



# CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION

1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102  
Tel: 215 686 7660

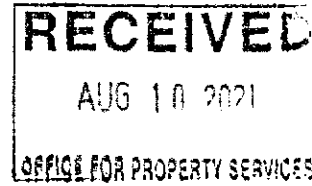
Robert Thomas, AIA  
Chair

Jonathan E. Farnham, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

30 July 2021

OFFICE OF PROPERTY SERVICES  
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA  
222 N. 17TH ST  
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103

Re: 2301-41 S 3RD ST



Dear OFFICE OF PROPERTY SERVICES:

The Philadelphia Historical Commission, the City of Philadelphia's historic preservation agency, is pleased to inform you that a portion of the property at 2301-41 S 3RD ST has been proposed for designation as an historic landmark and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

The Historical Commission seeks to safeguard the city's unique heritage and wealth of cultural resources as it encourages economic development, promotes healthy and sustainable communities, enhances property values, attracts new residents, businesses, and tourists, provides educational opportunities, and fosters civic pride. Under the City's historic preservation ordinance, Section 14-1000 of the Philadelphia Code, the Historical Commission is authorized to designate as historic and then promote the preservation of buildings, structures, sites, objects, interiors, and districts that are representative of and important to Philadelphia's heritage, traditions, and values. More than 23,000 properties illustrating Philadelphia's history from its earliest years to the recent past have been designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. A brief overview of the Historical Commission is attached to this letter.

The Historical Commission will consider the proposal, called a nomination, to designate a portion of the property at 2301-41 S 3RD ST as historic at two public meetings. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, these meetings will be held remotely, using the Zoom Webinar teleconferencing system. The Historical Commission's advisory Committee on Historic Designation will consider the nomination at its meeting 9:30 a.m. on 30 August 2021. The Historical Commission will review the nomination and its committee's recommendation at 9:00 a.m. on 8 October 2021. You are invited but not required to attend these meetings, which are open to the public. The meetings provide the owner as well as the public with opportunities to participate in the Historical Commission's discussions about the historical significance of the property and deliberations on the merits of its historic designation. Instructions for participating in the remote Zoom meeting are attached. A copy of the nomination proposing the designation of this property is available on the Historical Commission's website, [www.phila.gov/historical](http://www.phila.gov/historical).

The designation of a property as historic provides benefits to the owner. There is, of course, the satisfaction derived from the ownership of a recognized historic landmark and from the trusteeship for the past and future that accompanies ownership. The owner of a designated property may call upon the Historical Commission's staff for historical and technical services

and assistance at no charge. In addition, the protection against inaccurate or unsympathetic alterations and against unnecessary demolitions offers some assurance that the historic character of the property will be preserved and improved. In Philadelphia and other cities, studies show that designation has helped to enhance resale values and foster community pride. Finally, a well-maintained, accurately preserved property may also be eligible for a Historical Commission plaque, which, when mounted on the exterior, identifies the property as a historic landmark.

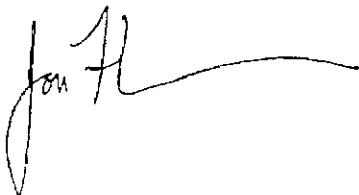
In addition to benefits, the designation of a property as historic entails some restrictions. If adopted, the designation of the property as historic would include the site, the exterior envelopes of all buildings on the site, and any permanent site appurtenances. To promote the preservation of historic buildings and sites, the Historical Commission reviews all building permit applications and other proposals for exterior alterations to ensure compliance with historic preservation standards. The Historical Commission also reviews all demolition proposals for designated properties. The Historical Commission and its staff approach such matters reasonably and practically, and understand that historic buildings must be adapted for evolving uses and requirements. The Historical Commission's goal is to manage change, not prevent it, and to ensure that any changes to historic properties meet historic preservation standards.

The Historical Commission has no jurisdiction over building permit applications submitted to the Department of Licenses & Inspections (L&I) prior to the date of this notice letter unless the building permit application is still under review at L&I when the Historical Commission finalizes its designation process and designates the property. The Historical Commission has jurisdiction and must review all building permit applications submitted to L&I on and after the date of this notice letter. For building permit applications under the Historical Commission's jurisdiction while it considers the nomination, L&I may issue the permit if the Historical Commission approves the application, or if the Historical Commission has not completed its designation process within 90 days of the submission of the application.

The Historical Commission welcomes your participation in the efforts to preserve Philadelphia's unique, significant, and valuable heritage. Philadelphia's remarkable collection of historic landmarks is one of its greatest resources. Working together, property owners and the Historical Commission can protect and preserve those resources, ensuring a rich future for the city. If you have any questions about historic preservation or the work of the Historical Commission, please do not hesitate to contact the Commission's staff at [preservation@phila.gov](mailto:preservation@phila.gov) and explore the Commission's website at <http://www.phila.gov/historical>.

If you would like the Historical Commission to communicate with you about this matter using email in addition to paper, please provide your email address the Commission's staff at [preservation@phila.gov](mailto:preservation@phila.gov).

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon F", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jonathan E. Farnham, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

**NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT**  
**PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)  
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

**1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE** *(must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)*

Street address: 2301-41 S. 3rd Street

Postal code: 19148

**2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Historic Name: Our Lady of Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Church

Current/Common Name: as above

**3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Building

Structure

Site

Object

**4. PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Condition:  excellent  good  fair  poor  ruins

Occupancy:  occupied  vacant  under construction  unknown

Current use: Active worship site (church); Residence for clergy (parish house)

**5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

*Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.*

**6. DESCRIPTION**

*Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.*

**7. SIGNIFICANCE**

*Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.*

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1901 to 1922

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1901-03 (Rectory); 1923-24 (Church)

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Jacob Naschold; Charles J. Mitchell

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: Wm. R. Dougherty (Church)

Original owner: Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Other significant persons: Saint Therese Martin, "Sister Theresa of the Child Jesus"

**CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:**

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

**8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

*Please attach a bibliography.*

**9. NOMINATOR**

Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name with Title Celeste A. Morello, MS, MA Email \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address 1234 S. Sheridan Street Telephone 215-334-6008

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19147-4820

Nominator  is  is not the property owner.

**PHC USE ONLY**

Date of Receipt: April 19, 2021

Correct-Complete  Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 7/29/2021

Date of Notice Issuance: 7/30/2021

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Address: 222 N. 17th Street

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19103

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Final Action: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated  Rejected

## **AN OVERVIEW OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION FOR OWNERS OF PROPERTIES NOMINATED FOR DESIGNATION AS HISTORIC**

Established in 1955, the Philadelphia Historical Commission is the City of Philadelphia's agency responsible for ensuring the preservation of historically significant buildings, structures, sites, objects, interiors, and districts in Philadelphia. The Historical Commission identifies and designates historic landmarks, listing them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, an inventory that currently includes more than 23,000 properties. After designation, the Historical Commission collaborates with property owners to ensure the preservation of landmarks through the City's building permit process.

Before the Historical Commission can designate a property as historic, it must determine whether the property has the requisite historical significance to merit designation. To make this determination, the Historical Commission and its advisory Committee on Historic Designation review what is called a nomination, a document that outlines the property's history and explains its significance. Both the Historical Commission and Committee on Historic Designation conduct their reviews of nominations at public meetings in which property owners and the public may participate. Owners of properties under consideration for designation are notified by letter of the time and place of the public meetings at least 30 days prior to meetings. The Historical Commission's jurisdiction over the property begins as of the date of that letter, meaning that it must review all building permit applications for the property before a permit is issued. If the Historical Commission votes to designate the property as historic, its jurisdiction continues; if the Commission declines to designate, its jurisdiction lapses.

The City of Philadelphia's historic preservation ordinance requires that owners of properties designated as historic (and those nominated and under consideration for designation) seek and obtain the approval of the Historical Commission and a building permit from the Department of Licenses & Inspections prior to commencing any work that would require a building permit and/or would alter the exterior appearance of the building, site, or permanent site features such as fences or walls. To protect historic properties, the Historical Commission reviews the work proposed in the building permit application to determine whether it satisfies historic preservation standards including the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The Historical Commission's jurisdiction extends over the entire exterior envelopes of buildings including all facades and roofs, but the Commission concentrates its reviews on facades and roofs that are visible from the public right-of-way. Protecting public views of historic properties is the Historical Commission's primary goal. The Historical Commission is sensitive to time constraints and completes most reviews on the day of submission. More than 90% are completed in five days or less. All reviews must be completed within 60 days. Except in extreme cases of neglect, the Historical Commission cannot require an owner to undertake work to a property, but may only review within the scope of work defined by the owner. Moreover, alterations in place at the time of designation, such as non-historic windows, are grandfathered and may be retained until the owner determines that they need replacement.

-over-

The Historical Commission requires reviews for projects including but not limited to:

- construction, alteration, and demolition of buildings and addition to buildings;
- construction, installation, alteration, repair, removal, replacement, or covering of:
  - windows, storm windows, dormers, doors, storm doors, security doors, garage doors, and shutters;
  - exterior light fixtures, window boxes, railings, grilles, grates, and star bolts;
  - porches, steps, stoops, ramps, decks, balconies, and patios;
  - fences, walls, gates, sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots;
  - façades, façade elements, and trim such as cornices and doorways;
  - roofing and flashing;
  - storefront features, signage including awnings and lighting;
  - exterior mechanical equipment, vents, wiring, conduit, pipes, and satellite dishes (except seasonal window air conditioners that require no window alteration);
- masonry cleaning, painting, pointing, repair, replacement, alteration, or removal;
- painting, coating, staining, or sealing surfaces except wood trim and metal trim; and,
- all other projects that would alter the exterior appearance of the building, site, or permanent site features.

Reviews are not required for ordinary maintenance and repair such as scraping and painting wood trim, cleaning gutters, and replacing clear window glass. Also, reviews are not required for gardening, landscaping, tree trimming, or temporary holiday decorations, provided no historic features are altered or removed. Moreover, the Historical Commission has no jurisdiction over the use or ownership of historic properties, but only their appearances.

The Historical Commission recommends that property owners confer with its staff early in the planning stage of any construction or rehabilitation project, especially if the project is complicated. The staff can provide valuable guidance regarding the Historical Commission's processes as well as appropriate preservation techniques. It can also assist property owners in researching the histories of their properties. The Historical Commission charges no fees for any of its services.

The Historical Commission seeks to safeguard the city's unique heritage and wealth of cultural resources as it encourages economic development, promotes healthy and sustainable communities, enhances property values, attracts new residents, businesses, and tourists, provides educational opportunities, and fosters civic pride. The Historical Commission welcomes your participation in the efforts to preserve the Philadelphia's unique, significant, and valuable heritage. Philadelphia's remarkable collection of historic landmarks is one of its greatest resources. Working together, property owners and the Historical Commission can protect and preserve those resources, ensuring a rich future for the city.

If you have any questions about historic preservation or the work of the Historical Commission, please do not hesitate to contact the its staff at [preservation@phila.gov](mailto:preservation@phila.gov) and to explore its website at <http://www.phila.gov/historical>.

## FAQS FOR REMOTE MEETINGS

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION, 9:30 A.M., MONDAY, AUGUST 30, 2021

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION, 9:00 A.M., FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2021

### **Q: How do I watch and/or listen to the Committee on Historic Designation's and Historical Commission's remote meetings?**

A: The Historical Commission and its advisory committees are holding remote meetings using Zoom Webinar teleconferencing technology. You can watch/listen and speak during the live meetings using your computer, tablet, or smartphone on Zoom. You can listen and speak during the live meetings on your telephone.

To watch/listen to and speak during the remote meetings live on Zoom using your computer, tablet, or smartphone, click on the following links:

Committee on Historic Designation, August 30, 2021

Link: <https://bit.ly/chdaug30>

Password or Passcode: 718233

Historical Commission on October 8, 2021

Link: <https://bit.ly/phcoct8>

Password or Passcode: 477693

To listen to and speak during the remote meetings live on the telephone, call the following telephone number:

Committee on Historic Designation, August 30, 2021

Telephone Number: 1-301-715-8592

Webinar ID: 845 8812 5938

Password or Passcode: 718233

Historical Commission on October 8, 2021

Telephone Number: 1-301-715-8592

Webinar ID: 898 4011 0009

Password or Passcode: 477693

Please note that the remote public meetings are recorded. By participating in the meeting, you are consenting to be recorded. Please also note that the email addresses and telephone numbers used to join the remote meeting are logged by the meeting software and may become part of the official record of the meeting. After the meeting, a recording of it (and other earlier meetings) is available on the Historical Commission's website at

<https://www.phila.gov/departments/philadelphia-historical-commission/recordings-of-public-meetings/>

### **Q: How do I participate in the remote meetings?**

A: Property owners or owner's representatives may participate in the reviews of building permit applications proposing work to historic properties and nominations proposing designations of properties. The public may comment on permit applications and nominations. The Historical Commission, Architectural Committee, Committee on Financial Hardship, and Committee on Historic Designation provide public comment periods during each review. Use the information above to log into the Zoom meeting. If you are watching the live meeting with your computer or smartphone on Zoom or listening on your telephone, you may speak live. You may also send written comments via email to [preservation@phila.gov](mailto:preservation@phila.gov) until 12:00 noon the day before the meeting.

