

Landmarks Preservation Commission
May 16, 1995; Designation List 264
LP-1868

WESTFIELD TOWNSHIP DISTRICT SCHOOL NO. 5/now

Public School 1 Annex (the structure at the corner of Yetman Avenue and Academy Avenue), 58 Summit Street, Tottenville, Staten Island.

Built 1878, builder/architect undetermined; enlarged 1896-97, Pierce & Brun, architects.

Landmark Site: Borough of Staten Island Tax Map Block 7898, Lot 1 in part consisting of the property bounded by a line beginning at the southeast corner of the lot, then extending northerly along the eastern lot line approximately 125 feet, then extending westerly approximately 180 feet, then extending southerly approximately 125 feet to the southern lot line, then extending easterly along the southern lot line approximately 180 feet to the point of beginning.

On October 1, 1991, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Westfield Township District School No. 5 (later Public School 1 Annex), 58 Summit Street, Tottenville, Staten Island, and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 5). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Two speakers testified in favor of designations. Previously, the Commission had received correspondence from the Principal and Parent Teacher Association of P.S. 1 and Community School Board of New York City District No. 31 in favor of designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Summary

Westfield Township District School No. 5, erected in 1878 (architect undetermined) and enlarged in 1896-97 to plans provided by the architectural firm of Pierce & Brun, demonstrates the strong commitment of the inhabitants of Tottenville to education. As the oldest public school remaining in use on Staten Island, the building recalls the era when such schools on Staten Island were under the jurisdiction of Richmond County and the State of New York. The brick schoolhouse appears to have been designed by a builder or architect familiar with the neo-Grec style. The facade, with its temple-inspired form, incorporates stylized classical elements and incised ornament, while the side walls have a robust rhythm established by pilasters and window openings with denticulated window heads. The growing population of the village and the establishment of a two-year high school department prompted the construction of an addition to the schoolhouse in 1896-97. Pierce & Brun established a T-shaped plan and incorporated signature elements of the original building into an up-to-date scheme with banks of windows and a well-lighted central stairhall. Denticulated brick window heads and patterned bands, as well as the bracketed wood cornice, unite the two portions of the building into a harmonious whole. The projects, undertaken by the School District Board of Trustees and Board of Education with the approval of district residents, were exercises in local government as well as architectural achievements. The schoolhouse, part of the educational complex in Tottenville, remains in use as the Public School 1 Annex.

History of Tottenville¹

The southwestern tip of Staten Island (Richmond County), once an important Native American habitation site and burial ground, has a recorded history which dates to the 1670s, when Captain Christopher Billopp built a stone manor house (the Billopp or Conference House, a designated New York City Landmark) and initiated ferry service to Perth Amboy, New Jersey. Billopp's plantation, later enlarged and given the title "Manor of Bentley," was the largest holding in the West Division (later renamed Westfield Township), one of the four precincts into which the county was divided. Following the Revolution, the Billopp property was confiscated by the State of New York, partitioned, and sold; it continued to be used largely for farming and as a base for fishing and associated maritime trades. Gradually the land was subdivided into smaller lots and by the 1840s a hamlet began to form around the ferry landing and the nearby sections of Amboy Road, the path leading to it. The slow-growing settlement soon came to be known as Tottenville, after the prominent family who had erected a wharf, Totten's Landing. Many local residents were engaged in the oyster business and ship-building, which remained leading occupations and mainstays of the area economy into the 1920s, while the waterfront setting and frequent steamer and ferry connections prompted the development of small summer resorts, restaurants, hotels, and other recreation businesses.

The completion in 1860 of the Staten Island Railroad, which ran from Vanderbilt's Landing on the island's east shore to a depot near the hamlet's ferry landing, establishing an important link between the developing village and the rest of the island, spurred the growth of an adjacent commercial area. During the subsequent decade, a post office was begun and soon named Tottenville, and the hamlet was officially incorporated as a village — the only one to be chartered on the island's southern and western sections. The village, re-incorporated in 1894, reached a peak of development at the close of the nineteenth century, when many commercial and civic institutions — such as the Tottenville Free Library, several weekly newspapers, the Atlantic Terra Cotta Works, and the Tottenville Copper Company — were established. From the 1870s through much of the present century, Tottenville has been the largest, most populous, and most cohesive settlement in the southern section of Staten Island and has retained its individuality as a suburban village.

Common Schools on Staten Island²

Prior to the consolidation of Greater New York in 1898, the schools on Staten Island were under the jurisdiction of the Richmond County Superintendent of Schools and the State of New York. Though thought of today as public schools — as opposed to private or parochial institutions — they were known as "common schools" throughout the nineteenth century. In 1854, local school districts, organized and numbered by township, were given the power to select sites for schools and raise the money to construct and maintain schoolhouses, in addition to other school supervisory powers. Common school districts received financial support from state sources and school district taxes; some continued to use the rate bill system and assessed parents according to the number of children they sent to school. The Township of Westfield had seven school districts, which were centered on small villages and numbered in order of establishment.³

During the last half of the nineteenth century, presumably all of the school districts on Staten Island erected schoolhouses, which varied widely since each school district was responsible for its own facilities. The increase in the population on the island throughout that period, however, taxed the adequacy of even the best-planned and largest facilities. During the 1870s, the Village of Tottenville and the Townships of Castleton and Southfield responded to the problem with the construction of substantial brick schoolhouses. During the late 1880s, the inadequate and overcrowded conditions of many of the schools on Staten Island prompted the County Superintendent to report that the public was generally taking a greater interest in schools and education, in contrast to the "good enough" attitude that had prevailed.⁴

