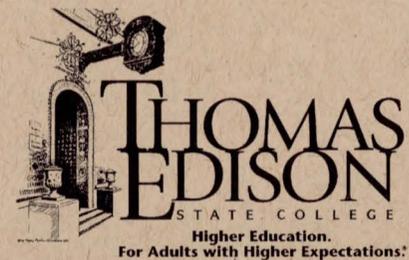


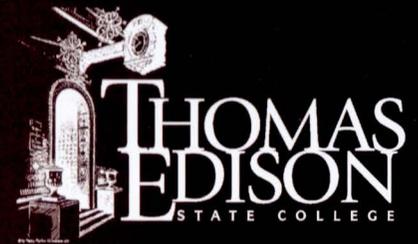


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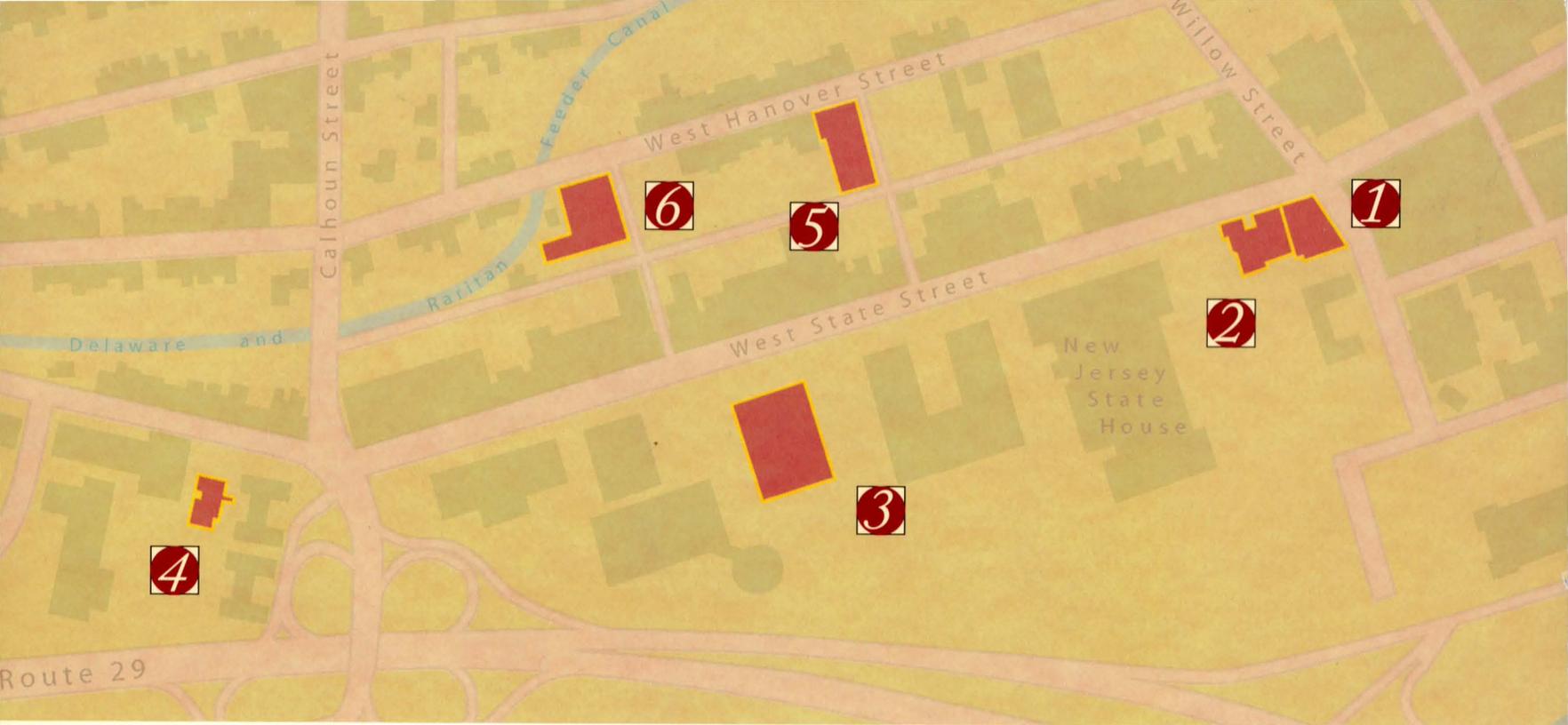




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Welcome1

Welcome!

Thomas Edison State College, a pioneer in providing nontraditional higher education for adults, has established a campus on historic ground surrounding New Jersey's State House.

Dear Reader:

Thomas Edison State College moved to Trenton in 1979 and established its headquarters in the Kelsey Building, built in 1911 and one of the architectural beauties of the State House Historic District. Since that time, the College has been active in conserving the historic buildings of downtown Trenton to preserve the essence of the city's legendary past and stimulate economic development. From the Kelsey Building on West State Street, our campus expanded westward as we restored the five mid-19th-century brick townhouses adjoining the Kelsey Building and leased the early-20th-century Kuser Mansion in the next block. These buildings, all listed on the National Register of Historic Places, are complemented by the modern Academic Center and Canal Banks buildings, both located a block north, on West Hanover Street. The New Jersey State Library, an affiliate of Thomas Edison State College, occupies an historic site at the middle of the State House block.

The Kelsey Building and Townhouse complex occupy what was originally the highest elevation of the bluff running through downtown Trenton along the eastern side of the Delaware Valley. Between the townhouses and the State House, Petty's Run (now confined to a culvert below ground) flows to the Delaware River. In the early 1730s, Petty's Run powered a plating mill, and by midcentury drove a steel furnace. Both the mill and the furnace were the earliest facilities of their type in New Jersey, foreshadowing Trenton's role as an industrial center. From these pre-Revolutionary beginnings came the establishment of our College's "spiritual ancestor," the School of Industrial Arts, the Kelsey Building's former occupant. Now, Thomas Edison State College is proud to occupy the Kelsey Building and the rest of our campus buildings in Trenton as we carry on the mission of providing flexible, high-quality, collegiate learning opportunities for self-directed adults in New Jersey and beyond.

This guide is an introduction to our historic buildings and some of the people and events responsible for making them what they are today. I hope you will enjoy it.

Sincerely,



Dr. George A. Pruitt
President



Dr. George A. Pruitt
President, Thomas Edison State College

1 The Kelsey Building

101 West State Street



The Kelsey Building and Trenton's City Hall, monuments to turn-of-the-century civic and educational progress at opposite ends of State Street, were both begun in 1909 and completed in 1911. But even in that prosperous and expansive period, the West State Street building was unusual.

