

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received

MAR 18 1982

date entered

APR 15 1982

1. Name

historic Gleason Building

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number 349^A351 Essex Street N/A not for publication

city, town Lawrence N/A vicinity of congressional district 5th

state Massachusetts code 025 county Essex code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☐ district	☐ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture ☐ museum
☒ building(s)	☒ private	☐ unoccupied	☒ commercial ☐ park
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☐ educational ☐ private residence
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment ☐ religious
☐ object	☐ in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government ☐ scientific
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial ☐ transportation
		☐ no	☐ military ☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Vincent Landers

street & number 30 School Street

city, town No. Andover N/A vicinity of 01845 state MA

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Essex County Registry of Deeds

street & number 381 Common Street

city, town Lawrence state Massachusetts

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1979 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston, state Massachusetts

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Gleason Building is a six story brick commercial structure located in downtown Lawrence on the north side of Essex Street, the main commercial thoroughfare, on the block between Lawrence and Amesbury Streets. Constructed in 1890, the handsome Victorian Romanesque style Gleason Building was designed by Arthur F. Gray, a Lawrence architect whose work in the same city includes the Merchants Bank, now a part of the Downtown Lawrence National Register Historic District.

The Gleason Building, rectangular in plan, has a frontage of 40 feet on Essex Street and extends 90 feet back to an alleyway. The property is butted on the east by a two story commercial structure and on the west by a one story commercial structure. While the rear and side walls are of red brick, the Essex Street facade is of yellow brick trimmed with brownstone.

The original appearance of the facade has not been altered except at the ground level. Originally the first floor front was flush with the upper stories. On the west side of the facade, an entrance led into the main hallway. The rest of the front was composed of two large display windows with a store entrance between them. Iron pilasters separated the hall entrance, the windows and the store entrance. An iron lintel above the ground floor set it apart from the upper floors.

The position of the two entrances has not changed, but in recent years the display windows have been extended forward. New siding has been installed around the side entrance concealing the iron pilasters. Most of the iron lintel has also been hidden by the new siding and by a large sign that extends above the store front.

The composition of the unaltered upper 5 stories of the facade is symmetrical. Pilasters and rounded arches provide vertical emphasis, while stringcourses and lintels denote horizontal divisions. The second and third floors are divided vertically into two equal bays by three brick pilasters with carved brownstone bases and capitals. At each of these floors, the two bays each contain a group of four closely spaced elongated windows. Each group of four is further broken down into two groups by a slender iron colonnette. Above the third floor windows is an iron lintel bearing the inscription "Gleason Building" on it.

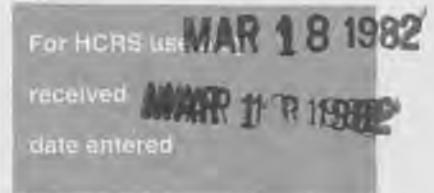
The fourth floor is also divided into two equal bays by two large carved brownstone arches that spring from the pilaster capitals above the third floor. Under each arch are four windows aligned with those of the second and third floor.

A stone stringcourse above the fourth floor clearly separates the lower stories from the upper two.

The fifth and sixth floor facade is divided vertically into four equal bays by five brick pilasters with brownstone bases and capitals. The end and center pilasters are aligned with those of the lower floors and are wider than the two intermediate

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1

pilasters. Within each of the four bays on each floor are two closely spaced windows. Iron lintels with a stone stringcourse above them separate the fifth from the sixth floor windows. Above each sixth story window is a carved brownstone arch.

An intricate cornice crowns the facade and rises up slightly higher than the flat roof which covers the building.

On March 22, 1897, a serious fire completely gutted the inside of the Gleason Building and except for the facade, the entire structure had to be rebuilt, including side and rear walls. The plain, red brick rear wall facing the alley contains rows of five double hung windows with shallow arched heads in the upper five stories. At the ground level, the original windows have been bricked in and replaced with five smaller ones. In addition, there is an entrance.

Originally multi-story structures abutted the Gleason Building on both sides. In recent years, these adjoining structures have been reduced to one and two stories, leaving the blank brick side walls of the front half of the Gleason Building exposed. The originally exposed portion of the west side wall contains rows of double hung windows with shallow arched heads, identical to those of the rear wall facing the alley.

At the middle of the east side wall is a slightly recessed section containing rows of double hung windows with stone sills and lintels. The rest of the wall is blank.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400–1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500–1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600–1699	☒ architecture	☐ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700–1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800–1899	☒ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☐ 1900–	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates 1890 Builder/Architect Arthur F. Gray

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Gleason Building possesses integrity of location, design, and materials, and as a major local example of Romanesque commercial architecture, meets criterion C. It is especially significant as one of the few important buildings outside of the Downtown Lawrence Historic District.

