

**ADDRESS: 1935-37 CHESTNUT ST**

Name of Resource: Shimwell & Logan Building

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: 1935 Chestnut St LLC

Nominator: Center City Residents' Association

Staff Contact: Allyson Mehley, allyson.mehley@phila.gov

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate a building located at 1935-37 Chestnut Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Two buildings stand on the parcel, at 1935 and 1937. This nomination focuses on the 1935 Chestnut Street only. The building was constructed in the Italianate style during the mid-nineteenth century but was redesigned for the Shimwell & Logan Optical Company in 1921 by architect Ernest H. Yardley.

The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criteria for Designation C and D. Under Criterion C, it argues that the redesigned front facade expresses distinguishing characteristics of Modern Classicism that became popular in the United States during the interwar years. Under Criterion D, the nomination asserts that the facade reflects an Italian Palazzo style with refined classical detailing. The subject building represents an era characterized by the Modern Classical style, which gained distinction during this period in red brick Philadelphia. The period of significance is limited to 1921, the time of the façade's reconstruction.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the building at 1935-37 Chestnut St satisfies Criteria for Designation C and D.



# NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT

## PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

### PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)  
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

#### 1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE *(must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)*

Street address: **1935 Chestnut Street**

Postal code: **19103**

#### 2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: **The Shimwell & Logan Building**

Current Name: **Unknown**

#### 3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☒ Building

☐ Structure

☐ Site

☐ Object

#### 4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: ☐ excellent ☒ good ☐ fair ☐ poor ☐ ruins

Occupancy: ☒ occupied ☐ vacant ☐ under construction ☐ unknown

Current use: Commercial

#### 5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

*Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.*

#### 6. DESCRIPTION

*Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.*

#### 7. SIGNIFICANCE

*Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.*

Period of Significance (from year to year): **1921**

Date(s) of construction: **Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, 1921 (façade)**

Architects: **Ernest H. Yardley (1921 façade)**

Builders: **Metzger & Fisher, Contractors (1921 façade)**

Original owner: **Shimwell & Logan Optical Company (1921)**

Significant person: **NA**

**CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:**

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- ☐ (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- ☐ (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☒ (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- ☒ (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- ☐ (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☐ (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- ☐ (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- ☐ (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- ☐ (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- ☐ (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

**8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

*Please attach a bibliography.*

**9. NOMINATOR**

Organization: **Center City Residents' Association**

Author: **Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian  
Keeping Society of Philadelphia**

Date: **4 October 2021**

Address: **1315 Walnut Street, Suite 320  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107**

Telephone: **717.602.5002**

Email: **keeper@keepingphiladelphia.org**

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

**PHC USE ONLY**

Date of Receipt: October 4, 2021

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete

Date: 10/28/2021

Date of Notice Issuance: 10/28/2021

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: 1935 Chestnut St LLC

Address: 1821 Ranstead St

City: Philadelphia

State: PA

Postal Code: 19103

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Final Action: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

12/7/18

# **NOMINATION**

FOR THE

## **PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**



Figure 1. The primary (south) elevation. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

### **THE SHIMWELL & LOGAN BUILDING**

#### **A FAÇADE IN THE MODERN CLASSICAL STYLE**

#### **FAÇADE BUILT IN 1921**

—

**1935 CHESTNUT STREET**  
**PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19103-4411**



**Figure 2. The proposed historic designation is for 1935 Chestnut Street only.** The legal parcel is known as 1935-37 Chestnut Street (shown in blue above). The legal parcel includes two buildings: 1935 Chestnut Street and 1937 Chestnut Street. The boundary for the subject property, 1935 Chestnut Street, is delineated by the red line within the larger parcel. Source: Atlas, City of Philadelphia, 2021

## 5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the designation of the subject property is as follows:

ALL THAT CERTAIN lot or piece of ground with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, SITUATE at 1935 Chestnut Street, containing in front or breadth on Chestnut Street at the south twenty-two feet, extending to Ranstead Street 153 feet at the east and west to the south side of Ranstead Street with twenty-two feet front at that elevation.

BEING known as 1935 Chestnut Street.

