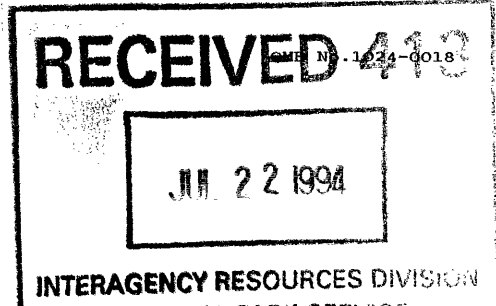


1014

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual ~~NATIONAL PARK SERVICE~~. 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 any 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 : Walnut Green School

other names/site number : District School Number 25; N-308

2. Location

street & number : Route 82 and Owl's Nest Road
city or town : Greenville

not for publication : N/A
vicinity : X

state : Delaware code : DE county : New Castle code : 003 zip code : 19807

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Daniel P. Gifford
Signature of certifying official

July 8, 1994
Date

State or 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 commenting or other official

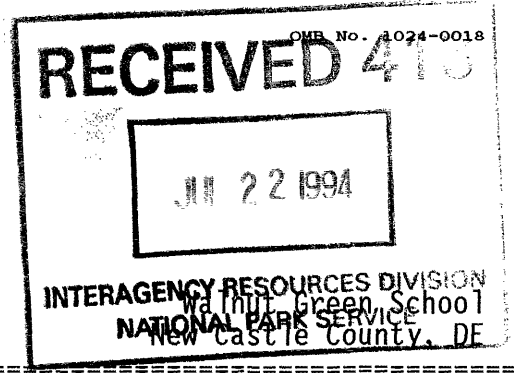
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 3 Page 1



Agency Certification

In my opinion, The Walnut Green School meets/ does not meet the National Register criteria.



 Dennis E. Greenhouse
 County Executive
 New Castle County, Delaware

9/17/93
 Date

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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

Elson H. Beall 9.19.94

other (explain): _____

Entered in the National Register

for

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u> TOTAL

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Education</u>	Sub: <u>School</u>
<u>Landscape</u>	<u>Street Furniture/Object</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Single Dwelling</u>
<u>Domestic</u>	<u>Secondary Structure</u>
<u>Landscape</u>	<u>Street Furniture/Object</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>Stone</u>
roof	<u>Wood</u>
walls	<u>Stone</u>
other	<u>Wood, Weatherboard</u>

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

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section 7 Page 1

Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

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Description

Walnut Green School is a one-room, stone schoolhouse built in three main sections that date to the early nineteenth century (east half), ca. 1919 (west half), and ca. 1924 (wings). Since at least the 1830s, the school has been located on a half-acre parcel northwest of the crossroads of present-day Route 82 and Owl's Nest Road, 1.2 miles west from State 52 in Christiana Hundred.

The front of the school faces Route 82, which, since the early nineteenth century, circuitously connected the Red Clay and Brandywine Creeks. The north-south road that passes by the east end of the school yard led from Newport to Centreville. Surrounding houses date to the first-half of the eighteenth century and ca. 1800. Nearby sites contribute to the preservation of the strong rural character of the current landscape: the Hoopes' Reservoir and Valley Garden Park are located east of Walnut Green on Route 82; and northeast of the school are the Winterthur Museum and the Wilmington Country Club.

The school building maintains a high level of integrity of design and setting from the time of its Colonial Revival remodelling in 1919-24. During these years, Mrs. Henry B. (Mary Wilson) Thompson, one of the three school commissioners and a well-known social and civic leader, spearheaded a fund-raising campaign to update the school. The main building was doubled in size, the rear wings were constructed, and the building's distinctive feature, the prominent Colonial Revival vestibule, was created.

The Walnut Green School is a rectangular, one-room, symmetrical five-bay, one-story, gambrel-roofed, white-stuccoed stone building. The long facade of the school is distinguished by a centered, Colonial Revival, arched entrance vestibule. Two frame, gable-roofed rear wings extend perpendicularly from the center of the rear elevation. Two contributing structures define the setting of the school. Dressed random ashlar walls enclose the school's front yard parallel to Route 82, and continue more than 100 feet north on Owl's Nest Road. According to an anonymous account of the school, the walls were built in 1922 by Alfred Taylor, one of the school commissioners. The date "Nov. 1922" is engraved in the western pier marking the path to the centered front door. The yard enclosed by the walls is landscaped with boxwood shrubs, azaleas, and forsythia, and shaded by large Walnut trees. The water pump and its protecting 6-foot, 6-inch square gazebo with a frame pyramid roof is located east of the school, and is a contributing structure. Extant documents do not reveal when the gazebo was built. Its style suggests that it was built at the time of the renovations to the school, 1919-24. It appears in a photograph taken in 1932, which shows the school, wall, and gazebo as they appear today. There is a noncontributing modern two-bay, frame, shed-roofed garage on a stone foundation west of the school within the half-acre parcel.

Overall, the main block of the school, which is stone, appears to have been constructed in one building period, because of its stuccoed surface and symmetrical facade. The building and records suggest that the eastern section may be the

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 2

Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

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nineteenth-century block. First, the stonework on the east end has a patched and undulating surface, whereas the surface of the west end appears more regular. (The walls were sandblasted in 1992, then painted with a cement/stucco product, Durafilm.) The irregular surface indicates changes in openings. It has been reported that the entrance was moved: Mrs. Thompson recorded that her improvements included taking out the side door. An anonymous account of the school indicated that the original entrance had a shed built over it to protect the students before school. A shadow of a gable roof and patching is evident on the eastern end wall in raking light, suggesting the location of an earlier entrance at that end.

Furthermore, the school's location at a crossroads suggests that the end closest to the road is the oldest part. If the western half were the original section, the builders would have built the addition toward the road, which would have been difficult given the close proximity of the road and adjacent water pump. Secondly, at the time of the enlargement, the school was supposed to have gotten a pipeless heater to replace a stove that sat near the center of the room. The basement where the heater is currently located is situated below the western section. It is not a full basement, but appears to have been excavated for a heating system. It seems unlikely that a basement would have been excavated below the original building, when one could be dug before constructing the enlargement. The exterior chimney at the west end and interior fireplace and surround are in keeping with the early-twentieth-century Colonial Revival style, and the renovations at Walnut Green in the 1920s.

