

FORM A- AREA

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
80 Boylston Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Assessor's Sheets

[Empty box for Assessor's Sheets]

USGS Quad

Hull +  
Lynn

Area Letter

D

Form Numbers in Area

71, 72, 119, 146-148  
82, 83, 131-133, 25  
26, 18, 242-261

800, 900, 901 + 902



Town Winthrop MA

Place(neighborhood or village) Winthrop Center

Name of Area Winthrop Center

Present Use Municipal, commercial,  
ecclesiastical and residential

Construction Dates or Period c.1790-1932

Overall Condition Good

Major Intrusions and Alterations Modern comer-  
cial area south of Pauline, prkng los N of George

Acreage aprox 3 acres

Recorded By Edward W. Gordon

Organization Winthrop CDO+Historic Comm

Date (month/year) May,1994

tion sheet is space is not sufficient here. Indicate north.

[see attached map]

## AREA FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION  see continuation sheet

*Describe architectural, structural and landscape features and evaluate in terms of other areas within the community.*

Winthrop Center contains most of the town's architecturally significant municipal and ecclesiastical buildings dating from the 1870's-early 1930's. This area also contains a relatively extensive concentration of residences whose cottage- scale contributes significantly to the charm and interest of this area. Part of at least one of these dwellings dates to the late 18th c. (257 Winthrop St., MHC #252) while most were built c.1840's-1900. Highly visible landmarks in this area, by virtue of their tall and distinctive towers include St. John's Roman Catholic Church at Winthrop and Lincoln Streets, (1912-1922, MHC# 259), First Methodist Church (1930, MHC # and the Winthrop Center Fire Station's hose drying (?) tower on Pauline Street. Located at the southeastern corner of the proposed historic district is the old section of the Winthrop Cemetary which may date to as early as the 1830's (MHC# ) This well maintained, tree shaded cemetery provides welcome green space within a densely built up portion of the Town Center. A memorable symbiotic visual relationship exists between the old Winthrop Cemetary and St. John's Episcopal Church, a wood shingle clad Victorian Gothic chapel-scale structure located at Bowdoin and Buchanan Streets. The heart of this area is a locally historic cross roads which converge at Metcalf Square, formerly Columbia Square and include Winthrop, Hermon and Pauline Streets. Metcalf Square is bordered on the north by the ample lawn shared by the

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE  see continuation sheet

*Explain historical development of the area. Discuss how this are relates to the historical development of the community.*

The first English settlement in Winthrop dates to the 1630's . Originally, Winthrop or Pullin Poynte as it was called, was an area of scattered farm houses .As early as the 1750's Point Shirley was the first area of relatively dense settlement in Winthrop. Winthrop Center evolved as the focus of the town's municipal, religious, commercial and residential life over a period of about 150 years. This development was characterized by slow growth between the late 18th century and Winthrop's incorporation as an independent town in 1852. Winthrop Street was the first thoroughfare in this area, set out as a cross-town road as early as 1699. The establishment of a school house in 1805 on the site of the present police station at Pauline and Hermon Streets, Metcalf Square suggests that a sufficient number of families lived in this area to identify it as a rural village. (this school house is said to have been recycled as the second floor of #278 Winthrop Street (c.1856, MHC#254). At least one late 18th c. house and possibly more (interior inspection required to ascertain construction dates) survive in and around Metcalf Square. The nucleus of the old Samuel Belcher House at 257 Winthrop Street (MHC#252) exhibits timber markings and foundation treatments that suggest a c.1780's or 90's construction date. Another late 18th c, dwelling known as the Burrill House once stood on the site of the Wadsworth Block. (MHC#249) The William Belcher House at 131 Winthrop Street (MHC#242) which appears to be a c.1840's Late Federal/Greek Revival residence, may have been constructed decades earlier. In any event, this house provides a glimpse of Winthrop Center when it was home to farmers and fishermen. By the time of the town's incorporation as a town independent of North Chelsea (Revere), Winthrop Center could easily have been called Belcher Village with yet another mid 19th century Belcher- owned farm house at 75 Hermon Street (MHC#14). During the early 1830's, a religious revival swept Winthrop resulting in the construction of a Methodist Church at Madison Avenue and Winthrop Street in 1834. This was the first church established in Winthrop, prior to the 1830's, Winthrops' families worshipped in Revere or, in the case of the Bill family during the 18thc. rowed across (continued)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES  see continuation sheet

Winthrop Maps and Atlases-1852,1873,1886,1896,1906 and 1914  
 Chelsea/Winthrop Directories-1882,1884,1886,1887,1890,1893,1895/96,1899,1901,1906,1908  
 Winthrop Directories-1911,1913,1916/17,1924,1931,1936,1942,1947  
 William H. Clark's History of Winthrop (1952)  
 Frost Library photo files  
 Our Streets-Winthrop Constitutional Bicentennial Committee (1987)  
 Interviews with Peg Hinckly, Warren Davis, Rich Ferino and Ralph and Mary Seriani  
 Suffolk County Registry of Deeds.