It was the gift of Henry Cooper Kelsey, a banker who served for 27 years as New Jersey's Secretary of State. A shopkeeper's son who believed in helping people to help themselves, he was impressed by the idea of a school that trained artisans for the city's booming factories. Although he had no previous connection with the School of Industrial Arts, he bought land, hired a

prominent architect, and paid for the building at a final cost nearly half again as much as the \$100,000 he had pledged.

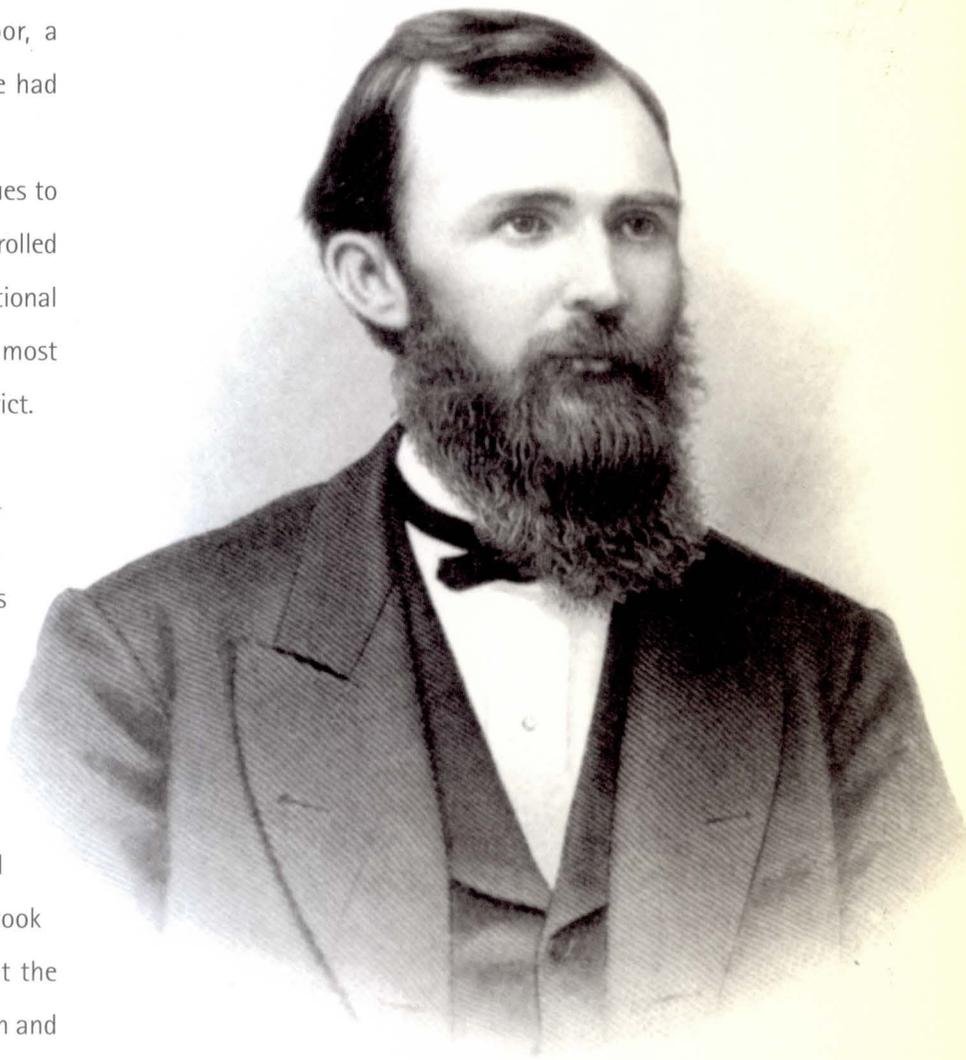
His motive was a romantic one. The whole project was intended to memorialize his wife, Prudence Townsend Kelsey, who had died in 1904. A bronze tablet on the building's facade is dedicated to her and the first floor auditorium was named

Prudence Hall. But the widower also lavished more than \$12,000 on the decoration of a single room on the second floor, a permanent exhibit space for the porcelain and art his wife had collected on their annual trips to Europe.

Nearly a century after its dedication, the building continues to be appreciated in its own right. Thousands of students have enrolled in the four schools that called it home. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and recognized as "one of the most important visual landmarks" of the State House Historic District.

The Donor: Henry Cooper Kelsey

Henry Cooper Kelsey was a self-made man. His great-grandfather, a Scots tanner and currier, was an early resident of Newton, Sussex County. The young Kelsey went from school to a general store clerk's job. In 1858, when he was 21, he took over a Newton store and took up an active interest in Democratic party politics. Appointed postmaster the next year, he served until the Republicans took over nationally in 1861, after Lincoln's election. He bought the *New Jersey Herald* that summer and settled in to journalism and politics, buying and merging the *Sussex Democrat* into the larger *Herald* the next year.



Henry Cooper Kelsey as a young man, probably during his 20s when he was publisher of the *New Jersey Herald*.

The Kelsey Building

Kelsey, who had married Prudence Townsend the year he became a publisher, was appointed a judge of the Court of Common Pleas in 1868, filling the vacancy caused by her father's resignation. Two years later, Governor Theodore Randolph appointed him Secretary of State.

He stayed in the job for 27 years and remained in Trenton for the rest of his life. Together with Benjamin F. Lee, Clerk of the State Supreme Court for 30 years, and Henry S. Little, Clerk of the Chancery Court, he ran state Democratic politics for three decades. The Secretary of State, a contemporary wrote, "was a man of the most precise habits. If you were two minutes late on an appointment with him, he was apt to close the door in your face."

From the time he entered state government until his death 50 years later, he lived in a suite of rooms at the Trenton House, on North Warren Street. Beginning in 1872, when his doctor advised him to go to Europe for his health, he and Mrs. Kelsey sailed each spring for Europe, returning in the fall — 54 Atlantic crossings together.

Active as vice president of the Mechanics National Bank of Trenton, he was at his desk there until two weeks before his death in 1920, at the age of 82. He was buried in Newton, next to his wife.



Henry Cooper Kelsey and his wife, Prudence Townsend Kelsey, were inseparable from the moment they married in 1861 until Mrs. Kelsey's death 43 years later.

The Architect

If Cass Gilbert (1859–1934) was not yet America's most famous architect when Henry Kelsey hired him, he hadn't long to wait.

His first full-time architectural job, in 1880, was as a draftsman in the New York office of McKim, Mead & White, where he quickly became Stanford White's personal assistant. In 1882, he moved to his hometown of St. Paul to set up a McKim, Meade & White office in the West. Following the failure of this venture Gilbert established his own local architectural practice in its place.

