



# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Westory Building

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street & number 607 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW  not for publication

city or town Washington  vicinity

state District of Columbia code DC county District of Columbia code 001 zip code 20005

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

\_\_\_ entered in the National Register

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- |                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | private          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Local   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - State   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Federal |

- |                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | district    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | site        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | structure   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | object      |

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1		<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

#### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/business, office building

Trade/department store, clothing store

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/business, office building

Commerce/financial institution, retail bank

#### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Beaux Arts \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: \_\_\_\_\_  
walls: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof: \_\_\_\_\_  
other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**Summary Paragraph**

The Westory Building is a 9-story brick, granite, and terra cotta office building occupying a prominent intersection at the northeast corner of F Street & 14th Street in the historic financial and real estate district of Washington, DC. The steel-frame neo-classical building employs the Beaux Arts convention of base, shaft, and crown as a vertical organizing principle. The flat-roofed building extends seven bays long on the 14th Street elevation and two bays wide on the F Street elevation, creating a rectangular footprint measuring 28.9' wide by 85.9' deep.

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**Narrative Description**

The first two stories of the building on the south and west façades constitute the base. Alternating round columns and square piers, resting on a cement base, support a full cornice above the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor level. The rusticated columns and piers, carved with textured bands, are topped with carved Ionic capitals. The entablature follows the same Ionic design with a low geometric relief on the frieze and a row of small lions' heads and exaggerated dentils that are identical in design to the cornice at the 7<sup>th</sup> floor.

The brick shaft is articulated by the rhythm of paired window openings, with seven pairs totaling 14 windows per floor on the west façade and two pairs totaling 4 windows per floor on the east façade. The windows on the third floor rest directly on the cornice topping the base. The windows from the fourth floor to the seventh floor have a small sill with modest and restrained detailing.

The terra cotta cornice at the 7th floor is highly ornamented featuring swags encompassing lion's heads below a garlanded belt course. The lion heads are larger but otherwise identical to the lion heads appearing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor cornice. The top two floors of the building are detailed in terra cotta. Paired pilasters form a giant order culminating in pairs of arches. Spandrels between the giant order pilasters are embellished with garlands and keystones. The building is surmounted by an elaborate, projecting terra cotta cornice with anthemion.

The entrance for the upper levels is located in the northernmost bay on west face. A corner entrance with doors in the southernmost bay on the west face and westernmost bay on the south face provides access to the first floor space. The second floor features Chicago windows; one-over-one sash is used throughout the remainder of the building. Arched windows appear on the 9th floor.

Integrity

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The Westory Building retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship that strongly establish the integrity of association between the existing building and the rich history of commercial development in the neighborhood of 14<sup>th</sup> Street and F Street NW. The building received alterations in 1910 to accommodate the occupancy of the Calvert Company retail business. Subsequent renovations in the late 1940s, 1955, and 1967 evidently removed any features of the historic storefront and modernized the elevator lobby and the offices on upper levels. At the time of the 1991 renovation, no historic windows and little trace of the original finishes remained. The 1991 additions placed a one-story addition on the flat roof of the historic building and encased the historic structure on its north and east faces. Despite these changes, the structure still maintains significant exterior integrity.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

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**Period of Significance**

1907-1908

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**Significant Dates**

1907-1908, 1910

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**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

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**Cultural Affiliation**

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**Architect/Builder**

Jekel, Henry Lewis Adrien (architect)

Gilbert, Edwin (general contractor)

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### **Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance begins with the start of construction and 1907 and ends with the full completion of construction in 1908.

### **Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

The Westory Building is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C with architecture as its area of significance for its style as a refined example of Beaux Arts architecture and for its type as an early large-scale steel-frame commercial structure. Architect Henry L.A. Jekel and Philadelphia builder Edwin Gilbert created an elegant structure that reflects a period of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century commercial development in the District of Columbia that should be recognized for its local significance. The significance of the Westory Building is that of a unique building that reflects the broader context of commercial building design and construction in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the role of Beaux Arts architecture in Washington, DC following the McMillan Plan. The period of significance begins with the start of construction and 1907 and ends with the full completion of construction in 1908.

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### **Narrative Statement of Significance** (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

The significance of the Westory Building type as a commercial office building is derived from Jekel's substantial experience in working with and developing commercial office buildings. Early in his career, Henry L.A. Jekel had the opportunity to work with both the George A. Fuller Company and Thompson-Starrett & Company—two of the foremost modern commercial building construction firms in the United States during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These firms followed a model of integrating general contracting, civil engineering and design that likely encouraged Jekel's transition from engineering to architecture and informed his later partnership with builder Edwin Gilbert.

The significance of the Westory Building style as a Beaux Arts building depends on its role in the local context of the McMillan Plan. In 1902, the McMillan Commission released its proposals to apply the ideals and principles of the City Beautiful movement to the design of Washington, DC. While the McMillan Commission's recommendations focused on the Mall public buildings, Richard Longstreth has argued that private developers recognized a "shared imperative to commission work that would adequately reflect the expansive mood and rising aspirations for a national capital." Longstreth continued to note that, "the business community, as champions of civic improvement, harbored the goal of making their city one of distinction."<sup>i</sup>

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### **Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

The Westory Building is a 1908 commercial building at 14<sup>th</sup> Street & F Street NW, designed by Philadelphia architect Henry L.A. Jeckel and constructed by Philadelphia builder Edwin Gilbert for the eponymous real estate partnership of Wescott & Story, acting on behalf of the owner, Colonel George H. Higbee. Over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Westory Building continuously provided retail on the ground level and office space on the upper floors for a range of professionals and service businesses. Renovations in 1991 by Shalom Baranes Associates with preservation architects Oehrlein & Associates and an addition by Shalom Baranes Associates in 2003 still retained the character and integrity of the structure allowing the recognition of this exemplary commercial building at the center of Washington, DC's historic financial and retail district.

