

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

RECEIVED 41

OCT 20 1994

MAR 14 1995

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name HIGBEE STREET SCHOOL

other names/site number Bellevue Avenue School, John T. Nixon School, School Number 3

2. Location

street & number 20 Bellevue Avenue not for publication

city or town Trenton vicinity

state New Jersey code 034 county Mercer code 021 zip code 08618

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of certifying official/Title [Signature] Date 3/3/95
Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO
State of Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Entered in the Date of Action
Edson H. Beall National Register 4.14.95

HIGBEE STREET SCHOOL
Name of Property

Mercer County, New Jersey
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/school
Government/public works

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid-Nineteenth-Century Greek Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Sandstone
walls Brick
roof Metal
other N/A

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations N/A
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Ethnic Heritage/African American

Period of Significance

1857-1872

Significant Dates

1857 Completion of Building construction
1872 Conversion into an exclusively white educational institution.

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

African American

Architect/Builder

Evernham and Hill, builders

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government: City of Trenton
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Trentoniana Collection,
Trenton Public Library

HIGBEE STREET SCHOOL

Mercer County, New Jersey

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1

Trenton West Quad

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

UTM grid 1: Zone 18, Easting 519920, Northing 4453580

UTM grid 3: Zone, Easting, Northing

UTM grid 4: Zone, Easting, Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert S. Grumet, Archeologist
organization Mid-Atlantic Region, National Park Service
street & number U.S. Custom House - Room 251
city or town Philadelphia, state PA zip code 19106

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Superintendent, Trenton Board of Education
street & number 108 North Clinton Avenue
city or town Trenton state NJ zip code 08609

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings.

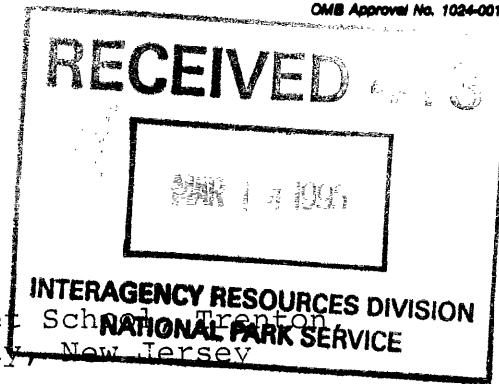
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey



Narrative Description:

The Higbee Street School (later known as the Bellevue Avenue School, the John T. Nixon School, and School Number 3) is a brick Greek Revival-style building constructed in 1857 as the first school building specifically erected for the free public education of African American children in Trenton, New Jersey. The building is located at 20 Bellevue Avenue in the North Ward of the City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey [see Figure 1]. The school building is the only surviving example of five rectangular-shaped nineteenth-century Greek Revival edifices constructed for the Trenton School Board in 1857. It is a two-story red brick building with two rooms on each floor. Containing four thousand three hundred square feet of space (not including the cellar), the building is fifty feet long and forty-three feet wide. Set back approximately eight feet from the northern side of Bellevue Street near the corner of Bellevue and Willow Streets, it is the only building on Lot 6, a parcel in Plat 27 spanning one hundred and forty seven feet of frontage along Bellevue Avenue that extends northward to a depth of one hundred and ten feet from the street and extends for a distance of one hundred and fifty six and a half feet along the rear property line [see Figure 2].

The building is located upon its original site within the lot purchased by the Trenton Board of Education from Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Fowler and Mr. and Mrs. William P. Sherman on August 1, 1856 (Mercer County Deed Book 37:285-286; also see Figures 3-9). It has remained in the ownership of the Trenton Board of Education up to the present day. Most widely known today as the Nixon School, the name given to the institution in honor of prominent New Jersey lawyer John T. Nixon in 1896, twenty-four years after it had become a school for white children.

The building stands as an isolated and dominant structure. The structure rests upon a foundation of red sandstone. Wall materials are red brick. The building has a metal roof. Rectangular red-brick chimneys rise from the roof near the center-point of both side elevations. The building's cornices and other trim are wood. All cornice-work and other trim are unornamented.

Windows are set in three bays in an A-B-A sequence on the front facade of the building. Photographs taken during the 1920s and 1970s [see Figures 10-11] show that panes in the B bays were framed in six over six sash; other front facade windows were set in a nine

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7

Page 2

Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

over nine sash pattern. Each window has wood lintels and stone sills.

The building's pedimented front facade is surmounted by a gable roof whose end is oriented towards the street [see Figure 12]. Blind oculi covered with boards are located in the center of pediments in the front and rear of the building. The above mention photograph taken during the 1920s [Figure 10] shows that four panes of glass were inset into each oculus.

A belt course of red-brick marks the division between the building's first and second stories along its' front facade. This belt course is not repeated on the building's side or rear elevations [see Figure 13].

The building's front entrance is located at the eastern end of the facade. The above mentioned historic photographs [see Figures 10-11] show that it consisted of a double door atop three stone steps. A glass transom was located atop the doors. A matching doorway located at the western end of facade was bricked-over sometime during the early twentieth-century. The transom and steps of this former entrance have been removed and a square grey sandstone tablet with the number three incised into it has been inset within the brick-work at the upper-center area of the former doorway.

Five windows are set into the walls of each story on both of the building's side elevations. The historic photographs [Figures 10-11] show that the panes of each of these windows were set in a nine over nine sash pattern. Each window also has wood lintels and stone sills. The facade pattern of pediment, oculus, window arrangement, sash pattern, and building entranceways noted for the front facade is repeated in the rear elevation.

Several features of the building exterior have been modified since the period of significance. The lowermost portion of the window at southern end of the western side elevation and the lowermost portion of the window at the northern end of the eastern side elevation has been lowered to ground level [see Figure 13]. B bay windows on both floors of the rear elevation have been bricked-over and a cantilever-supported wooden balcony was added to the second floor B bay area on the rear elevation sometime during the twentieth-century [see Figure 13].

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

All wooden exterior surfaces presently are in need of re-painting. Some areas of wood roof trim along the side elevations are rotting and in need of replacement. Presently all building fenestrations except the westernmost rear door are boarded over [see Figures 12-13].

Although alterations and deterioration have affected some elements of the building's exterior, extant map and photographic information indicate that the Higbee Street School building overall retains a high degree of integrity. Maps dating from 1872 to 1973 depicting the building indicate that its dimensions and exterior appearance have changed little over the years [see Figures 3-9]. These same maps show that the structure stands within the original bounds of the lot acquired by the Trenton School Board in 1856.

