

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	SWN.138
Historic Name:	South Swansea Union Church
Common Name:	
Address:	Gardner's Neck Rd corner of Church St
City/Town:	Swansea
Village/Neighborhood:	South Swansea; Gardner's Neck;
Local No:	11;
Year Constructed:	1916
Architectural Style(s):	Shingle Style;
Architect(s):	Hunt, Arthur L.;
Use(s):	Church; Other Educational;
Significance:	Architecture; Religion;
Area(s):	SWN.H
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register Individual Property (02/16/1990); Nat'l Register MRA (02/16/1990);
Building Materials:	Roof: Asphalt Shingle; Wall: Wood Shingle; Foundation: Cobblestone;
Demolished	No



The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has converted this paper record to digital format as part of ongoing projects to scan records of the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places nominations for Massachusetts. Efforts are ongoing and not all inventory or National Register records related to this resource may be available in digital format at this time.

The MACRIS database and scanned files are highly dynamic; new information is added daily and both database records and related scanned files may be updated as new information is incorporated into MHC files. Users should note that there may be a considerable lag time between the receipt of new or updated records by MHC and the appearance of related information in MACRIS. Users should also note that not all source materials for the MACRIS database are made available as scanned images. Users may consult the records, files and maps available in MHC's public research area at its offices at the State Archives Building, 220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, open M-F, 9-5.

Users of this digital material acknowledge that they have read and understood the MACRIS Information and Disclaimer (<http://mhc-macris.net/macrisdisclaimer.htm>)

Data available via the MACRIS web interface, and associated scanned files are for information purposes only. THE ACT OF CHECKING THIS DATABASE AND ASSOCIATED SCANNED FILES DOES NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LOCAL, STATE OR FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS. IF YOU ARE REPRESENTING A DEVELOPER AND/OR A PROPOSED PROJECT THAT WILL REQUIRE A PERMIT, LICENSE OR FUNDING FROM ANY STATE OR FEDERAL AGENCY YOU MUST SUBMIT A PROJECT NOTIFICATION FORM TO MHC FOR MHC'S REVIEW AND COMMENT. You can obtain a copy of a PNF through the MHC web site (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc) under the subject heading "MHC Forms."

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

This file was accessed on: Monday, June 27, 2022 at 7:49 PM

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

NR IND
NR MRA 7/16/90
OFFICE COPY
DO NOT REMOVE
USGS-FALL
PL-S.SWAN, GARD

AREA

FORM NO.

RH, E

138

Swansea, Mass. MRA
SWANSEA

Address Gardner's Neck Road

Historic Name South Swansea Union Church

Present religious

Original religious

DESCRIPTION

Year 1916

Source Church records

Roof Shingle

Architect unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric wood shingle

Outbuildings parish house (ca. 1960s)

Major Alterations (with dates) none

Condition good

Moved no Date ---

Acreage less than one acre

Setting suburban houses on fairly

regular rectangular lots

UTM REFERENCE 19 316880 4621270

USGS QUADRANGLE Fall River, MA-RI 1967/1979

SCALE 1:25000

Recorded by Kay Flynn/K. K. Broomer

Organization Swansea Historical Commission

Date March 1988/October 1989

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s).
Indicate north

(see attached map)



NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The South Swansea Union Church retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and is significant on the local level. The church meets Criterion A as a product of the rapidly expanding suburban population on Gardner's Neck in the early 20th century, and Criterion C as a well-preserved ecclesiastical structure in the Shingle Style. For its architectural significance in Swansea, the church also meets Criteria Consideration A.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

South Swansea Union Church is architecturally significant as the best example of a Shingle Style church in Swansea. One and one-half stories on a raised rubblestone foundation, the church is a gabled rectangular structure with characteristic wood shingle cladding. A prominent facade cross-gable includes four lancet windows on the first floor and a wheel window above. Similar arrangements of lancet and wheel windows grace the end-gable elevations of the main block. The offset entrance is marked by a square tower rising to a belvedere with tent roof. Other architectural features includes overhanging eaves, exposed rafters, and drip moulds over windows and doors.

