

**NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE**

1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE (must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)

Street address: **3819-31 Chestnut Street**

Postal code: **19106**

Councilmanic District: **3rd**

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: St. Leonard's Academy of the Holy Child Jesus

Current/Common Name: St. Leonard's Court

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Building

Structure

Site

Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Occupancy:

occupied

vacant

under construction

unknown

Current use: Offices

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Attached

6. DESCRIPTION

See Attached

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1867 to 1981

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1867; c.1875; 1893; 1924

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: _____

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: _____

Original owner: Sisters of Sharon/Society of the Holy Child Jesus

Other significant persons: Cornelia Connelly

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Attached

9. NOMINATOR

Organization Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia Date _____

Name with Title Ben Leech, consultant Email patrick@preservationalliance.com

Street Address 1608 Walnut St, Suite 1702 Telephone 215-546-1146 x5

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19103

Nominator is is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 3 October 2018

Correct-Complete Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 7 February 2019

Date of Notice Issuance: 8 February 2019

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name: Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania

Address: 3819 Chestnut Street #31

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19104

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: 12 March 2019

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: 12 April 2019

Date of Final Action: 12 April 2019

Designated Rejected

5) BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at a point formed by the intersection of the Northeasterly side of Chestnut Street (80 feet wide) and the Southeasterly side of 39th Street (60 feet wide); thence extending from said point of beginning North 11 degrees, 1 minute East along the said Southeasterly side of 39th Street the distance of 214.500 feet to a point on the Southwesterly side of Ludlow Street (40 feet wide); thence extending South 78 degrees, 59 minutes, East along the said Southwesterly side of Ludlow Street, the distance of 200.500 feet to a point; thence extending South 11 degrees 1 minute West the distance of 214.500 feet to a point on the said Northeasterly side of Chestnut Street; thence extending North 78 degrees, 59 minutes West along the said Northeasterly side of Chestnut Street the distance of 200.500 feet to a point on the said Southeasterly side of 39th Street, being the first mentioned point and place of beginning.



6) DESCRIPTION



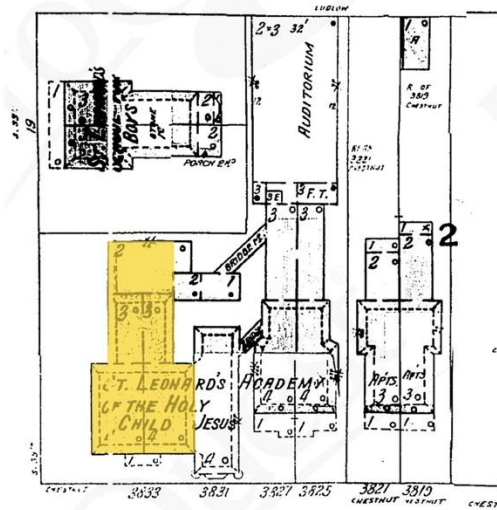
Figure 1: Chestnut Street (south) elevations

The former St. Leonard's Academy of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus at 3819-31 Chestnut Street, now known as St. Leonard's Court, contains multiple historic structures occupying a single one-acre parcel of land bounded by Chestnut, 39th, and Ludlow Streets in the University City area of West Philadelphia. The current property is a collection of eight formerly distinct building parcels consolidated over time by St. Leonard's Academy, which was founded in 1867 at 3831-33 Chestnut Street on the parcel's southwest corner. The current property includes three pairs of semidetached twins built between 1867 and c.1875 (originally 3831-33 Chestnut, 3825-27 Chestnut, and 19-21 S. 39th Street), a two-bay infill addition fronting Chestnut Street built in 1896, a rear addition fronting Ludlow Street built in 1924, and an infill addition fronting 39th Street built in 1986. A fourth c.1875 twin formerly occupying the southeast corner of the current parcel (3819-21 Chestnut Street) was demolished in 1959 and is now a surface parking lot.¹ For the purposes of this nomination, the property's period of significance begins in 1867 and ends in 1981, the year of St. Leonard's Academy's closure. Therefore all existing structures except for the 1986 infill addition are considered contributing elements of the property.

¹ Zoning Permit #76105, July 6, 1959.



Figure 2: South (Chestnut Street) elevation of 3831-33 Chestnut Street



3831-33 Chestnut Street

The southwest corner of the property contains a three-and-one-half story, mansard-roofed brownstone twin fronting onto Chestnut Street. The building is set back from both Chestnut and 39th Streets, enclosed by a short brownstone retaining wall topped with a simple wrought iron fence. Its primary south (Chestnut Street) elevation is laid in random ashlar and is a combined six bays in width, with a raised one-story porch covering the two central entryway bays. Each doorway features double-leaf wood and glass doors with arched lights and segmental arched transoms. The tall ground-floor wood windows feature four-light lower sashes and two-light, segmental arched upper sashes. The upper two stories both feature two-over-two segmental arched windows. A mansard roof rises above a bracketed cornice, with four arched dormers lighting the attic.



Figure 3: West (39th Street) elevation of 3831-33 Chestnut Street

The west (39th Street) elevation is clad in random rubble brownstone across both its three-story front massing and two-story rear ell. The three-story front is unfenestrated and capped by a mansard roof and bracketed cornice. A single dormer lights the attic behind a central chimney. The two-story, hip-roofed rear ell is five bays wide. Three of its second-floor windows feature enlarged openings with elaborate wood-framed Gothic tracery; the remaining first- and second-floor windows are two-over-two double-hung wood sashes. Three triangular three-light dormers pierce the hipped roof, which is capped by an octagonal copper cupola.

The building was under construction in 1867 when it was acquired by Society of the Holy Child Jesus, which modified its design during the construction process.² Hence, the ecclesiastic elements of its rear ell are likely original or early alterations. The porch originally featured a pedimented cornice on wooden columns. The original architect is unknown.

² Van Allen, Rodger. "Growing Up in Cornelia's School: St. Leonard's Academy, Philadelphia." *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, Vol. 107, no. 1-2 (Spring-Summer 1996), p. 84.

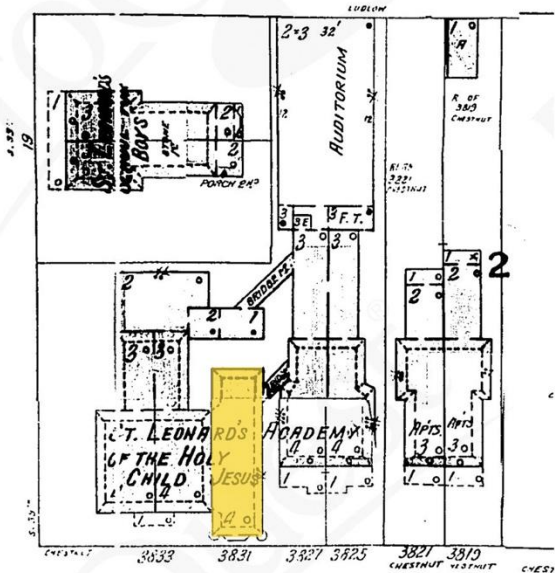


Figure 4: South (Chestnut Street) elevation of 3833 Chestnut Street Annex

3833 Chestnut Street Annex

A two-bay, two-and-one-half-story hipped mansard-roofed addition stands to the east of the original 3831-33 Chestnut street twin, projecting forward from its attached neighbor but still set back slightly from Chestnut Street and within the original twin's perimeter wall and fence. Clad in iron-spotted Roman brick set on a brownstone base, it features an ornate pressed-metal bay window on its second floor and a Flemish gable attic dormer above a bracketed cornice. The primary south elevation and its one-bay western return both feature brick quoins, keyed window surrounds, and pressed brick or terra cotta string courses, while the freestanding eastern side elevation is clad in common brick. Original corner turrets were removed in 1958.³ All windows are one-over-one double-hung wood sashes topped by segmental arched transoms on the lower floors and flat transoms in the attic dormers.

The annex occupies the side yard of the original St. Leonard's Academy parcel and was constructed by the school in 1896. John Sullivan was the contractor; the original architect (if any) is unknown.⁴

³ Building Permit #8409, Nov. 24, 1958.

⁴ "Real Estate News," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 28, 1896, p. 9.

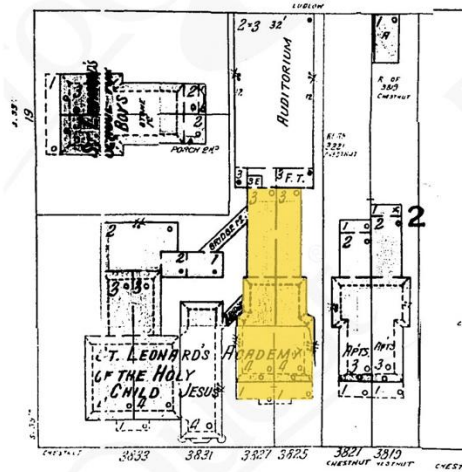


Figure 5: South (Chestnut Street) elevation of 3825-27 Chestnut Street

3825-27 Chestnut Street

A three-and-one-half-story random ashlar brownstone twin stands to the east of the 3833 addition, set back from Chestnut Street behind a short granite curb and wrought iron fence. Its south (Chestnut Street) facade measures a combined four bays across its upper floors and six bays across its ground floor, with the two central entryway bays covered by a one-story porch. An uncovered porch spans the full width of the building. The two entryways feature matching double-leaf wood and glass doors topped by segmental arch transoms; the full-heights ground-floor windows feature tall four-light lower sashes and two-light, segmental arched upper sashes. The upper-floor windows are two-over-two double-hung sashes. All masonry openings on the Chestnut Street facade are framed in elaborately-incised stone surrounds with segmental arched lintels. Stone belt courses span the facade at the impost-block level of the second and third floors, as well as the sill level of the third floor. A mansard roof and four round-arched, gable-roofed dormer windows sit atop a cornice supported by ornate bracketed columns.



Figure 6: East elevation of 3825-27 Chestnut Street

The west elevation faces a narrow breezeway and is minimally visible from the public right of way. The east elevation faces a surface parking lot and features a three-and-one-half story front and a three-story flat-roofed real ell. Both are clad in common-bond brick and feature a variety of window configurations, including rectangular casements and a tall round-arched window on the ground floor front, double-hung segmental-arched windows on the upper floor front, and two-over-two and six-over-six double-hung sashes on the real ell. Two chimneys and a dormer rise above the front cornice line.

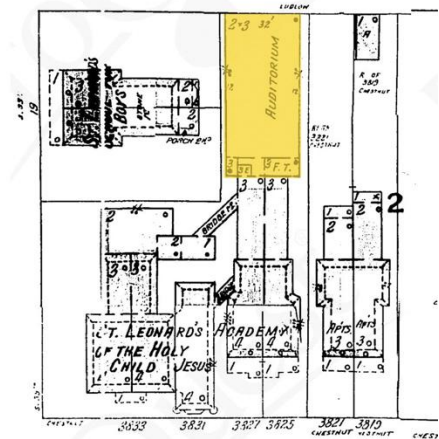
The building was constructed as twin residences c. 1875 and purchased by the Academy in 1905. The architect is unknown. After its purchase, it was connected via exterior passageways to both the original Academy building and annex.⁵ An ornate, full-width original porch was removed and replaced with the existing structure in 1956.⁶

⁵ Building Permit #134, Jan. 9, 1905.

⁶ Building Permit #7715, Aug. 20, 1956.



Figure 7: North and partial west elevations of the auditorium addition to 3825-27 Chestnut Street, viewed from Ludlow Street



3825-27 Chestnut Street Annex (Ludlow)

A three-story, flat-roofed rear addition to 3825-27 Chestnut Street extends to Ludlow Street. Industrial in character, its five-bay east and west elevations feature large factory-style windows separated by wide brick pilasters. The short north (Ludlow Street) elevation is clad in common bond brick and features a single punched window on the ground floor and three punched windows on the third floor. All windows appear to be replacement units; the large factory-style openings are currently glazed with four-light fixed panes. A four-story circulation tower rises at the south end of the annex adjacent to the rear ell of the Chestnut Street building, with a contemporary glass entrance at its base.

The annex was constructed by the Academy in 1923-24 to house an auditorium/gymnasium and dining hall. It was designed by architect William Webb Donohoe.⁷

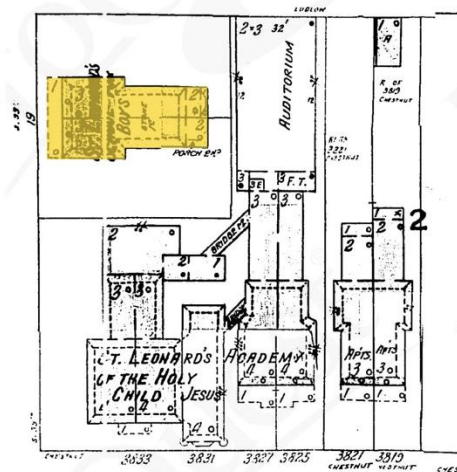


Figure 8: Contemporary entrance at west elevation.

⁷ Building Permit #13144, Nov. 14, 1923.



Figure 9: West (39th Street) elevation of 19-21 S. 39th Street



19-21 S. 39th Street

A two-and-one-half-story, mansard-roofed brownstone twin fronts 39th Street at the northwest corner of the property. The building measures a combined four bays across its second floor and six bays across its ground floor, which is covered by a full-width, hipped roof porch supported by paired doric columns. A lone double-leaf wood and glass doorway occupies the third bay (north to south). The building features random ashlar coursing and one-over-one, segmental arched windows on its 39th Street elevation. The original arched attic dormers have been modified with flat heads. A bracketed cornice wraps the building. Facing Ludlow Street, the building's north elevation features rubble-coursed brownstone on its two-story from massing and one-story rear ell. A second story over the ell is clad in brick and features a shingle-clad bay window now partially encased by later infill construction. The freestanding portion of the south elevation is rubble-coursed brownstone and features three multi-pane casement windows.

The building was constructed c.1868 as twin units on individual parcels and combined into a single residential unit in 1901.⁸ It was purchased by St. Leonard's Academy in 1926 for use as a boys' school.⁹

⁸ Deed Abstracts, Parcels 17-S09-03, 04

⁹ Van Allen, p. 85.



Figure 10: North (Ludlow Street) elevation of 19-21 S. 39th Street



Figure 11: West (39th Street) elevation of the parcel with infill addition at center.

1986 Infill Addition

A three-story infill addition occupies the former yard and interstitial spaces once separating the five historic structures on the property. Its primary two-bay elevation faces 39th Street and features a postmodern-scaled Flemish gable in a brownstone checkerboard pattern.

Constructed outside of the property's period of significance, it is not considered a contributing element of this nomination.

7) STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The former St. Leonard's Academy at 3819-31 Chestnut Street is a complex of historic structures constructed and/or annexed by the Society of the Holy Child Jesus between 1867 and 1924 for use as a Catholic convent and parochial school. The Society of the Holy Child Jesus was founded in 1846 in Derby, England by the notable Philadelphia native, Catholic convert, and English emigrant Mother Cornelia Connelly (1809-1879). Connelly personally selected the Chestnut Street property on a visit to her hometown in 1867, naming the new academy St. Leonard's after the Society's mother school in St. Leonard's-on-Sea, Sussex, England. The founding of St. Leonard's in Philadelphia followed the success of the Society's first American mission at Sharon in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, founded in 1864. Connelly is a significant figure in the history of the Catholic Church in the nineteenth century and was proclaimed "Venerable"-- a step towards possible beatification-- in 1992. The curriculum Connelly developed for her Holy Child Jesus missions, including St. Leonard's, represented significant innovations in educational philosophy, particularly for girls' education.¹⁰ The Academy's original building at the northeast corner of Chestnut and 39th Streets, as well as the adjacent residences it later annexed, also retain much of their original architectural character and reflect the development of West Philadelphia as a prestigious destination for affluent Philadelphians and ambitious institutions in the immediate post-Civil War period. The property therefore meets the following criteria for listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places as established in the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Ordinance §14-1004 (1):

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
- and*
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.



Figure 12: Undated rendering of St. Leonard's Academy. Reproduced from Rodger Van Allen, "Growing Up in Cornelia's School, Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia, Vol. 107, no. 1-2 (Spring-Summer 1996), p. 85.

¹⁰ Walton, Margaret. "Mother Connelly 1809-1879," *Notable Women of Pennsylvania*, Gertrude Bosler Biddle and Sarah Dickinson Lowrie, eds. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1942, p. 137.

Cornelia Connelly and the Society of the Holy Child Jesus

Cornelia Peacock was born into a wealthy Philadelphia family in 1809, the youngest of six children by Ralph Peacock and Mary Swope. Cornelia was orphaned at age fourteen after Ralph's death in 1818 and Mary's death in 1823; thereafter she was raised by a half-sister and educated by private tutors. Raised a Presbyterian, her path to becoming one of nineteenth-century England's most influential Catholic nuns was as unorthodox as it was at times agonizing.¹¹

In 1831 she fell in love with Pierce Connelly, an Episcopalian curate of St. James Church, Kingsessing and graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. Married over the protest of her Presbyterian family, the couple moved to Natchez, Mississippi, where Pierce had accepted the rectorship of a small Episcopal congregation. Two children soon followed, and Pierce began climbing the ranks on course towards a possible bishopric. But in 1835 Pierce abruptly resigned his post and announced his intentions to convert to Catholicism, in part spurred on by sympathies for Catholics then suffering from virulent waves of nativism. "I am proud to say that against all my prejudices and the horrors which I have nurtured for the catholic faith," Cornelia wrote to her sister in 1835, "I am ready at once to submit to whatever my loved husband believes to be the path of duty."¹²

The family relocated briefly to Europe before returning to a Jesuit college in Louisiana--Pierce teaching English and Cornelia teaching music at a nearby girls' academy. The family had also grown by two, though tragedy struck with the deaths of their fourth child in 1839 and third child in 1840. Still grieving and again pregnant with their fifth child, Cornelia's life was yet again upended when Pierce announced his intention to join the Catholic priesthood-- a move that demanded vows of chastity from both of them. In 1842, Pierce sold the family home and moved to Rome to begin his seminary studies, while Cornelia, who reluctantly agreed to a formal separation, followed with her three surviving children. She was given lodging in a convent and a position teaching English and music while



Figure 13: Cornelia Connelly, circa 1867. Cornelia Connelly Digital Library Resource, <http://corneliaconnellylibrary.org>

¹¹ Minor details of Connelly's biography vary between sources. The following summary has been adapted from the following: Therese, Marie. *Cornelia Connelly; A Study in Fidelity*. Westminster MD: Newman Press, 1963; *Cornelia Connelly: Founder, Society of the Holy Child Jesus; 1809-1879*. <https://www.shcj.org/our-story/cornelia-connelly/>; Addington, Catherine. "Path of Duty," *America: The Jesuit Review*, Nov. 13, 2017.

¹² Therese, p. 9.

Pierce pursued his ordination. Cornelia was then invited by Bishop Nicholas Wiseman to help open a new school and convent in Derby, England, but the conditions of the offer were severe: she would not be allowed personal contact with Pierce, and her children would be sent away to boarding school. Taking her calling to the Church to heart, she agreed and set about planning a new religious order-- the Society of the Holy Child Jesus-- devoted to "meeting the wants of the age."¹³

With only meagre resources provided by Bishop Wiseman, Cornelia's mission nevertheless thrived in Derby, a factory town with a swelling population of poor Irish Catholics displaced by the potato famine. Her school taught paying pupils in the day and gave free night classes and Sunday school instruction to factory girls. More than 200 students enrolled within her first year at Derby, during which Cornelia herself was still completing her novitiate studies. In 1847, she took her final vows of chastity and poverty to become "Mother Connelly, Superior of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus."¹⁴ The following year, the Society relocated to what would become its permanent home at St. Leonard's-on-Sea in Sussex.

Meanwhile, Pierce had grown disillusioned on his own priestly path and abruptly renounced his Catholic conversion a mere month after Cornelia's final vows. Appearing unannounced in Derby in 1848, Cornelia refused to see him or consider his pleas that she return to her former family life. An enraged Pierce ultimately sued in an attempt to reclaim "conjugal rights," and the case of "Connelly v. Connelly" quickly became a public sensation and an ersatz battle between Protestant and Catholic sympathies in the English press.¹⁵ Cornelia's legal right to separation was not ultimately affirmed until 1851, when an appeals court reversed an earlier decision that Cornelia be jailed for refusing her former husband's demands.

Throughout the ordeal, however, Connelly remained focused on her religious mission and her vision of a progressive education to "meet the wants of the age." Philosophy, geology, Greek and Latin were subjects rarely taught to girls at the time, but were all central to Connelly's emerging curriculum at St. Leonard's-on-Sea. Theater and dance replaced deportment and elocution, and an atmosphere of support and trust was cultivated over one of strict obedience and discipline.¹⁶ Her efforts eventually garnered the interest of another American expatriot, the wealthy widow Mary Anne Patterson, Duchess of Leeds, who donated an old family estate in rural Bradford County, Pennsylvania, for the Society to establish an American mission in 1862.

However well-intentioned, the donated land at Towanda proved extremely ill-suited; the two sisters and a priest sent by Connelly to establish the mission discovered "a small wooden building, falling into decay," and enveloped by overgrown gardens. After a valiant but ultimately fruitless year attempting to reclaim the land and establish a functional convent and school, Towanda was abandoned in favor of Philadelphia, where the Society was offered a building adjacent to the Church of the Assumption on Spring Garden Street.¹⁷ This proved a more auspicious home base for the fledgling mission, which soon established a night school for

¹³ *Cornelia Connelly, Founder* p. 21

¹⁴ *Therese*, p. 84.

¹⁵ *Therese*, p. 104.

¹⁶ Addington, Catherine. "Path of Duty," *America: The Jesuit Review*, Nov. 13, 2017.

¹⁷ *Therese*, p. 223.

factory girls modelled after the Society's first experiments in Derby. In May 1864 they converted the thirty-acre Sharon Estate, a former Quaker girls' school six miles west of Philadelphia, into a convent and school. And in 1867, their mission grew again with the purchase of a new brownstone at 39th and Chestnut Streets in West Philadelphia.¹⁸ This last property was personally selected by Connelly herself on a return visit to her hometown in the fall of 1867.

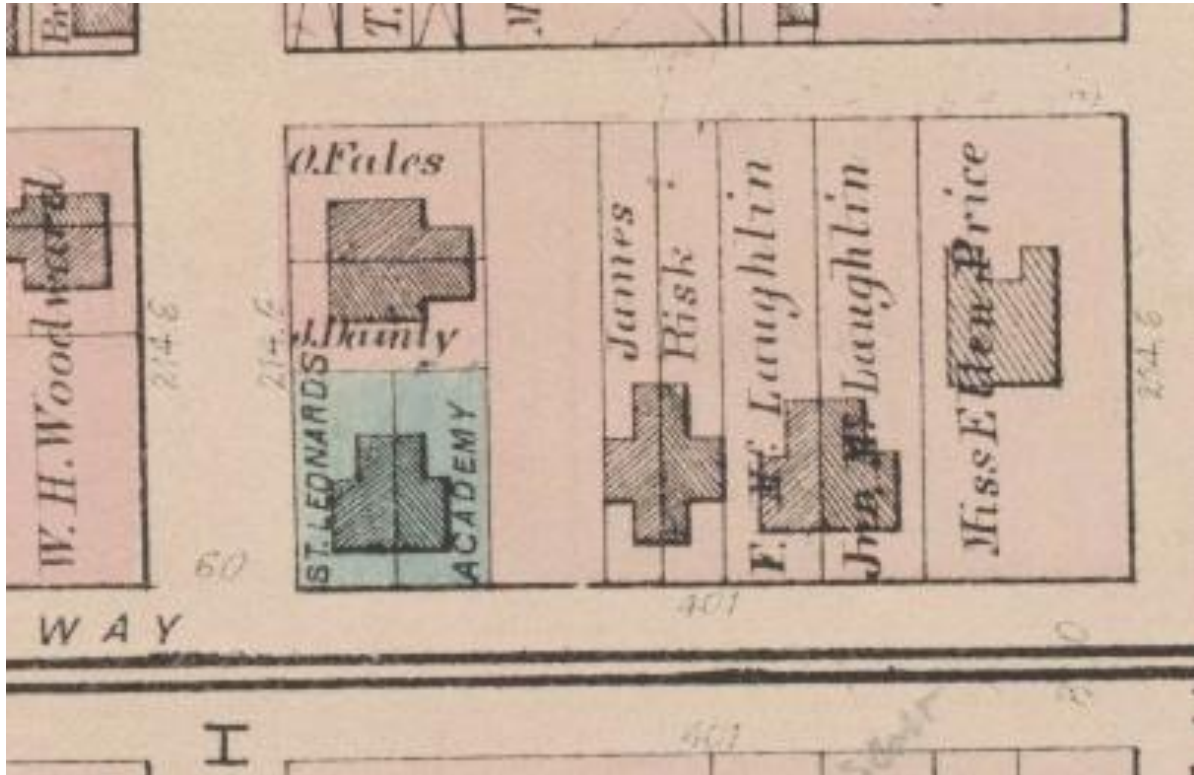


Figure 14: St. Leonard's Academy at 39th and Chestnut Streets in 1872. Note existing structures to the north and vacant lot to the east. City Atlas of Philadelphia, 24th and 27th Wards. G.M. Hopkins & Co, 1872, Plate D.

¹⁸ Deed Abstracts, Parcels 17-S09-01, 02

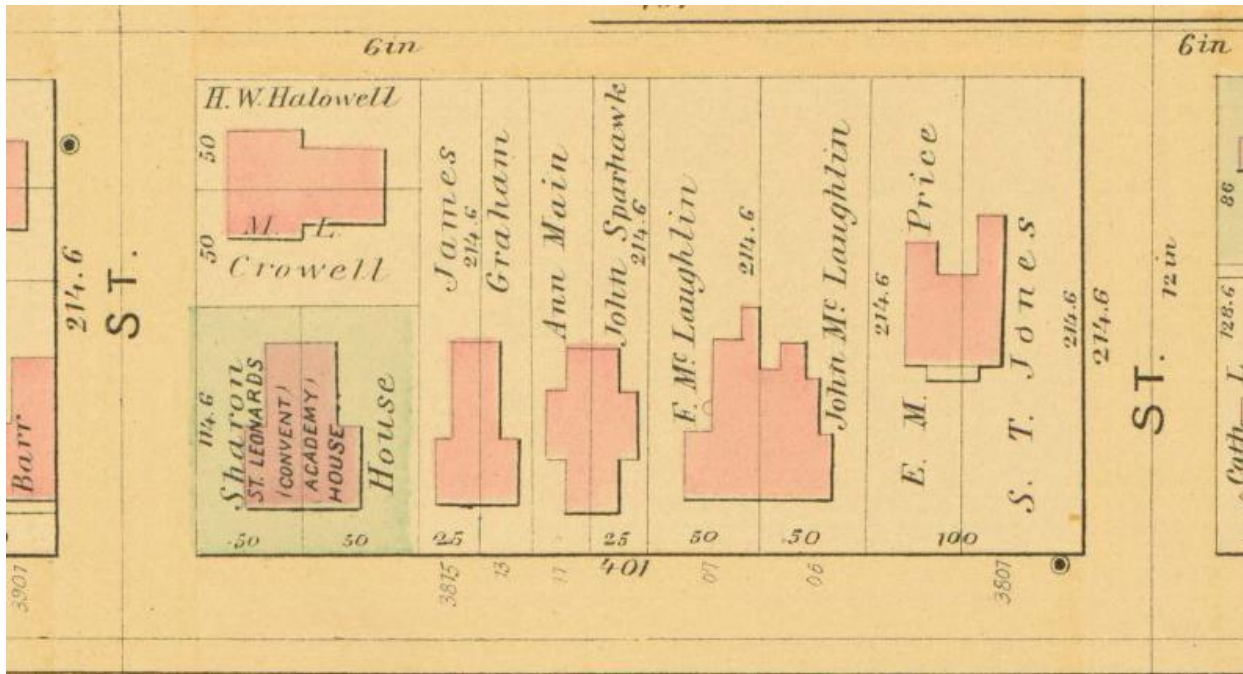


Figure 15: St. Leonard's Academy in 1886. Note construction at what is now 3825-27 Chestnut Street was previously numbered 3813-15 Chestnut. Atlas of West Philadelphia, 24th and 27th Wards, J.L. Smith, 1886, Plate 22.

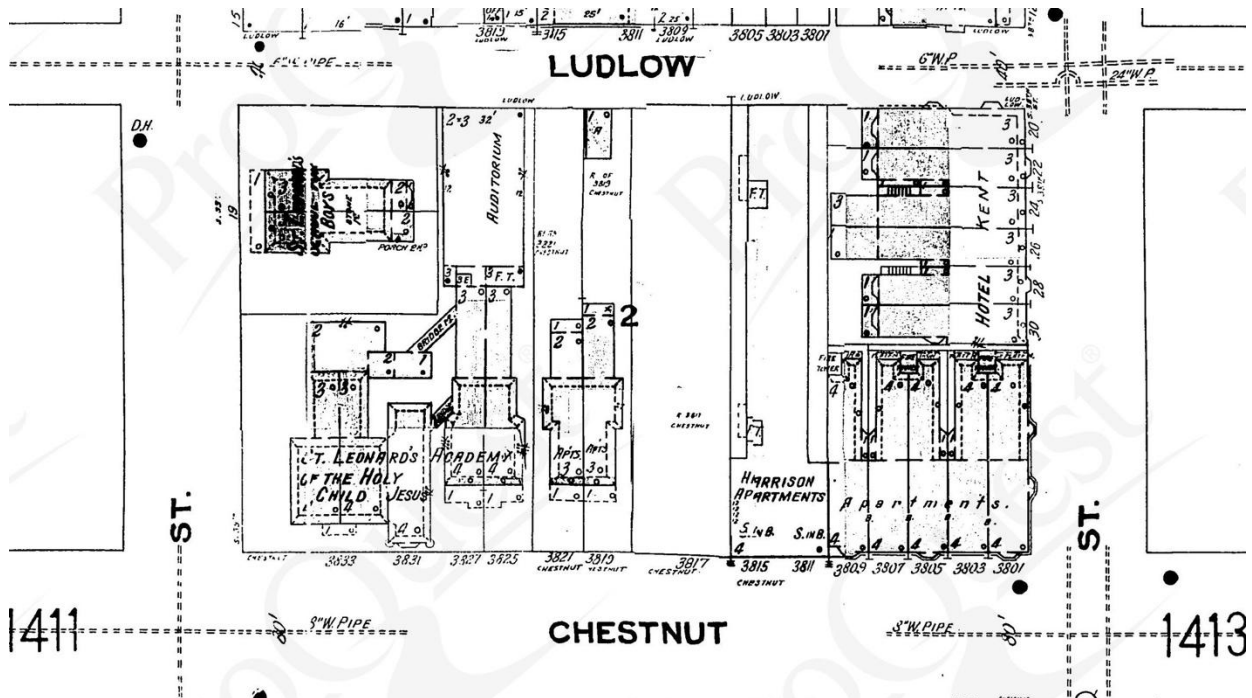


Figure 16: St. Leonard's Academy in 1951. Note annexation and addition at 3825-27 Chestnut Street. Philadelphia Sanborn Atlas Vol. 15, 1951.

Named after the Society's mother school in Sussex, St. Leonard's Academy opened in Philadelphia on January 20, 1868. Under construction at the time of its purchase, the new building was adapted to house a convent, chapel, and school. Mother Mary Xavier, one of the original Towanda missionaries, was appointed the convent's superior and the vicarress of the Society's American mission, whose headquarters moved from Sharon to St. Leonard's. The private day school opened with a class of forty girls and a curriculum closely following Connelly's progressive educational philosophies. By 1880, the convent was home to 15 sisters, 11 of whom were teachers in the day school.¹⁹ By 1893, the school had outgrown its original brownstone and added a three-story classroom annex; the 1900 census records 31 sisters living on the property.²⁰ In 1905 the school expanded again into the neighboring c. 1875 brownstone on Chestnut Street, to which a large gymnasium and cafeteria addition was added in 1924. In 1926 a neighboring brownstone on 39th Street was purchased and converted into a boys' school.

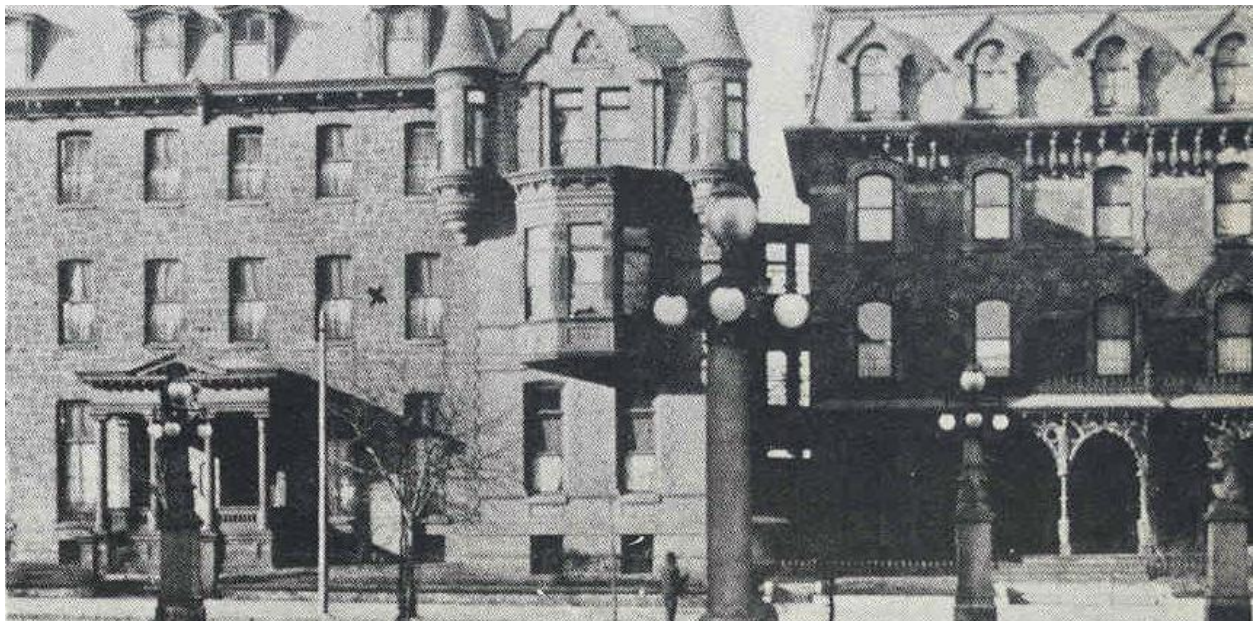


Figure 17: Figure 18: St. Leonard's Academy campus as seen from Chestnut Street, c. 1905. Original building at left, annex at center, and 3825-27 Chestnut Street at right. Cornelia Connelly Digital Library Resource, <http://corneliaconnollylibrary.org>

Residential Chestnut Street

As the Academy campus expanded into the twentieth century, it incorporated and preserved a small slice of a Chestnut Street corridor once lined with large and generously-spaced homes constructed in the first decades after the Civil War. Like the Academy's original corner property, the two buildings it annexed were both stately brownstone twins with covered porches, mansard roofs and bracketed cornices, with random ashlar and rubble-coursed facades embodying a tempered rusticism then fashionable across much of Philadelphia's developing periphery.

¹⁹ *Tenth Census of the United States*, Philadelphia Enumeration District 571, 1880

²⁰ *Twelfth Census of the United States*, Philadelphia Enumeration District 654, 1900

The property at 19-21 S. 39th Street was likely constructed around the same time as the Academy; deeds first record a structure occupying the two plots of land sold by Joseph Paxson to John Dainty (21 S. 39th) and Oliver Fales (19 S. 39th) in August 1868. The two plots were owned separately until 1901; the 1880 census lists physician Elisha Crowell as the owner of 21 S. 39th, occupying the property with his wife, mother, sister, three daughters, two sons, a niece and a servant. Next door, Philadelphia Board of Education Secretary Henry Halliwell lived with his wife, son, and two servants. In 1901 both halves of the twin were purchased by Francis E. Kelly and combined into a single-family residence, which it remained until being acquired by St. Leonard's in 1926.²¹



Figure 19: 19-21 S. 39th Street, date unknown. Reproduced from Rodger Van Allen, "Growing Up in Cornelia's School, p. 86.

The property at 3825-27 Chestnut Street²² was likely built a few years after its neighbors, based both on its ownership history and physical appearance. The building's ornately incised window hoods and bracketed colonnade cornice are more typical of later Victorian eclecticism, though its random ashlar facade and mansard-roofed massing echo the basic forms of its neighbors. Its exact construction date and architect are unknown; both parcels were sold by Richard Stotesbury to wholesale grocer James Graham in 1877, who is recorded in the 1880 census as residing at 3827 Chestnut Street with his sister, four adult daughters, a boarder and three servants. Next door, 3825 Chestnut was occupied by former U.S. Senator and lawyer John Scott and his wife, five daughters, four sons, and two servants. St. Leonard's acquired both properties from the Graham Estate in 1905.²³

Connelly's Legacy

Cornelia Connelly died in 1879 at the age of 70 in St. Leonard's-on-Sea, Sussex. Her Society of the Holy Child Jesus still operates schools across the United States, Great Britain, Ireland, France, Ghana, and Nigeria, as well as Rosemont College in Rosemont, PA. At the time of its eventual closure in 1981, St. Leonard's Academy was the longest-operating Holy Child Jesus mission school and one of the oldest Catholic schools in Philadelphia. By virtue of its close association with Connelly and her highly significant educational mission (Criterion A), its architectural character as an intact collection of stately nineteenth-century brownstones reflecting the environment of post-Civil War West Philadelphia (Criterion C), and its long history as a noteworthy civic institution in the community (Criterion J), the property at 3819-31 Chestnut Street merits listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

²¹ Deed Abstracts, Parcels 17-S09-03, 04

²² The 1880 census and J.L. Smith's 1886 *West Philadelphia Atlas* list the address of these properties as 3813-17 Chestnut. Later atlases and deed abstracts make clear that the parcels were subsequently renumbered 3825-27.

²³ Deed Abstracts, Parcels 17-S09-05, 19, 20.

8) BIBLIOGRAPHY

Addington, Catherine. "Path of Duty," *America: The Jesuit Review*, Nov. 13, 2017

Atlas of West Philadelphia, 24th and 27th Wards, J.L. Smith, 1886, Plate 22.

Building Permit #134, Jan. 9, 1905.

Building Permit #13144, Nov. 14, 1923.

Building Permit #7715, Aug. 20, 1956.

Building Permit #8409, Nov. 24, 1958.

City Atlas of Philadelphia, 24th and 27th Wards. G.M. Hopkins & Co, 1872, Plate D.

Cornelia Connelly Digital Library, <http://corneliaconnellylibrary.org>

Cornelia Connelly: Founder, Society of the Holy Child Jesus; 1809-1879.

<https://www.shcj.org/our-story/cornelia-connelly/>

Deed Abstracts, Parcels 17-S09-01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 19, 20: Philadelphia City Archives

"Real Estate News," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 28, 1896, p. 9.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Atlas, Philadelphia Vol. 15, 1951

Therese, Marie. *Cornelia Connelly; A Study in Fidelity*. Westminster MD: Newman Press, 1963

Tenth Census of the United States, Philadelphia Enumeration District 571, 1880

Twelfth Census of the United States, Philadelphia Enumeration District 654, 1900

Van Allen, Rodger. "Growing Up in Cornelia's School: St. Leonard's Academy, Philadelphia." *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, Vol. 107, no. 1-2 (Spring-Summer 1996), p. 84.

Walton, Margaret. "Mother Connelly 1809-1879," *Notable Women of Pennsylvania*, Gertrude Bosler Biddle and Sarah Dickinson Lowrie, eds. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1942

Zoning Permit #76105, July 6, 1959.