

201 North Murkland Street
(The Ella & Emil Keller House)
City of Pittsburgh
Historic Landmark Nomination

Prepared by Preservation Pittsburgh



412.256.8755
1501 Reedsdale St., Suite 5003
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
www.preservationpgh.org

May 2023



HISTORIC NOMINATION FORM

Historic Preservation Staff Signature:

Fee Schedule

Individual Landmark Nomination:

\$100.00

District Nomination:

To be determined

**Nomination is incomplete without historic preservation staff signature

1. HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY: The Emil and Ella Keller House
2. CURRENT NAME OF PROPERTY: The Dr. David Fisher House

3. LOCATION

- a. Street: 201 N. Murtland Street
b. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, PA 15208
c. Neighborhood: Point Breeze North / 14th Ward

4. OWNERSHIP

- d. Owner(s): Dr. David A. Fisher
e. Street: 201 N. Murtland Street
f. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, PA 15208
g. Phone: (412) 512-5102

5. CLASSIFICATION AND USE – Check all that apply

Type

- Structure
 District
 Site
 Object

Ownership

- Private – home
 Private – other
 Public – government
 Public - other
 Place of religious worship

Current Use:

Single-family residence

6. NOMINATED BY:

- a. Name: Matthew W. C. Falcone & Dr. David A. Fisher
- b. Street: 1501 Reedsdale Street, Suite 5003
- c. City, State, Zip: Pittsburgh, PA 15233
- d. Phone: (412) 256-8755 Email: mfalcone@preservationpgh.org

7. DESCRIPTION

Provide a narrative description of the structure, district, site, or object. If it has been altered over time, indicate the date(s) and nature of the alteration(s). (Attach additional pages as needed)

If Known:

- a. Year Built: Completed in 1905
- b. Architectural Style: Prairie and Neoclassical
- c. Architect/Builder: Designed by Emil and Ella Keller; constructed by B.F. Lee Company

Narrative: See attached.

8. HISTORY

Provide a history of the structure, district, site, or object. Include a bibliography of sources consulted. (Attach additional pages as needed.) Include copies of relevant source materials with the nomination form (see Number 11).

Narrative: See attached.

9. SIGNIFICANCE

The *Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances, Title 11, Historic Preservation, Chapter 1: Historic Structures, Districts, Sites and Objects* lists ten criteria, at least one of which must be met for Historic Designation. Describe how the structure, district, site, or object meets one or more of these criteria and complete a narrative discussing in detail each area of significance. (Attach additional pages as needed)

The structure, building, site, district, object is significant because of (check all that apply):

- 1. Its location as a site of a significant historic or prehistoric event or activity;
- 2. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
- 3. Its exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship;
- 4. 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 Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
- 5. Its exemplification of important planning and urban design techniques distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design or detail;

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6. Its location as a site of an important archaeological resource;
 7. Its association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
 8. Its exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinction;
 9. Its representation of a cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related theme expressed through distinctive areas, properties, sites, structures, or objects that may or may not be contiguous; or
 10. Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh.

Narrative: See attached.

10. INTEGRITY

In addition, the ordinance specifies that “Any area, property, site, structure or object that meets any one or more of the criteria listed above shall also have sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation or restoration”. (Attach additional pages as needed)

Narrative: See attached.

11. NOTIFICATION/CONSENT OF PROPERTY OWNER(S)

1.3(a)(2) Community information process.

Preceding submission of a nomination form for a District, the Historic Review Commission shall conduct at least one (1) public information meeting within or near the boundaries of the proposed district, which shall include at least one (1) member of the Department of City Planning and one (1) Commission member, to discuss the possible effects of designation. Notice shall be given to the owners of property in the proposed district in accordance with Section 1.3(b) below. The final public information meeting shall be held no more than six months before the nomination form is submitted.

1.3(a)(1)(a) Subsection F.

In the case of a nomination as a Historic District, by community-based organizations or by any individual, but in either event the nomination shall be accompanied by a petition signed by the owners of record of twenty-five (25) percent of the properties within the boundaries of the proposed District.

- Please attach documentation of your efforts to gain property owner’s consent.-

** The nomination of any religious property shall be accompanied by a signed letter of consent from the property’s owner.

12. PHOTO LOGS: *Please Attach*

13. BIBLIOGRAPHY: *Please Attach*

14. NOMINATION FORM PREPARED BY:

a. Name: Jeff Slack, AICP, Principal, Time & Place, LLC (with research assistance from Cara Halderman)

b. Street: 1651 Beechwood Boulevard

c. City, State, Zip: Pittsburgh, PA 15217

d. Phone: (412) 802-5406 Email: j_h_slack@yahoo.com

e. Signature: _____



HISTORIC NOMINATION – INSTRUCTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING OUT THE NOMINATION FORM

1. Indicate the original name of the property if it is currently known by a different name; e.g. Union Station.
2. Indicate the current name of the property
3. Indicate the street address for the property. For districts, attach a separate sheet listing the street address of each property included in the nomination and a clear street map of the area showing the boundaries of the proposed district.
4. Indicate the owner of the property and his or her mailing address. For districts, attach a separate sheet listing the owner of each property and his or her mailing address.
5. Check the classification as indicated.
 - a. **“Historic Structure”** means anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires directly or indirectly, a permanent location on the land, including walks, fences, signs, steps and sidewalks at which events that made a significant contribution to national, state or local history occurred or which involved a close association with the lives of people of nations, state or local significance; or an outstanding example of a period, style, architectural movement, or method of construction; or one of the last surviving works of a pioneer architect, builder or designer; or one of the last survivors of a particular style or period of construction.
 - b. **“Historic District”** means a defined territorial division of land which shall include more than one (1) contiguous or related parcels of property, specifically identified by separate resolution, at which events occurred that made a significant contribution to national, state, or local history, or which contains more than one historic structure or historic landmarks, or which contains groups, rows or sets of structures or landmarks, or which contains an aggregate example of a period, style, architectural movements or method of construction, providing distinguishing characteristics of the architectural type or architectural period it represents.
 - c. **“Historic Site”** means the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure whether standing, ruined or vanished, where the location itself maintains historical or archaeological value regardless of the value of any existing structures.
 - d. **“Historic Object”** means a material thing of historic significance for functional, aesthetic cultural or scientific reasons that may be, by nature or design, moveable yet related to a specific setting or environment.
6. Indicate the person(s) responsible for the nomination. Please note: According to the Historic Preservation Ordinance:

“Nomination of an area, property, site, or object for consideration and designation as a Historic Structure, Historic District, Historic Site, or Historic Object may be submitted to the Historic Review Commission by any of the following:

- a. The Mayor of the City of Pittsburgh
 - b. A Member of the Historic Review Commission
 - c. A Member of the City Planning Commission
 - d. A Member of the Pittsburgh City Council
 - e. The Owner of Record or any person residing in the City of Pittsburgh for at least one year (for the nomination of a Historic Structure, Site or Object)
 - f. A signed petition of 25% of the owners of record (for the nomination of a Historic District)
7. Write a physical description of the nominated property or district. Include the following information as applicable:
- architectural style(s)
 - arrangement of architectural elements
 - building materials
 - method(s) of construction
 - visual character
 - street pattern
 - density
 - type and arrangement of buildings
 - topography
 - history of the development of the area
8. Provide a narrative history of the structure, district, site, or object. Include the following information when available:
- History of the development of the area;
 - Circumstances which brought the structure, district, site, or object into being;
 - Biographical information on architects, builders, developers, artisans, planners, or others who created or contributed to the structure, district, site, or object;
 - Contextual background on building type(s) and/or style(s);
 - Importance of the structure, district, site, or object in the larger community over the course of its existence.
 - Include a bibliography of all sources consulted at the end. Where historical information is uncertain or disputed, reference sources in the text.
9. Listed below are the categories and criteria for historic designation as set forth in the Pittsburgh Historic Preservation Ordinance. Describe in detail how the structure, district, site, or object meets one or more of the criteria. According to that legislation in Section 1.4 of the Pittsburgh Historic Preservation Ordinance, *Criteria for Designation*, a building must meet at least one of the following criteria in order to be designated:
1. Its location as a site of a significant historic or prehistoric event or activity;
 2. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
 3. Its exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship;
 4. 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 Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;

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5. Its exemplification of important planning and urban design techniques distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design or detail;
 6. Its location as a site of an important archaeological resource;
 7. Its association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
 8. Its exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinction;
 9. Its representation of a cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related theme expressed through distinctive areas, properties, sites, structures, or objects that may or may not be contiguous; or
 10. Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh.
- 10.** In addition, the ordinance specifies that “Any area, property, site, structure or object that meets any one or more of the criteria listed above shall also have sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation or restoration.”
- 11.** The nomination must be accompanied by evidence that the nominator has made a good-faith effort to communicate his or her interest in the historic designation of this landmark or district to the owner(s) of these properties. Describe how this was done, and attach evidence that the owner(s) of the nominated landmark or of the properties within the nominated district have been informed of the nomination. This may include a copy of a notification letter with a mailing list, a letter confirming phone calls, or a petition signed by affected property owners.
- 12.** Clear photographs of the nominated buildings or districts should accompany the nomination form. The applicant shall include photographs of all elevations of an individual building and its setting, or the front elevation of each building in a district. In the case of closely spaced buildings or rowhouses, several buildings may be included in one photograph. Each photograph must be labeled with the street address of the building(s) and the month and year the photograph was taken.
- 13.** Copies of major supporting documents should accompany the nomination form. Such documents may include, but are not limited to:
- historic photographs;
 - historic and contemporary maps;
 - historic or contemporary texts describing the subject property or district;
 - historic or contemporary texts describing people, places, or events that comprise the historic context of the subject property or district.
 - Oversized materials (such as architectural drawings) and materials too fragile to copy may be accepted.

PLEASE NOTE: It is the responsibility of the nominator to provide the Historic Review Commission and its Staff with information sufficient to fairly evaluate the nomination. **Incomplete nomination forms will not be accepted. Fee must be included. Nominations must be submitted in both electronic and hard-copy format.**

CHECKLIST: *INSERT NAME OF PROPERTY HERE*

- #1-6 Nomination Form:** Address, Ownership, Classification, Nominator Info.
- #7: Description
- #8: History
- #9: Significance
- #10 Integrity**
- #11 Consent of Property Owners**
- #12 Photographs of Property:** numbered and labeled
- #13 List of Supporting Documents**

- Fee**
- Hard-Copy nomination**
- Electronic nomination (Word Format for text).**

Nomination form is incomplete without the signature of Historic Preservation Staff.

Please email HistoricReview@pittsburghpa.gov to schedule a meeting.

201 North Murtland Street—Addenda

Overview

201 North Murtland Street is a skillfully designed, eclectic Pittsburgh house, clad in gray Roman brick that successfully blends Prairie-style form with Neoclassical decorative elements. It is significant for this architectural combination and for its association with original owners, Emil Ernest Keller and Ella (Miller) Keller, and fourth owners John Evon Nelson and Margaret (Dodds) Nelson.

The Kellers are credited with the 1904 design of the house, working in conjunction with contractor B. F. Lee Company of Wilkinsburg and Braddock, Pennsylvania. The house was completed in the spring of 1905. Emil Keller, a mechanical and electrical engineer, served at the time as vice president and general manager of the Westinghouse Machine Company, which employed 5,000 workers at its plant in East Pittsburg in the Turtle Creek Valley. Keller had previously gained considerable notoriety for successfully managing the installation of all electrical lighting at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 under the contract awarded to George Westinghouse.

The Nelsons made important contributions to Pittsburgh during the first half of the twentieth century in the areas of business, philanthropy, religion and culture. Of particular note was John E. Nelson's four-decade career with Gulf Oil, which began shortly after the company was founded.

7. Description

Provide a narrative description of the structure, district, site, or object. If it has been altered over time, indicate the date(s) and nature of the alteration(s).

A note on compass directions: Since the street grid in Point Breeze North is not aligned with the points on a compass, this document establishes a "Plan North" to simplify descriptions. This designation allows the top of the page/screen to be considered north, with North Murtland Street considered to be running north-south and Meade Street to be running east-west. The site plan in Figure 5 reflects this "plan north" orientation and also shows "true north" in the compass rose at the lower left.

Setting

201 North Murtland is located on the northwest corner of North Murtland and Meade Streets in the Point Breeze North neighborhood in Pittsburgh's East End (Figures 1-2). The neighborhood is residential, consisting primarily of single-family homes and some small multi-family buildings. To the west and north of the property, most of the housing stock dates to the first quarter of the twentieth century (Photos 1 and 2). Many are large, two-and-one-half-story examples of the Colonial Revival style along with other styles in vogue at the time. To the east and south, most of the housing stock dates to the second quarter of the twentieth century, as large estate homes were demolished and the properties subsequently subdivided and developed (e.g., "Solitude," Mr. and Mrs. George Westinghouse II, to the northeast; "Greenlawn," Mr. and Mrs. Henry J. Heinz, across Murtland to the east; and Ebonhurst, Mr. and Mrs. David Pollock Black, across Meade to the south; Figure 3).

The neighborhood around 201 North Murtland Street contains a large number of mature street trees that create a dense canopy during the months when the trees are in leaf (Figure 4; Photos 1 and 2). Point

Breeze North is noted for having over 14 percent of the neighborhood covered by the foliage of street trees (the sixth-highest neighborhood ranking in the city).¹

The Yard, Garden, and Surrounds

The house occupies the center of Allegheny County Tax Parcel 126-C-122, the boundaries of which represent the boundaries for this nomination (see Site Plan, Figure 5). The parcel is bounded on the east by North Murkland Street, on the south by Meade Street, on the west by the property at 6947 Meade Street, and on the north by Lark Way. The property is roughly rectangular, measuring just over 135 feet along North Murkland and 150 feet along Meade and comprising nearly one-half acre (see Site Plan for exact measurements from the deed description). Historically, the Keller House property is designated as Lots 64, 65 and 66 in the Westinghouse Park Plan of Lots of 1901.

Concrete sidewalks with grass road verges, or planting strips, mark the edges of the lot along both Murkland and Meade Streets. The lot slopes from south to north; decreasing in elevation from Meade Street to Lark Way. Wide lawns provide a buffer around the house on all four sides. To the north, a driveway with access from both Murkland Street and Lark Way leads under a porte cochere and provides access to an integral garage in the northwest corner of the basement. The driveway is constructed of cast concrete stamped with a field of decorative 4-inch squares.

The front yard, which is largely bounded by privet-type hedges, is bisected by a wide concrete sidewalk with concrete curbs (Photos 3 and 4). It contains two sets of concrete stairs, one at the public sidewalk and a second that leads to the front porch and an adjacent L-shaped terrace to the south. Set just inside the front hedges, parallel to North Murkland, are four very large street trees (three sycamores and one oak, which are believed to date from when the house was constructed).

The side yard to the south (Photo 5), which slopes slightly from east to west, is partially enclosed on its east side by a late-twentieth century black aluminum fence that terminates at the southeast corner of the terrace. It is fully enclosed by the same fencing on its south side, where a gate provides access from Meade Street. In the late twentieth century, an opening was cut in the brick wall on the south side of the terrace to facilitate access to the side yard. In the process, a window to the basement beneath the terrace was infilled and a black wrought iron gate and two concrete steps were added (Photos 6, 14 and 20). Further delineating the front and side yards is a series of evergreen arborvitae on the east side of the fence, which continue along the east side of the terrace. The same species are found on the inside of the southern section of fence for its full run along Meade. A variety of deciduous shrubs are located near the foundation on the south side of the house.

The back yard, which continues uninterrupted from the side yard, is enclosed on its west side by a chain link fence and the east wall of the red brick garage of 6947 Meade Street. It is bounded on its north side by a wall of buff brick laid upon a poured concrete footer with stone coping. Spanning the west edge of the back yard are additional mature shade trees and in the northwest corner are remnants of a sunken garden defined by low walls and steps of tufa stone and containing the remnants of a fountain (Photos 7 and 8).² Further research would be needed to establish the date of the garden, which likely evolved at the hands of multiple owners, with Emil Keller as its probable progenitor. Keller arguably had the design skills and horticultural knowledge, having grown up in his father John B. Keller's extensive

¹ City of Pittsburgh, Department of Public Works, Forestry Division; Pittsburgh Shade Tree Commission; and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, "Pittsburgh i-Tree Ecosystem Analysis, prepared by Davey Resource Group, a division of the Davey Tree Expert Company, 2018, Table 6, p. 13.

² David A. Fisher, property owner, interview by author, 26 January 2023, Pittsburgh.

florist/greenhouse business in Rochester, New York.³ The elder Keller was “a botanist and horticulturist and wrote much of the herbaceous section of *Bailey’s Cyclopaedia of Horticulture*.”⁴ Emil Keller’s gardens at his subsequent home in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan have also been noted, with the authors of two articles observing his devotion to “the culture of flowers and fine trees.”⁵ Additionally, it is known that he was a careful observer of the Japanese Tea Garden at the 1893 World’s Fair, having captured an image that won a special prize at the first international salon and exhibition of the Pittsburgh Amateur Photographers’ Society in 1898.⁶ Lastly, solidifying the argument that the origins of the garden likely rest with Keller is the fact that a James Heard is listed in the 1907 Pittsburgh city directory as a live-in gardener for the Kellers.⁷ Fourth-owners Margaret and John Nelson are known to have shared a similar passion. In 1931, a newspaper article reported that Margaret Nelson “loves gardening, and has a lovely rock garden on the grounds of her North Murtland Avenue home.”⁸ Granddaughter Sheila Nelson Hourihan, recounted that her grandfather “was an absolutely wonderful man who loved to garden.”⁹ Historic photographs show that the backyard once contained a collection of custom-built, painted wood elements, including a trellis, arbor, gate, and sections of lattice and fencing, some of which survived until at least May 1980 (Figures 6-8).

Form, Massing, Materials and Construction

201 North Murtland is a two-story, three-bay wide house with rectangular massing, with the main block of the house measuring approximately 50-foot square in plan. It is clad on all four sides in gray Roman brick laid in a running bond that rests upon a foundation of smooth-tooled coursed ashlar, with terra cotta and carved limestone accents. The house projects a sense of horizontality, in part from its a low-pitched, pyramidal hipped roof of faded green Spanish- or Mission-style tile and wide, overhanging, boxed eaves. After more than a century, the green glaze has faded from the tiles and they now appear largely as terracotta in color. They are believed to be original based on physical inspection and their mention in a 1905 newspaper description of the house.¹⁰ The house’s location at the center of the sloped site results in a partially exposed basement on the north end of the front façade and on the rear façade, and a fully exposed basement on the north façade. Roughly centered on each façade is an original projecting wing (i.e., open brick porch on the front, enclosed brick sun parlor on the south, open wood-framed porch on the rear, and brick porte cochere on the north). Like the main roof, all are covered by low-pitched hipped roofs of faded green tile.

Structurally, the house rests on a stone foundation of random rubble that is dressed, as noted, with smooth-tooled coursed ashlar where visible on the exterior. Brick bearing walls divide basement spaces; floors throughout the house are framed in wood. The floor decks of the terrace, front porch and sun parlor are comprised of cast concrete with embedded steel beams. Beneath them are full-height extensions of the main basement space. A steel beam is also visible in the garage ceiling (with steel specified rather than wood for fire-resistance). A sale notice placed by the Kellers in 1912 touts the

³ “John B. Keller,” obituary, *The Florists’ Review*, 20 (April 1922): 39. The florist business had the eponymous name “John B. Keller, Florist.”

⁴ “Keller, Emil Ernest,” entry, in *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White & Company, 1934), vol. D, 406.

⁵ “Our Own—Who’s Who—and Why? Emil Ernest Keller, Director, Detroit Motorbus Co.,” *Motor Bus News* 5, no. 7 (March 1931): 5; “E. E. Keller Dies at 74 in Detroit,” obituary, newspaper clipping in Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County, Historic Scrapbooks Collection.

⁶ “Photographic Art: The First Annual Salon and Exhibition Opened,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 19 January 1898, 1.

⁷ Pittsburgh City Directory, 1907.

⁸ Anne Ryan Lesh, “New College Club Fund Directed by Mrs. Nelson; Family’s Life Centers About Two Grand Pianos in Music Room; Philanthropies Share Her Time,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 28 March 1931, 13.

⁹ Sheila Nelson Hourihan, email to author, 1 April 2023.

¹⁰ “Society,” *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, 7 May 1905, 26.

“brick and steel construction.”¹¹ Stylistically, the house is executed in a mix of the Prairie and Neoclassical styles (see more below under Criterion 3).

Front/East Facade

The front façade, facing Murtland Street, is symmetrical, two stories high and three bays wide (Photos 9 and 10). It is dominated by a wide, projecting front porch that is reached by eight concrete steps with flanking piers/cheek walls of gray Roman brick with cut limestone bases and Classically-derived terracotta caps. The porch roof is supported by two similar, full-height, square piers of gray Roman brick, though these contain much more ornate, Classically-derived terracotta capitals with tall, unadorned architraves capped by an egg-and-dart bed moulding with a cornice of Greek fret moulding above (Photo 11). Atop the piers span wide, painted wooden box beams that are decorated on their outboard surfaces by cornices of carved, wood, egg-and-dart moulding. The ceiling of the porch consists of 4-inch wide painted boards (Photo 12). They were installed c. 2000 to remediate water damage. A shadow suggests that a decorative crown moulding (likely of matching egg-and-dart) was removed at that time. Where the box beams engage the brick of the front façade, there are paired, decorative terracotta corbels (Photo 12). Decorating the cornice/fascia above the box beams is a large band of Greek fretwork constructed of painted, applied, scroll-cut wood, behind which box gutters are concealed. The soffits of the porch are coffered, containing recessed panels of tongue-and-groove beaded boards (Photo 13).

The north end of the porch is enclosed by a low wall of gray Roman brick capped with terracotta coping. Matching low walls enclose the east and south sides of the terrace (Photo 14). Where the terrace walls meet, there is a low brick pier, similar to those flanking the stairs. The floor of the porch and terrace consists of 8-inch square terracotta tiles (which also extend into the sun parlor). Extending up the front steps is a late-twentieth century, wrought iron railing. It terminates at the top of the steps into a matching handrail that spans between the two porch piers and contains two gates. On the north side of the porch, a rectangular copper downspout with verdigris patina is attached to the north side of the pier. Beneath the north porch wall, a paired, wood casement window set in a light well opens to the basement room beneath the porch (Photo 15). It is trimmed in rectangular cut limestone with a central carved keystone of the same material (hereafter, called “typical basement window surround.” Its opening is covered by a black wrought iron grille. A similar basement window opening with iron grille is located beneath the south terrace wall, but its original window has been replaced by a late-twentieth century, two-light, sliding window (Photo 16).

On the main block of the house, the northern bay of the basement level contains a short, paired, wood, one-over-one, double-hung sash window, trimmed with the typical basement window surround (Photo 15). On the first story, the main entrance to the house is located on the centerline of the front façade and porch (Photo 17). It consists of a wide, stained oak door with a tall, single-beveled lite and original hardware. In design, the center sections of the stiles and rails project toward the center lite. It is flanked by similarly-sized leaded-glass sidelights featuring stylized tulips and hearts set in a clear glass field. Above and below each sidelight is a recessed oak panel. Demarcating the three elements of the entry are four Classically-inspired stained oak pilasters that feature capitals with bands of scroll-cut, oak, Greek fretwork (Photo 18). Light fixtures to each side of the entry date to the late-twentieth century, but shadows of the original fixtures remain and those fixtures have been found in storage in the basement (Photo 12).

¹¹ “For Sale: Murtland Ave., Cor. Meade St.,” advertisement, *The Pittsburg Bulletin* 64, no. 8 (1 June 1912): 16.

Flanking the porch on this level are paired, wood, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows with simple center mullions of painted wood (Photo 19). Their openings are trimmed with diminutive terracotta sills, and ornate terracotta antepagments (i.e., decorative dressings that enrich the jambs and heads of window and door openings)¹² along with central keystones of terracotta. Sometimes called “architrave mouldings,” or “architrave frames,” these terms for the surrounding elements is particularly apt, since they are nearly identical in detail to the terracotta architraves that sit atop the piers of the front porch—complete with egg-and-dart moulding. This window and trim assembly, hereafter called “typical paired double-hung sash window,” is repeated on the second story, where three of them are spaced evenly across the façade (Photos 9 and 10). These windows, and most of the windows on the rest of the house, contain late-twentieth century, brown, aluminum storm windows.

South Façade

The south façade facing Meade Street, is three bays wide, asymmetrical, and dominated by the wide, enclosed sun parlor roughly centered in the middle of the first story (Photo 20). Its detailing is identical to the front porch (Photo 21), except for retaining its painted, tongue-and-groove, beaded-board ceiling and being enclosed by single-lite, painted, wood-sashed ribbon windows (three on the north; four on the south; and two on the east, flanking a door to the terrace containing a single beveled lite). The door opening also contains a painted wood screen door and screens are present in some of the windows. Further contributing to the house’s sense of horizontality, the terracotta sills beneath the windows align with and match in design the coping that tops the low walls around the terrace (Photo 20). Beneath the south and west ribbon windows of the sun parlor are short basement windows consisting of two lites in painted wood sashes, covered by an iron grille, with typical basement window surrounds.

On the main block of the house, the western bay of the basement level contains a paired, wood, one-over-one, double-hung sash window, set in a light well, with a typical basement window surround, but no iron grille. On the first story, to the west of the sun parlor, is a very shallow, three-sided bay window that illuminates the dining room. Its center section contains a painted, wood, one-over-one, double-hung sash window that is flanked by matching leaded glass casement windows consisting of mostly clear glass with three stylized lilies in hues of blue, green and white (Photos 22 and 23). The three-sided bay design might not be readily apparent since it occurs entirely within the depth of the wall and does not project beyond the south façade. The flanking stained glass panels are offset from the center panel by just ten degrees or so. The window opening is trimmed with the typical terracotta antepagment. The center bay (i.e., the north wall of the sun parlor) contains paired French doors into the living room, which contain leaded glass panels with motifs that are similar to the front sidelight, but are simpler in design. To the east of the sun parlor is a one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash window with typical terracotta antepagment; hereafter, “typical single double-hung sash window.”

On the second story, from west to east are the following windows: a typical paired double-hung sash window; paired, painted wood, casement windows featuring stylized water lilies and lily pads in pinks and greens in a textured clear glass field, which sit high in the wall (since it illuminates a bathroom); and a typical single double-hung sash window. Attached to the wall are two rain scuppers with rectangular downspouts. All are copper with a verdigris patina.

Rear/West Façade

¹² Cyril M. Harris, “Antepagment,” definition, in *Illustrated Dictionary of Historic Architecture* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1977), 21.

The rear façade (Photo 24) is asymmetrical and less ornate than the previously described façades, which face public streets. For example, there are no ornate terracotta antepagments. Instead, window openings contain simple limestone sills on the basement level and simple terracotta sills elsewhere. The tops of openings are finished with flat arches of Roman brick.

Roughly centered in the middle of the first story is the painted, wood-framed back porch. It rests on two square piers consisting of limestone bases that align in height with the foundation stones of the main block of the house, with gray Roman brick above. Atop the tongue-and-groove floor deck sit three Classically-inspired, square, wood posts with recessed panels, which support box beams and the green tile roof above. Where the beams engage the brick of the rear façade, there are decorative wood corbels. The porch ceiling and surrounding soffits consist of tongue-and-groove, beaded boards. A square, brown, aluminum downspout is attached to the northernmost post to drain water from the box gutter. Encircling the three sides of the porch are painted wood balustrades with simple square balusters (with one section on the west side having been replaced by an expandable wood baby gate). Painted wooden stairs lead down from the porch to the yard on both the north and south sides. The north run is of closed riser design (i.e., containing a full riser beneath each tread) and retains a balustrade that matches that of the porch. It terminates at the top in a newel post that matches the bottom third of the porch posts. The post at the bottom is no longer present. The south run is a late-twentieth century addition that was inserted by removing a portion of the south balustrade. It is open riser in design with a simple handrail of dimensional lumber.

On the main block of the house, the sloping elevation of the back yard allows basement access. There are five openings on this level, with the center three located beneath the porch. From north to south they include: a single-lite window in a painted wood sash that sits just above the stone foundation; a single, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash window; a small, single-lite, painted wood, hopper-style window that sits just above the foundation stones; a painted wood door consisting of a single lite with four horizontal recessed panels below and a transom above; and a paired, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash.

On the first story, openings include (from north to south): a single, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash to the north of the porch; under the porch roof there is a painted wood back door consisting of a single lite with two, square, recessed panels below with transom above along with a painted wood screen door, and a single, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash; and to the south of the porch is a single, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash window. Between the door and window of the porch, an original window opening has been infilled with Roman brick, though its terracotta sill remains.

On the second story, there are three windows roughly located above the porch roof (from north to south): a narrow, single, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash window; a, single-lite window in a painted wood sash that sits high in the wall (illuminating a bathroom); and a wider single, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash window.

North Façade

The north façade is also asymmetrical and less adorned than the facades facing Murtland and Meade Streets (Photos 25 and 26). Window openings are trimmed similarly to those on the rear façade (i.e.,

simple limestone sills on the basement level and simple terracotta sills elsewhere, with the tops of openings finished with flat arches of Roman brick).

This façade is dominated by the porte cochere roughly centered in the middle of the façade that rises to two stories in height (so that its roofline is at the same elevation as that of the front porch). In its detailing, the porte cochere is similar to the front porch, except for its height and retention of its original ceiling, which is comprised of tongue-and-groove beaded boards supported by a series of evenly spaced wood beams that extend perpendicular to the façade (Photo 27). Spanning between the two piers at ground level is a side wall of smooth-tooled coursed ashlar that rises to the same height as the adjacent exposed foundation of the house. It is capped by terracotta coping that matches the low walls of the front porch and terrace.

On the basement level of the main block of the house there are three openings (from east to west): a painted wooden door from the porte cochere into the house that contains a center beveled lite and original hardware; a paired, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash window; and a c. 2000, white, vinyl, overhead rolling garage door (set within the historic opening). The door from the porte cochere into the house is reached from three cast concrete steps set in a pyramidal form with rounded corners.

On the first story, there are three openings (from east to west): a paired, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash window beneath the roof of the porte cochere; an identical window in the center; and a small, single, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash window.

On the second story, there are four openings (again, from east to west): a single, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash window; paired, painted wood, casement windows each featuring four stylized flowers in whites, blues and greens in a textured clear glass field, which sits high in the wall (since it illuminates a bathroom); followed by two single, one-over-one, painted wood, double-hung sash windows.

Near the east end of the façade, a square, brown, aluminum downspout drains water from the box gutters of the porte cochere and main roof of the house.

Main Roof

As noted, a low-pitched, pyramidal hipped roof of faded green tiles with wide, overhanging boxed eaves covers the main block of the house. Detailing of the soffit and fascia is identical to the front porch, sun parlor and porte cochere (i.e., painted wood egg-and-dart moulding adorns the tops of the brick walls of the facades; soffits are coffered with recessed, beaded-board panels; and cornices/fascias are decorated with large bands of Greek fretwork constructed of painted, applied scroll-cut wood, behind which box gutters are concealed; Photo 27).

At the center of the roof's hips is a square skylight that allows natural light to penetrate the attic space and illuminate a large stained-glass skylight over the stairs of the center hall (Photo 28).

Projecting from the roof are the tops of four large, rectangular interior chimneys (one each on the north and south planes, and two on the rear/west plane; Figure 4, Photos 3, 5, 24 and 25). They are executed in gray Roman brick with terracotta architrave mouldings similar to those on the previously described piers

around the house, but with unadorned blocking courses at their tops (i.e., absent any bed mouldings of egg-and-dart). Attached to the chimney of the north roof plane is an old television aerial.

8. History

Provide a history of the structure, district, site, or object.

The following is a brief history of 201 North Murtland Street and its nine periods of ownership.

During the last half of the nineteenth century, the East End became an increasingly desirable place to live, especially for the city's managerial and wealthy classes. Seeking to escape increasing pollution from growing industrial plants along the rivers and from crowding near the city centers of Pittsburgh and Allegheny, they were aided by improvements in transportation, such as completion of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1852 from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh through what was then largely undeveloped countryside and, by the end of the century, numerous streetcar lines and road improvements. The idyllic East End around the Railroad's Homewood Station was heralded in one real estate promotion as "near to Nature's heart, yet within easy distance of the hum of humanity."¹³ In 1871, noted industrialist George Westinghouse II purchased an Italianate house on five acres of land in what is today Point Breeze North (then referred to as Homewood). Constructed in 1869 for James H. Hopkins, Jr., the house was a birthday gift for Westinghouse's wife, Marguerite (Figure 9).¹⁴ In 1879, he purchased additional land from Hopkins, creating an estate of over ten acres on the east side of Murtland Street and south of the Pennsylvania Railroad line.¹⁵ Dubbed "Solitude" by Mrs. Westinghouse (despite the rumblings of the nearby trains), the house was subsequently enlarged and remodeled and was (not surprisingly, given her husband's fascination with electricity) one of the first in Pittsburgh to be electrified (Figure 10).¹⁶

In 1900, working through his Security Investment Company, Westinghouse purchased lots totaling over twenty-five acres immediately east of his estate and Greenlawn, the estate of H. J. Heinz immediately to the south (Figure 11). Bounded by North Dallas and Penn Avenues, Murtland Street, and the Pennsylvania Railroad, the assembled properties were subsequently subdivided into one hundred building lots and marketed for sale as The Westinghouse Park Plan of Lots of 1901 (Figure 12). The goal was to create of "one of the finest residence sites" in town.¹⁷

By 1904, six stately Colonial Revival style homes had been constructed on what is today the 6900 block of Thomas Boulevard, which bisected the plan, running east-west; five of them survive (Figure 3).¹⁸ In January 1904, Ebonhurst, the large Colonial Revival estate of realty executive David Pollock Black and his wife was completed on the northwest corner of Penn Avenue and Murtland Street (Figure 13).¹⁹

¹³ *Westinghouse Park: The Suburb Beauty* (Place of publication and publisher not identified, [1903]), 17.

¹⁴ James D. Van Trump, "'Solitude' and the Nether Depths: The Pittsburgh Estate of George Westinghouse and its Gas Well," *The Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* 42, no. 2 (June 1959): 159; William R. Huber, *George Westinghouse: Powering the World* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2022), 60.

¹⁵ Huber, 62.

¹⁶ Westinghouse's East End neighborhood was electrified in 1886 by the East End Electric Light Company. "The houses of George Westinghouse, Herman Westinghouse (George's brother), and Henry Clay Frick were the first on the circuit" quoted in Quentin R. Skrabec, Jr., *Henry Clay Frick: The Life of the Perfect Capitalist* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2010), 190.

¹⁷ "Mr. Westinghouse Adds to His Home," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 11 December 1900.

¹⁸ G. M. Hopkins Company, *Real Estate Plat-Book of the City of Pittsburgh*, v. 2, 1904.

¹⁹ "The Building Situation," *Pittsburgh Press*, 3 January 1904, 23.

1) April 2, 1904—To Ella M. and Emil E. Keller from Security Investment Company (Deed Book 1317, page 361)

In April 1904, Emil and Ella Keller purchased lots 64 and 65 in the Westinghouse Park subdivision, just across Meade Street from the Black estate and across Murtland from the sprawling lawns and gardens of Greenlawn.²⁰ Their new property, which consisted of the eastern two-thirds of the current parcel at 201 North Murtland Street, was expanded in May 1907, when they purchased lot 66, to create the present-day boundaries (Figures 14).²¹ The Kellers received their building permit in mid-June 1904, with B. F. Lee Company listed as the contractor, and by the end of the month construction was under way.²² Less than a year later, the house was complete. The estimated construction cost listed on the building permit was \$17,000, which would be equal to approximately \$600,000 today when adjusted for inflation (with some calculators determining a value nearly twice as high).²³ The purchase price for lots 64 and 65 was an additional \$15,000, meaning the Kellers made an investment of more than a million dollars when adjusted for inflation.²⁴

A description in the May 7, 1905 edition of the *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette Sun* stated that “The house is a notably beautiful one standing in Murtland Avenue. . . and is built of gray brick with green tile roof. The plans for the house were drawn by Mr. and Mrs. Keller, who took possession of their new domicile but a few weeks ago (see Figure 15 for the complete article describing the house).”²⁵ The 15-room house afforded more than ample space for the two Kellers, containing a 16-foot-wide center stair hall, 16 x 29-foot living room, sun parlor, library, spacious dining room, butler’s pantry, large kitchen, breakfast room, three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a second-floor den and an extensive basement with integral garage.²⁶ Additionally, there was a servants’ suite on the second floor adjacent to the rear steps down to the kitchen, which contained bedrooms and a bathroom, along with a chauffeur’s apartment in the basement. Given the Keller’s social standing and frequency of entertaining, it seems a near certainty that they had regular, live-in domestic help. However, a search of city directories has thus far only uncovered the name of one live-in servant. James Heard is listed in 1907 as “gardener” and again in 1909 as “butler.”²⁷ The enthusiasm of both Kellers for their multiple automobiles suggests that they never hired a chauffeur, despite having designed accommodations for one.

While it is not known if Emil Keller ever drove to work, his new home provided an easy commute to work by rail via the Pennsylvania Railroad’s Homewood Station, a quarter mile to the northeast—during

²⁰ Allegheny County Deed Records, vol. 1317, p. 361, 2 April 1904; “Builds Home in East End,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 5 April 1904.

²¹ Allegheny County Deed Records, vol. 1544, p. 432, 27 May 1907; *Pittsburgh Press*, 9 July 1907.

²² Pittsburgh Building Permit Dockets, vol. 21, 1904-05 (June 13, 1904, p. 64), Historic Pittsburgh, <https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A31735064529518/viewer#page/44/mode/2up>, accessed 31 January 2023; *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 15 June 1904, 7; *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide* 19, no. 26 (29 June 1904): 407.

²³ While numerous online Consumer Price Index inflation calculators list the adjusted value of \$17,000 to be nearly \$600,000 in current dollars, only a few calculators provide separate calculations for the real estate market. The website U.S. Inflation Calculator, at <https://casaplorer.com/inflation-calculator>, shows separate values for CPI, gold, real estate, and the stock market. The real estate values for 1904 (\$1,181,000) and 1905 (\$1,348,000), when averaged, yield a 2022 value of \$1,265,000. Admittedly, figures like these do not account for variations in specific real estate markets and other variables and, therefore, should only be considered for their value as general, illustrative comparisons.

²⁴ Allegheny County Deed Records, vol. 1317, p. 361, 2 April 1904; “Recorded Transfers,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 22 April 1904, 8.

²⁵ “Society,” *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, 7 May 1905, Section 4, 2. Despite being designated “Murtland Street” today, a number of articles from the early part of the twentieth century utilized the name “Murtland Avenue.”

²⁶ “Society,” *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, 7 May 1905, Section 4, 2; “Beautiful East End Residence, in Unsurpassed Location,” advertisement, *Pittsburgh Press*, 12 June 1908, 26. “For Sale: Murtland Ave., Cor. Meade St.,” advertisement, *Pittsburg Bulletin* 64, no. 8 (1 June 1912): 16.

²⁷ Pittsburgh City Directories, 1907, 1909.

which he was often accompanied by George Westinghouse. The pair could be in Downtown or the Turtle Creek Valley in just over twenty minutes (Figure 16).²⁸

The Financial Panic of 1907 meant that the Kellers would ultimately end up occupying their new home for less than five years. The crisis resulted in numerous Westinghouse interests being forced into receivership, including the Westinghouse Machine Company, which Emil Keller headed (and became the receiver for). In the reorganization that ensued, George Westinghouse was forced out of the presidency of Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company (though he remained president and director of sixteen of his other companies).²⁹ Keller was similarly ousted as vice president and general manager of the Machine Company in the spring of 1908 shortly after he had led the company out of receivership. The Kellers remained in their Murtland Street home until late 1909 before moving to Detroit, where Mr. Keller had previously established business ventures.

From the time of their departure until the sale of their house in 1914, the Kellers rented their home to a series of tenants, including George Westinghouse III and his new wife, Evelyn Violet Brocklebank. The couple had been married on March 4, 1909 and moved into 201 North Murtland shortly thereafter.³⁰ The 1910 U.S. Census, which was enumerated on April 15 of that year, shows the household at 201 North Murtland comprised of the following members: George Westinghouse III (26), Evelyn V. Westinghouse (28), Mary Stratton, seamstress (25), Helen McDonough, chambermaid (19), Alberta Patterson, cook (32), and James Heard, houseman (28). The latter being a carry-over from the Keller's staff.³¹ The publication *Social Register, Pittsburgh, 1911* (published in November 1910) listed the Westinghouses at 201 North Murtland in the main body of the text, but an addendum titled "Dilatory Domiciles" inserted inside the front cover (published in January 1911), showed that they had by then moved a few blocks away to 300 South Linden Avenue.³² The Kellers then rented the house to local banker John Gracey Kelly and his family, beginning May 1, 1910.³³

[Note: Whenever possible, details about wives and servants have been included. Rarely are their contributions sufficiently captured in historical accounts, even though their support usually contributed considerably to the environment that allowed the principal historic figure to attain significance.]

For additional biographical information on the Kellers, see "9. Significance; Criteria 2; A. Emil Ernest Keller" below.

Summary of Subsequent Owners (listed by purchase date)

2a) April 6, 1914—To Mary Agnes (and Joseph A.) Langfitt from Ella M. and Emil E. Keller (Deed Book 1787, page 670)

²⁸ E. E. Keller, "George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him," April 1936, in *Anecdotes and Reminiscences of George Westinghouse, 1846-1914, Contributed by his Former Associates*, ed. Charles F. Scott, typescript (Pittsburgh: Westinghouse Air Brake Company, 1939), Detre Library & Archives, Senator John Heinz History Center, 22. Note: each author's recollection is independently numbered.

²⁹ "George Westinghouse Dead," obituary, *Electrical Review and Western Electrician* 64, no. 12 (21 March 1914): 564.

³⁰ Huber, 198; "Society," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 28 December 1909. Census records and numerous newspapers accounts directly contradict Huber's assertion on page 199 that George Westinghouse III never lived at 201 North Murtland.

³¹ United States Census, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 1910.

³² The Social Register Association, *Social Register, Pittsburgh, 1911* (New York: The Social Register Association, November 1910, updated January 1911), 74.

³³ "Personal and Society," *Pittsburg Bulletin* (7 May 1910): 12.

In April 1914, Former Pennsylvania State Senator Joseph A. Langfitt (Figure 17) and his wife Mary Agnes purchased the house. Senator Langfitt, a Republican, served in Harrisburg during the 1907-08 and 1909-10 terms.³⁴ He was born in Kendall, Beaver County, on October 19, 1858 and graduated from Washington and Jefferson College in 1879 prior to starting his legal career. He was admitted to the bars of Allegheny and Beaver Counties in 1882; served four years as a member of the Select Council of Allegheny and served as president of the Mercantile Bank, First National Bank of Pittsburgh, and the Bank of Brushton. He died on March 17, 1934 at a new home in Point Breeze at 111 Yorkshire Drive.³⁵ His wife, Mary Agnes (Burry) Langfitt, was born in Butler County on December 24, 1862. She died on February 5, 1922 at her Murtland Street home, where her funeral service was held three days later.³⁶ The couple was married on August 25, 1887 in Latrobe, Westmoreland County.³⁷ The 1920 U.S. Census (enumerated on January 16th of that year) indicated that their 201 North Murtland household consisted of the following members: Joseph Langfitt (62); Agnes Langfitt (57); two maids, Mary Jenkins (28) and Chesteen Swan (30); daughters of the latter, Margaret Swan (13) and Alma Swan (12); and a chauffeur, Herbert J. Baker (33).³⁸

2b) September 10, 1924—To Joseph A. Langfitt, Jr. from Joseph A. Langfitt, widower (Deed Book 2270, page 614)

This transaction conveyed the deed from father to son. Joseph A. Langfitt, Jr., who practiced law with his father, married Kathryn Elizabeth Rea on February 24, 1914, shortly before his parents purchased 201 North Murtland.³⁹ City directories indicate that the younger Langfitts never occupied the house, living instead at 1339 Murdoch Road in Squirrel Hill North.

3) July 14, 1926—To Frank and Francenia M. Stewart from Joseph A. and Kathryn R. Langfitt (Deed Book 2292, Page 351)

An article in the July 31, 1926 edition of the *Pittsburgh Press* indicates that the Murtland property was given as partial payment in a real estate deal between Frank Stewart and J. A. Langfitt, Jr.⁴⁰ Census records indicate that Frank Stewart was a residential contractor.⁴¹

4) October 26, 1926—To John E. and Margaret D. Nelson from Frank and Francenia Stewart (Deed Book 2302, Page 720)

John Evon Nelson (1879-1951) and Margaret Nora (Dodds) Nelson (1880-1966) purchased 201 North Murtland in October 1926. Their family would become the first of two that would own the house for a period of more than four decades. John Evon Nelson played a significant role in the management of Gulf Oil Corporation, rising to the position of treasurer and executive vice president during a forty-one-year tenure that ended with his retirement in 1949. Together, the couple raised four children in the house and made substantial civic and philanthropic contributions to the city.

³⁴ Pennsylvania State Senate Records.

³⁵ "Joseph A. Langfitt," entry, *Distinguished Successful Americans of Our Day: Containing Biographies of Prominent Americans Now Living* (Chicago: Successful Americans, 1912): 286; "J. A. Langfitt, Former State Senator, Dead," obituary, *Pittsburgh Press*, 19 March 1934. A photograph of the Langfitt home at 111 Yorkshire Drive appears on page 69 of Sarah L. Law's book *Pittsburgh's Point Breeze*, which is part of Arcadia Publishing's "Images of America" series.

³⁶ "Mrs. Joseph P. Langfitt," obituary, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 7 February 1922; "Mrs. M. A. B. Langfitt, obituary, *Pittsburgh Press*, 7 February 1922.

³⁷ "Pennsylvania, County Marriages, 1885-1950," database, www.familysearch.org.

³⁸ United States Census, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 1920.

³⁹ "Rea-Langfitt Wedding," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 24 February 1914.

⁴⁰ "Outer Liberty Avenue Realty Traded Often, is Sold Again," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 13 October 1926, 19.

⁴¹ United States Census, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 1910, 1930.

For additional biographical information on the Nelsons, see “Ancillary Materials” below.

5) November 30, 1966—To Pittsburgh Theological Seminary from Margaret D. Nelson (Deed Book 4379, page 209)

Margaret Nelson (a widow following her husband’s death in 1951) bequeathed the property to Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in her will.

6 September 8, 1967—To Jacob J. and Miriam Gzesh From Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (Deed Book 4416, Page 333)

The Board of Directors of the Seminary ultimately found that it was not practical to use the property for any of the purposes described in Margaret Nelson’s will and subsequently directed that the property be sold in accordance with the provisions of said will.

Jacob Jerome “Jerry” Gzesh (Figure 18), was born on February 14, 1929 to Joseph and Anna Gzesh and grew up in Squirrel Hill. During the Korean War, he was awarded the Bronze Star with the affixed “V” for valor. In 1953, he graduated from the School of Architecture at Carnegie Institute of Technology (present-day Carnegie Mellon University) and later worked as a Registered Architect. He eventually grew his sole proprietorship into a firm with offices in Pittsburgh (in the Oliver Building) and Baltimore with twenty-nine employees. Miriam “Mimi” Bleiberg Gzesh, was born in 1932 to Rebecca “Betty” and Max Bleiberg of Jeannette, Pennsylvania. She received her BA in Education from Penn State University in 1951. Jacob and Miriam Gzesh were married June 12, 1955 at B’nai Israel Synagogue, which operated until 1995 at 327 North Negley Avenue in Garfield. After a honeymoon to the Adirondacks, they lived at 5511 Stanton Avenue in Highland Park before later moving to Murtland Street. The couple raised three children in the house: Daniel Jonathan (b. 1959), Andrew Joseph (1970-2006), and Anne Debra (b. 1960). There are mezuzahs on the doorframes throughout 201 North Murtland, which are believed to have been installed by the Gzesh family, the only known Jewish owners.⁴² Mezuzahs are small, rolled parchments inscribed with scriptural verses to remind Jews of their obligations toward God.

7) July 15, 1976—To Marvin H. and Barbara L. Bennett from Jacob and Miriam Gzesh (Deed Book 5652, Page 881)

The Bennetts would own the house for less than two years. While limited information is publicly available, searches of historic newspapers revealed a large number of purchases and sales of houses by the Bennetts in the Pittsburgh area, suggesting that the couple made a living, at least in part, from real estate. 201 North Murtland may simply have been one of their many investments. Public records now suggest that they have retired to Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

8) May 30, 1978—To John P. Fernandez from Marvin H. and Barbara L. Bennett (Deed Book 5944, Page 429)

⁴² “Countians Given Degrees at State,” *Daily Courier* (Connellsville, Pennsylvania), 30 January 1953, 11; “Eight Korea GIs Win Decorations,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 21 Jul 1951, 17; “Round About: What’s Doing on Squirrel Hill—by a Squirrel,” *Squirrel Hill News*, 11 February 1954, 9; “Bride-Elect Plans Late-June Wedding,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 21 April 1955, 26; “Bridal couple in Adirondacks,” *Pittsburgh Sun Telegraph*, 3 July 1955, 27; “Jerry Gzesh: In My Own Words,” interview with Todd De Pastino, Heinz History Center, 4 May 2015, Pittsburgh, Veterans Breakfast Club, Vimeo, <https://vimeo.com/152910930>; “Social and Personal,” bar mitzvah notice, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 11 November, 1971, 16; “Social and Personal,” bar mitzvah notice, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 9 June, 1983, 15; “Gzesh-Weinstein,” wedding announcement, 5 *The Jewish Chronicle*, January 1984, 13. Daniel Gzesh was bar mitzvahed on November 20, 1971 at Tree of Life Synagogue in Squirrel Hill, Andrew Gzesh was bar mitzvahed June 18, 1983 at the Hebrew Institute Student Congregation, and Anne Debra, who married Louis Harry Weinstein at B’nai Israel Synagogue in late December 1983 or early January 1984.

John P. Fernandez (Figure 19) would be another owner of short duration, owning the house for just under three years. In April 1978, Bell of Pennsylvania hired Fernandez to be its division operations manager for five Pittsburgh-area counties and 300,000 customers. Prior to this, he had been head of management, development and education for AT&T in New York City. Additionally, he worked as an assistant professor of Sociology at Yale University. He graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University and earned a masters and doctorate degree from the University of California, Berkeley. In January 1981, he was promoted to division manager for labor relations for Bell of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. In the intervening decades, he has authored ten books on race, politics, gender relations and management. He also has taught management at New York University, been a visiting professor at Yale and Penn and appeared on CNBC, CNN and Marketplace on National Public Radio.⁴³

9) May 1, 1981—To David A. and Amanda C. Fisher from John P. Fernandez (Deed Book 6362, Page 1158)

In May 1981, David A. Fisher and Amanda “Mandy” (Toole) Fisher began would what become the longest period of ownership of 201 North Murtland—a tenure that will mark its 42nd year in May 2023.⁴⁴

David Fisher and Mandy Toole had ties to the neighborhood prior to getting married and long before purchasing 201 North Murtland. David had been a boarder at the home of Mandy’s aunt at 7153 McPherson Boulevard near Westinghouse Park in the early 1960s. After their marriage in 1964, they lived at 7128 McPherson Boulevard from 1967 to 1970.

Mandy (Toole) Fisher grew up in the Brookline section of Pittsburgh and attended Seton Hill University. In addition to managing her large family’s household, she was active in civic and charitable organizations until her death on May 27, 2022 at the age of 77.

David Fisher, like George Westinghouse II and Emil Keller, has been an engineer, inventor, and entrepreneur who strived for technological advances that would benefit the economic and social structure of society and managed companies for the benefit of employees as well as return on investment. He received a B.S. and Ph.D. from Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) and an M.S.E. from the University of Pennsylvania. He was a professor at CMU for nineteen years, and also taught at Vanderbilt University and the University of Delaware. He served as a senior executive in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (DoD-OSD) and at the National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST); vice president for advanced development at Western Digital Corporation; and president of Incremental Systems Corporation. During the course of his career, he invented three computer architectures and a variety of data structures and algorithms. He coined the term “embedded systems” and published over 200 papers in various areas of computer science, including programming languages, information security, software engineering, and high-performance computing.

Early in his career, David Fisher had a Westinghouse connection. In 1962, he worked as a programmer for WABCO (founded in 1869 as Westinghouse Air Brake Company) at the Westinghouse Castle in

⁴³ “People on the Move,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 29 March 1978, 33; “Bell Names Manager,” *New Castle News*, 6 April 1978, 10; “Briefcase Briefs,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 16 January 1981, A-16; “Dr. John P. Fernandez, Author,” website, <http://www.drjohnpfernandez.com/home.html>, accessed 5 February 2023.

⁴⁴ Biographical information in this section came from the following sources: David A. Fisher, property owner, interviews by author and emails to author, various dates from December 2022-April 2023, Pittsburgh; “Toole-Fisher Vows Exchanged,” *News-Journal* (Mansfield, Ohio), 21 September 1964, 7; “Amanda Fisher,” obituary, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 3 June 2022.

Wilmerding. At age 50, he made time to hike the entire Appalachian Trail, which runs 3500 kilometers from Maine to Georgia.

Together, David and Mandy Fisher had six children: Stephen, Matthew, Timothy, Edward, Jessika, and Judy. Like other owners before them, they loved their home at 201 North Murtland Street and the space it provided their children to develop their unique personalities. David and Mandy were also central figures in the lives of their extended family, which included their children's spouses, eleven grandchildren, their own siblings and their families, and various neighborhood children (Figure 67).

Though his children are grown and his spouse of 57 years is gone, David Fisher continues to live at the family home and remains active as a senior life member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)—the successor organization to the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, of which Emil Keller was a long-standing member. He also continues to be engaged as an emeritus professor at Carnegie Mellon, founder and chief engineer at Reasoning Technology, LLC, and distinguished visitor of the IEEE-Computer Society. His current life objectives are to ensure preservation of the original architectural, technological, and historical aspects of 201 North Murtland and to found an institute to enable a new mathematical foundation for computing. It is through his generosity that this nomination and future public benefit from the house are possible.

9. Significance

Criterion 2. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;

201 North Murtland Street is significant for its identification with owners Emil Ernest Keller and John Evon Nelson and their families.

Emil Ernest Keller—Historic Overview⁴⁵

The property is the most significant extant resource within the City of Pittsburgh representing the broad contributions of Emil Ernest Keller to the fields of science and industry. Highlights of his accomplishments include a pivotal role in settling the “current wars,” between George Westinghouse/Nikola Tesla (alternating current) and Thomas Edison/General Electric (direct current) through his work planning, installing and maintaining all electric lighting at the Chicago World’s Fair in 1893, the first large-scale proof-of-concept of the Westinghouse system; heading Westinghouse Machine Company for nearly fifteen years and overseeing its move from Lawrenceville to East Pittsburgh and subsequent expansions; pioneering the development of electric vehicles; being an early adopter and promoter of automobile technology in Pittsburgh; and designing with his wife, Ella Miller Keller, their innovative home in North Point Breeze. *See more below under “Emil E. Keller—Significance.”*

Emil Ernest Keller (Figure 20) was born in New York City on October 16, 1863 to John [Johann] Baptiste Keller and Susan (Brueck) Keller, both of whom were German immigrants. Census records from 1870 show the couple and four children then living in Islip on Long Island, where John Keller was employed as a gardener.⁴⁶ Later that year, the family moved to Rochester, New York, after John Keller accepted the position of foreman of the greenhouses of Ellwanger & Barry.⁴⁷ Emil Keller was educated in the Rochester public schools until 1875 and then attended the German American Institute in Rochester until 1878. During this time, his father founded his own florist/greenhouse business in 1876 and the family grew to include the parents, six sons and one daughter (1880 U.S. Census).⁴⁸ John Keller retired in 1891 and his business became “John B. Keller Sons” (Figure 21).⁴⁹ Emil Keller was the only son to not enter into John Keller’s florist enterprise or a related line of work. For a photo of the Keller brothers, see Figure 22. John and Susan Keller’s daughter, Fredrica Keller, died sometime after the 1880 U.S. Census, which listed her at the time as being twenty years old.

Emil Keller learned the machinist trade with specialty manufacturers Yawman & Erbe in Rochester, who were then producing optical goods before expanding into specialty office equipment. He became a

⁴⁵ The background history for this section has been assembled from a number of standard and generally similar biographical entries in published compendiums, with those sources listed at the end of this note. More specific details are footnoted where they occur within the text. Main background sources: “Keller, Emil Ernest,” entry, *Men and Women of America: A Biographical Dictionary of Contemporaries* (New York: L. R. Hamersly & Company, 1910), 933-34; John W. Leonard, ed., “Keller, Emil Ernest,” entry, *Who’s Who in Pennsylvania: A Biographical Dictionary of Contemporaries*, 2d. ed. (New York: L. R. Hamersly, 1908), 405; “New Members of the Council,” E. E. Keller, biography, *The Journal of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers* 36, no. 1 (January 1914): vi-ix; Winfield Scott Downs, ed., “Keller, Emil Ernest,” entry, *Who’s Who in Engineering: A Biographical Dictionary of the Engineering Profession*, 3d ed., (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1931), 707; “Keller, Emil Ernest,” entry, *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White & Company, 1934), vol. D, 406; “Keller,” obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 158-59.

⁴⁶ United States Census, Islip, Suffolk County, New York, 1870.

⁴⁷ “John B. Keller,” entry, in *The Biographical Record of the City of Rochester and Monroe County, New York* (New York: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1902), 230-31.

⁴⁸ “A Skillful Florist,” *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 1 May 1876, 4; United States Census, Rochester, Monroe County, New York, 1880.

⁴⁹ “News Notes,” *The American Florist* 7, no. 184 (10 December 1891), 388.

department foreman in 1883, serving in that capacity until 1885. During these years, his lifelong interest in photography was born. Yawman & Erbe worked at the time for George Eastman to prototype film holders and the metal parts for what would become the first Model No. 1 Kodak camera.⁵⁰ The journal *Mechanical Engineering* noted that “[Keller] did much of the mechanical work in the development of George Eastman’s earliest roll cameras, in which Eastman, before the days of celluloid photographic films, used a roll of thin paper coated with the then new dry emulsion for photographic plates, which was faster than the wet collodion emulsion used on glass photographic plates of those days.”⁵¹

On October 23, 1884, he married Ella Miller at her parents’ home in Attica, a village between Rochester and Buffalo. The bride and groom both lived in Rochester at the time.⁵² *See separate historic overview of Ella Miller Keller below.*

In 1885, at the age of only 21, Emil Keller went into business for himself, forming a partnership in the machine shop Keller, Flesch & Rung. The venture was short lived, however, having been destroyed by fire in January 1886.⁵³ Later that year, he became superintendent of the Clark Novelty and Machine Works in Rochester. The company manufactured small machinery and specialized in supporting “experimental work for inventors.”⁵⁴ During these early years of his career, when he wasn’t actively working, Keller taught himself a number of engineering specialties, including electricity. In January 1887, he presented a paper before the Rochester Society of Natural Sciences, titled “Producing Electricity by Mechanical Means.”⁵⁵

A summer drought in 1887, which resulted in inadequate water power and a temporary shutdown of Clark Novelty, prompted Keller to visit an old friend, Daniel W. Edgecomb, in New York City. A patent attorney for George Westinghouse, Edgecomb encouraged Keller to explore construction opportunities in Pittsburgh and provided an introduction to Paul Winsor, who managed projects for G. H. Blaxter Company, electrical engineers and contractors, and the earliest approved installers of Westinghouse alternating current electric lighting systems.⁵⁶ In January 1888, the Kellers moved to Pittsburgh, living on Claybourne Street near South Aiken Avenue in Shadyside, and Emil Keller began work as a wireman’s helper at Blaxter, with offices in the Schmidt & Friday Building at 95 Fifth Avenue, downtown.⁵⁷ Soon after, he was tasked with drawing plans “for wiring a large, new church in East Liberty” (possibly the fourth iteration of East Liberty Presbyterian, which was completed in September 1888).⁵⁸ So impressed were his superiors with the resulting design and cost estimate that Keller was promoted in October 1888 and sent to Chicago to open and manage a new office of the Keystone Construction Company, successor firm to Blaxter. When Keystone merged with two other companies in January 1890 to become the North American Construction Company (with headquarters in the Westinghouse Building in Pittsburgh), Keller led its Western Office out of Chicago, where he was

⁵⁰ Charles Elliott Fitch, “Yawman, Philip H., Manufacturer, Inventor,” entry, in *Encyclopedia of Biography of New York: A Life Record of Men and Women of the Past* (New York: The American Historical Society, 1916), v. 4, 53; Lockwood Richard Doty, ed., *History of the Genesee Country (Western New York)*, (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1925), v. 4, 779; “Keller,” obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 158-59

⁵¹ “Keller,” obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 159.

⁵² “Keller-Turneure,” wedding announcement, *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 25 October 1884.

⁵³ “Flames Amid the Flakes: Fire in the Briggs Building on Mill Stree[t]—The Losers and Losses,” *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 10 January 1886, 6.

⁵⁴ John F. Hart, “The Clark Novelty Co.,” advertisement, *The Industries of the City of Rochester: A Resume of Her Past History and Progress* (Rochester: Elstner Publishing Company, 1888), 222.

⁵⁵ “Town Talk,” *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 18 January 1887, 6.

⁵⁶ E. E. Keller, “George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him,” 1-2.

⁵⁷ Pittsburgh City Directory, 1888.

⁵⁸ E. E. Keller, “George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him,” 2.

primarily involved in managing the installation of Westinghouse alternating current electrical systems, which he installed “in many of the principal cities of the territory extending from Ohio to as far west as Ogden, Utah.”⁵⁹ When North American Construction Company phased out its electrical work, Keller briefly worked as an electrical engineer for the Fort Wayne Electric Company in its Chicago office.⁶⁰

In 1890, the Chicago City Directory indicates that Keller was sharing office space with Frederick E. Degenhardt (1856-1894; Figure 23) in Suite 542 of The Rookery. It appears that they were in charge of separate business ventures, with Degenhardt listed as “manager, Standard Underground Cable Company” and Keller listed as “manager” (presumably for Fort Wayne Electric).⁶¹ Standard Underground Cable was a Pittsburgh-based Westinghouse company and Degenhardt served as its western manager for about a decade beginning around 1883 and was responsible for all territory west of the Allegheny Mountains.⁶² By 1891, advertisements in trade journals indicate that the two engineers had formed an electrical engineering partnership, Keller & Degenhardt (Figure 24). The 1890 directory listed Emil and Ella Keller living at 18 Bellevue Place north of the Loop. During this time, Keller was a member of the Chicago Electric Club, which had been founded in 1887 to “promote the diffusion of knowledge in electrical matters.”⁶³

On June 16, 1891, Keller, then 27 years old, resigned from the Fort Wayne Electric Company to accept the position of electrical engineer in the Department of Electricity for the World’s Columbian Exposition, working under department chief John P. Barrett.⁶⁴ Keller had expected Barrett’s department “to have full responsibility in carrying out the lighting of the Fair . . . and to install and operate whatever lighting plant should be decided upon.”⁶⁵ However, in the spring of 1892 controversy arose and Barrett’s role was diminished to oversight of electrical exhibits only. Faced with this dramatic change in plans, Keller lamented that “My ambition was doomed unless I could tie up directly with George Westinghouse [who had won the electrical installation contract in late May]. I, fortunately, met him at once through my old friend, Charles A. Terry, [Secretary] of the [Westinghouse] Electric Company. . . .”⁶⁶

Keller recounted that “My personal contact with George Westinghouse began . . . in June 1892.”⁶⁷ Westinghouse was no doubt familiar with Keller’s abilities from Keller’s days installing Westinghouse lighting systems for Blaxter, Keystone, and North American Construction. Keller recalled that “I explained to Westinghouse that I wanted to construct and operate the electrical plant. Our negotiations began immediately.”⁶⁸ He noted that at a meeting in Pittsburgh, “Westinghouse explained that his representative must be acceptable to three key men of the Exposition: D[aniel] H. Burnham, Director of Works [and Chief Architect], Fred Sargent, Burnham’s Chief Electrical and Mechanical Engineer, and [Keller’s former boss] Mr. Barrett. He said that if I could get letters from them, I could have the job. I

⁵⁹ “Electrical Department, World’s Fair,” *Western Electrician* 8, no. 26 (27 June 1891): 362; “Keller,” obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 158-59; “The Electric Light,” *Western Electrician* 6, no. 2 (January 11, 1890): 23. The three companies that were consolidated to form North American Construction were the Keystone Construction Company, the Marr Construction Company and the Washington Carbon Company.

⁶⁰ “Appointment of E. E. Keller,” *Western Electrician* 11, no. 1 (2 July 1892): 7.

⁶¹ Chicago City Directory, 1890.

⁶² “Death of Fred E. Degenhardt,” *Western Electrician* 15, no. 24 (15 December 1894): 285.

⁶³ “New Corporations,” *Chicago Tribune*, 21 May 1887, 9; “Chicago Electric Club Dinner,” *Electricity* 1, no. 4 (12 August 1891), 40.

⁶⁴ “Appointment of E. E. Keller,” *Western Electrician* 11, no. 1 (2 July 1892): 7.

⁶⁵ E. E. Keller, “George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him,” 2.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

went back that night to Chicago, secured what was needed—I knew each of the three men—and the following day became Westinghouse’s manager to execute the World’s Fair contract.”⁶⁹

The Fair and Keller’s work there were a resounding success. For a detailed description of the Westinghouse installation in Keller’s own words, see E. E. Keller, “Model Incandescent Lighting Plant,” *Western Electrician*, 6 May 1893, 233-35, which was published the week that the Fair opened.⁷⁰ For more information on the significance of Keller’s work at the World’s Fair, see “Emil E. Keller—Significance: Westinghouse Superintendent of Lighting for the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition” below.

In January 1894, following the successful run of the fair, Keller was chosen by George Westinghouse to become vice president and general manager of the Westinghouse Machine Company, then located in Pittsburgh’s Lawrenceville neighborhood—his election by the board of directors being a mere formality.⁷¹

Living in Pittsburgh for the second time, the Kellers initially resided at 224 Murtland Street, across the street from their future home. The house, located on the southeast corner of Murtland Street and Thomas Boulevard, was later demolished (around 1915) and the property absorbed into the H. J. Heinz estate. They next lived in a house rented from Brown Caldwell on Washington Street in Edgewood Park, today’s Borough of Edgewood (until it was destroyed by fire on April 12, 1901).⁷² The fire reportedly destroyed “many valuable scientific books [and] scientific instruments on the third floor . . . , and a number of cameras, together with a collection of negatives and prints of pictures taken at the World’s Fair [and] an index to scientific works and journals which Mr. Keller has been years in making.”⁷³ A “valuable automobile” owned by Emil Keller was removed from the automobile stable before it burned to the ground.⁷⁴ In the aftermath of the fire, the couple resided at the Hotel Schenley until their new Murtland Street house was completed in 1905. During their years living in Edgewood Park, Emil Keller was an active member of the Edgewood Golf Club, and was its president in 1901.⁷⁵

As noted above, the Financial Panic of 1907 forced a number of Westinghouse’s Pittsburgh operations into receivership. Emil Keller, was appointed receiver of Westinghouse Machine Company, and in only five months’ time, returned control of the company back to the stockholders. One newspaper account noted that “the company has been doing an excellent business during the time it was in charge of the receiver, and now has about \$3,000,000 worth of orders on hand for gas and steam engines and turbines.”⁷⁶

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ E. E. Keller, “Model Incandescent Lighting Plant,” *Western Electrician* 12, no. 18 (6 May 1893): 233-35.

⁷¹ “Directors and Officers of the Westinghouse Machine Company Elected,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 10 January 1894.

⁷² Pittsburgh City Directory, 1888.

⁷³ “Helpless to Save Homes,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 13 April 1901, 1; “Handsome House Burned, Bad Fortune of Former Rochesterian at Pittsburg,” *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 28 April 1901.

⁷⁴ “No Water to Check Flames; Edgewood Residences Burned to the Ground, Entailing a Loss of \$40,000,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 13 April 1901.

⁷⁵ “Edgewood Golf Club,” entry, in *Harper’s Official Golf Guide, 1901* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 260. The golf course, at the time, was located on approximately thirty acres immediately north of Westinghouse’s Union Switch and Signal Plant. In 1907, the course was forced to relocate for expansion of the plant. Today, the approximate location of the golf course is the area around the Parkway East (I-376) immediately north of Edgewood Towne Centre.

⁷⁶ “Receivership is Discharged,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 1 April 1908, 11.

Though the company survived the crisis, Emil Keller's career at Westinghouse did not, as he was forced out in the ensuing reorganization in the spring of 1908.⁷⁷ A year later, he moved with his wife to Detroit to pursue a number of business enterprises that would occupy him for the remainder of his professional life.

During his years in Pittsburgh, Keller helped lead a number of Westinghouse ventures in addition to managing Westinghouse Machine Company. In 1902, Keller undertook for George Westinghouse the development of a new method for commercially manufacturing storage batteries.⁷⁸ Keller noted that he and his assembled engineers "made a substantial beginning in the storage battery business, under the Westinghouse name, in a short time."⁷⁹ The ultimate result was the formation of a storage battery department, which grew into the Westinghouse Storage Battery Company in 1909. In 1906, Keller was selected to oversee creation of a new Westinghouse subsidiary, The Detroit Insulated Wire Company to manufacture insulated wire, streetcar cables, lead pipe for conduits, and other electrical supplies. His work there ultimately became the impetus for the Kellers selecting Detroit as their home after leaving Pittsburgh.⁸⁰ Additionally, Emil Keller served as vice president and director of the Pittsburgh Meter Company; and director of the Westinghouse Foundries Company of Pittsburgh, East Pittsburgh, Trafford City, and Attica, New York; Security Investment Company; Nernst Lamp Company; and the Westinghouse Interworks Railroad Company. In terms of social and professional activities, he was a member of the Duquesne Club, Edgewood Golf Club, Oakmont Country Club, Engineers' Society of Western Pennsylvania, and the Engineers Club of New York City, along with the Automobile Club of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Amateur Photographers' Society.

The publication *Social Register, Pittsburgh, 1910* (published in 1909) listed the Kellers at 201 North Murland in the main body of the text, but an addendum titled "Dilatory Domiciles" inserted inside the front cover (published in February 1910), showed that they had by then moved to the Pasadena Apartments at 2170 East Jefferson Avenue in Detroit.⁸¹

Highlights of Keller's leadership roles in Detroit-based companies over the years included the following: President and ultimately principal owner of the Detroit Insulated Wire Company, Metal Products Company (steel automobile axles, gearings and other parts), and Insulating Materials Company (insulating products for the electrical and storage battery industries); president of the Standard Screw Products Company (screw machines and electrical welded products for the automotive industry); executive director of the Detroit Motorbus Company (passenger bus transportation); and director of the Bower Roller Bearing Company (automobile bearings), the Michigan Terminal Warehouse Corporation and the Central Detroit Warehouse Company (dry goods storage), and the Durango Commercial Company (rubber production for insulated wires). Additionally, during his years after leaving Pittsburgh, he was a director of the Rochester Trailer Company of East Rochester, New York (manufacturer of automobiles, trucks, trailers, hearses, etc.), the Hide-It-Heel Company of Brockton, Massachusetts (replacement heels for shoes), the Ontario Nickel Company in Worthington, Ontario

⁷⁷ "A Westinghouse Shakeup; General Manager Donner Makes Heavy Cuts—Keller Out," *New York Times*, 18 May 1908, 1.

⁷⁸ "Keller," obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 159.

⁷⁹ E. E. Keller, "George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him," 20.

⁸⁰ "Westinghouse Firm Buys Site in Detroit," *The Standard Union* (Brooklyn, New York), 22 July 1906; "Will Invest Here; Pittsburg Capital to Erect Big Plant in This City," *Detroit Free Press*, 22 July 1906.

⁸¹ The Social Register Association, *Social Register, Pittsburgh, 1910* (New York: The Social Register Association, November 1909, updated February 1910), 38.

(nickel mining and processing), and a large department store in Attica, New York, owned by his brother-in-law Hugh Miller, which opened in 1907.⁸²

From 1913 to 1915, Emil Keller served as one of three vice presidents of the prestigious national professional association The American Society of Mechanical Engineers.⁸³ On March 6, 1914, the Kellers cut their last substantial tie with Pittsburgh when they sold their Murtland Street house. The severing of relations with their adopted hometown was likely made more permanent by the death of George Westinghouse just a week later. He died on March 12th in New York at age 67. Emil Keller was among the more than 1,500 mourners who paid their respects at Westinghouse's funeral on March 14 at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City, attending as part of a delegation from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. Also attending was Nikola Tesla, Westinghouse's long-time collaborator in the establishment of alternating current.⁸⁴

Though the Kellers made Detroit their new home in the succeeding years, they maintained close personal ties with their relatives in Rochester. On December 21, 1915, Ella Miller Keller died at a family home, 7000 East Avenue in Pittsford, just east of the city.⁸⁵ During their many years together they had no children.

On September 15, 1917, Emil Keller married Corinne Beatrice Bray (1887-1962) at St. Paul's Chapel at Columbia University in New York City.⁸⁶ Corinne Bray was the daughter of William Libius Bray (1870-1905), an accountant, and Anna (McCurdy) Bray (1867-1898) of Minneapolis.⁸⁷ She likely met Keller in Pittsburgh through her uncle, Samuel Brown Dusenberre (1861-1919), who worked for Westinghouse Machine Company and lived near the Kellers. The U.S. Census for 1900 showed her living at 712 Lamar Street in Wilkinsburg (a half mile from the Keller's Edgewood Park home on Washington Street) with her uncle Samuel Dusenberre and aunt Agnes Maude (Bray) Dusenberre (the surname is misspelled as "Dusenberry" in the 1900 Census and again in 1910).⁸⁸

Samuel Dusenberre had worked as a clerk in Rochester, New York from 1879 to 1881.⁸⁹ While his employer has not been identified, it is possible that he was acquainted with Emil Keller and/or Keller's future wife, Ella Miller, during this time. By 1896, Dusenberre and his wife were living in Pittsburgh,

⁸² "Pittsburgher's Firm Gets Contracts for \$8,000,000; E. E. Keller Heads Company at Detroit Which Will Be Prominent in the Automobile World," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 24 October 1909, 4; "Durango Commercial Company," advertisement, *Detroit Evening Times*, 8 December 1910, 11; "New Firms and Incorporations," *The Hub* 57 no. 8 (November 1915), 35; "Our Own—Who's Who—and Why? Emil Ernest Keller, Director, Detroit Motorbus Co.," *Motor Bus News* 5, no. 7 (March 1931): 5; "Large Department Store About to Open in Attica," *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 2 December 1907, 3.

⁸³ "New Members of the Council," E. E. Keller, biography, *The Journal of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers* 36, no. 1 (January 1914): vi-ix; "A.S.M.E. Record and Index, 1930; "New Members of the Council, Past Officers, Vice Presidents," *Transactions of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers*, 1930 52, pt. 2, MAN_WDI (New York: The American Society of Mechanical Engineers, 1931), 11. Note: For the latter, the volume contains 33 sections, each numbered individually.

⁸⁴ "George Westinghouse Dead," obituary, *Electrical Review and Western Electrician* 64, no. 12 (21 March 1914): 565; "Pays Last Tribute to Westinghouse," obituary, *New York Times*, 15 March 1914, 12.

⁸⁵ "Keller, Ella Miller," death notice, *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 22 December 1915; "Keller," death notice, *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 23 December 1915.

⁸⁶ New York City Marriage Records, 1829-1938; New York, U.S., Episcopal Diocese of New York Church Records, 1767-1970,

www.ancestry.com. Two versions of Corinne Bray Keller's death certificate were found. One lists her birthdate as August 22, 1887; the other as August 23, 1887. The latter (from "U.S. Reports of Deaths of American Citizens Abroad, 1835-1974, Ancestry.com) indicates that her last known address in the United States was 1494 Fairway Drive, Birmingham, Michigan (the address at the time of her son, Emil Keller, Jr.).

⁸⁷ "Minnesota, Birth and Death Records, 1866-1916," database, www.familysearch.org, accessed 5 March 2023. William Bray's middle name appears in other sources as "Liebous" and "Liebons."

⁸⁸ United States Census, Wilkinsburg Borough, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 1900.

⁸⁹ "Samuel Brown Dusenberre," entry, in *Catalogue of the Sigma Phi: E.P.V.* (Place of publication not identified: Printed for the Society, 1915), 248; Rochester City Directories, 1880 and 1881.

with the 1897/98 city directory listing their address as 7223 McPherson Boulevard (since demolished) in what is today Point Breeze North, a block or so west of the Westinghouse estate.⁹⁰ By 1900, as noted, they had moved to Wilksburg and had welcomed their niece from Minneapolis. In 1902, Dusinger was elected to membership in the Engineers' Society of Western of Western Pennsylvania joining Emil Keller, who had been elected in 1895. A brief biography indicated that Dusinger worked as a purchasing agent for Westinghouse Machine Company in East Pittsburgh.⁹¹ Samuel Dusinger's brother, George B. Dusinger, also worked for Westinghouse, serving as general manager of Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company. He lived across the street from the Kellers during the time they lived on Washington Street in Edgewood Park.⁹²

By 1906, Samuel Dusinger had been elevated from purchasing agent to head of Westinghouse Machine Company's storage battery department, which had been started by Emil Keller in 1902.⁹³ In 1907, Corinne Bray graduated from Wilksburg High School. The city directory from that same year indicates that she then moved with her aunt and uncle from Lamar Street in Wilksburg to a "modern apartment of six rooms with two bathrooms" in The McAbee Dwellings, twin apartment buildings at 7225 Meade Street in Point Breeze North, two blocks east of the Kellers.⁹⁴ In the fall after graduation, she attended the Pennsylvania College for Women (i.e., Chatham University) and was a day student at the Margaret Morrison Carnegie School in 1908-09.⁹⁵ An article from September 1909 indicated that she was preparing to leave her Meade Street home to study at Columbia University.⁹⁶ A month later, when the Westinghouse Storage Battery Company was organized at Boonton, New Jersey, her uncle Samuel Dusinger was named vice president and general manager.⁹⁷

After fire destroyed the Boonton battery plant in February 1910, Samuel and Agnes Dusinger relocated to Detroit, where they were joined once again by their niece.⁹⁸ If Corinne Bray had somehow not met Emil Keller during the time they both lived in Pittsburgh, it is clear that they were acquainted by the time they both relocated to Detroit. A society page recounting activities in the Michigan vacation town of Orchard Lake (about 30 miles northwest of Detroit) from August 1910 noted that "Miss Corinne Bray, who has been visiting Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Keller, [has] returned to her home in Detroit."⁹⁹ Given the date, the Kellers would have been taking time away from their new home in The Pasadena Apartments in Detroit.¹⁰⁰ In Detroit, Samuel Dusinger, like Emil Keller, worked in the automobile

⁹⁰ "Samuel Brown Dusinger," entry in *Catalogue of the Sigma Phi: E.P.V.*, 248; Pittsburgh City Directory, 1897/1898.

⁹¹ "Elected to New Membership," *Proceedings of the Engineers' Society of Western Pennsylvania* 18, no. 1 (February 1902): 202.

⁹² Pittsburgh City Directory, 1899.

⁹³ "Westinghouse Storage Batteries," *The Signal Engineer* 1, no.7 (December 1906): 286.

⁹⁴ "For Rent; Unusually Desirable and Modern Apartment," advertisement, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 19 August 1909, 9; Pittsburgh City Directory, 1907.

⁹⁵ "Commencement Exercises," *Pittsburgh Press*, 29 May 1907, 3; "General Catalog," *Bulletin of the Carnegie Technical Schools* (Pittsburgh: Carnegie Technical Schools, 1909), 4th series, no. 3, 272; "Tableaux at the Pennsylvania College for Women," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Illustrated Sunday Magazine*, 15 December 1907, 6.

⁹⁶ "Personals," *The Index: Pittsburgh's Illustrated Weekly* 21, no. 12 (18 September 1909): 14.

⁹⁷ "Storage Battery Company Organizes," *Boston Evening Transcript*, 28 October 1909, 4.

⁹⁸ "Westinghouse Plant Burns," *The Plainfield Courier-News* (New Jersey), 7 February 1910, 4. The 1910 U.S. Census for Boonton, Morris County, New Jersey, indicated that the couple remained in Boonton until at least the enumeration date of April 28, 1910.

⁹⁹ "Events of Season at Orchard Lake," *Detroit Free Press*, 28 August 1910, unnumbered.

¹⁰⁰ The Social Register Association, *Social Register, Pittsburgh, 1911* (New York: The Social Register Association, November 1910), 37. The 1910 U.S. Census for Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan, which was enumerated on April 28, lists E. E. Keller and unnamed wife as residents of "apartment house." The scant amount of information (most fields are marked "unknown"), suggests that information was provided by someone other than the Kellers. The Pasadena building, which still stands, is located at 2170 East Jefferson Avenue and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

industry. From 1911 until his death in 1919, he was the western sales manager for the New Departure Manufacturing Company, which made ball bearings for motor vehicles.¹⁰¹

In 1913, Corinne Bray received her bachelor of science degree in education from Columbia University's Teacher's College.¹⁰² She then returned to Detroit, where she took extension courses at the University of Michigan and taught for the Detroit Department of Education.¹⁰³ When she married Emil Keller, their wedding license listed her address as 620 West 116th in New York (a large apartment building one block west of the Columbia University campus). Emil Keller's address was listed as Rochester, New York, suggesting that he had moved back home from Detroit, perhaps coincident with Ella Keller's death.

As he had done throughout his previous marriage, Keller continued to have close ties with Rochester, at times apparently maintaining homes there and in Detroit simultaneously. While children had eluded Emil Keller during his first marriage, fatherhood was in his future with his second wife. The 1920 U.S. Census shows him living in Rochester with his wife Corrine Keller; daughter, Anne Keller; and a servant, Constance Garniakowska, in a rented house at 1239 Lake Avenue.¹⁰⁴ In 1921 and 1922, the membership directory for The Franklin Institute listed his address as 717 Mount Hope Avenue, Rochester.¹⁰⁵ A year later it showed him living at the Hotel Sagamore, Rochester.¹⁰⁶

Together the couple had four children, but only two survived childhood: 1) William Bray Keller, who died in August 1919 at the family's Lake Avenue home in Rochester less than fifteen hours after his premature birth; 2) Anne McCurdy Keller, who died April 9, 1921 in El Centro, Imperial County, California at the age of 28 months from acute ileocolitis (she and her parents had been visiting relatives of Corinne Bray Keller); 3) Suzanne Brueck Keller (1922-51); and Emil Ernest Keller, Jr. (1925-82).¹⁰⁷ Beginning in the early 1920s, the Kellers' long-time family home became "Braywood" on Quarton Road in Bloomfield Hills Village, Michigan, about twenty miles northwest of Detroit.¹⁰⁸ The 1930 U.S. Census shows the family living there and being comprised of the following members: Emil E. Keller, Sr. (68), Corinne B. Keller (42), Suzanne B. Keller (8), Emil E. Keller, Jr. (4).¹⁰⁹

¹⁰¹ "Now a New Departure Man," *Motor Age* (14 September 1911): 46.

¹⁰² Columbia University in the City of New York, *Catalogue of Officers and Graduates of Columbia University*. 16 ed. (New York: Columbia University, 1916), 837.

¹⁰³ "University Extension Classes: Students," in *Catalogue of the University of Michigan for 1914-1915* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1915), 649; Detroit Board of Education, "Appointments and Transfers," in *Proceedings of the Board of Education* (10 September 1914): 114.

¹⁰⁴ United States Census, Rochester, Monroe County, New York, 1920.

¹⁰⁵ "Keller, E. E.," entry, in "Membership Directory," in *The Franklin Institute—Yearbook—1921* (Philadelphia: Hall of the Institute, 1 September 1921), 143; "Keller, E. E.," entry, in "Membership Directory," in *The Franklin Institute—Yearbook—1922* (Philadelphia: Hall of the Institute, 1 September 1922), 154.

¹⁰⁶ "Keller, E. E.," entry in "Membership Directory," in *The Franklin Institute—Yearbook—1923* (Philadelphia: Hall of the Institute, 1 September 1923), 179.

¹⁰⁷ Nancy Uffindell, Trustee/Genealogist/Public Historian, Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, New York, email to author containing records of interment and causes of death for the family of Emil E. Keller, 11 March 2023; Pennsylvania College for Women Alumnae Association, *Alumnae Recorder* (June 1921): 40; Downs, 707. John Keller is in possession of a detailed journal of the 1921 car trip to El Centro, California.

¹⁰⁸ The Keller home is listed in the 1939 Birmingham, Michigan Directory with a notation that the house was on the north side of Quarton Road west of Cranbrook Road. *McAlpines Atlas of Oakland County Michigan—1947* (Drawn and Compiled by W. S. McAlpine Map Co., Birmingham, MI), shows the E. E. Keller parcel, which contained nine acres. Comparing that location to present-day maps places the property in roughly the 2400-block of Quarton Road. The former Keller property has since been subdivided, with Quarton Lane running north-south through the center. There is no indication that "Braywood" survives, as all houses on the lane appear to date from the past thirty years or so. Thus, there is no way to determine if Braywood, like 201 North Murtland, had been designed by Emil Keller or was the farmhouse of the previous owner, H. C. Smith. Thanks to Leslie Pielack, director of the Birmingham Museum, for undertaking the following commissioned report: "Property/Biographical Report: Emil Ernest Keller; Corinne Bray Keller," emailed to author, 24 February 2023.

¹⁰⁹ United States Census, Bloomfield Hills, Oakland County, Michigan, 1930.

In 1936, Keller authored a historical account of his years working with George Westinghouse. The 25-page collection of personal reflections was titled, “George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him,” and was part of an unpublished Westinghouse Air Brake anthology, *Anecdotes and Reminiscences of George Westinghouse, 1846-1914, Contributed by his Former Associates*,” which was created to mark the 90th anniversary of George Westinghouse’s birth. For a photo of Keller from this time period, see Figure 25.

On January 7, 1938, Emil Keller died at the age of 74 at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. Dozens of newspapers around the country published his obituary, including the *New York Times*.¹¹⁰ His death certificate listed the cause of death as carcinoma of the prostate that had metastasized to the spine and that he had battled this for over five months, having last worked in August 1937.¹¹¹ Funeral services took place in Rochester, with burial at Mount Hope Cemetery. Throughout his life, he maintained memberships in a number of national organizations, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the Franklin Institute, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Civic Federation, the National Geographic Society, and the Society of Automotive Engineers, along with dozens of other organizations in Pittsburgh, Detroit and Rochester.

Emil Keller’s second wife survived him by nearly a quarter century. Corinne Bray Keller died April 24, 1962 at the age of 74 in Johannesburg, South Africa from a subarachnoid hemorrhage.¹¹²

Ella (Miller) Keller—Historic Overview

Ella Miller was born in 1853/54 in upstate New York to Ammi Rogers Miller and Martha (Tracy) Miller and spent her childhood in the area around Attica, approximately forty-five miles southeast of Rochester. The 1860 U.S. Census indicates that the family was comprised of the parents, six children and one servant, and that her father was a farmer in Bennington, Wyoming County, New York (five miles west of Attica). The 1870 Census indicates that the family was comprised of the parents and seven children and that her father continued to work as a farmer, but then in Bethany, Genesee County, New York (ten miles northeast of Attica). He also operated a grist mill there.¹¹³ Ultimately, the Millers had five sons and three daughters. A biography from 1895 indicates that Ammi Miller’s “parents were prosperous; and, his wife having inherited a considerable sum from her father [Alanson Tracy], they were placed in easy circumstances.”¹¹⁴ In 1873, Ammi and Martha Miller retired to the village of Attica.¹¹⁵

On June 15, 1871, Ella Miller married Robert P. Turneure in Belvidere, Illinois, northeast of Chicago.¹¹⁶ Turneure was born in 1848 and was from a family who lived in Crawford County, Pennsylvania when the 1850 Census was enumerated.¹¹⁷ In 1865, his family relocated to Belvidere.¹¹⁸ In

¹¹⁰ “E. E. Keller Dead, Industrialist, 74, An Engineer Long Active in Electrical Field—He is Stricken in Detroit, Once with Westinghouse,” obituary, *New York Times*, 9 January 1938, 43; “Emil Ernest Keller,” obituary, *Buffalo Evening News*, 8 January 1938.

¹¹¹ “Emil E. Keller,” Certificate of Death, Michigan Department of Health, 7 January 1938.

¹¹² “Corinne Bray Keller,” Death Certificate, District Registrar of Births and Deaths, Johannesburg, South Africa, 28 April 1962.

¹¹³ “Hugh Miller—Merchant of Attica and Family History,” *Attica News*, 8 May [possibly 1941, date illegible], Attica Historical Society, www.ancestry.com, Accessed 4 March 2023.

¹¹⁴ “Hugh Miller,” entry, in *Biographical Review: This Volume Contains Biographical Sketches of The Leading Citizens of Livingston and Wyoming Counties, New York* (Boston: Biographical Review Publishing Company, 1895), 472.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ “Illinois, County Marriages, 1810-1940,” www.familysearch.org.

¹¹⁷ United States Census, Spring Township, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, 1850.

¹¹⁸ “Death of Robert Turneure,” obituary, *The Belvidere (Illinois) Standard*, 4 December 1877.

May 1875, he received a patent for an innovative boot tree and by November of that year he and his wife had moved to Rochester, New York, where he had begun manufacturing it.¹¹⁹ On November 28, 1877, Turneure died from consumption (tuberculosis) back in his hometown of Belvidere at the age of 29.¹²⁰ Production of the boot tree was subsequently taken over by Ella Miller's father. An advertisement from 1877 indicated that the company, A. R. Miller, Son, & Co., had their factory at 122 Mill Street in Rochester and that they were utilizing R. Turneure's patent (Figure 26).¹²¹ By this time, a second venture, "A. R. Miller & Son, Attica, New York" was establishing a national reputation as the manufacturer of the Carriage Painters' Automatic Jack, a stand that allowed the body of carriages to be easily painted and varnished.¹²² In 1880, Census records indicate that Ella Turneure was living with her sister Lucelia Bostwick and her husband, physician H. A. Bostwick, at 250 North St. Paul Street in Rochester.¹²³ On October 23, 1884, as noted above, she married Emil Keller at her parents' home in Attica, with the newspaper announcement listing the couple's surnames as Keller and Turneure.¹²⁴

Little information specific to Ella Keller has been found in the decade following her marriage to Emil Keller. However, after the couple moved back to Pittsburgh following the World's Fair, she became active in East End social circles and spear-headed a number of charitable activities.

Shortly after arriving from Chicago in early 1894, Ella Keller regularly dedicated her time to the Kingsley House Association, which supported the charitable ventures of the Kingsley House, a settlement house that at the time supported European immigrants. It was initially located in the Strip District before moving to the Hill District.¹²⁵ For many years she chaired their Christmas Circle, which helped provide gifts for the children of the settlement house along with decorations.¹²⁶ Kindergarten seemed to hold a special interest for Ella Keller. One Thanksgiving she baked thirty-six miniature pumpkin pies in the settlement house kitchen to provide one for each child of that age. For many years she was involved in numerous activities that supported free kindergarten in Pittsburgh, including the Kindergarten College of Pittsburgh, a teacher-training program in Oakland.¹²⁷ In 1901, when Henry Clay Frick provided a building and grounds at Fulton Street and Bedford Avenue in the Hill District for a larger, improved settlement house and kindergarten, Emil and Ella Keller were among a short list of a dozen donors who provided the furnishings and equipment.¹²⁸

Ella Keller served on a number of women's committees that advocated for "sanitary reform," including the Permanent Civic Committee, which had among its goals the creation of healthful tenements, reduction of air pollution and improved conditions for public transportation and transit stations. In 1903, she was a signatory to a letter to J. D. Callery, president of the Street Railways Company, which had recently consolidated lines throughout much of the city. It called for "radical reform" measures, such as providing proper ventilation and regular washing of the interiors of street railway cars and ensuring that

¹¹⁹ *Chicago Weekly Post*, 6 May 1875; *The Belvidere (Illinois) Standard*, 9 November 1875.

¹²⁰ "Death of Robert Turneure," obituary, *The Belvidere (Illinois) Standard*, 4 December 1877.

¹²¹ "A. R. Miller, Son, & Co.," advertisement, *Rochester City Directory*, 1877.

¹²² "A. R. Miller & Son, Attica, New York," entry, in *Draft Book of Centennial Carriages, Displayed in Philadelphia, at the International Exhibition of 1876* (New York: Hub Publishing, c. 1876), 115.

¹²³ United States Census, Rochester, Monroe County, New York, 1880.

¹²⁴ "Keller-Turneure," wedding announcement, *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 25 October 1884.

¹²⁵ "Annual Membership," *Third Annual Report of the Kingsley House Association, 1896* (Pittsburgh: Myers & Shinkle, Co., 1896), 16; "Annual Membership," *Fourth Annual Report of the Kingsley House Association, 1897* (Pittsburgh, 1897), 32.

¹²⁶ "The Kindergarten Christmas," *Kingsley House Record* 4, no. 34 (January 1900): 2; "The Christmas Tree," *Kingsley House Record* 5, no. 44 (January 1901): 5.

¹²⁷ "Doings in the Social Realm," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 3 June 1900, 14; "House Notes," *Kingsley House Record* 6, no. 53 (December 1901): 5; "Kindergarten Convention; Largest Union of the Kind in the World Meets Here in April," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 15 March 1903, 7.

¹²⁸ "Kindergarten Work Started . . . Kingsley House Will Open," *Pittsburgh Press*, 27 August 1901, 5.

there were exit doors at both the front and rear of all cars.¹²⁹ She also promoted anti-spitting measures for health and sanitation as a member of the anti-expectoration committee of the Woman's Clubs of Western Pennsylvania.¹³⁰ In September 1909, shortly before relocating to Detroit with her husband, she again fought against air pollution and in favor of improved living conditions as she advocated strongly against an asphalt plant being constructed on Hamilton Avenue in Homewood. Calling the proposed City-owned plant a nuisance, and citing concerns over "smoke, dust, noise and bad odor," Keller and more than thirty other property owners submitted a petition urging Mayor Magee to find a more appropriate location. They sought not only relief for their Westinghouse Park neighborhood, but a solution that would locate the plant outside of *any* residential district.¹³¹ They were joined by the Homewood Board of Trade and numerous other neighborhood organizations, but ultimately lost their fight.¹³²

Ella Keller hosted multiple gatherings of the Epoch Club over the years in both her Schenley Hotel and Murtland Street homes. In 1904, she was elected treasurer of this club for East End women, which was active in social welfare and civic activities.¹³³ During her years in Pittsburgh, she was an active member of the Sisterhood of Calvary Episcopal Church in Shadyside and served on a number of social committees and supported various events, and she and her husband were guarantors (donors) to the Pittsburgh Opera.¹³⁴ In May 1909, she volunteered on two reception committees when the ninth annual convention of the National Association of Manufacturers of the United States was held in Pittsburgh's Carnegie Music Hall.¹³⁵ After moving to Detroit with her husband, Ella Keller continued to pursue social and charitable interests. Among other activities, she was a member of the Twentieth Century Club (organized to advance the interests of women while promoting science, literature and art) and served on their Housing Reform Committee and secretary of the Program Committee.¹³⁶

On December 21, 1915, Ella Miller Keller died in Rochester, New York at "Colnos," a family residence at 7000 East Avenue.¹³⁷ She was 58 years old. Pittsburgh and Rochester papers printed only brief death notices. While a Buffalo obituary noted that she had died "from shock," more accurate cemetery records, which drew from information on her death certificate, indicate that she died from a cerebral hemorrhage and that the location of her death was the Rochester suburb of Brighton (though other accounts list the location as Pittsford).¹³⁸ She was buried in Mount Hope Cemetery in Rochester.¹³⁹

¹²⁹ Marion Bonsall, "The Past Week in Club Circles," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 11 January 1903, 8.

¹³⁰ "Week in Women's Clubs," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 23 November 1902, 2.

¹³¹ "Asphalt Plant Named Nuisance," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 8 September 1909.

¹³² "City Soon Will Build on Peabody Site; To Begin Work on the Asphalt Plant When Plans Have Been Prepared," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 13 December 1909, 4.

¹³³ "Elects New Officers," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 28 May 1904, 7; "Clubs and Associations," *The Index: Pittsburgh's Illustrated Weekly* 17, no. 11 (14 September 1907): 16; "Year Books Issued," *Pittsburgh Press*, 27 September 1908, 13.

¹³⁴ "Society," *Pittsburgh Press*, 25 November 1896; "Daily Doings of the Socially Inclined," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 25 November 1897, 4;

"Society," *Pittsburgh Press*, 26 November 1898, 2; "Tenth Season of the Pittsburgh Orchestra: A Full List of Guarantors," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 4 September 1904, 8.

¹³⁵ "Manufacturers Convention," *American Manufacturer and Iron World* 74, no. 20 (19 May 1909): 630.

¹³⁶ *The Twentieth Century Club of Detroit, 1913-1914 Program, By-Laws, List of Members* (Detroit: The Twentieth Century Club, 1914), 14. *The Twentieth Century Club of Detroit, 1915-1916 Program, By-Laws, List of Members* (Detroit: The Twentieth Century Club, 1916), 7, 17.

¹³⁷ "Keller," death notice, *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 23 December 1915; "Keller, Ella Miller," death notice, *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 22 December 1915;

¹³⁸ "Mrs. E. E. Keller Dies," *Buffalo News*, 22 December 1915, 16; Nancy Uffindell, Trustee/Genealogist/Public Historian, Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, New York, email to author containing records of interment and cause of death for the family of Emil E. Keller, 11 March 2023.

¹³⁹ Find a Grave, database, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/8398489/ella-keller>, accessed 24 February 2023, memorial page for Ella Miller Keller (1863–1915), Find a Grave Memorial ID 8398489, citing Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, Monroe County, New York. The tombstone erroneously lists Ella Miller Keller's birth year as 1863, which is impossible given all of the pertinent biographical information presented here.

Emil E. Keller—Significance

The following narrative highlights the numerous accomplishments of Emil Ernest Keller and supports the landmark nomination of 201 North Murtland Street as the most significant extant resource within the City of Pittsburgh associated with his life and work.

Westinghouse superintendent of lighting for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition

Emil Keller, through his work supervising the planning, installation and maintenance of the electrical plant and lighting at the World's Fair under the Westinghouse contract, played a pivotal role in settling the "current wars" in which the alternating current system of George Westinghouse and Nikola Tesla ultimately bested Thomas Edison and General Electric's direct current design (Figures 27 and 28). The lighting for the fair, with over 100,000 light fixtures and hundreds of miles of wiring, represented the first large-scale proof-of-concept of the Westinghouse alternating current system (Figure 29). Keller was tasked with executing "the largest single electric lighting construction contract ever undertaken up to that time, with only a little more than a year's time in which to complete the work. It included all the installation of plant, underground and interior work, decorative lighting, and the operation before, during and after the exposition period, as well as the final removal and disposal of the installation."¹⁴⁰ The generating plant alone "was the largest alternating-current central station then in existence, consisting of twelve 1000-hp units, each equipped with two 500-hp alternators."¹⁴¹

In assessing the significance of Keller's contribution, it is essential to understand that that he was not a mere underling following detailed daily orders from Westinghouse. In fact, the opposite was true. Keller was given near autonomous control of the project by Westinghouse, with the latter not inspecting Keller's work until months after opening day. Keller described this "full authority to manage" in his 25-page personal reflection from 1936: "One of the characteristics of George Westinghouse that impressed me was that, when he was confident of an executive, he left him practically to his own methods and resources. He puzzled me at first by leaving all matters relating to work on the Exposition grounds to me with no instructions, other than a printed copy of the contract specification, and no interference. . . . He did not come to Chicago to see the work at the Fair until midsummer after the [May 1, 1893] opening, when in full operation." Keller added that "When someone at Pittsburgh attempted to dictate details, [Westinghouse] quickly squelched this and assured me of a free hand."¹⁴²

The article, "Model Incandescent Lighting Plant," published *Western Electrician* the week that the Fair opened helped illustrate how Keller's exacting methodology was one of the reasons for his success. Given the extremely short window to complete the installation, he established "an inviolable rule that no wiring should be erected without a complete detail drawing. In every case, all necessary calculations and drawings were made in the office, giving the foreman all required information, thus securing a uniform construction and a permanent record for future reference in case of trouble."¹⁴³ Keller began this practice shortly after he was hired by Westinghouse. By July 1892 he had "a force of fifty men working under his direction, including a number of draughtsmen."¹⁴⁴ Of particular note and a credit to Keller's sense of equal opportunity, one of the "draughtsmen" that he hired was, in fact, a woman. The journal

¹⁴⁰ "New Members of the Council," E. E. Keller, biography, *The Journal of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers* 36, no. 1 (January 1914): ix.

¹⁴¹ "Keller," obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 158.

¹⁴² E. E. Keller, "George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him," 5.

¹⁴³ E. E. Keller, "Model Incandescent Lighting Plant," *Western Electrician* 12, no. 18 (6 May 1893): 233.

¹⁴⁴ "Electricity at the World's Fair," *Western Electrician* 11, no. 4, 23 (July 1892): 45.

Western Electrician noted in September 1892 that “As an instance of the advanced ideas—to say nothing of good taste—of the Westinghouse engineering corps at the World’s Fair grounds, it should be stated that many of the handsomest drawings . . . come from a lady. This young woman has her own [drafting] board and does her work like any other delineator, and it is said the knights of the ‘T’ square and triangle at the grounds have to ‘hustle’ to keep even.”¹⁴⁵ Unfortunately, the journal did not publish her name.

Keller’s design work at the fair was not limited to electricity. In 1891, when he was working for the Fair’s electrical department, *Western Electrician* reported that “Several changes have been made in the plans for the electricity building by the construction department at the request of Mr. Keller.”¹⁴⁶ Of note, Keller successfully advocated for design changes to improve the architectural program of the building, which had been designed by Van Brunt & Howe of Kansas City. These included removal of planned grand central stairways that would have occupied prime exhibition space, to be replaced by eight staircases and eight elevators distributed in the building’s corners and near its side entrances. Keller’s redesign created a 40-foot wide center aisle with others measuring 20 feet, “leaving about 240,000 square feet actually available for exhibits,” with space secured in the center of the building to “be utilized for some brilliant lighting effect” (Figure 30).¹⁴⁷ That centerpiece ended up being Thomas Edison’s “Tower of Light,” which showcased General Electric’s lighting technologies—but Westinghouse did not want for exhibit space. In addition to multiple displays in the Electricity Building, the entire Westinghouse power plant was open to public view in Machinery Hall, with the visual climax being the massive Westinghouse alternating current switchboard spanning the south end. Faced in one thousand square feet of white marble and towering two stories high and over 70 feet wide, it allowed one technician to control all of the electricity at the Fair (Figure 31).

Keller’s successful execution of the Westinghouse contract did not go unnoticed. He recalled that those involved “were naturally all much pleased with the final outcome of the World’s Fair adventure. The lighting of the Fair, the operation of the lighting plant and of the other Westinghouse exhibits . . . were highly satisfying. Mr. [Harlow N.] Higginbotham, President of the Exposition, some months after the close of the Fair, wrote Mr. Westinghouse a letter of congratulation and profuse thanks, saying that this contract was most courteously handled and the only one that could be closed without conferences to make adjustments.” The journal *Western Electrician* reported “That the [Westinghouse contract] work was so successfully accomplished is due in no small degree to the practical engineering ability, level head and unremitting industry of E. E. Keller, the general manager of the entire Westinghouse interest at the exposition. Mr. Keller was peculiarly well fitted for the trying situation in which he was placed, and, although he has lost some flesh by reason of his World’s Fair experience, he has won golden opinions that cannot fail to stand him in stead during his future career.”¹⁴⁸ On a personal level, Keller added that Westinghouse “did not fail to use that magnetic manner of his before leaving [his midsummer inspection of the Fair]. After a visit with the Exposition officials, he puffed me up a bit with mild praise and expressions of satisfaction. Like most of his helpers, I felt ready to go through fire for him and was amply repaid for the daily fourteen to even eighteen hours devoted to the work during the preceding year. Such was the man, Westinghouse.”¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ “Electricity at the World’s Fair,” *Western Electrician* 11, no. 11 (10 September 1892): 133.

¹⁴⁶ “Electricity at the World’s Fair,” *Western Electrician* 9, no. 13 (26 September 1891): 185.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ “Electricity at the World’s Fair,” *Western Electrician* 13, no. 25 (16 December 1893): 309.

¹⁴⁹ E. E. Keller, “George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him,” 6.

Vice President and General Manager of Westinghouse Machine Company

The ultimate praise from Westinghouse came in the form of his immediate hiring of Keller at the conclusion of the Fair to run the Westinghouse Machine Company. A newspaper article from January 10, 1894, announcing Keller's appointment that day to vice president and general manager, placed Keller's hiring in the context the rapidly expanding demand for alternating current electrical plants, especially those of the Westinghouse design wherein the engine and the dynamo were combined in one apparatus.¹⁵⁰

At the time of Keller's hiring, Westinghouse Machine Company was located in Lawrenceville on two blocks bounded by Liberty Avenue, Spring Alley, 24th and 26th Streets (Figures 32 and 33). Large portions of the plant remain today and are home to the Pittsburgh Opera and Brake House Lofts. The Machine Company had been established in 1881 and was known for its Westinghouse single-acting, high-speed steam engine, the design of which was first proposed by George Westinghouse's brother, Herman H. Westinghouse.¹⁵¹ By the time Keller took charge, the company had manufactured over seven thousand units.¹⁵²

As he had at the World's Fair, George Westinghouse continued to trust Keller with the "full authority to manage." Under Keller's nearly fifteen years of leadership, the Westinghouse Machine Company greatly expanded its product line and production capacity. By the time of his departure in 1908, the company was "the leading manufacturer of steam-powered appliances in the world" and so much more.¹⁵³ An obituary of Keller in the journal *Mechanical Engineering* summarized his accomplishments as vice president and general manager as follows: "Under his general management, in this position, the business grew to very large proportions. His office, during the next fifteen years, brought him into intimate personal relations with George Westinghouse, in business as well as in a social way, while developing the largest types of steam engines, steam turbines, and generators, as well as extending the field and sizes of gas engines from the small and inefficient units at first in limited use, to those of the largest capacities, including the first and still the largest gas engines operated with waste gases from blast furnaces, for electric power and for furnace blowing engines. These required also the development of washing and purifying apparatus for cleaning dust and other foreign matter from the waste gas. The now universally used and indispensable mechanical stoker, for steam boilers, was another new field of progress during this time; gas producers, steam condensers, of entirely new principle and type, and various other power-station requirements were added to the list of the company's major activities."¹⁵⁴

Other significant accomplishments by Keller during his tenure at Westinghouse Machine Company included the following:

—Relocation and expansion of the Westinghouse Machine Company

Keller directed the planning and execution of the company's 1894-96 relocation from Lawrenceville to East Pittsburg in the Turtle Creek Valley (Figures 33 and 34). The move was part of the creation of "a

¹⁵⁰ "To Rush the New Dynamo; Directors and Officers of the Westinghouse Machine Company Elected," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 10 January 1894.

¹⁵¹ Emil E. Keller and Francis Hodgkinson, "The Steam Turbine in the United States, I. Developments by the Westinghouse Machine Company," *Mechanical Engineering* 58, no. 11 (November 1936): 683.

¹⁵² J. M. Kelly, "The Westinghouse Machine Company," entry in *J. M. Kelly's Handbook of Greater Pittsburg* (Pittsburgh: The J. M. Kelly Co., Publishers, 1895), 58.

¹⁵³ *Pittsburgh Gazette Times*, "The Westinghouse Interests," *The Story of Pittsburgh and Vicinity: Illustrated* (Pittsburgh: The Pittsburgh Gazette Times, 1908), 213.

¹⁵⁴ "Keller," obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 159.

massive Westinghouse manufacturing complex” that consolidated most Pittsburgh-area operations onto one sprawling, inter-connected campus fourteen miles east of Downtown Pittsburgh.¹⁵⁵ “This part of the Turtle Creek Valley [became] the engineering Mecca of the world with hundreds of engineers visiting daily. No greater manufacturing valley had ever existed for heavy industry. In its peak, ‘Westinghouse Valley’ would have over 30,000 employees. The valley boasted world-class foundries of iron, steel, and brass as well as electrical equipment factories. The automation was the best in the world, foreshadowing the great assembly lines of [Henry] Ford. The management system was one of the first in the country to fully implement the scientific management concepts of Frederick Taylor.”¹⁵⁶ Keller’s work included considerable involvement in the design of the new Westinghouse Machine Company facilities and subsequent expansions, which included a doubling in size of the plant in 1898 (Figures 36 and 37). That year that also marked his becoming one of the four largest stockholders in the company. By the end of his tenure in 1908, he had led the growth of the company from two acres and about 1,500 employees in Lawrenceville to over fifty acres and nearly 5,000 workers at the Turtle Creek site and affiliated sites around the country (Figures 38 and 39).¹⁵⁷ By the time of his departure, an average of 175 [rail] cars of finished product were being shipped monthly from East Pittsburgh and the company had branch offices in all principal cities in the country.¹⁵⁸

One small reason behind Keller’s success at Westinghouse Machine again came down to an exacting methodology, as explained in an article from 1898: “Each part of a Westinghouse engine, whether steam or gas, is numbered, like the parts of a modern watch or bicycle. Duplicates are thus always obtainable, so that if any part of a Westinghouse engine breaks or wears out, the owner has only to telegraph or cable . . . and the part can be supplied on short notice, whether the order comes from Wilkesburg or Shanghai.”¹⁵⁹

The economic impact of the company under Keller’s leadership extended beyond Pittsburgh to include stoker works at Craigin (South Chicago), Illinois, and then later at Attica, New York (Figure 40).¹⁶⁰ Keller is directly responsible for locating the Attica plant in the hometown of his first wife, Ella Miller Keller. An article in *The Buffalo Commercial* noted that “It was through the united efforts of Hugh Miller, Attica’s prominent merchant and his brother-in-law, Mr. Keller . . . of the Westinghouse Company . . . that the industry was induced to locate in Attica.”¹⁶¹ Reflecting on the decision to build there, Keller noted that “I wanted to build an extensive plant at Attica, New York, for the manufacture of our stokers, because of labor troubles and inadequacy at a leased plant near Chicago. [Westinghouse’s] answer was, ‘I see you have given the question careful thought and I think you are right. Go ahead.’”¹⁶² The subsequent impact on the local economy was considerable. When the plant opened in 1905, it created over 200 jobs in a village that numbered fewer than 1,800 people in 1900.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁵ Quentin R. Skrabec, Jr., *Benevolent Barons: American Worker-Centered Industrialists, 1850-1910* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2015), 174.

¹⁵⁶ Skrabec, *Benevolent Barons*, 174.

¹⁵⁷ “Double the Capital Called for by Orders; Increase of Westinghouse Plant and Money to Run it Will be Needed,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 29 December 1898, 2. The figure of nearly 5,000 employees came from Keller himself in E. E. Keller, “George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him,” 17.

¹⁵⁸ John Newton Boucher, editor-in-chief, *A Century and a Half of Pittsburg and her People*, v. 2 (New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1908), 59.

¹⁵⁹ “Double the Capital Called for by Orders; Increase of Westinghouse Plant and Money to Run it Will be Needed,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 29 December 1898, 2.

¹⁶⁰ Westinghouse Air Brake Company, *The Westinghouse Companies at the International Railway Congress* (Wilmerding: The Westinghouse Air Brake Company, 1906), 38.

¹⁶¹ “Attica’s Luck; The Westinghouse Company to Establish Extensive Stoker Plant There,” *Buffalo Commercial*, 2 April 1903.

¹⁶² E. E. Keller, “George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him,” 20.

¹⁶³ “To Build Big Stoker Plant; News Brings Joy to Attica People; 200 Hands to be Employed,” *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 17 March 1905.

A unique historical resource exists to allow one to see the Westinghouse Machine Company and other Westinghouse facilities in the Turtle Creek Valley in action in 1904 at the height of Keller's leadership. The Library of Congress has posted to its website a series of documentary films titled *Inside an American Factory: Films of the Westinghouse Works, 1904*. The collection contains 21 silent motion pictures "showing various views of Westinghouse companies. Most prominently featured are the Westinghouse Air Brake Company, the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, and the Westinghouse Machine Company. The films were intended to showcase the company's operations. Exterior and interior shots of the factories are shown along with scenes of male and female workers performing their duties at the plants. The motion pictures taken of the Westinghouse Works were produced by the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company from April 13 to May 16, 1904 [when the Kellers had just purchased their Murtland Street lot], and were photographed by G. W. (Billy) Bitzer."¹⁶⁴ Catalogs from the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company indicate that at least 29 films were made of the Westinghouse Works, of which the Library of Congress has 21.¹⁶⁵ They can be accessed at: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/films-of-westinghouse-works-1904/>

—*Acquisition of the Parsons steam turbine and the expertise of engineer Francis Hodgkinson*

In 1895, George Westinghouse began investigating the work of Sir Charles Algernon Parsons of England into the potential for steam turbines to drive alternators as part of commercially viable power systems. Parsons, was the "patentee of the only practical steam turbine then reasonably well demonstrated in moderate sizes to indicate future practicability of large units."¹⁶⁶ In September of that year, Westinghouse sent Emil Keller to England to investigate. Engineer Francis Hodgkinson, who had worked with Parsons on the design of his turbine, recalled that "It was characteristic of . . . Westinghouse to delegate authority . . . His instructions to Keller were that if he saw value in this turbine development, he was to acquire the American rights, and to pay whatever considerations he thought proper. This culminated in an exclusive agreement being consummated in the later part of 1895 for the building and sale of Parsons steam turbines in the United States. . ." by the Westinghouse Machine Company.¹⁶⁷

Keller described the assignment from George Westinghouse as follows: "I was to determine whether [the turbine] was a promising thing, and if so, to acquire the rights for making it. Asking how much I might pay, I was characteristically told that the method and the price were for me to determine. He said he had little idea of its value but to secure it any sane price if attractive. I was again left free. . ." ¹⁶⁸ Significantly, Keller also arranged for Hodgkinson to travel to Pittsburgh to convey the necessary operational knowledge. He ended up staying forty years with Westinghouse, until his retirement in 1936.¹⁶⁹ Keller later quipped that acquiring a reluctant Hodgkinson had ultimately been harder than getting the turbine itself.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁴ "Inside an American Factory: Films of the Westinghouse Works, 1904; About this Collection," Library of Congress, available at <https://www.loc.gov/collections/films-of-westinghouse-works-1904/about-this-collection/>, accessed 1 March 2023.

¹⁶⁵ Karen C. Lund, "Inside an American Factory: The Westinghouse Works in 1904," Library of Congress, available at <https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/970224/factory.html>, accessed 1 March 2023.

¹⁶⁶ "Keller," obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 159.

¹⁶⁷ Francis Hodgkinson, quoted in W. Garrett Scaife, *From Galaxies to Turbines: Science, Technology and the Parsons Family* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2000), 323.

¹⁶⁸ E. E. Keller, "George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him," 7.

¹⁶⁹ W. Garrett Scaife, *From Galaxies to Turbines: Science, Technology and the Parsons Family* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2000), 323.

¹⁷⁰ E. E. Keller, "George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him," 7.

The significance of Keller's acquisition was summed up by the journal *Mechanical Engineering* in 1938 as "the first commercially useful example of a steam turbine seen in this country, which became the basis for development of Westinghouse steam-turbine units that are one hundred times as powerful as the largest reciprocating steam engines ever found practicable and are now used in the largest power plants and ocean vessels of the world (Figure 41)."¹⁷¹ A decade later, the same journal called Keller "a mechanical genius," and noted that his negotiations for the rights to the Parsons turbine and to the expertise of Hodgkinson "fully justified the confidence and farsightedness of Keller."¹⁷² Historian Quentin R. Skrabec, Jr. concluded simply that Keller's negotiations helped Westinghouse "start another engineering revolution" much as Tesla's designs for alternating current had done a decade earlier.¹⁷³ Keller, in his own words, concluded that "The acquisition of the steam turbine was an epoch-making event in Westinghouse's career and in power production."¹⁷⁴

Leader of other Westinghouse ventures

As noted above, Keller was significant for heading a number of other companies controlled by George Westinghouse, among which were the Pittsburgh Meter Company (manufacturer of gas and water meters), Security Investment Company (real estate, especially the development of the Westinghouse Park Plan), Nernst Lamp Company (light bulbs), and the Westinghouse Interworks Railroad Company. The latter was a five-mile-long private railroad created in 1903 that connected the Westinghouse facilities in the Turtle Creek Valley from East Pittsburg to Trafford. In addition to transporting freight, employees and local travelers, it was "used for scientific, experimental and exhibition purposes."¹⁷⁵

Installer of numerous electrical plants and systems throughout the country

As noted above, Emil Keller made significant contributions to numerous towns, businesses and other organizations through his work installing electrical plants and systems from his first project in East Liberty in 1888 until his acceptance of the World's Fair position in 1891. It is fair to say that the impact on those who gave up candles, kerosene and steam power was nothing short of revolutionary.

Pioneer in electric vehicles and battery technology

As early as 1891, Emil Keller began exploring the potential uses of storing electricity in batteries, especially as a means of propulsion for vehicles. In 1892, with planning for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago underway, Keller and two other electric vehicle proponents, Fred Degenhardt (Keller's electrical engineering partner) and Clyde J. Coleman, formed the Columbia Perambulator Company to produce battery-powered transport for World's Fair visitors. Three prototypes were built, two of them tricycles steered by a driver perched on a rear seat, and a larger, four-wheeled vehicle, which seated four people (on two seats constructed back-to-back) with a top speed of ten miles per hour (Figures 42 and 43). While the prototypes were exhibited in the Electrical Building at the Exposition, production on a larger scale never occurred, due in large part to the demands placed on Keller from his appointment to superintendent of the Westinghouse lighting contract.¹⁷⁶ Their vehicle inventions were the subject of an illuminating discussion at the Chicago Electric Club on March 20, 1893.¹⁷⁷ Degenhardt died from pneumonia in Chicago in 1894 at the age of 38.¹⁷⁸ The company disbanded in 1896. For

¹⁷¹ "Keller," obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 159.

¹⁷² "Francis Hodgkinson," obituary, in *Mechanical Engineering* 71, no. 12 (December 1949): 986.

¹⁷³ Quentin R. Skrabec, Jr., *George Westinghouse: Gentle Genius* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2007), 195.

¹⁷⁴ E. E. Keller, "George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him," 8.

¹⁷⁵ "Small Railroad is as Perfect as Can be Made," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 11 September 1904.

¹⁷⁶ Beverly Rae Kimes, "Columbia Perambulator," entry, *Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805-1942*, 3d ed. (Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 1996), 361.

¹⁷⁷ "Chicago Electric Club," *Western Electrician* 12, no. 14, 8 (April 1893): 183.

¹⁷⁸ "Fred E. Degenhardt," obituary, *The Inter Ocean* (Chicago), 8 December 1894, 6.

historical context, Keller's exploration with Degenhardt of the potential of battery-powered vehicles that began in 1891 occurred only months after William Morrison, a chemist from Des Moines, Iowa, debuted the first successful electric car in the United States in late 1890 (building on a prototype from 1887). Designed as a six-passenger vehicle, it was little more than an electrified wagon, but it helped spark interest in the development of electric vehicles.¹⁷⁹

As noted above, in 1902, Keller undertook a special project for George Westinghouse that led to a new method for commercially manufacturing storage batteries, which ultimately led to creation of the Westinghouse Storage Battery Company, which saw an extensive output of Westinghouse batteries throughout the first half of the twentieth century.¹⁸⁰

A lengthy feature titled "The Auto in Pittsburgh" that spanned seven pages in the April 3, 1904 edition of the *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette* (Figure 44) surveyed the state of Pittsburgh's burgeoning automobile culture and contained a lengthy interview by author Martha L. Root in which Emil Keller opined on the future of electric vehicles, which at the time comprised well over one-third of all vehicles on the road in United States.¹⁸¹ He praised the high number of electric cabs in use in New York City at the time, the use of electric trucks by the Bindley Hardware Company and other Pittsburgh commercial ventures for delivery purposes, and noted that "the Westinghouse companies at East Pittsburg each use several electric delivery and express trucks." He foresaw a day, which might now be slowly dawning, of widespread use of electric vehicles especially in crowded urban areas, stating that "It would not seem unreasonable to expect that the delivery and trucking work of our cities will be largely done by electric vehicle. . . ." As part of this, he envisioned a system of battery exchange and charging stations so that vehicles could be in constant use.¹⁸²

Advocate and early adopter of automobiles in Pittsburgh

After he returned to Pittsburgh following the World's Fair, Emil Keller played a central role in popularizing the new "motoring" trend in Pittsburgh, being one of the earliest owners of a motorized vehicle in the city. Keller, in a 1903 article in *The Automobile Review*, described himself as "an enthusiastic user of the automobile since the day of the light steam runabout."¹⁸³ An obituary of Keller in the journal *Mechanical Engineering* stated that "He brought to Pittsburgh one of the very first 'horseless carriages' introduced there."¹⁸⁴ An article in a 1900 society page reported that he and his wife had just completed a "three weeks tour through Western Pennsylvania and New York State which they made in their automobile."¹⁸⁵ For perspective, by 1903, the number of automobile owners in the city had grown to only about three hundred and, by one count, to only 540 individual vehicles.¹⁸⁶ By 1910, the number of registered automobiles in all of Allegheny County numbered just 1,601.¹⁸⁷

¹⁷⁹ United States Department of Energy, "The History of the Electric Car," 15 September 2014, <https://www.energy.gov/articles/history-electric-car>, accessed 9 March 2023; "Chicago Electric Club," *Western Electrician* 12, no. 14, 8 (April 1893): 183.

¹⁸⁰ "Keller," obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 159; "Industrial Notes," *The Railway and Engineering Review* (17 July 1909): 663.

¹⁸¹ United States Department of Energy, "The History of the Electric Car." While statistics vary, there is general consensus that about 38% of U.S. automobiles in 1900 were powered by electricity, 40% by steam, and 22% by gasoline.

¹⁸² Martha L. Root, "The Auto in Pittsburgh" *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, 3 April 1904, 13-18.

¹⁸³ E. E. Keller, "A Passenger's Experience on the Endurance Run," *The Automobile Review and Automobile News* (1 November 1903): 177.

¹⁸⁴ "Keller," obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 159.

¹⁸⁵ "Personal," *Pittsburg Bulletin* (6 October 1900): 15.

¹⁸⁶ "Speed Contest for the Autos," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 31 May 1903, 11; "Motor Life Stirring in the Iron City," *The Automobile* (5 December 1903): 589.

¹⁸⁷ Joel A. Tarr, "The Automobile Comes to Pittsburgh," in *Making Industrial Pittsburgh Modern*, eds. Edward K. Muller and Joel A. Tarr (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019), 157.

It is known from newspaper coverage of the April 12, 1901 fire that destroyed the Keller's Edgewood Park home that Emil Keller owned a "valuable automobile" that was spared from the flames. An article in *The Pittsburg Bulletin*, a weekly report on society and culture, which was published the day after the fire, indicated that Keller had ordered a second car, a De Dion-Bouton Motorette, earlier that week.¹⁸⁸ He took delivery in June.¹⁸⁹ By 1903, he possessed at least one of the two Haynes-Appersons he would come to own, and used one to drive to Rochester, New York, in November to visit family with his wife.¹⁹⁰

In October 1903, the Haynes-Apperson Company invited Emil Keller to participate as a passenger in the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers' 800-mile Endurance Run from New York to Pittsburgh (technically from Weehawken, New Jersey via Binghamton, Buffalo and Cleveland, from October 6th through 15th; Figure 45). So that none of the 36 cars had a competitive advantage, ballast or passengers had to be added to lighter weight cars. Keller played that role for one of three Haynes-Appersons and also served as an unofficial photographer, with a number of his images subsequently published in a variety of national magazines (Figures 46 and 47). The cars left New Jersey on October 8, 1903 and travelled up the Hudson Valley and then through the Catskills and across the Southern Tier of New York, where Keller joined at Bainbridge on the second day, having been delayed by business matters. By that time, ten inches of rain had fallen and the largely dirt roads had turned to mud and flooding was widespread. Ultimately, 25 cars reached Pittsburgh, including Keller's Haynes-Apperson number 31, though they finished last in points for having missed too many timing milestones.¹⁹¹ Keller subsequently wrote about his adventure in an article titled "A Passenger's Experience on the Endurance Run," which was published in *The Automobile Review* and reprinted in about a half-dozen other periodicals. In describing his experience, he noted that "The whole endurance run was more of a test of the endurance of men than of machines," and that entrants were "doomed to fight the entire distance against conditions that no ordinary tourist would attempt to overcome." However, he concluded with an upbeat assessment of the future of motor vehicles, stating that "The test went to prove that the American automobile can go through road conditions impossible for the ordinary horse and wagon . . . [And that] practically all of the machines in the contest were, with the exception of a few minor necessary repairs, in as good condition when they reached Pittsburgh as when they left New York."¹⁹²

Writing about the Endurance Run was far from Keller's only instance of noting a need for better road conditions and automobile safety. In 1901, he became a life member of the Good Roads Association, which among other issues, advocated for a national system of safe roads.¹⁹³ At that time, though the country had an extensive system of roads, only four percent of them were paved.¹⁹⁴ He was an active member of the Automobile Club of Pittsburgh and advocated in a number of publications for the improvement of roads and highways. In November 1903, he assumed the role of inaugural senior consul for the new Pittsburgh consulate of the American Motor League, to help further the group's promotion of the automobile, innovation, and safe travel (Figure 48).¹⁹⁵ His ardent support for improved driving

¹⁸⁸ "Automobilia," *Pittsburg Bulletin* (13 April 1901): 14.

¹⁸⁹ "Automobilia," *Pittsburg Bulletin* (8 June 1901): 14.

¹⁹⁰ "Club Catches Culprit Who Shot Member in the Head," *The Automobile* 9, no. 21 (21 November 1903): 552.

¹⁹¹ "Summary of Performances of the Cars in the Endurance Run," *Cycle and Automobile Trade Journal* (1 November 1903): 27; "Preliminary Official Announcement of Result of Endurance Run," *Cycle and Automobile Trade Journal* (1 November 1903): 28.

¹⁹² E. E. Keller, "A Passenger's Experience on the Endurance Run," *The Automobile Review and Automobile News* (1 November 1903): 178.

¹⁹³ "Life Membership," *Good Roads Magazine* (November 1901): 35.

¹⁹⁴ Committee on Ecological Impacts of Road Density, National Research Council, *Assessing and Managing the Ecological Impacts of Paved Roads* (Washington: National Academies Press, 2005), 38.

¹⁹⁵ "Minor Mention," *The Horseless Age* (25 November 1903): 565.

conditions extended beyond concern for the present, largely elite group of car owners who drove mostly for pleasure, for he foresaw the day when the automobile would replace the horse for the masses. In the *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette's* 1904 feature "The Auto in Pittsburgh," Keller rightly predicted that "The present pleasure motor vehicle will undergo gradual change into more useful forms and become the vehicle for personal service use rather the 'sporting vehicle' as it is now usually looked upon. This field of usefulness will extend until it reaches the proportions of the present [horse-drawn] livery. . . ." ¹⁹⁶ The same article also contained a rather remarkable statistic, noting that the Keller's car "had already taken its owners over 5,000 happy miles."

It is important to note that Emil Keller was not the only avid enthusiast of the new technology in the family and that Ella Keller was not just along for the ride. The feature "The Auto in Pittsburgh" made clear that "Mrs. Keller is . . . an expert motorist herself, [and on] long journeys she never loses her courage in emergencies nor her sense of humor." The author, Martha L. Root, perhaps paid particular attention to Ella Keller since she herself was a woman who was writing about a field overwhelmingly dominated at the time by men. ¹⁹⁷ Another article published in *The Automobile* called Ella Keller "one of the most enthusiastic motorists in the Iron City." ¹⁹⁸

An engineer and inventor of significant intellect

Emil Keller was, since his childhood, "intensely interested in science" and went on to craft a career of exceptional scientific curiosity and innovation. ¹⁹⁹ In addition to the long list of accomplishments presented above, he obtained a half-dozen patents for a wide range of inventions. Examples include the battery-powered vehicles developed for the World's Fair, a means of providing electrical power to underground trolley systems, conduit for electric railways (with Fred Degenhardt), a regulator/switch for motors, a speed-changing mechanism for automobile motors, a power transmission mechanism for automobiles, and a mechanism for transferring sheets of steel from a rolling mill into vertical stacks upon a platform. ²⁰⁰ While never patented, Keller also invented a "One-Sided Snow Plow" that controlled the direction of snow being pushed away by the blade; a design for "A Sliding Gate," that "is cheap, handy, and easily made;" and "An Adjustable Boot-Jack" to fit all sizes of shoes. ²⁰¹ The latter was designed at a time when he was likely courting his future wife Ella (Miller) Turneure, and could have been inspired by her late-husband's patent.

In the fall of 1901, in response to a dearth of "definite information" in the automobile industry about what is known today as antifreeze, Keller began a series of careful scientific experiments to test various solutions of calcium chloride to cool gasoline engines while having a negligible corrosive impact on their components. Utilizing the "assistants and apparatus" of the Westinghouse Machine Company, he arrived at a suitable formula and then tested it in his own automobile for over a month. His results were published as "Non-Freezing Liquids for Cylinder Jackets," the feature article on the cover of the February 8, 1902 edition of *Automobile Topics Illustrated* (Figure 49). ²⁰² His findings, explained in detail over five pages, were not only complete with a number of technical graphs showing his trials and outcomes, but also contained a translation of his results into simple measurements for "the average automobilist." A number of automobile enthusiasts noted in subsequent journals that Keller's

¹⁹⁶ Root, "The Auto in Pittsburgh," 15.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁹⁸ "Rollicking Pittsburg Club Run," *The Automobile* 9 (14 September 1903): 516.

¹⁹⁹ "Keller," obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 159.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*; United States Patent Office.

²⁰¹ "A One-Sided Snow Plow," *American Agriculturist* (January 1882): 18; "A Sliding Gate," *American Agriculturist* (January 1882): 20; "An Adjustable Boot-Jack," *American Agriculturist* (June 1881): 248.

²⁰² E. E. Keller, "Non-Freezing Liquids for Cylinder Jackets," *Automobile Topics Illustrated* 3, no. 17 (8 February 1902): 619-23.

work was significant since it advanced the topic from anecdotal reporting to actual scientific experimentation and became the impetus for additional investigations that refined the accepted knowledge of the day and added to the growing enthusiasm for horseless transportation.

As a result of his considerable scientific and technical expertise, Emil Keller was often called upon to assist others in their scientific endeavors. Two examples are noted here: In 1908, he reviewed and edited Volume 4, “Internal Combustion Engines,” for *The Deinhardt-Scholmann Series of Technical Dictionaries in Six Languages*, edited by Alfred Schlomann and compiled by Karl Schikore (London: Archibald Constable and Co., Ltd.: 1908).²⁰³ Following World War I, Keller corresponded closely with Herbert Dow, founder of the Dow Chemical Company, and aided Dow’s development of magnesium engine pistons. “Dow asked business acquaintances who had worked with the metal what they knew about magnesium, and carried on an extensive correspondence with several of them. One of them was E. E. Keller in Rochester, New York, whom he described as ‘an intimate friend of mine.’ Keller, who had been vice president and general manager of the Westinghouse Machine Co., had run tests on the various alloys [of magnesium] back in 1919, and he became Dow’s closest business confidant on the subject.” At one point, Dow entertained the idea of establishing “a Dow subsidiary company to manufacture and sell magnesium, with Keller as its head.”²⁰⁴ The resulting pistons provided increased speed and better fuel efficiency and were used heavily in race cars, even sparking the 1921 winner of the Indianapolis 500.²⁰⁵

Keller also made important contributions to the advancement of photography, from his early days in Rochester working for George Eastman at Yawman & Erbe, to his advocacy of amateur photography. As early as 1895, he was a member of the Pittsburgh Amateur Photographers’ Society, which had been founded in 1885. He was elected vice-president of the organization in December 1895 at a membership meeting held in the Society’s “luxuriously appointed rooms” in the newly-constructed Carnegie Library in Oakland, which included a dark room, committee meeting room and lecture room.²⁰⁶ In January 1897, Keller was elected president of the Society.²⁰⁷ In May 1897, *The Pittsburgh Press* called Society president Keller “the best photographer in the county, ranking higher even than the professionals.”²⁰⁸ Under Keller’s leadership, the Society held its first annual international exhibition of amateur photography along with a more rigorously juried salon. It opened on January 18, 1898 in the Department of Fine Arts of the Carnegie Institute, in what is today the Main Branch of the Carnegie Library (Figure 50). Judges awarded nearly two dozen prizes, selected from over 800 entrants. Over 2,000 people attended opening night and the event was extended for an additional week. As noted above, Keller was honored for his entry, “Japanese Tea Garden, World’s Fair,” for which he received a 5x8 wide-angle Zeiss lens donated by *The Pittsburgh Daily Post*.²⁰⁹ That paper reprinted his work in their January 23, 1898 edition (Figure 51).²⁰⁹ “It is important to note that Pittsburgh was an early entrant into the [amateur

²⁰³ Alfred Schlomann, ed., and Karl Schikore, compiler, *The Deinhardt-Scholmann Series of Technical Dictionaries in Six Languages* (London: Archibald Constable and Co., Ltd.: 1908).

²⁰⁴ E. N. Brandt, *We Called it MAG-nificent: Dow Chemical and Magnesium, 1916-1998* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), 16.

²⁰⁵ Scott Stoddard, “Herbert Dow’s Chemical Stand,” *Investor’s Business Daily*, 22 December 2009.

²⁰⁶ Charles C. McVay, “Amateurs in Pittsburgh; They Have a Society, Which Flourishes More Every Year, and Hold Creditable Exhibitions,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 30 May 1897, 15.

²⁰⁷ “Keller,” obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 159; “Lenten Society,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 28 March 1896, 2; “The Social Realm,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 22 January 1897, 4.

²⁰⁸ “It’s Second Outing; Amateur Photographers on an Excursion to Indian Creek,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 22 May 1897, 9.

²⁰⁹ “Photographic Art; The First Annual Salon and Exhibition Opened,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 19 January 1898, 1; “Fine Exhibition; A Splendid Display of Amateur Photography Last Night; First Annual Salon Opened,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 19 January 1898, 7; “Photographers’ Salon Opens with a Verve; Carnegie Galleries were Thronged with Lovers of the Sun’s Paintings,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 19 January 1898, 3; “Salon Pictures,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 23 January 1898, 17.

photographic] salon movement,” preceding by ten months the first exhibit of the prestigious Philadelphia Photographic Salon, which opened on October 24, 1898.²¹⁰ Author Julius Moritzen, writing at the time in the journal *Photographic Times*, called the Pittsburgh Amateur Photographers’ Society first exhibition and salon “a photographic treat . . . of importance to the art world . . . that will allow the metropolis of western Pennsylvania to take its rank among the known art centers of the continent.”²¹¹ Keller oversaw two additional salons and exhibitions, serving as president into the year 1900, at which time the Society became the Photographic Section of the Academy of Science and Art of Pittsburgh.²¹²

While Keller was surrounded by rapidly evolving technologies during much of his professional life, he regularly exhibited broader interests in issues such as safety and aesthetics. In one example from April 1892, he presented an impassioned plea at the Chicago Electric Club for that city to mandate that street car lines in the central business district dispense with the use of overhead electric wires. His paper was subsequently reprinted less than two weeks later in *Western Electrician*. He argued that underground electric wires offered the “safest plan for the protection of people and property” and that even the “most ornamental pole or support that could be designed for overhead trolley wires could not add to the beauty or safety of our streets and buildings.” He went on to cite potential interference that “the maze of overhead wires” could pose to fire departments along with degradation to “the ornamentation of our beautiful buildings.” He concluded by stating that the city should prioritize the “relieving our thoroughfares of every possible obstacle in the way of protecting humanity and our property.”²¹³

In his later professional years, Keller maintained a keen mind. An article in Detroit’s *Motorbus News* in 1931 remarked that Keller, then 67 years old “is known to his associates as a mathematician of no mean ability. His habit . . . of memorizing figures and with lightning-like manipulations . . . solving problems with a degree of accuracy that is astounding, is disconcerting to those who may have unwittingly given a figure or set in error.”²¹⁴

Significant relationship with George Westinghouse

Emil Keller enjoyed a close professional and social relationship with George Westinghouse. While it would seem an overstatement to call them friends, Keller clearly held a place of high esteem within what he called Westinghouse’s “official family” of top managers and engineers. Keller noted that Westinghouse maintained a certain distance, stating that over “sixteen years of close social and business relationship. . . , [Westinghouse] never was familiar with even his closest friends and, still, he never struck me as at all cold toward any friendly person.”²¹⁵ The two men regularly commuted together, as noted by Keller: “When in Pittsburgh, Mr. Westinghouse and I were in the habit of meeting at the eight o’clock train at Homewood Station, as we both lived close by [the Keller home being a half block from Solitude]. Discussion of whatever problem was uppermost generally began at once, and continued for

²¹⁰ Valentino Buttignol, “The Amateur Photographers’ Society, Pictorialists and the Photo Salon,” *The Photographic Section; The Academy of Science & Art of Pittsburgh*, <http://pghphoto.org/wp/history-part-2/>, accessed 16 March 2023.

²¹¹ Julius Moritzen, “A Photographic Salon with a Purpose; First Annual Exhibition of the Pittsburgh Amateur Photographers’ Society,” *Photographic Times: An Illustrated Monthly Magazine Devoted to the Interests of Artistic and Scientific Photography* 30, ed. Walter E. Woodbury (May 1898): 234-5.

²¹² Valentino Buttignol, “The Amateur Photographers’ Society,” *The Photographic Section; The Academy of Science & Art of Pittsburgh*, <http://pghphoto.org/wp/history-part-1/>, accessed 16 March 2023.

²¹³ E. E. Keller, “The Electric Railway for Chicago,” read before the Chicago Electric Club, April 11, 1892, reprinted in *Western Electrician* 10, no. 17 (23 April 1892): 250.

²¹⁴ “Our Own—Who’s Who—and Why? Emil Ernest Keller, Director, Detroit Motorbus Co.,” *Motor Bus News* 5, no. 7 (March 1931): 5.

²¹⁵ E. E. Keller, “George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him,” 22.

some twenty minutes, until we reached East Pittsburg. He [then] usually accompanied me to my office; [as] his own office was in the Westinghouse Building [Downtown].”²¹⁶

The wives of Keller and Westinghouse appeared to have shared a similarly close social relationship. There are numerous accounts in the Pittsburg society pages over fifteen years of Marguerite Westinghouse and Ella Keller attending each other’s social engagements and traveling in some of the same social circles. Some examples include the following events:

- In January 1905, Ella Keller hosted “a very handsomely appointed breakfast in honor of Mrs. [George] Westinghouse” in the private dining room of the Hotel Schenley.²¹⁷
- On May 16, 1905, Ella Keller was a member of “a party of friends who came on a special train” with George and Marguerite Westinghouse to a luncheon for delegates to the International Railway Congress held at Westinghouse Machine Company in East Pittsburg. She joined her husband for the festivities and was seated at the head table with Mrs. Westinghouse and the wife of M. Ernest Gerard, chief of staff of the Belgian minister of railways. One of the cavernous shop buildings had been cleared of all equipment, decorated with bunting and flags from all nations, and set up with tables for 300 guests (Figure 52).²¹⁸ Later that evening, Emil and Ella Keller were among 26 participants at a private dinner at Solitude hosted by the Westinghouses in honor of a visit by Baron Moncheur, Belgian Minister to the United States.²¹⁹
- In September 1906, the Kellers were among the invited guests who travelled to Kidders Point, on Cayuga Lake in Upstate New York, to celebrate the wedding of George Westinghouse’s niece, Miss Catherine Westinghouse, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herman H. Westinghouse.²²⁰ George Westinghouse served as one of the ushers.²²¹ There are also a number of accounts of similar social engagements with Herman H. Westinghouse and his wife, Clara Louise (Saltmarsh) Westinghouse.
- In November 1906, Mrs. Westinghouse “was the guest of honor at a beautiful little luncheon . . . given by Mrs. George C. Smith, Squirrel Hill.” Among the ten other guests at the intimate affair was Mrs. Emil Keller.²²²
- During the 1901 fire that destroyed the Kellers’ home in Edgewood Park, “one of the most conspicuous fire fighters . . . was Mrs. George Westinghouse, who is acquainted with the Keller [family] and worked valiantly to help them get out their valuables. She wore a beautiful street gown and white kid gloves, but with the utmost disregard for either, she lifted and hauled and pulled at household articles until she was working as hard as anybody at the fire”²²³

Designer of a state-of-the-art house in partnership with his wife

²¹⁶ Ibid. 16.

²¹⁷ “Social Life,” *The Index* 12, no. 20, 14 (January 1905): 17.

²¹⁸ “Trip Here Pleases Visitors; International Body of Railroad Men Spend Busy Time in Pittsburg,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 17 May 1905, 1; “Were Pleased with the City; Distinguished Foreign Railway Men Were Reluctant to Leave Pittsburg,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 17 May 1905, 7.

²¹⁹ “Social Life,” *The Index* 12, no. 20 (20 May 1905): 17.

²²⁰ “In the Social World,” *The Index: Pittsburgh’s Illustrated Weekly* 15, no. 11 (15 September 1906): 10.

²²¹ “Westinghouse-Fletcher Wedding,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 12 September 1906, 7.

²²² “Pretty Luncheon,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 17 November 1906, 5.

²²³ \$50,000 Fire at Edgewood; Several Dwellings in the Beautiful Suburb Destroyed by Flames,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 12 April 1901, 1.

Emil and Ella Keller designed an innovative house at 201 North Murtland Street that was notable for its early use of Prairie style architectural motifs and for having an integral garage. To read more about the state-of-the-art features and equipment, see “Innovative Design” under Criteria 3, below.

Successful Detroit Businessman

Lastly, as noted above, Keller’s accomplishments were not limited to Pittsburgh, as he founded and led a number of successful companies, mostly manufacturing endeavors, in Detroit, Rochester and other cities.

Criterion 3. Its exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship;

201 North Murtland Street is a skillfully designed, eclectic Pittsburgh house that successfully and uniquely blends Prairie style form with Neoclassical decorative elements. It is also distinguished by the overall quality of its design, the number of innovative features that Emil and Ella Keller specified for their new home, and the continued presence of most of these features (see more below under “Integrity”).

The Designers of 201 North Murtland Street

The attribution of the design of the house to the Kellers comes from the aforementioned *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette* article from 1905, which explicitly states that “The plans for the house were drawn by Mr. and Mrs. Keller.”²²⁴ No architect is mentioned in this or any other articles about the planning and completion of the house. *The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, which invariably named architects associated with projects, was silent in its 1904 announcement that construction had begun, instead calling the project “the dwelling . . . for E. E. Keller.”²²⁵ Additionally, Pittsburgh building permit records list the builder, B. F. Lee Company, but no architect, and multiple newspaper articles announcing the assignment of the permit are conspicuously silent about an architect, when it was standard practice to provide the name.²²⁶ Emil Keller’s background in engineering and years of project management for major Westinghouse construction projects lends further credibility to the idea that he led the design of the house, with assistance from his wife.

A Note About Style

A brief examination of the stylistic traditions that may have informed the design of 201 North Murtland Street can provide important context, but not without first adding a caveat: Stylistic analysis, while it can be useful, is not perfect. Applying stylistic labels to buildings can at times be a forced exercise in linguistic shorthand leading to inaccuracies and omissions. Among the concerns raised by Richard W. Longstreth in his appropriately titled essay, “The Problem with ‘Style,’” is the idea that style is too often equated with decoration and selected motifs, that most style guides probe no further than parts of the surface, seldom include interiors, almost never provide plans, and place little emphasis on function or architectural program. He concludes that “When virtually all the context and most of the architectural fabric are ignored, ‘style’ is left a lonely and trivial thing.”²²⁷

²²⁴ “Society,” *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, 7 May 1905, Section 4, 2.

²²⁵ “Through Pennsylvania,” *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide* 19, no. 26 (29 June 1904): 407.

²²⁶ Pittsburgh Building Permit Dockets, vol. 21, 1904-05 (June 13, 1904, p. 64), Historic Pittsburgh.

²²⁷ Richard W. Longstreth, “The Problem with ‘Style,’” *The Forum: Bulletin of the Committee on Preservation*, Society of Architectural Historians, December 1984.

Prairie Style

Noted Pittsburgh architectural historian Franklin Toker briefly described the house in two of his books, noting that it was of “Prairie School” design overlaid with Classical detailing and had “walls made of the same long ‘Roman’ bricks that Frank Lloyd Wright made famous in his Chicago-area houses of the same years.”²²⁸ Lu Donnelly and Steve Kibert described the 1905 house similarly for Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, noting the “emphasis on horizontality coming into vogue at [the] time, while maintaining elements of the classical vocabulary to express it.”²²⁹

The Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide developed by the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) indicates that the Prairie style was utilized in Pennsylvania largely during the time period from 1900 to 1920:

The Prairie style is a true American creation, developed by an American architectural legend, Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright was part of an impressive group of talented architects known as the Prairie School working in Chicago at the turn of the 20th century. As a student of Louis Sullivan, Wright was part of a creative force that was changing the world of architectural design. The time period itself was one of great change and growth as was reflected in the emerging new building styles. Wright was especially interested in the design of houses . . . and he became the master of the Prairie style, a new domestic architectural form designed to complement the terrain and temperament of the mid-western prairies. . . .²³⁰

For additional information on the Prairie style, see “Ancillary Materials” below.

In Pittsburgh, examples of the Prairie style are rare. However, Martin Aurand, former Architecture Librarian and Archivist at Carnegie Mellon University, identified a handful of buildings that exhibit a “Prairie School sensibility” in his 1995 article, “Prairie School Architecture in Pittsburgh.”²³¹ Among the buildings highlighted are the George H. Stengel House (constructed in 1913) at 4136 Bigelow Boulevard in Schenley Farms by Kiehnel and Elliott (founded in Pittsburgh in 1906; Figure 60);²³² First National Bank of Pitcairn (c. 1910) at 500 2nd Street in Pitcairn, Pennsylvania, also by Kiehnel and Elliott (Figure 61);²³³ and the Millar House (1907, though now greatly altered), at 546 Orchard Avenue in Bellevue, Pennsylvania, by George Grant Elmslie, who had worked for Louis Sullivan from 1898 to 1909, primarily on residential projects.²³⁴ Commenting on the dearth of Prairie examples, Aurand notes that “The architecture of turn-of-the-century Pittsburgh [i.e., circa 1900] had moments of clarity and invention; but mostly it was a rather ponderous and conservative affair, based on the proliferation of established manners and revival styles. . . . [Pittsburgh] provided only limited incentive for new

²²⁸ Franklin Toker, *Pittsburgh: An Urban* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994), 223; Franklin Toker, *Pittsburgh: A New Portrait* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 251. While Toker accurately described the style of the house, he mistakenly asserted in both of his books that 201 N. Murtland was built by George Westinghouse II as a gift to his son George Westinghouse III. While historical records show that the latter did indeed reside in the house during a short period around 1910, no Westinghouse ever owned it.

²²⁹ Lu Donnelly and Steve Kibert, “201 N. Murtland Street,” *Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form*, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 1 May 1980.

²³⁰ Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, “Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide: Prairie School Style, 1900-1920,” <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/prairie-school.html>, accessed 1 February 2023.

²³¹ Martin Aurand, “Prairie School Architecture in Pittsburgh,” *Pittsburgh History* 78, no. 1, Spring 1995, 4-20.

²³² *Ibid.*, 6, 13.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 7, 13.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 4, 7, 8, 13.

architectural thinking. . . . [However, the few Prairie style] buildings that resulted were out of the ordinary, and most of them remain as intriguing elements in our streetscapes today.”²³⁵

The late Pittsburgh architectural historian Walter Kidney also noted the Stengel House and its “allusion to both Prairie School and Classical design practice” along with the First National Bank of Pitcairn, stating that its “effect is Classical, the detailing is not. . . . [They] are without historical references, and have something of a contemporary Prairie School look.”²³⁶ For a more nuanced analysis of work by Kiehnel and Elliott, see Albert M. Tannler’s book, *Pittsburgh Architecture in the Twentieth Century*, in which he argues how the firm was influenced by Central European architecture and not just a general awareness of the Prairie School.²³⁷

Features of 201 North Murkland that convey its Prairie School sensibility include its two-story form with lower-height wings; an emphasis on horizontal lines, like the continuous line of the sun parlor window sills, terrace wall coping, and front porch wall coping, and the consistent elevation of the roofs of all four wings; the low-pitched, hipped form of the roofs (all five); the wide, overhanging boxed eaves; the absence of dormers; the broad front porch that flows into the terrace along with the port cochere, which extend the house even further into the landscape; vertical accents like chimneys and piers that provide sturdy anchors to the horizontal lines; and the use of Roman brick, square brick piers, paired double-hung sash windows on the main block of the house, and ribbon windows on the sun parlor. Additionally, Wright and his peers frequently sought to create intimate private spaces, often with connections to the outdoors, that would shield a family from public view. The space created by the terrace walls and the sunken tufa garden are examples.

Neoclassical or Classical Revival Style

The ornament that embellishes the general Prairie-style form of 201 North Murkland is decidedly Neoclassical. However, since it is applied judiciously as a layer, rather than as a full-blown expression of the style, it lacks the monumentality typically associated with the movement. Needless to say, PHMC’s *Field Guide* provides useful context.

The Neoclassical style was utilized in Pennsylvania largely during the time period from 1895 to 1950:

The Classical Revival or Neoclassical style is one of the most commonly seen across the state and the country. This style was inspired by the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago held in 1893 which promoted a renewed interest in the classical forms. . . . [T]he Classical Revival style was . . . formal and monumental in its design. Relying on stylistic details of the earlier Greek Revival style, Classical Revival style buildings often have massive columns with classical Corinthian, Doric or Ionic capitals, topped by a front facing pediment. One of the most distinctive versions of this style features a full height columned front porch topped with a classical pediment. Over variations of this style may feature a rounded front portico with columns and a balustraded flat roof, or a flat-roofed, full or partial front porch with columns. The arrangement of windows and doors is formal and symmetrical, with the front door often flanked by pilasters or side lights and capped with a flat entablature, broken pediment or rounded fanlight. . . .

²³⁵ Ibid, 5, 7,

²³⁶ Walter C. Kidney, *Pittsburgh’s Landmark Architecture: The Historic Buildings of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 1997), 366, 491.

²³⁷ Albert M. Tannler, *Pittsburgh Architecture in the Twentieth Century: Notable Modern Buildings and Their Architects* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 2013), 70-81.

The prominent architectural firm of McKim, Meade and White designed many buildings in this style across the nation in the early years of the 20th century. Examples of this style can be found in many Pennsylvania communities, often in the form of public buildings.²³⁸

In Pittsburgh, examples of the style include the Herron Hill Pumping Station (1896) at 4501 Centre Avenue in North Oakland, designed by William S. Fraser (Figure 62); the former First Church of Christ, Scientist (1904) at 635 Clyde Street in Shadyside, designed by Chicago architect Solon Spencer Beman (Figure 63); and Ebonhurst, the estate of Mr. and Mrs. David Pollock Black (1904, now demolished, northwest corner of Penn Avenue and Murkland Street in Point Breeze), designed by MacLure & Spahr (Figure 13).²³⁹

Features of 201 North Murkland that convey its Classically-inspired roots include its formal, symmetrical front façade with center door; the sense of balance attained by the large main mass with its flanking wings; masonry construction, including exposed foundation of monumental limestone blocks and limestone basement window surrounds with carved keystones; terracotta ornamentation, including the capitals of the brick piers with their unadorned architraves capped by egg-and-dart bed mouldings with cornices of Greek fret moulding above, the window antepagments with their central keystones, the decorative corbels, various wall copings, and the architrave mouldings of the chimneys; the large bands of Greek fretwork, executed in painted, applied scroll-cut wood on the cornices around the entire building; carved wood egg-and-dart molding; the stained oak, tripartite front entry, with its sidelights, Classical pilasters and small bands of Greek fretwork; the Classically-derived wood posts of the rear porch and adjacent corbels; and rectangular double-hung sash windows.

Design Inspiration

While the Kellers' melding of Prairie and Classical elements on 201 North Murkland Street produced a harmonious result, this was not a natural marriage. Born of Chicago—the couple's home from late 1888 to early 1894—the two chosen styles simultaneously embraced and rejected the ideals of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition.

It is easy to understand how the Kellers could be drawn to the Neoclassical. In addition to the widespread popularity of the style at the time, Emil Keller was intimately and uniquely aware of the Neoclassical details of the "White City" created by Daniel Burnham and associated architects. Starting in June 1891, when he was appointed engineer in the fair's Department of Electricity, and continuing with his appointment twelve months later to superintendent of the Westinghouse lighting contract, Keller immersed himself month after month in the design, installation and maintenance of miles of electrical cables throughout the exterior and interior of every building and the grounds of the World's Fair. Formality, symmetry and Greco-Roman precedents abounded. Additionally, there are numerous accounts of Keller interacting directly with Daniel Burnham in the course of his work. Keller indicated in his 1936 recollections that he knew Burnham by at least June 1892.²⁴⁰ Plus, they both had offices in The Rookery (1888, designed by Burnham & Root). The architectural office, where planning for the World's Fair began in 1890, was on the twelfth floor (with Burnham and Root's main office in suite

²³⁸ Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, "Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide: Classical Revival Style 1895-1950," <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/classical-revival.html>, accessed 1 February 2023.

²³⁹ "A. & S. Wilson Will Build D. P. Black's Residence," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 18 September 1902.

²⁴⁰ E. E. Keller, "George Westinghouse, As I Knew Him," 3.

1143). The office of Keller and his electrical engineering partner, Frederick E. Degenhardt, was on the fifth (in suite 542).²⁴¹

The Kellers' interest in the Prairie School design elements is a bit more speculative. Certainly by 1904 there was rising awareness of this new Midwestern architecture that rejected Classicism in favor of nature and natural materials. "The Prairie School developed immediately following the World's Fair of 1893 and must be seen in some sense as a response to, or reaction against, the perceived excesses and falsehoods of that event."²⁴² The young progressive Chicago architects of the era, like Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright, sought an ahistorical style. Their thinking was a direct contrast with the prevailing revival styles of nineteenth-century architecture and Beaux Arts advocates like McKim, Mead and White who normalized Classicism throughout the country.²⁴³ Though the Kellers left Chicago when Wright was in the early years of experimentation into what would become the Prairie style, they maintained relationships they had formed in Chicago and were actively engaged in the world of art and design once they settled in Pittsburgh, especially with the Pittsburgh Amateur Photographers' Society, for which Emil Keller served as board member and later president for a number of years. Additionally, organizations like the Pittsburgh Architectural Club offered the public numerous opportunities to learn about the latest architectural trends, including a 1903 talk on "The Work and Personality of Louis Sullivan" and through the architectural exhibitions it hosted between 1897 and 1916 (though Frank Lloyd Wright did not exhibit until 1907).²⁴⁴

Exceptional Pittsburgh Vernacular—A Less Style-Centric Assessment

Further research is needed to more firmly establish the strength of the Prairie School lineage for 201 North Murtland— especially given its date of construction—in order to ascertain if there was a design intention beyond mere "emphasis on horizontality coming into vogue at [the] time," as noted by Donnelly and Kibert. If more definitive ties between the Kellers and the Prairie School can be established, it would make the Keller House one of the earliest examples of the style in Pittsburgh—if not the earliest.

Three architectural historians/critics, writing over a century apart, offer an assessment of large Pittsburgh houses, like the Keller House, that were increasing in popularity after the turn of the last century and combining a mix of styles. Walter Kidney, commented on 5605 Aylesboro Avenue in Squirrel Hill, a large, box-like house that combines wide overhanging eaves and Roman brick with Classical detailing (Figure 64). It shares many characteristics with the Stengel House and, minus its attic story, also with the Keller House. Kidney observed that "Such houses are not Pittsburgh's alone—they have a Midwestern feeling about them—yet an architect around 1910 said, 'If a Pittsburgh man were let alone, that is the kind of house he would have.'"²⁴⁵ Martin Aurand notes that "Here [Kidney] seems to acknowledge in this house what others are seeing in the Keller House, without being too exact about origins, at the same time that he grounds the house in Pittsburgh."²⁴⁶ Architecture critic Montgomery Schuyler, writing in his landmark 1911 essay, "The Homes of Pittsburgh," provided the same quote from the unnamed architect in his assessment of the large crop of new, eclectic, East End homes. He

²⁴¹ "Keller & Degenhardt," advertisement, *The Electrical World* (25 June 1892): xix; "Western Notes; D. H. Burnham," *The Electrical World* 18, no. 5 (1 August 1891): 85.

²⁴² *Inland Architect* 35, May/June 1991, 31.

²⁴³ Karim Doumar, "Rediscover the Gilded Age's Most Famous Architects: McKim, Mead & White, *Selected Works 1879-1915*," book review, *Bloomberg*, City Lab, 14 November 2014.

²⁴⁴ "Architectural Club Meets," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 6 February 1903, 6; Tannler, 16-22.

²⁴⁵ Kidney, 454.

²⁴⁶ Martin Aurand, email to author, 12 February 2023.

noted their boxy form, “four-hipped roof, like a square or oblong umbrella, which roof may be covered with corrugated tiles projecting umbrageously at the eaves,” grand central stair halls, and rooms arranged formally on each side. He concluded that “This type . . . is so frequent in Pittsburgh as to be characteristic,” and then adds, “small blame to the Pittsburgh man. He might do much worse. It is often very well and impressively done.”²⁴⁷

Ultimately, the architectural significance of 201 North Murtland stems less from forcing it into one or another stylistic boxes and more from its overall quality of design, detail, materials, and craftsmanship along with its innovative features. In short, the quality of the Keller House is exceptional. Carved limestone, uniform expanses of gray Roman brick with narrow mortar joints, richly modeled terracotta, warm tile on the terrace, graceful stained oak entry details, hand-crafted bands of wood moulding, elegant stained and leaded glass, and green roofing tiles all blend harmoniously and express an air of serene sophistication. Though some sections of the exterior need repair after nearly 120 years, inspection at close range reveals a high caliber of design and execution. The house is particularly distinguished for the quality and expanse of Greek fretwork, executed in varying sizes in both terracotta and wood and on both the exterior and interior. Nary a crack can be found in the brickwork, which creates a broad backdrop against which the more decorative elements are set off. The roofs tiles, though much of their green glaze has faded, continue to protect the house. Even the landscape, planted with century-old sycamores and oaks that shade the sunken tufa garden, continues to convey the overall quality.

Site/Setting

The location where the Keller’s chose to build their new house is significant for a number of reasons. First, was its proximity to George and Marguerite Westinghouse and their estate, “Solitude,” a half block to the northeast, which reflected the social and professional interactions shared by the two families. Second, was its proximity to the Homewood Station of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which was just across Lang Street from the Westinghouse estate, which allowed Emil Keller and George Westinghouse to easily commute to work by rail, often together. The house that the Kellers initially lived in across the street at 224 North Murtland after the World’s Fair, though small, was significant for similar reasons. Third, the purchase of two lots (and later a third) in Westinghouse’s newly-plotted eponymous subdivision, Westinghouse Park, showed the Keller’s support for Westinghouse’s vision for an idealized neighborhood on the west edge of his estate. A newspaper at the time noted the goal of creating a unique residential enclave “principally for the use of the engineers and superintendents of the Westinghouse companies.”²⁴⁸ Lastly, the siting of the house on its lot afforded the Kellers views out their front windows of the Heinz estate, which had been redesigned beginning in 1901 by the nationally prominent landscape architecture firm of Olmsted Brothers. Fortunately for the Kellers, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and John Charles Olmsted dissuaded H. J. Heinz from constructing a high wall along the Murtland Street edge of his property.²⁴⁹ Instead, the Kellers were afforded views of carefully curated trees and bountiful planting beds augmented by a series of large conservatories added by Heinz beginning in 1905.²⁵⁰ In reality, there was no other viable option for siting the Kellers’ house in any other fashion on their corner lot. The house would not have fit the two original lots (numbers 64 and 65)

²⁴⁷ Montgomery Schuyler, “The Homes of Pittsburgh,” part 5 of “The Building of Pittsburgh,” in *The Architectural Record* 30, no. 3 (September 1911): 265-82.

²⁴⁸ “To Build Many Residences; Westinghouse Park in the Twenty-First Ward to be a Fine District,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 12 March 1902.

²⁴⁹ Olmsted Associates, *Olmsted Associates Records: Job Files, -1971; Files; 133; Heinz, H. J.; Estate; Pittsburgh, Pa., 1901 to 1908*.

Manuscript/Mixed Material. Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mss5257100219/>.

²⁵⁰ “Society,” *The Pittsburgh Bulletin* 51, no. 19, 26 August 1905, 10.

if rotated 90 degrees to face Meade Street (lot 66 was not added until 1907). Plus, if it faced south, the view would have been the back side of Ebonhurst, the Black estate, and its carriage house.

Innovative Design

Not surprisingly, given Emil Keller's background, the house is noteworthy for possessing a number of state-of-the-art features. Perhaps most significant is the original integral garage—one of the very earliest in Pittsburgh. Still present today, it features room for two cars (via a single entry door), sound- and fire-proof walls and ceiling, fire doors, and a mechanic's pit recessed into the concrete floor. The extensive fire proofing not only reflects best practices in design at the time for the novel construction, but was likely a reassuring measure added by the Kellers given the loss to fire of Emil Keller's partnership of Keller, Flesch & Rung in 1886 and their Edgewood Park house in 1901. The previously mentioned feature, "The Auto in Pittsburgh," in the April 3, 1904 edition of the *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, published just months before the Kellers broke ground for their new house, discussed the proper storage of cars. It noted that "People are only beginning to understand that the owner of motor cars should have a proper coach house for this new class of vehicle. Pittsburghers have heretofore put their automobiles into sheds or outbuildings, more often damp than dry, or in stables built for horses." The author categorized the range of auto stables, as they were often called, that were constructed to accommodate the new technology and cited an array of local examples. In this early era, they were predominantly outbuildings, ranging from a single bay to roomy and elaborate examples, not unlike their carriage house predecessors. Others were large public auto stables, where multiple owners in a neighborhood could store their vehicles for a monthly fee. And a rare few were recently-constructed additions attached to the main house, with appropriate noise and fire retardants in between. But none were purpose-built within the footprint of the main house like the Kellers' soon would be.²⁵¹ That the Kellers would innovate in the area of automobiles is no surprise given that Emil Keller was a pioneer in the early development of electric vehicles and that both husband and wife were avid automobile enthusiasts.

Emil Keller applied his electrical engineering skills in innovative ways when designing 201 North Murtland. For example, inside all major rooms in the house, centered above every doorway, is a light bulb for emergency situations (Photo 29). They are wired together on the same circuit and are controlled from the primary bedroom. In the event that an intruder was suspected or if egress routes needed to be illuminated, say during a fire, a simple flick of the switch would provide immediate assistance and reassurance. Sheila Nelson Hourihan, daughter of Douglas Evon Nelson and granddaughter of John and Margaret Nelson, recalls another similar circuit from childhood days in the house that controlled an electrical outlet in the children's bedrooms, whereby the parents could remotely turn off bedside lamps when they felt it was time to go to sleep.²⁵²

In the floor of the dining room is a recessed electrical call button designed so that one of the heads of the household could summon servants without dinner guests being aware. Throughout the house were intercom telephones for calling the staff. Parts of two wall-mounted panels remain in upstairs bedrooms, with mouthpieces resembling those from old-fashioned candlestick telephones. In the basement, the 1905 Canton Clothes Dryer is still present, featuring a floor-to-ceiling heated enclosure with five pull-out racks on which to hang freshly washed clothing (Photo 30). According to advertisements from the period, it would dry "any kind of clothing, woolen or cotton, in from 10 to 24 minutes" (Figure 65).

²⁵¹ Root, "The Auto in Pittsburgh," 13-18.

²⁵² Sheila Nelson Hourihan, phone call with author, 23 January 2023.

Unsuccessful advertisements for the sale of the house by the Kellers in 1908 and 1912 (a buyer was not secured until 1914) provide further insights into its original features. For example, there was originally an electric elevator that connected the basement, first and second floors, which was removed by the Nelsons early in their term of ownership.²⁵³ On the second-floor level, the elevator shaft was infilled and the space converted to an additional full bathroom—such facilities likely had a premium over elevators with four teenagers in the house. The ads also mention “special chandeliers and plumbing, . . . patent clothes washer, [and] automatic vapor cleaning system.”²⁵⁴ Additional research is needed to fully understand the nature of these features and if any components remain.

A final notable feature of the house is its expansive basement with its nine to ten feet of headroom. The uncommon design, with rooms extending beyond the footprint of the main block of the house (beneath the front porch, terrace and sun parlor) provided spaces for family and staff alike. Here, in addition to the garage, chauffeur’s apartment, laundry room, and mechanical room, were multiple large rooms for Emil Keller to pursue his wide range of interests and avocations. It is known from a number of articles that Keller had labs and workrooms in his prior home in Edgewood Park and later home in Bloomfield Hills.²⁵⁵ Given his interest in automobiles and photography, it is reasonable to conclude that he dedicated basement space at Murtland Street to at least one workshop and a dark room.

10. Integrity

201 North Murtland Street meets the criteria for integrity as it applies to location, design, materials, and workmanship.

Location: The building retains integrity in regard to location. It remains in its original location on the northwest corner of Murtland and Meade Streets. The neighborhood continues to reflect its residential character. Though the arbors, fences and gates of the backyard are gone, the site retains original shade trees, remnants of the sunken tufa garden, and the buff brick garden wall.

Design: The house retains integrity in regard to design. It retains its form, massing, method of construction, and its original purpose as a large, single-family home. The character-defining design elements of the Prairie and Neoclassical styles remain (as enumerated above under Criterion 3). The early and innovative integral garage continues to serve the house.

Materials: The house retains integrity in regard to materials. Still present are the original carved limestone, gray Roman brick, terracotta ornamentation, terracotta tile flooring on the terrace, stained oak and leaded glass at the front entry, bands of carved and scroll-cut wood moulding, stained glass windows, and green roofing tiles.

Workmanship: The house retains integrity in regard to workmanship. Exterior details were exceptionally designed and executed and continue to reflect a high level of skill and sophistication. Examples are many and include the detail and consistency of the carved stone, the detail of the terracotta ornamentation, the uniformity of the brickwork, the quality of the stained and leaded glass (especially

²⁵³ “For Sale: Murtland Ave., Cor. Meade St.,” advertisement, *Pittsburg Bulletin* 64, no. 8 (1 June 1912): 16; Sheila Nelson Hourihan, phone call with author.

²⁵⁴ “Beautiful East End Residence, in Unsurpassed Location,” advertisement, *Pittsburgh Press*, 12 June 1908, 26.

²⁵⁵ “Helpless to Save Homes,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 13 April 1901, 1; “Keller,” obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 159.

the large skylight over the grand staircase), the quality of the carved wood egg-and-dart moulding, and the fact that the faded green tiles are still present and functioning on all five roofs. As mentioned above, the house is particularly distinguished for the quality and expanse of Greek fretwork, executed in varying sizes in both terracotta and wood and on both the exterior and interior.

Overall, exterior alterations have been very minor and include the addition of generally-compatible storm windows, replacement of the front porch ceiling, the addition of metal front porch railings, removal and storage of original front porch lighting, the addition of the south steps from the back porch, cutting a passage through the terrace wall to access the side yard, and the loss of built landscape elements, like arbors and fencing. In short, the exterior of the house looks essentially as it did when Ella Keller invited her society friends to a bridge luncheon to mark the opening of the house in May 1905 (Figure 66).

11. Consent of Property Owner

This nomination has been developed with the awareness and support of the property owner. See attached.

12. Photo Logs

All photographs were taken by Time & Place, LLC from December 2022 to February 2023.

Photo 1. Streetscape, looking northwest, showing North Murtland Street passing in front of the house.

Photo 2. Streetscape, looking west, showing Meade Street passing along the south side of the house.

Photo 3. Front yard, looking northwest, showing the perimeter hedges and three sycamore trees.

Photo 4. Front yard and front facade, looking west, showing the perimeter hedges, sidewalk to the front porch and driveway.

Photo 5. Side/south yard, looking northeast.

Photo 6. Gate connecting terrace and side yard, looking north.

Photo 7. Back yard, looking northwest, showing the remains of the sunken garden and its low tufa walls with the buff brick wall in the background extending along Lark Way.

Photo 8. Back yard, looking southwest from Lark Way, showing the remains of the sunken garden.

Photo 9. Front Facade, looking northwest.

Photo 10. Front facade, looking west.

Photo 11. South pier of front porch, looking north, showing the gray Roman brick, Classically-derived terracotta capital with its egg-and-dart and Greek fretwork motifs, and one of the brick cheek walls that flank the stairs to the porch.

Photo 12. Front porch, looking northwest, showing the historic terra cotta corbels and more recent lighting ceiling boards.

Photo 13. South soffit of front porch, looking northwest, showing the coffered eaves and egg-and-dart moulding.

Photo 14. Terrace, looking south from the front porch.

Photo 15. Basement windows, looking southwest: north side of front porch (left); front facade (right).

Photo 16. Basement window on east side of terrace, looking west.

Photo 17. Front entry, looking west.

Photo 18. Front entry, pilaster detail, looking southwest.

Photo 19. A typical paired double-hung sash window, with ornate terracotta antepagments, or architrave frames. This one is to the north of the front porch on the first story of the front facade (camera pointed northwest).

Photo 20. South facade, looking northwest.

Photo 21. West pier of sun parlor, looking north, showing detailing identical to the front porch.

Photo 22. Stained glass detail, dining room window, looking south from the interior.

Photo 23. Dining room bay window, looking northwest.

Photo 24. Rear facade, looking east.

Photo 25. North facade and its porte cochere (right), looking southwest.

Photo 26. North facade, looking southeast.

Photo 27. North facade, looking south, showing the ceiling and soffit of the porte cochere, plus the soffit of the main roof (upper right).

Photo 28. Skylight, from grand staircase of center hall, looking up.

Photo 29. View from first floor drawing room to entry hall, looking southeast, showing two examples of emergency light fixtures.

Photo 30. Basement laundry room, looking southeast, showing the 1905 Canton Clothes Dryer.

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14. Supporting Documents

See Figures, attached.

13. Supporting Documents / Figures

**201 North Murtland Street
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13. Supporting Documents / Figures—201 North Murtland Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15208

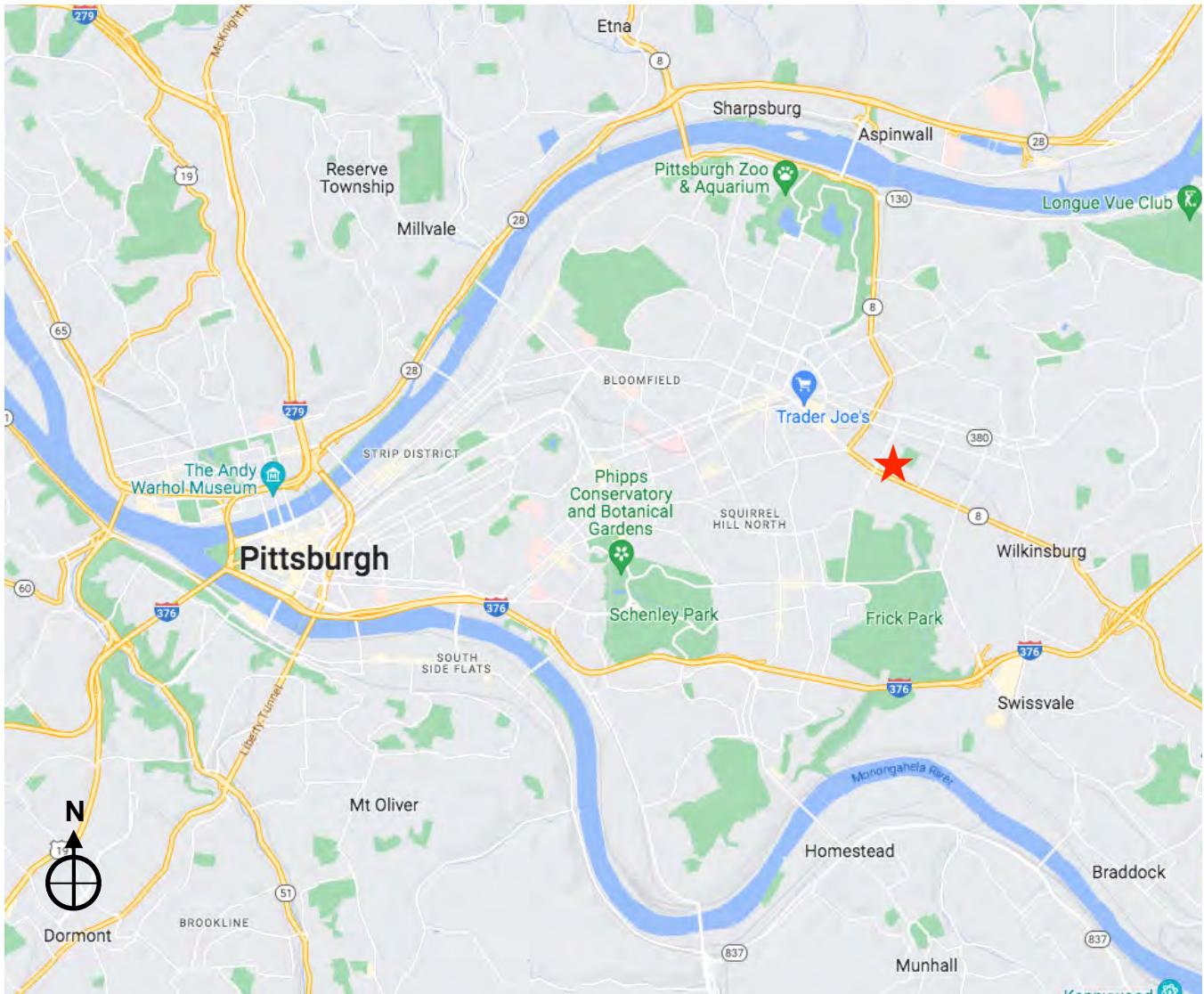


Figure 1. Location map, with red star showing the location of 201 North Murtland Street in Point Breeze North (Google Maps).

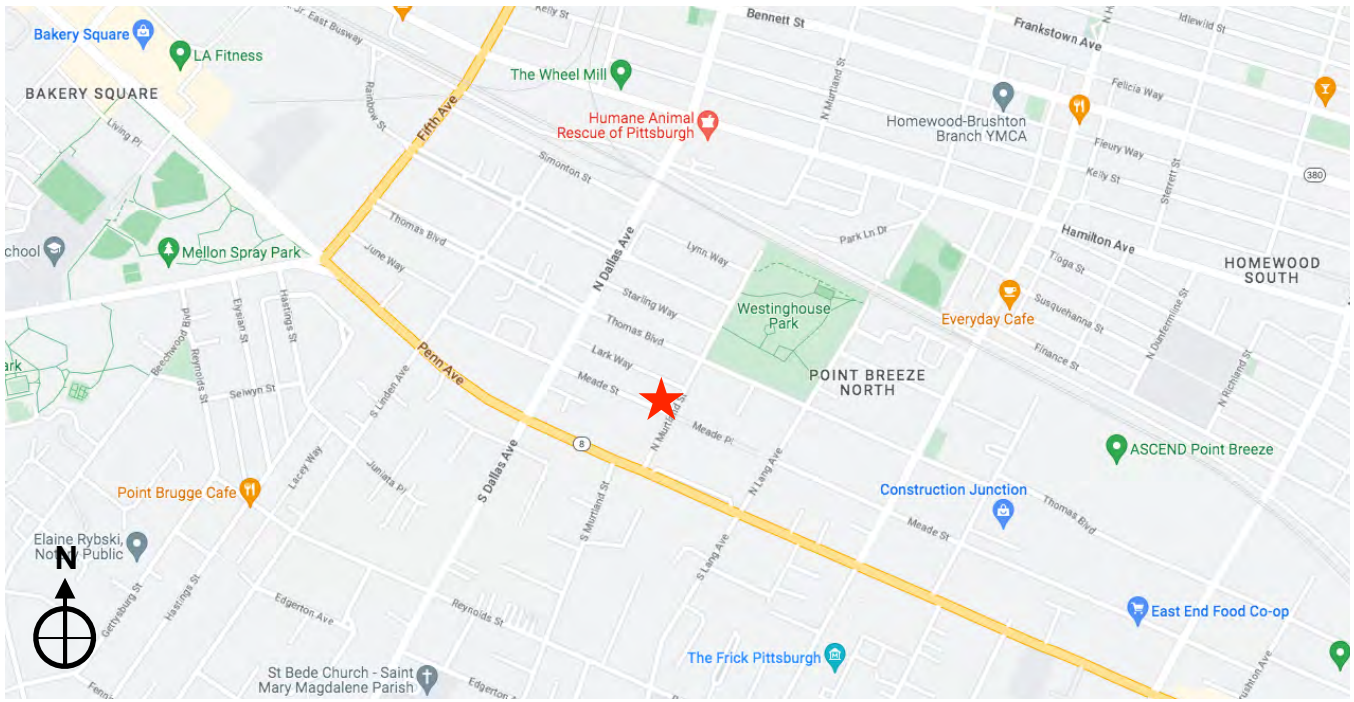


Figure 2. Vicinity map, with red star showing the location of 201 North Murtland Street in Point Breeze North (Google Maps).

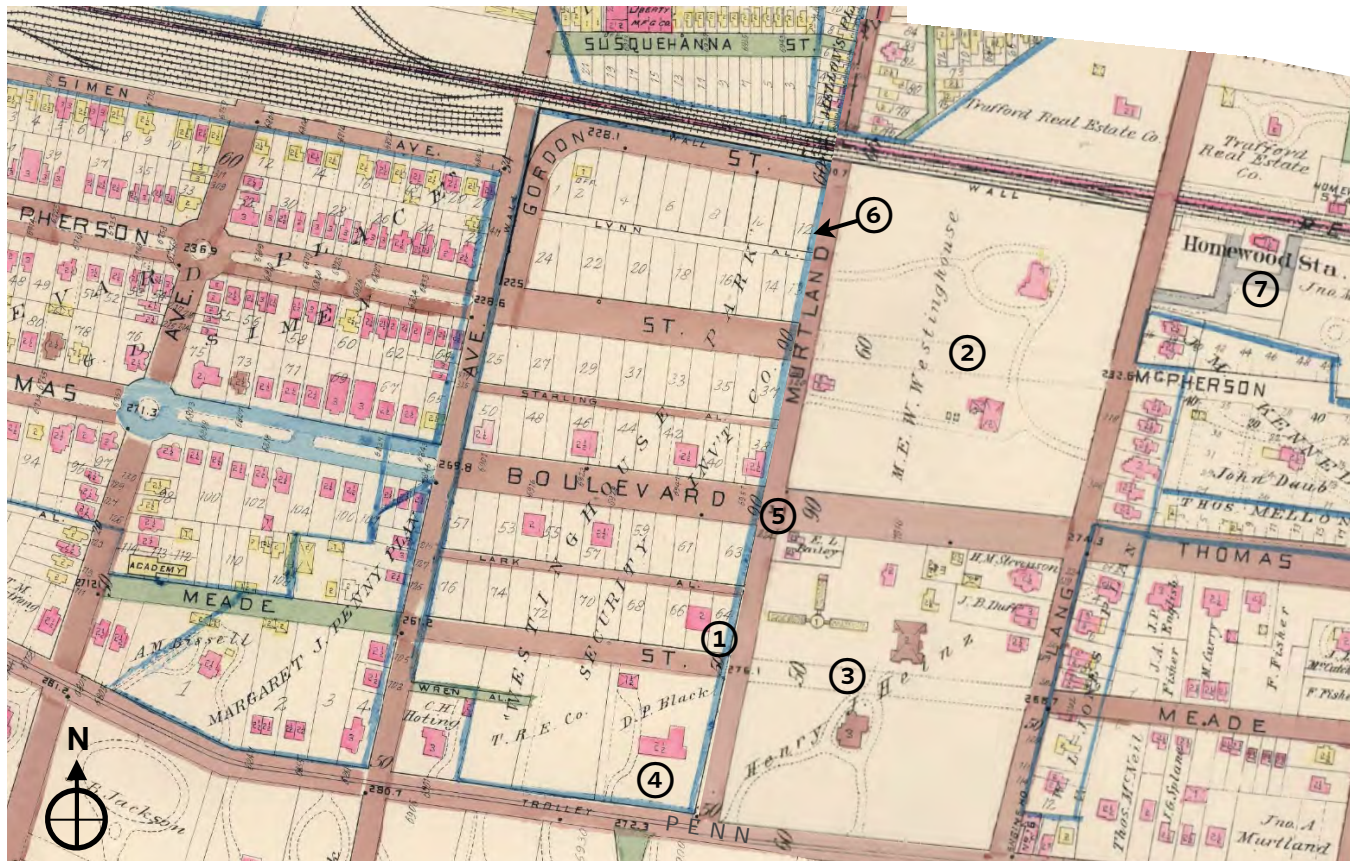
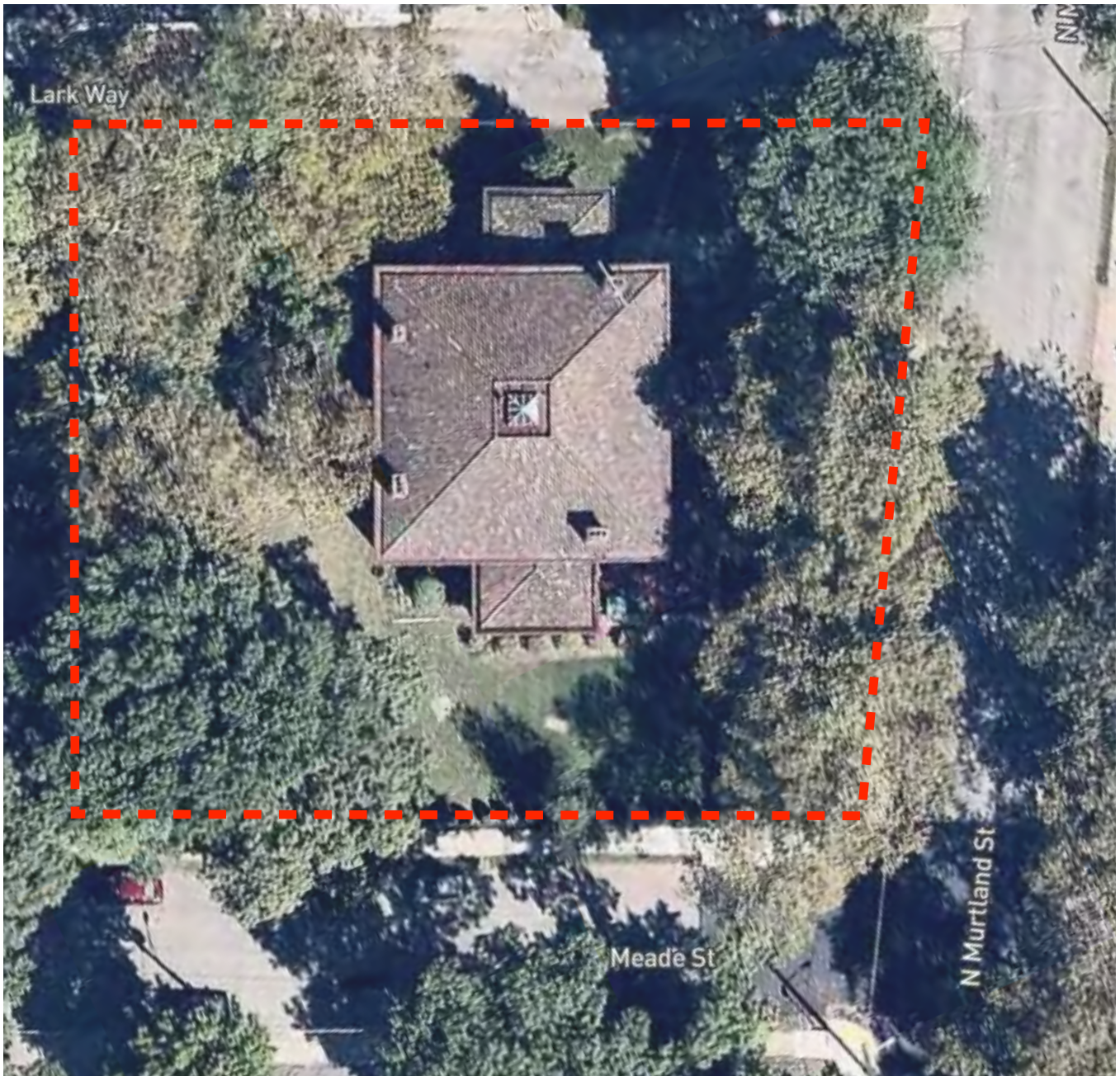


Figure 3. Historic neighborhood plan from 1910 (G.M. Hopkins Company Maps).

- ① The Keller House at 201 North Murtland Street.
- ② "Solitude," the estate of George Westinghouse II.
- ③ "Greenlawn," the estate of Mr. and Mrs. Henry J. Heinz.
- ④ "Ebonhurst," the estate of Mr. and Mrs. David Pollock Black.
- ⑤ 224 Murtland Street, on the southeast corner of Murtland and Thomas Boulevard, the Kellers' home right after the World's Fair.
- ⑥ Westinghouse Park Plan of Lots (blue line on map). The first six houses constructed in the plan can be seen on Thomas Boulevard.
- ⑦ Homewood Station, Pennsylvania Railroad, from which Emil Keller and George Westinghouse would often ride to work together.

PLAN NORTH



Plan North

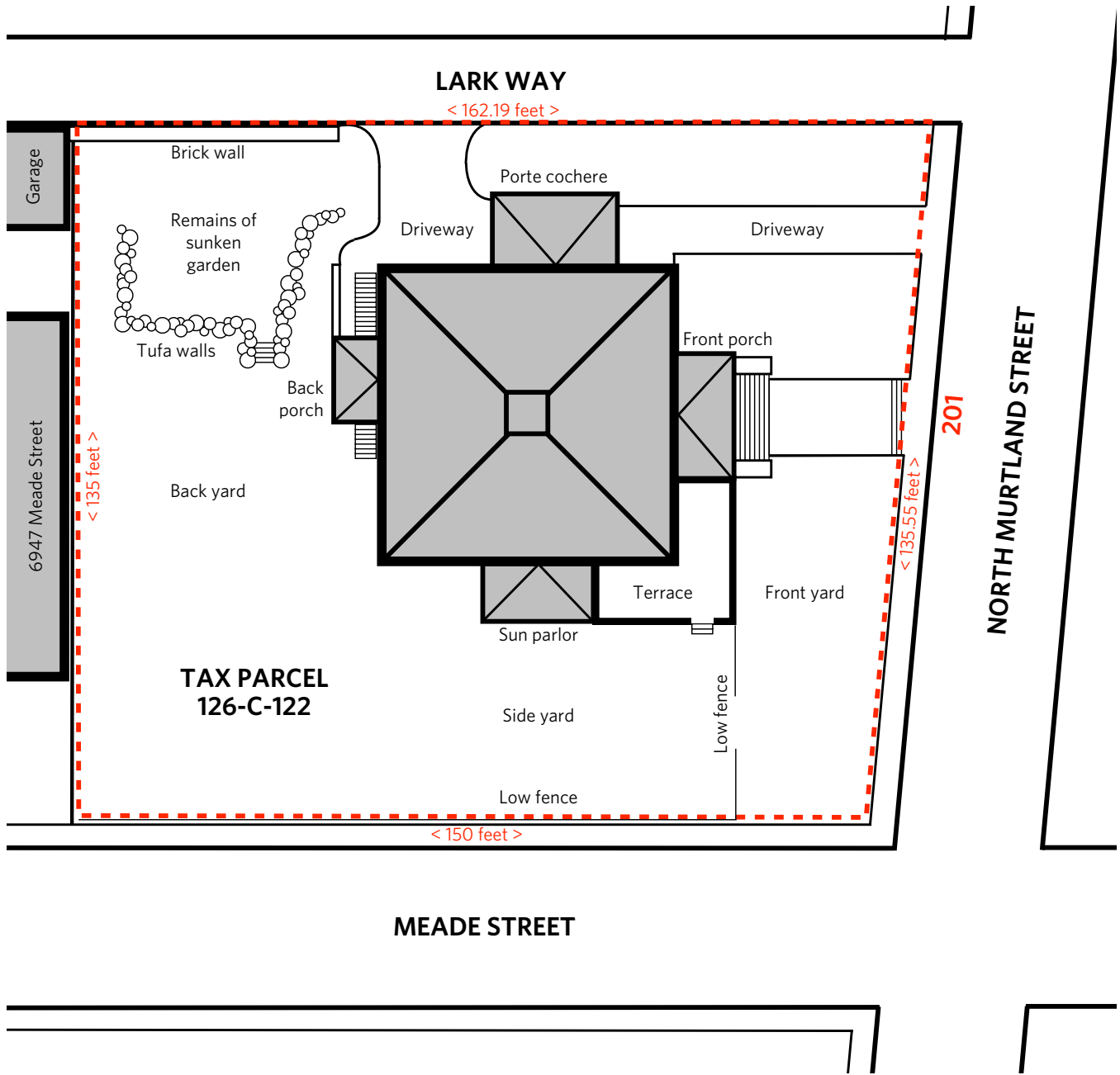



Approximate nomination boundary, representing, Tax Parcel 126-C-122. Consult Allegheny County Deed Office description for full legal boundary.

Boundaries are approximate and are for illustrative purposes only and should not be relied upon as legal property descriptions.

Figure 4. Site aerial photograph, 201 North Murtland Street, showing the property boundary (red dashed line) and the dense tree canopy that surrounds the house (Mapbox).

PLAN NORTH



 Approximate nomination boundary, representing, Tax Parcel 126-C-122. Consult Allegheny County Deed Office description for full legal boundary.

Boundaries are approximate and are for illustrative purposes only and should not be relied upon as legal property descriptions.

Figure 5. Site plan, 201 North Murtland Street, showing the property boundary (red dashed line).

Figure 6. Detail from the 1980 Historic Resource Survey Form, showing the painted white fence, arbor and gate in the background beyond the porte cochere (Donnelly and Kibert).

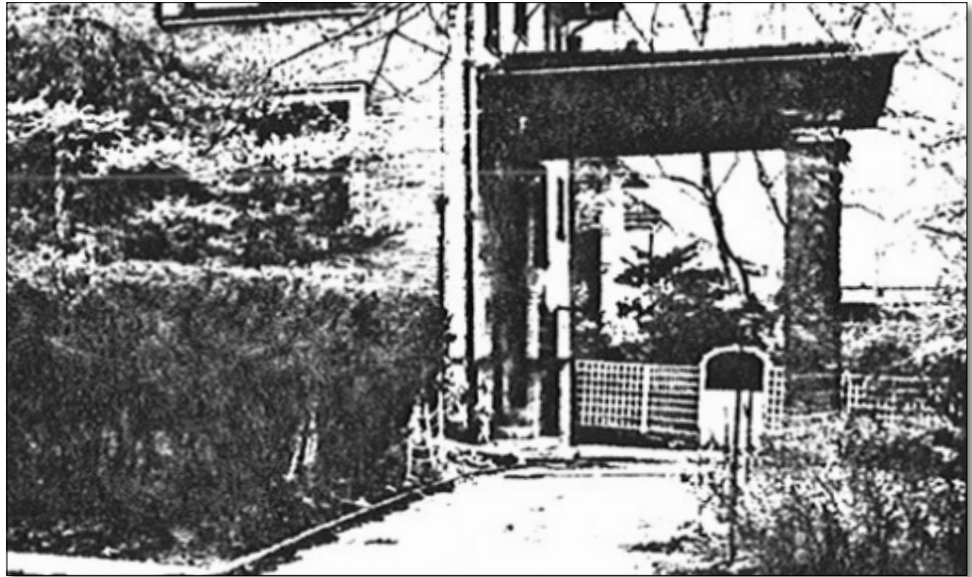


Figure 7. The Nelson family posing in the backyard, c. late-1930s (camera pointed east). From left to right: Wenley Dodds Nelson, Margaret Dodds Nelson, John Oliver "Jack" Nelson, Margaret Elizabeth "Peggy" Nelson, John Evon Nelson, and Douglas Evon Nelson. In the upper left corner is the west side of the arbor, gate and fence section shown in Figure 6 (Sheila Nelson Hourihan).



Figure 8. The Nelson family posing in the sunken garden, c. late-1930s (camera pointed north). From left to right: John Oliver "Jack" Nelson, Douglas Evon Nelson, Margaret Elizabeth "Peggy" Nelson, Margaret Dodds Nelson, John Evon Nelson, and Wenley Dodds Nelson. In the background is a trellis supported by Classically-inspired wood columns and the buff brick wall that extends along Lark Way, atop which are sections of lattice (Sheila Nelson Hourihan).





Figure 9. George and Marguerite Westinghouse, circa 1869 (Senator John Heinz History Center).



Figure 10. "Solitude," residence of Mr. and Mrs. George Westinghouse II (Westinghouse Park: *The Suburb Beauty*).



Figure 11. "Greenlawn," residence of Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Heinz (Westinghouse Park: *The Suburb Beauty*).

Figure 12. Map of Westinghouse Park (Westinghouse Park: *The Suburb Beauty*, [1903]).

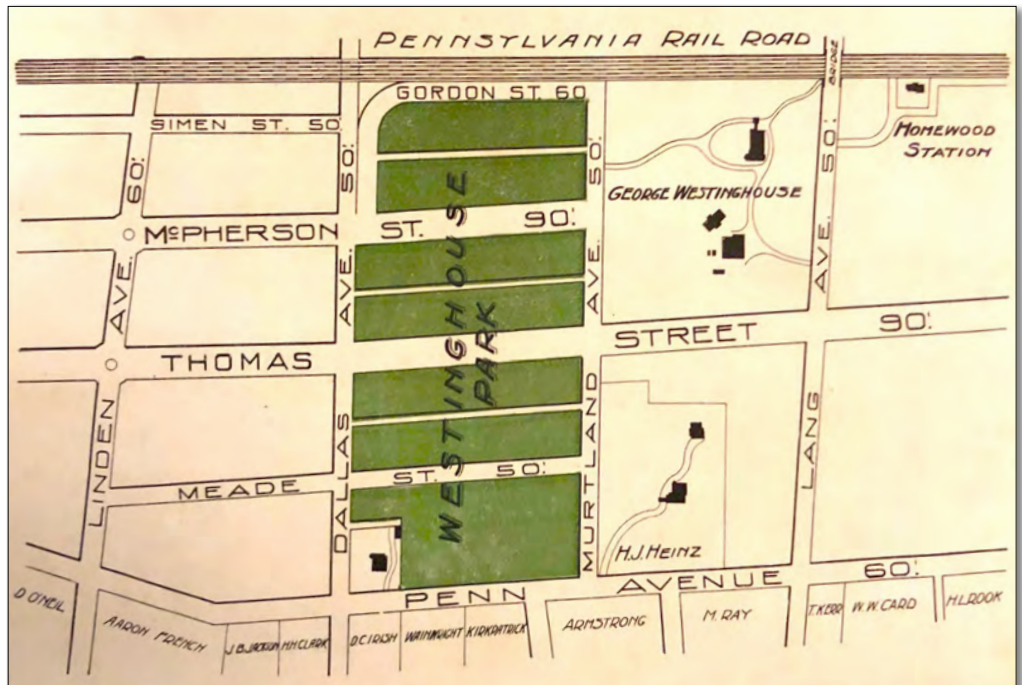


Figure 13. "Ebonhurst," residence of Mr. and Mrs. D. P. Black (Edward, White, ed. *Pittsburgh the Powerful*, 67). This image from 1907 is noteworthy for also including the Keller's recently-completed house in the background. It can be seen in the distance, beyond the Black's porte cochere (red circle).



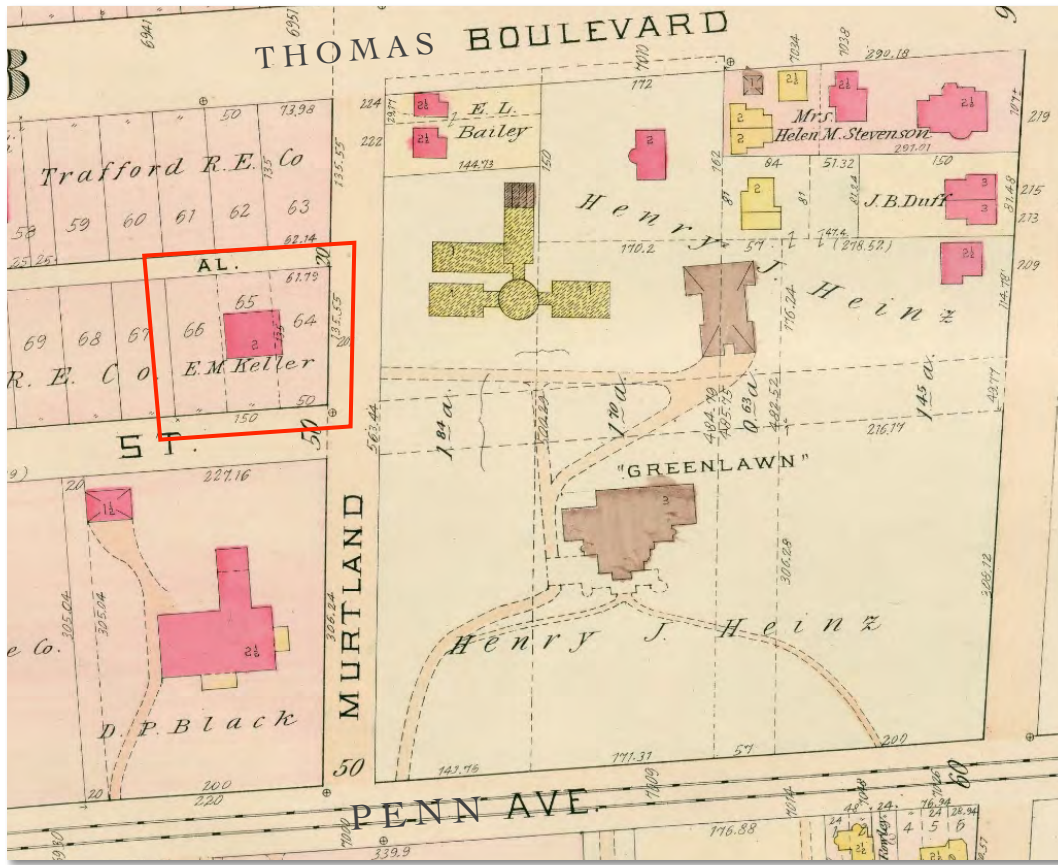


Figure 14. G. M. Hopkins Company Map, 1911, showing the E. M. Keller House on Lots 64, 65 and 66 (red box) across the street from the Heinz and Black estates.

ALTHOUGH it was not called a housewarming Mrs. Emil E. Keller's bridge-luncheon yesterday afternoon gave to her friends an opportunity of inspecting the handsome new home of the hostess in Murtland avenue, Homewood. The guests included Mrs. Omar Scott Decker, Mrs. George Pearson, Mrs. William Blackstock Rodgers, Mrs. John P. Knable, Mrs. Gordon Fisher, Miss Milligan, Mrs. Biddle Arthurs, Mrs. George Hoyt King, Mrs. William N. Burt, Mrs. Walter C. Mellor, Mrs. Loyall A. Osborne, Mrs. George Taylor, Mrs. Ewing Wilber Day, Mrs. Henry L. Barton, Mrs. William Alvah Stewart, Mrs. David Pollock Black, Mrs. W. W. Wisbart, Mrs. John G. Bennett and Miss Jane C. Bennett. The house is a notably beautiful one standing in Murtland avenue just back of the D. P. Black residence, which had its formal house warming about a year ago, and is built of gray brick with green tile roof. The plans for the house were drawn by Mr. and Mrs. Keller, who took possession of their new domicile but a few weeks ago. In each room, the walls and ceiling are done in soft tints, while here and there near the border a large drooping cluster of flowers in contrasting bright colors appears. On those ceilings which are not beamed a wreath of the

flower gives an artistic appearance to the apartment. The spacious hall, through which the card tables were placed yesterday, is done in oak with a broad staircase turning to either side at the top. The drawing room is especially dainty with its walls of soft gray, large white mantel and gray marble fireplace. The single chandelier hangs from the center of the ceiling and is formed entirely of prisms through which the light gleams in rainbow effect. Across the hall is the cozy library, finished in dark rich green and mahogany. A wide fireplace is a feature of the room which opens into the sun parlor on the Penn avenue side of the house. The dining room at the end of the hall has a beamed mahogany ceiling. The china closets and buffet are built into the walls and in every detail of the plans and furnishing simplicity is the keynote. The apartments on the second floor are exquisitely dainty. One is finished in pale green, another in soft gray and a third in blue, and each connects with a handsome marble bath. A cheerful little den occupies the extreme front of this floor. Mrs. Keller will have no formal house warming, but has been entertaining her friends with a series of informal little social affairs which will be followed in the fall by a second series of more pretentious events.

Figure 15. A description of the Kellers' new home from the society page of the Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette, 7 May 1905.

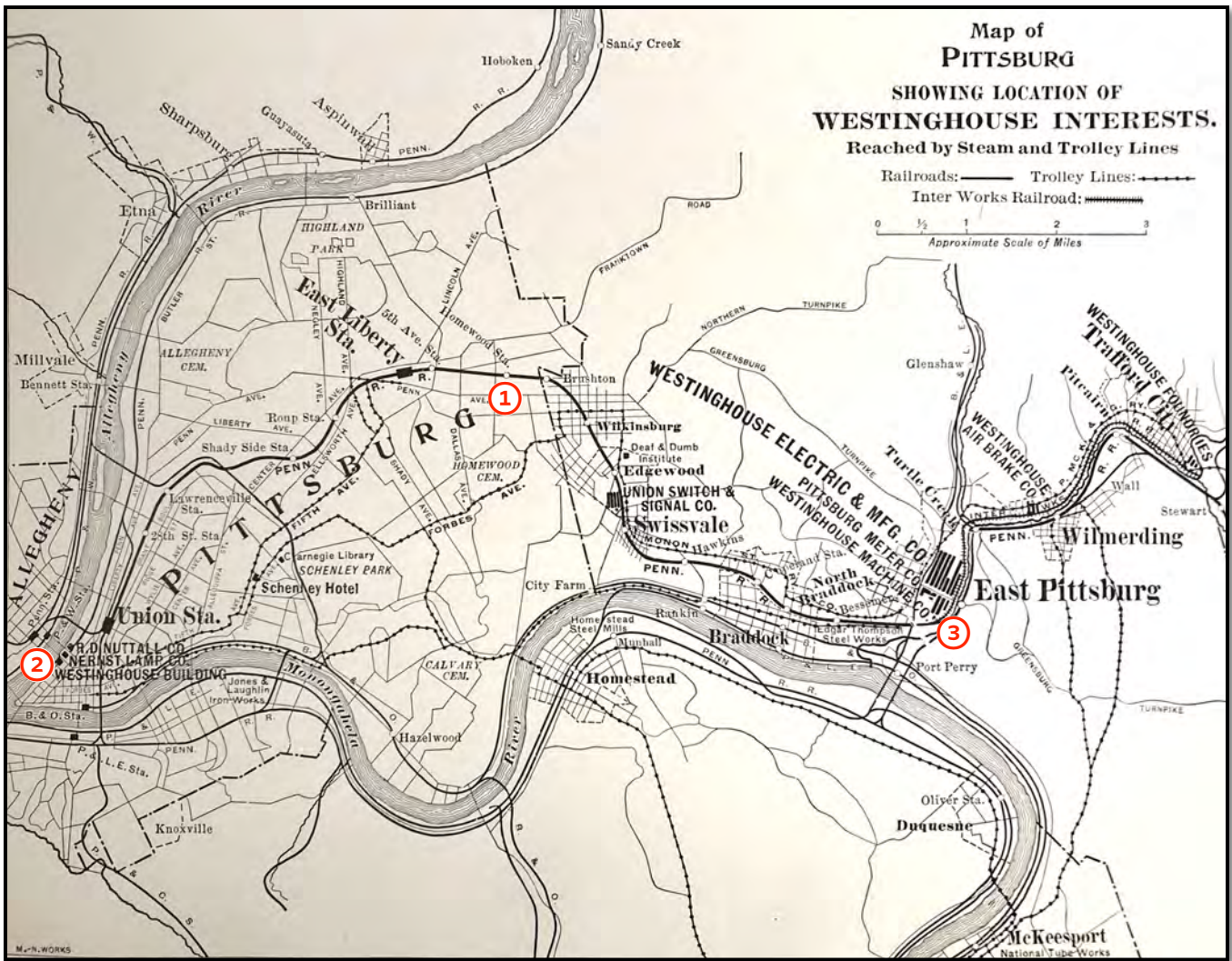


Figure 16. Map showing the extent of George Westinghouse’s Pittsburgh-area business interests during the time that Emil Keller managed Westinghouse Machine Company. It also illustrates the central location of their homes near Homewood Station ① and the equidistant, 20-minute rail commute to either the Westinghouse Building Downtown ② or the Westinghouse Machine Company in East Pittsburg ③ (*The Westinghouse Companies in the Railway and Industrial Field*, 1907).

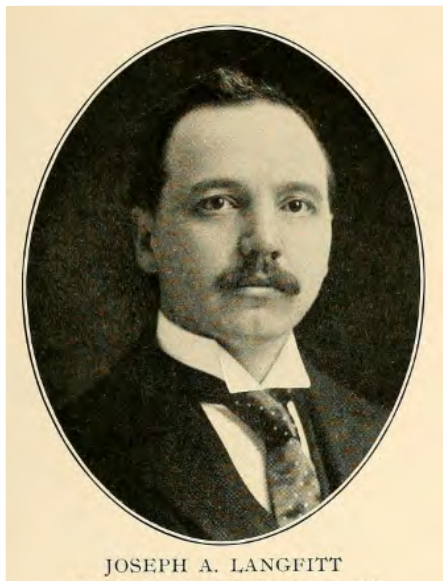


Figure 17. Second owner Joseph A. Langfitt (Percy F. Smith, ed., *Notable Men of Pittsburgh and Vicinity*, 281).



Figure 18. Sixth owner Jerome Gzesh (*Pittsburgh Press*, 21 November 1972).



Figure 19. Eighth owner John P. Fernandez (*New Castle News*, 6 April 1978).

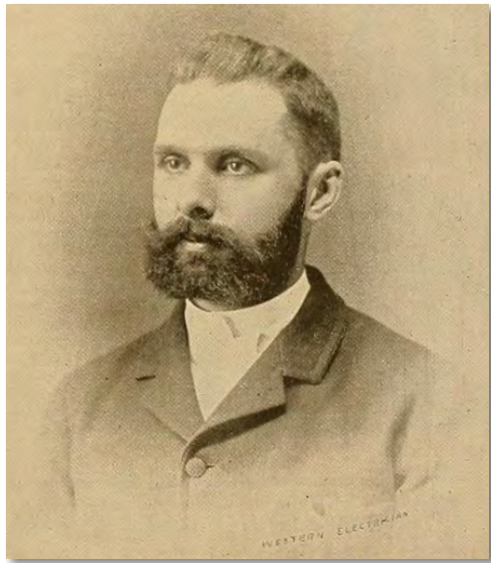


Figure 20. Emil Ernest Keller (*Western Electrician*, 7 July 1892, 7).



Figure 21. Advertisement for the florist business originally founded by Emil Keller's father (*The Rochester House Directory and Family Address Book*, 1894, 819).

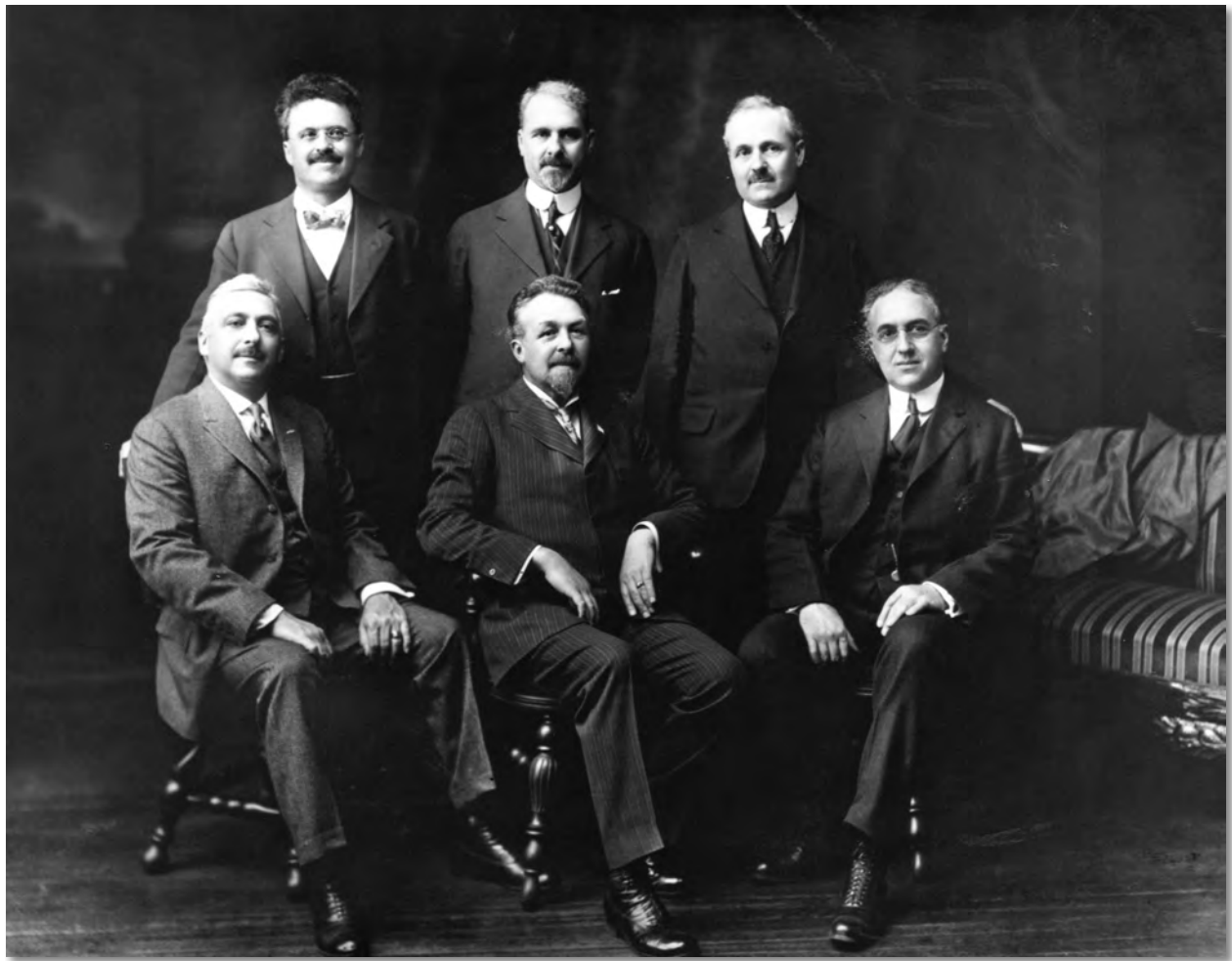


Figure 22. The Keller brothers, circa 1910, around the time that Emil and Ella Keller relocated from Pittsburgh to Detroit. Front row (left to right): J. Michael Keller, John W. Keller, William L. Keller. Back row (left to right): George J. Keller, Emil E. Keller, Fernando J. Keller (Courtesy John Keller).



Figure 23. Frederick E. Degenhardt (*Western Electrician*, 15 December 1894, 285).



Figure 25. Emil Keller, approximately age 70, around the time he was working on his contribution to *Anecdotes and Reminiscences of George Westinghouse* (*The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*).



Figure 24. Advertisement, Keller & Degenhardt (*The Electrical World*, 25 June 1892, xix).



Figure 26. Advertisement for the company founded by Ella Miller Keller's father, which utilized the patented shoe tree of her first husband, Robert P. Turneure (Rochester City Directory, 1877, 615).



Figure 27. Emil Keller, around age 28, shortly after becoming Westinghouse's superintendent at the 1893 World's Fair (*Westinghouse: The Life and Times of an American Icon*).

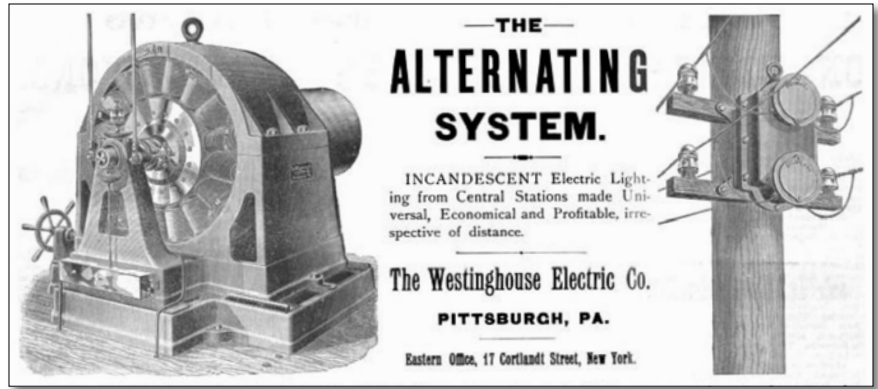


Figure 28. Advertisement for Westinghouse's alternating current electrical system during the height of the "current wars" (*Electrical Review*, 2 September 1887, 13).



Figure 29. A night view of the Court of Honor at the 1893 World's Fair, showing some of the 100,000 lights installed under Emil Keller's supervision (Rossiter Johnson, ed., after p. 482).



Figure 30. Interior view of the Electricity Building, showing a portion of the Westinghouse exhibits in the open center of the floor plan, which was made possible by Emil Keller's redesign (*Official Views of the World's Columbian Exposition*, Plate 30).

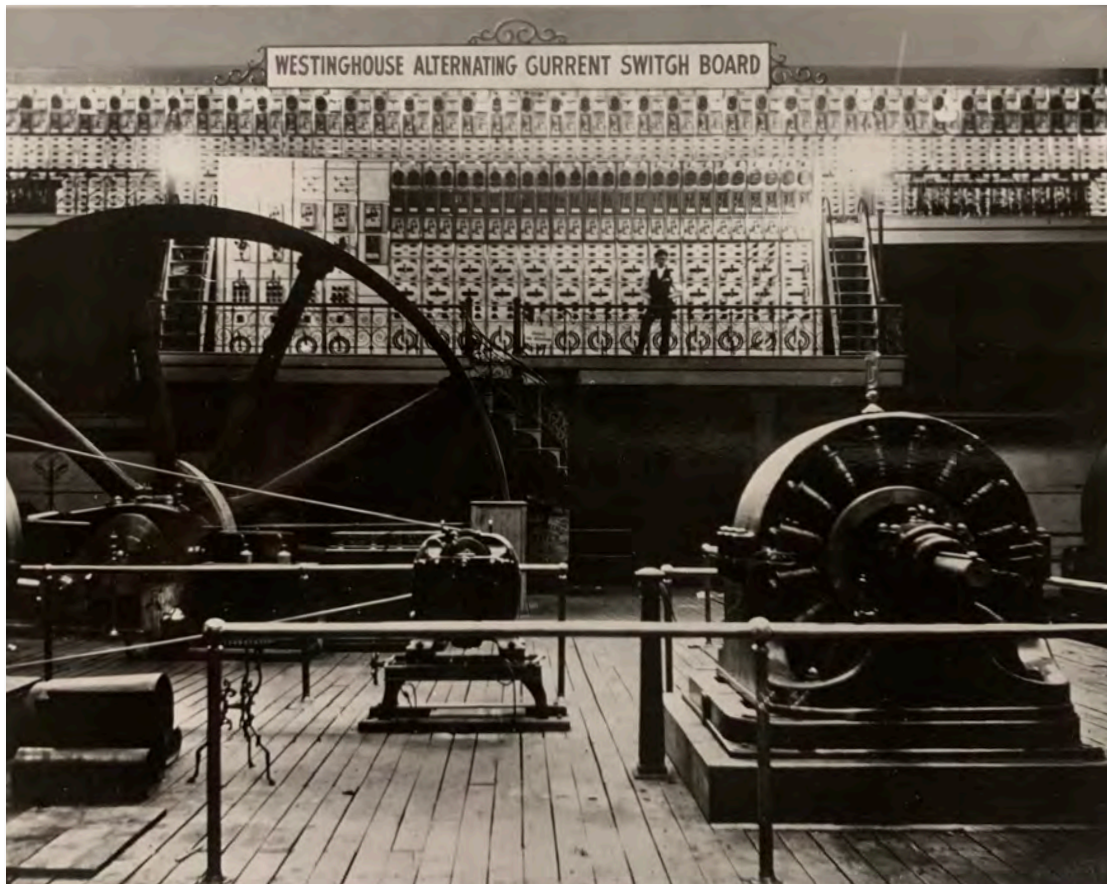


Figure 31. The massive Westinghouse Alternating Current Switch Board in Machinery Hall at the 1893 World's Fair (Detre Library & Archives, Senator John Heinz History Center).

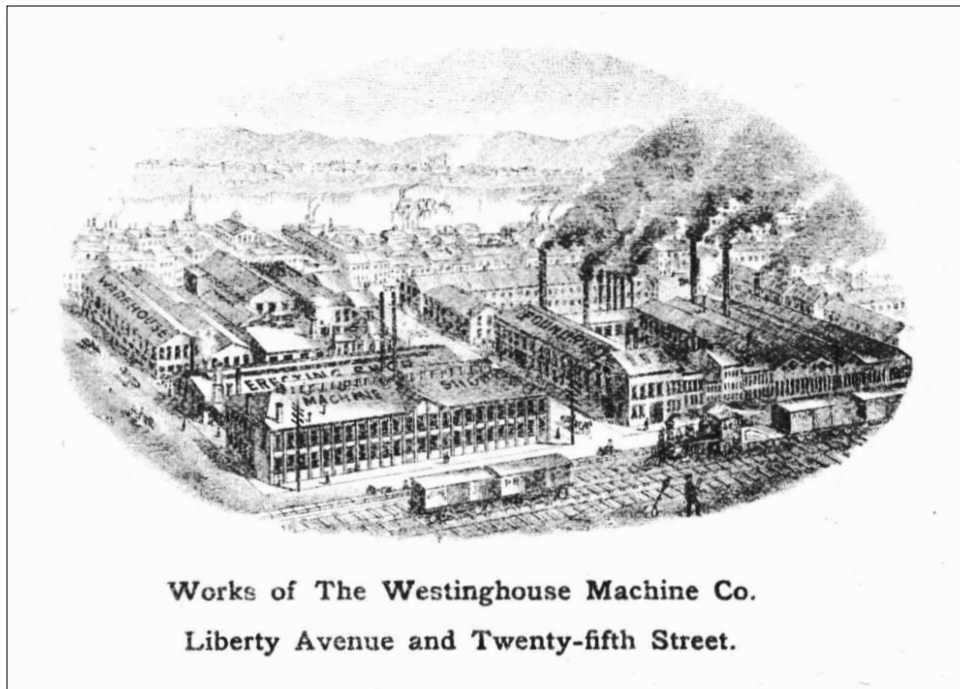


Figure 32. The Westinghouse Machine Company at its original Lawrenceville location. The street in the foreground is Liberty Avenue. In the distance is the Allegheny River (George H. Thurston, *Pittsburgh's Progress, Industries and Resources*, 1886, after p. 68).

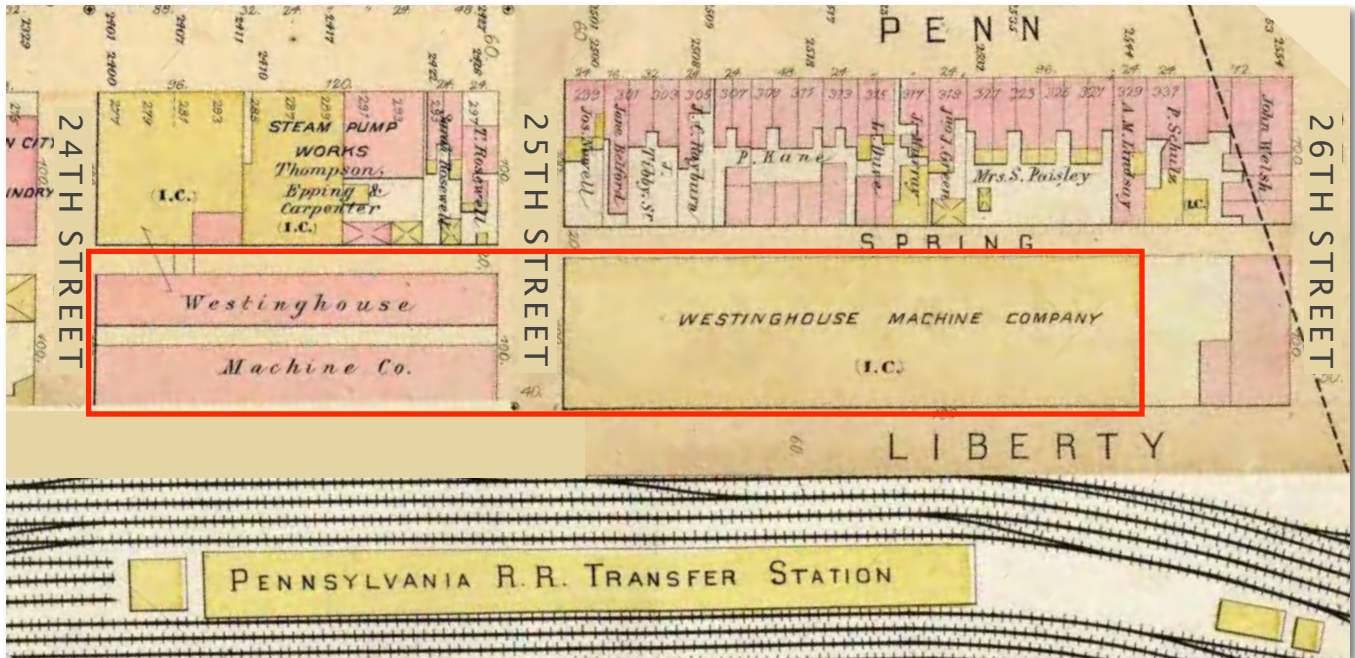


Figure 33. Map detail, showing the Westinghouse Machine Company (red rectangle) at its original Lawrenceville location (G. M. Hopkins Company, 1889).

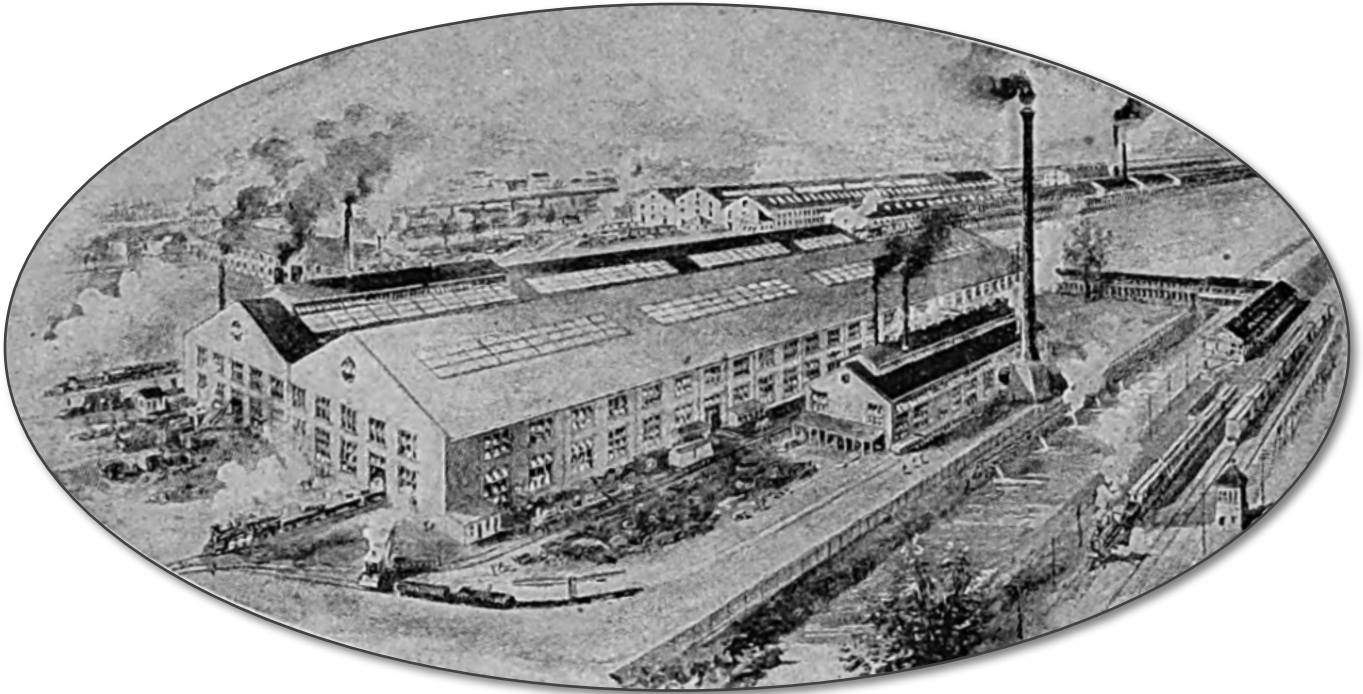


Figure 34. The Westinghouse Machine Company in East Pittsburgh shortly after opening. Under Keller's leadership the plant would soon be doubled in size by expanding the far end of the building. In the background is the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company (W. S. Bell, photographer, in Charles Thomas Logan, "The Rise of Pittsburgh," *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*, September 1897, 347).

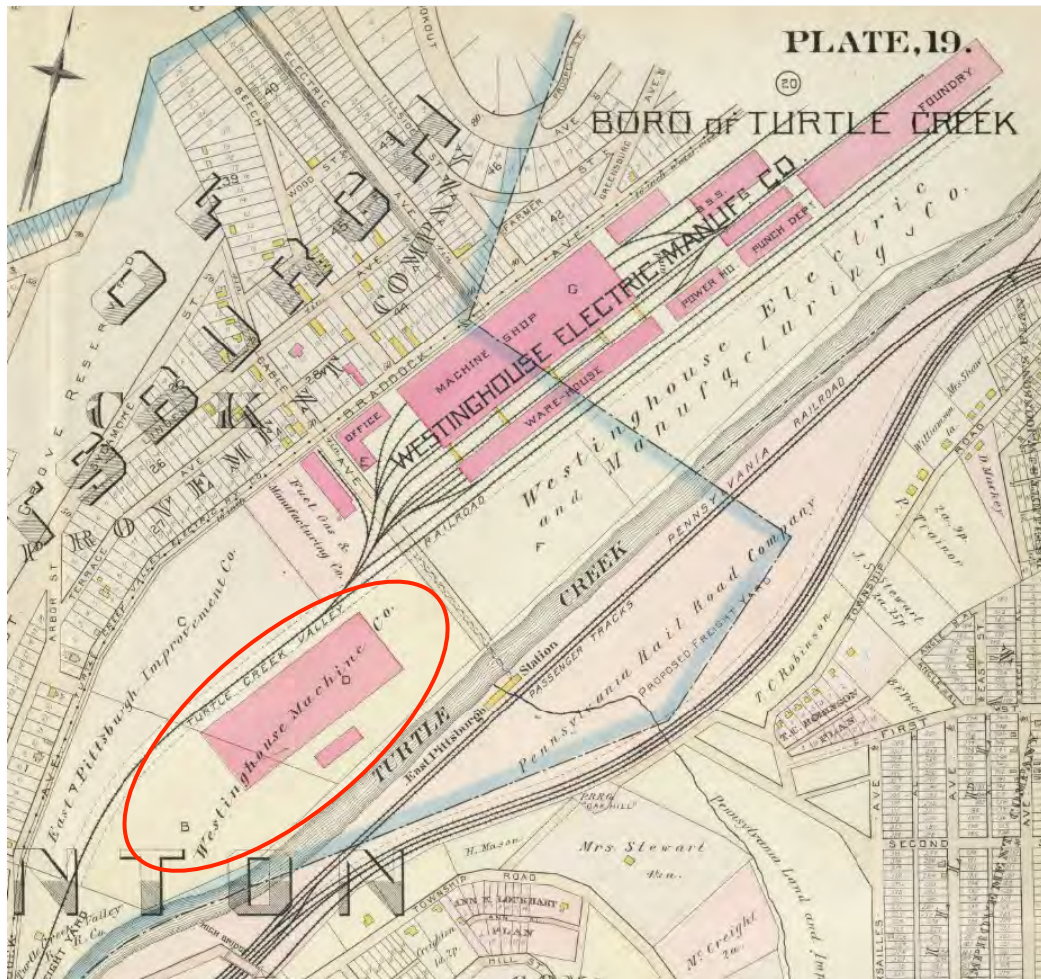


Figure 35. Map detail, showing the Westinghouse Machine Company (red oval) in East Pittsburgh shortly after opening (G. M. Hopkins Company, 1895).

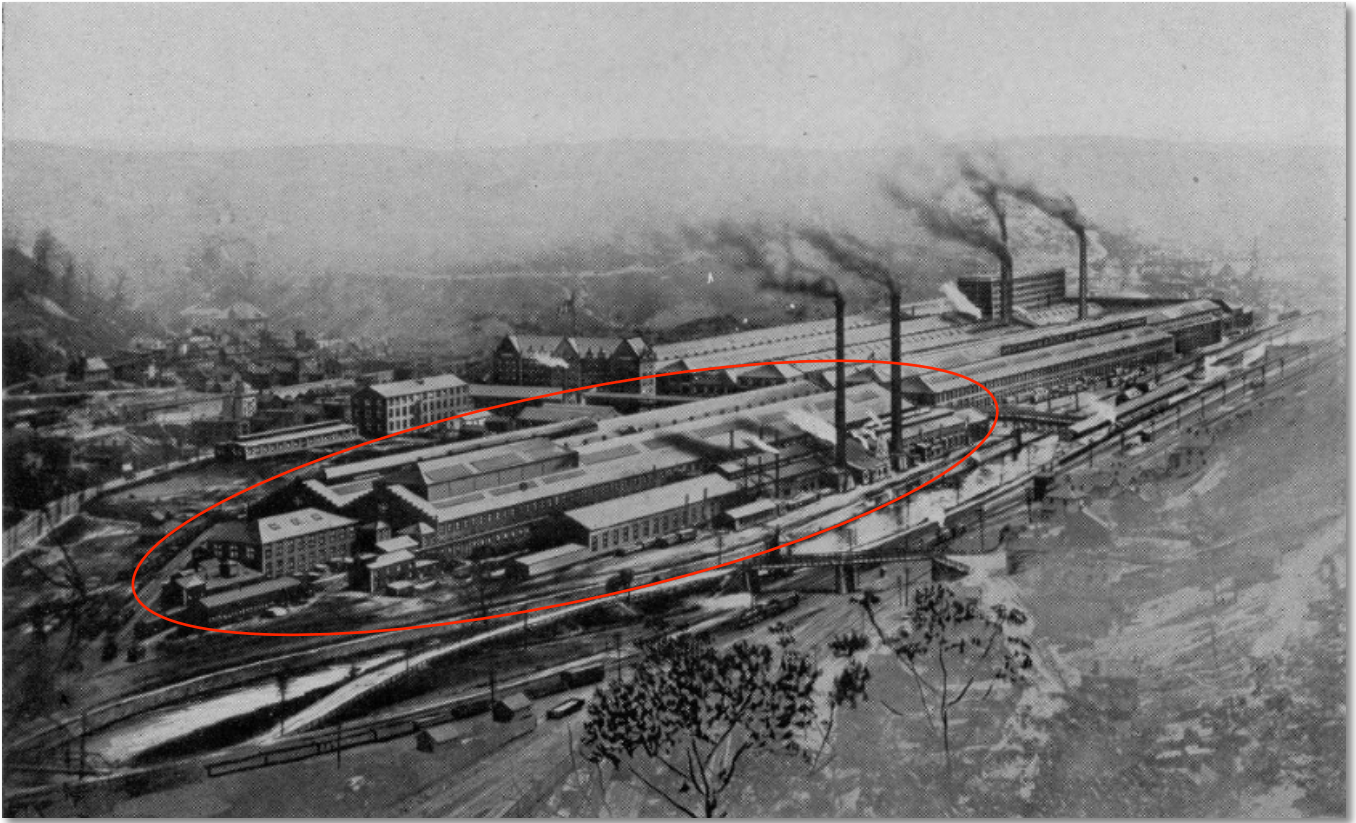


Figure 36. The Westinghouse Machine Company (red oval) at its East Pittsburgh, circa 1910, showing the expanded size of the plant that would have existed at the time of Keller's forced departure. In the background is the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company (Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, *Trades Training with the Westinghouse Electric & Mfg. Co.* 27).

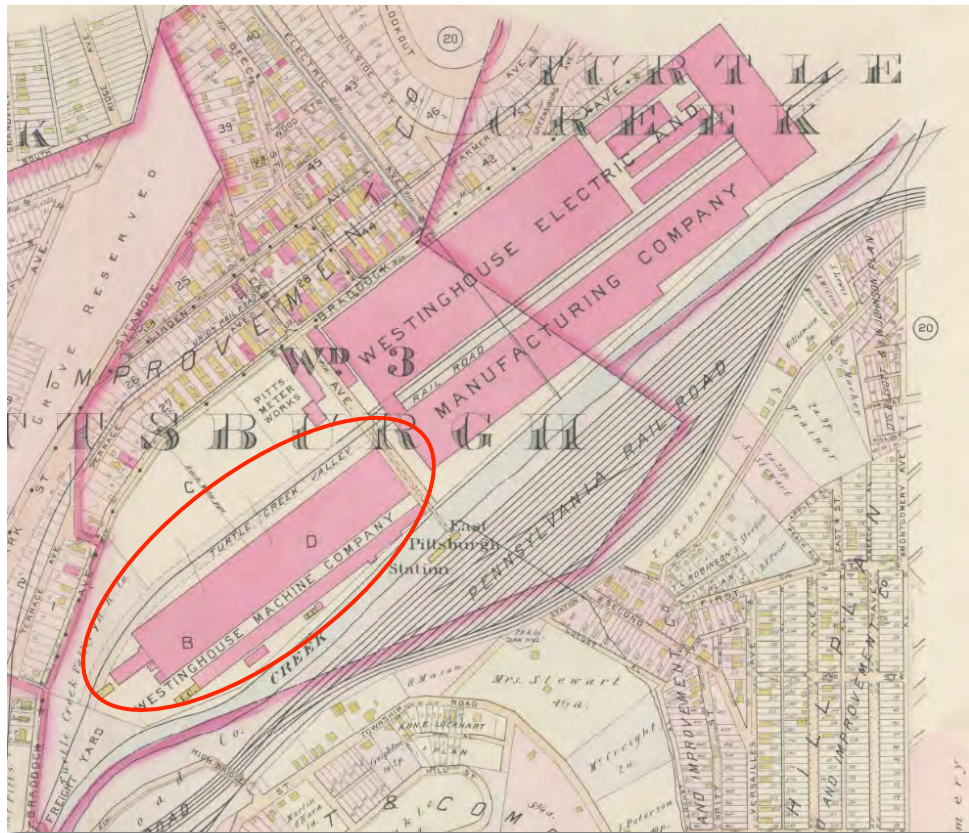


Figure 37. Map detail, showing the Westinghouse Machine Company (red oval) after doubling in size under Keller's leadership (G. M. Hopkins Company, 1903).

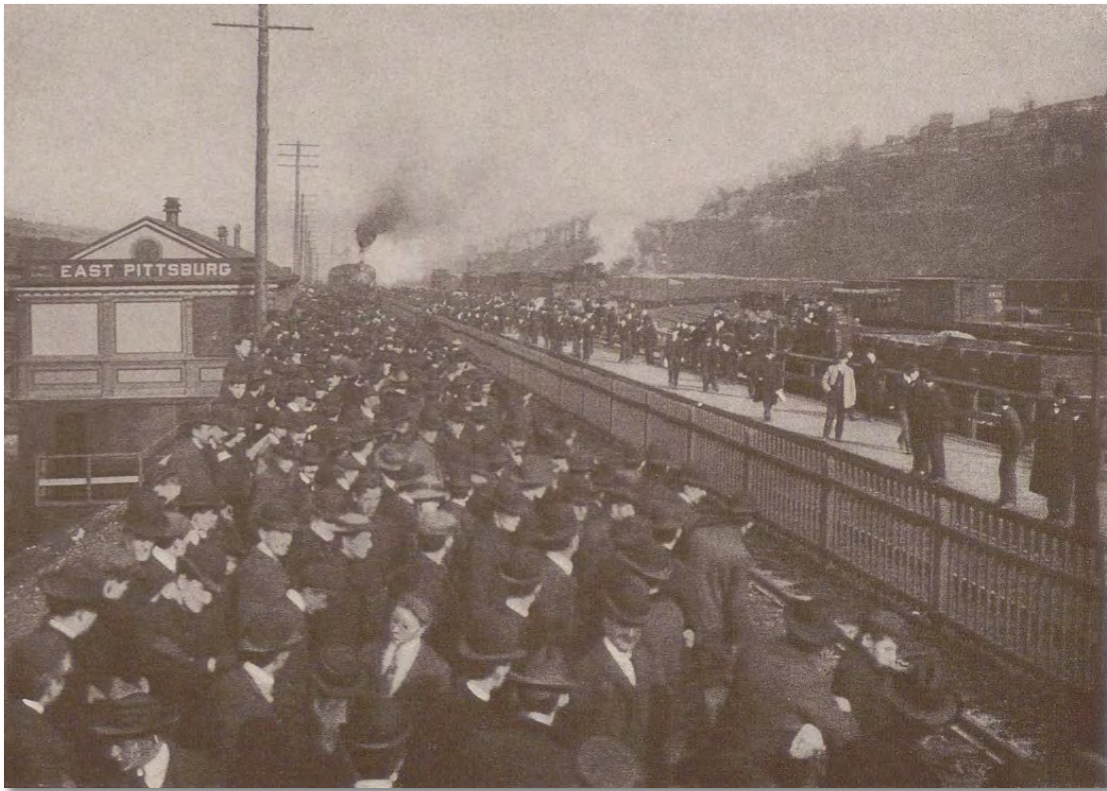


Figure 38. Westinghouse employees at the East Pittsburg railroad station outside the Westinghouse Machine Company, waiting for the evening trains. The close of each shift required six trains to convey all of the workers (Westinghouse Machine Company, "Westinghouse Views").



Figure 39. Interior of the main machine shop of the Westinghouse Machine Company (Walter M. McFarland, "George Westinghouse—Inventor, Organizer, and Director," *The Engineering Magazine* 20, no. 4, January 1901, 538).

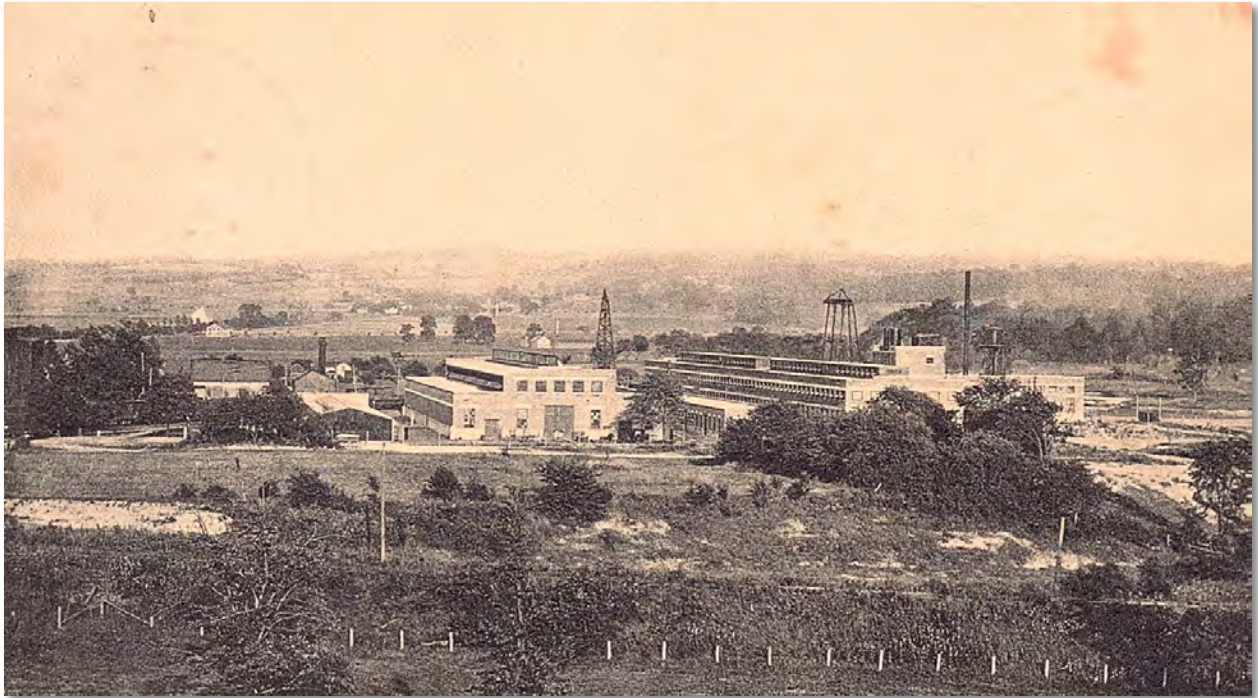


Figure 40. Vintage postcard of the Westinghouse Machine Company's plant in Attica, New York (postmarked 1907).

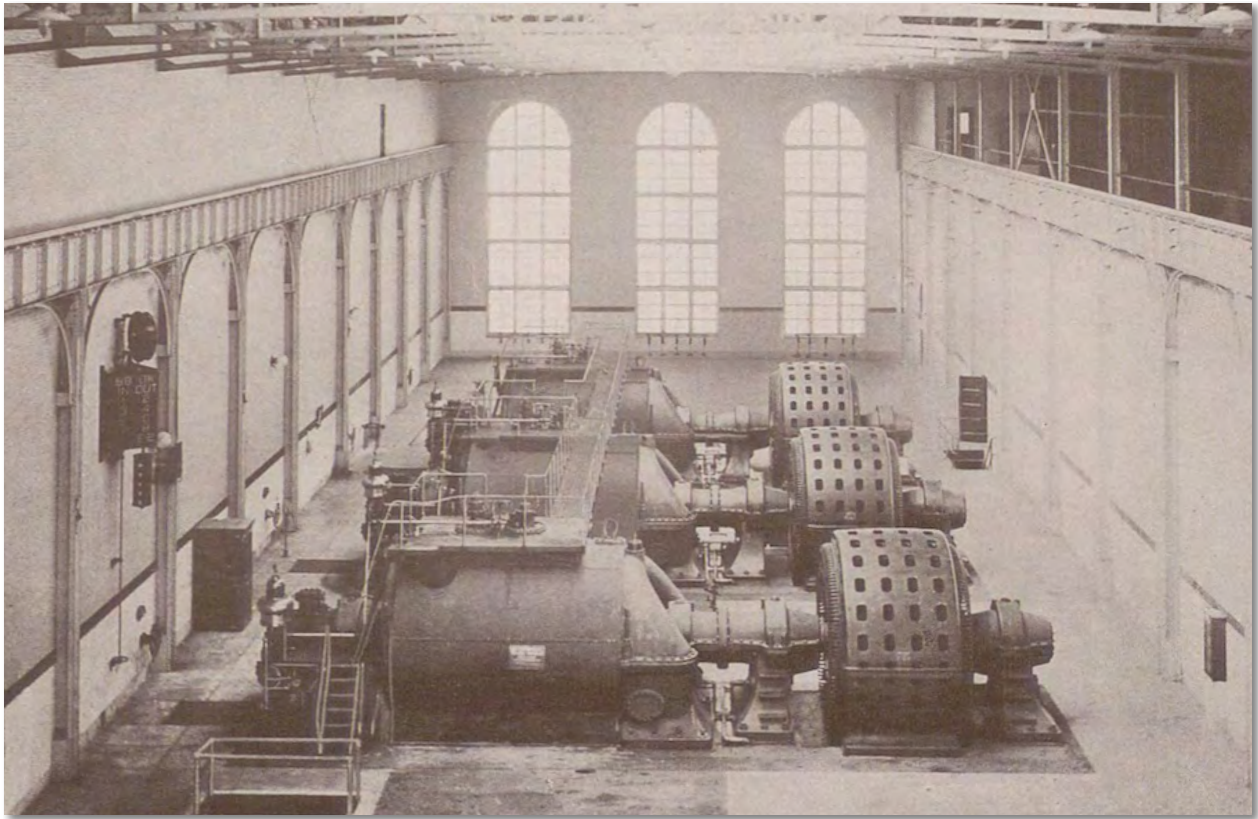


Figure 41. Engine room of the Long Island City Power Plant of the Long Island Railroad, showing three 5,500 kilowatt Westinghouse-Parsons steam turbines (Westinghouse Machine Company, "Westinghouse Views").



Figure 42. The three-wheeled electric vehicle developed by The Columbia Perambulator Company, which was envisioned as a means to move guests about the 1893 World's Fair (*The Motorcycle*, November 1895, 34).



Figure 43. The larger, four-passenger electric vehicle developed by The Columbia Perambulator Company (*The Horseless Age*, December 1895, 15).

12 THE PITTSBURGH GAZETTE, APRIL 3, 1904.

THE AUTO IN PITTSBURGH

F. F. LOVEJOY IN HIS CAR.

E. E. KELLER, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE WESTINGHOUSE MACHINE CO. IN ONE OF HIS HAYNES ANDERSON CARS.

GEORGE FLINN PRESIDENT OF THE PITTSBURGH AUTOMOBILE CLUB.

S. JARVIS ADAMS AND HIS SON S. J. ADAMS JR. IN THEIR STEPHENS-DURYEA CAR.

THE motor car in Pittsburgh is not a mere fad or fancy, nor exclusively a pleasure vehicle. It has definitely come to stay; some of the most intelligent men in the Iron City assert that the revolution wrought by the railway and electric systems will not be greater than the revolution to be produced in our cities through this new motive power. The very facts set forth in this article show the change that the motor car is already producing in this city's social, economic and commercial circles.

Only so long as five years ago, on Easter Sunday, a horseless carriage, driven to the First Presbyterian church, in Wood street, when the congregation was dispersing, created the greatest excitement, and no less a person than one of the prominent elders of the church said that it was the first automobile he had ever seen. Though, as a matter of fact, it was not the first motor machine in Pittsburgh, it was the first horseless vehicle that 75 per cent of that Easter congregation had ever seen. Now so changed are the conditions even in this short time that today handsomely equipped motor cars will stand at church offices at the close of the Easter service and elicit only now and then a passing comment. Society has so ardently taken up the motor vehicle that nearly 400 pleasure cars are now seen for town use and sport. A local automobile club, composed of about 200 prominent members, has been organized, a Pittsburgh board of consultants of the American Motor league, an active, virile society is well under way and in the commercial world of the Iron City the motor car is assuming a place undreamed of five years ago. The growth of the motor car in Pittsburgh has been phenomenal, no imitation

Figure 44. The first of journalist Martha L. Root's six pages on the status of the automobile in Pittsburgh in 1904. The image in the upper right shows Emil Keller in one of his Haynes-Apperson cars—though incorrectly noted in the caption as "Haynes Anderson" (Martha L. Root, "The Auto in Pittsburgh," *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, 3 April 1904, 12).

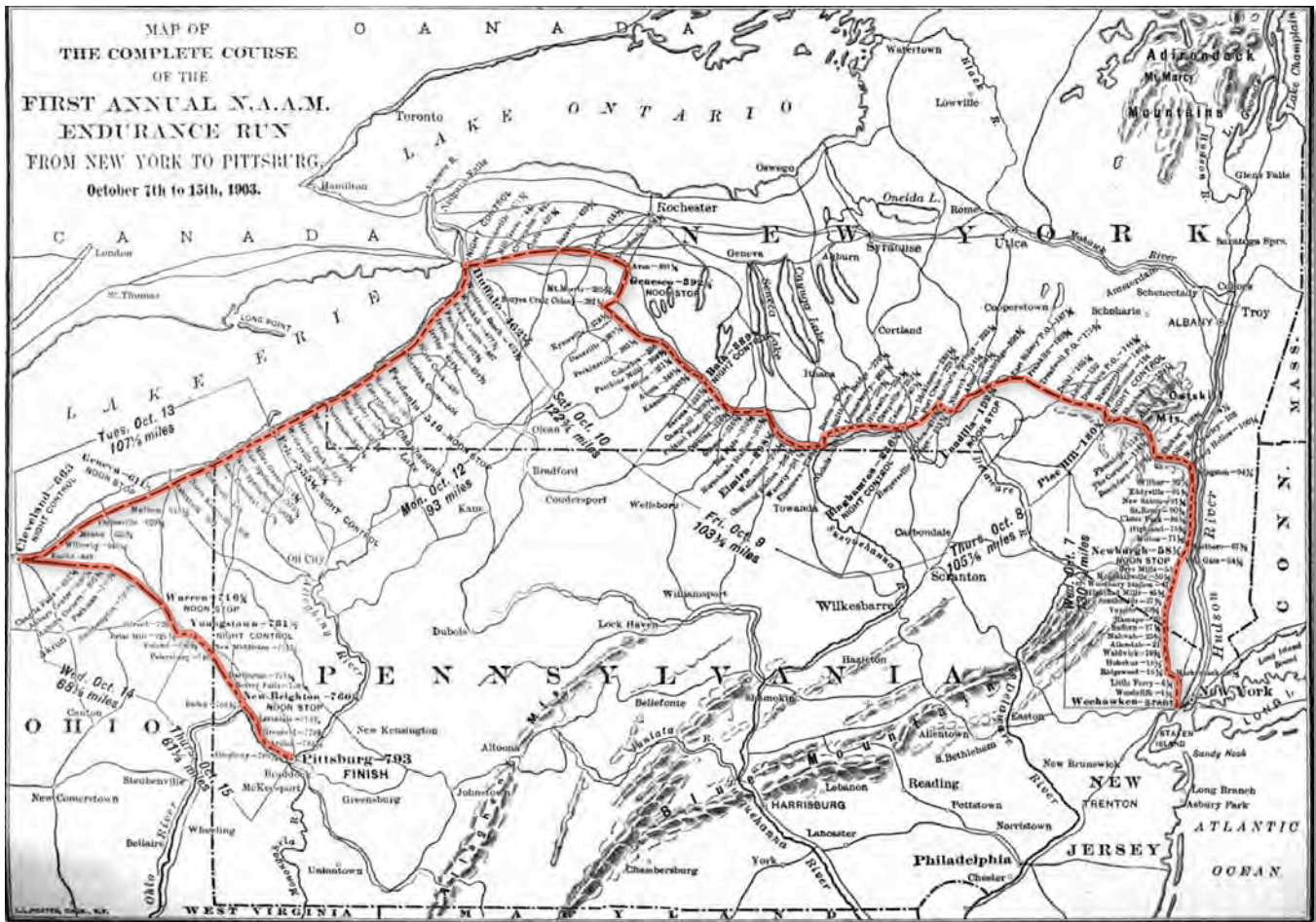


Figure 45. Map of the 1903 Endurance Run, in which Emil Keller participated as a passenger and unofficial photographer (*The Automobile*, 10 October 1903, 376).



Figure 46. Photo by Emil Keller, showing flooding near Binghamton, New York during the 1903 Endurance Run (*Country Life in America*, February 1904, 295).



Figure 47. Photo by Emil Keller, showing his team being forced from the roads to railroad tracks due to flooding near Binghamton, New York during the 1903 Endurance Run (*Country Life in America*, February 1904, 295).



Figure 48. Masthead for the Pittsburgh consulate of the American Motor League (*Pittsburg Index*, 16 January 1904, 20).



Figure 49. Cover of the February 8, 1902 edition of *Automobile Topics Illustrated*, showing Emil Keller's article highlighted at the top as the feature story.

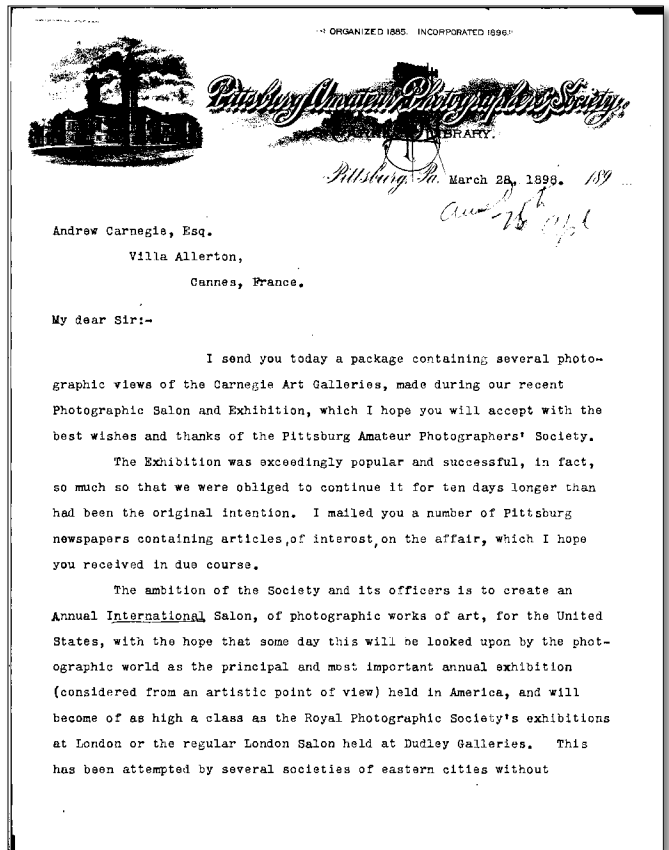


Figure 50. Page one of a three-page letter from Emil Keller, president of the Pittsburgh Amateur Photographers' Society, to Andrew Carnegie, dated March 28, 1898, in which Keller shares images from the Society's first salon and exhibition and requests funding to make the event an annual occurrence (Andrew Carnegie Collections, Carnegie Mellon University).



Figure 51. Emil Keller's award-winning photographic transparency, "Japanese Tea Garden, World's Fair" (*Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 23 January 1898, 17).

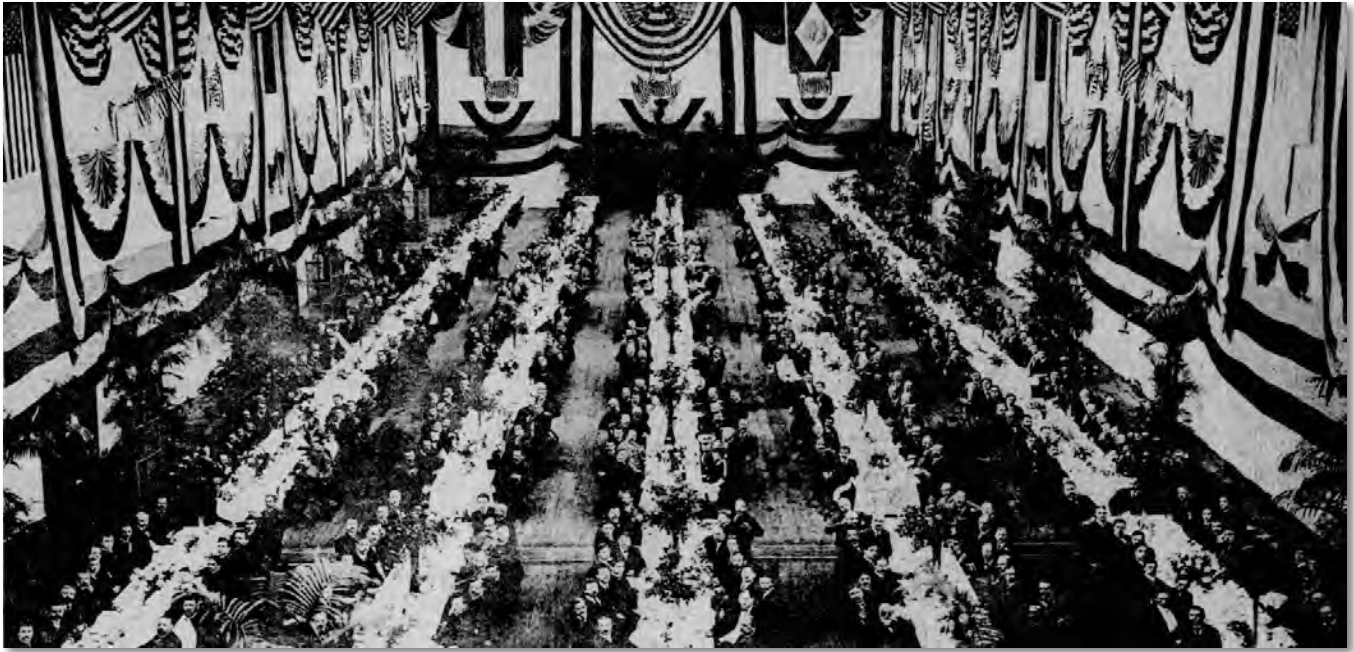


Figure 52. Delegates to the International Railway Congress gathered for a luncheon inside one of the machine shops of the Westinghouse Machine Company in May 1905 (*Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 17 May 1905).



Figure 53. John Evon Nelson, at his desk at Gulf Oil, c. 1940s (Sheila Nelson Hourihan).



Figure 54. Another view of John Evon Nelson, at his desk at Gulf Oil, c. 1940s (Sheila Nelson Hourihan).



Figure 55. Margaret Nora (Dodds) Nelson, c. 1924 (Sheila Nelson Hourihan).



Figure 56. The Nelson Family in their living room, c. late-1920s, not long after moving in to their Murtland Street home. From left to right: Margaret Dodds Nelson, Wenley Dodds Nelson, Margaret Elizabeth "Peggy Nelson, Douglas Evon Nelson, John Oliver "Jack" Nelson, and John Evon Nelson (Rita M Yeasted, JON: John Oliver Nelson).



Figure 57. Margaret Nelson, c. 1965, shortly before her death, recreating her pose from decades earlier for the portrait above the fireplace in the music room. Also shown are the two grand pianos that brought so much joy to family and friends (Sheila Nelson Hourihan).



Figure 58. The Nelsons posing on the grand staircase, c. 1930. From left to right: Douglas Evon Nelson, John Oliver "Jack" Nelson, Margaret Elizabeth "Peggy Nelson," Margaret Dodds Nelson, and John Evon Nelson (Sheila Nelson Hourihan).

Figure 59. Celebration of John Evon Nelson's 70th birthday, c. August 1949, in the Murtland Street dining room. John Evon Nelson is at the head of the table (left) with his back to the bay window, with Margaret Nelson opposite (far right; Sheila Nelson Hourihan).





Figure 60. The George H. Stengel House (1913) in Schenley Farms, designed by Kiehnel and Elliott (Martin Aurand, "Prairie School Architecture in Pittsburgh").



Figure 61. The First National Bank of Pitcairn (c. 1910), designed by Kiehnel and Elliott (Martin Aurand, "Prairie School Architecture in Pittsburgh").



Figure 62. Herron Hill Pumping Station (1896) in North Oakland, designed by William S. Fraser, showing its front-facing pediment of Neoclassical design (Historic Pittsburgh).



Figure 63. Former First Church of Christ, Scientist (1904) in Shadyside, designed by Chicago architect Solon Spencer Beman (*The Inland Architect and News Record*, February 1907).



Figure 64. 5605 Aylesboro Avenue in Squirrel Hill (Kidney, 454).



Canton Clothes Dryer

For use in Private Residences, Hotels, Apartment Houses, Hospitals, Public Institutions, Clubs, Laundries, etc.

Dries any kind of Clothing, Woolen or Cotton, in from 10 to 24 minutes, according to style of heating system used

HEAVY—RIGID—DURABLE

The Most Convenient and Economical Laundry Accessory Made

Write for Catalog "B"

The Canton Clothes Dryer & Mfg. Co., Canton, O., U. S. A.

Figure 65. Advertisement for a Canton Clothes Dryer of the type specified by the Kellers for their new Murtland Street home, which remains in the basement today (*Country Life in America*, June 1904, 190).

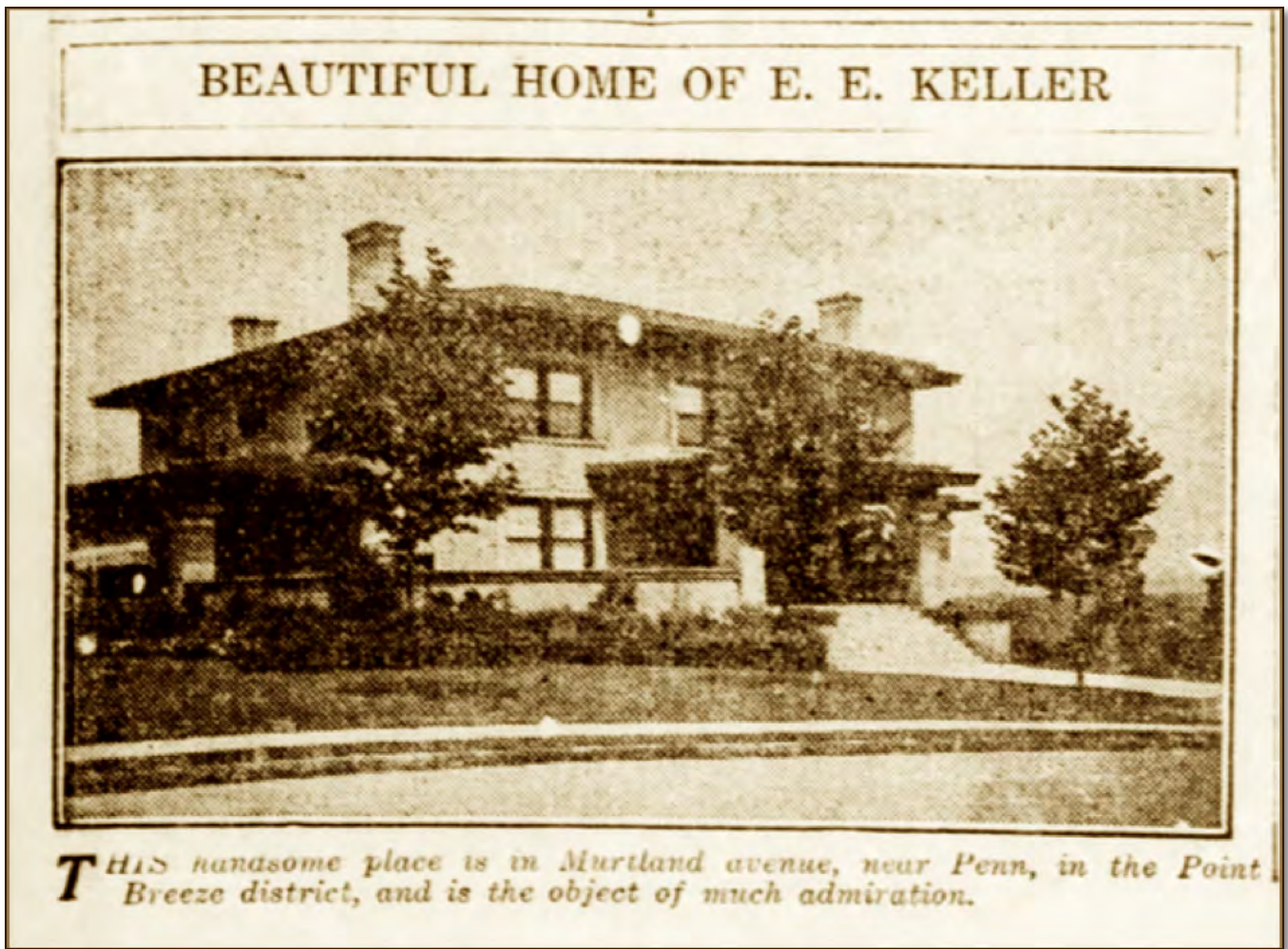


Figure 66. The exterior of 201 North Murkland as it looked when Emil and Ella Keller owned it. Though more than a century has passed, the house retains a high level of integrity (*The Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 1 December 1912).



Figure 67. The extended Fisher clan on the stairs in the central hall, c. 2021. David and Mandy Fisher are at the lower left (David Fisher).

Ancillary Materials
201 North Murtland Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15208

8. History

Provide a history of the structure, district, site, or object.

Pre-Construction

The land where 201 North Murtland Street would ultimately be constructed was once connected to several Native American tribes that changed over time. “The rivers that flow through western Pennsylvania drew many native people. This was likely what brought the mound-building Adena tribe to the McKees Rocks area, where they constructed burial earthen mounds. The Hopewell tribe came next, followed by the Monongahela people, who lived here until the early 17th century.”¹

Post-European contact, several groups from eastern colonies who were forced off their lands came to what is today Pittsburgh as refugees, including Delaware, Shawnee, and Iroquois peoples. “Because the area wasn’t the ancestral homeland for any of these nations, their cultures mixed.”² Following the French and Indian War (as most historians in the United States still refer to the conflict) and significant battles like Pontiac’s War and the Battle of Bushy Run, tribal communities lost land and the number of Native Americans in what is today Pittsburgh and Allegheny County rapidly decreased.³

As Pittsburgh grew from a tiny borough in 1794 to a city of nearly seven thousand people in 1816, the population gradually expanded beyond the historic “Point,” where the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers meet to form the Ohio. In 1868, the largest annexation in Pittsburgh’s history added twenty-one square miles and 35,000 people to the city’s East End. The townships of Liberty, Collins, Peoples, Oakland; part of Pitt Township; and Lawrenceville Borough were incorporated as the city was extended to Penn Hills (then Penn Township).

9. Significance

Criterion 2. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;

John Evon and Margaret (Dodds) Nelson

John Evon Nelson and Margaret (Dodds) Nelson were the fourth owners of 201 North Murtland Street. John Evon Nelson (Figures 53 and 54) was born on August 30, 1879 in Helensburg, Scotland to Ambrose and Elizabeth (Forsythe) Nelson. The following year, he immigrated to the United States with his parents and a sister, settling on Osgood Street near Lafayette Avenue in

¹ Alan Gutches, Fort Pitt Museum director, cited in Katie Blackley, “Who Lived Here First? A Look at Pittsburgh’s Native American History,” 90.5 WESA, Pittsburgh’s NPR News Station, “Good Question” Series, 18 December 2018. Online version of story accessed 2 March 2023.

www.wesa.fm/arts-sports-culture/2018-12-18/who-lived-here-first-a-look-at-pittsburghs-native-american-history.

² Ibid.

³ Jay Toth, Seneca Nation tribal historian, cited in Katie Blackley, “Who Lived Here First? A Look at Pittsburgh’s Native American History,” 90.5 WESA, Pittsburgh’s NPR News Station, “Good Question” Series, 18 December 2018. Online version of story accessed 2 March 2023.

www.wesa.fm/arts-sports-culture/2018-12-18/who-lived-here-first-a-look-at-pittsburghs-native-american-history.

what was then Allegheny City (today, Pittsburgh's Fineview or Perry North neighborhoods). While Ambrose Nelson worked as a stonecutter, city directories from 1887-98 list his occupation as "city missionary," signifying his work as a Presbyterian street preacher. John Evon Nelson received a preparatory education at the Park Institute in Allegheny (1894-97) before earning his bachelor's degree in 1900 from Westminster College, in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania.

After college, he returned to Pittsburgh and worked as a clerk at the Keystone National Bank (1900-02) and then as secretary to Andrew W. Mellon (1902-08), beginning a decades-long business relationship with the Mellon family. In 1908, he was named assistant treasurer of Gulf Oil, one of the primary businesses of the Mellon family fortunes, which had been founded in 1901 and incorporated in 1907. In 1922, he rose to the position of treasurer; then vice president and treasurer in 1939; and executive vice president in 1941. By the time of his retirement in 1949, he had managed over a dozen additional Gulf ventures and in-house policy and planning groups. For many years he served as a trustee of Westminster College, including a number of years as the head of that body. The College acknowledged his service by awarding him an honorary doctor of humanities degree in 1948. During his life he was engaged in a number of philanthropic and civic endeavors. He served as director, vice president and executive committee member of Children's Hospital; advisory board member of the Industrial Home for Crippled Children; director of Pittsburgh Junior Achievement, Inc.; and a Session member of the Shadyside Presbyterian Church. Additionally, he served as a director of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Commerce; secretary and director of the Pittsburgh Art Society; and director and vice president of Pittsburgh Parking Garages.

Despite these many responsibilities and commitments to the care of others, granddaughter Sheila Nelson Hourihan recalls that John Evon Nelson "was an absolutely wonderful man who . . . took wonderful care of his family." This was especially so after Sheila Nelson and her sister Nora lost their mother, Grace Turner (McVittie) Nelson, when they were just 5 and 3 years old, respectively.⁴ Hourihan adds that "even when he was vice-president and treasurer at Gulf Oil, he wrote letters daily to each of his children."⁵ John Evon Nelson died October 6, 1951 at the age of 72 from coronary occlusion at his Murkland Street home.⁶

Margaret Nora (Dodds) Nelson (Figure 55) was born on February 7, 1880, in Franklin Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania to the Rev. Robert Clarence and Sarah Stevenson Dodds. As a child, she moved multiple times as her father accepted different positions with the United Presbyterian Church. From 1894 to 1899, he was pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Dayton, Ohio. In 1898, Margaret Dodds enrolled at nearby Western College and Seminary in

⁴ Grace Nelson died in Pampa, Texas on November 30, 1946 from cardiac arrest at the age of 33. She had been living there with her husband, Douglas Evon Nelson, who served as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church and children Sheila and Nora (Texas State Death Certificates, 1903-1982, www.ancestry.com).

⁵ Sheila Nelson Hourihan, email to author, 1 April 2023.

⁶ Albert Nelson Marquis, ed., "Nelson, John Evon," entry, *Who's Who in New Jersey: A Biographical Dictionary of Leading Living Men and Women of the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and West Virginia*, (Chicago: The A. N. Marquis Company, 1939), v. 1, 641; "J. E. Nelson to Retire at Gulf Oil," *Pittsburgh Sun Telegraph*, 27 July, 1949; "John Nelson, Gulf Official, Taken by Death; Civic, Business Career Ends," obituary, *Pittsburgh Press*, 8 October 1951, 2; "John Nelson Dead; Long with Gulf Oil: Director and Executive Vice President Retired After 41 Years—Was Mellon Aide," *New York Times*, obituary, 8 October 1951, 18; Rita M. Yeasted, *JON: John Oliver Nelson and the Movement for Power in the Church* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2012), 1; Pennsylvania, U.S., Death Certificates, 1906-1969, www.ancestry.com. John Evon Nelson was, at the time of his death, a month shy of turning 72 years old (though most obituaries incorrectly listed his age as 73). Nelson's birthdate was obtained from his World War I and II Draft Registration Cards at www.ancestry.com.

Oxford. However, her plans were interrupted after just a year. In 1899, her father moved the family to Pittsburgh so that he could become district superintendent of the Anti-Saloon League, a powerful prohibition organization. The family lived at 622 College Street in Shadyside and Margaret resumed her studies at nearby Pennsylvania College for Women (now Chatham University). Later that year, Rev. Dodds accepted a position leading the First Presbyterian Church in Lansing, Michigan. Margaret Dodds subsequently attended and received a degree in Philosophy in 1902 from the University of Michigan.⁷

On September 6, 1905, Margaret Dodds married John Nelson at her father's church. After their return to Pittsburgh, the young couple would eventually make their home at 7516 Tuscarora Street in Point Breeze prior to moving to Murtland Street.⁸ Between 1907 and 1916, they had four children: Wenley Dodds Nelson, 8 May 1907; John Oliver "Jack" Nelson, 14 May 1909; Douglas Evon Nelson, 9 February 1913; and Margaret Elizabeth "Peggy" Nelson, 18 January 1916.⁹

Throughout her life, in addition to raising four successful children, Margaret Nelson was engaged in numerous public-spirited endeavors. A "leader in Pittsburgh music circles," she established, with Mrs. Taylor Allderdice, a regular series of "Morning Musicales" to introduce new artists who came to Pittsburgh and to foster the musical talents of local individuals, with events being held in the founders' homes.¹⁰ In 1931, she was featured in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* as part of "a series of articles on women who are prominent in the civic, economic and cultural life of Pittsburgh."¹¹ She was an active member—and frequent leader—of many organizations, including the Epoch Club (a literary club for East End women that was active in social welfare and civic activities, which frequently met at the Nelson's Murtland Street home), the Pittsburgh College Club (local women with college degrees who aimed to turn their educations "to practical use by applying the benefits of their college training to advantage in the field of volunteer social service"), the Family Welfare Association (aimed at understanding and improving social conditions as they influenced family life), the Daughters of the American Revolution (for which she served as a regent of the Pittsburgh chapter and National Chair of the Advancements of American Music Committee), the Twentieth Century Club, the Art Society, for which her husband served as secretary and director (dedicated to cultivating and promoting music, painting and other fine arts), and, along with her husband and family, Shadyside Presbyterian Church. During World War II, she was the local chair for a "Buy a Bomber" War Bonds drive. Margaret Nelson died October 24, 1966 at West Penn Hospital, with funeral services held two days later at 201 North Murtland.¹²

⁷ United States Census, Franklin Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, 1880; "The Western College, Oxford, O.," *Dayton Herald*, 28 September 1898, 3; United States Census, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 1900; "Goes to a Michigan Church: Rev. Dr. Robert Clarence Dodds Resigns District Superintendency of Anti-Saloon League," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 24 August 1900; "Dodds-Nelson," marriage announcement, *Pittsburgh Press*, 7 September 1905; Michigan Marriages, 1868-1925," database, www.familysearch.org; Pennsylvania College for Women, "New Addresses," *Alumnae Recorder* (March 1927): 11; The Alumni Association of the University of Michigan, "News . . . by Classes," *The Michigan Alumnus* 68, no. 13, 16 (February 1952): 271; Yeasted, 2.

⁸ Pittsburgh City Directory, 1925.

⁹ John Evon Nelson Family Tree, www.ancestry.com.

¹⁰ "Sponsor Morning Musicales," *Pittsburgh Press*, 20 November 1932;

¹¹ Anne Ryan Lesh, "New College Club Fund Directed by Mrs. Nelson; Family's Life Centers About Two Grand Pianos in Music Room; Philanthropies Share Her Time," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 28 March 1931, 13.

¹² Art Society Meets," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 8 May 1927; "Education is Put to Practical Use by Pittsburgh College Club Women," *Pittsburgh Press*, 7 February 1937; "Mrs. Nelson, Pittsburgh Music Leader," obituary, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 25 October 1966.

The Nelson's new home in 1926 would have been an active place, with four children ranging in age from roughly ten to eighteen (Figure 56). In addition to hosting the musicales and other events, Margaret Nelson taught music from her home and instilled in her children a strong appreciation for music. "Each of the Nelson children played a musical instrument, and it was commonplace for the family to entertain guests and themselves."¹³ The *Post-Gazette* article mentioned above noted that "she plays piano in the family trio, of which John Oliver Nelson is first violin and [Wenley] D. Nelson, cellist. . . . In the music room are two grand pianos around which the life of their home, and of their friends, circles. . . . Mrs. Nelson says it is true that anyone they know uses the room and its facilities (Figure 57)."¹⁴

Granddaughter Sheila Nelson Hourihan, recalling her grandparents, notes that her grandmother "was the steelier, more driven person who got everyone to concerts, operas, and lectures, hosted ministers and lecturers, and kept us on our toes in general." Remembering the family homestead on Murtland Street, she fondly remembers that her grandparents "loved the house, always just referring to it as "201," but always as an important reference point. It was clearly a hub from which so much radiated outward."¹⁵

The 1930 U.S. Census indicated that the family was comprised of six members (Figure 58) and two servants: John Nelson (50); Margaret Nelson (50), Wenley Nelson (22), John Nelson (20), Douglas Nelson (16), Margaret Nelson (14); and two servants, Clara Johnson (39) and Mattie Archer (42).¹⁶

The 1940 Census indicated that the family consisted of parents John Evon Nelson and Margaret Dodds Nelson (both 60), John Oliver Nelson (30), Margaret E. Nelson (24), and servants Mary Skowann (25) and Stella Pochynok (21).¹⁷

In 1949, the extended family gathered at Murtland Street to celebrate John Evon Nelson's 70th birthday (Figure 59). A year later, when the 1950 Census was enumerated, the household was down to three members: John E. Nelson and Margaret D. Nelson, who had somehow both aged only five years—they are listed as being 65 years old in the ensuing ten years—and a maid, Jessie Motan (61).¹⁸

Wenley Dodds Nelson followed in his father's footsteps and became a senior executive at Gulf Oil in their Philadelphia operations before becoming head of their New York office in 1958; he died in 1994.¹⁹ John Oliver Nelson, like his two grandfathers, became a Presbyterian clergyman. "From the start of his theological career, he advocated for peace and justice," which led to his founding of Kirkridge, an ecumenical retreat and study center in Bangor, Pennsylvania. The center's motto, "Picket and Pray," reflected his commitment to effecting both social change and spiritual growth.²⁰ He was also a professor of Christian vocation and director of field work at

¹³ Yeasted, 3.

¹⁴ Lesh.

¹⁵ Sheila Nelson Hourihan, email to author, 1 April 2023.

¹⁶ United States Census, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 1930.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1940.

¹⁸ United States Census, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 1950.

¹⁹ "Wenley Dodds Nelson," obituary, *Philadelphia Daily News*, 2 August 1994; "Wenley D. Nelson '28, obituary, *Princeton Alumni Weekly* 22 March 1995): 53.

²⁰ Gordon Oyer, *Pursuing the Spiritual Roots of Protest* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books), 10.

Yale Divinity School from 1950 to 1964; he died in 1990.²¹ Douglas Evon Nelson also became a Presbyterian Minister who “was known for quoting Shakespeare at length from the pulpit and for delivering all of his sermons without notes;” he died in 1989.²² Peggy Nelson was an amateur musician who married American composer Howard Hanson (director of the Eastman School of Music for forty years); she died in 1996.

For more information about the Nelsons and their life on Murtland Street, particularly the career achievements of John Oliver “Jack” Nelson, see Rita M. Yeasted’s biography, *JON: John Oliver Nelson and the Movement for Power in the Church*, 2012. Members of the Nelson Family made significant contributions to the content of this nomination and through their generosity made this application possible.

Criterion 3

Prairie Style

The Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide developed by the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) indicates that the Prairie style was utilized in Pennsylvania largely during the time period from 1900 to 1920.

. . . . In describing the [Prairie] style Wright said, “The prairie has a beauty of its own and we should recognize and accentuate this natural beauty, its quiet level. Hence gently sloping roofs, low proportions, quiet sky lines, suppressed heavy-set chimneys and sheltering overhangs, low terraces and out-reaching walls sequestering private gardens.”

Many other notable architects in Chicago and the Midwest generally designed well-executed Prairie style houses, mostly in that region. The shape and form of the Prairie style house was distinctly different than previous domestic architecture. Wright wanted to create organic homes with strong horizontal emphasis that did not resemble the traditional, revival style houses popular in the past. Wright’s interest in organic architecture, designed in concert with the natural environment continued to develop far beyond the Prairie style and period. Wright’s masterpiece Fallingwater, was built in 1936 in Fayette County, Pennsylvania and reflects the evolution of Wright’s work and the Modern Movement in architecture. Pure examples of the Prairie style are scarce in our state, but it is represented in more vernacular forms, [many of] which were made popular by pattern books.

[Vernacular versions of the Prairie style in Pennsylvania] are generally two stories in height, square in shape, and have low-pitched, hipped roofs with broad overhangs and symmetrical façades with broad front porches with square columns. Their connection to the Prairie style is seen in the horizontal emphasis created by the roofline of the dominant front porch and the overhanging eaves of the roof itself. These vernacular buildings may also incorporate details from other styles, like Spanish Revival tiled roofs, or Italianate

²¹ “Rev. Dr. John Oliver Nelson,” obituary, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 17 April 1990.

²² “The Rev. Douglas E. Nelson; Skilled Presbyterian Orator,” obituary, *Hartford Courant*, 4 November 1989.

cornice brackets which make their association with the Prairie style more difficult to identify.”²³

Interior

See Floor Plans below.

Though not subject to the purview of the Historic Review Commission, the interior rivals the exterior in terms of high-quality design. However, it is neither traditionally Classical nor Prairie in style. More Edwardian than anything, which is fitting from a date perspective (though the term is inexactly defined, especially in the United States), the interior being mismatched stylistically from the exterior is a further caution about the problem of applying styles based only on exterior motifs. Featuring over a dozen rooms, arranged around a central hall and grand staircase that splits at the top to form a three-sided second-floor balcony (Figure 58), the interior is grand, formal and peaceful. While no photographs have been found to show the Keller’s interior décor, the house itself makes it fairly easy to envision since very little has changed. For example, much of the rather prolific stained woodwork remains unpainted, including wainscots, door and window trim, beamed ceilings, and numerous built-ins. Where changes, like the painting of walls or ceilings has occurred, the May 7, 1905 article from *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette* (Figure 15) explains some of the Kellers’ finish selections. It noted that “walls and ceilings are done in soft tints, while here and there near the border, a large drooping cluster of flowers in contrasting bright colors appears. On those ceilings which are not beamed, a wreath of the flowers gives an artistic appearance.” In terms of possible interior design inspiration, there is an intriguing account by Martha L. Root in the June 12, 1904 edition of *The Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette* that suggests one possible source. Published within a week of the Kellers obtaining the building permit for their new home, the article described their trip to the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair and, specifically, the fact that “Mrs. E. E. Keller was particularly impressed with the series of rooms decorated by Prof. [Joseph Maria] Olbrich of Darmstadt.”²⁴ Olbrich, an Austrian architect and furniture designer and one of the founders of the Vienna Successionist movement, won the highest prize at the World’s Fair for his courtyard and interior designs. The *Weekly Gazette* article expounded on the significant bearing Olbrich’s designs would have upon American furnishings and noted their quiet colors, elegance and simplicity and the welcome change from “the prevalent heavy decorations” that were common at the time.

A final notable feature of the house is its expansive basement with its nine to ten feet of headroom. The uncommon design, with rooms extending beyond the footprint of the main block of the house (beneath the front porch, terrace and sun parlor) provided spaces for family and staff alike. Here, in addition to the garage, chauffeur’s apartment, laundry room, and mechanical room, were multiple large rooms for Emil Keller to pursue his wide range of interests and avocations. It is known from a number of articles that Keller had labs and workrooms in his prior home in Edgewood Park and later home in Bloomfield Hills.²⁵ Given his interest in automobiles

²³ Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, “Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide: Prairie School Style, 1900-1920,” <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/prairie-school.html>, accessed 1 February 2023.

²⁴ Martha L. Root, “What Pittsburghers Think of the World’s Fair,” *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, 12 June 1904.

²⁵ “Helpless to Save Homes,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 13 April 1901, 1; “Keller,” obituary, *Mechanical Engineering* 60, no. 2 (February 1938): 159.

and photography, it is reasonable to conclude that he dedicated basement space at Murtland Street to at least one workshop and a dark room.

Integrity

Workmanship

Though not part of HRC's review, it is worth noting that the interior retains a high level of integrity. The overall plan with its central hall, grand staircase and second-floor wrap-around balcony remains—all still illuminated by the original stained glass skylight. Back stairs and servants' quarters are intact, as is much of the original cabinetry of the kitchen and butler's pantry. Throughout all major rooms, original oak flooring, wood and marble fireplaces, wainscoting, beamed ceilings, and storage/display built-ins remain (including a hidden storage compartment in the dining room wall). Stained woodwork remains largely unpainted almost 120 years later. Sheila Nelson Hourihan, confirmed the house's high degree of integrity based on the times she spent there as a child. She noted that "I had assumed that there must have been big renovations inside over the years, so I find it touching, and not a little haunting, that it remains so untouched." Thinking of her extended Nelson family, she concluded, "It feels as though they could all step back into the house and feel that they were home."²⁶

²⁶ Sheila Nelson Hourihan, email to author, 1 April 2023.