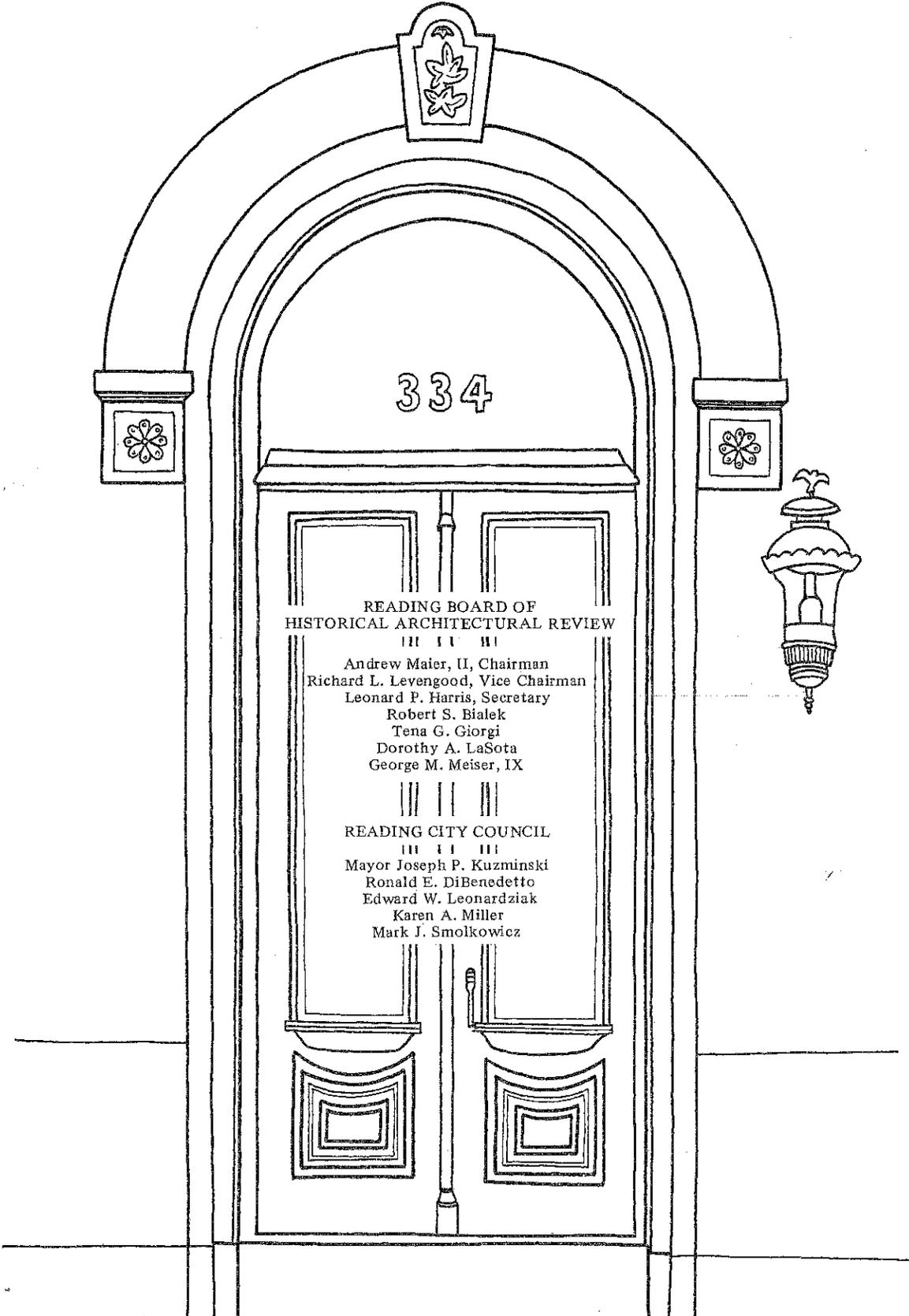


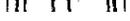
**CALLOWHILL  
HISTORICAL DISTRICT**

READING, PENNSYLVANIA



334

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Prepared by the Reading Bureau of Planning and partially funded by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's Office of Historic Preservation utilizing grant-in-aid funds from the Heritage Conservation Recreation Service, Department of the Interior.

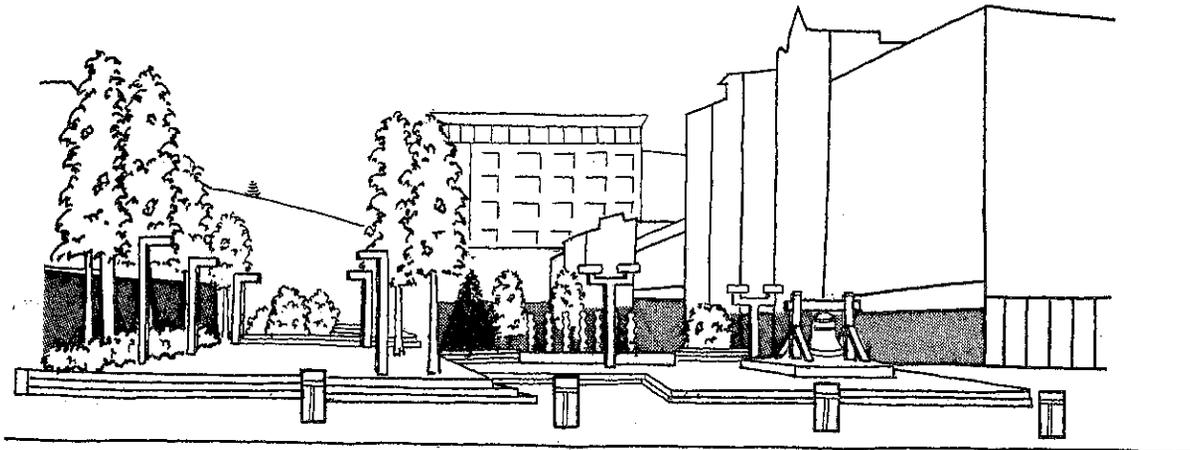
## INTRODUCTION

THE FIRST HISTORIC DISTRICT IN READING, THE CALLOWHILL HISTORIC DISTRICT, IS LOCATED ALONG FIFTH STREET AND PENN STREET WITHIN THE CITY, AND EXTENDS FROM 501 SOUTH FIFTH STREET TO 355 NORTH FIFTH STREET, INCLUSIVE, AND FROM 356 PENN STREET TO 601 PENN STREET INCLUSIVE.

THIS LOCATION HAS BEEN FROM THE TIME OF THE ORIGINAL DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF THE CITY IN 1748, NOT ONLY THE PHYSICAL CENTRAL POINT BETWEEN THE SCHUYLKILL RIVER AND THE BASE OF MT. PENN, BUT ALSO THE CENTER OF BUSINESS AND COMMERCE IN THE CITY AND BERKS COUNTY. THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS CENTRAL LOCATION MAY BE RECOGNIZED BY THE GREATER THAN NORMAL WIDTH OF THE STREETS AND BY THE INTENSITY OF THE ACTIVITY ALONG THEM. THE 253 ACRE HISTORIC DISTRICT DERIVES ITS NAME FROM THE MAIDEN NAME OF WILLIAM PENN'S SECOND WIFE - WHICH WAS HANNAH CALLOWHILL. HANNAH CALLOWHILL PENN'S SONS, THOMAS AND RICHARD, AUTHORIZED WILLIAM PARSONS TO LAY OUT THE CITY USING THEIR MOTHER'S NAME AS THE NAME OF ONE OF THE TWO MAJOR STREETS IN PARSONS' DESIGN. THUS FIFTH STREET HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN DESIGNATED 'CALLOWHILL STREET', A STREET NAME FOUND IN OTHER CITIES FOUNDED BY THE PENN FAMILY; TODAY, THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA STILL RETAINS ITS ORIGINAL CALLOWHILL STREET NAME, DESIGNATED FOR THE SAME COMMEMORATIVE REASON THERE AS HERE IN READING.

## Development

The present Penn Square and Fifth Street have developed along the lines which their original designers intended. Penn Square is the City's center of commerce, while Fifth Street holds a mixture of residential, institutional, and commercial uses. About 32% of District land is used for commerce, 13% for institutions, and 25% for residential development. The remaining 30% is utilized as a public street or park.

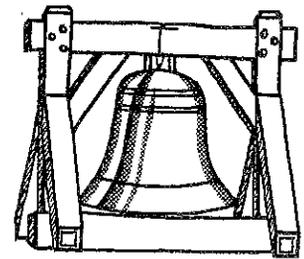


*Penn Square Garden and Fountains, 1975*

## Visual Qualities

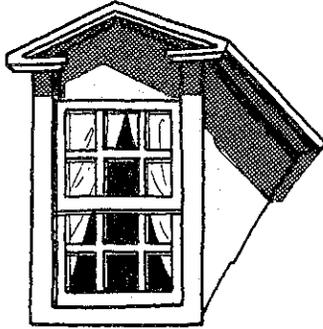
Much of the history and beauty of Reading is reflected in the architecture and urban spaces of the Callowhill Historic District. Penn Square has been a central space for community activity since the time of Reading's founding. Originally the site of Reading's market houses, Penn Square today is an attractive pedestrian plaza with park benches, gardens, and fountains. This area is contained by buildings from the Victorian and Twentieth Century periods.

