

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bowditch School
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 80-82 Greene Street N/A not for publication
city, town Jamaica Plain, Boston N/A vicinity
state Massachusetts code MA county Suffolk code 025 zip code 02130

3. Classification

| | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district | <u>1</u> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | _____ | _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | <u>1</u> | _____ |
| | | | Total |
| | | | <u>0</u> |

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Valerie A. Talmage
Signature of certifying official Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Date June 21, 1990
State Historic Preservation Officer Commission;
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. Mark J. Baker Entered in the National Register August 3, 1990
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain): _____
Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

6. Function or UseHistoric Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Education/Public SchoolCurrent Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Vacant/Not in Use**7. Description**Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th/20th Century Revivals/
Classical Revivalfoundation Granite
walls Brick, Stoneroof Slate, Copper, Tar and Gravel
other Wood, iron, Marble, Plaster

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Bowditch School, 80-82 Green Street, at the corner of Green and Cheshire Streets, occupies a prominent position near the MBTA Orange Line Green Street station in Jamaica Plain, Boston, Massachusetts. Basically rectangular in plan, the free-standing, 3-story-plus-basement Classical Revival structure of sandy-colored brick with North River stone sills, lintels and string courses, rises from its high quarry-faced granite base with hammered granite coping, to a modillion block cornice of North River stone and a gray-slate-covered hipped roof.

The primary Green Street facade features a slightly projecting central pavilion rising from a dignified tripartite portico with pillars and pilasters supporting a granite and North River stone entablature. Paired stairways, flanked by heavy granite railings which rise from a granite monument in the center, lead to the recessed entry porch, from which two sets of double wood panel doors, surrounded by small-paned transoms and sidelights, lead into the building. Shallow windows with North River stone sills and lintels are grouped in twos on the central segment and threes on the flanking wings, with single windows immediately abutting the central pavilion. A stone string course forming the second floor lintels encircles the entire building. Third floor central windows are paired within masonry openings and are topped with small-paned, round-arched transoms. The entire central facade above the spring of the transom arches is of North River stone with voussoirs fanning out above each transom. The windows throughout the building with few exceptions contain 4/4 double-hung wood sash.

The rear elevation is similarly organized with a projecting central segment flanked by wings, but with less elaborate detail. Windows are paired on the first two floors of the center portion and united in groups of fours by continuous stone sills and lintels on all three levels of the wings. Unusual corner oriels with single windows join the three elements at the third level. There is no portico or significant rear entrance. Paired fire escapes, which are later additions, detract from the rhythm of the rear elevation.

The side elevations are without projecting elements, punctuated only by window groups and modest double-door entrances flanked by multi-paned sidelights. Rising from these entrances in continuous columns to the cornice are series of

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paired windows alternately small-paned fixed sash and 4/4 double-hung sash. Groups of four and three windows with continuous sills and lintels at all levels flank the central column.

An iron picket fence along Green Street remains largely intact, giving the school a residential rather than institutional air. The architectural integrity of the building has not been marred by additions or remodeling, with the exception of the rear fire escapes.

Above the modillion-block cornice rises a hipped roof of slate in three parts, with the two wing segments butting into the slightly raised central section. Rising dramatically from the roof are two towering brick vent stacks with stone trim and wide hip-roofed metal canopies. These are joined by two smaller brick and stone chimneys plus a circular iron chimney with a conical top. The rear portion of the roof, which slopes only slightly, was originally of copper but is now of built-up tar and gravel. Gutters and flashing are of copper.

The lot area is 29,536 square feet. Front and rear dimensions of the building are 114.5 feet, side dimensions are 78.5 feet. The central portion is 92.4 feet deep. The ridge of the central pavilion is 62 feet above grade.

Vertically the interior is divided into four levels plus an attic. The three lower levels are each organized around a generous central corridor, with the third floor top level bisected by a large auditorium, originally an "Exhibition Hall". Cast iron staircases, with ball-topped newels and twisted balusters, behind the vertical window columns on the southeast and northwest sides of the building connect all levels.

The basement, with its painted brick perimeter walls and partitions, is essentially utilitarian and without detail.

All rooms on the three main floors contain the same treatment of surfaces: narrow maple strip flooring, plaster walls and ceilings, beaded-board wainscoting over high baseboards, four-panel wood doors and casings, many with four-light transoms, horizontal moldings above the blackboards and at the ceilings in classrooms, and, in the first and second floor central corridors, plaster arches with beaded corners. Central corridors on the first and second floors lead to all significant rooms. There are two entrance vestibules with marble floors on the first floor, flanking a reception room at the front of the building. There are large classrooms in all four corners, each with seven windows and each with its long narrow wardrobe, plus a fifth classroom in the center rear. Staircases can be seen through steel and glass partitions (later additions) at either end of the central corridor on the first and second floors. The second floor is similar to the first floor except that a

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classroom and master's room replace the vestibules and reception room. Ceiling height in classrooms is 13 feet.

Corner classrooms and staircases on the third floor are similar to those below, but the central pavilion contains a large open auditorium with a stage and proscenium, plus wardrobes beside the stage and small rooms to the rear. The 20.6 feet high auditorium is entered through double doors from the staircase and classroom halls at the northwest and southeast ends of the building. The auditorium is relatively unadorned, with only the wainscot found throughout the building and some simple panel moldings on the walls. A sloping floor was added at some point after construction. The proscenium arch is flat with rounded corners. There is no fixed seating in the auditorium.

The attic is unfinished, with wood rafters, trusses and collar beams exposed. The floor level rises over the auditorium. It is accessible only by ladder.