The facade of the Walnut Green School possesses the identifying features of the Colonial Revival style: an accentuated front door with a transom; and symmetrical windows, which are double hung with multi-pane glazing. The entrance vestibule is distinguished by an arched roof covered with green-painted tin sheets. The curved pediment is unsupported by pilasters, a typical Colonial Revival feature. The pediment rests on a wide, paneled cornice pierced by a five-light transom. The walls and pediment of the vestibule are covered with white-painted weatherboard, like the rear additions. The vestibule rests on a stone foundation. The double-leaf doors are protected by frame storm doors with eight lights in the upper two-thirds, and a single recessed panel below, sometimes considered a French design. The main doors are colonial six-panel with modern brass hardware. A photo of 1932 shows cross five-panel doors; however, the style of the present doors is in keeping with the Colonial Revival theme. The 8/8 double hung sash windows are flanked by paneled shutters that hang on hinges and are held open by simple, wrought-iron shutter dogs. The three-panel shutters probably date to post-1932 because they do not appear in the photo mentioned above, although the shutter dogs are visible.

East and west views of Walnut Green accentuate the steeply-pitched gambrel roof, which creates almost a full second story of open space on the interior. There is very little overhang at the sides and cornice. The roof is covered with wood shingles and the building has new copper gutters. There are no openings in the east elevation except for a louvered lunette with a brick header surround. The east wall is scarred by a gable form. There are bolts from four tie-rods visible below the shadow of the gable. The patched stonework could indicate the location of an

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

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earlier entrance. The gable shadow suggests that the roof of this section may have been raised. The western elevation is distinguished by the large, stone, tapered, exterior chimney. The chimney cap is finished with brick headers, below which a band has been created by projecting stone blocks. There is a lunette with a brick header surround near the top of the chimney, matching the lunette on the east end.

The north elevation is characterized by a telescoping wing made up of two sections, constructed at a right angle to the main block, and centered opposite the entrance and between four 8/8 double hung sash windows. These windows match the four on the front in size and trim. There are no shutters on the windows toward the western end. There are four-panel shutters on the windows toward the eastern end, with shutter dogs bearing a stamped clam-shell pattern.

The rear section consists of two one-story, gable-roofed, white weatherboard buildings on stone foundations. Differences in design and materials between the two wings may be attributed to the rebuilding that occurred after an alleged fire in the wings, and to slightly different periods of construction. The kitchen wing was supposed to have been built in 1924. The kitchen is now located in the wing that adjoins the main block. The northernmost wing could have served as a lunch room, extra classroom, or possibly as the original kitchen. Both wings appear in the 1932 photograph.

The two wings are clad in weatherboard of slightly different widths; the window trim is different; and the heights of the two parts are different. The symmetrical windows are 6/6 sash. The windows of the adjoining wing have plain-board surrounds and small drip hoods, with louvered shutters on the east elevation. The northern wing has moulded surrounds and two-panel shutters. Shutter dogs with a stamped clam-shell pattern were used in both wings. There is an exterior entrance on the east elevation of the wing that abuts the main block, with a six-light top and three cross panel bottom. The west elevation of this wing has a bulkhead entrance to the full basement under this wing, which leads to the excavated space below the main block where the oil burner sits. The foundation walls of this wing are 1 foot 4 inches thick, although its north end rests on a cinder block foundation. The foundation of the northernmost wing has been stabilized with modern poured concrete piers and a modern, concrete block, end wall foundation. The spaces between the piers are filled with rubblestone. There are two brick chimneys in the rear wing. One served as a flue for the furnace in the basement of the main block. It is situated north of the exterior wall of the main block, inside the adjoining wing. The second chimney is centered on the exterior wall of the north wing, and served a stove that sat in the northern end of that wing.

The interior of the entrance vestibule is lined with closets with plain insert-panel doors and Colonial Revival hardware. The ceiling of this space is a smooth plastered round arch. An archway separates this vestibule from the main block. The main block is a lofty single room with light-pink plastered walls. The interior dimensions of this room are 17 feet 7 inches by 60 feet 9 inches. Interior trim is minimal, and includes wide beige baseboards, moulded chair rails, and picture moulding. The west end is the most detailed, with a wide, black stone

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Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

fireplace, a semi-circular brick hearth, and an arched inset panel above the fireplace. Inside the fireplace is a reproduction colonial wrought-iron crane. Two large projecting stones support a plain wood mantel shelf that extends the length of the wall, and forms the top shelf of the built-in shelves flanking the fireplace. A 10-foot deep platform/stage extends the length of the east end. There are scars where lighting fixtures were attached to the walls between the windows. Two round black iron chandeliers are suspended by chains from the ceiling. There are decorative register faces in the ceiling for ventilation, typical of early-twentieth-century fixtures. The visible joists below the main block are vertical and circular sawn, 3 inches by 9 1/2 inches, on 1-foot, 5-inch centers. Foundation walls are about 1-foot, 10-inches thick.

The rear wings are accessed through a six-panel door like the double doors in the front entrance. The interior arrangement of the abutting wing dates to post-1947. The wing is divided into three rooms with a central hall leading to the north wing. On the east is the kitchen, and on the west are men's and women's restrooms. A letter written in 1947 to the School Board complaining about the old outside toilets confirms the post-1947 date for the current restrooms (RG 8005, Department of Public Instruction, Box 4281, Delaware State Archives). Doors and door mouldings are the same in both wings, and appear to date to the period after the building functioned as a school. The rear wing is wainscotted with beaded board and the walls are plastered. The rear wall is marked by a scar from a stove flue. Floors in the main block and wings are laid with narrow wood boards. Floor joists in the abutting wing appear to be new and measure 1-and-1/2 inches by 7-and-1/4 inches. Those in the northern wing are 1-and-3/4 inches by 5-and-3/4 inches.

Overall, Walnut Green School is little-changed from the time of its closing in 1947. After its closing, the school functioned for many years as the Walnut Green Gallery, an oriental rug store. The school has recently been converted for residential use. The renovation required few interior changes, since a kitchen and bathrooms already existed.

