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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NOV 23 1994

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting ~~determinations for individual~~ properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Federal-American National Bank  
other names/site number Hamilton National Bank  
National Bank of Washington

2. Location

street & number 615-21 14th Street, N.W. not for publication N/A  
city or town Washington vicinity X  
state District of Columbia code DC zip code 20005 county N/A code N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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     nationally X statewide     locally. (     See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Robert L. Mallett 11/14/94  
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property     meets     does not meet the National Register criteria. (     See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register (See continuation sheet). Edson H Beall 12-29-94
- determined eligible for the National Register (See continuation sheet).
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] Signature of Keeper      12-29-94 Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
_____	_____ Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0  
Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Banks and Financial Institutions in Washington, D.C., 1790-1960

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>COMMERCE</u>	Sub: <u>financial institution</u>
<u>TRADE</u>	<u>specialty stores</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>TRADE</u>	Sub: <u>specialty store</u>
<u>VACANT/NOT IN USE</u>	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

20TH CENTURY REVIVAL  
Classical Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>STONE: Granite</u>
roof	<u>ASPHALT</u>
walls	<u>STONE: Limestone</u>
other	<u>DOORS: Bronze</u>

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

**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 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.)

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

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
COMMERCE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance** 1925-26  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates** 1925-26  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder Alfred C. Bossom  
Jules-Henri de Sibour

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)  
SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>18</u>	<u>323800</u>	<u>4307200</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	___ See continuation sheet.					

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) Square 253, lot 833.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) The boundary includes the Federal-American National Bank Building.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Maloney / Architect  
organization D.C. Historic Preservation Division date September 20, 1994  
street & number 614 H Street, N.W., Room 305 telephone (202) 727-7360  
city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20001

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name 619 14th Street Limited Partnership  
street & number 4390-A Parliament Place telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Lanham state MD zip code 20706

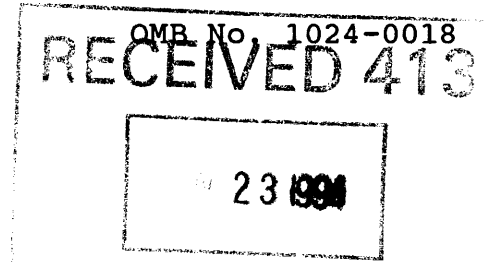
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION  
~~Federal-American National Bank~~  
Name of Property  
Washington, D.C.  
County and State

The Federal-American Bank is situated at the southeast corner of 14th and G Streets, NW. It occupies a lot measuring 85 feet along G Street and 83.5 feet on 14th Street. A ten-story office building (c. 1990) abuts the property on the south side and a Little Tavern building (1931), recently demolished, was on the east side. The Federal-American Bank is a four-story, approximately 60 feet high, structure built of reinforced concrete; there is a small ell which extends to the alley at the rear of the property. The Federal-American Bank illustrates the Classical Revival style and incorporates some design principles from the Baroque tradition. The street facades are faced with ashlar limestone; party walls are beige brick. Both street facades are symmetrical and have five bays, the principal facade faces 14th Street. The ground floor was originally treated as a monumental base with a show window in each bay; a continuous metal and glass storefront has replaced the show windows. The second and third stories are unified by giant Orders, and the fourth story, which is lit solely by skylights, features a full entablature and a parapet wall.

The principal facade is on 14th Street. The Classical facade incorporates some Baroque design principles, these include concatenation, an emphasis on the center, and the use of shades and shadows as a calculated part of the design. The five bays present an a:b:c:b:a pattern. An elaborate portal is located in the central bay. The portal has a limestone surround with a broken (bottom) segmental pediment. In the Baroque tradition, the surround is embellished with scrolls, volutes, consoles, cherubs, vines, flowers, a shield, and a female head with a Roman warrior headress. The pocket-doors are bronze with a bronze frame. The frame is decorated with low-relief urns, vines, Roman heads, and grotesque animals. The doors have three blank panels, an ornate panel with low-relief griffins, vines and birds, and the principal panel which includes a stylized arcade infilled with glass. Above the doors is a brass transom with two identical square panels with floral ornament. On either side of the portal are windows covered with bronze grilles, one with a night depository.

The second and third floors are linked by giant Orders attached to the three middle bays. The arrangement suggests a portico and also presents concatenation. The outer bays have two layered Doric pilasters while the center bay is flanked by two Ionic half-columns.

