

Small Area Study
Mrs. Walker

A: This is a very pleasant block, one of the most pleasant in the city. Fairly wide streets, quite wide sidewalks, no buildings, I would say, over six stories. The block at Boylston is certainly architecturally more hodge podge than - well, the side of the street we were on on Newbury, which is a very lovely block because it has - it is all brick, I recall there may be one or two of stone buildings, most of them are brick, they are all quite simple, in a sense coordinated. They don't have any fussy details, not a great deal of ornamentation, very nice design. Bonwit's is always pleasant because it's not an ordinary - it has a history as an old residence from M.I.T. building then something else and then something else and finally a shop. It still has distinction, and again space, and it's fun to see something that is both spacious and distinguished, and maintained - from another period set back in the middle of a contemporary business area.

The Common, of course, is another thing that gives the pleasantness and open feeling. Arlington Church, I think, is a little too ornate, but in mass and architectural form I think it's very lovely. Personally I would have liked it with a little less detail, or maybe that the detail had been simpler, but that's a small matter. The thing about it is -- that sandstone which is peeling and discolored. This one short block comes out on Arlington.

Obviously old houses that are not really made over. The first floors have been made into shops, and apartments. The iron railings are quite simple, the ornate and carved ones that have been added since are not nearly so nice. The parking lot on the corner which isn't anything, and then the lovely block.

I think I have gone around all four sides.

Q: Could ---

A: If I go again, I could turn it inside out and I don't see anything, but occasionally on the Newbury Street block, you find of course, usually women, some men, but more women than men because it's a women's shopping district. Very beautifully dressed women, as again, that's a neighborhood of very fine shops. Probably 25% of those work around the neighborhood and use the same sidewalk.