

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	NWT.2450
Historic Name:	The Swedenborgian Church
Common Name:	Church of the New Jerusalem
Address:	19 Highland Ave 10A Highland Ave
City/Town:	Newton
Village/Neighborhood:	Newtonville
Local No:	18, 24009 0025
Year Constructed:	1893
Architect(s):	Connick, Charles Studios; Cram and Wentworth; Cram, Ralph Adams
Architectural Style(s):	Neo Gothic Revival
Use(s):	Church
Significance:	Architecture; Religion
Area(s):	NWT.G: Newtonville Historic District NWT.Y: Newton Multiple Resource Area - 1636-1907
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register District (09/04/1986); Nat'l Register MRA (09/04/1986)
Building Materials(s):	Roof: Slate Wall: Brick; Glass; Limestone; Roxbury Pudding Stone; Stucco; Wood; Stone, Cut; Stone, Uncut Foundation: Roxbury Pudding Stone; 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, September 15, 2021 at 11:15 AM

FORM B – BUILDING

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

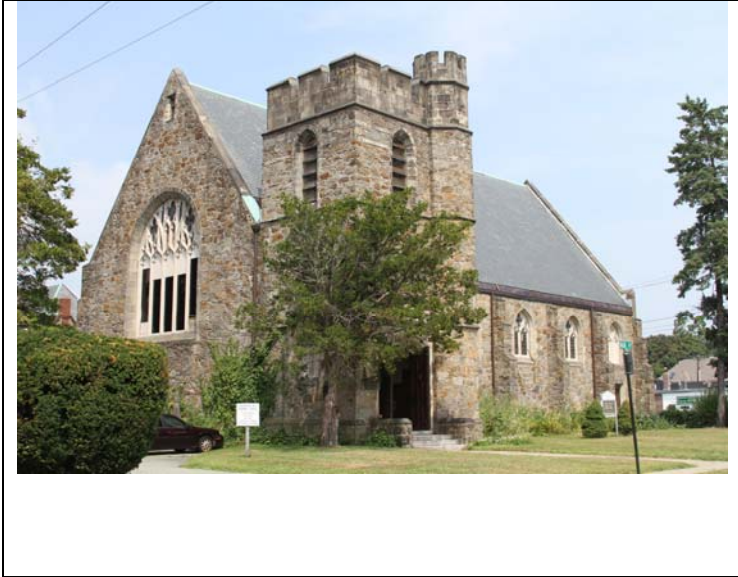
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

24009 0025 [] G, Y [NWT.2450]
NRDIS 9/4/1986 [NWT.G]

Town/City: Newton

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Newtonville

Photograph



Address: 19 Highland Ave

Historic Name: Church of the New Jerusalem

Uses: Present: Worship

Original: Worship

Date of Construction: 1893

Source: Church records and Firm records

Style/Form: Gothic

Architect/Builder: Ralph Adams Cram

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Puddingstone

Wall/Trim: Puddingstone / Indiana Limestone

Roof: Virginia Black Slate

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Parish House

Major Alterations (*with dates*): 1916 Chancel enlarged, 3 stained glass windows added.

Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 31606 sf

Setting: Village

Locus Map



Recorded by: Sarah Mancuso

Organization: Cram and Ferguson Architects

Date (*month / year*): January 2014

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MASS. HIST. COMM.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

NEWTON

19 HIGHLAND AVE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

G

NWT.2450

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

In 1892, the architecture firm of Cram and Wentworth was commissioned to design the Swedenborgian Church in Newton, MA. The church was erected in 1893. The Parish House adjacent of unknown authorship predated the church and is estimated to date to 1888.

The entire building is masonry construction with limestone trim. The nave and adjoining chancel have a gabled slate roof. The main type of stone used, was a local puddingstone known as "Roxbury conglomerate" or "Brighton stone." The trim is Indiana limestone. The church has 3 volumes consisting of the tower, nave, and chancel. The Tower, which houses a bell deck on the upper level, a ringer's chamber and a vestibule on the main level, is located in the Southwest corner. The west facade is home to a large perpendicular gothic stained glass window with limestone tracery. The nave is composed of 6 bays plus the chancel at the east. The first bay is the location of the tower, with 5 more bays, each divided on the exterior by a buttress. The chancel projects from the east end of the church.