Fifth Street south of Penn Square was developed during the early 1800's, and offers a collection of architecture from the Federal, Victorian, and Contemporary periods. The street's gentle slope southward toward the River allows this array of architectural styles to be viewed from Penn Square or from any point on South Fifth Street. North Fifth Street slopes gradually upward from Penn Square, then crests at Washington Street and slopes downward to Buttonwood Street. The aspect of the Victorian buildings of North Fifth Street is enhanced by this rolling terrain. An outstanding view of this portion of the Historical District is afforded on Fifth Street north of Buttonwood Street, where North Fifth Street again begins to ascend. From here, this splendid Victorian streetscape rises toward Penn Square and South Fifth Street. Throughout the District, many views are afforded of the greenery of Mount Penn. This offers a pleasant backdrop to the urban character of the District.



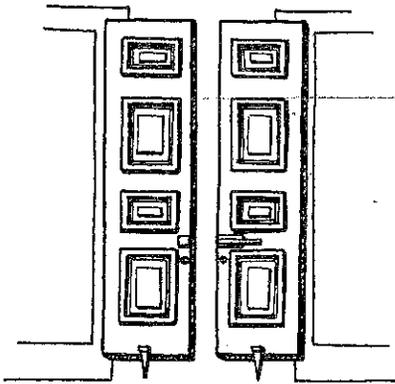
*Rainbow Fire Company bell*

## Architectural Styles

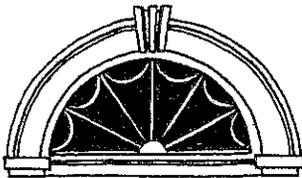


*Dormer window  
Federal style*

*South Fifth Street*



*Paneled shutters*



*Federal Period  
fan-shaped transom*

There are many architectural periods and styles represented in the Callowhill District. In general, the residential structures along Fifth Street from Laurel Street to Walnut Street are representative of architecture spanning from 1830 to 1870. Federal, Early and Mid-Victorian styles are in evidence. The residential architecture north of Walnut Street dates mostly from 1870 to 1890 and is of Victorian style.

The commercial buildings are mostly Victorian, while several bank buildings are done in the classical revival styles. There are two or three good examples of the modernistic Art Deco style and one or two Contemporary structures. The greatest range of styles is found among the religious and institutional architecture. These range from Gothic through Classical Revival to Modernistic.

Along South Fifth Street, the diverse collection of architecture is arranged in small clusters of similar buildings which create an element of visual harmony along the street. The pleasant streetscape is frequently punctuated by Gothic Revival church steeples often set back from the street line. The west side of South Fifth Street between Chestnut and Spruce Streets displays a typical array of three story Italianate rowhomes. These imposing brick and stone structures exhibit detailed wooden cornices and window lintels, handsome stoops leading up to massive arched doorways over finely carved wooden doors, and ornamental stained glass and ironwork. This composition of rowhomes is complemented by the First Baptist Church on the southwest corner of Fifth and Chestnut Streets. The balanced design of the Church's red sandstone facade lends a warmth to the Victorian streetscape. On the east side of the same block is a pleasant group of rowhomes dating from the Federal Period. These two-story brick structures with small dormers projecting from gabled roofs possess a simplicity of design that is in marked contrast to the imposing nature of the Victorians across the street. In spite of this obvious contrast, however, an interesting and harmonious streetscape is afforded throughout South Fifth Street by the consistent arrangement of a diverse architectural stock into groups of similar styles.

While Italianate and Federal architecture clearly predominates on South Fifth Street, there are a number of impressive buildings which represent other styles. Norman Gothic architecture is well rendered in the massive stone walls, the tower with battlements, and the pointed arch stained glass windows of the First Presbyterian Church at 35 South Fifth Street. The Reading Public Library at 100 South Fifth is an example of the Classical Revival style. The entire Historical District is anchored at its southern end by the Liberty Fire Company, a handsome four story brick building dating to 1854, that also reflects elements of the Richardsonian Romanesque style.

North of Penn Square, a blend of building styles from the Federal, Victorian, and Contemporary periods greets the eye. The Christ Episcopal Church at 30 North Fifth Street was built in 1826, and is one of the oldest Gothic Revival churches in Reading. The rustic sandstone facade and spire lend an austere appearance to the church which is lightened by the pointed arch stained glass windows. The eight story Berkshire Hotel at 101 North Fifth Street possesses elements of Italianate ornamentation in its superb brick masonry. The outstanding patterned brickwork of this dignified structure reflects a quality of design and craftsmanship that is common throughout the City.

*North Fifth Street*

Fifth Street north of Walnut Street was not developed until the late 1800's when Reading experienced its greatest period of economic expansion. As a result, this portion of the Historical District offers an unusually pure collection of Victorian architecture. The Empire style building at 227 North Fifth reflects a calm confidence in its graceful lines. Its form is accentuated by a mansard roof with Empire style dormers, and by double-story bay windows running smoothly down the brick facade. At the northeast corner of the intersection of Fifth and Elm Streets is a Gothic Revival style church. There are recently restored Victorian homes on each of the other three corners. These handsome buildings reflect Reading-German influence in their fine ornamental brickwork, and their having been restored makes this a particularly attractive intersection.

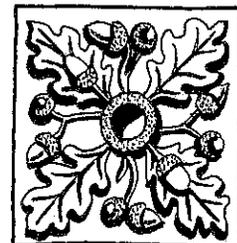


*Cornice bracket  
Victorian Italianate style*

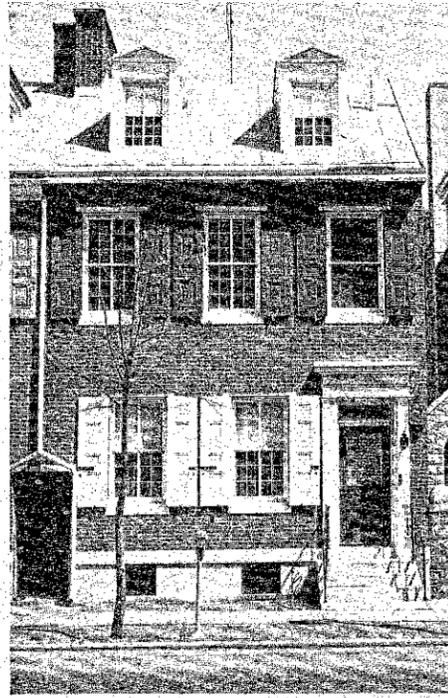
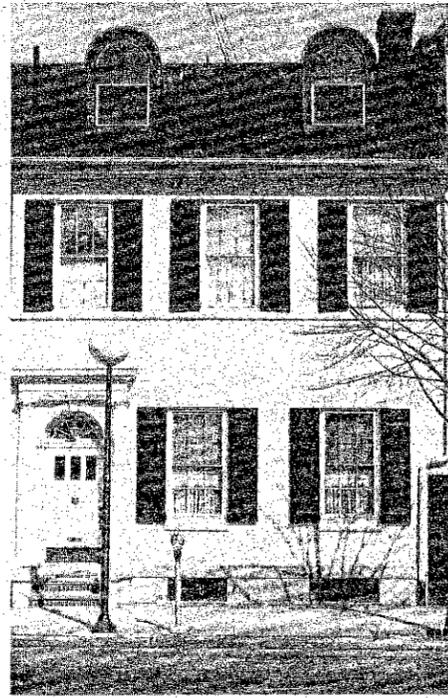
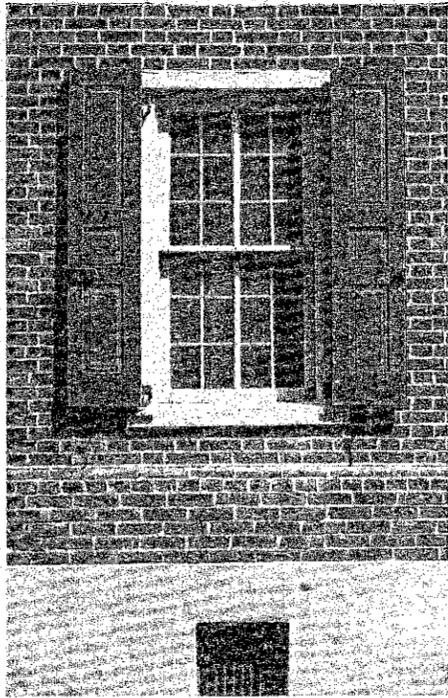


*Winged dragon  
stone ornament*

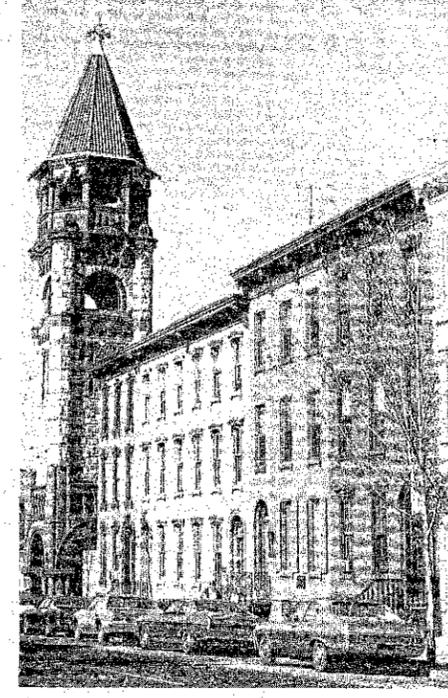
The northernmost part of the Historical District, is comprised entirely of buildings from the Victorian period. Outstanding brick and stone masonry, richly carved wooden cornices and window lintels, impressive arched doorways, and ornamental details of stained glass and iron adorn the large three story homes of this block. The uniformity of design and the simple restrained elegance of these Italianate rowhomes forms a scene of quiet beauty. The gently sloping street, the trees, and the handsome stone churches of the same period all further enhance this streetscape. On the east side of the street, the Gothic Revival style Greek Orthodox Church and the Richardsonian Romanesque Holy Cross Methodist Church anchor and unify the ten Italianate rowhomes between them, thus forming a balanced streetscape. The fine buildings of this block were once the homes of the families who led Reading through the brightest period in its history. They are worthy of preservation because of their architectural beauty and because of their historical importance.



