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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. Aug. 2002)

OMB No. 1024-0018
(Expires 1-31-2009)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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: United States Custom House

Other names/site number: U. S. Custom House

2. Location

Street & Number: 200 Chestnut Street — Not for Publication: N/A

City or Town: Philadelphia — Vicinity: N/A

State: Pennsylvania — Code: PA — County: Philadelphia — Code: 101

Zip Code: 19106

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ✓ 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 ✓ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ✓ Statewide ___ locally. (__See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official: [signature] — Date: 4/14/11

Director, Center for Historic Buildings & Federal Preservation Officer
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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

Signature of commenting official/Title: [signature] — Date: 4/13/2011

PA Historical & Museum Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action
✓ entered in the National Register	for Edson W. Beall	5-25-11
___ See continuation sheet.		
___ determined eligible for the National Register		
___ See continuation sheet.		
___ determined not eligible for the National Register		
___ removed from the National Register		
___ other (explain):		

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)		Category of Property (Check only one box)		Number of Resources within Property Contributing	Noncontributing	
	Private	x	building(s)	1		building(s)
	public-local		district			sites
	public-state		site			structures
x	public-federal		structure			objects
			object	1	0	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.)
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: GOVERNMENT Sub: Custom House

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: GOVERNMENT Sub: Custom House

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Granite
roof CERAMIC TILE
walls BRICK, TERRA COTTA, and STONE: Limestone

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

Please see Section 7 Continuation Sheets.

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.

x C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or 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
ART

Period of Significance
1932-1938

Significant Dates
1932, 1934, 1938

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Architects: Verus Ritter, Howell L. Shay; Contractor J. McCloskey & Co.; Sculptor: Edward Ardolino; Muralist: George Harding

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

Please see Section 8 Continuation Sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Please see Section 9 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

x Federal agency

x Local government

___ University

x Other

Name of repository: National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ¼ Acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	487631	4421978	3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description

The property begins at the southwest corner of Second and Chestnut streets and extends west along Chestnut Street to the former American Street or Exchange Place; then continues south along the latter street to the corner of former Moravian and Dock Streets; then continues east along former Moravian to Second Street; then continues north to the southwest corner of Chestnut Street and the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

This building and its parking area entirely occupy the property owned by the U.S. Treasury Department and used by the U.S. Custom House. It is also so identified on the USGS Survey, 7.5 Minute Series, Philadelphia, PA-NJ Quadrangle, 1995 accompanied herewith.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title	Erica Kachmarsky & Barbara Lamprecht, Senior Architectural Historians (revised from earlier versions by George E. Thomas (1992); Hillier (2004))		
Organization	ICF Jones & Stokes Associates	Date	05/15/2008, rev. 8/25/2009
Street & Number	811 W. 7th Street, Suite 800	Telephone	213.627.5376
City or Town	Los Angeles	State CA	Zip Code 90017

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.

Photographs

Representative 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	U.S. General Services Administration		
Organization	U.S. General Services Administration, Mid-Atlantic Region	Telephone	215-446-5100
Street & Number	20 North Eighth Street		
City or Town	Philadelphia	State PA	Zip Code 19170-3191

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.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to range from approximately 18 hours to 36 hours depending on several factors including, but not limited to, how much documentation may already exist on the type of property being nominated and whether the property is being nominated as part of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. In most cases, it is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form to meet minimum National Register documentation requirements. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

Description

Summary

The United States Custom House in Philadelphia, PA, built between 1932 and 1934 to the Art Deco designs of the architectural firm Ritter & Shay, occupies an entire block between Second, Chestnut, and Sansom streets and the former Exchange Place (presently closed) in the heart of the oldest portion of the city. The south and west sides border on Independence National Historical Park. The seventeen-story building blends into the neighboring three- and four-story historic streetscape with a square, three-story, limestone-clad base from which rises a brick-clad tower in cruciform plan with a central five-bay limestone face on each elevation. These upper stories step back in four sections toward a crowning illuminated terra cotta lantern based on the ancient lantern at the Greek Island of Rhodes. Large sculpted eagles and urns decorate the upper corners of the building.

At ground level, round-headed entrance doorways feature decorative pressed aluminum panels and lanterns. The interior public spaces entered off Chestnut Street feature a classically inspired eight-columned, three-story rotunda with an illuminated oculus and two spiraling staircases. Ornate aluminum and bronze balustrades, railings, and gates in Art Deco patterns contrast with other finishes of travertine, colored marbles, and decorative painted pastel plaster work with sea motifs. A significant maritime mural program by Brandywine School artist George Harding at walls and ceilings combine with the architecture to achieve one of the most distinctive interiors of the period. The public custom and passport offices off the rotunda use fluted pilasters for architectural interest. A large courtroom on the third floor along Chestnut Street is elaborately detailed in a handsome Federal Style. Office spaces adapted for modern government uses fill the remaining floors reached from the south elevator bank.

In 1992 Ueland Junker McCauley, Architects and Planners, oversaw a rehabilitation of the building's interior to address outmoded air conditioning, elevators, lighting, and new fire and life safety codes. The interior architectural masonry finishes, decorative ornamentation, and murals were cleaned and conserved to enhance all features of the original designs. The building retains remarkable architectural integrity inside and out.

Setting

The United States Custom House, serving the port of Philadelphia, was constructed on the southwest corner of Chestnut and Second streets one block south of Market Street, Philadelphia's main east-west corridor. In 1932 it was approximately three blocks west of the earliest piers and wharves of the Delaware River, but the construction of Interstate Highway 95 between Front Street and Penns Landing increased the distance to the river bank and piers. The United States Custom House is currently a few blocks from the point where the Schuylkill and Delaware rivers merge, near the site of the former Philadelphia Navy Yard (now the Philadelphia Naval Business Center). The building's square footprint has its main entrance elevation on Chestnut Street. The west façade faces former Exchange Place. This closed street now accesses a parking and loading area on the south side of the building. The east side of the lot has iron gates that open onto Second Street. The south building façade differs from all others with large arched openings for loading docks. The south parking lot covers what was once Sansom Street and terminates with a brick wall before Moravian Street. This block formerly housed the Appraisers' Stores warehouse built in 1868 and used until the new building was constructed. Moravian Street is now a recreated walking alley adjoining the historically rebuilt City Tavern on the southeast corner.

Significant historic buildings in this heart of colonial and federal Philadelphia are Christ Church at Second above Market, the Merchant's Exchange at Third and Walnut Streets, the First Bank on Third between Walnut and Chestnut streets, and Carpenters' Hall and the Second Bank at Chestnut between Third and Fifth streets. The Georgian edifice of Independence Hall (the former Pennsylvania State House) stands between Fifth and Sixth streets on Chestnut Street. Between these historic resources still remain some of the eighteenth century buildings that served maritime industries. Sail lofts, ship chandleries, warehouses, shops, shipping offices, and coffee houses used three- and four-story brick buildings with symmetrically placed multi-pane windows. These Georgian features gave the region a unity of scale and design. Later nineteenth century industrial buildings with more ornate or cast-iron elevations now intermingle with those of the earlier century, but generally only reach a five-story height. In 1931 it was this setting and existing architecture that fostered the architects' conservatively modern designs for the new United States Custom House in 1931, using sympathetic materials of limestone, brick, and terra-cotta.

Presently, the north side of Chestnut Street, immediately across from the United States Custom House in this old shipping, industrial, and financial quarter, remains relatively intact. These blocks also include buildings of architectural significance by renowned nineteenth century architects of the Philadelphia school. The brick Corn Exchange Building (1902) of Newman, Woodman & Harris, with later changes by Horace Trumbauer, stands on the northeast corner of Second and Chestnut streets. At Third and Chestnut streets remains the smaller C. L. Borie Counting House (1897) designed by Wilson Eyre. In contrast, since completion of the Custom House in 1934, demolitions and reconstruction have occurred on Second and Third streets between Chestnut and Sansom streets. On Second Street, a five-story concrete parking garage replaces early brick buildings directly across from the east side of the United States Custom House. Welcome Park, an interpretive open space established for the 1976 Bicentennial, adjoins the garage to the south in commemoration of William Penn's 1682 arrival in Philadelphia.

On the Third Street side of the Custom House, and backing onto its parking lot, is the U.S. National Park Service Independence Living History Center. The brick building is set well back from Chestnut Street with a border of trees along the sidewalk to mask its end façade. The U.S. National Park Service building's main entrance faces Third Street. This building has little impact on the setting or architecture of the United States Custom House.

Architecture

Base

The square, three-story, Indiana limestone base of the United States Custom House is constructed of two distinct levels defined through masonry and window treatment. Ground level footings and planters use granite. The first floor elevation, clad in seven courses of rusticated limestone blocks with two-inch-wide chamfered joints, incorporates deeply recessed round-headed window and door openings with turned arch stones at the arch center above each door and window. A molded, horizontal limestone belt course completes this section.

Above this first story, the second and third floors are read as one by using ashlar limestone with thin joints and seventeen two-story-high steel window units. Soapstone panels between the two stories, some of them carved with nautical figures, mimic the shape of adjacent windows. The windows are separated by fluted pilasters, with capitals

that are alluded to at the bottom of the horizontal cornice directly overhead. The windows and pilasters create strong vertical lines. A parapet with both carved and brick inlay panels terminates this base of the building at the third story.