Summary of Resources within Property:

School	1 contributing building
Pump and gazebo	1 contributing structure
Stone wall	1 contributing structure
Garage	1 noncontributing building

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)

- X 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.
X 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 (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ___ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
___ B removed from its original location.
___ C a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Education
Architecture

Period of Significance 1919-1947

Significant Dates 1919
1924

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

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

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 1

Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

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Statement of Significance

Walnut Green School, District School Number 25, is significant under Criterion A as a property that represents the theme of education. Walnut Green School is significant as an example of the survival of the one-room school until the mid-twentieth century, despite the movement to consolidate old districts and build new schools. School records illustrate the duties and activities of the District Number 25 community, in regard to maintenance, renovations, and daily operations. The Walnut Green School's period of operation and significance extends to 1947 when it succumbed to the trend of consolidation. Walnut Green School is also significant under Criterion C as a well-preserved example of the Colonial Revival style. In addition, the renovations to the school reflect the state-wide, and national, educational reforms, which prompted a massive rebuilding of state schools between 1919 and 1940.

Education

The Nineteenth Century

Background to the significant period in the school's history is provided by the historic context of education in Delaware, particularly rural school education, which has been established by two recent National Register reports: Naaman's Creek School District No. 1, N-1227, and Eight-Square School, School District No. 6, N-557. The context of rural school education for School District No. 25 is based on and condensed from these sources.

The earliest significant legislation for public school education in Delaware was in 1796, but its effects were not widespread. The 1796 legislation created a school fund from taxes on marriage and tavern licenses. The funds were allowed to accumulate until 1817, when they were dispersed for education of the poor. The more successful and significant legislation occurred in 1829, when the Free School Act was instituted with support from Judge Willard Hall. This Act established a system of small, independent school districts. Delaware was in step with the east-coast movement to replace private and subscription schools with public schools, which occurred by the 1830s (Gulliford, 38).

The date of the construction of Walnut Green School is an approximation. Walnut Green School has generally been referred to as "the old stone school." A variety of construction dates have been cited:

- Circa 1780, in session from 1808 (source: 1932 photo of school, showing a sign attached below the lunette)
- Circa 1780, in session 1790 (source, 1938, Delaware, A Guide to the First State)
- 1800 (source: What Do You Know About the Public Schools of Delaware, ca. 1924)

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Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

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These references to a construction date of circa 1780-1800 are from the 1920s and 1930s, and are not from primary sources. Although a date of 1780-1800 is not impossible, it is also not substantiated by extant primary documents. The earliest documented reference to a school in the deeds and assessment records occurs on May 18, 1832, when a three-member school committee bought the half-acre of land. Before this date, the half-acre was part of a 180-acre parcel. None of the deeds for the one-hundred-eighty acre parcel, back to 1751, refers to a schoolhouse or building used for school purposes. The earliest date, listed above, at which time the building was supposed to have been used as a school was 1790. After that date, the improvements listed in the deeds do not mention a school. Specifically, a deed for the property in 1811 referred to a stone dwelling house, which was recorded as being on the property in 1787, too. Although this stone dwelling house could be the school, it would have had to have been located on the half-acre that was deeded to the school district in 1832. There was no symbol for a school on Henry Heald's map of the roads of New Castle County of 1820. No buildings were specified on the half-acre parcel that was deeded to the school district in 1832. "S.H. 25" appeared on the Rea and Price map of 1849.

The districts formed in 1829 encompassed rural lands of about a two-mile radius. A district usually equalled thirty-five pupils and one building (Mowrey, 4). Each district formed a corporation with the name "School District No. ____." By 1830, school districts were given the right to raise funds through taxes, with matching funds coming from the state's school fund. The funds were to be used for the free education of white children. Yearly, voters in each district were to meet at the school to elect a clerk and two commissioners. These elected officials were responsible for building and maintaining the school, and employing teachers.

The Free School Act was enacted in District 25 within a few years of its establishment in 1829. The first deed to mention the school by name, dated 1832, was granted to a three-member school committee. Furthermore, records for Walnut Green, School District No. 25, show that the system of electing a clerk and two commissioners was followed from at least 1892 up until the time it closed in 1947. Specifically, a book of accounts and minutes for District No. 25, dating from 1892 to 1918, contains records of the yearly meetings and of the activities of the commissioners, which included hiring teachers and maintaining the school. Educational Directories for the State of Delaware up through the year the school closed list the clerk and commissioners for Walnut Green.

The Walnut Green School was built on a typical rural schoolhouse site. The site deeded to the three-man committee in 1832 was a triangular, half-acre parcel at the junction of two roads. The current tax parcel is still approximately one-half acre. The size, configuration, and location of the site were typical, based on the findings of the Strayer commission, a twentieth-century group, which studied Delaware's rural schools. The commission found that the typical school site in Delaware was a triangular or rectangular plot, less than half an acre, and located in the angle of a crossroads (Strayer, et al., General Report, 1919, 4). 40.2% of the school buildings in Delaware in 1919 were located on triangular or irregular sites (Strayer, et al., General Report, 1919, 213).

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Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

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By 1833, sixty-one districts had been organized in New Castle County and were receiving aid from the state fund (Weeks, 44). In 1837, forty-six New Castle County districts sent reports to the Annual Educational Convention, led by Willard Hall. In three of these forty-six districts, no schools had been established. About half of the remaining forty-three districts had been in operation for seven years since 1830. The other half of the forty-three districts had been instituted around 1833 to 1834. Many districts had already erected school houses (Weeks, 46). It seems likely that Walnut Green, whose school committee was organized at least by 1832, would fit into this trend of school construction in the 1830s. In Christiana Hundred by 1868, there were fourteen districts mapped on Beers' Atlas.

The Twentieth Century

Except for legislation to clarify and enforce the Act of 1829, it remained essentially unchanged until increased population and industrialization of the early twentieth century necessitated reforms. The reform movement had its impetus in part from the federal government. In 1908 Theodore Roosevelt formed the National Commission on Country Life to study and solve rural problems, including the one-room schools (Gulliford, 41). The State of Delaware enacted the School Code of 1919 and its revision of 1921. This legislation led to a massive rebuilding of state schools between 1919 and 1940, and to consolidation. Though still locally supervised, after 1919 the legal title to the rural schools was held by the state. The rebuilding campaign led to the eventual demise of rural school districts.

School activities at Walnut Green during the years before the rebuilding campaign are documented in a ledger from 1892-1918, which contains the minutes and account records for Walnut Green School. The records of purchases recreate a picture of the school's contents with such items as a bell, Bible, Webster's Dictionary, box of crayons, readers such as Baldwin's, a blackboard, and a clock. Bills included the coal to fuel the stove, and a payment to Mrs. McCullom for the use of the pump. (The McCullom property was at the southeast corner of the Route 82 and Owl's Nest Road intersection on the 1881 Hopkins and 1893 Baist maps.) In 1899 the school committee purchased new desks from Megary & Co.

