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A STUDY OF POSTWAR ARCHITECTURE IN CENTER CITY, PHILADELPHIA

Jeffrey L. Baumel

A THESIS

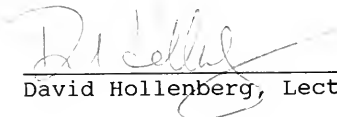
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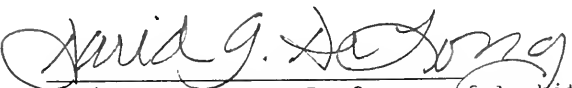
MASTER OF SCIENCE

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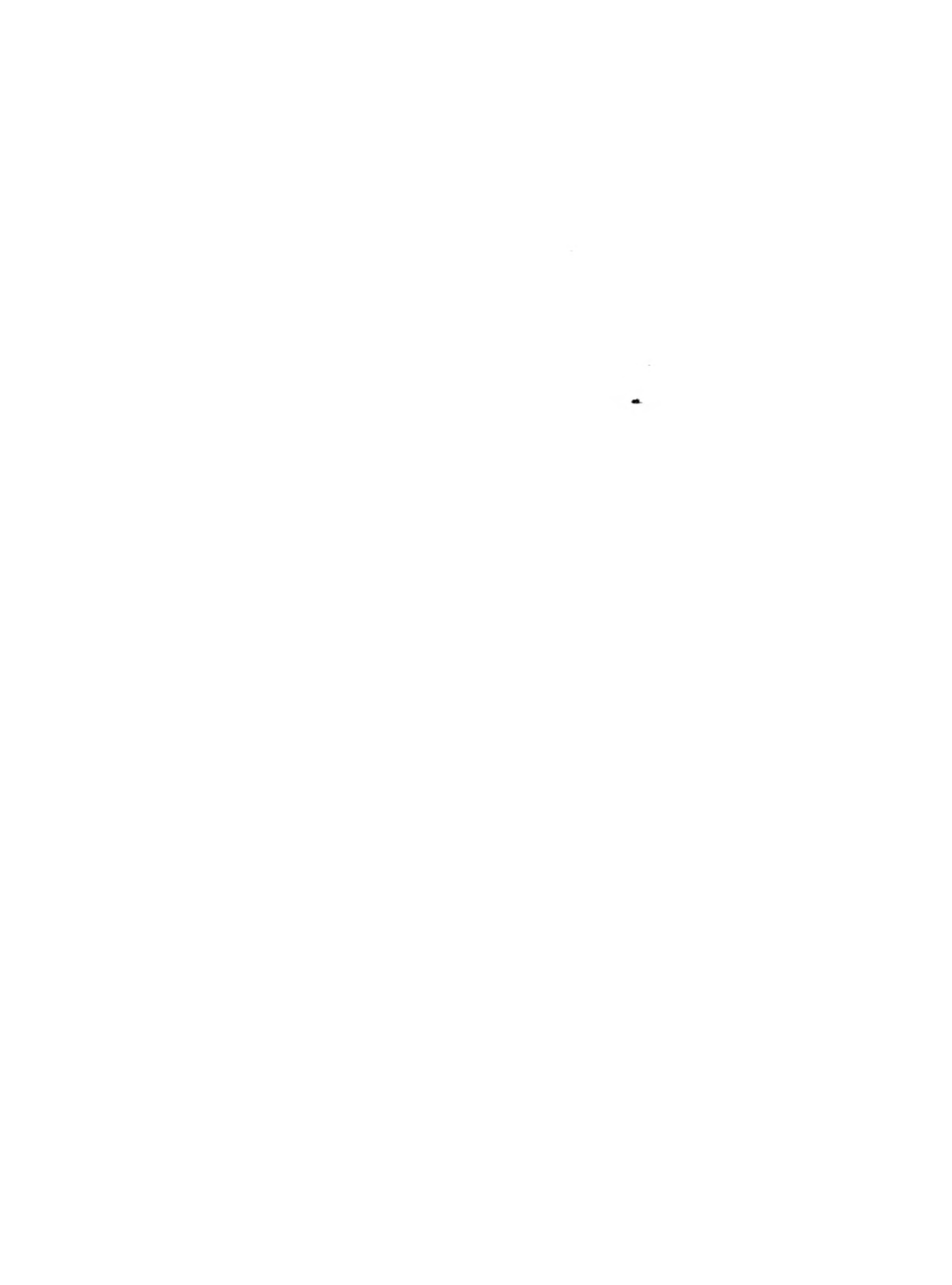
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## Introduction: Issues of Postwar Preservation and the Thesis Study Area

This thesis is a study of the post-World War II architectural fabric of Center City, the densely built and populated commercial center of Philadelphia. My intention is to examine a portion of the Postwar urban built environment and to provide an increased understanding and the means to assess this layer of cultural and historic architectural significance. This examination has resulted in the documentation and analysis required for a set of recommendations geared towards historic preservation. In addition, this study seeks to encourage a proactive response to the preservation of the Postwar built environment. Since the majority of the study area buildings retain a rather high level of architectural integrity in terms of original exterior design fabric, the goal of historic preservation is all the more compelling and indeed possible.

Such a study necessarily encompasses a host of important issues that emerge in the serious consideration of urban vernacular Postwar buildings. There is the primary concern for studying a historical period which many members of the preservation community may regard as being questionable in terms of age value. In addition, while many of the buildings in the study area are good but not outstanding works of Postwar architecture, as components of the built environment of Center City they embody a layer of significance and provide visual interest that augments and enhances larger qualities of this urban center. Also, many of the buildings in the study area are in fact extensive renovations executed in the Postwar era, and this phenomenon



contributes an additional layer of complexity.

Underlying these immediate concerns are fundamental issues regarding "the recent past": the period of the past fifty years.<sup>1</sup> As Richard Longstreth explains, the public and many preservationists regard commercial and residential vernacular buildings of the 1940's and 1950's as part of the current world, and as such, regardless of their architectural quality, they are inadequately assessed for their historic architectural value. Therefore, the ability to possess the objective perspective required in assessing the significance of vernacular Postwar buildings cannot be attained: the qualities of these rather anonymous buildings cannot be understood or appreciated. Relying upon the work of David Lowenthal, Longstreth writes of the need for the passage of time to occur, and the acquisition of a sense of detachment, in order to adequately determine the significance of the Postwar built environment.<sup>2</sup>

Longstreth explains that, unlike other disciplines concerned with history, historic preservation has "a self-conscious nervousness about recent occurrences." This characteristic of the preservation movement is compounded by the prejudice against preserving all but the "exceptional monument"; an attitude articulated by some academicians and preservationists, although mainstream preservation activity does address the need to preserve the vernacular built environment.<sup>3</sup> In any case, by exclusively focussing on buildings of an older vintage there is the danger of destroying a fundamental tenet of historic preservation: the maintenance of historic continuity. By excluding the mid-twentieth century from serious consideration in historic



preservation, an "artificial gap" is formed between the present and the more remote past; according to Longstreth, "the greater the gap, the less of a sense of continuity."<sup>4</sup> in spite of such problems and obstacles, a number of new developments have emerged in regard to an enhanced understanding and appreciation of Postwar architecture. Among these, Longstreth has observed "a maturing of architectural history," and on a more empirical level, a desire over the past twenty years to gain an understanding of "things experienced routinely," specifically vernacular architecture.<sup>5</sup> As a result of these developments, there is the realization that fifty years does indeed constitute a historic period for buildings of the 1940's and 1950's, and that vernacular buildings, in addition to acknowledged outstanding works of Postwar architecture, can be the subject of both historical analysis and the efforts of preservationists.

Such activities as preservation conferences illustrate the growing interest in Postwar architecture and have become a prime means of assessing it in a new light. Beginning in the late 1980's, several domestic and international conferences have directly addressed the issue of preserving Postwar architecture, most notably the 1989 Association for Preservation Technology (APT) conference in Chicago, and the 1990 conference of the International Working Party for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites, and Neighborhoods of the Modern Movement (DoCoMoMo) that transpired in 1990 in Eindhoven, Netherlands.<sup>6</sup>

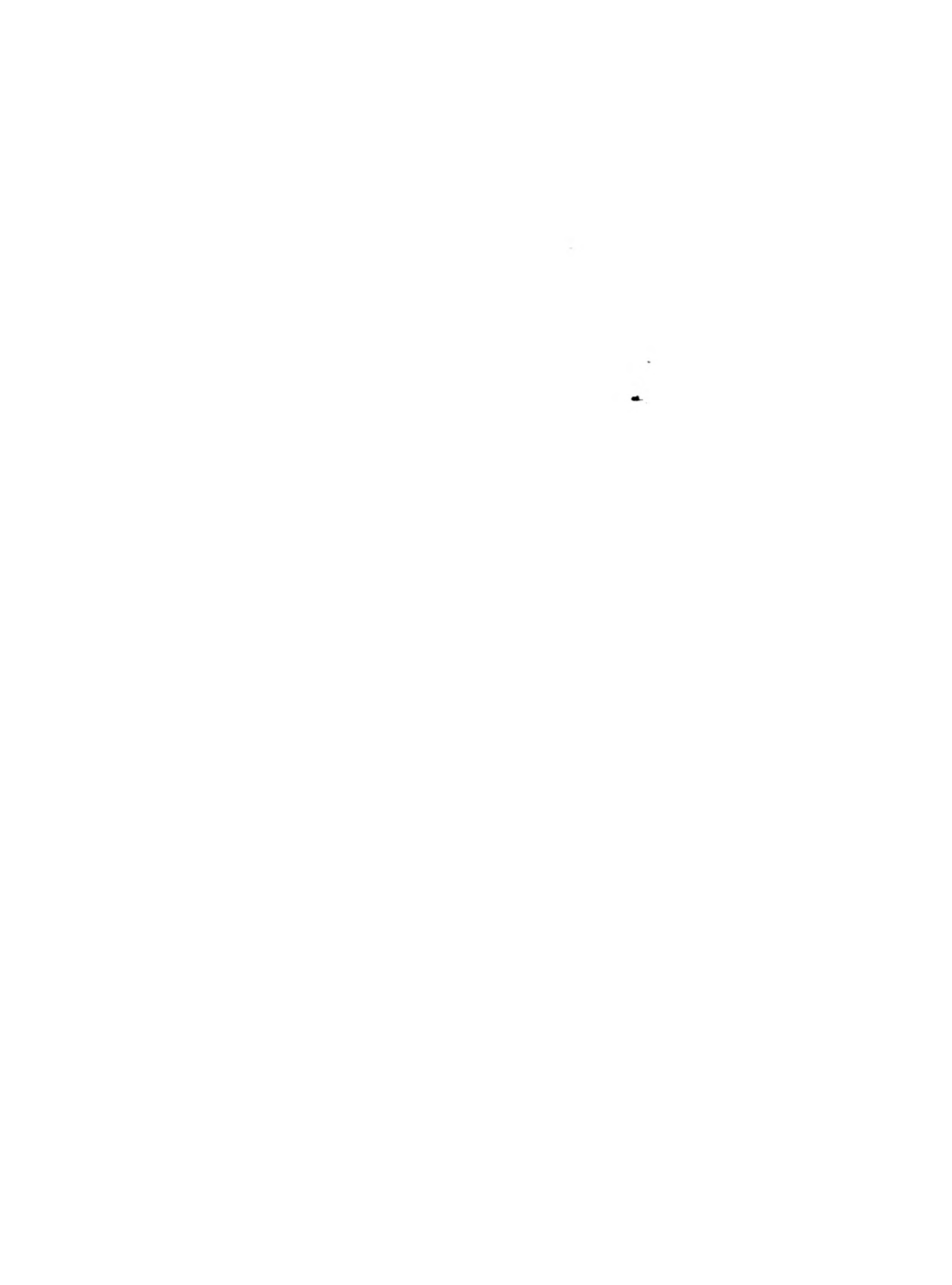
The 1989 APT conference focussed on issues of preservation linked to the fact that the considerable number of vernacular Postwar buildings that exist in the



contemporary American built environment have not been examined and documented, and have been rapidly vanishing. In fact, this interest in issues of Postwar preservation was first expressed at the association's 1987 conference in Canada.<sup>7</sup> The papers delivered at the 1989 conference were presented as part of a thematic track called "Preserving What's New." They included Richard Longstreth's essay, "The Significance of the Recent Past," in an attempt to arrive at a consistent preservation policy regarding the Postwar period and to understand the nature of historical research pertaining to the mid-twentieth century. The topics dealing primarily with preservation of technology included the restoration of neon signs and building curtain walls, and a particular type of mass-produced dwelling, the Lustron House.<sup>8</sup>

In Europe, where the International Style enjoyed considerable popularity during the 1930's, the 1990 DoCoMoMo conference sought to address issues pertaining to the preservation of modern architecture.<sup>9</sup> DoCoMoMo emerged from a research project at Eindhoven University that focussed on the technical problems of restoring the Zonnestraal Sanatorium designed by Johannes Duiker and built in 1926-1931 near Hilversum, Netherlands.

Presented at the conference were several widely differing arguments directed at preserving modern buildings. A notion presented by Martin Pawley, a British delegate, dismissed the idea of preserving modern buildings, based on the view of orthodox Functionalists of the 1920's and 1930's that modern buildings were conceived as impermanent instruments, whose value would disappear once the original





function of the building had left the structure. Hence to preserve such buildings was to completely undermine their *raison d'être*. This credo was balanced by the argument that there existed a camp of Modernists who regarded modern buildings as "social monuments."<sup>10</sup>

As in the case of the APT conference, DoCoMoMo addressed issues of building conservation and the preservation of building technology in regard to particular modern buildings. Notable examples included Berthold Lubetkin's Finsbury Health Centre constructed in 1938 in London and the Bauhaus, designed by Walter Gropius and Hannes Meyer, and built in Dessau in 1925-1926.<sup>11</sup> The issue of total authenticity in the restoration of modern buildings also emerged at DoCoMoMo, in relation to the replacement of corroded ungalvanized steel casement windows with modern equivalents containing powder coating protection: such technology was not available to architects in the 1920's and 1930's.<sup>12</sup>

As these conferences and preservationists such as Richard Longstreth indicate, a study oriented towards historic preservation must approach the Postwar period carefully. Obstacles exist both at the level of the professional preservation community and in the very nature of the buildings themselves. Issues regarding documentation, analysis, restoration, and conservation, regardless of the historic period of architecture and despite the fact that the Postwar period belongs to the "recent past," are multi-faceted and complex.

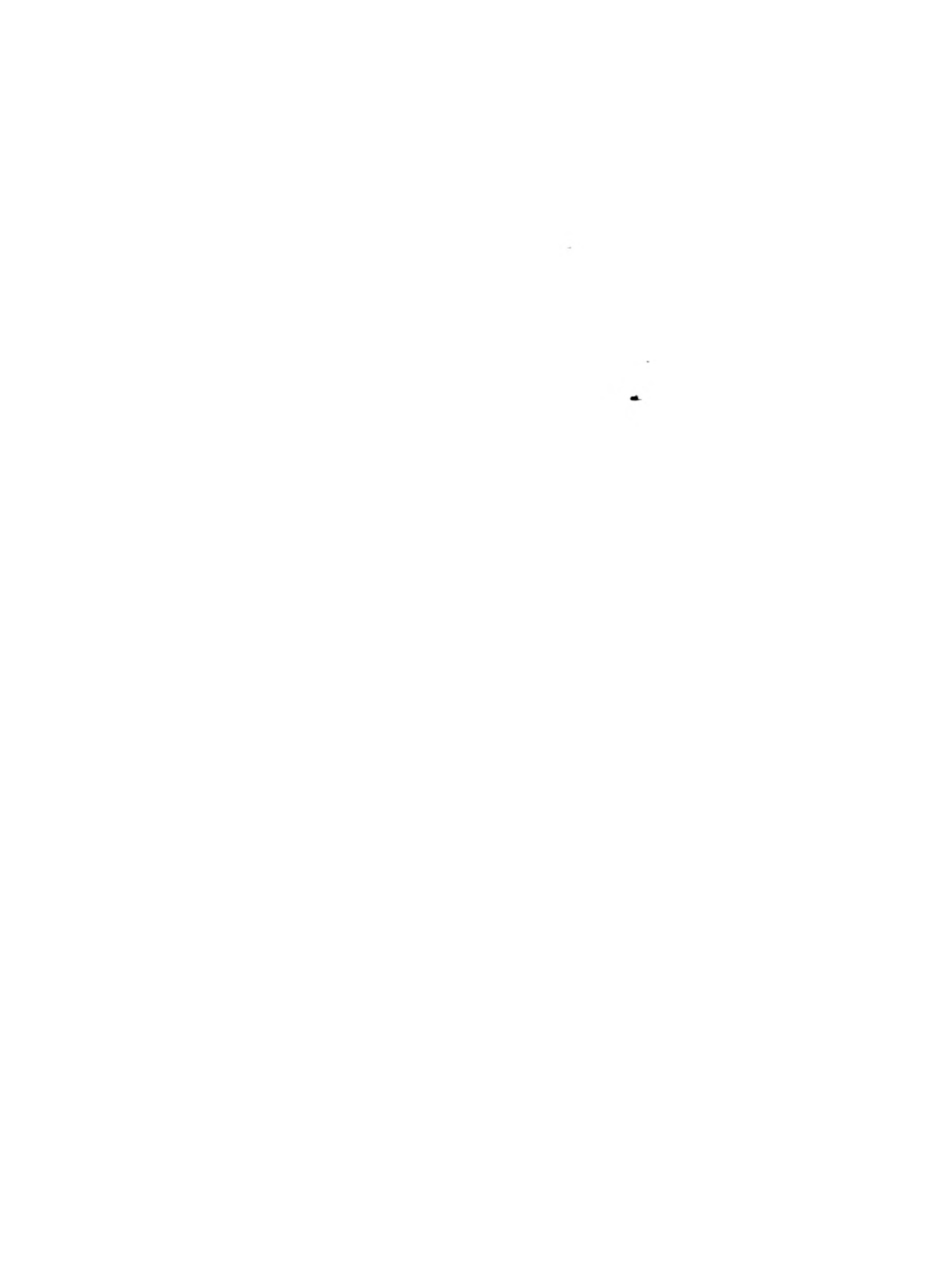
In determining the area of Center City to be examined in this thesis study, the



principal objective was to select a pair of major streets that possessed a substantial number of Postwar period buildings. The streets chosen, Chestnut and Sansom, are lined with Postwar period institutional, commercial, and residential buildings that exist as a layer of architectural design fabric among buildings of other historical periods, beginning with the early nineteenth century. However, the Postwar built environment of Chestnut and Sansom Streets does not exist along the entire length of these arteries, and consequently the east and west boundaries of the study area were established at 10th and 24th Streets, respectively (See **Map: Figure 1.**)

The decision to include Postwar buildings located on adjoining blocks situated between, and to the north and south of Chestnut and Sansom Streets, was based upon evidence that such buildings located on adjoining side streets were highly visible and therefore strongly suggested a visual connection with the two corridors. Also, in several instances these buildings occupy corner sites and thus necessitate including the side street upon which they face. The northern edge of the study area is composed of Ranstead and Ludlow streets, while the south blocks of Sansom Street compose the south border.

The high degree to which Postwar buildings, both as new construction and extensively renovated facades, constitute the architectural fabric of much of Chestnut Street in Center City determined designating the study area to include these street blocks. Most of the Postwar buildings in the thesis study area are in fact located along Chestnut Street, in which there are concentrations of such buildings between

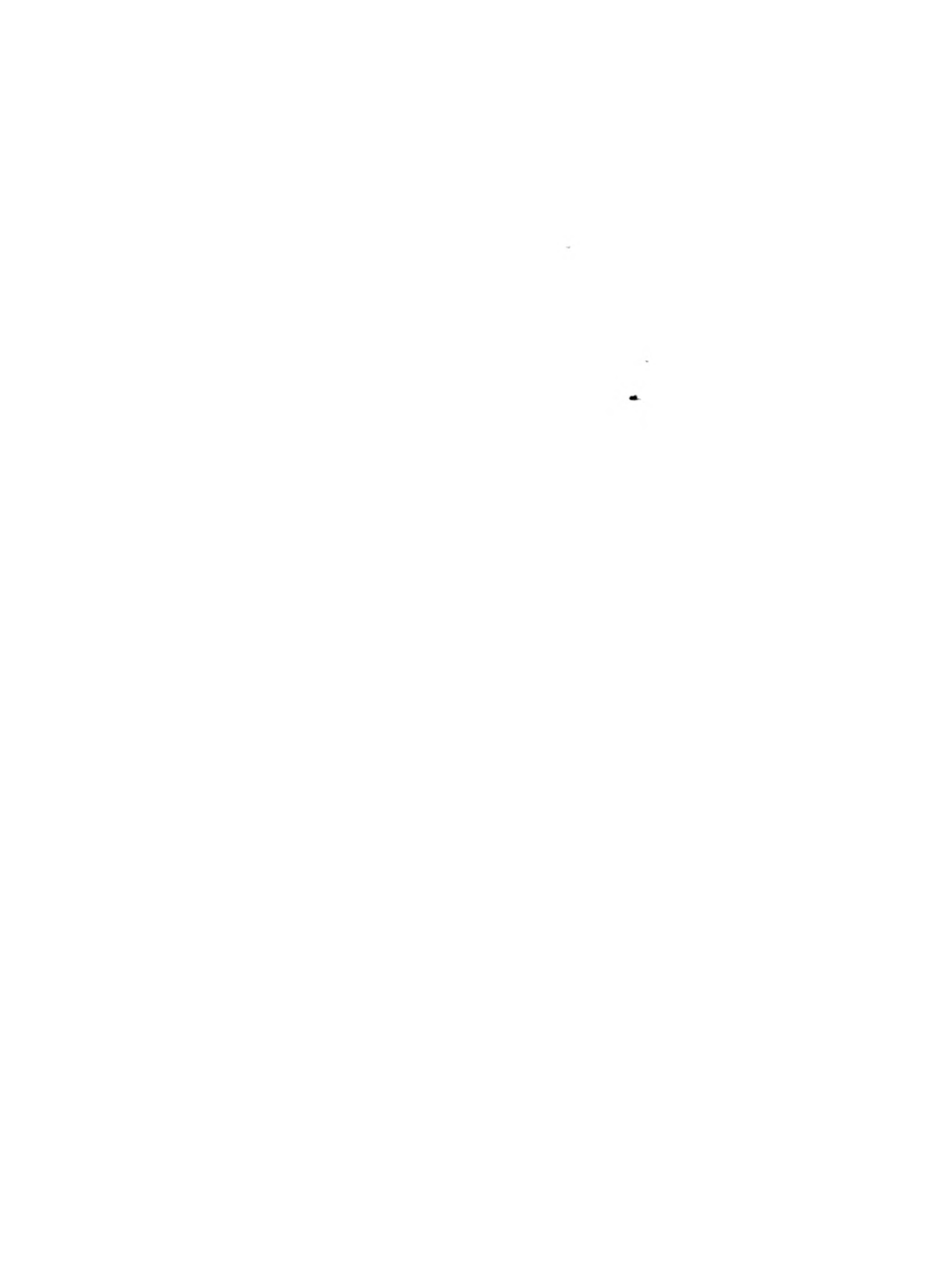


22nd and 20th Streets, and both newly-constructed buildings and renovations located in the vibrant commercial and retail zone between 20th and 11th Streets (Fig. 2.)

Although Sansom Street does not possess the same degree of Postwar architectural presence, its streetscape nonetheless contains a number of distinguished individual buildings. Since the intention of this study was to identify a pair of streets constituting a corridor in Center City with a substantial number of Postwar buildings, Sansom Street was identified as a more representative street than Market Street, located to the north of Chestnut. Market Street, where most new building construction in Center City has transpired since the Postwar era, possesses very few unaltered Postwar buildings.<sup>13</sup>

The selection of individual buildings for this study was primarily based upon the amount of original exterior design fabric and architectural integrity that a building possessed. Buildings were selected for inclusion in the study area based upon the degree of alteration to their original exterior design fabric. Such alterations include window replacement, application of new exterior veneer and cladding or any other significant alteration of exterior surfaces, and incompatible new construction. In fact, with several exceptions, the noticeable absence of such alterations to both the newly-constructed and renovated buildings in the study area makes the Postwar architectural fabric of the study area rather remarkable: for the most part, these Postwar buildings remain fully intact.

This primary factor of retention of original design fabric is supplemented by



the fact that the buildings in this study possess historic architectural value as locally significant examples of Postwar modern and revival architectural styles. In terms of their massing, design composition, use of materials, and relationship to the existing design fabric of their surrounding built environment, these buildings possess architectural value to different degrees. This determination of value is also based upon the unique design qualities and features which some of the study area buildings possess, as well as the expression of distinctive modes of Postwar architectural design by many of the buildings which are more specific than the more general and broad classifications of Postwar "Modern" and "Revival" styles.

The Postwar architectural fabric of Chestnut and Sansom Streets has several different characteristics. In these locations, the Postwar buildings constitute different design responses to the immediate built environment. Along Chestnut Street between 22nd and 20th Streets in Center City, the Postwar buildings, with their limestone exterior wall veneers, constitute a contextual design response, since the streetscape of these blocks is largely composed of older masonry buildings.

Along Chestnut Street, from 20th to 11th Streets, the streetscape changes into a built environment of great design variety as expressed by the facades of retail and commercial buildings lining these blocks. In expressing this lack of design uniformity and cohesion, the Postwar buildings are more daring in their design, and they display considerable variety in the design of their facades. These buildings and re-designed exteriors in the retail district also constitute a kind of infill architecture in their





surrounding design context. In addition to those buildings selected for more careful and detailed study, there are a number of ground-floor banks, restaurants and a movie theater building front re-designed and rendered in Postwar Modern design modes, that constitute a substantive Postwar architectural design fabric along the Chestnut Street commercial/retail corridor.<sup>14</sup>

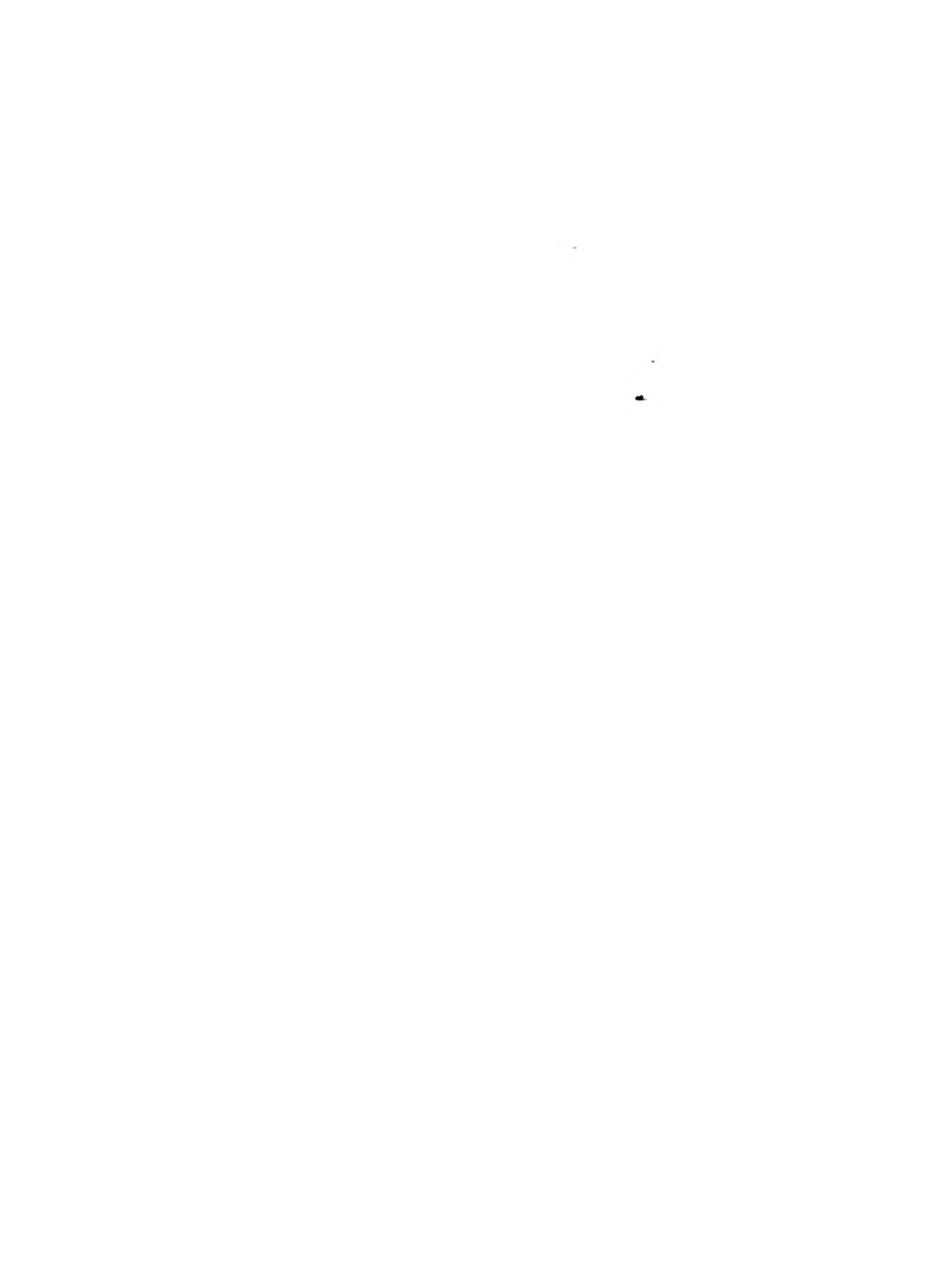
In the case of the several buildings rendered in the commercial variant of the Georgian Revival style, these buildings are situated so as to have been constructed as unobtrusive and inconspicuous additions, as in the case of the Provident Bank Building in the 1600 block of Chestnut Street, or as a prominent corner building, exemplified by the Real Estate Trust Company building at 15th and Sansom Streets.

The study area selected for this thesis comprises an excellent type of laboratory for closely examining the myriad issues related to Postwar era buildings. With its range of building typologies and sizes, architectural styles, and contextual relationships, the Postwar built environment of Chestnut and Sansom Streets, and adjoining blocks, provides a context in which to probe concerns addressed in international conferences and in the writings of individuals such as John Brinckerhoff Jackson and Richard Longstreth.<sup>15</sup> Hopefully this thesis can present useful information in order to deal with these issues and problems in the study of Postwar American urban vernacular architecture.



NOTES

1. Richard Longstreth, "The Significance of the Recent Past" in the APT Bulletin, Vol. XXIII; No. 2, 1991: p. 14. Longstreth defines the "recent past" as the period of the Mid-twentieth century, including the 1940's through the 1960's. To further validate Longstreth's argument, the minimum building age requirement for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places is fifty years. Therefore, buildings of the "recent past" are explicitly excluded from the only national act aimed at historic preservation.
2. Ibid., p. 13. In his discussion of the passage of time in order to assess the significance of a historical period and the notion of history as a continuum, Longstreth incorporates an excerpt from an essay by David Lowenthal. See David Lowenthal, "Nostalgia Tells It Like It Wasn't" in Christopher Shaw and Malcolm Chase, editors, The Imagined Past: History and Nostalgia (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1989), p. 30.
3. Longstreth, p. 14. Local historic preservation ordinances, however, express a considerably more liberal approach towards preservation that has important implications for the vernacular Postwar built environment. For example, the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Ordinance does not stipulate a minimum age required for certification: see Amending Section 14-2007 of The Philadelphia Code entitled "Historic Buildings"; App. No. 566-7 & No. 566-8.
4. Ibid., p. 15. For a more in-depth discussion of concepts of historical continuity and other temporal issues pertaining to the study of historical periods and their relationship to the present, see David Lowenthal, The Past is a Foreign Country (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985.)
5. Longstreth, pp. 14-15. Since the mid-1970's, with the emergence of interest in the Art Deco and "Streamline Moderne" design esthetics, numerous articles, essays and books have been published on aspects of twentieth century residential and commercial vernacular architecture, some of which have focussed on the Post-World War II period. For a comprehensive overview of modern commercial vernacular architecture, in particular the built environment of the American highway and metropolitan urban thoroughfare classified



- as "roadside architecture," see Chester H. Liebs, Main Street to Miracle Mile (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985.)
6. For a published account of the 1987 APT Conference see the entire issue of the APT Bulletin, Vol. XXIII; No. 2, 1991. For reviews of the 1990 DoCoMoMo Conference, see John Allan, "Instruments or Icons?" in The Architectural Review, Vol. 187, November, 1990: p. 5; p. 9. For other reviews of the 1990 DoCoMoMo Conference see Gino Anzivino, "DO.CO.MO.MO, Primo Seminario sul Restauro del Moderno" in Domus, No. 721, November, 1990: pp. 15-16; and Rowan Moore, "Il Mondo Moderno Invecchia/The Modern World Grows Old" in Abitare, No. 295, April, 1991: pp. 252-256.
  7. Michael F. Lynch, "What Are We Going to Do With the Recent Past in the Not Too Distant Future?" in the APT Bulletin, Vol. XXIII; No. 2, 1991: p. 6. Lynch mentions that the subject of preserving the built environment of the "recent past" was addressed at the 1987 APT conference in Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia.
  8. See Andrew S. Weber and Dennis K. Johnson, "Investigative Technique for Water Penetration" for a discussion on the restoration of building plate glass and curtain wall systems; Michael F. Crowe, "Neon Signs: Their Origin, Use, and Maintenance"; and Robert A. Mitchell, "What Ever Happened to Lustron Homes?" all published in the APT Bulletin, Vol. XXIII; No. 2, 1991.
  9. Since much of the design of the American Postwar built environment was influenced by European modernism of the 1920's and 1930's, the issues addressed at the DoCoMoMo conference are to some degree significant in regard to Postwar preservation. Also, although the conference focussed primarily on modern buildings of the 1920's and 1930's, several Postwar case studies were included. For example, Alexander Fleming House, an office tower designed by Erno Goldfinger for the British Ministry of Health and constructed in 1962 in London, was the subject of a paper presented at the conference addressing a proposal to radically alter the exterior design of this building.
  10. Murray Fraser, "Conferences: Modernist Preserve" in Architects' Journal, Vol. 192, No. 13, September 26, 1990: pp. 76-77. The argument that modern buildings served as "social monuments" was presented at the 1990 DoCoMoMo conference by Hilde Heynen of Leuven University, Belgium. The numerous research and



technical papers presented at the DoCoMoMo conference have been published; see Conference Proceedings of the First International DOCOMOMO Conference, September 12-15, 1990 (Eindhoven, Netherlands: Eindhoven University of Technology, 1991.)

11. Ibid.
12. John Allan, "Instruments or Icons?" in The Architectural Review, Vol. 187, November, 1990: p. 5.
13. There are several exceptions to this condition existing along Market Street in Center City. They are the former M & H Company Building located in the 700 block and the former Robinson's Clothing Store designed by the notable firm of Krummeck & Gruen, and constructed in 1947. The Robinson's store, located in the 1000 block of Market features a dramatic sloped facade veneered in tile, as well as a prominent curved concrete roofline overhang perforated with square openings.
14. These redesigned businesses and buildings include branches of the Philadelphia National Bank and Philadelphia Savings Fund, a restaurant/pizzeria, and the AMC Midtown Theatre. For more information on these renovations, see Appendix I.
15. J.B. Jackson writes in his preface to Discovering the Vernacular Landscape (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984) of the need for historic preservation to expand its range of subjects and concentrate on the bulk of historic buildings and landscapes in America that remain undocumented. Jackson believes that preservation must avoid possessing a small-town, middle-class sensibility by eschewing the continued study of such established and well-documented landmarks as battlefields and historic communities such as Williamsburg, Virginia and Savannah, Georgia; and exercise more imagination by broadening its activity.





## Chapter 1: Aspects of Postwar American Architecture in Center City, Philadelphia

Postwar architecture in Center City, Philadelphia was not created in isolation; the examples selected for examination reflected national trends in architecture. The influence of Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, as well as such Dutch architects as Johannes Duiker and Willem Marinus Dudok, is clearly evident in many of the Postwar Center City examples and in such buildings situated in many urban centers throughout the nation.

For the most part, Postwar era buildings possess stylistic qualities of modernism, namely the emphasis on volume enclosed by an exterior envelope, absence of applied ornament, regularity in terms of the organization of fenestration and other components of the building's elevations, flat roofs, and interiors of unobstructed space.<sup>1</sup> However, some Postwar buildings, in particular institutional and commercial structures, continued to be rendered in revival styles: the several buildings in the study area designed in a Georgian Revival manner attests to this phenomenon. Yet, modern architecture dominated the Postwar period, and together with the type of modern design and its variants expressed by the buildings in the Center City study area, Postwar modernism illustrates the impact of a number of other factors evident in the period, such as socio-economic conditions existing in the nation in the early Postwar years.

In his introduction to Built in USA: Post-war Architecture, a 1952 critical



study of the modern architecture of the early Postwar period, Henry-Russell Hitchcock discusses aspects of American Postwar architectural development. Hitchcock comments that by the early 1950's, American architecture had come to occupy a position of special prominence in the world. This important status could be largely attributed to the considerable building production of a "controlled economic boom," which in spite of such previous bursts of building activity, as in the 1920's, was distinguished by the maintenance of design standards, such as he thought required definition.<sup>2</sup>

Hitchcock observed that a new homogeneity of architectural design had appeared in America by the early 1950's. In spite of considerable geographical distances that separate the nation's regions, disparate climates and differences in availability of building materials, modern architectural design had indeed become "nationally standardized." In fact, modern architectural design had become more standardized, according to Hitchcock, than the far more likely American building industry.<sup>3</sup>

Among the buildings in the Center City study area, there are several examples that demonstrate this observation. Buildings representative of the type of box-like glass-walled pavilions incorporating flat, steel-frame roofs, such as the Mercantile Library designed by Martin, Stewart & Noble, and built in 1953 (Fig. 3.), and Herman Polss' Charles Weinstein Geriatric Center of 1959 (Fig. 4.), clearly recall such examples as Mies van der Rohe's single-story pavilions, and buildings designed



by Richard Neutra (Figs. 5 & 6.)

It was the various interpretations of the International Style that constituted a dominant design mode of the Postwar period in America. Therefore, many of the issues of preservation and restoration pertaining to the International Style are relevant to Postwar architecture in the United States. However, the development of an esthetic of Postwar modernism, beginning in the 1940's and continuing into the 1950's differed in many respects from the emergence of the International Style in the 1920's and 1930's.

Hitchcock believed that a prime reason for the phenomenon of standardization and uniformity in Postwar American architecture rested with the absence of the revolutionary design and discourse that characterized much of modern architecture in the 1920's. Initiated by the Museum of Modern Art's landmark 1932 exhibition "The International Style" and spurred considerably further by the emigration of Gropius and Mies van der Rohe to the United States in the 1930's, American modernists and well-established architectural firms had indeed appropriated European modernism. However, while their adoption of the International Style, beginning in the 1930's, was somewhat wholesale in manner, they did so, according to Hitchcock, at a slower pace than their European counterparts had in the 1920's and early 1930's. However, in spite of the seemingly uncritical and uniform adoption of European modernism by many American architectural offices, the results, according to Hitchcock, were not inferior.<sup>4</sup>



Hitchcock addresses the issue of design quality in regard to industrial and educational buildings, two typologies that were frequently rendered in a modern style of generally high quality; schools, in particular, he believed, were of a "clean and fresh" design. Yet, in spite of the design quality of these buildings, few factories, for the most part, were of "particular distinction", while schools had rarely achieved "much individual character": a testament to the uniformity and standardization of the Postwar American modern architectural esthetic.<sup>5</sup>

But in the final analysis, Hitchcock states that while quality is foremost among the primary criteria for evaluation of buildings constructed in any period, quality is difficult to define in that it depends more on "the effectiveness of the individual solution" than on the rigid application of a particular design formula.<sup>6</sup> Thus, Hitchcock articulates the notion that Postwar buildings ought to be assessed in terms of their ability to satisfy specific functional or programmatic, and design requirements, in regard to their overall architectural design. Therefore, this recommendation to assess the quality of an architectural design based on factors related to the individual building allows for a serious study of commercial and institutional buildings which may be considered as rather unremarkable works of architecture, and not refined examples of modernism.

In the end, Hitchcock's views on the issue of quality as it relates to expressions of Postwar modern architecture in America, are decidedly liberal in their inclusiveness. Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown's examination of issues





pertinent to Postwar American architecture also express a liberal attitude towards the Postwar built environment, but with a quite different focus. They deal with more complex issues of design and context, while their approach is directed primarily at commercial and residential vernacular Postwar American architecture, as evident in their 1971 study Learning from Las Vegas and Venturi's earlier work Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture of 1966. Although Venturi and Scott Brown have focussed much of their attention on the commercial architecture of the Las Vegas strip, as well as modern roadside vernacular building design, many of their observations can be applied to the Postwar architectural design fabric of Center City.

The design quality of the buildings in the Center City study area derives in large part from their status as largely non-"high art" works of architecture, based on the overall context of American Postwar architecture. Many of the examples of Postwar architecture in the Center City study area, both of modern and revival styles, can be regarded as the manifestation of a phenomenon outlined by Venturi, which attributes such buildings to original high level sources. Venturi states that buildings of a decidedly non-"high art" caliber have evolved as less-refined versions of original "high art" examples. He explains that this process, in regard to modern buildings, has taken thirty years or less, and results in buildings that are actually more interesting than those which served as their sources.<sup>7</sup> This distinctive quality which Venturi assigns to the popular interpretations of "high modern" examples is clearly subjective. However, if such buildings acquire architectural design value based upon their



singular and liberal interpretations of form and style, they can therefore possibly be regarded as more interesting than the original examples from which they are derived.

In the case of the Center City buildings, the original sources are of both the high and middle rank. They range from Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona pavilion, a source of design influence for the Charles Weinstein Geriatric Center, to what Venturi explains as the middle source of Edward Durrell Stone's neo-Eclectic work of the 1950's, including his U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India and his New York City town house (Fig. 7.), as a source of influence for the General Contractors Building built in 1961 and designed by Clifford E. Garner (Fig. 8.)<sup>8</sup> In regard to such Postwar period commercial Georgian Revival works as Sydney E. Martin's Real Estate Trust Company building (Fig. 9.), the period of time from an original high source building to an accomplished low or middle source period revival building is clearly more than thirty years.

Venturi's notion that modern architecture does indeed possess the design embellishment and richness which Hitchcock and Philip Johnson dismissed in The International Style of 1932, is an assertion of Hitchcock's notion, expressed in the early 1950's, of assessing individual buildings according to individual qualities and not a single set of standard precepts. Citing such well-known examples as Mies van der Rohe's steel I-section columns and his use of marble in the Barcelona pavilion, Venturi argues that design elements and materials in modern architecture are inherently ornamental.<sup>9</sup>



However, among the Postwar modern buildings in the Center City study area which do possess ornament, the embellishment is in the form of the more traditional manner of applied materials. The Sidney Hillman Medical Center, designed by Louis Magaziner and Herman Polss and built 1949-1950, has exterior surfaces of yellow limestone with rose-colored gradations, and end walls sheathed in a rich black granite (Fig. 10.), while the former Kinney Shoe Store, now the offices of the Philadelphia Federal Credit Union, designed by William Linker in 1956, presents a facade of dark polished stone paneling punctuated by a grid of decorative raised stainless steel round "disks." (Fig. 11.)

The fact that the Philadelphia Federal Credit Union was an extensive alteration, in the form of a renovation, of an existing building dating from 1909, illustrates an important aspect of the history of Postwar modern architecture: the redesigned building facade. In the early Postwar period, the United States experienced several developments that would combine to make the redesign of existing building facades an attractive alternative to new construction. A dynamic, indeed "booming" consumer-based economy, combined with a shortage of raw building materials, prompted building owners to commission architects to re-design storefronts and often the entire facade of the building in which the retail establishment was located, rather than construct a new building.<sup>10</sup>

Store owners obviously needed to attract customers in order to compete with other retailers. An expedient and effective way to accomplish this goal was frequently



to resurface or reconstruct the building facade, employing such materials as structural glass, sheet metal, "Granux" (a material simulating granite), sheet plastic, or other exterior-cladding materials which were becoming increasingly available from the building industry.<sup>11</sup> In addition, the austerity measures that were enacted during the war had effected the building industry by precipitating a virtual halt in new construction: the effect of this hiatus was a strong desire to engage in the most expedient activity of new construction; the redesign of building facades and storefronts (Fig. 12.)<sup>12</sup>

This wave of building alterations, in the form of re-designed building facades and storefronts, represented a major current of twentieth-century American retail architecture. Beginning in 1945 and continuing throughout the 1950's, architects including the firm of Gruen & Krummeck, who redesigned entire facades, and Jose A. Fernandez and Morris Lapidus, whose work concentrated on storefront design and shop interiors, were engaged in the "modernizing" of buildings, most of which were constructed in the period from 1880 to 1920 (Figs. 13 to 15.) In altering the exterior design of these older masonry buildings, the building exterior was transformed into modern design compositions of plate glass panels, extruded and rolled metal surfaces, textured ceramic blocks, and colorful mosaic tile paneling; other design features included recessed storefronts with free-standing glass display cases.<sup>13</sup> The result was an open, even transparent design quality belonging to many shopfronts which was intended to allow the potential customer to easily assess the merchandise



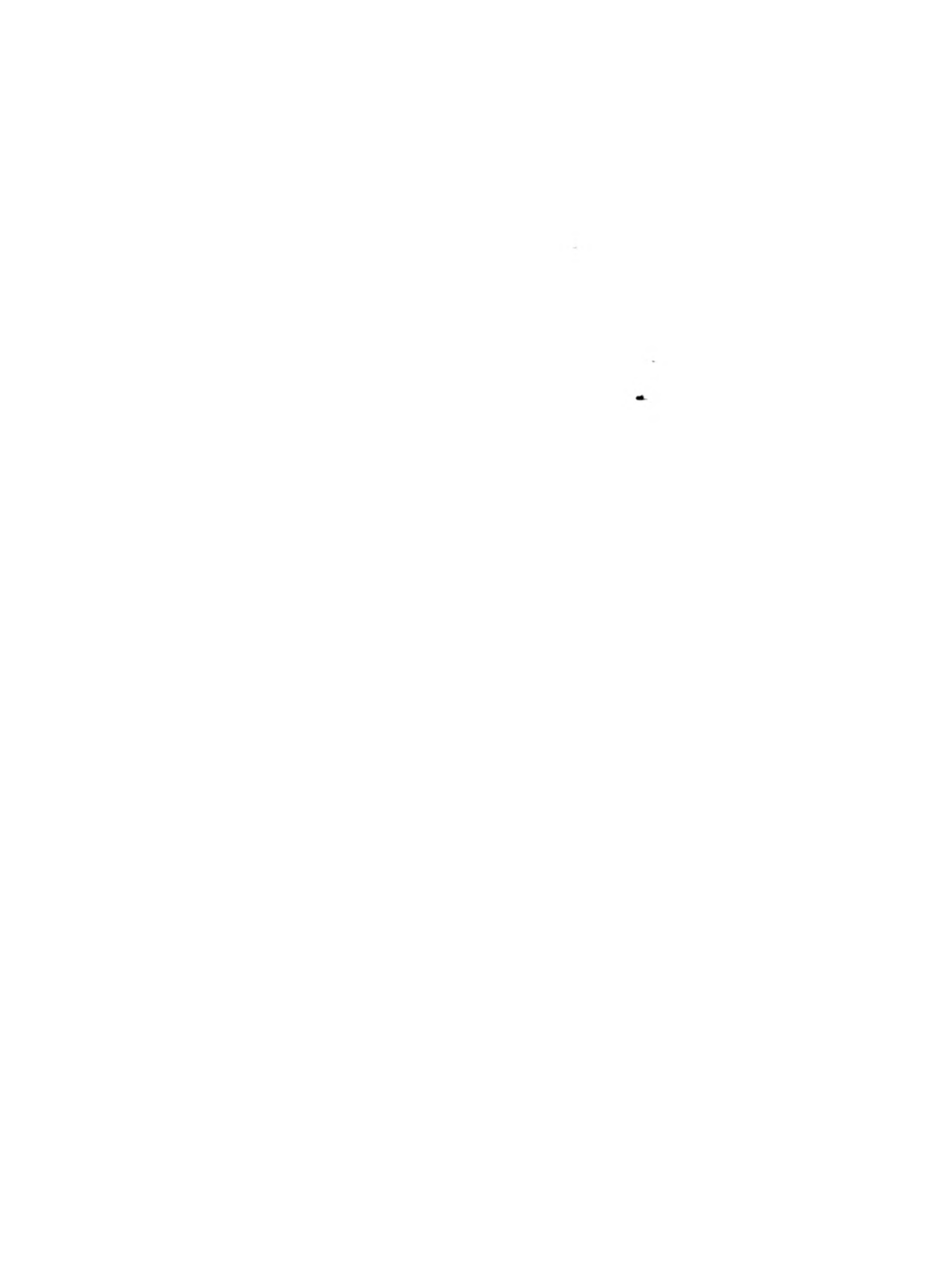


offered by a particular retail establishment.

