivotal in creating a land boom which began in 1845. By 1850 as many as nine new streets were laid out including Grove and Hancock. Also by 1850 a critical mass of members who no longer wanted to travel to West Newton led to the formation of the Society.

In 1849 the Educational Association of Auburn Dale had been formed to promote education and public worship. A building was constructed on Lexington Street in 1850 and there the worship services of the Auburndale Congregational Society were held prior to construction of this church.

The historical significance continued as the building served as a meeting place for many social and educational organizations. Also the Society and later the Church gave impetus to the formation of a number of women's groups.

c. *Architectural Significance* The Auburndale Congregational Church is one of only three wood frame church buildings remaining in Newton. It is the only example of the Romanesque Revival Style wood frame church building. The architect, Charles Parker, designed other important buildings in Massachusetts and used detail on this building which is elaborate and consistent with the style and with the affluence of this new growing community in the 1850s.

d. *Landmark Designation Criteria* The Auburndale Congregational Church meets criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Section 22-93 of Newton's Ordinance T-288. The property is:

- individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- importantly associated with the development of Auburndale as a village within the City of Newton;
- historically and architecturally significant for its representation of the Romanesque Style in a wood frame church building and representative of the development of institutional entities in the formation of the residential village;
- at a location and setting which continues to be used and preserved;
- representative of the original design retaining most of its original fabric.

9. *Recommendations*

a. *Preservation Recommendations* The property has been well maintained and materials needing replacement have been completed with compatible and sensitive materials and styles. Further, the additions are clearly modern yet drawing on the original architecture to gain unity of design.

b. *Important Features* Of greatest importance are the three-stage belfry, the gable front facade, and the side entrance porch. Ornamental detail is consistent throughout the original structure and unifies the building. Thus attention to maintenance and repair of such features are important to maintain the integrity of the site. The space in front of the building and its setback from Hancock and Woodland Streets in the area of the intersection are important features of the landscape setting and contribute to an understanding of the original context of this unique property.

10. *Standards for Design Review*

a. *General Standards* All projects affecting the property should be evaluated by considering the effect that proposed changes would have on the general design, arrangement, texture, material and color of the features involved and the relationship of such features to the surrounding area. In the case of additions, the appropriateness of size, shape and location of the additions is of critical concern. The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation should provide a baseline for review of changes to the landmark property.

b. *Specific Standards* The context and setting on the lot of this building are critical to its overall design and integrity. Thus the Commission should consider

setback and dimensional requirements that may be more restrictive than the zoning code for the west and southwest sides of the original block.

Specific design standards have been addressed in the existing additions with regard to height, proportion of windows and doors, scale and architectural detail. The same principles should be applied in developing a design for changes and in reviewing proposed changes, such that the key features retain their prominence and continue to stand out as examples of fine craftsmanship. Thus the following specific design standards refer to the original church building.

Exterior Walls

- No new openings should be allowed in the original body of the church.
- 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 show the original opening or shadow thereof.
- Wood siding should be retained and replaced in kind.

Windows

- All windows of the original church building, with lattice muntions or stained glass, should be preserved.
- Original window design and arrangement of openings should be retained.
- Deteriorated and missing window elements and architectural features should be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation.

Entrances/Doors

- The original entrance design and arrangement of door openings should be retained. This refers to the two entrances to the original church on the west and southwest elevations.
- When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical and documentary evidence.

- Only heavy paneled doors with bold hardware replicating the original should be allowed , thus flush metal or vinyl doors would be inappropriate.

Roof

- Roof elements and shape should be preserved. The use of architectural asphalt roof shingles should be continued.
- The slate polychromatic shingles of the steeple should be retained and replaced with like materials. If economically unfeasible, compatible substitute materials may be considered.
- All replacement flashing and gutters should be copper or match the original materials.

Additions

- Additions have been designed so that the defining features of the original building have not been radically changed, obscured, or destroyed. New additions should follow the same guidelines.
- Additions have been designed so that they are differentiated from the original building. New additions should follow the same principle.
- New additions should be not be located near the main or front facade, nor extending from the sides of the original block.

