

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116

AREA	FORM NO.
	130(S-4)

Town Worcester

Address 49 Austin Street

Historic Name "The Russell"

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

Use: Present apartments

Original apartments

DESCRIPTION

Date ca. 1894

Source Eng. & Bldg, Record Vol. XXX, p. 11

Style Classical, Romanesque, Utilitarian

Architect Barker & Nourse

Exterior Wall Fabric brick, granite, brown-stone

Outbuildings none

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s). Indicate north

Major Alterations (with dates) main door

replaced, cement block addition at side rear. (late 20th c.)

Condition Fair/Good

Moved no Date NA

Acreage 4,834 sq. ft.

Setting intersection in mixed residential/apartment/commercial area, some vacant lots

See attached maps.

UTM REFERENCE 19/268440/4782330

USGS QUADRANGLE Worcester North Quadrangle

SCALE 1:25000

Recorded by Sarah Zimmerman w/S. Ceccaci

Organization Mass. Historical Commission

Date August, 1985

*Valerie Talmage shpo 9/26/85*

**OCT 7 1985**

**NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)**

"The Russell" is a simple but well-preserved example of Richardsonian Romanesque design by a noted Worcester architectural firm, Barker and Nourse. It is representative of architect-designed apartment buildings built in Worcester during the late 19th century. "The Russell" is also significant as a good example of the apartment blocks built in the Main-Wellington-Chandler area, once Worcester's most extensive area of middle-class apartment block construction. As such, "The Russell" meets criteria A and C of the National Register on the local level.

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

"The Russell" is a four-story brick Richardsonian Romanesque apartment block built ca. 1894. Built to the designs of Barker and Nourse, a noted Worcester architectural firm, "The Russell" is a modest building whose Romanesque styling is most evident in its use of rugged materials and sparse detailing. These give the building a fortress-like appearance. The building is located at the corner of Austin and Irving Streets, just west of Worcester's central business district. It is set directly on the street with no landscaping.

The building is rectangular in plan with a five-bay facade on its north elevation and a curved bay at the northeast corner. On the west elevation to the rear is a concrete block addition added in the late 20th century. The building rises four stories from a raised foundation of rock-faced granite

Continued

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

"The Russell" was originally part of the city's largest district of apartment block construction, which extended along South Main Street, Wellington and Chandler Streets. During the second half of the 19th century, Worcester's industries expanded greatly in size and number. The city's population grew rapidly and swelled through large additions of foreign immigrants. As a result of the growing demand for housing, residential expansion became necessary and occurred in all the central sections of the city. Older neighborhoods became more densely settled, while outlying areas were expanded with new subdivisions. During the late 19th century, three deckers and apartment blocks formed the bulk of the city's multiple family housing.

Located two blocks west of Main Street, "The Russell" was built near the southernmost edge of the central business district. Constructed in an area where apartment blocks began appearing as early as 1879, the building was built on the site of an earlier double house. Typical of apartment blocks in the area, "The Russell" was architect designed and purely residential.

The building was built at a cost of \$25,000 for Abigail Russell Parsons.

Continued

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

atlases, directories

Worcester Architects List, Worcester Heritage Preservation Society

Engineering and Building Record, Vol. XXX, July 14, 1894, p. 115

Worcester Telegram, January 11, 1938 (Ava G. Hovey) clipping file, Worcester Historical Museum.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Worcester	Form No: 130-(S-4)
Property Name: 49 Austin Street "The Russell"	

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

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE continued

Although many speculative apartment blocks were being built by developers in the 1890s, "The Russell" was owner-occupied as most earlier Worcester apartment buildings had been. In this case, Mrs. Parsons' daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Hovey, lived on the first floor while the owner herself lived next door at 55 Austin Street. Mrs. Parsons also owned houses south of "The Russell" on Irving Street. Her grandsons, founders of one of Worcester's largest laundry (the Hovey Laundry), also built and owned property in the neighborhood. The majority of "The Russell's" tenants were of the middle class.

