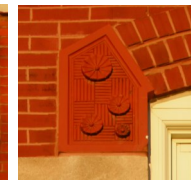
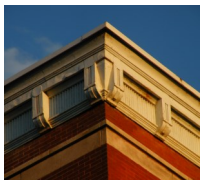


LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL

739 NORTH ADA STREET

Final Landmark Recommendation adopted by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, July 7, 2016



CITY OF CHICAGO
Rahm Emanuel, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
David Reifman, Commissioner

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.

The landmark designation process begins with a staff study and a preliminary summary of information related to the potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the landmarks commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.

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JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL

739 N. ADA STREET

BUILT: 1884 (WITH ADDITIONS IN 1898)

ARCHITECTS: John J. Flanders, Normand Smith Patton

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw a myriad of changing laws and standards regarding childhood education. The location, design, and construction of the John Lothrop Motley School (or simply, Motley School) exemplified these changing ideals by shifting its overall concept to a more modern and flexible approach, both in architectural design and in educational practice. From the 1880s through the early 1900s, the Chicago Public Schools gained thousands of new students as rural farming families moved into the city, new populations arrived from across the world, and as new laws were passed requiring school attendance in an effort to reduce child labor. The West Town community area where the Motley School was built was one of Chicago's largest immigrant populations, and an area where these trends would be strongly felt. The Motley School was first completed in 1884 as a fifteen-classroom grade school and based on a prototype design by the Chicago Board of Education architect John J. Flanders (1848-1914) in 1884. A south addition including nine additional classrooms and a north boiler room and chimney were added in 1898, designed by Flanders' school board architect successor, Normand Smith Patton (1852-1915).

The substantial and uniform design of this Renaissance Revival style building embodies the prevailing concepts of school architecture in the late-nineteenth century, with its masonry construction, central hallway design, and classrooms with tall windows for ample light and ventilation. Ornamentation on the building carries from the original north half to the southern addition, with decorative brickwork, limestone trim, terra cotta details, and a pressed metal cornice. Overall, the building has a regular footprint with shallow projecting bays, a rear light well, and a single-story boiler room addition at the north end of the building. Each half of the building has an entrance from Ada Street. The building has a high degree of integrity, retaining its original floor plan and circulation pattern and many of its historic features and finishes. The building maintained its original use as a school until 2013 and continues to illustrate its role in the late nineteenth century development of Chicago educational buildings.



The Motley School was built in 1884 (left) with a seamless addition completed in 1898 (right).



Map 1: The Motley School occupies a quarter of a block on the east side of Ada Street south of Chicago Avenue. The school's parcel is bordered by Ada Street on the west, Chicago Avenue on the north, and an alleyway on the east.

THE HISTORY OF CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL ARCHITECTURE BEFORE 1884

Chicago's public schools formed following Chicago's incorporation in 1837 with the founding of a managing board appointed by the City Council. Several rudimentary frame schoolhouses were constructed in the 1840s, during which time the Illinois state legislature granted additional power to Chicago to purchase and manage school land, and to fund the construction of new schools through taxation. Tax funds allowed for the construction of Chicago's first brick school, later known as the Dearborn School, which was completed in 1845 in the Greek Revival style (and demolished in 1871). Dozens of new school buildings were completed through the 1860s as Chicago's student population rose from fewer than 2,000 in 1849 to nearly 41,000 in the 1860s. School buildings, such as the Chicago High School, built in 1856 in the Gothic Revival Style (and demolished in 1950), and the Haven School completed in the Italianate style in 1862 (and demolished after it closed in 1974), followed conventional rectilinear floor plans with classrooms arranged around central hallways.

Across the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, the design of school houses followed a few standard formulas for size and layout. The intended purpose of the school building was primarily to contain classrooms where long-established methods of recitation and memorization could be performed. School buildings of this period were simple, either single room structures in rural areas and small towns, or larger multiple room buildings in cities. All types of schoolhouses featured a standard square or rectangular footprint. A few schoolhouses offered more than just classrooms, with some allowing for office space for teachers and principals.

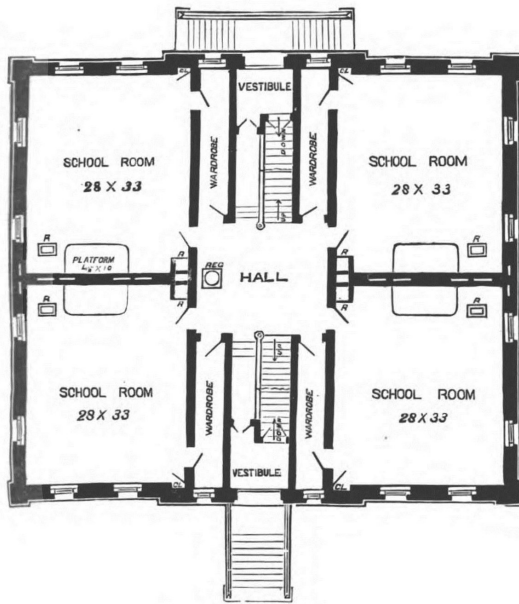
While most school houses shared similar basic design principals, concerns about the healthfulness of enclosed indoor air and the benefits of improving the illumination of classrooms led to the publication of guides for the design of school buildings, including one published in 1848 by Henry Barnard, the commissioner of the public schools of Providence, Rhode Island. In his *School Architecture; or Contributions to the Improvement of School-houses in the United States*, Barnard proposed a series of standards for the location of schools, the size and layout of classrooms, the size and position of windows for light, and most importantly the ventilation of buildings. Having toured schools of every type across country during his career, he asserted that existing school buildings were largely unhealthful and uninspiring. School children, he felt, "should spend a large part of the most impressible period of their lives," in school, in buildings which could positively shape their lives. Overall, "the style of the exterior should exhibit good, architectural proportion, and be calculated to inspire children and the community generally with respect for the object for which it is devoted." Barnard's moral-driven enthusiasm for the purpose and design of public school buildings helped slowly propel changes in American school design.

