

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received NOV 20 1982
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

and/or common Elementary School

2. Location

street & number 502 Pine Street NA not for publication

city, town Wilmington vicinity of ~~Congressional District~~

state DE code 10 county New Castle code 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> NA being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name CHURCH OF ST. MARY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

street & number 6th & Pine Streets

city, town WILMINGTON vicinity of state DELAWARE

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. RECORDER OF DEEDS

street & number PUBLIC BUILDING

city, town WILMINGTON state DELAWARE

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Survey of DE Historic Sites AND Buildings, N-651 has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Section, Hall of Records

city, town DOVER state DELAWARE

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

St. Mary's School is a three-story square building fronting on Pine Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets, on the lot just south of St. Mary's Church. The structure retains its original dimensions, 57 feet wide by 48-1/2 feet long, and is five bays wide across the facade and four bays on the side. The exterior wall is made of pressed brick laid in American bond. The cornice is bracketed, the roof line is low-hipped. On the facade and sides, there are brick pilasters separating each bay and two pilasters defining the front corners. Overall, the building has retained excellent architectural integrity.

Most of the original window openings (there are 50) contain six-over-six sash windows with segmental arches above them. Most of the panes appear to be original. The wooden muntins and sashes are painted white. On the facade the arches are made of gauged stretchers; on the sides and rear the arches are of headers (three of these openings are now doors, used to access fire escapes). Each window has a sandstone sill. The center bay of the rear consists of three segmental, six-light windows, and three modern doors. There are also small openings with segmental arches at the base of the water table on all four sides. On the facade, the north side, and the rear these openings have been bricked-in.

The low-hipped roof is topped with a rectangular base which once supported a cupola. A single-stack brick chimney is visible to the right of center from the rear.

Above the five-foot-wide door opening is a round arch of gauged headers and stretchers. Within the arch is a fanlight containing four triangular lights. Above the arch and below the second story window is a sandstone rectangle with the following inscription: ST. MARY'S SCHOOL 1866.

2024-0018
10/31/84

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A wooden box cornice extends around the entire roof line. On the sides and front, where each pilaster meets the cornice, there were paired wooden Italianate brackets. Between each pilaster and beneath the cornice is a brick frieze. On it, the brickwork has the following pattern: a half triangle, followed by seven full triangles, and another half triangle. Above every other brick triangle is a wooden modillion (three between each pair of brackets) attached to the cornice. The rear has one bracket on each corner and one had 21 wooden modillions spaced along the width of the cornice (15 remain). The cornice, brackets, and modillions are painted white.

Minimal modern attachments to the building exterior include fire escapes on the rear and south sides. Also, a gutter pipe runs from ground to cornice on each of the four corners. On the north side, a small concrete block enclosure contains trash cans. A short brick wall is attached to the front right corner of the building and there is evidence of there once being a corresponding wall on the left corner of the rear. A modern playground with wooden and steel equipment is located behind the school.

Originally, the building had four classrooms on the first and second floors which opened from a center hall. The third floor was completed in 1973. Between 1905 and 1929 (the Pastorate of Father Edward Brady), the school was renovated and new heating and lighting systems were installed. Extensive interior alterations were made in 1964, when new offices and laboratories were installed, and in 1974 for the present occupant, the Elementary Workshop.¹

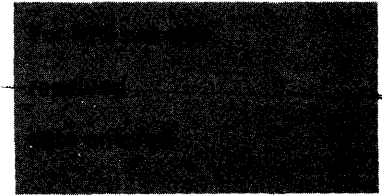
The school is in the Mulberry Run Urban Renewal Project. Facing it on Pine Street are modern townhouses built in 1966. To the north is St. Mary's Church and to the south across Fifth Street is the small parking lot. The remainder of the block consists of moderate-income brick townhouses of innovative arrangement, where alternate units front on interior walkways instead of the front street.²

¹Donn Devine, National Register Nomination for St. Mary's Church, accepted by NPS 12 December 1976, Doc. 20-06/78/01/7 CRS N-651.

²Ibid.