To speak live on Zoom, you must indicate your desire to speak. You can indicate your desire in advance of the meeting by sending an email with your name and the address of the matter of interest to [preservation@phila.gov](mailto:preservation@phila.gov).

If you are on a device, you can indicate your desire to speak during the meeting by using the Raise Hand feature in Zoom. Please raise your hand even if you have indicated your desire to speak in an email. Please do not raise your hand until the matter of interest is being considered. Once you have indicated your desire to speak, a Zoom host will cue you to speak when it is your turn during the comment period. Once you have spoken, please lower your raised hand.

If you are on the telephone, you can indicate your desire to speak during the meeting by using the Raise Hand feature by pressing \*9. Please raise your hand even if you have indicated your desire to speak in an email. Please do not raise your hand until the matter of interest is being considered. Once you have indicated your desire to speak, a Zoom host will cue you to speak when it is your turn during the comment period.

To email comments, send them to [preservation@phila.gov](mailto:preservation@phila.gov). Written comments received before 12:00 noon the day prior to the meeting will be forwarded to the Commission and Committee members.

**Q: If I watch the live meeting on my computer, tablet, or smartphone on Zoom, will the Commission/Committee and other attendees be able to see me?**

A: No, the Commission/Committee and others will not be able to see you. Your video connection will be disabled; your audio connection will be disabled except when enabled by the Historical Commission to allow you to speak during the comment period. You will be able to see the Commission/Committee as well as the shared visual presentation, but you will not be able to see the applicants, owners, and other attendees.

**Q: Will my computer, tablet, or smartphone work with Zoom?**

A: The first time you use Zoom Webinar with a computer, tablet, or smartphone, please allow a few extra minutes to register and download an app. You can test your device in advance to ensure that it is compatible with Zoom by clicking on this <https://zoom.us/test>.

**Q: Where can I find the meeting agenda and materials?**

A: The meeting agendas and meeting materials including building permit applications and nominations are available in the usual place on the Historical Commission's website at <https://www.phila.gov/historical>.

**Q: How are the remote meetings being conducted?**

A: With the exception that the participants will be physically remote from one another and connected by Zoom and telephone, the meetings of the Historical Commission and its advisory committees will be conducted in the same manner that they are conducted in person. The Historical Commission will follow the meeting processes laid out in its Rules & Regulations and Guidelines for Conduct at Philadelphia Historical Commission Meetings, which can be found on the Historical Commission's website at <https://www.phila.gov/historical>. For each agenda item, the staff will provide an overview of the matter, the applicant or property owner will be present his/her case, the public will be provided with an opportunity to comment, the applicant or property owner will be provided with an opportunity to respond to the public comment, and the Committee will discuss the matter and reach a recommendation by motion and vote. All votes will be taken by roll call.

**Q: Will my comments be incorporated into the official record of the meeting?**

A: Yes, all comments offered in advance in writing via email and offered during the public comment sections of the meeting will be noted in the official meeting minutes and incorporated into the official record of the meeting, just as they would be at an in-person meeting.

**Q: As a property owner, nominator, or a member of the public, can I share photographs, architectural plans, or other visual materials during the meeting using Zoom?**

A: No, property owners, nominators, and attendees may offer written and/or spoken comments, but may not share visual materials with the other participants during the meeting. The Historical Commission will display architectural plans, photographs, and other documents during the meeting for all to see.

**Q: Will the meeting be recorded?**

A: Yes, the meeting will be recorded. The recording of the meeting will be available for viewing after the meeting. By participating in the meeting, participants are giving their consent to be recorded. A link to the recording will be provided on the Historical Commission's website at <https://www.phila.gov/departments/philadelphia-historical-commission/recordings-of-public-meetings/>



**ADDRESS: 2301-41 S 3RD ST**

Name of Resource: Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church

Proposed Action: Designation

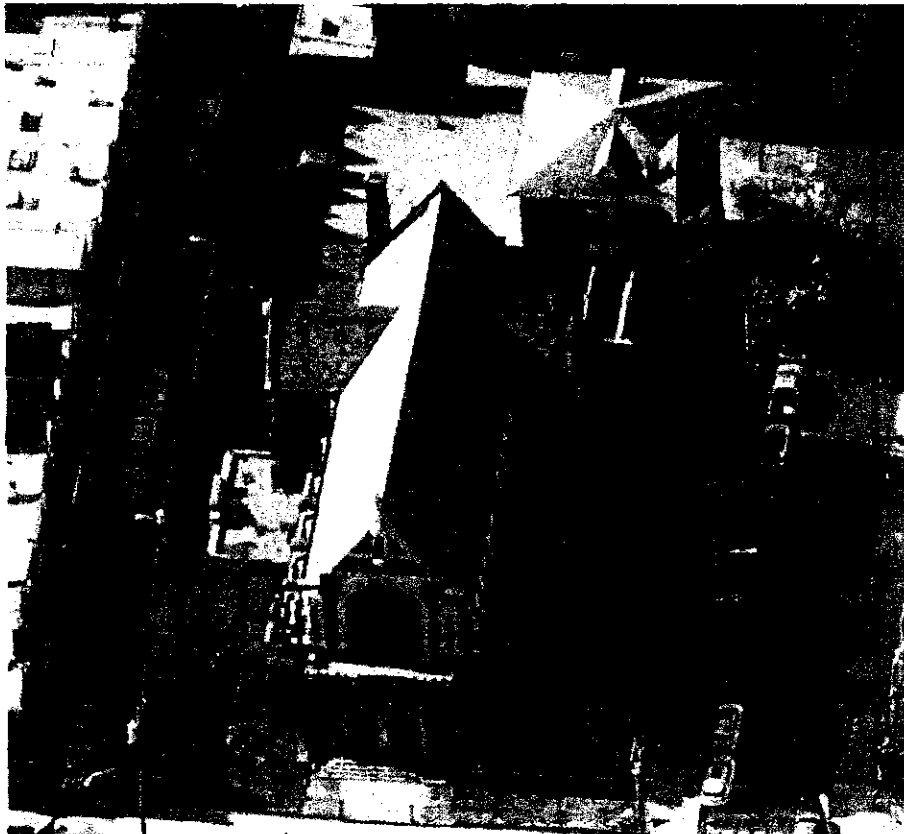
Property Owner: Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Nominator: Celeste Morello

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, [meredith.keller@phila.gov](mailto:meredith.keller@phila.gov)

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and rectory, two buildings on a larger parcel at 2301-41 S. 3rd Street, and list them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the church and rectory satisfy Criteria for Designation D and F. Under Criterion D, the nomination contends that the church building embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Tudor Gothic style of architecture. Under Criterion F, the nomination argues that the church building's architectural sculpture by the Economy Concrete Company represents an anomaly for English Gothic churches.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the church building at 2301-41 S. 3rd Street satisfies Criterion for Designation D, with the clarification that the style is Late Gothic Revival with some Tudor Revival elements and is not "Tudor Gothic." The staff also recommends that the nomination fails to demonstrate that the property satisfies Criterion F, because no argument is offered to demonstrate that the church or rectory represents a significant innovation. Finally, because the nomination fails to include the rectory in the Statement of Significance and no arguments for its significance are made, the staff recommends that the boundary be redrawn to exclude it from this nomination.