*Moulded brick detail  
Victorian Period*

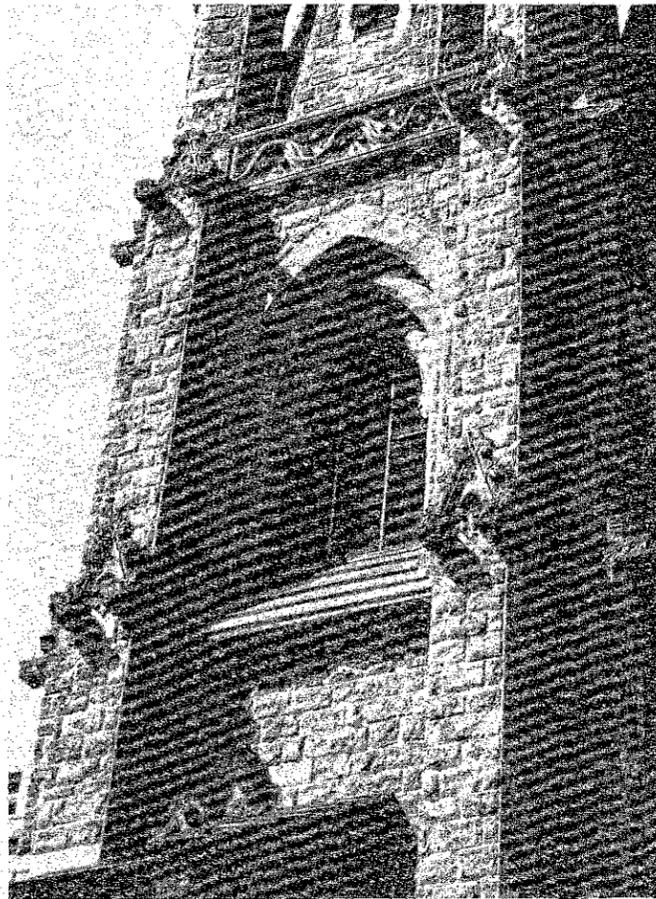


*Residences representative of the Federal style*

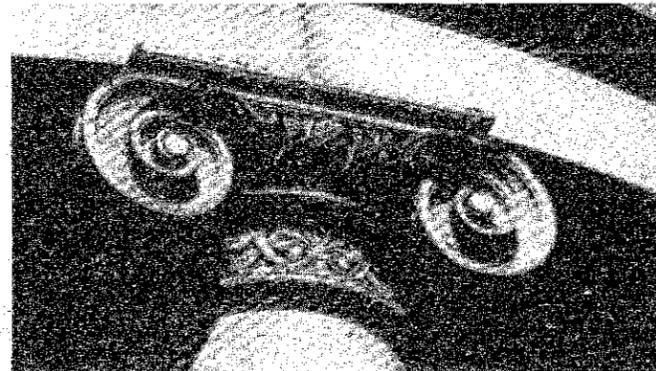


*Residences representative of the Victorian styles*

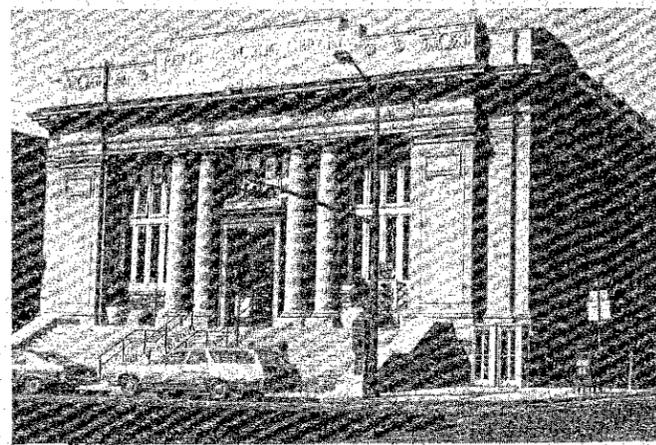
THE ARCHITECTURAL STYLES OF CALLOWHILL



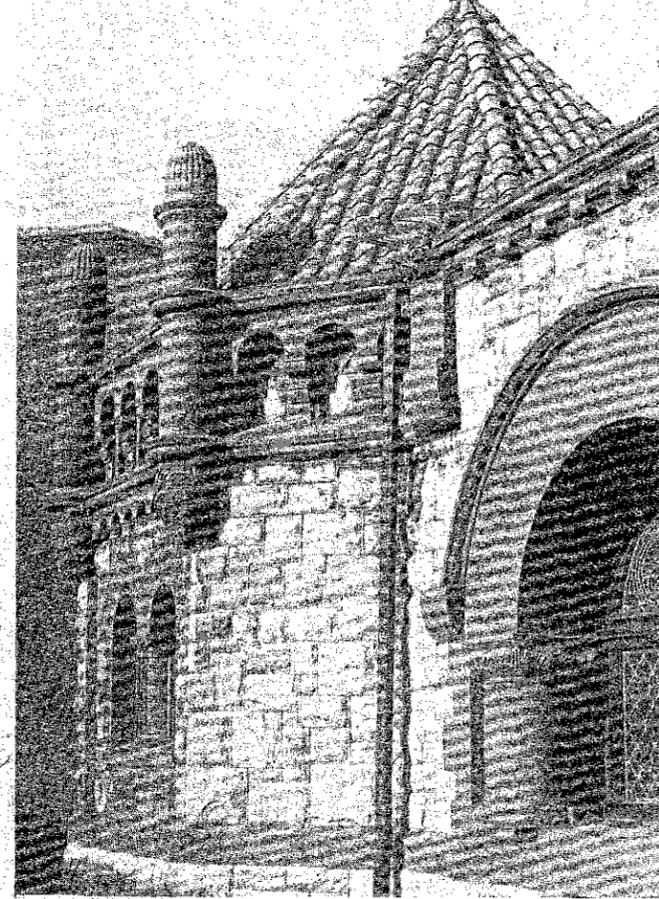
*The Gothic style, Christ Episcopal Church*



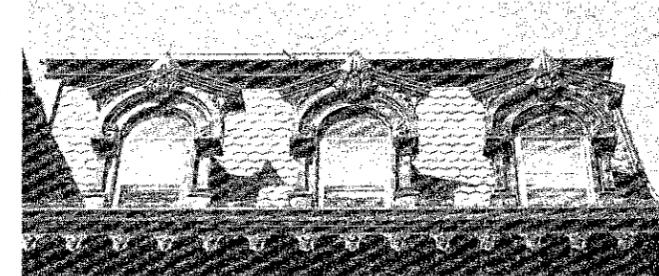
*Classical Revival style Ionic column capital, American Bank & Trust Co.*



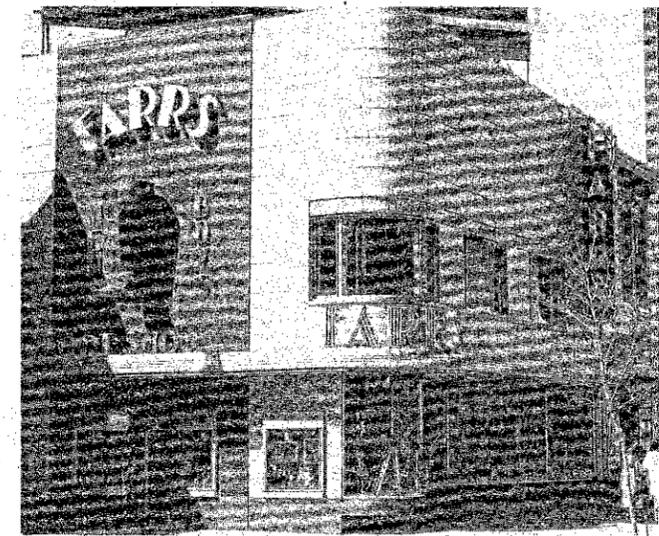
*Classical Revival, Reading Public Library*