During the 1890s over twenty district schoolhouses were erected on Staten Island. The growing population and the enforcement of the Compulsory Education Act, adopted in 1894, prompted the school construction boom. Richmond County Superintendent of Schools Julia K. West, who held the position from 1894 to 1898, oversaw most of this construction. West noted in her first annual report that the schools in the county were overcrowded and some were unfit for use.⁵ The work on Staten Island occurred at the same time as the extensive construction of schoolhouses throughout New York State during the 1890s. According to a Department of Public Instruction annual report, schoolhouse construction emphasized "aesthetics, convenience, and hygienic provisions" and involved

such a spirit of rivalry between districts to erect the most attractive school buildings that even the most parsimonious districts and stolid trustees were unable to oppose the progressive aspect of the times.⁶ The *Staten Island Independent* articulated the effect of the school building campaign, noting that the large brick school built in Tompkinsville was "an ornament to the neighborhood and will reflect great credit on the trustees of the district."⁷

The construction of a school on Staten Island prior to the consolidation of Greater New York in 1898 was an exercise in local government that was directed by the School District Board of Trustees, but included all voting residents of the district.⁸ The trustees of a school district board would call a special meeting to entertain the question of constructing a new building. If the vote was favorable, the trustees then appointed a committee to consider sites and make a recommendation to the voters. Once the district acquired a site, a small building committee – usually the trustees and two or three additional members of the community – was appointed; sometimes the trustees commissioned an architect to provide plans and specifications, while in other situations, particularly for larger building projects, the trustees acquired plans through a competition advertised in local newspapers. Once plans were adopted, the district usually issued revenue bonds to finance construction. Both the Kreischerville and Tottenville school buildings were erected by local contractors and furnished with materials acquired from Staten Island merchants.

Westfield Township School District No. 5

School districts were established in the townships of Staten Island in 1812, and it appears that a common school existed in the area that became Tottenville by 1822. Local residents recalled an early school that was located in a former chapel and Sunday school building near Richmond Valley (the small hamlet just to the northeast of Tottenville).⁹ The Leslie sisters from Nova Scotia operated one of the private schools in the village during in the early 1850s, and the Rollins family owned another. During the mid-nineteenth century there were two schoolhouses in the village, one of which was at Satterlee Street near the western termination of Amboy Road. The other was a two-story brick structure on the north side of Amboy Road, between Wood and Fisher Avenues. That building was remembered as having a single room downstairs for older students and two

classrooms upstairs for the intermediate group; the primary class was located in a house across the street.

In the early 1870s, the residents of Tottenville began to consider the construction of a larger school house because the existing facility was overcrowded and more classrooms and teachers were needed. Although the residents considered erecting a building with two classrooms across the road from the existing schoolhouse, in 1873 the trustees chose a site for a new school: a large, partially wooded lot of about one-and-one-half acres between Garretson (now Yetman) and Prospect (now Brighton Street) Avenues – which was set back from the south side of Amboy Road.¹⁰ The residents instructed the trustees and members of the building committee to procure plans and specifications for a schoolhouse which was not to cost more than \$9,000. After the trustees and the building committee presented the plans for the building, the voters in the school district defeated a proposal to issue revenue bonds for \$10,000, and the project was temporarily set aside.¹¹ In October 1877, the school district decided to move forward with the building program and authorized the trustees to solicit bids for construction of the building according to the plans and specifications on hand, and to issue bonds to raise money for building.¹²

The new school opened with an official ceremony on the first Monday of September 1878.¹³ Students, parents, and friends heard *America* sung to the accompaniment of a new organ and remarks from officials, including David C. Butler, president of the board of trustees, who reminded the students of how their parents and neighbors had labored and saved to construct the fine school building and the importance of taking care of it. The students and visitors marvelled at the grandeur of the place, with its high ceilings, spotless floors, extra large blackboards, and heavy sliding glass doors that divided both the upper and lower floors into three large classrooms. Also impressive was the view from the upper windows which extended from Sandy Hook to the New Jersey Hills, prompting the name for the school, "Bay View Academy."¹⁴

In 1895, the school district took actions that confirmed the village's strong commitment to education, as well as the effects of the continued growth of the village population and the Compulsory Attendance Law passed in 1894. It initiated the expansion of the school to include two upper grades which became one of the three high school departments established on Staten Island prior to the

consolidation of Greater New York.¹⁵ In July 1896, the district decided to build an addition to the schoolhouse in order to accommodate 200 pupils and to improve the existing structure with a new heating and ventilation system. The newly-established Board of Education in the district commissioned the architectural firm of Pierce & Brun to prepare plans for the addition, which was built by the local contractor, P.W. Wolf & Son.¹⁶ The high school department occupied rooms on the upper floor of the building prior to its merger in 1902 with the Stapleton high school, which in turn was soon replaced with the establishment of Curtis High School in 1904.¹⁷