The Gleason Building was constructed in 1890 by William Oswald, one of the foremost dry goods merchants in the City. For years he operated the Boston Store at the corner of Essex and Appleton Streets and had branch stores in Lowell, Massachusetts and in Lewiston, Maine. Mr. Oswald was also the founder and director of the Merchants National Bank.

At the time it was constructed, the six story Gleason Building stood as the largest of its kind in the city. Above the store on the ground floor were forty-four rooms for offices. The top floor was built expressly as a photographer's studio, and had a large skylight to light the interior.

The Gleason Building was also noteworthy at the time of its construction for boasting the first hydraulic elevator in the city. Other "modern improvements" included in the design were steam heat, electric lights and speaking tubes.

The Gleason Building was originally praised not only for its innovative systems, but also for the unusual appearance of its facade. At the time of its construction, it was written, "The face of the building will be of a unique and novel design, differing vastly from any building in the city"¹ and "The plans provide for a structure which will eclipse all others in the city and perhaps open a new era in the building history of Lawrence."²

The expanse of glass created by the bands of windows, and the bold Romanesque arches were features introduced with the Gleason Building and set it apart from other commercial structures on Essex Street.

Other taller commercial buildings soon followed the construction of the Gleason Building. However, it remained one of the finest of the few Romanesque style commercial structures built in Lawrence. As time goes by and many of the nineteenth century commercial buildings that once lined Essex Street are demolished, its significance increases.

Today, surrounded by twentieth century structures, the Gleason Building stands as a major representative of Lawrence's nineteenth century commercial development.

1. "Handsome Building", Lawrence-American, May 16, 1890.
2. "Oswald's New Block", Lawrence-American, March 24, 1890.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Lawrence Up-to-Date 1845-95, Lawrence, Mass;

Rushforth & Donoghue, 1895.

Lawrence-American newspaper. March 24, 1890 and May 16, 1890.

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreage of nominated property less than 1 acre (3600 sq.ft.)

Quadrangle name Lawrence

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

UTM NOT VERIFIED

A

1	1	9
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 Zone

3	2	1	2	8	1	6	1	9
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 Easting

4	1	7	3	1	0	4	1	0	1	0
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 Northing

B

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

C

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

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 Easting

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 Northing

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 Easting

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 Northing

F

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 Easting

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 Northing

G

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

H

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is bounded to the north 40 ft. by an alleyway, to the east 90 ft. by an abutting commercial building, to the south 40 ft. by Essex Street, and to the west 90 ft. by an abutting commercial structure. Also refer to the attached map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Candace Jenkins, Registration Director with Lawrence Community Development Office.

