NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE *(must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)*

Street address: 1631, 1633, and 1635 Francis Street

Postal code: 19130

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: 1631, 1633, and 1635 Francis Street

Current/Common Name:

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☑ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Site ☐ Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: ☐ excellent ☑ good ☐ fair ☐ poor ☐ ruins

Occupancy: ☑ occupied ☐ vacant ☐ under construction ☐ unknown

Current use: Multi-family housing

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1886 to 1910

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1886

Architect, engineer, and/or designer:

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: Charles C Haines

Original owner: Charles C Haines

Other significant persons:

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- ☐ (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- ☐ (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☑ (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- ☑ (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- ☐ (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☑ (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- ☐ (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- ☐ (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- ☐ (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- ☐ (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach a bibliography.

9. NOMINATOR

Organization Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia Date 2/27/2025

Name with Title Mark Flood, consultant Email hstark@preservationalliance.com

Street Address 1608 Walnut St, Suite 1702 Telephone 215-546-1146

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19103

Nominator ☐ is ☑ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 28 February 2025

☑ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 12 March 2025

Date of Notice Issuance: 13 March 2025

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Francisville Associates

Address: 1501 Cherry St

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19102

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation:

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission:

Date of Final Action:

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

5. Boundary Description

1631 Francis Street

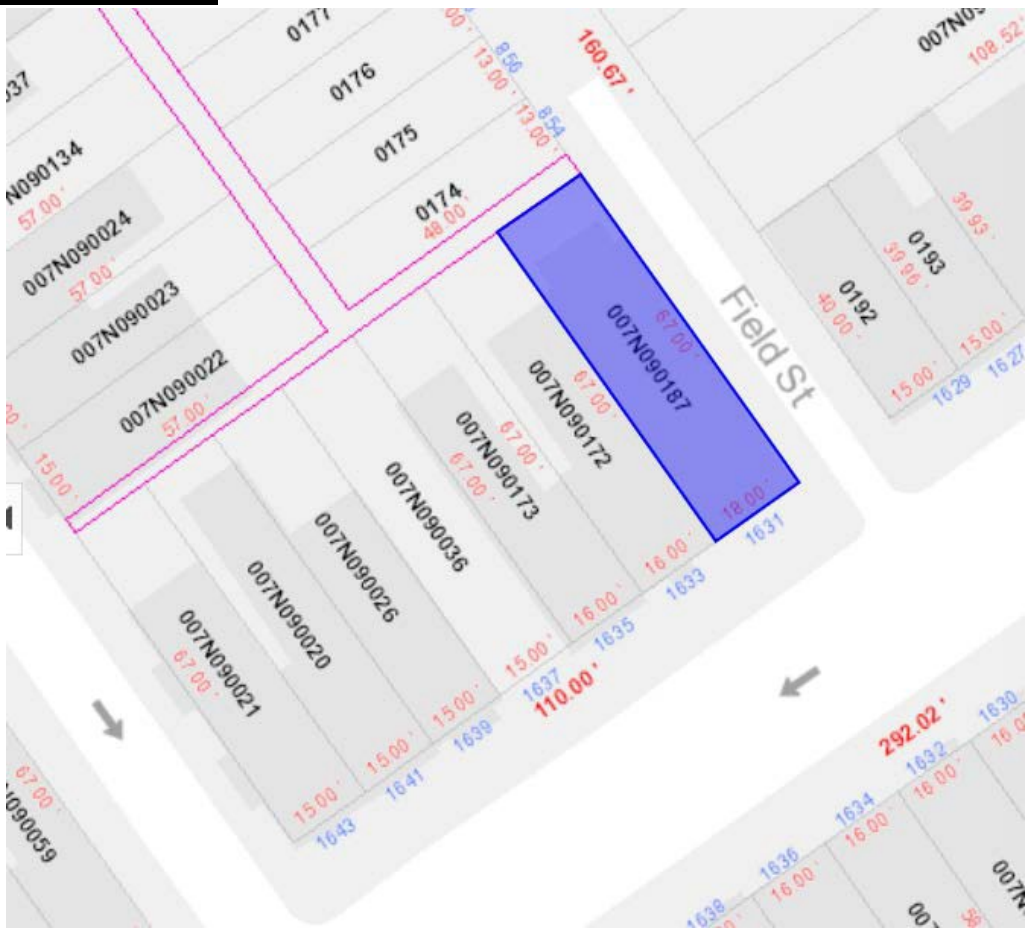


Figure 1: Property Boundary Map

"All that certain lot or piece of ground with the messuage or tenement thereon erected. Situate on the Northerly side of Francis St. and the Westerly side of Field St. Beginning at the distance of 132 feet 7 inches more of less Westwardly from the Westerly side of Ridge Ave. in the 15th Ward of the City of Phila. Containing in front or breadth on said Francis St. 18 feet and extending in length or depth northward of that width between parallel lines at right angles to the said Francis Street 67 feet to a certain 4 feet wide alley. Being No. 1631 Francis St."[1]

The property is known as Parcel No. 007N090187, Office of Property Assessment Account No. 886708800

[1] Deed Book 1532, page 71, dated 01/09/1990,. Grantor Community Ventures Inc, Grantee Francisville Associates.

1633 Francis St

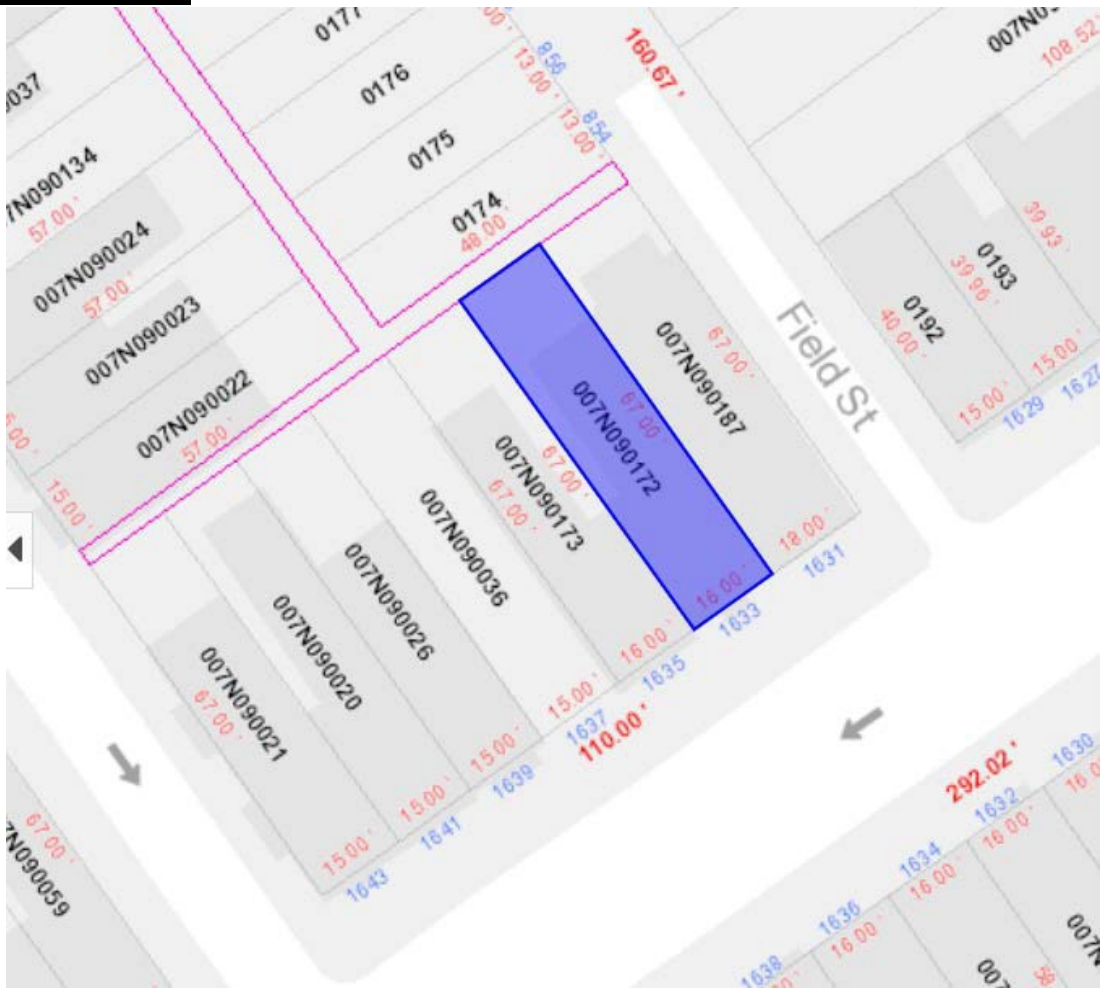


Figure 2: Property Boundary Map

"All that certain lot or piece of ground with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, Situate on the Northerly side of Francis Street at the distance of 18 feet westward from the west side of Field Street in the 15th Ward of the City of Philadelphia. Containing in front or breadth on the said Francis Street 16 feet and extending in length or depth northward of that width between parallel lines at right angles to the said Francis Street 67 feet to a certain 4 feet wide alley. Being No. 1633 Francis Street."[2]

The property is known as Parcel No. 007N090172, Office of Property Assessment Account No. 886708900

[2] Deed Book 1372, Page 556, dated 06/13/1989. Grantor Fambrough, Ester Ruth; Golson, benny; York, Robert, Grantee Francisville Associates.

1635 Francis St

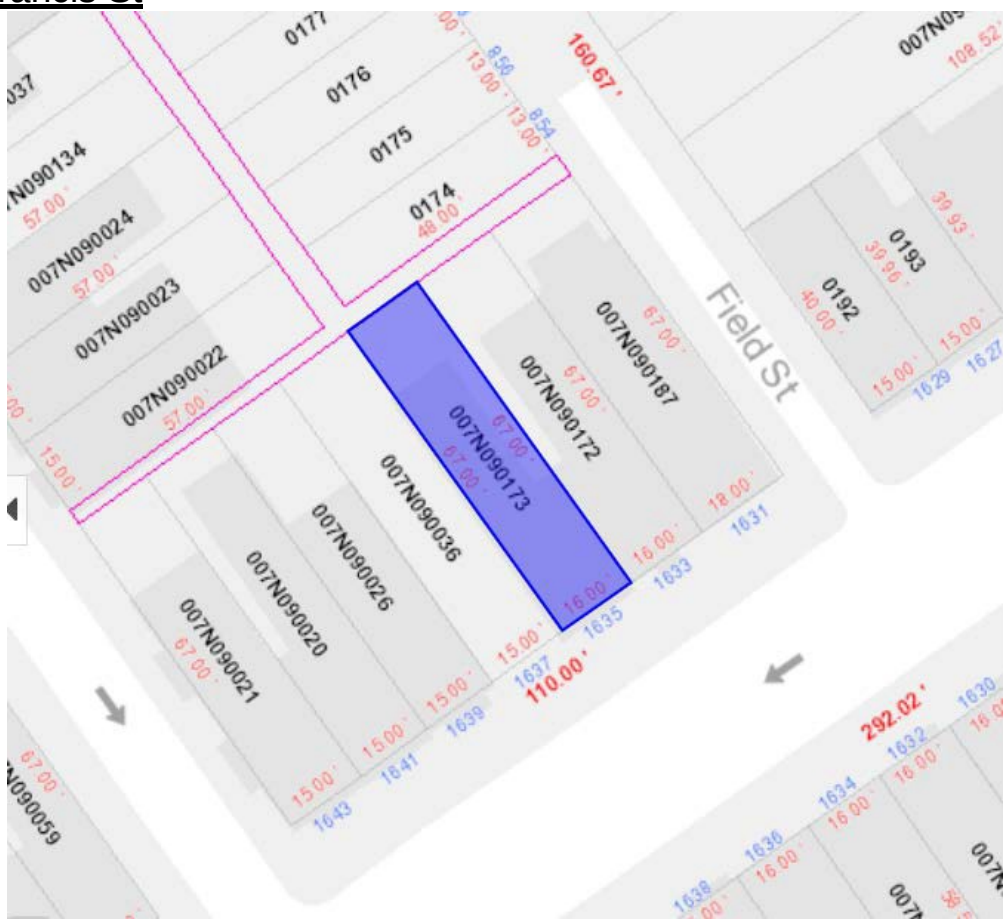


Figure 3: Property Boundary Map

"ALL THAT CERTAIN lot or piece of ground with the three story brick messuage or tenement thereon erected. SITUATE on the Northerly side of Francie Street at the distance of Thirty-four feet Westward from the West side of Field Street and also being at the distance of One Hundred Sixty-six feet Seven and One-half inches Westward from the West side of Ridge Avenue in the Fifteenth Ward of the City of Philadelphia. CONTAINING in front or breadth on the said Francis Street Sixteen feet and extending in length or depth Northward of that width between parallel lines at right angles to said Francis Street Sixty-seven feet to a Four feet wide alley. BEING Known as No. 1635 Francis Street."[3]

The property is known as Parcel No. 007N090173, Office of Property Assessment Account No. 886709000

[3] Deed Book 1510, Page 394, dated 12/08/1989. Grantor Philadelphia Housing Devel. Grantee Francisville Associates.

