

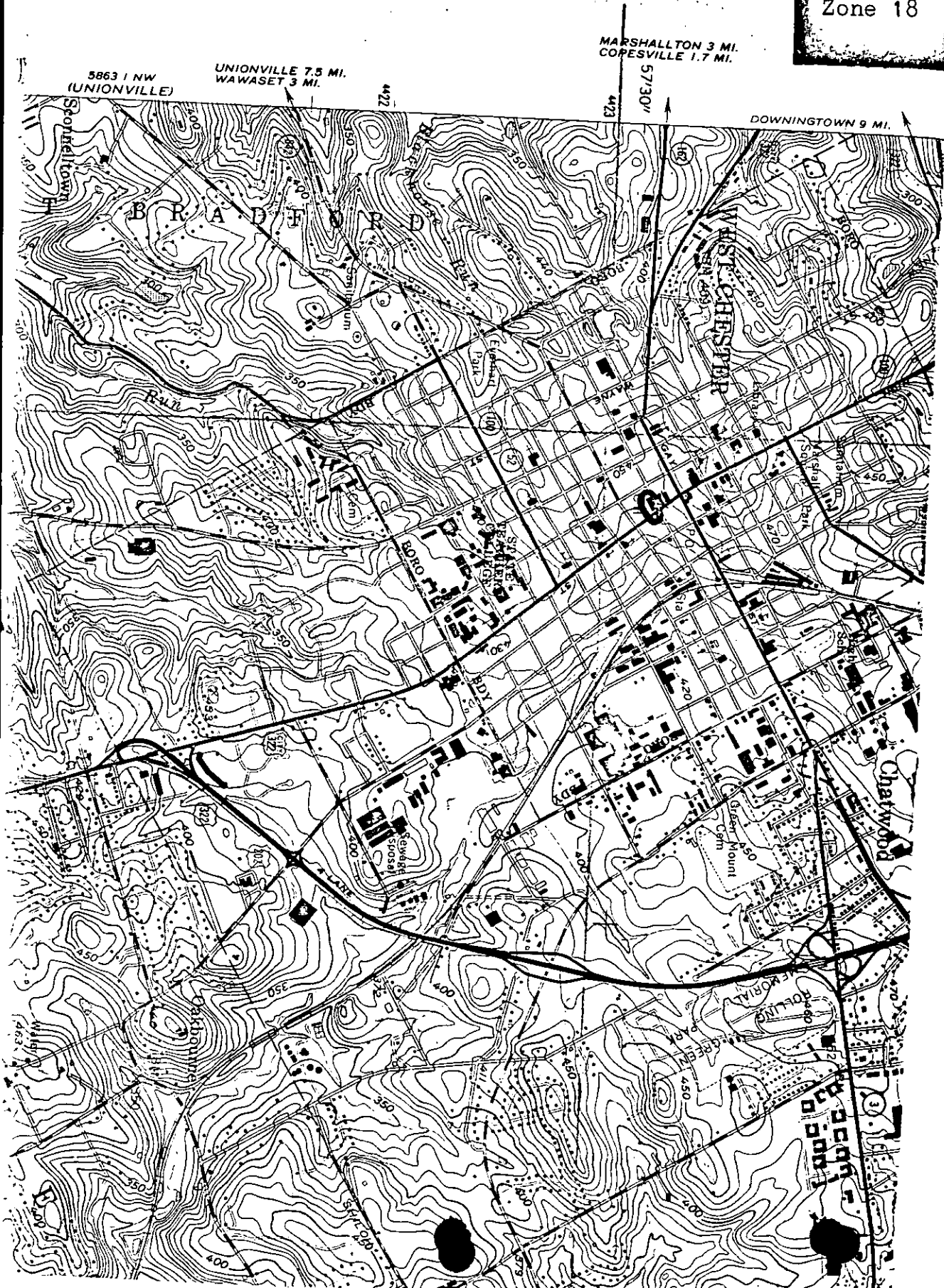
Farmers and
Company Br
Chester Co
Zone 18

MARSHALLTON 3 MI.
COPESVILLE 1.7 MI.

