

***NEWTON LOCAL LANDMARK REPORT***

***William L. Church – Dai Buell (Greenidge) House***

***145 Warren Street (NWT.5604)(NC-0135)***

**Prepared for: Newton Historical Commission, June 2021**

1. *Historic Name of Property:* (NWT.5604)(NC-0135)

2. *Common Name:* Aloha Bungalow

3. *Location*

a. Street address: 145 Warren Street

b. Zip code: 02459

c. Assessors' #: 61039 0010

4. *Classification*

a. *Ownership of Property:* Private

b. *Type of Property:* Residential

c. *National Register Status:* Individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places (1990) and contributing to the Newton 20<sup>th</sup> Century MRA Amendment NR District (1988). The garage was deemed by the NHC to be a non-contributing element to the district.

5. *Function or Use*

a. *Historic Functions:* Built in 1916 as a residential home and performance space. There is one detached garage.

b. *Current Functions:* This building continues to serve as a residential building.

6. *Zoning*

The Zoning District is zoned MR1. This is an Old Lot per Chapter 30 of the Newton Zoning Code.

7. *Description*

*Neighborhood Description:* This property is in a neighborhood of a stylistic mix of homes on land Horace Cousens subdivided in 1911. Eight other homes on this street were previously surveyed and date from the 1860s to 1880s. The building is a freestanding structure of an unusual design in this neighborhood and is an individually listed property on the National Register of Historic Places.

**8. *Architectural Description:***

*(1) Materials:*

*Foundation:* Concrete

*Walls:* Wood shingle, banded

*Roof:* Orange clay tile

*Windows:* Single pane

*Ornamentation:* oversized brackets (struts); 'Aloha' signage; horizontal banded wood siding; orange clay tile roof; front bench

*Landscaping:* The lot is landscaped and slopes down in the back to a detached garage and ultimately train tracks.

*Building Permits:*

**Date: 1916**

**Owner:** William L. Church

**Architect:** Morton & West (16 State Street, Room 64, Boston, MA)

**Nature of permit:** New single-family dwelling

**Date: 1916**

**Owner:** William L. Church

**Architect:** Morton & West

**Nature of permit:** Garage

**Date: 1951**

**Owner:** Marcus W. Feinberg

**Architect:** John Marion (63 Eleanor Street, Chelsea, MA)

**Nature of permit:** "To enclose existing front porch with brick veneer on wood frame"

*(2) Description:*

*Current appearance:*

The Church - Buell House is a unique example of a Craftsman style bungalow that stands one story in height, typical of the Bungalow Style in Newton and elsewhere, but which was custom designed around a central music room or 'Salon.' This house was individually listed on the National Register (NR) of Historic Places in 1990 for its unique architectural design. The house and garage were designed by Hawley W. Morton & Albert E. West, architects who collaborated briefly at this time to form the firm of Morton & West Architects of 16 State Street, Boston, MA. The 1990 NR nomination makes no mention of the home's famous resident, Dai Buell (Greenidge).

The gradually pitched hipped roof is of orange clay tile, with two narrow, centrally located gable peaks containing multi-lite windows that provided natural light to the salon space below. The rectangular building is sheathed in wood shingle hung in distinctive horizontal bands. Windows are single-pane vertical rectangles, many topped by transoms, and a single three-part window kit is topped with a stained-glass 'Aloha' panel on the east side. The entrance porch displays rusticated brick piers and heavy carved brackets that support the overhanging roof. The original front porch on the left of the front entrance was later enclosed and sided in brick veneer (1951). A carved wood bench stands to one side, which is topped by an inset decorative panel, again with the word 'Aloha' etched in it.

The survey form for this property asserted that the major alteration to the house was the front window bay, where an original window kit was replaced by horizontal louvers. It would appear the brick extension on the front façade should be included as well. The detached, frame garage has a shallow gable roof and a double garage door. An addition was constructed on the south side of the garage at a later date with three hinged doors for access. The garage was approved for demolition by the Newton Historical Commission in 2018.

Historical appearance:

With the exception of the enclosed front porch in 1951 and bay window, the historical appearance of this house was largely unchanged from its current appearance. Exhibit A below appears in all deed references to the property:

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Bk: 69584 Pg: 188

Exhibit A

A certain parcel of land in that part of said Newton called Newton Centre situated on the northerly side of Warren Street, bounded and described as follows:

Commencing at a granite post on the northerly line of Warren Street, at the southeasterly corner of the premises herein conveyed, and the southwesterly corner of land now or formerly of Packard; thence running westerly on Warren Street (90) feet to land now or formerly of Vachon;

Thence northerly on said land now or formerly of Vachon, two hundred fifty-four (254) feet to land now or formerly of the Boston & Albany Railroad Company;

Thence easterly on said land now or formerly of the Boston & Albany Railroad Company, ninety (90) feet to said land now or formerly of Packard;

Thence turning and running southerly on land now or formerly of Packard two hundred sixty-nine and 40/100 (269.40) feet to the point of beginning.

Said parcel containing twenty-three thousand three hundred eighty-three (23,383) square feet, more or less, as shown on a plan of land in Newton Centre belonging to the estate of Horace Cousens, E.S. Smilie Surveyor, Sept 28, 1911, and duly recorded in Middlesex County South District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 198, Plan 22.

