

**KANSAS CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SURVEY (pre 1940)**

**FINAL REPORT**

**October, 1989**

**Prepared by:**

**The Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri**

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## Introduction

The Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri contracted for an historical and architectural intensive level survey of public schools located within the city limits of Kansas City, Missouri, constructed prior to 1940. As a result of court-ordered desegregation and the implementation of magnet school plans, the Kansas City public school system currently confronts rapid changes. These changes have placed many of the pre-1940 school buildings in jeopardy with possible threats of demolition. Since this report commenced **Karnes School** has been demolished.

The project was begun in January, 1989 by Ms. Melanie A. Betz, Architectural Historian formerly with the Landmarks Commission. Ms. Betz prepared a research design and identified fifty-two (52) previously unsurveyed schools. Five (5) additional schools have been identified in other geographical surveys. The final report and map were prepared by consultants hired by the Landmarks Commission upon Ms. Betz's departure from the project.

This document was funded in part by a matching grant through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Program.

## Survey Boundary/Objectives

The boundaries of this survey are the Missouri River on the north, Eighty-fifth Street on the south, State Line Road on the west and Eastern Drive on the east. The purpose of this report is to provide an evaluation of the 57 public school buildings surveyed. There are three major objectives to this evaluation. First, it provides a

pattern of development of the public school building in the educational history of Kansas City. Secondly, it determines the architectural significance of the school buildings. Finally, it recommends potential individual properties or multiple properties (Thematic) which are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Methodology**

A research design was prepared by Ms. Betz and submitted to the State Office of Historic Preservation. A copy of which is attached to this report.

### **Map**

A map pinpointing the location of the surveyed buildings and their construction dates was prepared.

### **Photography**

Individual 5"x7" black and white glossy photographs of each structure was made using a 35mm. camera and Kodak Panatomic-X film. The negatives were keyed by sheet number and exposure number and listed as such on the survey forms.

### **Archival Research**

The location for primary source materials are as follows:

1. City Hall, Kansas City, Missouri - 414 East 12th Street. This is the repository for water and building permits, and Kansas City Atlases for 1886, 1891, 1907 and 1925.
2. Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library, 311 East 12th Street. This local history room of the Main branch of the Kansas City Public Library is the repository of City directories, newspaper clippings, copies of the Western Contractor (a construction trade journal) and numerous other local history books, scrapbooks,

photograph collections, and files.

3. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Linda Hall Library, and University of Missouri Library, University of Missouri-Kansas City, 51st & Rockhill Road. These collections include floor plans and elevations for numerous Kansas City buildings, and technical periodicals.
4. Board of Education of Kansas City, Missouri - 1211 McGee Street. Minutes of Board Meetings as well as Superintendent's Annual Reports are housed here.

### **Site Visits**

An on-site visit was made for each property being surveyed in order to fully understand the present condition of a building, and to access its integrity (i.e., whether there have been significant alterations and/or additions).

### **Completion of the Missouri State Historic Preservation Inventory Forms**

In preparing inventory sheets, the researcher began with water and building permits. Information from these sources was verified. The known history of a building was summarized, an architectural description was written, and the sources of information were provided. In addition, address, architect (when applicable), builder/contractor, date, number of stories, building style, and National Register eligibility were provided. A 5" x 7" black and white glossy photograph accompanies each sheet. As new information was obtained, information on the inventory sheets were expanded or altered to reflect additions, alterations, and demolition.

### **Analysis of Information**

A summary of the surveyed properties is as follows: The individual inventory sheets and their accumulated data have been used to provide

historical context, school architects, architectural style, chronology of construction and school building design. Finally, a section on recommendations concludes the report.

## Historical Overview

The 1820 Missouri Constitution stated that "schools and the means of education" should be forever encouraged. In essence, the State of Missouri existed without an efficient public school system prior to the Civil War. Basically the private and subscription schools comprised the educational system at that time.

It wasn't until 1861 that Kansas City made an attempt to implement a free public school system. In March of 1861, the City incorporated a territory within the city limits of Kansas City, Missouri for a school district; approving the expenditure of \$1,500 and 3 teachers for the project. The mayor rejected the City Council's proposal. A second attempt at providing a school system was made after the Civil War, when Missouri's new 1865 Constitution urged for the creation of free schools for all those between the ages of 5 and 21. Subsequently an 1866 State legislation provided a School Board the power to issue bonds, upon the approval of the voters. In 1867, as a result of the passing of the bond issue, the Public School District of Kansas City was organized and in the spring of 1868 an elementary school, Washington School was constructed. Unfortunately, this building as well as most of the other early school buildings in Kansas City do not exist.

The early school buildings in Kansas City were plain brick buildings consisting of four, six or eight rooms. They were usually erected on lots unfit for residences and businesses, such as hillsides or ravines. The building merely consisted of school rooms. They had no enclosed cloak rooms, and the rooms were poorly lighted and ventilated (heated by coal stoves and in cold weather ventilated by opening and

closing windows). Stairways and hallways were narrow and there were no auditoriums, gymnasiums, playgrounds or kindergartens.

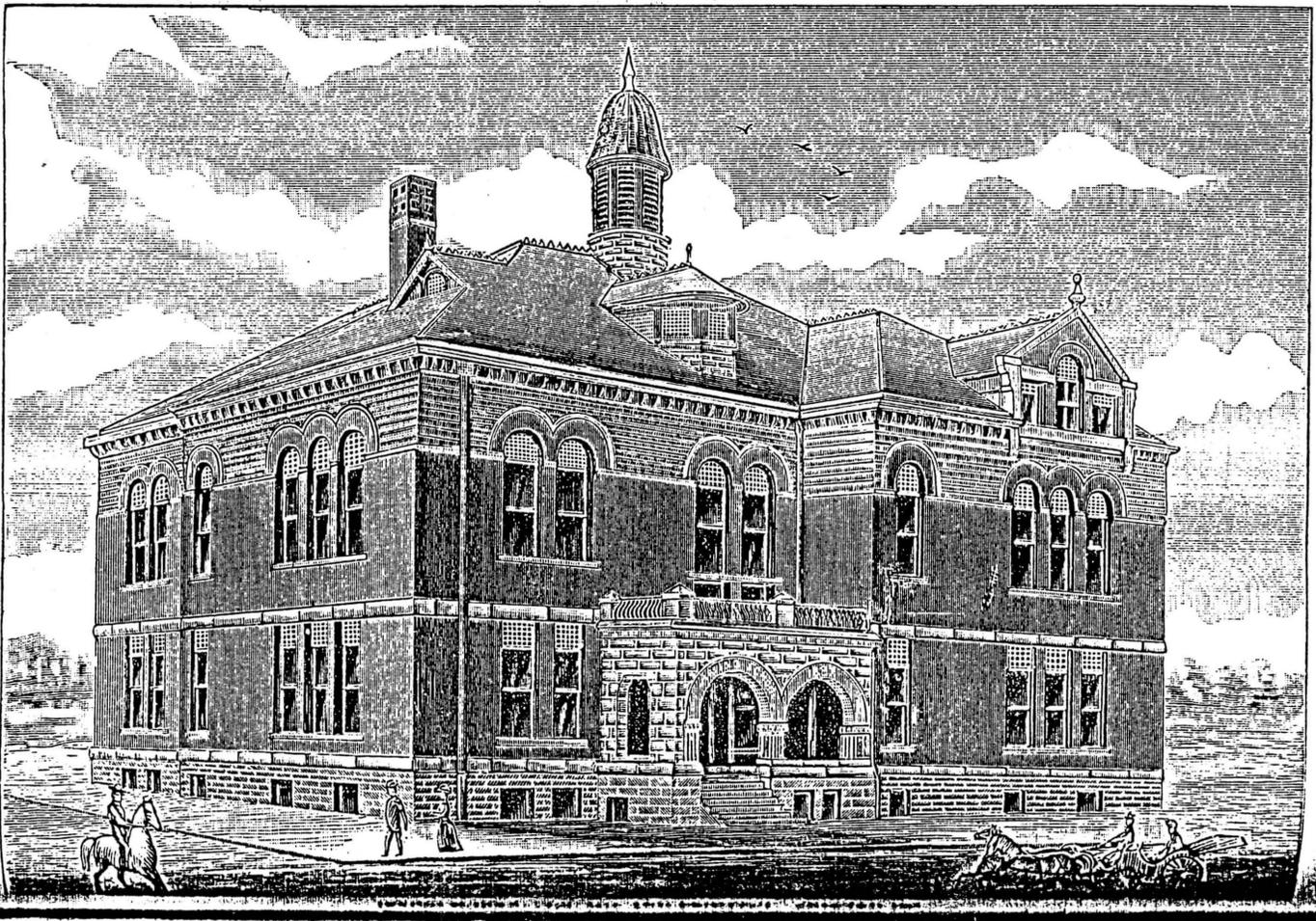
**1884-1890**

There are four surveyed school buildings erected during this period. These buildings are constructed of brick with stone trim and are two-stories in height. Their original floor plans contained four classrooms on each floor divided by a central corridor. Of the earliest school buildings, **Switzer School**, 1829 Madison, was constructed in 1884 adding to an 1881 building which is now demolished. The architect of this Italian Renaissance style building is unknown.

The **Webester School**, 1644 Wyandotte, constructed one year later, was designed by the second official School Board architect, Manuel Diaz. **Webester School**, executed in a style derived from Richardson Romanesque is on the National Register of Historic Places and privately owned and in commercial/residential use. With the erection of Switzer and Webester, marked improvements were introduced into the internal arrangement and convenience of the school rooms. There were better methods of heating, ventilating, seating and admitting light.

The **Irving School**, 2404 Prospect (PLATE I), was renamed Booker T. Washington School and converted to a "Negro School" in 1930. The school was constructed in 1887-88 by the third official School Board architect William F. Hackney. Designed in the Romanesque Revival style, this building is threatened by demolition. The **Hamilton School**, 1512-24 Carver, presently the Carver School, was designed in the Italian Villa style and constructed in 1889 with additions in 1900,

*demolished  
1975*



IRVING SCHOOL, 2404 Prospect  
PLATE I

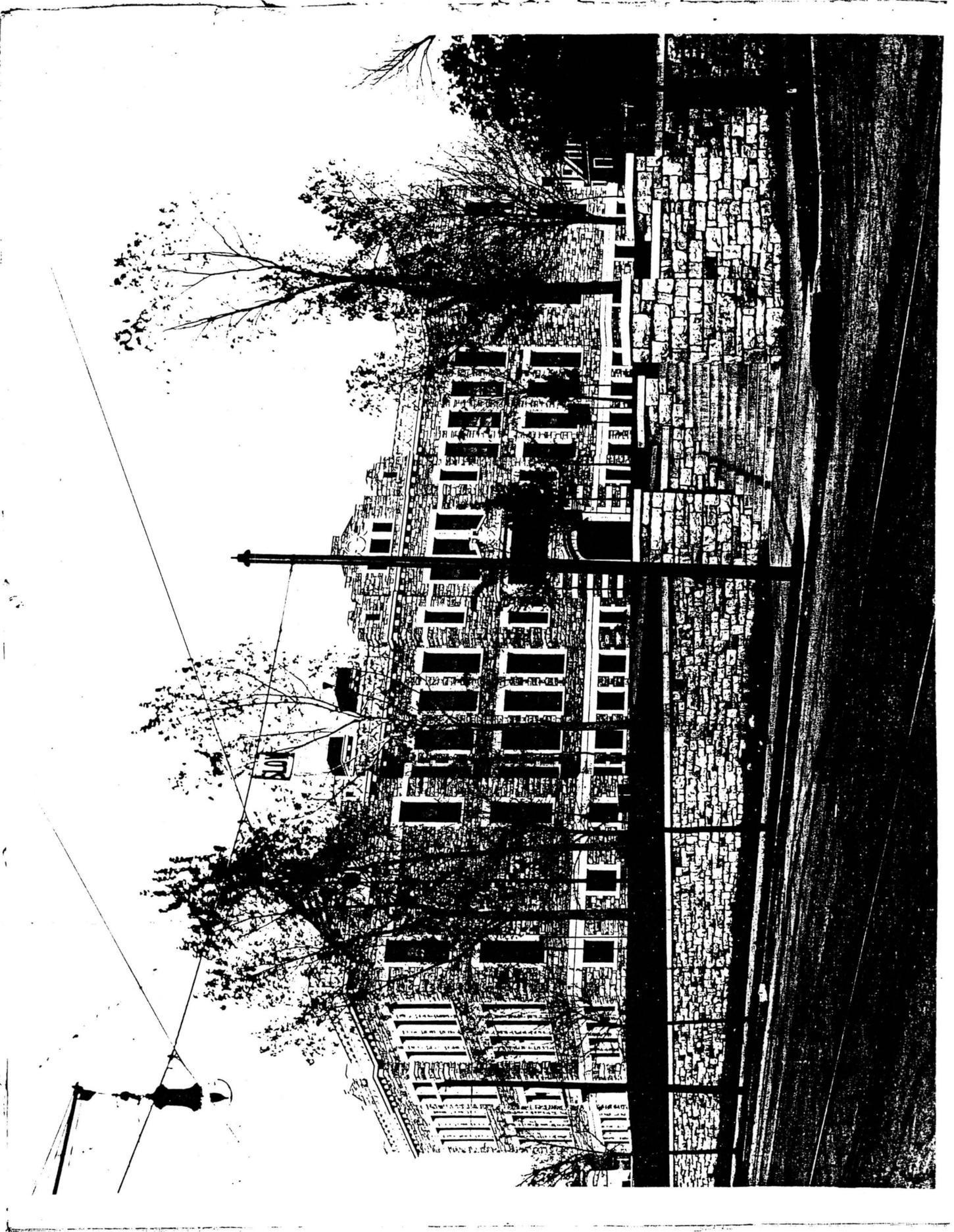
1913 and 1923. With the erection of Irving and Hamilton more attention was given to ventilation and elegance of the building. New features in these schools were large and airy rooms, spacious halls, wide stairways, convenient cloak rooms, and play and lunchrooms in the basement.