Accessibility

- The property has been made accessible with a ramp parallel to the end of the west side wall of the original building and accessing a modern entrance porch. This method has protected the integrity and historic character of the property. Additional access should only be constructed if essential and should have a similar sense of concern for being not obtrusive.

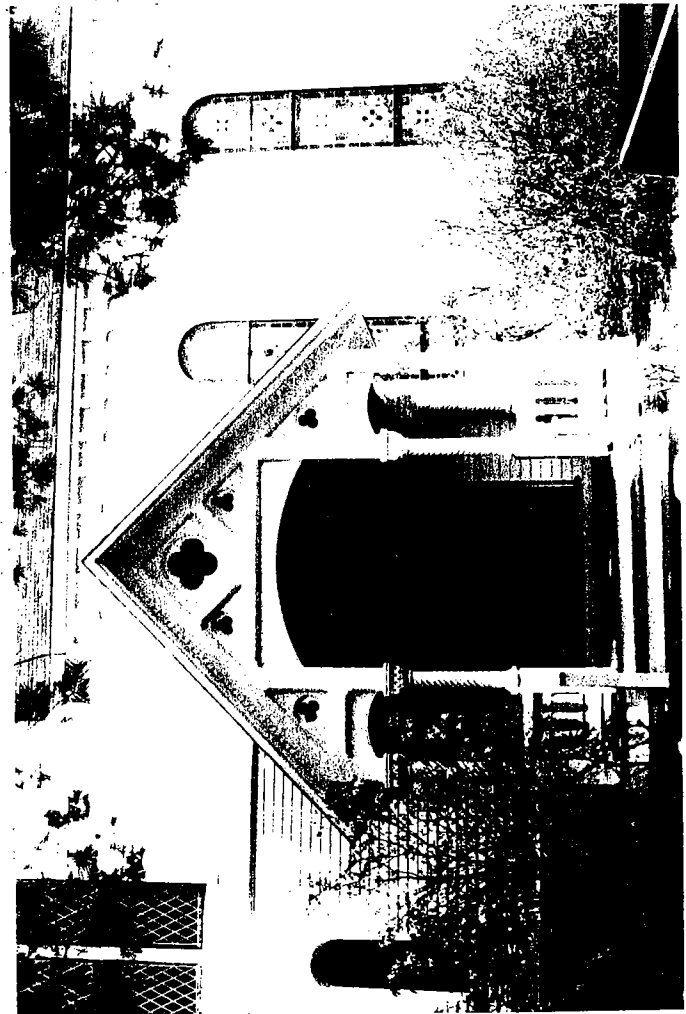
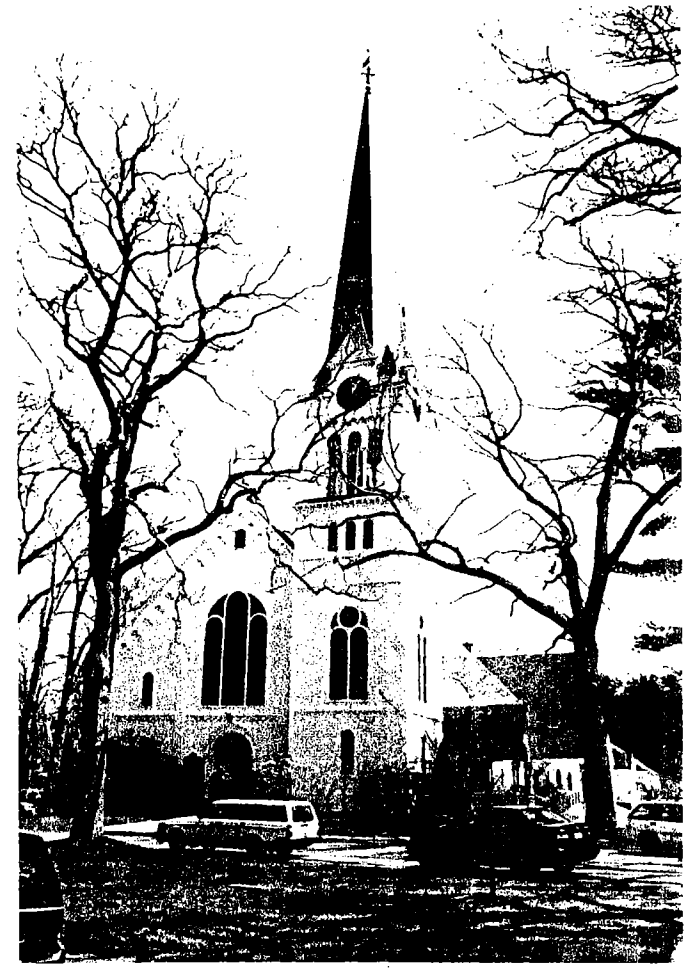
11. *Notification*

