

OMB NO. 1024-0018
EXP. 10/31/84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park 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 NPS use only

received SEP 21 1982

date entered

1. Name

historic Wigglesworth Building

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number 89-83 Franklin Street (also 211-215 Devonshire Street) N/A not for publication

city, town Boston N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Massachusetts code 025 county Suffolk code 025

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name A.W. Perry, Inc.

street & number 44 Bromfield Street

city, town Boston N/A vicinity of state Mass., 02108

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number Pemberton Square/Government Center

city, town Boston state Mass., 02108

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Assets
of the Commonwealth

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date June 1980 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town 294 Washington Street state Mass. 02108

7. Description

Boston, Wigglesworth Building: 89-93 Franklin St.
(also 211-215 Devonshire St.)

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

1885, 1970

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved

date

N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Wigglesworth Building stands at the southwest corner of Franklin and Devonshire Streets in Boston's central business district. Constructed of pressed red brick, granite and buff-colored freestone, the building rises five full stories above a high basement that extends beneath the sidewalk in an iron and masonry vault. The building's plan is irregular, conforming to the curved boundary lines of its lot, which reflect the curves of Franklin and Devonshire Streets. The Franklin Street elevation (north) contains ten bays; the northeast corner is curved over four bays; the Devonshire Street elevation (southeast) contains ten unevenly spaced bays; the south elevation, facing an alley, contains three bays; and the west elevation is a party with a neighboring structure.

The building rests on a plinth of dressed granite above which brick walls and cast-iron storefronts rise to a hammered granite sign board and freestone cornice. Storefronts are framed into bays by panelled cast-iron columns with decorated capitals. Between each pair of columns are former basement windows (mostly removed) and plate-glass display windows surmounted by transoms (mostly removed). From the second to the fourth stories, windows are flanked by recessed brick panels; window surrounds are connected by continuous courses of freestone at their sills and at the level of springers for their lintels. Second storey windows contain 1/1 sash and lintels with carved rosettes while third and fourth storey windows contain 2/2 sash and lintels with incised, curvilinear decorative patterns. At the head of the fourth storey is a freestone cornice with modillions, above which the fifth storey contains 5/5 arched windows set in arched surrounds with keystones. At the head of the fifth storey is a shallow stone cornice. The building's roof is flat, covered with tar and gravel, and has two metal-clad elevator penthouses, one near the building's southwest corner, the other near its northwest corner.

Alterations to the Wigglesworth Building have been minor. A aluminum-trimmed glass entry has been added to the westernmost bay of the Franklin Street facade; similar entries have been added to the storefronts, however, none of these impinge upon the castiron framing of the storefronts. Several bays of stores on the southeast elevation have been enclosed with stucco panels and one of the doors of the rear loading bay (south) has been replaced with a flush door (ca. 1970).

8. Significance

Boston, Wigglesworth Building

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 1873, 1885 **Builder/Architect** Nathaniel J. Bradlee, architect (1873)

Winslow & Wetherell, architects (1885)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Wigglesworth Building possesses integrity of location design, materials and setting as well as historical associations with one of Boston's most prominent nineteenth-century architects and with the retail firm of French, Abram & Co. As an excellent example of Boston's late nineteenth century mercantilism it meets criteria A,B,& C of the National Register of Historic Places.

Noteworthy for its ornate and well-preserved Victorian Gothic design, the Wigglesworth Building was built in 1873 to replace a building that had been destroyed in the Great Fire of 1872. The polychromatic effect of the Building's red brick walls and buff-colored freestone trim, as well as its many moulded belt courses, recessed brick panels, carved lintels, and cast-iron storefronts marked it then and now as one of the finest examples of mid-Victorian commercial architecture in downtown Boston. In addition, the Building's curved facades and corner site make it a prominent architectural element of Franklin Street and Winthrop Square. As originally built, the Wigglesworth Building stood only four stories high above a basement; around 1885, the existing cornice was raised two feet above its original position and the fifth storey was added bringing the Building to its present size. The fifth storey was designed by Winslow & Wetherell of Boston; sketches and elevations of the addition are in the possession of the Boston Athenaeum.

