

B-2223

Baltimore Life Insurance Company Building
(Commercial Credit Annex Building)
301-307 North Charles Street
Private

1929-30

The Baltimore Life Insurance Company Building (Commercial Credit Annex) is an excellent example of the Modernistic or Art Deco skyscraper style. This building and the 1929 Baltimore Trust Company Building are the best representatives of this style in Baltimore. The common elements of the style present in the Baltimore Life Building are the setbacks, fluted piers, scroll carvings, zig-zags and fan decorative designs. Upon its completion in 1930, the building was recognized by the Charles Street Association for artistic qualities and awarded a Certificate of Merit.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Baltimore Life Insurance Company Headquarters Building

and/or common Commercial Credit Annex Building (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 301-307 North Charles Street not for publication

city, town Baltimore vicinity of congressional district 3rd

state Maryland county

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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" 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 (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Commercial Credit Corporation

street & number 300 St. Paul Place telephone no.: 332-3000

city, town Baltimore state and zip code Maryland 21202

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse liber RHB3158

street & number Fayette and Calvert Streets folio 212

city, town Baltimore state Maryland 21202

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Baltimore City Neighborhood Survey

date 1976 federal state county local

depository for survey records Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation

city, town Baltimore state Maryland 21201

7. Description

Survey No. B-2223

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 of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Baltimore Life Insurance Company Headquarters Building (Commercial Credit Corporation Annex) is an 11-story office and commercial building in the Modernistic or Art Deco skyscraper style built in 1929-30 and located on the northeast corner of North Charles and Saratoga Streets in central Baltimore, Maryland. The exterior is limestone over brick and steel structure and the principal facade is on the west or Charles Street elevation. The building is connected on the east elevation to the Commercial Credit main building by an enclosed walkway at the 2nd floor level. A large arched central entrance on the main facade is flanked by four bays containing commercial storefronts. Set-backs at the 3rd, 10th and 11th floors are articulated by Art Deco details in bronze, limestone, and marble.

The building's structure is brick and steel with Indiana limestone facing on the west and south facades. The west facade has five bays with the center three bays set back above the second floor. Setbacks on the north and south elevations above the 10th floor set off the central portion. The center bay on the west contains the entrance, which is a high round arch under a shallow peak. Carved moldings articulate the arch. Set deep within the arch is a full height bronze grille with large double gates. On the upper portion of the grille is a rectangular bronze panel with scenes of Baltimore overlaid with a Commercial Credit Corporation logo. The original logo on the panel was that of the Baltimore Life Insurance Company. The spandrel between the arch peak and the round arch has "Commercial Credit Corporation" in applied letters. This also was formerly occupied by a Baltimore Life Insurance Company sign in bronze letters.

The flanking bays on the west side are occupied by store areas on the first floor. Each of these originally had a central entrance between display windows. The two bays at the southwest corner are now a single banking room (Commercial Credit Savings and Loan) and the south bay is closed to the street. The original two stores on the south facade are now unoccupied and have a single access from Saratoga Street at the southeast corner. Each store front retains its original transom with vertical muntins with a wide decorative panel separating it from the display windows. Windows in the upper floors are in groups of three within each bay. They are only slightly recessed from the outer wall surface and have steel 3/3 sash. The windows at the 10th and 11th floor levels on the west facade are enlarged and joined by marble panels and molded surrounds. Cast iron balustrades decorate the 10th floor windows. Iron balustrades are also on the second floor windows.

The decoration of the exterior is especially noteworthy. The aforementioned trim of the store front windows is primarily in fan and zig-zag motif, a design popularized by the Art Deco movement. Incised stylized scrolls between the 2nd and 3rd floors are also common elements of the Art Deco style. Beginning at the 7th floor level are fluted piers between the bays which rise from shallow scrolls to the parapet of the roofline. The parapet is articulated by vertical panels and corner piers with scrolls. Cast metal panels identical to the stylized scroll reliefs on the west and south elevations are placed above the first floor on the east or rear side of the building facing Lovegrove Alley.

CONTINUED

8. Significance

Survey No. B-2223

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 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 1929-30 Builder/Architect Mottu and White

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
 and/or
 Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G
 Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

SUMMARY

The Baltimore Life Insurance Company Headquarters Building (Commercial Credit Corporation Annex) is significant in local architectural history as an excellent example of the Modernistic or Art Deco skyscraper style. This building and the 1929 Baltimore Trust Company Building, (southwest corner E. Baltimore and Light Streets) are the best representatives of this style in Baltimore. The common elements of the style present in the Baltimore Life Building are the setbacks, fluted piers, scroll carvings, zig-zag and fan decorative designs. Upon its completion in 1930, the building was recognized by the Charles Street Association for artistic qualities "which adds materially to the architectural harmony and beauty of the Charles Street District."

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

PREVIOUS BUILDINGS ON SITE:

The site of the Baltimore Life Insurance Company Building was occupied from the mid-1830's to 1881 by a group of brick rowhouses. These were probably similar in design to the few which survive relatively intact on other sections of Charles Street: 2 1/2 or 3 stories, usually 3 bays wide with a side hall entry, gable roofs with one or two dormers. Originally residential, these buildings gradually became converted to commercial use on the ground floor with living quarters on the upper floors. This shift followed the general trend of development on Charles Street and its side streets, beginning as a rather exclusive residential district, then seeing an increasing number of businesses and professional offices established throughout the rest of the 19th century.

Over the period 1878 to 1881, the three lots extending from the northeast corner of the Charles and Saratoga intersection were purchased by the trustees of the Thomas Wilson Estate. Thomas Wilson was a wealthy childless Quaker who, concerned by the poor health of lower-class city children, provided in his will for the establishment of a sanitarium outside the city for the improvement of their condition. Commonly known as "summer complaint," their illnesses were caused by a variety of factors, including among others malnutrition, unsanitary living and working conditions, summer heat and humidity, and psychological depression of both mothers and children. To further the good health practices, mothers and children learned at the sanitarium in the summer and help combat despair during the winter, the Thomas Wilson Estate also established a Milk Fund which set up milk distribution stations throughout the city, and a Fuel Savings

CONTINUED

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. B-2223

American Architect and Building News, 9 (Jan.-June 1881); Apr. 9.,
1881, 179; June 18, 1881, 300. Vol. 10 (July-Dec. 1881); Aug. 20,
1881, 87.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .199

Quadrangle name Baltimore East

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	Zone	Easting		Northing			

B	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	Zone	Easting		Northing			

C	<input type="checkbox"/>						
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

D	<input type="checkbox"/>						
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

E	<input type="checkbox"/>						
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

F	<input type="checkbox"/>						
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

G	<input type="checkbox"/>						
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

H	<input type="checkbox"/>						
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

Verbal boundary description and justification

Co-terminous with lot measuring 99'10"x87'.
Building occupies entire lot.

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

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janet Davis, Historic Preservation Analyst

organization Comm. for Hist. and Arch. Pres. date November, 1984

street & number Rm. 606, Tower Suites, 118 N. Howard St telephone (301) 396-4866

city or town Baltimore state Maryland 21201

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

7. Description, cont'd.
Page 2

The interior lobby is completely covered with several varieties of colored marble. (See attached article from Through the Ages, a marble industry publication.) The elevator lobby also has marble walls and floor and an ornamental plaster ceiling. Cast bronze elevator doors are of a scroll and zig-zag design. Bronze chandeliers are similar in design to two bronze lanterns flanking the exterior main entrance.

8. Significance, cont'd.

Page 2

Society to provide low-cost or free heating coal. For several years, a Sewing Machine Distribution Committee provided the means for a measure of economic improvement for poor women. The sanitarium, later called Mount Wilson, was operated by the Thomas Wilson Fund until the 1950's when it was transferred to state ownership. The Thomas Wilson Fund is still in existence, but is one of the least known philanthropic organizations in the state.

The Thomas Wilson Fund hired Charles L. Carson to design its office building. The finished design appeared in the American Architect and Building News on August 20, 1881 (see Fig.1). The four story brick building had Cheat River stone trim and carved panels and spandrels of Scotch sandstone. A mansard roof was punctuated by massive dormers and chimneys. Although overshadowed in height by the turrets of the 1873 Y.M.C.A. Building (B-2158) across Charles Street, the Wilson Building complemented the brick and stone exterior of that structure, both being designed by prominent architects in the Queen Anne commercial style popular at that period. These buildings were clear indications of the changing architectural and economic character of the Charles Street district.

Carson also designed a one-story annex to the Wilson Building on the northernmost lot to house the Mercantile Library Association. The elegant facade of this little building may be seen in Carson's drawing of the Wilson Building. The Association was founded in 1839 and had about 37,000 volumes available to members through subscriptions of 3, 6 or 12 months. Among other lessees in the Wilson Building soon after its completion was the business office of the Johns Hopkins Hospital, then under construction in East Baltimore. Charles Carson also had an office in the Wilson Building in the 1890's.

Baltimore Life Insurance Company

In 1911, the Wilson Building was sold to the Baltimore Life Insurance Company. Founded as the Baltimore Mutual Aid Society of Baltimore City on March 27, 1882, the company's first office was a small brick building on South Sharp Street, formerly used as a residence. The office occupied the first floor and an employee's family quarters were on the second floor. In 1889, this building was destroyed by fire and the company moved to new office space at Park Avenue and Saratoga. In 1898, increasing policy sales and related activities dictated a need for more space and another move to a larger building at Liberty and Clay Streets was made. In 1900, the company's name was changed to Baltimore Life Insurance Company of Baltimore City. "Baltimore City" was dropped from the name in 1949. Surviving the 1904 fire, the company dropped its coverage of health and accident insurance in that year to concentrate on life insurance. When the company moved to the Wilson Building in 1911, its assets totaled over \$2 million and it had over \$17 million in insurance in force.

The former Wilson Building became the home office of the company and, as is customary with insurance companies and other businesses, it was pictured on the company's letterhead and annual reports. A 1916 annual report illustration (Fig.2) showed a few changes from Carson's original drawing. Large plate glass display windows replaced the shop fronts on Charles Street and a small entrance on Saratoga Street was added either during construction or later. The prominent arched chimneypiece on the roof in Carson's drawing was built, but does not appear in the 1916 illustration. An interesting detail to note in both drawings are the types of transportation shown. In 1881, only pedestrians appear, with the paved or wood mud crossing at the corners. In 1916, the streets are paved, apparently with belgian blocks, and a streetcar and automobiles join the pedestrian traffic. Not only did the company enjoy increased accessibility, but the entire Charles Street district had changed to cater to a public living farther out of the City center.

Design and Construction of New Baltimore Life Insurance Company Building

By the 1920's, the Baltimore Life Insurance Company had expanded beyond the capacity of the 1881 building. This period was one of great changes in the economic life of the Charles Street area, with substantial architectural effects on the buildings. Wanting a wholly modern building to convey its corporate image, but also wanting to remain in its prominent location, the company decided to demolish the old building and build on the same site. It acquired the building and lot at 307 North Charles to add to the existing holdings of 301-305 N. Charles, making a lot of 100 feet fronting on Charles and 87.5 feet on Saratoga.

Early in 1929, the firm of Mottu and White were commissioned to design the new building. Henry S. Taylor White (1879-1943) and Howard M. Mottu also designed the Friends School, Fire Truck House No. 16 at Calvert and Read Streets, and many residences in Guilford and Towson, as well as churches, warehouses and institutions. One notable commission outside of Baltimore was the Baltimore City building at the 1907 Jamestown Exposition. White studied architecture at the Maryland Institute of Design and was a draftsman in the office of Baldwin and Pennington. He formed the partnership with Mottu in 1904. White later practiced with his son H.S.T. White, Jr. No information on Howard Mottu's earlier career was discovered during research for this survey.

Mottu and White, along with Albert Burns, treasurer of the company, visited Boston, Springfield, New York and Philadelphia to inspect insurance company office buildings during early 1929. By midsummer, a design was accepted by the company and bids for construction were taken in January 1930. Construction by the J. Henry Miller Company of Baltimore was begun in early 1930 and the building was occupied in December.

The Company's liberal attitude as employers was evident in the provision of a lounge, lunch room, kitchen, and roof gardens on the 10th floor. A library and reading room on the 11th floor was also open to employees. Even before the building was completed, the banking firm of John P. Baer and Company leased the corner store on the first floor. Prior to the site clearance, this firm had occupied the old Mercantile Library Association building. Although this interior space has been much altered since 1930, a bronze mezzanine balustrade and clock remain from the original Baer offices. The stores at 303 and 305 N. Charles were leased in late 1931 to A.G. Spalding and Brothers athletic goods and Thomas Cook and Son travel services.

The building was clearly a great success as an office building and as architecture. Mottu and White were obviously impressed by the work of Raymond Hood. Their interpretation of the set backs and shallow relief decoration of the New York skyscrapers of the late 1920's to the relatively low rise and pivotal location of the Baltimore Life Insurance Company design was recognized at least in Baltimore as worthy of honor. The

CONTINUED

8. Significance, cont'd.
Page 4

Charles Street Association, organized in 1915 to further the economic development and protect the interests of merchants in the Charles Street area, awarded the building a Certificate of Merit for a new building in 1930 "which adds materially to the architectural harmony and beauty of the Charles Street District." The Association was advised by the Committee on Architectural Beauty and Harmony of the Baltimore Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. That year the Committee was composed of Henry Howell Hopkins, T. Worth Jamison (chairman), and Thomas Machen. The previous year, the Committee awarded one of two Certificates of Merit to the Baltimore Trust Company Building, Smith and May, associates Taylor and Fisher, architects. The Art Deco skyscraper was clearly in favor in Baltimore around 1930.

Subsequent Owners of the Building

In the late 1950's, the Baltimore Life Insurance Company again outgrew its headquarters as the use of electronics and computers in the insurance and bookkeeping fields grew. A new home office was built at North Howard and Preston Streets. The 1930 building was purchased in 1954 by Jack Meyerhoff and Sons, real estate developers and continued as rental office and commercial space. For a short time, the building was known as the Meyerhoff Building and the flagpoles flanking the main entrance were used for various flags to indicate the daily weather, an attempt to attract attention to the Charles Street retail district. In 1960, the Aurora Federal Savings and Loan Corporation planned "major alterations and redecoration" on the ground floor. A new board room, president's offices, settlement rooms, 11 teller windows and a spacious public area were planned. Aurora Federal merged with Baltimore Federal Savings and Loan in the late 1960's or early 1970's and the building was again sold to the Commercial Credit Corporation in 1971. This corporation had completed its own building (B-2230) in 1957 directly east of the Baltimore Life Building, but needed additional office space for its subsidiary companies. The elevated connection between the two buildings was constructed in the mid-1970's. In spite of these changes in ownership, the Baltimore Life Building remains essentially intact on the exterior and its main interior public spaces have also been retained.

9. Major Bibliographical References, cont'd.

B-2223

Baltimore Life Insurance Company records, primarily undated press release entitled "Baltimore Life Insurance Company of Baltimore City Home Office Building".

Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland Department vertical files:
Baltimore Life Insurance Company, Aurora Federal Savings & Loan,
Meyerhoff Building, Charles Street, Thomas Wilson Fund.

Land Records of Baltimore City

Peale Museum Reference Department: Architects, Photographs.

Through the Ages, 9:9 (June 1932), 39-42. (National Association of Marble Dealers magazine).

AREA: Cathedral Hill

MAGI NO.: 0422235811

Address: 301-307 North Charles Street
 Current Name: Commercial Credit Annex Building

Block: 603	Lot: 7-8	Lot size: 99'10" x 87'
Height: 11		Materials: Limestone
Condition: excellent		Owner: Commercial Credit Corp.
Use: Commercial		Accessible: yes: unrestricted
Designation:		Liber/Folio: RHB 3158/212



Historic Name: Baltimore Life Insurance Company Headquarters
 Date: 1929-30
 Architect/Builder: Mottu and White, arch.
 Style (if appropriate): Modernistic or Art Deco skyscraper

Description:

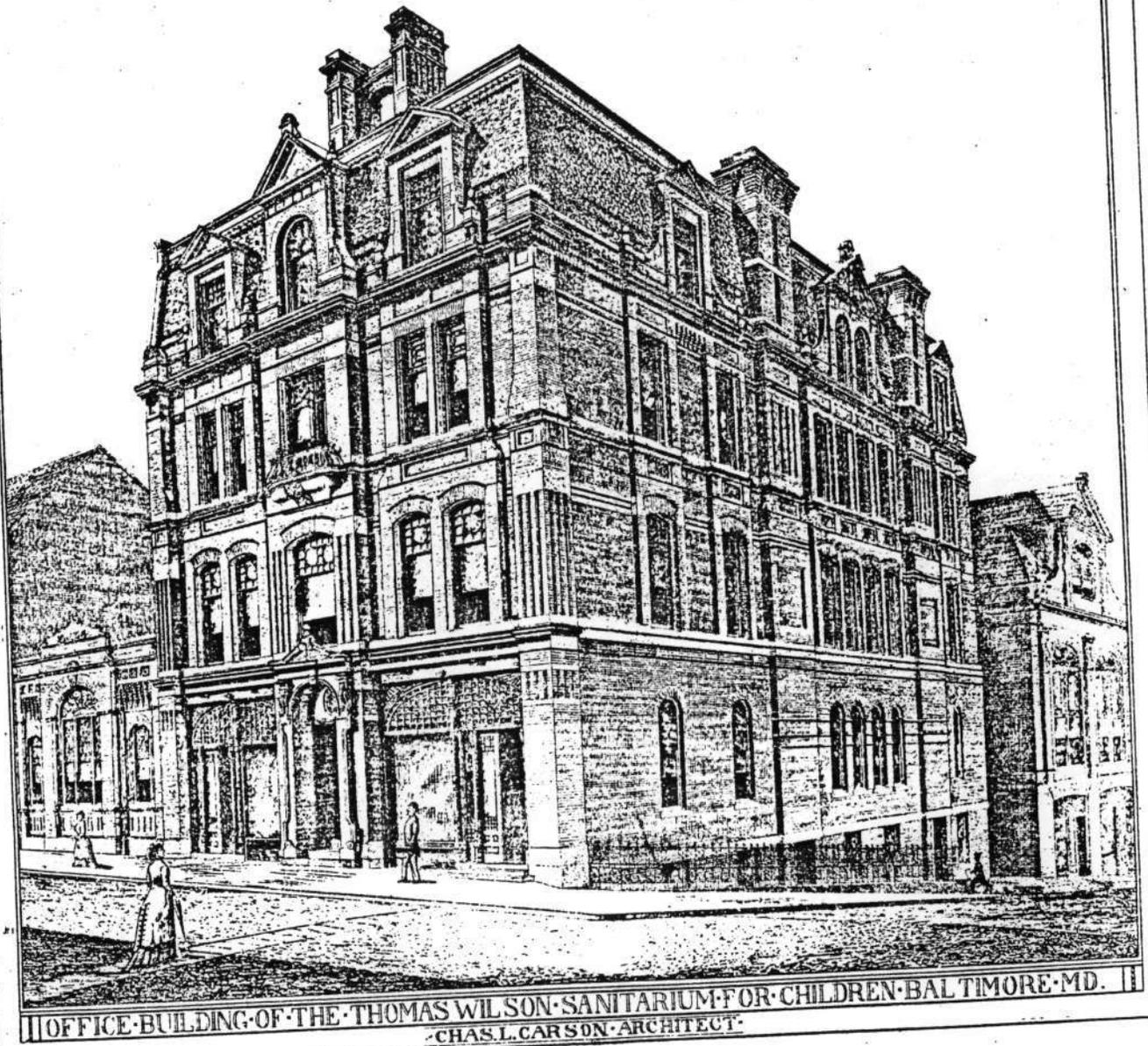
The steel and brick structure is faced on the west and south with Indiana limestone. Setbacks above the second and ninth floors are articulated with incised scroll design panels and fluted piers ending at the roof line with a paneled parapet and scroll corner piers. A high round-arched entrance on the west facade has carved moldings and a bronze grille and double gates. Two bays on each side of the entrance are occupied on the ground floor by store fronts with plate glass windows. Windows on the second floor are 2 panes with a center muntin. All other windows are 3/3 metal sash and are grouped in threes in each bay. The interior decoration of the public lobby and elevator foyer is in a variety of colored marble with bronze chandeliers and elevator doors repeating the zig-zags, scrolls, and fans of the exterior ornamentation.

Significance:

Area: Architecture

Level: Local

The Baltimore Life Insurance Company Headquarters Building (Commercial Credit Annex) is an excellent example of the Modernistic or Art Deco skyscraper style. This building and the 1929 Baltimore Trust Company Building (Maryland National Bank) are the best representatives of this style in Baltimore. The common elements of the style present in the Baltimore Life Building are the setbacks, fluted piers, scroll carvings, zig-zags, and fan decorative designs. Upon its completion in 1930, the building was recognized by the Charles Street Association for artistic qualities and awarded a Certificate of Merit. See MHT Inventory form.



The Holston Printing Co. 217 Fremont St. Boston.

Baltimore Life Ins. Co. Bldg. B-2223
Baltimore, Maryland
Wilson Building, previous building on
site, from Amer. Arch. & Bldg. News,
Aug. 20, 1881

The Baltimore Life Insurance Company



OF BALTIMORE, MD.

June 1

1916

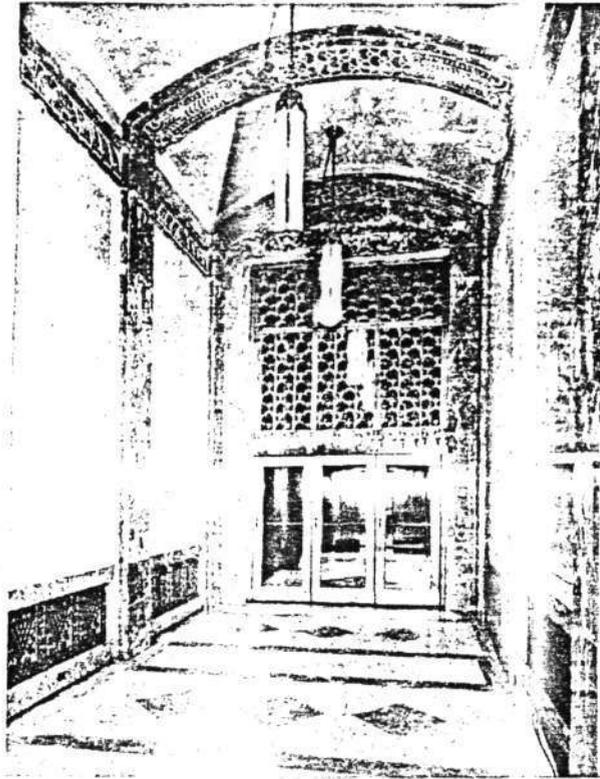
THIRTY FOUR YEARS IN BUSINESS

HOME OFFICE BUILDING
OF THE COMPANY



N. E. COR. CHARLES & SARATOGA STS.

Baltimore Life Insurance Co. Bldg.
B-2223
Original at Balto. Life Ins. Co.



Entrance hall or outer lobby.

HOME OFFICE BUILDING FOR THE BALTIMORE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

EARLY in the year 1929 the firm of Mottu & White, architects, of Baltimore, were commissioned by The Baltimore Life Insurance Company of Baltimore City to take charge of the erection of their new Home Office Building at the corner of Charles and Saratoga Streets, Baltimore.

After a number of conferences with officers of the company in regard to details of plan and character of building, the architects were instructed to visit a number of the most modern home office buildings erected for life insurance companies in other large cities; and so in company with the treasurer of the insurance company, an inspection was made of the home office build-

ings of The John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company, at Boston, Massachusetts; The Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company, at Springfield, Massachusetts; The New York Life Insurance Company, at New York City; and The Provident Mutual Life Insurance Company, at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

As a result of this trip and many further conferences, the preliminary studies, showing plan and design of the contemplated building, were approved and accepted the midsummer of 1929, after which the working drawings and specifications followed very shortly. Building operations were started early in 1930, and ten months later

THROUGH THE AGES

the company's dream of a suitable home office building was a reality. The company occupied the new building the first part of December, 1930.

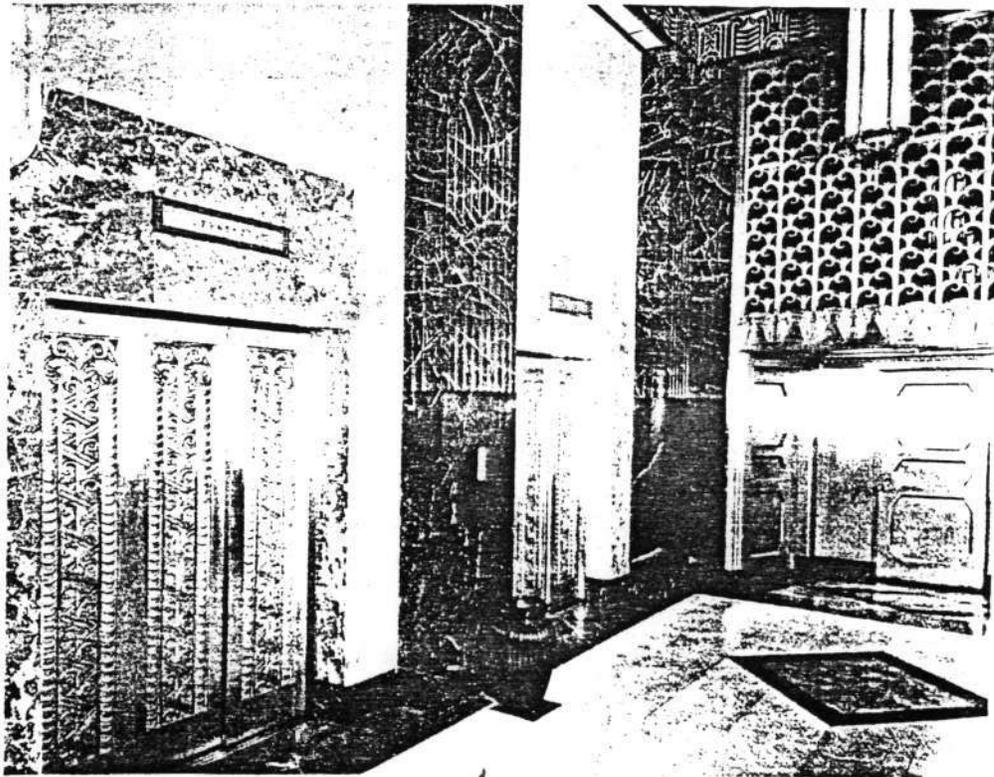
The architects, when first given this commission, were instructed to give much thought and attention to making adequate provision for the comfort and welfare of the employees, with the result that all offices for the clerical forces are well ventilated with washed air, the ceilings are treated with sound-absorbing material and the natural as well as the artificial lighting has been arranged upon a scientific basis.

Further, at the special injunction of the president of the company, the entire tenth floor and a portion of the eleventh floor has been arranged for recreational uses by the employees of the company. The tenth floor comprises a large decorated lounge or meet-

ing room where the employees may dance or listen to lectures, etc.; a lunch room; a well-equipped kitchen; a rest room for female employees; and two large roof gardens, one on the north side of the building and the other on the south side. On the eleventh floor there is a large reading room or library.

It being the intention to erect an absolutely modern, convenient and fireproof building, a special effort was made to employ throughout every known improvement and device for the permanency and durability of the structure, as well as for the comfort and convenience of the company's staff and the tenants in the office space—which for the present will be leased until such time as the company, due to growth and expansion, will be obliged to occupy the entire building.

The space which the company now leases



In the main lobby of the Baltimore Life Building the walls are of Florida marble, with pilasters, base and floor borders of Pyrenees Black and White. The trim is Royal Rose marble.

THROUGH THE AGES

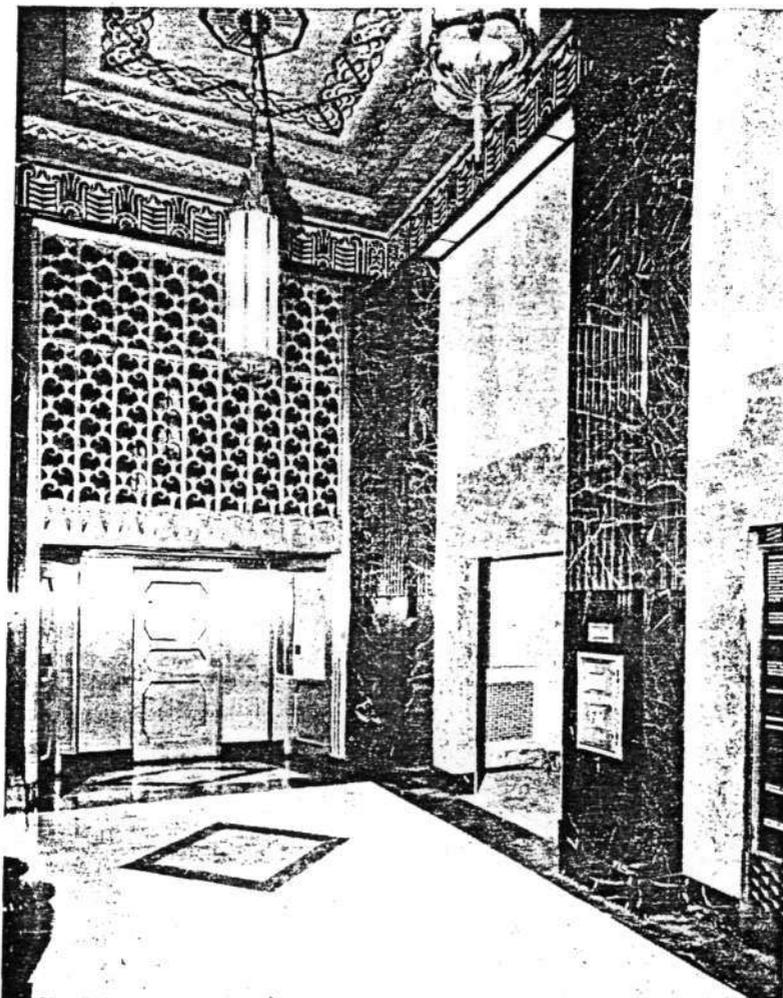
comprises a basement store opening on Saratoga Street; three stores and a banking room on the first floor fronting on Charles Street; the entire second and third floors, and a portion of the ninth.

The head officers have their quarters on the fifth floor in a suite designated as the executive department. A large board room is nearby, and the clerical forces of the treasurer's department are also located here in a large room communicating with the treasurer's office.

The building has been constructed of steel frame with hollow tile floor construc-

tion and with masonry outside walls, stone face having been employed on the Charles and Saratoga Streets fronts and for the face of walls of tenth and eleventh floors, while light buff brick shows on the east and north walls. Entrances to stores have floors of two types of Travertine, and the bases to the store windows are of Red Levanto, as are the spandrels and trim generally on the exterior.

The main entrance is through a wide entrance hall or outer lobby opening off Charles Street. This entrance hall, as well as the main lobby beyond, offers one of the most



Main lobby, Baltimore Life Building; Mottu & White, architects. The floor is of Botticino, Royal Rose and Pyrenees Black and White marbles.

THROUGH THE AGES



A typical upper floor elevator lobby in the Baltimore Life Building.

interesting marble treatments to be found in Baltimore. The floor field is Botticino with borders and inserts of Royal Rose, Florido and Pyrenees Black and White marble.

The trim at the elevator openings in the main lobby is of Royal Rose marble; the pilasters, low wainscot, ceiling beams and cornice in the outer lobby are likewise of this material; but the pilasters in the main lobby, together with the base, caps and girders, are of Pyrenees Black and White marble. The ceiling in the outer lobby is of Florido, as are the large wall panels between the pilasters in the same area.

Leading up from the elevator lobby is a stairway having its strings and risers of Royal Rose, its treads of Roman Travertine,

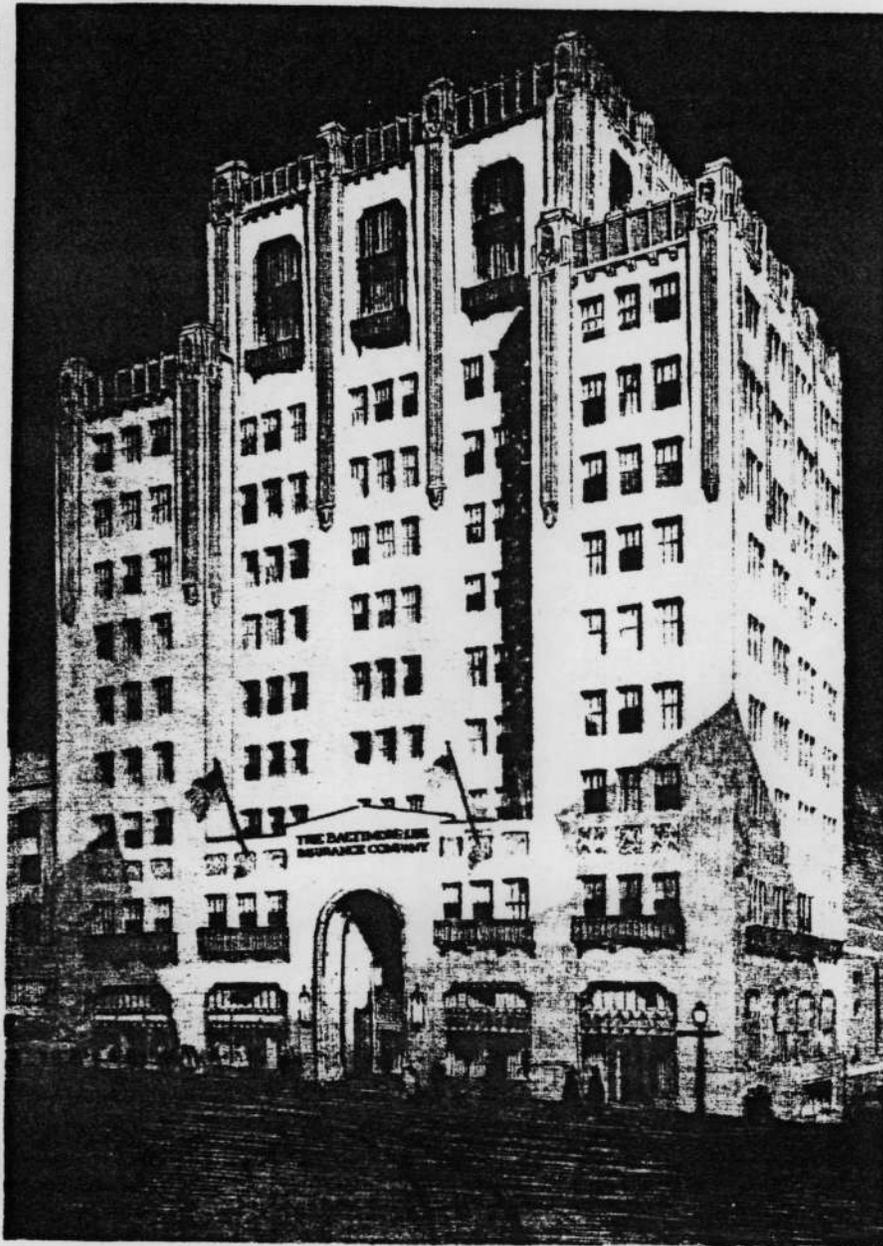
and its walls, rails and soffits of Florido. The floor of the stair landing and hall is of Roman Travertine. All of the upper floor elevator lobbies are wainscoted in Blue Veined Tennessee Tavernelle, the material being carried to ceiling height around elevator openings and certain doorways, as shown in the illustration. Toilets have stalls of this same marble; and several counters, such as those in the industrial department on the first floor, and the cashier's department on the sixth, have been built of this type of Tennessee marble.

The Baltimore Life Building has taken its place as one of the "better" buildings of Baltimore; and there is no question but that the marble it contains goes a long way toward giving it this distinction.

CO-OPERATION

Attention of our readers is called to the advertisements appearing in the back of this issue. The advertisers represented are contributing largely to the success of this magazine. We trust that, wherever possible, our members, subscribers and readers generally will show their appreciation of this co-operation by patronizing these well-recognized and dependable concerns.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MARBLE DEALERS



Baltimore Life Insurance Co. Bldg.
B-2223
Architectural rendering
Original at Baltimore Life Ins. Co.



Baltimore Metrocenter Survey
 Cathedral Hill Area
 Baltimore Life Insurance Co. Hqs. Bldg.
 301-307 North Charles Street
 B-2223



Old Baltimore Life Insurance Co.
Building B-2223
301-307 North Charles Street
Cathedral Hill - Metrocenter Survey
Baltimore (City), Maryland
Photo: Janet Davis
Date: August 1984
Neg. loc.: Maryland Historical Trust
Southwest corner view
1/3

COMMERCIAL
CREDIT

COMMERCIAL
CREDIT
801 N. CHARLES ST.
BUILDING

COMMERCIAL
CREDIT
801 N. CHARLES ST.
BUILDING



Old Baltimore Life Insurance Co.
Building B-2223
301-307 North Charles Street
Cathedral Hill - Metrocenter Survey
Baltimore (City), Maryland
Photo: Janet Davis
Date: August 1984
Neg. loc.: Maryland Historical Trust
Main entrance detail, west elevation
2/3

Commercial Credit Savings and Loan



COMMERCIAL CREDIT FINANCIAL NETWORK
a Control Data Company



Hours:
Mon.-Fri. 9:30-4:00



COMMERCIAL CREDIT
FINANCIAL NETWORK
a Control Data Company



COMMERCIAL CREDIT
FINANCIAL NETWORK
a Control Data Company

Hours:
Mon.-Fri.

Old Baltimore Life Insurance Co.
Building B-2223
301-307 North Charles Street
Cathedral Hill - Metrocenter Survey
Baltimore (City), Maryland
Photo: Janet Davis
Date: August 1984
Neg. loc.: Maryland Historical Trust
Detail, west elevation
3/3

blk. 603
B-2223
MAGI#0422235811

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

NOMINATION FORM
for the
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Commercial Credit Corporation Building

AND/OR HISTORIC: Baltimore Life Insurance Company Building

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 301 North Charles Street

CITY OR TOWN: Baltimore

STATE: Maryland COUNTY:

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input 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		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Commercial Credit Corporation

STREET AND NUMBER: 300 St. Paul Place

CITY OR TOWN: Baltiamore STATE: Maryland 21202

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Records Office Room 601

STREET AND NUMBER: Baltimore City Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: Baltimore STATE: Maryland 21202

Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #):

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: City of Baltimore Neighborhood Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1976 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Room 200

CITY OR TOWN: 26 South Culvert St. Baltimore, Md. 21202 STATE:

7. DESCRIPTION	
CONDITION	(Check One)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	

Designed by Howard M. Mottu and H.S.T. White, this ten story high granite ashlar office building is a refined example of late 1920's Modernistic American architecture, as developed out of the early designs of Eliel Saarinen and the Sullivan-inspired ornamental work of George Elmslie. The five bay wide, four bay deep structure rest on a low, projecting granite base which rises to a full story in height at the rear on the sloping site.

The first floor of the building features four large openings with flat bell arches, symmetrically arranged about a central, two story high, round arched portal. The first and fourth bays from the left contain minor bronze and glass entrances to first floor stories; the second and fifth bays are fitted with plate glass windows resting in bronze frames on the granite base. Within each of these flat arched openings, brown marble panels are set within bronze frames adorned with fans and zig-zags in low relief, capping windows and entranceways. Transoms of ten fixed lights set side by side fill in each opening above the panels and below the flat arches. Cable moldings outline each of the four flat-arched units.

The central 2 story high, round arched portal is framed in a series of receding arches defined by numerous layers of reed, cable and leaf moldings of carved granite. The entranceway is faced on the floor level with three bronze doors set with single large plates of glass, above which rises a large bronze screen composed of an arabesque of vines. Above the screen is a solid bronze panel, with a screen featuring the monuments of Baltimore executed in low relief around the company insignia. Above the relief panel, a round-arched piece of bronze screen fills in the opening. The entranceway is barred from the street at night by a double set of high bronze gates composed of a variety of spindly geometric and natural forms. The entranceway is enhanced on either side by cylindrical bronze lanterns with reeded glass, which are elaborately ornamented with stylized natural decorative motifs, and feature cast, magnolia hip finials.

The side bays on the second floor each contain three sets of French doors, composed of large single panes of glass set in thin metal sash. Each set is faced with a cast and wrought metal balcony supported on four slim wrought metal brackets, all painted brown. Above each of the doors are stone panels carved with chevrons and stylized leaf and floral motifs in low relief. Above the central sets of doors in bays two and four, flag poles are set in prows of stone ships, which deeply project from panels of separating, carved waves. Above the central bay a low pedimental hood is faced with the company sign, with bronze colored figures in block relief.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

B. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1930

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> 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/Phi-	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	losophy	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	itarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE 300 ST. PAUL PLACE.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL HISTORICAL & MONUMENTS COMMISSION
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL ARCHIVES
 COLLETSVILLE, MD 21784

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Empty box for Major Bibliographical References.

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 TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreage Justification:

Large empty box for Acreage Justification.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Bill Pencek, Planning Assistant

ORGANIZATION: COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

DATE: 1976

STREET AND NUMBER: Room 900

CITY OR TOWN: 26 South Calvert St, Baltimore, Md. 21202

STATE: []

12. State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)

Significance of this property is:

National State Local

Signature _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

At the third floor level the central three bays are set back behind the flanking bays. The side bays rise seven floors more to a total height of nine stories. Each floor is fenestrated with three double hung windows with 3/3 lights, which are shallowly recessed into the flat wall plane. Behind the low pediment over the portal, nine of the same windows mark each of the next seven floors. A three bay wide, tenth story penthouse rises above these. Each bay is articulated by a tripartite, flat bell arched opening. Ornamental metal frames painted brown divide French doors from side-lights, and frame brown marble panels which horizontally divide each lower member from a fixed transom above. Each tripartite arrangement is fronted with a wrought metal balcony.

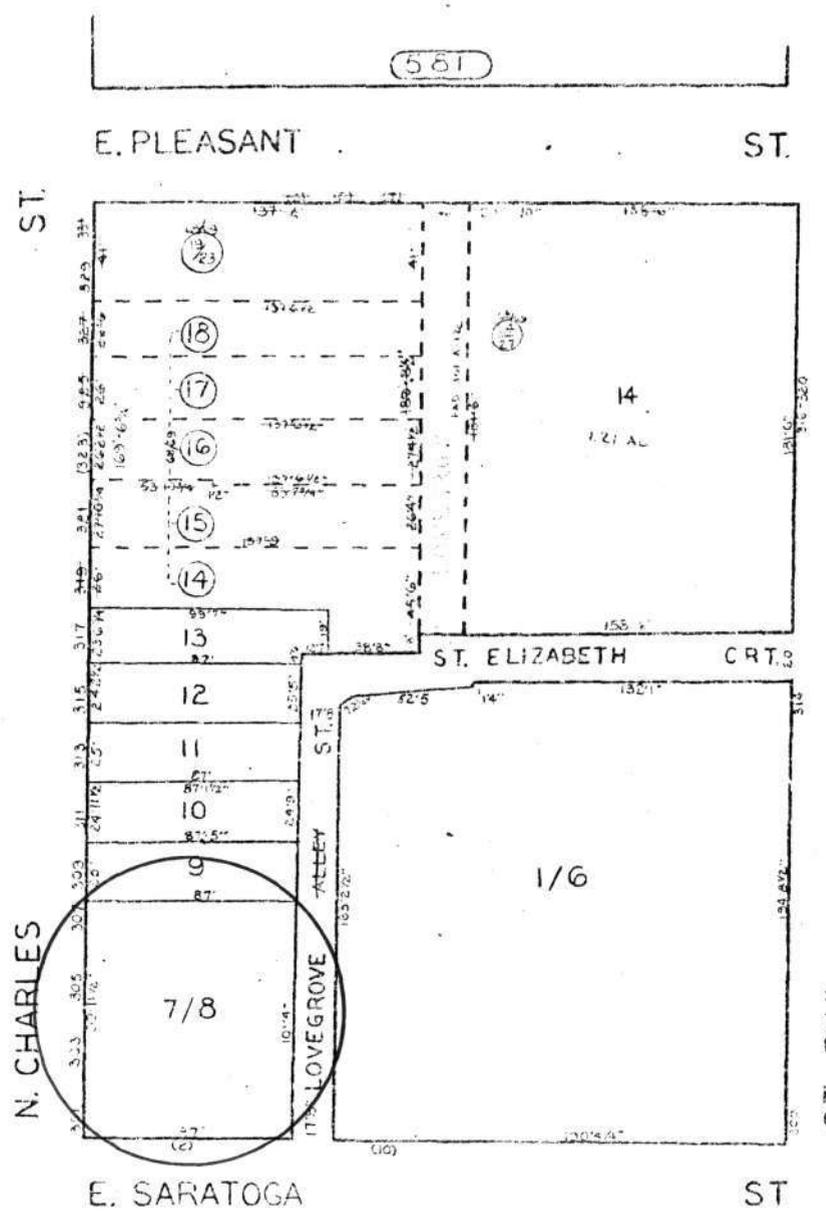
Rising from the top three floors, articulating each of the five major bays, reeded applied stone verticals rise above the roof-line to the tops of granite piers, and are terminated on either end by geometrically styled stone plates. Between the piers the roofline supports a low, folded granite parapet set on simple brackets, which encloses heavily landscaped roof top gardens. The four bay wide Saratoga Street facade is detailed identically to the Charles Street Front. The Lovegrove Alley rear of the building has spandrels of glazed yellow brick set between granite piers. Cast metal panels, identical to the stone relief panels on the front and side, are set above the first floor windows at the rear.

The vestibule and lobby interiors present a riot of Modernistic design. Floors, walls, and barrel-vaulted ceilings are sheathed in a variety of polished marbles laid in geometric patterns. Cylindrical bronze chandeliers with reeded crystal shades are suspended from plates set in brightly painted geometrical ceiling reliefs, and bronze arabesque screens and doors are set amid a variety of fanned, zig-zagged and stylized natural motifs used for carved and incised ornament.

REVISIONS

NO. 15, 14, 11, 10, 23, 22, 21, 20, 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

580



N. CHARLES ST.

E. PLEASANT ST.

E. SARATOGA ST.

LOVEGROVE ST.

LOVEGROVE ST.

PLACE

ST. PAUL

GARDENS

PRESTON

603

602

TRACED BY: BLW
LETTERED BY: BLW
CHECKED BY:

NOTICE
THIS IS A REAL PROPERTY PLAT AS PROVIDED FOR UNDER ARTICLE 76(B) OF THE CITY CHARTER. IT IS COMPILED FROM TITLE AND OTHER SOURCES AND IS NOT AN ANTIETIC SURVEY.

CITY OF BALTIMORE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

PROPERTY LOCATION DIVISION
WARD 4 SECTION 1
BLOCK 603

SCALE: 1"=50' 0"
DATE: 12/15/66

B-2223

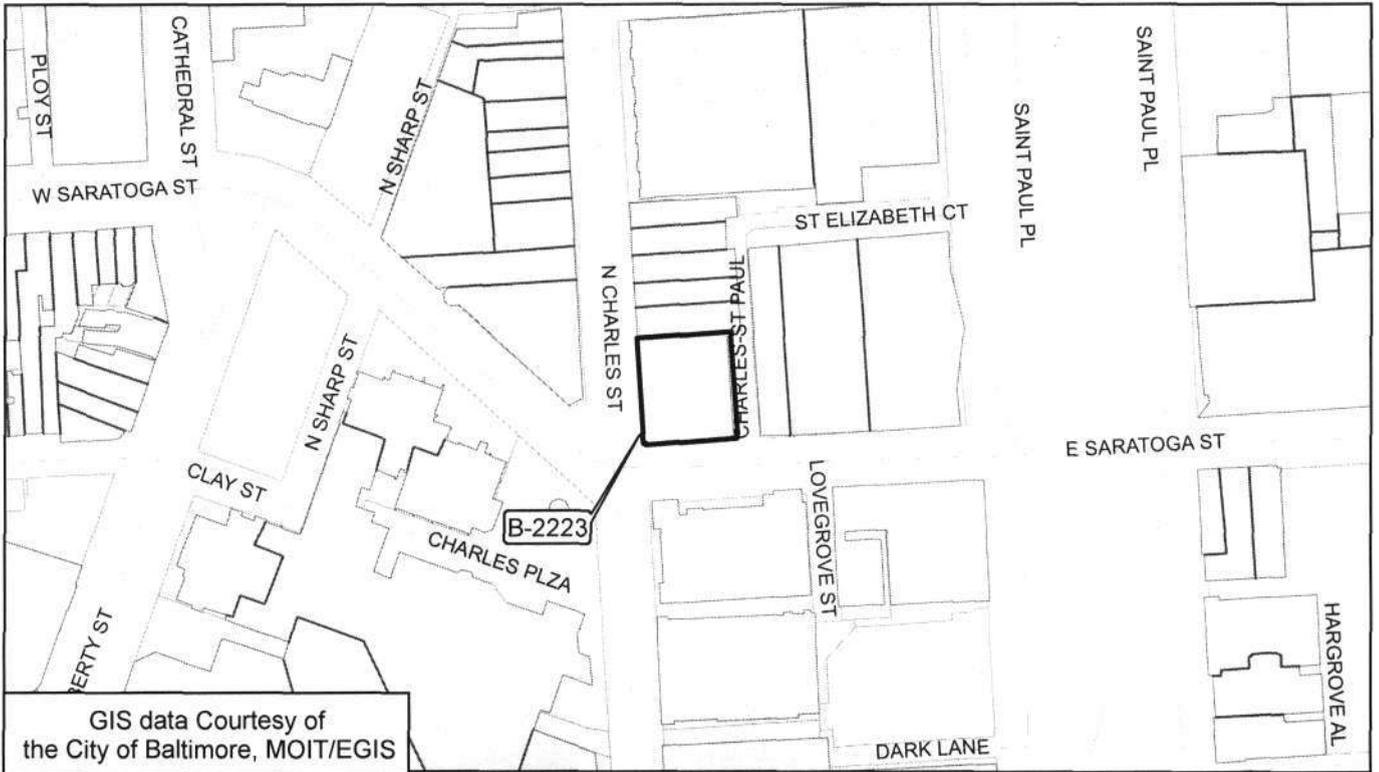
Old Baltimore Life Insurance Company Building (Commercial Credit Building)

301 N. Charles Street

Block 0603, Lot 007

Baltimore City

Baltimore East Quad.





B-2223