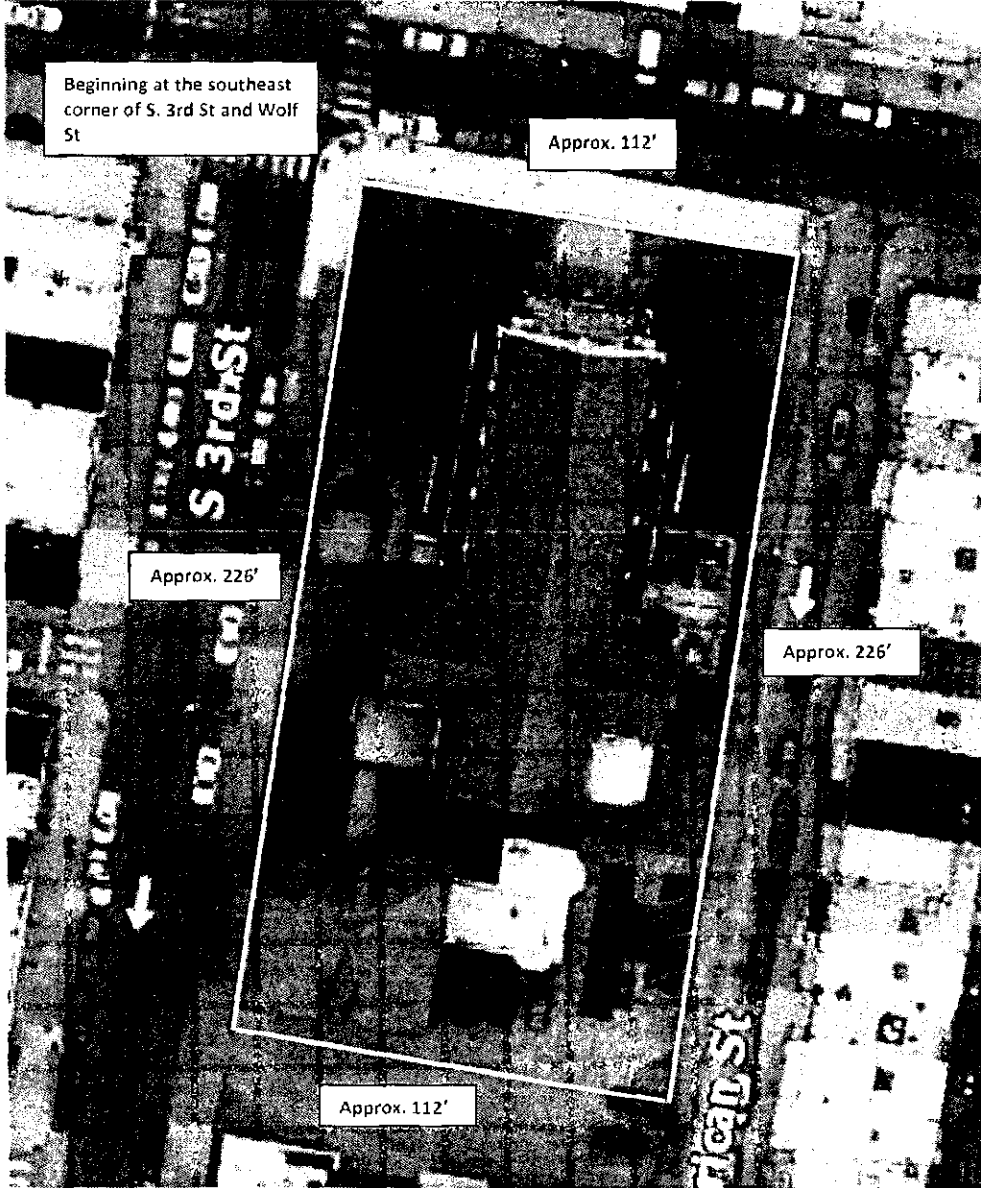


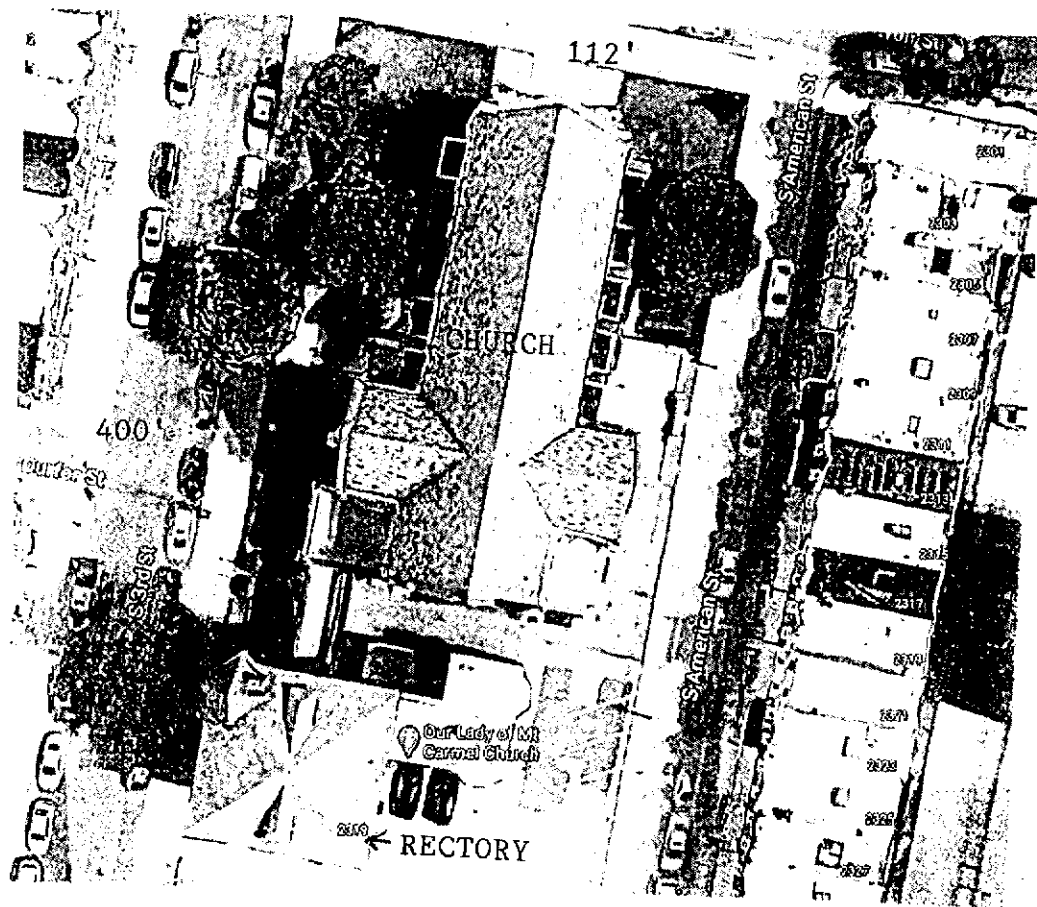
5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION (Provided by PHC staff)

This nomination proposes to designate Our Lady of Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Church and rectory, two buildings on a larger parcel of 2301-41 S. 3rd Street that currently includes several buildings. The overall parcel is bounded by S. 3rd Street at the west, Wolf Street at the north, S. American Street at the east, and Ritner Street at the south.



The boundary of the church building and rectory begins at the southeast corner of S. 3rd Street and Wolf Street. The proposed boundary includes the footprint of the church and rectory, with a perimeter buffer.





BOUNDARIES: The lot measures 112 feet across by 400 feet long, encompassing the entire block from Third to American Street, Wolf to Ritner Street<sup>1</sup>

The Church building measures 51 feet across the facade; 71 feet spanning the transept; 120 feet long. No adjoining projections had been measured. The Rectory, contributing, is 40 feet on the Third Street side and 71 feet deep including the addition from a later date.

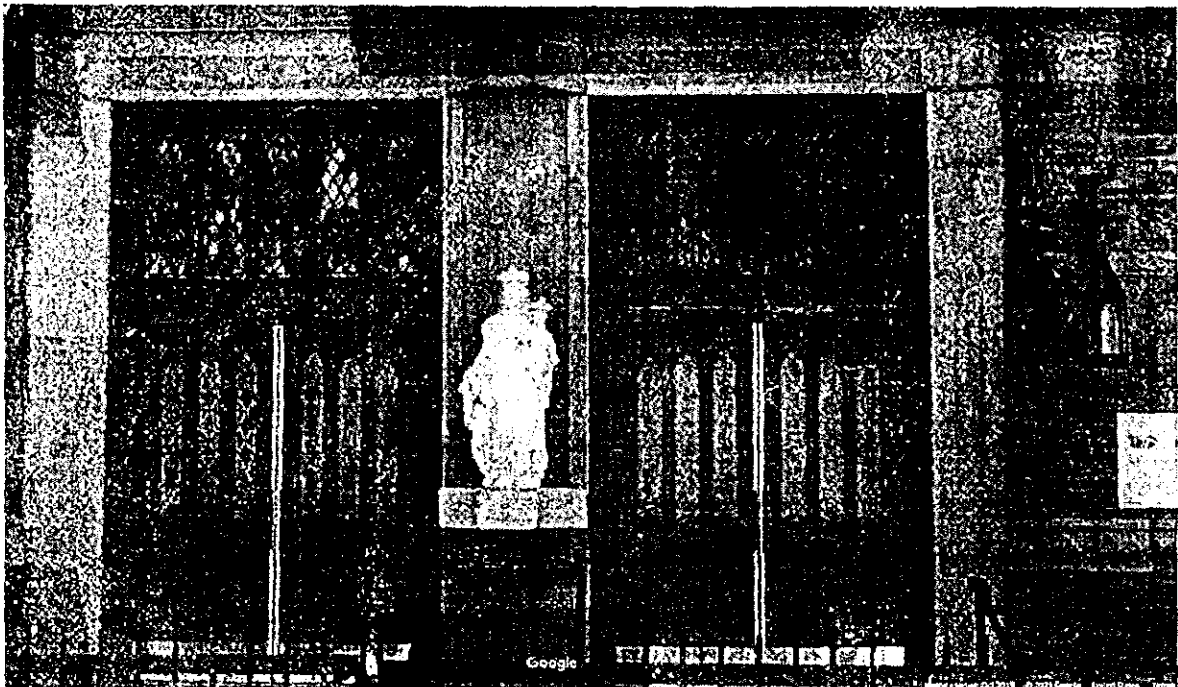
<sup>1</sup> "Dedication Souvenir: Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, October Fifth Nineteen hundred and twenty-four." non-paginated. Our Lady of Mount Carmel parish file, Catholic Historical Research Center (CHRC), Philadelphia.

<sup>2</sup> The church's architect was first identified as Charles J. Mitchell. Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide, December 14, 1921. The Rectory's architect was recorded as Jacob Naschold. PRERBG, May 1, 1901.

DESCRIPTION:

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church (1922-1923) is the primary property to the contributing Rectory (1901). The Church is in a cruciform plan with the altar at the south wall. Architect Charles J. Mitchell described his design as "Gothic...with a feeling of Tudor." There is a clerestory level with five bays at the east and west walls with "blunt" arches different from the "equilateral" type of Gothic arch at the transepts and entries at ground level. Projected areas from the cruciform plan include the vestibule (north); sacristies for clergy and altar boys adjoining the altar area (south); and a one-story structure (shrine chapel) on American St. (east). A now-blind cloister of stone connects the church with the rectory and is not a contributing resource.

The church is of dressed ashlar "Foxcroft stone" in mortar with a contemporary material, "Economy concrete stone" trim to emphasize the windows and portals, creating more textures above and below the windows at the transept and facade. (See pages 9 and 20.) All of the windows have a clear membrane as protection, but the tracery is still visible. The most attractive element at the church is the projecting vestibule with the sculptural architecture. This will be addressed at criterion (f) later. (Below), the portal has



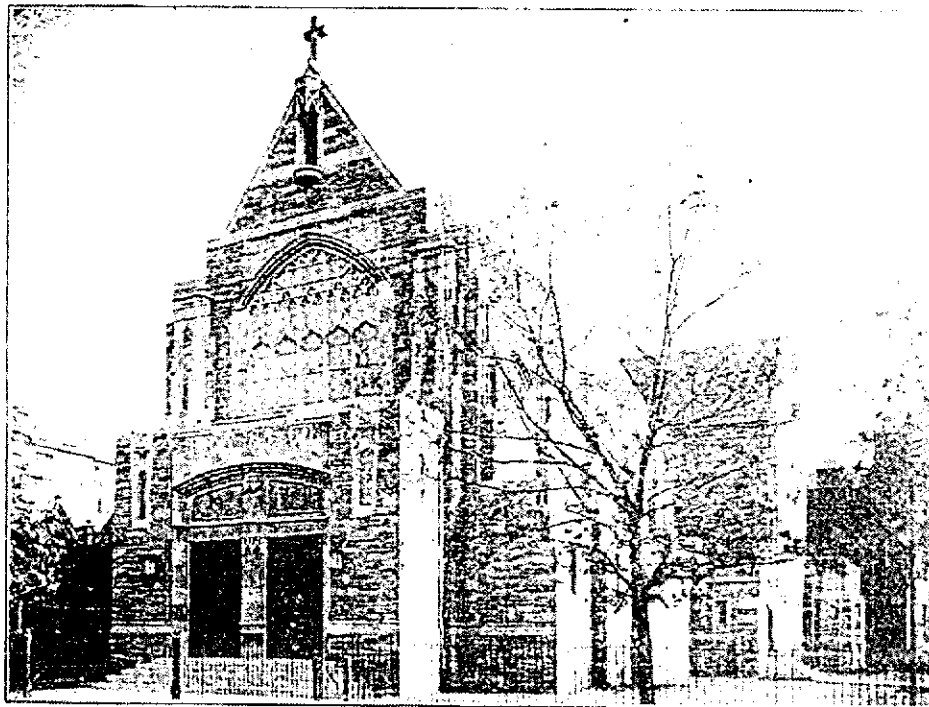
changed over the years with the addition of new jambs of the Economy concrete stone above the stone. (Refer to 1924 photograph.) The portal's doors are 12 feet high and are surmounted by panels with diamond-shaped glass panes as background to the figures or without the figures--"Tudor." The Economy concrete stone trim was more decorative around the narrow windows flanking the vestibule's portal. (See 1924 photo below.)

Behind the vestibule, as if a detachable structure, is the church with buttresses supporting the church's facade to the nave. (See below and on p. 9. ) The buttresses on the east and west walls appear as bulky elements from the transepts' north walls at ground level while the clerestory level maintains the length of the nave.

The original use of the Economy concrete stone so elaborately at the windows in 1924 seems to meld the "Gothic Tudor" to Art Deco standards at the time. Note on page 10 how the window is drawn up and down with the vertical grooves and the ornamentation below the sill. The facade's upper window also has this "arch within a square" form which detracts from the type of arch around the window.

In 1924, as now, the roof is "variegated-colored" slate.

Below, photograph from the "Dedication Souvenir" of 1924.



OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH



Flanking the nave of the Church are small side aisles separate from the nave by a series of arches. The arches, together with heavy piers, support the clerestory. The interior of the Church is in sand finish, while the moldings above the clerestory windows at the intersection of the nave and transept have been treated in white, making a pleasant contrast. Huge piers supporting the trusses of the roof are accentuated in their treatment of detail, being suggested from floor to apex of vaulted ceiling and lined off in imitation of natural stone. Warmth is added to the interior by the red and white Spanish tile floor. Chancel floor is laid in black and white tile in pattern.

Doxcroft stone was used in the construction of the exterior walls. Economy concrete stone was used for all trim stone. The roof is of variegated colored slate.

Surmounting the two twelve-foot doors are two panels in cut stone, descriptive of the story of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The panels portray Our Lady's part in the origin of the Carmelite Dedication on the one hand and the most recent consecration on the other. The devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel is supposed to have had its beginning with the Prophet Elias (III Kings, XVIII, 44) who, according to the interpretations of the Christian Fathers, saw the Blessed Virgin in the cloud on Mount Carmel, and later retired there (as the Carmelite order maintains) to found a monastery of Essenes, from which the later organizer of the Order of Carmelites, Berthold, is supposed to have received the inspiration of his institute. This account of the Carmelite origin is not accepted by the Bollandists. But Berthold did go to Mount Carmel and there established his monastery as the result of his inspiration.

The panel to the left presents the figure of the Prophet Elias seeing in a cloud over the distant mountains the vision of Our Blessed Lady; beside him his servant or minister, watching the raincloud form over the sea beyond the mountain.

"Per hoc namque puer Eliae vidit de mare nubeculam parvam orire, revelavit Deus Eliae, quod B. Maria, per illam nubeculam significate nasceretur de humana designata mare." (S. Joannesep Hierosolymyt.)

