

ADDRESS: 225-31 N 15TH ST

Name of Resource: Klahr Auditorium- Hahnemann Medical College 1938 Building

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: PAHH NEW COLLEGE MOB LLC, Harrison Street Real Estate

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate a portion of the property at 225-31 N. 15th Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination, which is limited to the 1938 Klahr Auditorium building of Hahnemann Medical College designed by Horace Trumbauer and constructed in 1938, contends that the building is significant under Criteria for Designation A and E. Under Criterion A, the nomination asserts that the building exemplifies the growth and development of Philadelphia's medical-educational industry and culture in the first half of the twentieth century. Under Criterion E, the nomination argues that the building is significant as likely the last work of Horace Trumbauer, a prominent Gilded Age architect, whose designs influenced the development of Philadelphia.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the 1938 Hahnemann Medical College building, a portion of the property at 225-31 N. 15th Street, satisfies Criteria for Designation A and E.



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: 225 - 231 North 15th Street

Postal code: 19102

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Klahr Auditorium, Hahnemann Medical College [1938 building]

Current/Common Name: New College Building [part of]

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: Institutional

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 1938 to c. 1970

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1938

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Horace Trumbauer

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: Frank J. Stewart Company

Original owner: Hahnemann Medical College

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 The Keeping Society Date 15 February 2021

Name with Title Oscar Beisert; Steven J. Peitzman Email peitzmansj@gmail.com

Street Address 2911 Wood Pipe Ln Apt D Telephone 215 843 7412

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19129

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 6/14/2021

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 7/29/2021

Date of Notice Issuance: 7/30/2021

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: PAHH NEW COLLEGE MOB LLC

Address: Harrison St Real Estate, Ste 120

444 W. Lake St

City: Chicago State: IL Postal Code: 60606

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

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____

Date of Final Action: _____

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

12/7/18

NOMINATION

FOR THE

PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES



Figure 1 The subject property from 15th Street, looking north and east. Source: Michael Bixler, 2020.

THE HAHNEMANN MEDICAL COLLEGE

—
BUILT 1938-39
—

225-31 N. 15TH STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19102-1101

*Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, 2021, 1
Hahnemann Medical College 1938, 225-31 N. 15th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102-1101*

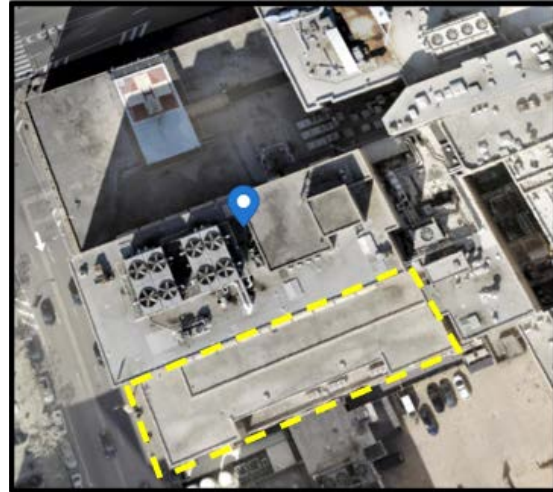
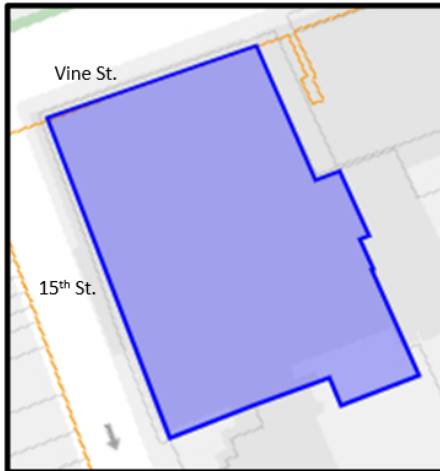


Figure 2. Left: The boundary for the subject property is delineated by the purple line. Source: Atlas, City of Philadelphia, 2020. Figure 3. Right: The specific portion of the property subject to the proposed designation is delineated by the dashed yellow line. Source: Atlas, City of Philadelphia.

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the relevant parcel (002N110386; figure 2), of which the nominated building occupies a part, is as follows:

All that certain lot or parcel of ground together with the buildings and improvements thereon erected. Situate in the 8th ward of the City of Philadelphia, beginning at a point on the Eastwardly side of 15th Street (150 feet wide) at the distance of 65 feet, 6- ½ inches measured southwardly along the same from the southerly side of Vine Street (157 feet wide) thence eastwardly parallel with Vine Street 196 feet to a point on the westerly side of Carlisle Street; thence Southwardly partly along said side of Carlisle Street and parallel with 15th Street, 114 feet, 4 inches to a point; thence westwardly parallel with Vine Street, 1 foot 5 inches to a point; thence southwardly parallel with 15th Street, 57 feet 9 inches to a point; thence westwardly parallel with Vine Street 7 feet 7 inches to a point; thence Southwardly parallel with 15th Street, through a wall 26 feet, 1 ½ inches to a point; thence Westwardly parallel with Vine Street 1 foot 2 inches to a point; thence southwardly parallel with 15th Street, 81 feet, 7 inches to a point; thence westwardly parallel with Vine Street, 62 feet, 3 inches to a point; thence northwardly parallel with 15th Street, 21 feet to a point; thence westwardly parallel with Vine Street partly through 2 certain walls 123 feet, 7 inches to a point on the easterly side of said 15th Street; thence northwardly along said side of 15th Street, 261 feet, 9 – ½ inches to first point at place of beginning.