In addition to the moldings, wainscotting and other high quality architectural details, interior items of note include cast iron newels on the staircases, cabinet work in the master's room, a plaster frieze in the second floor corridor, donated by the Class of 1904, and a plaster-cast reproduction of the Liberty Bell, donated by William A. Filene, of department store fame, and mounted in the first floor entry vestibule ca. 1918. Mr. Filene generously commissioned twelve of these casts which were placed in public schools of the city.

The Bowditch School, declared a surplus property by the City of Boston in July of 1981, has been vacant since that time. It has fared reasonably well, although suffering some water damage, graffiti inside and out, broken windows and minor vandalism.

(end)

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture

1890-1939

1892

Community Planning and Development

Education

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Atwood, Harrison Henry

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Bowditch School (1890-1892) possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and meets National Register Criteria A and C on the local level. Under Criteria A, the Bowditch School is strongly associated with the development and growth of Jamaica Plain and the education of its citizens, through its role as a public educational institution for nearly ninety years, and as prime example of well-intentioned, civic-minded goals of local and city government from the time it was built through the first decades of the twentieth century. Under Criteria C, the Bowditch School is a virtually unaltered, dignified and well-proportioned example of a Classical Revival educational structure, designed by the prominent local architect and politician, Harrison Henry Atwood (1863-1954). The architects' sensitivity to site is still evident today as may be seen in the scale, siting and use of materials for the school and its successful relationship to the 2- and 3-story frame, shingle and brick residential environment. The architectural integrity of the building has not been seriously altered, the interior and exterior alterations primarily reflecting updated fire codes. The major exterior additions over the years were paired rear fire escapes and metal vent shaft covers, as well as fire doors inside the building. A 1943 fire resulted in damage to the third-floor auditorium, attic and roof, but repairs closely matched original details, with the exception of eliminating skylights over the stage. The original relatively cramped lot was expanded to the southeast in 1926, forming the present L-shaped configuration.

Rich with cultural and historical associations for generations of Jamaica Plain residents, the Bowditch School was constructed during the development boom of the 1880s and 1890s which dramatically altered the composition of Jamaica Plain. Jamaica Plain has played an important role in the history of the Commonwealth dating back to pre-Revolutionary days. Originally known as "Jamaica Plain in Roxbury", the area was settled early on, initially as a small farming community within the larger Roxbury district.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested HPCA #11169 MA
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

 See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Massachusetts Historical Commission**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

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| Zone | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | | |

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 See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The Bowditch School occupies an irregularly-shaped lot at the corner of Greene Street and Cheshire Street in the Jamaica Plain section of Boston. It is bounded on the southwest by Greene Street, 195.56'; on the northwest by Cheshire Street, 175'; on the northeast by another lot, 69'; again on the northwest by this same lot, 2'; again on the northeast by this same lot and another lot, 66.86'; on the southeast by another lot, 89.53; again on the northeast by this same lot and another lot, 63.8'; again on the southeast by two other lots. 99.7.

 See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary defining the Bowditch School site is shown on the attached Boston Redevelopment Authority map. The site was acquired by the City of Boston through three separate real estate transactions. The legal boundary for each parcel, from northwest to southeast, was established in Suffolk County Deed 1923:136, Norfolk County Deed 316:58, and Suffolk County Deed 4572:242.

 See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By National Register Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission
 name/title Leslie Larson and Kimberly Shilland, Historical Consultants; Betsy Friedberg,
 organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date June 1990
 street & number 80 Boylston Street telephone 617-727-8470
 city or town Boston state Massachusetts zip code 02116

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Roxbury, with Jamaica Plain as a smaller community within its boundaries, was a hot-bed of Revolutionary activity. Joshua Loring, for example, a prominent citizen and Loyalist, was forced to flee the country, leaving behind all possessions and the grand Loring-Greenough House when he would not renounce his allegiance to the Crown. Nearby at John Eliot Square, the grounds of the First Church in Roxbury were the scene of repeated cannon fire during the siege of Boston, and it was from the Church green that William Dawes began the second leg of his famous Midnight Ride of 1775.

Jamaica Plain developed a character of its own within the larger area of West Roxbury, which severed its ties with Roxbury proper in 1851. Sam Bass Warner, whose book Streetcar Suburbs is helpful in understanding the growth and development of Boston's suburbs, states: "During the 1820's a charming rural village grew up near Jamaica Pond and along the main street, Centre Street, which was formerly the highway to Dedham." This area, which came to be known as Jamaica Plain, was the political and social center of West Roxbury. Jamaica Plain was sparsely populated until the second half of the 18th century, when the area became a popular location for the summer estates of such notables as Governor Francis Bernard and John Hancock. A series of improvements in roads and turnpikes, ca. 1795-1830's, and the laying of the Boston and Providence Railroad, opened the doors for industrial growth. By the mid-19th century, tanneries and breweries, such as the Haffenreffer Brewery, were familiar sights. In 1873, the citizens of West Roxbury voted to annex the town to the City of Boston.

The most striking physical change for Jamaica Plain occurred in the 1870's when streetcar lines were extended from Roxbury into West Roxbury along Washington and Centre Streets, making the area available to larger numbers of commuters. The streetcar lines dramatically changed the area by bringing real estate speculation, which resulted in increased residential, industrial and municipal growth, thus making possible to many the "ideal" housing opportunities we now associate with suburban life. Warner notes that the suburbanization of Roxbury, West Roxbury and Dorchester occurred in two waves, first from 1865-1873 and then during the 1880s-1890s. With this second wave of development in housing, came dozens of schools, libraries and public buildings, of which the Bowditch School is a prime example. Franklin Park and the Arnold Arboretum were also being planned at this time, again providing evidence of tremendous civic commitment.

