

PH0016021 HB NO 47M

Form 10-300
(July 1969)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:

Massachusetts

COUNTY:

Middlesex

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

APR 19 1972

1. NAME

COMMON:

Austin Hall

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

Congressional District 8

STREET AND NUMBER:

Harvard University (Harvard Law School)

CITY OR TOWN:

Cambridge

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY:

Middlesex

CODE

017

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY
(Check One)

- ☐ District ☒ Building
☐ Site ☐ Structure
☐ Object

OWNERSHIP

- ☐ Public
☒ Private
☐ Both

- Public Acquisition:
☐ In Process
☐ Being Considered

STATUS

- ☒ Occupied
☐ Unoccupied
☐ Preservation work
in progress

ACCESSIBLE
TO THE PUBLIC

- Yes:
☒ Restricted
☐ Unrestricted
☐ No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Agricultural ☐ Government ☐ Park ☐ Transportation ☐ Comments
☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Private Residence ☐ Other (Specify) _____
☒ Educational ☐ Military ☐ Religious _____
☐ Entertainment ☐ Museum ☐ Scientific _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

President and Fellows of Harvard College

STREET AND NUMBER:

Massachusetts Hall

CITY OR TOWN:

Cambridge

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

025

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:

Cambridge and Third Streets

CITY OR TOWN:

Cambridge

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Inventory of the Historical Assets of Massachusetts

DATE OF SURVEY:

1967

☐ Federal☒ State☐ County☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Massachusetts Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:

Office of the Secretary, State House

CITY OR TOWN:

Boston

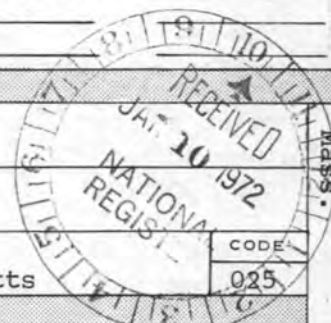
STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

025

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE:

COUNTY:

Middlesex

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

APR 19 1972

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☐ Excellent	☒ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	☐ Altered	☒ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Austin Hall, built 1881-1883, is the second Harvard University building designed by H.H. Richardson. A basic T plan was used in the execution of this structure built to house the law school. The two storey central mass with triple arched entrance porch and small circular stair tower is flanked by a pair of simpler, single storey wings. Extending behind the central section, a two storey reading room wing forms the base of the T. The entire building is constructed in light and dark colored Longmeadow sandstone, with the exception of the yellow Ohio sandstone used in the arches surrounding the entrance. The foundation, string course, sills, lintels and cornice are built of the light sandstone while the dark stone is used for the rest of the bearing wall structure.

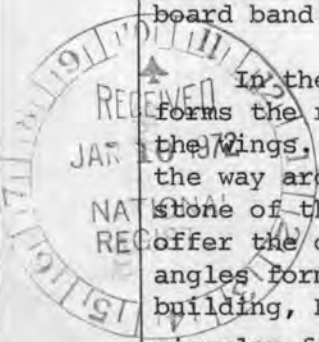
The main facade of the central mass is dominated by the three arches over the recessed entrance porch. Above it on the second storey level a row of tall narrow windows separated by rectangular stone mullion crosses the facade. A broad lintel and a continuous sill, above and below the second storey windows, runs across the facade and around the building. Below the sill is a wide band of stone laid in a checkerboard pattern. Still further down the facade to the left of the triple arch, a string course of light stone cuts across the top third of the three narrow first storey windows. This course is actually an extension of the continuous sill below the range of windows on the left wing. A two storey semi-attached stair tower breaks through the horizontality of the facade just to the right of the entrance arches. Three narrow slit windows follow the progress of the stairs on the first floor of the tower while two rows of smaller windows are situated on the second storey. The continuous lintel and sill bordering the large second storey windows continue around the tower. Finally, the hipped roof over the main part of the building is considerably higher than the roofs of the wings. This added height further emphasizes the main block of the building in relation to the wings.

The simplicity of the two side wings contrasts with the more elaborate design of the main facade. Each is smaller and lower and in typical Richardson manner contains a single strip of windows placed high on the facade, directly beneath the hipped roof. The stone wall on each is uninterrupted from the ground to the sill below this range of windows. The rear facades of these wings repeat the design of the front. The end wall of each wing is dark stone from foundation to cornice, with the exception of a broad checkerboard band and a large decorative panel of light stone.

In the complexity of its design, the rear of the central mass, which forms the reading room extension, lies somewhere between the main facade and the wings. The tall second storey windows used on the front appear again all the way around the rear of the central mass, and together with the light stone of the foundation, string course, lintels and cornice, these windows offer the only other break in the dark ashlar walls. In each of the reentrant angles formed where the reading room projects from the main mass of the building, Richardson has introduced a curved wall which articulates the two circular foyers of the main lecture hall.

