



# CITY OF NEWTON CITY-WIDE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY: PUBLIC EDUCATION REPORT



Newton Department of Planning and Development  
Newton Community Preservation Committee

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CPC website.

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# EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT OF NEWTON

**N**ewton is made up of thirteen distinct villages. While united under a City charter, each village has a distinct place in the City's past and present. During its first period of settlement, the community was characterized by scattered farmsteads with small-scale industrial activity along the Charles River. The river and a far-reaching Native trail system provided the means to connect this dispersed population.

## Seventeenth-Century Settlement

**I**n 1632, after the founding of Charlestown, Boston, Dorchester, Watertown, and Roxbury, the establishment of a fortified town as a place of refuge in case of an Indian attack became a priority. Each town was to build a "new town" at common expense. A palisade 1 ½ miles long was constructed that contained upwards of 100 acres of land; this town was named Newtown. While Newtown was originally expected to be the capital of the Colony, this expectation was never met. In 1636, Reverend Thomas Hooker led about a hundred Newtown residents overland to form a new settlement at Hartford along the Connecticut River. This was in large part a result of religious and political differences between Newtown's residents and the leadership of the Massachusetts Bay colony.

Soon afterwards, Boston became the capital, in large part because of its favorable trading ports. With the establishment of Harvard College in 1636, Newtown was renamed Cambridge.

As the settlement of Cambridge became established there was a need for more meadowland. In 1633, Cambridge obtained large grants of land on the south side of the Charles River (in present-day Newton and Brighton) that was known as Nonantum, the Algonkian term for "the place of rejoicing."

### Newton's Founding Families

1639	John Jackson, London
1640	Samuel Hyde, London
1643	Edward Jackson, London
1644	John Fuller, England
1647	Jonathan Hyde, London
1647	Richard Park, Cambridge
1649	Capt. Thomas Prentice, England
1650	John Ward, Sudbury
1650	Vincent Druce, Hingham
1650	Thomas Hammond, Hingham
1650	John Parker, Hingham
1650	James Prentice, England
1650	Thomas Prentice, 2nd, England

The area along the river was soon occupied by a small number of farms varying in size from 100 to 1,000 acres. Between 1632 and 1641, the General Court granted land within this area including 30 acres to Mr. Philips, 1,000 acres to John Haynes, 500 acres to Thomas Dudley, 500 acres to Simon Bradstreet and 450 acres to Mr. Mayhew. These parcels, developed as farms, were not owner occupied. Considered the area's first permanent settler, John Jackson purchased a dwelling house with 18 acres of land along the Charles River in 1639.

Unlike other New England towns, the area to the south of the Charles River was not settled by groups of people from similar backgrounds, rather settlers were from various areas in England as well as other Massachusetts towns.

## Historic Era Native Americans

**A**t the time of Cambridge's expansion, a Native American group of Massachusetts were living in a cluster of wigwams on Nonantum Hill in the north-east section of the settlement. The native settlement proved advantageous to the early settlers who were able to utilize existing Native American trails in the settlement process. These trails were typically 12 to 18 inches wide and, if frequently trodden, a foot deep. A major north-south trail, present-day Centre Street to Crystal Lake, a



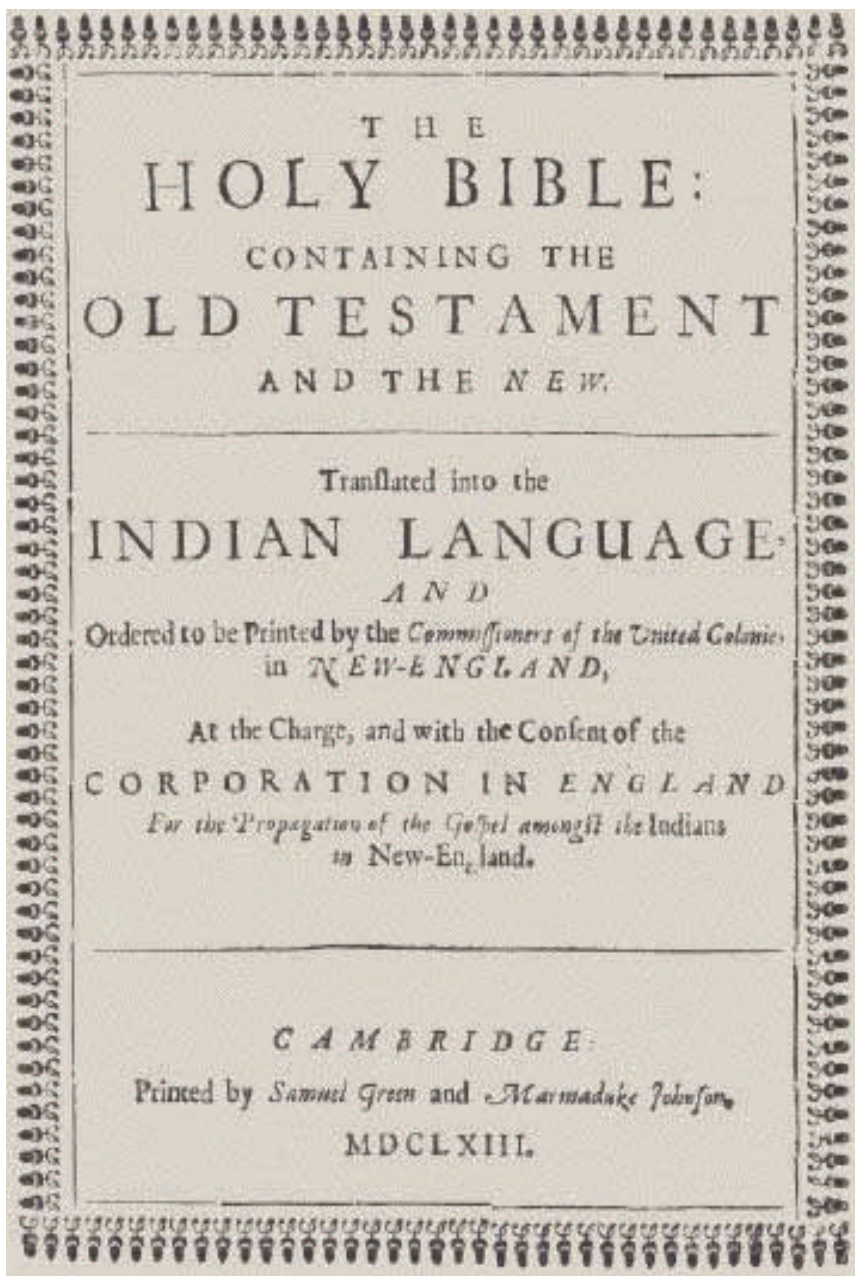
major east-west trail, present-day Washington Street to Weston, and a number of secondary trails allowed settlers to explore and settle interior areas.