These prominent designers were joined by many small architectural offices working in towns and cities throughout the country. With a paucity of new building construction in the late 1940's, and a massive, highly efficient heavy industrial complex, once geared to military production but now devoted in part to producing consumer goods to be sold in stores, shop owners and retailers were motivated to hire architects to redesign buildings deemed old and obsolete in many American retail business districts. In addition, this new wave of retail design reflected significant changes in retailing itself, in which high inventory, self-service retail operations and aggressive marketing were becoming firmly established.<sup>14</sup>

The alteration of building facades in the Postwar period comprised just one aspect of architectural design developments in such central business districts as Center City in Philadelphia. In his column appearing in The New Yorker, Lewis Mumford commented on how, aside from the large and significant Penn Center development, "so many other buildings have lately been going up in Philadelphia that a commentator on them hardly knows where to begin."<sup>15</sup>

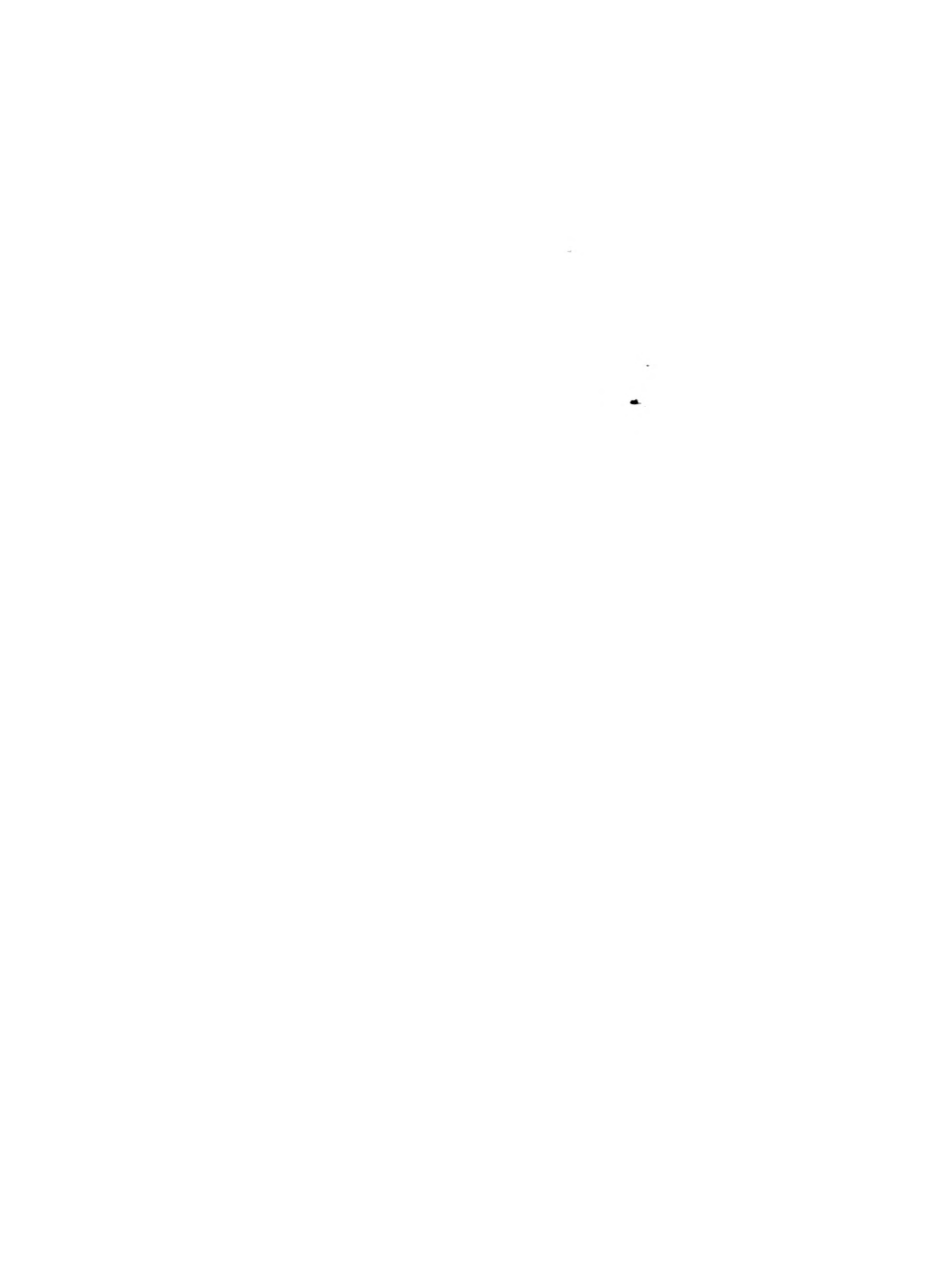
Mumford observed that "many forthright modern buildings" had been constructed in Center City since the end of the war. These works included the new Jefferson Medical College hospital tower built in 1954 and designed by Vincent Kling, a prolific Philadelphia architect responsible for the design of many commercial and institutional buildings during the postwar period, and Martin, Stewart and Noble's



Mercantile Library completed also in the same year. The result of these new buildings was the creation of "a quite modern city" that was "audaciously rising" around the original eighteenth century remnants of Philadelphia.<sup>16</sup>

While Mumford regarded Postwar building activity in Center City as a significant development, the results, in terms of produced designs, were generally of inconsistent quality. Richard Longstreth and Edward Teitelman, in their 1974 guide to the architecture of the city, remarked that despite the quality of the work of Oscar Stonorov, George Howe, and Kenneth Day, and one must also add Louis Kahn and Vincent Kling, Postwar modern architecture was "basically retardataire in its general design ideas" and that architects in the city responded only vaguely to "the forces that contributed to architectural innovation elsewhere in the country."<sup>17</sup>

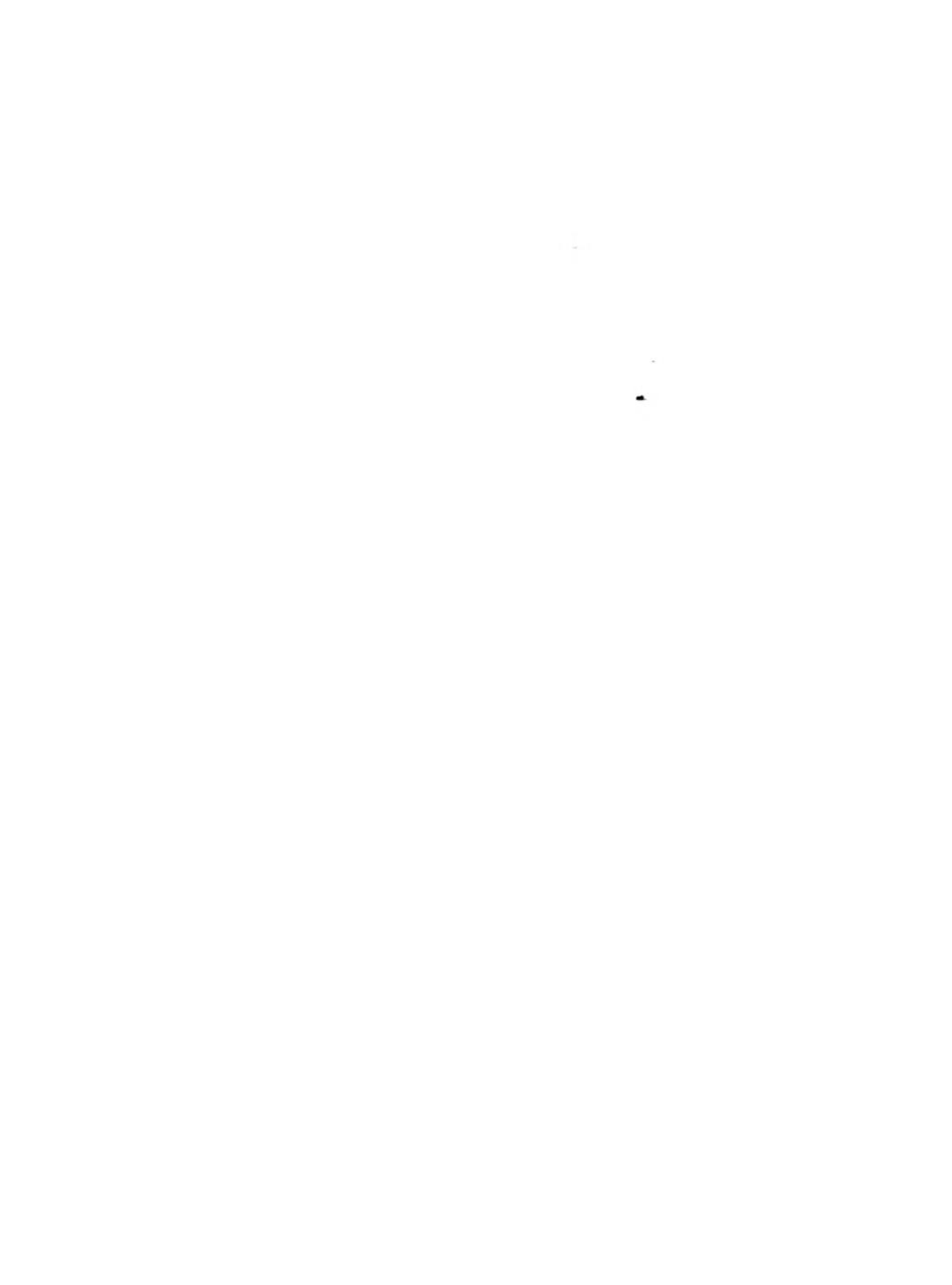
Indeed, aside from a handful of recognized examples, including the Mercantile Library, Jefferson Medical College Hospital tower designed by Vincent Kling, Robinson's Clothing Store designed by Gruen & Krummeck, and the Philadelphia Thermal Company plant, and other exceptions included in this study, the Postwar architectural fabric of Center City is marked by buildings that are rather undeveloped expressions of Postwar modern design. For the most part, the Postwar buildings do not exist as bold design statements, but can instead be regarded as modern buildings that seek a compromise with the existing architectural context of Center City without being contextual design solutions. In addition, they largely eschew such significant developments in Postwar building technology as the metal and glass curtain wall, and



opt instead for masonry cladding.<sup>18</sup> The absence of a well-defined Postwar architectural legacy of overall high quality is somewhat ironic in light of the fact that the nation's first International Style highrise building, the PSFS office tower designed by Howe & Lescaze and built in 1930-1932, was constructed in Philadelphia (Fig. 16.)

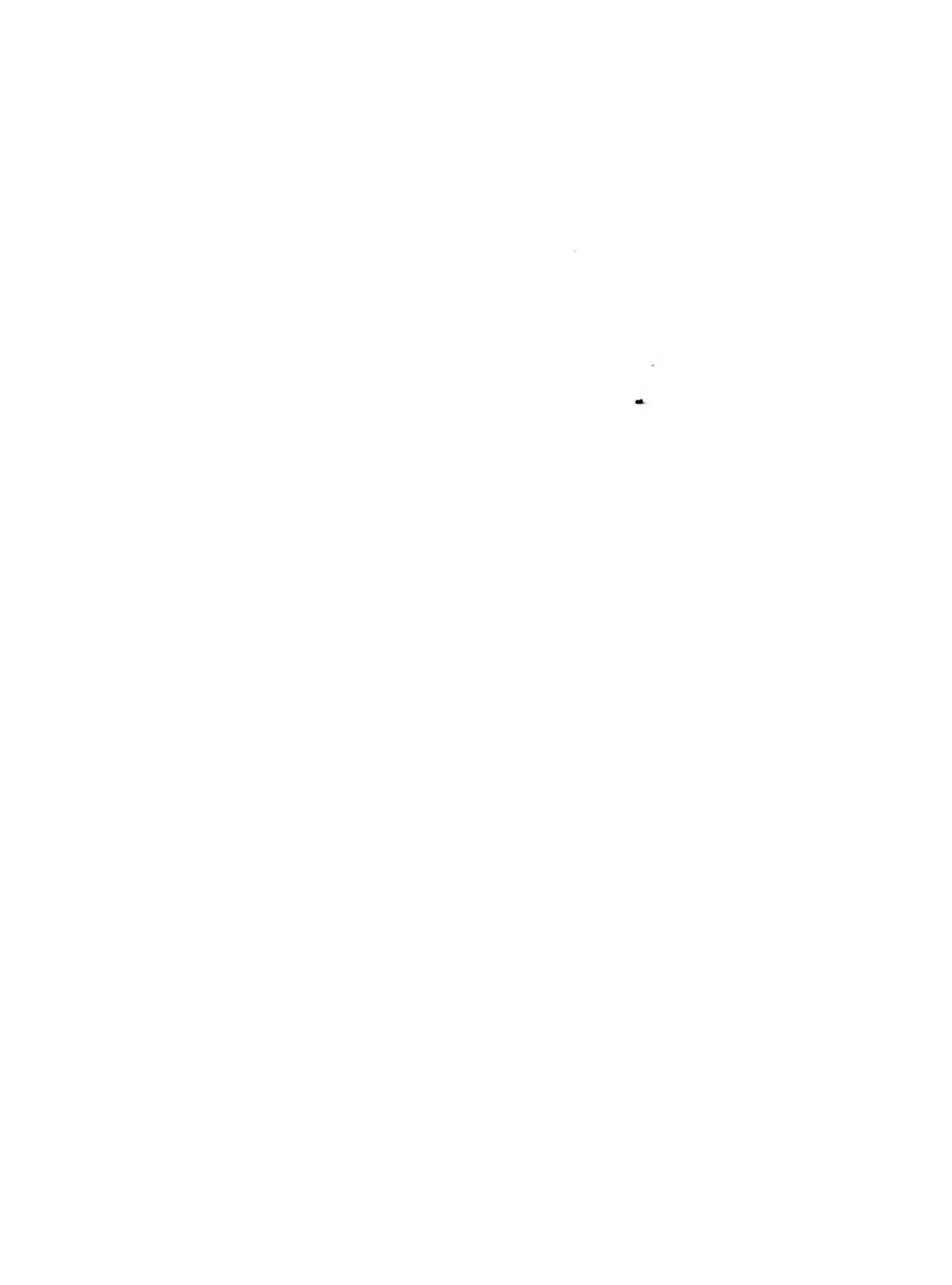
Indeed, Penn Center, the most notable Center City building project of the Postwar era is of greater significance for its planning than its architectural design. Designed by Vincent Kling and Emery Roth & Sons, Architects, in collaboration with Edmund Bacon, head of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, Penn Center compares unfavorably with Kling's Jefferson Medical College hospital tower. The latter building is a rather elegant slab of continuous band windows and brick spandrels, with a cantilevered rooftop canopy running the length of the building (Fig. 17.), while the Penn Center buildings are rather bland towers featuring metal and glass curtain walls which do not possess the transparency and careful attention to detail characteristic of better designed examples (Fig. 18.)

Lewis Mumford commented that Penn Center represented a determined effort to build a civic and business center that would introduce spaciousness, light, and a "certain orderliness" to the location where the Broad Street Station and infamous "Chinese Wall" once stood.<sup>19</sup> While the original portion of the building complex does provide these qualities with its plazas, building placement, and subterranean light courts, it did not provide the high level of modern architectural design quality



exhibited by buildings designed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, and Mies van der Rohe in New York City and Chicago, or the Equitable Building in Portland, Oregon of 1948 designed by Pietro Belluschi.

Penn Center was one of several schemes for Center City developed by Bacon in collaboration with such architects as Stonorov and Kahn, and later I.M. Pei.<sup>20</sup> Apart from their architectural design, these plans, which included Market East, and later Washington Square and Society Hill, were dynamic and of generally high quality, with the Society Hill scheme incorporating contextual design components; they, in fact, constituted the major achievement of the Postwar period in Philadelphia.





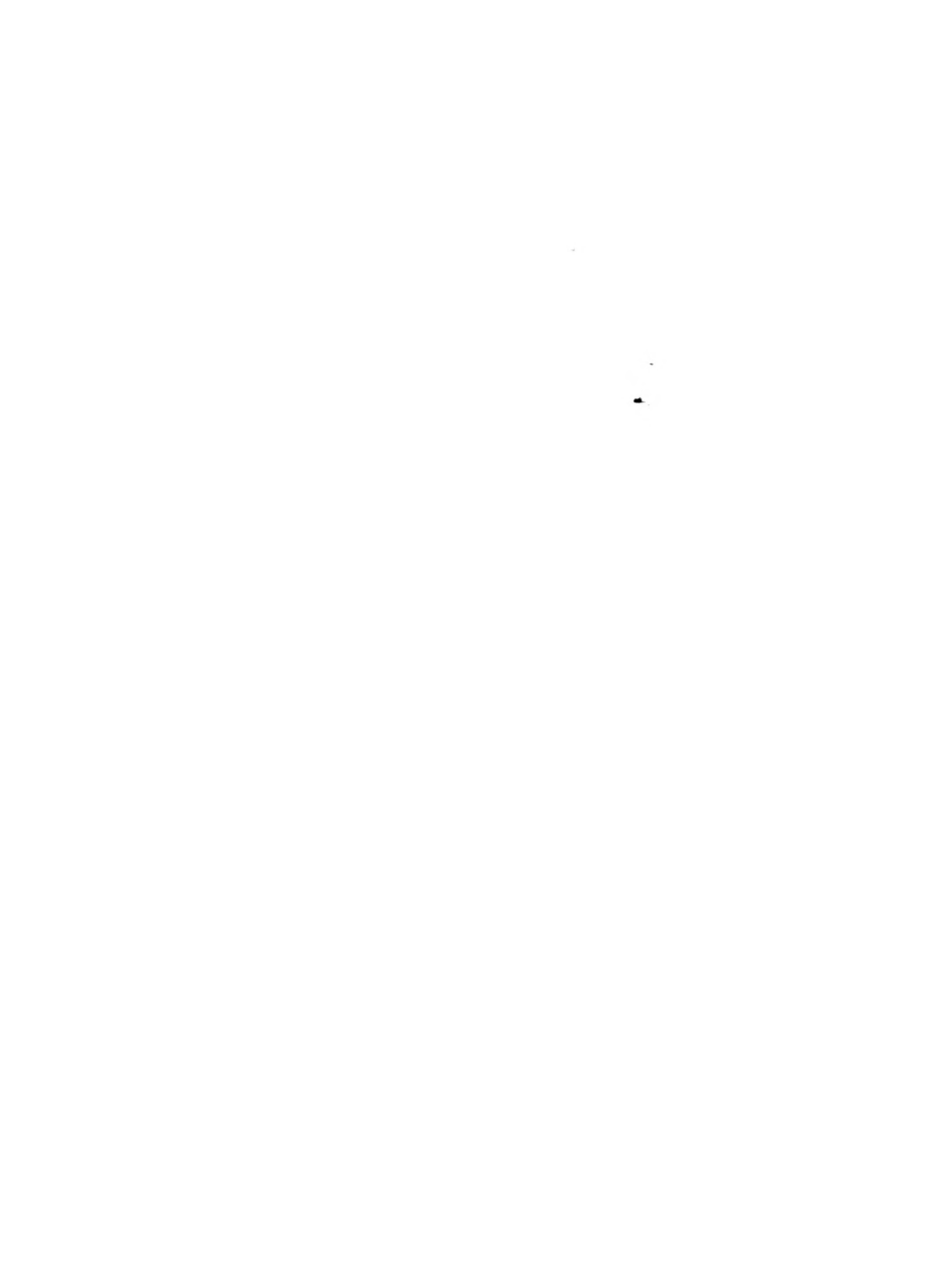
NOTES

1. These principal distinguishing qualities of modern architecture were identified in the landmark 1932 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, entitled "The International Style" curated by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson. They were also examined in the book, The International Style: Architecture Since 1922 (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1932), written by Hitchcock and Johnson and prepared in conjunction with the MOMA exhibition.
2. Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Arthur Drexler, editors. Introduction to Built in USA: Post-war Architecture (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1952): p. 10.
3. Hitchcock, pp. 12-14.
4. Ibid., pp. 14-15.
5. Hitchcock, p. 18.
6. Ibid.
7. Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour. Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1977), p. 8. The architect Charles Moore has also addressed issues pertaining to the dissemination of architectural design. See "You Have to Pay for the Public Life" in Perspecta; June, 1965. No. 9-10: pp. 57-107. Moore discusses the impact of such architects as Oscar Niemeyer, Le Corbusier, and Italian Rationalists on the architecture of bank offices in southern California.
8. Venturi, Learning from Las Vegas: p. 8.
9. Ibid., pp. 114-115. See also Venturi, Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture (New York: Museum of Modern Art and Graham Foundation, 1966.), p. 107; pp. 116-117, in which Venturi discusses his firm's projects.
10. "Surfacing Materials" by Walter Sanders and Arthur Malsin in Progressive Architecture, January, 1947: pp. 65-69. Several publications of a promotional nature appeared beginning in the late 1940's that provided information to storeowners and architects on how to redesign and update retail buildings and interiors. Among these publications are Modern Stores 1946 (Chicago, Ill: National Retail Furniture Association),



described as the "Modernizing Manual of the National Retail Furniture Association" and Jose A. Fernandez, The Specialty Shop (A Guide), (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., Inc., 1950.)

11. Beginning in the late 1940's, producers of building materials were manufacturing a range of products, primarily manufactured stone such as "Mo-Sai," "Carrera" Structural Glass, and extruded aluminum and stainless steel finishes and applied design components: see Sweet's Architectural Catalog File for the years 1947-1951 (New York: Sweet's Catalog Service.) Also, architectural journals published numerous articles that addressed new exterior designs and redesigning buildings with new veneers and exterior cladding. See "Enclosure: the Building Shell Has Become a Filter between Exterior and Interior Environments" in The Architectural Forum; November, 1948, Vol. 89: pp. 134-141, and "Materials for '49, Structural and Surfacing Materials" in Progressive Architecture, Vol. 30: pp. 42-43; pp. 49-51. Also, see "Surfacing Materials" by Walter Sanders and Arthur Malsin in Progressive Architecture; January, 1947. Vol. 28: pp. 65-70.
12. Architectural journals addressed the issue of shortages of building materials. See "Surfacing Materials" by Sanders and Malsin and "Materials Easier to Get" in Architectural Record, December, 1948. Vol. 104: pp. 20-49.
13. The retail designs of these architects were extensively published in Progressive Architecture, The Architectural Forum, and Architectural Record during the late 1940's and early 1950's. For a more comprehensive record of the designs of Fernandez, Gruen & Krummeck, and Lapidus, books written by these architects offer descriptions and illustrations of their work. See Fernandez, The Specialty Shop (A Guide) (New York, 1950), and Morris Ketchum, Jr., Shops & Stores (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp., 1957). For the work of Morris Lapidus see an interview with Lapidus in John W. Cook and Heinrich Klotz, editors, Conversations With Architects (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.) and Morris Lapidus, An Architecture of Joy (Miami, Florida: E.A. Seemann Publishing, Inc., 1979.)
14. For an examination of the American economy in the immediate Postwar era, including an overview of industrial production and increases in material consumption, see Alvin Harley Hansen, The Postwar American Economy (New York: Norton Publishing Co.,



1964): pp. 4-5; pp. 24-26. Also, for a study of new developments in Postwar American retailing see the chapter on the development of the supermarket, pp. 124-135 in Chester H. Liebs, Main Street to Miracle Mile (Boston: Brown, Little and Company, 1985.) Liebs focusses on the supermarket as an indicator of new overall developments and trends in American retailing and marketing.

15. Lewis Mumford, "The Sky Line-Philadelphia II" in The New Yorker, May 26, 1956. Vol. 32: pp. 121-129. Mumford's comment appears on page 121.
16. Mumford, "The Sky Line: Philadelphia I" in The New Yorker, April 28, 1956. Vol. 32: pp. 118-127. Mumford's observation appears on page 121.
17. Edward Teitelman and Richard W. Longstreth, Architecture in Philadelphia: A Guide (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1974), p. 21. The "forces" to which Teitelman and Longstreth refer, while not explicitly stated in their book, include the strong interest in the building as a structural envelope enclosing space, new building materials and technology, and an increasing tendency in architectural design towards lightness and transparency.
18. With its abundance of late eighteenth and nineteenth century architecture, Center City possesses a strong architectural design context that proved to be a factor in the design of several of the Postwar buildings in the study area. This phenomenon may have been responsible for the reluctance, in a number of instances, to incorporate advanced building technology in Postwar architectural design. For a study of the architectural fabric of Center City, with an emphasis on the visual character of this urban center, see Eric Uhlfelder, Center City Philadelphia, The Elements of Style (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984.)

This major quality of Postwar architecture in Philadelphia was not characteristic of cities such as New York or Chicago, where for the most part architects adopted glass and metal curtain wall systems, although glazed brick was occasionally employed in spandrel bands: these cities do not possess the cohesive eighteenth and early nineteenth century architectural design fabric found in Philadelphia. An exception, however, was Boston, a city similiar to Philadelphia in the preservation of historic fabric, where several notable Postwar buildings, including the John Hancock Building of 1947 (Cram and Ferguson, architects), were



largely stone-clad.

19. Mumford, "The Sky Line: Philadelphia I," p. 118. It is important to mention that the original pair of midrise towers at Penn Center, located between 15th and 16th Streets, was altered with the addition of new strip windows on the office floors, redesigned entrances, and reclad with a new veneer in the spandrel zones. This work was executed in the late 1980's.
20. For an examination of Louis Kahn's plans for Center City see Peter Reed, A Search for Form: the Urban Designs of Louis Kahn, 1938-1953 (University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. Dissertation, 1989.) The redevelopment plans for Washington Square and Society Hill preserved a considerable amount of existing eighteenth and nineteenth century architectural design fabric in these districts of Center City, while incorporating new rather well-designed low- and high-rise residential construction.





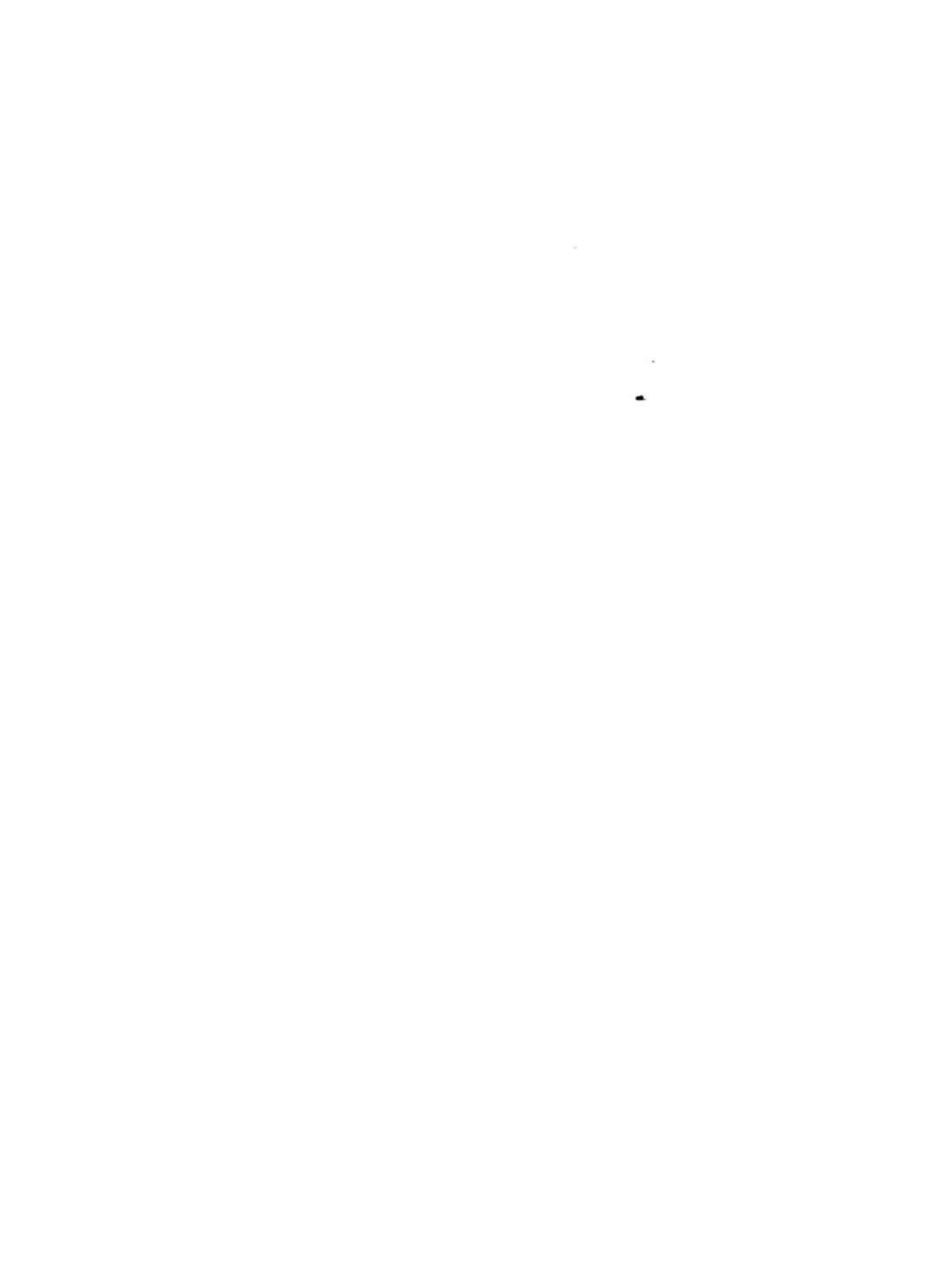
## Chapter 2: Defining Postwar Trends in Architecture

In terms of architectural development, the post-World War II period is generally considered by historians to encompass the years between 1945 and 1960. Some architectural and cultural historians, however, believe that the period extended into the early 1960's, coming to an end in 1964.<sup>1</sup> Based upon the fact that before 1964 the latest Postwar building to have been constructed in the study area, the General Contractors Building designed by Clifford Garner, dates from 1961, the year 1961 will be considered the date of closure for the Postwar period architecture of buildings in the study area.

In regard to the development of a Postwar modern architectural esthetic, the Postwar period is not uniform or monolithic: there is not a single or uniform modern architectural style. The identification and definition of different expressions of Postwar architectural modernism is now being undertaken by architectural historians

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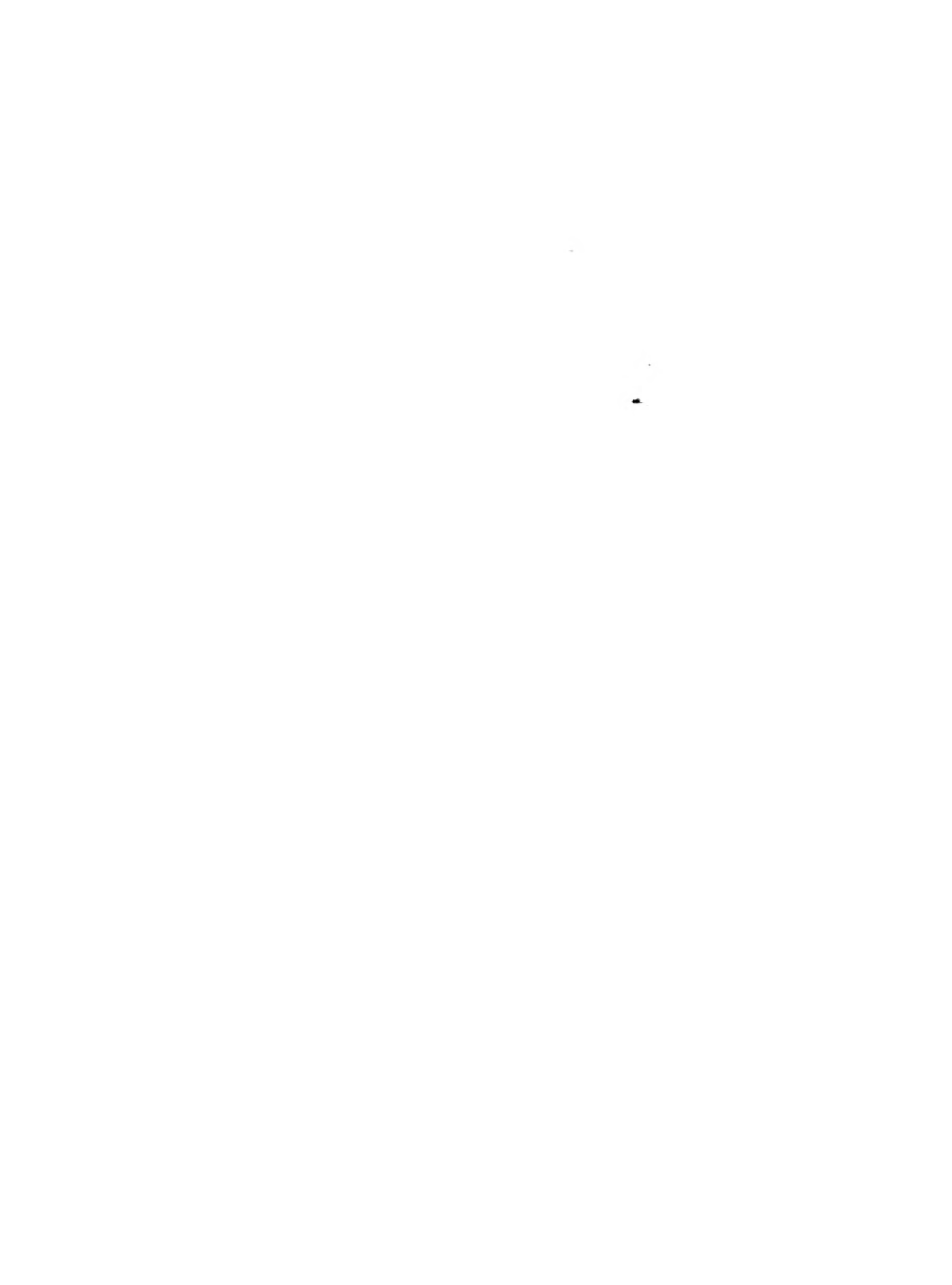
1. Thomas Hine, in Populuxe, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986) discusses the impact of the New York World's Fair of 1964 in determining the end of the Post-World War II era. The fair signaled the end of the seemingly endless fascination with consumer product technology that characterized much of the 1950's, and the unbridled American love of material consumption. As Hine states in the book, visions of the future, as presented at the New York fair, seemed "tired" and that modern suburbs, air-conditioned shopping malls, and fully automatic automobiles were now regarded as necessities for American living, rather than awe-inspiring phenomena. See chapter entitled, "The End of Populuxe?," pp. 167-178.



and preservationists. In fact, in the minds of many observers, there exists a stereotypical image of Postwar period modern buildings. Buildings that represent this image feature metal and glass curtain walls, large expanses of glass, and steel-frame as well as brick slabwall construction. While they are clearly modern, such buildings do not represent the entire range of Postwar architectural design. A primary intention of dismantling this monolithic perception of the era is to provide a greater genuine understanding of Postwar architecture by supplying a framework for discerning differences in building styles and periods.

For the purposes of this study, four categories of Postwar modern style have been defined: "Early Postwar Modern," "Middle Postwar Modern," "Late Postwar Modern," and "High Postwar Modern." These categories have been developed based on an art historical model in tracing and assessing the development of a visual art or architectural esthetic, in which a period of mature development has been identified and then earlier and later developments have been traced. Also, three chronological periods are proposed herein: "Early Postwar, 1945-1950;" "Middle Postwar, 1951-1959;" and "Late Postwar, 1960-1964." These time periods correspond, in most cases, with the stylistic categories of the same name.

It is important to note that there are several buildings in the study area that possess an architectural design which does not correspond with the chronological period in which they were constructed. For example, a building constructed in 1948, the period defined as Early Postwar, may display design features and qualities belonging to the Middle Postwar Modern period. Clearly, all four modes, and the

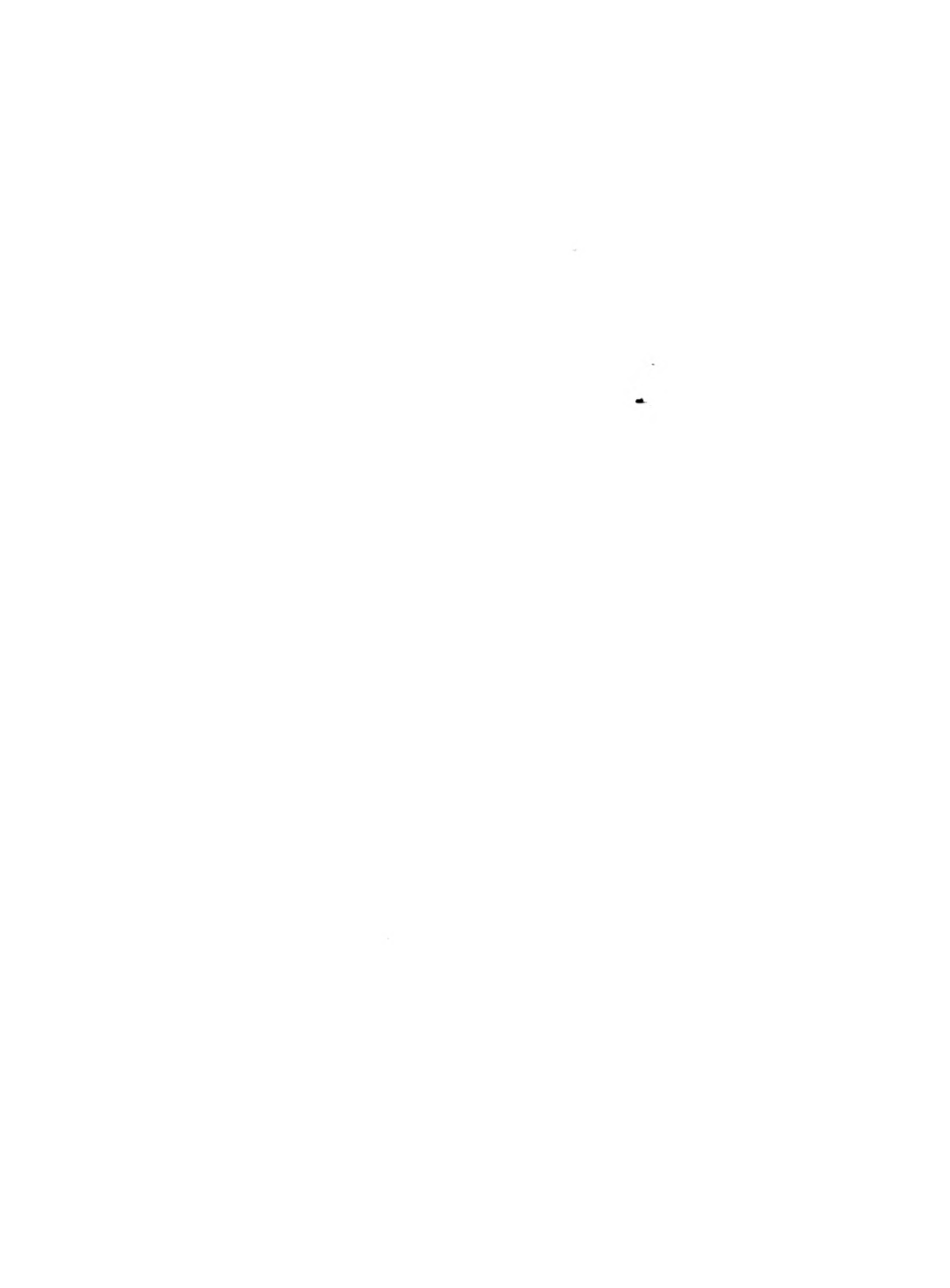


category of revival styles, may be exhibited in buildings regardless of the time period in which they were constructed.

The following descriptions outline the distinguishing features and essential design characteristics of the four design modes. For the purposes of this examination of Postwar era buildings in the Chestnut/Sansom Street corridor of Center City, "Modern," in regard to architectural styles and the modern design esthetic, is defined as the interpretation of architectural design as developed by buildings of the International Style. It does not encompass other, more individual modern architectural design manifestations such as Expressionism or the work of Frank Lloyd Wright.

"Early Postwar Modern" is a mode which frequently corresponds with the early Postwar period, 1945-1950. This mode is transitional in nature, in that design components of such architectural stylistic modes as "Art Moderne" and Twentieth century Neo-Classicism merge with design elements of the International Style. The design compositions of Early Postwar Modern buildings generally feature a combination of masonry and glazed surfaces, in which masonry is predominant.

"Middle Postwar Modern" represents the adoption of the International Style by many American architects during the period, 1951-1959. Middle Postwar Modern represents the adaption of the fully-developed International Style to the context and factors of the American building industry, building technology, and the production of building materials. Middle Postwar Modern is essentially the mainstream American architectural expression of the International Style, widely disseminated throughout the



United States.

"Late Postwar Modern" is the expression of the Postwar Modern mode principally during the period, 1960-1964. The style reflects the development of a type of Postwar modernism that displays a sensitivity to issues of architectural design context as well as the expression of a social consciousness. Buildings designed in this mode often employ building materials which express a contextual design sensibility, such as exposed fired brick. In addition, poured-in-place and precast concrete are employed to provide texture to the building elevations and are used in producing such traditional design elements as arches and lintels.

Finally, buildings designed in the "High Postwar Modern" mode exhibit a refinement and skillful as well as sophisticated handling of design elements and materials that are not unlike many acknowledged outstanding American works of International Style architectural design. Buildings designed in this mode may resemble those rendered in Middle Postwar Modern style, but High Postwar Modern buildings are distinguished by a greater refinement and skillful treatment of exterior design and massing.

Early Postwar Modern buildings display vertical massing elements, such as prominent central facade bays, towers, and signage, which are juxtaposed with the overall horizontal building mass. Buildings often feature roofline parapets and rounded building block corners, as well as entrance canopies.

There is the extensive use of such masonry materials as limestone, sandstone,





granite and manufactured stone-like materials, including simulated granite, for building exteriors, as well as polychrome brick. Also, porcelain enamel paneling, often square and rectangular in shape and of different colors, is widely used for exterior cladding. Early Postwar Modern buildings also employ stainless steel, aluminum, and extruded metal for facade and window trim and borders, entrance canopies, and in the articulation of parapets and spandrel zones. In addition, there is the absence of extensive glazed exterior surfaces, while glass block is frequently used in exterior design.

Finally, signage is often integrated with the facade design, and frequently features neon. For retail buildings, considerable emphasis is placed on storefront design, in which large, plate glass-enclosed display areas are often recessed.

#### Examples of the Early Postwar Modern Mode in the Thesis Study Area:

Sidney Hillman Medical Center; 2116 Chestnut Street, built 1949-50. (Fig. 19.)

U.S. Post Office Branch "Middle City;" 2037-39 Chestnut Street, 1949. (Fig. 20.)

"Second Federal Savings & Loan;" 1727 Chestnut Street, 1948. (Fig. 21.)

Addition to Provident Bank Building; 1630 (Aka 1632-36) Chestnut Street, 1947. (Fig. 27.)

Former office of the Benjamin Franklin Federal Savings and Loan Association; 1624 Chestnut Street, 1952. (Fig. 22.)

"Woolworth's;" 1336 Chestnut Street, 1948. (Fig. 23.)



"Baker's" (Shoe Store); 1318-20 Chestnut Street, 1948. (Fig. 24.)

Former "Swartz Furniture Store," 1108 Chestnut Street, 1946. (Fig. 25.)

"Real Estate Trust Company;" 1500 Sansom Street, 1946-47. (Fig. 9.)

"Square Industries" Parking Garage; 1132 Sansom Street, 1950. (Fig. 28.)

Air Conditioning Contractors Association building, built 1954. (Fig. 26.)

Middle Postwar Modern buildings generally possess a form that exhibits a lightness and transparency in its design and massing, and which in effect serves to enclose spatial volumes in the manner of a thin envelope. Building forms, such as walls, roofs and entrance canopies are frequently flat slabs and planes which intersect and project. Also, applied ornament and decorative trim is largely absent from building exteriors. Slabs and pylons, often connected to the building mass and usually rectangular in form, are employed as free-standing building components designed to be prominent features intended to attract attention. This feature was frequently employed in the design of such commercial buildings as supermarkets and shopping centers.

A prominent feature of Middle Postwar Modern design is the use of metal and glass curtain walls and curtain wall systems employing such technology as neoprene gaskets and prefabricated "sandwich wall" units for the exterior design. Also, a wide range of metal and glass materials, such as color-tinted and reflective glass panels, and aluminum and anodized bronze for mullions and muntins were employed in curtain wall unit design. Other frequently employed exterior building materials include



standard red brick (sometimes glazed in various colors), Roman brick, fieldstone, and glazed ceramic tile, often sculpted or featuring a textured pattern. Also, polychromed mosaic tile and block tiles were employed in the design of wall surfaces.

The fenestration of Middle Postwar Modern buildings is frequently composed of steel casement and sash windows organized in continuous bands for upper floors, and large plate glass used for commercial ground floor spaces. There is also the use of sliding glass windows. Signage and graphics are usually not integrated with the design of the building form, or when used on free-standing signage towers in the case of large retail buildings such as shopping centers, department stores and supermarkets. When signage is incorporated into the design of buildings, it is usually contained in a delineated band and is of small sans serif metal letters.

Examples of the Middle Postwar Modern Mode in the Thesis Study Area:

Ambassador Towne House Apartment Building; 2101 Chestnut Street, 1957.  
(Fig. 29.)

Apartment Building; 118 S. 21st Street, 1954. (Fig. 30.)

Former S & P Training Center; 2020 Chestnut Street, 1953. (Fig. 31.)

1800 Chestnut Street (Aka 102 S. 18th Street), 1959. (Fig. 32.)

YWCA Annex; 2019-2023 (Aka #2025) Chestnut Street, 1954. (Fig. 33.)

Former Quaker Savings & Loan Association Building; 37 S. 16th Street, 1954.  
(Fig. 34.)

"The Avenue" (Former "Coward Shoe Store"); 1118-1120 Chestnut Street,  
1949. (Fig. 35.)



"Rite Aid" Pharmacy and City of Philadelphia Parking Garage; 1025-29 Chestnut Street, 1953. (Fig. 36.)

"Sophy Curson" Dress Shop; 122 S. 19th Street (Aka 1900 Sansom Street, 1952. (Fig. 37.)

Charles Weinstein Geriatric Center; 2115-2121 Sansom Street, 1959. (Fig. 4.)

Former Cayuga Federal Savings & Loan Building; 121 S. 13th Street, 1960. (Fig. 38.)

Buildings rendered in the Late Postwar Modern mode feature a more sculptural building mass, while there is the absence of stone and applied ornament. Facade and elevations become textured surfaces produced by such design elements as projecting bays, projecting and recessed windows and sills, and exposed window lintels. Exterior building materials also provide sculptural qualities and textures, and include precast and poured-in-place concrete, unglazed terra cotta elevation or facade screening, and fired red and brown brick.

The roof design of Late Postwar Modern buildings frequently incorporates pitched forms, particularly in later examples. Fenestration is generally organized as individual units, rather than in long window bands located on the elevations. Large plate-glass ground-floor windows are frequently placed in exposed concrete framing. In addition, building signage is low-scale and inconspicuous with small-size letters, frequently serif in type.

Examples of the Late Postwar Modern Mode in the Thesis Study Area:

Philadelphia Federal Credit Union (Former "Kinney Shoes" Store); 1204





Chestnut Street, 1956. (Fig. 11.)

General Building Contractors office building; 36 S. 18th Street (Aka 32-36 S. 18th Street), 1961. (Fig. 8.)

The principal features of the High Postwar Modern mode are essentially those of the Middle Postwar Modern mode: the difference is in the degree of refinement and overall design quality. The High Postwar Modern mode is characterized by a higher degree of refinement of modern architectural design and composition, and a more sophisticated use of design elements and building materials.

Qualities of the International Style are fully expressed by the High Postwar Modern mode. These attributes include the pure expression of building volumes, and well-composed and regular placement of fenestration and other design elements. Additional features include exposed steel-frame construction with fully-glazed bays, and steel-frame construction frequently combined with masonry surfaces and building bases with stone or brick veneers.

High Postwar Modern buildings possess many of the features of buildings designed by such European modernists as Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, Giuseppe Terragni, and the pre-World War II work of Le Corbusier. In terms of overall design quality, such buildings are comparable to the work of these architects.

Example of the High Postwar Modern Mode in the Thesis Study Area:

Former Mercantile Library, Free Library of Philadelphia; 1021 Chestnut Street, 1954 (Fig. 3.)



With the classifications of Postwar architectural style defined, these categories can be applied to the twenty-seven buildings in the study area. Through this process, common design features shared by buildings can be identified, and the different levels of stylistic development expressed by buildings within each classification can be detected, thus forming the basis for more specific sub-categorization within each larger stylistic category.

The buildings in the study area that belong to the category of "Early Postwar Modern" express, within the parameters of this classification, distinctly different design sensibilities. There are essentially two clearly defined subdivisions of stylistic expression; buildings that represent a transition between Pre-World War II masonry structures and the glass and steel-frame commercial buildings of the 1950's, and those that clearly are rendered in the commercial variant of the Neo-Georgian style. Buildings that belong to the former group include the Sidney Hillman Medical Center designed by Louis Magaziner and Herman Polss, 1949-50 (Fig. 19.); U.S. Post Office Middle City branch (Steele Pownall & Gebhardt, 1949: Fig. 20.); Second Federal Savings and Loan Association (Stanley Selinck, 1948: Fig. 21.); the former office of the Benjamin Franklin Federal Savings and Loan Association (Ralph B. Bencker, 1952: Fig. 22.); Woolworth's (Harry W. Hakes, 1948: Fig. 23); Baker's Shoe Store (Thalheimer & Weitz, 1948: Fig. 24.); the former Swartz Furniture Store (George Neff, 1946: Fig. 25.); the Square Industries Parking Garage (Clarence Thalheimer, 1950: Fig. 28.); and the Association of Air Conditioning Contractors



Building (1954: Fig. 26.) The two Neo-Georgian commercial buildings in the study area are the addition to the Provident Bank Building, constructed in 1947 (Fig. 27.), and the "Real Estate Trust Company" building (Sidney E. Martin, 1947: Fig. 9.)<sup>1</sup>

The buildings that express a transitional design sensibility do so in varying degrees. Buildings such as the Second Federal Savings and former Benjamin Franklin Savings and Loan branches consist of facades, clad with marble and limestone, that frame large areas of glass divided and bordered with metal strips: these glazed zones are recessed within their borders. The rather conservative appearance of both buildings closely links them to conventional pre-World War II commercial building design, and is a reflection of their function; these buildings, originally dating from the early Twentieth century, were extensively renovated in the early Postwar period to serve as bank branches. In both cases, these small single-bay, two-story buildings function as Postwar period infill architecture along the commercial blocks of Chestnut Street.

The former Benjamin Franklin Savings and Loan office, possesses, with its polished granite base, fluted borders, and cornice, a design vocabulary of classicizing motifs. Combined with these traditional design components are the large plate glass surfaces defined by metal strips, plate glass door and stainless steel lintels, and recessed circular soffit lighting characteristic of Postwar modern buildings. However, the facade of the Second Federal Savings and Loan branch more closely anticipates the widespread use of glass and metal curtain wall construction in Postwar commercial



buildings, as evidenced by its facade of integrated glass and metal panels.

Two retail buildings, Woolworth's and the former Swartz Furniture Store, along with the Middle City post office branch, represent buildings that only refer in a minor way to pre-World War II commercial architecture. Both buildings are clad with masonry veneer, while the post office branch is of tan-glazed brick construction: all three examples refer to earlier architecture in terms of this emphasis on masonry exterior design. The exterior of Woolworth's is clad with manufactured stone blocks, while the former Swartz Furniture Store features limestone cladding.<sup>2</sup> The central roofline parapet of the Woolworth's store, featuring a stepped or setback design rendered in rounded strips of stainless steel, and the Swartz building, with its limestone veneer, further accentuate the pre-War design qualities of these buildings. The use of ridge-like strips of extruded metal and polished stainless steel to demarcate the floor levels of the Swartz Furniture building, and embellish and accentuate the window and facade borders of the Woolworth's store also alludes to pre-War design modes, in particular "Streamline Moderne."

However, the large glazed areas and largely unadorned exterior surfaces of both these buildings provide them with strong Postwar modern design qualities. The double-height plate glass recessed ground-floor storefront windows and prominent recessed upper-floor strip windows of the Woolworth's building, as well as the floor-to-ceiling windows that fill the width of the single bay of the Swartz Furniture Store building are clearly modern design features.





The Middle City post office branch, altered from its original physical condition with the installation of a new ground-floor front and second-floor windows of a compatible design, nonetheless retains a rather high level of architectural integrity and considerable original exterior design fabric. With its slightly projecting limestone bands along the facade, projecting side bay, and articulated brick cornice, the small two-story building clearly contains a greater number of traditional design elements than the two retail buildings. Yet with its band of second-floor windows, the building suggests the Postwar Modern design mode.

The next group of Early Postwar Modern buildings, composed of the Sidney Hillman Medical Center, "Baker's" Shoe Store, the former office building of the Association of Air Conditioning Contractors, and the "Square Industries" parking garage express an advancement towards the full-fledged Middle Postwar Modern design mode. All three buildings display the planar facades and elevations that suggest the buildings as enclosures of volumes, and the Modernist tendency to eliminate all ornament, including bands and strips of extruded metal and stainless steel. However, the use of masonry materials in the construction of these buildings and the suggestion of such construction as conveyed by a lack of lightness and transparency associated with the Middle Postwar Modern design mode, strongly implies that these buildings are transitional in nature.