6. Description

The three Queen Anne Revival rowhouses at 1631-1635 Francis Street are each slightly different, with beautifully ornamented facades that can be easily appreciated individually. Yet the overall composition, including the consistent cladding materials and details, forms a striking and cohesive whole.

Plain and molded red bricks play a key role in the ornamentation. Many of these bricks can be found advertised in *The Peerless Brick Company*'s 1890 catalog, and style numbers from this catalog are included where possible.

Figure 4: Right to left: 1631, 1633, and 1635 Francis Street, looking northwest.

1631 Francis Street

1631 is the largest of the three properties, fronting 18 feet on Francis Street. It is also a corner property, with its northeastern elevation running along Field Street, a small, dead-end access way to the interior of the block.

1631 Francis Street Facade – First Story

The street-level facade of 1631 has a typical rowhouse arrangement. A high water table (now painted a buff color) surrounds two large basement windows behind simple black grills. The smooth flat surface of the water table directly above these basement windows tilts inward slightly as it rises to the bottom of

two tall, thin, one-over-one windows. A six-panel door is reached by five steps painted to match the water table, and sits under a generous, clear-glass transom window.

Figure 5: The first floor of 1631 Francis St.

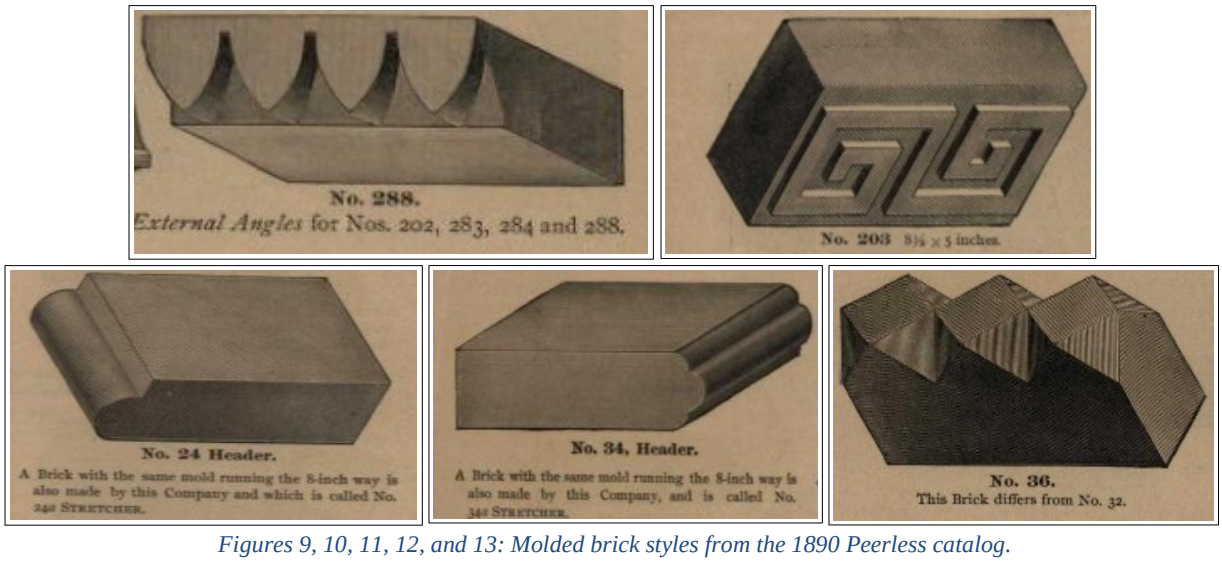
The original woodwork of the door and window frames consists of a tight dentil pattern across the lintel and grooved sides (Figure 6). These, and the door, are painted brick red, matching all other painted elements of the three houses.

Figure 6:Detail showing the decorative trim around the transom.

The portions of the facade between and to either side of the stacked basement and first-story windows read as vertical elements, rather than simply flat wall surfaces. The water table in these sections is decorated with raised panels, one larger and four smaller. The subtle inset of the windows allows for grooves in the surrounding brick edges (except for the one making the turn to Field Street), with the bricks stepping out in two directions to meet each corner (Figures 7 and 8).

The section between the two windows gives the impression of a pilaster, embellished with two bands of molded brick, the first using styles 288, 203, and 24, and the second using styles 34 and 36 (Figures 9-10).

Figures 7 and 8: Detail of brickwork around windows.



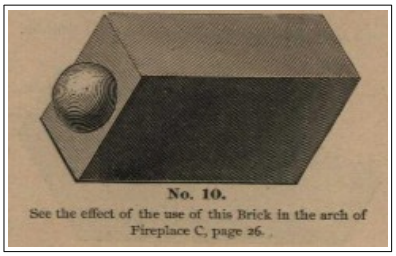
Figures 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13: Molded brick styles from the 1890 Peerless catalog.

A raised band course of light-colored stone and relief carvings makes a strong visual demarcation between the first and second stories. The carvings over each window are swags and scallop shells, while the carving over the door includes the same swags, but has stronger embellishments at the ends that include round flowers. This band course appears to have been painted a pale green at some point.

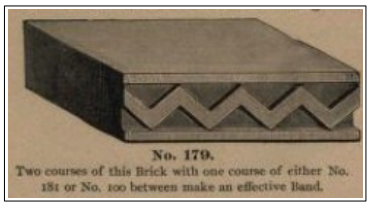
Figure 14: A decorative band of stone runs above the first-floor windows and door.

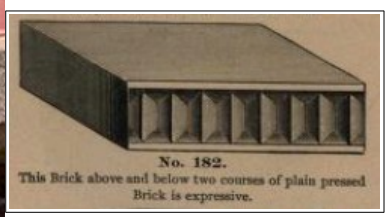
1631 Francis Street Facade – Second Story

The second story of the facade is comprised of two identical segmental arch windows with prominent notched pink stone sills. The brickwork on either side of the windows has the same notched treatment as the first-story windows. At the upper edge of the arches, plain brick alternates with bricks containing small half-spheres of style 10. The keystones are grotesques topped by small capitals. The windows are visual tied together by two belt courses using styles 179 and 182, one running at the level of the arches and the other running at the level of the sills.



Figures 15, 16, and 17: The second-floor windows feature decorative arches using Peerless brick No. 10 and topped with a Green Man keystone.





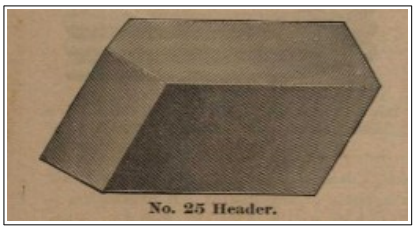
Figures 18, 19, and 20: The lower decorative belt course, which uses No. 179 and No. 182 from the 1890 Peerless catalog.

1631 Francis Street Facade – Third Story

The primary decoration is found on the third story of the facade in the cornice and the embellishment around two closely-spaced windows. The windows, with their pink stone lintels and sills, sit within a composition of three tall pilasters just a single brick wide. The pilasters begin at the second story – the outer two from the top of the second- story keystones and the center from a brick corbel – and break through the roof line to terminate in paneled ornaments crowned by finials.

The center pilaster rises higher than the other two, forming a gable decorated with a broad, paneled trim and a checker-board pattern of flat and beveled (style 25) brick.

Figure 21:The third floor of 1631 Francis St.



Figures 22 and 23: Detail showing the decoration on the gable adorned by a checkerboard pattern using the No. 25 brick.

A pair of raised brick bands runs through each pilaster just above and just below the window-sill level, while another pair of raised brick bands with a center diamond design, style 204, is found around the pilaster center point. These latter bands continue onto the facade, visually forming the bottom edge of a

broad band of corbelled brickwork that extends right up to the bottom of the cornice. A row of the same half-sphere bricks used in the second-floor arches makes an appearance here as well.
The cornice consists of a tight dentil pattern surmounted by horizontal ridges. Its scale, color, and placement interplay with the gable trim to create a pleasing visual rhythm along the roof line. Above the cornice and running behind the gable is a low-pitched parapet wall covered in gray roofing shingles.

Figures 24 and 25: Detail showing ornamental brick bands and cornice.

Field Street Elevation

Continuity with the Francis Street facade is achieved through the use of the same brick cladding and the continuation of the cornice and roof parapet. The elaborate brick band beneath the cornice also continues for a short distance.

The front third of the elevation is dominated by an unusual oriel window at the second story, with just a single window on the third story and a blank wall at ground level.

The oriel has thick wooden mullions with grooved faces similar to the grooved woodwork found on the Francis Street windows. Wood trim suggesting capitals support brackets, which themselves support the lower edge of a pent roof. Above the pent roof is a painted cornice decorated with a pointed arch pattern. The upper half of the cornice appears to have been coated with a layer of stucco or concrete.

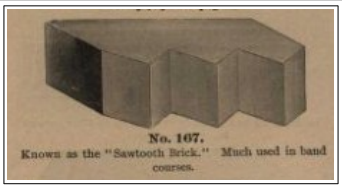
The bottom section of the oriel does not follow the lines of the windows but rather is the rectangular shape of a boxed bay window. Its sides curve gracefully outwards towards its wooden-planked base and prominent curled bracket. Both the pent roof and boxed lower section are faced in the same roofing shingles used in the parapet wall.

Figure 26: The Field St elevation, looking west.

Figures 27 and 28: Details of the oriel window and its supporting bracket.

The back two-thirds of the elevation is an orderly five-bay arrangement of one-over-one sash windows (with matching stone lintels and sills) on each floor, along with grilled basement windows. The only variation is the second bay, where the third-story window sits a bit lower than the rest, the second-story window is quite a bit lower, (with its sill aligning to the lintels of the first-story windows,) and a considerably smaller first-story window.

A final decorative element used in this elevation is one not found on the Francis Street facade: a course of saw-toothed bricks, style 167, between each window at the height of the window lintels.



Figures 29 and 30: Detail showing the course of sawtooth bricks as well as a corresponding product from the 1890 Peerless catalog.

1631 Francis Street – Rear Elevation

The simple rear elevation is faced in a neutral- colored stucco. The first story has a single one- over-one window in a plain wooden frame and a windowless, unadorned door leading to a small backyard.

A large, boxed oriel window with a hip roof covers nearly the entirety of the second story. In addition to side windows, it has three one-over- one windows and is faced with the same roofing tiles used elsewhere on the building. The oriel roof, covered in darker roofing tiles, extends past the plane of the windows and a series of small, painted wooden brackets are found in its eaves. A centrally placed, wood-framed window on the third story completes the fenestration on this elevation.

Figure 31: Rear elevation of 1631 Francis St, looking southwest.