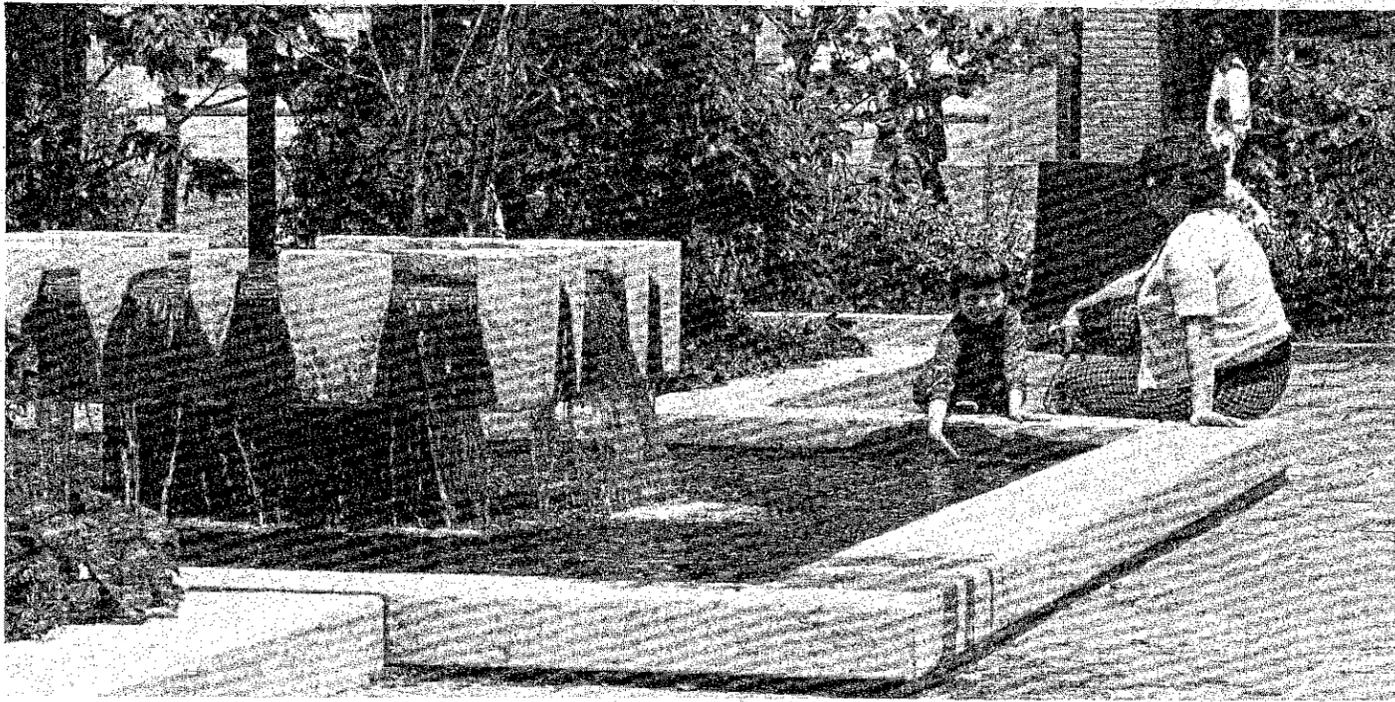
*Richardsonian Romanesque  
Holy Cross United Methodist Church*