In Chicago, the Great Fire of 1871 destroyed much of the city, including ten public school buildings. The loss of these buildings offered the opportunity to rebuild following new methods

popularized by education thinkers like Henry Barnard. While student enrolment dropped initially, by 1874 nearly 48,000 students were enrolled in the city's 39 school buildings. One of the new post-fire buildings was the King School, completed in 1874 by architects Johnston & Edlmann in the Italianate style (Harrison Street and Western Avenue, demolished) (images 1 and 2). The James Ward Public School (designated a Chicago landmark in 2004) was completed in 1875 by Johnston & Edlmann following the same plans as the King School. It is an extant example of the firm's lasting design. The King School's form followed a familiar template with a symmetrical square footprint with rooms set around a central hallway. While similar to previous schools in form, however, the King School featured many of the improvements to design, layout, ventilation, and lighting which had been advocated by educators for over a half century. The three-story, twelve-room King School featured tall windows and special ducted ventilation systems and other new features. In addition, as a precaution against fire, brick interior partitions were used instead of the previous standard of frame. The King School's modern design and low construction budget made it the school board's favored design. All public school houses built in Chicago for the next decade followed its design until architect John J. Flanders became architect for the city's schools.

Following years of contract design work by early Chicago architect Augustus Bauer (1827-1894), the Chicago Board of Education created the official position of architect to the Board in 1882. The Board initially elected three architects, each serving brief terms of fewer than six months. Despite restructuring, designs for new schools between 1882 and 1884 continued to reflect the 1874 King School model. One example completed in 1883, the North Division High School (later named the James Sexton Public School and today the Ruben Salazar Elementary Bilingual Education Center, 160 West Wendell, architect Julius S. Ender, a designated Chicago landmark) offered the same overall symmetrical form and layout as other King School-modeled buildings, except with more exterior decorative features and larger windows (image 3).

Architect John J. Flanders was elected chief architect of the Chicago Board of Education in January of 1884 and was immediately presented with the problem of overcrowding that consistently plagued the city's existing school facilities. Flanders' new post coincided with a new legislation-driven expansion of Chicago's public school system. In 1883, the Illinois Legislature enacted the Compulsory Education Law, which required that every student between the ages of 8 and 14 have at least twelve weeks of school each year. The legislation followed years of advocacy by progressive groups seeking to stem child labor and to raise the importance of "childhood" as a special stage of life to be protected. Despite criticism of the law as unenforceable and despite the School Board freely granting "good cause" exemptions to keep children at home or at work, the new law increased demand for seats in Chicago's public schools, particularly in the city's growing immigrant neighborhoods like West Town.



KING SCHOOL.
FIRST FLOOR.



KING SCHOOL,
HARRISON ST., NEAR WESTERN AVENUE.

Images 1 and 2: The King School, designed by Johnston & Edlmann in 1874, featured three-floors with symmetrical floor plans. The Italianate-style school building was favored by the school board, and became the standard design for school buildings through the early 1880s.



Image 3: Ruben Salazar Elementary (originally the North Division High School) at 160 West Wendell was one of the last school buildings completed following the form and style of the King School model. School board architect Julius S. Ender designed the building; which was completed in 1883. The building was designated a Chicago landmark in 1978.



Image 4: John J. Flanders developed a new design for Chicago's public school buildings following his appointment as architect to the Board of Education in early 1884. His prototype design was applied to schools erected between 1884 and 1885. Both the Von Humboldt School (seen above) and Motley School share Flanders's asymmetrical design.