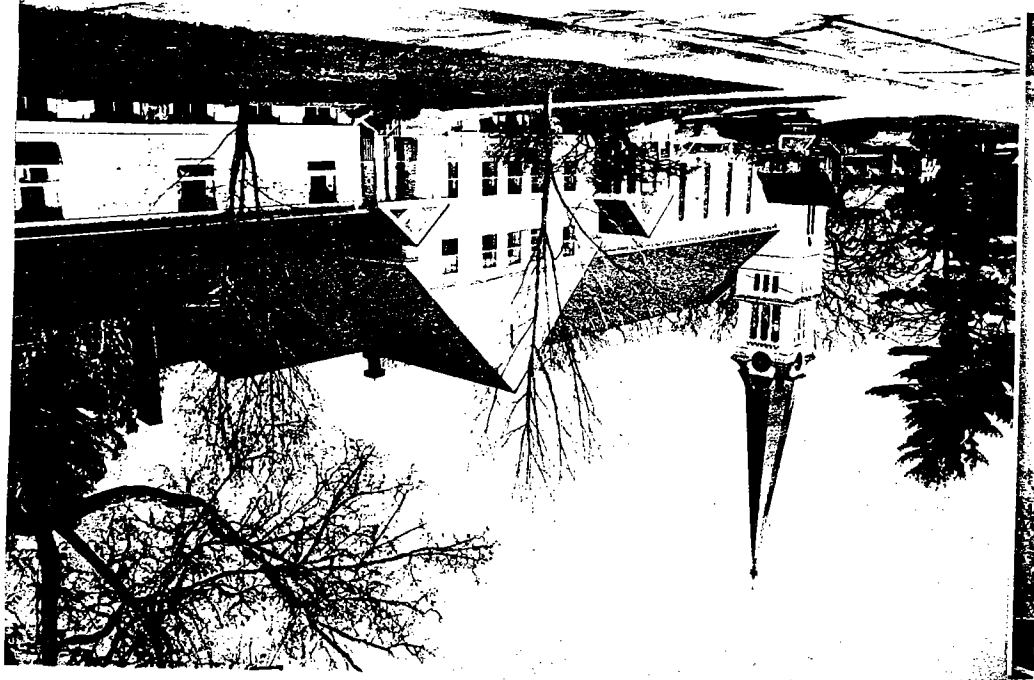
The following properties are considered abutters for the purposes of notification. Owners of these properties should receive notice when this property is considered for landmark designation and for any future under the Landmark Ordinance.

| <u>ADDRESS</u> | <u>S/B/L</u> |
|---------------------|--------------|
| 5 Graydale Street | 43/017/0011 |
| 15 Graydale Circle | 43/017/0013 |
| 11 Graydale Circle | 43/017/0012 |
| 81 Grove Street | 43/017/0008A |
| 57 Hancock Street | 43/021/0016 |
| 61 Hancock Street | 43/021/0017 |
| 67 Hancock Street | 43/021/0018 |
| 80 Hancock Street | 43/ 031/0008 |
| 71 Woodland Road | 43/032/0009 |
| 77 Woodland Road | 43/032/0010 |
| 81 Woodland Road | 43/032/0011 |
| 87-89 Woodland Road | 43/032/0012 |

