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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JUN 1 1988

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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 St. Michael's Church
other names/site number 32 GF 515

2. Location

street & number 520 North Sixth Street N/A not for publication
city, town Grand Forks N/A vicinity
state North Dakota code ND county Grand Forks code 035 zip code 58201

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> 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 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official James E. Sperry, State Historic Preservation Officer, North Dakota Date 5/29/88

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 Alou Byron Date of Action 6-30-88

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/religious structures

Religion/religious structures

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque

foundation concretewalls bricksandstoneroof asphaltother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

St. Michael's Church is located at 524 Fifth Avenue North and sits within a residential neighborhood on the fringes of downtown Grand Forks, North Dakota. The site straddles two plats of the city: the Original townsite of Grand Forks as platted by Captain Griggs in 1875 (Roberts, P. 19), and McCormack's Addition (platted by Michael L. McCormack in 1880; See Figure F). This area of the city has been developed for residential purposes since the late 19th Century and contains numerous dwellings from that period and shortly thereafter. The site contains five buildings (church, rectory, garage, school, and youth center). Only the church is being nominated.

Since 1883 the parish complex has been located on Block 4 of the near northwest side of downtown Grand Forks, between two railroad tracks about three blocks from the Red River of the North. North Fifth Street which runs along side the complex served as the main artery through Grand Forks for many years. Properties surrounding St. Michael's consists in large part of lots with 25 foot frontages (see Figure G). In this area were constructed small inexpensive frame houses on narrow lots near to the workplace: railroad switching yards, maintenance shops, saw mills, boiler works and foundries.

The main portion of St. Michael's Church is a large, rectangular structure of red brick with a steeply pitched gable roof that towers above structures in the immediate area. The church is rotated 45° from cardinal directions (see Figure F) such that the main entrance occurs on the southeast facade. Appended to the rear (northwest elevation) of the church is a large apsidal projection and a number of additional historic compartments. The cornerstone on the southern corner of the building indicates it was built in 1908.

Above the main entry is a large rose window situated between two 106' bell towers. Above the rose window on the gable peak is an 8' 5" x 4' 4" stone cross (Figure A). Surmounting the towers are bellcast domes (Figure B) covered with gold-painted metal and decorated with four circular crosses (Figure C) and four urns (Figure D). Romanesque styling is indicated by tower decoration, by the full arches over facade openings, by running arch bands at the cornice level, and by the massive and symmetrical composition. Sandstone is employed on lintels and sills and at the watertable level.

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Entry to the church's raised basement occurs on the primary facade via stairs which flank the main stone steps. A second historic entry occurs at the western corner, within a 2-story vestibule. A third entry has been added recently to the northeast side for handicapped access. An original entry on the northeast corner has been sealed.

The church exterior appears much as it did originally, having undergone minimal alteration. Brick serves as the exterior facing material. The original contract between the Hancock Bros. of Fargo, the architects, and E. C. Richmond, Grand Forks, builder (3/11/1908 Contract), states that ". . . the building is to be faced above grade with No. 7 Red Menomonie pressed brick laid and pointed in brown mortar and that all stone trimmings are to be clear No. 1 Portwing Brownstone, except the steps, door sills and area copings, which are to be of clear No. 1 Kettle River sandstone . . ." This contract was for \$48,931.00.

The Appraisal and Quantity Survey, completed for St. Michael's in 1938, provides many structural details of the church. It lists brick construction with stone trim, concrete floor and trussed and shingled roof; wood joint construction throughout. It also reports the Nave as 40' and the circular Sanctuary as 38' in height. The nave consists in 6,844 sq. ft.; the sanctuary area is 650 sq. ft.; and balcony contains 1,682 sq. ft. The columns which support the room consist of structural steel from 7' 10" to 9' 10" in length. The floor slants downward from the entrance of the church toward the sanctuary. The rough excavation measurements were 120' x 65'.

