

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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## 1. Name of Property

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historic name: Emmanuel Church

other name/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 2. Location

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street & number: 42 Dearborn Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Newport

vicinity: N/A

state: RI

county: Newport

code: 005

zip code: 02840

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## 3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Property name Emmanuel Church, Newport County, Newport, Rhode Island

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

See continuation sheet.

Frederick C. Williams  
Signature of certifying official

4/9/96  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

_____ entered in the National Register	_____	_____
_____ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined eligible for the	_____	_____
_____ National Register	_____	_____
_____ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined not eligible for the	_____	_____
_____ National Register	_____	_____
_____ removed from the National Register	_____	_____
_____ other (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic:	<u>RELIGION</u>	Sub:	<u>Religious Facility</u>
Current:	<u>RELIGION</u>	Sub:	<u>Religious Facility</u>

Property name Emmanuel Church, Newport County, Newport, Rhode Island

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification:

Late Gothic Revival

Other Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: foundation	<u>Granite</u>	roof	<u>Slate</u>
walls	<u>STUCCO, Granite</u>	other	_____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

X See continuation sheet.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE  
ART  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: 1900-02 1912-13 1921

Significant Dates: 1900-02 1912-13 1921

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder: Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X See continuation sheet.

Property name Emmanuel Church, Newport County, Newport, Rhode Island

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: Emmanuel Church, Boston Public Library

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of Property: Less than one acre

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
	A	<u>19</u>	<u>306870</u>	<u>4594390</u>	B	_____
	C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:  See continuation sheet.  
 Tax Assessor's Plat 32, Lots 182 and 183.

Boundary Justification:  See continuation sheet.  
 The property nominated includes all of Newport Tax Assessor's Plat 32, Lots 182 and 183. The property nominated is that historically associated with the resource.

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/Title: Wm McKenzie Woodward, Architectural Historian  
 Organization: RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission Date: August, 1995  
 Street & Number: 150 Benefit Street Telephone: 401-277-2678  
 City or Town: Providence State: RI ZIP: 02903

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### Description

A monumental, high-shouldered granite church with thrusting corner tower and attached stucco-and-half-timber parish house comprise Emmanuel Church. The complex stands at the corner of Dearborn and Spring Streets, an emphatic landmark that dominates Newport's Fifth Ward, a small-scale, wood-frame, largely working-class neighborhood at the southern end of Thames Street, between the monumental summer houses of Bellevue Avenue to the east and of Ocean Drive to the south and west.

The church is oriented on an east-west axis, parallel to Dearborn Street, and its exterior massing somewhat disguises its interior spatial organization. The high-ceiling, flat-roof nave with tall clerestory windows is flanked by low-shed-roof (north side) and flat-roof (south side) aisles. The south aisle breaks from the mass to extend even further south for its easternmost three bays to embrace the corner tower; within this extension is the chapel. The four-stage battlemented tower stands at the building's southeast corner. The surge of massing at the building's southeast corner reinforces its visual prominence at the street corner.

Exterior surface handling is superb: broad surfaces and simple, strong structural elements are reinforced by the delicate, finely wrought, carefully controlled detail. In specific reference to Emmanuel, Ann Miner Daniel notes

As was Cram's characteristic tendency, ornamentation, when used at all, was carefully directed.... Rigorously controlled ornamentation that was used to strengthen the mass of the building was a characteristic of the strongest early designs.<sup>1</sup>

Battered buttresses frame each of the fenestration bays, and clasping buttresses frame the tower corner. Banked lancet-arch stained glass panels set within Tudor-arch and openings regularly punctuate the exterior walls. Large, complex stained-glass windows are located at the east end of the sanctuary, the west end of the nave, and the west end of the chapel. Facing south at the west end of the south wall and in the south wall west of the end of the nave paneled wood doors are set within lancet-arch cusped frames. Sculpture surmounts both entrances: the narthex, to the east,

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<sup>1</sup>Ann Miner Daniel, "The Early Architecture of Ralph Adams Cram, 1889-1902 (PhD. Thesis, University of North Carolina, 1978), p. 234.