Village Schoolhouse Architecture¹⁸

Several nineteenth-century pattern book authors articulated the intent of schoolhouse architecture at that time. Henry Barnard, writing in 1842, asserted that schoolhouses should compare favorably to other public edifices in attractiveness, convenience, and durability, and that the exterior of the building should exhibit good architectural proportions and inspire children and the community with respect for education. In his 1871 volume, James Johnnot added a "modern style" to the Greek and Gothic modes that he had previously recommended for schoolhouses, and noted that the best buildings had a composite style in which beautiful forms were adapted from any of the classic styles and arranged for convenience. School planners had long acknowledged the importance of lighting, ventilation, and adequate classroom size; in the early 1870s, school designers began to recognize the value of what came to be a signature element of a school architecture: banks of windows in classroom walls. Johnnot noted that grouped windows not only provided the greatest amount of light, but also gave the opportunity for fine architectural detail. The small brick schools erected in Tottenville and Kreischerville were similar in size to designs recommended for schoolhouses in villages or towns that had two classrooms (for as many as fifty-six pupils) on each floor and often an assembly room in the attic; the buildings usually had separate entrances for boys and girls. In towns throughout the state, wood-framed schoolhouses were much more common than brick structures, and many of the schools erected in the small villages on Staten Island during the 1890s were picturesque wood-framed buildings. District School No. 7 in Kreischerville and the addition to the Tottenville school appear to have been the only brick structures of the smaller schools

built on Staten Island during the 1890s, although several of the larger schools in north shore communities were brick.¹⁹ The school district trustees and architects were likely to have chosen that material in 1878 and 1896 because of its fire-resistant qualities and its strong association with civic buildings, and to establish the Tottenville school as a small village school built of the finest affordable material.

District School No. 5 appears to have been designed by a builder/architect (undetermined) in the "modern style" of the era, which is best characterized as neo-Grec. Stylized references to classical architecture include the suggestion of a Greek-temple facade with a crowning pediment enclosing by an interrupted entablature, the denticulated window heads and bands, and incised ornament on the sandstone entrance and window elements. Pilasters incorporating ventilation flues and window openings with jaunty denticulated heads created a robust rhythm for the side walls of the structure; chimneys originally rose above alternate pilasters, creating a lively roofline. The designer of District School No. 5 acknowledged the convention of incorporating towers in school buildings to further their civic appearance by placing an open belfry on the roof.²⁰ (See Fig. 1 for a late nineteenth-century view of the building.)

For the 1896-97 addition to the school Pierce & Brun skillfully incorporated up-to-date elements of schoolhouse design with the prominent elements of the original structure, such as the denticulated window heads. The central portion of the west-facing facade announces the location of the central stairhall; its large windows are flanked by expanses of classroom walls with no openings. The north- and south-facing end facades of the addition have closely-set windows, suggesting the banks of windows of contemporary school buildings; the joined denticulated window heads appear as a variation of a well-established theme. The intersecting gable roof of the entire structure is united by similar bracketed wood cornices which have interrupted entablatures framing each gable face to suggest pediments.

The architectural firm of Pierce & Brun specialized in school design during the mid-1890s.²¹ George Henry Pierce established an architectural practice in Long Island City, Queens about 1887. He moved his practice to Manhattan about 1892, where he was joined by Clement Benjamin Brun in a partnership from 1894-97; Pierce practiced in New York City until around 1900. After leaving his association with Pierce, Brun established a partnership

with Leo Hauser from 1898 through 1902. The firm had provided plans for a school in Pleasant Plains, Staten Island, and may have become known to the Westfield District No. 5 Board of Education through that project.

Description

District School No. 5 is a T-shaped structure consisting of the original portion facing Yetman Avenue²² and a wing added to the west end, on the Brighton Street side of the site. The building is now surrounded by play yards and flanked by other school buildings: Public School No. 1 to the north and Intermediate School No. 34 to the southeast (buildings not included in this designation).

The 1878 portion of the school is a rectangular, two-and-one-half-story red brick structure on a raised basement. The main entrance is in the end of the building facing Yetman Avenue; steps (with a replacement pipe-rail balustrade) lead to a pair of doors set in a surround of sandstone with carved impost blocks supporting a pediment-like form with a segmental arch framing the opening.²³ The fenestration of the facade of the building is irregular, with a single window on each side of the entrance, four bays at the second story, and an opening of the same size in the gable face lighting the attic. The window openings have sandstone supporting blocks, sills, and crested lintels that are incised with curvilinear and geometric designs, and (like all of the windows in the building) have four-over-four double-hung wood sash. A bracketed raking cornice at the edge of the gable roof is replicated as an interrupted entablature across the facade, which suggests a pediment form; the break in the entablature allows for the placement of a sandstone plaque inscribed "District School No. 5 Erected A.D. 1878." The bracketed cornice extends along the side walls of the building and longer brackets emphasize the corners. Bands of light-colored brick, with alternating denticulated and sawtooth patterns, extend across the end wall at each story at the height of the sills and just below the lintels of the window openings.²⁴

The side walls of the original portion of the school building are articulated with pilasters that are corbelled out at the main floor level and rise to the cornice. The narrow bays are nearly filled with window openings which are emphasized with denticulated segmentally-arched light-colored brick heads. The east end bays of the side walls have blocked windows; the pilasters west of those bays

have corbelled terminations above low, rectangular window openings at the main floor level.²⁵ Only two of the chimneys with corbelled caps that originally rose above alternating pilasters remain: one near the east end of the south wall and one near the west end of the north wall. A one-story, flat-roofed, metal-clad service structure extends from the mid-portion of the north wall.

The 1896-97 addition on the west end of the building has exterior walls of red brick similar to that of the original portion of the building; its intersecting gable roof is edged with a bracketed cornice which is nearly identical to that on the earlier portion. The facade of the addition facing Brighton Street has a central entrance and stairhall bay topped with an intersecting gable roof with a pediment formed by an interrupted entablature; an oculus window with a denticulated brick surround is centered in the pediment (and those above the end walls). Pilasters, like those that emphasize the corners of the addition, set off the bay. The bay has door and window openings with denticulated segmentally-arched brick heads (similar to those on the original portion of the building). Denticulated bands extend from the entrance arch at impost height across the central bay; the entrance has replacement paired doors.²⁶ The upper portion of the tall, central window lighting the stairhall is separated by a brick panel from the lower opening, which has a sandstone lintel. The central bay is flanked by blank walls that form the side walls of classrooms. The north and south end walls of the classrooms have banks of five windows separated by narrow brick piers above which the denticulated brick heads join. At the junctures of the wings, external staircases have been added to serve entrances at the upper story which have solid doors. A rectangular chimney rises above the addition near its juncture with the original wing.