The only change in the exterior of Austin is the recent addition of a small, single storey entrance of copper and glass on the northerly face of the eastern wing at the junction of the wing and the central mass.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☐ 18th Century☒ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1881-1883

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal☒ Education☐ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Prehistoric☐ Engineering☐ Religion/Phi-☐ Other (Specify)☐ Historic☐ Industry

losophy

☐ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Science☒ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Sculpture☐ Art☐ Architecture☐ Social/Human-☐ Commerce☐ Literature

itarian

☐ Communications☐ Military☐ Theater☐ Conservation☐ Music☐ Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Austin Hall was constructed in 1881-1883 to house the Law School of Harvard University. This is the second Harvard building designed by H.H. Richardson, who is generally considered the first great architect to work in a truly American idiom, the style of architecture known as American or Richardsonian Romanesque. Richardson is best known for his massive, monumental works of stone and brick and for his use of very low arches which rise, in Syrian style, almost from the ground. Although influenced by the Romanesque architecture of Southern France, Richardson's style is a new combination of design elements, widely imitated by his contemporaries and by later architects as well.

Austin Hall is the only stone academic building Richardson ever did and according to Professor Henry Russell Hitchcock "one of Richardson's greatest works."¹ When he built Austin and Sever Halls, "Richardson repaid his debt to Harvard by constructing the only two buildings in Cambridge worthy to stand with those of the eighteenth and the first decades of the nineteenth century."²

The asymmetrical balance achieved in the main facade of Austin Hall is characteristic of much of Richardson's architecture. The building has a strong horizontal emphasis in the long range of second story windows, the broad continuous lintel above them and the continuous sill below (which extends to form the eaves of the two wings). Subtler points of emphasis include the horizontal line formed by the capitals of the entrance arches and the string course that runs across the facade to the left of the arches. The semi-attached stair tower counter-balances this horizontality; the individual arches over the entrance and the shape of the windows, sepecially those on the second floor, restate the vertical accent of the tower. Finally, the deeply recessed entrance porch draws the eye, keeping the visual center of the facade low and quite close to its geometric center.

Interior decoration is also part of the significance of Austin Hall. The Romanesque arches and wainscoting of the first floor and the fireplaces throughout speak for Richardson's competence in interior design and ornamentation. The dragons and wild boars' heads carved in the exposed tie beams above the reading room are indicative of interior work closely supervised by Richardson himself. In describing the fireplace in the same reading room, Professor Hitchcock states that it "has decoration, which in detail of design and execution, represents the highest point of Richardson's achievement in ornament."³

¹ Henry Russell Hitchcock, The Architecture of H.H. Richardson and His Times (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966), p. 232.

² Ibid, p. 232.

³ Ibid, p. 231.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hitchcock, Henry Russell. The Architecture Of H.H. Richardson and his Times. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966.

Sutherland, Arthur E. "Harvard Law School's Four Oldest Houses" Cambridge Historical Society Proceedings, Vol. 41. Cambridge: 1967-1969.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds
NW	0 0 0	0 0 0		42 22 37	71 07 10	
NE	0 0 0	0 0 0				
SE	0 0 0	0 0 0				
SW	0 0 0	0 0 0				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Anne R. Wardwell, Survey Director

ORGANIZATION
Massachusetts Historical Commission

DATE
12/14/71

STREET AND NUMBER:
Office of the Secretary, State House

CITY OR TOWN:
Boston

STATE
Massachusetts

CODE
025

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☒ State ☒ Local ☒

Name

JOHN F. X. DAVOREN

Title

Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts
Historical Commission

Date

December 28, 1971

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

Robert M. Utley
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

4/19/72

ATTEST:

Bradford
Keeper of The National Register

Date

April 7, 1972

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Middlesex
Mass

Austin Hall

DATE OF RECEIPT 1/10/72 YES NO NUMBER

REGISTER:
APR 19 1972



DATA PAGE
PHOTO (S)
PHOTO DESCRIPTION (S)
MAP (S)
MAP DESCRIPTION (S)
LOGGED
ACKNOWLEDGE
RESUBMIT

tech ok jlj 3-21-72

REVIEW		OK	means 3/31/72
HISTORIAN	who was H. H. Richardson?	OK	3/24/72
ARCHAEOLOGIST			
ARCHITECT		OK	Chambers 3-27-72
ASST. KEEPER			
KEEPER			for 4/7/72
WRITER/EDITOR	H. H. who?	OK	Marshall 3/27/72
CHIEF, OAHF			
EDITORIAL PROCESSING, EDITOR			ok EDA 4/5/72