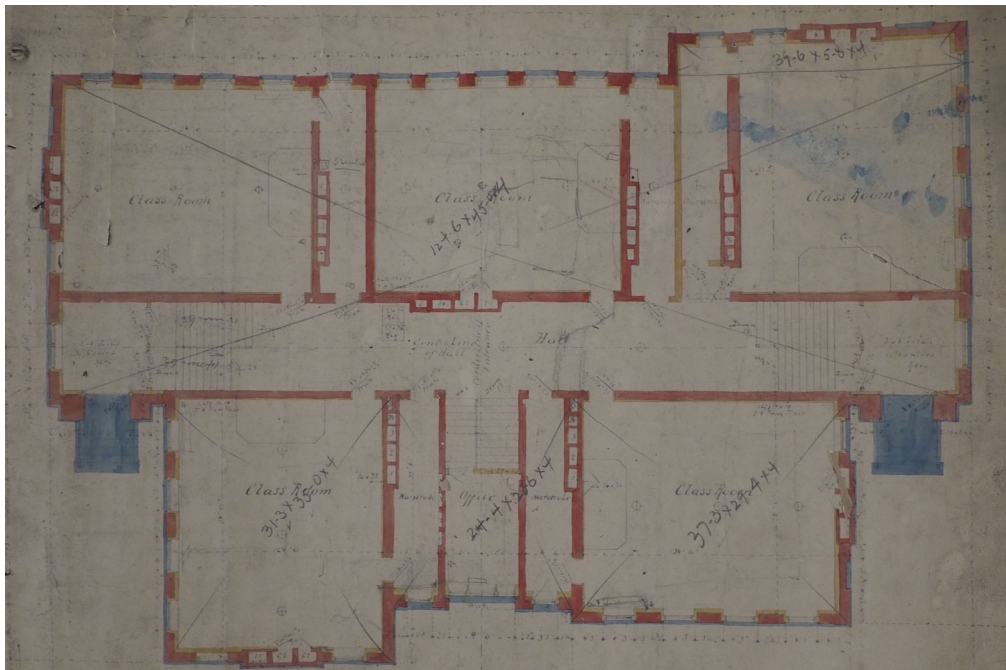


Image 5: The asymmetrical floor plan for the Motley School features five classrooms per floor along a central hallway.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MOTLEY SCHOOL

John J. Flanders's 1884 School Prototype

Architect John J. Flanders designed a new cost-effective school prototype in 1884 to replace the previous Italianate-style King School model. The school could be introduced into neighborhoods where a new school was needed without having to design site-specific buildings. The design for the Motley School was created in advance of what would be the Chicago Board of Education's greatest period of schoolhouse construction between 1884 and 1885. By 1886, Flanders's school design could be found in at least eight neighborhoods across the city. Today, the Motley School remains one of the best preserved of Flanders' innovative design among three surviving schools.

The school building prototype that Flanders designed in 1884 featured five classrooms per floor, with a north-south bisecting hallway terminated by an open staircase at each end. Three classrooms were on the east side of the hallway, and two were on the west side separated by a narrow "recitation room." This gave the building a total of fifteen classrooms and shaped the building such that the rear presented a wider footprint than in the front. Flanders' asymmetrical design was a departure from preceding rectangular schools that had been based on the King School model. Each classroom had its own adjacent hallway fitted with benches and hooks for coats. Most importantly, each classroom had its own flue for drawing warm air up from the basement furnace and a second flue for ventilation and removing spent air. While each classroom was designed for ventilation, heat, and optimal light levels, basement spaces were left for less significant activities. Playrooms, separated by gender, were located next to furnace and coal storage rooms. Few schools during the nineteenth century had outdoor play areas.

The exterior of the Flanders's 1884 school design was unlike the standard school buildings built in Chicago through 1883. Nearly all preceding schools that had been built since the 1870s were in the Italianate style. Some buildings had hints and details pulled from other styles, but their form, massing, and overall design matched both the King School prototype and prevailing national school design trends. Flanders's design rotated the hallways so they would be perpendicular to the main entrance, which he off-set. Additional entrances were placed at the foot of stairwells at either end of the ground floor hallway, leading to small recessed courts on either side of the building. The significance of ventilation and heating flues too was not lost on the exterior design. Windowless exterior walls concealing interior flues were celebrated with decorative brickwork to emphasize verticality, and were punched past the cornice to terminate in a wide chimney stack.

Windows featured prominently in Flanders' design. National school design promoted east and west facing rooms to maximize natural illumination, while discouraging southern exposures as too strong and northern light as too weak. Classrooms in Flanders' design placed windows in all directions, with each classroom gaining primary light from a different direction. Every classroom had a wall with four tall windows, while corner classrooms had a second wall with

two additional windows. Having windows feature prominently on all elevations allowed the school to be built facing any direction. Regardless of placement, classrooms would receive optimal east or west light from at least two windows. National guidelines on school window design also influenced Flanders's schools. Windows were designed to be no lower than three feet above the floor, which prevented having light reflect off the wood floors and impair students' vision. The dependency on sunlight as the primary source of classroom illumination also influenced classroom layout. Desks were oriented to face the instructor who would stand before an interior wall, so as to be perfectly illuminated.

John J. Flanders continued as the school board architect until 1889, but served again from 1890 until 1893. He designed several different school buildings during the course of his two terms as school architect. Only the schools completed during 1884 and early 1885 were built from the same plans as the Motley School. Later designs were for larger buildings, and included additional stonework and terra cotta. According to an article in the *Chicago Tribune* on city schoolhouses, Flanders was deemed by some as "a man of expensive tastes." Here, his school buildings received wide criticism for their "useless ornamentation at the cost of the public." His design for the West Division High School (demolished) provoked the greatest fervor, and led to his brief termination in 1889.

Eight new schools were completed between 1884 and 1885 following Flanders's new design. Of these, the Motley School and two other school buildings remain. These include the Von Humboldt School (1885) at 1410 North Rockwell Street and the Thomas Jefferson School (1884) at 1010 South Laflin Street.

Chicago's West Town Community

Spurred by the state's 1883 Compulsory Education Law and by the city's fast-growing population, the years 1884 and 1885 recorded the greatest amount of school-building activity in the Chicago Board of Education's history. The Motley School site was only one of seven properties purchased in 1883 for the construction of new grade schools, and one of eight new schools completed in 1885 designed by the new Board architect John J. Flanders.

