

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

11-27-89

89002038

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Leonard's Catholic Church

other names/site number St. Leonard's Catholic Church and Rectory; NEHBS # MD03-23

2. Location

street & number 502-504 So. Nebraska Street

na not for publication

city, town Madison

na vicinity

state Nebraska

code NE

county Madison

code 119

zip code 68748

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

Category of Property

building(s)

district

site

structure

object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

Noncontributing

3

1 buildings

_____ sites

_____ structures

3

1 objects

_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

James A. Hanson
Signature of certifying official

October 13, 1989
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

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:)

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Religious StructureReligion/Church - Related ResidenceDomestic/Secondary Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Religious StructureReligion/Church - Related ResidenceDomestic/Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque RevivalNeo-Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation limestonewalls brickroof asphaltother stonecopper

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

St. Leonard's Catholic Church and Rectory are located in Madison, Nebraska, the county seat of Madison County. Designed in the Romanesque Revival style of architecture, the church building was erected from 1902-1913. The rock-faced limestone foundation, built 1902-03, was first used as a basement church. In 1913, the church was completed by enlarging the limestone foundation and constructing solid pressed brick walls. The church is typical of Romanesque Revival buildings with its massive walls, high vaulted ceilings, huge columns, and rounded archways. The church displays characteristics of the old Roman basilica which emphasizes massiveness, a semi-circular apse, buttresses, and a single high tower, with a domed shaped roof. The two-story, pressed brick rectory, constructed in 1911-1912, is of the Neo-Classical Revival style of architecture. Some Romanesque features are evident in the rowlock arches over windows, and porticoes supported by columns, circular in shape with Doric capitals. The nomination also includes the rectory garage, a one-story brick building constructed in 1912-13. The structural and historical integrity of the church, rectory, and garage has been preserved except for minor alterations to the church. The alterations include redecorating the church interior in 1964, replacing a slate roof with asphalt shingles in 1977, point tucking old mortar about 1980, adding a concrete ramp for the handicapped in 1986, and constructing a new kitchen in the hall of the church basement in 1988. The property includes one non-contributing building, a modern frame two-stall garage located east of the rectory.

St. Leonard's Catholic Church and Rectory are located in Madison, Nebraska, the county seat of Madison County. The religious edifice was designed in the Romanesque Revival style by architect Jacob Nachtigall of Omaha, Nebraska. The original church was started in 1902 with a rock-faced, limestone foundation and was dedicated as a basement church in February 1903. Father Bartholomew Feldman, O.F.M., was instrumental in the construction of this foundation which measured 100 feet by 52 feet.

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The basement church cost \$8,000, and served the parish until 1913. In the fall of 1912 an additional 53 1/2 feet was added to the basement, and the work began to erect a new church on March 26, 1913. Jacob Nachtigall laid out all the plans and specifications in accordance with the wishes and ideas presented by the pastor, Reverend Edward Muenich, for a predominately German Catholic congregation.

The church, rectory, and garage are located at 502-504 South Nebraska Street. The massive oblong church measures 153 1/2 feet from east to west and 52 feet from north to south, with a wall height of 40 feet. The limestone foundation is 18 inches thick and the solid pressed brick walls are 14 inches thick. The sloping roof at its apex measures about 70 feet from the ground. The brick walls are trimmed with Bedford stone. Brick corbels create a design at the top of the walls. A semicircular apse to the east is topped with a hexagonal skylight, which gives the apse a cone shaped appearance. Minor transepts extend out a few feet north and south to form the two sacristies of the church. Along the north and south walls are many buttresses built flat against the brick walls to strengthen them. Between the buttresses are fourteen hand painted stained glass windows which measure 13 1/2 feet in height and more than 5 feet in width, topped with round arches. The sills are made of stone and the windows are encased in wooden frames. Each window depicts an event in the life of Christ from the Annunciation to the Ascension. The windows were purchased from the Muenich Art Studio in Chicago, Illinois. Under each window, recessed areas, measuring 4 feet high by 5 feet wide, contain the steam heat radiators.

Above the high vaulted ceiling are 2 by 8 wood rafters which help support the sloping roof. The roof, once covered with slate, now has asphalt shingles. The apex of the roof has a galvanized iron ridge, that extends across the full length of the roof. All cornices and gutters are galvanized iron. Two tall chimneys are located at the east end of the roof.