The records also reflect how the school commissioners maintained the school during these years, in accordance with the Free School Act of 1829, which defined the commissioners' responsibilities. In 1904 the committee paid to have the school whitewashed. In 1910, one of the school commissioners, Alfred Taylor, was paid for building a chimney. Mr. Taylor also built the stone wall enclosing the school property in 1922. In 1916, the ledger records a payment to the Wilmington Sash and Door Company. In 1917, the commissioners moved to build two new waterclosets, and to check with the school board about size and materials. In 1918 the commissioners voted to have a 4-foot high wainscot installed, and to "whitecoat and hack the remainder." The records do not specify what area was to be wainscotted.

The ledger does not record any major renovation projects, but attendance records for the school indicate that Walnut Green was experiencing the population boom felt throughout the county, which ultimately led to the rebuilding period of

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Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

1919-40. The thirty-nine pupils at Walnut Green in 1892 had surged to seventy-three in 1904 (School District No. 25 Account Book and Minutes). In the twentieth century, grades one through eight, and later one through six, were taught at Walnut Green. In the year 1918/19, two teachers were employed by the school commissioners, about the time the school was enlarged. The force behind the rebuilding at Walnut Green, Mrs. Henry B. (Mary Wilson) Thompson, was first listed as a trustee in the 1921/22 Educational Directory of the State of Delaware. She remained a trustee until her death in 1947.

In 1944/45 there were only sixty-two one-room schools in the state, compared with the sixty-one districts in New Castle County alone in 1833. In 1946 the one-room schools constituted about one-third of all schools, for white and black students. Of these one-teacher schools, 62 per cent were black, the remaining 38 per cent white (Report of the State School Survey Commission, 1948, 53-54). A 1947-48 report gave more specific numbers. In that year, there were seven white one-teacher schools in New Castle County, with a total of eighteen in the state. In combination with black one-teacher schools, of which there were nine in the county, the grand total of one-teacher schools was forty-nine in the state, down from sixty-two in 1944/45 (Annual Report for the Year Ending 6/30/1948, 89). Walnut Green is an example from this small pool of one-teacher schools that remained in the late 1940s. Of the 200,000 one-room schools in operation nation-wide at the start of the twentieth century, only about 12,000 remained at the time of the National Trust-sponsored survey in 1984, or about a 6 per cent survival (Gulliford, 233).

Of the fourteen districts in Christiana Hundred mapped by Beers in 1868, eight were consolidated into the Alexis I. duPont Special School District. This district was created on April 14, 1919. Seven of the eight Christiana Hundred districts merged into Alexis I. duPont in 1931-32. These included, besides the original A. I. duPont Districts 23 and 75, Oak Hill 22 (June 19, 1931); Mt. Airy 27 (March 9, 1932); Montchanin 24 (March 9, 1932); Center Grove 26 (March 9, 1932); and Clinton 28 (August 7, 1931) (Mowrey, 7). The last of the Christiana Hundred districts to consolidate with Alexis I. duPont was the Walnut Green School District No. 25, which finally succumbed on October 17, 1947 (Annual Report for the Year Ending 6/30/1948, 56). Of the twelve total districts that consolidated with A. I. duPont, seven merged between 1926-32, and five between 1947-62. Walnut Green was part of this later period of consolidation. Nation-wide, rural one-room schools were widely used into the 1940s (Gulliford, 195).

The movement toward consolidation resulted in the publication of several books and reports, including a pamphlet published ca. 1924 by the Service Citizens of Delaware for wide-spread circulation entitled What Do You Know About the Public Schools of Delaware? The Service Citizens called for sweeping reforms, recommending that only thirty-one out of the total 314 white schools be retained (What Do You Know, 24). Their statistics showed that five out of the thirteen rural schools in Christiana Hundred were older than fifty years (What Do You Know, 14). According to their records, the five schools that were older than fifty years were Richardson Park No. 20 (1780), Walnut Green No. 25 (1800), Center Grove No. 26 (1854), Mt. Airy No. 27 (1863), and Clinton No. 28 (1868) (What Do You Know, 29). Three of these

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Section 8 Page 5

Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

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five remain, including Walnut Green, which earned a score slightly higher than the other two (What Do You Know, 29). Walnut Green is the oldest of these, and therefore the oldest extant school in Christiana Hundred, dating at least to 1832. The other two, Center Grove and Mt. Airy, are on the National Register and function as residences.

Nation-wide, commissioners of one-room schools fought to keep their schools open. The issue of consolidation was divisive and controversial for district residents (Gulliford, 43). The events that occurred in the Walnut Green district during this period of the decline of the rural school illustrate the extremes to which a commission, or in this case one commissioner, would go to save a one-room school, and the mixed feelings of district residents.

Mrs. Thompson's name first appeared as a commissioner of the Walnut Green School in the Educational Directories in 1921/22. Her front-page obituary in the Journal Every Evening of April 2, 1947, described her as "one of Delaware's best known club women, social and civic leaders." Her interests included the early history and historical landmarks of Delaware, and she was referred to as "an authority on the ancient homes and landmarks of Delaware." She was a founder and president of the Delaware Society for the Preservation of Antiquities. Her restoration projects included the Old Dutch House in New Castle, the Town Hall, and the Delaware Bank Association. In regard to Walnut Green, her obituary stated:

Mrs. Thompson raised money for, and doubled in size, the Walnut Green School in Christiana Hundred. The school is one of the oldest in the state, and since her successful campaign to save it, Mrs. Thompson was chairman of its board of trustees.

The records of the Department of Public Instruction contain letters for and against the closing of Walnut Green. One letter written by Mrs. Thompson in 1945 illustrates her influential role as chair of the school committee. She urged the State Board of Education to put in an oil-burning system to replace the steam-heating system that was installed in 1938. The steam-heating unit was from the Greenwood School and was too large for Walnut Green. She then recounted the changes she had funded at Walnut Green. These began when the building was "doomed to destruction" under the P. S. du Pont improvement law. Mrs. Thompson explained that she raised \$14,000, put in a modern heating plant, took out the old stove and side door, and furnished tables and chairs. Another view was offered in a letter from a mother who complained that the duPont School bus, for which they paid ten cents, passed by her two sons as they walked to the old Walnut Green School. She then sarcastically noted that Mrs. Thompson's children had not attended Walnut Green.