Built during this second wave of development on the site of an earlier frame schoolhouse, the Bowditch School represents the well-intentioned civic concerns of the day: increased attention was given to fireproof construction, adequate ventilation and proper lighting. As part of Jamaica Plain's rich school inventory, the Bowditch School shows the pride the community took in educational structures at this time. This is evident in the high quality of

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design, not only of the Bowditch School, but also in other neighborhood educational buildings such as the earliest extant school in Jamaica Plain, the Eliot School (dedicated 1832), through the completion of the Margaret Fuller School (1891-1892) by Edmund M. Wheelwright, the Jamaica Plain High School (1901, 1920s) by Andrews, Jacques and Rantoul, and the Mary E. Curley School (1931) by McLaughlin and Burr.

The urbanization (or suburbanization) of the Green Street section of Jamaica Plain began on July 27, 1836, when Samuel G. Goodrich of Roxbury, gentleman, conveyed a large portion of his land and gardens to John Ashton and Theophilus Parsons, plus a trust including Charles W. Greene, Charles Bradley, Levi Haskell and others, on a 40-foot wide street "now being made" (referred to as Union Street) from Jamaica Plain to the Dedham Turnpike (Norfolk Deed 111:210).

In June of 1837, a "Plan of House Lots at Jamaica Plain" by Alexander Wadsworth, Surveyor, appeared in the deeds (Norfolk 115:226) with 30 lots of varying sizes grouped around "Willow Street" running northwest and southeast, crossing the Boston and Providence Railroad, and "Boston Avenue" running northeast from Willow Street. Part of lots 26 and 27 eventually became the Bowditch School site. Willow became Greene Street on August 14, 1837 and Boston Avenue was renamed Lamatine Street in 1848.

The Bowditch site is made up of three lots with different histories of ownership, acquired by the City of Boston at different times. The vacant northwest lot at the corner of Greene and Cheshire Streets was purchased from Roxbury carriage makers John E. and George H. Williams by Joseph Perry, carpenter, also of Roxbury, on October 7, thereon" to Josiah Capen of Boston, also a carriage maker (Norfolk 147:293). Charles E. Jackson acquired the house and lot in 1864 (Norfolk 321:20) and eventually conveyed it to the City of Boston on February 27, 1890 (Suffolk Deed 1923:136). The middle and southeast lots were acquired by Phillip Allens Senior and Junior from Charles W. Greene in 1844 (Norfolk 316:58). Following a series of transactions, William Wellington, a West Roxbury trader, conveyed the middle lot to the Town of West Roxbury on June 27, 1863 (Norfolk 316:58) for construction of a primary school, which occurred soon thereafter. The land and building become City of Boston property when West Roxbury was annexed in 1874.

Those two lots formed the original site for construction of the Bowditch School. Charles Jackson's house was probably demolished, but the wooden late Greek Revival schoolhouse was apparently moved to the southeast adjacent property, where it still stands in an altered state abutting the Bowditch parking area. The third lot, which of late served as an asphalt-covered play area, was added to the site on April 22, 1926, when the city took the property from Alice E. Fowler for unpaid taxes.

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Built with what were considered to be the finest materials of the day, granite, North River stone and sandy-colored brick, the Bowditch School is a well-proportioned, carefully detailed building exhibiting an imaginative interplay of the materials, especially on the central pavilion on Greene Street. The fenestration is well composed and made integral to the structure by the stone trim. The interior spaces are generous and airy, with well-detailed woodwork in all rooms and graceful plaster arches in the central corridors. The scale, siting and materials of the Bowditch School as a whole relate well to the immediate neighborhood which features a comfortable mix of residential and institutional (or former institutional) uses such as the old Jamaica Plain Police Station, designed by George A. Clough ca. 1873, and the Municipal Court, designed by Edmund M. Wheelwright ca. 1890. Both are located a short distance from the Bowditch School on Seaverns Avenue.

The Bowditch School was the recipient of local patronage and alumni support. The Boston Art Commission, in its annual reports, lists several items of artistic note within the Bowditch School. For example, the artist Walter Gilman Page (1862-1934), organizer of the Public School Art League, had two portraits on display at the Bowditch School. A portrait of Charles Willard Hill (1834-1896), the first master of the Bowditch School from 1890-1896 and a Jamaica Plain resident, hung in the Assembly Room. It was purchased in 1898 "with the proceeds of an entertainment arranged by school." A Memorial Service was held in Jamaica Plain's Curtis Hall to commemorate Hill in November 1896. An account in the Boston Herald, entitled "Record of a Useful Life", reported that the hall was filled to capacity with present and former pupils as well as school committee members. Hill was obviously a well-liked and respected Jamaica Plain citizen.

Hill's tenure was followed by that of Edward Schuerch, who was master of the Bowditch School from 1896 until at least 1926. His long reign saw many changes in the school, including the change from a Girls Grammar School (Grades 4-9) to an Elementary School (Grades 1-3) in 1907. In the mid-1920s, the Bowditch became an Intermediate School.

