

Report of the Boston Landmarks Commission

on the Potential Designation of the

JAMES MICHAEL CURLEY HOUSE

as a Landmark

under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended.

Approved By Judith B. McDonough June 7, 1988
Executive Director Date

Approved By Alan Saly June 7, 1988
Chairman Date

This project has been funded with the assistance of a matching Grant-in-aid from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, through the Massachusetts Historical Commission, Secretary of State Michael Joseph Connolly, Chairman, under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

<u>CONTENTS:</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1.0 LOCATION OF PROPERTY	1
2.0 DESCRIPTION	5
3.0 SIGNIFICANCE	25
4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS	33
5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT	35
6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES	39
7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS	41
8.0 GENERAL STANDARDS & CRITERIA	43
9.0 SPECIFIC STANDARDS & CRITERIA	51
10.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY	53

1.0 LOCATION OF THE PROPERTY

1.1 Address:

350 The Jamaicaway, Jamaica Plain, Ward 19. The assessor's parcel number is 2060.

1.2 Area in Which Property is Located:

The Curley House is located in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston, at the southeast corner of the Jamaicaway and Moraine Street. The house overlooks Olmsted Park to the west and Jamaica Pond to the southwest. The pond is a principal segment of Frederick Law Olmsted's Emerald Necklace, and is the largest body of fresh water within the city's boundaries.

The character of the Pondsides neighborhood is predominantly residential. The housing stock is approximately 1/3 single family structures and 2/3 two and three family structures. The majority of houses along the Jamaicaway are large single family structures: some have been converted to institutional uses.

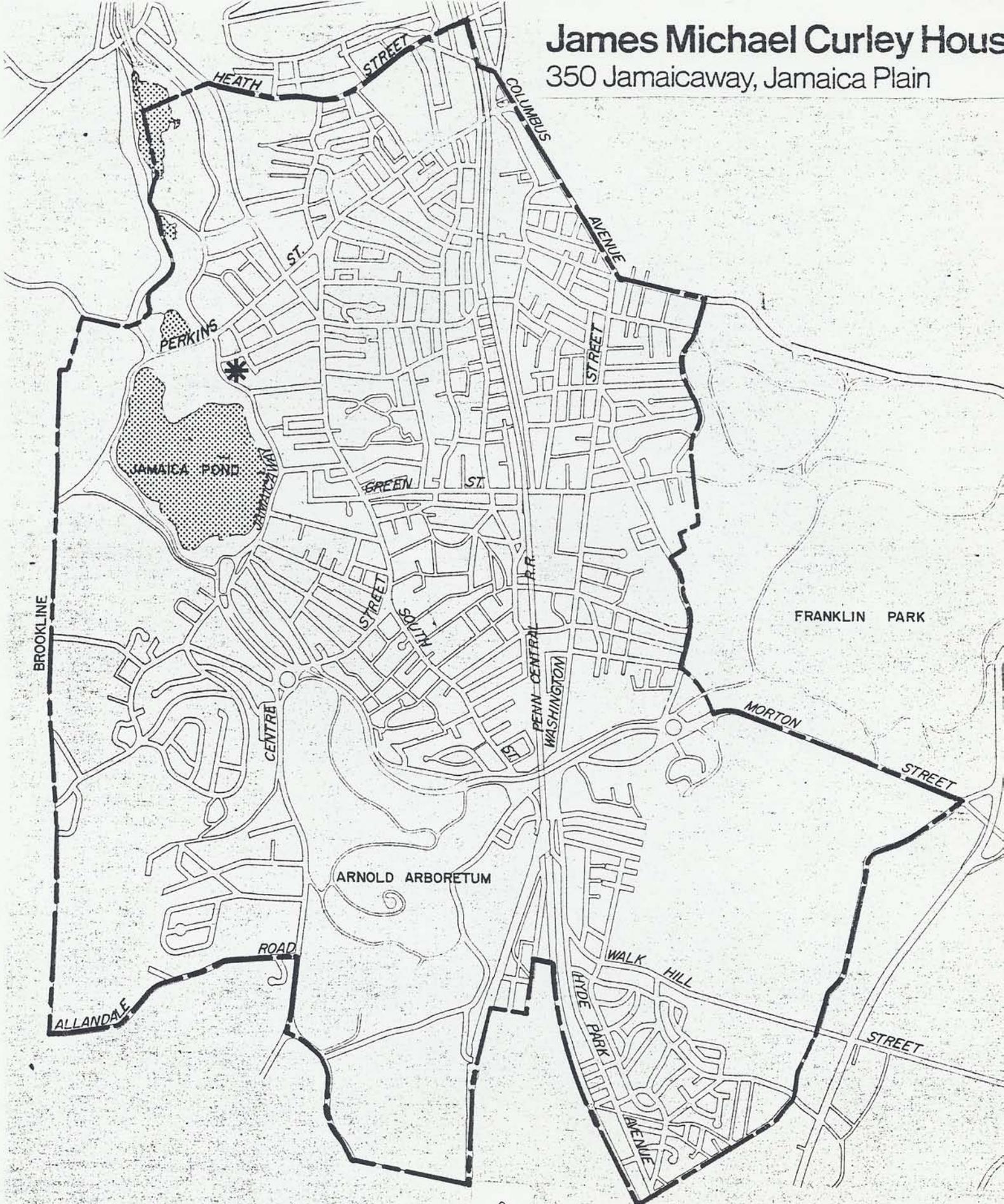
The residential neighborhood to the east and northeast is chiefly characterized by early 20th century two families and some triple deckers. A few early 19th century houses remain on Perkins Street. Across the Jamaicaway is Pinebank, a 19th century estate which is now vacant.

1.3 Map Showing Location:

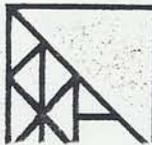
Attached.

James Michael Curley House

350 Jamaicaway, Jamaica Plain



2

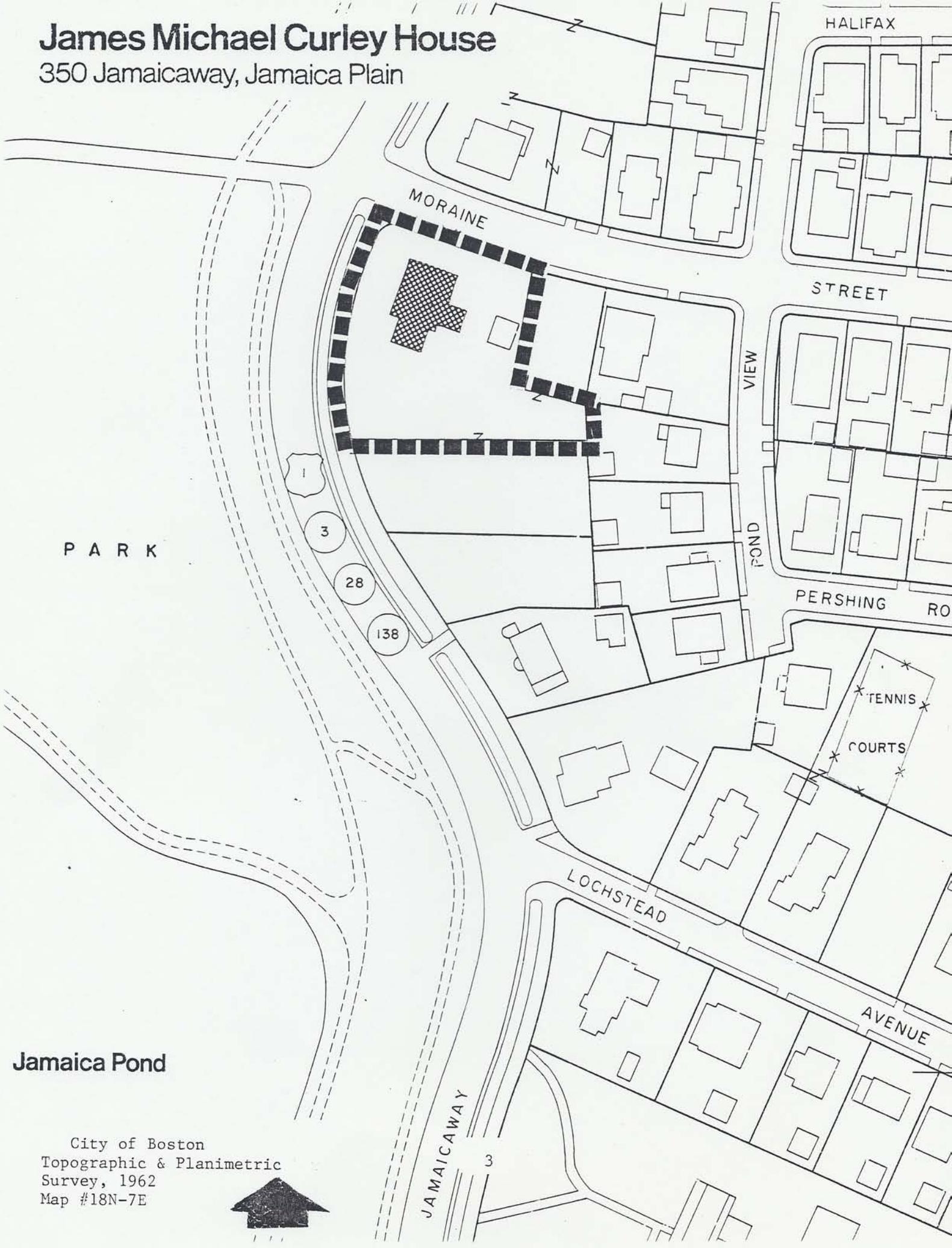


JAMAICA PLAIN



James Michael Curley House

350 Jamaicaway, Jamaica Plain



Jamaica Pond

City of Boston
Topographic & Planimetric
Survey, 1962
Map #18N-7E



2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

2.1 Type and Use:

350 The Jamaica way was built in 1915 for James Michael Curley, as his primary residence. In 1956, the house was sold to the Society of Oblate Fathers for Missions Among the Poor, to be used as a novitiate. In 1988, the structure was sold to the City of Boston. Plans for the building's use are being formulated.

