

Fourth Ward Neighborhood  
Altoona  
Blair County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5786

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7-ALTO,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FOURTH WARD NEIGHBORHOOD

HABS No. PA-5786

*I write of men and women who came on the iron rail from the east to the west [to] the new railway village at the base of the Allegheny Mountains. . . . Their names are not found in "Who's Who." Their special acts have not been memorialized in bronze or marble. . . . These were homesteaders in the most effective manner. Everyone of them purchased the property in which he lived and settled down to the task of paying for it. Through thrift and economy he was at last successful.<sup>1</sup>*

Altoona's East Side developed both as opposition and complement to the city's commercial center. The original plan of Altoona (Fig. 1.1) shows two gridded areas approximately equal in size, separated by railroad tracks and the extensive PRR shops. The identity of each area grew more distinctive with time, due to conceptual differences and to the physical separation created by the tracks and shops in the central valley.<sup>2</sup>

The old East Side, with the Fourth Ward at its heart, became a primarily working-class neighborhood of modest family homes. A short row of company housing built on 8th Avenue in 1853 first marked the East Side as a residential area for PRR employees.<sup>3</sup> Compared to surviving houses in the First Ward area, those in the Fourth Ward tend to be modest in size and style. Yet the East Side quickly grew to encompass more than just houses. As transportation across the tracks was limited, the East Side developed its own commercial and institutional structure where East Side residents could purchase most goods, attend church, the theater or school, and find employment.<sup>4</sup> Altoona's substantial German immigrant population settled primarily in the Fourth Ward and the adjoining Second and Sixth wards, bringing to the area a distinctive ethnic flavor and the nickname "Dutch Hill." By the late nineteenth century, 8th Avenue may well have rivaled the downtown 11th Avenue as a conceptual center for the city.

Set on a hill rising over the city, today the Fourth Ward is physically divided into several sections, each quite distinct in character (Fig. 1.2). At the top of Prospect Hill, from 1st to 4th avenues, the area is heavily and almost completely residential. Here, the remaining core of a larger nineteenth-century neighborhood survives. Past the 1st Avenue survey boundary and over the hill into Pleasant Valley, houses are newer and less densely placed. Between 4th and 6th avenues a complex of schools--

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. William M. B. Glanding, "Eighth Avenue When the City Was a Village," Altoona Tribune (January 15, 1916), sec. 3, 3.

<sup>2</sup>From 1850-54 the PRR ticket office was located on 9th Avenue, spurring development on the east side of the city, but when the PRR's track across the Alleghenics was opened in 1854, the new main line ran along 10th Avenue. A new train station and hotel decided the west side's role as commercial center. The track along 9th Avenue became a branch line to Hollidaysburg. George A. Wolf, ed., Blair County's First Hundred Years (Hollidaysburg, Pa., 1945), 27.

<sup>3</sup>In the early years, at least, the area was home to management-level employees, including Andrew Carnegie and Samuel Vaclair, as well as skilled workers. Edgar Custer, No Royal Road (New York: H. C. Kinsey & Co., 1937), 2. Anna and Louis Leopold correspondence with Kim E. Wallace, August 17 and September 12, 1990.

<sup>4</sup>Crossings over the shops and tracks have consisted, over time, of some combination of one or two vehicle bridges, a foot bridge, and street cars.

including an elementary school, a vocational school, the Altoona junior and senior high schools, and the public library--over the years has replaced many of the residential structures in this section. Large public buildings and open spaces set the tone. Below 7th Avenue intermittent residential buildings continue to mix with churches and a variety of commercial structures. The steep grade has leveled out, and a row of 8th Avenue churches and the Station Mall (on the former site of PRR shops) predominate.<sup>5</sup> The recent 17th Street highway serves both as access into the area or an effective bypass around it.

Over time, Altoona's Fourth Ward has proved to be an area turned primarily inward on itself. At its height, this East Side neighborhood, with its layered residential, institutional, and commercial components--rivalled the downtown as a focus for the city. Yet, this role has diminished over the years. East Side establishments may have once duplicated the functions of those found in the downtown, but the area never superseded the city's commercial center. Only the presence of the high school, or particular ethnic establishments, turned citywide attention to the Fourth Ward. While the neighborhood's well-being lies in the strength and focus of its community, community vitality has always been dependent on the city of Altoona as a whole. As a working-class, ethnic neighborhood, the Fourth Ward has been selectively focused, existing primarily to serve the shared needs of its particular residents.

### John Wright and the Fourth Ward Plan

When Altoona was laid out on the site of David and Susannah Robeson's farm in 1849, the East Side ran approximately from what are now 9th to 4th avenues and from 12th to 16th streets. This area, with the addition of the blocks from 4th to 1st avenues, was designated as the Fourth Ward in 1868.<sup>6</sup> The gridded layout is like other parts of Altoona. Main parallel avenues are intersected at even intervals by perpendicular streets, while alleys paralleling the avenues provide service access to the backs of lots. As the distance between streets is much greater than that between the avenues, distinctive streetscape types developed. Individual plots were oriented to face the unbroken avenue frontage, marking the intended site of community interaction and formalized presentation. Houses were built accordingly, and neighborhood development reinforced a focus on the avenue streetscape. Streets served a secondary function for the neighborhood, as access to the avenues and as thoroughfares into and out of the area. Alleys provided informal access to individual homes.

Each structure in the Fourth Ward was built on land that once belonged to Jane and Archibald Wright. Irish immigrants and residents of Philadelphia, Wright and his wife are most often associated with the founding of the city of Altoona, yet their son, John, should probably receive this credit. John Armstrong Wright worked as an engineer under J. Edgar Thompson in Georgia before becoming a member of the first PRR board of directors. From 1848-68 he supervised the Freedom Iron Works near Lewistown, Mifflin County. The 1923 Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania Biography claims that:

Mr. [John] Wright laid out the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania, the original deeds being in

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<sup>5</sup>These sections within the Fourth Ward are now formalized through zoning designations that reflect historical patterns of use and development as well as current perceptions of the area. Zone Map of Altoona (1983).

<sup>6</sup>The next annexation to affect the Fourth Ward was made April 3, 1905, and consisted of an area bounded by Crawford Avenue alley and Walton Avenue, 12th to 16th streets. Another on March 30, 1906, added 12th to 16th streets, Walton to Bell avenues. Three other annexations that brought the Fourth Ward to its present size were made in the 1920s: April 19, 1921--14th to 15th street, Grant Avenue to Grant Avenue alley; January 2, 1928--13th to 14th streets, Grant Avenue alley to Walton Avenue; January 7, 1929--12th to 16th streets, Bell Avenue to Polk Avenue. The survey area of this study included only the pre-1905 boundaries. "Great Expansion Record Shown by City Since 1868," Altoona Mirror (June 13, 1939).

his name. The shops there maintained by the Pennsylvania railroad are built on ground presented by him to the company.<sup>7</sup>

While the first deed to Altoona is in fact in his parents' names, a deed of 1850 appoints him "as true and lawful attorney to grant, bargain, and sell that tract or parcel." Archibald and Jane Wright transferred their property to John in 1858.<sup>8</sup> It is John Wright's name that appears in connection with the development of Fourth Ward and the distribution of property within it.