The southwest elevation is entirely a shared wall with 1633 Francis Street.

1633 Francis Street

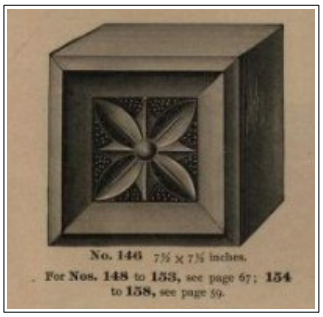
1633 Francis Street is the center of the three properties. At 16 feet wide, it is smaller than 1631, but it is differentiated from its two neighbors by a more elaborate treatment of its third story, which underscores the symmetrical elements in the overall design.

1633 Francis Street Facade – First Story

At street level, each of the three buildings has its own individual character, owing to a slightly different design and reuse of decorative elements. At 1633, the water table from 1631 continues and the two front doors are perfect mirror images. However, with the smaller frontage, the two windows found in 1631 are narrower, conjoined without a center mullion, and placed under a single segmental arch.

The arch is decorated with the same half-sphere bricks used in the arches of the second-story windows in 1631. Notches placed at intervals enliven the bottom edge.

Evenly spaced down either side of the window are large, molded bricks with a four-petal flower design, style 146.



Figures 32 and 33: Detail showing four-petal flower ornaments around the first-floor windows.

Figure 34: Notably, the arch interrupts the stone band course that otherwise runs the entire width of the three properties.

1633 Francis Street Facade – Second Story

The placement and size of the two windows on the second story exactly follow the pattern set with 1631.

However, the decorative treatment is different from 1631. The segmental arches here are plain brick, with notches similar to those used on the first-story arch. Also reused from the first story are the molded brick flowers, this time with five on each side. The pink stone sills are also slightly simpler, without the small vertical returns on each side.

The two belt courses of 1631 continue onto the facade of 1633, becoming more prominent yet further contributing to the overall cohesiveness of the design. The bottom belt course swaps the thin notched bricks used in 1631 for a wide, plain band of stone that matches the sills. The plain bricks of the top belt course are replaced with small, four-petal flowers, style 144.

Figure 35: 1633 on the left, with 1631 on the right, for comparison.

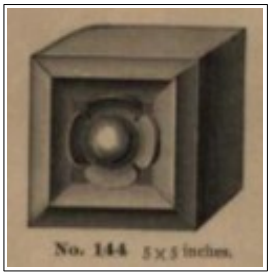


Figure 36: The more rounded four-petal flower ornaments (No. 144) are used in a horizontal band across the second floor of 1633 Francis St.

1633 Francis Street Facade – Third Story

The two third-story windows are positioned directly above the second-story windows and all four have identical sills. Further unifying the facades of the upper two stories are the identical stone belt courses running through the sills. The window lintels on the third story are slightly lower than 1631 and sized more closely to the sill-level belt course.

The parapet wall from 1631 continues, as well as the (slightly scaled down) cornice. Some of the molded brick details used here are found in other places on the facade, such as the sawtooth bricks above the stone lintels (style 288; also used in the first story of 1631), and the small diamond design mid-window in the pilasters (style 204; also used in the third story of 1631).

Figure 37:Extensive ornament at the top of the façade of 1633 Francis St serves as a central element for the three adjoining properties.

Though these details help tie in the design of this section to the whole, much of the other ornamentation is unique to this part of the facade, providing a culminating focal point for the three facades.

In the center of the facade, between the two windows are a pair of pilasters, topped by a classic pediment with prominent dentil molding. Crowning the pediment, at the building's highest point, is a finial of the same design used in 1631, but larger in size. Between the pilasters are several other notable ornaments using Peerless bricks as well as stone plaques bearing the year of construction and a large swag. The color and scale of the carved elements mimic those of the first-story band course and provide textural interest and contrast against the dominance of the red brick.

Figure 38: Under the pediment, below two courses of plain brick, are a pair of ornaments assembled in a novel way from molded bricks (style 10, 144, and 288) used elsewhere on the facade.

Figures 39 and 40: A protruding course of somewhat deteriorated notched brick, style 135, aligns with a notched band that echoes the design of the parapet wall cornice behind it. Two pairs of sloped panels (the larger one incised with a curved decoration) soften the transition between setbacks.

Figures 41, 42, and 43: At about the half-way point of the central pilasters, and bisected by the cornice line, a stone plaque set in raised bricks bears the year of construction – 1886 AD. Below, the central pilasters terminate in a flourish. Bands of raised bricks sandwich two rows of style 19 brick that are not reused outside this band course, above a stone swag relief. Each pilaster rests on a highly carved bracket of flowers and leaves.

Though adapted to its time, the general design of this section of the facade certainly seems inspired by Renaissance and Baroque antecedents, such as the 17th-century Dąbrowska Townhouse in Lviv, Ukraine (Figures 44 and 45).[4]

[4] This example and others of distinctive volutes on gables in Lviv, Ukraine, were collected by Areta Kovalska in a post on her blog, *Forgotten Galicia:* https://web.archive.org/web/20250311155114/https://forgottengalicia.com/volutes-on-the-gables-of-lviv-from-renaissance-to-art-deco/ (archived link)

Figures 44 and 45: The crowning ornaments of 1633 Francis St evoke Baroque and Renaissance styles.

The final ornaments of the third story are two smaller pilasters flanking the outside edges of the windows. Beginning mid-window with the same bracket as the center pilasters, they contain a continuation of the decorative band from the center of the facade and terminate with a painted finial just above the roof line. In one of the few signs of wear on the facade, the right-hand bracket is missing and replaced with plain concrete.

Figures 46 and 47: Two smaller pilasters flank the windows. The left pilaster is relatively intact while the bottom bracket of the one on the right has been replaced by a simpler concrete element.

1633 and 1635 Francis Street – Rear Elevations

The rear elevations of 1633 and 1635 are traditional ells, mirroring each other to create an overall u-shaped plan.

Each building has two one-over-one windows with brick sills on both the second and third stories. On the first story, each has a single window and a door. As with 1631, the entire elevation is faced in stucco.

The roof of each building has a slight height change, with the back half stepping down about a foot from the front half.

Figure 48: Rear elevations of 1633 (left) and 1635 (right) Francis Street, looking southeast.

1635 Francis Street

1635 Francis Street completes the symmetry of the overall design by closely mimicking the ornamentation of 1631, butr the two buildings are not identical. All three properties have a unique first-story design. At 16 feet wide, 1635 is the same size as 1633, and two feet narrower than 1631. Unlike 1631, 1635 is not a corner property.

Finally, as is most evident at the roof line, 1635 sits a few inches higher than the other two buildings, so horizontal elements do not completely align across the facades.

1635 Francis Street Facade – First Story

To accommodate the narrower width of the building, the two windows are adjacent to one another, separated by only a very thin mullion. The overall visual effect is of a large two-over-two window.

Other elements of the facade, including the door, transom window, and water table are replicated from 1631.

Figure 49: The first-floor windows of 1635 Francis St.

1635 Francis Street Facade – Second and Third Stories

The remainder of the Francis Street facade of 1635 is broadly identical to 1631. The difference in width between the two buildings is handled not by moving the windows closer together, but by reducing the width of the wall sections to either side of the windows. The difference is not immediately obvious, but is evidenced by the number of half-sphere bricks below the cornice (seven in 1635 vs. twelve in 1631).

Also, as mentioned, 1635 is located mid-block and so its cornice and parapet wall are squared off rather than continuing around the corner.

1635 Francis Street – Southwestern Elevation

There is currently no building at 1637 Francis Street. The southwestern wall of 1635, previously a party wall, is fully covered in stucco.

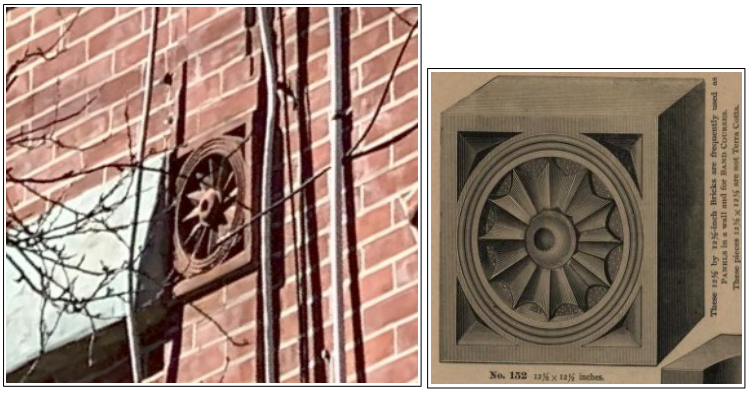
Figure 50: The southwestern wall of 1635 Francis St sits along the property line and was previously a party wall.

Francis Street Facade, Between Buildings

The final decorative elements on the Francis Street facade are the pronounced, vertical ornaments that visually delineate the three buildings, as well as separate 1635 from its now-demolished neighbor. Found three times on the facade, this treatment was omitted from the corner at Field Street, allowing the cornice and parapet to wrap around the building, visually unimpeded.

The ornamentation on the first story is different in all three instances. To the left of 1635, the facade simply continues the brick bands found to the right of the door. Between 1635 and 1633 is a raised panel of plain brick, topped by a molded brick, style 152, at the level of the band course. The section between 1633 and 1631 contains notches that mirror the design on the other side of each door, as well as two peaked notches similar to the one used higher up on the second story.

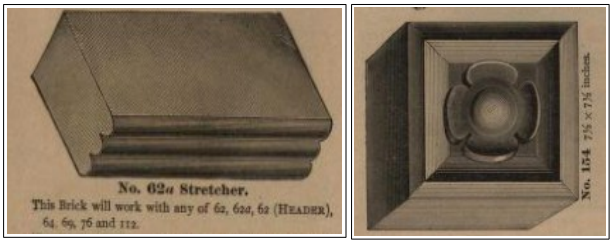
Figures 51, 52, and 53: The boundary ornaments of the three properties are each distinct at the first-floor level.



Figures 54 and 55: The raised brick panel which separates the first floors of 1635 and 1633 Francis St is topped with Peerless brick No. 152.

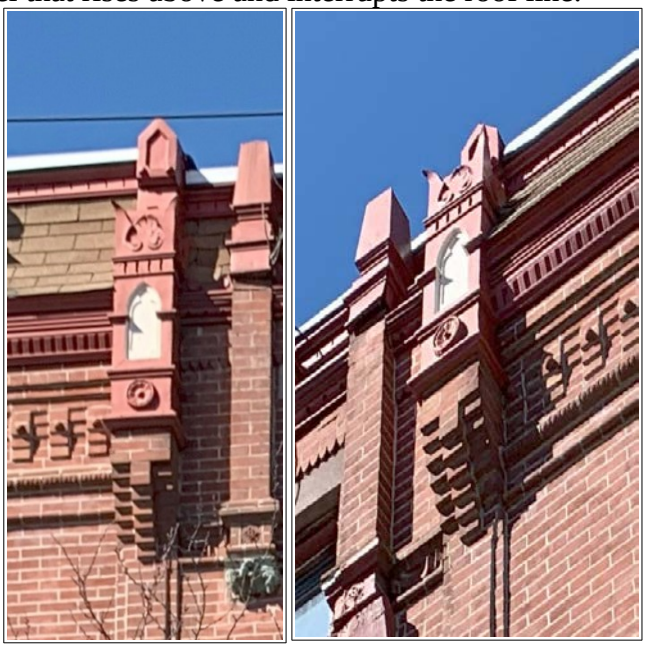
The sections through the second-story are largely identical in all three instances. The notches in the edges of the raised bricks are similar (though less pronounced) to those around the windows. In line with the lower band course is a four-petal flower brick, style 154, similar to one (style 144) used elsewhere on the facade, but larger in size. In line with the upper band course is a peaked notch in the bricks. In the center, between these two flourishes, is a small band of style 62a brick. The only difference at this level is that the bottom of the outer two 'delineators' is a small corbel that terminates just above the stone band course. However, corbelling is not seen in the center instance.