Information on the interior of the building is presently unavailable. Two requests were made to the property owner, the Trenton Board of Education, to gain access to the building's interior. Neither met with success.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Higbee School was the first educational institution specifically established for the free public education of African American students in the city of Trenton, New Jersey. It was also one of the first free schools of its type erected for students of African American descent in the state of New Jersey. In its size and architectural quality, it anticipated the new schoolhouses for African American children that would be built after the Civil War. The building is further distinguished as a surviving example of the few nineteenth-century Greek Revival buildings in Trenton with a pedimented front, a high-style interpretation of the Greek Revival in America. It is also one of the few known surviving school buildings erected in the Greek Revival style in the state of New Jersey (Bob Craig, personal communication, October 11, 1994). The Higbee Street School meets Criterion A in the areas of Education and Ethnic Heritage/African American, and Criterion C for architecture. In addition, the building was designated by the City of Trenton as a City Landmark on January 6, 1977.

Currently, only four of the approximately fifty school houses listed in the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places are significantly associated with African American education in the state of New Jersey. Of these four, the Old School House, 55 Carpenter Street, Woodbury, Gloucester County, is the oldest. This building was entered on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places as part of the Bethel AME Church property on which it historically stood. Built in 1840, the Woodbury School represents the rural origins of African American education in New Jersey.

Although the State Street Public School of Newark was built as a school for white children in the 1840s, it later became important as the home of the "Colored School" during its most successful years. The Hale Street School (1872) in New Brunswick and the William R. Allen School in Burlington (1900: see KFS Historic Preservation Group 1990:80) represent later developments of the philosophy that free public education should be made available to African American children that earlier inspired the Trenton Board of Education to build and operate the Higbee Street School. The Higbee Street School is thus a resource of a type under-represented on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places. It is also a resource accorded high priority in the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office historic preservation plan (Delson 1984:194).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

Approximately seven hundred African Americans lived among Trenton's eighteen thousand citizens at the time the Higbee Street School was built in 1857 (1860 census figures in Walker et al. 1929(2):1058). Most of the city's African American population then resided in a segregated district in Trenton's North Ward, a poor district much-neglected by municipal authorities located between the Pennsylvania Railroad yards and the Delaware and Raritan Canal and Feeder. The core of the community centered in and around present-day Bellevue Avenue (Washington 1990:3).

Most community members had either been born in New Jersey or had moved to Trenton from the neighboring states of Pennsylvania, Delaware, or New York (Washington 1990:3). The 1810 census had noted that forty two percent of the four hundred and thirty five African Americans enumerated in Trenton were slaves (Walker et al. 1929(2):1057). Forty years later, only one person was listed as a slave in the 1850 census figures, which were recorded four years after involuntary servitude was legally abolished in New Jersey in 1846 (Walker et al. 1929(2):1058).

Most of the community's inhabitants eked out precarious livings as unskilled laborers, cooks, servants, dressmakers, or carriage drivers. Almost all worked for low wages, and few owned property. The majority lived in sub-standard housing, and although many community members paid taxes to the city treasury, the community itself was denied most basic municipal services (Washington 1990:3).

One municipal service of particular importance to Trenton's African American community was education. Extant evidence indicates that African American residents in the city had regarded education as a means to combat poverty, intolerance, and racial oppression long before the Higbee School was constructed in 1857. As early as 1801, Trenton was one of the few cities in the state to have white-staffed and run schools for African American children. By 1809, the Society of Friends established a Sabbath School for the community's children in a two-story brick building (Washington 1990:42).

Although the framework for public school systems was established in New Jersey under the terms of the Common School Law of 1824 (Burr 1942 244-258), Trenton did not establish its own school board until 1832. As one of its first acts, the new board opened three common schools, one for boys, one for girls, and one for "colored" children, on May 5, 1832 (Wright 1941:116). The latter school,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 3Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

known as the African School House or Jackson Hall, was located near the African American Community Burial Ground. Although education, albeit segregated, was open to all Trenton residents, it was not free. Families of students attending these schools paid tuition fees. At Jackson Hall, instruction in spelling and reading cost one dollar per quarter. An additional fee of one dollar and a quarter per quarter was levied for instruction in writing, arithmetic, and geography. Other branches of education were available at a cost of one dollar and seventy five cents per quarter (Wright 1941:116).

Most of these fees went to pay for teacher's salaries and administrative costs. Extant evidence indicates that an African American instructor was sought for the school in 1833 (Wright 1941:116). The school board failed to properly maintain the school building. Increasingly dilapidated, the building became known as Nightmare Hall.

Adoption of a new state constitution in 1844 established a statewide school fund and mandated creation of a system of tuition-free public schools for all children between the ages of five and eighteen (Wright 1941:121). This same constitution denied the vote to African American men and sanctioned subsequent legislation maintaining segregated schools. Free education was instituted at Jackson Hall in 1848. Although the school's doors were opened to the children of all residents living in the North Ward at that time, Jackson Hall remained segregated. School board officials, moreover, required that all African American families living in Trenton send their children to the school no matter how far they lived from it.

Overcrowded and inadequately maintained by the city, the school continued to deteriorate. Finally, in 1855, Jackson Hall was condemned and torn down. Members of the city's African American community agitated for the construction of a new building to house the sixty-three pupils left without a school house. A subcommittee of the Trenton School Board known as the School Committee to the Colored School quickly arranged for the rental of interim space for the students. Hiring a new teacher named A. L. Stanford, an African American instructor who continued to live in Philadelphia during his tenure in Trenton, the School Board purchased a lot on Higbee Street for the sum of nine hundred and twenty six dollars on August 1, 1856. Shortly thereafter, they hired two builders named Evernham and Hill on October 27, 1856 to erect a new school building at a cost of two thousand six hundred

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 4 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

and ten dollars.

Although the Higbee Street School was not the first school building constructed in New Jersey for the education of African American children, it was a radical departure from its predecessors. As Trenton's own experience has shown, buildings of a sort had been allocated for use as schools for African American children since the beginning of the nineteenth century. As the earlier-mentioned Old School House in Woodbury shows, buildings built intentionally for the purpose of educating African American children had been constructed since at least 1840. Such schools were small buildings. Most were one-room buildings of domestic scale similar to eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century rural one-room "subscription" schools built for white children.

The Higbee Street School, by contrast, followed design concepts of nineteenth-century education reformers like Henry Barnard (see below) that were adopted by the nascent New Jersey state school bureaucracy pressing for better schoolhouses throughout the state. As such, the Higbee Street School is probably one of the first African American schoolhouses to embody such innovations. It is the earliest example of its type thus far identified, and it the only one known to have predated the Civil War. The building anticipated by ten years the city of Camden's eight-room Mount Vernon School. Built to support a much larger African American community, it was the largest and most up-to-date schoolhouse for African American children in New Jersey when it first opened its doors in 1867 (Robert Craig, Senior Historic Preservation Specialist, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, personal communication, October 31, 1994).

