

JAN 02 1990

0016

NEWTON

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

Area Letter Form numbers in this Area

NUF-B	
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Town Newton (Newton Upper Falls)

Name of Area (if any) Saco-Lowell Shops

Housing Historic District

Present Use residential

General Date or Period 1919-1920

General Condition good

Acreage 92,218 sq.ft. / 2.12 acres

Recorded by Candace Jenkins/Susan Abele

Organization Newton Historical Comm.

Date 6/1987; rev. 5/1988

Photos (3"x3" or 3"x5" black & white) Indicate on back of each photo street addresses for buildings shown. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient).

see attached map

UTM REFERENCE A 19/317000/4686180  
B 19/317040/4686170  
C 19/316920/4686040  
D 19/317000/4686000  
 USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON  
 SCALE 1:25000

## NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Saco-Lowell Shops Historic District possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It is significant as the only enclave of 20th century workers' housing in Newton, located appropriately in the industrial village of Newton Upper Falls. Additionally the houses themselves possess architectural interest as brick variants on the Colonial style in gabled, gambrel, and lean-to roof shapes. The district meets criteria A & C of the NRHP.

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

The Saco-Lowell Shops Housing Historic District is a small enclave of workers' housing located just beyond the southern tip of the Newton Upper Falls Historic Districts (LHD: 12/17/75; NR: 9/4/86). It includes the two blocks formed by Oak Street (N), Saco Street (W), a proposed street (S) and Williams Street (E). The interior of the northern block, with the exception of houses fronting on Oak Street, is developed with six older (c18 0s) wood-frame gable end houses. The perimeter, however, is distinguished by eight small scale brick houses in a variety of Colonial shapes and forms--gable, gambrel and lean-to roofs. They are unified by their brick construction, their scale and consistent use of segmental window openings. The widespread use of Colonial detail in worker housing built at the time of the first World War "helped to democratize the style and contributed to its popularity in later suburban development."<sup>1</sup> (see cont. sheet)

## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain historical importance of area and how the area relates to the development of other areas of the community.

In 1831, Otis Pettee (1795-1853), whose name is synonymous with the industrial growth of Newton Upper Falls established the Pettee Machine Works, which supplied the burgeoning northeast textile market, as well as a national market, with cotton machinery. Pettee died in 1853, but the company continued to prosper, becoming Newton's largest employer by the 1890s. The company expand in 1897, merging with the Saco Water Power Machine Shops of Biddeford, Maine to become the Saco and Pettee Machine Shops and by 1912, had merged with the Lowell Machine Shops to become the Saco-Lowell Shops. Although the changing economy forced the closing of the company's local operations in 1927, the Saco-Lowell factory buildings still remain on Oak Street in Upper Falls. (NR 12-23-86)

As part of a reform movement in workers housing, begun in the nineteenth century by Ebenezer Howard (whose "garden-city" philosophy tackled the problems of poverty, public health and overcrowding in industrial areas) the Saco-Lowell Shops proposed a small development of worker houses near the factory on Oak Street in 1919. A plan drawn by Maurice Roscoe, managing architect for The Housing Company, which styled itself as "Town Builders," details a group of eight houses and appropriate plantings to be fitted in with the existing houses on Williams, Butts and Saco Streets off Oak Street. About the same time, a plan for company housing for the Saxony Mills on Chapel Street in Nonantum was outlined in the *Newton Times* January 22, 1919. However, further details were not forthcoming and the project appears not to have materialized. The Saco-Lowell project is the only known enclave of twentieth century workers housing in Newton.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (see continuation sheet)

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton (Upper Falls)	Form No: NUF-B
Property Name: Saco-Lowell Shops Housing Historic District	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)**

The single family house a **41 Butts Street** (1920) is typical. It is a two story, three bay house enclosed by a gabled lean-to roof. Its symmetrical facade is centered on a pedimented entry. Flanking windows are set in segmental arch openings and second story windows are framed into the cornice. Windows on the side elevations are set in segmental openings and all contain 6/6 sash. The other five houses clustered at the corner of Butts and Williams Street are all similar, varying only in their roof configuration. The larger dwellings at **4-6 Saco Street** (1919) and **135-139 Oak Street** (1920) are similar, but were designed for two or three family use. They set gabled sections at right angles to each other and incorporate Greek Revival type entry surrounds with sidelights and heavy cast stone lintels. They continue to feature segmental arch window openings.