The relationship between the two groups appears to have been friendly, for in 1647 the settlers contracted with their leader, Waban, to take care of 60 head of cattle for which

Waban was to be paid eight pounds. The site of Waban's "wigwam" is indicated south of Nonantum Hill in an eighteenth century reconstructed map of Newton. At this time the natives also had a fish weir constructed along the upper falls of the Charles River where they caught alewives and shad.

In the 1640s, the first of Rev. John Eliot's "Praying Indian" villages, Nonantum, was located by Waban's residence. The goal of these praying Indian villages was the acculturation of local Native American groups by Christian missionaries. Eliot attracted neighboring Native groups to Nonantum as he helped them obtain tools for farming and building, and even imported fruit trees from England for their farms. Not only were the Native men engaged in husbandry and newly acquired trades, but the

Native women were taught to spin and make items, such as brooms and baskets for the market. The Natives surrounded their growing community with ditches and stone walls. Evidence of that time period, a stone wall constructed around the native settlement, was recalled a hundred years later by Newton historian Dr. Jonathan Homer. Known as the "Indian fence," Homer described helping to tear down the wall on his father's farm. The Nonantum community along with other Praying Indian groups moved to South Natick in 1650/1651.



The Eliot family has a rich history in Newton. The missionary Rev. John Eliot, mentioned above, also translated the Bible (left) for use in the "Praying Indian" villages. His son, Rev John Eliot, Jr. served as Newton's first pastor. The Rev. John Eliot, Jr. Parsonage was located on Centre Street just north of Mill Street. It stood near the Edmands estate and dated to 1664. The probable site was located as a result of a reconnaissance survey of Boston College in 1994. The entire campus underwent an intensive survey by Timelines, Inc. in 1995 but no artifacts associated with the parsonage were identified.



Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, religious activities in Newton were centered on the Puritan First Church. The first meeting house was constructed in 1660 on an acre of land on Centre Street in the East Parish Burying Ground, which was given by John Jackson. The first minister of record was Rev. John Eliot Jr., son of Rev. John Eliot, minister to the Praying Indians. While Eliot, Jr. was not ordained until 1664, he began preaching about 1658 two years after his graduation from Harvard. As the church records were lost in a fire in 1770, little information remains on the early days of the church. Following Eliot, Jr.'s death in 1668, the town went six years without a minister until Nehemiah Hobart was selected in 1674. When Hobart arrived, the first meeting house was enlarged, and in 1681, the town voted to "make a rate for repairing the glass" around the structure and "to pay John Fuller, Sen. what he had laid out for the raising of the new end of the Meeting-house. In 1696, the town voted to build a new meeting house near the old one, and in 1697, John Brewer of Sudbury was employed to construct the structure. This work was completed in the early part of 1698. The new meeting house was located across the street from the first one, near the house of Lt. John Spring.



JOHN ELIOT PREACHING TO THE INDIANS.

*A nineteenth-century interpretation of Reverend John Eliot giving his first sermon to Native Americans in their own language at Nonantum.*

(Image source: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a06609/> taken from Ballou's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion Vol X, Jan-Jun 1856)



## Seventeenth-Century Civic Development

In 1654, the section of Cambridge vacated by the Massachusetts of Nonantum was named Cambridge Village. Even though the settlers had their economic base in Cambridge Village, they still depended on Cambridge for their social institutions such as church, government and schools. As early as 1656, village residents sent petitions to both Cambridge and the General Court to cease paying taxes to Cambridge in order that they may begin the process of having a place of worship close to their village center. In 1660, a meetinghouse was erected on land given by John Jackson. This became the site of the first burying ground, and in 1661, the General Court freed those who lived more than four miles from the Cambridge meeting house from paying taxes to that church.

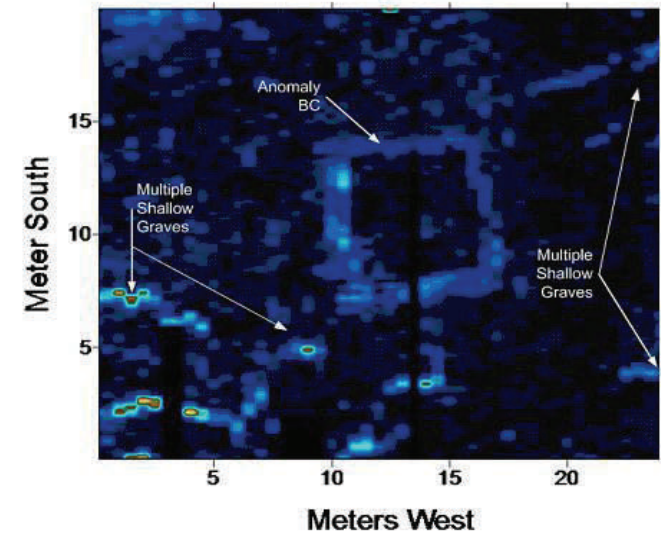
As Cambridge Village worked toward its independence, other prominent settlers moved to the area. These included Thomas Wiswall (ca.1654), John Kendrick (1658), Isaac Williams (1661), John Spring (1664), Gregory Cook (1666), and James Trowbridge (1675). As the century progressed, the meeting house was unable to accommodate the town's growing population. A second meeting house, replacing the first, was erected across the street in 1696/1698 on land given by Lt. Spring.

