STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

March 13, 1990

Mr. C. Francis Driscoll
City Manager
Municipal Building
181 Captain's Walk
New London, CT 06320

Dear Mr. Driscoll

I am pleased to inform you that the State Historic Preservation Board for the National Register of Historic Places at its meeting on December 7, 1989 approved the nomination for Civic Institutions Historic District, New London, Connecticut.

This nomination has been forwarded to the Keeper of the National Register at the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. Copies of all letters and newspaper clippings which have been received by our office regarding this nomination have also been forwarded to the National Register office. The staff of the National Register office will review the nomination to determine whether it meets the criteria for enrollment on the National Register. This office will inform you of the decision of the Keeper of the National Register as soon as that decision is announced.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or write John Herzan, National Register Coordinator.

Sincerely,

John W. Shannahan
State Historic Preservation Officer

JH:mf

TEL: (203) 566-3005
59 SOUTH PROSPECT ST. — HARTFORD, CONN. 06106
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

cc: The Honorable Stephen Massad
Harold Arkaba, Chairman, Planning & Zoning Commission
Richard B. Erickson, Executive Director, Southeastern Connecticut Regional Planning Agency
Frank L. McGuire, Chairman, Historic District Commission
Lisa Perrin, President, New London County Historical Society
Peter Haller, Executive Director, New London Landmarks, Inc.
Sharon Churchill

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property
   Civic Institutions Historic District
2. Location
   Colman Street
   Garfield Avenue
   Walden Avenue
3. Classification
4. State/Federal Agency Certification
5. National Park Service Certification
6. Function or Use
7. Description
8. Statement of Significance
9. Major Bibiographical Significance
10. Geographical Data
11. Form Prepared By

Photographs

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Civic Institutions Historic District

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 156-158, 171, 173-175 Garfield Avenue, 179 Colman Street, 32 Walden Avenue ☐ not for publication

city, town New London ☐ vicinity

state Connecticut code CT county New London code 011 zip code 06320

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property
[X] private	[ ] building(s)
[ ] public-local	[X] district
[ ] public-State	[ ] site
[ ] public-Federal	[ ] structure
	[ ] object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
6	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official John W. Shannahan, State Historic Preservation Officer — Date 3/13/90

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

[ ] entered in the National Register.
[ ] See continuation sheet.

[ ] determined eligible for the National Register. [ ] See continuation sheet.

[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.

[ ] removed from the National Register.

[ ] other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

Colman Street

179	Amelia and Ronald Cart 39 Maple Avenue, Essex, CT 06426

Garfield Avenue

156-158 Unit 1 Unit 2 Unit 4 Unit 6 Unit 7 Unit 8 Unit 10 Unit 11 Unit 18 Unit 22	Frederick P. Mott P.O. Box 716, Northfield, CT 06472
156-158 Unit 3	Gregory P. Massad 120 Lincoln Avenue, New London, CT 06320 Speros Velles 28 Chapel Drive, New London, CT 06320
156-158 Unit 5	Henry J. and Mary M. Chamberlain
156-158 Unit 9	Syros Spanos
156-158 Unit 12	Joan Janicki
156-158 Unit 13	Arthur G. and Pamela J. Fox
156-158 Unit 14 Unit 21	Hob Realty Association
156-158 Unit 15	Santa Cortina 3 Rockwood Drive, Waterford, CT 06385
156-158 Unit 16	Joan S. and John Allen
156-158 Unit 17 Unit 23	Thomas J. Chamberlain 114 Colony Road, Groton, CT 06340 Russell E. Vila, Esquire Route 184, Groton, CT 06340
156-158 Unit 19	Diane m. Tassinary
156-158 Unit 20	Arthur M. and Lorraine E. White
171	Lloyd K. and Anna J. Belanger No. Anguilla Road, Pawcatuck, CT 02891
173-175	Thomas F. and Clydia L. Barnes

Walden Avenue

32	B & P Realty c/o Bienstock and Patterson 177 Boston Post Road, Waterford, CT 06385

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Healthcare: Hospital
Domestic: Institutional Housing
Domestic: Secondary Structue

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Healthcare: Hospital
Domestic: Multiple Dwelling
Domestic: Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian: Queen Anne
Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals
Colonial Revival, Georgian Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: Granite
walls Brick
Asbestos
roof Porches: Wood
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Civic Institutions Historic District contains approximately seven acres located roughly one mile west of downtown New London on the western edge of the city. The district includes six contributing buildings and one non-contributing outbuilding. Garfield Avenue bisects the district in an easterly direction (Figure 1). The eastern side of the district is located on a hillside rising to the west which reaches its apex in the middle of the district. The buildings are situated to take advantage of this commanding position, especially the almshouse at 156-158 Garfield Aveneu, set on a slight knoll created by a granite retaining wall, overlooking Jefferson Avenue running north about 25 feet below (Photograph #1).