The central bay is highlighted by a two-story, round-arch window. The keystone incorporates a female head on a console, flanked by bas-reliefs of griffins and vines. The first, second, fourth, and fifth bays have square-head windows with simple trim and Classical proportions. In between the second- and third-story windows of the the second and fourth bays are roundels which depict charioteers.

<sup>1</sup> Concatenation refers to the linking together of parts, for example, half-pilasters, pilasters, half-columns, columns, and walls.

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All the windows have metal frames and are multi-light. The fourth floor has no windows; the rooms are lit by skylights. The exterior treatment includes a full entablature and a parapet wall. An inscription, "The National Bank of Washington," in bronze letters is attached to the frieze; the original bank name was similarly displayed. The upper fascia of the architrave has bronze letters which state, "Washington's Oldest Bank." The cornice includes an egg-and-dart moulding and large dentils. Small lion heads, which align with the full pilasters and half-columns, project from a cyma recta moulding located in the middle of the cornice. The parapet wall has panels which correspond to the five bays. Above the center bay of the parapet is an ornamental panel with scrolls.

There are also five bays on the G Street facade, presenting an a:b:b:b:a pattern. The second and third floors are linked by giant pilasters. The outer side of the end bays display the only Baroque aesthetic (concatenation) on this elevation; an Ionic pilaster projects from a Doric half-pilaster. The rest of the bay divisions are demarcated by an Ionic pilaster. Each bay at the second floor incorporates a pair of casement windows set beneath a fixed round-arch window. Like the one on 14th Street, these keystones have a console which supports a female head. The third floor windows are fixed with square-heads and plain trim. The bas-relief panels with griffins and vines are repeated between the Ionic capitals. The entablature is identical to that of the principal facade. The parapet is also incorporated above the entablature, but its center bay does not support an ornamental panel.

The double height banking room is located on the second floor. It is reached through a brass and glass hexagonal vestibule, which connects to a small lobby with rusticated walls and a flight of stairs on axis with the entrance. Two small elevators flank the steps. The vestibule retains its original bronze hanging lantern.

The banking room is square in plan, with a continuous, open mezzanine level around the sides. At each corner of the mezzanine is a semi-private room separated from the main area by broad elliptical arches. The ceilings of these corner rooms are elaborately painted with Renaissance motifs.

The interior is described in a contemporary newspaper account as of "Spanish design," and finished with variegated "George Washington freestone" from Virginia, which has since been painted. Walls and balustrades are decorated with Ionic pilasters, bas-relief panels of griffins, and other classical motifs. Blind arches on the east and south walls echo the five arched windows along the north wall, overlooking G Street. The main ceiling has gilded and polychromatic finishes and ornate octagonal coffers. The ceilings below the mezzanines incorporate dropped beams. The banking counter along the east wall (opposite the entrance) and other fixtures, including a chandelier with ornate grillwork, appear to be original.



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Federal-American National Bank  
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Federal-American National Bank stands among a group of bank buildings forming Washington's financial district in the vicinity of the U.S. Treasury Department. It is an excellent example of early-twentieth-century Classical Revival bank architecture, designed by the nationally prominent bank and skyscraper architect Alfred C. Bossom, in association with J.H. de Sibour, the distinguished Washington architect who was among the city's leading proponents of Beaux-Arts principles. It is the only building designed by Bossom in Washington, and exemplifies many of the best characteristics of the forty banks he designed around the country between 1912 and 1926.

The building epitomizes the striving of a 1920s financial institution to express its financial prowess through a distinctive building. It also illustrates the dangerous tendency, typical of the period, for some banks to over-invest in lavish building campaigns, to the detriment of their financial stability. The building's subsequent history as the main office of a newly constituted Depression-era bank, the Hamilton National Bank, and a much larger financial institution, the National Bank of Washington, demonstrates its sustained appeal as a banking headquarters.

The building's design incorporates a number of innovative features, on the interior and exterior, that were unique in Washington banks. Raising the banking room to the second floor helped separate it from the noise and congestion of the street, while simultaneously freeing the ground floor for shops at street level. The two uses were congruous with this neighborhood's roles as a financial and shopping district.

THE FEDERAL-AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK

The Federal National Bank of Washington was organized in January 1913 by a group of businessmen which included thirteen directors who had recently resigned from their positions at Commercial National Bank. For its first home, Federal National Bank acquired the building previously occupied by J.H. Small florists on the southeast corner of 14th and G Streets, NW. In October 1922, the bank merged with American National Bank, becoming Federal-American National Bank. Soon after this merger, the bank began planning for a new building to accommodate its increased business. The present building was constructed in 1925-26 on the site of the original florist shop.