In 1647, the General Court ruled that every town with more than 50 households should provide a school where boys could learn to

read, write, and understand the laws. Newton voted to build its first schoolhouse in 1699, which was constructed on an acre of land given to the town by Abraham Jackson adjacent to the meetinghouse and burying ground. This was followed by the construction of a schoolhouse in Oak Hill in 1701.

In 1672, John and Edward Jackson asked the General Court to allow Cambridge Village to be completely independent from Cambridge, but this bid was unsuccessful. In 1678, the General Court was petitioned again for independence, but with a majority of freeman signing. With the total number of freeman having risen from 23 in 1639 to 65 in that year, the General Court approved the bid, and Cambridge Village was organized as a separate township in 1679. It became an independent town in 1688. Though it was named New Cambridge, this proved to be confusing, and in 1691, was renamed Newtown. The name was later shortened to Newton.

Depth 0.29-0.42 meters (1' - 1.4')



*This ground penetrating radar imagery may reflect the foundation of the First Meeting House.*

The Lt. John Spring Dwelling site is located on Centre Street near Mill Street in Newton Centre. Lt. Spring settled opposite the old cemetery in 1644 and gave land for the second meeting house. The site was located on the Boston College Law School Campus during a reconnaissance survey of Boston College by Timelines, Inc in 1994. Ceramic artifacts, including German stonewares possibly associated with Lt. Spring, were identified.

## Seventeenth-Century Industrial Activity

Because of the proximity of the Charles River and its tributaries, mills were a very important element of early historic period industry in Newton. Small water powered industrial works developed along dammed streams and rivers to process the natural and agricultural resources of the region. Small-scale industry developed hand-in-hand with the clearing and farming of the land. The early histories of many Massachusetts towns are closely tied to mills built to support the economy. Grist mills ground farmers' grain into flour and meal. Construction materials such as boards, shingles, and beams were manufactured in the saw mills. The first grist mill was established in 1664 along Smelt Brook on the property of Lt. John Spring, who lived along Dedham Road (present-day Centre Street). In order to construct the mill, Spring had to build a dam across Smelt Brook and flood a low-lying area of swamp and bog at the confluence of two streams, thus creating Bullough's Pond. Spring then opened a lane (present-day Mill Street) to provide access to the mill. At that time this section of the town was still forested, with numerous bears, deer and wolves reported. It was been said that "bears were shot from the door-yards of the farms." The earliest saw mill was constructed in 1683 by Erosmond Drew on Palmer Brook by the present-day Brookline town line.

The saw mill is said to have supplied lumber for the entire area. A second saw mill, constructed in 1688 by John Clark, was the first industrial venture along the Charles River. It was located by the upper falls where the river fell 23 feet. Clark is said to have purchased the eel weir above the falls from the local Native American population along with the right to construct mills. Following Clark's death in 1695, his two sons, John and William, inherited the mill site.

Many mill owners contributed to the economy in other ways. Drew, for example, also produced huckleberry wine for public consumption for which his house became known as Huckleberry Tavern.

John Clark's Sawmill site is located by Eliot Bridge in Newton Upper Falls. This sawmill was erected in 1688 on the east bank on the Charles River and was the first industrial venture in Newton Upper Falls. The site has not been evaluated archaeologically.

The Spring/Trowbridge Grist Mill site is located off of Mill Street by the north end of Bullough's Pond in Newton Centre. The first grist mill was established in 1644 along Smelt Brook by Lt. John Spring who lived across Dedham Road (present-day Centre Street) from the first Meeting House. Spring opened a road to the mill (present-day Mill Street) from then Dedham Road to provide access to the mill. One quarter of the dam and grist mill passed to William Trowbridge who married Lt. Spring's daughter and eventually to their son and grandson. The grist mill remained in operation into the nineteenth century.



*Remnants of old mill complexes may now be difficult to discern, as at the Lt. John Spring mill shown here.*



## Archaeological Evidence of European Settlement

Native American and European American early settlement period sites may be expected to include artifacts reflecting contact between the two cultures and the entry of European items into the Native American economy. For example, the former location of Eliot's Praying Indian Village will likely contain both Euro- American and Native American artifacts as well as evidence of both traditional native wigwams (*wetus*) and possibly earth-fast framed structures made in the European fashion. This site is one of the City of Newton's most significant and assessment of its condition is highly recommended.

Types of artifacts and features are likely to vary considerably between sites during this dynamic period of settlement. Evidence of simple earth-fast construction for residences, garrisons, and meeting houses may yet survive in protected areas of the City. During the early settlement period, the homestead often represented the first built and central structure of the farmstead. Houses were typically built along the roadways, often as close as twenty five feet from the edge of the road. Seventeenth century sites are likely to contain low densities of European manufactured artifacts made of metal, ceramics, and glass. This can make them difficult to locate. Subsistence remains, such as wild and domestic animal bone may also be present, and be



*The remains of old mills and bridgework have survived in many places throughout the city and should be preserved whenever possible.*

informative about past food habits. Archaeological sites of first settlement locations are also expected to include artifacts and features reflecting common Early settlement era activities, such as logging, agriculture, trade, travel, and road building. The presence of human burials outside of documented burial grounds is also possible. The design and many elements of grist and saw mills were similar; structures and day-to-day activities radiated

around the mill and mill yard. Grist and saw-mills were power-driven by nearly identical technology and components including the dam, headrace, penstock, wheel pit, and tailrace. While the earliest mill sites utilized natural waterfalls to obtain the necessary elevation drop for power, later ones were powered by dams which often reflect significant works of vernacular engineering.



The dams' primary function was to impound water and regulate the volume and height of the water in the reservoir or millpond. Early dams were primarily built of earth, rock or timber fill. This limited the size of most dams and made them susceptible to failure. A survey of mill sites in Middlefield, Massachusetts indicated the average height of traditional mill dams was about 8 to 10 feet and rarely exceeded 15 feet. The dam wings varied in length extending in some cases between 150 to 225 feet. Cribbing, comprised of logs, packed earth, and fieldstone, may remain as evidence also.

