Sanborn Fire Maps
New Castle, 1920

Jim Cerny
New Castle Historical Society
rev. 2024-12-22

Map facts: general

- Detailed city plans as atlases, covering built-up areas.
- Made to assess fire risk for insurance.
- Most sheets are 21 x 25 inches.
- Most sheets are a scale of 1 inch = 50 feet.
- Coded by symbol, color, and text.
- Library of Congress has 35,146 maps online.
- Easy to locate and download by geography, date, and neighborhood.
- Several formats: GIF, JPEG, TIFF.
- JPEG < 1MB, TIFF > 140MB.

Map facts: local

- Portsmouth atlases for 1887, 1904, 1910, 1920, 1949.
- New Castle included with Portsmouth starting 1910.
- Portsmouth 1910 is 28 sheets.
- New Castle 1910 is sheet 40 (hotel).
- Portsmouth 1920 is 56 sheets.
- New Castle 1920 is sheets 40, 41, 42.

Articles and Essays

Introduction to the Collection

Sanborn Samplers

Sanborn Time Series

Expert Resources

Geography and Map Reading Room

Geography and Map Reading Room, Guide to the Collections

How to Order Reproductions

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Introduction to the Collection

The Sanborn map collection consists of a uniform series of large-scale maps, dating from 1867 to the present and depicting the commercial, industrial, and residential sections of some twelve thousand cities and towns in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

(This article was published within the Library's publication, **Fire Insurance Maps: in the Library of Congress**)

The Sanborn map collection consists of a uniform series of large-scale maps, dating from 1867 to the present and depicting the commercial, industrial, and residential sections of some twelve thousand cities and towns in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The maps were designed to assist fire insurance agents in determining the degree of hazard associated with a particular property and therefore show the size, shape, and construction of dwellings, commercial buildings, and factories as well as fire walls, locations of windows and doors, sprinkler systems, and types of roofs. The maps also indicate widths and names of

Fire Insurance Maps at the Library of Congress: A Resource Guide

Introduction

Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. Maps

- Searching for Sanborn Maps
- Downloading Sanborn Maps
- **Interpreting Sanborn Maps**
- Sanborn Atlas Volume Finder

Interpreting Sanborn Maps

Fire insurance maps are distinctive because of the sophisticated set of symbols that allows complex information to be conveyed clearly. In working with insurance maps, it is important to remember that they were made for a very specific use, and that although they are now valuable for a variety of purposes, the insurance industry dictated the selection of information to be mapped and the way that information was portrayed. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps all share a number of common elements that are useful to understand when working with the collection. Becoming familiar with these elements will make working with the Sanborn maps easier for the researcher.

Use the menu below to jump quickly to each section of this page:

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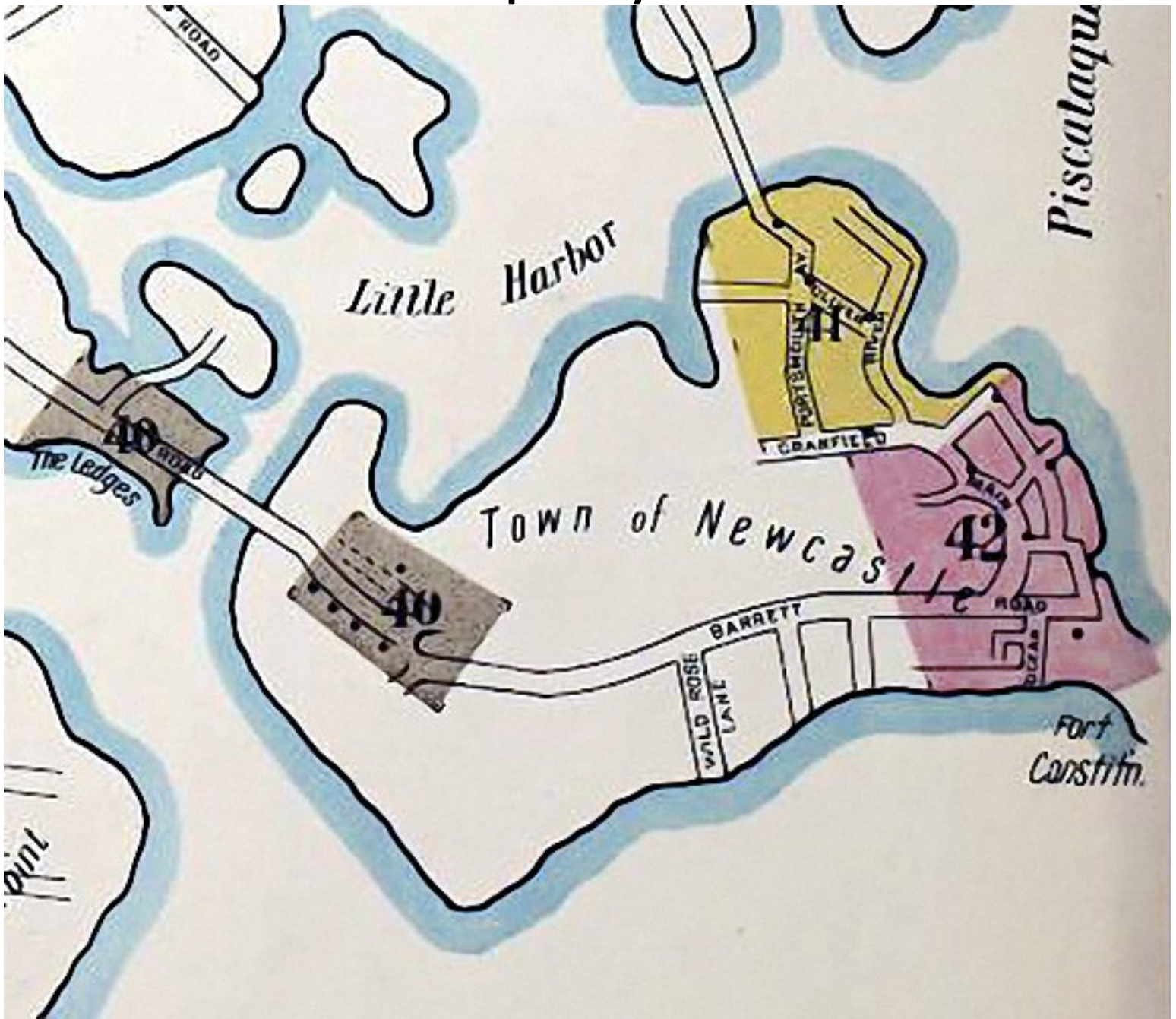
Downloading Sanborn Maps

Maps that have been digitized and placed on the Library's website are in the public domain and can be downloaded directly to a computer or flash drive. If you look underneath the thumbnail image in the individual catalog record, you will see a download menu with various scans available to download at no cost. The TIFF file is the highest resolution scan.