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<sup>i</sup> Richard Longstreth, "The Unusual Transformation of Downtown Washington in the Early Twentieth Century," *Washington History* 13, no. 2 (Fall): 50-71

## Site History

In mid 19<sup>th</sup> century the northeast corner of 14<sup>th</sup> Street & F Street was the site of a refined and elegant three-story Greek Revival style dwelling.<sup>ii</sup> Built around 1849 by Washington engraver William J. Stone as a wedding present for his son, Dr. Robert King Stone, the four-story “old red brick Colonial mansion” reflected the fashionable residential character of the neighborhood that persisted through the 1860s. Born 1822 in Washington, DC, Robert King Stone received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1845 and proceeded to inspect major hospitals in London, Paris, and Vienna, before starting his own medical practice in 1847. Dr. Stone served as President Abraham Lincoln’s family physician, attended the President after he was shot, and testified about Lincoln’s medical condition during the subsequent trial. By the time of Stone’s death from apoplexy on April 23, 1872, he had become one of the most prominent physicians in Washington, DC.<sup>iii</sup> His wife, Elizabeth J. Stone remained in residence at the house until her own death in 1892.<sup>iv</sup>

Beginning in the 1860s, residential properties in the local area began to be replaced by commercial development and in the 1880s, a financial and retail district began to grow in the area of G Street, New York Avenue, and 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW and, with minimal banking regulations in the District of Columbia, many new financial firms concentrated around the US Treasury Building. The first significant commercial development on the block occurred in 1887, when the nine-story Sun Building, designed by local architect A.B. Mullet, was built at 1317 F Street. By the 1890s, Square 253—bounded by 14<sup>th</sup> Street, F Street, G Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Street—included a diverse mix of detached and attached dwellings, office buildings, retail stores, and apartments. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, local developers constructed many large-scale office buildings in the area including the Home Life Building at the northeast corner of 15<sup>th</sup> Street & G Street in 1901, the Bond Building at the southwest corner of 14<sup>th</sup> & New York Avenue in 1901, and the Colorado Building at 1434 G Street in 1903. The rising value of investment in the neighborhood is further reflected in the construction of the New Willard Hotel at 14<sup>th</sup> Street & Pennsylvania Avenue in 1901. Among the first fire resistant buildings in DC, the Bond and Colorado Building are also both examples of Beaux Arts commercial architecture in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. When built, the Colorado Building became the largest private office building in Washington, DC. The location of these buildings, as well as the selection of 14<sup>th</sup> Street and F Street for the construction of the Westory Building, followed from their proximity to both the financial district and the streetcar routes on 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, and New York Avenue.

## Development of the Westory Building

In April 1906, the Stone estate received an alteration permit to install a show window evidently converting the dwelling from residential to commercial use.<sup>v</sup> It is unclear whether they had time to implement these plans before May 1906 when Wescott, & Story working on behalf of Colonel George H. Higbee from Burlington, Iowa, purchased the property at 14<sup>th</sup> Street & F Street NW from the Stone estate.<sup>vi</sup>

A contemporary account on the transaction identified the sales price, \$190,000 or \$76 per square foot, as “the highest price ever paid for real estate in Washington.” The account suggested further that George H. Higbee, who has no other known association with real estate or development in Washington, DC, acted as a representative for “prominent Western and Boston interests” in his purchase.<sup>vii</sup> In November 1906, George H. Higbee and Frances N. Higbee placed a deed on record in order to secure a loan of \$200,000 from the Fidelity and Trust Company of Pennsylvania. At the time Higbee secured the trust, contemporary “experts in real estate” considered the site “one of the most valuable pieces of property in the District of Columbia.”<sup>viii</sup> George H. Higbee and Edwin Gilbert, the builder for the Westory, received a building permit for the project on December 27, 1906 and anticipated completing construction by September 1, 1907.

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<sup>ii</sup> “Known As The Ridge – Ancient Designation of F Street – From the Old West Market to the Capitol – Those Who Had Residences – Business Men and Government Officials Included – Variety of Occupations,” *The Washington Star*, May 5, 1906; GEORGE ROTHWELL BROWN, “EBBITT HOTEL, GONE, HAD ITS BEGINNING IN BOARDING HOUSE,” *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, April 8, 1926

<sup>iii</sup> Harvey W. Crew, William Bensing Webb, and John Wooldridge, *Centennial History of the City of Washington, D. C.* (Pub. for H. W. Crew by the United brethren publishing house, 1892).

<sup>iv</sup> “THE LATE MRS. E. J. STONE.,” *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, August 5, 1892, [<sup>v</sup> Square 253, Lot 29, No. 603, April 2, 1906, DC Permit #2520](http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=235311412&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP; Crew, Webb, and Wooldridge, Centennial History of the City of Washington, D. C., 606.</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

<sup>vi</sup> See biographical summary of George H. Higbee at the end of the building history.

<sup>vii</sup> “\$200,000 OFFICE BUILDING TO BE ERECTED AT ONCE,” *The Washington Post*, May 25, 1906.

<sup>viii</sup> “BIG TRUST DEED RECORDED.,” *The Washington Post*, November 20, 1906

An account published during the course of construction described the Westory as an “office building de luxe.” The same account continued to note, “From beginning to end the most modern methods of construction will be followed, and the finish and decorations will be the best.”<sup>ix</sup> Although relatively unknown, Jekel still attracted attention as an out-of-town architect. *The Washington Times* speculated, “Mr. Jekel has no specimens of his work in this city, and it is expected that he will make a special effort to give the Capital an office building of the finest and most up-to-date design.”<sup>x</sup> Plans called for the first floor to remain an undivided space with a 16’ ceiling, the second floor to be divided into three large offices with 16’ ceilings, and the remaining seven floors to be laid out in seven spaces with 12’ ceilings. The building permit suggested that the ground floor could be leased as a dry goods store, which would also use the cellar accessed by an exterior stair.

As the end of construction neared the *Washington Post* glowingly described the building as “Washington’s rival of the Flatiron Building of New York.”<sup>xi</sup> Several accounts particularly celebrated the elegant appearance of the materials and the contrast to the historic character of the corner, “The columns of white terra cotta with great doors and plate-glass show windows, both on Fourteenth and F streets, and the towering white structure above, make a decided change at this old corner, where for so many years stood the red brick residence of Dr. Stone. It makes now a fitting complement to the tall building of the new Willard now diagonally across the street.”

By late 1907, Wescott & Story reported receiving “ten to twenty” lease applications daily and the building was one of several eagerly anticipated new developments in the area. A November 1907 account noted, “The effect of this building upon values of realty in the neighborhood cannot be questioned. The demand for store and office space in this vicinity seems steady and strong, and is further illustrated by the approaching completion of the additional story on the American National Bank building.”<sup>xii</sup> Within the month several tenants began moving into the building and construction was certified fully complete in March 1908.

### Design context for the Westory Building

The significance of the Westory Building is that of a unique building that reflects the broader context of commercial building design and construction in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the role of Beaux Arts architecture in Washington, DC following the McMillan Plan. Early in his career, Henry L.A. Jekel had the opportunity to work with both the George A. Fuller Company and Thompson-Starrett & Company—two of the foremost modern commercial building construction firms in the United States during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These firms followed a model of integrating general contracting, civil engineering and design that likely encouraged Jekel’s transition from engineering to architecture and informed his later partnership with builder Edwin Gilbert. In addition, both firms illustrate the application of Daniel Burnham’s vision for Beaux Arts design and the broader City Beautiful movement to large-scale commercial building.

