events. Whenever America paraded or celebrated anything, the postcard photographer was there. When buildings burned or rivers flooded, when prohibitionists or suffragettes demonstrated, when workers struck, when political candidates ran for office, the postcard was there; it recorded everything. Most of these postcards were taken as souvenirs, not just the unusual, but also the ordinary. They are snapshots, quite without art, but in their very naïveté there is a fascinating charm and honesty. Finally, at a time when telephones were few and the mails were more reliable than they are today, they offered a way to stay in touch, to communicate with both a written and a visual message.

You do not have to be a historian to enjoy this book. You only need to be human. In these pages is something for every Pennsylvanian: the main streets of small towns like Perryville or Summerhill, the ferry across the Susquehanna at Meshoppen, the railroad station at Bellefonte, J. G. Lauer's Toy House in Pittsburgh, a Slavic wedding at Wilkes-Barre, a funeral procession of victims of a mine disaster, college life and student pranks, Pittsburgh's Luna Park and Woodside in Philadelphia, a barber shop in Bethlehem.

These are truly Hamlet's "trivial, fond records." The postcards have not ceased to communicate. This album has a real place on the modern coffee table.

Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania


Pittsburgh is not only famous for its athletic teams but also (or even more so) as the city in which private efforts have gone into the preservation of buildings and districts. It is one city in the United States that has not been urban renewalized into a desert. This has resulted from a teamwork among the government, business and industry, and the private citizen. Marshaling much of this support in the cause of preservation has been the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation. Associated with PH&LF during most of its history in a
leadership role has been Arthur P. Ziegler. It is fortunate that he is able to share his experience with us and write this book from his vast background of experience. Walter Kidney (who is less well known) brings as much experience, and the book is good as a result of this collaboration.

Although the book is aimed at small towns I would think it would be useful for anyone starting a preservation project. Preservation is a funny term. Just as the word “media” has lost all its modifiers to just mean “news media” in the present day so has the word “preservation” lost all of its modifiers to now mean saving old buildings and districts more or less in their original (or preserved) state. At one time it was the highest in the hierarchy of condition of any historical object, the actual hierarchy being (from best to worst) preserved, restored, or reconstructed. The word, as it is used in this book, is never really defined although anyone reading the book will soon learn what it really means.

Historic preservation is perhaps the most popular American pastime. There are areas that do not have bars, do not have schools, do not have American Legion Posts or baseball teams, but you would be hard pressed to go anywhere in America and not find a preserved house or district. Sometimes the house or district is preserved by accident. Especially in the Pittsburgh area, you can find whole streets of houses or buildings that are well preserved because for one reason or another the people living in them find it expedient to do so. Most buildings and districts, however, are preserved through the strenuous efforts of people. The Mexican War District is a good example of an organized effort in Pittsburgh. One can travel to Hudson, Ohio, and see one of the examples used in this book. It is how to develop the popular support necessary and, more important, how to raise the funds for it that Historic Preservation in Small Towns addresses itself.

Why did the authors pick small towns for their audience? They believe that larger towns, ones over 50,000 people, are better able to preserve buildings and districts. The reason the larger cities are better able to do this is, according to the authors, that they can marshal money and public awareness better than the small town or rural areas. On this basis (which some may question) the book develops its theme. The arrangement is quite straightforward. The first section builds up a justification and rationale for preservation, the second tells one how to do it, and the third is a number of case histories telling how others did it. There is an appendix with the usual list of agencies where one can go for help. This last portion will be very
helpful to people just starting out. As a matter of fact, the book is loaded with advice on where to turn for help.

The word "manual" in the title is an excellent description of the book. *Historic Preservation* is designed to be read quickly and to impart a lot of advice in a small space. The problem with a book like this, and one recognized by the authors, is that much of the advice becomes dated rather quickly. There would not be much point in writing a longer book as this should be rewritten on a regular basis to keep up with changing times. *Historic Preservation* is not something one will curl up by the fire with, but if you want to know how to save the house or business district the advice is here.

The case histories are one of the best parts of the book. The first one, Essex, Connecticut, is not exactly a success story and may be more helpful than some of the others in telling one what not to do. The case of Essex is a good contrast with the one following, that of Hudson, Ohio. Essex had no united citizen support and Hudson did. If there is any lesson in the book it is this one: get everyone behind you that you can. The case histories are about half the book and are either written by Kidney or by people in the town that is discussed.

The photographs are numerous and helpful. They reinforce the whole tone of the book which is to encourage people to try preservation for themselves. The illustrations are all from small towns and give the reader the idea that if "they can do it so can I." The book does not talk down to the reader but rather builds his confidence.

The book is not without faults. The "manual" aspect of it makes the reading tiresome at times and tends to make one feel he is being lectured to. The point of the book is often made by asking a series of questions. This might be a good way to make people think but sometimes you wish you had the answer rather than the question. The faults are few and minor especially when one considers the scope of the work and the changing and evolving nature of preservation.

It is sort of strange that with all the interest in preservation no one has produced a popular manual before this. *Historic Preservation in Small Towns* is really a manual for the whole preservation field. It is pleasing that the authors developed their expertise right here in Western Pennsylvania and that area readers can see some of the results of the techniques discussed in a short ride from home. I would recommend that anyone interested in preservation read this book.

*Old Economy Village*  
*Ambridge, Pennsylvania*  

Daniel B Reibel