Recommended as a National Register District. If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement Form.

# INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

<b>Community:</b> Winthrop, MA	<b>Form No:</b> Area D
<b>Property Name:</b> Winthrop Center	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

**Architectural Description continued**-Renaissance Revival Frost Library (1898, MHC# 132) and the Georgian / Renaissance Revival Town Hall (1928, MHC# ), both designed by Willard M. Bacon; (continued) to the east is the Colonial Revival First Methodist Church (1930, MHC# 131) and to the south west is the Romanesque/Georgian Revival Wadsworth Block (1890's, MHC# and the Police Station (built as a U.S. Post Office in 1932, MHC# 133, site of old Town Hall of 1855). In addition to the Wadsworth Block, the other architecturally significant commercial building in this area is the old New England Telephone Co. at 20 Madison Avenue, (c.1912, MHC# 119) The NET building is chastely rendered, constructed of brick and is noteworthy for its fine terra cotta trimmings. Representing the social/charitable aspect of late 19th century Winthrop is the Masonic Hall, which despite alterations is still an architecturally significant building, dating as its gable's ornamental plaque notes to 1892. (198 Winthrop street, MHC# 248). The western edge of the district encompasses the brick Georgian Revival Fire Station of 1898 (MHC# 144, W.M. Bacon architect), brick Jacobethan/Georgian Revival Edward B. Newton School, (1907, MHC# 147) whose lot includes the site of the school's circular gold fish pond, brick Willis School (1920's) and the wooden Victorian Gothic Baptist Church (1871). The Christian Science Church at 165 Winthrop Street blends Classicism in the form of a monumental columned, pedimented portico with Georgian Revival window treatments and details (1920's, MHC# 245).

Winthrop Center's possesses the town's most comprehensive collection of residences reflecting almost the full range of historic structural forms and architectural styles found elsewhere in Winthrop (the exception being the type of substantial Shingle Style house that characterizes so much of the Highlands). The long evolution from sparsely settled rural village to densely settled town center is represented in modestly scaled farm houses dating from as early as c.1790 to the mid 19th century. Here and there, stylish and substantial late 19th century Queen Anne and Colonial Revival residences rub elbows with the aforementioned, earlier, cottage scale dwellings. Possibly the earliest residence in the proposed Winthrop Center Historic District is the Samuel Belcher House at 257 Winthrop MHC# 251). Although it looks like a c.1840's Greek Revival house with tall windows, its basement exhibits timber markings and foundation construction that suggest a construction date of c.1790. Another house that maybe older than its Greek Revival surface treatments suggest is 131 Winthrop. (MHC# 242). Like 257 Winthrop Street, this house's earliest known owner was a Belcher. This connected house (three contiguous components) appears on the Winthrop Map of 1852, but may have been built decades earlier. A portion of 278 Winthrop Street (MHC# 254) dates to 1805. The second floor of this dwelling is reported to be the one room school house which stood on the site of the present Police Station from 1805 until 1856 when it was removed to accommodate the construction of the old Town Hall. Other Winthrop Center dwellings which date to at least the 1850's include 57 Buchanan Street (c.late 1850's, MHC# 26) which may represent the work of Vermont-born Winthrop builder and real estate developer George S. Shaw and 11 George Street MHC# 72) which was moved from an undetermined location during the early 1900's. This house blends Greek Revival form and fenestration with Italianate brackets and almost certainly dates from the first decade of Winthrop's incorporation as an independent town. Dating from c.1860 is the well preserved Italianate 35 Fremont street (MHC# 70). Built for clergyman George S. Day, this house may well represent the work of George S. Shaw, builder of Winthrop's first Town Hall. 291 Winthrop Street (by 1870, MHC# 254) and 329 Winthrop Street (c.1873, MHC# 258) are Italianate cottages that contribute to the unique charm of the Town Center. Situated on a hedge bordered corner lot, 319 Winthrop Street blends Italianate cross-shaped form, bays and bracketed lintels with gingerbread barge board ornamentation that maybe

# INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: WINTHROP, MA	Form No: AREA D
Property Name: Winthrop Center	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

**Architectural Description continued**-The most substantial, full blown example of the Italianate Style in the proposed historic district is 158 Winthrop Street (c.1860's, MHC#~~244~~). Retaining granite fence posts and still-ample yards, this stately cupola topped residence provides a glimpse of Winthrop before intensive late 19th century development. Contributing to the architectural interest of the Metcalf Square area is a towered Italianate / Mansard residence at 233 Winthrop Street, built for Edward S. Freeman, a Lynn-based printer c.1883.(MHC#~~251~~). Mansard roofed buildings are not well represented in Winthrop but a modest Italianate /Mansard wood frame house is still extant at 30 Cora Street. (outside the boundaries of the proposed district, built c.1870's, MHC#~~35~~). The Queen Anne Style is represented by residential examples ranging from the restrained to the exuberant. The former type includes several examples at the northern end of the district which are of interest more for their form and massing rather than ornamentation-these include the c.1885 Charles H. Day House at 350 Winthrop Street (MHC#~~260~~) and 355 Winthrop Street (C.1885, note its intact , belvere topped stable (MHC#~~264~~). 180 Winthrop Street (c.1890, MHC#~~247~~) illustrates the predilection for a variety of shingle shapes on irregular structural forms on the part of builders working in the Queen Anne Style. 100 Fremont Street possesses the irregular form and pleasing surface textures typical of the Queen Anne as well as an unusual lunette attic window with ornamental surround.(c.1893,MHC#~~71~~) 14~~2~~ Winthrop Street (c.late 1880's, MHC#~~243~~)represents a locally rare mix of red brick on the first floor and wood shingles on the upper floors rather than the more typical clapboards/wood shingle Queen Anne fabric. By far the most exuberant expression of this style is the towered Dr. Horatio S. Soule house at 270 Winthrop Street (c.1883, MHC#~~253~~) with its intact ornamental panelling, Queen Anne window sash and variety of shingle treatments.This house has recently been painted in an appropriate manner and is now truly one of the domestic architectural gems of the proposed district. The Colonial Revival Style, although utilized in the design of this area's churches and public buildings is not well represented in the domestic architecture of the Town Center, in part, because this area was almost completely built up by the time this style came into vogue in Winthrop during the 1890's. Stellar examples of this style however, are to be found in the originally identical residence and hospital of Dr. Ben Hicks Metcalf at 170 and 174 Winthrop Street, respectively (1895-97, MHC#~~246~~). By 1900, Winthrop Center was essentially completely built-up with the exception of public buildings like the Town Hall, First Methodist Church, Christian Science Church and Post Office (Police Station) which replaced existing "out moded" structures.

# INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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<b>Community:</b> Winthrop, MA	<b>Form No:</b> AREA D
<b>Property Name:</b> Winthrop Center	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

**Historical Narrative continued**-Boston Harbor to Old North Church in Boston's North End. The third First Methodist Church was built in 1930 at Metcalf Square (MHC#250). The old portion of Winthrop Cemetary seems to have been established c. 1830's-possibly at the same time as the organization of the Methodist Church on land formerly owned by Bills and Belchers. By 1856, Winthrop began to assume an architectural identity recognizable as a town center with the construction of a Greek Revival/Italianate Town Hall (demolished in 1929) by Vermont-born carpenter George S. Shaw. He was a major land owner in this area and evidently built a number of mid 19th c. Winthrop Center dwellings including 57 Buchanan Street (MHC #26) and 35 Fremont Street (c. 1860, MHC#70). Overtime, transportation ~~Transportation~~ developments triggered residential development at the town center. While there is little evidence that the first bridge links with East Boston's Orient Heights in 1834 triggered house construction at the Town Center, it is more likely that the coming of the first stage coach line between Winthrop and Maverick Square in East Boston in 1848 did have an impact on house construction activity at Winthrop Center. Example of possible transportation improvements-related mid 19th century development at Winthrop Center are George S. Shaw's residential development bordering the segment of Buchanan Street west of Winthrop Street (including Fremont Street) of the mid-late 1850's and Hermon S. Tewksbury's development that included Hermon, Cora, Lincoln, Centre and Atlantic Streets as well as parts of Winthrop and Main Streets of the early 1870's. The Charles H. Day House at 350 Winthrop Street (c. 1885, MHC#260), for example was built on land purchased from Hermon Tewksbury c. 1885. Tewksbury's residential development existed on paper by 1872 and may have been initiated by the introduction of the town's first horse railroad in 1871 (ceased operations in 1877). Hermon Tewksbury was a major shareholder in this railroad. It was the coming of the Boston, Winthrop and Point Shirley Railroad or "peanut" train in 1877 really marks the beginning of widespread house construction activities at Winthrop Center and elsewhere in the town. The completion of the Narrow Gauge Railroad's loop around the town in 1888 resulted in a stable, mostly dependable mode of public transportation for the next 52 years. #355 Winthrop Street's (c. 1885, MHC#261) represents a residence that may have been built in response to transportation improvements. Its lot was carved from the extensive real estate holdings of Boston leather merchant William Rice who is perhaps more often associated with residential development in Winthrop Highlands and Cottage Hill.