While Hill and Schuerch are both important individuals in the history of the Bowditch School's development, Dr. Elizabeth Catherine Keller, while not a graduate of the school apparently had close ties with it. Keller (1837-1912) was, according to a page-one obituary in The Boston Evening Transcript of 29 November 1912, "One of the first four women in the world to study and practice surgery." Keller was Superintendent for the Home for Friendless Children in Philadelphia, going on to establish a hospital and dispensary in 1871, also in Philadelphia. She was called to succeed Susan Dimmock at New England Hospital for Women in Roxbury in 1875. She was resident surgeon there until ca. 1900. Keller had established private practice in Jamaica Plain by 1877. From 1899 on, Keller took a keen interest in the Boston School Board, representing the

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24th Ward on the School Committee. She donated a 3/4 portrait of herself (also by Walter Gilan Page mentioned above) to the Bowditch School during the 1890s. Keller first lived at Greene and Lamartine Streets, a short distance from the school, and later built a mansion at Rockview and Greene Streets, also only a few blocks away. That she probably felt a civic responsibility as a successful woman surgeon to the young women and girls of the Bowditch School is quite likely.

Throughout its construction, the school was referred to as a "Hillside District Grammar School", first appearing as the "Bowditch School" in the 1892 report of the Architects Department by Edmund M. Wheelwright. The architect for the Bowditch School was Harrison Henry Atwood (1863-1954). (See attached Appendix A for a partial list of buildings designed by Atwood.) Atwood had a long and distinguished career not only as an architect, but also as a politician.

Born in North Londonderry, Vermont, Harrison Atwood came to Boston as a young man and was educated in Boston schools. Before training as an architect, he began his career in the law office of Godfrey, Morse and John R. Bullard. Deciding instead to pursue a career in architecture, Atwood apprenticed with the well known New England architect, Samuel J.F. Thayer (1842-1893) for three and a half or four years. Richard Herndon, in his 1892 compilation, Boston of Today, states that Atwood was with Thayer for four years followed by "a year or more" with former city architect George Clough (1843-1916). Atwood left Clough to begin his own practice in 1886, when he was first listed under "Architects" in the Boston Directory, with an office at 22 School Street, where he remained through 1889. From 1891 through 1894 he rented space in the Stock Exchange Building at 53 State Street and was back on School Street at Number 13 in 1896. Atwood's name did not appear again in the Directory's classified section until the period from 1911 to 1920, when his home address at 61 Alban Street, Dorchester, was listed.

Harrison Atwood undoubtedly had a thorough, high quality training which, in combination with his own talent, enabled him to set up his own practice at a young age as well as to qualify for the prestigious position of City Architect in 1889 at age twenty-six. Before taking over as City Architect, Atwood completed the following solo projects: the First National Bank building in Chelsea (1888), at a cost of \$100,000; a Baptist church on Woodlawn Avenue, Chelsea; a large warehouse on Friend Street, Boston; and a dozen houses in Ashmont between Dudley Street and the Milton line.

While establishing his architectural practice, Atwood was also involved in politics as a State Representative, serving his first full term from 1887 to 1889. He was the Republican Representative of Ward 8, West End. Atwood participated on the liquor, mercantile affairs and building department

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committees. He continued to be active in local and state Republican politics until late in his life.

Appointed City Architect in 1889 by Mayor Thomas Hart (28th Mayor, served 1889-1890, 1900-1901), Atwood held this position from May 16, 1889 to March 30, 1891. In 1891, however, he was removed from office by the succeeding Democratic administration of Nathan Matthews (29th Mayor, served 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894). (The Mayor was elected annually until 1895, after which elections were held biennially. In 1909, John F. Fitzgerald became the first mayor to enjoy the extended term of four years.)

At this point it seems pertinent to discuss the peculiarities of the City Architect position (which caused Atwood to be dismissed by one administration and reinstated by the next) and the effect of a one-year mayoral term. The City Architect Department was established in 1874 as a means of cutting building costs. Although politically appointed, holders of the position turned out to be only the most qualified of architects, with the first being George A. Clough (1843-1914), whose tenure lasted through several mayoral administrations, ca. 1875-1883. (It will be remembered that Atwood trained briefly with Clough.) Clough began his career as a shipbuilder and later trained with Snell and Gregerson from 1863 to 1869. He was responsible for completing at least 25 Boston schools, including the renowned English High and Latin Schools (1877).

Charles Bateman (b. 1851) followed Clough, serving two terms, one in 1883 and a second in 1888. Some of his most noted designs include: the O Street School House, St. Cecilia's Church in the Back Bay, the Andrew Carney Hospital in South Boston and St. Catherine's Church in Charlestown.

Succeeding Bateman was Arthur H. Vinal (1854-1923), a versatile and prolific architect who often designed in a Richardsonian style, as illustrated in his Engine and Hose House #33, 1885, and the present Institute of Contemporary Art, 1886. Atwood, who came next in this chronology, was succeeded by Edmund March Wheelwright (1854-1912). Wheelwright's contributions to Boston architecture were extensive. He was the subject of a book by Francis Ward Chandler which dealt exclusively with Wheelwright's municipal structures for the City of Boston. He was the last City Architect, serving from 1891 to 1895. It was in this talented group that Atwood belonged.

In his inaugural address of 1895, Mayor Edwin Upton Curtis recommended that the position of City Architect be abolished. This was the result of several factors, the primary one being that although the Architect Department had been initiated to cut building costs, it had in fact become more costly to operate the department with its staff than to put the projects out to private bid. Accusations of political favoritism and the giving of contracts to friends and

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political favorites were widespread and Atwood himself bore the brunt of many years of accumulated frustration with this department.

In a highly publicized scandal concerning the awarding of contracts for the work on public buildings, the activities of the Architect Department came under the harsh scrutiny of the public. Atwood, while guilty of bestowing favoritism, was in reality continuing the practices well established in the department. It is evident in the Bowditch School that he chose skilled workmen and contractors for the project. Atwood rose above the scandal, for he continued his successful careers in both architecture and politics after this event.