### **1900-1908**

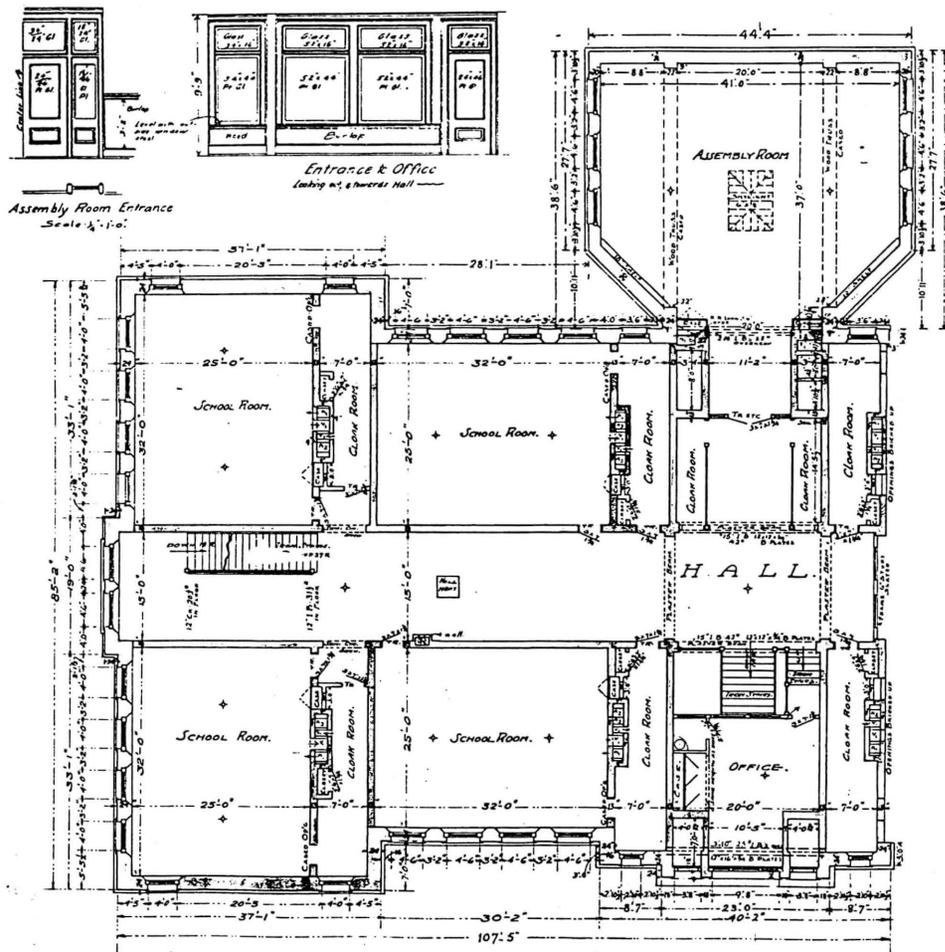
There were ten surveyed school buildings constructed during the period 1900-1908. All but one were executed in brick with either cut stone or terra-cotta trim. The **Norman School**, 3514 Jefferson (PLATE II, III), 1906, was the first school building to be constructed solely of stone. All of the survey buildings during this time were designed by the School Board architect, Charles A. Smith. The architectural styles of these buildings include Second Renaissance Revival, Jacobethan and mixed Revival. In addition, one high school and one junior high school were constructed during this period.

The **Louis K. Thatcher School**, 5800 Independence, executed in the Second Renaissance Revival style and constructed in 1900 is one of Charles A. Smith's early examples of school design. His design for Thatcher included an innovative ventilation and heating system. Smith had been credited for numerous technical advancements in ventilation and sanitary features for school buildings which were adopted throughout the country. The **Horace Mann School**, 3841 Euclid, the **D. A. Holmes School**, 3004 Benton and the **Rollins School**, 4043 Main Street, constructed in 1903-04 are almost identical in original floor plans and exterior designs. (PLATE IV [1] [2] [3])

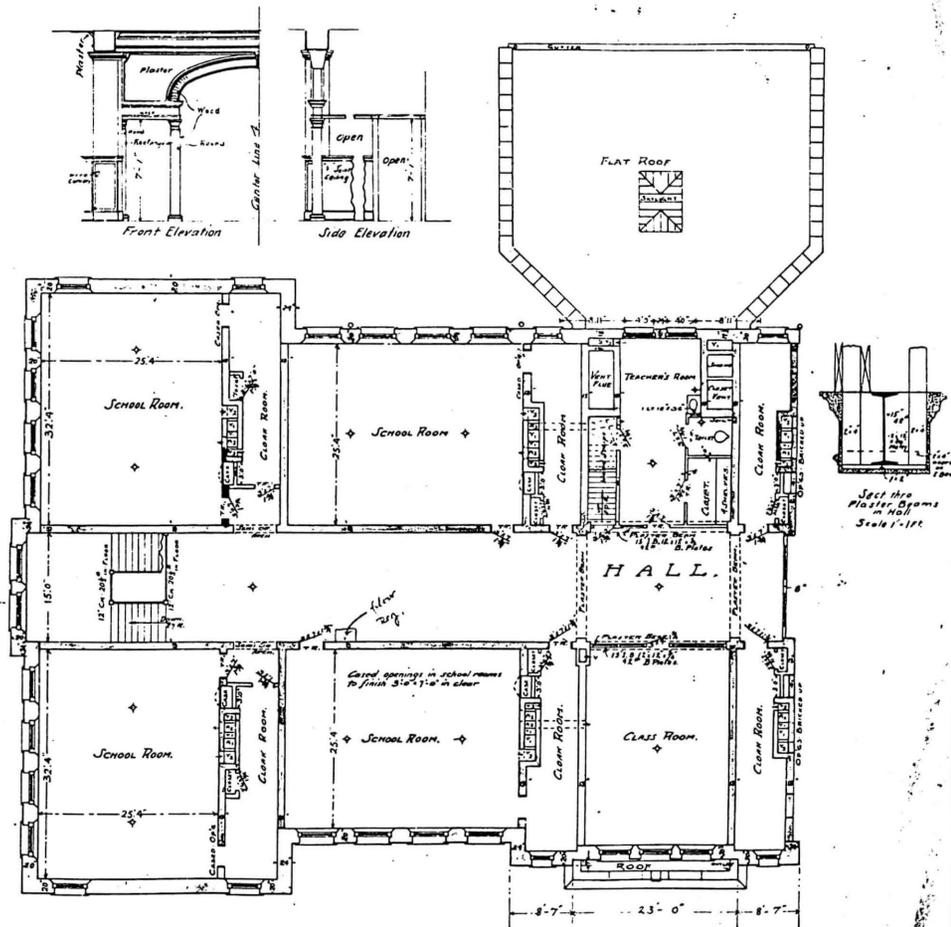
Smith executed the **Attucks**, 1815 Woodland, **Greenwood**, 3711 E. 27th



NORMAN SCHOOL, 3517 Jefferson  
PLATE II



FIRST FLOOR PLAN.



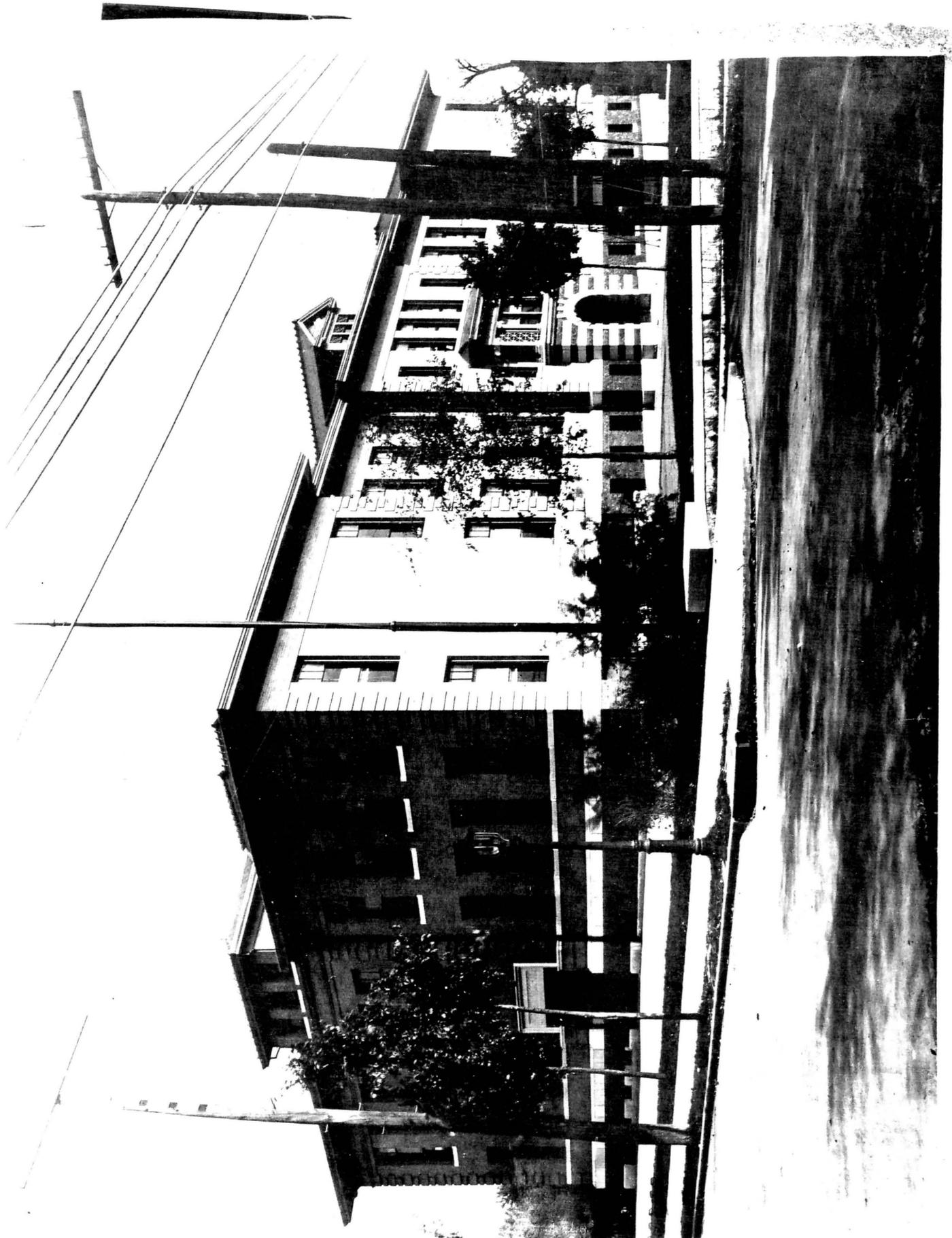
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

NORMAN SCHOOL  
 BETWEEN SUMMIT & JEFFERSON STS.  
 NORTH OF THIRTY-FIFTH ST.  
 SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

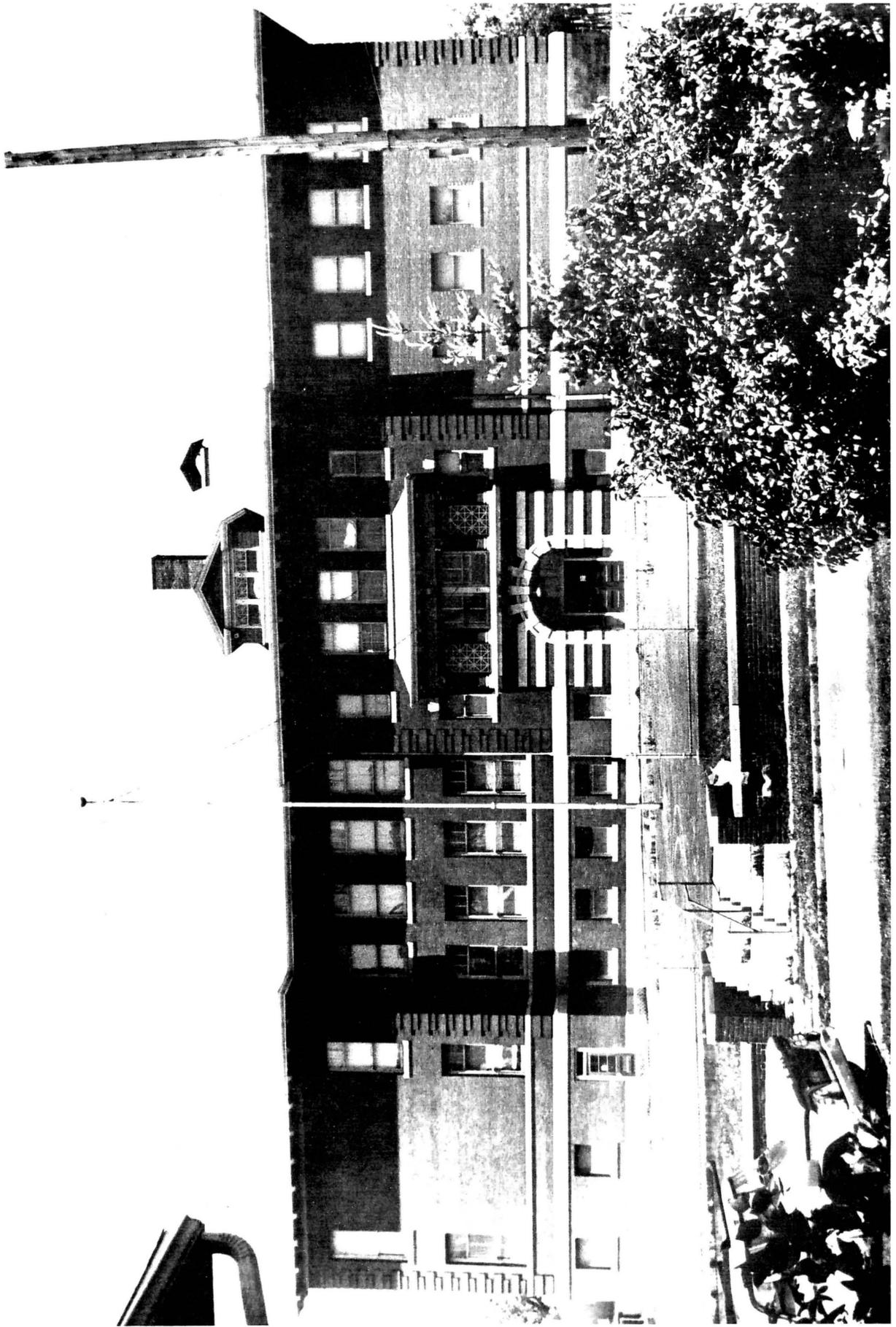
CHAS. A. SMITH ARCHT. & ENGR.  
 720 DWIGHT BLDG.



