

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no. NW CAMB.	Form no. NWC IID3
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Cambridge

2270 Massachusetts Avenue

Saint John's Roman Catholic Church

present use church

present owner Roman Catholic Arch diocese of Boston Corporation Sole; Rev. Henry Barry.

1904

source Deed Records

Tuscan Romanesque

architect Maginnis, Walsh & Sullivan

Exterior wall fabric brick

Outbuildings (describe) -----

Other features impressive campanile

at rear of church, terra cotta decorative features, marble columns supporting arched openings at entrance.

Altered Yes- part of Date 1957

church rebuilt after 1957 fire

Moved No Date -----

5. Lot size:

One acre or less Over one acreXXX

Approximate frontage 278 feet

Approximate distance of building from street

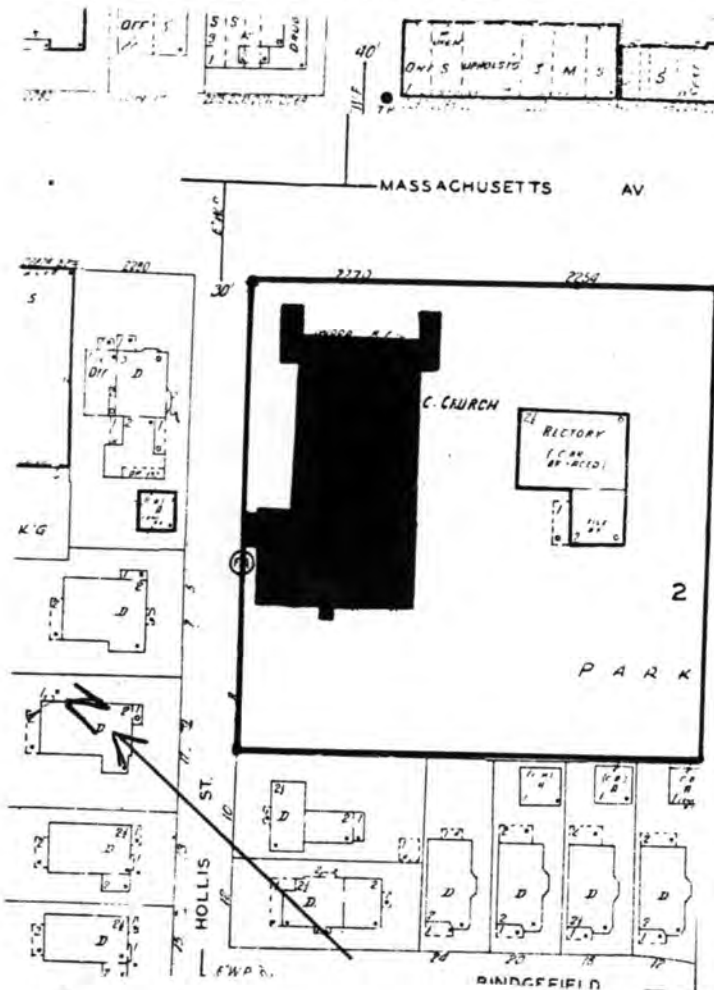
10 feet

6. Recorded by Bainbridge Bunting

Organization Cambridge Historical Comm.

Date 1965

4. Map. Draw sketch of building 1105-31 in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



UTM-LEXINGTON
19/324860/4695500

7. Original owner (if known) _____

Original use _____ religious _____

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates _____ same _____

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	_____	Conservation	_____	Recreation	_____
Agricultural	_____	Education	_____	Religion	XX
Architectural	XX	Exploration/ settlement	_____	Science/ invention	_____
The Arts	_____	Industry	_____	Social/ humanitarian	_____
Commerce	_____	Military	_____	Transportation	_____
Communication	_____	Political	_____		
Community development	_____				

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

This Tuscan Romanesque style church was built in 1904 to replace the parish's earlier building of 1891. Flanked by a Florentine-style campanile, it is executed in brick with ivory, green and red terra cotta detailing. Marble columns with terra cotta capitals support five arched openings, within which are three entrances and above which is a broad terra cotta fascia pierced by paired round arched windows.

A 1957 fire resulted in the rebuilding of the nave area in a similar style as the original. Fortunately, no damage was done to the tall campanile to the rear of the church which is ornamented with ornate terra cotta trim in the belfry area. The reconstruction of the nave was designed by the firm of Maginnis, Walsh & Sullivan.

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

NOV 14 1980



St. John's R.C. Church
2270 Massachusetts Ave.

