

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 13 1980 JUN 16 1980
DATE ENTEREDSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC All Saints' Church

AND/OR COMMON same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 211 Ashmont Street

CITY, TOWN Boston (Dorchester)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

11th

STATE

Massachusetts

VICINITY OF
CODE
025COUNTY
SuffolkCODE
025**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☐ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ ENTERTAINMENT☒ RELIGIOUS☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Parish of All Saints'

STREET & NUMBER

211 Ashmont Street

CITY, TOWN

Boston

VICINITY OF

STATE
MA 02124**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Suffolk County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Pemberton Square

CITY, TOWN

Boston

STATE
Massachusetts**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DATE February 1978

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Massachusetts Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Boston, Massachusetts

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The All Saints' Church is located in the Ashmont section of Boston's large Dorchester neighborhood. It is in the immediate vicinity of Peabody Square where Dorchester Avenue, a main thoroughfare, intersects with several local streets.

All Saints' Church, erected between 1893 and 1929 is a basilican form Modern Gothic style Episcopal parish church building consisting of a nave with flanking aisles, tower, chancel, two small side chapels, and a projecting cloister with an attached parish house. Constructed of random-coursed, rough-faced Quincy granite with Nova Scotia sandstone trim, the church was designed by the firm of Cram & Goodhue and executed in stages: the nave, chancel, and cloister were completed in 1893, the tower and west and south porches in 1896, the parish house in 1906, and the Lady Chapel and Chapel of Saint Stephen in 1912 and 1929 respectively.

The west, or main entrance porch is a one-story, buttressed projection from the tower, with a battlemented parapet and a pointed-arch entranceway flanked by carved sandstone niches with other decorative carved detail above. The massive, squarish tower has tapering buttresses at the corners, a battlemented parapet, a large cathedral window with perpendicular style stone tracery over the west porch, and pairs of lancet windows toward the top of each facade. An attached octagonal stair tower rises slightly above the height of the main tower from its southwest corner.

The six-bay nave has a simple pitched slate roof and is flanked by low buttressed aisles on both sides. Cram's intentional lowering of these side aisles was designed to let more light into the nave through the large clerestory windows above, while darkening the aisles themselves, which are lit only by small, rectangular windows in each bay. The large rectangular chancel reaches almost the full nave height and has three large windows on each side which, like those in the clerestory and tower, have perpendicular style stone tracery with cinquefoil panels. Sandstone belt courses around the nave, tower, and chancel reflect divisions of interior space.

Although part of the original plan for the church, a small south porch with a pitched roof and intricate wooden tracery in the entrance arch was not completed until 1896. The Lady Chapel, built alongside the three southernmost bays of the east aisle, and the small, semi-octagonal Chapel of Saint Stephen, built off of the southernmost bay of the west aisle, are of matched stone and simulate the effect of transepts.

The cloister, a low, pitched-roof ell projecting north from the chancel, connects the church to the 1906 Parish House. This two story, medieval-inspired structure mixes Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Gothic elements, having a partially half-timbered second story, stepped buttresses and a lancet window, and rectangular window banks divided by stone mullions that derive from Jacobean architecture.

The Church's interior contrasts a very simple structural fabric with highly decorative overlain ornament, handcrafted by a variety of notable European and American craftsmen. The pointed-arch arcades separating the nave from the narrow aisles are supported on simple chamfered stone piers without capitals, and the chestnut roof truss framing is similarly devoid of surface decoration other than chamfering. Head-high oak wainscoting, composed of beaded vertical boards capped by a molded rail, runs along the walls of the aisles and tower. The fixed oak pews have quatrefoils carved into the end boards.