A notable architectural feature on the west facade is a single copper domed tower with an extreme height of 110 feet and topped with a gold leafed cross. Hanging high in the dome is a peal of three bells, weighing 900, 1600, and 2500 pounds. There is also a great clock with six foot dials facing all directions. The bells are so attached to the clock that they strike every quarter hour. In addition to the lofty tower the west facade has the main entrance of double doors set into a round semi-circular

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archway, which contains a large semi-circular stained glass window of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. Brick corbels and circular recesses add to the decorative features on the west facade. Six narrow and three large stained glass windows of saints provide light and beauty for the west facade. Buttresses trimmed with Bedford stone lend additional support for the walls and tower. The arched theme is continued in the shuttered openings of the bell tower. The limestone foundation on the west has two entries with lintel beams which lead to the basement. Seventeen steps over an arched passageway extend upward to the arched double doors.

The interior plan consists of a nave, transept, chancel, ambulatory, and two sacristy areas. A vestibule, balcony, baptistry area and reconciliation room are located at the west end of the church. The interior presents a massive appearance and confines its relationship to the exterior in every respect. The seating capacity is for 700 people.

Within the chancel is an altar more than 20 feet high made of white, hand carved wood. The intricate designs are trimmed with gold. Onyx columns and marble altar tops are centered above a sculptured base of the Last Supper. The ceiling of the sanctuary reaches a height of 29 feet and has an enormous oil painted mural on the upper wall of the apse. The painting represents a scene in heaven depicting 34 life-size figures, including Jesus sitting at the right hand of God. Altars of the Blessed Virgin and Joseph are located in recessed archways to either side of the chancel area. On the altar of St. Joseph is a small glass case which contains a bone relic of St. Leonard, the patron saint of missions.

Two rows of massive circular columns seem to march toward the high altar in the sanctuary. The columns have Corinthian capitals carved with acanthus leaves and trimmed with gold. Wooden shafts in the center of each column support the weight of the rib-vaulted ceiling. The columns are plastered to conceal the shafts. In addition to the 14 columns there are 12 other pillars or columns, some rectangular and some semi-circular, which provide more support for the high vaulted ceilings. The church nave has a center aisle and two side aisles separated by columns.

All walls inside the church are plastered and the interior walls above the columns are decorated with frescoe paintings

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between the archways. The nave of the church is 98 feet long from the entrance to the communion rail. The steps in front of the communion rail are marble. The two side altars and communion rail are made of white handcarved wood, trimmed with gold, and adorned with miniature onyx columns. A massive pulpit of similar design has sculptured figures encircling the center of the pulpit.

The high vaulted ceiling attains a height of 30 feet. Adorning the walls of the church between the largest stained glass windows are 14 beautiful stations of the cross, once richly decorated in silk finish, but now painted white and trimmed with gold.

Elaborate designs on the archways have been replaced with narrow bands of zig-zag gold designs intermingled with gold crosses. Small light globes which once encircled the massive columns have been replaced by larger lamps which dangle from chains between the rounded archways. The sanctuary floor, steps, and aisle passageways, once covered with tile in mosaic design, are now covered with carpet.

Above the main entry to the west is the balcony which is used as a choir loft and supports a gigantic pipe organ which is still in use. Behind the apse is a four foot wide ambulatory which leads to an exit on the east and also provides a passageway from one sacristy to the other.

The church has a full-sized basement with metal shaft columns which support the floor above. There are nine exits to the church and sixty-six windows. Thirty-nine of the windows are stained glass and the remainder of the basement windows are two-over-two clear glass pane arrangements.

The 1,800 pound Vermont granite cornerstone, located on the northwest corner of the church, was laid on May 8, 1913, and was dedicated December 4, 1913, when the church was completed. The church cost about \$75,000 at the time of its construction. The church is still in use today as a religious institution.

