

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: 17-23 S 52nd St

Postal code: 19139

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Parke Building

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: Mixed use commercial and residential

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 1913 to 1932

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1910-1913

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: H.H. Markley

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: James Mullen & Sons

Original owner: Mary M. Parke

Other significant persons: Charles O. Kruger

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 Philadelphia Historical Commission Date 10/14/2026

Name with Title Ted Maust, Preservation Planner Email theodore.maust@phila.gov

Street Address 1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor Telephone 215-686-7660

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19102

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 10/14/2026

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 10/14/2026

Date of Notice Issuance: 10/16/2026

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: University City Capital Group LLC

Address: 7 Glenwood Avenue, Suite 418

City: East Orange State: NJ Postal Code: 07017

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: 11/18/2026

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: 12/11/2026

Date of Final Action: _____

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

12/7/18

**NOMINATION TO THE
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**



Figure 1: View of 17-23 S. 52nd Street, looking Southeast. photograph by author, June 2026.

PARKE BUILDING

17-23 S. 52nd Street
Constructed 1910-1913
Philadelphia, PA 19139

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property boundaries, as described on deeds of sale, are as follows:

ALL THAT CERTAIN lot or parcel of land, SITUATE on the Southeast corner of 52nd Street and Ludlow Street in the City of Philadelphia. CONTAINING in front or breadth on the said 52nd Street 61 feet and extending of that width in length or depth Eastward between parallel lines at right angles to the said 52nd Street and along the South side of said Ludlow Street 67 feet to a certain 3 feet wide alley which extends Northward into the said Ludlow Street. BEING known as 17-23 South 52nd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19139.¹

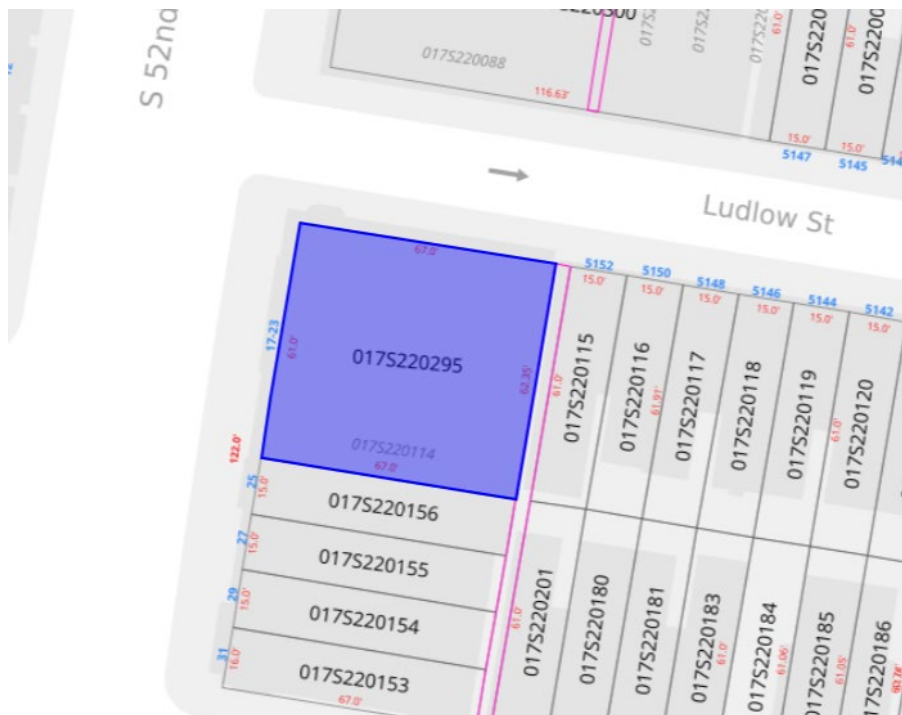


Figure 2: Property boundary of 17-23 S. 52nd Street. Atlas.Phila.gov

¹ Deed dated October 4, 2021, RK Trading LLC to University City Capital Group LLC, document number 53935233.

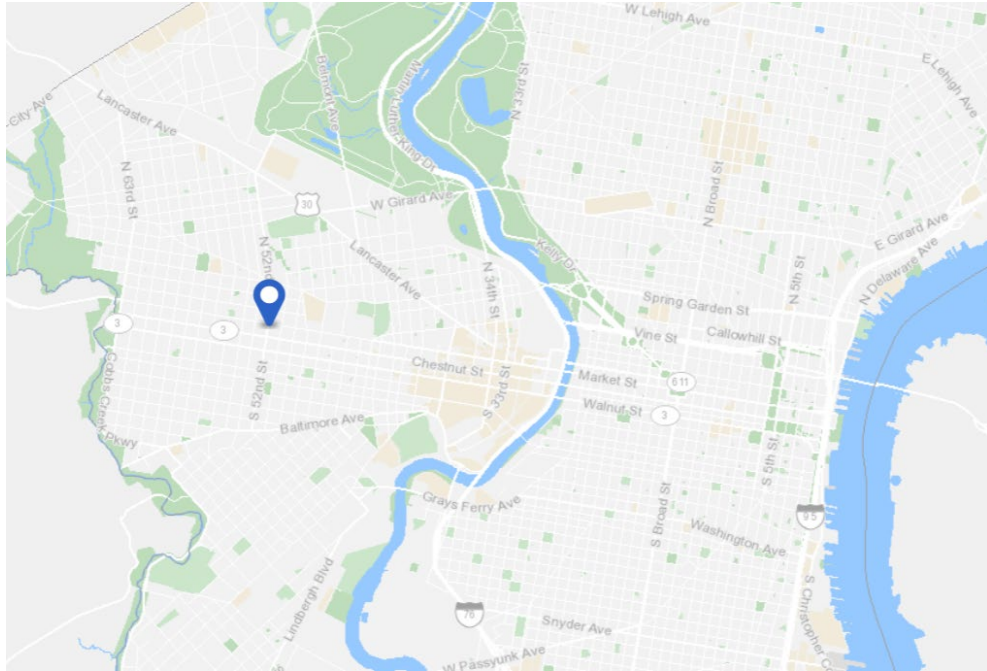


Figure 3: Location of 17-23 S. 52nd Street. Image from phila.atlas.gov.

6. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Parke Building is located just south of Market Street along the 52nd Street Corridor in West Philadelphia. It occupies the southeast corner of 52nd Street and Ludlow Street, extending 61 feet along the former and 67 feet along the latter.

Seven stories in height, the building is primarily of steel and concrete construction, with its street-front elevations clad in terracotta and its secondary elevations clad in brick.



Figure 4: The building at 17-23 S. 52nd Street seen in the context of the 52nd Street corridor, looking south. Image from EagleView.



Figure 5: The 52nd Street elevation. Cyclomedia.phila.gov, 2025.

West Elevation, 52nd Street

The primary elevation, facing 52nd Street, comprises a two-story base, a middle section of four floors, and a penthouse level, all five bays wide.

The base is clad in limestone and was significantly altered from a previous limestone base between 1923 and 1932.² Four engaged columns with ionic capitals and simpler pilasters at the corners divide the bays and are topped with an entablature which slightly protrudes above the central three bays. The first and fourth bays of the first floor feature large, fixed windows, while the third and fifth bays have pedestrian entries. The second bay was a window matching the others as recently as 2011, before being partially closed to accommodate an automatic teller machine, which has since been removed.³ The upper portion of that bay remains a fixed window. The large windows have minimal frames suggesting they are not historic, though the openings may be. The central doorway is ornamented by a dentiled architrave and is filled by a contemporary metal and glass system with two doors and a transom.

² See 'Historic Context' below.

³ Google StreetView, 2011.



Figure 6: Central entryway. Cyclomedia.phila.gov, 2025.

The doorway at the fifth bay has somewhat simpler ornamental surround and is filled with a similar metal and glass system with a single door and a sidelight. The transom seems to have been infilled, and the entryway is somewhat obscured by an awning and a roll-down security gate [Figures 7 and 8].⁴



Figures 7 and 8: Cyclomedia.phila.gov, 2025 (left); Google StreetView, 2011.

The upper floors are clad in cream-colored glazed terracotta with decorative features executed in limestone. Windows are dark green in color and do not appear to be historic, though they largely match the configuration seen in historic photographs. Several windows are missing at time of this writing, with plywood partially closing the openings.

Floors 3-6 are consistent in design, with ornamental quoins on the corners and alternating bays.

⁴ Google StreetView suggests the security door was installed ca. 2012 and an awning (prior to the present one) was added ca. 2014. The earliest StreetView images available (2007) seem to show the transom infilled, though the material is unknown.

Bays 1, 3, and 5 feature two ganged one-over-one double-hung windows. The window openings have sills and egg-and-dart mouldings around the side and top, all executed in limestone. Bays 2 and 4 feature stacked protruding bays, with one-over-one double-hung windows in each face of the bay. Sills appear to be made of limestone. The spandrels above and below the windows feature recessed panels, executed in terracotta.

The sixth floor differs slightly. The topmost protruding bays feature an architectural ornament at the top of each edge between the faces and a simple cornice. Above the flat roofs of those stacked bays, a small cornice runs across the entire elevation.

The top floor has five window openings which match in size, each surrounded by a subtle decorative frame in cream terracotta matching the floor's cladding. The windows in bays 2 and 4 are sliders, while those in bays 1 and 5 are fixed panes of glass. The central window is currently missing. Because none of the early photographs depict this floor, the historic configurations are unknown. At the top of the seventh floor is a large projecting cornice, decorated with three pairs of elaborate corbels at the center and each corner and modillions between them.

Above the cornice, a small addition can be seen on the southwest corner of the roof. This addition, like the building more generally, has a variety of cellphone network antennae.

