



A WALKING TOUR OF THE CLARENCE M. MITCHELL JR. COURTHOUSE



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100 NORTH CALVERT STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202

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WELCOME & INTRODUCTION:

The Historical Committee of the Bar Association of Baltimore City would like to welcome you to the Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse. Construction of this magnificent building began in 1895, it was completed in 1899, and it was rededicated in 1985 in honor of Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr., a local lawyer and a nationally respected civil rights leader.

Every year, approximately forty thousand citizens visit this massive neoclassical structure. We invite you to be one of those lucky guests, and to follow along on this historic walking tour. Please take the time to marvel at the architectural and artistic wonders contained within, such as stained-glass skylights that are over a century old, two of the most beautiful courtrooms in the world, murals painted by some of the world's most famous artists (and valued in the tens of millions of dollars), an extensive and valuable portrait collection, the Museum of Baltimore Legal History, and the oldest private law library in the country.

“These old buildings do not belong to us only, they belong to our forefathers and they will belong to our descendants unless we play them false. They are not in any sense our property to do with as we like. We are only trustees for those that come after us.”

- William Morris, 1889

This modern marvel was created with extensive planning and attention to detail. The process began in 1885, when city and state politicians created a courthouse building committee to review architectural bids

for this facility. The person selected to be the Chairman of the committee was Baltimore Mayor Ferdinand Latrobe. Mayor Latrobe was the grandson of Benjamin Latrobe, the architect of both



*Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. (1911-1984)
Oil on canvas, 1996 by Simmie Knox, can be seen
in Courtroom 215. © Photograph printed with the express
permission of Simmie Knox*

the U.S. Capitol and the Baltimore Basilica. The committee selected two architects from Ohio, who were proposing to build the structure in the most magnificent exemplification of the Renaissance Revival style. They promised a granite foundation, marble facades, huge brass doors, mosaic tiles, mahogany paneling and marble columns, all of which survive today. The architects' concept was exactly what the Committee envisioned as their gift to the citizens of Baltimore.

Less than fifteen years later, that vision became a reality when the present-day Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse opened its doors to the public on January 8, 1900. The total cost of construction was just over \$2.2 million (or slightly more than \$56 million, adjusted for inflation).

That huge investment however, was almost totally lost just four years later. On February 7-8, 1904, for more than thirty straight hours, Baltimore nearly burned



© Photograph by Frederick W. Mueller, 1904; Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Digital ID pan 6a05834

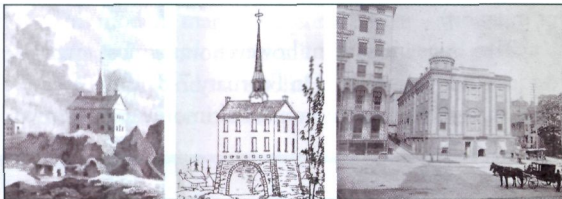


to the ground. More than 1,200 firefighters fought the blaze that burned 1,545 buildings covering over 70 city blocks and 140 acres. When the fire was finally extinguished, over \$150 million worth of property was destroyed (or roughly \$3.6 billion, adjusted for inflation) – but the Courthouse was miraculously saved. Nearly every building south of the Courthouse, extending all the way to the harbor, and every building west of St. Paul Street extending to Liberty Street, was reduced to ashes.

Luckily, the Courthouse was saved for us to enjoy. We are confident that after you take this walking tour you will feel obligated to preserve the rich history of our Courthouse for yet another generation. Again, on behalf of the Historical Committee of the Bar Association of Baltimore City, welcome, and please enjoy your visit.

~HISTORY~

When studying the history of the Baltimore City Courthouse, it is necessary to keep in mind that “Baltimore-Town” was once a part of Baltimore County, which incorporated much of the land now considered Harford, Carroll, Anne Arundel, Howard and Frederick counties. With that understanding, the first Baltimore courthouse was built in 1683 on a lot near the Bush River, in what is now Harford County. The first courthouse in present-day Baltimore City was not constructed until 1770, at the site of the Battle Monument near the intersection of Calvert and Fayette Streets. *(See frame 1 in the photograph below.)*



© Photographs courtesy of the Baltimore Museum of Legal History

At the time, the neighboring landscape was made up of beautiful meadows, streams and farms, and Calvert Street did not yet extend this far north. So it was here, atop a fifty-foot hill where the citizens chose to build their first courthouse in what is now known as Baltimore City. The small red brick structure, with its towering



© Photograph of Old Record Office courtesy of the Baltimore Museum of Legal History

church-like steeple, proudly stood atop the massive hill as an architectural jewel of the neighborhood. As the town of Baltimore grew, the Courthouse was forced to modify its appearance. In 1784, as a result of Calvert Street being extended northward beyond Fayette Street, it was necessary for the City to excavate a tunnel beneath the Courthouse to accommodate traffic *(See frame 2 in the photograph on page 3)*. This modification extended the life of the Courthouse until 1809. By the early part of the nineteenth century however, the structure was in disrepair, and the expanding city had outgrown the building. As a result, the City built a replacement courthouse on the southwest corner of Calvert and Lexington Streets *(the northeast quadrant of the current Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse; See frame 3 in the photograph on page 3)*.

After the Courthouse on the corner of Calvert and Lexington Streets suffered fire damage in 1834, nearly losing all of the City’s land records, a fireproof Records Office was built as a courthouse annex near the corner of St. Paul and Lexington Streets. *(See photograph at the top of this page.)*

When the City outgrew both the Courthouse and the newly constructed Records Office, it found temporary additional quarters in the vacant Masonic Hall next to the Records Office from about 1867-1895. *(See photograph on right.)*



© Photograph courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society



© Photograph courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society

Finally, in 1895 all three structures, as well as the numerous others within the block bound by St. Paul, Calvert, Lexington and Fayette Streets were razed to make way for the current Courthouse. During the four years it took to construct the Courthouse (*see photograph above*), legal matters were heard in a small temporary building erected at the corner of North Street (now Guilford Avenue) and Lexington Street, at the location of the back corner of Courthouse East.