At the time that Federal-American was planning the present building, its Board of Directors included many of the city's distinguished business leaders. The membership also had a strong representation of individuals with real estate interests. Board members included:

- Charles G. Abbott, Assistant Secretary, Smithsonian
- Lester A. Barr, real estate interests
- Albert E. Berry, President, C&P Telephone

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- =====
- Thomas Bones, associate of developer Harry Wardman
  - W.F. Brenizer, President, coal company
  - Walter A. Brown, realtor and insurance broker
  - Aubrey L. Clarke, proprietor, L.A. Clarke & Son, lumber company
  - W.G. Galliher, lumber merchant
  - Isaac Gans, Treasurer, Saks & Company
  - William F. Ham, President, Washington Railway & Electric Company and Potomac Electric Power Company
  - George W. Harris, President, Harris & Ewing, photographers
  - William A. Hill, President, Moore & Hill, realtors
  - James Brown Scott, law professor and secretary, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
  - James F. Shea, realtor
  - Leon Tobriner, lawyer and manager, Christian Heurich Brewery
  - L. Perry West, Vice President, West Bros., brick company

Contemporary newspaper accounts describing the new bank building indicate that it was considered one of the most beautiful, commodious, and innovative structures of its type in the city. The bank's directors clearly intended to provide customers with state-of-the-art conveniences in a prestigious setting. At the same time, they also expected the building to accommodate the complex business concerns of a growing modern financial institution, including generous space for expansion and provisions for rental income from both retail and office tenants. Although the building permit estimated the cost at \$400,000, early press reports quoted the projected construction cost of the building as \$1 million.<sup>2</sup>

The building was designed by Alfred C. Bossom of New York, with J.H. De Sibour as associated architect. Bossom, an Englishman whose later career focused on the mechanization of the building industry, was an early proponent and designer of skyscrapers, including bank headquarters in Dallas, New Orleans, Buffalo, and New York. DeSibour is perhaps best known as the designer of elegant residential buildings along Massachusetts Avenue, but was also responsible for large commercial commissions. The builder was Harry Wardman, the noted Washington developer of commercial and residential properties who transformed large sections of the city, constructing more than 400 apartment houses and 5,000 houses from 1900 to 1930.

Planning for the building began early in 1923. As was sometimes done at the time, the building was designed to accommodate additional floors. The building was unusual, however, in being the first and probably only bank in Washington designed with an "elevated" banking room. The location of the banking room on the second floor was undoubtedly recognized as an advantage at a time when growing automobile traffic made the streets increasingly noisy and polluted. The novelty of the idea apparently caused the bank officials some concern, since newspaper accounts carefully pointed out precedents in New York and the easy access that would be

<sup>2</sup>D.C. Permit to Build #4135, October 25, 1924.

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provided by elevator. According to one press report, "The new home... will bring to this city a banking house space with the best in the country. The various federal reserve districts have provided themselves with new main offices, practically all of which have located their main banking room above the ground floor. The great national banks in New York City, such as the National Bank of Commerce, the First National, the Continental and Commercial in Chicago and innumerable others likewise boast elevated banking rooms."<sup>3</sup> In 1921, architect Alfred C. Bossom designed an "elevated" banking room for the Seaboard National Bank in New York, which probably influenced his design for Federal-American in Washington. As *Architectural Record* described, "The entrance gives into a small vestibule, with two elevator shafts left and right, and a stair leading up into the banking space...."<sup>4</sup>

The design of the banking counters was also considered innovative at the time. According to a contemporary account, "the visitor is first impressed with the absence of tellers' cages, wickets and grillwork. There is not a cage in the bank. In place of the usual protective devices there is a new type of counter which was originated by [Federal-American president John] Poole... Along the outer edge of the counter is an artistic iron grating perhaps a foot high. The counter is quite broad and the money is, of course kept beneath it. On account of the height of the grating and the width of the counter it would be impossible for anyone in the lobby to reach over the counter and down under it to where the money is kept."<sup>5</sup>

The safety of this arrangement, together with the inviting openness in the banking room that it allowed, made the "Poole Counter" a much-noted improvement in the design of bank interiors. A 1929 book on bank design called the Poole counter "the most important contribution to good bank architecture that has been made in many years" which "opened up the whole interior of the banking room to its very great benefit." The new counter improved ventilation by eliminating the old high screens and wickets that often made the tellers cages stuffy. Supervision of bank employees was improved, since every teller was in full view of the officers. The counter also eliminated a psychological as well as physical barrier between tellers and customers; it was credited with a "wholesome influence on morale" which made the clerks more responsive and attentive.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Evening Star, November 5, 1923, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup>Matlack Price, "The Seaboard National Bank, New York City." Architectural Record, Vol. 51, p. 485 (June 1922).