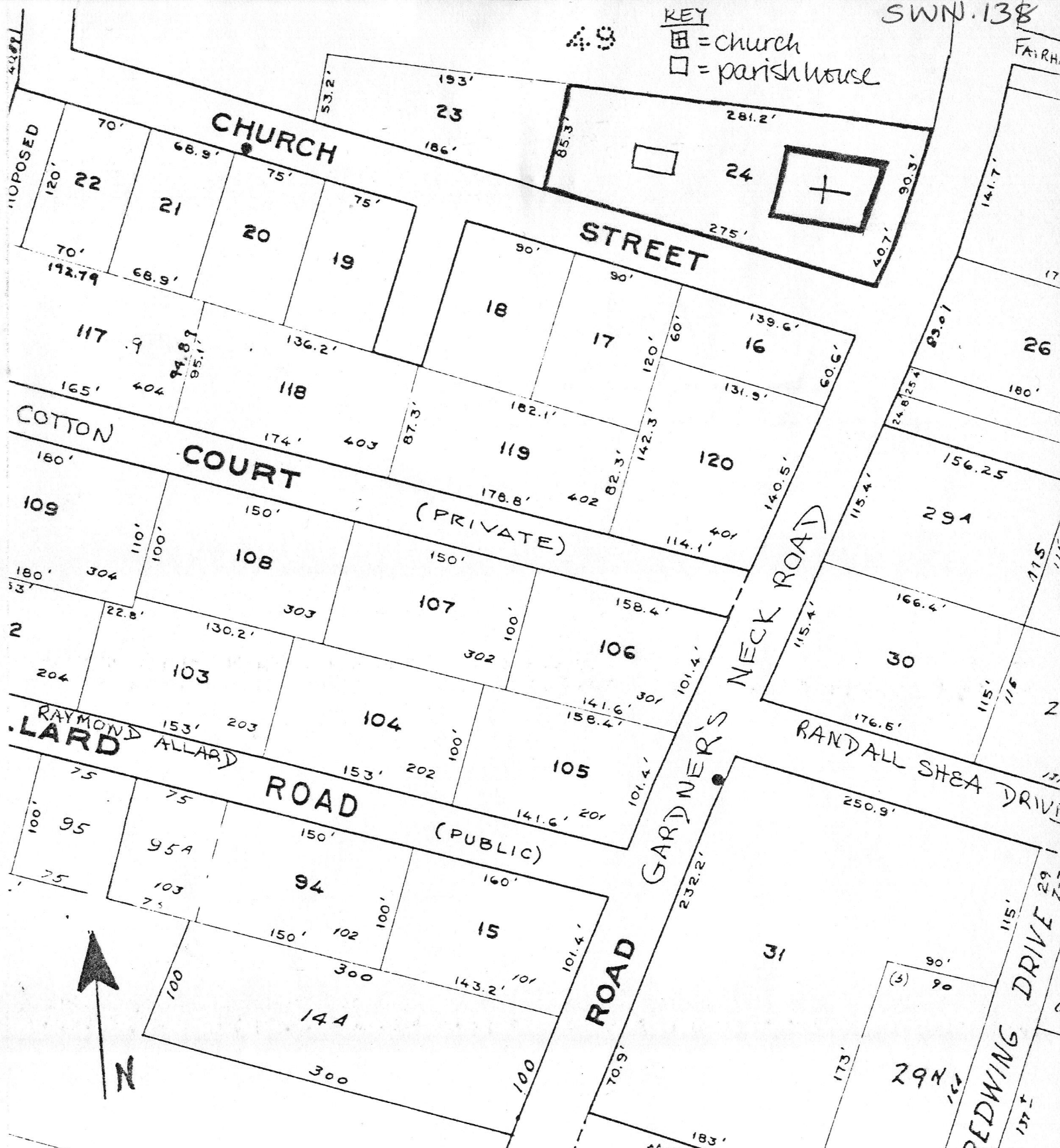
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