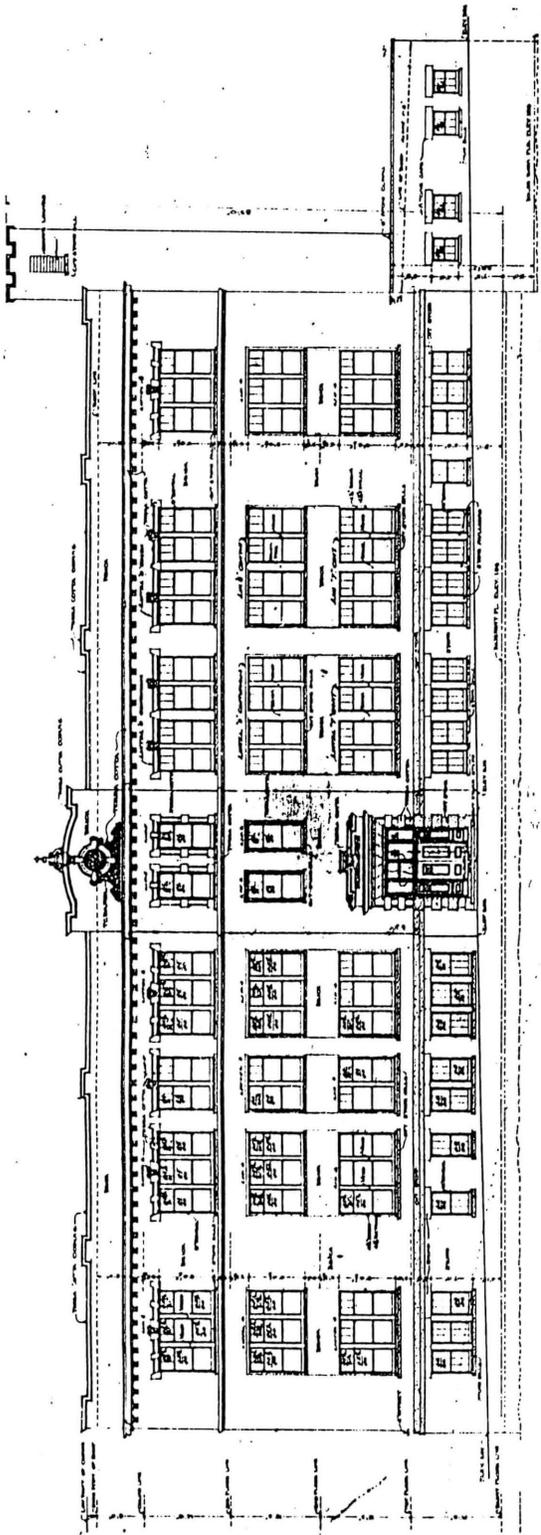
HORACE MANN SCHOOL  
PLATE IV (1)



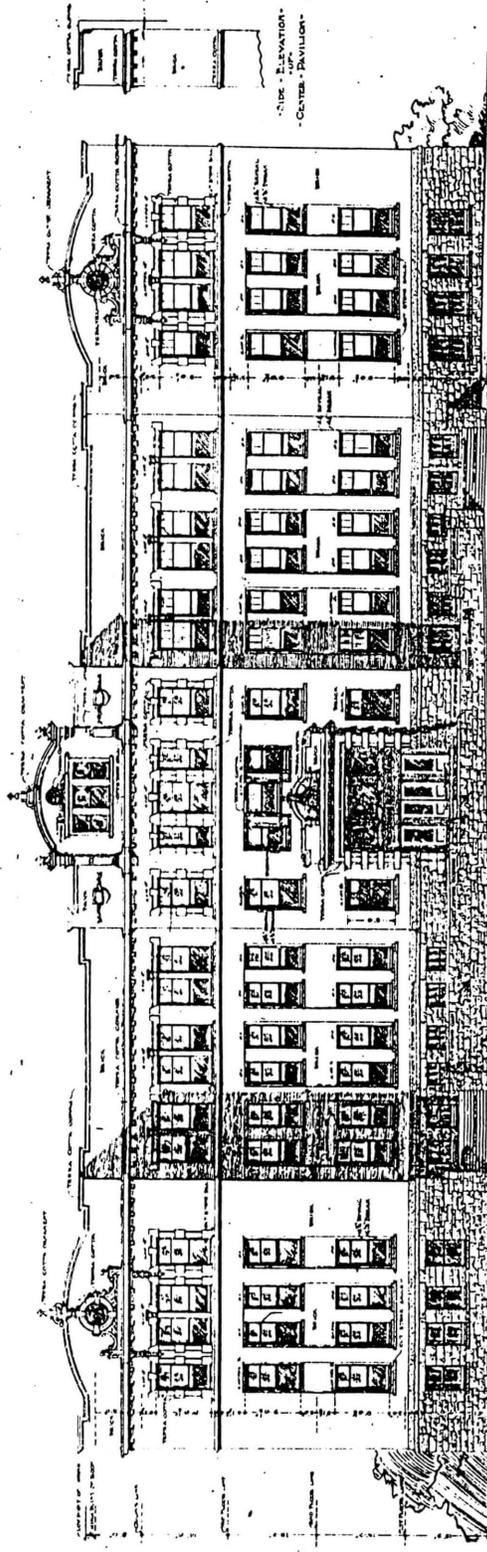
D. A. HOLMES SCHOOL  
PLATE IV (2)



ROLLINS SCHOOL  
PLATE IV (3)



WEST STREET ELEVATION  
WEST  
SCALE: ONE EIGHTH INCH TO ONE FOOT.

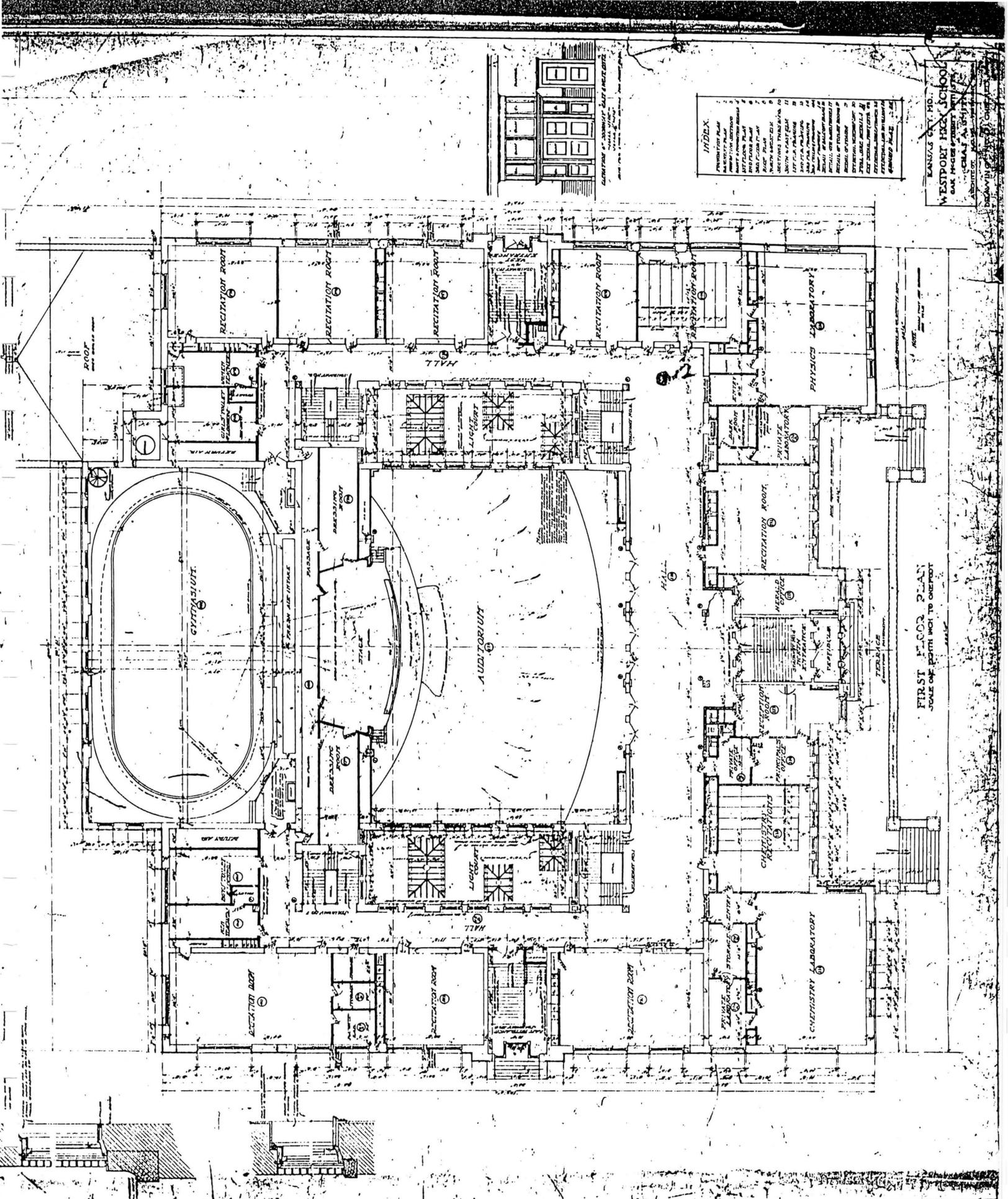


FRONT ELEVATION  
NORTH  
SCALE: ONE EIGHTH INCH TO ONE FOOT.

KANSAS CITY NO.  
WESTPORT HIGH SCHOOL  
OAK HILLS SUBURB WEST MO.  
CHAS. A. FRITH  
ARCHITECT, MOBILE, ALA.  
DRAWING NO. 9

WESTPORT HIGH SCHOOL  
PLATE V





**INDEX**

1	RECIATION ROOM
2	RECIATION ROOM
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31	RECIATION ROOM
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33	RECIATION ROOM
34	RECIATION ROOM
35	RECIATION ROOM

LANCASTER, MO.  
**WESTPORT HIGH SCHOOL**  
 GAK H-108  
 CHAS. A. SMITH  
 ARCHT.  
 DRAWING

FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
 SCALE OF FOUR INCH TO ONE FOOT

WESTPORT HIGH SCHOOL PLATE VI



Street and **Westport High Schools** 315 E. 39th Street, in the Jacobethan style. Both **Greenwood** and **Westport High School** display fanciful Flemish parapets. The **Attucks School**, constructed in 1905 is the earliest building in the survey to be constructed specifically for "negro" children. The earliest surveyed high school building is **Westport High School, (PLATE V, VI)**, West 39th Street constructed in 1908, after the original building burned in 1907.

At the time of its construction **Westport High School** was considered "the finest in Kansas City and among the finest in the whole country". Smith's design of this high school incorporated the most advanced ideas in school architecture and the most approved method of school construction. Each classroom was designed with three to nine windows in order to provide sufficient lighting. The auditorium in form and decoration replicates the plan of a Greek theater.

#### **1910-1918**

During this period, Kansas City saw a shifting of its population from downtown districts to areas south and east. With the annexation of new territory on the south and east came the need for new school buildings. In addition, there was a great need to replace existing older schools and relieve already congested districts with new school buildings.

The year 1912 saw in Kansas City the beginning of the greatest era of school building construction in the history of the City. \$4,000,000 was expended on school buildings between the years 1912-1916. Of the buildings surveyed 12 were constructed during these peak years.

During 1910-1918 there were 16 surveyed buildings constructed. These buildings were built in accordance with modern standards. The elementary schools were being erected on the high school plan. The buildings were fireproof, had modern ventilation and heating systems, ample hallways, playrooms, gymnasiums with shower baths, auditoriums, assembly halls, ample grounds for playgrounds and demonstration gardens. Unlike earlier schools, the building was situated in the very best location of a neighborhood. In September 1915, the first open air school was established at **Karnes School**. This type of school was meet with such success that it was then placed in many of the schools. The open air school was used for anemic and tuberculois children. Its chief purpose was to develop the physical strength of the pupils and to protect them from contagious and infectious diseases. The open air roof of the building was used for these classes as well as recitation rooms, gardens and playgrounds for the children. Thus, regular elementary school work was taught in the "open-air". For a long time the Anti Tuberculois Society furnished food and special clothing needed for the open-air school.

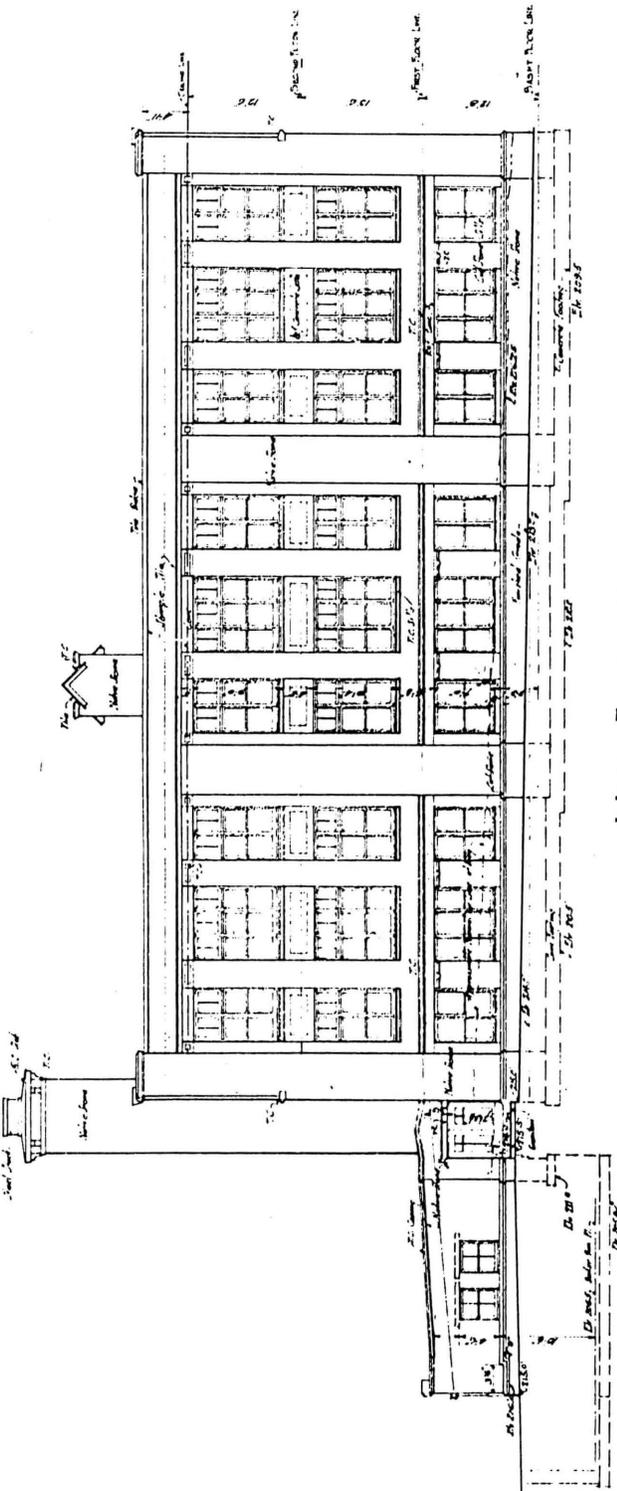
To meet the added functions of the public school new types of school building design emerged. The **Milton Moore School**, (PLATES VII, VIII, IX, X) 4510 E. Linwood, the second largest stone school, is of one type of new school building design. Constructed in 1914-15, it is almost three stories in height. The ground floor contains the gymnasium, showers, play and lunch rooms. The first floor contains classrooms around the outer wall and an auditorium in the center. (The auditorium at this time became an "multi-purpose" room used for music,

assemblies and reading rooms.) The top floor contained more classrooms, fresh air rooms, a roof playground and an entire open-air classroom. The **McCoy School**, 1524 White, **Swinney School**, 4641 Holly, and **William Cullen Bryant School**, 319 Westover Road, were constructed in 1914-15 and are of similar design as the **Milton Moore School**.