Architecturally, "The Russell" is comparable to other well-built, architect-designed Worcester apartment blocks of the late 19th century. With the demolition of many of these, especially in the Main-Wellington-Chandler area, in the late 20th century, "The Russell" is now one of the few apartment blocks in the area. As a representative of the Richardsonian Romanesque style, it is a simple but effective design. The rounded northeast corner, extensive use of rock-faced granite and brownstone trim, repeated rhythm of chimney stack "piers" and roofline chimneys, heavy, carved Romanesque arched main entrance and deep corbelled roof parapet are all notable features of the design.

The architect of the structure was the firm of Barker and Nourse of Worcester. The partnership of Albert A. Barker (1853-1905) and Walter B. Nourse (1854-1906) was active from 1880-1902. Barker and Nourse designed many important Worcester buildings including a number of apartment buildings. They appear to have been the major designers of Worcester apartment blocks at the end of the 19th century. Some notable Barker and Nourse apartment blocks in the general area are "The Boynton" (1887) and "The Vendome" (1898).

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Worcester	Form No: 130-(S-4)
Property Name: 49 Austin Street "The Russell"	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE continued

ashlar to a flat roof punctuated with several narrow rectangular chimneys along the outside walls. The main block of the building rests on a rock-faced brownstone water table, a detail repeated as a string course above the first floor windows. Above the first floor, the walls are unadorned with the exception of shallowly projecting chimney stacks with corbelled bases. At the roof line is a shallowly-projecting corbelled frieze culminating in a metal cornice. Windows throughout the building are 1/1 wooden sash set within wooden surrounds. On the principal facades, windows feature brownstone sills and deep relieving arches.

The building's principal ornament is contained within the central three bays of the north facade. The frontispiece is enclosed within a pair of projecting piers which are the stacks for two chimneys at the roof level. The entrance to "The Russell", centered between two flanking window bays and recessed beneath a massive round arch, is reached by a short flight of stairs. The round arched entrance is the building's most outstanding architectural feature. It is composed of rock-faced brownstone and rests on a pair of squat Ionic columns. A carved keystone surmounts the arch. Above the entrance, on the second, third and fourth stories, narrow paired windows, flanked by a pair of full-sized windows, occupy the central bay. Between the second and third stories is a brownstone plaque bearing the name of the building. The frontispiece culminates in a raised brick parapet with a deep course of corbelled brick.

The building's only alterations have been the addition of the concrete block shed to the rear and the replacement of the original front door with a modern metal door. A rehabilitation of "The Russell" in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation will take place in the near future.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received 5-3-84  
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 1 of 1

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Worcester Multiple Resource Area  
State Worcester County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Worcester Corset Company  
Factory

Substantive Review

Keeper

*Toussaint* 10-4-84

Attest

2. Malvern Road School

Substantive Review

Keeper

*Toussaint* 10-4-84

Attest

3. Claremont Street Historic  
District

Substantive Review

Keeper

*TS*

Attest

4. Richmond, Willard, Apartment  
Block

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

*Selena Byers* 11/7/85

Attest

5. Russell (The)

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

*Selena Byers* 11/7/85

Attest

6. Aurora Hotel

Substantive Review

Keeper

*Patrick Ardus* 4/28/88

Attest

*Bob L. Sarge* 4/28/88

7. Holy Name of Jesus Complex

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

*Selena Byers* 6/8/88

Attest

8. Vendome and the St. Ives

Substantive Review

Keeper

*Bob L. Sarge* 02-09-90

Attest

9. Shaarai Torah Synagogue

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

*5/10/90*

Attest

10.

Keeper

Attest

*Re-it*  
*85002782*

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Russell (The) (Worcester MRA)  
Worcester County  
MASSACHUSETTS

OCT 7 1985

Working No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87  
Date Due: 11/7/85 - 11/21/85  
Action: ACCEPT 11-7-85  
\_\_\_\_\_ RETURN  
\_\_\_\_\_ REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in ~~the~~  
National Register

- 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  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated  ruins  unexposed  unaltered  altered  original site  moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

---

**8. 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

---

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

---

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM 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: \_\_\_\_\_

*Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet*



419 Austin ST.

"The Russell"

