

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0678830

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 12 1978
DATE ENTERED	14

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Church

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Washington, State and Ann Streets

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY/TOWN Passaic

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

8th

STATE New Jersey

CODE 34

COUNTY Passaic

CODE 031

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Diocese of Paterson, Chancery Office ✓

STREET & NUMBER 24 DeGrasse Street

CITY/TOWN Paterson

VICINITY OF

STATE New Jersey

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Passaic County Register, County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER Hamilton and Ward Streets

CITY/TOWN Paterson

STATE New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory

DATE 1975

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Office of Historic Preservation

CITY/TOWN Trenton

STATE New Jersey

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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

Built in 1889 the St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Church in Passaic is High Victorian Gothic in style.

The center tower of the church completely dominates the front facade which has three entrances into the narthe divided by angle buttressing. The prominent center entrance is flanked by smaller ones - all compound pointed Gothic arches with molded archivolt. The two smaller archways have quatrefoil window heads. Above these flanking doors, on the second level, are Gothic arched tracery windows with quatrefoils. The tower has three small closely grouped round-head openings on the second level. The stained glass tracery window on the third level has a small rose window. This tower is topped by a hip-roofed belfry which has three Gothic arched openings with louvers which are necessary for sound disposal.

The linear facade of the church has eight bays - the narthe and seven stained glass tracery windows - all divided into separate panels via buttressing. The roof, which is slate, has three small triangular dormers.

The plan is a classic basilica, the center nave rising above the two sides aisles, the front narthex and the rear polygonal apse (sacristy). Added to the apse is a one story L-shaped stone chapel. On the interior the use of wall and ceiling frescoes is extensive. The floor beams and rafters are cut pine and fire, varnished and highly polished.

A most striking feature of the church is the stained glass windows. Imported from Europe, the pictorial scenes portray the Old Testament, the New Testament, and modern day church activity.

The stained glass windows were installed around 1910 during the tenure of the Right Reverend Monsignor Thomas J. Kernan, Rector of St. Nicholas' from 1898 to 1933. The windows were executed by the firm of Franz Mayer, Inc. of Munich.

Commencing near the High Altar on the Gospel side the windows are identified as follows:

1. Annunciation of Our Lady/Fall of Adam and Eve/Resurrection of Our Lord.
2. Nativity of Christ/Finding of Moses/Children Around the Crib at Christmas in church.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

St. Nicholas R.C. Church
Passaic City
Passaic County
New Jersey 034

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

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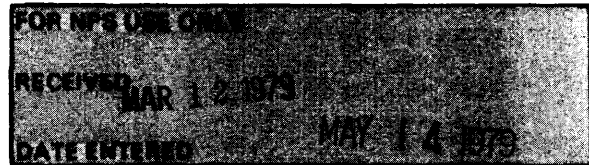
Description

3. Presentation of Christ in the Temple/The Dedication of Samuel.../A Priest Baptizing Child.
4. The Adoration of the Magi/The Lord Appearing to Moses in the Burning Bush/The Adoration of the Holy Eucharist.
5. The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple/Abraham Obeys the Call of the Lord/St. Francis of Assisi.
6. The Holy Family in the Workshop/The Jews Laboring as Slaves/St. Leo XIII Publishing his Encyclical.
7. Christ Blessing Little Children/Jacob Blessing the Children of Joseph/A Nun Teaching a Class of Children.
- 8.,9. Figures of Angels carrying Musical Instruments.
10. The Marriage Feast at Cana/Marriage of Jacob and Rachel/Scene of Nuptial Mass.
11. Jesus and the Samaritan Woman/Nathan Reproaches David/The Conversion of St. Augustine.
12. St. Mary Magdalene/Almighty God Forgives the Ninevites/Sacrament of the Holy Penance.
13. Jesus Feeds 5000 People/The Mana in the Desert/Pope Pius X Administering Holy Communion.
14. Christ Carrying His Cross/The Sacrifice of Isaac/Priest Saying Holy Mass.
15. Christ Sending Out the Apostles/Aaron Receiving the Priesthood/The Sacrement of the Holy Orders.
16. The Descent of the Holy Ghost.

On January 22, 1953, a contract was signed between the Kilgen Organ Company of St. Louis, Missouri, and St. Nicholas Church, Passaic, N.J. The agreement was for the Company to build and install a new Kilgen pipe organ in the St. Nicholas Catholic Church.