The three-story base is nearly identical on its north, east and west elevations with projecting centered entrance pavilions and lesser corner pavilions of one window width. The north, Chestnut Street, or main entrance pavilion is the most distinctive. It has three arched door openings off a front platform that is reached by four steps. An aluminum-railed access ramp was added in 1977 to the eastern end of the platform. Each door opening arch forms a recessed space above the horizontal lintel. There is an eagle keystone above each arch. Within the arched recesses, large, pressed aluminum relief panels fill the arches. Each has a different design carried out in an Art Deco manner. In the central door opening is an allegorical figure of America with an eagle, buffalo, torch and the like. In the door opening to the east is a depiction of American industry using a ship and nautical tools; in the door opening to the west is American agriculture.

These panels arc forward at their bases. Beneath them, originally were revolving doors, now replaced by flat double-leaf and glass doors. Flanking the entry doors are floor-mounted, eight-foot-high decorative aluminum lanterns with an octagonal plan. Above these doors, the second masonry level has three two-story windows separated by four fluted pilasters and implied capitals. A large stepped parapet completes the entrance pavilion. Centered in the parapet is the carved Seal of the United States between incised lettering that reads "UNITED STATES/CUSTOM HOUSE." Festoon-draped shields are mounted at the corners of the parapet.

The east and west elevations feature similar central pavilions, but with only one entry door and five windows above. The seal of the Treasury Department, complemented by festoons, hangs over each arched doorway. Here an ornamental keystone overlaps the peak of the arch and lanterns hang to the sides of the entrance. The pressed aluminum relief in the west elevation's doorway represents an Asian scene of culture and industry; on the east elevation, Europe is represented. The south façade of the building was designed as a loading dock. Between the corner pavilions is a wider, one-story, parapeted pavilion with seven arched entryways for vehicles.

Tower

Above the three-story base, the building steps back from the property line and rises another fourteen stories as a cruciform tower consisting of six additional recessing blocks. The first section, and widest, is two stories; the second, and tallest, rises six stories with a seventh-story parapet. The third section of four stories becomes the base for the three-part, but one-story terra cotta lantern. Brick is the principal cladding, but a central, slightly projecting limestone cladding on the cardinal elevations creates a vertical white band soaring from the ground floor base to the white terra cotta sections and the lantern above the eleventh floor.

The principal office space of the building is in the first two sections of the cruciform tower, making up nine floors. In contrast with the windows of the base, those in the tower are uniformly double-hung wooden sash that add verticality to the design by using three vertical muntins. Two exceptions to this pattern occur. The eighth story of the tower, set off by a limestone belt-course, serves as the frieze to the overall composition. Here in the brick work, the windows are octagonally framed bulls-eyes. From a distance they resemble port holes around the building. A limestone

balustrade above alludes to the ship rail. To complement the limestone base of the building with its round-headed openings, the ninth floor repeats the limestone and uses an arcade of Romanesque windows.

Above the ninth floor, the building steps back twice again in brick, but terra cotta becomes the contrasting material. Balustrades of cast aluminum with large ball finials mark this level, further defined by large winged terra cotta eagles that decorate the corners. Projecting terra cotta pavilions, an ornate frieze, and large urns top the next level. Crowning this is the grand, three-part terra cotta lantern. Its openings are filled with diagonal–patterned grill work of terra cotta, surmounted by a garland-decorated frieze, and finished by large ball finials on the cornice. Although not visible, the roof surface of the United States Custom House is red quarry tile (six-inch-by-nine-inch) over a five-ply built up roof.

Interior Plans

The architects' use of a square three-story base under the cruciform, multi-story, recessing tower allowed them to incorporate three important functions on the first floor. The building is divided in half by a central east-west corridor with exterior exit doors. For one function, handling customs goods, everything to the south of the corridor was designed as ancillary space to the loading docks in the south façade of the building. The building half on the north side of the corridor was designed for two other purposes: monumental public space plus customs offices and a central elevator bank for access by federal workers to offices on the upper floors. The effect of this plan is that the elaborate public spaces in the north half of the building become the spectacular, prominent architectural focus, provide access to the elevator bank, and make this half of the building appear to be the entire first floor.

This north section of the first floor is tripartite in plan using the three-story building base as its volume. At the center is a three-story oculus-lit rotunda. It lies on axis from the north doors after a vestibule and ante-chamber. Spiral staircases to the upper floors burst from the rotunda plan at the southeast and southwest corners. Between them the central axis leads to the elevator lobby off the east-west central corridor. Flanking the rotunda to the east and west are the large publicly accessible offices. The east office now houses the U.S. Passport Agency, while the west office houses the U.S. Customs Service, Department of the U.S. Treasury.

Public Spaces

The three main north portals open into a broad entrance lobby twenty-feet-by-thirty-nine-feet with a ceiling height of fourteen-feet-eight-inches. The wall surfaces are travertine, a finish used throughout the public areas in the whole building. The travertine comes from a Colorado quarry and is book matched at both the vertical and horizontal joints, a rare technique found in few buildings. A baseboard and incised piers of green Massachusetts Westfield marble provide contrasting vertical elements to the travertine. Above the travertine, a frieze of seven tempera-and-oil-panels on canvas, painted as part of the decorative interior design planned by architect Howell Shay, Fiske Kimball, Director, Philadelphia Art Museum, and Brandywine artist George Harding, presents over seventy-five feet of murals, nearly four feet in height. The scenes depict active workers involved in trade and commerce in international settings

of transportation and maritime activities.[1] These particular paintings have darkened with age due to the application of an inappropriate superficial art conservation treatment that cannot be removed. Non-original torchieres have been placed in the lobby for added illumination. Above the paintings, an ornamental plaster cornice features a scalloped border and raised gold stars on a blue background. The ceiling has a new band of lighting and further mural treatment in quadrate sections. The floors are tessellated, contrasting squares of terrazzo marble. This entrance lobby sets the federal, nautical, and maritime tone for the more decorative work of the rotunda and exemplifies the marble, travertine, and aluminum architectural materials that are so elegantly amplified in the main space.

The constricted ante-chamber to the rotunda continues the use of travertine and marble and is currently used as a security check point. Entering the rotunda easily overwhelms the visitor through its explosive, unexpected height and classical columned space. It is a remarkable mixture of beautiful green marble, terrazzo floor patterns, gold-leafed capitals, and glistening Art-Deco architectural aluminum and bronze metalwork contrasting with colorful ornamental plaster, nautical plaster sculptures, and painted murals. The thirty-two-foot diameter, three-story rotunda is ringed by eight massive green marble grooved columns with round embossed gold-leafed capitals. Each capital is encircled with a deco-inspired anthemion design topped with a bunting and tassel pattern and underscored with three-ringed molding. The columns support a circular second-story balcony and the rotunda roof. The roof, with its central lighted oculus, is painted blue and decorated with scallop shells and intervening squares with crabs, star fish, or snails. Below the dome is an Art Deco sculpted frieze in bas relief depicting eight reclining sea gods attempting to harness the elements.

In addition to the dark green marble and the colored, decorative plasterwork, a prominent contribution to the space is the architectural aluminum and bronze in Art Deco designs. The balcony face is sheathed in vertical aluminum strips with quadrate banding at the top and bottom, creating what looks like a corrugated surface. Encircling the balcony edge is an open balustrade of extruded, twisted and turned aluminum posts that flank bronze foliated shafts. At the first floor level, large aluminum screens and gates in rectilinear and foliated designs mark the entrances to the publically accessible offices off the rotunda. In the same locations on the second floor, these screens occur in front of light well windows.

Aluminum further accentuates and decorates the two spiral staircases of the southeast and southwest corners of the rotunda hall that provide access to offices on the second and third floors. These circular stairs rise two stories in a serpentine shape under small, secondary oculus-lit domes. The stringers are faced with delineated banding of corrugated aluminum with contrasting bronze circles depicting fish in pairs, seahorses, and conch shells. The elegant aluminum and bronze balustrade used at the balcony is repeated at each staircase. At the domed ceiling, intricate ostrich plumes radiate from a star-spangled frieze in pastel shades of pink and green plus an accent of goldenrod at the oculus opening.

In the rotunda, the program of thirty-one murals for the building, designed by muralist George Harding, uses six segmental inset canvas panels and four small triangular panels on each ceiling of the first and second floors. The paintings work illustratively as a narrative medium and also iconographically as they relate to the architecture and

[1]The titles and wall locations are: Foreign Imports to Philadelphia (west); Government Aids to Harbor Navigation Buoys (southeast); Government Aids to Deep Sea Navigation, Captain Taking Observation (southwest); Commerce of the East (northwest); Custom Examination (north center); Ship Building (northeast); Exports, Port of Philadelphia (east).

maritime services of the building. Images on the first floor show motifs of government agencies associated with the Treasury Department that relate to activities of foreign commerce entering U.S. ports. Included are U.S. Coast Guard cutters on international ice patrol, lightships, signals of distress; drifting obstructions; shore life saving; international signal codes; and flag insignias of different services. The second floor ceiling paintings colorfully depict the cycles of the sun and moon as a testament to their importance to seafarers. Included also are weather measuring devices. Each painting is in its own frame within a colorfully painted border. An example showing federal motifs associated with the U.S. Postal Service and the U.S. Coast Guard and emphasizing the American eagle is directly in front of the U.S. Customs Service office door.

A second group of murals in the elevator lobby south of the rotunda celebrate the U.S. Coast Guard, lightships, and the U.S. Weather and Lighthouse Bureau, all of which had offices in the upper levels of the building. These murals use applied elements in relief over designs that combine Abstraction and Cubism. The elevator lobby is a rectilinear continuation of the architectural design and ornamental patterns of the rotunda but here is marked by large, square columns, and aluminum directory frames and hardware at the six elevator doors.