Photo: c.1905
N.R.# NWC II.D.3

ST. J.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

Property: Saint John's Roman Catholic Church
(Cambridge Multiple Resource Area)
State, County: MA - Middlesex
Federal Agency: _____

Working No. 11-17-80-2862

Fed. Reg. Date: _____

Date Due: 4-17-82

Action: ACCEPT

RETURN 4.13.82

REJECT

photos

maps _____

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

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

No context, no ^{real} statement of architectural significance. Please discuss the rebuilding of the Nave area following the 1957 fire - how extensive was this rebuilding, and what effect does it have on the integrity of the historic portion of the church?

Recom./Criteria Return

Reviewer Patrick Andrus

Discipline Historian

Date 4/5/82

see continuation sheet

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

8. Significance

Period _____ Area 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

Acres of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UMT 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 Audrey

Signed Branham Date 4.13.82 Phone: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no.	Form no.
NW CAMB.	NWC IID3

1. Town Cambridge

Address 2270 Massachusetts Avenue

Name Saint John's Roman Catholic Church

Present use church

Present owner Roman Catholic Archocese of Boston Corporation Sole; Rev.

3. Description: Henry Barry.

Date 1904

Source Deed Records

Style Tuscan Romanesque

Architect Maginnis, Walsh & Sullivan

Exterior wall fabric brick

Outbuildings (describe) -----

Other features impressive campanile

at rear of church, terra cotta decorative

features, marble columns supporting

arched openings at entrance.

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10 feet

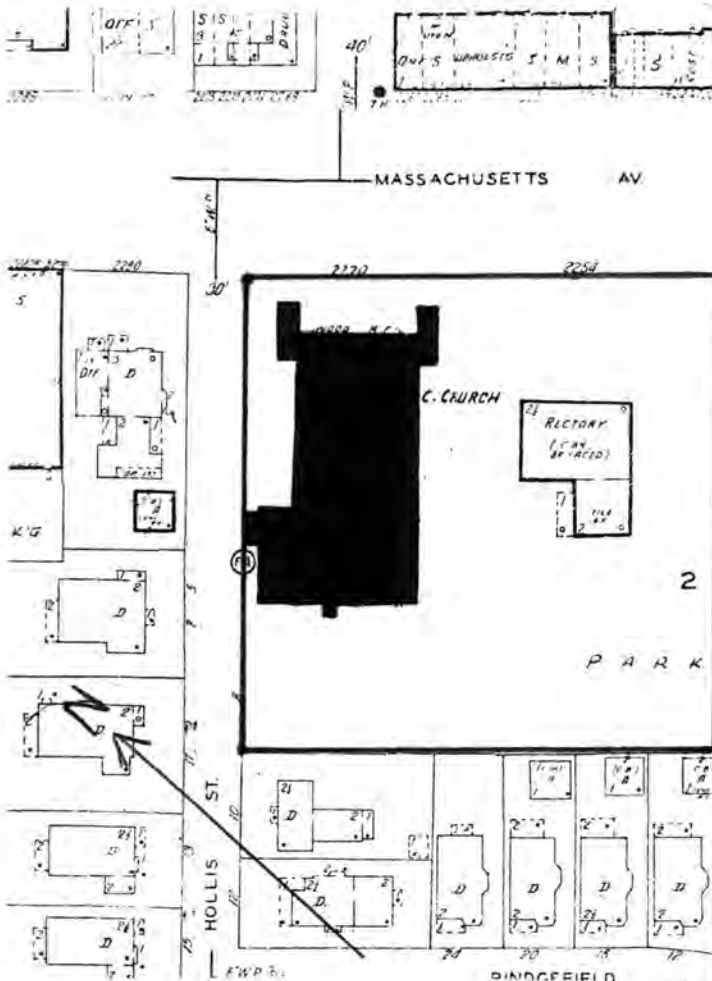
6. Recorded by Bainbridge Bunting

Organization Cambridge Historical Comm.

Date 1965

2. Photo (3x3" or 3x5")
Staple to left side of form
Photo number 1105-31

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



UTM-LEXINGTON
19/324860/4695500

7. Original owner (if known) _____

Original use _____ religious _____

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates _____ same _____

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	_____	Conservation	_____	Recreation	_____
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Architectural	XX	Exploration/ settlement	_____	Science/ invention	_____
The Arts	_____	Industry	_____	Social/ humanitarian	_____
Commerce	_____	Military	_____	Transportation	_____
Communication	_____	Political	_____		
Community development	_____				

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

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

NOV 14 1980

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Northwest Cambridge	Form No: NWC II.D.3
Property Name: Saint John's Roman Catholic Church	

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

Until the middle of the 19th century, Porter Square and Massachusetts Avenue developed as a strip community along the highways to Lexington on the west and Charlestown and Harvard Square on the east and south. The Square itself was an important stage stop, with a hotel, tavern, blacksmith shops and cattle market. The opening of the Fitchburg Railroad in 1843 established direct communication to Boston, and North Cambridge quickly became a bedroom community. While North (Massachusetts) Avenue from Porter Square to Harvard Square quickly became a prestigious suburban address, Porter Square itself and the streets north of it developed in a more modest fashion. The streets north of the railroad immediately adjoining Porter Square were developed in the 1850-1880 period with comfortable single family homes on small lots, while the streets further out Massachusetts Avenue developed in the 1890-1930 period in two family houses and three deckers. Those who built close in were Yankee and Protestant Yankee craftsmen and managers, while those who built further out were Irish Catholics, the children of immigrants.