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Justification of boundaries

The boundaries set for this nomination are the current legal boundaries for the St. Mary's School lot: northeast from the northwest corner of Pine and Fifth Streets, 136 feet; southeast from that point to a point 153.7 feet and perpendicular to Pine Street; southwest from that point 56 feet to a point parallel with Fifth Street; northwest from that point 37.7 feet to a point; southwest from that point 80 feet to an intersection with Fifth Street; northwest along Fifth Street 116 feet to point of origin.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates Built 1866 **Builder/Architect** Possibly Chas. McCloskey, Contractor

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

St. Mary's School, at 502 Pine Street, in addition to being one of the better unaltered institutional examples of the Italianate style in Wilmington, is remarkable both locally and nationally for its continuous use as an educational institution from its construction in 1866 to the present. Historically, the building was associated with Monsignor Patrick Reilly, a local educational and religious figure and large landholder in Wilmington, and Bishop (now Saint) John Neumann of Philadelphia. Bishop Neumann ordered Father Reilly to establish St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish on Wilmington's east side. St. Mary's School is therefore being nominated under criteria B, associated with figures significant in our past, criteria A, associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, and criteria C, embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the works of a master, or that possess high artistic value.

The founder of St. Mary's School, Father (later Monsignor) Patrick Reilly, was a leader in Delaware education. He founded a boarding school in 1839, which eventually became St. Mary's College in 1847, with Reilly serving as its president (the college was forced to close in 1866, because many of its students had left to fight in the Civil War).¹

While assistant pastor at St. Peter's Church, Reilly opened a school for boys in the Rectory in 1841. This school prospered so well that it was eventually established in a four-story schoolhouse surmounted with a large bell in a belfry.²

In 1858, Father Reilly was assigned by Bishop (now Saint) Neumann of Philadelphia to organize a parish on the east side of Wilmington which was, at that time, still part of the Diocese of Philadelphia. The Church of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception was built in 1858. Reilly's pastorate of the church lasted from 1858 to 1885. All the German-speaking Catholics of the city were assigned to St. Mary's under the direction of his assistant pastor, Reverend Emilius Stenzel.³

9. Major Bibliographical References

Beer's Atlas of the State of Delaware, 1868, p. 14-15. (Note: See Item 8, p. 4).
 Baist's Atlas of New Castle County, Delaware, 1893, plate 1.
 Scharf, J. Thomas, History of Delaware, 1888, vol. 2
 Zebley, Frank R., The Churches of Delaware, Wilmington, Delaware 1947.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Wilmington South Quad

Quadrangle scale 7.5 minutes

UMT References

A

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4	13	9	18	6	18	10
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 Zone Easting Northing

B

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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See Item 7, p. 3.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	NA	code	county	code

state	NA	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laura Tuthill

organization Museum Studies Program, Univ. of Del. date March 5, 1980

street & number 93 Amstel Avenue, E-10 telephone (302) 366-8942

city or town Newark state Delaware

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is: (Note: See Item 8, p.5)

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature Daniel R. Griffith

Daniel R. Griffith

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date 11/18/82

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Linda M. Collins date 1/15/83
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Patricia Andrews date 1/3/82
 Chief of Registration

EXP. 10/31/84

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Despite the decline in enrollment of St. Mary's College and other difficulties which the war imposed, Reilly continued in his active support of education. On May 10, 1864, Reilly purchased from Michael Harrity for \$1,760 a lot 86 by 80 feet which adjoined the church.⁴

A new parochial schoolhouse attached to St. Mary's Church, Fifth and Pine Streets, Wilmington, is now in the course of erection. The building will be 60 feet square and three stories high (40 feet) and it is estimated it will cost \$15,000. Immediately in the rear of the school will be the residence for the teachers...both buildings will be of brick. A cupola will crown the roof of the school. Reverend P. O'Reilly (Reilly), the pastor, has the work in charge - a work at once an ornament to the city and valuable to the interests of the Faith.⁵

The Sisters of St. Joseph from Chestnut Hill in Philadelphia were invited to staff the school, and eventually six sisters were sent to teach the 350 children enrolled on opening day in 1867.⁶ The total cost of the lot, schoolhouse, and residence for the sisters was \$15,500.⁷

In 1867, when the Diocese of Wilmington separated from that of Philadelphia, the sisters were withdrawn. It was in this year the building was leased to the Wilmington Board of Education, who operated it as Public School 13 (not to be confused with a second P. S. 13, which became Fairfax Trainables in 1961).⁸

Twenty-seven years later, on the first Monday of September 1887, four sisters belonging to the Third Order of St. Francis, a religious community of women established by St. Neumann in Philadelphia, reopened the parochial school.⁹ The Sisters of St. Francis staffed the school until it closed in 1975.

