HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

PART II (PORTION)

ON

SECOND BANK OF THE UNITED STATES

Restoration of Roof and Iron Work

Independence National Historical Park

Prepared by
Joseph Petrak
Architect
May 1964

for

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
Division of Architecture
STATUS OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

PART II (PORTION)

PROJECT: Restoration

SECOND BANK OF U. S. (ROOF AND IRON RAILING, ARCH. DATA SECTION)

STRUCTURE/BUILDING #

CLASS
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MASTER PLAN

PCP

PROGRAMMED

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Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Northeast Region
From: Assistant Director, Design and Construction
Subject: Historic Structures Report, Part II (Portion: Roof and Iron Railing), Second Bank of the United States, Independence NHP

The subject report has been reviewed by the interested Divisions and they concur with the recommendations stated in your June 12 memorandum. I have approved the subject report this date.

We understand that the departures from established procedures to which you allude were necessitated by the need to obligate the funds for this work in this fiscal year. We would hope that these departures will not recur. If the procedures set forth in the Historic and Prehistoric Structures Handbook do not adequately cover year-end and other historic structures situations, such a meeting as you propose might be advisable. On the other hand, recommendations might be sent to us by mail for consideration as possible revisions to the Handbook.

cc:
Chief, BODC (2)
Supt., Independence
Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Northeast Region

From: Assistant Director, Design and Construction

Subject: Historic Structures Report, Part II (Portion: Roof and Iron Railing), Second Bank of the United States, Independence NHP

The subject report has been reviewed by the interested Divisions and they concur with the recommendations stated in your June 12 memorandum. I have approved the subject report this date.

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J. E. N. Jensen

cc: Chief, EODC (2)
Supt., Independence
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WASHINGTON DC 6-23-64 182OR
REG DIR
NPS PHILADELPHIA PA
H3ODCA. TODAY I APPROVED HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT.
ROOF, SECOND BANK, INDEPENDENCE. CONSTRUCTION MAY PROCEED.
JENSEN ASST DIR
H3ODCA II
WU 1823R
Memorandum

To: Director
From: Regional Director, Northeast Region

Subject: Historic Structures Report, Part II (Section: Roof and Iron Railing), Second Bank of the United States, Independence NHP

With great reluctance, I am recommending the enclosed Historic Structures Report, Part II, to your approval, as does Superintendent M. O. Anderson, NHP. I have also reviewed the working drawings and specifications for this work.

My reluctance is due to the substantial departure from the procedures established by the Director for restoration work on historic buildings, set forth in the Historic and Prehistoric Structures Handbook. Specifically, I hesitate to recommend a portion of an Historic Structures Report, Part II, in the absence of an Architectural Data Section, Part I. However, since such a section has been prepared and is now being reviewed, together with a revised PCP, I am taking this action so that the work may proceed with the funds obligated.

However, I strongly believe that it would be very desirable for the Service to have key personnel meet to review the present procedures for conservation work on historic structures. Specifically, we would suggest that staff specialists from your office meet here in the near future with those from this office and the NODC, with a view to drafting a list of suggested improvements which could be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of the Regional Directors in July.

(Sgd.) Ronald F. Lee

Enclosure
cc: Superintendent, Independence
    Chief, NODC
Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Northeast

From: Superintendent, Independence NHP

Subject: Historic Structures Report, Part II, Architectural Data Section (Portion), Second Bank of United States

We have reviewed the subject report and find it to be historically accurate. Restoration of the pre-1888 roof while not specifically covered in the historical data section of the Part II report appears to be a desirable phase of the exterior work which can be concurred in wholeheartedly.

M. O. Anderson
Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Independence
From: Resource Studies Advisor
Subject: Historic Structures Report, Part II, Architectural Data Section (Portion), Second Bank of United States

Enclosed for your review is a copy of the subject report.

In view of the urgency cited by Chief Architect Robert E. Smith in his memorandum of May 20 (copy enclosed), please review the report as expeditiously as possible and forward your comments to this office, preferably by no later than Monday, May 25.

Murray H. Nelligan

Enclosures

cc: Chief, KODC
Mr. Whitcraft
MHNelligan/gmf
General
Daily
Area
Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Northeast Region

From: Chief Architect, EODC


Enclosed for your review and distribution are three copies of a portion of the Architectural Data Section, Part II for the Historic Structures Report on the Second Bank of the United States which was recommended by Chief Hall this date. This portion covers only the Restoration of the Roof and casting of decorative elements of the cast iron fence on Chestnut and Library Streets.