Figure 56: The second-floor "delineator" between 1631 and 1633 Francis St features corbelling at the bottom.



Figures 57 and 58: Peerless bricks No. 62a and No. 154 are used to ornament the "delineators."

The third-story sections are completely identical. The notch-edged, raised bricks continue up to a heavily protruding corbel. On top of this sits a painted, highly-decorated finial with a recessed pointed arch, carved ornaments, and curving pointed edges. This decorative element slopes up the parapet, ending with a pointed panel that rises above and interrupts the roof line.



Figures 59 and 60:The third-story ornamentation between 1635 and 1633 Francis St (left) and 1633 and 1631 Francis St (right). The ornament at the southwestern corner of 1635 Francis St (not shown) is identical.

7. Significance

(c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style.
(d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen.

Visitors to the Centennial Exhibition of 1876 in Philadelphia found architectural inspiration in two model houses constructed for the British fair commissioners. The picturesque, rambling, half-timbered "British Buildings", with their pediments and prominent chimneys, hearkened back to the English Renaissance. Their loose simplicity was a stark change from the Second Empire and High Victorian Gothic buildings of the prior 20 years. Their reflection of the past aligned with the colonial nostalgia generated by America's hundredth birthday.

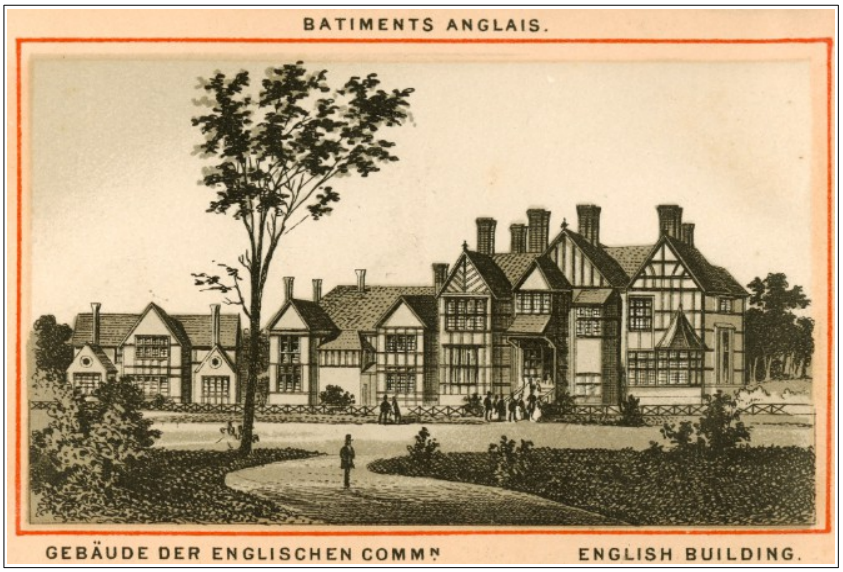


Figure 61: The British Buildings at the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia.

Figure 62: The Savoy Theatre, designed by C. J. Phipps in 1881, is a good example of the Queen Anne Revival style in Britain.

These buildings were America's introduction to the British Queen Anne Revival style, developed by British architect Richard Norman Shaw. Drawing heavily from medieval and Jacobean sources, the eclectic style commonly featured, in the words of architectural historian Mark Girouard, "red brick and white-painted sash windows, with curly pedimented gables and delicate brick panels of sunflowers,

swags, or cherubs, with small window panes, steep roofs, and curving bay windows, with wooden balconies and little fancy oriels jutting out where one would least expect them."

Queen Anne quickly became a preferred style for American houses in the last two decades of the 19th century. Its popularity was buoyed by pattern books and building magazines, as well as easily obtainable premade architectural details. While the style was primarily used for residential architecture, it can also be found on commercial and institutional buildings. Given the wide latitude to incorporate varied historical elements, there is enormous variation in the appearance of Queen Anne-style buildings. "Spindlework" and "Free Classic" sub-type designs show considerable evolution into a distinctly American interpretation. "Half-timbered" and "Patterned Masonry" sub-type designs more closely reflect their British origins.

Patterned masonry buildings represent only about 5% of all Queen Anne houses and were primarily high-style designs built in large cities. Typical features include façades of stonework and patterned, textured, and molded brick, frequently with inset decorative panels. Common are strong, picturesque roof silhouettes composed of gables and dormers, which are sometimes parapeted and shaped.

Figures 63, 64, 65, and 66: Examples of Queen Anne Revival style buildings: Brooklyn, NY; Washington, DC; The Astral Apartments, Brooklyn, NY; The Century Building, New York, NY

The Francis Street buildings are beautiful examples of this sub-type of the Queen Anne style, with hallmarks such as a primarily brick facade with differing textures and materials, molded brick elements, and gables that add complexity to the roofline. And yet, without turrets, bays, or oriels to interrupt the plane of the facade and with abundant symmetry in the top two stories, "decorative excess" was constrained such that they would not have looked out of place among their neighbors. It's also worth noting that while the architect could have easily repeated a single design three times, they

instead developed three distinctive designs that treated each building individually, while also forming a larger composition.

The buildings are also a tangible record of a style that was briefly in favor during a period of quickly evolving tastes. Not even 20 years after the fair in Philadelphia had moved architectural expression away from High Victorian Gothic towards a European-based historicism, the 1893 Columbian Exhibition in Chicago furthered this change of direction, re-introducing the forms and ideas of classical architecture. By the turn of the 20th century, the Queen Anne style was no longer preferred, replaced by Colonial Revival and Neo-classical designs.

(f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation

No record could be located of the brick supplier for 1631-1635 Francis Street. However, nearly all its many ornamental bricks can be found in the *Peerless Brick Company*'s 1890 catalog. Given that Philadelphia-based *Peerless Brick Company* was a key player in a city that dominated the pressed brick market in the second half of the 19th century, this strongly suggests that the buildings represent a remarkable testament to *Peerless*' pressed bricks in residential architecture.

Pressed Brick

Societies as far back as the Babylonians, Egyptians, and Romans constructed buildings from brick, originally sun-baked and later kiln-fired. When the Francis Street buildings were constructed in the late 1800s, bricks had been made in the Philadelphia region for over two centuries.

For uses like side- and rear-facing walls, “common” brick was used. However, for a more pleasing appearance on building facades, higher-quality front or facing brick was desired and “pressed” brick was the material of choice.

Pressed brick was made from fine, dry clay that minimized shrinkage. The clay was filtered or sifted to remove the larger aggregate particles that would be included in common brick. It was pressed into molds under high pressure from hydraulic or screw presses. While common brick was left to air-dry for days before firing, pressed brick was fired almost immediately and at relatively higher temperatures than common brick. The bricks were also fired in smaller batches than common brick, which allowed for more consistent temperatures.

The result of this more expensive process was a denser, harder brick, with a regular, uniform appearance. Pressed bricks were very durable and could be produced in a variety of colors. The molds themselves could range from simple blocks to ornate shapes, giving architects a wide array of choices.

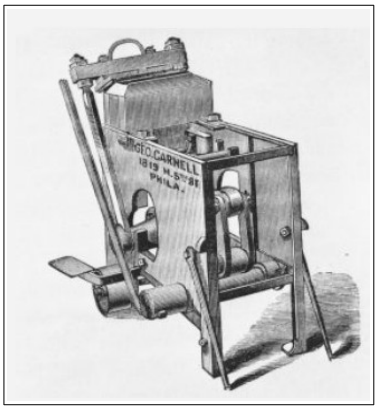


Figure 67: Presses, like this one manufactured by George Carnell on North 5th Street, enabled brick makers to make more uniform bricks.

Figure 68: Both pressed brick and common brick are visible in this photo from a building in Washington, DC. The pressed brick (darker, left) is more uniform, while common brick (lighter, right) has more variation and visible particles of stone.

Philadelphia Brick

The Philadelphia region sits on an enormous wealth of easily extractible clay, the result of the melting of an ancient glacier north of the city. This allowed even this city's earliest buildings to be made of brick rather than wood. In 1683, William Penn described “divers brickerys going on ...and fome Brick Houfes going up.”

By the middle of the 19th century, the city contained at least 50 brickyards, employing nearly 2000 workers and consuming the equivalent of over 1,300 acres of forest per year to keep the kiln fires going. By this time, several local yards reported having brick presses, and Philadelphia became the leading producer of pressed bricks.

At the height of production at the end of the century, Pennsylvania, led by Philadelphia, ranked first in the nation in the manufacture of common and pressed bricks. There were about 78 brickmaking companies in the city, with an output of more than 200 million bricks per year. They supplied enough brick to not only meet the needs of local builders during a period of significant city growth, but also to export throughout the county.

Despite high shipping costs, the superiority of Philadelphia-made bricks was widely recognized. From the New York City *Real Estate Record*, to the *Pensacola News* (FL), to the *LA Times*, glowing accounts of new construction highlight the use of “Philadelphia brick”. One attractive quality of the bricks was the color, which, with higher kiln temperatures, could be made a deep burgundy color. As the *Evening Telegraph* described it, “Philadelphia red brick is as unapproachable in its way as Philadelphia golden butter.” Another highly-regarded aspect was their craftsmanship, as many bricks continued to be hand-

made. One St. Louis brickmaker boasted that “no brick made, except the Philadelphia Pressed Brick, will compare with those made by our machine.”

Brickmaking in the region declined in the 20th century. The Columbian Exhibition of 1893 ushered in a major change of architectural expression. Neo-classical designs with stone cladding would start to replace the ornate brick facades that had been so popular over the preceding decades. In addition, new building materials such as concrete and concrete blocks began to displace bricks in foundation walls and as backup for wall facings. The remaining demand for bricks began to be filled by companies in lower-cost areas of the country, which was in line with a general trend during that time of relocation of manufacturing industries.

The Peerless Brick Company

Company History

Led by retired chemist Thomas F. Adams, the *Peerless Brick Company* was incorporated in February 1876 “for the purpose of making an entirely new kind of molded and ornamental Bricks in red and other colors, in addition to a face press Brick of a quality superior to anything then made.”

In its first year, the company supplied local builders with just under half a million bricks. Within two years, they were producing that many bricks in a matter of weeks. Within four years, they had expanded their geographic reach, as evidenced by a Boston distributor (*Waldo Brothers*), who advertised a stock of between 60 and 100 million of its bricks. By 1892, their production had jumped to 16 million, with customers across North America.

A depiction of their 1888 manufacturing facilities (Figure 69) shows a large operation at what is today Old York Road and W. Lycoming Street. The campus employed 140 men in 1882. A site visit was part of the 1887 curriculum of The University of Pennsylvania's post-graduate Civil Engineering class.