In 1895, Gilbert was commissioned to design the Minnesota State Capitol. Completed in 1905, this project made his reputation as one of the nation's pre-eminent architects of public buildings. He went on to design other state capitols in West Virginia and Arkansas, public libraries in St. Louis, Detroit and New Haven, the New York Custom House and the Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C. He is best known, however, as architect of the Woolworth Building in Manhattan, completed in 1913. Still standing, this remarkable 66-story Perpendicular Gothic edifice ranked as the tallest building in the world for almost two decades.

Gilbert designed the Kelsey Building at the peak of his career. When hired in 1909, he was president of the American Institute of Architects and already a tireless campaigner for greater

professional recognition for architects. In his later years, honors were heaped upon him at home and abroad. He is revered for his contributions to architectural design in the early years of the skyscraper.



Cass Gilbert (1859–1934), architect for the Kelsey Building, is best known for designing the Woolworth Building in Manhattan. (Minnesota Historical Society)

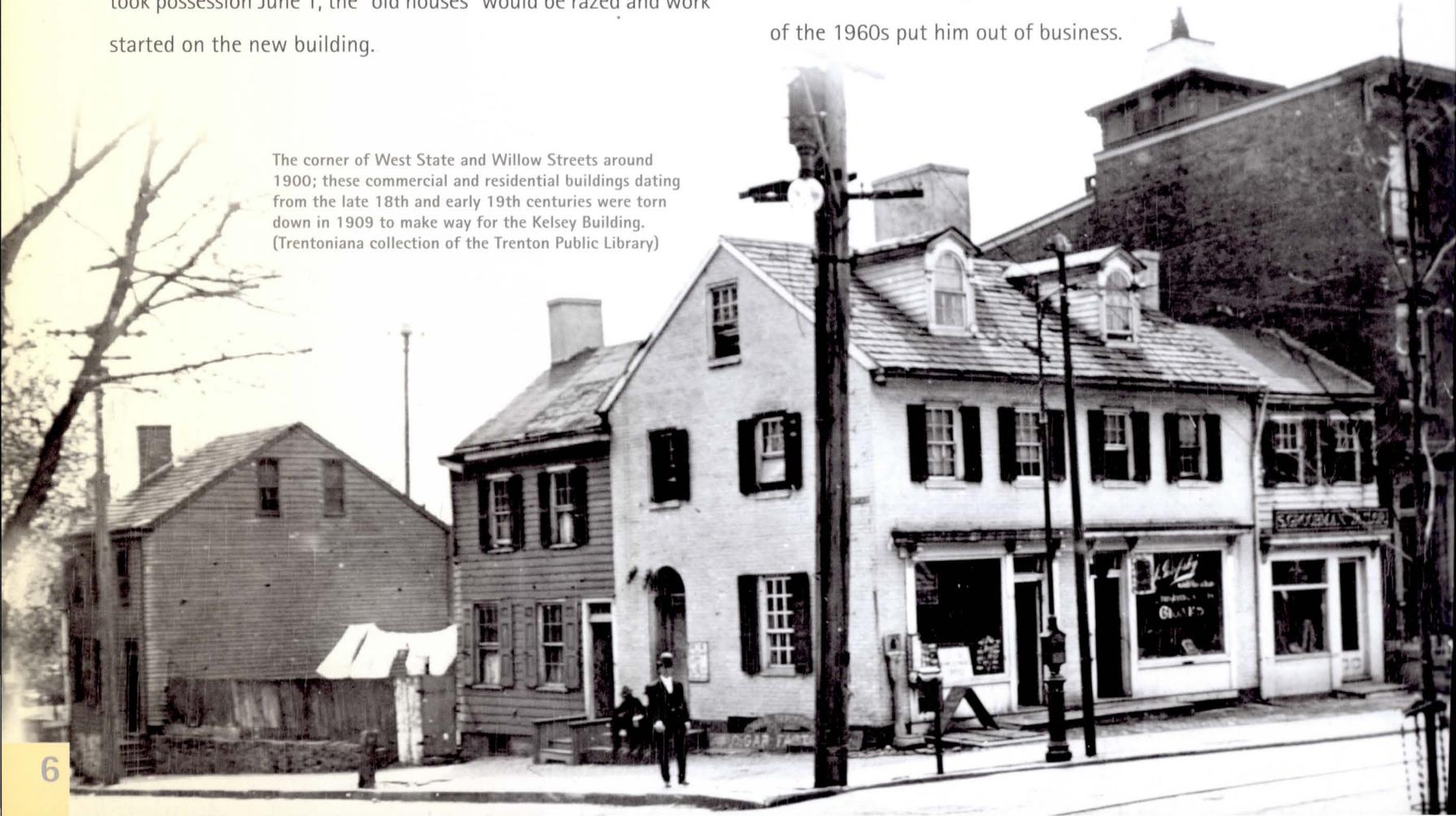
The Kelsey Building

The Site

The *Daily State Gazette*, announcing Kelsey's plans on May 2, 1909, reported that he had purchased two buildings on the southwest corner of West State and Willow streets for \$19,000; that tenants had been given notice to vacate; and that after he took possession June 1, the "old houses" would be razed and work started on the new building.

The building at 101 West State was a grocery at the time, while 103 was a cigar factory. Both were rented to Isaac Gerofsky, who also operated the I.G. Employment Agency at 103. Forced out by the coming of the school, Gerofsky relocated to 124 East Front Street, where he remained until the urban renewal of the 1960s put him out of business.

The corner of West State and Willow Streets around 1900; these commercial and residential buildings dating from the late 18th and early 19th centuries were torn down in 1909 to make way for the Kelsey Building. (Trentoniana collection of the Trenton Public Library)

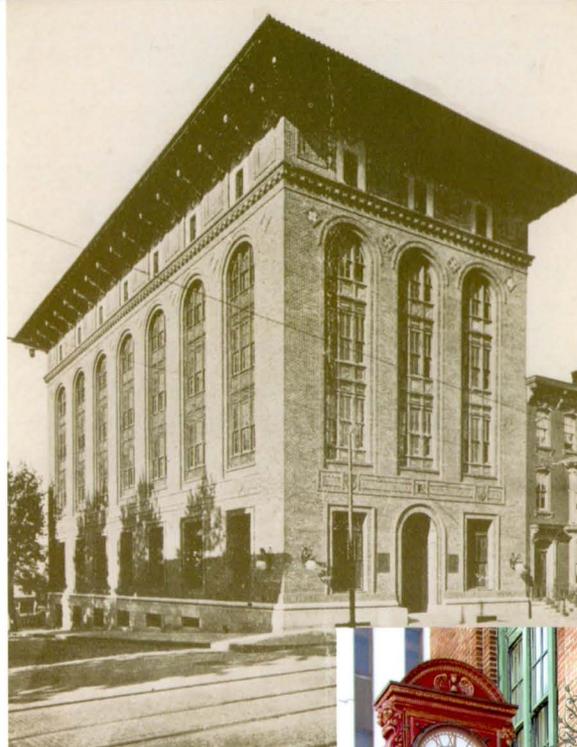


The Building

At the June 7, 1911, dedication ceremony, architect Cass Gilbert said that Henry C. Kelsey's financing of a school of the arts reminded him of the princely patrons of the Renaissance. His design was modeled after the Palazzo Strozzi, one of Florence's most famous palaces, designed by Benedetto da Maiano in 1489.

