

Architectural And Historic Survey



Identification

STREET ADDRESS: 450 Fourteenth Street, NW

MAP & PARCEL: 4-118

CENSUS TRACT AND BLOCK:

PRESENT ZONING: R-2

ORIGINAL OWNER: School Board of City of Charlottesville

ORIGINAL USE: Elementary School

PRESENT USE: Elementary School

PRESENT OWNER: School Board of City of Charlottesville

ADDRESS:

HISTORIC NAME: Venable School

DATE / PERIOD: 1925 and 1951-52

STYLE: Colonial Revival

HEIGHT (to cornice) OR STORIES: 2, 1 storey

DIMENSIONS AND LAND AREA: 422' x 275' (2.64 acres)

CONDITION: Good

SURVEYOR: Bibb

DATE OF SURVEY: Summer 1981

SOURCES: City Records
The Daily Progress, Ch'ville Bicentennial
edition, 4/13/62

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Venable School is a 2-storey, 5-bay building set on an English basement. Walls and foundation are constructed of brick laid in stretcher bond with a concrete water table. The medium-pitched hip roof is covered with slate and has Baltimore gutters and a deep entablature with concrete architrave and frieze and white wooden dentiled cornice. There are two central chimneys. An octagonal cupola is set at each end of the ridge of the roof. Each consists of a white wooden lantern with round-arched louvered air vents and corner pilasters set on a slate base, with a domical roof covered with copper. In each of the side bays of the facade there is a band of five double-sash, 12-over-12 light windows with architrave surrounds and a concrete sill. There is a concrete spandrel between the first and second storey windows with an inset panel below each window. The center panel in each bay is enriched with an open book on a shield. Between the side bays, there are two separate narrower 9-over-9 light windows with plain spandrels. Basement windows are separate 8-over-8 light. A two-storey pedimented Ionic portico, with the name "VENABLE SCHOOL" on the frieze, covers the center bay of the facade. The double entrance doors have a reeded frieze with rosettes, a cornice, and a 12-light rectangular transom with decorative iron grill, all within a wooden architrave. This is set against two pilasters carrying an entablature with fluted frieze and dentiled cornice. The entrance is flanked by short, jack-arched, 9-over-9 light windows with decorative grill. At the second level, there is a pair of 12-over-12 light windows flanked by full-sized 9-over-9 light windows with enriched concrete panels below them. The portico floor is concrete, and a broad flight of brick steps replaces the original concrete one. There is a brick balustrade. In the center of the rear elevation, there is a slightly projecting pavillion with four pilasters supporting a pediment matching the one on the facade. At each level there is a 12-over-12 light window with enriched spandrel flanked by jack-arched 4-over-4 light windows. Before the 1950-51 additions, the ends of the building had one-storey porticoes. Their concrete steps and brick balustrades matched those on the facade, and the entrance doors and transoms were similar, but with architrave trim and a simpler entablature with the cornice supported on consoles. The four columns were arranged in pairs instead of being evenly spaced. Above the entrance, a pair of 12-over-12 light windows with a single jack arch with keystone remains. Brick panels outlined with several bands of headers and stretchers occupy the side bays. Flat-roofed, one-storey wings, set several steps lower than the basement level, now cover both ends of the central block and extend some distance to the rear. They are constructed of brick laid in stretcher bond. Windows and entry recesses have gray brick architraves. The southern wing contains six classrooms, and the northern wing, the auditorium and gymnasium.

HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION

The land for Venable School was purchased in 1922 (City DB 42-140), and the first classes were held in 1925. It was named for Col. Charles Scott Venable, a professor at the University and Charlottesville's first representative on the Albemarle County School Board. Miss Serepta Moran, for whom Burnley-Moran Elementary School was named, served as Principal from 1925 until her retirement in 1945. She was succeeded by Mrs. Betty Davis Via, for whom Jackson-Via Elementary School was named. Mrs. Via left to become Principal of the new James G. Johnson Elementary School in January 1955. Two wings were added in 1950-51, providing six additional classrooms, a gymnasium, and an auditorium, and the basement of the existing building was remodeled. Venable School was closed for the 1958 fall term under Virginia's "Massive Resistance" laws. It re-opened for the spring term, and in September 1959 it became the first elementary school in Charlottesville to be desegregated.