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission

date November 1980

street & number 294 Washington Street

telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston,

state Massachusetts

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national

☐ state

☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Peter W. Weslowski

title Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission

date 2/25/82

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the

National Register

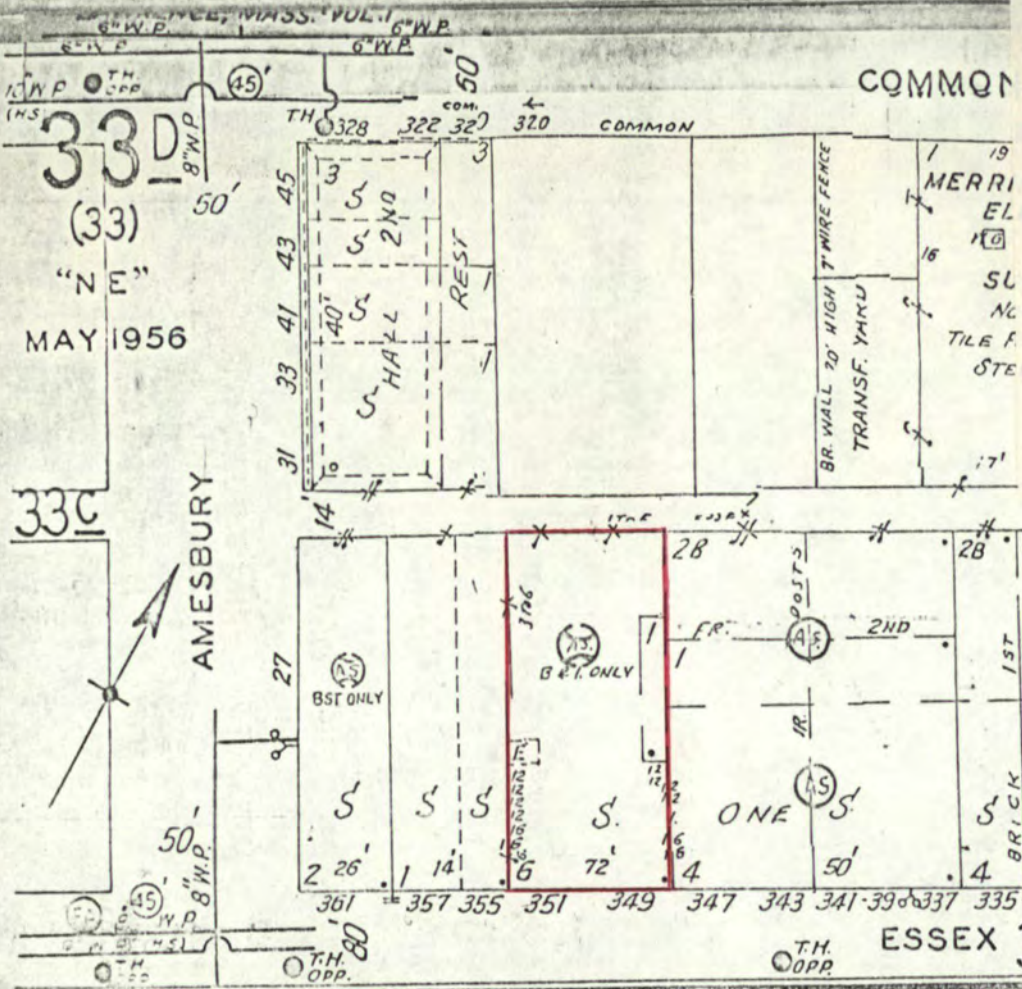
date 4/15/82

for Delores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



Gleason Building
Lawrence, MA

Sanborn Map 1964
1" = 50'



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

Property: Gleason Building
State, County: MA, Essex
Federal Agency: _____

Working No. 3-18-82-811
Fed. Reg. Date: 2-1-83
Date Due: 4-15-82 / 5-2-82
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 4/15/82
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT

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

Entered in the
National Register

photos ☒
maps ☒

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
☐ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☐ technical corrections cited below
☐ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

X 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
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered	☐ moved date _____
☐ fair	☐ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

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

for NPS use only

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

Acreage of nominated property _____
Quadrangle name _____
UNIT 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

title _____ 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



~~Gleason Building~~

Gleason Building
Lawrence, MA.

Christine Pfaff November 1979
Lawrence Community Development Dept,

Photo # 1 of 3
View of facade and west wall from Essex St.

#1 Gleason Building
View of facade and west wall from
street



Gleason Building
Lawrence, MA

Christine Pfaff November 1979
Lawrence Community Development Dept.