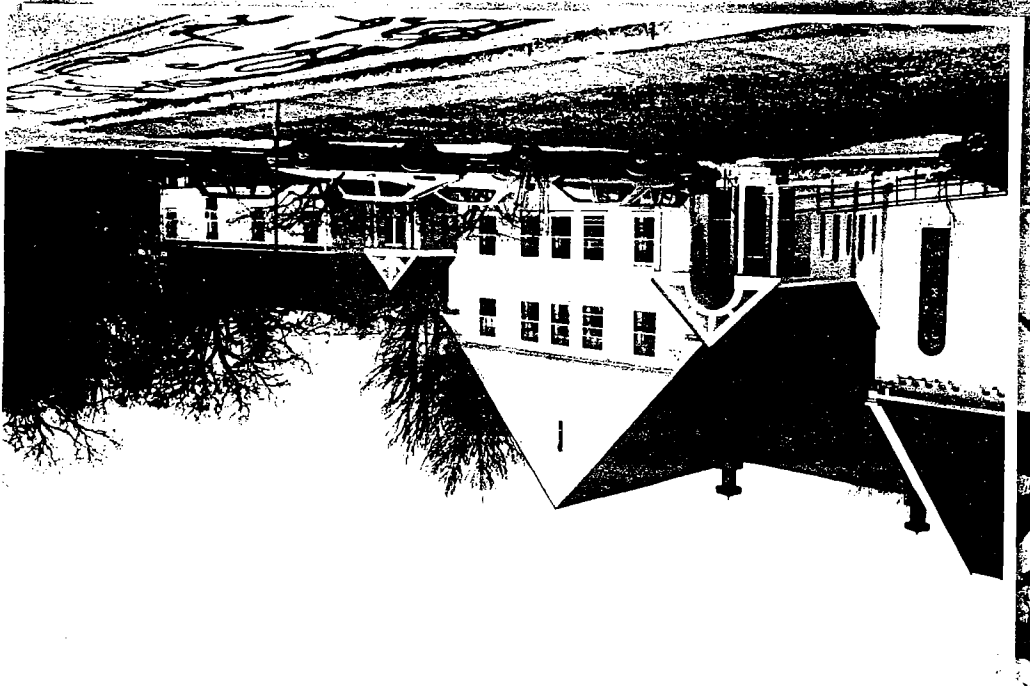


64 Hancock Street





SOUTH ELEVATION



64 Hancock Street



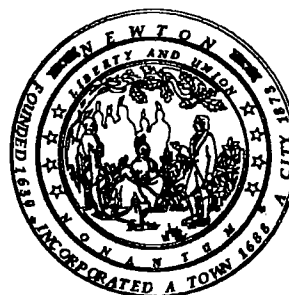
Newton Assessor's Sheet

Map Produced on: July 07, 1997

Property boundaries from Newton Assessor's property maps
 Zoning or land use information from Assessor's CAMA database
 Map projection & coordinate system: Massachusetts State Plane - NAD83

