

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

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

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street & number 202 East Redwood Street N/A not for publication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 N/A vicinity of congressional district Seventh

state Maryland code 24 county Independent city code 510

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☐ district	☐ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture
☒ building(s)	☒ private	☐ unoccupied	☒ commercial
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☐ educational
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment
☐ object	☐ in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial
	☒ not applicable	☐ no	☐ military
			☐ museum
			☐ park
			☐ private residence
			☐ religious
			☐ scientific
			☐ transportation
			☐ 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

B-40

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

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

B-40

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400-1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500-1599	☐ agriculture	☒ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600-1699	☒ architecture	☐ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700-1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800-1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☒ 1900-	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

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.

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

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.

9. Major Bibliographical References

B-40

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than 1 acreQuadrangle name Baltimore, East, Md.Quadrangle scale 1-24:000

UMT References

A

1	8	3	6	0	9	4	0	4	3	4	9	8	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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 N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ronald L. Andrews, National Register Administratororganization Maryland Historical Trust date 1983street & number 21 State Circle telephone (301) 269-2438city or town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

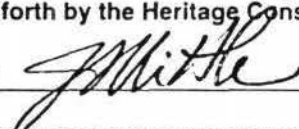
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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

1-28-83title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

date

For HCRS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

B-40

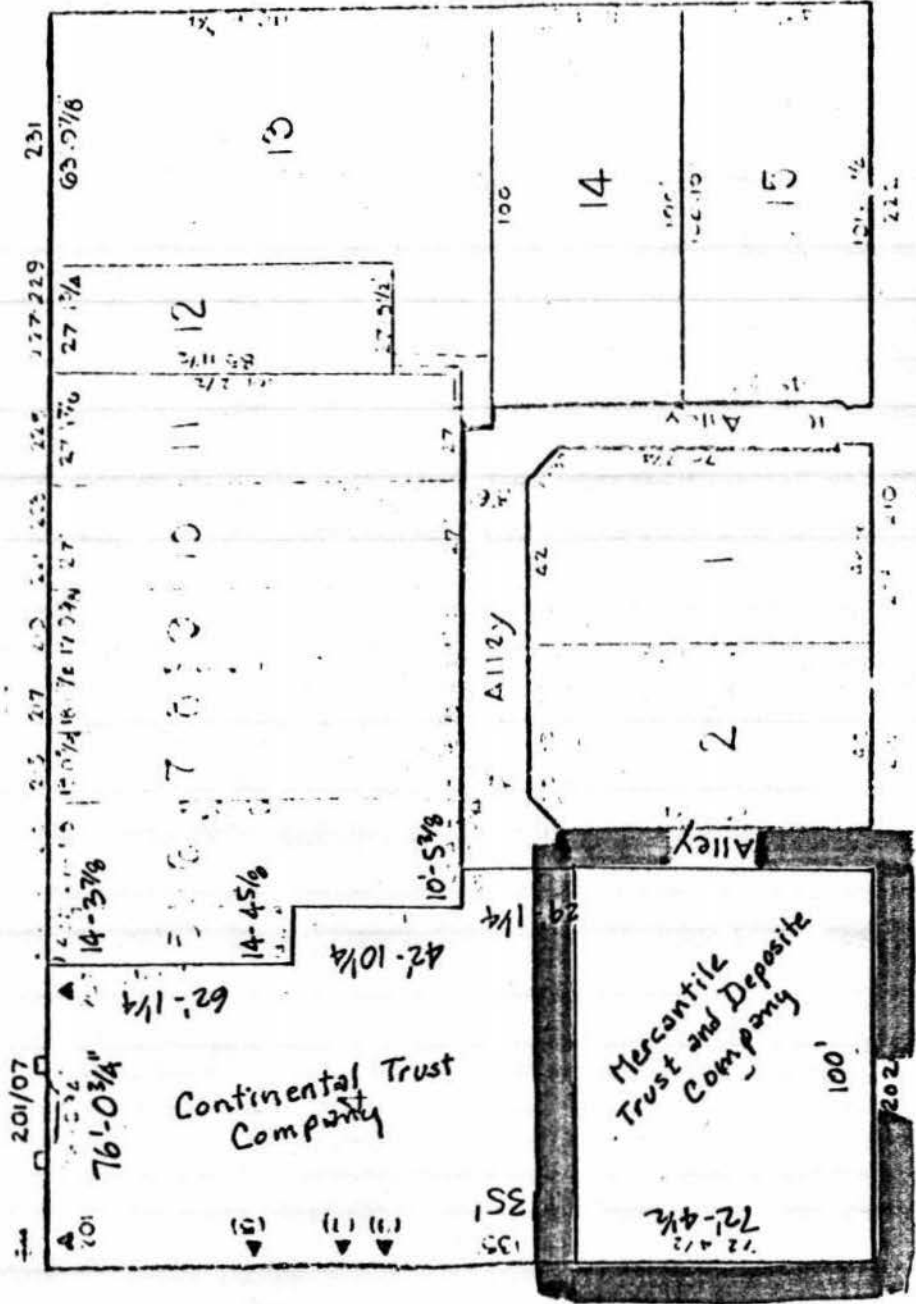
S

(637)

E BALTIMORE

GUI A

ST



ST

SOUTH

ST.

E. REDWOOD

S CALVERT

Mercantile Trust and Depo : Co.
Baltimore, Maryland

boundaries for NR nomination

(62)

B-40
 Mercantile Trust and
 Deposit Company
 Baltimore
 Maryland

4349

18/360940/434890



(RELAY)
 402 11 NW

Mapped by the Army Map Service
 Edited and published by the Geological Survey