

B-4477

DRUGSTORE, 2500 FRANCIS STREET

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

This is an Italianate corner drugstore. The door is placed across the corner angle; the roof extends in front of it in the form of a projecting bracketed cornice. There is decorative jigsaw work. The cornice is supported by a cast-iron column. Store is enclosed behind a grate.

**D INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES FORM  
ANDTOWN-WINCHESTER SURVEY**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Drugstore

other names/site number vacant/ B-4477

**2. Location**

street & number 2500 Francis St. not for publication \_\_\_

city or town Baltimore vicinity N/A  
state Maryland code MD county Baltimore City code 510  
zip code 21217

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification** N/A

**4. National Park Service Certification** N/A

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
1	_____ Total

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
(2500 Francis St.)  
(Baltimore City, MD)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: specialty store

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: VACANT/NOT IN USE Sub:

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate  
Queen Anne

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK  
roof  
walls BRICK  
other WOOD, CAST IRON, STONE: granite

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance See continuation sheet.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce  
Ethnic Heritage

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Period of Significance 1852-1940

Significant Dates 1852-90

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Maximillian Plitt, developer

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property  
in one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Maps

- Bromley, G.W. and Co. Atlas of the City of Baltimore, Vol. 1. Philadelphia: 1885, 1896.
- Hopkins, G.M. Map of the City of Baltimore, Maryland. 1876, 1877.
- Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps, Baltimore, Maryland, Vols. 2,3, and 7. New York: 1890, 1901, 1914, 1928.
- Simmons, Isaac. 1852 Revision of the Thomas H. Poppleton Map. Baltimore: 1852.

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Lot = 13' x 83'

SDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
(2500 Francis St.)  
(Baltimore City, MD)

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	—	—	—	3	—	—
2	—	—	—	4	—	—

— See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Block 3408, Lot 51

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are based on a city lot(s) retaining original property lines.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Jo Lampl & Kay Fanning/Architectural Historians  
organization Robinson & Associates date July 1992  
street & number 1710 Connecticut Ave., NW telephone (202) 234-2333  
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20009

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Marie Andrews  
street&number 2733 Fairmount telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Baltimore state MD zip code 21223

NPS Form 10-900-a  
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 5 & 6 Page 1

2500 Francis Street  
name of property  
Baltimore City, Maryland  
county and State

HISTORIC CONTEXT

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

**Geographic Organization:** Piedmont

**Chronological/Developmental Period(s):** Industrial/Urban Dominance  
**Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):** Architecture, Landscape  
Architecture, and Community Planning; Economic

**Resource Type:**

**Category:** building(s)

**Historic Environment:** urban

**Historic Function(s) and Use(s):** commerce

**Known Design Source:** none

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

2500 Francis St.  
**name of property**  
Baltimore City, Maryland  
**county and State**DESCRIPTION

This corner drugstore entrance says much about the character of commercial nodes within densely built rowhouse neighborhoods. As epitomized in this building, the storefront and its entrance are virtually one and the same. While the exact original fenestration along Francis Street is unclear, it appears as though advertisement of the commercial nature of the structure was done more through entrance articulation than anything else.

The door is placed across the corner angle; the roof extends in front, its pierced and bracketed cornice supported by a cast-iron column at the corner. The building itself also is used as a dwelling, and is constructed of brick.

The two-leaf door originally had four window panels, and screen doors in front. To the left of the door is a sidelight, parallel to the wall plane. Both door and sidelight have transoms; though these are now filled in, their Queen Anne sash is still visible. A similar sash treatment, framed by small colonettes, is apparent at the transom to the right of the door.

The slim, attenuated, cast-iron column is fluted and has a fanciful capital of leaves and scrolls. It rests directly on the stone entrance step.

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

2500 Francis St.  
name of property  
Baltimore City, Maryland  
county and State

SIGNIFICANCE

This corner store was built with butcher's money, like so many of the blocks in the survey area. The developer of the lower portion of the southwest side of Frances Street was Maximillian Plitt, a butcher whose business was listed at 2547 Pennsylvania Avenue. Max Plitt and his wife Sophia executed both ground leases and deeds to occupants of the 2500 block of Francis Street.

At least one set of residents, Caroline and John Christopher, received a mortgage from the Baltimore Sheep Butchers Loan Association #1, illustrating that the butchers, once providing the housing, had also provided a means for people to purchase their homes. (Liber J.B. 1303, Folio 308.)

