

635 & 637 D Street, NW (Commercial Building)  
Washington  
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-613

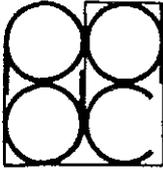
HABS  
DC,  
WASH,  
354-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HABS DC -6L3



PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

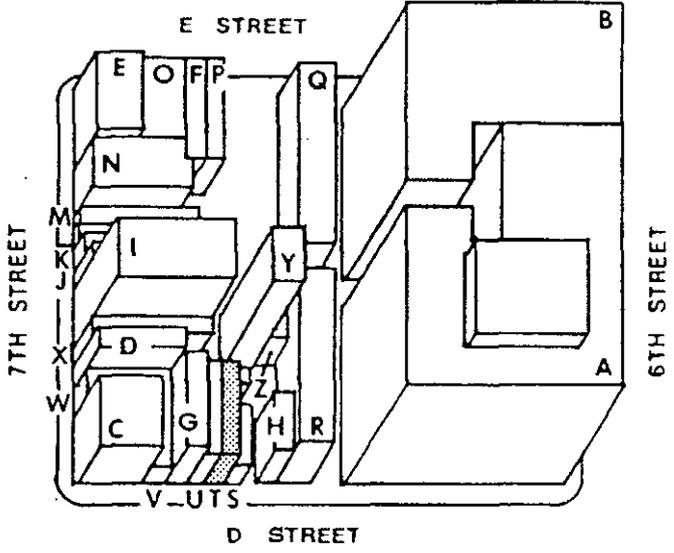
425 13TH STREET, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20004

GENERAL CONSULTANTS ANDERSON NOTTER/MARIANI GENERAL PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT DEVROUAX & PURNELL ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS DAVID MCLAREN HART & ASSOCIATES PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT MONK DUNSTONE ASSOCIATES COST ESTIMATING CONSULTANT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM BUILDING DOCUMENTATION

HABS DC, WASH, 354-

Commercial Building 635 and 637 D Street, NW Lot 811



This documentation was produced for mitigation purposes by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. Additional documentation exists for Square 457, within which this structure stands. For photographs, historical, and descriptive data on Square 457, see HABS No. DC-597.

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Built before 1880, this three-story utilitarian brick structure, twenty-four feet wide, one hundred feet deep and forty feet high, is part of a series of similarly sized row commercial buildings. Like its neighbor to the west, it exhibits relatively simple construction and detail. The two upper stories of the three bay facade are clad in red pressed face brick. A corrugated-metal, aluminum, glass and tan brick storefront, clearly not original, comprises the ground floor of the street (south) face.

The facade is capped by a simple wooden entablature; four carved brackets support the cornice above the flat board which serves as an architrave. The double hung windows are also of wood and have wood sills. Deteriorating brownstone lintels span the masonry openings. An iron fire escape, two signs and an awning project from the building's face. The nearly flat roof slopes from front and back toward the center of the rectangular volume of the building. The ground-floor clothing store has several central columns and a small back room. A stair located along the western party wall permits access to the loft spaces above.

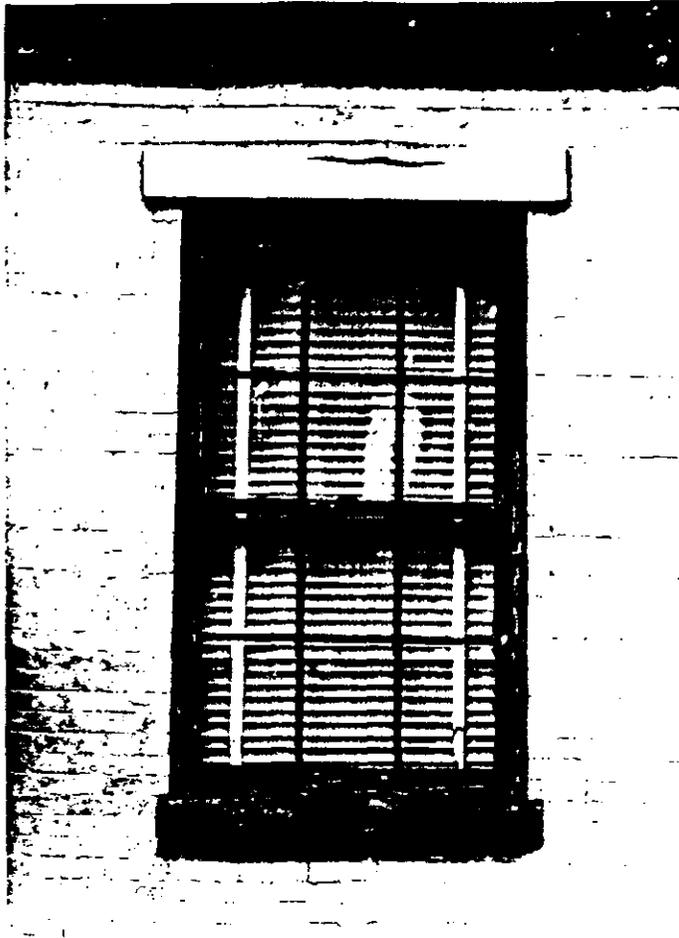
#### ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

This building is a simple, unadorned brick commercial building of the late-Nineteenth Century. Permit information indicates that the building existed before 1879. Though there is little that is intrinsically noteworthy in its architecture, the building contributes to the harmony and vitality of the streetscape in which it is set through its size, scale, proportion and through use of its ground floor for commercial purposes.

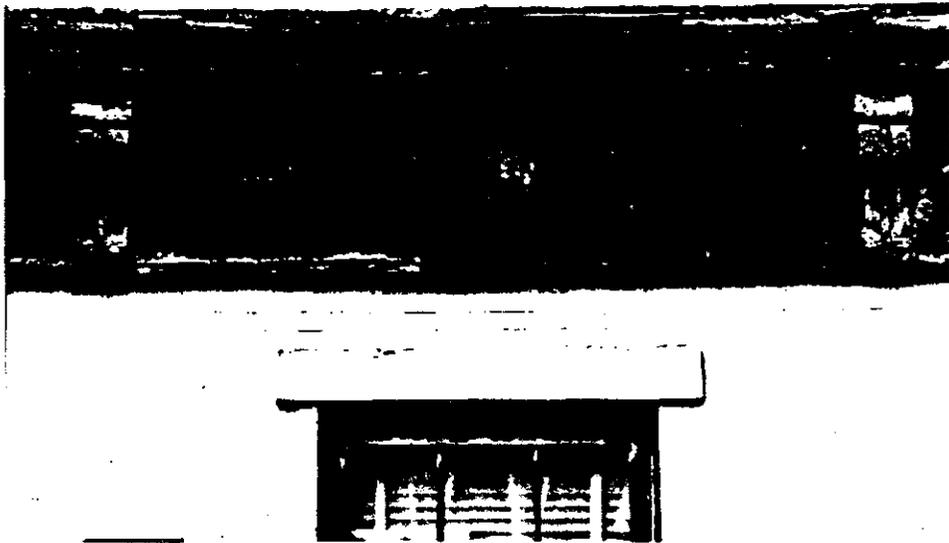
September 1979



D STREET (SOUTH) FACADE



SOUTH FACADE:  
TYPICAL WINDOW



SOUTH FACADE: DETAIL OF CORNICE

Lot 6  
631-637 D Street

When originally platted, Lot 6 was an L-shaped property located in a southwestern quadrant of Square 457. It was bounded on the north and east by a public alley.

1819.....A.E. Hough and John Coyle were owners of Lot 6.

1824.....At this date, the Tax Records indicated a division of the lot into east and west properties. Refer to the individual listings for further information.

Lot 6 West (Sublot 811)  
635-637 D Street

The western section of original Lot 6 measured approximately 25' x 100'.

1824.....John Mans, owner of the lot, was assessed \$378.00 for the lot, \$500.00 for the building improvements.

1829/33

and

1844.....D.A. Hall was the new lot owner. His land was valued at \$503.00.

1855

to

1870.....Tenants at 402 D Street (the address of 635 0 prior to 1870), included a stationer, a book dealer, grocers and a plumber.

At 400 0 (635 0), Reason Beck ran a boarding house (1855); B.A. Prather, a "market man", was established in the building in 1858.

1859.....Now owned by William Oeale, the lot value was \$2392.00.

1870.....Deale's title was transferred to Phillip M. May. May's improvement value was \$4000.00. May, a grocer, was listed in the Directories at 635 0 Street until 1879.

1878/79..The lot assessment increased considerably to \$3225.00, still in May's name.

1879.....Building Permit #2187, 4/29/1879: Insert store window with 18" projection. Cost: \$95.00.

1883/84..May was assessed \$3777.00 for the lot. Between 1883 and 1890 George F. Schaffer, a plumber, was established at 635 D Street; Schaffer was listed at 637 0 between 1891 and 1896.

1888.....Building Permit #374 8/25/1888: General repairs. Cost: \$100.00.

1893/94..The lot value increased further to \$5666.00. The building improvement value was \$3700.00. The owner was unchanged.

1896

to

1904.....The building (635 D Street) had occupied second-hand clothing stores. Simon and Samuel Goldberg were most frequently listed in the Directories.

1899/

1900.....May's assessment of the lot dropped to \$5036.00, as did the improvement value, to \$3000.00.

1903.....Building Permit #358½, 8/26/1903: Repair wooden platform connecting front with rear building. Cost: \$10.00

1905

to

1911.....Wholesale notions were sold by Aaron Goldman at 635 D Street according to the Directories.

1919.....The Baist Plat Map named the lot 811.

1919

to

1926.....The building was part of the Central Armature Works complex.

1927

to

1930

and

1932

to

1942.....The building at 635 D was listed as vacant in the Directories.

1938.....Building Permit #158954, 11/9/1938: Refrigeration system.

1946.....Building Permit #284746, 4/22/1946: Partition to form a lavatory;  
two-story brick building. Builder: John Miller & Brothers.  
Cost: \$75.00.

1947.....Building Permit #295257, 5/22/1947: Replace platform with concrete  
stoop; brick-up openings; three-story brick commercial building.  
Architect: W.G. Nicholson, Jr. Builder: A. Adams. Cost: \$100.00.

1954  
to

1956.....The Colonial Piano Company and the Crockett Machy Company, printers,  
were located at 637 D Street. In 1954, 635 D was vacant (City  
Directories).

1960  
to

1967.....A men's clothing store, Frank's Quality Clothing, was situated at  
635 D Street, D Street Tailors was established at 637 D in 1967.

1981.....The building is used for commercial purposes.

## SOURCES

Baist Real Estate Atlas

Bastert and Enthoffer Plat Maps

Boyd's City Directories

District of Columbia Building Permits

District of Columbia General Assessment Records

District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds

District of Columbia Surveyor's Office Records

District of Columbia Tax Records

Hopkins Real Estate Atlas

Polk's City Directories

Property Map for Downtown Urban Renewal Area for District of Columbia Redevelopment  
Land Agency

Sanborn Insurance Map