The subject building's north boundary is approximately 200 feet south from the southern edge of Vine Street. The coordinates of the building are 39.96 lat and -76.16 long. It measures approximately 200 feet in depth and 60 feet in width.



Figure 4. The 1938 proposed design for Hahnemann Medical College by Horace Trumbauer, of which only the wing to the right (south) was built, the subject of this nomination. Source: The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, Hahnemann Collection



Figure 5. The subject building soon after it opened, from an aerial photograph. Looking north.
 Source: Dallin Aerial Survey, Central Philadelphia, 1939, Hagley Digital Collections



Figure 6. The subject building seen from above in 2020, looking north. Source: Pictometry via atlas.Phila.gov.



Figure 7 The subject building looking north and west, 2021. Steven Peitzman photo.



Figure 8. The primary (west) and side (south) elevations of the subject property soon after completion (looking east and north). Source: *The Medic* [Hahnemann Medical College yearbook], 1939. Available at archives.drexelmed.edu. Figure 9. Looking north and east on 15th Street. The larger buildings adjoining the 1938 building to the north were built in the period 1960s – early 1970s. This group came to all be known as the “New College Building.” Source: Michael Bixler, 2020. Note that the current building shows that a story was added sometime after initial completion, distinct from an addition much later added above the central section of the structure, visible in figure 6.

6. Physical Description

The rectilinear building extends 60 feet north-south (facing 15th Street), with a depth of about 200 feet west-east (figs 3, 6). Above the first-floor (auditorium) level, the south aspect shows a central recess of about 15 feet in depth, extending from 40 feet from the 15th Street front of the building (the west elevation), to 40 feet from the rear. Hence, as built, the structure's footprint is rectangular, but from the third story up the shape is something of a "bracket." This configuration was, of course, part of the original overall Trumbauer design for the intended very large building. As built (not precisely matching the rendering for the planned large building), the south exposure contained windows both in the end blocks, the auditorium level, and in the recessed wall; but at some point the recessed area was covered over with a striated surfacing (figures 6,7) for unknown reason. The placement of windows was also altered at the lower levels on this south façade. Also, at an unknown date, a two-story partial addition was added on the original roof, not readily seen when standing in front of the building on 15th street. The east and north aspects of the building adjoin (and on some floors connect with) subsequent Hahnemann buildings.

Executed in limestone and buff brick, the 1938 Hahnemann Medical College as seen looking east at the west facade on North 15th Street (the only easily accessible façade) is a five-bay wide, seven-story building in a subdued Art Deco style (figures 8, 9). What appears to be two stories suggested by the first two levels of fenestration pattern is really one story – that of the auditorium.¹ The building stands on a granite foundation of a medium-gray coloring, which is articulated above-grade in two tiers of substantial blocks. At the first floor is a central entrance frontispiece, composed of a lightly colored limestone surround with Art Deco details, as well as the identification "Klahr Auditorium," over the door (intended to label this one of the originally intended three doors on 15th Street). The doorway occupies two bays at center and is flanked by two bays to the north and one especially wide single bay to the south. The obvious asymmetry is understood by considering the hoped-for original plan – that is, the subject building was intended to be the south-most section or wing of the much larger design, with a mirror-imaged section on the north (figure 4). The two closely spaced piers to the south still serve to "anchor" that edge of the current complex of adjoined buildings. The bays are delineated by piers reaching from the foundation to the roofline, and the windows are recessed within the depressions created by these projecting vertical bands. Between each of the floors are spandrels fashioned out of decorative brick work and stone decals. Replacement windows have been installed on the first, and the second through seventh floors. Argus glass blocks fill each opening of the second tier of fenestrations.

The Entrance or Frontispiece (figures 10, 11).

It comprises a rectilinear stepped or "layered" architrave with a projecting composite rectangular assembly superiorly, the foremost tablet of this assembly containing the words "Klahr Auditorium" flanked by two inset rosettes. Two stepped-back elements complete the central section of the door head, the deepest and highest of these being ornamented at its top with a course of molding comprising small partial cylinders, looking almost like stacks of coins.

¹ There are eight tiers of windows seen from the exterior, suggesting eight floors. However, at least for part of the building, the first two tiers of windows relate to one level, namely that of the auditorium. The only available photograph of the auditorium suggests that the ceiling is about 20 to 25 feet high (figure 12).

Flanking this uppermost section are foliate ornaments, likely of terra cotta. Below the tablet bearing the words “Klahr Auditorium” and set inward is a shallow projecting panel bearing in relief the snake and staff symbol, or “Rod of Asclepius,” an emblem of medicine. Details of the ornament, including one of several plaques which are not part of the entrance unit, are shown in figure 11. The motif is foliate, perhaps stylized acanthus leaves. It is the frontispiece which most suggests the Art Deco flavor, though one might argue for stylized Classical – not incompatible with Art Deco. In addition, the vertical piers and ornamented brickwork in the spandrels also are consistent with the Art Deco look.²



Figure 10. The frontispiece or primary entrance of the (west aspect of the subject building, looking east). Source: Michael Bixler, 2020. Figure 11: Ornament of the frontispiece (Steven Peitzman photos)

² Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide*, section on Art Deco (on-line, <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/art-deco.html>)

7. Statement of Significance

The Hahnemann Medical College 1938 building at 225-31 N. 15th Street in Center City, Philadelphia, is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

- (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.
- (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.

The period of significance dates to the time of construction in 1938 to 1939, though the building, if not the first-floor auditorium, has housed activity in health-care education to the present (2021).

