

# **NEWTON LOCAL LANDMARKS PROGRAM**

## **29 GREENWOOD STREET**

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

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## Gershom Hyde House - 29 Greenwood Street

### 1. *Name of Property*

- a. *Historic Name:* Gershom Hyde House
- b. *Common Name:* same

### 2. *Location*

- a. *Street Address:* 29 Greenwood Street
- b. *Zip Code:* Newton Centre, 02159
- c. *Assessor's #:* 81/051/0017 and 81/051/0018

### 3. *Classification*

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

### 4. *Function or Use*

- a. *Historic Functions:* The property was constructed as a residence and was the main farmhouse. The nineteenth century barn also was part of this farm and served a utilitarian function.
- b. *Current Functions:* Presently the property, which has been divided into two lots, is privately owned and serves as a residence. Farming has been discontinued..

### 5. *Zoning*

The property is in a Single Residence 1 Zoning District which means that there must be a minimum of 25,000 square feet and 140 feet of frontage per dwelling. The house lot has 20,900 sq. ft. and the lot with the barn has 13,500 sq. ft.

### 6. *Description*

- a. *Neighborhood Description:* Located in the postal address of Newton Centre, the property is south of Route 9 off Dudley Street in a small pocket of Newton that retains somewhat of a rural atmosphere. Although there is a subdivision directly across the street from this property, adjoining properties on the north side of Greenwood Street retain some open space reminiscent of a less densely settled area and the agricultural environment of days past.. Adjacent to the barn lot is a

lot that has several acres with no buildings thereon. Originally this land was part of the Hyde Farm. There are two other eighteenth century houses nearby both of which originally were owned by the Hydes.

*b. Architectural Description:* The five-bay gabled roof dwelling displays a center chimney plan and Georgian simplicity in design. The house rests on a fieldstone foundation with clapboards close to the ground level. It is two bays deep and has a narrow one bay wide side ell that also extends behind the main block.

(1) *Materials:*

*Foundation:* granite/fieldstone

*Walls:* Wood clapboard

*Roof:* Asphalt shingles

*Windows:* Wood frame 6/6

*Ornamentation:* Simplicity of design

*Vegetation:* Mature trees, large shrubbery, rural and undesigned

(2) *Verbal Description:*

*Historical appearance:* The dwelling was built around a center chimney with a five-bay, center entrance facade, on a fieldstone foundation with clapboards laid up in a graduated fashion and starting low to the ground. The house retains its massing and scale with the five bays on the main facade evenly spaced across the wall. It is two bays deep, indicating a four room plan built around the center chimney which extends above the roof straddling the ridge. There is one window in each gable peak.

The trim is plain as seen by the unadorned corner posts, the boxed cornice, and the slightly projecting wood frames. Six-over-six sash are set in the projecting unmolded frames. Originally the house had a center entrance of unknown appearance. In keeping with the simplicity of design, age and scale of the house, the door probably was of the simple raised field paneled variety.

The large gable front ca. 1850 barn has clapboard sheathing and rests on a fieldstone foundation. The large barn door is centered and has a long multi-light transom. In the gable peak is a window that is a six-light window with three long lights over three long lights. It appears to be stationary and is the size opening of a six-over-six double hung window. The rake of the roof is similar in scale to that of the house.

*Current appearance:* The most significance change is the centered entrance that was removed and replaced with a multi-light hipped roof addition in place of the centered bay. It is rectangular with a parged base and multi-light stationary wood window on each of the three sides. The side ell that is one bay wide is two bays deep and also has no elaboration. It is two stories and has a shallow pitch to the shed roof. Built into the L formed by the main block and the side/rear ell is a flat roofed entrance with storm door facing south. It is close to but not obstructing the rear window on the gable end side. There is one second-story window over this projecting entrance addition. The roof of the main house was probably reconstructed when replaced at some point in the mid 1800s. The rake is deeper than would have been found on the original house and is similar to that of the barn which appears to be of mid-nineteenth century construction.

