

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

Other names/site number: John P. Robin Civic Building

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 200 Ross Street

City or town: Pittsburgh State: PA County: Allegheny

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B ___C ___D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p> <p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
---	-------------------------------

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

**State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

District

Site

Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	<u>1</u>	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business

GOVERNMENT/Government Office

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT/Government Office

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Jacobean Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, limestone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Jones & Laughlin Building, known since 1952 as the John P. Robin Civic Building, is an early 20th century high-rise office building in downtown Pittsburgh. The building is symmetrical, rectangular in plan, and seven bays wide and three bays deep. It is built to the sidewalk on the front and side facades. At the rear, the parcel adjoins a large surface parking lot. The Jones & Laughlin Building is 12 stories tall when viewed from the front and 13 stories at the rear. The first eight stories were completed by 1908. The upper stories are an addition of 1917. Both the original building and the addition were designed by the Pittsburgh architectural firm of MacClure and Spahr in the Jacobean Revival style. The building is of steel frame construction, clad in red brick with sandstone trim and a dressed ashlar foundation. Its primary facade is symmetrical in arrangement with the main entrance in the first-floor central bay. Above the first floor, pilasters rise between the bays to the original building cornice at the eighth floor. Each bay contains a tripartite window group, framed in stone. The ninth through twelfth floors show only minor variations. The Second and Third Avenue side elevations are detailed identically to the front. The rear facade is flush brick with individual punched window openings arranged singly, in pairs, or in groups of three. The rear facade's top stories rise in a stepped formation to accommodate the thirteenth floor, which has a smaller footprint than the lower stories. A one-story concrete block parking structure behind the Jones & Laughlin Building is part of the building site, but does not contribute to its historical or architectural significance. Alterations to the office

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building County and State Allegheny, PA
building's original design include aluminum replacement windows and alterations to the floor plans and finishes on many of the interior floors. Its most significant interior spaces—the first floor lobby and 13th floor board room—remain intact. The Jones & Laughlin Building has integrity of location, setting, design, materials, craftsmanship, association, and feeling.

Narrative Description

Setting and Site

The Jones & Laughlin Building, known since 1952 as the John P. Robin Civic Building, stands at 200 Ross Street in the southeastern section of downtown Pittsburgh, approximately three blocks north of the Monongahela River. It occupies an L-shaped parcel, 2-J-164-02, spanning a block of Ross Street between Second and Third avenues. The building is built to the sidewalk on all three of these streets. At the rear, the parcel adjoins a large surface parking lot, which occupies a separate legal parcel. The one-story concrete block parking structure behind the Jones & Laughlin Building is part of the building site, but does not contribute to the Jones & Laughlin Building's historical or architectural significance. It has a shed roof and is open to the west (Photo 9).

The building's neighbors are predominantly low- to mid-rise office and commercial buildings (Photo 1), including two survivors of a small Chinatown which occupied this part of downtown during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Most of the other buildings of Pittsburgh's Chinatown were destroyed by the construction and expansion of the Boulevard of the Allies in 1921. A ramp for the Boulevard of the Allies rises immediately alongside the Jones & Laughlin Building's south facade, above the alignment of Second Avenue. Several government buildings, including the Pittsburgh City-County Building, Allegheny County Building, Allegheny County Courthouse, Family Court Center (former Allegheny County Jail), and County Morgue, are located within one or two blocks.

Exterior

The Jones & Laughlin Building is rectangular in plan, seven bays wide and three bays deep. It is 12 stories tall when viewed from the front and 13 stories at the rear. The first eight stories were completed by 1908. The upper stories are an addition of 1917. Both the original building and the addition were designed by the Pittsburgh architectural firm of MacClure and Spahr in the Jacobean Revival style.



Photo 1. Jones & Laughlin Building, 200 Ross St. (center), from intersection of Ross St. and Fourth Ave.

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

The building is of steel frame construction, clad in red brick with sandstone trim. A dressed ashlar foundation rises in height as the grade of Ross Street descends toward the south and terminates with a moulded water table.

Its primary facade faces Ross Street and has a symmetrical arrangement with the main entrance in the central bay (Photos 2-4). A stone arch leads into a small, square, vaulted exterior vestibule. Three granite steps ascend a landing before a revolving oak door surmounted by a divided transom. A pair of wrought-iron gates at the entrance to the vestibule can be closed to secure it, and there is a large, ornate wrought-iron sconce light fixture on each side. Framing the vestibule entrance arch is a stone relief with the numerals "19" and "07" in heraldic shields, one in each upper corner, representing the date of the building's construction. (Photo 4)



Photo 2. Jones & Laughlin Building, primary facade, from intersection of Ross St. and Third Ave.

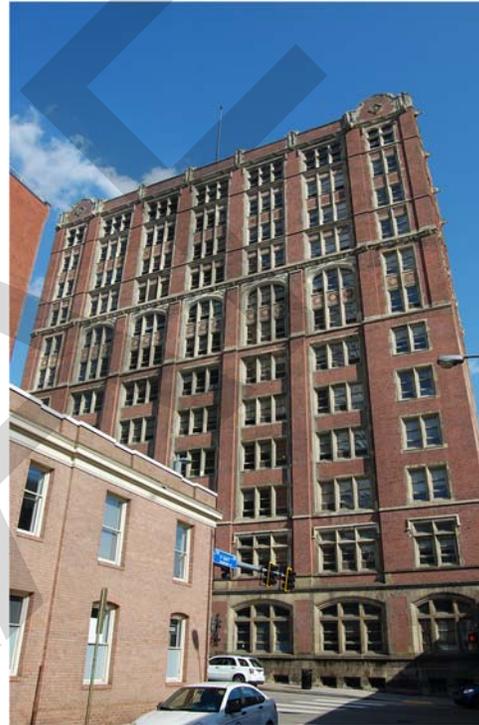


Photo 3. Jones & Laughlin Building, primary facade, from intersection of Ross St. and Second Ave.

On each side of the entrance are three broad arched window openings framed in stone. Stone mullions divide each into three windows and transoms. The arrangement is original, but the windows throughout the building are aluminum replacements.

A stone belt course divides the first from the second floor. Above this is a stone sill course. From it, pilasters rise between the bays to the original building cornice at the eighth floor. The second-floor window arrangements are similar to the first, but the lintels are flat instead of arched and have simple stone Tudor drip moulds. The openings on the end bays are two windows wide instead of three.