The Higbee Street School was one of five schools in the Greek Revival style contracted by the Trenton School Board in 1856. The architecture of these schools evidently followed the recommendation of the 1847 Annual Report of the New Jersey School Superintendent that all public schools conform to the general design specifications laid out by the innovative New England educator Henry Barnard (1841). Describing Barnard's approach to the built educational environment, Delson (1990:192) has written that:

Barnard was concerned, among other things, with proper ventilation and furniture, believing that each pupil must have a separate chair and what one might call today "breathing space". In addition, he had clear ideas about the arrangement of interior spaces; pupils' desks would be placed in rows allowing for free passage between the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 5 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

aisles. Boys and girls were to have separate entrances and cloakrooms, these flanking the teacher's platform. In two-story schools, the pattern was repeated on the second floor, reached by double staircases at the end of the first floor room...It is interesting to note that although Barnard preferred separate entrances for boys and girls, the front entrance (presumably used by the master) was usually single, while the double entrance was at the rear of the building.

Interestingly, this latter arrangement of doorways appears to have been instituted in the Higbee Street School building sometime after its initial construction as a structure with two front entrances. It is presently unknown if this alteration was undertaken during or after the structure's period of significance.

The construction and contracting of the school did not pass without incident. Ellis (1876:28-29) writes that:

The walls [29] were laid and fell in. They were relaid and the work progressed so slowly, that it was not completed at the time agreed upon, and the advice of the City solicitor was taken as to making a demand for the surrender of the building.

On the second of June, the contractors were notified to surrender the building within ten days thereafter under penalty of proceeding according to law against them or their sureties or both.

Messrs. Evernham and Hill replied on the eleventh of June, that they had erected the building twice according to the specifications, and they had twice been defeated, and additional compensation was asked for completing the structure.

On the fourteenth of July, the offer was made to finish the building for twenty-six hundred dollars. Their proposition was rejected. On the twenty-second, the building committee reported that the City solicitor had been instructed to proceed against the contractors for the amount paid them on contract. The case was tried in the Mercer Circuit Court, and the judgement rendered in favor of the trustees, whereupon the defendants appealed to the Supreme Court. Here decision was again rendered against them. The defendants paid the Board fifteen hundred dollars in accordance with the decision April 19, 1860, and gave their note for the balance

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 6 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

(\$429.98) in May following.

The city's African American students and teachers continued to meet in rented rooms while the school board struggled to complete the Higbee Street School. Although the building was finally occupied on March 17, 1857, school records dated February 14, 1861 note that it had not been completed to the satisfaction of the school board (Ellis 1941:36).

The school experienced a high rate of faculty turnover throughout its years on Higbee Street. Samuel A. Gould replaced A. L. Stanford as the school's principal in 1858 (Ellis 1876:32). Gould was a prominent and prosperous member of the City's African American community. Together with his wife Lucy, Gould amassed ten thousand dollars in real estate and five hundred dollars in personal wealth (Washington 1990:3). In 1860, a Miss Daymond was hired as a teacher. One year later, she was replaced by a Miss Lizzie Glenn (Ellis 1876:36). On February 14, 1861, another teacher named George J. Roney was elected principal of the school (Ellis 1876:36). Numerous other teachers were hired and retired in the years that followed.

In 1868, the school board responded to a petition of a group identified as "the patrons of the colored school" intent upon halting the high rate of turnover by appointing an African American woman named Sarah A. Armstrong to be principal of the Higbee Street School. She was paid a salary of one hundred and fifty dollars and "compensation accorded to that grade by the Board" (Ellis 1876:48). Miss Armstrong continued to serve as the school's principal until her death in 1870 (Ellis 1876:51). That same year, the Board announced plans to relocate the Colored School in a larger building.

Enlarged accommodations had become necessary. Trenton's African American population had risen from five hundred and twenty six in 1850 to eight hundred and five in 1870 (Walker et al. 1929(2): 1058). A large percentage of this population was young. Agitation that would soon lead to the passage of the Statewide Compulsory Education Act of 1874 sweeping across New Jersey made it evident that more of these young people would be attending school (Wright 1941:123).

In 1872, the students of the Higbee School were moved into rented rooms on Belvidere Street while construction began on a new school on Ringold Street. The new Colored School was opened at the latter

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 7 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

location on March 28, 1872 (Ellis 1876:54). The Higbee Street School was renovated and soon reopened as a white-only school. The school was renamed the John T. Nixon School in 1896 in honor of a prominent New Jersey lawyer. Again renovated in 1913, the Nixon School, like others in New Jersey, remained segregated.

The renamed Nixon School had long been closed when state authorities finally put an end to segregation in New Jersey public schools in 1944. Antiquated and overcrowded, the school was closed and converted into a carpenter shop for the School Board sometime during the late 1920s (Walker 1929(2):724). Operating the building in this capacity for nearly forty years, the Trenton Board of Education closed the shop and boarded up its doors and windows sometime during the mid-1980s.

As noted earlier, the school was designated as a City Landmark in 1977. More recently, the City of Trenton has committed itself to the preservation of the Higbee Street School as a community facility dedicated to the maintenance of Trenton's African American heritage.

FIGURES

- Figure 1: Map showing the Higbee Street School (Trenton West, N.J. - PA. U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute quadrangle, 1955 [photorevised 1981]. Reston, Virginia: Department of Interior, Geological Survey).
- Figure 2: Tax map showing the Higbee Street School Parcel, Lot 6, Plat 27, City of Trenton, 1966 [revised April, 1975], 13th Tax Area (Sheet No. 27: Map on file in the Office of Tax Assessment, Trenton City Hall, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).
- Figure 3: Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1870 (F.W. Beers 1870: Map of the City of Trenton, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).
- Figure 4: Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1882 (C.C. Haven 1882: A New Real Estate and Insurance Map of the City of Trenton, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 8 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer
County, New Jersey).