## 7. *History of Property*

- a. *Deed History* Book 8759 Page 554 shows the sale of the property to the present owner by 1957. See deed of 1860 when the property was split into three deeds as shown in Book 849, Page 101. The three parcels were
- 1) homestead farm house lot and ten acres
  - 2) thirty-four acre wood lot
  - 3) barn lot and field and "half-moon" lot, all twenty and one-half acres.

b. *Development History* From the late 1600s Jonathan Hyde and his descendants settled in this area of Newton south of Boylston Street (Route 9), a part of Newton that remained a farming community longer than other areas and a part that never developed its own village center. In 1711 Greenwood Street and Dudley Road were laid out and soon thereafter farms were established along Dudley and Greenwood as well as Dedham and Brookline Streets. Timothy (b. 1689) built 9 Burdean Road (extant) which is near 29 Greenwood Street. His brother John Hyde Jr. lived at 336 Dudley Street also an early eighteenth century farmhouse. The traditional date for this property is ca. 1744 when Gershom Hyde (1719-1754) is thought to have established a farm at this location. Surrounding land including all land between 336 Dudley and 9 Burdean (just off Greenwood Street) was owned by the Hydes.

Gersom Hyde died without a will and the property eventually passed to his nephew, Thaddeus Hyde (1751-1821) and finally to his son, Thaddeus (1791-1857). In 1860 the Hyde farm was sold to Edward Wales of Needham in three lots, described above in Deed Information.

Edward and Phebe Wales had been married in 1842. They moved here in the 1860s and Wales sons, George (1845-1918) and William, started a small fruit preserving business at this location. By 1884 the business had prospered such that George and William Wales moved to the corner of Mill and Cedar Streets and developed a house, carriage shed and jam factory which was in an old clapboard three-story barn. All three buildings that comprised the Wales Brothers property were demolished in 1997. The business that began here locally was well known and sold to stores in the region and nationally. Edward Wales' widow, Phebe Wales remained here in this house until her death when the property was sold to Louis Vignoles in the early 1900s. The property at that time included nine acres, a house and two barns. Vignoles and hers were here until 1948 after which the property changed hands a couple of times until ca. 1957 when Dr. Edward Friedman purchased the property and continued the long term ownerships for this property for the past forty years.

## 8. *Significance of Property*

a. *Period of Significance* For the purposes of the Landmark consideration the period of significance for this property extends from its construction date in ca. 1744 throughout the Hyde family ownership during which time the family farmed in the area and contributed to the agricultural history of Newton. Also included in the period of significance is the Wales ownership for the continued farming use and the interesting development of the jam business.

b. *Historical Significance* Members of the Hyde family were important early settlers and were responsible for the development of several local farms. Also the connection with the Wales Bros. Early business days is historically significant.

c. *Architectural Significance* The house is one of twelve pre-1800 houses remaining in Newton of which only a few were built before 1750, including this property. The house retains the massing and scale of its eighteenth century origins and more important is its context which retains some of the rural atmosphere that once articulated the use of the property and the social and economic lives of its inhabitants.

d. *Landmark Designation Criteria* The Gershom Hyde House 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 agricultural development of Newton as one of the few remaining examples of a farm with some remaining context;

- historically and architecturally significant for its representation of an eighteenth century farmhouse;
- 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 maintained and materials needing replacement appear to have been replaced with similar materials. The removal of the center entrance has compromised the architectural integrity. Thus the primary recommendation would be to restore the entrance if one wanted to reclaim the full historical and architectural integrity of the property.

b. *Important Features* The simplicity of design and of building materials are key features. Also important to this property is the remaining context not often found in Newton today.

## 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 a landmark property.

b. *Specific Standards* The Gershom Hyde House is one of the only remaining farmhouses that retains its rural setting with related outbuilding. Thus one of the most significant qualities to protect is the setting.

### *Exterior Walls*

- No new openings should be considered for the main and side facades of the main block;
- 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 clapboards should be used to replace sheathing with replication of exposure to the weather;

### *Windows*

- All windows that retain their wood six-over-six sash should be preserved. If replacement is necessary, the configuration and dimensions of mullion profile are important;
- 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 has been altered and removed. Replacement should be done according to physical evidence or according to appropriateness of design for an eighteenth century dwelling.