2.2 Current Appearance:

The James Michael Curley House, constructed in 1915, is an excellent example of a brick, high style, Georgian Revival suburban residence. The symmetrical facade, center entrance with pedimented portico and double hung, multipaned windows are identifying features of this style.

The building stands on the northwest corner of the lot, set back 35' from the Jamaica way and 20' from Moraine Street. The prominent lot is defined by a well trimmed hedge. Two deciduous trees stand in front of the house, and shrubs surround the perimeter. The site is relatively flat. There is a substantial, grassy vacant lot next door, with two large trees.

The Curley House is comprised of 2 full stories plus an attic story. The main section of the house is 5 bays wide and rectangular in plan: 72'9" in the front and rear, and 58' 10" deep. The main section has parapet end walls with a chimney at the north end. A chimney also extends from the end wall of the south wing. There are two substantial wings: one extending from the south side and an ell from the rear (east). The south wing is a full story with an additional story beneath the steeply pitched gambrel roof; the rear ell is two stories high.

A gable roof covers the main section of the house: it is articulated by three dormers. The roof was originally covered with slate shingles. In 1974, the slate was removed and asphalt shingles were applied, although the original slate remains on the sides of the dormer windows. The flashing is copper, and the downspouts painted white. The rear ell also has a gable roof. The south wing has a steeply pitched gambrel roof.

The house is constructed of red brick laid in flemish bond, with a quoin effect of brick accentuating the corners. The foundation is concrete. A brick walkway and stair lead to the front entrance.

The main elevation of the house has many decorative elements. The main entryway, projecting from the west elevation, features paired Ionic columns echoed by Ionic pilasters. The door has classical surrounds including an elaborate fanlight and sidelights. The first story windows on the main elevation are large nine over nine sash with marble cornice heads, sills and decorative pilasters. The first and second stories are divided by a stone string course. The windows on the second story and on the rear are 6 over 6 sash with stone sills and Greek key motif lintels. One of the building's most distinctive and noted features are the "shamrock shutters". These solid wood shutters have two panels with shamrock cut-outs.

Additional Georgian detailing includes the wood cornice with dentils and heavy modillions. The three dormers on the main facade have arched windows with classical pediment surrounds. Lunettes of fruit bowls flank the central second story window.

The rear (east) elevation contains a variety of features including: a covered porch; a three bay window; a multipaned leaded glass window; and an elaborately detailed Palladian window set in a large pedimented dormer. The ell has six over six windows with shamrock shutters.

The south wing has a broad, rounded bay window on the first floor of the main elevation. A dormer featuring a broken swan's neck pediment and round arch window is set directly above the bay window on the gambrel roof. The end wall chimney has buttress-like features capped in stone. The north elevation has a triple window and enclosed sun porch.

To the rear of the house is a detached two car brick garage. The garage was constructed in 1926. It is 22' by 23' and has a gable roof with asphalt shingling.

Known alterations include the construction of the brick garage in 1926, the glazing of the sun porch in 1933, and the removal of the slate shingles in 1974. Much of the trim is in need of repainting, and ivy is growing on several of the exterior walls.

Though not presently under consideration for Landmarks designation, certain interior features are important to note. A stained glass window, set in the rear wall of the house at the landing of the stairway, was designed by the Charles C. Connick firm. The firm was established in 1912, and this window was probably an early commission for the firm. The window has nine panels of leaded glass; in the center panel is a medallion with a house in the background, and the lower panel a phrase is painted which reads: "East...West...Homes...Best."

Also of importance are the dining room and interior main stair. Both were bought from the Henry Rogers Mansion in Fairhaven, Massachusetts. The oval dining room is 32 feet long and fourteen feet high, with mahogany paneling and marble columns. The winding staircase is a full three stories.

Photo Opposite: James Michael Curley House, 350 The Jamaicaway
Main (west) elevation
Photo by Robert P. Burke, Boston Landmarks Commission
June, 1978

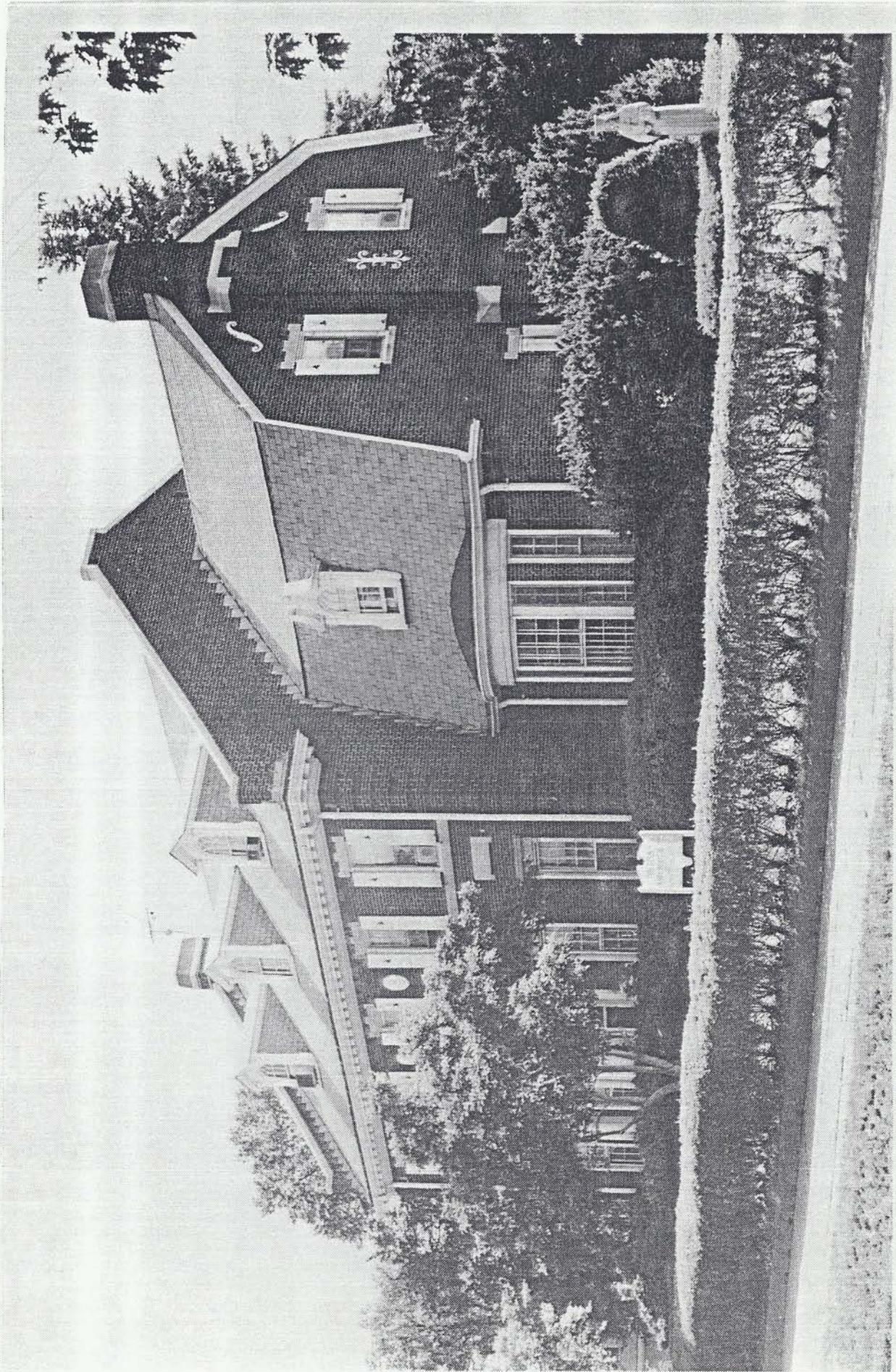


Photo Opposite: James Michael Curley House, 350 The Jamaicaway
Main (west) elevation
Photo by Robert P. Burke, Boston Landmarks Commission
June, 1978