St. John's Church was built to serve the Irish Catholic community on outer Massachusetts Avenue. It is described in Report Five: Northwest Cambridge of the Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge:

After 1900, three elaborate edifices were erected in North Cambridge by Roman Catholic parishes. St. John's, begun as a mission of St. Peter's church on Concord Avenue, erected a building at 122 Rindge Avenue in 1891, designed by Patrick W. Ford, on the present site of St. John's Grammar School that served both as school house and church. The present impressive building of buff-colored brick and terra cotta at 2270 Massachusetts Avenue was designed in 1904 by Maginnis, Walsh and Sullivan and completed a year later. The most successful aspect of this Tuscan Romanesque design is the splendid campanile located well back from the Hollis Street facade. Separated from the nave of the church by a low side aisle, the campanile appears even taller than its 100 foot height, whose vertical lines are uninterrupted by decorative elements except for slight indentations in the brick at each floor level. The facade, approached by broad flights of stairs, is enhanced by a profusion of terra cotta ornament harmonizing with the large cream-colored marble columns which carry a blind arcade across the main story.

A serious fire in 1957 necessitate the reconstruction of the upper part of the church, including the second story of the facade. at that time, the design was changed: the gable was lowered slightly, raking parapets in front of the side aisles were eliminated, the rose window was greatly simplified, and the pair of twin windows that once flanked the rose window in imitation of a church in

Staple to inventory form at bottom (over for continuation)

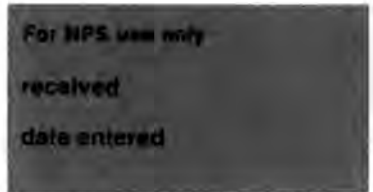
Toscannella, Italy, were deleted. In comparison to the original design, the present upper story seems rather light, but a nice accomplishment of the remodeling is the pair of covered vestibules which flank the steps to the main entrance and lead to the lower church.

The alterations of 1957, while serious, do not detract from the associations of the church with the North Cambridge Irish Catholic community.

St. John's Roman Catholic Church meets criterion A of the National Register due to its associations with the development of Massachusetts Avenue and North Cambridge, most notably the Irish settlement on the outer reaches of Massachusetts Avenue.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 15 of 17

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Cambridge Multiple Resource Area
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- 141. Taylor Square Firehouse *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper William H. Bracham 4.13.82
Attest _____
- 142. Aborn, John, House *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper William H. Bracham 4.13.82
Attest _____
- 143. Hews Pottery Company Carriage House *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper Revised 4/13/82
Attest _____
- 12 144. Walden Street Cattle Tunnel *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper Revised 4.13.82
Attest _____
- 145. Slowey, Patrick, House *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper William H. Bracham 4.13.82
Attest _____
- 146. Fresh Pond Hotel *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper William H. Bracham 4.13.82
Attest _____
- 147. McLean, Isaac, House *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper William H. Bracham 4.13.82
Attest _____
- 148. Billings, Frederick, House *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper William H. Bracham 4.13.82
Attest _____
- 149. Farwell, R. H., House *Substantive Review* ✓ Keeper William H. Bracham 4.13.82
Attest _____
- 150. St. John's Roman Catholic Church ✓ Keeper Donna Lee Dwyer 6.30.82
Attest _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Substantive Review

St. John's Roman Catholic Church (Cambridge MRA)
Middlesex County
MA

Working No. 11 11-80-2862

Fed. Reg. Date: 2-7-84

Date Due: 7/4/83

Action: ACCEPT 6/30/83
 RETURN
 REJECT

Federal Agency:

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

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

ALTHOUGH THE FIRE REQUIRED THE REMOVAL, REDESIGN
AND REBUILDING OF THE ~~THE~~ UPPER
PORTION OF THE CHURCH IT RETAINS
SUFFICIENT INTEGRITY TO BE ELIGIBLE
UNDER CRITERION A.

Recom. / Criteria A/accept

Reviewer Man Oryl

Discipline A-4

Date 6-30-83

see continuation sheet

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
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- clarity
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Specific dates _____ Builder Architect _____

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Quadrangle name _____

UMT 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



1105-31

Cambridge MA, Ma

Saint John's Roman Catholic Church

NOV 14 1980

0490

2270 Massachusetts Ave.

1105-31

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000275