Depending on the age of your computer and default programs, it can be difficult to download TIFF files without a TIFF viewer. A search of the internet will provide links to many free TIFF viewers. The Library of Congress uses *Irfanview* on its computers for this purpose.

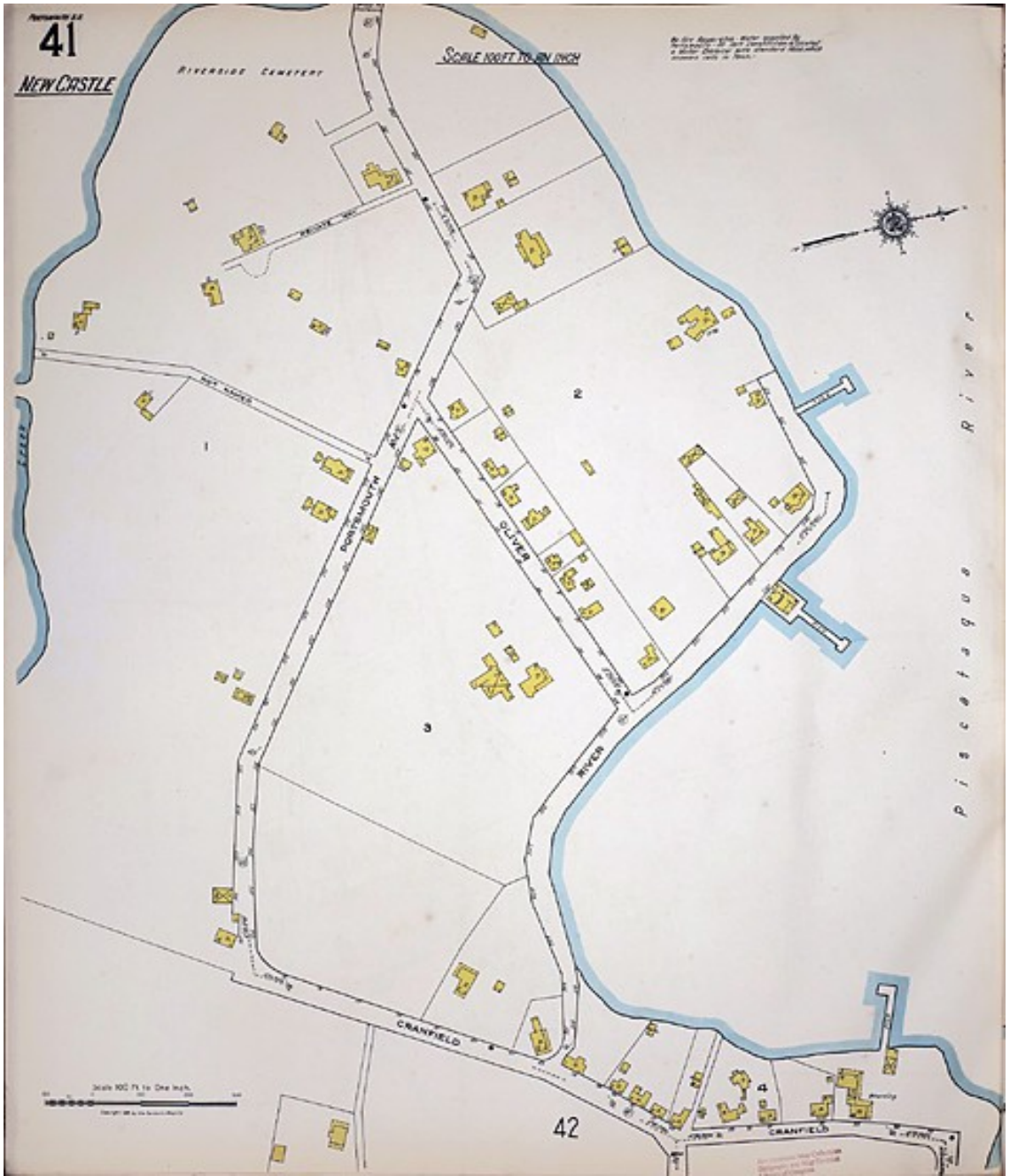
INSURANCE MAPS
OF
Portsmouth
NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLISHED BY THE
SANBORN MAP COMPANY
11 BROADWAY, NEW YORK
1920
COPYRIGHTED 1920 BY THE SANBORN MAP CO.

Map key.

