

Central National Bank
Building (Now Apex Liquor Store)
Pennsylvania Avenue, C and
Seventh Streets, N.W.
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-229

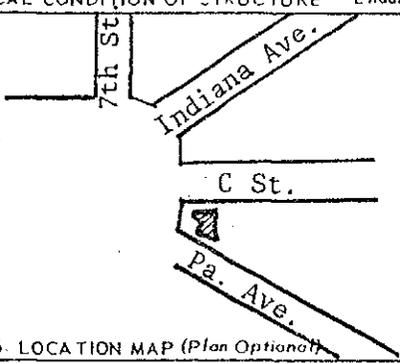
HABS
DC
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PHOTOGRAPHS

Written Historical and Descriptive Data

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
801 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

<p>1. STATE District of Columbia COUNTY TOWN Washington VICINITY STREET NO. Pa. Ave., C & 7th Sts., NW</p> <p>ORIGINAL OWNER Central National Bank ORIGINAL USE Bank & office building PRESENT OWNER PRESENT USE Ground floor is liquor store; upper stories untenanted WALL CONSTRUCTION Brownstone NO. OF STORIES Five and six</p>	<p>HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY</p> <p>2. NAME Central National Bank Building (now Apex Liquor Store) DATE OR PERIOD 1888 STYLE ARCHITECT Alfred B. Mullett (1834-1890) BUILDER</p> <p>3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE HABS, DC, WASH. 186-</p>
<p>4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC</p> <p>Standing at the western apex of a triangular block, this massive brownstone building with twin round towers capped by conical roofs is a picturesque landmark representing Pennsylvania Avenue near the end of the nineteenth century. It approximates a trapezoid in plan, being 40 feet on the "point" and about 50 feet on the two other facades.</p> <p>The western facade is six stories high, between the corner towers, rather plain except for an arcaded top story and heavy piers with carved capitals and austere entablature at the ground floor. A rock-faced stone course marks each story at the window heads, contrasting with smooth-faced ashlar.</p> <p>The southern facade, facing Pennsylvania Avenue, adjoins one tower and consists of five bays of round-arched windows in a rusticated wall. There is an entrance with double doors at the eastern end. This facade is terminated by a cornice of bold projection, constructed of wood and cast iron, whose most conspicuous elements are large brackets. Each consists of an upper enriched modillion and a lower upright console.</p> <p>The northern facade, on C Street, contains six bays of rectangular windows at the upper stories, in a rusticated wall, and a similar cornice. The first story consists of five bays, the central one being a doorway. The others contain windows, one of them containing remains of colored leaded glass, and are protected by ornamental wrought-iron grilles.</p> <p>Except for the first story, the exterior has changed very little, except for painting and deterioration.</p>	
<p>5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered Yes Interior Exterior Neglected</p>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p>6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;"> <p>7. PHOTOGRAPH</p> </div> </div>	
<p>8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages) INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.</p>	<p>9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER Harley J. McKee Professor Emeritus of Architecture Syracuse University</p> <p>DATE OF RECORD August 6, 1969</p>

Addendum to
Central National Bank Building
(Apex Liquor Store)
633 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-229

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PHOTOGRAPH

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ADDITIONAL
PHOTOGRAPHS

Addendum to
Central National Bank Building
(Apex Liquor Store, St. Marc. Hotel)
631 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-229

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

CENTRAL NATIONAL BANK BUILDING

(Apex Liquor Store, St. Marc Hotel)