The main entrance to the church is through a vestibule at the base of the tower leading into the nave. The vestibule has wood paneled wainscoting and a wood ceiling. There is one other small doorway that leads to the tower stairs. Halfway up the tower itself is a small trap door leading to the ringer's chamber.

Upon entering the nave, there is a screen approximately 8 feet high separating the narthex area from the nave. The opposite side of the narthex has another door leading to the porte-cochere connecting the sanctuary with the parish house. The nave features a fine English Gothic ceiling with elaborate woodwork and spectacular hammerbeams. There is elaborate woodwork throughout the entire sanctuary.

In 1916, the church was remodeled to enlarge the chancel. At this time, they added a Hutchings Organ in the choir and 3 new stained glass windows were installed. These windows were designed by the Charles Connick Studios. Although the style and construction methods were the same, there is a limestone trim under the windows which goes around the exterior of the chancel.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

The Church of the Open Word, as it is seen today was designed by Ralph Adams Cram, prominent Gothic church architect, in 1893 with a chancel extension added in 1916 attributed to Ralph Adams Cram. This composition was designed contemporaneously with the Second Church in Exeter, NH and features a similar plan, tower, and the organ placement. It was one of three contributing buildings to the National Register Listing of the Newtonville Historic District.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

NEWTON

19 HIGHLAND AVE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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G

NWT.2450

Cram and Ferguson was, and still remains a nationally recognized architecture firm specializing in church architecture, with much emphasis on the Gothic style. The recognition and national significance of Cram's work has grown exponentially in the last ten years. Two major biographical works have been published on Cram in the 2000's, work is underway on a postage stamp and Cram is now recognized along with Goodhue and Upjohn with an Episcopal Feast Day commemorating their great dedication to good church architecture. Today over 50 Cram churches are recognized with National Historic Register Listings.

The building is as designed, never altered. It is an excellent example of Cram and Wentworth design of the early period pre-Goodhue, despite similarities it has unique characteristics including elaborate interior design, including gold leaf and a large Hutchings Organ.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Anthony, Ethan. The Architecture of Ralph Adams Cram and His Office.
New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007.

Carter, Timothy Harrington. A Brief Autobiographical Sketch. Boston 1888.

Shan-Tucci, Paul Douglass. Boston Bohemia, 1881-1900 Ralph Adams Cram: Life and Architecture.
Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995.