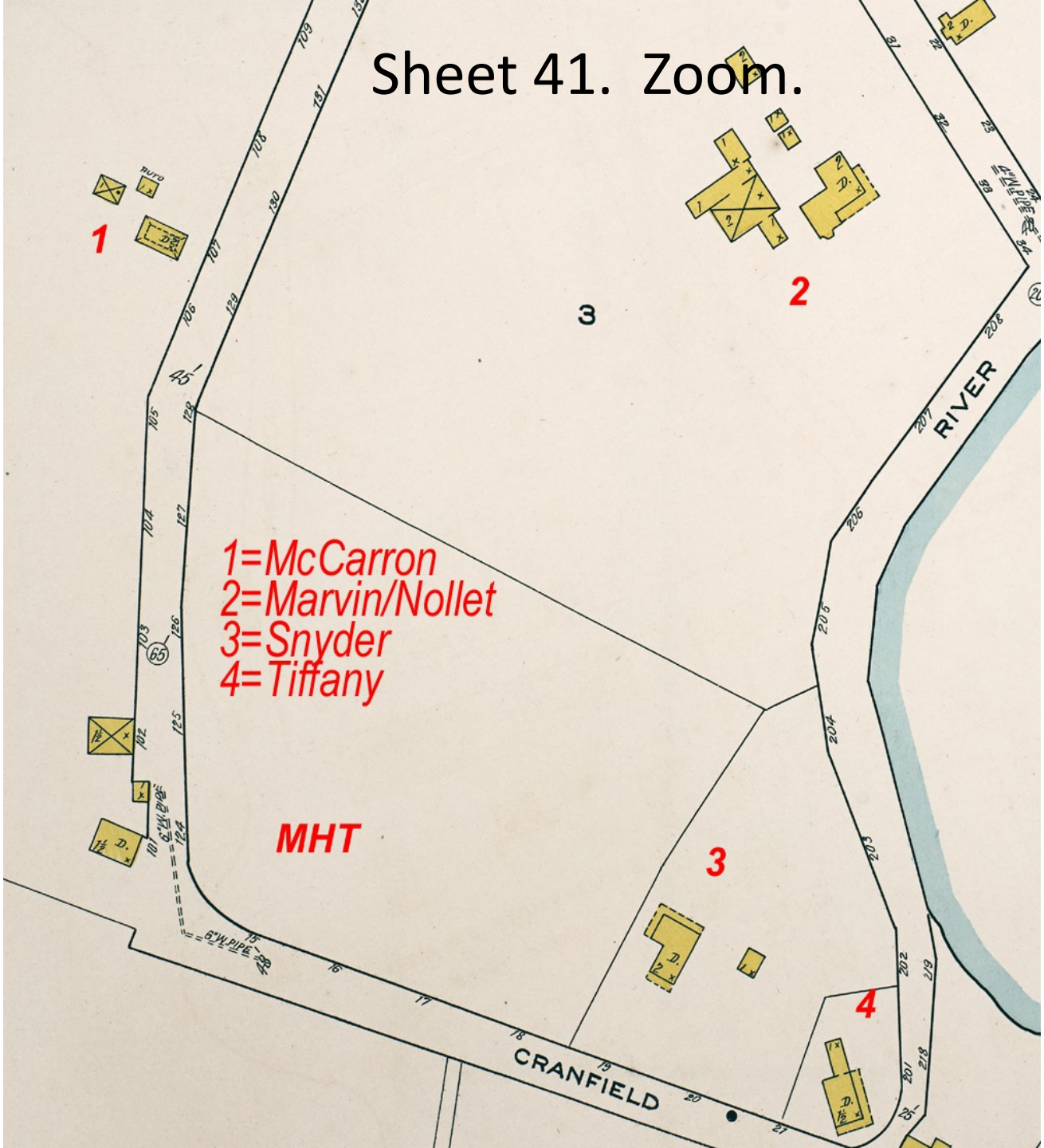


Little Harbor
Piscataqu
Town of Newcastle
The Ledges
40
40
41
42
BARRETT
ROAD
WILD ROSE
LANE
Fort
Constitn.

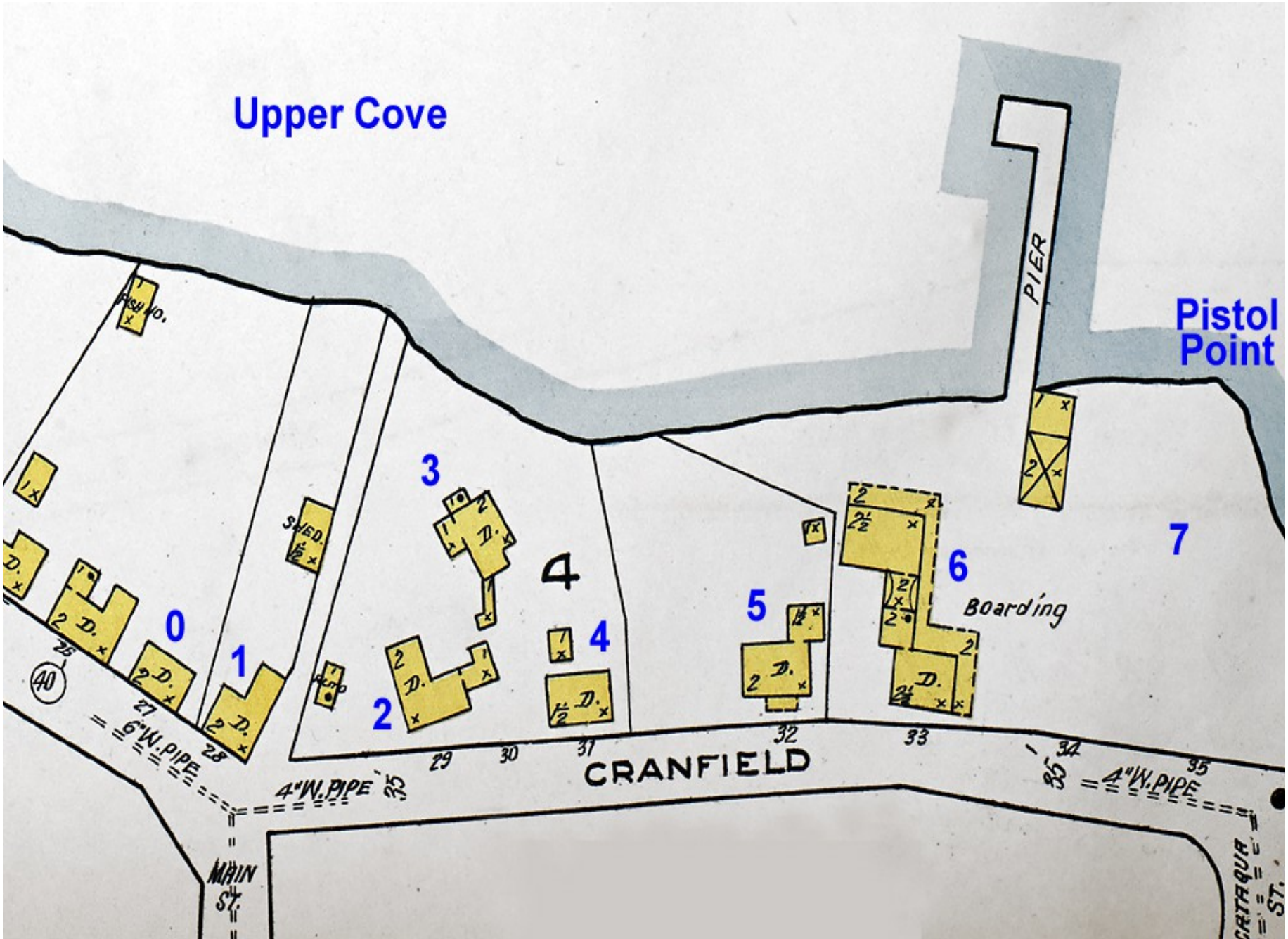
Oliver Street centered, sheet 41. full coverage.



Sheet 41. Zoom.