To the east and west of the rotunda stand immense rooms now serving the U.S. Customs Service and the U.S. Passport Agency. They are separated from the rotunda by aluminum screens and gates. Once inside, the U.S. Customs Service space on the west side is fully open to the public view, exposing the monumental round-headed windows of the first floor. On the interior, the windows are separated by shallow, grooved pilasters. The grooved detail is repeated in the center spaces as massive, square, grooved columns that contain the structural steel of the frame. A grid of reeded plaster beams subdivides the ceiling. Original counters still serve the public, but contemporary office partitions have been added. On the west side, the U.S. Passport Agency has reduced its space to one half the size. Bank-like counters and windows serve the public on a non-original east wall. The remaining open floor space provides seating for the waiting public. The functioning office space for this agency is primarily behind the east wall. No windows are visible but architectural pilasters and columns decorate the space similarly to the U.S. Customs Service area.

The Office of the Collector of the Port was located in Room 115. The spacious office was dedicated to the Collector, the most powerful position within a U.S. Customs House. The room occupies the northwest corner of the building and denotes a greater architectural ranking than that of the executive administrative office down the hall, which has one less window and no corner setting; these offices are separated by a public waiting area and a shared secretary's office. The Collector's office is also the only office in the U.S. Customs House with a private closet and a bathroom with a medicine cabinet.

The roughly 800-square-foot rectangular Collector's office, however, also bespeaks a larger public role in having the same amount and degree of decorative detail as other primary interior public spaces in the U.S. Customs House. The fifteen-foot-six-inch tall room features sixteen engaged, full-height Doric pilasters of painted poplar wood that rise to an articulated cornice wrapping the room. The cornice is elaborate, with an egg-and-dart molding between a molding with rosettes below and a slightly larger-scale denticulated crown molding above. There are four pilasters on each elevation. These are distributed evenly on each elevation, though each elevation differs from the others depending on its length and window configuration. The somber Doric order exhibited by the pilasters bordering the Collector's office space, in contrast to the more ornate non-ordered or Ionic column capitals on pilasters found elsewhere in the building, seem to denote the authority of the Collector position.

The Collector's office has two windows on the north and one on the west. These large metal windows are identical to the others throughout the building described earlier, characterized by a Palladian motif of a round-headed arch whose keystone just meets the ceiling. The windows' lower portions are divided into three equal vertical areas below the spring of the arch. These windows end at the top of a bank of three-foot-three-inch tall rectangular raised panel cabinetry, of painted poplar wood, which clad the entire room as low wainscoting and also locate specified cast aluminum grilles or bench seating/storage beneath each window. The incision lines at the bases of the pilasters match the lower lines of the baseboard that also wraps the room. The protruding spaces flanking the window on the west define the closet and bathroom in the northwest and southwest corners of the room, respectively. The doors to these ancillary functions are oriented north-south, facing each other so the doors do not open directly into the room. The walls are plaster covered in canvas.

At the second-floor level, one has the opportunity to look into the rotunda space through the metal railings and directly at the lavish, colorful rotunda ceiling. The Art Deco intertwining marbles and metals make it one of the most dramatic interiors in the city. On the third floor, the circular corridor of the rotunda is maintained, but the dome is enclosed in a drum. A special feature on this floor is the courtroom on the Chestnut Street side above the vestibule. Here the interior departs from the Art Deco designs and returns to Georgian inspired architectural elements to create a classical room reminiscent of Independence Hall. Paired fluted pilasters with Ionic capitals are rhythmically placed along the walls under a deep, molded cornice. At the base they transect a paneled wainscoting. The ceiling uses wide, reeded intersecting beams with recessed lights. The judge's bench sits on a raised platform with turned balusters and ramped railings at each end. Behind it is a pedimented doorway with a winged eagle mounted above. The main entrance door features an elaborate broken pediment. Wooden pew-like benches furnish the space behind the gated rail to the bench.

Tower floors

The fourth through eleventh levels of the building are generally utilitarian in character and made up of an inner core of stairwells, elevator shafts and lobbies. Elevator lobbies continue the palette of materials of the first floor public spaces with travertine and marble, but with a considerable simplification of detail. Four radiating arms of offices flank the core, and, with a few exceptions, are lacking in detail. Many have typically been renovated with acoustical suspended ceilings and lighting fixtures. Certain sections have been completely altered to meet new agency needs.

The twelfth floor retains a square plan with small offices surrounding the inner core of stairs and elevators. Finishes are similar to the floors below. The thirteenth through fifteenth floors become octagonal and only one elevator services these floors. On the thirteenth floor, the travertine is reduced to wainscoting only; on the last two floors there is no travertine but terrazzo and marble bases remain consistent. The sixteenth and seventeenth floors retain the octagonal format but have no architectural interest and are used for mechanical equipment.

Alterations, Rehabilitation, and Integrity

Alterations occurred in the United States Custom House since it opened to the public in 1934, but a rehabilitation program was undertaken in 1993. Work completed by the firm Ueland Junker McCauley, Architects and Planners,

was based on recommendations of the historic structure report of 1980. Workers cleaned and repointed the masonry and restored 1,000 windows, corrected adverse alterations and intrusions, upgraded air conditioning and lighting, addressed safety and handicapped issues. The results show that in addition to a restored exterior, air conditioning units and mechanical equipment have been removed from public view, missing elements have been replaced appropriately both inside and out, elevators have been restored, and adverse lighting has been replaced to relate to the architecture, both in illumination and fixtures. Finally, the exterior terra cotta lantern has again been illuminated. In the monumental interior public spaces, all the painted surfaces were analyzed to assure original colors were employed in the repainting. Additionally, marble, metals, and the murals were cleaned and restored as necessary. The building has been returned as closely as possible to its 1934 design and appearance.

Alterations that have been made to the building are relatively modest and have had a minimal impact. The original doors of the building, consisting of metal and glass revolving doors, have been replaced by dual metal and glass swinging doors. The sliding grille night gates no longer remain. On the interior, the original maple wood of the columns and pilasters in the public offices has been painted, creating a change in warmth and tone. At the front entrance, granite planters have been added at the base of the building in association with a handicapped ramp, which is also not original to the main façade. These alterations are modest. On the whole, the U.S. Custom House that stands prominently in the oldest section of Philadelphia is one of the best preserved and elaborate twentieth century federal buildings in the city. It represents a grand gesture to Modernism in its exterior design and to the Art Deco style on the interior, all with a high degree of architectural integrity.

Significance

Summary[2]

The United States Custom House built in 1934 at Second and Chestnut Streets in Philadelphia is a major landmark in the heart of the eighteenth century section of the nation's founding city. It looms above remaining historic buildings of the shipping, financial, and commercial quarter, establishing its presence in what has always been the nation's largest freshwater port. The building is significant for its evolution and continued role in commerce as a federal custom house in the history of Philadelphia and the country. The building's construction resulted from large "pump-priming" projects of the federal government during the darkest days of the Depression and illustrates the governmental activism of the Hoover and Roosevelt presidencies. The United States Custom House is significant for Criterion C through its distinctive skyscraper architecture of the work of Ritter & Shay. As a design of one of the principal early twentieth century Philadelphia architectural offices, the building acknowledges its historic setting in its composition, massing, and exterior palette of materials and detailing, while being firmly rooted in the conventions of the Art Deco style. Decorative elements focus on commerce and maritime history. The interior public spaces are particularly notable for a classical rotunda using rich marbles, architectural aluminum and bronze, and nautical ornamentation. Colorful murals of maritime themes and government services by noted Brandywine School and Depression-era artist George Harding establish significance for art.

Early Custom Houses in Philadelphia

Customs operations in Philadelphia existed under the British Crown as soon as the city became an established port in the seventeenth century. The port officer who was named Royal Collector of Customs had a jurisdiction of thirty miles on the Delaware River from New Castle County to the falls, a non-navigable section of the river. The officer was highly paid, but was also under a checks-and-balance system through record verification by an appointed "Naval Officer." Exchanges or limitations of goods plus customs duties were critical to the balance of trade and economies of all nations, especially developing ones such as America. Thus it was that the new nation of the United States of America established through its Constitution a Customs Bureau in 1789. The office administered the assessment of goods, collected import duties, and prevented smuggling, espionage, and sabotage. The Surveyor of Customs of the Port supervised inspectors and reported the arrival of ships. The Collector of Customs was responsible for collections and served as the comptroller. During the decade from 1790 to 1800, Philadelphia was the nation's capital and the sole port of entry for the state of Pennsylvania.

No monies were supplied by the government for permanent offices or a place to assess or store goods until 1798. Prior to this year, the federal customs officers rented office space in various local establishments, all in the vicinity of the current United States Custom House. In 1798 a room was first assigned in Congress Hall at Sixth and Chestnut streets. From 1802 to 1819 more permanent residency was in Carpenters' Hall on Chestnut between Third and Fourth streets. Finally, in 1819, architect William Strickland was responsible for building a dedicated building to serve customs administration on Second Street below Dock Street in a traditional temple form of the day. Its role for commerce was initially further clarified by a wooden sculpture of the allegorical figure "Commerce" executed by noted Philadelphian William Rush. Space in this new building served the

[2] Unless otherwise noted, the significance statement has been taken directly from earlier versions of the nomination prepared by George E. Thomas (1992) and revised by Hillier (2004). ICF Jones & Stokes updated the statement and prepared further research pertaining to the artistic program within the building.