On October 14, 1892, Max and Sophia Plitt executed a lease with Frederick L. Kramer for the plot of land on the west side of Francis Street, 13 feet north of Retreat Street. This distance matches that of 2500 Francis Street. (Liber J.B. 1415, Folio 115.) According to the Sanborn Map of 1890, a three-story building (with awning) was already standing on the site when Kramer executed the lease for the ground rent.

Four years later, on October 4, 1902, Max Plitt executed a deed for the property to Frederick Kramer. (Liber R.O. 1980, Folio 193.) This instrument presumably enabled Kramer to purchase the building on the land he had leased. The 1901 Sanborn Map shows that the building is operating as a drugstore at that time.

Frederick L. Kramer is listed in the 1902 City Directory as a druggist at 2500 Frances Street. At this time, druggists were just that, and offered little more than drugs at their commercial establishments. Beginning in the latter half of the decade, however, People's Drugstore in Washington, D.C. emerged as one of the first drugstores to offer more than medicinal goods,

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National Park Service

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Section 8      Page 2

2500 Francis St.  
**name of property**  
Baltimore City, Maryland  
**county and State**

offering cosmetics tobacco, clocks, books, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Corner stores were an integral component of the speculative rowhouse neighborhood. Mid-length blocks typically featured at least one store, and long blocks, a store at each end. In two-story rowhouse developments, the corner store unit was often three stories, to allow for a first floor devoted to commercial use. Stock mill and then metal work provided the simple frame front with cornice, or cast-iron system to establish the commercial nature of this otherwise residential building. Drugstores were often located at corners.