For the new Motley School, the School Board selected a parcel on Snell Street (later renamed Ada Street) south of Chicago Avenue in the West Town community. West Town covers a large area between the North Branch of the Chicago River on the east, Humboldt Park on the west, North Avenue on the north, and Kinzie Street and rail lines on the south. The location was near three overcrowded older schools: the Carpenter Branch, a wood-frame church, which was rented for school-use; and two frame schools, the Armour School and the Wells School. These early frame schools served a largely German neighborhood, which had established themselves in the area in the early 1850s. However, the neighborhood was changing.

Since the Great Fire, new residents had settled largely in the more open and undeveloped areas outside the formerly devastated city center. By 1880, new first-generation residents from Sweden and Norway had moved into houses and apartments formerly occupied by Germans



J. L. Motley.

The Motley School was one of several schools designed by Board of Education architect John J. Flanders in 1884-1885. The new school was intended to relieve the overcrowded schools of the West Town area, which had attracted a large population of new residents from Poland and from Scandinavian countries.

The Motley School was named after author, historian, and diplomat John Lothrop Motley (1814-1877), who is known for his diplomatic intervention during the United States Civil War to prevent European countries from siding with the Confederacy.

between Halsted and Hubbard streets in the southeast portion of West Town, nearer downtown, and Ashland and Chicago avenues in the northwest portion of West Town. Polish immigrants too moved into the area north of Chicago Avenue, creating what would be the largest Polish community outside of Warsaw. These new immigrants arrived in a community that had both ample manufacturing jobs to the east along the North Branch of the Chicago River and which retained the cultural atmosphere of their European homelands.

Early History of the Motley School (1884-1897)

Motley School was completed in 1884 and named after John Lothrop Motley (1814-1877). Motley was an author, historian, and diplomat who served as Secretary of Legislation in St. Petersburg, Russia. He is known as an historian for his work on a series detailing the history of the Dutch. However, he is most remembered for his effort in assisting the Union during the United States Civil War. As minister to the Austrian Empire, he worked with diplomats John Bigalow and Charles Francis Adams to prevent European countries from intervening in the Civil War on the side of the Confederacy.

The Motley School's West Town site was set within a dense working class neighborhood on a street lined with frame houses and converted apartment flats where multiple families lived in former single units. Some families had boarders to help pay rent, while in some buildings residents operated simple businesses, such as shoe repair. Chicago Avenue to the north served as the main commercial thoroughfare and was lined by frame and brick storefronts and some houses and apartment flats. Several of these frame houses and stores, most of which were built between the 1860s and the late 1870s, remained on Ada Street and Chicago Avenue until the 2000s when new development pushed into the area. Mixed among the older frame houses were brick flats built in the 1880s after stronger building codes enacted after the Great Fire. Most residential buildings in the area reached at most three stories. The Motley School, when completed in 1885, was also of three-stories, but was built over a raised-basement or ground floor and had taller ceilings, which effectively lifted the school a full story above the tallest buildings in the area. This made the school a visible landmark throughout the neighborhood.

The Motley School's grounds were small compared to those of other Chicago schools of the period. An alleyway ran adjacent to the school along its north side, meeting the extant alleyway that runs along the school's east side. Less concern was paid to the potential ill-effects of the alleyway (health and sanitation), than were paid to potential fire dangers. When the School Board agreed to purchase land on Snell Street (currently Ada Street) in May 1883 from real estate speculator William S. Proudfoot, the \$8,500 deal included several lots at the south end of the block closer to Huron Street. However, in the course of a month, Mr. Proudfoot had quietly sold the land and instead offered the current school site to the north, closer to the busier Chicago Avenue, for \$8,550. During construction of the Motley School, some frame storefronts facing Chicago Avenue, abutting the school property on its north side, were demolished. Eventually the assembled lots were cleared, making way for a playground in the 1910s. The alleyway separating the Motley School from the lots along Chicago Avenue was not closed

until 1914.

Ten years after Motley School's completion, one modern yet unreliable school feature had to be addressed: the gravity heating system. While the school was adequately ventilated, the coal fired furnace that supplied warm air to the school was inefficient and uneven in its heat distribution. In addition, coal soot tended to rise with the heat and would settle in classrooms. While soot was easily remedied with special filters, the more significant problem was the uneven distribution of heat. In 1894, a new steam-radiator system was installed in the school. A large boiler was added to supply steam to the new system. Because of their size and the potential danger of explosion, boilers in school facilities were relegated to separate buildings. A casualty of the new system was the only patch of open outdoor space at the school, which consisted of a small paved area at the north end of the school beside the alley.

Normand S. Patton: 1898 Motley School Addition

Chicago's population and the students at its public schools increased substantially between 1880s and the 1890s. By 1898, the Motley School lacked capacity to serve its neighborhood and district, requiring the construction of an addition. Normand S. Patton was elected as board architect in 1896, and was given the task of building both several new schools and dozens of additions in order to meet growing demand. Chicago's population had not only grown annually, but had expanded in area in 1889 through the annexation of five surrounding townships and suburbs. While this had little direct effect on the population of the Motley School's West Town community, it indirectly stressed the school board's ability to meet student population challenges.