Figure 5: Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1886 (Sanborn Map Company 1886(1): Plate 8. Insurance Maps of Trenton, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

Figure 6: Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1905 (J.M. Lathrop 1905: Plate 10, Atlas of the City of Trenton and the Borough of Princeton, Mercer County, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

Figure 7: Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1930 (Franklin Survey Co. 1930: Real Estate Plat-Book of the City of Trenton and the Borough of Princeton, Mercer County, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

Figure 8: Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1955 (Sanborn Map Company 1955(1): Plate 57. Insurance Maps of Trenton, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

Figure 9: Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1982 (Sanborn Map Company 1982(1): Plate 57. Insurance Maps of Trenton, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

Figure 10: Photograph of the Higbee Street School, ca. 1920s,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 9 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey
(Photograph courtesy of Gerald Harcar).

Figure 11: Photograph of the Higbee Street School, ca. 1970s,
City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey
(Photograph courtesy of Gerald Harcar).

Figure 12: Photograph of the front facade of the Higbee Street
School, 1994, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New
Jersey (Photograph by Robert S. Grumet).

Figure 13: Photograph showing the eastern side and rear
elevations of the Higbee Street School, 1994, City
of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey (Photograph
by Robert S. Grumet).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

9. Major Bibliographical References

Manuscript Sources

Mercer County Deed Books. Office of the County Registrar, Mercer County Court House, Trenton, New Jersey.

Nixon School File. City of Trenton, New Jersey.

Office of Tax Assessment. Trenton City Hall, Trenton, New Jersey.

Trentoniana Collection. Trenton Public Library, Trenton, New Jersey.

Reports and Published Sources

Barnard, Henry
1841 School House Architecture. State of Connecticut, Hartford.

Burr, Nelson R.
1942 Education in New Jersey, 1630-1871. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Delson, Roberta Marx
1984 New Jersey Schools: Recommendations for Conservation of the Legacy. in Olga Chesler, ed., Historic Preservation Planning in New Jersey: Selected Papers on the Identification, Evaluation, and Protection of Cultural Resources, pp. 188-206. Trenton: Office of New Jersey Heritage.

Ellis, Edward S.
1876 History of the Public Schools of the City of Trenton, New Jersey. Manuscript on file, Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library. Copied from the original manuscript in the possession of the Board of Education, Trenton, New Jersey.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

KFS Historic Preservation Group

1990 New Jersey Historic Context: Immigration and
Agricultural, Industrial, Commercial, and Urban Expansion
1850-1920. Submitted to the Office of New Jersey
Heritage, Trenton, New Jersey by Kise, Franks, and Straw,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Draft report on file, New
Jersey Historic Preservation Office, Trenton.

Walker, Edwin Robert, et al.

1929 A History of Trenton, 1679-1929. 2 vols. Princeton:
Princeton University Press.

Washington, Jack

1990 In Search of a Community's Past: The Black Community in
Trenton, New Jersey, 1860-1900. Trenton: Africa World
Press, Inc.

Wright, Marion M. Thompson

1941 The Education of Negroes in New Jersey. Teachers
College, Columbia University Contributions to Education,
No. 815. New York: Columbia University Press.

Craig, Robert

1984 Black Historic Sites In New Jersey,
New Jersey: New Jersey Historical Commission

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

10. Geographical Data

UTM References: Zone 18
 Easting 5 19 920
 Northing 44 53 580

Verbal Boundary Description

As described in the original August 1, 1856 deed through which Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Fowler and Mr. and Mrs. William P. Sherman transferred title to what is presently listed in City of Trenton tax records as Lot 6, Plat 27 to the Superintendent and Trustees of [Trenton] Public Schools, the boundaries of the nominated Higbee Street School property run along a line "Beginning on the north side of a street called Higbee Street [present Bellevue Avenue] at the corner of a lot of Mrs. Simons, and running thence along the north side of said Higbee Street North Seventy seven and a half degrees west Ninety two feet; thence still along said Higbee Street North Seventy one and three quarter degrees west fifty five feet; thence at right angles to Higbee Street North Eighteen and a quarter degrees East one hundred and twenty five feet more or less, to Land belonging to the Heirs or devisees of William Megill deceased; thence along said Megill's line South Forty eight and a half degrees East one hundred and seventy feet more or less to Land of Peter Staats; and thence along the line of said Peter Staats and said Mrs. Simons South twenty five and a half degrees west forty five feet more or less to the place of beginning" (Mercer County Deed Book 37:285).

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of Lot 6, Plat 27 described above have remained unchanged from 1856 to the present day. They represent the boundaries of land occupied by the Higbee Street School building and grounds from 1857 to 1872 during its period of significance as Trenton's first school constructed specifically for the free public education of children belonging to the city's African American community.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 1 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