The only additions to the original structure were simply "need-precipitated" with a chimney constructed at the advent of central heating and a simple "Mansard" style roof atop the central tower, possibly because of the snow accumulation problem.

The Rectory is a 2/ 1/2 story irregular coursed stone structure with a corner turret. Also built in 1889 the Rectory is at the corner of State and Washington Streets and provides a fine complement to the St. Nicholas Church. The roof is hip at the front and



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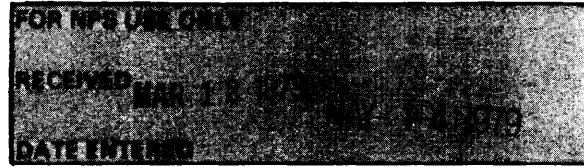
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DESCRIPTION

gable at the rear projecting fenestration of an irregular form building. The front facade has a three bay format with a one story frame porch along the entire front. A simple iron fence surrounds the Rectory.



8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1889

BUILDER/ARCHITECT William Schickel

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Church, built in 1889 by architect William Schickel, is one of the best examples of Gothic architecture in Passaic and as a religious edifice served a city with a significant foreign population providing valuable assistance in their adjustment to a new environment and cultural identity.

Religion

As Passaic grew from a tiny trading settlement to an industrial metropolis many factors helped the city's residents in the transition. One such contributing factor was the role of St. Nicholas Church.

The earliest recorded Catholic service in Passaic was celebrated the first Sunday in May, 1768, 100 years prior to the organization of St. Nicholas.²

Competition for immigrant labor shifted to the City of Paterson in the 19th century. With the arrival of the Erie Railroad the iron industry was greatly curtailed and with its curtailment most Catholics followed the lure of the other enterprising industries and left Passaic.

The return of Irish immigrant labor to Passaic was due to the dynamic growth of the Dundee Manufacturing Company.

Irish Catholics began resettling Passaic in the late 1840's. Religion provided a focus for community activity. The movement toward an Irish Catholic congregation corresponded with the development of the textile industry during the Civil War. In 1862, a committee of worshipers petitioned the bishop for permission to conduct local religious services. Prior to this the Catholics in Passaic worshipped at St. John's in Paterson or St. Francis de Sales Church in Lodi.

The advent of a new congregation often reflected the desire of each ethnic group to provide their children with religious oriented education. Irish Catholics instituted a daily education program in 1872. By 1877, 22.5% of the 773 school children in the city attended parochial rather than public schools.³

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See continuation sheet).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

QUADRANGLE NAME Weehawken

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 573880 4523580

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 84, Lot 1. City of Passaic Tax Map.
Dimensions of property are 239' x 158'

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Nick Ulan (Revisions by Terry Karschner, Office of Historic Pres.)

609-292-2023

ORGANIZATION

Passaic City Historical Commission

DATE

11/1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Passaic

STATE

New Jersey

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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.

Deputy Terry Karschner
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

2-16-79

TITLE Deputy Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

DATE

February 16, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

[Signature]

DATE

5.14.79

ATTEST:

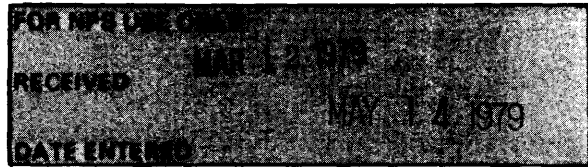
[Signature]
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

May 14, 1979

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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SIGNIFICANCE

Industrial development in Paterson depended largely on ethnic labor. By 1870, 1 of every 3 persons in Passaic was foreign born; this compares with a national ratio of 1:5.⁴

In Passaic's leading industry, textiles, the six related establishments reported 90.2% of the 909 manual laborers were either foreign born or offsprings of foreign born parents.⁵ Of the 820 identifiable ethnic stock workers the Irish constituted the largest proportion of immigrants of any sizable city in the nation.⁷

To meet the spiritual needs of the large number of immigrants St. Nicholas was especially vibrant.

Its first church building in 1864 was an old wooden structure. Its congregation numbered 200 in 1869. This was before the establishment of the Dundee Manufacturing Company.⁸ The second floor of the building, where the priest lived, served the community as a parochial school. Three sisters of Charity taught the 150-200 pupils enrolled.⁹

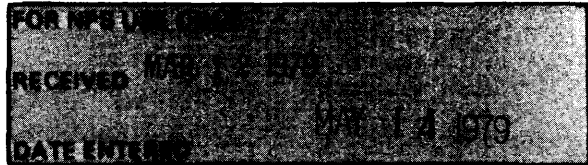
The pastor, Reverend John J. Schandel, purchased the premises on June 9, 1869; the property was conveyed to Bishop Bayley who held the title until April 12, 1875 when the name St. Nicholas was incorporated.