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

Another stone sill course demarcates the transition from the second to the third through sixth floors. Each of these floors is detailed identically to the second floor, except the windows do not have transoms.



Photo 4. Central and flanking bays, first through fourth floors, primary (Ross St.) facade



Photo 5. Main entrance, Ross St.

A third sill course is found at the seventh floor level. The seventh floor is detailed identically to the third through sixth floors below, but decorative spandrels connect the seventh floor windows to those on the eighth floor. The arched eighth floor window openings in bays two through six echo those on the first floor. An eighth-floor cornice of stone with subtle Tudor ornamentation terminates the original composition. (Photo 6)

The ninth through twelfth floors, added ten years later, show only minor variations. The pilasters and tripartite window groups, framed in stone, continue with brick spandrels or blind transoms. At the twelfth floor, rather than three windows under one broad arch in each bay, each of the three windows in each group is arched, and the trio is capped with a squared Tudor drip mould. A narrow stone cornice above the twelfth floor mimics the cornice at the eighth floor below. At the very top of the building is a brick parapet, capped in stone, with articulated stone ornamentation above each pilaster. Further ornamentation and raised, rounded parapet walls emphasize the first and seventh end bays.

The three bays of each of the Second and Third Avenue elevations are detailed identically to the front (Photo 7).

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA



Photo 6. Fourth through twelfth floors, primary (Ross St.) facade

The rear facade is flush brick with individual punched window openings arranged singly, in pairs, or in groups of three (Photo 8). There is no stone ornamentation. The rear facade's top stories rise in a stepped formation to accommodate the thirteenth floor. There are two rear entrances: one located in the third bay from Second Avenue, reached via a short flight of steps, and one accessible via a ramp from the parking lot in the fifth bay from Second Avenue.

Interior

Basement

The basement is a utilitarian space used for storage and mechanical equipment. It does not contain any ornamental finishes or details.

First Floor

The first floor contains the lobby, rest rooms, offices, and a large public hearing room. The lobby is T-shaped and extends the full depth of the building in its central bay. The exterior vestibule penetrates the front (west) end of the lobby with entrance via a wood-framed revolving door.



Photo 7. Third Ave. side and rear elevations

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA



Photo 8. Rear elevation from adjacent parking lot



Photo 9. Concrete block parking structure in rear from Third Ave.

Faceted walls on either side of the vestibule contain doorways to offices (on the north) and a pair of rest rooms (on the south). Four elevators are located in facing pairs at the lobby's east end. There is an enclosed stairwell behind each pair of elevators. Forward of the vertical circulation core, forming the cross of the T, is a broad north-south corridor. Paneled oak doors lead to offices at the north end of the first floor. At the south end, a suite of offices has been converted to a single large, open room for public hearings.

Lobby finishes include marble flooring and wainscoting, plaster walls, moulded wood trim around doorways, and crown moulding. The elevator lobby has a coved ceiling with replacement canister-style hanging light fixtures. First-floor offices and the public hearing room have carpeted floors and dropped ceilings.

Second through Twelfth Floors

The original plan of the second through fifth floors was of a U-shaped office suite around the building's vertical circulation core. At the center rear of each floor is the elevator lobby, containing four elevators in facing pairs. Rest rooms and the building's primary staircase are located adjacent to the south elevators. Each elevator lobby has windows at one end facing east while the other end connects to each floor's office suite. On each floor, a single-loaded, U-shaped corridor wrapped around the core, and offices were situated at the perimeter to take advantage of natural light through the building's windows. Original finishes consisted of marble floors in the lobbies, plaster walls, and quarter-sawn oak trims and moldings throughout.

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building County and State Allegheny, PA

Current conditions vary floor by floor. Aspects of the original plan and finishes remain in evidence on some floors, while others have experienced near-complete renovation with modern layouts and finishes such as carpet, dropped ceilings, and new drywall partitions. Where original moulded trims remain, most have been painted.

Thirteenth Floor

The thirteenth floor is set back from the building's north, south, and west elevations and occupies only about half of the footprint area of the floors below. It contains the executive suite of the Jones & Laughlin Company. Its original plan, a compact version of the office suite wrapped around the circulation core found on the floors below, has been well-preserved, as have its original materials and finishes, except that floors throughout have been carpeted. At the north end of the thirteenth floor is the executive conference room, now known as the Wherrett Room. This room exhibits its original oak-paneled walls, ornamental plaster ceiling, and brass light fixtures.

Integrity

The Jones & Laughlin Building retains all seven aspects of integrity. Still standing in its original location on Ross Street between Second and Third Avenues, the Jones & Laughlin Building has absolute integrity of location. It also has strong integrity of setting among the low- to mid-rise office and commercial buildings nearby, most of which were also built in the late 19th-early 20th centuries. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are present as well. Its aluminum replacement windows do not replicate the originals, but do fill the original openings. Interior renovations have substantially altered some of the office floors, but the first and thirteenth floors—originally the most finely-designed and finished—remain largely intact. The Jones & Laughlin Building retains integrity of feeling as an early 20th century office building and integrity of association with Pittsburgh's corporate might during this time period.

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce
Architecture

Period of Significance

Commerce: 1907-1952
Architecture: 1907-1917

Significant Dates

1907
1917

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

MacClure & Spahr
A. & S. Wilson Construction Company

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

The Jones & Laughlin Building is significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with the activities of the Jones & Laughlin Steel Company (later Corporation), one of the largest producers of steel in the United States during the first half of the 20th century. Its period of significance is from 1907, when the building was built, to 1952, when J&L moved out to new, more modern offices. The Jones & Laughlin Building was the headquarters of the company, founded in 1853 as an iron manufacturer on the South Side. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, J&L transitioned into steel production and built blast furnaces and vast mills on both sides of the Monongahela River and on the Ohio River in Aliquippa. J&L's impact on the economy, urban geography, and identity of Pittsburgh and the western Pennsylvania steel-producing region is impossible to overestimate. The Jones & Laughlin Building is also significant under Criterion C as a high-quality, high-integrity example of the Jacobean Revival Style of architecture applied to a major commercial building. The building is also a distinguished example of the work of MacClure and Spahr. Founded by Boston architects Colbert A. MacClure and Albert H. Spahr, this firm designed many prominent commercial and residential buildings for clients in Pittsburgh and its suburbs between 1901-1922. The period of significance under this criterion begins with the construction of the first eight stories of the J&L Building in 1907 and concludes in 1917, when the ninth through thirteenth stories (also by MacClure & Spahr) were added.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Jones & Laughlin Steel