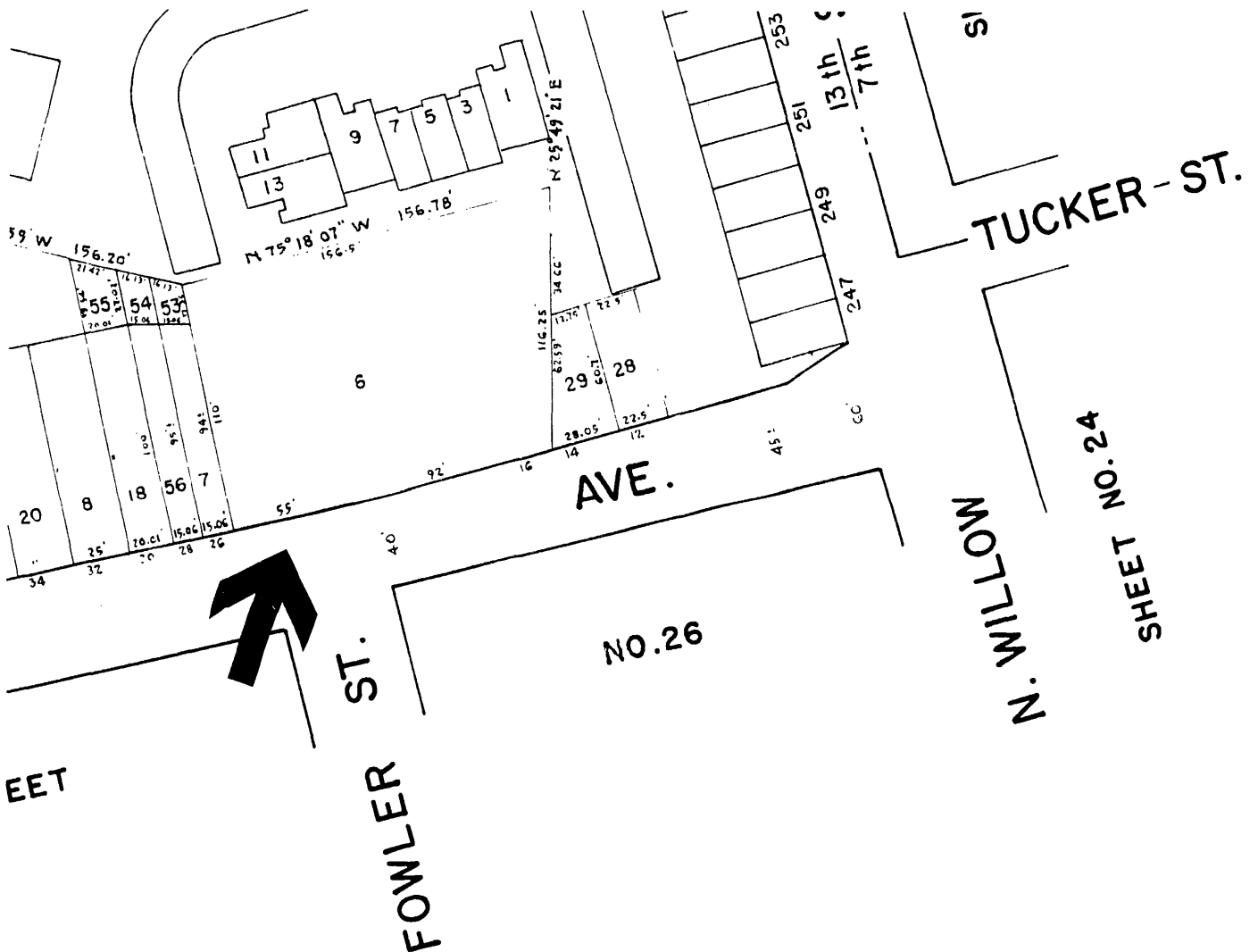


Figure 2

Tax map showing the Higbee Street School Parcel, Lot 6, Plat 27, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey 1966 [revised April, 1975], 13th Tax Area (Sheet No. 27: Map on file in the Office of Tax Assessment, Trenton City Hall, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 2 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

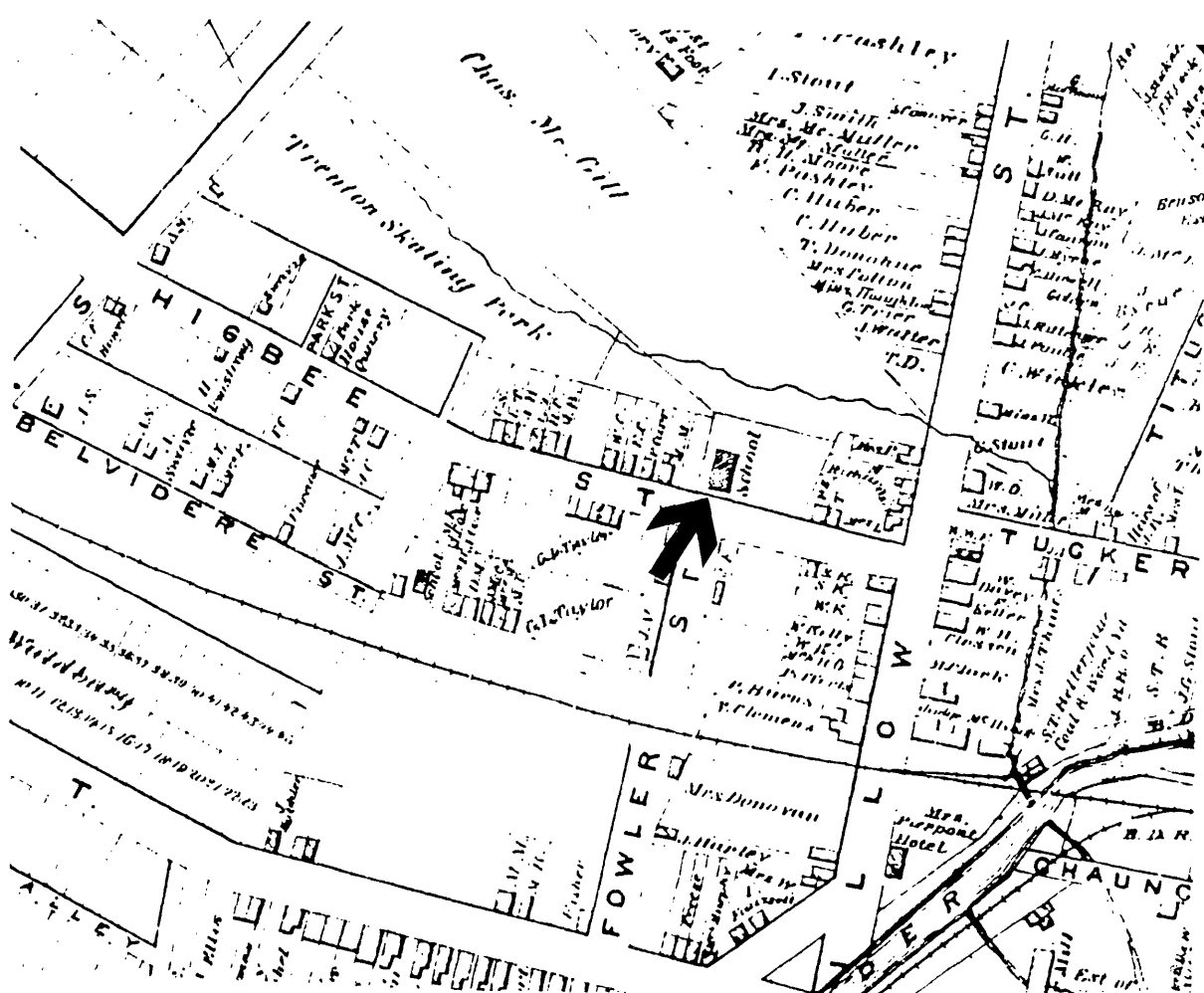


Figure 3

Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1870 (F.W. Beers 1870: Map of the City of Trenton, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 3 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey



Figure 4

Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1882 (C.C. Haven 1882: A New Real Estate and Insurance Map of the City of Trenton, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 4 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