As agent and owner of East Side properties, Wright had the potential to shape and control development in this part of Altoona. His policy appears to have been straightforward: from the earliest date, lots in the Fourth Ward were generally sold individually or in small parcels that were later broken up. Today, most houses rest on a half-lot 25' along the avenue front and 120' back to the alley. Common variations occur when a wider house sits on a 50' lot, or when a single corner lot is developed with several houses facing the longer street-front side of the property. Such variations, though, were mostly the choice of individual owners and builders. Wright was not an Altoona resident, and it is not clear exactly how he, or his agent, Clement Jaggard, handled the business of land distribution.<sup>9</sup> Successive maps of the area show that development was heaviest closest to the railroad tracks and moved progressively outward. Though certain lot locations may have been more socially desirable, Wright's tax records indicate that all subdivided land was considered of equal value.

### PRR Influence

More formative to the East Side's development was the proximity and influence of the PRR. The earliest photographic view of the shops shows a fledgling residential East Side in the distance (HABS No. PA-5784). Although PRR-built workers' houses were sold to private owners at an early date, the pattern for development of a workers' neighborhood was firmly established. Altoona is not strictly a company town, since the PRR did not assume overall responsibility for the city's infrastructure and housing stock. PRR influence in Altoona was filtered, instead, through an independent municipal structure and through private individuals--developers, builders, PRR workers, and other city residents--who took up the task of creating a residential environment.

The railroad shops were technically part of the Fourth Ward, ensuring that direct ties to the neighborhood continued. The intersection of work and home sites is seen in the East Side location of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen meeting hall, designed by Altoona architect D. George Puderbaugh and built in 1914 at 8th Avenue and 10th Street. The PRR provided the area with its first firehouse near

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<sup>7</sup>Thomas Lynch Montgomery, ed., Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania Biography (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1923), 14: 85-7.

<sup>8</sup>Most histories of Altoona suggest that the entire Robeson farm, purchased by Archibald Wright in April 1849, was immediately incorporated into the city, however, the area from 1st to 4th avenues is not accounted for. The 1858 deed listed by their letter designations the blocks in the original plan extending to the present 4th Avenue. It also described a tract "adjoining lands of \_\_\_ Bell \_\_\_ Hileman & others & the Town of Altoona aforesaid & laying South East of the said Town & containing \_\_\_ Acres more or less," that apparently was the area between 4th and 1st avenues that was incorporated into the city by 1868. Although deeds in the tract refer to a plot plan of this addition "A" to Altoona, no plot map or associated deed filed for the area could be found. Altoona tax assessment records show John Wright taxed for the first time in 1869 for "Plot of ground formerly outside the City Limits." By 1871 the area was described as seventeen acres "in common" suggesting that it had not yet been developed. In 1877, a new lot-by-lot enumeration of Wright's holdings was included in tax assessment records. Deed books: C/321, 1/1-3.

<sup>9</sup>Tax records specifically listed Clement Jaggard as agent to John Wright in the years 1886-90, then listed Couch & Morgan subsequently. Couch & Morgan continued as agents for the Wright estate after 1892.

the shops at 9th Avenue and 12th Street (later relocated at 1231 6th Ave. as the Good Will Fire Company, HABS No. PA-5850). Likewise, the first telephones came to the homes of East Side residents at the instigation of the PRR. In 1907, 165 telephones were installed in area homes to more efficiently call train crews to work; some 200 trainmen lived in what was known as "the First Calling District"--the area from 7th to 17th streets and from 1st to 9th avenues. Because "the experiment proved so successful," a second calling district was equipped within a few months, placing 220 phones in the area from Kettle to 7th streets and from 1st to 9th avenues.<sup>10</sup>

#### Fourth Ward Residents

The occupational and class homogeneity of Fourth Ward residents, and the importance of the PRR as an employer, emerges from a comparison of tax-assessment records. Altoona taxes were based on occupation: to determine tax owed, the local Fourth Ward assessor used occupation to place each area resident into one of six flat-rate categories. By dividing area residents in this way, the assessor has provided a key to perceived relationships between occupation and socioeconomic class in Altoona's Fourth Ward.

In 1878 the assessor encountered a total of 414 taxable residents (Fig. 1.3). He assigned only one resident to each of the three lowest categories. One-hundred-sixty residents were ranked in the fourth category; of these, 128 were laborers. The rest fell into a number of skilled positions: there were six brakeman; six clerks; three shoemakers; two blacksmiths, firemen, ministers, moulders, and painters; one boilermaker, machinist, printer, tinner, and weaver. Of the thirteen different occupations in this category, ten could have been encompassed by the PRR.

The majority of Fourth Ward residents, 241, were taxed in the fifth occupational category in 1878. Carpenters (150), machinists (47), blacksmiths (23), moulders (21), engineers (16)--all skilled occupations needed by the PRR--accounted for most of these men. Merchants (12) were the largest group among the remaining occupations. Represented in smaller numbers were boilermakers, clerks, conductors, foremen, patternmakers, and tinner. Only ten residents were ranked in the highest category. They included a banker, brewer, contractor, doctor, and a merchant; the remaining five were foremen.

The 1901 tax assessment records show an increase and maturing of the Fourth Ward population (Fig. 1.4). The number of taxable residents rose from 414 to 787, and the lowest tax category included fifteen invalids and twenty-three retirees. The overall population shifted downward in rank; this time the assessor placed the majority of residents in the fifth (215) and fourth (477) categories. He placed only eight residents in the highest tax category, forty-four in the second highest. This downward shift may reflect changing attitudes toward the relative prosperity of Altoona's working class. It may also indicate an upper-end increase in status for the neighborhood's elite. The records reveal a continued PRR dominance. Significant increases in the number of machinists (111) and clerks (70) in the third category and of laborers (207) in the fifth, indicate the company's growth as jobs increased in record keeping, and in both technical and unskilled areas.

While research in the First Ward and in Altoona as a whole has shown the city to have a fairly homogeneous, native-born American population from its start, there were significant areas of ethnic

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<sup>10</sup>J. Simpson Africa, History of Huntingdon and Blair Counties, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1883), 152. Altoona Charter Centennial (Altoona, 1968), 25.

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concentration. Of the immigrant groups that came to Altoona, Germans were among the most numerous. They settled on the East Side, particularly in the Fourth Ward, which popularly became known as Dutch Hill.<sup>11</sup> By the late nineteenth century, the majority of Fourth Ward residents were German; German churches, schools, social clubs, and commercial establishments grew in the area to meet their needs.

Most German immigrants were newly arrived from Europe; the majority came to work for the PRR. As the seventy-fifth anniversary history of St. James German Evangelical Lutheran Church explains:

Mechanics were needed to man these [railroad] shops . . . ; those who had learned their trades in Europe were the most sought after. German mechanics were especially welcomed because of their ability, diligence and application. These Germans wrote to relatives and friends in the old country, telling them of the favorable outlook. This, in turn, caused much immigration in the [1850s], which continued to the turn of the century.<sup>12</sup>

Once they arrived, however, many German immigrants found jobs in support occupations such as grocer, butcher, baker, shopkeeper, seamstress, and hotel proprietor. These catered to the needs of a growing, family-based, multi-generational community. In time, many German women found employment in Altoona's two silk mills. Established residents often served as sponsors to new immigrants, introducing them to the community networks, providing a place for them to stay, and helping family members find jobs. In the absence of extended families, sponsorship helped to foster kinship-like ties within the immigrant community.