The figure of a woman (the widow of Sarepta) with her child is suggested in the angel back of the prophet as a symbol of mercy.

The panel to the right presents the figure of "Little Teresa," presented to Our Lady to St. Teresa of Jesus, as indicative of her recent canonization, and St. Simon Stock receiving the scapulars of Berthold keeping the Elias vision etc.

An interesting feature of the Church is that the entire structure is erected on one hundred and forty concrete piles, each pile being driven into the ground to a depth of twenty-three feet.

The Church, exclusive of the cloister, is approximately 120 feet long and is 51 feet across the nave portion. The transept measures 71 feet from wall to wall, while the measurement from the ground level to the apex of the slate roof is 60 feet.

The main and side altars, by Benziger Brothers, are designed in Tudor Gothic style and executed in Italian Statuary marble. Statuary marble is also used for the altar rail, while the gates are in bronze.

Cornerstone was laid Sunday, October 8, 1922.

Charles J. Mitchell, R. A., A. U. A.



William Krause of Northern Liberties had advertized that he created a "permastone" material to be used in lieu of the limestone which had to be carved by hand then inserted onto the spaces at lintels, posts, jambs, etc... The permastone was applied like concrete. Krause's material, he said, was first made from the Civil War years (1860s) and used in many brick and stone buildings mostly in North Philadelphia, then elsewhere in the City. It was less expensive and required less craftsmanship and error than using limestone.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel's church in 1923 applied "Economy Concrete Stone" instead of limestone as the trim on the building. This material would have had to be approved by architect Mitchell for his plan of the design's execution and how the material would be used. The 1924 "Dedication Souvenir" commented that the church was "erected at a cost so low as to astonish even those who are acquainted with his (the pastor, not architect) high order of ability." (The pastor took all credit for the church's design.) Mitchell's knowledge of new materials created for construction, as well as for embellishment on buildings brought the "Economy" company to Mount Carmel.

**ECONOMY  
CONCRETE  
COMPANY**

New Haven, Conn.

*Makers of Concrete Stone  
Specializers in Stone for  
Schools and Churches*

Philadelphia Office  
Flanders Building

Phone, Locust 8627

**FRED GENSEL  
& CO.**

*Manufacturers of*

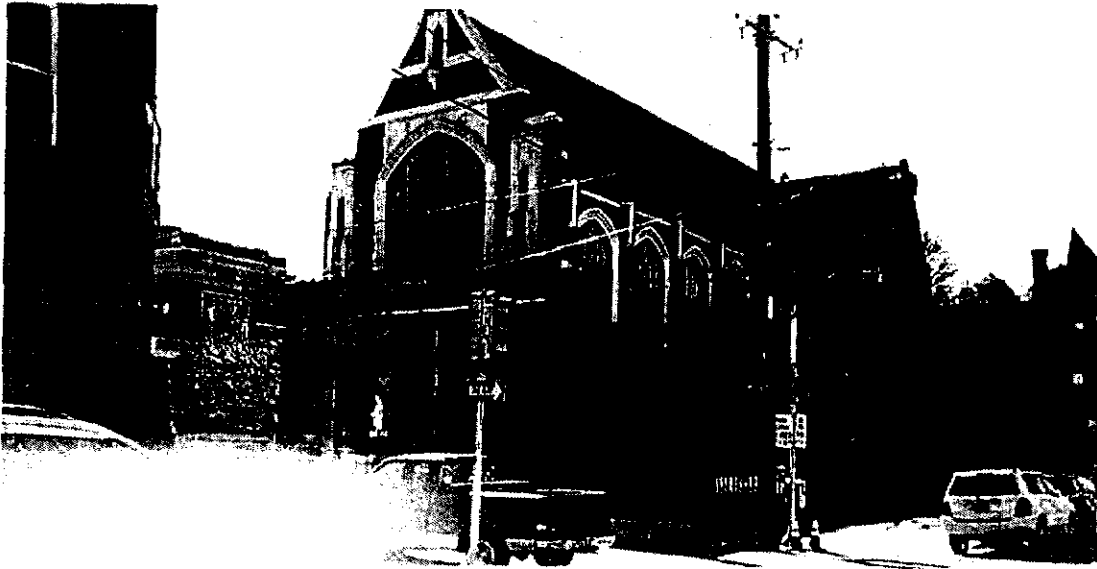
**IRON FENCING GATES  
BRASS and BRONZE  
RAILINGS**

*of Quality for*

Churches and Residences

**911-913 Vine Street**

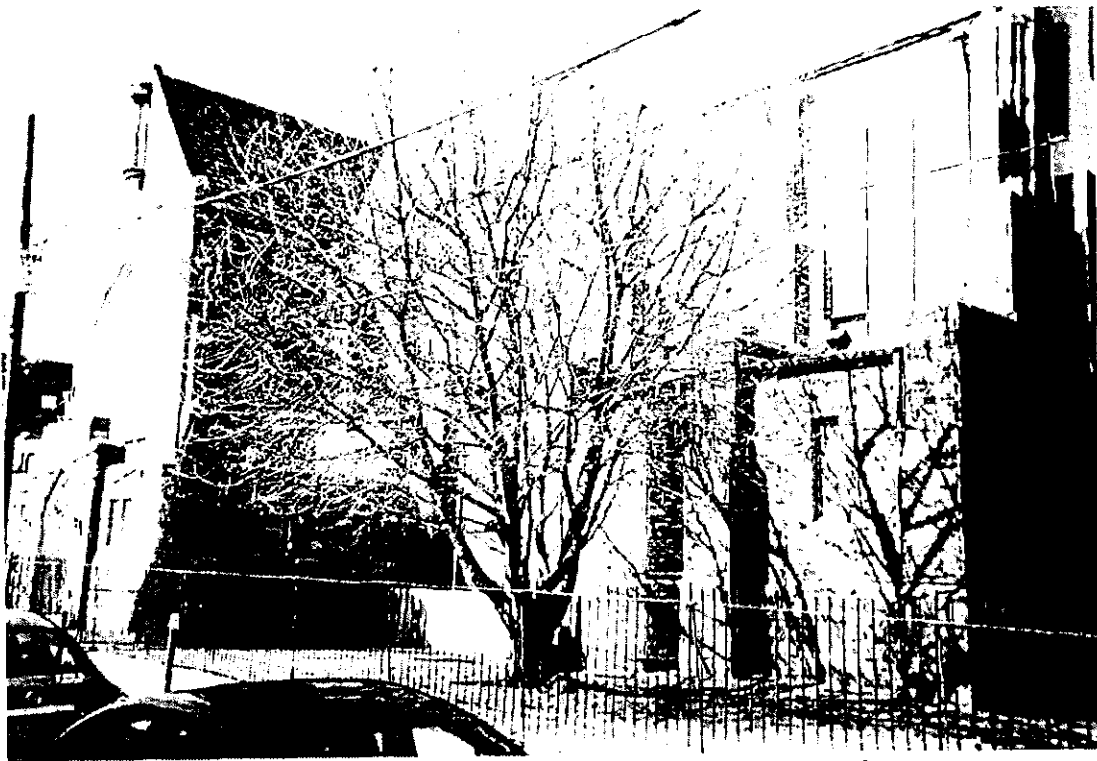
Fences Erected by Us for  
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church



(above)  
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel's  
north wall or facade is  
on the 200 block of Wolf  
Street at Third Street.

Left is facade's profile,  
with the projected vesti-  
bule.

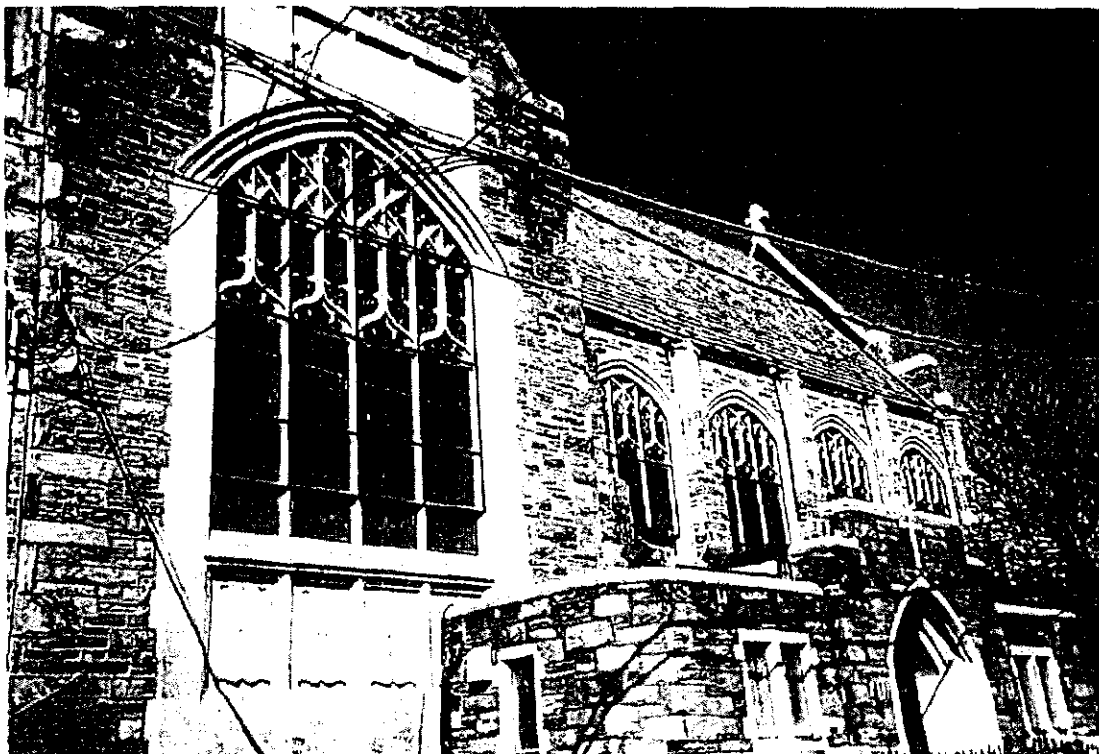
(Photographs by nominator  
in March, 2021.)



East side along American Street shows side aisle's projection, access at transept and five bays with large windows.

An outer window covers the tracery on the windows.

Below, close-up of east transept. Note the concrete stone trim.



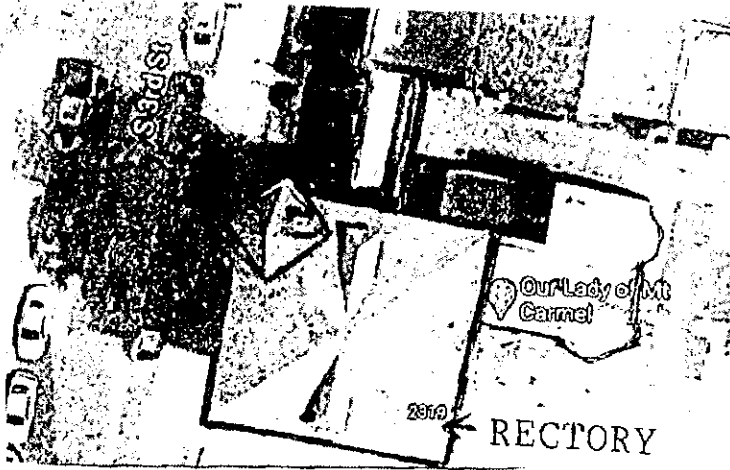


The sealed structure with blind arches is attached to one of the sacristies-- it is not a contributing property in this nomination.

This structure has little architectural relationship with the Rectory (1901), except to physically link to the church, not stylistically.

This cloister was constructed in 1922-1923 with the church, but can be dismantled to separate the Church from the Rectory, a brick, Italianate in fair condition.

This view looks westward.



Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Rectory<sup>3</sup>  
(1901-1903) by Jacob Naschold.



## R E C T O R Y

Although difficult to photograph because of the trees blocking views from the north and west (facade) sides, this red brick Italianate three-story has an asymmetrical facade with rounded arch windows on the first level and rectangular windows on the second and third levels. The asphalt roof extends well beyond the walls of this building, the original plan in a square; then afterward extended to the northwest corner. Three steps lead to the main portal, which is under a pediment extending about two feet and supported by brackets. A modern door and windows replace originals; decorative iron grates cover only the facade's basement windows. The double stairs to the portal have an original wrought iron railing in a flourish design. Concrete is over a limestone (?) trim on the windows, cracked and gone in many places. The brick needs powerwashing and pointing. Painting is needed everywhere, especially at the metal under the roof's eaves and decorative wrought iron. The later building extensions require the same attention. The main feature, the corner element, is mostly obscured by trees, but its pyramidal roof is an attractive, quirky "exclamation point" to the building which needs more care.