The millpond was one of the most important features of the mill. Water from the millpond was directed through the headrace to the penstock, which regulated the flow of the wheel. Subsequently the water passed through the tailrace back into the stream. In particular, the millpond of a sawmill was also used to store significant amounts of wooden board feet to preserve the logs from cracking, staining, as well as to prevent bark beetle and other boring insects. The water also washed dirt and soil off the logs, reducing wear on the saw blades.

In contrast to short-term sawmills temporarily established in the forested uplands, permanent mills were typically rectangular in plan.

While there are differences in size, some documented ranges of mill buildings are 30 to 50 feet in width and 30 to 90 feet in length. The buildings were generally comprised of wood, fieldstone, split stone, and/or bricks. Water powered mill

foundations bordered streams, ponds, or other water sources. Today, sections of walls may be partially submerged.



*Grist mills, like the 1636 John Jenney Mill in Plymouth shown above, would have been common aspects of the seventeenth and eighteenth century landscape in Newton.*

## EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LIFE IN NEWTON

### Early Community Life

Prior to the Revolutionary War, Newton experienced economic and social development, along with a steady population growth. From 1765 to 1800, immigration was negligible. The Provincial Census of 1765 showed that a majority of towns in Massachusetts had a population of less than 1,000 with only 15 towns as large as 2,500. Newton, with a population of 1,308, was already a good sized community.

The colonies faced a period of economic depression in the early 1760s. Two bad droughts, in 1761 and 1762 along with unemployment, affected Boston and the surrounding areas. Recovery from the French and Indian Wars, new taxes from England such as the Sugar Act and the Currency Act of 1764 and the Stamp Act of 1765 created more hardships but also a growing political awareness among the colonists. Town meeting records reveal that Newton faced economic plight from the 1760s until the 1790s. The rate to defray town expenses, which had been 80 pounds in 1760, rose to 100 pounds in 1767 and then fluctuated from 260 to 300 pounds in the 1770s, reaching an inflationary high of 100,000 pounds in 1781. Not only did people have trouble paying their taxes, but the town also had trouble collecting them.

The period following the Revolution was one of financial and social depression in Newton. A letter from Alexander Shepard to a town meeting in 1784 stated:

*...The General Court are become sensible that the burthen that yet remains on the people, by taxes already granted, is too heavy, and seem inclined to ease them, or at least not to burthen them any more at present ... The families of many must unavoidable become a Town charge, if their burthens be much increased .*

As the 1780s progressed, the town economy began to recover. During the last decade of the eighteenth century the mood in Newton was mixed. Although recuperation from the war was occurring, families remained scattered on farms, people showed little concern for civic unity, and neighbors were at times at odds (Rowe 1930). Fortunately, the industrial complexes along the Charles River area enabled the town to find prosperity again.

### Eighteenth-Century Religious Activities and Structures

Religious activities continued along a trajectory to that of the seventeenth century, but as the population of the colony grew, more meeting houses and ministers were needed to accommodate the increase in worshippers. In particular, Nehemiah Hobart remained a popular minister throughout his life. Following his death in 1712, those who lived in the more remote southern and eastern areas petitioned the General Court for either a separate precinct or a more centrally located meeting house. In 1714, John Cotton was chosen as the town's next minister, and, in the same year, a committee was appointed to find a convenient and central place for a new meeting house. The committee decided, in 1715, on a location in a field belonging to Nathaniel Parker. The General Court decreed that the meeting house be erected within five years during which time the existing meeting house remain at its location. By 1716, the town had laid out a road two-rods wide that began at Mill Lane near the head of the mill pond to the proposed location, and, in 1721, the town's third meeting house was constructed at the corner of Centre and Homer streets.





The second meeting house was removed to Waltham in 1721.

Jackson's discussion of the construction of the third meeting house is of some interest. In it he states that the first meeting house was still standing in 1717 when Abraham Johnson conveyed several parcels of land to his son John. According to Jackson, one of the parcels, a 20-acre tract, "excepting four acres to Isaac Beach, and the land on which the Meeting-house now standeth, so long as the Town shall see cause to improve it for the use they do now." This seems an odd statement for Jackson to make as the land by the first meeting house was then used as a burying ground. While the old meeting house may have remained standing and was used by the town for other purposes, it is possible that his statement actually refers to the location of the second meeting house. This structure was to remain in place until 1720/1721 according to the above decree by the General Court.

### ***The Third Meeting House in Newton Centre.***

*(Newton historic archives, noted by Allison Carter at <http://Newton.patch.com/articles/the-centre-of-it-all>.)*

**I**n 1721, the town's Third Meeting House was constructed north of intersection of Centre and Homer streets in Newton Centre. In 1847, a new church was constructed on the site, and, in 1907, the present Greek Evangelical Church was built on the same location. Despite these potential disturbances, the site should be evaluated.

Cotton remained the minister of the First Church (third meeting house) until his death in 1757. During his ministry, the Great Awakening occurred and some members of the parish joined the Baptist Church in Boston. The year that Cotton died, Jonas Meriam became the new minister. Two years following Meriam's death in 1780, Jonathan Homer was ordained the minister of the East Parish, and in 1805, a new (fourth) meeting house was constructed at the corner of present-day Centre and Homer streets.

The town was divided into two parishes in 1764 – the East (the original parish) and the West (including present-day West Newton and Auburndale). West Newton was granted permission to erect a second meeting house (no longer standing) near the corner of Washington and Cherry Streets on land conveyed to the church by Phineas Bond. The second parish (Congregational Church) was established in 1778 with the appointment of its first minister, Rev. William Greenough. Following incorporation of the parish, a dividing line was drawn, and 26 people were dismissed from the first church to become members of the West Parish church. Greenough's ministry ended with his death in 1831, at which time 102 members had been admitted to the church. The West Parish Burying Ground was formally established in 1781, a short distance north of the meeting house, but the first recorded interments occurred in 1777-78.

During the same period that the West Parish was being formed, the Baptist Society gained membership in the town. In 1781, the society voted to build a

meeting house on land given by Noah Wiswall that adjoined his pond (Wiswall, then Baptist Pond, present-day Crystal Lake). The meeting house was completed in 1795. The society was incorporated in 1821, and a second meeting house was constructed in 1836 at the present location of the First Baptist Church. Archaeological assessment of these many early meeting house locations is recommended.