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- Location: 631 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, District of Columbia. Square 460, Lot 805. The building is located at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and C Street at their intersection with 7th Street.
- Present Owner: Daniel Davidson
- Present Occupant: Apex Liquor Store
- Present Use: A liquor store occupies the basement, first and second floors of the building. The upper floors are vacant.
- Significance: The Central Natl. Bank Building has stood at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and C Street since the mid-1860's. Originally a simple trapezoidal Renaissance Revival building, it is an early example of fire resistant construction in Washington. In 1887 the Central National Bank assumed ownership of the hotel and commissioned architect Alfred S. Mullett to design an addition to the west facade. Mullett's design included the erection of two distinctive corner towers. The ST. MARC HOTEL, and the buildings surrounding it, express a common scale and image of late Nineteenth Century commercial Washington at its height.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Dates of Erection: The Central Natl. Bank dates from circa 1860. Assessment Taxes for the property in 1859 show an increase in the value of improvements from \$9,776 in the previous year to \$23,215. The property was owned by Charles Stott at the time. In 1860, the property was bought by John R. Murray and John H. Semmes. A photograph taken by the Civil War photographer, Mathew B. Brady, of the Grand Review of the Armies of the Union in May or June of 1865, shows the building in the last stages of construction. The ST. MARC HOTEL was established by John H. Semmes on the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 7th Street in 1865. (Historical and Commercial Sketches of Washington and Environs published by E.E. Barton in 1884).

On June 30, 1887, The Central National Bank commissioned the major remodeling of the ST. MARC HOTEL. The west facade and towers were constructed at this time.

2. Architect: The original architect of the building is unknown. Alfred Bult Mullett (1834-1890) was the architect of major additions to the structure in both its roles as the ST. MARC HOTEL and "The Central National Bank". His additions include the two towers which are now the hallmark of the building and a prominent Pennsylvania Avenue landmark. Mullett, a supervisory architect of the U.S. Treasury Department, was one of the major proponents of Second Empire Style architecture in the United States. His "State, War, & Navy Building" in Washington (built between 1871 and 1887) is considered one of the prominent examples of the style in the United States.

Mullett was born in Taunton, England on April 7, 1834. He emigrated to the United States with his parents and one brother in 1845. They settled in the Village of Glendale, a suburb of Cincinnati. It is believed that Mullett attended college at the Ohio Mechanical Institute of Cincinnati (the only trade school in the area) or the University of Cincinnati, but neither school has records from the period in which he would have attended. He traveled to Europe in the late 1850s. Upon his return to Cincinnati, he entered the office of the Greek Revival architect Isaiah Rogers as a draftsman and eventually became a partner in the firm Isaiah Rogers Son & Co. Rogers dissolved the office in order to move to Nashville, Tennessee. Mullett continued to practice in Cincinnati under his own name from 1860-2, completing a half dozen projects before the advent of the Civil War slowed activity in the architectural profession. On January 6, 1863 he was appointed to work as a clerk in the Bureau of Construction for an annual salary of \$1,400 under Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Isaiah Rogers.

Mullett advanced quickly at the Treasury Department. He was appointed Chief Clerk in April of 1863. In June of the same year, Rogers took an extended leave from the office of Supervisory Architect and Mullett was appointed to discharge his duties. Rogers resigned from the post in September of 1865 and Mullett was given the commission of U.S. Supervisory Architect of the U.S. Treasury in May of 1866. A great deal of the most costly public work in the country was carried out under his administration as a result of the Federal expansion that was necessary after the Civil War. During his tenure in office, Mullett designed over 32 major public buildings and supervised the construction of many more. Among them were the U.S. Mint in San Francisco, Post Offices in Chicago, New York, Boston, St. Louis, Philadelphia and Knoxville, Tennessee, and many Custom Houses. He also organized the office for the first time, retaining files, plans and deeds.

Mullett resigned his post in November of 1874 because he refused to work under Secretary Bristow. He was then appointed to a post that was created for him and supervised the construction of six major buildings that he had designed.

Edward Potter succeeded Mullett as Supervisory Architect. When Potter resigned two years later, Mullett was asked to return to his former post, but remarks he made concerning some government officials were reported in the papers at an inopportune time, making it necessary to drop his name from final consideration for the post.

Mullett reentered private practice in 1883 with J. F. Denson and his two eldest sons, T. A. Mullett and Frederick M. Mullett, who were training for the profession. The firm, A. B. Mullett & Co., was formed in January of 1889. The "Central National Bank Building" was one of the major projects of the office. Others were the Baltimore Sun Building, the W. B. Moses Store, the New National Theater and the G.A.R. Hall.