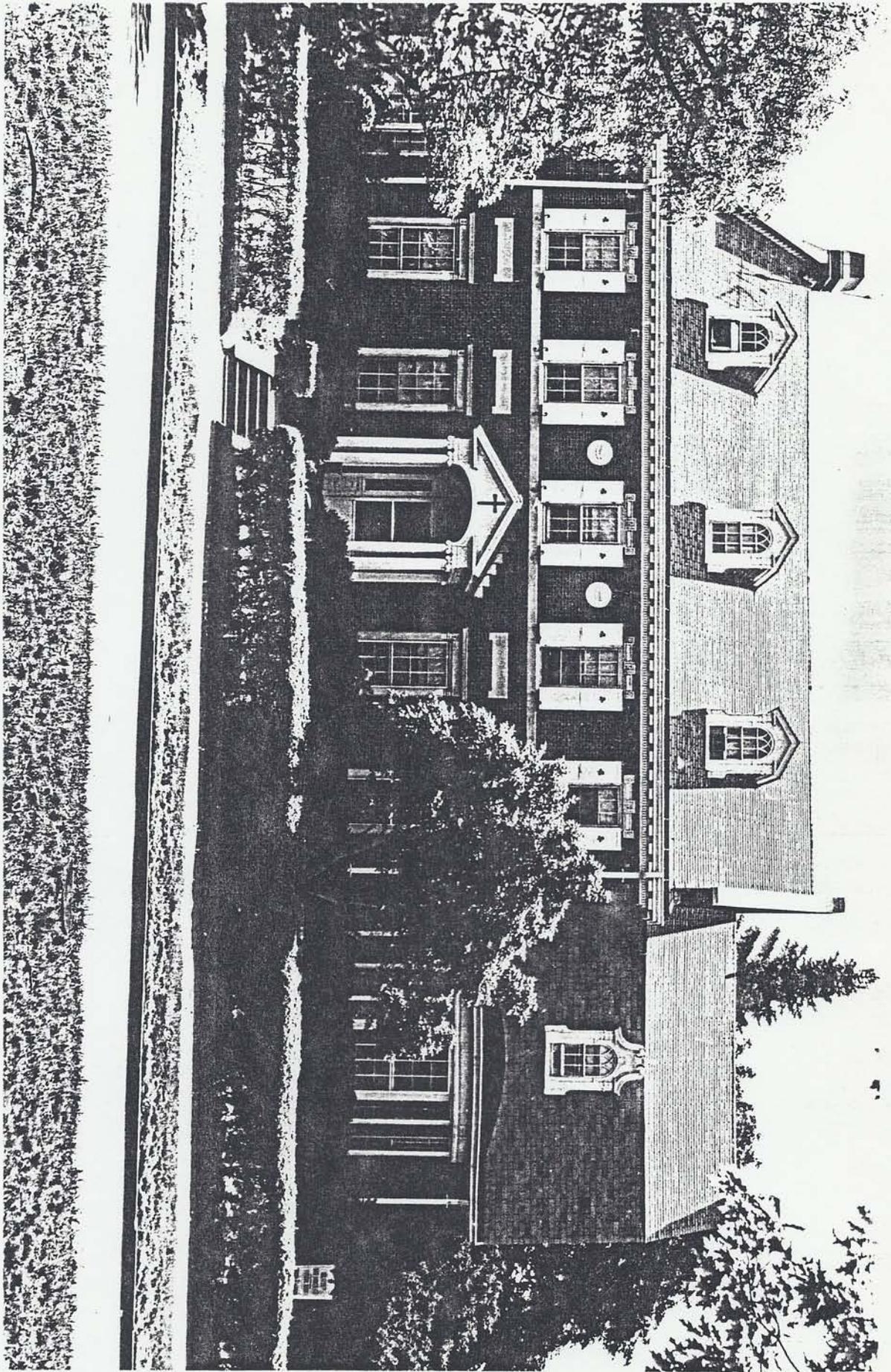


Photo Opposite: James Michael Curley House, 350 The Jamaica Way
Portico, main (west) elevation
Photo by Robert P. Burke, Boston Landmarks Commission
June, 1978

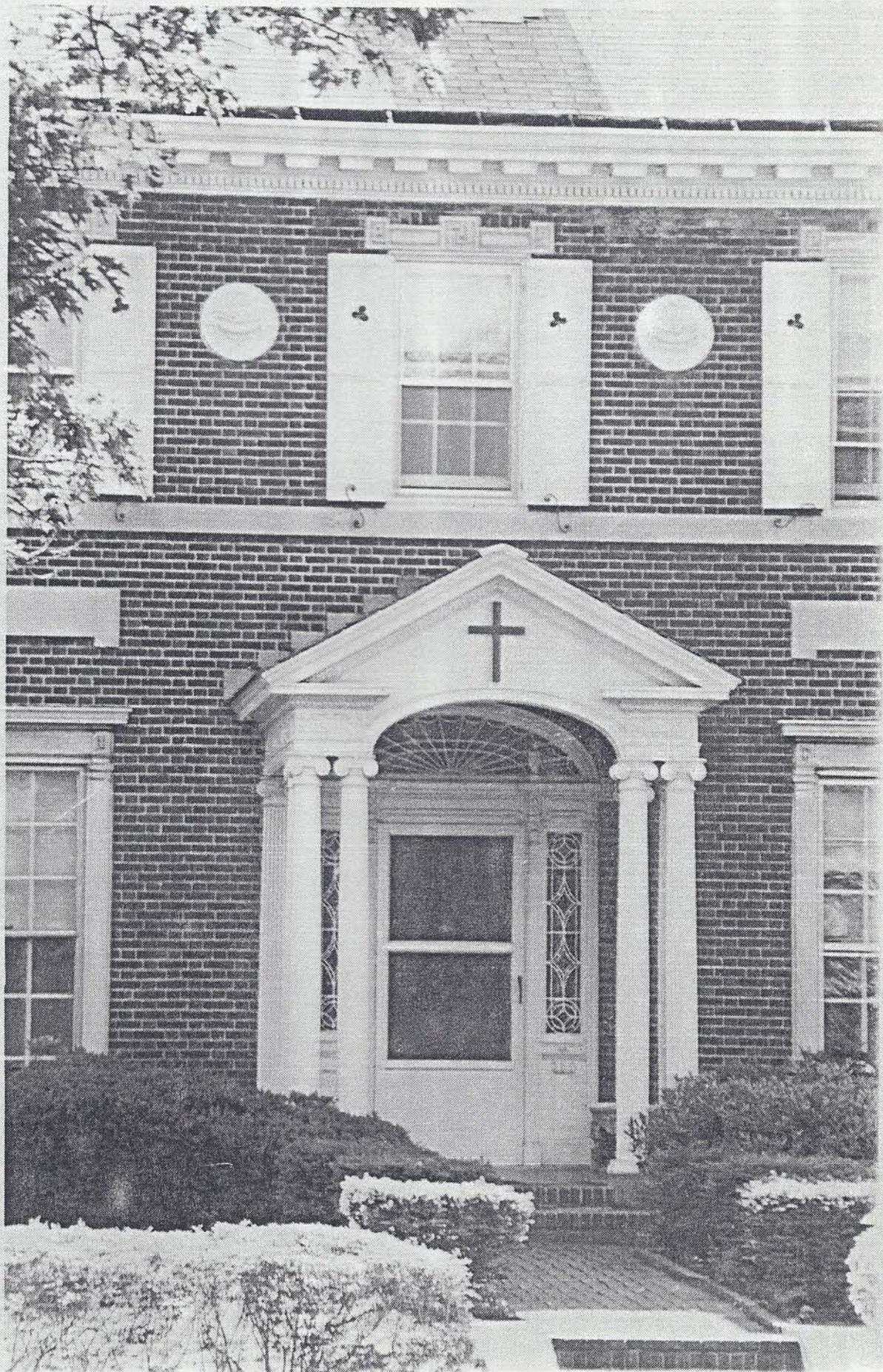


Photo Opposite: James Michael Curley House, 350 The Jamaicaway
East elevation
Photo by Robert P. Burke, Boston Landmarks Commission
June, 1978

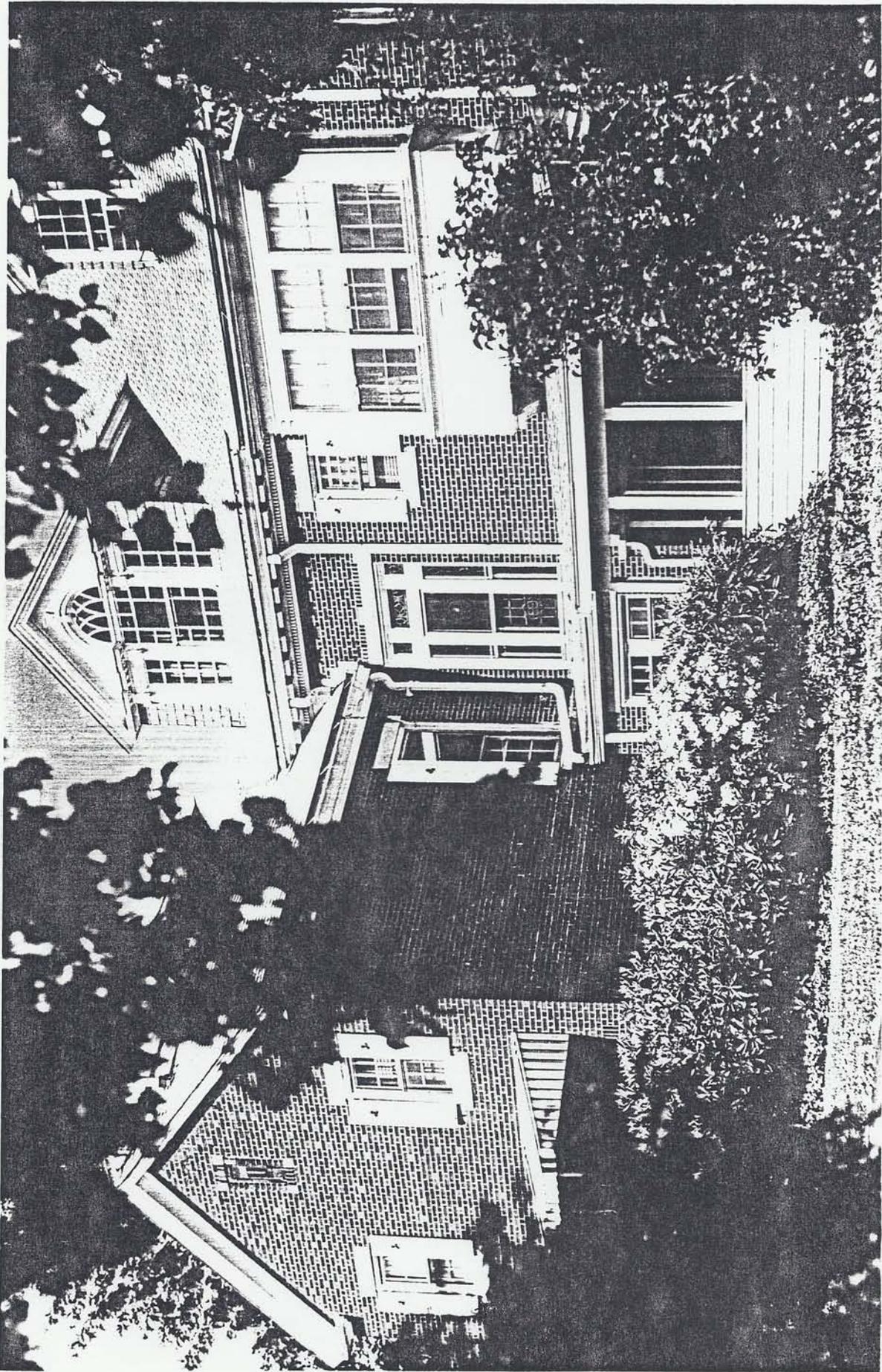


Photo Opposite: James Michael Curley House, 350 The Jamaicaway
North elevation
Photo by Robert P. Burke, Boston Landmarks Commission
June, 1978