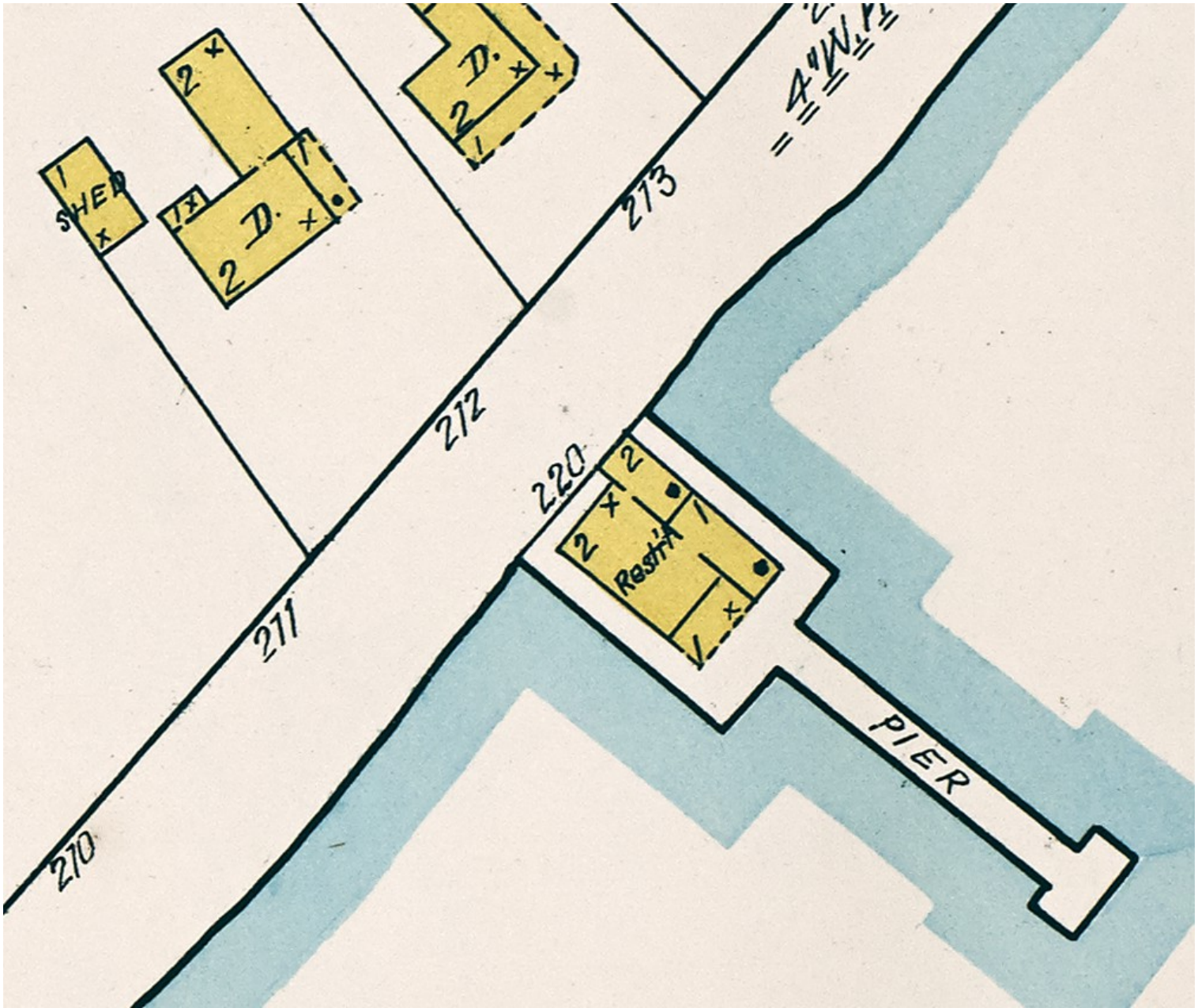
Sheet 41. Zoom.



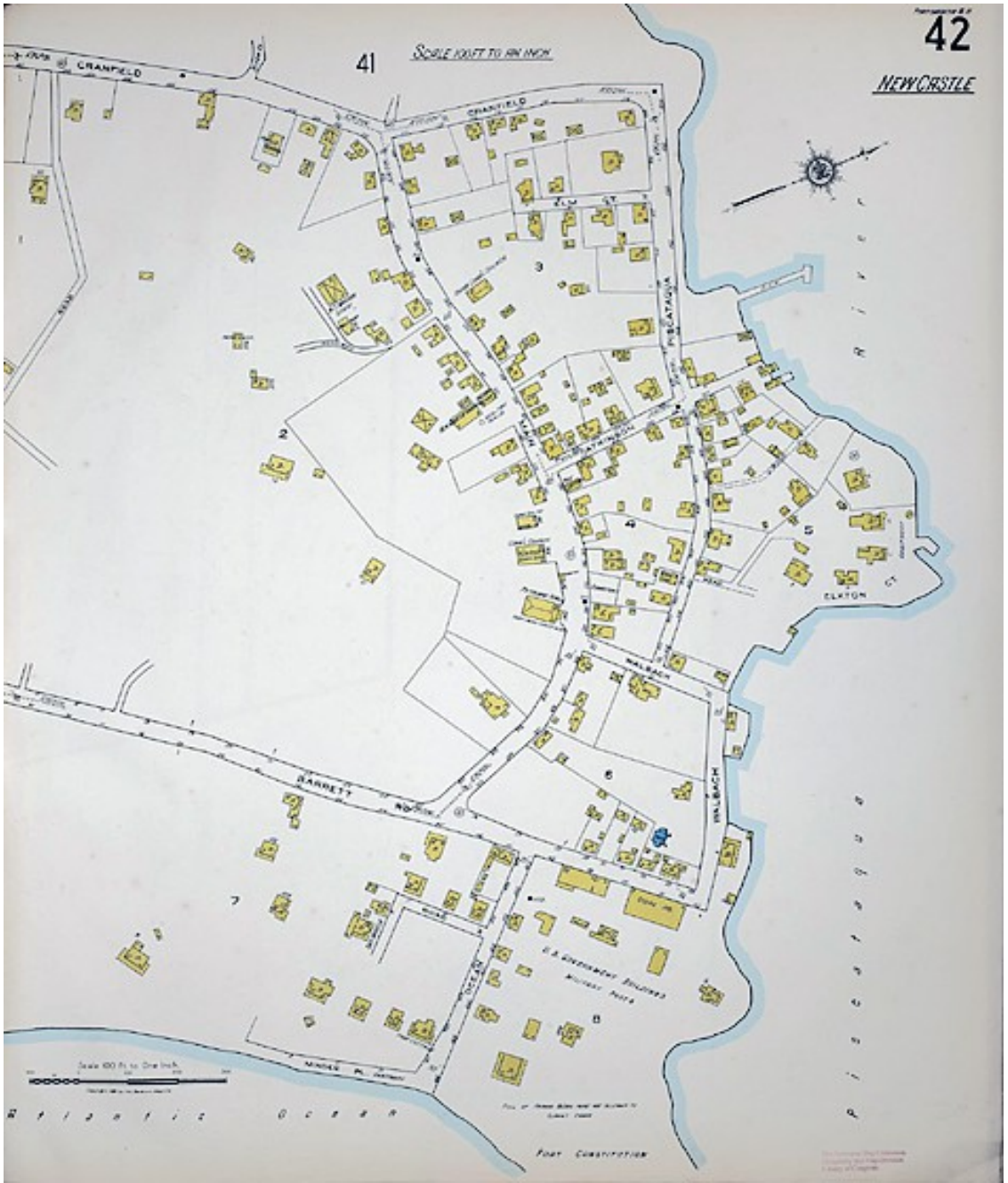
Key to Cranfield Zoom.

- 0 = Former Lydia Amazeen house, torn down, now open lot as Mud Cove Boat Yard.
- 1 = Maddi Alana house.
- 2 = Former Ida Maxam house, torn down, now Thomas Breen.
- 3 = Tarbell house (several generations).
- 4 = Nancy Jackson house.
- 5 = Mary Tilney house.
- 6 = Former Curtis Hotel, torn down, now open lot.
- 7 = Two houses today: Lamb/Joselow and Driscoll.