Church of the Open Work Records

Cram and Ferguson Architects Archives

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

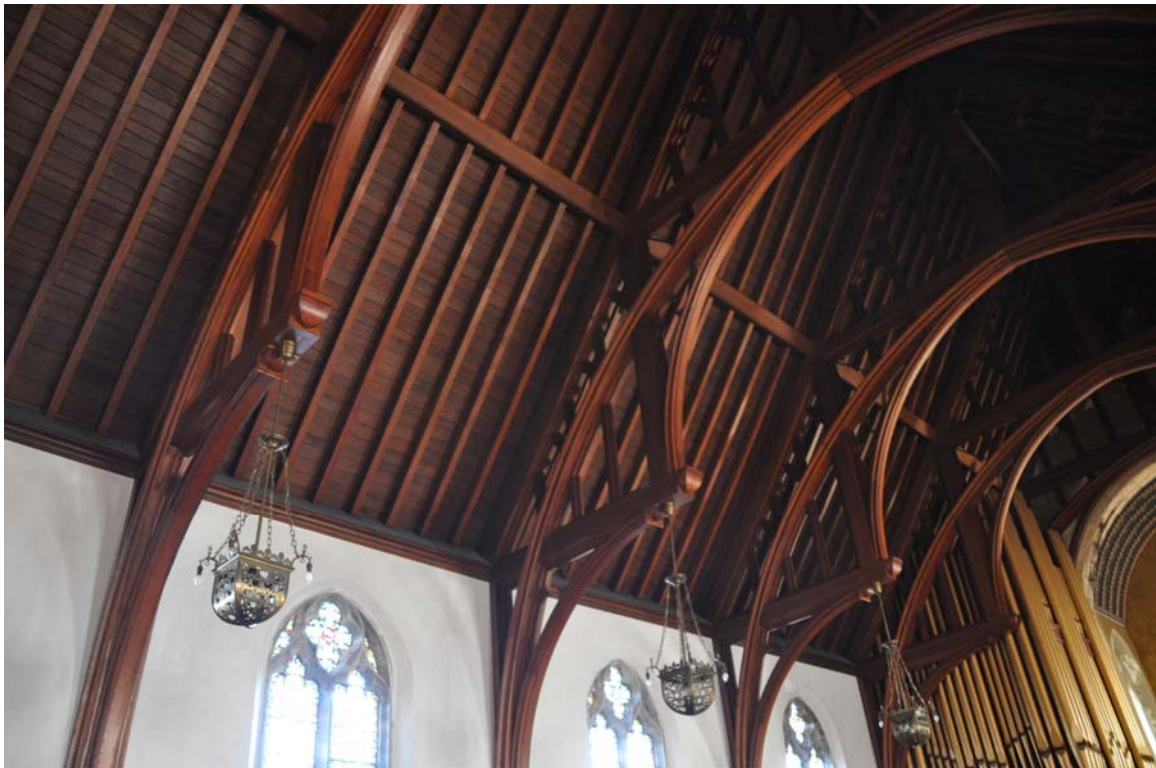
NEWTON

19 HIGHLAND AVE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

G	NWT.2450
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NEWTON

19 HIGHLAND AVE

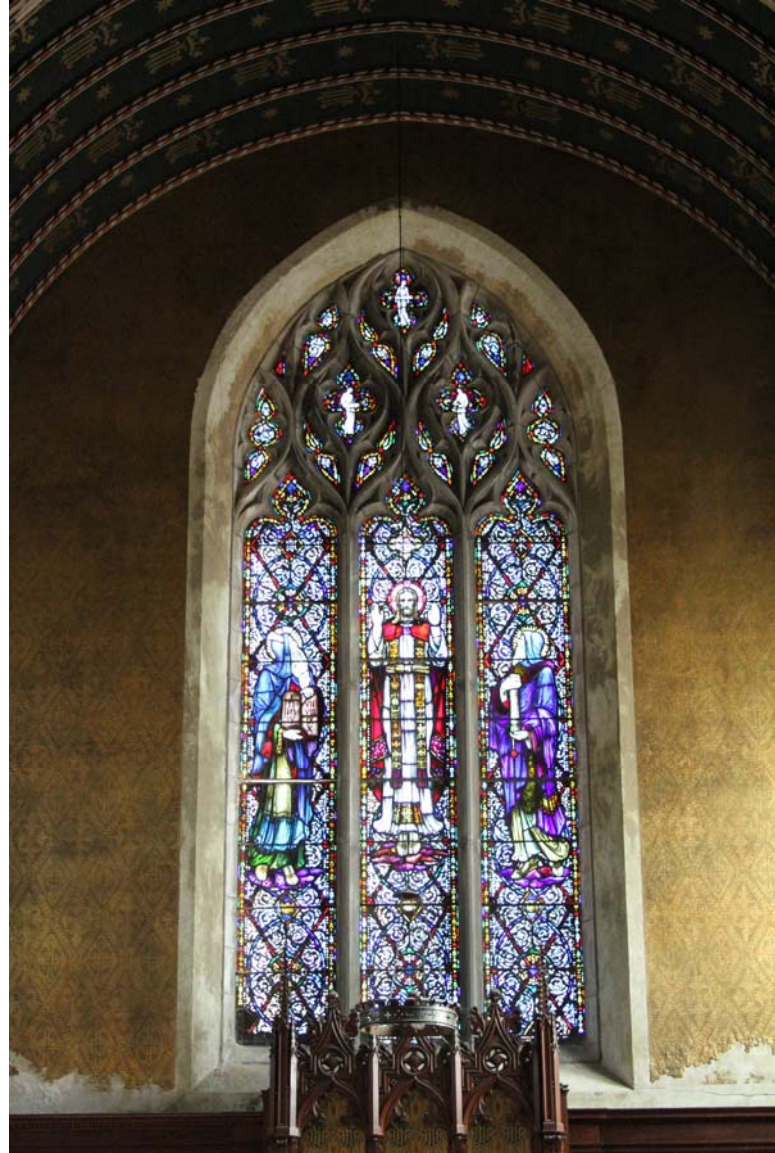
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G	NWT.2450
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Chancel