Map Registry No. 001S110289

OPA Account No. 881564515





Figure 3. The primary (south) elevation. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

## 6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Shimwell & Logan Building at 1935 Chestnut Street is a four-story masonry commercial structure with a limestone façade designed in 1921 by Ernest H. Yardley, architect, in a restrained Palazzo style reflective of the interwar years. The subject building stands within a vignette of attached, nineteenth-century buildings that began as dwellings. As it appears today, this former townhouse, initially built in mid-nineteenth century, was renovated in 1921 with the construction of a new façade at the primary (south) elevation. The four-story structure features two elevations, the primary (south) elevation and the rear (north) elevation. As stated, the primary (south) elevation is the limestone façade of a commercial building, while the rear (north) elevation appears like a mid-nineteenth century townhouse. The primary (south) elevation is four stories, which is divided into three stages.



Figure 4. Looking upward at the primary (south) elevation, showing the leaded glass windows in the transom of the first floor and the banner, reading “SHIMWELL & LOGAN.” Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

The first stage of the primary (south) elevation comprises the first floor, which is defined by a fenestration of eight openings. A large storefront window dominates the façade in the central bay. This opening features a mullion window that is divided into seven openings. A large store front window occupies the lower portion of the central opening. The upper portion is divided into two stages of transom windows, three per level. The lower section of three transom windows is delineated by decorative mullions, though the windows appear to feature replacement glazing. The upper section, also divided into three, features original and/or early window fabric, including a central sash featuring opaque glass that is flanked by single leaded glass sashes. Each leaded glass sash features nine central panes, three per level, that are separated by diamond panes, and surrounded by slender horizontal and vertical panes that form a border. This upper trio is delineated by decorative mullions and set within original architraves. The easterly and westerly bays feature pedestrian doors within the original architraves, though the doors are modern commercial replacement units. The individual transoms that rise above the pedestrian doors feature leaded glass that is like that employed in the central bay, though the central panes feature fifteen panes, five per level. The entire fenestration is set within smooth-faced limestone, delineated by muted pilasters. Above the central bay, within the limestone, is a banner featuring incised text: “SHIMWELL & LOGAN.” Demarcating the first and second floors are three bands of molding that gradually project per level as the eye ascends the elevation. The first band is a strand of repetitive geometric forms that embody traditional forms articulated in a modern style relief. The second band is a densely set egg-and-dart relief. A simple two-tiered crown molding comprises the next and final band.



<https://www.rubberflooringinc.com/garage/coin-nitro-rolls.html>

Figure 5. Details of the first floor of the primary (south) elevation, showing the first-floor fenestration. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

Comprising a two-story *piano nobile*, the second stage of the primary (south) elevation comprises the second and third floors. The fenestration in this stage includes three apertures per floor, continuing the three-bay system. The windows are set within a simple, but attractive network of restrained pilasters and recessed panels that characterize the classical modernist style façade. Aligned with the storefront window below, the central openings of the second and third floors feature three-part mullion windows. The mullions are low-relief limestone pilasters, setting off a central window at the second floor that is at a height that allows for three sashes—two-over-four-over-four. Flanking the center window are slender openings that also feature three sashes—one-over-two-over-two. The westerly and easterly bays feature the same three-sash configuration as the central window—two-over-four-over-four. Separating the second and third floor windows are limestone spandrels with simple one- and three-panel configurations. The third story, the upper portion of the *piano nobile*, continues the same theme, though the windows are more typical sash windows. The three-part mullion window features a four-over-four unit at center, flanked by one-over-one units to the east and west. The mullions continue the limestone pilaster motif. Single apertures occupy the westerly and easterly bays, repeating the same window configuration as the central four-over-four unit. A simple molding rises above the third-floor fenestration, distinguishing it from the fourth story.

The third stage of the façade comprises the fourth floor. Unlike the lower three stories, the fourth floor is four bays in width, featuring the same four-over-four sash windows. This fenestration is



delineated by limestone pilasters with simple capitols. A cornice rises above the fourth floor and is comprised of several traditional, but restrained moldings. The building features a flat roof.



Figure 6. A view of the cornerstone or architect's reference at the base of the building on the easterly side of the primary (south) elevation. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

Just above the granite base at the bottom of the eastern most pilaster of the first floor is the following inscription:

E.H. Yardley  
Architect  
1921



Figure 7. Left: A vintage photograph showing the subject property when it was in use as the March of Dimes. Source: Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Database. Figure 8. Right: Looking northeast at the subject property. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

## 7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Shimwell & Logan Building at 1923 Chestnut Street in the Rittenhouse Square neighborhood of Philadelphia is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The subject building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

- c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; and
- d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen.

The period of significance is related to the time of its construction in 1921.