It was not unexpected when the school finally closed during the fall term of 1947. In August of that year, one of the school commissioners had written to the state superintendent about whether he should prepare the school for the fall term. He was instructed to get the school ready to open at the regular time, because time would be required to hold a referendum. This was not the first referendum

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New Castle County, DE

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concerning the closing of the school. In a referendum of September 1942, fifty-nine voted for consolidation and one-hundred-and-one against. The movement to consolidate dates to at least 1912, when an article in the Evening Journal noted the merger under consideration between Walnut Green and Diamond No. 84, because of a low attendance at both schools (Evening Journal, June 3, 1912). These advances were successfully halted and followed by the rebuilding campaign.

However, the sentiment against the old one-room school was growing, as exemplified by Bill Frank's editorial about country schools in the March 4, 1946 edition of the Journal Every Evening. There, Frank reprinted quotations from two letters about the deplorable condition of Walnut Green, with its outhouses and contaminated well. Children had to carry their drinking water in open buckets from a nearby estate. (An article in the Journal Every Evening from October 21, 1942, reported that the State Board of Health had tested and approved the drinking water.) The column concluded with this statement from one of the letters: "Why does it exist? Because it is a cherished project of one person." Mary Wilson Thompson died on April 1, 1947. The following fall the school was closed.

Architecture

Walnut Green School is significant under Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Colonial Revival style of the 1920s. Walnut Green School is also significant under Criterion C because its architecture typifies the period from 1919 to 1940 when rural schools across the state were being renovated according to recommendations of the Strayer Commission. This commission studied Delaware's rural schools in response to the School Code of 1919, and made recommendations for updating these schools.

As an architectural type, Walnut Green School is a product of the twentieth century. However, the school's current form evolved from a nineteenth-century, 20-by-35-foot block. The prototypical form for nineteenth-century rural schools was the gable-front design, and it is likely that Walnut Green was originally a gable-front plan. The entrance on the long side of the building appears to be a twentieth-century change, based on the patched areas of the east wall of the school, the written statement by Mrs. Thompson, and the anonymous history of the school. (According to the survey records for the school dated 1972, this "History" was written by a student and found in the files of the previous tenant.) Mrs. Thompson explained that one of her improvements was taking out the side door. The anonymous account recorded that the school had one entrance directly from the outside, with a shed built over it later. Walnut Green's original form was likely more typical of the earlier stone school buildings such as the Forwood School (N-447) and Richardson Park No. 20 (unlocated).

The rebuilding at Walnut Green began in the late teens. A sign that was attached to the school below the eastern lunette, and is legible in a photograph from 1932, indicates that Walnut Green was rebuilt and enlarged in 1918. The Delaware Federal Writers' Project Guide to the First State also mentioned that the school was rehabilitated and a wooden addition built in 1918 by Mrs. Thompson

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Walnut Green School
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(Delaware: A Guide, 442). (This guide was edited by a friend of Mrs. Thompson.) However, according to the anonymous memoir, the rebuilding was begun in July of 1919. This date is corroborated by the school ledger, which does not indicate any major rebuilding campaigns or enlargements through the year 1918.

According to the anonymous memoir, the original rural school form existed until March of 1919, when plans were made for the building of a new school and community room. These plans were not accepted by the County School Board. Instead, they led to a suggestion by P.S. du Pont, accepted by the district school commissioners, to enlarge the school, "making one large room." This enlargement was begun July 1919 and finished in November. Walnut Green's original dimensions were approximately 20 by 35 feet, an average size for rural schools (Biennial Report of the State Board of Education, 16). The renovations almost doubled the school. Its approximate current exterior dimensions are 21 feet 3 inches by 64 feet.

The anonymous memoir also noted that at the time of the renovations, 1919, the school got electric lights and a pipeless heater. Also after the remodelling, in the winter of 1920, the School Board of Education at Dover wanted to consolidate Walnut Green with Centreville. Again, the author mentioned Mrs. Thompson, now for her efforts to keep the school open. The anonymous memoir recorded the landscaping improvements made to the school by Alfred Taylor, one of the commissioners, who built the stone wall in November 1922. The following spring grass seed was sown, and flowers and shrubs were planted. It was probably about this time when the gazebo was built and pump installed. In 1924, another building project occurred at the school, with the building of the kitchen addition for hot lunches. A photo in the photo collection of the Board of Education of 1932 shows the school after the 1919-24 changes and also as it appears today. The school was five-bays long, with a center entrance and two rear additions. The school yard was surrounded by a stone wall, shaded by Walnut trees, and, in addition to the school, contained a shingle-roofed frame gazebo.

Stylistically, the changes at Walnut Green reflect the then-current fascination with the colonial period. Specifically, the rebuilding resulted in a uniform five-bay facade, with a Colonial Revival entrance centered between multi-paned, eight-over-eight sash windows, and a prominent Colonial Revival chimney and fireplace. Mrs. Thompson, the force behind the renovations, was an advocate of colonial architecture. She explained in her memoir that because "Delaware is the first of the thirteen original states," it "should be purely a colonial state as to architecture and memorials" ("Mary Wilson Thompson Memoir, Part IV," 264). She admired the University of Delaware and the town of New Castle. According to reminiscences of her daughter, Mrs. Thompson was advised on matters of decoration and renovation by Henry F. du Pont of Winterthur, and his sister, Louise Crowninshield, of Hagley (Elinor Thompson Douglas, "Growing Up at Brookwood," 268).

In addition to bearing the characteristics of the Colonial Revival style, some of the changes at Walnut Green were in accord with recommendations for updating rural schools made by the state and other agencies during the 1919-40 period. Renovations to another New Castle County school at the same time, 1919, illustrate

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that the changes at Walnut Green were quite typical. Improvements at Mt. Pleasant included unspecified interior changes, electric lights, and yard beautification of iron fences and walks (Report and Recommendations on Certain School Buildings of Delaware, 10).