### **Eighteenth-Century Industry**

**M**ill production remained a crucial component of the eighteenth century. Grist and saw mills remained vital to the area's growth and, as the population grew, production sites for construction and machinery materials, like nails, as well as more leisure items, like snuff, began to appear. The waterways were also sites of food production. Weirs for eel and other fish became essential.

By 1708, the Clark brothers had added a grist mill and another saw mill to the saw mill property on the upper falls of the Charles River they had inherited from their father in 1695. By 1717, the mill property at the upper falls contained a saw mill, dam, eel weir, grist mill and fulling mill that was jointly owned by the Clark brothers, Nathaniel Parker and Nathaniel Longley. Noah Parker, Nathaniel's son, became the sole owner of the property in 1720 (see sidebar text). His son Thomas sold the complex to Boston tobaccoist Simon Elliot in 1778 who added four snuff mills to the site.

**T**he Elliot-Perkins-Pettee Manufacturing site is located northwest of the intersection of Elliot Street and Quinobequin Road in Newton Upper Falls. By 1717, the mill property at the upper falls that contained a saw mill, dam, eel weir, grist mill and fulling mill was jointly owned by the Clark brothers, Nathaniel Parker and Nathaniel Longley. Noah Parker, Nathaniel's son, became the sole owner of the property in 1720. Following his death, his son Thomas sold the complex to Boston tobaccoist Simon Elliot in 1778. Aside from continuing with the grist mill, Elliot erected four snuff mills on the site. By the time that the venture was sold to Thomas Perkins in 1814 it also contained a screw factory, wire mill and annealing shop. In 1823, the buildings were taken down by Perkins who replaced them with a large cotton mill called the Elliot Manufacturing Company. In 1841, Otis Pettee purchased all the property of the Manufacturing Company, including the cotton factory, and dwelling houses. Pettee constructed shops for making machinery for cotton mills which continued business in the upper falls until his death in 1853. The National Register eligibility of this complex site should be assessed.



In the seventeenth century, a competent blacksmith could take iron ore and produce small quantities of iron in his forge, although the limitations of the hearth size and problems of handling and hammering hot metal in a single bloomery resulted in a small output that was for the most part used locally. Increased smithing productivity occurred along the Lower Falls of the Charles with the erection of an iron works, forge, and trip hammer by John Hubbard and Caleb Church in 1704. Hubbard's purchase in the area of

the lower falls along the Charles River was bounded "west by the old path that leads to the wading place, formerly the Natick Path" (a ford along the Native trail). Following Hubbard's death, his son conveyed a blacksmith shop as well as the property that included half the iron works, two fire hearths, a hammer wheel, dam, head wares, water-courses, running and going gear, and utensils of the iron works to Jonathan Willard. Following Willard's death in 1772, a number of mills and businesses were constructed

including saw mills, grist mills, snuff mills, clothing mills, leather mills, calico printing, and machine shops.

**A** water-power raceway and associated factory sites are located on the south side of Route 9 in Newton Upper Falls. The raceway provided water to a number of factories that are now gone including Jonathan's Bixby's rolling mill (1782), Newton Iron Works (1799), a cotton mill (1813-1850 when it was destroyed by fire), nail factory (1853), and then a number of other mills that were destroyed by fire in 1873 and never rebuilt. The Newton Rubber Company was built by Quinebequin Road in 1888 followed by several other rubber and tire companies until 1907 when the last company was destroyed by fire, ending industrial activity in the area. Evidence of the site's complex and dramatic history or reconstruction may yet exist below the ground.



*Newton Upper Falls today.*

(Image source: <http://newtonupperfalls617locksmith.com/auto-car-locksmith-newton-upper-falls-massachusetts-ma/>)



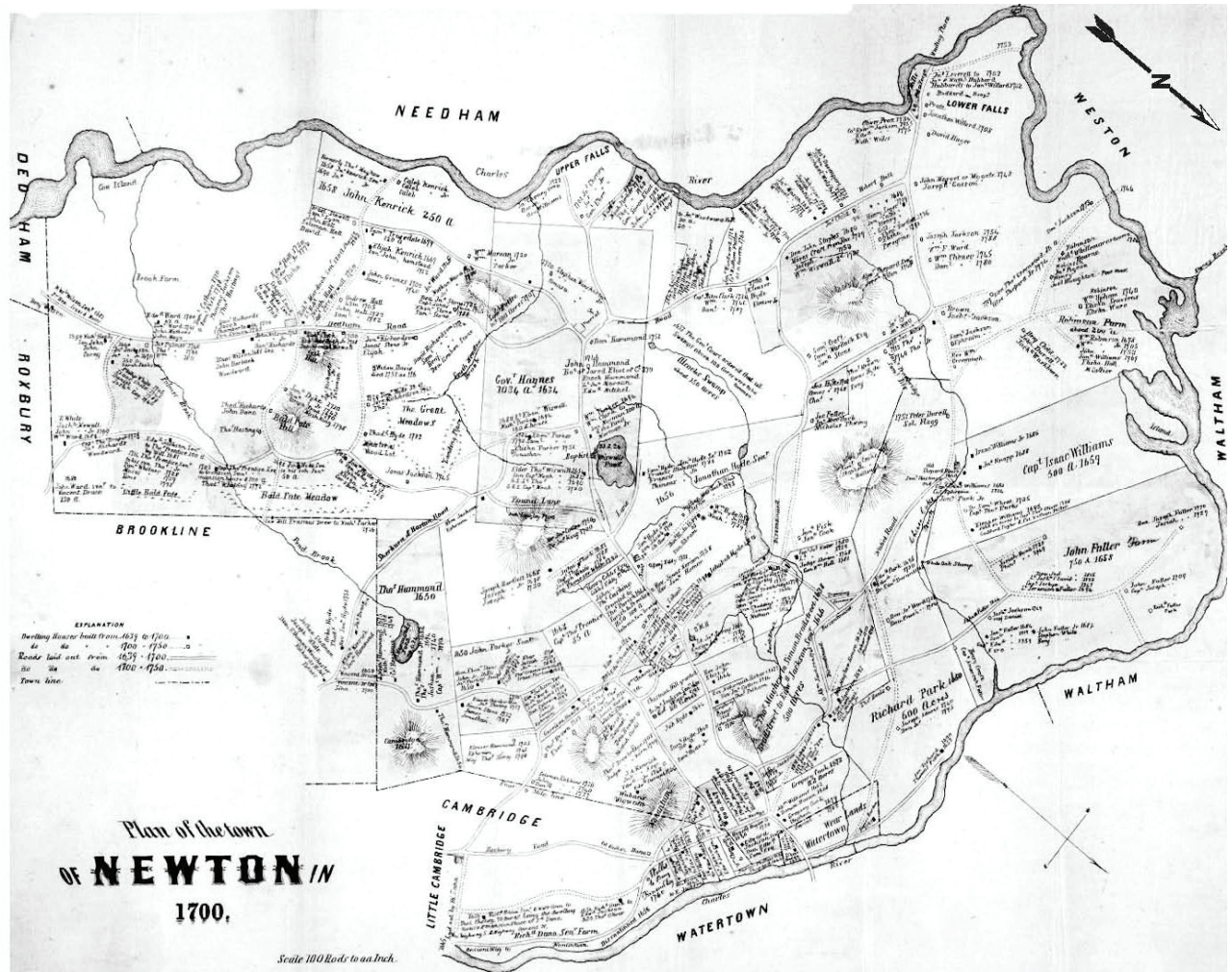
## Eighteenth-Century Settlement Patterns