This building is a contributing property.

<sup>3</sup> Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide, May 1, 1901.

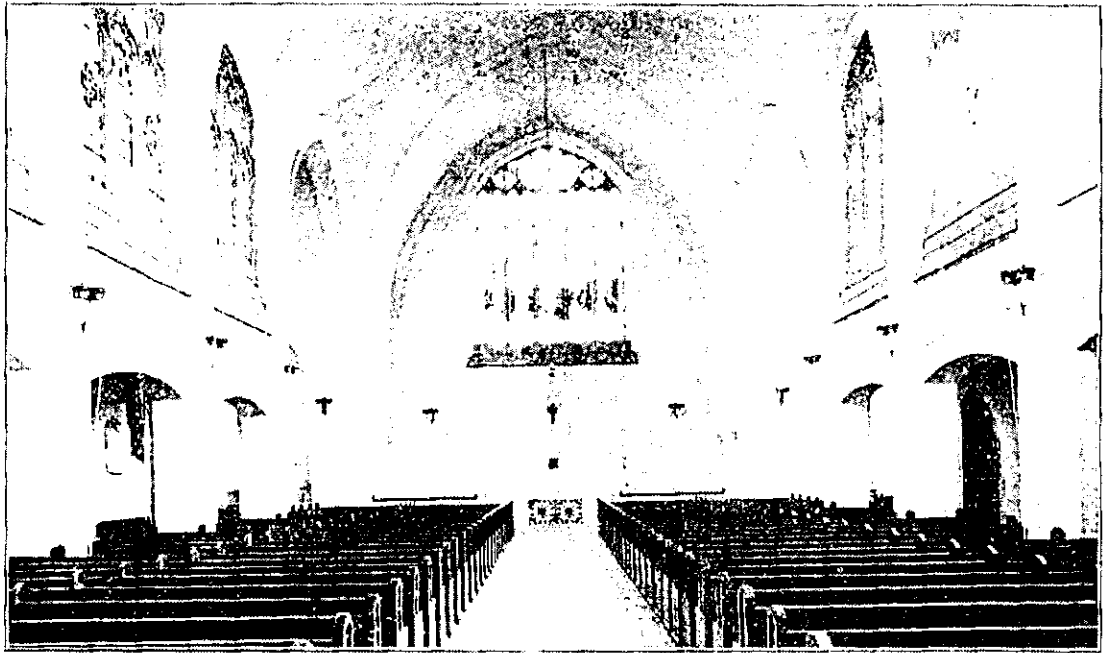


West side of church facing South Third Street has projecting side aisle and "buttness" between church and vestibule.

Below is view closer to transept and rectory. The handicap access is from a circular ramp.

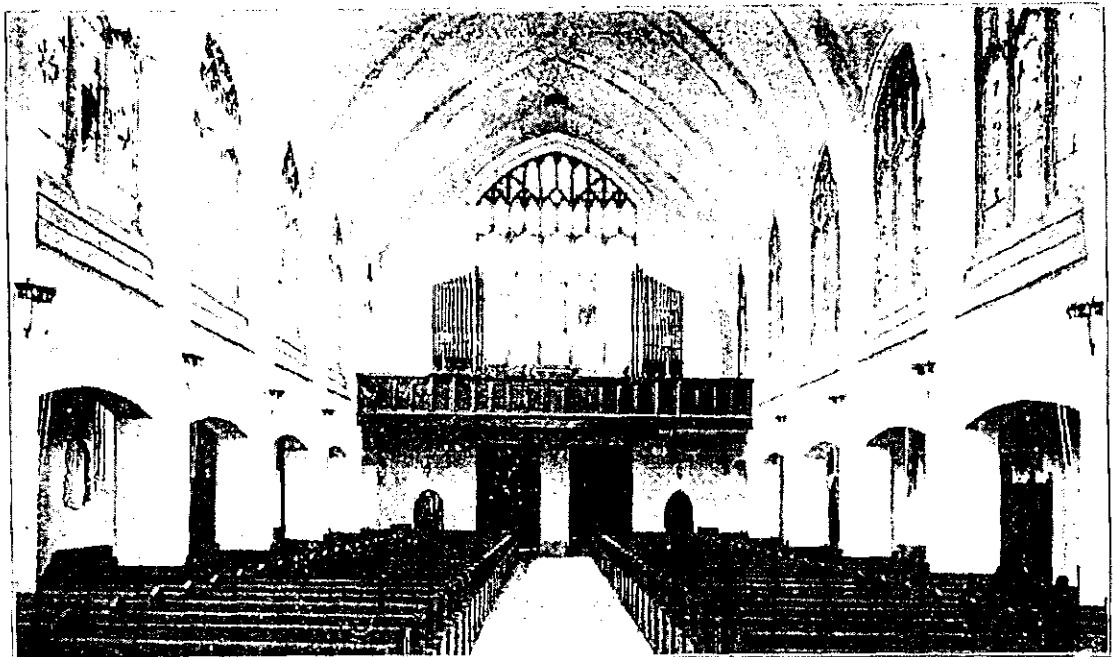
Covered passageway between Church and Rectory has sealed arches, masking a "cloister" appearance.





INTERIOR OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH

First interior photographs of (just completed) Church in 1923.  
Cardinal Dennis Dougherty consecrated the church in 1922.  
Dougherty would participate in Thérèse Martin's canonization,  
and the saint would become one of his favorites.  
South wall (rear) top; North wall below.



INTERIOR OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL

STATEMENT of SIGNIFICANCE:

Our Lady of Mount Carmel church and rectory are in the Whitman neighborhood of South Philadelphia's far southeast corner. Founded in 1896 on the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel (July 16th), the church's architectural value is in how the design and the odd sculptural relief above the portal really date the church to the early 1920s. The architect of the church, Charles J. Mitchell, AIA, designed what he called a "Gothic...with a feeling of Tudor" which is not a traditional "Roman Catholic" architectural style.<sup>4</sup> But, adding more to the uniqueness of this church is the sculptural architecture at the facade: a two-panel relief relating a history of the Carmelite Order and then, the contemporary news of two Carmelite nuns, one just canonized (Sister Teresa of Jesus from Chile) and one awaiting canonization (Thérèse Martin, the "Little Flower.") Architectural sculpture was barely seen in the early 1920s, and not on buildings as public as a church.<sup>5</sup> For architectural construction, the building's components are unusually heavy for a "Gothic," but the modified "blunt" Gothic-type of arch explains why "140 concrete piles" were "driven into the ground to a depth of 23 feet." Architect Mitchell was a member and adherent of the "T-Square Club's"<sup>7</sup> mission to unite artists of various media with architects: at the nominated church building, Mitchell applied unusual and rarely used treatments to his building design, resulting in this atypical structure.

To Roman Catholics in the early 20th century, the news on a growing devotion to a young Carmelite nun from Normandy, France, reached world-wide attention. In Philadelphia, Thérèse Martin, OCD was known through the Carmelite Monastery's prioresses' publications throughout the Archdiocese, fostered by the first Cardinal's own interest in Martin. Cardinal Dennis Dougherty, one of Philadelphia's most powerful leaders from the 1920s to his death in 1951 promoted

<sup>4</sup> The "Roman Catholic" architectural styles are Romanesque, Gothic and Baroque. The House of Tudor in England was Protestant, from the early 16th to early 17th centuries.  
<sup>5</sup> See Bach, Penny Balkin, Public Art in Phila. Temple Univ., pp.109-112.  
<sup>6</sup> Mitchell's writing on church in "Dedication Souvenir."  
<sup>7</sup> Tatman, S., "Charles J. Mitchell (1892-1957)."philadelphiabuildings.org.



the cause of Thérèse Martin, as a cardinal participating in her canonization at the Vatican. Dougherty would also consecrate Our Lady of Mount Carmel's cornerstone in 1922, just before leading over 500 individuals from Philadelphia overseas for the canonization.<sup>8</sup>

One need not be a Catholic to appreciate the church and the quasi-Italianate rectory which dates from 1901 (the contributing property). They are in contrast to the rows of two-story residences for this working-class community, the descendants of those who had survived the perils of draining the waters from the present-day stadium area. A formidable Eastern European Jewish community was adjacent, if not intermingled with the Catholics here (before most of the Jews left to re-settle in Northeast Philadelphia.)<sup>9</sup> Whitman's flat area, just off the Delaware River, was a refuge for renegades to the "Neck,"<sup>10</sup> or those wanting isolation, until development in the early 1920s, when Mount Carmel's Catholic population increased.

The nominated buildings are memorials to the "when" and "why" they were designed. The criteria, (d) and (f) are discussed to further the merits of the church building, the primary nomination, with the Rectory, the secondary or contributing property noted.

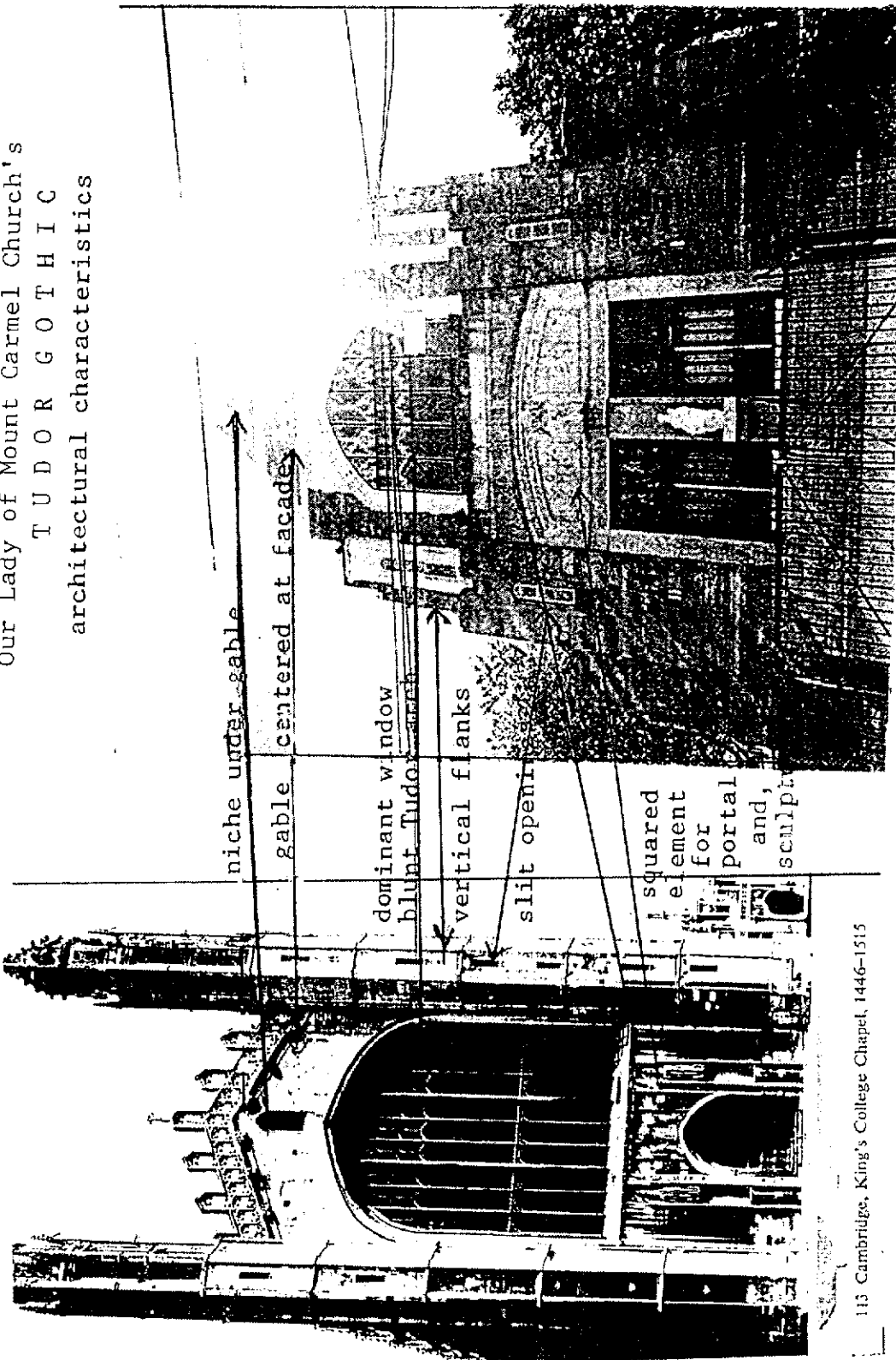
Celeste A. Morello, MS, MA  
March, 2021  
(During COVID-19 limitations)

<sup>8</sup> Archdiocesan Staff, Our Faith-Filled Heritage. Strasbourg: 2007,p.84.