Customs Collector only; storage warehouses for the Appraisers were located nearby. This complex became too small by 1844, and the government purchased the former Second Bank of the United States, designed in 1818 by William Strickland to emulate the Parthenon, and located between Fourth and Fifth streets on Chestnut Street.

When the United States Custom House moved into Strickland's monumental bank in 1844, the architect himself carried out the adaptive changes. Strickland's early recommendation was not to use the Second Bank cellars for the necessary customs service storage. Finally, in 1868, the requisite five-story fireproof warehouse for the Appraisers' Stores was built closer to the Delaware River between Exchange Place and Second Street and Moravian and Sansom Streets just east of Dock Street. The United States Custom House in Philadelphia had met the criteria of a federal presence in a noble, classic revival building for administrative offices with off-site storage space nearby. By the 1900s, however, other port cities had gained new modern facilities with federal dollars to manage growing shipping trades. The port of Philadelphia began a campaign for a new building designed for modern commerce.

The Evolution of the Ritter & Shay Custom House

When Philadelphia politicians began pushing for a new federal custom house in 1913 to replace William Strickland's Greek revival masterpiece, local civic leaders conceived of two buildings. These were to be on the order of the Baltimore downtown custom house and portside river warehouse of 1907. By the 1930s, however, federal agencies preferred a large building in the midst of the old commercial district of Philadelphia. On 21 January 1931 a 300 foot square site was announced at Second and Chestnut streets under "Contemplated Construction" in the *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* (PRERBG). This designated block of commercial buildings was directly adjacent to and north of the Appraisers' Stores warehouse, and thus logically extended the government's land holdings for the new building.[3] On 25 February the same publication published a budget of $4,200,000, stating plans were in progress and the project was approved. Construction materials and an eight-story building were noted. The selection of Ritter & Shay as architects of the project was finalized in August 1931 and announced in PRERBG.[4] Funding was initiated under Herbert Hoover's term but awarded from the "New Deal" economic recovery act of President Franklin D. Roosevelt as a project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

By October 1931, Ritter & Shay had prepared their conceptual design. They submitted it to the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, James Wetmore, and his assistant, Acting Supervising Architect George von Nerta.[5] The design progress was constantly affected by contemporary events. When the architects were slow to begin, they were admonished by the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Ferry Heath to expedite the work "to the utmost in order to ameliorate the unemployment situation."[6] The architectural intent of Ritter & Shay was to integrate modern design with architectural materials and elements of the historic Independence Hall area. Their

[3] The cost of the new land was $939,376. The old warehouse was demolished as part of the project for parking. Eventually Sansom Street was closed off and included in a fenced parking area with the loading dock on the south side of the Custom House.
[4] *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* 46, August 19, 1931, 1. In this announcement the allocation is listed as $4,000,000. Ritter & Shay's letter of contract with the U.S. Treasury Department is dated 28 August 1931.
[5] The principal repository of materials on the Custom House is located in the Washington National Records Center, Suitland, Maryland, a division of the National Archives and Records Administration. The chronological record of Ritter & Shay's work is in Folder August 1931-April 1935, Box 2095, General Correspondence, Record Group 121, National Archives and Records Administration.
[6] Ferry Heath to Ritter and Shay, 7 October 1931, Record Group 121, National Archives and Records Administration.

plan for the United States Custom House thus changed the original government scheme of an eight-story block to a seventeen-story tower design. When Congress passed the Economy Act on 30 June 1932, another change in design occurred. The project budget had to be reduced by 10%, forcing proposed marble trim, which would have been in keeping with the historic architecture of the neighborhood, to be forsaken for limestone.

The division of the building into a base and tower was probably derived from one of the most successful skyscrapers of the day, the Barclay-Vesey Building for the New York Telephone Company by Walker and Gillette. Bertram G. Goodhue's Nebraska State Capitol would have provided a similar influential precedent. The Barclay-Vesey Building's lower base conformed to the street orientation and architectural scale of the New York warehouse district while its multi-story spire was aligned with the uptown skyscrapers. Ritter & Shay adapted the New York scheme to the similar situation of Philadelphia's commerce and warehouse district and the cluster of spires being constructed around City Hall. Against the low scale of the old city, their design resulted in a building that, even now, remains one of the principal landmarks of the Philadelphia skyline. Moreover, by adapting the architectural scheme for the ancient lighthouse at Rhodes on the top of a modern skyscraper, the architects arrived at a form that symbolized the lighthouse guarding the port of Philadelphia and linked the building to the historic role of government as the provider of lighthouses.

In November 1932 the construction bid went to J. J. McCloskey & Co. and the project moved forward. Work continued for nearly two years, employing over 4,000 construction workers. The nearly completed building was dedicated on 10 November 1934 with enthusiasm and acclaim, although the mural competition for the walls and ceilings had not even occurred. The cost remained within budget at $2,574,000 and was lauded as being nearly $1 million less than the appropriation. In addition to its assigned role as the United States Custom House, the building became the seat of the Treasury Department's offices for the Coast Guard, the Bureau of Lighthouses, and the Bureau of Steamboat Inspection. The U.S. Marine Corps, founded a few blocks away more than a century-and-a-half before, had offices there as well. New arms of the federal government were also housed in the building, including the Radio Inspector, the forerunner of the Federal Communications Commission. The varied federal presence continues today, as does the building's original function to provide customs port duties.

The architectural mass and height of a new building east of Independence Hall has often been cited as the beginning of a new urban development plan for Philadelphia's historic core. Sparks for such ideals had already grown through three events of 1926: Philadelphia's Sesquicentennial of the Declaration of Independence, the opening of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge across the Delaware River, and publication of the first regional plan for the Philadelphia area. In 1933 Collector of the Port, A. Raymond Raff, who was also president of the Carpenters' Company, promoted various neighborhood improvements including a landscaped park along Third Street called "Congress Plaza."[7] Neither municipal nor private economics allowed this or other schemes of the time to evolve. It was the federal Historic Sites Act of 1935 that charged the U.S. National Park Service with preservation of historic areas through cooperative agreements for public use that would eventually bring federal dollars into the mix. Ironically, the first effort in Philadelphia under this act was caused by the sale of the Second Bank of the United States that had served the U.S. Custom House for 90 years. In 1939, rapid negotiations to protect and preserve the empty but historic and architecturally significant building brought about its transfer from the Treasury Department to the Department of the Interior's National Park Service with a collaborative arrangement of use, restoration, and public access. Through $100,000 of WPA funds and $15,000 from the new tenants, the Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation, the architect for the National Park Service, oversaw restoration of the bank. This initiated a first step toward the development of Independence National Historical Park and eventual revitalization of

[7] Constance M. Greiff, *Independence: The Creation of a National Park* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 39.

the Society Hill area. The Second World War interceded before planning and implementation of the next phases evolved.

Architects Ritter & Shay

The firm of Ritter & Shay was one of the most important architectural offices in Philadelphia in the 1930s. During the previous decade they designed most of the signature buildings of the Philadelphia skyline including the Packard (1500 Walnut Street), the Market Street National Bank office buildings (1-21 North Juniper Street) and the Sir Francis Drake Hotel (1512-14 Spruce Street). Characterized by boldly shaped forms with rich elaboration of detail in strongly stated styles on the exterior and splashy and richly ornamented lobbies, their works are among the best known buildings in the Art Deco style in the city from the years around the Great Depression. It was presumably for this reason that Ritter & Shay were given this commission. It was the most visible of the Depression projects in Philadelphia, rivaled in scale only by Tilden, Register and Pepper's United States Post Office at 30th Street and in prominence of location by Harry Sternfeld, and the Ballinger Company's Federal Courthouse and Post Office at Ninth and Market streets. All these buildings represented a government economic and social program that reduced unemployment by using local suppliers, manufacturers, and contractors and assuring fair wages. Furthermore, local artists were involved in the interior designs of the public spaces through the WPA.

The Ritter & Shay firm consisted of two partners, Verus T. Ritter (1883-1942), a largely self-taught architect from Pennsylvania, and Washington state native Howell Lewis Shay (1884-1975), a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and later a member of the office of Horace Trumbauer during the years when the Philadelphia Museum of Art was designed. In 1920, they established an office that continued until 1936 with the completion of the United States Custom House. The evidence of the documentation in federal archives suggests that it was Shay who was the chief designer for the project. He had already won the A.I.A. Gold Medal for the design of the Packard Building in 1925 and was unquestionably the most prominent tall building designer of his day in Philadelphia.

Ultimately, it was Shay who worked with muralist George Harding to develop the decorative program in the United States Custom House.[8] As a Beaux-arts trained graduate of the University of Pennsylvania's program, Shay was educated to integrate the decorative arts in the design program of an important building.[9] Harding was part of a group of artists that included Charles Sheeler and Charles Demuth, who were recommended by Fiske Kimball, the director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and a Beaux-arts trained architect in his own right.[10] Through the WPA, in May of 1935, with the construction of the building nearly completed, competition entries were received and judged by Shay, Kimball, and Henri Marceau, Kimball's assistant director. Harding's entry was singled out for its "magnificent color quality," and was recommended for first place.[11]

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[8] See the general correspondence files, 1929 ff, Box 2095, Record Group 121, National Archives and Records Administration. For Shay's direct involvement in the mural program, see Shay to Simon, 8 November 1934, Record Group 121, Box E-133, National Archives and Records Administration.