The two most significant factors leading to increased school enrollment were child labor laws and immigration. In 1893, the State of Illinois passed its first child labor law, which determined that no child under age fourteen work in "remunerative labor" in workshops or factories. While exemptions were granted, the law sent many children out of factories and into the school system. In 1880, the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics identified at least 5,000 children working ten to fifteen hours per day in Chicago alone. A decade later, an 1894 study by reformers at Chicago's Hull House found over 6,500 children working in manufacturing jobs. Following the law, several hundred children were admitted to the public schools. The West Town community area attracted recently arrived immigrant families through the 1900s. Between 1880 and 1920, Chicago's population remained between 30 and 40% foreign born. A 1908 study by the US Senate Immigration Committee identified Chicago as having the second highest ratio of foreign to native born (7:10) in the country after New York City. This was especially notable considering that Chicago's birth rate during the same period was declining. Chicago was a city of first-generation immigrants, most of whom lived in several neighborhoods bordering the downtown. West Town was one such neighborhood. The Motley School, having fulfilled demand in the previous decade no longer had enough space for all of the new students and children that were shifted from factory work to school.

Normand S. Patton started work on an addition to the Motley School in 1898. The addition was to give the school nine additional classrooms, expanded basement playrooms, and a flexible



Image 8: Normand S. Patton's 1898 addition to the Motley School matches Flanders's original 1884 design in its materials, design, and details.

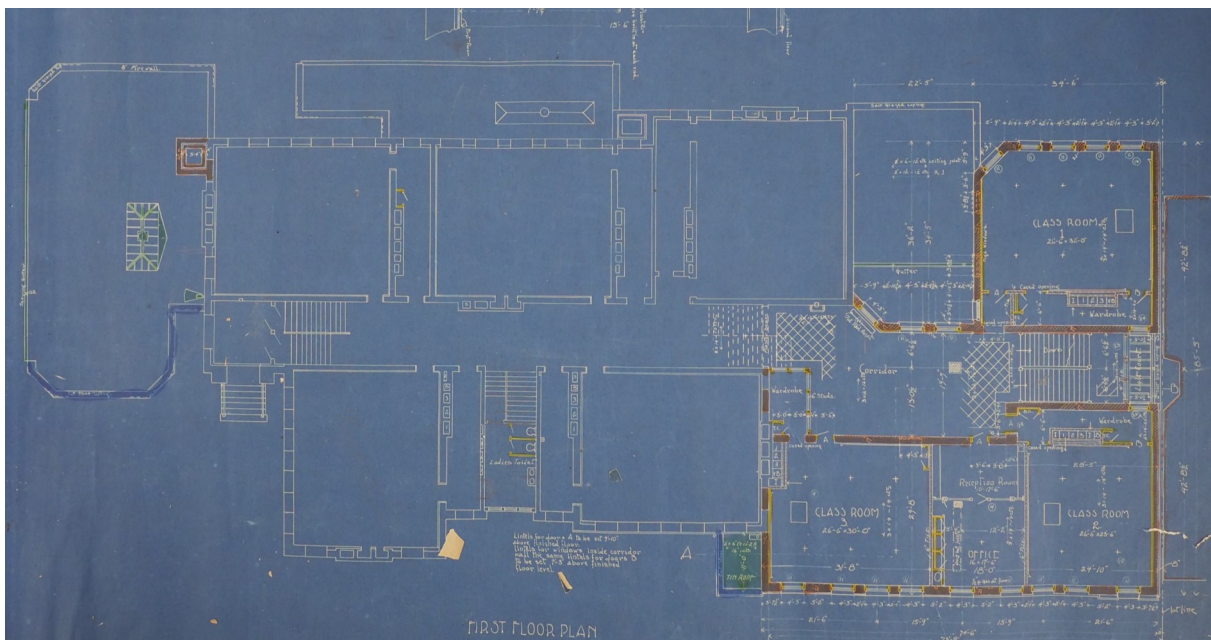


Image 9: First floor plan for Normand S. Patton's 1898 addition to the Motley School.

space on the top floor that could be made into a hall. The new addition would also address an aspect of childhood learning which reformers had also been advocating: early schooling for children under six years. A kindergarten was proposed for the basement, though original plans show that it was left to be finished later. A special entrance was added especially for the future kindergarten space. A highly utilitarian one-story north boiler room and four-story chimney were also added in 1898.

The design of the addition was unique to the Motley School. Patton, who was best known for designing Carnegie libraries in the Midwest, elected to perfectly match Flanders' original exterior Renaissance Revival design of 1884. He extended the Ada Street frontage south by about 60 feet up to an existing apartment flat, providing for two new classrooms per floor along the west elevation. Along the east elevation, the addition provided for one classroom per floor and a light well between the old and new buildings. The coursed, rock-faced limestone base was continued with evenly spaced windows for the new kindergarten. On upper floors, new terra cotta skewbacks were reproduced to match the Aesthetic flower pattern found in Flanders' original design. With a new total of 23 classrooms, the Motley School was prepared to serve the neighborhood into the future.