1. Battle Monument

We begin our tour at the site of Baltimore's original Courthouse (1700 – 1809), and the current location of the Battle Monument. Construction of the Battle Monument began in 1815, and upon its completion became America's first war memorial. Erected on-site by Baltimore architect, Maximilian Godefroy, the monument commemorates the Battle of Baltimore. It honors the 39 brave soldiers who died during the month of September 1814 defending our city and country from British forces during the War of 1812. The monument stands 52 feet tall, and its base is said to suggest a tomb.



© Photograph by W.M.Dunn

The eighteen layers of marble base represent the eighteen states of the United States at the time of the War. Griffins (which Greek legend suggests protect society's most valued possessions) stand at each corner. The main



“...it is again no question of expediency or feeling whether we shall preserve the buildings of past times or not. We have no right whatever to touch them. They are not ours. They belong partly to those who built them, and partly to all the generations of mankind who are to follow us.”

- John Ruskin

column is bound with cords listing the names of the soldiers who died during the battle, while the names of the officers killed are etched in the top of the monument. Standing on top of the fasces, and flanked by an eagle and a bomb, is an 8 ½ foot tall marble statue of a female figure representing Baltimore. She wears the crown of victory, and holds in one hand a laurel wreath, and in the other, a ship's rudder. Today, the monument is depicted on the Seal of Baltimore, which was adopted in 1827, and on the City's flag, which was adopted in the early part of the 20th century.

(Proceed across the street to the Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse, which is to the left when you are facing the Monument.)

2. Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse



© Photograph by W.M.Dunn

Prior to entering the Calvert Street entrance of the Courthouse, stop on the stairs and gaze up in wonder at the eight largest monolithic marble columns in the world. Each weighs over 35 tons, and measures over 31 feet in height. As you proceed up the stairs, notice the heads of three angry lions peering menacingly down upon you.

3. Calvert Street Lobby

As you enter the Courthouse you find yourself standing in what was originally designated as the “Basement Level.” This is because the Courthouse was constructed on a slope, running down from St. Paul Street to where you entered. The St. Paul Street entrance (presently referred to as the Second Floor) was the main first floor entrance.



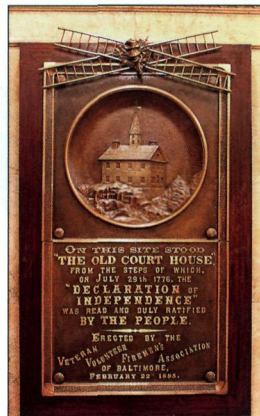
© Photograph by W.M. Dunn

Here (in the “old basement”), you can see the massive ten foot piers fashioned of Old Convent Sienna marble, which support the weight of the exterior walls and columns. The lobby also features a beautiful ceiling of ornate plaster cross vaults. Walk to the rear wall, and you will come to our next point of interest on the walking tour.

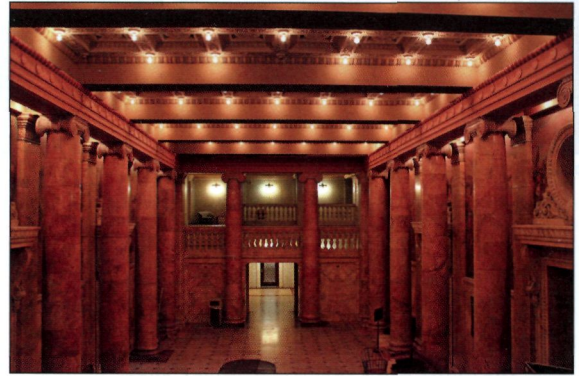
4. Colonial Courthouse Plaque

Members of the Veteran Volunteer Firemen’s Association presented this plaque to the City in 1892. It was attached to the iron fence that surrounds the Battle Monument outside until 1906 when it was brought inside to this spot. Upon examination of the plaque, you will see an engraving of the original Courthouse prior to the Calvert Street extension.

(Please ascend the far stairs (closest to the security metal detectors) up to the 2nd floor and around the corner to the 2nd floor lobby.)



© Photograph by W.M. Dunn



© Photograph by W.M. Dunn

5. Kaplan Court

Originally known as the Criminal Court Lobby, this space was re-dedicated in 2007 in honor of Chief Judge Joseph H.H. Kaplan. He is credited with the wonderful restoration of this room and many others in the Courthouse during the massive restoration project in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s. The lobby is 64 feet long, by 38 feet wide and 25 feet high. The ceiling is supported by sixteen Numidian marble columns, which face walls lined with Old Convent Sienna marble. Although the floor is not original, great effort was made to make the renovation resemble the original as closely as possible. The original floor, which was constructed of Italian marble, was completely lost to the renovations from 1951-1954, when it was replaced with asphalt tiles. During the restoration of this lobby in the late twentieth century, Spanish marble, similar in color to the original marble, was installed.