The "Square Industries" parking garage is perhaps the least progressive building with respect to exhibiting the design features and qualities of the Middle



Postwar Modern mode. This enclosed two-level garage is a rather massive building composed of a base of Roman brick, white-painted exposed poured concrete slabs, and strips of steel casement windows that are not continuous but instead divided by columns clad with extruded metal panels on the ground floor and concrete pillars on the upper level. The structure's lack of lightness and transparency, qualities negated by its enclosed form and fenestration, clearly provide the building with an overall quality that is rather "retardataire." However, the design of the office entrance, with its plate glass window and door framed by a wide inside band of stainless steel, engages in play with the surrounding surfaces of extruded metal and Roman brick, a Middle Postwar Modern building material (Fig. 39.) Yet the window base clad with manufactured granite links the design to earlier commercial architecture.

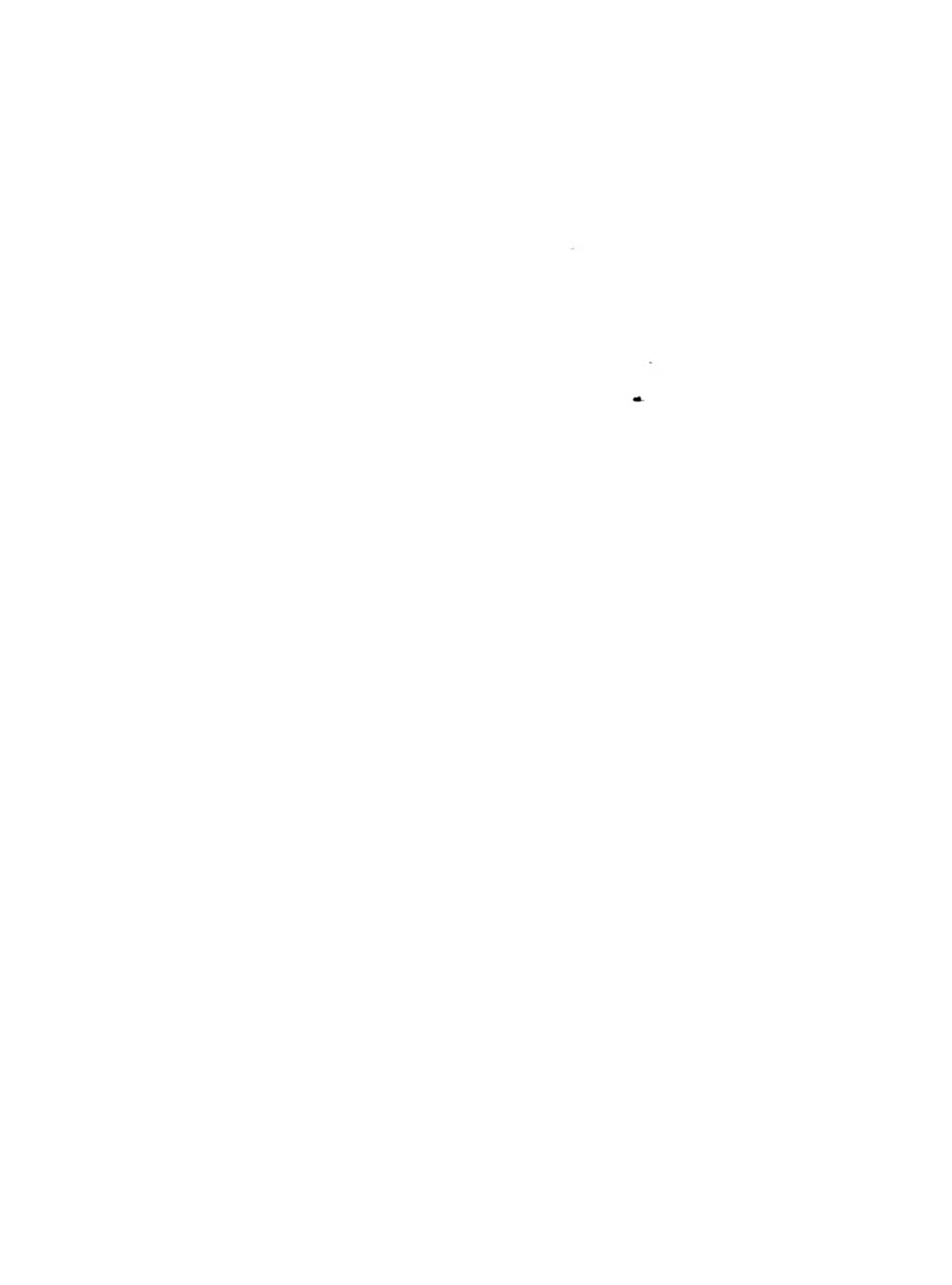
The former Air Conditioning Contractors building represents a more advanced design. The building features a central entrance block composed of tall bands of plate glass with stainless steel borders and framing, which is of greater height than the adjoining side wings of the building: there are also small square inset windows. The facade, veneered with yellow-glazed brick and panels of "Mo-Sai" manufactured stone, also consists of bands of double-hung steel frame windows (Fig. 40.) The transitional design quality of this building is thus derived from its symmetrical massing, fenestration and exterior masonry cladding.

The designs of both the Baker's Shoe Store building and the Sidney Hillman Medical Center depart from the influence of commercial and institutional pre-War



architectural design that effected Early Postwar Modern architecture. The Hillman Medical Center, with its asymmetrical, free-form plan, continuous bands of steel-framed windows and spandrels, sweeping curved entrance canopy, and juxtaposed flat planes of polished black granite, displays qualities of Postwar modern design (Fig. 41.)<sup>3</sup> In addition, the building contains an entrance consisting of large panels of plate glass divided by stainless steel bands and integrated glass and metal glazed zones located at the end walls of the main three-story block (Fig. 42.) Also, the juxtaposition of rather distinctive exterior materials; limestone, granite, and brown brick, provide the building with a Middle Postwar design quality. However, the double-hung design of the steel-framed windows and the piers clad with extruded metal that divide the window zones provide the building with anachronistic touches that are consistent with the Early Postwar Modern design mode.

The Baker's Shoe Store building represents a greater departure from the transitional qualities of the Early Postwar Modern mode. Featuring a rather heavy facade consisting of three layers of masonry materials above a recessed glass and metal storefront, the building is marked by the absence of the extruded metal and stainless steel borders and trim that suggests pre-War "Streamline Moderne" design or Neo-Classical carved stone. The random-coursed fieldstone and travertine cladding, which extends to the ground floor of the building to function as a frame, and yellow-glazed brick-clad rectilinear cubic volumes that project and recede, comprise the building's elevation. The spare quality of the facade is accentuated by a minimal



amount of fenestration; the upper floor strip of deeply recessed windows and recessed framed, paired square windows provide the only glazed zones on the building exterior.

However, it is the design of the ground-floor storefront which best anticipates the fully developed Postwar Modern design mode, in terms of the transparency and rectilinear design composition that characterize modern commercial architecture of the 1950's. The building's recessed storefront is composed of large fully glazed projecting display cases that are attached to the sides of the entrance and flank the front glass entrance doors (Fig. 43.) The side wall surfaces are veneered with translucent glass panels etched with an abstract geometric pattern.

Finally, the commercial architecture of the Early Postwar period was characterized by an affinity for the Georgian Revival design mode. The two buildings in the study area that exhibit this tendency are the Real Estate Trust Company building designed by Sidney E. Martin and the annex to the Provident Trust Bank building. Both structures date from 1947, and display the characteristic features and qualities of the fully-developed commercial Georgian Revival mode. Veneered in red brick, the exteriors of both buildings are articulated with marble and brick pilasters, courses and moldings of marble and limestone, a balustrade atop the Provident Bank annex, and entablature, cornice, pediment surround, and window sills, keystones, and arch impost blocks, all of marble, belonging to the Real Estate Trust Company.

Of the two buildings, the Real Estate Trust Company is undoubtedly the more elaborate. With its limestone and marble temple front facade encompassing an



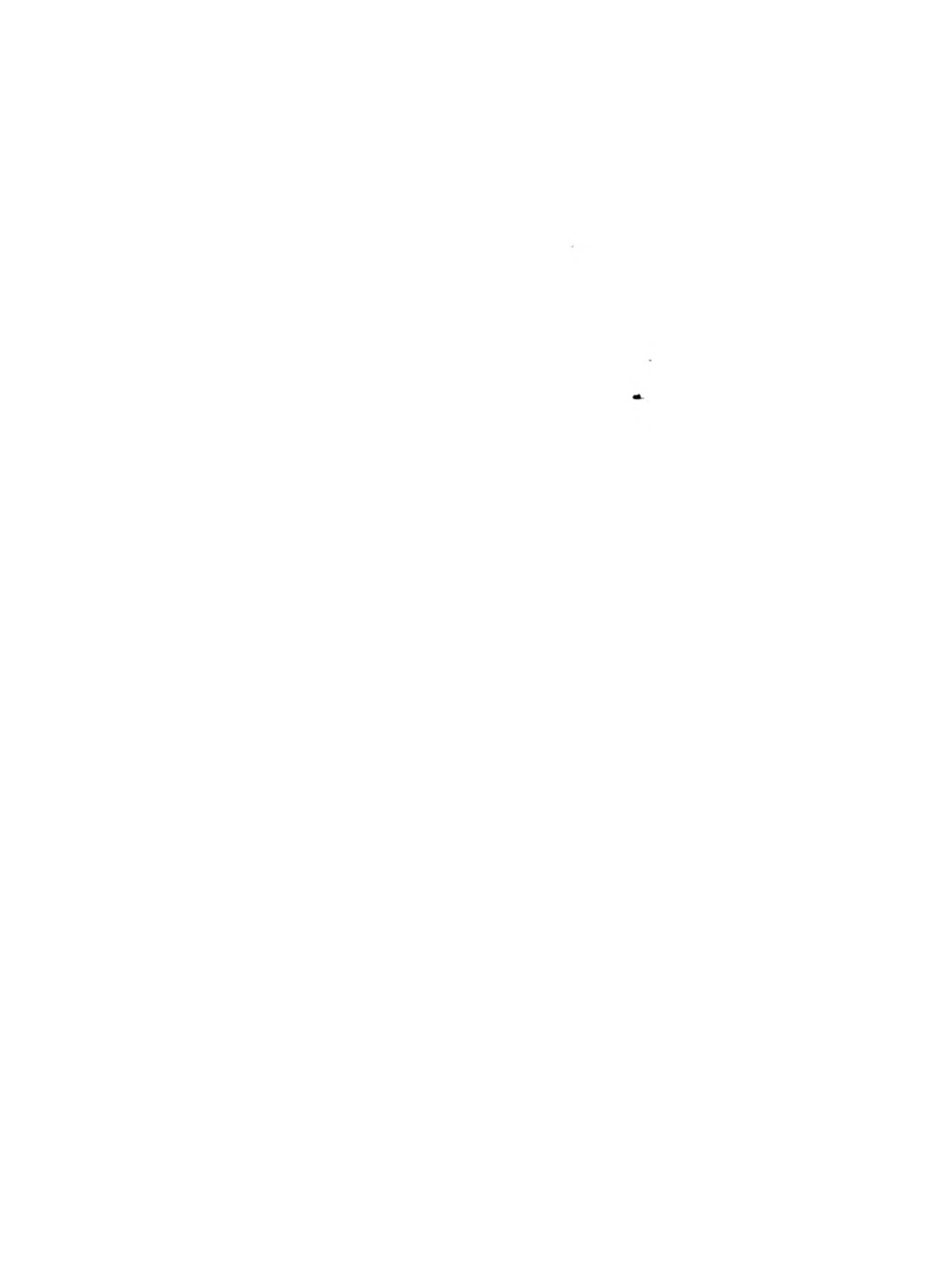


ornamental doorway, embellished second-floor center bay window and carved decorative panel, the building is a fully-developed example of the Georgian Revival, and yet there is some expression of planarity in the pair of marble courses that wrap around the building between the two floors. There is also a rear three-story addition, built in 1959 and rendered in an apparently more successful manner in the same Georgian Revival mode, with projecting brick courses.

On the other hand, the Provident National Bank annex is a rather inconspicuous addition to the main highrise office block, built in 1927 and designed in the commercial Georgian Revival style by architects Rankin & Kellog. Containing a main ground-floor banking hall, the annex, in terms of design, is completely integrated with the original main structure.

The next category of Postwar modern architecture, the Middle Postwar Modern design mode, encompasses buildings that possess the qualities and features of mid-Twentieth century modern architectural design, with an emphasis on planarity, rectilinear forms, transparency, total absence of ornament, and crisp, enclosed volumes. Yet, as in the case of the Early Postwar Modern buildings of this study, the Middle Postwar Modern architectural fabric exhibits varying degrees of adherence to these qualities and characteristics.

The introduction of changes to the design of Postwar modern buildings in Center City is evident in a trio of buildings, the Sophy Curson Dress Shop of 1952, designed by Beryl Price (Fig. 37.), the former S & P Training Center (Charles H.



Ingle, 1953: Fig. 31.), and the annex to the YWCA Building (Howell Lewis Shay, 1954: Fig. 33.) All three of these buildings display an increased preference for transparency, crisp, rectilinear design composition, and the total absence of any ornament intended to articulate the building facade and elevations. Both the S & P Training Center and YWCA Annex buildings refer in their designs, in which limestone cladding largely comprises the exterior veneer, to the Early Postwar Modern mode. Of these two buildings, it is the YWCA Annex that appears as the more anachronistic design expression, with its upper floors sporting individual steel-frame double-hung windows in a field of limestone veneer, while strips of such Early Postwar period fenestration, along with painted steel piers, dominate the rest of the facade (Fig. 44.) However, the YWCA Annex introduces a greater transparency and an attempt to merge interior and outside space, as evidenced by the extensive use of plate glass in the design of the main entrance (Fig. 45.), while the clearly asymmetrical massing of the building's main block and stairwell tower, strongly suggests an allegiance to a more developed Postwar modern architectural expression. The juxtaposition of the taller stairwell tower, with its vertical band of translucent glass and projecting top, with the rest of the building, is in fact reminiscent of modern Dutch architecture of the 1930's.

The S & P Training Center is a greater refinement of the Postwar Modern design treatment of the building envelope. With its ground-floor entirely glazed with a continuous band of large plate glass and transom windows, and an uninterrupted



upper-floor band of well-detailed tall steel-frame casement windows, the building, in spite of its limestone veneer, emphasizes the building as a thin, taut structural envelope possessing qualities of transparency and planarity, that encloses interior volumes.

The Sophy Curson Dress Shop introduces a new building form that would achieve a great level of popularity in the Postwar period of the 1950's: the flat or sloped-roof single-story pavilion. The Curson store features a veneer largely composed of an expanse of dark brown Roman brick, interrupted at several points by a corner butted-joint and a side elevation display window. The building is surmounted by a gradually sloped roof composed of varnished wood strips and fascia that forms wide eaves along the front and side elevations (Fig. 46): the building is also embellished with original period lettering in the design of its signage. However, the heavy molded doorframe of manufactured stone is a rather anachronistic feature which disrupts the clean lines and overall planar quality of the building design.

Another group of three Middle Postwar Modern buildings is composed of two structures with entirely redesigned and rebuilt facades, the former Quaker Savings & Loan Association building designed by Sydney Jelinek and built in 1954 (Fig. 34.), and the former Cayuga Savings & Loan building (Philip Mastrin, 1960: Fig. 38.) Both of these buildings exhibit highly individual expressions of the Middle Postwar Modern, while displaying a similar approach to the design of new Postwar modern facades and elevations. A third building, 1800 Chestnut Street built in 1959 and



designed by Leo Hauf (Fig. 32), is a fine example of a newly constructed building that exhibits the emphasis on expressing new building technology characteristic of the 1950's. This narrow two-story building features a second-floor metal and glass curtain wall that punctuates the surrounding streetscape of early Twentieth century masonry-clad commercial buildings, and thus contributes a decidedly modern design element to the existing variety of architectural styles evident along Chestnut and South 18th Streets. In addition, the building, with its extensive curtain wall exterior, projects the qualities of a pavilion, rather than that of a modern commercial building.

The Quaker Savings & Loan building, like its Early Postwar Modern predecessors, is an extensive renovation of an early Twentieth commercial building that has supplied the original structure with an entirely new identity. The re-design of the main elevation features a band which frames a recessed facade. This "frame" also consists of an inside strip of a white manufactured stone simulating marble and a wide soffit of white-painted metal panels containing round lights. However, instead of the rather uniform and simplified facades of the Benjamin Franklin and Second Federal Savings buildings, the multiple bay front elevation of the Quaker Savings & Loan building is considerably more complex. Composed of a strong diagonal plane which in turn consists of an upper story plate glass curtain wall and a ground-floor plate glass storefront separated by a band of metal cladding, this surface is juxtaposed with a projecting side bay clad with panels of extruded metal and containing upper floor wraparound plate glass windows (Fig. 47.) The bold geometric forms and play





of metal and glass surfaces clearly provide this building with qualities of the Middle Postwar Modern design mode.

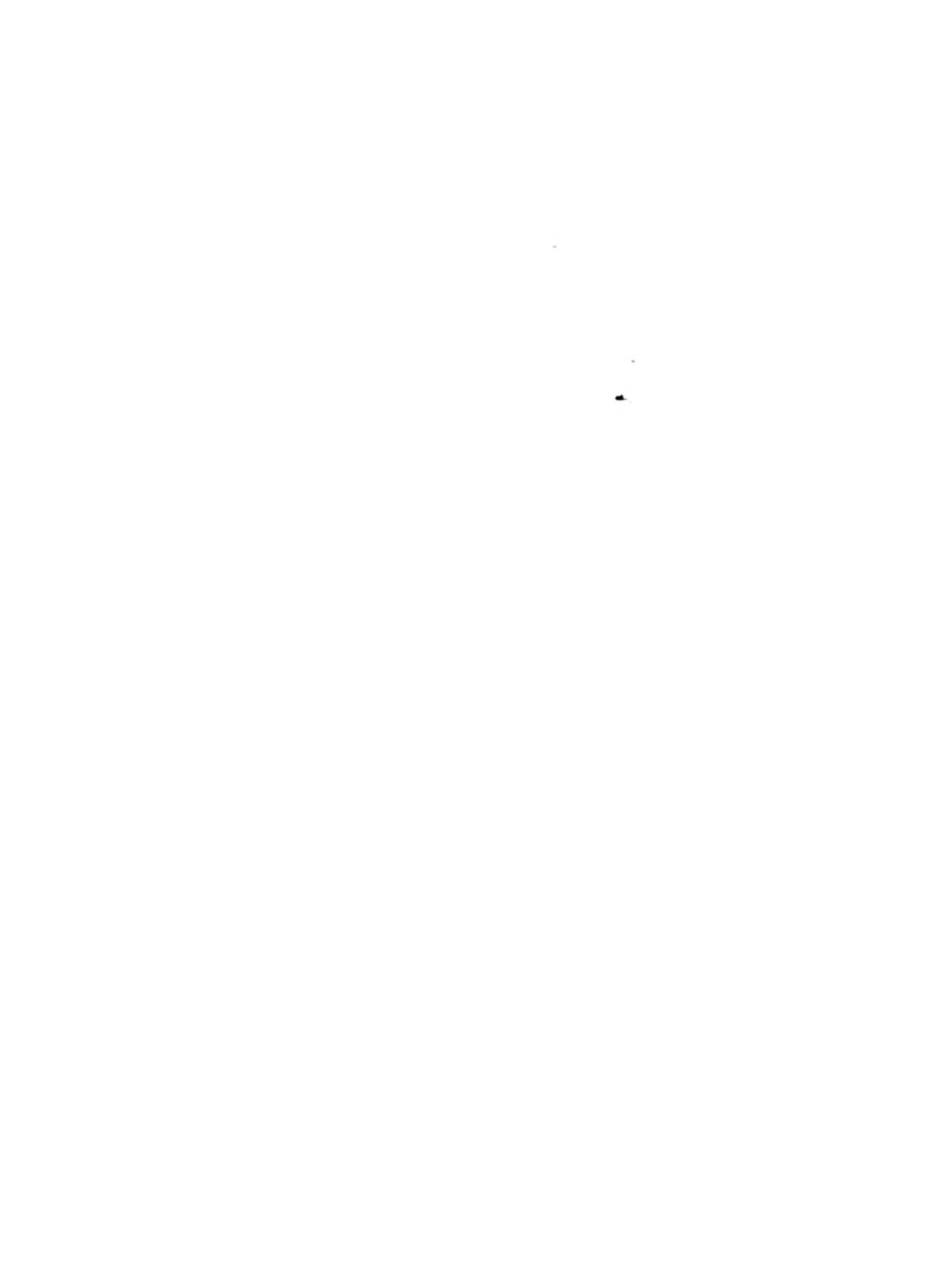
The formal complexity of the re-designed main elevation of the Quaker Savings & Loan building is echoed in the re-designed exterior of the former Cayuga Federal Savings & Loan building. The different exterior surfaces include an inner surface area that includes fenestration, which is clad with square panels of manufactured stone, and a metal and glass curtain wall that sheathes the remainder of the building exterior. A projecting grid framed by a band clad with metal paneling and comprised of thin long metal strips has been superimposed over the combination fixed-plate glass and double-hung windows located in the central facade portion clad with manufactured stone. The ground floor of the building is composed of a projecting row of large plate glass windows, and a row of round metal-clad columns which support the projecting grid located above (Fig. 48.)

The next group of Middle Postwar Modern buildings is comprised of buildings that possess an increased sophistication in terms of design and handling of materials, as well as a refinement of modern design and clear and cogent expression of its salient qualities that makes these structures particularly distinguished. These buildings include the former Mercantile Library of the Free Library of Philadelphia built in 1954 and designed by Martin, Stewart and Noble (Fig. 3.); "The Avenue" Dress Store, formerly the Coward Shoe Store, (Oscar Stonorov and Louis I. Kahn, 1949: Fig. 35.); and the Charles Weinstein Geriatric Center (Herman Polss, 1959: Fig. 4.)



The Charles Weinstein Geriatric Center is a flat-roofed single-story building strongly suggestive of a pavilion that expresses an esthetic that is more characteristic of Postwar commercial or even residential architecture in such places as Postwar suburbs and southern California. This long and low-rise free-standing building, somewhat an anomaly in its urban setting, is a skillful and tight composition of intersecting planes which form the building's walls and roof. In its construction, bearing slab walls of brick have been combined with the steel-frame construction of the roof and recessed portion of the facade, which features marble panels and steel-frame clerestory windows. These brick walls tie the building to the streetlines on the main (south) and east elevations, while also serving to enclose a rear terrace and garden onto which the building opens to the north. The roof, with its wide eave, extends over this section of the facade: there is also a row of soffit lights contained within metal cylinders. The building entrance is located to the east side, where it is recessed behind a projecting slab clad with marble paneling; a band of steel-frame clerestory windows, located along the building's east elevation, completes the architectural composition.

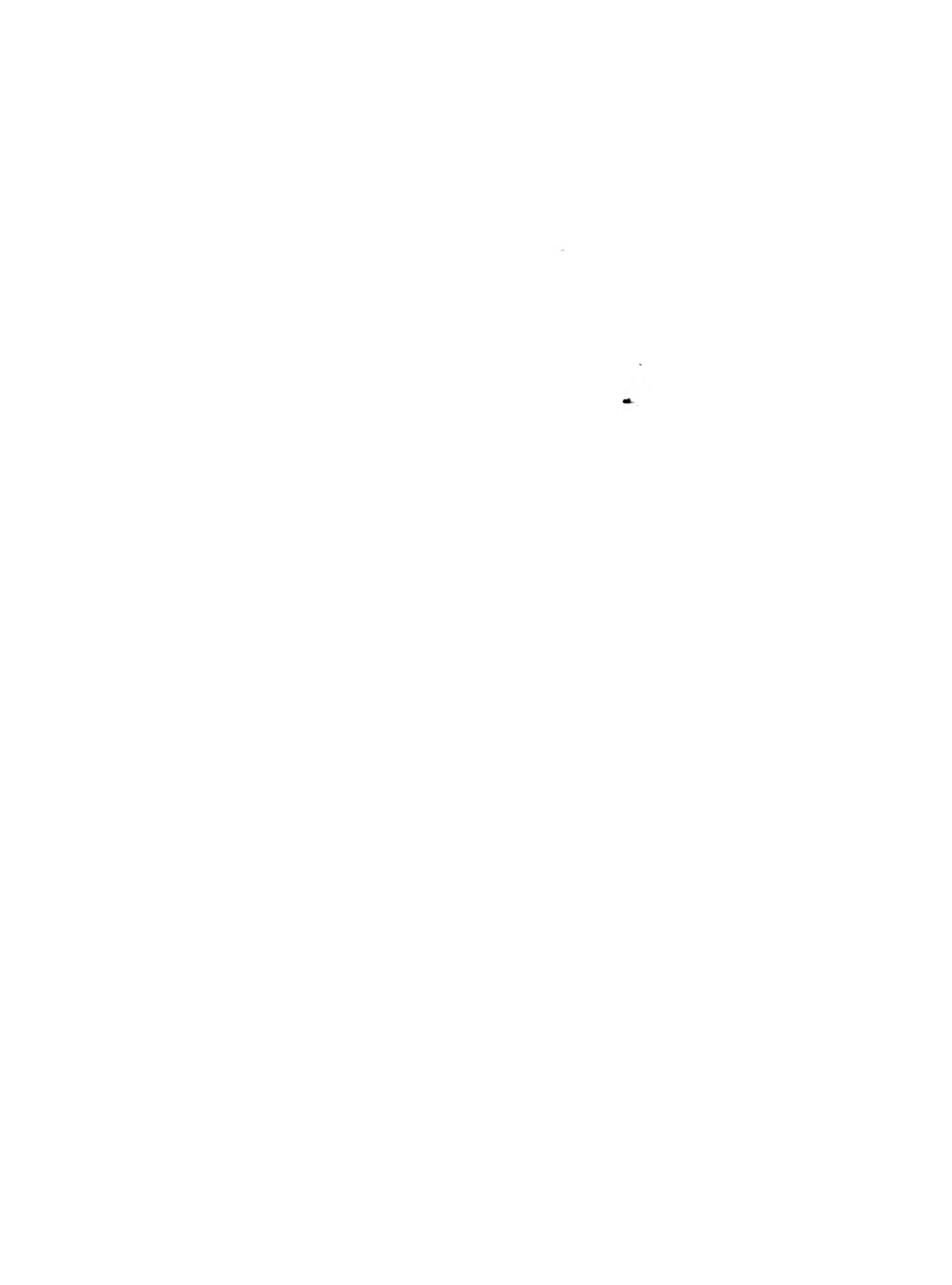
The former Mercantile Library is another expression of the Middle Postwar Modern building as a pavilion. The library, however, is a considerably more abstract, even pristine expression of this design esthetic which results in a kind of minimalist Postwar modern design. The building is essentially a two-story infill structure composed of a five-bay plate glass front that entirely comprises the main elevation.



The individual glass panels which compose the facade are bordered by strips and a projecting band of stainless steel, while the front is framed by a pair of granite-clad piers. The building's flat roof, of steel-frame joist construction, is set back from the front and features a stainless steel fascia. In addition, the building's signage, composed of metal letters and located above the paired entrance doors, is intended to function as an integral design component.

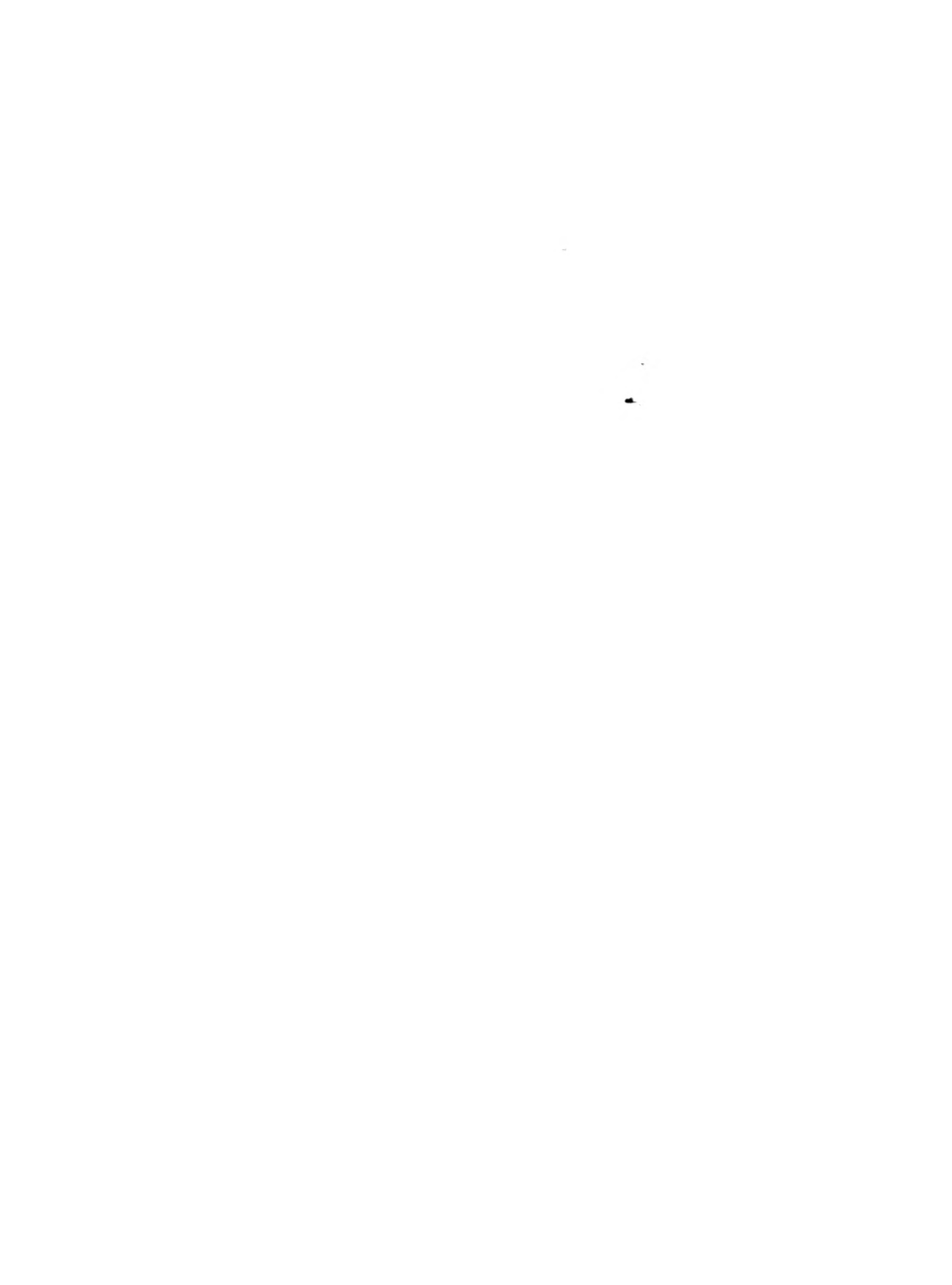
"The Avenue" Dress Store is another building, in this case an entirely re-designed facade, which features a minimalist plate glass and metal frame front.<sup>4</sup> Significantly larger than the Mercantile Library, the main elevation of this building is composed of a grid of large square sections of plate glass. In spite of the alteration of its ground floor, in which the lower registers of the grid have been replaced with new display cases and a wide metal band accommodating the store signage, the building retains the prime quality of transparency that it originally possessed. As in the case of the library, this glass and metal front is bracketed by brick walls, the ends of which are clad in granite, and there is also a portion of the building that is setback at the rooftop level, in this instance it is a penthouse featuring large plate glass and steel casement windows.

Yet another trio of buildings indicates a more prosaic approach to designing buildings in the Middle Postwar Modern design mode. These buildings, the "Ambassador Towne House" apartment building built in 1957 and designed by George S. Idell (Fig. 29.), the apartment building at 118 S. 21st Street (George S. Idell,



1954: **Fig. 30.**); and the City of Philadelphia Parking Garage (Harbeson Hough Livingston & Larson, 1953: **Fig. 36.**), represent two building typologies, the highrise apartment building and parking garage, many examples of which were constructed during the Postwar era. Both apartment buildings are rather typical examples of the steel-frame highrise apartment tower clad in red brick and featuring plate glass entrances and steel casement and sliding sash windows. Yet, the quality of the fenestration of both buildings is somewhat notable. The segmental bands of sliding sash windows that characterize the Ambassador Towne House lessens the monotonous quality of its red brick veneer while producing a sense of openness (**Fig. 49.**). The multi-pane steel casement windows of the apartment house on South 21st Street are a distinctive feature of this building, since they also alleviate the deadening effect of the bland tower and its monotonous red brick veneer (**Fig. 50.**) In addition, both buildings feature distinctive and well-detailed narrow fixed-pane and sliding sash windows. In the Ambassador Towne House, a pair of these windows appears on the outside of groundfloor retail space along Van Pelt Street, while the bathrooms located on the upper apartment floors of the apartment house on 21st Street feature a similar type of narrow fenestration (**Fig. 51.**)

The City of Philadelphia Parking Authority Garage is a notable design solution toward producing a building with the rather undesirable function, in an urbanistic sense, of accommodating automobiles. This "L"-shaped parking structure, located immediately adjacent to the former Mercantile Library, is a building which openly





expresses its concrete slab construction along the elevation facing South 10th Street, while in response to the more unified streetscape of the 1000 block of Chestnut Street, the garage structure features an elevation comprised of a concrete grid with square openings and square spandrel panels infilled with sheets of rough textured green slate.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, the Late Postwar Modern design mode is represented by two buildings located in the thesis study area, the General Building Contractors Association building designed by Clifford Garner and constructed in 1961, and the Philadelphia Federal Credit Union building (William Linker, 1956: Fig. 28).

The Philadelphia Federal Credit Union Building, with its rather sculptural, yet planar and extensively re-designed main elevation, functions as a transitional work between the Middle and Late Postwar Modern modes. Compared to the re-designed Middle Postwar Modern Quaker and Cayuga Savings & Loan buildings, the tall single-bay Credit Union building features a rather subdued reconstructed facade. As in the case of earlier re-designed facades, the front is framed with a band, in this case, metal cladding. However, the surface of the facade is veneered with black Carrera structural glass punctuated by rows of polished metal "disks" which provide texture and add visual interest to an otherwise blank exterior surface. The ground floor is composed of four arched plate glass windows, an arched double entrance door, along with an arched canopy with inserted round lights: the canopy supplies the building with a sculptural design element. Such applied decorative features as segmental



arches, with their reference to more traditional architectural styles, belong to buildings rendered in the Late Postwar Modern mode. (Fig. 52.)

The General Building Contractors Association building is another extensive re-design of a building, originally constructed in 1947, that rejects the planarity and smooth, unadorned surfaces of Middle Postwar Modern buildings in favor of an ornamental metal screen superimposed over the building's fenestration.<sup>6</sup> This screen, contained within the painted concrete frame of the facade, features the decorative motif of interlocking circles, popular during the Late Postwar period. In addition, the screen is juxtaposed with the flat plate glass surfaces of the ground floor and the band of glass located above it.



NOTES

1. For references to the architects of buildings in the thesis study area, dates of building construction, and other related information, see the building inventory forms included in Appendix 1 of this paper.
2. The Woolworth building also possesses the rather curious feature of a black marble doorframe topped with a broken pediment, added to the building in 1960 (See Permit #928 for "Alteration".) The location of this design feature against a flat wall of manufactured stone cladding surrounded by the wide band of rippled stainless steel that frames the ground-floor storefront is perhaps an unusual attempt to link the building with the city's past.
3. It should be noted that the third and fourth floor addition of the Hillman Medical Center was designed by Herman Polss and added to the building in 1959 (See Building Permit #3509 "Addition.") Polss designed these upper floors so as to imperceptibly blend and merge with the design of the existing structure. However, the grain of the Kasota limestone veneer which clads the addition possesses a noticeably different character.
4. "The Avenue" Dress Shop was originally the Coward Shoe Store, one of the few retail designs produced by Oskar Stonorov and Louis I. Kahn. A description of the interior design of the shoe store was published in a 1945 article entitled, "Stonorov and Kahn's Conception of a Men's Shoe Store." The article described the proposed store design as featuring an informal layout, continuous cold cathode lighting installed behind the entire length of the corrugated glass wall of the interior, and what was deemed as the "extensive, though rational use of glass in the design of the store entrance and facade to provide "a measure of objectivity" that would encourage potential customers to focus their attention on a particular displayed item rather than the design of the display itself. See There is a New Trend in Store Design (Pittsburgh, PA: Pittsburgh Plate Glass, 1945): pp. 36-37.  
 Also, for an account of the completed store design see "Glass Front Store in Philadelphia" in Architectural Forum, December, 1949, Vol. 91, No. 6: pp. 94-95. This article describes the use of the glass-paneled facade to reveal the organization of the interior into two sales floors, as an example of the



store's "surprising direct design." In addition, the owner's intention to retain the same store layout and interior design for a twenty year period encouraged a final design of elegant simplicity. The article also mentions that the three-story shoe store was "pared down" from a nine-story early twentieth century commercial building, while the columns and walls of the former retail establishment were retained for reuse. In addition, the Coward Shoe Store was comprised of departments for men's, women's, and children's shoes, with the women's shoe section located on the upper floor level, and that the total cost of the new store design was \$95,000.

5. Herman Polss' unexecuted design for the Charles Weinstein Geriatric Center appeared in the 1959 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA, (Philadelphia, 1959): p. 146. This conception differs from the completed design in that it features a facade bay consisting of plate glass panels that punctuates the brick exterior surface, and a wide strip of aluminum sunshades located above the row of upper-level clerestory windows facing west.
6. Lewis Mumford, in his column entitled "The Sky Line: Philadelphia II," published in The New Yorker (May 26, 1956, Vol. 32 : p. 117) described the City of Philadelphia Parking Authority Garage, with its grid and panel facade fronting on Chestnut Street, as "paradoxically, at once neutral and distinguished." In addition, Mumford regarded the building as functioning as a "very good foil" to the adjacent Mercantile Library.
7. The previous building constructed on the site in 1947 was designed by A.C. Borzner and owned by James W. Baird Building Associates (See Building Permit #4964 for "Office.")





### Chapter 3: A Notable Group of Institutional Buildings

Of the buildings included in this study of Postwar architecture in Center City, there exists a trio of institutional buildings that warrants closer examination; the Sidney Hillman Medical Center of the Philadelphia Men's Apparel Industry, the Metropolitan Mid-City YWCA Annex, and the Mercantile Library of the Free Library of Philadelphia. These Postwar buildings introduced new functional features in order to meet the new needs and requirements of institutional operations. In addition, by constructing these buildings and adopting Postwar modern architectural design, each institution created for itself a new public identity.

The Mid-City YWCA Annex, completed in 1954 and designed by Howell Lewis Shay (Fig. 33.), was built as a mixed-use structure, and was unique in accommodating such varied functions as housing, recreational and religious activities, and public education. It was the first building to be constructed in Philadelphia for the YWCA since 1916, and was designed to provide dormitory apartments for women visiting Philadelphia, a regulation tournament-sized swimming pool together with other recreational amenities, and seven classrooms to be leased on a long-term basis by the Philadelphia Board of Education as a public school.<sup>1</sup> In respect to accommodating these functions, the building annex represented a major expansion of activities and services and in some respects was a departure from the traditional role



of the YWCA in Philadelphia.<sup>2</sup>

A building fund had been established for the new annex in 1950 and ground breaking for the new facility was announced for the first week of June, 1953. The cost of the new annex was estimated to be \$750,000.<sup>3</sup> In 1949, Sydney E. Martin of Martin & Stewart Architects was commissioned to produce a design for the new annex. Martin's design was composed of a four-story building that largely faced away from Chestnut Street. The Chestnut Street elevation was composed of a base with a side entrance that featured a large steel-framed window, above which was the three-story slightly projecting main block of the building. The elevation of this main block featured a central glazed bay that extended the full height of the building, while the side elevation, facing away from the street, was composed of bands of tall steel casement windows. The building itself was to be clad with masonry panels (Fig. 53.)

Martin's proposed design was never adopted and instead the board of the Metropolitan YWCA commissioned Howell Lewis Shay to design the new annex.<sup>4</sup> Shay retained the four-story building height, but chose to site the building so that it largely faced the street. The building plan assumed a shape comprised of a long spine and three attached wings: several courtyards designed for outdoor recreation were thereby created (Fig. 54.) As in the case of the Martin design, Shay's design for the new annex was a rather restrained Postwar modern architectural expression, but unlike the earlier design, Shay's scheme appears as a contextual response to the architecture



of the main Metropolitan YWCA building, constructed in 1923. The new addition was composed of a limestone and brick-clad building with an extensively-glazed entrance composed of tall plate glass windows, and steel casement and single double-hung windows on the upper floors.<sup>5</sup>

The first and second floors of the new annex were to be devoted to offices and classrooms, while "low-priced" studio-type bedrooms for residents and transients would occupy the third and fourth floors: these rooms were to be furnished in the "latest contemporary style" with such built-in furnishings as desks, clothing chests, and closets.<sup>6</sup> Other amenities in the dormitory section of the building included a private lounge, kitchens, and laundry and sewing rooms. The annex also contained a rooftop sun-deck and all-purpose recreation room in addition to the indoor swimming pool located in the basement, the largest pool belonging to any of the Philadelphia YWCA branches: there was also a non-sectarian chapel with ornamental windows designed by noted stained glass window designer Henry Lee Willet of Philadelphia.<sup>7</sup>

The Sidney Hillman Medical Center, another Middle Postwar institutional building located one block away from the Mid-City YWCA Annex, featured a number of functional and planning innovations which contributed to the building's significance. The Hillman Medical Center was constructed and fully funded by the Philadelphia Clothing Manufacturers Association and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America as a center to provide diagnostic and preventive medical care to approximately 25,000 garment workers in Philadelphia.<sup>8</sup> As in the case of the



Metropolitan Branch YWCA Annex, the partnership established between two distinctly different organizations in constructing and operating a new institutional building was a notable aspect of the project.<sup>9</sup>

The Hillman Center was designed by Philadelphia architect, Louis Magaziner, with Herman Polss as his associate. After considering a building parti based on "U" and "T"-shaped plans, Magaziner and Polss decided to design a building composed of a long central diagonal main building block with attached wings.<sup>10</sup> On the one hand, this dominant diagonal form permits the building to achieve a physical distance from Chestnut Street and thus assert its status as a designed object, therefore expressing an important quality of architectural modernism. However, the building also manages to relate to the street, thus becoming part of the street wall by way of the location of its annex sections. The same sort of ambivalent or tentative expression of modern architectural design projected by the massing of the health center is expressed in the exterior design treatment of the building. The flat, unadorned exterior surfaces, rectilinear massing, and bands of steel-framed windows with continuous strips of aluminum solar shades on the rear elevation clearly express a modern esthetic (Fig. 55.), while the exterior cladding of limestone and black granite strongly suggest an attempt to relate the building to the adjacent streetscapes and surrounding architectural context of mid-to-late Nineteenth and early Twentieth century masonry buildings.

Ground was broken for the new building on October 17, 1949, with the erection of the steel-framing begun in early February, 1950, and the pouring of





reinforced concrete taking place in early April (Fig. 56.) By early September, 1950, the building was completed.

The Hillman Medical Center features a number of notable elements. Although it was constructed as a health center intended for ambulant patients who would visit the facility mainly between the hours of 5pm and 7pm, provision was made to later convert the center into a 200-bed general hospital in which space was reserved in the basement for a future hospital kitchen, while footings and steel pillars were arranged to accept an additional four floors atop the main diagonal building block.<sup>11</sup> The center also included a fully-equipped auditorium, often used for lectures and presentations on health issues, located in a separate building wing connected to the main building block by an enclosed curved passageway, access to which could be provided when the rest of the center was closed.

The Hillman Center featured a highly functional plan consisting of corridors, waiting room alcoves, offices, and examination rooms (Fig. 57.) The building's interior design was composed of a spatial organization comprised of a system of waiting area alcoves designed to accommodate patients, which served the individual clinics of the health center (Fig. 58.) Since not all the clinics were open each day, large numbers of individuals waiting for doctors at a particular clinic could be easily accommodated. Thus, the impersonal experience of being among a mass of people in a single large waiting room was eliminated. These waiting room areas consisted of rows of upholstered steel-frame chairs contained within metal and ribbed translucent



glass partitions. In addition, the size of the examination rooms could be altered through the use of moveable partitions.

Durable materials of high quality were employed throughout the interior spaces of the Hillman Center and included terrazzo floors, and marble-clad walls and columns (Fig. 59.) Suspended "Louverall" egg crate-type ceiling panels were installed in hallways, while stained plywood wall paneling provided the interior surface of the auditorium (Fig. 60.) In addition, the interior walls were finished with removable panels so that easy access to the building's mechanical systems could be achieved in case of needed repairs.<sup>12</sup>

The last building belonging to this trio of notable institutional buildings, the Mercantile Library of the Free Library of Philadelphia designed by Martin, Stewart & Noble and constructed in 1953, is perhaps the most outstanding of the group.<sup>13</sup> The Mercantile Library, housed in a largely glass pavilion of great design elegance and simplicity, is clearly a High Postwar Modern building (Fig. 61.) The building which Lewis Mumford described as "small, open, almost nude, disarmingly transparent and inviting" is a rare example of the full flowering of Postwar architectural modernism in Center City, Philadelphia.<sup>14</sup>

The construction of the building, the fourth home of the once autonomous Mercantile Library, began in 1952 when the Free Library signed an agreement with the Philadelphia Parking Authority to exchange the 1859 Franklin Market Building, the home of the Mercantile Library since 1867, for the site of the new building at



1021 Chestnut Street. The authority planned to demolish the building, located immediately to the west of the site of the new library, in order to construct a new parking garage. In providing compensation for the demolition of the Market building, the Parking Authority agreed to contribute \$350,000 towards the construction of the new library building: the library opened to the public on December 9, 1953.<sup>15</sup>

According to one account, the genesis of the design for the new Mercantile Library building derived from the desire of the Free Library director, Emerson Greenaway, to provide a new building that would emulate the design of new retail architecture. Greenaway, impressed by the striking glass facade of a new shoe store, with its brightness, transparency, and functional convenience, believed that such a design could be adapted to a library facility. Indeed, Greenaway believed that library books should be considered as merchandise which must be advertised, and the best and most effective way of accomplishing this goal was to house them in "a bright modern structure."<sup>16</sup>

The result was a "brisk new type of book-lending center" possessing the "general appearance of an ultra-modern shoe store" designed to capture the customer when the urge strikes him."<sup>17</sup> Lewis Mumford described the building as appearing outwardly as "little more than a panel of huge windows, set in a stainless steel frame," but that the rather modest building achieves, by way of its qualities of lightness and transparency, the same end as a more recognized example of Postwar modern architecture, the Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company building on



Manhattan's Fifth Avenue, designed by Gordon Bunshaft and completed in 1954. Both buildings, according to Mumford, became eloquent pieces of self-identification that effectively revealed their functions, thus greatly mitigating the effect of their modern architectural design to hide or disguise the particular function of the building.<sup>18</sup>

The large expanse of glass panels, bordered by strips of stainless steel, that essentially comprises the building's facade was also in part necessitated by the size of the building lot; the facade is framed by the projecting side brick walls of the building, the ends of which are clad in polished gray granite. Measuring 35 ft. in width, 163 ft. in length and tightly situated between larger buildings, Sydney E. Martin felt compelled to open up the main elevation as much as possible. Also, by eschewing a facade composed of traditional design components, the library is able to stand out in a striking manner among the older masonry buildings that compose the streetscape. The effect of this relationship is to transform the library into what Mumford refers to as a "poser."<sup>19</sup>

The openness and transparency of the facade is reflected in the free-flowing spaces of the library's highly functional interior layout (Fig. 62.) The interior is composed of a double-height entrance level, entirely visible from the street, where the book circulation desk, a lounge area with seating, and book bins are located: the library housed some 45,000 volumes. Connected to this area are the upper and lower levels of the library; the upper level housed the general book collection, while the

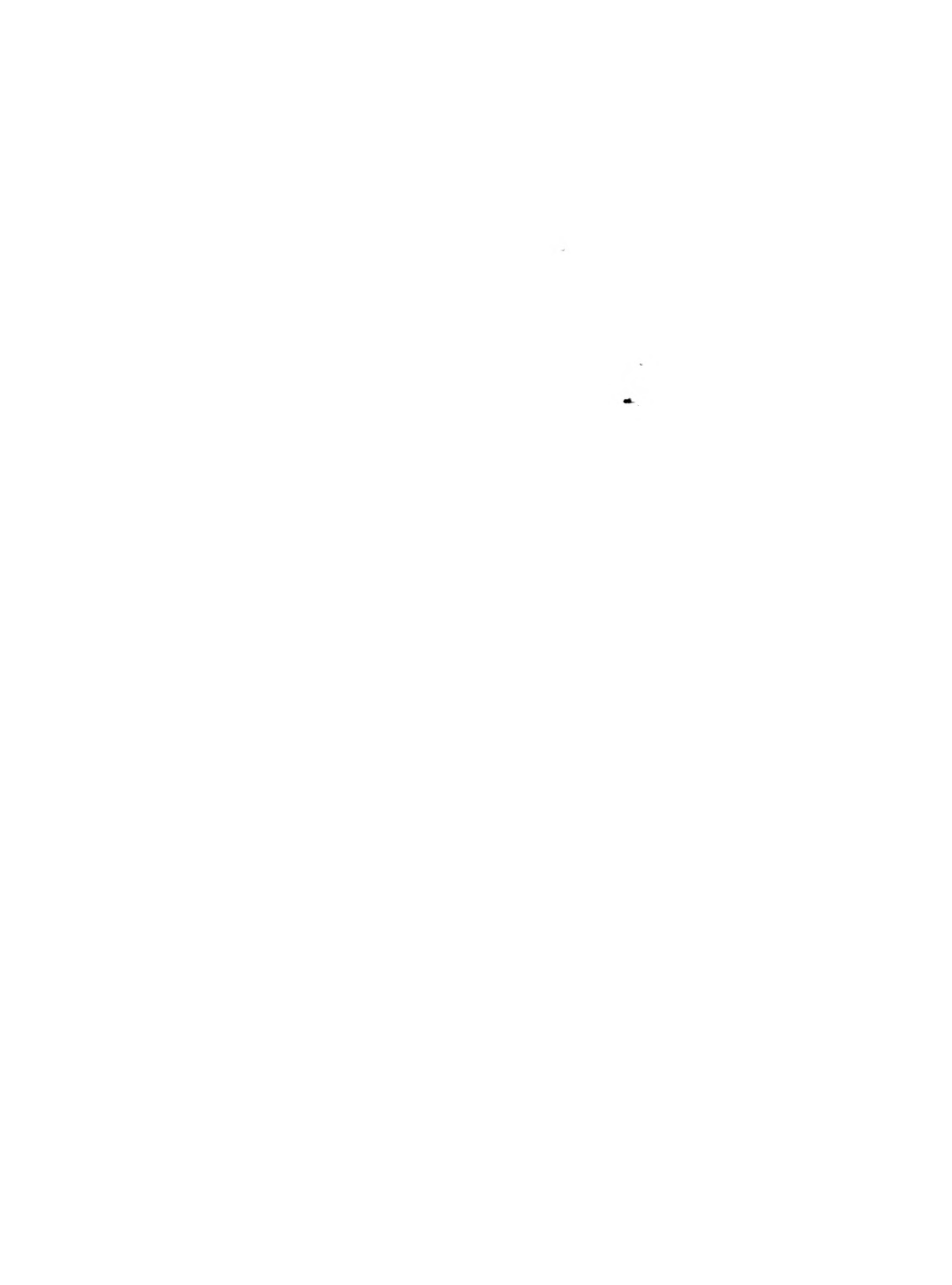




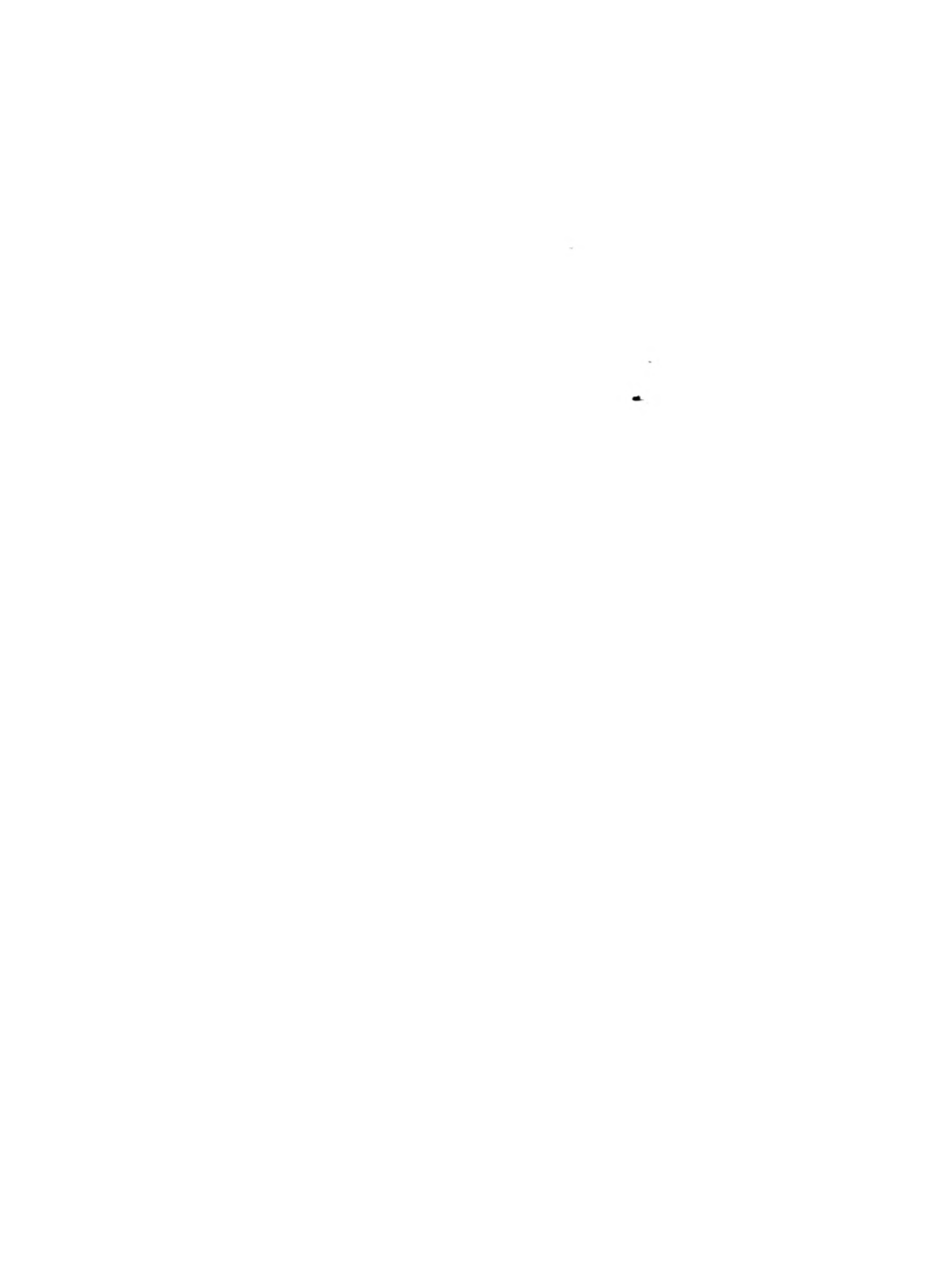
lower level accommodated reference books and the business library. The result of the split-level plan is the creation of an openness and spaciousness that, because of the role of the entrance hall, eliminates the confusion a patron may have as to which level he or she must peruse; instead, the patron is directed by the layout of the interior as to where to go.