North Elevation, Ludlow Street

The side elevation facing north along Ludlow Street, like the primary façade, comprises a lower section clad in limestone and upper floors clad in glazed terracotta.

The first two floors can be divided into four bays, unequal in size. The details of three out of the four are similar, with a decorative frame connecting window openings on multiple floors, a recessed panel below the second-floor windows, and a decorative scroll at the top of the frame.



Figure 9: The northeast corner of the Parke Building.

Beginning from the left side, the first bay is framed by two engaged pilasters. Between them are a stack of three window openings, suggesting different floor heights from the front portion of the building. A shortened opening just above the water table contains a mullioned set of three windows and likely lights a basement area. Just a few feet above that is a taller opening filled with a mullioned set of three double-hung windows. These two lower window openings have security bars installed over them. The top window in the stack, serving the second floor, is taller still, filled with paired fixed (or possibly casement) windows. In front of this bay, a Bilco door gives access to the basement level surrounded by a metal railing with vertical pickets. In front of the left pilaster, a security fence encloses an electrical box which appears to be connected by electrical conduit to the antennae mounted to the building.

The second bay has no pilaster to the right but is otherwise similar to the first bay. The openings for the lower two windows have either been filled in with masonry or never existed.⁵ The second-floor window opening is similar in size to that in the first bay but is filled with a mullioned set of three double-hung windows.

The third bay from the left has a recessed opening at the first floor, though it is smaller and simpler in style than the one to its left. Like that opening, it is unclear when it might have been infilled. At the second level, a smaller opening contains another mullioned unit of three double-hung windows. It has a projecting sill and differs slightly in style from the other bays on this elevation but features the same scroll on the lintel.



Figure 10: The Ludlow Street elevation seen obliquely from 52nd Street. Cyclomedia, 2025.

⁵ The horizontal mortar lines of the masonry recessed inside the opening correspond to the surrounding stone, making this unclear.

Finally, the bay at the right of the elevation is a wider version of the second bay, with an apparently infilled opening at the first floor and a wide opening at the second. This opening is filled by two large, fixed windows. A second Bilco entry and metal rail are located at this corner, covered by an awning advertising "On-Site Copy Service."

At the west end of the elevation, a small portion wraps around from the 52nd Street elevation, including a pilaster. The top of the entablature wraps around and connects with the entablature or cornice of the side elevation. Below each of the stacked bays of the upper floors are two large and ornate corbels.

The upper floors of the Ludlow Street elevation are very similar to the front elevation, with the difference that there is an additional bay at the northeast corner of the building. The window openings in this bay are similar to those elsewhere on the elevation, though those on floors 3-6 are sized for a single double-hung window rather than two.

East Elevation

The east elevation of the Parke Building is clad in brick and is clearly more utilitarian than the streetfront façades. The first floor has a pedestrian door with a small awning as well as four scattered window openings, though public visibility is limited, making the configuration and operation difficult to determine. The six floors above have a consistent design divided into six bays.

The first two bays from the right (northeast corner) of the elevation feature two-over-two double-hung windows, likely steel. The second-floor windows on these bays have been replaced with more contemporary windows and security bars are installed over those openings.

The third bay has slightly wider openings, each filled with a ganged unit of two double-hung windows: one two-over-two and the other one-over-one.

The fourth and fifth bays match each other, with three-over-three double-hung windows in every visible opening.

The bay at the left of the elevation has fire escape balconies on each floor above the first, with simple horizontal railings. The details of the doors to the fire stair and interior of the building are not visible.



Figure 11: Oblique view of the east elevation, seen from Ludlow Street. Cyclomedia.



Figure 12: View of the top of the east elevation, seen from Ranstead Street. Cyclomedia.phila.gov.



Figure 13: Aerial view of the east elevation. EagleView.

South Elevation

The south elevation of the Parke Building sits directly along the property line and was thus designed as a party wall, without exterior openings. Above the roofline, a variety of volumes are visible, with many antennae bracketed onto them. There are a couple of patches of stucco near the top of this wall, but otherwise it is simply painted brick.



Figure 14: South elevation seen from 52nd Street. Cyclomedia.phila.gov.

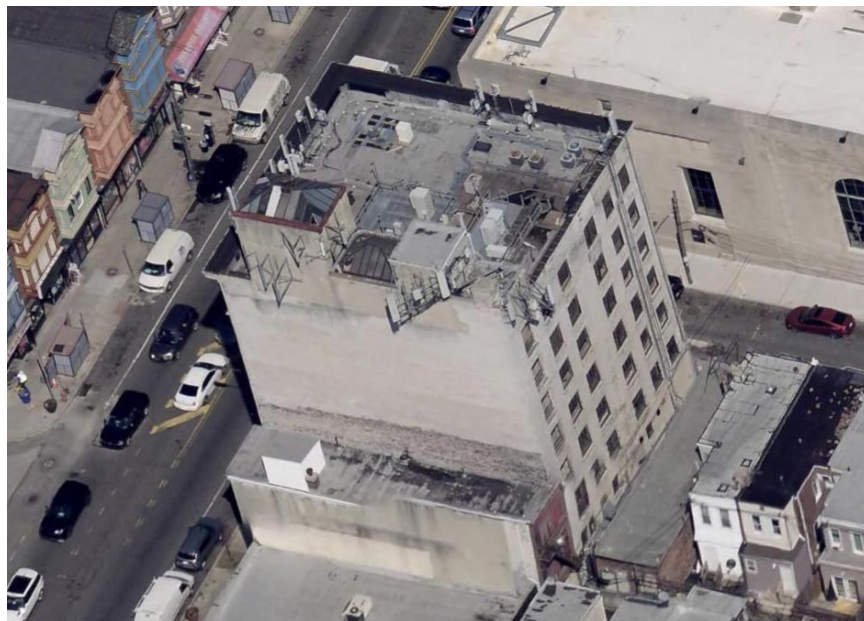


Figure 15: Aerial view of south elevation. EagleView.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

The property at 17-23 S. 52nd Street is historically significant and should be listed individually on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The property may also be eligible for designation as part of a larger historic district. Pursuant to Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code, the property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and H. The property:

- C. Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
- D. Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; and
- H. Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City.

The period of significance is from the building's completion in 1913 to the 1932 sale by the Bank and Trust Company of West Philadelphia, at which point the first two floors of the 52nd Street elevation had been renovated to the current configuration.⁶

The seven-story Parke Building embodies characteristics of the Commercial Style (also called the Chicago Style) and in its speculative development and subsequent alterations reflects early-twentieth-century architectural trends in the design of both commercial buildings and banks. As a tall building in neighborhood typified by buildings on a smaller scale, the subject property represents an established and familiar visual feature of the 52nd Street corridor.

Historical Context

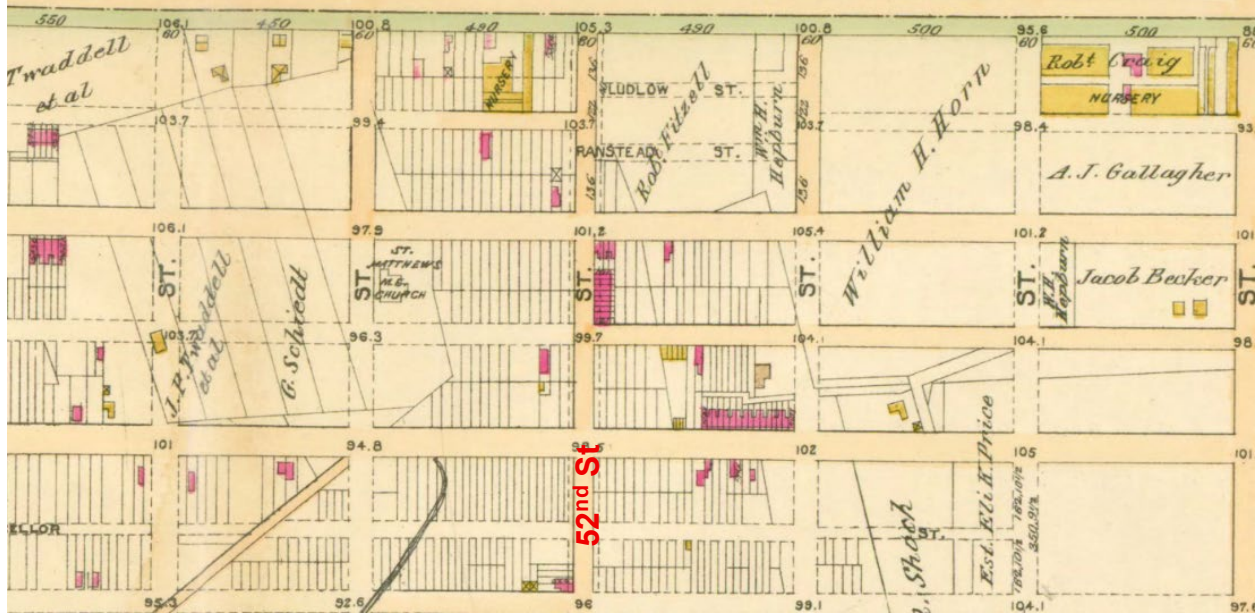
The intersection of 52nd Street and Market Street is now a bustling hub, but as late as 1901, only the east side of the half block between Chestnut and Sansom Streets had been developed. At that time, the most prominent activity in the area involved two plant nurseries along Market Street [Figure 16].

