

~~Tacony~~

TACONY TRUST COMPANY BUILDING

~~(Henry Disston & Sons, Incorporated, Keystone Saw Works)~~

Tacony 4900 block of Longshore Avenue,

Southeast corner of Longshore Ave. & Tulip St.

Philadelphia

Philadelphia County

Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-6692-K

HABS

PA-6692-K

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

1849 C St. NW

Washington, DC 20240

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

### Tacony, TACONY TRUST COMPANY BUILDING

HABS No. PA-6692-K

**NOTE:** Tacony's street grid does not lie true to the compass. For the purpose of locating buildings in this report, the roads running NE to SW (ex. Keystone Street and Torresdale Avenue) will be the N-S axes and those running SE to NW (ex. Longshore Avenue and Disston Street) will be E-W axes.

**Location:** 4900 block of Longshore Avenue, southeast corner of Longshore Avenue and Tulip Street, Tacony neighborhood, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

**Significance:** The Tacony Trust Company Building is a structure both integral to the vision that Henry Disston had for his all-encompassing company town as well as Longshore Avenue's development as Tacony's main commercial and civic thoroughfare prior to 1900.

#### **Description:**

This eclectically conceived edifice displays characteristics common to bank buildings constructed around the turn-of-the-twentieth-century. Occupying a corner lot, the structure's main entrance faces the dominant thoroughfare, with a windowed two-story blind arcade extending along the secondary street. Unlike other period bank buildings, however, the almost requisite two-story banking hall is only a single story with the two upper floors, originally finished for community organization meeting space. While the brick building features classical motifs on the exterior, the third-floor window sills' integration with the lower stories' cornice, the hipped roof, and the wide eaves are in keeping with non-historicist period design tendencies.

#### **History:**

See the historical report for Tacony, HABS No. PA-6692 for more detailed information about Tacony's general development.

On December 1, 1873, the Tacony Trust Fund Building and Loan Association was founded by Henry Disston and others mainly to assist his workers in the purchase of Disston-owned company housing.<sup>1</sup> The company became so successful by 1892 that they were forced by law to found a second association in Tacony.<sup>2</sup> Also in that year, and perhaps on account of their fiscal well-being, the Tacony Trust Company broke ground for a new bank building at

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<sup>1</sup>Louis M. Iatarola and Siobhán Gephart, *Images of America: Tacony* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000), 60, for date; Harry C. Silcox, *A Place to Live and Work: The Disston Saw Works and the Tacony Community of Philadelphia* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 17, for motivation.

<sup>2</sup>Silcox, 17.

the southeast corner of Longshore Street (Longshore Avenue) and Tulip Street.<sup>3</sup> The bank's high-profile location enhanced the civic nature of Longshore Street late in the nineteenth and early in the twentieth century. As indicated by an extant sign, the company ultimately functioned as a full-service bank. Additionally, however, and underscoring its importance to community life, the building was also to house the local public library on the second floor and the third floor was to be let for "social purposes."<sup>4</sup> In 1928, the Tacony Trust Company still occupied the building and the Tacony Station of the United States Post Office was housed in a structure appended to the Trust Company's rear, fronting Tulip Street.<sup>5</sup>

The building and its post office addition are currently unoccupied.

**Historian:** James A. Jacobs

**Sources:**

Iatarola, Louis M., and Siobhán Gephart. Images of America: Tacony. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000.

Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide.

Sanborn Map Company. Sanborn Maps for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, vol. 27. New York, 1928.

Silcox, Harry C. A Place to Live and Work: The Disston Saw Works and the Tacony Community of Philadelphia. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994.

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<sup>3</sup>*Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, 19 October 1892.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Maps for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*, vol. 27 (New York, 1928), 2636.