

BOOK REVIEWS

more helpful for illustrative purposes. One also might hope for a bit more personal insight into the executives who led U.S. Steel, particularly after mid-century, and what they thought about the momentous developments in which they often participated. But it is impossible to discuss everything, and Warren has made wise choices. This is a solidly researched, clearly written volume on one of the most influential of American corporations at the height of the industrial era, and it should be read by anyone with a serious interest in steel.

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Thomas H. Keels. *Forgotten Philadelphia: Lost Architecture of the Quaker City*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007. Pp. vii, 309, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$40.00.)

Encyclopedic in scope and brimming with narrative detail, *Forgotten Philadelphia* presents a fascinating, if somewhat piecemeal account of significant Philadelphia buildings that have fallen to the wrecking ball. Despite its title, *Forgotten Philadelphia* is much more than a nostalgic tribute to these lost buildings; it weaves into the individual stories complex reflections on the finance, politics, changing architectural tastes, and sometimes social violence that attended the birth and demise of these structures. Because the story of each building is completely different, certain themes appear in one narrative only to disappear in the next. In reading through the myriad examples, one is struck by the great variety of reasons, often verging on quirks of fate, that ensure the demise of any one particular building. Building life spans seem to have lasted anywhere from a few months to a few centuries. Nevertheless, certain buildings become central case studies, illustrating a host of issues that run throughout the book. The case of Broad Street Station, for example, which also appears in the introduction, brings together issues of corporate and municipal power, technological and economic obsolescence, and shifts in architectural taste, all of which overlap in determining the trajectory of what had been one of the busiest railway terminals in the country. Thus, the book will be of interest not only to historians of Philadelphia, but also more generally to architectural historians, preservationists and geographers, for whom such issues have a broad relevance. While the book is engagingly written and

brings together an impressive array of evidence and detail, much of it also summarizes information from older histories and guidebooks on Philadelphia architecture. Although a few primary sources are cited, many more citations seem to have no more of a substantial basis than a website address. Because of its anecdotal structure, moreover, it is not a book that is likely to be read cover-to-cover, except by the most devoted followers of Philadelphia's local history. Rather, it seems most readily useful as a reference source, for those interested either in the histories of particular Philadelphia buildings or in certain periods of Philadelphia's architectural development.

While some of the buildings, especially those by better-known architects, such as Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Frank Furness and Louis Kahn, have been well documented by architectural historians, others, especially the more temporary structures have, in fact, been widely neglected or forgotten. Here the book provides a useful service by collecting building narratives that have never before been considered all together in one place. In justifying his choices for the inclusion of particular buildings, Keels makes reference to criteria set forth by the National Register of Historic Places. These criteria include not only architecturally significant structures, but also buildings that exemplified aspects of Philadelphia's "political, industrial, economic or social history" and "buildings associated with notable Philadelphians" (6). This method of selection, while not especially innovative, does have the effect of generating suggestive juxtapositions between buildings built roughly at the same time but not generally compared. Thus, for example an account of the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, an enormous, temporary and architecturally undistinguished structure for feeding the thousands of Union soldiers who passed through Philadelphia during the Civil War, illustrates the pivotal role that Philadelphia played in the transport and deployment of troops to the front. A few pages later, meanwhile, an account of the new mansions built around Rittenhouse Square during roughly the same period records the simultaneous rise of a new industrial upper class. Thus, buildings that might seem at first glance to be completely unrelated become drawn together, at least by implication, into a larger set of interdependent social spaces. The industrial scale of the refreshment stand and the private wealth of the industrial elite can appear as flip sides of the same phenomenon. Perhaps one of the most useful and thought-provoking aspects of the book is the manner in which it reveals a tension between the life-cycles of individual buildings and the overall structure of the city, both in social and physical terms. It remains the task of the reader, however, to make such connections explicit.

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The only explicit, overarching historical narrative that runs through the book is that which is contained in the introduction to each of the seven chapters. The first six chapters parcel out periods of history, roughly corresponding to the Colonial, Federal, Ante-Bellum, Gilded Age, Progressive, and Post-World War II eras, which have long been familiar to American historians. Each of these periods has had unique consequences for Philadelphia and its built environment, particularly as the relative economic and political status of the city shifted. Keels is not unique in pointing out these shifts, but his introductions contain useful reminders. The seventh chapter recounts, in a manner that compresses all the periods, architectural plans that were never implemented, except on paper. In contrast to the somewhat conventional periodization of Philadelphia architecture, the individual building entries continually break out of these periods. Because each entry follows the building until the moment of its destruction, its particular story may span three or more periods as the building is remodeled, expanded, falls into disuse and ultimately destruction. Thus, for example, one encounters the destructive role of the Independence Mall project, long before it appears as an entry in the Post-World-War II period. It also becomes clear from reading some of the entries that major cycles of economic change and architectural obsolescence have occurred within each of these periods. Some of the most poignant narratives are not of the old and venerable structures that have been callously sacrificed and publicly mourned, but of quite recent buildings that have been all but wiped from public consciousness. For example, Vincent Kling's Philadelphia Centre Sheraton of 1957, a centerpiece of Edmund Bacon's Penn Center plan fell victim to the sudden shifts in taste and fashion that occurred in the 1970s and 80s. Keel's description of the ball and grand opening that took place in the building in 1957 seems to jump from the page like the sudden return of a repressed memory. Marking a moment when leaders in the city were attempting to erase Philadelphia's Victorian past, the hotel reveals an image of Philadelphia's modernist future that has since become tarnished and faded.

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