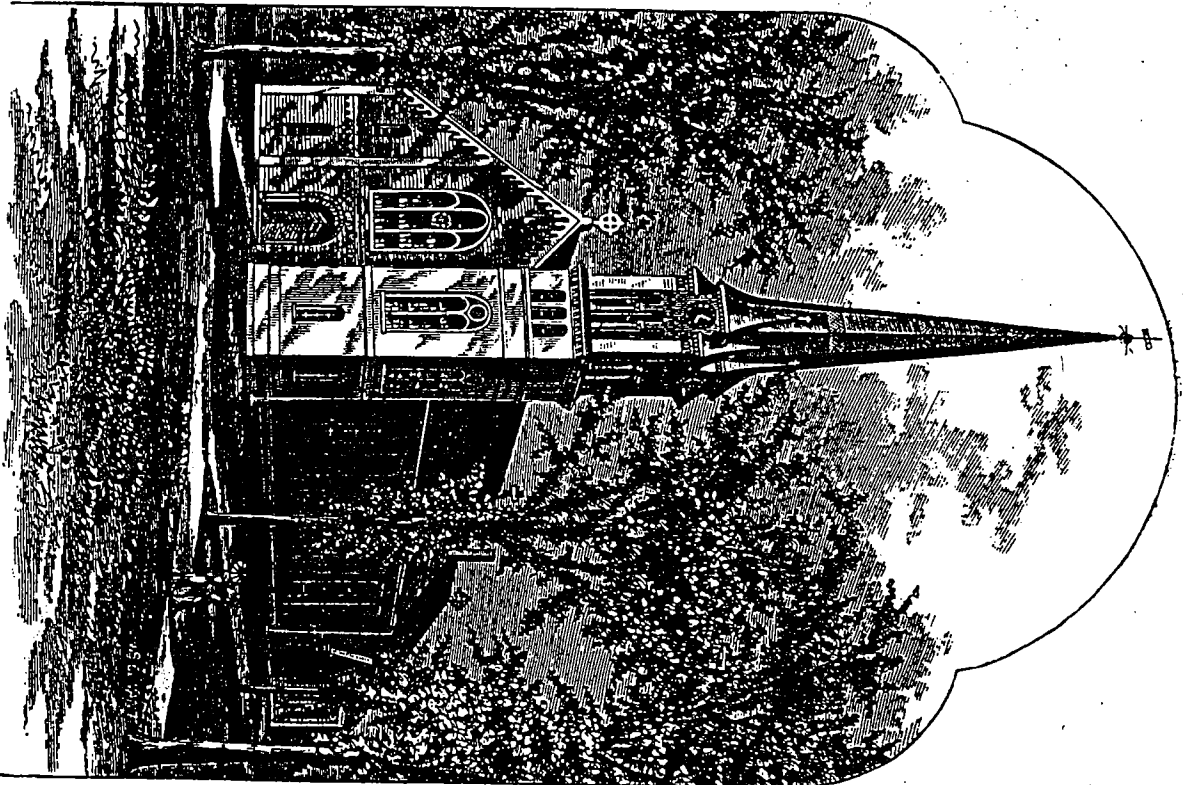
CITY OF
NEWTON
 MASSACHUSETTS
 ASSESSING DEPARTMENT
 1000 COMMONWEALTH AVE.
 NEWTON CENTRE, MA 02159

Scale: 1" = 166 ft.