In February 1902, the subject property was part of a parcel sold by the Fitzell family to Alexander Cowan. It covered the present property and extended as far east as the lot now addressed as 5110 Ludlow Street.⁷ Cowan sold ground rent rights to Samuel Patrick, \$110 for the lots facing S. 52nd Street, \$75 for those fronting on Ludlow Street and began to develop the lots.⁸

⁶ An item in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* ("West Philadelphia Values Raised," Nov. 21, 1913, p. 13) reports that the building was "given a valuation of \$150,000 as a completed structure." The redesign of the lower floors was likely part of alterations designed by Harvey Child Hodgens in 1923 and 1924 (*Philadelphia Builders' Guide and Real Estate Record*, vol. 38, p 405 and vol. 39, pp. 54 and 103).

⁷ Deed dated February 15, 1902, Robert W. Fitzell, et al to Alexander Cowan, deed book 65, p. 247. The purchase also included the ground east of S. 52nd Street between Market and Ludlow Streets to the same eastern boundary.

⁸ *Builders' Guide*, Vol. 17, no. 11, March 12, 1902, p. 173.



On November 8, Cowan sold the corner lot (17 S. 52nd Street), now containing a two-story brick store and dwelling to Jane Rodgers (wife of William A. Rodgers) for \$2000.⁹ William A. Rodgers was a grocer and is listed at 17 S. 52nd Street in *Boyd's Co-Partnership and Residence Business Directory of Philadelphia City* (1904).¹⁰ William, or his father, died in December 1903 and Jane Rodgers sold the corner store and dwelling to Abraham Steinfeld on September 2, 1909.¹¹

On September 15, 1903, Cowan sold the three lots south of the Rodgers' property (19, 21, and 23 S. 52nd Street) along with three similar lots a block to the north, all of them now containing buildings, to J. Wilfred Hart for \$1500 apiece.¹² Hart transferred the three houses south of the Rodgers' property to C. Howard Schermerhorn in 1904.¹³ Throughout the ownership of Hart and Schermerhorn, these properties appear to have been rented.¹⁴

⁹ Deed dated November 8, 1902, Alexander Cowan to Jane Rodgers, deed book 80, p. 518.

¹⁰ *Boyd's Co-Partnership and Residence Business Directory of Philadelphia City*, 1904, p. 692.

¹¹ Obituary, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 12, 1903, p. 7; Deed dated September 2, 1909, Jane Rodgers to Abraham Steinfeld, deed book 1190, p. 190.

¹² Deed dated September 15, 1903, Alexander Cowan to J. Wilfred Hart, deed book 249, p. 185. The other three parcels were 9, 11, and 13 S. 52nd Street.

¹³ Deed dated August 18, 1904, J. Wilfred Hart to C. Howard Schermerhorn, deed book 320, p. 423.

¹⁴ The 1910 United States Census swept through on April 15, 1910, and captured the Carey family (Christopher, Wilhelmina, and Anna) living in 19 S. 52nd Street shortly after the sale of the home to Mary M. Parke. Enumeration District 1164, sheet 3A, rows 8-10.

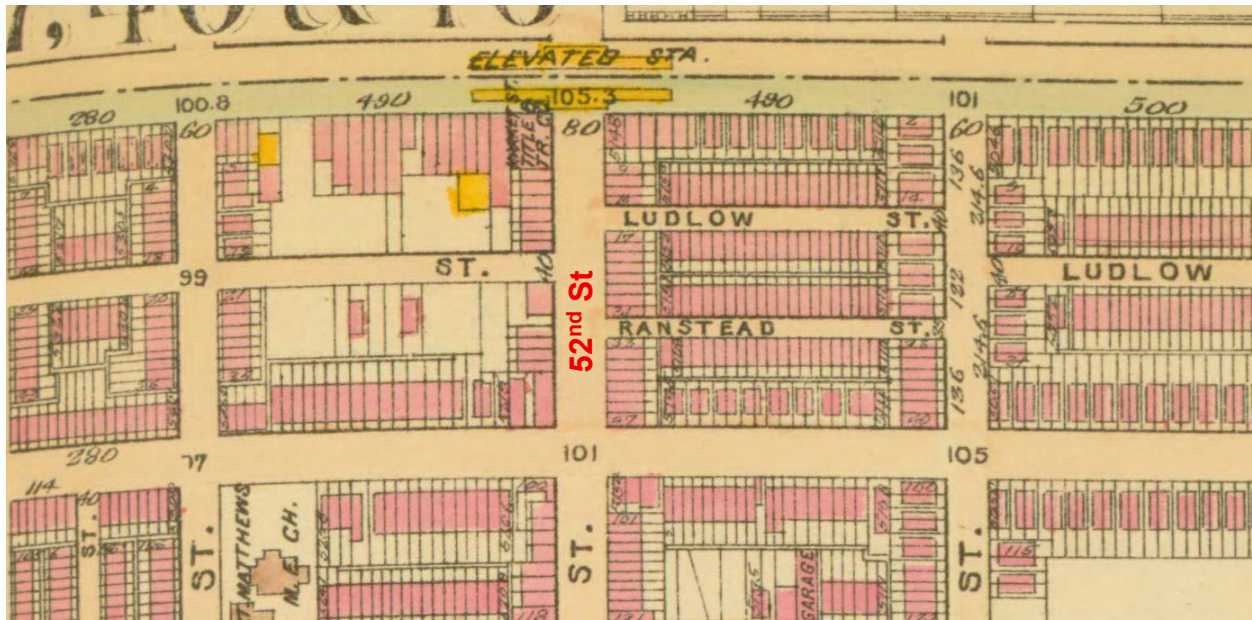


Figure 17: Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, G. W. Bromley, 1910, detail of plate 24. Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

In March and April of 1910, Mary M. Parke bought the property at 17 S. 52nd Street and the three houses to the south in quick succession.¹⁵

Parke (nee Mary M. Kost) had grown up in Johnstown, Pennsylvania and survived the Great Flood of 1889. Her first husband, Harry L. Parke, inherited the family opera house after his fellow heirs were lost to the flood.¹⁶ When he died in 1892, leaving Mary with a four-year old daughter (Agnes), she married Franklin P. Weir, 13 years her senior, who operated a drinking establishment in the opera house.¹⁷ Together they had a second daughter (Mary) but ran into marital discord and mother and daughters were living in Philadelphia by 1900, with a divorce finalized in 1901.¹⁸ Mary Parke's step-father, Albert Kost, passed away in 1904, and along with her mother Catherine Brabt, she served as executrix of the will, perhaps giving her some more financial stability.¹⁹

In 1907, Parke purchased land at the southeast corner of 63rd Street and Nassau Road for a house, which constructed by H. H. Markey, a builder known for his rowhouses.²⁰ The 1910

¹⁵ Deed dated March 28, 1910, Earl B. Taylor to Mary M. Parke, deed book 1232, p. 514; deed dated April 8, 1910, C. Howard Schermerhorn to Mary M. Parke, deed book 1209, p. 274.

¹⁶ "The Parke Opera House," *The Pittsburgh Post*, December 12, 1889, p. 1. The Opera House was the site of a crowd stampede that left 10 dead on December 10, 1889.

¹⁷ Marriage License dated January 4, 1892, between F. P. Weir and Mary M. Parke. Weir's business is mentioned in "The Parke Opera House," *The Pittsburgh Post*, December 12, 1889, p. 1.

¹⁸ 1900 United States Census, Enumeration District 711, sheet 8, rows 48-50. "Released from Matrimonial Bonds," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 2, 1901, p. 10.

¹⁹ "Last Will and Testament of Albert Kost," Cambria, Pennsylvania, Will Books, Vol 5-7, 1899-1907, pp. 383-4, accessed via Ancestry.com.

²⁰ "Real Estate Transfers," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 30, 1907, p. 8; "Building Permits," *Builders' Guide*, September 18, 1907, Vol. 22, no. 38, p. 615; "Permits Issued Yesterday," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 13, 1907, p. 9.

United States Census found her there, 911 N. 63rd Street, with daughters Mary and Agnes, Agnes' husband Franklin W. Earle, a boarder, and two servants.²¹

In 1908, Parke bought significant parcels of land on the west side of S. 46th Street between Walnut and Sansom Streets.²² She may have learned about the opportunity from her brother, Joseph Kost, who lived one block north at 19 S. 46th Street.²³ Parke developed one of those parcels with six three-story rowhouses [Figure 18], built by Markley.²⁴



Figure 18: The properties at 128-138 S. 46th Street, built by H. H. Markley, seen in 1954. Photograph by John McWhorter, Philadelphia City Archives, Public Works collection.

In 1909, Mary M. Parke made a couple more property acquisitions, buying ground at 54th and Locust Streets and 5615 Spruce Street, from her brother Joseph.²⁵ In March 1910, she bought the property immediately to the south of her house on N. 63rd Street.²⁶

The purchase of the lots on S. 52nd Street, however, was more ambitious than any of Parke's previous real estate deals. While the ink was still wet on the deed, it was announced that H. H.

²¹ 1910 United States Census, Enumeration District 842, sheet 13A, rows 12-18.

²² "The Latest News in Real Estate," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 11, 1908, p. 9.

²³ 1910 United States Census, Enumeration District 1163, sheet 9B, rows 97-100.

²⁴ *Builders' Guide*, September 2, 1908, Vol. 23, no. 36, p. 573. Several of these buildings survived in poor condition until 2007 when they were demolished. Zoning Application 101839 for demolition of 132 S 46th Street.

²⁵ "Real Estate Transfers," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 25, 1909, p. 9; "Real Estate Transfers," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 10, 1909, p. 13.

²⁶ "Real Estate Transfers," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 14, 1910, p. 14.