It has been argued that ethnic ties develop in opposition to the unfamiliar new surroundings of the host country.<sup>13</sup> A range of institutions emerged to bring the Fourth Ward ethnic German community together. The United Church of the Brethren, St. Mary's Catholic Church (HABS No. PA-5847-A), and St. James Lutheran Church (HABS No. PA-5860) were established especially for the German population. Altoona is a place of many clubs and social organizations, and Germans were instrumental in creating and joining these groups. As an essay on "Social Life in Altoona," explains:

Clubs attract many of the German people of both sexes, and lodges and secret societies draw largely on the male members of the community, while theater going is a popular amusement with young and old of both sexes so far as they can afford the necessary expense.<sup>14</sup>

Specifically German organizations included the Concordia, Frohsinn, and Maennerchor Singing Societies;

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<sup>11</sup>17th rather than 16th Street is the more familiar southern boundary of the Dutch Hill area. Germans of Bavarian origin tended to live in the area from Crawford Avenue to Pleasant Valley, while Germans from other areas lived on 1st through 4th avenues.

<sup>12</sup>"Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1861-1936," 21.

<sup>13</sup>Abner Cohen, ed., "Introduction: The Lesson of Ethnicity," in Urban Ethnicity (New York: Tavistock, 1974), ix-xxiv. Frederick Barth, ed., "Introduction," in Ethnic Groups and Boundaries (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1969), 9-38. Anya Peterson Royce, Ethnic Identity: Strategies of Diversity (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982).

<sup>14</sup>Charles B. Clark, Illustrated Altoona (Altoona, 1896), 128.

the Altoona Turgemeinde, a gymnastics group; the Bavarian Hall, the Swiss Rifle Club, Unter Uns Club, and Truchtenverein. Many of these met in buildings on the East Side. The Frohsinn's building at 9th Avenue between 11th and 12th streets was described in 1896 in Illustrated Altoona:

the second and third stories . . . are arranged as a theater, and the building is now known as the East Side Theater. Occasional plays are produced here, sometimes by home talent and at other times by traveling troupes, the rates being usually 30 cents for seats and, of course, the plays are such as are usually produced by low-priced companies.<sup>15</sup>

Although not always flattering, this description does reveal a citywide understanding of the German community's shared social and economic status. Several building and loan associations, most notably the Germania and Teutonia, catered to the special needs of the German population.

Altoona's German immigrants adapted both to American society and to the culture of the area's pre-existing German populations. In popular thought, the Pennsylvania Germans, or "Pennsylvania Dutch" are members of certain sectarian groups such as the Amish and Mennonites.<sup>16</sup> Pennsylvania German culture is more accurately a complex of practices that developed through the interaction of many German groups in an American context over 300 years of influx and change. It includes a distinctive German dialect and variations in the preparation of food, and the development of hybrid Protestant denominations. In Altoona, the continued influx of native-born Germans kept the issue of ethnicity in delicate balance. German residents sought to maintain the culture of their origins, yet systematically placed their churches, clubs, organizations, schools, neighborhoods and neighbors into already-established Americanized structures.

At the turn of the century, a number of Italian immigrants came to Altoona and settled at the northern border of the Fourth Ward. Following the pattern of their German predecessors, Italians tied their community to a set of distinctive religious, commercial, and social institutions. In building an ethnic Catholic church, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel (HABS No. PA-5854) at 8th Avenue and 11th Street, working-class Italians, like the Germans at St. Mary's before them, built in stages. A cornerstone was laid in 1912, the building completed in 1923, and the mortgage paid off in 1950. In 1920, the Italian National Bank was established in a building across the street; today it stands next to the Italian-American Grocery. Social organizations included the Christopher Columbus Society, Italian-American Citizens' Society, San Donato Society, Crown of Italy Society, Abruzzese Society, and the Roman Ladies Political Society.<sup>17</sup>

## Housing Stock

At the base of the Fourth Ward's neighborhood vitality are hundreds of residential structures--the houses and homes of Altoona's working classes. When the PRR built the first of its eight company

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 130.

<sup>16</sup>Of Swiss or Palatine origin, these sects maintain a separation from general society along with a distinctive "plain" style of dress and selective rejection of modern technology.

<sup>17</sup>Our 75 Years Together: Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish And Franciscan Friars, T.O.R. (Tappan, NY: Custombook Inc., 1985), 10-19. "Italian Bank to be Opened in Altoona," Altoona Mirror (May 3, 1920); "Italian-American Groups Aid in Advancement of Altoona," (August 12, 1949); "Count Ranuzzi Opens Consulate," (December 3, 1912).

houses on the East Side in 1853:

It stood quite isolated, being almost the only house in the neighborhood. . . . The land between it and the railroad was unenclosed common, a portion of which was marshy, while a stagnant pond occupied a part of its area. To cross this common in the daytime required caution, and after dark necessitated a lantern.

But by 1883 this local historian could report that these same blocks were "now solidly occupied by fine residences, lawns, shrubbery, and gardens--not only these, but for many squares beyond, into what was formerly a considerable woods."<sup>18</sup> Such reminiscences of Altoona's rapid development abound. As one writer reported in 1916, "Altoona has passed through several periods or ages," ranging from the age of mud, to the age of wood, to the present age of brick and cement.<sup>19</sup> In his recollection, the author suggests a series of dramatic transformations in which the frontier-like company town became a comfortable middle-class city.

Single-family houses make up the vast majority of surviving Fourth Ward structures, followed in number by multi-family units which are often free-standing double houses. Most of these structures are unique, built by individual private owners. Contractors or investors built a few small groups of identical houses in the Fourth Ward, but larger scale tract development was more common elsewhere in the city.

While most Fourth Ward houses are free-standing single-family structures facing on 25'-avenue-front lots, there are variations in this pattern. Most common are double-wide houses, attached double houses, and houses facing the street side of corner lots. In other cases, an auxiliary house on the back of a corner property was built facing the alley's edge (HABS Nos. PA-5864, PA-5865). Corner lots in general are the most frequent site of exception and variation within the pattern of uniform domestic development. Almost every corner has a double or large house (HABS No. PA-5832, for example), a local business or a small alley house.

A profile of the typical Fourth Ward house can be developed from aggregate survey information. It is two-and-a-half stories with a side-gable or cross-gable roof, wood-frame, from 20-25' wide, occupies a single lot, was originally sided in wood but now is covered with aluminum or vinyl, and dates from ca. 1890-1900. A somewhat less typical neighbor retains its original siding, which may be either wood cladding or a brick veneer. Fourth Ward houses do, of course, represent a full range of types, from the smallest gable-front house at 1509 4th Ave. (HABS No. PA-5845) dating from 1870, to the large style-bearing house built at 1329 8th Ave. (HABS No. PA-5859) as a doctor's home and office in 1888 and now used as a funeral home. But these few are exceptions, making up about 18 percent of the total sample. The neighborhood housing pattern, with its large number of mid-range homes, supports Altoona's claim to being a city of the working middle class.

Almost all domestic structures encountered in the Fourth Ward survey area can be divided among several formal groups. Almost all residences are two-and-a-half stories tall, although some have only crawlspace-sized attics, some have full third floors, and a few of the newest are one-story ranch houses. Side-gable houses are most often three bays wide--although two-bay examples are occasionally found--and

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<sup>18</sup>Africa, 140.