The interior of the church has experienced extensive change over the years, but these alterations were done in a manner which was consistent with the original architecture and artistry.

The nave of the church seats about 725 people presently, with room for another 225 in the sacristies and choir-loft (approximately 950 total). During the 1985-86 renovation, the pews were replaced slightly further apart in the nave of the church (39" instead of 36"); previously the church had seated about 100 more people than it presently does.

The majority of alterations have resulted from maintenance and repair work. The following outlines the major alterations which have occurred to the exterior of the church since 1908 when it was built.

Tuckpointing and caulking to exterior brickwork, stonework, and joints was undertaken in 1958 and 1979.

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A new entrance was added on the northeast side of the church in 1963 near the front of the church. This allowed ready access to the courtyard (area behind the buildings which comprise the St. Michael's block). A lift for the handicapped was installed at this entrance in 1977, but it wasn't until the renovation of 1985-86 that the handicapped entrance was completed. It now includes another lift which enables the handicapped access to the lower auditorium as well as the church proper. At the same time the over ground "tunnel" from the church to the school was removed.

The church underwent major reroofing in 1948. During the years of 1978-1979, major work was done to the gutters and downspouts to prevent water from further damaging the inside of the church. The roofs of the towers and the cupola were repainted gold. Insulation was added in 1944 and again in 1978-80. New doors replaced the old ones on the front of the church by 1946. The original artistic windows have never been replaced, but have needed repairs several times since being installed: 1941, 1954, 1977-79. The original bells were altered by the installation of an electric drive motor in 1951-52.

In addition to the exterior alterations, the streets around the church were widened in 1958, and the courtyard asphalt was repaired and improved in 1978.

The interior of the church has experienced extensive change over the years, but these alterations were done in a manner which was consistent with the original architecture and artistry.

The church interior was redecorated in 1930 by an artist/decorator named Eligio Bianchi from Chicago. It was again redecorated in 1951, this time by an artist/decorator named Sverre Hanssen from St. Paul. The latest renovation/decoration project was in 1985-86 and this was done by the Conrad Schmitt Studios of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

During this last renovation, it was found that the balcony had been sagging. It was repaired and steel and cement supports added. The fourteen Stations of the Cross are original, having only undergone repair or painting.

The lighting system was electric from the beginning, but it has been changed over the years. Originally individual light bulbs dotted all of the arches; later hanging lights were added in 1930; and in 1978 a new Romanesque lighting/sound system combination was installed.

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The flooring in the nave of the church was repaired in 1951 and again during the 1985-86 renovation. Tiling was installed on the sanctuary floor in 1934; the main aisle was retiled in 1944; and in 1969 the sanctuary and aisles were carpeted. The entire floor was refinished with tongue-in-groove wood and recovered with carpeting in the aisles and sanctuary, while tiles were placed under the pews, all during the 1985-86 renovation. The side aisles had been widened in 1963 when the northeast entrance was added.

A Sacred Heart statue was installed on the right front side of the proscenium arch, and a Bishop's chair, canopy and kneeler were added on the left side of the sanctuary when the church became known as a "pro-cathedral" (term given to the structure by Msgr. LeMieux around 1911-1912. The term was dropped by Msgr. McNamee around 1930. The statue, the Bishop's chair, canopy and kneeler were removed around 1951 at the time of the second redecoration. The Bishop's chair is now in the lower auditorium in a prominent place and the kneeler has been redesigned and is in use in the church proper at Our Lady of Perpetual Help shrine.

The main altar and two side altars are in place. They have been repainted or refinished in the decorating project of 1930, again in 1942, and in the 1985-86 renovation work.

A set of sanctuary furnishings was purchased on March 23, 1909, from the Dubuque Altar Manufacturing Company of Dubuque, Iowa, at a cost of \$4,848.90. The contract lists them as follows: Roman style main altar of white wood with onyx columns; two Roman style side altars of whitewood; Roman style altar railing 57 feet long with onyx columns; Roman style confessional of red oak; Roman style pulpit with steps and canopy; Romanesque vestment case; 120 pews of red oak (included kneelers); 7 statues.