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with a single figure set within a niche and under a crocketed baldachin; the secondary entrance, to the west, with a high-relief figural group set within the tympanum. Elaborate copper sconces flank each of the entrances. A smaller wood-panel door barely breaks the water table below the stained-glass window on the chapel's south end. Crocketed finials cap the buttresses above the narthex and the chapel. Exterior materials include seam-face, random-course-ashlar Weymouth granite in a variety of warm ochre tones for the walls and limestone trim for the windows, doors, and belfry louvers.

The church's interior space is tightly controlled. The small, low-ceiling, square-plan narthex opens into the nave just west of the south transept. The nave is narrow and high. Exceptionally narrow, almost vestigial side aisles, separated from the nave by a stark lancet arcade, reinforce the space's emphatic verticality, itself strongly terminated by the flat nave ceiling. Low ceiling transepts extend north and south of the nave and side aisles. A broad lancet arch, which springs from the north and south walls well above the springline of the lancet arcade, defines—however minimally—the chancel and sanctuary space at the church's east end. The chancel, three steps above the level of the nave, is framed by lectern on the south and pulpit on the north. Choir stalls facing the center aisle and the organ, to the north, occupy the chancel. Behind the altar rail and raised one step above the chancel floor is the sanctuary, with limestone high altar raised three steps above the sanctuary floor, credence table immediately south of the altar, and sedilia on the north and south walls; a large reredos is above the high altar. Above the paneling on the north, east, and south walls of the chancel and sanctuary are extensive wall paintings. Immediately south of the south transept, chancel, and sanctuary is the chapel, at the same level as the nave. At the east end of the chapel is a small sanctuary behind an altar rail and one step above the floor of the chapel; above the free-standing carved wooden altar is a dossal below a stained-glass window. Immediately north of the chancel and sanctuary are two sacristies: the southern, off the chapel, dedicated to preparation and maintenance of liturgical accessories, silver, linen, floral decoration; the northern, off the north transept, dedicated to clergy vesting. A passageway behind the high-altar reredos connects the two sacristies.

The "...problem that the architects faced in designing Emmanuel...was the restrictive size of the lot on which the church was to be built."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Daniel, op. cit., p. 228.

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The shortness of the nave...was a problem that caused a different arrangement of proportions for nave, aisle and arcade than Cram had used before. Emmanuel has, like [All Saints (see below) in] Ashmont, shallow aisles lighted by small windows. However Emmanuel has a higher arcade and smaller clerestory and smaller clerestory windows than Ashmont. .... The height and frequency of the arches of the nave as well as the roof design emphasize the height of the nave so that its lack of length is not apparent. The roof design, taken from the increasingly obtuse roofs of the Perpendicular period has the horizontal tie-beam resting against the panel work [*i.e.*, the ceiling is flat.] and supported by wall posts. This gives the effect of greater height as opposed to the roof at Ashmont where the tie-beam extends into the space of the nave.<sup>3</sup>

Interior finishes are integrally linked to the church's design. Walls are plaster with limestone for window sills and frames, door frames, and arches. Floors in the nave are tongue-and-groove oak; those in the chancel and sanctuary are glazed tile, the latter ornamented with ecclesiastical symbols and phrases. The ceiling is beaded tongue-and-groove oak.

The interior decorative work is remarkable:

...Emmanuel's chancel, with its woodwork by Irving and Casson, stained glass by Harry Goodhue, and superb wall paintings by Robert Wade (the only chancel where Cram and Goodhue...finally talked a client into going, as it were, the whole way), is very richly and imaginatively detailed in Goodhue's best manner.<sup>4</sup>

The chancel [of Emmanuel] with the rich colors of the wall painting, the reredos with its central panel of blues and golds, and the stained glass of the east window by Harry Goodhue is a light, extremely decorative focal point for the austere simplicity of the nave.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Daniel, op. cit., p. 235.

<sup>4</sup>Douglass Shand-Tucci, Boston Bohemia, 1881-1900; Ralph Adams Cram: Life and Architecture (University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), p. 289.