Markley was preparing plans for a seven-story building for Parke.²⁷ The building was to contain a bank on the first floor, with offices occupying the upper floors.²⁸

The Parke Building was also a statement of ambition from H. H. Markley. His career before that point appears limited to rowhouses and the 46th Street flats, which were still a rowhouse form. He appears to have greater ambitions, however; having listed his profession as “Carpenter” in the 1900 Census, he answered “Architect” a decade later, the same year he began construction on the apartment building.²⁹



Figure 19: “Munyon Explains His Success” (advertisement), *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Oct 20, 1895, p. 5.

Construction began at the corner of Ludlow and 52nd Streets, but disaster struck almost immediately. Workers of James Mullen & Sons, contractors, had been excavating the lot for the Parke Building for three weeks when the adjacent row house at 5152 Ludlow Street entirely collapsed. The residents of the house escaped before the full collapse but lost all their possessions. Building inspector Charles T. Hart blamed a layer of quicksand under the rowhouse as the cause, not a lack of due diligence from the workers.³⁰

²⁷ Deed dated March 28, 1910, Earl B. Taylor to Mary M. Parke, deed book 1232, p 514; deed dated April 8, 1910, C. Howard Schermerhorn to Mary M. Parke, deed book 1209, p. 274; *Builders' Guide*, Vol. 25, no. 15, April 13, 1910, p. 228.

²⁸ “Explosion at Bank Puzzle to Police,” *Camden Post-Telegram*, November 29, 1910, p. 11. “Big Deal Closed,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 17, 1911, p. 40.

²⁹ 1900 United States Census, Enumeration District 498, sheet 4B, row 91; 1910 United States Census, Enumeration District 1011, sheet 7A, row 39.

³⁰ “Dwelling Falls into Pit Undermined by Excavation,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 26, 1910, p. 2.

DWELLING FALLS INTO PIT UNDERMINED BY EXCAVATION

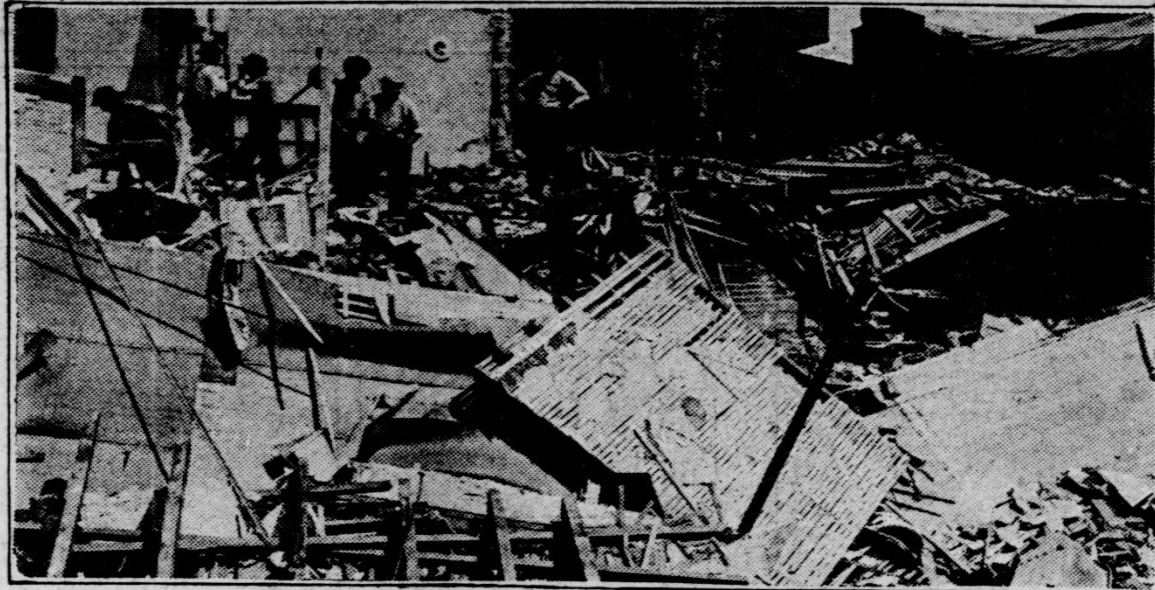


Figure 20: "Dwelling Falls into Pit Undermined by Excavation," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 26, 1910, p. 2.



MRS. O. P. BIEHL, WHO HAD NARROW ESCAPE

Figure 21: Susan Biehl, owner of 5152 Ludlow St, was displaced by the collapse. "Dwelling Falls into Pit Undermined by Excavation," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 26, 1910, p. 2.

Work on the Parke Building continued, but the project's luck remained bad.³¹ That November, a nitro-glycerin explosion rocked the work site and "wrecked a big derrick on the fourth floor." Police were puzzled but speculated that a man who had "obtained a position among the workmen" had placed the explosives in one of the supports of the derrick on a timed fuse as some kind of sabotage. "Only the dampness of the night, which to an extent counteracted the force of the explosion, prevented the wrecking of the entire building," reported the Camden Post-Telegram the next morning.³²

Susan Biehl and her husband O. P. Biehl, the owners of 5152 Ludlow Street, sued Parke for damages in early 1911, winning \$3364.³³ The Warren-Ehret roofing company sued Parke that October, and by December, she was ready to move on from the project.³⁴ She agreed to sell the partially-completed building to G. M. Bowen and Co., who planned to convert it into a department store.³⁵ That sale fell apart and the lawsuits piled on, from the Keystone Fireproofing Company, Fred O. Goodwin, the C. D. Pruden Company, the Federal Terra Cotta Company, the Hamilton Trust Company, and the Elevator Company.³⁶ The structure was sold at sheriff's sale in June 1912 for \$75,500 to satisfy a mortgage and mechanics' liens.³⁷ In September, Parke filed for bankruptcy.³⁸ In 1913, Parke married Charles J. Collins, a man in the oil business, listing her name as Mary M. Weir on the marriage certificate.³⁹ She seems to disappear from the record after that. H. H. Markley died in September 1913 at age 54, after suffering apoplexy that May.⁴⁰

In June 1913, William Hoffman and Co. was taking bids from contractors for the completion of the Parke Building as stores and offices.⁴¹ A month later, Charles O. Kruger, president of Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company, purchased the still-unfinished building with the prepared plans to complete it for use as "stores and apartments."⁴² By November 1913, the building was finished, and the stores began to be leased.⁴³

³¹ "Permits Issued Yesterday" *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 28, 1910, p. 13.

³² "Explosion at Bank Puzzle to Police," *Camden Post-Telegram*, November 29, 1910, p. 11.

³³ "Suits Begun," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 6, 1911, p. 4; "Court No. 3," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 29, 1912, p. 13.

³⁴ "Common Pleas," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 16, 1911, p. 7.

³⁵ "Big Deal Closed," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 17, 1911, p. 40.

³⁶ "Common Pleas," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 5, 1912, p. 13; "Common Pleas," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 10, 1912, p. 5; "Common Pleas," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 13, 1912, p. 5; "Common Pleas," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 23, 1912, p. 10; "Common Pleas," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 25, 1912, p. 11.

³⁷ "7-Story Building Sold for \$75,500," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 4, 1912, p. 5; deed dated October 21, 1912, from A. Lincoln Acker, sheriff, to Barry H. Hepburn, deed book 99, p. 492.

³⁸ "Bankruptcy," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 30, 1912, p. 11.

³⁹ Marriage License dated November 8, 1913, between Mary M. Weir and Chas J. Collins, County of Delaware, *Pennsylvania, Marriages, 1852-1968*, Ancestry.com, pp. 1011-12 of 1120.

⁴⁰ Death Certificate of Harry H. Markley, September 18, 1913, Registered no. 22175.

⁴¹ "Advance Construction News," *Builders' Guide*, Vol. 28, no. 23, June 4, 1913, p. 359. William Hoffman was collaborating at the time with Harvey Childs Hodgens, and the newspaper notice credits the work to "Hoffman and Hodgens": "Review of Week in Real Estate," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 1, 1913, p. 27.

⁴² "Transfers of Note," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 19, 1913, p. 13. "Review of Week in Real Estate," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 20, 1913, p. 15. Deed dated July 7, 1913, May H. Powers to Charles O. Kruger, deed book 243, p. 435.

⁴³ "West Philadelphia Values Raised," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 21, 1913, p. 13; "Leases Negotiated," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 23, 1913, p. 15.

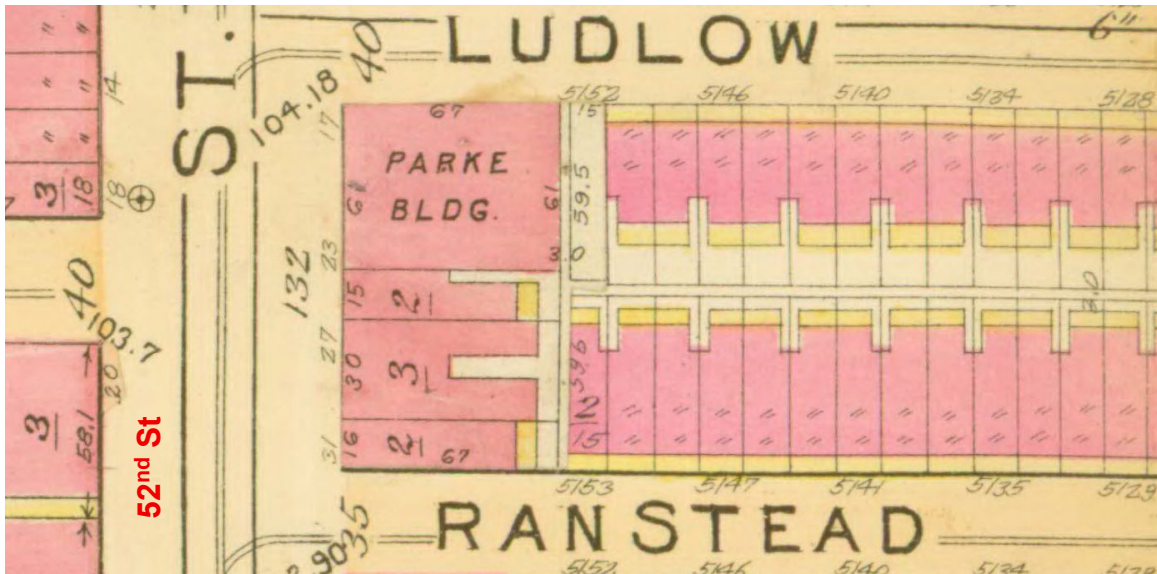


Figure 22: Atlas of the 27th & 46th Wards of the City of Philadelphia, Elvino Victor Smith, updated 1913, detail of plate 12. Athenaeum of Philadelphia.



