

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED AUG 13 1979
DATE ENTERED OCT 18 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Public School Number 111-C
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER DE 7
Route 7
CITY, TOWN Christiana VICINITY OF One
STATE Delaware CODE 10 COUNTY New Castle CODE 002

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" 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 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"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Vacant

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME State of Delaware, Department of Public Instruction
STREET & NUMBER Townsend Building
CITY, TOWN Dover VICINITY OF CHRISTIANA DE STATE Delaware

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Public Building
STREET & NUMBER Rodney Square
CITY, TOWN Wilmington STATE Delaware

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Delaware Cultural Resource Survey N-5258
DATE 1979
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Hall of Records
CITY, TOWN Dover STATE Delaware

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Public School No. 111-C is situated on the east side of and facing the Wilmington and Christiana Pike just north of the village of Christiana, White Clay Creek Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware. The building rests on a flat topped ridge north of Christiana Creek. In the immediate vicinity of the school are several single story frame residences built in recent decades. The original two acres of land associated with the school are included with the nomination which incorporates the school yard and former playground.

Essentially, this colonial revival school building consists of a medium sized one story and attic block which functions as the classroom. To this core are appended three small wings housing the furnace room, wash rooms and work and lunch room.

The main block is constructed of balloon framing which rests upon a concrete foundation and crawl space. It is covered by a low gambrel roof of composition shingle with partial returns. A simple box cornice with bed molding defines the eave line. The building is especially sturdy as the exterior walls are formed of heavy, horizontally laid planking nailed to the studs and principal posts. This exterior planking is approximately an inch and a half thick and some twelve inches wide. Wide overlapped mill sawn weatherboard forms the finished exterior and narrow vertical boards define the corners. The building is painted dark green, with white wooden trim.

On the north gable end of the classroom block is a large exterior end chimney of brick which vents the furnace. At attic level on each gable end are two quarter-circle windows. The facade is comprised of a bank of six tall windows with nine over nine pane sashes. To the right of the facade is the entrance door, protected by a pedimented gable porch supported four square wooden posts resting on a concrete slab. The door consists of five horizontal raised panels and is framed by panelled recesses and is surmounted by a five light hinged transom.

On the northwest corner of the main block is the one story furnace room. It is built of the materials used throughout the school and features a composition shingled gable roof with partial return box cornices. On the front elevation of the furnace room are situated a two over two pane sash window and six paneled door which provides access to the furnace and heating system.

A small gable roofed wing on the south gable end houses the washrooms. Projecting from the rear of the main block and opening to the classroom is a story and attic wing designed as a work room and lunch room. At the attic level on the gable end is a small circular window with a keyed wooden architrave. An unpaved drive way connected to the main road runs immediately in front of and parallel to the school.

The interior of the school is very plain with simple baseboards and trim surrounding the interior doorways and windows. The walls are of lath and plaster and have been painted in various light colors over the years. The ceilings too, are of lath and plaster. The floor is built of narrow hardwood tongue and groove boards. A built-in bookshelf is situated just past the foyer. In the northeast corner of the classroom is a built-in colonial revival supply closet. The chalkboards have been removed but their original wall locations are discernable.

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 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> _OTHER (SPECIFY) Philanthropy
		<input type="checkbox"/> _INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Public School Number 111-C is significant to the educational heritage of Delaware as a well preserved example of the Black schools built in the 1920's by progressive philanthropist Pierre S. du Pont, III. Largely through his efforts and generosity the State of Delaware was able to inaugurate one of the most ambitious and successful school building programs in America.

In an article for the magazine American Architect, June 16, 1920, entitled, "New School Buildings, State of Delaware," architect James O. Betelle presented an excellent summation of du Pont's program to improve Delaware's educational system. Betelle was a partner in the architectural firm of Guilbert and Betelle, of Trenton, New Jersey, who produced the plans and specifications for most of the schools built by the du Pont fund. Betelle pointed out that the most progressive citizen of the state had long realized the education facilities of Delaware were grossly inadequate. Most of the buildings were fifty to one hundred or more years old, obsolete, and a menace to the health and safety of the children. A survey of existing school buildings was conducted by an organization known as the Service Citizens of Delaware and the results published in 1919 in a book entitled General Report on School Buildings and Grounds of Delaware. The report included a set of "Standards and Rules" for school construction and recommended that they be strictly followed by architects designing future Delaware public schools.