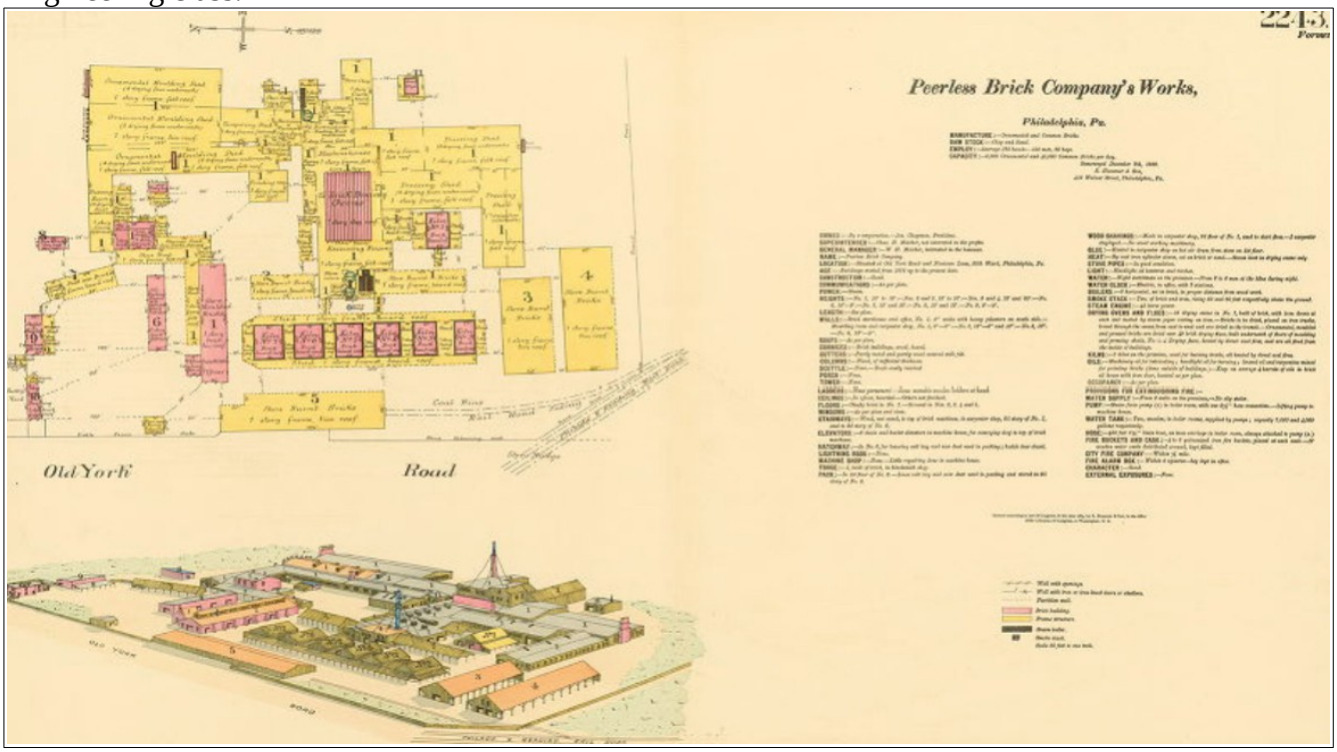


Figure 69: Map and drawing of the Peerless Brick Works along Old York Rd and adjacent to the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad, produced as part of the Hexamer General Surveys, vol 23 (1888), sheets 2243-2244.

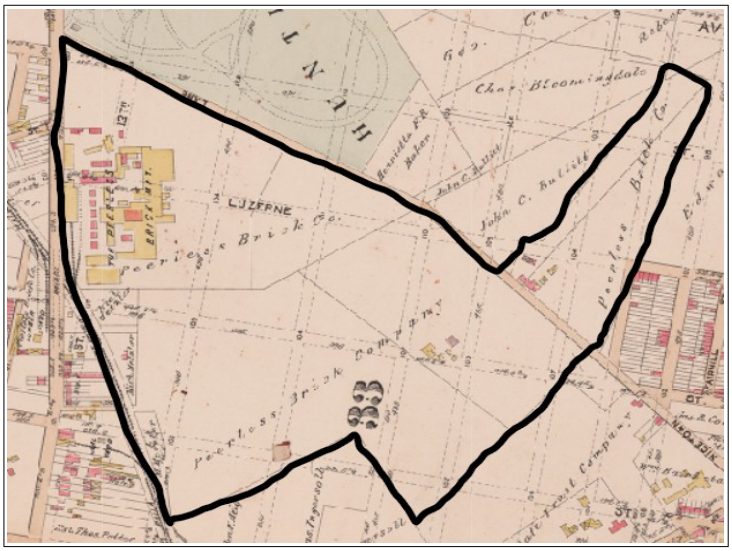


Figure 70: The Peerless Brick Company constructed its Brick Works on a 70 acre parcel of land, as can be seen in this 1895 map. Land owned by Peerless (black outline), brick works in upper left.

The company seems to have been successful from its beginnings. While brick prices dropped by 30% in 1878, *Peerless* was reported as being little impacted due to its extensive business in ornamental brick. In 1880, stockholders voted for an increase of $100,00 to the company, and it was reported that *Peerless* was increasing worker wages. In what seems like a key endorsement, when the city's *Bricklayer's Protective Association* built their new headquarters building on North Broad Street, they chose *Peerless* brick for the facade.

Figure 71: 1899 photograph of the Master Builder's Exchange at 18-24 S 7th St, designed by Wilson Brothers and Co. 1890-91.

In 1889, the company moved their offices to the Master Builder's Exchange at 18-24 South 7th Street. In the permanent exhibit of construction materials on the first floor, they contributed numerous samples of their bricks, as well as fireplaces and mantels comprised of them.

Throughout the mid-1890's, *Peerless* expanded their Brick Works with new buildings and installed major new equipment such as a drier, boilers, and brick represses.

However, around that same time, the company seems to have undergone a massive slow down. It ceased print advertisements and is mentioned in local and industry publications far less often. For example, while the 1884 edition of C.T David's *A Practical Treatise on the Manufacture of Brick* has numerous references to *Peerless*, the 1895 edition mentions the company only once. It was reported in 1894 that the employees returned to work under new management after several months of idleness and with a 15% decrease in wages.

An 1889 PA state report noted that just a small proportion of brick manufactured in the city was ornamental. It continued that *Peerless* appeared to be overstocked and not manufacturing during the current season.

The company had always had competition, not just locally, but from the many brickmakers throughout the country who could supply regional builders without the overhead of shipping bricks from Philadelphia. *Peerless* was renowned for its ornamental bricks, but architects were responding to changing tastes and no longer calling for the company's key product. The company remained in business for several more years, as evidenced by its stock remaining on a 1904 report of the revenue

for Pennsylvania.

But in 1901, it began selling off land around its Brick Works and advertising stables for rent. And then, with no fanfare, a small entry in the April 16th, 1904 *Philadelphia Inquirer* offers equipment for sale from the Brick Works. About a year later, 20 acres of the Works are reported as sold.

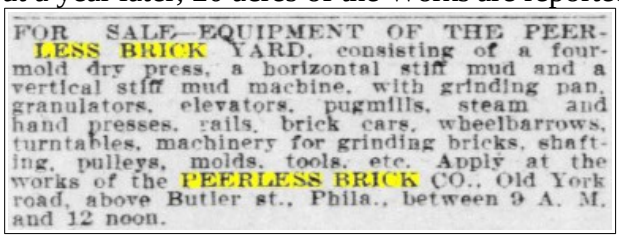

FOR SALE—EQUIPMENT OF THE PEERLESS BRICK YARD, consisting of a four-mold dry press, a horizontal stiff mud and a vertical stiff mud machine, with grinding pan, granulators, elevators, pugmills, steam and hand presses, rails, brick cars, wheelbarrows, turntables, machinery for grinding bricks, shafting, pulleys, molds, tools, etc. Apply at the works of the PEERLESS BRICK CO., Old York road, above Butler st., Phila., between 9 A. M. and 12 noon.

Figure 72: Peerless Brick Works equipment for sale, Philadelphia Inquirer, *Apr 16, 1904, p. 13.*

There seems to be little information about the final years of the company as it quietly dissolved. By 1910, Bromley's *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia* shows the manufacturing buildings of the Peerless Brick Company demolished, but the company still owned most of the land in the pentagon bounded by Hunting Park, Old York Road, the railroad, Erie Avenue, and 9th Street. At that time, one area along Old York Road (house numbers 4001-4051) had been developed with rowhouses. By 1921, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show many more rowhouse developments on the old Peerless parcel, as well as a complex of car barns for the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company.

Interestingly, the company's name lived on as several companies in the industry adopted variations of the *Peerless* name, such as:

- *Peerless Brick Company of Lebanon, Penna* (chartered 1904, though referenced as early as 1897)
- *Peerless Brick Company* of New York City, NY (circa 1904)
- *The Peerless Brick Machine Company* of Minneapolis, MN (founded 1905)
- *Peerless Block & Brick Company* of Saint Albans, WV (founded 1905)


FRONT BRICK

We can give immediate delivery of front brick in light grey, rose, red, pink and buff colors, in either plain or mottled face.

PEERLESS BRICK CO.

541 to 559 East 118th Street, Manhattan

'Phone, 1327 Harlem

Down-town Office:
20 East 20th St.

A. M. ROSE, Selling Agent

Figure 73: 1904 advertisement for the Peerless Brick Company of New York, NY.

Figure 74: 1911 advertisement for the Peerless Brick Machine Company of Minneapolis, MN.

Key Products

Fifteen years after its founding, the company had on offer over 600 different shapes and designs of pressed brick. Bricks were available in many colors, including two shades of red, brown, gray, buff, drab, and an uncommon matte black.

Figure 75: 1878 advertisement listing various colors of Peerless bricks as well as boasting about the 80 architectural shapes in the company's catalog.

Figure 76: An 1892 advertisement shows several of the shapes Peerless offered, and mentions the annual volume of product.

The company marketed its bricks for such uses as columns and piers, base and string courses, capitals, and cornices. Otherwise plain walls could be enlivened by arranging ornamental bricks into panels. *Peerless* also promoted its brick for use in arches, fireplaces and mantels. The 1881 publication of *Builder and Woodworker* mentions a fireplace phototype sent to them of a carved brick design, with a "very happy effect" executed for the library of a Philadelphia lawyer.

Figures 77, 78, 79: Example fireplaces from the 1890 Peerless Catalog, "Isometrical Diagrams of Plain and Ornamental Bricks."

Peerless also specialized in "Carving Bricks". Brick-carving had been used to ornament buildings back to the Renaissance, but the technique had died out during the 19th century. *Peerless* positioned them as a cost-effective (compared to stone) way to introduce unique designs into the building facade. Typically, removing the hard outer facing of a brick is damaging, increasing its deterioration. However, *Peerless* carving bricks were specially designed for this purpose. They were manufactured such that "the substance beneath the face of the Brick is found to be of one color, close in texture, and solid throughout." The bricks could be carved to any design once installed in the wall, or *Peerless* could carve a custom design in its factory (for a fee).

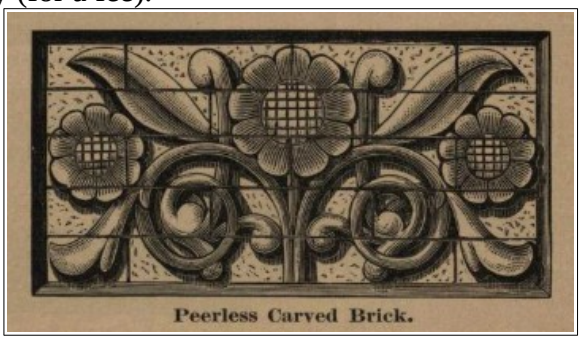


Figure 80: Diagram from Peerless catalog, "Isometrical Diagrams of Plain and Ornamental Bricks", Philadelphia, The Peerless Brick Company Philadelphia, 1890, p. 5

Figure 81: Example of carved brick (possibly Peerless) as it appeared in 2018.

Innovations

Though the patent could not be located, the company advertised having invented and patented the "Peerless Brick Machine" for the manufacture of its bricks. An account in a publication from the 1876 Centennial Exhibition describes the machine in detail and attributes the invention to Crabtree and Melcher, names that will appear on future patents filed in connection with *Peerless*.

Peerless had two of its Brick Machines running continuously, turning out between 20 and 25 thousand common and pressed bricks per day. (Ornamental bricks were molded and finished by hand.) Weighing about 6 tons, the machine thoroughly tempered the clay, allowing the bricks to be more easily handled right out of the machine. It also helped the bricks endure the burning process without cracking or bursting, even during winter.

The machines were for sale, at a price of $2000, plus $1000 for the right to use it. The company offered to create bricks from any clay samples sent to them from prospective customers.


"The Peerless" Brick Machine.

TEMPERS THE CLAY THOROUGHLY.

Capacity----20,000 to 25,000 per day, according to the quality of clay and convenience of handling.