Another notable feature of the building was the efficient florescent lighting distributed evenly throughout the interior through continuous transverse strips of corrugated plastic panels suspended between acoustical baffles: the design of this interior lighting resulted in large luminous ceiling surfaces (**Fig. 63.**)<sup>20</sup> In addition, there is a reading garden located to the rear of the building, from which the building's two levels are defined in a glass and metal-panelled elevation designed in a similar manner to the library's facade (**Fig. 64.**)

The embellishment and articulation of the interior design surfaces is accomplished through the use of stained wood wall paneling consisting mainly of maple and red birch, and glazed cinderblock wall surfaces featuring gray, brown, and orange-tan colors. The library book cases were arranged to form alcoves near the west wall, while chairs and tables were placed to break up the rather large uninterrupted space into smaller spatial areas. Furnishings included metal frame chairs with wood seats designed by Charles and Ray Eames and upholstered couches and sofas manufactured by Knoll Associates.<sup>21</sup> The interior of the library also featured several works of art, including a metal mobile suspended from the ceiling of

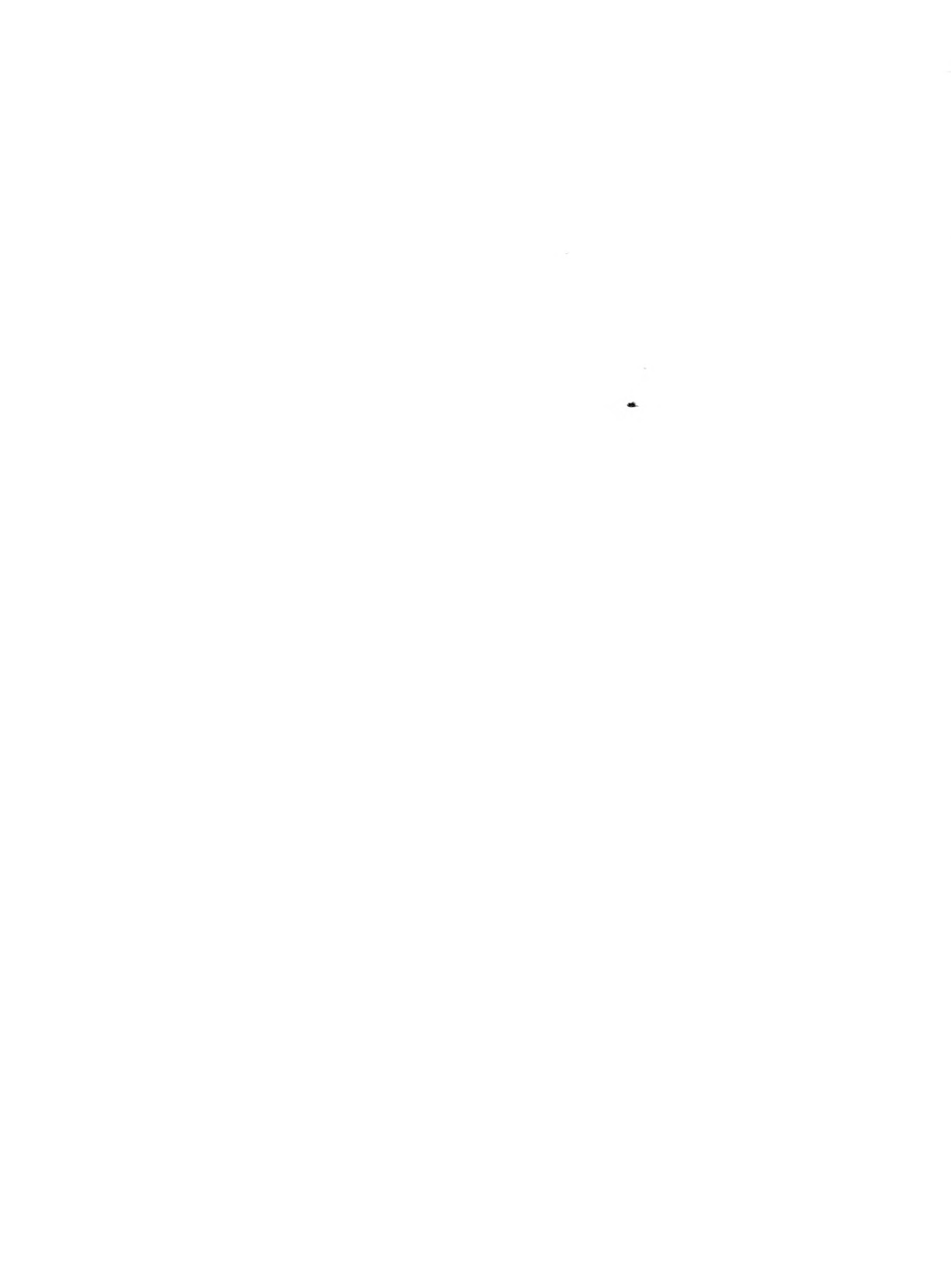


the entrance vestibule designed by Philadelphia artist Marshall Brown, as well as a mural, measuring twelve by eighteen feet, painted by artist Raymond Spiller, that depicted groups of library readers: the mural was located on the west wall of the entrance hall.



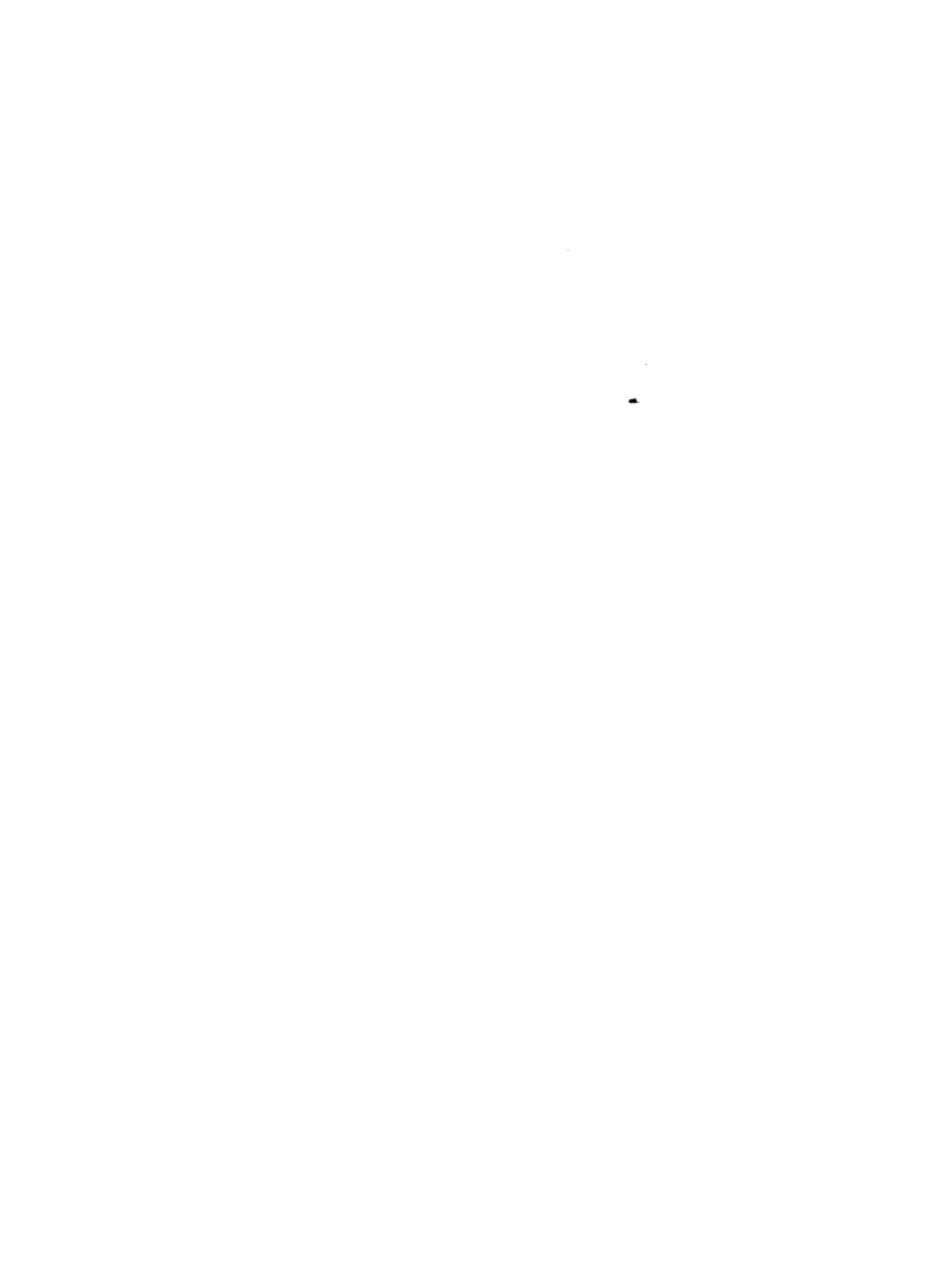
NOTES

1. Press Release dated November 22, 1954. From the YWCA Metropolitan Branch File of the Temple University Urban Archives: Box 9.
2. Press Release dated January 14, 1954 from Public Relations Director Dorothy Zuckerkandel (From the YWCA Metropolitan Branch File at the Temple University Urban Archives.) This collaboration between the YWCA and the Philadelphia Board of Education was touted as the first time a joint public/private venture had been undertaken by either agency. The new annex was indeed regarded as a community center, and in functioning in such a capacity, the new building was considered to be an ideal location for seven school classrooms designed for school children in the neighborhood, who until 1968, had no public school in which to attend. See sample letter for the "Annex Completion Fund" in the YWCA Metropolitan Branch File catalog no. URB 23/II/39.
3. Press Release from Metropolitan YWCA Public Relations Director, Dorothy Kahn Zuckerkandel. Dated: March 15, 1953.
4. Press Release dated December 5, 1954 from the YWCA Metropolitan Branch File. The release also stated that a Mrs. Mary Clayton Earle "personally raised" \$112,500 towards the total cost of the new annex and that consequently the new building was dedicated to her.  
It is not known why Howell Lewis Shay subsequently received the commission to design the new annex or why Sidney Martin's design was not adopted. The perusal and careful examination of documents belonging to the YWCA Metropolitan Branch File found no information regarding the selection of Shay as architect.
5. Ibid. The press release refers to Shay's design for the new annex as being rendered "in contemporary style."
6. Press Release dated February 8, 1954 from the YWCA Metropolitan Branch File of the Temple University Urban Archives: Box 9. See also press release dated March 15, 1953.
7. Memo, no date, from the YWCA Metropolitan Branch File of the Temple University Urban Archives: Box 9.
8. William G. Weart, "Work Will Start on Health Center; Building to Begin Tomorrow in Philadelphia on



\$1,500,000 Unit for Clothing Labor" in The New York Times, October 16, 1949: p. 64.

9. Ibid. The article mentioned that the new health center marked "another milestone" during twenty years of "peaceful bargaining" between the industry association representing management and the organized labor group. It should also be noted that Sidney Hillman, for whom the medical center is named, was the distinguished longtime leader of the Garment Workers Union of America.
10. Interview with Henry J. Magaziner, February 24, 1992 in Philadelphia, PA. The son of Louis, Henry was a draftsman employed by the elder Magaziner at the time of the design and construction of the Hillman Medical Center.
11. Paul Hayden Kirk and Eugene D. Sternberg, Doctors' Offices and Clinics (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp., 1955): p. 122.
12. Ibid.
13. Although the design of the Mercantile Library is attributed to Martin, Stewart and Noble, the building was most probably designed by Sydney E. Martin. Harry G. Stewart and Robert W. Noble did not join Martin in establishing the firm until 1954, after the completion of the library.  
 However, G. Holmes Perkins, former Dean of the Graduate School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania, in an interview on December 10, 1991, attributed the design of the library to Robert Noble, who, according to Perkins, had some association with Martin before the formal establishment of the firm.
14. The quotation by Lewis Mumford appears in "The Sky Line-Philadelphia II" written by Lewis Mumford and appearing in The New Yorker, May 26, 1956, Vol. 32: p. 117.
15. Philadelphia Register of Historic Places nomination form prepared by Ira Klauder, dated August 12, 1989: p. 3.
16. "Library Like a Shoe Store" by Sydney G. Hantman in The Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine, June 21, 1953: p. 7. Greenaway's belief that libraries needed to become bright, convenient, and attractive places was, according to this article, a reaction to the increasing popularity of movies and television, which were beginning to have an adverse effect on the





patronage of public libraries. Also, while Hantman's article does not mention the retail shoe store which inspired Greenaway's vision, the influential design may have been that of the Coward Shoe Store of 1949, designed by Oskar Stonorov and Louis Kahn, and located one block to the west of the new library on the 1100 block of Chestnut Street. The striking design similarities between the Coward building and the new Mercantile Library make such a connection quite plausible.

Also, the analogy made between the library and modern retail design is articulated in "Extrovert Library: Philadelphia's New Mercantile Library" in Architectural Forum, August, 1954, Vol. 101: p. 113. The article mentions that the "open show-window front removes all library mystery...makes using books seem natural, easy, popular."

17. Hantman, "Library Like a Shoe Store."
18. Mumford, "The Sky Line-Philadelphia II" in The New Yorker, May 26, 1956, Vol. 32: pp. 117-118.
19. Ibid.
20. "Extrovert Library" in The Architectural Forum; August, 1954: p. 113.
21. Donald A. Reichmann, "New Merchantile (sic) Building" in The Library Journal; January 1, 1954: Vol. 79, No. 5.



## Chapter 4: Postwar Building Materials and Technology

The buildings within the thesis study area exhibit a range of materials and technologies which have contributed significantly to Twentieth century architecture. Overall, the Postwar era represented a departure from, but also a continued reliance upon, traditional building materials and their application. The Postwar period was therefore an era that was linked to aspects of pre-War building, while also existing as a period of transition and innovation.

Masonry, employed principally as cladding, while dominating much of pre-World War II American architecture, continued to be widely used in the design of Early Postwar era buildings and into the 1950's. Quarried stone and manufactured pre-cast or composition material closely resembling stone were employed as cladding and veneer, and enjoyed considerable popularity among builders and architects during the period from 1945 to 1950.

As evidenced by such buildings as the Baker's Shoes store, Woolworth's, the Sidney Hillman Medical Center, and the former Air Conditioning Contractors Association building, such materials as sandstone, limestone, granite, and manufactured material simulating stone were utilized in the design of buildings in the thesis study area. Sandstone, as observed in the facade of the Baker's Shoe store, was often employed in the form of rough-finished flat irregular slab blocks of varying sizes, laid in random course.<sup>1</sup> As in the case of the Baker's store, sandstone was



frequently used in the design of groundfloor storefronts as a material juxtaposed with plate glass windows and fully glazed display cases.

The use of limestone in the study area is represented by the Hillman Medical Center. Although the building material was often used in the design of institutional and commercial buildings rendered in more traditional architectural design modes, rarely was it employed in modern design. The spandrel zones of the Hillman Center are clad with "Pink Buff Kasota Veine Ashlar" sandstone face stone, a type of limestone that with its warm tones resembles yellow sandstone, quarried and produced by the Kasota Stone division of The Babcock Company of Kasota, Minn.<sup>2</sup>

Granite, another material popular with designers of institutional buildings, is the other masonry cladding material used in the design of the Hillman Center. The building's polished black granite with strongly visible veining and color tonal variations was supplied by the "Rainbow Line of Cold Spring Granites" quarried by the Cold Spring Granite Co. of Cold Spring, Minn.<sup>3</sup> In addition to these quarried stones, a number of manufactured masonry materials were widely available including Granux, a manufactured granite, porcelain enamel face blocks, and "Mo-Sai" pre-cast concrete facing slabs.<sup>4</sup>

The rear elevation of the Woolworth's store, facing Sansom Street, is clad with Granux panels simulating black granite, while rectangular pre-cast stone facing panels, possibly "Mo-Sai" slabs, clad the building's principal elevation: the veneer panels may also be an unglazed architectural terra cotta (Figs. 65 & 66.) Yet another



manufactured stone cladding material, "Modur," was possibly employed for the exterior of the Metropolitan YWCA Annex.<sup>5</sup> "Modur," like "Mo-Sai," was a pre-cast exterior building facing material, but as a manufactured stone it was designed to simulate limestone and other light-colored stones.<sup>6</sup>

Other buildings in the study area that feature the use of manufactured stone include the former Air Conditioning Contractors Building, displaying a main elevation clad with rectangular, possibly "Mo-Sai" panels (Fig. 67.), and the former Cayuga Savings Bank building, featuring a ground floor partially clad with a polished gray-black manufactured granite known as "Regal Oxford" produced by the Rock of Ages Corporation of Barre, VT (Fig. 68.)<sup>7</sup>

In addition, decorative stone pavement is represented in the study area by the paved covered walk along the facade of the Charles Weinstein Geriatric Center. This pavement is composed of square pre-cast panels containing white marble round pebbles or "spheroids" of varying sizes embedded in the panels as a type of aggregate. This material, "Italia Cast" or "Italia Tiles" was manufactured by the Preco Chemical Corporation of New York, NY.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps the most common masonry material employed in the design of the study area buildings was face brick. Often glazed, brick was used extensively, in addition to the red-brick buildings in the study area, in the design of the Baker's Shoes store, Woolworth's, Hillman Medical Center, "Middle City" Post Office Branch, and other structures. Face brick was produced in a variety of colors, with





buff/tan and yellow the most popular tones: leading manufacturers included The Claycraft Company of Columbus, OH; Elgin-Butler Brick Co. (Austin, TX); and the ACME Brick Company of Ft. Worth, TX.<sup>9</sup>

Aside from the widespread use of masonry cladding and veneer materials in the design of Early Postwar Modern buildings, metal finishes, in particular stainless steel design elements, trim and fasciae, enjoyed enormous popularity during the early Postwar period. Among these building products was "ENDURO" Stainless Steel produced by the Republic Steel Company of Cleveland, OH (Fig. 69.) "ENDURO" was promoted for its ability to resist corrosion, as well as its easy cleaning and sanitary qualities: its numerous applications ranged from window lintels and spandrels to decorative grills and railings. Examples of the possible application of "ENDURO" in the design of buildings in the study area include the band of rounded stainless steel fasciae of the groundfloor storefront canopy of Woolworth's (Fig. 70.), the stainless steel spandrel bands of the former Swartz furniture store, and the stainless steel fascia of the groundfloor canopy of the Hillman Medical Center. Buildings of the middle Postwar period that featured an extensive use of stainless steel strips to articulate the glazed zones of their facades include the former S & P Training Center (Fig. 71.), Air Conditioning Contractors Building, and the Mercantile Library (Fig. 72.)

Also in the middle Postwar period, from 1951 to 1959, extruded metal paneling, produced as "Zourite" Facing Material by Kawneer Architectural Metal (Fig. 73.), "Lustrik" Alumilited Facing produced by Lustrik, Inc. of Philadelphia,



PA (Fig. 74.); and under the "ENDURO" brand label by Republic Steel, became increasingly popular for exterior cladding and veneers.<sup>10</sup> Extruded metal was often affixed to wood and metal furring strips attached to brick walls or to reinforced concrete surfaces, thus making the cladding ideal for re-designed building exteriors. Notable examples of the use of such extruded metal paneling in the study area include the former Quaker Savings and Loan Building on South 16th Street where extruded metal clads the projecting south bay of the facade and the Elgin's Parking Garage, in which the exterior of the office and flat piers dividing windows are veneered in extruded metal: the steel casement windows of the Hillman Medical Center are also articulated by such metal-clad concrete piers.

Another type of material applied to a building in a decorative fashion was rolled, textured or embossed stainless steel sheet produced by either the Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corp. of Pittsburgh, PA or the Washington Steel Corp. of Washington, PA: the material was used to envelope the round groundfloor columns of the former Cayuga Savings & Loan Building (Fig. 75.) Also, exterior metal, as well as ceramic screens composed of interlocked geometric shapes and patterns, and applied to building facades, became popular in the late Postwar period, particularly in re-designed building facades. The exterior facade screen of the General Building Contractors features a geometric pattern of interlocking circles known as "Shad-o-Wheel" produced by "Al-Shade" of Alcoa Exterior Wall Products (Pittsburgh, PA: Fig. 76.): the Reynolds Metals Company also produced an exterior building metal



screen with a similar design motif.<sup>11</sup>

The Cayuga Savings & Loan Building also features a highly significant design element derived from the new use of building materials and technology; the metal and glass exterior curtain wall. By the late Postwar period, in 1961, there were well over forty manufacturers of aluminum curtain wall systems in the United States, along with other producers of stainless steel, porcelain, bronze, and even marble and granite curtain walls.<sup>12</sup> The two building examples in the study area of metal and glass curtain wall construction, the Cayuga Savings Building and the two-story office building at 1800 Chestnut Street reflect, to a degree, the range of such curtain wall systems.

1800 Chestnut Street features a rather standard aluminum and glass curtain wall, with black-colored metal paneling, which was produced by a number of manufacturers, most notably the Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA); other major producers included CECO Steel Products Corp. (Chicago, IL); Fenestra, Inc. (Detroit, MI); Kawneer Company (Chicago, IL); Lupton Curtain Walls produced by the Michael Flynn Manufacturing Co. (City of Industry, CA); and Gridwall Curtain Walls (North Hollywood, CA.)

Curtain wall systems of more specialized designs also enjoyed considerable popularity during the middle Postwar period. The former Cayuga Savings Building features a metal and glass curtain wall which incorporates a standard metal panel and glass envelope with a louvered grid of aluminum components that encloses much of



the building's main elevation: this system was most probably manufactured by "Bayley Aluminum Curtain-Wall Systems" of The William Bayley Company (Springfield, OH).<sup>13</sup>

Other materials such as tile paneling are also represented in the design of buildings in the study area. The City of Philadelphia Parking Authority garage located on the 1000 block of Chestnut Street and extending to Ludlow and South 10th Streets, features rectangular concrete piers located near the entrance at 10th Street which are clad with mosaic tile surfaces (Fig. 77.) Mosaic tile was a popular cladding material among middle and late Postwar era builders and architects, in particular from 1957 to 1961. It was frequently used in commercial and institutional buildings as a surfacing material for walls and piers located at or near entrances, hallways, stairwells, vestibules and courtyards, as well as the exterior wall surfaces of building facades and elevations. Tiled wall surfaces frequently featured strong, often brilliant colors, a wide range of abstract patterns and decorative schemes, and figurative images. A large number of companies produced mosaic tile surfaces, most notably National Lifetime Tile, United States Ceramic Tile Company, and the Robertson Manufacturing Company.<sup>14</sup>

As an important design component of Postwar period buildings, windows, mainly steel and aluminum casement and double-hung sash fenestration, and plate glass panel glazing, comprised an important aspect of the Postwar building industry. Aluminum and steel casement and double-hung sash windows of the early Postwar





period were generally composed of multiple rectangular and square glass panes separated by metal mullions and designed to open up/down as well as outward: these windows were organized both in continuous bands and as individual units along building facades and elevations.<sup>15</sup> In addition, specialized window glass designs, such as fixed-light single-pane windows containing translucent "rippled" glass, were produced; examples of this windows glass are located on the curved groundfloor portion of the facade of the Sidney Hillman Medical Center, the upper floors of Woolworth's, and the third floor level of the Baker's Shoes store.<sup>16</sup>

In the middle Postwar era, beginning circa 1954, metal-frame windows experienced a simplification in their design. Multi-pane casement windows were eschewed in favor of metal-frame windows containing one or two usually rectangular panes designed to slide open or open outward, and they were frequently integral components of aluminum and metal curtain wall systems. In addition, aluminum had replaced steel and steel alloys as the material for window frames.<sup>17</sup> A variety of plate glass, tinted in various color tones, was produced during the Postwar era by the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company. PPG produced a wide range of plate glass including "Polished Plate Glass," "SOLEX Heat-Absorbing Glass," and "Twindow," a double-layer insulated glass for large glazed surfaces. Libbey-Owens-Ford (LOF) manufactured a selection of color-tinted glass including "Color Clear," "Colored," and "Golden," a gold-tinted polished plate glass: another company which produced a range of tinted and color reflective plate glass was the American Window Glass Co. of



Pittsburgh, PA, the manufacturer of the "Lustraglass" product line of color-tinted and reflective glass.<sup>18</sup>

The persistence of building craft as relating to traditional architectural design in the Postwar period is a rather significant aspect of the building materials industry between the years of 1945 and 1961. The fact that buildings continued to be rendered in the Georgian Revival mode during this period insured that carved stone ornament as well as the specialized production of decorative wood design components would persist. The notable example in the study area of the Real Estate Trust Company Building testifies to this development. The facade of this building features the principal carved stone design elements of the Georgian Revival style; pilasters with carved capitals, a stone entablature, rooftop pediment surround and cornice, and a carved stone doorframe surmounted by a curved pediment. Such companies as the Globe Marble & Granite Corp. of Flushing, NY; Georgia Granite Co. (Elberton, GA); and Delano Granite Industries (Delano, Minn.) which supplied quarried building stones also produced carved stone design components.<sup>19</sup>

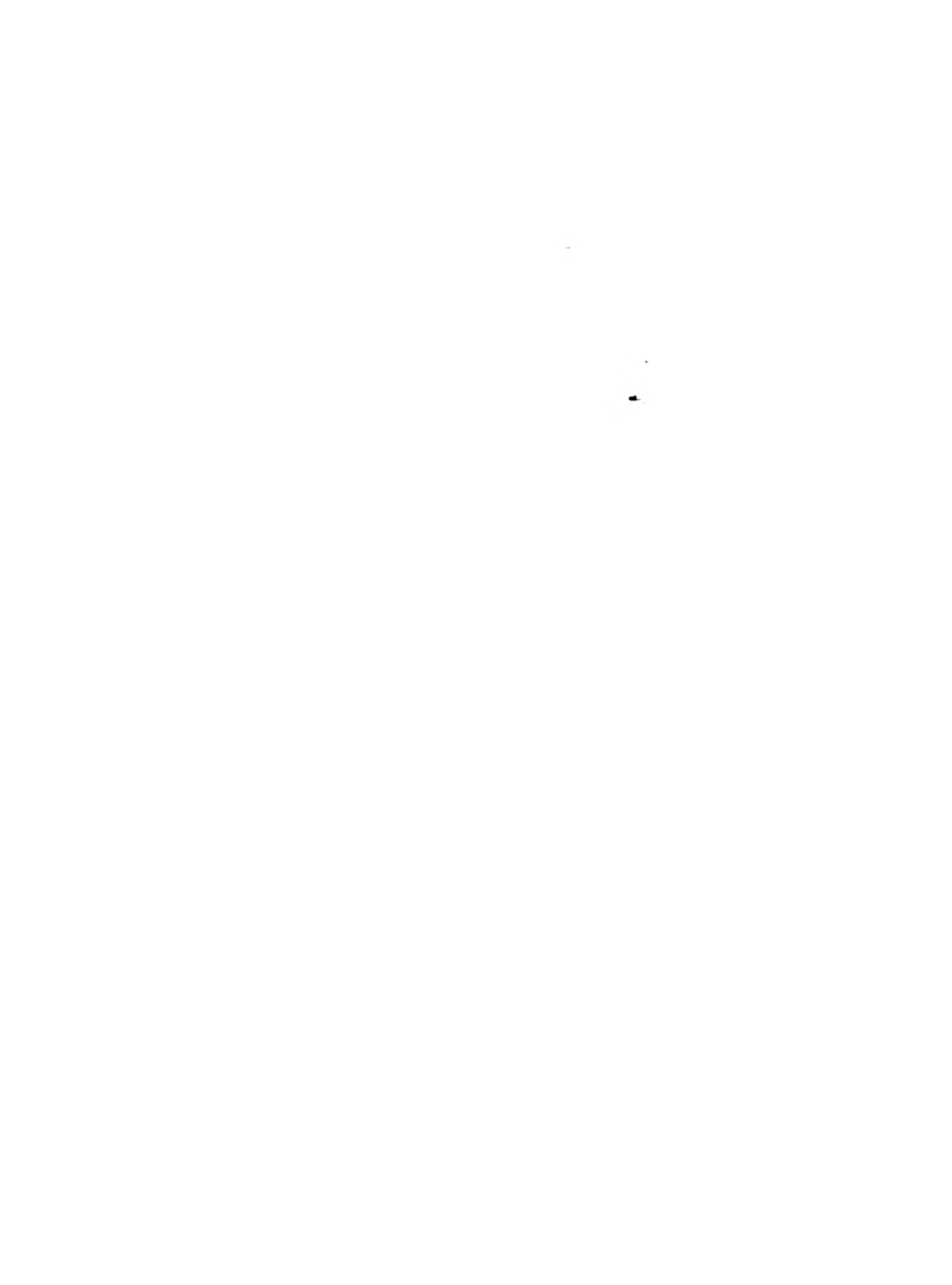
Perhaps even more significant is the building's interior design. Composed of double-height rectangular room spaces, the interior space is defined by tall square fluted carved wood pilasters connected to rather massive carved wood ceiling beams: there are also carved moldings and window surrounds. During the early Postwar era, when the Real Estate Trust Co. Building was completed, a number of companies produced fine interior and exterior carved wood design components, such as columns,



pilasters, cornices, moldings and trim. These companies included Hartmann-Sanders of Chicago, IL, "Nuroco Woodwork," a manufacturing division of the New Rochelle Coal and Lumber Co. (New Rochelle, NY); and the Curtis Woodwork Company of Curtis, Iowa.<sup>20</sup>

By providing an overview of commonly used Postwar building materials and technology, a common misconception that Postwar architecture was dominated by glass and steel construction is corrected. Rather, the persistent use and popularity of masonry materials was a major characteristic of the Postwar era, most especially in Philadelphia where the strong influence of a historic architectural context existed.<sup>21</sup> Another notable aspect of the Postwar period in American building was the introduction of colorful mosaic tile into Twentieth century American architectural design and its widespread use in surfacing large areas.

Yet, plate glass and metals together did play a major role in the design and construction of Postwar buildings, in particular between 1951 and 1960 both in Philadelphia and throughout the nation. Knowledge of extruded metal, stainless steel, and aluminum components, as well as glass and metal curtain wall systems, and their producers can undoubtedly be valuable in building restoration. The pathological conditions manifested in Postwar buildings, including those in the study area, frequently effect metal components (Figs. 78 & 79.) The deterioration and dislodging of metal trim and framing from building exteriors are particularly evident in the Mercantile Library branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Mid-City



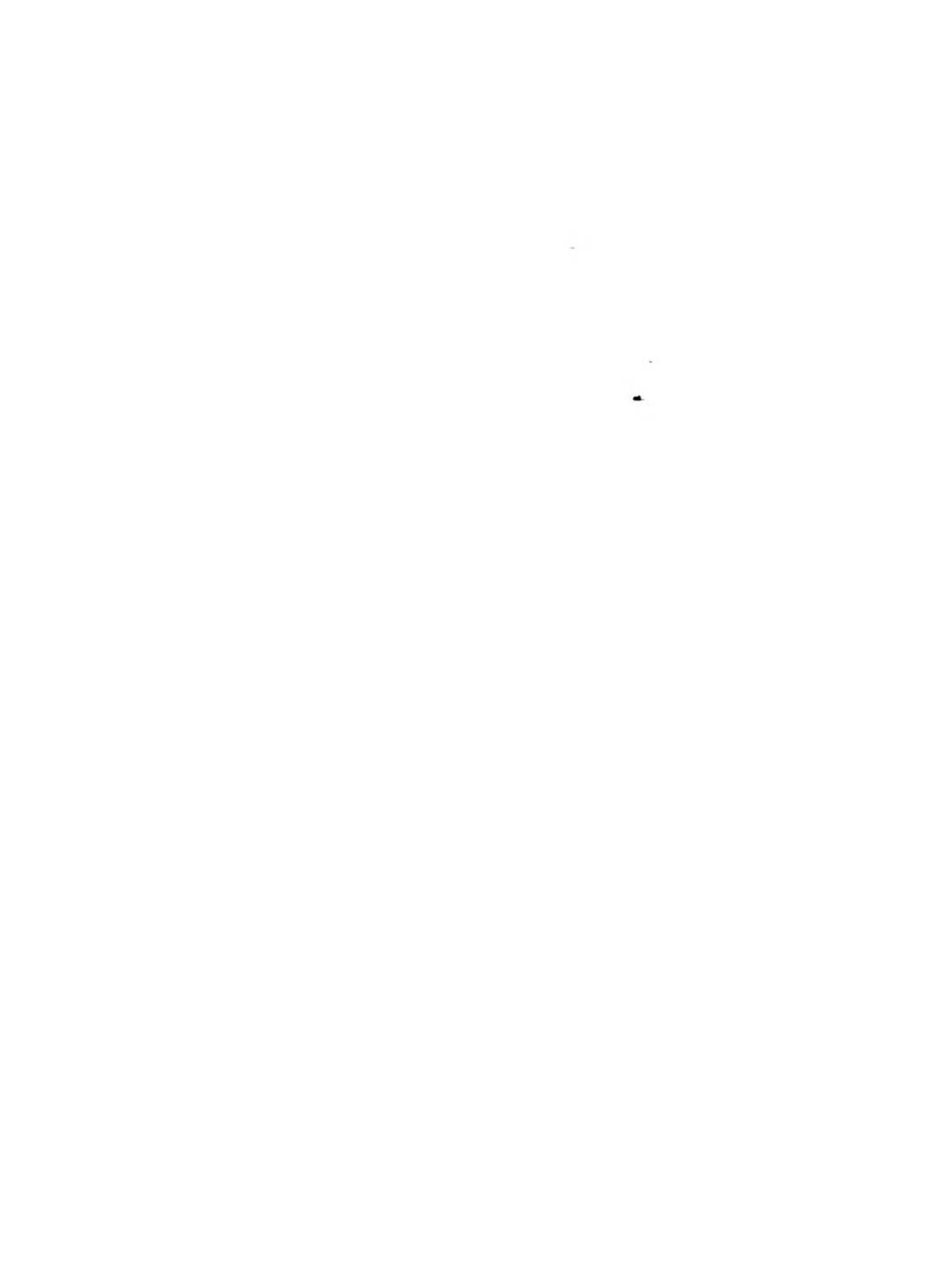
YWCA Annex and the former S & P Training Building. When efforts to restore these buildings are implemented, knowledge of Postwar building materials and their producers will be required.





NOTES

1. Major suppliers of building limestone in the Early Postwar period included Crab Orchard Stone Co., Inc. (Crossville, Tenn.); Chenango Valley Bluestone Company (Oxford, NY); and Berea Sandstone (Cleveland, OH.) See the 1947 edition of Sweet's Catalog File for Builders (New York: Sweet's Catalog Service, 1947); Volume 4, Section 4a.
2. See the 1957 edition of Sweet's Catalog File, Section 4c/Ba.
3. Interview with Henry Magaziner, February 21, 1992 in Philadelphia, PA. Also, see the 1948 edition of Sweet's Catalog File; Volume 4, Section 4a/Co.
4. "Mo-Sai" was advertised by its producer, Mo-Sai Associates, as a "refined type of thin, pre-cast, reinforced architectural concrete facing slab" with an exposed aggregate surface. The reinforcement of the panels was to be composed of galvanized welded steel "engineered for all structural stresses, strains and temperature changes." The facing of the panels were manufactured of granite quartz, and vitreous porcelain aggregate together with white or grey Portland Cement; in many cases, however, the panels possessed a uniform appearance, with the aggregate largely invisible at a distance. Also, the panels were to have a minimum compressive strength of 7,500 lbs. per square inch "at 28 days of age and a maximum absorption of 6%." See the 1954 edition of Sweet's Catalog File; Volume 3, Section 3d/Mos.
5. Cast stone was employed as the exterior cladding material for the Metropolitan YWCA Annex. This fact is indicated as Item No. 15 in the detailed breakdown of expenditures for the new building addition compiled by Howell Lewis Shay Architects, and approved by Howell Lewis Shay Jr. on October 1, 1953. From the Metropolitan Branch YWCA File, Temple University Urban Archives.
6. "Modur" was advertised in its trade catalog as being available in buff/tan color tones and in a one and 1/4 inch thickness, while it was recommended especially for remodeling building facades. Also, "Modur" was produced by the Modur Company division of Granux Corporation of Chicago, IL. See the 1954 edition of Sweet's Catalog File; Volume 3, Section 3d/Mod.



7. See the 1961 edition of Sweet's Catalog File; Volume 4, Section 4a/RO.
8. See the 1959 edition of Sweet's File Catalog; Volume 13, Section 13h/Pr. The pavement panels of the Weinstein Center also closely resemble "Marbella Venezia," a pre-cast pavement product produced by Murals Incorporated and described as consisting of "marble spheroids or chips pre-cast in blocks.": the building material was advertised as being available "cut and polished to reveal marble veining, or with uncut pebbled surfaces that produce deep textural effects." See the 1959 edition of Sweet's File, Vol. 13, Sec. 13c/Mu.
9. See the 1947 edition of Sweet's Catalog File; Volume 4, Section 4d. These producers of face brick continued to publish trade catalogs in subsequent issues of Sweet's File during the 1950's.
10. For trade catalogs on these extruded metal building products, see the 1954-1957 editions of Sweet's Catalog File; Volume 5, Sections 5c/Re, 5a/Lu, 5d/Ka.
11. See the 1961 edition of Sweet's Catalog File, Volume 3, Section 3c/ALu.
12. In a 1957 article entitled, "A New Approach to Fabrication, the Integration of Materials into Thin Wall Panels," the development of advanced curtain wall systems was discussed in relation to a new conception of the building wall. The curtain wall, according to the article, was to be regarded as the first step toward developing wall enclosures that would constitute continuously articulated membranes. This notion of an integrated building skin or sheath encompassed containing integrated mechanical systems such as heating, air conditioning, and ventilation in a type of "sandwich wall."

From 1947 to 1957, the exterior treatment of buildings had evolved toward a conception of the wall as a series of panels serving as filters of light and air between exterior and interior environments. In addition, curtain walls had become continuous enclosures pre-fabricated off- or on-site and then assembled into the structure in "the manner of industrial subassembly components." In fact, it is the aspects of mass-production and fast assembly-line techniques that make the curtain wall such a significant development in building technology and construction. However, the article also pointed out that largely because of local building codes, the



"sandwich wall" concept has remained unrealized, and that, for example, instead of such a wall containing a thin layer of insulation, the opaque panels of most curtain wall are backed with two to four inches of cinder block. See The Architectural Forum, January, 1957; Vol. 106: pp. 108-115.

13. See the 1961 edition of Sweet's Catalog File; Volume 3, Section 3a/Ba.
14. The 1961 edition of Sweet's Catalog File contains trade catalogs and information inserts on over 25 producers of wall and floor tiles.
15. Major manufacturers of early Postwar era steel casement windows included the Cupples Products Corp. of St. Louis, MO; Fenestra Windows (Chicago, IL); Thorn Metal Windows produced by the J.S. Thorn Co. (Philadelphia, PA); and Truscon Steel Windows available from the Truscon Steel Co. (Youngstown, OH). See 1947-1951 editions of Sweet's Catalog File, Volumes 7 and 17.
16. The Hillman Center and Baker's Shoes store windows were possibly supplied by Pennsylvania Wire Glass Co. of Philadelphia, PA and/or the Mississippi Glass Co. of New York, NY ("Pentecor" Windows). Also, Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Co. produced a product line of translucent window glass with "ridged" or "rippled" surfaces. For more information on these types of glass and windows see the 1950 edition of Sweet's Catalog File; Volume 7, Sections 7a/3 and 7a/5.
17. Among the many producers of aluminum casement sliding windows were Aluminum Gliding Windows, manufacturers of "Glidorama"; Textron Metals of Girard, OH; the Soule Company (San Francisco, CA); and the General Bronze Corp., producers of "Alwintite" windows (Garden City, NY).
18. For trade catalogs and information inserts on these plate glass window companies, see the 1954 edition of Sweet's Catalog File; Volume 6, Sections 6a/Pi, Li, & Am.
19. For trade catalogs and information inserts on these producers of quarried stone and carved stone design components, see editions of Sweet's Catalog File for the years 1947-1950.
20. For advertisements and information on these manufacturers of carved wood interior design



components, see the 1947 edition of Sweet's Catalog File; Volume 5, Section 5C. Also, the 12-light/12-light woodframe double-hung sash windows of the Real Estate Trust Company Building could have been provided by either one of several manufacturers, including the Carr, Adams & Collier Co of Dubuque, Iowa: see the 1947 Sweet's File; Volume 16, Section 16c.

Building craft was not limited to buildings rendered in traditional architectural styles such as the Georgian Revival mode. Rather, such Postwar modern buildings as the former Coward Shoe store and the Mercantile Library branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia exhibit a high level of craft, as evidenced by the manner in which their glass and metal frame facades are constructed and articulated. A high level of modern design craft is exhibited by the proportion of glass to metal in the design of these facades and the manner in which the plate glass panels are framed by stainless steel and metal components.

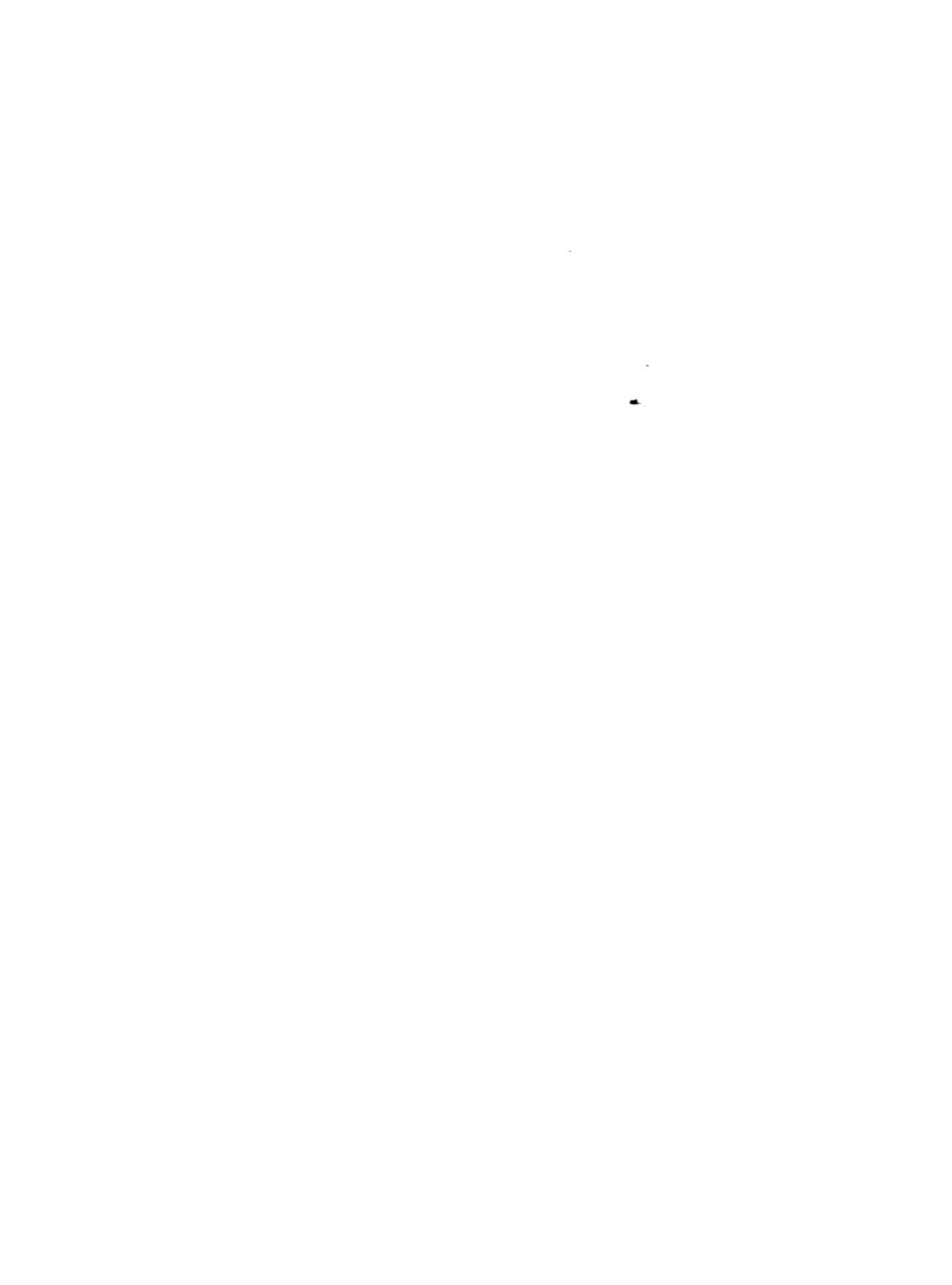
It is interesting to note that such design components as stairway railings, newel posts, and doorhandles, rendered in modern design and produced most often in stainless steel and aluminum, exhibited a high degree of craft and attention to detail that was characteristic of carved wood components. These stair railings were composed of thin, tapered balusters supporting a smooth flat hand rail, while railing posts and brackets, and doorhandles, displayed a similar attenuated design of great simplicity: the result was a refined, even elegant, modern design esthetic. For an excellent example of this aspect of middle Postwar era design, see the trade catalog and information inserts for The Blumcraft Company of Pittsburgh, PA, a major producer of metal and aluminum interior design components, in the 1957 edition of Sweet's Catalog File; Volume 6, Section 6e/Blu, pp. 1-28. (See Fig. 80 for an illustration.)

21. There are undoubtedly geographical differences in the use of building materials in the Postwar period, with wood and light steel-frame buildings popular in California and the Pacific Northwest, and masonry-clad buildings more common in the Midwest and Northeast. Within the Northeast United States, however, the reluctance of Philadelphia architects, with the notable exception of Vincent Kling, to employ metal and glass curtain wall systems in commercial design, is most evident when the city is compared to New York, where curtain wall systems were widely used. Evidence of their popularity is Park Avenue between East 45th and East 59th Streets, in which the streetscape is





dominated by Postwar office buildings of glass and metal curtain wall construction. In those instances where brick was used as a cladding material, white and tan-glazed brick was often employed in spandrel bands of office buildings, in particular those constructed along Madison Avenue between East 46th and East 59th Streets and throughout midtown Manhattan.



## Chapter 5: Conclusion

As this thesis study clearly indicates, there is a substantial amount of Postwar era architectural design fabric in Center City. Although Center City, and indeed the city of Philadelphia as a whole, may lack the number of acknowledged masterworks that distinguishes midtown Manhattan or the Loop district of Chicago, there is nonetheless a rather large sampling of buildings of architectural and historical interest. Indeed, the three chronological periods and four categories that define Postwar Modern design modes, which largely form the core of this study, were formulated in a largely empirical fashion by carefully examining the Postwar architecture of this study area in Center City.