## **9. History of Property**

### *a. Deed History:*

**Date: 2020**  
**From: 145 Warren Street LLC**  
**To: Norton Point Warren Street LLC**  
**Book/Page: 74917/516**

**Date: 2017**  
**From: Robert W. Swartz**  
**To: 145 Warren Street LLC**  
**Book/Page: 69548/189**

**Date: 1995**  
**From: Alec F. and Linda Feinberg**  
**To: Robert W. Swartz**  
**Book/Page: 25882/397**

**Date: 1992**  
**From: Frances Gordon**  
**To: Alec F. and Linda K. Feinberg**  
**Book/Page: 22472/58**

**Date: 1949**  
**From: John W. Dearborn**  
**To: Frances Feinberg Gordon**  
**Book/Page: 7389/581**

**Date: 1944**  
**From: Audley Earl Greenidge, widower**  
**To: John W. Dearborn**  
**Book/Page: 6788/9**

**Date: 1932**  
**From: Newton Trust Co., estate of William L. Church**  
**To: Dai Buell Greenidge**  
**Book/Page: 5700/138**

## **10. Significance of Property**

### *a. Period of Significance*

The period of significance for 145 Warren Street is 1916 to 1971. This period encompasses the historic and current residential use and ownership of the site and

acknowledges the site's continued use prior to the 50-year cut-off for historical significance.

### *Historical Significance*

#### **Dai Buell**

This building stands on a site owned and named for its original owner, William L. Church, but is better known for Church's famous niece, Josephine 'Dai' Buell Greenidge (1893 – 1939). Buell was an international concert pianist who traveled to Boston from the Mid-West to study music. Buell was a ground-breaker for professional women in the arts. She was also the first to perform classical music live on both radio and TV, an achievement noted for both the style of music and gender of the performer at the time. Born in 1893 in Fort Wayne, Indiana to parents from Ohio, the family soon moved to Logansport, Indiana where Dai resided until she graduated from high school. Her piano studies took her to the New England Conservatory in Boston, and she became a Newton resident at 10 Chase Street where she taught music lessons. By 1917, Buell was a soloist with the Boston Symphony and performed with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra.

At age 21 (1918) Buell married Navy officer Audley Earl Greenidge in Woonsocket, RI. This marriage was kept secret for years so as not to affect her or her husband's careers. By 1920, both were residents of the house at 145 Warrant Street, built by Buell's uncle William L. Church, an engineer. Until recently, the house retained its central performance room, or 'Salon' that was constructed for Buell's use. By 1920, Buell's widowed mother was also residing here. Buell traveled to perform in her old and new hometowns as well as internationally in Europe. By 1932, Buell and her husband became owners of 145 Warren Street upon the death of William L. Church. Buell died soon after in 1939 of a heart-attack at the age of 46. Her death was reported in newspapers nationwide, including the Boston Globe.



**DAI BUELL.**

From a 1922 publication (Wikipedia)

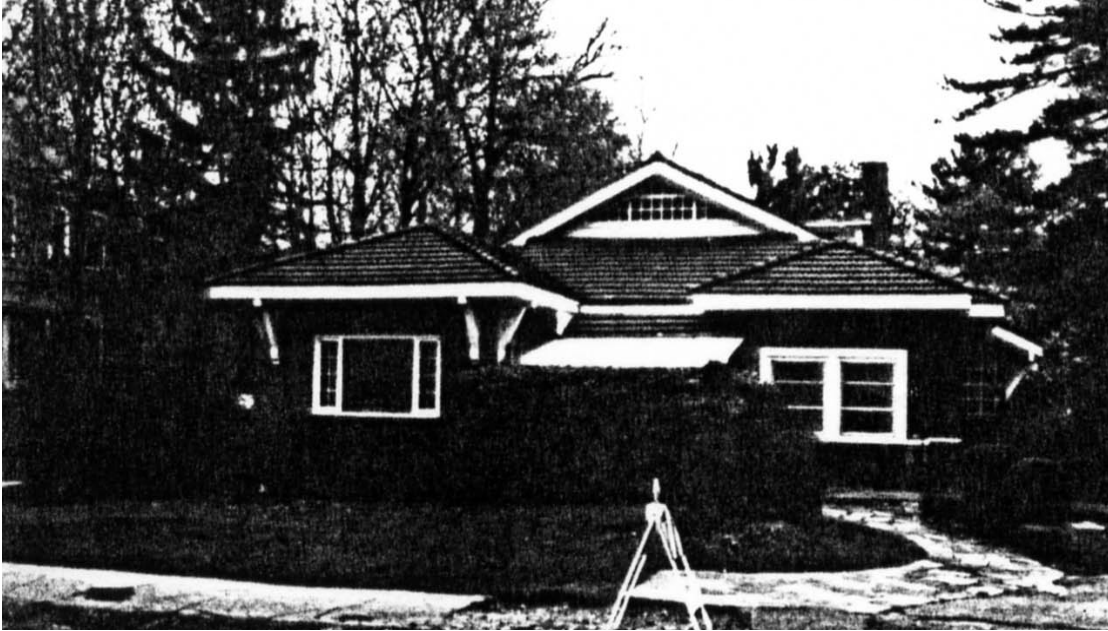
Audley Earl Greenidge stayed in the house until 1944, and by 1949 the house was purchased by Marcus (worked in tires) and Frances Feinberg. Marcus died soon after and Frances remarried, continuing to live at this address well into the 1990s.



**Morton & West Architects**

The architecture firm of Morton & West is listed in some early 20th century directories but their temporary professional partnership appeared to have stayed somewhat below the radar. One exception was an ad they placed on January 31, 1912 in *The American Architect*: "Mr. Hawley W. Morton and Mr. Albert E. West, architects, inform us that they have formed a partnership for the

practice of their profession under the firm name of Morton & West. They have opened (an) office at 16 State Street, Boston, Mass., and desire to receive manufacturers samples and catalogues." Morton & West also appear on the building permit for 50 Beacon Street, Newton, as its designers, built in 1909 in the Spanish Eclectic Style with an orange tile roof. This property is in the Chestnut Hill Local Historic District. Publications from the time show Morton & West continued to design homes and garages in Newton in 1914 (*The American Contractor*, 2/12/1914), two years before the house at 145 Warren Street was constructed.