*A mansard roof and dormer windows representative of the Empire Style*



*Modern or Art Deco style*



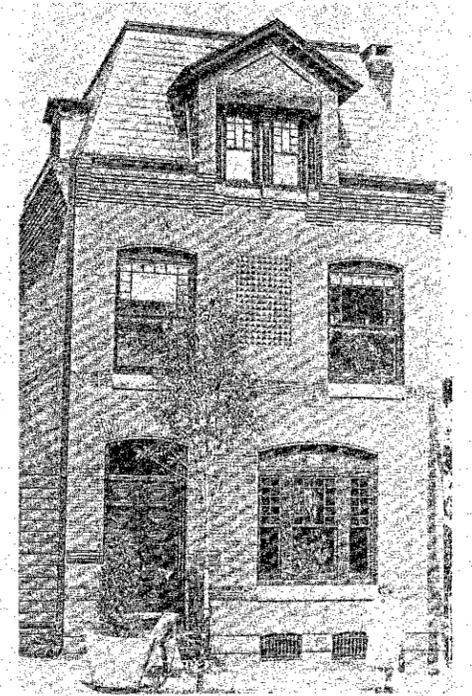
*Penn Square*



*(Saint) John Neuman residence*

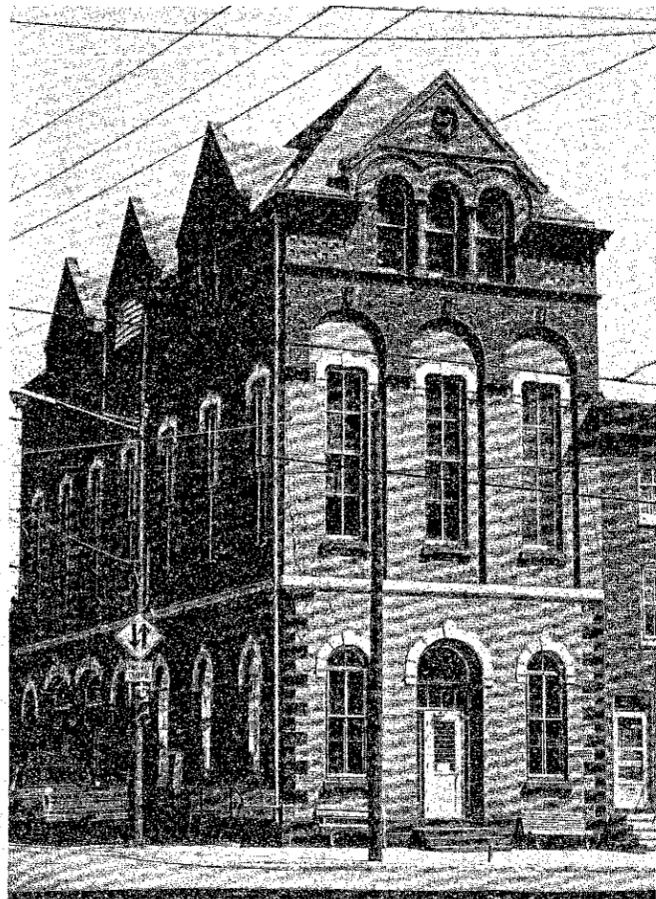


*Glen-Gery Corp., offices*

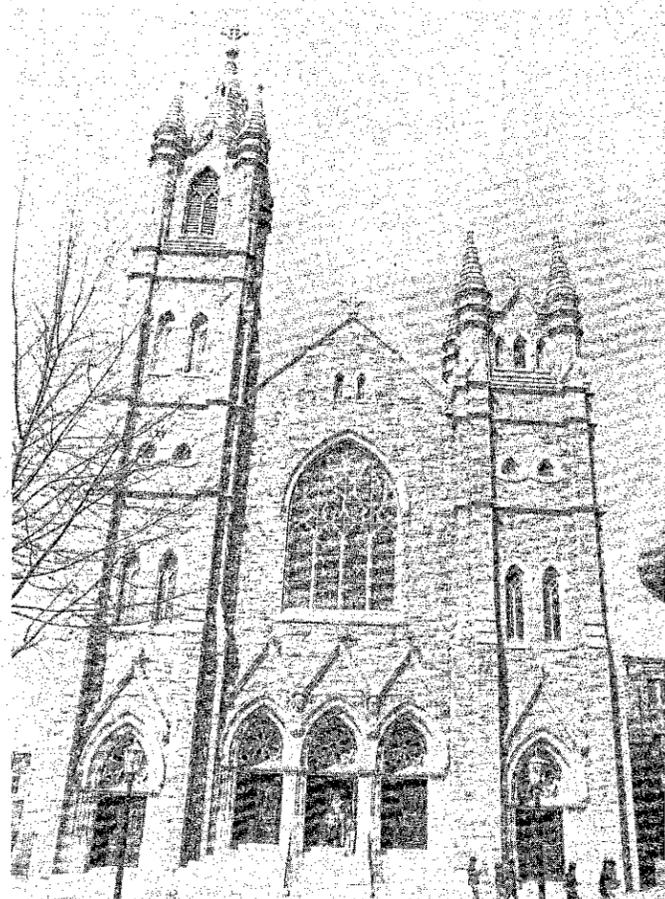


*Morris Krietz, office*

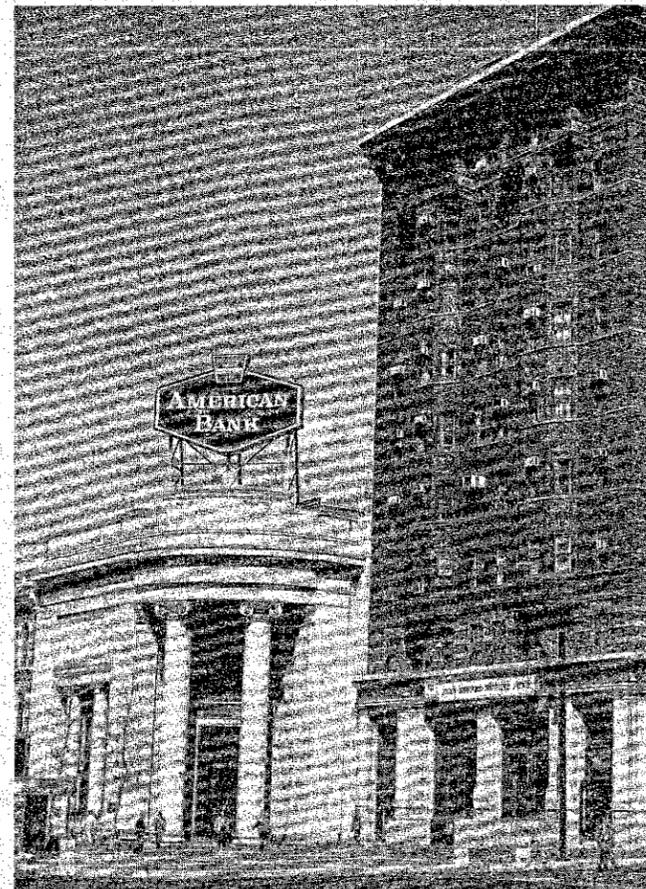
THE LANDMARKS OF CALLOWHILL



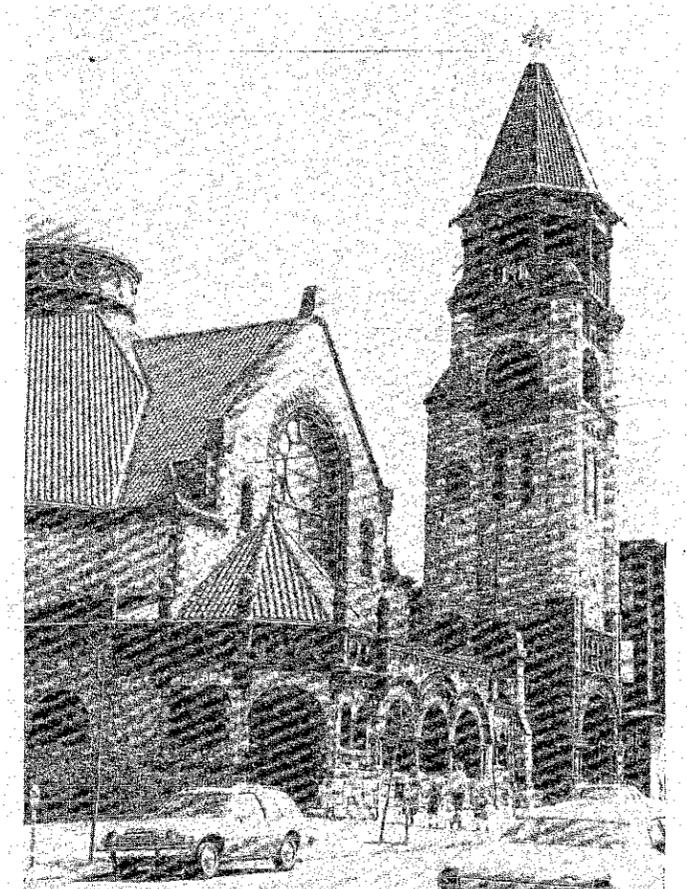
*Liberty Fire Company*



*Saint Peter's Roman Catholic Church*



*American Bank & Trust Co. (left)  
Colonial Trust Building (right)*



*Holy Cross United Methodist Church*

# CALLOWHILL HISTORICAL DISTRICT

READING, PENNSYLVANIA



THESE THREE STORY ROWHOMES ARE AN EXCELLENT STUDY IN VICTORIAN ARCHITECTURE. NO. 234, THE MOST OUTSTANDING OF THE GROUP, IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE EMPIRE STYLE. THE OTHERS ARE EXAMPLES OF THE ITALIANATE STYLE. ALL ARE WELL-CONSTRUCTED AND ARE NICELY EMBELLISHED WITH SUCH FEATURES AS CARVED WOODEN CORNICES, ARCHED DOORWAYS AND WINDOW LINTELS, AND ORNAMENTAL BROWSELS. THE ROWHOMES ARE COMPLEMENTED BY THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH ON THE CORNER OF FIFTH AND CHESTNUT STREETS TO FURTHER ENHANCE THE STREETSCAPE.

THE READING PUBLIC LIBRARY WAS BUILT IN THE CLASSICAL REVIVAL STYLE IN 1910.

SITE OF THE FORMER RESIDENCE OF GENERAL WILLIAM HICK, WHO SERVED AS A UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN AND HELPED DRAFT THE PENNSYLVANIA CONSTITUTION (CIRCA 1850).

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH WAS BUILT IN 1865 IN THE RICHARDSONIAN ROMANESQUE STYLE. A HARMONIOUS BALANCE OF PALLADIAN ENTICED CLASS WINDOWS, GALLERIES AND DOORS ARE DRAWN TOGETHER BY A CENTRAL TOWER. THE RED SANDSTONE FACADE LENDS A WARM, BUT SOBER APPEARANCE TO THE STRUCTURE.

SITE OF THE FORMER RESIDENCE OF HENRY A. WILKINSON, UNITED STATES MINISTER TO RUSSIA. THE EXISTING FOUR STORY BRICK BUILDING WAS BUILT DURING THE VICTORIAN PERIOD AND FEATURES HIGHLY PROMINENT CARVED WOODEN LINTELS AND CORNICE.

THESE TWO BUILDINGS ARE GOOD LOCAL EXAMPLES OF THE MODERNISTIC STYLE.

FORMER SITE OF BERKS COUNTY'S FIRST COURT HOUSE, BUILT IN 1760. THIS TWO STORY BRICK BUILDING HAD A GABLED ROOF ADORNED WITH A CURVOLA AND RESEMBLED MANY OF THE FEDERAL STYLE HOMES FOUND IN THE CALLOWHILL HISTORICAL DISTRICT TODAY.

FORMER RESIDENCE OF NORATH TINKER, A LOCAL INDUSTRIALIST IN THE LATE 1800'S. THIS EMPIRE STYLE MANSION FEATURES DELICATELY CARVED WINDOW LINTELS, DOORWAYS AND CORNICE. THE MANICURED ROOF IS TOPPED BY ORNAMENTAL BROWSELS.

FORMER SITE OF THE FEDERAL HILL HOME, GEORGE WASHINGTON STOVER DURING HIS VISIT TO READING. THE EXISTING BANK BUILDING REFLECTS THE CONCEPT OF THE BANK AS A CLASSICAL TEMPLE. MASSIVE IONIC COLUMNS, REACHING NEARLY TO THE FOURTH FLOOR OF THE STRUCTURE, STAND ON EITHER SIDE OF THE ENTRANCE. OF NOTE ARE THE CURVATURE OF THE BUILDING'S LINE AND A PRIZEE IN LOW RELIEF WHICH ADORNES THE SIDE FACADE.

FORMER SITE OF THE WESTERN MARKET HOUSE.

SITE OF A FORMER RESIDENCE OF DANIEL ROSS, A PROMINENT LOCAL CLOCK MAKER AND MUSICAL OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD.

THE EXISTING TEN STORY BUILDING WAS CONSTRUCTED DURING THE EARLY 1900'S AND IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE COMMERCIAL STYLE. FEATURES OF THIS EARLY "SKYSCRAPER" INCLUDE VERTICALLY RUNNING BAY WINDOWS AND AN ELABORATE CORNICE. THIS BUILDING ILLUSTRATES THE ADAPTATION OF CLASSICAL DESIGN TO TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY STRUCTURAL INNOVATIONS IN ARCHITECTURE.

FORMER SITE OF THE STATE HOUSE, A TWO STORY BRICK BUILDING WHICH STOOD FROM 1753-1876. THE STATE HOUSE PROVIDED VARIOUS CITY AND COUNTY OFFICES AND SERVED AS A MEETING PLACE FOR THE PUBLIC, CHURCH GROUPS AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE DEFENSES DEBATING SOCIETY AND THE MADONS.

THIS THREE STORY STONE BUILDING, KNOWN AS THE READING NEWS BUILDING, IS ONE OF THE FEW EXAMPLES OF THE BRICK ARTS STYLE IN READING. IT IS FULLY ORNAMENTED IN CLASSICAL MOTIFS, INCLUDING SCROLLS, TURTLE SHELVES, COLUMNS AND PEDIMENTS.

CURIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, BUILT IN 1824, IS ONE OF THE OLDEST GOTHIC REVIVAL CHURCHES IN READING. THE SPIRE WAS ERECTED BETWEEN 1850 AND 1857. THE SLATE SHINGLE ROOF AND MASSIVE RED SANDSTONE FACADE OVER AN AUSTRALIAN APPEARANCE WHICH IS LIGHTENED BY POINTED ARCH STAINED GLASS WINDOWS.

SITE OF THE FORMER RESIDENCE OF SPENCER FULLERTON BAIRD, WHO WAS SECRETARY OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION IN THE LATE 1800'S. THE EXISTING STONE AND GLASS BUILDING IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE EMPIRE STYLE.

FORMER RESIDENCE OF FRANK J. SWING, PRESIDENT OF THE READING IRON COMPANY (1845-1920).

