

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Mercantile Trust and Deposit Company

and/or common Mercantile Safe Deposit and Trust Company

2. Location

street & number 202 ~~East~~ Redwood Street N/A not for publication

city, town Baltimore (ind. city) N/A vicinity of congressional district Seventh

state Maryland code 24 county Independent city code 510

3. 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name RGBV Associates

street & number 7000 Security Boulevard, Suite 316

city, town Baltimore N/A vicinity of state Maryland 21207

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse

street & number 100 North Calvert Street

city, town Baltimore state Maryland 21202

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust
Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" 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

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The Mercantile Trust and Deposit Company Building, located on the northeast corner of East Redwood and South Calvert Streets in Baltimore, is a mid 1880s brick-with-stone-ornamentation Romanesque influenced bank building which was constructed in two parts. The original section is the front portion along Redwood Street and the second section is to the north along Calvert. The exterior is characterized by heavy weight and massiveness reinforced by deeply set windows, round arch window openings, squat columns with foliated capitals, broad plane roofs steeply pitched, and straight-topped windows in groups. The street elevations have foliated stone belt courses and smooth stone belt courses. The date 1885 appears in Roman numerals along the roof line above the recessed entranceway on the Redwood Street (south) elevation. The interior consists of a large banking room with a balcony around the west, north, and east sides. Interior decoration consists of Corinthian columns and ornate wall plaster work dating from when the interior was rebuilt following the Great Fire of 1904 with 1950s remodeling elements.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Redwood Street (south) or main elevation is symmetrically arranged into three parts. The outer sections have parapeted gables round arch windows surmounting groups of rectangular windows divided by squat columns, and tripartite openings in the gables. The eastern section is plain on the street-level except for a small window opening near the central portion of the facade. The west section has a row of fine rectangular windows on the street level. This group of windows does not appear on the drawing published in the American Architect and Building News and may have been inserted about 1887 when the north section was added. The treatment of this set of windows is more similar to those in the addition than to the window groups in the original section.

The central portion of the main elevation is slightly set back with a recessed entrance flanked by squat columns rising from balustrades below square windows. Above the entranceway is a three-part panel with the name of the institution in the central panel with animal and foliated designed panels flanking. Fine rectangular windows with transoms rise above these panels and below a decorated frieze with the date 1885 in Roman numerals.

The west or Calvert Street elevation is divided into two bays corresponding to construction. Both bays have sets of rectangular windows, four to a group, on both levels. The street level set in the south or original bay have squat columns dividing the openings. Decorated rectangular stone panels the width of the window groupings exist between the groupings on each floor. The panels are foliated in design except that the south or original-section panel bears a face in the design.

B-40

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Mercantile Trust and Deposit Company

Continuation sheet Baltimore City, Maryland Item number

7

Page 1

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (Continued)

The north elevation abuts the neighboring building and is not exposed. The east elevation, along an alley is brick and almost devoid of decoration except for a simple corbeled brick cornice.

In 1904 during the Great Fire, the roof of the building collapsed. The interior was rebuilt in the Colonial Revival style, some elements of which still remain. The exterior remains almost completely intact for the 1880 period.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input 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 1885-1886; 1904 **Builder/Architect** Wyatt and Sperry, architects

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Applicable Criteria: A and C

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Mercantile Trust and Deposit Company Building, erected in the 1880s, acquires significance from several sources. First, as a highly ornamented bank building executed in the Romanesque style, the Mercantile Trust and Deposit Company Building embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and period of architecture that was not commonly employed in Baltimore for commercial structures. Several commercial buildings in the city, particularly in the retail area, have Romanesque detailing on the facade but none have the heavy massing and weight formed by the masonry construction reinforced by deep window reveals, the broad planes of the roofs, and the general largeness and simplicity of form found in the Mercantile Building. Secondly, the structure represents one of the finest examples of the work of the Baltimore architectural firm of Wyatt and Sperry which designed several major commercial and ecclesiastical buildings in Baltimore. The third source of significance is the historic role the bank played in the development of Baltimore as a financial, commercial and urban center on the east coast. The Mercantile Trust and Deposit Company underwrote bonds for several southern communities such as Norfolk, Virginia, Ashville, South Carolina, and Montgomery, Alabama.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

The Romanesque influenced building was erected in 1885 for the Mercantile Trust and Deposit Company, a firm which was founded a year earlier. As constructed, the building was only half the size of the present structure, being the full length along Redwood Street but only one bay deep along Calvert Street. About 1887, the building was enlarged to its present size, two bays deep. The addition was also carried out in the Romanesque manner. The Mercantile Trust and Deposit Company was one of the first financial institutions in Baltimore to offer several services (loans, savings accounts, safe deposit boxes) under one roof. The firm took an active role in rebuilding the South in the late nineteenth century by underwriting bonds for various cities and companies. The exterior of the building survived the Great Fire of 1904 which destroyed a hundred plus acres surrounding the bank. The present interior reflects 1950s renovations but still retains elements (Corinthian columns and ornate plaster-work) from the post-fire rebuilding. In 1953, the bank merged with the Safe Deposit and Trust Company to form the Mercantile Safe Deposit and Trust Company.

9. Major Bibliographical References

B-40

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Baltimore, East, Md.

Quadrangle scale 1-24:000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>9</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>9</u> <u>8</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundaries are delineated on the attached map.
The property consists of a city lot.

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

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	code
-------	------------	------	--------	------

state		code	county	code
-------	--	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Ronald L. Andrews, National Register Administrator</u>		
------------	---	--	--

organization	<u>Maryland Historical Trust</u>	date	<u>1983</u>
--------------	----------------------------------	------	-------------

street & number	<u>21 State Circle</u>	telephone	<u>(301) 269-2438</u>
-----------------	------------------------	-----------	-----------------------

city or town	<u>Annapolis</u>	state	<u>Maryland 21401</u>
--------------	------------------	-------	-----------------------

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature	<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>1-28-83</u>
---	--------------------	----------------

title	<u>STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER</u>	date	
-------	--	------	--

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>[Signature]</u>	date <u>3/17/83</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Mercantile Trust and Deposit Company
Baltimore City, Maryland Item number 8 and 9 Page 2

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (Continued)

The architectural firm of Wyatt and Sperry was formed in 1880 by James Bosley Noel Wyatt (1847-1926) and Joseph Evans Sperry (1854-1930). The firm existed for about six years during which several churches and commercial buildings were designed including the Mercantile Trust and Deposit Company Building. The addition to the Mercantile building was designed by Sperry following dissolution of the firm.

An illustration of the street elevations and the principal floor plans appeared in an 1885 issue of the American Architect and Building News.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

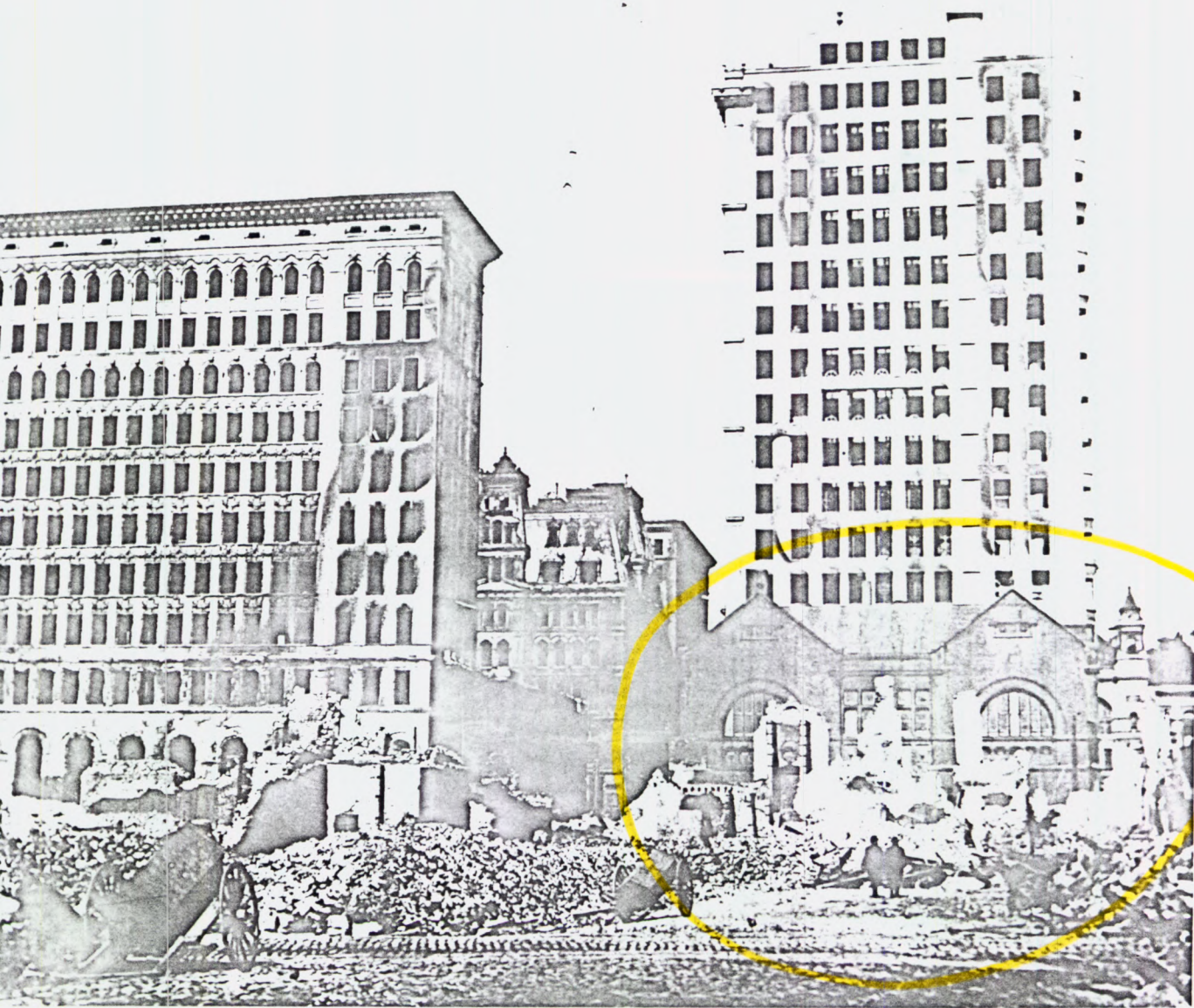
American Architect and Building News (elevation and plans), 1885.

Baltimore Land Records, City Courthouse, Baltimore, Md.

Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation, files, City Hall,
Baltimore, Md.

Dorsey, John and James D. Dilts. A Guide to Baltimore Architecture.
Cambridge, Md: Tidewater Publications, 1973, p. 68.

Mooney, E. Financial Interest of Baltimore. Baltimore, Md: n.p., 1912, pp. 46-48.



The Maryland Trust, left, B&O, and Continental Trust buildings were burned inside and out. The Mercantile Bank (bottom right) was saved through an accident of wind drafts. The photograph is looking toward the corner of Calvert and Redwood streets. Enoch Pratt Free Library photo

*source: Bygone Baltimore: A Historical Portrait
Jacques Kelly, 1982*