<sup>5</sup>Daniel, op. cit., p. 236.

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Irving and Casson lavished oak linenfold paneling around the lower walls of the chancel and sanctuary. The reredos (planned as part of the original decorative scheme but not completed until 1921) depicts the victorious Agnus Dei surrounded by the evangelists and other saints. Above the reredos, Goodhue's stained-glass window shows scenes from the life and ascension of Christ. High on the walls, Wade's oil-on-canvas panels illustrating the "Benedicite, Omnia Opera Domini" including a portrait of the church's patron, Natalie Bayard Brown (Mrs John Nicholas), presenting a model of the church.<sup>6</sup> To the south of the chancel steps is the brass-and-bronze lectern, designed and made by Rhode Island's Gorham Manufacturing Company and exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. In addition to the Goodhue altar window, the church has a number of windows by Joseph G. Reynolds & Associates (Boston), one by Henry Wynd Young, one by Wright Goodhue (son of Harry), and one possibly by Maitland D. Armstrong.

To the west of the church is the parish house (1912-13), also designed by Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson and connected to the nave by a north-south passage with a secondary entrance at its southern end. The parish house is a two-and-a-half-story, stucco-and-half-timber structure with a complex cross-gable roof. Its significant spaces include a large paneled room, the Library, immediately west of the connecting passage; the Auditorium, immediately west of the Library; and the Guild Room and parish offices, immediately south of the Library.

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<sup>6</sup>The inclusion of portraits of contemporary individuals in the firm's decorative architectural work is quite common and occurs abundantly at the West Point Chapel and a later Brown-family commission, St George's School Chapel.



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### Significance

Designed by Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson and fitted with paneling, paintings, and stained-glass windows by the country's leading artisans, Emmanuel Church presents an architectural and decorative-arts ensemble that exemplifies the best of turn-of-the-century Gothic Revival. "Emmanuel...is an excellent example of Cram's spare aesthetic...,"<sup>7</sup> "...simply but strongly conceived, notable chiefly for its massive form and severely disciplined ornament. [The combination of architecture and decorative arts]...make Emmanuel one of the most comprehensive ornamental statements by the firm."<sup>8</sup>

Emmanuel Church was the gift of Natalie Bayard Brown (1869-1950) in memory of her late husband, John Nicholas Brown (1861-1900). The Providence-based Browns spent their summers in Newport. This building was the first of three important commissions for Cram's firm by the Browns.<sup>9</sup> Upon the completion of Emmanuel, Mrs Brown engaged the firm to design a French chateausque summer house on Halidon Avenue, "Harbour Court" (1904-06). Her son, John Nicholas Brown (1900-1979), in his first of a number of distinguished architectural commissions, hired Cram & Ferguson (Goodhue had left the firm in 1913) to design the Chapel (1921-28) at his preparatory alma mater, St George's School in nearby Middletown.

Mrs Brown's choice of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson is significant.<sup>10</sup> Architect and ecclesiologist Ralph Adams Cram (1863-1942) began independent

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<sup>7</sup>Shand-Tucci, op. cit., p. 289.

<sup>8</sup>Douglass Shand-Tucci, "Emmanuel Church," Buildings On Paper: Rhode Island Architectural Drawings, 1825-1945, (Providence, 1982), pp. 54-55.

<sup>9</sup>Cram also enjoyed successive commissions from other rich East Coast families, notably the Peabodys of Boston and the Mellons of Pittsburgh.

<sup>10</sup>Cram notes on pp. 243-244 in his autobiography—albeit in "his usual maddeningly vague way," as Shand-Tucci (Boston Bohemia, p. 288) puts it—that the commission for Emmanuel derived from ecclesiastical work he had done for the late Mr Brown before his marriage in 1897, but no documentation for such commissions has yet surfaced.