The **Kensington School** is another type of school building design to emerge at this time and one that was entirely new to Kansas City. It is one story in height with all of the classrooms arranged around a court in which there is a covered gymnasium, auditorium, and domestic science rooms. "Sawtooth" skylights provided natural illumination into each classroom. At the time, Charles Smith stated that this new type school building "will prevail in the future where land value is cheap."

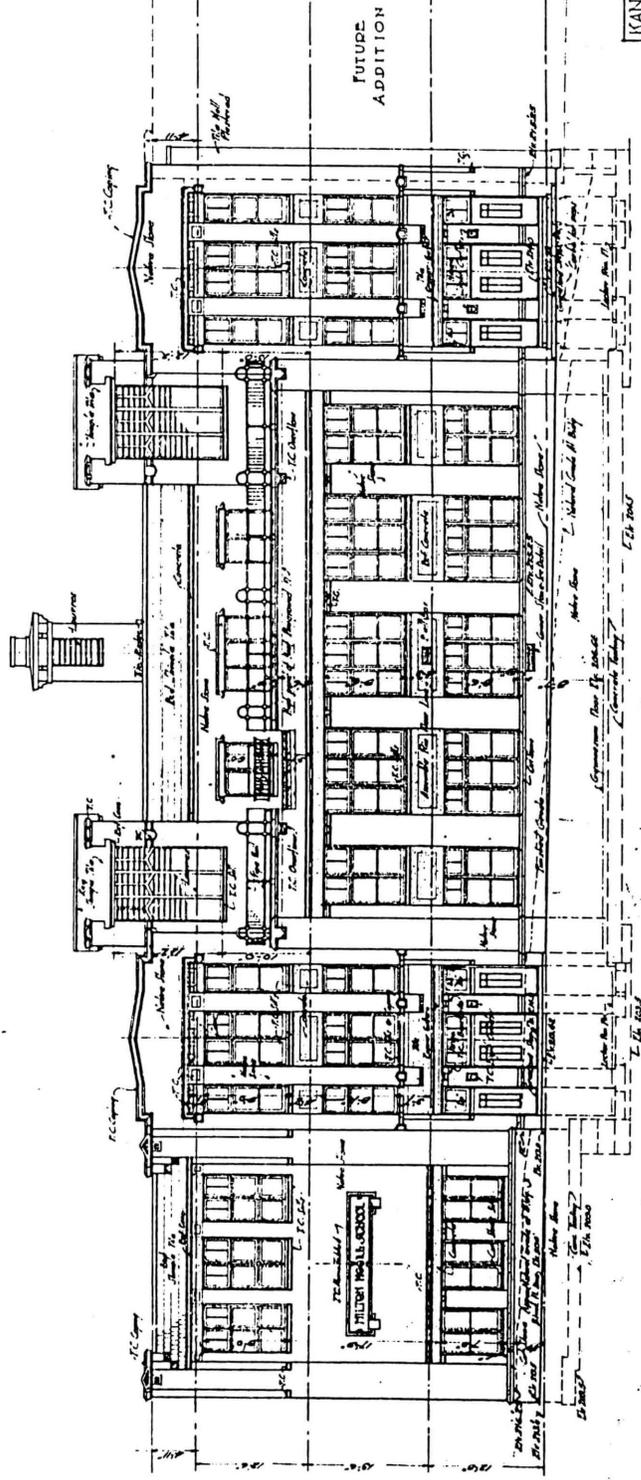
Charles A. Smith designed all but one of the school buildings during 1910-1918. **William Cullen Bryant School** was designed by his firm, Smith, Rea and Lovitt. During this period of new ideas in school building design, Smith designed his buildings with thought for expansion. His plans were to be practical rather than extravagant, ornate or luxurious. In a 1915 newspaper article, Smith stated "as far as the school buildings and playgrounds are concerned Kansas City has gone farther in the last five years than any American city". As a result of the building renaissance at this time, the year 1916 found Kansas City ranking very high among the large cities of the country in "housing facilities" for its children.

Smith designed his school buildings during 1910-18 in a variety of

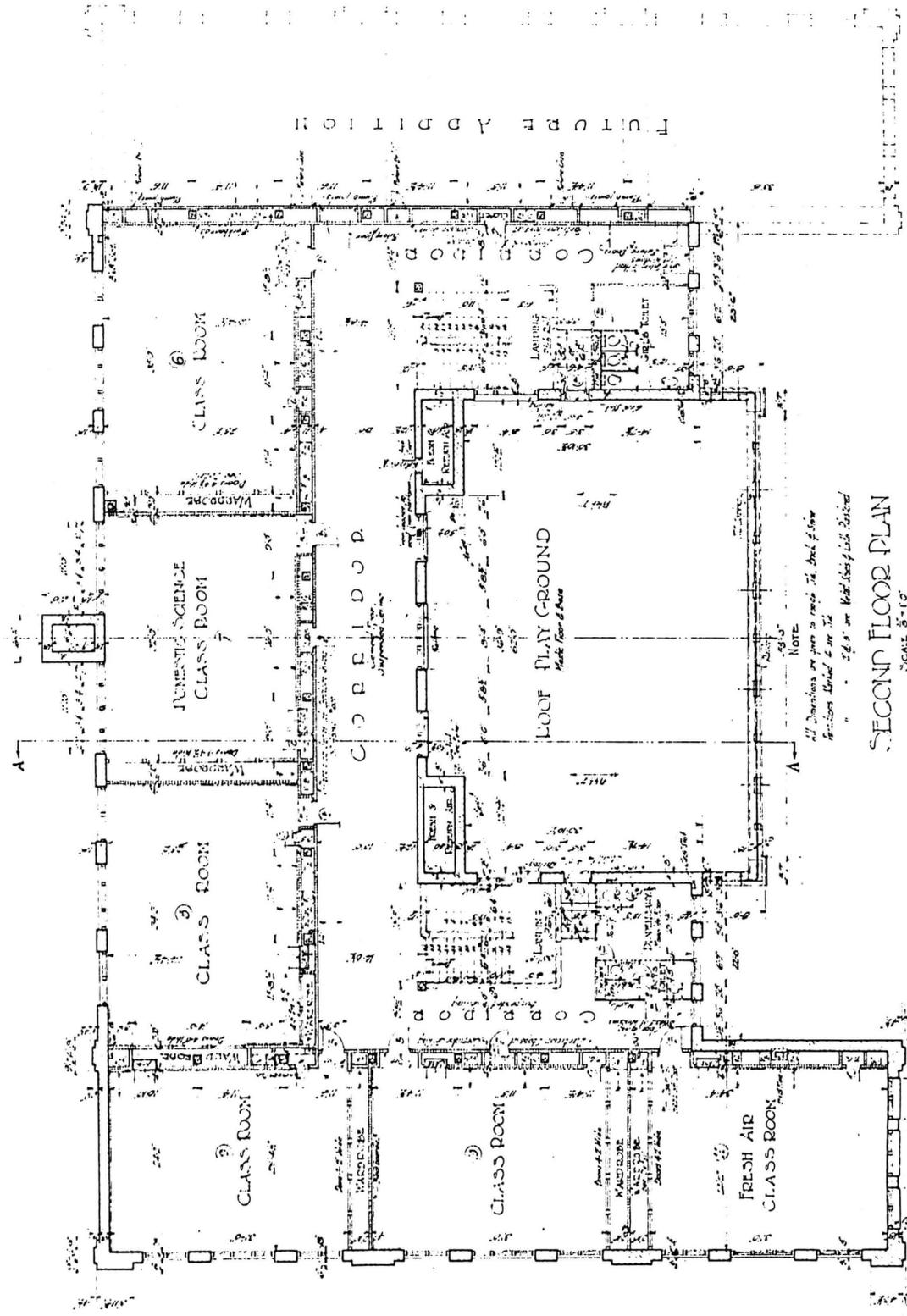


WEST ELEVATION

NOTE: All work to be finished on 'Z' line strips unless otherwise noted.



SOUTH FRONT ELEVATION



Note:  
 All dimensions are given in rough. The exact figures  
 will be shown in the  
 24" x 36" or 36" x 48" plan.

SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
 SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

MILTON MOORE SCHOOL  
 PLATE VIII

ELEMENTARY TO PRINCIPALS OFFICE  
 12000 3100

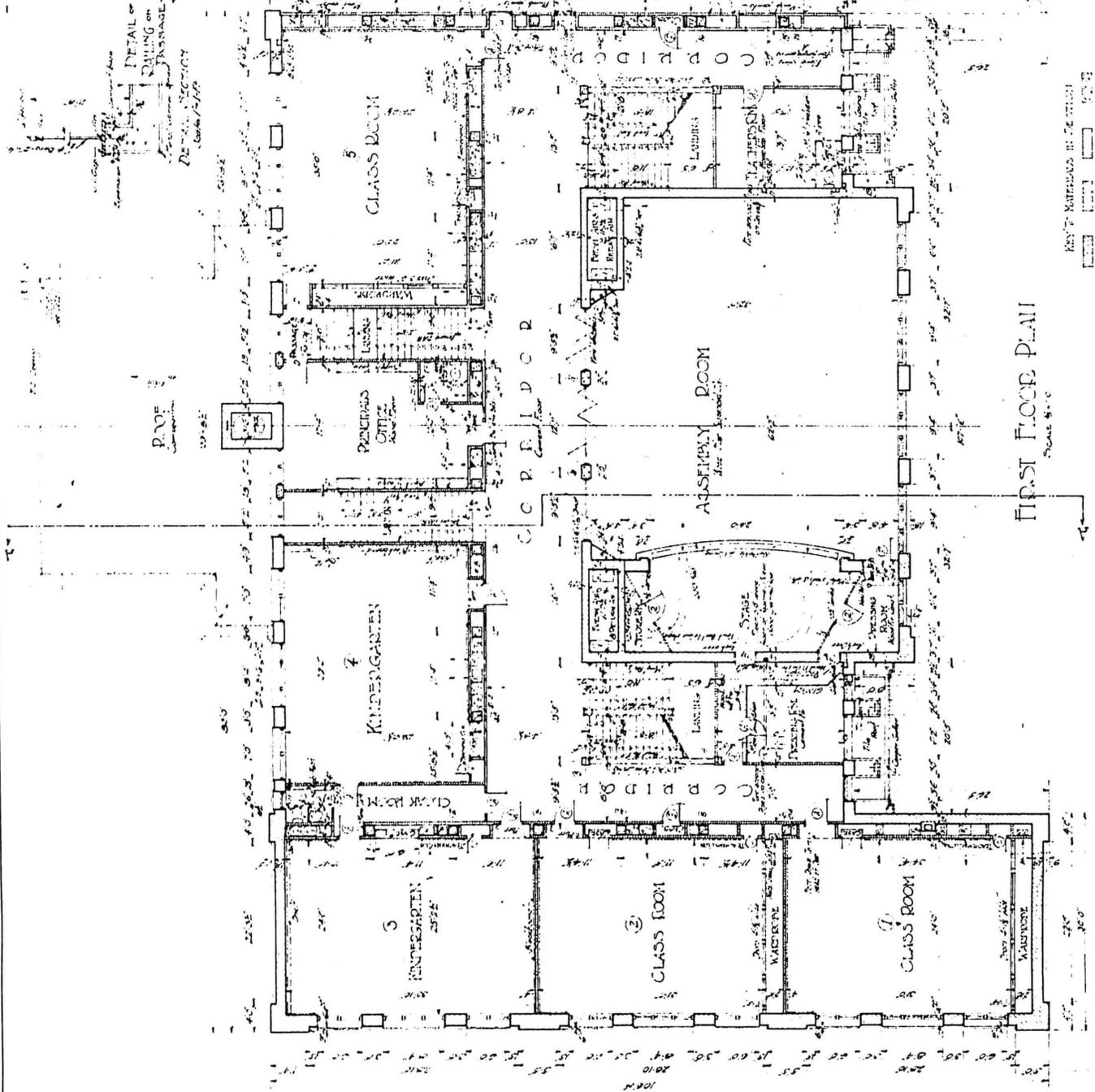
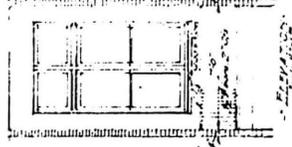
NORTH SIDE  
 WEST SIDE

NO.	TO	SCHEDULE	REMARKS
A	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
B	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
C	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
D	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
E	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
F	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
G	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
H	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
I	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
J	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
K	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
L	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
M	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
N	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
O	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
P	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
Q	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
R	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
S	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000
T	CLASS ROOM	12000	12000

CENTRAL HALL

All doors are open to the right unless otherwise noted.  
 All windows are to be wood sash double hung.  
 All doors are to be wood sash double hung.  
 All windows are to be wood sash double hung.  
 All doors are to be wood sash double hung.  
 All windows are to be wood sash double hung.