All of the clerestory windows except the four closest to the chancel have diamond-shaped panes in various shades of orange. The remaining four are of stained glass depicting biblical scenes; that on the south wall closest to the chancel was designed by Cram's design partner, Bertram Goodhue. Five of the small, stained glass aisle windows were designed by the fine-arts glazier Charles Connick.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Its high degree of decoration and elevation slightly above the nave floor combine to make the chancel the dominant focus of the church's interior. The chancel walls are paneled with a ten foot high oak screen, carved by the firm of Irving and Casson and containing choir stalls, an organ case, and sculpture niches with Gothic motifs such as linenfold carving in the dados, perpendicular tracery in the panel heads, a frieze with reliefcarved Biblical scenes, and an ornate foliate cornice. The altar, a solid, seven-ton block of Caen stone, is surrounded by a large and elaborate stone reredos, executed by Domingo Mora under the supervision of John Evans and carved with similar Gothic motifs. A large, central niche contains a figure of the Risen Christ, flanked by side niches containing angels, with a dozen smaller niches in between with Old and New Testament figures. A somewhat similarly composed carved oak reredos above the side altar in the Lady Chapel was carved by the ecclesiastical sculptor Johannes Kirchmayer in 1912.

The building has not been altered since the date of the last addition.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1892-4, 1906, 1912, 1929 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Ralph Adams Cram

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

All Saints' Church possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship as well as significant associations with the development of the Modern Gothic style. All Saints' Church, Ralph Adams Cram's first architectural commission, has considerable and long-recognized significance both as the earliest work of a major architectural style, the Modern Gothic. The church's construction over a nearly forty-year span also reflects the evolution of Cram's theory and style; finally, its interior sculpture and ornament represent a high point in American interior church design.

All Saints' Parish had its origin as a mission, begun in 1867, for mill workers in the Dorchester Lower Mills area. After building its first church, a wood frame building in Dorchester Avenue in 1871, the congregation formally organized as a parish in 1874. Largely because of the beneficence of Colonel Oliver Peabody, a prominent Unitarian and partner in the investment banking firm of Kidder & Peabody (who adopted the parish in 1879 after stopping in for a Sunday service when a snowstorm impeded his passage into Boston from his residence in Milton) the parish undertook the building of a larger church in 1890. Bertram Goodhue at this time was Cram's draftsman and later became his partner. Apparently because of the beauty of Bertram Goodhue's renderings, Cram's firm was chosen by a Parish committee, which included Colonel Peabody, to design the new church. Its cornerstone was laid by Phillips Brooks the following year.

A major figure in American architecture and designer of such noted works as the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, the Princeton University Chapel, and the West Point Academy, Ralph Adams Cram (1863-1942) was also a theorist and Gothic scholar whose work and thought fostered a style which changed the face of ecclesiastical America in the first third of the 20th century.

Reacting against what he saw as artificiality and awkwardness in Victorian Gothic architecture, Cram preached a "creative scholarship" (Tucci, 1973, p. 53) based on an attempt to move forward from the point where English Perpendicular Gothic architecture had been, in Cram's view, interrupted by the Renaissance and Reformation early in the 16th century. Although Cram recognized the necessity of creating new Gothic forms to satisfy modern needs, he insisted that these forms have structural authority, artistic integrity, and a basis in English Gothic precedents.

Thus, as Cram's first opportunity to give physical form to these precepts, All Saints' Church is important not only for its broader impact on American architecture (ultimately leading to such diverse developments as the "Collegiate Gothic" of Princeton and Yale, and Chicago's Tribune Tower) but more particularly, as a watershed in American ecclesiastical design. Furthermore, its nearly forty-year genesis reflects Cram's style development from a simple, massive, textured beginning, as exemplified in the original nave, tower, and chancel, to a later emphasis on smoothness, verticality, and detail which can be seen in the later parish house and side chapels (though somewhat obscured by Cram's attempt to match these additions to the original design).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cram, Ralph Adams. Church Building Boston, 1899 (1924 Edition).
Maginnis, Charles D. The Work of Cram & Ferguson, Architects New York, Pencil Points Press, 1929.
Tucci, Douglas S. The Gothic Churches of Dorchester, Volume Two: All Saints' Church, Boston, Dorchester Savings Bank, 1973.
All Saints', Ashmont: A Centennial History of the Parish, Boston, Parish of All Saints', 1975.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 53,500 Square Feet

QUADRANGLE NAME Boston South

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1"=24,000'

UTM REFERENCES

A 19 329870 4683350

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please refer to the attached map.

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

by Boston Landmarks Commission

Candace Jenkins, National Register Coordinator

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Massachusetts Historical Commission

December 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

294 Washington Street

(617) 727-8470

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Boston

Massachusetts 02108

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ☒

STATE ☐

LOCAL ☐

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Patricia L. Weslowski

4/14/80

TITLE

Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Comm.