Subsequent History

Westfield District School No. 5 became Public School No. 1, Borough of Richmond, at the time of the consolidation of Greater New York in 1898 when all schools were renumbered. In 1905-06, a new school was erected north of the former Westfield District School No. 5. The New York City Board of Education Superintendent of School Buildings, C.B.J. Snyder, designed the new building (not included in this designation), which became P.S. No. 1. Snyder was the architect responsible for many New York City school buildings (several of which are designated New

York City Landmarks), and initiated the period of City-controlled school design in Tottenville. The former District School No. 5 became known as the P.S. 1 Annex. The complex of schools was expanded again with the construction in 1935 of the building south of Academy Avenue that originally housed the Tottenville High School, and is now Intermediate School No. 34 (also not included in this designation). The former District School No. 5 building has

remained an integral part of this educational complex and currently houses classrooms and a small gymnasium on the main floor of the original portion of the building.

Report prepared by
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NOTES

1. Research for this report was greatly facilitated by Tottenville Branch librarian Michael Loscalzo. LPC Commissioner Charles L. Sachs contributed much to the editing of this section, which is based on the following sources. F.H. Walling, *Map of Staten Island, Richmond County, New York* (New York: D.A. Fox, 1859); F.W. Beers, *Atlas of Staten Island, New York* (New York: J.B. Beers & Co., 1874); a description of the town in the *Richmond County Gazette*, June 11, 1873, p. 2; E. Robinson and R.H. Pidgeon, *Atlas of the Borough of Richmond, City of New York* (New York: E. Robinson, 1907), pls. 22-23; Charles W. Leng and William T. Davis, *Staten Island and Its People: A History, 1609-1929* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1930), vol. 1, 351; Irene C. Jacobs, "A Chronological History of Tottenville, 1860-1978, and Report of Architectural Survey," typescript (Urban Studies Internship, College of Staten Island, 1979), found in the box labeled "Tottenville Historical Material" at the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences (hereafter, SIIAS); Ms. Jacobs cites Benjamin Franklin Joline, "Tottenville in Retrospect," bound typescript with illustrations (Staten Island: the Author, 1950), 9; Edna W. Holden, "Staten Island Resource Manual for School and Community," passim; Henry G. Steinmeyer, "Staten Island, 1524-1898," 117, 127. "Our Fathers Have Told Us, Tottenville Facts and Traditions Told by Lovers of their Hometown, 1935," a loose-leaf binder documenting the town's history, compiled by [Ella E.] Wagar, 276, 282; Vincent Sweeney, "Tottenville Exhibit, Suggested Theme: Tottenville Commercial Area — 1896," typescript found in the Tottenville Exhibit Folder at SIIAS. *Insurance Maps of the Borough of Richmond, New York City, Staten Island, New York*, vol. 5 (New York: Sanborn, 1937-93), pl. 531.
2. This section is based on the New York State Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report*, (Albany) 1876-1878, 1893-1898 (hereafter *Annual Report*), which includes a statement from the Richmond County Superintendent of Schools; S.S. Randall, "Report of the Commission for Embodying in a Single Act a Common School Code for the State of New York; pursuant to a Resolution of the Assembly of 10 July 1851 and transmitted to the Legislature January 7, 1852"; New York State Department of Public Instruction, "The Schools of New York — A Glance at the Common School System of the Empire State" (Albany, 1893); and Board of Education of City of New York, *Staten Island — A Resource Manual for School and Community* (1964).
3. According to *Staten Island — A Resource Manual for School and Community*, 72-73, the school districts in Westfield Township were No. 1, Richmond Valley; No. 2, Bloomingview (Huguenot); No. 3 Fresh Kills (Greenridge); 4, Rossville; No. 5, Tottenville; No. 6, Lemon Creek (Pleasant Plains); No. 7, Kreischerville.
4. Maurice Denzil Hodgen, "A High School in Perspective: The Character of High School Life on Staten Island. 1881-1926," (Ph. D. diss., Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1959), 25; *Annual Report*, 1876, 1878.
5. West was an active member of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the State Prison Association, the Richmond County branch of the State Charities Aid Society, the S.R. Smith Infirmary, and the Public Education Association, according to the *Staten Island Independent*, Nov. 4, 1893; *Annual Report*, 1894.
6. *Annual Report*, 1894, p. 11.
7. November 20, 1894.
8. The description of this process is based on the record and account books of Westfield Township School Districts Nos. 5 and 7 in the collection of the New York City Municipal Archives and notices in the *Staten Island Independent*, 1893-1894, the *Richmond County Standard*, Mar. 24, 1894, and *Real Estate Record*

& *Guide* (hereafter *RER&G*) 57 (Mar. 7, 1896), 387. The Board of Trustees considered matters of insurance, maintenance, and repairs at Annual Meetings.

