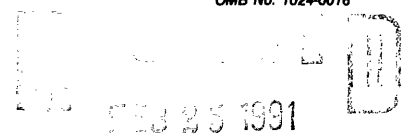


364

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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 St. Mary's Parochial School  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number - Beaver Street  not for publication  
city, town New Britain  vicinity  
state Connecticut code CT county Hartford code 003 zip code 06051

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>                            | <u>1</u> buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State       | <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | _____                               | _____ sites        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal     | <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | _____                               | _____ structures   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | _____                               | _____ objects      |
|   |   | <u>1</u>                            | <u>1</u> Total     |

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.

John W. Shannahan 2/22/91  
Signature of certifying official, John W. Shannahan, State Historic Preservation Officer Date

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. **Entered in the National Register**  
 See continuation sheet. Delores Byer 4/3/91  
 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 Use**

---

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
EDUCATION/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 AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Classical  
Revival/Colonial Revivalfoundation brownstonewalls brickroof slateother terra cotta applied detail

---

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

St. Mary's Parochial School was constructed in 1904 in the Classical and Colonial Revival styles (Photograph #1). A three-story masonry building (160' x 88'), it has brick bearing walls and rests on a rusticated brownstone foundation with a brownstone watertable. It is located on the east side of Beaver Street in an area that is presently undergoing redevelopment. A wrought iron fence borders the school property which includes a paved parking lot to the rear, south, and north of the building.

All but one of the neighboring multi-family residential buildings to the north and west, all built in the late nineteenth century, were demolished in the Spring of 1990. A commercial district is located to the north of the school on Main and Broad streets. Because of urban renewal and the highway construction to the south, most of this area was demolished and partially replaced with new commercial construction. The church associated with the school is located on the abutting land to the east. The school is presently being developed as apartments for the elderly.

Basically rectangular in plan and designed with bilateral symmetry, St. Mary's School has slightly projecting pedimented pavilions on all four elevations (Photographs #2, 3). The outside three bays on each end of the front and rear elevations project to form a modified H plan. The gabled and hipped roof is slated and surmounted by a square hipped-roof bell tower and several large brick chimneys. The six round-arched entrances to the school, and the three-bay groupings of the fenestration pattern are characteristics of the Classical Revival style. Each entrance is surmounted by a terra cotta band of egg and dart molding above the arch, terminating in a foliated pattern (Photographs #4, 5). The principal entrances on the north and south elevations are larger and more deeply recessed (Photograph #4); the four smaller secondary entrances are similar and have compound arches (Photograph #5). Each arch is set off by brick voussoirs and brownstone keystones. Both the exterior walls and the longitudinal-bearing partitions are brick, laid in a common stretcher bond. A corbelled stringcourse runs around the building just below the second-floor windows. The window openings are flat-headed with flared gauged brick lintels and brownstone keystones; the 2-over-2 double-hung sash with transoms are generally covered with plywood on the exterior as protection against vandalism. The Colonial Revival style is expressed by the modillioned pediments and cornices and such architectural details as the fanlight in the principal facade pediment and wheel windows in the pediments of the other three elevations.

**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)

ARCHITECTURE  
EDUCATION  
ETHNIC HERITAGE/EUROPEAN  
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1904  
1904 - 1940  
1904 - 1940

Significant Dates

1904

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Cadwell, William H.

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

St. Mary's Parochial School, built in 1904, is architecturally significant as a representative well-preserved example of a Classical Revival-style institutional building which displays superior craftsmanship. Designed by William Cadwell of New Britain, it is classically proportioned and displays distinctive Colonial Revival-style detailing. St. Mary's was originally founded in 1862 as the earliest Roman Catholic parochial school in New Britain. The present building has historical significance as the first brick parochial school constructed in the city and the one which served all of New Britain's leading ethnic groups, particularly Irish, Poles, and Italians.

Architectural Significance

St. Mary's Parochial School is a Classical Revival-style educational building of the early twentieth century which incorporates the stylish architectural themes of the era and displays the craftsmanship of local builders. In addition, unlike many of the school buildings of this period, St. Mary's has retained much of its original interior fabric. Cadwell strictly adhered to the bi-lateral symmetry of the Classical Revival style through the matched and fully-detailed opposing elevations and utilized fine Classical details and proportions, as well as Colonial Revival features in his design. Of particular note are the bands of terra cotta molding over the arches. Exceptionally fine craftsmanship is displayed in the masonry, especially in the joining of the gauged brick voussoirs in the arches to the surrounding brick bond and in the application of the terra cotta.