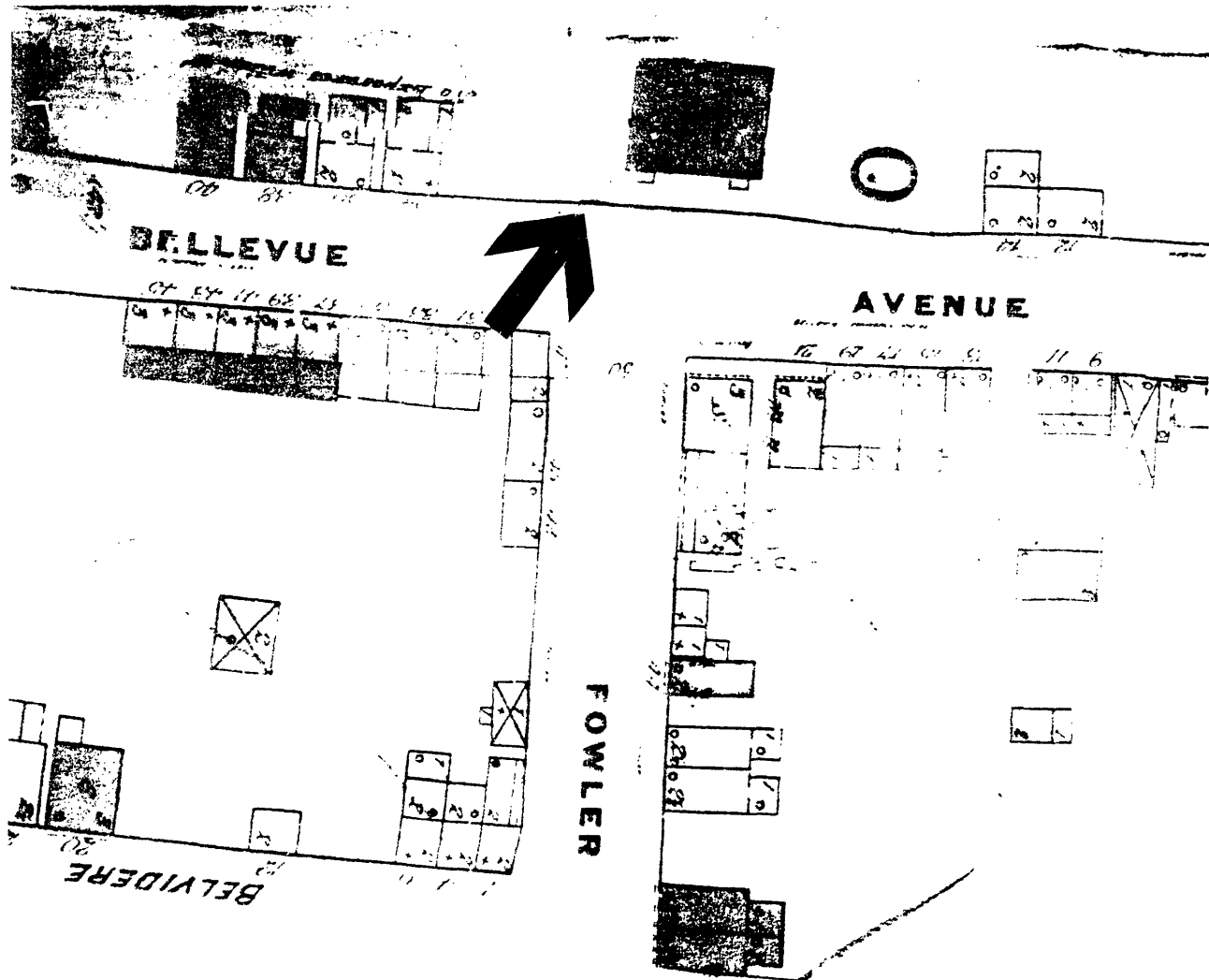


Figure 5

Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1886 (Sanborn Map Company 1886(1): Plate 8. Insurance Maps of Trenton, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 5 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

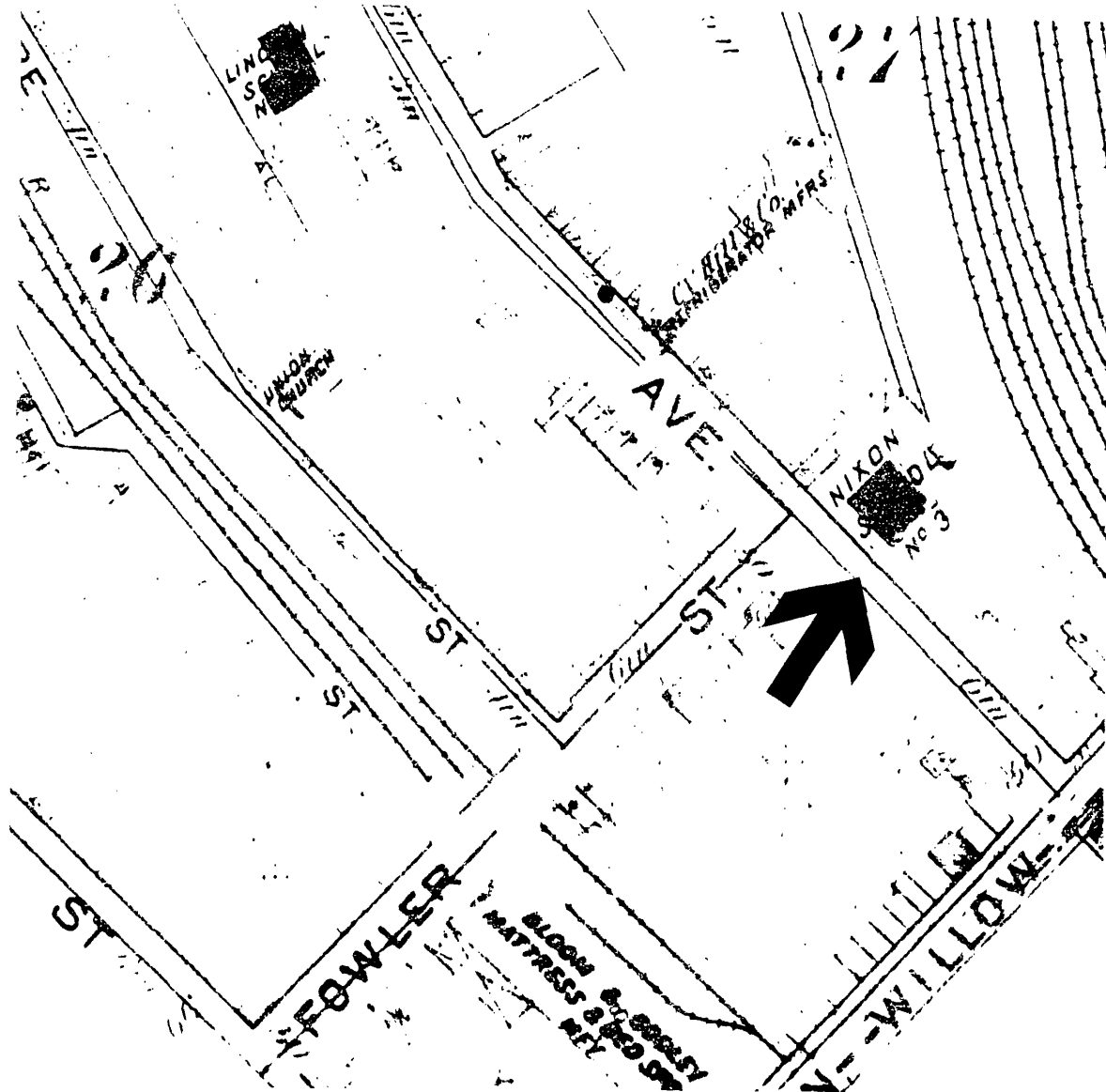


Figure 6

Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1905 (J.M. Lathrop 1905: Plate 10, Atlas of the City of Trenton and the Borough of Princeton, Mercer County, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 6 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