6. “Calvert’s Treaty with the Indians” Mural (East Wall of Kaplan Court)

High above the doors to the Criminal Division Clerk’s Office (Room 200) is a beautiful mural painted in 1902 by Baltimore born artist, Charles Yardley Turner. It portrays the purchase of land from the Indians for the first English settlement in Maryland in 1634. Governor Leonard Calvert and his advisers met with the friendly chiefs of the Yaocomico tribe and purchased a former village for the site of St. Mary’s City. Using farm tools and cloth as the medium of exchange, and not the guns and liquor used by less scrupulous adventurers in other parts of the New World, Calvert concluded the meeting



© Photograph by W.M. Dunn

with a treaty of peace that was never broken. This is noteworthy because it occurred fifty years prior to William Penn's treaty with the Indians, which history incorrectly claims to be the earliest peaceful purchase of land by the English in America.

The center panel shows Governor Calvert, brother of Cecil, Second Lord Baltimore, facing the Indian chiefs with some of his followers. The man without a hat is Henry Fleete, a captain from Virginia who is acting as an interpreter. In the background, some Indians are examining a piece of red cloth.

The left panel illustrates the domestic side of Indian culture: a squaw tries out a new hoe, while a brave admires an axe that a young boy has just used to chop a cord of firewood.

The right panel depicts an English family scanning the shore along the St. Mary's River, while the Ark and the Dove ride at anchor in the background.

7. "The Burning of the Peggy Stewart" Mural (West Wall of Kaplan Court)



© Photograph by W.M. Dunn

Directly across the lobby is another mural by Charles Yardley Turner. This work, entitled "The Burning of the Peggy Stewart," was painted to the same scale and dimensions as "Calvert's Treaty with the Indians" (60 feet long by 10 feet high) and it was completed in 1904. It represents an episode in Maryland history known as "Peggy Stewart Day," traditionally recognized on October 19. The holiday celebrates Maryland's resistance to British taxation without representation. On that date in 1774, indignant patriots forced Annapolis merchant,



Anthony Stewart, to burn both his ship and its cargo of tea, upon which he had paid the hated tax levied by the British Parliament. Unlike the better-known Boston Tea Party, the incident occurred in broad daylight, its actors undisguised and unafraid. News of the "Annapolis Tea Party" never reached England, supposedly suppressed by Maryland's Royal Governor, Sir Robert Eden. Had this cover-up not occurred, Parliament might have reconsidered its taxation policies and the American Revolution might have been averted. The destruction of the ship occurred exactly seven years to the day before the British surrendered at Yorktown. The hull of the Peggy Stewart was located in 1906 near the shore of the present site of the U.S. Naval Academy's Bancroft Hall. Anthony Stewart's home is still standing.

In the left foreground of the central panel, leaders of the protest, Dr. Charles Alexander Warfield and members of his Whig Club, are depicted demanding the ship be destroyed and its owner hanged. On the right side of the same panel, the Annapolis Committee of Correspondence, led by Charles Carroll of Carrollton, is depicted persuading Warfield's group to be satisfied with the burning of the vessel. The flaming masts can be seen in the background. The left panel shows Anthony Stewart waving farewell to the ship named for his daughter, while holding in his right hand the burning brand used to ignite the vessel. In the right panel, a group of Annapolitans stand outside Stewart's home, observing the scene.

8. Memorial to Baltimore Attorneys Killed in World War I

The memorial column standing beneath the "Calvert's Treaty with the Indians" mural was erected in 1919 in honor of six Baltimore attorneys who lost their lives in World War I. The memorial was designed by the original architects of the Courthouse, Wyatt and Nölting.



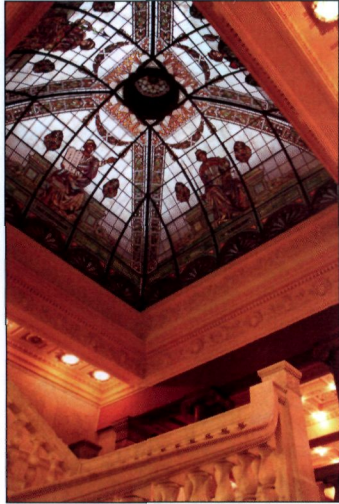
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(Exit Kaplan Court and ascend the same north staircase to the balconied overlook.)

9. Kaplan Court Balcony

From this balcony, you get a wonderful birds-eye view of the beautifully restored Kaplan Court. Above



© Photograph by W.M.Dunn

your head is an original, albeit restored, domed artglass skylight designed and executed by the New York firm of Heinigke & Bowen, rivals of Tiffany and LaFarge. Across Kaplan Court, above the southern staircase, is a similar domed skylight. These domes are considered by experts to be premier examples of stained

glass in terms of quality and detail. Each dome depicts four goddesses of virtue. The dome above your head depicts Justice, Mercy, Religion and Truth. The dome above the other stairs across the lobby depicts Courage, Literature, Logic and Peace.

These beautiful windows were covered up with drywall around 1920, and all but forgotten. That is until Chief Judge Joseph H.H. Kaplan convinced Mayor William Donald Schaefer to commit City resources to the uncovering and restoration of the domes. During the demolition process, it was discovered that all of the glass in this north skylight had been removed, and most of the glass in the south dome was missing or broken. Luckily, a black and white photograph of one of the domes was discovered in a book that was published in 1900 shortly after the opening of the Courthouse, and the meticulous work of recreating the domes was undertaken by the Rambusch Studio of New York in 1985.

Using one extant photograph of the south skylight, a full size enlargement was made from which a drawing,



or cartoon, was fashioned. From this drawing, the entire design of the south dome was reconstructed in glass. Because no image existed of the northern dome, its reconstruction was based upon an original design that Rambusch Studios produced and completed in 1987.

(Continue up to the 4th floor.)