<sup>19</sup>Glanding, Altoona Tribune, sec. 3, 3.

are almost always configured with a main door at one or the other side of the front facade (HABS No. PA-5819). Cross-gable houses are substantially similar, with either a centered or asymmetrical cross gable adding late Victorian interest to the roof line. These cross-gable houses and contemporary side-gable examples are more likely to have ornate porches, bay windows, towers, or other ornamental features in keeping with late-nineteenth-century stylistic trends. A small number of gable-front houses are usually two bays wide, while gambrel-front houses from the early twentieth century are wider and have three bays across the front. Entrance doors are again offset at one side. Mansard and hipped roofs are occasionally present, particularly on some of the larger style-bearing houses built by wealthy individuals; several mansard-front roofs are also found in imitation of the more complete and more expensive examples (HABS No. PA-5866). Some hipped roofs represent the only modest gestures toward Colonial Revival styles found in the Fourth Ward area. Aside from these major groups, characterized by roof type, a number of very small houses are best characterized by size rather than form, as are another group of exceptionally large and substantial houses. These two groups in aggregate make particular economic statements about segments of the Fourth Ward population.

The overwhelming majority of houses surviving in the Fourth Ward, 73 percent, are side-gable and cross-gable types. Of these, side-gable houses predominated, at 44 percent of the total housing stock. Gable-front houses, more typically considered an urban form, are relatively scarce, although when gambrel-front houses are added to this total, it begins to have significance (18 percent of surviving housing stock). As the nineteenth century progressed, first side-gable and later cross-gable types were preferred for new building in the Fourth Ward area. The largest group of new side-gable houses appeared in 1888-94, while the largest group of cross-gable houses appeared in the years from 1894-1909. This is in keeping with general architectural trends throughout the United States.

Side-gable houses predominate over time. Buildings in the survey were dated using a series of insurance maps that set time periods for the area: pre-1882, 1882-88, 1888-94, 1894-1909, 1909-32, 1932-51, 1951-68, and post-1968. In each period, the most common form of new construction that has survived is the side-gable house. This predominance is most striking in the earliest pre-1882 period, where 55 percent of surviving houses from that time have side gables. Few houses built in 1882-88 survive. In the next large group of survivors, dated 1888-94, 53 percent of the surviving houses are again side-gabled, followed by 26 percent that are cross-gabled in type. By 1894-1909, the number of side-gabled houses has dropped to 42 percent; by 1909-32 it is down to 26 percent. In place of side-gabled houses, the percentage of gable-front and gambrel-front structures increases, from 12 percent in 1894-1909 to 35 percent in 1909-32. Only one house in the survey was built between 1932-51; it is a gable-front house.

Data available is for surviving houses only, and does not take into account homes that were built in the Fourth Ward area and subsequently demolished. Yet, certain conclusions can still be drawn about patterns of new construction. The small number of surviving houses built between 1882-88 (4 percent of total), and the large number built in the next six-year span (28 percent of total) shows that there was a significant building boom in the eastern part of the survey area; the front line of heavy settlement had just then reached the area above 4th Avenue. Likewise, the increasing number of cross-gable houses (15 percent pre-1882, 26 percent 1888-94, 37 percent 1894-1909) corresponds to familiar stylistic trends in domestic vernacular architecture. A cross-gable is a primarily cosmetic feature added to a basic side-gable house; it provides some additional light and floor space in the upper or attic floor but does not in itself represent a major conceptual shift. The increase in gambrel-front houses during the 1910-20s is likewise a marker of changing architectural style.

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Almost every domestic structure in the Fourth Ward, more than 95 percent in total, is wood frame. This includes most of the brick examples (81 percent), which are actually wood frame with a brick veneer. Almost all other frame houses were originally sided in wood. Many of even the smallest houses were decorated with extensive Victorian trim often referred to as gingerbread or carpenter Gothic; original wood siding was most often novelty or drop siding, having a decorative groove along the top edge of each board that creates a shadowed effect. Today, aluminum siding is the predominant exterior material (28 percent). Other frequently found replacement siding materials include: vinyl, cement asbestos, asphalt sheet or shingle, and formstone. Twenty-three percent of the surviving houses still have wood siding. While some concrete block appears in replacement foundations, concrete or stone building materials are almost exclusively confined to church and school buildings.

Of course, attention to surviving houses tells us as much about attitudes of later Altoona generations toward maintaining and/or altering the built environment as it does about initial intentions. We cannot simply assume that a statistically random group of houses has been demolished--there may well be patterns of selective demolition and replacement at work. More of the area's oldest houses, for example, have been torn down because of the commercialization of 6th, 7th and 8th avenues, and because of the expanding schools along 4th and 5th avenues. More selective patterns of demolition have remained elusive. Yet, we must recognize that the survey shows us most of all which houses from which time periods are still acceptable to Fourth Ward residents.

The history of Fourth Ward houses is one of adaptive re-use over time. Beyond the replacement of windows, roofing material, siding, and other exterior materials, a variety of structural alterations can be found in the houses. Hallways are removed, ceilings dropped, shed additions built. Some exterior changes are more dramatic. One unusual looking house, for example, started as a gable-front and was later raised to a full three floors and sided with vinyl. The mansard-like front section still has a triangular projecting molding outlining the former gable. In a stretch of side-gable houses along 3rd Avenue (1308 3rd Ave., HABS No. PA-5836), each has received a unique treatment as dormers and gables of different shapes have been added. One is a shed dormer, another a gambrel dormer, another a false cross gable. Several structures, including 1210 3rd Ave., started life as double houses and through the addition of gables and changes in window and door placement over the years, have taken on a unified single-dwelling form. The brick-veneered house at 1329 4th Ave. (HABS No. PA-5842) was moved one lot over from its original corner site; its main entrance was moved from the avenue front to the 14th Street side.

Sometimes structural changes have been the direct result of changes in a building's use. What is now a double house at 1313-15 2nd Ave. (HABS No. PA-5825) in 1900 was the hall of the Maennerchor Singing Society. The pitch of the roof, overall lack of ornament, and placement of the structure at the rear of the lot all indicate its former function. A small house at 208 14th St. (HABS No. PA-5864), situated at the alley behind 2nd Avenue, at the turn of the century was a one-story butcher shop. The second floor seems to have been added as part of its conversion in the 1920s. At 1430 2nd Ave., a large three-story mansard-roofed house has been converted to apartments, with an awkward three-story brick porch structure added to the chopped-off front of the original building. Many houses in the more commercial areas on 7th and 8th avenues have been converted from domestic to commercial uses; more dramatic is the conversion of the fire station at 1231 6th Ave. (HABS No. PA-5850) into a restaurant. In the residential areas, houses such as 1424 2nd Ave. (HABS No. PA-5828) that once were neighborhood grocery stores have been converted to back houses, yet maintain the evidence of additions and former shop windows.

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There are porches on almost every house; it is hard to know how many were original, as they are not pictured on early maps and many were built or rebuilt well after the houses were constructed. Some porches appear to be original (HABS No. PA-5819), others-- particularly the many brick examples--were added in the twentieth century. A porch provides a semi-public and semi-private transitional space, specific to a house and its residents yet not as potentially intimate as access to its interior. The use of such a space fits in with practice in the current Fourth Ward community, where in general people know their neighbors a little but not too well and don't often enter each other's houses. Today--in the summer at least--many area residents are found on their porches at various times throughout the day. Longtime area residents have explained that even in the 1920s, visiting between neighbors most often occurred in these outdoor/indoor spaces.<sup>20</sup>

Comparison of the floor plans of two typical Fourth Ward dwellings, dating from different decades of the late nineteenth century, provides some insight into the structuring of interior domestic space in Altoona working-class homes. The Bentley House, 1509 4th Ave. (HABS No. PA-5845), was built by 1870 and is one of the oldest homes studied, while the Healy House at 1415 3rd Ave. (HABS No. PA-5839), dating from 1895-96, is typical of the generation of houses built between 1894-1909. The comparative elaboration of the Healy House--it is larger and includes internal passages--may be due to its later date. Changing conceptions of domestic space correspond to Altoona's maturing as a city. Both houses exhibit elements common to domestic structures found in a diversity of urban settings.