Photo # 2 of 3
View of north or rear wall and west wall
taken from Common Street

#2 Gleason Bu
view of rear
wall



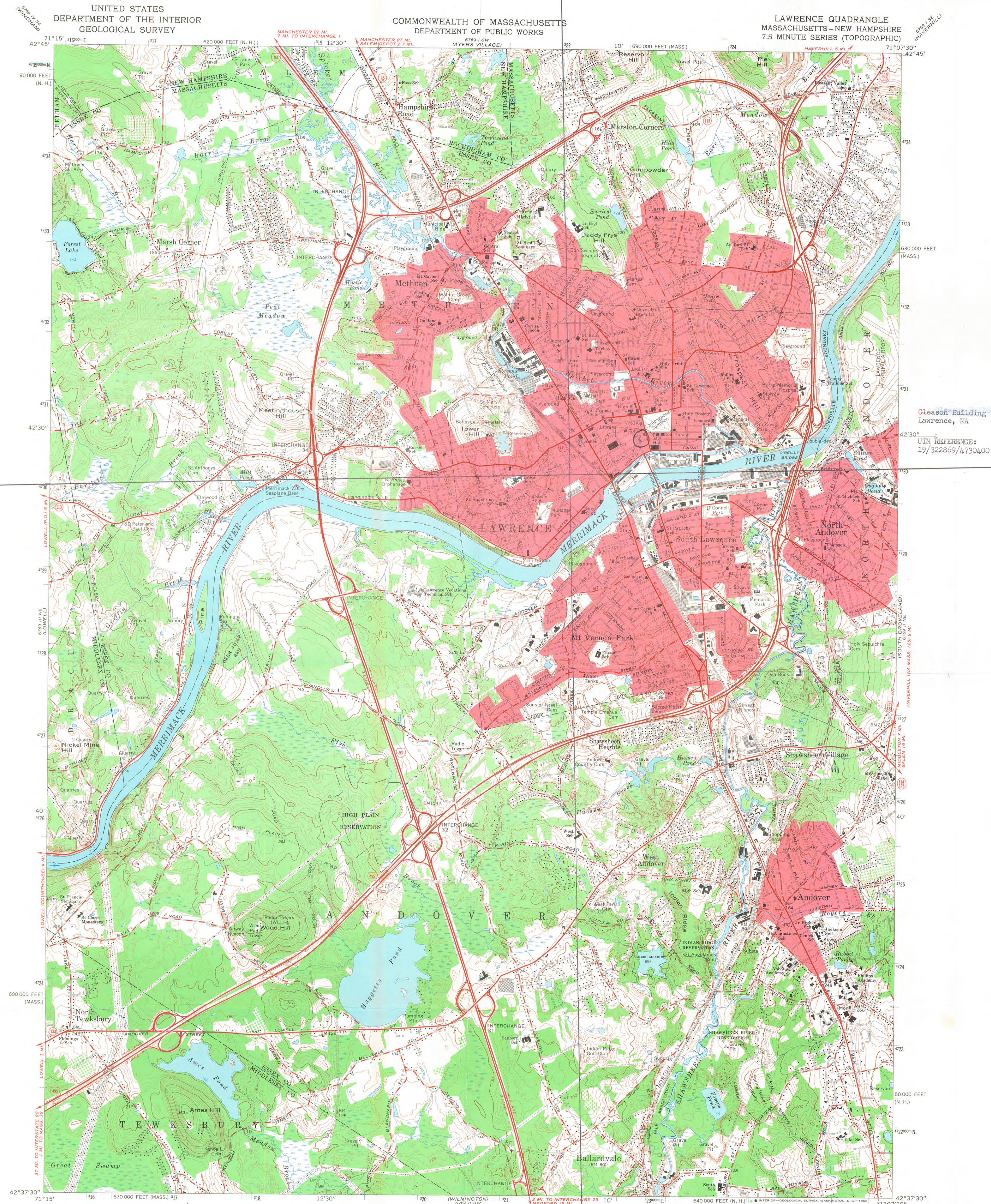
Gleason Building
Lawrence, MA

Christine Pfaff
Lawrence Community Development Dept.

November 1979

Photo # 3 of 3
Detail of facade

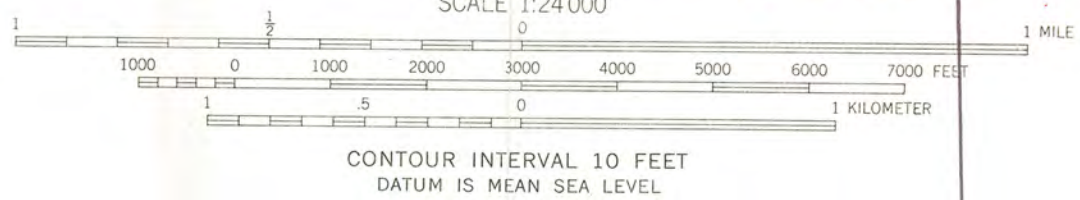
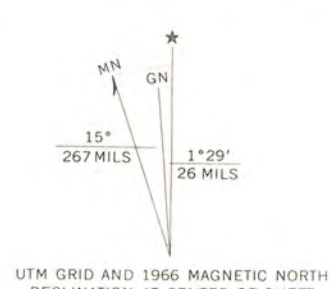
#3 Gleason Building
Detail of facade



Gleason Building
Lawrence, MA

UTM REFERENCE:
19/322869/4730400

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1941 and 1942. Revised 1966
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone, and New Hampshire coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
Interstate Route ——— State Route ———

LAWRENCE, MASS.—N. H.
N4237.5—W7107.5/7.5

1966
AMS 6769 II NW—SERIES V814

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered APRIL 15, 1982

Name

Location

Gleason Building

Lawrence
Essex County

Kimball, C. Henry, House

Chelsea
Suffolk County

Stacy, George O., House

Gloucester
Essex County

Notified

Honorable James M. Shannon
Honorable Nicholas Mavroules
Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Honorable Paul E. Tsongas

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Patricia L. Weslowski
Executive Director, Massachusetts
Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, NPS
North Atlantic Regional Office, NPS