Figure 9. Left: An advertisement for Shimwell & Logan at 1935 Chestnut Street in 1922. Source: *Evening Public Ledger*, 24 April 1922, 24. Figure 10. Right: Advertisement for Guild Opticians, including 1935 Chestnut Street in 1925. Source: *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 23 April 1925, 14.

## HISTORIC CONTEXT

The Classical Modern façade that stands at 1935 Chestnut Street is the design of Ernest H. Yardley, Architect, commissioned in 1921 by Shimwell & Logan, Opticians, at an estimated cost of \$10,000. The exterior was altered from its mid-nineteenth century Italianate appearance at the primary (south) elevation to a modern limestone front, taking the form of a restrained Italian Palazzo in commercial format. The new façade deviated from otherwise uniform row of redbrick houses, which still stand on each side of the subject property. Under a building permit dated October 3, 1921, the improvements included the following scope of work: “Rebuild front wall set back 18” [inches]” to meet Highway Dept. requirements.” The work was completed by Metzger & Fisher, Contractors.<sup>1</sup> In addition to its initial renovations for an optician’s practice on the ground floor, the building also offered some office and studio space on its upper floors.<sup>2</sup>

The Shimwell & Logan Optical Company was founded by Henry S. Shimwell, Jr. (1877-1945) and Herbert Wells Logan (1885-1936), operating at the northeast corner of Sixteenth and Walnut Streets as early as 1913.<sup>3</sup> The firm moved to the subject property between 1921 and 1922.<sup>4</sup> The *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported that the subject property was sold by Shimwell & Logan in 1927,

<sup>1</sup> Building Permit for 1935 Chestnut Street, 1922. Source: CAP.

<sup>2</sup> *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 12 February 1922, 51.

<sup>3</sup> Pennsylvania (State). Death certificates, 1906–1968. Series 11.90 (1,905 cartons). Records of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Record Group 11. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.; and “Leases Negotiated,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 10 June 1913, 11.

<sup>4</sup> *Evening Public Ledger*, 24 April 1922, 24.

just six years after it was purchased, then being assessed at \$105,000.<sup>5</sup> Shimwell & Logan operated for many years afterwards, outliving each of its founders.<sup>6</sup>



Figure 11. Left: An advertisement for The Swiss Pastry Shop at 1935 Chestnut Street in 1934. Source: *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 4 November 1934, 66. Figure 12. Right: An advertisement for the Coronet Hat Shop at 1935 Chestnut Street. Source: *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 September 1941, 6.

As shown above, the subject building's ground floor served other common commercial purposes including the Swiss Pastry Shop in the 1930s and the Coronet Hat Shop in the 1940s.<sup>7</sup> In later years the building even served as the regional location of the March of Dimes, a tenancy that began in 1962.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> "Activities of the Day in Real Estate," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 2 June 1927, 24.

<sup>6</sup> "Harry S. Shimwell," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 27 February 1945, 26.

<sup>7</sup> *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 4 November 1934, 66.; and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 September 1941, 6.

<sup>8</sup> "Real Estate News," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 16 August 1962, 25.





Figure 13. The primary (south) elevation of Shimwell & Logan on December 14, 1921, nearing the time of its completion. Source: Julius Rosenberg, Photographer, via DOR Archives, [www.phillyhistory.org](http://www.phillyhistory.org).

#### **CRITERION C & D**

The Shimwell & Logan Building at 1935 Chestnut Street embodies distinguishing characteristics of Modern Classicism. Influenced by “the Classical legacy of the Renaissance,” the abstracted and chaste appearance of the subject building’s primary (south) elevation embodies the type of Modern Classicism that had become fashionable in the United States during the interwar years.<sup>9</sup> The subject building’s limestone-clad façade is an emphatic architectural statement amid the otherwise red brick structures of the 1900 block of Chestnut Street. It presents very much like a restrained Italian Palazzo, featuring traditional architectural details, as interpreted in a reductive aesthetic that further emerged during the 1920s. The subject building represents an era characterized by Modern

<sup>9</sup> Robert A.M. Stern., Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins. *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between The Two World Wars*. (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1987), 23-24.

Classical style buildings, which gained distinction in the context of the largely red brick Quaker City.