Three steps lead from the street into an arched vestibule ornamented with a tilework frieze, designed in the glazed terra-cotta della Robbia style by Herman C. Mueller, a member of the school's board and a noted Trenton tile manufacturer. The design combines the shield of the school, an open book and artist's palette, with the portrait of a student.

As built, the first floor housed the director's office, library and 300-seat auditorium, Prudence Hall. A white marble staircase rose the height of the building, with the third and fourth floors used for classrooms and the fifth floor for studios. While most of the second floor was classrooms, one room was used to exhibit the school's art pottery and porcelain collections, with another dedicated to Mrs. Kelsey's own collection.



A view of the Kelsey Building around the time of its dedication in 1911, when West State Street was still cobbled and traversed by streetcars.



A terra-cotta ornamented arch and stone urns adorn the original entrance into the Kelsey Building from West State Street.

The Kelsey Building

The Room and the Clock

At the front of the building on the second floor, under a pediment of Siena marble inscribed "In Memoriam Prudence Townsend Kelsey," through two sets of doors – the outer, mahogany, the inner, satinwood – is Henry Kelsey's permanent valentine.

Henry C. Kelsey himself arranged its contents as a monument to the wife he never ceased to mourn and her favorite things – an ivory whistle shaped like a dog; a measuring cup from

Carlsbad, one of their favorite cities; small charms and vases. The extent of his feelings can be gauged by his opening remarks at the dedication: "When, on that bitter winter night, now more than seven years ago, the light of my life went out, all the world seemed dark and cold to me. My heart was chilled, my reason staggered and I felt that for me the end could not come too soon."

A personal collection of decorative china and glassware, mostly of European origin, is displayed in the room that memorializes Prudence Townsend Kelsey on the second floor of the Kelsey Building.



His Victorian excess of feeling was mirrored in the room, where porcelain cherubs perched atop framed portraits of the Kelseys, six clocks were stopped at 11:49, and a number of small calendars were turned permanently to Sunday, January 3, the time and date of her death. Small pictures of Mrs. Kelsey were scattered among the cabinets holding her belongings and one shelf displayed a sachet, with her calling card attached. On it was written: "This little sachet was the last thing I took to Blessed Prude – a day or two before Christmas 1903 (at the hospital). God bless her soul. O! My darling, darling wife."

Outside the room, suspended from the building's State Street façade by lacy ironwork, is a large clock. Kelsey was a great proponent of public clocks, so it is not surprising that he wanted his building to have one. Nor is it surprising that V-shaped brass markers on the clock's faces note the hour and minute of Prudence's passing, and above the face a winged hourglass reminds all that "time flies." Henry C. Kelsey passed it twice daily as he walked to and from his office at the State House.



A portrait of Prudence Townsend Kelsey late in life accompanies calendar and clock that mark the day and time of her death.

Suspended from the façade above the main entrance to the Kelsey Building is a large clock with an elaborate iron surround.



The Kelsey Building

The School of Industrial Arts and Its Successors

What became the School of Industrial Arts started out as a night drawing class, established in 1890 as an extension of the public schools and taught on the third floor of a North Broad Street building. In 1898, the Board of Education formalized it as the Trenton School of Technical Science and Art, housing it at the Trenton Academy (later the site of the Trenton Public Library). Two moves later, it was renamed the School of Industrial Arts in 1903, with a trustee board appointed by the governor. By 1906, the school had eight teachers and 75 students.

Henry C. Kelsey's new building spurred growth, so that in 1916 a shop building on Quarry Street was acquired. By 1940, when the school was the subject of the first of the Works Progress Administration's Writers Project Studies of "Trenton Municipal Activities," there were 44 teachers and a student body of 1,272, including children who attended

Saturday classes, "...industrial workers, art students, housewives, professional men and women and high school graduates seeking vocational training..." in daytime and evening courses. The WPA writers calculated that 28,000 students had attended classes

since 1898. The growth of the school led to expansion beyond its original scope. On May 2, 1947, precisely 38 years since Henry C. Kelsey's plans for the night school were announced, the New Jersey Board of Education approved a change in name to Trenton Junior College and School of Industrial Arts. Twenty years later, as the state of New Jersey began to put together a county-based system of two-year colleges, the school was renamed Mercer County Community College on July 1, 1967. The renamed school moved to a new campus in suburban West Windsor Township three years later.

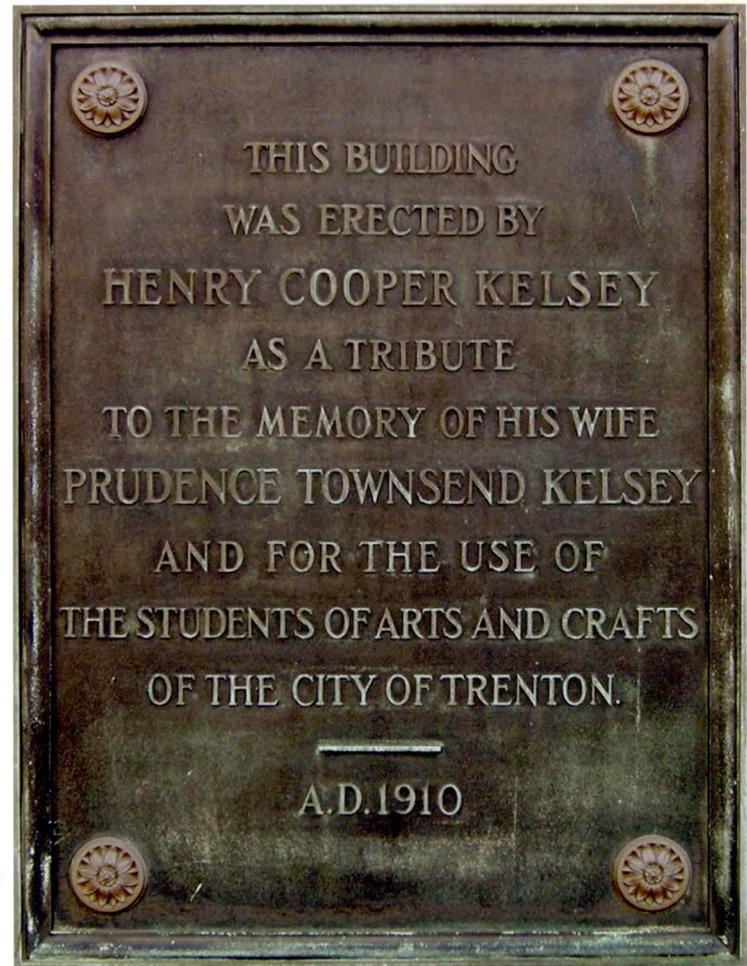


The richly ornamented intados surrounding the main entry to the Kelsey Building includes a shield with the intertwined initials of the School of Industrial Arts.

