

PH0002003

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_  
 FOR NPS USE ONLY  
 ENTRY NUMBER: 69-03-08-0006  
 DATE: 3/24/69

RECEIVED  
 NATIONAL REGISTER

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Rhodes' Tavern (Hotel)**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Bank of the Metropolis: Corcoran & Riggs**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**601-603 15th Street, N. W. and 1431 F Street, N. W.**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Washington**

STATE <b>District of Columbia</b>	CODE <b>08</b>	COUNTY: <b>District of Columbia</b>	CODE <b>001</b>
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes: Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments <input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>
Educational <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	_____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNERS NAME:  
**American Security Corporation**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**734 15th Street, N. W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **District of Columbia** CODE: **08**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Recorder of Deeds**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**6th and D Streets, N. W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **District of Columbia** CODE: **08**

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **2,217 square feet; originally approximately 4,700 square feet**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: **Proposed District of Columbia Additions to the National Register of Historic Properties recommended by Joint Committee on Landmarks**

DATE OF SURVEY: **March 7, 1968** Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**National Capital Planning Commission**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**726 Jackson Place, N. W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **District of Columbia** CODE: **08**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ENTRY NUMBER: 69-03-08-0006  
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/>	Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Rhodes' Tavern is located on its original site at the N. E. corner of F and 15th Streets, N. W., directly opposite the Treasury Department. The building has been much altered in its 168-year history, but early descriptions, photographs, and a detailed 1817 watercolor by the Baroness de Neuville, wife of the French minister, permit a fairly accurate reconstruction of the exterior design. Rhodes' Tavern was originally an L-shaped 3-1/2 story common-bond, red-brick with white stone trim Federal townhouse-style hotel measuring approximately 40 feet (3 bays) on F Street x 76 feet (8 bays) on 15th Street.

In the 1817 watercolor, the first floor of the F Street facade has two stone steps leading to a central Federal door (with fanlight, stone arch, and keystone) flanked on either side by a 12/12 light double-hung window with stone sills, splayed voussoir-and-keystone-patterned lintels and three panel wooden shutters. Second floor windows appear identical in design but with two panel blinds. Third floor windows have the same splayed lintels but are shorter, 4/4 lights, and are without shutters. There is an overhanging cornice with wooden dentils and the roof, gabled on the east end of the F Street wing, is modified hip on the west with the ridge running the entire length of the 15th Street facade. The sketch also shows a small walled yard to the east of the building. Because the 1817 sketch shows only the F Street facade, we can only surmise that the eight-bayed 15th Street facade was similar in design.

Although the first floor was changed many times to accommodate different commercial establishments, the building remained largely intact until around 1957 when the five northern bays of the 15th Street wing were razed, leaving only three bays (approximately 30') of the original 76' and making the building rectangular rather than L-shaped. The building fabric is now in poor condition. The stucco which was applied to the brick sometime after 1903 and which also covers the adjoining building at 1429 F Street is badly cracked and needs paint.

The interiors of the three stores which now occupy the ground floor show no trace of original architectural detail. The original chimneys, as shown in the 1817 sketch and a 1903 photograph, no longer exist. The store fronts, and windows and original ground floor entrances no longer exist or have been so changed as to be unrecognizable. The street level has obviously been graded down substantially since 1817. Second story window sills and lintels are original, although the windows have been changed to 1/1 light, are boarded up, and in a deteriorated condition. Presumably some of the original Federal detailing is still evident in second floor interior rooms. Original third floor lintels have been replaced and the windows lengthened. There are no longer shutters on any of the windows of the building. The shape of the roof corresponds exactly to the 1817 sketch. It has been covered in black shingles which are in bad repair. The overhanging cornice with wooden dentils is presumably original and appears to be in good condition. One of the original three gable-ended dormers on the 15th Street side remains.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

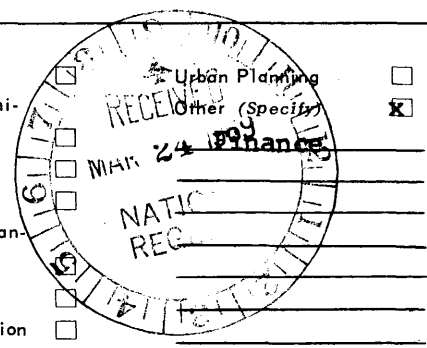
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian <input type="checkbox"/>	16th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	18th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	20th Century <input type="checkbox"/>
15th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	17th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	19th Century <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1800-1801**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Education <input type="checkbox"/>	Political <input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Historic <input type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input type="checkbox"/>	Science <input type="checkbox"/>	Finance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>	
Art <input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/>	
Commerce <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>		