10. The Third and Fifth Floors

When the Courthouse was originally constructed there were only three fully utilized stories (present-day 2nd, 4th, and 6th floors). Each of the three stories was grand and beautiful, with ceilings two-stories in height. In 1951 however the building underwent an extensive, but unimpressive overhaul. The three-year, \$2.6 million remodeling project (\$22 million adjusted for inflation), added more than 50,000 square feet to the building by adding the current third and fifth floors, and by filling in the interior open courtyards. Although architecturally unattractive, the project added needed courtrooms and elevators to the building. As a result of the lackluster and cost-saving workmanship however, the interior of the building lost much of its original charm. As such there is nothing of architectural importance to view on the 3rd and 5th floors.

(Proceed to Courtroom 400 on the 4th floor.)

11. Severn Teackle Wallis Monument

Just outside of Courtroom 400 stands a statue of Severn Teackle Wallis (1816-1894). Mr. Wallis was a poet, author, statesman, and perhaps the foremost Maryland attorney of the nineteenth century who wrote prolifically on the issues of history and politics. He was elected to the Maryland House of Delegates in 1861, and he championed many causes, including civil service reform. Opposed to the dissolution of the Union at the time of the Civil War, he was nevertheless arrested by Federal authorities as a



© Photograph by W.M.Dunn



suspected secessionist along with many other prominent Marylanders, and imprisoned for fourteen months at Fort McHenry. Upon his release he returned to private practice, and was elected the first President of the Bar Association of Baltimore City in 1880.

The bust of Mr. Wallis is a copy of an original by the famous Maryland sculptor, William Henry Rinehart (1825-1874), which is owned by the Peabody Institute. The composition of the monument base is copied from an original in Paris. The pedestal is green and white marble. The bronze figure represents “Fame,” reaching up to Mr. Wallis with a laurel branch. The Wallis Memorial Association presented the masterpiece on June 18, 1902, at which time it was placed in the St. Paul Street Lobby on the 2nd floor. However, it was moved from that location in 1985 following the re-dedication of the Courthouse to Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr.

12. Ceremonial Courtroom (Room 400)



© Photograph by W.M.Dunn

You are currently standing in the former Superior Courtroom. It is here where National Adoption Day is observed, new admittees to the Baltimore Bar are welcomed into the practice of law, a select few take the oath of judicial office, and where lawyers and judges of Baltimore are eulogized upon their death in a solemn memorial ceremony. The walls of the courtroom are adorned with a few of the nearly 100 portraits in the Courthouse collection. The portraits in this room portray some of the most celebrated Baltimore lawyers, including: Justice



Thurgood Marshall (first black appointed to the positions of Solicitor General of the United States and Justice to the Supreme Court); Judge Henry D. Harlan (elected the youngest Chief Judge of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City at the age of 30); Judge Eli Frank; Judge Shirley Jones (first female judge in Baltimore); Judge Joseph C. Howard (first black judge to win an election in Baltimore City, and first black person to serve on the U.S. District Court); Reverdy Johnson (distinguished lawyer and politician, and although opposed to slavery represented the slave-owning Defendant in Dred Scott v. Sandford, as well as Mary Surratt for her alleged involvement in the assassination of President Lincoln); Arthur W. Machen, Sr; and Arthur W. Machen, Jr.

This room and its portraits were restored in 1990 at a cost of \$400,000. The funds were raised from contributions by the Bar Association of Baltimore City and the Courthouse Foundation. Three copper plaques hang in the lobby outside of this room in appreciation of those who so graciously contributed to the restoration project.

(Proceed to the staircase hallway which you accessed to get to the 4th floor, make a left, and halfway down the hallway enter Room 451 on the left.)

13. “Washington Surrenders His Commission” Mural

(Inside Courtroom 451)



© Photograph courtesy of the Maryland State Archives

In this original Courtroom, above the Judge’s bench, is one of two murals in the Courthouse by the famous artist Edwin H. Blashfield (1848-1936). Blashfield was a prolific artist, and his murals adorn public buildings all



across the United States. His most famous work is painted on the collar of the dome over the main reading room in the Library of Congress. In this painting, Blashfield symbolically portrays the resignation of George Washington as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army, which occurred in Annapolis, Maryland on December 23, 1783.

In this mural, "Columbia" is the central figure, enthroned upon a pedestal bearing the inscription "Patriae," the grateful nation at whose feet the victorious general is about to lay his commission. Immediately to the left stands "Maryland," symbolized by her dress composed of the state colors. Behind her stands "War," who sheathes a sword, and "Resistance to Oppression," who symbolically breaks a rod. Seated in the foreground is "History," recording the scene. Following Washington is "Prosperity," bearing a cornucopia, or "horn of plenty," and "Commerce," carrying a caduceus. On the far left soldiers represent Washington's Revolutionary successes. On the far right stands a magistrate, an officer of the allied French forces and various American officers.

(Now proceed down the center corridor, past the elevators. The photographs along this wall are of the sitting Judges of the Circuit Court. At the end of the hallway, make a right down the southern hallway to Room 417 on the immediate right.)

14. "Religious Toleration" Mural

(Inside Courtroom 417)



© Photograph courtesy of the Maryland State Archives

We are now in the Courtroom which displays Edwin Blashfield's second Courthouse mural. In a



letter written before the mural was unveiled, the artist explained its meaning: "What I intended to suggest was simply Lord Baltimore commending his people to Wisdom, Justice and Mercy. Wisdom holds out the olive branch of Peace to the tolerant." Behind Lord Baltimore, a Catholic priest and a Protestant pastor hold between them the Edict of Toleration. A black woman and an Indian squaw crouch behind Baltimore and take hold of his mantle of black and gold (the colors of Maryland). To the right and left are other figures of colonists introduced simply to fill out the composition decoratively. At the side of Justice a boy holds a shield with the date 1649, the year of the Edict. In the center of the decoration another boy holds a scale level as the symbol of equity, and points upward at the Calvert's motto, "Thou hast covered us with the shield of thy good will." The background is woodland with a suggestion of the Bay.

