

Mount Royal Station, Baltimore & Ohio Railroad  
Intersection of Cathedral  
Street and Mt. Royal Avenue  
Baltimore  
Baltimore City County  
Maryland

HABS No. MD-193

HABS  
MD  
4-BALT  
119-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction  
143 South Third Street  
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

MOUNT ROYAL STATION  
BALTIMORE & OHIO RAILROAD

HABS

MD

4-BALT

Location: Intersection of Cathedral Street and Mt. Royal Avenue, Baltimore, Baltimore City County, Maryland 119-

Present Owner: Baltimore and Ohio Railroad

Present Use: Railroad Station

Brief Statement of Significance: Built in 1896, this station is a well designed structure of its type, from both aesthetic and functional standpoints.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original end subsequent owners: Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.
2. Date of erection: Completed in 1896.
3. Architect: The architects were E. Francis Baldwin and Josias Pennington, who were among the most important and prolific architects in Baltimore of the period. They also designed the Mount Clare Shops of the same railroad, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Building, the Maryland Club, City College, etc.
4. Original plans: The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad offices were burned in 1904, and presumably the original plans and documents were destroyed. Later working plans are available in the railroad construction department.
5. Important old views: Numerous photographs exist in the files of the railroad, The Peale Museum, and other places in the city.
6. References: Wilbur H. Hunter, Jr., and Charles H. Elam, Century of Baltimore Architecture (Baltimore: The Peale Museum, 1957) contains plates showing a number of buildings designed by E. Francis Baldwin and Josias Pennington. Richard H. Howland and Eleanor P. Spencer, The Architecture of Baltimore (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1953), pp. 90-91 and plates 69 and 70. Carroll L. V. Meeks, The Railroad Station (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956), pp. 135 and 145; figure 179. Book of the Royal Blue, Vol. II, No. 4 (January 1899), p. 1, contains a lengthy description.

- B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:  
No information.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Shortly after its construction in 1896 this station enjoyed the enviable distinction of being "the most magnificent railway station in the U. S. built and used exclusively by one railway." Today it still stands as a well-designed structure of its type, from both aesthetic and functional standpoints, solving the problem of a railroad station totally devoid of all annoyances to its surroundings and being a valuable artistic asset to its residential section instead of a constant eyesore and general nuisance.
2. Condition of fabric: Essentially, the building stands today as originally built, more than 60 years ago. The whole structure appears to be in good, sound, condition and shows very little deterioration.

### B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. General: Of Italian renaissance design, the entire building is faced with stone: At the second floor level, the broad arched and mullioned windows separated by engaged columns, are all trimmed with limestone and are quite reminiscent of the facade of Vendramini Palace, Venice, one of the earliest examples of the Renaissance in Italy. The stone work of the 22 foot square tower is paneled and near the top is an ornamental stone balcony on each of the four sides. Just above the balconies is a 9'0" diameter clock dial. This clock is of special design, a pendulum 8-day clock manufactured by E. Howard of Boston, Massachusetts. It was originally used as a master clock to operate electrically seven other clocks in the station. At the base of the tower is a one-story stone porte cochere with ornamental turned stone balustrade at roof.
2. Overall dimensions: The station is 240 feet long by 53 feet wide and is rectangular in plan and symmetrical about an east-west axis, with minor wings at north and south ends. Main entrances to the station are on the east side, with campanile-like tower at center.

The station is three stories high; the waiting room area being two stories high, the roof design producing a third

floor level above the waiting room ceiling which is only attic space and is unoccupied. On the east side is a stone tower with access to the top by means of stairs and landings. The tower rises to a height of 150 feet above grade. There is just one small basement area, including boiler room, coal bin, and store room, at south end of building.

3. Foundations: All foundation walls are of brick, the main foundation walls being 34" thick and the secondary foundation walls 17" thick, on stone footings 3'6" wide and 2'0" deep.
4. Wall construction: Of stone and brick, constructed as load-bearing walls. The exterior walls of 13" thick quarry faced granite are backed up with 27" thick brick backing. Sills and belt courses are of dressed granite. The masonry work of one-half of the tower is supported by steel girders on steel columns. The base of the tower is on steel grillage.
5. Chimneys: Of quarry faced granite.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: All exterior doors and door frames, mouldings, transoms, and sidelights are of oak. Upper panels of doors and sidelights are glazed.
  - b. Windows: Pivoted, hinged, and double-hung sash on second floor of white pine. All windows at second floor level are two light, D. H. circular headed. All first floor sash and frames of oak.
  - c. Shutters: There are none.
7. Roof:
  - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof on main wing and hip roof at north and south wings and peak roof of tower were originally covered with a glazed red tile roof. When repairs became necessary, new red tile roofs were installed, with the exception of the peak roof of the tower which received a copper covering shaped to the profile of the original roofing tile. At this time also, the original skylights on the north and south wings were omitted.
  - b. Cornice, eaves: Granite corbels and exposed show rafters on 2 foot centers with 3'6" roof overhang and half round copper gutters all around at eaves. At second floor level, on north and east sides, a slate-roofed overhang supported on ornamental wrought iron brackets, projects 11'6" from the face of the wall.