Historic Context and Building History: Hahnemann Medical College 1938 Building

(A note on nomenclature: Student yearbooks and other archival sources suggest that after opening in 1939, the new building for Hahnemann Medical College was simply referred to as “the college” or “the new college,” though “Klahr Auditorium” showed, as it does now, above the entrance. This name was installed to recognize the donor; and with the expectation that the building would soon take its place as one wing of a much larger structure, to include multiple entrances, including a more prominent central access. It does not seem that it was referred to as the “Klahr Building” historically. We refer to the structure of interest here as “Hahnemann Medical College 1938 building.”)

In a city which rightly claims medicine and especially medical education as part of its identity and heritage, Philadelphia counted six medical schools surviving into the 1920s: Penn, Jefferson, Hahnemann, Woman’s Medical College, Osteopathic, and Temple. Several others had gone extinct. Responding to increasing expectations in the post-Flexnerian decades³ for fuller training in the laboratory and hospital – that is, beyond the lecture hall – these schools *built*. They replaced Victorian era buildings with, in some cases, massive blocks by prominent architects.

³ The “Flexner Report” was the work of educator Abraham Flexner working for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; its proper title was *Medical Education in the United States and Canada, Bulletin Number Four* of the Foundation. This document, and the reform of medical education in the United States have been the subject of immense scholarship and various interpretations. One standard source is Kenneth Ludmerer, *Learning to Heal: The Development of American Medical Education* (New York: Basic Books, 1985).

They were competing with each other, and nationally, for the most qualified students, and also for patients in their hospitals and clinics. This history is expanded below, in the essay supporting Criterion A, and in the appendix. In Philadelphia, the 1920s was a time of incessant building, especially of high buildings, many of which survive in the downtown, and this provide much of the visual flavor of the central city.

In 1928-1929, Hahnemann Medical College had completed a tall and advanced new hospital building, on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The next perceived need was new housing for the College and its expanding curricular programs (see below, essay for criterion A). The Hahnemann leaders chose Horace Trumbauer, who produced a rendering for a quite grand building (figure 4). Trumbauer had been considered for the 1928 hospital, but eventually not selected.⁴ Clearly, during the Great Depression Hahnemann was not able to afford such a project in its entirety. But in 1938, Mrs. Emilie Foster Klahr, widow of Philadelphia hardware magnate Lewis W. Klahr, offered Hahnemann \$200,000 to build an auditorium to be named for the couple.⁵ The minutes of the board do not reveal if Hahnemann *wanted* a large and gleaming auditorium, or if Mrs. Klahr had her mind set on one. Of course, educational buildings from grade-school level to colleges usually included an auditorium of some sort, larger than typical classrooms or lecture halls. Given other needs, however, it is difficult to imagine why the school would covet a hall to seat 1000 -- with an organ!⁶ In any case, Hahnemann got the funds and the auditorium, but also six floors above for more pressing needs – lecture rooms sized to hold one class, small “quiz” rooms, teaching labs, a library, etc... Though the new building was meant to become the south wing of the proposed very large edifice, the program provided for essential educational facilities the day it opened.

The Board of Trustees of Hahnemann authorized the hiring of Trumbauer on 5 May 1938, though it is possible this was a *pro forma* endorsement to an earlier agreement.⁷ On May 18, a notice appeared in the *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* (hereafter *Builders' Guide*) indicating that bids were invited for demolition of an existing structure on the site, and that the “first unit” of a new college building would be 60 wide facing 15th Street (east side) by 200 feet, six stories with basement [the board authorized a 7th floor on 7 July 1939], of “brick, steel and concrete” with estimated cost of \$400,000.⁸ At a special meeting of the Hahnemann Board of Trustees on the 20th of May, the members discussed the need for haste in approving the

⁴ See the Nomination to place 222-248 North Broad Street, the Hahnemann Hospital “South Tower,” on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, written by Oscar Beisert and Steven Peitzman, available on the website of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, <https://www.phila.gov/departments/philadelphia-historical-commission/public-meetings/>

⁵ Minutes of Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the HMCH, 22 April 1938, Hahnemann Collections, Archives and Special Collections (Legacy Center), Drexel University College of Medicine,

⁶ During the early and mid- twentieth century, organs could be heard everywhere in America – churches, of course, but also department stores, movie theaters, radio stations, baseball parks, and homes of the middle class. Some city halls included an organ in their municipal auditorium, such as Portland, Maine (Lloyd Klos, “Municipal Organ of Portland, Maine,” *Theater Organ* 30(1988)12-16.

⁷ Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital, 5 May 1938, in Hahnemann Collections, Archives and Special Collections (Legacy Center), Drexel University College of Medicine.

⁸ The *Builders' Guide* was accessed and searched using the online version created by the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, philaathenaeum.org.

architectural plans, since the conditions of the donor, Mrs. Emilie Foster Klahr, required that all contracts be given by July 1. Mrs. Klahr was elderly, and wished to ensure visible progress on the building while she was alive. A notice in the June 8 *Builders' Guide* reported that plans were “nearly completed;” another one week later reported a contract awarded to Frank G. Stewart and Company. Hahnemann leaders hoped for completion by the fall of 1938. It is not clear when the structure was ready for occupancy, but a dedication event was held on 29 February 1939 in the new auditorium. The cover of the program showed the rendering of the envisioned full college building.⁹ The section built was welcomed by students: comments in the 1939 yearbook (*The Medic*) praised the “air-conditioned rooms [and] splendid laboratories.”¹⁰

Horace Trumbauer died on 18 September 1938.¹¹ He does not show up as primary architect for any project other than the Hahnemann College building in the 1938 *Builders' Guide*. Thus this might well have been the last project originated by Trumbauer, or built under his supervision as head of firm.