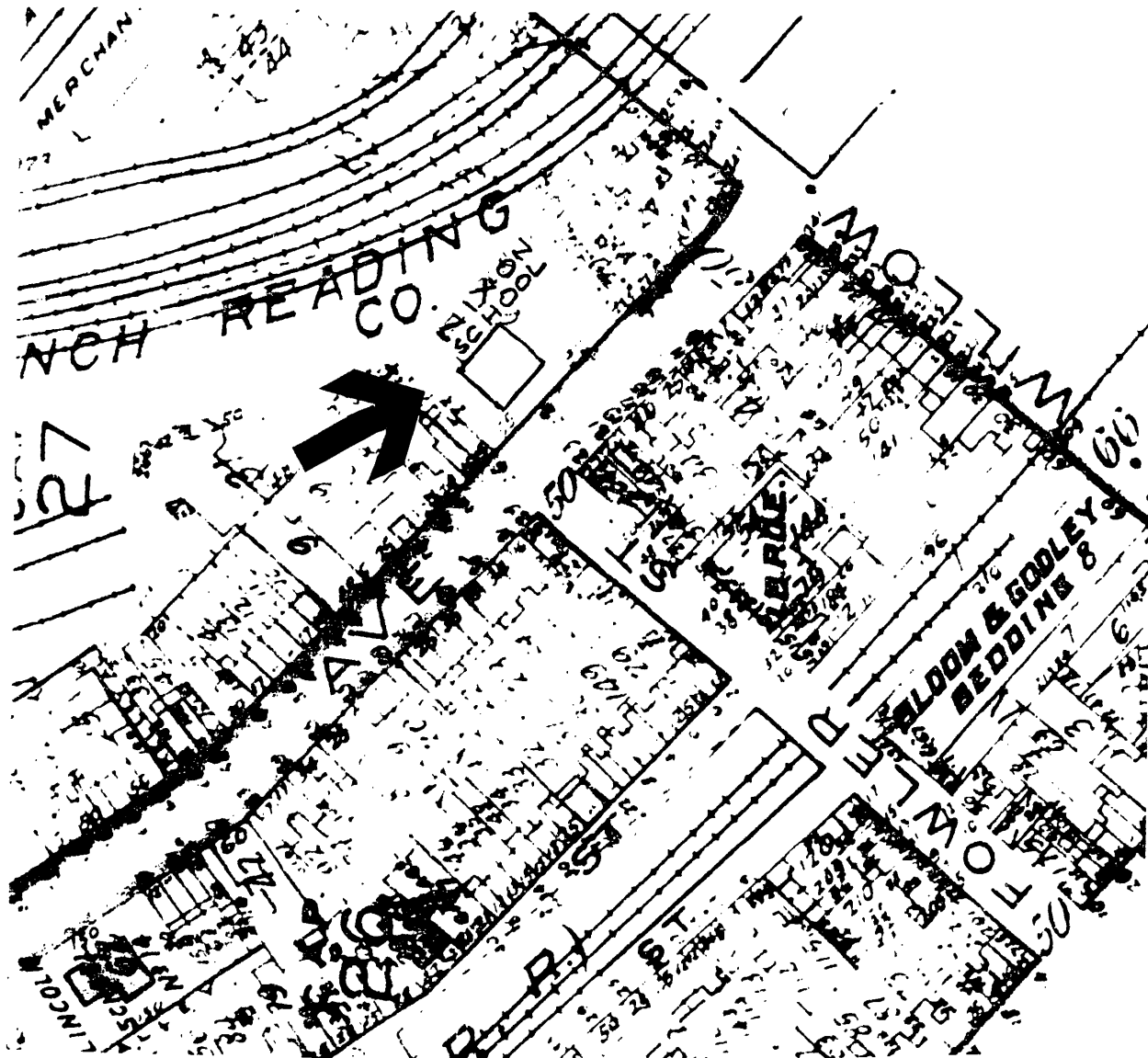


Figure 7

Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1930 (Franklin Survey Co. 1930: Real Estate Plat-Book of the City of Trenton and the Borough of Princeton, Mercer County, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 7 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