H O T E L I C A D E M Y

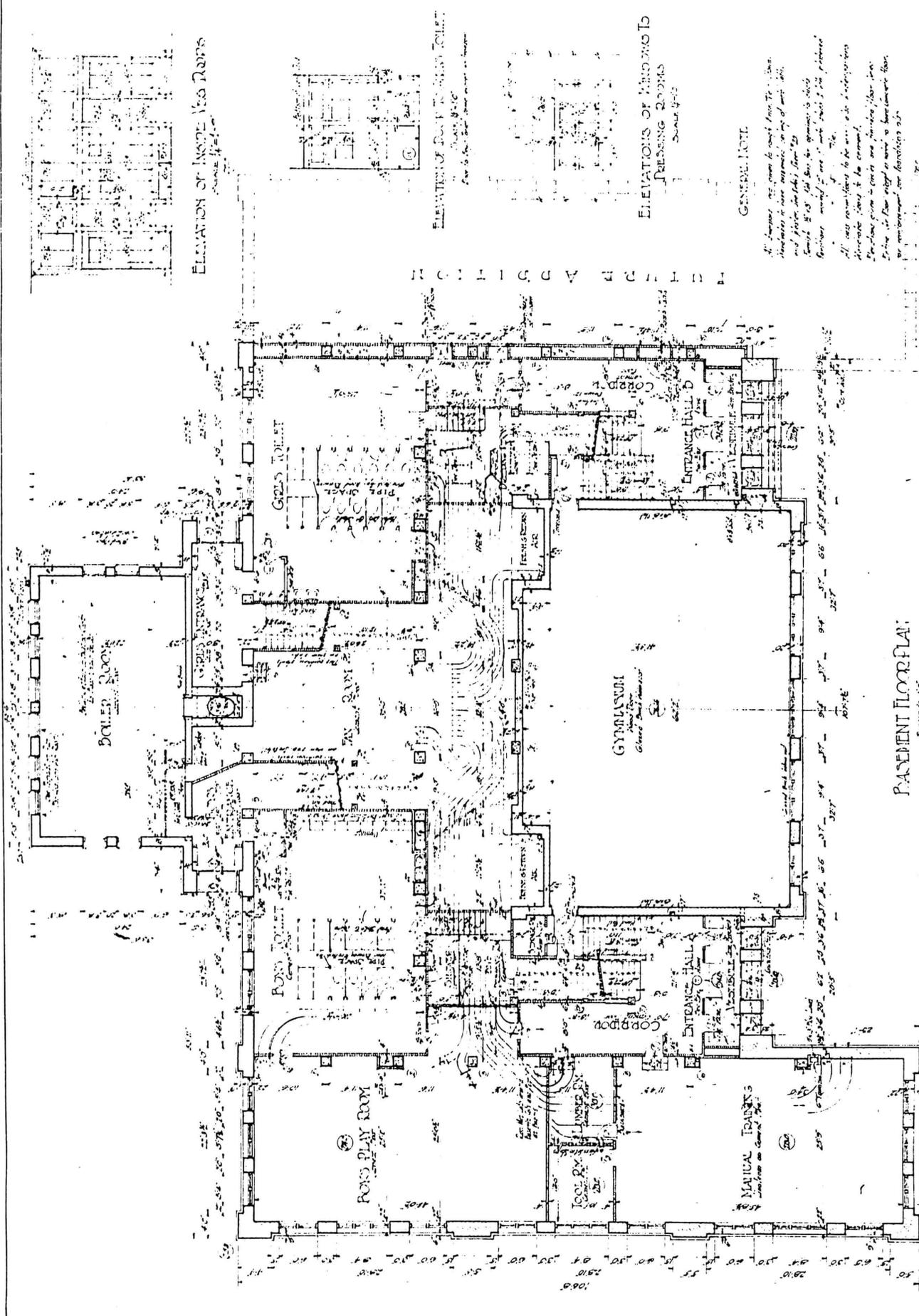


KEY TO MATERIALS IN THE WALLS  
 Brick  
 Concrete  
 Plaster  
 Lath & Plaster  
 Gypsum  
 Terrazzo  
 Marble  
 Granite  
 Slate  
 Tile  
 Wood  
 Metal  
 Glass

FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
 SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

MILTON MOORE  
 PLATE IX

MILTON MOORE SCHOOL  
PLATE X



BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN  
Scale 1/8" = 1'-0"

KEY TO MATERIALS BY FINISHES:  
 [Symbol] Cable Floor [Symbol] Floor [Symbol] Tile & Ceramic  
 [Symbol] Concrete

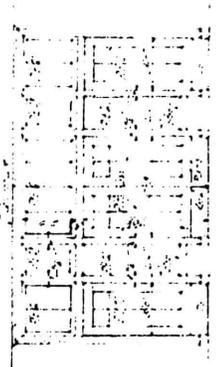
MILWAUKEE CITY RECORDS  
 JOB 119 110  
 CIVIL ARCHITECTS

GENERAL NOTE

All dimensions are given to center line unless otherwise noted. All work to be done in accordance with the specifications and drawings. The contractor shall be responsible for the proper installation of all materials and workmanship. The contractor shall be responsible for the proper installation of all materials and workmanship. The contractor shall be responsible for the proper installation of all materials and workmanship.

FUTURE ADDITION

ELEVATION OF MOORE VEST ROOMS



ELEVATION OF BOILER ROOM TOILET



ELEVATION OF MAJICAL TRAINING ROOMS



architectural styles including Jacobethan, Italian Renaissance, Neo-Classical and mixed Revivals. **William Cullen Bryant**, 319 Westover, **Allen** 706 W. 42nd Street, and **Faxon**, 3710 Paseo and **Sanford B. Ladd**, 3640 Benton Blvd., are executed in the Jacobethan style. **Allen**, **Faxon**, **James**, **Bancroft** and **Ladd** are similar in design. They contain a central projection, housing the main entrance and capped with a fanciful Flemish parapet. Flanking the central projections are corner projections with decorative parapets. Smith's plan for expansion can be seen in the **Sanford B. Ladd School** with the addition being placed next to the corner projection.

There were two high schools designed during this period, **Northeast**, 415 Van Brunt and **Central High School**, 3221 Indiana. **Northeast**, the first to be constructed (1913-14) was designed in the Neo-Classical Revival style. Three-story doric columns visually supporting a classical pediment marks the entrance bay. Other classical elements on the building include a denticulated terra-cotta cornice, colossal fluted Doric carthage stone columns, and brick pilasters. **Central High School** also contains classical elements including a series of three story brick pilasters, crowned with modillions. A novel feature used by Smith on both high schools is the rib windows of the "factory type" which provided the maximum amount of light to the classrooms. The interior plan for **Central High School** closely follows that of **Northeast High School**.

One of Smith's unusually designed school buildings during this period is the **John J. Pershing School**, 5915 Park. Constructed in 1918, it displays Mediterranean elements such as corbelled brick blind arcades

above the third-story windows and spiral columns capped with urns flanking the entry.

### 1920-1927

The largest number of surveyed school buildings were constructed during this period. From 1916-1921 very few new school buildings were erected. This was due primarily to the economics of the war. These same five years saw the school population increase by 9,000 students. By 1921, Kansas City found it was in need of additional school buildings. Therefore, in that same year the School Board submitted a proposal to issue \$5,000,000 of bonds for the erection of new buildings. The bond issue passed and a new era of school building began.

There were 23 surveyed school buildings constructed between 1920-1927. All of the buildings were designed by Charles A. Smith, with the exception of **Southwest High School**, which Smith was jointly designed with Edgar Welty. The buildings were executed in a variety of revival styles including Gothic, Romanesque, Neo-Classical, Greek, Mediterranean and Jacobethan.

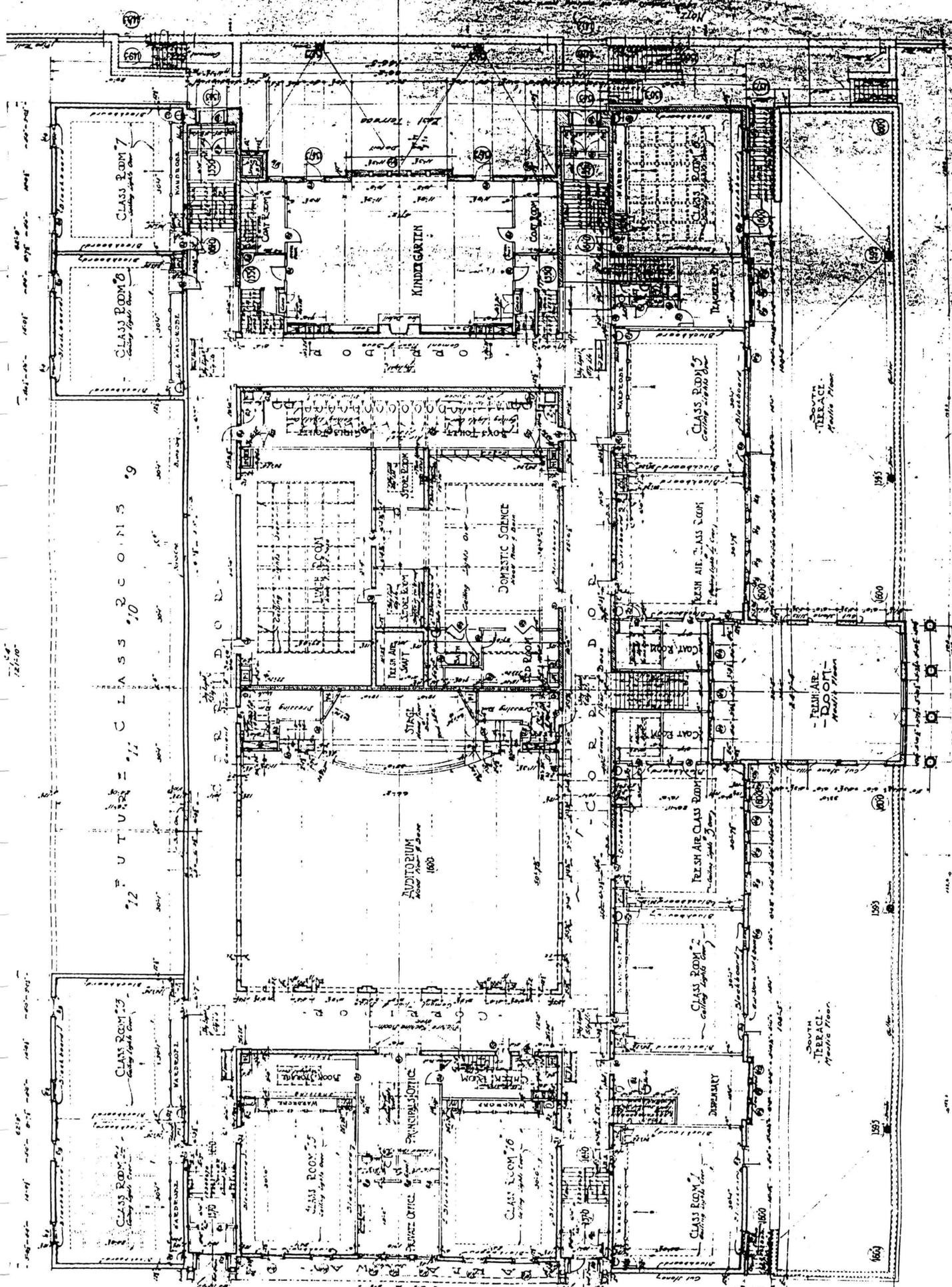
The **Kumpf School**, (PLATE XI) 4423 Olive, constructed in 1920 is an example of Greek Revival style with the two-story Doric column portico covering the main entrance. The interior plan of this school consisted of 18 classrooms all having their own outside door - a unique concept at the time. The **Frances Willard School**, 5001 Garfield constructed in 1923, is one-story in height and uses a similar interior plan as **Kumpf**. The **Woodland School**, 711 Woodland, constructed in 1921

is executed in the Romanesque Revival style. Its series of large and small arcades dominate the facades.

**Askew School**, (PLATE XII) 2630 Topping, **Paseo High School**, (PLATE XIII) 4747 Flora, and **J. C. Nichols School**, 6901 Oak are designed in the Gothic Revival style. **Askew**, constructed in 1922-23, displays Gothic elements such as stone tracery and a cut stone castellated parapet. **Paseo High School**, constructed in 1925-26, is the third all-stone school building in the survey. Its centrally placed tower houses three Gothic entryways. Although the **J. C. Nichols School** has undergone substantial alterations, the Gothic arched windows and entryways are still intact.

Six buildings of this period exemplify Neo-Classical design. They are **William A. Knotts**, 3511 E. 70th Street; **Border Star**, 6321 Wornall; **Central Junior High School**, 3611 Linwood; **Northeast Junior High School**, (PLATE XIV, XV) 523 Chelsea; **Southwest High School**, 6512 Wornall and **East High School**, 1924 Van Brunt. **Border Star** and **Southwest High School** (PLATE XVI) are the finest Neo-Classical examples in this period. The interior plan of the **William A. Knotts School** was unique at the time as its interior consisted of a central unit containing an auditorium, gymnasium and manual training rooms, surrounded by 16 classrooms.

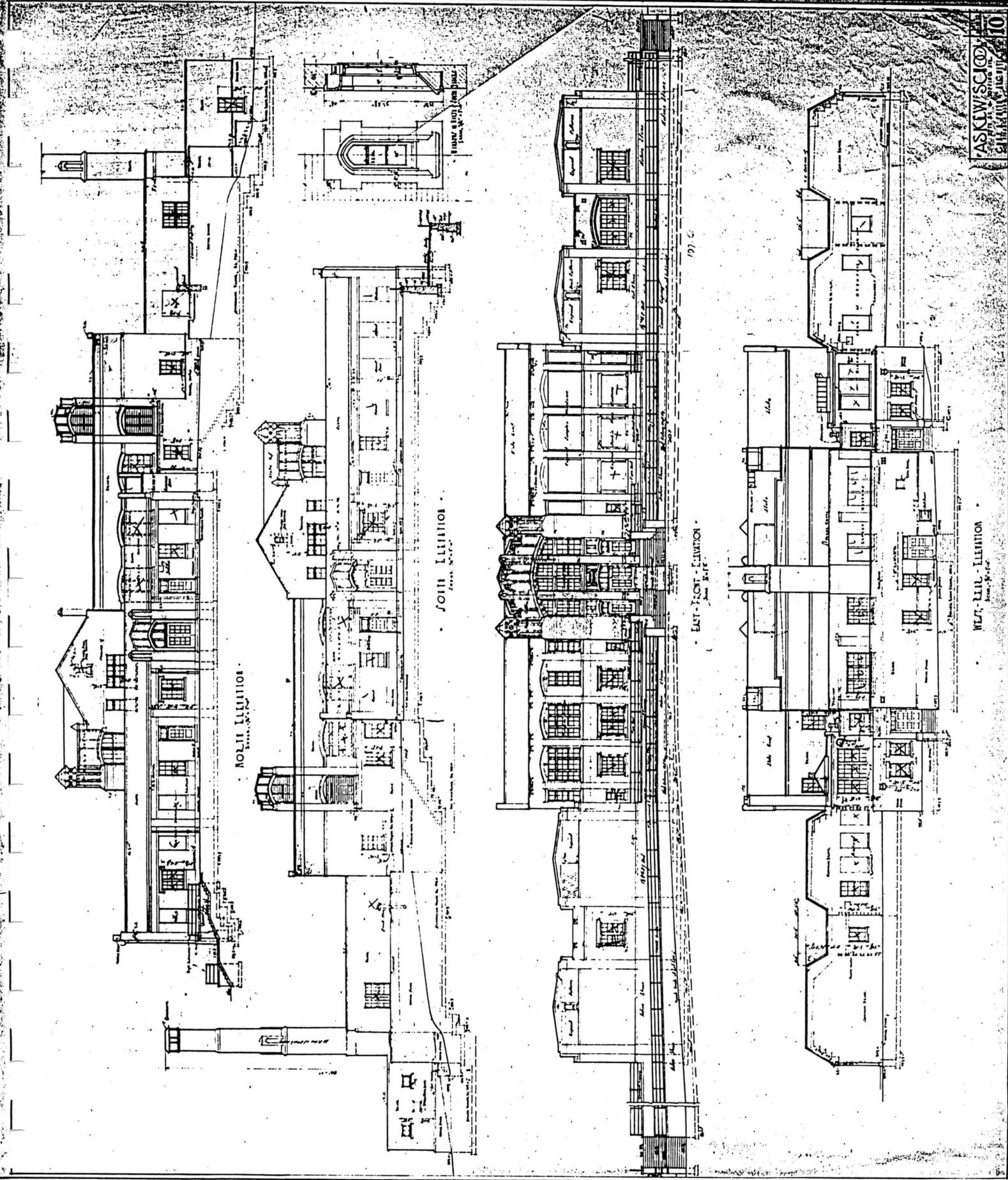
At the time of its construction, 1924, **Westport Junior High School** was touted as a completely modern "English Renaissance" building. The building displays ornate classical elements such as Ionic pilasters, crowning pediment with volutes, cartouches, rosettes, and balustrade

