

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD**  
**APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK OR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION**

New Designation     X      
Amendment of a previous designation     —    

Please summarize any amendment(s):

Property name Interstate Building/International Building  
*If any part of the interior is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.*

Address 1317 F Street, NW

Square and lot number(s) Square 0253; Lot 0807

Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2F

Date of construction 1912 Date of major alteration(s)                     

Architect(s) Milburn Heister & Co. Architectural style(s) Revival/ Beaux Arts

Original use Office Building Present use Office Building

Property owner Olive Limited Partnership

Legal address of property owner 1612 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006

NAME OF APPLICANT(S) D.C. Preservation League

*If the applicant is an organization, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.*

Address/Telephone of applicant(s) 401 F Street, NW, Room 324, Washington, DC 20001

Name and title of authorized representative Rebecca Miller, Executive Director

Signature of representative  Date 6/24/2011

Name and telephone of author of application Rebecca Miller (202-783-5144)

Date received                       
H.P.O. staff

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# 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 Interstate Building/International Building  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street & number 1319 F Street, NW  not for publication  
city or town Washington, D.C.  vicinity  
state \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

## 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/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
DC Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  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

Interstate Building  
Name of Property

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**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.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
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**

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Office Building

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Office Building

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVAL/Beaux Arts

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick and marble

roof: Slag

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 Interstate Building at 1319 F Street, NW is a 10-story office building located on the north side of F Street in the heart of the city's historic commercial downtown. The building, constructed in 1912, is located mid-block and is the westernmost of four historic buildings which form a historic focus to the streetscape. The other three buildings in the group are all listed as D.C. Landmarks and in the National Register of Historic Places and include the Baltimore Sun Building at 1317 F Street (1885-1887); the Harris & Ewing Photographic Studio at 1311-1313 F Street (1924); and the Brownley Building at 1309 F Street (1932).

The 1912 Interstate Building was designed by the architecture firm of Milburn, Heister and Co., and presents a fine example of an office building reflecting the typical early 20<sup>th</sup>-century, Chicago-style, three-part commercial form of base, middle and top. The base of the building is marble with a storefront extending across most of the façade and a Classical door surround providing access to the elevator lobby. The middle is clad in buff brick and extends six full stories in height. The top, corresponding with the upper two stories of the building, is clad in terra cotta and is the most ornate part of the building. A broad, overhanging cornice culminates at the top of the building, rising just slightly above the principal roof of the adjoining Sun Building.

The Interstate Building extends to the alley at the rear of the lot.

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### Narrative Description

The Interstate Building is a 10-story, five-bay-wide office building with a base, middle and top measuring approximately 58 feet wide by 114 feet deep. It is a steel frame structure set upon a concrete foundation with brick walls clad with marble, face brick and terra cotta. The roof is flat, covered with slag, and hidden behind the projecting cornice. A double-height storefront framed by a marble surround and projecting cornice with egg and dart molding comprises the base of the building. The storefront is divided into five bays with an entry located in the eastern-most end bay and show windows in the other four, all separated by masonry piers and surmounted by square transoms, with large windows recessed into the openings. Although the overall composition of the storefront is intact, its materials and windows have been altered in recent years. The terra cotta cladding of the piers has been removed and the piers covered with some kind of a parge coating. Exposed raw metal wraps the base of the piers, while a broad raw metal cornice projects above the show windows and below the transom windows. While each of the show windows is recessed between the piers, the entry to the office lobby is relatively flush with the wall plane and is surrounded by an ornate pedimented door surround. The surround is marble, with a molded and carved architrave surround including a Greek lotus motif. The surround is capped by a Greek Doric pediment, characterized by dentils in the cornice and raking cornice and by three acroteria on center and at the ends of the pediment. A frieze below the pediment holds the building's name in metal letters, reading INTERNATIONAL BUILDING, though ghosting reveals the original INTERSTATE name. The marble pediment is weathered and worn, but it is intact and stands out as the most architecturally distinctive element of the building's base.

The shaft or middle of the building, consisting of floors 3-8, is clad in buff brick and divided into five unadorned bays, each of which is defined by symmetrically arranged square-shaped, punched window openings with narrow sills. Pairs of 1/1 double-hung replacement windows are recessed into the openings. The eighth floor is capped by a terra cotta cornice which has the dual visual purpose of serving as the base for the top of the building. Marble jack-arched lintels with projecting keystones are located above the eighth floor windows, while decorative marble panels that visually recall drop molds are flush with the brick walls between the windows.

The top of the building, consisting of floors 9-10, treated as a single, double-height area, is ornately articulated with white terra cotta tile. Tall, double-height segmental arches with molded reveals frame the five bays, each of which include pairs of windows above and below a wide, terra cotta spandrel. The lower windows have pairs of rectangular, double-hung replacement sash, while the upper ones feature pairs of segmental arched replacement sash. The spandrel between the floors has three recessed panels, the center one being the widest. A keystone, located at the center of the segmental

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arch, has a central, recessed panel. A narrow frieze or bed molding which sits between the windows and cornice above and extends across the facade has small, square vent holes symmetrically aligned.

A broad and ornate complex marble cornice culminates at the top of the building. The marble cornice is visually supported by large, scrolled brackets located at each bay between the windows, with five oversized modillions in the soffit and interspersed between them. The scrolled brackets have top and bottom volutes with a carved garland wrapped around between them. A bed mold extends across the façade, below the soffit and spanning the bays between the oversized brackets. The bed molding is layered with an egg and dart molding at the lower level and dentils above. A narrow frieze below this bed molding features vent holes, while the top cornice capped by a cyma recta molding features a row of carved lion's heads with open mouths and full manes spaced evenly along the length of the cornice.

Historically, the west side elevation of the building rose above the lower three-story building abutting it. Currently, a slightly lower 10-story office building abuts the Interstate Building to the west, leaving only a narrow front portion of the upper floors of the building exposed. The terra cotta cladding turns the corner of the building at the upper level and cornice, while red brick walls are keyed into it to form corner quoining.

The rear of the building is visible from the alley. It is a utilitarian elevation clad with common red brick. Single, 1/1 replacement windows are located in each of the bays at each of the building's 10 stories.

Interior

When originally constructed, the Interstate Building was designed to offer additional office space for the International Commerce Commission whose workers were housed in the Baltimore Sun Building next door. As a result, the buildings were connected on the interior at each floor level. Following the departure of the ICC, the building was later renovated into 110 separate offices for professionals, and the connection with its neighboring building closed off. The ground floor consisted of a single store with show windows lighting the open space and a small elevator lobby providing access to the offices above. The ground floor retail area has been remodeled several times over the years and currently houses a restaurant. The elevator lobby remains essentially intact.

**INTEGRITY**

The Interstate Building maintains its integrity as a ten-story, early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Beaux Arts style office building located on F Street in downtown D.C. The building retains its original massing and materials and despite alterations to its storefront, retains its historic use with ground floor retail and upper floor offices. The marble base, terra cotta top and marble cornice are all intact and indicative of the high quality of design and craftsmanship associated with early 20<sup>th</sup> century office building design. The marble entry door and cornice have weathered and in need of repair, but are still intact and maintain their integrity of design, materials and craftsmanship. The original windows have been replaced with 1/1 replacement sash, but these replacements match the original size and configuration, so do not compromise the integrity of the building.

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**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

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**Period of Significance**

1912

**Significant Dates**

1912

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Milburn, Heister & Co.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The Period of Significance for the Interstate Building is 1912, the year the building was designed and constructed.

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

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

The Interstate Building is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C at the local level of significance as an excellent example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century office building, and under Criterion A as an office building built by private investors specifically to house the offices of the city's expanding federal government work force. Constructed in 1912, the Interstate Building was part of the first wave of purpose-built, high-rise office buildings erected in downtown D.C. Its construction illustrates the early growth of the city's 20<sup>th</sup> century downtown area, and represents the first phase of the area's transformation from residential to commercial/business.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**Architecture:** The Interstate Building is eligible for listing under Criterion C with architecture as the Area of Significance as a good example of the city's earliest, purpose-built, high-rise office buildings and a good example of the work of the architecture firm of Milburn, Heister and Co. The ten-story, five-bay-wide building--divided into the standard three-part, early 20<sup>th</sup>-century office building form with base, middle and top—is indicative of early 20<sup>th</sup> century office buildings in the city and is one of a few remaining from this period.

**Community Planning and Development:** The Interstate Building is eligible for listing under Criterion A with Community Planning and Development as the Area of Significance. The Interstate Building is one of the first office buildings to have been built by private investors to accommodate the growing federal government workforce. The rise of speculative office buildings contributed to the transformation of the formerly residential neighborhood of old downtown in to the city's principal business area.

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

Site and Building History:

Built in 1912, the Interstate Building is an excellent example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century speculative office building and representative of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century commercial growth of F Street. Prior to the Civil War, F Street was primarily a low-scale residential street with small-scaled business structures and taverns scattered along the corridor. Following the Civil War, Washington experienced a major commercial building boom along F Street, and by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the street had become the city's premier location for new office and commercial buildings. In 1885, the Victorian rusticated stone Baltimore Sun building was constructed in the 1300 block, where for two decades it rose well above its neighbors as the tallest building along the street, and indeed in the larger area. Several historic aerial photographs of the downtown area's skyline capture the soaring dominance of the Sun Building, with its prominent central tower still intact. In the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, several other multi-story office buildings arose along the street, thereby altering the Sun Building's distinction as the tallest building on the block. In 1906, the nine-story Westory building was constructed west of the Sun building at 14<sup>th</sup> and F Streets, replacing an older three-story building on its site, and in 1912, the Interstate building was built to abut the Sun Building to its immediate west. Like the Westory, the Interstate building displaced two, three-story buildings in its wake. By then, these ante-bellum red brick, gable-roofed residences had been converted to business use<sup>1</sup>, but like most of the other converted downtown residences, were proving too small for 20<sup>th</sup> century needs.

During the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, in order to house its growing bureaucracy and work force, the federal government occupied rental quarters in many of the city's formerly private residences and office buildings, becoming the city's single largest tenant. In 1912, the Interstate Building Corporation—formed by a group of businessmen described in period newspaper accounts as “out of town capitalists”—sought to capitalize on the government's need for consolidated rental space. At the time, the expanding Interstate Commerce Commission occupied all but the first story of the former Baltimore Sun building (then the American National Bank), plus offices in other nearby downtown buildings.<sup>2</sup> According to

<sup>1</sup> The former dwelling at 1319 F Street, NW was occupied at the time of its demolition by the Lewis Johnson & Co. See “Ten Story Office Building Planned for 1319 F Street,” *The Washington Star*, 1/18/1912 p. 2. However, an historic photo of the building indicates that it was formerly the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company.

<sup>2</sup> See “I.C.C. Expanding Fast; Soon Will Occupy 175 Rooms to House Force and Records,” *The Washington Post*, April 14, 1912.

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period accounts, the Interstate Commerce Commission had grown from a force of 250 in 1904-05 to one of 700 in 1912, and was accumulating extensive documents and papers, all of which needed to be properly housed. For several years, the ICC had been pushing for quarters of its own and in 1912, succeeded in having a bill introduced in Congress to erect one. However, until that dedicated building was erected, ultimately not until ### the ICC still had an immediate and pressing need for space.

Recognizing the larger need for the government to consolidate its department offices, and the specific need of the ICC, the Interstate Building Corporation purchased the lots adjacent to the Sun building with the intention of building an office building for the International Commerce Commission. According to the *Washington Star*, "the plan contemplates the cutting through of corridors into the American National Bank building, so that the commission may have all the office space in both structures. In effect, the two buildings will be so closely united physically that if regarded as one building, it will be the single largest office building in the city."<sup>3</sup> According to period accounts, the Corporation had already made arrangements with the government to lease all of the 175 offices above the first floor to the ICC. With the guarantee of such a lease, the officers and founders of the Interstate Building Corporation were effectively building a speculative office building without the risk of speculation.<sup>4</sup> The officers included J. W. Henry, president; Colin Livingston, vice president; and Alexander McNeil, manager.

The Corporation was not alone in investing in private office space for the federal government. An article highlighting construction of the Interstate building titled "Capitalists Plan to Build for Government," the *Washington Star* notes that other "capitalists" were doing the same thing as the Interstate Building Corporation, concluding that "the number of such enterprises, either contemplated or actually decided upon at this time, gives an excellent outward indication of the growth of the machinery of the government."<sup>5</sup>

To design its office building, the Interstate Building Corporation turned to the firm of Milburn, Heister & Co., a noted architectural practice that was on its way to becoming one of the city's most important office building designers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The firm had moved to Washington, from Columbia, South Carolina in 1907 after having worked on the Southern Railway Office building at 13<sup>th</sup> and Pennsylvania Avenue. For this mid-block F Street site, the firm designed a five-bay, ten-story Beaux Arts style building presenting a "Chicago-style," three-part commercial form. The building was described in period accounts as "one of the finest office buildings in the city, the plans calling for a fireproof structure throughout with steel frame construction. The F Street façade will be pressed brick, terra cotta, and marble, with the details worked out to harmonize with the design."<sup>6</sup> In May 1912, the former residences at 1319 and 1321 F Street were razed and excavation begun for the new office building. Less than three months later, in August 1912, the Interstate Building was well under way, under the capable direction of Wells Bros. Company, builders. At that time, completion of the building was expected by October of that year, one month ahead of schedule. The local press hailed the "fast work in building" and noted that "Seldom in the history of Washington has the record for rapid construction established by the work on the new Interstate building been equaled, and old builders say that it has never been beaten."<sup>7</sup>

On September 15, 1912, the Interstate Building was completed in just four months, more than two months before its scheduled November 30 completion. The credit for the speedy, but competent construction job was attributed to the Wells Bros. Company, who in turn credited the architects, noting that the contractors had been "greatly aided in the construction by the completeness of the work of the architects."<sup>8</sup> Upon its opening, the building was described as "one of the most imposing structures on F Street." The local press noted the building's white marble base and "tapestry" brick walls and proffered that the interior offices "are as handsomely finished as any in Washington." The technological achievements of the building were also touted, especially the "plunger elevators" which assured the tenants "ample service for reaching the upper floors without delay."<sup>9</sup> For five years after its construction, the Interstate building was home

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According to the article and prior to construction of the Interstate building, the ICC occupied offices in the American National Bank, and in the nearby Armes and Gover buildings on G Street, NW.

<sup>3</sup> "Ten-story Office Building Planned for 1319 F Street," *The Washington Star*, 1/18/1912, p.2.

<sup>4</sup> See "New Building for Interstate Commerce Commission," *The Washington Star*, 1/20/1912, p. 2-1 and "Capitalists Plan to Build for Government," *The Washington Star*, 1/27/1912, o. 2-1.

<sup>5</sup> "Capitalists Plan to Build for Government; F Street Structure for Commerce Commission—Others in Contemplation." *The Washington Star*, 1/27/1912, p. 2-1.

<sup>6</sup> "Plan Interstate Building: Owners Expect to Start Work on F Street Structure Soon," *The Washington Post*, January 21, 1912, p. R4.

<sup>7</sup> "Fast Work in Building," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 1912, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> "Fast Work in Building," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 1912, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> "Built in Record Time, Interstate Structure Finished Before Limit Expires, Wells Brothers Praised," *The Washington Post*, September 29, 1912, p. F4.



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to the Interstate Commerce Commission. In 1917, the ICC moved into a new office building, erected specifically for the ICC at 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Pennsylvania Avenue and in 1935, it moved into Federal Triangle. At the time of its opening, Charles Kaufman & Son's Young Men's Shop occupied the ground floor retail area.

Following the ICC's move in 1917, the Interstate building housed the United States Shipping Board for several years, during which time it changed ownership twice. It was sold first to Morris Cafritz, then to Austin L. Zachary, both of whom purchased the building for investment purposes. In 1921, the Shipping Board vacated the building, at which point the property was purchased by Mrs. George M. Morse. Morse renovated and remodeled it into 110 rooms and suites of offices for professionals. In a transaction with an unnamed investor, Mrs. Morse apparently exchanged two buildings—an apartment building in Mt. Pleasant and an historic house called Mt. Eagle in Alexandria—for the downtown office building, then valued at \$750,000.<sup>10</sup> Then Mrs. Morse renamed the building the International Building and several months later had sold it to another investor. In lieu of or in addition to cash, Mrs. Morse received to apartment buildings in the transaction—the Biltmore Apartments at 19<sup>th</sup> and Biltmore and the apartment building at 1511 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, N.W.<sup>11</sup>

In January of 1922, John H. Bartlett, former governor of New Hampshire and then president of the Civil Service Commission, and his business partner, Albert Hislop purchased the International Building.<sup>12</sup> Bartlett and Hislop were part of a trend of out-of-town investors speculating on the city's real estate market which was apparently priced lower than other, similar cities.<sup>13</sup> Bartlett and Hislop continued to own the building until at least the late 1940s. In the interim, Bartlett purchased several other downtown buildings adding to his real estate investments in this city.

Throughout the changes in ownership and upper floor tenants, the Charles Kaufman & Sons, Young Men's Shop continuously occupied the ground floor retail space from the opening of the building in 1912, until after 1960.

Charles Kaufman & Son, Clothiers:

In July of 1912, Charles Kaufman & Son, Clothiers announced that it would open a new store on the ground floor of the Interstate building upon its opening in October. The store was expected "to be the most modern-equipped clothing store south of New York. The elaborate fixtures that are to be installed will be so arranged as to make the entire stock visible."<sup>14</sup> In November, several weeks after the upper floor offices were opened for business, Kaufman's opened its Young Men's Shop in the ground floor retail space. Upon its opening, the store was hailed for its haberdashery and its display inventions, but most notably for its use of salesgirls:

"One innovation which is new in the District, and which is expected to prove popular, is the introduction of salesgirls to handle different lines. Men accustomed to depend on a woman's judgment concerning colors and combinations of color will be able to get expert advice of trained saleswomen. Dainty misses will sell neckties and such things and add attractiveness to the new shop."<sup>15</sup>

In addition to the salesgirls, the press made note of the store's show windows, commenting:

"The show window on F Street is expected to be one of the marvels of this already up-to-date street. The window is 60 feet long and deep enough to allow all the arts of the window dresser to be exercised. In this window will be displayed samples of the treats in clothing and haberdashery to be found within the shop."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup> "Realty Exchange Involves Million," *The Evening Star*, April 2, 1921, p. 2-1. According to this newspaper article, Mount Eagle was built in 1739 and was originally the home of the Bryan, Eighth Lord Fairfax.

<sup>11</sup> See "Building Brings \$700,000 at Sale, The Interstate Property on F Street Goes to a Local Investor," *The Evening Star*, August 27, 1921.

<sup>12</sup> "International Building is Sold in Largest Deal Here in Months," *The Washington Post*, January 22, 1922, p. 46.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> "The New Kaufman Store," *The Washington Post*, July 7, 1912, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> "New Store a Marvel," *The Washington Post*, November 30, 1912, p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

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The Young Men's Shop, founded by Stanley Kaufman in 1912 in the Interstate Office Building, was an off-shoot of the long-standing Kaufman family clothing store. Kaufman clothiers had been in existence since the Civil War with its earliest store located on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Milburn, Heister & Co., Architects

Milburn, Heister & Company was one of the most prominent architectural firms in D.C. and the Southern states during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Beginning in the 1880s, architect Frank P. Milburn built his practice into the largest architectural business south of the Mason Dixon. Milburn, an extremely successful businessman, designed over 250 major government and commercial buildings in the southeastern United States by the time of his death. Of the many buildings his firm completed in Washington, the Interstate Building is one of only a surviving few that remain today.<sup>17</sup>

Initially working under the name Frank P. Milburn & Company, Milburn relocated his thriving architectural business to D.C. to form Milburn, Heister & Company in 1907 with his partner, Michael Heister. While in D.C, Milburn capitalized on his talents as a businessman to expand the firms operations, relegating much of the design work to Heister, his former draftsman. Developing into one of the first architectural firms with a regional practice, the firm became widely known in southern states, where it designed a variety of high-profile structures. In addition to banks, hotels, and residences, Milburn, Heister & Company designed prominent public buildings, including statehouses, courthouses, and asylums. Milburn's ability to win government commissions was a major factor in his success—he and his firm designed at least 59 courthouses during his career. In addition, Milburn enjoyed the position of official architect of the Southern Railway Company and designed many of its stations. These high-profile projects enabled him to expand his practice across the South.<sup>18</sup>

In D.C., Milburn, Heister & Company designed various banking, federal and commercial buildings. At the time of his death in 1926, Milburn was given credit for designing more than half of the largest business buildings in the city and many substantial government buildings as well. The firm's major commissions included the six-thousand seat Washington Auditorium (1922-24) and the World War I Victory Arch (1919).<sup>19</sup> Milburn, Heister & Company was the preeminent builder of Washington office buildings in its day and designed more than 15 between 1910 and 1920. Only three of these tall office buildings remain: the Interstate Commerce Building (1912) at 1319 F Street NW, the Continental Trust Building (1913-14) at 1343 H Street NW, and the Federation of Labor (1915-16) at 901 Massachusetts Avenue NW. The Federation of Labor is the only building by the firm designated a historic landmark. It is listed in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites, in the National Register, and is a National Historic Landmark.<sup>20</sup> A handful of other types of buildings designed by the firm remain in the city, including Lansburgh's Department Store at Eighth and E Streets NW, the Holy Comforter School Building at Fifteenth and East Capital Street SE, and the Milburn Apartment Building at 1016 Sixteenth Street, NW.

Prior to 1910, Milburn did not limit himself to an individual style. Milburn's patrons in the New South sought to imitate Northern architecture, and Milburn met this demand by competently designing buildings in nearly every popular style of the period. However, by the 1910s and 1920s, the firm abandoned eclecticism in favor of a more coherent mode of Beaux-Arts classicism, an aesthetic characteristic to the era.<sup>21</sup> The firm's standard stylistic approach to the office building emphasized horizontality and borrowed elements from traditional classical architecture. Major D.C. works such as the Southern Railway Office Building, the United State Department of Commerce Building, and the Powhatan Hotel (all demolished) had broad, unbroken brick facades ruled by strong unembellished projecting cornices. They were capped with heavy and ornate overhanging cornices that further underscored the buildings' horizontality.<sup>22</sup> The Interstate Building followed this trend, in that the architectural emphasis was placed on the ground floor store front and the upper floors and cornice, with sparse detailing in between.

<sup>17</sup> Vivian, Daniel J. "A Practical Architect: Frank P. Milburn and the Transformation of Architectural Practice in the New South, 1890-1925." *Winterthur Portfolio*, 40:1 (2005), p. 17.

<sup>18</sup> Vivian, p. 17-29. "Skilled Architects," *The Washington Post*, February 24, 1907, p. 24.

<sup>19</sup> Vivian, p. 31-32, 39.

<sup>20</sup> Design Forum Architects. "DC Downtown Office Building Survey, Phase II Final Report: Historic Context Statement," 1992, p. 49.

<sup>21</sup> Vivian, p. 35.

<sup>22</sup> *Selection of the Latest Work of Milburn, Heister & Company, Architects*, Washington, D.C., 1922.

<http://www.archive.org/details/selectionsfromla00milb>

Interstate Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

Immediately following its design of the Interstate Building, Milburn, Heister & Company designed two of its most notable buildings in Washington: the Real Estate Trust building and Lansburgh's Department Store, both highly ornate terra cotta designs. The Real Estate Trust building, built 1913, stands apart for its polychrome facade, while Lansburgh's, built 1916, is studded with elaborately detailed white terra cotta tiles featuring abstract classical motifs.

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### 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

"Building Brings \$700,000 at Sale: The Interstate Property on F Street Goes to a Local Investor," *The Evening Star*, 8/27/1921.

"Built in Record Time; Interstate Structure Finished Before Limit Expires," *The Washington Post*, 9/29/1912, p. F4.

"Business Building at 13<sup>th</sup> and F Assured," *The Evening Star*, 8/8/1913, p. 2.

"Capitalists Plan to Build for Government," *The Evening Star*, 1/27/1912, p. 2-1.

"F Street Property Transferred," *The Washington Post*, April 21, 1912, p. F4.

"Fast Work in Building," *The Washington Post*, 8/11/1912, p. 9.

"Plans for New Office Building on F Street," *The Evening Star*, 1/20/1912, p. 2-1.

"Realty Exchange Involves Million," *The Evening Star*, 4/2/1921, p. 2-1.

"Structure Planned for F Street; Plan Interstate Building," *The Washington Post*, 1/21/1912, p. R4.

"Ten-story Office Building Planned," *The Evening Star*, 1/19/1912, p. 2.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**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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### 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Interstate Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

**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.)

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title \_\_\_\_\_  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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**Additional Documentation**

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.)

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**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.

Interstate Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

**Name of Property:**

**City or Vicinity:**

**County:**

**State:**

**Photographer:**

**Date Photographed:**

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:**

1 of \_\_\_\_.

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**Property Owner:** (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

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name \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**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.).

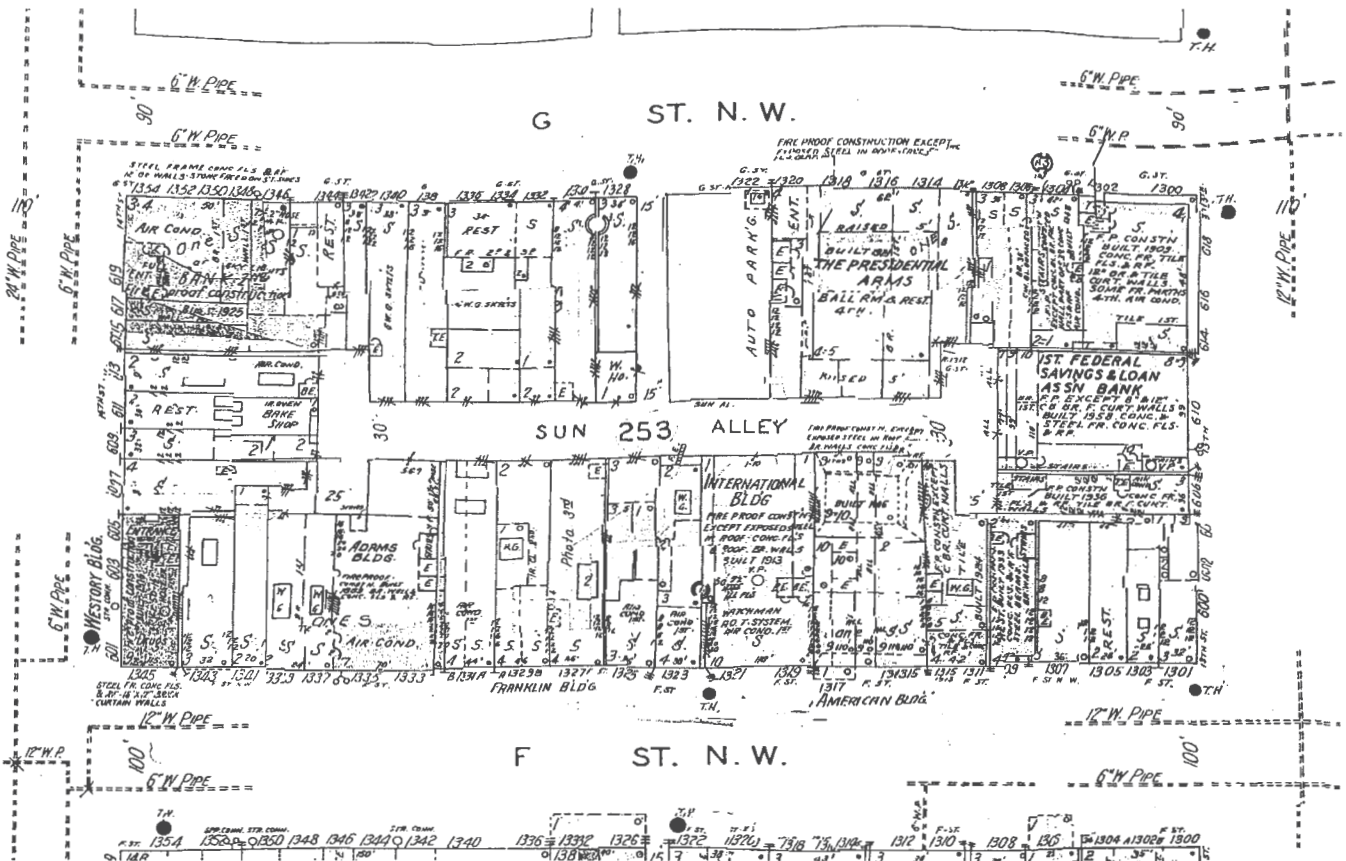
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

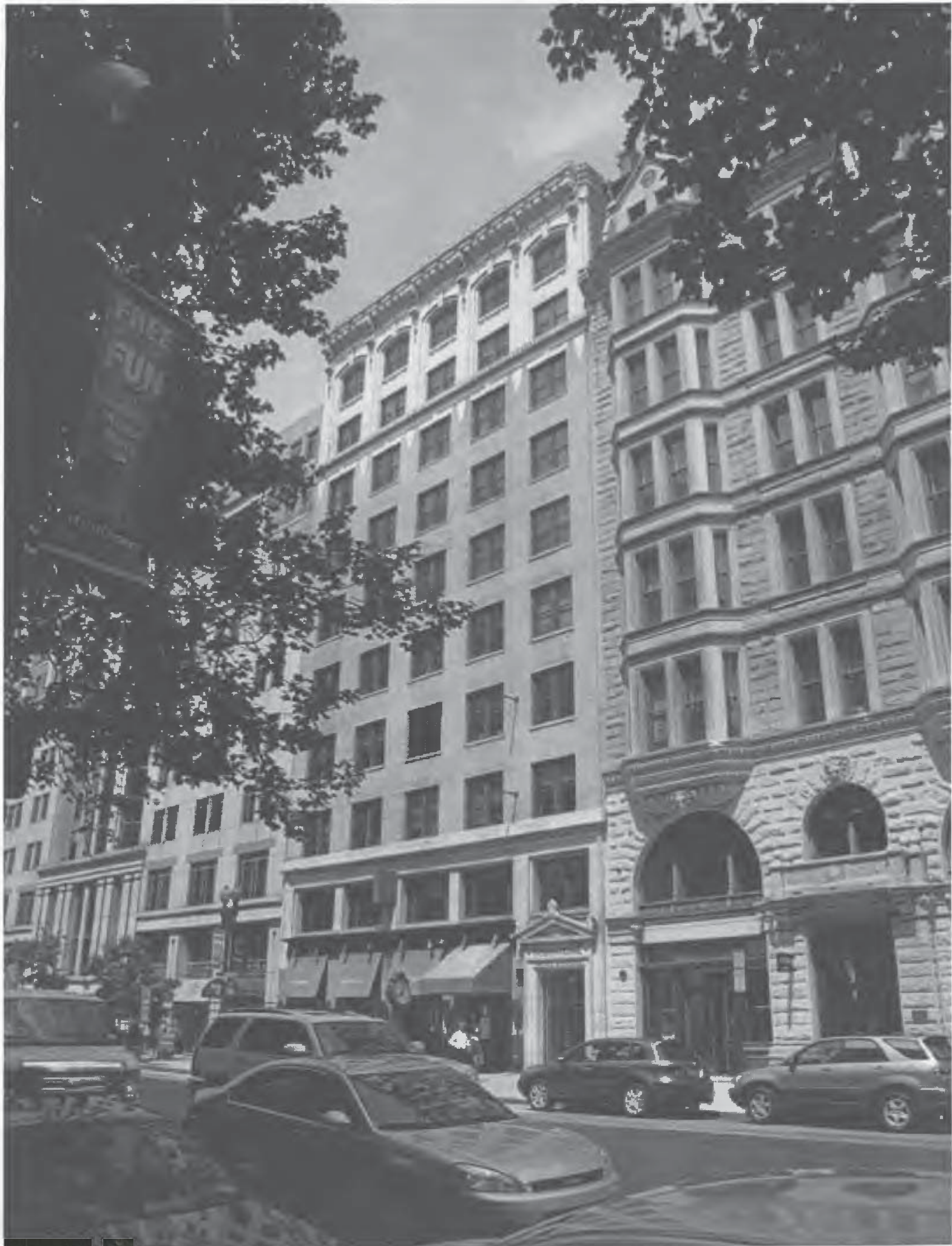
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Interstate Building
Name of Property Washington, D.C.
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Maps Page 1

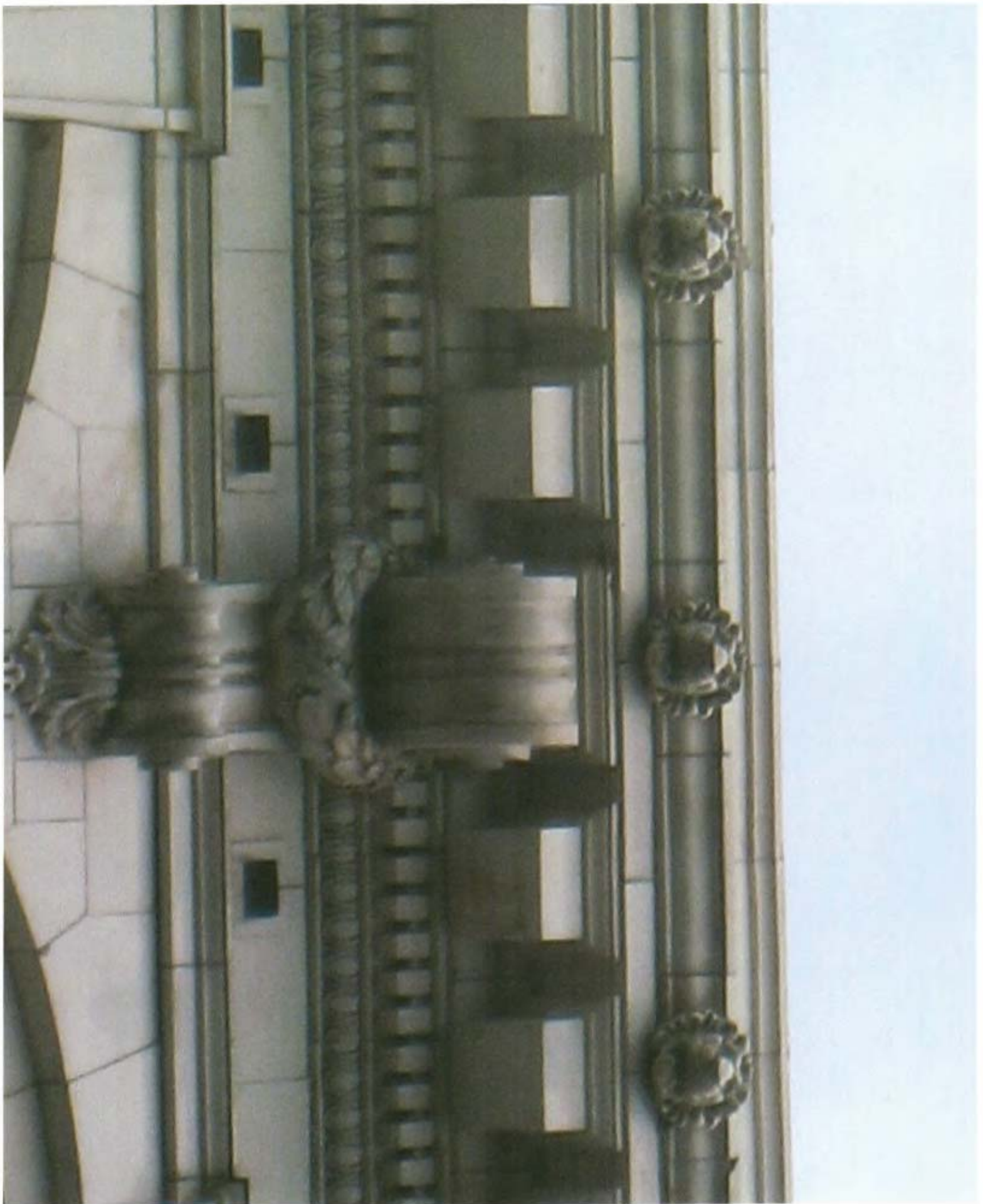














INTERNATIONAL

OFFICE BUILDING

1319