Some of the changes at Walnut Green specifically complied with the Strayer Commission's recommendations for updating rural schools. The Commission was working on behalf of the Teacher's College at Columbia University. These changes included the addition of the room at Walnut Green for serving hot lunches. The Strayer commission recommended that schools have a room where hot foods could be prepared (Strayer, et al., General Report, 1919, 8-9). The commission found that in 46% of the one- to four-teacher schools, the only heat was provided by wood or coal stoves (Strayer, et al., General Report, 1919, 11). The stove at Walnut Green was supposed to have been replaced in 1919 by a new heating unit. The commission also recommended lighting to supplement daylight (Strayer, et al., General Report, 1919, 14), and in 1919 the school acquired electric lights. The commission specified the type of entrance, 6- to 8-feet wide with a porch and two pairs of double doors that open outward (Strayer, et al., General Report, 1919, 199-200). Only 8.3% of the schools in 1919 were without a vestibule (Strayer, et al., General Report, 1919, 213). 62.5% were without cloakrooms (Strayer, et al., General Report, 1919, 213). Walnut Green's colonial-revival entrance vestibule is 9-feet, 9-inches wide, with double doors.

Both the style and the form of the Walnut Green School contribute to its architectural significance under Criterion C. The Colonial Revival style was not only one of the prevailing stylistic trends at the time of the school's renovations, but it was also promoted by the school's benefactress. Furthermore, the school's current form is a product of the state-wide rebuilding campaign, which took place between 1919 and 1940. The building's current form contributes to the school's significance under Criterion A as an example of the modernization efforts of a local school district, efforts which resulted in the continued use of the building as a school until 1947.

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Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

Walnut Green School, N-308

Comprehensive Planning

Geographic Zone: Piedmont
Theme/Time Periods:

Education (15D, 15E)

Walnut Green School contributes to an understanding of rural school education in Delaware from 1830-1940 +/- . Walnut Green illustrates the response of one local district to the state-wide program for rural school education, which began with the Free School Act of 1829. The school illustrates the function of the three-person commission as supervisors of school maintenance, renovations, and daily operations throughout the period of significance. Because the building functioned as a one-room school through 1940 until its closing in 1947, the school is an example of the survival of the one-room system in the midst of a trend toward consolidation.

Of the fourteen districts in Christiana Hundred listed on Beers' Atlas of 1868, six definitely remain:

- District 22, N-12083, Oak Hill
Built ca. 1854; current use: abandoned residence
- District 24, N-1086.11, Montchanin Historic District
Built ca. 1890; current use: to be renovated as office for bed-and-breakfast
- District 25, N-308, Walnut Green
Built ca. 1832; current use: residence
- District 26, NR, N-1386, Centre Meeting Historic District
Built 1800, current use: residence
- District 27, NR, N-5831, Mt. Airy School
Built 1863; current use: residence
- District 77, (N-13103), Marshallton
Built ca. 1880; current use: United Paper Workers' Local 770 Hall

The status of rural schools in Brandywine Hundred was assessed in 1989 for the National Register nomination of Naaman's Creek School. Of the ten districts in Brandywine Hundred listed on Beers' Atlas of 1868, seven still stand:

- District 1, NR, N-1227, Naaman's Creek School
Built 1805, expanded 1905; last functioned as library
- District 2, N-1208, Mt. Pleasant School
Built 1830; current use: residence
- District 3, NR, N-164, Brandywine Village Historic District, Brandywine Academy
Built 1796
- District 4, N-457, Hanby's Corner
Mid-19th c.; current use: residence
- District 5, N-447, Forwood School
Built 1796; current use: residence

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Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

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District 6, N-557, Eight-Square School
 Built c. 1895; current use: residence
District 73, N-1181, Shellpot School
 Built 1798, expanded 1945; current use: residence

Architecture (12D, 12E)

Although the Walnut Green School dates to the early nineteenth century, the expansion and renovations that occurred at the school from 1919 to 1924 resulted in a building whose form and style exemplify the Colonial Revival period. Walnut Green School is also significant under the theme of architecture because some of the changes made during the 1919-24 period illustrate the ways in which a local district complied with the recommendations for updating rural schools made by the state and other agencies during that period.

Major Families, Individuals, and Events (18E)

In 1896, Sylvester D. Townsend taught at Walnut Green. Because he later became the Secretary of the State of Delaware, his association with this school should be noted.

From at least 1921 to 1947, Mrs. Henry B. (Mary Wilson) Thompson was a trustee of Walnut Green and the school's main benefactress. Mrs. Thompson was a well-known social and civic leader, whose friends included other major families of the period, such as Henry F. du Pont of Winterthur and Louise Crowninshield of Hagley.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: New Castle County Department of Planning

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property .51 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>18</u>	<u>446440</u>	<u>4404810</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> 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 Susan Brizzolara, Assistant Historic Preservation Planner

organization New Castle County Dept. of Planning date July 21, 1993

street & number 2701 Capitol Trail telephone 302-366-7780

city or town Newark state DE zip code 19711

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name CID, Inc., c/o Fred Fiechter

street & number 162 Stone Block Row telephone 656-6643

city or town Wilmington state DE zip code 19807

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. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Walnut Green School
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Walnut Green School
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Walnut Green School
New Castle County, DE

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Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for Walnut Green School is the legal parcel on which it is located. On the accompanying map, "New Castle County Property Tax Map, Revised 1/3/90," the parcel is outlined and identified by the number 07-022.00-018. On the accompanying map, "Boundary Measurements from Piers to Roadway," current distances from the outside face of the piers of the stone wall to the roadway are recorded. Measurements from west to east are as follows:

- Pier A 2 feet, 4 inches
- Pier B 2 feet, 8 inches
- Pier C 2 feet, 3 inches
- Pier D 1 foot, 3 inches

Measurements from south to north are as follows:

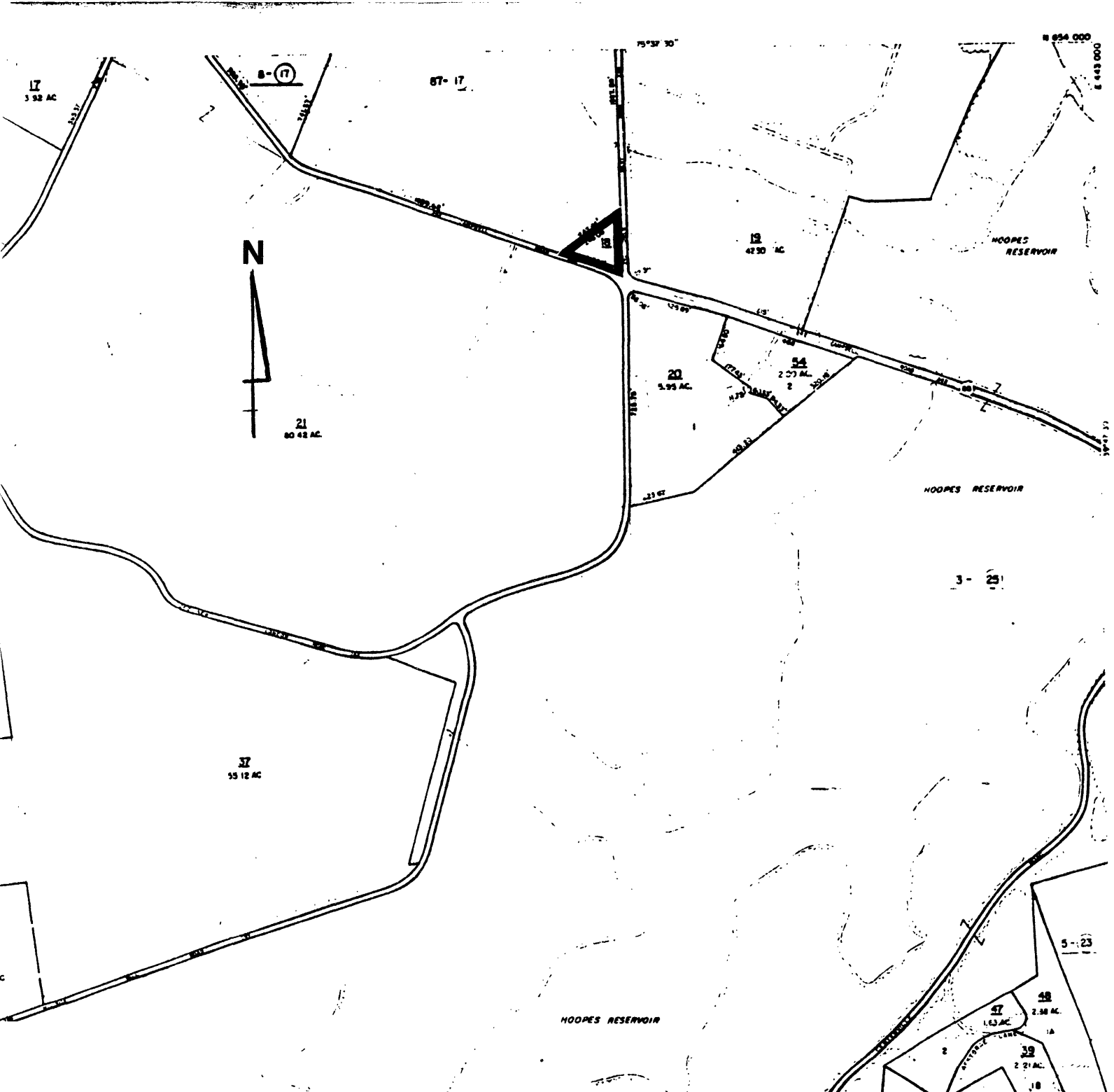
- Pier E 2 feet, 3 inches at southern corner
- " " 4 feet, 9 inches at northern corner
- Pier F 6 feet, 8 inches
- Pier G 6 feet, 4 inches
- H (steps) 4 feet, 9 inches to bottom step
- Pier I 6 feet, 1 inch

Approximate roadway widths of 21 feet, 9 inches, and 21 feet, 10 inches, are also recorded on the "Boundary Measurements" map. A survey of the property dated November 7, 1963 was prepared by Van DeMark & Lynch, Inc., Civil Engineers & Surveyors, of Wilmington, Delaware.

Boundary Justification

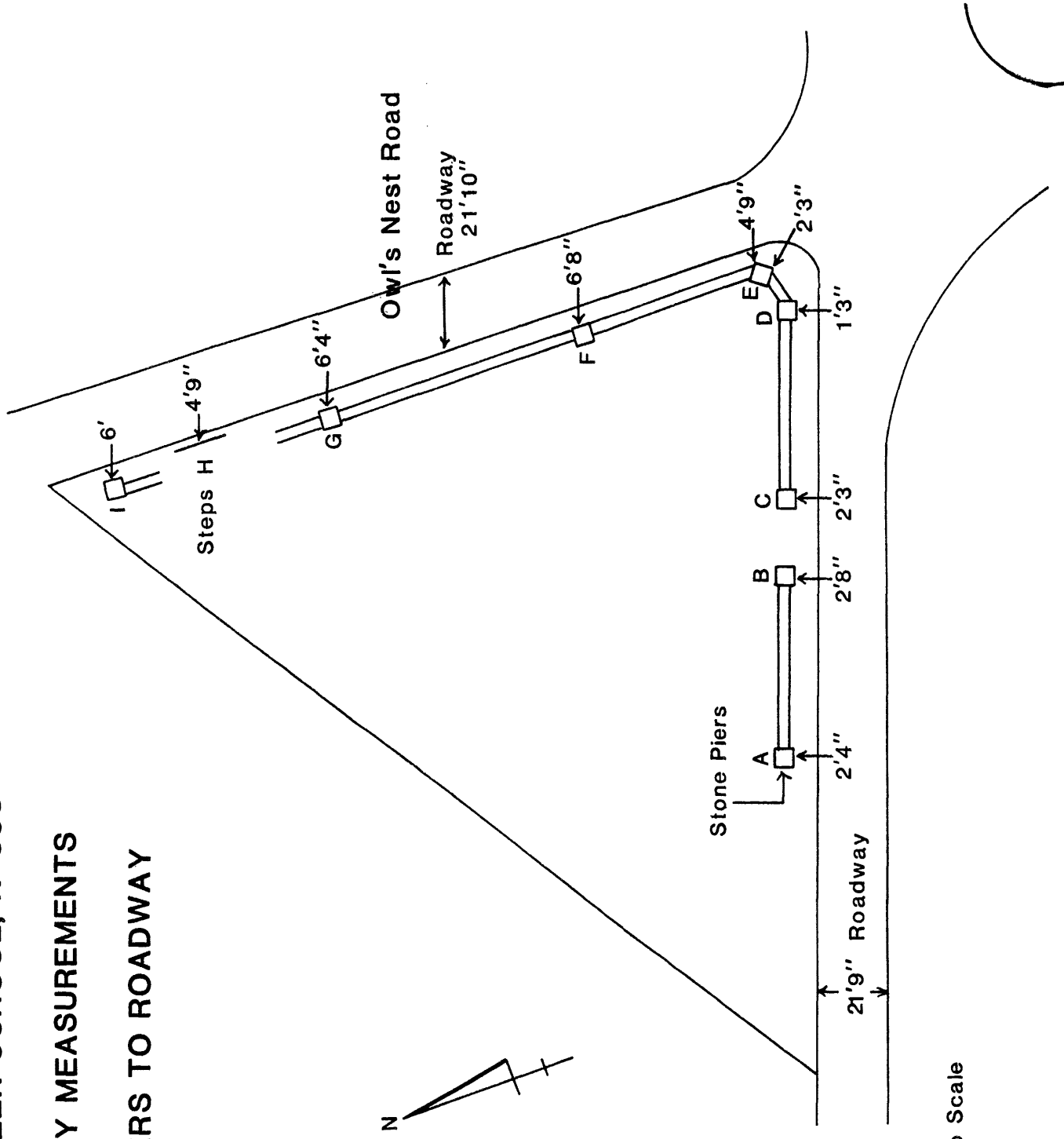
The legal parcel was chosen as the nominated boundary because the half-acre parcel is the same land that was granted to the School Committee of School District Number 25 on May 18, 1832, and that continued as the parcel deeded to School District Number 25 during the period of significance, 1919 to 1947. In addition, a stone wall has defined the outer limits of the parcel since the 1920s; and this wall is a contributing structure of the school's historic landscape. The only plan recorded in the files of the State Highway Department regarding the boundaries of the Walnut Green School is dated October 22, 1936 (Contract 504). At that time, the roadway measured 16 feet wide. Very little detail was provided regarding the proximity of the wall to the road. There is no DeIDOT right-of-way line on record.