During the last three decades of the 19th century, Winthrop Center's role as a focus for the spiritual life of the town was augmented by the construction of Baptist, Episcopal and Catholic church's. In 1867, a group of parishoners from the First Methodist Church withdrew to form a Baptist Society. By 1871, construction was underway on the First Baptist Church which is still extant at 60 Hermon Street, although adapted for reuse as a community theatre. (see MHC # 83). During the mid 1880's, James Nelson, Annie Wentworth and others initiated the first Episcopal church services in Winthrop. The present St. John's Episcopal Church was completed in 1887 at Bowdoin and Buchanan Streets (MHC#18). The growth of the late 19th/early 20th century Roman Catholic community is symbolized by St. John the Evangelist Church at Lincoln and Winthrop Streets (MHC#259). Catholic workers associated with the Revere Copper Company worshipped at Point Shirley between 1853 and 1866. Between 1866 and 1887, the few Catholics who lived in Winthrop had to commute to East Boston to worship. As early as 1881, the present church's lot was purchased with the intention of erecting a Catholic Church.

# INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

<b>Community:</b> Winthrop, MA	<b>Form No:</b> AREA D
<b>Property Name:</b> Winthrop Center	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

**Historical Narrative continued**-Construction of St. John the Evangelist Church began in 1911 but was not completed until as late as 1923. The Christian Scientists began conducting services at Winthrop Center in January 1916 in the Wadsworth Building's Wadsworth Hall. (MHC#249). The Christian Science Church building at 165 Winthrop Street (MHC #245) was a decade in the making, with its lot purchased in 1920 and dedication ceremonied conducted on November 30, 1930.

During the 1890's, Winthrop Center became the Town's medical center. Historically, Winthrop Center was evidently the home of most of the local doctors. Beginning c.1884, Dr. Horatio S. Soule lived and practiced at 270 Winthrop Street (MHC#253). In 1897, Dr. Benjamin Hicks Metcalf began his quarter century of service to the medical needs of the town. The twin Colonial Revival buildings at 170 and 174 Winthrop Street served as his residence and hospital, respectively (MHC #246). Tragically his son and heir to his medical practice was killed in France during World War I and the doctor, himself, sustained serious injuries from war-related gas inhalation which forced him to leave Winthrop in 1921. The historic Hermon/Winthrop/Pauline Streets crossroads long known as Columbia Square was renamed Metcalf Square in honor of the doctor's son Richard F. Metcalf c.1920.(?).

Between the 1880's and early 1930's, Winthrop Center gradually acquired a more architecturally sophisticated appearance as the rural village of farmers, fisherman, lobstermen and sail makers became the more urbane town center of tradesman, artisans and white collar professionals commuting to Boston, East Boston, Lynn, Chelsea and Revere. Early evidence of this concern for more urbane appearances may be found in Marcena Belcher's gift of a drinking fountain in the form of a bronze female figure with a drinking cup and pitcher. This fountain was placed on or near the grassy triangle at Metcalf Square containing the present Spanish American War Memorial. Unfortunately, the fountain, which gave an "artistic appearance" to the town center, disappeared c.1920's and at the present time efforts are underway to determine if this fountain was buried in Metcalf Square. Still extant to attest to the Town Center's increasing late 19th/early 20th century architectural sophistication are public buildings. Unfortunately, Belcher's fountain disappeared c.1920's and at the present time efforts are underway to determine if this fountain was buried in Metcalf Square. Still extant to attest to the Town Center's increasing late 19th/early 20th century architectural sophistication are public buildings such as the Italian Renaissance Revival Frost Public Library of 1898, possibly the master work of local architect Willard M. Bacon's career. (MHC#132); the Winthrop Center Fire Station, at 40 Pauline Street (MHC#146) also designed in 1898 by Mr. Bacon is a symbol of Winthrop's maturation as a town in need of more sophisticated municipal services. Still extant at the Town Center are the Edward B. Newton School (1908, MHC#147) and the N. Elliot Willis Junior High School (1925) attest to the continued growth of the town during the first quarter of the 20th century. By the 1920's, the old mid 19th century Town Hall was woefully inadequate for conducting the business of the town. In 1928 the present Town Hall (MHC #137) at One Metcalf Square was completed from designs provided by Willard M. Bacon, just before his 1929 retirement. The construction of the Winthrop Post Office at 3 Metcalf Square (now the Winthrop Center Police Station, see MHC #133) gave residents construction jobs during the height of the Depression in 1931-32. Since the 1930's, this area's appearance has changed but little, with the exception of the introduction of three parking lots in the northern section of the proposed district and the drastic commercial expansion and parking lot construction which has occurred along Pauline Street.