Figure 12 An interior view of the Klahr Auditorium. Source: This and other interior views are from *The Medic* for 1939, the Hahnemann Medical College yearbook, Drexel University College of Medicine Archives and Special Collections, also available on-line via http://archives.drexelmed.edu/subjectguides_yearbooks.php.

⁹ Program for dedication ceremonies, 29 February 1938, in Hahnemann Collections, Archives and Special Collections (Legacy Center), Drexel University College of Medicine.

¹⁰ *The Medic*, 1939 (n.p.), Hahnemann Collections, Archives and Special Collections (Legacy Center), Drexel University College of Medicine

¹¹ “Horace Trumbauer Dies; Noted Phila. Architect,,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 19 September 1938. That this was Trumbauer’s last project is also suggested by Frederick Platt in “Horace Trumbauer: A life in architecture”; *Penna. Mag. Hist. Biog.* 125(2001):315-349.



Figure 13. A lecture hall in the 1938 Hahnemann College building. Source: *The Medic* [Hahnemann Medical College yearbook], 1939.



Figure 14. Bottom: A teaching laboratory. From, *The Medic* [Hahnemann Medical College yearbook], 1939.

Criterion A

Philadelphia as a Medical City

We argue here that medicine and medical education have long been part of the “development, heritage [and] cultural characteristics of the City;” and one could add part of its economic foundation, particularly in the post-industrial period. Philadelphia gained its early reputation as a city of medicine through the building of hospitals and medical schools. Founded in 1751 by physician Thomas Bond (1712-84) and Benjamin Franklin (1706-90), Pennsylvania Hospital became the nation’s first general hospital. By the nineteenth century it contributed to the city’s early reputation for medical education: its Wednesday and Saturday morning demonstration “clinics” drew crowds of medical students, of which Philadelphia came to have an abundance. Later, MD graduates from around the country and world sought Pennsylvania Hospital internships and residencies.

Numerous hospitals subsequently arose within neighborhoods and nearby townships, supported by religious denominations or particular segments of the citizenry, such as African Americans or women. Pioneer female doctor Ann Preston (1813-72) with other Quaker women founded Woman's Hospital of Philadelphia in 1862, to provide clinical training for women medical students and nurses, and care for women by women. Subsequently, all of the city's major medical schools built teaching hospitals. The city opened Blockley Almshouse in 1732, which later became Philadelphia General Hospital. Through affiliations, this huge museum of sickness aided the education of countless medical students; and its internship became a prized objective for ambitious graduates.

Philadelphia's place as a center of formal medical schooling can be traced to 1762, when William Shippen, Jr. (1736-1808) initiated some lectures on anatomy and midwifery on Walnut Street near Third. Like Shippen a product of European training, the energetic John Morgan (1735-89) in 1765 proposed an enlightened plan for medical education, and with Shippen inaugurated lectures at the College of Philadelphia intended as part of a course of study leading to a degree in medicine. From 1789 through 1791, both the revived College of Philadelphia and the newly chartered "University of the State of Pennsylvania" offered medical lectures, by feuding faculties. The factions united as the forerunner of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, America's first. It won standing during the nineteenth century as one of the strongest in the nation.

Perceiving room for another medical school in Philadelphia, if not an actual need, surgeon George McClellan (1796-1847) and some collaborators opened Jefferson Medical College in 1824. Both Penn and Jefferson welcomed huge classes, and so produced a high proportion of early American doctors. Until the Civil War, they both attracted many students from the Southern states.

Beginning in the 1840s and 1850s, the making of new medical colleges in Philadelphia swelled into a kind of mania. Those after Penn and Jefferson that endured into the twentieth century included, with founding dates: Hahnemann Medical College (1848); the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania (1850, the first of its kind in the world); the Medico-Chirurgical College (1881, welcoming students with ethnic backgrounds)¹²; the Philadelphia Polyclinic and College for Graduates in Medicine (1883, offering supplementary clinical courses to those holding MD's);¹³ and the Philadelphia College and Infirmary of Osteopathy (1899, teaching the last major sectarian practice, osteopathy). Other schools, ranging from fully creditable to entirely fraudulent, came and went in the nineteenth century.¹⁴ Lastly, the Medical Department of Temple College, later Temple University School of Medicine, opened in 1901 initially as a night school for the working woman or man seeking a medical career.¹⁵ The availability of strong

¹² The Medico-Chirurgical College merged with the University of Pennsylvania in 1916. It's leaders knew that its buildings were to be demolished in 1918 for the new Parkway, and lacked the resources to rebuild.

¹³ The Polyclinic also merged into the University of Pennsylvania, in 1917, contributing to the formation of its Graduate School of Medicine and the Graduate Hospital.

¹⁴ Harold J. Abrahams. *Extinct Medical Schools of Nineteenth-century Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966.

¹⁵ There exists no recent general history of medicine, or of medical education, in Philadelphia, but useful are: Burton A. Konkle. *Standard History of the Medical Profession of Philadelphia*, edited by Frederick P. Henry, enlarged and corrected republication of the 1897 original edition by Lisabeth Holloway. New York City: AMS Press, 1977; John Francis Marion. *Philadelphia Medica, Being a Guide to the City's Historical Places of Health Interest*. Philadelphia: Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, 2021, 12 Hahnemann Medical College 1938, 225-31 N. 15th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102-1101

medical education for women, and the presence of several women's hospitals, fostered growth of a sizeable community of women physicians and surgeons in Philadelphia, who practiced and taught here. Blacks had a more difficult time gaining entry to the profession. The Woman's Medical College, founded and led largely by Quakers, showed the most liberality. Hahnemann Medical College taught the therapeutic system of German physician Samuel Hahnemann (1745-1843) called homeopathy ("like cures like"), which flourished in Philadelphia with active lay support. The larger point is that by the early twentieth century, Philadelphia could claim a medical school of almost every possible stripe: university (Penn); non-university independent (Jefferson); homeopathic (Hahnemann); run by and for women (Woman's Medical); accessible to ethnic students (The "Med-Chi"); osteopathic (Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine); for the earnest and aspiring working man and woman (Temple); offering practical brush-ups for recent graduates (The Polyclinic). Most of these continue to the present (2020). Following a troubled merger of Hahnemann University with Medical College of Pennsylvania (the coeducational continuation of the Woman's Medical College), the resulting medical school became the College of Medicine of Drexel University.

