

B-3709

United States Department of the Interior  
 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service  
**National Register of Historic Places  
 Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered 1/7

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
 Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Continental Trust Company Building

and or common Continental Trust Company Building

**2. Location**

street & number 1 South Calvert Street N/A not for publication

city, town Baltimore N/A vicinity of congressional district Third

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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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, c/o Edward B. Vinson

street & number 7000 Security Boulevard, Suite 316

city, town Baltimore 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

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

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

date 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

# 7. Description

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Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="radio"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 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 Continental Trust Company is a 16-story skyscraper of early modern construction, with steel structural members clad with terra-cotta fireproofing and tile-arch floors. Its form is based on the Classical column, with base, shaft and capital. The building's main facades (north and west) are three and five bays wide, respectively. They are of painted brick above the fourth floor with painted stone trim. Each bay is divided into three windows above the fourth floor with the central window in each bay slightly larger. The central window in each bay is also surmounted by a classical pediment at every second level of the shaft. At the alternate levels, a string course projects. The base of the building is of granite to the fourth floor, with arched windows in each bay running full height and divided by a heavy stone spandrel at the second floor. Stonework at the first floor level is rusticated and part of the first floor is set in an areaway on the west side, which accommodates the site's gentle slope to the south. The cornice, which originally covered the sixteenth floor at the north and west, was mostly removed after the Great Fire of 1904, and was replaced by double-hung windows similar to those below. Only the portion of the cornice in the southernmost two bays on the Calvert Street side remains. It is heavily dentiled, projecting several feet and has terra cotta shields on the frieze above each window and each column.

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Continental Trust Company is a 16-story skyscraper of modern construction, with steel structural members clad with terra-cotta fireproofing and tile-arch floors. Its form is based on the Classical column, with base, shaft and capital. In styling and detail it is exceptionally Classical for Burnham's office of this period.

The building's main facades (north and west) are three and five bays wide, respectively. They are of painted brick above the fourth floor with painted stone trim. Each bay is divided into three windows above the fourth floor with the central window in each bay slightly larger. The central window in each bay is also surmounted by a classical pediment at every second level of the shaft. At the alternate levels, a string course projects. The base of the building is of granite to the fourth floor, with arched windows in each bay running full height and divided by a heavy stone spandrel at the second floor. The Baltimore Street (north) entrance is in the central bay, surmounted by a large bronze eagle. Smaller eagles sit atop the cast-iron spandrels of the arched bays at the third floor level. The Calvert Street (west) entrance passes under a rounded pediment bearing a shield with the letters "CB". Stonework at the first floor level is rusticated and part of the first floor is set in an areaway on the west side, which accommodates the site's gently slope to the south.

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION (Continued)

The cornice, which originally covered the sixteenth floor at the north and west, was mostly removed after the Great Fire of 1904, and was replaced by double-hung windows similar to those below. Only the portion of the cornice in the southernmost two bays on the Calvert Street side remains. It is heavily dentiled, projecting several feet and has terra cotta shields on the frieze above each window and each column.

Of the minor facades of the building, all of which are brick, both the south facade adjoining Calvert Street and the east facade adjoining Baltimore Street are painted a buff color, like the main facade.

The other facades, most of which face an interior court, are of a light brown brick. There is a single projecting "Chicago bay" window to the east. The interior court once allowed light and air to the original bank lobby below. This lobby on the second floor, once had a mezzanine at the third level. The heavy steel vault in the lobby was removed at the time of the building's scale in 1933, and the third level was filled in completely in 1958. At that same time, the upper flight of stairs was added in the Baltimore Street lobby to service the third floor and a mechanical room was added on the fourth level roof above the bank lobby.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Baltimore City Land Records, Courthouse, Baltimore, MD

Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation files, City Hall,  
Baltimore, MD

~~Mooney, E. Financial Interest of Baltimore. Baltimore N.P. 1912, pp 46-48/~~

~~Dorsey, John & James D. Dilts, A Guide to Baltimore Architecture.  
Cambridge, MD.: Tidewater Publishers, 1973, p. 68.~~

# 8. Significance

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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 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 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 1900, 1901; 1904 Builder/Architect D. H. Burnham & Co.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Applicable Criterion: A

### SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The significance of the Continental Trust Company Building derives primarily from the history of the institution and the building. The firm, the Continental Trust Company, chartered in 1898, was instrumental in merging several Baltimore light and gas companies into one city-wide system. Through this involvement, the Continental Trust played an important role in the development of Baltimore in the early years of the twentieth century as a financial, commercial, and urban center on the east coast. Additional significance is achieved from the building's history. Constructed in 1900-1901 to designs prepared by D. H. Burnham and Company of Chicago, the building is a survivor of the 1904 fire that destroyed 100+ acres in the present financial district. Rehabilitated after the fire, Continental Trust Company Building is characteristic of the skyscraper type of structure being erected in this section of Baltimore at the turn of the century and extensively built following the 1904 fire.

### HISTORY AND SUPPORT

The Continental Trust Company Building was constructed in 1900-1901 to designs prepared by D. H. Burnham and Company of Chicago. The design of the building was shown in a 1900 issue of The Brickbuilder. Charles McCall of Philadelphia was the General Contractor hiring Bartlett, Heyward and Company to furnish and install the steel work and the Carnegie Steel Company of Pittsburg to produce the Main Vault of "Harveyized" steel. The total cost at that time was \$700,000. Until the time of the great Baltimore Fire in February 1904, the Continental Trust Company building was the tallest in the city (two hundred nine (209) feet). Following the fire, though, the interior was destroyed; Burnham came to Baltimore and declared that the building was still structurally sound. The Continental Trust Company took bids for reconstruction on July 6, 1904 from three major firms, including Murphy Construction Company, Tidewater Building Company and the Thompson-Starrett Company. Thompson-Starrett Company won the award at the cost of \$500,000.

The Continental Trust Company was chartered by the Maryland Legislature in 1898 and began business the following year. Three key people in organizing the firm were S. Davies Warfield, Alexander Brown and William Marbury, all names prominent in the annals of Baltimore commercial history of the late nineteenth century (Mooney). The firm played important roles in the merger of electric light and gas companies, street railways, and the cotton duck industry

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (Continued)

in Baltimore. On 28 July 1930, Continental Trust Company, the Drovers and Mechanics Bank, and the National Trust Company merged with the Maryland Trust Company. The building at Calvert and Baltimore Street was sold to the Mercantile Trust and Deposit Company in 1933.

In February 1904, a 100+ acre section of Baltimore bounded by Liberty Street on the west, Fayette Street on the north, West Falls Avenue on the east, and the harbor on the south was destroyed by fire. The present-day financial district, which includes the Continental Trust Company Building, is part of this burnt area. The section which developed as the financial district consisted of eighteenth and nineteenth century structures ranging from houses to commercial buildings. By the close of the nineteenth century, the area developed commercially with many of the earlier structures remodeled for new uses and new multi-storied bank and office buildings erected but the area did still retain some of the character of the nineteenth century. With the fire all but about eight buildings in the burnt district remained standing although generally extensively damaged.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

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SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #1

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Baltimore East, Maryland

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	8
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3	6	0	9	5	0
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4	3	4	9	9	5	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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## Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundaries are delineated on the enclosed map and constitute 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 William Meyers

organization Meyers and D'Aleo, Inc. date November 1981

street & number 108 Water Street telephone (301) 752-7848

city or town Baltimore state Maryland 21202

# 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 [Signature] 12-22-82

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date

certification was given by [Signature] that this property is included in the National Register

date

