NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

B-1276

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name BUILDING AT 423 WEST BALTIMORE STREET

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 423 West Baltimore Street N/A ☐ not for publication

city, town Baltimore N/A ☐ vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Independent City code 510 zip code 21201

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
[X] private	[X] building(s)	1	0 buildings
☐ public-local	☐ district		sites
☐ public-State	☐ site		structures
☐ public-Federal	☐ structure		objects
	☐ object		
		1	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Cast Iron Architecture of Baltimore, MD 1850-1904

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER Date 12/20/94

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

B-1276

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse	COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/manufacturing facility	COMMERCE/TRADE/business

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Iron
Brick
roof Asphalt
other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The building at 423 West Baltimore Street is a five-story loft structure located on the south side of West Baltimore Street between Eutaw and Paca Streets in downtown Baltimore city, Maryland, in the neighborhood which was a center of Baltimore's "needle trades" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The building achieved its present configuration in 1893, as the result of the extensive alteration of a three-story brick warehouse which existed on the site. Each of the four upper stories is defined by a group of five tall 1/1 sash windows above a narrow spandrel, framed by brick piers. The fourth and fifth stories are distinguished from the lower floors by increased height, reflecting the transition between the previous structure and the new (1893) construction. Rectangular transoms are located above the windows on these levels. The building is capped with an elaborate sheet-metal cornice, central dome element, and finials. It retains a high degree of architectural integrity; the storefront retains its important cast-iron elements, and the upper floors are essentially unchanged.

[X] See continuation sheet no. 1 for General Description

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:[1]

The original configuration of the storefront appears to have comprised a central entrance, with a pair of display windows to its left and a single display window to the right; at the west corner of the storefront, a secondary entrance provided access to a stair leading to the upper floors. The windows were framed with fluted piers, and the space below the sills was treated with fielded panels. The corners of the storefront were defined by bold fluted pilasters supporting decorative consoles spanned by a molded cornice. Despite recent alterations, the storefront has retained integrity in its major cast iron framing elements. The panels below the display window sills and four of the five fluted piers framing the windows appear to be unchanged [the pier located to the left of the secondary entrance is a wooden reproduction]. The display windows have been replaced, reducing the glazed area by approximately 40%, and the opening has been infilled with grooved plywood. The main commercial entrance probably originally consisted of double-leaf glazed wooden doors surmounted by a transom; this has been replaced with a modern door framed with a stock Classical surround, and a backlighted plastic sign occupies the transom area. At the secondary entrance, a modern door has been installed, and the transom area infilled with grooved plywood. The storefront cornice appears to be sheet metal, rather than cast iron.

The upper stories are five bays wide, defined by clusters of five double hung windows on each of the four upper levels, between common-bond brick piers. Narrow spandrels mark the floor levels. The grouping of the windows and the expression of the floor levels, structurally independent of the masonry walls, reflects the influence of the Chicago School of commercial architecture. The grid established by the window pattern is created with the muntins and spandrels rather than load-bearing masonry, as would be typical of earlier construction methods.

The five-story masonry structure is unusual in the ascending

---

[1]Incorporates material prepared by Lisa Jensen for Baltimore Heritage, Inc.

See Continuation Sheet No. 2

height of its floors. The fourth and fifth stories have the greatest ceiling heights in the building; more typically, the ceiling height would decrease at successively higher levels. [This effect results from the fact that the two upper stories were added to an existing three-story building; the floor levels of the existing structure were not altered.] The corners of the facade are defined by common-bond brick piers extending from above the storefront to the building cornice, punctuated between the third and fourth floors with elements of overscaled composite molding. The spandrels below the third and fourth floors are plain, but the one below the fifth floor is embellished with small rosettes spaced at even intervals. These rosettes are echoed in larger scale in the frieze of the main cornice. The crisply-detailed metal cornice comprises elements of the Classical Revival style of the turn of the twentieth century, exaggerated in typical fashion. The large consoles at the corners are topped with articulated finial orbs. The dentilled cornice is interrupted; the center portion lacks the crown molding and is capped with an exaggerated domed finial.

8. Statement of Significance

B1276

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
ARCHITECTURE	1893	1893

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Ginter, Louis J., architect
Jones, Thomas L., builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

THEME:

Cast Iron Architecture in Baltimore, Maryland, 1850-1904.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The building at 423 West Baltimore Street is significant as representing a Storefront Alterations type building. The present appearance is the result of alterations made in 1893.

☒ See continuation sheet no. 3 for Historic Context and Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan data.

9. Major Bibliographical References

B-1276

[X] See continuation sheet no. 8

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- [ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- [ ] previously listed in the National Register
- [ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
- [ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- [ ] State historic preservation office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

USGS quad: Baltimore East, MD

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	360100	4349900
B			
C			
D			

[ ] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Boundaries are defined as a single city lot, specifically identified as Block 642, Lot 9, recorded among the Land Records of Baltimore City, Maryland.

[ ] See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property comprises the city lot upon which the resource stands, and represents the entire property historically associated with the resource.

[ ] See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Peter E. Kurtze, Architectural Historian

organization Baltimore Heritage, Inc. date October 4, 1990

street & number 109 Brandon Road telephone (410) 296-7538

city or town Baltimore state MD zip code 21212

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Architecture/Landscape Architecture/Community Planning

Economic (Commercial and Industrial)

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Urban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s):

COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/manufacturing facility

Known Design Source: None

See Continuation Sheet No. 4

HISTORY & SUPPORT:

The building at 423 West Baltimore Street achieved its present configuration in 1893, through the extensive alteration of a three-story brick warehouse. The 1876 tax assessment describes a three-story brick warehouse on this site; the 1879 Sanborn map documents the building's three-story height and use as a "sash door and blind factory; hand work."

From 1879 to 1881 Gable & Beacham, manufacturers of sashes, doors, and blinds and wholesale dealers in builders' materials, occupied the site; the principals in the firm were H. A. Gable (manager) and James W. Beacham, Sr., and the company maintained offices at 320 Pennsylvania Avenue. When Gable & Beacham moved out, the Southern Bottling Company moved in; the proprietor, George Fleckenstein, came to Baltimore from Rochester, New York, as the sole agent for "Rochester" brand beer produced by the Bartholomay Brewing Company. During its first year on the Baltimore and southern markets, four thousand barrels of Rochester beer were bottled; the company apparently failed to live up to its early promise, however, as it disappeared from city directories by 1883. By 1885, the firm of Abraham Mansbach & Gabriel Gump, liquor wholesalers, had located at this address.

George W. M. Crook purchased the three-story brick warehouse in 1888; five years later, the building was raised to five stories and the iron front applied. The April 1, 1893 issue of the Baltimore Sun describes this work:

> ***New Business Improvements***.--A fine two-story [*sic*] brick warehouse on Baltimore street near Paca has just been completed for George W. M. Crook. The building has an open iron front with a dome, which gives it a very showy appearance. On the first floor will be the private offices of the occupants and storage rooms. The floors above will be used as work-rooms. The building cost $9,000. Louis J. Ginter was the architect and Thomas L. Jones the builder.

The newspaper account's description of the building as a "two-story brick warehouse" apparently refers to the two additional

See Continuation Sheet No. 5

stories which, added to the existing three-story structure, resulted in the present five-story composition.

Architect Louis J. Ginter, who designed the remodeling, was active in Baltimore in the late 1880s and early 1890s; his other known works include the Reformed Presbyterian Church at Chase Street and Harford Avenue (1888), 310-312 Mulberry Street (1892), a stable at the southeast corner of Myrtle and Smith (1893), and the Monumental Distilling Company works at Canton (1893).

Like many of the other loft structures in the neighborhood, 423 West Baltimore Street is significantly associated with Baltimore's garment industry. This association began with the original tenants, J. Huchberger & Co., clothing manufacturers, who occupied the building upon its completion in 1893. Jacob and Simon Huchberger remained at this address through 1907.

The prominent umbrella manufacturer Polan, Katz & Company (Jesse N. Polan, Charles Katz, and William L. Fox), occupied the building between 1908 and 1912. Polan, Katz & Co. was founded in 1906, and grew to become one of the largest manufacturers in the umbrella industry by World War I (Kahn, p. 125). In the 1920s, Baltimore umbrella manufacturers led the nation in production; Polan, Katz & Co. branded their product "Reigning Beauty" (Kahn, p. 148), and became the largest umbrella maker in the country by the 1930s, producing three million pieces annually. By 1970, competition from Asian umbrella manufacturers began to affect domestic concerns, and Polan, Katz' output dropped to a third of its 1930s level. Relaxed import tariffs in the period exacerbated the pressure from foreign competition, and Polan, Katz briefly turned from manufacturing to importing umbrellas before the firm finally closed in 1981 (Kahn, p. 179-80).

From 1913 to 1919, the building was occupied by Silverman & Sons Co. (Harris Silverman, president; Israel Buckner, secretary [succeeded in 1914 by Aaron Silverman when the company incorporated]).

The property was purchased in 1918 by David Greenberg, wholesaler of woolens and tailors' trimmings, who located his enterprise in the building and leased additional space to other companies.

See Continuation Sheet No. 6

The building accommodated a succession of garment operations through the 1920s, including (1920-22) David Greenberg and Son (David & Harry), woolens brokers. In 1922 tenants included the Star Clothing House (Joseph & Moses Blackner), clothing manufacturers and wholesalers, and Corman & Wasserman, pants manufacturers. Maurice [Morris S.] Corman and Samuel Wasserman manufactured pants on their own for ten years before entering into a series of associations with other prominent manufacturers, including the Londontown Clothes Company; they finally developed a national reputation under the name Mayfair Slacks (Kahn, p. 139). In 1923, the building housed the Right Tailoring Company (George Weinberg and Simon Neel), clothing manufacturers and wholesalers; National Pants Manufacturing Company; Pine Shirt Company (Joseph Kleinman, Louis Polikoff); David Greenberg & Son, whose business was now listed as tailor's trimmings; (1924/5) L. (Louis) Silverman & Company [along with Greenberg & Son]; (1926) Doline-Adler & Company (Samuel and Leon M. Doline, Julius C. Adler); Federal Clothing Manufacturing Company (Ben Rothkin); Superior Clothing Company, a retail store operated by Harry and William Millman; John Shumsky & Co., coat manufacturers (John and Michael Shumsky, Stanley Caluska, Joseph Mockevic); (1927) D. Engel & Co., clothing manufacturers [Doline-Adler and Shumsky continued]; (1928) Hoffman & Sachs Tailoring Company, clothing wholesalers; (1929) U.S. Hoffman Machinery Corporation, suppliers of tailoring machinery (first floor); Doline-Adler Company, clothing manufacturers (second floor); David Greenberg & Son, tailors' trimmings, and the Builders' Specialty & Cabinet Company (third floor); Hoffman & Sachs Tailoring Company (fourth floor); and John Shumsky & Company, clothing manufacturers (fifth floor).

In the 1930s, the building came increasingly to house companies which were not involved in garment-related industries. By 1937, manufacturers of a variety of household equipment had joined the Builders' Specialty & Cabinet Company on the third floor: these included Victors Electric Products, producers of electric ventilators; Estate Stove Company; Hoosier Manufacturing, makers of kitchen cabinets; and Fries & Son, steel construction and engineering company, whose product was medicine cabinets. The fourth floor was taken over by International Sales Company, distributors of musical instruments. The building continued to accommodate two clothing manufacturers: Doline-Adler had been

See Continuation Sheet No. 7

replaced on the second floor by the Value Tailoring Company (Joseph Blankman, Morris Fisher & Charles Sher), and John Shumsky & Co. remained in the building but moved out by 1940.

In 1942, the building was purchased by Philip Needle. It continued to house clothing firms, often in combination with other industries, well into the 1960s. It currently houses a small delicatessen/restaurant; the upper floors appear to be largely vacant.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Baltimore City Directories, 1870s-1940s

Industries of Maryland: A Descriptive Review of the Manufacturing and Mercantile Industries of the City of Baltimore. (Baltimore: Historical Publishing Co., 1882), p. 338.

Kahn, Philip, Jr. A Stitch in Time: The Four Seasons of Baltimore's Needle Trades (Baltimore: The Maryland Historical Society, 1989).

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, Maryland Historical Trust, Crownsville, Maryland.