"We will probably be judged not by the monuments we build but by those we have destroyed."

*- New York Times Editorial
(on the destruction of Penn Station)*

The Edict of Religious Toleration proclaimed in 1649 was in keeping with Lord Baltimore's instructions to his brother, Governor Leonard Calvert, to "do justice to every man without partiality." It was the first law of its kind in the New World. The Calverts were Roman Catholics, an oppressed minority in pre-civil war England. Accordingly, they envisioned their colony of Maryland as a sanctuary from the institutionalized prejudice of the mother country. As it turned out, however, Catholics remained a minority in Maryland. Even on the first voyage to the colony in 1633-34, they were outnumbered by Protestants on the Ark and the Dove. Yet under the able administration of the Calverts, Maryland escaped the strife and oppression that resulted from religious hatred in other colonies.

(Exit the Courtroom, turn left down the southern hallway, and proceed up the stairs (by-passing the 5th floor) to the sixth floor. Atop of the stairs, proceed slightly to your right and down the hall to Room 600.)



© Photograph by W.M. Dunn

15. Supreme Bench Courtroom

When the Courthouse opened in 1900, this Courtroom was designed to permit all of the Judges of the Court, then known as “The Supreme Bench of Baltimore City,” to sit together (en banc) to hear various proceedings. This circular courtroom is unlike any other in the world. It is surmounted by a coffered dome resting upon walls and sixteen columns of Sienna marble from the Vatican’s quarry near Rome. In spite of the fact that the quarry was nearly exhausted when the Courthouse was built, Pope Leo XIII consented to its use in this building at the behest of James Cardinal Gibbons. The dome is a miniature replica of the one over the main reading room in the Library of Congress. The names of Maryland’s early legal legends are inscribed on the frieze around the base of the dome.

Maryland’s Early Legal Legends

Thomas Alexander – Foremost equity lawyer and author of Maryland Chancery Practice.

James Bartol – Former Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals of Maryland.

Theodorick Bland – Defender of Baltimore in the War of 1812, member of the House of Delegates, Associate Judge of Baltimore City, and U.S. District Court Judge.

Charles Carroll – Patriot and leader in the cause of American Independence, eminent jurist, and President of the Convention of 1776.

Samuel Chase – Signer of the Declaration of Independence, member of the Continental Congress, Chief Judge of the



General Court of Maryland, and Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Daniel Dulany, Jr. – Brilliant lawyer, scholar and orator.

Gabriel Duvall – Member of the U.S. Congress, Judge on the Court of Appeals of Maryland, Comptroller of the U.S. Treasury, and Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Alexander Hanson – Associate Judge of the General Court of Maryland, and Chancellor of the High Court of Chancery of Maryland.

Robert Harper – U.S. Senator, Major General in the War of 1812, defender of Justice Chase during his impeachment trial, defender of Aaron Burr in his treason trial, and Federalist candidate for Vice President of the United States in 1816 and 1820.

Reverdy Johnson – U.S. Senator, Attorney General of the United States, counsel in the Dred Scott case, Minister to Great Britain, and defender of President Johnson during his impeachment trial.

William Kilty – Chancellor of the High Court of Chancery of Maryland, and author of a report on British statutes in force in Maryland.

John Latrobe – Author, soldier, poet, inventor, historian, and artist. He founded both the American Bar Association and the Maryland Historical Society.

John Carroll LeGrand – Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates, Maryland Secretary of State, Associate Judge, and Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals of Maryland.

Luther Martin – Ardent patriot, colossal figure in the convention that framed the U.S. Constitution, Attorney General of Maryland; Judge of the Court of “Oyer and Terminer and Goal Delivery,” successful defender of Justice Chase in his impeachment trial and of Aaron Burr in his treason trial.

John McMahan – Author of the first railroad charter in the U.S. for the B&O Railroad, and founder and first President of the Bar Library of Baltimore City.

John Nelson – Attorney General of the U.S., and brilliant member of the American Bar.



William Pinkney – Called “the greatest man I have ever seen in a court of justice” by Chief Justice Marshall, U.S. Senator, U.S. Attorney General, U.S. Ambassador to England, and U.S. minister to Naples and Russia.

William Schley – Distinguished and successful advocate, and member of the Maryland General Assembly.

Robert Smith – Revolutionary War hero, member of the Maryland House of Delegates and State Senate, U.S. Secretary of the Navy, U.S. Attorney General, and U.S. Secretary of State.

L. Nevitt Steele – Leading lawyer and orator of the 19th century.

Roger Taney – Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, U.S. Attorney General, Maryland Attorney General, and U.S. Secretary of the Treasury.

Severn Wallis – Undisputed leader of the Maryland Bar, diplomat, author, lecturer, linguist, and first President of the Bar Association of Baltimore City.

William Winder – Brigadier General at the Battle of Bladensburg and in the defense of Baltimore during the War of 1812.

William Wirt – U.S. Attorney General, lawyer involved in such high profile cases such as *McCulloch v. Maryland*; *Gibbons v. Ogden*, and the *Dartmouth College* case.

(Exit the Courtroom and take a right, around several slight turns to the northern hallway, and proceed all the way to the end, through the double doors, and once inside the Library turn left into the Main Reading Room.)