The Building's architect, Nathaniel J. Bradlee (1829–1888), is known as one of Boston's most prolific nineteenth-century architects. Having studied architecture in the Boston office of George Dexter, to whose practice he succeeded, Bradlee is believed to have designed more than 500 commercial blocks in downtown Boston in addition to blocks of row houses and other commissions throughout the Boston area. Following the Fire of 1872, which destroyed many of his earlier buildings, Bradlee was active in the re-building of the burned district. Together with his students, Walter T. Winslow and George Wetherell, Bradlee was an important influence on Boston's commercial architecture directly through his own designs and indirectly through the firm of Winslow and Wetherell which succeeded to his large commercial practice. Original plans and elevations of the Wigglesworth Building are contained in the Boston Athenaeum's collection of N.J. Bradlee's drawings.

Built as an investment either for Edward Wigglesworth, a businessman, or for Edward Wigglesworth, M.D., whose family had owned a house in this general vicinity during the mid-nineteenth century, the Wigglesworth Building was rented to the firm of French, Abram & Co. from 1876 until 1900. Founded by Andrew Hall in 1822 as a retail and wholesale dealer in glassware, pottery and cutlery, French, Abram & Co. advertised itself in the 1870's as New England's largest business of its type. Employing more than 100 people, the company used the basement and upper floors of the Wigglesworth Building for its wholesale department which carried on a business throughout New England and Canada. The first storey served as display space and included several "art rooms" in which art pottery was displayed. Since 1900, the Wigglesworth Building has been used for a mixture of stores and offices.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Architectural Drawings of Nathaniel J. Bradlee. Vol 27 (1873) pp. 124-144
Manuscript at Boston Athenaeum.
Leading Manufacturers and Merchants of the City of Boston (1885) p. 99

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 7,009 feet

Quadrangle name Boston South

Quadrangle scale 1:25,000

UMT References

A 19 330490 4991040
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property includes only the lot on which the building stands; it is described in Boston Assessors' Records as parcel #4165 of Ward 3 and is shown on Assessors' Map 25N-13E. The nomination is confined to the Wigglesworth Building at the (cont.)

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Candace Jenkins, Registration Director with B.R. Pfeiffer ACT for Mass.

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date July, 1982

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Valerie Ann Talavage

title Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission date September 13, 1982

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the date 10/21/82
National Register

for Alison Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

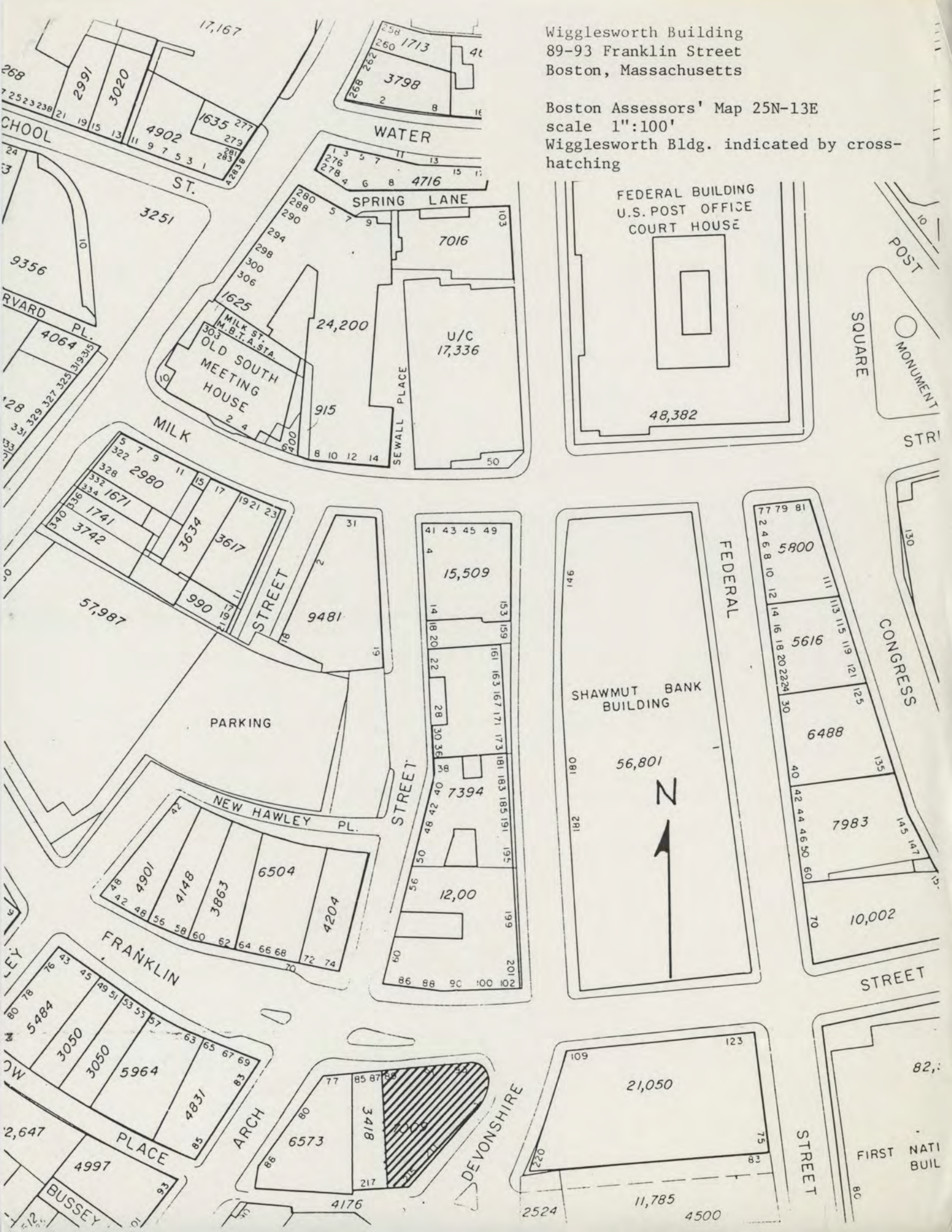
Continuation sheet Boston; Wigglesworth Bldg. Item number 10