<sup>9</sup> See Haller, M. and David, A., The Peoples of Philadelphia... Temple Univ. Press, 1973, Chapter 11: "Philadelphia's Jewish Neighborhoods" by Maxwell Whiteman, pp. 231-254 which ignores this group better addressed by former "Philadelphia Inquirer" reporter and Whitman resident, Murray Dubin in South Philadelphia: Mummies, Memories, and the Melrose Diner. Temple Univ. Press, 1996, pp. 192-205. Dubin grew up about two blocks from Mount Carmel church.

<sup>10</sup> A romantic article about the area is Maurice F. Egan's "A Day in the Ma'sh." Scribner's Monthly, Vol.22, #3, July 1881, pp. 343-352.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church's  
TUDOR GOTHIC  
architectural characteristics



niche under gable

gable centered at facade

dominant window  
blunt Tudor arch

vertical flanks

slit opening

squared element  
for portal  
and, sculpture

113 Cambridge, King's College Chapel, 1446-1515

(Source of photo: Watkin.)

Facade's bays.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Whitman...

(d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style:

"TUDOR GOTHIC"

The nominated church's architect, Charles J. Mitchell (1892-1957) described his design in 1922 as "Gothic...with a feeling of Tudor." In many instances, an architect would relate the design of a Roman Catholic church with the person after whom the building is named. Here, Our Lady of Mount Carmel refers to apparitions to the prophet Elias (before Christ, in the Old Testament) and to the 13th century, with St. Simon Stock, an Englishman and Carmelite from the Order founded in 1155. Why Mitchell would plan a Catholic church in a design associated with one of the greatest persecutors of Irish Catholics, and one who dissented from Roman Catholicism to found his own church is puzzling. King Henry VIII, from the House of Tudor reigned Great Britain after his father, Henry VII took the throne in 1485. The House of Tudor would rule Britain until 1603, with Elizabeth I, Henry VIII's daughter, as the last regent. However, art historians have divided "Tudor Gothic"<sup>11</sup> into two periods: 1485 to 1534, the "Catholic" years when influence from the Italian Renaissance brought artists and sculptors to England; then the 1534 to 1603 period which had few buildings of note after Henry VIII broke with Roman Catholicism, began the Church of England (or "Anglican Church") and ignored any art aligned with Rome and Roman Catholicism. Domestic architecture in England took precedence. And Catholic churches constructed prior to 1485 and still not completed during Tudor rule would bear some "Tudor Gothic" characteristics. But these examples are few.<sup>12</sup> A review of "Tudor Gothic" possible prototypes that Mitchell could have studied produced Cambridge University's King's College Chapel (1446-1515) on the previous page. This building was finished while Henry VIII was still Catholic.

<sup>11</sup> Art historians have also called this period "Late English Gothic" of "Perpendicular," or referred to any style under "Henry VIII."

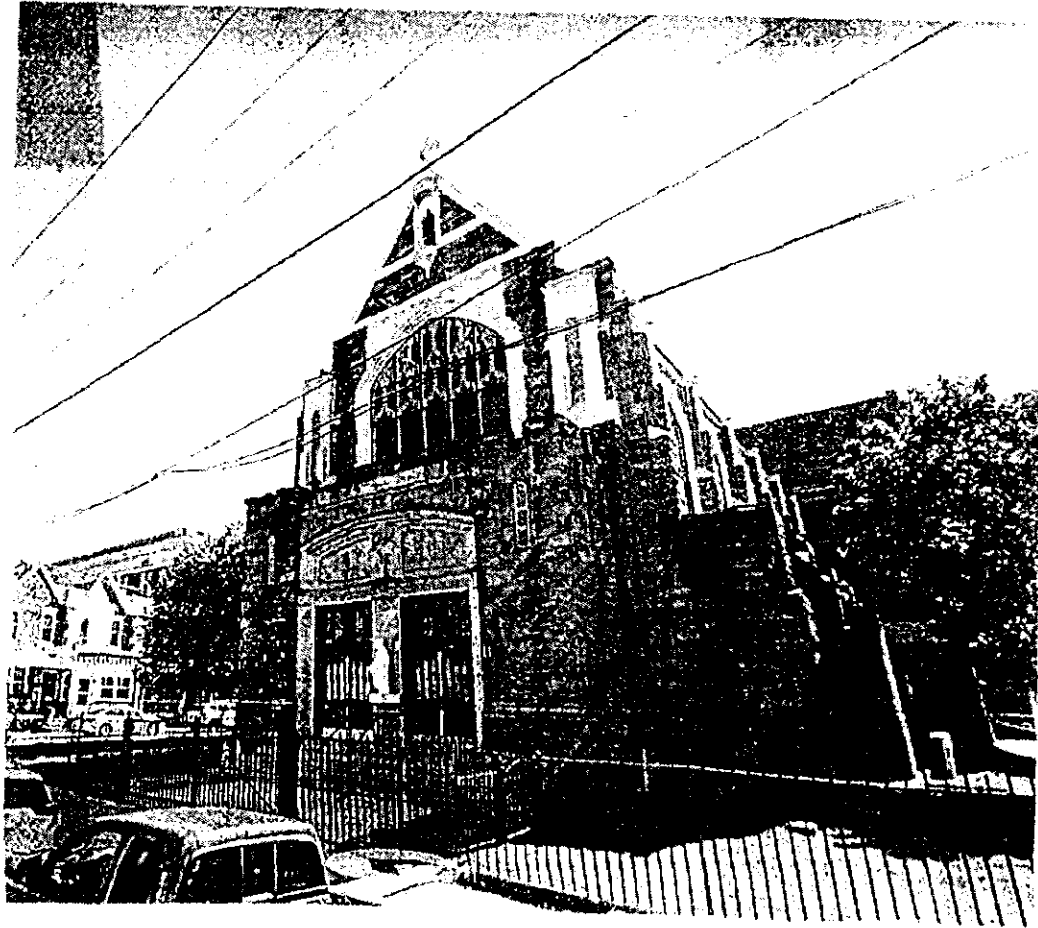
<sup>12</sup> Pevsner, N., An Outline of European Architecture.(1974)pp.275-277; 330-331. Summerson, J., Architecture in Britain:1530-1830.(1991), 23-25; 157-158. Watkin, D. English Architecture (2001),p.81-84.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel church's similarities in its architectural characteristics with the Tudor Gothic King's College Chapel are visually detailed on page 17. There is the feigned "gateway" component at the South Philadelphia church's projecting vestibule within a square form, just as in England. The type of Gothic arch termed as "blunt" is on the church and chapel, with tracery more intricate at the top of the arch; then descending bands to the sills present the verticals. Large windows, or sets of windows are typical of Tudor Gothic. Pevsner categorized the style more as "Perpendicular Gothic...(which was) during the Tudor dynasty..." Janson, another art historian agreed, writing that the "Perpendicular Style" or "Late English Gothic" had a "vertical accent" while Zarnecki phrased the English "Perpendicular as stressing vertical."<sup>13</sup> While Mount Carmel church's height of "60 feet" may not be so impressive, the exterior's windows' "Economy concrete stone" trim elongates the windows at the top at bottom. (See pages 9 and 10.) Squarish windows are made longer and larger by the trim. Emphasis on the windows of Tudor Gothic also minimized attention to the masonry, which wrote Summerson, was in "a steady decline" under the Tudors.<sup>14</sup> Symmetry was also not of importance with many projected building additions in Tudor Gothic. At Mount Carmel, notable is the updated version of the Late Gothic "Lady Chapel" (dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary) on the east (American Street) side. This type of structure appeared after the medieval "cult to Mary" waned with the many "Notre Dames" all over France and the Continent. (Notre Dame is French for "Our Lady" as in "Our Lady" of Mount Carmel.) "Lady Chapels" became more frequent after 1400, in keeping some form of devotion in a separate building dedicated to Our Lady.

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<sup>13</sup> Pevsner, pp.330-331. Janson, HW, History of Art. 1977, p. 302,  
<sup>14</sup> Zarnecki, G., Art of the Medieval World. 1979, p. 412.

<sup>14</sup> Summerson, op.cit., p. 24.



Above: The perspective from Wolf Street.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel's design can be counted as part of an architectural scheme among the Roman Catholic churches east of Broad Street and south of Washington Avenue for those of Irish ancestry. First there was Sacred Heart of Jesus Church (c.1876), a Victorian Gothic by Edwin F. Durang, the parish from which Mount Carmel derived. Then, Frank Watson's Epiphany of Our Lord (c.1910) has more French Gothic characteristics in a revived version. This parish is at Mount Carmel's western border. So, the "Tudor Gothic" of Mount Carmel church complements the array of "Gothics" from the late 19th century for almost fifty years in South Philadelphia. However, "English Gothic" in Archdiocesan churches in the City was still popular, even more in the 20th century.

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WILL  
RECEIVE PROMPT ATTENTION

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ESTIMATES ON CITY OR COUNTRY WORK

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Carpenter  
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*Particular attention given to Jobbing and all manner of Building  
Repairs or Alterations to Churches, Dwellings,  
Stores, Factories, Etc.*

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TELEPHONE CONNECTION

At the time when this advertisement was published in 1895, the WR Dougherty Company was at work on the Holmesburg Prison project, one of many large-scale buildings under contract.

The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide named Dougherty as winning the bid for constructing the church building at Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Mitchell would have been familiar with Dougherty's work, which now would include securing the two architectural reliefs atop the portal--this was not a routine task. What is not recorded is if Dougherty had been the contractor to apply the Economy Concrete Stone that would have needed molds of the motifs and application at the surrounds.

ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church:

LEFT PANEL: A depiction of the prophet Elias on Mount Carmel (Israel) having a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary on a cloud. With Elias is his servant, the widow Sarepte and her child.

RIGHT PANEL: A more contemporary history, St. Teresa of Jesus from Chile had just been canonized (1920) and with her is "Little Thérèse" (Martin) awaiting canonization. St. Berthold, founder of the Carmelite Order is seen with scapulars next to St. Simon Stock, an Englishman who brought the Carmelites to England.

This program honors the Carmelite Order and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel who is with the Child Jesus in two statues at the portal.

The sculptor has not been identified, but this was executed 1922-23. Architect Mitchell recorded who was in each panel. (See p. 7.)



Our Lady of Mount Carmel church's facade's

ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE

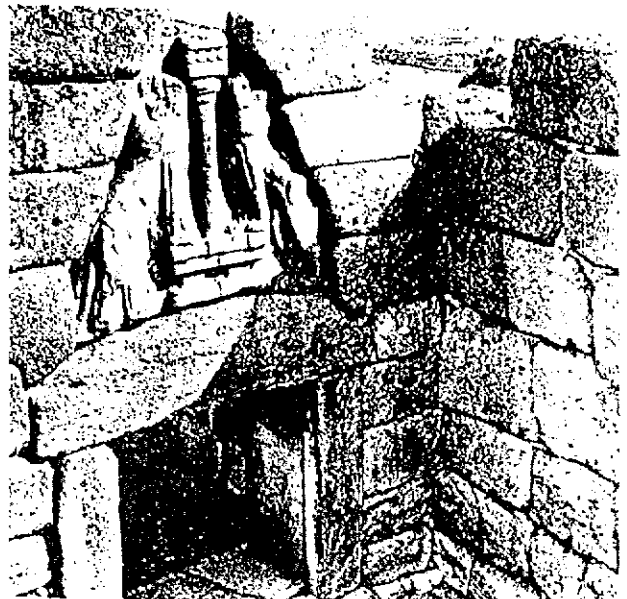
(f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel's parish history reported that in July of 1921, a fund was begun to construct a new and larger church. Sometime shortly after, Charles J. Mitchell was contracted to draw plans for the new church,<sup>15</sup> which would have to be approved by the pastor and parishioners of Irish ancestry who would finance the entire project with art work. Mitchell had attended Catholic elementary and secondary schools, according to Tatman's research. He was also strongly influenced with the integration of art work with architecture, as seen in his interest in the "T-Square Club." "Organized" in 1885, the T-Square Club was a union of artists of various media with architects<sup>16</sup> who would find areas in their buildings to install art or make the art integral to the structure. From ancient times, sculpture placed onto, atop or as part of the building effected more intent. As Janson would emote on the famous architectural sculpture at "The Lion Gate" in Mycenae (1250 B.C.): "a work integrated with the structure yet also a separate entity rather than a modified wall surface or block."<sup>17</sup> He and others saw "The Lion Gate" as "the direct ancestor of Greek architectural sculpture."<sup>17</sup> That element sufficed for pagan buildings in pediments, or in caryatids where human figures were representations of someone, or of an action.