9. Recollections of early schools are found in Benjamin Franklin Joline, "Tottenville in Retrospective" (1950) and "Our Fathers Have Told Us" which includes Mr. Paul VanName's "Reminiscences Written at the Age of 98" and a section, "History of Schools of Tottenville." Both typescripts are in the collection at the New York Public Library, Tottenville Branch. VanName recalls that a second story was added to the chapel structure for the school, and the second story was reached by an outside entrance.
10. The lot was purchased from the estate of W.H. Garretson, which extended from Amboy Road south to the waterfront. The deed for the school lot stipulated that before occupying the premises, the school district would construct a fence — either a "good tight board fence 7' in height, or a picket fence of the same height — on the sides of the lot and along the Avenue a good picket fence 6' in height." Two other lots were considered prior to the purchase.
11. The records of the district meetings do not record the source of the plans; the Ledger of the Treasurer, Westfield School District No. 5, for the period 1875 to 1878 does not include accounts for the new building. It seems likely that the plans procured in 1873 were used in 1878.
12. During the 1870s, Mr. M. Cronk, a clerk by profession, was chairman of the board of trustees on which David Joline (an agent) and E.R. Wood (a clerk) also served. The building committee appointed in 1873 included Isaac Sleight, Robert Lee (a carpenter), and J.P. Bedell. Robert Lee served on the committee appointed in 1878, along with Chairman Samuel L. Hopping (proprietor of the Hopping lumber yard), Walter J. Elliott, James A. Sleight, William Reid, and James Zedell.
13. Benjamin Franklin Joline describes the event in his memoirs.
14. Joline, "Tottenville in Retrospective," 58.
15. In order to conform to an 1864 law that authorized the Board of Education of any Union Free School District to establish an academic department, or high school, a Union Free school district was established in District No. 5 and the board of trustees evolved into a Board of Education. On May 2, 1895, the board resolved to apply to have the high school department come under the State Board of Regents.
16. The April 24, 1895, Minutes of the Board of Education note damage done by a recent fire and repairs made to stairways, stoops, and doors. Board of Education member William D. Frerichs suggested that the firm of Pierce & Brun be commissioned to provide plans; no reasons were stated in the Board's minutes. The district Treasurer's Account Book, 1879-1898, indicate that the Port Richmond firm of A.B. Mersereau provided molding for the building, and that P.J. Barth's Stapleton hardware store provided fittings.
17. Hodgen, 18-19.
18. This section is based on Henry Barnard, *School-house Architecture* (Hartford: printed by Case, Tiffany & Burnham, 1842), 2-5; Samuel F. Eveleth, *Schoolhouse Architecture* (New York: Geo. E. Woodward, c.1870); and James Johnnot, *Country School-houses* (New York: Ivison, Phinney, Blakeman & Co. and Chicago S.D. Griggs & Co., 1866) and *School-houses; ... Architectural Designs by S.E. Hewes* (New York, J.W. Schermerhorn & Co., 1871), 36, 58. These volumes are included in Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *American Architectural Books* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1946, 1962).
19. Several larger school buildings were erected during this period on Staten Island. These structures were brick buildings designed by architects (including E.A. Sargent and Lord & Hewlett) that were comparable to the schoolhouses built in large towns and cities in New York State.
20. Historic photographs, including Figure 1, indicate that the school had a busy roofline with three chimneys rising on each side above the eave line, three urn-shaped ventilators at the ridge line, and the open belfry set back slightly from the front of the building. The open area of the belfry had corner posts spanned by X-shaped bracing and a railing; the pyramidal roof with a spire was enriched with a bracketed cornice at the eaves and pediments projecting from each face of the roof. The belfry was removed prior to a 1937 photograph in the Special Collections, Milbank Memorial Library, Teachers College, Columbia University.

21. New York State Public Instruction Department, *Recent School Architecture* (Selected Reprints from Annual Reports of Charles R. Skinner, State Supt. of Public Instruction; Albany, 1897). The architectural practices of Pierce and Brun were traced through Dennis Steadman Francis, *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1840-1900* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1979), 18, 61, 100 and James Ward, *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1900-1940* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1989), 11, 61. Pierce & Brun are noted as the architects of a school in Pleasant Plains, a two-story brick and frame structure with modern ventilation and hot-air heating systems, in *RER&G 55* (Mar. 16, 1895), 418. The firm requested bids for the construction of the District School No. 5 addition in *RER&G 58* (Aug. 15, 1896), 232.
22. Prospect Avenue was renamed in honor of Hubbard R. Yetman (1847-1924) who settled in Tottenville after the Civil War; Yetman worked as a teacher, justice of peace, and legislator before serving as the first Borough Superintendent of Schools from 1898 to 1905. *Staten Island - A Resource Manual for School and Community*, 200.
23. Historic photographs indicate that the stoop had a turned balustrade, and that the entrance had a pair of paneled (and glazed on the upper half in later years) doors set below a glazed transom.
24. Now painted white, the bricks may be a light color similar to the sandstone elements on the exterior of the building; historic photographs indicate that there was always a color contrast between the flat walls and the bands and window heads.
25. The period photograph included as Figure 1 suggests that there were entrances at this location in both side walls, presumably the separate boys' and girls' doors; there appears to have been curved walls extending to the north and south of the building as windscreens for the raised, uncovered stoops. The window had been inserted by the mid-1930s, according to the 1937 photograph in the Milbank Memorial Library.
26. A concrete ramp edged with a chain-link fence approaches the entrance from the north; there are steps at the south end.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Westfield Township District School No. 5/now Public School 1 Annex (the structure at the corner of Yetman Avenue and Academy Avenue), 58 Summit Street, Tottenville, has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Westfield Township District School No. 5, erected in 1878 (architect undetermined) and enlarged in 1896-97 to plans provided by the architectural firm of Pierce & Brun, demonstrates the strong commitment of the inhabitants of Tottenville to education; that as the oldest public school remaining in use on Staten Island, the building recalls the era when such schools on Staten Island were under the jurisdiction of Richmond County and the State of New York; that the brick schoolhouse appears to have been designed by a builder or architect familiar with the neo-Grec style; that the facade with its temple-inspired form incorporates stylized classical elements and incised ornament while the side walls have a robust rhythm established by pilasters and window openings with denticulated window heads; that the growing population of the village and the establishment of a two-year high school department prompted the construction of an addition to the schoolhouse in 1896-97; that Pierce & Brun established a T-shaped plan and incorporated signature elements of the original building into an up-to-date scheme with banks of windows and a well-lighted central stairhall; that denticulated brick window heads and patterned bands, as well as the bracketed wood cornice, unite the two portions of the building into a harmonious whole; that the building projects, undertaken by the School District Board of Trustees and Board of Education with the approval of district residents, were exercises in local government as well as architectural achievements; and that the schoolhouse, part of the educational complex in Tottenville, remains in use as the Public School 1 Annex.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Westfield Township District School No. 5/now Public School 1 Annex (the structure at the corner of Yetman Avenue and Academy Avenue), 58 Summit Street, Tottenville and designates Borough of Staten Island Tax Map Block 7898, Lot 1 in part consisting of the property bounded by a line beginning at the southeast corner of the lot, then extending northerly along the eastern lot line approximately 125 feet, then extending westerly approximately 180 feet, then extending southerly approximately 125 feet to the southern lot line, then extending easterly along the southern lot line approximately 180 feet to the point of beginning, as its Landmark Site.