With allied hospitals and practices, Philadelphia's medical schools have attracted countless women and men to the city to pursue training towards the MD or DO, as well as recent graduates to serve as interns and residents. In the post-WWII decades particularly, many persons have come to Philadelphia's medical schools from all over the world as science trainees, many in doctorate programs. Medical education has long been a leading industry and prominent attribute of the City. Of course, Philadelphia also offered training in nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, and indeed all health fields.

Adding to the medical reputation of Philadelphia, for many years it stood as the nation's center of medical publishing, mostly located around Washington Square. The firms include or included Lea and Febiger, J.B. Lippincott, W.B Saunders, and F. A. Davis.¹⁶ The city is also home to the American College of Physicians, the National Board of Medical Examiners, the College of Physicians of Philadelphia with its Mutter Museum and world-renowned historical-medical library. The medical profession and medical education in Philadelphia became part of the city's culture even beyond medical care, research, and teaching. The numerous hospitals and medical schools provided substantial commissions for some of the city's best architects – not only Horace Trumbauer, but such firms or individuals as Samuel Sloan, Addison Hutton, Hewitt and Hewitt, Watson and Huckel, Frank Furness, Cope and Stewardson, Ritter and Shay, Louis Kahn, and others. Medicine intersected with art in Philadelphia: no painting is more iconic to the city than Thomas Eakins' *Portrait of Dr. Samuel D. Gross* ("The Gross Clinic").¹⁷ Eakins studied

SmithKline Corp., 1975; Bell, Whitfield J. *The College of Physicians of Philadelphia: a Bicentennial History*. Canton, MA: Science History Publications, 1987. The best accounts of the City's medical schools include: Corner, George W. *Two Centuries of Medicine: a History of the School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1965; Edward Louis Bauer. *Doctors Made In America*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1963 [a history of Jefferson Medical College]; Naomi Rogers. *An Alternative Path : the Making and Remaking of Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital of Philadelphia*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1998; Steven J. Peitzman. *A New and Untried Course: Woman's Medical College and Medical College of Pennsylvania, 1850-1998*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2000.

¹⁶ Richard Lampert. *Medical Publishing in Philadelphia: An Informal History*. Philadelphia, 2020.

¹⁷ Kathleen A. Foster and Mark S Tucker. *An Eakins Masterpiece Restored : Seeing the Gross Clinic Anew*. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2012.

anatomy at Jefferson Medical College, where Gross operated and taught. Another prominent surgeon, W.W. Keen, taught anatomy at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

Hahnemann's new medical school building

What does this have to do with the 1938 Hahnemann Medical College building? In a paradoxical manner, this relatively modest building exemplified the growth and development of Philadelphia's medical-educational industry and culture in the first half of the twentieth century. The medical schools had to respond to new requirements in medical education, which called for more space, especially for laboratories. Furthermore, they wanted to increase class size, sometimes for economic reasons. Each advanced in competition with the others – for prestige, philanthropy, the best students, and paying patients in the hospitals. By the turn of the twentieth century, the older schools found their Victorian era structures crowded and inadequate. When they decided to build, they often went to the best city architects. Penn added the then immense John Morgan Hall in 1904-1906, designed by Cope and Stewardson, already major contributors to the University-scape.¹⁸ It replaced Medical Hall (later Logan Hall, now Claudia Cohen Hall), one of the original (early 1870s) buildings on the Penn West Philadelphia campus. In 1928, Stewardson and Page added the anatomy-chemistry wing to Morgan Hall. Between 1928 and 1931, Jefferson Medical College built very big medical school and hospital buildings, designed by Horace Trumbauer in a sort of Romanesque-Art Deco alloy, in the 1000 block of Walnut Street.¹⁹ The Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania left its home on North College Avenue in 1930 for a new campus on Henry Avenue in East Falls, where medical school and hospital shared one classical-colonial revival building by Ritter and Shay.²⁰ At about the same time (1929 – 1930), Temple University College of Medicine engaged architect William H. Lee to design its handsome new seven-story home at Broad and Ontario Streets, eventually demolished by Temple in 2015 after being left to rot.

In 1928, Hahnemann Medical College opened a costly high-rise hospital building, one of the tallest and most advanced in the country.²¹ From then, the medical school functions took place in the old (19th-century) former hospital structure on Fifteenth Street.²² In 1935, a survey of American medical schools carried out by the American Medical Association produced a caustic critique of Hahnemann. It focused on its homeopathic teaching and low admission standards, but the antiquated college building could not have helped.²³ Seeking to catch up and perhaps leap ahead, Hahnemann in the late 1930s turned to Trumbauer, who provided a rendering for a grandiose college building comprising a central mass and two wings, in the Art Deco manner (figure 4). In a newspaper article marking the beginning of construction in May of 1938, a Hahnemann official referred to the “giant medical centre” envisioned.²⁴ The intent was likely to keep up with, or even outpace, Jefferson, its near neighbor in downtown Philadelphia. In addition, leaders of Hahnemann Medical College, with its idiosyncratic homeopathic roots and

¹⁸ George E. Thomas. *University of Pennsylvania: An Architectural Tour*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002.

