

Chestnut Street Public School  
Cambria City Neighborhood  
500 Chestnut Street  
Johnstown  
Cambria County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5759

HABS  
PA,  
11-JOTO,  
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Chestnut Street Public School

HABS No. PA-5759

HABS  
PA,  
11-3070,  
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Location: 500 Chestnut Street, Cambria City, Johnstown, Cambria County, Pa.

Description: The two-story Chestnut Street School measures 160' x 64'. Built of brick with stone detail, the principal facade has five bays, each bay except for the center bay consisting of a line of five flat-arched windows on each story. The center bay, rendered in stone, has a Tudor-arched entrance set above an impressive flight of steps. Between the basement and first story there is a wide stone string course. The building has a high brick parapet with stone panels with petal motifs. The center bay rises higher than the rest of the parapet and has a crest of the city of Johnstown. The side facades are brick with little detail except for a two light window on the first and second stories in the middle of the facades.

History: In 1891 the School District of the City of Johnstown purchased lot 46 from J. Burkhard for \$10,500. The first public school in Cambria City known as 16 Ward School was erected in 1894. It was brick, with two stories. In the 1920s the authorities began to buy up adjoining lots at a cost of \$37,500.

In 1921 the new school was built. The grade school was known as the Chestnut Street Public School and shares the same design as the public school in Maple Park. The older school, 16 Ward School, was demolished after 1949, and was used as a parking lot. This building was used in the 1950s as an office building by the city. In 1985 it was bought by a private company B.C.D. Associates.

Sources:

Deed Records (77:227-229, 319:155, 309:350, 1178:321), Cambria County Courthouse, Ebensburg, Pa.

Johnstown Tribune (15 September 1928).

Sanborn Map Company, Johnstown Pennsylvania (New York, The Sanborn Co., 1895, 1911, 1913, 1949).

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP). An overview of history of the city (HABS No. PA-5669) and an overview of the neighborhoods of Cambria City and Minersville (HABS No. PA-5672) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the downtown and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Bernadette Goslin in August 1988 under the direction of Alison K. Hoagland, HABS historian, and Kim E. Wallace, the supervisory historian of the project. Goslin's and other project historians' work was published as The Character of a Steel Mill City: Four Historic Neighborhoods of Johnstown, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1989), edited by Kim E. Wallace. Illustrations in the publication include large format photographs taken by HAER photographer Jet Lowe and 35 mm photographs taken by the project historians.