The side-passage house has often been considered a typically urban form; that is, many more are found in urban rather than rural settings. Most often such a house has a front-gabled orientation--it is, in effect, half of a four-room, central-passage house turned sideways to accommodate the narrow arrangement of lots found in most cities, including Altoona. Yet the Healy House, like many in the Fourth Ward, has a side-facing gable despite its internal side-passage plan--this is one reason that so many Fourth Ward houses abut their neighbors so closely. The Bentley House, by contrast, has a front-facing gable end, but no passage.

The Healy House survives in remarkably original condition (exterior and interior are unaltered), perhaps because it stayed in the family of its original owners until 1986. Inside are three main rooms arranged front to back off a side entrance-and-stair passage at right. A parlor/living room at front connects to a dining room and then to a kitchen which, along with a service porch, stretches across the back of the house. The three rooms are almost square and approximately equal in size, ranging from 13' to 14'-6" on a side. The overall width of the house is 18'-4"; 4 feet comprise the side passage.

The Bentley House is one of the smallest in the Fourth Ward survey; it is only 12'-9" across the front facade. Two rooms deep with a one-story kitchen-shed extension and two bedrooms above, it has no interior passageways. Nearly equal in depth to the Healy House on the first floor, the Bentley House has the same layout minus the important addition of a side passage. Rooms in each have similar function and relational placement, and are approximately equal in size. While access in the Bentley House is obtained only through direct passage from one room to the next, use of the passageway in the Healy House is optional as first-floor rooms interconnect. If 4 feet in width were added to the Bentley House in the form of a side passage, the plans of the two would be equivalent.

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<sup>20</sup>Author's interview with Ida Ficker and Bortha Duffy, August 18, 1989. The prevalence and similarity of 1920s brick porches deserves further research to determine if a specific contractor and/or a municipal initiative accounts for their frequent occurrence.

Folklorist Henry Glassie and scholars building on his work in vernacular architecture have suggested that the inclusion of passages in homes signals an increasing recognition of inhabitants' need for individual privacy.<sup>21</sup> Glassie distinguishes between open and closed plans--open forms being those where direct access is not mediated by privacy-creating passageways. While this single comparison of the Healy and Bentley houses cannot support systematic statements about use of space or privacy in Altoona's working-class homes, both open and closed interiors are found and they may correlate to the period in which a house was built. Inclusion or exclusion of a hallway may also indicate cultural background or economic status.

It is easier to identify the owners than the builders of Altoona's private working-class houses, about which little history is written. Patterns of ownership and residence in the Fourth Ward are typical of a close-knit immigrant community. Especially through the 1930s, East Side residents tended to stay within the immediate neighborhood, coming to the Fourth Ward from nearby blocks. Even when they assumed the role of landlord, most continued to live in the area. On the East Side a seemingly disparate network of private individuals rose to the task of building domestic structures. Through a variety of approaches, they shared a single activity--providing homes for railroad workers and their families.

### Residential Development

While most individual builders in the Fourth Ward remain anonymous, it is possible to trace some developers and architects. The success of a variety of enterprises was helped in part by an ongoing emphasis on individual home ownership in Altoona, and by the hands-off approach of the PRR.<sup>22</sup> John Wright was one of the first to deal in houses ready for sale. While he usually sold vacant lots, the four houses that he owned in 1884 along the south side of 15th Street are an interesting exception (see 1506 2nd Ave., HABS No. PA-5830, and 205 15th St., HABS No. PA-5867). These two-and-a-half story, three-bay, side-gable houses are a type that is quite common in the Fourth Ward neighborhood. They were sold by Wright to individual Altoonans in the same manner as many of the unimproved lots.

Large tracts of land for extensive development were usually not available. Wright died in 1891; after continuing to deal in individual lots until 1913, his heirs eventually sold the remaining Fourth Ward property--"about 2 acres Vacant hills & stone 1515 to 35 2 ave"--to the contracting firm Hoyer and Kring. It is responsible for the 2nd Avenue row of six identical gambrel-front houses (1515 2nd Ave., HABS No. PA-5831) built two to three years later.

At times, the development process was closely interwoven in East Side community life. In 1900, the firm Bunker & Fleck bought a corner lot on 2nd Avenue and built three identical houses facing 13th Street (see 200 13th St., HABS No. PA-5862). These were sold individually six months later. The third house at the alley, 206 13th St., was transferred to George Klesius--a contractor himself who was also choir director at St. Mary's German Catholic church for more than forty years. Klesius, who ran a heating and sheet metal firm, made a business of sponsoring German immigrants and settling them into

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<sup>21</sup>Henry Glassie, Folk Housing in Middle Virginia: A Structural Analysis of Historic Artifacts, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1975) 120-21, 190.

<sup>22</sup>In 1916 an advocate of Altoona's German community highlighted its role in boosting the city's home-ownership rate and its tax revenues: "the home-seeking instinct of the German race is incontestably demonstrated in our city. Most of its citizens own properties and are heavy taxpayers." Altoona Tribune (January 15, 1916).

newly constructed homes. By bartering labor with other contractors, Klesius helped promote his small-scale developments. If ten houses were being built, for example, he would provide the sheet-metal work in all ten in exchange for ownership of two. He then financed the sale of these homes to German immigrants through articles of agreement.

Klesius's personal influence was wide and well-recognized. A plot-plan of lots he owned, just east of 1st Avenue on Walton, Crawford, and Bell avenues was filed in the Blair County Courthouse in November 1918. He traded land actively, making fifty-five purchases between 1892-1918, and selling a total of 104 separate parcels within those same twenty-six years. Klesius also donated land for the expansion of Prospect Park.<sup>23</sup> In 1950, the Frohsinn Society--of which he was a long-time member--presented him with a special deed giving him "an absolute life interest" in the building of the "Ancient, Honorable, Transcendental and Effervescent Order of the Harmoniously Discordant, Disorderly and Mangy group of Thespians of the Frohsinn Sing-Sing Society of the City of Altoona, County of Blair and State of Intoxication." This interest was granted "with the Exception that he may not use, sell or mortgage the property, land, buildings or contents, minerals under ground, water ways, timberlands, etc." Klesius's role as a community leader is thus clearly tied to an interest in real estate; the joking tribute suggests that he was well-liked and admired in this dual capacity.<sup>24</sup>

In contrast to Klesius's broad-based community role as a builder, there is less evidence of professional architects working in the Fourth Ward. Most notably, two houses in the survey area and another just beyond were designed by Altoona architects Michael and Louis Beezer in the early years of their practice. Looking quite out of place among its neighbors, the Queen Anne-style house at 1331 2nd Ave. (HABS No. PA-5826) was built for Lawrence Kimmel, Jr., a successful grocer and the son of a German immigrant. When Kimmel's fortunes changed, his wife and children went to work at the silk mills, in part to help pay off the house.<sup>25</sup> A Beezer house at 1204 6th Ave. (HABS No. PA-5848), one of the few to share a party wall in the surviving sample, was built for Joseph Nixon, Jr., in the late 1890s. Another Queen Anne-style Beezer house just outside the survey area at 416-18 11th St. was built for Thomas Gift (Fig. 1.5 and HABS No. PA-5820).

