

PH0681199

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED AUG 9 1978

DATE ENTERED DEC 13 1978

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Canton House

AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

300 Water Street

\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Third

STATE

Maryland

CODE

24

COUNTY

Baltimore City

CODE

510

**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Hartman, McLean & Schmidt, Inc.

Canton House Associates, a Ltd partnership, c/o Carl W. Schmidt, President

STREET & NUMBER

300 Water Street

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland 21202

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Records Office, Room 601

STREET & NUMBER

Baltimore City Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland 21202

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Municipal District Study

DATE

1977

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland 21202

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Canton House is a 4½-story building of the Colonial Revival style. Its walls are composed of seven bays across the front (Water Street) facade and three bays across the side (South Street) facade. The exterior wall material is marble at the first story level and brick laid in Flemish bond from the second story up.

The main entrance, in the central bay of the front facade, is surrounded by a pilastered architrave and two fluted Corinthian columns. The entranceway is capped with a plain marble lintel. A similar entrance, with the exception of the pilasters, is located in the central bay of the side facade.

Shuttered triple windows flank either side of the main entrance, each set containing a central window with 8/8 lights and side windows of 6/6 lights. The first story end windows of both facades are shuttered and have 8/8 lights.

The marbled first story facades of the front and side are divided from the upper levels by a marble fascia. An identical fascia trims the top of the fourth floor.

In the central bay of the second and third stories of the front, and of the second story of the side, is a large window with sidelights. The central divisions have 8/8 lights and each sidelight has four lights. These windows are decorated with marble lugsills, a characteristic of all windows of the building, and arches of radiating voussoirs.

The remaining second, third, and fourth-story windows of the front and side facades have double-hung sash with 8/8 lights and flat-arched lintels of radiating voussoirs. Fourth story windows of both facades are noticeably shorter than the others.

The central window of the fourth story front is flanked by two circular details, one containing the date in which the Canton Company was founded, 1828, the other the date of the Canton House construction, 1923.

A gabled parapet caps the front facade. In the center of the gable is a semi-circular window with three divisions. The window has an arched lintel of radiating voussoirs and a marble lugsill.

In the roof level between the first and second, and second and third bays of the side facade are pedimented dormers. Each dormer contains a window of 8/8 lights.

The interior of the Canton House totals 16,747 square feet in floor area with 2,962 square feet per floor from the basement through the fourth floor and 1,937 square feet on the fifth (attic) floor. There were no major structural changes during the 1977 rehabilitation.

The cellar basically houses storage, mechanical and electrical (telephone and air conditioning) functions. Also included are an unimproved restroom and a paneled room, located in the southeast corner, to be converted into a lunch room at a later date. Of historical interest are the remnants of stone and brick foundations of buildings pre-dating the Baltimore Fire of 1904. These foundations indicate that the streets and sidewalks were widened during the reconstruction of the area, since they project under what is now the sidewalk along Water Street.

Behind the main entrance of the first (ground) level is a marble floor which extends through the elevator lobby. The marble was originally the wall material in the entry, but this area was widened during the rehabilitation to provide a possible reception area. The entry is presently unused. The double leaf, paneled door of the main entrance was installed as part of the rehabilitation. The panels are

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Canton House  
Baltimore City  
Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

#7 DESCRIPTION (continued):

bevelled glass to reflect the Colonial character of the building. The office space of the first floor is sub-leased by the Canton House Associates to outside tenants.

The second, third and fourth floors have similar floor plans, with a walkway on an east-west axis giving access to offices basically laid out in a "U" plan. With exceptions in only several fourth story rooms, the ceilings of these floors have been slightly lowered to cover the newly installed central air conditioning ducts and a maze of other utility pipes installed in earlier years. The hung ceiling does not interfere with any of the architectural features (windows, doors, etc.).

The second floor is presently open and vacant. The Canton House Associates may retain this space for future expansion.

The third floor, fully carpeted, houses the reception, accounting and underwriting functions of the major tenant, Hartman, McLean and Schmidt, Inc., an independent insurance agency.

The fourth floor, also fully carpeted, contains the executive offices of Hartman, McLean & Schmidt, Inc. This floor, with its wainscoting, and plain cornice trim in several offices, is the most decorative of the building. An Adamesque mantel with flanking pilasters and three delicately detailed ovals, is located in the office at the southeast corner. Two large mahogany sliding doors separate this office and the executive conference room. The conference room is decorated with wainscoting and a plain wooden cornice trim. A bar, replacing a shower, was installed adjacent to the conference room during the rehabilitation.

The fifth (attic) floor is paneled and houses the personal lines department of the agency. This area, laid out with open offices, was left unchanged during the rehabilitation.

Paneled mahogany doors of natural wood finish have been retained throughout the building. Also characteristic of the entire building are attractive modernized restrooms, two on every floor except the cellar, and walk-in iron vaults, original elements presently used for storage.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1923

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Canton House was designed and constructed as the headquarters of one of Baltimore's largest and most colorful businesses, the Canton Company. This business was established in 1828 by Peter Cooper, most remembered for inventing and manufacturing the Tom Thumb steam locomotive, and Ames Benney, a Boston entrepreneur. A number of top businessmen helped purchase 6000 acres of land, stretching from Harris' Creek to Back River, which would serve as the pier and service area of the Canton Company. This speculative venture was dependent on plans that called for the rapid construction of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, conceived to revitalize the local goods movement being eroded by the recently opened Erie Canal and Mississippi River steamship trade. By 1830 the State of Maryland endowed both companies with very liberal benefits and the beginnings of two commercial giants were firmly established. Since 1830 the Canton area, through the efforts of the Canton Company, has served as a nerve center of import and export traffic, and as a large manufacturing center for the entire Baltimore area.

The Canton House was conceived by Walter B. Brooks, then president of the Canton Company, with the idea of giving the company a permanent homelike atmosphere. He suggested that the design of the home building should reflect the beginnings of the company that had been identified with the growth of Baltimore for almost a century. Consequently, it was decided that the building should follow the "Colonial" style popular in this state when the Canton Company was in its formative period.

When completed the Canton House received many compliments on its architectural design: "By the simplicity of its Colonial outline and the dignity of its style it arrests the eye of the passerby and wins from even the casual at least a moment's notice as a tribute to its beauty." (The Baltimore Sun, May 4, 1924.)

The Canton House is located within the boundaries of the Municipal District Urban Renewal Area. The Area was designated in 1973 to assure the preservation of the many fine, architecturally significant buildings concentrated within the district. The recently renovated City Hall and the Block, currently undergoing renovation, are located in the area.

Early in 1977 the Canton Company moved its offices to the World Trade Center in the Inner Harbor.

The Canton House has recently undergone interior renovation by its new owners, Canton House Associates, for commercial use as a modern office building. Hartman, McLean and Schmidt, Inc., the main tenant of the building, is one of the largest general insurance agents in the Baltimore area.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Simplicity Marks Canton House." The Baltimore Sun, May 4, 1924.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Baltimore East

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24 000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 36,10,8,0 4,3,4,9,8,5,0  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B                    
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C                  

D                  

E                  

F                  

G                  

H                  

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Bill Tamburrino, Planning Assistant

CS

ORGANIZATION

Commission for Historical & Architectural Preservation

DATE

1977

STREET & NUMBER

100 North Holliday Street

TELEPHONE

(301) 396-4866

CITY OR TOWN

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland 21202

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

John N. Pearce 7/27/78

TITLE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 12-13-78

ATTEST:

Myra A. Beebe  
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE Dec 12, 1978

RECEIVED  
AUG 9 1978  
NATIONAL REGISTER

Canton House

Baltimore East Quad



39°15' 76°27'30" W GLEN BURNIE 6.1 MI

910 000 FEET

362

363