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4-118✓

422x275

R-2

Venable

Venable Sch

1972

42-140

Sch Bld of Ch'vr

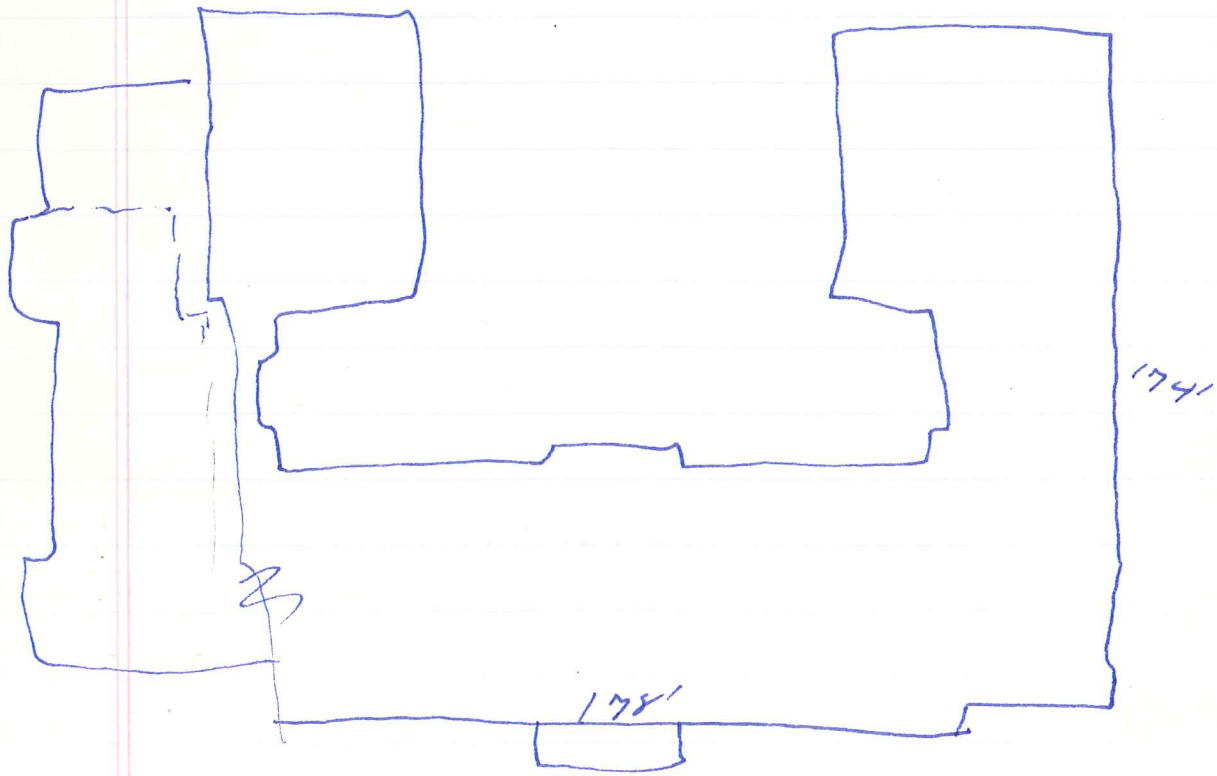
1922

plot 42-142

3-5

brick & conc, brick, slate gable

built 1925-51



Venable

2-5, 5 or 7-bay, double-pile

Eng basement, stretcher bond, some water table
stretcher bond

med hip roof, slate, proj eaves? & gutters
entab; some architrave & plain frieze
white wooden cornice w/ ~~dentils~~ ^{dentils}

2 central chim - rear of center

2 ^{octagonal} cupolas centered bet portico & ends; near ends of ridge
bet 2 sep wind bet 2 side bays
slate bases

^{white wooden} lantern (?) w/ round-arched (w/ cartouche) louvered vents,
& 4 corner pilasters supporting frieze & cornice
metal (prob corroded copper) domed roof, & oct. bell
(~~bell~~ bellcast & round on top)
no finial

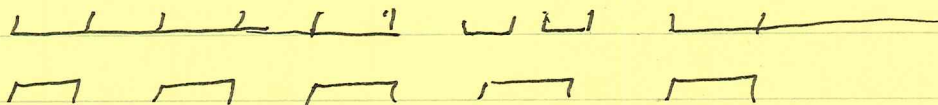
in each bay; rear too

group of 5 12/12 & windows w/ single com sill &
architrave surrounds

com spandrel bet ~~ft~~ levels, inset panel under each
window, relief in center one: open book on shield
w/ swag to each side
touches entab at tops

bet 2 side bays: 2 sep ^{narrower} windows 9/9, w/ ^{unfluted} spandrel

basement windows 8/8 w/ com sills &
under #1, 3, 5 of groups & centered under 2 sep



✓ full-ht ped. portico covers center bay
one floor, ~~for~~ wide & long flight brick steps, brick bal.
4 white cor. columns
entab cont, name on frieze; ~~arch wooden, only frieze cor~~
ped no window in pediment

center bay:

reg 9/9 windows side bays upper level, no spandrel

pr reg 12/12 " center " " " " "

✓ shorter 9/9 " side " lower " , brick jack arches,
decorated iron grill

ent: double doors 12/1 panel
reeded frieze w/ relief rosettes
cornice

12. l root transom w/ decorated iron grill

all this ~~is~~ within wooden architrave set agst

2 pl pilasters carrying entab w/ fluted frieze
& dentiled cornice

decorated inset panels w/out spandrels in side bays


center bay rear projects slightly

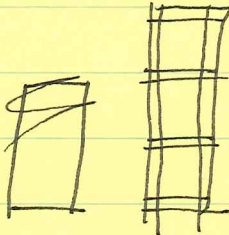
4 pilasters resting on water table support pediment
- same, entab cont around

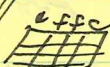
side bays: ~~is~~ 4/4 each level w/ jack arch & cor sill

center " : reg 12/12 " " w/ single wide spandrel w/
same decoration, sashes spread out more

and water table at rear below basement windows: vert band headers
~~to~~ 5 reg 8/12 windows² side bays rear, ^{to} below 2nd water table

1-5 auditorium & gym addn N & E ell
 low found, i.e. basement level
 stretcher w 5 gray brick parapet
 flat roof
 windows & entry recesses have gray brick architraves
 windows multi-light metal
 2 groups 3 doors w/ transoms 

1-5 primary wing S & E ell
 conc. stepped parapet
 windows = group metal ^{double} hung arch (3x ^{fixed} 2/2/2 w/ 2/1 transoms
 2 brick sill, 0 above on N
 4 bays on S elevation beyond ent:
 2 groups windows, door in one
 2nd 2 bays stepped lower
 ent: 3 doors w/ ~~transoms~~ taller transoms
 arch. at other end 

W of door & on facade: ~~2~~ 2 lower stories
 windows 

ends; 3 bays

side bays; blind panels outlined w/ band headers,
vert stretchers, band stretchers, vert stretchers,
beveled corners

short over hall

center bay 2nd level; pr reg 12/16 w/ single
conc sill & jack arch w/ keystone & corner blocks

center bay 1st level;

2 conc pilasters support nothing, prob orig entab
console support cornice (w/ frieze below) over

16-l transom &

surrounded by architrave

Venable

42-140 John W & Mary L Fishburne & Lillie S Dinwiddie (wid) → \$10,500
9/17/1922 Sch Bd of C of th'o
all of Block 5, Preston Heights (ACDB 97-346434)
Lots 49, 50, 103, & 104, Trader's Landing (" 146-317)