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practice in Boston with Charles Wentworth (1860-1897) in 1889. The firm's first major ecclesiastical commission, All Saints, Ashmont (1892-94, NR), Dorchester, Massachusetts, is a key monument in the revival of sixteenth-century English Perpendicular Gothic for use in an Anglican parish church. By the time of the Emmanuel commission, Wentworth had died, and Cram had segued into partnership with Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue (1869-1925) and Frank W. Ferguson (1861-1926), who both joined Cram & Wentworth in 1891. As with other commissions during the early years, Cram took chief responsibility for the exterior, especially massing, while Goodhue attended to detail and interior. The partnership, which lasted until Goodhue's striking out on his own in 1913, was prolific and successful, both aesthetically and practically. Ann Miner Daniel notes in her doctoral thesis, however, that the firm's organization and scope of work changed dramatically after the Emmanuel commission.<sup>11</sup> Immediately after the completion of Emmanuel, the firm achieved national attention by winning the design competition for extensive new construction—including the Chapel—at the United States Military Academy (1903 et seq., NHL) at West Point, New York. That commission required the opening of a New York office, staffed by Goodhue, while Cram headed the original Boston office. The Emmanuel commission, then, represents the last small parish church that Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson designed as a collaborative team working out of the same office. Between 1903 and 1913 Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson designed a number of churches, with commissions originating from both offices—notably New York's St Thomas's (1908-14, NR)—but Cram and Goodhue individually were chief designers in each office.<sup>12</sup> Cram remains "...best known as the most eminent American church designer ranging from the small parish churches to major work on the immense Cathedral of St John the Divine [1911-42]."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Miller, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>12</sup>The relationship between Cram and Goodhue, especially following the former's marriage in 1900 and the latter's in 1902, probably played a significant role in the partners' decision to maintain separate offices even after the West Point commission, a decision that eventually precipitated Goodhue's disassociation from Cram.

<sup>13</sup>Douglass Shand-Tucci, "Ralph Adams Cram," Buildings On Paper: Rhode Island Architectural Drawings, 1825-1945, (Providence, 1982), p. 212.

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Emmanuel Church has its origins in "cottage meetings" during the late 1840s led by members of Trinity Church, farther north on Spring Street. Foremost among their concerns were the price of pews at Trinity and the inability of some to afford worship there. Emmanuel was thus founded as a "free" church. After 1849, members of the mission church worshiped in the former Free Will Baptist Church at the corner of Thames and South Baptist Streets. In 1852, the Diocese of Rhode Island granted full parish status to Emmanuel Free Church, as it was aptly named. At the end of 1852, Edward King, who lived nearby at the corner of Spring and Bowery Streets, purchased the lot on which the church was built, and a wooden structure designed by Richard Upjohn<sup>14</sup> was completed for the newly established parish in 1856.

This edifice replaces the 1856 structure. John Nicholas Brown was a member of the parish at the time of his death on 1 May 1900, and his young widow chose to donate a modern stone structure as his memorial. Correspondence between Cram and Brown make it clear that she made the decisions as well as paid the bills for the new building.<sup>15</sup> The Upjohn structure was removed from the site in April 1901, the cornerstone was laid on 29 June 1901, and the church was consecrated on 3 June 1902. The south wall was originally wood frame, it was replaced with the present masonry wall when the parish house was constructed in 1912-13.

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<sup>14</sup>Upjohn had only recently completed King's house, which still stands.

<sup>15</sup>Daniel, op. cit., p. 226.

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### Major Bibliographical References