Rectory

The St. Leonard's Rectory was constructed in 1911-1912 in the Neo-Classical Revival style of architecture. Emphasis is on

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the porticoes, cornices, and the use of classical ornamentation. The two-story, eight room, brick rectangular house is 40 feet wide and 57 feet long. It has a 13-inch thick pressed brick wall and foundation, of mosaic grey color to match the church. The brick is laid with cement mortar and has wooden cornices, overhanging eaves, hanging mold gutters, and brick lattice work around the porches. A tympanum on the south wall is filled with imbricated shingle siding. The sloping roof is covered with asphalt shingles. On the cornices are brackets 2 1/4 inches thick with three fourth inch anchor rods four feet apart and three feet long. All joists on the first, second, and attic floors have wall anchors four feet apart. The first floor windows have three rowlock arches above all windows. The second floor windows are all rectangular except for one window on the west facade which has two rowlock arches of brick. The attic has two circular window openings, one on the west and one on the south. Most of the windows have one-over-one pane arrangements. The exterior sills on the windows are made of Bedford stone. An open porch borders the west and half of the south facade. The porticoes are supported by six large circular columns with Doric capitals. All outside joints of walls are neatly struck with weathered joints. All inside joints in the basement have struck joints except where the walls are plastered. The two rectangular chimneys are topped with pressed brick. The entry on the west has beveled glass panels on either side of the door. The upper section of the door also has beveled glass, with an intricate design. Beveled glass panes can also be found on some of the south windows. An enclosed porch with one entry is located on the east facade. Another entry is located at the southeast corner of the south porch.

The interior of the rectory consists of plastered walls, red oak woodwork on all doors and windows and an open oak stairway. An unusual fireplace in the parlor is constructed in a corner and touches two walls. The front of the fireplace has a high shield inlaid with miniature panels of tile which are multi-colored. A small porch entry on the north side of the rectory was removed shortly after construction and replaced with two long arched windows made with translucent glass panes. Minor alterations have been made in the kitchen by adding more cabinets. The structural and historical integrity of the rectory has been preserved. The rectory was completed in 1912 at a cost of \$10,374.

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Garage

The rectory garage gives one the impression that all the remnants from the church and rectory were used in the construction of the building. The front of the garage faces west and is made of the same hydraulic pressed brick as the Church and rectory. The west and east walls of the garage are of two different heights as the garage was built on sloping ground. The west wall is 9 feet high from the ground to the eaves while the east wall is 7 1/2 feet high. The north and south walls are 26 feet 4 inches in length with two different types of materials used in the construction of both walls. The first 18 feet moving from west to east on the north and south walls is constructed of old brick possibly obtained from Madison's early day brick yard. The remaining 8 feet 4 inches at the east end of the north and south walls is plastered with a thin layer of cement and painted a brick red to match the old bricks. The east wall of the garage is also plastered with cement and painted brick red.

One is left with the impression that the garage was either lengthened at one time to accommodate a longer car or the old brick was repaired. (The roof gives no indication that the garage had ever been lengthened.) The east and west walls are 16 feet 2 inches wide. The apex of the sloping roof is approximately 12 feet from the ground with wide overhanging eaves. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

The garage has two entrances and two windows. The car entrance is 7 feet 1 1/2 inches wide and 8 feet 4 inches high and is located on the south side of the west wall. Near the west end of the north wall is a smaller entrance which is 3 feet 1 inch wide and 6 feet high. Above each of the two entrances and the two windows are 8 inch wide arched wooden strips and above the wooden arches of the doors and windows are two rowlock brick arches. The west window north of the door is 3 feet high and 4 feet 2 1/2 inches wide. The panes are beveled lead glass similar to the rectory, beautifully designed, colorless from the outside, but on the inside they appear red when the sun shines on the window. Although there is no verification, this west window could have been part of the old church before it was converted into a school in 1902. The outer sill of this window is made of pressed brick and the inner sill is wooden. On the east wall of the garage is another window centrally located, measuring 4 feet 8 1/2 inches wide and 3 feet 1 inch high. There are two rows of

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window panes with four panes in each row measuring 9 inches by 12 inches and above and below these two rows of panes are narrow panes about 3 inches by 12 inches. All the panes on the east window are made of clear glass. The sills on the east window are made of wood. The interior of the garage is a single room, now used as storage for lawn equipment and tools.