### **HISTORIC CONTEXT: FROM NEOCLASSICISM TO MODERN CLASSICISM<sup>10</sup>**

The Composite Era saw the rise of historicism in the Classical architecture of the United States, a trajectory epitomized by architectural firms like Peabody & Sterns of Boston; McKim, Mead, & White of New York; and that of Horace Trumbauer (1868-1938) of Philadelphia. This revival was employed in varying waves of popularity starting with the advent of the Neoclassical movement following the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893 until as late as 1950.<sup>11</sup> In a country defined increasingly by diverse populations of immigrant communities, the United States was, in some ways, without an "identifiable culture," devoid of cohesive national traditions. In the built environment, Classicism promised an impressive and tangible sense of history and legacy—an "heroic fiction of a well-ordered, stable society."<sup>12</sup> This appears to have been the aim of many architects and their patrons, especially in the American urban environment.

The literal historicism of the Composite Era was perhaps the greatest period of pure monumentality on this side of the Atlantic, eclipsing and, in many cases, replacing the landmarks created during the Victorian era. Naturally, this transition occurred in the most fashionable parts of American cities and, in Philadelphia, would ultimately begin to transform the blocks that faced Rittenhouse Square. From a prominent Philadelphia (and New York) family, Alexander Van Rensselaer (1850-1933) and his wife Catherine Ledyard (1811-1882), commissioned Peabody & Sterns to design a Palazzo in 1896 at the northwest corner of South Eighteenth and Walnut Streets, replacing a handsome and similarly sized, but somewhat craggy Victorian-era mansion. While the name Van Rensselaer is one long associated with old American stock, not all of the city's impressive Classical style structures were commissioned by this elite realm of society. Wealthy industrialist, Alfred Edward Burk, a German-born immigrant, commissioned Simon & Bassett to design his fully detached Gilded Age mansion in 1907 at North Broad and Jefferson Streets. Of course, even after the monumental residence was completed, most Philadelphians likely had no idea that it worked to edify society through its Italian Renaissance antecedents; however, those passing by no doubt understood Burk's position of importance and wealth in their city.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> This context was previously presented to the Philadelphia Historical Commission in the following nomination: Oscar Beisert. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: The J.E. Limeburner Co. Store, 1923 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*. (Philadelphia: Center City Residents' Association, 2020).

<sup>11</sup> Schuyler, Montgomery, "Last Words About the World's Fair," *Architectural Record* 3 (1894): 292–295.

<sup>12</sup> Robert A.M. Stern., Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins. *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between The Two World Wars*. (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1987), 20.

<sup>13</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, Creator. *Alfred E. Burk House, North Broad Street, Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, PA*. Documentation Compiled After. Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <[www.loc.gov/item/pa1124/](http://www.loc.gov/item/pa1124/)>.



Figure 14. The Athenaeum of Philadelphia. Source: The Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

Commercial, institutional, and public establishments also asserted, reinforced, and/or solidified their integrity and significance through the inherent monumentality of the Classical-inspired buildings that they commissioned. After all, the country's first Palazzo was built between 1845 and 1847 at 219-21 South Sixth Street on Washington Square for the Athenaeum of Philadelphia. Known as "America's oldest subscription library," the National Historic Landmark was designed by the eminent Philadelphia architect John Notman.<sup>14</sup> After hundreds of other buildings were designed and constructed in the Italian Renaissance style all across the city following the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, the Palazzo style culminated in the impressive and striking five-story edifice at 1435-41 Walnut Street, a high style Italianate Renaissance pile commissioned by Drexel & Company in 1925-28. The building was designed by Day & Klauder, Architects, and built by Doyle & Company.<sup>15</sup> Both of these examples are corner buildings, while many more of Philadelphia's Palazzos stood in a row with other attached buildings.

<sup>14</sup> Constance M. Greiff. *John Notman, Architect, 1810-1865*. (Philadelphia: The Athenaeum, 1979), 90-102.

<sup>15</sup> Richard J. Webster, *Philadelphia Preserved*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976), 127, 128, and 348.

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*The Shimwell & Logan Building, 1935 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-4411*