The formation of the South Swansea Union Church is rooted in the organization of the South Swansea Sunday School about 1910. In the early decades of the 20th century the population of Gardner's Neck (South Swansea) rapidly increased, as the formerly rural area was transformed by suburban development. The Sunday school provided for area children of varied circumstances who were unable to attend the other Sunday schools of the town. School membership swelled from 16 to 96 children in just one year, and meeting places included private homes and even a tent at Ocean Grove. In October 1914 the school was incorporated with the objective of buying land and building a chapel. Meanwhile, the Ladies Aid Society was formed November 17, 1914 to assist in running the Sunday school.

Sunday evening services began in private homes on the Neck in August 1915. In November of that year, the South Swansea Sunday School Corporation purchased land from Edwin Gardner for the chapel. The building committee consisted of members of the Sunday school corporation: Charles A. Chace, Edward Goss, Mr. and Mrs. Chester R. Gardner, and Mrs. Sidney K. Crittenden. The cornerstone for the church was laid May 6, 1916 and the building was dedicated the following September.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

50th Anniversary of the South Swansea Church, 1914-1964, booklet printed by the Church.
 Pierce, Helen, ed. Swansea Tercentenary 1667-1967. Swansea, MA, 1967.
 Wright, Otis. History of Swansea 1667-1917. Swansea, MA, 1917.



MAC # F-138 / 1961
 SOUTH SWANSEA UNION CHURCH
 GARDNER'S NECK ROAD
 JAMES W. SEWALL COMPANY
 OLD TOWN, MAINE
 SCALE 1/4 INCH = 100 ± FEET
 FOR A BISSING PURPOSES ONLY
 46



PL- S. SWAN
GARD
USGS FALL
NRIND 72hwlgn NR
NR MRA
AREA F FORM NO. 138
H/E 1C
INC

Town SWANSEA
Address Gardner's Neck Road
corner of Church Street
Historic Name South Swansea Union Church