Pierre S. du Pont made a gift of over \$2,500,000 for the construction of new schools for all Delaware school children. This fund was administered by the Delaware School Auxiliary Association, created for this purpose, and directed by Dr. Joseph H. Odell, also director of the Service Citizens of Delaware. Dr. Odell summarized P.S. du Pont's premiere role in the project:

" 'The man who had made 40 per cent of the explosive that burst along 400 miles of trenches in Europe now turned his attention almost exclusively to the improvement of educational conditions in Delaware. He worked chiefly through the Service Citizens and called in the aid of the most experienced educationalists of America in meeting the problems as they arose. The conditions of public school property, which were ascertained by an exhaustive survey, led Mr. du Pont to set aside \$2,669,000 for the rebuilding of school houses, nine thousand of this amount to be used in building rural colored schools. Greater than his gift of money has been his gift of himself. Delaware has had the privilege of seeing its richest and most influential citizen pass his business responsibilities on to others, foregoing the pleasures of leisure, society, travel, and spending his time and strength in going from place to place in the State, expounding the New School Code, conferring with

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Public School No. 111-C

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

Architect James O. Betelle, a partner of the firm of Guilbert and Betelle who designed most of the du Pont fund Black schools, wrote an article for The American Architect in June of 1920 which outlined the practical considerations governing the design of the modern rural school. Portions of his discussion follow:

"The small rural school is not as simple a problem as it might at first glance seem. In the One and Two Teacher buildings it must be borne in mind that the teacher is usually the janitor as well. In addition to her duties as instructor she must be burdened with many other cares. How to reduce these duties and eliminate the cares and permit her to give the maximum time and energy to instruction has been given a great amount of thought and careful study. In the design of the building the layout of the heating, the water supply and the plumbing has been the most difficult to decide. From the standpoint of first cost it was possible with the funds available to place the very best systems of heating, running water for drinking purposes, and the installation of water closets. It was not this first cost, however, that was the deciding factor, but the attention and expense that was necessary for proper maintenance after the systems had been installed. It must be realized that these small buildings receive no attention during the holidays or from Fridays until Mondays, and that no heat is maintained in the building during those periods. Even if it were decided to keep heat up at all times during the cold weather, so that running water system could be installed, heavy snows and impassable roads would often make it impossible to reach the school building for days at a time, and the freezing up of the plumbing system would naturally be the result.

After much consideration and investigation it was decided to install chemical toilet fixtures to be reached through the coat rooms inside the small buildings. For the water supply system it was further decided to install a hand pump over a sink in the work room. The water in the pump will be sufficiently below grade to prevent freezing, and it is in a convenient location for use for drinking purposes and for instruction purposes in connection with domestic science lessons. For the heating, a jacketed stove located in an alcove or a furnace placed in a small room outside of the class room was decided upon. It is realized that the jacketed stove will heat and ventilate the class room with considerably less coal than the furnace. It is admitted, however, that the jacketed stove does not give the required 30 cu. ft. of air per minute per pupil and on this account it of course consumes less fuel. A stove in the class room with the attending noise, confusion and dust caused by the putting on of coal and the removal of ashes is very much of a handicap to good instruction work. A furnace in a separate room, where the firing and the removal of ashes will not interfere with the classes and which will provide the proper amount of ventilation, will be installed wherever the community is willing to provide the additional amount of fuel needed to obtain the more satisfactory results."

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DATE ENTERED 11 18 1979

Public School No. 111-C

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

"The community use of these small schools have always been kept in mind. In the isolated communities the church is usually near the school, and it is contemplated that these two elements of public welfare work will very closely cooperate. The class rooms will be fitted with movable desks which can be placed around the walls and the center of the room thus left clear for community meetings or dances. Additional chairs are kept in a convenient store closet and can be brought out and used for community lectures, entertainments, etc. The work room can be used not only for the instruction of pupils, but is available as additional seating space for meetings, for the serving of refreshments at entertainments or dances, and for adult instruction in sewing, canning and cooking in the summer months or during evenings.

The materials to be used in these buildings will be clapboards, or brick veneer on a frame structure. The roofs will be of shingles or slate. A paved space will be provided on the outside, adjoining the building, so that the children will always have a dry place for outdoor play during all periods of the year. A number of different types of these schools will be built. This is necessary on account of the different locations of the building sites and their exposure to different points of compass. Everything possible will be done to construct the building in such a way that the maintenance cost can be kept down to the minimum, and when completed the school will be finished in every way."

Public School Number 111-C is presently unoccupied. There are several local groups which are actively pursuing the possibility of rehabilitating the property for use as a community center and museum.