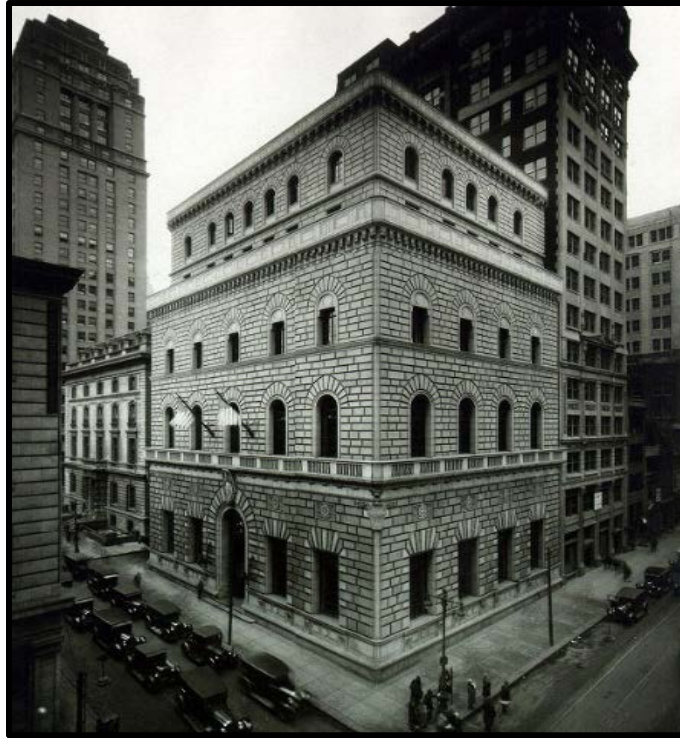


Figure 15. Drexel & Company (1928). Source: James Dillon (Photographer) Collection, Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

The interwar years led to an “Ideological Battle of Styles,” making archaeological Classicism a decided choice for old fashioned architects and their patrons rather than an aesthetic moral imperative. While the “rigid historicism” that defined the Composite Era was passing away from the norm, Modern Classicism was developing as a major if not preferred alternative that architects understood as reflective of the past rather than as built history lessons. Nevertheless, some Philadelphia businesses and institutions, like their preferred architects, continued a more traditional approach to design, as had Drexel & Company. The so-called “oldest auction house in America,” Samuel T. Freeman & Co. was one such business—a local institution—that commissioned architects Tilden & Register in 1923 to design a new auction house for their firm.<sup>16</sup> Despite the rising popularity of Modern Classicism and the impending Art Deco, Freeman’s Palazzo was articulated in a manner that did not completely diverge from historicism, presenting a Second Renaissance Revival style façade with less architectural restraint than many of its contemporaries. This is not to say that the building did not possess some undeniable hallmarks of the era, as the new auction house was perhaps more chaste than it might have been a decade earlier. The interior, while stylized, was decidedly modern and equipped to serve the old auctioneer with new amenities.

The epic of technology in buildings of the 1920s is inseparable from the modernization of Classical architecture. While some architects and their clients alike clung to traditional forms, they were

<sup>16</sup> Meredith Keller, Staff of the Philadelphia Historical Commission. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Samuel T. Freeman & Co. Auction House, 1810 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Historical Commission, 14 March 2019).

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unduly influenced by the shift in social norms and expectations.<sup>17</sup> Not far from Freeman's new auction house, The Roosevelt, a large hotel at 2025-29 Chestnut Street, was remodeled, upgraded and became the Stephen Girard Hotel.<sup>18</sup> A definite product of Modern Classicism, the building features a smooth-faced limestone façade, restrained classical details, and other elements of the style. Extant to-date, it speaks to the shift that had occurred in the employment of the Modern Classical style.



Figure 16. The Modern Classical façade of the Stephen Girard Hotel at 2025-27 Chestnut Street. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2020.

The abstraction of classical design in architecture gave rise to subcategories of Modern Classicism such as the Stripped Classical or Modern style. Architects like Paul Phillippe Cret, the French-native in Philadelphia, among others nationwide, popularized these contemporary movements with avant-garde prototypes. This architectural and stylistic transition can be seen in the evolution of banking and stock brokerage house designs in Philadelphia, including the Integrity Trust Company (1923-1929) at 717 Chestnut Street by Paul Cret and the Stock Brokerage House of Hano, Wasserman & Co. (1929) at 1516 Chestnut Street, designed by Grant Simon.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Charles Belfoure. *Monuments To Money*. (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2005), 212–213.

<sup>18</sup> Atlas of the City of Philadelphia (Central), 1922.; and Atlas of the 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Wards of the City of Philadelphia, 1927, revised 1931, Plate 19. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

<sup>19</sup> Oscar Beisert. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: The Stock Brokerage House of Hano, Wasserman, & Co., 1615 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*. (Philadelphia: Center City Residents' Association/Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2019).