In addition, the qualities of these buildings that are uniquely contextual, in that they express certain characteristics particular to the built environment of Philadelphia, contribute an added layer of meaning and significance to this study. One such quality is the tentative approach toward adopting modern design exhibited by a number of buildings in the study area. To some observers, this design phenomenon may be interpreted as an expression of the city's conservatism, but this assessment is incorrect, considering that a number of unabashedly modern buildings have been constructed both in the study area and throughout the city, beginning with the construction of the nation's first International Style skyscraper, the PSFS Building of 1930-1932 designed by Howe and Lescaze. Other characteristics which may be



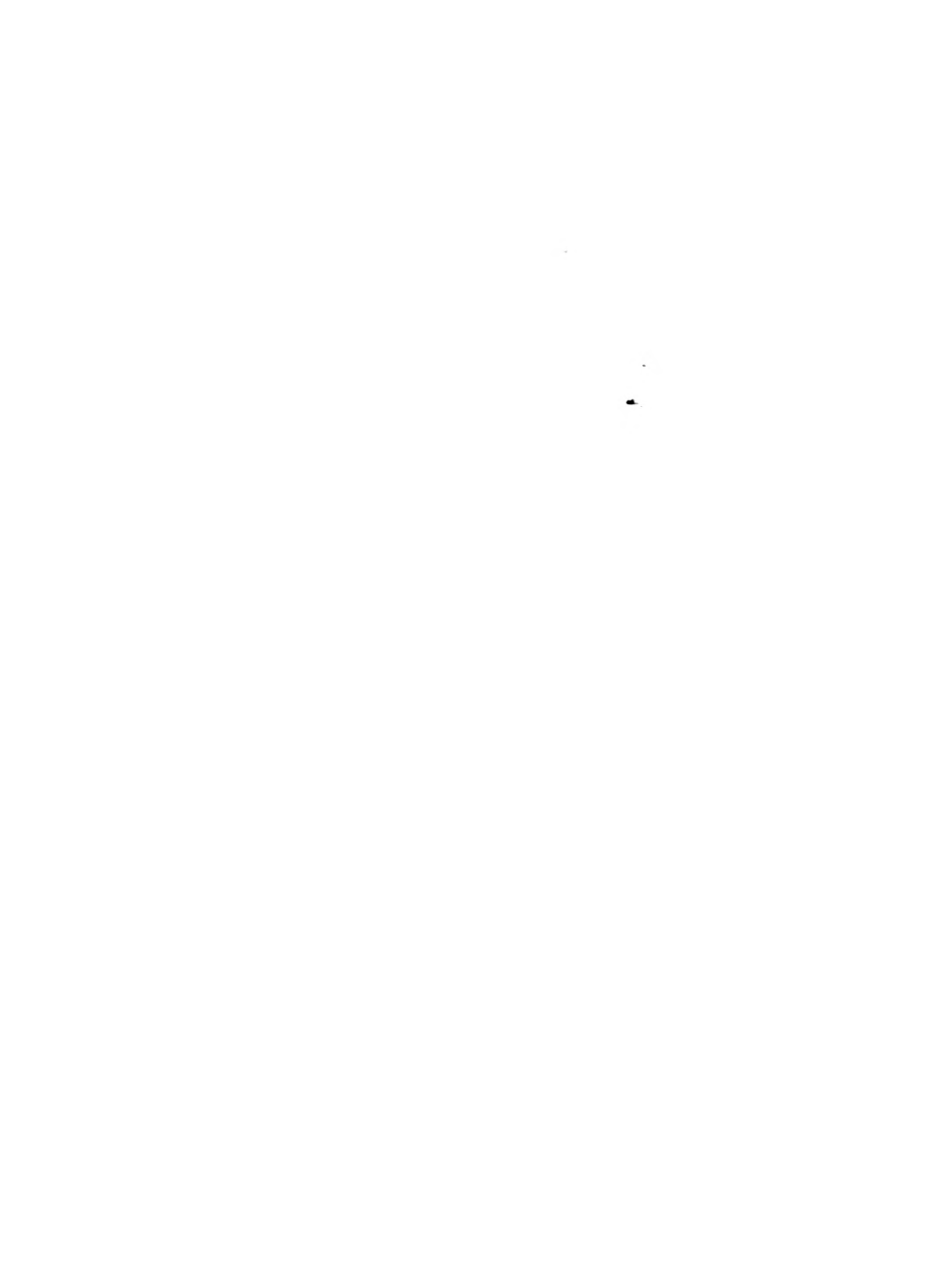
considered unique to the Postwar architectural fabric of Center City include the Postwar modern building as infill construction and design, and the contextual nature of several buildings, in terms of height, mass, and especially building materials.

In regard to determining the architectural and historical value of the study area buildings, the Philadelphia Historical Commission has designated only one Postwar building, the Mercantile Library branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia as a city landmark. However, the Commission has deemed a number of buildings in the study area eligible for local certification. These buildings are the former S & P Training Center, 1800 Chestnut Street, the former Benjamin Franklin Savings & Loan Association, the Second Federal Savings & Loan branch, and Woolworth's.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, this list of eligible buildings omits two buildings in the study area that possess a considerably higher level of architectural and historical significance: the former Coward Shoe store and the Sidney Hillman Medical Center. Both buildings were designed by distinguished Philadelphia architects with the Coward Shoe store building designed by two major international figures in modern architecture, Oscar Stonorov and Louis I. Kahn.

In assessing the significance of this thesis study area, both in terms of its overall importance and the significance of individual buildings, there are components

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1. This list of eligible buildings is indicated on a map of Center City prepared by the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation (PHPC) in September, 1991.



of the National Register of Historic Places and the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Ordinance that both prevent and encourage the protection and preservation of most Postwar architectural fabric. The fifty year requirement stipulated by the National Register for a building to become eligible for listing currently functions as a principal obstacle towards recognizing the significance of the Postwar built environment on a nationwide level. Thus, the protections offered by the National Register cannot be applied to Postwar era buildings.<sup>2</sup>

The Philadelphia Ordinance, on the other hand, does not specify a minimum age for a building to be protected by the ordinance, but instead stipulates that the building demonstrate its cultural, architectural, and/or historical significance by meeting broad standard criteria. The liberal nature of the local Ordinance is

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2. The National Register, however, does permit buildings that have achieved significance in the last fifty years to be registered. However, these buildings must demonstrate "exceptional importance" or contribute to the significance of a district eligible for inclusion in the Register. The building must meet the established Register criteria based upon sufficient historical perspective and scholarly, comparative analysis. The National Register emphasizes that the criteria are not intended to bar consideration of buildings less than fifty years in age, but that such buildings must be "unusually important" in the "recent" development of American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture.

An extensive explanation of the criteria and background for nominating buildings that have achieved significance in the last fifty years is provided in National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties That Have Achieved Significance Within the Last Fifty Years by Marcella Sherfy and W. Ray Luce (Washington, DC: U.S. National Park Service of the Department of the Interior, 1990.)





demonstrated by such criteria as that in which a building "reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style", or "owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City."<sup>3</sup> By applying such criteria to the buildings in the study area, local designation under the Ordinance for many Postwar buildings is greatly facilitated. In addition, the Philadelphia Ordinance, unlike the National Register, provides strong protection for designated buildings, most notably by making owners' requests for alterations and demolition subject to review and approval by the Historical Commission.<sup>4</sup>

It is incumbent upon the American preservation community to recognize the significance of Postwar era buildings. Currently, a considerable portion of the Postwar built environment is disappearing through alterations and demolitions, while a substantial number of buildings are allowed to fall into decay. The need for a preservation methodology based upon a well-defined and coherent body of important concepts and information, which this thesis study has attempted to provide, regarding

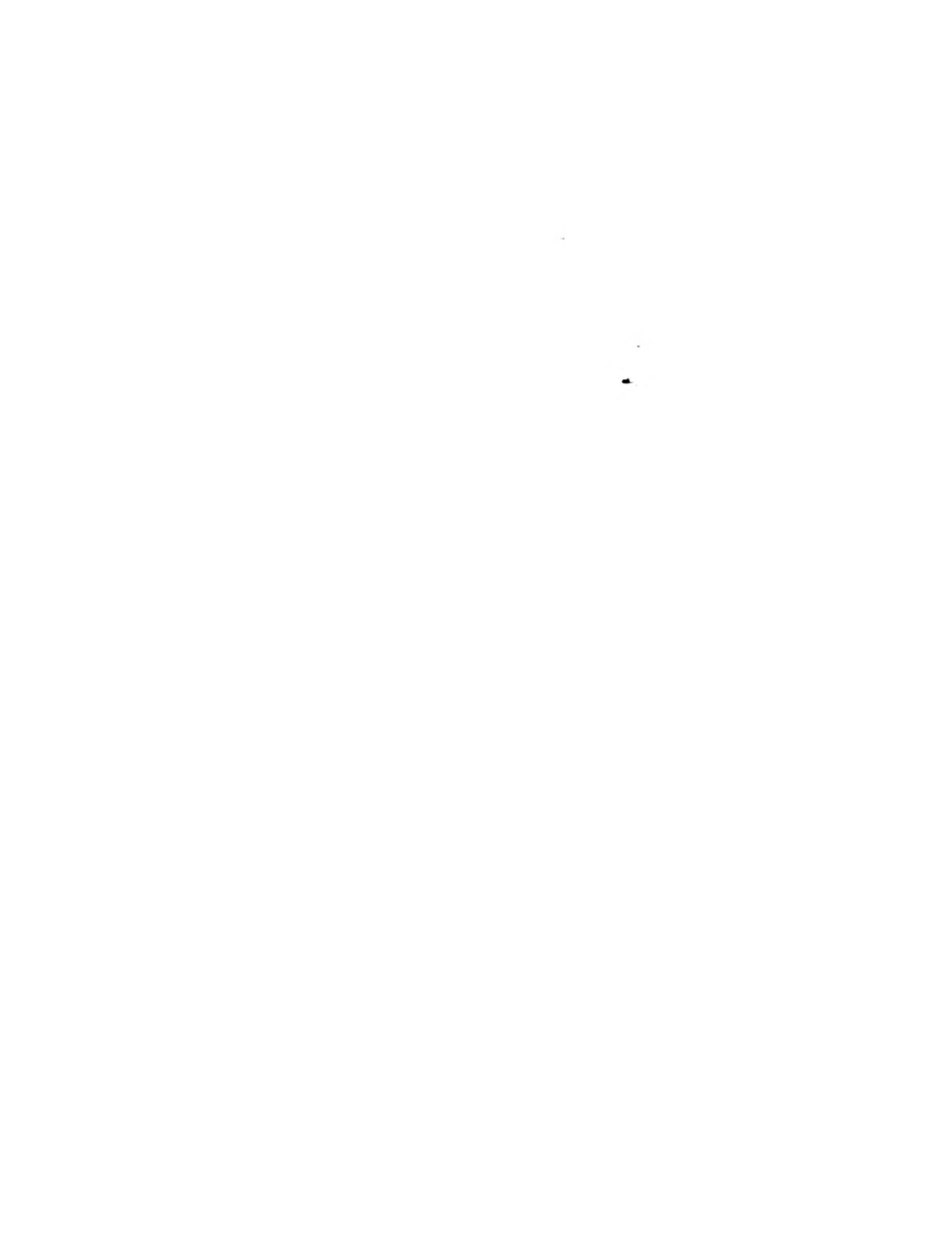
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3. See the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Ordinance; Amending Section 14-2007 of The Philadelphia Code, ("Historic Buildings"), App. No. 566-7 & 566-8: "Criteria for Designation." The Philadelphia Ordinance was amended on December 31, 1984.

4. The Philadelphia Historic Preservation Ordinance; Sections App. No. 566-10 through App. No. 566-19. These sections encompass the main categories of "Permits" (No. 7), "Performance of Work and Maintenance" (No. 8), "Enforcement" (No. 9), and "Appeals" (No. 10.)



this layer of architectural, cultural and historical significance, will constitute an important first step.



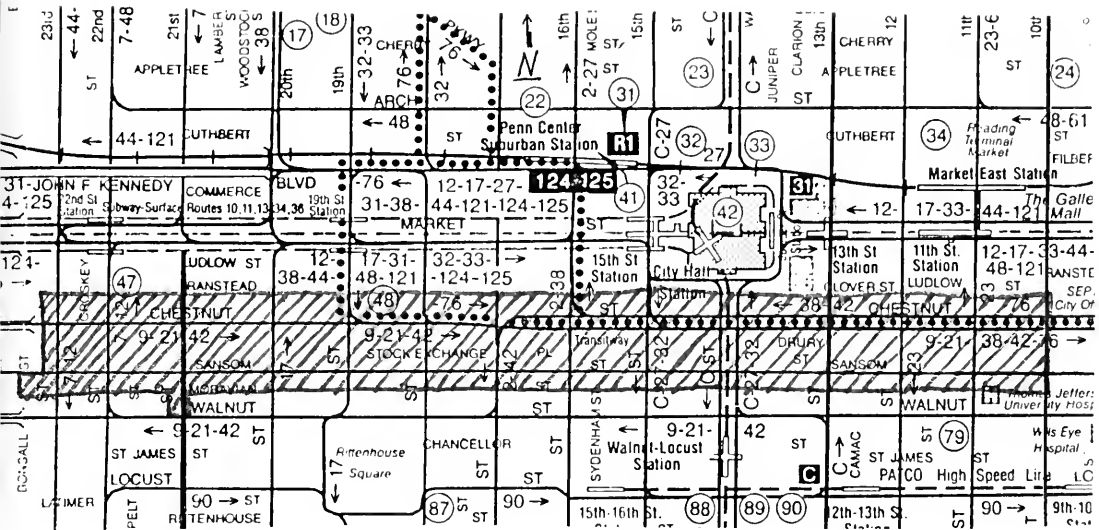


Figure 1.: Map of Center City, Philadelphia Indicating Thesis Study Area.

[From SEPTA's Philadelphia Street and Transit Map (Philadelphia: South-eastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, 1990.)]



Figure 2.: View of 1300 Block of Chestnut Street [Photo taken by author.]



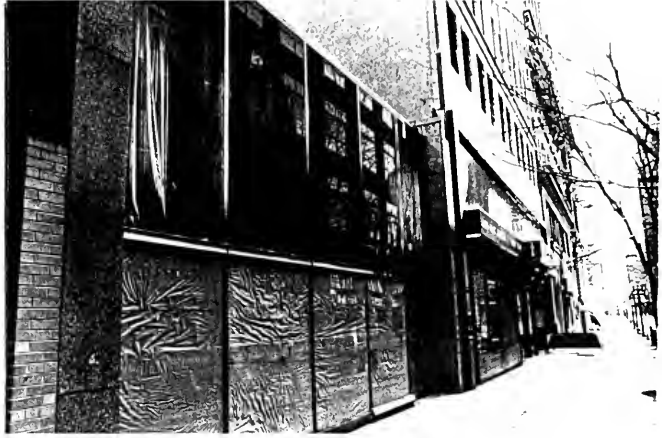


Figure 3.: Mercantile Library of the Free Library of Philadelphia, 1953-54. [Photo taken by author.]



Figure 4.: Charles Weinstein Geriatric Center, 1959. [Photo taken by author.]





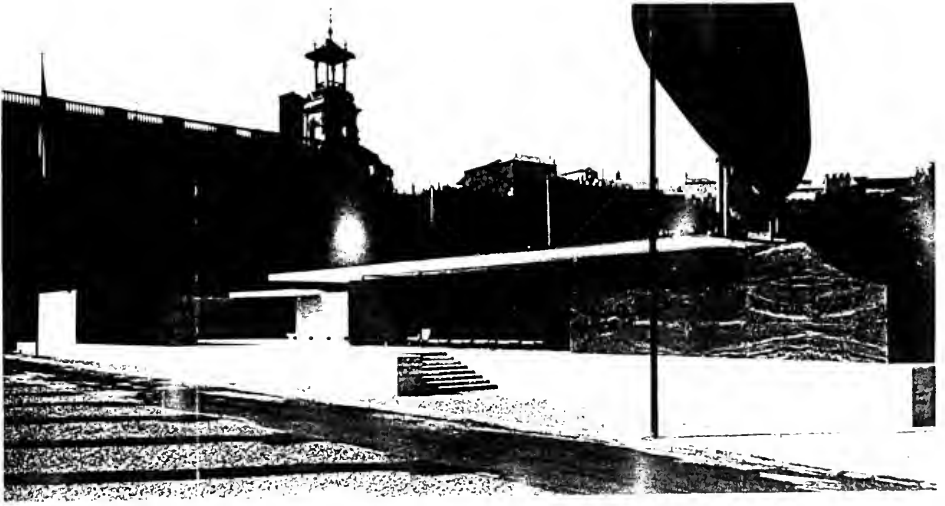


Figure 5.: Mies van der Rohe, Barcelona Pavilion, 1928-29.  
[From David Spaeth, Mies van der Rohe (New York: Rizzoli International, 1985):  
p. 62.]

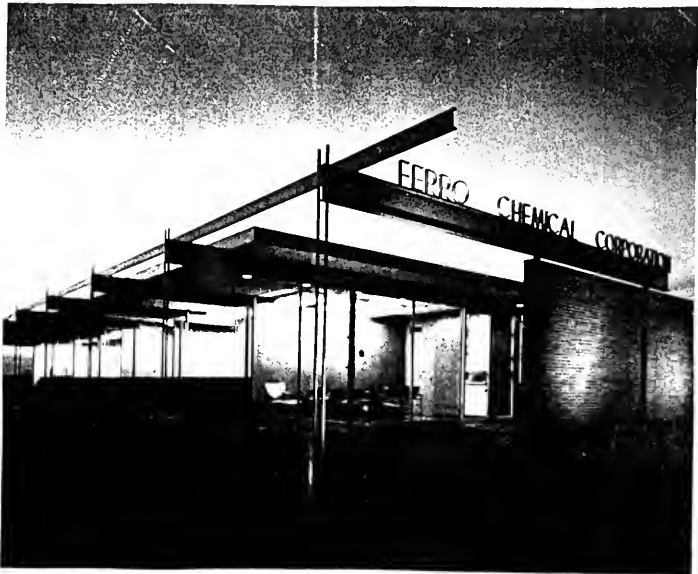


Figure 6.: Richard Neutra, Ferro Chemical Corp., 1958. (Cleveland, OH)  
[From Richard Neutra, 1950-60; Buildings and Projects, edited by W. Boesiger  
(New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc. Publishers; 1959): p. 145.]



Figure 7: Edward Durell Stone, Town House; New York, NY; 1956.  
[From The Evolution of An Architect by Edward Durell Stone (New York: Horizon Press, 1962): p. 180.]

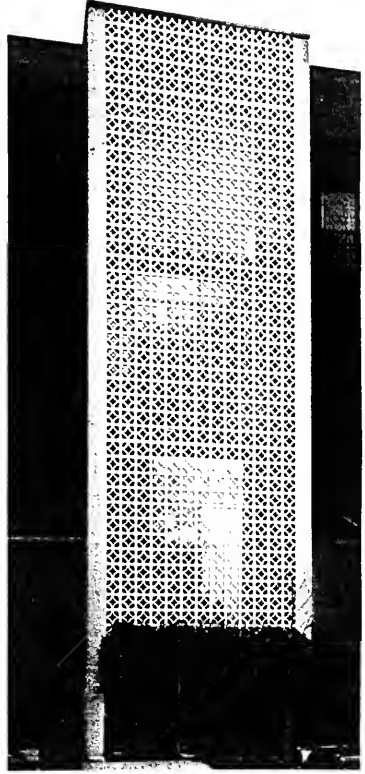


Figure 8:  
Clifford E. Garner,  
General Building  
Contractors  
Building, 1961.

[Photo taken by  
author.]





Figure 9: Real Estate  
Trust Company, 1947.  
(Sydney E. Martin,  
archt.)

[Photo taken by author]



Figure 10.: Sidney Hillman Medical  
Center (Louis Magaziner and  
Herman Polss, archts.), 1949-50.

[Photograph taken by author.]





Figure 11: Philadelphia Federal  
Credit Union, 1956.  
(William Linker, archt.)

[Photo taken by author.]

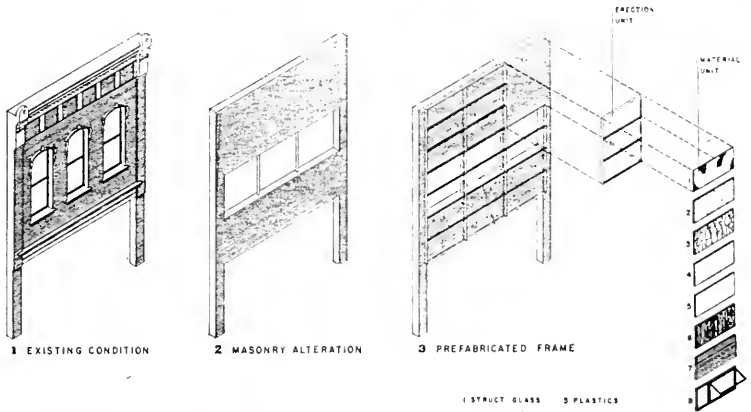


Figure 12: [From Morris Ketchum, Jr.,  
Shops & Stores (New York: Reinhold Publishing  
Corp., 1957.): p. 186.]





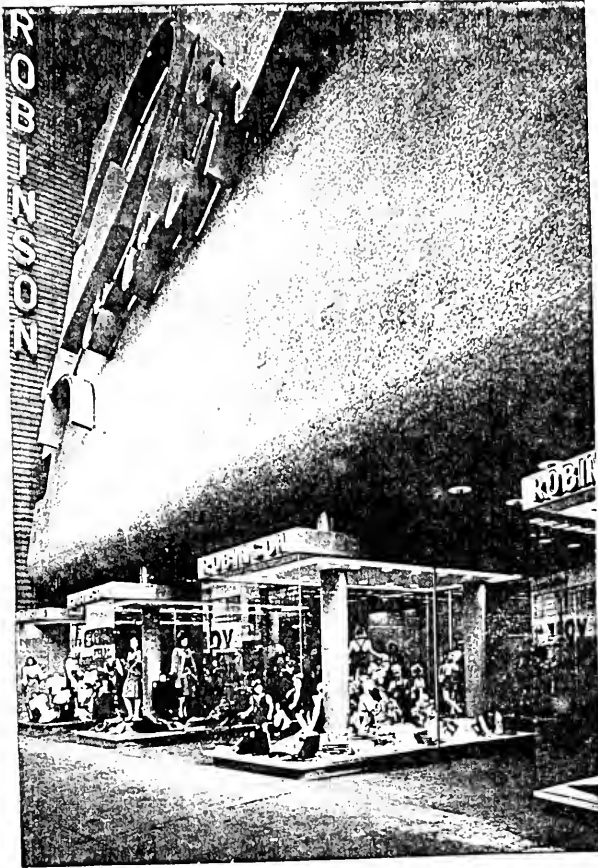


Figure 13.: Gruen and Krummeck, Robinson's (Philadelphia, 1947.)

[From Jose A. Fernandez, The Specialty Shop (A Guide)  
(New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co.,  
Inc., 1950.)]



Figure 14: Jose A. Fernandez,  
"Punch 'n Judy" shop; Rego  
Park, NY.

[From Fernandez, The Specialty  
Shop (A Guide)]

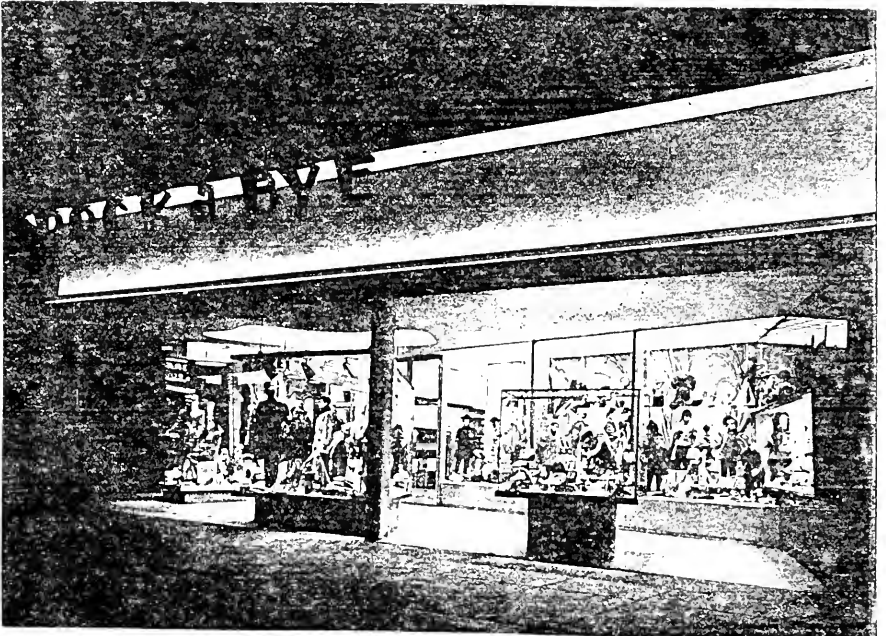


Figure 15: Morris Lapidus, "Rock A Bye" Store (Brooklyn, NY)  
[Fernandez, The Specialty Shop (A Guide)]



Figure 16: Philadelphia Saving Fund Society, 1930-32 (Howe and Lescaze, archts.)

[From Philadelphia Architecture, A Guide to the City, edited by John Gallery (Philadelphia: The Foundation for Architecture, 1984.)]

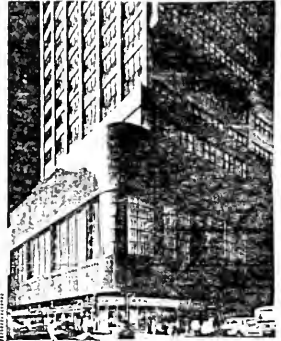
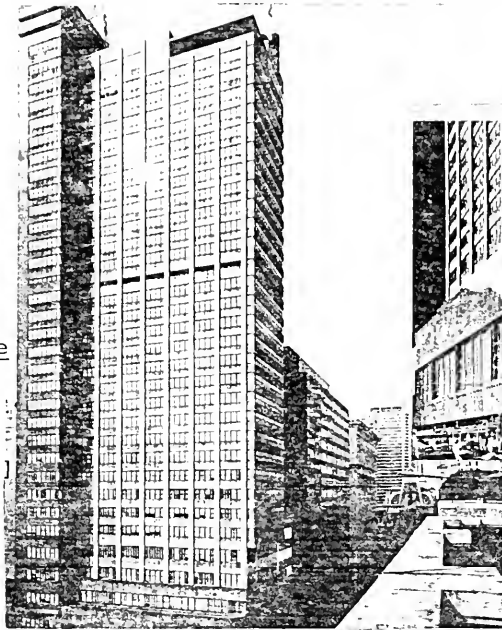


Figure 17: Jefferson Medical College Hospital tower (Vincent Kling, archt., 1954.)

[From the 1956 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA.]

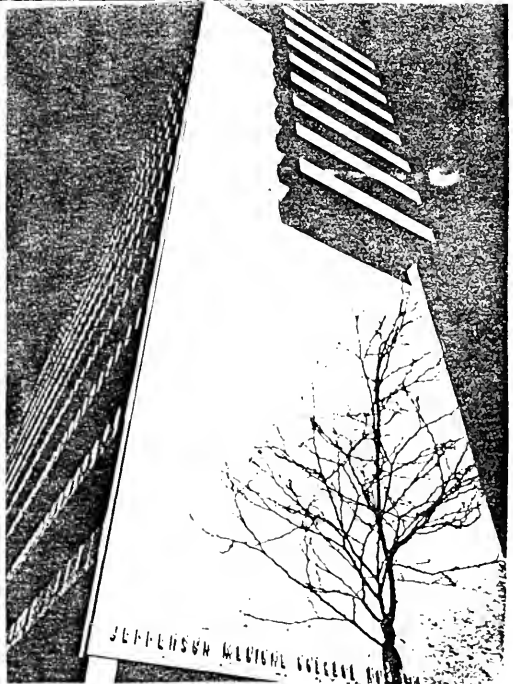




Figure 18: View of Penn Center  
(right); Vincent Kling and  
Emery Roth and Sons, archts.  
(Begun 1953.)



[From Philadelphia Architecture, A Guide to the City; edited by John Andrew Gallery (Phila.: The Foundation for Architecture, 1984.)]



Figure 19: Sidney Hillman Medical Center (Louis Magaziner and Herman Polss,  
archts., 1949-50.)

[Photo taken by author.]





Figure 20: Middle  
City Post Office  
branch (Steele Pownall  
and Gebhardt, 1949.)

[Photo taken by  
author.]



Figure 21: Second Federal Savings  
& Loan (Stanley Selinck, 1948.)

[Photo taken by author.]





Figure 22: Former Benjamin Franklin Savings & Loan (Ralph B. Bencker, archt., 1952)

[Photo taken by author.]



Figure 23: Woolworth's (Harry Hakes, archt., 1948) [Photo taken by author.]



Figure 24: Baker's Shoe Store  
(Thalheimer & Weitz, archt., 1948)

[Photo taken by author.]

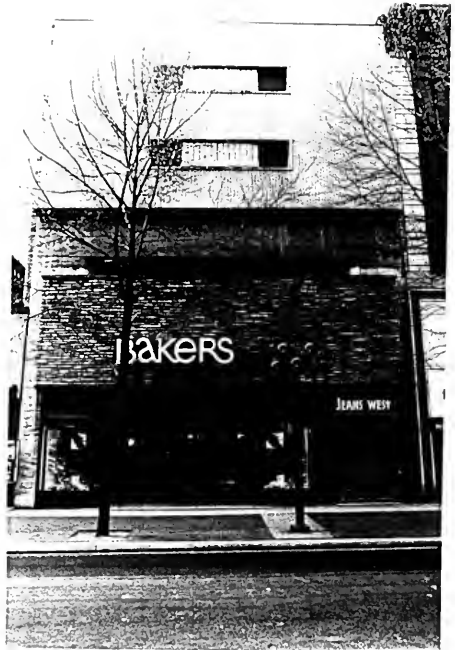


Figure 25: Former Swartz  
Furniture Store  
(George W. Neff, archt., 1946)

[Photo taken by author.]





Figure 26: Air  
Conditioning  
Contractors  
Association Bldg.

[Photo taken by  
author.]

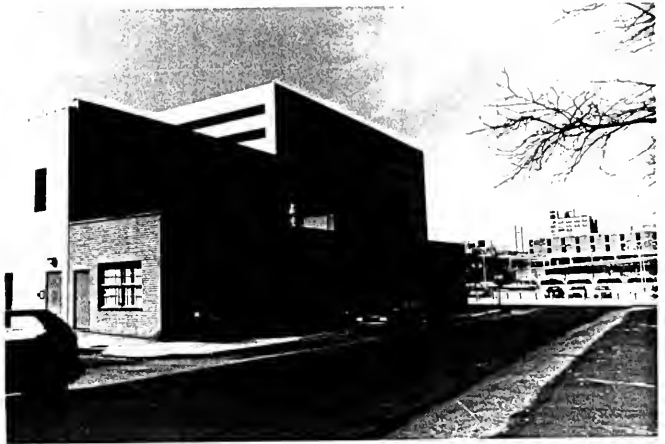


Figure 27: Square  
Industries  
Parking Garage  
(Thalheimer &  
Weitz, archt.,  
1950)

[Photo taken by  
author.]









Figure 28: Addition to Provident Bank Bldg. (Built 1947) [Photo taken by author.]



Figure 29.: Ambassador Towne House  
Apartment Building (George S. Idell,  
1957.)

[Photograph taken by the author.]



Figure 30.: Apartment Building at  
118 S. 21st Street (George S. Idell,  
1954.)

[Photograph taken by the author.]





Figure 31: Former S & P Training Center (Charles H. Ingle, archt., 1953)  
[Photo taken by author.]



Figure 32: 1800 Chestnut Street (Leo Hauf, archt., 1959)  
[Photo taken by author.]



Figure 33: Metropolitan YWCA Annex  
(Howell Lewis Shay, archt., 1953)

[Photo taken by author.]



Figure 34: Former Quaker Savings & Loan Association (Stanley Jelinek, archt.,  
1954)

[Photo taken by author.]







Figure 35: "The Avenue" Dress Shop (Formerly Coward Shoe Store)  
Oscar Stonorov and Louis I. Kahn, archts., 1949.

Figure 36: City of Philadelphia Parking Garage (F. Spencer Roach of Harbeson  
Hough Livingston and Larson,  
[Photo taken by author.] 1953)







Figure 37: Sophy Curson Dress Shop (Beryl Price, archt., 1952)  
[Photo taken by author.]

Figure 38: Former Cayuga Federal Savings & Loan Building (Philip Mastrin, archt., 1960)  
[Photo taken by author.]







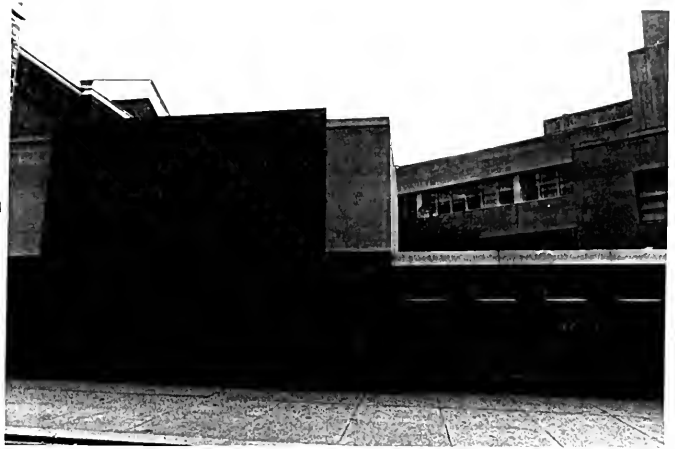
Figure 39: Square Industries Parking Garage-Office Entrance (Thalheimer & Weitz, archt., 1950)  
[Photo taken by author.]

Figure 40: Association of Air Conditioning Contractors Bldg. (Built 1954)  
[Photo taken by author.]





Figure 41: View  
of Main Elevation



Figures 41 & 42: Sidney Hillman  
Medical Center (Louis Magaziner and  
Herman Polss, archts., 1949-50)

[All photos taken by author.]

Figure 42: View of West  
Elevation.

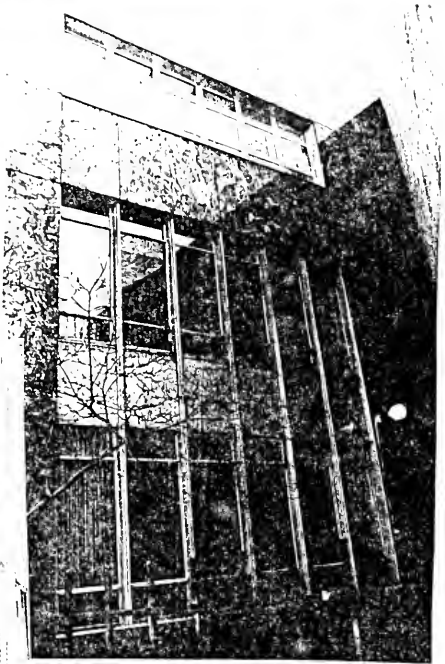


Figure 43: Baker's Shoe Store-  
Entrance.







Figure 44: Metropolitan  
YWCA Annex (Howell Lewis  
Shay, 1954)

[Photo taken by author.]



Figure 45: Metropolitan YWCA Annex (Entrance) [Photo taken by author.]





Figure 46: Sophie Curson Dress Shop (Signage on North Elevation)  
[Photo taken by author.]



Figure 47: Quaker Savings & Loan Association Bldg. [Photo taken by author.]





Figure 48: Cayuga Federal Savings & Loan Association Bldg. (View of Ground Floor)  
[Photo taken by author.]



Figure 49: Ambassador Towne Apartment House (George S. Idell, archt., 1957)  
(View of North Elevation) [Photo taken by author.]



Figure 51:  
Ambassador Towne  
Apartment House  
(Ground floor--  
West Elevation)



Figure 50: Apartment House at 118  
S. 21st Street (View of East  
Elevation)

[Photos taken by author.]







Figure 52:  
Philadelphia  
Federal Credit  
Union  
(William Linker,  
archt., 1956)

[Photo taken by  
author.]



Figure 53: Metropolitan  
YWCA Annex (Proposed  
Design by Sydney E.  
Martin, archt.)

[From the Metropolitan  
YWCA File, the Urban  
Archives at Temple  
University; Phila.]



PROPOSED ADDITION

Y. W. C. A.



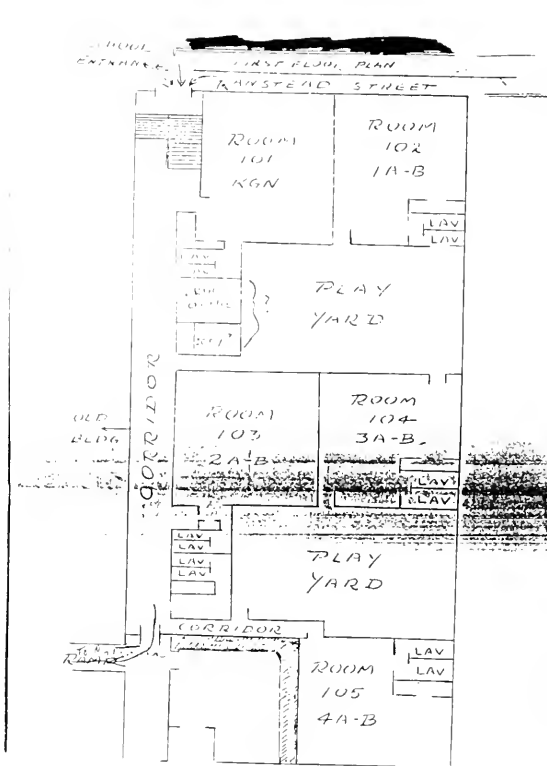


Figure 54: Metropolitan YWCA Annex (Building Plan of Ground Floor)

[From the Metropolitan YWCA File, the Urban Archives at Temple Univ.]



Figure 55.

Metropolitan  
YWCA Annex:  
Design Rendering  
by Howell Lewis  
Shay, archt.

[From the 1953  
Yearbok of the  
Philadelphia  
Chapter of the  
AIA, p. 24.]



Figure 56.

Sidney Hillman  
Medical Center:  
View of North and  
East Elevations,  
and Rear of Audito-  
rium.

[Photo taken by  
author.]



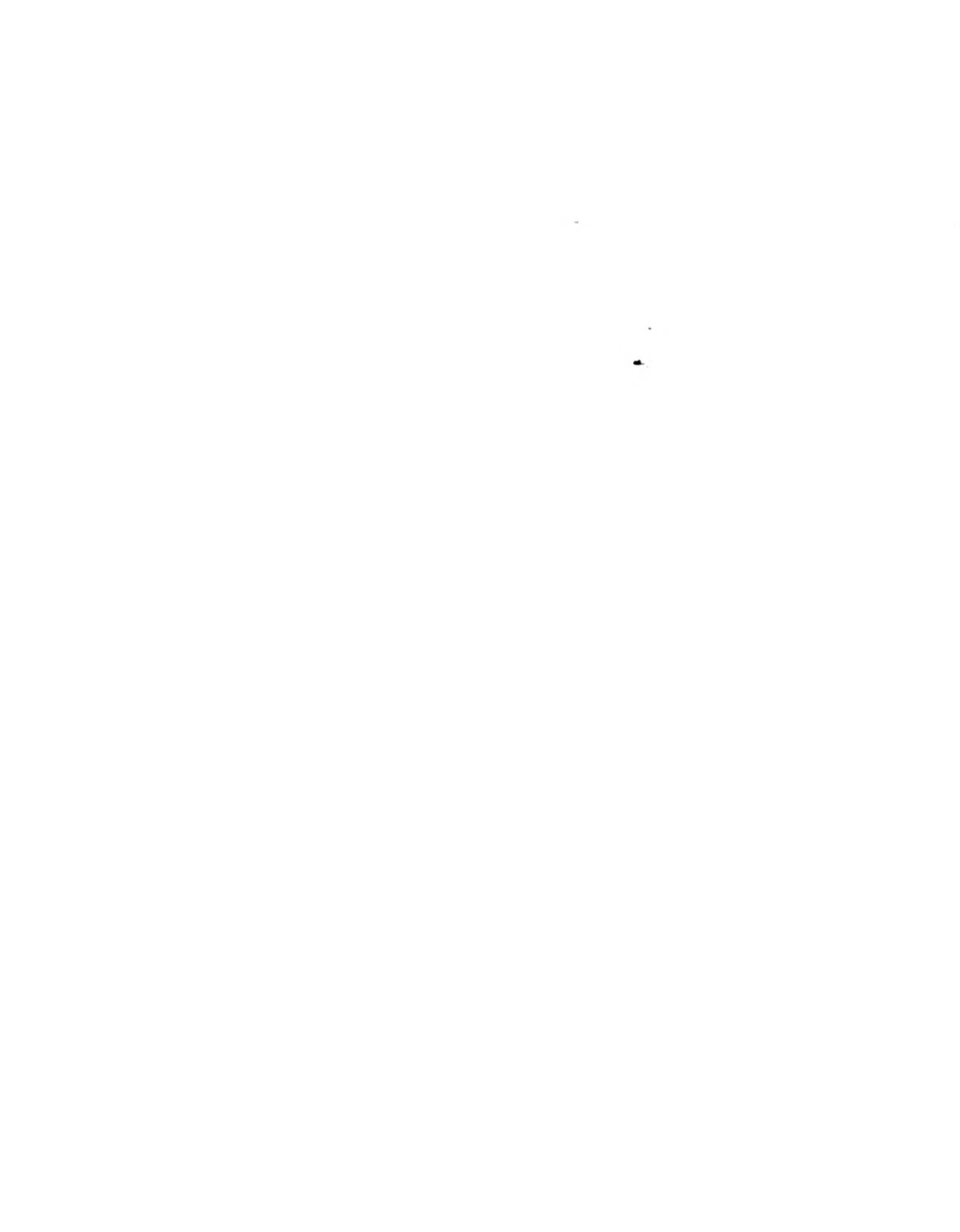
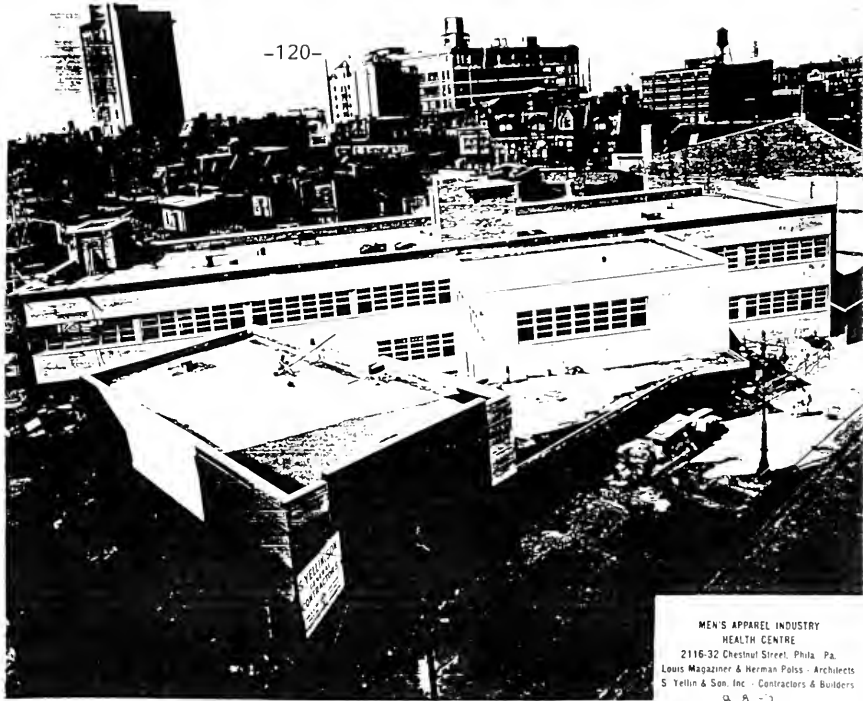


Figure 57.

Sydney Hillman Medical Center: View of Center Under Construction.  
(Date: August 8, 1950.)

[From the Louis Magaziner Collection, The Athenaeum of Philadelphia.]



MEN'S APPAREL INDUSTRY  
HEALTH CENTRE  
2116-32 Chestnut Street, Phila. Pa.  
Louis Magaziner & Herman Polss - Architects  
S Yellin & Son, Inc. - Contractors & Builders  
B B - 3

Figure 58.

Sydney Hillman Medical Center: Plan of Ground Floor.

[From the 1950 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA: p. 9.]

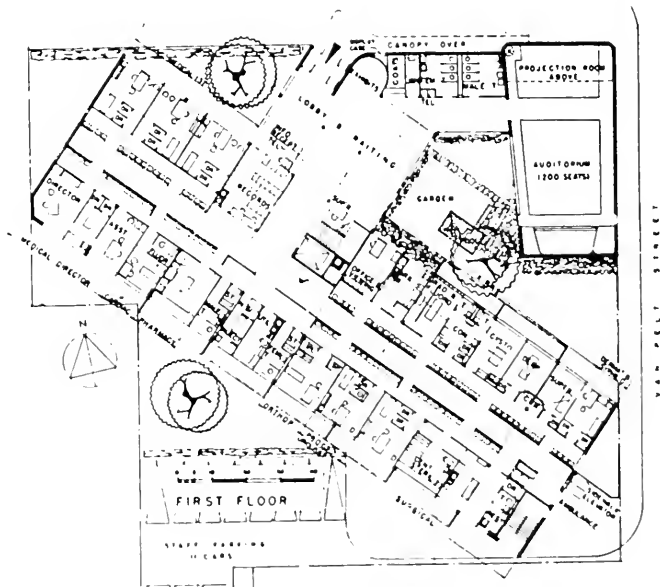






Figure 59.

Sydney Hillman Medical Center: View of Waiting Alcove.

[From the Louis Magaziner Collection, The Athenaeum of Philadelphia.]



Figure 60.

Sydney Hillman Medical Center: View of Lobby and Waiting Area.

[From the Louis Magaziner Collection, The Athenaeum of Philadelphia.]

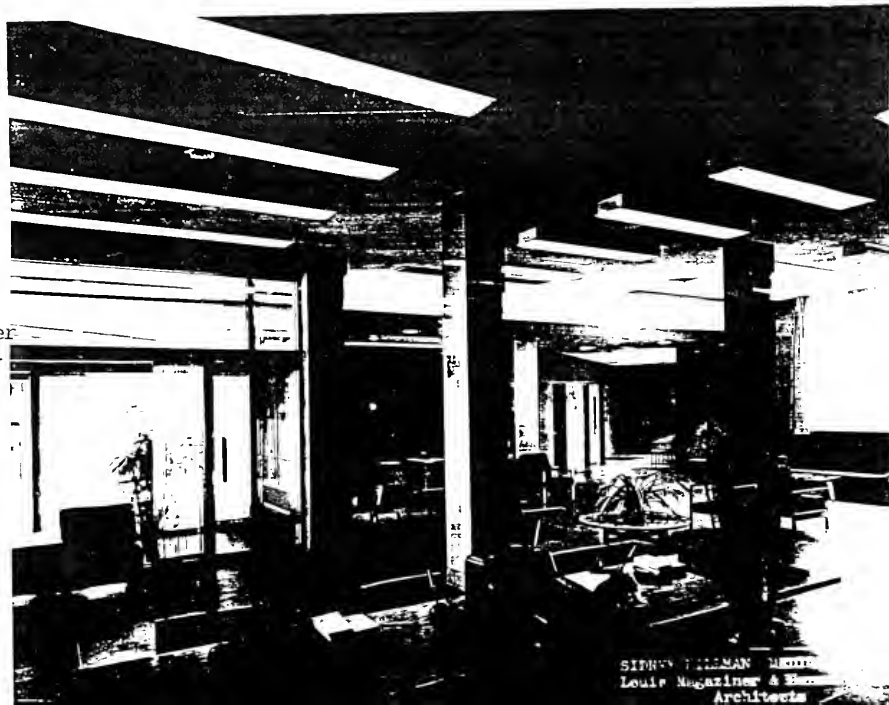




Figure 61.

Sydney Hillman Medical Center: Interior of Auditorium.

[From the Louis Magaziner Collection, The Athenaeum of Philadelphia.]

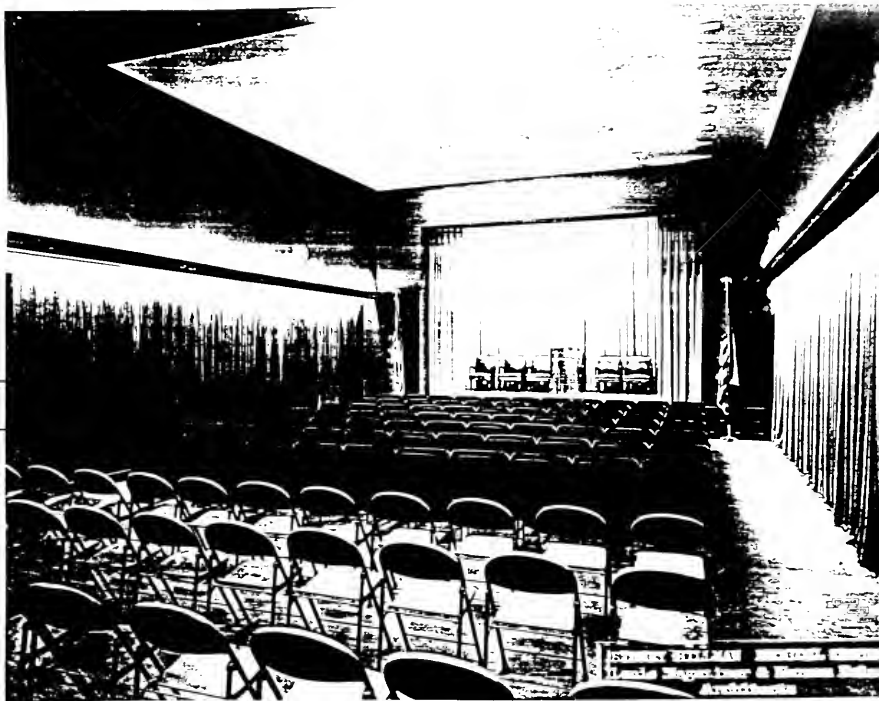


Fig. 62.

The Mercantile Library branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia: View of Facade

[From the Mercantile Library File, Art Department, the Free Library of Philadelphia.]

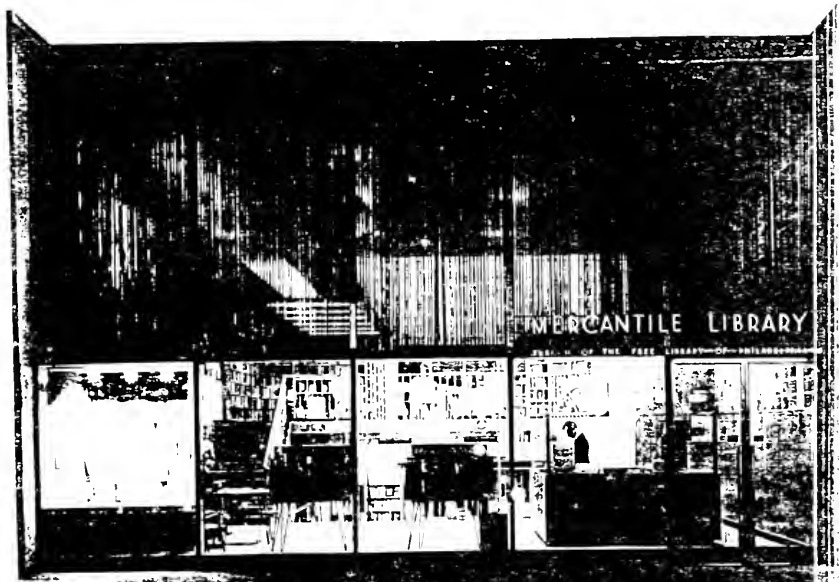




Figure 63.

Mercantile Library:  
Floor Plans and Building  
Section.

[From "Extrovert Library:  
Philadelphia's New  
Mercantile Library" in  
Architectural Forum;  
August, 1954, Vol. 101:  
p. 115.]

