

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116

AREA \_\_\_\_\_ FORM NO.  
\_\_\_\_\_ UF 32

Location Newton, Mass. MRA  
NEWTON (Upper Falls)

Address 156 Oak Street

Historic Name Saco-Pettee Machine Shop

Use: Present mixed use:indus/commerc

Original textile machine shop

**DESCRIPTION**

Year 1892+

Source Insurance Survey

Use Industrial

Architect Lockwood, Greene & Co.

Exterior Wall Fabric brick

Outbuildings interconnected industrial  
buildings, 1892-1930

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

(see text)

Condition Good.

Moved no Date ---

Acres 724,398 sq. ft. (16.6 acres)

Setting Located between Railroad  
tracks and Needham Street commercial  
corridor.

Recorded by Deborah Shea; Peter Stott

Organization Newton Historical Commission

Date May 1981; April 1986



**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 19.317200.4686120

USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON, MA

SCALE 1:25,000

shol

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

As one of the key factors in the growth of Newton and Newton Upper Falls, as well as for the important technological role the company played in the growth of the textile industry, the Saco-Pettee Machine Shops meet criteria A 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.**

The Saco-Pettee Machine Shops in Newton Upper Falls is a complex of approximately thirteen connected one-to-three story, turn-of-the-century, brick structures. (Though the site was initially developed in the 1830s, no structures remain from this earlier time period. The earliest buildings were located adjacent to the South Meadow Brook, where water was utilized as a source of power.) The complex is located on a 13-acre parcel of land situated between Needham Street, a major thoroughfare, and the former Charles River Railroad. The factory buildings are given a sense of unity by their similar design, attributed to Lockwood, Greene & Co. of Boston, and their common building material, red brick. The proportions of the buildings are long and narrow. Further cohesion for

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

The Saco-Pettee Machine Shops, manufacturers of cotton textile machinery, was established by Otis Pettee in 1831. Pettee (1795-1853) had come to Upper Falls in 1823 to oversee the construction of the Elliot Manufacturing Company cotton mill (Area A) and then to take charge of its machine shop. Once the Elliot mill had been completed and equipped with machinery made in large part in its basement machine shop, Pettee turned his attention to filling machinery orders for other mills in the region. The success of this business led him in 1831 to start his own machine shop not far distant on South Meadow Brook, a Charles River tributary a half mile upstream from the Elliot mill. He built a 25-foot dam, a shop, and a forge. Much of the original equipment was purchased from his old employer, as the company discontinued machine building after Pettee's departure. The business expanded rapidly, as contracts were filled for several mills in New England, as well as a number of mills in Mexico. Much of his success was as a result of the many innovations and inventions which Pettee made in textile machinery.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

- George Swett Gibb, The Saco-Lowell Shops. Textile Machinery Building In New England (Cambridge, 1950).  
Samuel B. Lincoln, Lockwood Greene: The History of an Engineering Business, 1832-1958 (Brattleboro, VT, 1960).  
Peter H. Stott, A Guide to the Industrial Archeology of Eastern Massachusetts (to be published in 1987).  
Newton Graphic 23 October 1931, p.1; 18 December 1931, p. 1.  
Henry K. Rowe, Tercentenary History of Newton (Newton, 1930).

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton, Mass. MRA	Form No: UF-32
Property Name: Saco-Pettee Shops	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

the group derives from the fact that almost all have deep, overshot eaves which have bracket supports and large segmental masonry openings detailed with radiating voussoir arches. Buildings 1-5 form an imposing row along Oak Street and are architecturally significant.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

After Pettee's death in 1853, the business was continued under the name of Otis Pettee and Company by his sons George & Otis, and Henry Billings, a son-in-law. Billings later bought out the others' interests and the business was incorporated as the Pettee Machine Works in 1880. During this period, the firm achieved great success in manufacturing the English flat card, and it began to specialize in its construction. In 1893, a new brick foundry was constructed, building 13, now the oldest part of the present complex. Designer was the prominent mill engineering firm of Lockwood, Greene & Company, which maintained close ties with the firm throughout its subsequent history. Two years later, an additional three-storied brick mill, No. 2, was erected.

With increasing specialization, the firm could not supply all the different types of machinery necessary to the manufacture of cotton cloth. But in 1897 a merger with the Saco Water Power Machine Shop made possible a situation where the company could completely equip a mill with everything but the looms.