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 6/16/80

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 6/12/80

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED JUN 16 1980

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8, 9 PAGE 2

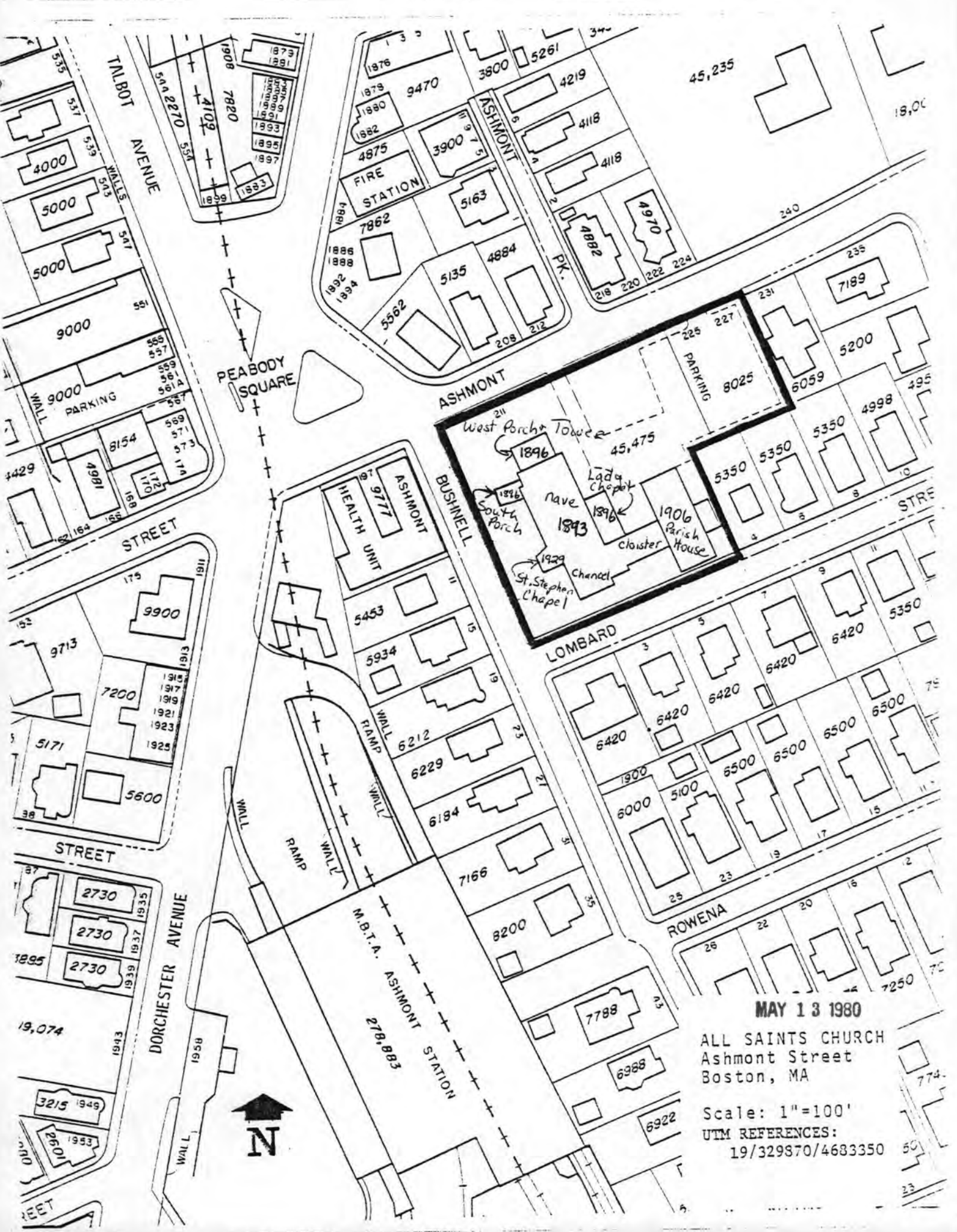
8) Significance - continued

Finally, the church's finely crafted interior is important not only for the quality of its design, but as the first example of a church interior designed as an integral example of the overall building design, by the same firm as the structure itself. All of the church's interior ornament, with the exception of the figurative sculpture and most of the stained glass, was designed by Cram and Goodhue with the expressed intention of maintaining an internal consistency of design which would allow the church structure and its interior decoration to function as a coherent whole. This integrated design concept, first employed at All Saints', became the prototype for much subsequent church building in America.