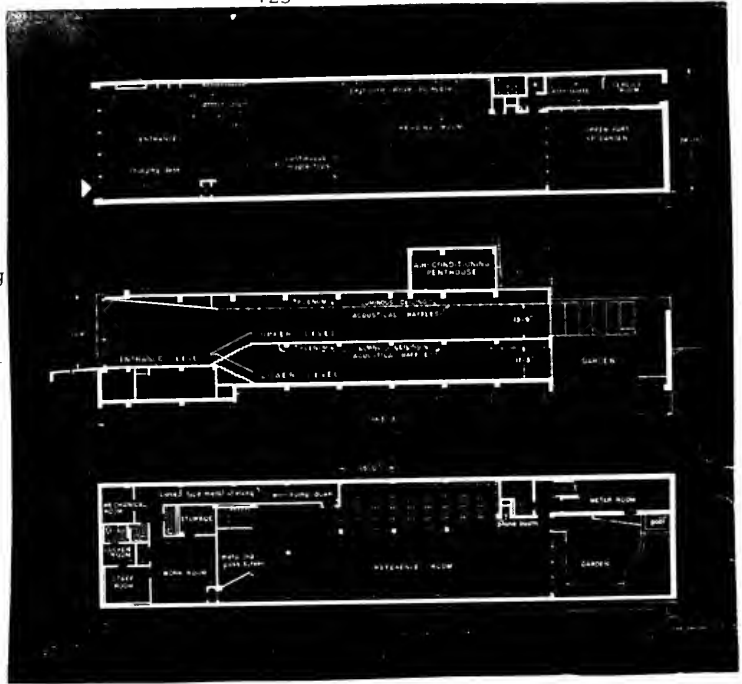
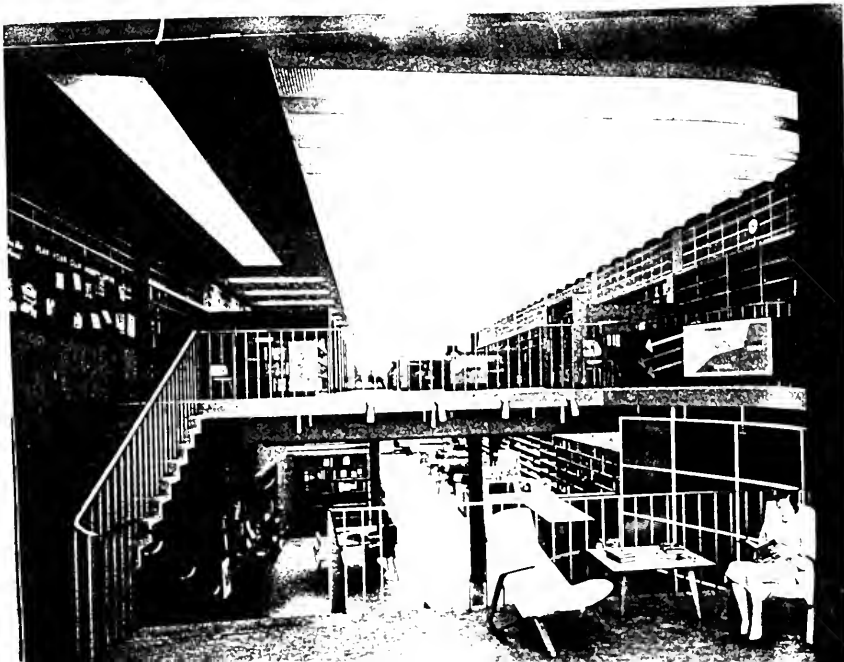


Figure 64.

Mercantile Library:  
View of Interior.

[From "Extrovert  
Library" in Architec-  
tural Forum: p. 114.]



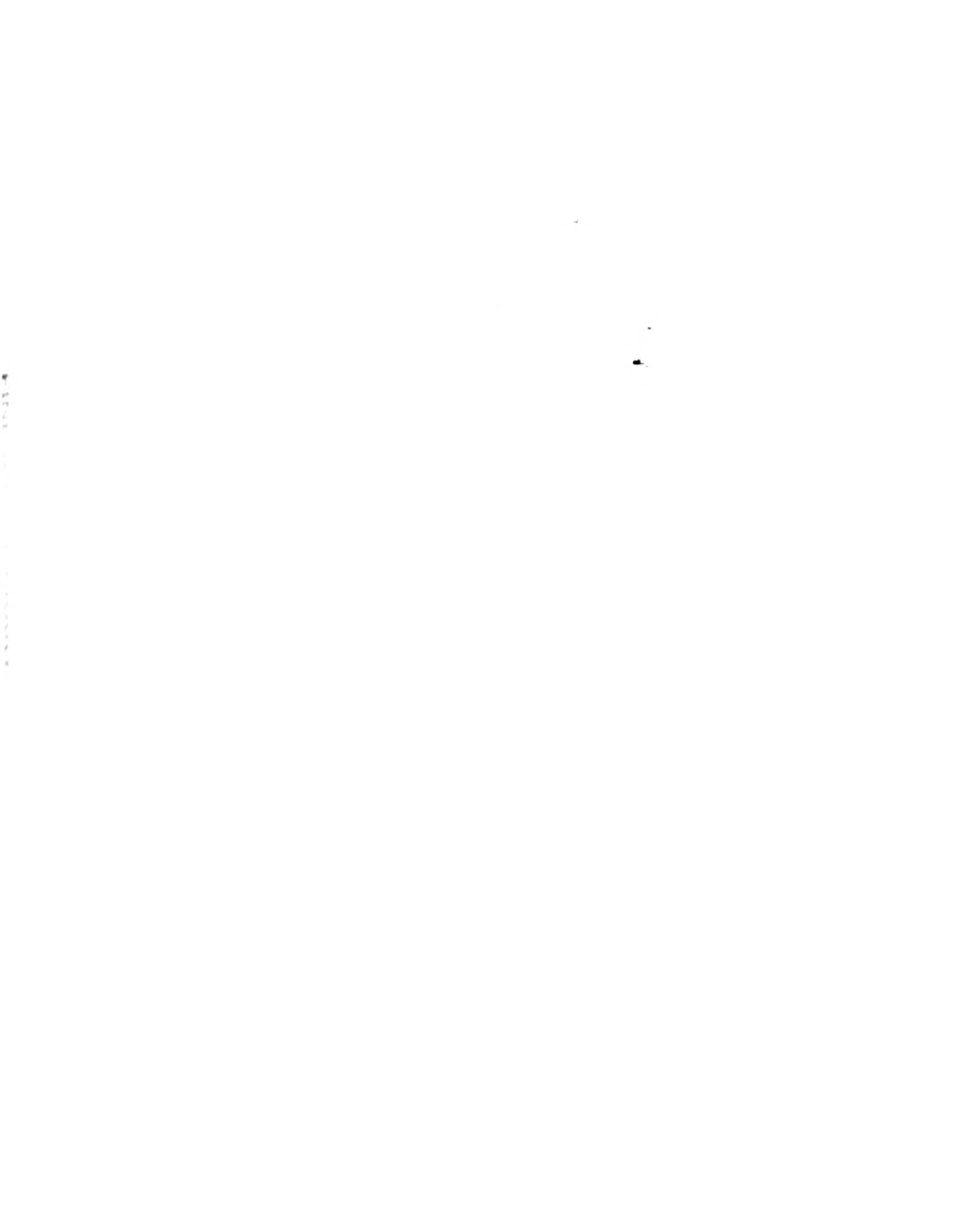


Figure 65.

Mercantile Library:  
Night View of Rear Elevation  
Facing Rear Garden.)

[From "Extrovert Library"  
in Architectural Forum:  
p. 115.]

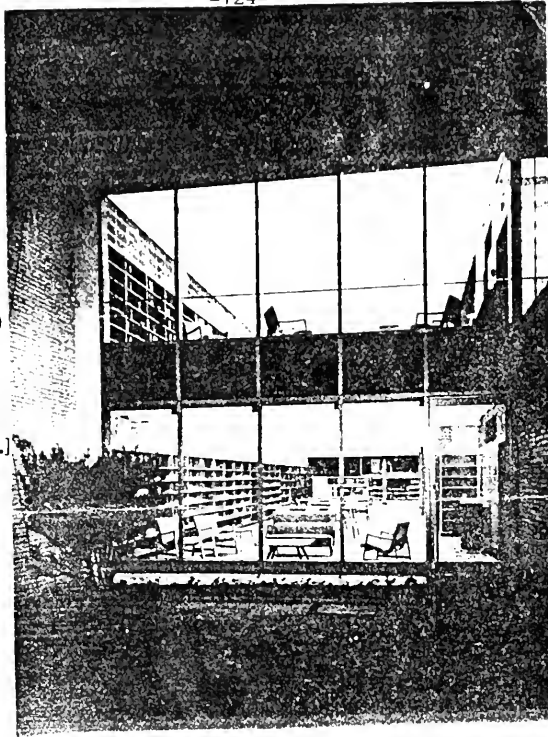


Figure 66.

Woolworth's: View of  
Rear Elevation Cladding

[Photograph taken by the  
author.]



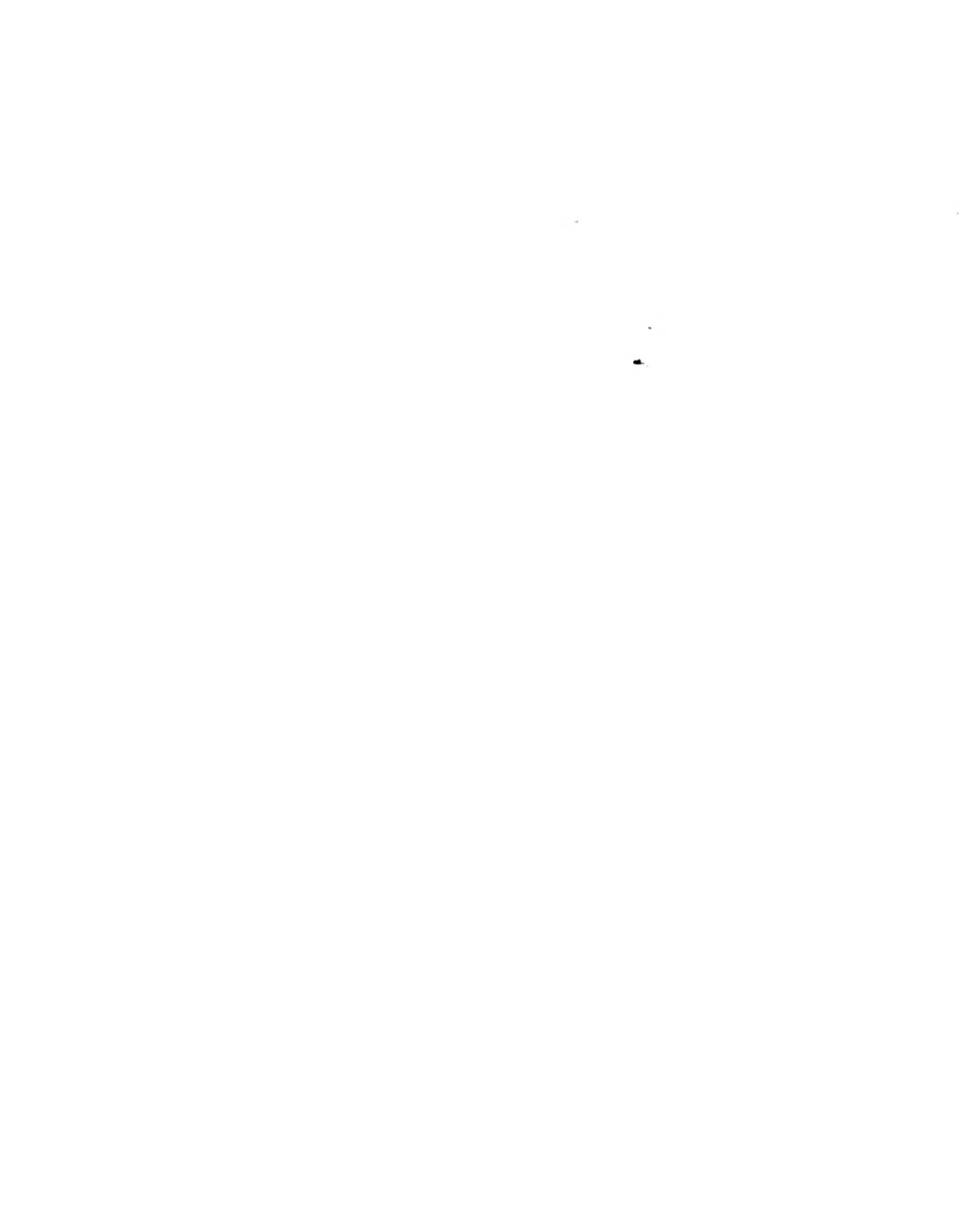




Figure 67: Association of Air  
Conditioning Contractors Bldg.  
View of Cladding Material on  
Main Elevation.

[Photo taken by author.]



Figure 68: Cayuga Savings & Loan  
Association Bldg.

View of Cladding Material on  
Ground Floor.

[Photo taken by author.]

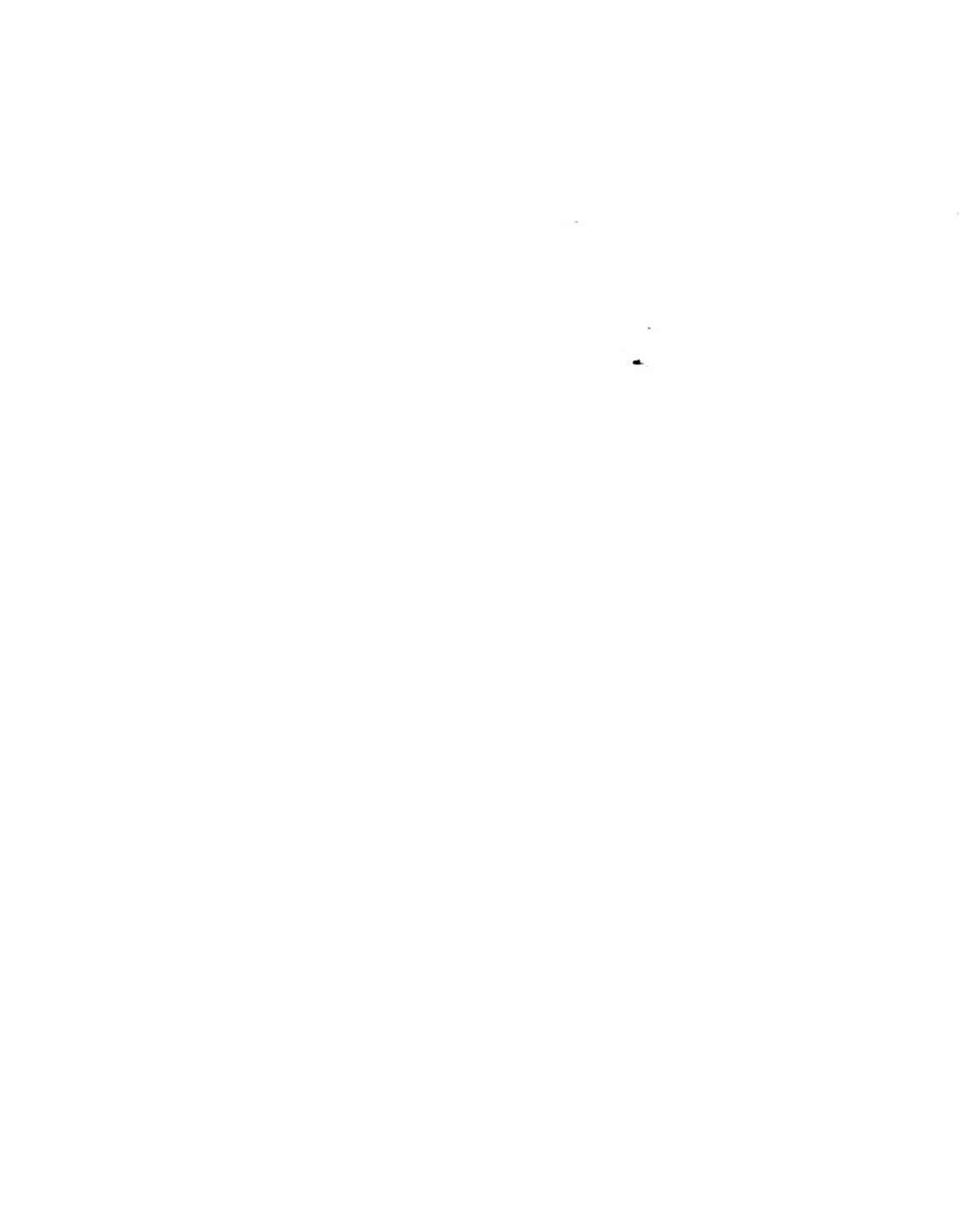


Figure 69.

Trade Catalog Advertisement for "ENDURO," a building material manufactured by the Republic Steel Company.

[From the 1948 edition of Sweet's Catalog File for Builders (New York: Sweet's Catalog Service, 1948), Vol. 6, Section 6C]

MISCELLANEOUS USES

ENDURO is being used for many and varied purposes in all forms of building construction. Its corrosion-resistance and ease of maintenance make it ideal for all types of exterior applications. Many uses of Enduro have come to our attention... if you know of an interesting application we would appreciate your writing giving the location and usage.

Right: Branch Building, Eastern Kodak Co., Chicago, Ill. Architects—Smith, Gordon & Erickson, Chicago, Ill.

Enduro 18-8 Stainless Steel Incoats used for entrance jambs to top of building and for fixed jambs and center mullion at sides of windows.

Left: Administration Building at Baylor University, Waco, Texas. Enduro 18-8, 24 size, number 4 finish, used as a covering for the dome. Architects—Buch D. Esterwood & Son.

Above: Beck's Restaurant, Philadelphia. Formed by J. P. Collins Co.

Figure 70.

Woolworth's: View of Metal Overhang above Main Entrance.

[Photo taken by author.]



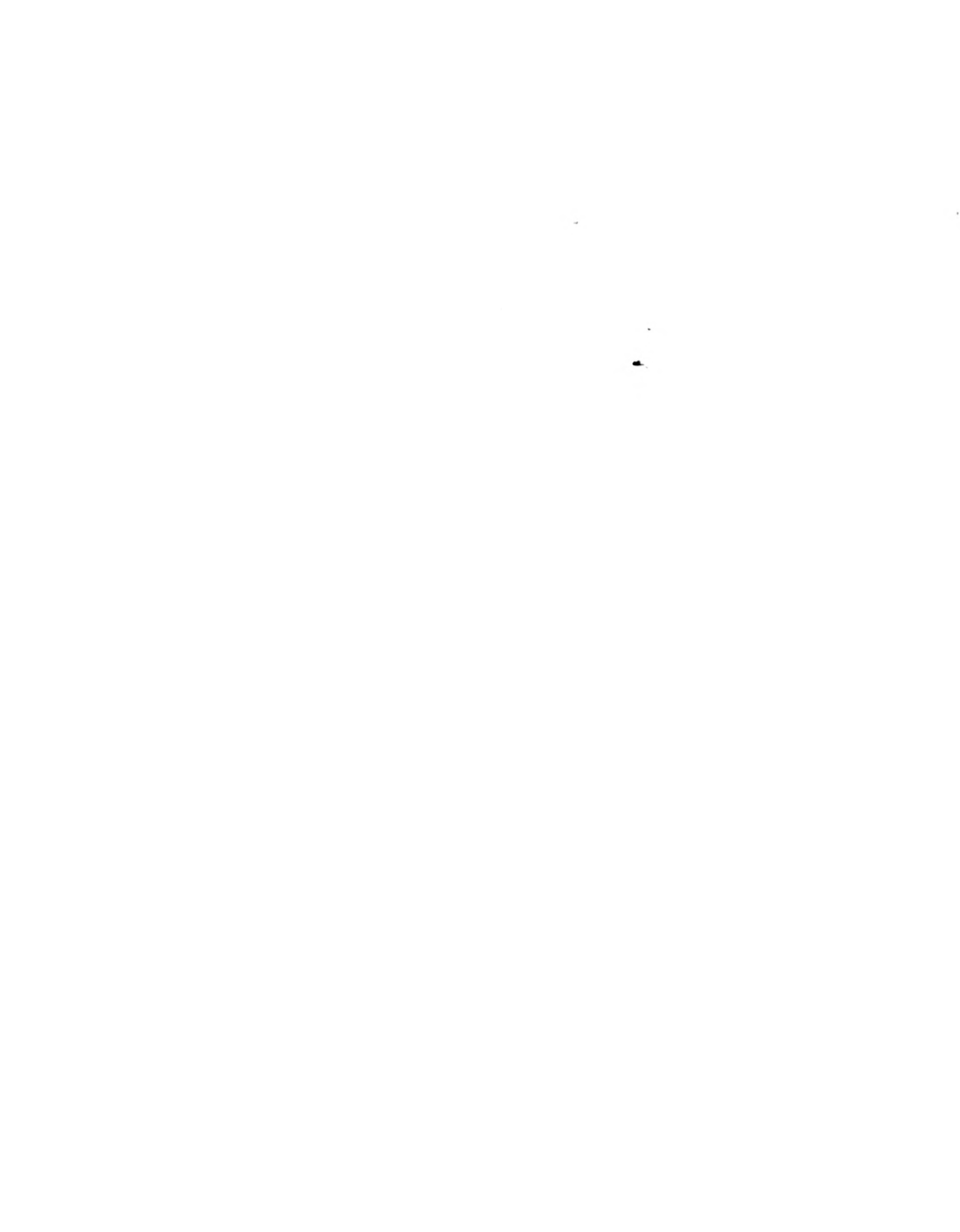




Figure 71. Former S & P Training Center: Detail of Facade Glazing.  
[Photo taken by author.]



Figure 72. Mercantile Library: View of Main Elevation.  
[Photo taken by author.]



Figure 73.

Trade Catalog Advertisement for "Zourite" Facing Material manufactured by the Kawneer Architectural Metal Company.

[From Sweet's Catalog File for Builders (New York, 1954), Vol. 5, Sec. 5d/Ka]



# Zourite Facing Material

ALUMILITED ALUMINUM AND PORCELAIN ENAMEL ON ALUMINUM

For Remodeling... For New Construction

ZOURITE, the modern aluminum facing material, is available in 5 Porcelain Enamel finishes, "Spring Green... Harvest Brown... Velvet Black... Academy Blue... Sunset Red" and in lustroon, non-glossing aluminite and aluminite grey.

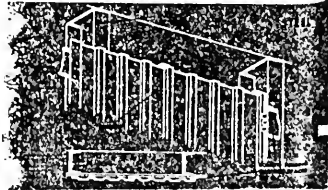
Zourite is made of heavy gauge (.050) aluminum. It can be applied horizontally or vertically to exterior or interior surfaces without making major structural alterations. It can be fitted around corners, angles or curves, and it can be applied to masonry, frame, or metal.

Zourite flexibility, with its 4 width, assures uniform spacing for all areas, small or large. Stock lengths of 20 feet in Alumilite finish and 16 feet in Porcelain finish are easily cut at the job to fit its requirements. Sleeves are provided for butt joints.

## Kawneer

ARCHITECTURAL METAL PRODUCTS

WRITE FOR COMPLETE CONSTRUCTION DETAILS



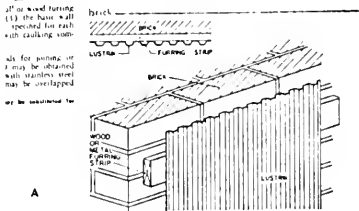
## LUSTRIK *alumulited facing* $\frac{5a}{Lu}$

### stails

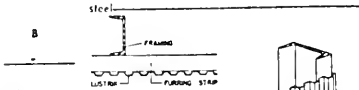
If wood framing (S) the base will specify for each with caulking compound.

ails for joining or if may be obtained with caulking compound may be overlapped.

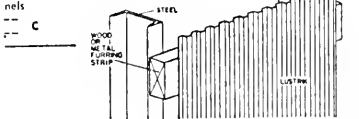
or be substituted for



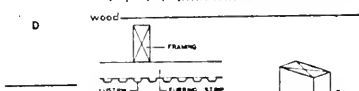
A



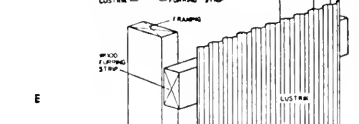
B



C



D



E

Figure 74: Trade Catalog Advertisement for "Lustrik" Alumilited Facing Material produced by Lustrik, Inc.

[From Sweet's Catalog File for Builders (New York, 1954), Vol. 5, Sec. 5a/Lu]

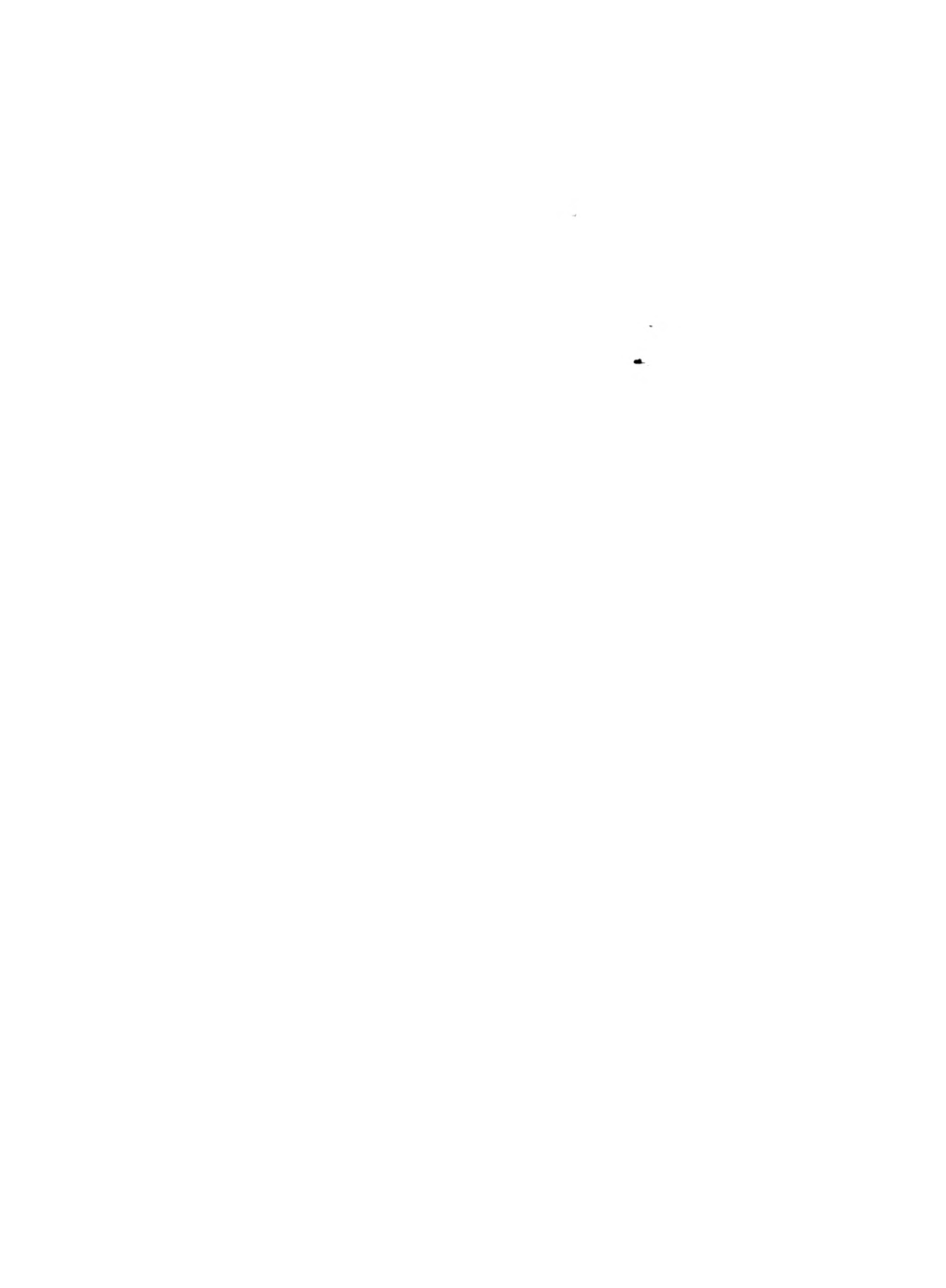




Figure 75.

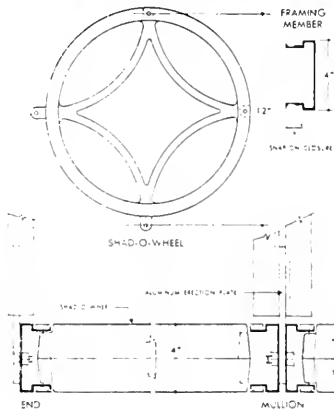
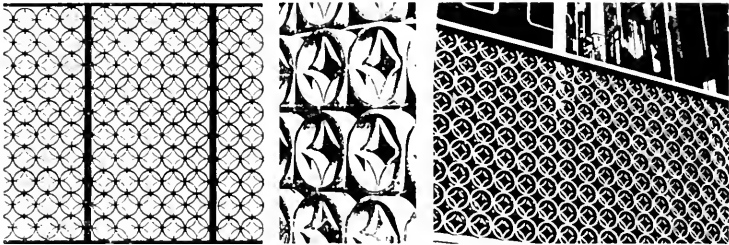
Cayuga Savings & Loan Bldg.: View of Metal-clad Columns on Ground Floor.

[Photo taken by author]



# Al-Shade Screen System

PATENT PENDING



Alcoa Al-Shade\* is a simple system of standard aluminum components which assemble into an ornamental sun screen. Screen parts are finished with any of eleven Alcoa baked enamel color finishes.

### SHAD-O-WHEEL COMPONENTS AND ASSEMBLY

The Al-Shade Shad-O-Wheel Pattern featured here is a glass screen made from cast aluminum Shad-O-Wheel units which join to each other mechanically. Screen assemblies having three different depths are possible.

- Assembly 1, using Shad-O-Wheels back to back for double depth and maximum shading in front of window areas. (Depth—4", Weight—9 lb. psf.)
- Assembly 2, using 5/8" Shad-O-Wheel depth plus backup plate as a decorative screen over wall or windows. (Depth—2 3/4", Weight—4 lb. psf.)
- Assembly 3, with Shad-O-Wheel backup plates used double as ornamental grilles on walls, ceilings or as space dividers. (Depth—1 1/2", Weight—2 lb. psf.)

Shad-O-Wheel assemblies may be installed as a continuous pattern facade or with mullion dividers, depending on the effect desired. Screens are attached to the building with angles or brackets. A sheet of suggestive installation details for Al-Shade Shad-O-Wheel screens is available from your Alcoa sales office.

### PATTERN POSSIBILITIES

The principle of Alcoa's Al-Shade Screen System lends itself to other pattern possibilities. Some typical designs are suggested below.

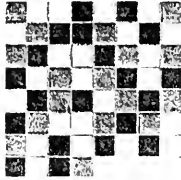
\*Trademark of Aluminum Company of America.

Figure 76: Trade Catalog Advertisement for "Al-Shade Screen System" manufactured by the Aluminum Company of America.

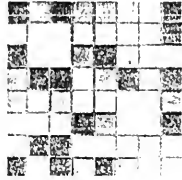
[From Sweet's Catalog File for Builders (New York, 1959); Vol. 3, Sec. 3a/ALU]



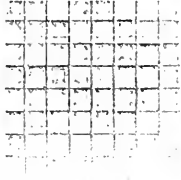
CERAMIC MOSAIC PATTERNS *To order, specify complete pattern number—example: 3015-VAAA*



3015-VAAA Mosaic Medley  
33% each Velvetone 104,  
Velvetex 101, 24% Velvetex  
102, 10% Velvetone 181.



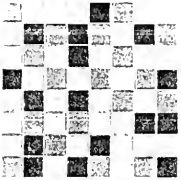
3304-VAAA Medley Random  
2' x 2'—Velvetex 101,  
2' x 1'—Velvetex 101,  
1' x 1'— $\frac{1}{2}$  each—Velvetex 101,  
Velvetex 102, Velvetone 103.



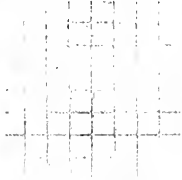
3000-ZAAA Straight Joint  
Evertex 1062



3000-ZABA Straight Joint  
Faientex 1091



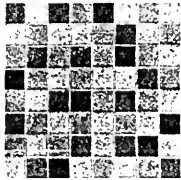
3015-VBCA Mosaic Medley  
33% each Velvetex 111,  
Velvetone 113, 24% Velvetone  
114, 10% Velvetex 181.



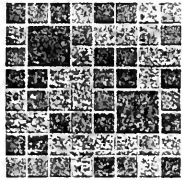
3000-ZBAA Straight Joint  
Evertex 1162



3000-ZBBA Straight Joint  
Faientex 1191



3015-VCEA Mosaic Medley  
33% each Velvetex 171,  
Velvetex 121, 24% Velvetex  
122, 10% Velvetone 124.



3304-VCAA Medley Random  
2' x 2'—Velvetex 122,  
2' x 1'—Velvetex 121,  
1' x 1'— $\frac{1}{2}$  each—Velvetex 121,  
Velvetex 122, Velvetone 123.



3000-ZCAA Straight Joint  
Evertex 1262



3000-ZCBA Straight Joint  
Faientex 1291

Figure 77.: Trade Catalog Advertisement for Mosaic Tile patterns  
Designed for Exterior Surfaces such as the  
Ground Floor Piers of the City of Philadelphia  
garage.

[From Sweet's Catalog File (New York, 1961); Vol. 13,  
Sec. 13d/Mo.]



Figure 78.

Former S & P Training Center: Detail  
of Metal Framing of Facade Glazing.

[Photograph taken by the author.]



Figure 79.

Mercantile Library Branch  
of the Free Library of  
Philadelphia: Detail of  
Bottom Framing of Plate  
Glass Facade.

[Photograph taken by the  
author.]





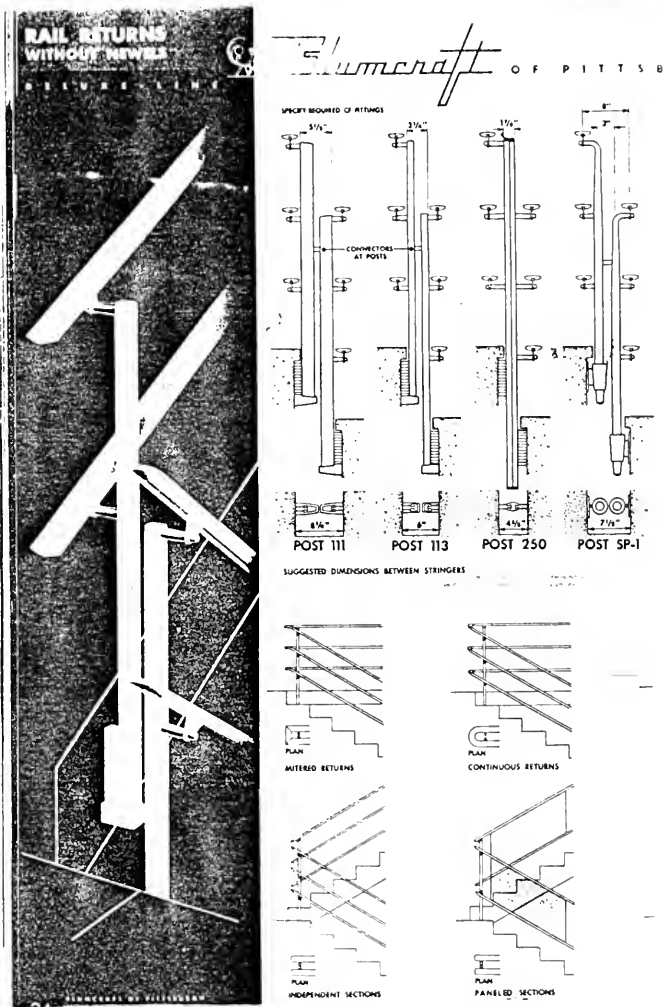


Figure 80: Trade Catalog Advertisement for Metal Design Components produced by Blumcraft of Pittsburgh.

[From Sweet's Catalog File for Builders (New York, 1957); Vol. 6, Sec. 6e/Blu]





Figure 81: Clifford E. Garner, archt., "Gewiss Bakery"  
(Media, PA; 1949)

[From the 1949 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA]

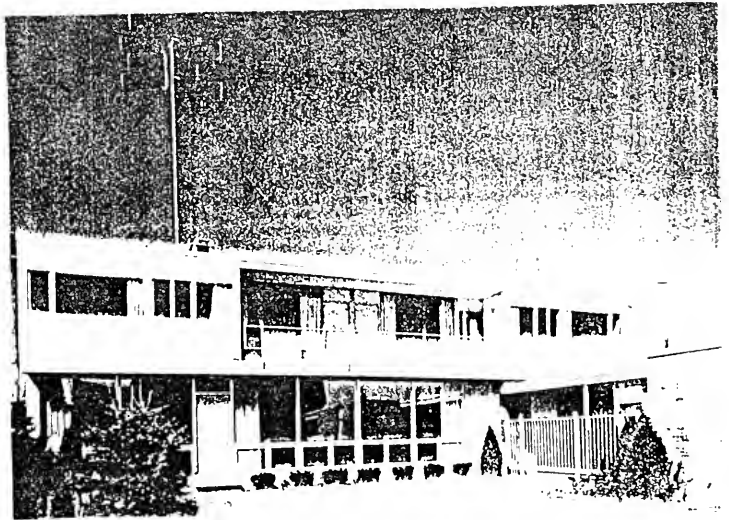
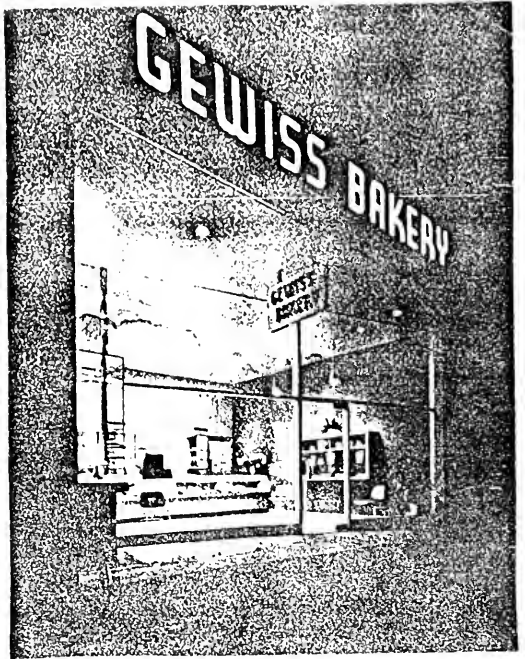


Figure 82: Clifford E. Garner, archt., Beron Residence (Margate, NJ; 1952)

[From the 1952 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA]



Figure 83.

Northeast Office of  
Highway, Truck Drivers  
and Helpers Local No.  
107-Clifford E.  
Garner, archt.  
(Philadelphia, 1954)

[From the 1954 Year-  
book of the Phila-  
delphia Chapter]

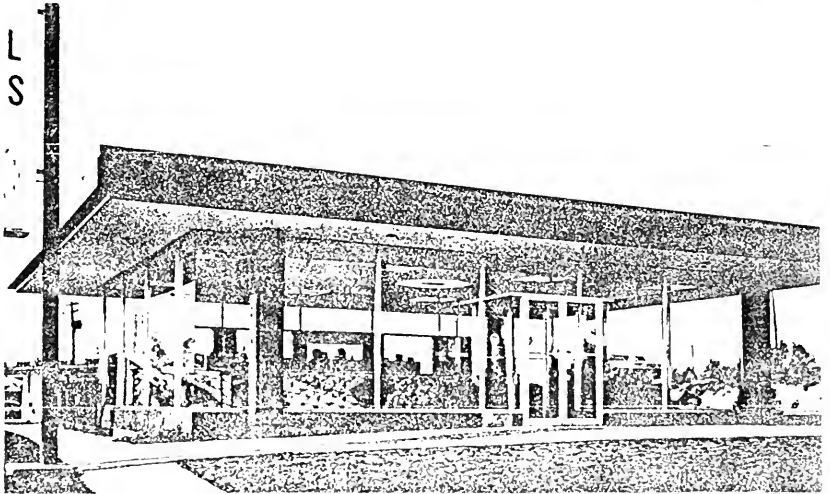
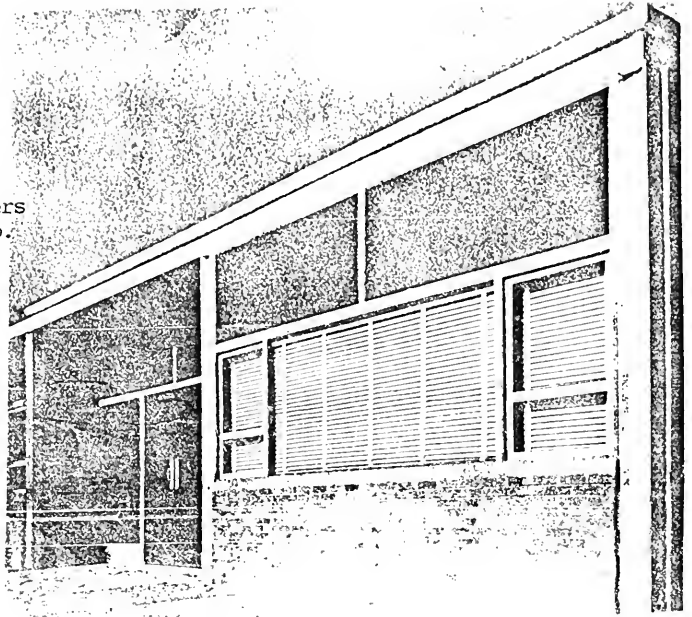


Figure 84: Levittown Branch of First Federal Savings & Loan (Levittown,  
PA; 1960)

[From the 1961 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]



Figure 85.

Clifford E. Garner,  
archt.  
Roosevelt Elementary School  
(Middletown Township, PA;  
1959)

[From the 1959 Yearbook of  
the Philadelphia Chapter]

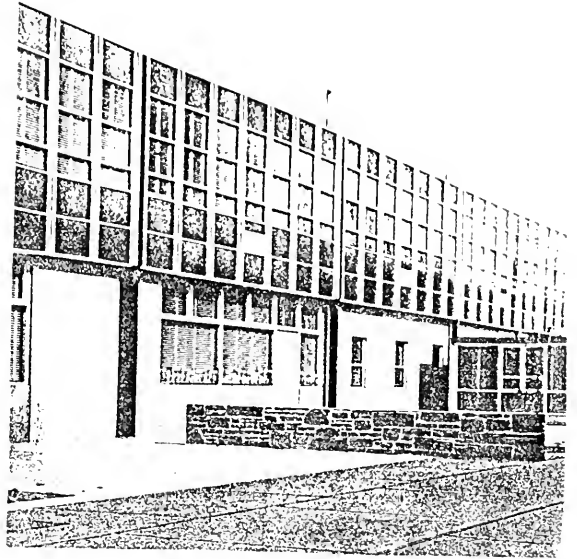
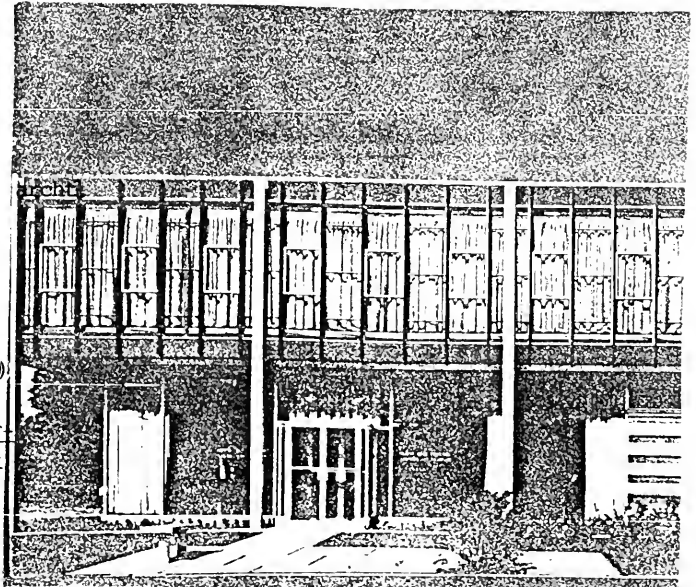


Figure 86.

Clifford E. Garner, archt.

Southampton Branch  
of Northeast Fed-  
eral Savings &  
Loan  
(Philadelphia, 1960)

[From the 1960 Year-  
book of the Phila-  
delphia Chapter]





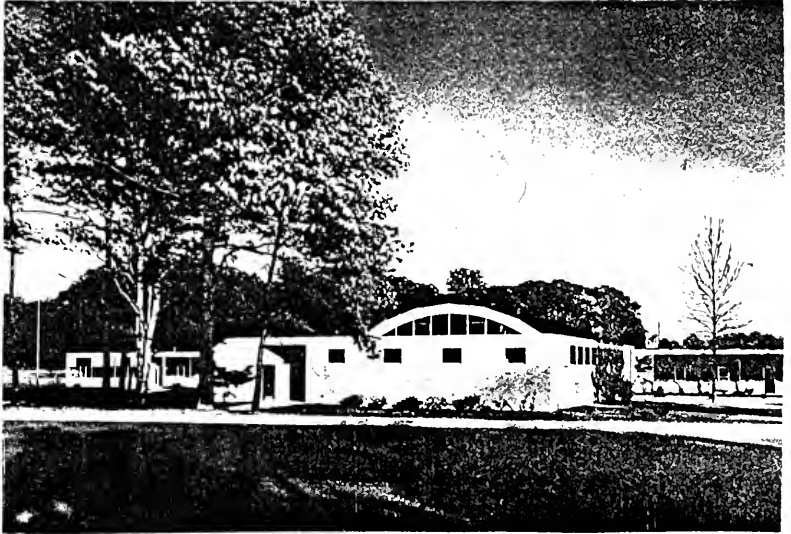


Figure 87: Clifford E. Garner, Thomas Coeburn Elementary School (Brookhaven, PA;  
1956)  
[From the 1956 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]

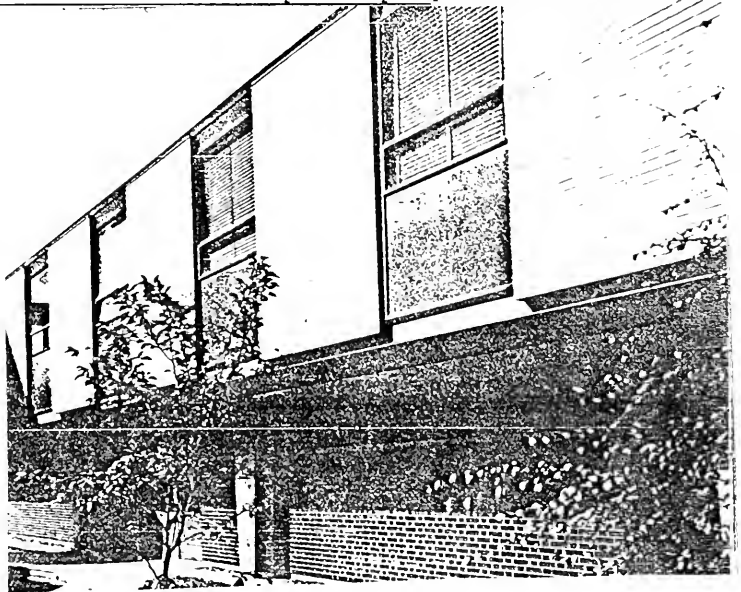


Figure 88: Clifford E. Garner, Nurse's Residence at Northeast Hospital (Phila-  
delphia, 1961)  
[From the 1961 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]





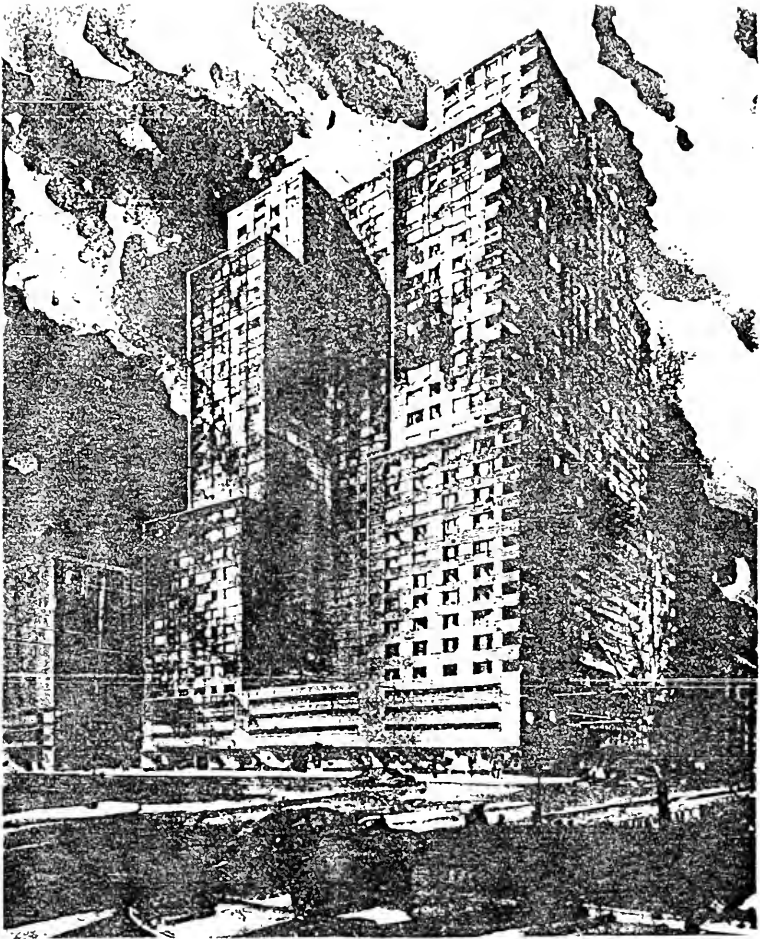


Figure 89.: George S. Idell, Stevens Tower Apartment Building (Project: Philadelphia, PA; 1950.)

[From the 1950 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter.]



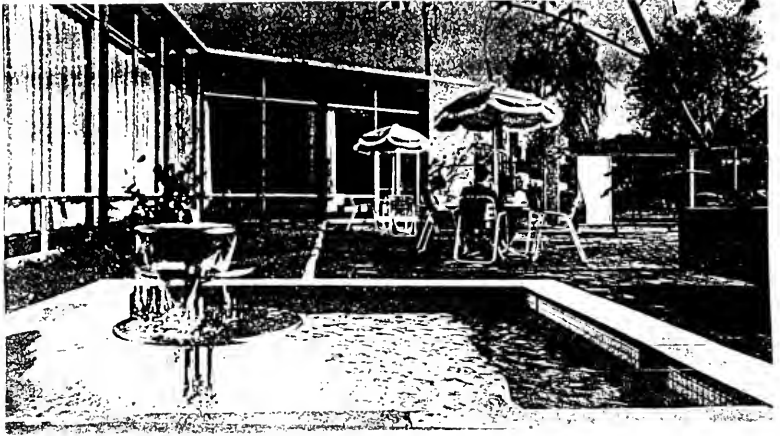


Figure 90: West Oak Lane Branch Library (Philadelphia, 1959)  
Martin, Stewart & Noble with Robert Allan Cass, assoc. archt.

