



J&L open hearth crew, South Side, c. 1900.

Gift of LTV Corporation, MSP 33.B5.F19.

Construction workers stand artfully on a wood retaining wall, 1904.

This striking image reminds us of the importance of preserving the historic information with photographs. Familiar details are highly reminiscent of Pittsburgh—the rocky soil of the bluff, the sight of a wooden stairway climbing the side of the hill at right—but alas, the identification of the photo is unknown. A few tantalizing details offer clues. Posters on the wood scaffolding announce the first annual Swissvale Athletic Club Carnival, which ran from June 27 through July 2, 1904. Perhaps the image was taken somewhere in Pittsburgh's East End, where such advertisements would reach the intended audience. The building looming over the men features a bell, and a partially visible sign for an auditorium. Is it some sort of school? Most of the workmen hold shovels; a few have other tools. Five men standing at the base of the wall hold nothing—are they supervisors, engineers, or business owners? Did the men simply pose here? Much of the image remains a mystery but it still speaks of the hard work and effort it took to build the communities of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Phyllis Metz, PFF 63.