145 Warren Street, from survey form (1990)

Hawley Winchester Morton was a prolific early 20<sup>th</sup> century Boston architect in his own right and a lifelong resident of Newton. He was noted in his obituary as being an accomplished pianist (*The Democrat and Chronicle*, Rochester, NY, 1/3/1966) and sang in the Newton Center Baptist Church choir. Seventeen of his buildings are listed on MACRIS: thirteen are in Newton, and six of those are listed on the State Register. Two of his bungalow house designs are located in Wellesley in the Wellesley Gardens/Sunny Acres development. Built in 1921, they have similar features to those at 145 Warren (see below). This district is noted on MACRIS for having historical significance in the areas of Architecture and Community Planning and was constructed five years after 145 Warren Street.

From the MACRIS area form for this development: "This area of Wellesley contains the town's best collection of bungalows and similar one-story house forms...Both subdivisions attracted a mix of Boston and Wellesley builders...Two unusual brick bungalows flank the entrance to Thomas Road, 394 and 396 Weston Road (1921, Photos \*6 and 7). The Boston team of Richard Thomas Jr. and H. Morton, builder and architect respectively, built \*394 and possibly \*398. "





394 Weston Road, Hawley W. Morton (1921)

In the early 1920s, Albert E. West had his own State Street address at the same time the Morton & West firm appeared in directories. This suggests the partnership was intended to be a temporary collaboration. West lived in Boston and designed four homes in Quincy, MA that were surveyed and in MACRIS. It is worth noting that the builder of the house at 145 Warren Street was from Quincy.

#### **11. Local Landmark Review (Sec. 22-64 (b). Designation)**

- (a) At or after the public hearing, the commission by three-quarters (3/4) vote, but in no instance less than four (4) votes in the affirmative, may designate as a landmark any property within the city being or containing a building, structure or landscape which it determines to meet one or more of the following criteria:
- (1) the property significantly represents an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detailing, materials or craftsmanship;
  - (2) the property is meaningfully associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural or archeological aspect of the development of the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or the United States of America;
  - (3) the property's identification as a notable work of an architect, designer, engineer or builder whose work is significant in the history or development of the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the United States of America; or
  - (4) historic events or activities occurred at the property that have made an outstanding contribution to, or which best represent some important aspect of, the history of the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the United States of America.

- (b) In determining whether to designate a property as a landmark, the commission shall also consider the following conditions:
- (1) that the distinguishing characteristics of significance are for the most part original and intact or capable of restoration;
  - (2) that the property, location and setting is compatible with future preservation and maintenance; and
  - (3) the property's context in relation to the City's policies and adopted plans and the property's surrounding area.

### ***Landmark Designation Criteria***

The Aloha House at 145 Warren Street meets criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Section 22-64 of Newton's Ordinance. The property is:

- An individually listed resource on the National Register of Historic Places
- Associated with the historic development of Newton Center as a suburban village
- Historically and architecturally significant for its intact representation of the Bungalow Style on a site that is in residential use since 1916 by an internationally known performance artist
- Compatible with future preservation and use because the historic location and setting has been retained
- Representative of a distinct period in architectural design retaining its decorative fabric and features

### **12. Recommendations**

The property has been maintained over time as a residence. The building has also retained the style and appearance of its most visible period of historical significance and continues to contribute to the neighborhood of Warren Street in Newton Center. In accordance with the newly drafted local landmark ordinance:

- this historic property stands alone as an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detailing, materials or craftsmanship. The building is a unique and unusual example of the Bungalow Style adopted from examples beginning to be seen at the time on the west coast of the US and was custom designed as a performance space for a concert

pianist of some renown.

- the property significantly contributes to the cultural, historic, architectural or archeological aspect of the development of the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or the United States of America through its design for use by Dai Buell, an early concert pianist, feminist, and advocate for bringing classical music to the public;
- this is a notable contextual example synonymous with 1920s architecture and early evidence of suburban design for the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the United States of America; or
- documented historical events or activities that occurred at this property have made an outstanding contribution to the understanding of the history of performance music by a female artist and her ‘firsts’ with respect to TV and radio, and which best represent some important aspect of, the history of the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the United States of America.

### **13. Preservation Recommendations**

a. *Preservation Recommendations* The exterior of the property should be maintained with repairs that are appropriate and which use compatible materials where necessary. The building has also retained the style and appearance of its most visible period of historic significance.

b. *Important Features* The defining features of this building are the general size and massing of the structure, its role as a prominent visual anchor on Warren Street, and the original Craftsman Style architectural detail found on the house. The ‘Aloha’ signage, the orange tile roof, front bench, banded siding, and single-pane windows throughout are important characteristics to preserve. Features not to be included in the designation would be the rear façade and the detached garage.

### **14. 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 defined important features of the building. The Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation should provide a baseline for review of changes to the landmark property.

b. *Specific Standards* Specific design standards have been addressed in the existing maintenance of the property regarding 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 excellent examples of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Craftsman Style and that the structure itself retains its architectural identity. Thus, the following specific design standards refer to potential changes to the existing structure:

*Exterior Walls*

- Sheathing should be repaired and painted when needed.
- Decorative elements should be preserved and only replaced by like materials and design when necessary.
- No new openings should be allowed aside from the rear facade.
- No existing openings should be permanently filled in.

*Windows*

- Surviving historic windows should be retained and repaired where possible. If replacement is necessary, the replacements should match as closely as possible the original window in materials, style, and design.