Financial problems began to take their toll on Mullett. The effect of these worries and both his own and his wife's bad health caused him to take his own life on October 20, 1890.

The firm of A. B. Mullett & Co. continued under T. A. Mullett until the younger Mullett's death in 1935. It merged with another firm at this time and all further records of the office have been lost.

3. Original and subsequent owners:

- 1859 Deed, June 25, 1859, recorded in Liber JAS 177, Folio 282. John Longworth Stettinius and Eloise Stettinius, his wife, to Charles Stott.
- 1859 Deed, July 19, 1859, recorded in Liber JAS 179, Folio 69. Charles Stott and Esther A. Stott, his wife, to John R. Murray and John H. Semmes.
- 1877 Deed, January 6, 1877, recorded in Liber 845, Folio 65. John H. Semmes and Elizabeth W. Semmes, his wife, to James L. Barbour and John A. Hamilton.
- 1887 Deed, July 1, 1887, recorded in Liber 1265, Folio 321. James L. Barbour and Annie E. Barbour, his wife, and Annie E. Murray and Robert J. Murray, her husband, to Central National Bank of Washington, Inc.
- 1907 Deed, May 8, 1907, recorded in Liber 3072, Folio 182. Central National Bank of Washington, Inc. to National Bank of Washington.
- 1908 Deed, September 22, 1908, recorded in Liber 3176, Folio 302. National Bank of Washington to Albert W. Martin.
- 1908 Deed, December 18, 1908, recorded in Liber 3198, Folio 258. Albert W. Martin to United States Realty Co., Inc.

- 1911 Deed, September 15, 1911, recorded in Liber 3444, Folio 468. United States Realty Co., Inc. to The Security Building Co., Washington, D.C., Inc.
- 1941 Trustees Deed, February 21, 1941, recorded in Liber 7582, Folio 59. American Security and Trust Co., Tr., to The National Bank of Washington.
- 1942 Deed, March 20, 1942, recorded in Liber 7734, Folio 441. The National Bank of Washington to J. & J. Investment Corporation.
- 1960 Deed, November 21, 1960, recorded in Liber 11517, Folio 190. J. & J. Investment Corporation to Daniel Davidson, et. ux. tenants by entirety.
4. Original plan and construction: A plan of the building drawn by A. B. Mullett Architect in 1884, shows that the exterior of the structure consisted of six 1' piers on the south facade, six 2'-6" piers on the north elevation, and four 3' piers on the west elevation of the building. There was glazing between the piers. On the ground floor, four columns stood in the middle of the hotel lobby. The major entry to the building was located on Pennsylvania Avenue in the fourth bay from the corner of 7th Street. A lobby, bar and office were located on the ground floor of the building with a stair to the upper levels directly across from the front door. The dining rooms for the hotel were on the second floor and sleeping apartments were on the upper floors. The rooms above the ground floor lined the perimeter of the building and were entered from a center corridor.
5. Alterations and additions: Two alterations occurred to the Central Natl. Bank Bldg. According to Barton's Historical and Commercial Sketches of Washington, H. C. Bowers, the hotel's second proprietor, thoroughly remodeled and renovated the building in 1879. In 1884, Alfred B. Mullett designed a shop window which was to project 2'-8" beyond the building line on C Street. (Permit #372, August 26, 1884, estimated cost \$25.00.) Mr. Mullett was also the architect for the Central National Bank's extensive remodeling of the building in 1887. At this time, a new west facade and flanking towers were built on the west elevation of the building. (Permit #2731½, June 30, 1887.) N. R. Grimm was the architect and W. A. Hall the contractor for the show windows which were built between the towers of the west facade in 1913. (Permit #3244, January 8, 1913, cost \$1,000.)

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The ST. MARC HOTEL was established in 1865 by John H. Semmes. It became one of the foremost hotels in Washington. Under Semmes' proprietorship, rooms at the ST. MARC rented for \$1-\$2 per night for a single room and \$2-\$3 for a double room. H. C. Bowers secured a lease from Semmes in 1879 after which he completely remodeled and refurnished the building. John F. Fitzgerald became the proprietor of the hotel in 1885 and remained with it until the building was purchased by The Central National Bank in 1887. A commercial guide to Washington published in 1887 noted the ST. MARC's "...elegant apportionments, fine cuisine, and unsurpassed location, being in close proximity to several lines of streetcars and the center of the business part of the city."

The Central National Bank was the primary tenant of the building, which is generally referred to by this name, from 1887-1907. The Central National Bank was organized as a national bank on April 11, 1878. For several years, it occupied the Bank of Washington building, 322 C Street, N.W., before purchasing the ST. MARC HOTEL building at the apex of Pennsylvania Avenue and C Street on July 1, 1887. The bank occupied the ground floor of the building and had its vaults in the basement and on the second floor. The upper floors were rented to brokers, lawyers, insurance and real estate agents, a printer, publisher, artist and notary public. The "Central National Bank", under its first president, Samuel Norment, engaged Alfred B. Mullett to give the building a unique image. The west facade and two towers were added to accomplish this end. James L. Barbour, one of the previous owners of the building, became the first vice-president of the newly formed bank.

Nearly twenty years later, The Central National Bank merged with the National Bank of Washington. The National Bank of Washington, formerly The Bank of Washington, was the first bank to be chartered in the city of Washington in 1809. The newly formed bank moved into the older bank's building and "The Central National Bank" building was retained as an investment.

After the bank's departure from the building, the lower floor corner (west) room was rented to a series of cigar stores. The space defined as 633 Pennsylvania Avenue was rented to a men's furnishing and clothiers store, Greenberg & Kuntz. Jacob Melvikov Men's Furnishings followed Greenberg & Kuntz in the space. The upper floors remained professional offices. The Apex Liquor Store began occupying the ground floor of the building in 1945. Two lawyers leased space on the second floor of the building until 1970. The Apex Liquor Store now has additional office space in one of the rooms on the second floor. The third through sixth floors of the building have remained vacant since 1950.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Central National Bank is an excellent example of a Romano-Tuscan, Renaissance styled building. Its heavy cornice and six story rusticated sandstone load-bearing walls are typical of large commercial buildings constructed during the Civil War period in Washington. The symmetrical western facade with its flanking conically roofed towers gives the building a unique image suitable to its prominent location on Pennsylvania Avenue. The building typifies the vitality of turn of the century commercial Washington.
2. Condition of fabric: The exterior bearing walls of the building and the vertical circulation shaft are structurally sound, as are the basement and first floors. All upper floors have major structural damage. Wall, ceiling and floor finishes become progressively more deteriorated as one reaches the upper floors of the building.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The building is trapezoidal in plan. Its west facade, which faces onto 7th Street, measures approximately 39'-6"; the Pennsylvania Avenue facade measures approximately 44'-11". An eastern wall runs perpendicular to Pennsylvania Avenue for 33'. It then runs and continues 23' perpendicular to C Street. The C Street elevation measures approximately 53'. Towers flanking the front facade have 7' radii taken from the former interior wall junctures. The west facade has three bays between the towers and is six stories high with another story in the conical roof of the towers. The main body of the building is five stories.
2. Foundations: Brick.
3. Walls:
 - a. West Elevation: The west facade is six stories in height. At the base of the building an aluminum and glass storefront extends between the towers. Rusticated stone piers with intricately carved stone capitals separate the recessed windows and doors of the towers. The piers are topped by a full granite entablature. Floors two through five are of a smooth-faced ashlar stone with a rock face stone string course at the window heads. The fifth and sixth stories are separated by the cymatium of the north and south facade cornice lines, which continue across the towers and the west facade as a projecting, denticulated cornice. It has a simple, smooth-face, cut stone architrave below. The sixth story of the west facade is topped by a simple cornice.

- b. South Elevation: This elevation has six bays across its upper, smooth-faced, rusticated sandstone wall. It has a bold wood and pressed metal bracketed cornice, supported by six deep consoles. The ground floor bays have been altered by the insertion of a storefront. At the extreme east end of the south elevation is a double doorway flanked by rock-faced stone pilasters with carved stone capitals. A rock-faced architrave and smooth-cut cornice form the terminus of the building base.
 - c. North Elevation: The north elevation is five stories in height and is topped by a bracketed cornice similar to that on the south elevation. The first story, which was altered by A.B. Mullett & Co., in 1887, is five bays wide with pilasters separating the bays. The upper four stories are faced with smooth-cut, rusticated sandstone and are divided into six window bays.
 - d. East Elevation: The east elevation was the brick party wall of a former neighboring building. A door opening which has a wooden lintel has been bricked in at the second story level.
4. Structural systems, framing: Masonry bearing walls (brick faced with sandstone) form the exterior of the building. The first and second floors are supported by steel beams spanned by shallow brick vaults which run north to south. This is a very early example of this fire-resistant construction technique in Washington. Steel beams support the smaller beams of the vaulted system in the basement as well as the landing of the stairwell. The upper floors are supported by load-bearing stud partitions. Cracks in the interior walls suggest that the building has developed structural problems.
 5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways: A double plywood door with a boarded transom above is centered between the stone piers of the third and fourth bays of the north elevation. The south facade has modern double glass doors with aluminum frames centered in the plastic and aluminum projecting storefront. Four large panes of clear plexi-glass over a single, blue metal panel are to the left of the inset glass doors. Two pieces of plastic top a similar metal panel to the right. The entire storefront is topped by a black and white sign dating from the mid-1930's, which reads '=APEX='. A double wood door with a rectangular transom is set between the two easternmost piers of the south facade. Set between the piers on the ground floor of the east tower is a glass door with a wooden frame. The transom of the door has been boarded. A single glass door with metal frame is centered within a modern storefront between the towers of the west facade.

b. Windows: Windows differ somewhat on each of the three primary elevations. The west facade has double-hung, single light wood sash set within rectangular openings on the second through fifth stories. These windows have continuous stone sills. The sixth story triple windows have single light, double-hung sash set within segmentally arched openings. The wall surface immediately above these windows is smooth stone rather than the rough rock-faced surface of the rest of the floor. The towers of the sixth floor have recessed blind arches between the segmentally arched windows. The north elevation has four-over-four light, double-hung windows set within rectangular openings. What was the central window of this facade, before the addition of the towers, is a four-over-four light, double-hung window with two light casement windows flanking it. The large windows of the ground story are double-hung. The upper sash of the far west bay has a leaded glass window with a pattern of arrow forms on either side of a segmental arch. Iron grates protect both glazed bays. The two left bays have been boarded up. The south facade upper windows have half-round transoms which swing in. The upper sash have six lights and are now fixed. The lower sash are made up of single light casements. Second story windows are 1'-6" taller than those above. The second through fifth floor windows of the north and south facades have wooden sash and sandstone sills. The upper story windows of the west facade have wooden sash and granite sills.

6. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The original body of the building and the parapet between the towers have a sloped, asphalt roof.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The western facade has a denticulated upper cornice of pressed metal. An elaborate pressed metal and wooden cornice is on the north and south facades. It is supported by six large wooden consoles with panels and smaller brackets between. The ground floor cornice is smooth granite with a rock-faced architrave.
- c. Dormers, towers: Two corner towers each with seven foot interior radii, frame the western facade. Each tower has an asphalt shingled conical roof which is pierced by six shallow pedimented dormers. A continuous entablature extends around the circumference of the tower roof and acts as a belt course uniting each of the dormer windows. The peak of the conical roof is topped by a cast iron spire.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

- a. Basement floor plan: Brick piers, 30" x 48", form an arcade of segmental arches which support the north and south bearing walls of the building. Smaller piers support the structural arches below the west facade and towers. These brick piers have two 10" high courses of roughly cut sandstone. The basement contains two additional significant features: the two bank vaults which are located in the north-east corner within the building's perimeter and the coal storage areas under the sidewalks of Pennsylvania Avenue, C Street and 7th Streets. Circular coal chutes, cut through the pavement of the sidewalks above, are visible in the ceiling. There are six on the north side of the building, five on the south side and three on the west side.

The bank vaults are located 2' in from the east wall of the building and the building's northern perimeter. The northernmost vault was used for records storage. It is 5' wide x 10' deep with 12" thick walls. The adjacent vault is 8' wide x 10' deep with 2' thick walls. A 12" brick wall runs directly to the south of the vaults for 30'. Another brick wall meets this one at a right angle and continues north to within 2' of the C Street facade forming a separate vaulted room. Access to this room from the first floor is provided by a marble and cast iron staircase on the west side of the space. Square cast iron piers with beaded corners flank the entry to the stairwell. It is bolted into piers and into brick walls at the north and south. One cast iron column is adjacent to the west brick wall of the vault room near its intersection with the south wall of the room. The elevator pit and the electrical service box are in a room in the southeast corner of the basement directly beneath the ground floor entry to the upper floors of the building.

- b. First floor plan: The first floor contained the open banking area of the "Central National Bank". A platform, 4' above the main door, is in the northeast corner of the space. This was once the bank director's office. It is 17' deep and runs 22' north to south. A 15" thick bearing wall perpendicular to 7th Street encloses its southern side. There are four steps at either end of this platform; one set provided access to the U-shaped customer circulation area and the other provided access directly into the tellers' area, which is no longer apparent. A customer circulation area ran along the north, south and west walls enclosing the tellers' area. The north and south arms of the path were 4' wide and the west path, 10' wide. The major entry into the bank was centered on the west facade and opened into the 10' west corridor of the first floor banking area. Marble tile flooring along the north wall remains from this period. The main banking floor is now occupied by the display shelves

of the Apex Liquor store. The southeast corner of the first floor contains vertical circulation to the upper floors of the building. It is reached internally by a door at the southeast corner of the sales floor and by an exterior entry in the east bay of the Pennsylvania Avenue facade. The stair runs up from the exterior door along the east wall. The elevator is adjacent to the stair to the west. A service shaft is directly west of the elevator shaft. A 9" thick bearing wall runs parallel to the Pennsylvania Avenue facade at a distance of 21'. It forms the support for the top landing of the stair and the rear wall of the elevator shaft.

- c. Second floor plan: There were originally three rooms on this floor serving as the dining rooms of the building. The rooms were divided into offices and a vault was installed on this floor during the Central National Bank's tenancy, and professional offices were located there from 1907 through the 1960's. Rooms line the north, south and west walls of the floor and open onto an 8' wide central corridor parallel to Pennsylvania Avenue. Access is provided by a stair at the east end of the hall. A secondary hall, parallel to 7th Street, provides access from the center hall to the bathroom in the southeast corner of the building and to the stairs up to the remaining floors.
- d. Third, fourth, fifth floor plans: The layout of the halls, stair, and bathroom of the upper floors is similar to that of the second floor while the arrangement of rooms differs. There are six rooms opening off of the center hallway: two large, round corner rooms with a single narrow room between on the west end of the hall, two rooms to the north of the hall, and one room on the south side of the hall. A 30" wide open stair, located along the north bearing wall of the center hall, leads from the fifth floor up to the sixth floor.
- e. Sixth floor plan: The basic layout is similar to the lower floors. The southern tower is currently inaccessible.

2. Stairways:

The stair from the ground floor down to the basement vaults, now blocked off at the ground floor, is enclosed on either side by cast-iron walls that were made to simulate wood paneling. The treads are marble and the risers are of cast-iron. The first to second floor stair is an open, straight run stair with marble treads and metal risers which are inset with square glass blocks that are impressed with a waffle pattern. The cylindrical brass handrail is supported by ornate 8" wide cast-iron balusters of a floral design. It has a cast-iron fluted cylindrical newel

post with a ball on top. The second to third floor stair has painted stone facing on the treads and risers. Stairs from the third through the fifth floors are 4'-6" wide and constructed of wood. An open wooden stair from the fifth to the sixth floor has a straight run with a small landing four risers below the top of the stairs. Its wooden newel post is octagonal. It has turned wooden balusters and a simple wooden handrail. All stairs appear to be structurally sound.

3. Flooring:

Most of the basement floor is concrete. White marble has been laid on the landing in front of the banking vaults. The original white marble of the banking room floor has been covered with vinyl asbestos tiles in the area now used by the Apex Liquor Store. Some marble is visible, however, along the north wall of this room. White marble tiles, 1'-5" by 1'-9½", are used in the ground floor space containing the stairwell and elevator. In the individual rooms of the second floor, the flooring material is 2½" wide tongue-and-groove wooden boards. The floor has been raised 5" in a portion of the northeast corner room to accommodate a bank vault. The third and fourth floors have had linoleum applied to the original wood flooring. Major water and structural damage has caused the floors to buckle excessively on these upper floors. The sixth floor is not visible beneath the debris of pigeons and the disintegrating roof above.

4. Wall and ceiling finish:

The walls in the basement are unpainted brick. A scored cement coating has been applied to the vaults. The walls on the upper floors have plaster on wood lath. Wood cabinetry remaining from one of the early 20th century haberdashers has been applied to the walls in the former bank director's room on the first floor. Beaded board wood paneling is visible beneath the gypsum board of the second floor northwest room.

The brick vaults remain unfinished in the basement. In the main banking space, an acoustical dropped ceiling masks the vaulting above. In the secondary hallway, the vaults have been plastered and a random pattern of stylized daisies of varying sizes have been stenciled on this surface. A white pressed metal cove ceiling has been installed below the plastered arches and plaster cove ceiling of the director's room. Plaster on lath is used to finish the ceilings of all the upper floors of the building with several large gypsum board patches. Portions of an unpainted pressed metal ceiling exist in the fifth floor, northeast corner room. The ceilings of all upper floors have been damaged by water.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The doors from the hallway into the perimeter rooms have a wooden panel in the lower half of the door with a window in the upper half. A beaded molding surrounds the glass panel and a brass mail slot is centered below the panel. There is a rectangular fixed glass transom above each door. Each door has four ornate cast-iron hinges. A wide molded architrave surrounds the hall doors and the pocket doors between the north rooms. On the second floor, the south room, and the pocket doors between the three west rooms, has a reeded architrave with corner bull's-eye blocks.

b. Windows: The window architraves are the same as the hall doors.

6. Decorative features and trim: Wide, molded baseboards have the same profile on all floors. They are 12" high on the ground and second floors and shorter on the upper floors.

An oak paneled wainscot surrounds the bank director's room. The chair rail in the halls of the upper floors is 3" wide with molded top and bottom. It is 3'-6" above the floor. A 9" wide chair rail 3' above the floor, is in the west center room of the third floor.

Shelves and paneled partitions remaining from the haberdashers who occupied the ground floor in the early years of the Twentieth Century have been reused in the former bank director's room. It has mahogany piers which have a carved crescent pattern. The piers carry a simple cornice above a frieze which is carved with a pattern of vertical ellipses between round discs. The paneled section between the piers has centered square panels at top and bottom with a vertical, rectangular window between. Two vertical panels, one above the other are to either side. Additional pressed wood shelving now lines the north wall of the first floor which is being used for storage by Apex Liquor Store.

7. Hardware: The hall doors have two sets of cast-iron hinges. The hinges on the face of each door are less ornate and appear to be from a later period. The brass mail slots in the hall doors are highly decorative and are different on each door.

8. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating, ventilation: A stove pipe flue, centered on the exterior wall, and an early Twentieth Century cast-iron radiator are in each perimeter room. An ornate, cast-iron ventilator grill is located under the center window of the north corner room on each floor. A coal-fired boiler along the south wall of the basement was removed twelve years ago.

- b. Lighting: The existing lighting fixtures which date from the 1930's are glass globes suspended from the ceiling.
 - c. Plumbing: The bathrooms in the southeast corner of the upper floors have fixtures dating from the early Twentieth Century. The floors of the bathrooms are elevated 5" above the original flooring to accommodate the plumbing. A plumbing stack runs up the west wall of the building adjacent to the north tower. There are sinks at this location on some of the upper floors.
 - d. Elevator: An elevator was installed during the 1887 renovation of the ground floors of the building by The Central National Bank.
 - e. Western Union Call Bell: A direct call bell to the local Western Union office is located under the north window of the southern tower on the third floor.
9. Original furnishings: A cast-iron vault installed between 1887 and 1907 is in the northeast corner of the second floor. Its door is flanked by fluted cast-iron pilasters which have elaborate, flat ionic capitals and a paneled base. A bead molding separates the 18" high base from the pilaster shaft. The simple cast-iron cornice has a decorative keystone with a carved lion's head and an upside down heart above. Single carved leaves are at either side of the lion's head. A roll form is beneath the lion's head.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The Central National Bank Bldg. adjacent to the center of the most important vista of the L'Enfant Plan of Washington, Pennsylvania Avenue. This avenue is the link between the "President's House" at the northwest and the "Congress House" at the southeast promontories of the City of Washington. The Central National Bank is built on the southeast perimeter of Market Square, directly across 7th Street from the square. This area was the most congested commercial district of Washington from the Civil War to the turn of the century. In the years just following the close of the Civil War, the area surrounding Market Square had a coherence marked by four and five story retail buildings and hotels, most of which had pronounced cornices and a horizontal facade composition. At the time that The Central National Bank bought the structure, Market Square was already one of the most vital areas in the growing federal center. The towers that The Central National Bank added to the structure became one of the prominent features on Pennsylvania Avenue.

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ment Corporation
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PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Original Architectural Drawings: The first floor plan of The Central National Bank Building was drawn by A.B. Mullett's office in 1887. It is available at the National Archives, Natural Resources Division with building permit #372. The first floor plan of the Central National Bank Building, designed by A.B. Mullett is also available at the National Archives, Natural Resources Division. It is attained by requesting Building Permit #2731½, date 30 June 1887.
8. Old Views: The Grand Review of the Union Army, photographed in May or June of 1865 by Mathew B. Brady was published in James Horan's book, Mathew Brady-Historian with a Camera, published by Crown Publishers in New York, 1955. It is also available at the Library of Congress, LC-B8184-7907.

The Central National Bank Building, circa 1900, is available at The Library of Congress, LC-US262-36862.

A photograph of the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 7th Street, circa 1920, is available at The Columbia Historical Society.

The north side of Pennsylvania Avenue between 6th and 7th Street, N.W. circa 1870, from a stereopticon view of the City of Washington is available at The Columbia Historical Society. It was a donation from Robert A. Truax.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

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2. Secondary and published sources:

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Weisman, Winston, "The Commercial Architecture of George B. Post", The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians. October 1972.

3. Interviews:

Donald J. Lehman, 6617 32nd Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.
A former historian at the General Services Administration who is currently writing a biography on A. B. Mullett for MacMillan Publishing Co.'s, Biographies of American Architects.

4. Miscellaneous Sources:

Hopkin's Atlas of Washington, 1887.

Hopkin's Real Estate Plot Map, 1892.

Sanborn Insurance Maps, Volume 2, 1904.

D. Likely Sources not yet Investigated:

Gordon Smith and Sue Mullett Smith (the granddaughter of A.B. Mullett) are possible sources for information on the architectural firm, A. B. Mullett & Co. Mr. Smith is on the faculty of American University in Washington, D.C.