16. The Baltimore Bar Library

Founded in 1840 as “The Library Company of the Baltimore Bar,” the Bar Library is one of the oldest private libraries in the state and one of the most complete and comprehensive law libraries in the entire country, with approximately 130,000 books. Downstairs you can find rooms full of antique law books dating back to the 1600’s, and copies of books dating back to the 1000’s. You can also find all of the original colony’s statutes. This is a private reference library run by a non-profit corporation



© Photograph by W.M. Dunn

supported by the annual dues of over 2,000 member attorneys. The library consists of several floors of beautiful rooms, however, only a few will be highlighted on this tour. The librarian would be pleased to show visitors the other rooms upon appointment.

The Main Reading Room - With its barreled ceiling and intricately carved English oak walls, the main room of the library has been described as one of the most elegant interior spaces in Baltimore. It measures 125 feet long by 35 feet wide, and it is crowned by a beautiful barrel vault ceiling punctuated by forty artglass skylights. Fourteen medallions set in the east and west walls represent the trademarks of European printers immediately after Gutenberg. Also noteworthy are the handsomely carved faces of goddesses over the wooden doorways in each of the four corners of the room. The large portrait of John Marshall over the circulation desk was painted in 1990 by Henry Cooper on the sesquicentennial of the Library. It replaced an earlier portrait of the Chief Justice that was destroyed.

Venerable Moose Room - As you pass through the main reading room along the windowed wall, you will end up in a small room aptly known as the Venerable Moose Room. This conference room is the epitome of sophistication and style, representing an era in which elegance mattered. It contains a hardwood floor, a high ceiling, dark wood wainscoting, an antique chandelier and a majestic



© Photograph by W.M. Dunn

moose overlooking it all. The conference table, which dates to the early 1900's, was the original conference table of the major Baltimore law firm of Venable, Baetjer and Howard.

The story of the moose in this room is quite interesting. Edwin Baetjer, one of the founding partners of Venable, Baetjer & Howard, hunted the animal in New Brunswick in 1935. He had its head mounted, and it proudly hung in the conference room of his law firm for many years. Around 1970, as the growing law firm expanded, their offices could no longer accommodate the huge trophy. Thus, it was either loaned or given to the Bar Library, where it happily and peacefully hung for more than twenty years. In 1992, and to the dismay of the Bar Library Board of Directors, the law firm requested the moose be returned. For a couple of years, the firm and the library attempted to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution, but they were unsuccessful...that is until 1994. In that year, the Bar Library was involved in a labor dispute, and it needed legal representation. Administrative Judge Joseph H.H. Kaplan requested the firm of Venable, Baetjer & Howard to represent the library. The firm agreed, but only on one condition – that they either get reimbursed for their services at the rate of \$400 per hour, or the moose be returned to the firm. Both parties agreed, and in 1995, after successfully representing the Bar Library, the moose was returned to the firm.

To the delight of the Bar Library, several years later Venable, Baetjer & Howard re-donated the restored animal head to the Bar Library, along with a charitable donation, and thus the room has been named in honor of the firm.

(Please exit the Bar Library through the doors that you entered, and take the stairs immediately on your right back down to the 2nd floor lobby.)

17. St. Paul Street Lobby & “The Ancient Lawgivers” Mural

The St. Paul Street Lobby is composed of Numidian marble with four columns and pilasters of Sienna marble. The floor is a mosaic of rich ochre with a dark green border containing a red honeysuckle design. Of special note is the display of artifacts and photographs from the life of Clarence M. Mitchell Jr., including the Presidential



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Medal of Freedom, the Spingarn Medal awarded by the N.A.A.C.P. and the Doctor's gown worn by Mr. Mitchell when he received an honorary degree from Temple University. The exhibit was installed when the building was renamed in Mr. Mitchell's memory in March of 1985.

“Great architecture has only two natural enemies: water and stupid men.”

- Richard Nickel

Adorning the higher elevations of this two-story lobby is a beautiful mural by John LaFarge (1835-1910). Art historians regard the panels that Mr. LaFarge painted in 1876 for the interior of Trinity Church in Boston as the first great American mural. When commissioned to paint the “American Lawgivers” for the Baltimore Courthouse, LaFarge was nearing the end of his life, and this was one of his last works. This mural depicts the six great lawgivers of antiquity – all richly colored and painted upon a clear gold background.

MOSES

(North Wall, above the security desk)

Moses is depicted sitting beneath the cloud upon Mount Sinai, dispensing justice to his people. On the left stands his brother, Aaron, to whom God gave the gift of eloquence. On the right is Joshua, the great general who conquered Jericho and led the Jews into the Promised Land of Canaan.



LYCURGUS

(East Wall, above the clock)

Lycurgus was the legendary King of Sparta who set out to make his country the happiest and best-governed state in the ancient world by holding down laws designed to promote virtue and harmony among his subjects. According to Greek tradition, he began his mission by consulting the Oracle at Delphi, praying that the Spartan constitution which he envisioned might be the best imaginable. He appears in the mural during the final consultation with the Delphic Oracle, represented by a woman seated next to a smoking altar.

CONFUCIUS

(East Wall)

Confucius, the great sage of China, is represented as seated upon an altar beneath an apricot tree by two disciples for whom he is playing the “kin,” an instrument similar to the lyre. The painting conveys the serenity envisioned by his philosophy, the goal of which was harmony among people in a well-ordered society. Confucius recognized five relationships as the foundation of the harmonious state: first, subjects should obey their rulers; second, children should obey and respect their parents; third, wives should obey their husbands; fourth, younger brothers should obey their older brothers; and fifth, friendships between individuals will guarantee societal harmony. Of the five relationships, only one deals with one’s relation to government, while three deal with the family, upon which Confucius placed utmost importance.

