

MAY 15 1988

MIRA

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

-563

AREA	FORM NO.
A	121

Roll # 1-17

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 Main Street at Marcy Street

Historic Name Notre Dame Catholic Church

Use: Present Catholic church

Original Catholic church

DESCRIPTION

Date 1912

Source parish history

Style French Renaissance influences

Architect Joseph Venne of Montreal, P.Q.

Exterior Wall Fabric marble

Outbuildings rectory, 1927(C) Salle Notre

Dame, ca. 1950 (NC)

Major Alterations (with dates) significant

interior renovations after Vatican II

Condition Excellent

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage (4) four acres

Setting on main thoroughfare, on rise

overlooking central business district

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

UTM REFERENCE 18/745 110/4662 460

USGS QUADRANGLE Southbridge, Mass.-Conn

SCALE 1:25,000

Recorded by E. Woodford, S. Ceccacci

ed. S. Ceccacci

Organization Southbridge Historical Com-

mission

Date May 1986

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Notre Dame Church is significant for its association with the expansion and development of Southbridge's French Canadian community late in the 19th century, and for its unusual French Renaissance design. It meets National Register criteria A and C at the local level and retains integrity of setting, location, materials, workmanship, 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.

Set on a rise overlooking the central business district, Notre Dame is one of the town's most prominent and imposing architectural features. Distinguished by the proportions of cathedral and massive volume it is a worthy monument to the large Franco-American population of Southbridge. Its round arched French Renaissance style is said to have been deliberately chosen as a symbol for the cultural heritage of its parishioners. A pleasing exterior surface texture and the use of high quality materials are notable characteristics of the building. Sheathed in rock-faced white marble from Lee, Massachusetts, the building is trimmed with blue and yellow terracotta tiles inscribed with the letters "ND". The roof is of red terracotta. Bronze doors with scenes depicting the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary accent the main entrance. Cast by Gorham of Providence, the doors were designed by Bernard P. Johnson and Aristide B. Cianfaniti. On the interior, murals were done by Gonippo Raggi of Rome, Italy; sculptured decorations by Hugh Cairns of Boston; stucco sculptures, columns and pilasters by Mr. Francini of Rome; stained glass by VonGreichten of Columbus, Ohio. The architect was

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

Immigration of French Canadians to Southbridge accompanied the town's industrial growth in the 1840's. The town's first Catholic church, made up of both French Canadian and Irish parishioners, was built in 1853 on Hamilton Street (form #A-113). In 1869 a separate French Canadian parish, Notre Dame, was formed. The original Notre Dame church was built about 1870 on land donated by the Hamilton Woolen Company, around the corner from the earlier church, on Pine Street. The approximate location was the site of the present convent next to Notre Dame School (Academie Brochu).

By the time of the establishment of a separate French Canadian parish, one quarter of the total population of Southbridge was of French Canadian origin. By 1908 the French population, increasing with the continued growth and prosperity of the American Optical Company, had grown so large as to cause the creation of a second French Canadian parish, Sacred Heart Church (form #A-229), on Charlton Street. Although foreign immigration to Southbridge slowed after the 1920's, French Canadians even today make up the town's largest immigrant group. Today, the Franco-American community is the largest ethnic community in Southbridge.

The present church is the second church building of Notre Dame parish. Its construction was the culmination of the efforts of two pastors, Msgr. George Elzear Brochu and his successor, Msgr. Louis-Onesime Triganne. Both priests were dedicated to building a great monument to the Catholic faith and cultural heritage of the Franco-American community in Southbridge. Msgr. Brochu bought the land from William Marcy in 1895. At that time, Marcy was living on the site

(See Continuation Sheet)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

maps, atlases

Brown, Robert E. The New New Englanders. Worcester: Commonwealth Press, 1980, pp. 36-37

LePain, Albert N. "Notre Dame Church: Southbridge, Massachusetts: A Marvel of Renaissance Art", unpublished paper, 1979.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: MIRA Southbridge	Form No: A-121
Property Name: Notre Dame Catholic Church Main at Marcy Street	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

Joseph Venne of Montreal and the contractor, H. U. Bail of Southbridge. An attached rectory of the same monumental style as the church was built in 1927. F. X. Laliberte of Southbridge was the contractor *for the construction of the rectory.*

A separate parish hall, Salle Notre Dame, was added in ~~ca. 1950~~ to the east of the church. Although its modern style does not clash with that of the church, the hall is placed close to the street in a position which diminishes the original eminence of the church when seen from the east.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

in his family's original homestead, which had been built by Moses Marcy about 1739. When he signed the purchase agreement, Brochu overlooked the stipulation that the church could not be constructed until after Marcy's death. While waiting for Marcy to depart from life, Brochu did not sit idle. He actively continued to raise funds from his working class parishioners who did not have much to give. Marcy outlived Brochu who died in 1904. Brochu's successor Msgr. Triganne took up the fund raising effort, donating much of his personal estate to the building fund. When Marcy died in 1908 Triganne immediately began plans for the new church. The bishop rejected the first two proposed plans as being too costly. Triganne was nevertheless determined that the church be nothing less than monumental. He discovered an inexpensive lot of marble available in Lee. This marble is reported to have been ordered from quarries in Lee by the United States government in anticipation of the need for tombstones for those killed in the Spanish American War. Since the war was a short one, the government was stuck with a large surplus and the French Canadian parish of Southbridge benefitted from it. Built at a total cost of over \$250,000, the marble sheathed Church of Notre Dame was truly the monument that Brochu and Triganne had hoped for. Furthermore, as the result of the ceaseless efforts of these two men, the church was entirely paid for and free of debt when it was dedicated on July 2, 1916. When Msgr. Triganne died in 1931, he left the money for the bronze doors which now adorn the building. The church was consecrated on October 11, 1950.

