

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

AREA	FORM NO.
	5620, MV-34

Newton, Mass. MRA
Town NEWTON (Newtonville)

Address 170 Otis Street

Historic Name _____

Use: Present residence

Original residence

DESCRIPTION

Date 1870-71

Source O'Gorman; architect's plans

Style Mansard

Architect Hammatt Billings

Exterior Wall Fabric clapboard

Outbuildings garage

Major Alterations (with dates) deck and north chimney added; fenestration altered in south ell.

Condition retains iron cresting; good.

Moved no Date ---

Acreage 50,427 sq. ft. (1.16 acres)

Setting wooded hillside in residential neighborhood

Recorded by Peter H. Stott

Organization Newton Historical Comm.

Date April 1986

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

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

(SEE ATTACHED MAP)

UTM REFERENCE 19.317530.4690370

USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON, MA

SCALE 1:25,000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

As an important example of the mansard style in Newton by a nationally known architect, Hammatt Billings, as well as for its associations with the Claflin family, this house meets criteria B and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

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

This two-storied mansard house is one of the few known examples in Newton of the work of Hammatt Billings (1818-1874), a mid-century Boston architect, responsible for the Boston Museum (1845) and the original Wellesley College buildings (1875), Italianate and Second Empire designs, major structures which roughly span the architect's activity. The architect's original watercolor drawing of the house (elevation and floor plans), dated September 1869, is still in the house. Billings authority James O'Gorman notes that "the structure was a stylistically updated version of towered villas the Billingses were designing in the fifties, with mansard roofs and applied Neo-Grec details" (p. 69).

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

According to Billings' own drawing, the house was built for Newtonville resident and real estate developer, William Claflin (1818-1905), whose own house, "The Old Elms," was built fifteen years earlier. In 1869, Claflin began his two-year career as Governor, and this house, which he built for his daughter and her husband, Charles Ellis, was completed in 1870 or '71, while he was still in office. Charles Warren Ellis (1837-1907) was a former New York businessman who came to Boston to become a member of the produce exchange. In 1862 he married Emma, eldest daughter of William Claflin. The family later moved into the center of the village, to 25 Highland Avenue, where they were living at the time of Ellis's death.

In the 1880s, George L. Clark, who was in the dry goods business in Boston, lived here. In the 1890s, the house was acquired by J. Richard Carter (1849-1923), founder in 1871 of the wholesale paper business, Carter, Rice & Co., which grew to become one of the largest wholesale paper firms in the nation. He closely associated himself with many Boston business associates, but also in Newton he served as President of the Newton Club and treasurer of the Newton Kindergarten School. In 1902 he is recorded as living on Mt. Vernon Street, and his son Hubert lived in this house. The family retained ownership of the house until the 1950s.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- James F. O'Gorman, "H. and J.E. Billings of Boston: from Classicism to the Picturesque," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians XLII (March 1983), pp. 54-73.
Newton, Garden City of the Commonwealth (The Newton Graphic, 1902).
"Charles Warren Ellis," Boston Evening Transcript 4/28/1907.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton, Mass. MRA	Form No: 5620
Property Name: 170 Otis Street	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The most striking feature of the building is the 2-1/2-story mansard tower, projecting from the center of the principal (west) facade. It retains its original iron cresting and slate fishscale shingles; an entry porch at its base, with slotted brackets and a deck balustrade, shelters the principal entrance. An early sketch for the house prepared by Billings, shows that this tower was originally proposed to be a full story higher than it was eventually built.

A two-story pavilion immediately to the south of the tower is balanced on the opposite (east) side of the house by a similar pavilion; a wing extends the house to the south. The residence retains a much of its original ornament including segmental windows with carved bosses, Eastlake-inspired brackets, and pediment and architrave surrounds.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received 7/23/86
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Newton MRA
State Middlesex County, MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

61. House at 170 Otis Street

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Delores Byers 9/4/86

62. House at 173--175 Ward Street

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Delores Byers 9/4/86

63. House at 203 Islington Road

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Delores Byers 9/4/86

64. House at 215 Brookline Street

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Delores Byers 9/4/86

65. House at 2212 Commonwealth Avenue

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Delores Byers 9/4/86

66. House at 230 Melrose Street

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Delores Byers 9/4/86

67. House at 230 Winchester Street

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Delores Byers 9/4/86

68. House at 3 Davis Avenue

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Delores Byers 9/4/86

69. House at 307 Lexington Street

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Delores Byers 9/4/86

70. House at 309 Waltham Street

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Delores Byers 9/4/86

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

House at 170 Otis Street (Newton MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. JUL 23 1986

Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87

Date Due: 8/21/86 - 9/6/86

Action: ACCEPT 9-4-86

RETURN

REJECT

Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the
National Register

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
 Reviewer _____
 Discipline _____
 Date _____
 _____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: technical corrections cited below
 substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. 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

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Newton, Mass. MRA

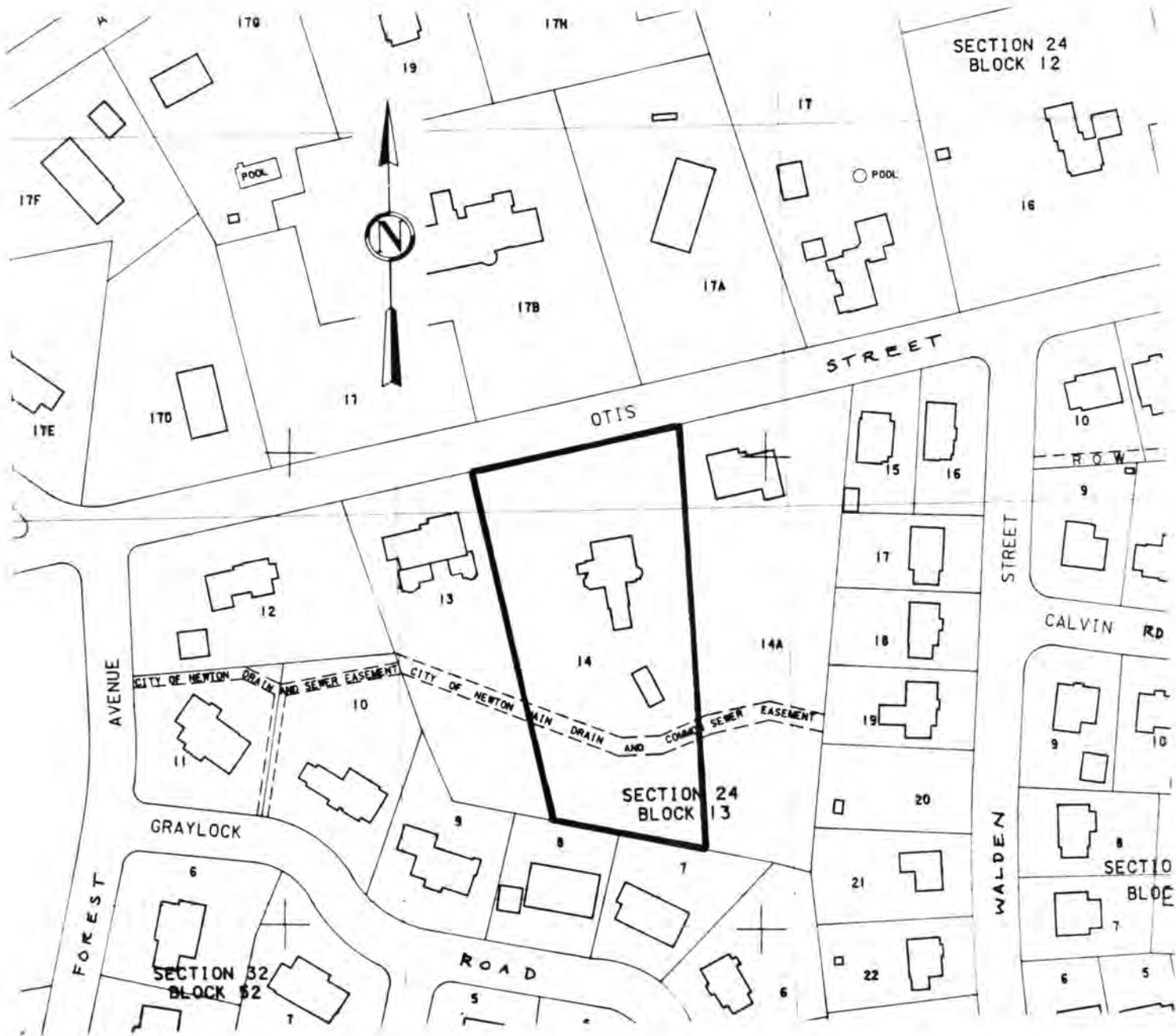
170 Otis St., Newtonville

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Inv. #5620, NV 34

Newton, Mass. MRA





City of Newton Assessor's Maps, Sheet 43
 Metric Series, 1979
 Scale: UTM grid line interval = 100 meters (328 feet)

Newton, Mass. MRA
 170 Otis St., Newtonville

24-13-14