Figure 23: 1914. Philadelphia City Archives, Department of City Transit collection.



Figure 24: 1914. photograph by N. M. Rolston, Philadelphia City Archives, Department of City Transit collection.

The completed building probably looked much like it does today, with the notable exception of the first two floors of the 52nd Street elevation, which were reworked a decade later. From the oblique views available in photographs taken in 1914, it appears that the original design, also limestone, looked much like the surviving elevation along Ludlow Street. Engaged pilasters defined each end of the façade, with three storefronts on the first floor. Each storefront had a retractable awning, above which was a long transom of prismatic glass to bring diffused natural light inside. A small cornice ran between the corner pilasters, visually differentiating the storefronts from the rest of the building.

On the second floor, two additional pilasters, one below each stacked bay, divided the façade into three segments. Between the pilasters were three ganged window units of three double-hung windows each. Below each of the stacked bays were two ornate corbels like those seen on the side elevation.

In December 1914, Kruger died suddenly, and it appears that his heirs could not maintain payments on the Parke Building, which was transferred to the Gilbert Building and Loan

Association by sheriff's sale in August 1915.⁴⁴ During this period, at least some of the space on the upper floors was dedicated to apartments; the 1920 United States Census records 34 residents of 23 S. 52nd Street.⁴⁵

The building passed through various hands before the West Philadelphia Bank purchased it on April 18, 1923, with plans to make extensive alterations.⁴⁶ Harvey Childs Hodgens was hired to oversee the significant alterations. Notices about the renovation in the *Philadelphia Builders' Guide and Real Estate Record* list a variety of interior work—including “banking fixtures, including glass, glazing, steel phone booths, steel coat closets, steel elevator enclosures, steel shelving, steel wainscoting, steel partitions, wire cages, radiator grills, all marble work, including terra cotta backing, counters and fronts, tile floors”—but also brick and limestone work.⁴⁷ It seems very likely that this included the exterior work to convert the storefronts to a façade befitting a bank.

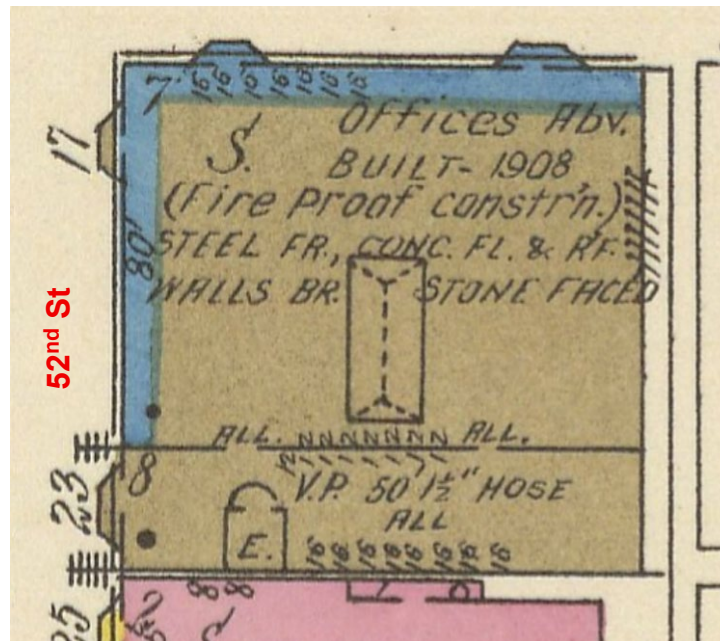


Figure 25: Insurance Maps of Philadelphia: Volume 15, Sanborn Map Company, 1923, detail of plate 1401. Pennsylvania State University Libraries.

In 1925, the building was transferred to the Bank and Trust Company of West Philadelphia as part of the absorption of the West Philadelphia Bank.⁴⁸ A year later, it merged with the Bankers Trust Company of Philadelphia.⁴⁹ When the Bankers Trust closed in 1930 amid the financial

⁴⁴ Deed dated August 7, 1915, A. Lincoln Acker, sheriff, to Gilbert Building and Loan Association, deed book 530, p. 242.

⁴⁵ 1920 United States Census, Enumeration District 1728, sheet 18B, rows 51-84. A sign reading “Apartments for Rent,” can also be seen in Figure 24.

⁴⁶ “Activities of Day in Real Estate,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 29, 1923, p. 11. Deed dated April 18, 1923, Joseph J. McCahan to West Philadelphia Bank, deed book 1498, p. 496.

⁴⁷ *Builders' Guide*, Vol. 38, p 405 and vol. 39, pp. 54 and 103.

⁴⁸ “A Special Stockholders' Meeting of...” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 17, 1924, p. 19. Deed dated June 19, 1925, West Philadelphia Bank to Bank and Trust Company of West Philadelphia, deed book 2145, p. 175.

⁴⁹ “Mr. Scott Elected President Chester Co. Trust Company,” *The Oxford Press*, February 6, 1930, p. 1.

crisis, the property was “frozen” along with the bank’s other real estate holdings.⁵⁰ In 1932, the Bankers Trust company sold the building to the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.⁵¹

West Philadelphia
BUSINESS PROPERTIES

ABSOLUTE AUCTION

By Order of
Hon. William D. Gordon
Secretary of Banking in possession of the
Bankers Trust Company of Philadelphia

**The Valuable 7-Story
Bank & Office Building**
Lot 61x67 Ft.



S. E. Cor.
52nd & Ludlow Streets
Thursday, May 5, 1932
At 12 NOON
(Daylight Saving Time)
On the Premises

Income-producing property in desirable business section of West Philadelphia.

The property is sold subject to a first mortgage of \$204,750, interest to the amount of \$8,392.50 and taxes for 1932.

Send for Detailed Description

WILLIAM R. SMITH, Special Deputy as Agent J. HIBBS BUCKMAN, Esq., Special Deputy Attorney General

SAMUEL T. FREEMAN & CO
Auctioneers—Established Nov. 12, 1805
1808-10 Chestnut St. Philadelphia
“Creators of the Best Immediate Market”

Figure 26: The_Philadelphia_Inquirer_1932_04_24_Page_67

In 1945, Rose and Solomon Feinstone purchased the building.⁵² Sol Feinstone had a degree in chemistry and served in the Navy before starting a construction business, which made him a fortune, though he always claimed the title of “socialist.”⁵³ It is somewhat difficult to document the Parke building’s occupancy during the Feinstones’ ownership. A bank, which started its residency in the building as “Tradesmen’s Bank” by 1951 at least, would continue in the first floor through many name changes—Provident Tradesmen’s, Provident National, and PNC—until sometime around 2015.⁵⁴ Indeed, a 1961 photograph [Figure 41] shows the bank operating

⁵⁰ “Millions ‘Frozen’ in Realty Holdings,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 23, 1930, p. 6.

⁵¹ Map Registry Ledger 17-2-22, rows 111-114. Deed dated December 26, 1945, Metropolitan Life Company to Jean Meier, deed book 1109, p. 177.

⁵² Deed dated December 26, 1945, Jean Meier to Rose Feinstone, deed book 1109, p. 165.

⁵³ “Sol Feinstone, 92; Unsung Philanthropist,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 18, 1980, p. 16.

⁵⁴ “As the Years Go By” (advertisement), *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 3, 1951, p. 57; Google StreetView shows an active PNC branch as late as October 2015 and the ATM was removed sometime in 2018; “Corporate History,” PNC.com.

on the first floor but there is also a sign offering upper floors for rent, suggesting that finding tenants for the large building was a challenge. A 1959 newspaper advertisement offered up to 19,000 square feet for rent, suggesting at least four floors were vacant.⁵⁵

In 1965, Sol Feinstone made local headlines for two major acts of philanthropy: he donated the David Library of manuscripts from early America to the Washington Crossing Memorial Building, and he gave free rent in the top six floors of the Parke Building, plus \$20,000 in renovation costs, to the Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC).⁵⁶

The Parke Building was the third branch of the OIC after the initial site in a former police station at 19th and Oxford Streets and one at 19th and Diamond Streets. At its opening in May 1965, 1500 people were enrolled in the program.⁵⁷

In 1976, Sol Feinstone officially transferred ownership of the Parke Building to the OIC.⁵⁸ In 1986, the OIC sold the building to 17-23 South 52nd Street Associates, who in turn sold to the West Philadelphia Economic Development Corporation, a non-profit, in 1991.⁵⁹ Under the non-profit's ownership, several attempts were made to rehabilitate the building, with the aim of converting it for "community education seminars, entrepreneurial and small-business development programs, employment and job-training workshops and social service programs."⁶⁰ It is unclear what rehabilitation work was completed. While the first two floors have been occupied at various times over the intervening years, it appears that the upper floors have been largely vacant since the OIC branch closed in the 1980s.