### *Roof*

- Roof shape should be preserved. The use of asphalt shingles is acceptable. Replacement with wood shingles would enhance the property.
- All replacement gutters should be wood while downspouts may be synthetic if of a high grade and with a carefully chosen profile.

### *Additions*

- Location of an addition is an important decision to retain the massing and scale. No further additions should be made to the main facade nor the sides. An addition on the west side or the rear would be appropriate and in keeping with the way in which eighteenth century farmhouses evolved.

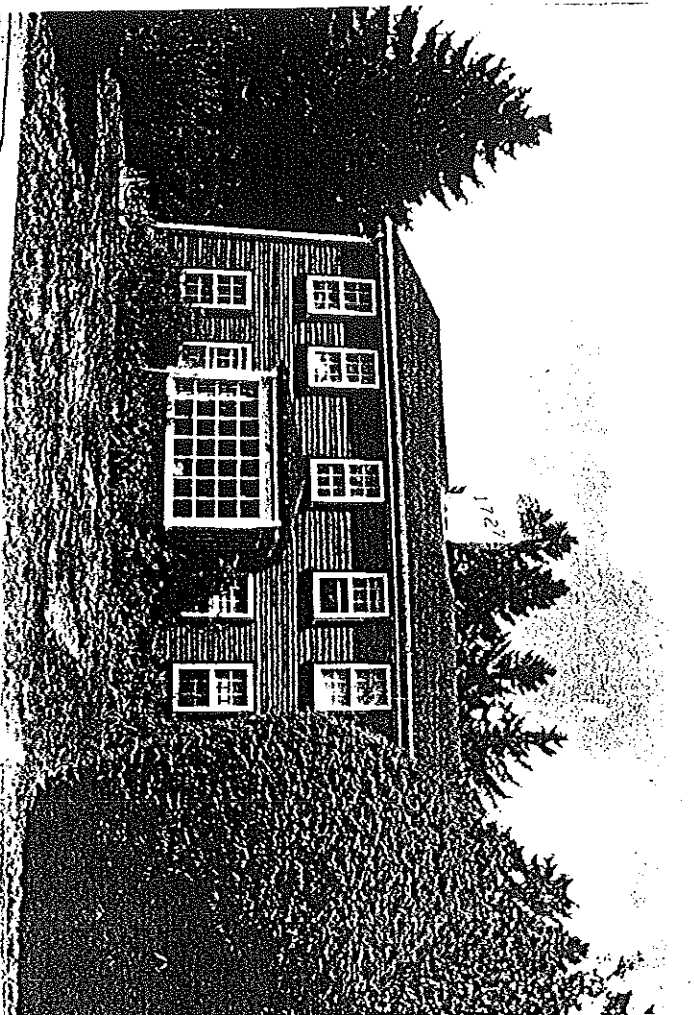
- Material of an addition should be similar to those of the existing building and addition.

*11. Notification*

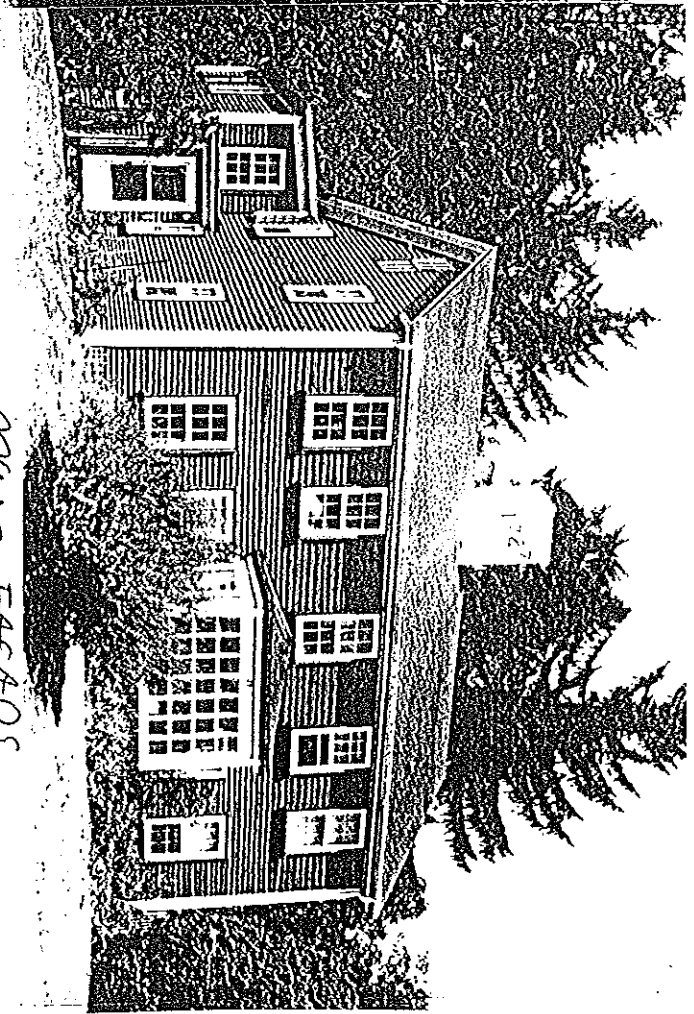
The following properties are considered abutters for the purposes of notification. Owners of these properties should receive notice when this property is considered for landmark designation and for any future review under the Landmark Ordinance.