Also noteworthy are the figurative sculpture and stained glass work which, though not expressly following the firm's designs, were intended as highlights in a larger ornamental fabric and were executed by a collection of notable European and American artists. German-born Johannes Kirchmayer (1860-1930), who carved the Lady Chapel altarpiece and the sanctuary paneling reliefs, was a founder of the Boston Society for Arts and Crafts. He also worked on wooden figure sculpture at Christ Church, Cranbrook, Michigan, and the Washington Cathedral. John Evans (1850-1923), the Welsh sculptor who supervised the execution of much of the chancel sculpture as well as carving various other interior elements at All Saints' also worked on the Washington Cathedral, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, and the Boston Public Library, Trinity Church, and the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston. Charles Connick (1874-1945), designer of much of the stained glass at All Saints' was also a personal friend of Cram's who worked with him on numerous other commissions as well, including St. John the Divine and the Princeton University Chapel.

9) Bibliography - continued

Whitaker, C. H. Editor, Bertram Goodhue: Architect and Master of Many Arts, New York, American Institute of Architects Press, 1925.



MAY 13 1980

ALL SAINTS CHURCH
Ashmont Street
Boston, MA

Scale: 1"=100'
UTM REFERENCES:
19/329870/4683350

MAY 13 1980

JUN 16 1980

Property all Saints Church

State ma - Suffolk

Working Number 5-13-80 1326

ref no 80000678

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 3
Maps 2

Built by the noted architect, Ralph Adams Cram, this church is eligible for architecture HISTORIAN
as the earliest work of an architectural style - the Modern Gothic. Cram's church ^{accept}
which was built in stages (1892-4, 1906, 1912, 1929) started a reaction in ecclesiastical design Patrick Andrews
against the alleged artificiality of Victorian Gothic architecture. This church is made of
granite and sandstone trim - its austere exterior is in contrast to its richly detailed interior. 6/12/80

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up _____
Federal Register Entry 2.3.81

Send-back _____
Re-submit _____

Entered JUN 16 1980



All Saints Church
211 Ashmont Street
Boston, Mass.

JUN 16 1980

Suffolk Co.