**Verbal Boundary Description and Justification:**

The Saco-Lowell Historic District is confined to the fourteen houses contained within the two small blocks bounded by Oak Street (N), Saco Street (W), a proposed street (S) and Williams Street (E). Only lot 51-46-7A, at the corner of Saco Street and the proposed street, is excluded. Boundaries are the lot lines of these fourteen houses as shown on the attached Engineering Map. Boundaries have been drawn to correspond to the original 1919 subdivision by Maurice Roscoe of the Housing Company. The unique architectural qualities of the eight brick Colonial Revival style workers' houses built by that company clearly dominate the character of the district. Excluded from the district is the surrounding mix of mid-19th century workers' housing, turn-of-the-century two family houses, and recent single family houses.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES**

Engineering Department Records: N-53, 16423 (1919)

Building Department Records: Williams Street, Butts Street, Saco Street

City Directories and Atlases, *Newton Times* 1/22/19

*Newton's Nineteenth Century Architecture: Newton Upper and Lower Falls*

*Newton Massachusetts 1688-1988*

<sup>1</sup>Candee and Harwicke, "Early Twentieth-Century Reform Housing by Kilham and Hopkins, Architects of Boston", *Winterthur Portfolio*, Volume 22, Spring 1987

NEWTON, MASS. MULTIPLE RESOURCE AMENDMENT - 1988 - SACO-LOWELL HISTORIC DISTRICT

<u>Street Address</u>		<u>SBL</u>	<u>Area(sf)</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Form #</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Status</u>
		51-47-9	2050	Vacant Lot				
35	Butts St.	51-46-7	6185	house		1920	CP	c
40	Butts St.	51-47-8	4825	house cottage		1896	Workers Cottage	nc
41	Butts St.	51-46-8	13367	house garage		1920	CP	c
44	Butts St.	51-47-7	4800	house		1896	Workers Cottage	nc
4	Butts St.	51-46-9	14050	house garage		1920	CP	c
48	Butts St.	51-47-6	4273	house		1896	Workers Cottage	nc
135	Oak St.	51-47-2	7524	Condo		1920	CP	c
137	Oak St.	51-47-2A		Condo/see 51-47-2				
139	Oak St.	51-47-2B		Condo/see 51-47-2				
4-6	Saco St.	51-47-1	6417	2 family house		1919	CP	c
7	Williams St.	51-47-3	2487	house		1893	Workers Cottage	nc
9	Williams St.	51-47-4	3322	house		1893	Workers Cottage	nc
15	Williams St.	51-47-5	3000	house		1894	Workers Cottage	nc
21	Williams St.	51-46-10	4758	house		1919	CP	c
27	Williams St.	51-46-11	4865	house garage		1919	CP	c
31	Williams St.	51-46-12	10295	house shed		1919	CP	c

Number of buildings	14	Sum of square feet in field "area" (Streets not included)	
Number of contributing buildings	8		
Number of non-contributing buildings	6		92218 C 2.12A
Number of structures	5	Number of vacant lots	1
Number of contributing structures	1		
Number of non-contributing structures	4		
Number of contributing objects	0		

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Newton MRA  
State Middlesex County, MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- 131. Old Chestnut Hill Historic District  
(Boundary Increase) *SR* Keeper Betty J. Savage 02-16-90  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 132. Pine Ridge Road--Plainfield Street  
Historic District Entered in the  
National Register Keeper Arlene Byers 2/16/90  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 133. Saco-Lowell Shupe Housing Historic  
District Entered in the  
National Register Keeper Arlene Byers 2/16/90  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 134. West Newton Village Center Historic  
District Entered in the  
National Register Keeper Arlene Byers 2/16/90  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 135. Windsor Road Historic District  
Entered in the  
National Register Keeper Arlene Byers 2/16/90  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 136. Agudas Achim Anshei Sfard Synagogue  
Entered in the  
National Register Keeper Arlene Byers 2/16/90  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 137. Boston Edison Power Station  
Entered in the  
National Register Keeper Arlene Byers 2/16/90  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 138. Bruner Mayall, House Entered in the  
National Register Keeper Arlene Byers 2/16/90  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 139. Childs, Mayor Edwin O., House  
Entered in the  
National Register Keeper Arlene Byers 2/16/90  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 140. City Stable and Garage  
Entered in the  
National Register Keeper Arlene Byers 2/16/90  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Saco-Lowell Shops Housing Historic District  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Newton MRA  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 1/02/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/16/90  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/02/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/16/90  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000016

