

WI-259
Vernon Powell Building
Salisbury
Private

c. 1936-37

Prominent among the twentieth century commercial blocks on Salisbury's West Main Street, now the Downtown Plaza, is the Vernon Powell building. Designed in the Renaissance Revival style, the two-and-a-half story brick and stone commercial building is distinctive for its large window openings framed by stone surrounds and featuring turned baluster railings. The top of the West Main Street elevation is noteworthy as well with its three segmental arched dormers enhanced by stone surrounds with scrolled knees. The dormers pierce a slate roof terminated on each side with parapets. The slate roof disguises the flat roof that covers the balance of the commercial block, which expands to the back in an ell shape.

The exact date of construction for the Vernon Powell building has not been determined, but it was erected shortly after 1936 when the property was acquired by the Montgomery Ward Co., Incorporated, for a department store. Following the 1886 fire and the reconstruction of Main Street, this lot was occupied by a two-story, tee-shaped frame dwelling that doubled as a dentist's office.

MARYLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN INFORMATION

RESOURCE NAME: Vernon Powell Building

MHT INVENTORY NUMBER: WI-259

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA

1. Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture

2. Geographic Orientation: Eastern Shore

3. Chronological/Development Period(s): Modern Period
1930-

4. Resource Type(s): Commercial Block

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. WI-259

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Montgomery Ward Building

and/or common Vernon Powell Building

2. Location

street & number 218-220 West Main Street not for publication

city, town Salisbury vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Wicomico

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| <input 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 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 (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Joseph P. Wright, Jr. et al.

street & number % Vernon Powell telephone no.:

city, town Salisbury state and zip code Maryland 21801

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wicomico County Clerk of Court Map 107, P. 1060
liber 1103

street & number Wicomico County Courthouse folio 385

city, town Salisbury state MD 21801

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

type federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. WI-259

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site | |
| <input checked="" 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 Vernon Powell building is located at 218-220 West Main Street in the downtown business district of Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland. The two-and-a-half story, three-bay, common bond brick storefront that expands at its south end to a four-story, brick commercial block roughly five bays by five bays. The building faces north and it is covered by a flat roof distinguished in front by a single-sloped slate roof.

Built around 1936-37, the two-and-a-half story, three-bay storefront was designed in the Renaissance Revival style. The first floor facade is dominated by large glass display windows and a recessed entrance sheltered by a seamed metal roof. The second floor is marked by three large-sized twelve-over-sixteen sash windows framed by limestone surrounds featuring keystone blocks. Stretching across the bottom of each window is a large turned baluster railing executed in stone.

The top of the wall is finished with a large modillion block cornice executed in stone as well. The roof slope, covered in slate, is pierced by three segmental arched dormers covered on each side with lead sheets. Framing the arched sash windows are stone surrounds with scrolled knees.

The sides of the building are finished with parapet gables capped with stone. The west side of the building, which is not completely obscured by an adjacent commercial block, is laid in five-course common bond.

The south end of the building expands into a large common bond brick commercial block approximately five bays across by five bays deep. Four stories in height, the rear portion is pierced by twelve-pane metal windows set on concrete sills. The top of the wall is finished with a concrete cap.

The interior of the first floor commercial space has been reworked over the years with little remaining of the 1930s interior finishes. The second and third floors of the front portion, as well as the upper floors of the rear section were not seen.

8. Significance

Survey No. WI-259

| 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"/> 500-1599 | <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/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 _____ **Builder/Architect** _____

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.

Prominent among the twentieth century commercial blocks on Salisbury's West Main Street, now the Downtown Plaza, is the Vernon Powell building. Designed in the Renaissance Revival style, the two-and-a-half story brick and stone commercial building is distinctive for its large window openings framed by stone surrounds and featuring turned baluster railings. The top of the West Main Street elevation is noteworthy as well with its three segmental arched dormers enhanced by stone surrounds with scrolled knees. The dormers pierce a slate roof terminated on each side with parapets. The slate roof disguises the flat roof that covers the balance of the commercial block, which expands to the back in an ell shape.

The exact date of construction for the Vernon Powell building has not been determined, but it was erected shortly after 1936 when the property was acquired by the Montgomery Ward Co., Incorporated, for a department store.(1) Following the 1886 fire and the reconstruction of Main Street, this lot was occupied by a two-story, tee-shaped frame dwelling that doubled as a dentist's office.(2)

Due to the intact nature of this building, it is eligible for listing in *Category A*, which identifies property that must be preserved on account of their high architectural or historical merit. The Vernon Powell building adds significantly to the downtown historic district.

1 Wicomico County Land Record, IDT 199/91, August 31, 1936, Wicomico County Courthouse.

2 Sanborn Insurance Map, Salisbury, 1888, Maryland State Archives.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. WI-259

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

| | | | | | | | | | |
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| Zone | Easting | | | Northing | | | | | |

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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 Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian

organization Private Consultant date 4/5/96

street & number P. O. Box 5 telephone 410-651-1094

city or town Westover state Maryland 21871

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

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
514-7/00

WI-259
Vernon Powell Building
218-220 West Main Street
Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland
Chain of title

1103/385 Adelene P. Wright
 Shirley P. Kirby, Personal Representatives of the Estate
 of Vernon H. Powell

to

5/1/1987 Joseph Phillips Wright
 Barbara Ellen Kirby

AS 860/505 Vernon H. Powell
 Emma A. Powell

to

8/11/1976 Vernon H. Powell

JWTS 780/117 Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company

to

12/29/1972 Vernon H. Powell
 Emma A. Powell

Plat recorded IDT 201/320, 12/17/1937

JWTS 752/409 Maryland National Bank

to

1/26/1972 Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company
 the said Baltimore National Bank through a merger with
 County Trust Company of Maryland became Maryland
 National Bank

WI-259
Vernon Powell Building
218-220 West Main Street
Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland
Chain of title continued

JWTS 318/71

Ramond P. Mecherle
Mildred M. Mecherle, Bloomington, Illinois

to

5/2/1950

Baltimore National Bank, Trustee

IDT 199/91

Samuel S. Feldman
Sara W. Feldman
William Feldman
Esther S. Feldman

to

8/31/1936

Montgomery Ward Co., Inc.

Plat-property of Samuel S. and William Feldman,
surveyed June 29, 1936, by surveyor Roy E. Moore
Plat shows outline of different buildings on lot

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

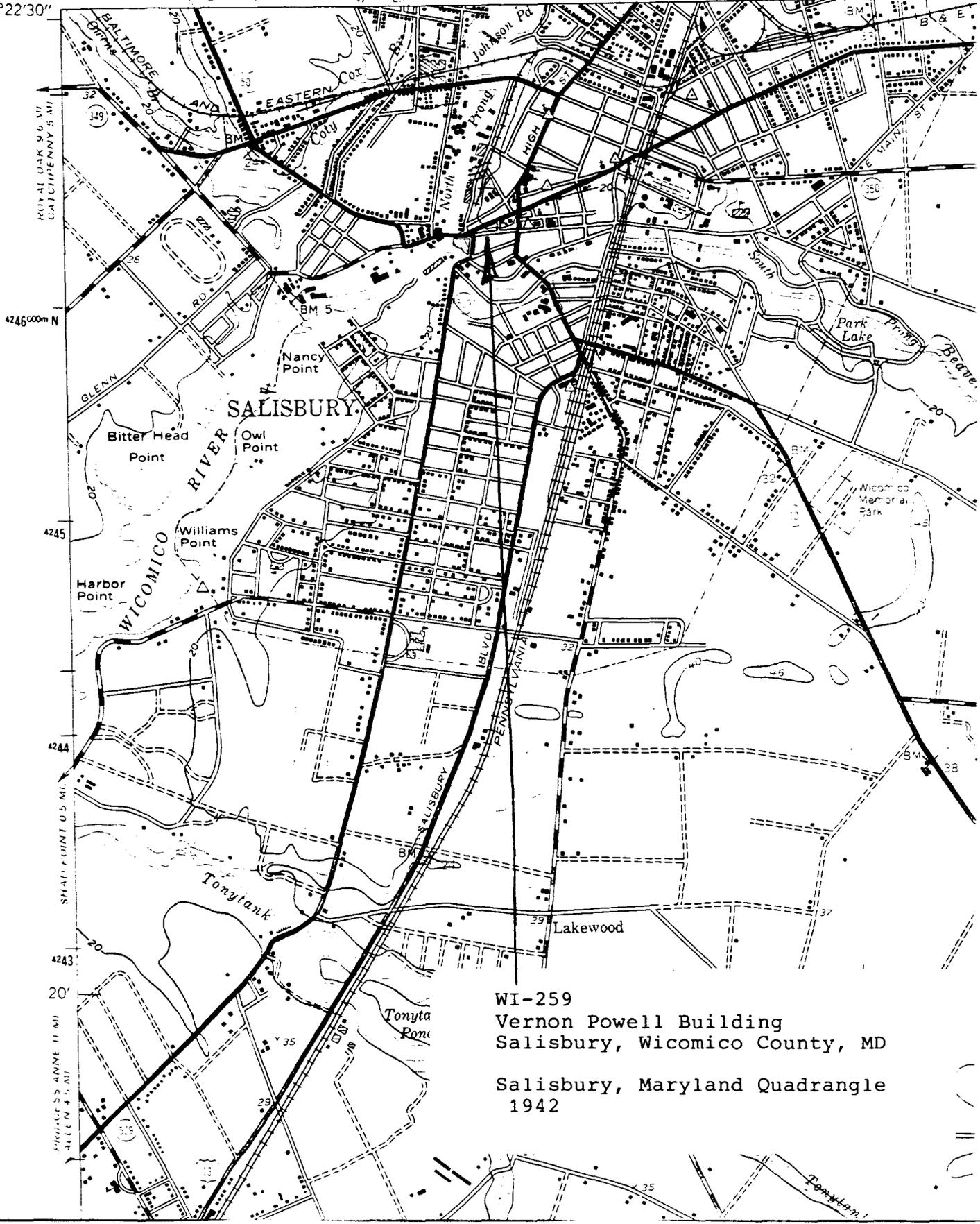
5860 LNW
(HEBRON)

75°37'30"
38°22'30"

CAMBRIDGE 31 MI
VIENNA 13 MI
47000m E

LAUREL 13 MI
DELMAR 13 MI

35'



ROYAL OAK 9.6 MI
CATIPENNY 5 MI

4246000m N

4245

4244

4243

20'

PROGRESS ANNE 11 MI
ALLEN 4.5 MI

WI-259
Vernon Powell Building
Salisbury, Wicomico County, MD

Salisbury, Maryland Quadrangle
1942



WI-259

Western River Swallow

5th May, Western River, WA

Source: [unclear]

3/66, [unclear]

NEG, [unclear]



THE POWELL BUILDING

Vernon Powell / the Athlete