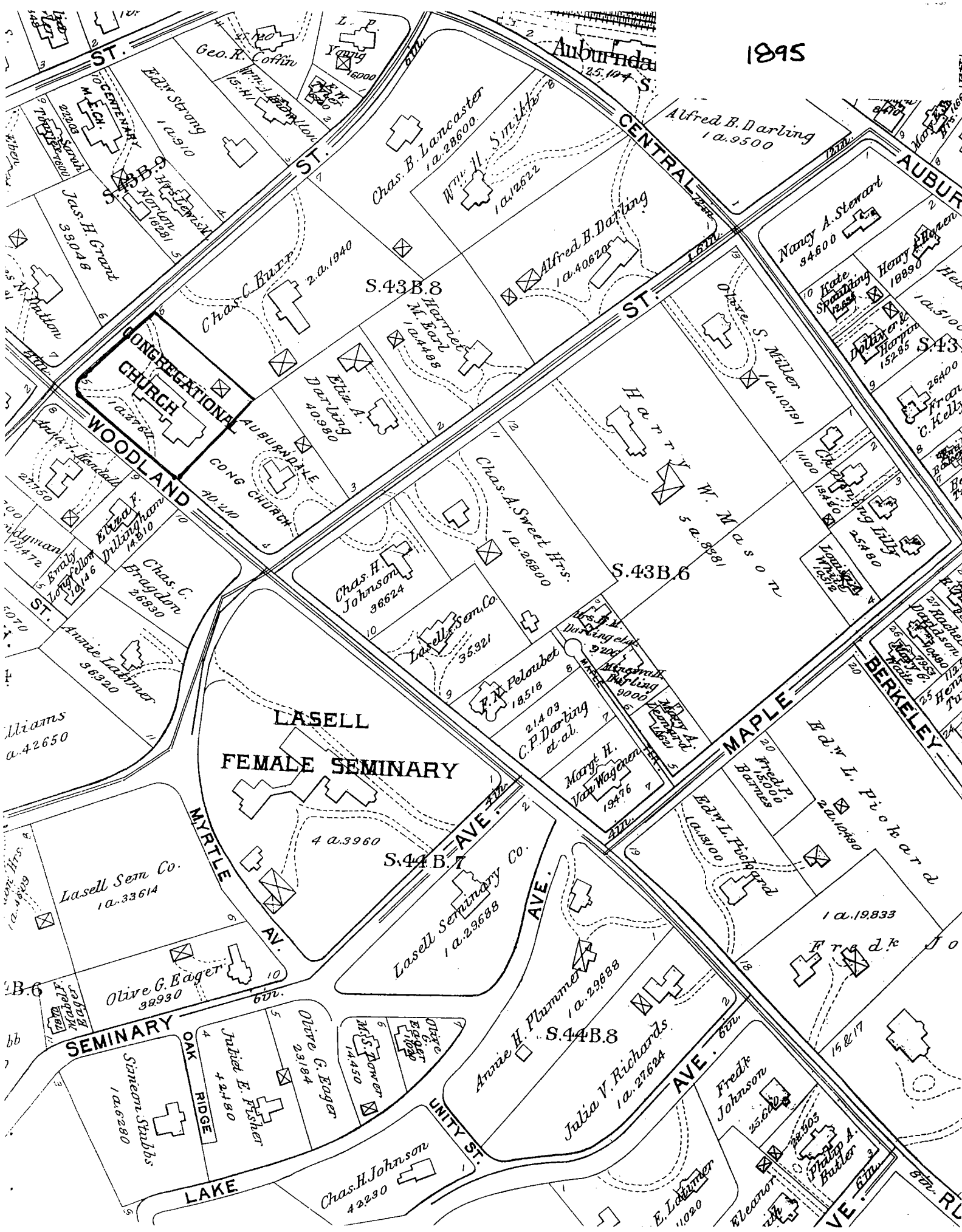
Parcels labeled with Address Number

HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAPS



AUBURNDALE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.
Woodland Avenue and Hancock Street.

1895



WOODLAND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
 WOODLAND CONG CHURCH

LASSELL FEMALE SEMINARY

SEMINARY

S.43B.8

S.43B.6

S.44B.7

S.44B.8

Chas. B. Lancaster
1 a. 28600

Alfred B. Darling
1 a. 40820

Chas. H. Johnson
36624

F. N. Peloubet
18518

Lasell Sem Co.
1 a. 33614

Lasell Seminary Co.
1 a. 29688

Annie H. Plummer
1 a. 29688

Julia V. Richards
1 a. 27624

Olive G. Eager
39930

Olive G. Eager
23184

Sarah Stubbs
1 a. 6280

Julia E. Fisher
42480

Chas. H. Johnson
42290

Fred Johnson
25500

Philip A. Butler
28303

E. L. Johnson
11020

Edw. Strong
1 a. 2910

Chas. C. Burr
2 a. 1940

Edw. A. Darling
40980

Chas. A. Sweet Hrs.
1 a. 26800

W. M. Mason
5 a. 8881

Nancy A. Stewart
34600

Kate Spaulding
18890

Olive S. Miller
1 a. 10791

Clara J. Kelly
11000

Laura J. Kelly
11536

B. W. L. Piobart
2 a. 10380

Frank
1 a. 19833

LAKE

OAK RIDGE

UNITY ST.

AVE.

MAPLE ST.

BERKELEY ST.

CENTRAL ST.