¹⁹ Documented, with some difficulty owing to the number of Jefferson Buildings, in the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings website, the Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

²⁰ Peitzman, *A New and Untried Course*.

²¹ Hahnemann Hospital nomination (n. 4)

²² The new hospital required the demolition of the 1899 medical school building by Hewitt and Hewitt.

²³ Rogers, *An Alternative Path*, pp.129-131.

²⁴ *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 10 May 1938,

non-elite background, sensed a need to think big, even to make a statement, as with its landmark 1928 hospital building.

Hahnemann had gone into debt, however, for that building; and particularly with the onset of Depression times, could not undertake to put up a new college building until later in the 1930s, when an individual gift was in the offing. But the Klahr donation could hardly pay for the hoped-for pile. Nonetheless, the segment that *was* completed served its teaching purposes well for many decades. Both it, and the aspirational rendering of the “giant medical centre” (eventually fulfilled in the 1960s and 1970s, though not to the original design) reflect the ongoing physical renewal and expansion of one of Philadelphia’s longest enduring and most recognized cultural and economic enterprises – medical education.

Criterion E

The 1938 Hahnemann Medical College at 225-31 N. 15th Street is the work of the architectural firm of Horace Trumbauer, whose designs and architectural legacy significantly influenced the architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation.

Probably most Philadelphians who have set foot in Center City, and countless visitors from outside the city and the country, have also set foot in a Horace Trumbauer building – the Free Library, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Jefferson Hospital, even the Union League extension for the select and their guests. Likely millions of people have tramped through “The Elms” since the Edward Berwind “cottage” in Newport became a house museum. “By Trumbauer” applies to a seemingly endless list of palatial mansions, lesser but handsome houses, office buildings, schools, hospitals, art galleries, stables, a few churches, some mausoleums, at least one railroad station, libraries, and anything else with walls and a roof. Almost all styles appear, though classicism informs the grandest of these. Yet Horace Trumbauer (1868-1938) remains Philadelphia’s enigmatic architect.²⁵ Could he really have designed all these structures? As is well known, he was born in the Frankford section of Philadelphia, grew up partly in Jenkintown when his middle-class family bought a home there, attended (as best one can tell) public schools but no college, and as a teenager entered the architectural firm of George W. Hewitt and William D. Hewitt. That was it: no degrees, no visits to Europe. At his apprenticeship with the Hewitt brothers, he evidently showed ability and gained a superior foundation of knowledge and skills. He set out as an independent architect at the age of twenty-one. Some of his first houses were designed for developers Wendell and Smith, and quite a few still house families in Overbrook Farms, Wayne and other areas. His “breakthrough” was the commission to design “Grey Towers” for William W. Harrison, built in 1893, a chunky castle which later became the center of Beaver College (now Arcadia University).

²⁵ Surprisingly little has been written about Horace Trumbauer. The available sources include: Entry by Sandra L. Tatman in the digital service *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings* of the Philadelphia Athenaeum (philadelphiabuildings.org); Frederick Platt, “Horace Trumbauer: A life in architecture,” *Penna. Mag. Hist. Biog.* 125(2001):315-349; Bruce Lavery and Karen Chernick, “Reassessing Horace Trumbauer,” *Hidden City*, April 22, 2016, <https://hiddencityphila.org/2016/04/reassessing-horace-trumbauer>; acc 19 July 2020. The one book dealing with Trumbauer’s work is: Michael C. Kathrens, *American Splendor: the Residential Architecture of Horace Trumbauer* New York: Acanthus Press, n.d..

Trumbauer grew from there as he enjoyed the opportunities to design immense residences in classical and picturesque styles in the Cheltenham region for the Elkins and Wideners and some of their friends. Jobs arose in Newport, New York, Colorado, West Virginia, etc., but he retained popularity among moneyed Philadelphians and local institutions for elegant designs showing little or no unwanted eccentricity. Of course, he hired draftsmen and several excellent designers such as Frank Seeburger and Julian Abele. Skeptics have doubted that later in his career Trumbauer actually designed anything; others don't insist on his hand in every drawing, but believe he oversaw it all, knew what his eye wanted, and that he was the boss. Recent opinion credits Abele with much of the finer, especially French flavored, design work. Abele clearly was the preeminent designer for the Duke University campus, working on it for years even after Trumbauer died. For the purposes of this nomination, however, we are agnostics: when we refer to "Trumbauer," it is to the firm and its head.



Figure 14. "The New Building for the Jefferson Medical School" by Horace Trumbauer. Source: The *Philadelphia Record* Morgue, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

As noted elsewhere, the 1938 building for Hahnemann Medical College can claim historical importance as very likely the last Trumbauer project built while he was alive, excluding the ongoing work for Duke University. According to the *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*²⁶, Trumbauer designed three small buildings for Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital in 1903. Hahnemann had engaged Hewitt and Hewitt for both its college building of 1886 and its hospital of 1900, so Trumbauer perhaps enjoyed some connection with the

²⁶ October 1903, v. 18. p. 701. Accessed online via the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, www.philageohistory.org/buildersguide.

medical school early in his career. In 1929-1930, the firm designed a very large medical college and hospital building for Jefferson Medical College on Walnut Street west of 10th (Figure 14), extant in 2020. With this background, it is not at all surprising that Hahnemann would look to Trumbauer to design its own grand college structure. Arguably, one can see some similarities between the completed Jefferson building and the Trumbauer rendering for the intended Hahnemann college project. As described elsewhere, only the south wing was completed, the subject of this nomination.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

This nomination was completed by the Keeping Society of Philadelphia with the primary author as Steven J. Peitzman, M.D., Medical Historian, with assistance from Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist; J.M. Duffin, Archivist and Historian; and Kelly E. Wiles, Architectural Historian.