George A. Fuller pioneered the form of steel-frame construction used in the Westory Building, employing the technology for the construction of the Tacoma Building in Chicago, the New York Times Building, and the Flatiron Building in New York City. Fuller established his business in 1882 and developed the model of a general contractor essential for the development of large projects. Between 1900 and 1914, the George A. Fuller Construction Company built over 600 structures. In Washington, DC, these included the Mills Building in 1902, the Munsey Building in 1905, the Hibbs Building in 1906 and the Evans Building in 1908.<sup>xiii</sup>

Thompson-Starrett & Company, founded in 1900 by Theodore Starrett and Henry S. Thompson, was based on methods that Theodore Starrett had learned directly from George A. Fuller in the 1890s. The firm specialized in large-scale industrial, commercial, hotel, and skyscraper construction. Theodore and his brother Paul Starrett both began their careers in 1887 in the office of architect Daniel H. Burnham. One of the most notable of the firm’s projects is Union Station in Washington, DC designed by D.H. Burnham & Co. and built 1903-1908.

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ix “Article 1 -- No Title,” *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, November 4, 1906, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=251835742&Fmt=7&clientId=41139&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

x “Office Building to Cost \$400,000,” *The Washington times. (Washington [D.C.]) 1902-1939*, June 3, 1906, sec. Metropolitan Section

xi “FLATIRON’S RIVAL HERE,” *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, August 11, 1907, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=252094632&Fmt=7&clientId=41139&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

xii “Two Office Buildings and Residence Nearly Finished; Westory and Union Trust Have Tenants In Their Rooms,” *The Washington times. (Washington [D.C.]) 1902-1939*, November 3, 1907, sec. Sports - Real Estate, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026749/1907-11-03/ed-1/seq-19/>

xiii Design Forum., *DC downtown office building survey phase II : historic context statement* (Washington D.C.: The Forum, 1992).

Jekel's experience with integrating Beaux Arts design of Daniel Burnham and the standards of commercial building was clearly demonstrated in the design of the 17-story Pennsylvania Building at the NW corner of 15<sup>th</sup> Street & S. Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Although significantly larger than the Westory the two buildings are remarkably similar, sharing the typical tripartite elevations, light brick façade, and a nearly identical pattern of ornamentation at the cornice.

The Westory Building may also be compared to the demolished six-story Mills Building, built by the George A. Fuller Construction Company of Washington and designed by the Baltimore architectural firm Parker and Thomas, at the southwest corner of 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. The Mills Building similarly reflected a synthesis of Chicago commercial architecture and a Daniel Burnham influenced Beaux Arts style. In addition, like Colonel George Higbee, the owner of the Westory Building, General Anson Mills, the owner of the Mills building, was a Civil War veteran and a wealthy industrialist investing in Washington, DC real estate.

The radical transformation of the District of Columbia that eventually followed the development of the McMillan Plan began with Daniel Burnham and McKim, Mead, and White's "White City" at the Columbian Exposition of 1893. The exposition inspired architects and civic leaders throughout the nation and when the Senate McMillan Commission was established in 1901 to evaluate the development of the city and improve the capital many of the same architects were involved. The experts selected by James McMillan to study the problem included Daniel Burnham and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. who added Charles McKim and sculptor Augustus St. Gaudens.<sup>xiv</sup> In 1902, the McMillan Commission released its proposals to apply the ideals and principles of the City Beautiful movement to the design of Washington, DC. While the McMillan Commission's recommendations focused on the Mall public buildings, Richard Longstreth has argued that private developers recognized a "shared imperative to commission work that would adequately reflect the expansive mood and rising aspirations for a national capital." Longstreth continued to note that, "the business community, as champions of civic improvement, harbored the goal of making their city one of distinction."<sup>xv</sup> Although not a project by a local owner or architect, the importance of the project to broader themes of civic pride and the City Beautiful is clear from press accounts that celebrated the unprecedented value of the initial sale, the unique character of the design, and even The local importance is further emphasized by the decision to recognize local real estate developers, rather than the owner or the architect, in the naming of the building.

### Early tenants in the Westory Building

Early tenants at the Westory Building reflected the professional character of the neighborhood, beginning with a basement bar and restaurant or *rathskeller*, the Thos F. Keane Chop House and Buffet described as "A Resort for Gentlemen" in a 1908 advertisement. Throughout the 1910s and 1920s, the Westory provided offices for a range of professionals, financial firms, and small businesses providing services to other professionals in the local area. For example in 1915, tenants included five dentists, six lawyers, the Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance Company of Hartford, Connecticut, the Correspondents Office for the New York Tribune, a hairdresser, and the Capitol Sight Seeing Company. One of these dentists, Charles H. Beach, remained in the building for an exceptionally long period from 1915 through 1948. The Washington Bureau of the New York Tribune only temporarily occupied the Westory building while their new building was under construction across the street. Over the next 20 years, tenants included tailors, chiropodists, manufacturing agents, industrial firms, an office of Christian Scientists, and the Electric Railway Commission. Notably, financial firms are not a significant presence in the building although tenants did occasionally include insurance firms or auxiliary offices for financial firms in the area. This diverse mix of professionals and small service businesses is largely comparable to tenants found in the Bond Building during the same period.

One of the most significant early tenants was the local Washington, DC office of the American Union Against Militarism. A group of pacifist activists in New York City established the organization in 1915 as the "Anti-militarism Committee." In 1916, the organization became the "Anti-preparedness Committee" and established Washington offices in the Munsey Building on Pennsylvania Avenue. This pacifist advocacy organization then maintained offices in Room 203 of the Westory Building from 1918 through their dissolution in 1922. The Civil Liberties Bureau of the American Union Against Militarism, established in 1917 to provide legal support to conscientious objectors, split from the organization in October 1917 to become the National Civil Liberties Bureau and, in 1920, the American Civil Liberties Union or ACLU.<sup>xvi</sup>

<sup>xiv</sup> Design Forum., *DC downtown office building survey phase II : historic context statement* (Washington D.C.: The Forum, 1992)

<sup>xv</sup> Longstreth, "The Unusual Transformation of Downtown Washington in the Early Twentieth Century."

<sup>xvi</sup> Samuel Walker, *In Defense of American Liberties, Second Edition: A History of the ACLU*, 2nd ed. (Southern Illinois University Press, 1999).

