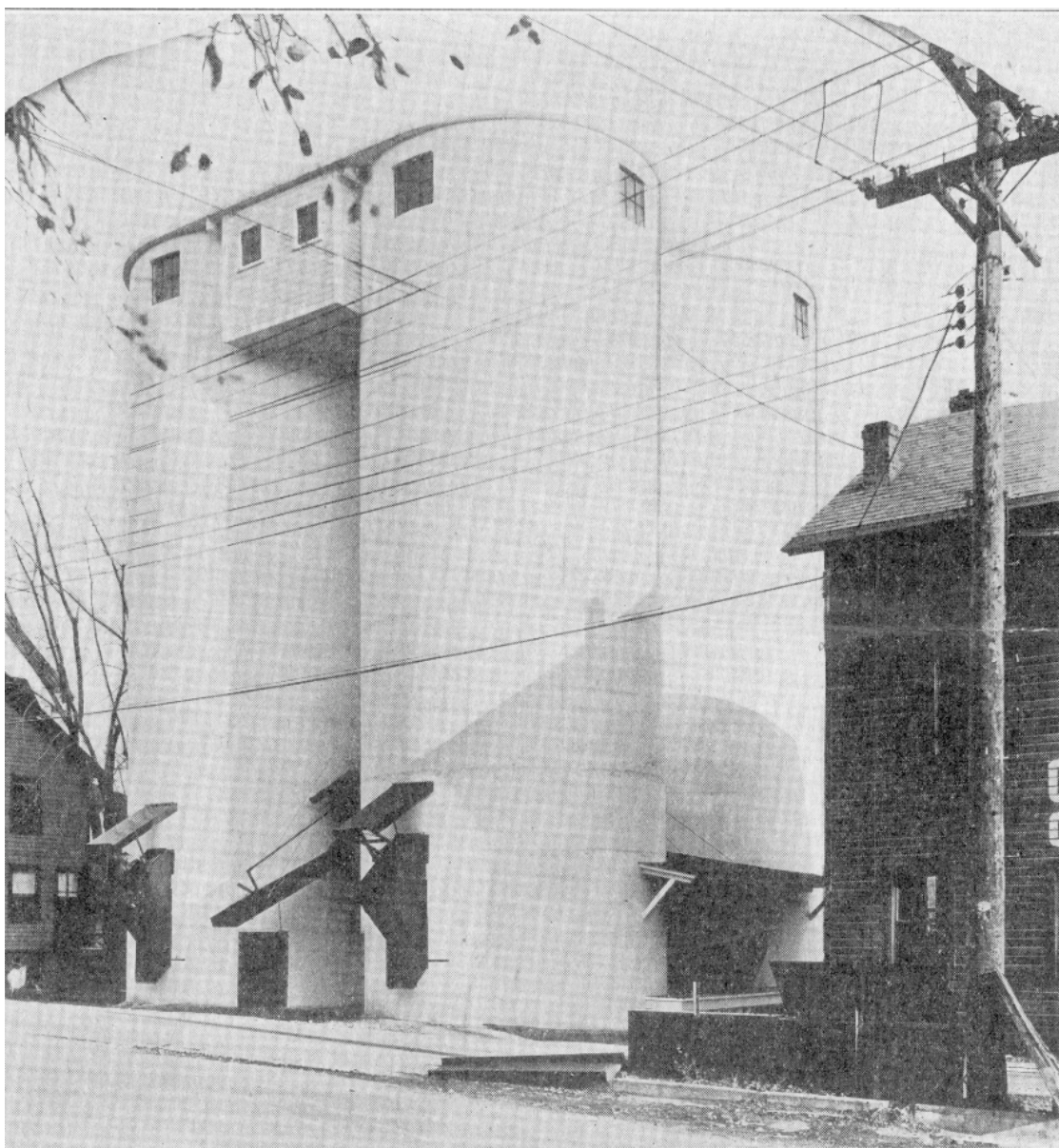




Compact storage plant of Garret Storm, Incorporated, Beacon, N. Y.

The silos in 1931

The four massive cement silos on Tioronda Avenue seem curiously misplaced--so unsightly near to the shops on Main Street, so aesthetically opposite of the lofty spire on the abutting old First Methodist Church, and so disconnected to Richard Morris Hunt's architectural gem, the old Howland Library, just across the street. Yet oddly enough, after almost 90 years of dominating the skyline of Beacon's east end, the hulking silos do warrant special attention in their own right--as important relics of our city's industrial and railroad past ...

The silos were constructed in the fall of 1931 for the Garrett Storm coal

business as a unique solution for the company's limited ground storage space of its supply of anthracite coal, the fuel most commonly used at the time to heat homes and businesses. Each silo stands 55 feet high, with an 18-foot diameter, and held 320 gross tons of anthracite. The silos had a cleverly designed mechanism for receiving and dispensing: from a nearby siding a railroad car delivered the coal into a concrete receiving hopper.

From there, the coal fell into an electric elevator which lifted the anthracite to the top of each silo at the rate of 40 tons an hour. At the top, separate valves on the conveyor discharged the coal--whether "stove" (the largest size), the best (medium size), or the smallest, for pot stoves)--into its proper bin. Three loading gates were located on the street side of the silos for easy access by delivery trucks. The silos provided "air-rights" storage space for the coal yard. That new concept of the day, combined with the advanced technology of the delivery system, proved critical to the economic success of a small scale retail yard like Storm's. Today, the silos are being talked about as a possible re-purposed conversion for residential space. But whatever their fates, these silent giants still are a past reminder of the ingenuity of American capitalism and of a bygone era when coal was King.



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