Federal Registry Entry 6-6-72

Annual Edition Entry

Logged APR 19 1972 Card APR 19 1972

REMARKS: WORKING NUMBER 1,10.72.72

Canq. dist. # 8



Cambridge
Austin Hall

NPS Number April 19, 1972
Title: Austin Hall

Loc. Middlesex County, Mass.
Front (southern) facade and

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

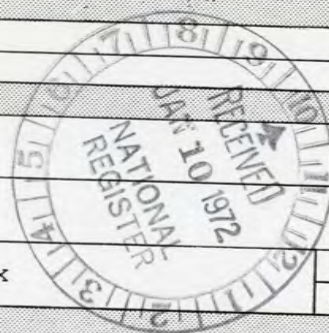
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	
Massachusetts	
COUNTY	
Middlesex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
APR 19 1972	

1. NAME		
COMMON: Austin Hall		
AND/OR HISTORIC:		
2. LOCATION		
STREET AND NUMBER:		
Harvard University (Law School)		
CITY OR TOWN:		
Cambridge		
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:
Massachusetts	025	Middlesex
3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
PHOTO CREDIT: Bradford Paul		
DATE OF PHOTO: June 1971		
NEGATIVE FILED AT:		
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State House, Boston, Mass., 02133		
4. IDENTIFICATION		
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		
Front (southern) facade and eastern wing		



PROPE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Middlesex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER APR 19 1972	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: Austin Hall			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: Harvard University (Law School)			
CITY OR TOWN: Cambridge			
STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 025	COUNTY: Middlesex	CODE 017
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE: U.S.G.S. Boston North, Mass.			
SCALE: 1: 24,000			
DATE: 1956			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			



AUSTIN HALL
(Harvard University)

U.S.G.S.: Boston North, Mass.,
(1956)

Scale: 1: 24000



71°07'10"

42°22'37"



CAMBRIDGE (CITY HALL) 0.8 MI.
BOSTON (HARVARD BRIDGE) 2.2 MI.

710000 FEET

BOSTON (STATE HOUSE) 1.7 MI.

(BOSTON SOUTH) 0.9 MI. TO MASS. CI
6768 I SE

2'30" 332
BOSTON (CITY HALL) 1.9 MI.

