

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

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| Inventory No: | NWT.71 |
| Historic Name: | Saint Mary's Episcopal Church |
| Common Name: | |
| Address: | 250-258 Concord St |
| City/Town: | Newton |
| Village/Neighborhood: | Lower Falls |
| Local No: | 131, 42030 0009 |
| Year Constructed: | 1813 |
| Architect(s): | Durant, Thomas; Pulcifer, John |
| Architectural Style(s): | Federal; Gothic Revival |
| Use(s): | Church; Church Hall; Other Educational |
| Significance: | Architecture; Community Planning; Religion |
| Area(s): | NWT.C: Newton Lower Falls Historic District NWT.Y: Newton Multiple Resource Area - 1636-1907 |
| Designation(s): | Nat'l Register Individual Property (04/16/1980); Nat'l Register District (09/04/1986); Nat'l Register MRA (09/04/1986) |
| Building Materials(s): | Roof: Asphalt Shingle Wall: Glass; Wood; Wood Clapboard; Wood Flushboard Foundation: Brick; Concrete Unspecified; Stone, Uncut |



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

This file was accessed on: Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at 4:23: PM

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

42030 0009

Natick

C/Y

NWT.71

Designations: NR IND 1980 NR DIS 1986 NR MRA 1986

Town/City: Newton

Place: Newton Lower Falls

Photograph



Address: 250-258 Concord Street

Historic Name: Saint Mary's Episcopal Church

Uses: Present: Church / Day Care Center

Original: Church

Date of Construction: 1813

Source: Kings Handbook of Newton

Style/Form: Federal

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Fieldstone / Concrete

Wall/Trim: Clapboard

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Hearse House

Major Alterations:

Expansions, 1838, 1892

Parish House, 1941

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 40,850 Square Feet

Setting: Suburban neighborhood close to the village center of Lower Falls and across from the Charles River. A stonewall runs along Concord Street and is broken by a semi-circular driveway. The church's cemetery is adjacent to the building on the north side next to the Memorial Circle. A playground is located at the southern end of the

Locus Map



Recorded by: Brian Lever

Organization: City of Newton

Date: 2 / 2011

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JLY 05 2011

MASS. HIST. COMM.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

NEWTON

250-258 CONCORD STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

C/Y

NWT.71

☒ Listed in the National Register of Historic Places.**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:**

This one and one half story Federal style church with Gothic Revival updates has a main block that is three by seven bays with a two and one half story bell tower at the front (western end) of the building. Supported by a fieldstone and concrete foundation, the clapboard / flushboard exterior has a molded cornice, fascia board, large double hung 21/21 windows with fanlights above, pediments on the front gable ends, as well as cornerboards, pilasters, and oculi on the bell tower covered with wooden panels. During the mid-19th century the church underwent stylistic changes with the addition of Gothic Revival features including arched windows replacing earlier double hung windows with fanlights, gothic trim detail, gothic style finials, and gothic arched doors. These gothic features were added largely to the front facade and bell tower and it is possible that the present flushboard on the front façade was added at this time as well.

The present rectory addressed as 260 Concord Street was constructed in 1946 and now exists on a separate lot. The rectory was built in Colonial Revival style. A small hearse house is located on the eastern side of the cemetery built in 1838 by John Pulcifer a local wheelwright.

Interior details include three rows of boxed pews, square columns, vaulted ceiling with crown molding, and wood floors. The elevated chancel is separated from the nave by two steps and flanked on either side by choir seating. The altar is located at the rear of the building separated by a wooden balustrade with the adjoining sacristy accessed through a doorway. The organ loft is located at the front of the building. The original pulpit with spiral staircase was removed and replaced with the current pulpit.

In 1838, the main block was expanded to the rear to make room for additional seating for 100 people and shortly thereafter the stone wall was built around the property. In 1892, the main block was enlarged again to the rear with the section containing the sacristy and chancel. In 1941, a new parish house was added to the church replacing one that had been destroyed by fire, this one story building is ten by four bays in three sections and extends off of the rear of the building to the south and is in the same style as the main block. In 1954 the bell tower was altered with the gothic finials replaced with the current urns on the balustrade, the bell openings were changed to the current arched shape, and entablature, pilasters, and a cross were added. Church records state that the design of the church was based upon the Old North (Christ) Church in Boston and it reflects the style of Christopher Wren.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE:

Saint Mary's is the oldest extant church in Newton and the first Episcopal church built west of Boston. The cornerstone for the building was laid on September 29, 1813 containing a package of coins and a silver plate. Previously services had been held in the Lower Falls schoolhouse and Hoogs Tavern, with the first Episcopal service held in 1811. The land for the church was donated by Samuel Brown a wealthy Boston merchant who invested in the paper mills in Lower Falls. Thomas Durant one of the first church wardens is believed to have been the builder of the church. The construction of the church and its expansion are evidence of the growing population in Lower Falls. Brown contributed toward the building of the church and donated the bell which was hung in 1822. The bell cracked and was recast and rehung in 1839. Many of the founding members and parishioners were in the paper making business in Lower Falls and buried in the adjacent cemetery.