WALNUT GREEN SCHOOL, N-308
New Castle County Property Tax Map
Revised 1/3/90
Parcel # 07-022.00-018
Scale: 1 inch=200 feet



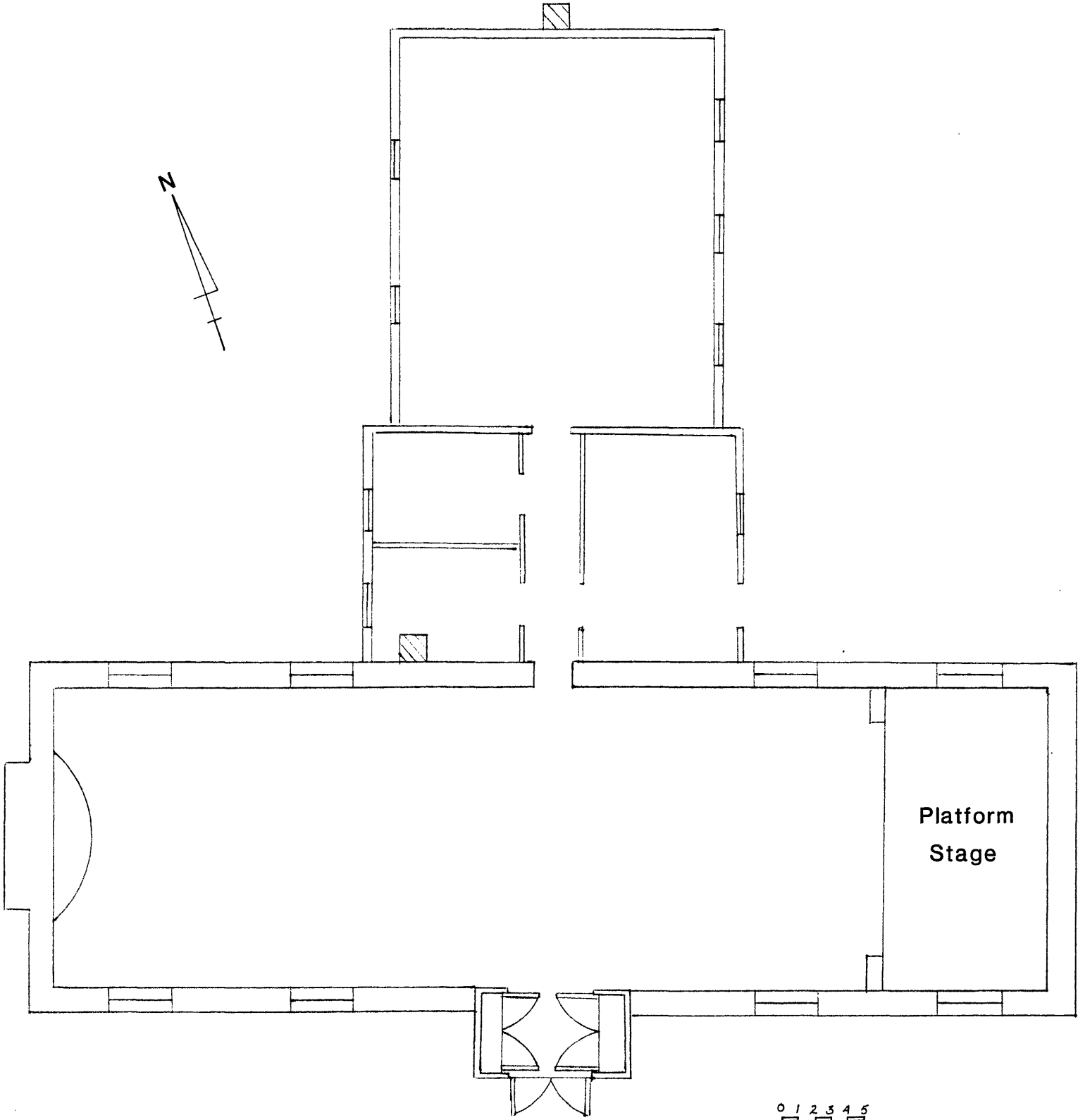
WALNUT GREEN SCHOOL, N-308

BOUNDARY MEASUREMENTS
FROM PIERS TO ROADWAY



Not to Scale

WALNUT GREEN SCHOOL, N-308
Northwest Corner of Route 82 and Owl's Nest Road
Christiana Hundred
New Castle County, Delaware



Susan Brizzolara, 1993

0 1 2 3 4 5
Scale: 1/8" = 1'