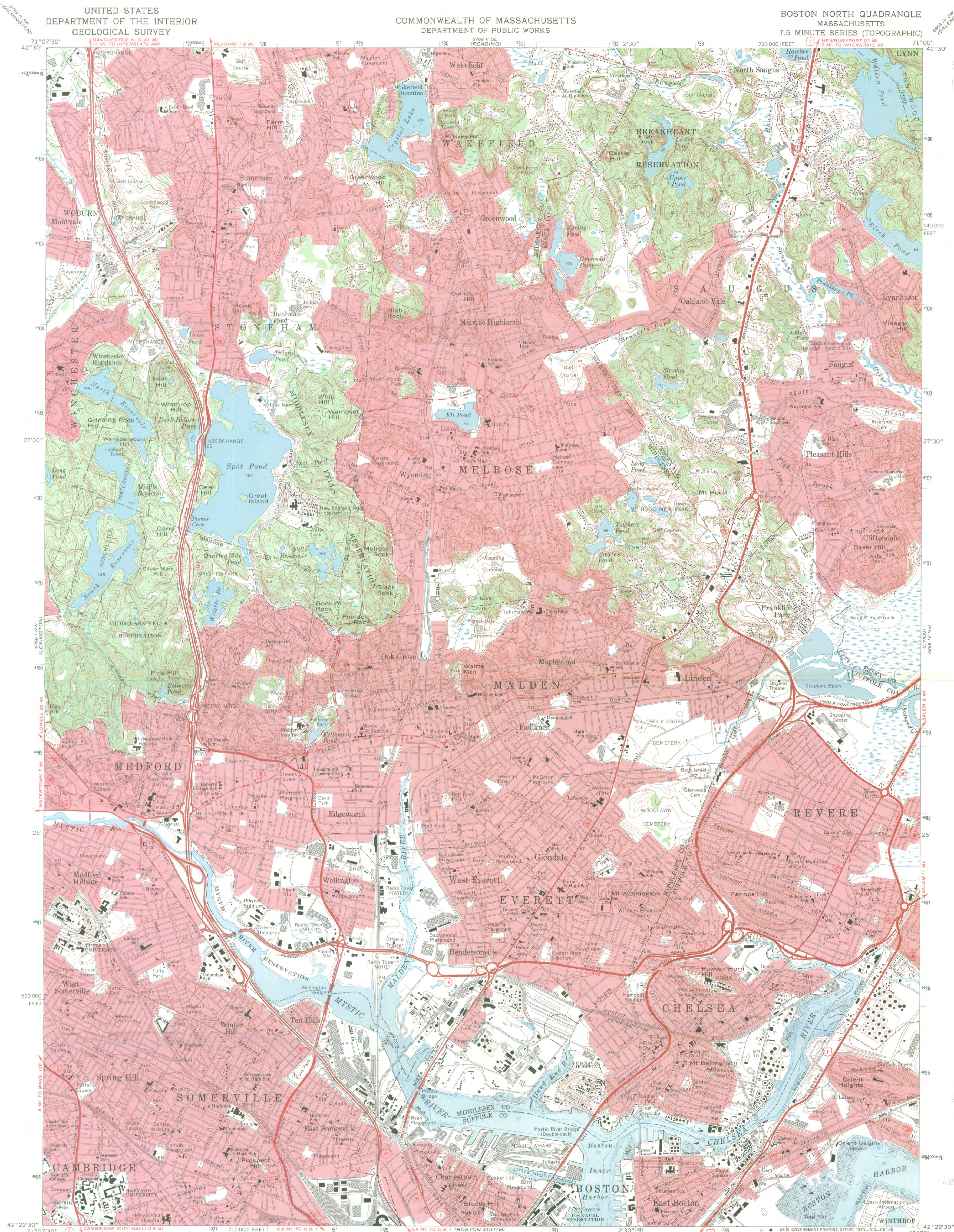
INTERIOR-GE



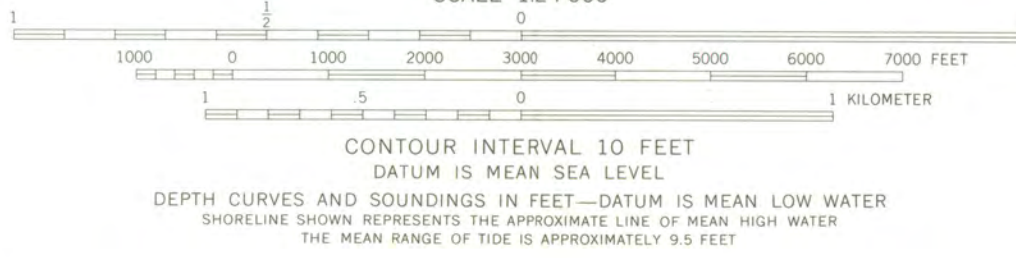
00000

11-07-10

45.55.97



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planimetric surveys 1943. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1971
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Chart 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
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue
Boundaries in tidalwater areas from information supplied
by Massachusetts Department of Public Works
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



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

BOSTON NORTH, MASS.
N4222.5-W7100/7.5
1971
AMS 6768 I NE-SERIES V814

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered **APR 19 1972**

Name

Location

Austin Hall

Cambridge
Middlesex County

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
Hon. Edward W. Brooke
Hon. Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr.

Director, Northeast Region

HR NRowland:mm 4/17/72

State Liaison Officer
Hon. John F. X. Davoren
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical
Commission
Office of the Secretary
State House
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

file with
Austin Hall
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Middlesex
RECEIVED
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON OFFICE

MASSACHUSETTS HALL
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138
JUN 5 9 09 AM '72

H30-PHRS

June 1, 1972

Dear Mr. Davoren:

Thanks so much for your letter informing us that the National Park Service has put Austin Hall on its National Register of Historic Places. We are pleased by this recognition.

Although we are grateful for the national notice, we would prefer not to have a bronze plaque attached to Austin Hall and not to apply for the certificate in question. We declined this opportunity in the case of Massachusetts, Sever, University and Memorial Halls and Elmwood, and I believe we should continue this policy. All these buildings are already being preserved by Harvard not as museums or monuments, but as workaday buildings in regular use for the purposes for which they were originally erected. The old buildings in the College Yard including Massachusetts and Harvard Halls, as well as Hollis and Stoughton Halls, serve today as College dormitories and classrooms just as they did when they were erected in the 18th Century. Where they have been "modernized," modernization has been carried out with careful consideration for 18th Century style and spirit. We have long since provided these buildings with suitable markers. Massachusetts Hall, for example, has since 1896 borne a bronze plaque indicating its pre-Revolutionary and Revolutionary history.

We provide a free guide service which originates either at a guide tent in the College Yard or at the Information Office in Holyoke Center, on Forbes Plaza, just a step across Massachusetts Avenue beyond the point where once stood the original College buildings. These guides, usually specially trained students from the Crimson Key Society, conduct visitors around this whole historic area. We, of course, intend to continue to value these buildings and their historic character.

I wish strongly to emphasize that the decision not to apply for registration implies no criticism whatsoever of the wonderful work done by the National Park Service in preserving the nation's heritage of historic and natural sites for the appreciation and enjoyment of the public. We have cooperated in this praiseworthy endeavor in applying for registration in the case of the Arnold Arboretum.

June 1, 1972

We simply feel that we do not wish our constantly used buildings to become a formal part of the National Registry. We hope you will understand and sympathize with this reluctance on our part.

Sincerely,

Derek C. Bok

Mr. John F. X. Davoren
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of the Secretary
State House
Boston, Massachusetts