Sheet 41. Piscataqua Cafe. Zoom.

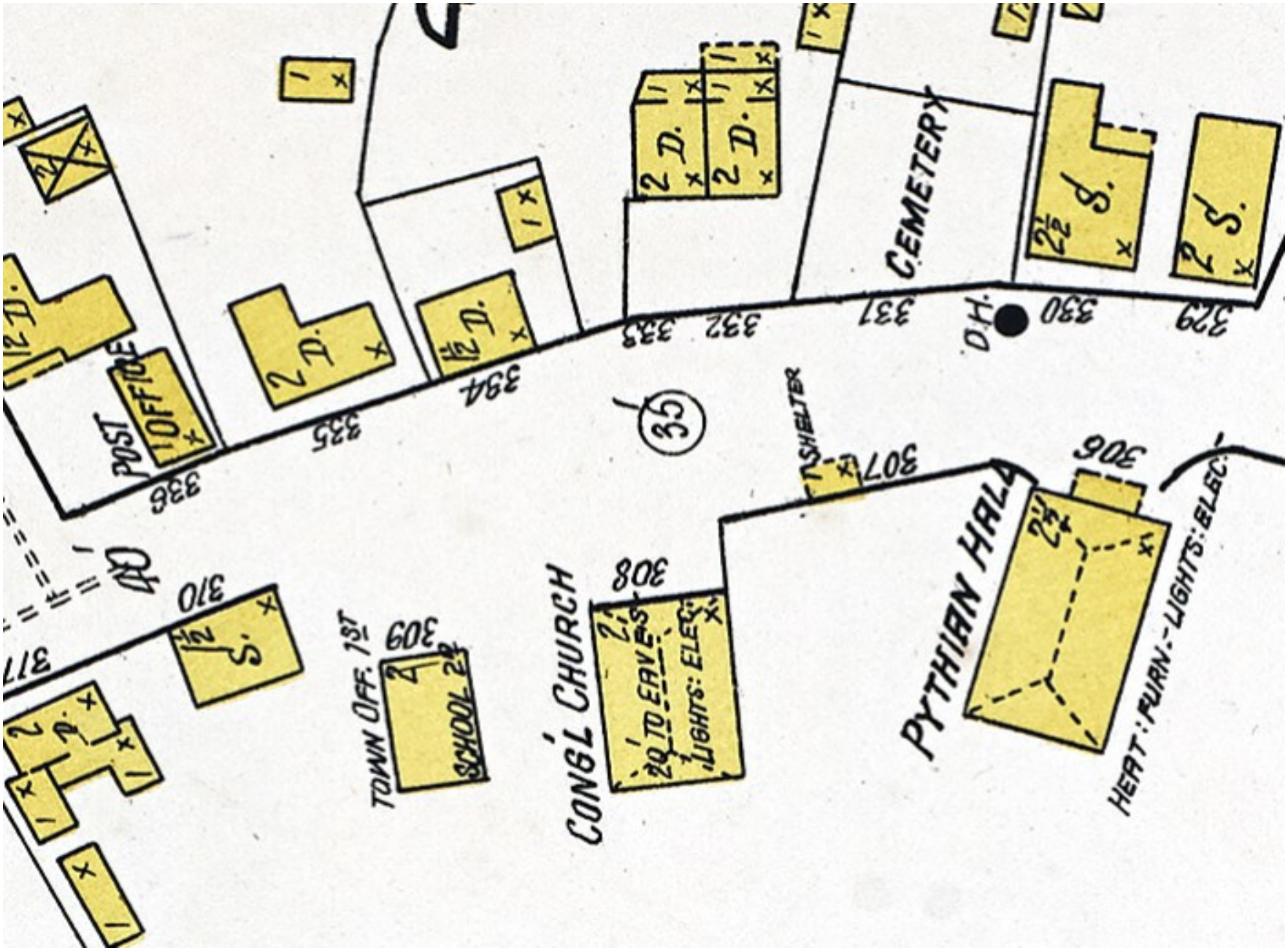


Village center, sheet 42. full coverage.



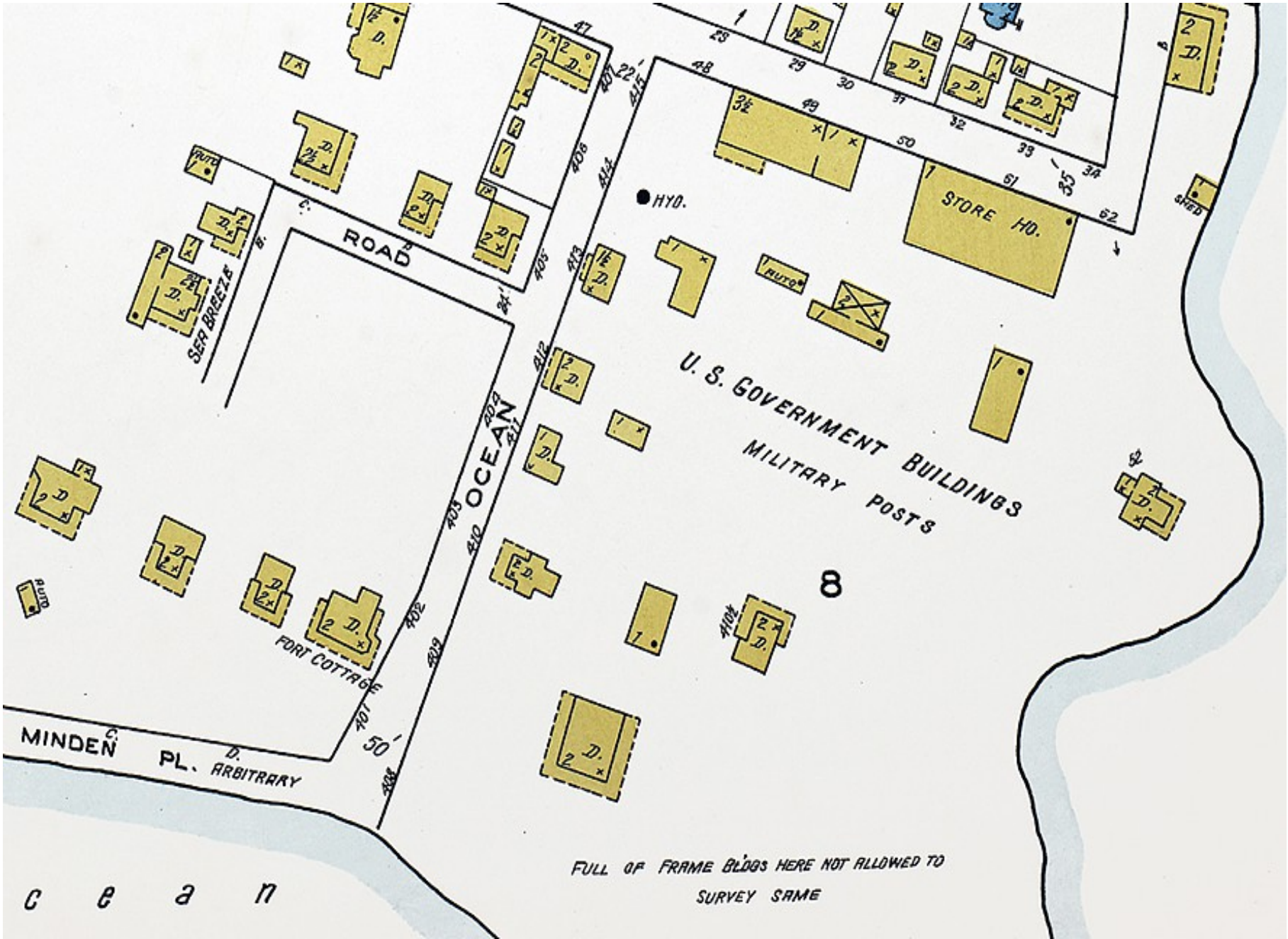
Sheet 42. Village centered. Zoom.

