

46-50 Winthrop Street (1913-15)

From Boston Landmark Commission's Charlestown Historic Resources Study 1981*:



46- 50 Winthrop Street

2015

Built as Saint Mary's R.C. Church Parish Hall, 46- 50 Winthrop is constructed of brick with a concrete basement and stone trimmings. Although the building is difficult to categorize stylistically, it is vaguely Renaissance Revival by virtue of the main façade's division into a high-rusticated brickwork first floor and a *piano nobile* with tall arched windows. Colorful glazed tiles are inset into the walls between floors one and two. The first floor has nine bays. The second floor has a 3-bay center segment flanked by slightly projecting 2-bay segments. The building culminates in a

corbelled cornice with raised arches and above the cornice is a pedimented parapet. It has a flat roof.

The tall center entrance has cast stone (?) enframing consisting of engaged colonnettes supporting a bracketed balcony above the main entrance. In general, the windows have replacement sash; the second floor has tall arched windows with solid lunettes and a continuous granite sill course.

Architect: Wells and Dana

Builder: Joseph M. Dolan

Original owner: St. Mary's Church

The building's design was provided by the Boston architectural firm of Wells and Dana. Information on this firm is sketchy—evidently they were in business from circa 1910 to circa 1930. During the 1910s their office was located at 29 Central Street, room 52. The contractor was a Joseph M Dolan of Cambridge Massachusetts.

A *Charlestown enterprise* story dated February 13, 1915, page 1, was entitled "The new parish house is opened. A much needed addition to St. Mary's is completed". The building's interior is described in considerable detail in this story. The reporter noted, that "the interior is very attractive... The vestibule is furnished in ruby tile and the floor blends harmoniously with the same. The main reception room is on the first floor on the Winthrop Street side of the building. Directly to the north is the ladies parlor, which will be admirably furnished. Directly west on the same floor is the men's parlor, across the corridor is a small reading room and adjoining is a billiard parlor with three tables. The lavatories are furnished with Vermont marble. The coloring of the rooms on the street floor is of an appropriate tint blending harmoniously with the varnish finish of the woodwork, which gives the interior a decidedly rich appearance. The basement has been given over to

bowling alleys. The assembly Hall of the upper floor is to be used for many pleasant socials and entertainments, conducted under the auspices of the parish. (Including a 90' x 30' stage of suitable dimensions). The walls and ceiling of the hall are finished in a water color."

Note: pre-1911 atlases show a long T-shaped house on this site, which extended all the way from Winthrop Street to Monument court).

Bibliography:

Atlases-1901, 1911, 1922

City of Boston Building Department-"application for permit to build" dated April 3, 1913.

Charlestown enterprise, February 13, 1915 page 1

*Digitized and edited without change in content from the scanned record in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System, with the 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.

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