

1207 FEDERAL STREET (House)
Pittsburgh
Allegheny County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-6201

HABS
PA
2-PITBU,
82-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Northeast Region
Philadelphia Support Office
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, P.A. 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

1207 FEDERAL STREET (HOUSE)

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Location: Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania

USGS Pittsburgh West Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
17.584210.4478860

Significance: 1207 Federal Street is representative of the commercial buildings that fronted on this section of Federal Street in Allegheny by the 1890s.

Description: This three-story, two bay brick building was originally constructed as part of a row, but now stands as a detached structure set directly on the sidewalk on the west side of Federal Street. It measures 15' across the front and 80'-10" in depth, 60' of which is the original brick structure. A one story, concrete block addition of undetermined date extends to the rear. The flat roof is concealed by a corbeled brick cornice. The double hung sash windows have stone lintels and sills. The first floor commercial front has been significantly altered at an undetermined date, but retains its original flanking rock-faced stone piers.

The first story contains commercial space, and a side stair leads to the residential spaces above. The first floor and basement interior spaces are inaccessible. On the upper floors, a transverse stair separates the front rooms from the rear rooms. Interior details include marble and slate mantels with cast iron inserts, bull's eye corner blocks on door and window casings, and horizontal panel doors.

History: Based on map research confirmed by stylistic analysis, the building's construction date has been estimated at ca. 1874-1884. Established as a significant corridor of native American travel, communication, and commerce by the early eighteenth century, Federal Street Federal Street was later the site of an early Pittsburgh horse car line, which began service in 1868. The Day and Cramer map of Allegheny in 1851 reflects little actual construction in the block bounded by Federal-Eloise-Reddour and Pernod Streets. The earliest erection of buildings near the corner of Eloise (first called Benton Avenue) and Federal Street took place between 1850 and 1872, a period of rapid urban population growth. By 1872, the G. M. Hopkins atlas shows that four buildings fronting on Federal Street had been erected. The division and orientation of lots within the block has remained little changed down to the present day. In 1872, the building at 222 1/2 (now 1207) Federal Street appears to have owned by a Mrs. Grubb, about whom little more is known. This earlier building on the property was presumably destroyed by the fire of July 4, 1874 that destroyed some four acres and 199 buildings between Sampsonia Street on the north and Eloise Street on the south. The fire occasioned massive re-building in the block, and by 1884, no fewer than nine stores (including four grocery stores) and a cigar factory (near the corner of Federal Street and Eloise) fronted on Federal Street in this area of Allegheny.

The 1890-1891 G.M. Hopkins Atlas shows that 1207 Federal Street was then owned by Margaret Stewart et al. The 1925 G.M. Hopkins atlas lists the owner of 1207 Federal Street as J.M. Fleming. African-American, Italian, and eastern European immigrants were now predominant among the neighborhood's residents, and

older, more established families abandoned the inner city for newer suburbs, a process facilitated by the greater availability of the personal automobile after the 1920s. Many of the new arrivals were too poor to own their own homes and consequently rented property. Only 20 percent of all housing units in the Central Northside neighborhood were owner-occupied by 1940. Since at least 1994, the building at 1207 Federal Street has been owned by the City of Pittsburgh; it was transferred to the Urban Redevelopment Authority in 1996.