Sheet 42. Village centered. Greater Zoom.

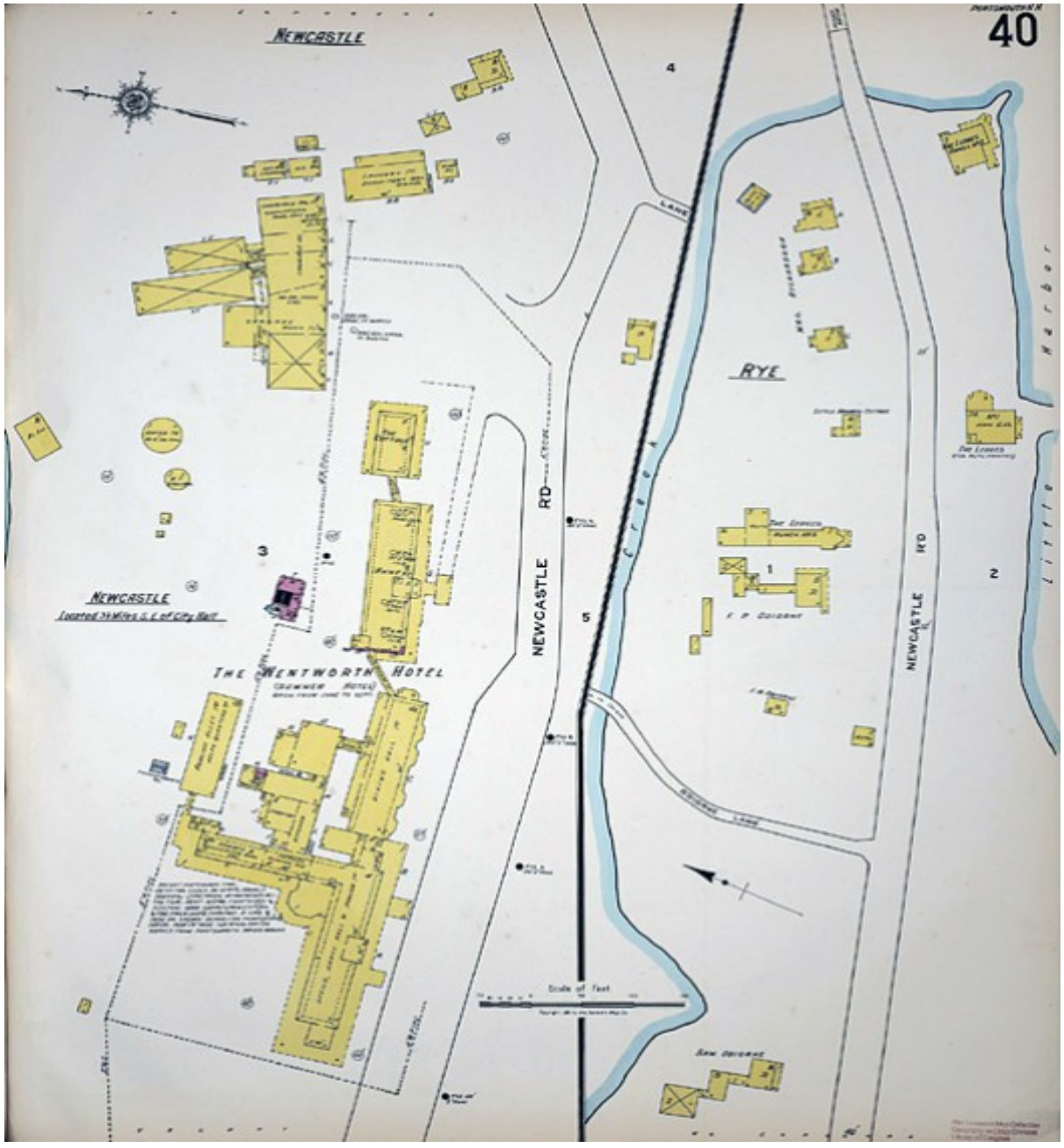


Sheet 42. 120 Main (Church) centered. Zoom.