Criterion D

The Parke Building exhibits distinguishing characteristics of the Commercial Style, also called the Chicago Style because it gained prominence in that city, which became a popular architectural mode for tall buildings between the 1880s and 1920s and also influenced the design of smaller commercial or industrial buildings of that era.

Advances in structural steel enabled the construction of taller buildings, and the 1890s saw a proliferation of "sky-scrapers" in Philadelphia, chief among them City Hall, the exterior of which was completed in 1894. A poster produced in 1898 [Figure 27] shows many of these buildings, with cornice lines ranging in height from 100 feet tall to 225 feet tall. While embracing a variety of ornamental styles, most of these buildings featured a classically inspired, almost columnar,

⁵⁵ (Advertisement), *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 13, 1959, p. 24.

⁵⁶ Helen Rothbardt, "Ex-Immigrant Gives Job Center Building as Token of Humility," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 2, 1965, p. 44.

⁵⁷ "7000 Negroes Cheer at Rites for New Job Study Center," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 3, 1965, p. 27.

⁵⁸ (Untitled photograph and caption), *The Philadelphia Tribune*, November 20, 1976, p. 18. Deed dated September 1, 1976, S&R Foundation to Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc, deed book 1197, p. 30, document number 37322162.

⁵⁹ Deed dated July 15, 1991, 17-23 South 52nd Street Associates to West Philadelphia Economic Development Corporation, document number 45087277.

⁶⁰ Leslie Scism, "High hope at 52nd St. site," *Philadelphia Daily News*, July 31, 1991, p. 22; "Amendment to Final Statement for CDBG Year 16," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 31, 1992, p. 14; "Bustin' out all over," *The Philadelphia Daily News*, April 18, 1994, p. 26.

composition of a base of one to three stories, a shaft containing most of the height, and a capital of one or more penthouse floors.⁶¹



Figure 27: "Skyscrapers of Philadelphia," Webster & Hunter, 1898. Library of Congress.

Steel-frame construction allowed for an increasing number of windows relative to structural masonry, and a group of architects in Chicago began designing buildings in what came to be known as the Chicago or Commercial Style. In part, the style was developed as the result of working within parameters out of the architects' control. As the authors of *Industrial Chicago* put it in 1891:

The requirements of commerce and the business principles of real estate owners called this style into life. Light, space, air and strength were demanded by such requirements and principles as the first objects and exterior ornamentation as the second. Thus,

⁶¹ Kevin McMahon, "1232 Chestnut St," Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, designated February 11, 2022.

severity in many buildings, ornamentation in a few and massiveness in all. portrayed the varied ideas of owners in art matters, as well as their determination to build strong and large. The title, Commercial style [...] may be said to embrace, generally, all modern houses over seven stories in height.⁶²

Yet if the Commercial Style owed much to both technological advances and economic and logistical limitations, it was also developed as an aesthetic language of its own. The Commercial Style eschewed much of the ornament of earlier styles and made the form of the structure the primary aesthetic feature. The steel framework and exterior cladding became “structurally ornamental.”⁶³ In practice, this led to features such as tripartite windows and stacked projecting bays being commonly used to maximize light and air, and often the employment of terracotta cladding, which weighed as much as one-third as much as brick or stone construction.⁶⁴

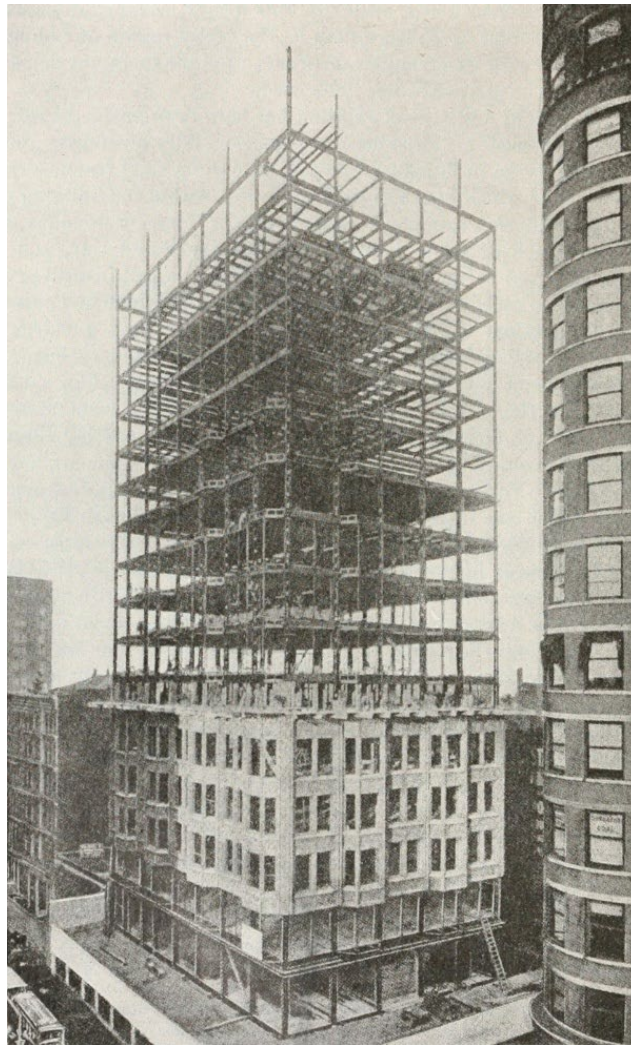


Figure 28: *The Fisher Building in Chicago, under construction (completed 1896)*. Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1903, p. 480.

⁶² *Industrial Chicago*, Goodspeed Publishing Co., Chicago, IL, 1891, p. 168.

⁶³ *Industrial Chicago*, Goodspeed Publishing Co., Chicago, IL, 1891, p. 70.

⁶⁴ *Industrial Chicago*, Goodspeed Publishing Co., Chicago, IL, 1891, p. 169.

Examples of the Chicago Style which offer precedents for the Parke Building's design include the Fisher Building (D. H. Burnham & Company, 1895-96) and the Chicago Building (Holabird & Roche, 1904-05).



Figures 29 and 30: The Fisher Building (left) and the Chicago Building. photographs by J. Crocker, via Wikimedia Commons.

In 1897, Daniel H. Burnham, one of the Chicago architects known for the Commercial Style, designed the first volume of the Land Title Building at 100 S. Broad Street, one of the first major buildings in the style in Philadelphia. Architectural historian George Thomas described the impact of the Land Title Building in his nomination to the National Register of Historic Places:

Because traditional building provided few experiences equivalent to the tall mid section, it is that zone which most often tested the turn of the century designer. Here Burnham clearly took his cues from his Chicago contemporary, Louis Sullivan who argued that a tall building was “a proud and soaring thing” rising as a solitary utterance from the earth. By designing a facade of continuous brick piers rising eleven stories to crowning round arches, Burnham gave vertical emphasis to the building setting it apart from all of the other tall buildings of Philadelphia which were designed in horizontal layers. That verticality was further emphasized by alternating strips of bay windows with flat window pairs between the piers, resulting in a subtle plasticity recalling the fluting of the classical column.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ George Thomas, “Land Title Building,” Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 1978. Reference number 78002450.



Figure 31: The older portion of the Land Title Building (built 1897-98) features stacked bays and a prominent cornice. Detail of photograph by Peter Olson, Olson Collection, Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

The aesthetics of the Commercial Style began to be adopted for more modest buildings. In 1900, Amos Barnes designed the DeLong Building at 1232 Chestnut Street, a seven-story office building. In his nomination of the DeLong Building to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, Kevin McMahon described its design thus:

The DeLong Building's large, repetitive bay windows are most indicative of the building's structural steel skeleton, demonstrating that a significant portion of the building envelope is not masonry [...] In fact, the stacked bay windows of the DeLong Building, continuous from the second through sixth floors, help to create a sense of verticality and an undulating surface that are perhaps the building's most defining characteristics.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Kevin McMahon, "1232 Chestnut St," Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, designated February 11, 2022.



Figure 32: DeLong Building, 1910. Ballinger Collection, Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

In 1901, two similar apartment buildings were erected across from each other on S. 36th Street. The Tracy at 20 S. 36th Street and the Normandie at the northeast corner of S. 36th and Chestnut Streets were both seven-story apartment houses designed by Samuel D. Milligan and Frederick Webber that featured stacked bays on the middle five floors and a prominent cornice.⁶⁷ Both buildings were converted to hotels in the following decades.

⁶⁷ *Builders' Guide*, March 3, 1901, Vol. 16, no. 11, p. 161; *Builders' Guide*, March 20, 1901, Vol. 16, no. 12, p. 177.



Figure 33: The Hotel Normandie at 36th and Chestnut Streets, 1948. photograph by Parker and Mullikin, Free Library of Philadelphia Print and Picture Collection.



Figure 34: The Hotel Tracy, 1951. Philadelphia City Archives, Department of City Transport.



Figure 35: Photograph of the Parke Building by author, 2026.

H. H. Markley's design for the Parke Building features trademarks of the Commercial Style, including the stacked bays and the tripartite windows which survive in the base along the north elevation and which can be seen in photographs of the original primary elevation [Figure 39, Figure 40]. The influence of precedents such as the Land Title Building, the DeLong Building, the Tracy, and the Normandie can be clearly seen, though the prominent use of white terracotta likely reflects the growing ubiquity of that material as the century moved into its second decade.⁶⁸

The façade includes some ornamentation, including quoins at the corners and egg-and-dart detailing around many of the window openings [Figure 36] and elaborate brackets at the cornice [Figure 37]. The overall visual impact, however, comes from the building's scale, the rhythm of the bays, and the terracotta cladding.



Figure 36: Cyclomedia.phila.gov.

⁶⁸ For instance, see the prominent use of white architectural terracotta in the buildings included in the Automobile Row Thematic Historic District, designated July 9, 2021.