By the beginning of the eighteenth century both farmsteads and small-scale industrial ventures were united by one centrally-located meeting house that functioned as the town's social and civic core. Though these were scattered over a large area, the foundation had been laid for three village areas: Newton Corner, the location of early farms associated with Cambridge's expansion on the south side of the Charles River; Newton Centre, the location of the First and Second meeting houses; and Newton Upper Falls, the location of Clark's saw mill. Roadways became critical for the communities to keep in contact and to sustain the growing population.

It is worth noting that the first roads were often constructed by cutting rough and uneven swaths through the forests. In order to connect a new farm to its neighbors and other crucial areas, a road typically followed a straight line providing the shortest distance even though it might follow steep terrain. If not used constantly, secondary growth of bushes and shoots inevitably obscured the travel way. The growth of outlying settlements precipitated change: footpaths became paths for pack horses and then into crude roads to accommodate wagons. As roads were often constructed with the center lower than the edges, streams of water gathered within,

making them nearly impassable during the winter and spring. Travel was so bad at times that coaches, passing through flooded areas, were only able to move about 2 ½ miles per hour. However, after Newton was established, the old roads were improved and new ones were constructed to facilitate travel to key

places like the meeting house and the grist mill. Even though travel remained difficult if not impossible, Newton's close proximity to Boston, Cambridge and Watertown allowed residents to not only engage in trade in those towns, but kept them aware of worldly affairs as well.