The buildings in the district are generally large institutional structures. The almshouse, in the southern part of the district, is comprised of two distinct buildings connected by an arcaded two-story block (Photograph #2). The original Italianate section (c.1867), now located in the rear of the complex, consits of three-story brick center block flanked by two-story wings with shallow gable roofs (Photograph #3). Brackets support the overhanging eaves of the center block. Window openings have granite lintels and sills and the walls are framed by projecting brickwork which suggests pilasters and a frieze (Photograph #1). The rusticated granite block foundation is built into the hillside, exposing a full story with fenestration on the eastern facade. Windows on the first floor have round-arched openings with decorative cast-concrete keystones, those have flat-arched lintels with simple concrete keystones. The typana in the pavilions have ocular windows with radiating mutins and keystones. The heavy molded cornice has pronounced modillions in the frieze. Some of the cornice has been replaced. The complex has been coverted into 24 condominium units.

Mitchell Isolation Hospital at 1769 Colman Street (1914) is an imposing one-story Colonial Revival structure built in polychrome Flemish bond (Photograph #5). The cross gabled central pavilion, flanked by two six-bay wings, has a projecting vestibule with a stepped-gable parapet and shed-roofed portico supported by Tuscan columns (Photograph #6). The building is symmetrically arranged in plan, fenestration, and detail, Four ventilation stacks define the corners of the building. Ocular windows with brick drip molds are located in each gable end; other windows are elongated with concrete sills and drip molds (Photogrpah #7). Four copper cupolas with open arches, keystones, and tent roofs are symmetrically located along the ridges of the side wings. Wrought-iron balconies, decorative brickwork, cupolas, and a concrete water table add visual interest to the building (Photograph #8).

171 Garfield Avenue is the principal block of Memorial Hospital (1892). This two-and-one-half-story-Queen Anne structure is

☒ See continuation sheet

asymetrical with an octagonal tower and a projecting bay on the eastern facade which is the main entrance to the building (Photograph #9). A four-bay recessed wing (1901) is on the north side. Although asbestos siding obscures the original clapboards and shingles, ornamental details such as the stickwork frieze and finial on the tower, wooden stringcourse, and convex frieze on the projecting members are visible. The main building was originally connected to the Women's Ward at 173-175 Garfield Avenue to the west, a modest two-story Folk Victorian building with cross-gables end bays and jerkinheads (Photogrpah #10). The original nine-bay facade with entries in the cross-gables ends has been altered through the replacment of some of the original 2/2 sash with picture windows (Photograph #11). An additional wing of Memorial Hospital, located north of the Women's Ward, and the Men's Ward, origainally connected to the eastern side of the Women's Ward, were removed in the second decade of the 20th century.

The Nurses' Dormitory for Memorial Hospital is located north of the main building at 32 Walden Avenue (Photograph #12). This three story Colonial Revival building is rectangular in plan, three bays wide by seven bays deep. Two hipped-roof cupolas and a pent roof relieve the boxiness of the building. The front of the building originally faced south, towards the hospital, A three story porch covers the central bay of the southern facade. The doorways opening onto this porch on the second and third stories have sidelights: the second-story door has a fanlight with central keystones, and the third-story door has a tripartite transom. A non-contributing garage is located on the rear of the property.

INVENTORY

Address	Contributing (C) Non-Contributing (NC)	Style, Use, Date, Builder/Architect (if known)
Colman Street		
179	C	Colonial Revival hospital, 1914, Donald G. Mitchell, architect (Photographs #5,6,7 & 8)
Garfield Avenue		
156	C	Georgian Revival almshouse, 1917 (Photographs #1,2)
158	C	Italianate almshouse, c 1867 (Photographs #3,4)
171	C	Queen Anne hospital, 1892 (Photographs #9, 10)
173-175	C	Folk Victorian hospital wing, c.1893
Walden Avenue		
32	C	Colonial Revival dormitory, 1901; garage (NC) (Photograph #12)

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Architecture	1867-1917	1867
Health : Medicine	1892-1939	1892
Social History	1867-1939	1914

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Mitchell, Donald G.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Civic Institutions Historic District reflects the means by which New London provided for its less fortunate citizens in the late-19th and early-20th centuries. The almshouse and Memorial Hospital were public institutions suppported by the community and private charity. Their existence is at least partially the result of public-spirited individuals who regarded the responsiblilty of caring for the indigent and sick to belong to the community. The district's location on the western edge of New London identify what was considered the outskirts of the ctiy in the 19th century. The buildings are architecturally significant as representatives of late-19th and early-20th century institutional design. The original almshouse and the Memorial Hospital buildings are the only extant 19th-century buildings in the city which were built for charitable institutional use. Both the Mitchell isolation Hospital and the 1917 addition to the almshouse are highly-crafted, well-preserved examples of high-style institutional design. The Mitchell Isolation Hospital is the work of Donald G. Mitchell, a New London architect, and nephew of the hospital's patron.

Historical Significance

As early as 1761, New London provided for the needs of the indigent with an almshouse, Although a thriving seaport community, there were numerous cases of sailors who needed temporary relief or of widows of seamen and their families who might need greater assistance. Until the advent of specialized facilities, almshouses often sheltered the insane and retarded as well. With the economic dislocations of the American Revolution and War of 1812, the numbers of poor increased dramatically.

The original almshouse was located on the site of the Bulkeley School at Hempstead and Granite Streets (formerly Alms Street). It was surrounded by a prosperous upper-middle-class neighborhood which developed in the mid-19th century, which problabley accounted for the razing of the facility and relocation of the facility to the outskirts of the city. The grounds of the new building, c.1867, became the town farm, which provided work opportunities for all male residents (Photographs #3,4). the 1917 addition was the bequest of Sebastian Duffy Lawrence, who also gave the city the Soldiers and Sailors Monument and Lawrence Hospital. Lawrence left $50,000 for construction of a new almshouse, with specifications about the design of the building (Photographs #1,2). As late as 1971, there were 33 residents at the almshouse, named Hillside Home. By the time the

☒ See continuation sheet

city sold the property in 1974, the almshouse as an institution

was obsolete and its place was taken by other forms of public assistance which did not isolate the poor as much from the rest of society.

During most of the 19th century and earlier, health care in New London was relegated to the private domain. The earliest hospital was a small facility on the upper story of a private home (1848). This same pattern was followed for other small private hospitals until Memorial Hospital was built in 1892. The idea of a public hospital was nurtured by Jonathan N. Harris, a prominent businessman, philanthropist, and former mayor, who donated the initial $10,000 for its construction. The city donated four acres adjacent to the almshouse. Harris directed the basic design of the hospital, requesting a two-story administration building (171 Garfield Avenue) connected to wards by corridors (Photographs #9,10). The Women's Ward at 173-175 Garfield Avenue is the only extant building representing this aspect of the construction (Photograph #11. A training school for nurses was extablished by the Memorial Hospital Association, the incorporated body charged with overseeing the hospital. By 1901, a dormitory was built at Memorial Hospital to help develop the nursing school (Photograph #12). The dormitory, complete with a library, kitchen, and tting room, was opened in 1902.

Mitchell Isolation Hospital provided a facility where patients with contagious diseases such as tuberculosis and smallpox could be quarantined and cared for. Previously, such patients had to be quarantined in their homes or placed in "pest houses" which appeared to serve more as isolation rather than recuperation facilities. Annie O. Tiffany Mitchell, heir to the Tiffany jewlery fortune and member of the illustrious Mitchell family who summered in New London, donated $100,000 for this hospital construction. Begun in 1912, the hospital was completed two years later. The Mitchell Isolation Hospital was connected to Memorial Hospital by an underground tunnel, now defunct. The two hospitals remained associated until 1918, when memorial Hospital merged with Lawrence Hospital in the southern part of the city, where it exists today as Lawrence and Memorial Hospitals. The influenza epidemic opf 1918 led to expansion for the merged hosopitals. The city assumed the finacial aspects of operating Mitchell Isolation Hospital in 1920 until it was closed in 1953 due to lack of need.

Memorial Hospital, together with the Women's Ward, represents the first concerted effort to provide medical services for the general public in a separate facility, reflecting the trends in health care which occurred throughout the country in the late 19th century. Mitchell Isolation Hospital played a pivotal role in providing modern health care treatment for diseases which were as feared in the early 20th century as the terminal illnesses of today.

Architectural Significance

The institutions represented in the district are indicative of trends in the design of these types of facilities. The construction of the Women's Ward and overall plan of Memorial Hospital reflect the desire to separate the sexes within a unified facility. Mitchell Isolation Hospital has elongated windows

for ventilation and other requisite features deftly incorporated into the design. The 1867 almshouse has a much more institutional appearance than its elaborate Georgian Revival addition, which illustrated a concern for housing the poor in a facility that was more than merely functional.

The almshouse complex has fine examples of both the Italianate an Georgian Revival styles. The original building is a notable Italianate edifice with well balanced design. The 1917 addition is almost sumptuous in plan and detail, overshadowing the older section because of scale, siting, and lavishness of ornamentation. The Memorial Hospital buildings, while not architecturally distinguished, are the only frame institutional buildings in New London. The existence of the complex, despite extensive development around it, is noteworthy, even in its compromised condition. The three 19th-century Revival buildings in the district are the only structures of that century built as charitable institutions remaining in the city.

Donald G. Mitchell, Jr., (1861-1950) of New London designed the high-style Colonial Revival Mitchell Isolation Hospital and supervised its construction tween 1912 and 1914, Mitchell and the city health officer, Dr. John orrington Black, went to Providence to study a pioneering isolation hospital there which Mitchell used as a model for the one in New London. Michell Isolation Hospital displays his skillful design using quality building material and craftsmanship, providing well-preserved evidence of his talents. The Yale-educated Mitchell was the nephew of Alfred Mitchell, whose wife, Annie O. Tiffany Mitchell, was the patron the the hospital. Mitchell's father, Donald G. Mitchell of New Haven, was well-known as a novelist, landscape designer, and the leading individual behind the New Haven park system.

Endnotes

1. It is unclear to what extent Mitchell received formal training in architucture of whether he practiced architecture in a formal or informal capacity. The Providence contagion hospital he studied as a prototype for the Mitchell Isolation Hosdpital may have been the former Chapin Hospital, now part of Providence College.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Decker, Robert O. The Whaling City. New London, Connecticut, 1976

Devoe, Patricia Cyr, and Smith, Diane K. New London Completion Survey, 1974-1985, New London Landmarks-Union Railroad Station Trust, Inc. Survey on file with Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut.

New London City Council Minutes, 1892.

New London City Directories, 1864-1976.

"Mitchell Has Witnessed" New London Day, 28 March, 1953.

New London Land records, New London City Clerk.

☐ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 7 approximately

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	19	741580	4581700
B			
C			
D			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries in this district are drawn to encompass the present property lines of the former institutional buildings in the district.

(See Figure #1 (Map)

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sharon Churchill, Executive Director, Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator
organization New London Landmarks, Inc. date June 1989
street & number 309 Captain's Walk telephone (203) 442-0003
city or town New London state CT zip code 06320

★U.S.GPO:1988-0-223-918

Major Bibliographic References, Continued

New London Tax Abstracts, 1864-1940.

Picturesque New London. New London, Connecticut, 1901.

Starr, W.H. Centennial Historical Sketch of New London. New London, Connecticut, 1876.

Maps:

Sanborn-Perris Map Company. "Sanborn Map of New London, 1901."

_____. "Sanborn Map of New London, 1901."

_____. "Sanborn Map of New London, 1901."

_____. "Sanborn Map of New London, 1921."

_____. "Sanborn Map of New London, 1954."

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Civic Institutions Historic Districxt are determined by the present property lines of the former institutional buildings which comprise the district. This cluster of buildings is isolated from others with similar functions elsewhere in New London. On the wertern edge of the district is a city-owned elderly housing porject built on the poorhouse property in 1964. Across Colman Street is more city-owned subsidized housing built in the early 1950s. There is a cinder-block package store on the northwest corner of Colman Street and Garfield Avenue just outside the district. Mid- to late-20th century commercial and residential buildings and a large apartment house abut the eastern and southern edges of the distreict. The northern edge is bordered by late-19th and early-20th century residential buildings. The commercial presence in the vicinity of the district is of a much smaller scale than the institutional buildings within the district itself.

The above information is the same for all photographs listed.

CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London County
New London, Connecticut

New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
Negative on file with Connecticut
Historical Commission, Hartford