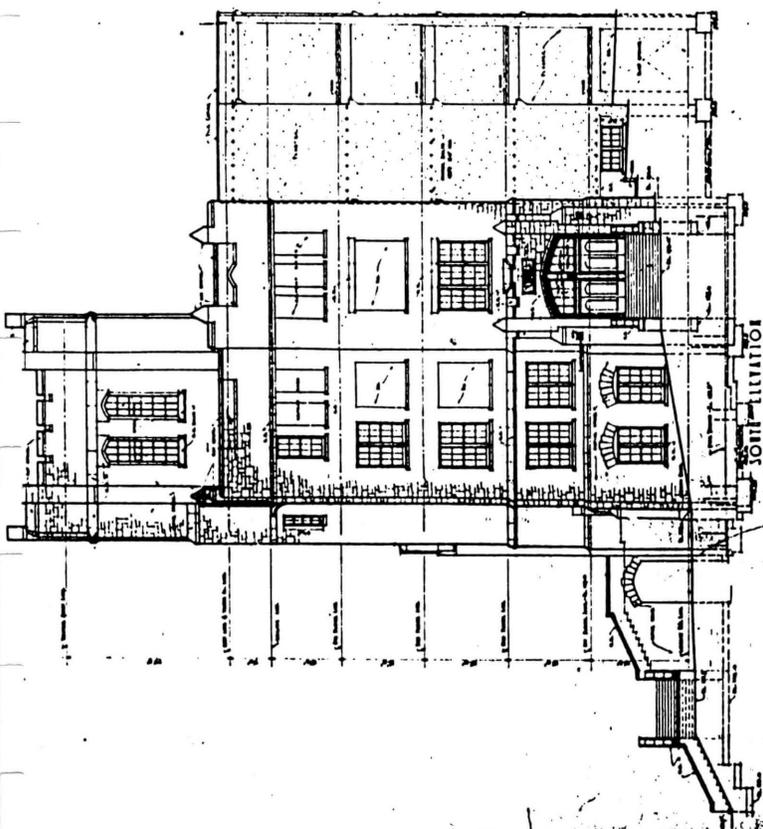
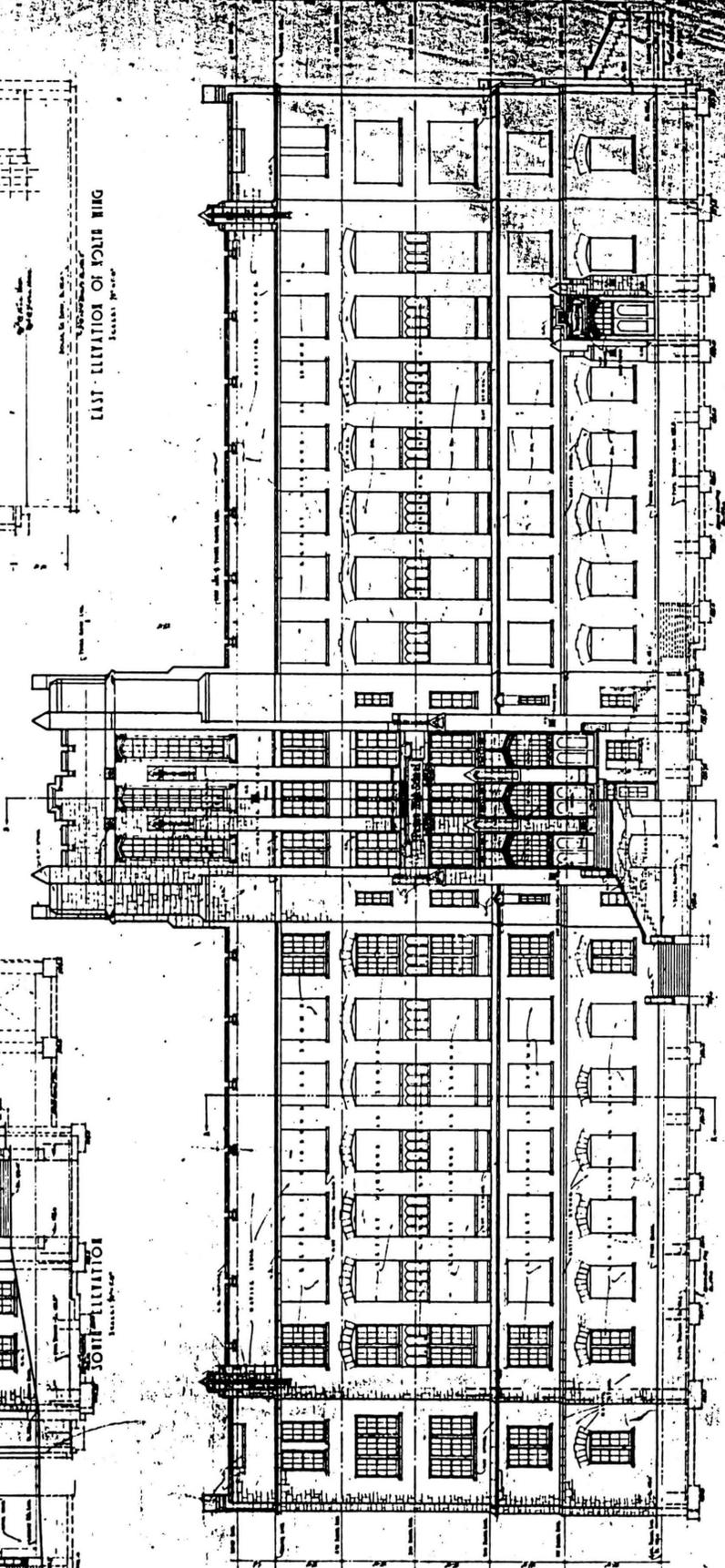
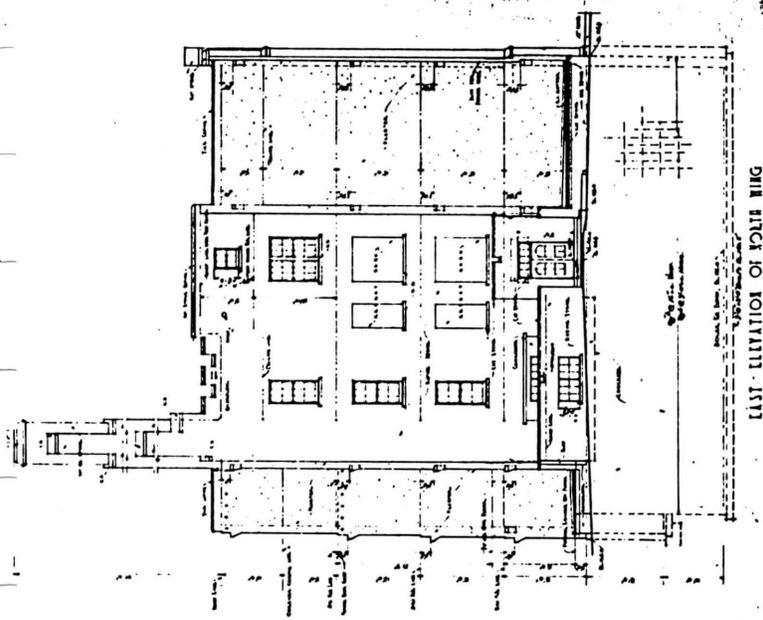


KUMPF SCHOOL  
PLATE XI

21	FIRST FLOOR PLAN
21	PAUL J. SCHLOSSER ARCHT.
21	1001 MADISON CITY BLDG.
21	CALIFORNIA STATE ARCHT. OFFICE
21	1917-18

SOUTH











SOUTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL  
PLATE XVI

executed in stone and or terra-cotta. A roof garden, top floor cafeteria and two passenger elevators (the first to be installed in Kansas City public school building) are all unique features in Smith's design for **Westport Junior High School**.

The **Hale H. Cook School**, 7302 Pennsylvania Avenue, designed in the Jacobethan style is one of Charles A. Smith's finest school buildings. Before planning the school Smith and I. I. Cammack, then the superintendent of schools, traveled through the United States inspecting the very best school buildings in many of the large cities. Smith designed the **Hale H. Cook School** to incorporate the best features of the schools he studies. The stone Tudor arch doorways, stone quoining window surrounds, an hexagonal, one-story bay, and checkerboard brickwork are all architectural features making this building an outstanding Jacobethan example.

#### 1930-1937

There were four surveyed school buildings constructed during this period. Two of the four are high schools, all but one were designed by Charles Smith.

A five-million dollar bond issue passed in 1929 to be used for new school building construction, expansion, and improvement to existing buildings. Both the **J. S. Chick**, 4101 E. 53rd Street and **D. M. Pinkerton Schools**, 6409 Agnes were constructed in the early phase of this bond expenditure. The **J. S. Chick School**, constructed in 1930-31 by Charles A. Smith is the only Art Deco style building in the survey.

In 1934 the Board of Education received a government grant of a



LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL  
PLATE XVII

12402-E  
PHOTO BY TINEB + MUEPNY, KANSAS CITY, MO

half-million dollars. During this building program two new high schools were constructed, **Lincoln High School**, (PLATE XVII) 2111 Woodland for 'negro' students and **Southeast High School**, 3416-32 E. Meyer Blvd. Although designed by different architects, these two high schools are examples of the Collegiate Gothic Revival style. **Southeast High School** with its centrally-placed tower was built with PWA money and a branch library in the school contains murals painted by WPA artists.

### Ownership and Use

Of the 56 school buildings surveyed, one (**Karnes School**) has already been demolished. **Booker T. Washington, Thatcher** and **Paseo High School** are presently being threatened with demolition. Two buildings, **Ruhl** and **Humboldt** are vacant. 47 of the buildings surveyed are owned by the Board of Education. Of the nine privately owned, four are still functioning as a school. They are: **Hamilton School** now Carver School; **Rollins School** now St. Paul's Episcopal Day School; **Horace Mann School**; now Brown Caldwell Christian School; and **Kensington School** now Carver Christian School. The remaining five buildings are used as: **Allen School** now Westport Allen Center, **Webster School** now residential/commercial and **J. C. Nichols School** now Gladstone Visual Arts and **Humboldt School** vacant.

### Construction Materials

Fifty-four (54) of the fifty-seven (57) schools surveyed are constructed of brick with either cut stone including Carthage and Bedford or terra-cotta trim. The remaining three schools are constructed totally of stone. The first all stone school building was the **Norman School**. Built of Missouri limestone, **Norman** was considered a unique building at the time of its construction. The **Milton Moore School**, 1914-15, is executed in Oolitic limestone (quarried at 3rd and Highland Streets) and at the time of its construction was the second largest stone school building. Built of stone quarried on the site and trimmed with cut stone **Paseo High School** (1925-26) is the third stone school building included in the survey.

### Construction Chronology

<u>Period of Construction</u>	<u>Number of Buildings</u>
1884-1890	4
1900-1908	10
1910-1918	16
1920-1927	23
1930-1937	4

### Ethnic Schools

There are several schools in the survey that were constructed solely for black students or served students of Greek, Russian, and Italian descent. The first school in Kansas City specifically built for "colored" students was Lincoln School which opened in November, 1869. In 1873 a group of blacks petitioned the School Board for night classes in English since many of their children could not get into any school. The board granted this request with the stipulation that the blacks would furnish their own lights.

The 1880's showed some improvement in the education of black students. Between 1880-1887 four new public schools for black students opened: **Sumner, Phillips, Garrison and Douglass**. None of these schools are in existence today.

The earliest school building in the survey constructed solely for "negro" students was **Attucks School**, 1815 Woodland. The first Attucks School opened on the present site in 1893. The present building was constructed in 1905 with an addition in 1922-23. **The Irving School**, constructed in 1887-88 for white students was renamed in 1930 the

**Booker T. Washington School** and was converted at this time to a "Negro School". **Lincoln High School**, 2111 Woodland was constructed in 1935 to accomodate 1,000 "Negro pupils". This school replaced the original Lincoln High School (colored) which was located at 19th and Tracy and constructed in 1887.

When the **Karnes School** opened in 1914, it was the largest grade school at the time and served a community composed primarily of Italian and Russian (Jewish) immigrants. By 1917, 90% of the students at **Karnes** were of Italian and Jewish descent. A 1922 report stated that 25% of the **Hamilton School** was comprised of students of Jewish, Greek or Italian descent.

### The Gary School System

The Board of Education of Kansas City, Missouri, like other public school systems throughout the United States, adopted a new type of school curriculum in the early decades of the 20th Century. Called the Gary Plan, or the Gary Idea, it was first developed in Gary, Indiana to provide for a burgeoning population of school-age children. Because of the strong influence of the Gary Plan on the schools of Kansas City, it is important to look briefly at the history of the philosophy of the Gary Plan and individuals responsible for its development.

### History of the Gary System

The Gary Plan, a comprehensive plan that essentially reorganized the academic and social activities of public schools across the nation, was developed in 1908 by William Wirt (1873-1938), then superintendent of the public school system in Bluffton, Indiana since 1898. Wirt was called to Gary, Indiana, a town that was founded by the United States Steel Corporation as a site for its new plant, the most complete system of steel mills west of Pittsburg.

In 1906, Gary was a "waste of sand-dunes and scrub oak swamps". By 1909, Gary had a population of 12,000 consisting of a generally poor community. Subsequently, community problems arose quickly because of a sharp increase in population over a short period of time. A large proportion of the people were immigrants who owned no taxable properties. In short, because of undervalued assessments, school revenues remained low. Among other difficulties the community faced as a result of the above conditions, was the one of supplying adequate

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school facilities where "the mere physical problem of providing seats for the children" was insurmountable. Because of this situation, Wirt was consulted by the mayor and school board of Gary to see if his revolutionary educational philosophy that had been in practice in Bluffton, Indiana could be applied in principle to the Gary, Indiana school system.

Support for Wirt's plan in Gary came quickly---it was instituted within a year after Wirt's visit, and by 1916, modifications of the Gary Plan, as it came to be known, were adopted throughout the United States and in England (see section on Platoon Plan). Although Wirt is certainly responsible for development of the Gary Plan, it was the work of the brilliant author Randolph Bourne (1886-1918) that popularized its philosophy and importance. In a series of articles written for the New Republic beginning in 1914, Bourne made public his endorsement which "gave the proponents of the Gary system credibility in the eyes of the intellectual elite." Most important, Bourne reached the solid middle class who voted regularly.

