

325 Bunker Hill St. (1901)

From: Boston Landmark Commission's Charlestown Historic Resources Study 1981 (E. W. Gordon, Consultant)*:



325 Bunker Hill Street

ca1980s

The St. Francis deSales Roman Catholic Convent is a substantial, boxy Georgian Revival building. It has a three bay main façade with brickwork quoins at the corners, and a low hip roof. The side façade has seven bays.

The center entrance has granite steps leading to the original double multipanel doors, and a projecting porch with fluted Corinthian columns, surmounted by a cornice-headed entablature. The front porch is topped by a balustrade with curved and straight-sided balusters.



325 Bunker Hill Street entry detail 1980s

The entrance is flanked by pairs of round arch keystone windows with 2/2 wood sash. Basement windows have wedge shaped lintels. The windows of the upper floors have keystone wedge shaped lintels. The center bay of the main façade has a tripartite window on the second floor surmounted by a granite plaque with raised lettering, reading "St. Francis deSales 1901 Convent". Above this plaque on the third floor are two round arch keystone windows, identical to those of the first floor.



325 Bunker Hill Street

2015

Architect: C J Bateman

Original owner: Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston

Together with the St. Francis de Sales Church and rectory, the St. Francis DeSales convent imparts considerable Victorian charm to both its immediate and extended streetscapes. These three buildings provide a climax to the remarkably intact mid-19th century Bunker Hill streetscape as viewed from Elm Street to the southeast. Built in 1901, this masonry structure is characterized by a high degree of symmetry and Georgian Revival elements. Its distinctive, boxy volume is enclosed by a low hip roof and accented by a corner brickwork quoin,

keystone arched brickwork lintels and keystone wedge shaped lintels.

This building was designed by Charles J Bateman, who was city of Boston architect during the 1880s.

”He was born in Cambridge, March 4, 1851. He was educated in the public schools and in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and then studied architecture in the office of Faulkner & Clarke seven years, one of which was passed in their Chicago office. For three years he was with George Ropes, now of Kansas, and then began practice for himself in Boston, in 1876. In the year 1883 he was elected city architect, and appointed again in 1888. During his administration he built the O Street schoolhouse and also the school buildings on Auburn Street, Harbor View, George Putnam, Hammond Street, and the Roxbury High School; also an engine house in Charlestown, and other buildings. A peculiar feature of Mr. Bateman's work is that while in public office the actual cost of his plans never exceeded his first estimates. Mr. Bateman has also accomplished much notable work in private practice in the way of churches and parochial school buildings. In this class of work are the parochial school buildings in Charlestown, Malden, Waltham, and East Boston; the St. Cecilia Church, Back Bay district; the St. Catherine's Church, Charlestown district; Most Precious Blood, Hyde Park; Sacred Heart School, East Boston, and others. Among larger buildings designed by Mr. Bateman are the Carney Hospital, South Boston, Boston College, Home for Aged Poor in Roxbury, and a similar structure in Somerville; apartment houses in Boston, and in Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury district; the Couch Block in Somerville; and the Hotel Miller. Although the greater portion of Mr. Bateman's work is seen in large buildings, he has designed many handsome residences in the Dorchester and the

Roxbury districts, and in the cities of Keene and Nashua, N.H. He resides in the Roxbury district, with his wife and family” (from Sullivan, *One Hundred Years of Progress*, 1895



The 1875 atlas shows this building's corner lot as part of a larger vacant parcel owned by James Damon. The first building on this site was constructed of wood with two rear ells, in 1885-1892. A circa 1860 (?) rectory is not shown to southeast of the church) photograph of St. Francis de Sales Church shows a boxy Italianate building with paired, off center entrance and (bracketed?) cornice. The present building dates to 1901. St. Francis de Sales Church was built in 1859-1862 (see form).



Predecessor to present convent-(Sullivan, 1895

Bibliography:

Atlases-1875, 1885, 1892, 1901

One Hundred Years of Progress –A Graphic, Historical, and Pictorial Account of the Catholic Church in New England, James S Sullivan, M.D., 1895

The Catholic Churches of Boston and Vicinity, William A Leahy

*Digitized, and edited without change in content, from the scanned record in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System, and with addition of current photographs. In the case of houses that have been altered since the survey, these photographs may not entirely correspond to the architectural description. If earlier photographs of suitable quality are available, these have been included.

R. Dinsmore