

314

Landmarks Preservation Commission
June 21, 1966, Number 3
LP-0186

OLD ST. PATRICK'S CONVENT AND GIRLS' SCHOOL, 32 Prince Street, Borough of Manhattan. Completed 1826.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 494, Lot 21.

On March 8, 1966, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Old St. Patrick's Convent and Girls' School and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 10). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Three witnesses spoke in favor of designation including Monsignor Arthur Tommaso representing the Archdiocese of New York. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

This Late Federal Style institutional building was a popular type in the post-Revolutionary period. This three story brick structure, with attic and low basement, retains a great deal of its original character. Formal in design, severely stark in appearance, the plain exterior is enhanced by a centrally located arched doorway, of great architectural beauty. This is one of the few complete Late Federal Period doorways in the City. The doorway has a simple elliptical stone arch and consists of an eight-panelled door flanked by fluted Ionic columns, leaded glass sidelights and similar half-columns next to the stone frame. A handsome leaded glass fanlight is set above the top of the door frame. The doorway is further enriched by a series of fine mouldings.

The Prince Street front is divided into three sections, with the center section slightly recessed from the two end sections which are identical. The treatment of the attic story is bold and striking in appearance. Two pediments, with round windows, accentuate the end pavilions, while three handsome pedimented dormer windows in the low-pitched gable roof, clearly define and dominate the central section of the roof.

The architectural composition on the Mott Street wall, with its high brick chimney extending up from the line of the brick gable is severe and striking in appearance. The central, round arched attic story window in the center of the gable is flanked by two blind quadrant panels and is the principal feature of this facade.

In 1886, the interior of the wing, at the South West corner of Prince and Mott Streets, was remodelled changing it from an Orphan Asylum to a school. A school entrance was installed in the Mott Street wall at this time, and the convent remained unaltered.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Old St. Patrick's Convent and Girls' School has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, Old St. Patrick's Convent and Girls's School is an outstanding example of a large Late Federal Style institutional building, that the structure is noteworthy in design and character, that it is in an excellent state of preservation and that it is probably the last example of this type of building remaining in New York City.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 8-A of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Old St. Patrick's Convent and Girl's School, 32 Prince Street, Borough of Manhattan and designates Tax Map Block 494, Lot 21, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.