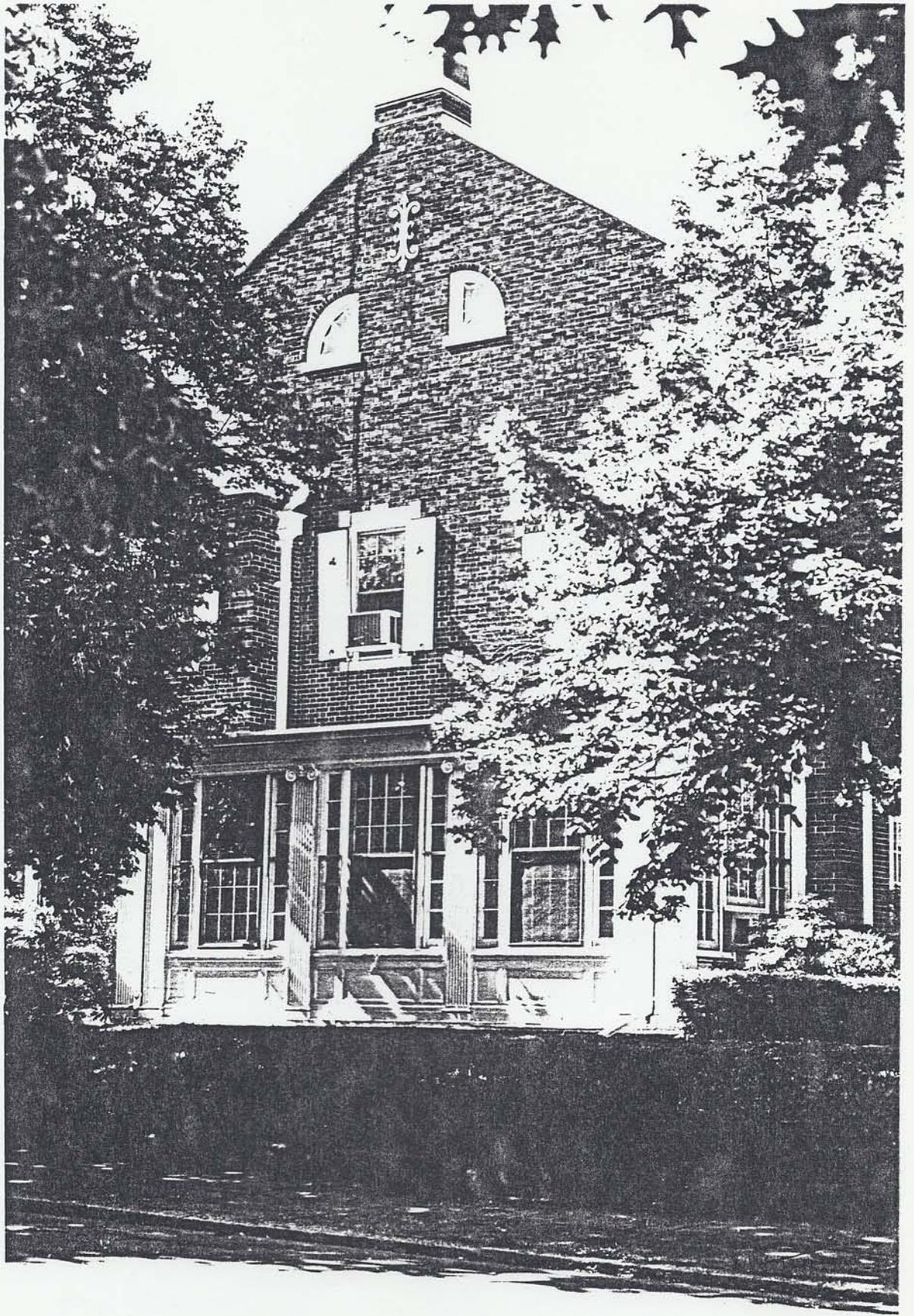


Photo Opposite: James Michael Curley House, 350 The Jamaica Way
Shutter detail, north elevation
Photo by Robert P. Burke, Boston Landmarks Commission
June, 1978

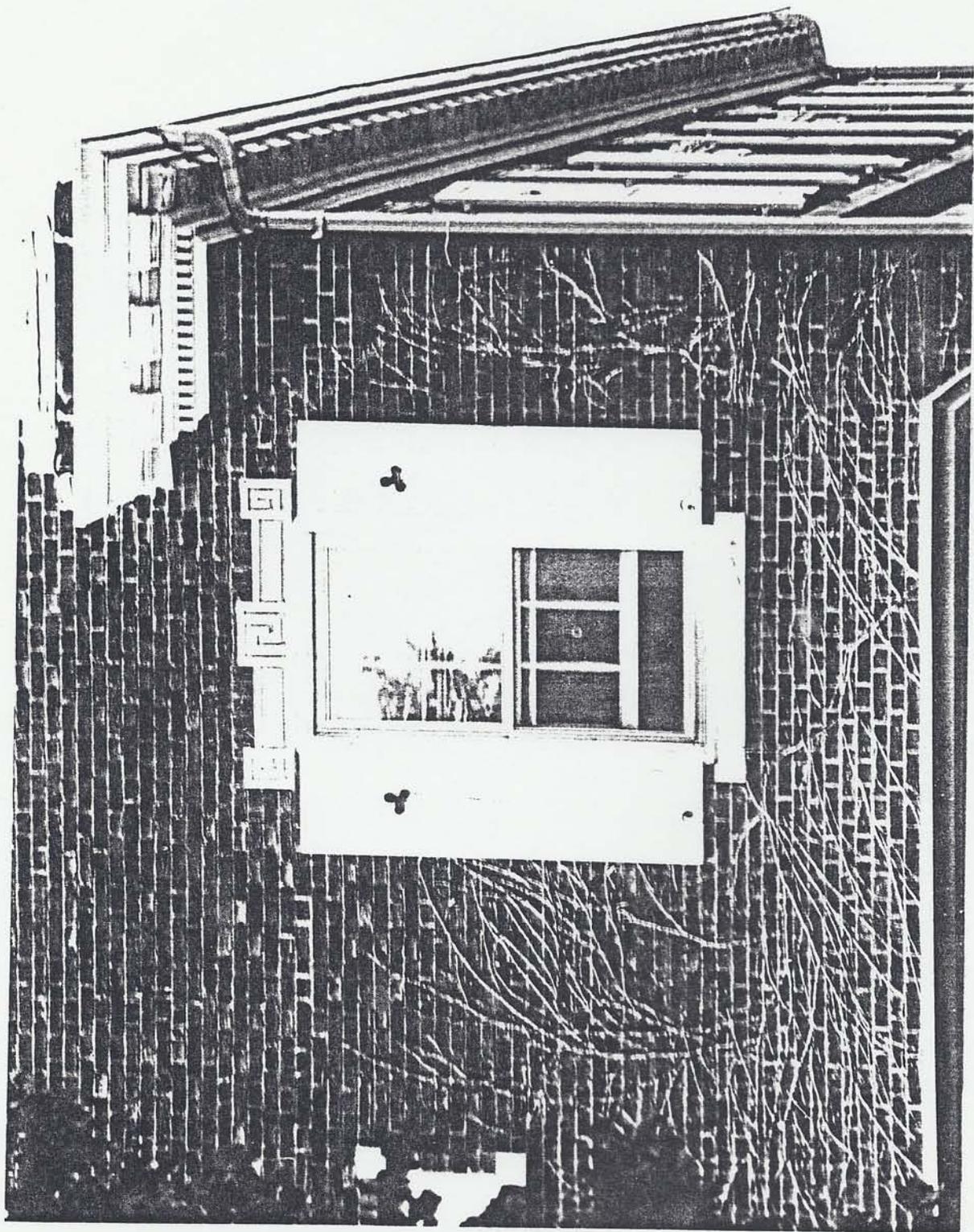


Photo Opposite: James Michael Curley House, 350 The Jamaicaway
Charles Connick stained glass window, 1915
East elevation
From the Charles Connick Stained Glass Archives,
Boston Public Library