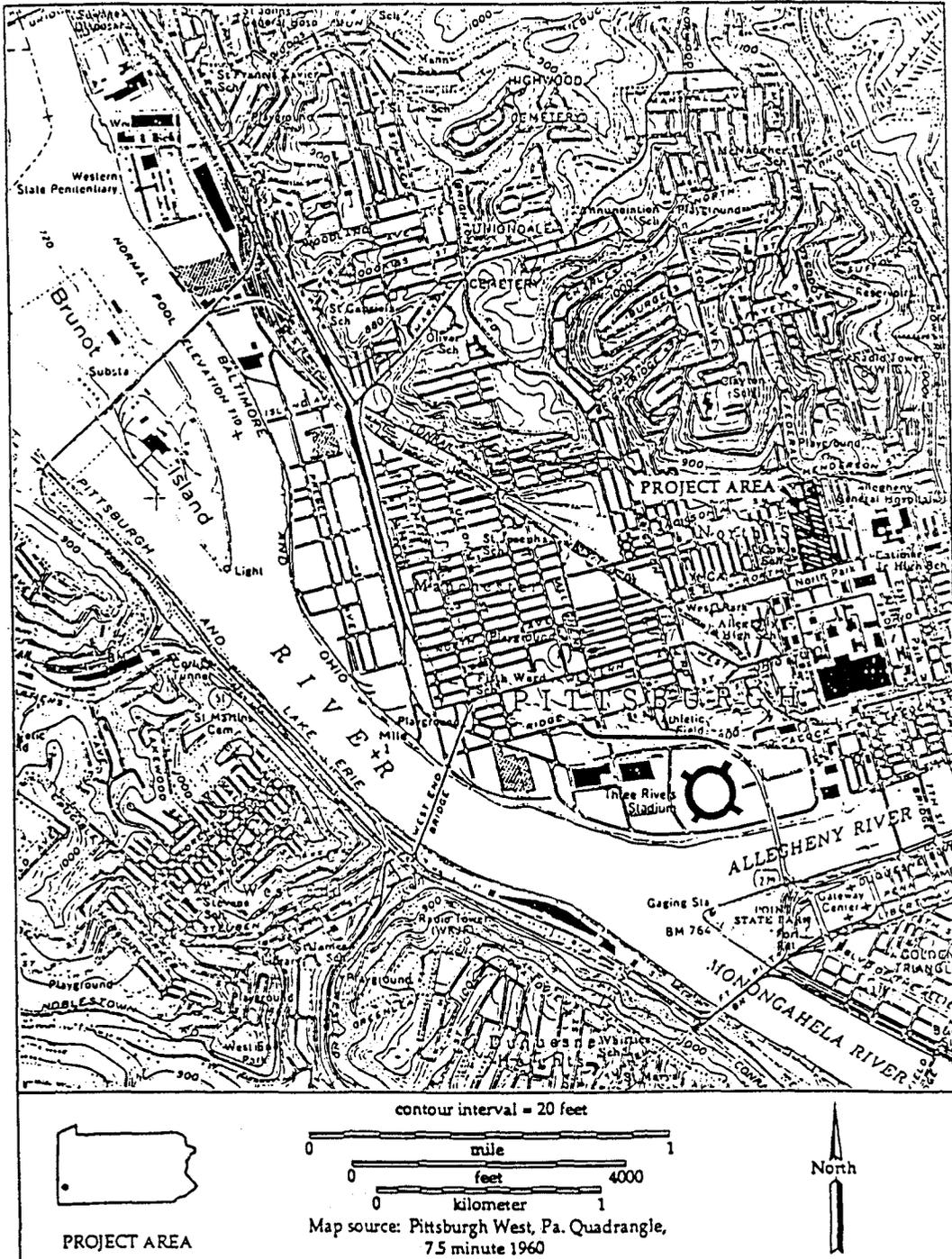
The three-block Federal North Redevelopment Area in the Central Northside Historic District of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was certified in 1989. In 1995, Pittsburgh adopted a redevelopment plan for this neighborhood. In consultation with the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Officer (PASHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), it was determined that proposed redevelopment in the Federal North neighborhood would affect National Register of Historic Places-eligible historic properties. One condition of the project's Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) provided for Historic American Building Survey (HABS) recording of 14 buildings in a portion of the redevelopment project called "Block #2." Block #2 includes the area bounded by Federal Street on the east, Eloise Street on the south, Reddour Street on the west, and Pernod Street on the north. The building at 1207 Federal Street is located in Block # 2.

