FARMERS AND MECHANICS BANK OF CARROLL COUNTY

195 EAST MAIN STREET

Although this building may at first glance appear, at best eccentric, it might better by interpreted as an example of the struggle that took place in the late 19th century to pry the City away from its traditional, well-behaved building style. The Bank building is an example of how a local architect, Paul Reese, tried to impart some fashionable Beaux-Arts ideas and forms into Westminster's streetscape. He was displaying what Vincent Scully has called a "blessed sense of civic excess" in that he felt a pride in his native town and tried to force it to be up to date architecturally. (Perhaps the struggle was just too great for Reese, as he eventually gave up architecture to become an Episcopal Minister.) The local paper, The American Sentinel, got caught up in this local pride as it notes exuberantly, that "from beginning to end, it is the product of local talent".

CARR 373
070373470

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Farmers & Mechanics Bank of Carroll County

AND/OR COMMON
Crouse's Barber shop

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
195 East Main Street (MD 32)

CITY, TOWN
Westminster — VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
6

COUNTY
Carroll

STATE
Maryland

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	X COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	X YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Ray E. Bixler, Jr.

Telephone #: 848-9392

STREET & NUMBER
195 East Main Street

CITY, TOWN
Westminster — VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code
Maryland 21157

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Carroll County Office Building

Liber #: 202
Folio #: 49

STREET & NUMBER
Center Street

CITY, TOWN
Westminster

STATE
Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
None

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

CARR-373

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED Slightly	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Although basically a 20' x 40' shoe box in plan and section, the north and south elevations of number 195 East Main Street are anything but routine.

The south front faces Main Street (Maryland Route 32) in a very open manner. Laid in stretcher bond above a low foundation, the building's three stories have been contrived to read as one. This illusion is created by means of end pilasters which rise to two-thirds of the building's height and are topped by a broad wooden painted string course. The pilasters have Indiana limestone copitals that might best be classified as inverted trefoil arches; these are now painted the same color as the string course. Most of the space within this pilaster - string course - ground defined plane is filled with a "giant" thermal window, used to light the ground floor, and, in a tiny way, to serve as a door. The window's limestone arch has an equally giant cabriole-shaped limestone keystone. Above the arch, a trio of six-over-one double-hung sash windows seem to be suspended from the string course. The windows' frames repeat the yellowish color, but are made of iron. In an old photograph of the building, there was originally a plaque with the date "1901" between the keystone and row of windows; furthermore, the windows originally had decorated jambs and ball pendants.

Above the string course, the wall rises blindly for a few feet until it is ended abruptly by the roof's yellow-painted modillion cornice; the modillions have the same heroic proportions as the thermal window. Above the cornice, is a flat roof, a pair of squat towers. These "asses ears" (or, due to their small size, perhaps they shall be called "sow's ears") have been covered with roofing tar.

The west facade has never opened onto a broad garden, but there are eleven windows randomly scattered on its three floors; the six course common bond wall is separated from its neighboring, and equally tall, building by a two-foot wide alley. As the east facade shares a solid party wall with number 197 East Main Street, the apartments, still inhabited, must be exceedingly dark.

A three story clapboard and glass porch is well-used to insulate the north facade of the building; one, unsystematically placed, half-glass two panel door leads, on each floor, to the porch. The west side of the porch has regularly placed openings - two 1/1 windows on each of the upper two stories, a 1/1 window on the ground floor with a 6 pane door to its south. From the south, the top floor of the porch could have served as a studio, as its twelve closely placed 1/1 windows would keep out little of the northern light. Below, to the west, are six closely spaced 1/1 windows on each floor. The eastern half of this "porch" has one 1/1 window on each floor to the extreme east, and a six-light casement window in the center of the second floor.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CARR-373

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	X COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1901 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Paul Reese

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certainly one of the most individualistic buildings in the City, this is the quirkish product of an original, educated local mind. Originally built as a bank, now a barber shop, the structure's design is such that it would be equally (ill) suited to any use.

The building's architect was Paul Reese, descendant of the Reese family who built and ran a store (no. 192) further up East Main Street. Reese had an interesting life-reared in the Shellman House (she was his aunt) he studied and practiced architecture, until he saw the light and became an Episcopal minister. Photographs exist showing him in a very Galsworthy studio and smock, providing an interesting picture of a Belle Epoque architect. Reese also authored a (lengthy) account of his childhood in Westminster, which is attached to this report, and which indicates the strong, healthy, love Reese had for the City and its inhabitants.

An article in the local paper, The American Sentinel, proudly describes the building's interior on its opening, in 1901:

> The Director's Room is at the rear, near the vault, separated from the counting room by a glass screen and doors. It is finished in heavy oak, and has a ceiling 11 feet high and derives light from the rear window. The fixtures of the bank are of the Louis XV style, hand carved, and very handsome. The ceiling 16 feet high, is of steel, of an ornamental pattern, and of a delightful cream color. The color of the walls is in harmony.

The same article also notes that "from beginning to end, it is the product of local talent", listing Reese (grandson of the first cashier of the bank) as architects and Samuel J. Sloan (mason), J. Webster Ebaugh (carpenter), Gilbert & Gehr (iron mongers) Joshua Stevenson (pilasters), and Samuel Yingling (painter), as his co-workers.

Although it is easy to take cheap shots at this pile, it could better be read as an example of the struggle that took place in the late 19th century to pry the City away from its traditional, well-behaved

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CARR-373

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Being the eastern section of lot 47 of the town of New London.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY
STATE	COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: Christopher Weeks, Consultant	November, 1976 (DATE)
ORGANIZATION: Westminster Historical Sites Survey	
STREET & NUMBER: c/o City Hall - Public Works Department	TELEPHONE
CITY OR TOWN: Westminster	STATE: Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

building style. If left to follow its own devices, Westminster would probably build nothing but 3-or-5-bay 2-story buildings. This is an example of how Reese, a local architect, tried to impart some fashionable Beaux Arts ideas and forms into Westminster's streetscape. Reese was displaying what Vincent Scully has called a "blessed sense of civic excess" (American Architecture and Urbanism, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1969). Although Scully used the phrase to describe the spirit of Pennsylvania Station's architects, certainly it can be applied here as well. The same desire that pushed architects such as McKim, Mead, and White to seek to ennoble New York by a monumental train station (or by a library, ennoble, or by....) was echoed by men in the provinces by a similar desire to ennoble their small towns. While it is easy to dismiss Westminster's bit of Beaux-Arts as a minor variation on the Metropolitan Museum of Art, it is harder to dismiss the pride of the architect in his native City.

CARR 373

195 E. Main St. Westminster

N. Jacade

C. Weeks 12/76

54%

CARR 373
195 E. Main St.

"B" Section

B-32

CHR-37B Paul Revere,
in studio
c. 1900
(for 195 E. Main
St. Westminster)

S. S. X 86-131 % O LINE O HALFTONE O DUOTONE SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS SS

CARP 373

373

P.8486

131

S.S.

CXLXXIV-B

Reese Bank Originally

Baldwin

CARR-373
Paul Revere,
for 195 E. Main St.
Westminster

c. 1885, c. 1935

J. Rees Architect

CARR-373

Paul Revere

(for 195 E. Main St.)

c. 1900