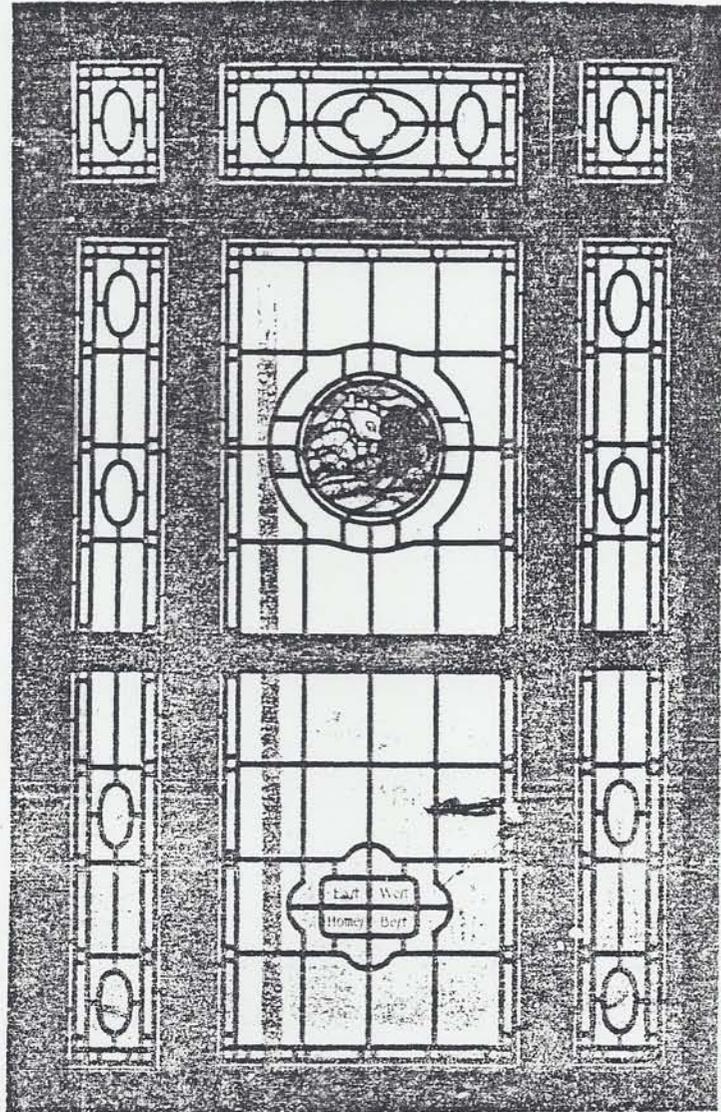
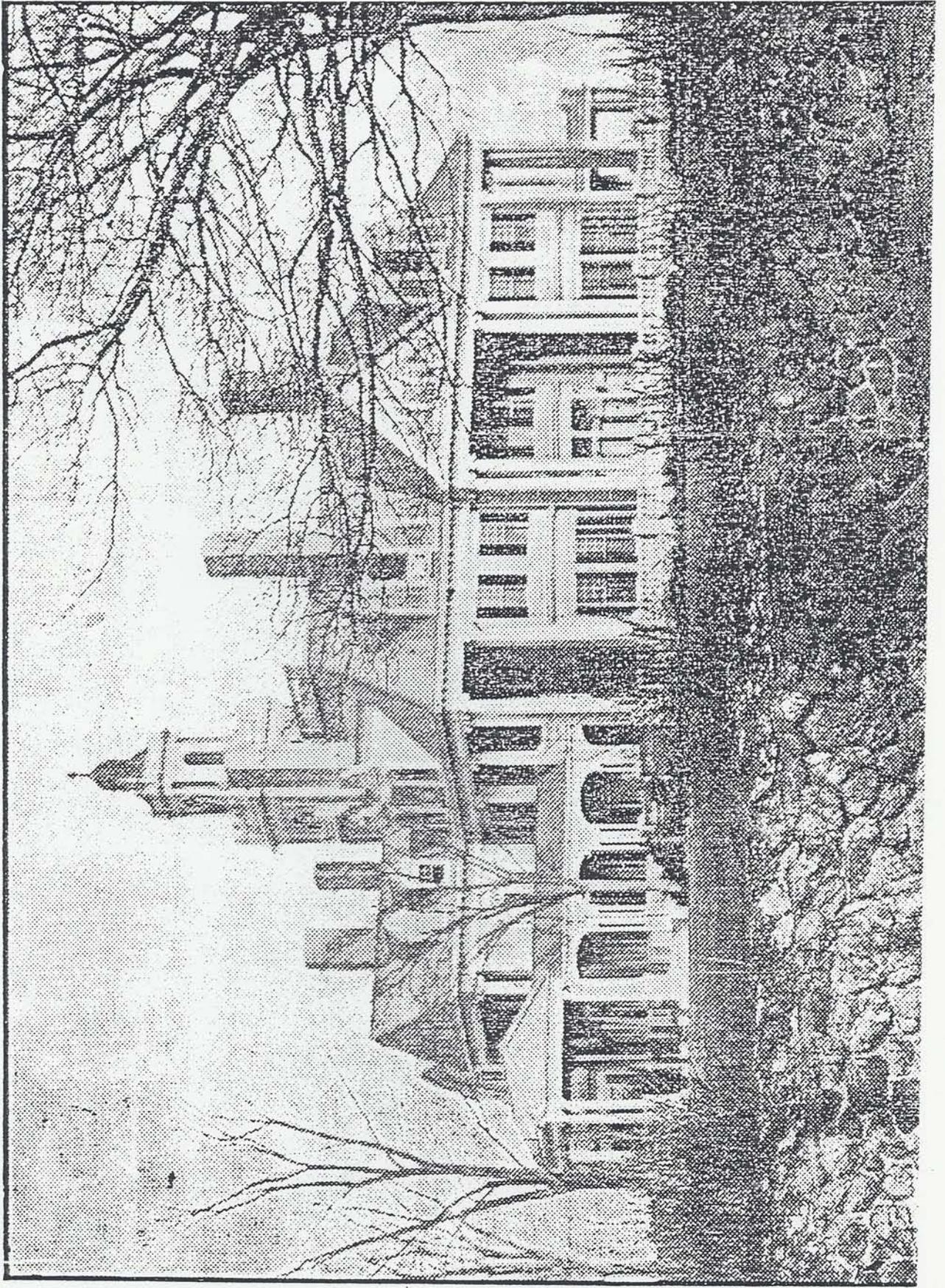


Photo Opposite: Henry Rogers Estate, Fairhaven, Massachusetts
Photo from the Boston Globe, September 12, 1903
From the collection of the Society for the
Preservation of New England Antiquities.



3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

The James Michael Curley House, 350 The Jamaicaway, is significant as the primary residence, for 41 years, of James Michael Curley, one of the most legendary figures in 20th century Massachusetts politics. Curley built the house on the Jamaicaway in 1915, during his first mayoral term, and lived there until 1956, the year after his last mayoral campaign. For seven decades, the Curley house has been a symbol of the evolving social, cultural and political presence of 19th century immigrants and their descendants.

3.1 Historical Significance:

James Michael Curley

Curley's parents emigrated from County Galway, Ireland to Boston in the 1860s. James Michael was born on November 24, 1874, in a wooden tenement at 28 Northampton Street, Lower Roxbury. Throughout his childhood, Curley lived in the vicinity of Boston City Hospital, first at 5 Fellows Court and then at 81 East Lenox Street. Curley's father, Michael, died when the boy was ten. Exhibiting his industrious nature at an early age, Curley took his first job as an errand boy for an apothecary shop, working before and after school.

Upon graduating from grammar school at age 16, Curley took a job at the New England Piano Company Factory. After the work began to take a toll on his health, Curley resumed work at the apothecary, clerking and collecting bills. Curley kept this position for 8 years, and during this period attended night school for two years. Curley got his first taste for politics in the 1890s, when he was asked to campaign in Ward 17 for Owen Galvin, a candidate for Mayor. Although Galvin lost, Curley was undaunted and decided to run for Common Council from Ward 17. His first campaign was unsuccessful, but in 1900, Curley was elected to the Council.

Curley's political ambitions grew and, in 1901, during his second term on the Common Council, Curley gained control of the Ward 17 Democratic Committee. Also in 1901, Curley and his brother John established the Tammany Club of Roxbury, modeled after the political organizations he had seen in New York. He was elected to two terms to the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1902-1903 and to the Board of Aldermen for five consecutive terms from 1904 to 1909. It was in 1904 that Curley took a civil service exam for a friend, and was sentenced to sixty days at the Charles Street Jail. This may be the first of the Curley legends, as he was reelected as alderman while he was serving the term in jail.

In 1906, Curley married Mary Emilda Herlihy; they moved to an apartment at 114 Mount Pleasant Avenue, Roxbury. Between 1907 and 1923, Mary Curley gave birth to nine children; only two of whom would outlive their father.

The structure of the city government changed in 1910, when the new city charter went into effect. At that time Curley was elected to the City Council for a term until 1911. Curley was elected to his first and second terms as Representative to Congress from 1911 to 1914. Many Republican politicians unsuccessfully tried to block his seat because of his 1904 jail term.

It is said that Curley's favorite political post was Mayor of Boston. Curley was elected Mayor in 1913, 1921, 1929 and 1945. He was defeated in 1917, 1937, 1941, 1949 and 1951.

In his first term as Mayor, Curley succeeded in cutting municipal expenditures. It was at this time that Curley befriended George Robert White and appointed him as the Chairman of the Statistics Department. Upon his death in 1922, White bequeathed to the City of Boston the income from a three million dollar trust. During his second term, commencing in 1922, Curley established neighborhood health units in the North End, East Boston, Charlestown, South Boston, Dorchester, Roxbury and the West End with the income from the White Fund.

Curley was defeated by Andrew J. Peters in the 1917 Mayoral election. While Curley was not in public office, he was employed as the president of the Hibernia Savings Bank. In order to block Curley in the future, a provision was eliminated from the Boston Charter that allowed the mayor to serve two terms in a row.

During his second term as Mayor, Curley oversaw several public improvement projects in addition to the establishment of the neighborhood health units. Curley secured an eight million dollar bond issue from the state for improvements to the Boston City Hospital. Improvements to the public transit system were made including the alteration of the Maverick Station transit tunnel and the extension of the Dorchester line to Mattapan and Milton.

Unable to succeed himself as Mayor, Curley made an unsuccessful bid for governor in 1924; he was defeated by Alvan T. Fuller. In 1929 he ran, and was elected, for his third term as Mayor of Boston. During this term, the Sumner Tunnel was built at a cost of ten million dollars, and the Prado, or Paul Revere Mall, was created adjacent to Old North Church, using income from the George Robert White Fund. Curley's first wife, Mary, died in 1930.

In the 1932 presidential election, Curley campaigned ardently for Franklin D. Roosevelt. For his efforts, Curley hoped for an appointment as the Ambassador to Ireland or Italy. When Roosevelt offered Curley the position of Ambassador to Poland, Curley refused.

In 1934, Curley made his first successful run for Governor of Massachusetts. He defeated his Republican opponent, Lt. Gov. Gasper Bacon, by over 100,000 votes. In 1936, Curley was married to Gertrude M. Dennis, who brought to the family two sons from a previous marriage. The year 1936, however, marked the beginning of a string of defeats for Curley. That year, he ran for the U.S. Senate and was beaten soundly by Henry Cabot Lodge.

In 1938 Curley ran for a second term as Governor but was defeated by Republican Speaker Leverett Saltonstall. In 1940 Curley hoped to attain his fourth term as Mayor of Boston, but he was defeated by Maurice J. Tobin, an early protege.

In 1941, a Federal Grand Jury indicted Curley for his connection with the Engineers Group Inc., an enterprise which claimed to assist clients in securing government housing projects contracts and general war bonds. Curley was asked to be the organization's president by James G. Fuller, who was later sentenced to a five year prison term. Curley claimed that his association with the organization lasted only 3 months, and he never received any money for his association. The first indictment was set aside on technical grounds, but Curley was given a second indictment in 1944. He was convicted in 1946, and in 1947, received a sentence for 6 to 18 months at the Federal Corrections Institute in Danbury, Connecticut. Curley served only five months in prison; his sentence was commuted by President Truman.