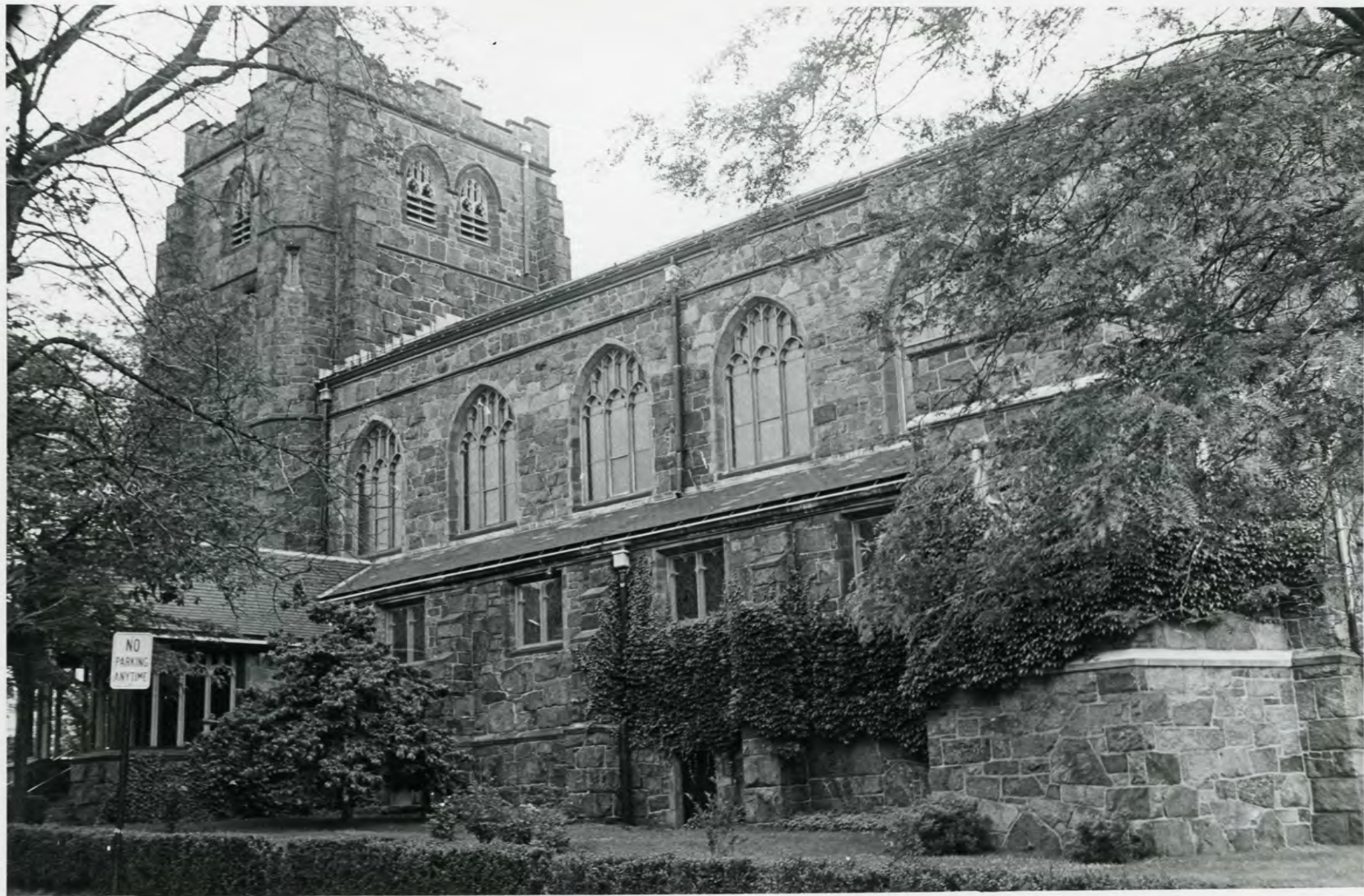
Robert Burke 1977
Boston Landmarks Commission

Photo #1 of 3
Ashmont Street elevation
facing south

MAY 13 1980

, southerly

#2



All Saints Church
211 Ashmont Street
Boston, Mass.