JUSTINIAN

(South Wall)

Justinian was the great Byzantine emperor of the Roman Empire who decreed that Roman law would be set down in the form of written code to preserve it for future generations. He is portrayed in flowing robes standing before his throne. To the left is Tribonian, the great lawyer who headed the commission charged with the compilation of the Code, variously called the *Courpus Juris Civilis* (or “Body of the Civil Law”) and the “Code of Justinian.” To the right is the Empress Theodora, said to have been his inspiration.



NUMA POMPILIUS

(West Wall, above exterior doors)

Numa Pompilius (715-673 B.C.), legendary second king of Rome and the founder of Roman law and religion, is shown seated in his garden, where he has come to confer with his mentor, the divine Egeria, who instructs him in the issuance of his royal edicts. According to tradition, Numa succeeded Romulus, the founder of Rome. Attributed to Numa Pompilius are the contractions of temples, creation of priesthoods and a twelve-month lunar calendar.

MOHAMMED

(West Wall)

Mohammed (570-632 A.D.), the great Arab prophet, lawgiver and founder of Islam is clothed in heavy veils and seated between his two grandsons in paradise, symbolized here by the cypress and palm. In early life he was a merchant, but he was upset by the poor condition of his people, especially their ignorance and superstition. After a series of visions in which the angel Gabriel appeared to him, calling him the great prophet of God, Mohammed began preaching Islam, which means submission to the will of Allah, who demands strict compliance with a tough ethical code, in return for which the believer will receive his rewards in Paradise. The central theme of Islam is that “There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet.”

*(Proceed around the hallway closest to the Sheriff's Security Desk, around the corner, and down the hallway to Courtroom 243 on the right. **No high heels are permitted in this courtroom...heeled shoes must be removed to protect the original wood floors.**)*



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18. The Museum of Baltimore Legal History; Original Orphans' Courtroom

This room housed the Orphans' Court of Baltimore City from 1900-1977. It has been called the most beautiful courtroom in Maryland, combining the atmosphere of an English taproom with the delicate embellishment of a French drawing room. In 1984, this room underwent a restoration at a cost of \$35,000. A team of artists, specially recruited for the restoration project, gilded the ceiling and painted in the false windows on the plaster walls above the woodwork. When the Courthouse was originally built, prior to the renovations of the 1950's, these painted windows were real, and light from the courtyards illuminated this room. The farm scenery seen through the faux windows is similar to what would have been seen in 1900. Also during the recent restoration, the West Indies mahogany wainscoting and bench were completely restored, and the floors were refinished, including replacement of some damaged wood. Feel free to take your time to walk the self-guided tour in this room. Items of significance include the grandfather clock designed in circa 1800 (which records indicate has stood in the Orphans' Court of Baltimore City since sometime prior to 1810). Also, note the copper drum in the center of the room. The Clerk of the Court used this until 1960 to randomly select jurors. Additionally, in one of the glass cases, notice the historic opinion by the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City from 1885 that ruled black lawyers could not be denied the right to practice in its courts. On the side wall, a 1948 jury list identifying Maryland's first and perhaps only, all-female jury is displayed, and above the bench, you are treated to yet another incredible mural.

“The British Surrender at Yorktown” Mural –

In 1907 Jean-Paul Laurens (1838-1921) was commissioned to paint the Yorktown mural. The Maryland Line Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Municipal Art Society paid the world-renowned French muralist \$13,000 (more than \$300,000 adjusted for inflation) for the commission. The mural was two years in execution when it was nearly destroyed. In the spring of 1909 heavy rains swelled the Seine and caused the studio in Paris where the mural was nearing completion to flood. The artist saved the canvas at the last minute by hoisting it above the water. It was shipped to New York aboard the steamer Lorraine, arriving on November 12, 1910 accompanied by the artist's son, Jean Pierre, who supervised its hanging the following month. Its formal unveiling was a gala affair, marked by an address by Jean Jules Jusserand, the French Ambassador.

The Mural depicts the capitulation of the British under Lord Cornwallis to General George Washington on October 19, 1781 on “Surrender Field” at Yorktown, Virginia. Legend says that the band played a nursery rhyme, “The World Turned Upside Down” while the defeated army of King George III, its regimental colors furled, proceeded to lay down its arms. Cornwallis, claiming indisposition, sent his subordinate, General O’Hara to deliver his sword to Washington.

(Return to the St. Paul Street lobby, and exit the grand doors.)

19. Cecil Calvert Statue

Cecil Calvert (1600-1675), Second Lord Baltimore and First Proprietor of Maryland, was an early pioneer of religious toleration, separation of Church and State and the right of citizens to legislate for themselves in a representative democracy. The statue was executed in 1908 at a cost of \$5,000 by German-born sculptor Albert Weinert (1863-1947). The model for the statue was Baltimore-born silent film star Francis X. Bushman (1885-1966), who before going to Hollywood was an artist's model in New York. The monument was unveiled on November 21, 1908.



