

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH, 1227 Pacific Street, Borough of Brooklyn.
Completed 1890; architect George P. Chappell.

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1200, Lot 16.

On September 25, 1973, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of St. Bartholomew's Church and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 1). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. No speakers appeared to testify at this hearing. Since the hearing the Rector and Vestry of St. Bartholomew's Church have indicated their support of the proposed designation of their building.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

St. Bartholomew's Church, in the vicinity of Grant's Square in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, was completed in 1890 and designed by Brooklyn architect George P. Chappell. It is a strikingly picturesque Romanesque Revival building, one of the finest in New York City. Chappell also designed the Romanesque Revival Tompkins Avenue Congregational Church of 1889 in the Bedford area of Brooklyn and several fine Romanesque Revival houses in Park Slope during the same period.

St. Bartholomew's Church was originally established by St. Luke's Church as a chapel in 1881. St. Luke's Church (now the Church of St. Luke and St. Matthew) is located nearby at 510-521 Clinton Avenue in the Clinton Hill area.

The congregation began meeting in the former Bedford Congregational Church building, that stood on the present site, which St. Luke's purchased in 1884. Work on the main portion of the present building was completed in 1886. The chapel was incorporated as St. Bartholomew's Church on March 22, 1887, and admitted into the Protestant Episcopal Convention in the same month.

In May 1887, St. Luke's Church sold the "land, buildings thereon, fixtures, furniture and personal property connected therewith" to St. Bartholomew's under the terms of a covenant which prohibited the selling or renting of the pews as they felt that the church should be free to all worshipers. St. Luke's had established a free pew system in 1869, and they were anxious to have this system continued by their "daughter" church; however, St. Bartholomew's experiment with free pews apparently was not successful, for they had the covenant revoked by an agreement with St. Luke's in 1892.

The church building was formally consecrated on December 3, 1911. The nearby Romanesque Revival rectory also appears to be a Chappell design and probably dates from about the time the church was built. The neo-Gothic parish house at 1229 Pacific Street was built in 1921 by the architectural firm of Montrose Morris Sons.

Located on the north side of Pacific Street, St. Bartholomew's Church is set back from the rest of the street in a yard enclosed by a low fence with wrought-iron gates. The church, with rough-faced red granite base and red brick above, has a variety of effectively arranged picturesque elements on the Pacific Street facade: A wide gable contains a large round-arched stained glass window. At the west corner of this gable section is a one-story semi-circular projection with a semi-conical roof, while a massive square tower with battered brick walls, a belfry, and low convex, tile roof rises from the east corner of the gable section. From each side of this facade a porch projects. The east porch is quite long and shelters the main entrance to the church. Vertical wood posts supporting a tile roof are set on a rubble masonry base. The west porch is smaller but of similar construction.

The nave, extending back from the main front gable, has a clerestory with stained glass windows rising above the sloping roofs of the buttressed side aisles. The nave terminates in two projecting gable-roofed end sections--added in 1890 by Chappell to contain a chancel and vestry--set at right angles to it. Each of these sections has its own peaked roof and each gable has a large round-arched window like that of the front gable.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

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

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, St. Bartholomew's is a strikingly picturesque Romanesque Revival church, that among its outstanding architectural features are its porches, windows and a belfry tower, that the elements were skillfully handled by the architect George Chappell to create a charmingly sited and picturesque building, and that the church building is an outstanding building in the Grant Square neighborhood.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 63 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark St. Bartholomew's Church, 1227 Pacific Street, Borough of Brooklyn and designates Tax Map Block 1200, Lot 16, Borough of Brooklyn, as its Landmark Site.