Figure 37: Cyclomedia.phila.gov.

Traces of Markley's design for the base that would have housed bank on the first floor can be seen on the Ludlow Street elevation and in the second-floor portions captured in 1914 photographs [Figure 39 and Figure 40].⁶⁹ It appears that Markley drew on bank design of the era, using Neoclassical elements such as engaged pilasters and the scrolls over the windows, while also infusing elements of the Commercial style such as tripartite windows and simple masonry panel details in the spandrels between the first and second floors [Figure 38].



Figure 38: The Ludlow Street elevation blends Neoclassical and Commercial Styles. Cyclomedia.phila.gov.

⁶⁹ "Explosion at Bank Puzzle to Police," *Camden Post-Telegram*, November 29, 1910, p. 11. "Big Deal Closed," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 17, 1911, p. 40.



Figure 39: Detail of 1914 photo. Philadelphia City Archives, Department of City Transit collection.

Criterion C

While Markley's original design, such as it can be determined from contemporary photographs and the surviving building, exhibits a clear identity as a building in the Commercial Style, the subsequent alterations of the building's base along 52nd Street reflect the built landscape of Philadelphia in a period of rapid changes in architectural trends and shifting economic realities.

The extent of the work overseen by William Hoffman and Harvey Childs Hodgens to complete the building in 1913 is described in the *Builders' Guide* as "[I]nterior alteration and addition for stores and offices, electric light, steam heat."⁷⁰ It seems likely that the building's envelope, with the exception of the first-floor storefronts, was completed according to Markley's design.

The insertion of storefronts on the first floor came after the financial collapse of Mary M. Parke and H. H. Markley's initial project left the building unfinished. An ambitious plan to finish the

⁷⁰ "Advance Construction News," *Builders' Guide*, Vol. 28, no. 23, June 4, 1913, p. 359.

building as a department store did not come to fruition, perhaps due to the economic volatility of a neighborhood in its first decades of residential and commercial development; leased storefronts may have presented a more reliable return on investment.⁷¹



Figure 40: Detail of 1914 photo. photograph by N. M. Rolston, Philadelphia City Archives, Department of City Transit collection.

One decade later, Hodgins was hired to rework the primary façade when the first floor was converted for use as a bank. The resulting elevation incorporated some elements of the Commercial Style, with large fenestration and simple panel elements in the spandrels, while overall subscribing to the Beaux Arts or Neoclassical architectural vocabulary common for banks in this period. Hodgins' design came just before major changes in bank design and the widespread adoption of Art Deco forms. This evolution can be seen in the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society branch constructed in 1926-27 immediately across Ludlow St from the Parke

⁷¹ "Big Deal Closed," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 17, 1911, p. 40.

Building, which incorporates characteristics of stripped Classicism while responding to Art Deco aesthetics.⁷²



Figure 41: The renovated primary elevation of the Parke Building, with the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society branch bank (built 1926-27) visible in the foreground across Ludlow Street. Detail of 1961 photograph attributed to "Bender," Philadelphia City Archives, Law Department collection.

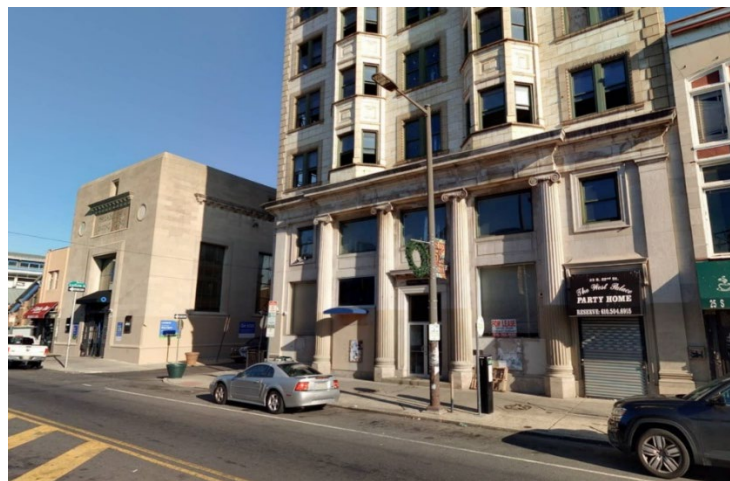


Figure 42: The building's base was reworked in 1923-24 along the 52nd Street elevation. The PSFS building next door, built just a few years later, reflects rapid changes in bank architecture in the 1920s. Cyclomedia.phila.gov.

⁷² For more scholarship on bank architecture in Philadelphia, see nominations for 15 S. 52nd Street, 2037 S. Broad Street, 5604 N. 5th Street, 820-26 E. Allegheny Avenue, and 601 S. Broad Street.



Figure 43: The Parke Building appears at the very edge of a 1929 aerial photograph by the Dallin Aerial Survey Company. Detail of photograph from Dallin Aerial Survey Company collections, Hagley Museum and Library.

Criterion H

The Parke Building was constructed as the tallest building in view and has remained a prominent landmark in the landscape in the century since. When George W. Reynolds of 1718 N. 56th Street tried to join the trend of climbing tall buildings as a “human fly” in 1923, he picked the Parke Building for maximum drama. His stunt was ultimately prevented by police.⁷³ The south elevation, designed as party wall, eventually became the largest billboard on the corridor [Figure 44].



Figure 44: 52nd Street seen in 1959, before both the State Theatre and the YMCA were demolished. Detail of photograph by Bob Fox, Free Library of Philadelphia Print and Picture Collection.

The attempts by the West Philadelphia Economic Development Corporation (WPEDC) to rehabilitate the Parke Building are a testament to its iconic status on the commercial corridor. In

⁷³ “‘Human Fly’ Halted by Police,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 14, 1924, p. 4.

the *Philadelphia Daily News*' 1991 coverage of the non-profit's proposal, WPEDC president Jerome Mitchell highlighted plans for a rooftop restaurant. "The view is breath-taking," Mitchell said. "You can almost see the entire city. You can almost reach out and touch Liberty Place." A prepared statement from U.S. Representative William H. Gray III reiterated this connection with what was then the tallest building in the city. Gray suggested that the rehabilitation of the Parke Building would "do for the [West Philadelphia] community what Liberty Place has done for Center City, both practically and symbolically." The accompanying illustration [Figure 45] imagined the non-profit's initials on the rooftop addition and a flag flying atop it, further emphasizing the building's height and prominence.⁷⁴

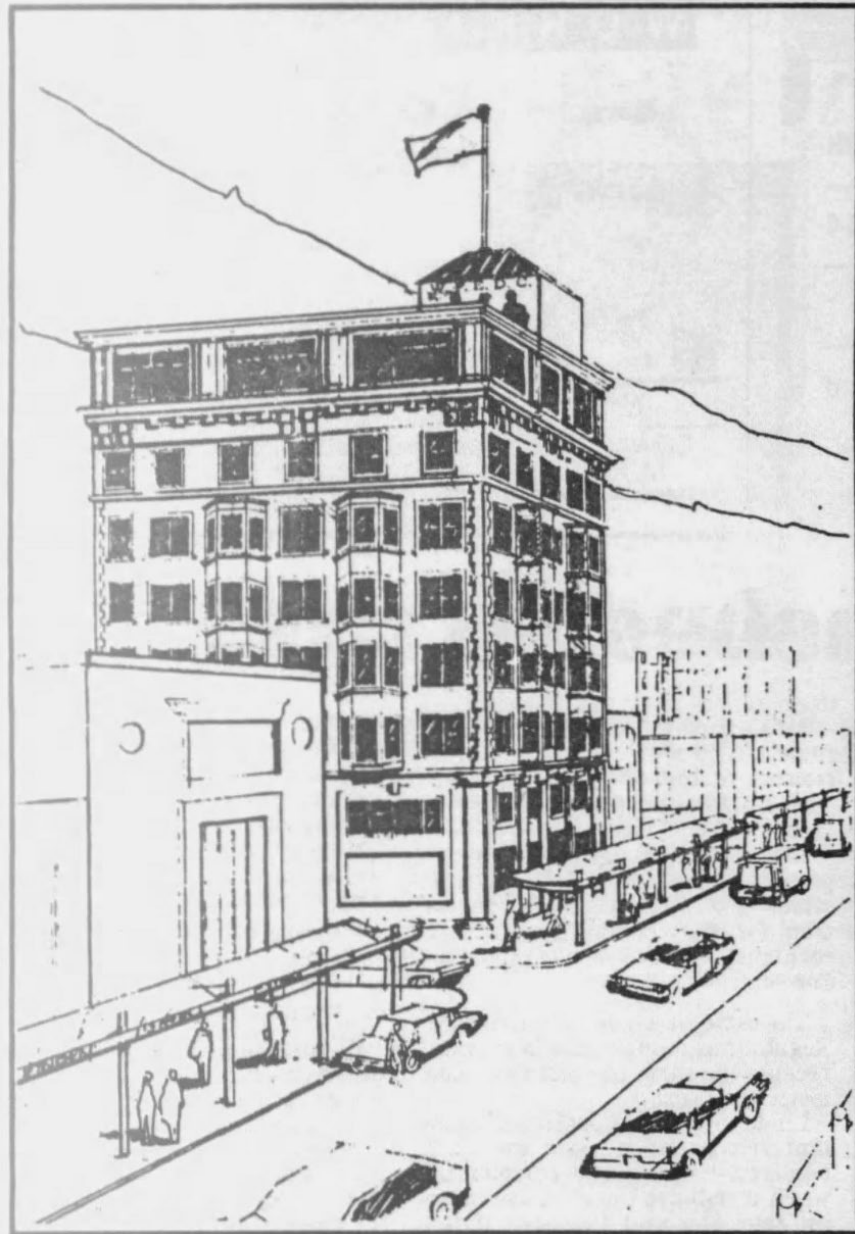


Figure 45: Illustration. Leslie Scism, "High hope at 52nd St. site," *Philadelphia Daily News*, July 31, 1991, p. 22.