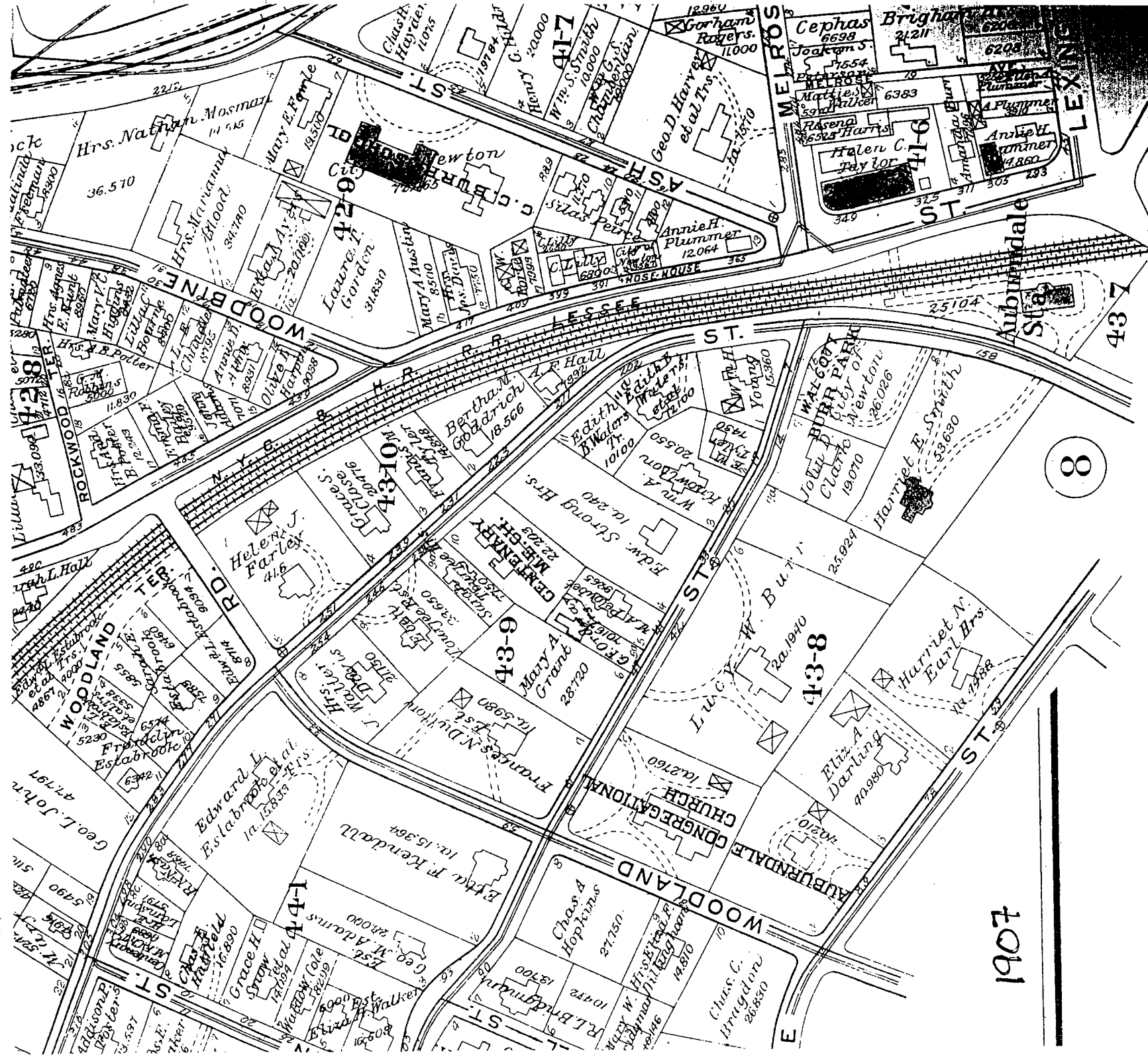
ST.

AUBURNDALE ST.

AUBURNDALE ST.

BERKELEY ST.

AVE.



1901