While waiting for the outcome of the second indictment, Curley ran successfully for his third and fourth terms as U.S. Congressman. He was elected to Congress in 1942 and 1944. Of great consolation to Curley was his election as Mayor of Boston for the fourth term in 1945. While the indictment was still pending, Curley defeated John Kerrigan by a record margin and was a majority mayor for the first time.

Curley was sent to Danbury in the middle of his mayoral term. A special meeting of the state legislature was called to deal with the Boston emergency. It was determined that City Clerk John B. Hynes would be temporary Mayor, and that Curley would receive his salary and could resume office upon his release from Danbury.

In 1948, at age 74, Curley left elected office for the last time. In the following years, 1949, 1951 and 1955, He was defeated for Mayor three times by John B. Hynes. Between 1950 and 1957, Curley served as National Committeeman to the Democratic State Committee.

In addition to many political setbacks, Curley suffered numerous personal tragedies throughout his life, particularly the death of seven of his children. In 1922, twins John and Joseph Curley died shortly after birth. Curley's second daughter, Dorthea, died at age 15 in 1925. In 1931, the oldest son, James Jr., died at age 24, while a student at Harvard Law School. In 1945, Curley's second son, Paul, died at age 32 while a student at Boston University Law School. In 1950, Curley's oldest daughter Mary and third son Leo, died within an hour of one another. Curley was survived by two sons, George and Francis Xavier. Francis Curley is now a Senior Clerk at the State Treasury Department.

Curley's fame increased when he appeared as the protagonist in the best-selling fictional novel by Edwin O'Connor, The Last Hurrah. The protagonist of the novel, Frank Skeffington, was clearly modeled after Curley. Although Curley professed to be upset by the fictional portrayal, he was pleased with the ending of the novel. On his deathbed, Skeffington overhears a character in the novel state that he, Skeffington, would live his life differently if he had a second chance: Skeffington mutters: "like Hell I would." In 1957, Curley published his autobiography, I'd Do It Again.

Curley died on November 12, 1958, eight days short of his 84th birthday. Curley was in 33 campaigns during his public career which lasted over 50 years. He served four terms as Mayor, four as a U.S. Congressman and one as Governor of Massachusetts.

CHRONOLOGY OF PUBLIC OFFICES AND CAMPAIGNS

from: I'd Do It Again, A Record of All My Uproarious Years. by James Michael Curley. Prentice Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, MJ1957.

1900-01	Boston Common Council
1902-02	Representative (State Legislature)
1904-09	Alderman
1910-11	City Council
1911-14	Congressman from Massachusetts (I and II terms)
1914-18	Mayor of Boston (I term)
1917	Defeated for Mayor by Andrew J. Peters
1922-26	Mayor of Boston (II term)
1924	Defeated for Governor of Massachusetts by Alvan T. Fuller
1930-34	Mayor of Boston (III term)
1935-36	Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
1936	Defeated for U.S. Senate by Henry Cabot Lodge, JR.
1937	Defeated for Mayor of Boston by Maurice J. Tobin
1938	Defeated for Governor of Mass. by Leverett Saltonstall
1940	Defeated for Mayor of Boston by Maurice J. Tobin
1943-46	Congressman from Massachusetts (III and IV terms)
1945-49	Mayor of Boston (IV term)
1949	Defeated for Mayor of Boston by John N. Hynes
1951	Defeated for Mayor of Boston by John N. Hynes
1955	Defeated for Mayor of Boston by John N. Hynes
1950-57	National Committeeman, Democratic State Committee

3.2 Architectural Significance:

The Curley House

James Michael Curley and Mary, his first wife, had their Jamaicaway house built while they were living in a small cottage on Mt. Pleasant Avenue in Roxbury. Building Department records state that the building's architect was Joseph P. McGinnis. Curley, in his autobiography, states that the builder was Thomas O'Connor.

Clearly the structure's most visible characteristic was the exterior detail, which infuriated the rest of the exclusive Brahmin neighborhood. As Joseph Dinneen explains in The Purple Shamrock:

Architecturally, (the house) was perfectly in keeping with its surroundings until white shutters were affixed. Upon each was a cut-out shamrock that seemed to symbolize thumbs to multiple noses with fingers extending in all directions. Curley's opinion of Boston bluebloods had been well advertised. (Dinneen, p. 122).

Several of the significant interior features of the structure were bought from the estate of Henry H. Rogers in Fairhaven, Massachusetts, across the inlet from New Bedford. Rogers, Chief Executive Officer of Standard Oil, built an 85 room summer estate in the Colonial Revival style in 1895. Rogers was a great benefactor to the town of Fairhaven, donating the Town Hall, Library, Grammar School, a Unitarian Church and Parish House. Each of these buildings, like the mansion, were designed by Boston architect Charles Brigham.

In 1915, six years after Rogers' death, his heirs put the enormous estate, which included six buildings, up for auction. Many of the building's interior features were sold. Several of the smaller structures on the property, such as the laundry building, were moved and reused for houses. What was not sold was demolished, and the site was divided into house lots. In his autobiography, Curley reminisces about the items he bought from the Rogers Estate:

I shall never forget buying the beautiful tile fireplace. When the contractor removed it I asked him how much he wanted for it. He told me to make him an offer....It was a real bargain. At the auction I also got the tongs and other fireplace equipment, which I thought were brass, but which turned out to be gold-plated! (p. 128)

The oval-shaped, hand carved mahogany-paneled dining room, with its marble Grecian columns, is forty feet long and has a fourteen foot ceiling. Its chandelier, with delicately carved Irish Waterford glass hung on silver chains is flanked on the ceiling by carved moldings. The outstanding feature of the house is the wide, winding staircase which rises two stories without any visible support. (p. 129)

It appears that none of the exterior features of the Rogers Mansion were reused at the Curley House, though many features may have been modeled after Rogers' Colonial Revival Mansion. Curley talks in detail about the interior features taken from the Rogers mansion, but, he paints a confusing picture of the exterior. Curley states in his autobiography:

Although I had no immediate site in mind for a house, I bought part of the Rogers mansion, had it carefully marked and disassembled and brought to Boston, where it was stored until it was reassembled on a pleasant knoll overlooking Jamaica Pond. (p.128)

Curley came under the great scrutiny of the Finance Commission (established 1909) due to the elaborate nature of the house. Many wondered how a man on a \$10,000 salary could afford a \$45,000 house on a \$15,000 lot. Curley responds in his autobiography:

I told these snoopers that I had acquired the nucleus of the house at an auction at a ridiculously low figure and further informed them that I had made a substantial sum of money on the stock market, thanks to a gentleman named Nathan Eisman, a wool magnate. When they asked where they could find the gentleman I said he was unavailable for further tips, since he had passed on to his heavenly reward. (p.130)

Curley also explains that the house was called by some critics "the demonstration house," implying that various contractors donated their time and materials in order to impress the Mayor with their skills and wares. (p.129)

Many celebrities, politicians and other well known figures visited the Curley's at their Jamaicaway home. Those visitors included Eleanor Roosevelt, Sophie Tucker, Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein, Chiang Kai-Shek and the Vienna Boys Choir.

Curley talks at length about leaving the house in I'd Do It Again. He states that in November, 1956, he sold the house to the Society of Oblate Fathers for Missions Among the Poor, to be used as a novitiate. He elaborates on the move, explaining that:

parting was sweet sorrow in many respects, for my wife and I not only moved out of the house with the shamrock shutters on Jamaicaway to a nearby Garrison Colonial on Pond Circle, but I also parted with some dear old friends-1,500 books in my personal library. Many of them are rare, and many others are autographed with personal messages from the authors. I left another thousand volumes of a religious nature for the Oblate Fathers who have already built a magnificent chapel on the third floor of the shamrock house, and turned over many scrapbooks to Holy Cross College for political history studies. (continued).

The house on the Jamaica way will always have memories for me. Memories of the children who were born there and of my first wife and my children who died there. Memories of the hundreds of thousands of picturesque characters and distinguished guests, memories of defeats and victories. (p. 353).

The Society of Oblate Fathers for Missions Among the Poor are members of a missionary congregation founded in France in 1816. They came to the United States from Canada to perform missionary work with the non-English speaking northeastern mill workers immigrating to the US. The Oblate Fathers lived in the Curley House for thirty-two years.

In addition to the importance of the structure and its association with James M. Curley, the landscape adds significance to the site. The Massachusetts Association of Olmsted Parks' "Master List of Design Projects in Massachusetts 1866-1950" by Frederick Law Olmsted and the successor firm, the Olmsted Brothers, lists James M. Curley as a client in 1915-16. The list states that drawings and correspondence exist for the Curley property, suggesting, but not confirming, that the Olmsted Brothers did some of the landscape work for the Curley House. Further investigation at the Library of Congress could shed light on this issue, as it is the correspondence which verifies work completed by the firm.

Joseph McGinnis

Joseph McGinnis, a relatively unknown Boston architect, designed the Curley House in 1914-15. McGinnis practiced architecture in Boston for six years, between 1912-1918. He died in 1918, at the age of 34, from pneumonia which he contracted during the influenza epidemic of that year.

McGinnis was born in Boston and was first educated at the Rice Training School. He graduated from English High School and attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. McGinnis was awarded the Rotch Scholarship for his design for the midway station of the Boston Railroad Tunnel. McGinnis spent one year abroad, during which time he sent back numerous renderings of classical European buildings; these renderings are reprinted in an autobiographical sketch of McGinnis, written by the theatre architect, Clarence Blackall. (American Architect and Building News Vol. CXVII, No. 2315, May 5, 1920).

Upon his return, McGinnis opened an office at 16 Arlington Street, Boston. His six years were extremely productive; Blackall believed he was "one of the brightest young architects in the City." Blackall felt that McGinnis' most prominent work was the Codman Square Theatre. McGinnis designed many buildings for the City of Boston, including an addition to Boston City Hospital, several infirmary buildings at Long Island, an addition to the Boston Public Library, five engine houses, and two schools. Most significant of these designs are the Michelangelo School in the North End and the Readville Engine House on the Neponset River Parkway. McGinnis also designed Catholic churches in East Milton, Cambridge and Wellesley.