[9] For the Beaux-Arts program at Penn see, George E. Thomas, "A Group Enthusiasm," in Ann Strong and George E. Thomas, *The Book of the School* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 25-39.

[10] Among the others recommended by Kimball were George Biddle, Julius Block, Arthur B. Carles, Earl Hortter, Franklin Watkins, and Harold Weston. Kimball's list is dated 8 February 1935, Record Group 121, Box E-133, National Archives and Records Administration.

[11] Olin Dows to Henri Marceau, 29 June 1935, Record Group 121, Box E-133, National Archives and Records Administration.

The first Collector of the Port to serve in the newly constructed United States Custom House, Collector A. Raymond Raff, also helped commission the United States Custom House mural paintings. Raff, a former politician and superintendent of the U.S. Mint, Philadelphia from 1934-1935, was known to be an activist in the local urban environment. In 1933, serving in dual capacity as Collector of the Port and president of the Carpenters' Company (which dates back to the eighteenth century as America's oldest trade guild, historically a union of master builders, architects, engineers and artisans),[12] Raff proposed a series of improvements for the neighborhood around the United States Custom House. One, known as "Congress Plaza," would have created a formal landscaped park along Third Street west of the United States Custom House.[13] Muralist George Harding was an acquaintance of Raff. A letter by Harding dated April 28, 1937, notes Collector Raff's role "in helping to get the murals installed," a remark that underscores the sustained and successful collaboration between agencies, artist and architect manifested throughout all levels of the project.

The Decorative Program of the United States Custom House

The decorative program of the rotunda and lobby within the United States Custom House in Philadelphia is one of the very finest pieces of government-sponsored art in the region. Painted over a four-year period between 1934 and 1938, the 31 mural paintings within the United States Custom House are an important character-defining feature of the building and make a unique contribution to the building's significance. The murals exhibit a very high level of artistic skill and craftsmanship. Rendered in a unique blend of Modern and WPA Moderne styles, they also signify the building's connection to its period of significance. The maritime content of the mural paintings, with images depicting themes from navigation to trade, further link the building to its function and setting, adjacent to the world's largest freshwater port, the Delaware Bay.

Harding's design of the United States Custom House murals resulted from a juried competition by the Department of Treasury's Section on Painting and Sculpture to paint 31 murals on nautical themes for the United States Custom House in the heart of Philadelphia. Harding competed with other artists who included Charles Sheeler and Charles Demuth recommended by Fiske Kimball, the director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and a Beaux-arts trained architect in his own right.[14] Through the WPA, in May of 1935, with the construction of the building just completed, competition entries were received and judged by Shay, Kimball and Henri Marceau, Kimball's assistant director. Harding's entry was singled out for its "magnificent color quality," and was recommended for first place.[15] Harding represented the building's use as a center for commerce in his images of ships and planes; the setting of the United States Custom House next to a freshwater port is represented by nautical images of boats, conch shells, seahorses, and reclining figures of Neptune.

The United States Custom House commission was particularly prestigious, for the building is highly visible and is located only a few blocks away from Independence Hall. Begun in December 1932, the building opened on

[12] The Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia is the oldest trade guild in America and has been based in Carpenter's Hall since 1770. The four-story, Georgian style Carpenter's Hall, a National Historic Landmark, is considered a treasure of historic Philadelphia because the building hosted the First Continental Congress in 1774 and was home to Franklin's Library Company, the American Philosophical Society, and the First and Second Banks of the United States. Between Third and Fourth streets, the hall is one block away from the Customs House and is now part of Independence National Historical Park: Independence Hall Association, "800 Members, 300 Years," *Carpenters Hall*, http://www.ushistory.org/carpentershall/visit/800.htm.
[13] Independence Hall Association, "The National Park Service," *ushistory.org*, http://www.ushistory.org/iha/dreams/dreams10.htm.
[14] Among the others recommended by Kimball were George Biddle, Julius Block, Arthur B. Carles, Earl Hortter, Franklin Watkins, and Harold Weston. Kimball's list is dated 8 February 1935, Record Group 121, Box E-133, National Archives and Records Administration.
[15] Olin Dows to Henri Marceau, 29 June 1935, Record Group 121, Box E-133, National Archives and Records Administration.

November 10, 1934, having cost over $3,500,000, a large sum for a structure designed and realized in the height of the Great Depression. The stylish new building, designed by Ritter & Shay, uniquely integrated Beaux arts planning sensibilities, Art Deco materials and detailing, and a skyscraper silhouette on an otherwise Classical base. The design's eclectic but successful synthesis of styles paralleled the consolidation of a multiplicity of government agencies in one building, the first federal architectural project of this type.

By 1934, when Harding began his work on the newly completed building, the artist was already an experienced muralist and on the faculty of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts for twelve years. The artist was especially suited for this commission, given his personal and professional background as maritime journalist, explorer and documentarian. His early training with the celebrated "Brandywine Group" leader, teacher and artist Howard Pyle, N.C. Wyeth's mentor,[16] taught him that only art tempered by authentic experience was worth doing; he lived that ethos a few years later as a foreign correspondent and illustrator covering mostly treacherous and always far-flung sea and air voyages. His work became known for its expressiveness, sense of urgency, and obvious intimacy with all things related to the sea. As a combat artist during World War I, his illustrations and paintings were notable in their ability to communicate action and feeling with apparently rapid but carefully placed brushstrokes and intense colors. This early work led to an exhibition in 1923, when the Carnegie Institute sponsored Harding's first exhibition, "A Salute to the Marines; Ninety-two Sketches by Captain George M. Harding, United States Marine Corps." He never quit his thirst for adventure: at age 60 Harding reenlisted as an artist solider for a four-year stint during the height of World War II.

All these factors combined to make George Harding the perfect candidate for contributing to the United States Custom House, a high-profile commission conceived at the height of the Great Depression to symbolize and convey courage and optimism. Harding's United States Custom House murals made the shift from the Brandywine School realism towards contemporary art, which he merged with the conventional social realism of WPA art. Their success was such that they were included in the fall 1936 exhibit of government art at the Whitney Museum in New York, and were later included in a late winter exhibit at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C. There they attracted the interest of Eleanor Roosevelt.[17] Their installation in the United States Custom House by 1938 completed the building.[18] The successful mural and decorative sculptural programs can be seen as the counterpart on the interior for the great lighthouse-capped spire of the exterior, communicating both function and aspiration to the public.

One of Harding's most important projects, the mural project at the United States Customs House in Philadelphia, is an excellent example of such contextual and stylistic integration. The murals' saturated colors and sense of dynamism, carefully nuanced for each interior space and volume, enliven and engage the architecture. Art and architecture are seamlessly blended on behalf of the user and visitor in an effort rarely seen in this variety, and in such quantity.

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[16] Howard Pyle's school was free. Students were required to pay only a small fee to cover costs of models and incidental expenses. Other students, contemporaries of Harding, included Clifford Ashley, Henry Peck, Frank Schoonover, Stanley Arthurs, Sidney Chase, Harvey Dunn, Thornton Oakley, Allen Ture, William J. Aylward, Ethel Franklin Betts, Dorothy Warren, and N.C. Wyeth.

[17] Edward Rowan to George Harding, 24 March 1936, Record Group 121, Box E-133, National Archives and Records Administration.

[18] Additional details related to the mural program are found in Sandra L. Tatman, "Philadelphia and the Rhetoric of Modernism: Prelude to PSFS" Ph.D. diss., University of Delaware, 1994, 255-56., and in Timothy Noble and Cynthia A. Rose, "Seriated Paint Analysis of the US Custom House, Philadelphia, PA." Philadelphia, 1993.

The planning and documentation of the United States Custom House's decorative mural program exemplifies the fruitful collaboration among various federal agencies, artist George Harding, architect Howell Lewis Shay, director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Fiske Kimball, and the Collector of the Port, A. Raymond Raff, all of whom helped Harding in facilitating the murals' installation.

Ultimately, it was Shay and Olin Dows, Assistant Superintendent of the Department of Treasury's Section on Painting and Sculpture, who worked with George Harding to develop the specifics of the mural program.[19] Both had definite ideas about the murals before an artist was chosen. As a Beaux-arts trained graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Shay was educated to integrate the decorative arts in the design program of an important building.[20] From the outset, the murals project was collaborative and involved a close exchange between Shay, Harding and Dows.[21] Shay conceived the mural paintings—their placement, size, and palette—and designed molded frames to accommodate them. Dows envisioned the subject matter to "have relations to commerce and customs with particular relation to Pennsylvania commerce both past and present, or with local industry, pursuits or scenery." A letter of March 26, 1937 describes guidelines for the murals:

> *"The ceiling of the entrance vestibule is to be in a color scheme to harmonize with the wall decoration, with two bands of stenciled ornament and three designs of conventionalized navigating instruments as center and flanking motif. On the ceiling of the first floor, at the circular corridor surrounding the rotunda, there will be six segmental panels and four small triangular panels in which will be presented motifs of governmental agencies connected with the Treasury department that contact all foreign commerce entering the ports of the USA. On the ceiling, second floor, rotunda, six segmental panels and four triangular panels showing the dependency of sea-borne commerce on the sun and stars for position, together with radio direction finder, wind measuring, barometer and thermometer, and forecasting by the Weather Bureau of tropical storms and hurricanes and aviation weather reports for airships. The ceiling painting in the elevator lobby will have a conventionalized design motif suggestive of communications."*

Small triangular paintings between the large ceiling murals were painted directly on the plaster or on canvas without board. As murals were completed, and prior to their permanent installation, they were exhibited in museums, including the Whitney Museum, the Corcoran, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. By 1938, Harding completed all the paintings.