200 BLOCK

THREE DISTINCT ARCHITECTURAL PERIODS ARE REPRESENTED ON THE WEST SIDE OF THIS BLOCK. THE ROWHOMES DATE FROM THE VICTORIAN PERIOD AND ARE ITALIANATE IN STYLE. THE CONCRETE AND GLASS GREAT VALLEY SAVINGS AND LOAN BUILDING (NO. 210) IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE COMTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL STYLE. THE BRICK MEDICAL ARTS BUILDING (NO. 200) DATES FROM THE 1900'S AND CAN BE IDENTIFIED AS MODERNISTIC IN STYLE.

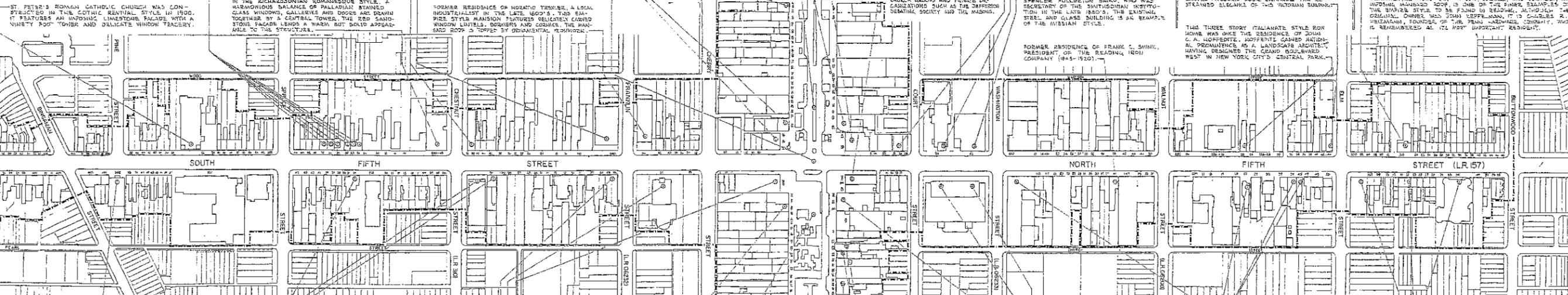
THIS THREE STORY BRICK ROW HOME EMPHATICALLY THE FINE CRAFTSMANSHIP TYPICAL OF READING'S ARCHITECTURE. MOULDED ORNAMENTAL BRICK, STAINED GLASS, ORNAMENTAL IRON BAYMENT GRILLS AND CARVED WOODEN DOOR ENHANCE THE RETAINED ELEGANCE OF THE VICTORIAN SUBURB.

THIS THREE STORY ITALIANATE STYLE ROW HOME WAS ONCE THE RESIDENCE OF JOHN C.A. HOPPEL, HOPPEL'S GAINED NATIONAL PROMINENCE AS A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT, WHILE HE HAD DESIGNED THE GRAND BOULEVARD WEST IN NEW YORK CITY'S CENTRAL PARK.

300 BLOCK

THIS BLOCK HAS RETAINED ITS VICTORIAN ARCHITECTURAL IDENTITY TO THE PRESENT DAY. THE UNIFORMITY OF DESIGN AND THE SIMPLE, RESTRAINED ELEGANCE OF THESE ITALIANATE ROWHOMES FORMS A SCENE OF QUIET BEAUTY. ONCE THE RESIDENCES OF READING'S LEADING CITIZENS, THE BUILDINGS ARE FRONTED WITH FINELY CRAFTED DETAILS SUCH AS CARVED WOODEN CORNICES, ARCHED DOORWAYS AND WINDOW LINTELS AND ORNAMENTAL BROWSELS.

THE HEIZMANN MANSION DIFFERS IN STYLE FROM ITS NEIGHBORS, BUT IS INTEGRATED INTO THE STREET FABRIC AND SHOULD BE NOTED FOR ITS UNUSUAL ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES. THE THREE STORY BRICK AND STONE HOME, WITH ITS ORNAMENTAL IRON BAY WINDOW GRILLS AND CARVED WOODEN MANSARD ROOF, IS ONE OF THE FINEST EXAMPLES OF THE EMPIRE STYLE TO BE FOUND IN READING. ALTHOUGH THE ORIGINAL OWNER WAS JOHN HEIZMANN, IT IS COLLEGE & HEIZMANN, FOUNDER OF THE PENN. WARDWELL COMPANY, WHO IS REMEMBERED AS ITS MOST IMPORTANT RESIDENT.



THE LIBERTY FIRE COMPANY WAS ORGANIZED IN 1834 WHEN IT OCCUPIED A TWO STORY BRICK BUILDING ON THIS SITE. THE THIRD FLOOR WAS ADDED TO THE STRUCTURE IN 1893. OTHER ALTERATIONS WERE MADE TO THE BUILDING OVER THE YEARS TO ACCOMMODATE ADVANCED FIRE FIGHTING APPARATUS. THE BUILDING, AS IT NOW APPEARS IS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RICHARDSONIAN ROMANESQUE STYLE. THE SLATE SHINGLE ROOF AND NICE CARVED WINDOWS ORNAMENTED WITH GALLISTERS AND STAINED GLASS CONTINUE TO FORM A PLEASING VICTORIAN STRUCTURE.

ST. PETER'S METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH WAS BUILT IN 1848. THE UNPRETTENTIOUS DESIGN OF THIS GOTHIC REVIVAL STYLE CHURCH HIGHLIGHTS THE RECENTLY RESTORED BRICK FACADE AND THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS. THIS IS PRESENT IN THE HOME OF THE SPANISH RENAISSANCE CHURCH.

FORMER RESIDENCE OF SAINT JOHN NEUMAN, THE FOUNDER OF THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM AND OF THE ADJACENT ST. PETER'S BLENKART SCHOOL (CIRCA 1860). THE TWO STORY BRICK ROWHOUSE WITH GABLED ROOF IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE FEDERAL STYLE.

SITE OF THE "BALD EAGLE INN," A TAPEN OF LOCAL PROMINENCE DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD. IT WAS HERE IN 1777 THAT MAJOR JAMES MONROE, LATER FIFTH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, WAS INFORMED BY JAMES WILKINSON, A MESSENGER OF GENERAL GATE, OF THE "CONWAY CABAL" PLOT TO DEPRIVE GEORGE WASHINGTON AS HEAD OF THE CONTINENTAL ARMIES.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WAS CONSTRUCTED IN 1847. ITS MASSIVE STONE WALLS, THE TOWER WITH ITS BATTLEMENTS AND THE POINTED ARCH STAINED GLASS WINDOWS ARE ALL FEATURES OF NORMAN GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE.

IN 1777 WHEN THE BRITISH WERE THREATENING PHILADELPHIA, MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS FLED THRU READING TO THE WESTERN CITY OF PENNSYLVANIA. DURING THE SUMMER OF THAT YEAR, WILLIAM HALL, FOUNDER OF UNITED STATES CURRENTLY AND BANNER, PARTNER TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SET UP HIS PRINTING SHOP ON THIS SITE. HALL PRINTED OVER \$20,000,000 IN CONTINGENT CURRENCY IN READING, \$5,000,000 BEING CALLED TO YORK, PENNSYLVANIA BY CONGRESS. IN THE 1800'S THIS BECAME THE SITE OF THE MANSION HOUSE, AN IMPORTANT LOCAL TAVERN, FROM WHICH PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT ADDRESSED A CROWD OF APPROXIMATELY 30,000 PEOPLE IN 1912.

FORMER SITE OF THE EASTERN MARKET HOUSE. IN 1749, WEEKLY MARKETS WERE ESTABLISHED IN PENN SQUARE TO ACCOMMODATE THE GROWING COMMUNITY'S NEED FOR GREATER TRADE. THE MARKET ENLARGED UNTIL THE 1800'S AND WEST CENTERS OF GREAT ACTIVITY THROUGHOUT THEIR EXISTENCE. PRESIDENTS GEORGE WASHINGTON AND MARTIN VAN BUREN APPEARED AT THE EASTERN MARKET HOUSE IN 1794 AND 1856 RESPECTIVELY.

SITE OF THE READING EAGLE COMPANY FROM 1860 TO 1886 (SUCCESSOR TO READING ADLER (1815) AND OF READING'S FIRST TELEPHONE EXCHANGE WHICH OPENED IN 1861 ON SECOND FLOOR. THE EXISTING BRICK BUILDING IS AN EXAMPLE OF MODERNISTIC ARCHITECTURE.

A CENTURY OF BUSINESS EXPANSION IS REFLECTED IN THE ARCHITECTURE OF POMEROY'S DEPARTMENT STORE, ESTABLISHED IN 1810. THE SOUTH SIXTH STREET SIDE OF THE STORE WAS ASSIGNED BUILDINGS OF AN EARLIER PERIOD AND TRACES OF THEIR ORIGINAL ITALIANATE ORNAMENTATION ARE STILL VISIBLE. ALTHOUGH THE DISPLAY WINDOWS ON THE FIRST FLOOR ARE IN MARKED CONTRAST TO THE VERTICAL REGULARITY OF THE COMMERCIAL STYLE BAY WINDOWS ABOVE, THEY DO REFLECT THE TRENDS OF THE LAST TWENTY YEARS.

SITE OF THE FORMER RESIDENCE OF JOSEPH HESTER (1747-1804), READING'S FIRST UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN.