The Motley School's Later History

The Motley School continued to serve the immediate neighborhood throughout the twentieth century with only minor alterations and modernizations. Beginning in 1902, land to the north of the school, between an alleyway and Chicago Avenue, was claimed through eminent domain for use as a school playground. At the time, the reform movement advocated fresh air for children, which included classes outdoors. Creative solutions across the country for more landlocked schools included fenced rooftop play areas for use even in winter. The land provided through commendation of small retail establishments on Chicago Avenue was sufficient to give Motley School students a place to spend time outside and to expend energy. A few years later, the West Side Park Commission, established through state legislation in 1905, started to designate and build a series of small parks to create open space in the area's crowded neighborhoods. One of these parks was created in 1907 north of the Motley School across Chicago Avenue. Covering an entire city block, Eckhart Park was designed by Jens Jensen and featured playgrounds, public pools, ball fields, and open lawns.

By the 1920s, the neighborhood surrounding the Motley School had shifted away from Scandinavian families and become largely Italian. As part of the school's increased outreach into the community, classes were held for families and parents to assist in adjusting to life in America. Daily life too was assisted by the school in order to improve the lives of its students and of the community as a whole. With a strong emphasis on "Americanization," teachers and administrators intervened in home life and addressed parent work habits, sanitation, and other issues. The school became the neighborhood's community center for advice and daily assistance for immigrants adjusting to American life.

Throughout the rest of the twentieth century, the Motley School remained an important part of the West Town neighborhood. Plans in the early 1950s to replace the Motley School and three other neighborhood schools with one central elementary school did not materialize. Instead, a few decades later, the Motley School shifted its focus to providing specialized education. The Motley School closed in 2013.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION

The building faces west onto Ada Street, which is narrow and lined by older frame houses, brick apartment flats, and newer apartment developments. The east (rear) elevation faces an alleyway, while its secondary north elevation faces a former paved playground area and Chicago Avenue beyond. The south-facing secondary elevation is largely obscured by a series of existing brick apartment flats. A newer wrought iron fence separates the playground area from the public sidewalk, which runs along Chicago Avenue and Ada Street.

Although comprised of three sections built at different times, the Motley School maintains an integrated appearance, with a continuity of both design and materials between the original 1884 school and the 1898 classroom addition on the south. The school displays the visual characteristics of the Renaissance Revival style with elements of Italianate.

Overall, the building features a limestone base of rock-faced ashlar, with tooled corners and a water table of smooth limestone. The upper walls are clad in red pressed-brick, which varies slightly in color between the original half and the addition; the original half maintains a deep orange-red tone, while the addition was sourced with deeper red-toned brick. Common brick clads the east ally-facing elevation. A plain limestone string course encircles the building below the first and third floor windows, while a limestone band runs above the third-floor below the cornice. A string course which meets at the top of the second-floor windows is continuous in form but comprised of lengths of limestone and lengths of projecting pressed-brick, depending on the elevation. The entire structure is capped by a pressed-metal cornice, featuring brackets that are spaced equal to the fenestration below and are separated by vertical ribbed panels. The majority of original window openings remain, with some filled with matching face brick. The windows are replacement six-over-six double-hung sash with exterior mounted screen panels; some upper sashes have been fitted with a solid panel to mount an air conditioning unit. Each floor presents a different style window arch; basement windows have triple row-lock arches with the top row creating a shadow line; second floor window arches are similar to those over basement windows but feature decorative Aesthetic style terra cotta skewbacks with four rosettes of varying size; and first and third floor windows feature limestone lintels.

The primary elevation along Ada Street reflects the continuity of design between the original school and its addition. The original north half of the elevation is visually divided into three symmetrical bays, each of which is set back a different distance from the sidewalk. The main entrance is centered in the middle bay, which set farthest back. The doorway has a non-historic steel frame with two doors, a centered four-pane window and a two-pane transom above. The



Image 10 (above):
View of the Motley School looking south along
Ada Street



Image 11 (left):
The north entrance of the 1884 building
features a brick arch, decorative brick dental,
and a pressed metal pediment.

Image 12 (right):

Decorative terra cotta skewbacks are found above second floor windows.



Image 13 (below):

The south entrance of the 1898 addition features a Classical entablature and pilasters.



whole unit is set within a two-story shallow rounded-arched recess, with a brick-filled former window above. Single windows flank the entrance and rounded-arched window on the ground-level and first floor. All three windows on the first floor are capped by a rounded-arched terra cotta drip molding, above which are unglazed two terra cotta panels that read in raised letters “ERECTED” “1884.” On the second floor a row of four arched windows, three of which have been brick filled, appear below a terra cotta panel with a foliate background and raised letters that read: MOTLEY SCHOOL. The third floor features four windows, three of which have been filled. The north bay of the original Ada Street elevation is set closest to the sidewalk and is symmetrical with an engaged chimney stack, featuring vertical decorative dog tooth reveals, flanked by single windows on each floor. To the north, a narrow elevation with the north entrance is set back by approximately twenty feet. The entrance is at the top of a flight of cement steps with cement handrails, and is recessed within a brick arched opening, which is surmounted by a row of brick corbels and capped by a pressed metal pediment. The south bay has four windows per floor, with the exception of the basement where a single-story entrance to the addition replaced a window; the entrance features a stone panel with raised letters that read: ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN.

Unlike the original school building, the south addition’s Ada Street elevation meets the sidewalk and is divided into five window bays with single windows and sets of three (1,3,1,3,1). An entrance to the first floor at the south end of the addition features a double steel doorway with a sidelight and transom. The doorway is framed in limestone by Ionic pilasters supporting a Classical entablature with a frieze with the raised words “MOTLEY SCHOOL” bordered by wreathes.

