

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **SEP 30 1986**

date entered

NOV 6 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic McLachlen Building

and or common NA

2. Location

street & number 1001 G Street, N.W.

NA not for publication

city, town Washington

NA vicinity of

state District of Columbia

code 11

county NA

code 001

3. Classification

Category

district
 building(s)
 structure
 site
 object

Ownership

public
 private
 both
Public Acquisition
 in process
 being considered
NA

Status

occupied
 unoccupied
 work in progress
Accessible
 yes: restricted
 yes: unrestricted
 no

Present Use

agriculture
 commercial
 educational
 entertainment
 government
 industrial
 military
 museum
 park
 private residence
 religious
 scientific
 transportation
 other:

4. Owner of Property

name Woodward & Lothrop

street & number 1025 F Street, N.W.

city, town Washington

NA vicinity of

state District of Columbia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder of Deeds

street & number 6th & D Streets, N.W.

city, town Washington

state District of Columbia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites;

title Don't Tear It Down Downtown Survey

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979-80 (DTID Survey); 1985 (D.C. Inventory)

federal state county local

depository for survey records D.C. Historic Preservation Office, 614 H St., N.W., Washington, D.C.
D.C. Preservation League, 930 F St., N.W., Washington, D.C.

city, town See above

state NA

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" 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 McLachlen Building, located on the northwest corner of 10th and G Streets, N.W., is an excellent example of a Classical Revival style office building. It contains elements of the Chicago commercial style, although the vocabulary is from the Ecole des Beaux Arts. As in Chicago style office buildings, the steel frame is expressed on the exterior by recessed spandrels of contrasting texture. The piers, of a flat-surfaced glazed terra cotta, stand out and emphasize the verticality of the structure. Another characteristic of the Chicago style found in the McLachlen Building is its vertical division into base, shaft, and capital. The strict symmetry of the south front, the Classical doorway, and the Classical ornament are derived from the Ecole des Beaux Arts. These influences taken together produce an office building that is forceful yet elegant.

Although rectangular in appearance, the building is actually L-shaped. It measures 45 ft. (three bay front) on G Street and 83 ft. 11 in. (five bays) on 10th Street, while the ell is 33 ft. 11 in. wide and extends 22 ft. to the west. The building is nine stories high (110 ft.) and is of steel frame construction.

Set on a granite base, the first story is faced with marble ashlar with deep horizontal joints. The show windows, now divided with aluminum strips, are flat-arched with marble voussiors. The window at the north end of the 10th Street facade was converted in 1956 to the city's first "sidewalk teller" (Post, October 28, 1956). Although it still has its aluminum marquee, the window has been bricked up with a buff brick. Originally, this window had been a projecting show window, as was the westernmost window on the south facade. The first story is topped with a terra cotta cornice which features a Greek key fret.

There are two main entrances: the one on G Street led into the first floor banking room while the 10th Street entrance led into the elevator lobby and to the upper floors. The G Street entrance, set in the center of the south facade, is an elaborate Greek Doric projecting one. The door itself is glass with aluminum framing set in a marble shouldered architrave. The doorway is framed by fluted Doric columns and topped by a frieze with triglyphs and metopes and the name "McLACHLEN BANKING CORPORATION." This is surmounted by a cornice with lion heads, above which is a parapet with the date "MCMX."

The 10th Street entrance is much more subdued. Located in the fourth bay from the corner, the entrance bay projects slightly at the ground level. Set in a round arch, the glass doorway is framed by wooden pilasters featuring egg and dart molding at the capitals.

(See Continuation Sheet)

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1910-1911

Builder/Architect Jules Henri de Sibour

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Historic Preservation Review Board of the District of Columbia has designated the McLachlen Building an Historic Landmark of value which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage or visual beauty and interest of the District of Columbia and its environs and which should be preserved or restored. Standing at the strong western terminus of the Downtown Historic District, the McLachlen Building complements and reinforces the architectural and historical importance of the district and of the old downtown area of the Nation's Capitol as a whole. The work of nationally known architect Jules Henri de Sibour, the McLachlen Building distinctively adapts the Beaux-Arts style for use in a steel framed commercial building of the Chicago type. It is an architecturally distinctive commercial building which relates powerfully in scale, rhythm, materials and texture to the pivotal Woodward and Lothrop Building at the western terminus of the Downtown Historic District. Its exuberant, grandly scaled crowning cornice is a distinctive feature of the downtown Washington skyline. It is a significant work of architect Jules Henri de Sibour whose notable designs for grand residences and commercial buildings in the Beaux-Arts style contribute immeasurably to the architectural distinction and character of the Massachusetts Avenue Historic District and to the realization in the private sector of the early 20th century City Beautiful ideal in the City of Washington. De Sibour's work includes the following buildings which have previously been placed on the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites: Keith's Theatre and Albee Building (1426 G Street and 615-27 15th Street, N.W.), the Canadian Embassy (1746 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.), the Mellon Apartments (1785 Massachusetts Ave.), and the Folger Building and Playhouse Theatre (725-27 15th Street, N.W.). The McLachlen Building was built as the headquarters building for the local family-run McLachlen Banking Corporation and remained in this use until 1968 when the corporation moved one block to the west. The McLachlen Banking Corporation is strongly associated with downtown Washington and the history of banking and development in the city.