<sup>5</sup>"Federal American Bank Thrown Open." Evening Star, March 16, 1926.

<sup>6</sup>Alfred Hopkins, The Fundamentals of Good Bank Building, p. 71-78. New York: Bankers Publishing Company, 1929.

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In October 1930, Federal-American merged with Merchants Bank and Trust. The new bank operated four city branches in addition to its main office. After the National Banking Holiday in March 1933, however, the bank was deemed insolvent and failed to receive a license to resume normal operations.

Among the banks that failed during this banking crisis, Federal-American National and Commercial National (located diagonally across from one another at 14th and G Streets) had the largest investment in banking headquarters. Their elaborate buildings were directly related to their failure, since they represented a large portion of the banks' resources. At a time of economic strain, when the banks' capital assets should have been available to absorb losses in earnings and to provide adequate protection for depositors, they were instead immobilized by real estate holdings that could not be quickly liquidated.

In the case of Federal-American, the value of its banking structure (\$1.5 million) was almost 50 percent of its capital assets (\$3.1 million). Together with the bank's other real estate holdings, 90 percent of its capital was tied up; this was far greater than the 30 percent recommended at the time for a bank's total real estate investment.

In September 1933, the Federal government reorganized Federal-American along with six other local banks to form the Hamilton National Bank, which then occupied the building as its main office. In 1954, Hamilton was merged with the National Bank of Washington, which moved its headquarters into the building from its landmark building at 7th Street and Indiana Avenue, NW. NBW's choice of the Federal-American building for its new headquarters is testimony to the enduring distinction and appeal of the building's design, as well as the continuing importance of the area near the U.S. Treasury as the city's primary financial center.

Commercial Tenants

The use of Federal-American's ground floor as retail space reflected the commercial nature of 14th Street. As the Evening Star noted, "Stores on the ground floor will not only provide a very large source of revenue, but, with smart, colorful shops, will add greatly to the business life of the corner and draw thousands of shoppers to the bank doors who otherwise would be forced to go elsewhere."

The building has had a remarkably stable commercial tenantry. City directories list the National Shirt Shop, Inc., at 617 14th Street from 1926 to 1955, when the store moved a few doors to the south. The George C. Baker Optical Company occupied 615 14th Street from 1930 until the early 1960s. William Hahn & Company was an original tenant of the building, operating a shoe store in the corner space

<sup>7</sup>Evening Star, April 1, 1923, p. 26.

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at 619 14th Street from 1927 until the late 1980s. As the other commercial tenants left the building, Hahn's rented the newly available space and continues to operate there today.

Commercial tenants made significant alterations to the original 1920s storefronts in 1934 and 1939.<sup>8</sup> The projecting, continuous band of store windows may date from 1939, although many cosmetic changes to the storefronts have been made since then.

**ALFRED C. BOSSOM**

Alfred Charles Bossom (1881-1965) was one of the leading figures in American bank and skyscraper architecture during the 1920s. Born in London, Bossom was trained at the Royal Academy of Arts. He arrived in America in 1903, at age 22, to design workers' housing for the Carnegie steel mills in Pittsburgh.

Among his early architectural projects was the restoration of historic Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain (1908-25). In 1910, he married Emily Bayne, the daughter of Samuel Bayne, an oil tycoon who founded the Seaboard National Bank in New York. Bayne would become the source of several commissions launching Bossom's career as an architect of banks and office buildings. By 1912, Bossom had designed the First National Bank building in Richmond, the first skyscraper in the South. The success of this building earned him several more commissions for bank buildings in Virginia, North Carolina, and elsewhere in the South and Northeast. By 1920, he was recognized as one of the leading bank architects in the country.

Bossom was an early proponent of skyscrapers. He designed several, including the 17-story American Exchange National Bank in Dallas (1918; Lang & Witchell, associated architects), the 25-story Magnolia Petroleum Building in Dallas (1922), as well as the banking room of the 20-story, domed Hibernia Bank & Trust in New Orleans (1920-21; in collaboration with Favrot & Livaudais).