The north elevation facing the former playground has two sections divided by the north entrance. The half to the west is symmetrical with four windows per floor. The east half features a centered decorative chimney similar to the west elevation. A four-story chimney stack and a one-story boiler room were added at the north elevation in 1898; both are highly utilitarian in character and have been altered.

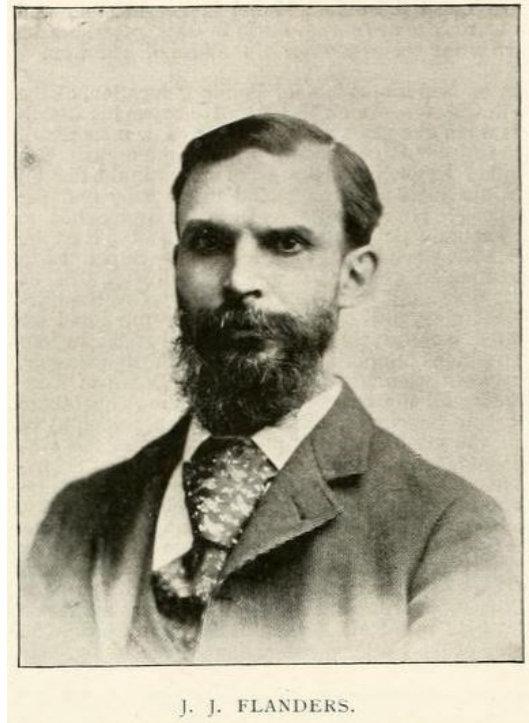
The secondary east elevation facing the rear alleyway is largely uniform with evenly spaced windows and cladding of common brick. The south addition features a recessed light well, which reveals the east half of the original building’s south elevation. The south elevation of the addition abuts residential buildings and has no windows except for those set within a light well for an interior south stairway.

THE ARCHITECTS OF THE MOTLEY SCHOOL

Architect John J. Flanders (1848-1914)

John J. Flanders was born in Glencoe, Illinois, and as a student attended the city’s first brick public school building, the Dearborn School (1845 – 1871). Flanders studied at the Chicago

Public Manual Training School and in 1866 began his architectural training as an apprentice with Augustus Bauer, one of Chicago's early professional architects and the first architect for the Chicago Board of Education. Flanders continued his training with architects before and after the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 including: Theodore Vigo Wadskier, William Warren Boyington, and the partnership of Dankmar Adler and Edward Burling. In 1874, Flanders partnered with Charles Furst, which lasted until 1877 when he continued to practice alone.



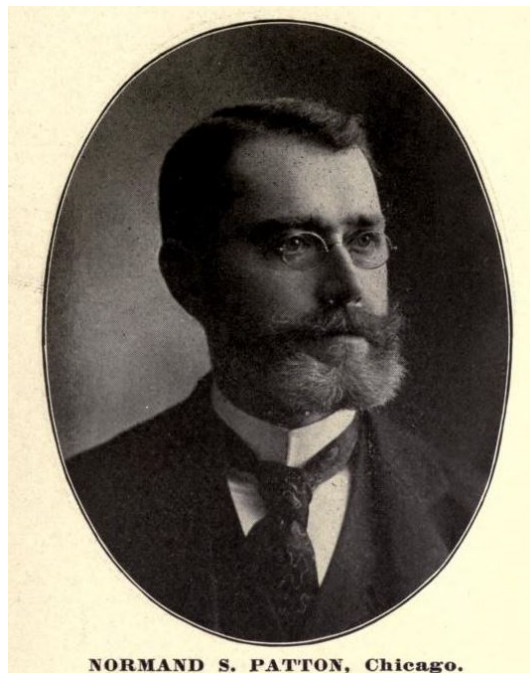
In January of 1884, the Chicago Board of Education elected Flanders as architect of the schools, a position he maintained, while continuing to design private homes and office buildings, until 1888. As architect for the schools, he developed a new design and plan for school buildings, which up till then had followed a standard symmetrical layout and retained the elements of the Italianate style that had been employed since the 1860s. Flanders gradually began to design schools in the Renaissance Revival style with irregular footprints, projecting bays, and more complex rooflines. His designs, especially for the now demolished West Division High School, included more architectural details and higher grade finishes than previous school buildings, which meant higher construction cost, an issue which brought him significant criticism. However, in his first year, the schools had already embarked on a process of building more grade schools to relieve overcrowding in certain neighborhoods. The Motley School site had been selected in 1883 and was one of several future school sites awaiting plans; it and others were completed by 1885. In 1886, he and William Carby Zimmerman formed the firm of Flanders and Zimmerman. Flanders was not reelected as architect to the Board of Education in 1889 following criticism that his school designs were too costly.

Following a hiatus beginning in 1889, Flanders was again elected as architect to the Chicago Board of Education in December of 1890. His position was the same, but in his absence while designing homes for elite business magnates, the city had annexed five surrounding townships, adding over 100 existing school buildings and 35,000 students to the city's school system. For three years, he designed new school buildings and additions that were desperately needed across Chicago neighborhoods. Flanders ultimately designed over fifty school buildings in Chicago, which include the Thomas Jefferson School (1884, 1010 South Laflin Street), Ravenswood Elementary School (1892, 4332 North Paulina Street), and Louis Nettelhorst School (1892, 3252 North Broadway), as well as numerous additions. In addition to school buildings, Flanders also designed dozens of private homes which include the Clarence A. Knight House (1891, 3322 South Calumet Avenue) and the Gustavus F. Swift House (1898, 4848 South Ellis Avenue).