THIS FIVE STORY STONE BUILDING REPRISATES THE ADAPTATION OF CLASSICAL DESIGN TO THE STRUCTURAL INNOVATIONS IN ARCHITECTURE OF THE TURN OF THE CENTURY. HORIZONTAL BAY WINDOWS, ORNAMENTED BY PILASTERS, AND A STONE CORNICE COMPLETE A HARMONIOUS FACADE.

THIS EMPIRE STYLE ROWHOUSE WITH NICELY CARVED WOODEN WINDOW LINTELS AND DOORWAYS HAS RECENTLY BEEN RESTORED. THIS IS THE APPROPRIATE SITE OF THE RESIDENCES OF EDWARD DOOLE AND WILLIAM HUMBERG, TWO TRAVELERS FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD.

THE EXISTING STITCHER'S HATMAKING BUILDING HAS RETAINED ITS ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY FOR NEARLY A CENTURY. OF INTEREST ARE THE CARVED MANSION IN WHICH CLASSICAL DESIGN MOTIFS DISCORDANT TO THE BUILDING AND THE CHICAGO STYLE WINDOWS WHICH ENHANCE THE HORIZONTALITY OF THE BUILDING'S LINE.

SITE OF THE FORMER RESIDENCE OF H.E. LYONS, RAILROAD ENGINEER AND DESIGNER OF READING'S HISTORIC ASHEN BRIDGE. LYONS LIVED IN SECOND ON THE WEST SIDE DURING WHICH TIME HE ENGINEERED A CORNER PART OF THE READING RAILROAD.

WILLIAM H. LUFEN BEGAN HIS CANDY BUSINESS HERE IN 1879, PRODUCING SMALL AMOUNTS OF CANDY IN THE BACK OF HIS FATHER'S JEWELRY SHOP.

FORMER SITE OF CONRAD WEBER'S TRADING POST, AN IMPROBABLE PIONEER SETTLER AND AGENT FOR THE PENNS. WISLER ESTABLISHED HIS BUSINESS IN 1750 AND OPERATED IT UNTIL 1765.

THE FORMER RESIDENCE OF JONATHAN BOYD'S BUSINESS GENERAL OF THE NORTHERN CONTINENTAL ARMY DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

THESE TWO HOMES ARE SIMILAR IN DESIGN BUT DIFFER IN FACADE TREATMENT. NO. 245 HAS A BRICK FACADE WITH A DOUBLE STORY BAY WINDOW OF CHEERFUL PROPORTIONS, WHILE NO. 244 HAS A STONE FACADE AND A SMALL BAY WINDOW. BOTH BUILDINGS REFLECT THE ELEGANT PREVALENT IN ARCHITECTURE OF THE LATE VICTORIAN PERIOD. TRACES OF ITALIC STYLE, SHINGLE ROOF AND RICHARDSONIAN ROMANESQUE STYLES CAN BE OBSERVED.

THIS EMPIRE STYLE HOME EXPRESSES A CALM CONFIDENCE IN ITS GRAVEFUL LINES. ITS FORM IS ACCENTUATED BY DOUBLE STORY BAY WINDOWS RISING SHARPLY ABOVE THE BRICK FACADE. THE MANSARD ROOF WITH ITS EMPIRE STYLE CORNICE AND RICHARDSONIAN ROMANESQUE STYLISHNESS CAN BE OBSERVED.

NOW USED AS AN OFFICE BUILDING, THE BRICK SHED HOTEL WAS BUILT IN 1912. IT IS AN EIGHT STORY BUILDING WITH A FACADE OF SUPERB BRICK MASONRY. FINE BRICK CARVING AND CLASSICAL DESIGN MOTIFS ORNAMENT THE HANDSOME, DISTINGUISHED STRUCTURE. THIS WAS ONCE THE SITE OF THE "OLD JAIL."

HOLY CROSS UNITED METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IS AN EXCELLENT REPRESENTATION OF THE RICHARDSONIAN ROMANESQUE STYLE. THE CHURCH WAS DEDICATED BY BISHOP T.M. HEIZMANN ON NOVEMBER 1, 1853. DETAILED MASONRY INCLUDING ROWS OF ARCHES SUPPORTED BY COLUMNS, A THE SHINGLED ROOF, TURRETS, GUTTERAS AND STAINED GLASS WINDOWS ALL EXPRESS A RICHARDSONIAN ROMANESQUE STYLE.

THE CHURCH AND THE GREAT ORTHODOX LUTHERAN AT THE SOUTHERN END OF THE BLOCK, ISolate AND UNDER THE FINE ITALIANATE ROWHOMES REPRESENTS THE BALANCED PLACEMENT OF THESE BUILDINGS HAS FORMED A HARMONIOUS STREETSCAPE IN THIS BLOCK.

FORMER RESIDENCE OF JESSE C. HAWLEY, LOCAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER (1859-1903). THIS IS AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF THE MANY FINE ITALIANATE ROWHOMES IN THE CALLOWHILL HISTORICAL DISTRICT.

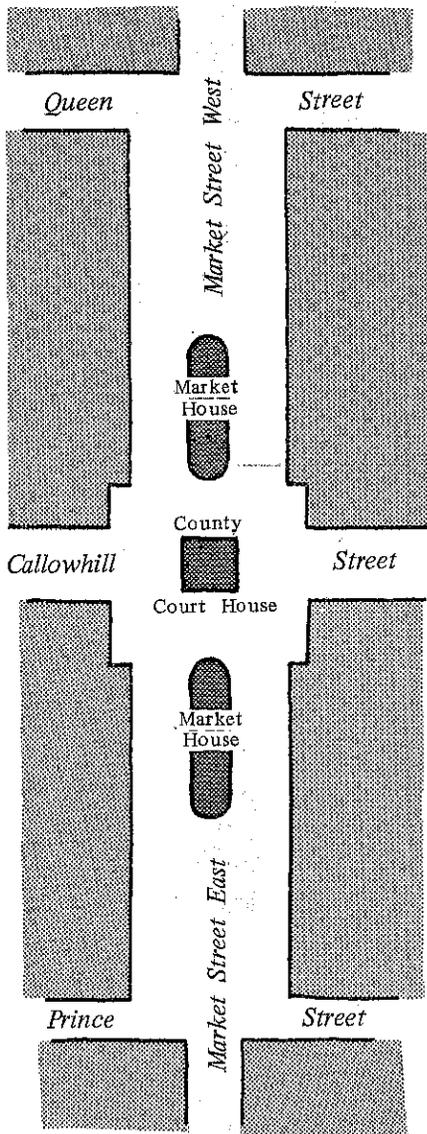
THIS GOTHIC REVIVAL STYLE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH WAS BUILT IN 1891. THE STONE FACADE, TOWER AND POINTED ARCH STAINED GLASS WINDOWS FORM A BALANCED STREETSCAPE WITH NEARBY ITALIANATE ROWHOMES.

## Historical Significance

As was indicated, Reading was originally laid out in 1748 at a site 60 miles northwest of Philadelphia where a good ford on the Schuylkill provided access to the growing settlements of western Pennsylvania.

### Colonial Period

During the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods, the town of Reading was limited to the area immediately surrounding Penn Square, and its economy depended upon agricultural products shipped down the Schuylkill River to markets in Philadelphia. The population of Reading in 1800 was 2,386. Many of the buildings in Reading at this time were of log construction. Berks County's first Court House was built in 1762 and stood in the center of Penn Square. The Federal Inn, built in 1763 at 445 Penn Street, and the Bald Eagle Inn, located at 101 South Fifth Street were both important local taverns. In 1777, it was at the Bald Eagle Inn that Major James Monroe was informed by Major James Wilkinson of the 'Conway Cabal' plot to replace George Washington as head of the Continental armies. Later, in 1794, Washington himself visited the Federal Inn while enroute to Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The State House, built in 1793 at 501 Penn Street, served as a public office and meeting house for nearly a century. Most of these buildings were very simple two story structures with gabled roofs. They were probably very similar to the Federal style buildings found today in the Callowhill District. Only the streets and open spaces remain from this era.



Penn Square, 1825

Important people who lived or worked in the Callowhill Historical District during this period include William Hall, printer of United States currency and business partner to Benjamin Franklin. When Congress fled Philadelphia in 1777, Hall set up his printing shop at 500 Penn Street during the summer of that year. He printed over \$20,000,000 in Continental currency here, before being called to York by Congress. Edward Biddle, delegate to the First and Second Continental Congresses resided at 529 Penn Street. Dr. Jonathan Potts, Surgeon General for the Northern Continental Army, and Dr. Bodo Otto, personal physician to General Washington, both are believed to have resided on Penn Street.

Weekly markets were established on Penn Square in 1766 in order to accommodate the growing community's need for greater trade. The markets flourished until the mid-1800's and were centers of community life throughout their existence. The period from 1800 to 1860 is represented by the Federal architecture on South Fifth Street. This period saw the opening of the canals and the growth of Reading as a transportation link and an industrial center.