Photograph #1
156-158 Garfield Avenue (Almshouse), looking west

Photograph #2
156-158 Garfield Avenue, looking southeast

Photograph #3
156-158 Garfield Avenue, looking east

Photograph #4
156-158 Garfield Avenue, looking north

Photograph #5
179 Colman Street (Mitchell Isolation Hospital), looking east

Photograph #6
179 Colman Street (Mitchell Isolation Hospital), looking southeast

Photograph #7
179 Colman Street (Mitchell Isolation Hospital), looking north

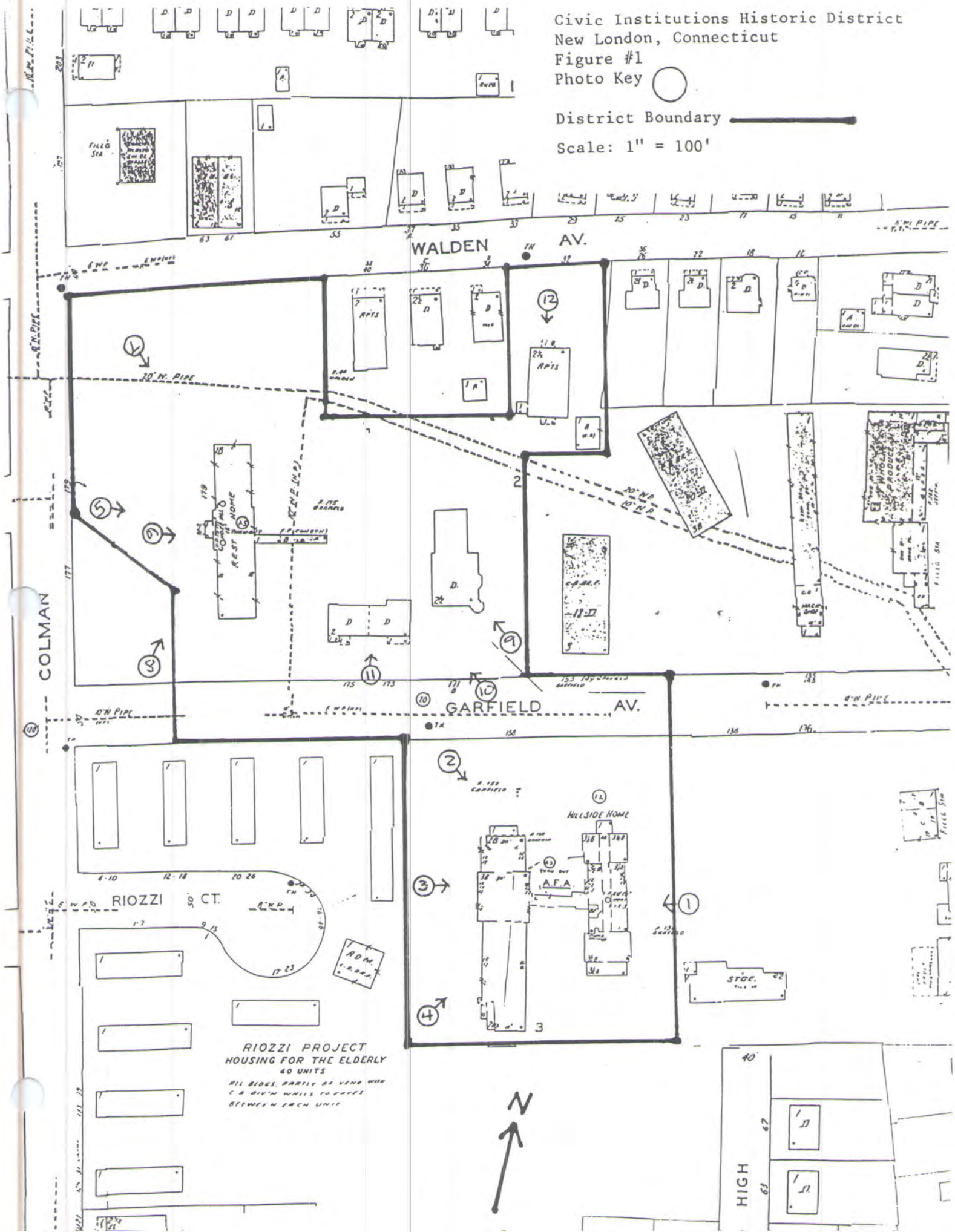
Photograph #8
179 Colman Street (Mitchell Isolation Hospital), looking north

Photograph #9
171 Garfield Avenue, looking northwest

Photograph #10
171 and 173-175 Garfield Avenue (Memorial Hospital), looking northwest