The altar railing has been removed, but the doors were incorporated into the new lectern when it was designed and crafted in 1979. The original raised pulpit was installed on the first column on the right side of the nave. It had an oak canopy and steps leading up to it. Historic pictures taken upon completion of the 1930 decoration project indicate that the canopy was changed to a shell style canopy. The very ornate decorations on top of the three altars were removed in 1951 because they were in disrepair. The new free-standing oak altar was built in 1978-79 incorporating some of the altar railing from the sacristy. Six holy water fronts were fashioned out of oak in 1981 to match the baptistry.

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The Roman style confessional listed on on the original order has been moved from the sacristy to the nave of the church. Two additional confessionals were added on either side at the rear of the church shortly after the church was built. These were redesigned and enlarged, on just prior to, and one during the 1985-86 renovation to allow for not only private but also for face-to-face confessions.

During this last renovation, new vigil candle stands were crafted for the three shrines, two in the church proper, and one in the sacristy where in 1987 an icon of St. Michael the Archangel, the patron of St. Michael's Church, was painted and framework crafted for placement in the main sacristy. These items represent, in effect, a type of furniture; their presence does not affect the structure or its basic form. These additions have all been designed in such a way as to be consistent with the church's design.

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

1909

1909

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
E. C. Richmond, Grand Forks: Builder
Hancock Brothers, Fargo: Architect

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

St. Michael's Church in Grand Forks is significant architecturally and historically. Architecturally it represents a locally important building style, Romanesque, which generally imparted a sense of trustworthiness and dignity to its wearers. The size of the church makes it a local visual landmark. In the county, it is architecturally important as the only church which represents the style. Its historical importance stems from its time of construction during a period of general economic and building activity known as the "Second Dakota Boom." Though the importance of St. Michael's parish predates the present church building, the size and quality of the worship house completed in 1909 suggests parishoners' and diocesan expectations for future expansion of the city.

Before active settlement of the Grand Forks area, i.e., during the early and mid-1800s, missionary priests travelled along the Red River to serve the needs of the Metis (French and Indian) people (Ahern: 168-70; Wilkins and Wilkins: 31-32; Sherman, 1983: 104-5). As the fur trade and ox cart enterprises declined, Metis families with their gardens and cabins settled along the Red, the Turtle, and the Red Lake rivers. St. Michael's congregation began, therefore, in 1872 when the Bishop of St. Boniface in Manitoba, assigned a priest to care for these permanent Metis residents. Descendants of some of these early peoples are still part of St. Michael's parish, as high as fifty families of Metis background are affiliated with the present-day church. When St. Michael's was established in 1872, a handful of early Irish, French and German frontiersmen were also present. St. Michael's became their parish, too.

An 1880 map of Grand Forks (Tweton: inside front cover) indicates four churches: Episcopal, Methodist and Catholic (St. Michael's) on the north side of town, and the Presbyterian on the south. The building shown on the map was the first structure to have the name St. Michael's Church; it was located at Sixth Street and DeMers Avenue and built in 1878. By 1882 the parish had grown so rapidly (from 15 families in the mid 1870s, to 350 in the early 1880s) that a new church had to be built five blocks northwest on North Sixth Street and Sixth Avenue North on land which was sold by

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
 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:
State Historical Society of North Dakota,
Division of Archeology and Historic Preserv.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 14 6464810 53098110
Zone Easting Northing
C _____

B _____
Zone Easting Northing
D _____

N/A See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 6, 8, 10, 12, Block 4, partly in the Original Townsite Plat of Grand Forks and partly in McCormack's Addition to the Original Plat. This area is part of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Lot 3, Section 3, Township 151 North, Range 50 West of the Fifth Principal Meridian.