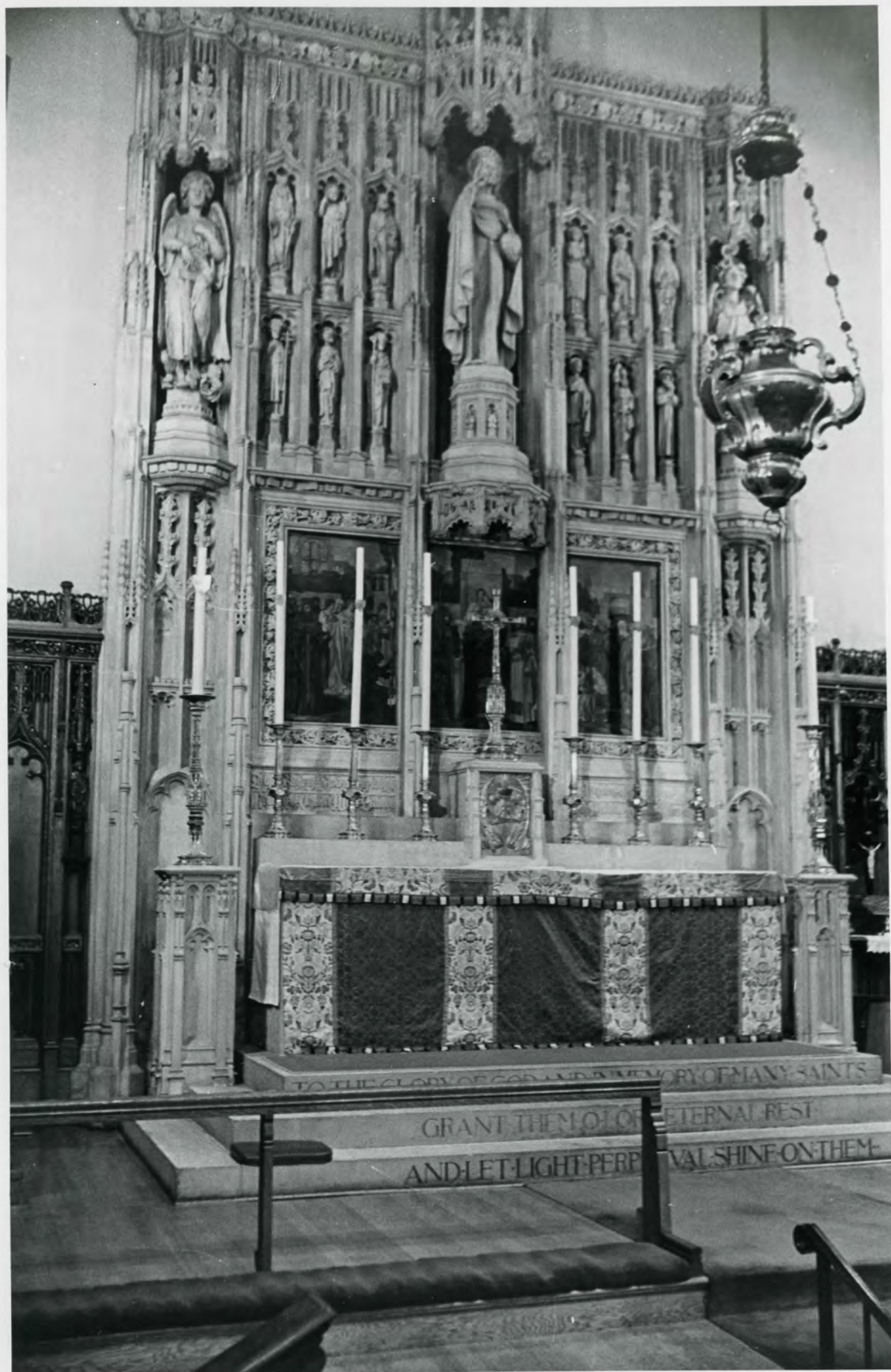
JUN 16 1980

Suffolk Co.

Robert Burke 1977
Boston Landmarks Commission

Photo #2 of 3
Bushnell Street elevation
facing northeast

MAY 13 1980



TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN MEMORY OF MANY SAINTS

GRANT THEM O LORD ETERNAL REST

AND LET LIGHT PERPETUAL SHINE ON THEM

All Saints Church
211 Ashmont Street
Bosotn, Mass.

JUN 16 1980

Suffolk co.

Robert Burke 1977
Boston Landmarks Commission

Photo #3 of 3
High alter reredos

MAY 13 1980

#4



All Saint's Church
Ashmont Street
Boston (Dorchester)
Massachusetts

Scale: 1"=24,000'
UTM References:
19/329870/4683350

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey

Topography by planetable surveys 1943. Revised from

aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970

Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 246

and 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

1,000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,

zone 19, shown in blue

Boundaries in tidewater areas from information supplied

by Massachusetts Department of Public Works

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

SCALE 1:24,000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET

DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER

SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER

THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 9.5 FEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242

A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface

Secondary highway, hard surface

Light-duty road, hard or improved surface

Unimproved road

Interstate Route

U. S. Route

State Route

BOSTON SOUTH, MASS.

N4215-W7100/7.5

1970

AMS 6768 1 SE—SERIES V814

JUN 16 1980

RECEIVED
MAY 13 1980
NATIONAL
REGISTER

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered JUN 16 1980

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Colburn, Sarah Foster, House	Cambridge Middlesex County
Charles Playhouse	Boston Suffolk County
All Saint's Church	Boston Suffolk County
Stearns, R. H., Building	Boston Suffolk County
Grafton Inn	Grafton Worcester County

Also Notified

Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Honorable Paul Tsongas
Honorable Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr.
Honorable Brian J. Donnally
Honorable John J. Moakley
Honorable Joseph D. Early

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Patricia L. Weslowski
Executive Director, Massachusetts
Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

NR

Byers/mjd

6/27/80

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.