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The Joint Committee on Landmarks has designated Rhodes' Tavern a Category II Landmark of importance which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty of the District of Columbia. This 168-year old building, the oldest extant commercial structure in Washington's Downtown Area, served as a polling place in the first municipal election of 1802, as one of the first banks in the District, and was the tavern from which the British command directed the burning of the White House and Treasury in 1814. It was also the first home of the banking institution which is now Riggs National Bank. The building has been in continuous commercial use since it was built and its site has been historically important as a hub of commerce and finance since the foundation of the city. Although the building has been partially demolished and the remainder is in a deteriorated condition, there are so few architectural remains of this early Federal period in the Downtown Area that every consideration should be given to its preservation and restoration.

When the District of Columbia was created in 1790, the property on which Rhodes' Tavern stands was part of Beall's Levels owned by David Burnes. In the division of lots between the government and the landholders, Burnes retained this property (old lot 6) which he sold to Bennett Fenwick on August 17, 1797. In the summer of 1799 Fenwick procured a permit and by 1801 he had erected a building there which he leased as a hotel to William Rhodes. Early identified with the civic life of Washington, Rhodes' Tavern is mentioned as the meeting place for the Orphans' Court convened April 14, 1801, as an auction house, and as the polling place for the second ward in the first municipal election, June 7, 1802.

In the summer of 1804 Rhodes left the building, which was then leased to Joseph M. Semmes who operated a hotel under the sign of the Indian King from 1805 to 1807. From 1807 to 1814, it was run as a boarding house by Mrs. Barbara Suter, with F Street frontage converted to a store first operated by Edgar Patterson and then from 1811 to September 1813 as a bookstore by Roger C. Weightman who later became the 8th Mayor of Washington (1824-26). The building was sold by Mrs. Fenwick, April 12, 1810, and again by John C. Jackson on April 9, 1814, to the Bank of the Metropolis which opened for business three days later. General John Van Ness was the bank's first president; Andrew Jackson, one of the original stockholders. The Bank of the Metropolis later became the National

(Continued on Form 10-300a)

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Bryan, W.B., "Hotels of Washington Prior To 1814," Records of the Columbia Historical Society, Vol. 7, Washington, D.C.: Published by the Society, 1904 pp. 71-106.

National Intelligencer, March 2 and April 8, 1801, and May 28, 1802.

"140 Years of Satisfactory Service, 1814-1954," pamphlet, National Metropolitan Bank of Washington, 1954, 15pp.

"Growing with the Nation's Capital," American Security and Trust Co., 75th Anniversary, 1889-1964.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		38° 53' 50"	72° 02' 01"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Nancy C. Taylor, Landmarks Historian**

ORGANIZATION: **National Capital Planning Commission**      DATE: **Feb. 27, 1969**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**726 Jackson Place, N. W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington**      STATE: **District of Columbia**      CODE: **08**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name

*Wm F. [Signature]*

Title

Deputy Mayor-Commissioner

Date

March 24, 1969

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

*Ernest Allen Connolly*  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

March 24, 1969

ATTEST:

*William J. [Signature]*  
Keeper of The National Register

Date

April 3, 1969

12/30/83 1-7-77 1-23-77 SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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STATE	
VIRGINIA	
COUNTY	
PETERSBURG (in city)	
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bathrooms, but the principal rooms have been left unaltered. As soon as research is complete, the first floor rooms are to be outfitted as a banking museum.

9. \_\_\_\_\_ BIBLIOGRAPHY

An Act for Incorporating the Farmers' Bank of Virginia (Richmond, 1818).  
Acts Passed at a General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, 1811-1812,  
Chap. VII.

Bristow, M. E., Richmond, Capital of Virginia.

Deed Book, Hustings Court, Petersburg, vol. 5, p.15.

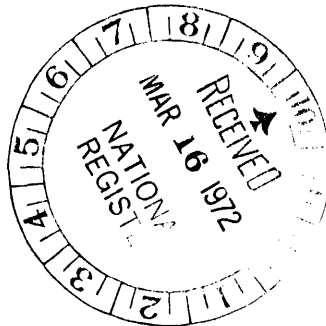
Deed Book, Hustings Court, Petersburg, vol. 29, p.578.

Deed Book, Hustings Court, Petersburg, vol. 40, p.63.

Deed Book, Hustings Court, Petersburg, vol. 251, p.78.

Know, John Jay, History of Banking in the United States.

Williams, Frances Leigh, They Face the Future (Richmond, 1951).



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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE
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8. Significance--Rhodes' Tavern

Metropolitan Bank which was recently merged with the American Security and Trust Company.

On August 24, 1814, the British Commanders General Ross and Admiral Cockburn made their headquarters here during the burning of the White House and the Treasury. Mrs. Suter has left an excellent account of the dinner which the British ate by the light of the burning buildings on that historic occasion.

The building served as the Bank of the Metropolis from 1814 to 1836. In 1839, W. W. Corcoran moved his exchange and brokerage office here and on April 15, 1840, the partnership of Corcoran & Riggs was formed and commenced business as a bank of deposit. During their occupancy, Corcoran & Riggs (now Riggs National Bank) financed the first telegraph line in the United States, from Washington to Baltimore.

From 1845 to 1850, the building was used mainly by claims agents for offices. It was probably during this period that the addition to the east was constructed. In April 1852, Charles St. J. Chubb bought the building from the Bank of the Metropolis and sold an undivided share to his brother Isaac. The Chubb brothers operated a private bank until July 1858 when they sold the property to Alfred V. Scott.

From 1860 to 1899 the building was used for offices, quarters for private bankers, and shops. Since 1900, commercial usage has continued with the National Press Club as 2nd and 3rd floor occupants of 603 15th Street from 1909-1914. A bootblack rented the first floor shop at 603 15th Street from 1916 to 1941. Since then, this shop has been occupied by a news agency. The 601 15th Street shop has housed a restaurant, cigar store, candy store, record shop, and now a souvenir shop. 1431 F Street is occupied by a fruit market.

Ownership of the property has gone through several hands since Scott's heirs sold it in the 1920's. About 1957 the north portion (lot 810) was torn down and the single story American Savings and Loan Association now occupies that lot which was purchased by Riggs National Bank in 1959. The extant portion of Rhodes' Tavern is now owned by the American Security Corporation.

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of the times, the president or cashier of the bank, depending on which officer took the leading supervisory role, maintained his home in the bank building. Such was the case in Petersburg, with the cashier having his living quarters on the upper two floors, reached by a side-hall entrance separate from the banking establishment.

The banking business in Petersburg must have been rapidly expanding, for, by the 1850's there were two other banks in operation: the Exchange Bank and the Bank of Virginia. By 1860 the capital of the Farmers' Bank in Petersburg was valued at \$270,000. The bank survived the War between the States but faced destruction during the opening years of Reconstruction. In 1866 the General Assembly passed an Act requiring all state banks to be liquidated. In compliance with this law the Petersburg Bank had all its assets deeded to John M. Goddin and Samuel C. Robinson who were to serve as trustees in the conversion of all assets into current money.

In settling out accounts Goddin and Robertson sold the buildings and lot on the northwest corner of Bollingbrook Street and Market Lane (Cockade Alley) to John P. Branch for \$5000 on June 25, 1867. Branch, a member of the firm of Thomas Branch and Son was living in Petersburg in 1870 but by 1879 had moved to Richmond. His firm probably used the former Bank property as a bank office until 1871, for after that year there is no mention of the firm in the Petersburg Directory. In 1879 Branch and his wife sold the property on Bollingbrook Street to John O'Conner of Petersburg for \$3,002. The land sold at this time only included the area extending as far back as the brick kitchen and did not include the back area where the brick stable building had been erected.

John O'Conner conducted a grocery and liquor business in the building and resided there until 1896. Since that time the building has not been used as a residence. In 1962 the O'Conner family sold the property to John D. Haire of Petersburg. Haire, in turn, conveyed the property to the Fort Henry Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. Since that time the APVA has been engaged in the restoration of the building as a banking museum.