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 2/16/90 DATE

Entered in the  
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

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CLASSIFICATION

count       resource type

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STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

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FUNCTION

historic       current

---

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification  
 materials  
 descriptive text

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SIGNIFICANCE

Period      Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

summary paragraph  
 completeness  
 clarity  
 applicable criteria  
 justification of areas checked  
 relating significance to the resource  
 context  
 relationship of integrity to significance  
 justification of exception  
 other

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage       verbal boundary description  
 UTM's       boundary justification

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ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps       USGS maps       photographs       presentation

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OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



Saco-Lowell H.D.

41 Butts St  
Newton, MA

Newton, MA-MRA

C. Jenkins

6/87

req. @ Jackson Homestead

87/16-1A



Saco Lowell H.D.

135-139 Oak St  
Newton, MA

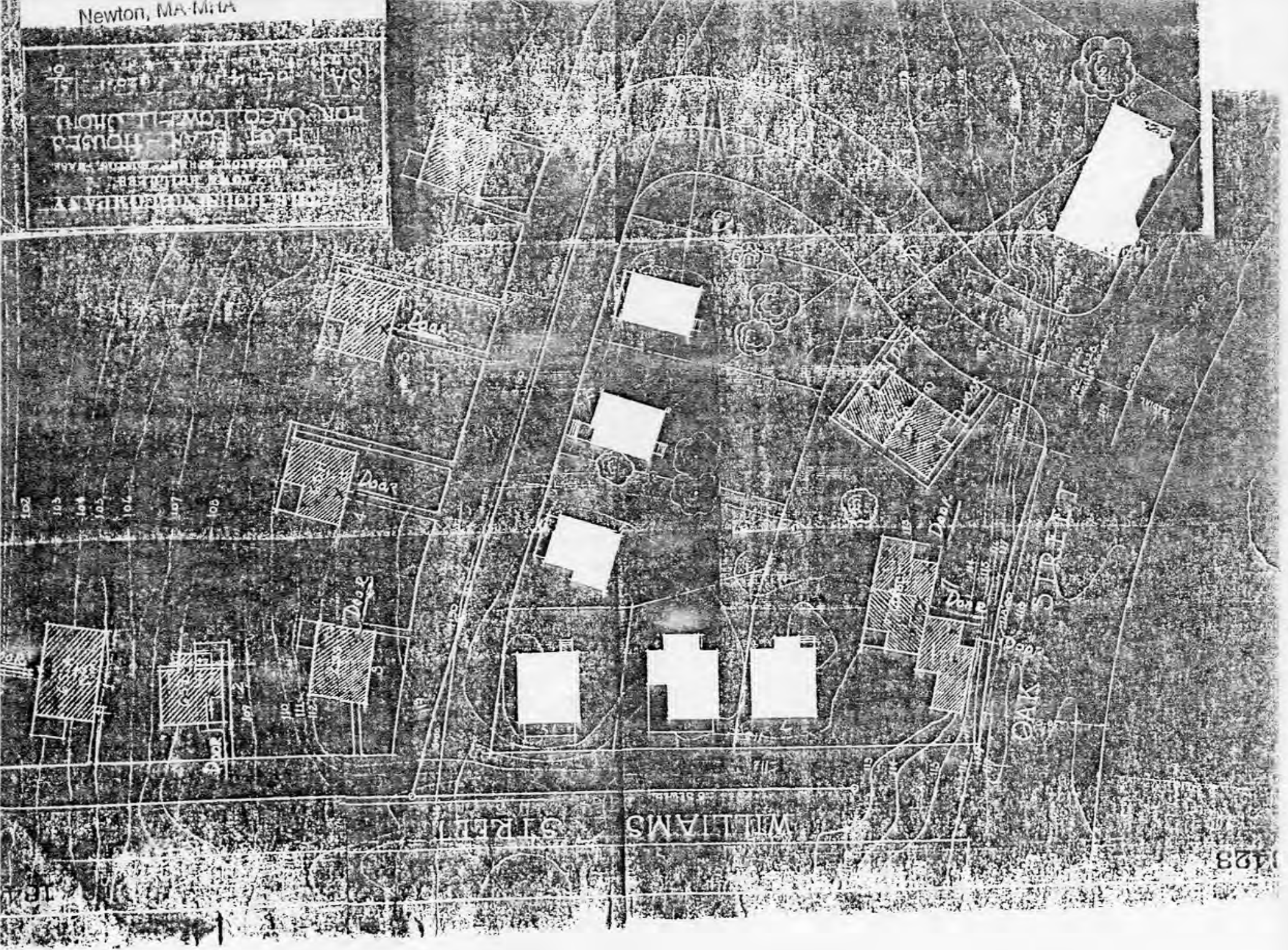
C. Jenkins

1/87

req. @ Jackson Homestead

87-2-7

THE CITY OF NEWTON  
 OFFICE OF THE CITY ENGINEER  
 100 STATE STREET  
 NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS  
 02459-1000  
 TEL: 617-552-3100  
 FAX: 617-552-3101  
 WWW: WWW.CITYOFNEWTON.MA.GOV



WILLIAMS STREET

OAK STREET

102  
103  
104  
105  
106  
107  
108

10-1-35  
16423

THE ROUSSEAU COMPANY  
107 N. BROAD ST.  
BOSTON, MASS.  
PLOT PLAN - HOUSES  
FOR SARGENT LOWELL CHORP

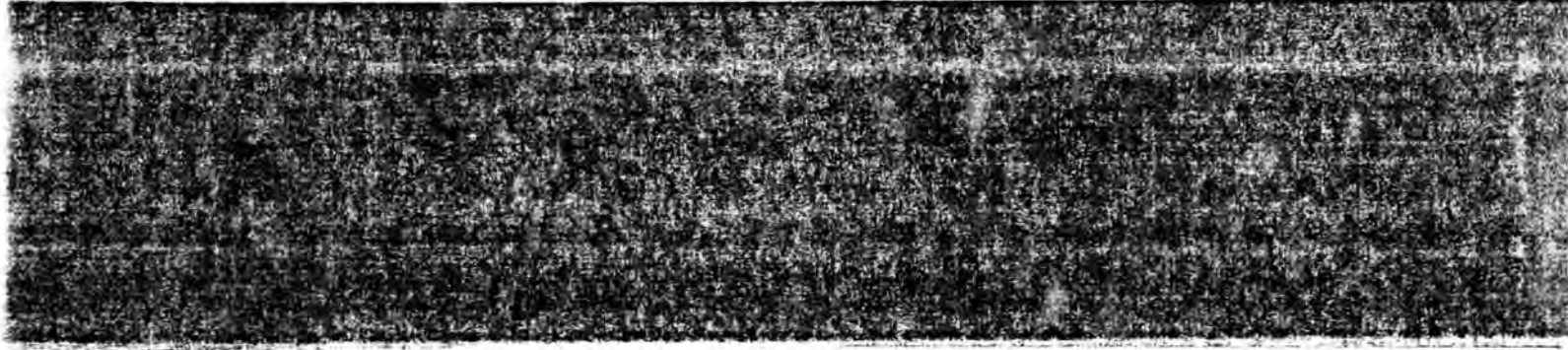
SA OCT 4, 1935 16423 3/5



316900M E

E 675600 317000M E

E 676000 317100M E



Newton, MA-MRA

Saco Lowell Shops Housing  
Historic District

Engineering Map 1979

Scale: 1"=1000" Reduced 74%

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