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
51. Kinney, A., House	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
52. LaCroix--Mosher House	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
53. LaRochelle, Napoleon, Two-Family House Entered in the National Register		Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
54. Maple Street Historic District Entered in the National Register		Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
55. Marcy, Mrs. R., House	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
56. McKinstry, William, Jr., House Entered in the National Register		Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
57. McKinstry, William, Farmhouse Entered in the National Register		Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
58. Morse, H., House Entered in the National Register		Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
59. New York, New Haven & Hartford Passenger Depot Entered in the National Register		Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
60. Notre Dame Catholic Church Entered in the National Register		Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Notre Dame Catholic Church
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: 89000563

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

CLASSIFICATION

count resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

historic current

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification
 materials
 descriptive text

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage verbal boundary description
 UTMs boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



Main Street

at Marcy Street
Notre Dame Catholic Church
Southbridge, MA

1985 photo

Southbridge Historical Commission

Form # A-121

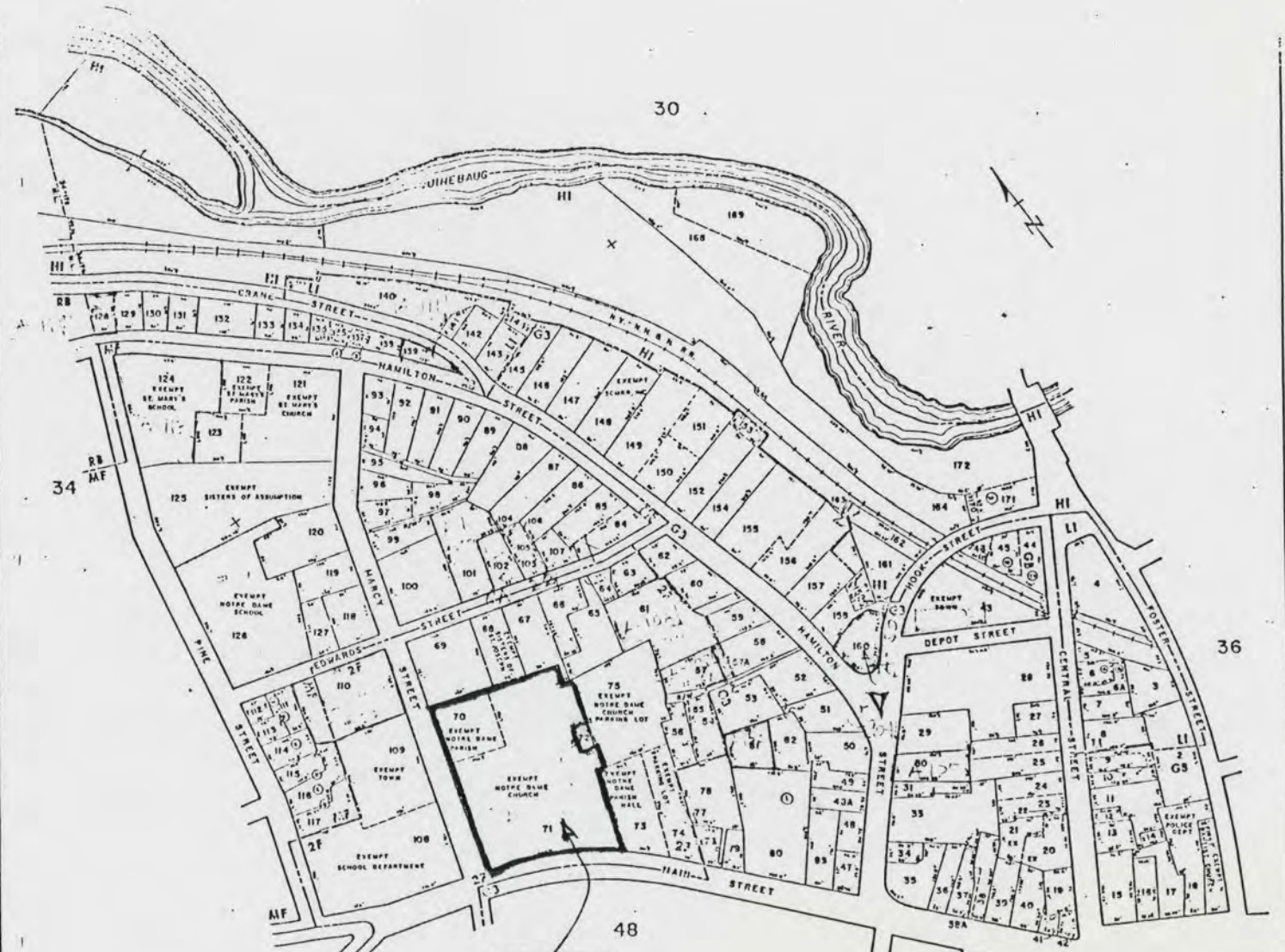
1985 photo

Southbridge

Main & Marcy Streets

Roll # 1-17

SOUTHBRIDGE MASS
MRA



A-1211

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

ACCESS 3013 MAP
SOUTHBRIDGE, MASS.

SCALE IN FEET
0 100 200

35

Notre Dame Church, Main Street

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000294