(Source of image: Janson, p.91.)

"The Lion Gate"

<sup>15</sup> PRERBG, December 14, 1921.  
<sup>16</sup> Tatman, "Charles J. Mitchell, at "pab" site.  
<sup>17</sup> Janson, op.cit., p. 103.





For the architectural sculpture, Mitchell would have to consult with Roman Catholic sources: clergy and documentation. It is unknown who sculpted Mount Carmel church's friezes, or what sources had been consulted, but Mitchell explained the two panels and identified the figures. (See page 22.) Mitchell also seemed to have paid a visit to the Carmelite Monastery<sup>18</sup> in the city, where the Carmelite Sisters had been--for years--promoting the cause for canonization of a young Norman-French nun, Thérèse Martin (1873-1897). Publications on Thérèse were distributed from the Philadelphia Sisters all over the nation while another Carmelite nun, Teresa of Jesus from Chile had just beached sainthood. These two Carmelites were very popular among Roman Catholics not just in the city, but over the world. Cardinal Dennis J. Dougherty, one of the City's most influential (who would attain mass parcels of real estate for the Archdiocese through his friend, Albert M. Greenfield), would participate in Thérèse's canonization, then lead hundreds from Philadelphia to the Vatican for the ceremony.<sup>19</sup> Thérèse Martin was known as a Catholic celebrity from the World War I years to her canonization in 1925, and after, to the present. She would be sculpted on Mount Carmel church's right panel as "Little Thérèse" awaiting her official sainthood, along with pronounced saint, Teresa of Chile who died in 1920. Mount Carmel's architectural sculpture pays homage to these timely subjects of Catholic interest in the early 1920s.

It is also likely that if, hypothetically-speaking, Mitchell did visit the Carmelite Monastery for information on Teresa and Thérèse, that he did see the architectural sculpture on the Chapel's portal and portico extending to 66th Avenue. It is in the Lombard

<sup>18</sup> I have nominated the Chapel of the Carmelite Monastery to the PHC with this nomination, although separately, in April, 2021.

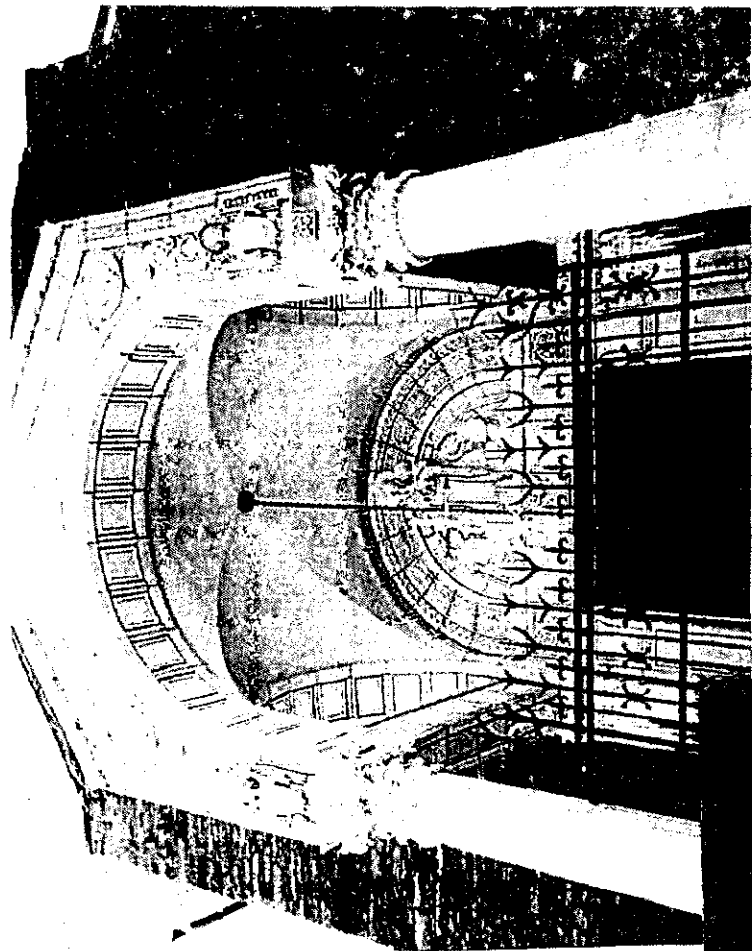
<sup>19</sup> Archdiocesan Staff, Our Faith-Filled Heritage. Strasbourg: 2007, pp. 84-85.

**The Philadelphia Premiere of the Film  
"St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus:  
An Echo of the Heart of God"**



**Tuesday, October 12, 1999  
Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel**

**St. Thérèse Martin**



**ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE  
at the Carmelite Monas-  
tery's Chapel, c. 1920.**

**St. Teresa of Jesus from  
Chile (1900-1920) on left.**

**Both Carmelite Sisters are  
depicted on Our Lady of  
Mount Carmel's relief on  
the church's facade.**



Romanesque Style, part of the late 11th and early 12th centuries' movement to place architectural sculpture on Catholic churches. Art historians are hesitant to assert "where" and "when" this began: the dating of the Lombard Romanesque friezes and sculpted portals and portichi (porticoes) parallels to the sculpture on exteriors on the "Pilgrimage churches" in Toulouse, France and Santiago and Leon in Spain.<sup>20</sup> If architect Mitchell saw the architectural sculpture at the Carmelite Monastery's Chapel--which also bore the same standing figure of Our Lady of Mount Carmel with the Child Jesus--it would serve as an affirmation to proceed with a similar art work at the South Philadelphia church. With his avid interest and knowledge obtained from his years at the T-Square Club, Mitchell would direct one of the few architectural sculptural programs (albeit two panels) on an Archdiocese of Philadelphia's church building. It would remain one of the rare art works, and one that had a contemporary historical subject, The relief/frieze also fell timely within the Art Deco trend on many secular, public buildings in Center City. So, for a "neighborhood" and "residential" area, this architectural sculpture was an anomaly, yet it raised the architectural value of Mitchell's building design.

But, historically, was Mitchell's decision for the architectural sculpture appropriate? English Gothic cathedrals originally heeded to St. Bernard of Clairvaux's advice<sup>21</sup> to spare ornamentation. Niches in medieval English cathedrals held statues of monarchs and saints as commemorative, rather than decorative or didactic. Yet, as Mitchell was reliant upon the "Catholic" Tudor Gothic, there were instances where exteriors held architectural sculpture, even

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<sup>20</sup> Janson, op.cit., p. 271. Zarnecki, op.cit., pp. 218-219;272-275.

<sup>21</sup> Art history recites the frequent written clashes between Abbott Suger, the "inventor" of the Gothic Style and promoter of all embellishments on Gothic, and Bernard, an Abbott and saint who recommended spiritual inspiration from "books" and "not to read in the marble" (sculpture). Bernard's monks were responsible for the early English Gothic interpretations of the elaborate French Gothic. See Janson, pp. 300-301, and Zarnecki, pp.252;366.

above portals or gateways. Henry VIII, while still practicing Roman Catholicism, was actively aware of the Italian Renaissance in art, architecture and sculpture. A competitive, young monarch, Henry invited Italian artesans to England to provide the same ornamentation which excited royalty on the Continent. Thus, in that "Catholic" Tudor Gothic period (1485-1534), the limited number of buildings that had not been destroyed by Henry after his conception of the Church of England bear some classical sculpture on exteriors. The most famous prototype is Hampton Court, originally the palace of (Catholic) Cardinal Wolsey where from c.1515 to 1529 "Medallions of terra cotta" and "putti and foliage in the spandrels of the hall roof" were in an "Italian" style.<sup>22</sup> Cambridge University's gateway to St. John's College has decorated heraldry (1511). Because Henry's sheer renouncing of anything pertaining to "Rome" or "Roman," there had been massive stripping of "Catholic" English art and architecture. Pevsner recorded that the "Perpendicular Gothic" arose from the early "Protestant" Tudor Gothic years ("until 1550") and was influenced by "a Flemish Mannerist type" seen on domestic buildings. On their exteriors, these English structures had "cartouches, animal and human figure derivations, both caryatid and grotesque...a garbled version of classicism."<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, it was still architectural sculpture, despite the viewer's opinion. But for the Cambridge University Chapel and perhaps others not brought to the attention of art historians, English Gothic churches were not remarkable. Therefore, what Mitchell achieved at Our Lady of Mount Carmel church was a historical reminder of "Catholic" Tudor Gothic, before Henry would slaughter Irish Catholics en masse in a centuries<sup>1</sup>long siege where Protestants and Catholics continually drew blood in Ireland.

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<sup>22</sup>Pevsner, p. 296; Summerson, p. 24; Watkin, pp. 81-82.

<sup>23</sup>Pevsner, op.cit., pp. 330-331. He provided no visuals.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church was described in the 1924 parish history as "second to none in the city in unity of conception and variety of detail, the two component features ...which we call beauty." Adding further on the church's design was the architect, Charles J. Mitchell who opined the church "to be one of the most beautiful buildings in the archdiocese(sic) and the most artistically designed edifice in the southern section of Philadelphia." A matter of taste, as well as preference, the church nonetheless carries the "Tudor Gothic" style, which for a religious building is hardly seen in the City (or Commonwealth). Moreover, the architectural sculpture on Tudor Gothic domestic structures would have been anomalous on English Gothic churches of any era, which at Mount Carmel is especially unique. These architectural characteristics may not have been recognized by those passing by, or going to services at Mount Carmel church, but they add to the spectacular array of styles in the City's Roman Catholic churches. These designs also contribute to the City's architectural history.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel's church merits historical designation for all of the foregoing reasons.

Celeste A. Morello, MS, MA  
March, 2021  
(During COVID-19 limitations)

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- "Carmelite Monastery" pamphlets and history, (CHRC)
- "The Carmelite Monastery" nomination is submitted with to the PHC with this nomination in April, 2021. Some information was used in the Mount Carmel church nomination with reference to the sculpture.
- Temple University Charles Library.

103-101-3

Dedication  
Souvenir

OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH

SOURCES & INFORMATION

October  
Fifth  
Nineteen hundred  
and twenty-four

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## HISTORY OF THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL.

On the sixteenth day of July in the year 1896, the Archbishop of Philadelphia, the Most Reverend Patrick John Ryan, D. D., decided to erect a new parish in the southern part of the district which formed the parish of the Sacred Heart. Several reasons led to this decision. The increase of the population of the city had brought about the building of many new houses to the south of the Church of the Sacred Heart, and in many of these houses Catholic families lived. The result was the overcrowding of the old parish church. There was also an ever-increasing number of the faithful who had to walk considerable distances to attend Holy Mass. The territory thus separated from the old parish began at McKean Street and extended southward between the Delaware River and Seventh Street, having the Delaware River again as its boundary on the south. Since the day on which the new parish was erected was the feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, it was called the parish of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

For the work of establishing the new parish the archbishop chose the Rev. Bernard F. Gallagher, assistant rector of the Church of St. Malachy, in Philadelphia. Father Gallagher was born in Ireland in 1856. His parents came to America, bringing him with them while still a boy, and settled in the Assumption parish, Philadelphia. He attended the parochial school, later going to St. Bonaventura's College, Allegany, N. Y., and entering St. Charles' Seminary, Overbrook, Pa., in the fall of 1873. After nine years of study and preparation for the priesthood he was ordained in the Cathedral at Philadelphia on June 3, 1882, by the Right Reverend Jeremiah F. Shanahan, D. D., Bishop of Harrisburg. His first appointment was as Assistant Rector of the Church of the Annunciation, Shenandoah, Pa., in which position he remained for about two and one-half years. Thence he was transferred to the Church of the Immaculate Heart, Chester, Pa., where he was Assistant Rector for fourteen months. In the early part of the year 1886 he was appointed Assistant Rector of the Church of St. Malachy, Philadelphia, in which parish he was stationed under the Very Reverend Edmond F. Prendergast, Vicar General of the Archdiocese, later Auxiliary Bishop and Archbishop of Philadelphia. This appointment lasted for more than ten years until the appointment to be pastor of the new parish came in 1896.