[From the 1959 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]

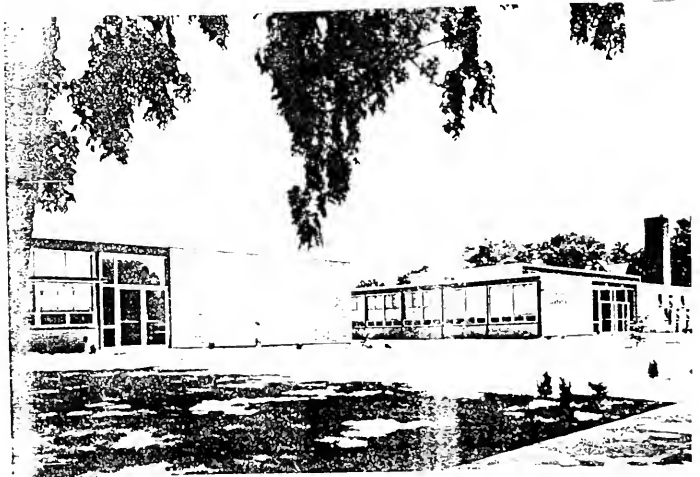


Figure 91: Collingdale Elementary School (Collingdale, PA; 1960)  
Martin, Stewart & Noble, archts.

[From the 1960 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]



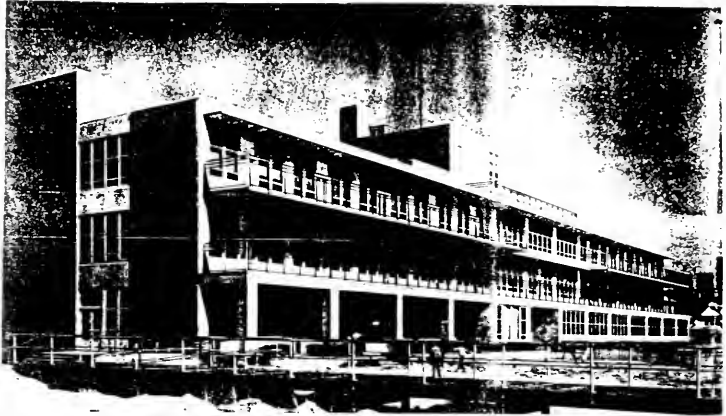


Figure 92: Children's Seashore House (Atlantic City, NJ; 1956)  
Martin, Stewart & Noble, archts.

[From the 1956 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]

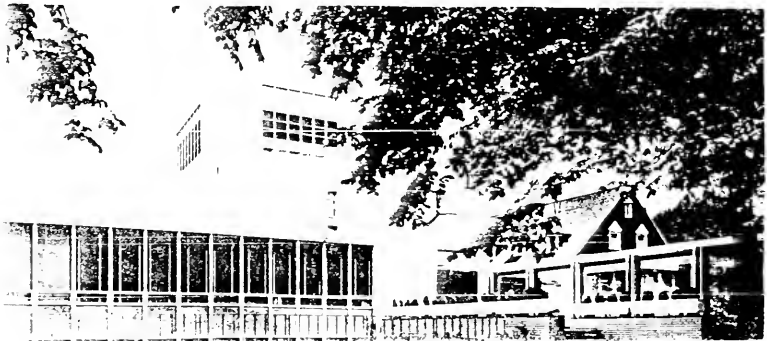


Figure 93: Psychiatric Wing of the University of Pennsylvania Hospital  
(Philadelphia, 1959)

[From the 1959 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]



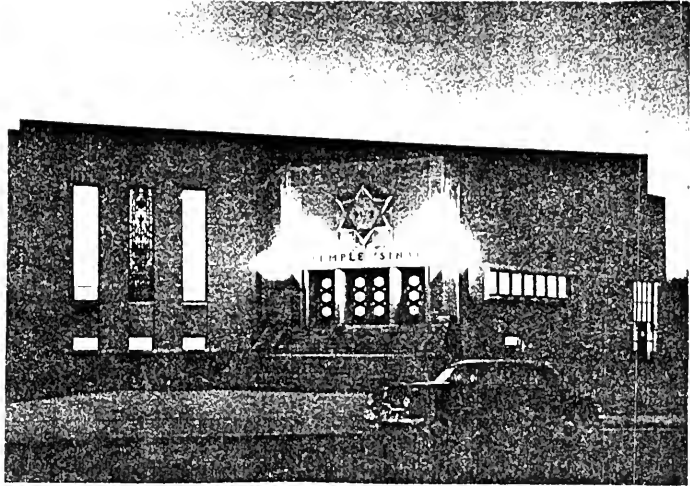


Figure 94: Temple Sinai Synagogue (Philadelphia, 1949)  
(Herman Polss, archt.)

[From the 1949 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter

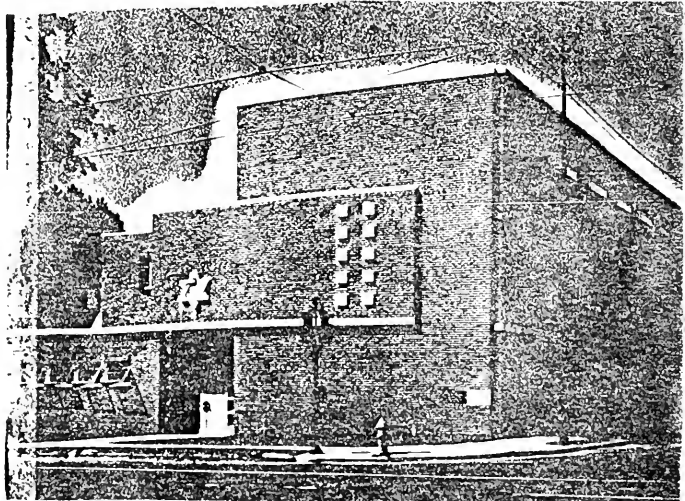


Figure 95: Ezrath Israel Synagogue (Philadelphia, 1955)  
(Herman Polss, archt.)

[From the 1955 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]





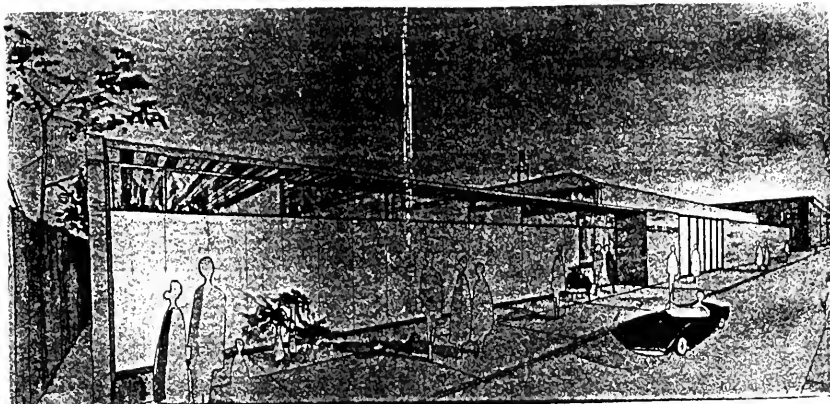


Figure 96: Charles Weinstein Geriatric Center (Philadelphia, 1959)  
(Herman Polss, archt.)

[From the 1959 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]



Figure 97: Colonial Beef Company (Philadelphia, 1959)  
(Herman Polss, archt.)

[From the 1959 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]



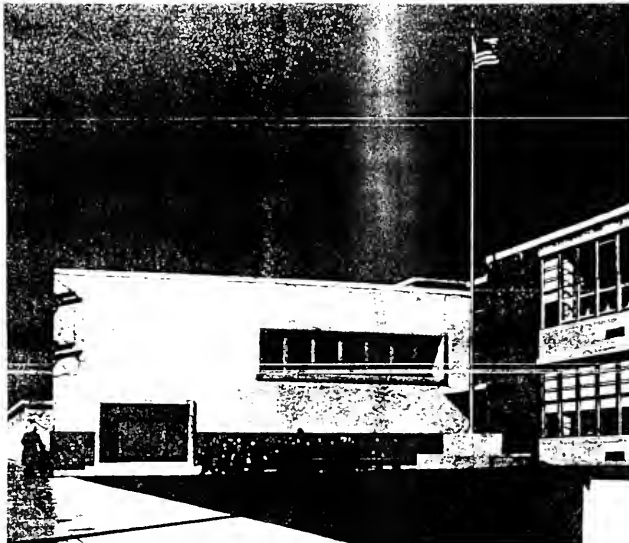


Figure 98: Elementary School at Sedgwick and Williams Avenues (Philadelphia, 1950)  
(Howell Lewis Shay, archt.)  
[From the 1950 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]

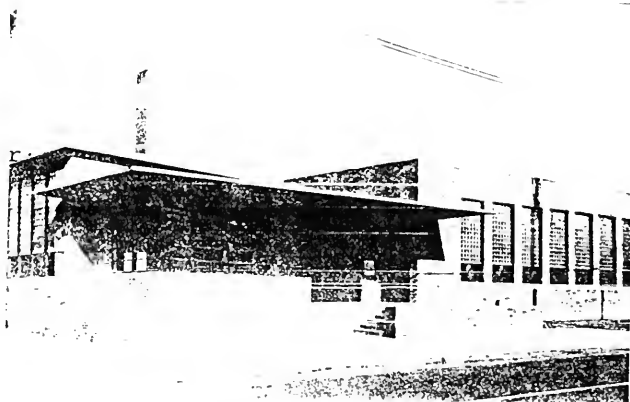


Figure 99: Lawncrest Recreation Center (Philadelphia, 1950)  
(Howell Lewis Shay, archt.)  
[From the 1950 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]



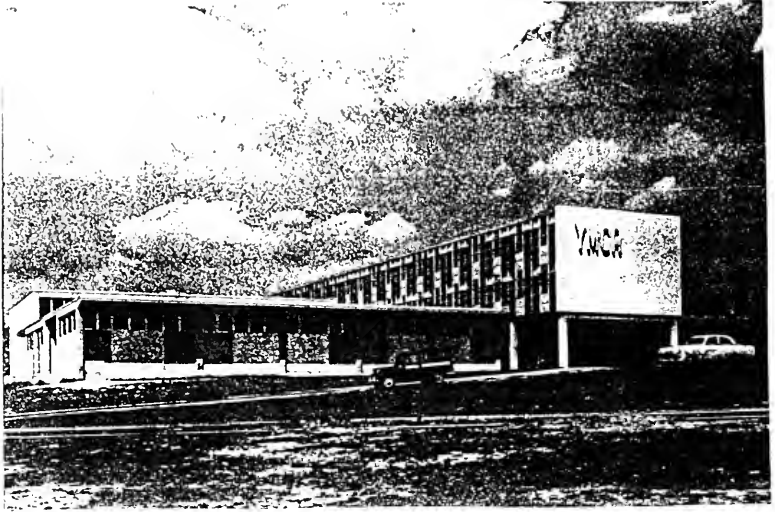


Figure 100: YMCA in Chester, PA (Built 1957) Howell Lewis Shay, archt.

[From the 1957 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]

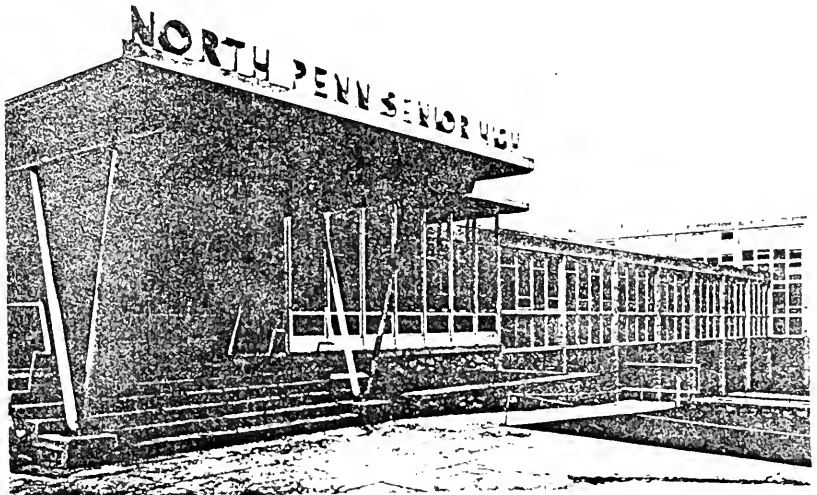
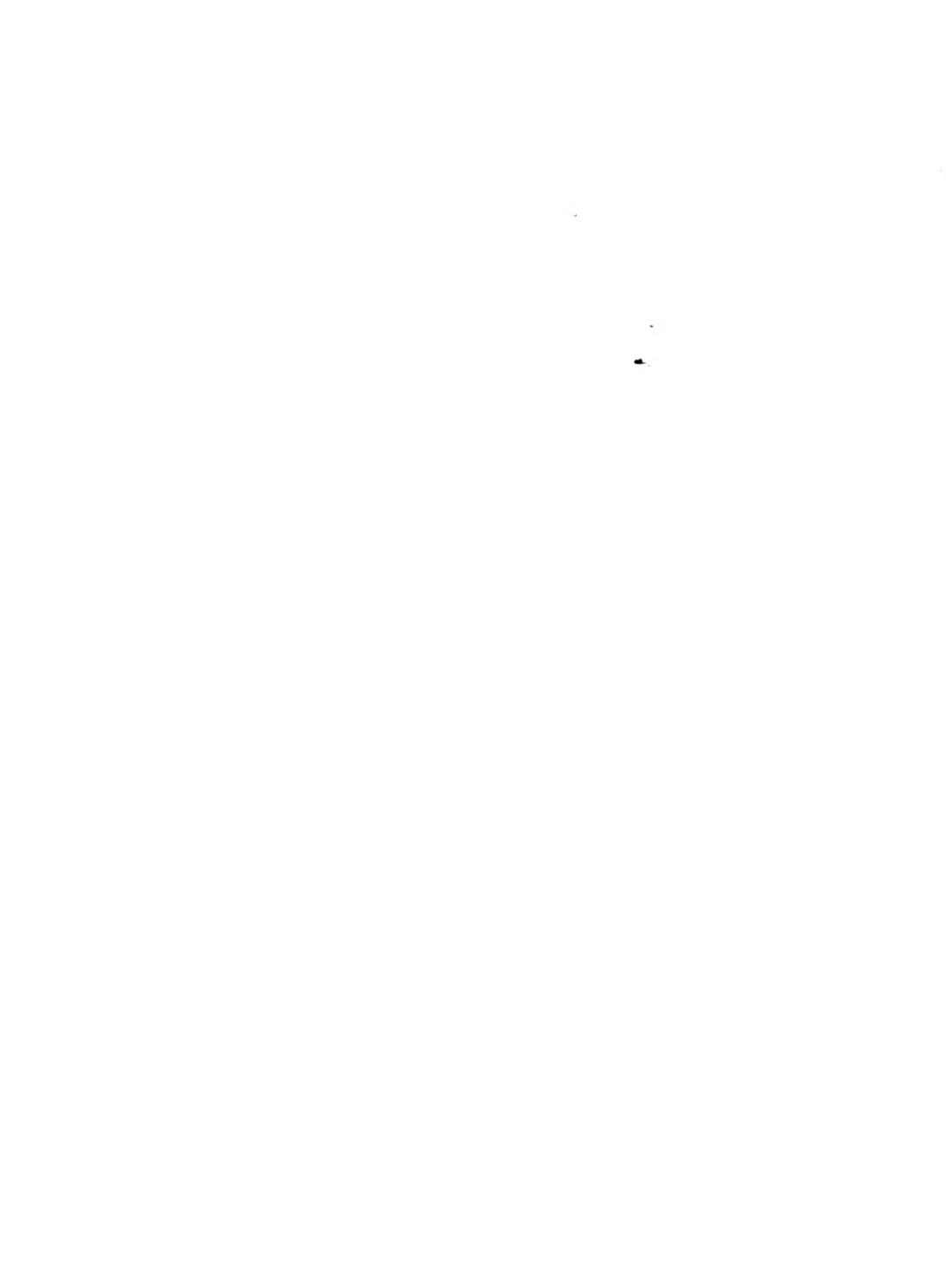


Figure 101: North Penn Junior-Senior High School (Lansdale, PA; 1956)

[From the 1956 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]



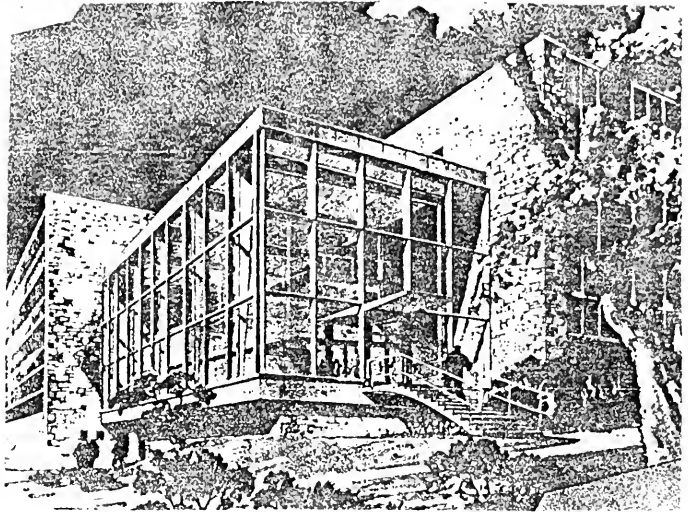


Figure 102: Engineering Building and Petroleum Laboratory at Penn State University (University Park, PA; 1958)  
(Howell Lewis Shay, archt.)  
[From the 1958 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]

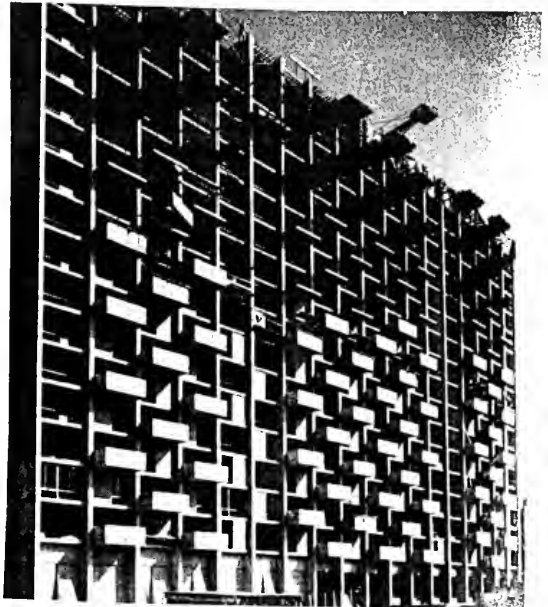
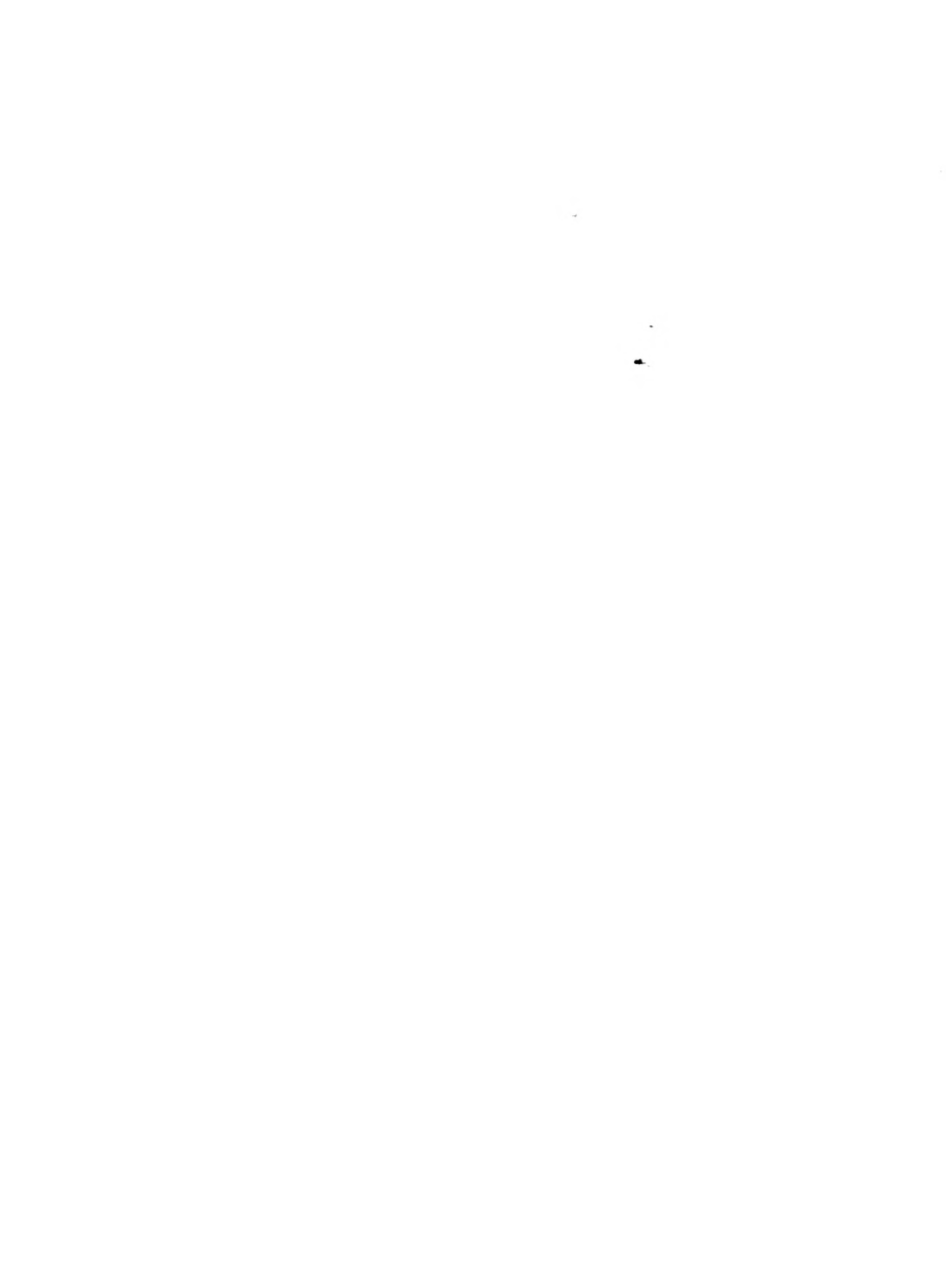


Figure 103.

Hopkinson House Apartments  
(Philadelphia, 1963)  
Oscar Stonorov, archt.

[From "Philadelphia Landmark;  
Hopkinson House" in  
Architectural Forum, Vol. 118  
(April, 1963): p. 93]





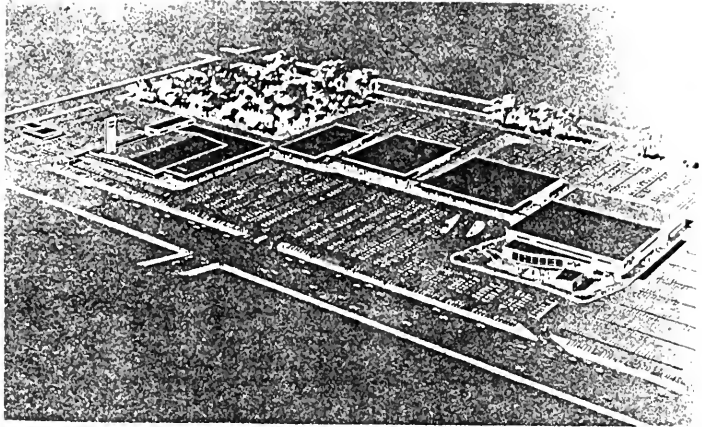


Figure 104: Bala-Cynwyd Shopping Center (Bala-Cynwyd, PA; 1956)  
(Thalheimer & Weitz, archts.)

[From the 1956 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]

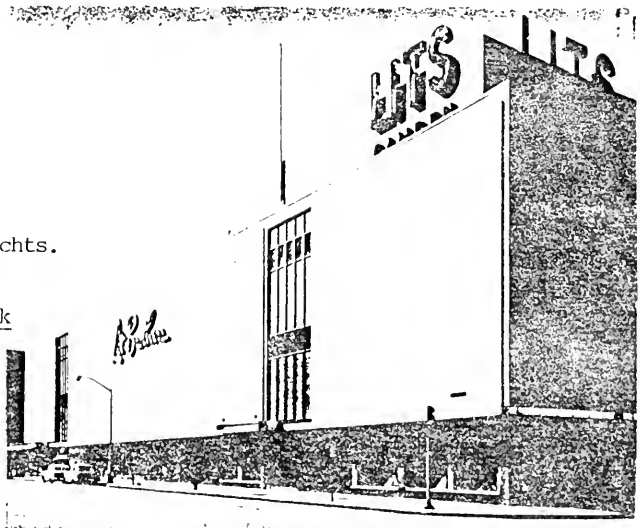
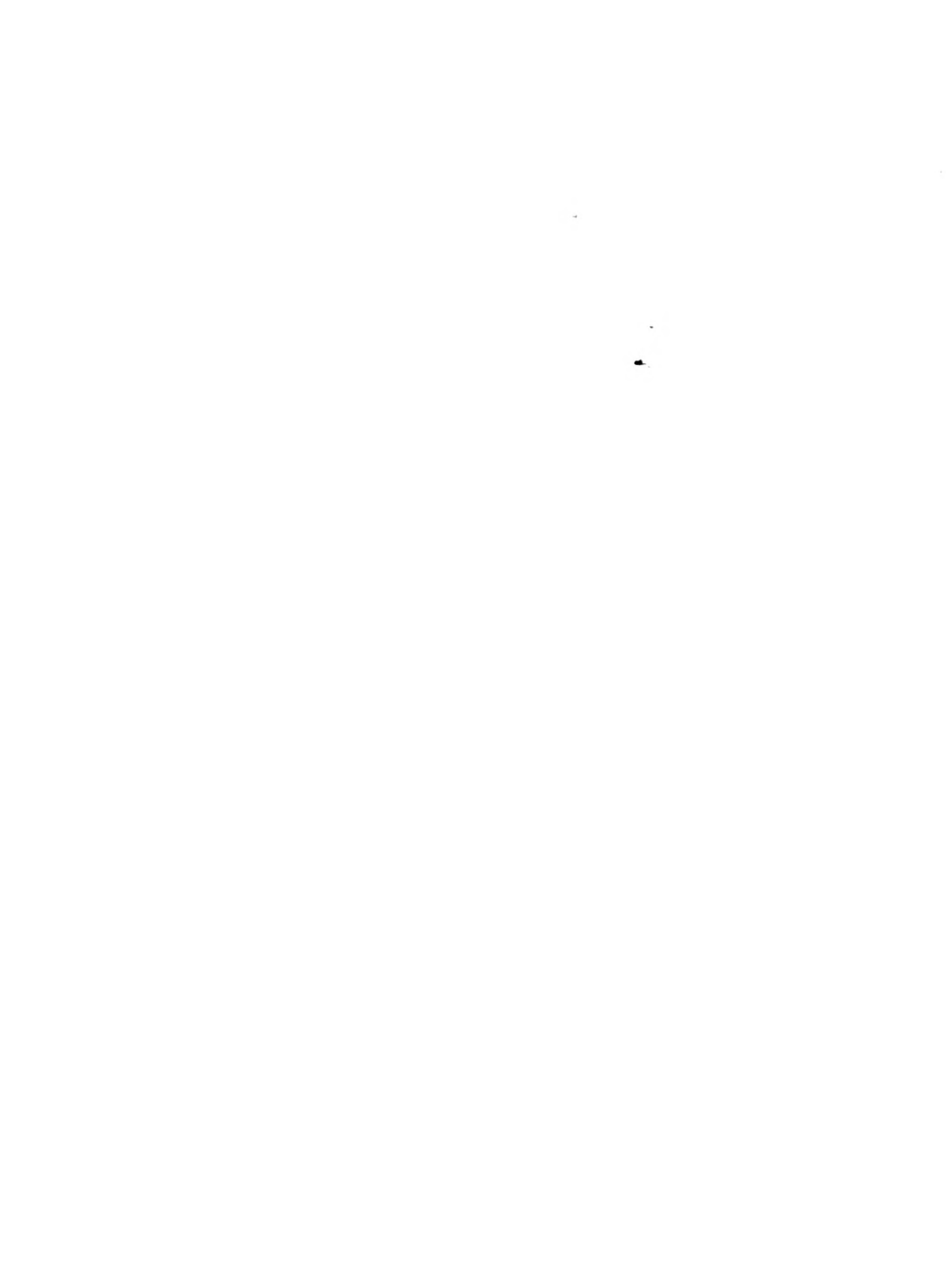


Figure 105: Lits  
Department Store  
(Camden, NJ; 1957)  
Thalheimer & Weitz, archts.

[From the 1957 Yearbook  
of the Philadelphia  
Chapter]



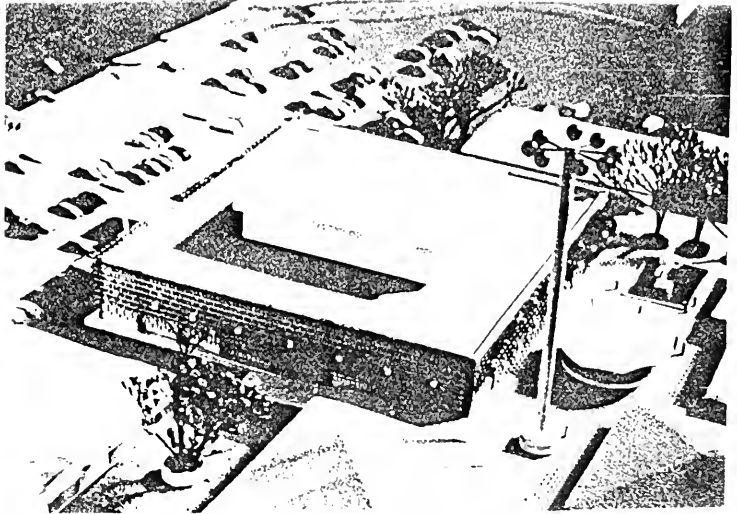


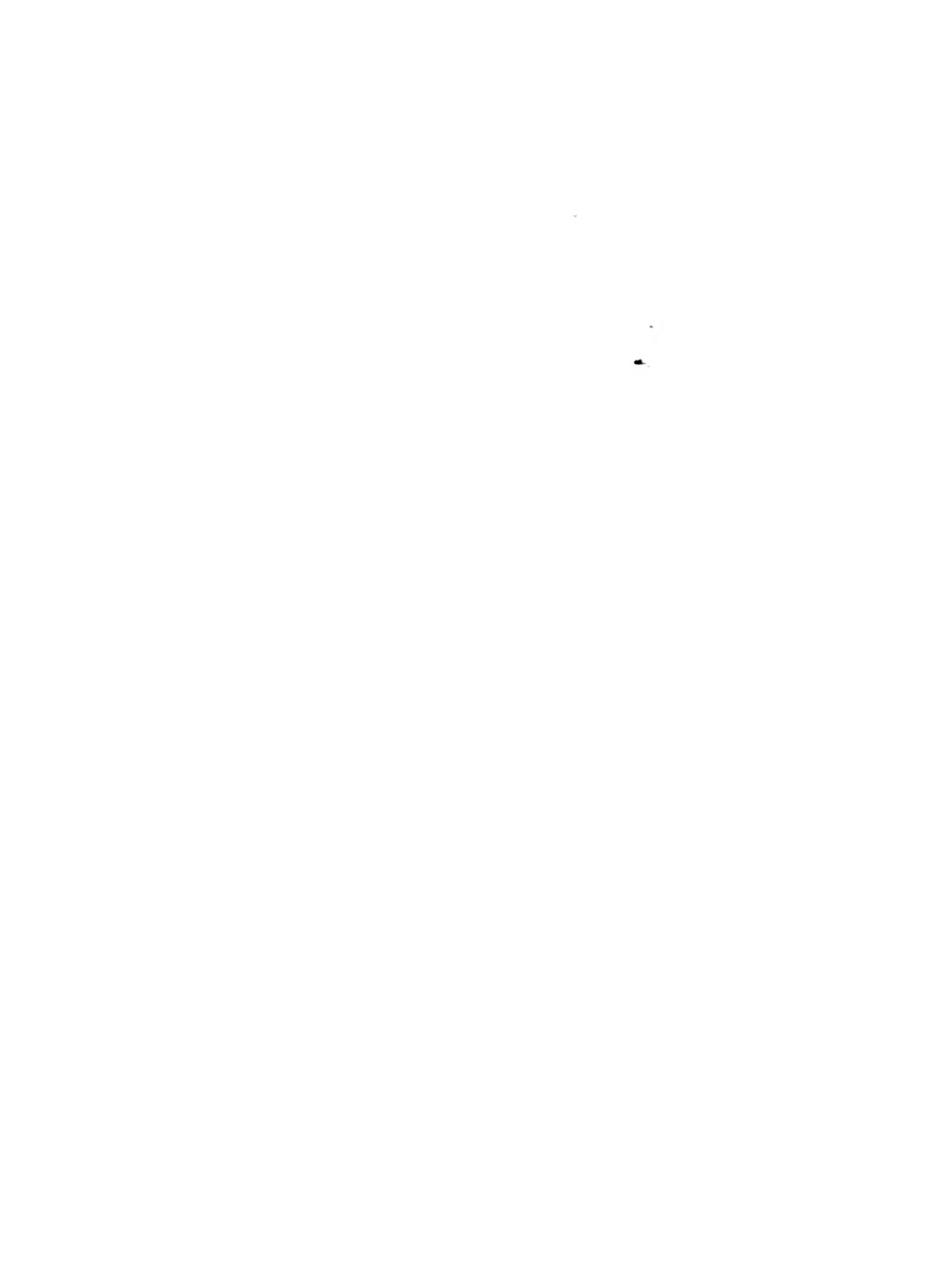
Figure 106: Thalheimer & Weitz, Oak Park Shopping Center (Project)  
(Clifton Heights, PA; 1959)

[From the 1959 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter]



Figure 107: Thalheimer & Weitz, Germantown Office of the Provident Bank &  
Trust Co. (Philadelphia, 1957)

[Photo taken by author.]



Appendix 1: Building Information for Thesis Study of Postwar  
Architecture in Center City, Philadelphia

The following is a list of building information providing the address, the building name (if applicable), name of architect and builder (if available), and building permit information which includes date of construction, information on construction, and estimated cost (if available.)

The building information was obtained from the building records division of the City of Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections. Building construction information, where indicated by a plate number, was obtained from Insurance Maps of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Vols 1 & 2 (New York: The Sanborn Map Company, 1916; Copyright renewed 1954; Copyright on revisions, 1978--Vol 2. Copyright renewed 1943 for Vol. 1)

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Addresses of Buildings on Chestnut Street--West:

2116 Chestnut St.: Sidney Hillman Medical Center of the Male  
Apparel Industries

Louis Magaziner and Herman Polss, archts.  
Samuel S. Yellin & Co., bldr.

Date of Construction: 1949 [Bldg. Permit # 5289 of  
1949 ("Office"); Plan #1665]

Construction: Semi-fireproof const. with concrete  
frame floors & roofs; 8 in. concrete block & tile  
structure; frame curtain walls and 8 in. concrete block  
interior walls. (From Plate 135, Vol. 2)

Bldg. Construction History--Various interior  
alterations since construction in 1950:

1955: Permit #1242--"New Metal Partitions for West  
End of Basement Floor, Acoustic Ceiling, etc." Herman  
Polss, archt. Est. Cost: \$16,000.

1956: Permit #1778--"New Glazed Tile Partitions in  
Basement." H. Polss, archt. Est. Cost: \$9,000.

1959: Permit #3509--"Addition." "Additional 3rd  
Floor and Partial 4th Floor" Steel & Concrete const.  
Herman Polss, archt. and Perry J. Goldman Construction  
Co., bldr.

Est. Cost: \$300,000.

2101 Chestnut St. ("Ambassador Towne House" Apt. Bldg.):

George S. Idell, archt.; Ambassador Towne House, bldr.

Date of Construction: Bldg. Permit #410 of 1957; Plan



#410.

**Construction:** Reinforced concrete frame construction with concrete floors: metal sliding sash picture windows. (From Plate 124, Vol. 2.) Brick & concrete block exterior veneer/cladding. 158ft. in height.

Est. Cost: \$3,400,000.

Total Floor Area: 317,391 sq. ft.

**Bldg. Const. History:** No Major Alterations since Construction in 1957.

118 S. 21st St. (Aka 2101 Walnut St.):

George S. Idell, Archt. (117 S. 17th St., Phila.);

S. Yellin & Son, bldr. (222 N. 11th St., Phila.)

**Date of Construction:** Bldg. Permit #5693 of 1953 "Tenement and Garage"; Plan #1789.

**Construction:** Semi-fireproof steel-frame const. with concrete floors & roof.--12 in. cinderblock facing with outer brick facing & curtain walls. Bldg. contains 299 units and has a garage with a capacity for 150 cars.

**Bldg. was built in 1954.** (From Plate 124, Vol. 2)

Total Floor Area: 309,520 sq. ft.--135 ft. in height.

Est. Cost: \$2,000,000

Bldg. was originally named "2101 Cooperative Apartment Building."

2037-39 Chestnut St.: U.S. Post Office Branch "Middle City": Steele, Pownall (Malcolm Pownall) & Gebhardt, archts. for W.A. Clarke Company.

**Date of Construction:** 1949--Permit #1142 (Office); Plan #419.

**Construction:** Concrete block const. with steel columns and girders--brick & load-bearing concrete wall const. (From Plate 125, Vol. 2.)

Originally built as offices--Est. Cost: \$60,000.

2020 Chestnut St.: 2-story commercial bldg. (Former S & P Training Center) with picture windows and limestone cladding.

Charles H. Ingle, Archt. (164 W. Penn St.); Morris Marshall, bldr. (112 S. 16th St.)--Goldie Hoffman, original owner.

**Date of Construction:** 1953--Office & Garage (Permit # 301, Plan # 96.)

**Construction:** Concrete block const. Block & brick const. with 8 in. brick front; side and rear walls constructed of 12 in. concrete block.(From Plate 136, Vol. 1).

Floor area: 5,822 sq. ft.; bldg. height: 25ft.; Est. Cost: \$60,000.

2019-2023 Chestnut St. (Aka #2025): Metropolitan YWCA Annex





Howell Lewis Shay, Archt. (1801 Packard Bldg.); Wark & Co., Bldr. (1920 Sansom St.)

Date of Construction: 1953--Bldg. Permit #8253  
("Addition.")

Construction: Semi-fireproof const. w/ steel frame concrete floors & roof w/ interior walls of 8 in. concrete block. (From Plate 125, Vol. 2)

"New building addition with connections to existing YWCA building."--Consists of a basement, 3 full floors & a partial 4th floor. Basement walls, floor & ceiling all of reinforced concrete.

Remainder of bldg.: Light-frame steel skeleton with brick & cast-stone exterior walls & concrete floors.

Bldg. annex originally contained 44 apartment units, a school for 225 students, offices designed for 160 workers, and a swimming pool capable of accomodating 100 swimmers.

(From Bldg. Permit #8253 of 1953.)

Est. Cost: \$677,000

Total Bldg. Area: 47,865 sq. ft.

Information on main Metropolitan YWCA Building: "YWCA Bldg. and Residence"--Built 1923: (Permit #4152--Originally a hotel.) Clyde S. Adams, archt.; John P. Hallohan, bldr.; Girard Craftsmans Club, owner. Brick wall const. with stone cornices and concrete floors. Seven stories of steel-frame const. and a stone front of applied four-inch ashlar stone. Est. Cost: \$450,000.

**1800 Chestnut St. (Aka #102 S. 18th Street.):**

Leo Hauf, Archt. (101 Walsh Rd., Phila.); Laessle Builders, bldr. (Architects Bldg., Phila.)

Date of Construction: 1959 (Building Permit #8131 of 1959; Plan #1924-B)

"Two retail shops on ground floor with office space above."

**36 S. 18th Street (Aka 32-36 S. 18th St.): "General Building Contractors" bldg.**

Clifford E. Garner, AIA, Archt. (1737 Chestnut St.); Wark & Co., bldr. (1920 Sansom St.) Original owner: James W. Baird Savings & Loan Association.

Date of Construction: 1961--Permit #7271 ("Bank"); Plan #1736 A.

Construction: Reinforced concrete fireproof const. (From Plate 128, Vol. 2). Brick and block const. with side walls constructed of 8 in. concrete block--also, built-up slag roof of felt.

Area of bldg.: 3,100 sq. ft.

Est. Cost: \$208,960.

\*\*\*Prior to 1961 const. of present bldg. was a bldg.



constructed in 1947 with a brick front and limestone trim & cornices (Stone: 4in. ashlar)

A.C. Borzner, Archt.; John A. Robbins Co., Inc.,  
Bldr.; James W. Baird Bldg. Assoc., Owner.  
Bldg. Permit #4964 of 1947 "Office"; Plan #1537.

1727 Chestnut St. : "Second Federal Savings & Loan":  
Stanley Selinck, archt. (926 Walnut St.) & Perry  
J. Goldman Construction Co., bldr. (Lewis Tower  
Bldg.)

Date of Construction--Alteration to Present Design:  
1948 (Permit #3580)

Alteration of a ca. 1922 limestone commercial bldg.  
(From Center City West NR Nomination)  
Est. Cost: \$20,000.

1630 Chestnut St. (Aka 1632-36 Chestnut St.): Annex to  
Provident Bank Building.

Main Provident Bank Building: Built 1927; Rankin &  
Kellogg, archts. & Turner Const., bldr. (From  
Permit #1779 of 1927 "Office Building." Rankin &  
Kellogg, archt.)

Date of Construction: 1947 (From Plate 129, Vol. 2)  
Construction: Steel frame const. & floors w/  
reinforced steel columns & tile pilasters--red-brick  
vener. (From Plate 129, Vol. 2)

1624 Chestnut St.: Former Benjamin Franklin Savings & Loan  
Association

Ralph B. Bencker, archt.

Date of Construction--Alteration to Present Design:  
1952--Permit #10791 ("Addition"); Plan #2648.  
Building originally dates from 1906.

37 S. 16th St. (Aka 33-37 S. 16th St.): Former Quaker  
Savings & Loan Association

Sydney Jelinek, Archt. (207 S. 24th St.); David M.  
Hunt, bldr. (112 S. 16th St.)

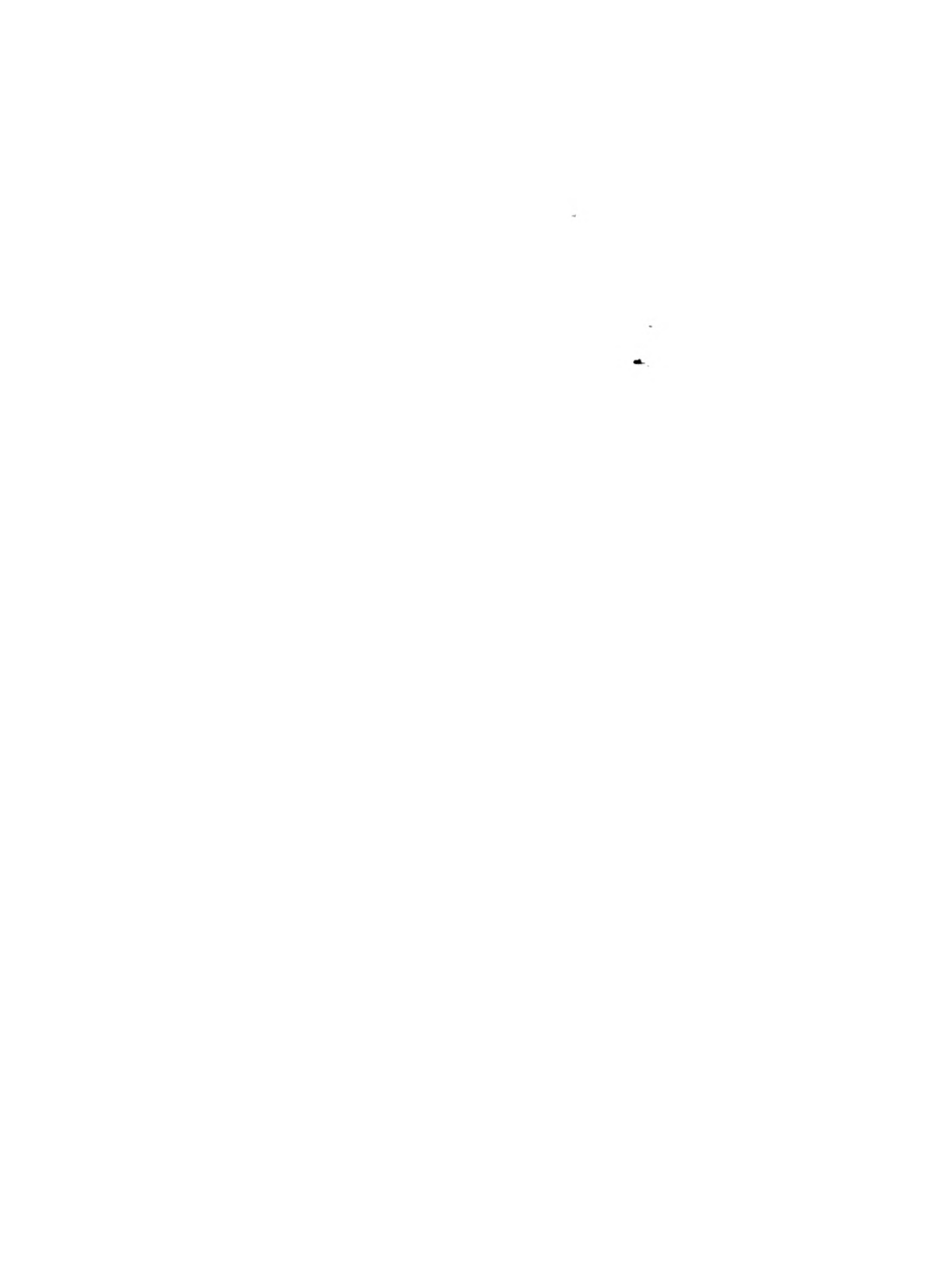
Date of Construction: 1954 (Permit #9999--"Addition &  
Alteration"; Plan #2625.)  
Building originally dates from 1907.

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#### Chestnut Street--East

1336 Chestnut St. (Aka 1330-1336 Chestnut St.):

"Woolworth's"  
Harry W. Hakes, archt. (123 S. Broad St.) and



Turner Construction Co., bldr.)  
 Date of Construction: 1948--Permit #528 ("Store");  
 Plan #189.

Construction: Semi-fireproof brick & steel  
 construction w/ concrete floors & roof. Columns  
 veneered with (protected by) tile. Suspended  
 multi-light & panel ceiling located beneath  
 exposed floor I-beams.

Additional information: 4 in. concrete floors with  
 steel floor joists & beams. Stainless steel  
 applied to exterior and structural glass used for  
 ground-level storefront (From Plate 131, Vol. 2.)

Est. Cost: \$800,000.

Area of Bldg.: 21,500 gross sq. ft. (Undivided)

1318-20 Chestnut St.: "Baker's" Shoes store (Formerly A.S.  
 Beck Shoe Store)

Thalheimer (Clarence Thalheimer, AIA) & Weitz, archts.  
 (1315 Walnut St.) & Havershick-Borshwiche Co.,  
 bldr. (1505 Race St.)

Date of Construction--Alteration to Present  
 Condition: 1948 ("Alteration", Permit #5604; Plan  
 #1931)

Original Owner: A.S. Beck New York Shoe Co. (25 W.  
 43rd St., NYC)

Est. Cost: \$75,000

1204 Chestnut St.: "Philadelphia Federal Credit Union"  
 (Former Kinney Shoe Store)

William Linker, archt. (2036 Arch St.)

William Linker Co., Inc., bldr.

Date of Construction--Alteration to Present Condition:  
 1956--After Condemnation #2268: 1956. Building  
 originally dates from 1909.

Construction: Brick "Alter present bulk windows;  
 Remove island bulk; Widen present bulk; Ivory  
 Structural Glass for Sign Space above Bulk." (1956  
 Bldg. Permit)

G.R. Kinney, Original Owner (1206 Chestnut St.)

Est. Cost: \$6,000

\*\*\*1st Postwar Alteration: 1946 (Work commenced in  
 1947.)

Same owner, architect, & builder info. as above.  
 "New Open Front" 3rd and 4th floors unoccupied and  
 unused.

Est. Cost: \$10,000

1120 Chestnut St. (Aka #1118-1120): "The Avenue" (Women's  
 Dress Shop) Originally Coward Shoes Store.

Stonorov & Kahn, archts. (Broad St. Station Bldg.)

John A. Robbins Co., Inc., bldr. (10 S. 18th St.)



Coward Shoe Co., owner

Date of Construction--Alteration to Present Condition:  
1949 (Permit # 1798--"Alteration"; Plan #650)--  
After Condemnation #1103: 1948. Building  
originally dates from 1902.

Construction: Fireproof Brick & Concrete Construction--  
(From Plate 22, Vol. 1)

Alteration: "Remove upper floors to 4th floor level. New front wall and bulk windows. New interior metal stairs. Hollow tile elevator shaft. Steel & concrete slabs over old wall openings. Suspended plaster ceilings. 3rd floor used for storage only; 4th floor unoccupied. Gypsum & Plaster partitions. Bldg. to be used for shoe store." (From 1949 Bldg. Permit)

Est. Cost: \$30,000

1108 Chestnut St. (Former "Swartz Furniture" Store):

George W. Neff, archt.;

John A. Robbins Co., Inc., bldr.

S. Swartz, owner.

Date of Construction--Alteration to Present Condition:  
1946 (Permit #373 "Alteration", Plan #115)--

"Construct new bulk window and limestone facing for front." "Repair floors, patch plaster, install toilet rooms and balcony." "New freight elevator shaft and penthouse." "No additions--no structural changes."

Est. Cost: \$25,000.

1954 (Permit #6783 "Alter.": "Install casement windows and partitions." George Neff, archt.; Frank Sims, bldr.

1955 (Permit #11094 "Alter."): "Plaster walls and ceilings." "Replace interior finished surfaces on 5th floor where damaged by fire." Laessle Builders Inc., bldr.

Est. Cost: \$7,500.

1025-29 Chestnut St. (Extends to S.W. Corner of Ludlow & 10th Sts.)

F. Spencer Roach of Harbeson Hough Livingston & Larson, archt. (1510 Architects Bldg.; Successor firm to Paul P. Cret, archt.)

McCloskey & Co., bldr. (1620 Thompson St.)

Phila. Parking Authority, owner (815 Packard Bldg.)

Date of Construction: 1953--Permit #1542 "Open Deck Garage"; Plan #537.

Construction: Semi-fireproof const. composed of 24" to 8" brick-faced cinderblock & cinderblock brick-faced curtain walls. (From Plate 23, Vol. 1)

"4-5 floors in height. Brick & Reinforced concrete const." (From Bldg. Permit #1542.)

1960: Permit #5716 "Alter."--"New Face Brick on North





Side & Interior Alterations" Est. Cost: \$5,000.  
 Total Floor Area: 214,303 sq. ft. (39,935 sq.  
 ft./floor)  
 Est. Cost: \$1,114,000.

NOTE: Letter, dated Nov. 6, 1952, from the Art Commission of Phila. indicating the commission's approval of plans for the parking garage. Signed: R.C. Roberts, Executive Secretary

1021 Chestnut St.--Mercantile Library Branch of the Free  
 Library of Philadelphia  
 Sydney E. Martin, principal archt., of Martin, Stewart  
 & Noble.