Chancel window

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

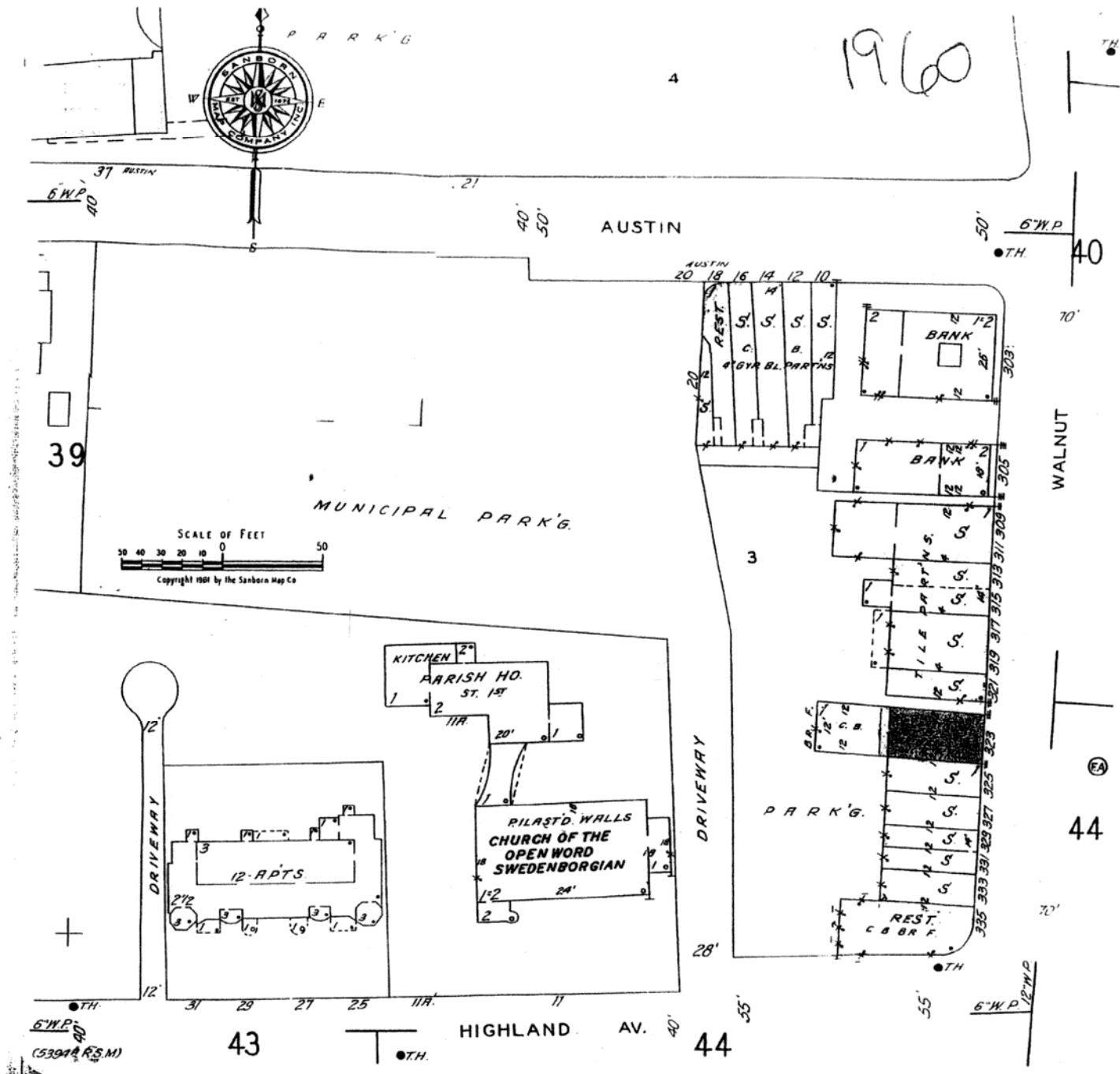
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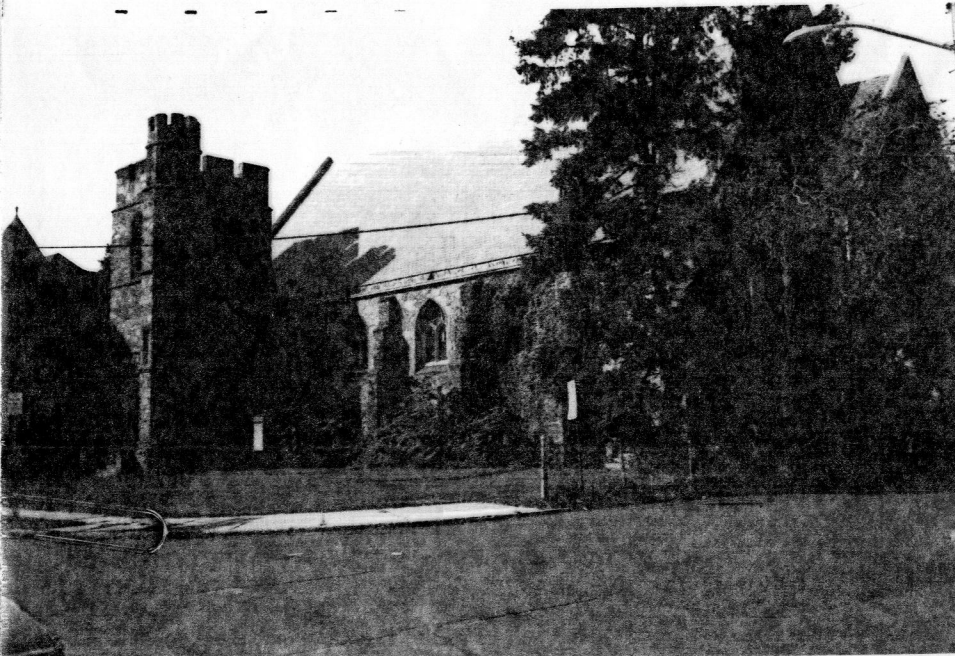
FORM B - BUILDING