Non-residential structures, used and experienced jointly by neighborhood residents, provide further insight into collective approaches to the built environment over time. Longtime area residents attest to the importance that neighborhood institutions--language-based ethnic clubs, local commercial establishments, schools, churches, parks, cemeteries, and swimming pools--contributed to a sense of community. They provided a site for shared experience, tying together physical neighbors through a network of shared activities and identifications.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Author's interview with George Sheedy, grandson of George Klesius, August 18, 1989. "Plan of lots on George A. Klesius Property Situated in the Fourth Ward in the city of Altoona, Pa., November 1, 1918," Plot book 3/198. Index to deed transactions. "Property to be Acquired from George A. Klesius for Extension of Prospect Park," City Engineer's Office, Altoona, Pa., January 24, 1920, collection of George Sheedy.

<sup>24</sup>"Special Warranty Deed. From the Frohsinn Sing-Sing Society To the Honorable (More or Less) Georgius Adamus Klesiusinsky," June 7, 1950. Collection of George Sheedy.

<sup>25</sup>Author's interview with resident Kimmel descendent, August 7, 1989. City directories.

<sup>26</sup>Interview with Ficker and Duffy, August 18, 1989.

## Commercial Development

Interspersed among the homes in the residential sections of Fourth Ward were a variety of locally oriented commercial structures. Despite the draw of department stores and shopping malls in other parts of Altoona, several neighborhood businesses from the turn-of-the-century remain and serve as focal points for daily activity.

The most common small-business form to survive is the neighborhood grocery. Still operating as the I & K Grocery, the brick-veneered storefront structure at 1224 2nd Ave. (HABS No. PA-5824) was built by Henry Schmitt in 1907. It has variously been known as Smitty's, and Albert's, and Graham's Grocery; it also functioned as a branch of the A & P chain during the 1920s. Other groceries were built into the fronts of pre-existing houses, though most have since been converted back to a solely domestic function. Examples include the Huber House (HABS No. PA-5828) at 1424 2nd Ave. (for another view see 1426 2nd Ave., HABS No. PA-5829) and 1222 3rd Ave., formerly Ficker's Grocery and a landmark for members of the German community.<sup>27</sup>

Other small commercial establishments included several barber shops, such as the alley-fronting shed at the rear of 1200 3rd Ave. (HABS No. PA-5833). Beahm's Garage (HABS No. PA-5868) at 206 16th St. is a neighborhood establishment which, before it switched to car repairs in 1953, served as a wagon and blacksmith's shop. The Belmar Hotel, established in 1904 at 1501 14th Ave., still operates as a local tavern.

Beyond the influential PRR shops, several smaller concerns brought industrial character to the area. In particular, breweries and bakeries were established by members of the German community, and were found primarily in this part of Altoona. Altoona breweries located on the East Side of the city once included the Kasmeier Brewery and the Oswald Brewery at 4th Avenue and 13th Street; an important component of the historic landscape has disappeared. Situated in the midst of residential sections, these buildings often made up extensive complexes that would have contributed distinctive smells, noise, and activity to the neighborhood. The only surviving brewery structure is a single brick-veneered stable from the Union Brewery, located at 1425-1/2 4th Ave. (HABS No. PA-5843).

Two major bakeries were also located in the Fourth Ward--again both were operated by German immigrants. Surviving at 1206-10 5th Ave. (HABS No. PA-5846) is the building from Haller's Eagle Bakery, operated first by John Haller, then, from 1903-78, by his sons. The bakery was large and successful, as attested by frequent articles in the Altoona Mirror; during the Depression years of the 1930s, Haller's was declared Pennsylvania's "model bakery."<sup>28</sup> The 5th Avenue building is currently leased by Pacifico Bakery, which uses it as a distribution center. The Altoona Steam Bakery, operated by A. J. Heess at 8th Avenue and 13th Street in the late nineteenth century, is no longer extant. That bakery was described in 1883 as "perhaps the most extensive and best-equipped establishment of its kind between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Interview with Ficker and Duffy, August 18, 1989.

<sup>28</sup>Altoona Mirror files.

<sup>29</sup>Africa, t43.

## Churches

East Side churches were built as an institutional response to both the spiritual and social needs within a residential community. An Altoona citizen in the 1916 anniversary issue of the Altoona Tribune reported that:

In my recollection, the first religious effort in Altoona was the Sunday School conducted by the United Brethren in a room at the corner of 8th Avenue and 13th Street, where the 8th Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church now stands.<sup>30</sup>

Despite this claim, the majority of Altoona's first religious institutions formed on the west side of the city. Surviving churches in the Fourth Ward survey area represent a second phase of development within Altoona.

Since Catholic, Methodist Episcopal, Lutheran, and Presbyterian churches were already established west of the tracks, the development of East Side institutions attests to both the fast growth of Altoona and to the unique ethnic composition of the Fourth Ward neighborhood. Of the six surviving churches studied, three--St. James' German Lutheran, St. Mary's German Catholic, and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Italian Catholic--developed in direct response to the needs of non-English-speaking immigrant communities (HABS No. PA-5854). Others--both the Methodist Episcopal and Presbyterian churches--were specifically built to help accommodate growing numbers of East Side Altoonans. All but St. Mary's Catholic Church are located on the commercial 8th Avenue within a block or two of each other; St. Mary's is on 5th Avenue, perhaps symbolically closer to the heavy area of German settlement.

Fourth Ward churches survive as the oldest group of religious structures in Altoona, since most in the downtown commercial district were rebuilt in the early twentieth century. St. Mary's was begun in 1871, the Second Presbyterian Church was built in 1870-71 and 1875-77; St. Luke's Episcopal was built in 1881-82, and St. James' Lutheran's current structure dates from 1889-90. The 8th Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church was rebuilt on the site of an earlier structure in 1902.

By 1896 there were sixteen churches on the East Side; half of these were located along 5th Avenue. Seven of the East Side churches were in the Fourth Ward; all were housed in permanent brick or stone structures.<sup>31</sup> They included: Bethel Church of God (5th Avenue and 13th Street), St. James German Evangelical Lutheran Church (1401-05 8th Ave., HABS No. PA-5860), Second (later Eighth Avenue) Methodist Episcopal Church (1227-31 8th Ave., HABS No. PA-5855), Second Presbyterian Church (1315 8th Ave., HABS No. PA-5857), St. Luke's Protestant Episcopal Church (8th Avenue and 13th Street, HABS No. PA-5856-A), St. Mary's Roman Catholic (1401 5th Ave., HABS No. PA-5847-A), and First United Brethren Church (5th Avenue and 12th Street). The dominant German ethnic composition of the area is clear, though the presence of the Anglo-Episcopal and Presbyterian churches should be noted. Also located in the ward in 1932 was St. George's Syrian Orthodox Church at 809 15th St.

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<sup>30</sup>H. H. Gibson, "Deer Caught on Eleventh Avenue" Altoona Tribune (January 15, 1916), sec. 3, 4.

<sup>31</sup>Several churches were located to the north of the Fourth Ward and are centered around 5th Avenue and 5th Street. In 1896 these churches were mainly housed in their original frame structures.