5863 1 NW
(UNIONVILLE)

UNIONVILLE 7.5 MI.
WAWASET 3 MI.

DOWNTOWN 9 MI.



**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic FARMERS AND MECHANICS TRUST COMPANY BUILDING

and/or common THE F & M BUILDING

2. Location

street & number SOUTHWEST CORNER OF MARKET & HIGH STREETS N/A not for publication

city, town WEST CHESTER N/A vicinity of congressional district FIFTH (5th)

state PENNSYLVANIA code 42 county CHESTER code 029

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name ALBERN REALTY, INC. (ALAN L. & BERNICE REUBEN & JOHN M. KLEIN)

street & number 732 MT. MORO ROAD

city, town VILLANOVA N/A vicinity of state PENNSYLVANIA 19085

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. CHESTER COUNTY COURTHOUSE

street & number HIGH AND MARKET STREETS

city, town WEST CHESTER state PENNSYLVANIA 19380

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY—WEST
title CHESTER BOARD OF HISTORICAL REVIEW has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date DECEMBER 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records WEST CHESTER BOROUGH HALL (#42-029-WC-14A-24) GAY & ADAMS STREETS

city, town WEST CHESTER state PENNSYLVANIA 19380

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Farmers & Mechanics Building (F & M), completed in April, 1908, was designed by architect William C. Prichett, FAIA¹ for the owners, The Farmers & Mechanics Trust Company. This distinguished "Skyscraper" was the first "fire-proof, elevatored" building in Southeastern Pennsylvania (outside the Philadelphia area), and is situated in a predominately "low-rise" community. The building is a "Classic Three Part Facade" (Base, Column & Capitol), an example of the Neo-Classic style as applied to a Skyscraper. The 6 stories consist of a basement level ($\frac{1}{2}$ out-of-ground), a Banking Floor with a Mezzanine, the remaining stories were used for offices, with a Roof Garden (the first in this area) and a Penthouse on the roof (surrounded by a 4' parapet). Making a total of 8 usable floors.

The Basement is constructed of granite, steel and concrete designed to support the massive safes on the 1st floor. The polished gray granite was brought from Portland, MA and was used in the basement as well as the steps on Market Street. The 1st floor, columns and entablature are Indiana Limestone. The 2nd through 5th floors are yellow hard face brick (from Pittsburgh), laid in concrete using colored mortar. The cornices of the 2nd and 6th floors and the roof line are of gray terra cotta; also found about the oriels, window-heads and sills. The terra cotta was color matched with the Indiana Limestone. Above the 1st floor windows are stepped voussoirs; the 2nd through 5th floor windows are radiating voussoirs; the windows of the 5th floor consist of 3 sets of arched openings with lintel decorations separated by 2 slim columns. There is a 4' parapet decorated with round finials surrounding the top of the building.

The rounded oriels (9'-4" x 3') consist of 3 windows each from the 2nd through the 5th floors on the Market Street side. This facade has a total of 41 windows. There are 3 similar bays on High Street with a total of 91 windows on this facade. The base of each oriel is supported by ornamental corbels. On the South side there are 32 windows; the West side has 43 windows, all have Indiana Limestone heads and sills. The hard face brick on the South and West sides are of an orange color.

The Market Street entrance is a Classic portico with composite order columns and entablature and are of Indiana Limestone. There is a Classical Arch doorway. The steps are granite as are the bases of the columns. On the High Street facade, a sculpted round window above the entablature doorway opens onto a double stairway of Indiana Limestone.

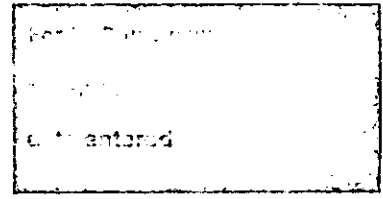
The main roof and the roofs of the oriels are concrete covered with black asphalt. There are wrought iron screens at the 1st floor windows, and a wrought iron gate between the F & M and the Hammond Building on the West side.