Recognition of the Gary system was capped by a medal for an exhibit on the Gary Schools at the International Panama Pacific Exposition of San Francisco in August, 1915. Financed by United States Steel and conceived by Wirt, the exhibit made an impact on educators and the public alike.

The Gary plan, as developed by Wirt, was a plan to "educate the whole child physically, artistically, manually, scientifically as well as intellectually" in one complete school, from kindergarten through the 12th grade. To accomplish this goal, an increased efficiency in

the use of the school building, both existing and new, was implemented in addition to the following:

1. Shops, gymnasium and auditorium are added to the school building; playgrounds and gardens are outside.
2. All special rooms and classrooms are used throughout the school day.
3. Several classes are accommodated simultaneously in auditoriums and gymnasiums.
4. Different groups of children come to school at different hours.
5. Libraries, churches, YMCA, etc., are to be allied with the schools to care for children part-time.

In general, the Gary Plan aimed to provide a well-balanced "work-study-play" environment where the student is enrolled in a varied curriculum. The Gary Plan also increased efficiency in building use where all grades were combined in one school plant. There were no buildings used exclusively for high school.

### **The Platoon Plan**

The Platoon Plan was an outgrowth of the original Gary Plan developed by William Wirt in Gary, Indiana in 1908. Like other plans such as the "duplicate school plan" or the "alternating plan", the Platoon Plan evolved from Wirt's basic philosophy, yet was modified to adapt to local conditions and needs. No attempt was made by other cities to actually duplicate the Gary Plan.

The term platoon was first applied to the type of school system that had been adopted in 1911 at the Roosevelt School in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The name was actually originated by Professor Leonard Ayres who conducted the 1915 Cleveland School Survey and was first used in print in the 1916 monograph entitled Overcrowded Schools and the Platoon Plan, by Shattuck O. Hartwell.

The platoon school outlined a curriculum where the school is divided into two major sections, dividing the day into two equal parts. During the first half of the morning session, one group of classes is involved in traditional subjects (the Three R's) in regular classrooms, while the second group is engaged in special subjects such as art, music, nature, physical education and manual training. At mid-morning a shift occurs, then after lunch, similar shifts are made. Like the Gary Plan, the Platoon Plan was a readjustment or reorganization allowing for better instruction, more constant use of the school plant and accommodated a larger enrollment. Unlike the Gary Plan, the Platoon Plan was primarily for the elementary school grades.

#### **The Architecture of the Gary Plan Philosophy**

The Gary Plan and its many adaptations does not imply a building type, but a curriculum plan that can be adapted to an existing building or organized in a new structure. Although no standardization of architecture was developed, there were basically two types of buildings that were used for the Gary Plan schools, the closed and open types.

The closed type was closely tied to the shape of a rectangle, with little or no room for rearrangement. More than likely, this type applied to existing, older school houses. The more popular building type was the open plan, which included buildings shaped in the form of an H, I, U, T, E, and Y. The open plan, discussed in more detail below, was already in use before the Gary Plan became popularized. Its adaptability to the philosophy of the Gary system was one of great importance.

The development of the **H-Plan** in school architecture (and

subsequent variations) was actually the result of the efforts of one individual. Architect C.B.J. Snyder, superintendent of school buildings in New York City during the turn-of-the 20th Century, was studying the problem of providing school buildings with maximum light and ventilation. Early school structures, rectangular in plan, gained light and air from the front and rear elevations. First floor rooms and rooms located at the sides were cut off from adequate light and ventilation.

After studying such buildings as the Hotel Cluny while on a trip to Paris, Snyder realized how to revolutionize school architecture. By using the H-Plan, as the Hotel Cluny was designed, every room gets light from two sides. In addition, with the added fenestration, problems of ventilation were solved.

#### **The Gary Plan as Applied to the Kansas City School System**

In Kansas City, the Gary Plan "idea" (sometimes referred to as the "duplicate" or "platoon" plan) was applied to the school system beginning in 1913. M. J. Patterson, principal of the Garfield School was sent to Gary, Indiana by the Kansas City Board of Education to study their school system developed by William Wirt. Among other benefits that the Gary system provided, Patterson was most impressed by the economy of accommodating twice the number of students in a given school building, as the problem of providing adequate space for a growing number of school age children in Kansas City was pressing.

On November 6, 1913, Patterson along with superintendent I. I. Cammack, made a formal recommendation to the Board of Education

requesting the adoption of the Gary Plan to the Kansas City school system. The first school to become a "Gary experimental school" was **Irving School**, now called **Booker T. Washington School**, located at 24th and Prospect. In order to apply the Gary Plan to the existing structure, an auditorium and gymnasium was added in 1914. In addition to the building change that occurred, the entire curriculum of **Irving** was reorganized. (For additional information on **Irving School**, see inventory form #42).

Charles A. Smith, who was the architect for the school board at the time the Gary Plan was first explored in Kansas City, was "acquainted with the Gary idea of school structure" and his "new plans were all adaptable to the Gary Plan." Smith's design for **McCoy School** (1914) and **Kensington School** (1915) both allowed for the application of the principals of the Gary Plan, where the gymnasium and auditorium became the focal point of the overall building scheme.

## Architects

The following section contains biographical information on architects relative to the survey project.

### Charles A. Smith

Charles Ashely Smith was born in Steubenville, Ohio on March 22, 1866, the son of Augustine L. and Cynthia Loraine (Parker) Smith. The family moved to Des Moines, Iowa in 1874, where the elder Smith worked as a contractor and builder, while serving on both the Des Moines City Council and the Board of Education. Perhaps inspired by his father's work, Charles A. Smith was interested in architecture from an early age. Following a public school education, at the age of 16 he was able to secure a position with the architectural firm of Bell and Hackney, designers of both the Iowa and Illinois State Capitol buildings.

When William F. Hackney moved his office from Des Moines to Kansas City in 1887 to take advantage of the great construction boom then occurring, the 21 year old Smith accompanied him as a draftsman. Then in 1892, Smith was made a partner in the firm of Hackney and Smith. One of the firm's most important surviving buildings from this period is the old Kansas City, Missouri Public Library erected in 1895-1897 in the Renaissance Revival style, with an addition by Smith in 1917-1918. Also of note from 1895 were the twin residences of Ferdinand and Michael Heim, at 320 and 322 Benton Boulevard. In addition to his private practice, from 1887 to 1898, Hackney served as architect for the Kansas City, Missouri Board of Education. (See section on William F. Hackney).

In 1898, Smith assumed the position as official architect for the School Board, a position he retained for 38 years, until his retirement in 1936. During his tenure, he designed more than fifty school buildings for the Kansas City, Missouri school district. At the same time, he continued to work on non-school projects as well, most notably the Kansas City, Missouri YMCA at 404 East 10th Street, built in 1907-09.

In 1910, Smith joined with Charles Rea and Walter Lovitt to form the firm of Smith, Rea & Lovitt. The firm lasted for ten years (with Lovitt dying in 1920 and Rea in 1921), and was responsible for a number of large commercial designs. Among those were the recently demolished Hewson Building at 1016 Walnut (1912), with its elegantly articulated facade of terra-cotta, the Firestone Building (1915), the prestigious Kansas City Club (1918), and the original Hereford Association Building (later to become the Ararat Temple) at 300 West 11th Street, completed in 1920. In addition, the firm designed the Bryant Elementary School in 1915.

Among Smith's many school designs, one of the finest was for the **Woodland School** at 711 Woodland, built in 1921 to replace one of Kansas City's oldest school buildings. At the time of completion it was the largest elementary school in the city, with 27 classrooms. Styled in the Romanesque Revival, **Woodland** is constructed of red brick, richly embellished with Carthage limestone, terra-cotta and Classical detailing.

Smith, Rea & Lovitt also worked on commissions in neighboring Kansas City, Kansas. When Arthur F. Hall, a Kansas City, Kansas architect, established an independent office in the Brotherhood Block

in 1923, it also served as a branch office for Smith's firm. This led to a number of projects by Smith in Kansas City, Kansas, beginning with the George H. Gray residence in Westheight Manor, built in 1924. That same year saw the construction of Tudor style Fire Station No. 11 at 3100 State Avenue, unusual in that such local commissions were rarely given to "outsiders." Smith's largest commission in Kansas City, Kansas was for the six-story Anderson Storage Co. Warehouse at 736-738 Armstrong, built in 1925. In addition, he also designed one school in Wyandotte County, the rural White Church Elementary School in 1926-27.

By the late 1920's, Smith was in his sixties, hardly the age at which a successful architect might be expected to whole-heartedly embrace a new style. Yet that was what Smith did, with some of his finest works designed in the Art Deco tradition. The first hint of this change can be found in the Capitol Garage at 1306-1310 Main Street, erected in 1928. Here the detailing of a Gothic-inspired structure was beginning to take on an Art Deco angularity.

Smith's firm then went on to design a number of significant local examples of the new style. Perhaps the most outstanding were his designs for the Woods Bros. Corporation's new Fairfax Airport in the Fairfax Industrial District, north of Kansas City, Kansas. These included the sales building and twin hangers (1929), and the Fairfax Airport Administration Building (1929-30) with its detailed interiors. A third project, for a hotel and related shops, remained unbuilt, while the Administration Building and hangers were demolished in 1987 to make way for a new General Motors automobile assembly plant.

Smith's Art Deco design in Kansas City, Missouri have suffered similar fates. The Kansas City, Missouri Municipal Airport Administration Building was demolished to make way for a new facility, which was in turn abandoned when the main airport operation was moved. The Jenkins Music Company Building, a Gothic-flavored design of 1912 to which Smith added a south half and two upper floors with an elaborate Art Deco cresting in 1932, has been radically truncated, and now stands as a false front for a huge parking garage.

Fortunately for Charles A. Smith, he did not live to see the demise of a significant part of his legacy to both Kansas Cities. He died in 1948, at the age of eight-two.

#### **The Firm of Wight and Wight**

Thomas Wight and his younger brother William Drewin Wight, who formed the architectural firm of Wight and Wight in 1916, were responsible for many of Kansas City's monumental, Classically-inspired buildings. Both Thomas and William were born in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1874 and 1882 respectively, to Robert Adam Wight and Emmaline McLean Wight, natives of Edinburgh, Scotland.

According to newspaper accounts, the younger Wight received his education in Canadian schools and in "architectural studios" and Thomas studied architecture while traveling in Italy and Greece. As draftsman, they both worked for the architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White; Thomas was employed in their New York office from 1892 to 1904, then William joined the prestigious firm in 1900.

Thomas Wight moved to Kansas City, Missouri in 1904 and formed a partnership with Edward T. Wilder. It was the same year that the firm

designed the Neo-Classical styled First National Bank at 10th and Baltimore Streets.

The firm was changed from Wilder and Wight to Wight and Wight in 1911, when William moved from New York to Kansas City and joined his brother in the business. Among their more outstanding building projects, the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art (formerly known as the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum), finished in 1933, is undoubtedly their best known. Other buildings designed by the firm are: The Civic Center, including the 1934 Courthouse (with Keene and Simpson), City Hall (1937), and the Municipal Courts Building, constructed in 1938. In addition, Wight and Wight designed the Kansas City Life Insurance Company building (1923) and the Federal Courts building which was completed in 1939.

Although the majority of Wight and Wight's designs were certainly influenced by the Neo-Classical tradition, a shift in style came with the Gothic-influenced design for **Southeast High School**, a PWA project which began in 1936 and was completed a year later.

The firm of Wight and Wight remained active until William suffered a heart attack a week before his death on October 29, 1947. Less than two years later, on September 6, 1949, Thomas Wight passed away at the age of seventy-five.

#### **William F. Hackney**

William F. Hackney was born in Springfield, Missouri in 1854 (the exact date is unknown). According to The Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Hackney was educated in Springfield and received

his architectural training in the Chicago office of A. Piquenard. Following Piquenard's death in 1875, Hackney retained his office and soon formed a partnership with M. F. Bell. The firm, who had hired the young Charles A. Smith, completed the designs for the Iowa and Illinois State Capitol buildings which Piquenard had begun.

Hackney, along with Smith, left Des Moines in 1887 to set up practice in Kansas City, Missouri. That same year Hackney was also hired as official architect for the School Board, following the resignation of his predecessor, Manuel A. Diaz. Hackney's early work as School Board architect included the former **Central High School**, located at 11th and Locust Streets (1887), and the original building for the **Booker T. Washington School** (formerly **Irving School**), completed in 1888. Curiously, the year that **Booker T. Washington School** was completed was the same year that Hackney requested to be retained as architect by the School Board without salary. "Little if any work [is] to be done this year," Hackney wrote. "I will consider it a favor if you deem my past service of sufficient merit to continue me in the office without pay."

Independent from his school-related projects, Hackney was also responsible for the design of the Federal Penitentiary at Chester, Illinois completed in 1880 and the the Soldiers and Sailors Orphans Home at Normal, Illinois (1888). Along with Smith, whom he made his partner in 1892, Hackney designed the Kansas City Missouri Public Library (1895-97) and the twin residences for Ferdinand and Michael Heim (1895). (See section on Charles A. Smith).

Although it was apparent that William Hackney was successful in his architectural practice, his personal life was one of difficulty. In 1890, a controversial charge against Hackney for "corrupt management" was publicized in the February 1890 issue of Kansas City Architect and Builder and the February 10, 1890 issue of The Kansas City Globe. In both publications, it was stated that Hackney diverted "no less than \$5,000" from the building fund by using inferior materials for the **Hamilton and Whittier Schools**. School and City officials denied the accusation, claiming that "the matter was inspired by jealousy" and that they "all had perfect confidence in Hackney". Although this issue certainly troubled Hackney, a formal charge was never filed.

In addition to suffering public humiliation, Hackney was also plagued severely by financial difficulties. Nine years later, on May 25, 1899, William F. Hackney took his own life.

#### Manuel A. Diaz

Not much information is available on the life and career of Manuel A. Diaz, Kansas City, Missouri School Board architect from 1884 to 1887, succeeding James L. Parkinson. Diaz, who listed himself as a civil engineer in the 1883 City Directory, was responsible for the design of **Webster School**, built in 1885 and before his resignation, he completed the foundation of **Lathrop School**. In addition, Diaz was the architect for a number of residences in Kansas City (See Kansas City Times, December 31, 1887, p.17), most notably an elaborate Romanesque Revival residence built for Thomas E. Gaines in 1887, located at 512 Woodland. Presently owned by the Oak Ridge Manor, a nursing home, the building has suffered extensive alteration. In 1891, it appears that

Diaz moved to Buffalo, New York, yet no record of his personal or business life there can be located.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The following buildings are determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as thematic nominations. These recommendations are based upon the completion of the Public School Building survey. (See Key)\*

1. Askew (1)  
2630 Topping
2. Border Star (1)  
6321 Wornall Rd.
3. Kensington (2)  
5000 E. 17th St.
4. William Cullen Bryant (2)  
319 Westover Road
5. Central High School (4)  
3221 Indiana
6. East High School (4)  
1924 Van Brunt
7. William A. Knotts (2)  
3511 E. 70th St.
8. Henry C. Kumpf (2)  
4423 Olive
9. McCoy (2)  
1524 White
10. Milton Moore (2) (3)  
4510 E. Linwood
11. J. C. Nichols (1)  
6901 Oak
12. Northeast Jr. High School (4)  
523 Chelsea
13. Paseo High School (3) (4)  
4747 Flora
14. Southeast High School (1) (4)  
3416-32 E. Meyer Blvd.

