



7. Original owner (if known) City of Cambridge  
 Original use almshouse  
 Subsequent uses (if any) and dates school-convent

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

|                       |               |                            |               |                         |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Aboriginal            | <u>      </u> | Conservation               | <u>      </u> | Recreation              | <u>      </u> |
| Agricultural          | <u>      </u> | Education                  | <u>XX</u>     | Religion                | <u>XX</u>     |
| Architectural         | <u>XX</u>     | Exploration/<br>settlement | <u>      </u> | Science/<br>invention   | <u>      </u> |
| The Arts              | <u>      </u> | Industry                   | <u>      </u> | Social/<br>humanitarian | <u>XX</u>     |
| Commerce              | <u>      </u> | Military                   | <u>      </u> | Transportation          | <u>      </u> |
| Communication         | <u>      </u> | Political                  | <u>      </u> |                         |               |
| Community development | <u>      </u> |                            |               |                         |               |

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

In 1849 the City purchased an eighteenth century estate for the site of its new Poor Farm, the fifth facility of its type in Cambridge.

The winning architectural design for the structure was submitted by Rev. Louis Dwight and Gridley J.F. Bryant. Dwight was known for his pioneering work in prison reform and care of the poor and mentally ill. Bryant would later design Boston's Old City Hall.

The Almshouse follows a radial plan with a central octagonal section and four residential wings, a concept based on late eighteenth century English jail prototypes. Considered advanced for its time, the cruciform plan appeared in other local commissions by the architects, including the Charles Street Jail (1848) and the Deer Island House of Correction (1850).

The Almshouse is a transitional Greek Revival/Italianate structure, but the absence of detail or embellishment frees the building from any strict stylistic category. The glory of the building is its masonry: grey-green and grey-ochre slate blocks laid in random ashlar with contrasting dark granite quoins. Bryant was familiar with stone building techniques, as it was his father who had developed the Quincy granite quarries for the Bunker Hill Monument (1824). The slate used in the Almshouse came from

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

a ledge at the site.

The City sold the almshouse to the Archdiocese of Boston in 1927, and since that time it has been occupied by the parish school and convent. The building is intact except for a few later additions.

NOV 14 1980

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Cambridge Multiple Resource Area  
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- 131. <sup>Lowell 5/74</sup> Conventual Church of St. Mary and St. John *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper William H. Brasham 4.13.82  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 132. Second Cambridge Savings Bank Building *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper Paul H. Boyd 6.30.83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 133. Frost, David, House *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper Paul H. Boyd 6.30.83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 134. Howe House *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper Paul H. Boyd 6.30.83  
*written 413*  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 135. Lowell, The *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper Paul H. Boyd 6.30.83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 136. Willis, Stillman, House *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper William H. Brasham 4.13.82  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 137. Second Waterhouse House *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper Paul H. Boyd 6.30.83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 138. <sup>SEAS TOWER -</sup> Harvard Observatory *owner objection withdrawn* ~~DOE/OWNER OBJECTION~~ *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper Carel D. Skell 2-26-87  
Attest Beth L. Sarge 2-26-87
- 139. Almshouse *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper William H. Brasham 4.13.82  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 140. Lovell Block *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper Paul H. Boyd 6.30.83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

Property: Almshouse (Cambridge Multiple Resource Area)  
State, County: MA - Middlesex  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Working No. 11-14-80-2862  
Fed. Reg. Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Due: 4-17-82  
Action:  ACCEPT 4/13/82  
 RETURN \_\_\_\_\_  
 REJECT \_\_\_\_\_

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

photos 1  
maps \_\_\_\_\_

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

### Reviewer's comments:

Locally significant for architecture - application of Greek Revival/Italianate styling to large scale public building.  
Significant for association with social humanitarian movement in Cambridge  
- significance is inferred more than actually stated

Recom./Criteria Accept. AIC  
Reviewer Patrick Andrus  
Discipline Historian  
Date 3/22/82  
 see continuation sheet

WAB  
4.13.82

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

FILED APR 14 1982 SAN JOSE

## 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

Address of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

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

USIT References

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

Site \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

## 13. Other

- \_\_\_\_\_ Maps
- \_\_\_\_\_ Photographs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other

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

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



1106-6A

NOV 14 1980

Cambridge MA, Ma

0640

Almshouse

45 Matignon Ave.

1106-6A

Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000275