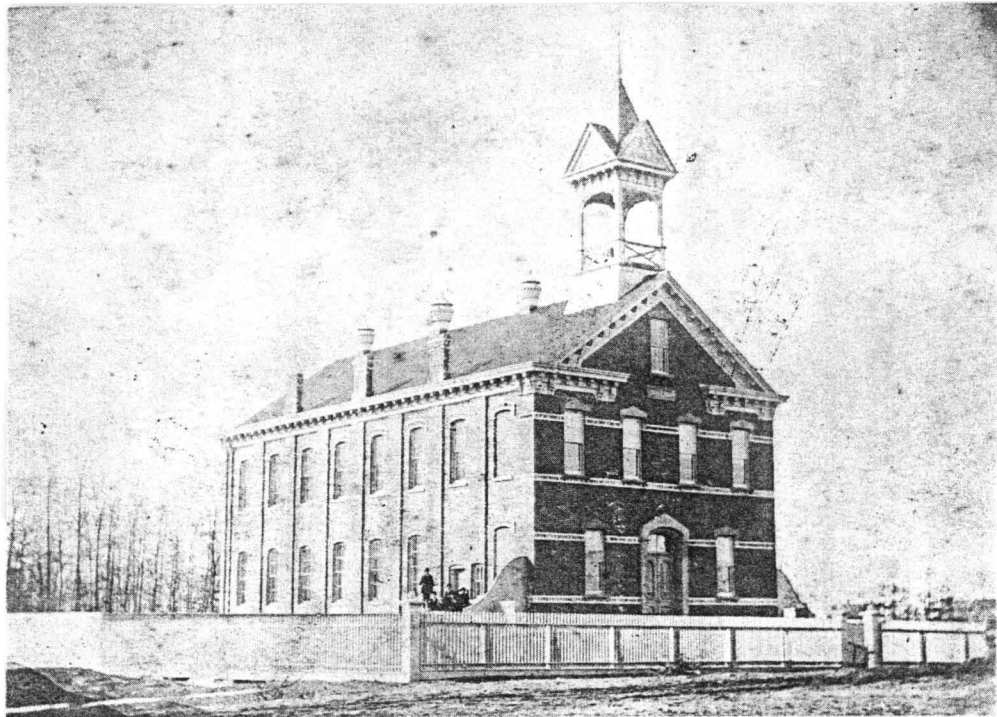
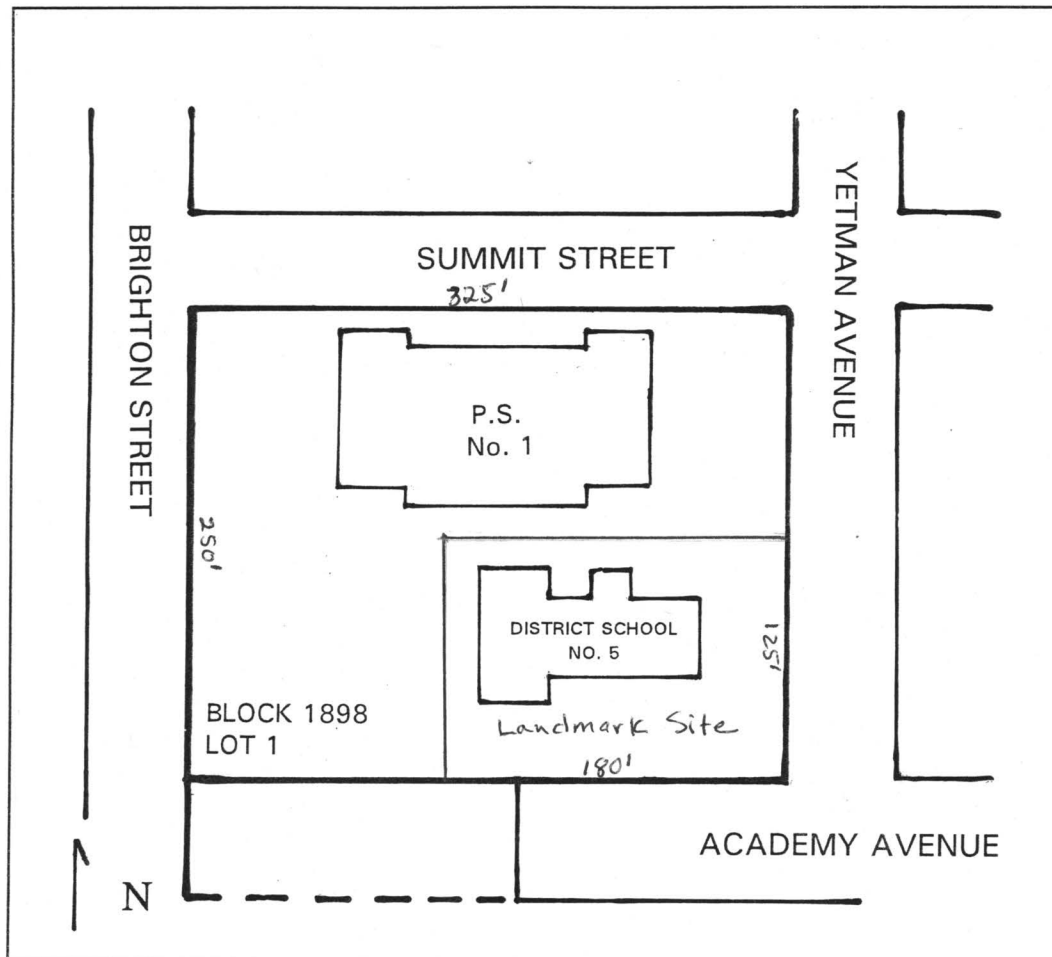