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While churches are important as ethnic and social markers in the growing community, their appearance may also have local historical significance. In the mid-1870s there was an evangelical religious revival in Altoona. An article in the January 27, 1876, Altoona Tribune refers to the "Great Awakening" of recent past, citing in particular two Fourth Ward churches--the Second Presbyterian and 8th Avenue Methodist Episcopal churches--as sites of nightly filled-to-overflowing prayer. The construction of the Second Presbyterian Church, described in the December 18, 1876 edition of the Altoona Mirror, occurred in response to newly modern and progressive attitudes toward religion and its place in society.

Accounts of construction of two area churches illustrate competing traditional and modern attitudes toward church institutions and church buildings. In one case a community provides for itself; in the other, its perceived needs are provided for. St. Mary's German Catholic Church (HABS No. PA-5847-A) was built in the 1860-70s and was completed in 1883. A centennial anniversary article describes the integral role that building the church played in community life.

For the actual construction of the Church, all labor was performed by the members of the parish. Even the ladies contributed to this effort. After their day's toil in the Railroad shops, the men would come directly to the church site and excavate for the foundations, or perform whatever tasks had been laid out for them. The ladies would bring the men their meals, so no time was lost. Then the following day, after the men had returned to their labors in the shops, the ladies would haul away the dirt and debris.<sup>32</sup>

In time the congregation built a school and social hall, as well. This bottom-up, shared-work ethic contrasts sharply with the attitudes underlying the construction of the Second Presbyterian Church (HABS No. PA-5857) just a few years later. Thinking toward the future rather than tradition, congregants first built a large chapel in 1870-71, attaching a large and stylistically sophisticated sanctuary to the structure in 1875-76. A church member explained that:

As a church we have sought to be alert, enterprising, wide-awake and quick to embrace every opportunity of advancing the Master's cause. If the modern amphitheatrical audience room is better calculated to reach the masses than one constructed on the gloomy medieval style, we have said to our architect give us the circular seats and the slanting floor . . . .<sup>33</sup>

In this conception, the church is built in the spirit of introducing improvements and a new focus to the pre-existing community.

Today, both strains of church identification remain. The former Second Presbyterian church, now Cathedral of Christ the Good Shepherd, relates little to its immediate community--its leaders, in fact, have caused local scandal for their reinterpretations of standard Catholicism. As Altoona's only Episcopal church, St. Luke's maintains a large congregation, but almost no members are Fourth Ward residents. On the other hand, St. James's Lutheran Church is still tied closely to the community and its roots, as are St. Mary's and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

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<sup>32</sup>"St. Mary's Parish--How It Started," Altoona Mirror files.

<sup>33</sup>Altoona Mirror files.

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Increasing access to transportation has broadened the area of daily Altoona activity; most Fourth Ward residents travel beyond the area's boundaries on a daily basis. In addition, ethnic ties have weakened as native-born generations of Altoonans reach maturity. Thus, the secular communal institutions once prevalent in the area are mostly gone--their built forms have gone with them. The original Concordia and Frohsinn Halls were both destroyed by fire. Concordia was rebuilt as a low modern structure, while Frohsinn moved across the tracks to a vacant building on 12th Avenue. Once this area was rich with such structures--in 1896 they included Block's Hall, Concordia Hall, Emerald Hall, Frohsinn Hall, and Logan Hall.<sup>34</sup> Today, the Memorial Hall of St. Mary's Church is a sole survivor.

Throughout most of its history, the East Side has been viewed as an area of working-class neighborhoods. This conception has shaped past perceptions, actual development over time, and continues to shape perceptions of the area today. Between 1889-96, when the city implemented a street-paving program, forty-one streets and avenues were paved across the city. All but five were on the city's west side. As the home of PRR workers, the Fourth Ward prospered when they did, and likewise it declined with the company: the loss of jobs following the demise of the PRR has had a so far unrepaired effect. Much of the Fourth Ward is today considered a "blighted area" by city and county governments. The area continues to suffer the effects of rearranged business to domestic inter-relationships. Ethnic identification has lessened with passing generations. A fiftieth anniversary history of the Frohsinn Singing Society lamented the decline of tradition: "the existence and growth of the German song could not be doubted, were it not for the decrease of the German immigration."<sup>35</sup> Altoona's Fourth Ward now faces a lost support network that has not been replaced in the minds of residents or government.

Yet, if church services in German or Italian have ceased, other strains of neighborhood vitality continue. At least one pastor reported renewed interest among younger church members, something that is much needed among congregations where the median age is past middle age. Other sites of neighborhood activity include the I & K Grocery, Prospect Pool, and the recently converted Firehouse Foods in the old fire station. Churches, stores, club buildings, schools, and parks are landmarks of the local community. Supporting these structures and lining the East Side's hills are hundreds of houses built in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Built to maintain a focused community they, like their residents, are more alike than they are different. As tangible connections to the Fourth Ward's and Altoona's past, they are also homes for a community of people living in the present. They help us more fully understand the links between the Fourth Ward's historic strengths as an Altoona neighborhood and its future as a viable residential community.

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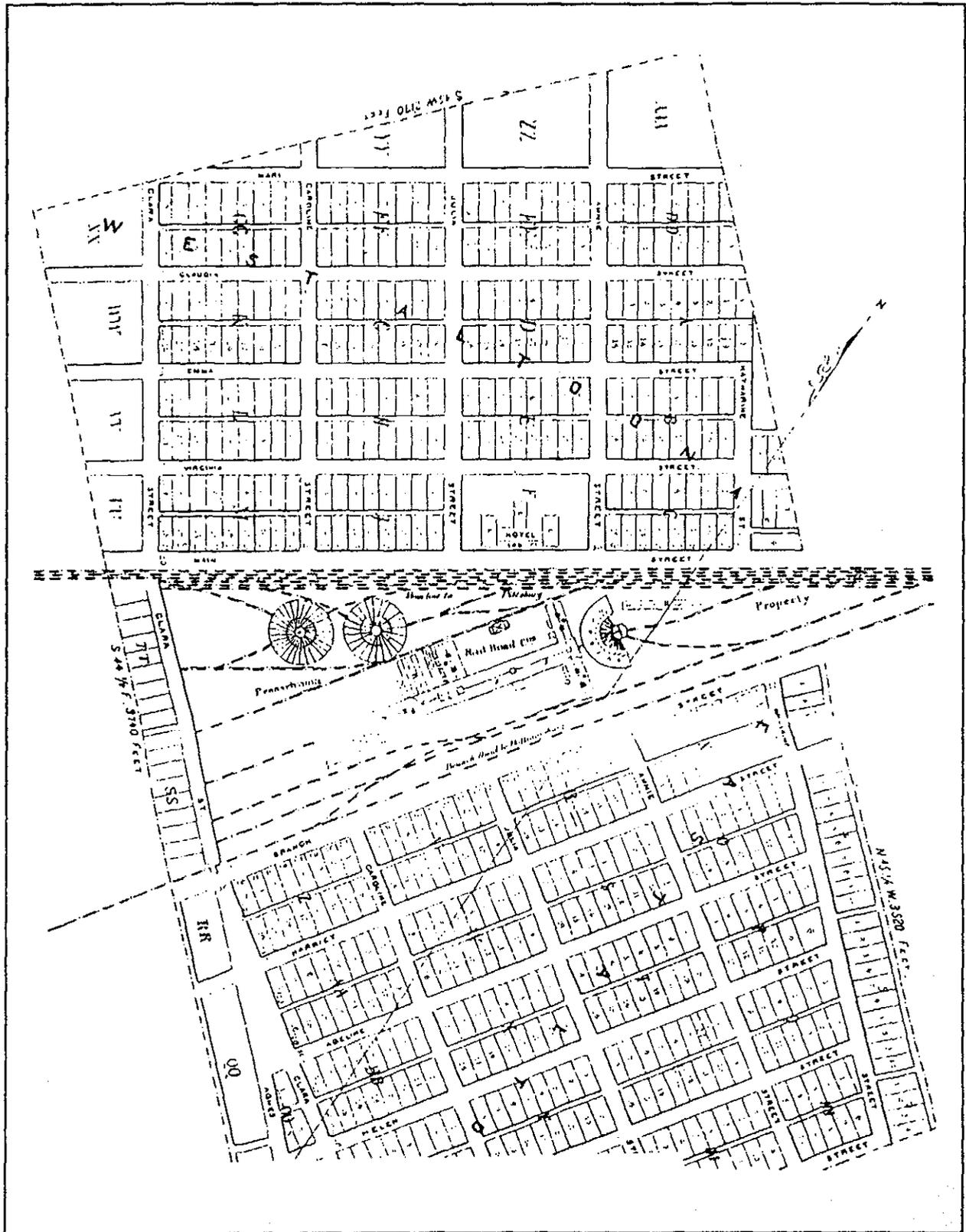
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Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), Randy Cooley, director. An overview of the history of the city (HABS No. PA-5784) provides context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the city and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Susan Garfinkel in the summer of 1989 under the supervision of HABS senior historian Alison K. Hoagland and Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian. Garfinkel's and other project historians' work was published as Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990), edited by Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian, and Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.