Construction: Steel frame w/ concrete floors & roofs.  
 Cinder block curtain walls & exposed steel posts.  
 (From Plate 23, Vol. 1)

Bldg. Const. History: No Alterations since  
 Construction.

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#### Sansom Street-West

1500 Sansom St. (Aka 124-134 S. 15th Street)  
 Sydney E. Martin, archt. [1104 Architects Bldg.] & J.P.  
 Hallohan and Co., bldrs.

"Real Estate Trust Company," owner.

Date of Construction: 1946-47 (Permit #2851  
 "Bank"; Plan #875.) Permit #8151 of 1959  
 ("Addition"); Plan #1923 C.

Construction: Semi-fireproof steel-frame & brick  
 const. w/ concrete floors & roof. 20 in. to  
 12 in. brick & tile exterior (curtain) walls.  
 Exposed I-beam flanges in Mansard roof only.  
 Brick-faced cinder block curtain walls in  
 penthouse. (From Plate 130, Vol. 1)

Est. Cost: \$500,000

Area of Bldg.: 9,310 sq. ft.

122 S. 19th St. (Aka 1900 Sansom St.)  
 Beryl Price, Archt. (From 1952 Yearbook of the Phila.  
 Chapter of the AIA.)

Sophy Curson, original owner.

Date of Construction: Bldg. was built in 1952 (From  
 1952 Phila. AIA Chapter Yearbook.)

Construction: Brick-faced cinder block (From Plate  
 126, Vol. 2)

2115-2121 Sansom St.: Charles Weinstein Geriatric Center.



Herman Polss, Archt., (10 S. 10th St.)  
 Perry J. Goldman Const. Co., Bldr. (Lewis  
 Tower)

Sidney Hillman Medical Center, Owner

**Date of Construction:** 1959--Permit #3353 "Recreation Building."; Plan #900-A. "Concrete & Steel Construction. Concrete foundations & masonry walls; Gypsum & concrete roof.

**Construction:** Steel frame construction with concrete floor & roof and metal sash windows (Brick & tile veneer.) Brick construction of east wing with steel frame reinforcement, concrete floor, gypsum roof (Supported on exposed steel joists) and 12-inch brick veneer. Fireproof interior walls. (From Plate 124, Vol. 2)

**Note:** Bldg. adjoins the Hillman Medical Center on the same block.

Area of Bldg.: 5,400 sq. ft.  
 Est. Cost: \$150,000

2320-30 Sansom St.: Former Air Conditioning Contractors Association Building.

Air Conditioning Association, original owner.

**Date of Construction:** 1954--Permit # 5941; Plan # 1518.

**Construction:** Brick const. w/ stone veneer. (From Plate 123, Vol. 2)

\*\*\*\*      \*\*\*\*      \*\*\*\*      \*\*\*\*

#### Sansom Street-East

1132 Sansom St.--Square Industries "Eglin's" Parking Garage.

Thalheimer & Weitz, archt.  
 Wark & Co., bldr.

**Date of Construction:** 1950 (Permit #7090--"Garage";  
 Plan #2397)

**Construction:** Semi-fireproof const. w/ concrete frame, floors, & roof. Cinder block w/ brick faced curtain walls on 1st floor. Concrete curtain walls on 2nd floor. (From Plate 22, Vol. 1)

Est. Cost: \$317,000.

121 S. 13th Street ((Aka #121-127 S. 13th St.): Former Cayuga Savings & Loan Association Building Philip Mastrin, Archt. (Penn Square Bldg., #420) John A. Robbins, Bldr. (3 Penn Center Plaza) Cayuga Federal Savings & Loan Assoc., Owner



Date of Construction: 1960: Building Permit #6946; Plan # 1794-B

"Alter existing bldgs. & 3-story and penthouse machine room masonry addition."

Building Construction History: 1948: Permit #3222 ("Alter.") George W. Neff, Archt. (1520 Locust St.)

S. Yellin & Son, Bldr. (222 N. 11th St.)

Cayuga Federal Savings & Loan Co., Owner (115 S. 12th St.)

"New bldg. will be for banking and offices. New front on bldg. on both 13th St. and Sansom St. Alteration of 1st & 4th floors for banking quarters."

Construction: Semi-fireproof steel-frame const. w/ floors & roofs supported on steel joists. Suspended ceilings; 12" & 8" brick & cinderblock curtain walls. (From Plate 132, Vol. 2)

1954: Permit #9207--Type of Const.: "1V" (127 S. 13th St.) "Removal of 14 window frames to be closed with cinder block to comply with fire code for ladies apparel store."

1956: Permit # 2341 (Alter.)--"Bank offices: install new hung acoustic mineral tile below present plaster ceiling. Plaster ceiling to remain. Wood suspension system. All metal hangers. Ceiling area: 2nd floor-144 sq.ft.; 3rd floor-400 sq. ft. Est. Cost: \$500.00

1961: Permit # 9655 (Alter.); Plan # 2317-C; Type of Const.: "1V"; Type of Occupancy: Ground Floor Bank.

Est. Cost: \$100,000

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#### Other Buildings in the Study Area:

1341-1349 Chestnut St. ("Phila. Nat'l. Bank"--N.E. Cor. of Broad and Chestnut Streets)

1956: Permit #4781 "Alter." Harbeson Hough Livingston & Larson, archt.; David M. Hunt, bldr.  
Est. Cost: \$35,000.

1412 Chestnut St. "AMC Midtown Theatre" (Originally a "Goldman Theatre"--Built 1950: Permit #6534 "Alter." David Supowitz, archt.; Wm. Goldman, owner; Stone Const. Co., bldr.

"Alterations to lobby, foyer and lounge of theatre; Remodel bulk windows. Est. Cost: \$27,000.

1954: Permit #1100 "Alter."--David Supowitz, archt. "Interior Alterations."

2001 Chestnut St. "Restaurant and Pizzeria"--Built 1954:



Permit #777 "Alter." Armand Carroll, archt.; M.  
Olevsky & Sons, bldr.; Dewey, Inc., owner.  
"Replace Present Bulks with New Brick and Glass."  
Est. Cost: \$6,000. (Bldg. dates from 1928--Permit  
#246 "Store and offices.")





## Appendix 2: The Architects Represented by Buildings in the Thesis Study Area

Ralph B. (Bowden) Bencker:

Ralph B. Bencker was born in Philadelphia in 1883, and died in 1961. Bencker was active primarily during the pre-World War II era of the Twentieth century. He studied at the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art (1900-1902), and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (1902-1903 and 1905-1907.) Bencker began his apprenticeship by 1902 in the office of Wilson Eyre, and was later employed in the office of William Price and M. Hawley McLanahan. Following Price's death in 1917, Bencker became a partner in the firm, and subsequently the name of the office was changed to McLanahan & Bencker: in 1925 Bencker left the partnership and began his own independent practice.

As Tatman and Moss mention, Bencker was particularly adept at applying the Art Deco and Moderne stylistic modes to such notable commercial and institutional buildings as the Traymore Hotel in Atlantic City, NJ completed in 1919, and the N.W. Ayer & Son Building constructed in 1927 on Washington Square in Philadelphia. In addition, Bencker designed numerous restaurants in Art Deco and Moderne styles for the Horn & Hardart chain of automats, including two existing examples, one constructed in 1930 at 818 Chestnut Street in Philadelphia and a rather ornate and spacious two-level restaurant constructed in 1938 at 104 West 57th Street



in New York City.<sup>1</sup>

[From Sandra L. Tatman and Roger W. Moss, Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects: 1700-1930 (Boston, MA: G.K. Hall & Co., 1985): pp. 55-56.]

The Benjamin Franklin Savings and Loan Association office at 1624 Chestnut Street expressed the architect's continued use of the Moderne stylistic mode, albeit in a Classicizing manner, during the Postwar period; the savings bank, like the Horn & Hardart restaurants, is a design composed of a facade framed in masonry cladding material, embellished with such design motifs as fluting and incised carved ornament.

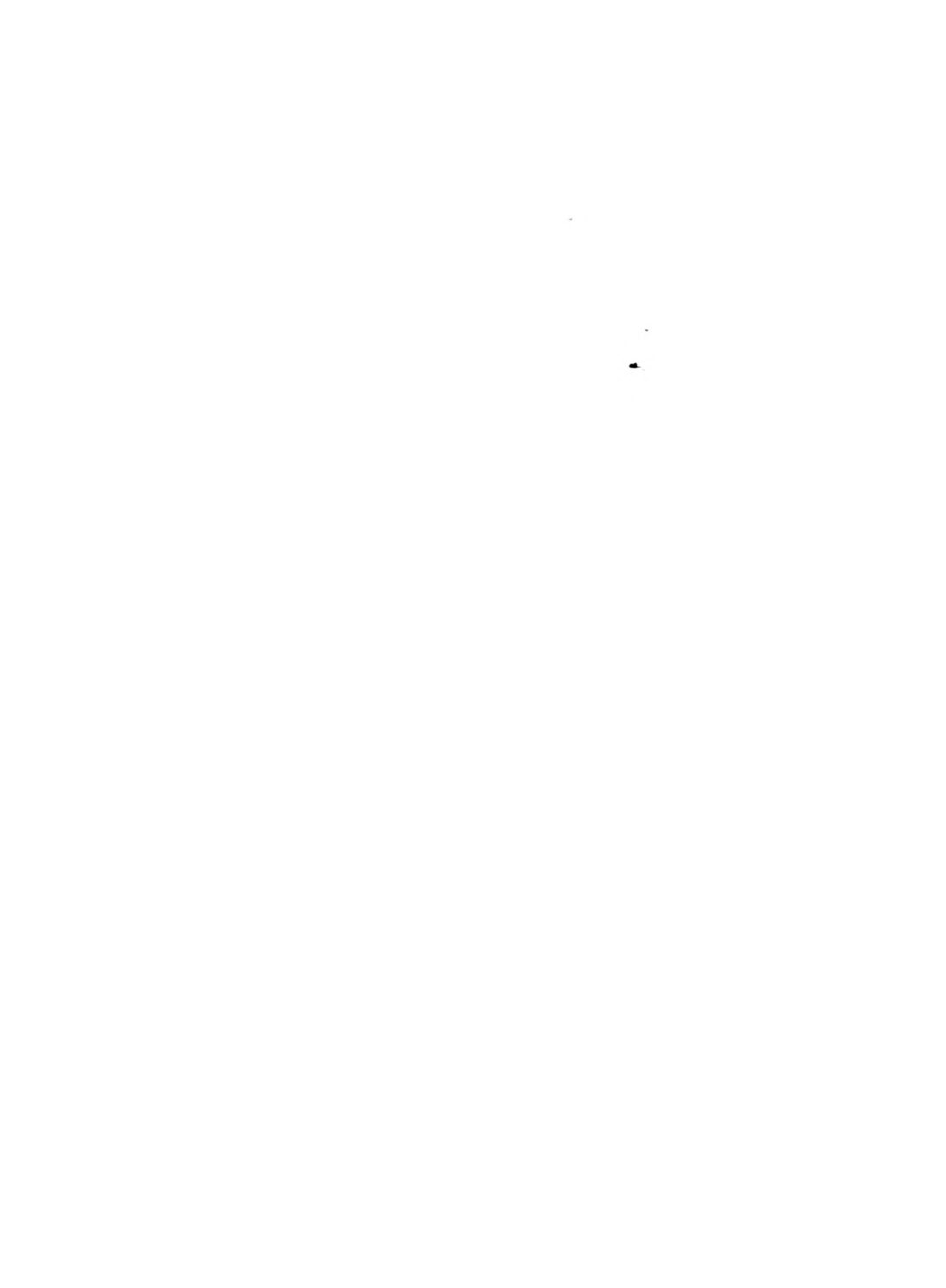
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1. The former Horn & Hardart restaurant on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia is now a cafeteria-type of eatery, while the example on West 57th Street in Manhattan became the New York Delicatessen upon its renovation in 1983 by Hochheiser-Elias Design Group [See Elliot Willensky and Norval White, AIA Guide to New York City, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Publishers, 1988): p. 279.]



Clifford E. Garner:

The architectural design practice of Clifford E. Garner was distinguished by a rather wide range of commissions and design solutions. Garner's Postwar architectural career appears to have been initiated with a number of small design commissions, including a design for the "Gewiss Bakery" built in 1949 in Media, PA (Fig. 81.) With its recessed, almost completely transparent storefront design of angled plate glass, bold illuminated signage and interior furnishings comprised of suspended metal pendant lighting and metal tubular frame Charles Eames chairs, the design of this bakery was a pure expression of Postwar Modern retail design.

During the early 1950's, Garner designed a range of buildings, including the Beron residence of 1952 located in Margate City, NJ (Fig. 82.), which featured a symmetrical composition of massing and fenestration, and the Northeast Office of Highway, Truck Drivers and Helpers Local No. 107 (Philadelphia, 1954: Fig. 83) The design of the latter work, featuring exposed steel I-beam frame construction with bays composed of plate glass and brick infill, reflects the powerful design influence of Mies van der Rohe during this period: Garner's glass pavilion design for the Levittown branch of First Federal Savings & Loan built in 1960 in Bucks County, PA is another work, the design of which is



blatantly Miesian (Fig. 84.)

During the remainder of the decade and into the 1960's, Garner produced building designs that incorporated steel and metal curtain wall exteriors, as evidenced by his design for the Roosevelt Elementary School built in 1959 in Middletown Township, Delaware County, PA (Fig. 85.) and the Southampton branch of Northeast Federal Savings & Loan (Philadelphia, 1960: Fig. 86.) However, Garner also began to introduce masonry-clad surfaces into the design of his buildings. This new esthetic was first demonstrated by his design for the Thomas Coebourn Elementary School of 1956, built in Brookhaven, PA (Fig. 87.), which featured a single-story vaulted building block of brick punctuated by recessed rectangular windows.

Garner's 1961 design for the Nurse's Residence at Northeast Hospital in Philadelphia (Fig. 88.) exhibited a base clad with dark-glazed brick and a second floor featuring exposed fired red brick bays alternating with dark tinted steel casement windows: the second floor was also supported by a row of tapered concrete columns. With these buildings, Garner's architectural work began to display features and characteristics of the Late Postwar Modern design mode.

Garner's design for the General Building Contractors Association office building of 1961 also exhibits the tendency to design textured or sculptural exterior surfaces.





Compared to his design for the Northeast Hospital Nurses Residence, however, Garner had adopted the conservative, and considerably more mundane solution of simply applying a open metal screen, composed of a design pattern of interlocking circles, over a facade of recessed plate glass windows; this geometric design motif enjoyed considerable popularity in the mid and late 1950's, and into the early 1960's. In contrast to the metal screen are the glazed upper band and ground floor of plate glass that lend to the building a quality of transparency, while further enhancing the sense of lightness projected by the main elevation.

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George S.(Smith) Idell

Born in 1886 in Philadelphia, George S. Idell died in 1971. Idell was an architect who would become well known as a designer of highrise apartment buildings in Philadelphia. He attended the program in architecture at the Drexel Institute and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (1906-1907.) Before opening his own office in 1912, Idell worked for several Philadelphia architects, including George B. Page and the Wilson Bros. & Co. Beginning in 1914, upon receiving a commission from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for a community designed for the mentally ill, Idell became known chiefly as an architect who specialized in institutional buildings for the care and treatment of



handicapped individuals.

(From Tatman and Moss, Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects: 1700-1930; pp.407-408.)

However, in the Postwar period, Idell became a major designer of modern highrise apartment buildings in Philadelphia. The two examples of his work dealing with this building type that are included in the study area, the "Ambassador Towne Apartments" and the apartment tower on South 21st Street are typical examples of his designs for such buildings: they are crisp rectilinear monolithic towers of red brick, the expanse of which is interrupted with regularly spaced steel casement windows.

In addition, Idell designed several other towers, one of which, the "Rittenhouse Claridge" apartment building, was actually constructed in 1956. These buildings include "The Benson East" apartment building in Jenkintown, PA, and a rather impressive design for an unexecuted building, the "Stevens Tower," with its massive composition comprised of two tall towers with setbacks connected by a central block, is quite similar to the design of the "Rittenhouse Claridge": the "Stevens Tower" was to be constructed on Walnut Street facing Rittenhouse Square (Fig. 89.)

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Louis I. Kahn

Louis Kahn was born in 1901 in Saarama, Estonia, and died in 1974. Kahn emigrated to the United States and



settled with his family in Philadelphia in 1905. Kahn studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania from 1920-24, where he received a B. Arch degree. Throughout his architectural career, Kahn worked for and in association with various Philadelphia architects. He began his career as a draftsman for the firm of Hoffman and Henan in 1921 and then with Hewitt and Ash in 1922. Kahn later became a senior draftsman in the City Architect's Department from 1924-27 and then a designer in the office of Paul Cret (1929-30), and Zantziger, Borie and Medary (1930-32.) From 1932-33, he organized and directed the Architectural Research Group, and then was made in charge of the Housing Studies division of the City Planning Commission for the W.P.A. (1933-35); from 1935-37, Kahn worked as the Assistant Principal Architect in the office of Alfred Kastner and Partner. From 1937 on, Kahn worked in private practice, but maintained associations with George Howe (1941-42), Howe and Oscar Stonorov (1942-43), and with Stonorov (1943-48.)

During the Postwar era, Kahn was actively involved with a number of Philadelphia city agencies. He served as Consultant Architect to the Philadelphia City Planning Commission from 1946-52 and 1961-62 and to the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (1951-54.)

Louis Kahn was one of the pre-eminent architects of the Twentieth century. He served as the leader of "the most dramatic shift in architectural thought since the dawn of



modern architecture," and his building designs, together with the architectural philosophy he professed, resulted in having an enormous impact on the development and redirectioning of progressive design.

[From Contemporary Architects, edited by Muriel Emanuel with Dennis Sharp, architectural consultant (New York: St. Martins Press, 1980): pp. 409-411. Commentary on Kahn written by Mitchell B. Rouda.]

The Coward Shoe Store, designed by Kahn with Oscar Stonorov is a transitional building design in the context of the development of Kahn's architectural esthetic in the Postwar era. The steelframe and plate glass building possesses qualities of International Style modernism, the influence of which is evident in Kahn's work of the 1940's. However, Kahn would reject the new construction techniques and materials technology offered by Postwar modernism.

The full flowering of Kahn's esthetic occurred in the 1950's during which such architectural icons as the Yale Art Gallery (New Haven, CT: 1951-53), the Richards Medical Research Building at the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, 1957-64), and the Jewish Community Center Bath House (Trenton, NJ: 1955) were designed. These buildings exhibited a new design vocabulary based upon both archetypal and personal notions of light and the nature of materials, and new concepts regarding building function and the organization of spaces that produced a new architectural





Classicism antithetical to International Style modernism. The influence of Kahn's work of the 1950's became particularly evident during the Late Postwar period when buildings designed by American architects featured architectural compositions and materials derivative of Kahn's Postwar work.

[For a comprehensive study of Kahn's work, see David R. Brownlee and David G. De Long, Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture (New York: Rizzoli International, 1991.)]

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#### Louis Magaziner

Born in Hungary in 1878, Louis Magaziner died in 1956. Magaziner emigrated to the United States from Hungary with his parents in 1887. After receiving his B.S. in Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 1900, he worked in a number of architects' offices, including those of Frederick Mann and Cope & Stewardson. By 1907 Magaziner had established his own firm with William Woodburn Potter under the name Magaziner & Potter: the firm lasted until 1917. Later he established a number of partnerships, including Magaziner & Eberhard, Louis & Henry Magaziner, and Louis Magaziner & Herman Polss.

Magaziner was extremely prolific, designing numerous college and hospital buildings, banks and other commercial buildings. His most notable designs, however, were for large residential commissions and designs for theatres,



including the Midtown and Uptown Theatres constructed in the late 1920's and 1930's.

(From Tatman and Moss, Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects: 1700-1930; pp.508-509.)

Magaziner's work in the Postwar era was dominated by commissions for institutional buildings, especially synagogues. The work of this period is best represented, in addition to the Sidney Hillman Medical Center by the Workmen's Circle Home built in 1955 and located in Media, PA, in which exposed poured-in-place concrete panels featuring patterned plywood forms alternate, on the elevations, with fully-glazed bays to create an interesting sculptural play of surfaces: the building also features an extensively glazed groundfloor with a high-ceiling corner solarium enclosed with large plate glass panels. Clearly, such a building differs from the largely unarticulated planar elevations of the Hillman Center, with their wide spandrel bands of limestone, polished black granite surfaces and rather restrained bands of fenestration.

In addition, Magaziner designed several synagogues, including Temple B'nai Aaron located in Philadelphia (1949-53), Rodeph Shalom Suburban Temple in Elkins Park, PA (1949-51), and a design for Temple Emanuel-El in Baltimore, MD that featured a rather skillful composition of vaulted and curvilinear forms, as well as juxtapositions of planar exterior wall surfaces and inverted roof forms.<sup>2</sup> Magaziner



died in 1956, and therefore his architectural practice in the Postwar period was relatively brief.

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2. The design for Temple Emanuel-El in Baltimore was most probably a project, since it is not known whether this building was ever constructed. For sketches of the synagogue and a photograph of the building model, see the "Misc. Materials" box of the Louis Magaziner Collection at The Atheneum of Philadelphia.



Sydney E. (Errington) Martin:

Sydney E. Martin was born in Philadelphia in 1883, and died in 1970. The designer of the Real Estate Trust Company building located at Sansom and South 15th Streets, and the Mercantile Library branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia at 1021 Chestnut Street, Sydney Martin was an architect who served as a sort of transitional figure in the Postwar architectural landscape of Center City. Having been born in the late Nineteenth century, Martin was undoubtedly a member of the older generation of practitioners, yet because of his association with younger architects, Harry G. Stewart and Robert Noble in the prominent Postwar firm of Martin, Stewart & Noble, he played a pivotal role in the dissemination of the modern Postwar architectural esthetic in Philadelphia. Indeed, Martin is described by Tatman and Moss as having "enjoyed a long and fruitful career in Philadelphia's architectural scene, from the early days of Beaux Arts-influenced designs into more modern times."

Martin studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania and received his B.S. degree in 1908. He later worked in the office of Frank Miles Day beginning in 1912, and established his own firm with Donald M. Kirkpatrick in 1914: Martin and Kirkpatrick were joined by Walter H. Thomas in 1919. The firm continued under the name of Thomas, Martin & Kirkpatrick until Kirkpatrick's departure in 1931, and then in 1941 Thomas retired. Martin worked



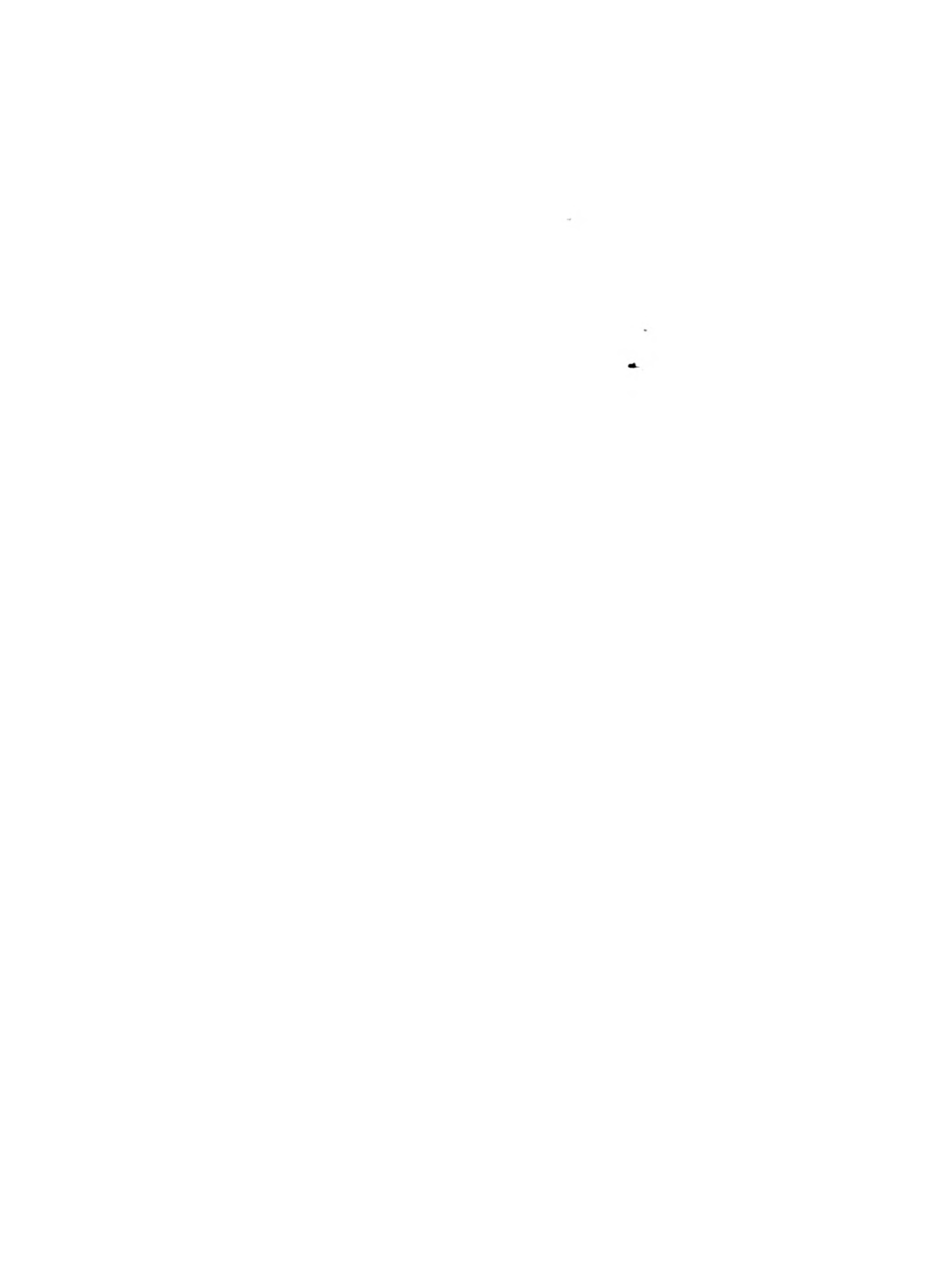


independently until 1954 when he was joined by two younger architects, Harry Gordon Stewart and Robert Warren Noble, establishing the firm Martin, Stewart & Noble: Martin continued as the senior partner of the firm until his retirement in 1965.

(From Tatman and Moss, Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects: 1700-1930; pp.508-509.)

The two rather stylistically disparate buildings representing Martin in the study area reflect the diversity of architectural work which characterized his career. In addition, both the Real Estate Trust Company and Mercantile Library were accompanied by buildings rendered in similar stylistic modes. Martin's design for the American Philosophical Society Library, located on South 5th Street in Center City, is a well-executed Georgian Revival building, with even greater attention paid to the articulation of exterior surfaces with architectural detail than the Real Estate Trust Company building.

Throughout the 1950's, Martin, working in tandem with Stewart and Noble, designed a number of notable Postwar modern buildings. As the result of the success of the design of the Mercantile Library, in which the building received the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA Gold Medal and the National AIA Award of Merit for the year 1954, the firm was commissioned by the Free Library of Philadelphia to design new library branches in such neighborhood districts



as Frankford and West Oak Lane. The Free Library branch constructed in 1959 and located in West Oak Lane, designed in association with Robert Allan Class, is a rather well-articulated modern design composed of a crisp flat-roofed single-story cubic form with exterior surfaces of brick and fully-glazed well-detailed plate-glass window bays, framed with black-painted metal and featuring exposed lintels (Fig. 90.)

Martin, Stewart & Noble designed a series of institutional buildings which all featured rectilinear volumes with extensive glazing and exposed brick surfaces. Their design for the Collingdale Elementary School constructed in 1960 in Collingdale, PA (Fig. 91.) features the same exterior wall and window treatments as the West Oak Lane library branch.

Other buildings of interest include the Children's Seashore House built in 1956 and located in Atlantic City, NJ (Fig. 92.), which features continuous balconies, including cantilevered ones on the third level, and fenestration organized in window pairs and bands: other interesting design components are a ground level arcade and a fourth-level penthouse. Another noteworthy building is the psychiatric wing for the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, 1959: Fig. 93.) which is composed of a main two-story block clad with a continuous and well-detailed metal and glass curtain wall band



including a row of tall windows, and a tower featuring a grid-like curtain wall of recessed glazed and metal panel surfaces.

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Herman Polss

Born in 1901 in Philadelphia, Polss graduated with a B.S. degree in architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 1923. Upon graduation, he became a draftsman for John Molitor and later assistant chief designer for Ralph B. Bencker from 1926 to 1929. Polss then served as a designer and the chief draftsman for Louis Magaziner (1929-1933), and in 1946 established his own design practice.

[The above information about the career of Herman Polss was obtained from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Archives in Washington, DC. See Herman Polss file: Accession No. RG 803; Box 147, Folder 20.]

During the Postwar era, Polss specialized in the design of synagogues and single-story pavilion-like commercial and institutional buildings. Among the former group are such buildings as the Temple Sinai Synagogue, built in 1949 in the West Oak Lane section of Philadelphia (Fig. 94.) and the Ezrath Israel synagogue (Philadelphia, 1955: Fig. 95.) Both the Temple Sinai and Ezrath Israel buildings are rather severe, massive brick and masonry-clad Early Postwar Modern buildings with exterior surfaces articulated with strips of



exposed limestone and punctuated by individual square windows and vertical and horizontal bands of steel-frame fenestration. However, both of these buildings, especially Ezra Israel, display the incipient tendency to break up the building block into the intersecting and projecting planes that would distinguish Polss' design for the Charles Weinstein Geriatric Center on Sansom Street, and to a lesser degree, the design for the Sidney Hillman Medical Center produced by Polss and Louis Magaziner in 1949.

Accompanying Polss' preliminary design for the Weinstein Center which appeared in the 1959 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA (Fig. 96.), is his design for the Colonial Beef Company of Philadelphia (Fig. 97.) As in the case of the Weinstein Center, the Colonial Beef Company was to be accommodated in a low-rise, flat-roofed single-story building of crisp rectilinear design and featuring flat unglazed and fenestrated exterior planes: the building for the beef company also featured a recessed entry whose design was suggestive of a loggia (See 1959 Yearbook of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA, pp. 146-147.)

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Howell Lewis Shay:

Born in 1884 in Washington, DC, Howell Lewis Shay died in 1975. Shay was responsible for many major buildings in Center City, Philadelphia. He received the B.S. degree in





Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 1913. Upon graduation, Shay went to work for Philadelphia architect Horace Trumbauer: he would remain in Trumbauer's employ until 1918. In 1920, Shay formed a partnership with Verus T. Ritter under the name Ritter & Shay. Utilizing Shay's Beaux Arts architectural training and Ritter's contacts, the firm became very successful, designing a number of notable institutional and commercial buildings, including such prominent examples as the Packard Building of 1925, the Francis Drake Hotel (1929), and the U.S. Customs House built in 1927. In 1936 Ritter & Shay was dissolved. However, in 1948 Shay established a practice with his sons Howell Lewis Shay, Jr. and William Dixon Shay: the new firm was called Howell Lewis Shay and Associates.

(From Tatman and Moss, Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects: 1700-1930; pp.508-509.)

The Postwar period was a prolific one for Howell Lewis Shay, during which numerous institutional, particularly educational buildings and commercial structures were designed.<sup>3</sup> The firm designed a pair of Early Postwar Modern buildings, an elementary school at Sedgwick & Williams Avenues in Philadelphia (Fig. 98.), and the Lawncrest Recreation Center located in northeast Philadelphia (Fig.

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3. It is important to note that Shay served as consulting architect for the Philadelphia Board of Education from 1937 to 1940, while he continued to design public school buildings into the late 1940's.



99.), both completed in 1950, that display flat-roofed, irregularly massed blocks clad with brick and featuring glass block and bands of steel-framed windows. Later in the 1950's, the office designed a group of rather well-articulated Middle Postwar Modern buildings.

In addition to the YWCA Metropolitan Branch Annex on Chestnut Street, Shay designed the branch for the YMCA in Chester, PA constructed in 1957 (**Fig. 100.**) Unlike the Center City facility, this free-standing concrete-framed building with brick infill featured a one to one and one-half story main block with bands of clerestory windows. Intersecting this block is a long three-story section featuring a principal elevation clad entirely with a metal and glass curtain wall consisting of square panels and brick end walls: the multi-story slab extends beyond its base to rest on a pair of concrete columns that form a ground-level entrance portal.

Shay would continue to employ metal and glass curtain walls together with crisp rectilinear flat-roofed building blocks arranged in asymmetrical compositions in such other commissions as the North Penn Junior-Senior High School constructed in 1956 in Lansdale, PA (**Fig. 101.**), the Enfield Junior High School built in 1959 in Springfield Township, Montgomery County, PA, and the Engineering Building and Petroleum Laboratory both constructed in 1958 at Penn State



University, University Park, PA (Fig. 102.)<sup>4</sup>

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4. Shay's work of the 1950's also included a group of commercial buildings that comprised a series of single-story extensively glazed pavilion-like bank branches located throughout suburban Philadelphia. These branches were designed for the National Bank of Pottstown and the Bucks County Bank and Trust Company. See 1957 and 1954 Yearbooks of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA.



## Oscar Stonorov

Oscar Stonorov was born in Frankfurt, Germany in 1905, and died in 1970. He studied anatomy and mathematics at the University of Florence in 1924-25, and later at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich in 1925-28. Stonorov began his architectural career by working for the architectural firm of Andre Lurcat, while also studying sculpture under Aristide Maillol in Paris during 1928-29.

Stonorov emigrated to the United States in 1929, settling in Philadelphia. From 1932 to 1936, he practiced architecture in partnership with Alfred Kastner: the partnership produced the noted Carl Mackley Houses built in Philadelphia in 1933-34, the first of many socially responsive housing developments designed by Stonorov. Stonorov later established partnerships with George Howe, 1942-43, and Louis I. Kahn, 1942-48.

[From Contemporary Architects, edited by Muriel Emanuel with Dennis Sharp, architectural consultant (New York: St. Martins Press, 1980): p. 780.]

Stonorov's Postwar career was prolific, and was comprised of numerous residential commissions, including private homes and apartment developments; other aspects of Stonorov's Postwar career included the creation of redevelopment plans for various sections of Philadelphia, and a number of commercial and institutional buildings and building alterations and additions. Two of his better known





buildings, the Schuylkill Falls public housing development (1954-56) and the Hopkinson House apartments (1963: Fig. 103) express a tendency to eschew International Style modernism in favor of more complex sculptural and textured architectural designs that feature pre-cast and poured-in-place concrete and brick cladding.

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Thalheimer & Weitz

The firm of Thalheimer & Weitz was especially active and prolific in the Postwar era. Together with Clifford E. Garner and Herman Polss, Thalheimer & Weitz designed buildings that largely rejected Prewar architectural modes in favor of a range of unabashedly modern Postwar designs. Clarence Thalheimer, in association with his partner David Weitz, was among the leading architects specializing in retail architecture and design in Postwar Philadelphia.<sup>5</sup> Born in Philadelphia in 1898, Thalheimer attended the University of Pennsylvania from 1916 to 1920, and in 1924 organized the firm of Thalheimer & Weitz, Architects and Engineers.

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5. Former dean of the Graduate School of Fine Arts, G. Holmes Perkins, in his discussion of Thalheimer & Weitz, described David Weitz as an architect who specialized in interior design. Perkins also described the partnership as a firm that produced "Jazzy architecture," though Thalheimer & Weitz approached commissions in an essentially pragmatic manner. Interview with G. Holmes Perkins on December 10, 1991 in Philadelphia, PA.

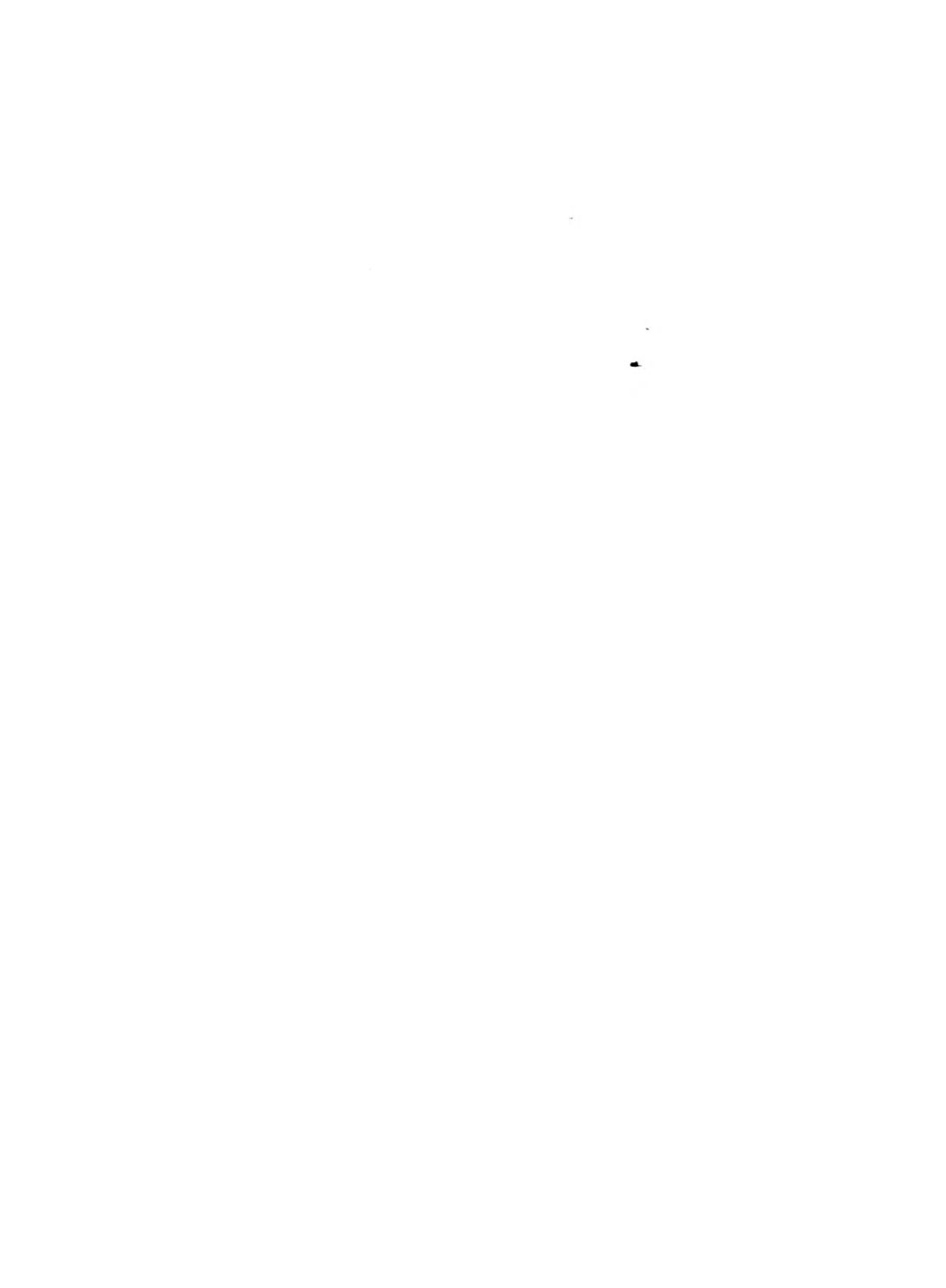


Thalheimer & Weitz produced a number of designs for stores and shopping centers, that included large department store branches. Among these commissions are the Lord & Taylor Department Store and Bala-Cynwyd Shopping Center built in 1956 in Bala-Cynwyd, PA (Fig. 104.); Lits Department Store in Camden, NJ (1957: Fig. 105.); Snellenburg's Suburban Department Store in Willow Grove, PA (1957); and a project for the Oak Park Shopping Center in Clifton Heights, PA (1959: Fig. 106.)<sup>6</sup> The modulation of exterior building mass and surfaces encompassing different layers of cladding materials that characterizes their design for the Baker's Shoe Store is also expressed in the designs for the Lits Department Store, and especially by the Lord & Taylor store in Bala-Cynwyd; the latter building, with its slightly curved facade, features recessed and cantilevered exterior portions.

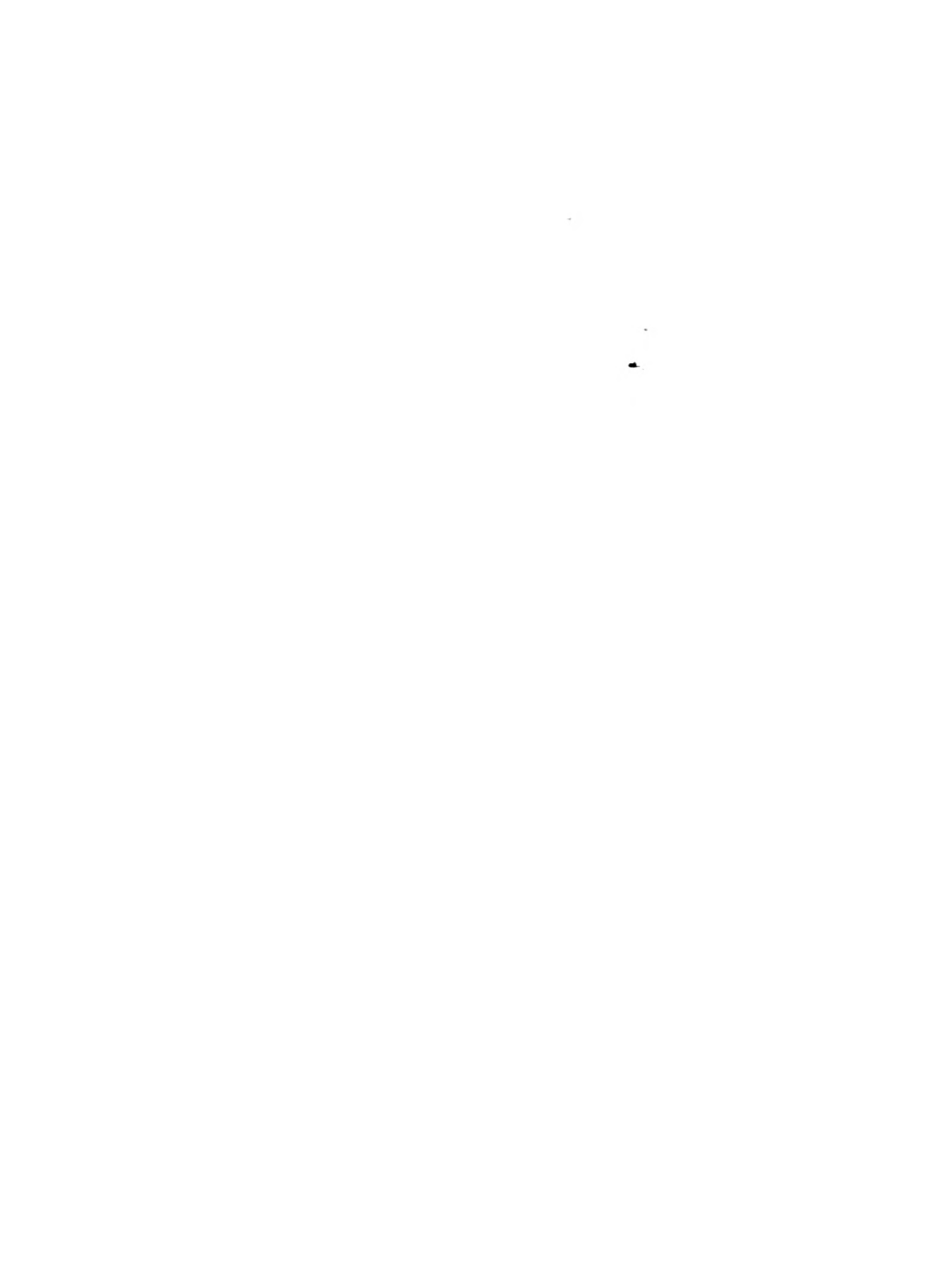
In addition, the firm designed a rather distinguished group of bank branches in Philadelphia that included the Germantown office of the Provident Bank & Trust Co. (1957: Fig. 107.) and a branch for the First Federal Savings & Loan

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6. Thalheimer's design for the Bala-Cynwyd Shopping Center, together with designs for the Benjamin Franklin High School in Philadelphia and Snellenburg's Department Store in Broomall, PA, were recipients of Pennsylvania AIA Honor Awards for the year 1958. In addition, the Oak Park Shopping Center in Clifton Heights, PA received a Pennsylvania Society of Architects award in the "Commercial Category" as well as a citation from Progressive Architecture, both in 1959. See George S. Koyl, American Architects Directory, (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1962.)



Association, also built in 1957. Clarence Thalheimer and David Weitz would continue their design partnership into the 1960's.



## Other Architects Represented by Buildings in the Study Area:

(Information obtained from George S. Koyl, American Architects Directory (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1956; Second Edition, 1962.)

**Leopold Hauf:**

Born in 1896. Worked as draftsman for Spencer Roberts, 1912-1918; Ritter & Shay, 1919-1924; Silverman & Levy, 1928-1933: all of Philadelphia; Designer for Andrew J. Sauer & Co., 1924-1928 (Philadelphia.)  
 Firm of Leopold Hauf, Jr., Architect organized in 1933.  
**Principal Works:** Cosmetic plant, Phila. (1949);  
 Recreation Bldg., Phila. (1950); Office bldgs. in Philadelphia and Upper Darby (1953.)  
 (From Koyl, American Architects Directory, 1955: p. 235.)

**Sydney Jelinek:**

Born in 1899. Received B. Arch. degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1923.  
 Worked as junior draftsman for William H. Lee, 1924-1932; Senior draftsman and designer for Simon & Simon, Architects, 1934-1937; Chief draftsman for Thalheimer & Weitz, 1944-1946. Established own firm in 1946.  
**Principal Works:** Factory buildings for New York Shipbuilding Corp., Camden, NJ (1943); Roseman Bros., Phila. (1949); Nannette Manufacturing Co., Phila. (1951.) Also, synagogue and community center, Phila. (1951); police station, Phila. (1951); recreation center, Phila. (1955).  
**Other:** Served on City Planning Commission of Philadelphia, 1933-1934.  
 (From Koyl, Amer. Archts. Directory, 1962: p. 347.)

**Philip Mastrin:**

Born in 1920. Received B.S. degree in Architecture from Drexel Institute of Technology in 1941.  
 Worked as designer for Roth & Fleisher; Associate architect with George W. Neff, Architect (Phila.)  
 Established his own firm in 1954.  
 (From Koyl, Amer. Archts. Directory, 1962: p. 469.)





**Beryl Price:**

Born in 1910. Received B. of Arch. from University of Pennsylvania, 1933.

Worked as draftsman for Simon & Simon, 1930-1931; and Philip H. Johnson, Architect, 1931-1934.

Established his own firm in 1939.

**Principal Works:** Adler Residence, 1950 (Phila.); Lipoff Residence, 1953 (Phila.); Yeadon Jewish Community Center, 1947 & 1953 (Yeadon, PA.); Philadelphia International Airport Motel, 1959; and the Samuel Rose Recreation Center, 1961 (Phila.)

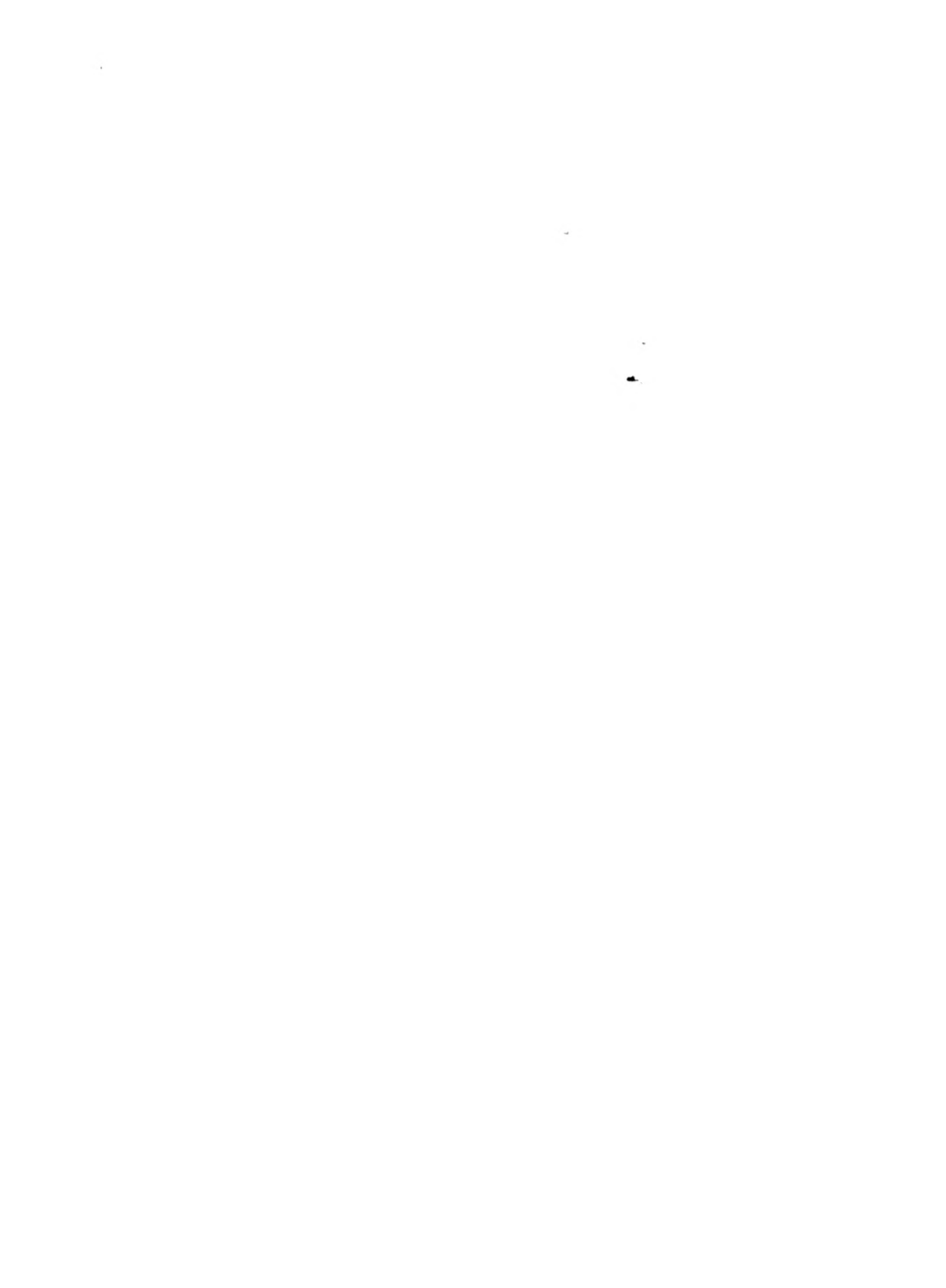
(From: Koysl, Amer. Archts. Directory, 1956 & 1962: p. 444, p. 564.)

**F. Spencer Roach:**

Born in 1906. Received B. Arch. from University of Pennsylvania, 1928.

Worked as draftsman for Robert Rodes McGoodwin, Archt., 1929-1942; and Harbeson Hough Livingston & Larson beginning in 1945; became a partner in 1961.

(From: Koysl, Amer. Archts. Directory, 1962: p. 590.)





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