The church edifice was set on fire December 10, 1875 by a member of the local McLean Hose Company. Rather than rebuild a church on the old site it was felt a different location would be more appropriate for religious observations; specifically nearer the Dundee section of Passaic.

Some land was purchased in 1870 as a prospective site and construction would have commenced but the trustees were encouraged to switch to its present location on Washington Place which was acquired in 1874.

Reverend Lewis Schneider became the second rector of the church in 1872 and sought to establish an education program to meet the needs of the congregation. In 1876 Spencer Academy, a private school, was purchased and for a period of time served the parish community.

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SIGNIFICANCE

Reverend Schneider died in 1884 and was replaced by Reverend John A. Sheppard, born in Ireland. He set out to erect facilities worthy of the expanding congregation.

A residence for the sisters, a block away from the church and rectory, was erected in 1886 at a cost of \$16,000.¹⁰ A plot of ground across the street was purchased in 1892 for a school; its total completed cost was \$20,000.¹¹ It was during Sheppard's residency that the present church¹² was built for approximately \$80,000. This included the rectory.

The rectory was built in 1889. Four years later ground was broken for a new brick school. The new parochial school officially opened¹³ on September 18, 1893 with upwards of 500 children in attendance.

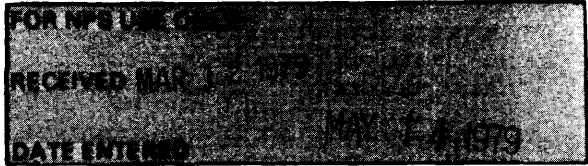
The dedication of St. Nicholas Church was held on October 28, 1889 with a seating capacity of approximately 1500.¹⁴ The original structure still stands today as it was envisioned.

Much more than limiting themselves to strictly fulfilling religious obligations the church served and provided comfort and valuable assistance in helping its immigrants adjust to a new environment. Studies have demonstrated the function of religious life as the initial step in the immigrants perception of their cultural identity within their new society.¹⁵ If the future potential of a community can be demonstrated in attention fostered upon its youth the church again proved itself a worthy contributor to the growth and development of Passaic.

Architecture

St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Church is one of the finest examples of Gothic architecture in the City of Passaic. The architect of the church and rectory, William Schickel, was born on January 29, 1850 in Hockbeim Germany and died on June 14, 1907. Educated in architecture, at age 20 he came to the United States.

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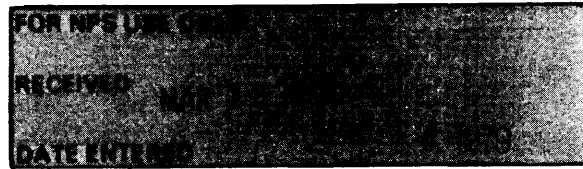
SIGNIFICANCE

His early employment in America was that of a draftsman with noted architect Richard M. Hunt. The architectural background led him into a partnership with Isaac Ditmars. The company of Ditmars and Schickel was responsible for building the German Staats-Zeitunt and the German Hospital and Training School for Nurses.

The partnership was known for its church work. In addition to St. Nicholas they were responsible for: St. Ignatius on Park Avenue and 84th Street, St. Monica on Lexington Avenue and 79 Street, St. Gabriel in New Rochelle, New York and the parochial school for the Immaculate Conception in Montclair, New Jersey.

In recognition for his architectural achievements he was elected a fellow in the American Institute of Architects in 1894.

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Footnotes

- ¹Scott, William W., Passaic and Its Environs, Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc. (New York and Chicago, 1922), p. 541.
- ²Ibid.
- ³Ebner, Michael, The Historian's Passaic, 1855-1912: A Research Model for New Jersey's Urban Past, (Doctoral Dissertaion-University of Virginia, 1974), p. 105.
- ⁴Ibid., p. 88
- ⁵Ibid., p. 89
- ⁶Ibid., p. 89
- ⁷Ibid., p. 88
- ⁸Passaic Daily News, Nov. 4, 1885
- ⁹Pape, William J., Illustrated History of Passaic 1899, The News Publishing Co. (Passaic, New Jersey 1899).
- ¹⁰⁻¹⁴Scott, p., 546
- ¹³Passaic Daily News, September 19, 1893
- ¹⁴News 28