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Public School Number 111-C

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

8 PAGE 1

local boards of education about consolidations and new buildings, discussing with any and every type of citizen the details of the projected educational program and, in the course of this work, eating, and sleeping anywhere or missing meals entirely. Weeks together, Sundays as well as week days, he has devoted his undivided attention to education, and the entire State is recognizing its unrepayable debt to Mr. du Pont . ' "

Considerable attention was given to each aspect of school construction. The du Pont Black schools were carefully sited on two acre landscaped lots with walks, drives and playground equipment. The buildings were kept as simple as possible, to insure maximum efficiency as an educational facility and community center as well. The severity of the straightforward, geometric, floor plans was lightened somewhat by the use of restrained colonial revival detailing, popular at the time as a visual interpretation and architectural symbol of the simple democratic virtues perceived to be the foundation of America's greatness.

In the early 1920's approximately eighty schools were built throughout the state for Black students. It is not known at present how many of these have survived or to what extent they may have been altered over the years. Public School No. 111-C in Christiana has survived as an excellent and unaltered example of the type of segregated school that served the Black community in Delaware until recent years.

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(11/78)

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DATE ENTERED	081 18 1979

Public School Number 111-C

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE 1

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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"Feudal Delaware:" Time: January 31, 1927

James O. Betelle, A.I.A., "New School Buildings; State of Delaware," American Architect, CXVII, June 16, 1920.

Robert G. Murray, "What Delaware Is Doing For Its Negroes," Southern Workman Vol. LI No. 11, November 1922. Press of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute.

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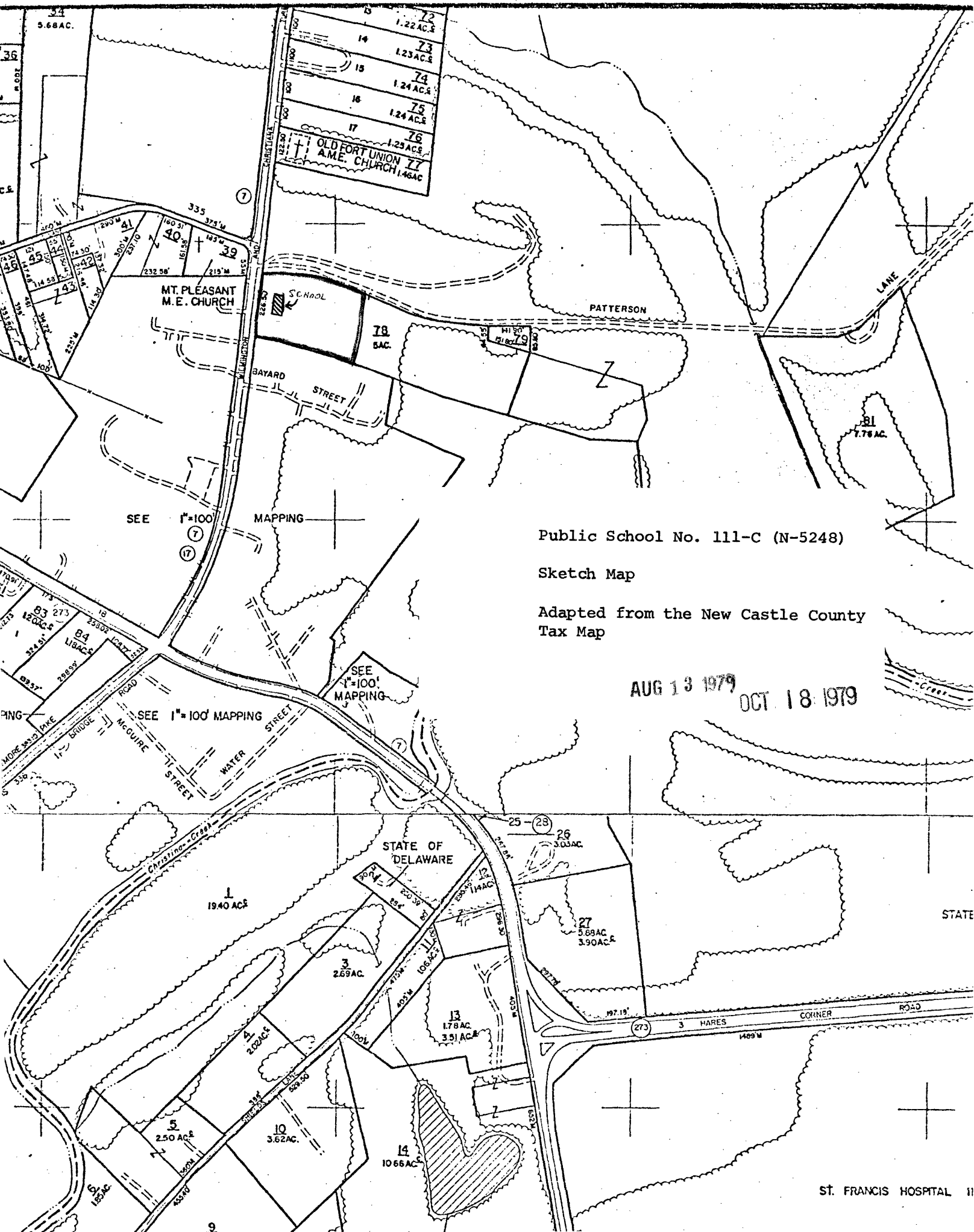
AUG 18 1979