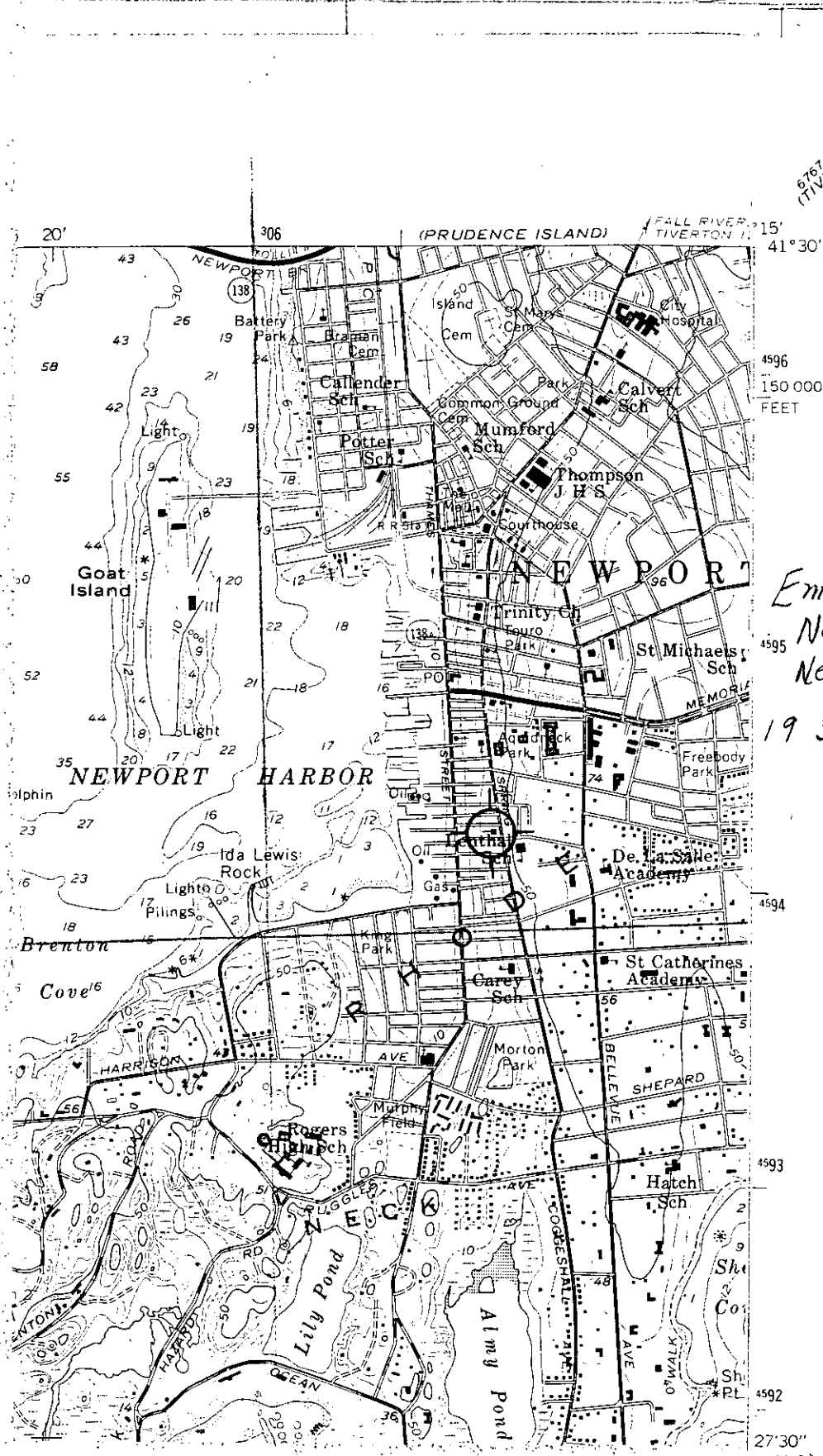
Both primary and secondary bibliographical references for Ralph Adams Cram and Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson are immense. Cram was a prolific author as well as architect, and the combination of his extensive literary efforts as well as the critical response to both his architectural and literary work precipitate a long list even of major bibliographical references. The following list deals only with selected sources that relate specifically to Emmanuel Church.

Cram, Ralph Adams. My Life in Architecture. Boston, 1936.

Daniel, Ann Miner. "The Early Architecture of Ralph Adams Cram, 1889-1902." Doctoral thesis, University of North Carolina, 1978.

Jordy, William H. and Monkhouse, Christopher P. Buildings On Paper: Rhode Island Architectural Drawings, 1825-1945. Providence, 1982.

Shand-Tucci, Douglass. Boston Bohemia, 1881-1900; Ralph Adams Cram: Life and Architecture. Amherst, 1995.