*Roof*

- No changes should be made to the pitch, style or material of the roof

**15. 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 review under the Landmark Ordinance.

ADDRESS

|                                   |                        |                         |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| RUIZ JILL T & JOSE ANTONIO        | 136 WARREN ST UN 2     | NEWTON, MA 02459        |
| BELLEVILLE MARY LEE               | 136 WARREN ST 1        | NEWTON, MA 02459        |
| SIRAFOS KIMON & DEMETRA           | 81 PAOLA DR            | EAST FALMOUTH, MA 02536 |
| MARTIN CLIVE D & DIANE J          | 142 WARREN ST UN 2     | NEWTON, MA 02459        |
| LIPKIND BARRY K & RINALDI MARYLIN | 140/142 WARREN ST UN 1 | NEWTON CENTRE, MA 02459 |
| 145 WARREN CREH LLC               | 1290A BEACON ST        | BROOKLINE, MA 02446     |

|                         |                   |                  |
|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| BOWMAN JOSHUA M         | 148 WARREN ST 150 | NEWTON, MA 02459 |
| CHODAT ROBERT A         | 148 WARREN ST 148 | NEWTON, MA 02459 |
| VACHON PETER L & ANNLEE | 151 WARREN ST     | NEWTON, MA 02459 |

## **16. Report Appendices**

- Appendix A: MACRIS NR Nomination
- Appendix B: Original plans (1916), Morton & West
- Appendix C: Labeled photos

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 80 BOYLSTON STREET  
 BOSTON, MA 02116

NC-0135



Town Newton (Newton Centre)

Address 145 Warren Street

Historic Name William L. Church House

Use: Present residential

Original same

DESCRIPTION

Date 1916

Source Building permit

Style Bungalow

Architect unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric banded shingle

Outbuildings garage-NC

Major Alterations (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

window sash- c1950?

Condition good

Moved no Date n/a

Acres 22,383 sq.ft./ c .51 acres

Setting quiet residential neighborhood

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s). Indicate north

UTM REFERENCE 19/319590 14688490

USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON

SCALE 1:25000

Recorded by Candace Jenkins/Susan Abele

Organization Newton Historical Comm.

Date June, 1988



**NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)**

The William L. Church House possesses integrity of location, design, materials (except for some window sash), setting, workmanship, feeling and association. It is significant as a representation of Newton's early 20th century growth which resulted in infill of established areas as well as in the creation of new subdivisions. It is also important as an exceptionally detailed Craftsman style bungalow, surpassed locally only by the Goodbar House (NV-085). It thus meets criteria A and C of the NRHP.

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.**

The Church House is a well-detailed example of a Craftsman style bungalow which adheres to the prescribed one story height unlike many other examples in the city. It is built on a rectangular plan with some squared projecting window bays and a projecting entry porch. It is sheathed with the banded shingles popular for this style, and its low pitched hip roof is covered with tiles. The entrance porch displays rusticated brick piers and heavy carved struts to support the overhanging roof. An original built-in bench remains between the porch and the balancing window bay to the right. The major alteration to the house has occurred in this window bay where original vertically aligned sash with transoms has been replaced by horizontal louvers; fortunately this is a change that could easily be restored. Original sash, some with stained glass transoms, remains on the side elevations. Small, multi-pane sash remains in the gabled dormers.

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.**

Mr. and Mrs. William Lee Church were the original owners of the bungalow at 145 Warren Street which was built in 1916. The architect and builder of the house are unknown, but it may be that Mr. Church who graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute as a mechanical and hydraulic engineer had some hand in its design. Before coming to Newton, Mr. Church worked for the firm of Westinghouse, Church and Kerr Company of New York, and then in Boston for Lockwood-Green Company. (The Lockwood-Green Company was responsible for the design of the Gamewell Company buildings in Newton Upper Falls.) He was also President for a time of the Ambursen Hydraulic Construction Company of Boston. Church and his wife Sarah had one son, Burr Alden Church who became a photographer and a niece, Miss Dai Buell, a music teacher and concert pianist, who lived with them. The house is said to be designed with proper acoustics for the piano for the use of Miss Buell. Sarah Church died in 1922 within days of their fiftieth wedding anniversary. William, who was listed as an "old resident" of Newton Centre died in 1927 at the age of 77. The early picture of the house can be dated to the 1940s due to the Red Cross sign in the front window.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

Building Department Records: 145 Warren Street  
 City Directories and Atlases, VF-Jackson Homestead  
*Newton Graphic*, 27 May 1927