The church had financial difficulty in its early years, but recovered through the sale of pews and the efforts of a new rector, Rev. Alfred L. Baury (1794-1865). Baury held the position for almost 30 years and is credited with substantially increasing the congregation. He resided nearby at 2345 Washington Street (MHC# NWT.2795). Over the years among the parishioners were Ralph Waldo Emerson, Alexander Rice (future Massachusetts governor), and Thomas Gould (future sculptor). Some pews stayed in individual ownership to the 1940's. In 1944 a nursery later becoming a day care center began operating on the

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

NEWTON

250-258 CONCORD STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

C/Y

NWT.71

property out of the parish house. Saint Mary's Church has been and continues to be a community center and valuable asset to the Lower Falls village.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES:

City of Newton Inspectional Services files, Water records, Maps, and Atlases: 1714-1772, 1831, 1839, 1848, 1855, 1856, 1874, 1886, 1895, 1907, 1929

Jackson Homestead property file

National Register Nomination (1980)

Roesner, William MHC Building Inventory Form (1974)

Sweester, Moses F. (1889) Kings Handbook of Newton

St. Mary's Through the Years (1988)

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

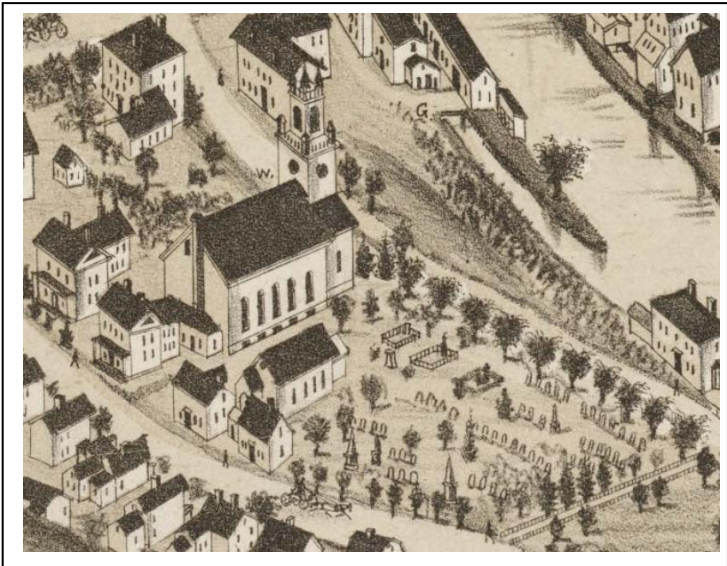
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ADDITIONAL IMAGES:

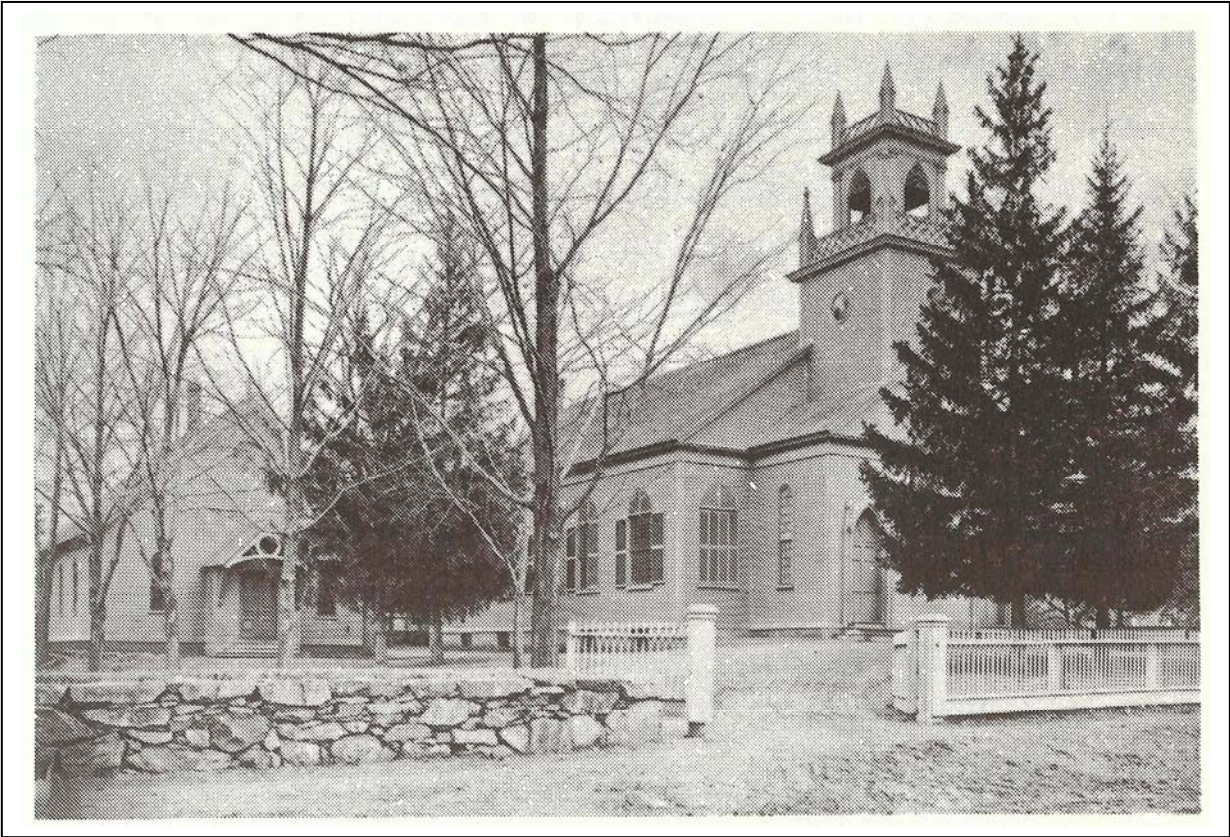
View of Parish House



1880 Birdseye



Late 19th / early 20th century photograph



INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

NEWTON

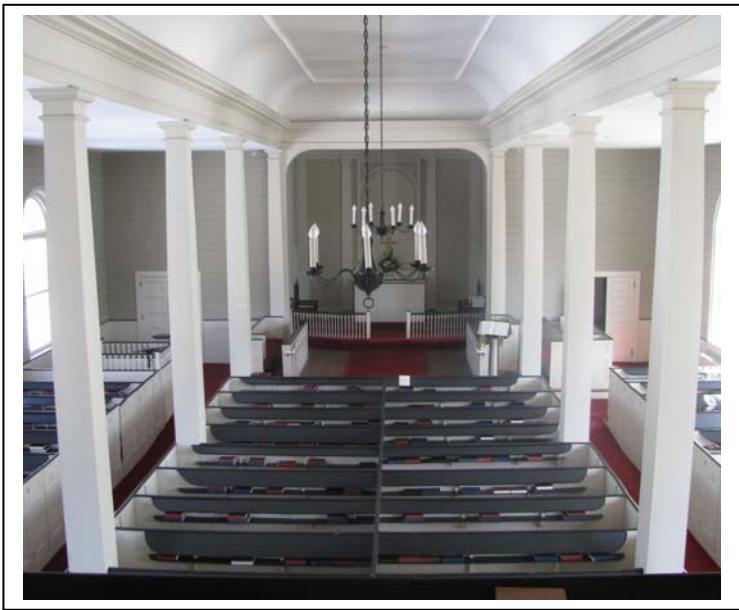
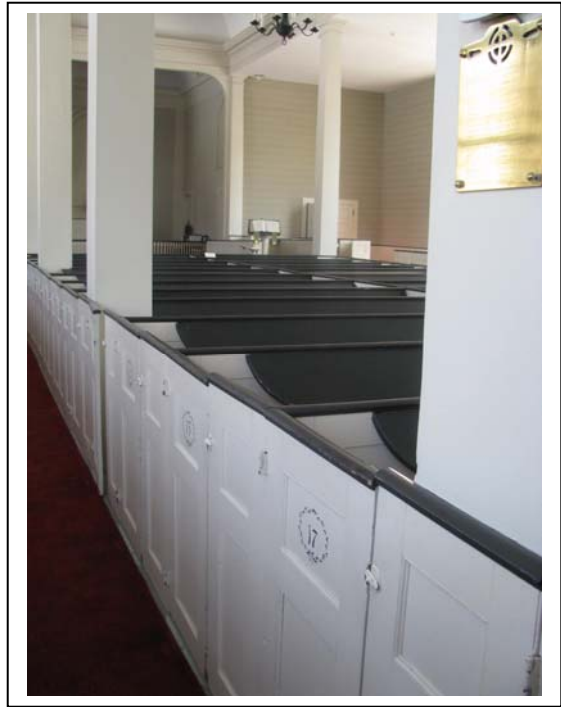
250-258 CONCORD STREET

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220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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| C/Y | NWT.71 |
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Interior Photographs:



FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

NRDIS NRMRA - 9/4/86 NWT.71 USGS - Notice

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| In Area no. | Form no. |
| NR 1110 4/16/80 C.Y. | 13171 |



Town Newton Lower Falls.
Address 258 Concord St.