The Building

Henry C. Kelsey's will had established a trust for the permanent maintenance of the bronze tablet and clock on the building's façade, as well as the Prudence Townsend Kelsey Room. As the college made plans to sell the building to the state of New Jersey in the early 1970s for demolition, it received court permission to transfer those legacies to the new campus.

But the threat to the Kelsey Building galvanized efforts to preserve the architectural character of the State House area. Then, a newspaper story recalled the influence of the Palazzo Strozzi on Cass Gilbert's design, and his prominence. Finally, a bill introduced by State Senate President Joseph P. Merlino on January 21, 1974, provided for the building's preservation, citing it as "...a unique and distinguished architectural work of art." The legislation required the state to provide a use "...consistent with the preservation of the building and the integrity of its architectural design."



This bronze tablet mounted to the right of the main entrance documents the motive and purpose behind the Kelsey Building.

2 The Townhouses

110-115 West State Street



The core of Thomas Edison State College is on lands originally taken up by Trenton's founding settler, Mahlon Stacy, in 1679. William Trent bought 800 acres from Stacy's son in 1714, and built himself a manor house, today's William Trent House, on the south side of the Assunpink. North of the Assunpink, Trent set about developing a formal settlement, Trent's Town.

By the early 18th century Trenton had four principal roads, whose names changed with politics (King and Queen) and circumstances (Water and Market), until by the 19th century they were known as Warren, Broad, Front and State streets. The least

of these was State, also known as Second Street, which for much of the 18th century, only went as far as Pettit's Run (later Petty's Run), a natural boundary. At a time when the town ended at Barrack (then known simply as West) Street to the west and

Broad Street to the east, there was little reason to build beyond.

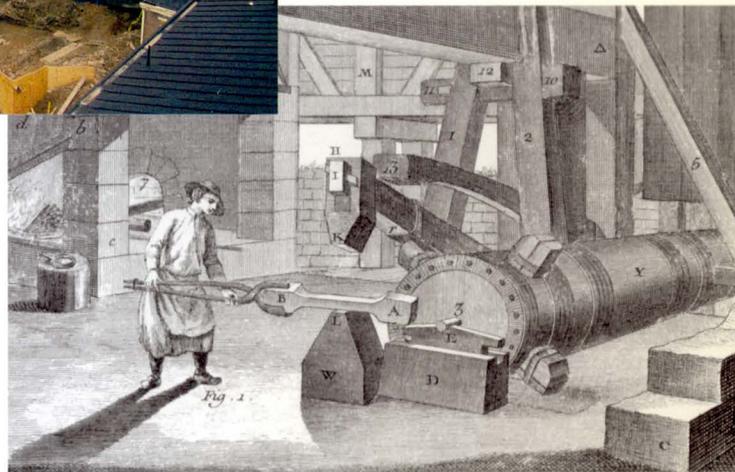
That began to change in 1731, when James Trent sold Isaac Harrow a one-acre lot on both sides of Petty's Run. By 1734, Harrow had built a plating mill, essentially a water-powered blacksmith shop. The mill used the run to drive a waterwheel, which in turn powered a bellows and one or more large trip-hammers, making it possible to heat and hammer bars of iron into thin sheets (plates) of metal. Harrow fashioned a wide range of iron tools and implements to sell locally and in Philadelphia. He also built a workshop, coal house and home on the property. The eastern portion of his plating mill was within the southwestern corner of the modern 115 West State Street lot.

After Harrow's death in 1741, his land was divided, with the western half of his property, straddling Petty's Run, being sold in 1745 to Benjamin Yard. By 1750, Yard had built a steel furnace

across the creek from the plating mill, one of only five such furnaces in the colonies at that time. Yard owned the plating mill site into the early 19th century, manufacturing small arms for the Continental Army there during the Revolution. He sold the steel furnace to Owen Biddle and Timothy Matlack of Philadelphia in 1762. This facility operated intermittently over the following quarter century, changing hands several times.



A view looking down from the roof of the Kelsey Building at the partially excavated ruins of the Harrow/Yard plating mill in 1996.



How the interior of the Harrow/Yard plating mill might have appeared in the mid 18th century with a water-powered trip-hammer being used to shape bar iron on a blacksmith's anvil.

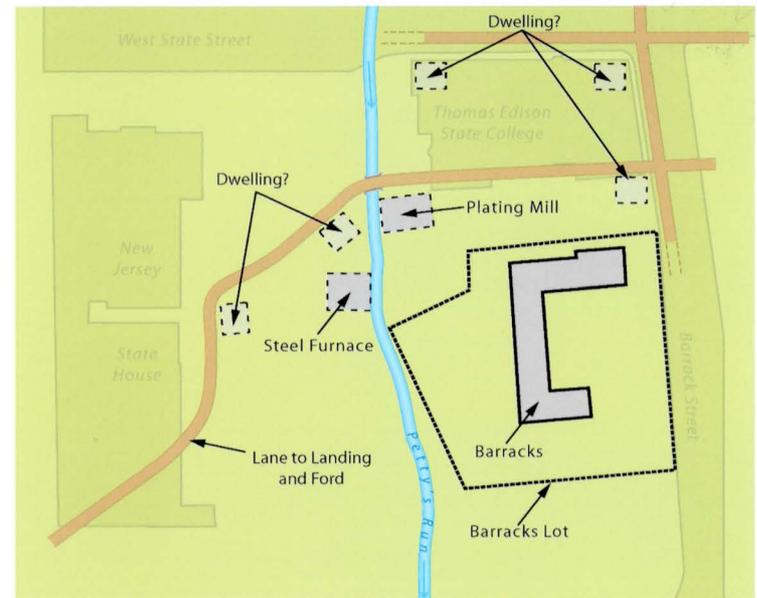
The Townhouses

Both the plating mill and steel furnace probably went out of use in the 1790s, around the time the State House was constructed, although the buildings likely remained standing for a few years longer. In 1812, Joseph Fithian built a cotton mill at this same spot on Petty's Run. The factory soon floundered and was replaced in the 1820s by a paper mill, which operated with greater success into the mid-1870s.