The following collections were used to create the nomination:

Athenaeum of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Architects and Buildings website

Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network, via the Athenaeum of Philadelphia

Newspapers.com

Archives and Special Collections on Women in Medicine and Homeopathic Medicine (Legacy Center), Drexel University College of Medicine

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Appendix

BRIEF HISTORY OF HAHNEMANN MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL FROM FOUNDING IN 1848 UNTIL 1948, WITH EMPHASIS ON ITS BUILDINGS

(This matter is not essential for assessing the assertions of the nomination and repeats some of the information already provided.)

Since colonial times, Philadelphia has been one of the United States' preeminent centers of medicine and medical education. Hahnemann Medical College, later Hahnemann University, with origin in 1848, was founded to teach the therapeutic system known as homeopathy, but in the twentieth century abandoned this mission. It became instead a major source of general medical and surgical care for numerous Philadelphians, particularly poor people of North Philadelphia. In the later twentieth century, with homeopathy long gone, Hahnemann faculty would carry out advanced work in cardiovascular medicine and cardiac surgery, and the physiology and diseases of the kidney. This very brief review looks at Hahnemann Medical College over its first one hundred years, with a focus on its sequence of buildings.

Understanding the unlikely pathway of Hahnemann Medical College requires looking back to the learned German physician Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843), and his new system of therapeutics known as homeopathy. In a time when conventional medical treatment relied on harsh drugs with emetic and laxative properties--and sometimes bloodletting--Hahnemann's approach differed. He believed he had discovered in 1790 the principle of *similia*: a substance which causes certain bodily sensations when ingested by a healthy person will cure a disease comprising those symptoms in someone ill. He further came to believe that small doses, even infinitesimal doses, acted more strongly in the sick than large doses, when properly "potentized" by a kind of percussion. Many physicians of course scoffed at these concepts, especially as medicine in the late nineteenth century moved towards a more scientific foundation. But the new system, homeopathy, won many converts in Europe, both physicians and lay persons.

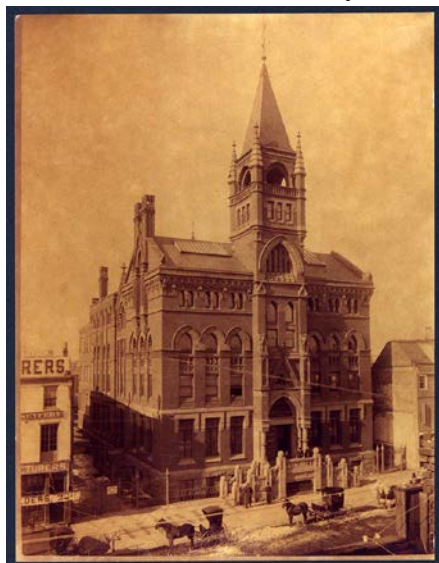


Figure 15 The Hahnemann Medical College building by Hewitt and Hewitt, 1886; demolished in 1928. Source: Archives and Special Collections, Drexel University College of Medicine

A major step in the export of homeopathy to the United States was the 1848 founding of the Homeopathic Medical College of Pennsylvania (later the Hahnemann Medical College of Pennsylvania after healing of an 1867 schism within the original school). HMC sought to teach the new system and practice of homeopathic therapeutics along with the then standard subjects of anatomy, chemistry, pathology, etc. After briefly renting quarters on Arch Street east of Seventh, in 1855 the new college acquired a structure on Filbert Street at Eleventh. By 1886, the school was able to erect a grander home, a weighty Gothic-eclectic stone pile by the firm of Hewitt and Hewitt

(figure 15). It included a tower of ecclesiastical bearing (to its professional converts and lay adherents, homeopathy amounted to a religion, though any connection is doubtful).

Though at times it struggled financially, the young HMC proved a success. Philadelphia in turn became a major center of homeopathic education, publishing, and the manufacture of its medicines. More broadly, by the 1890s homeopathy had grown into a parallel medical world in the United States, backed by large numbers of lay supporters, most middle-class and particularly women.²⁷ It spawned its own hospitals, societies, journals, and pharmacies.

Several small hospitals associated with HMC, but not owned by it, had come and gone before it opened its own, on Fifteenth Street near Vine in 1890, also by the Hewitt brothers. This improvement concurred with the ascent of surgery in the 1880s and 1890s, by which time anesthesia and the understanding of bacterial wound infection had allowed for safe operations into the body. HMC and its hospital (HMCH) fully embraced the new surgery, not a part of pure homeopathy.

The period leading up to the famous “Flexner Report” of 1910 marked the acceleration of reform of American medical education, which had suffered from the proliferation of proprietary medical colleges of low standards.²⁸ Many schools, orthodox or “sectarian,” could not meet new expectations and closed. Of the American medical schools founded on Samuel Hahnemann’s teachings, only HMC and a homeopathic school in New York City survived. To do so, the homeopathic colleges had to emulate the “regular” medical schools, including those of elite universities, as best they could. This meant, in the 1890s and 1900s, adding laboratory instruction, extending the curriculum to four years, and teaching new subjects, such as specialties like ophthalmology. These new expectations strained Hahnemann’s finances, as occurred at many other medical colleges in the United States, few of which had sizeable endowments. Still, HMC kept going.