The Jones & Laughlin Steel Company formed officially under that name in 1902, but derived from parent companies, also run by the Jones and Laughlin families with interlocking management structures, founded half a century before. The earliest of these was Lauth and Brother, an iron-making concern founded by Bernard and John Lauth in 1850. In 1853, the brothers brought Benjamin Franklin Jones, a young entrepreneur from Washington County, and another man, Samuel Kiel, into the partnership, which was renamed Jones, Lauth, and Company. At the time, the Lauth brothers had established puddling and heating furnaces in Brownstown (now part of the South Side) and planned to build a rolling mill for the production of iron.

In 1856, Kiel and John Lauth left the partnership and were replaced by James Laughlin. Laughlin was an Irish immigrant and banker who became interested in the iron industry while acting as a lender to Jones, Lauth. The new partnership "was a melding of entrepreneurial vision, managerial skill, technical expertise, and financial capital that would help make J&L the leader in iron-making in Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh the leading iron-producing region in the country."¹ Both Jones and Laughlin brought other family members into the partnership, and soon renamed it Jones & Laughlins. The partners called their South Side iron mill the American Iron Works. In 1861, Bernard Lauth left the partnership, selling his interests to B.F. Jones and James Laughlin.

Meanwhile, the same set of partners along with three others (including two sons of James Laughlin) formed another company, Laughlin & Company, to produce pig iron. Pig iron was the source

¹ David H. Wollman and John R. Inman, *Portraits in Steel: An Illustrated History of Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1999), 12.

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

of the metal used by the American Iron Works. Unable to purchase enough pig iron from suppliers, Jones & Laughlins decided to manufacture it themselves, and formed Laughlin & Company for this purpose. In so doing, the company was among the first to engage in backward vertical integration, in which a company expands its role to include work products formerly purchased from businesses up the supply chain.

Laughlin & Company acquired land in Hazelwood on the north side of the Monongahela River, just opposite the South Side location of the American Iron Works. There the company erected two blast furnaces and beehive coke ovens. These furnaces, called the Eliza furnaces after family members of both Jones and Laughlin, were the second blast furnaces built in the Pittsburgh area. The Eliza furnaces began operation in 1860, just in time to meet the demands for iron products of the rapidly-expanding railroads and the Civil War. After the war, a building boom in bridges as well as buildings; demand for iron transportation and storage facilities for the emerging oil and gas industries; and the need for plows and other heavy equipment in the United States' westward expansion fueled ongoing demand for iron.²

Between 1859 and 1876, the American Iron Works grew from 31 puddling furnaces to 75 with a production output of 50,000 tons annually; by 1880, the output was 65,000 tons. The Eliza furnace manufactured 36,000 tons of pig iron in 1876 and, after an enlargement of the stacks, 50,000 tons in 1880. Barges transported the pig iron across the Monongahela River to the American Iron Works until 1887, when the Hot Metal Bridge was constructed to connect the Eliza blast furnaces in Hazelwood to the puddling furnaces on the South Side. The bridge got its name from its function of carrying railcars filled with hot pig iron.

The railroads also created demand for steel, which has a lower carbon content and is more malleable than iron. The Bessemer conversion process transformed the metals manufacturing industry in the post-Civil War United States by decreasing the cost of steel production while it increased efficiency. Patented in England in 1856, the Bessemer process was introduced to the United States in 1864. In Pittsburgh and elsewhere, iron mills began to invest in diversification into steel production.

B.F. Jones was the first iron maker in Pittsburgh to construct a Bessemer plant in his works, but the experiment was initially unsuccessful, and Jones shut it down. It was Andrew Carnegie who demonstrated the economy of the Bessemer method at his Edgar Thompson Works, which began production in 1875. Competition drove B.F. Jones to try again at steel production in the 1880s. Between 1883-1886, he built two Bessemer converters at the American Iron Works and added a third blast furnace at the Eliza site in Hazelwood. In 1890, he replaced and enlarged one of the older stacks to increase production to 160,000 tons of Bessemer iron and 50,000 tons of pig iron. A new name marked the mills' transition: the American Iron and Steel Works.

In 1895, an advertisement for the Jones & Laughlins American Iron and Steel Works listed its products as bar, hoop, and sheet iron and steel; I-beams, channels, and structural shapes; blooms and billets; fish bars, piston rods, and finger bars; and patent cold rilled iron and steel shafting.

² Ibid., 20, 22.

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

J&L was also known for its rails and nails. By 1900, J&L was one of the leading rollers of Bessemer steel rails.³

Also in this year, Jones & Laughlins formally acquired Laughlin & Company, consolidating the family firms under one administration led by B.F. Jones, Jr. In 1902, the partnership was reorganized as a corporation, Jones & Laughlin Steel Company. The company continued to grow. By 1904, the annual capacity of the American Iron and Steel Works had increased to over one million tons of ingots. A major expansion of the open hearth steelmaking capacity between 1904 and 1908 added nine 200- to 250-ton open hearth furnaces and an additional Bessemer converter, allowing the J&L mill to achieve an annual capacity of over 1,425,000 tons of steel ingots. Unable to physically expand its Pittsburgh plant, J&L bought land to build a new plant, along with an entire town to house and serve its workers, up the Ohio River at Aliquippa. In 1916 a sixth blast furnace was added to the Eliza Works, bringing ingot capacity to 1,740,000 tons per year in 1920, and two million tons in 1930. In 1923, the company was reorganized again, from a family-held private company to the publicly-held J&L Steel Corporation. Its Board of Directors was still filled largely with members of the Jones and Laughlin families. (Figure 1)

From the beginning to the middle of the 20th century, J&L was the second-largest producer of steel in America after Andrew Carnegie's U.S. Steel. During this period of peak production, the company constructed and expanded its office building at 200 Ross Street. J&L occupied its building at 200 Ross Street for 44 years, until decamping for even more modern offices in the new Gateway Center in 1952.