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

NRDIS
NRMPA

NWT. 2450

In Area no. <u>G, B, Y</u>	Form no. <u>182450</u>
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town Newtonville #5421

Address 19^{T11A} Highland Ave.

name Swedenborgian Church

present use Church

present owner _____

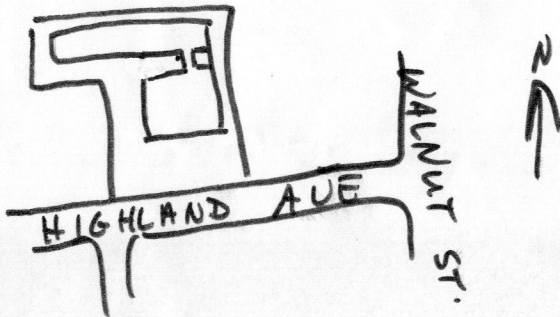
description: _____

date 1892

Source church history

style Gothic

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



Architect _____

Exterior wall fabric Masonry

Outbuildings (describe) brick/stucco/wood

Other features school building, attached by breezeway

Altered _____ Date _____

Moved _____ Date _____

5. Lot size: 3/606
One acre or less _____ Over one acre _____

Approximate frontage _____

Approximate distance of building from street _____

6. Recorded by _____

Organization _____

Date _____

(over)

Criteria A and C important for its history and architecture
major

The Swedenborgian Society in Newtonville was founded in the 1860s simultaneously with other ecclesiastical groups and civic organizations to meet the needs of a growing suburban population. However founding members David Howard and T.H. Carter moved from Boston to Newtonville during the 1840s when the commuter train first served this small village. Keeping ties with the mother church in Boston, it was not until the 1860s when the community was more established that a small wooden chapel was built (1868-9) on land given by T.H. Carter. The Gothic stone structure constructed in 1897 marked the continued prosperity of the congregation and the community. Heavy masonry walls with a castellated entrance towers and buttresses are only broken by the recessed, arched stain glass windows.

"The Messenger", a Swedenborgian periodical included an article in December 1978 on the Newtonville Church saying that the earlier wooden chapel was moved to the rear of the wlot when the new stone church was built and a stone Sunday school building was joined to the old church by a long corridor. If the chapel remains, it must be either enclosed in the stone and brick structure to the rear or be the side wing clad in stucco...

atlases

directories

Newton's 19th Century Architecture: Newtonville 1980

Jackson Homestead Historical Collection

Rowe, History of Newton 1930 pp. 130,134,335,486

MHC INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MHC Inventory scanning project, 2008-2011

MACRIS No. NWT 2450