Back in the 1740s, the eastern half of Isaac Harrow's property was sold to Joseph Peace, from whom Peace Street takes its name. In 1758, the southern portion of Peace's holdings was chosen as the site of a barracks to be built for 300 British troops arriving to fight in the French and Indian War. The Old Barracks Museum, the College's neighbor to the south, is the only extant provincial French and Indian War barracks in North America.

Residential building came about more slowly. Joseph Reed, grandfather of George Washington's aide-de-camp of the same name, built a house at the site of modern 113 West State Street before the Revolution. There was little appetite for building during the war, but in 1782, Joseph Brittain Jr., began to lay out lots on property he had acquired from his father eight years earlier. A portion of his land was sold in 1792 for construction of the State House.

At the turn of the century, a house was built on the site of



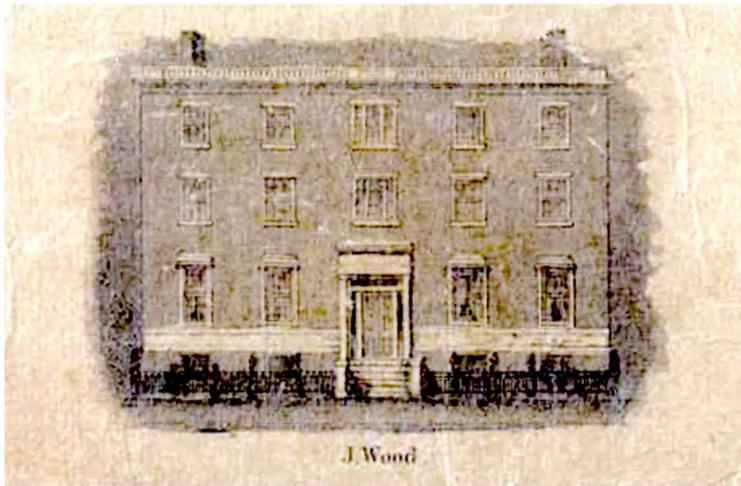
Petty's Run in the vicinity of Thomas Edison State College campus at the time of the American Revolution.

modern 115 West State Street. Shortly after the War of 1812, the old house at the corner of West State and Barrack was torn down and replaced by a brick residential and commercial building. The construction of 107-109 West State circa 1838 by Joseph Wood, a wealthy real estate developer, future mayor and future owner of the William Trent House, was followed by the construction of today's 105, 113 and 115 West State, all in the decade preceding the outbreak of the Civil War. Construction of the Kelsey Building in 1911 completed the configuration that existed when the

College moved to Trenton in 1979.

Twenty years later, the College celebrated the completion of an ambitious construction project. The surviving three-story brick houses adjacent to the Kelsey Building were rehabilitated and connected to the main building by the addition of a 40-foot high atrium to their rear, with classrooms and offices opening from it.

In 2002, the College Board of Trustees named the Townhouse complex after Dr. George A. Pruitt, the College's third president, in recognition of his years of service and leadership.



An engraving of Joseph Wood's mansion included as an inset on the Sidney map of Trenton published in 1849; erected in 1838, this building at 107–109 West State Street is now integrated into the Thomas Edison State College campus.



3 The New Jersey State Library

185 West State Street



Before 185 West State Street became the address of the State Library, the palatial home of one of Trenton's wealthiest and most influential families stood here for decades. This residence, with a historic address of 191 West State Street, was where the Roebblings lived.

By the time the Brooklyn Bridge opened to traffic in 1883, the Roebblings were Trenton's largest employers and its social and civic leaders. But it was another five years before the bridge's chief engineer, Colonel Washington A. Roebbling, and his wife, Emily, returned to Trenton for good.

The colonel's father, John A. Roebbling, designed the bridge and died working on it. The son took over but himself suffered from the crippling effects of caisson disease, the bends. Invalided, he retired to a Brooklyn Heights house overlooking the bridge. For the final five years of construction, his wife took his orders to the

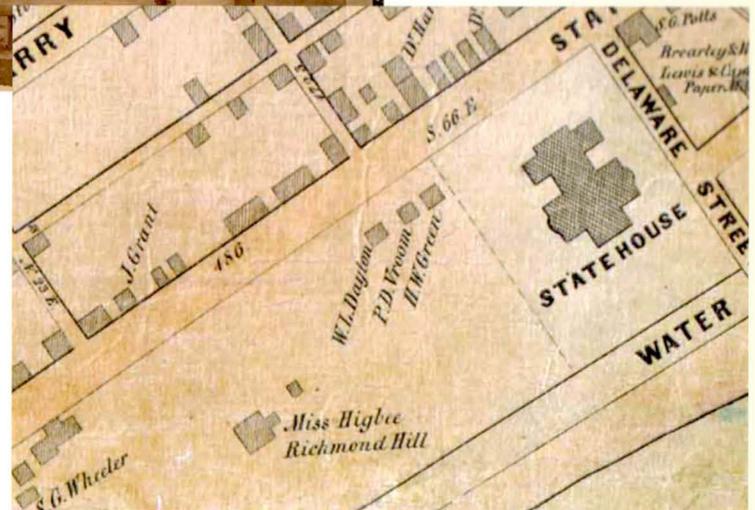


The front of Colonel Washington A. and Emily Roebing's mansion at 191 West State Street around 1900; the New Jersey State Library today occupies this site. (Roebing Family Papers; Rutgers University Special Collections and University Archives)

site each day, bringing back detailed progress reports. When the 14-year project ended in triumph, their remarkable story had made them both famous.

They moved to Troy, New York, while their only child, John, attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. In the spring of 1888, they returned to Trenton, to a rented home. They bought 191-195 West State, a triple lot just west of the State House, and hired a New York architect to replace the old Higbee home, built in 1799. George E. Harney, the designer of Newark's

The New Jersey State Library and its predecessor, the Roebing mansion, replaced a still earlier grand residence "Richmond Hill," home of the locally prominent Higbee family, seen here on the Sidney map of Trenton published in 1849.



Ballantine House, drew up plans to meet Emily's specifications for a "commodious mansion in the Tudor style." In 1892 they moved in after years of construction.

