

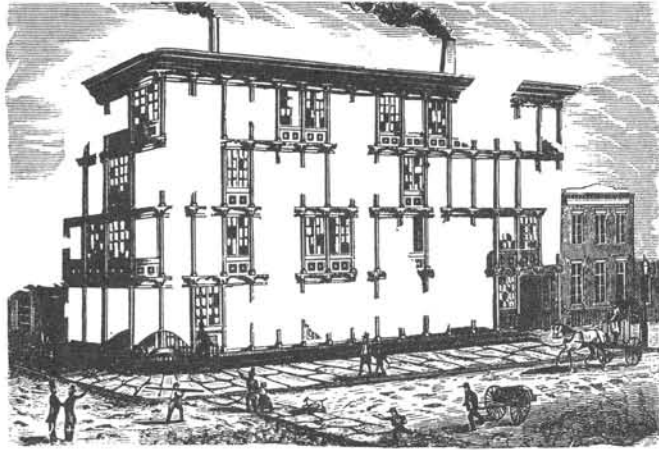
SOCIETY FOR INDUSTRIAL ARCHEOLOGY

NEWSLETTER

Volume Three Number 4

July 1974

BOGARDUS BUILDING BALDLY BOOSTED



This plate represents one of Bogardus's cast iron buildings, with the greater part of its iron work removed, or supposed to be destroyed by violence; in which demolished condition it will yet remain firm. It is designed to illustrate the strength, stability, and safety, obtained by Mr. Bogardus's method of construction; and also the security against an imperfect foundation: advantages possessed by no other buildings.

It must have appeared to the unknowing as junk, just more of New York's omnipresent demolition debris, this pile of cast iron cast off in a vacant downtown lot, home of winos and derelicts. Panel by panel, in daylight and full view, much of the five-story facade of the historic building was carted away by shantytown thieves and sold as scrap for whatever price

they could get.

There remains about a quarter of the parts of the 126-year-old structure, the prototype of all cast-iron facades, and forerunner of the modern steel-framed office building. Samples of the various components are intact; also examples of the decorative elements which the NYC Landmarks Commission had stored on its own premises.

The building, erected at 97 Murray St., was designed by James Bogardus in 1848, and known originally as the Laing Stores. It is significant for its simple post and lintel construction, the lightest type achieved until then, which made possible the use of slender uprights and a great percentage of window area. The further importance of the Bogardus structure was that it could readily be disassembled, moved, and reassembled at another location; or additional elements cast to expand it if so desired. Its distinction lay in its elegance, and the role it played in structural development.

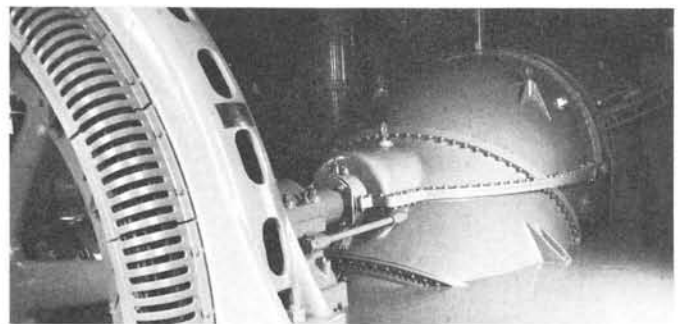
Designated an official NYC Landmark in 1970, the Laing facade was meticulously dismantled a year later to make way for the Washington Market Urban Renewal projects and stored in a fenced, open lot, which was to have been the site of its future reincarnation on the campus of the proposed Manhattan Community College. These plans still stand, and local preservationists are exploring the possibility of having the stolen parts recast, using those that survive as patterns. They assert that Bogardus would have done this. *Margot Gayle, Friends of Cast-Iron Architecture; Frances Frieder, NMHT.*

GRANT/COOKE WORKS BURNS

It was, predictably, "of suspicious origin," the fire that on 28 June destroyed the three-story c1870 shop building in Paterson, NJ, that had been part of the Grant, later Cooke, locomotive works. In a situation full of irony, the building is across the street from the Rogers Locomotive Works erecting shop which is one of the key elements in the Paterson historic industrial district; it had been scheduled for photographic recording this summer by Natl Park Service; and above all, it was the subject of one of Paterson's perpetual historic preservation-demolition fights with the state Dept of Transportation, who *still* are attempting to build an interstate highway extension through the district. Even as the building burned, the Great Falls-SUM salvage excavation project [SIAN 2:5] carried on less than 100 yards away. (Suspicious, not the least as it was the scene in April 1973 of another small fire that apparently aborted. Moral—if you want a job done right, hire a pro.)

Wood Screw Pumps Dedicated

The ASME on 11 June dedicated as a Natl Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark two low-head, high-volume axial screw pumps of 1915 in the No 1 "Melpomene" Pumping Station, New Orleans. Developed in 1912 by A B Wood



PATERSON SYMPOSIUM

26 & 27 Oct 1974. The IA of Paterson, New Jersey's National Historic Industrial District: research papers & walking tours. The Fall Meeting of the Council for Northeast Historical Archeology, in cooperation with the SIA. Hosted by the Great Falls Development Corp. Paterson Library, Broadway. (201) 278-2800. *Full details with Sept SIAN.*