- c. Dormers: The thirteen dormer windows on the third floor of the main wing have red tile roofs; there being six dormers on the east side and seven on the west.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor plans: On the east side of the station are five entrances to the waiting room with porte cochere at center. In the center of the 42'0" x 130'0" waiting room, at the north end, is a large open fireplace, with clock above. To the right are women's toilet and rest rooms and to the left, a lobby-like entry to a large baggage room. The baggage room, 40'0" x 48'0", contains a small office for the station master, adjacent to which is a stairway to second floor. At the south end and in the center of waiting room is another fireplace of similar description. A small area in front of this fireplace has been converted into facilities for Union News Company. To the left of the fireplace is an entrance to the men's toilet and an office space (originally a men's smoking room) and stairway to second floor, comprise the remainder of the floor area of the south wing. A ticket counter is located in the center of the waiting room along the west wall. The counter is flanked on either side by 3 large double doors permitting easy access to the concourse and train side. Along the east and west walls of the waiting room there is an elevated balcony with ornamental wrought iron railing, 16' above the floor. This balcony serves as a connecting passageway between the north and south wings. The second floor areas of the north and south wings contain offices for railroad personnel; third floor areas being used exclusively for record storage purposes.
2. Stairways: Open and closed string stairways at north and south wings constructed with wood stringers. Risers, treads, handrails are all of wood, including turned wood balusters.
3. Flooring: Marble mosaic floors in all rooms on the first floor, except the baggage room, which has a yellow pine finished floor. The second and third floors have T&G long leaf yellow pine flooring 2-1/2" wide and floor areas devoted to office space have linoleum as finished flooring.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: All rooms on the first floor have a 6' high, paneled oak wainscot, including marble base, with sand finish plastered walls and ornamental pressed metal ceilings, except baggage room, which has

a T&G and beaded yellow pine wainscot 6'0" high, and toilet rooms which have marble wainscot 6'10" high. Waiting room wainscot has a marble base 10" high. All rooms on second floor of wings have sand finish plastered and painted walls, with metal ceilings.

5. Doorways and doors: Oak doors and door jambs on first floor; majority of second floor door openings of same materials. Third floor doors of white pine.
  6. Trim: Oak door and window trim on first floor. Baseboard, door and window trim of yellow pine on second floor of north and south wings.
  7. Hardware: Hardware is of brass and japanned iron consisting of mortise and cylinder locks, door checks, sash fasts, and sash lifts.
  8. Lighting: In waiting room, four nine-outlet ornamental brass chain chandeliers for electric lighting, supplemented by bracket outlets. Second floor lighting, ceiling outlets at center of room.
  9. Heating: Heating is by steam with boiler room in basement. There were six circular radiators in the original heating installation of the waiting room. This type of radiator consisted of a number of 1-1/4" diameter wrought iron coil pipes 3'6" high, grouped together with cast iron top, to form a 3'0" diameter circular plan and installed on a 5" high marble pedestal. These radiators have been abandoned and convector type radiation installed under the present waiting room settees. The waiting room has two marble-faced fireplaces each with 9'0" x 12'0" oak panel work with dentil and egg and dart courses above and flanked by ornamental fluted oak pilasters. In the center of the panel is a large clock.
- D. Site: The station, which faces east (the length of the building running north and south), is located at the intersection of Cathedral Street and Mt. Royal Avenue in the heart of the residential part of the city. The entire structure is below the level of the street and is surrounded by a magnificent park, the station and its surroundings occupying a full city block. However, all semblance of a hole in the ground is done away with by the lawns sloping gently to the building. Planting, shrubbery of all kinds, flower beds and trees create a setting in which the station is robbed of all its obtrusiveness and harmonizes with the surrounding residential section. Walks are of cement, driveways on east and north sides of vitrified brick, with entrance to station from Mt. Royal Avenue. A train shed along the whole west side of the station, beginning at a point where train tracks emerge from a tunnel underneath

the city streets, extends about 500' to the north. The shed is 71'0" wide, wide enough for three tracks and a switch track. The ornamental iron work of fences, gateways, covered stairway exits, and shed supports is all in keeping with the architectural design of the station building.

Prepared by C. R. Riley, Baltimore &  
Ohio Railroad, Baltimore, Maryland  
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