One of the major problems with the post was that it was an appointed one and therefore inextricably tied to politics. What one architect began under one administration might be carried out under three architects from three different administrations, causing considerable delays and radical and costly changes. The building was often subjected to several different approaches before eventually being completed and occupied.

Exactly what was required to "qualify" for the position of City Architect is uncertain. One item that Atwood secured, however, was a petition signed by others in the architectural community, as well as those for whom he had completed work. The petition was presented to the Mayor for consideration. Atwood was recommended by S.J.F. Thayer (Atwood's former employer, architect of the Clarendon Street Baptist Church, The Tudor), Carl Fehmer (Oliver Ames House, 357-59 Beacon Street, 505 Beacon Street), John Spofford (partner with Brigham, Maine State Capitol Building Extension, Massachusetts State House Addition), Charles Brigham (Burrage House, earlier a partner with Sturgis on the old Museum of Fine Arts), Gridley J.F. Bryant (Old City Hall, Boston City Hospital) and Charles F. McKim (Boston Public Library, Algonquin Club), to name a few of the more prominent individuals.

As the appointment to the post of City Architect was annual, it is often difficult to ascertain which buildings were designed by which City Architect. Such is the difficulty with Atwood's work. In fact, the Bowditch School has often been attributed to Atwood's predecessor, Arthur H. Vinal (1854-1923). Atwood's Report of the Architects Department for 1889 (presented January 30, 1890), however, clearly states: "Plans are about ready for the approval of the School Board for the following named school buildings, viz: - A twelve room grammar school with exhibition hall at the corner of Greene and Cheshire Streets, Jamaica Plain, Ward 23...." At this point in Atwood's tenure (January of 1890) the plans for the Bowditch School had not yet been approved by the School Committee.

Herndon, writing in 1892, said of Atwood's work: "...and the new work laid

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out, completed or under contract during his term of office comprises four of the finest public schools in New England, namely, the Henry L. Pierce Grammar School, Dorchester (demolished), the Prince Primary School, Cumberland and St. Botolph Streets (he probably means the Perkins School which is at that address and which was designed by Atwood. The Prince School was at Newbury and Exeter Streets, designed by George Clough), the Bowditch Grammar School, Jamaica Plain and the Adams Primary School, East Boston."

Completed ca. 1891, slightly earlier than the Bowditch School, the Perkins School shares with the Bowditch School a restrained and intelligent use of the Classical Revival style, as well as a similarity in massing, siting and use of materials.

Atwood's skill in school design is apparent in the structures he built while City Architect, but he obviously maintained a reputation for talented institutional design and remained aware of current style, technology and practice, as he was commissioned to produce plans long after leaving the City's employ. Several of his later plans for school buildings include: the George Lewis School, 131 Walnut Avenue, Roxbury, 1912; the Curtis Guild School, 5 Ashley Street, East Boston, 1921; the Frank V. Thompson School, 110 Maxwell Street, Dorchester, 1922; and, as late as 1935, the Joyce Kilmer School, 35 Baker Street, West Roxbury.

In addition to the large number of public buildings Atwood was responsible for during his term as City Architect and in private practice, he also designed many distinguished residences, primarily in the Ashmont Hill section of Dorchester. His own house at 61 Alban Street has been the subject of attention for its unique design. Atwood was equally adept at designing institutional and residential structures, in Neo-Classical, Queen Anne, Stick and Shingle styles.

While engaged in a successful practice, Atwood continued his involvement in politics. From 1893 to 1897, he was Representative in Congress for the 10th District. In 1914, Atwood was elected to represent Dorchester, Ward 24, in the State Legislature, where he served until 1929. Atwood was a delegate to numerous Republican conventions over the years. This successful mixture of politics and architecture appears to be uncommon.

The records are silent on exactly how the school came to be named after Nathaniel I. Bowditch (1773-1838), an astronomer, noted mathematician and insurance executive. Although there were several prominent members of the Bowditch family named Nathaniel, it appears most likely, in regard to date and long-term influence, that the school was named after the aforementioned Bowditch.

(continued)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 78

Bowditch School,
Boston, Massachusetts

N.I. Bowditch was born in Salem, Massachusetts on March 26, 1773. His ancestors had "for three generations followed the sea so that this lad came very naturally by his passion for ships and sailing." He was interested at an early age in calculations and navigation and went on to write extensively on astronomical and nautical subjects, preparing the first American edition of The Practical Navigator. In 1823, Bowditch was named actuary of the Massachusetts Life Insurance company and moved to Boston. He resided at what was then 8 Otis Place (now Winthrop Square) until his death. Members of his family lived at Otis Place until the house was demolished in 1858 to make way for a new opening to Franklin Street.

Boston's first "Bowditch School" was located on South Street, not too far from where the family had made their home, beginning in 1861. In 1874 the school was relocated to nearby East Street, with the free-standing South Street schoolhouse eventually replaced by a row of three, 5-story loft buildings under the trusteeship of one Charles Bowditch et al. The East Street institution survived until 1884.

Nathaniel I. Bowditch served as the president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences from 1829 until his death in 1838. Awarded an honorary Master of Arts from Harvard in 1802 - most likely coinciding with his publication of The Practical Navigator - Bowditch received the degree of LL.D. from Harvard in 1816, and was made a Fellow of the Corporation of Harvard in 1826. At the time of his death he was working on a translation of the 4th volume of La Place's Mechanique Celeste.