By the 1920s fewer Americans turned to homeopathy as regular, or scientific, medicine produced advances such as serum treatments for diphtheria and pneumonia, immunization for typhoid fever, safer surgery (as noted above), and insulin for diabetes. Radiography and the diagnostic laboratory had become daily aids to medical practice. American Homeopathy was split between true believers and compromisers—but overall, it was in retreat. The HMC curriculum of the 1920s still included instruction in homeopathic treatment, but only a few hours of lectures. In this bleak time for homeopaths, HMC initiated plans and fund-raising to build a new hospital

²⁷ Samuel Hahnemann’s major statement of his system was, and still is, the *Organon of the Healing Art*, first published in German in 1810, and still available in later editions. For the history of homeopathy in the United States, with some coverage of its German roots, see Martin Kaufman, *Homeopathy in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971); John S. Haller, *The History of American Homeopathy: The Academic Years, 1820-1935* (New York: Haworth Press, 2005); idem, *The History of American Homeopathy: From Rational Medicine to Holistic Health Care* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009); Anne Taylor Kirschmann, *A Vital Force: Women in American Homeopathy* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004).

²⁸ The “Flexner Report” was the work of educator Abraham Flexner working for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; its proper title was *Medical Education in the United States and Canada, Bulletin Number Four* of the Foundation. This document, and the reform of medical education in the United States have been the subject of immense scholarship and various interpretations. One standard source is Kenneth Ludmerer, *Learning to Heal: The Development of American Medical Education* (New York: Basic Books, 1985).

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which would be the tallest in Philadelphia and fully modern when completed in 1928.²⁹ The 1886 medical school building was demolished to open space for the new hospital; and the 1900 hospital on 15th Street was modified to provide the lecture halls, teaching laboratories, faculty offices, and other needs on the college side. In this period, and still much the case today, American medical students study the “basic sciences” and some introduction to patient interviewing and physical examination over the first two years, then spend the third and fourth years in hospitals and outpatient settings. The new hospital of 1928 would presumably enhance practical clinical education, but it moved the “basic science” years from an aging 1886 structure to improvised space in a 1900 hospital building.

The new hospital left Hahnemann in debt going into the Depression years, though the fundraising campaign did raise a substantial sum. Fortunately, salaries demanded little expenditure, since most clinical faculty were in their own private practices, and taught as volunteers. But to enhance revenue in tough times, class size was increased. The need for tuition led Hahnemann to become more open to Jews and Italian-Americans than the elite Penn and Jefferson medical schools, though in the 1920s and 1930s it remained closed to women and African-Americans. The large class size and a general discomfort with change limited teaching largely to lectures, and to mostly observational time in the hospital rather than more practical learning. Staffed and overseen by practitioners, the grand new hospital never fulfilled hopes for a vigorous educational role. Its advanced design did not include space for small clinical discussions, or even a place for students to sit and compose clinical notes.

Once again, less than ten years after building the 1928 hospital, Hahnemann leaders thought big, as indicated by a rendering for a grand new college building by the prestigious Horace Trumbauer firm, the subject of this nomination

During the World War II years, Hahnemann, like many other medical schools, fashioned a shortened curriculum to produce young doctors for War service. In addition, for the first time it admitted (six) women students in 1941, possibly driven by fewer available male applicants, but this is not proved. In fairness, some Hahnemann faculty had advocated for coeducation for years.³⁰

As the country returned to normal business following the War, some of Hahnemann’s deficiencies caught up with the school as the accrediting organizations for medical schools resumed activities. In 1945, the Association of American Medical Colleges and the American Medical Association placed HMC on academic probation. Among the problems were excess

²⁹ There seems no doubt that the 1928 hospital was at the time the tallest in Philadelphia, and one of the tallest in the country, though the claim that it was the “first skyscraper hospital” in the United States is difficult to confirm. See Jeanne Kisacky, *Rise of the Modern Hospital: An Architectural History of Health and Healing, 1870 – 1940* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017), p. 248. The author discusses the rise of the “vertical hospital” on pp. 235-264, with emphasis on vertical organization of functions. See the Nomination to place the 1928 Hahnemann Hospital (later known as South Tower) on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places by Oscar Beisert and Steven Peitzman, on the Philadelphia Historical Commission website.

³⁰ Naomi Rogers, *An Alternative Path: The Making and Remaking of Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital of Philadelphia* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998), 136-139.

power of the Board of Trustees, inadequate funding, not enough basic science faculty, high failure rates of graduates in board examinations, and lack of research productivity. It turned out that buildings played a role in revealing some of the deficiencies. Dominated by practitioners in private practice, the 1928 Hospital never made as many beds available for teaching as first promised. As earlier noted, its design included no accommodations for students – they owned no space in the structure. The trustees repeatedly increased class size to boost revenue, so there were too many students to permit “one on one” experiential learning with patients, as in the “clinical clerkships” offered at the better medical schools. The handsome 1938 College building, meant as a fragment of a grander college hall left to the future, became overcrowded.³¹

So Hahnemann Medical College sadly entered its 1948 centennial year on probation and in turbulence, with many changes and improvements needed. New leaders began to right the errors of the past, and probation was lifted in 1949. Hahnemann returned to building in the 1960s with a home for the nursing school. The new college building, though not built to the 1930s design, was completed and opened in 1974, adjoining and connecting with the much smaller 1938 building. Never finding a major donor, as of the time of this nomination its name is simply “New College Building” and remains in use by Drexel University College of Medicine,

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³¹ The period of probation and what led to it are covered in Rogers, *An Alternative Path*, pp. 139-158.

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