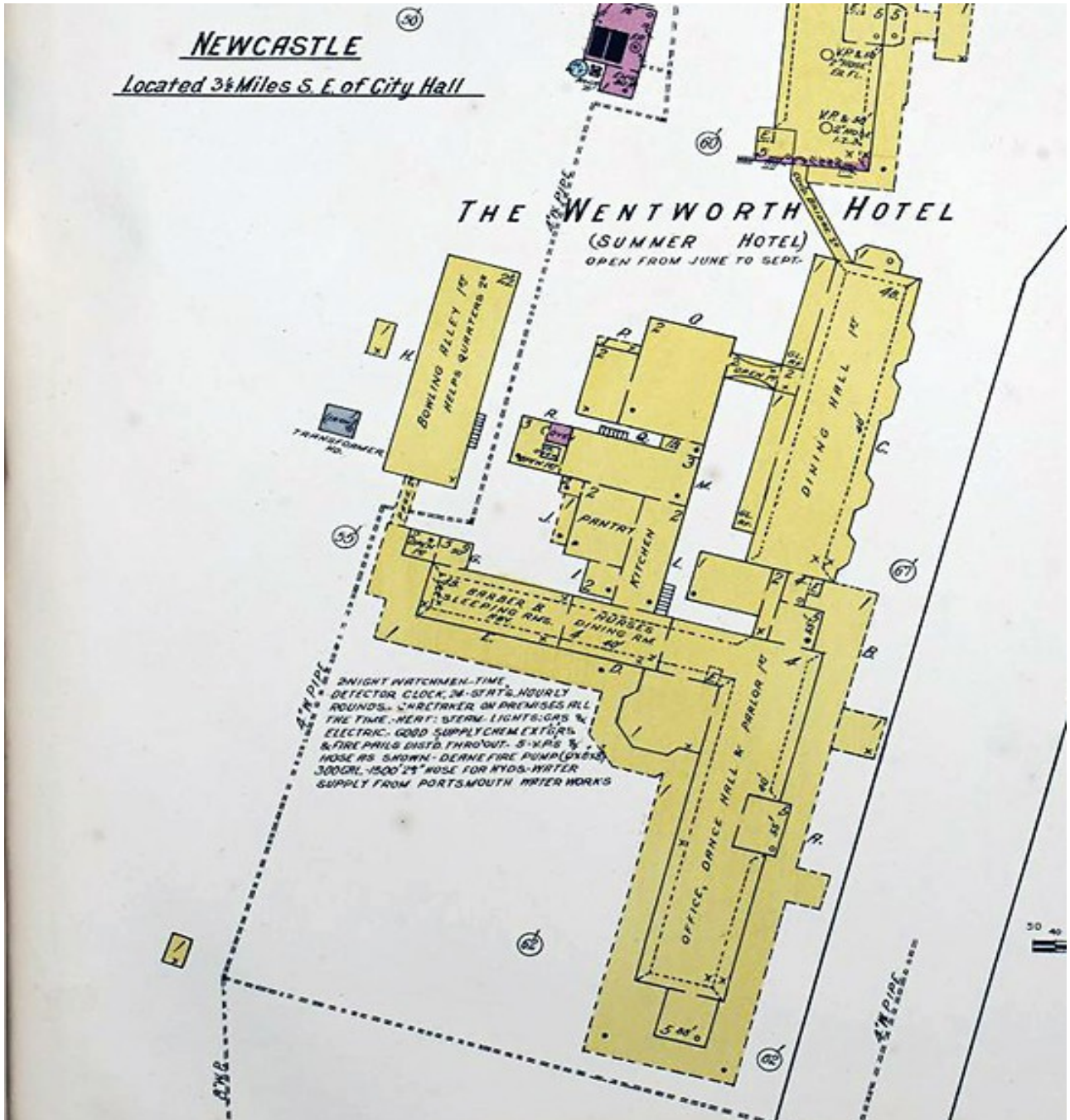
Sheet 42. Ocean street centered. Zoom.



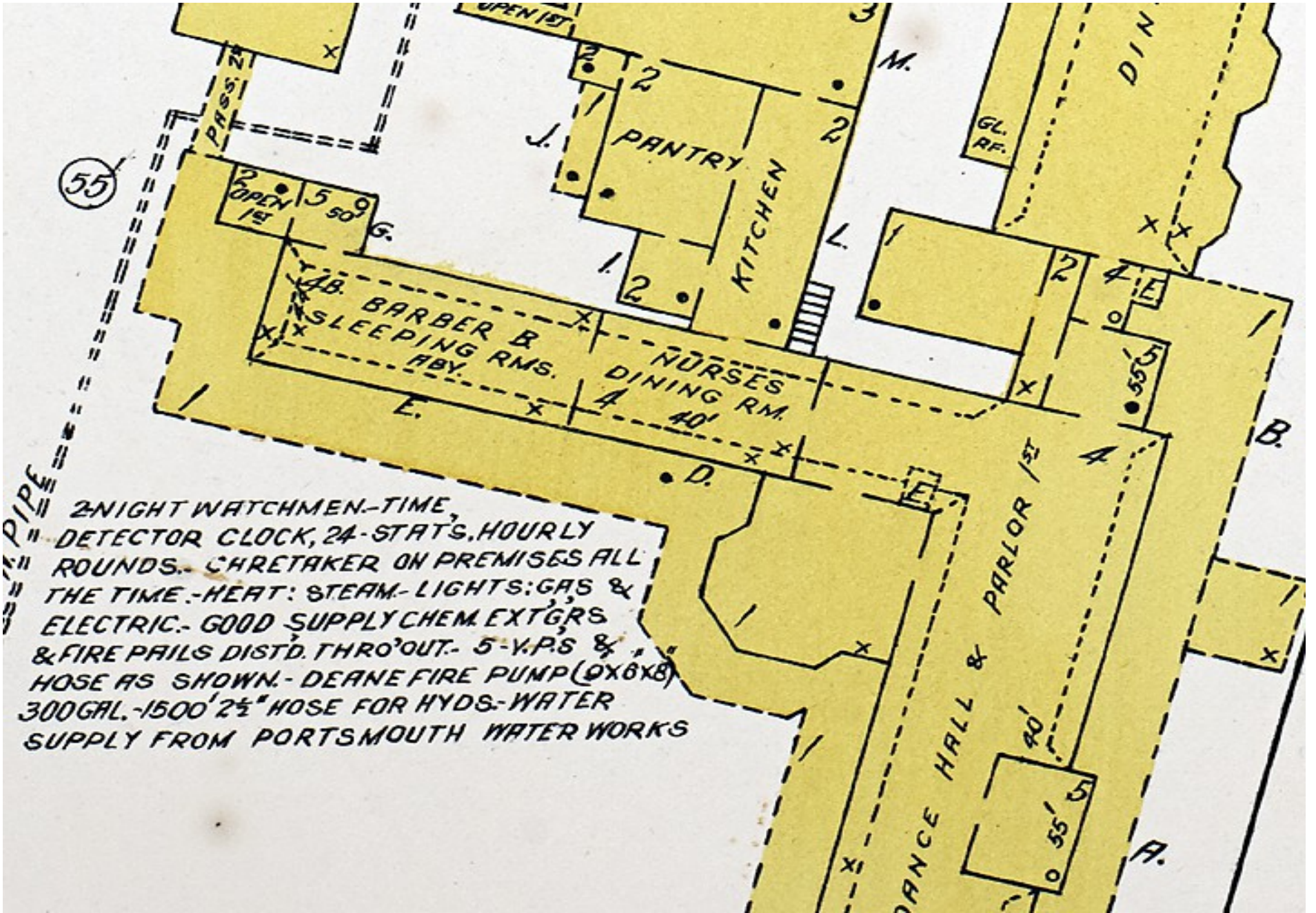
Wentworth Hotel, sheet 40. full coverage.



Sheet 40. Wentworth Hotel. Zoom.