CLAY OF ANY KIND

Of which bricks can be made by hand or machinery can be successfully molded by "THE PEERLESS."

Two machines have been in constant use at ALL SEASONS OF THE YEAR for the past six years at the extensive Brick works of this company.

SEND FOR CIRCULAR.

We are prepared to make into bricks, dry in our ovens and burn in our kilns any SAMPLE OF CLAY that may be sent us from any part of the world, freight post-paid.

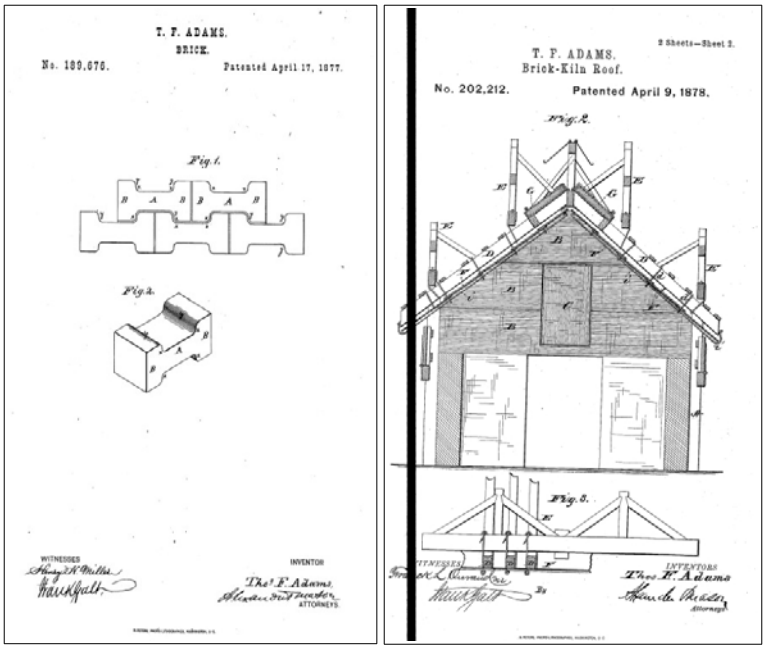
Address

The Peerless Brick Co.,

208 S. Seventh St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Figure 82: An 1881 advertisement for the Peerless Brick Machine.

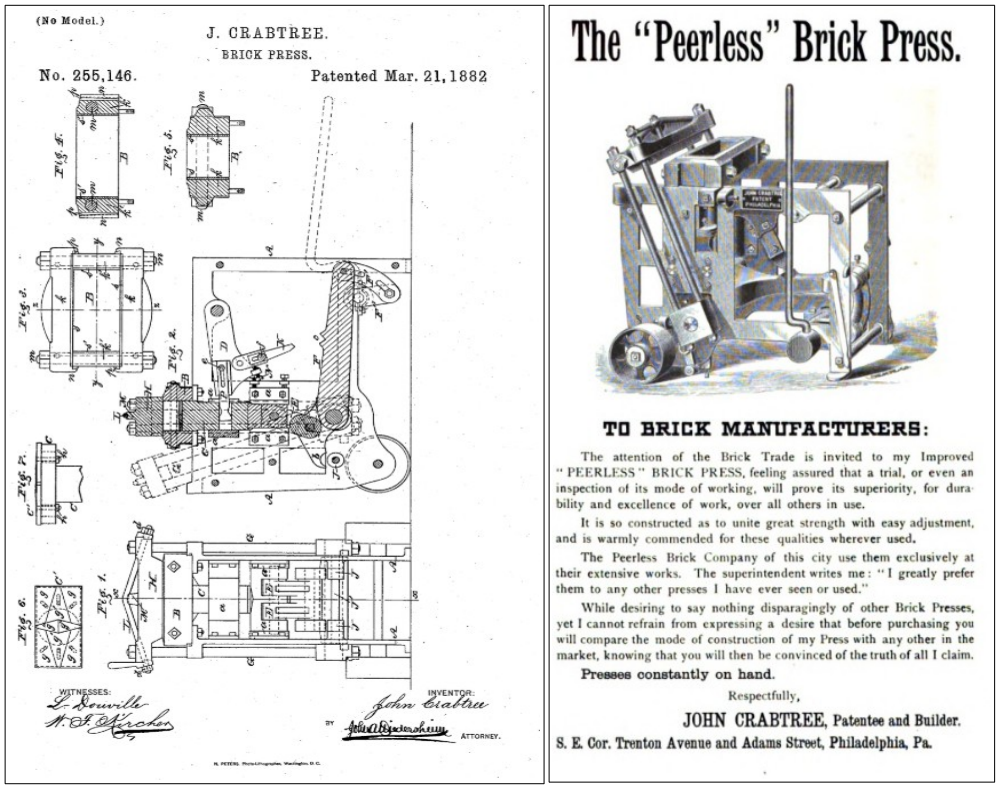
In April of 1877, founder Thomas Adams filed a patent, assigned to *Peerless Brick Company*, to modify the shape of the bricks, so that "they interlock and bind the walls of building firmly together, dispensing with other locking device." (This technique is not readily observed in the diagrams included in their 1890 catalog.)



Figures 83 and 84: Brick Patent 189676 (left) and Brick Kiln Patent 202212.

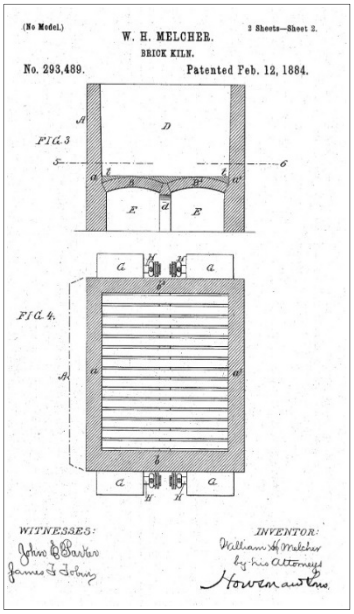
His second patent, filed in 1878, seems to have been much more instrumental in the success of the company. Adams had designed a permanent kiln roof made of iron that made the kiln weather-proof and saved labor and fuel. The operator could manage the direction of the heat, as well as manipulate doors to control drafts, which improved the uniformity of the bricks.

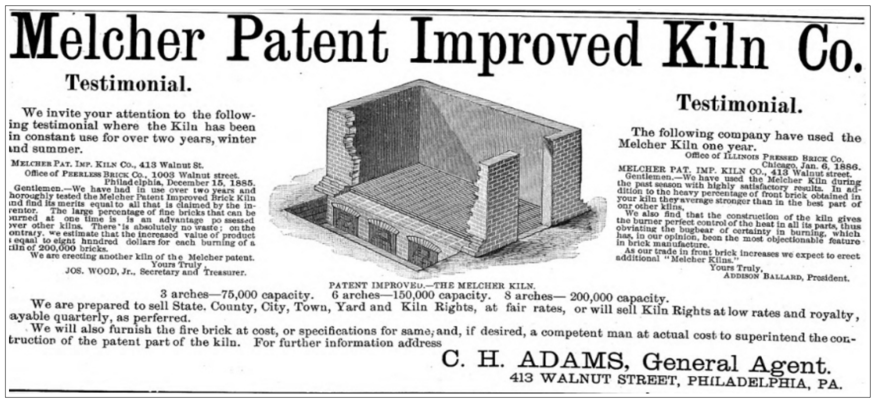
In 1882, John Crabtree patented the “Peerless press”, used exclusively by *Peerless*. The lever mechanism pulled in one direction, pressed the brick, and in the other, ejected it from the mold.



Figures 85 and 86: Brick Press Patent 255146 (left) and an advertisement for same by John Crabtree.

In 1884, William H. Melcher, Director and General Manager of *Peerless Brick*, patented an improved kiln design used by the company which more consistently burned the bricks, reducing waste, and further saved labor and fuel.





Figures 87 and 88: Brick Kiln Patent 293489 (left) and an advertisement for same by William H. Melcher.

Reception and Impact

The *Peerless Brick Company* was earning accolades early in its history. In an 1878 article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* entitled "A Perfect Brick," the author explains that there existed over 1500 patents for brick-making machines, but all failed to match the prized qualities of hand-made bricks. However, the bricks made from the Peerless Brick Machine and fired in the Peerless Brick Kiln elicit "from architects and builders in almost every part of the country voluntary testimony to the effect that its productions are considered superior even to the very best hand-made bricks." It concludes that the company "cannot fail to add to Philadelphia's eminent reputation for super-excellence as a manufacturing city."

In the spring of 1879, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reported on the *Peerless* bricks delivered for the new Bureau of Engraving and Printing (now the Sidney R. Yates Federal Building) in Washington, D.C, which it predicted would be "the finest specimen of brick architecture in the world." The company supplied bricks for many elements of the facade, including window arches, string courses, and spandrels. But most striking would be the arch over the main entrance, described as being "composed of extra fine red brickes, in rich mouldings of beads, coves, fillets, angles and quirks, surmounted by a hood moulding, the voussoirs so nicely fitted together as to make on complete whole." It asserted that *Peerless* had "revolutionized the manufacture of bricks" and particularly praised its ability to create bricks in rich and lasting colors.

Figure 89: Yates Federal Building, designed by James G. Hill, architect of the Treasury, and built 1878-1880.

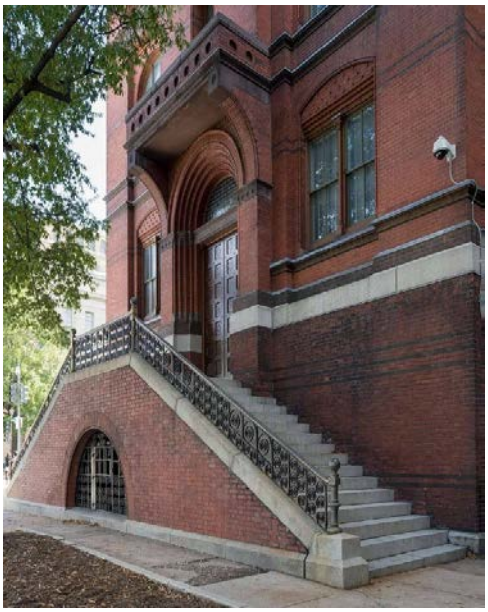


Figure 90: Main entrance, Yates Federal Building.

Figure 91: Entrance Detail showing the "rich mouldings of beads, coves, fillets, angles and quirks" created with Peerless bricks.

In January 1893, the National Brick Manufacturers' Association met in Louisville, KY, for their seventh annual convention. An essay was read that explored the relationship between front brick and architectural expression. Traditionally, front brick, known as the "Philadelphia" front, didn't add to the design per se but merely acted as a decent background for ornamentation in stone or iron. That changed with the *Peerless Brick Company*.

> "[T]hey recognized the absolute necessity of co-operation between architectural design and front brick. It proved to be a wise step, for their products at once leaped into a very prominent position as an architectural material, and were readily adopted by architects everywhere. The architects at once comprehended that now there was a fair prospect of obtaining good material for molded courses and other details of construction. This led them to begin making designs for buildings, with an intention of having them constructed of brick work, and thus they evolved what are known as Queen Anne designs, which are, therefore, distinctively and correctly classed as brick buildings. Thus the Peerless brick became the standard of excellence."

The more wide-spread use of front brick created an increasing demand for variety and allowed architects to apply elaborate designs in buildings like offices, hotels, theaters, and factories that would otherwise have had had plain, simple designs. Thousands of buildings all over the country were designed expressly to use *Peerless* brick. The author credits the company with changing the direction of American architectural design.

In the same essay, the author speaks to the factors that led to the company's decline. In part due to the success of the architectural style it helped to create, *Peerless* had new competition in markets all across the country to meet the demand for front brick. In addition, it noted that the uses for molded brick were not as broad or universal as Peerless had predicted and in fact, the combination of front brick and terra-cotta was proving popular. It concluded that the best and largest works of molded brick were done within two years of its introduction.