The Lobby is composed of polished white marble wainscoting with Corinthian columns, broken arches over the doorways and ornamental plaster work around the cornices, over the entrance door and the entrance to the Main Banking Room. There are also two doors opening to small offices on the East and the West sides of the Lobby. An elevator is located on the West side of the Lobby, an iron stairway winding around it throughout the height of the building. An original ornate brass chandelier is suspended from a vaulted ceiling.

The Main Banking Room is 19' high, with a Mezzanine supported by iron columns. The wainscoting is of white Tennessee marble except on the Mezzanine where mahogany was used as wainscot paneling with glass panels above. The flooring is executed in white marble tile with a border of Lake Champlain, Vermont brown and black marble. There is a bronze rail leading to and along the Mezzanine. Mahogany was used throughout the 1st floor.

¹Henry F. Withey, Biographer, AIA, Philadelphia Chapter AIA, 1940, (Records located at the Athenaeum of Philadelphia).

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet F & M BUILDING

Item number 7 DESCRIPTION

Page 2

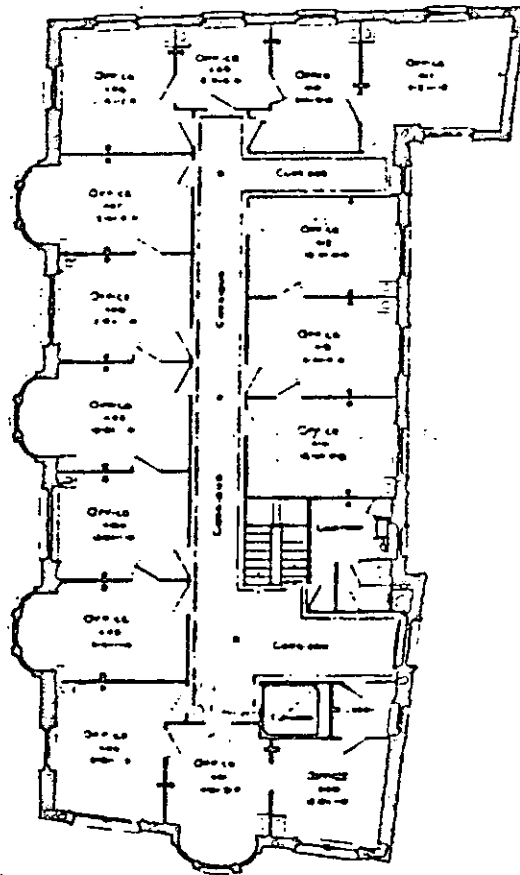
Heat for the F & M was supplied through a public utility steam line located in High Street. Each room had a steam radiator. Every office had a wash basin, and was supplied with both gas and electricity. The floors were of maple and/or pine. The doors are chestnut and each has a glass transom above. The walls of the offices were cream tinted, rough finished. There are lavatories on each floor, and each floor had a mail chute, electric bells and speaking tubes for communication between the rooms¹.

The upper floors contain about 75 offices (10'-10''⁺ in height) that opened off a central corridor. The floors of the public corridors are a light colored terrazzi (American marble) with an 8" border of marble mosaic, white background with black or white fretwork pattern. The wainscoting in the corridors and upper floors is white Tennessee marble¹.

Typical Floor Plan

THE floor plan of the 3rd floor shows the location of stairways, corridor, elevator, toilet rooms, etc., equally well for the other floors.

Partitions and doorways can be changed in some places, if a different arrangement will better suit the convenience of long-term tenants.



Copy of Floor Plan
From ADVERTISEMENT
BROCHURE, 1908.