Newton, MA-MRA

**NWT.5604**

NC-0136

145 Loarner St.  
Newton Centre

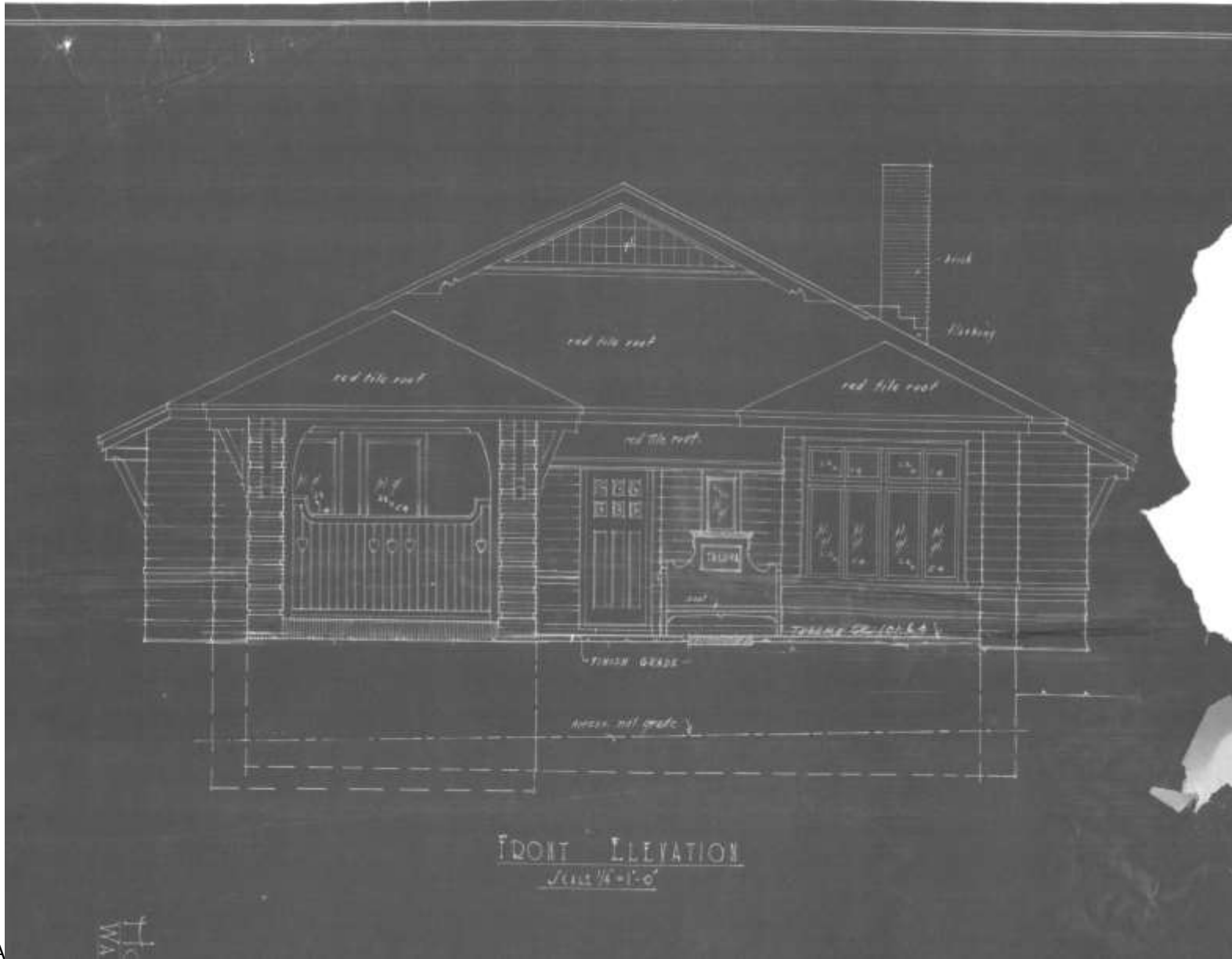
1916





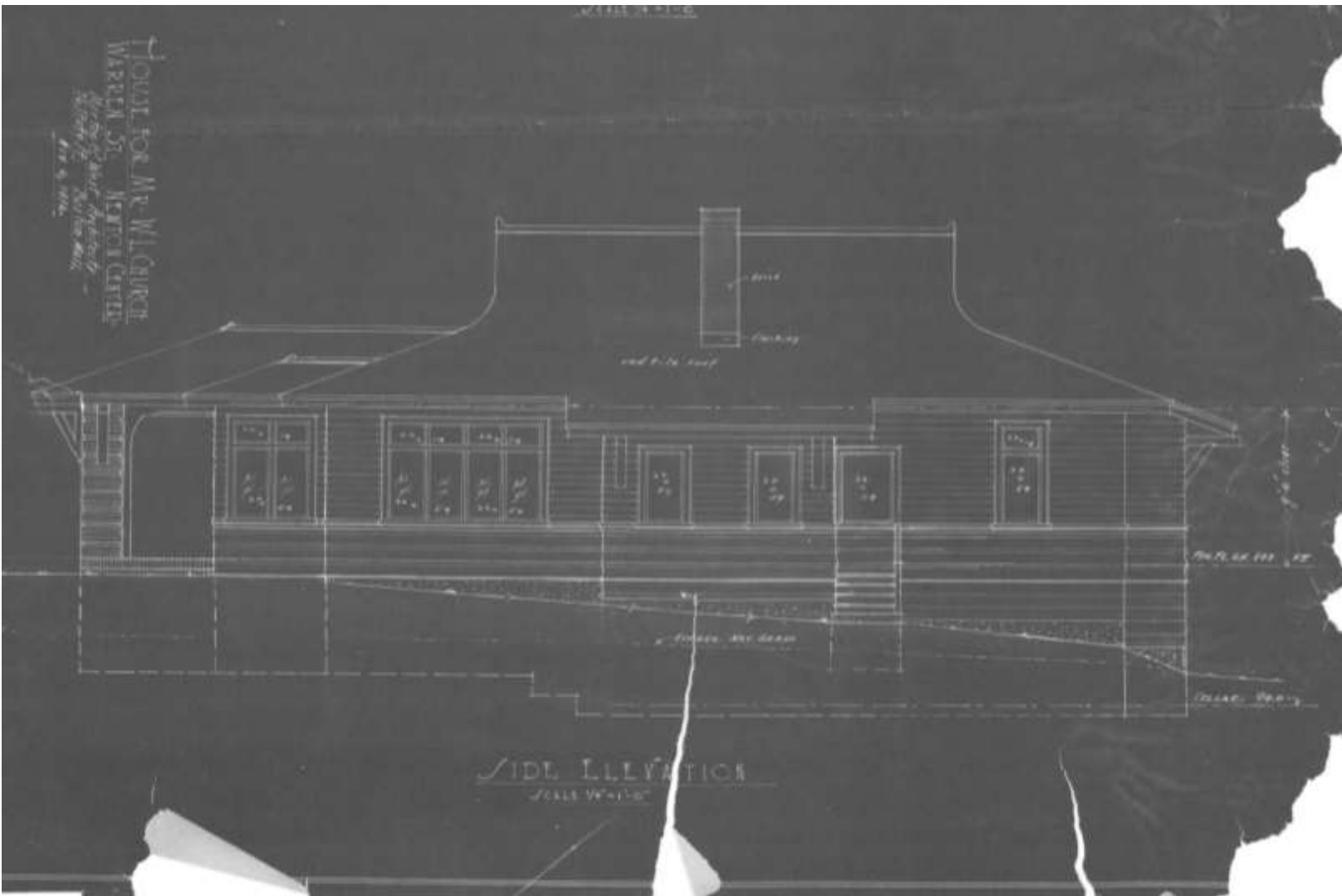
Newton, MA-MRA  
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 Engineering Map - 1979  
 Scale: 1"=1000" Reduced 64%  
 Page: 91