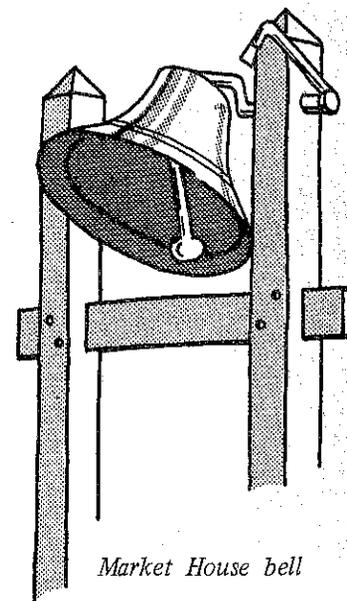
Between 1800 and 1830, the population of Reading grew from 2,386 to 5,856. During this thirty year period, growth occurred within the boundaries of the original Town Plan. The local economy continued to depend on the shipment of agricultural and light industrial products to Philadelphia. In the 1820's, the Union and Schuylkill canals were opened, and Reading became an important transportation link between Philadelphia and the towns of western Pennsylvania.

*Federal Period  
1800 - 1860*

Between 1830 and 1860, the population grew from 5,856 to 23,162. The availability of coal, timber, and iron ore led to the development of iron production and related industries such as stove and hardware manufacturing. This new development was concentrated south of Penn Street, between the Old Town and the River. Brick replaced wood as the primary building material during this period, as local brickmaking grew in importance. Many of the Federal style rowhomes found today on South Fifth Street were built during this expansion. The Liberty Fire Company at 501 South Fifth Street, and the Christ Episcopal Church at 30 North Fifth Street were both built during the early 1800's.

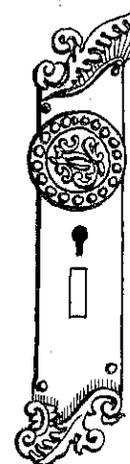
Important people who lived or worked in the Historical District during this time include (Saint) John Neumann, founder of St. Peter's Elementary School at 225 South Fifth Street, and of the American Catholic School System. He resided at 229 South Fifth Street. Henry A. Muhlenberg resided at 400 Penn Street. He served as United States Ambassador to Austria in 1830, and was a member of one of Reading's most prominent families. Margaret Quacco, a Black woman who worked as a cook at the Mansion House, an important tavern which was located at 500 Penn Street, was the last local survivor of the indentured servant system when she died in 1903. She had arrived in Reading from New Orleans in 1818 and was indentured to the family of Frederick Smith. 'Der Readinger Adler', a German language newspaper, was published at 546 Penn Street from 1868 to 1913.

The second half of the nineteenth century was a time of great industrial expansion for Reading as well as for the nation. The railroad industry served as the impetus for much of this growth. Chartered in 1833, the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company quickly developed a dynamic business, transporting coal from Pottsville to the north, south to Philadelphia. Over the following half century, Reading became the hub of the Eastern Pennsylvania rail system, and one of the nations leading producers of rail equipment and suppliers. Because of the easy access to rail transportation that Reading offered, other expanding industries were attracted here. The steel and textile industries were established in Reading during the 1880's.



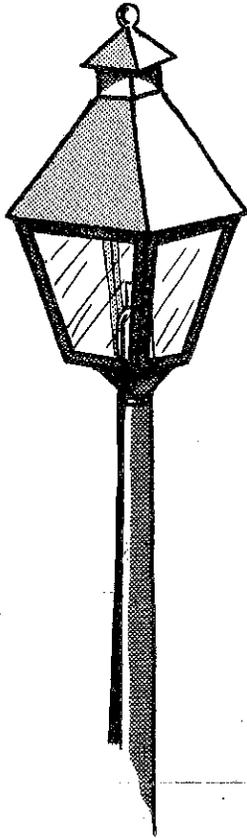
*Market House bell*

*Industrial Growth*



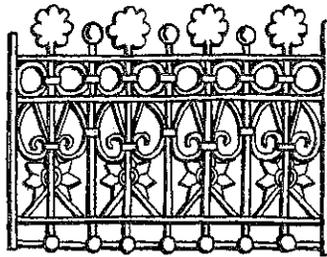
*Door hardware manufactured by  
Reading Hardware Co.*

*Victorian Period  
1860 - 1920*



*Gas street lamp at  
Sixth and Penn Streets*

Most of what is today the City of Reading was constructed between 1860 and 1920. During these sixty years of expansion the population of Reading increased from 23,162 to 107,784. Most of this growth occurred north of the Old Town, in the direction away from the River. Many of the prominent families who led Reading through this great period of growth resided on North and South Fifth Street in the Callowhill Historical District. The fine Victorian homes and churches of the Historical District were built by the leading citizens of Reading in the late 1800's. These imposing Italianate and Empire style homes reflect the opulence of the Victorian era in their fine brick and stone masonry, their richly carved wood trim, and their ornamental detail of stained glass and iron. The great prosperity experienced in Reading at this time is apparent in the quality of design and craftsmanship displayed by these buildings. Also, the development of unique local ornamental design is another indication of a prosperous and self-sufficient community. Traces of German influence are evident in the patterned masonry of many buildings in the Historical District. On many buildings are ornamental molded bricks which were manufactured by local brickmakers, and which display designs unique to Reading. Stained glass windows and wrought iron basement grills, which abound in the Callowhill Historical District, were designed and manufactured by local artists and craftsmen. The Victorian architecture of the Callowhill Historical District is significant because its beauty represents the peak of Reading's prosperity, and because it displays elements of ornamental design that are unique to our City.



*Wrought iron window grill  
manufactured by Harbster Brothers Co.*

Important people who lived or worked in the Historical District during this period include M.E. Lyons, who resided in the vicinity of 35 North Fifth Street. Lyons was the designer for much of the Reading Railroad, including the historic Askew Bridge. Charles Raymond Heizmann was the founder of the Penn Hardware Company. His home at 318 North Fifth Street is today known as the Heizmann Mansion. George F. Baer was one of Reading's most important industrialists. Having established a highly successful law practice as a young man, he was made receiver of the bankrupt Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company in 1884. By 1896, he had successfully re-organized the Railroad Company and had become president of the Reading Iron Company. Baer resided at 232 North Fifth Street.

## CONCLUSION

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADE IN THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF READING IS EVIDENCED BY THE OUTSTANDING COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE OF THE CALLOWHILL DISTRICT. THE FEDERAL ARCHITECTURE FOUND ON SOUTH FIFTH STREET STEMS FROM THE GROWTH OF THE EARLY 1800'S, WHEN READING INCREASED IN IMPORTANCE AS A TRANSPORTATION LINK AND AN INDUSTRIAL CENTER. THE VICTORIAN ARCHITECTURE LOCATED SPORADICALLY ON SOUTH FIFTH STREET, AND CONCENTRATED ON NORTH FIFTH STREET AND PENN SQUARE, EVIDENCES THE CITY'S GREAT EXPANSION DURING THE LATE 1800'S. AT THIS TIME, THE GROWTH OF THE RAILROAD AND RELATED INDUSTRIES SPURRED THE CITY TO TRIPLE IN SIZE OVER A FIFTY YEAR PERIOD. THE QUALITY OF DESIGN AND CRAFTSMANSHIP OF THESE HANDSOME VICTORIAN BUILDINGS, AS WELL AS THEIR ORNAMENTAL DETAIL UNIQUE TO READING, SUGGEST THAT THIS ERA WAS ONE OF GREAT PROSPERITY. IN SUMMARY, THE CALLOWHILL HISTORICAL DISTRICT ENCAPSULATES THE 230 YEAR HISTORY OF THE CITY OF READING, PENNSYLVANIA, AND, AS SUCH IS DESERVING OF THE ATTENTION AND CARE OF ITS CITIZENS NEEDED TO PRESERVE IT.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION GUIDELINES

Historic Preservation and Environmental Protection are two sides of the same coin. The basic goal of each is to save and protect the natural and man-made environment on which we all depend. Historic Preservation is not only a means of insuring that significant historical and architectural structures are saved for future generations, but in addition is one of the most direct methods of protecting our neighborhoods. The spirit and intent of the following goals and guidelines are to be exercised with these concepts in mind.

The Callowhill Historical District was created in 1978 by City Council. The purposes and goals for the District are as follows:

- To protect those areas of the City of Reading which reflect the cultural, economical, social, and architectural history of the City, the State, and the Nation.
- To awaken an interest in our historic past.
- To promote the use and reuse of the areas of the City of Reading for the culture, education, pleasure and the general welfare of the people of the City, the State, and the Nation.
- To strengthen the economy of the City of Reading by stabilizing and improving property values within the historic district.
- To encourage new buildings and developments that will be harmonious with the existing historic and architecturally important buildings.

At the same time the District was created, City Council instituted the Reading Board of Historical Architectural Review. The Board consists of seven citizens appointed by the Mayor and approved by Council. The function of the Board is to advise property owners of how to undertake improvements, when they are ready to make changes to their properties, in an appropriate manner consistent with the goals. The Board is charged with the responsibility of overseeing any improvements or work that would affect the general design, arrangement, texture, material or color of any structure in the Callowhill Historical District when the result of such work can be viewed from a public street or way. This includes, but is not limited to; painting, sandblasting; chemical cleaning; stucco or other applied materials; replacement or major repair of trim, windows, cornices or other non-structural elements; signs; awnings; and other work affecting the visual appearance of a structure. The following general guidelines for preservation have been adopted by the Board:

- (1) Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.
- (2) The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
- (3) All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
- (4) Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
- (5) Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.
- (6) Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, whenever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.
- (7) The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.
- (8) Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by or adjacent to any project.
- (9) Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.
- (10) Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

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