Public School No. 111-C

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

in the middle of a private road; thence by the middle of said private road, north fifty-seven degrees thirty minutes west fifty-eight feet and five-tenths of a foot to a point; thence by the middle of said private road north sixty-three degrees eight minutes west one hundred and three feet to a point; thence by the middle of said private road north seventy-eight degrees and thirty-one minutes west one hundred and eighty-two feet to a point in the middle of the public road leading from Christiana to Wilmington; thence south along the middle of said public road, thirteen degrees and twelve minutes west two hundred twenty-six feet and five hundredths of a foot to the place of BEGINNING. Containing within said metes and bounds two acres of land, be the same more or less."

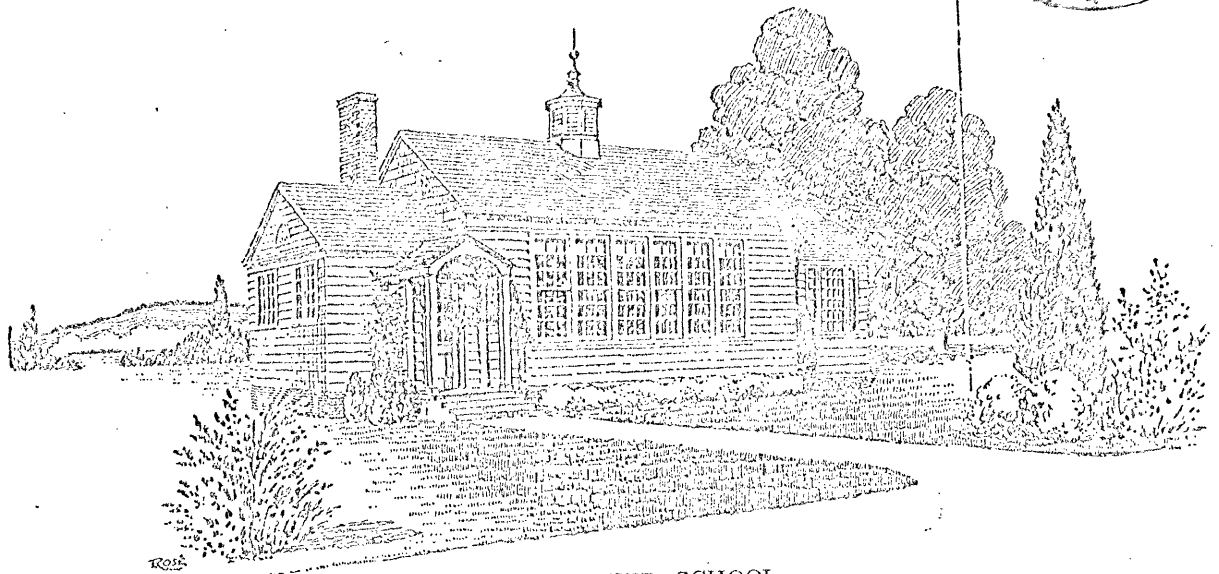


Public School No. 111-C (N-5248)

Sketch Map

Adapted from the New Castle County Tax Map

AUG 13 1979 OCT 18 1979



ONE TEACHER SCHOOL

This illustration appeared in an article entitled "New School Buildings, State of Delaware" in The American Architect, June, 1920. The author was James O. Betelle, A.I.A. a partner in Guilbert and Betelle of Trenton, New Jersey, who designed the du Pont fund schools. Public School No. 111-C in Christiana was built according to the above pictured plan, varying slightly in that it lacked the cupola and substituted a gambrel roof.