The New Jersey State Library

With nearly 40 rooms, the home of Trenton's most famous residents was one of the sights of the town. At night, streetcar conductors would point out the Tiffany stained glass window of the Brooklyn Bridge at the landing of the grand staircase. Emily had a complete set of photographs made, documenting the rooms. There was a museum room, for the colonel's mineral collection, said to be the largest in private hands. There was a private bowling alley in the basement. A long, two-story glass conservatory overlooked the river from the garden.



The rear of the Roebing mansion at 191 West State Street around 1900. (Roebing Family Papers; Rutgers University Special Collections and University Archives)



Washington Roebling's museum on the first floor of the mansion. (Roebing Family Papers; Rutgers University Special Collections and University Archives)



A lounge at the Roebing mansion with an indoor bowling alley. (Roebing Family Papers; Rutgers University Special Collections and University Archives)



A Tiffany stained glass window of the Brooklyn Bridge overlooked the grand staircase and main hallway. (Roebing Family Papers; Rutgers University Special Collections and University Archives)



This early 20th century postcard view shows the rear of the Roebing property stretching down to a conservatory, with the State House dome beyond; the canal of the Trenton Water Power in the foreground flowed along the base of the bluff below the State House.

Emily died in 1903, but the frail colonel lived on in the big house until his death in 1926. Their grandson, Siegfried, kept the house in the family until his own death a decade later. The mansion was acquired by a real estate holding company and rented to the state for office space. The state bought it in 1945 and razed it the next year. The site was used to park state employees' cars until the early 1960s, when construction began on a new Cultural Complex, including a State Library building on the Roebing site, now renumbered as 185 West State Street.

The State Library's origins reach back to 1796; it is the third-oldest state library in the nation. Its holdings were first collected

in the State House, and from there were moved in May 1931 to the first floor of the east wing of the State House Annex. In 1945, three separate functions were combined within the Department of Education as the Division of the State Library, Archives and History. As the number of books and records grew, additional space had to be leased, until the 1965 opening of the new library building. A reorganization in 1996 separated the Library from the Archives, and while both were transferred to the Department of State, administrative control of the Library was turned over to Thomas Edison State College.

4 The Kuser Mansion

315 West State Street



When Governor Woodrow Wilson left the State House for the White House in 1913, West State Street between Barrack and Calhoun streets was a wide avenue lined by large, elegant homes. On the south side of the street, surrounding the State Capitol, lived families who had played prominent roles in New Jersey since before the American Revolution, side by side with those who had made their names and money in the Industrial Revolution. Their back yards overlooked “Sanhican Creek” (the former canal of the Trenton Water Power Company), and their properties extended to the riverside Stacy Park, the land for which they had donated.

By 1922, the state of New Jersey had bought and razed six town-houses just east of the State House, to gain open space. Two larger homes just west of the Capitol fell in the next few years to clear the way for construction of the State House Annex. The demolition of the Roebling mansion in 1946 was followed within 20 years by the razing of every other home on the river side of the block.

The one grand residence that survives is in the block west of Calhoun, where the College's John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy is housed in the Kuser Mansion. R.V. (for Rudolph Victor) Kuser was an officer of several family-owned businesses, serving most notably as vice president of china maker Lenox, Inc. and president of the People's Brewing Co. The fourth of five entrepreneurial brothers, he was a steady dabbler in Trenton real estate and took pleasure in his long associations with the Inter-State Fair Association and the Carteret Club, both of which he headed as president.

The sociable Kuser was married to Johanna, daughter of Newark brewer Christian Feigenspan, whose every beer and ale was marked P.O.N., for Pride of Newark. At a time when Mrs. Kuser's parents were building a new home in Newark, their son-in-law determined to do likewise



Rudolph V. Kuser (1866-1931), a prominent Trenton entrepreneur at the turn of the 20th century. (Private Collection)



A tray that served also as a means of advertising a much-revered product of the Kuser-owned People's Brewing Company.

in Trenton. Both families moved into their new homes in 1905, and moved on in 1941; both houses were added to the National Register of Historic Places in the late 1970s.

The Kuser Mansion



A group photograph of workers engaged in building the Kuser mansion shortly before its completion in 1905. (Private Collections)

R.V. Kuser died at home in 1931 at 65. When Johanna Kuser moved out a decade after her husband's death, she sold the family home to brothers from a local retail family, who planned to make it a women's specialty shop. Their father and uncle had



One of the mansion's reception rooms during the Kuser Era. (Private Collections)

operated H.M. Voorhees & Bro. until their deaths, and Raymond B. and Edward M. Voorhees had worked under the older generation for 20 and 16 years, respectively. In early November 1941, the *Trenton Times* reported that they were opening R.B. Voorhees

in the former Kuser residence: "R.B. Sherbourne, Inc., New York City, designed the interior, creating a colorful arrangement and retaining most of the former walls and fireplaces."

They stayed in business for just three years, with the mortgage reverting to Johanna Kuser in 1944. She sold it that year to the Medical Society of New Jersey, which occupied it for 32 years before selling to the New Jersey School Boards Association. Sold to a private developer in 1986, the building housed the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce for several years. The College began leasing the former home in 1992.

While a number of College offices occupy the building, its chief tenant is The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy. The Watson Institute was organized to serve the practical needs of New Jersey decision makers, harnessing the resources of higher education to support the capacity of elected and appointed leaders to address critical issues. It was named in March 1997 to honor the memory of a practical public servant, John S. Watson, the country's first African-American legislator to preside over a state appropriations committee.

The Store for Distinctive Christmas Gifts

Unusual Christmas



With Price Tags To Suit Every Purse



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Boudoir Accessory Shop—a shop in itself brimful of practical items for the closet, dresser, bed and bath.

★ ★ ★

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The
R. B. VOORHEES
Company

315 WEST STATE STREET
2 Doors West of Calhoun Street

Ample Parking Space Open Thursday Evening Till 9 P. M.
Store Open Daily 9:30 to 5:30

In the early 1940s, following the departure of the Kuser family, the mansion housed an up-market women's specialty store whose wares are summarized in this advertisement. (Trentonian Collection of the Trenton Public Library)

5 The Academic Center

167 West Hanover Street



6 The Canal Banks Building

221 West Hanover Street



The route out of Trenton known for much of the 18th century as River Road wound its way from the modern West Front Street up Barrack/Willow streets and out West Hanover Street. It was along this country roadway that General Sullivan and half of Washington's forces marched early on the morning of December 26, 1776, in the surprise attack on the Hessian garrison that won the Battle of Trenton.

By the early 19th century the section of modern West Hanover Street between Calhoun and Willow streets was known as Quarry Street. A flinty grey stone was quarried there in the 18th century and used in such local buildings as the Emlen House, still standing on West State Street across from the Kuser Mansion.

