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Lowering Grant Street

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Until the early 20th century, Grant's Hill hemmed in downtown on the east. "The Hump" had been lowered twice — in 1832 and 1846 — but it was still a formidable barrier to progress. It obstructed expansion of the city's business district and caused traffic congestion for trolleys and wagons struggling up Fifth Avenue to Grant Street. Removal of the hump was begun April 5, 1912, and completed November 17, 1913.

- The maximum cut, 16.3 feet, was made at the intersection of Wylie Avenue (above) and Fifth Avenue, at the Courthouse.
- Dirt was loaded into horse-drawn wagons, taken to a special platform at the Try Street yards of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and loaded into dump cars. It was then used as fill in low lying areas on the North Side and the ravine in front of the Carnegie Library in Oakland, now a parking lot.
- The lowered grade of Grant Street altered the facades of the Frick building and the Allegheny County Courthouse (left). When excavation revealed the basement level of the Frick Building, it was faced with stone and became the new entrance level.