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Fig. 1.1 "Altoona, Tuckahoe Valley, Blair County," c. 1855, showing the two halves of the town divided by the railroad yards. From Africa (1883).



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Fig. 1.2 Detail of map of Altoona. The Fourth Ward survey was limited to the area between 12th and 16th streets from 9th Avenue to the alley between 1st and Crawford avenues.

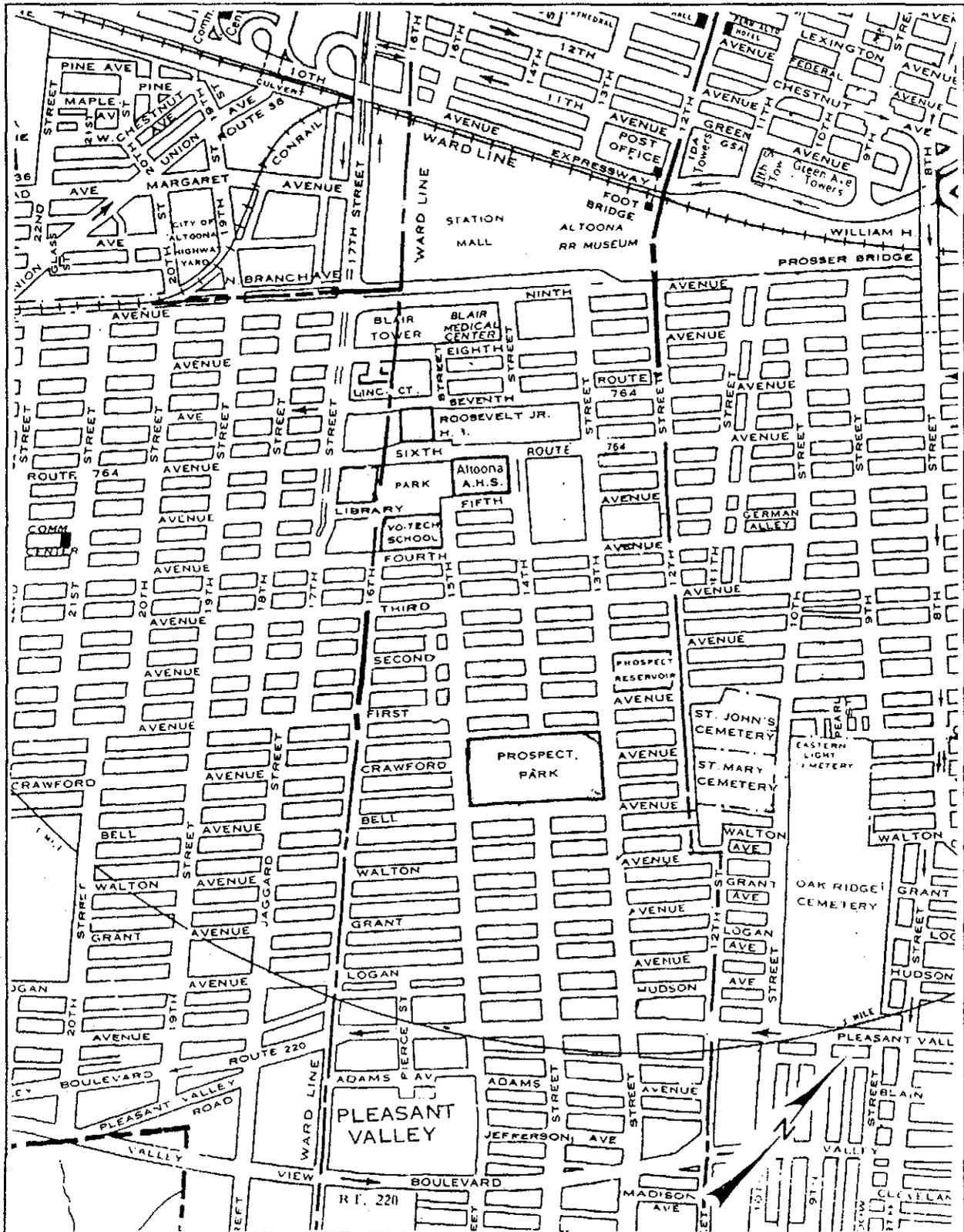


Fig. 1.3 Classes of Occupation in the Fourth Ward, 1878, from tax-assessment records.

Classes of Occupations in the Fourth Ward, 1878			
	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Occupations</u>	<u>Number</u>
1st	125	banker, brewer, contractor, doctor, foreman, merchant	10
2nd	100	attorney, blacksmith, boiler maker, butcher, cabinet maker, car builder, carpenter, clerk, coal merchant, conductor, engineer, foreman, lumber dealer, machinist, merchant, moulder, painter, pattern maker, shoemaker, stone mason, teacher, tinner, etc.	241
3rd	50	blacksmith, boiler maker, brakeman, carpenter, clerk, fireman, laborer, machinist, minister, moulder, painter, printer, shoemaker, tinner, weaver	160
4th	40	laborer	1
5th	30	gentleman	1
6th	10	none given	1
		Total	414

Fig. 1.4 Classes of Occupations of Residents in the Fourth Ward, 1901, from tax-assessment records.

Classes of Occupations in the Fourth Ward, 1901			
	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Occupations</u>	<u>Number</u>
1st	300	doctor, lawyer	8
2nd	200	agent, chemist, coal operator, contractor, doctor, editor, food inspector, foreman, grocer, insurance agent, merchant	44
3rd	150	engineer	2
4th	140	baker, blacksmith, boiler maker, brick layer, cabinet maker, car builder, car inspector, carpenter, chemical engineer, clerk, conductor, engineer, fireman, machinist, minister, moulder, painter, pattern maker, plumber, policeman, stone mason, telephone operator, tinner, etc.	477
5th	100	janitor, laborer, teamster	215
6th	20	invalid, retired	41
		Total	787

Fig. 1.5 Thomas Gift House, 416-418 11th Street, elevations from 1893 Beezer catalog.