In the 1960s and 70s, several factors brought about a nationwide decline of the American steel industry, including J&L. Analyses vary, but factors probably included overcapacity in a time of declining demand and increasing foreign competition; high labor costs; lack of diversification; and failure to streamline or restructure to meet changing market and technological demands. In 1974, Ling-Temco-Vought purchased Jones & Laughlin Corporation as part of LTV Steel. A



Figure 1. Pittsburgh Works of Jones & Laughlin Steel Company, 1921 (historical Society of Western Pennsylvania)

³ Ibid., 45.

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

merger of I.T.V. and rival Republic Steel in 1984 ended the Jones & Laughlin name. All produc-

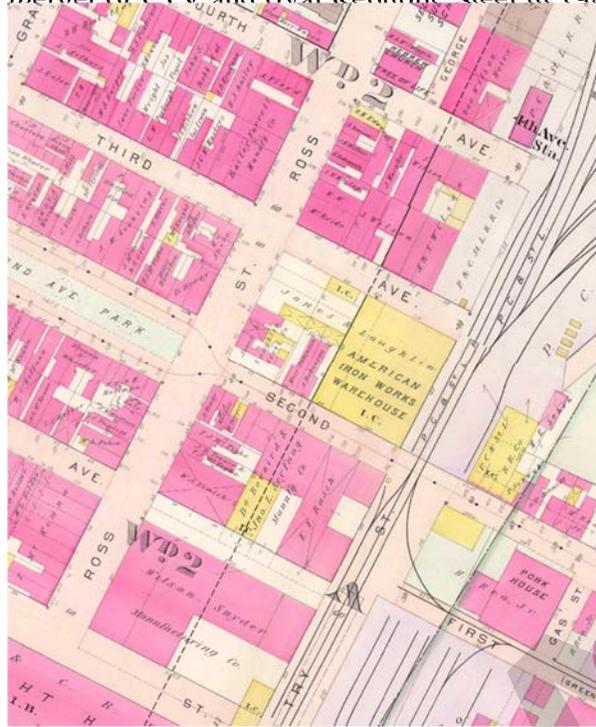


Figure 3. Excerpt, *Hopkins Real Estate Plat Book of the City of Pittsburgh, 1904.* Jones & Laughlin's American Iron Works is at upper center.

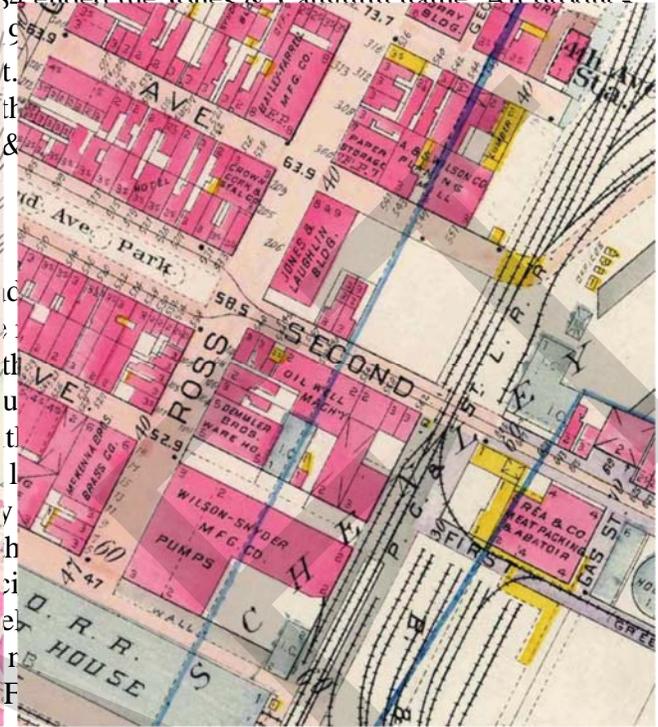


Figure 4. Excerpt, *Hopkins Real Estate Plat Book of the City of Pittsburgh, 1910.* The 8-story brick Jones & Laughlin Building of 1908 and the Robinson houses stand on the block between Ross St., Try St., and Second and Third avenues.

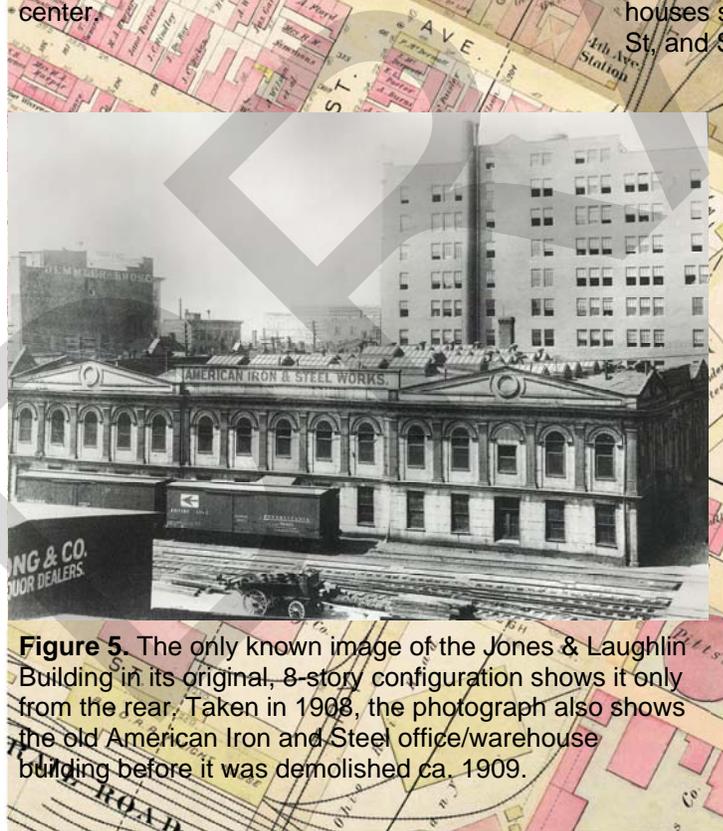


Figure 5. The only known image of the Jones & Laughlin Building in its original, 8-story configuration shows it only from the rear. Taken in 1908, the photograph also shows the old American Iron and Steel office/warehouse building before it was demolished ca. 1909.