After the completion of the Delaware and Raritan Feeder Canal in 1834, the stone yard on Quarry Street was taken over by John C. Grant. By 1843 he was advertising "cut stone of all kinds," quoting a price "at from 45 to 55 cents

per perch," used in the building of stairs. Grant, who controlled one of several brownstone quarries at Wilburtha, four miles outside of Trenton, brought the stone by boat along the feeder to the yards just east of Calhoun Street, where it was cut and dressed for builders. Behind Grant's lots, the canal feeder widened into the Willow Street Basin. With a small fleet of canal- and riverboats, his operation grew to encompass a Philadelphia office.

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WHOLESALE DEALER IN ALL KINDS OF
BROWN STONE,
From Greensburgh Quarries, Mercer County, N. J.
Also Connecticut Stone, Blocks, Plat-
forms, Steps, Base, Door Sills,
Window Sills, Lintels,
Ashlers, Water
Tables, &c.,
IN THE ROUGH AND DRESSED STATE.
Building Stone,
Of any Size and Quality, Delivered at any Point Designated.
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HYDRAULIC CEMENT
Kept Constantly on Hand.
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Contracts taken for Public and Private Buildings of every Description.
OFFICES—1203 South Front Street, Philadelphia, Pa., & Quarry St., above Willow, Trenton, N.J.

Across West Hanover Street from the Academic Center, on the bank of the Delaware and Raritan Feeder Canal, was the sprawling stone yard of John C. Grant, supplier of brownstone and marble to Trenton builders in the mid-19th century; the yard is shown in an inset view on the Lamborn map of Trenton in 1859, and advertised its stone products in Lant's city directory of 1872. (Trentoniana Collection of the Trenton Public Library)



John C. Grant's Brown Stone & Marble Yard
 Quarry St. Trenton N. J.

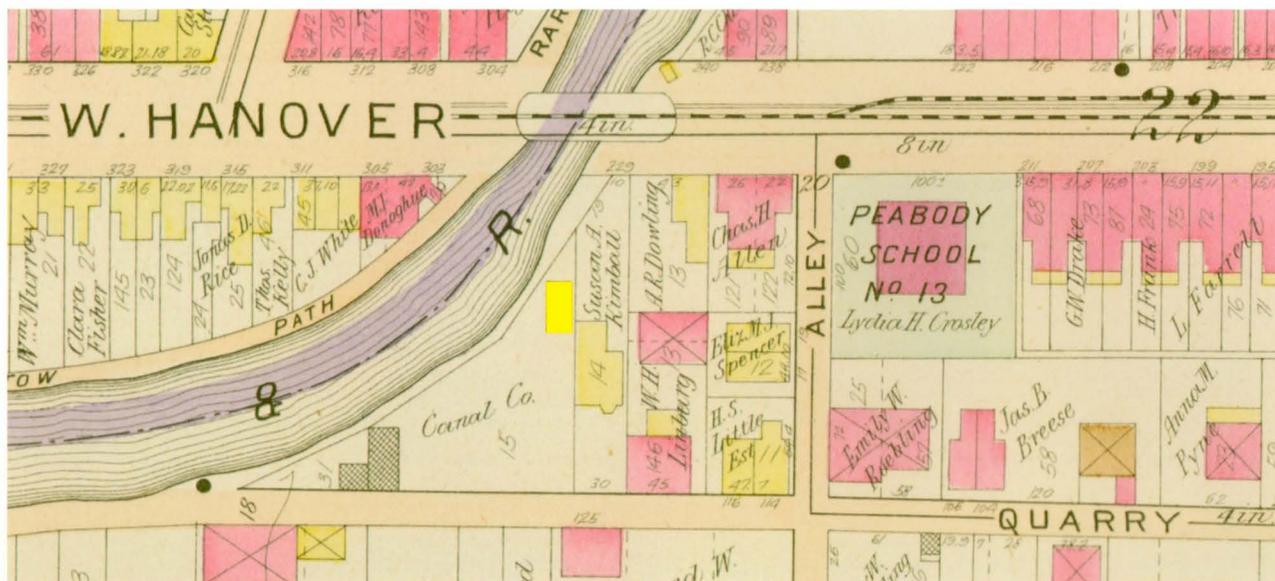
The Canal Banks Building

The street's post-Civil War industrial activity increased with the 1860 establishment of the Star Chain Works, on the eastern end of Grant's yards. The works eventually employed about 100 men and boys in the making of all kinds of chain. To the east of the chain works, the Blackfan & Wilkinson coal and lumber yard extended to Willow Street. Only the grocer at the Calhoun Street end interrupted the industrial character of the block's northern side in 1875.

While only scattered buildings appeared on the south side of

the block before the Civil War, all but a few lots had been built on by 1870. Common Council had passed an ordinance to open Hanover Street through from Warren to Willow streets in 1869, extending it in 1873 to Calhoun. Quarry Street was officially renamed, but it was another 75 years before Quarry Alley became Capitol Alley. Grant owned tracts of land on both sides of the street, so it is not surprising that houses built adjacent to his stone yards, at 193-211, 204-208 and 304-316 West Hanover Street include generous amounts of brownstone.

This sheet in the Lathrop atlas of 1905 shows no fewer than nine separate dwelling units on the site of what is now the Canal Banks Building; the canal bridge tender's house is the yellow rectangle shown closest to the canal bank.





The Delaware and Raritan Canal bridge tender's house on Hanover Street is now nestled into the space between the Canal Banks Building and the feeder canal.

The block retained a working class character well after the stone yards, chain works and coal yard began to disappear. A number of the new homes served as boarding houses: in 1881, a chain maker lived at 167 West Hanover, where in 1900 a grocer resided, and in 1920, a chauffeur. No. 221, not yet built in 1881, was occupied by a printer in 1900, and by a rubberworker, a stenographer and a special officer in 1920.

As the city's well-to-do built ever larger houses along West State Street, their secondary needs spilled over to West Hanover, where the Roeblings kept first stables and later garages. In 1910, when the use of the telephone was still a luxury most homeowners could not afford, the F.W. Roebling stable and

garage on West Hanover had its own listing in the city phone directory. Both the School of Industrial Arts and later Trenton Junior College had expanded from the Kelsey Building into additional quarters on Capitol Alley and West Hanover Street. As a result of its own growth in enrollment, the College in 1992 took over and renovated 167 West Hanover Street. Known as the Academic Center, it provides space for student assessment and counseling, as well as the Office of the Registrar. Recently opened in 2006, the Canal Banks Building, erected by the College at 221 West Hanover Street, houses the Information Center and other administrative functions.

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*What is a college?
An institute of learning.*

*What is a business?
An institute of learning.*

Life, itself, is an institute of learning.

Thomas Alva Edison

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