The shops were expanded still further between 1910 and 1913, including a new steam generating plant. The plant's last expansion in 1920 was for a new foundry to expand still further the production of cards. Throughout the 1920s, the Newton foundry was reputed the best in New England for this type of machinery.

The company had merged with the Lowell Machine Shops in 1912. In an effort to contain expenses, Lowell operations were shifted to Newton in 1927. By the early 1930s, however, the Newton plant was running at only 6 percent of capacity. There were no buyers for cards, and in a further effort to consolidate the company, the Newton plant was closed in the Spring of 1932, its operations shifted to York, Maine.

The former millpond is now a parking lot, but most of the brick buildings, constructed between 1893 and 1920, remain intact.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Sacco--Pettee Machine Shops (Newton MRA)  
Middlesex County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. JUL 23 1986  
Fed. Reg. Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Due: 8/21/86 - 9/6/86  
Action:  ACCEPT  
 RETURN 9/4/86  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- 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

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check one

- unaltered
- altered

Check one

- original site
- 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**

X Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_ *average over 10*

UTM References *Please provide 3 or more UTM Reference Points*

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 *At Byers* Date *9/4/86* Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**FORM B - BUILDING**

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116

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	UF 32

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(see text)

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Moved no Date ---

Acreage 724,398 sq. ft. (16.6 acres)

Setting Located between Railroad tracks and Needham Street commercial corridor.

Recorded by Deborah Shea; Peter Stott

Organization Newton Historical Commission

Date May 1981; April 1986



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)

Saco-Pettee  
Machine Shops  
156 Oak Street  
Newton, MA

- A 19/317/250/4686/470
- B 19/316/940/4686/230
- C 19/317/370/4686/010

UTM REFERENCE \_\_\_\_\_

USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON, MA

SCALE 1:25,000

*Valerie A Talmage shops 12/8/86*

DEC 17 85

*sho*

## NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

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

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:	Form No:
Newton, Mass. MRA	UF-32
Property Name: Saco-Pettee Shops	

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

## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

the group derives from the fact that almost all have deep, overshot eaves which have bracket supports and large segmental masonry openings detailed with radiating voussoir arches. Buildings 1-5 form an imposing row along Oak Street and are architecturally significant.

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The company had merged with the Lowell Machine Shops in 1912. In an effort to contain expenses, Lowell operations were shifted to Newton in 1927. By the early 1930s, however, the Newton plant was running at only 6 percent of capacity. There were no buyers for cards, and in a further effort to consolidate the company, the Newton plant was closed in the Spring of 1932, its operations shifted to York, Maine.

The former millpond is now a parking lot, but most of the brick buildings, constructed between 1893 and 1920, remain intact.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

1/23/87

**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

101. Rawson Estate

Entered in the  
National Register for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

102. Richards, James Lorin, House

Entered in the  
National Register for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

103. Riley, Charles, House

Entered in the  
National Register for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

104. Sacco--Pettee Machine Shops

Entered in the  
National Register for Keeper

Melores Byers 12/23/86

Attest

105. Salisbury, Jonas, House  
62 Walnut Park

Entered in the  
National Register for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

106. Salisbury, Jonas, House  
85 Langley Rd.

Entered in the  
National Register for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

DOE  
107. Silver Lake Cordage Company

Substantive Review Determined Eligible  
for Keeper

Patricia Anderson 9/4/86

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

Attest

Peter R. Savage 9/4/86

108. Simpson House

Entered in the  
National Register for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

109. Smith, S. Curtis, House

Entered in the  
National Register for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

110. Smith--Peterson House

Entered in the  
National Register for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

36001904

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Saco-Pettee Machine Shops (Newton MRA)  
Middlesex County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 7/23/86  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/2/88  
Date Due: 1/26/87  
Action:  ACCEPT 12-23-86  
 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 Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
----------	---------------------------------	----------------------	-------------

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

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**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**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 \_\_\_\_\_

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**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Newton, Mass. MRA  
156 Oak St., N. Upper Falls  
(Saco-Pettee Machine Shops)  
Inv. #UF 32