William H. Cadwell (1863-1941) was a practicing architect/engineer in New Britain from 1888-1916. Trained as an engineer, Cadwell (a.k.a. Caldwell) designed the sewage system for the City of New Britain in the 1890s and helped direct the laying of the first permanent pavement on the city's streets. Early in his career he designed a canal that was to be constructed from Arch Street to the Mattabesett River to link New Britain with the Connecticut River, a plan that never materialized. He combined his talents as an engineer and architect in the late 1880s when he designed the first steel mill for the Stanley Works, a tool manufacturer in New Britain. Prior to 1916, Cadwell was responsible for the design of several commercial and residential structures in New Britain, including the Vega Benefit

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- 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:

New Britain Public Library

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

A 

|      |   |         |   |   |   |   |   |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|---|---------|---|---|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1    | 8 | 6       | 8 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 4        | 6 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| Zone |   | Easting |   |   |   |   |   | Northing |   |   |   |   |   |   |

B 

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

C 

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

D 

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

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is described in the New Britain Land Records: volume 1022, page 243.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property comprises the land and building described above. This fenced in area has historically been associated with the educational purposes of the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

name/title Elizabeth A. Warner, with Jan Cunningham, National Register Consultants  
organization Cunningham Associates Ltd. date 9/18/90  
street & number 37 Orange Road telephone (203) 347-4072  
city or town Middletown state CT zip code 06457

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

St. Mary's School, New Britain, Connecticut

Section number   7   Page   2  

---

The interior of the building is largely intact. The floors are carried on chamfered principal and secondary wooden beams secured by steel fasteners. Although dropped acoustical ceilings and modern lighting fixtures were installed in 1958, the original ceilings remain above; the framing is exposed at basement and attic level and cased with coffered ceilings on the first and second floors. Bead-and-bevel wainscot remains throughout (Photograph #6). Many of the classrooms contain built in wood cabinets with diamond-paned glazed doors (Photograph #7). The original stairways, with wood balustrades and turned balusters, also remain in place (Photograph #8). The divided glass transoms that remain over the entryways, which are covered on the outside with plywood, can be viewed from the interior (Photograph #9).

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

St. Mary's School, New Britain, Connecticut

Section number 8 Page 2

Society Hall, a Swedish fraternal organization (1903), the John A. Andrews Building (1903), the Sovereigns Trading Company Building (1904), and the First Lutheran Church (1906). His most architecturally notable building was his own home at the corner of West Main and South High streets, built in 1890. Many of his designs utilized stylistic elements reminiscent of Chicago-based architect Louis Sullivan, particularly heavily decorated window lintels and applied foliated terra cotta details.<sup>1</sup> The latter element in his design for St. Mary's School is a surprising feature in an otherwise austere building. In 1916 Cadwell devoted himself full-time to Beaton & Cadwell Company, the heating and plumbing supply manufacturing enterprise he had purchased in 1895. Cadwell seems to have designed his last building in 1917, his own company's six-story brick factory building. Although he later served as chairman of the state's board of civil engineers, Connecticut commissioner of rivers, harbors, and bridges, and New Britain's sanitary engineer and city surveyor, after 1916 he concentrated his energy on his manufacturing company and real estate.

Historical Significance

Irish immigrants began to arrive in New Britain in the mid-1840s as demand for labor was created by the construction of area railroads. The city's first Catholic church was constructed on Myrtle Street by St. Mary's in 1850 to meet the religious needs of the Irish community. Under the leadership of Father Luke Daly, a Catholic school was established in 1862 in a frame building adjacent to the church, at the corner of High and Myrtle streets. Lay teachers taught about 170 students and the school was under the authority of the local school board. In 1877 St. Mary's Church invited the Sisters of Mercy, an Irish Catholic teaching order, to run the school, and it was at this time that St. Mary's School separated from the authority of the local school board and became a private institution, a not unprecedented experience in the late nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> A convent was built near the Myrtle Street church to house the Sisters of Mercy.