## Retail tenants in the Westory Building

Even tenants began to move into the Westory Building, a Bryan & Co., a haberdashery firm and clothing store, had secured a lease to the first floor. Bryan & Co. moved from the corner of 15<sup>th</sup> Street & F Street to the more prominent intersection at 14<sup>th</sup> Street. After G.B. Bryan who established the firm died in 1896, store manager Robert J. Hunter, an “expert window-dresser” reestablished the store on a “larger basis” in the Westory Building.<sup>xvii</sup> The store failed in 1909 and, with creditors calling for receivership, Hunter closed out the stock and attempted to reestablish the store on 15<sup>th</sup> between New York Avenue and G Street.<sup>xviii</sup>

In 1910, a local businessman Calvert S. Rosenthal leased the ground floor of the Westory building and proposed a \$20,000 renovation with plans to open an exclusive men’s store under the name of the Calvert Company.<sup>xix</sup> Calvert Rosenthal had worked for Park, Bridget & Co. for the previous fifteen years, leaving a position as general manager to start his new business. His professed intent was to stock, “not only the usual articles of men’s apparel found in haberdasheries, but to include a stock of high-grade clothing.” Architect J.N. McCauley and builder John F. Newman applied for a permit on February 4, 1910 to remove the glazed terracotta column that defined the corner of the building and work continued to expand the window frontage 100 feet, reducing the width of supporting columns to 18 inches, and extending the ground floor windows 5 feet outwards from the existing structure.<sup>xx</sup> When announced, the renovation was expected to be complete by April 1, 1910.<sup>xxi</sup> The contractors for this renovation also included “The Sheet-Metal Shop” owned by J.C. Brandstedt who later advertised their experience with a “contract for remodeling of Westory Building.”<sup>xxii</sup>

Calvert Rosenthal’s father, Samuel Rosenthal belonged to Baltimore’s Jewish community and worked as a member of the firm Strouse & Bros., a wholesale clothing dealer in Baltimore, Maryland, as well as serving as a Director of the Drivers and Mechanics National Bank at the northwest corner of Fayette Street & Eutaw Street. Established in 1868, Strouse & Bros. maintained Baltimore offices at Lombard Street & Paca Street, 212 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and a branch office at 733 to 735 Broadway, New York.<sup>xxiii</sup> The Calvert Company in the Westory Building joined a growing number of high-end retail businesses in the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor following the movement of financial businesses into the neighborhood. The earliest major retailer in the neighborhood was Woodward & Lothrop moving to the Carlisle Building on F Street between 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Street. The Palais Royale Department Store followed in 1892 building a new six-story store at 11<sup>th</sup> Street & G Street and the Hecht Company joined them in 1896 building their Washington headquarters at 7<sup>th</sup> Street near F Street. In 1905, Julius Garfinckel first established his business on the 1200 block of F Street.<sup>xxiv</sup> Accounts from the 1920s, reflected on an “F Street promenade” where, “beginning at 14<sup>th</sup> Street, the F-Streeters can find anything their hearts desire.”<sup>xxv</sup>

Calvert Rosenthal served as a founding member of the Retail Merchants’ Association when it separated from the Chamber of Commerce in 1912.<sup>xxvi</sup> At the first anniversary of his opening, Rosenthal reflected on a “successful year’s business” and “the popularity that the shop enjoys on all sides.”<sup>xxvii</sup> In July 1911, the store displayed a Manhattan shirt frozen in a solid block of ice with the announcement, “Manhattans are the ‘coolest’ shirts in town.”<sup>xxviii</sup> In September 1912,

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<sup>xvii</sup> “Death of G. B. Bryan,” *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, July 12, 1896,

<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=230226272&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>

<sup>xviii</sup> “ASKS RECEIVER FOR FIRM,” *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, April 17, 1908,

<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=200277832&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>; “R. J. HUNTER ENDS LIFE,” *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, July 5, 1913, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=248146412&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

<sup>xix</sup> “NEW STORE FOR MEN. Ground Floor of Westory Building Is Being Remodeled.,” *Evening Star*, February 18, 1910.

<sup>xx</sup> Building Permit February 4, 1910 #4346, February 24, 1910 #4616,

<sup>xxi</sup> “REAL ESTATE NOTES.,” *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, February 19, 1910,

<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=249702452&Fmt=7&clientId=41139&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

<sup>xxii</sup> “THE SHEET-METAL SHOP,” *The Washington Post*, June 12, 1912

<sup>xxiii</sup> “BALTIMORE BANKER WEDS HIS SECRETARY,” *The New York Times*, October 1, 1915,

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=9406E1DE1E3FE633A25752C0A9669D946496D6CF>; “ARRIVAL OF BUYERS,” *The New York Times*, May 15, 1918.

<sup>xxiv</sup> “Garfinckel’s Department Store” (National Register of Historic Places, 1995).

<sup>xxv</sup> William Hogan, “Washington’s Merchant Prince,” *Regardies’s*, October 1981

<sup>xxvi</sup> “MERCHANTS ISSUE BOOKLET,” *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, January 25, 1911,

<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=244204052&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>; “RETAIL MEN ORGANIZE,” *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, September 19, 1912, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=141546012&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

<sup>xxvii</sup> “A YEAR OLD TODAY.,” *The Washington Post*, March 16, 1911.

<sup>xxviii</sup> “An Ingenious Display.,” *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, July 30, 1911,

<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=244446762&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

the store featured trophies for the Washington Post's first annual motor vehicle parade in their windows.<sup>xxix</sup> By the end of the year, however, Calvert S. Rosenthal had abruptly "severed" his connection with the Calvert Company and moved his own business activities to New York City.<sup>xxx</sup>

Even following the failure of the Calvert Company, the neighborhood remained a retail center as Lansburgh's Department Store relocated to 8<sup>th</sup> Street & D Street to a new six-story building in 1916 and Garfinckel's Department Store opened on the NW corner of 14<sup>th</sup> Street & F Street facing the Westory Building.<sup>xxxi</sup> The Regal Shoe Company occupied the ground floor of the Westory from 1948 through the 1980s and Wormser Hat Store, Inc. shared the space from the mid 1950s through the 1980s.

### Renovations and later tenants in the Westory Building

After the failure of the Calvert Company, the space was occupied in 1915 by Crane, Parris & Co. a banking partnership established in 1883 by Augustus Crane Jr. and Albion Keith Parris Sr. In December 1916, Crane, Parris & Co. moved to 728 15<sup>th</sup> Street NW and a new brokerage firm, Crane, Gilpin & Co. established by J. Blake Gilpin and Benjamin Crane opened in the same space on January 2, 1917.<sup>xxxii</sup> The firm did not last the year however as the partnership dissolved in October 1917.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

Liggett's Drug Store, part of a national chain of 300 stores owned by the United Drug Company of Boston, Massachusetts, occupied the ground level in 1919. Liggett's Drug Store purchased the Westory Building in May 1926 through the real estate office of Theodore M. Judd.<sup>xxxiv</sup> The number of tenants sharply increased during the mid to late 1920s as the property values and prestige of the broader financial district grew. The increase in tenants may have followed from advertising such as notices in 1924 and 1925, offering "Outside Daylight Rooms" to interested businesses.<sup>xxxv</sup> Occupancy dropped off significantly in 1931 and 1933 with the advent of the Great Depression.

The Westory Building sold again on July 17, 1948 to A.E. Lichtman, A.L. Cohen, and Arthur J. Sundlan, the officers of the Westory Corporation, for \$750,000 in a transaction negotiated by the Legum & Gerber Real Estate Company. Abe E. Lichtman is notable as a major investor and developer of African-American movie and vaudeville houses in Washington, DC and throughout the east coast. He sold his theater business in 1944 and continued to remain involved in local real estate until his death in 1965. The new owners announced their plans for a "renovation program to make the building one of the most modern in the city" and the Regal Shoe Company took over the corner previously occupied by the drug store.<sup>xxxvi</sup> The building underwent significant renovations in 1955 and 1965, including a renovation of the elevator lobby and the modernization of the elevators.

Tenants during the 1950s included the National Bank of Washington, the Three D Live Image Co., Beauty Bazaar, construction companies, real estate firms, two dental laboratories, four separate patent attorney offices, and several other legal offices. The past president of the National Association of Women Lawyers, Maurine Howard Abernathy maintained an office in the building. The numerous legal offices led some to refer to the building as Westory Chambers.

One of the more unusual and significant tenants in the post-WWII period, was Willis M. Gault a unique musician, educator, and craftsman. Willis Gault, born near Salisbury, Maryland on June 10, 1908, retired from his career with the Treasury Department and opened Gault School of Violin Making in room 601 of the Westory Building in 1951. Gault began teaching groups of students three nights a week but, with limited space and tools, he soon switched to a more individual approach continuing until his shop was evicted by the owner in 1978. A 1962 newspaper account described the

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xxix "THOUSANDS ENJOY BIG MOTOR PARADE," *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, September 3, 1912, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=135764372&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

xxx "Great Exhibit at New York Show.," *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, December 29, 1912, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=135810752&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

xxxi "Garfinckel's Department Store."

xxxii "Display Ad 25 -- No Title," *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, December 31, 1916, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=249118622&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>

xxxiii "DISTRICT BROKER ANSWERS CHARGES," *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, October 25, 1917, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=242031832&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>

xxxiv "LIGGETT'S BUY WESTORY BUILDING," *The Washington Post*, May 30, 1926; "United Drug Company," *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, July 8, 1926, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=233338442&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

xxxv "Display Ad 1 -- No Title," *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, August 10, 1925, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=242415192&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

xxxvi "Building At 14th and F St. Sold Yesterday for \$750,000," *The Washington Post*, July 18, 1948; "Correction," *The Washington Post*, July 19, 1948.

shop as “jammed from floor to roof with violins, viols, violas and cellos in various stages of construction or repair.”<sup>xxxvii</sup> When he opened his shop, Gault was the only craftsman in the United States producing the 15<sup>th</sup>-century Viola d’Amore. He also established the Ancient Instrument Society and helped to encourage renewed interest in 15<sup>th</sup>-century musical instruments before his death in Greenbelt, Maryland on March 13, 1991.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

The 1991 addition facing 14<sup>th</sup> Street originally began as a proposed addition to the National Bank of Washington at 14th Street & G Street NW. The National Bank declared bankruptcy before the project started construction, forcing the revision of the proposal to a speculative commercial development. The first phase of development took place in 1991 with the construction of an addition on F Street and a one-story addition to the historic structure designed by Shalom Baranes Associates and Oehrlein & Associates Architects as an abstraction of the historic structure. The 2003 addition faced F Street as a further abstraction of the 1991 addition.<sup>xxxix</sup> The property is currently managed by Cassidy & Pinkard Colliers and owned by Deka-Immobilien Investment. The current ground floor tenant is TD Bank and the upper floor tenants include several legal firms, advocacy organizations, and government offices.

### Biographical summary of Henry L.A. Jekel

January 13, 1876 to Frederick Jekel & Louisa S. Yingert in Buffalo, New York, Henry Lewis Adrien Jekel initially trained as a civil engineer.<sup>xi</sup> He worked with Thompson-Starrett & Company, based in New York and Chicago, and the George A. Fuller Company, based in Chicago, before opening his own office. From 1902 to 1905, Jekel operated the H. L. A. Jekel Co. with William F. Forsyth as vice-President and an office at the 711 Mutual Life Building. The firm’s projects include the Forsyth Residence in Glenside, Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Office Building built by Thompson-Starrett & Company at 15<sup>th</sup> Street & Chestnut Street, Philadelphia in 1902-1903.<sup>xii</sup> The 17-story Pennsylvania Building employs an ornate cornice and a three part vertical block design remarkably similar to the design of the Westory Building. Jekel evidently then moved from Philadelphia to Boston, as multiple 1906 press accounts of the project identify Jekel as a Boston architect, but soon moved again home to Buffalo by 1910.<sup>xiii</sup>

In 1908, shortly after the construction of the Westory Building, Jekel worked with Bertrum Goodhue on the Panama-California Exhibition in San Francisco. Then in 1911, Jekel travelled to Riverside, California to work with architect Myron Hunt on the tower for the First Congregational Church at 3504 Mission Inn Avenue, Riverside, California. Jekel and his wife, Amanda Jekel born July 4, 1880, remained in Buffalo, New York until at least 1918, but by 1923 Jekel had designed and constructed a residence for himself and his wife in Riverside, California where he continued to complete over 40 homes and 15 office buildings, primarily in a Mission or Spanish style.<sup>xiiii</sup> In addition to the tower of the First Congregational Church of Riverside, his major work in Riverside includes the Riverside Mausoleum, the landmark Benedict Castle and the Hammer-Wallihan House. Jekel resided at 5063 Magnolia Avenue until his death in Riverside on May 26, 1960. Amanda Jekel died on August 7, 1970.

### Biographical summary of Edwin Gilbert

Born to Edwin Gilbert and Ellen Caroline Gilbert in Catasauqua, Pennsylvania, Edwin Gilbert began his career as an architect, rather than a builder, in an apprenticeship with Addison Hutton from 1892 to 1896 at an office at 400 Chestnut Street. Gilbert joined the T-Square Club in 1893 then established his own firm with offices in the Crozer Building at 1420 Chestnut Street. Edwin Gilbert and William L. Reid, formed the partnership of Gilbert and Reid and operated from 1900 to 1903. Following this partnership, Gilbert initiated his own successful contracting firm with offices in the Land Title Building in 1905 and 1906 and then the Weightman Building from 1907 to 1909.<sup>xlv</sup> Their work included services as a general contractor for the Hotel Blenheim and the Marlborough Hotel in Atlantic City, New Jersey. After 1907, Edwin Gilbert & Co.

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<sup>xxxvii</sup> By Meryle Secrest, “Viola-Maker Is Tuning Up For Waterford Tour Days,” *The Washington Post, Times Herald (1959-1973)*, September 30, 1962, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=179301702&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Claudia Levy Washington Post Staff Writer, “Willis Gault, Violin Maker, Teacher, Dies,” *The Washington Post (1974-Current file)*, March 15, 1991, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1059369312&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>

<sup>xxxix</sup> Gerard Martin Moeller, Christopher Weeks, and American Institute of Architects, *AIA guide to the architecture of Washington, D.C.*, 2006.

<sup>xi</sup> Henry L.A. Jekel is also known as Henry L.A. Jeckel or H.L.A. Jekel.

<sup>xii</sup> Sandra L. Tatman and The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, “H. L. A. Jekel Co. (fl. 1902 - 1904),” *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings*, [http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar\\_display.cfm/49411](http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/49411)

<sup>xiii</sup> “New Office Building To Be Called Westory,” *The Washington times. (Washington [D.C.]) 1902-1939*, November 4, 1906, sec. Metropolitan Section; “Higbee’s Building Unique in Design,” *The Washington times. (Washington [D.C.]) 1902-1939*, November 4, 1906, sec. Metropolitan Section

<sup>xiiii</sup> Sandra L. Tatman and Roger W. Moss, *Biographical dictionary of Philadelphia architects, 1700-1930* (G.K. Hall, 1985).

<sup>xlv</sup> Sandra L. Tatman and Roger W. Moss, *Biographical dictionary of Philadelphia architects, 1700-1930* (G.K. Hall, 1985), 304.

was later responsible for a major repair and renovation to the Treasury Building.<sup>xlv</sup> Shortly after their selection as the contractor for the Treasury Department renovation, however, the company went into receivership.

### Biographical summary of George H. Higbee

Born 1836 in Cincinnati, Ohio, George H. Higbee was raised in Trenton, New Jersey and graduated from Princeton in 1854. After beginning his career as a civil engineer with a railroad company in New Jersey, Higbee moved to Cedar Rapids, Iowa where he worked as a surveyor and farmer before returning to New Jersey to continue work with the railroad. With the start of the US Civil War, Higbee began service on May 14, 1861 and continued with the military until his honorable discharge on December 17, 1870. He returned to Burlington, Iowa in June 1870. In Burlington, Higbee purchased the Murray Iron Works and became a successful industrialist, banker, and prominent citizen.<sup>xlvi</sup>

Higbee's decision to purchase property for commercial development in the District of Columbia reflects the similar decision of many other Civil War veterans, such as General Mills who constructed the Mills Building in 1902. It appears likely that his selection of Henry L.A. Jekel and Edwin Gilbert as the architect and builder for the Westory Building follows from his long residence in the Philadelphia area and his the likely possibility that he was familiar with their work or their clients. Further evidence of his association with Philadelphia is the exclusive option offered to Thomas Keane, a Philadelphia businessman, who opened the Chop House *rathskeller* in the basement of the Westory Building. The Westory Building is the only property associated with George H. Higbee in the District.

### Biographical summaries of Westcott & Story

George H. Westcott, born in Philadelphia in 1872, moved to Washington, DC as a child to live with his uncle, Judge Charles Drake, Chief Justice of the US Court of Claims. Westcott trained as a lawyer but began work in real estate in 1895, beginning a partnership with John P. Story that continued for ten years before he established his own firm, Horace H. Westcott & Co. at 816 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW in 1908. Westcott remained active in local civic and social affairs throughout his life until his death in 1941.<sup>xlvii</sup>

Born in 1873, John P. Story, Jr. was the son of John Story, a brigadier general and Chief of Artillery in the US Army. John Story Jr. graduated from MIT and began work in real estate in Washington, DC in the late 1890s. Story and Company maintained an office at 812 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW. John P. Story Jr. died on April 1, 1966 at his residence.<sup>xlviii</sup>

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been Requested)  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # DC-329  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

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xlv International Association of Bridge, Structural, and Ornamental Iron Workers, *The Bridgemen's Magazine* (The Association, 1907).

xlvi Augustine M. Antrobus, *History of Des Moines County, Iowa* (The S. J. Clarke publishing company, 1915).

xlvii "H. H. Westcott To Be Buried In Maine," *The Washington Post*, June 2, 1941.

xlviii "Obituary 6 -- No Title," *The Washington Post, Times Herald* (1959-1973), April 3, 1966,

<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=199143492&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property** \_\_\_\_\_

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary of the property has not changed since the date of construction.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title Eli Pousson

organization District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office

date September 1, 2009

street & number 2000 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW, 4th Floor

telephone 202-442-7600

city or town Washington

state DC

zip code 20009

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

---

**Photographs:**

---

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

---

**Property Owner:**

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

---

name DESPA GESELLSCHAFT CASSIDY & PINKARD/STE 550

street & number 607 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW # 275

telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Washington

state DC

zip code 20005

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

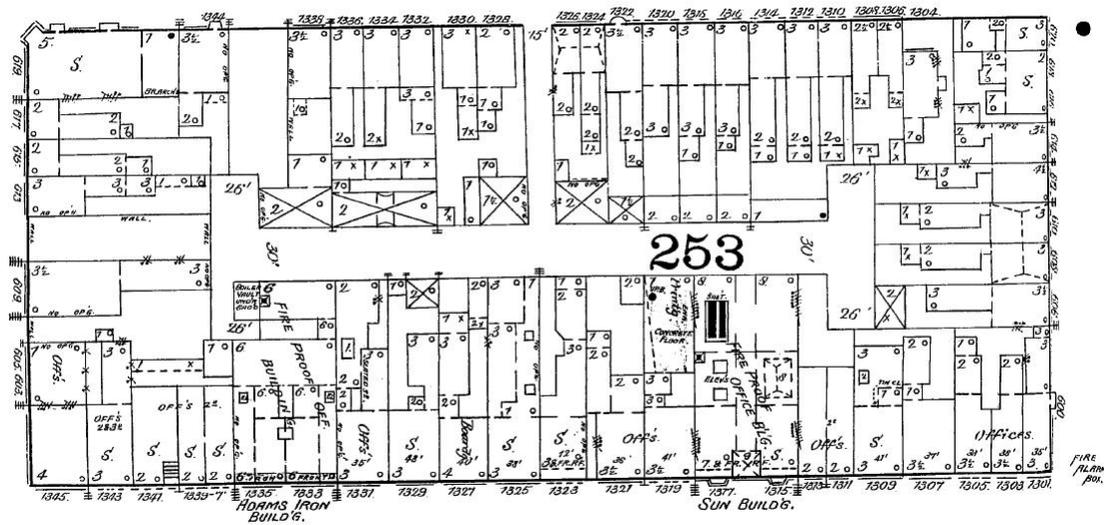


Figure 1 Square 253, 1888

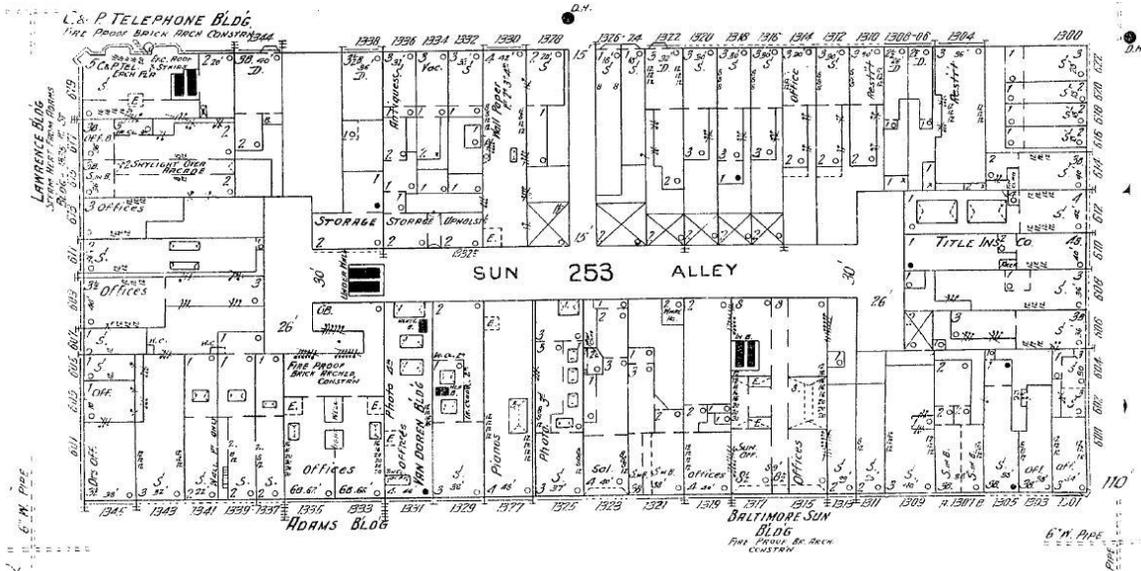


Figure 2 Square 253, 1903

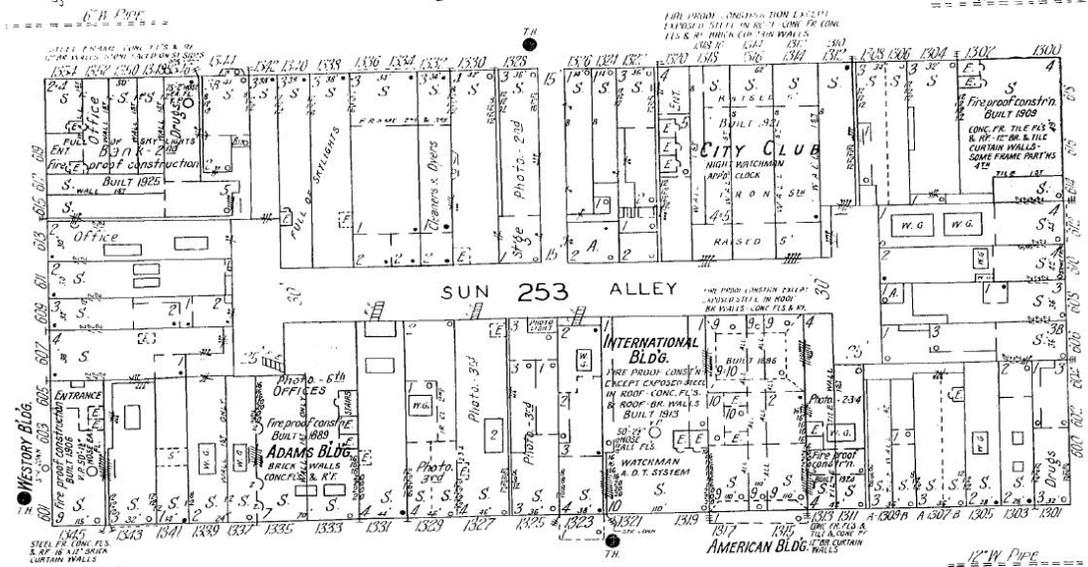


Figure 3 Square 253 with Westory Building identified, 1928

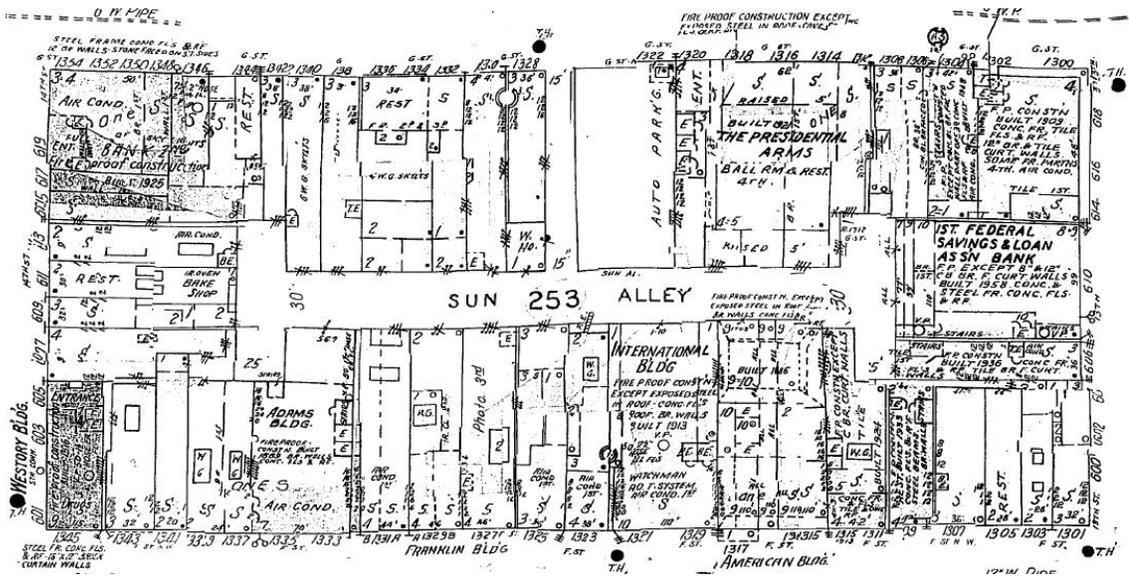
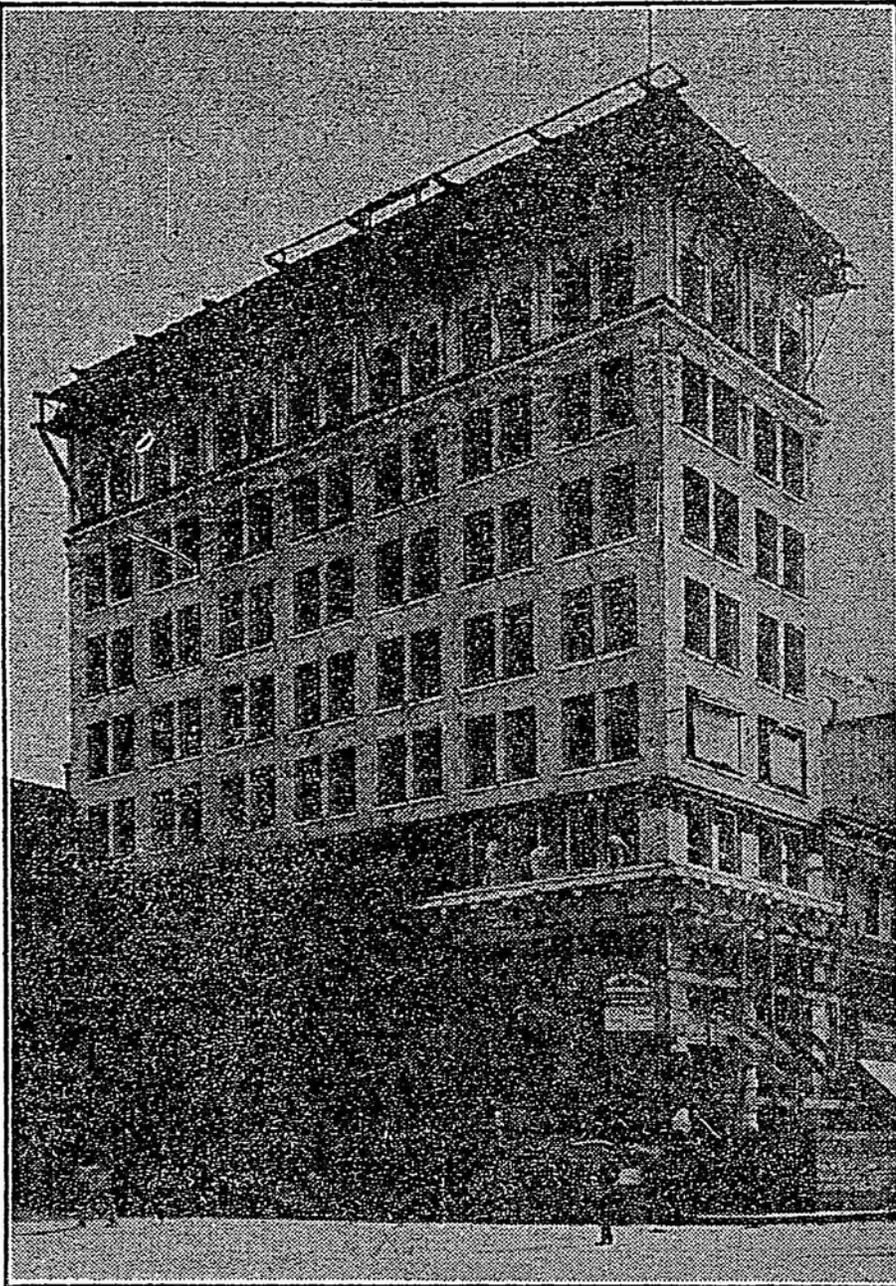


Figure 4 Square 253 with Westory Building identified, 1959

## SKYSCRAPER NEARS COMPLETION.



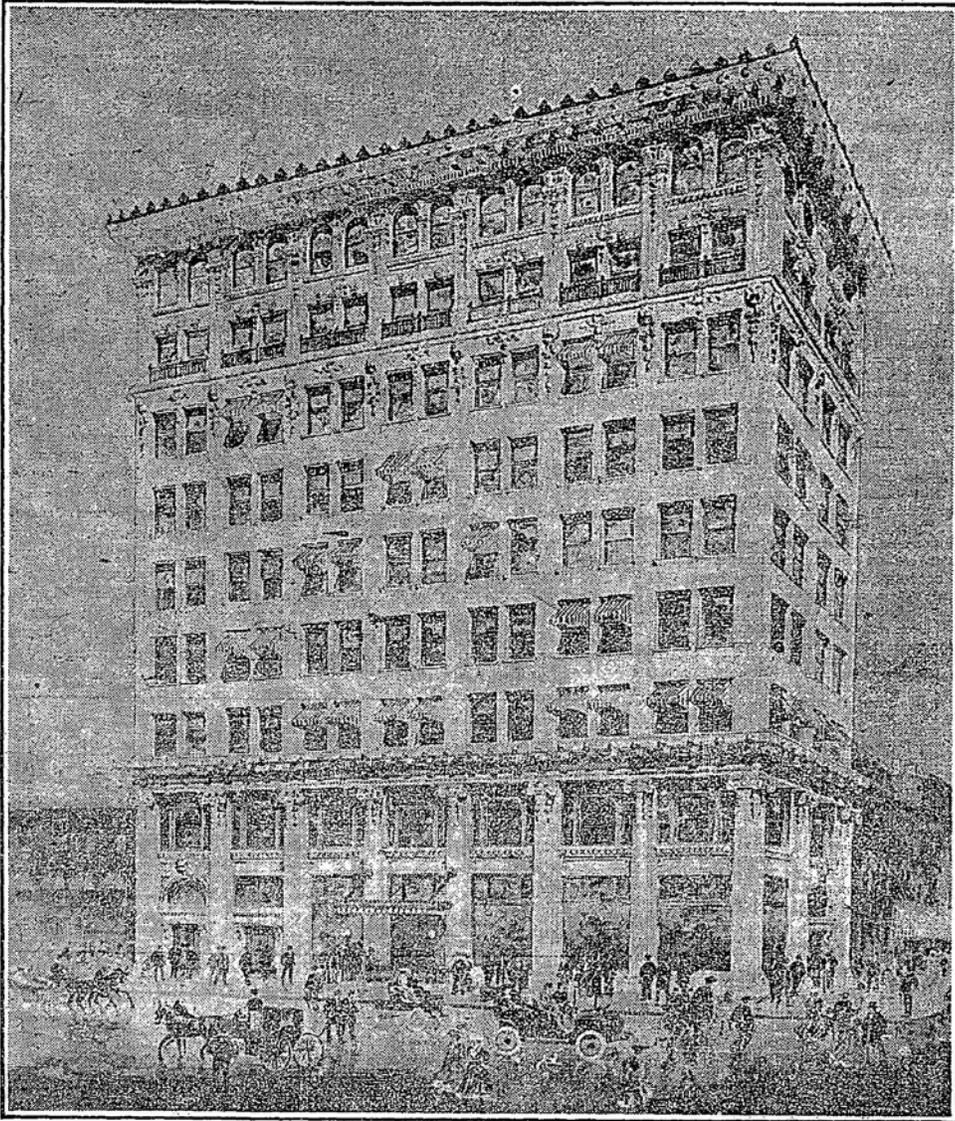
### THE WESTORY.

Photo by Harris-Ewing.

Office building on corner of F and Fourteenth streets will be thoroughly modern in equipment.

Figure 5 The Westory Building under construction, August 11, 1907

WESTORY BUILDING, TO BE ERECTED  
AT FOURTEENTH AND F STREETS



Henry L. A. Jehel, Architect.

Figure 6 Illustration of Westory Building, 1906



**Figure 7** Westory Building, 1967



**Figure 8** Westory Building, 1980



**Figure 9** Westory Building, 1990