

Newton Corner has passed through several stages of development on its way to becoming the populous village it is today. Newton's first village was originally settled in the 1630s as a farming settlement of Cambridge. (It was not until 1688 that Newton was officially incorporated as a separate town.) Throughout the 17th century, the village was known by various names such as Cambridge Village and Bacon's Corner after Daniel Bacon, a local tailor. The area continued to be little more than an outpost of scattered farms, however, until traffic along what is now Washington Street increased between Boston and its western hinterland. A cluster of small homes and shops eventually developed along Washington Street to serve the produce-laden farm wagons and travelers headed to the city, and its location along this route to Boston helped to cement Newton Corner's identity as the City's first village. The increase in traffic also brought a new name to the area: Angier's Corner, taken from its popular tavernkeeper, Oakes Angier.



Farlow Park

Although it was transportation rather than industry which played a key role in the development of Newton Corner, a surprising number of fledgling factories appeared amidst the residential streets during the 1800s. The railroad arrived in 1834, and with it came the village's current name.

Newton Corner became increasingly attractive to Boston's white-collar work force in the 1880s. Rental housing and numerous single-family homes were built during this period as increasing numbers of bookkeepers, clerks, insurance salesmen, and small shop owners caught the suburban dream. Pressure for land became so great in the late 19th century that large estates as well as former farmlands were broken up for house lots. Initially, these house lots were generous enough to accommodate substantial homes in the Queen Anne and Italianate styles popular in this period. After 1910, though, the trend in residential development turned increasingly to smaller homes on smaller lots, and the pace of development gradually slowed as available land became more scarce.

made history, introducing an era of suburban growth that continued through the 20th century.

With the railroad's daily service, the village became readily accessible, creating opportunities for Newton Corner landowners and Boston businessmen. By the 1840s, a few prosperous Bostonians had built homes on Newton Corner's hillsides. It is said that many of these new residents held on to their Boston townhouses and kept a summer place in Newton, where the country air was considered healthier than that of the city.

In the era of new prosperity that arrived in the wake of the daily commuter trains, the local population of tradesmen and shopkeepers also grew. This population began to spread southward to Church Street and Richardson Street, along Centre Street, and to the area directly north of the early central business district on Washington Street near the Boston & Worcester train station.

The real land boom, however, occurred after the Civil War. Mount Ida Street and Park Street were opened for development during this era and new homes gradually spread across the southern and eastern sections of the village. The founding and construction of the Newton Free Library in 1865 marked the increased importance of the area to the south of the railroad tracks. Within the next 20 years, most of the



Centre Street

Revival of the 1840s through the Colonial Revival of the early 1900s, but all have in common the turn-of-the-century preference for intricate, fanciful wood ornament. Except for the Newton Corner Branch Library, none of the sites on the tour are open to the public.

The tour begins at **276 Church Street**. The ca. 1911 West Suburban YMCA was one of the first buildings in the country to be constructed specifically for use as a YMCA. Although the building is institutional in nature, it exhibits several features of the Colonial Revival style. The decorative quoining on the corners and the Doric columns supporting the entablature were popular motifs of the style. Note how the new addition of the YMCA references the earlier construction in terms of materials and scale, but does not attempt to mimic the style.

The Dexter Whipple House at **234 Church Street** possesses several characteristics of the Greek Revival style. The broad corner pilasters extend to the second story, supporting a wide frieze just below the eaves. The pediment on the gable end facing the street and the fluted columns supporting the porch are also components of the style.

The Orrin Whipple House at **195 Church Street** and the Andrew P.



dormer possessing a single window mirrors this motif. Again, the flanking bays display a hierarchical window scheme, with clipped gable dormer windows allowing light to enter the attic level. Finally, the hipped roof form extends the height of this house, giving it the perception of being taller than its neighbor.

10 The well-preserved Elizabeth C. Rogers House at **322 Franklin Street** represents a combination of the Queen Anne and Stick styles common to Newton Corner. The

vergeboards and applied surface boarding, is derived primarily from motifs associated with the Stick style.

11 First owned by G. Frederick Simpson, a wealthy contractor; this large 1902 English Queen Anne style residence and its rear carriage house at **315 Franklin Street** remain nicely preserved. The vergeboards and paneling in the gables are reminiscent of English Tudor style cottages. Extension of the front porch to form a porte-cochere

the entrance were carried over from the Greek Revival style in the design of the 1850 Ralph W. Holman House at **306 Franklin Street**. Italianate style detailing appears at the eaves in the form of brackets and in the paired, single-story side bay windows, demonstrating a mix of styles resulting from shifts in fashion.

13 Levi B. Gay, a Boston publisher, built this elaborate house at **303 Franklin Street** in 1887. George F. Meacham, Newton Corner resident

14 The residence at **292 Franklin Street** provides another example of how fashion influenced architecture. The 1850 N. P. Smith House boasts an ornate porch and front bay windows, features intended to update the original Italianate style design demonstrated by the paired brackets and front pediment.

15 Victorians preferred picturesque, romantic buildings and the scroll saw, a new invention at that time, allowed them to build ornate residences with all manner of budget-priced wood trim. A medieval theme was used for the Samuel Jennison House, an 1845 Gothic Revival style cottage at **276-278 Franklin Street**, with board-and-batten walls, tracery in the front porch, and open trefoils carved into the vergeboards at the eaves.

16 In the late 1800s, **Kenrick Park** was described as "a beautiful oval reservation, thickly covered with ancient oaks, beeches and chestnut trees, and surrounded by pleasant country houses." The area was laid out for William Kenrick in 1845 and was one of Newton Corner's first speculative developments.

The Kenrick family came to Newton in the 1600s. John Kenrick established the first large nursery in New England at Newton Corner in 1790. William Kenrick, a renowned horticulturist, was said to have sold more fruit trees than any other man in New England. Kenrick Park is one of the anchors of the National Register Historic District created in 1982.

17 William Kenrick apparently built the Federal style house at **244**