N/A See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The area includes the nominated building and the property immediately surrounding. The building is within a complex of church-owned buildings. The buildings which do not contribute to the contexts defined in the nomination have not been included within the Verbal Boundary Description.

N/A See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ellen O'Connor/parish worker; Rev. William C. Sherman/ Pastor
organization St. Michael's Church date March 9, 1988
street & number 520 N. 6th telephone 701-772-2624
city or town Grand Forks, state North Dakota zip code 58201

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Michael McCormack to Bishop Martin Marty, head of the Catholic churches in Dakota Territory. The sale was accomplished on November 28, 1881, for \$1,800.00. "St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church of Grand Forks, Dakota Territory," the official name before statehood, was incorporated July 23, 1884, at Yankton, Dakota Territory.

The river boats and wagon trails brought the first peoples, but the railroad soon conveyed many more to the region: Canadians, Yankees, Scandinavians, Germans and Germans from Russia. Many of these were Catholic, so the need for the church increased with each decade. By 1890, St. Michael's was the largest Catholic parish in the State of North Dakota (only in 1980 did a suburban Fargo congregation exceed St. Michael's in size). Though the parish organization has an historical significance which dates from territorial times, the earliest building on the present St. Michael's site was the pastor's residence which was moved to the site in mid-1882 from the original 6th and DeMers location (Grand Forks Plaindealer, May 22, 1882). The parish was, in fact, the mother church for Catholics in what is now a seven-county area (St. Michael's Church, 1972).

That church building at North Sixth Street and Sixth Avenue North, formerly Ione Avenue, was largely destroyed by wind in 1887. A new structure designed by John W. Ross was rebuilt in old Gothic style that lasted until it was destroyed by fire in 1907. In 1892 Ross designed the parish rectory. These two structures were erected at a time when immigration to North Dakota was at a high pitch, in response to newly opened farmlands. The increase in railroad activity, agricultural cultivation, and commercial investment, created the "First Dakota Boom" and brought tens of thousands of people to North Dakota in the 1880s.

Grand Forks expanded rapidly, from 33 people in 1871, 1,800 people in 1880, 4,979 in 1890, 8,652 in 1900, to 12,478 in 1910, according to U. S. Census figures. Much of the housing in the vicinity of St. Michael's Church was composed blue collar workers who resided near their place of work. These have been joined over the years by number of retirees from rural areas and people of a more transient background.

In 1907 John Shanley, Bishop of Fargo and Edward J. Conaty, the pastor, set in motion the design and erection of an even larger church, one which could serve the needs of a growing congregation. To make room for the new, and present church, the parish house was moved to the northwest corner of the block, the site on which the former two churches had stood (Grand Forks Herald, September 3, 1907).

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That the new St. Michael's Church structure was meant from the start to be grand is evidenced by a report in the Grand Forks Daily Herald on September 3, 1907, just two days after the former church building had burned, which stated that the church ". . . is to be replaced with a \$100,000 church . . . (it) will be the finest church in North Dakota." Two years later, on the occasion of the formal opening of the church, the Herald headlines read that the "Structure Is Finest Church Building in Every Particular in Northwest" (October 17, 1909). The Bulletin of the Diocese of Fargo reported in their November, 1909, edition that the new St. Michael's Church of Grand Forks "...is one of the greatest monuments to Catholicity that this state can boast."

The excitement over building a new church paralleled the sentiment throughout Grand Forks as the 1900-1915 period saw a steady increase in construction and economic well being. Architects Joseph Bell DeRemer and J.W. Ross were continuously employed in designing the commercial renaissance. This period, known as the "Second Dakota Boom," resulted from additional immigration to the state and generally good harvests and crop prices. The downtown area of Grand Forks erected many new business blocks to serve growing markets, and additional residential areas were platted to accommodate present and future growth (Roberts and Roberts: 20, 45, 50-51). Within this perspective, the construction of the expansive St. Michael's Church is consonant with the optimism of the period.