<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>S/B/L</u>
5 Cynthia Street	82/009/0021
6 Cynthia Street	82/007/0059
133 Dudley Street	81/051/0016
48 Greenwood Street	82/007/0059
unknown address	81/051/0019





Main Elevation



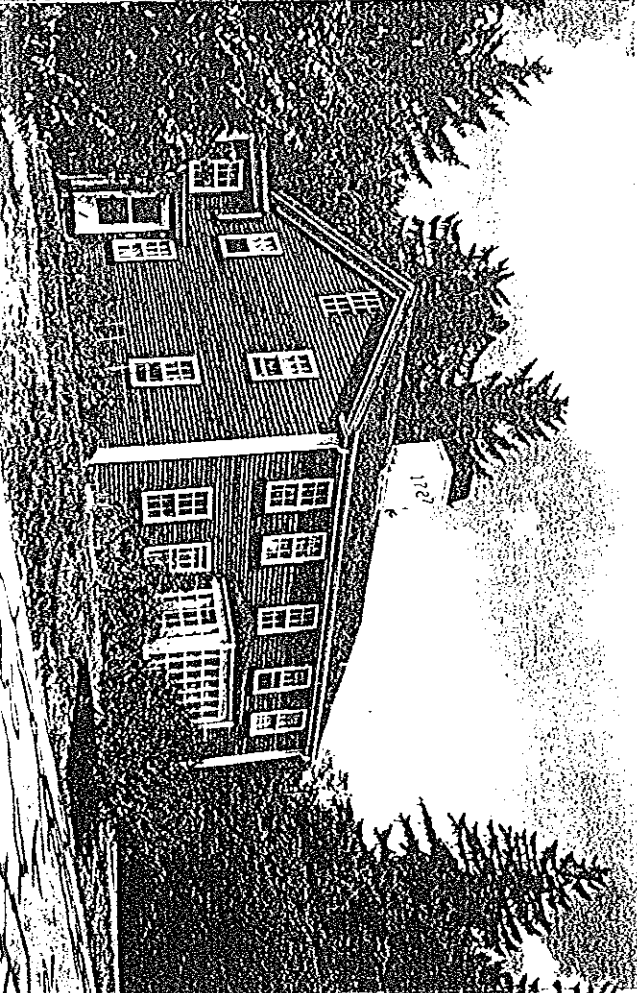
Main Facade

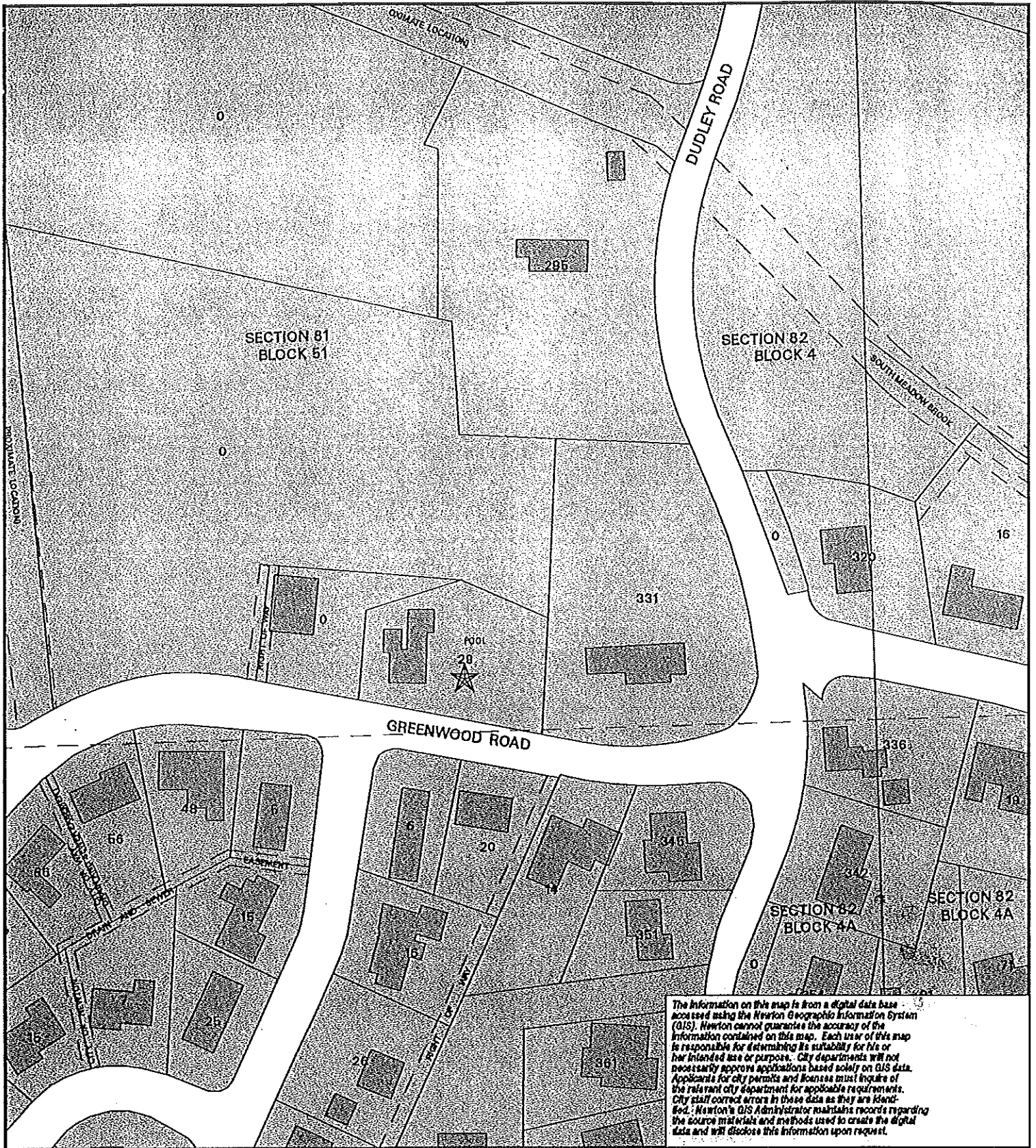
Barn



29 Greenwood Street

Main + Side Elevations





# Newton Assessor's Sheet

Map Produced on: July 23, 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" = 126 ft.