Harding's murals, funded by the Treasury Department Section of Fine Arts, generally complement the architectural interior and underline his broad view of the building's structure. The panels' palette, form, and scale respond to their architectural surroundings. With regard to technique, Harding both abstracted the subject and depicted it realistically, reflecting contemporary American stylistic currents of the time such as Social Realism and Regionalism.

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[19] See the general correspondence files, 1929 ff, Box 2095, Record Group 121. For Shay's direct involvement in the mural program, see Shay to Simon, 8 November 1934, Record Group 121, Box E-133, National Archives and Records Administration.
[20] For the Beaux-arts program at Penn see, George E. Thomas, "A Group Enthusiasm," in Ann Strong and George E. Thomas, *The Book of the School* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 25-39.
[21] Olin Dows to Howell Lewis Shay, January 25, 1935, unpublished correspondence.

As specified by Shay, in addition to some small, decorative panels Harding painted four groups of paintings by theme and location as follows:

1. **The Entrance Lobby** paintings combine representations of trade, shipbuilding and navigation located on the walls, with abstract representations of ships' propellers and compasses on the ceilings, as follows:

- Foreign Imports to Philadelphia (west wall)
- Government Aids to Harbor Navigation Buoys (south wall, east side)
- Government Aids to Deep Sea Navigation, Captain Taking Observation (south wall, west side)
- Commerce of the East (north wall, west side)
- Customs Examination (north wall, center)
- Ship Building (north wall, east side)
- Exports, Port of Philadelphia (east wall)

When entering the United States Custom House, one sees the semicircular bas-relief panels showing American industry, commerce, and trade which are set beneath the arched door openings of the main entrance. Once inside the U S Custom House, the rotunda welcomes the visitor with another series of murals.

2. **The First Floor Rotunda** murals work illustratively as a narrative medium while iconographically relating to the architecture and maritime services of the building. They are comprised of six segmental panels and four small triangular panels of motifs of governmental agencies connected with the Treasury Department that contact all foreign commerce entering the ports of the USA as follows:

- *Coast Guard Cutters on International Ice Patrol*
- *Lightships Signals of Distress*
- *Derelicts, Drifting Obstructions, Reported in Weekly Hydrographic Bulletins*
- *Shore Life Saving*
- *In the first panel on axis an arabesque decoration of the International Signal Code*
- *The second panel on axis an arabesque decoration showing the flag insignias of different branches of U.S. services, including the Customs Service, Coast Guard, Public Health Quarantine, Mail, Weather Bureau, Lighthouse, Coast and Geodetic Survey, Shipping Commissioners, and Fishery Bureau.*

3. On the ceiling of the **Second Floor Rotunda**, six segmental panels and four triangular panels illustrate the dependency of sea-borne commerce on the sun and stars for locating position, together with radio direction finder, wind measuring, barometer and thermometer, forecasting of tropical storms and hurricanes and aviation weather reports by the Weather Bureau for airships. Here, the designs of the paintings are slightly more light-hearted, Cubist and Abstract in tenor (recalling Classical architecture which would use the lighter Ionic order in elevations above the heavier Doric order, typically on the ground floor.) Collectively, these paintings colorfully depict the cycles of the sun and moon as a testament to their directions to seafarers while weaving in patriotic themes, seen in the American eagle directly in front of the U.S. Customs Service office door.

4. **The Elevator Lobby**. Here the medium is the message, with communication being the subject, as seen in depictions of a telephone, telegraph, switchboards, microphones, radio tubes, and submarine cable aerials.

Most of the murals are large, ranging from approximately fourteen feet to twenty-five feet in length and are typically located on the ceilings. An exception, the Entrance Lobby group, combines murals located above the travertine wall as a frieze with three large paintings on the ceilings.

Harding's compositions resulted from extensive studies. He produced numerous drawings and color sketches of individual paintings, as well as the entire design plan, before beginning to paint. Working from the drawings, he laid out the composition in graphite on the primed canvas. He then painted on egg tempera and oil on the primed canvas or a backer board called vehisote, a type of pressed paper composition board, in a variety of techniques responding to the individual requirements of the composition. For the more abstract paintings, such as those located on the lobby and elevator lobby ceilings, he painted in a combination of thin glazes, thicker mottled paints, and opaque fields of uniform color on a combination of canvas, plaster, and wood surfaces.

As noted, the general subject matter of the murals is navigation with relation to the commerce and customs of the Port of Philadelphia. Harding used this subject to develop his deep concern with the abstract problems of mural painting, conceiving each mural in terms of balance and mass of color, linear design, variety of forms and movement, direction and counter-direction, all tailored for a different place in the building that was subject to different daylight conditions. In addition to "flat" painting, he also created collage-like compositions with applied cut-outs in relief, such as the *Communications* mural in the Elevator Lobby. Harding also experimented on two murals by employing three-dimensional relief and applying molded wood and plaster detail to the surface.

While he planned the compositions extensively and painted with great care and skill, his brushwork appears rapid and sketchy. He tended to paint thinly, allowing the preparatory coat of paint to show through the brushwork. He also used the white preparatory coat for finished passages in the manner of watercolor painting. Harding evidently enjoyed integrating his graphic design sensibilities in some of the paintings, such as *Forecasting Weather in the Tropics*, located at the axis with the elevator hall on the second floor. There, as elsewhere, Harding rendered shadow in a linear manner with diagonal lines in a classic chiaroscuro to increase the drama of the image.

The overall result is one of great dynamism, with saturated colors in red, gold and brown in some places, and in strong red, white and blue in others, again unifying the murals' themes with the overall architectural effort.

Muralist George Harding

George Matthews Harding (1882-1959) was born at 501 North Twentieth Street in Philadelphia to first generation Americans, Joseph Harding and Charlotte Matthews and from youth showed exceptional early artistic talent. His older sister Charlotte was already enrolled in the Pennsylvania School of Design for Women, the adjunct facility for the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, where her brother George formally enrolled at eighteen after a brief stint studying architecture at Boston Technical College. Harding continued to work in an architect's office by day while attending the academy by night; this early training in thinking three-dimensionally is reflected in his handling of space and perspective in the United States Custom House murals; as an architecture student trained in the Beaux Arts tradition of thinking of architecture, art and ornament working together, he was quite aware of art's ability to create a memorable experience for user and visitor.

Harding's post-high school studies at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts led him in 1902 to the Howard Pyle School of Art in Wilmington, Delaware. Pyle's master classes in the summer along the Brandywine River in

Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, placed Harding in contact with Violet Oakley, Maxfield Parrish and the Wyeth family. These artists were trained as illustrators and painters for a burgeoning publishing industry. While invested in pastoral and medieval themes (he illustrated over twenty-five books, mostly Arthurian legends), Pyle is nonetheless considered the "father of American illustration," contributing to a wide range of magazines catering to the rapidly growing category of middle class Americans. Preceding the Great War, this was America's "Golden Age" of illustration, when art by hand still superseded photography. Pyle's approach included excursions to historical sites and impromptu dramas using props and costumes, meant to stimulate imagination and elicit drama, but he also insisted on historical accuracy. He impressed on his students the need to observe humans in action. Together, these were all necessities for a "Pyle" style of illustration.

Upon completion of his training, Harding quickly embarked on a career as an illustrator. In 1906 he began working for *The Saturday Evening Post*,[22] where Pyle and Wyeth also contributed.[23] From 1909 to 1917 he worked as an author and travel illustrator for *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, with dramatic titles such as *When our ship went down: An adventure with the sealing fleet off Newfoundland* (April 1909); *The menace of Cape Race* (April 1912); *Captains of the seven seas* (April 1912); and *The Admiralty Service* (December 1917). He sailed or flew to Newfoundland, Labrador, and the West Indies and in 1911, Harding covered a non-stop airplane flight from Key West to Havana[24] from aboard one of the U.S. Navy destroyers positioned along the flight route in the event of a rescue; coincidentally, his resulting article about icebergs was on the newsstands during the month of the Titanic disaster.[25] In 1912, he illustrated a Willa Cather story, "Behind the Singer Tower," with pictures of steamy industrial complexes complete with American workers. [26] He also took a round-the-world trip for *Harper's*, voyaging to the Mediterranean, Egypt, Arabia, Australia, (Papua) New Guinea, the South Seas and the interior of China. His travels, in turn, influenced his painting, especially his subject matter and palette.[27]

Following these adventures, Harding began his career as a mural painter in earnest. His earliest known commission titled *The Isle of Enchantment* was completed in 1917 for the Submarine Grille dining room at the fabled Traymore Hotel in Atlantic City, New Jersey,[28] where N.C. Wyeth also worked.[29] The next year Harding was commissioned Captain of Engineers and assigned the role of Official Artist to the American Expeditionary Force. From 1918 to 1919, he served as a combat artist for the Army in France.[30] There he developed a bold, quick sketching method that would influence his methods of mural production throughout his career.