St. Mary's School figured importantly in Reilly's later efforts in the fields of adult education and religious education for public school students. During his pastorate, the church and school were the main institutions for the education and integration of thousands of Irish immigrants, most of whom lived in the parish upon first arriving.¹⁰ In 1894, St. Mary's reported an average attendance of 478 pupils. This same year saw the close of a night school, which formerly boasted of an enrollment of 80 pupils.¹¹

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The building, in 1932, was the home of the first parish group of what was to become the Catholic Youth Organization. In 1970, the school became the first inter-parish school in Wilmington, serving two parishes - St. Mary's and St. Patrick's.¹²

When the parochial school closed in 1975, the building was leased to the Elementary Workshop, Inc. The Workshop had been started in 1971 in the former Rectory by Penny Contractor and Lillian Shah. It is a private, non-denominational school which provides an alternative to traditional public and non-public schools, combining Montessori techniques and the philosophies of modern British education, and the American open-classroom experience.¹³

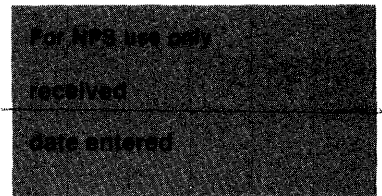
In considering the building's architectural significance, St. Mary's School defies exact stylistic categorization. However, it is definitely in the Italianate tradition. The building is perhaps closest to the Romano-Tuscan mode being straight-fronted, having a cubic block shape, and not having considerable projections or recessions. Further, the cornice is substantial and the roof is low and invisible to the passerby on the street. Its elevations are symmetrical. However, where the Romano-Tuscan mode emphasizes a horizontality in its windows, doors, and the use of balustraded balconies, the St. Mary's School only hints at it with the use of sandstone window sills. The segmental windows and the round arch over the front doors suggest the influence of the North Italian mode. Brackets and modillions on the cornice and brickwork on the frieze beneath it can be considered a very conservative concession to this mode's ornamentation. The verticality, which the ground-to-cornice pilasters evoke, is reminiscent of the North Italian mode. That it once had a cupola (which perhaps contained a school bell like that of St. Peter's School) is a further indication of its Italianate character.

The brickwork is of good craftsmanship, especially on the facade. Because it looks very similar to that of St. Mary's Church, perhaps Charles McCloskey, a local contractor who built the church, built the school as well.

The St. Mary's School building has benefitted Wilmington's adults and especially its children in the parochial, public, and private sectors for more than a century. An "ornament to the city", as well as one of the oldest educational facilities of its type in Delaware, St. Mary's School continues to be an important feature of Wilmington's eastside.

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Footnotes:

¹Frank R. Zebley, The Churches of Delaware, Wilmington, Delaware, 1947, pp. 71-72.

²Zebley, pp. 71-72.

³Zebley, pp. 71-72.

⁴J. Thomas Scharf, History of Delaware, 1888, vol. 2, p. 726.

⁵Catholic Herald, 4 August 1866 cited in Leonard John Kempfski, "A History of Catholicism in Delaware," M. A. Thesis, University of Delaware, June 1965, pp. 75-76.

⁶Touhey, Mother St. Philip, "History of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Wilmington, Delaware," M. A. Thesis, Catholic University of America, 1957 cited in Kempfski, p. 76.

⁷Scharf, p. 726.

⁸Evening Journal, 7 September 1962, p. 8.

⁹Scharf, p. 726.

¹⁰Donn Devine, National Register Nomination for the Church of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, accepted by NPS 12 December 1976, Doc. 20-06/78/01/7, CRS N-651.

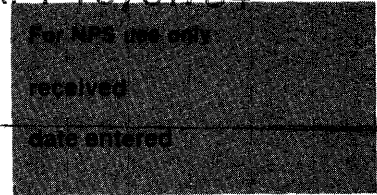
¹¹History of Wilmington 1894, compiled by Every Evening, Wilmington, Delaware, p. 126.