All of these employed classical designs which conveyed a sense of solidity and continuity and they often used Italian Renaissance sources for inspiration. As Bossom himself noted, "The building externally should be distinctive, should look like a BANK and should call attention to itself by its substantial and conservative appearance."

In 1921, Bossom's design for the Seaboard National Bank in New York (now demolished) was awarded a prize by the Downtown League as the best building constructed in the city that year. It was a low building for Manhattan's financial district. The bank building had four stories with pilasters and a

<sup>8</sup>D.C. Building Permits #173097 (July 21, 1934) and #220394 & 220396 (February 27, 1939).

<sup>9</sup>Alfred C. Bossom, "The Requirements of a Modern Bank Building." Bankers Magazine, Vol. 83, No. 11, November 1911.

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balustrade; it acted as a base for a five-story shaft designed as office space. The elevated, hexagonal banking room was reached by a broad staircase from the corner lobby. The Neoclassical design of the Seaboard National may have served as a prototype for Federal-American; its restrained Neoclassicism conformed with Washington tastes and its scale was in line with the District's height restrictions. In fact, Bossom's Federal-American Bank was designed to accept a several-story addition to the roof.

Toward the end of his American career, Bossom began to experiment with less conventional motifs. A visit to Mexico in the early 1920s sparked his interest in early Mayan architecture, inspiring him to crown his design for the Liberty Bank skyscraper in Buffalo (1924-25) with a ziggurat roof based on a towering Mayan temple at Tikal, Guatemala. Bossom also proposed the Mayan temple form as an appropriate design solution for meeting the building setback requirements in New York's zoning code (enacted in 1916). In experiments such as this, Bossom was exploring forms that would soon become a part of the Art Deco style.

At the height of his career in the mid-1920s, Bossom's New York office had a staff of thirty-three. Nevertheless, he decided in 1926 to close his lucrative practice and return to England. Despite his enthusiasm for America, he had remained profoundly English, and wanted his three sons to be raised and educated as Englishmen. Bossom served as a Member of Parliament from 1931-59, and wrote a respected book on parliamentary procedure. Although he no longer practiced architecture, he turned his professional attention to the modernization and mechanization of the British housing and building industry. He was named a Fellow of the Royal Society of British Architects, and was given a knighthood in 1953 and a life peerage (as Lord Bossom of Maidstone) in 1959.<sup>10</sup>

**JULES-HENRI DE SIBOUR**

Jules-Henri de Sibour (1872-1938) was responsible for the design of many of Washington's most distinguished Beaux-Arts style buildings of the early twentieth century, including several mansions on Massachusetts Avenue, at least six distinguished apartment houses (including the opulent McCormick Apartments, now the headquarters of the National Trust for Historic Preservation), and several Neoclassical office buildings in the financial district.

De Sibour was the son of Count Gabriel de Sibour, a French diplomat claiming direct descent from King Louis XI, and a mother from Belfast, Maine. The family moved to Washington in 1885. Shortly thereafter, the senior de Sibour died, and Jules-Henri inherited the title. De Sibour attended the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, but then switched to Yale, which at the time had no architecture department. After college, he apprenticed in the offices of two prominent New York architects, Ernest Flagg and Bruce Price.

<sup>10</sup> Dennis Sharp, The American Architecture of Alfred C. Bossom. London, Book Art, 1984.

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De Sibour married Margaret Clagett of Washington in 1898, afterwards returning to Paris for an additional year of architectural study in an atelier connected to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Thereafter, he returned to New York and in 1902 became the partner of Bruce Price, a socially prominent architect who had planned and designed the resort suburb of Tuxedo Park for Pierre Lorillard. Price also designed more formal Fifth Avenue mansions, and the Neoclassical Surety Building (1895) in the financial district.

After Bruce Price's death, deSibour continued his practice for several years under the name of Bruce Price & de Sibour. Moving to Washington, de Sibour quickly established himself as an architect of choice among the capital's social elite, and designed a number of mansions along Massachusetts Avenue for prominent families (many of these are now embassies). His bank and commercial buildings included the McLachlen Banking Corporation (1001 G Street, 1910), Keith-Albee Building (615-27 15th Street, 1911), and Investment Building (1502 K Street, 1923). The Guardian Federal Savings and Loan Building on Dupont Circle (1912) was an unusual, mixed-use building, with the banking room on the street level and two floors of apartments above. De Sibour's career in Washington lasted 30 years. He died in 1938.

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