

American Mosaic Company Building
(Convention Center Site, District of Columbia)
912 I Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

HABS No. DC-387

HABS,
DC,
WASH,
254-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

THE AMERICAN MOSAIC COMPANY BUILDING
(Convention Center Site District of Columbia)

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Location: 912 I Street, N. W. Washington, O. C.

Present Owner: District of Columbia.

Present Occupant and Use: Demolished 1979, for D. C. Convention Center Site.

Significance: This building is an exceptionally imposing and refined example of an 1860's Washington rowhouse. The building was remodded, and given a number of ornaments by the long term occupant, the American Mosaic Company.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1864-65 (per D.C. Tax Records).
2. Architect: Original architect may have been Job Angus, who was the original owner, and (according to City Directories) a carpenter and builder.

Alteration architect: Appleton P. Clark, Washington, D. C.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Job W. Angus, the original owner, sold this building to Thomas Lewis in the 1870's. After the turn of the century the American Mosaic Company acquired the structure, maintaining ownership until immediately prior to demolition.
4. Builder, contractor: 1911 remodeling, Boyle Robertson Construction Company.
5. Alterations and additions: 1911 remodeling (D. C. permit #4255, March 24, 1911) added store front and entrance, decorative mosaic work, and rear wing "warehouse".

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:
 - D. C. Building permits. National Archives, D. C.
 - D. C. Tax and Assessment Records. National Archives, D. C.
 - National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form

Prepared by: Robert S. Lange
Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey
July 1980

from information compiled by:
Margaret Orelup
National Register of Historic Places
for Determination of Eligibility
August 1979

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This red brick residence, turned commercial building, included rich mosaic ornamental features.
2. Condition of fabric: Demolished in 1979.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 26' wide, four stories tall, and three bays wide.
2. Wall construction, finish and color: This building has a plain wall surface of red brick. The first floor includes two entrances and a store window, all approached by steps. The second and third floor have three bays each, as does the fourth floor, whose central window is flanked by circular mosaic corbels featuring American Indian profiles.
3. Stoops: Both entrances are approached by a projecting stoop with iron railings.
4. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The original doorway, below the western bay, is recessed and enframed in the Italianate style; framed within a rope molding, surmounted by a bracketed cornice.

The newer door, at the eastern bay, has a wooden frame and a large glass panel.
 - b. Windows: The first floor contains a show window which is topped by three opening transoms.

The second and third floors contain three flat headed, 2/2 double hung windows each. These have brownstone lintels and sills. The fourth floor has round arched windows with keystones. These three fourth floor windows share a common sill which rests on one pair of brackets below each window.

5. Roof:

- a. Shape: Flat.
- b. Cornice: The show window has a two bracketed cornice whose architrave includes a mosaic panel. A cornice resting on heavy brackets rises above the western entrance, and one at the roofline is buttressed by a series of corbels, below which are bands of fretwork and moldings.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Decorative features and trim: Mosaic flooring and several mantels of molded wood or glazed tiles ornamented the first floor level.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: This building stood on the southside of Eye Street, facing north. It had been located in an area which included many examples of 19th century structures. Over the last few years, all the buildings in this three square block area were razed in preparation for the construction of the D. C. Convention Center.

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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the District of Columbia Government in compliance with Executive Order 11593 and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative effort in the completion of the Convention Center Project. John A. Burns, A.I.A., and Emily J. Harris were the HABS project coordinators. Photographs were taken by R. S. Scurlock in October 1979. The written data was prepared by Robert S. Lange of the HABS staff in July 1980, from material compiled by the National Register of Historic Places in October 1978 for a unilateral determination of eligibility.