Figure 2. Excerpt, *Hopkins Real Estate Plat Book of the City of Pittsburgh, 1890.* Jones & Laughlin's American Iron Works is at upper center.

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

The previous Jones & Laughlin building was demolished after the new one opened; it appears together with the new building in a ca. 1908 photograph, but is absent from the Hopkins historic

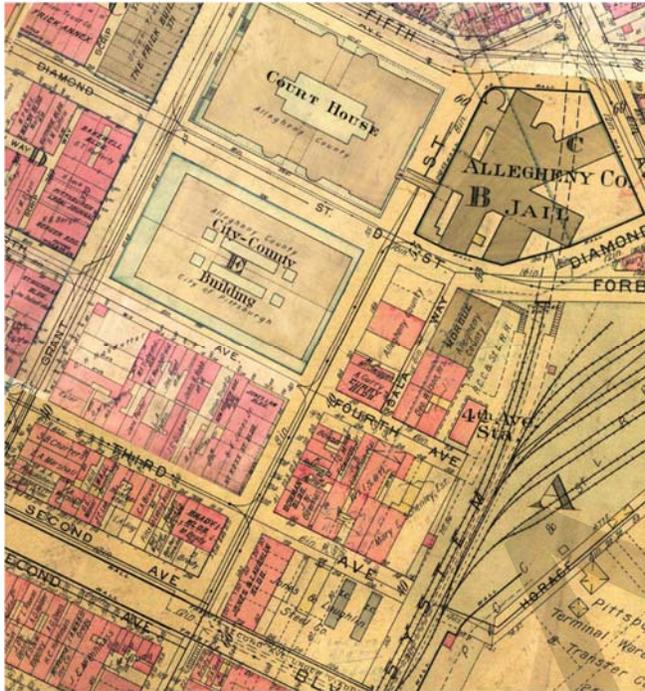


Figure 6. Excerpt, *Hopkins Real Estate Plat Book of the City of Pittsburgh*, 1923. The Jones & Laughlin Building is at bottom center along with three sheds. An increasing number of civic buildings can be seen in nearby blocks.



Figure 7. The Jones & Laughlin Building, with addition, in 1918 (Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania)

property map of 1910 (Figures 4-5). By the 1920s, the Robinson houses had finally been cleared and three narrow sheds—one frame and two iron-clad—stood on the warehouse site behind the Jones & Laughlin office building. (Figure 6)

Jones & Laughlin designed the steel structure of its office building at its Keystone Works structural plant, which moved from the South Side to Second Avenue in the Hazelwood portion of the facility in 1908. The company engaged architects MacClure and Spahr to design the building's exterior skin and interior spaces. The builder of the Jones & Laughlin Building was the A. & S. Wilson Construction Company. The original, eight-story building was completed at 200 Ross Street by 1908.

In the first decades of the 20th century, the Jones & Laughlin Company underwent tremendous expansion of its steel mills and production. The company's prosperity and expansion were reflected in its office building, as well. The company commissioned five additional stories to be added to the Jones & Laughlin Building in 1916, and this addition—also designed by MacClure and Spahr with structural steel plans by the J&L Keystone Works—was constructed in 1917

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA



Figure 8. Jones & Laughlin Board Room, 13th floor, ca. 1950 (Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania)

(Figure 7). The addition included the luxuriously-appointed paneled board room on the 13th floor, in which decisions about the future of the company were made. (Figure 8)

Jones & Laughlin management relocated from 200 Ross Street to more modern accommodations at Gateway Center in 1952. In the meantime, the sector of downtown between Grant and Ross streets south of Fifth Avenue had become the government center of the Pittsburgh region. The trend began with the construction of the massive and highly-visible Allegheny County Courthouse and Jail, completed in 1886. The Allegheny County Morgue joined this complex in

1902 on the current site of the Allegheny County Building. The City-County Building was completed in 1917, and in 1929, the morgue was moved to its present location to accommodate the construction of the County Building, completed in 1931. Thus, the presence of government offices in the blocks near the Jones & Laughlin Building was well-established by the time the company vacated the building in 1952.

Municipal government by this year had outgrown the City-County Building on Grant Street. In the 1930s and 40s, Pittsburgh responded to a complex set of large-scale crises including a shortage of decent, affordable housing; outdated infrastructure; and dangerous levels of pollution and flooding by establishing two major new city agencies: the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP) and the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA). The HACP is Pittsburgh's local housing authority, formed after the passage of the Wagner-Steagall United States Housing Act in 1937; it was set up to receive federal funding to plan, build, and manage multi-unit low-income public housing developments in Pittsburgh during the Great Depression, when the scarcity of safe, sanitary, and comfortable shelter for the poor and working classes was at its more dire. The URA was founded in 1946 to carry out the urban renewal agenda of city leaders, who wished to position Pittsburgh to remain competitive with other U.S. cities as a location of choice for business and industry. Both agencies functioned as conduits of federal funding to locally-planned and implemented projects.

The establishment of these agencies, the scope of their responsibilities, and the staff required to administer them demanded a large amount of additional office space. With Jones & Laughlin's move from 200 Ross Street, city officials saw the opportunity to purchase a ready-built office building near its existing center of operations rather than acquire land and build a new one. The City of Pittsburgh, together with the HACP and URA, purchased the building from the Jones & Laughlin Corporation in 1952. They renamed it the John P. Robin Civic Building after the first

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

executive director of the URA, who led the agency's efforts to implement Renaissance I in the 1940s and 50s. The URA and HACP occupied the upper floors of the building and shared the lower floors with city personnel in related departments, such as City Planning and Building Inspection, and nonprofit agencies working for the betterment of the city's future. Past nonprofit tenants have included the United Way of Allegheny County (formerly Community Chest of Allegheny County) and the Jewish Philanthropies of Pittsburgh.

In 2020, the city departments and quasi-governmental agencies of 200 Ross Street are in the process of relocating prior to the building's sale to a private developer. No non-profit tenants are currently in occupancy.

Significance: Jones & Laughlin

The Jones & Laughlin Building is significant under Criterion C in the area of Commerce for its association with the activities of the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation and its impact on the economy, urban geography, and identity of Pittsburgh, the western Pennsylvania steel-producing region, and the nation. Its period of significance extends from 1907, when the first eight stories were constructed, to 1952, when J&L moved out to newer, more modern offices elsewhere in Pittsburgh's central business district. With the J&L Pittsburgh Works site completely cleared and redeveloped, the Jones & Laughlin office building is one of the only extant remnants of the company's presence (along with the Hot Metal bridge) in Pittsburgh.