St. Michael's Church building possesses an architectural appeal derived from its visual impact upon its surroundings, the near north side of Grand Forks. In this old residential area of town the structure is an easily recognized landmark. It towers some 125 feet over the modest-sized homesteads which surround it. It serves as an anchor for the neighborhood. Indeed, dozens if not hundreds of families live nearby simply because the parish with its church represents roots and home. The elegance of the structure may have a certain positive influence upon its surroundings. Neighboring houses are almost universally kept in repair; the small yards are curried with diligence; the appearance of streets and alleys are accorded a special degree of concern. What could easily have become an urban area of decay is a respectable part of town. St. Michael's presence forms a sort of cornerstone of pride. There's good reason to believe that its continuing vitality will guarantee a healthy north side neighborhood.

According to an unreported survey of 13 North Dakota counties conducted by Frank Vyzralek and James Schimmer for the State Historical Society of North Dakota, St. Michael's Church building is the third oldest extant church structure in Grand Forks. All three of these early churches are located near the downtown district. The two older ones are the First Church of Christ Scientist, built in 1903, located at Belmont

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Road and Fourth Avenue South; and the First Presbyterian Church built in 1904, located at 308 South Fifth Street. St. Michael's Church, built in 1908, is located at 524 Fifth Avenue North.

The Second Dakota Boom years, 1900-1915, were years of heightened construction for commercial and religious organizations alike. The survey found that 33 of Grand Forks County's 83 churches were completed during this period. No other comparable span of years witnessed the erection of as many churches. The survey also found that St. Michael's is the only church of Romanesque design in the county. It was not, however, the only building of Romanesque design in the city of Grand Forks at the time of its construction. The Hotel Antlers and the first Dakota Hotel were built in the 1890s and were of Romanesque design according to the Roberts survey. The second hotel Dakota was also in this same design (Roberts, pp. 45-55). Also of Romanesque design were the Security Trust Building (built circa 1890) and the St. John Block in downtown Grand Forks. These structures still stand.

St. Michael's was built nearest the people it was meant to serve. At the time this church opened (1909), there were two services each Sunday, now there are six. It has in no way diminished in usefulness; rather, the number of parishioners continue to grow with each year.

St. Michael has not only an historical but also a symbolic meaning for a sizable group of Grand Forks' quiet and unspectacular lower income residents. Observers continually refer to the "fierce loyalty" found among church members. The residents are well aware of the fact that they do not reside in the affluent parts of town. Events in their neighborhoods may be "unspectacular," but today's 5,000 members feel pride in the fact they they are in the oldest parish and worship in the largest church in the state. The 1,500 families who gather for the six Sunday services have attempted to preserve the original flavor and artistic refinements of their structures. They have avoided as much as possible the renovation of their building which has left few churches untouched after the Roman Catholic Church's Second Vatican Council.