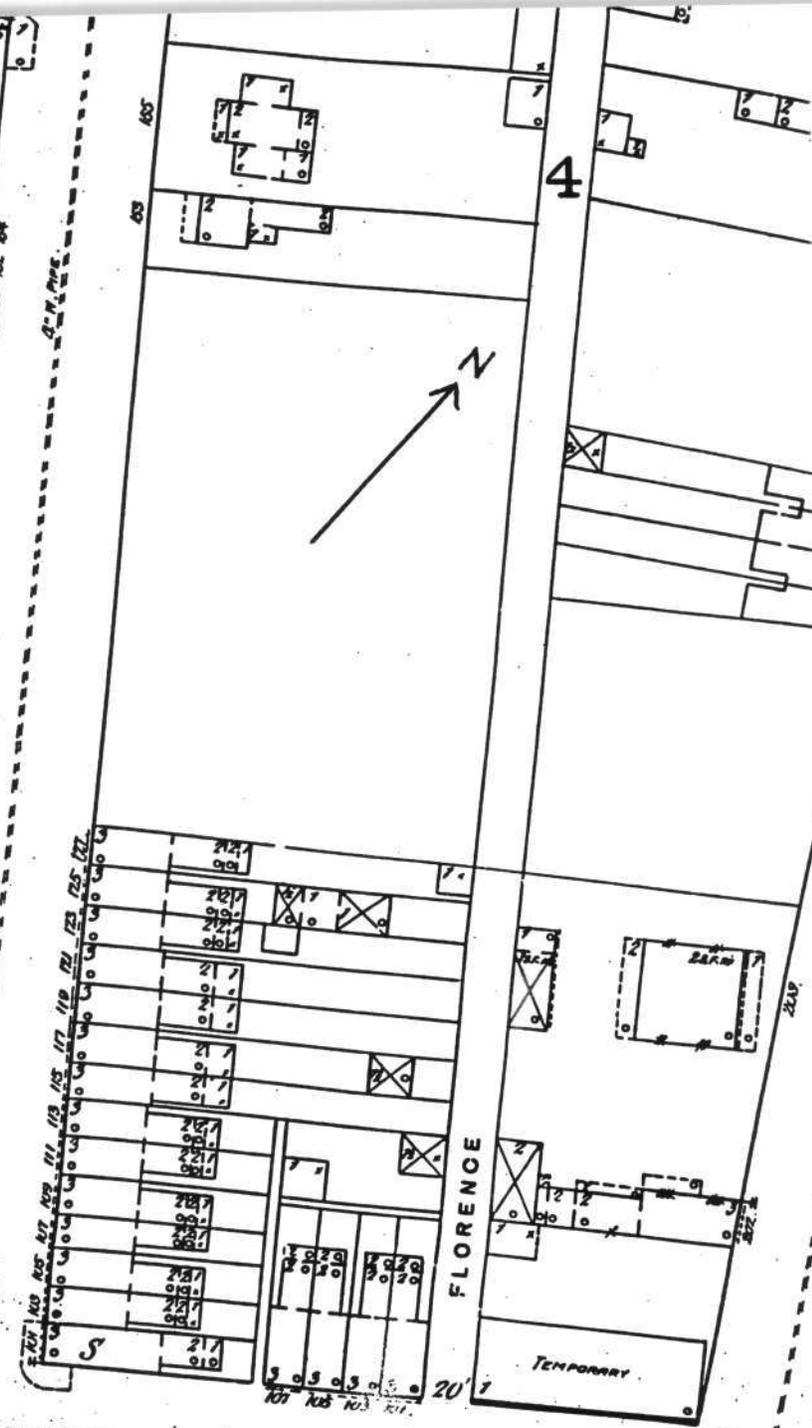
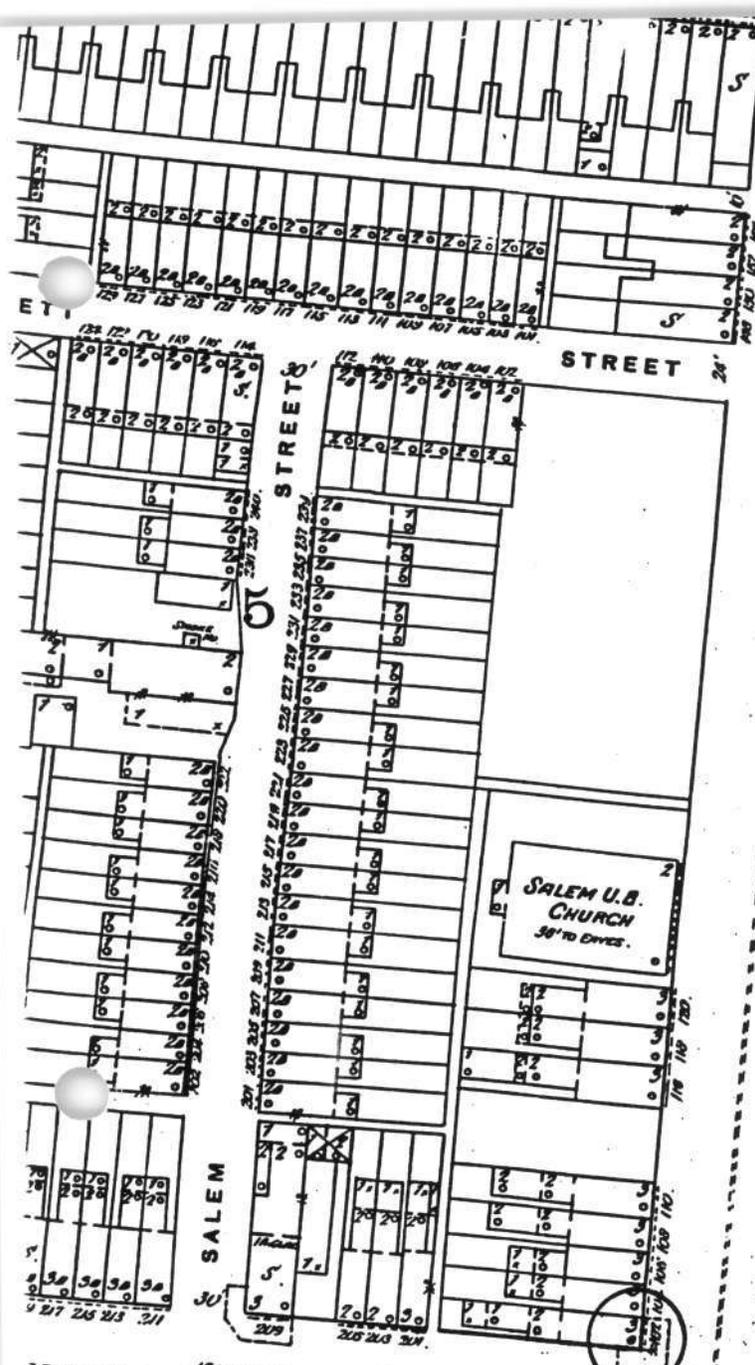
Goods were stored in cellars. Above the store itself were residences (of the proprietor or boarders). A canvas or tin awning out onto the sidewalk allowed for expandable commercial space during good weather.

By 1930, this address was still functioning as a drugstore under a different ownership. Its listing in the 1930 City Directory appears as Nelson G. Diener drugs. Two other residents lived above the store, a George J. Lessner, and Leon Euhler. The corner was a nucleus for goods: 2501 was occupied by J.W. Crook Stores Co. (grocers) and 2502 by Albert J. Reinsch, a barber.

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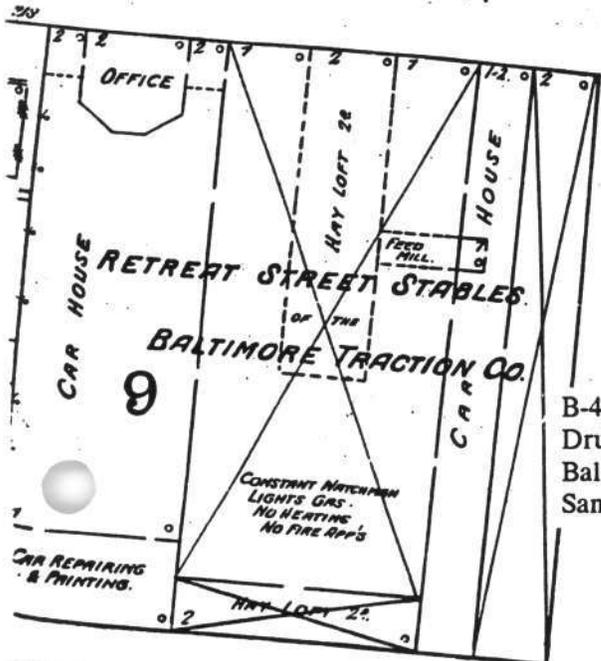
<sup>1</sup> Traceries for the D.C. Preservation League, The DC Warehouse Survey Phase II, Final Report, June 1992.



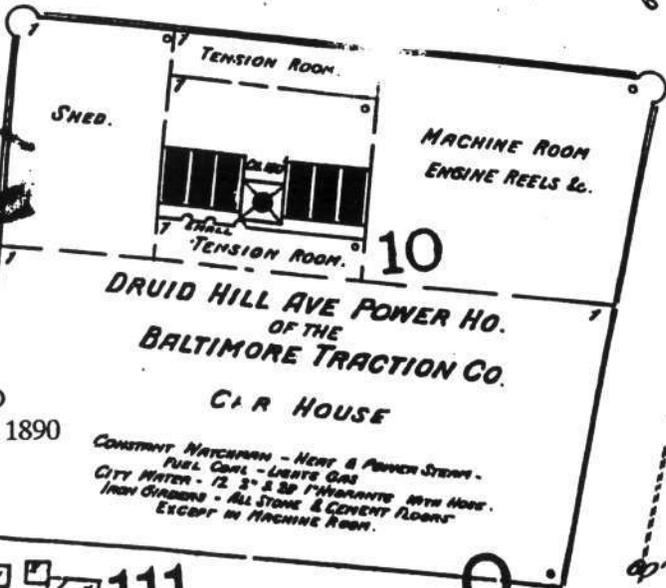


15" W PIPE  
RETREAT

STREET



61'  
FRANCIS

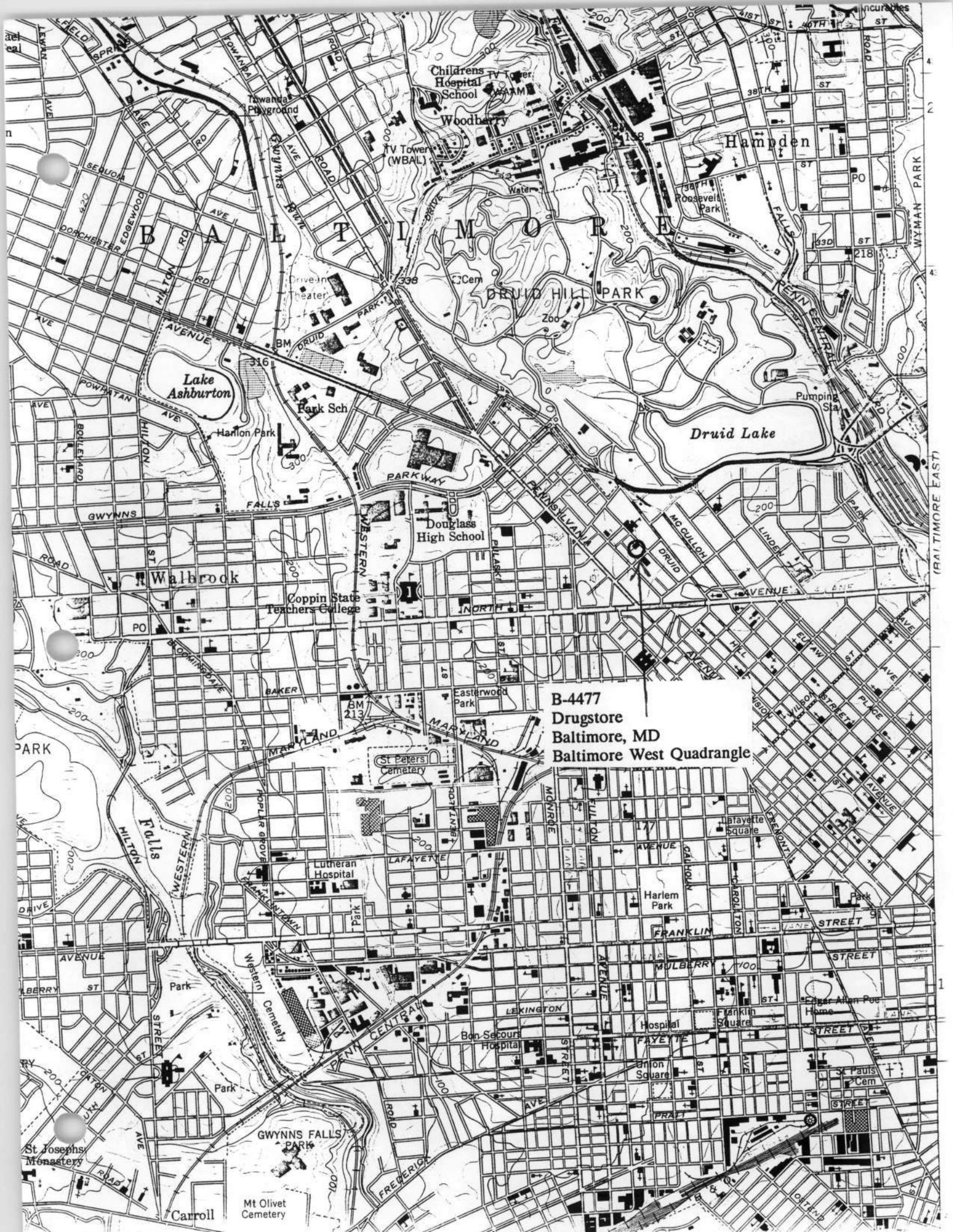


DRUID HILL

B-4477  
Drugstore  
Baltimore, MD  
Sanborn Map, 1890

CONSTANT WATCHMAN - HEAT & POWER STEAM -  
FUEL COAL - LIGHTS GAS  
CITY WATER - 12 3/4" & 8" PIPES WITH HOSE  
IRON CURBING - ALL STONE & CONCRETE FLOORS  
EXCEPT IN MACHINE ROOM.

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B-477  
Drugstore  
Baltimore, MD  
Baltimore West Quadrangle

St Josephs  
Monastery

Carroll

Mt Olivet  
Cemetery

BALTIMORE EAST



SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER / PENN-NORTH

B-4477

BALTIMORE, MD

ELIZABETH SO LAMPL

MARCH 1992

CITY OF BALTIMORE, COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL AND  
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

HISTORIC: DRUGSTORE

CURRENT: VACANT

2500 FRANCES STREET  
VIEW FACING NORTHWEST

ROLL 7/NEG 4

1 of 2



Sandtown-Winchester/Penn-North

#B-4477

Baltimore, MD

Leonard Jackson

July 1992

City of Baltimore, Commission for Historical  
and Architectural Preservation

Historic: Drugstore

Current: Vacant

2500 Frances Street

EAST EQUATION

2 & 2

Roll 9/neg 21