On the day that McGinnis died in September, 1918, the city recorded 74 deaths from the epidemic. His wife and child died a short time later. Clarence Blackall concludes that McGinnis,

in the space of less than six years had built up a business of high character and had shown himself to be possessed of many of the essential qualities which go to make up the successful architect. His work is characterized throughout by most sincere, conscientious, faithful study." (p. 545)

3.3 Relationship to Landmarks Criteria:

The James Michael Curley House clearly meets criterion (c) for Landmark designation established by Section 4 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 as a structure, site or object, man-made or natural, associated significantly with the lives of outstanding historic personages. James Michael Curley, a figure of great political and social significance to the City and Commonwealth, resided at 350 The Jamaica way for over four decades.

Additionally, the "Jamaica Plain Project Completion Report" published by the Boston Landmarks Commission in June, 1983 recommends that the Curley House be designated a Boston Landmark. The report states that the James Michael Curley House "qualifies as an intact example of a brick Georgian Revival residence, built for James Michael Curley as his home."

Finally, 350 The Jamaica way is significant as a large, brick, free-standing, Colonial Revival residence, with reused elements from the Henry Rogers mansion in Fairhaven, Massachusetts.

4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS

4.1 Assessed Value:

The assessed value for Fiscal Year 1988 for the total property on parcel 2060 is \$738,500. The assessed value for the land is \$110,500, and the building is \$628,000. The property is tax exempt.

Current Ownership:

The Curley House is owned by the City of Boston. The residence was sold to the City on May 31, 1988 by the Society of Oblate Fathers for Missions Among the Poor. Income from the City's George Robert White Fund, a trust fund that Curley takes full credit for establishing, was used to purchase the property. The property had served as the regional headquarters of the Order for 32 years. Plans for the City's reuse of the property are being formulated.

5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

5.1 Historical Background:

Roxbury was incorporated in 1846; its boundaries extended from the southwest shore of the Back Bay to the Charles River in Dedham. In 1846, West Roxbury separated from Roxbury and was established as an independent town. The original boundaries of West Roxbury included Jamaica Plain. Jamaica Plain was annexed to Boston in 1874.

Jamaica Plain developed as a secondary settlement center during the late 17th century along the Centre Street axis. A local school was first established in 1676. Further expansion occurred around Jamaica Pond with the establishment of the parish church and burial ground in 1769. In the second half of the 18th century, the scenic qualities of Jamaica Plain led many of Boston's leading citizens, including Governor Francis Bernard and John Hancock to build summer estates there.

In the 17th century, the sparsely settled area was comprised of farmlands which supplied much of Boston's fruit and produce. The First Church in Roxbury was established in 1632. In 1712, a second parish church was established in West Roxbury. The third or middle parish was established in 1769 at Eliot Square, Jamaica Plain on the site of the present Unitarian Church.

In 1795, the Jamaica Plain Aquaduct Company was formed. Its water system which extended from Jamaica Pond to Forest Hills used about 45 miles of pine pipes and was a major source of water supply to Boston until 1845 when lines were laid from lake Cochituate. In 1834, the Boston and Providence railroad was put through along the western side of the Stony Brook valley. The railroad provided quick and efficient transportation to downtown Boston. As a result, a substantial amount of housing was constructed for the new commuter population.

The second half of the 19th century was a period of rapid change. Eliot Square, Jamaica Plain served as a social and political center for West Roxbury when it was established as an independent town. During the 1870s, streetcar tracks were laid from Roxbury to West Roxbury along Centre and Washington Streets. A great deal more housing was built to accommodate the additional influx of commuters. Most of the 18th century estates were subdivided, and many new streets were laid out.

Plans for the Boston Park system were first formulated in a report made by the new Board of Park Commissioners in 1876. The Jamaica way, Arborway and Jamaica Park were all integral parts of the plan; however, they were not constructed until the mid 1890s due to difficulty in obtaining the necessary land. Jamaica Pond was surrounded by estates and only a small strip along Pond Street was open to the public.

The large estates in the Pondside area, where the Curley House is located, remained intact during the last decades of the 19th century. Land south of Perkins Street to beyond present day Pershing Street, extending from Centre to the pond, was contained in the Curtis family's farm lands and parcels. Joseph H. Curtis' property extended from the pond across Centre Street almost to the Boston and Providence Railroad tracks. Edward N. Perkin's estate, Pinebank, stands at its original site on the north side of Jamaica Pond. The brick and terra cotta Ruskinian Gothic residence, built in 1870, was designed by John Hubbard Sturgis, a prominent Boston architect.

5.2 Current Planning Issues:

The Curley House is within the Pondside neighborhood. The area is bounded by Perkins Street, South Huntington and Centre Street on the east, following the curve of Centre Street south and west to Murray Circle, and the Jamaica way and Francis Parkman Drive to the west side of Jamaica Pond.

Topographically, the residential land is relatively level with streets extending in a radial pattern outward from the pond to Centre Street. A few short cross streets and cul-de-sacs project from or connect the long radial streets. This street pattern largely reflects 19th century property lines, when wedge-shaped parcels of large estates extended from the pond. Directly around the pond are hilly areas.

The area is characterized predominantly by late 19th and early 20th century suburban residential development. A number of architectural styles are evident in the neighborhood including Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate, Victorian, Colonial Revival and Bungalow. Lot sizes are generally large, and the area is well treed and landscaped. The residential features of Pondside remain largely unchanged since the 1910s. The Jamaica way was laid out in the 1890s, and residences along it are largely Colonial Revival in character, usually more substantial than the similarly styled houses on the streets to the east.

A City of Boston Ordinance, sections 10-13 of Chapter 19 of the revised ordinances of 1961, as amended, places restrictions on park frontages within the city. This ordinance applies to property fronting on the Jamaica way. Section 10 states that garages, public stables and buildings used for manufacturing, mechanical or mercantile purposes are prohibited within 135 feet of the Jamaica way. Section 11 states that no building may be erected or altered within a distance of 100 feet from a park or parkway without written permission from the Parks and Recreation Commission. Section 12 stated that no building may be erected upon premises within 25 feet of the Jamaica way between Perkins and Prince Street.

The Jamaica Plain IPOD (Interim Planning Overlay District) is expected to be adopted by the Zoning Commission in early January, 1989. The protective zoning already in place for the Pondside neighborhood is not expected to change in the IPOD.

The Olmsted Park Master Plan, a part of the Department of Environmental Management's Olmsted Historic Landscape Preservation Program in conjunction with the City of Boston, creates a long-term rehabilitation framework which will guide future planning, maintenance and preservation activity in the Emerald Necklace. Jamaica Pond and Olmsted Park are crucial components within the master plan. Issues being addressed are water quality and historic appearance, circulation systems, restoration of scenic views and planting patterns and the upgrading of recreation facilities.

5.3 Relationship to Current Zoning:

The Curley House is an area which is zoned S.3, a single family, low density classification with a .3 Floor Area Ratio (FAR). Adjacent areas are also zoned for low density, residential (R.5 and R.8) development.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

6.1 Alternatives

The Curley House is of sufficient significance to merit individual Landmark designation under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended. However, the Commission retains the option of not designating the building as a Landmark. Not designating the building as a Landmark would mean that the City could offer no protection to the structure or guidance to present or future owners.

Landmark designation under Chapter 772 would require the review of physical changes to the exterior of the building in accordance with the standards and criteria adopted as part of the designation. It would not, however, affect the treatment of the building interior, or the use of the building.

An alternative approach would be to nominate the property to the National Register of Historic Places. This would provide protection from federally-licensed or federally funded actions under the Section 106 review process. Similar protection from state-sponsored activities is achieved by the concurrent listings of all National Register properties to the State Register of Historic Places under Chapter 152, General Laws of Massachusetts.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the James Michael Curley House at 350 The Jamaica Way be designated as a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended. Boundaries of the designation would be the assessor's parcel 2060, Ward 19.

The standards and criteria for administering the regulatory functions provided for in Chapter 772 are attached.

The staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission further recommends that an overall evaluation of the interior be undertaken.

8.0 GENERAL STANDARDS & CRITERIA

8.1 Introductory Statement on Standards and Criteria to be used in Evaluating Applications for Certificates

Per sections 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 of the enabling statute (Chapter 772 of the Acts of the 1975 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts) Standards and Criteria must be adopted for each Landmark Designation which shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the property. Before a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption can be issued for such changes, the changes must be reviewed by the Commission with regard to their conformance to the purposes of the statute.

The Standards and Criteria established thus note those features which must be conserved and/or enhanced to maintain the viability of the Landmark Designation.

The intent of these guidelines is to help local officials, designers, and individual property owners to identify the characteristics that have led to designation, and thus to identify the limitation to the changes that can be made to them. It should be emphasized that conformance to the Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily insure approval, nor are they absolute, but any request for variance from them must demonstrate the reasons for, and advantages gained by, such variance. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing, in accordance with the statute.

As intended by the statute a wide variety of buildings and features are included within the area open to Landmark Designation, and an equally wide range exists in the latitude allowed for change. Some properties of truly exceptional architectural and/or historical value will permit only the most minor modifications, while for some others the Commission encourages changes and additions with a contemporary approach, consistent with the properties' existing features and changed uses.

In general, the intent of the Standards and Criteria is to preserve existing qualities that cause designation of a property; however, in some cases they have been so structured as to encourage the removal of additions that have lessened the integrity of the property.

It is recognized that changes will be required in designated properties for a wide variety of reasons, not all of which are under the complete control of the Commission or the owners. Primary examples are:

- (a) Building code conformance and safety requirements.
- (b) Changes necessitated by the introduction of modern mechanical and electrical systems.
- (c) Changes due to proposed new uses of a property.

The response to these requirements may, in some cases, present conflicts with the Standards and Criteria for a particular property. The Commission's evaluation of an application will be based upon the degree to which such changes are in harmony with the character of the property.

In some cases, priorities have been assigned within the Standards and Criteria as an aid to property owners in identifying the most critical design features.

The Standards and Criteria have been divided into two levels: (1) those general ones that are common to almost all landmark designations (subdivided into categories for buildings and landscape features); and (2) those specific ones that apply to each particular property that is designated. In every case the Specific Standard and Criteria for a particular property shall take precedence over the General ones if there is a conflict.