⁷⁴ Leslie Scism, "High hope at 52nd St. site," *Philadelphia Daily News*, July 31, 1991, p. 22.



Figure 46: The West Philadelphia “Liberty Place” and Liberty Place, seen from the intersection of S. Cecil Street and Ludlow Street. Cyclomedia.phila.gov.



Figure 47: The cornice of the Parke Building (at right) joins the Philadelphia skyline in this 1993 photograph from the Market-Frankford Elevated line. Photograph by David Wilson.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Published Works:

Boyd's Co-Partnership and Residence Business Directory of Philadelphia City (1904), p. 692, accessed via HathiTrust.

Condit, Carl W., *The Rise of the Skyscraper*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1952.

"Corporate History," PNC.com: <https://www.pnc.com/en/about-pnc/company-profile/legacy-project/corporate-history.html>.

Industrial Chicago, Goodspeed Publishing Co., Chicago, IL, 1891, p. 168.

Thomas, George, "Land Title Building," Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 1978. Reference number 78002450.

Public Records:

Deeds (in chronological order)

February 15, 1902, Robert W. Fitzell, et al to Alexander Cowan, deed book 65, p. 247.

November 8, 1902, Alexander Cowan to Jane Rodgers, deed book 80, p. 518.

September 15, 1903, Alexander Cowan to J. Wilfred Hart, deed book 249, p. 185.

August 18, 1904, J. Wilfred Hart to C. Howard Schermerhorn, deed book 320, p. 423.

September 2, 1909, Jane Rodgers to Abraham Steinfield, deed book 1190, p. 190.

March 28, 1910, Earl B. Taylor to Mary M. Parke, deed book 1232, p. 514.

April 8, 1910, C. Howard Schermerhorn to Mary M. Parke, deed book 1209, p. 274.

October 21, 1912, from A. Lincoln Acker, sheriff, to Barry H. Hepburn, deed book 99, p. 492.

July 7, 1913, May H. Powers to Charles O. Kruger, deed book 243, p. 435.

August 7, 1915, A. Lincoln Acker, sheriff, to Gilbert Building and Loan Association, deed book 530, p. 242.

April 18, 1923, Joseph J. McCahan to West Philadelphia Bank, deed book 1498, p. 496.

June 19, 1925, West Philadelphia Bank to Bank and Trust Company of West Philadelphia, Deed book 2145, p 175.

December 26, 1945, Metropolitan Life Company to Jean Meier, deed book 1109, p. 177.

December 26, 1945, Jean Meier to Rose Feinstein, deed book 1109, p. 165.

September 1, 1976, S&R Foundation to Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc, deed book 1197, p.. 30, document number 37322162.

July 15, 1991, 17-23 South 52nd Street Associates to West Philadelphia Economic Development Corporation, document number 45087277.

October 4, 2021, R K Trading LLC to University City Capital Group LLC, document number: 53935233

Other Public Records

1900 United States Census, Enumeration District 711, sheet 8, rows 48-50.

1910 United States Census, Enumeration District 842, sheet 13A, rows 12-18.

1910 United States Census, Enumeration District 1163, sheet 9B, rows 97-100.

1910 United States Census, Enumeration District 1164, sheet 3A, rows 8-10.

1920 United States Census, Enumeration District 1728, sheet 18B, rows 51-84.

Burial Record for Harry H. Markley, September 22, 1913. Ancestry.com. *Pennsylvania and New Jersey, U.S., Church and Town Records, 1669-2013*, p 6195 of 6261.

Death Certificate of Harry H. Markley, September 18, 1913, Registered no. 22175.
"Last Will and Testament of Albert Kost," Cambria, Pennsylvania, Will Books, Vol 5-7, 1899-1907, pp 383-4, accessed via Ancestry.com.
Marriage License dated January 4, 1892, between F. P. Weir and Mary M. Parke.
Marriage License dated November 8, 1913, between Mary M. Weir and Chas J. Collins, County of Delaware, *Pennsylvania, Marriages, 1852-1968*, Ancestry.com, pp 1011-12 of 1120.
Zoning Application 101839 for demolition of 132 S. 46th Street.
Zoning Permit 704711, May 3, 2005.

Periodicals:

The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide (in chronological order)

March 3, 1901, Vol. 16, no. 11, p. 161.
March 20, 1901, Vol. 16, no. 12, p. 177.
March 12, 1902, Vol. 17, no. 11, p. 173.
September 18, 1907, Vol. 22, no. 38, p. 615.
September 2, 1908, Vol. 23, no. 36, p. 573.
April 13, 1910, Vol. 25, no. 15, p. 228.
June 4, 1913, Vol. 28, no. 23, p. 359.
June 27, 1923, Vol. 38, no. 26, p. 405.
January 23, 1924, Vol. 39, no. 4, p. 54
February 13, 1924, Vol. 39, no. 7, p. 103.

Philadelphia Inquirer (in chronological order)

"Munyon Explains His Success" (advertisement), Oct 20, 1895, p. 5.
"Released from Matrimonial Bonds," April 2, 1901, p. 10.
Obituary, December 12, 1903, p. 7.
"Real Estate Transfers," July 30, 1907, p. 8.
"The Latest News in Real Estate," August 11, 1908, p. 9.
"Real Estate Transfers," June 25, 1909, p. 9.
"Real Estate Transfers," July 10, 1909, p. 13.
"Permits Issued Yesterday," September 13, 1907, p. 9.
"Real Estate Transfers," March 14, 1910, p. 14.
"Dwelling Falls into Pit Undermined by Excavation," July 26, 1910, p. 2.
"Permits Issued Yesterday" July 28, 1910, p. 13.
"Suits Begun," May 6, 1911, p. 4.
"Common Pleas," October 16, 1911, p. 7.
"Big Deal Closed," December 17, 1911, p 40.
"Common Pleas," April 5, 1912, p. 13.
"Common Pleas," April 10, 1912, p. 5.
"Common Pleas," April 13, 1912, p. 5.
"Common Pleas," April 23, 1912, p. 10.
"Common Pleas," May 25, 1912, p. 11.
"Court No. 3," May 29, 1912, p. 13.
"7-Story Building Sold for \$75,500," June 4, 1912, p. 5.
"Bankruptcy," September 30, 1912, p. 11.
"Review of Week in Real Estate," June 1, 1913, p. 27.
"Review of Week in Real Estate," June 20, 1913, p. 15.

"Transfers of Note," July 19, 1913, p. 13.
 "West Philadelphia Values Raised," November 21, 1913, p. 13.
 "Leases Negotiated," December 23, 1913, p. 15.
 "Activities of Day in Real Estate," April 29, 1923, p. 11.
 "A Special Stockholders' Meeting of...", May 17, 1924, p. 19.
 "'Human Fly' Halted by Police," June 14, 1924, p. 4.
 "Millions 'Frozen' in Realty Holdings," December 23, 1930, p. 6.
 "As the Years Go By" (advertisement), January 3, 1951, p. 57.
 (Advertisement), March 13, 1959, p. 24.
 Rothbardt, Helen, "Ex-Immigrant Gives Job Center Building as Token of Humility," May 2, 1965, p. 44.
 "7000 Negroes Cheer at Rites for New Job Study Center," May 3, 1965, p. 27.
 "Sol Feinstone, 92; Unsung Philanthropist," October 18, 1980, p. 16.
 "Amendment to Final Statement for CDBG Year 16," March 31, 1992, p. 14.

Other Periodicals

"Bustin' out all over," *The Philadelphia Daily News*, April 18, 1994, p. 26.
 Carlisle, Dennis ("GroJLart"), "[Tower In The Parke: 52nd Street's Tallest Turns 100](#)," *HiddenCity*, Sept. 16, 2013.
 "Explosion at Bank Puzzle to Police," *Camden Post-Telegram*, November 29, 1910, p. 11.
 "Mr. Scott Elected President Chester Co. Trust Company," *The Oxford Press*, February 6, 1930, p. 1.
 Scism, Leslie, "High hope at 52nd St. site," *Philadelphia Daily News*, July 31, 1991, p. 22.
 "The Parke Opera House," *The Pittsburgh Post*, December 12, 1889, p. 1.
 (Untitled photograph and caption), *The Philadelphia Tribune*, November 20, 1976, p. 18.

Map References:

G. W. Bromley, *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia*, 1901, plate 24. Map Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia.
 G. W. Bromley, *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia*, 1910, plate 24. Athenaeum of Philadelphia.
 Elvino Victor Smith, *Atlas of the 27th & 46th Wards of the City of Philadelphia*, updated 1913, plate 12. Athenaeum of Philadelphia.
 Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Philadelphia: Volume 15*, 1923, plate 1401. Pennsylvania State University Libraries.

Nominations to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places:

Leech, Benjamin, [15 S. 52nd Street](#), designated May 13, 2011.
 McMahon, Kevin, [1232 Chestnut Street](#), designated February 11, 2022.
 - [2037 S. Broad Street](#), designated January 12, 2024.
 - [5604 N. 5th Street](#), designated June 12, 2026.
 McMahon, Kevin, and Logan Ferguson, [Automobile Row Thematic Historic District](#), designated July 9, 2021.
 Shachar-Krasnoff, Dan, [820-26 E. Allegheny Avenue](#), designated March 14, 2025.
 Stark, Hanna, [601 S. Broad Street](#), designated May 9, 2025.