Figure 1. Late nineteenth-century view of "Bay View Academy,"
Westfield District School No. 5, Tottenville, Staten Island.

Source: Dorothy Valentine Smith, *This Was Staten Island*, 35.



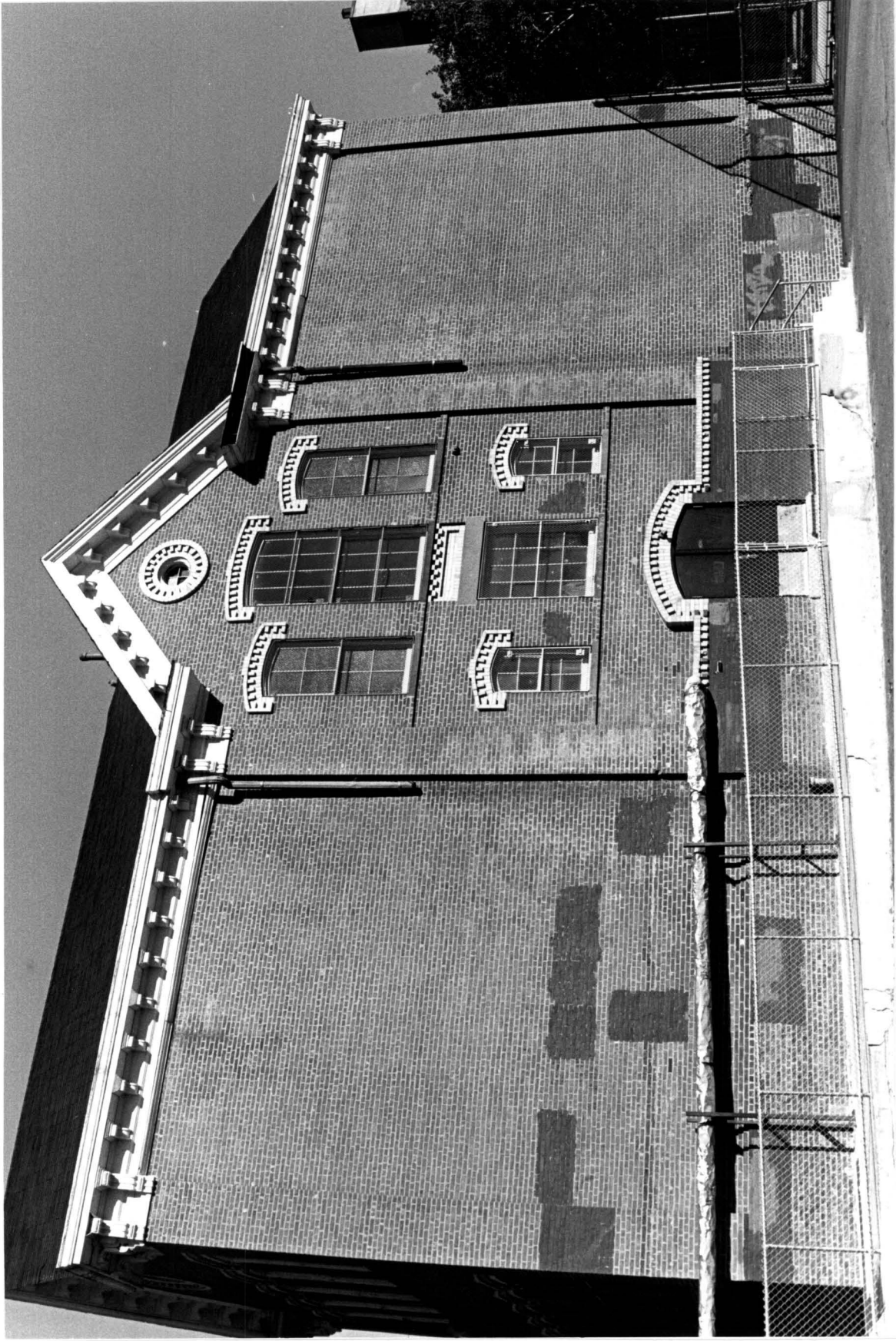
Westfield Township District School No. 5 (now Public School 1 Annex), the structure at the corner of Yetman Avenue and Academy Avenue, 58 Summit Street, Tottenville, Staten Island.