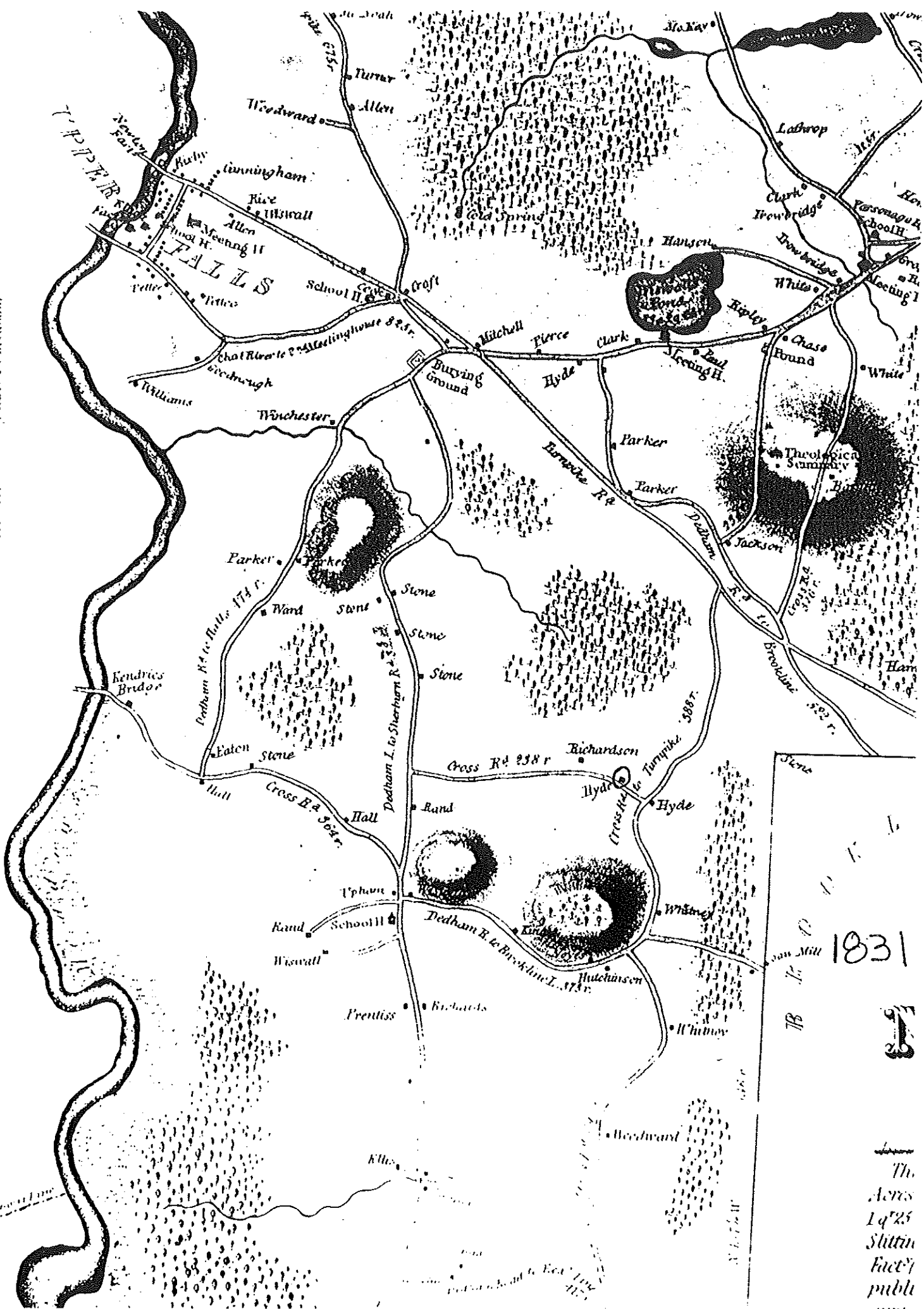


Parcels labeled with Address Number

*HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAPS*

W  
A  
H  
H  
D  
E  
B  
N

2115 N.W. at center of River on Steelham



Stone  
1831  
Van Mill  
TB

The  
Acres  
14<sup>25</sup>  
Slitin  
Fact  
publ



1848

Scale  
0 100 200 300 400 500  
feet

APR

The town of Newton, the Indian name of which 1810 was 1709, in 1820-1850, in 1830-2377, in 1840-3 Boston and Worcester Railroad runs through the country, the waters of Lake Cochichewick with the about 5 1/2 miles - 2400 ft. of which is tunneled. Seminary established in 1825, an Academy, and ing to the State.

Meeting houses.  
Cemeteries.

Expl  
B  
R  
O  
O  
K  
L  
N. 19 1/2° W. 636 rods  
N. 50° E. 318 rods  
New Blue

