

MAY 15 1989

SOUTHBRIDGE MASS

MRA

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116

AREA	FORM NO.
A	113

Roll # 1-16

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Town Southbridge

Address Hamilton and Pine Streets

Historic Name St. Peter's R.C. Church

St. Mary's School

Use: Present school

Original church

DESCRIPTION

Date 1853

Source local histories

Style Greek Revival

Builder: Leonard Cutler

Exterior Wall Fabric stucco and wood

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) 1872-moved fr site of St. Mary's Church & converted into school; (1939)- front doors modernized - windows enlarged - application of stucco finish Condition Good - belltry replaced by Cupola

Moved Yes Date 1872

Acreage one acre or less

Setting part of parish complex on commercial residential street

UTM REFERENCE 18/745 040/4662 790

USGS QUADRANGLE Southbridge, Mass-Conn

SCALE 1:2,000

Recorded by E. Woodford, S. Ceccacci  
ed. S. Ceccacci

Organization Southbridge Historical Com- mission

Date May 1986

## NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

St. Peter's Church/St. Mary's School is significant for its association with the town's industrial expansion at Globe Village, the growth of the immigrant Irish community, and the elaboration and diversity of public buildings at mid-19th century. It meets National Register criteria A and C at the local level and retains integrity of location, design, feeling, and association. The boundaries indicated on the attached assessors map are those of current ownership.

## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

Resembling a Federal period New England meeting house in its form, St. Peter's/St. Mary's has a rectangular hall and a projecting facade tower. Otherwise Greek Revival in style, the structure bears elements such as a matchboard facade pediment, paneled cornerboards and a Classical frieze and cornice.

Alterations were made to the building in 1939. The enlarging of windows along the sides of the building, the addition of the present doorframe and the application of a stucco finish were apparently done at this time. This same "improvement" project also seems to have included the removal of the original rectangular belfry and its replacement with the present faceted cupola like belfry and a surrounding balustrade. Despite these alterations, the building still retains much of its original Greek Revival character.

St. Peter's is one of two existing Greek Revival churches which were built about the same time in Southbridge. The other is the Universalist Church on Main Street in the Centre Village Historic District. Although it has lost its original steeple, the Universalist Church has suffered few alterations to other parts of the building. Yet, the present altered appearance of St. Peter's Church/St. Mary's School is nonetheless significant as the result of its continuous use by the same congregation for over 130 years.

## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

The first Catholic mass said in Southbridge took place in the home of a Mr. Leery on High Street in Globe Village in 1840. With Rev. James Fitton officiating, only twelve persons attended. Seven were Irish. The rest were French Canadians and Germans. Over the following years from time to time, other priests also came to say mass in Southbridge to a growing Catholic population. By 1845 the number of Catholics in town had grown to forty. Within only another year the number had reached 100. This rapid increase was due largely to the growing success and expansion of the Hamilton Woolen Mill which attracted Irish and French Canadian immigrants to Southbridge.

As the managers of the Hamilton Mill were anxious to have a steady work force, they encouraged the establishment of a Catholic church. In 1852 the town's first Catholic parish was organized. Land on Hamilton Street for a church building was donated by William Edwards a fervent Baptist. The present building, then known as St. Peter's Church, was completed and dedicated in 1853. During the remaining years of the 1850's the town's Catholic population continued to grow. Within only five years the church congregation numbered 1653. By 1869 the number of French Canadian Catholics had become sufficient to allow them to form their own French language parish. The French left St. Peter's. In 1870 their own church was completed around the corner on Pine Street on land given to them by the Hamilton Mill. The old parish then decided to build a new building. The original church was moved to its present site and in 1872 a new clasp board Gothic Revival church still standing but altered by synthetic siding was built on the original site. Along with the new church building came a new name for the parish, St. Mary's

(See Continuation Sheet)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Burns, Brian, ed. Footsteps Through History. Southbridge: Worcester County Newspapers, 1980, p. 46

Gatineau, Felix, Histoire des Franco-Américains de Southbridge, Framingham: Lakeview Press, 1919, pp. 32-41

\_\_\_\_\_. Quinebaug Historical Society Leaflets, Vol. II, #13, p. 113.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: MRA	Form No:
Southbridge	A-113
Property Name: St. Peter's R.C. Church / St. Mary's School	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

The old church was adapted as a parish school and still serves in that capacity today. The first structure built by a Roman Catholic congregation in Southbridge, this building has been in constant use by its original parish since its construction.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Southbridge MRA  
State Worcester County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review		Date/Signature
61. Oakes, J.J., House	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers 6/22/89</u> Attest _____
62. Phillips, E.M., House	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers 6/22/89</u> Attest _____
63. Plimpton, Simon, Farmhouse	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers 6/22/89</u> Attest _____
64. Richard, Stephen, House	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers 6/22/89</u> Attest _____
65. Sacred Heart Church Historic District Entered in the National Register		Keeper <u>Melrose Byers 6/22/89</u> Attest _____
66. Smith--Lyon Farmhouse	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers 6/22/89</u> Attest _____
67. St. George's Greek Orthodox Church	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers 6/22/89</u> Attest _____
68. St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church-- St. Mary's School	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers 6/22/89</u> Attest _____
69. Stone, Lorenzo R., House	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers 6/22/89</u> Attest _____
70. Sumner, George, House	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers 6/22/89</u> Attest _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church--St. Mary's School  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Southbridge MRA  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 5/15/89 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/31/89  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/16/89 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/29/89  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89000559