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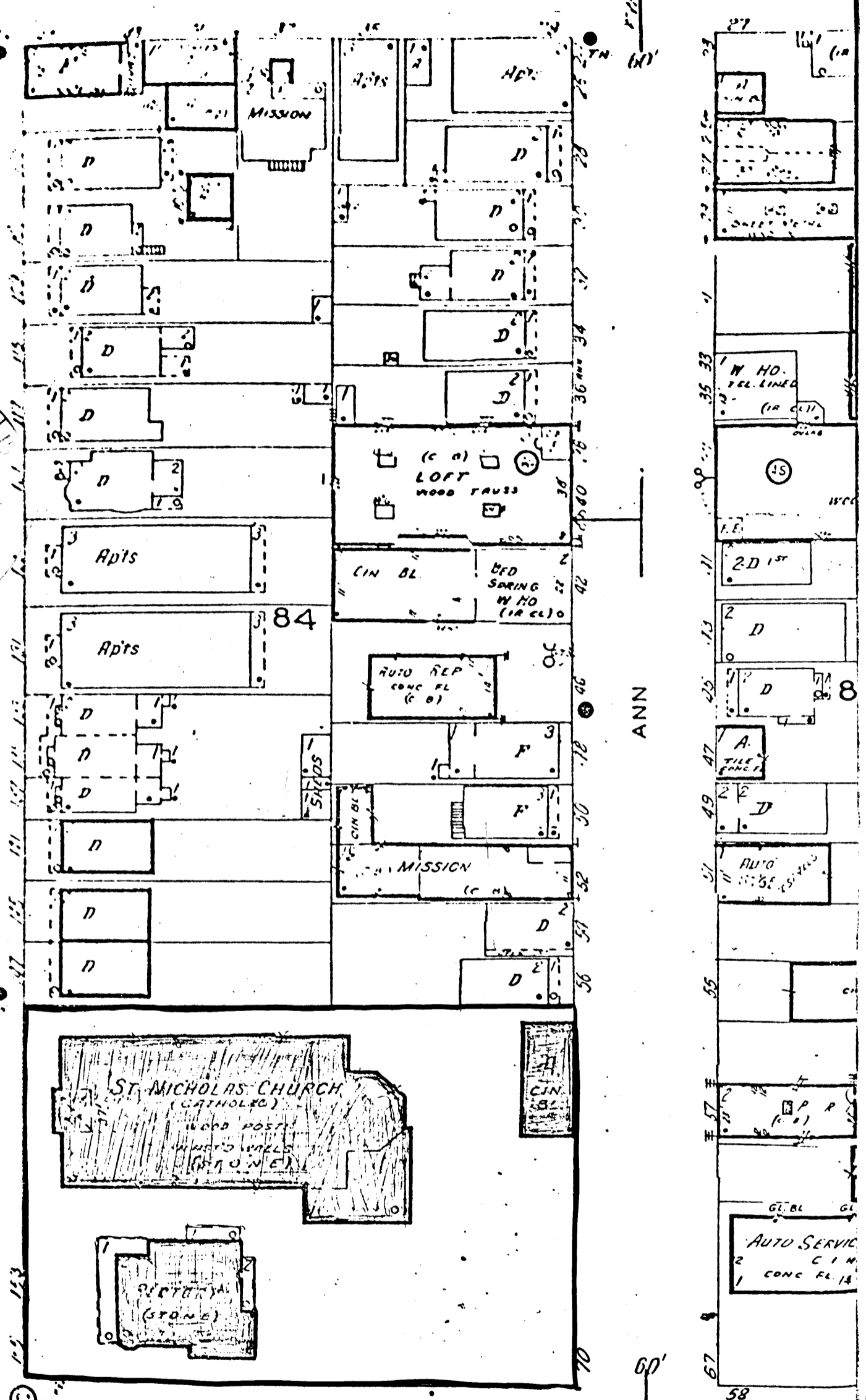
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Ebner, Michael, The Historians Passaic, 1855-1912: A Research Model for New Jersey's Urban Past, A Doctoral Dissertation Presented to the University of Virginia, August, 1974
Passaic Daily News: 11/14/1885, 9/16/1880, 10/4/1880, 10/28/1889, 11/11/1892, 11/7/1892

REVISED
MAY 2 1979
NATIONAL
REGISTER



ST. NICHOLAS R.C. CHURCH
PASSAIC CITY
PASSAIC COUNTY
NEW JERSEY 084

STATE
1"=10'
6"=10'