8.2 GENERAL STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

A. APPROACH

1. The design approach to the property should begin with the premise that the features of historical and architectural significance described within the Study Report must be preserved. In general this will minimize the exterior alterations that will be allowed.
2. Changes to the property and its environment which have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected. ("Later integral features" shall be the term used to convey this concept.)
3. Deteriorated material or architectural features, whenever possible, should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary it should be based on physical or documentary evidence of original or later integral features.
5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color texture and other visual qualities. The use of imitation replacement materials is generally discouraged.
6. New additions or alterations should not disrupt the essential form and integrity of the property and should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property and its environment.
7. Contemporary design is encouraged for new additions; thus, they must not necessarily be imitative of an earlier style or period.
8. New additions or alterations should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.
9. Priority shall be given to those portions of the property which are visible from public ways or which it can be reasonably inferred may be in the future.
10. Color will be considered as part of specific standards and criteria that apply to a particular property.

B. EXTERIOR WALLS

I. MASONRY

1. Retain whenever possible, original masonry and mortar.
2. Duplicate original mortar in composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile and method of application.

3. Repair and replace deteriorated masonry with material which matches as closely as possible.
4. When necessary to clean masonry, use gentlest method possible. Do not sandblast. Doing so changes the visual quality of the material and accelerates deterioration. Lest patches should always be carried out well in advance of cleaning (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
5. Avoid applying waterproofing or water repellent coating to masonry, unless required to solve a specific problem. Such coatings can accelerate deterioration.
6. In general, do not paint masonry surfaces. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.

II. NON-MASONRY

1. Retain and repair original or later integral material whenever possible.
2. Retain and repair, when necessary, deteriorated material with material that matches.

C. ROOFS

1. Preserve the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape.
2. Retain original roof covering whenever possible.
3. Whenever possible, replace deteriorated roof covering with material which matches the old in composition, size, shape, color, texture, and installation detail.
4. Preserve architectural features which give the roof its character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filligree, cupolas, domers, brackets.

D. WINDOWS AND DOORS

1. Retain original and later integral door and window openings where they exist. Do not enlarge or reduce door and window openings for the purpose of fitting stock window sash or doors, or air conditioners.
2. Whenever possible, repair and retain original or later integral window elements such as sash, lintels, sills, architraves, glass, shutters and other decorations and hardware. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.

3. On some properties consideration will be given to changing from the original window details to other expressions such as to a minimal anonymous treatment by the use of a single light, when consideration of cost, energy conservation or appropriateness override the desire for historical accuracy. In such cases, consideration must be given to the resulting effect on the interior as well as the exterior of the building.

E. PORCHES, STEPS AND EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

1. Retain and repair porches and steps that are original or later integral features including such items as railings, balusters, columns, posts, brackets, roofs, ironwork, benches, fountains, statues and decorative items.

F. SIGNS, MARQUEES AND AWNINGS

1. Signs, marquees and awnings integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be retained where necessary.
2. New signs, marquees and awnings shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features.
3. New signs, marquees, awnings shall be of a size and material compatible with the building and its current use.
4. Signs, marquees and awnings applied to the building shall be applied in such a way that they could be removed without damaging the building.
5. All signs added to the building shall be part of one system of design, or reflect a design concept appropriate to the communication intent.
6. Lettering forms or typeface will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally shall either be contemporary or relate to the period of the building or its later integral features.
7. Lighting of signs will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally illumination of a sign shall not dominate illumination of the building.
8. The foregoing notwithstanding, signs are viewed as the most appropriate vehicle for imaginative and creative expression, especially in structures being reused for purpose different from the original, and it is not the Commission's intent to stifle a creative approach to signage.

G. PENTHOUSES

1. The objective of preserving the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape shall provide the basic criteria in judging whether a penthouse can be added to a roof. Height of a building, prominence of roof form, and visibility shall govern whether a penthouse will be approved.

2. Minimizing or eliminating the visual impact of the penthouse is the general objective and the following guidelines shall be followed:
 - (a) Location shall be selected where the penthouse is not visible from the street or adjacent buildings; setbacks shall be utilized.
 - (b) Overall height or other dimensions shall be kept to a point where the penthouse is not seen from the street or adjacent buildings.
 - (c) Exterior treatment shall relate to the materials, color and texture of the building or to other materials integral to the period and character of the building, typically used for appendages.
 - (d) Openings in a penthouse shall relate to the building in proportion, type and size of opening, wherever visually apparent.

H. LANDSCAPE FEATURES

1. The general intent is to preserve the existing or later integral landscape features that enhance the landmark property.
2. It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has character, scale and street pattern quite different from that existing when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the landmark and its new surroundings.
3. The existing landforms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the landmark or site. Additional landforms shall only be considered if they will not obscure the exterior of the landmark.
4. Original layout and materials of the walks, steps, and paved areas should be maintained. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will improve this without altering the integrity of the landmark.
5. Existing healthy plant materials should be maintained as long as possible. New plant materials should be added on a schedule that will assure a continuity in the original landscape design and its later adaptations.
6. Maintenance of, removal of, and additions to plant materials should consider maintaining existing vistas of the landmark.

I. EXTERIOR LIGHTING

1. There are three aspects of lighting related to the exterior of the building:
 - (a) Lighting fixtures as appurtenances to the building or elements or architectural ornamentation.
 - (b) Quality of illumination on building exterior.
 - (c) Interior lighting as seen from the exterior.
2. Wherever integral to the building, original lighting fixtures shall be retained. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
3. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches as appropriate to the building and to the current or projected use:
 - (a) Accurate representation of the original period, based on physical or documentary evidence.
 - (b) Retention or restoration of fixtures which date from an interim installation and which are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.
 - (c) New lighting fixtures which are contemporary in design and which illuminate the exterior of the building in a way which renders it visible at night and compatible with its environment.
4. If a fixture is to be replaced, the new exterior lighting shall be located where intended in the original design. If supplementary lighting is added, the new location shall fulfill the functional intent of the current use without obscuring the building form or architectural detailing.
5. Interior lighting shall only be reviewed when its character has a significant effect on the exterior of the building: that is, when the view of the illuminated fixtures themselves, or the quality and color of the light they produce, is clearly visible through the exterior fenestration.

J. REMOVAL OF LATER ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS

1. Each property will be separately studied to determine if later additions and alterations can, or should, be removed. It is not possible to provide one general guideline.
2. Factors that will be considered include:
 - (a) Compatibility with the original property's integrity in scale, materials and character.
 - (b) Historic association with the property.
 - (c) Quality in the design and execution of the addition.
 - (d) Functional usefulness.

9.0 SPECIFIC STANDARDS & CRITERIA

James Michael Curley House
350 The Jamaica Way

GENERAL

1. The intent is to preserve the overall character and appearance of the Curley House.
2. All four elevations and the roof are subject to the terms of the guidelines herein stated.

EXTERIOR

1. No new openings shall be allowed in masonry walls. No original existing openings shall be filled or changed in size.
2. All facade detail and ornamentation shall be preserved.
3. All existing brickwork shall be carefully preserved. Any necessary replacement brick shall match existing material in color, size, and texture. Specifications will insure that joint size and color of new mortar matches original.

C. Windows

1. Existing window openings shall be retained. Existing sash may be replaced where required, but where replaced, shall match originals in materials, number and size of lights, and in section of muntins.
2. Window frames shall be of a color based on paint seriation studies. Replacement frames shall match originals in section and detail of installation.
3. The Connick stained glass window on the east elevation shall be retained. Should restoration of the window be required, consultation with a professional stained glass conservator is necessary.

D. Roof

1. The pitch of the roof shall be retained.
2. No additional roof openings or projections visible from a public view shall be permitted. Necessary repair or replacement chimney or other roof elements shall match the original elements in materials and details of execution and installation.

E. Porches, Steps and Exterior Architectural Elements

1. The front entrance, steps, and doors facing the Jamaica way shall be retained.
2. For other existing entrances, alterations will be reviewed.
3. The shutters shall be retained, in situ.

F. Lighting and Signage

1. Signage must be reviewed.
2. Lighting fixtures shall be reviewed. As a landmark, architectural lighting is recommended.

G. Additions

1. No additions to the height of the building shall be permitted.
2. No additions or projections to the building's front or side elevations shall be permitted.
3. Any additions proposed to the rear of the building will be reviewed.

H. Landscaping

1. Any proposed changes to the landscaping should be based on documentary evidence and will be reviewed.
2. Any proposed changes to paving will be reviewed.

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Architectural Forum, Volume 27, July 1917, advertisement.

Blackall, Clarence. American Architect and Building News.
Volume 117, no. 2315, pp. 543-546, May 5, 1920.

Boston Daily Globe, November 12, 1958, pp. 1, 34-36

Boston Sunday Globe, May 2, 1915,

Boston Landmarks Commission. "Jamaica Plain Project Completion Report" and Building Inventory Forms, June 1983.

Boston Public Library. Fine Arts Department, Architects Card File.

Boston Redevelopment Authority. "Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Profile," Boston, 1988.

Curley, James Michael. I'd do it Again-An Account of All My Uproarious Years. Boston: Prentice-Hall, 1957.

Dinneen, Joseph F. The Purple Shamrock-The Honorable James Michael Curley of Boston. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1949.

Jamaica Plain Citizen, February 11, 1988 and March 24, 1988.

Kaminski, Frank C. Auction Brochure for the James Michael Curley House, 1988.

New Catholic Encyclopedia, McGraw Hill Publishing Co., New York, 1967.

New York Times, November 12, 1958.

O'Connor, Edwin. The Last Hurrah. Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1956.

Registry of Deeds, Suffolk County Court House, Boston.

Time Magazine, November 17, 1958.

Time Magazine, May 13, 1957.

Schlesinger, Arthur M. Jr. The Saturday Review, May 25, 1957.

Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. Postcard and Photo Collection. H.H. Rogers Mansion, Fairhaven MA.

Withey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased, Hennessey & Ingalls, Los Angeles, 1970.