Present use Episcopal Church.

St. Marys -

Present owner St. Mary's Episcopal Ch.

Description:

Date 1813

pub. mss. of Hist. of St. Mary's Parish
Source KING'S HANDBOOK OF NEWTON

Style Federalist, with Gothic front.

Architect

Exterior wall fabric White clabboard -

Outbuildings (describe) Hearse STORAGE SHED

Other features SHED - 1838

GOthic FACADE ON ENTRY HALL.

ANTIQUe GLASS, PEWS, RESTORED CHANCEL

Altered Gothic FACADE? Date very early
(Jackson Homestead has early sketch showing
Moved — Date Gothic front

5. Lot size:

Less than one acre — Over one acre ✓

Approximate frontage including graveyard

Approximate distance of building from street

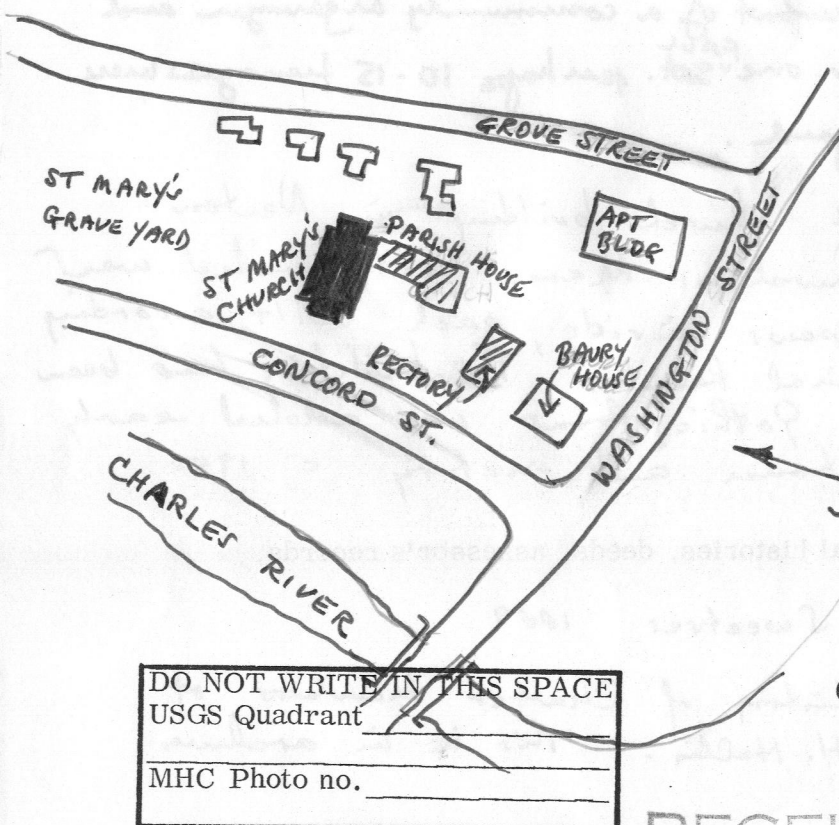
70 FEET

6. Recorded by W.E. Roemer

Organization Newton Historic District Study Comm.

Date Jan 12, 74

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USGS Quadrant

MHC Photo no. _____

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7. Original owner (if known) Original founding Parishoners

Original use CHURCH

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates -SAME-

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> | Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> | Recreation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Agricultural | <input type="checkbox"/> | Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Religion | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Architectural | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Exploration/ settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> | Science/ invention | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Arts | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> | Social/ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> | Military | <input type="checkbox"/> | Humanitarian | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> | Political | <input type="checkbox"/> | Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Community development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | | | |

9. Historical Significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

Architecturally, very handsome and with graveyard, parish house etc. composes a striking and prominent scene in the entire area. Many of the articles found in the interior. (pews, altar etc.) are artistically and of antique significance. This church played a large role in the establishing of the and development of the Lower Falls community and must have acted in those days as the heart of community activity.

To these days it serves as somewhat of a community organizer and brings together young people. On one ^{FALL} Sat. perhaps 10-15 teenagers were observed rocking up the graveyard.

St Mary's is the oldest church building in Newton and the 1st Episcopal Church in Mass. established west of Boston. Has orig. box pews inside, each built according to specifications of the original family. The building has been very little altered since Gothic front was added early in its existence. Parish house and rectory c 1950

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

KING'S HANDBOOK OF NEWTON

Sweetser 1889

Unpublished mss. on the "History of Charter Members of St. Mary's Church" by Wm. H. Hallis. This is in archives of Jackson Homestead.