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FIGURES

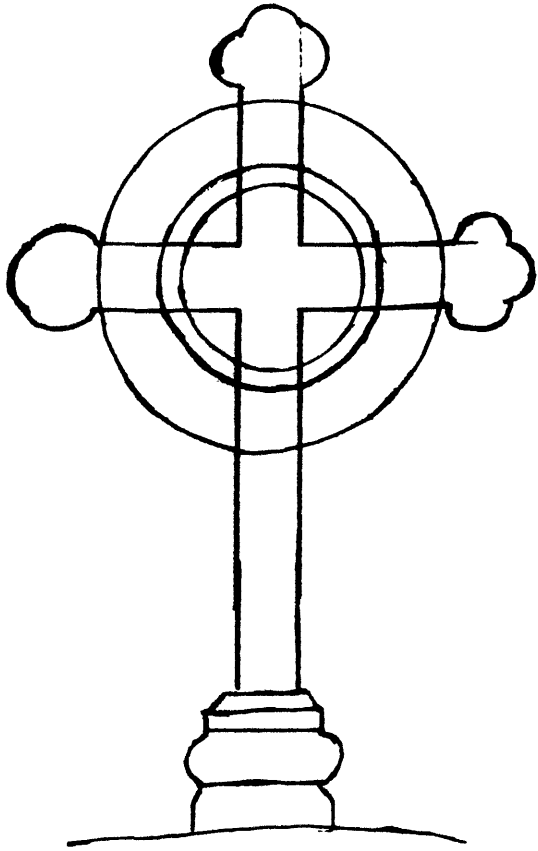
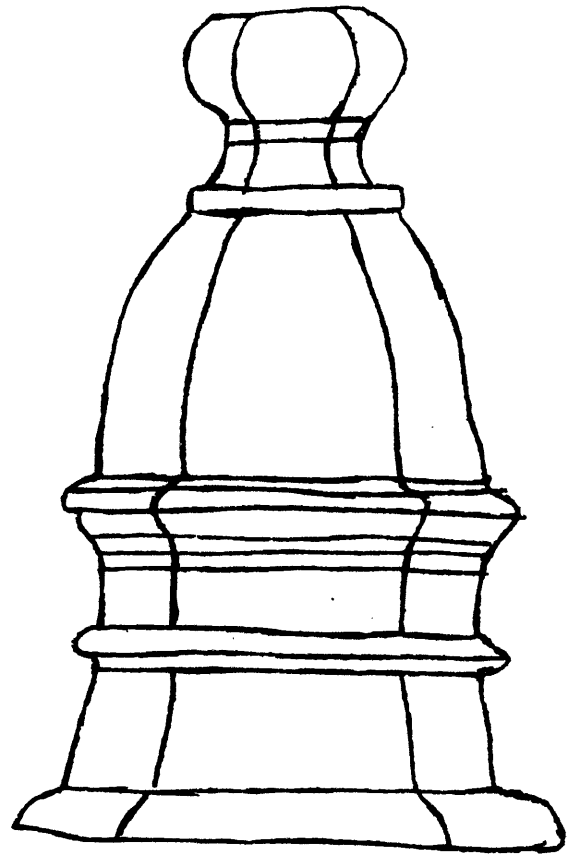
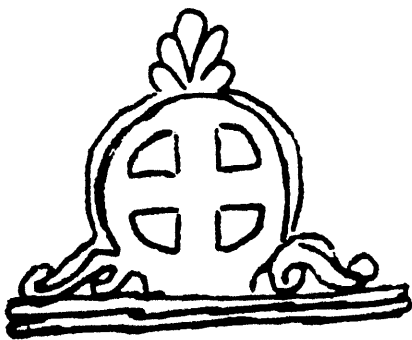


Figure A



Scale 1/2"

Figure B



1/2" scale

Figure C

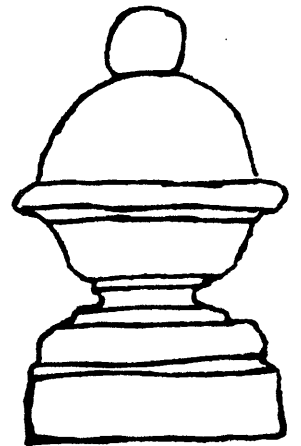


Figure D

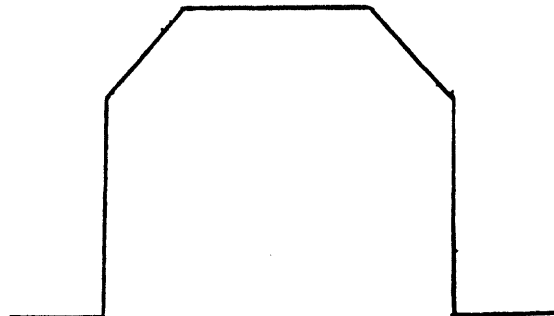


Figure E