Architect Normand Smith Patton (1852-1915)

Normand Smith Patton was appointed the Board of Education Architect in 1896 and designed the addition to the Motley School two years later in a manner that duplicated the original school building's scale, massing, and decorative details. Patton, working both individually and as the principal of the architectural firms of Patton & Fisher; Patton, Fisher, & Miller; and Patton & Miller, is noteworthy for designing school and college buildings and over one-hundred "Carnegie Libraries" throughout Illinois and the Midwest.

Patton was born in Hartford, Connecticut, and was educated at Amherst College and the Massachusetts Institute of technology, where he studied architecture. After graduation in 1874, he came to Chicago, working briefly as a draftsman with William Le Baron Jenney, before working alone for several years. Patton acted as supervising architect to the United States Treasury in Washington D. C. for six years until 1883 when he again returned to Chicago and partnered with architect C. E. Randall. In 1885, Patton joined with Reynolds Fisher, and the two were partners for the next sixteen years, until 1901, when Fisher moved to Seattle. It was during the later years of this partnership that Patton designed the 1898 addition to John Lothrop Motley School. Patton & Fisher designed several notable Chicago buildings, including the Armour Institute Main Building at the Illinois Institute of Technology (1891-93, a designated Chicago landmark), Chicago Academy of Sciences at 2001 North Lincoln Park West (1893), and Lakeview High School at 4015 North Ashland Avenue (1898). In addition, the firm designed dozens of large houses in the Village of Oak Park and in the Kenwood community area of Chicago.



CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sections 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a final recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object with the City of Chicago if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for designation," as well as possesses a significant degree of historic integrity to convey its significance.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Motley School be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Example of City, State, or National Heritage

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.

- The Motley School exemplifies the importance of Chicago’s public schools to the City’s social and cultural history.
- Public education has historically been one of the most important responsibilities of Chicago government, and public school buildings often are visual and social anchors in the City’s neighborhoods. Opened in 1885, the Motley School was one such institution in Chicago’s West Town neighborhood for almost 130 years.
- Motley’s design and expansion during the late nineteenth century reflects Chicago’s historic position as a major center of immigration. The school served the West Town community, which was one of Chicago’s largest foreign-born and first-generation populations.
- Social reform in public education is also reflected in Motley’s rapid expansion. National laws aimed at reducing child labor and city laws requiring school attendance made education more attainable and increased attendance in Chicago’s public school system.

Criterion 4: Exemplary Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- The Motley School is a handsome example of a school building, a building type of significance to the history of Chicago and its neighborhoods.
- The building was finely executed with Renaissance Revival and Italianate style details in traditional materials, including red pressed-brick, limestone, and pressed metal, and exemplifies the fine craftsmanship that defines historic Chicago school architecture.
- In its emphasis on large windows and high ceilings, which provided large, airy, well-lighted classrooms, the building reflects late-nineteenth century school design ideals.

Criterion 5: Important Architect

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- The Motley School was designed by important late-nineteenth century Chicago architect John J. Flanders (1847-1914), architect of the Chicago Board of Education from 1884 to 1888 and from 1890 to 1893. A proponent of modern school design, Flanders designed over 50 schools in Chicago and developed several new Chicago school design prototypes, many

of which like the Motley School remain intact.

- Flanders’s architectural career was influenced by apprenticeships with several of Chicago’s significant early architectural firms. His work besides school buildings included, with his partner William Zimmerman, mansions for some of Chicago’s business elite.
- The terra cotta details and asymmetrical form of Flanders’s 1884 prototype design are early design experiments, which Flanders developed and employed in his later school and residential designs.

Integrity Criterion

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express its historic community, architectural, or aesthetic value.

The Motley School exhibits a high level of architectural integrity. No major additions or alterations have been made to the building since the historic 1898 additions were completed, leaving historic features, finishes, overall form, footprint, and location of entrances and arrangement of fenestration intact. While some window openings have been filled, original fenestration openings remain distinguishable from surrounding masonry. The building retains its original pressed metal cornice.

The interior of the building also retains a high level of character-defining features and finishes. It retains its general floor plan, circulation pattern, classroom layout, and original stairs.

Both the interior and exterior of the building retain sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance as a late-nineteenth century school building in Chicago’s Near West Side during a period of progressive education reform, increasing immigration, and social change.

Under current plans, the Motley School will be converted to housing. The historic appearance of the exterior will not be affected.

SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Whenever an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the “significant historical and architectural features” of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on its evaluation of the Motley School, the Commission staff recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building.
- The one-story boiler room and four-story chimney at the north end of the building are both excluded from the significant features. The boiler room and chimney may be demolished subject to the review of the Commission. The foregoing is not intended to limit the Commission's discretion to approve other changes.



Image 16: View of the Motley School facing southwest from Chicago Avenue.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Image

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- Page 23 Halliday Witherspoon. *Men of Illinois* (Chicago: Miehle Press Co., 1902). 7.

** All existing condition photographs of the Motley School are by MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC.

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