In 1922, Harding joined the faculty of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and taught courses in mural decoration and illustration. During his thirty-six year tenure, ending in 1957 (except for a leave of absence during World War II), he rose to head the department of illustration and later headed a newly formed department of mural decoration

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[22] Harding, George, "Drawing the War," *American Magazine of Art*, October 1939, 569. Whether this new position coincided with his studies in unclear; he possibly worked through 1917 as a "stringer" for both *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Harper's Monthly Magazine*.
[23] The Saturday Evening Post Society, "Archives," *The Saturday Evening Post*, http://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/departments/archives/index.shtml
[24] *Danbury (CT) News-Times*, November 6, 1942.
[25] *Norristown (PA) Times-Herald*. March 28, 1956.
[26] Willa Cather, "Behind the Singer Tower," *Collier's*, May 18, 1912, 16-17; 41. located at: University of Nebraska-Lincoln, "Writings," *The Willa Cather Archive*, http://cather.unl.edu/ss045.html.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Wolf, Eva Nagel, "Murals by Harding," *International Studio*, July 1917, 16-17.
[29] Brandywine Conservancy, "N.C. Wyeth Biography," *Brandywine River Museum: N.C. Wyeth Catalogue Raisonné*, http://www.ncwyeth.org/ncbio3.htm.
[30] *Norristown (PA) Times-Herald*. March 28, 1956.

where he was reputed to be a popular and lively teacher. He also taught illustration and landscape, figure, and portrait painting at the Academy's Chester Springs summer school in 1930-1, 1934-41, 1947, and 1950. He was commissioned to depict the Father Jacque Marquette's arrival at the Mississippi River in a mural that still hangs above the lobby elevators at the Hotel Pere Marquette in Peoria, Illinois.[31] He was also associate professor in the Department of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania from 1915 through 1935.

Harding's developing mural designs reflected an aptitude for integrating graphics with painting and architecture and were commissioned for buildings in Washington, D.C. (U.S. Post Office Department, 1937), New York (World's Fair Federal Building, 1939), and Detroit, MI (Chrysler Building) as well as across Pennsylvania.[32] His career flourished rapidly, especially throughout the two years spent painting the United States Custom House murals. He won an award from the Philadelphia Art Club in 1937, possibly for his work at the United States Custom House, and won an additional competition to decorate the New Post Office Building (Washington, DC, 1934—presently U.S. Environmental Protection Agency headquarters) where he depicted "Franklin Signing [a] Post Receipt Book" and "Dispatch Riders in Revolutionary War" in 1938. He was awarded the Edward T. Stotesbury Prize from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in the same year. He also won a competition for the mural of the Hall of Legislation at the Federal Building for the 1939 New York World's Fair, which would be his largest commission at 100 feet long. In 1940 the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts commissioned Harding to paint unspecified murals, and in this same year he designed murals for the Municipal Court Parkway in Philadelphia. In 1942 Harding held his second individual exhibition, a retrospective at the Corcoran Gallery (his second exhibition there) of early tempera paintings of life in Newfoundland completed between 1908 and 1914.[33]

Harding resumed his role as a combat artist at age 60, joining the U.S. Marines in the South Pacific from 1942 to 1946.[34] He produced over 600 watercolor sketches at Bougainville, New Georgia, Munda and Guam. Harding's combat work was widely displayed throughout his career. Numerous magazine articles, including some by Harding himself, discuss and present reproductions of these articles and his recollections of the period. Exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art (1942) and the National Gallery of Art (1945) included some of his sketches.[35]

Between 1949 and 1953, he painted murals for the Montgomery County Courthouse in Norristown, PA, providing scenes of the county's early history. In 1953, Harding's work garnered more honors. He was elected a National Academician by the National Academy of Design in New York, possibly in conjunction with the completion of this mural project; a Gold Medal from the Architectural League of New York and a Fine Arts Award from the Philadelphia chapter of the American Institute of Architects for the murals. He was awarded the Gold Medal of Honor by the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1953,[36] and in 1956, the Golden Artist Award by the Norristown, Pennsylvania Art League,[37] presumably for his earlier work there.

From 1954 to 1956, Harding designed and executed murals of birds and other wildlife at the Audubon Shrine in Mill Grove, Pennsylvania. The next year, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts presented a comprehensive

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[31] National Trust for Historic Preservation, "Hotel Pere Marquette: Peoria, Illinois," *Historic Hotels of America*, http://www.historichotels.org/hotel/Hotel_Pere_Marquette/1974.
[32] Catherine Myers, "George Matthews Harding" (Philadelphia: U.S. General Services Administration, 2000).
[33] *Norristown (PA) Times-Herald.* March 28, 1956.
[34] *Philadelphia Bulletin.* May 3, 1944.
[35] *Washington Post.* March 1, 1942.
[36] Walter Hancock, "George Harding," Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts exhibit guide, 1957.
[37] *Norristown (PA) Times-Herald.* March 28, 1956.

retrospective exhibition of Harding's works. The exhibition catalog discussed Harding's approach to producing multiple sketches anticipating the final design. It noted that the place of color in his compositions was of prime importance, and praised his skill for integrating the murals into their architectural setting.[38]

Today Harding is principally known as an illustrator and painter working during the New Deal in the 1930s. He worked in a variety of roles, including commercial illustrator, combat artist, mural painter and educator. His greatest achievement was arguably his mastery of integrating illustration with mural painting and mural painting with architecture.

Contextual History

The United States Custom House in Philadelphia stands apart from other federal custom houses on the east coast because of its skyscraper design and its timing, as the majority of these government facilities were built during the nineteenth century. Custom houses in major ports such as New York, Norfolk, Savannah, and New Orleans exhibit federal or Greek Revival temple designs. One twentieth century custom house close to Philadelphia is the Baltimore Custom House, completed in 1907. The elegant, six-story, granite faced building of thirteen bays follows an ornate Beaux-arts design by Joseph C. Hornblower and John R. Marshall. Features of the interior, such as a skylight-lit atrium and nautical paintings, no doubt helped shape Ritter & Shay's ideas for their building. But the Treasury Department's intent that the Philadelphia United States Custom House contain multi-functions of the customs service, as well as at least twenty-nine other allied departments of the federal government, established a need for additional office space. The Ritter & Shay combination of monumental design in height that still blends into the historic streetscape and its interior public spaces with WPA and Art Deco sculptural and mural work is unique among America's custom houses.

In 1934 when the United States Custom House was formally opened, America's earliest modern International Style skyscraper and bank, the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society (PSFS) Building by Howe & Lescaze, had already been completed on Market Street ten blocks away. The modernity of the steel and glass PSFS building with its lighted neon sign on the roof still stands in strong contrast to the United States Custom House's more conservative modernism and brick, limestone, and terra cotta materials. Each building represented different aspects of the city's commercial life and each served different needs and neighborhoods—PSFS stood on the main business street across from the Reading Railroad Terminal and in the heart of taller nineteenth and twentieth century buildings. Both reflect strong elements of the 1930s design modes and efforts to reach new construction heights in architecture.

Eligibility under Criterion C for Architecture and Art

As a major architectural landmark by the principal architect of commercial buildings of the 1920s and 30s in Philadelphia, as a new building to handle customs services of the leading freshwater port in the United States, as the city's most complete program of WPA art by a nationally important artist, and as a building that reflects the efforts of the federal government to spur employment in the depths of the Depression, the Philadelphia United States Custom House meets significance under Criterion C of the National Register with the areas of significance of Architecture and Art.

[38] Ibid.

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Additional documentation: Photographs

Name:	United States Custom House
Location:	200 Chesnut Street Philadelphia, PA, 19106
Photographer:	Carol M. Highsmith
Date of Photographs:	July 27, 20007
Location of Negatives:	General Service Administration Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect

Description of View:

1. Perspective of north (primary) and east elevations. Above the three-story base, the building steps back from the property line and rises 14 further stories as a cruciform tower consisting of six additional recessing blocks. View: view southwest. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0001)
2. The north (primary) elevation along Chestnut Street is most distinctive. View: south. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0002)
3. Art Deco styling at ante-chamber, first floor. View: northwest. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0003)
4. Commerce of the East mural, Lobby north wall center, first floor. View: north. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0004)
5. Communications mural, elevator lobby ceiling, first floor. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0005)
6. Rotunda. View: south. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0006)
7. Column capital and soffit detail at rotunda, second floor. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0007)
8. Bas relief frieze at base of dome, detail. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0008)
9. Cycles of the sun and moon mural, second floor rotunda. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0009)
10. Flag insignias of federal services and eagle mural, second floor rotunda. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0010)
11. U.S. Coast Guard cutters on international ice patrol, first floor rotunda. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0011)
12. West stairwell. View: downward, southwest. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0012)
13. Ceiling detail with oculus above stairwell. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0013)
14. Aluminum screens at interior entranceways, first floor. View: northwest. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0014)
15. Third floor courtroom. View: west. (PA_PhiladelphiaCounty_USCustomHouse_0015)

Supplemental Photographs

U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Perspective of north (primary) and east elevations. Above the three-story base, the building steps back from the property line and rises 14 further stories as a cruciform tower consisting of six additional recessing blocks.

National Register of Historic Places—Supplemental Documentation Continuation Sheet

Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Above the three-story base, the building steps back from the property line and rises 14 further stories as a cruciform tower consisting of six additional recessing blocks.

U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Above the three-story base, the building steps back from the property line and rises 14 further stories as a cruciform tower consisting of six additional recessing blocks. The north (primary) elevation entrance along Chestnut Street is the most distinctive.

U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia

Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: The north (primary) elevation

National Register of Historic Places—Supplemental Documentation Continuation Sheet

Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Art Deco styling at ante-chamber, view: northwest.