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The Shimwell & Logan Building, 1935 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-4411*



Two examples of Modern Classicism on Chestnut Street. Figure 17. Left: the Becker Store (1929) at 1516 Chestnut Street, designed by Alvin Chester Bieber, Architect. Figure 18. Right: Child's Restaurant Building (Demolished), 1425-27 Chestnut Street (ca.1926/Demolished), designed by Dennison & Hiron, Architects. Source: © Indiana Limestone Company. Courtesy, Indiana Geological and Water Survey, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

The application of Modern Classicism was employed in several other nearby buildings, including the 1425-27 Chestnut Street (ca.1926/Demolished), designed by Dennison & Hiron; the Becker Store (1929) at 1516 Chestnut Street, designed by Alvin Chester Bieber; the building at 1807 Chestnut Street; the Mills Building (ca.1929) at 1909 Chestnut Street, designed by Mills & Van Kirk; The J.E. Limeburner Co. Store (1925) at 1923 Chestnut Street, designed by Heacock & Hokanson; etc.<sup>20</sup>

Historically, the Shimwell & Logan Building, with its limestone-clad façade, imposed a distinguished break in the red brick terraced houses that dominated much of the 1900 block of Chestnut Street. Ernest H. Yardley's design for the subject building employed smooth-faced Limestone, replacing the old and familiar with a crisp Palazzo. Ever more distinct, the design is purposely without the overt ornamentation of the Composite Era, a factor being replaced by a geometric appearance guided by abstracted classical forms. While this is certainly not the only limestone-clad facade in the vicinity, the subject building is unusually distinctive for a single-wide row building within the interior of a block, commanding attention within the architecturally rich context of Chestnut Street. Furthermore, the Shimwell & Logan Building retains nearly all of its original features and materials, including its leaded glass and wooden windows.

<sup>20</sup> *AIA/T-Square Yearbook*. (Philadelphia: 1929), 82.; and *The Philadelphia Real Estate Record & Builders' Guide*, 5 January 1921, i.



Buildings in Philadelphia with designed influence of Modern Classicism. Figure 19. Left: Built in 1927, The Masonic Temple (Demolished) at Broad and Race Streets in Philadelphia, designed by Horace W. Carter. Figure 20. Right: The Doyle & Tegan Building (1924) at 5909 N. Broad Street in Philadelphia, designed by Architects, Gleeson, Mulrooney & Burke. Source: © Indiana Limestone Company. Courtesy, Indiana Geological and Water Survey, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

## SUMMARY

The Shimwell & Logan Building at 1935 Chestnut Street stands as a significant example of a commercial building in the Modern Classical style in an urban environment replete with distinctive buildings influenced by both modernism and classicism, satisfying Criteria C and D.



## 8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

This nomination was completed for the Historic Building Preservation Task Force of the Center City Residents Association by the Keeping Society of Philadelphia with the primary author as Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist, with assistance from J.M. Duffin, Archivist and Historian; Kelly E. Wiles, Architectural Historian; and Tim Kerner, Architect.

The following sites were used to create the nomination:

Ancestry.com

Athenaeum of Philadelphia

Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network

Newspapers.com

### MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

“Activities of the Day in Real Estate,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 2 June 1927, 24.

*AIA/T-Square Yearbook*. (Philadelphia: 1929), 82.

Atlas of the City of Philadelphia (Central), 1922.

Atlas of the 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Wards of the City of Philadelphia, 1927, revised 1931, Plate 19. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

Building Permit for 1935 Chestnut Street, 1922. Source: CAP.

Charles Belfoure. *Monuments To Money*. (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2005), 212–213.

Constance M. Greiff. *John Notman, Architect, 1810-1865*. (Philadelphia: The Athenaeum, 1979), 90-102.

*Evening Public Ledger*, 24 April 1922, 24.

“Harry S. Shimwell,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 27 February 1945, 26.

Historic American Buildings Survey, Creator. *Alfred E. Burk House, North Broad Street, Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, PA*. Documentation Compiled After. Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <[www.loc.gov/item/pa1124/](http://www.loc.gov/item/pa1124/)>.

Meredith Keller, Staff of the Philadelphia Historical Commission. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Samuel T. Freeman & Co. Auction House, 1810 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Historical Commission, 14 March 2019).

Montgomery Schuyler. “Last Words About the World’s Fair,” *Architectural Record* 3 (1894): 292–295.

Oscar Beisert. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: The J. E. Limeburner Store, 1923 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*. (Philadelphia: Center City Residents Association/Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2020).

Oscar Beisert. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: The Stock Brokerage House of Hano, Wasserman, & Co., 1615 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*. (Philadelphia: Center City Residents Association/Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2019).

Oscar Beisert. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: The Wall & Ochs Building, 1617 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*. (Philadelphia: Center City Residents Association/Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2020).



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