From the beginning to the middle of the 20th century, J&L Steel's operations were central to the economy and identity of Pittsburgh. It was during this period, when J&L was the second-largest producer of steel in America (after Andrew Carnegie's U.S. Steel), that the company constructed and expanded its office building at 200 Ross Street. The steel-framed high-rise replaced the two-story, iron-clad office and warehouse built when the mills produced only iron. J&L's Structural Department, known as its Keystone Works, designed the building's structural system of steel columns, beams, and girders. From this building, J&L executives and board members directed the progress of the company through the first half of the 20th century, including through mobilization for two world wars. By taking its place in the skyline of 20th century Pittsburgh, J&L's new office building symbolized the company's rising fortunes as a result of its successful transition to steel manufacturing in the modern city. While most of the building's office floors have been substantially remodeled by subsequent tenants, the 13th floor board room remains almost exactly as it was when it functioned as the management hub of Jones & Laughlin Steel.

Significance: Architecture

The Jones & Laughlin Building is a high-quality, high-integrity example of the Jacobean Revival Style of architecture applied to a major commercial building and a distinguished work of the Pittsburgh firm MacClure & Spahr. Its period of significance under this criterion is 1907-1917. The first year marks the construction of the first eight stories, and 1917 is when the ninth through thirteenth stories were added.

A subtype of the Tudor Revival, the Jacobean Revival style in the United States recalled English residential architecture of the early Renaissance. In 17th century Great Britain, the style marked a transition between the more medieval Tudor and the pure Renaissance styles to come. During this period, Renaissance motifs were communicated to England through German and Flemish

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

carvers, rather than directly from Italy, resulting in some influences from those countries, as well.

Characteristics of the Jacobean Revival include columns and pilasters, round arches, and curved or scrolled, rather than stepped or peaked, gables and parapets. Authentic British examples of the Jacobean style from the 17th century are frequently of red brick with stone trim, especially around groups of multiple windows. All of these features are evident in the Jones & Laughlin Building, where they have been multiplied and repeated to apply to a building type which did not exist in early renaissance England, the high-rise commercial office building.

Because the style was developed for large manor houses, it was most frequently applied to domestic architecture. The style also often mingled with the so-called Collegiate Gothic in a secular version of Gothic architecture characteristic of the older colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, and so became popular for school and university buildings in the early 20th century. MacClure and Spahr employed the style in this vein in their Langley High School. Colfax School in Squirrel Hill, designed by Edward Stotz and built in 1911, is another educational example of Jacobean Revival in Pittsburgh.

The Jones & Laughlin Building is a distinctive example of the Jacobean Revival in commercial architecture. Its pre-industrial references were a curious choice for the Jones & Laughlin Company, whose steel provided the material for the framing of high-rise buildings, bridges, and other modern structures, including this one. But it did set the company's headquarters apart from others during the first decades of the 20th century, which were heavily influenced by the Beaux Arts and Classical Revival movements.

The Jones & Laughlin Building is also distinguished among the works of MacClure and Spahr, a Pittsburgh architecture firm formed in 1901 by Colbert A. MacClure (1879-1912) and Albert H. Spahr (1875-1966). Both founders came to Pittsburgh from Boston, where they had received architecture degrees from M.I.T., the oldest program in the USA. They met while working for the renowned Boston firm of Peabody and Stearns. That firm sent MacClure to Pittsburgh to supervise the construction of buildings it designed here, including the Joseph Horne Department Store and the homes of several affluent merchants and industrialists. MacClure soon secured enough independent commissions in Pittsburgh to start his own practice, and he summoned Spahr from Boston to be his partner.⁴ (Figure 9)

The firm was active from 1901-1922. Its first commission was the 15-story Keystone National Bank on Fourth Avenue between Wood and Smithfield streets (now part of the National Register-listed Fourth Avenue Historic District).⁵ This and another bank, the Diamond Bank Building (1903) at Fifth and Liberty avenues, were early Classical Revival skyscrapers in downtown Pittsburgh. (Figure 10)

⁴ Robert Maurice Trimble, "Rambling Reminiscences." *The Charette* Vol. 16, no. 2, Feb. 1936, 3-4.

⁵ "Contract Awarded. Thompson-Starrett Company, of New York, to Construct Keystone Bank." (Pittsburgh Daily Post, July 11, 1901).

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

Over the subsequent decade, MacClure and Spahr were busy. In 1904, the firm designed the lower (West Carson Street) station of the Monongahela Incline and the Spahr House, an Arts and Crafts Style residence for one of its principals, at 52 Cochran Street in Sewickley. In 1906, they

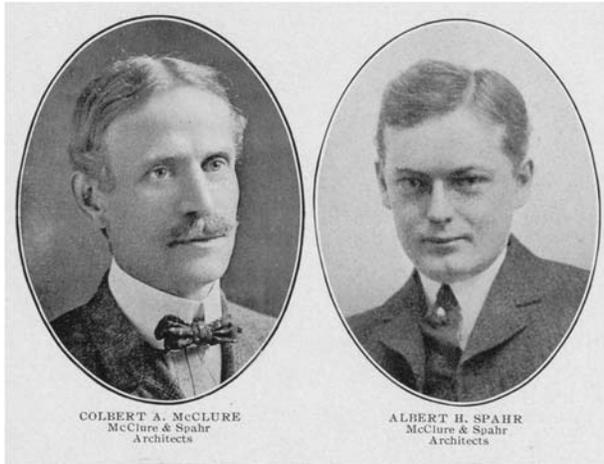


Figure 9. MacClure (sic) and Spahr, ca. 1904, depicted in *Palmer's Pictorial Pittsburgh and Prominent Pittsburghers Past and Present, 1758-1905*



Figure 10. Diamond Bank, MacClure & Spahr, 1903 (Detroit Publishing Company)



Figure 11. Laughlin House, MacClure & Spahr, 1907, shown after its conversion to a dormitory for Chaham College (now University), 1979 (Historic Pittsburgh: Chatham University Chronological Photo Files)

designed the Grand Opera House (now Warner Center) and Union National Bank (now Carlyle Apartments), both in the Classical Revival style, downtown. The following year, as the Jones & Laughlin Building was under construction, MacClure and Spahr were responsible for several houses, including one for John Walker in Sewickley, one in Schenley Farms, and the home of George M. Laughlin, Sr., on Woodland Road in 1907 (enlarged in 1917 after its purchase by Andrew W. Mellon). They designed the Meyer, Jonasson & Co. store at 606 Liberty Avenue in 1910 (Figure 12) and the Julia and James Rea House on Woodland Road in 1912.