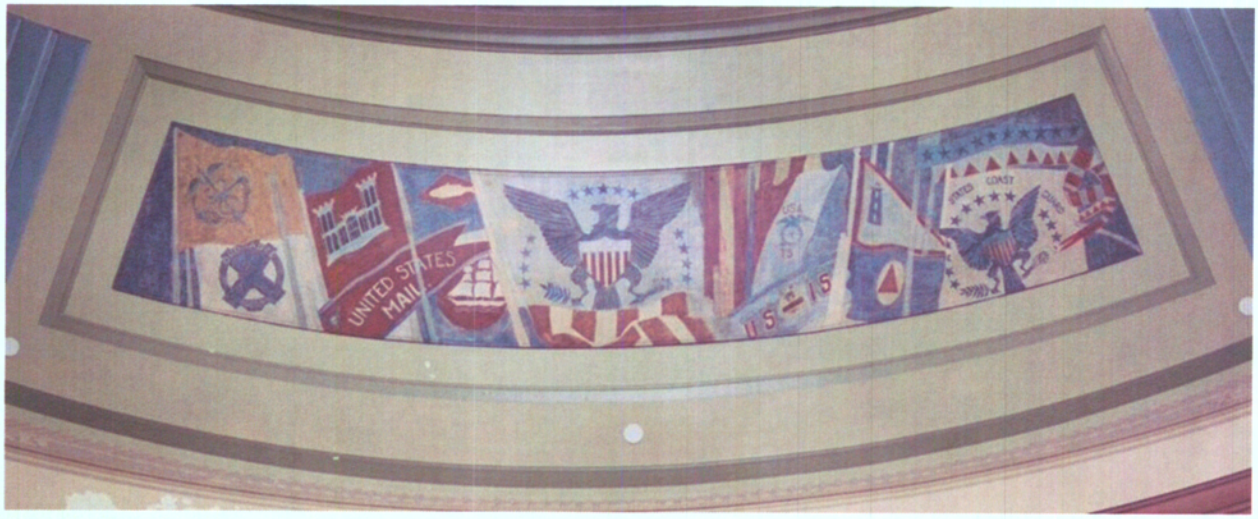
U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Rotunda. View: south.

U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Spiral staircases off rotunda. view: southwest.

U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: column capital and soffit detail at rotunda.

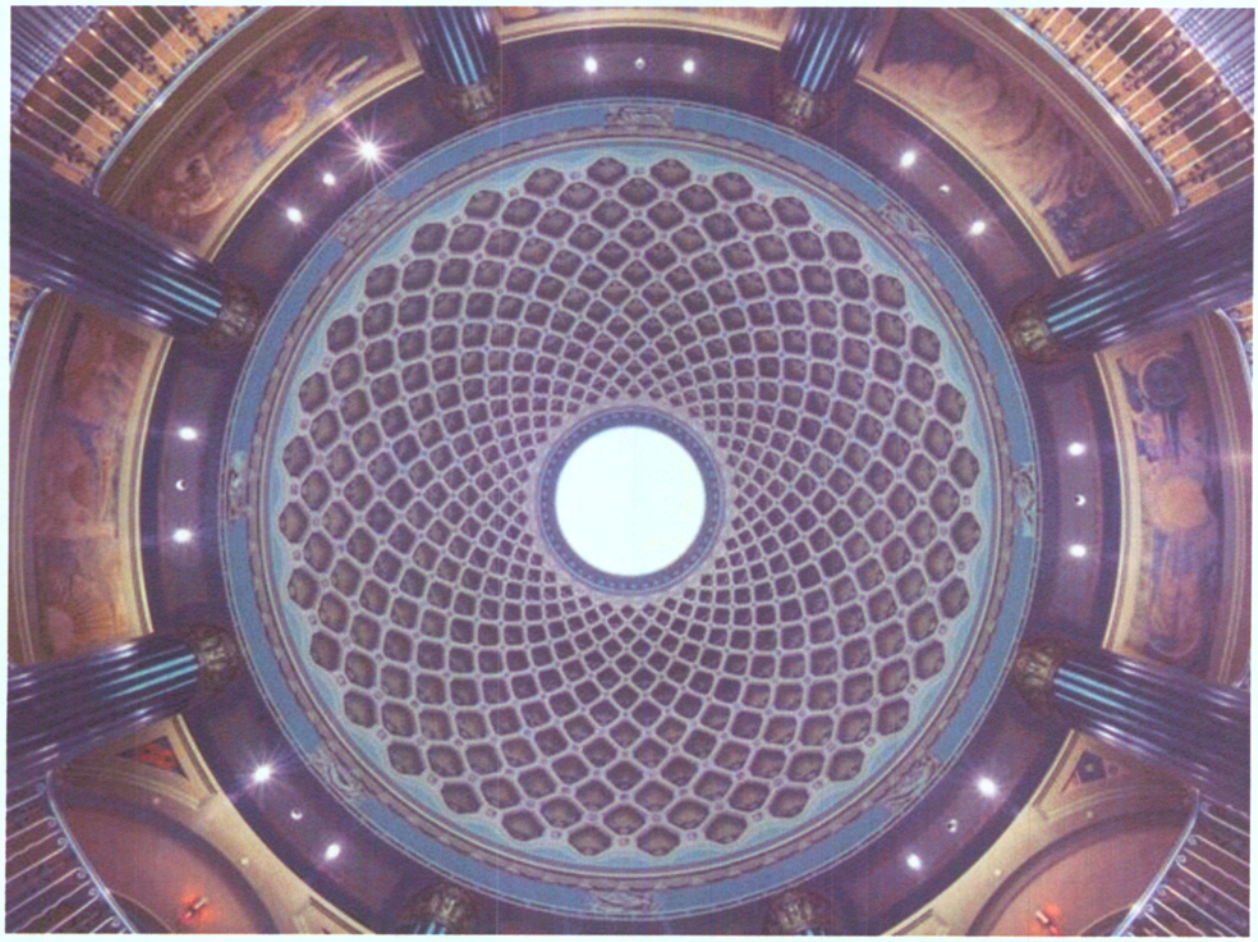
U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Bas relief frieze detail, first floor.

U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: In the rotunda, Soffit mural by George Harding, first floor rotunda.



U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Aluminum screens at interior entranceways. view: northwest

U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Rotunda roof with oculus. view: upward.



U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: West Stairwell. view: downward, southwest

National Register of Historic Places—Supplemental Documentation Continuation Sheet

U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Ceiling detail with oculus above stairwell.

U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Second floor fenestration.

U.S. Custom House and Appraiser's Stores - Philadelphia
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith
Date of photograph: July 27, 2007
Negative: GSA Headquarters, Office of Chief Architect
Description of view: Third floor courtroom. view: west.

UNITED STATES
CUSTOM HOUSE

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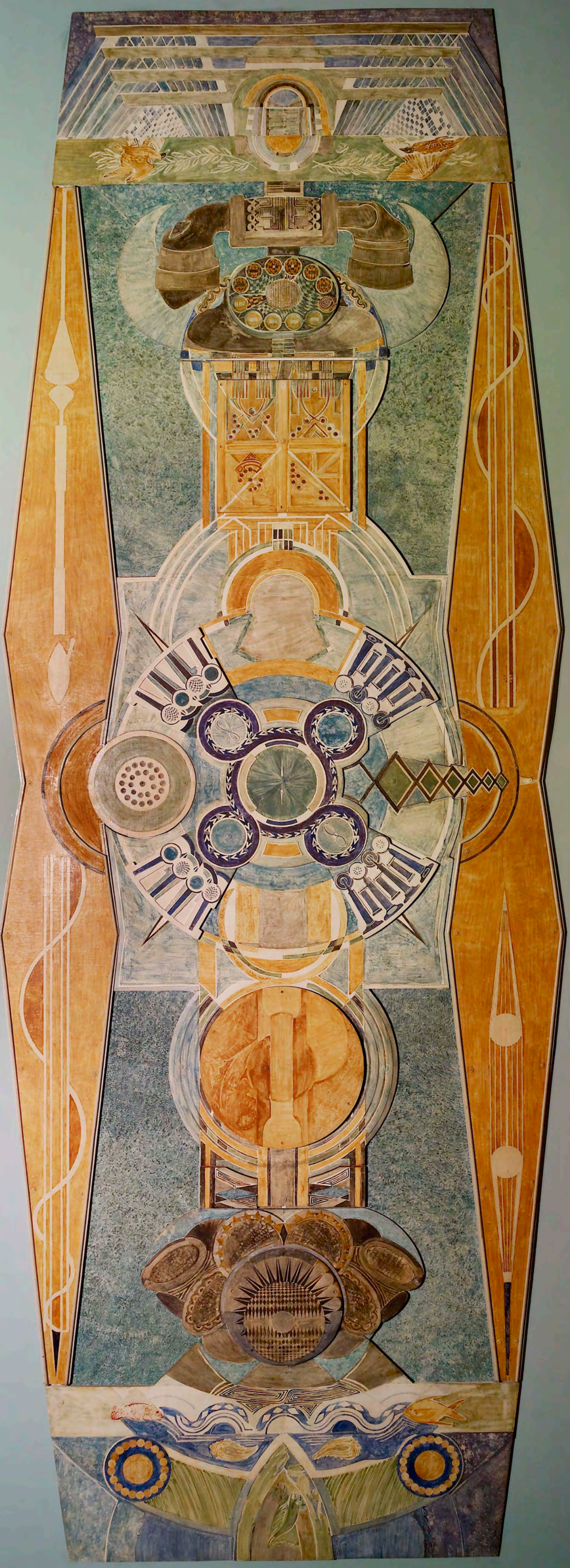
EXIT



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