Page 1

present since it is undergoing renovation and is in the process of certification of rehabilitation for purposes of the Tax Act. The building is part of a larger district which appears to meet the eligibility criteria. Because of the complexity of a downtown nomination and in order for the rehabilitation to proceed in a timely manner, the nomination for the Wigglesworth Building is occurring first and separately. Individually, the building meets the eligibility criteria.

Wigglesworth Building
89-93 Franklin Street
Boston, Massachusetts

Boston Assessors' Map 25N-13E
scale 1":100'
Wigglesworth Bldg. indicated by cross-hatching



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Wigglesworth Building
Suffolk County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 9/21/82-2475

Fed. Reg. Date: 2.1.83

Date Due: 10/21/82 - 11/5/82

Action: ☒ ACCEPT 10/21/82

Entered in the ☐ RETURN

National Register ☐ REJECT

Federal Agency: _____

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

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

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

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 _____

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



Wigglesworth Building
89-93 Franklin Street
Boston, Massachusetts

Brian Pfeiffer, Photographer Feb., 1982

negative at: A.C.T. for Massachusetts
45 School Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

View of Franklin Street (north) elevation taken from a position
facing southeast.

1012



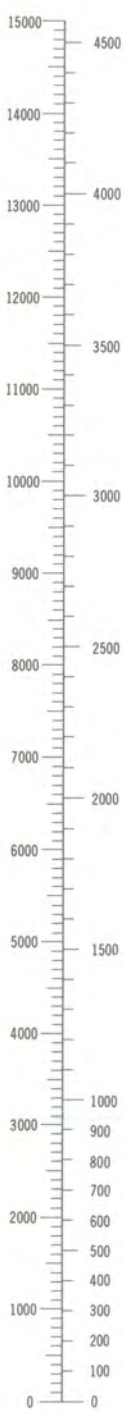
Wigglesworth Building
89-93 Franklin Street
Boston, Massachusetts

Brian Pfeiffer, Photographer Feb., 1982.