This report is being prepared in portions so various phases of the work may be gotten underway without awaiting a complete report on the entire structure which would entail many months.

We are attempting to get the work outlined in this portion of the report under contract this fiscal year. Working drawings and specifications have been prepared and will be forwarded for advertising as soon as approval of this report is received. We therefore request your review and the approval from the Washington Office at the earliest possible date.

Robert E. Smith

Enclosure

cc:
Assistant Director, Design and Construction
Superintendent, Independence
HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT
PART II (PORTION)
ON
SECOND BANK OF THE UNITED STATES
Restoration of Roof and Iron Work
Independence National Historical Park

APPROVAL SHEET

RECOMMENDED

M. O. Anderson
Superintendent

Robert W. Hall
Chief, EODC

Ronald T. Lee
Regional Director, Northeast Region

APPROVED

J. E. H. Jensen
Director
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ILLUSTRATIONS AND DRAWINGS
I. FOREWORD

Because of the complexity of the structure and the many alterations over the years, the Architectural Data Section for the Second Bank of the United States will be prepared in sections. The first section, covered by this report, will be the restoration of the roof and iron work. With some remaining physical evidence, an 1850 photograph and early documents, a reasonably accurate restoration of the roof and iron work can be made.


Joseph Petrak
Architect
May 1964
II. BRIEF PHYSICAL HISTORY OF THE ROOF

The Second Bank of the United States is located on the south side of Chestnut Street, between Fourth and Fifth Streets, in Philadelphia. This Greek Revival structure was designed by William Strickland, Architect and Engineer (1788-1854), and was erected in 1819-1824. The structure and surrounding terraces underwent many alterations from 1836 through 1941.

The entire structure was sheltered by a standing seam copper roof, supported by wood rafters and wood sheathing. Skylights and lightning rods were also installed and pole gutters were used to divert the rain water to the outlet of the downspouts. None of the original copper roof or skylights are now in existence, nor have any of Strickland's drawings been uncovered that would possibly have shown the original location of the skylights.

In 1836 when the Bank's charter expired and the building was occupied by the United States Bank of Pennsylvania, Strickland was called upon to supervise the necessary maintenance and repairs to the structure. No drawings or records of this work have been uncovered.

In 1844 Congress appropriated funds for the purchase of the property as a Custom House for the Port of Philadelphia. Strickland was brought back once again to superintend the renovation of the building. His report to the Collector of the District of Philadelphia
outlines the work done at that time. Repairs to the roof was one of the items, however, the extent of the repairs were not mentioned.

In 1857 a proposal to alter the Custom House and transfer it to the Post Office Department was made. Architects LeBrun and Runge of Philadelphia were commissioned to make the plans. The proposed alterations were not adopted and the structure was not altered.

In 1864-65 extensive alterations were made to house a sub-Treasury Office, under the supervision of Architect John McArthur, Jr., (noted for his Philadelphia City Hall). During this period considerable work was done, including the installation or the repairing of skylights. Specific locations are not given and plans of this work have not been uncovered.

In 1868 further remodelling was done to the interior.

In 1872 McArthur prepared plans for further modifications of the Treasury Office. Considerable changes were made on the first floor. The attic apparently did not contain rooms, but had "floor lights" with skylights above to allow daylight to pass through to the second floor rooms. Copies of these plans are in the Independence National Historic Park files.

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1 Letter, Strickland to Blythe, December 9, 1844, General Records of The Department of the Treasury, MSS, National Archives, Washington.

In June 1939, the Second Bank of the United States was designated as a National Historic Site.

In the period of 1940-41, major structural changes were undertaken by the Works Progress Administration under the guidance of the National Park Service. Repairs to the roof was among the items described in a National Park Service Report, dated 1947.  

III. PRESENT ROOF CONDITIONS

A. Roof Structure

1. Roof Framing

The roof structure is composed of 3-1/2" x 9-3/4" wood rafters with spacing varying from 24" to 28" on centers. The rafters are supported mid-way by brick walls, wood beams and iron trussed wood girders running at right angles with the rake of the roof. The iron trussed wood girders were installed in 1892 to breech the roof for the placement of the present large skylight at the south end of the roof, and another skylight over the Banking Room area. The skylight over the Banking Room area was removed in 1940-41 (see Illustration Nos. 11 and 12).