¹²Evening Journal, 27 March 1975, p. 3.

¹³Pamphlet by Elementary Workshop, 502 Pine Street, Wilmington, Delaware, n.d., p. 2.

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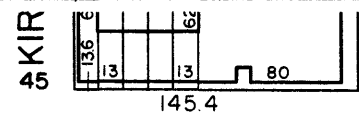
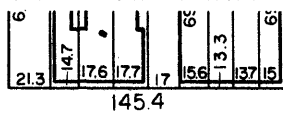
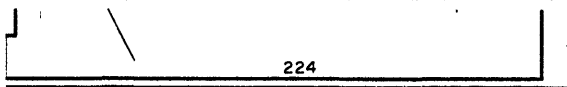
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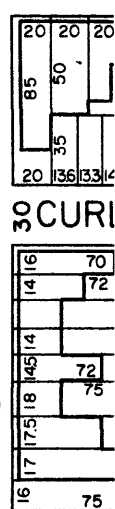
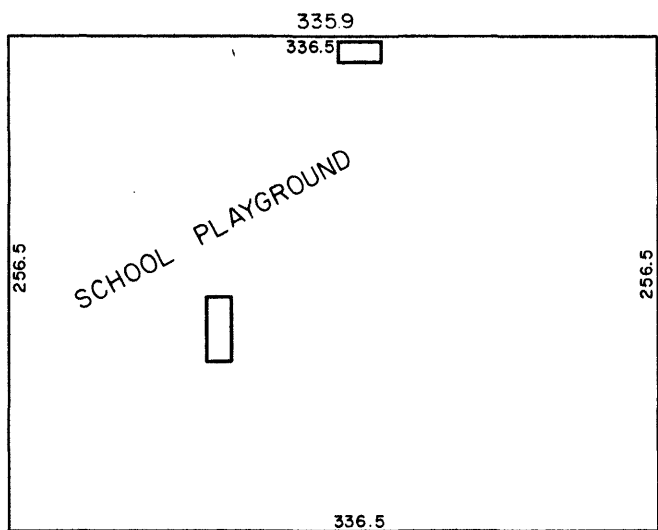
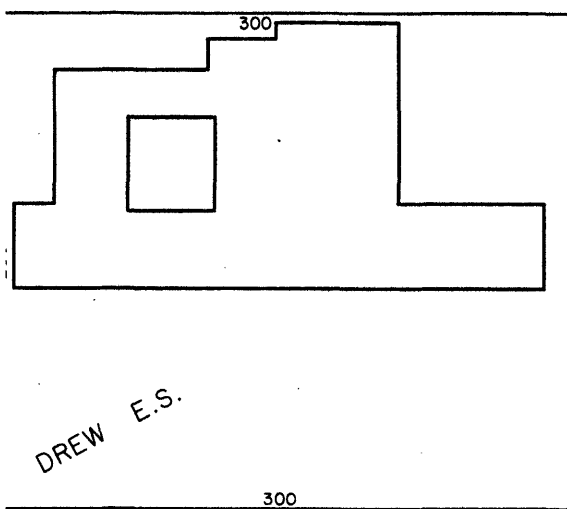
Level of Significance

Due to its association with Cardinal Neumann and Monsignor Patrick Reilly, and its continued association with parochial and private education in Delaware, St. Mary's School is considered significant at a State level.