Members of the Bowditch family such as Henry Pickering and Jonathan Pickering, grandsons of Nathaniel, resided on a large estate on Pond Street, Moss Hill, in Jamaica Plain, perhaps providing another clue to the origin of the school's name. J. Ingersoll Bowditch, President of the American Insurance Company, was the first family member to be listed at that address, in the Boston Directory for 1856. These later members of the Bowditch family continued to provide support for the school named after their ancestor. A plaque mentioned by the City Art Commission, which has since disappeared, read: "In Grateful appreciation of the Generosity of Charles P. Bowditch by the Bowditch Teachers." Henry Bowditch, Charles' brother, was a long-time member of the School Committee.

In summary, the Bowditch School played an important role in the educational advancement of Jamaica Plain citizens for over ninety years. The school is a prime example of the endeavors of various Boston City departments, through the Architects Department, the School Board and the Art Commission, as well as the local citizenry, to provide high-level educational and cultural opportunities for the students. Additionally, the Bowditch School is a fine example of the work of prominent local architect and long-time politician, Harrison Henry Atwood.

(end)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8⁹

Bowditch School,
Boston, Massachusetts

APPENDIX A: A PARTIAL LIST OF BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY HARRISON H. ATWOOD

Compiled from Atwood's obituaries, the Boston Public Library Fine Arts Reference Index Cards (which are in large part gathered from Building Inspectors' Reports), Boston Landmarks Commission Reports, Harrison Henry Atwood's Testimony, December 1895 - January 1896, and various City Documents.

SCHOOLS, PUBLIC AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

| DATE | NAME AND LOCATION | SOURCE |
|---------|--|------------------------------|
| 1888 | 1st National Bank, Chelsea | Atwood Test. |
| 1889 | Breeds Hill Water Tank, Orient Avenue near Lafayette Avenue, East Boston | Bldg. Inspec. Rept. |
| ca.1889 | Baptist Church, Woodlawn Avenue, Chelsea | Atwood Test. |
| ca.1889 | Warehouse, Friend Street | Atwood Test. |
| ca.1890 | Horace Mann School for Deaf Mutes (Atwood completed the work of Arthur Vinal), demolished in 1970's. | City Doc./Herndon |
| 1890 | Mount Vernon Street Engine House, Mount Vernon Street, rear of Old Harbor Point, Dorchester | Bldg. Inspec. Rep. |
| 1892 | Bowditch Grammar School, 80-82 Green Street, Jamaica Plain | Bos. City Doc. Jan., 1889-92 |
| 1891 | Harvard Avenue Fire Station, 16 Harvard Avenue, Brighton | BPL FA Index File |
| 1891 | Perkins Primary School, Cumberland and St. Botolph Streets. Reuse, 1980. | Bos. City Docs./ Herndon |
| 1892 | Henry L. Pierce School, Washington Street and Welles Avenue, Dorchester. (Demolished in 1974. Current site of Codman Square Branch Library.) | Bos. City Doc./ Herndon |
| ca.1892 | Adams Primary School. East Boston. | Herndon, BOSTON OF TODAY |
| 1912 | East Boston District Courthouse. | BPL FA Index File |

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9/10

Bowditch School,
Boston, Massachusetts

| | | |
|------|---|----------------------|
| 1912 | George Lewis School, 131 Walnut Avenue, Roxbury | Bos. Pub. Sch. Dept. |
| 1918 | Roslindale Municipal Building | BPL FA Index File |
| 1921 | Curtis Guild School, 5 Ashley Street, East Boston | Bos. Pub. Sch. Dept. |

(end)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 101

Bowditch School,
Boston, Massachusetts

Appendix A/2 Buildings by Atwood

| DATE | NAME AND LOCATION | SOURCE |
|---------------|--|----------------------|
| 1922 | Frank V. Thompson School, 110 Maxwell Street, Dorchester | Bos. Pub. Sch. Dept. |
| 1935 | Joyce Kilmer School, 35 Baker Street, West Roxbury | Bos. Pub. Sch. Dept. |
| ? | Roxbury Memorial High School | Atwood Obit. |
| ? | Boston Clerical High School | Atwood Obit. |
| (before 1895) | Engine & Hook & Ladder Hse., Paris St., East Boston | Atwood Test. |

In addition, Atwood was responsible for a number of engine houses and police stations in Boston, Brighton, Jamaica Plain, East Boston and South Boston during his tenure as City Architect.

RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

| DATE | NAME AND LOCATION | SOURCE |
|---------|--|-------------------|
| 1888 | Hse. for himself, 61 Alban Street, Dorchester | Tucci |
| 1888 | 2-story wood dwelling for Charles Barker, Englewood Street, Dorchester | Bldg. Insp. Rept. |
| ca.1888 | Beach hse. for Mr. Bates, Point Allerton | Atwood Test. |
| 1889 | Hse. for Hattie Furbrush, Alban Street, near Welles Avenue, Dorchester | Bldg. Insp. Rept. |
| 1889 | Hse. for Jas. Pope, Alban Street, near Ashmont Street, Dorchester | bldg. Insp. Rept. |

(continued)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 117

Bowditch School,
Boston, Massachusetts

-
- | | | |
|------|--|-------------------|
| 1890 | Englewood St., Dorchester. 2-story wood dwelling for J.F. Howland | Bldg. Insp. Rept. |
| 1890 | 3-story, 8-family house for Michael Garrity, 753 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester | Bldg. Insp. Rept. |
| 1895 | Hse. for Sophie Stein, 77 Alban Street, Dorchester | Bldg. Insp. Rept. |

(end)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1213

Bowditch School,
Boston, Massachusetts

Appendix A/3
Buildings by Atwood

| DATE | NAME AND LOCATION | SOURCE |
|------|--|-------------------|
| 1896 | Hse. for Lourse(?) & Harve, Salcombe Street, near Stoughton Street, Dorchester | Bldg. Insp. Rept. |
| ? | Hse. for Atwood, 87 Alban Street, Dorchester | Tucci |
| 1909 | Hse. for Atwood, 91 Alban Street, Dorchester | Tucci |
| ? | Hse. for Atwood, 515 Talbot Street, Dorchester | Tucci |
| ? | Hse. for Atwood, 521 Talbot Street, Dorchester | Tucci |

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS USED IN APPENDIX A

Atwood Obit.= Atwood, Harrison Henry. Obituary. THE BOSTON HERALD, 22 October 1954, p.15.