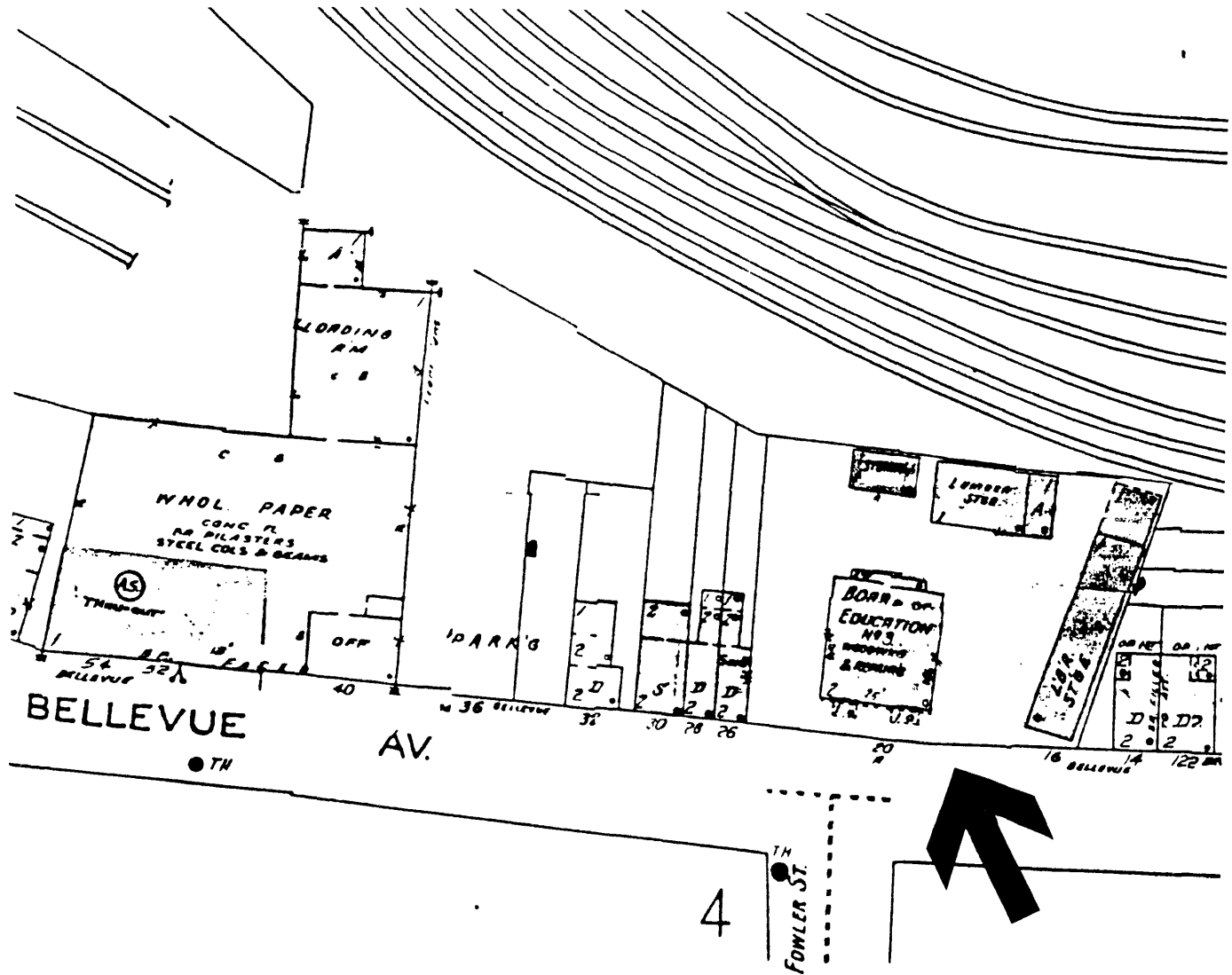


Figure 8

Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1955 (Sanborn Map Company 1955(1):Plate 57. Insurance Maps of Trenton, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 8 Higbee Street School, Trenton,
Mercer County, New Jersey

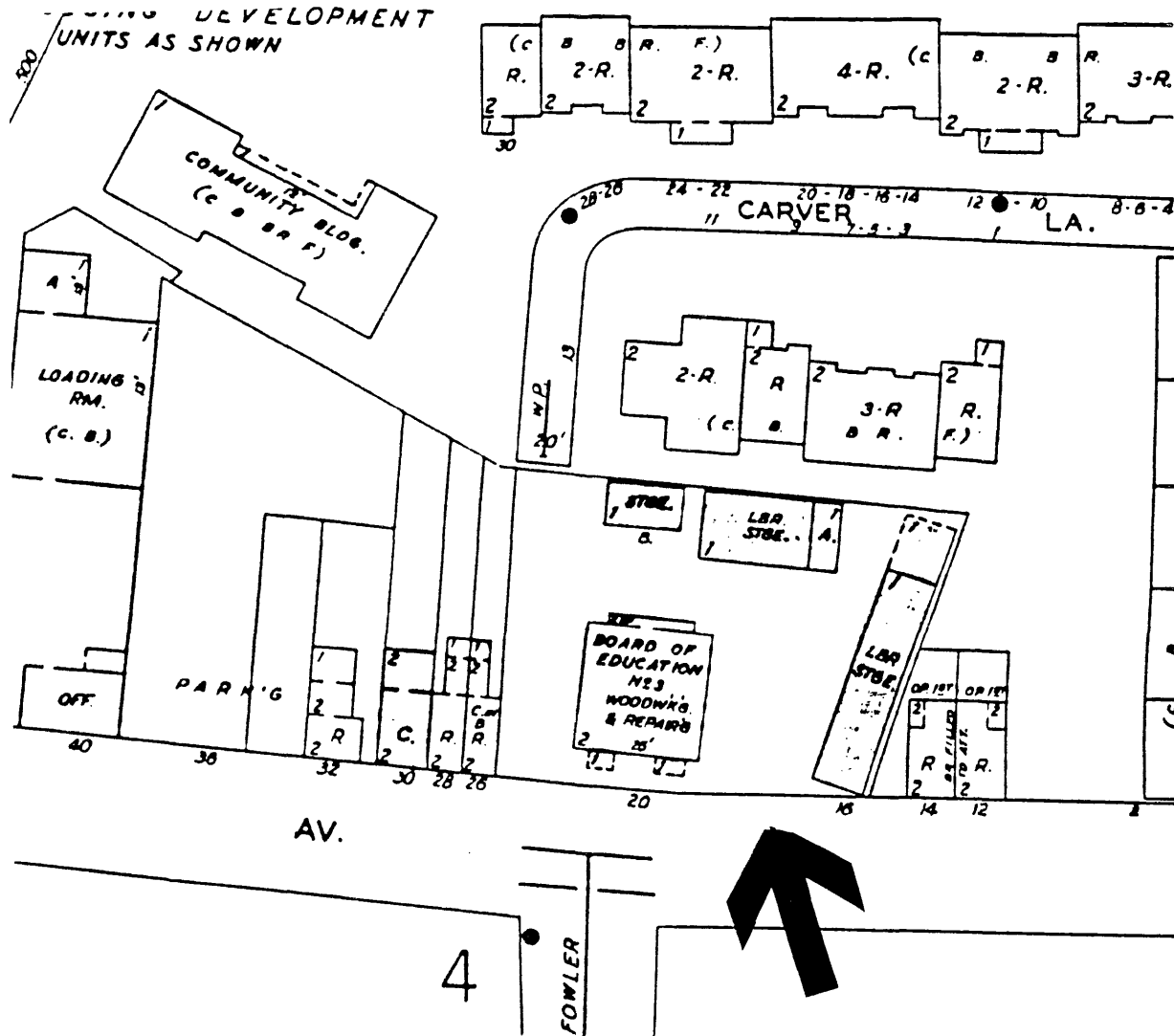


Figure 9

Map showing the location of the Higbee Street School, 1982 (Sanborn Map Company 1982(1):Plate 57. Insurance Maps of Trenton, New Jersey. Map on file in the Trentoniana Collection, Trenton Public Library, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey).