

On the other hand, the Peabody Institute [C2] and City Hall [D11] are significant demonstrations of the first tentative uses of structural iron in conjunction with traditional building techniques.

George Peabody, merchant and financier, who had begun his business career in Baltimore but had subsequently moved to London, in 1857 proposed to give to Baltimore an endowed cultural center which would encompass art, music, and literature. It was the first philanthropy of its kind in Baltimore and among the first in the country. Peabody insisted on placing his institute on a corner of Mount Vernon Place facing the Washington Monument, even though it was one of the most expensive building sites available. To house this magnificent gift, architect Edmund George Lind, recently arrived from London where he had been trained at the Government School of Design at Somerset House, designed an Italian Renaissance palace with marble facing. The exterior is little better than an exercise in classicism, but the extensive use of structural iron is highly original. The concert hall is spanned with iron beams and braced with iron columns, although everything is covered with plaster. There is a splendid iron spiral staircase from the cellar to the top floor, but the most exciting feature is the library reading room, a great six-story room walled with balconies and book stacks and illuminated by a skylight. All of this is supported on iron members, and iron is used extensively for balconies, floors, and shelving. It is a proto-modern construction of much sophistication.

At the same time the Peabody Institute was going forward, Baltimore put up its first large City Hall, begun in 1867 and completed in 1875. A young Baltimore architect, George A. Frederick, received the commission; for style he turned to the French Second Empire of Napoleon III as illustrated in the New Louvre of the 1850s. Popular in America at the time, it was used for such contemporary buildings as the Boston City Hall of 1862-65 and the State, War, and Navy Department building (now the Executive Office Building) adjoining the White House. Frederick capped his mansard roofs with a tall, slender dome inspired by Thomas U. Walter's recently completed dome for the United States Capitol.

If the architectural style for the City Hall was derivative and uninspired, Frederick's use of iron was bold

and modern. Although the building weight is carried on masonry walls, the floor joists, rafters, and four grand staircases are iron. The chief glory is the towering cast-iron dome and drum, designed and built by Wendel Bollman.

The exploration of the new technology of iron construction is interesting to us, but it was peripheral to the desires of the architects' clients of the mid-century. To them, superficial style was more important; the whole range of historical mannerisms from Orient to Occident was ransacked for ideas, with very little concern as to whether they were academically "correct" or not.

Where the monumental effect still seemed appropriate (the Peabody, City Hall) the designs came from the Renaissance. This elaborate and formal manner was used both for the iron-front office buildings downtown and for fine private town houses in the Mount Vernon Place area.

John Rudolph Niernsee, Austrian-born and trained, and his Baltimore partner, J. Crawford Neilson, designed a number of the great town houses. Their masterpiece is the 1851 mansion at 1 West Mount Vernon Place (Hackerman House [C18]). Others are the Miller House, at 700 Cathedral Street, and Asbury House [C8], next to the Mount Vernon Place Methodist Church [C9], where the Italian palazzo style is rendered in brownstone. The change in fashion in only a decade is illustrated by comparing these buildings with the restrained classicism of the Mount Vernon Club [C16].

Gothic was preferred for churches, but the trend was away from the regularity and bookish quality of Long's Franklin Street Church to the picturesque character of earlier periods such as "English Decorated" and "Norman Gothic," as contemporaries called them. Niernsee and Neilson designed three very different specimens in the early 1850s: Grace and St. Peter's Church [C15] in English country-parish Gothic; Emmanuel Church [C11] (originally Norman in style but remodeled in 1919 to appear more academically Gothic); and the elaborate mortuary chapel for Green Mount Cemetery [K2].

Another dimension of the Gothic, figuratively and literally, was provided by Norris G. Starkweather in the vertical lines and soaring tower of the First Presbyterian Church [C13], begun in 1853 and completed in 1874. The interior is a flamboyant display of intricate plasterwork.

decades) have also been renovated. D'Aleo, Inc., was the renovation architect. The Call Room's main attraction (restored in the 1970s) is *Entering Port*, a 30-by-63-foot ceiling canvas depicting a fleet of ships and the surrounding smaller paintings illustrating *The History of Navigation*. They are by Francis Davis Millet, reflect the complementary nature of art and architecture at the turn of the century, and are considered by experts to be among "the finest decorative art of any public building in the country." ❖



D11 • CITY HALL

(BCL, NR)

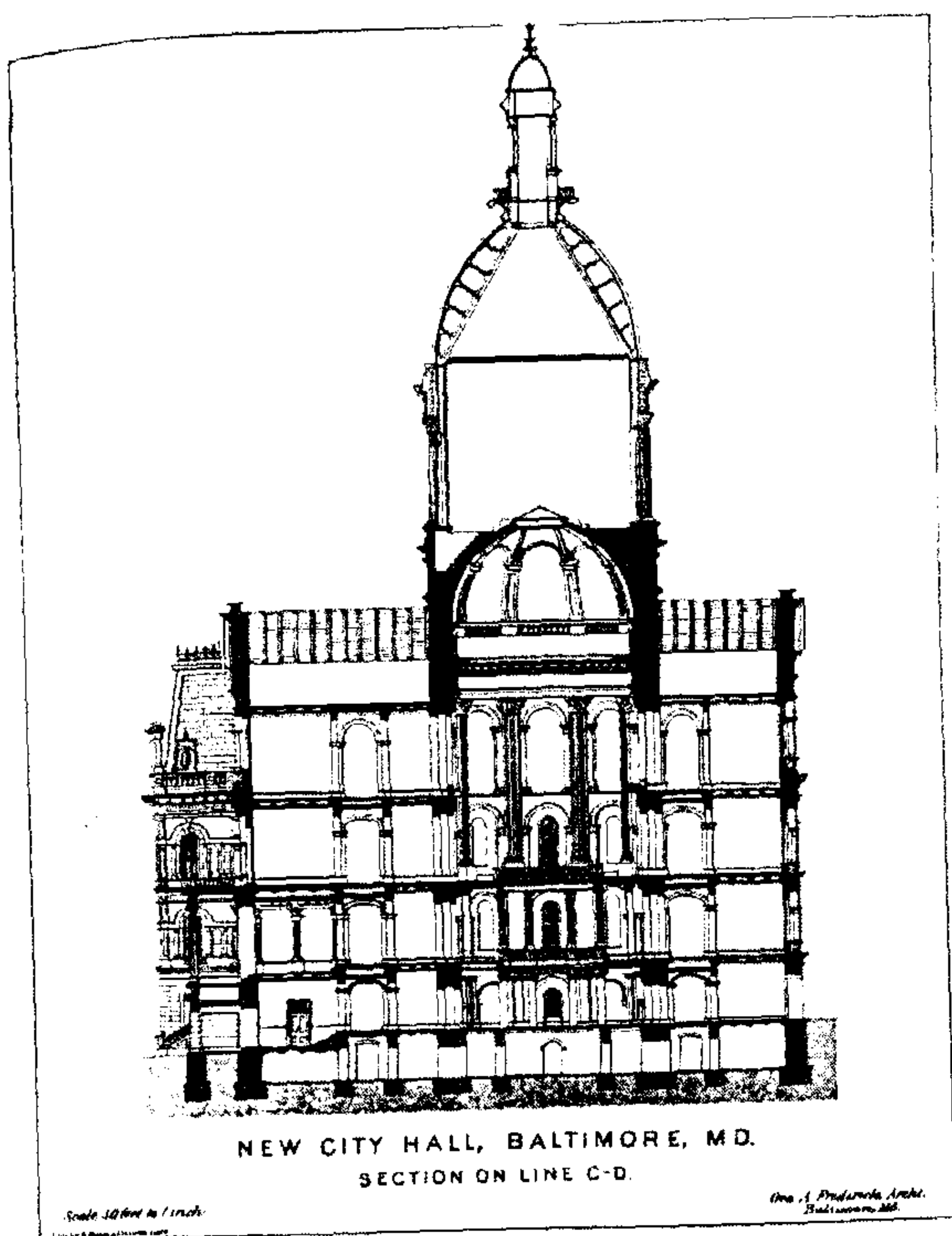
100 Holliday Street

*1875 — George A. Frederick; 1975 — Architectural Heritage;
Meyers and D'Aleo, renovation architect*

This building, influenced by the French Second Empire style, was Frederick's first commission. He was under twenty years old when he submitted the winning design.

The four-story building has two connected lateral wings three stories high with mansard roofs. These, the arched windows, bull's eye dormers, and other decorations show French influence applied with a certain dryness that keeps the building, though handsome, from rising to any really exciting level.

The structure of the roof is of iron, and much iron was also used in the interior structure; however, the building has brick bearing walls 5½ feet thick, faced with local Beaver Dam marble. The building is topped by a segmental cast-iron dome.



The interior rotunda rises 119 feet through three stories, surrounded by Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian columns, and culminates in an interior dome. The exterior dome rises to 227 feet. The segmental dome design was by Wendel Bollman (see Essays, p.13), with iron by Bartlett, Robbins and Company.

In 1975, the building was successfully renovated, saving the best of the old while making as much use of space as possible. The job involved restoration of the rotunda and ceremonial chambers, repair of the dome, and the opening of two courtyards roofed with glass to make public areas suitable for exhibitions. Two new floors were inserted to make six out of four. The building was rededicated in January 1977.

Its original cost had been \$2.3 million (\$250,000 less than the appropriation), plus \$104,000 for furnishings. The cost of the renovation was \$10.5 million, plus \$850,000 for furnishings.

The plaza in front of City Hall and the Greek classical War Memorial Building which faces City Hall on the other side of the plaza were both designed by Laurence Hall Fowler in 1925. ❖



oak and walnut furniture, and stained-glass windows.) The roof of the nave reaches almost to the height of the towers, which are capped by pyramidal roofs. In 1882, Baldwin added the apse and two side rooms, or pavilions, at the southern end without violating the original composition. The building is of brick covered with stucco and has a rubble stone foundation. The church closed in 1966. ❖

F13 • ST. JAMES AND ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

(NR)

1225 East Eager Street

1867—*George A. Frederick*

Like a medieval church in a provincial town in France, the former St. James and St. John's, its rectory, and the adjacent Institute of Notre Dame school buildings dominate East Baltimore's skyline and anchor the surrounding community. (The 256-foot church steeple is one of the tallest in the city.)

In 1841, Redemptorist priests took over the original St. James Church, completed in 1834 on this site, when its Irish parishioners left to worship at the newly established St. Vincent de Paul Church in Old Town [F2], and the German-speaking members remained. The Sisters of Notre Dame bought some of the church property and in 1847 set up a school for young women. The Redemptorists also started a school for training priests. By the 1860s, the growing congregation required a replacement church.

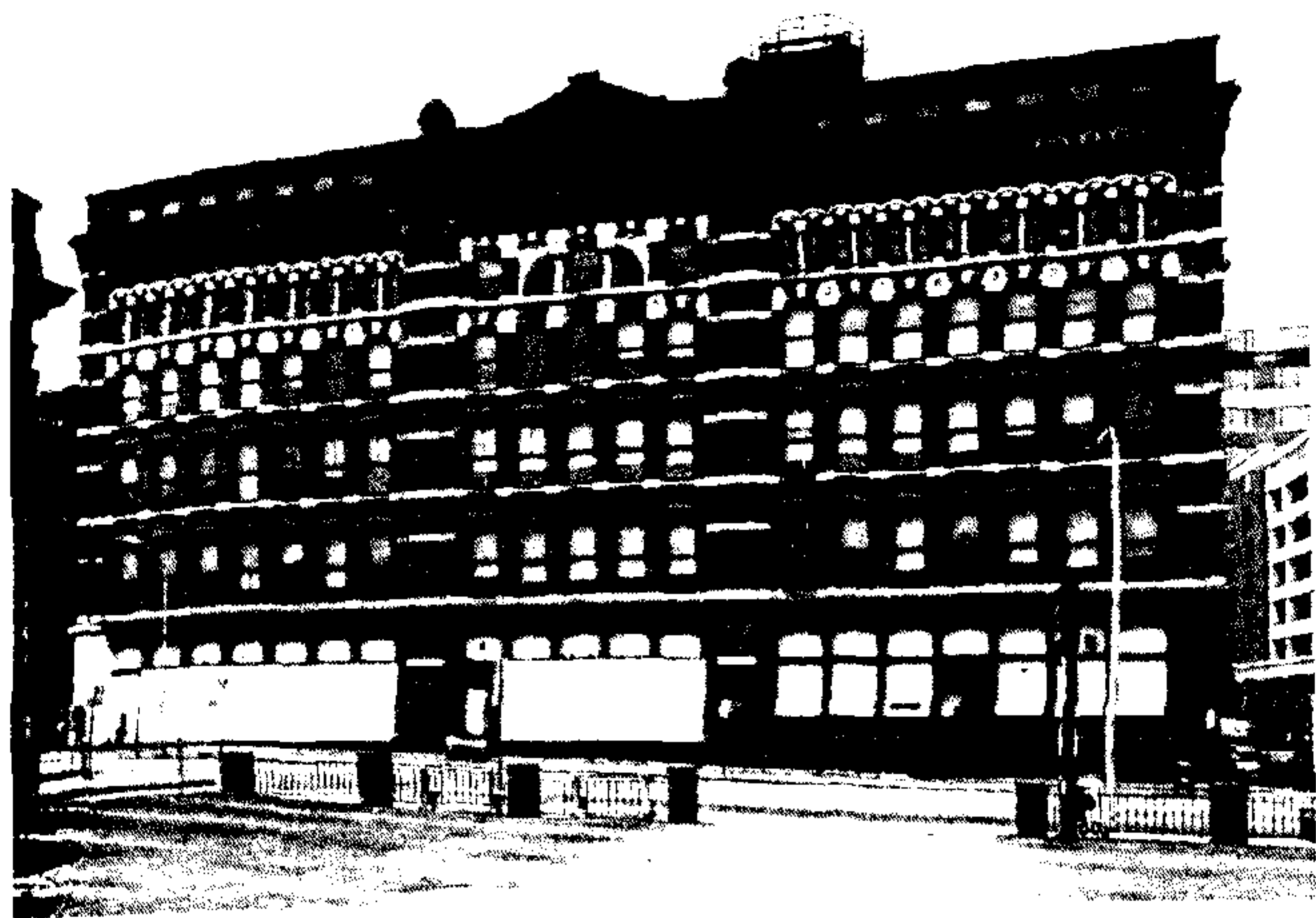


Frederick designed a huge Romanesque Revival building with a high-reaching spire (added 1885) and a variegated façade of brick with stone trim and white marble steps. The interior was a single large space 184 feet long, 65 feet wide, and two stories high, unobstructed by columns, except for cast-iron ones that supported the rear choir loft and galleries. The walnut pews could seat eighteen hundred people (the Redemptorists were dedicated to preaching), and the room was decorated with stained-glass windows, marble altars, railings, statuary, and wall murals. There was a locally built organ in the choir loft, and the four tower bells, weighing 1 to 2½ tons each, were cast by Baltimore's McShane Bell Foundry. The Eager Street rectory is believed to have been built at the same time as the church.

The Institute of Notre Dame gradually expanded to encompass the block bounded by Eager, Aisquith, Ashland, and Somerset streets. The oldest parts date from 1852–53; in the sections added later are striking interior spaces, including the chapel.

In 1966, the church of St. John the Evangelist [F12] (which also began as an Irish parish), closed and merged with the St. James Church. When the combined church closed in 1986, the stained-glass windows, organ, and other decorations were removed and sold or distributed to other churches; the pews and tower bells remain. In 1990, the Urban Bible Fellowship Church bought the church building and now holds services there.

The Institute of Notre Dame, 150 years old, has 440 students, grades 9–12; in 1992, the school added a new gymnasium to the complex. ❖



E.6 • ABELL BUILDING

329–335 West Baltimore Street

ca. 1878—George A. Frederick

The Abell Building's remarkable visual impact is due to a combination of materials and styles. The materials are cast iron and Baltimore brick, with bluestone, white marble, and terra-cotta trim. The styles blend a precise Neo-Grec storefront with an exuberant Italianate façade. The product is Baltimore's finest surviving warehouse from the period.

Its size and corner location also lend prominence to the structure, built as an investment property for A. S. Abell, then owner of the *Baltimore Sun*. It is actually a "double warehouse" with a longitudinal dividing wall creating space for two sets of tenants on each of its six floors. (A variety of tenants, from printers to insurance companies, occupied the building; the clothing industry predominated and some of these firms remain.)

Bartlett, Robbins and Company produced the 276-foot, cast-iron storefront, extending around three sides, most of it now unfortunately covered with metal paneling. However, its Neo-Grec details are exposed on the one and a half stories facing Redwood Street. The rich, polychrome masonry façade above is enhanced by a profusion of crockets, rosettes, and other decorative details.

At Redwood and South Howard streets are twin warehouses in a similar style designed by Jackson C. Gott. One of them, the Rombro Building, owned by the current owners of the Abell Building, has been renovated for federal agencies. ❖



G8 • BAUERNSCHMIDT HOUSE

Broadway and North Avenue
ca. 1889–90—George A. Frederick

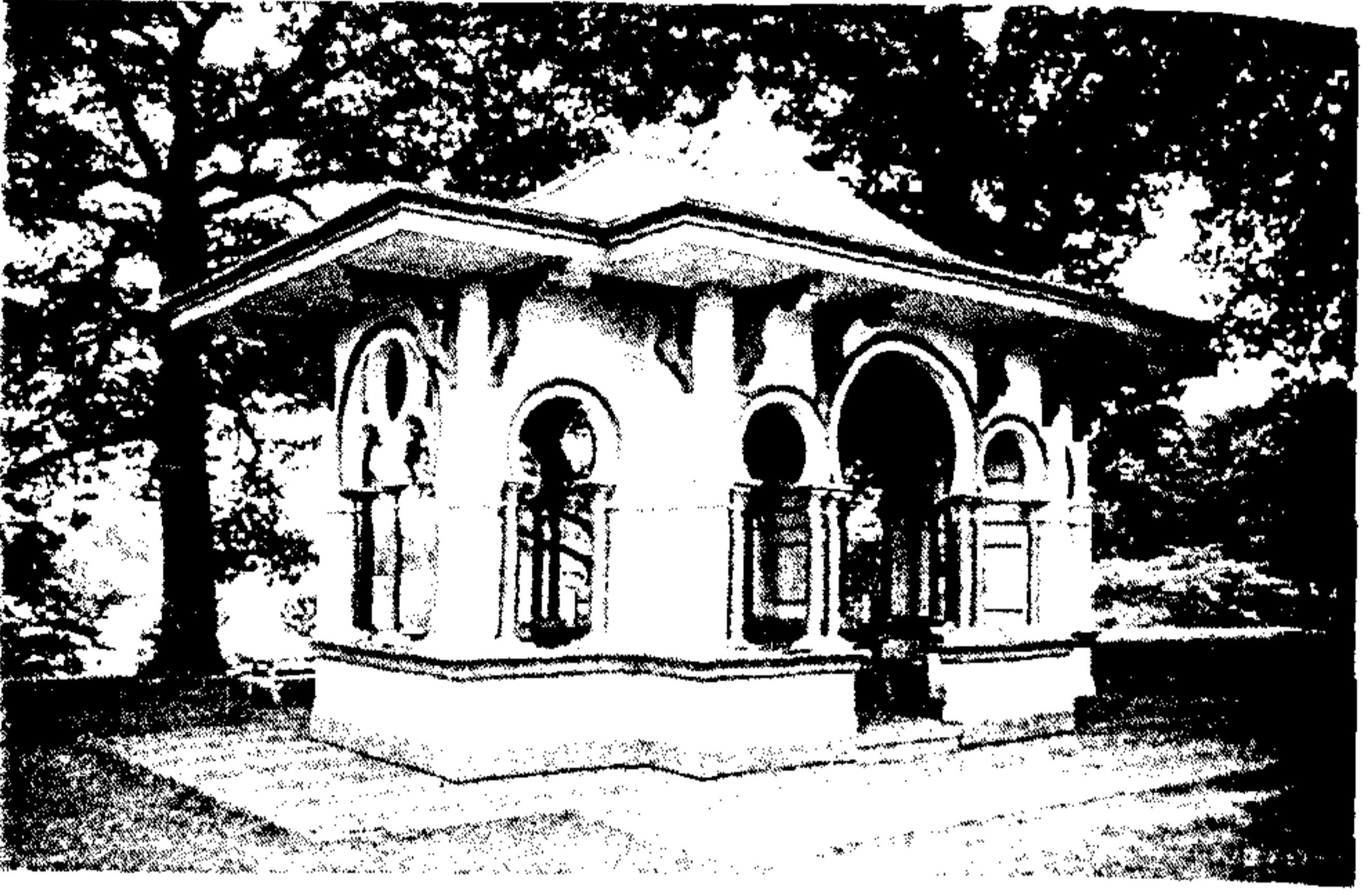
The architect of Baltimore's City Hall designed this house for a Baltimore beer baron. Although it may look grand by local standards, it is really quite restrained compared with, for instance, Washington's Henried mansion, also built for a beer baron. Still, it can be cited for such elements as the controlled but extensive use of brownstone, the Corinthian pilasters of the entrance and columns elsewhere, and the curious, slightly bowed section of brickwork that rises one and a half stories on the Broadway side. Used for a time as a funeral home, it is now owned by the Great Blacks in Wax Museum. ❖

G9 • VALVE HOUSE

(NR)
Clifton Park at the bend in St. Lo Drive
1887—architect unknown

This Victorian structure with an interesting alternation of pointed and rounded arches on ground level, decora-

Druid Hill Park face Mount Royal Terrace, a remnant of nineteenth-century Baltimore, whose new borders are defined by heavily traveled roadways. ❖



K24 • DRUID HILL PARK

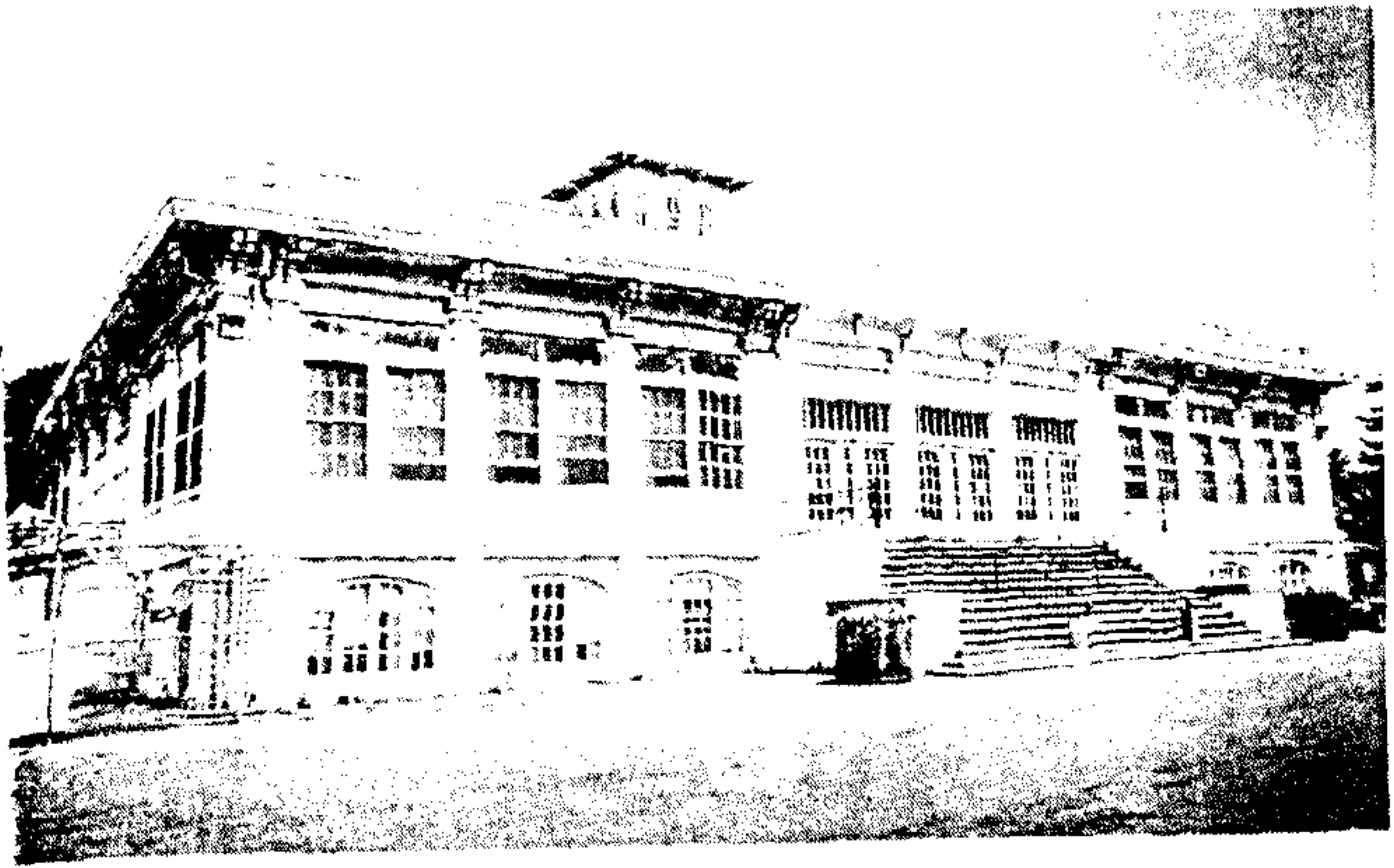
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1860 and after — Howard Daniels; George A. Frederick; and others

One of Baltimore's great amenities is its collection of public parks, thirty in all, covering more than 6,000 acres. Many of them are small areas under the jurisdiction of the Department of Recreation and Parks, such as the four squares in Mount Vernon and Washington places. But there are ten large parks, and the principal reason Baltimore has them is that a remarkably consistent and forward-looking parks board acquired by gift or purchase seven major estates between 1827 and 1942, as the city moved outward.

The first of these was a portion of the present Patterson Park, given in 1827 by William Patterson (father of Betsy Patterson Bonaparte, famous for having married Napoleon's brother Jerome). Other estates that became parks include Clifton, summer home of Johns Hopkins; Druid Hill; Crimea, summer home of Thomas DeKay Winans and now known as Leakin Park; and Cylburn, bought in 1942 for \$42,000. One can only imagine what a 180-acre tract of prime northwest Baltimore land would bring today on the open market.

Another factor to be credited to the parks board is that it retained a number of the imposing estate man-

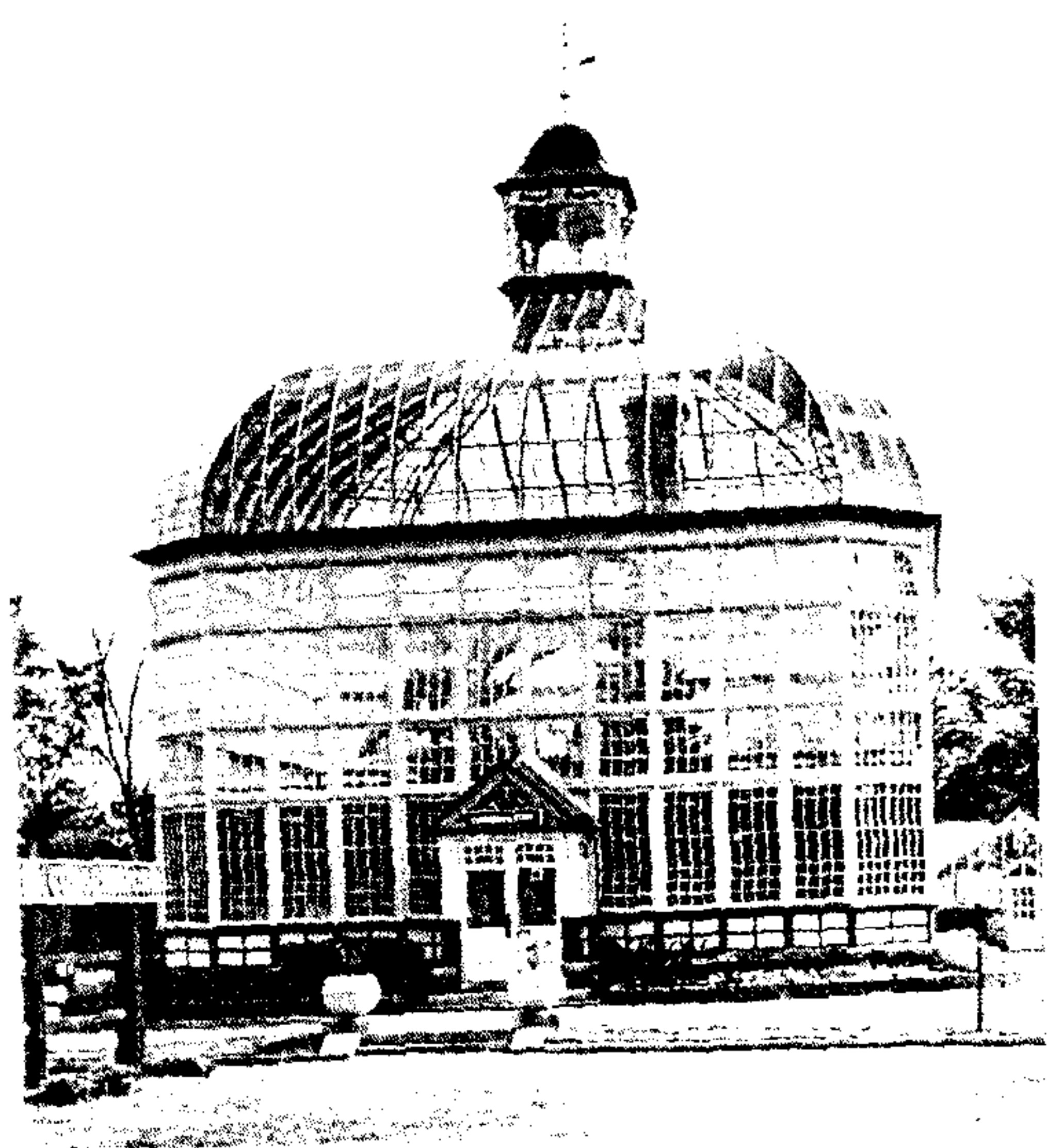


sions built in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and converted them to park use, thus preserving several architecturally important buildings. These include the mansion house in Druid Hill Park; Clifton [G10]; Cylburn [N18]; Crimea [K25]; and Mount Clare [I5] in Carroll Park. Mount Clare is an exception to the parks-use category; it has become a house museum.

Druid Hill, at something over 600 acres, is not the largest of the city parks (that honor goes to Gwynns Falls Park at about 700 acres). Thanks to its creative natural landscaping and the wealth of interesting buildings constructed and preserved there, it is both the most beautiful and the most interesting of Baltimore's parks. It is also a good example of how the parks were developed from estates.

The history of Druid Hill goes back to 1688. By 1716 some of the land was owned by the Rogers family, who would figure so prominently in its story. In the 1780s Colonel Nicholas Rogers raised a house which burned in 1796, and the subsequent house, which is the core of the present mansion house building, dates to about 1801. It was a Federal period structure with tall main-floor windows and some similarity to Homewood. The colonel died in 1822 and the estate passed to his son Lloyd Nicholas Rogers, who married the great-granddaughter of Martha Washington and, after her death, the granddaughter of James Monroe. The property, which had had several names under successive owners, was being called Druid Hill by the first decade of the nineteenth century, but no one knows why.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the expanding city sought to buy the estate for a park, a move which Lloyd Rogers resisted. But two events intervened:



over his objections, the Green Spring Avenue Company was granted a right-of-way for a turnpike to run through the property, and in 1858 Baltimore Mayor Thomas Swann attached a tax on the gross receipts of a new street railway, the proceeds to pay for establishing "one or more large parks." Money accumulated quickly, and in 1860 Rogers sold the property for a little less than \$500,000 (\$1,000 an acre—the park has since been expanded). He moved out in mid-October 1860 and died less than a month later.

The land had apparently been well landscaped by Colonel Rogers. Joanne Giza and Catharine F. Black, in their book *Great Baltimore Houses* (from which much information about the house has been taken), quote Thomas Scharf's earlier history of Baltimore, stating that Colonel Rogers had the land laid out "in the best tradition of English landscape gardening." Under city ownership, engineer Augustus Faul supervised the landscaping along the property's natural lines; the design was by Howard Daniels, described as "landscape gardener and engineer." Daniels took advantage of the hills and valleys to create lakes, scenic views, picnic groves, pathways, and promenades. George A. Frederick designed a number of fanciful pavilions, most of which still remain and are believed to be among the oldest park buildings in the country. These originally served as stops along a small railway that wound through the park and

that has long since been discontinued. Either Frederick or John H. B. Latrobe (both claimed it) designed the imposing Madison Avenue gateway to the park.

The mansion house has undergone a number of changes. In 1863 the most sweeping were executed by John H. B. Latrobe, who removed the entrance, added 20-foot-wide open porches all around the house, tore out the house's middle section, and Victorianized it with Gothic arches and a new staircase leading to a newly installed cupola. This would be thought architectural desecration today, but the building has worked well for the purposes to which it has been put. The surrounding pavilions were enclosed in the 1930s. In the late 1970s the house vastly benefited from an \$850,000 restoration under the direction of architect Michael F. Trostel, who preserved both Federal period elements of the original house and Victorian additions. The building now houses administrative offices of the Baltimore Zoo, which in recent years has itself been undergoing a twenty-year plan of major improvements.

In 1888, the conservatory, a large greenhouse of metal and glass construction, possibly by Frederick, was added. It is believed to be the oldest surviving public conservatory building in the country and has been the subject of a recent \$800,000 restoration.

A structure which had been the Maryland Building at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876 was moved to a knoll near the mansion house after the exposition ended. It was restored in 1978 and reopened as headquarters of the Baltimore (now Maryland) Zoological Society. One other building should be mentioned: the large pool house of 1924 by Josias and Pleasants Pennington.

During the Depression and World War II, and for some years afterward, the park declined somewhat. More recently, some parts have improved, while other parts appear to be neglected. ❖

K 25 • CRIMEA

(BCL)

4921 Windsor Mill Road
1857—*James Crawford Neilson*

Thomas DeKay Winans chose a spectacular setting on the city's west side to build his summer house. Thomas



Halprin envisioned a \$200 million, 375-acre, 3,800-unit new town with 11,000 residents, to be built in ten or so years. It featured a buffer zone on the north, a town center in the middle, and high-rise apartments lining the walls of the quarry near the southern end, with small lakes, parks, and recreation areas throughout.

Factory-produced housing units, like those at Habitat '67, were also projected. However, the first 124 “deckhouses,” which faced each other across pedestrian decks over parking areas, were conventionally built by the F. D. Rich Corporation. Construction began in 1975. The exterior materials were mainly precast concrete and brick; the light-filled interiors were arranged in varied configurations. The first units were occupied in 1977, and the average price was \$45,000.

By 1985, 128 more “deckhouses” and a 151-unit, seven-story apartment building for the elderly had been added. That year, the city ended the Rich Corporation’s exclusive right to build in Coldspring. A 1986 design competition produced a new, more traditional master plan for up to nine hundred residences and a village center. In 1994, the City Council altered the urban renewal plan for Coldspring, officially ending Safdie’s grand design. ❖

N18 • CYLBURN

(BCL, NR)

Cylburn Park, 4915 Greenspring Avenue

1889—George A. Frederick



Cylburn is the keystone of the former estates ringing the city that became municipal parks. It functions now as an arboretum and potential house museum.

Jesse Tyson began Cylburn in 1863 as a summer home for his mother, but her death and the Civil War intervened, and the house with its tall central tower (unfortunately now missing its iron roof cresting) was *not completed until 1889*. Designed in a simplified Second Empire style by Frederick, the architect of City Hall, it was built of gneiss, a stone quarried at nearby Bare Hills.

Jesse Tyson's father, Isaac Tyson, Jr., a Quaker and practical chemist, initiated the processing of chrome in Baltimore. He developed the chrome and copper mines at Bare Hills and Soldiers Delight in Baltimore County and the Baltimore Chrome Works in Fells Point. Jesse Tyson inherited the chrome works from his father. (His brother James, who inherited the chrome mining interests, built the neighboring Ruscombe mansion, ca. 1876, now part of Coldspring.)

Jesse Tyson remained a bachelor until 1888 when, in his sixties, he married nineteen-year-old Edyth Johns, a Baltimore debutante and renowned beauty. The mansion was then completed and she made Cylburn a home, furnishing it with European imports. Tyson reportedly boasted, "I have the fairest wife, the fastest horses, and the finest house in Maryland."

In 1910, four years after he died, his widow married an army lieutenant, Bruce Cotten. They commissioned the Olmsted brothers to landscape the property, and Cylburn became the scene of lavish parties, with guests

arriving at the estate's own station on the Northern Central Railroad and strolling among fountains, gardens, and rare trees lit with Japanese lanterns. Edyth Cotten reigned as a society hostess and patron of the arts for many years. When she died in 1942, her husband sold the house and 176 acres to the city for \$42,300.

The Cylburn estate is now a nature preserve, and the mansion serves as headquarters for the Parks Department's horticultural division and the Cylburn Arboretum Association, a volunteer group. However, one can still visualize how a wealthy family lived and entertained on a country estate in nineteenth-century Baltimore. The owners and Frederick must have had society gatherings in mind when they laid out the interior as a central hall with four formal rooms opening from it and a grand stairway in back.

Beginning with the vestibule with its mosaics and leaded-glass transom, the architect's use of materials and arrangement of spaces are impressive. The entrance hallway has parquet floors laid in a diamond pattern of oak, maple, and black walnut, opulent mirrors and chandeliers, and Belgian tapestries depicting a mansion in the woods.

The drawing room, to the right of the front door, was furnished in Louis XV style. Its Rococo marble fireplace, carved wood paneling, and floor-to-ceiling French windows with their original heavy brass hardware are vivid reminders of Cylburn's previous life. The stairway (painted white), is also of black walnut. A floor above, in Edyth Cotten's former bedroom, bas relief cherubs pose in a unique curved plaster frieze.

An ell containing a kitchen with servants' rooms above it is located behind the main block of the house and discreetly connected to it so that the help could go about their tasks without disrupting the guests.

Cylburn's exterior was recently renovated at a cost of \$200,000; the interior awaits restoration. ❖

Carson; the Mount Vernon Place United Methodist Church [C9] and the Mount Washington Presbyterian Church [N14] resulted from their collaboration. In 1880–81, Dixon practiced with Thomas C. Kennedy and then worked by himself again until a year before he died.

Faxon, Eben. See Andrews, Richard Snowden.

Fowler, Laurence Hall (1877–1971). Fowler executed a few large commissions, but the private home was his true métier. He designed some eighty houses in the mid-Atlantic states, most of them in his native Maryland where he was the architect of choice for families of means.

Fowler was born in Catonsville, the son of a judge. He graduated from The Johns Hopkins University in 1898, did graduate work at Columbia University, and although admitted to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, chose to return to Baltimore to practice architecture. He worked briefly with Wyatt and Nolting, then opened his own office in 1906. The Wolman House [L7], his own home [L15], and a 1941 house for Owen Lattimore in Ruxton are some of his designs which are characterized by subtle refinement, elegant proportions, and careful attention to landscaping.

Fowler advised the Roland Park Company on its development of Guilford and Homeland and was one of the organizers of the Baltimore Museum of Art. He left his large collection of drawings and rare books on architecture to The Johns Hopkins University. Fowler also published articles and made extensive notes for a history of local architecture.

Frederick, George A. (1842–1924). Frederick practiced a variety of styles and produced some of Baltimore's major municipal and commercial buildings. He also designed churches and park structures. In the 1870s he was responsible for extensive renovations to the State Capitol in Annapolis.

Born in Baltimore, Frederick began his architectural career at the age of sixteen with Lind and Murdoch; he also worked for a time with Niernsee and Neilson before establishing his own practice in 1862. One of his first projects, as architect for the Baltimore city park commission, was the design of the pavilions in Druid Hill Park [K24]. The commission for City Hall

[D11] soon followed. In 1867, Frederick designed the huge St. James and Saint John's Church [F13] and in 1878, a colorful warehouse for A. S. Abell [E6]. Later he turned to residences, among which were Cylburn [N18] and the Bauernschmidt House [G8].

In his 1912 "Recollections," recounted to J. B. Noel Wyatt, Frederick credited Wendel Bollman, the engineer and bridge builder who designed the City Hall dome, as the source of much of his knowledge concerning structure and the strength of materials. Although it is a valuable source of information on nineteenth-century Baltimore architecture and architects, the "Recollections" (on file at the Maryland Historical Society) must be read with care because Frederick tended to extol his own accomplishments at others' expense. Frederick served on the national board of the American Institute of Architects; a public dispute between Frederick and E. Francis Baldwin (see p. 395) led to the latter's resignation from the AIA in 1888.

Friz, Clyde N. (1867–1942). The Enoch Pratt Free Library [B10], the Garage [K8], and the Scottish Rite Temple of Freemasonry [L13] are the major buildings in Baltimore by this Michigan-born architect. Friz studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and worked for various architectural firms in St. Louis before moving to Baltimore in 1900. He first joined Wyatt and Nolting, then was associated with the firm of Beecher, Friz, and Gregg. Friz opened his own office in 1925.

Ghequier, Thomas Buckler (1854–ca.1910–12). Ghequier was the grandson of Robert Cary Long, Sr. He worked for five years in the office of J. Crawford Neilson. Later, on his own, he specialized in church architecture in Maryland, Virginia, and the Midwest. Ghequier also designed a number of local houses. The Baltimore building for which he is chiefly known is St. Paul's House, 309 Cathedral Street, long believed to have been the work of Frank Furness [see B4].

Glidden, Edward H. (1873–1924). Glidden, one of the sons of the founder of the Glidden Paint Company, was born in Cleveland, Ohio, studied architecture in Paris for four years, and came to Baltimore in 1912. Shortly thereafter he established his firm and designed several

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