The original St. Leonard's Church, located southeast of Madison, was moved into Madison and converted into a school in 1902. The building was located immediately east of the present church and served as the school property until its demolition in 1954 when a new school facility was erected on a different site. Because the new school building is not yet 50 years old, it is not included in this nomination. The original school building property now serves as a parking lot.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance
1902-1913

Significant Dates
1902-1903

Architecture

1911-1912

1912-1913

(see continuation sheet)

Cultural Affiliation
NA

Significant Person
NA

Architect/Builder
Nachtigall, Jacob M.

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

St. Leonard's Catholic Church and Rectory are architecturally significant (Criterion C), on the state level, as representing the work of a prominent Nebraska architect, Jacob M. Nachtigall. A distinguished designer of Ecclesiastical architecture, Nachtigall designed mostly Catholic buildings in the state. The church is an outstanding example of the Romanesque Revival style of architecture, with its massive articulated wall structures, round arches and powerful vaults. The rectory is designed in the Neo-Classical Revival style of architecture. Criteria consideration (Exception A) is applicable to this property and is met through the building's deriving primary significance from architectural distinction. The period of significance is derived from the original construction date of the basement church (1902-03) through 1913, the last year of building construction, inclusive of the church, rectory and garage. Nachtigall drew the plans for both the church and rectory with the exception of part of the basement foundation which was planned by Reverend Bartholomew Feldman, O.F.M. in 1902.

St. Leonard's Catholic Church exemplifies the Romanesque Revival Style of Architecture. The term Romanesque refers to the art style that appeared in western Europe in the early eleventh century and lasted until the advent of Gothic architecture in the middle of the twelfth century. The style is characterized by massive articulated wall structures, round arches and powerful vaults. The Romanesque Revival featured the reuse of massive Romanesque forms in the second half of the nineteenth century. The semi-circular arch form is the most characteristic decorative feature of the style. (Harris, 1977, p.464.)

The architecture of the Romanesque period is magnificent and dedicated to the glory of the church. The church became dominant

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Significant Dates

 1913

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influencing the lives of all persons, and it represented the wealth and luxury that existed and was centered in the church. (Alexander, 1976, p.351.) The plans for Romanesque churches derived from the early Christian Basilica, which evolved into the form of a Latin cross by the introduction of the transept. The church is oriented on an east-west axis, with the front facade to the west. This enables worshippers to face eastward toward the altar. The Roman semicircular arched vault appeared not only in the construction of the roof but was used for the shape of all door and window openings as well. Eventually the arch form was used for purely ornamental purposes. The ornament used in the interiors of Romanesque churches was primarily informative or instructional in nature. The art work depicted scriptural subjects, allegorical scenes indicating the rewards of virtue and the punishment of vice, historical events, etc. Abstract patterns, also used in surface ornamentation, included designs of the checkerboard, the chevron, zig-zag, rosettes, and fret--like motifs. (Whiton, 1974, p.59.)

St. Leonard's Rectory exemplifies the Neo-Classical Revival style of architecture which gained popularity in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The style derives its name through characteristics of Roman and Greek architecture with features of Classical architectural forms. The Classical movement strove for "purer" architecture based on the Roman and Greek forms, in reaction to the flamboyant styles of the Victorian era.

Architecturally significant (Criterion C), on the state level, St. Leonard's Catholic Church and Rectory represents the work of Jacob M. Nachtigall, an Omaha, Nebraska, architect, who became a distinguished designer of Ecclesiastical architecture in the state. Criteria consideration (exception A) is applicable to St. Leonard's Catholic Church and Rectory and is met through the property deriving primary significance from architectural distinction.

Jacob M. Nachtigall came to the United States from Germany in 1883 when he was eight years old. He was employed as a laborer in Omaha until 1898 when he was hired as a draftsman for the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition. This position gave him sufficient qualifications to gain employment with architect Thomas Rogers Kimball. In 1899 Kimball was one of the few professionally trained architects in Nebraska. Nachtigall

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was employed as a draftsman by Kimball from 1900-1908. During this time Kimball was chosen to design St. Cecelia's Cathedral in Omaha, Nebraska. (See NRHP, Jan. 25, 1979.) Perhaps in working with the design for St. Cecelia's, Nachtigall gained the experience necessary to design St. Leonard's Catholic Church and rectory three years later. In 1909 Nachtigall opened his own office. During his career he designed numerous buildings, including Father Flanagan's House in Boys' Town (See NRHP, Sept. 6, 1979), St. Joseph's Memorial Hospital, St. James Orphanage, Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Lourdes and Immaculate Conception Church--all in Omaha, Nebraska, and St. Bonaventure's Church in Raville, Nebraska (see NRHP, Oct. 19, 1982). He was past president of the American Institute of Architects. Jacob Nachtigall died in May, 1947, and is buried at St. Mary Magdalene Cemetery in Omaha, Nebraska.