Nevertheless, despite its short history, *Peerless* can boast its bricks being employed by the most prominent architects of the day, including:

Edwin Forrest Durang	John McArthur
John Fraser	Charles McKim
Frank Furness	William Mead

Willis G. Hale	Frederick Law Olmsted
George Hewitt	Wilson Brothers
Addison Hutton	James H. Windrim
Napoleon LeBrun	Calvert Vaux

Using *Peerless* products, these architects dreamed up impressive and, in some cases, lasting buildings, a small sample of which follows:

Figure 92: Summer House, Capitol Grounds, Washington, DC, Frederick Law Olmstead, 1881.

Figure 93: Arts & Industries Building, Smithsonian, Washington, DC, Cluss & Schulze, 1881.

Figure 94: Morse Building, New York City, Silliman and Farnsworth, 1880.

Figure 95: Seventh Regiment Armory, New York City, Charles W. Clinton, 1880.

Figure 96: Harry Packer Mansion, Jim Thorpe PA, Addison Hutton, 1874.

Figure 97: William Clark Residence, Newark NJ, Willam Halsey Wood, 1880.

Figure 98: Spring Garden Farmers' Market (now Union Transfer), Philadelphia, Collins & Autenreith, 1889.

Figure 99: Joseph Potts Residence (now offices of University of Pennsylvania Press), Philadelphia, Wilson Brothers & Co., 1876.

Figure 100: Hamilton County Court House, Noblesville, IN, designed by Edwin May ca. 1870s.

In addition to the extant buildings above, *Peerless* contributed to many large and important buildings that have not survived, notably (in Philadelphia alone):

Figure 101: Office of Baldwin Locomotive works, Wilson Brothers & Co, 1900.

Figure 103: Presbyterian Hospital, Wilson Brothers & Co, 1872.

Figure 102: Y.W.C.A., Benjamin Price, 1892: https://hiddencityphila.org/2013/09/a-foster-for-philadelphia/

Figure 104: Broad Street Station, Penna RR, Wilson Brothers & Co, 1885

A final note of the inspiration generated by *The Peerless Brick Company* comes in the form of two interior designs. The first was a prize-winning design for dining room corbeling that included the actual part numbers of the *Peerless* bricks. The second was an 1896 fireplace mantel built by the students at the Williamson Free School in Media, PA, from *Peerless* molded bricks.

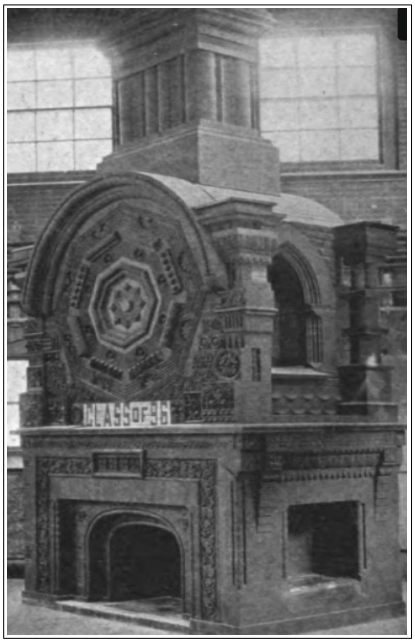
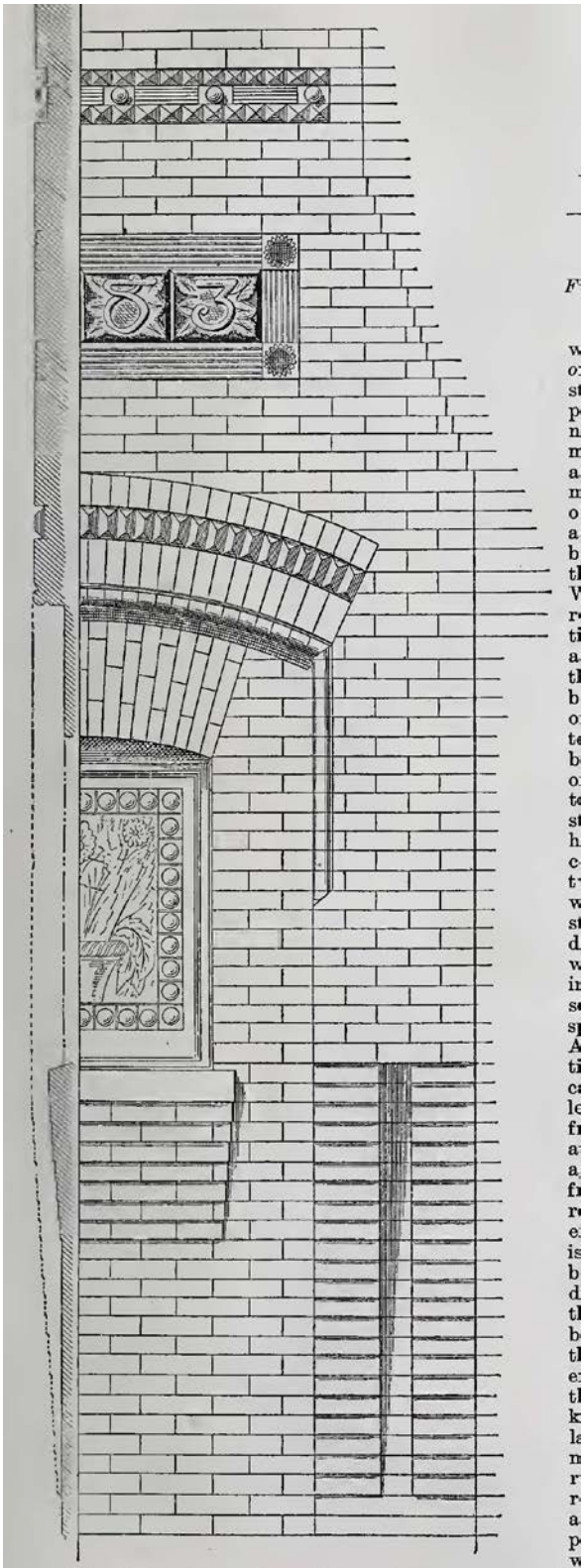


Figure 105: Fireplace mantel built, using Peerless bricks, by the Williamson Free School Class of 1896.



First Prize Design, Ninth Competition.—Fig. 16.—Corbeling for Dining-Room, Nos. 5, 10, 12, 32, 62a and 277a, Peerless Brick Co., Used in Ornamentation.—Scale, ½ Inch to the Foot.

enough to tak
floor where th
thus avoiding
more than one
is the highest
the top of it a
which will cont

Figure 106: Prize winning design from 1883, citing six specific Peerless bricks.

1631-1635 Francis Street contains an enormous diversity of *Peerless* brick throughout its facade. Molded bricks form window arches and belt courses. They embellish windows, decorate gables, and enliven key sections of plain wall. Interesting combinations of multiple brick shapes ornament several sections of the facade, as well as form a striking frieze beneath the cornice. While the company seems to have had great commercial success with its high-quality face brick, these buildings realize the kind of design that was made possible with the molded bricks that were the specialty of the *Peerless Brick Company*.

8. Major Bibliographical References
Sources – Criteria C and D

- Lee, Sidney, *Dictionary of National Biography Supplement*, New York, The MacMillan Company, 1901, vol. III, p. 264
- Banerjee, Jacqueline, *Some Features of the Queen Anne/Domestic Revival Family Home,* May 26, 2017, available at https://victorianweb.org/art/architecture/homes/qar.html
- Girouard, Mark, *Sweetness and Light: The Queen Anne Movement, 1860-1900*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1977.
- Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide*, 2015, available at https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/queen-anne.html
- Lewis, Michael J., *Frank Furness: Architecture and the Violent Mind*, New York & London, W. W. Norton & Co, 2001, p. 137
- McAlester, Virginia & Lee, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2004, pp. 262-286
- Lewis, Michael J. & Thomas, George E., *Frank Furness: The Complete Works*, New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 1996 pp. 37, 121
- Landmarks Preservation Commission, Designation List 227 LP-1632, New York House and School of Industry, Oct 2, 1990, available at https://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/lpc/lp/1632.pdf
- *Architectural Styles of America and Europe*, available at https://architecturestyles.org/queen-anne/
- Antique Homes, *Historical Style Guide*, available at https://www.antiquehomesmagazine.com/historic-style-guide/queen-anne/

Sources – Criterion F

Pressed Brick

- Capen, Judith M., "Guidelines Red Brick, Brown Brick, Pressed Brick and Common: Capitol Hill Brick", Washington D.C., Capitol Hill Restoration Society, Apr 1996, available at https://chrs.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/11_CHRS_Brick.pdf
- Jablonski Building Conservation, Inc, "Pressed Brick", New York City, available at https://www.jbconservation.com/blog/pressed-brick
- Infinity Design Solutions, "Common Brick vs Pressed Brick Side-by-Side", Washington, D.C., available at https://www.ids-dmv.com/masonry/common-brick-vs-pressed-brick-side-by-side/

Philadelphia Brick

- *Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, New York, Real Estate Record Association, June 15, 1878, vol. XXI, no. 535, p. 517
- Kerner, Timothy, "Uncovering the Philadelphia Brick", AIA Philadelphia, Sept 25, 2023, available at https://aiaphiladelphia.org/news/context-fall-2023/900/900-Uncovering-the-Philadelphia-Brick
- "Stupendous, A Colossal and Progressive Clothing Firm" *Los Angeles Times*, Oct 2, 1892, p. 14
- "Public Buildings" *The Pensacola News*, Feb 14, 1890, p. 17
- Kerner, Timothy, "The Rise, Fall, and Rise of Philadelphia Brick", *Hidden City*, Apr 5, 2024 available at https://hiddencityphila.org/2024/04/the-rise-fall-and-rise-of-philadelphia-brick/
- Gaskell, Tamara and Filik, Sarah K., "Brickmaking and Brickmakers", 2017, Rutgers University, available at https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/essays/brickmaking-and-brickmakers

Company History

- "Isometrical Diagrams of Plain and Ornamental Bricks Manufactured by the Peerless Brick Company Philadelphia", Second Edition, Philadelphia, The Peerless Brick Company, 1890, p. 3 available at https://archive.org/details/peerless-brick-1890s-a/page/n1/mode/2up
- Waldo Brothers Distributor's Catalog, Boston, 1880, available at https://archive.org/details/distributorscata00wald
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 19, 1878, p. 2
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Mar 10, 1879, p. 2
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Jan 23, 1880, p. 2
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Mar 10, 1880, p. 3
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 10, 1885, p. 2
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Mar 8, 1894, p. 1
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 5, 1894, p. 5
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Nov 28, 1894, p.10
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 30, 1895, p. 7
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 6, 1901, p. 16
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Aug 17, 1901, p. 11
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 6, 1903, p. 6
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Apr 16, 1904, p. 13
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 20, 1904, p. 3
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 30, 1905, p. 12
- Bromley, G. W. and Co., *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia*, 1910, plate 41, accessed via Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network: https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/BRM1910.Phila.043.Plate41
- Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania*, Vol. 12, Plates 1162, 1170, 1171, 1183, 1184, accessed via Library of Congress: https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3824pm.g3824pm_g07905192112/?c=80&sp=2&st=gallery
- *The Builder and Wood-worker*, New York, Hodgson & Barwood, Dec. 1889, vol. XXV, p. 192
- *Annual Report of the Provost of the University of Pennsylvania*, 1888, p. 63
- "Census of Manufacturers in Philadelphia", Philadelphia, Dickson and Gilling, 1883, p. 91
- *Brick and Clay Record*, Chicago, Windsor & Kenfield Publishing Company, Aug 1895, vol. III, no.2, p. 101
- *Brick and Clay Record*, Chicago, Windsor & Kenfield Publishing Company, July 1897, vol. VII, no. 7, p. 20
- *Brick and Clay Record*, Chicago, Windsor & Kenfield Publishing Company, Nov 1897, vol. VII, no 5, p. 167
- *The Clay-Worker*, vol. XXIII-XXIV, Indianapolis, Randall & Co., 1895, p. 539.
- "Official documents, comprising the department and other reports made to the Governor, Senate and House of Representatives of Pennsylvania", vol. 9, no. 22, 1900, p. 63.
- "Official documents, comprising the department and other reports made to the Governor, Senate and House of Representatives of Pennsylvania", vol. 4, no. 2, 1906, p. 40.
- "About Peerless Block & Brick Co.," https://peerlessblock.com/about/
- *The Minneapolis Journal*, Dec 15, 1905, p. 6, available at https://newspapers.mnhs.org/jsp/PsImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=4b0d4236-188b-40ad-be89- 7fd727b9dc91%2Fmnhi0031%2F1DFY7Q5A%2F05121501
- *Index to the New York City Record and Guide*, v.73, June 18, 1904, p. 1561