MacClure died in 1912, but Spahr continued to operate the firm under the MacClure and Spahr name for another decade, during which time he

designed the addition to 200 Ross Street for J&L. The firm's last commissions, in 1922, were Langley High School in the Sheraden neighborhood of Pittsburgh (NRHP 1986; Figure 13) and

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA



Figure 12. Meyer, Jonasson & Co. Department Store, MacClure & Spahr, 1910

the gatehouse buildings for Homewood Cemetery at Dallas and Ayelesboro avenues in Point Breeze.

In *Pittsburgh's Landmark Architecture*, Walter Kidney described MacClure and Spahr's firm as "a favorite, in Sewickley and in Pittsburgh, for houses and business buildings." He assessed the firm's work as capable and conservative: "rarely innovative, rarely imitative, rarely tasteless."⁶ In the oeuvre of MacClure and Spahr, the Jones & Laughlin Building stands out as a major office building in the Jacobean Revival style, which this firm and its peers more frequently applied to residences and other buildings of a more domestic scale, such as the Oliver Bath House, or to schools. MacClure and Spahr's other major commercial work tended strongly to the Classical Revival.

Comparisons

The Jacobean Revival Style was an unusual choice for a modern high-rise office building. More typically, schools at all levels, from elementary to university, employed the Jacobean Revival Style in the early 20th century. The style's medieval references recalled the exalted learning institutions of Europe, such as Oxford and Cambridge. In Pittsburgh, MacClure & Spahr designed Langley High School, their only public school commission, in the early 1920s and the school was built in 1924. The building was said to have been modeled after Warwick Castle in England,



Figure 13. Langley High School, MacClure & Spahr, 1922 (Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania: Pittsburgh Public Schools Photographs)

⁶ Walter Kidney, *Pittsburgh's Landmark Architecture* (Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 1997), 537.

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

“although the resemblance is limited.”⁷ Langley High school has stone walls, and its location in a residential neighborhood rather than dense downtown allows it to have a more sprawling horizontal rather than vertical massing. But the school displays some similar detailing to the Jones & Laughlin Building: grouped windows with smooth limestone surrounds, carved limestone at the main entrance, vertical piers separating bays, and vertical medieval-inspired stone accents at the cornice. (Figure 13)

Another MacClure & Spahr commission from this period of particular interest is the Oliver Bath House (1915) on Pittsburgh’s South Side. The Jacobean Revival design of this municipal commission echoes that of the Jones & Laughlin Building on a smaller scale, with red-brick walls; pairs and groups of windows surrounded by limestone trim; and end bays emphasized by arched parapets with carved limestone insets (Figure 14).

At the Sarah Heinz House, built in 1915 on the North Side of Pittsburgh, architect R.M. Trimble used the Jacobean Revival style to impart a domestic character to a large institutional building (Figure 15). Though modest in height at three stories, the Sarah Heinz House has a larger footprint than either the Oliver Bath House or Jones & Laughlin Building. As at the Jones & Laughlin Building, its Jacobean Revival detailing helps to organize the facade through symmetry and to emphasize its stories and bays through the outlining effect of pale stone against deep red brick.



Figure 14. Oliver Bath House, MacClure & Spahr, 1915 (Preservation Pittsburgh)



Figure 15. Sarah Heinz House, R.M. Trimble, 1915 (Historic Pittsburgh)

⁷ Martin Aurand, PA Historic Resource Survey Form: Langley High School, 1986.