Although the original plans for a church were drawn by a Franciscan architect, Brother Leonard Darscheid, his plans were never used for St. Leonard's Church. It is not known whether he assisted in the design of the basement foundation. Another Franciscan, Reverend Bartholomew Feldman supervised the construction of the limestone foundation for the basement church in 1902 and Jacob Nachtigall added to the basement foundation and completed the plans when he designed the church and rectory in 1911.

Churches were symbols of spiritual power. St. Leonard's is a symbol of faith that took root in Madison over one hundred years ago and a faith which will touch the people of Madison for many years to come.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Alexander, Harold H., Design, Criteria for Decisions, MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc. New York, copyright 1976.

Brass, Rev. Adam, "History of St. Leonard's Parish," Omaha True Voice, Nebraska, Oct. 16, 1925.

DeMers, Rev. L.J., "St. Leonard's Observe 75th Anniversary of a Church," Madison Star Mail, Madison, Nebraska, Dec. 1955., "St. Leonard's Catholic Church Will Observe Two Events," Norfolk Daily News, Norfolk, Nebraska, Dec. 1955., "Pioneers Heard Mass in Sod Houses in 70's", Madison Star Mail, Madison, Nebraska, Aug. 17, 1967.

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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one.

UTM References

A

1	4
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6	2	8	4	8	10
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4	6	3	1	3	8	10
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is described as the west 35 feet of lot 1, all of lots 2 and 3, the west 35 feet of lot 4 and the north 10 feet of lot 6, block 33, Clark and Madison Mill Co. Addition.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire town lots that have historically been associated with the property, and which include the resources (church, rectory, garage) that maintain historic integrity. That parcel of the original church property which contains modern intrusions (school, parking lot) is not included.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Helen Henry, Parish Council Member date _____

organization St. Leonard's Catholic Church telephone (402) 454-2241

street & number Box 393, 406 South Nebraska Street city or town Madison state NE zip code 68748

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Hagedorn, Eugene, O.F.M., The Franciscans in Nebraska, published by Humphrey Democrat and Norfolk Daily News, Nebraska, July 1931, pp. 384-389.

Harris, Cyril M., Ph.D., Historic Architecture Sourcebook, McGraw-Hill Book Co., copyright 1977.

Henry, Helen, "St. Leonard's Catholic Is a Symbol of Faith," Norfolk Daily News, Norfolk, Nebraska, Oct. 21, 1988, and "St Leonard's Catholic Church", compiled manuscript, unpublished, 1988. On file, Nebraska State Historical Society.

Lubischer, Rosemary, St. Leonard's Centennial Book, publisher, Humphrey Democrat, Humphrey, Nebraska, Sept. 1980. "Madison Parishioners Note Centennial," Humphrey Democrat, Humphrey, Nebraska, Sept. 18, 1980.

"Madison Parish Marks No. 100", The Catholic Voice, Omaha, Nebraska, Sept. 19, 1980.

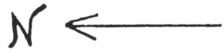
Muenich, Rev. Edward S., The Parish Monthly, Dec. 1913, pp. 7-8.

"St. Leonard's Burn Mortgage," The Sunday Visitor, Omaha, Nebraska, May 3, 1945.