- |     |   |     |         |
|-----|---|-----|---------|
| 15. | Westport Jr. High School<br>3835 McGee  | (1) | (4)     |
| 16. | Frances Willard<br>5001 Garfield        | (1) | (2)     |
| 17. | Hamilton<br>1514-24 Campbell            | (1) | (5)     |
| 18. | Thatcher<br>5800 Independence           | (1) |         |
| 19. | Norman<br>3514 Jefferson                | (3) |         |
| 20. | Hale H. Cook<br>7302 Pennsylvania       | (1) |         |
| 21. | Booker T. Washington<br>2404 Prospect   | (1) | (5)     |
| 22. | Northeast High School<br>415 Van Brunt  | (1) | (4)     |
| 23. | Woodland<br>711 Woodland                | (1) |         |
| 24. | Lincoln High School<br>2111 Woodland    | (1) | (4) (5) |
| 25. | Southwest High School<br>6512 Wornall   | (1) | (4)     |
| 26. | Westport High School<br>315 E. 39th St. | (1) | (4)     |
| 27. | Switzer School<br>1829 Madison          | (1) |         |

**\*Key**

- (1) Outstanding works by Charles A. Smith
- (2) Unique School building plans
- (3) Native stone school buildings in Kansas City
- (4) Early development of the High School building
- (5) Ethnic Affiliation

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APPENDIX

NAME & LOCATION	CONSTRUCTION DATE	ARCHITECT	DATE OF SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATIONS	ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	ETHNIC AFFILIATION
1. <b>Ashland Jr. High School</b> 4610 E. 24th Street	1908	Charles A. Smith	1915 1931	Tapestry Brick	
* 2. <b>Askew School</b> 2630 Topping	1922-23	Charles A. Smith	1955 (add.)	Gothic Elements	
3. <b>Blenheim School</b> 2411 E. 70th Terrace	1924	Charles A. Smith	1931		
* 4. <b>Border Star School</b> 6321 Wornall Road	1924	Charles A. Smith	1926 1931	Neo-Classic elements	
5. <b>Kensington School</b> (Carver) 5000 E. 17th St.	1915	Charles A. Smith	1923	Tapestry	
* 6. <b>Bryant School</b> 319 Westover Road	1914-15	Smith, Rea & Lovitt	1938	Jacobethan elements	
* 7. <b>Central High School</b> 3221 Indiana	1914-15	Charles A. Smith	1938 1964	Neo-Classical elements	
8. <b>Central Jr. High School</b> 3611 Linwood	1924-25	Charles A. Smith		Neo-Classical	
9. <b>J.S. Chick School</b> 4101 E. 53rd St.	1930-31	Charles A. Smith	1953-54	Art Deco	
10. <b>East High School</b> (R.A. Long High School) 1924 Van Brunt	1925-26	Charles A. Smith	1937, 1953-54	Neo-Classical	
*11. <b>Faxon School</b> 3710 Paseo	1910-11	Charles A. Smith	1920-21	Jacobethan	
12. <b>Graceland School</b> 2803 E. 51st Street	1924	Charles A. Smith	1953 1956	Tapestry Brick	

NAME & LOCATION	CONSTRUCTION DATE	ARCHITECT	DATE OF SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATIONS	ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	ETHNIC AFFILIATION
*13. <b>Greenwood School</b> 3911 E. 27th Street	1906	Smith, Rea & Lovitt	1910-11 1931-32	Jacobethan	
*14. <b>James School</b> 5810 Scarritt	1910-11	Charles A. Smith	1927	Jacobethan elements	
*15. <b>William A. Knotts School</b> 3511 E. 70th Street	1923	unknown	1934 1956 1959	Classical elements	
*16. <b>Henry C. Kumpf School</b> 4423 Olive	1920	Charles A. Smith	1953	Greek Revival	
*17. <b>Sanford B. Ladd School</b> 3640 Benton Blvd.	1911-12	Charles A. Smith	1921	Jacobethan/classical	
18. <b>Marlborough School</b> 1300 E. 75th Street	1927	Charles A. Smith	1938 1952	Romanesque elements	
19. <b>McCoy School</b> 1524 White	1914	Charles A. Smith			
20. <b>Edwin Miservey School</b> 4210 E. 45th St.	1927	Charles A. Smith	1934-35 1955-56		
*21. <b>Milton Moore School</b> 4510 E. Linwood	1914	Charles A. Smith	1924		
22. <b>W. R. Nelson School</b> 5224 Holmes	1923	Charles A. Smith	1989		
23. <b>J.C. Nichols School</b> 6901 Oak	1926	Charles A. Smith	1930 1935	Gothic elements	
*24. <b>Northeast Jr. High School</b> 523 Chelsea	1925-26	Charles A. Smith		Classical elements	
*25. <b>Paseo High School</b> 4747 Flora	1925-26	Charles A. Smith	1931 1938	Gothic	

NAME & LOCATION	CONSTRUCTION DATE	ARCHITECT	DATE OF SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATIONS	ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	ETHNIC AFFILIATION
*26. Southeast High School 3416-32 E. Meyer Blvd.	1937	Wight & Wight	1953	Gothic	
27. Troost School 5915 Forest	1922	Charles A. Smith			
28. William Volker School (Van Horn School) 3715 Wyoming	1912-13	Charles A. Smith	1938	Gothic	
29. Westport Jr. High School 3835 McGee	1923	Charles A. Smith		English Renaissance	
30. Frances Willard School 5001 Garfield	1923	Charles A. Smith	1931	Mediterranean elements	
31. D.M. Pinkerton School 6409 Agnes	1930-31	Charles A. Smith	1953 1980's		
32. D.A. Holmes School (Benton School) 3004 Benton Blvd.	1904	Charles A. Smith	1924	Romanesque elements	
33. Carver School (Hamilton School) 1514-24 Campbell	1889	unknown Charles A. Smith addition 1923	1900 1913 1923	Italian Villa	Jewish, Greek, Italian (1922)
34. Horace Mann School (Brown Caldwell Christian School) 3841 Euclid	1904	Charles A. Smith	1906 1927		
35. Thatcher School 5800 Independence	1900	Charles A. Smith	1914	Second Renaissance Revival	
*36. Seven Oaks School 3715 Jackson	1926	Charles A. Smith		Jacobethan/Classical elements	
*37. Norman School 3514 Jefferson	1906	Charles A. Smith			

*N/A  
Santa Fe  
District*

NAME & LOCATION	CONSTRUCTION DATE	ARCHITECT	DATE SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATIONS	ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	ETHNIC AFFILIATION
38. <b>St. Paul's School</b> (Rollins School) 4043 Main	1904	Charles A. Smith	none	Renaissance Revival elements	
39. <b>Ruhl School</b> 7933 Main	1927	Charles A. Smith	1933		
40. <b>John J. Pershing School</b> 5915 Park	1918	Charles A. Smith	1930	Mediterranean Influence	
41. <b>Hale H. Cook School</b> 7302 Pennsylvania	1923	Charles A. Smith	1930 1952	Jacobethan	
42. <b>Booker T. Washington</b> (Irving School) 2404 Prospect	1887	William F. Hackney (Partner with Smith)	1896, 1899 1905, 1914, 1921	Romanesque Revival	Black
*43. <b>Bancroft School</b> 4300 Tracy	1910	Charles A. Smith	1913 1927	Jacobethan elements	
44. <b>Northeast High School</b> 415 Van Brunt	1913-14	Charles A. Smith	1927 1937	Neo-Classical	
45. <b>Woodland School</b> 711 Woodland	1921	Charles A. Smith	1936	Romanesque Revival	
*46. <b>Lincoln Academy</b> (Lincoln High School) 2111 Woodland	1935	Charles A. Smith	1966-68	Gothic	Black
*47. <b>Southwest High School</b> 6512 Wornall Road	1925	Charles A. Smith Edgar A. Welty	1926 1931, 1938, 1962	Neo-Classical	
*48. <b>Humbolt School</b> 714 E. 11th Street	1905	Charles A. Smith	1923 1984 - part demolished		
*49. <b>Westport High School</b> 315 E. 39th Street	1908	Charles A. Smith	1964		

NAME & LOCATION	CONSTRUCTION DATE	ARCHITECT	DATE OF SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATIONS	ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	ETHNIC AFFILIATION
*50. <b>Allen School</b> 706 W. 42nd Street	1912	Charles A. Smith	1924	Jacobethan	
51. <b>Swinney School</b> 1106 W. 47th St.	1914	Charles A. Smith	1927 c. 1980's		
52. <b>Center Elementary School</b> 85th & Woodland	1925	Charles A. Smith	1952		
53. <b>Attucks School</b> 1815 Woodland	1905	Charles A. Smith	1922-23 (add.)	Jacobethan	Black
54. <b>Switzer School</b> 1829 Madison	1884		1939	Italian Renaissance Revival	
NR 55. <b>Webster School</b> 1644 Wyandotte	1885			Richardson Romanesque Revival	
56. <b>Longfellow School</b> 2815 Cherry	1914		1927, 1957		
57. <b>Karnes School</b> 550 Charlotte	1914-15	Charles A. Smith			Italian, Russian (Jewish)

\*Architectural plans at Western Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri-Kansas City.

## RESEARCH DESIGN - PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN KANSAS CITY

### **I. Objectives of Survey**

- A. To conduct an intensive level survey of all public schools constructed prior to 1940, that are currently owned by the School District and are located within the city limits of Kansas City, Missouri.
- B. To document buildings that may be in danger of future neglect or demolition.
- C. To evaluate which of these buildings are the best and most intact examples of early educational buildings.
- D. To examine the architectural styles used for these schools.
- E. To examine the architects and firms responsible for these buildings.

### **II. Overview/Previous Research**

In 1867, the Public School District of Kansas City, Missouri, was organized. The School District at that time was bounded on the west by State Line, on the north by the Missouri River, on the east by Prospect Avenue and on the south by 26th Street. By the year 1910, the district lines had been moved south to include the City of Westport, and east beyond the Blue River. The area of the district was well over fifty square miles.

According to the official reports for 1910, there were 67 school buildings in the school district with a total of 800 classrooms. The total number of school houses increased only 30% by 1935, but the number of classrooms increased to two thousand.

Many of the older schools are still standing today. The survey will examine at least 63 buildings constructed prior to 1940. Historical overviews (articles, reports, etc.) have been written for many of the schools that will be surveyed. General information on the educational system in Kansas City is also available and includes (-but is not limited to-) the following:

- 1) Case, Theo A. History of Kansas City, Missouri (1888), Part I, pp. 114-122.
- 2) Deatherage, Charles P. Early History of Greater Kansas City (1927), Vol. I, pp. 547-549.
- 3) Whitney, Carrie Westlake. Kansas City, Missouri, Its History and Its People, 1808-1908 (1908), Vol. I, pp. 302-349.

4) Wiberg, Ella. History of the Development of Public Education in Kansas City, Missouri, 1867-1925. Thesis, Univ. of Wisc. 1925.

5) Brief Historical Outline of the School Development During the Years. (Board of Education - report, 1971).

### III. Survey Methodology

Both archival research and field survey will be utilized to obtain information about the school in Kansas City.

#### A. Identification of Resources

The survey shall use the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Identification. An initial list of school buildings has been compiled and will be verified by a windshield survey. A map of the city will identify the locations of the surveyed properties.

#### B. Site Visits

Each school building on the list will be surveyed on an intensive level. Field notes will record such information as materials, alterations, conditions, and architectural details. A site number will identify each property. This number will begin with the prefix SCH and then will be numbered sequentially through 63.

#### C. Photography

A photograph will be taken of each of the buildings surveyed on an intensive level. This photograph will be of the front of primary facade. A 35mm camera and Kodak Panatomic-X black and white film will be used. Contact sheets will be keyed by roll number and exposure number and then identified on the inventory forms. A 5" x 7" print will be made and attached to the inventory forms.

#### D. Archival Research

The locations for primary source materials are as follows:

- 1) City Hall, Kansas City, Missouri  
414 East 12th Street

This is the repository for water (5th floor) and building (18th and 26th floors) permits, Kansas City Atlases for 1886, 1891, 1907, and 1925, as well as Sanborn Perris fire insurance maps. The Landmarks Commission Office (26th floor) has files on buildings within the city limits.

- 2) Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library  
311 East 12th Street

This local history room of the main branch of the Kansas City Public Library is the repository of city directories, newspaper clippings, copies of the Western Contractor (a construction trade journal) and numerous collections and files. A listing of some of the source materials obtained from these files is included in the appendix.

- 3) Western Historic Manuscript Collection  
University of Missouri-Kansas City

This collection includes the floor plans and elevations for numerous Kansas City buildings.

#### **IV. Products**

##### **A. Historic Inventory Forms**

Inventory forms will be prepared for each of the surveyed sites (approx. 63). The forms will include:

- 1) a site number
- 2) a photograph negative number
- 3) street address or description
- 4) approximate (or exact) date of construction. This will be obtained from the water or building permit and/or verified by city directories, newspaper clippings, the Western Contractor, maps or dates on architectural plans.
- 5) architectural style - only given if a true representative of the style.
- 6) name of architect, engineer, contractor, or builder, if known. This will be obtained from the building permit and/or verified by newspaper clippings, the Western Contractor, architectural renderings, or other sources.
- 7) original and current uses.
- 8) an on-site verification and description of prominent architectural features including number of bays (if applicable) wall treatment, plan or shape, exterior condition, number of stories, foundation material, roof type, etc. Section #36 of the inventory form also will indicate the direction of the front facade, additional features not mentioned in sections #24-33, major alterations, if any. A description of significant decorative features will also be given.
- 9) history of building (name of original occupant or tenant, if known); and significance of building (if any).
- 10) description of environment or outbuildings
- 11) and, National Register eligibility.

B. Map

A map of Kansas City will pinpoint all of the surveyed properties.

C. Final Report

A final report will be prepared at the end of the project. This report will include:

- 1) findings of survey;
- 2) an historic context for school buildings in Kansas City;
- 3) a discussion of the architectural styles used for the schools;
- 4) a discussion of the architects - especially Charles A. Smith - responsible for the design of many of these buildings;
- 5) criteria for National Register eligibility;
- 6) an assessment of eligible properties.