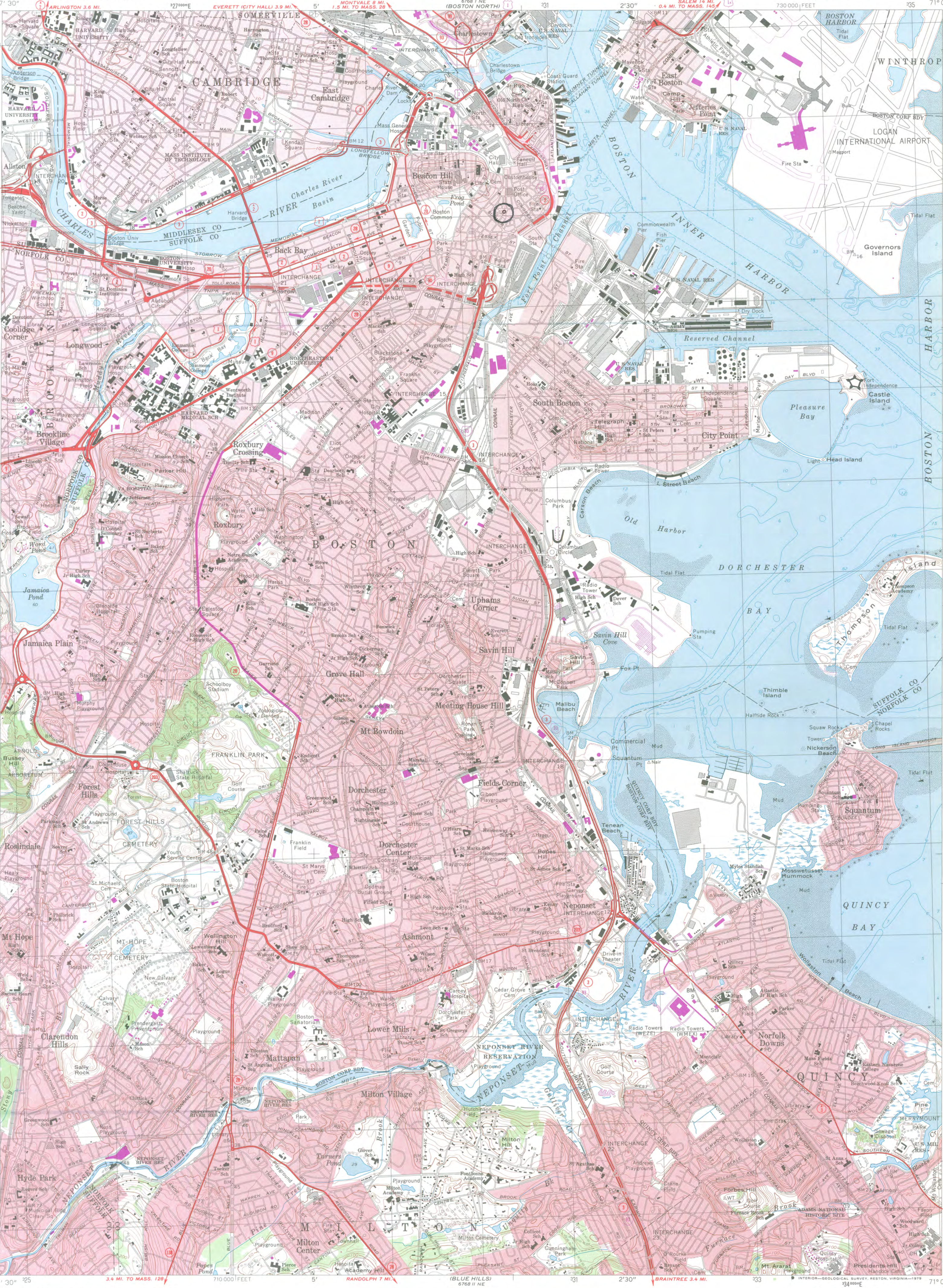
negative at: A.C.T. for Massachusetts
45 School Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

View of Devonshire Street elevation (south and southeast
elevations) taken from a position facing northwest.

2012



1	3048
2	6096
3	9144
4	12192
5	15240
6	18288
7	21336
8	24384
9	27432
10	30480



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1943. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 246
and 248 (1971). This information is not intended for navigational
purposes

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1 000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 19

Boundaries in tidewater areas from information supplied
by Massachusetts Department of Public Works

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

SCALE 1:25 000

1 000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 KILOMETER

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE ON MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 9.5 FEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Interstate Route
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road
U. S. Route
State Route

BOSTON SOUTH, MASS.
N4215—W7100/7.5

1970
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6768 I SE—SERIES V814

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map
Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with the State of
Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1975 and other
source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979



**MASSACHUSETTS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION**

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Office of the Secretary of State**

294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts
02108
617-727-8470

MICHAEL JOSEPH CONNOLLY
Secretary of State

September 14, 1982

Ms. Carol Shull, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find the following nomination forms:

Attleboro:	Herbert A. Sadler House (local)
Boston:	10 Liberty Square Building (local)
✓ Boston:	✓ Wigglesworth Building (local)
Falmouth:	Wood's Hole School (local)
Milford:	Gillon Block (local)

All have been voted eligible by the State Review Board and have been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Owners were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30-75 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment. Comments received to date are attached to the nomination forms.

Sincerely,

Candace Jenkins

Candace Jenkins
Registration Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

CJ/sac

enclosure