The task which confronted Father Gallagher would have discouraged a man of less forceful character and less indomitable courage. Business conditions were unfavorable, as 1896, being an election year, brought depression with it. The people of the new parish, being for the most part wage earners, felt keenly the burden of placing the new parish on its feet. And yet they set to with a will, determined to support to their utmost the earnest efforts of the new pastor. Looking forward to the day when their parish should be fully equipped, when there should stand in their midst a temple to God under the invocation of the Lady of Mt. Carmel, no sacrifice was too great for their warm-hearted devotion. And the pastor, realizing the heavy weight borne by his parishioners, appealed to the charity of those outside the parish, and through the kindness and generosity of the pastors of several of the older and larger parishes of the city he collected large sums of money to assist in financing the first needs of the new parish.



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Due to the labors of pastor and people it was possible to rent two properties at the northeast corner of Third and Wolf Streets. It was in the store at the front of the corner house that the first Holy Masses were said in the parish by Father Gallagher at 5, 7.30 and 9.30 on Christmas Day, 1896. Services continued to be held in this temporary chapel until the dedication of the chapel in the first floor of the school building, and the houses were used by Father Gallagher as a rectory until the erection of the present rectory. Still later the same houses were to serve as a convent for the Sisters of Mercy.

In the meantime Father Gallagher had been occupied in forwarding the plans for more permanent arrangements to take the place of these temporary expedients. With the approval of the proper authorities he arranged for the purchase of the piece of land on the east side of Third Street between Wolf and Ritner Streets, extending back to American Street. This land, the site of the present parochial buildings, is 400 feet in length by 112 in width, and was purchased for \$11,224.67.

BOUNDARIES

On this ground was erected a building of brick construction, the first floor of which was to serve as a chapel, and the second as a school later when the growth of the parish should warrant it. The work on the new building progressed rapidly, for the dedication of the chapel took place less than nine months after Father Gallagher's appointment and the establishment of the parish. This was on Sunday, February 28, 1897. The ceremony was performed by the Right Reverend Edmond F. Prendergast, D. D., who had been consecrated Bishop of Scillio and Auxiliary Bishop to Archbishop Ryan four days previously, this being the new bishop's first pontifical ceremony. The Mass was celebrated by the Rev. A. A. Gallagher, of the Church of the Visitation, assisted by Rev. Joseph C. Kelly, of St. Mary's Church, as deacon, and Rev. R. F. Hanigan, of the Church of the Assumption, as subdeacon. The master of ceremonies was Rev. M. J. Crane, who had been associated with Father Gallagher as Assistant Rector at St. Malachy's. The Father Crane of these days is now the Titular Bishop of Curium, and Auxiliary Bishop to His Eminence, D. Cardinal Dougherty, the present Archbishop of Philadelphia. The sermon, which was on the Sanctity of the Church, was preached by Rev. M. C. Donovan, then rector of St. Paul's Church, and now rector of St. Agatha's, West Philadelphia, and Domestic Prelate to His Holiness, Pope Pius XI. The choir rendered Haydn's Third (Imperial) Mass with Kreutzar's "Veni Creator" before the sermon, and Zingarelli's "Laudate Pueri" as an offertory. Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament followed the Mass at which the choir sang Kreutzar's "O Salutaris" and Faure's "Tantum Ergo." The ceremonies concluded with the singing of the "Te Deum" by Lambillotte. In an address to the congregation Bishop Prendergast referred to his close relations with Father Gallagher as pastor and assistant for ten years at St. Malachy's and paid a tribute to "his earnestness, his attention to the spiritual wants of the people, his kindness of heart and his constant attention to his priestly duties."

Having attended to the present wants of the parish, Father Gallagher next turned to provisions for the future. Realizing that the boys and girls of today are the men and women of tomorrow, he was anxious to insure that the coming manhood and womanhood should be all that the ideals of Catholicity require. He wished to train these future men and women in Catholic faith and practice and to protect them from possible evil influences which might come from association with those whose lives were not guided by the light of faith. Hence he determined on the establishment of a parish school at the earliest possible moment. Application was made to the Sisters of Mercy

# RECTORY

at Merion, Pa., and when the sisters arrived the school was opened, in October, 1901, two hundred and twenty-five children being on the rolls. The second floor of the building completed in 1897 was divided into schoolrooms, and later with the increase of the number of pupils a third floor was added, providing for more schoolrooms.

About the time that the school was opened, <sup>1891</sup> Father Gallagher undertook another important work. It was recognized from the first that the houses rented at the corner of Third and Wolf Streets would serve as a rectory only temporarily. They were not built as a rectory, and were totally unfitted for such use. Therefore, since provision had been made for a place of worship and the beginnings of a school were under way, a contract was awarded for the erection of the rectory which has housed the clergy of the parish ever since. It has a frontage of forty feet on Third Street, and was originally seventy-one feet in depth, an addition having since been made by Father Gallagher's successor. Its cost was \$12,500.

With the end of the year 1908 the parish had been in existence for twelve years, during which time Father Gallagher had been Rector. A school had been built, in the first floor of which was housed the chapel, and a rectory had been erected. And in spite of all the money needed for this work there remained but \$20,000 of debt on the parish in the form of a mortgage on the ground. It was at this time that the rectorate of St. Bridget's, in Falls of Schuylkill, became vacant, and the Archbishop transferred him to that church on January 1, 1909. He remained rector there until he died on November 21, 1918, at the age of sixty-two years. He was one of the older generation of priests, men of sturdy faith and unremitting work—the type of which Ireland sent such numbers to this country in the last century—to whom the Catholic Church in America owes a great debt. They were devoted to their people because their people were to them the sheep and the lambs of Christ's flock, and their people were devoted to them as to the shepherds in whose care the Lord had placed them.

Father Gallagher was succeeded by Rev. James A. Dalton, assistant rector of St. Columba's Church, Philadelphia. Father Dalton was born in Washington, D. C., June 17, 1866. While he was but a boy the family moved to Philadelphia, and he attended the parochial schools in St. Michael's and St. Joseph's parishes. He entered the Seminary at Overbrook in August, 1881, and was ordained to the priesthood in the Cathedral by the Archbishop, the Most Reverend Patrick John Ryan, on May 23, 1891. He was stationed temporarily during the summer of 1891 as assistant at St. Agatha's Church, West Philadelphia. Thence he was transferred to the Philadelphia Hospital at Blockley, another temporary appointment. Three months later he was moved to St. Leo's Church, Tacony, where he remained eleven months. This was followed by an appointment as assistant at the Cathedral. After nine months he was again transferred to the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Front and Allen Streets, an appointment which lasted nine years. On April 27, 1902, he was commissioned by President Theodore Roosevelt as a regular chaplain in the United States Army, and assigned to the Fifth United States Cavalry. He proceeded to the Philippine Islands, where the regiment was then stationed, and remained there until the regiment was ordered home a year and three months later. On his return he was stationed at several army posts in the Southwest during the next few years. On August 9, 1907, he resigned his commission and returned to Philadelphia. He was appointed as assistant rector at the Church of St. Columba, October 1, 1907, where he stayed until appointed as Rector at the Church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

# CHURCH

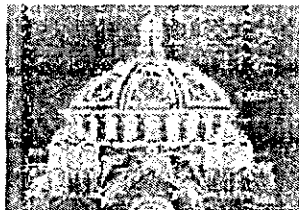
But to give the building fund a good start a new <sup>method</sup> ~~means~~ was introduced. After consulting the opinions of the members of the parish at a meeting called for that purpose, Father Wheeler inaugurated a six weeks' campaign starting on the evening of Sunday, January 9, 1921. Holding a meeting each week, Mr. D. B. O'Loughlin, in charge of the campaign, whose ~~ability needs no commendation here~~ <sup>cheered</sup> the people on to great and still greater sacrifices for the noble purpose. At the end of the six weeks about \$31,000 had been pledged by the parishioners and their friends, and of this sum all but a small amount was promptly paid.

With the coming of the spring of 1922 Father Wheeler judged that the time had come to begin the actual construction of the church. He had been rector of the parish virtually five years. In that time he had not only raised the money to pay off the \$42,000 debt which he found on taking up his duties as rector, but had also collected the sum of \$55,000 over and above the current expenses of the parish for the purpose of building the church.

The date was accordingly set for the beginning of the great work; and on Sunday, April 22, 1922, the first spadeful of earth was dug from the site of the new church by the rector in the presence of the clergy of the parish and a large number of parishioners.

Then there arose, stone by stone, the present beautiful structure, the culmination of the devout hopes of Father Gallagher and Father Dalton and of the earnest labors of Father Wheeler. When the foundations had been laid and the mere beginnings of the walls were rising from the ground, the corner-stone was laid. This ceremony took place on the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary, Sunday, October 1, 1922. The stone was laid by His Eminence, D. Cardinal Dougherty, Archbishop of Philadelphia. The deacon on this occasion was the Right Reverend Monsignor James Nash, rector of the Church of the Epiphany, and the subdeacon was the Right Reverend Monsignor Fenton J. Fitzpatrick, rector of the Church of St. Malachy. The master of ceremonies was the Reverend William J. Lallou, rector of the Church of St. Philip, and the chanters were the Reverend William A. Wachter and the Reverend John P. Thompson. A procession was formed which met the Cardinal at Moyamensing Avenue and Tasker Street and accompanied him to the parish buildings. At the conclusion of the ceremony the sermon was delivered by the Reverend William J. Garrigan, D. D., who spoke on the value of the Faith. In the course of his remarks he took occasion to congratulate the rector and people of the parish on the work they had undertaken. He said in part, "The church, therefore, to rise here in all its hoped-for grandeur and magnificence will stand as a monument to the courage, the zeal and the executive ability of your hard-working pastor, and will proclaim to future generations the extraordinary generosity of the people of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and their deep abiding love for the Holy Faith." His Eminence, the Cardinal, was unfortunately prevented by an untimely shower from voicing his felicitations to pastor and people.

And now the church stands completed, second to none in the city in unity of conception and variety of detail, the two component features of that thing which we call beauty. For a detailed description we refer the reader to another part of this volume. It is not proper, however, to close this account without once more stressing the self-sacrificing labor of Father Wheeler in the erection of the church. It is due to his vigilance that while it is a real work of art, it has nevertheless been erected at a cost so low as to astonish even those who are acquainted with his high order of ability. It was only possible through the finest balancing of the requirements of art against the desire to avoid burdening the parish with an insupportable debt.


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Born: 3/7/1892, Died: 10/28/1957

Charles J. Mitchell, a specialist in the design of Catholic church and institutional projects, was born in Philadelphia, the son of Anna Maria and James William Mitchell. After classes at St. Johns Parochial School and graduation from Roman Catholic High School in 1911, Mitchell entered the office of Druckemiller, Stackhouse & Williams, where he remained until 1915, attending the T-Square Club Atelier in the evenings from 1912 to 1913. His subsequent education in architecture included one year in the evening school offered by Drexel Institute and two years in the special course offered at the University of Pennsylvania, where he graduated in 1919, after having his stint at the University interrupted by service in World War I. In December, 1919, he, Wallace Hance of Wilmington, DE, and Richard Neely established Hance, Mitchell & Neely, an ambiguous organization which does not appear in the Philadelphia city directories. Mitchell & Neely appear in the *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders Guide* at least into 1920, but Mitchell's application for membership in the Philadelphia Chapter, AIA, indicates that Hance, Mitchell & Neely was in operation from 1919 to 1921, a declaration which is not supported by other information available. After this partnership Mitchell operated independently, specializing in ecclesiastical and residential design. In 1937 he moved to Washington, DC, where he was part of the office of the District Supervising Architect for the Public Works Act.

Mitchell also achieved some reputation as the author of 52 architectural articles for the Sunday edition of the *Public Ledger* newspaper.

*Written by Sandra L. Tatman.*

## Clubs and Membership Organizations

- Philadelphia Art Alliance
- Knights of Columbus
- Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
- American Institute of Architects (AIA)
- Philadelphia Chapter, AIA
- T-Square Club

## School Affiliations

- University of Pennsylvania
- Drexel Institute