Use: Present Church
Original Church

DESCRIPTION
Date 1916

Source Church Records - Assessors'
Map 46 Lot 24

Style Vernacular ^{American} Victorian Gothic
Shingle Style

Architect Builder - Arthur L. Hunt

Exterior Wall Fabric Shingle

Outbuildings Two buildings used for
Christian education

Major Alterations (with dates) None

Condition Good - original fabric

Moved No Date

Acreage Over one acre

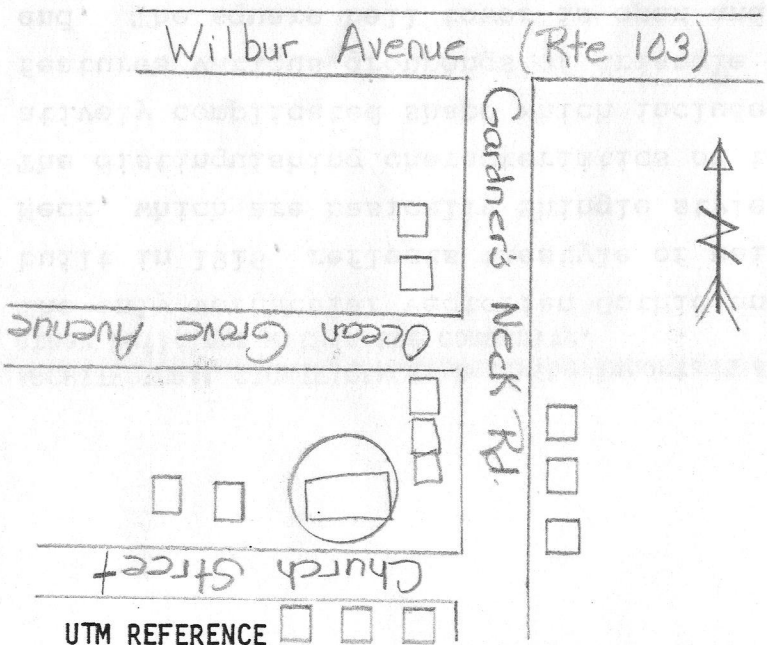
Setting

Recorded by Kay Flynn/Calvin L. Gardner
May 1978

Organization Swansea Historical
Commission

Date January, 1986

Intersection(s).
Indicate north



UTM REFERENCE

USGS QUADRANGLE Fall River, Mass. RI 1967-79

SCALE

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

The only vernacular Victorian Gothic and Shingle style church in Swansea and built in 1916, reflects the style of neighboring residential homes on Gardner's Neck, which are basically Shingle style. (See The Colony Area Form #____)

The distinguishing characteristics of this late Victorian Gothic church is its relatively complicated shape which includes a tri-gable and offset bell tower. It features various groupings of triangle windows with round windows in each gable end. The square bell tower is open and its hipped roof is conically capped.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

Religious work on Gardner's Neck began in the mid- 19th century. Preaching was done in the old school house which then stood just north of the present church . In the 1880's , meetings were held in the east room of the South Swansea railroad station (no longer extant) Outgrowing this room, meetings were then held in the "new" school house at Green's Corner, (no longer extant) The church grew and cottage meetings were held in several houses.

By October, 1914, the increased population of "varied " circumstances included children who were unable to attend the Sunday Schools in town, The South Swansea Sunday School Corporation was formed with the intent to buy land for a Chapel. The land was purchased from Edwin C. Gardner in November 1915. A building committee of five supervised the plans and the construction was done by Arthur L. Hunt.

The South Swansea Union Church historically shows the importance of religion to the growing suburban population of South Swansea during the period of time when the heirs of the Gardner family were selling pieces of property.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Wright, pg. 122-124

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no.

Form no.

138 ~~11~~



1. Town Swansea, Mass.

Address Gardner's Neck Road, cor. Church St.

Name South Swansea Union Church

Present use Church

Present owner South Swansea Union Church

3. Description:

Date 1916

Source Church Records - Assessors'

Map 46 Lot 24

Style GOthic REVIVAL

✓ Architect _____

Exterior wall fabric Wood

Outbuildings (describe) 2 buildings used for Christian education.

Other features _____

Altered no Date _____

Moved no Date _____

5. Lot size:

One acre or less _____ Over one acre 1.2 A.

Approximate frontage G. N. Road - 265 feet

Church St. - 281 feet

Approximate distance of building from street

100 ft. back from Gardner's Neck Road

6. Recorded by Calvin L. Gardner

Organization Swansea Historical Society

Date May 24, 1978

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



WILBUR AVENUE Rte. 103

GARDNER'S NECK ROAD

OCEAN GROVE AVE

CHURCH STREET

RECEIVED

JUN 13 1978

MASS. HIST. COMM.

7. Original owner (if known) South Swansea Union ChurchOriginal use ChurchSubsequent uses (if any) and dates No

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science/ invention	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social/ humanitarian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	Military	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	Political	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Community development	<input type="checkbox"/>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

In October 1914 a Sunday School was organized, and took the name of South Swansea Sunday School. The first year it was held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Chester R. Gardner. During this time a Society was formed with the object of buying land and building a chapel. A committee was formed to solicit pledges. Their effort enabled them to purchase the land for the chapel from Edwin C. Gardner in November 1915. The Sunday School Corporation selected a building committee to supervise construction in all details. Plans were developed and given to contractor Arthur L. Hunt. The cornerstone was laid on May 6, 1916, and the Chapel was dedicated September 10, 1916.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

Assessors' records, Swansea
Church records