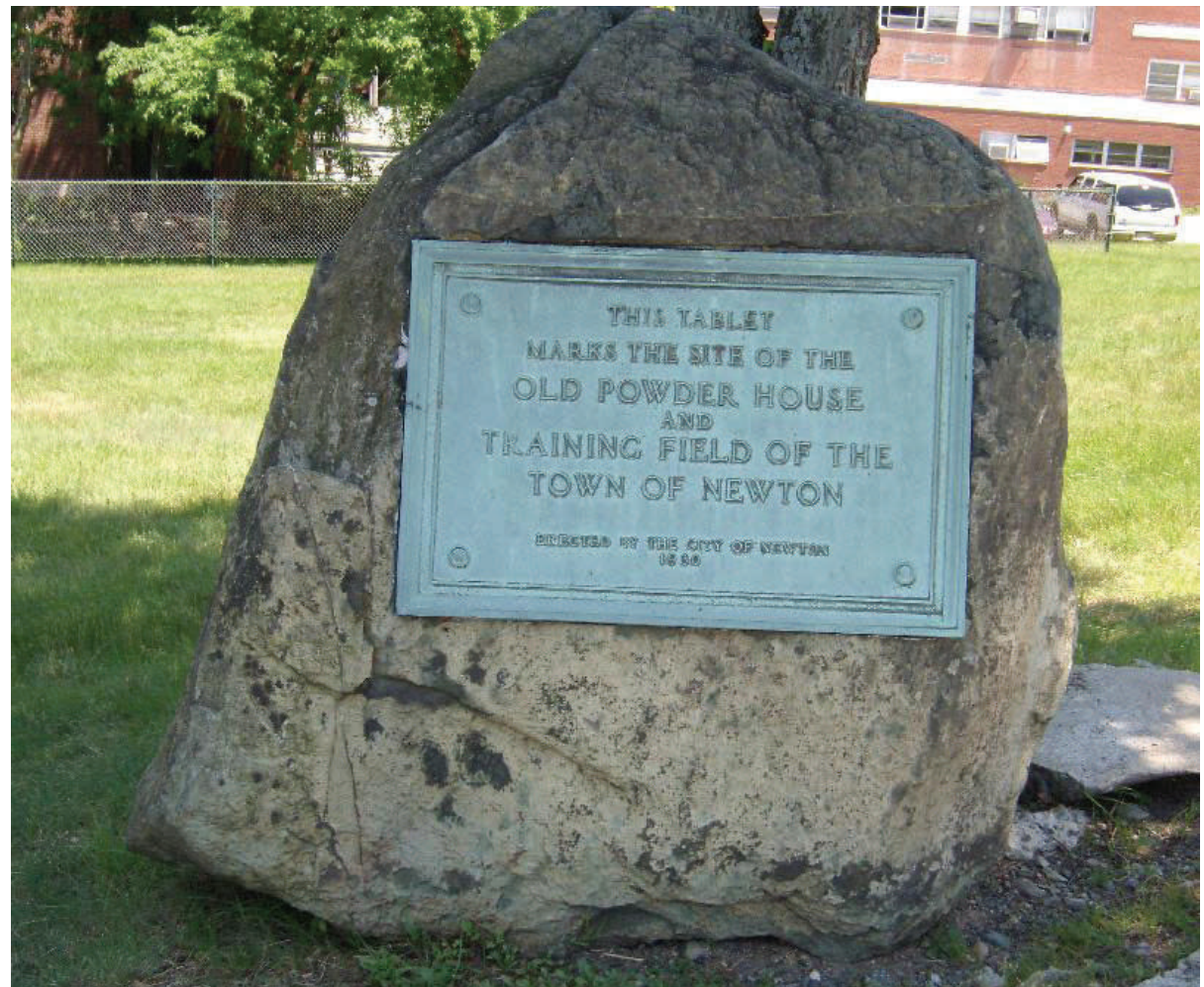


*Reconstructed map of Newton showing property owners, 1700-1750 (Jackson).*



Newton, during the eighteenth century, was a prosperous agricultural community with supporting small-scale industrial activity. Although immigration was limited, the town's population grew steadily. With the death of the first generation settlers, large farms were divided amongst the sons and daughters creating a community of smaller farms that were intensely cultivated. Some early settlers increased their wealth by selling parts of their large estates, resulting in a number of smaller farms throughout the town. Examples of these are the four large farms owned by William Robinson, Thomas Greenwood, Benjamin Childs and Jonathan Williams in Auburndale in the eighteenth century that had been divided into seven properties, each over 200 acres, by 1800.

Around 1711, the town maintained a training field by the common along Dedham Road (present-day Newton Centre). While no records have been identified, it is believed that approximately two-thirds of the land was given by Jonathan Hyde and one-third by Elder Wiswall. In 1799, a powder house was built on the easterly side of the field. A second training field was established in present-day Newtonville in 1735 on the property of Capt. Joseph Fuller. After the Revolutionary War the field reverted back to the Fuller family.



The Town Pound and Training Field site is located near Cypress Street (formerly Pound Lane) in Newton Centre. The Town Pound was located on land used as a common that was given to the town in the 1720s by the Hyde and Wiswall families. While part of the common was used as a militia training field, with a powder house and two noon houses (which were used by parishioners who had a long way to travel for Sunday service), the Town Pound was located at the other end of the common.

## School Districts and Villages

The organization and planning of Newton was an important feature during the eighteenth century. Surveying of the town and the establishment of school districts across the area marked a vital time in the development of the town.

Newton was fortunate to have been surveyed as early as 1714, though many of the depictions are unclear. This map was updated in 1772 (Shepard) and provided more accurate information than even the 1794 series plans. A comparison of maps from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries depict a town that still maintained a scattered settlement pattern in areas of agriculture development in the northern and southern sections of the town. In the eastern section, by the location of the market gardens, a more intricate street network emerged, likely due to the larger number of smaller properties. The fledgling villages of the late seventeenth century, Newton Corner, Newton Upper Falls, and Newton Centre grew by varying degrees and village development was evident in West Newton and Newton Lower Falls throughout the eighteenth century.

In 1723, the town was divided into three school districts (south, north and easterly, and the west); in 1764 four districts were created (Centre, North-west, Oak Hill, and South-west [Newton Highlands]); and in 1766, there were five school districts and

five school houses. In 1742, the original school and the west schoolhouse were moved.

Prior to 1760, Judge Abraham Fuller conducted private instruction in his house on the west part of town. To encourage the continuation of private instruction, Fuller left 300 pounds in his will for the construction of an academy. Charles Pelham opened a second private school in the home of Rev. John Cotton around 1765. Schools, however, were not opened to girls until 1789.

## Eighteenth-Century Burial Traditions

Cemeteries are significant features of the historic environment. Newton's historic burying grounds and cemeteries include the East Parish Burying Ground (1660), the West Parish Burying Ground (1782), the South Burying Ground (1802), Saint Mary's Cemetery (1813), and the Newton Cemetery (formerly Grove Hill Cemetery, 1855).

