

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
LEXINGTON

Property Address
16 FOREST ST

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

A brief mention appearing in the *Lexington Minute-Man* on September 1, 1899, confirms the construction of the original building on this site in that year.

Monday ground was broken for a little building on Forest street, near its junction with Muzzey street, for Miss Theodora Robinson's kindergarten. The location is convenient to the centre of the town and will doubtless prove a successful venture. Mr. A. C. Washburn has the contract for putting up the building which will be pushed to an early completion.

Another mention in 1904 chronicles the success of the kindergarten:

The Forest street kindergarten has completed the second week of the fall term. An attractive group of young children are under Miss Theodora Robinson's care and training, relieving parents of no little care and responsibility in starting them in the path of discipline and learning (*Minute-Man*, Oct. 15, 1904).

The daughter of Theodore Parker Robinson, Theodora Margaret Robinson (b. 1875) married Rev. George Ballard, rector of the Church of Our Redeemer in 1911. The "Kindergarten Hall" was used by members of the Christian Science church as early as 1906.

The renovated building was dedicated on June 30, 1918. At the time of the dedication of the First Church of Christ Scientist, architect Willard D. Brown provided the newspaper with a description of the building:

In view of the quiet and constant manner in which the membership first of the Society, and then of the Church has increased, it is peculiarly appropriate that the the new Church Edifice should be an actual outgrowth of the former modest structure that served so well as the Church home.

The shingled walls have given place, to stucco, and the simple porch of the earlier building has become a glorified arch supported on slender columns and approached by a broad flight of brick steps, flanked on either side by buttresses bearing tall bronze lamp standards. The main entrance, of classic design, is surmounted by a tympanum of Grueby tiles bearing the inscription: "First Church of Christ Scientist".

Broad double doors open into the ample foyer extending across the entire front of the building, on one end of which is a coat room also a broad flight of stairs leading to the Sunday School rooms I the basement, additional access to which is gained by a side entrance off the landing half way down.

Directly opposite the main entrance two pairs of leather covered doors open from the foyer into the auditorium capable of seating about 200 people, lighted by groups of mullioned windows affording pleasant glimpses of wood and meadow land outside, and crowned by an arched ceiling supported on paneled beams and cornices. In an arched niche opposite the entrance is the rostrum with its high wainscots surmounted by the organ screen. Here are the Readers' desks, paneled doors at the back giving access to their private rooms and to the Musicians' room, all directly in the rear. On either side of the rostrum are doorways, the one on the left opening into the Directors' room, that on the right to an emergency stairway leading to the outside as well as to the Sunday School room under. This is a large room, some 30 x 40 feet in size, with a large primary class room about 15 x 21 opening out of it. Owing to the slope of the land these rooms are completely out of ground and are exceptionally well lighted with groups of mullioned windows on either side.