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA

DRAFT

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA



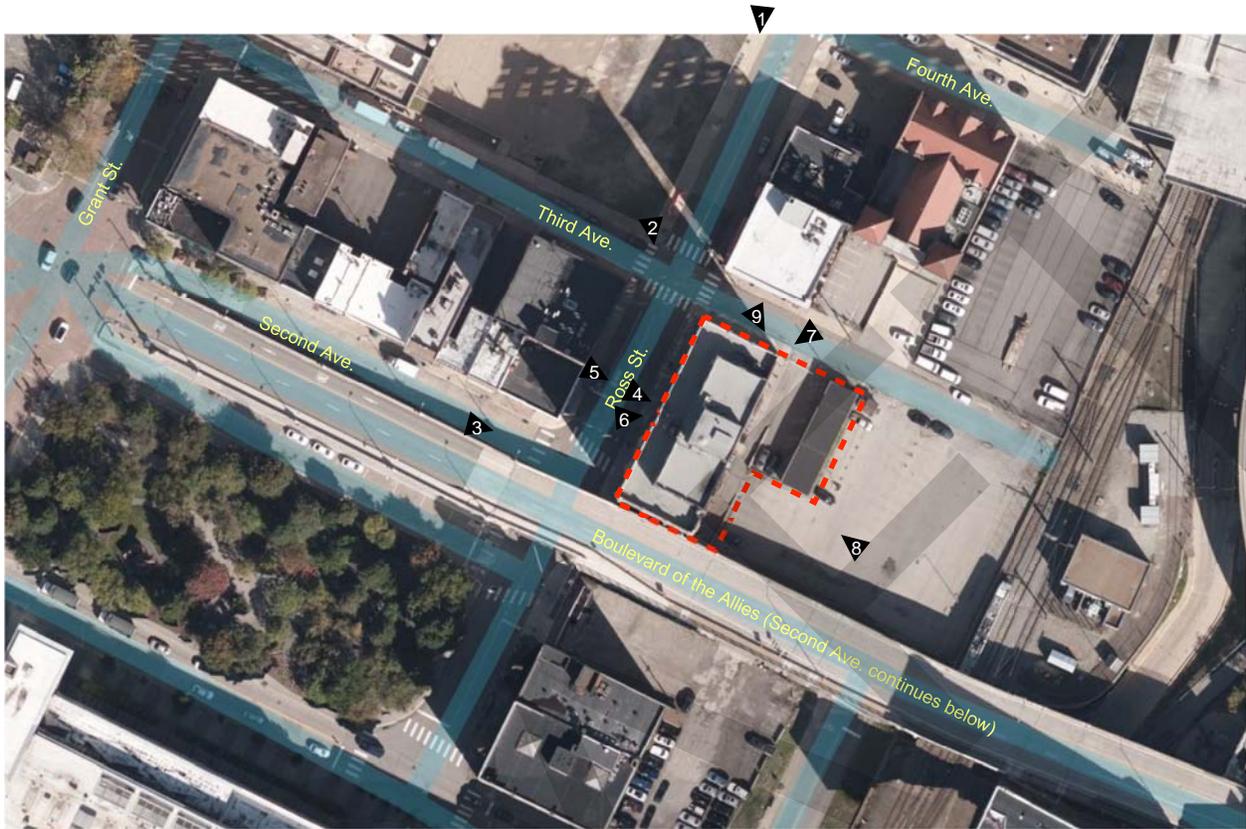
Excerpt: USGS Pittsburgh East

 Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building
National Register Boundary

Name of Property Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building

County and State

Allegheny, PA



Satellite image: Bing

Site Plan and Photo

-  Jones & Laughlin Steel Company Building
- 200 Ross St.
-  National Register Boundary

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

“Contract Awarded. Thompson-Starrett Company, of New York, to Construct Keystone Bank.”
Pittsburgh Daily Post, July 11, 1901

Historic Pittsburgh. <https://historicpittsburgh.org>

Jones & Laughlin Building Structural Steel Drawings, 1907-1916. Carnegie Mellon Architecture Archives

“The Keystone Works of the Jones & Laughlin Steel Company.” *Iron Age* Vol. 81: Chilton Company, June 4, 1908

Kidney, Walter. *Pittsburgh's Landmark Architecture*. Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 1997

Palmer's Pictorial Pittsburgh and Prominent Pittsburghers Past and Present, 1758-1905. Pittsburgh: Palmer Publishing Company, 1905

Pittsburgh Architectural Club. Fifth Exhibition Catalogue, 1910

Pleskovic, Mackenzie, and Alexis Narotsky. Jones & Laughlin Building Historic Resource Survey Form. PA SHPO: 2018

Real Estate Plat Book of City of Pittsburgh. Philadelphia: G. M. Hopkins and Co. Various years

Trimble, Robert Maurice. “Rambling Reminiscences.” *The Charette* Vol. 16, no. 2, Feb. 1936

Wollman, David H., and John R. Inman. *Portraits in Steel: An Illustrated History of Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1999

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

___ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

___ State Historic Preservation Office

___ Other State agency

___ Federal agency

___ Local government

___ University

___ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property <1

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 40.436968 | Longitude: -79.996734 |
| 2. Latitude: 40.436818 | Longitude: -79.996344 |
| 3. Latitude: 40.436525 | Longitude: -79.996708 |
| 4. Latitude: 40.436624 | Longitude: -79.996963 |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the Jones & Laughlin Building are those of tax parcel 2-J-164-02 as recorded by the Allegheny County Recorder of Deeds.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is the legal boundary of the property at 200 Ross Street that was historically associated with the present Jones & Laughlin Building.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Angelique Bamberg

organization: Clio Consulting

street & number: _____

city or town: Pittsburgh state: PA zip code: 15206

e-mail clioconsulting@me.com

telephone: 412-956-5517

date: June 1, 2020

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Jones & Laughlin Building
City or Vicinity: Pittsburgh
County: Allegheny
State: PA
Photographer: Angelique Bamberg
Date Photographed: Oct. 3, 2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 1 (PA_AlleghenyCounty_Jones&LaughlinBuilding_0001)

Jones & Laughlin Building from intersection of Ross St. and Fourth Ave., view to S

Photo 2 (PA_AlleghenyCounty_Jones&LaughlinBuilding_0002)

Primary facade from intersection of Ross St. and Third Ave., view to S

Photo 3 (PA_AlleghenyCounty_Jones&LaughlinBuilding_0003)

Primary facade from intersection of Ross St. and Second Ave., view to E

Photo 4 (PA_AlleghenyCounty_Jones&LaughlinBuilding_0004)

Central and flanking bays, primary (Ross St.) facade, first four stories, view to E

Photo 5 (PA_AlleghenyCounty_Jones&LaughlinBuilding_0005)

Main entrance, Ross St., view to E

Photo 6 (PA_AlleghenyCounty_Jones&LaughlinBuilding_0006)

Fourth through twelfth floors, primary (Ross St.) facade, view to NE

Photo 7 (PA_AlleghenyCounty_Jones&LaughlinBuilding_0007)

Third Ave. side and rear elevations, view to SW

Photo 8 (PA_AlleghenyCounty_Jones&LaughlinBuilding_0008)

Rear elevation from adjacent parking lot, view to NW

Photo 9 (PA_AlleghenyCounty_Jones&LaughlinBuilding_0009)

Concrete block parking structure in rear from Third Ave., view to SE

List of Figures

Figure 1. Jones & Laughlin Steel, Pittsburgh Works, 1921

Figure 2. Excerpt, Hopkins Real Estate Atlas of Pittsburgh, 1890

Figure 3. Excerpt, Hopkins Real Estate Atlas of Pittsburgh, 1904

Figure 4. 1908 photograph of old Jones & Laughlin office and warehouse building with new office building in background

Figure 5. Excerpt, Hopkins Real Estate Atlas of Pittsburgh, 1910

Figure 6. Excerpt, Hopkins Real Estate Atlas of Pittsburgh, 1923

Figure 7. Jones & Laughlin Building with completed addition in 1918

Figure 8. Jones & Laughlin board room ca. 1950

Figure 9. MacClure & Spahr, ca. 1904

Figure 10. Diamond Bank, MacClure & Spahr

Figure 11. Meyer Jonasson Store, MacClure & Spahr

Figure 12. Laughlin House, MacClure & Spahr

Figure 13. Langley High School, MacClure & Spahr

Figure 14. Oliver Bath House, MacClure & Spahr

Figure 15. Sarah Heinz House, R.M. Trimble

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.