¹ Advertisement Brochure, 1908. "Typical Floor Plan" also from Advertisement Brochure, 1908.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1907 **Builder/Architect** WILLIAM C. PRICHETT, F.A.I.A.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The significance of the F & M Building is directly related to its size, style and location. As the single "Skyscraper" of its period in West Chester, this building illustrates the builders desire to convince its users and observers that the future of commerce and banking in this County seat was stable, growing and important as in the larger metropolitan areas of Philadelphia, Baltimore or New York.

The Farmers & Mechanics Building is historically significant as an example of "Classic Three Part Facade", Neo-Classic style as applied to a Skyscraper situated in a predominately low-rise community. It towers high above the 2 to 3 story individual buildings that comprise the rest of West Chester. The F & M provided a concentration of deluxe offices and suites with all services and a banking facility across the street from the Courthouse, thus serving an area that has been, historically, a legal, financial and social center. Designed by architect William C. Prichett, F.A.I.A.¹, ground was broken on March 5, 1907 and construction progress was followed closely by accurate descriptions in daily newspaper coverage and great interest on the part of the townspeople.

Lengthy articles described the interior/exterior (including materials, colors, etc.) in both newspapers² and brochures.³ The 75 offices offered "ample heat, light and water supplied in every room; toilet rooms on each floor...elevator service, complete and efficient janitorial attention...three free deliveries of mail per day, four collections, a mailing box on each floor³ and even a Western Union office - all for the convenience of the tenants." The Roof Garden was the first of its kind in Chester County and functioned as a prestigious gathering place. Trolley tracks outside ran north, south, east and west and roads to Philadelphia were "close at hand".³

There are no buildings in the immediate West Chester area with which the F & M can be compared. Only in major cities would one find comparable buildings, i.e. Philadelphia, New York and/or Baltimore, thus indicating the uniqueness of such a structure in Chester County. The F & M and its site successfully incorporated luxury convenience and location to provide West Chester with a vitally important commercial and historically significant structure.

¹Henry F. Withey, Biographer, A.I.A., Philadelphia Chapter A.I.A., 1940, (Records located at the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, PA).

²"West Chester's First Skyscraper", Daily Local News (March 26, 1907); and various articles from the Daily Local News (From Jan. 26, 1907 through March 17, 1916).

³The Farmers and Mechanics Trust Company, Farmers and Mechanics Trust Company Building, (Chester County Historical Society), Advertising Brochure.

9. Major Bibliographical References

ADVERTISEMENT BROCHURE FARMERS AND MECHANICS TRUST COMPANY BUILDING, 1908.
 DAILY LOCAL NEWS, Articles dated from 1/26, 1907 through 3/17, 1916 (C. CO. Historical Soc.).
 DEED BOOK, S44, pp. 259; and PLOT PLAN & PROPERTY RECORD, Chester County Courthouse.
 WEST CHESTER BOARD OF HISTORICAL REVIEW: 12, 1980, Survey Code #42-029-WC-14A-24.
 WEST CHESTER CITIZEN, Article dated 6/25, 1981, F & M Prime Boro Site.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .078 or 3,418 sq. ft.

Quadrangle name WEST CHESTER QUADRANGLE

Quadrangle scale 1:24000 or 1"=2,000 ft.

UMT References

A	1 8	4 4 8 3 1 0	4 4 2 3 2 2 0	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

TAX PARCEL #1-9-269 as recorded in Chester County Courthouse. The nominated property consists of Parcel #269 as recorded in the map of West Chester, District 1, Map 91, Lot 1.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title CAROLE H. KIRKBRIDE
 organization DK ARCHITECTS PLANNERS date JUNE 23, 1982
 street & number 1 NORTH HIGH STREET telephone (215) 602-2232
 city or town WEST CHESTER state PENNSYLVANIA 19380

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

For HCHS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 DAILY LOCAL NEWS, Articles dated from 1/26, 1907 through 3/17, 1916 (C. CO. Historical Soc.).
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UMT References

A

1	8	4	4	8	3	1	0	4	4	2	3	2	2	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

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State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

by Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer date 11/12/82

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
	date
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	