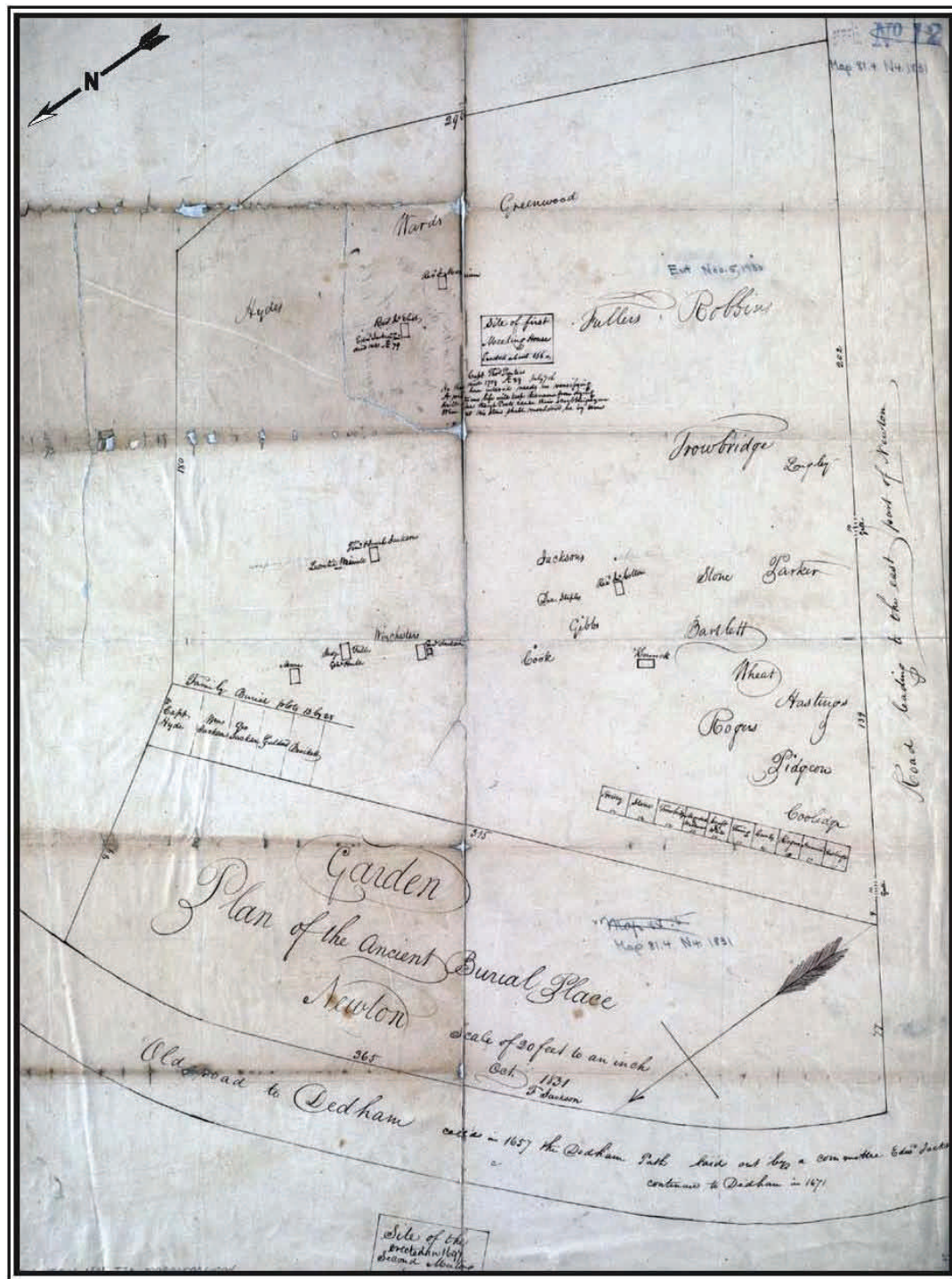
The East Parish Burying Ground, located by Newton's First Meeting House, was developed in 1660 on an acre of land at the corner of Centre and Cotton streets and was given by John Jackson. According to Jackson, the burying ground was first expanded in 1701 when Jackson's son, Abraham, donated an acre of land for the establishment of a school house, the expansion of the burying ground, and use for a training field. The two-acre parcel was then laid out and staked. At that time, it appeared that the lower portion of the

second acre, adjacent to present-day Centre Street, was unsuitable for graves because it was, at times, covered with water. As a result, the boundaries of the burying ground were staked out according to the 1-½ acres representing its visual boundaries. Accordingly ½ acre and 20 rods of the Original two-acre gift were lost. The burying ground was fenced for the first time in 1771, and cattle were pastured there until 1800. The burial ground was expanded again in 1802 and 1834. A monument was erected in 1852 near the center of the original acre to commemorate the first meeting house and the earliest settlers. At that time, a printed pamphlet was placed at the monument's foundation illustrating its first settlement in 1630, the ordination of its first minister in 1664, and its organization as an independent town in 1679.

As the only burial ground in the town until 1781, it contained the stones of the early settlers, ministers, teachers, selectmen and other town officials, military leaders, soldiers as well as those of every occupation who made a contribution to the development of the town.

Following the formation of the West Parish in modern West Newton, Nathan Fuller gave the parish one and one-half acres of land for a new burying ground in 1781. Known as the West Parish Burying Ground, it was located approximately 60 rods (approximately 1000 feet) north of the former location of the West Parish meeting house at the corner of River and Cherry streets.





Undocumented historic period burials, including small family plots may be located within seventeenth, eighteenth, and possibly early nineteenth-century farmsteads. Graves associated with the poor and/or slaves may be found unmarked in existing cemeteries, and those of the poor may be found in association with almshouses.

### **Eighteenth-Century Archaeological Evidence**

Archaeological evidence representative of the eighteenth century reflects continued settlement and development of the areas surrounding Newton. In particular, evidence of farmsteads, new meeting houses, and other buildings indicative of the growth of early towns such as blacksmith shops, tanneries, and mills are potentially visible. The footprints left over time can be seen in the ground, and are interpreted as periods of change reflecting family and economic growth over generations. The farm served as the primary social and economic unit of life. Although the specific patterning of eighteenth-century farmsteads has not been discerned, a review of historic maps identifies settlement clusters occupied by people with the same surname. A review of historic maps provides evidence of kinship-based neighborhoods.

Typically, the family's first house and central structure of the farmstead was a crude log cabin, with livestock housed in a single shed or barn. Early houses or cabins were built along the roadways, often as close as 25 feet from the edge of the road. These cabins were placed directly on the ground as in earth-fast structures, or on footings.

***Plan of the East Parish Burying Ground in 1831 (Jackson).***



Eighteenth and nineteenth-century houses frequently had foundations and cellar holes. A cellar hole would extend 4 to 6 feet (1.2 to 1.8 meters) below ground surface. Stone foundations provide evidence of the plan and dimensions of the house. Foundations and walls were comprised of fieldstones, split stones, cut stones and/or later brick. Builder's trenches may be found along the exterior faces of the foundations. One-room deep houses are recognized by their narrow width, measuring 15 to 20 feet (4.5 to 6 meters); two room deep houses are significantly wider, extending 25 to 35 feet (7.6 to 10.6 meters) (Sanford et al. 1994:6). For example, the Eliphalet Walker house (circa 1770-1790) measured 18 by 35 feet. These early houses were easily modified and expanded to meet the demands of growing production.

Over time, as families grew, and farmstead and domestic activities became more diversified, more structures were added to the landscape. Before 1800, typical historic barns were small, measuring 15 by 20 feet, while additions such as ells, stables, or back buildings might range between 16-20 feet by 20-50 feet. The agricultural practices and activities undertaken on the farmstead helped determine the size, design, function, location, patterning, complexity, technological developments, and number of structures and elements of the agricultural property. These agricultural outbuildings were typically built on footings, not foundations, so their archaeological correlates may be harder to discern at ground surface.



*Archaeologists from the UMass Boston Fiske Center examined the grounds of the Durant-Kenrick House during a field school in the summer of 2011.*