(See Continuation Sheet)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .1038 (4522 sq. ft.)

Quadrangle name Washington, D.C. West

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8	3	2	4	2	7	0	4	3	0	7	2	3	1	0
Zone				Easting				Northing							

B

NA															
Zone				Easting				Northing							

C

NA															
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D

NA															
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E

NA															
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F

NA															
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G

NA															
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H

NA															
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Verbal boundary description and justification

1001 G Street, N.W. is located on Record Lot 36, Square 345, Washington, D.C.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county code

state NA code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tanya Beauchamp, Architectural Historian

organization D.C. Historic Preservation Office date August 1986

street & number 614 H Street, N.W. telephone 202-727-7360

city or town Washington, D.C. 20001 state

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 Carol B. Thompson
title State Historic Preservation Officer for the District of Columbia date September 29, 1986

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

for Melvyn Byrum date 11-6-86
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____
Chief of Registration

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The transom has a denticulated cornice and a frieze with the name "McLACHLEN BUILDING." Above these are a fanlight. Set in marble on either side of the doorway are anchors for the marquee that originally sheltered the doorway.

The second story is set apart from the others by a cornice of vertical elements as well as an egg-and-dart molding. This story is faced with glazed terra cotta, and the paired windows are set in slightly recessed panels. Like the upper stories, the windows have one-over-one light sash.

The third through eighth stories read as a unit. The piers separating each bay are faced with glazed terra cotta, while the spandrels are faced with intricate terra cotta tiles. Each story window bay is set in a slightly recessed panel. Within each bay, the paired windows are separated by a glazed terra cotta mullion and topped by a continuous glazed terra cotta lintel. The cornice above the eighth story has a scroll motif below projecting moldings.

The ninth story is also faced with glazed terra cotta. Between each bay are panels framed with terra cotta ornament. The cornice is extremely elaborate; constructed of glazed terra cotta, it features modillions and various moldings. The cornice projects not only outward from the building face but also upward, and the profile it creates against the sky is a dramatic climax to an extremely handsome building.

The north and west sides of the building are constructed of common brick. The cornice wraps around on these sides approximately six feet. Besides the altered window sash on the ground floor, the only other known alteration is an opening in the north party wall to the adjoining building. It is not known what alterations have been made on the upper levels. An aluminum sign has been attached to the corner, and there are three "Woodward and Lothrop" plaques attached to the building.

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The McLachlen Building is a highly significant structure due to its owner/occupant, its architect, and its design. It was built in 1910-11 for a company associated with the McLachlen Banking Corporation, who occupied it as its headquarters building for fifty-seven years. The McLachlen was a small family-run bank with a strong interest in the community. The architect, Jules Henri de Sibour, was one of the most important architects of the early 20th century in Washington. He brought to this city the style of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, which was ideally suited to the monumental plans which reformers developed for Washington at the turn of the century. The McLachlen Building in particular employed the Classical ornamentation and light color popularized by the Beaux-Arts Classicism. Here de Sibour skillfully combined these features with a Chicago-influenced commercial style which produced an extremely elegant, dignified, yet modern building. As a bank headquarters, the building was designed to be a landmark building: visible, distinctive, and sophisticated.

The Building

On August 25, 1910, the Washington Investment Company was granted a building permit (#998) to erect a nine-story bank and office building at 10th and G Streets, N. W., at an estimated cost of \$125,000. The architect was Jules Henri De Sibour and the builder was James L. Marshall. Marshall was also the president of the Washington Investment Company, which was identified by the Star as "a subsidiary organization of the McLachlen Banking Corporation" (August 25, 1910). Marshall was listed in the city directories as a contractor with his office in the McLachlen Building after its completion.

Construction proceeded slowly. The building inspector notified the builders that the steel beams on the 10th Street side were not properly framed (October 13, 1910), instructed the builders to remove a bad rivet in the steel frame (October 14, 1910), stopped the brickwork "on account of not the proper mortar being used" (October 19, 1910), and notified the builders that the fireproofing of the columns must be filled in solid (January 15, 1911). Originally intended to be completed in early 1911, the building was not occupied until June.

The building features a marble and terra cotta front and expresses the sense of wealth and permanence that bank architecture hopes to achieve. The style is generally Classical Revival, a conservative style encouraged in Washington by the McMillan Commission and the City Beautiful movement.

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The use of marble on the first floor, and the simulation of marble on the upper floors by the use of glazed terra cotta, evoke the wealth of larger banks. The adept use of the Chicago commercial style techniques to express the height demonstrates the brilliance of the architect. The building is fully described in Section 310.22.

The location of the bank, in the heart of downtown but out of the Financial District on 15th Street where the more prestigious banks had their headquarters, reflects the neighborhood nature of the McLachlen Bank. Yet the fact of its building a new bank designed by a prominent architect must have served notice to the banking community that the McLachlen Banking Corporation was here to stay. The bank occupied most of the ground floor, and gradually occupied office space on the upper floors. Its imposing columned entrance on G Street, overshadowing the entrance to the upper floors on 10th Street, showed that the bank was the important tenant here.

Two stores shared the ground floor with the bank. An optician was located at 1003 G and a typewriter supply business was located at 702-06 10th. The offices on the upper floors had a variety of tenants: lawyers (especially patent lawyers), draftsmen, publishers, and author, and optometrist, and so forth. In 1968, the McLachlen Banking Corporation moved to its new headquarters one block away and Woodward & Lothrop acquired the building, using the upper floors as offices and the ground floor as retail space.

The McLachlen Banking Corporation

The McLachlen Banking Corporation was founded at the height of banking expansion in the District. Between 1880 and 1914, the number of banks in the District nearly tripled and their assets increased thirteen times, compared to an eight-fold increase nationally. Much of this growth was due to the development of real estate, the value of which increased nearly six times in this period (Cole, 356-61). The early relationship of the McLachlen Banking Corporation to the real estate business is a significant one, accounting for the neighborhood bank. Under the direction of various members of the McLachlen family, it maintained a friendly informal atmosphere and a strong interest in community affairs.

Never a large bank, the McLachlen Banking Corporation was a family run, although not entirely family-owned, business. The bank was founded as a real estate partnership by Archibald McLachlen in 1887. Incorporated in Virginia as McLachlen & Batchelder, the firm changed its name to the McLachlen Real Estate and Loan Company in 1896 (Cole, 544). Archibald McLachlen's real estate interests ere primarily residential, including the subdivisions of Lanier Heights, Brookland, Pinehurst, and South Pinehurst.

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He was treasurer and organizer of the Washington Investment Company, which built and owned the McLachlen Building, the Federal City Construction Company, the Ontario and Iowa Apartment House Companies, and secretary of the Brookland Building Association (Proctor 3:338).

In 1891, the firm acquired the house located on the northwest corner of 10th and G, remodeled it, and moved in. In 1908, the firm's name was changed to the McLachlen Banking Corporation (Cole, 544). In 1910, the existing building on the site was demolished, and the nine-story McLachlen Building was erected. In 1922, at the death of Archibald McLachlen, his son, Lanier P. McLachlen, became president. Lanier, named after the subdivision Lanier Heights where he was born, had started working for the bank as a runner in 1909 at the age of 18.

The McLachlen Banking Corporation grew at a modest pace. In 1928, the bank was eighth in size among the twenty-two savings banks operating in the District, with deposits of \$1.8 million. It was also the oldest (Larner, 313). The bank successfully weathered the Depression, when eighteen banks in the District folded, and in 1941 had deposits of \$8 million (Star, November 24, 1941). In 1945 the deposits totaled \$16 million (Emery, 293). The McLachlen Banking Corporation established a branch at 12th and Maryland, S. W., in 1928, and had a facility for the Quartermaster Corps at 2nd and Q Streets, S. W.

In 1954, Lanier P. McLachlen became chairman of the board and his brother, Archibald, took over as president. (At this time, Archibald had been with the bank a mere 36 years, compared to his brother's 44 years.) Lanier P. McLachlen was active in the Washington community, serving as president of the D. C. Bankers' Association, the Metropolitan Washington Board of Trade, and the Columbia Country Club; as vice-president of the National Capital Insurance Co.; as chairman of the board of the Holton Arms School, Sibley Hospital, and the Federal City Council. When the bank opened its Potomac Plaza branch in 1957, Lanier's son Thomas managed that branch (Star, February 7, 1974). When Lanier died in 1981 at the age of 91, his son Thomas was chairman of the board and his son Lanier P. Jr. was senior vice president (Star, April 12, 1981). Despite this dominance of the McLachlen family, there were over 100 stockholders in 1960 (Star, October 4, 1960).

As Star reporter Truman Temple noted in an article titled "McLachlen Clan Prefers Friendly, Almost Old-Fashioned Bank,"

The bank has been original and sometimes unique in its policies....Archibald believed in "character" loans, for example, and sometimes would lend money with little more than

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the strength of a man's face. The bank to this day is exceedingly liberal in its attitude towards employing women. During the Spanish-American War it was the first bank in Washington to hire a woman teller, Mrs. Carrie A. Hobson. Four of its 15 officers today are women, and their combined service totals 83 years. Overall, 65 of the 85 employees at the bank are women (Star, October 4, 1960).

By 1977, nearly half of the bank's officers were women (Star, May 7, 1977). In 1973 the bank was described as "a white bank with a reputation in the Washington banking community for an extremely liberal minority enterprise loan policy" (Star, June 13, 1973).

Other firsts included being the first bank here to record accounts on microfilm, in the early 1930s, and being the first to make an FHA house loan, in 1935. In 1960, Temple wrote, the bank "strives to keep its reputation as a folksy, personal institution." Its motto was "Small enough to be friendly, big enough for all your banking needs" (Star, October 4, 1960).

In 1968, the McLachlen Banking Corporation was renamed the McLachlen National Bank and relocated one block away. The bank traded its building, which it has acquired from the Washington Investment Company in the early 1940s, with Woodward & Lothrop for land at the southwest corner of 11th and G Streets. After acquiring additional land at that site, the new McLachlen Building was erected. When asked how he felt about the move, Lanier P. McLachlen, then age 77, responded, "When we were looking for a new site, I didn't want to go far. I insisted on staying in this area because I have faith in the future progress and economic growth of Washington's downtown area" (Post, December 15, 1968).

The Architect

Jules Henri de Sibour, the architect of the McLachlen Building, is one of the most significant practitioners of the Beaux-Arts style in Washington. His designs of palatial residences changed the face of Massachusetts Avenue in the early 20th century, and his office buildings introduced a new elegance to commercial architecture. His Ecole des Beaux-Arts training gave his designs an authority that other Washington architects lacked. His obituary ran on the front page of the Evening Star in 1938.

De Sibour, the son of a French count and an American woman, was born in Paris in 1872. He grew up in America, though, and attended Yale University. After graduation in 1896, he went to New York City to work for Ernest Flagg, whose Corcoran Gallery was one of the first statements of the Beaux-Arts style in Washington. In

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1898 de Sibour joined the firm of Bruce Price, who encouraged him to go to Paris. Although, it is not known if de Sibour was actually enrolled in the Ecole, it is known that he joined an atelier and clearly fell under the influence of the Ecole. After about a year of study, de Sibour returned to New York and to the firm of Bruce Price. In 1902, de Sibour continued the New York firm under the name Bruce Price & De Sibour until 1909. In 1908 he opened a Washington branch in the Hibbs Building and changed the name of the firm to J. H. de Sibour in 1910.

De Sibour's most prolific period in Washington was in the years before the First World War, when the Beaux-Arts style was in vogue. He was most known for his monumentally scaled residential buildings. In the 1700 block of Massachusetts Avenue, he designed residences for Emily J. Wilkins (1909, now the Peruvian Chancery), Clarence Moore (1906, now the Canadian Chancery), and M. E. Ingalls (1912, now the Yater Medical Group Offices), as well as an apartment building (1915, now the National Trust Headquarters). The design of these buildings reflected a grandeur that still characterizes Massachusetts Avenue.

His office buildings were landmark structures in their own right. Two of his most famous commercial buildings were located on 15th Street: the Hibbs Buildings (Folger Building) at 723 15th Street (1906) and Riggs Theatre and Office Building (Keith's Theatre and Albee Building) at 15th and G Streets (1910-11). Both of these buildings featured costly marble fronts, copper mansard roofs, and sculptural Beaux-Arts ornament. The McLachlen Building, by contrast, used the less expensive terra cotta facing and was more modern in appearance, due to the expression of its steel frame on the exterior. When de Sibour published a catalog of his works in 1923, though, the McLachlen Building was featured prominently.

De Sibour moved in the same social circle as his wealthy clients. His obituary called him a "famous architect and a dominating figure in National Capital Society" and noted that his "social interests were a definite part of his daily existence" (Star, November 4, 1938). He designed the Chevy Chase Club (1910-11) and the Racquet Club (1922, now the University Club).

The selection of de Sibour as the architect of the McLachlen Building was an interesting one, as he was not usually associated with buildings east of 15th Street. Archibald McLachlen, who was himself listed in the social registers of the period, probably wanted a landmark building that would give his bank the social standing that he thought it deserved. From a design standpoint, McLachlen couldn't have made a better choice. De Sibour's McLachlen Building remains one of the finest office building designs of an architect whose career "has much to do with the architectural development of the capital" (New York Times, November 5, 1938).

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