Photograph #11
173-175 Garfield Avenue, looking north

Photograph #12
32 Walden Avenue (Nurses' Dormitory), looking south

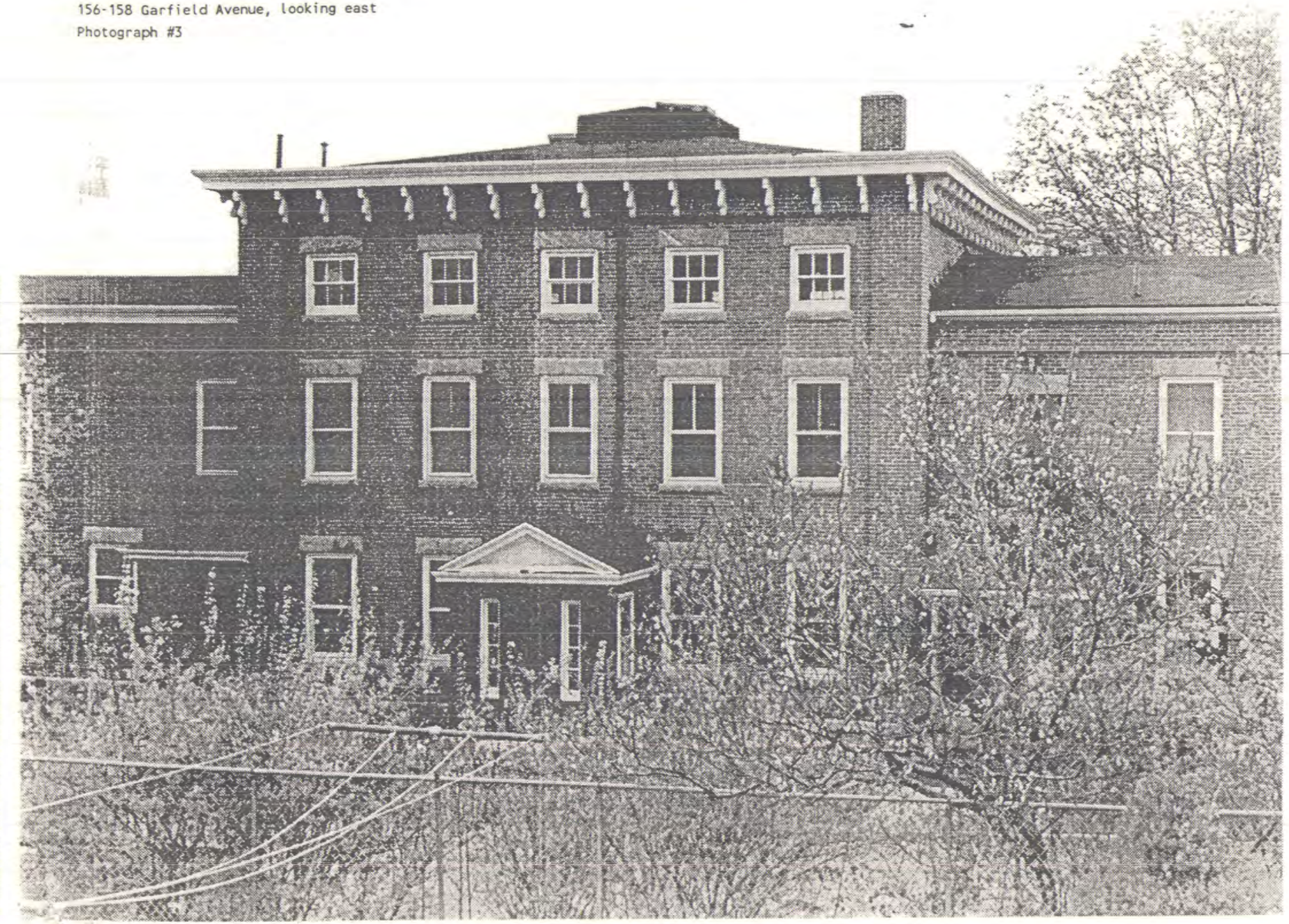

Civic Institutions Historic District
New London, Connecticut
Figure #1
Photo Key
District Boundary
Scale: 1" = 100'
WALDEN AV.
GARFIELD AV.
COLMAN
HIGH
RIOZZI CT.
RIOZZI PROJECT
HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY
40 UNITS
HILLSIDE HOME
A.F.A.
REST HOME
WHOLE PRODUCE
STOR.
FILLG STA
20" W. PIPE
8" W. PIPE
10" W. PIPE
6" W. PIPE
4" W. PIPE
N

CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut

New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
Negative on file with Connecticut
Historical Commission, Hartford
156-158 Garfield Avenue (Almshouse),
looking west
Photograph #1

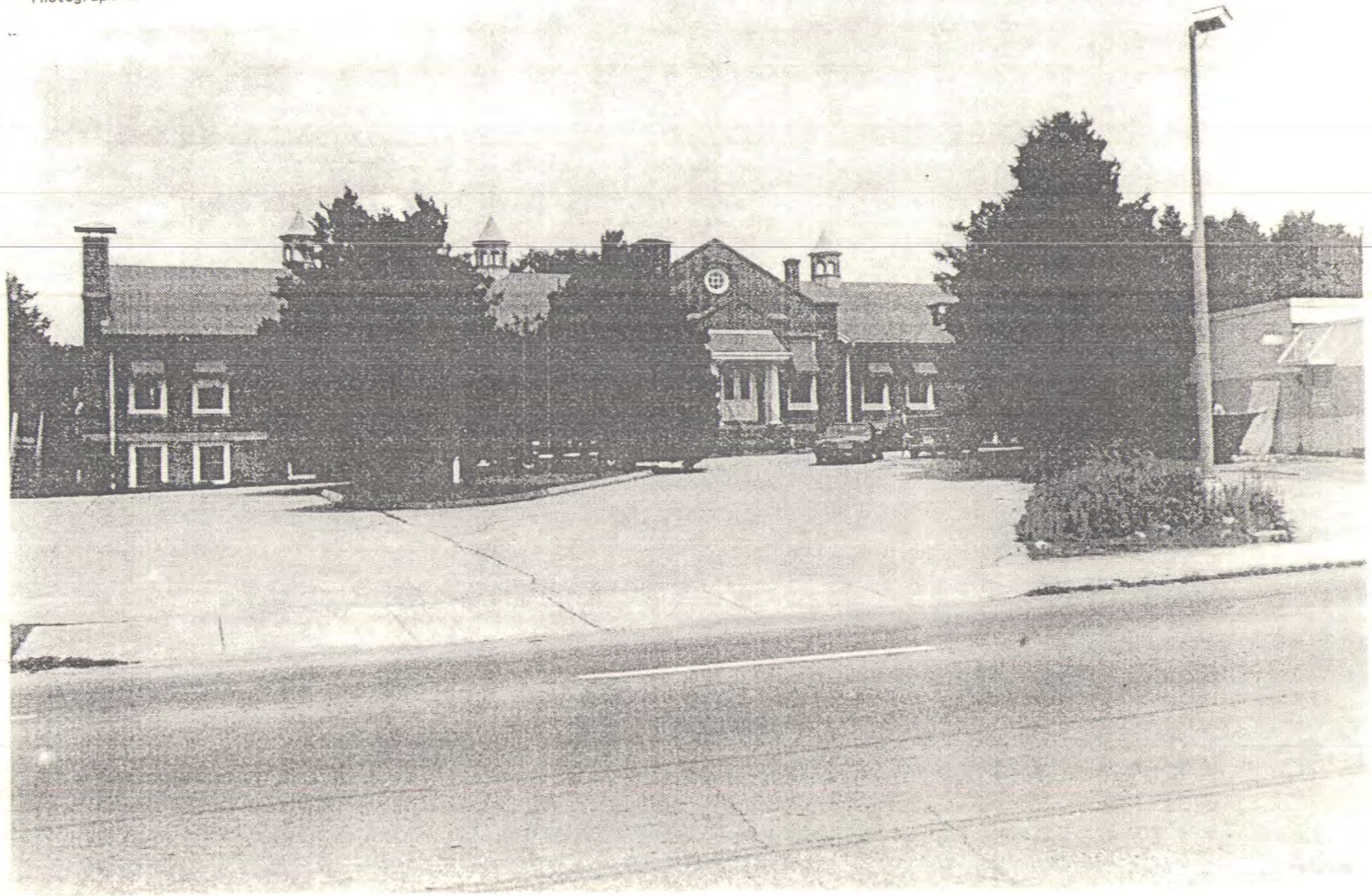
CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut
New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
156-158 Garfield Avenue, looking southeast
Photograph #2

CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut
New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
156-158 Garfield Avenue, looking east
Photograph #3



CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut
New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
156-158 Garfield Avenue, looking north
Photograph #4

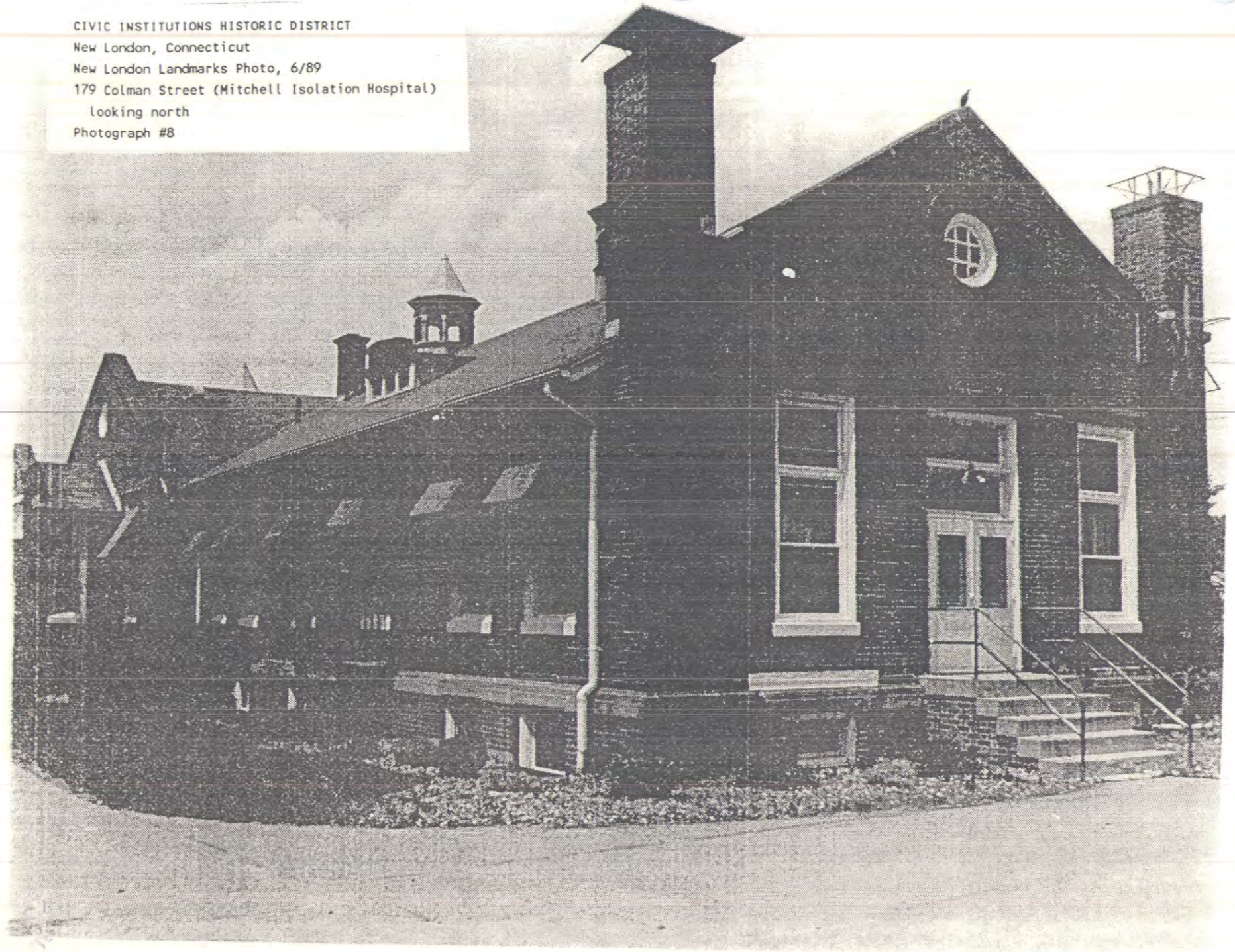
CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut
New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
179 Colman Street (Mitchell Isolation Hospital)
looking east
Photograph #5



CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut
New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
179 Colman Street (Mitchell Isolation Hospital)
looking east
Photograph #6

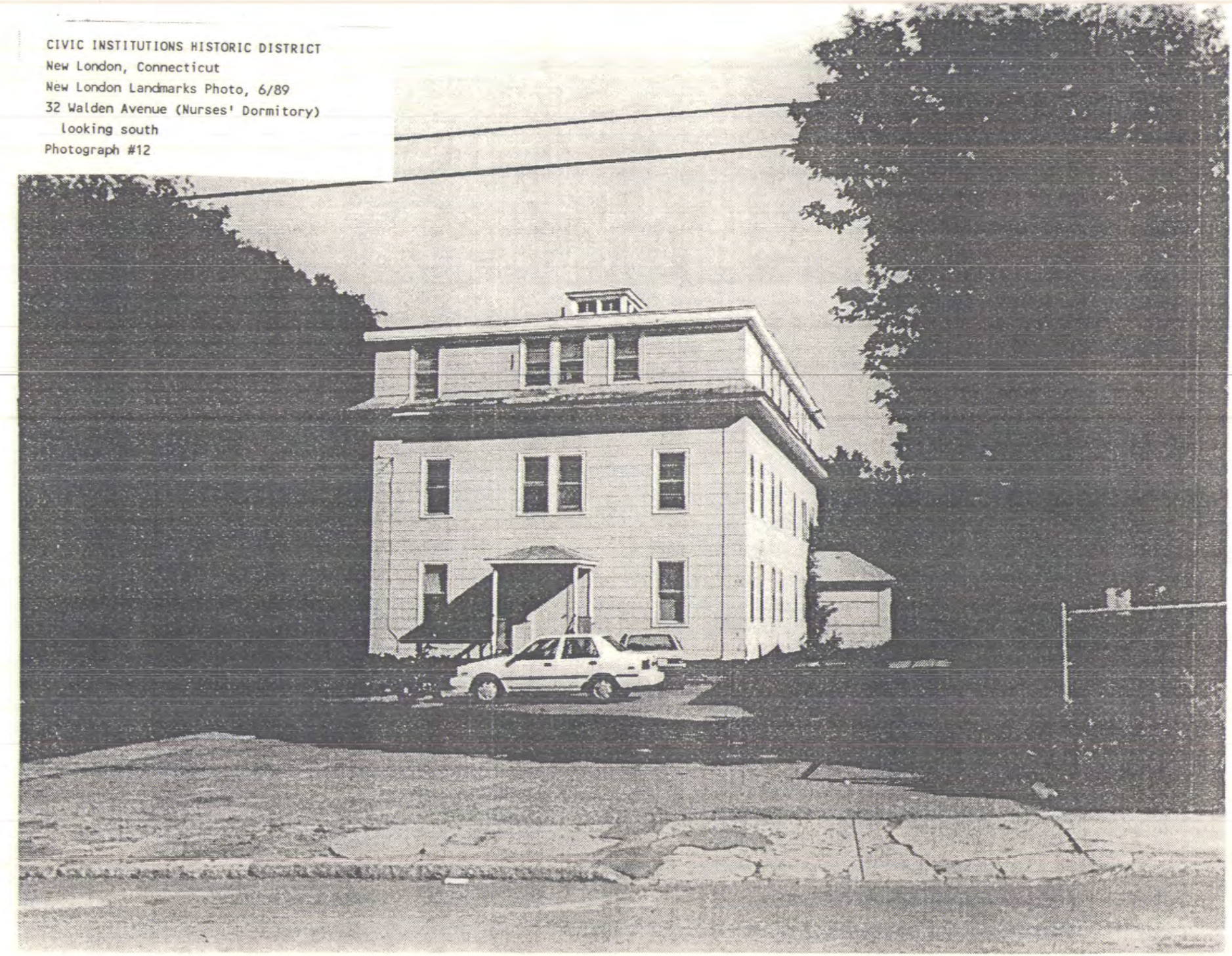
CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut
New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
179 Colman Street (Mitchell Isolation Hospital)
looking southeast
Photograph #7

CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut
New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
179 Colman Street (Mitchell Isolation Hospital)
looking north
Photograph #8



CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut
New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
171 Garfield Avenue, looking northwest
Photograph #9

CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut
New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
171 and 173-175 Garfield Avenue
(Memorial Hospital), looking northwest
Photograph #10

CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut
New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
173-175 Garfield Avenue, looking north
Photograph #11

CIVIC INSTITUTIONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New London, Connecticut
New London Landmarks Photo, 6/89
32 Walden Avenue (Nurses' Dormitory)
looking south
Photograph #12