Worcester MA, Ma

Roll I-20

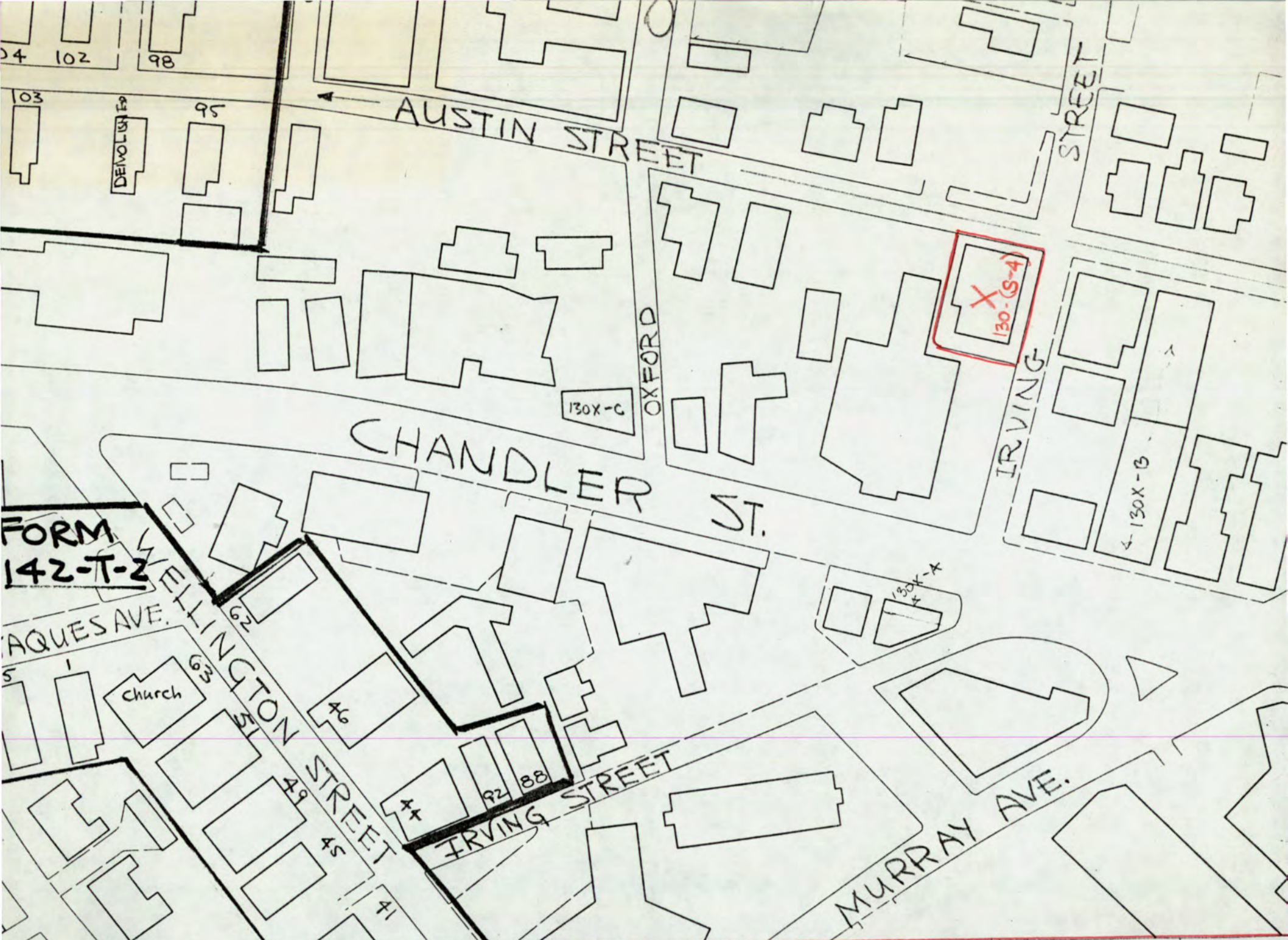


49A Austin ST.

"The Russell"

Worcester MA, Ma

Roll I-2



FORM  
142-T-2

AQUES AVE.

Church

WELLINGTON STREET

SEE MAP SHEET

IRVING STREET

MURRAY AVE.

CHANDLER ST.

AUSTIN STREET

IRVING STREET

STREET

OXFORD

130-S-4

130X-C

130X-A

130X-B

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000304