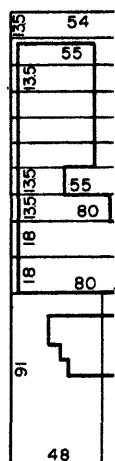
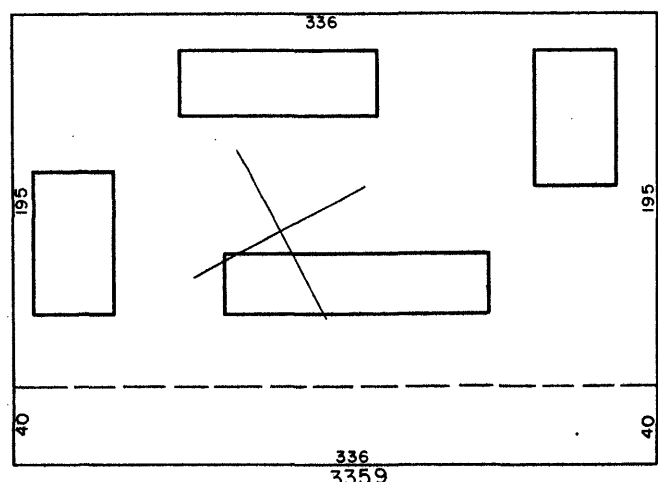
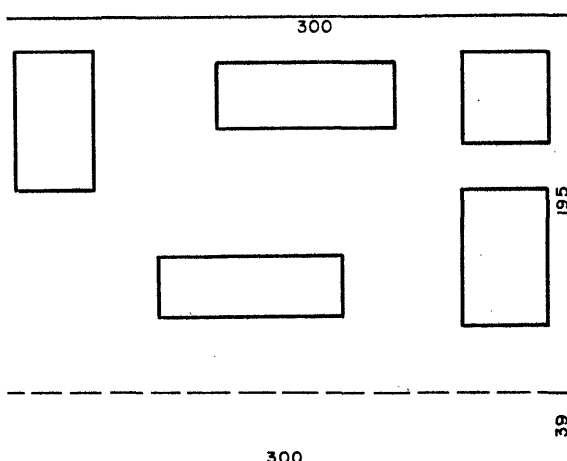
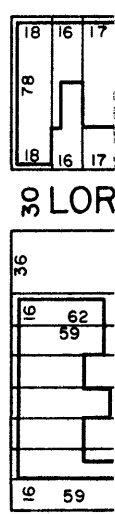
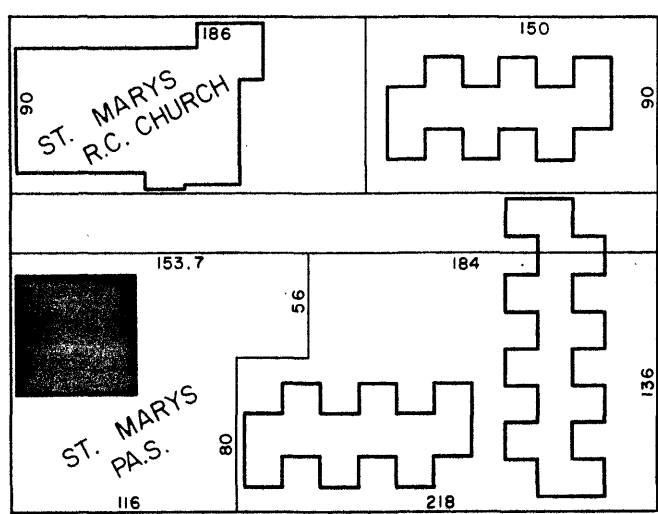
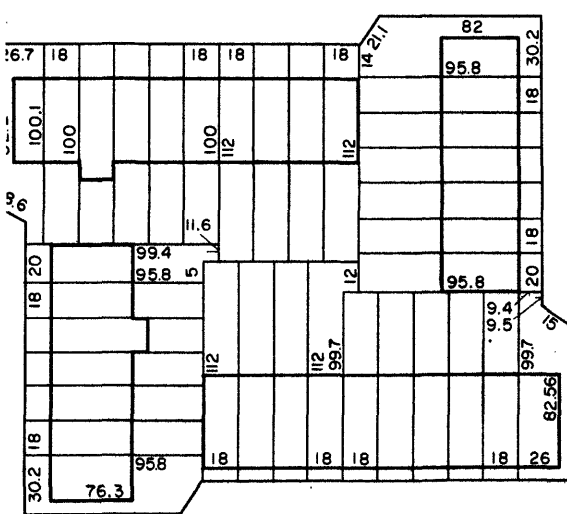
St. Mary's School derives its significance from its architecture, educational use, and association with historical figures. It, therefore, is an exception to the exclusion of structures with only religious association.



7TH



6TH



PINE

SPRUCE



SAINT MARY'S SCHOOL Wilmington, Del.

