

S. Weir Mitchell School

Physical Description

The S. Weir Mitchell School is a four story, seven bay, red brick building with rich terra cotta and granite trim. The basement, located above grade, features six light, fixed sash with granite sills and protective grilles. The basement is capped by a limestone belt course. The fenestration follows a regular pattern of four double hung four over four sash defined by quoined surrounds. Thin string courses span between the second and third floors and the fourth floor and parapet. Small windows with quoined surrounds pierce the parapet wall, providing subtle punctuation for each of the bays. The building is dominated by a projecting main entrance bay and projecting secondary entrance bay located at either end of the Kingsessing Avenue elevation. Similar in detailing to the Furness School, the building displays a main entrance which is a study in Gothic inspired detailing, with oversize arch surround. Tripartite entrance doors, with pronounced mullions are capped by a tripartite transom panel. The surround is framed by tracery with stylized panels featuring coffered panels between. Within the projecting bay the fenestration follows a pattern of tripartite sash with transom panels on the second and third floors. The fourth floor has the same configuration with an arched head. The flanking smaller windows, framed with terra cotta quoining, create the illusion of pilasters. The building detailing is completed with more terra cotta and brick decoration including diaper panels, gothic motifs and an arched gable parapet.

Statement of Significance

One of only three known designs of Building Type Number 130, the Mitchell School represents an exceptionally intact Gothicized design by Henry deCoursey Richards. Together with the Furness School and the John Kinsey School, the building stands as a richly ornamented example of Richards' work in this stylistic mode. This structure displays Richards' flare for intricate detailing, which is not usually found on Philadelphia public schools.

Thus the Mitchell School is important as a Gothic style school with detailing that is exceptional for Philadelphia public schools.

area of significance: architecture

verbal boundary description

The nominated property consists of Philadelphia County lot 8862665 which contains the school and its contiguous grounds.

EVALUATION

EVALUATOR(S)

8. property owners name and address
 School Board of Philadelphia
 21st Street & the Parkway
 Philadelphia, Pa. 19103

9. tax parcel number/other number
 11. status (other surveys, lists etc.)

10. U.T.M. Zone Easting Northing
 14 18 10 18 0
 two acres
 14 4 2 10 15 2
 usgs sheet: Philadelphia

12. classification
 site () structure () object ()
 building () district ()
 Thematic

13. date(s) (how determined)
 1915-1916
 14. period

15. style, design or folk type
 Acad. Gothic

19. original use School
 20. present use School

16. architect or engineer
 H.deC.Richards

17. contractor or builder
 David Peoples

18. primary building mat./construc.
 Firepf.const.
 t.cotta/gran.trim

21. condition Fair
 22. integrity Good

23. site plan with north arrow
 24. photo notation
 25. file/location

USE COPY FOR DUPLICATING
 BLACK AND WHITE PRINT(S)
 3 1/2" x 5" enlargement or medium format contact
 note location of negative in block 24.

26. brief description (note unusual features, integrity, environment, threats and associated buildings)
 NPS counting purposes: one contributing building
 (continue on back if necessary)

27. history, significance and/or background
 (continue on back if necessary)

28. sources of information
 see bibliography for nomination
 (continue on back if necessary)

29. prepared by:
 B. Mintz

Computer Coding (BHP Survey Grantees Must Complete)

30. date 7/1986
 revision(s)

31. county _____ 32. style _____
 33. construction material _____ 34. roof _____
 35. design type _____
 36. historic function _____
 37. construction feature _____ 38. ext. walls _____ 39. plan _____
 40. facade width _____ 41. roof material _____ 42. stories _____ 43. depth _____
 44. ext. design _____
 45. int. design _____

County PHILADELPHIA
 present name S. WEIR MITCHELL SCHOOL
 2. municipality PHILADELPHIA
 6. other name (historic name if any) SAME
 3. street address or specific location FIFTY SIXTH & KINGESSING STREET
 4. survey code

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
Spring Garden School #2
12th & Melon St.
18486 6204423 660

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
Spring Garden School #1
12th & Ogden St.
18486 6604424 (44)

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
W&E Martin Orthopedic Sch.
18485 1004424 220

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
Lydia Barrah School
18485 8204424 020

PHILADELPHIA QUADRANGLE
PENNSYLVANIA-NEW JERSEY
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
Rolph Walton School
18484 9004427 020

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
George Heade School
18485 9004425 140

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
Verbrook High School
18481 4604422 540

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
M. Shoemaker Jr. High
18480 4804424 840

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
William B. Hanna School
18479 8004424 680

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
George L. Brooks School
18480 0204424 040

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
Thomas Dunlap
18481 0404423 440

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
East Phil. High School
18481 4604422 520

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
Ella R. Masterson School
18485 8204423 440

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
David Landreth School
18484 4804420 620

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
Weir Mitchell School
18480 8804420 520

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County
Tony Wayne School
18481 6604419 960

Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia County

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
Daniel Boone
18488 9204

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
Edison High
18487 6604

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
David Farrar
18488 4204

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
William S. S
18484 0404

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
Paul Lawrence
18486 8004

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
William Penn
18486 0404

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
Alexander D
18485 1404

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
Mifflin Sch
18487 7604

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
18486 3404

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
Thaddeus Ste
18486 3404

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
Dorothy Sch
18487 1004

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
J. Sylvester
18486 3004

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
Samuel J. K
18486 3404

Philadelphia
Philadelphia
Robert Ralst
18487 4604

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Francis M. C
18485 2204

Philadelphia
Philadelphia