Landmark Site: Borough of Staten Island Tax Map Block 7898, Lot 1 in part.

Map Source: Drawn from *Insurance Maps of the Borough of Richmond, New York City, Staten Island, New York*. Sanborn Map Company, 1937 (updated). Vol. 5, plate 531.



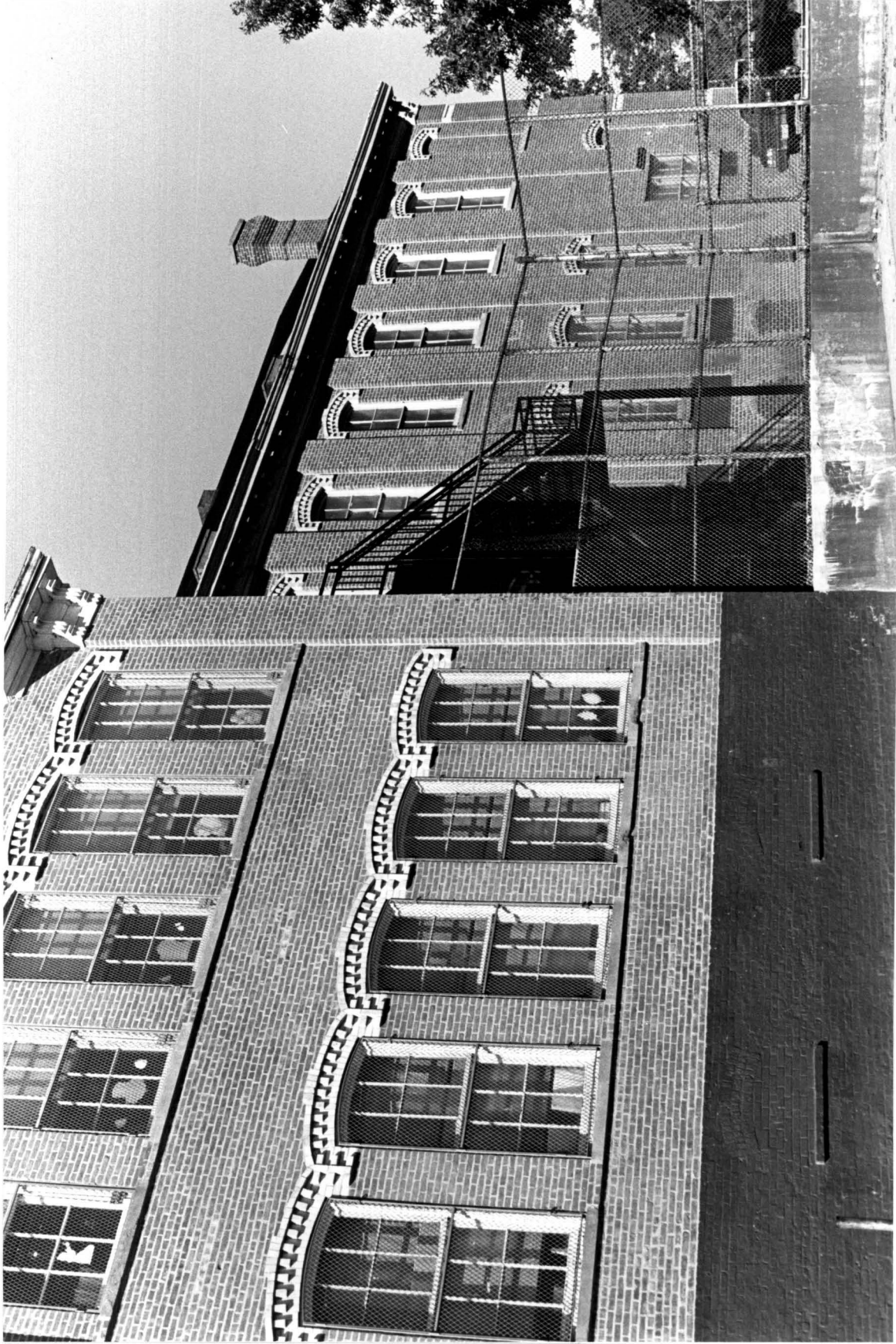
Westfield Township District School No. 5 (now Public School 1 Annex), corner of Yetman Avenue and Academy Avenue, Tottenville, Staten Island. Yetman Avenue facade. Photo: Carl Forster



Westfield Township District School No. 5 (now Public School 1 Annex), corner of Yetman Avenue and Academy Avenue, Totterville, Staten Island. West facade facing Brighton Street. Photo: Carl Forster



Westfield Township District School No. 5 (now Public School 1 Annex), corner of Yetman Avenue and Academy Avenue, Totterville, Staten Island. North facade, original wing. Photo: Carl Forster



Westfield Township District School No. 5 (now Public School 1 Annex), corner of Yetman Avenue and Academy Avenue, Tottenville, Staten Island. South facade, facing Academy Avenue, original wing on the right, addition on the left. Photo: Carl Forster



Westfield Township District School No. 5 (now Public School 1 Annex), corner of Yetman Avenue and Academy Avenue, Tottenville, Staten Island.
Detail, main entrance



Detail, juncture of two wings, north side; original wing on left.



Westfield Township District School No. 5 (now Public School 1 Annex), corner of Yetman Avenue and Academy Avenue, Tottenville, Staten Island. Detail, window sill and decorative banding, original wing.



Westfield Township District School No. 5 (now Public School 1 Annex), corner of Yetman Avenue and Academy Avenue, Tottenville, Staten Island. Detail, cornice, original wing.