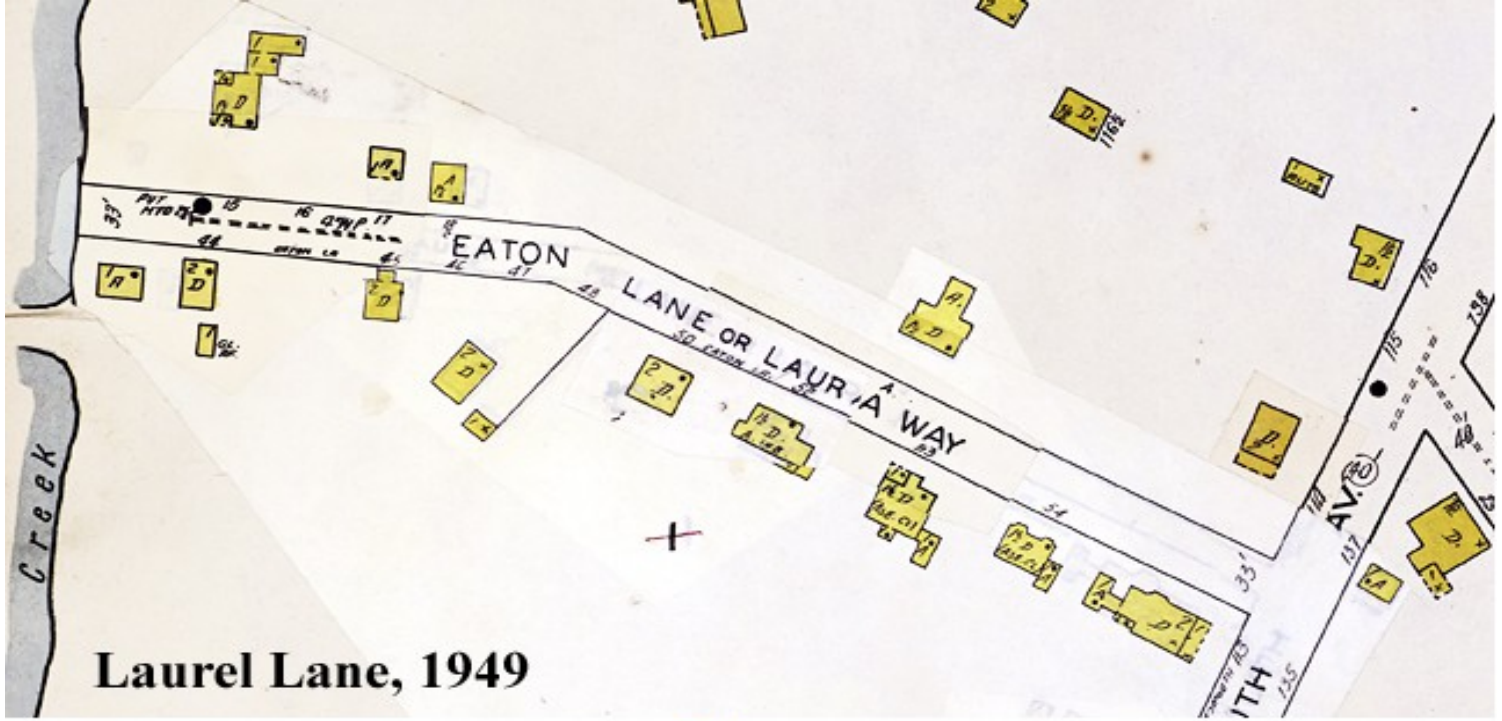


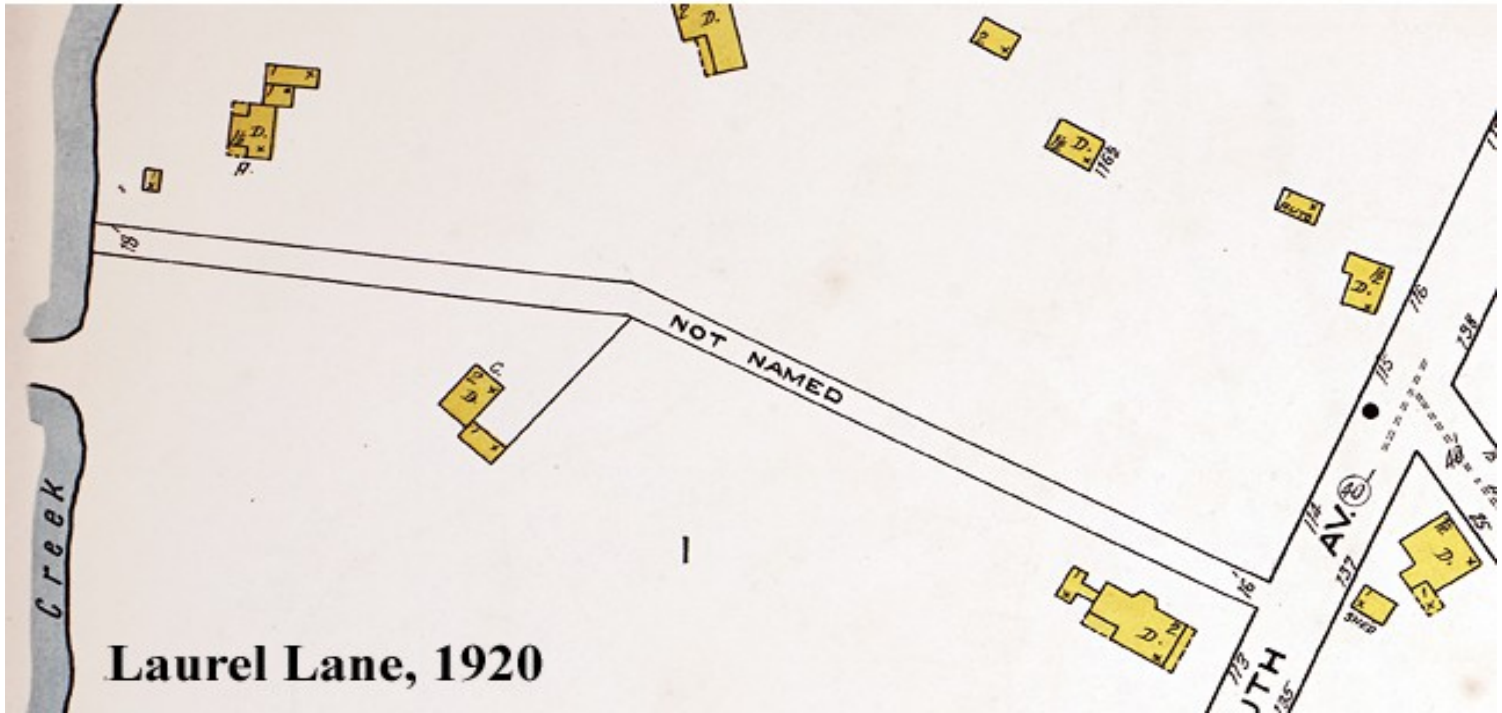
Sheet 40. Wentworth Hotel. Greater Zoom.



Comparisons across decades.

- Primarily we see change from the present.
- But we can see change across decades in some cases.
- Next map shows Laurel Lane. New and unnamed in 1920, called variously Eaton Lane or Laurel Way in 1949
- Two of the 1949 houses were torn down in 2024.


EATON LANE OR LAURA WAY
Creek
AV.
Laurel Lane, 1949


NOT NAMED
Creek
AV.
Laurel Lane, 1920

PUBLISHED BY THE
SANBORN MAP COMPANY
11 BROADWAY, NEW YORK