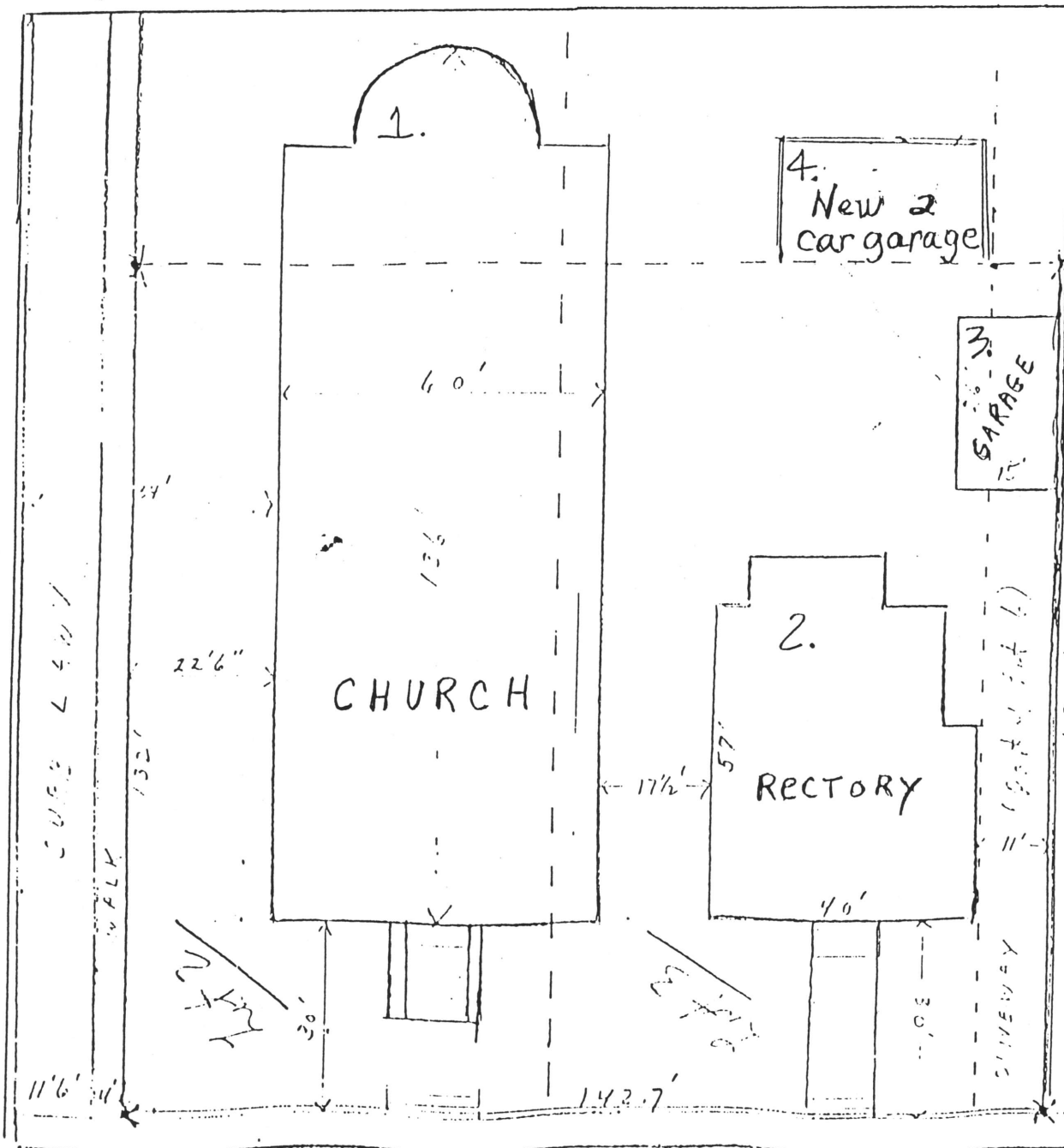
Whiton, Sherrill, Interior Design and Decoration, fourth edition, J.P. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia-New York-Toronto, copyright 1974

ST. LEONARD'S CATHOLIC CHURCH AND RECTORY
 (NEHBS #1 MDO3-23)
 MADISON, MADISON COUNTY, NEBRASKA

Site Plan
 No Scale



- LEGEND:
1. CHURCH
 2. RECTORY
 3. RECTORY GARAGE
 4. Non-CONTRIBUTING EPITAPH



NEBRASKA STREET



CATHOLIC CHURCH MADISON, NEBR. 738

Post card view, 1913
(NSHS H673.5-5061)



Aspect: NE – photo by Steve Pondelis, NSHS, June 1982 (8206/22:4)



Post card view, 1913
(NSHS H673.5-5060)



Rectory & garage, aspect: SW
Photo by Steve Pondelis, June 1982, NSHS (8206/22:8)