For most of the nineteenth century St. Mary's was the only Roman Catholic church in New Britain and served all the major ethnic groups in the community. Although the later arrivals, first the Poles and then the Italians eventually built their own churches, until 1938 St. Mary's was the only parochial school in New Britain. In 1894 New Britain's Polish community built Sacred Heart Church, followed by St. Ann's about 1900, built by the Italians. St. Mary's school population, however, continued to retain its multi-ethnic composition, serving children from all over the city, until St. Ann's built its own school in 1938.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

St. Mary's School, New Britain, Connecticut

Section number 8 Page 3

---

In 1882 St. Mary's Church purchased the Lee property on Main Street and in 1886 a new church was constructed. A rectory was built in 1895 adjacent to the new church. In 1902, while plans were underway for the construction of a new parochial school (the present building) behind the church on Beaver Street, a fire destroyed the new church. During the period from 1902 to 1907, the church undertook the construction of the St. Mary's Parochial School, a new convent adjacent to the church, and the reconstruction of the church building. All three buildings were dedicated together in 1908, although the school had been open since the Fall of 1904.

William H. Cadwell of New Britain was chosen to design the school and B. H. Hibbard, also of New Britain, served as general contractor. The cornerstone was laid on October 18, 1903, and, at the cost of \$61,000, the school was completed the following year. The school accommodated 1400 students in 24 classrooms and was considered "one of the finest school buildings in the State" at the time.<sup>3</sup> Twenty-nine teachers from the Sisters of Mercy ran the school at the cost of \$26 per pupil (1908).

After St. Mary's School closed in 1972, the church used the building for innovative religious programs conducted after school hours. Space was rented to community organizations for anti-poverty programs, vocational training classes, and literacy programs. The school building was closed entirely after 1974.

End Notes:

1. Sherrill Foster, typed notes, August 1984, William H. Cadwell File, New Britain Public Library, New Britain, Connecticut. These design characteristics are found in numerous residential structures built in New Britain between 1894 and 1902, although documented proof has not yet been found to link them to Cadwell.
2. St. John's Church School in Middletown functioned as a private parochial school for several years before it too, was incorporated into the public school system for six years, from 1866 to 1872. In 1872 the Sisters of Mercy from County Clare, Ireland, took charge and the school reverted to private use.
3. Souvenir of New Britain (New Britain, Connecticut: The Herald, 1890).

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

St. Mary's Parochial School, New Britain, Connecticut

Section number   9   Page   1  

---

Major Bibliographical References

1. Clarke, S. J. History of Hartford County, Connecticut, 1633-1928. Vol. III. Hartford: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1928.
2. "Centenary Observance, 1848-1948." New Britain, Connecticut: St. Marys (sic) Parish, 1948.
3. Ethnic Heritage Studies: Journal 1980. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1981.
4. Foster, Sherrill. Typed Notes, August 1984. New Britain, Connecticut: William H. Cadwell File, New Britain Public Library.
5. The Herald. 7 November 1959.
6. The New Britain Herald. 22 May 1941.
7. "St. Mary Parish - On a Foundation of Faith." New Britain, Connecticut: St. Mary Parish, 1974.
8. Souvenir of New Britain. New Britain, Connecticut: The Herald, 1890.
9. "A Souvenir: The Old and New, St. Marys (sic) Parish, New Britain, Connecticut, 1848-1908." New Britain, Connecticut: St. Marys (sic) Parish, 1908.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

St. Mary's Parochial School, New Britain, Connecticut

Section number Photos Page 1

---

List of Photographs

Property: St. Mary's Parochial School, New Britain, Connecticut

Photographer: Cunningham Associates Ltd.

Date: 9/90

Negatives on file: Connecticut Historical Commission

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Facade, west elevation<br>Facing: SE  | 2. North elevation<br>Facing: NW          |
| 3. Rear, east elevation<br>Facing: SW    | 4. Entrance, south elevation<br>Facing: N |
| 5. Entrance, east elevation<br>Facing: W | 6. Typical Classroom<br>Facing: SE        |
| 7. Typical classroom cabinet             | 8. Typical staircase                      |
| 9. Interior, south entrance<br>Facing: S |   |