# ATTACHMENT B

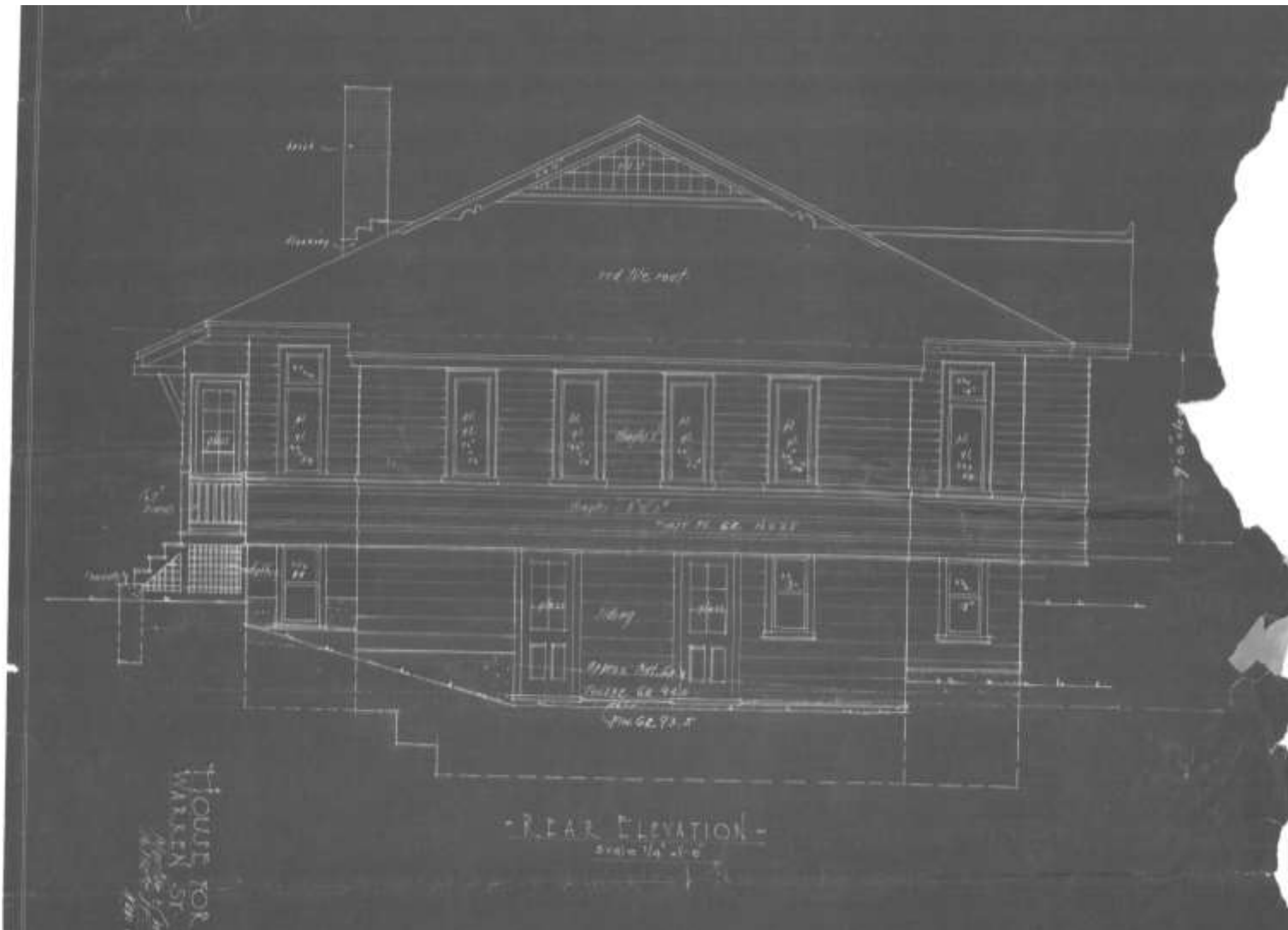


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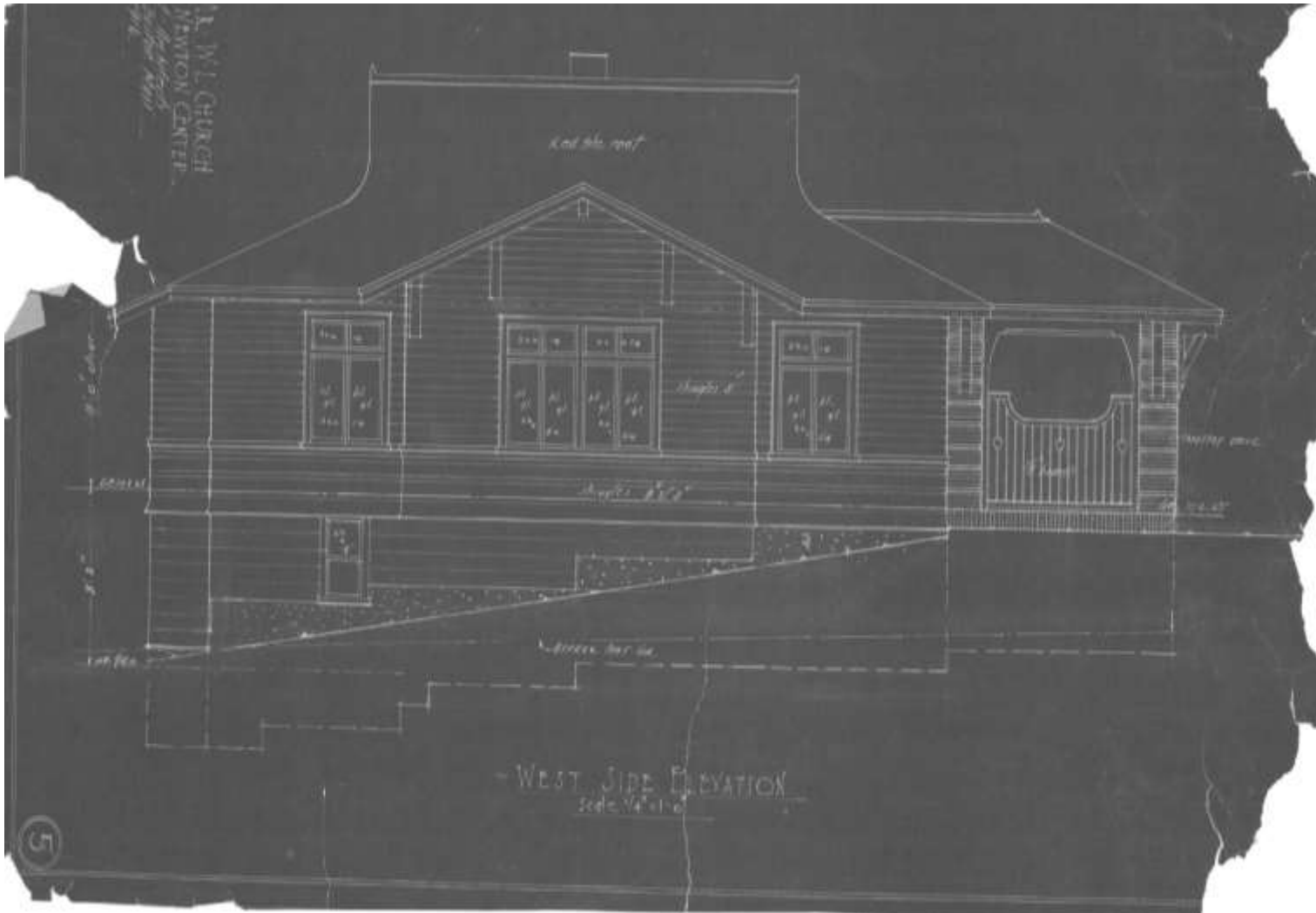
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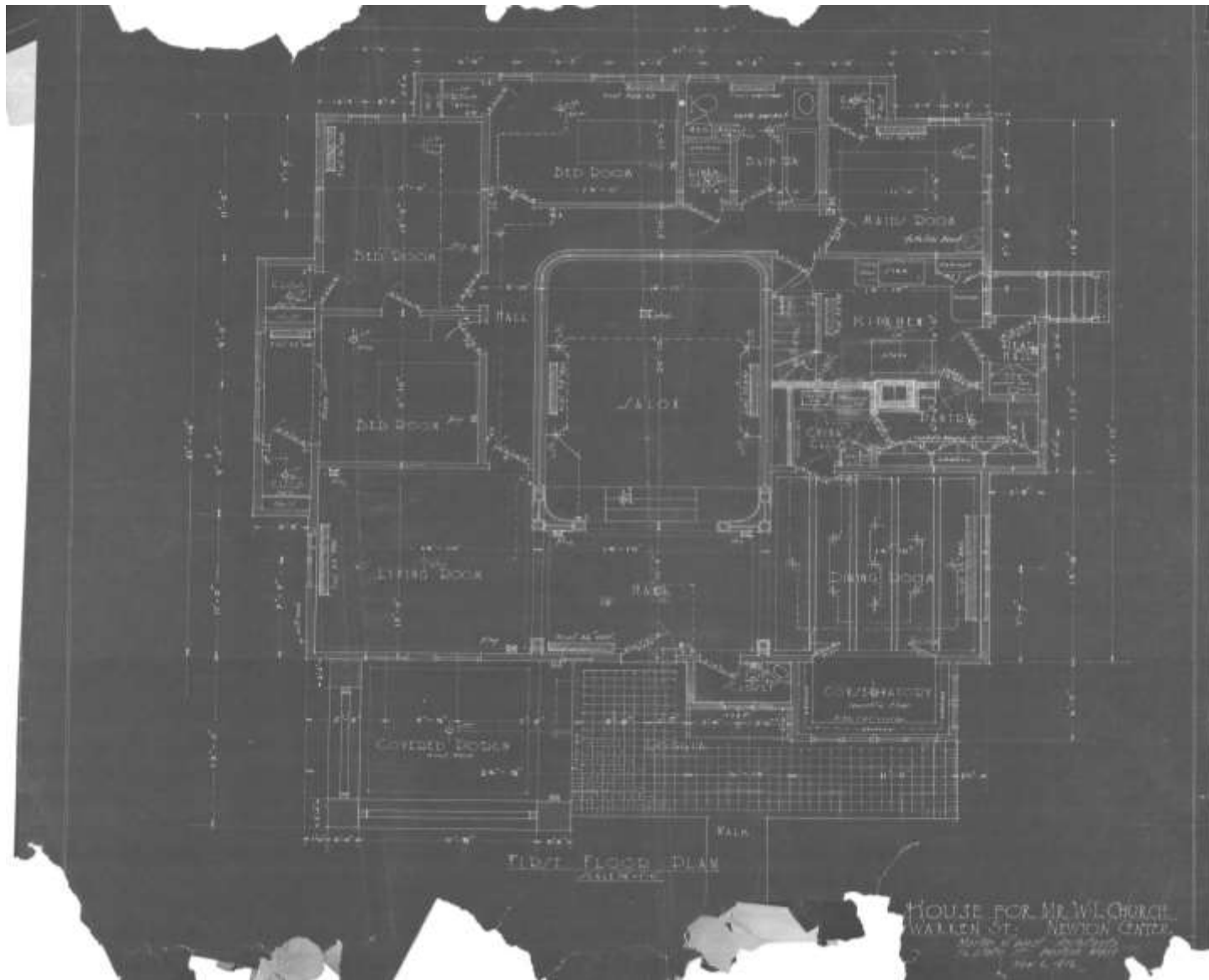
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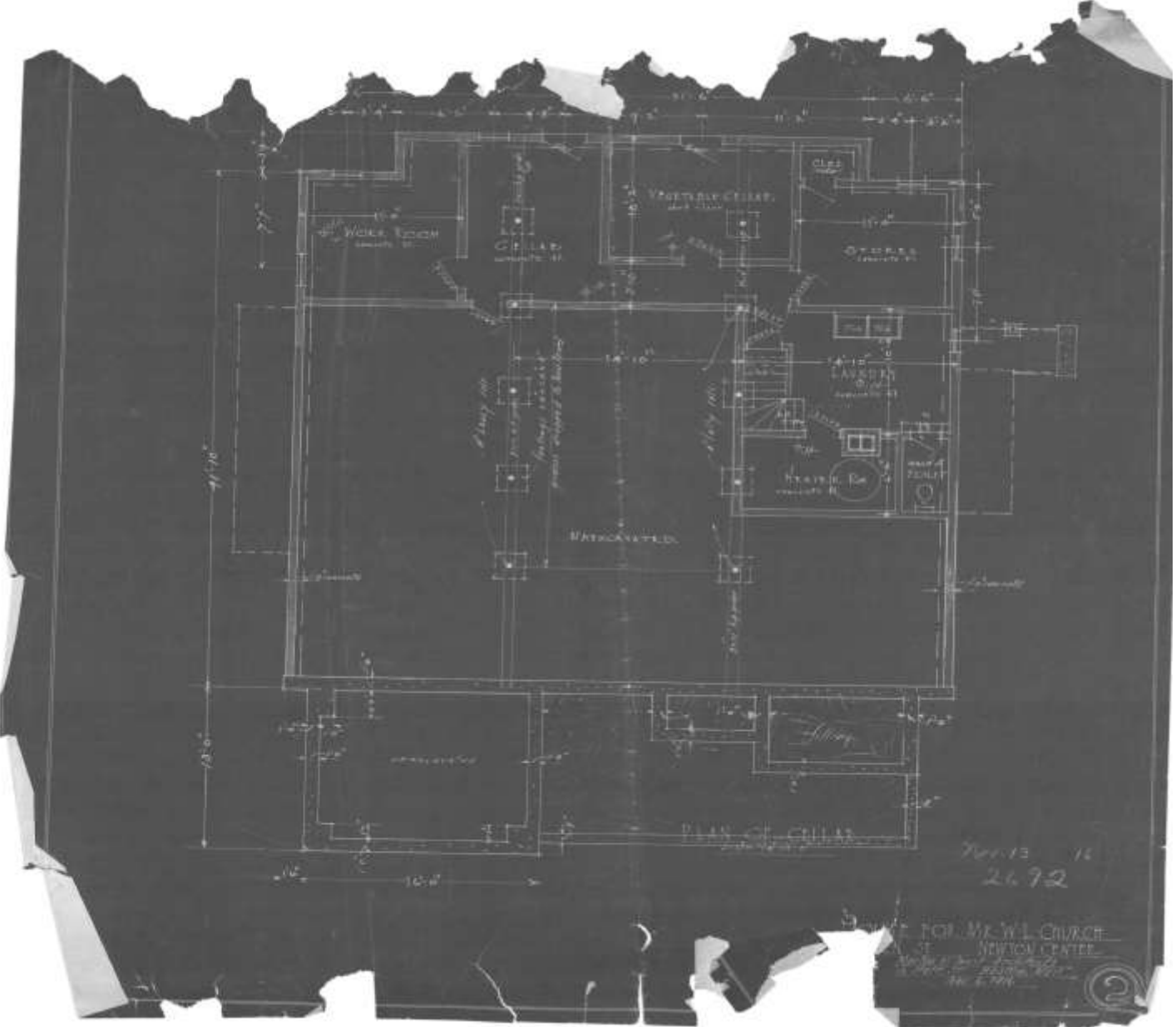
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# ATTACHMENT B



# ATTACHMENT B



## ATTACHMENT C



145 Warren Street, view looking north of front left corner





145 Warren Street, view looking west, detached garage



145 Warren Street, view looking south, rear facade





145 Warren Street, view looking southwest, side and rear facades.



145 Warren Street, view looking west at east window with 'Aloha' in stained glass





145 Warren Street, view looking northwest of east side, tile roof and struts



145 Warren Street, view looking west, front bench



145 Warren Street, view looking west, front bench with 'Aloha' panel





145 Warren Street, view looking north, front door





145 Warren Street, view looking north, front left façade, brick addition



145 Warren Street, view looking northwest, detached garage addition