Key Products

- "Isometrical Diagrams of Plain and Ornamental Bricks Manufactured by the Peerless

Brick Company Philadelphia", Second Edition, Philadelphia, The Peerless Brick Company, 1890
- *The Builder and Wood-worker*, New York, Fred T. Hodgson, May 1881, vol. XVII, p. 97
- Wermiel, Sara E. "Can Bricks be Carved? Hagley's Peerless Brick Co. of Philadelphia Trade Catalog Says 'Yes!'," Hagley Museum and Library, May 1, 2014 available at https://www.hagley.org/librarynews/can-bricks-be-carved-hagley%E2%80%99s-peerless-brick- co-philadelphia-trade-catalog-says-yes

Innovations
- "United States Centennial Commission, International Exhibition, 1876 Rewards and Awards", Washington, Government Printing Office, 1880, vol .3, groups I and II, p. 206
- David, Charles Thomas, *A Practical Treatise on the Manufacture of Bricks, Tiles, Terra-Cotta, Etc.*, Philadelphia, Henry Carey Baird & Co., 1884 pp. 161, 227, 199
- "Annual Report of the Commissioner of Patents", Washington D.C., Government Printing Office, Years 1877, 1878, 1882, and 1884
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 19, 1878, p. 2
- *Brick, Tile & Metal Review*, Pittsburgh, Feb 1885, vol. 4, no. 12, p. 9
- *Brick, Tile & Metal Review*, Pittsburgh, May 1883, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 3

Reception and Impact
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 19, 1878, p. 2
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Apr 21, 1879, p. 2
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 7, 1881, p. 3
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 17, 1881, p. 3
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Jul 29, 1892, p.8
- Maule, Bradley, "A Foster for Philadelphia," *Hidden City*, Sept 10, 2013: https://hiddencityphila.org/2013/09/a-foster-for-philadelphia/
- Taylor, James, "Front Brick, Their Relation to Architectural Design", *The Clay-Worker*, Indianapolis, T. A. Randall & Co. Jan 1893, vol. XIX, no. 1, pp. 171-173
- *The Brickbuilder*, Boston, Rogers and Manson Co, Jan 1896, vol. 5, no. 1, p. 240

Image Credits

- Figures 1-3: Property boundaries accessed via Atlas.phila.gov
- Figures 4-60: Photos of subject properties by nomination author. Illustrations of Peerless Brick Company products drawn from Peerless Brick Company, Philadelphia, "Isometrical Diagrams of Plain and Ornamental Bricks," 1890, accessed via Archive.org: https://archive.org/details/peerless-brick-1890s-a
- Figure 61: Image from a tiny souvenir book from the Centennial Exposition in the collections of the National Gallery of Art. *Centennial Souvenir, Philadelphia 1876*, published by Ostheimer Bros., Philadelphia, 1876. The book is digitized and available at https://www.nga.gov/features/slideshows/Philadelphia-Expo-1876.html#slide_10
- Figure 62: The Savoy Theatre as it appeared in 1881. Image from the collection of the London Theatre Museum, housed within the Victoria and Albert Museum, and is in the public domain. Accessed via WikiMedia Commons: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:1881_Savoy_Theatre.jpg
- Figures 63-66: Queen Anne building in Brooklyn, NY from Suzanne Spellen, "Queen Anne Style: America's Flamboyant and Fantastic Architectural Melting Pot," *Brownstoner*, March 18, 2026:, https://www.brownstoner.com/architecture/queen-anne-architecture-brooklyn-heights-ditmas-park/ ; Queen Anne buildings in Washington, DC, from Jackie Craven, "Queen Anne Architecture in the USA," *ThoughtCo.*, July 3, 2019: https://www.thoughtco.com/queen-anne-architecture-in-the-usa-176003 ; The Astral Apartments in Brooklyn, NY, built 1885-1886.

Photo by Jim Henderson, Wikimedia contributor: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astral_Apartments ; The Century Building, New York, designed by William Schickel and built in 1880-81. Photograph by Flickr user Emilio Guerra: https://www.flickr.com/photos/emilio_guerra/5765087340/

- Figure 67: Image of George Carnell Brick Press from C.T. Davis, "A Practical Treatise on the Manufacture of Bricks, Tiles, Terra Cotta..," 1884, p. 276, digitized by the Library of Congress: https://www.loc.gov/resource/hhh.de0032.photos/?sp=35
- Figure 68: Photo of pressed and common brick in one wall from "Common Brick vs Pressed Brick Side-by-Side," a blog post on the website of Infinity Design Solutions: https://www.ids-dmv.com/masonry/common-brick-vs-pressed-brick-side-by-side/
- Figure 69: Hexamer, Ernest, "Peerless Brick Works," *Hexamer General Surveys*, Vol 23, plates 2243-2244**,** accessed via Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network: https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv23.2243-2244
- Figure 70: Bromley, G. W. & Company, *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia* (1895), plate 12, accessed via Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network: https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/bromley1895-plate12
- Figure 71: 1899 photo of the Master Builder's Exchange published in *The Official Office Building Directory and Architectural Handbook of Philadelphia*, The Commercial Publishing and Directory Co., Philadelphia, 1899, p. 132, digitized in *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings*: https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/im_display.cfm/856466?ProjectId=D2590F39-89FD-4946-8ABCBDA796EE10B8
- Figure 72: *Philadelphia Inquirer,* Apr 16, 1904, p. 13.
- Figure 73: Advertisement for the Peerless Brick Company, New York, NY, *Index to the New York City Record and Guide* v.73, June 18, 1904, p. 1561.
- Figure 74: Advertisement for Peerless Brick Machine Company, Minneapolis, MN, in *American Carpentry and Builder*, Chicago, July 1911, p. 157.
- Figure 75: Advertisement, *The American Architect and Building News*, Boston, Ticknor & Co., June 22, 1878, vol. III, no. 30, p. 11.
- Figure 76: Advertisement, *The American Architect and Building News*, Boston, Ticknor & Co., Dec 31, 1892, vol XXXVIII, no. 888, p. 28.
- Figures 77-79: Peerless Brick Company, Philadelphia, "Isometrical Diagrams of Plain and Ornamental Bricks," 1890, pp. 10, 25, 26.
- Figure 80: Peerless Brick Company, Philadelphia, "Isometrical Diagrams of Plain and Ornamental Bricks", 1890, p. 5.
- Figure 81: Photo by Eric J. Nordstrom, published in the post "photographic survey of architectural ornament taken during weekend trip to boston" on urbanremainschicago.com: https://web.archive.org/web/20250312145328/https://www.urbanremainschicago.com/news-and-events/2018/12/16/photographic-survey-of-architectural-ornament-taken-during-weekend-trip-to-boston/ (archived)
- Figure 82: Advertisement, *Brick, Tile & Metal Review*, Pittsburgh, Mar 1881, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 14.
- Figures 83 and 84: Brick patent 189676, https://patents.google.com/patent/US189676A ; Brick kiln patent 202212, https://patents.google.com/patent/US202212
- Figures 85 and 86: Brick press patent 255146, https://patents.google.com/patent/US255146 ; Advertisement for brick press, David, Charles Thomas, *A Practical Treatise on the Manufacture of Bricks, Tiles, Terra-Cotta, Etc.*, p. 474.
- Figures 87 and 88: Brick kiln patent 293489, https://patents.google.com/patent/US293489 ; Advertisement for brick kiln, *Brick, Tile & Metal Review*, Pittsburgh, Feb 1886, vol. 5, no. 12, p. 9.

- Figure 89: The Bureau of Engraving and Printing (later known as the Auditors Building and now known as the Sidney R. Yates Federal Building), completed in 1880 for a division of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Washington, D.C., photographed by Carol M. Highsmith, 2011, part of the Carol M. Highsmith Archive, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division: https://loc.gov/pictures/resource/highsm.16463/
- Figure 90: Photo of the main entrance of the Yates Federal Building by Carol M. Highsmith, 2014, part of the Carol M. Highsmith Archive, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division: https://loc.getarchive.net/media/stairs-sidney-yates-federal-building-washington-dc
- Figure 91: Detail of an image published on the blog of McKay Lodge Laboratory Fine Art Conservation discussing conservation work the firm had done on the Yates Federal Building. No date of publication, but work described took place in 2017: https://mckaylodge.com/architectural-conservation-sidney-yates-federal-building
- Figure 92: Photo by Liz Guthrie, part of Guthrie's tour "Summer House / West Grounds of the U.S. Capitol" in the "Capitol Hill" section of the website "Landscape Architects Guide to Washington D.C." Available at https://www.asla.org/guide/site.aspx?id=35740
- Figure 93: Photo of Arts & Industries Building from the Smithsonian website: https://www.si.edu/Museums/arts-and-industries-building
- Figure 94: Photo of Morse Building, New York, NY, by Wikimedia user Beyond My Ken: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morse_Building#/media/File:Morse_Building_138-42_Nassau_Street.jpg
- Figure 95: Photo of Seventh Regiment Armory, New York, NY, by Wikimedia user Ajay Suresh: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Park_Avenue_Armory#/media/File:Seventh_Regiment_Armory_-_Park_Avenue_Armory_-_Front_(48377217362).jpg
- Figure 96: Photo of the Harry Packer Mansion drawn from DiscoverNEPA, a free marketing initiative of Mericle Commercial Real Estate Services: https://discovernepa.com/listing/harry-packer-mansion/
- Figure 97: Photo is part of the Digital Archive of Newark Architecture, New Jersey Institute of Technology, available at https://web.archive.org/web/20250312175243/https://dana-legacy.njit.edu/items/show/470 (archived)
- Figure 98: Image of Spring Garden Farmers' Market (now Union Transfer) captured from Cyclomedia.phila.gov, image dated Aug 2, 2024.
- Figure 99: Image of Joseph Potts Residence captured from Cyclomedia.phila.gov, image dated Dec 21, 2022.
- Figure 100: Photo of Hamilton County Court House by Wikimedia user Derek Jensen : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamilton_County_Courthouse_Square
- Figure 101: Postcard of the office of Baldwin Locomotive works, ca. 1900-06, accessed via https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baldwin_Locomotive_Works#/media/File:Baldwin_Locomotive_Works_Philadelphia.JPG
- Figure 103: Maule, Bradley, "A Foster for Philadelphia," Hidden City, Sept 10, 2013: https://hiddencityphila.org/2013/09/a-foster-for-philadelphia/
- Figure 105: Photo of Presbyterian Hospital from the University of Pennsylvania Archives Digital Image Collection, accessed via the West Philadelphia Collaborative History: https://collaborativehistory.gse.upenn.edu/stories/institution-building-19th-century
- Figure 106: Photo published in *The American Architect and Building News*, volume 18, number 509 (September 26, 1885), p. 157. Accessed at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broad_Street_Station_(Philadelphia)
- Figure 107: Dining room corbeling, *Carpentry and Building* July, 1883, p. 133.
- Figure 108: Fireplace mantel, *The Brickbuilder*, Boston, Rogers and Manson Co, Jan 1896, vol. 5, no. 1, p. 240.