5767 N SW  
(TIVERTON)

Emmanuel Church  
Newport County  
Newport, R.I.  
19 306 870 4594 390

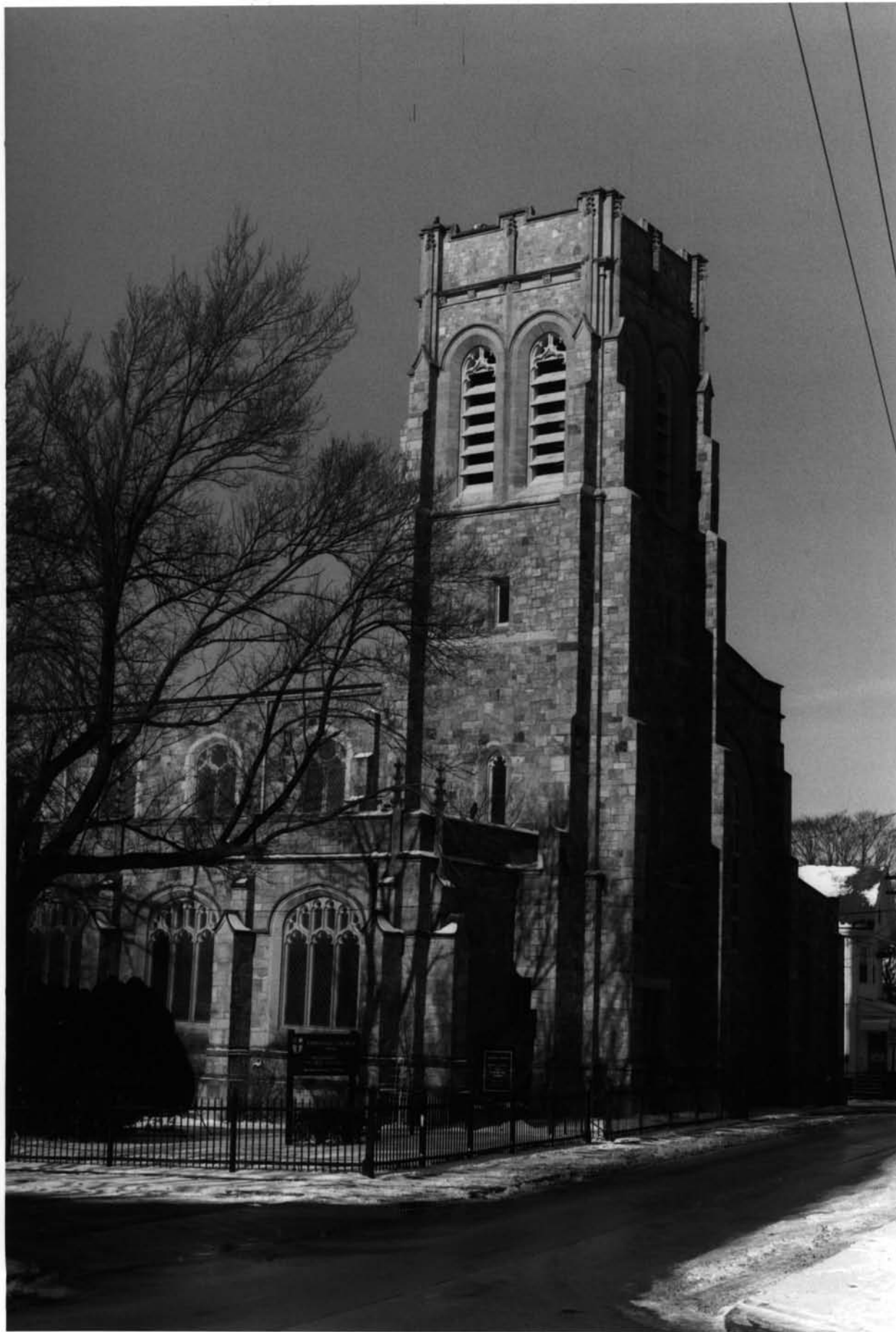
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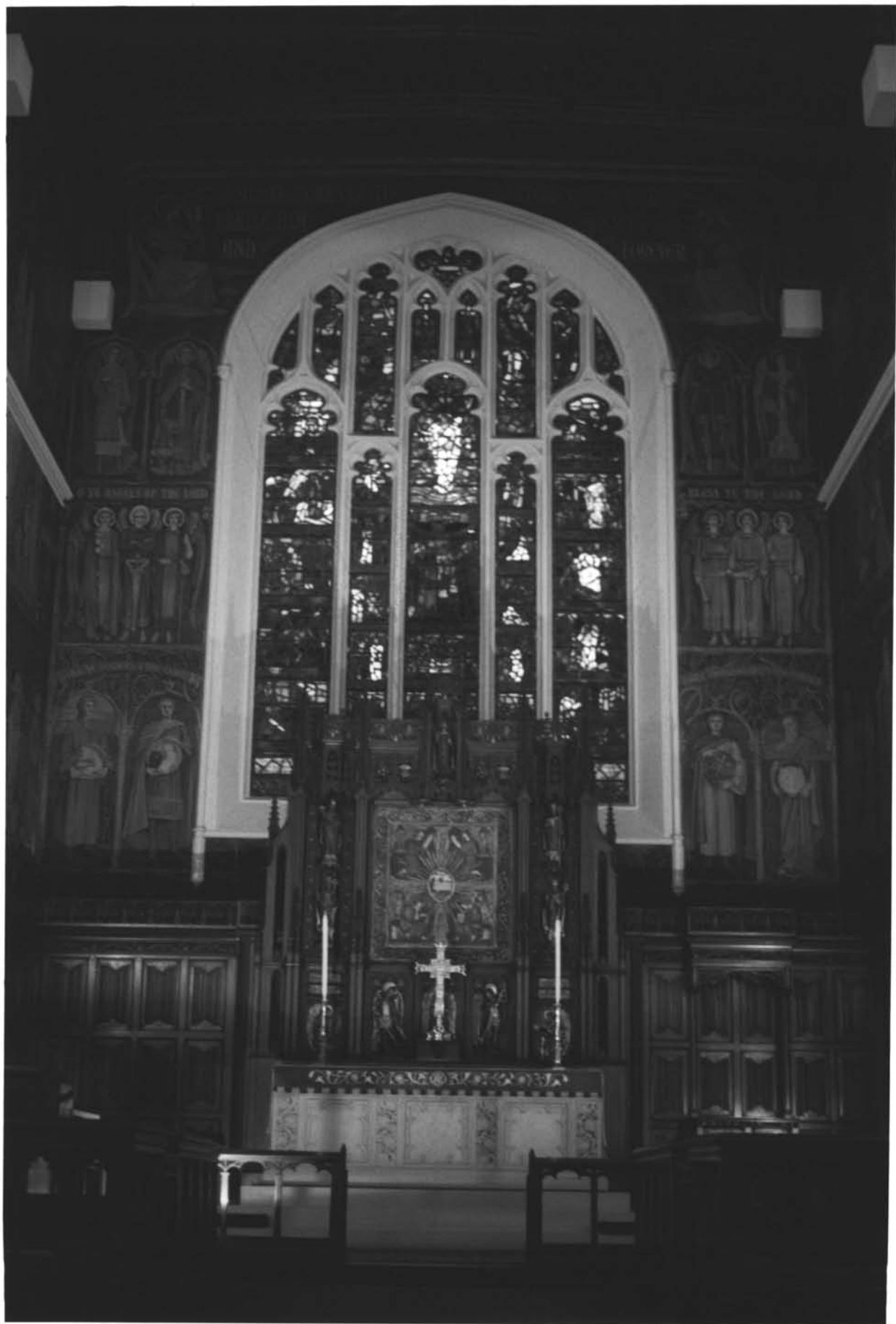
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Emmanuel Church  
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O YE SPIRITS AND SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS BLESS YE THE LORD



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