Atwood Test.= Testimony of Harrison Henry Atwood, COMMONWEALTH VS. PEABODY, Massachusetts Superior Court, December 1895 - January 1896.

BPL Fa Index File = Boston Public Library Fine Arts Reference Department, Architects Index File

Bos. Pub. Sch. Dept. = WHAT'S IN A NAME? NAMES OF BOSTON PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS: THEIR ORIGIN. Boston: Boston Public School Department, 1980.

Bldg. Inspec. Rept. = Building Inspector's Reports, City of Boston.

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(continued)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1314

Bowditch School,
Boston, Massachusetts

Tucci =

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(end)

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Boston, Massachusetts

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(continued)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 3

Bowditch School,
Boston, Massachusetts

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 4

Bowditch School,
Boston, Massachusetts

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(end)

*Neenah Board
52% COTTON FIBER*

Bowditch School, 80-82 Green Street, Jamaica Plain, Boston, MA
Boston Redevelopment Authority map

0
100
200
300
400
500 FT.
SCALE 1:1200



PLAYGROUND



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Bowditch School

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Suffolk

DATE RECEIVED: 7/03/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/17/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/02/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/17/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90001145

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: Y PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT August 3, 1990 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
 UTM's boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

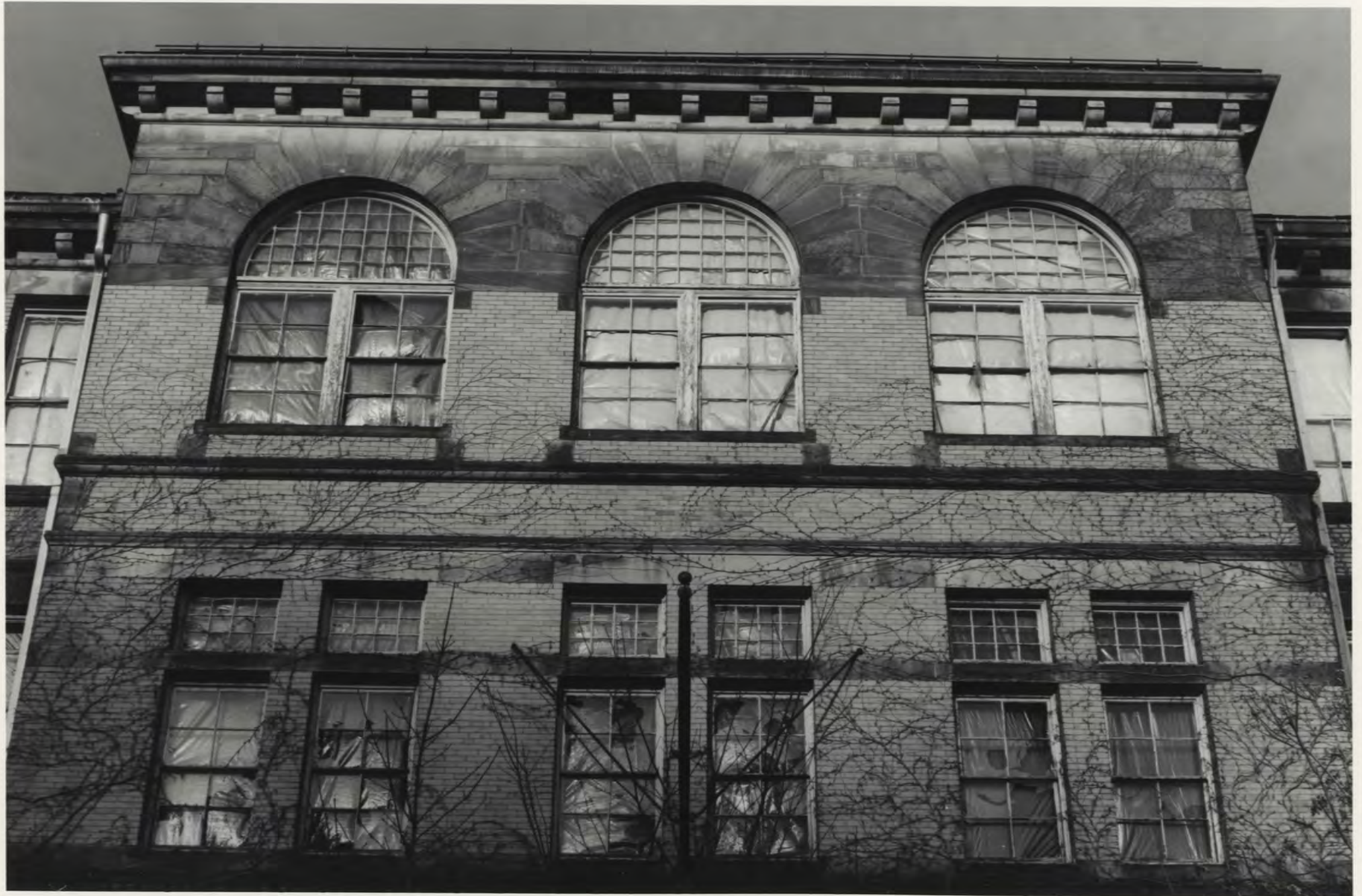
Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