Sources:

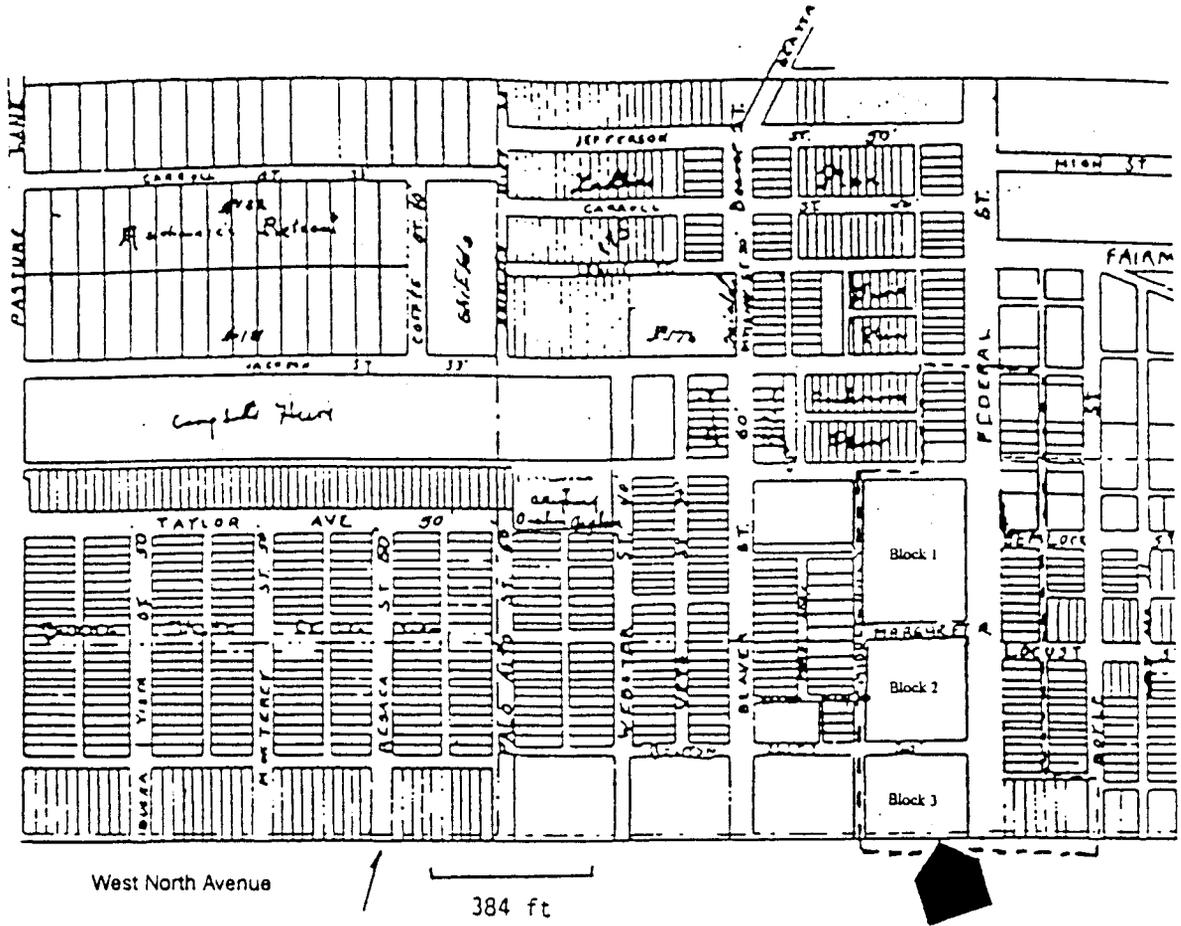
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Historians:

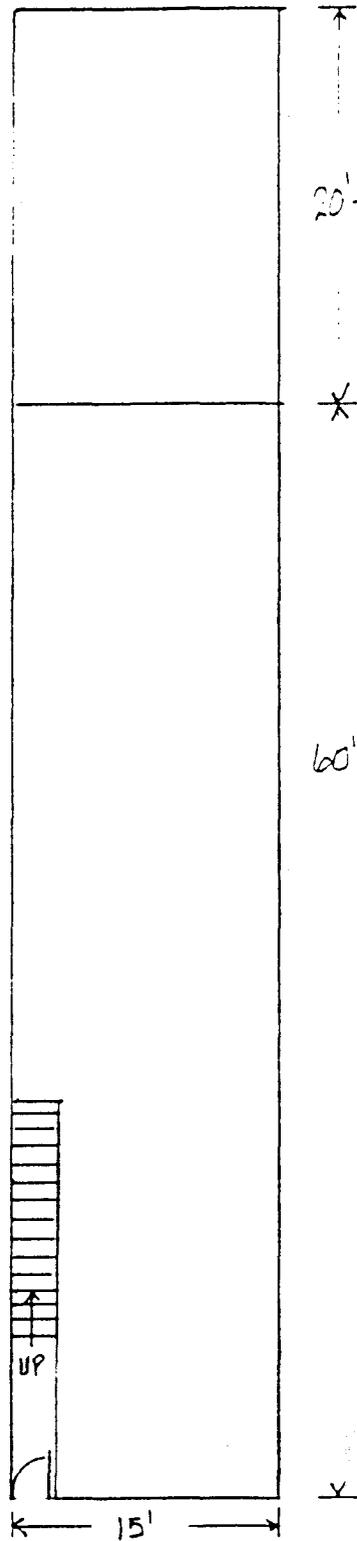
Ronald C. Carlisle, Ph.D, and Eliza Smith Brown
Brown Carlisle & Associates, Inc.
November 1996



Location of the Federal North Redevelopment Area in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Source: USGS Pittsburgh, West 7.5 minute quadrangle map.

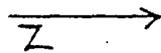
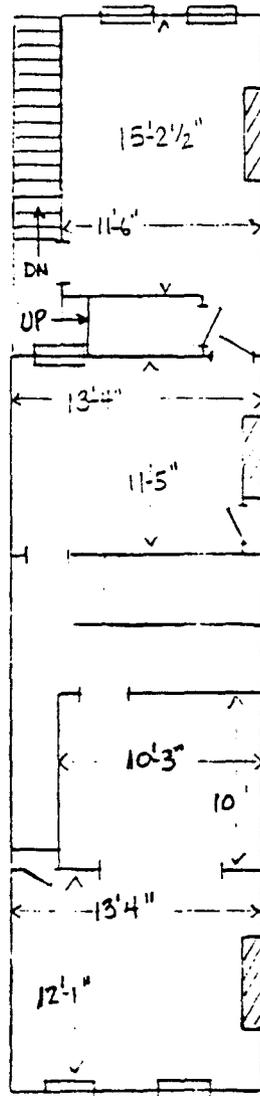


The Day & Cramer 1851 map of Allegheny, Pennsylvania (today, the Northside neighborhood of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) showing lot divisions in and near the Federal North Redevelopment Area (arrow). Dashes outline the project area. The subject building is located in Block 2. Benton Alley is today's Eloise Street. Margaret Alley is today's Pernod Street. Middle Alley is today's Reddour Street. Federal Street has retained its name to the present.

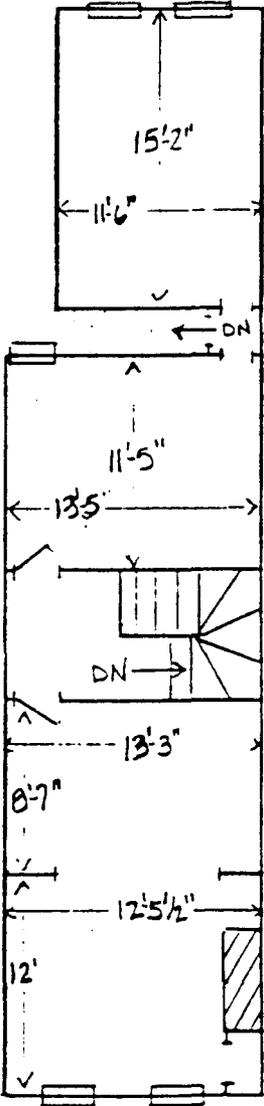


INTERIOR SPACE
INACCESSIBLE

1207 FEDERAL STREET
FIRST FLOOR



1207 FEDERAL STREET
SECOND FLOOR



1207 FEDERAL STREET
THIRD FLOOR