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THE COURTHOUSE IN FILM

House of Cards

(2013-) Netflix series

The Wire

(2002-2008) HBO series

Live Free or Die Hard

(2007) starring Bruce Willis

The Corner

(2000) HBO series

Homicide: Life on the Streets

(1993-1999)

For Richer or Poorer

(1997) starring Tim Allen and Kirstie Alley

The Distinguished Gentleman

(1992) starring Eddie Murphy

Homicide (the movie)

(1991)

Avalon

(1990) directed by Barry Levinson

Her Alibi

(1989) starring Tom Selleck

The Bedroom Window


(1987) starring Steve Guttenburg

And Justice for All

(1979) starring Al Pacino

The Seduction of Joe Tynan

(1979) starring Alan Alda and Meryl Streep



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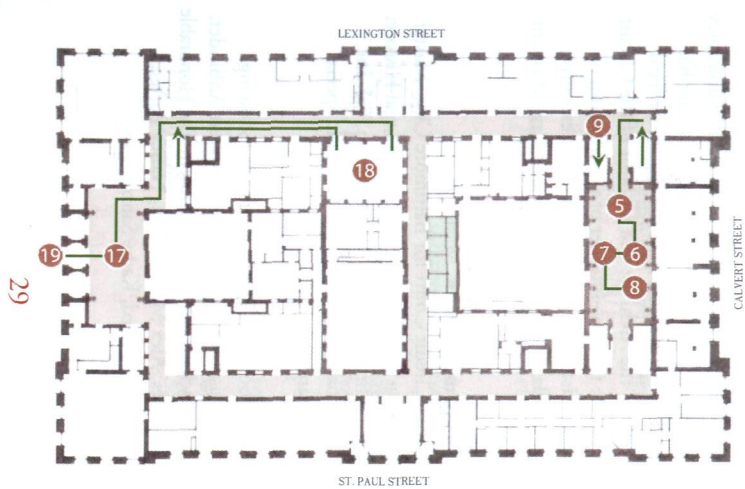
For additional information on our Courthouse, to request a private tour, or to volunteer in the Museum of Baltimore Legal History, please contact Bar Headquarters or (410) 539-5936.

The Historical Committee of the Bar Association of Baltimore City would like to acknowledge the Co-Chairs of the committee, and the authors of this brochure:

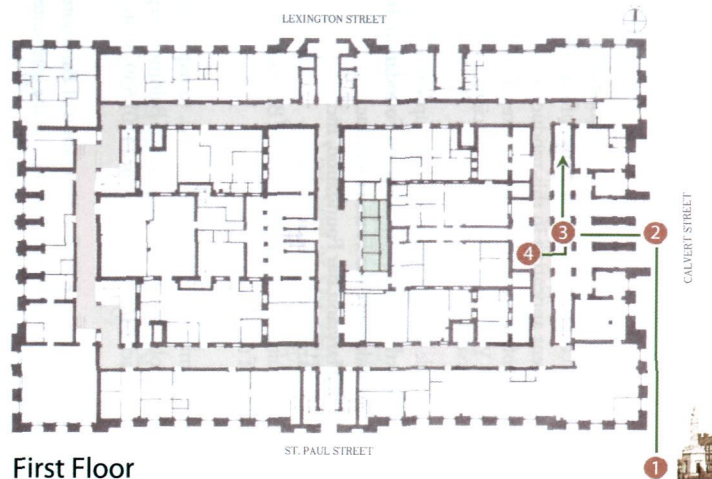
Honorable James F. Schneider, Judge in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Maryland. Judge Schneider has written extensively on the history of the Baltimore legal community. He is the Archivist and Curator of the Circuit Court of Baltimore City; co-founder of the Museum of Baltimore Legal History; and a member of the executive committee of the Baltimore Courthouse and Law Museum Foundation; and

Honorable William M. Dunn, Master in Chancery for the Circuit Court for Baltimore City. Master Dunn is: a Docent at the Museum of Baltimore Legal History; Director of the Baltimore History Center at the Peal, Inc.; and the MSBA's Board of Directors Liaison to the Special Committee on Courthouse Construction.

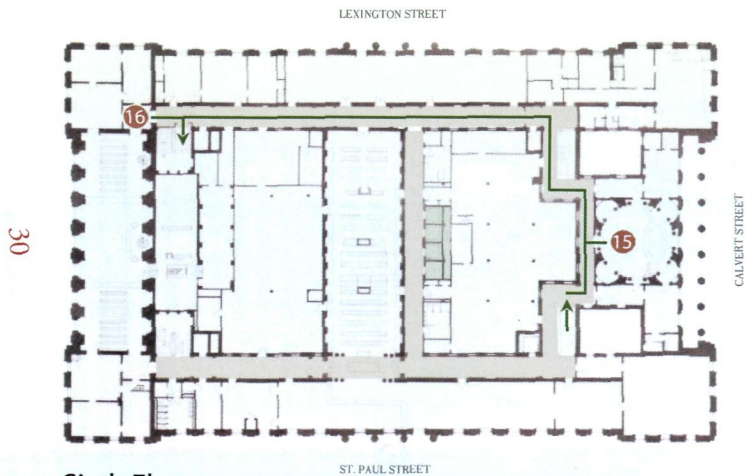
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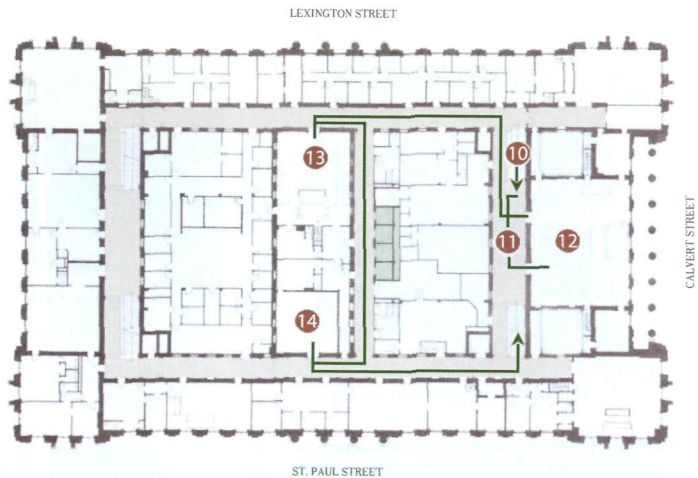
Second Floor



First Floor



Sixth Floor



Fourth Floor