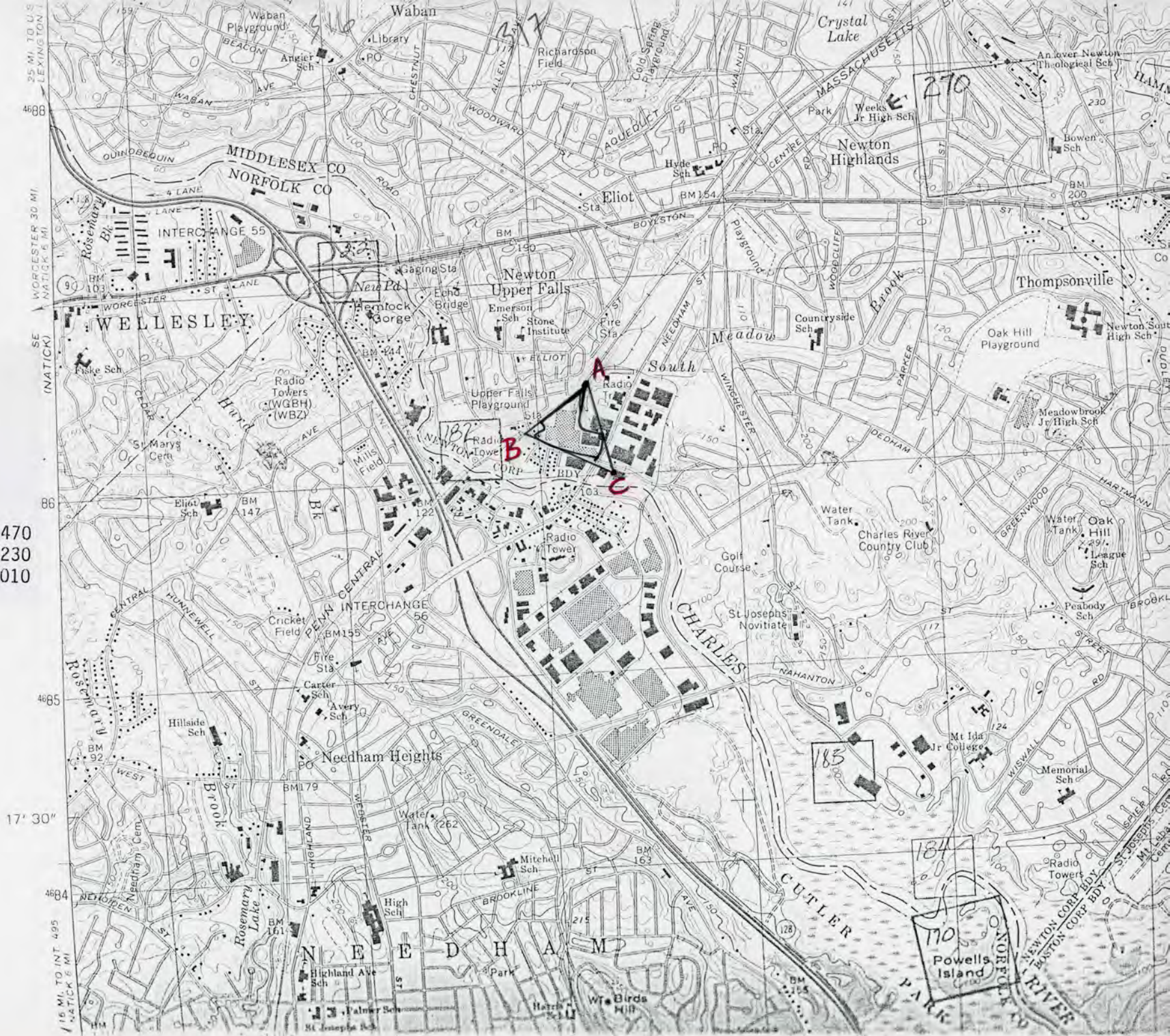
Newton, Mass. MRA



1986-7/22

Saco Pettee  
Machine Shops  
156 Oak Street  
Newton, MA  
Newton MRA  
Scale 1:25,000  
Quad: Newton, MA

- A 19/317/250/4686/470
- B 19/316/940/4686/230
- C 19/317/370/4686/010





City of Newton Assessor's Maps. Sheets 135, 136  
 Metric Series. 1979  
 Scale: UTM grid line interval = 100 meters (328 feet)

Newton, Mass. MRA  
 156 Oak St., N. Upper Falls  
 (Saco-Pettee Machine Shops)  
 51-28-5

7/23/14