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
80 Boylston Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Community

Property Address

Winthrop, MA

Winthrop Center Area

Area(s) Form No

D	25,26,71,82	83
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131, 133, 146, 147

242 - 261, 800, 900, 901

- 902

### National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form



Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible       Eligible only in a historic district  
 Contributing to a potential historic district       Potential historic district

Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations:     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Statement of Significance by Edward W. Gordon

*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

**Winthrop Center** This is the largest of the proposed historic districts. The nucleus of this area is a locally historic cross roads at Metcalf Square and includes the well designed municipal, commercial and ecclesiastical buildings ranged around the square (Wadsworth Block, 1890's, Frost Library, 1898, Town Hall, 1928, First Methodist Church, 1930, Police station, 1932.) Further west along Pauline Street, this district includes the Winthrop Center Fire Station and The Edward B. Newton School. Not all the architecturally significant public buildings are located on or near Metcalf Square. Also noteworthy is the Edward T.P. Graham-designed St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church (1912-22) at Lincoln and Winthrop Streets in the northern most part of the proposed district. This district, however, is largely residential. Many of its houses rank among the oldest in Winthrop dating from its mid 19th century beginnings as an independent town. There is some structural evidence at 257 Winthrop Street to suggest part of this dwelling dates to the 1780's or 90's. Architecturally, a variety of historic architectural styles is represented including Greek revival, Italianate, Mansard, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival. It is the cottage scale of many of these house's and their neat, well maintained lots that lends a distinctive country village like appearance to Winthrop Center which is well worth preserving. This town has significant historical associations with the town's early-mid 19th century farmers and fisherman and later the summer residents and commuters who came to Winthrop in ever increasing numbers during the last quarter of the 19th century and later. Also included in this district is the Masonic Hall of 1892 and the former Ben Hicks Metcalf Hospital and residence of 1897. This district stretches from Buchanan Street to Centre Street along Winthrop Street and also takes in Fremont Street, the former Winthrop Theatre on Putnam, the old cemetery and the north side of Madison Ave east to 106 Bowdoin, part of Pauline Street, Hermon Street to Belcher, Belcher to Winthrop and either side of Winthrop Street to Centre Street. This area appears to satisfy criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places on a local level.



Winthrop Center  
 TOWN OF WINTHROP  
 SUFFOLK COUNTY, MAINE  
 PREPARED BY  
 JAMES W. SEWELL COMPANY, OLD TOWN, MAINE  
 SCALE 1" = 40 FEET

Winthrop Cemetery  
 (old section)



Community: Winthrop

**MHC OPINION: ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER**

Date Received: 6/15/00

Date Due: 7/15/00

Date Reviewed: 7/5/00

Type:    Individual    District (Attach map indicating boundaries)

Name: Winthrop Center Inventory Form: MHC #WTH.D

Address:

Requested by: Taya Dixon

Action:    Honor    ITC    Grant     R & C    Other:

Agency: Staff in charge of Review: Stacey Wetstein

**INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES**

- Eligible
- Eligible, also in district
- Eligible    only in district
- Ineligible
- More information needed

**DISTRICTS**

- Eligible
- Ineligible
- More information needed

CRITERIA:    X A    B    X C    D

LEVEL:    X Local    State    National

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The period of significance for Winthrop Center is between 1790-1932. The nucleus of the area is at Metcalf Square and includes municipal, commercial and ecclesiastical buildings including the Wadsworth Block (1890s), Frost Library (1898), Town Hall (1928), First Methodist Church (1930) and Police Station (1932). The area also contains a relatively extensive concentration of residences. The area would be eligible for listing under categories A and C at the local level. Boundaries need to be determined.