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 6/22/89 DATE

Entered in the  
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

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CLASSIFICATION

count       resource type

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STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

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FUNCTION

historic       current

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DESCRIPTION

architectural classification  
 materials  
 descriptive text

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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

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage       verbal boundary description  
 UTM's       boundary justification

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ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps     USGS maps     photographs     presentation

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OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

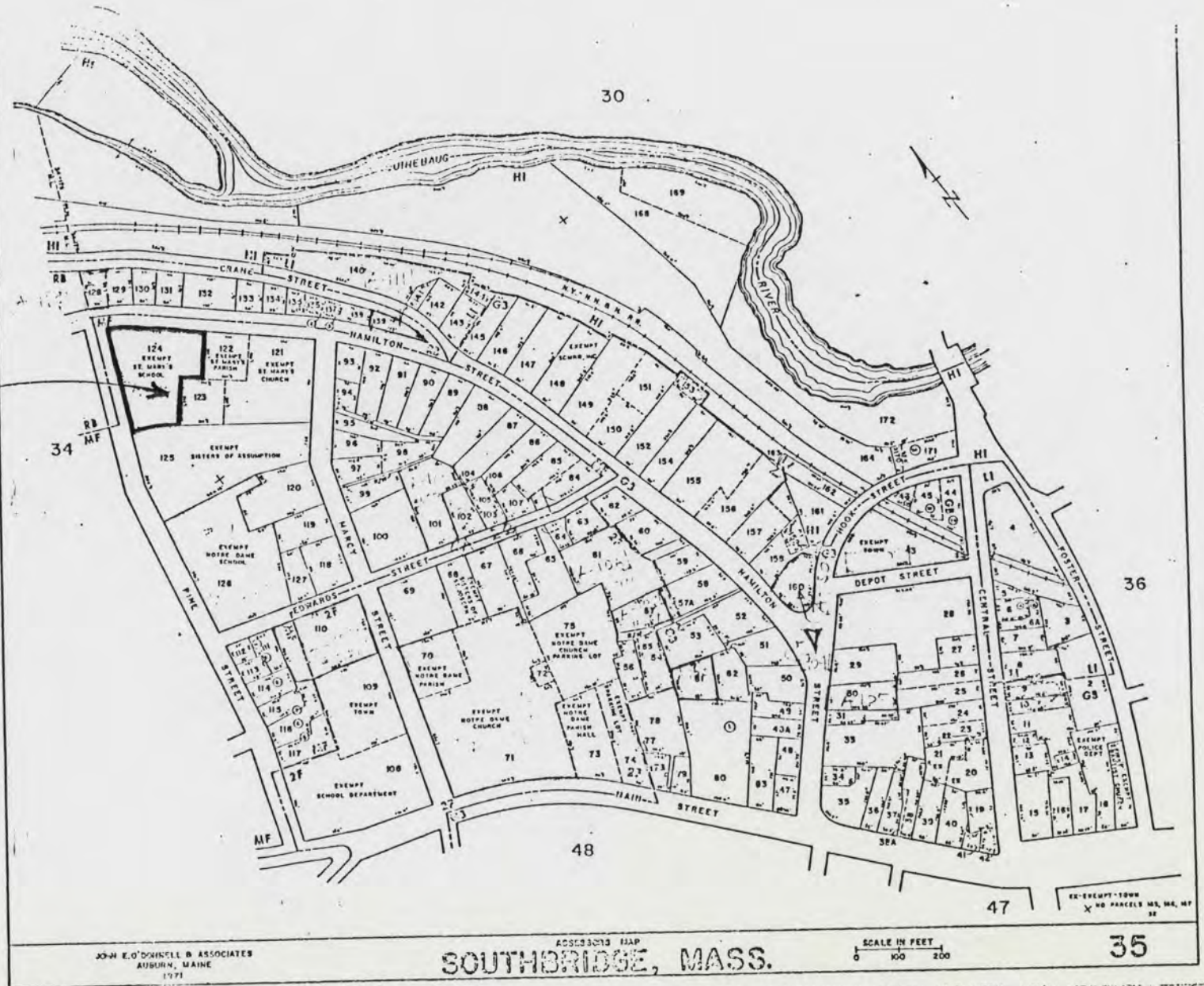
Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



St. Peter's Church / St. Mary's School  
Southbridge, MA MA  
Ceccacci, 1986  
Southbridge Historical Commission  
Roll # 1-16

A-113

SOUTHRIDGE MASS  
MRA



Hamilton + Paine, St Mary's School

JOHN E. O'DONNELL & ASSOCIATES  
AUBURN, MAINE  
1971

ASSESSOR'S MAP  
SOUTHRIDGE, MASS.

SCALE IN FEET  
0 100 200

EX-EMPT - 1800  
X - NO PARCELS MA, ME, NY

35

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000294