PROPERTY: BOWDITCH SCHOOL
ADDRESS: 80-82 GREEN ST., JAMAICA PLAIN, BOSTON, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 12-29-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: 10
VIEW: GREEN ST. (SW) & SE ELEVATIONS; FROM SOUTH



PROPERTY: BOWDITCH SCHOOL
ADDRESS: 80-82 GREEN ST., JAMAICA PLAIN, BOSTON, MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON

DATE: 12-29-88

NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108

PHOTO NO: (2)

VIEW: GREEN ST. (SW) ELEVATION; CENTRAL PAVILION; FLOORS 2 & 3
FROM SW



PROPERTY: BOWDITCH SCHOOL
ADDRESS: 80-82 GREEN ST., JAMAICA PLAIN, BOSTON, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 12-29-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST, BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: ③
VIEW: GREEN ST. (SW) ELEVATION; ENTRANCE PORTICO; FROM SW



PROPERTY: BOWDITCH SCHOOL
ADDRESS: 80-82 GREEN ST.; JAMAICA PLAIN, BOSTON, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 3-20-89
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST.; BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: (4)
VIEW: CHESHIRE ST. (NW) ELEVATION (RIGHT) ← PART OF
NE ELEVATION; FROM NORTH



PROPERTY: BOWDITCH SCHOOL

ADDRESS: 80-82 GREEN ST., JAMAICA PLAIN, BOSTON, MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON

DATE: 3-20-89

NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108

PHOTO NO: (5)

VIEW: NORTHEAST ELEVATION; FROM NORTH



PROPERTY: BOWDITCH SCHOOL
ADDRESS: 80-82 GREEN ST., JAMAICA PLAIN, BOSTON, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 12-29-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: ⑥
VIEW: INTERIOR: 1ST FLOOR, CENTRAL CORRIDOR;
PLASTER ARCH, WAINSCOT & DOORS



PROPERTY: BOWDITCH SCHOOL
ADDRESS: 80-82 GREEN ST., JAMAICA PLAIN, BOSTON, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 12-29-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: ⑦
VIEW: INTERIOR: 2ND FLOOR, CENTRAL CORRIDOR, TO SE



PROPERTY: BOWDITCH SCHOOL
ADDRESS: 80-82 GREEN ST., JAMAICA PLAIN, BOSTON, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 12-29-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST; BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: (8)
VIEW: INTERIOR: 2ND FLOOR, TYPICAL CLASSROOM



PROPERTY: BOWDITCH SCHOOL
ADDRESS: 80-82 GREEN ST., JAMAICA PLAIN, BOSTON, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 1/9/89
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: (9)
VIEW: INTERIOR: 3RD FLOOR, AUDITORIUM



PROPERTY: BOWDITCH SCHOOL
ADDRESS: 80-82 GREEN ST., JAMAICA PLAIN, BOSTON, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 12-29-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: (10)
VIEW: INTERIOR: STAIR, NEWEL POSTS



7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names



Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Massachusetts Department of Public Works

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1976. Field checked 1976. Map edited 1987. Supersedes Newton and Boston South 1:25,000-scale maps dated 1970.

Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS charts 13270 (1982) and 13272 (1982). This information is not intended for navigational purposes.

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

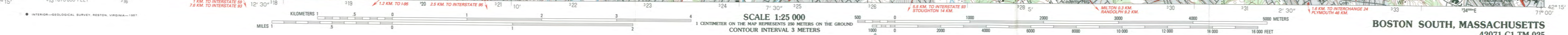
| CONVERSION TABLE | | DECLINATION DIAGRAM | | ADJOINING MAPS | | |
|------------------|---------|---------------------|--|----------------|---|---|
| Meters | Feet | Diagram | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 3.2808 | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 6.5617 | | | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3 | 9.8425 | | | 7 | 8 | |
| 4 | 13.1234 | | | | | |
| 5 | 16.4042 | | | | | |
| 6 | 19.6850 | | | | | |
| 7 | 22.9659 | | | | | |
| 8 | 26.2467 | | | | | |
| 9 | 29.5275 | | | | | |
| 10 | 32.8084 | | | | | |

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

Topographic Map Symbols

- Primary highway, hard surface
- Secondary highway, hard surface
- Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
- Unimproved road, trail
- Route marker: Interstate, U. S., State
- Railroad: standard gauge; narrow gauge
- Bridge: drawbridge
- Footbridge; overpass; underpass
- Build-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown
- House; barn; church; school; large structure
- Boundary: National, with monument; State; County, parish; Civil township, precinct, district
- Incorporated city, village, town
- National or State reservation; small park
- Land grant with monument; found section corner
- U. S. public lands survey: range, township, section
- Range, township; section line; location approximate
- Fence or field line
- Power transmission line, located tower
- Dam; dam with lock
- Cemetery; grave
- Campground; picnic area; U. S. location approximate
- Windmill; water well; spring
- Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave
- Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation
- Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression
- Distorted surface: strip mine, lava, sand
- Soundings; depth curve
- Pararell lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream
- Rapids; large and small; falls; large and small
- Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp
- Land subject to controlled inundation; wooded
- Scrub; mangrove
- Outcrop; viewshed

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request



130 WITCH SCHOOL 10/32 6100/408130



RECEIVED
JUL 03 1990
NATIONAL
REGISTER

June 22, 1990

Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination:

Bowditch School, HPCA #11169MA, 80-82 Greene Street, Boston (Jamaica Plain)
(Suffolk County), Massachusetts, 02130.

There has been no owner objection for the property listed above.

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has 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 form.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure: