

An Example of Pittsburgh's Progress



412 Boulevard of the Allies

City of Pittsburgh Historic Landmark Nomination

Prepared by Preservation Pittsburgh



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

April, 2021.



INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY HISTORIC NOMINATION FORM

HRC Staff Use Only

Date Received:

Parcel No.:

Ward:

Zoning Classification:

Bldg. Inspector:

Council District:

Fee Schedule

Please make check payable to *Treasurer, City of Pittsburgh*

Individual Landmark Nomination:	\$100.00
District Nomination:	\$250.00

1. HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY:

The W.J. Gilmore Drug Company Building;
 Equitable Gas Company Headquarters; the Art
 Institute of Pittsburgh

2. CURRENT NAME OF PROPERTY:

412 Boulevard of the Allies

3. LOCATION

a. Street: 412 Boulevard of the Allies (per Allegheny County tax records); formerly numbered 420

b. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, PA 15219

c. Neighborhood: Downtown

4. OWNERSHIP

d. Owner(s): City of Pittsburgh, Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), Housing Authority (HACP)

e. Street: 200 Ross Street

f. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, PA 15219 Phone: () - _____

5. CLASSIFICATION AND USE – Check all that apply

<u>Type</u>	<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Current Use:</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Private – home	<u>Offices</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> District	<input type="checkbox"/> Private – other	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public – government	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public - other	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Place of religious worship	_____

6. NOMINATED BY:

- a. Name: Matthew W. C. Falcone
- 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 1927
- b. Architectural Style: Late Gothic Revival /Commercial Gothic
- c. Architect/Builder: Joseph F. Kuntz, architect; W.T. Grange Construction Co., builder

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: _____

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

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;

-
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: *The Bradberry Apartment Building*

- #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).**

412 Boulevard of the Allies—Addenda

A note on compass directions: Since the street grid in the southern part of Pittsburgh’s Golden Triangle is aligned with the Monongahela River and not the points on the compass, this document establishes a “Plan North” to simplify descriptions. This designation allows the top of the page/screen to be considered north, with the Boulevard of the Allies considered to be running east-west. The site plan in [Figure 4](#) reflects this “plan north” orientation and also shows “true north” in the compass rose at the lower right.

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).

Introduction / Building Name

420 Boulevard of the Allies was designed by architect Joseph Franklin Kuntz and opened in 1927 as the headquarters for the W.J. Gilmore Drug Company. At the time, Gilmore was one of the region’s largest wholesale drug companies and the building was designed to accommodate its office, manufacturing and warehouse needs. In 2018, the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh, the City of Pittsburgh, and the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh jointly purchased the building and subsequently changed the address to 412 to reflect Pittsburgh’s telephone area code. Therefore, throughout this nomination, the building is referred to by its current designation, “412 Boulevard of the Allies.”

Site/Setting

412 Boulevard of the Allies is located on the southern edge of Pittsburgh’s Central Business District, two blocks from the Monongahela River ([Figures 1-3](#)). The setting is urban, with the south side of the Boulevard of the Allies and narrow First Avenue to the rear containing a mix of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century commercial buildings. Across the street, buildings tend to be later, as a result of Second Avenue being widened on that side to create the Boulevard of the Allies in 1921 ([Photos 1 and 2](#)).

The building occupies the eastern two-thirds of Allegheny County Tax Parcel 1-M-150, with the western third being a paved parking area for the building since its inception. The parcel boundaries represent the boundaries for this nomination (see [Site Plan, Figure 4](#)). The parcel is bounded on the north by the Boulevard of the Allies; on the east by Cherry Way, a narrow alley paved in Belgian Block; on the south by First Avenue; and on the west by commercial properties fronting on Smithfield Street. Directly across the street, the Allies Parking Garage (1955) occupies the entire block. To its east is the Distrikt Hotel in the former Salvation Army Building (1924, enlarged 1930; designed by architect Thomas Pringle).

Form and Massing

412 Boulevard of the Allies is a nine-story (116 feet tall), steel-framed office building with basement, clad in stone and brick, constructed in the Late Gothic Revival /Commercial Gothic style ([Photo 3](#)). When viewed from the front, it appears as eight stories due to a double-height vestibule with mezzanine level behind ([Photo 4](#)). The building is rectangular in massing, five bays wide (110 feet), eight bays deep (160 feet) and is covered by a flat roof that contains stair and elevator penthouses, mechanical equipment and a rooftop deck (constructed in 2017-18).

Stone is used throughout the exterior—for the entirety of the front façade and for decorative elements on the east and south facades. Identification of the particular type of stone is difficult since the front façade and northernmost bays of the east and west facades appear to have been painted since at least 2007 and were recently recoated.¹ Unpainted stone on the Cherry Way façade appears to be granite. Historic newspaper accounts refer to it simply as “stone.” A Zoning & Development Review Application completed by Strada Architects in 2017 indicates “cast stone,” but the documentation behind this is unknown.

¹ Determined from historic Google Street View images.

Front Façade

Like many steel-framed commercial buildings of its era, 412 Boulevard of the Allies, has a tripartite vertical organization like a classical column, with a base, shaft and capital—but little else is classically-derived as the exterior is draped in Late Gothic Revival details (Photos 3 and 4).

At the base of the building, six rectangular piers rest upon a projecting stone basement course, which originally contained “sidewall windows” to illuminate the basement (Photos 5, 8 and 9).² These remained until at least 1963 and are visible in an image of the building taken by Teenie Harris (Figure 44). The five bays defined by the piers form a semi-elliptical arcade. This is capped by a decorative stone lower cornice, which is supported at the top of each pier by a corbel shaft composed of floriated base, three bundled colonettes and floriated capitals (Photos 4, 5 and 11). Within the two-story openings of each bay are large storefront window and door systems with cast-iron mullions. The center bay contains the main entrance to the building’s lobby, described originally as a “roomy foyer for the accommodation of the public” waiting to conduct business at W.J. Gilmore (Photo 10). Access is provided through four doors, flanked by ten-pane sidelights. Except for the easternmost door, which contains a recent ADA door leading to a sidewalk ramp (c. 2017), all contain Gothic arch motifs (Photos 10, 12 and 13). The westernmost bay contains a secondary public entrance (Photo 11). This was part of the original design so that visitors and staff could directly access passenger elevators on the west side of the lobby.”³ Here, access is via a single, recent ADA door, which is capped by decorative cast-iron cresting (Photo 14). Attached to each pier are large copper gas lanterns (1963) that have been painted black (Photos 8 and 11).

Floors three through nine form the shaft of the building (Photos 4 and 5). Here, verticality is accentuated, as bundled colonettes (similar to those in the corbel shafts of the base) soar upward, uninterrupted for seven stories. In between, on each floor, are thirteen one-over-one, double-hung, metal sash windows. The original three-over-three, double-hung, metal sash windows were present until at least 1980.⁴ Beneath these are stone spandrel panels with carved rectangular medallions.

At the top, akin to a column’s decorative capital, is an elaborate cantilevered cornice (Photos 6 and 7). Projecting a full two feet from the wall plane behind, this superimposed diadem of Gothic tracery and crenellation forms a masonry hood over the bays below and creates a play of light and shadow.

East Façade (Cherry Way)

The northernmost bay of the east façade replicates the details of the front façade, except that the cornice does not project (i.e., the tracery is blind, being applied directly to the wall plane; Photo 6). The remaining bays are executed in a simpler manner using buff brick (technically, “gray waterproof face brick” from the Kittanning Brick & Fire Clay Company; Photos 15-18).⁵ The projecting stone basement course and lower cornice continue (unpainted) on this façade and appear to be granite (Photos 16 and 17). Verticality is still emphasized, but instead of bundled colonettes of stone, seven-story stacks of alternating recessed and projecting bricks are present between each window (Photo 18). The sixteen windows on each floor are identical to those on the front façade. Sills and lintels are stone. The wall is capped by a cornice of projecting brickwork, which terminates in a crenelated parapet with stone caps. On four of the piers are gas lanterns identical to those on the front façade.

South Façade

The south façade is nearly identical in detail with the east façade (Photos 19-21), with four exceptions: 1) the five bays of the ground floor contain large overhead rolling doors providing an off-street enclosed loading dock (a necessity on narrow First Avenue), 2) on the floor above, windows are arranged in ribbons of three, 3) floors three through nine each contain twelve windows, and 4) the wall terminates in a stone cornice identical to that on the front façade, except that has blind tracery.

² “W.J. Gilmore Drug Co. Opens House of Service,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Cathy Mourkas, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, “Equitable Gas Company/Gilmour [*sic.*] Drug Co.,” Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form, 13 February 1980.

⁵ Advertisement, *Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927.

West Façade and Parking Lot

The west façade is far simpler in detail than even the east and south facades—the result of form following function (Photos 22 and 23). For its first quarter century, this façade contained no windows (then-owner Equitable Gas Company inserted them around 1951). With the exception of the northernmost bay, which largely repeats details of the front façade, the walls were solid brick, with simple projecting brick frames delineating each bay. The absence of daylighting was likely the result of Gilmore Drug locating its warehousing and/or manufacturing facilities on this side of the building. Windows matching those on the rest of the building are located in bays three through seven (counting from north to south). Sills are stone; lintels are steel (meant to not be visible); and there is no lower cornice. Above, the wall terminates in a parapet with simple brick ornamentation and stone caps.

At the first-floor level, projecting from the four center bays, is a single-story brick porch with flat roof and stairs at the south end (constructed c. 2000; Photos 22-24). The rest of the lot on this side of the building is used for parking and dumpster storage. The arched entry into the parking area is not original and dates from circa 2000 (Photo 24).

8. History

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

Prior to construction of the current building, the site played an important role in Pittsburgh's post-Civil War medical history. The Homeopathic Medical and Surgical Hospital and Dispensary of Pittsburgh opened on August 1, 1866 "in an old mansion on Second Avenue . . . purchased from James B. Murray" on what is today the northern half of the parking lot for 412 Boulevard of the Allies (Figures 5 and 6). The three-story, Italianate building offered thirty-eight beds and was the fourth hospital established in the city.⁶ In less than two decades, the facility had become insufficient to meet demand. So, in 1883, the adjacent lot to the east was purchased (current site of the 412 Boulevard of the Allies building) and a new two-hundred bed hospital designed by Pittsburgh architect John U. Barr opened to the public in 1884 (Figures 7 and 8). The new hospital was "a substantial brick structure, four stories high, consisting of two main buildings, one on First Avenue and one on Second Avenue, with a central connecting building."⁷ In 1885, the Pittsburgh Training School for Nurses (the first nursing school in Western Pennsylvania) was added. In 1892, a four-story annex that extended east to Cherry Way was built to provide specialty ear and eye care. Four years later, the hospital became the first in the city to use x-rays as a diagnostic tool, with widely syndicated newspaper accounts heralding "the first practical use of the x-rays in surgery in America" (Figure 9).⁸ By 1905, the hospital had again reached capacity and the search for a new site was started. On March 1, 1910, a state-of-the-art medical facility was dedicated on Centre Avenue in Shadyside, which was renamed Shadyside Hospital in 1938. The old hospital on Second Avenue operated as an emergency department until 1915.⁹

In January 1917, Samuel Dempster (one of the four founders of the W.J. Gilmore Drug Company) completed the purchase of the former hospital property on the south side of Second Avenue and had the complex demolished.¹⁰ The year before, the City had announced intentions to widen the northern portion of Cherry Way (present William Penn Place), which would necessitate demolition of considerable portions of Gilmore Drug's operations, which were then located at the corner of Seventh Avenue and Cherry Way. Plans to widen Second Avenue, by demolishing buildings on its north side, were also being studied at this time, and had been since at least 1895. For a brief period, Dempster offered the parcel for sale, but quickly took it off the market, recognizing its future value to Gilmore Drug (Figure 10).

In February 1924, Dempster (then chair of the board of directors and treasurer at Gilmore) formally conveyed the property to the company, allowing plans for a new corporate headquarters building to advance.¹¹ In June of that year, Gilmore Drug bought an adjacent parcel known as the Maffett Estate, so that the company then controlled the entire eastern two-thirds of the block.¹² Under Samuel Dempster's leadership, the company hired architect Joseph F. Kuntz to design its new flagship building. A building permit was obtained in July 1925 and construction was well underway by January 1926.¹³

The new building opened in February 1927 with a major open house celebration and considerable coverage in the local press and pharmaceutical trade journals (Figures 11-14). The *Pittsburgh Press* devoted a special section to the grand opening and hailed the building as "an example of Pittsburgh's progress," and called it "the largest and finest wholesale drug business house in the United States." While the superlative regarding the company's size has not been encountered elsewhere, the company was clearly "one of the largest concerns" in the wholesale drug business in Pittsburgh and arguably "one of the most extensive wholesale drug houses in the state."¹⁴ A month later,

⁶ George Thornton Fleming, *History of Pittsburgh and Environs*, 2 (New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1922), 279-80.

⁷ Sarah Hutchins Killikelly, *The History of Pittsburgh: Its Rise and Progress* (Pittsburgh: B.C. Gordon Montgomery Co., 1906), 397-98.

⁸ Altoona Tribune, 6 April 1896—one of many papers to carry the story.

⁹ Fleming, 279-80.

¹⁰ *Pittsburgh Press*, 2 January 1917.

¹¹ "Drug Company Takes Title," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 20 February 1924.

¹² *Pittsburgh Press*, 23 January 1924; *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 20 February 1924; *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 10 June 1924; "Gilmore Drug Company Square Old Hospital Site," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 10 June 1924.

¹³ *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 9 July 1925; *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 1 January 1926; "Permits Granted for Big Building Projects in 1925," *Pittsburgh Press*, 4 January 1926.

¹⁴ "An Example of Pittsburgh's Progress," *Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927; "Gilmore Company Not Hurt by War," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 2 August 1915; Pittsburgh Gazette Times, ed., *The Story of Pittsburgh and Vicinity: Illustrated* (Pittsburgh: The Pittsburgh Gazette Times, 1908), 329.

demolition work began at the old Gilmore Drug location. Soon after, Andrew W. Mellon commissioned construction of the Koppers Building on the site (completed in March 1929; designed by Graham, Anderson, Probst & White).¹⁵

For additional details about the features and significance of the W.J. Gilmore Drug Company Building, see Criterion 3 (Architecture), below.

On December 1, 1944, the W.J. Gilmore Drug Company was purchased by McKesson & Robbins, Inc. While Gilmore was retained for a few years as a division, McKesson & Robbins soon sold the building and ended the Gilmore legacy.¹⁶

On April 30, 1947, Portable Realty Corporation announced its purchase of the building so that it could become the national headquarters of its affiliate, Portable Products Corporation. Unfortunately, a particularly poor investment resulted in a four-million-dollar tax lien, which forced the business to close in 1949.¹⁷

On April 27, 1948, in an effort to raise capital during their financial crisis, Portable Products sold the building to the 420 Corporation, a stock company, that attempted unsuccessfully to rent the building and turn a profit for its investors.

In May 1950, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reported that the 420 Corporation had sold the building to the Equitable Gas Company for one million dollars. There was no mention of how the outstanding lien was settled. The article also stated that Equitable would transfer the building “to a major insurance company, which in turn will lease it to Equitable.”¹⁸ An article from August 3 in the same paper provided contradictory (and clarifying) information, stating that “The Reliance Life Insurance Company of Pittsburgh has purchased the former Gilmore Drug Building. . . [and] the property has been leased to Equitable Gas, which will occupy it as general offices. The historic property card for 420 Boulevard of the Allies, which is a summary of transactions for the parcel available through the Allegheny County Deed Office, shows the sale from 420 Corporation to Reliance Life Insurance Company of Pittsburgh, recorded August 1, 1950. But it never shows Equitable as an owner, indicating that the initial *Post-Gazette* account from May was in error.”¹⁹ Nevertheless, this was the start of a half-century of Equitable Gas occupying the newly renamed Equitable Building as their Pittsburgh corporate headquarters (Figure 15).²⁰ That year, the company had become independent for the first time since 1900. For fifty years it had been an operating subsidiary of the Philadelphia Company, which was formed during development of the Murrys ville gas field east of Pittsburgh.²¹

Prior to moving into the building in 1952, Equitable undertook considerable renovations, which included the insertion of windows into the west façade. In August 1953, title to the building underwent a technical change as Lincoln National Life Insurance Company absorbed Reliance Life.

On March 12, 1956, in a marketing move to increase their visibility in Pittsburgh, Equitable dedicated a 21-foot tall lighted weather beacon atop the building.²²

In 1963, to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the company, Equitable further renovated the building as they took over street-level space previously rented by another tenant. Across the front of the building, Equitable installed “six large copper gas lights,” which were highlighted in a *Pittsburgh Press* article in June 1963 titled “Gaslight Era Making a Comeback.” The article noted the increasing popularity of gas lights and attributed this to “built-in nostalgia,” stating that “Homeowners and businessmen alike feel the lights bring back the charm and life of the Gay Nineties.”²³ The fixtures appear to be the same ones that are present on the building today.

¹⁵ *Pittsburgh Press*, 27 March 1927.

¹⁶ *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 30 November 1944; *Latrobe Bulletin*, 27 December 1944.

¹⁷ “\$4 Million Lien Hits War ‘Bargain,’ U.S. Files Suit Against Firm Here,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 7 August 1949.

¹⁸ “Equitable Gas Buys Former Drug Building,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 25 May 1950.

¹⁹ Historic Property Card, 420 Boulevard of the Allies, Parcel 1-M-150, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Deed Records.

²⁰ *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 1 June 1950.

²¹ “Equitable Gas Celebrating Anniversary in Renovated Headquarters Downtown,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 23 April 1963.

²² *Pittsburgh Press*, 5 June 1956;

²³ *Pittsburgh Press*, 16 June 1963.

In 1972, after only sixteen years of forecasting the weather, Equitable's Weather Flame atop the building ceased operation as a weather signal.²⁴

In February 1982, Equitable transferred ownership of the building to Kepco Inc., its gas exploration and production subsidiary, but continued its tenancy in the building. Two years later, Equitable Gas changed its name to Equitable Resources, Inc., to reflect its diversification into other energy areas.²⁵

In 1995, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation recognized the building with a historic landmark plaque. This is an honorary designation that affords no protection nor requires any sort of historic preservation review. However, it does acknowledge that the building had been cared for over the past seven decades in a manner that retained architectural integrity.

In 1999, Equitable Resources, Inc. sold the building to the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, which spent the next year working with the Design Alliance to complete significant renovations to convert the space into classrooms for a very diverse curriculum (Figure 16). Few changes were made to the exterior (with the possible exception of painting the front façade). On the interior, the Art Institute created seventy-classrooms with state-of-the-art fiber optic wiring, a television studio, digital darkroom and a fully equipped industrial design technology shop. "To advertise the school's presence, Art Institute President George Pry gave the sedate . . . façade a shock treatment, painting the first-floor window and door trim brilliant red."²⁶ Keeping a promise to remain downtown, Equitable Resources moved its headquarters to One Oxford Centre, where they signed a ten-year lease on the tower's thirty-third floor, which was renovated to accommodate fifty employees.²⁷

In 2001, the Art Institute received an Award of Merit from the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation for the renovation of their building.²⁸

In May 2013, 412 Boulevard of the Allies was listed as a contributing resource in the expansion of the Firstside National Register Historic District (the original, smaller district to the west was listed in 1988). The nomination cited the building as "the most architecturally distinguished building from the 1920s in the boundary increase area."²⁹ Again, this is a largely honorary designation that would only require a preservation review process (known as Section 106 Review) if a project ever involved federal funding, licensing or permitting).

In April 2014, the building was purchased by 420 Allies LLC and the Art Institute was given a three-year lease. In April 2017, after seventeen years in the building, the Art Institute moved to the Strip District. With the school gone, M&J Wilkow and CenterSquare Investment Management led renovation efforts "to convert classrooms and chalkboards. . . into a state-of-the-art office complex. . . with top-flight amenities," which included a rooftop deck served by a new elevator.³⁰

In September 2018, the building was jointly purchased by the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (39.08% share), the City of Pittsburgh (37.46 % share), and the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (23.46% share).³¹ The City subsequently changed the address from 420 Boulevard of the Allies to 412 reflect the city's telephone area code.

²⁴ *Pittsburgh Press*, 31 December 1972.

²⁵ *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 25 May 1984.

²⁶ Patricia Lowry, "Home Sweeter Home: Art Institute Expands into Former Gas Company Building," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 3 August 2000.

²⁷ "Equitable Making Its Move," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 5 February 1999.

²⁸ *Pittsburgh Business Times*, 11 November 2001, 41.

²⁹ Christine Davis and Mindy LaBelle, Christine Davis Consultants, Inc., "Firstside Historic District (Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation)," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2013.

³⁰ Mark Belko, "M&J to Redevelop 420 Allies," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 27 July 2017. Mark R. Wilkow was president of 420 Allies LLC at the time of the sale.

³¹ Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Deed Records.

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;

Introduction

412 Boulevard of the Allies is significant for its identification with three Pittsburgh companies that made the building their corporate headquarters:

1927-1944: W.J. Gilmore Drug Company, a regional drug wholesaler that could trace its roots back to 1825, whose primary market included western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio and West Virginia.³² They initiated a long-standing tradition of welcoming the public into the first floor of the building to view merchandise.

1947-1949: Portable Products Corporation, a national company with eight divisions and production facilities in Pennsylvania, New York and Illinois. They manufactured a diverse range of consumer products from lawn mowers to sporting equipment. 412 Boulevard of the Allies served not only as their corporate headquarters, but was also the assembly line for portable radios, produced at a rate of over three hundred per day.

1950-1999: Equitable Gas Company (later, Equitable Resources, Inc.), one of three gas companies in the city during this time. During their tenure in the building (but particularly during their first two decades), they distinguished themselves by the breadth of their operations, which ranged from drilling and pipeline services to selling gas appliances (in part, through a large showroom in the building) to innovative public engagement.

W. J. Gilmore Drug Company: 1927-1944

On May 1, 1886, W.J. Gilmore & Company opened at 623 Liberty Avenue (present site of EQT Plaza) in a small, three-story building measuring twenty by eighty feet (Figures 17 and 18).³³ The new firm was organized by William John Gilmore (1841-1912); Alexander Dempster (1836-1915), who was Gilmore's brother-in-law (Dempster's first wife was W.J. Gilmore's sister, Flora Jane Gilmore Dempster); Samuel Dempster (1870-1932), who was Gilmore's nephew (and the son of Alexander and Flora Dempster); and George F. Sichelstiel, Jr. (c. 1859-1924).

Together, they had purchased Pittsburgh's oldest wholesale drug house, the MacKeown Thompson Company (established in 1825) from the estate of D.C. Thompson. The new firm "conducted business as wholesale druggists and dealers in paints and dyes, varnishes, glass, glassware and white lead." In the early years, W.J. Gilmore handled financial matters for the business, while the Dempsters and Sichelstiel focused on sales.³⁴ It appears to have been a particularly opportune moment, as the wholesale drug business reported "sales from \$2,250,000 to \$2,500,00" that year, marking "an increase in the ten years from 1876 of about 100 per cent."³⁵

William John Gilmore was born in Wilkins Township in 1841. He was a son of James Gilmore (a farmer) and Ann Jane Waugh, both from Ireland, who had married in 1830. One of seven children, W.J. Gilmore received his education in Turtle Creek and later attended college in Pittsburgh. In 1878, he married Anna McKee, with whom he had two children.³⁶ City directories indicate that he had been an employee at MacKeown Thompson since at least 1873.

By 1889, the three-year-old Gilmore company had outgrown its Liberty Avenue building and moved to a larger space at 430 Seventh Avenue, a block east of Grant street, where it initially occupied the street-level storefront, but

³² *Pittsburgh Press*, 30 November 1944.

³³ "Gilmore Drug Shows Steady Gains Over 40-Year Period," *Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ George H. Thurston, *Allegheny County's Hundred Years* (Pittsburgh: A.A. Anderson & Son, Book and Job Printers, 1888), 231.

³⁶ Thomas Cushing, et. al., eds., *History of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania*, (Chicago: A. Warner & Co., Publishers, 1889), 401; *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 26 September 1912.

soon took over the entire building (Figures 19 and 20).³⁷ By 1894, they expanded to the buildings at 426-428 Seventh Avenue.³⁸ In 1903 it was reported that the company was erecting “a modern, seven-story building . . . in the rear of their present quarters on Seventh Avenue [on Cherry Way, behind the Grant Street Public School] . . . The two buildings will be connected by arcades from each floor, and when the work is completed this enterprising firm will have a substantial, well-equipped plant, with the best of facilities for conducting their business and serving their patrons (Figure 21).”³⁹

A year later, in 1904, the company was incorporated as the W. J. Gilmore Drug Company. Founder W.J. Gilmore was at the helm until retiring in 1911. He died the next year on September 24, 1912 at the age of seventy. An obituary in the *Pittsburgh Daily Post* noted that he had died at home at 5748 Centre Avenue (in what is today Pittsburgh’s Friendship neighborhood) and that he left a widow and two children.⁴⁰

Following Gilmore’s death, the remaining founders carried on operations, with Samuel Dempster becoming “the most active man in the management of the business.”⁴¹ On August 2, 1915, a tragic automobile accident took the life of his father, president Alexander Dempster (Figure 23). A single-vehicle crash on the Lincoln Highway west of Ligonier killed 79-year old Dempster along with his second wife, Ella Davenport Dempster (60); Dempster’s son, James Gilmore Dempster (32); and the family’s chauffeur, Carl Williams (35). Among those who rushed to the scene were Samuel Dempster, then treasurer at Gilmore and his brother David Morrison Dempster, then secretary.⁴² Funeral services for the Dempsters were held at the senior Dempsters’ home at 5721 Stanton Avenue in Highland Park.

Alexander Dempster was a significant figure in Pittsburgh’s history. In addition to helping form the W.J. Gilmore Drug Company, he was City of Pittsburgh Engineer as the immediate predecessor to Edward M. Bigelow. Prior to that time, he had been County Engineer. “A self-made man and a self-made civil engineer,” he was a charter member of the Engineer’s Society of Western Pennsylvania, and served as its president for two terms, in 1887 and 1888.⁴³

Dempster was born June 16, 1836 at Elderslie, near Glasgow, Scotland. He was a son of Samuel and Anne Vaughan Dempster. He emigrated to America with his father, Samuel, a superintendent of mines, in 1850 and settled in Port Perry near Braddock on the Monongahela River. From 1862 to 1863, he served in Company G, 123rd Pennsylvania Volunteers. In 1868, he obtained a position in the Engineering Department of the Pennsylvania Railroad. In 1872, he began ten years of service as City Engineer, during which time much of his work focused on providing water to the city’s East End, which had grown by 21 square miles and 35,000 people only four years before in the largest annexation in Pittsburgh’s history. At the start of his term, he advocated for removal of the Hump (the remains of Grant’s Hill, centered around Grant Street, which was seen as an impediment to transportation and development), when it could have been removed at relatively small cost. However, he lacked clout and could not gain the support of city council, so the project languished for the next four decades.

He was one of the founders of the Monongahela National Bank and was for a time the president of Monongahela Consolidated Coal Company. In his charitable work he served as a member of the board of managers for the Western Pennsylvania Institute for the Blind and the Allegheny Cemetery.

From 1902 to 1907, Dempster was president of the board of trustees of the Western University of Pennsylvania during the pivotal period when the decision was made to relocate the school from the Northside to Oakland and

³⁷ “Gilmore Company Not Hurt by War,” *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 2 August 1915.

³⁸ “Gilmore Drug Shows Steady Gains Over 40-Year Period,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927.

³⁹ “W.J. Gilmore & Co.’s New Building,” *Merck’s Report: A Practical Journal of Pharmacy as a Profession and a Business*, 12, no. 10 (October 1905), 303.

⁴⁰ *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 26 September 1912.

⁴¹ “W.J. Gilmore Drug Co. Opens House of Service,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927.

⁴² “Fourth Victim of Accident Died Today,” *Latrobe Bulletin*, 3 August 1915.

⁴³ Biographical information on Alexander Dempster for this section was combined from multiple sources, including: John W. Jordan, *Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania Biography* 11 (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1919): 60-61; *Proceedings of the Engineers’ Society of Western Pennsylvania*, 31 (February 1915-January 1916): 901-2; “Fourth Victim of Accident Died Today,” *Latrobe Bulletin*, 3 August 1915; *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 21 April 1916.

change its name to the University of Pittsburgh. These were also the key years of construction of the University's new Allegheny Observatory in Riverview Park.

Dempster's first wife, Flora Jane Gilmore, died in 1893. In 1896, he married Ella Davenport who died with him in the crash. She was a school teacher from Cincinnati when the couple met. The Dempsters were members of the Sixth United Presbyterian Church, Highland Avenue and Station Street. At the time of his death, Alexander Dempster was survived by four sons and one daughter (four other children predeceased him) and his estate was valued at two million dollars.

Under Alexander Dempster, the company had grown "from 5 to 250 department heads and employes" [*sic.*] from its inception to his death.⁴⁴ However, it was his son, Samuel Dempster, whose vision and leadership propelled the company to unprecedented success following World War I and who was responsible for the conception and construction of the company's new headquarters building on the Boulevard of the Allies.

With his father gone, Samuel Dempster stepped in to fill the void at Gilmore Drug. He further expanded his influence after a number of corporate officers died in quick succession. Brother and company secretary, David Morrison Dempster, died from influenza on December 6, 1918.⁴⁵ By that time, Samuel Dempster had ascended to the position of chair of the board of directors while continuing to control the powerful purse strings as treasurer.⁴⁶ At his side was remaining founder, G.F. Sichelstiel, Jr., president; and brother Arthur A. Dempster (vice-president).⁴⁷ However, Arthur Dempster died on March 15, 1920 and Sichelstiel, died July 30, 1924.⁴⁸

Samuel Dempster had been born on January 10, 1870 in Braddock and received a business education at Duff's College in downtown Pittsburgh, the first mercantile college started in America.⁴⁹ Notable among his achievements was that "he joined the forces of his company [Gilmore Drug] when a lad of sixteen."⁵⁰ While it might seem unlikely that a minor was a co-founder of a major Pittsburgh company, no other Samuel Dempster has been identified as having any association with Gilmore Drug, and the only other Samuel Dempster known to have been associated with the Dempster or Gilmore families was the father of Alexander Dempster, but he died in 1875, eleven years before the founding of W.J. Gilmore & Company.⁵¹

Samuel Dempster's foresight in purchasing the former Homeopathic Hospital site on narrow Second Avenue in 1916 (completed in January 1917) allowed Gilmore Drug to open its headquarters on one of the widest, most desirable thoroughfares a decade later after the street was widened and the Boulevard of the Allies was created. In selecting architect Joseph F. Kuntz, Dempster brought to Gilmore one of the most "well-known architects and engineers of Pittsburgh," who had played "a very real part in the upbuilding of the city [into]. . .one of the largest and most modern in the country."⁵²

In the span between W.J. Gilmore's death in 1912 and the start of construction on the new building in 1925, Samuel Dempster played an integral role in doubling the company's business.⁵³ He got off to a fast start. Commenting on sales for 1913, he stated, "This was the best year we ever had. Trade has advanced steadily throughout the year and the prospects are that the coming year will equal, if not excel, the record of 1913. I know of no particular factor that has aided in the development of our trade except strict attention to business."⁵⁴

By the time of the 1927 open house, he was hailed for his "foresight and business ability that has made him known all over the United States as one of the leaders in the [wholesale drug] trade."⁵⁵ He was also noted for helping to

⁴⁴ "Gilmore Company Not Hurt by War," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 2 August 1915.

⁴⁵ *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 7 December 1918.

⁴⁶ *Directory of Directors in the Pittsburgh District* (Boston: The Bankers Service Company, 1918), 497.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Pittsburgh Press*, 16 March 1920; *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 31 July 1924.

⁴⁹ *Duff's College: Established A.D. 1840; Chartered by the Legislature of Pennsylvania; the First Mercantile College Started in America*, (Chicago: Press of Hollister Bros., [1904]).

⁵⁰ National Wholesale Druggists' Association, *Year Book: Proceedings*, 1933, 80.

⁵¹ *Pittsburgh Daily Commercial*, 3 December 1875.

⁵² Frank C. Harper, *Pittsburgh of Today: Its Resources and People* (New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., [1931]): 34-35.

⁵³ "Gilmore Drug Shows Steady Gains Over 40-Year Period," *Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927.

⁵⁴ *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 1 January 1914.

⁵⁵ "Gilmore Drug Shows Steady Gains Over 40-Year Period," *Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927.

grow the company to heights likely unimaginable at its outset, “Each year since its inception in May, 1886, the Gilmore Company has shown such an increase in business that today the amount transacted annually is more than 40 times as much as the first year’s sales.”⁵⁶

Samuel Dempster was, by many accounts, a creative and benevolent manager. Working with architect Kuntz, he crafted a program for the building that devoted much of the first floor to “accommodation of the public” and displaying the enormous range of merchandise offered by the firm. Under his leadership, a fleet of International Harvester trucks with specially designed steel drawers and cabinets was purchased for the sales department because an “ordinary salesman’s sample case could not hold near enough to make an adequate display of his wares (Figure 24).”⁵⁷ And in 1923, he supported the formation of the Gilmore Drug Employees’ Associates—a fraternal and social welfare society (Figure 25). Dempster not only spoke at their inaugural banquet, but approved company funds to host the two-hundred-person event, “a move indicative of [his] purpose to cooperate with the members of the association. . .and evidence of [his] approval of any movement in the interests of the employes [*sic.*].”⁵⁸ For many years after, Dempster also headed the company’s annual picnic committee, which would develop “elaborate program[s] of sports and games” that attracted seven to eight hundred employees (Figure 26).⁵⁹ There were also banquets, dance and card parties, and bowling leagues, all sanctioned by Samuel Dempster and the company (Figure 27).⁶⁰

Samuel Dempster died on October 29, 1932, ending a forty-six-year career with the company he helped to found. He was survived by his widow, Jennie Louise Roberts Dempster, whom he had married on June 26, 1909, along with a sister, Agnes Flora Dempster Hill, wife of Bruce E. Hill.⁶¹ The couple’s home was at 425 South Braddock Avenue; they had no children.⁶²

Samuel Dempster’s death brought a close to the era when company founders played direct leadership roles. For the next decade, management responsibilities were largely in the hands of James Blythe McCormick, who had joined the company as a stock boy before working his way up to president in 1924 (following G.F. Sichelstiel’s death) and then also treasurer in 1933 (after Samuel Dempster’s death).⁶³ He was assisted by Sichelstein’s sons, A.J. Sichelstiel (vice-president) and L.H. Sichelstiel (secretary).⁶⁴ One initiative in the 1930s was advancement of the company’s Laboratory Apparatus Division, which manufactured equipment for the chemical and metallurgical industries (Figures 28 and 29).⁶⁵

In 1940, following the death of James B. McCormick, James L. Freeman was elected president. His appointment marked the first time that this key leadership position was not held by an individual who had “grown up” in the company. Freeman had previously served twenty-three years with the Southwestern Drug Company in Dallas, followed by a year in the advertising industry in New York, before moving to Pittsburgh.⁶⁶ Under Freeman’s leadership, the showrooms on the first floor were remodeled in 1941 “and equipped with modern display fixtures (Figure 30).”⁶⁷ Three years later, however, the company that could trace its roots back to 1825 would be gone.

On December 1, 1944, W.J. Gilmore was purchased by McKesson & Robbins, Inc., becoming the sixty-seventh firm in their organization. The Gilmore name would carry on briefly as a unit of McKesson & Robbins, known as the W.J. Gilmore Division, with James Freeman as division president and supported by A.J. and L.H. Sichelstiel.

⁵⁶ “Gilmore Drug Shows Steady Gains Over 40-Year Period,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927.

⁵⁷ *Pittsburgh Press*, 13 July, 1919 and 19 February 1927.

⁵⁸ “Gilmore Drug Company Employes Form Society,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 13 October 1923; “Gilmore Employes Guests at Banquet,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 11 November 1923.

⁵⁹ *Pittsburgh Press*, 14 August 1927.

⁶⁰ “Officers and Employes of Drug Company Hold Anniversary Banquet,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 4 May 1924; “Gilmore Employes Hold Annual Christmas Fete,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 25 December 1924; “Employes of Gilmore Drug Plan Entertainment,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 18 April 1928; “Cards and Dancing,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 25 April 1928; *Pittsburgh Press*, 13 April 1929; “Good Bowling Again Features Gilmore Drug Co. League,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 27 October 1929.

⁶¹ *Pittsburgh Press*, 31 October, 1932.

⁶² National Association of Retail Druggists, *N.A.R.D. Notes* 8, no. 14 (July 8, 1909): 594.

⁶³ *Pittsburgh Press*, 20 July 1940, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 20 July 1940.

⁶⁴ *Pittsburgh Press*, 30 November 1944.

⁶⁵ *Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* 9, no. 11 (15 November 1937), 18.

⁶⁶ *Pittsburgh Press*, 10 October 1940.

⁶⁷ *Pittsburgh Press*, 26 September 1941.

However, the new enterprise was scaled back considerably from its days of independent operation, as the new owners utilized only four floors and the basement, renting out the remainder.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 30 November 1944; *Latrobe Bulletin*, 27 December 1944.

Portable Products Corporation: 1947-1949

Though it was short-lived, Portable Products Corporation is significant in the history of 412 Boulevard of the Allies as the headquarters of an extremely creative and diverse company with a national audience that could arguably be considered the Apple, Inc. of its day.

The Gilmore Division of McKesson & Robbins lasted just over two years. In early 1947, James Freeman resigned and on April 30, 1947, Portable Realty Corporation announced its purchase of the building so that it could become the national headquarters of its affiliate, Portable Products Corporation. The latter enterprise had been renting three floors from McKesson & Robbins since 1944. Little has been discovered about the founding of the company, except that it was founded in Pittsburgh, incorporated in Pennsylvania on October 31, 1944 and that its president was Fernal R. Marlier (variously listed as residing in Crafton and Carnegie).⁶⁹ Marketing materials from 1947 indicate that the company at that time consisted of eight divisions and subsidiaries (Figures 31 and 32). “Closely integrated, these units contribute the experience of their own operations for the increased efficiency of the entire group. Each unit benefits from the research, productive capacity, purchasing power and distribution facilities of the group as a whole.”⁷⁰

On the fifth floor of the building, Portable Products ran a one-hundred-woman assembly line that produced ten thousand portable radios in plastic cases per month, “believed to be the first complete radios produced in volume in Pittsburgh—[the] birthplace of broadcasting (Figure 33A).”⁷¹ General manager, Haydon Hall, declared, “We are making radios here, and hope to expand our output of radios and other small electric appliances here because we have found that Pittsburgh is such a fine source of labor for light manufacturing.”⁷² In addition to the radios, the company also manufactured electric clothing irons in Pittsburgh, which were sold by Gimbel’s Department Stores (Figure 33B).⁷³

One of the company’s most innovative enterprises was a flying car. Initially created by Theodore Parsons Hall, before being sold to the Southern Aircraft Division of Portable Products in 1946. The Southernaire “Roadable” aerocar was a working, single-engine aircraft that featured a removable propeller and demountable wings, allowing the resulting three-wheeled vehicle to be driven on roads.⁷⁴ It was featured in major magazine and journals, including *Aviation News* and *Popular Science* (Figures 34 and 35).

Unfortunately, Portable Products bought more than it bargained for when it acquired Southern Aircraft Company. “Unwittingly, it also got the liabilities as well as the assets. These turned out. . . to include a \$5 million renegotiation bill from the Government on war contracts. Unable to meet it, Portable turned over its assets of about a million dollars, had the [Boulevard of the Allies] building sold, turned in the money, and folded.” The \$4 million lien [was] the largest claim ever filed in Allegheny County. The purchaser was the 420 Corporation, a stock company, that attempted to rent the building. However, income tax attorneys determined that the lien followed the building, no matter who buys it.⁷⁵

⁶⁹ “City’s First Radio Factory Has Daily Output of Over 300 Sets,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 6 March 1947.

⁷⁰ *The Bulletin Index*, 26 April 1947, 39.

⁷¹ *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 25 June 1955; “Gilmore Drug Building is Sold,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 1 May 1947; “City’s First Radio Factory Has Daily Output of Over 300 Sets,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 6 March 1947; “New Radio Production Begun Here,” *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 6 March 1947.

⁷² “New Radio Production Begun Here,” *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 6 March 1947.

⁷³ “City’s First Radio Factory Has Daily Output of Over 300 Sets,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 6 March 1947; *Pittsburgh Press*, 8 July 1946.

⁷⁴ “Drive Right Up,” *Popular Science*, April 1946, 92; *Aviation News*, 4 February 1946, cover.

⁷⁵ “\$4 Million Lien Hits War ‘Bargain,’ U.S. Files Suit Against Firm Here,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 7 August 1949.

Equitable Gas: 1950-1999

The third corporate headquarters to occupy 412 Boulevard of the Allies was the Equitable Gas Company, which leased the building from 1950 to 1999. During this time, the building was significant as the offices of one of three natural gas providers in Pittsburgh and for its identification with the terms of the company's first two presidents, during which time considerable upgrades were made to the building's infrastructure.

In May 1950, Equitable Gas Company began its long-term lease of 420 Boulevard of the Allies as its new home after fifty years of being a subsidiary of the Philadelphia Company. Leading the company during this transition was president Albert W. Conover, who would serve until 1957 (Figure 36). A native of Camden, New Jersey, he had previously served as the president and general manager of North Shore Gas Company in Chicago.⁷⁶ Under his inaugural leadership, two million shares of public stock in the new company were sold, the building was completely renovated, including the insertion of windows on the west façade, and it was renamed the Equitable Building.⁷⁷ During the earliest years, the company occupied five floors, with the Treasury Department (where customers could pay their bills) on the second floor, Customer Service on the third, Gas Measurement and Distribution on the fourth, and General Sales on the sixth.⁷⁸ Shortly after the relocation was complete, Equitable started to add an odorant to its product to better allow the public to detect leaks.⁷⁹

The company also undertook a major branding and marketing effort under Conover. On March 12, 1956, Equitable completed the installation of its 21-foot tall, Handy Weather Flame atop the 20-foot tall elevator penthouse on the roof (Figures 37, 39 and 40). It was constructed of stainless steel and Plexiglas and was illuminated by neon tubing—not gas, as might be expected.⁸⁰ Taking its name from Handy-Flame, the mascot the company had been employing in advertising and marketing since 1950, the flame-like glass bulb indicated changing weather, with red for fair, blue (symbolizing a blue natural gas flame) for rain and flashing blue for snow. The beacon, erected by structural steel engineer James F. Kelleher, could be seen for miles from the South Side and Mount Washington, and was similar to the Weathergide lighted beacon on the Gulf Building, which began operation the same day.⁸¹ In promotional materials, Equitable touted the project as “another community service by the friendly people with the low gas rates.”⁸² In June 1956, Equitable and Gulf announced that the two weather forecasting icons would use the same signals to avoid confusion (Figure 38).⁸³

Weather signals nearly identical to the 21-foot tall Weather Flame were also installed atop gas company buildings in El Paso and Milwaukee in 1955 and 1956, respectively. They were created by Federal Electric Company, which became Federal Sign and Signal Corporation in 1956. Further research will be needed to determine if Equitable's signal was from the same manufacturer. The Weather Flame provided Pittsburghers with a forecast until December 31, 1972. With the same service being provided atop the Gulf Building “an Equitable spokesman said one weather signal in Pittsburgh is enough” and that the flame would change to steady blue on January 1 “to symbolize the color of burning natural gas.”⁸⁴ Milwaukee turned their beacon completely off in 1973 citing the national energy shortage, but put it back into operation in 1985. It has not been determined when the flame atop the Equitable Building was dismantled.

Conover stepped down as president in 1956, then served as chair of the board for the next two years. After his time at Equitable, he remained active in business and civic affairs until his death on November 30, 1978 at the age of 79. Among his many achievements was serving as president of the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce in 1955 and 1956 and being a member of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development.⁸⁵

⁷⁶ “Chicago Utility Chief to Head Equitable Gas,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 3 March 1950.

⁷⁷ “Equitable Gas Makes Plans for Independent Operation,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 31 May 1950; “Seven Named for Board of Equitable Gas,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 1 June 1950.

⁷⁸ “Equitable Gas Company Grows with Pittsburgh,” *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 23 June 1953.

⁷⁹ “Odorization Adds Safety Factor to Gas,” *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 23 June 1953.

⁸⁰ *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 23 March 1956; *Pittsburgh Press*, 31 March 1965.

⁸¹ *Pittsburgh Press*, 5 June 1956; *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 7 December 1955.

⁸² *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 13 March 1956.

⁸³ *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 23 March 1956.

⁸⁴ “Equitable Gas to Discontinue Weather Light,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 28 December 1972.

⁸⁵ “Ex-Equitable Gas Chief Dies,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 1 December 1978.

Donald B. Beecher became Equitable's second president in 1957 (Figure 41). Beecher was born in Delaware, Ohio, graduated from Wesleyan University in 1923, and graduated from Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1925 as an electrical engineer.⁸⁶ He started his career in 1926 as a fieldman in the Philadelphia Company's Equitable subsidiary. Following a series of promotions and transfers within the parent company, he returned to the newly-independent Equitable Gas Company in 1952 as vice-president and general manager before becoming president five years later. He would serve in that capacity for a decade, retiring in 1967. He died December 29, 1974 at his winter home in Florida. He was survived by his wife Emily.⁸⁷

In 1963, Beecher oversaw renovations to mark the company's diamond anniversary (the company had been chartered seventy-five years before, in 1888). This was at a time when the gas industry nationwide had tripled in size in the past decade, becoming the fifth largest U.S. industry based on plant investment.⁸⁸ It was also a time when many corporate managers were uncertain that Pittsburgh's first Renaissance would be successful and worthy of further investment. A newspaper story under the headline, "Utility Firm's Move a Vote of Faith in City," affirmed Equitable's commitment to staying downtown: "Equitable Gas Company's faith in the future of Downtown Pittsburgh is being graphically illustrated this week as the firm unveils its newly remodeled headquarters building at 420 Blvd. of the Allies."⁸⁹

As part of the remodeling, Equitable expanded into all but one floor of the building. Renovations carried on the tradition of accommodating the public and marketing merchandise, which had been established by Gilmore Drug. The greatest transformations occurred on the first floor and mezzanine, which had previously been occupied by a tenant. There, the company created the largest gas appliance sales showroom in Western Pennsylvania, featuring 5,000 square feet of display space (Figure 43). Equitable was unique among Pittsburgh's three gas companies in that it was the only one to sell appliances as well as promote their use. To its rear, was a new service counter for easy payments and service requests, eliminating the need for customers to go to the second and third floors.

The basement was transformed into a 150-person auditorium, available to outside organizations when not scheduled for company business. On the same level, a Home Service Suite was created with six complete gas kitchens: a commercial kitchen was set up as a model for restaurants and schools; on-stage in the auditorium, a large kitchen was created for demonstrations and training; and the four remaining kitchens served as participation kitchens for customers taking cooking classes (these also opened onto the auditorium for additional demonstrations and support; Figure 42). The mezzanine became the new home for the general sales group. With the enlargement of its headquarters, Equitable closed its former appliance sales showroom, Home Service headquarters and business offices at 610 Wood Street, since those functions were now incorporated into the headquarters building.⁹⁰

As part of grand opening festivities, visitors could tour the Space Kitchen, a mock-up of "the type of kitchen facilities planned for a three-man spacecraft on a 14-day flight," and the Miracle Kitchen, which featured gas kitchen and laundry facilities of the future, both designed by Whirlpool. This included "a dishwasher that makes toast, keeps foods hot and beverages cold [and] moves on its own power from its base at the end of the center island to the table, sink, and even to the patio."⁹¹ In August of the diamond-anniversary year, noted Pittsburgh photographer Teenie Harris photographed the front facade of the building (Figure 44).

From the end of Beecher's term as president until the sale of the building in 1999, Equitable continued innovative ways to market the company and attract the public to its headquarters building. From at least the 1960s through the 1980s, Equitable was known for its seasonal window displays, which at times rivaled the famed windows of nearby Kaufmann's Department Store. Many of these were created by Pittsburgher Ted Rosignoli.⁹² For one promotion, they even installed a six-hole miniature golf course in the lobby.⁹³ After the steel industry collapsed, Equitable's tradition of offering its large basement auditorium to the public was increasingly utilized by countless nonprofit organizations whose programs and events sought to aid the Pittsburgh community.

⁸⁶ *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 28 January 1952.

⁸⁷ *Pittsburgh Press*, 2 January 1975.

⁸⁸ "Equitable Gas Celebrating Anniversary in Renovated Headquarters Downtown," *Pittsburgh Press*, 23 April 1963.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Gilbert Love, "Love Their Work," *Pittsburgh Press*, 2 September 1965.

⁹³ "Golf Putting Courses in Equitable Lobby," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 29 March 1966.

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;

412 Boulevard of the Allies is a skillfully designed example of the Late Gothic Revival style successfully adapted to an early twentieth-century, Commercial style office tower—a stylistic combination often referred to as Commercial Gothic. The building is also significant for many elements of its architectural program developed by Joseph F. Kuntz in concert with Samuel Dempster and the Gilmore Drug management team.

While conceding that applying stylistic labels to buildings can be a forced exercise in linguistic shorthand leading to many inaccuracies and omissions (see Richard W. Longstreth’s appropriately titled essay, “The Problem with ‘Style’”), a brief examination of the two stylistic traditions behind 412 Boulevard of the Allies can provide some useful context.⁹⁴

Commercial Style

The Commercial style reflects advances in construction technology that permitted the creation of very tall buildings, the first skyscrapers in the urban landscape. *The Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide* developed by the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission indicates that the style was utilized in Pennsylvania largely during the time period from the 1890s into the 1920s:

This style is sometimes referred to as the Chicago style, after the city where steel-framed, relatively unadorned, utilitarian, tall commercial buildings first appeared in great numbers in the 1890s. Advances in commercial architectural design in Philadelphia and New York City laid the groundwork for the full development of the Commercial style in Chicago. William Le Baron Jenney was the first architect to employ the steel frame construction in his design for the Home Insurance building completed in Chicago in 1885. Other prominent architects who worked in the development of this new building technology included the firms of Adler and Sullivan (Sullivan’s embellishment of this style became its own distinctive architectural style, the Sullivanese), Burnham and Root, and Holabird and Roche. While the style thrived in Chicago at the turn of the 20th century, examples of the Commercial style can be found in many other cities.

Prior to the development of steel frame technology, building height had been limited by the need for massive masonry support walls. The strength of the steel skeleton allowed for much taller buildings without the bulk of heavy masonry walls. The invention of the elevator also facilitated the design of tall buildings by making upper floors more easily accessible. Commercial style buildings reflecting this first wave of skyscraper construction are usually between six and twenty floors in height.

The distinguishing characteristics of this style are a steel skeleton construction, expressed externally as a grid of intersecting piers and cross spandrels, a flat roof with modest cornice, and large bands of windows. . . The ground floor of Commercial style buildings usually contained large display windows for storefronts. Some examples of this style employ decorative elements of other popular styles of the era, such as Romanesque or Gothic Revival ornament.⁹⁵

Character-defining features of the Commercial style that are present on 412 Boulevard of the Allies include its steel-frame construction, which divides each floor into a grid that is five bays wide by eight bays deep; rectangular, box-like massing; flat roof; masonry wall surfaces; and ground-floor retail/display space.

Late Gothic Revival Style

The Late Gothic Revival style is a late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century adaptation of the early-nineteenth century Gothic Revival style. “The Gothic Revival style, which flourished from the period of 1830 through 1890 in the United States, was often chosen for churches and institutional buildings due to its impressive, mediievally-

⁹⁴ Richard W. Longstreth, “The Problem with ‘Style,’” *The Forum: Bulletin of the Committee on Preservation*, Society of Architectural Historians, December 1984,

⁹⁵ Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, “Commercial Style 1890-1920,” *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide*, <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/commercial.html> accessed 18 August 2020.

inspired form.”⁹⁶ In the early twentieth century the Gothic Revival style reappeared as an appropriate choice for university and secondary school buildings (i.e., the Collegiate Gothic style) and for commercial buildings, especially when the typically spare ornament of the Commercial style was deemed to be insufficient. The style lent an air of respected antiquity, though buildings were often executed as rather pared down versions of the more ornate forms of the style with only a few decorative details like arched and recessed entryways or a few decorative panels. Masonry cladding lent a sense of permanence and substance, a fitting image for the educational and commercial enterprises.⁹⁷

Character-defining features of the Late Gothic Revival style that are present on 412 Boulevard of the Allies include its semi-elliptical first-floor arcade; piers that emphasize verticality through the application of seven-story bundled colonnettes of stone and alternating recessed and projecting bricks; the stone spandrel panels with carved rectangular medallions; the elaborate cantilevered cornice with its Gothic tracery and crenellation; and carved stone and cast-iron ornamentation.

Commercial Gothic

Joanna Merwood-Salisbury, in her chapter of *Skyscraper Gothic* titled “The Gothic Revival and the Chicago School: From Naturalistic Ornament to Constructive Expression,” captures the appeal of melding the Commercial and Late Gothic Revival styles: “The adaptation of the Gothic to commercial buildings was a fitting form of aesthetic evolution. In particular it lent the social cohesiveness of preindustrial northern European village life to a rapidly industrializing city on the western American frontier. The use of the Gothic Revival for office buildings that housed banks and insurance companies provided new and often financially precarious institutions with the moral authority previously held by sacred architecture. . . Implying intellectual and spiritual correctness, if not strict stylistic authenticity, the commercial Gothic Revival style ensured prestige for the architect and, with luck, high returns for his patron and longevity for the building itself.”⁹⁸ Completion of the Woolworth Building in New York in 1913 (designed by Cass Gilbert) with its 15th- and 16th-century-inspired ornament, “made Gothic newly fashionable for commercial work.”⁹⁹

Although the style was relatively uncommon, there are a number of examples of the Commercial Gothic style in Pittsburgh. The most elaborate, high-style example is the Union Arcade (later the Union Trust Building) on Grant Street in downtown Pittsburgh (Figure 45). Designed by Pittsburgh architect Frederick J. Osterling with assistance from Pierre A. Leisch, it opened in 1917. “The style is Flemish Gothic of the period around 1500. . . its ornament executed primarily in stone-colored and white terra cotta. . . Inside was space for 240 shops, facing two four-story open arcade spaces, and about 700 offices, [though]. . . the tall arcade spaces were floored in in 1923.”¹⁰⁰

Leisch designed a smaller Flemish Gothic Revival building in 1929 for the Croatian Fraternal Union (Figure 46). Located on Forbes Avenue in Oakland, the “building is a three-story, flat-roofed structure of brick, steel, and concrete construction. . . divided into five bays by vertically ribbed responds which run the full height of the building. The first floor has an arcade of five pointed arches, with the central arch housing the entry doors. . . The parapet above the third-floor windows is ornamented with Gothic tracery [and] . . . was originally crowned with a highly ornate overhanging cornice.”¹⁰¹ The building is currently threatened with demolition by the University of Pittsburgh.

Another example, very similar in form and massing to 412 Boulevard of the Allies, was the McCann Building (Figure 47). Designed by Bernard H. Prack and completed in 1930, it was a ten-story, five-by-ten bay, full-service grocery with integral 600-car parking garage located just off Market Square on today’s Stanwix Street (then Ferry Street). Simpler in detail, and clad in brick, it featured a first-story arcade capped by an ornate cornice with an even more ornate cornice at the roofline. In the mid-1960s, two floors were added and the façade was covered in glass panels, completely masking its earlier Commercial Gothic provenance (Figure 48).

⁹⁶ Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, “Collegiate Gothic Style 1890-1940,” Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/collegiate-gothic.html> accessed 18 August 2020.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Joanna Merwood-Salisbury, “The Gothic Revival and the Chicago School: From Naturalistic Ornament to Constructive Expression,” in Kevin D. Murphy and Lisa Reilly, eds., *Skyscraper Gothic* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2017): 93-94.

⁹⁹ Franklin Toker, *Pittsburgh: A New Portrait* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 102.

¹⁰⁰ Walter C. Kidney, *Pittsburgh’s Landmark Architecture: The Historic Buildings of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 1997), 245.

¹⁰¹ Preservation Pittsburgh, *Former Croatian Fraternal Union*, City of Pittsburgh Historic Landmark Nomination, October 2018.

Closer to our subject building—in fact, just across the street—is the former Salvation Army Building, now the Distrikt Hotel (1924, with 1930 addition, designed by architect Thomas Pringle; [Figure 48](#)). This ten-story, steel-framed building features a three-story granite base with large Gothic-arched door openings with stone tracery. Above, the building is much simpler, as floors four through ten are clad in red brick with minimal ornamentation.

Smaller examples of the Commercial Gothic style in Pittsburgh include the studio that Frederick Osterling designed for himself in 1917 on Isabella Street on Pittsburgh's Northside ([Figure 49](#)). A remodeling of an older Victorian building, the studio features “a glass façade of Gothic trefoils in the manner of Osterling's Union Trust Building.”¹⁰² In East Liberty, 6012-14 and 6018 Penn Avenue are the salvaged, terra cotta facades of two early-twentieth examples of the style ([Figure 50](#)). The buildings faced demolition for construction of a six-story apartment building. While “façade-only preservation is not a recognized or appropriate historic preservation tool,” this intervention at least retained some vestiges of this rather rare architectural style.¹⁰³

The Gilmore Drug Architectural Program

412 Boulevard of the Allies is also significant architecturally for the building program (i.e., features and functions) devised by Gilmore Drug in conjunction with architect Joseph F. Kuntz.

Note: The following information was adapted from the special feature in the February 19, 1927 edition of the Pittsburgh Press titled “W.J. Gilmore Drug Co. Opens House of Service,” which celebrated the completion of the building.

From a technical standpoint, the nine-story building was reportedly engineered so that up to twelve stories could be added in the future. Hand-in-hand with this, major machinery, power systems and conveyors were designed to be easily expanded. The building was constructed to be both fire proof and flood proof. The entire interior was faced with brick and all window sashes and frames were constructed of metal.

In planning the building, Joseph Kuntz visited similar wholesale drug facilities in New York, Boston, Chicago and Minneapolis before finalizing plans for Gilmore. As mentioned, display case were provided throughout the first floor to highlight the company's various product lines. Horizontal and vertical conveying equipment carried packages between departments and between floors. There were no boilers in the building, as steam was provided centrally by the Allegheny County Steam Heating Company. The loading dock, as mentioned, was concealed within the building so that traffic on narrow First Avenue would not be impaired.

Inside, a special burglar-proof vault was provided on the fifth floor for the safe storage of “medicinal whisky and wines, narcotics and bacteriological supplies.” Automatic ice machines kept drugs and supplies of chocolate at specific temperatures. On the sixth floor, a walk-in humidior with a capacity for three million cigars was airtight and moisture controlled.

Speed and accuracy in the filling of orders was assured by copying each original and dispatching a photostatic duplicate to the necessary departments. A special dark room in the business department on the mezzanine housed the expensive equipment.

One of the company's proudest achievements was their aim to make the “building a purely Pittsburgh institution” where “Pittsburgh products predominate.” Under the headline “Pittsburgh Firms Built Fine Gilmore Drug Home” in the special edition of the *Press*, is an accounting of all of the local talent. Starting from the steel (fabricated by the McClintic-Marshall Company) to the bricks (Kittanning Brick Company) to the marble used for the counters in the lobby (American Marble Company), everything possible was either manufactured or supplied regionally ([Figure 51](#)). Coordinating this all was the W.T. Grange Construction Company, located in the Keenan Building on Liberty Avenue.

¹⁰² Toker, 151.

¹⁰³ “Triumphant Terracotta! Facades Return to Penn Avenue,” *The East Ender: A Publication of the East Liberty Valley Historical Society*, Autumn/Winter 2017, 1-3.

Criterion 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;

412 Boulevard of the Allies is significant as a skillfully-designed example of the work of accomplished late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Pittsburgh architect Joseph Franklin Kuntz (Figure 52).¹⁰⁴

Joseph Franklin Kuntz was born around 1866 in Natrona, on the Allegheny River, about 25 miles northeast of Pittsburgh. He was the son of Peter and Phoebe (Held) Kuntz, both natives of Pennsylvania. Peter Kuntz was engaged in the lumber business until his death in 1910. For eight years, Joseph Kuntz worked with his father before moving to Pittsburgh to enter the engineering firm of William Glyde Wilkins (1854-1921).¹⁰⁵ The connection proved long-lived, for Joseph Kuntz continued to work with the successor firms of Wilkins & Davison and the W. G. Wilkins Company.

In the late-nineteenth century, the W.G. Wilkins Company built coal and coke plants throughout Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia, erecting whole towns adjacent to these plants, with houses, stores, schools, churches, and theaters. This necessitated the formation of an architectural department, which was put under the supervision of Joseph Kuntz. The responsibility of the post and his success in handling it led to a partnership in the W. G. Wilkins Company. After the senior member retired, Kuntz became the owner and principal of the enterprise (Figure 53).

The following Pittsburgh buildings are among the major designs by Joseph Kuntz:

- The W.W. Lawrence & Company Building, a.k.a. the Lawrence Paint Building (1902), West Carson Street (demolished in 2001; Figure 54).¹⁰⁶
- The Commercial Building (1907), 420 First Avenue, directly behind 412 Boulevard of the Allies, later the Graphic Arts Building; the first eight-story reinforced concrete construction in Pittsburgh; another contributing building in the expanded Firstside National Register District (Figures 2, 3 and 55).
- The Maul Building (1910), 1704 East Carson Street; four stories, elaborate terra cotta ornamentation featuring Native American motifs (Figures 56 and 57).
- The General A. J. Logan Armory (1911; Figure 58), at Bayard and Thackeray Streets (demolished; current site of Benedum Hall, 1971, designed by Deeter, Ritchey & Sippel).
- Frick & Lindsay Building (1913; Figure 59), 117 Sandusky Street; now the Andy Warhol Museum.¹⁰⁷
- The Captain Alfred E. Hunt Armory (1921), on Emerson Street (Figure 60).
- The Philadelphia Building (1925 expansion by Kuntz; Figure 61), 620 William Penn Place; eight stories, built for the Philadelphia Company, now the Hotel Monaco. Kuntz expanded upon an earlier design by MacClure & Spahr.

Additional buildings designed by Kuntz include:

- The Atlantic Building (1922), Broad and Spruce streets, Philadelphia; a twenty-two-story office building erected for the Atlantic Refining Company; currently apartments.

¹⁰⁴ Unless indicated otherwise, much of the biographical information on Kuntz was adapted from the entry "Joseph Franklin Kuntz," in Frank C. Harper, *Pittsburgh of Today: Its Resources and People* (New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., [1931]): 34-35.

¹⁰⁵ "Wilkins Funeral to Be Held Tomorrow," *Pittsburgh Press*, 13 April 1921.

¹⁰⁶ Patricia Lowry, "Nomination as Landmark May Save Paint Building," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 28 July 1999; "Lawrence Paint Building: Lost After Years of Effort," *PHLF News*, September 2001, 6.

¹⁰⁷ Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, *Historic Landmark Plaques: 1968-2009* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 2009).

- A bank and office building at Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, for the Hollidaysburg Trust Company.
- For the McClintic-Marshall Company, office buildings at Pottstown, Pennsylvania, Chicago, Illinois, and Buffalo, New York.
- Ten administration buildings for the Pittsburgh Railways Company.
- Railway stations at Butler for the Harmony and Butler Railroad.
- An eleven-story office building at Steubenville, Ohio, for the Union Savings Bank & Trust Company.
- Service buildings at Aliquippa and Glassport, Pennsylvania, for the People's Natural Gas Company.
- For the United States Government, typical power plant buildings and dwellings for locks and dams for the Ohio and Kanawha rivers.
- For the Armory Board of the State of Pennsylvania, Kuntz designed twenty-five armories (including the two mentioned above).
- Approximately two hundred gasoline service stations distributed throughout Pennsylvania and the New England States, erected for the Atlantic Refining Company of Pennsylvania, the majority of a type in which Joseph Kuntz was a pioneer, utilizing cream colored terra cotta and employing a distinctive design (Figure 62).
- He designed and constructed factory buildings for many companies employed in diverse industrial fields, including: The Columbia Plate Glass Company at Blairsville, Pennsylvania; the Crescent Machine Shops, Leetonia, Ohio; the Duff Manufacturing Company; the Gem Manufacturing Company; the Standard Underground Cable Company; Pittsburgh Gage & Supply Company; A. J. Logan Company; Pittsburgh Valve Foundry and Construction Company, and many others.

Kuntz was a member of the Engineering Society of Western Pennsylvania and of several local organizations, including the Pittsburgh Field Club and the Chamber of Commerce. He served during one enlistment period in the Pennsylvania Naval Reserve Corps. In 1896, he married Anna Oakford Day, daughter of T. Walter Day, a prominent Pittsburgh attorney. The couple had two sons: Joseph Franklin, Kuntz, Jr. and Blair Day Kuntz. Anna Kuntz died March 4, 1920; Joseph Kuntz died in 1938.

Criterion 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.

412 Boulevard of the Allies is significant as a visual landmark in downtown Pittsburgh. For almost a century, it has remained nearly unchanged, anchoring the south side of the Boulevard of the Allies between Smithfield and Grant Streets (Figures 63 and 64). It is important aesthetically as a representative of the relatively uncommon Commercial Gothic architectural style. The building's details, especially its elaborate projecting cornice, are eye-catching from blocks away; and at the street level, its two-story arcade of glass has attracted viewers and visitors for generations.

10. Integrity

412 Boulevard of the Allies 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 Boulevard of the Allies.

Design: The building retains integrity in regard to design. It retains its form, massing, method of construction, and the original purpose as an office building. Specific character-defining features remain that allow its significance as an example of the Commercial Gothic style to be conveyed. These include its steel frame construction, rectangular massing, flat roof, masonry wall surfaces, ground-floor retail/display space, semi-elliptical first-floor arcade, piers of brick and bundled stone colonettes that emphasize verticality, stone spandrel panels with carved rectangular medallions, the elaborate cantilevered cornice with its Gothic tracery and crenellation, and carved stone and cast-iron ornamentation.

The addition of window openings on the west façade around 1951 have become an integral part of the building and with more than fifty years having elapsed, are historic in their own right.

Materials: The building retains integrity in regard to materials. Still present are the stone and brick walls, carved stone ornamentation, and cast-iron storefront system. The painting of the front façade, while not a recommended preservation practice for a number of reasons, including the likelihood of trapping moisture, is ultimately reversible and does not detract from the overall ability to convey the form and style of the building.

Workmanship: The building retains integrity in regard to workmanship. Exterior details—especially the ornately carved stone ornamentation—reflect a high level of skill and sophistication.

11. Consent of Property Owners

12. Photo Log

All photographs taken by Time & Place LLC on 8 August 2020, unless noted otherwise.

Photo 1. Streetscape; Boulevard of the Allies, looking west from Grant Street, showing 412 Boulevard of the Allies in the middle of the block on the left.

Photo 2. Streetscape; Boulevard of the Allies, looking east from Smithfield Street, showing 412 Boulevard of the Allies in the middle of the block on the right.

Photo 3. Front and west facades, looking southeast.

Photo 4. Front and east facades, looking southwest.

Photo 5. Front facade, center three bays, looking south.

Photo 6. Detail, cornice, northeast corner of building, looking southwest.

Photo 7. Detail, cornice, northwest corner of building, looking southeast.

Photo 8. Front facade, sidewalk level, looking west.

Photo 9. Front facade, looking southwest, showing base of pilaster and painted surfaces.

Photo 10. Front facade, looking southwest, showing main entrance.

Photo 11. Front facade, looking southwest, showing west entrance.

Photo 12. Front facade, looking south, showing detail at front entrance.

Photo 13. Front facade, looking southwest, showing detail on front door.

Photo 14. Front facade, looking southwest, showing detail over west entrance.

Photo 15. Front and east facades, looking south down Cherry Way.

Photo 16. East facade, looking west, showing extent of painted stone.

Photo 17. East facade, looking west, showing extent of painted stone.

Photo 18. East facade, looking west, showing brick piers between windows.

Photo 19. Rear facade, looking west.

Photo 20. Rear and east facades, looking northwest, showing similar brickwork.

Photo 21. Rear facade, looking east.

Photo 22. West facade, looking northeast.

Photo 23. West facade, looking southeast.

Photo 24. West parking lot, looking south.

412 Boulevard of the Allies
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* See footnotes for specific citations.

14. Supporting Documents

See Figures, attached.

412 Boulevard of the Allies
Historic Nomination Form
Photo Log

Photographs—412 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

All photographs taken by Time & Place LLC on 8 August 2020, unless noted otherwise.



Photo 1. Streetscape; Boulevard of the Allies, looking west from Grant Street, showing 412 Boulevard of the Allies in the middle of the block on the left.



Photo 2. Streetscape; Boulevard of the Allies, looking east from Smithfield Street, showing 412 Boulevard of the Allies in the middle of the block on the right.



Photo 3. Front and west facades, looking southeast.



Photo 4. Front and east facades, looking southwest.



Photo 5. Front facade, center three bays, looking south.



Photo 6. Detail, cornice, northeast corner of building, looking southwest.



Photo 7. Detail, cornice, northwest corner of building, looking southeast.



Photo 8. Front facade, sidewalk level, looking west.



Photo 9. Front facade, looking southwest, showing base of pilaster and painted surfaces.



Photo 10. Front facade, looking southwest, showing main entrance.



Photo 11. Front facade, looking southwest, showing west entrance.



Photo 12. Front facade, looking south, showing detail at front entrance.



Photo 13. Front facade, looking southwest, showing detail on front door.



Photo 14. Front facade, looking southwest, showing detail over west entrance.



Photo 15. Front and east facades, looking south down Cherry Way.



Photo 16. East facade, looking west, showing extent of painted stone.



Photo 17. East facade, looking west, showing extent of painted stone.

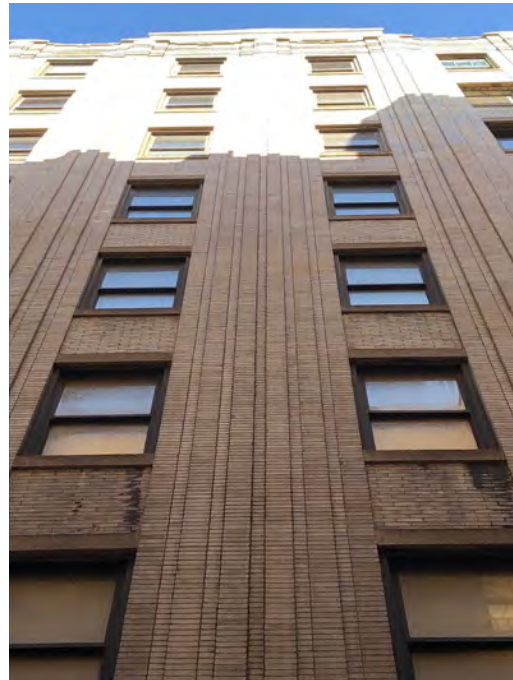


Photo 18. East facade, looking west, showing brick piers between windows.



Photo 19. Rear facade, looking west.



Photo 20. Rear and east facades, looking northwest, showing similar brickwork.



Photo 21. Rear facade, looking east.



Photo 22. West facade, looking northeast.



Photo 23. West facade, looking southeast.



Photo 24. West parking lot, looking south.

412 Boulevard of the Allies
Historic Nomination Form
Resources

Figures—412 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

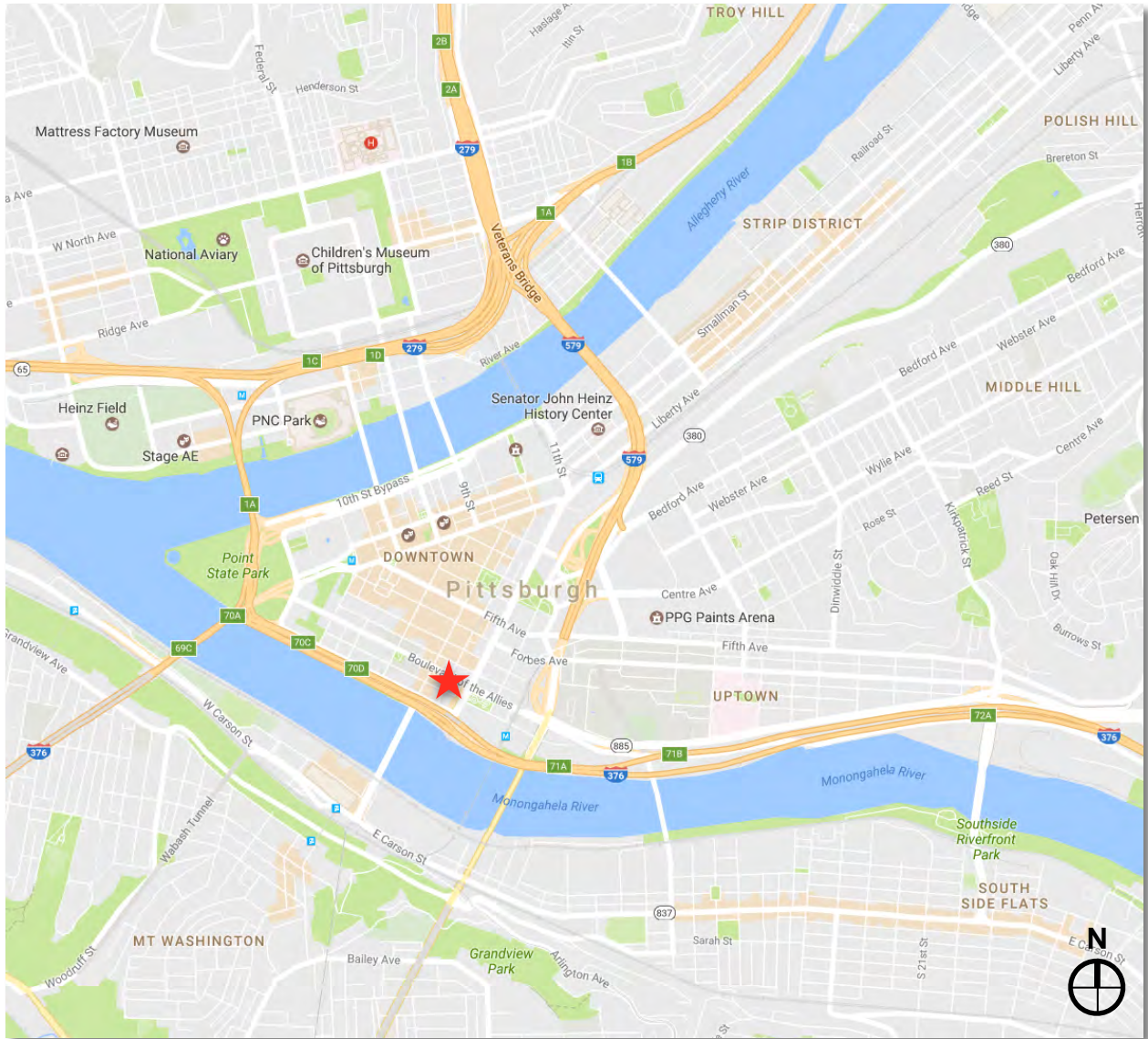


Figure 1. Location map, with red star showing the location of 412 Boulevard of the Allies on the southern edge of Pittsburgh’s Central Business District (Google Maps).



Figure 2. Vicinity plan. Birdseye view, looking north, showing 412 Boulevard of the Allies at center (Bing Maps).

- | | |
|---|--|
| ① 412 Boulevard of the Allies | ⑤ Firstside Park |
| ② Allies Parking Garage | ⑥ PNC Firstside Center |
| ③ Distrikt Hotel (former Salvation Army Building) | ⑦ Monongahela River |
| ④ One Oxford Centre | ⑧ Commercial Building/ Graphic Arts Building |



Figure 3. Vicinity plan. Birdseye view, looking south, showing roof of 412 Boulevard of the Allies (Bing Maps).

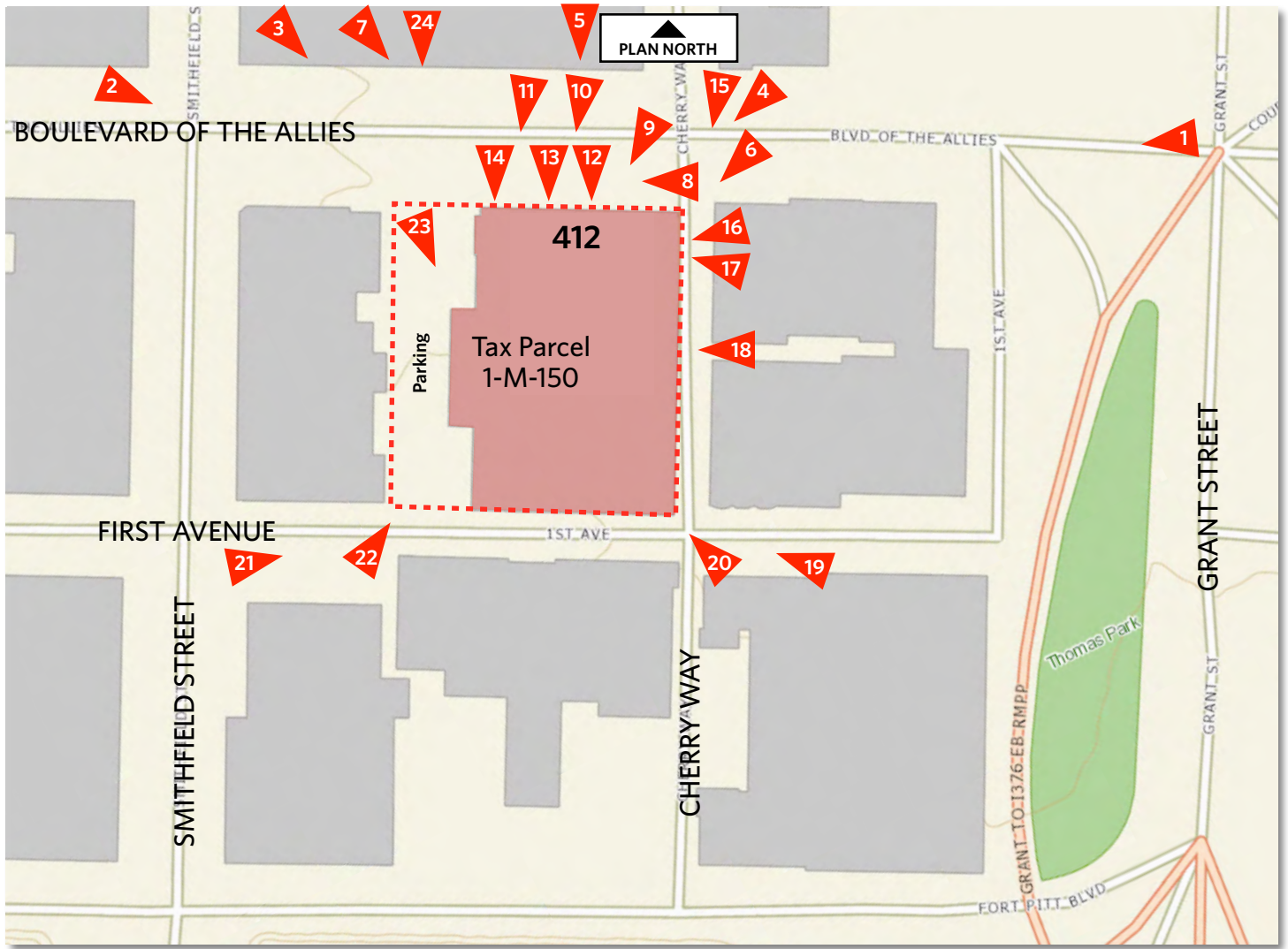


Figure 4. Site plan and photo key (adapted from Allegheny County GIS Viewer).

PLAN NORTH

Approximate nomination boundary, representing Tax Parcel 1-M-150. Consult Allegheny County Deed Office description for full legal boundary.

A note on compass directions: Since the street grid in the southern part of Pittsburgh’s Golden Triangle is aligned with the Monongahela River and not the points on the compass, this document establishes a “Plan North” to simplify descriptions. This designation allows the top of the page/screen to be considered “north,” with the Boulevard of the Allies running east-west. This site plan reflects this “plan north” orientation and also shows “true north” in the compass rose at the lower right.

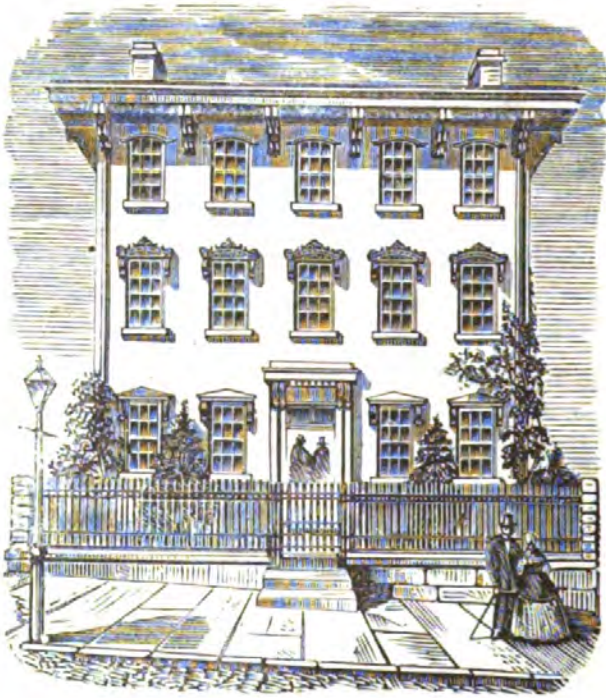


Figure 5. The Homeopathic Medical and Surgical Hospital and Dispensary of Pittsburgh that opened on August 1, 1866 on the site of 412 Boulevard of the Allies (*The Medical Counselor*, v. 8, 1884, 712)

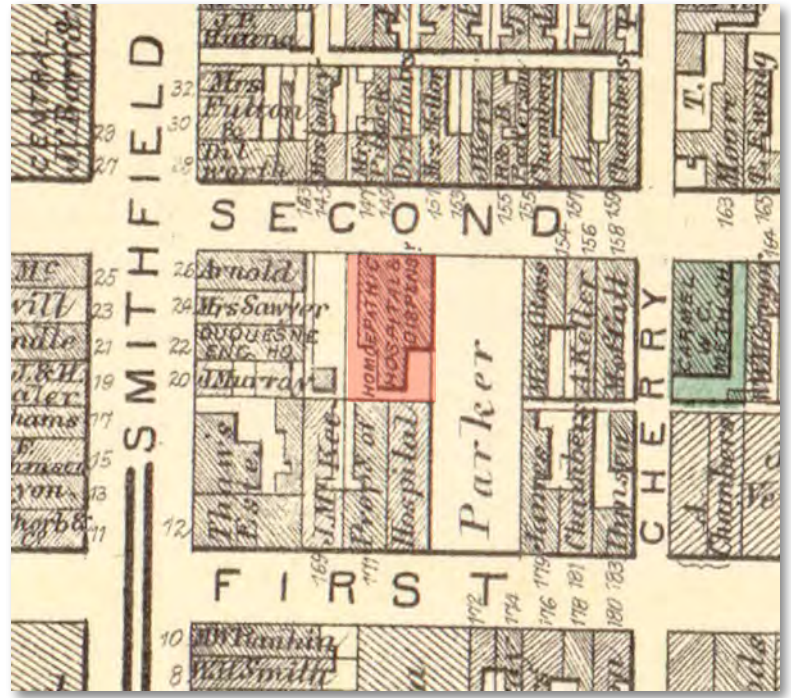


Figure 6. Location of the first Homeopathic Medical and Surgical Hospital on Second Avenue, in red (1872 G.M. Hopkins Company map).

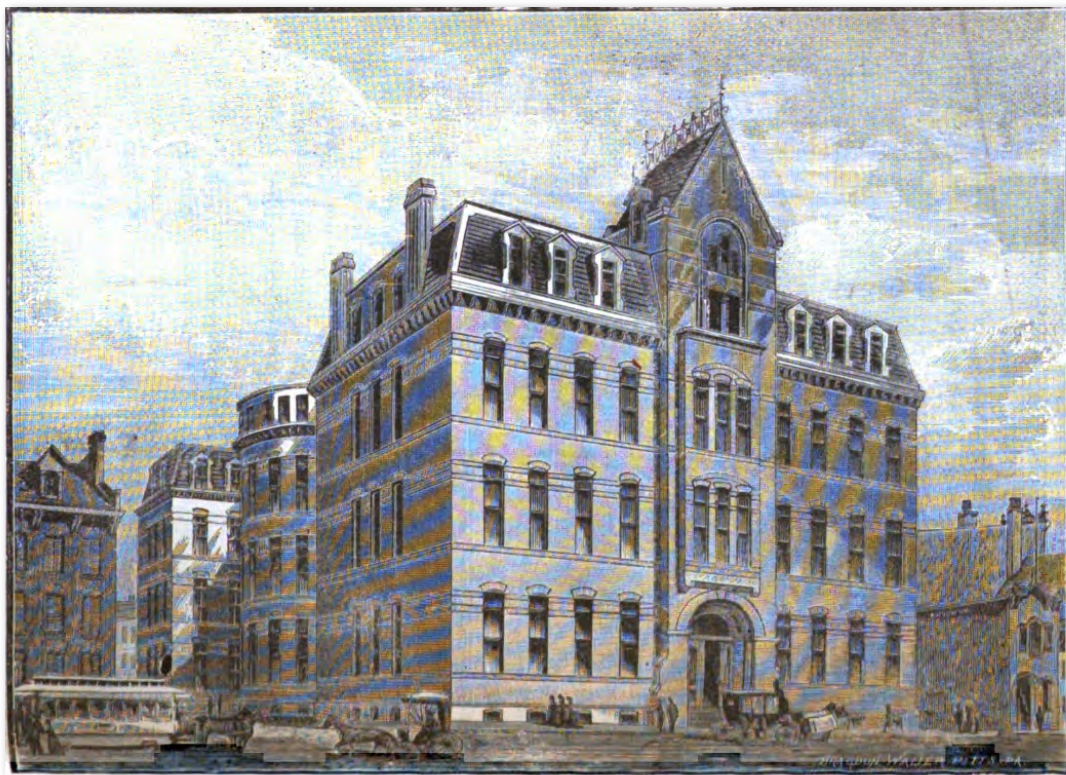


Figure 7. The second Homeopathic Medical and Surgical Hospital on Second Avenue, designed by John U. Barr (*The Medical Counselor*, v. 8, 1884, 714)

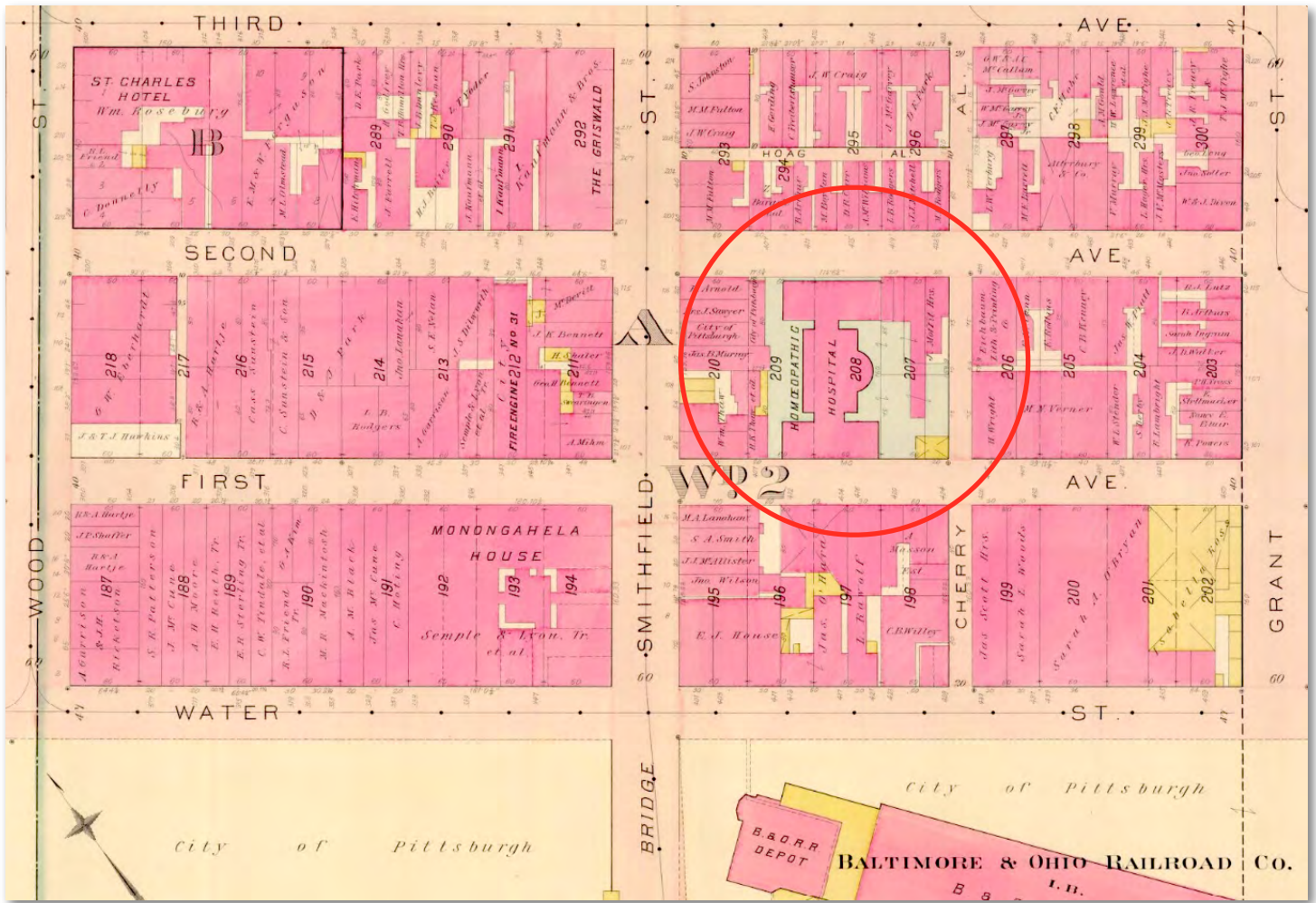


Figure 8. The second Homeopathic Medical and Surgical Hospital on Second Avenue, in red (1900 G.M. Hopkins Company map).

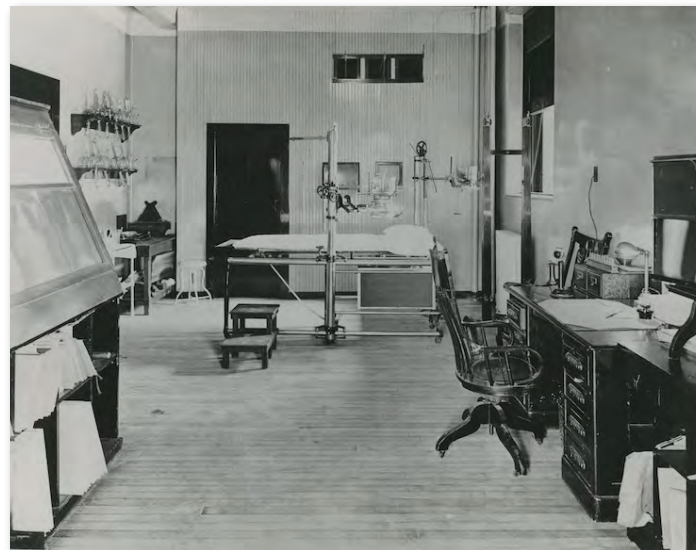


Figure 9. X-ray room, Roentgen Ray Department, Homeopathic Medical and Surgical Hospital on Second Avenue, 1900 (Shadyside Hospital Collection, Historic Pittsburgh).

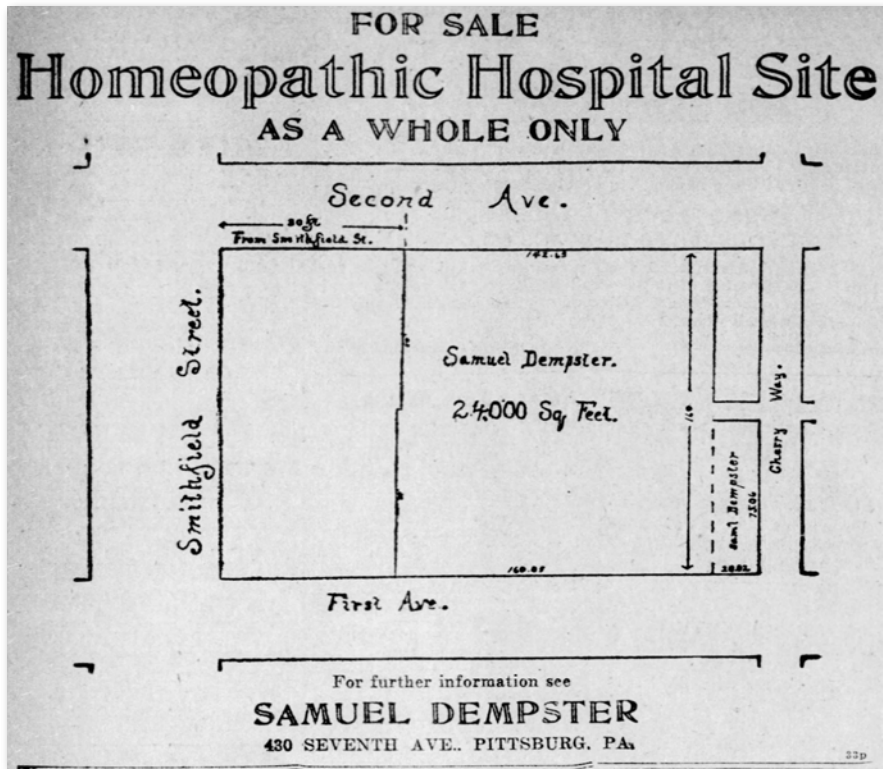


Figure 10. Real estate advertisement, showing Samuel Dempster’s short-lived decision to offer the former Homeopathic Hospital site for sale (Pittsburgh Press, 3 March 1917). Pittsburgh).

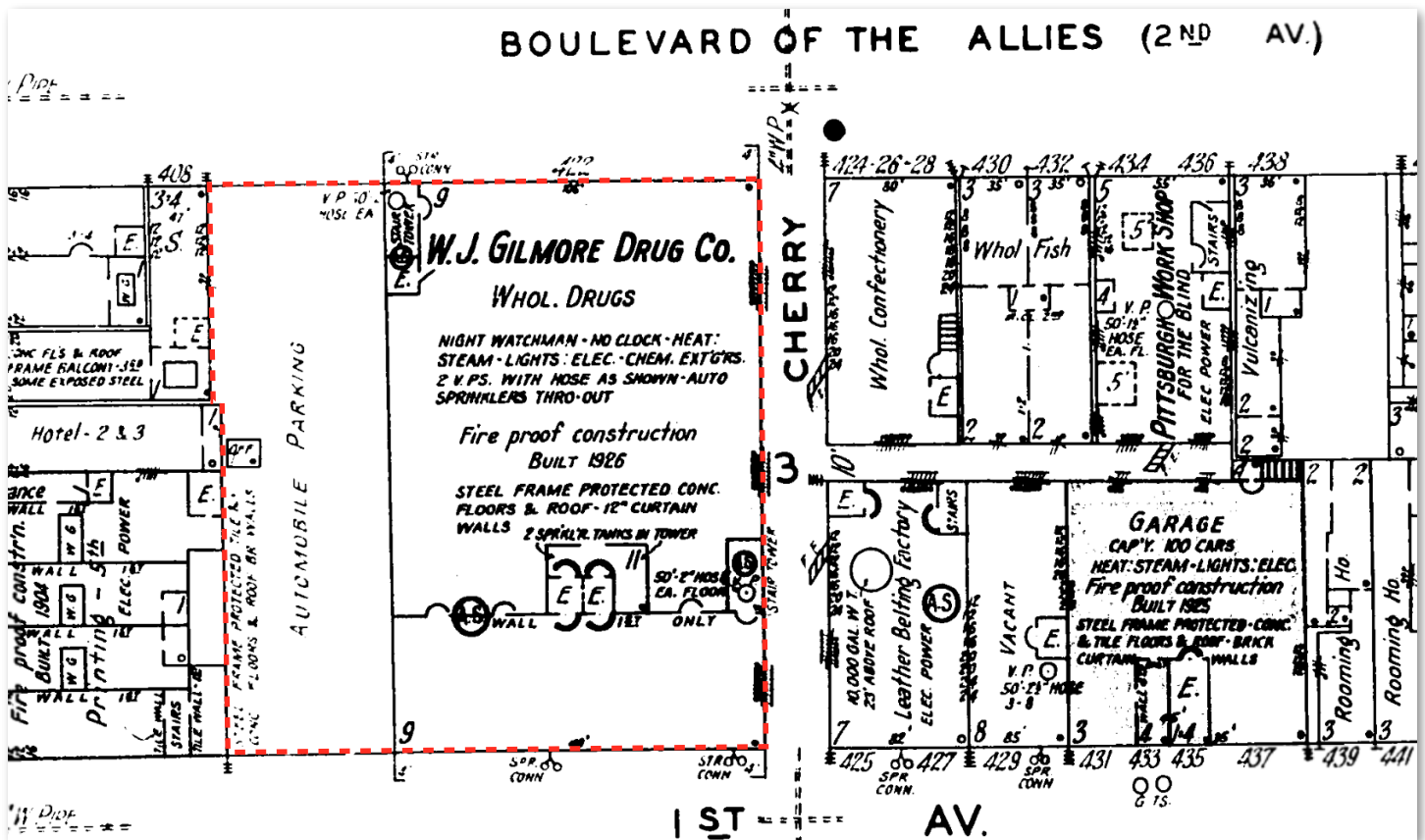


Figure 11. 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map, showing the newly-constructed Gilmore Drug Company Building and its adjacent parking area.

"A Press in Every Home"

PITTSBURGH, PA., SATURDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 19, 1927

"Always in the Lead"

W. J. GILMORE DRUG CO. OPENS HOUSE OF SERVICE

FIRE AND FLOOD PROOF PLANT ON BOULEVARD OF ALLIES IS MODEL FOR DRUG BUSINESS

An Example of Pittsburgh's Progress

GILMORE DRUG SHOWS STEADY GAINS OVER 40-YEAR PERIOD

The new and handsome home of the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. on the site of the old Homeopathic hospital at Second ave. Cherry and First ave. is of the most modern construction peculiarly suited to the wholesale drug trade.

The building, facing 110 feet on Second ave. and extending 100 feet back to First ave., contains eight stories and a mezzanine and was constructed to carry 12 additional stories. The building rests upon a foundation supported by 2,100 concrete piles, reinforced concrete footings and steel slab bases or receive the steel columns and carries 3,450 tons of structural steel that was so accurately fabricated that not one rivet hole had to be drilled. Each floor in the building was designed to support 500 pounds per square foot.

The building is fire and flood proof. Reinforced concrete incases all the steel and not a piece of wood was built into the structure, except for paneling in the directors' room. The entire interior of the building was faced with brick. All exterior sash and frames are made of metal and the plate glass is wired.

The front exterior of the building is of stone from the Adirondacks and the top of the parapet, with a return of the same material at each corner. The remainder of the exterior is of gray vitrified, waterproof brick. The structure stands on a plot of 100 feet by 110 feet of the same material with parapets topped with tiles.

The basement is well lighted with overhead lights as well as indirect lighting above the entrance and under the floor. Joseph F. Kuntz, architect, designed the building, which was designed to carry 12 additional stories. The building rests upon a foundation supported by 2,100 concrete piles, reinforced concrete footings and steel slab bases or receive the steel columns and carries 3,450 tons of structural steel that was so accurately fabricated that not one rivet hole had to be drilled. Each floor in the building was designed to support 500 pounds per square foot.



The new home of the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. is in the United States. It has eight stories and a mezzanine located at Second ave. Cherry way and First ave. The exterior is of stone and gray vitrified construction of the building. Joseph F. Kuntz was the architect.

FROM A humble beginning in a three-story building at 221 Liberty ave. the W. J. Gilmore Co., which recently opened their modern, new-story home on the Boulevard of the Allies, at Cherry way, has grown steadily until today it is one of the three foremost wholesale drug companies in the United States.

Each year since its inception in May, 1886, the Gilmore company has shown such an increase in business that today the amounts transacted annually in more than 45 times as much as the first year's sale.

THE HISTORY OF THE COMPANY. Formed in the development of the company since its birth and continuous growth during the 40 years of its existence, in Samuel Dwyer, who now directs the affairs of the company as president and chairman of the board of directors. Other officers of the present company are J. H. McCormick, president; Louis H. Schindler, vice president; and A. J. Schindler, secretary.

The first firm was organized by W. J. Gilmore, Alex. Dempster, Samuel Thompson and G. F. Schindler, Jr. They purchased the MacKracken Thompson Co. from the estate of D. C. Thompson. The firm was organized on W. J. Gilmore & Co. and consisted of wholesale druggists and general merchandise. The firm was organized in 1886 at 221 Liberty ave. and was the only living member of the original firm.

GILMORE SAVED FINANCE. W. J. Gilmore saved the financial affairs of the organization when the Dwyer and Schindler, Jr. firm failed. Louis H. Schindler, Jr., president, member of the firm, built up a sales and business organization that has maintained the lead for all these years after the company had been organized. In 1908 the company was moved to 221 Liberty ave. and a steady growth accumulated. Within a few years, the erection of a six-story warehouse on the rear of their building on Seventh ave. was rapidly followed by the erection of a four-story building at 221 Liberty ave. in 1912. These buildings were taken over and there the company continued its growth.

INCORPORATED IN 1916. In 1916 the company was incorporated as the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. and Samuel Dwyer became the president and chairman of the board.

The business of the company doubled between 1912 and 1923 and with the financial stability ability that has made him known all over the United States as one of the leaders in the trade, Samuel Dwyer purchased the site of the old Homeopathic hospital on Second ave. in 1916, when the thirty-story structure was a narrow street. The property face second ave. from Cherry way to Spangford st. and extends 100 feet back to First ave. on Cherry way. On part of that the company's new building was built.

FROM SMALL BEGINNING. Samuel Dwyer directed the sale and purchasing department until 1915 when he left over the financial affairs of the company as treasurer. David Matthews Dwyer was a member of the firm as secretary for 20 years until he died in 1915. Arthur A. Dempster had been vice president for 10 years until he died in 1915. They were brothers of Samuel Dwyer. The Gilmore Drug Co. grew from a small business in 1886 to a large business in 1927. It is now one of the three foremost wholesale drug companies in the United States.

most heating efficiency. Still air coming from the cabinet does not go upward to seal walls and ceiling and the additional insulating glass obtained by utilizing the radiator for window heat or doors is desirable in any room. The cabinets are decorative as well as efficient.

THE COMPANY HAS BEEN INCORPORATED IN 1916. In 1916 the company was incorporated as the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. and Samuel Dwyer became the president and chairman of the board.

PAINT BRINGS CHEERFULNESS

A noted engineer recently made the statement, on an address before a meeting of well known scientists and engineers, that the state of today is the future of tomorrow. This really has been a discussion devoted to the improvement of his products.

As a creature of environment, your endeavor to beautify our home surroundings in an effort to make them more beautiful. It is only by really however, the industrial camp and workshop have a markedly beneficial effect on production and the stimulation of it.

The workers' frame of mind is known to be a real factor in industry, and the entire efficiency of light and color. It is a cheerfulness through which correspondingly increased safety. The light reflecting value of paint is well understood and utilized by the most progressive industrial plants.

Light waves that impinge upon the human eye, and the human mind, and especially white, paints, so familiar to us, are reflected in less than half as much as the light waves that impinge upon the human eye. Light waves are reflected in less than half as much as the light waves that impinge upon the human eye.

These three distinct departments of the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. are centralized on the spacious first floor of the new building. They are the candy department, headed by J. C. Lehmann, and the cigar and sundries department, headed by Charles T. Fiserl, and the cigar and sundries department, headed by Charles T. Fiserl.

Grouped close to the manager's office is the photographic department, which is supplied by the department. Although the entire interior of the building is so arranged to effect the most complete display of the goods of the company.

Charles T. Fiserl, buyer and head of the candy department, has been with the company for 25 years. The entire floor space of the first floor is devoted to the display of the goods of the company for the thousands of customers who visit through the building.

THIRD-FLOOR RETAIL. Some of the lines handled by W. J. Fiserl are health brushes, imported and domestic chocolate boxes, confectionery, cut-throat razors, fountain pens, hair oils and hair pomades, handkerchiefs, soap, toothbrushes, leather goods, perfumes and

W. J. Gilmore Co. Department Heads



Those who have charge of the business are, left to right, J. C. Lehmann, candies, of the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co., other than the Charles T. Fiserl, sundries, and Robert Thompson, cigars and smokers' supplies.

Three distinct departments of the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. are centralized on the spacious first floor of the new building. They are the candy department, headed by J. C. Lehmann, and the cigar and sundries department, headed by Charles T. Fiserl, and the cigar and sundries department, headed by Charles T. Fiserl.

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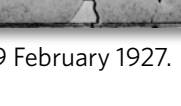
RADIATORS ARE MORE THAN JUST HEATERS

Moderately requires that the radiator be something more than just a heater. It should be a radiator that is efficient in style and materials that fit in with any scheme of interior decorating.

The cabinets are decorative as well as efficient. Still air coming from the cabinet does not go upward to seal walls and ceiling and the additional insulating glass obtained by utilizing the radiator for window heat or doors is desirable in any room.

THE COMPANY HAS BEEN INCORPORATED IN 1916. In 1916 the company was incorporated as the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. and Samuel Dwyer became the president and chairman of the board.

Appearance and practicality are given to the first floor of the new W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. building by the use of Mahan wall fixtures. All of the wall departments are equipped with display cases that lend beauty, practical service and style to the arrangement.



It was in this store at 623 Liberty ave., that the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. started its rise to one of the greatest wholesale drug houses in the country. The building, a four-story structure 60 feet wide and 60 feet long.

HALF WAY



When their Liberty ave. quarters became too small for their rapidly growing business, the W. J. Gilmore Co. took the building at 430 Seventh ave., later adding the buildings at 425 and 428 Seventh ave., where they remained for 37 years. The Gilmore Co. bought the property in 1912. The building will be razed.

When their Liberty ave. quarters became too small for their rapidly growing business, the W. J. Gilmore Co. took the building at 430 Seventh ave., later adding the buildings at 425 and 428 Seventh ave., where they remained for 37 years. The Gilmore Co. bought the property in 1912. The building will be razed.

PHOTOSTAT INSURES SPEED AND ACCURACY

Speed and accuracy in the filing of the building of the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. is insured by the use of the photostat. A special check room in the basement of the new building was provided for the department on the mezzanine floor.

The method eliminates any chance of error because of haste or careless transcription work and the order book is immediately returned to the handwriting of the original writer.

Largest Scale Company. The Toledo Scale Co. is the largest scale manufacturer of automatic scales in the world. After 25 years of successful working they have developed a new scale which will ensure and maintain speed, accuracy and durability. It is a new scale of 500 lbs. capacity with a range of 10 lbs. to 25 lbs. of steel.

Figure 12. Cover page to the special Gilmore Drug open house edition of the Pittsburgh Press, 19 February 1927.



Figure 13. A view of the recently-completed Gilmore Drug Company Building (upper right), looking southwest from the intersection of the Boulevard of the Allies and Grant Street. Wrapping the elevator penthouse are signs for “W.J. Gilmore Drug Co.” (Pittsburgh City Photographer Collection, Historic Pittsburgh, 1935).



Figure 14. Another early view of the new Gilmore Building (center), showing the absence of windows on the west facade (Dallin Aerial Survey Collection, Hagley Museum and Library, 9 September 1932).



Figure 15. Front facade of the new Equitable Gas Company headquarters, showing the original three-over-three , metal, double-hung sash windows and the company's new sign (*Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 23 June 1953).



Figure 16. From 199 to 2017, the building was home to the Art Institute of Pittsburgh (Allegheny Conference on Community Development, 2012).



Figure 17. W.J. Gilmore & Company opened in 1886 at 623 Liberty Avenue (*Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927).

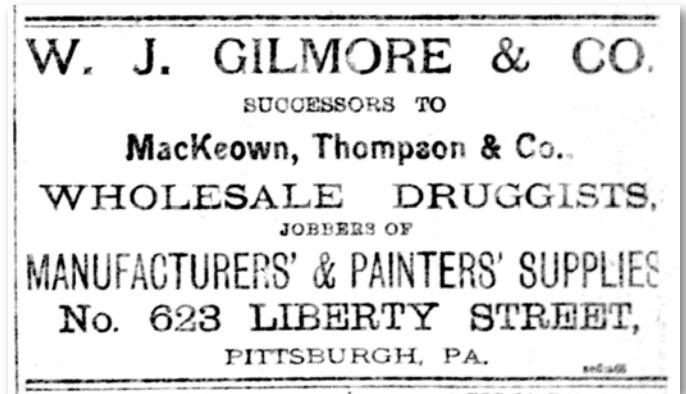


Figure 18. Advertisement for W.J. Gilmore & Company (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 1 October 1889).

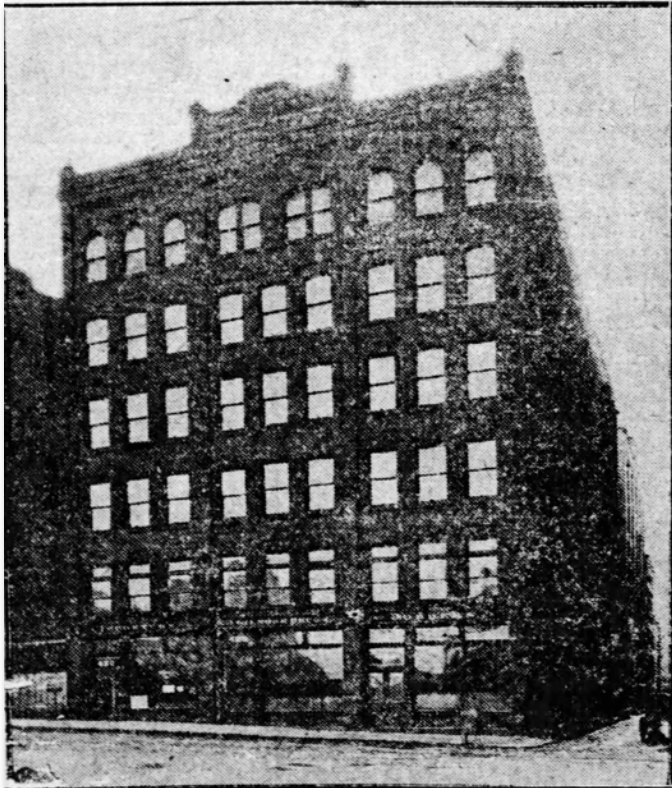


Figure 19. W.J. Gilmore & Company's second location, showing 430, 428 and 436 Seventh Avenue (*Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927).

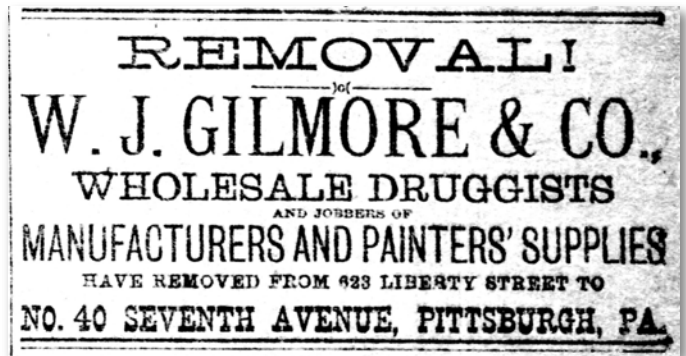


Figure 20. Advertisement for W.J. Gilmore & Company (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 14 March 1890).

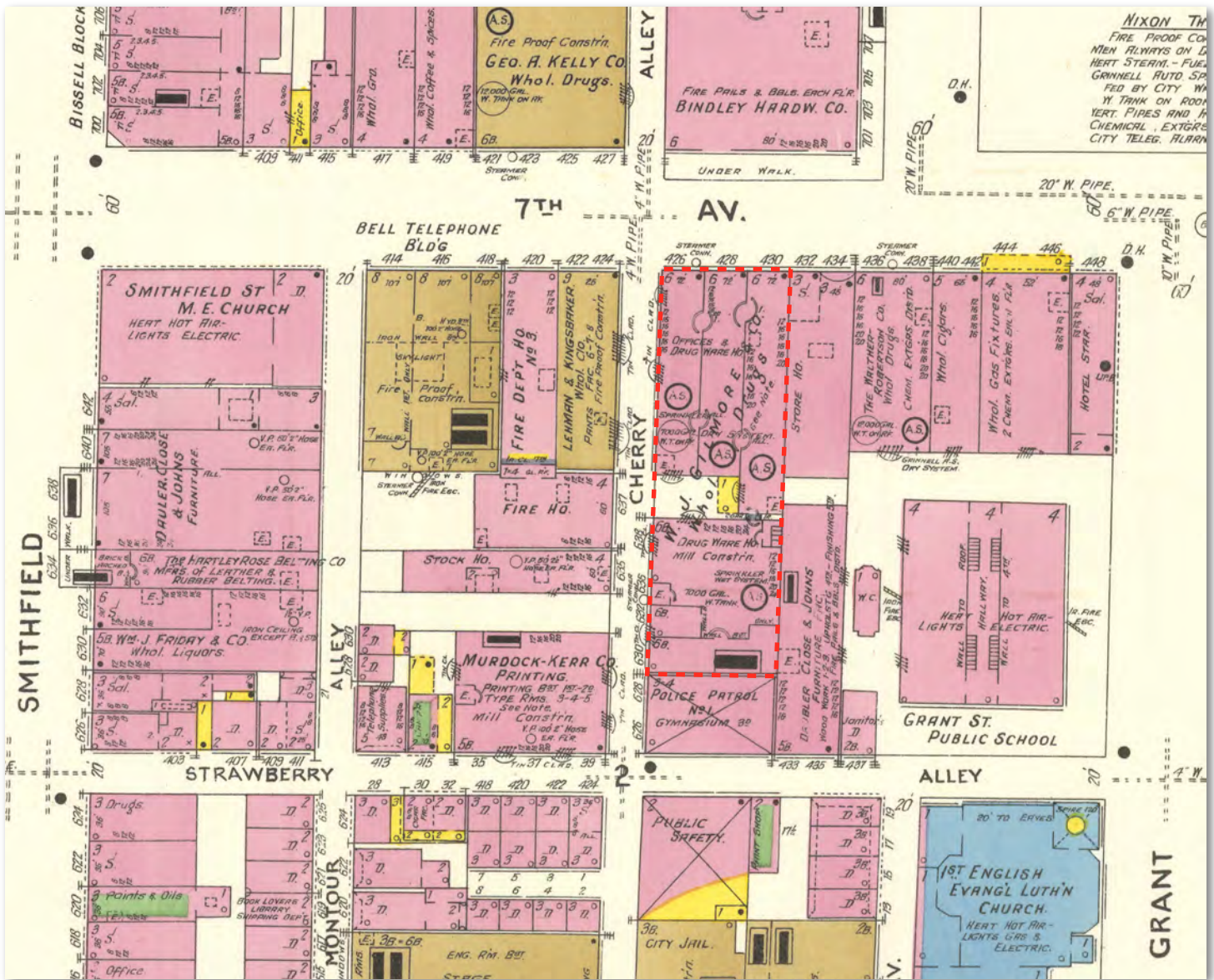


Figure 21. 1905-06 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, showing the W.J. Gilmore Drug Company buildings outlined in red.

W. J. Gilmore Drug Co.
IMPORTERS AND
JOBGING DRUGGISTS
426, 428 & 430 Seventh Avenue
630, 632, 634, 636 Cherry Alley
PITTSBURGH, PA.
Sole Distributors of SAMOSET
CHOCOLATES, EL VERSO
and SAN FELICE Cigars
Accounts of manufacturing
concerns solicited.

Figure 22. Advertisement for W.J. Gilmore Drug Company, reflecting the addresses shown in the map above (*Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 5 July 1915).

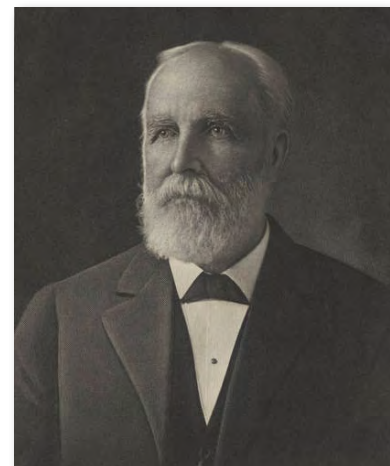


Figure 23. Alexander Dempster (*Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania Biography*).

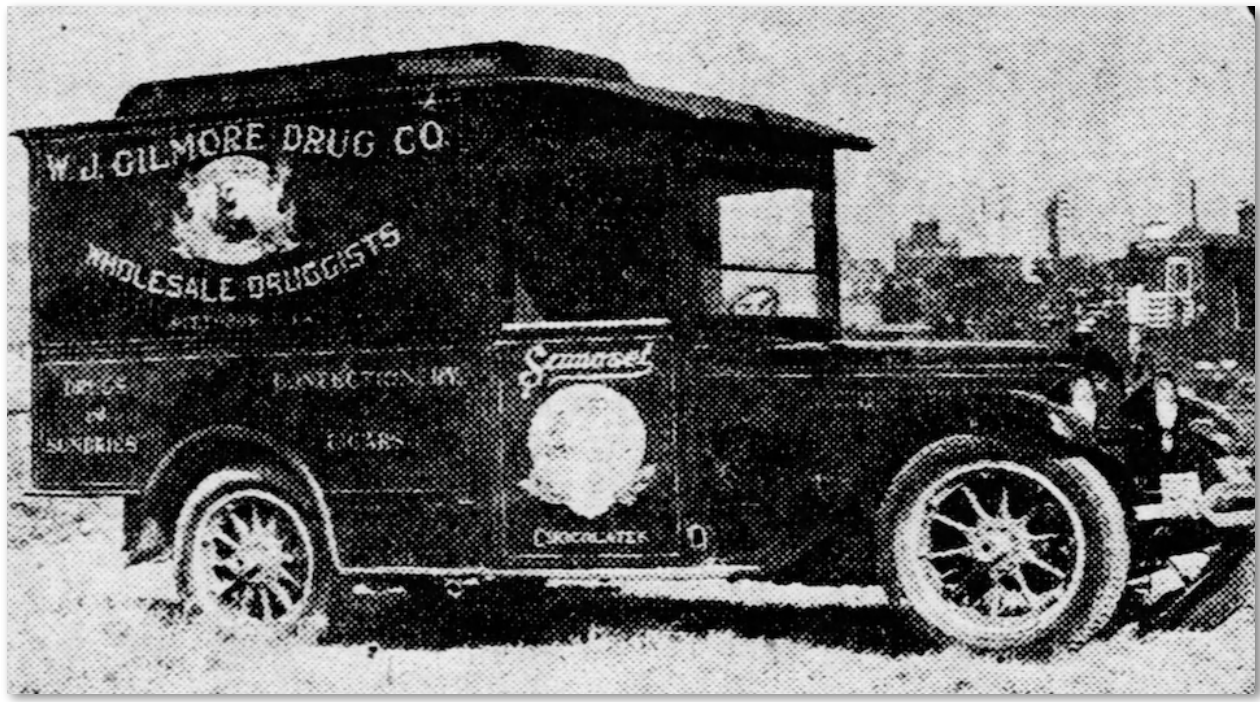


Figure 24. Part of the fleet of International Harvester trucks purchased by Gilmore Drug to promote the company's vast line of merchandise (*Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927).



Figure 25. Officials of the Gilmore Drug Employees' Association at their inaugural meeting in 1923 (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 11 November 1923).

HOLD PICNIC AT WILDWOOD



Employees of the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. held their annual outing at Wildwood yesterday. More than 700 persons attended and participated in an elaborate program of sports and games. Four special cars took the picnickers to the grove. The picture shows some of the girls leaving for an

afternoon's fun. They are, left to right—Kay Larson, Winifred Gavigan, Edith Farrell, Hilda Kalson, Dorothy Storch and Elizabeth Hitchman.

The picnic committee, headed by Samuel Dempster, treasurer of the company, and J. B. McCormick, president, included Clyde Williams, R. Thompson, C. Fierst, J. C. Lehneman and R. Williams.

Figure 26. Members of the Gilmore staff on their way to a company picnic in 1927 (*Pittsburgh Press*, 14 August 1927).

EMPLOYEES OF GILMORE DRUG PLAN ENTERTAINMENT

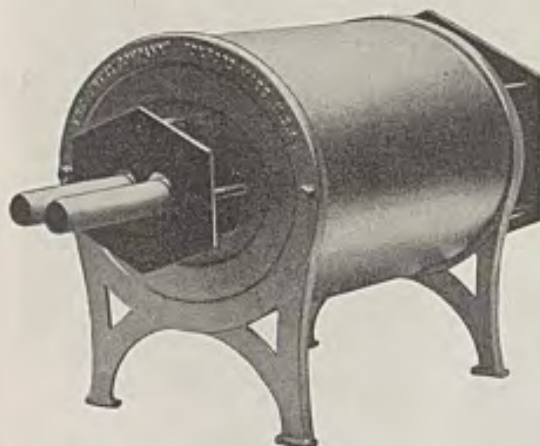


Employees of the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. will hold a banquet, dance and card party in the William Penn Hotel April 27. Some of the committee members in charge of the affair are pictured above as follows: Back row, left to right—S. J. Fox, Clara B. Faull, Mae Diet-

rich, Edna Bamford, E. V. Harris, Mary Flotzinger, E. Hensel and J. P. Crowl. Front row, left to right—E. H. Sweeney, Francis Grigg, Margaret Foster, Helen Joyce, Letitia Young, Madeline Barker and Clyde Williams.

Figure 27. Some of the committee members responsible for planning a company banquet at the William Penn Hotel in 1928 (*Pittsburgh Press*, 18 April 1928).

New Dual Tube Furnace



The SENTRY DUAL TUBE HIGH TEMPERATURE FURNACE, companion to the popular Model V single tube furnace, is now ready for delivery.

The same features of sturdiness and dependability, the same long-life refractories and insulating materials, the same heating elements are embodied in the new Dual Tube Model.

Write for complete information and prices.

W. J. GILMORE DRUG CO.
Laboratory Apparatus Division
422 Blvd. of the Allies
Pittsburgh, Pa.

METALLURGICAL MOUNTINGS

In Transparent

Bakelite

Already the new Bakelite Press is in use in over two hundred and fifty laboratories, including leading universities and industrials.

Bakelite has taken its place as the ideal mounting medium for small specimens, including those subjected to micro examination to their extreme edges.



Bakelite mountings provide absolute adherence to specimen; freedom from relief polish, margins or crevices; uniform, convenient shape; reagent resistant; speed and economical operation; choice of transparent or several colors or black.

The New Bakelite Press is accurately machined, sturdily built, provided with one inch or one and one quarter inch mould and heater for 110 volts.

Complete literature on request.

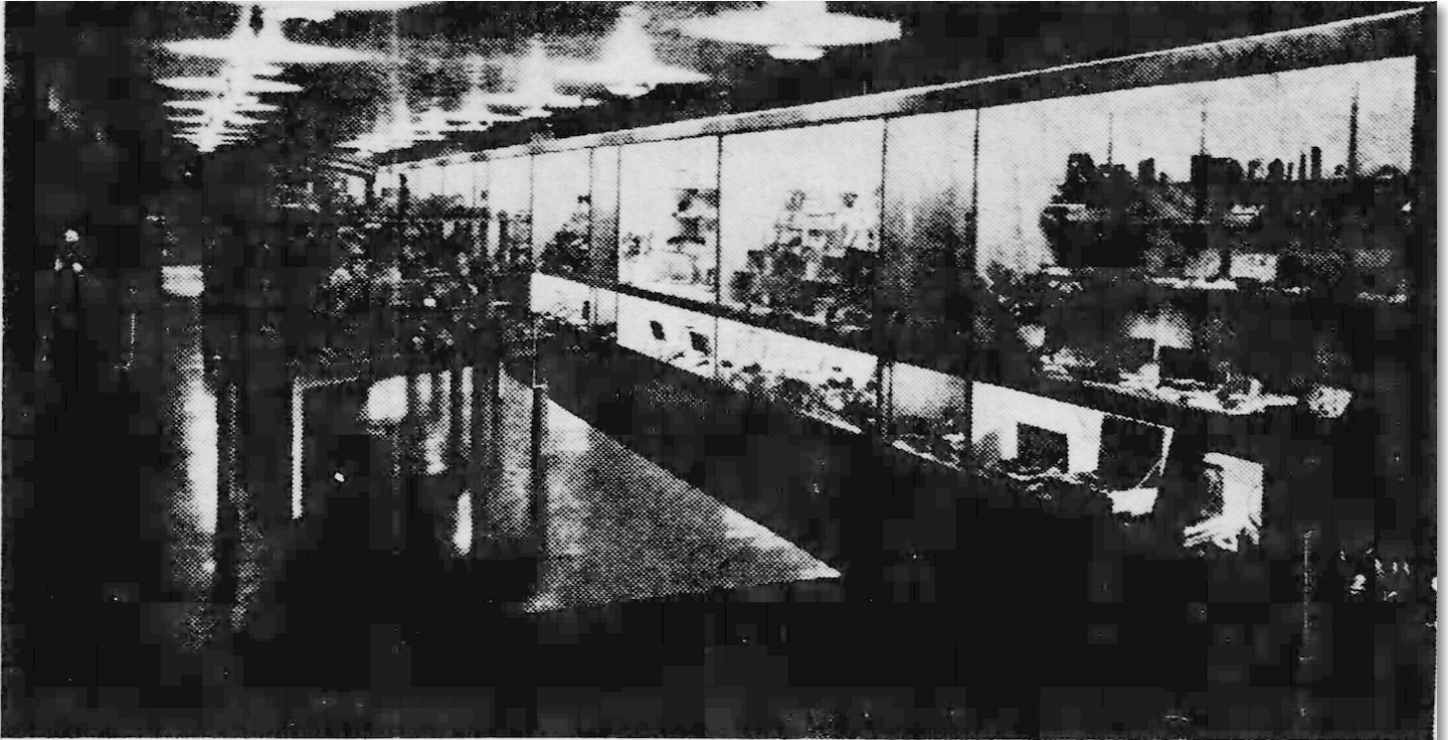


W. J. GILMORE DRUG COMPANY

Laboratory Apparatus Division

Chemical, Metallurgical Laboratory Equipment
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Figure 28 (left) and 29 (right), showing some of the products manufactured by Gilmore's Laboratory Apparatus Division. (*Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* volume 9, (15 April 1937 and 15 November 1937, respectively).



Here is a view of the showrooms of the W. J. Gilmore Drug Co., 422 Blvd. of the Allies, which have been remodeled for toiletries and cosmetics and equipped with modern display fixtures. One side of the balcony is shown above. J. L. Freeman, president of the firm, said the displays would be maintained permanently.

Figure 30. Remodeled Gilmore Drug showrooms (*Pittsburgh Press*, 26 September 1941).

Scratch

the surface of a corporation



and you find **A GROUP OF SPECIALISTS**

DIVISIONS

Paul and Beekman Division Philadelphia, Pa.
Metal Stampings, Complete and Sub-Assemblies
C. J. Tagliabue Division Brooklyn, N.Y.
Temperature and Pressure Recording and
Controlling Instruments
Coldwell-Phila. Lawn Mower Div. Newburgh, N.Y.
Hand and Power Lawn Mowers
Portable Products Division Pittsburgh, Pa.
Household Electrical Appliances
Portable Safety Division Pittsburgh, Pa.
Industrial Safety Belts, Hats and Caps

SUBSIDIARIES

The American Pad & Textile Co. Greenfield, Ohio
Sports Apparel, Marine Life-Save Equipment,
Sleeping Bags
General Television and Radio Corp. Chicago, Illinois
Electric and Battery Type Radios, Phonographs
Great Western Fuse Company Pittsburgh, Pa.
Industrial Lag Fuses, Cartridge Fuses

The Portable Products Corporation comprises eight successful divisions and subsidiaries, each manned and managed by highly-skilled specialists. Closely integrated, these units contribute the experience of their own operations for the increased efficiency of the entire group. Each unit benefits from the research, productive capacity, purchasing power and distribution facilities of the group as a whole. Result is that the corporation, and each branch of it, gives its customers the utmost in value in every transaction.

Watch for the Portable symbol. You'll find it frequently in the future . . . on products designed for American industry and for American living.



PORTABLE PRODUCTS CORPORATION

420 Boulevard of the Allies

Pittsburgh 19, Pa.

Figure 31. An Advertisement for Portable Products Corporation explaining their various divisions, subdivisions and approach to work (*The Bulletin Index*, 26 April 1947, 39).

Headquarters:

PENNSYLVANIA

We are proud of Pennsylvania's past . . . and we believe in Pennsylvania's future. That's why, although our manufacturing operations extend from New York to Illinois, our headquarters are here—and that's why we operate two plants in our home state.

The various lines of Portable products are expanding constantly. Watch for these products in the stores, and at work in many industries.



PORTABLE PRODUCTS CORP.
420 Boulevard of the Allies • Pittsburgh, Pa.

Manufacturers of
LAWN MOWERS • RADIOS • SPORTS EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING
FUSES • INDUSTRIAL INSTRUMENTS • METAL STAMPINGS



Figure 32. Another advertisement for Portable Products Corporation (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 15 October 1947).

Figure 33A. One of one hundred women making radios for Portable Products (*Pittsburgh Press*, 6 March 1947).

Figure 33B. Electric irons made in Pittsburgh by Portable Products were available at Gimbel's (*Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 22 July 1947).

Store Hours 9:30 to 5:30. General Shopping GR 3400. All Other Calls AT 4400

Gimbels Tremendous Purchase of an Entire Stock Brings You a

Fully Automatic Iron

For a Down-Right Flabbergasting

2.95

Made by the Portable Products Corporation right here in Pittsburgh—this fully automatic, fully guaranteed electric iron is sale-priced tomorrow at Gimbel's. We snapped up the entire stock on hand so that we could slash the price way, way down to 2.95. Just look at its many wonderful features. The accurate temperature control indicator is marked for specific fabrics—rayon, silk, wool, cotton and linen. And you get a positive guarantee against defects in workmanship and materials for one year! We're going to be swamped with orders—if you can't get in, mail Box 1016 or phone GRant 3400 right away for prompt delivery.

Gimbels Famous Housewares, Seventh Floor



- Thermostatically Controlled
- Fabric Indicator
- 800 Watts
- Streamlined, Highly Polished Design
- Smooth-Gliding Sole Plate
- Popular 5-LB. Weight
- 5-Foot Detachable Cord

Aviation News

McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, Inc. FEBRUARY 4, 1946



Roadable Plane: Two views of the new two-place roadable plane with which Southern Aircraft is experimenting at Garland, Texas, shows the 125 hp. land-air craft in use as a surface motor car, with its flight surfaces detached, and in flight as an airplane. The builder has no plans for quantity production of the plane at this time. (Story on Page 9)

At Least 30 Jet Planes, Engines Under Development
Range from mighty bombers to tiny, supersonic guided missiles.....Page 7

15 Leading Industrialists Form N. Y. Shuttle Service
Have extensive operation mapped; no government assistance will be sought.....Page 35

Figure 34. Portable Products Corporation's "Roadable" flying car was featured on the cover of *Aviation News*, 4 February 1946.

Ted Hall's original idea in making an automobile to an airplane was to develop a design that paratroops and commandos could use.

Drive Right Up

With its 30-foot wing and its tail removed, the flying auto looks pretty much like other cars on a highway. Its chassis is conventional.

FLYING automobile with a 130-hp. Franklin engine cruises at 110 m.p.h. in the air and travels 60 m.p.h. on the road. Those speeds were set by the first model of a design by Ted Hall, aviation engineer, Portable Products Corp., Garland, Tex., is considering the possibilities of producing it.

The "roadable" plane has detachable propeller, wing, booms, and tail. The forward end of the engine crankshaft turns the prop, while a shaft extends aft from the engine into a conventional automobile transmission and differential. Power goes both to propeller and rear wheels for the take-off.

Hall's three-wheel, "roadable" airplane seats only two, but has ample luggage space in the rear. Rear wheels are on shock struts.

POPULAR SCIENCE 92 SCIENCE

Figure 35. It was also featured in *Popular Science* in April 1946.



Figure 36. Albert W. Conover, first president of the newly-independent Equitable Gas Company (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 3 March 1950)



Figure 37. Top section of the Weather Flame just before installation (*Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, 15 December 1955)



Figure 38. Gulf and Equitable synchronize their weather signals (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 18 September 1956).



Figure 39. The Weather Flame atop the Equitable Gas Building, as viewed from across the Monongahela River in 1967 (center). In the background can be seen the Gulf Building, with its pyramidal top (Historic Pittsburgh).

Handy Flame

forecasts Pittsburgh's
WEATHER!

**GIANT FLAME ON TOP OF
EQUITABLE GAS COMPANY BUILDING
FORECASTS THE WEATHER 24 HOURS
A DAY BY CHANGING COLOR**

**A flame of RED—FAIR weather's ahead
A steady BLUE flame—means coming RAIN
When FLASHING BLUE—SNOW is due**

This huge twenty-one foot flame will tell you at a glance what to expect from the weather. Weather Bureau reports will be checked throughout the day and night, seven days a week. The men who are *always* on duty at Equitable to serve you will change the color to indicate the coming weather.

Mounted on a twenty-foot tower on the roof of the Equitable Gas Company building, at 420 Boulevard of the Allies, the big weather flame is visible from points in Downtown Pittsburgh, Mt. Washington, North Side, South Side and other surrounding communities.

Remember, Red for Fair Weather, Blue for Rain, and Flashing Blue for Snow. Look for Handy Flame's weather forecast and be prepared for Ol' Man Weather!

**ANOTHER COMMUNITY SERVICE BY THE
FRIENDLY PEOPLE WITH THE LOW GAS RATES**

EQUITABLE Gas COMPANY
420 BOULEVARD OF THE ALLIES • PITTSBURGH



Figure 40. A full-page advertisement touting Equitable's new weather signal from the day after its installation (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 13 March 1956).



Figure 41. Donald B. Beecher became president of Equitable Gas Company in 1957 (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 28 January 1952)

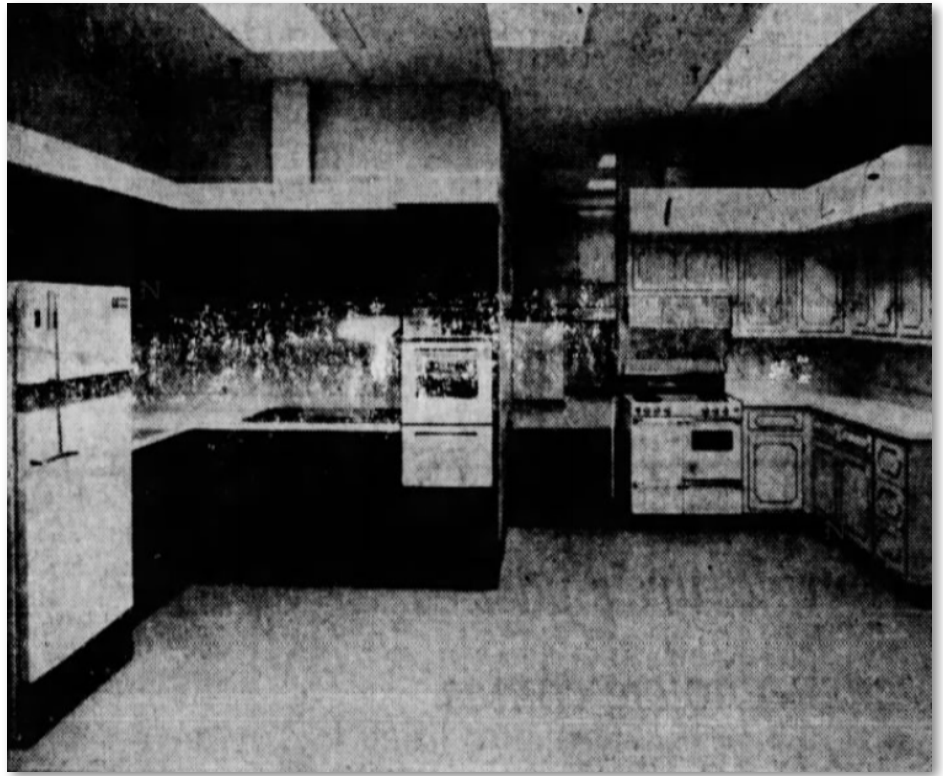


Figure 42. Two of the model kitchens in the renovated basement of Equitable Gas (*Pittsburgh Press*, 23 April 1963).

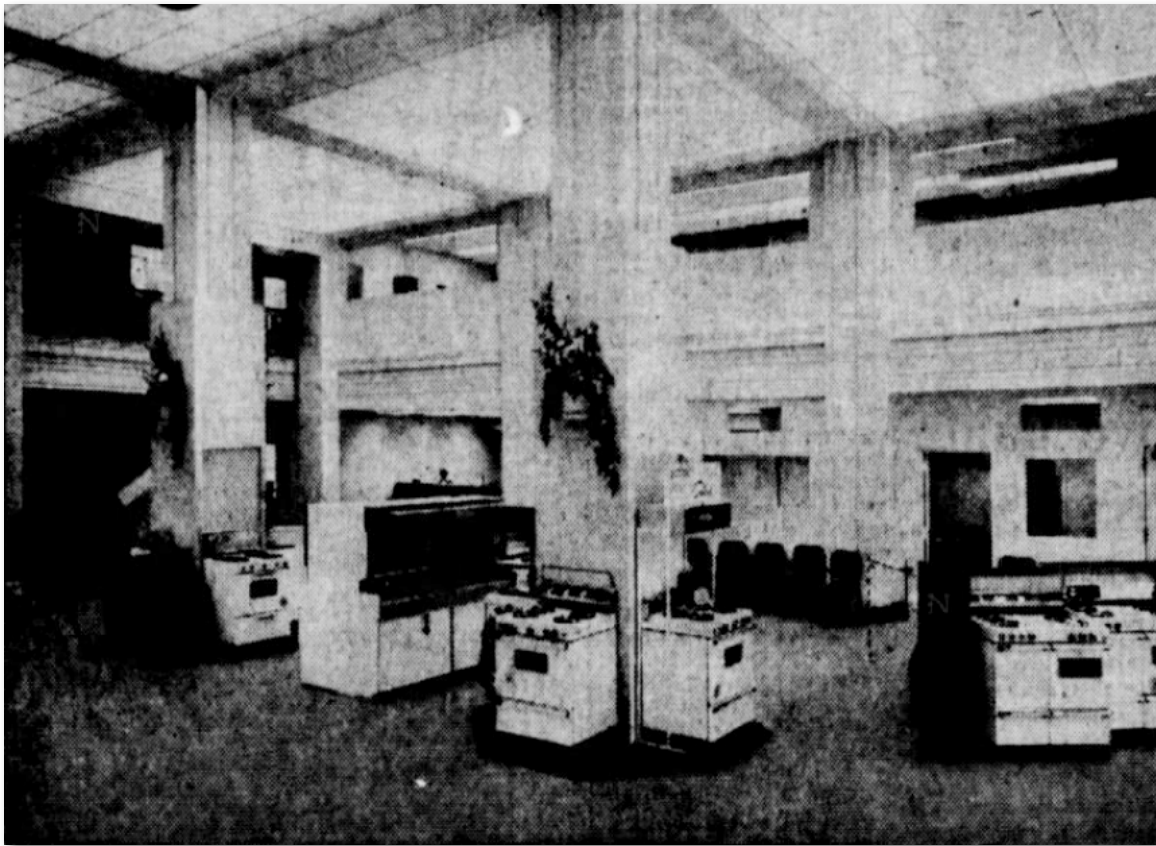


Figure 43. The new 5,000-square foot appliance showroom on the first floor of Equitable Gas (*Pittsburgh Press*, 23 April 1963).



Figure 44. Front facade of Equitable Gas during their diamond-anniversary year, showing how the company utilized the front showcase windows for displays and merchandising (Teenie Harris, Carnegie Museum of Art, August 1963).



Figure 45. Vintage postcard of the Union Arcade (later, Union Trust Building).

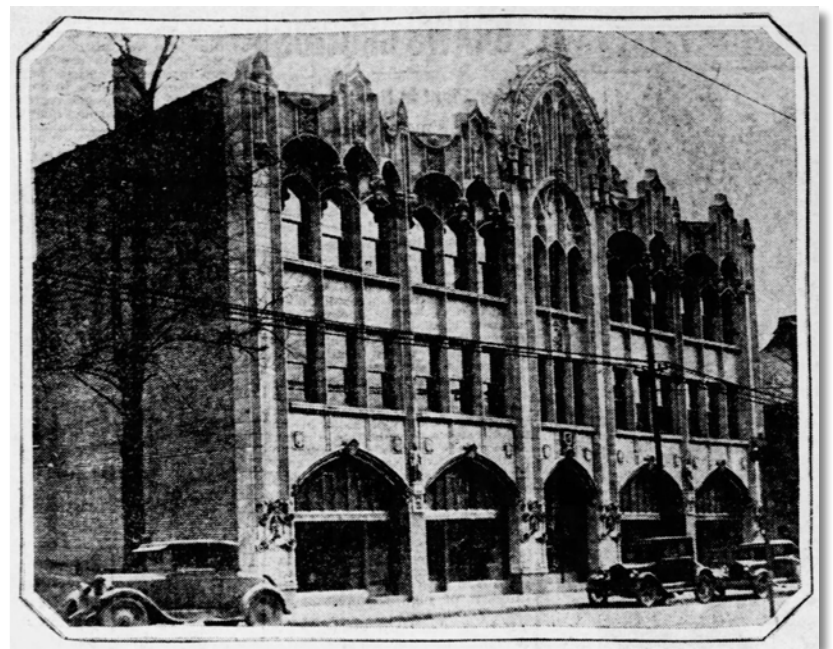


Figure 46. The Croatian Fraternal Union in 1929, showing the full extent of its original projecting cornice (*Pittsburgh Press*, 21 January 1929).



Figure 48 (inset, at left). Mid-1960s renovations added two floors to the McCann Building and covered all vestiges of its Commercial Gothic past (Pittsburgh Press, 14 April 1968).



Figure 47. The McCann Building as it appeared in 1937 from Market Square, with the Wabash Terminal partially visible behind it (Historic Pittsburgh).



Figure 48. The Salvation Army Building, showing its massive Gothic Revival front entry arches (National Register of Historic Places).

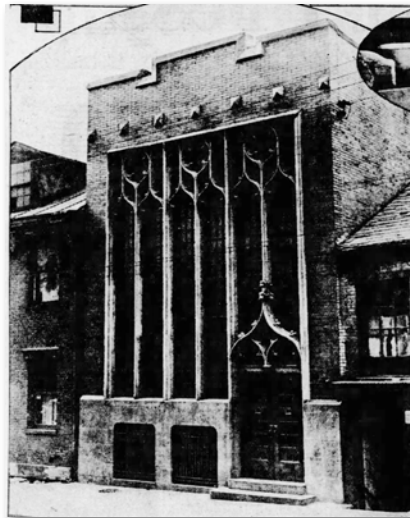


Figure 49. Frederick Osterling's office and studio at 228 Isabella Street (Pittsburgh Press, 8 August 1934).



Figure 50. Small Commercial Gothic facades at 6012-14 and 6018 Penn Avenue (Google Street View).

Pittsburgh Firms Built Fine Gilmore Drug Home

STRUCTURE A LOCAL PRODUCT

Builders Aimed to Make Plant a Purely Pittsburgh Institution

Pittsburgh products predominate in the structure and equipment of the new W. J. Gilmore Drug Co. building. Local firms were given the preference in an effort to keep the house purely a Pittsburgh institution.

All of the steel was fabricated in a Pittsburgh plant and the brick was made and sold here. Joseph F. Kuntz, Pittsburgh architect, designed the structure and the W. T. Grange Construction Co., prominently identified with building operations in the Pittsburgh district for many years, built it.

A partial list of the companies identified with the erection and furnishing of the new building follows:

Tuttle & Bailey Manufacturing Co.; Pittsburgh Supply Co.; Toledo Scale Co.; Pittsburgh Incinerator Co.; W. N. Sauer Co.; Wilson Cabinet Co.; National Radiator Co.; Sanitary Products Co.; W. T. Grange Construction Co.; Kittanning Brick Co.; R. W. Hunt Co.; Pittsburgh Builders' Specialty Co.; W. M. Hill Lumber Co.; United States Marble Co.; Bailey Farrell Manufacturing Co.; W. P. Nelson Co.; Garland Manufacturing Co.; Richard Alberts; Carter Electric Co.; Knox, Strauss & Bragdon; W. F. McLean Manufacturing Co.; Champion Sales Co.; Detroit Graphite Co.; Bartley O'Neill Co.; George V. Hamilton Co.; Tichinson Manufacturing Co.; McNutty Bros.; R. Munroe & Co., and the McClintic Marshall Co.

Figure 51. A list of some of the many Pittsburgh enterprises that contributed to construction of the Gilmore Drug headquarters (*Pittsburgh Press*, 19 February 1927).



Figure 52. Architect Joseph Franklin Kuntz (Frank C. Harper, Pittsburgh of Today).



Figure 53. By 1924, Joseph Kuntz had become the owner and principal of the W.G. Wilkins Company (Advertisement from the Pittsburgh City Directory, 1924).



Figure 54. The Lawrence Paint Building by Joseph Kuntz can be seen in the foreground of this undated post card of Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle.



Figure 55. The Commercial Building (later the Graphic Arts Building), designed by Joseph Kuntz, as it appeared in 1980 (Lu Donnelly, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, "Graphic Arts Building," Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form, 11 March 1980).



Figure 56. The Maul Building on East Carson Street (Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation).



Figure 57. The Maul Building, showing a terra cotta detail (Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation).



Figure 58. The Logan Armory prior to its demolition (Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh).



Figure 59. The Frick & Lindsay Building prior to being converted into the Andy Warhol Museum (photo credit: unknown).



Figure 60. The Captain Alfred E. Hunt Armory in 1922 (Indiana University Bloomington).



Figure 61. Joseph Kuntz designed to expansion of the Philadelphia Company headquarters (1925). Twenty-five years later, Equitable Gas would spin off and move into what was then 420 Boulevard of the Allies. Today, this is the Hotel Monaco (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 25 June 1925)



WHEN your client has something to sell, you design his building for prominence, attractiveness and an outward indication of *quality*.

Atlantic Terra Cotta in white, cream, ivory or polychrome is particularly appropriate for Stores, Theatres and Filling Stations.

The Filling Station illustrated is known as Type 5, designed by Joseph F. Kuntz, and design copyrighted by The Atlantic Refining Company. Metzger, Fisher & White, Builders. By using the original moulds a chain of similar stations can be erected with economy.

“Questions Answered” on request



Atlantic Terra Cotta Company
350 Madison Avenue, New York

Southern Branch
Atlanta Terra Cotta Company
Atlanta, Georgia

*Largest Manufacturers of Architectural
Terra Cotta in the World*

Figure 62. One of hundreds of gasoline service stations designed by Joseph Kuntz (Boston Architectural Club, *Yearbook*, 1922), 126.

Figure XX. (Boston Architectural Club, *Yearbook*, 1922), 126.



Figure 63. The Gilmore Drug Company Building on the south side of the Boulevard of the Allies, as it appeared in 1937 (Pittsburgh City Photographer Collection, Historic Pittsburgh).



Figure 63. The landmark, as it appears today from the same view.

Some additional historic images that weren't referenced in the nomination text. . .



Figure 64. As part of its marketing efforts from around the turn of the last century, Gilmore Drug commissioned the creation of a deck of playing cards illustrated with various Pittsburgh landmarks. Shown here (from left to right) are the Soldiers' Monument, the Bank of Pittsburgh, a scene on Smithfield Street, the Carnegie Building and the Frick Building. The Heinz History Center has a deck in their collections (*Pittsburgh Press*, 1 November 1953).



Figures 65 and 66. Gilmore Drug appears to have developed its own products that it sold under the brand name "The Gilco Line." Shown here are Gilco turmeric and saffron containers previously offered on eBay, which contain instructions on the reverse for using the products medicinally. Further research is necessary to better understand these offerings, especially since an advertisement in *The Proceedings of the 41st Annual Meeting of the Maryland Pharmaceutical Association* from 1923 offers potentially conflicting information. It contains a full-page advertisement for The Henry B. Gilpin Company, which states that they are "manufacturers of 'The Gilco Line'."