At the north end of the roof there is buldge that is visible on top of the present tin roof deck, about mid-way on the rake, on both sides of the roof ridge. The buldge is directly above the supports where the rafters lap one another. The rafters that bear on the main exterior walls are shimmed-up with wood to true-up the plane of the top surface of the rafters. Over a period of years these shims have compressed and many have been displaced. Also, many rafters have twisted, causing the ends of the rafters to "kick-up" over the supports, thereby causing this buldge on the roof surface.

2. Roof Sheathing

The rafters are decked with one inch thick, tongue and
groove wood sheathing. Widths vary from 6" to 12". Most of the sheathing appears to be original and in good condition.

B. Skylights, Stair to Roof and Vent Pipes

Roof Plan (Illustration No. 17), Illustration Nos. 6 and 7 show present roof conditions. The present skylights, stair to the roof and stub of the brick chimney protruding above the roof are non-historic. As a part of the present plumbing system are three cast iron pipes used for venting the toilet fixtures. These vents are a visible intrusion and historically incorrect. A study for the relocation of these vents will be made. The relocation may be made possible by taking them up through the flues of the original marble chimneys.

Illustration No. 2 shows the plan for proposed restoration of the roof which is based on a talbotype photograph showing the roof as it appeared in 1850 (see Illustration No. 1), this is the earliest photograph uncovered.

C. Flagpole

In the attic over the main north wall the wood flagpole is fastened to the brick wall with two iron "U" shaped clamps. The butt of the pole (approximately 10-1/2" dia.) and the iron straps are visible from the attic (see Illustration Nos. 14 and 15). The cut brick pocket around the pole indicates that the installation was not made at the time of original construction. The butt rests on a cement grout. There are
markings scratched in the cement, it appears to be the date the flagpole was reset.

"Ed. Hassler - Reset 9/15"

D. Marble Chimneys

The six chimneys are original. Except for the hood over the chimneys, they appear to be in sound structural condition. The large cap stones below the hoods are held together at the joints with surface iron cramp anchors. Three chimney hoods and two hood supports have been replaced with pre-cast concrete slabs. The flue openings have been capped with cement. A detail of an original reglet and joint flashing (see Illustration No. 17), shows the method that was employed to flash the chimneys. This was uncovered behind the present tin flashing.

E. Roof Covering

The present roof is covered with a standing seam tin roof. Tin covered pole gutters are used to divert the rain water to the outlet of the downspouts. These are connected to cast iron downspout shoes above the grade level, taking the water to an underground storm sewer line. It is believed this roof was installed prior to 1939. The tin roof has developed many leaks over the years and is being maintained by constant patching and repairing.
IV. EVIDENCE OF EARLIER CONDITIONS

A. Skylights and Roof Hatch

1. Skylight No. 1

Evidence of framing headers disappeared when the existing narrow wood stairway was installed from the attic floor to the roof. Location of this skylight was determined from the 1850 photograph.

2. Skylight No. 2

Evidence was found for the location of this skylight (see Illustration No. 9). Detail 2, on Illustration No. 18 shows one of the original mortise and tenon framing headers. A mortise hole in the sides of the rafters, is the only remaining evidence to indicate that the other framing header was removed.

The location of this skylight positions directly over what was once the private stairway from the Banking Room to the Director's, Engraver's and Copper-plate Printer's Rooms. Illustration No. 5 "Strickland's Plan" and Illustration No. 16 show original stairwell between attic and second floor.

Strickland's description of the "New Bank of the United States" that appeared in the Port Folio XII, (July-Dec., 1821), pp. 204-207, described a skylight that was over the second floor rooms. The article states in part;

The private stairway from the banking room leads to the Director's, Engraver's, and copper-plate printers' rooms being lighted from the roof by a plain convex glass light,
20 inches in diameter, and six inches thick, manufactured in Boston by Messrs. Jarvis & Co. The light being inserted in a marble curb, is placed on the apex of a cone which perforates the arch above the stair-way.

A voucher for this item has not yet been found. These two skylights apparently functioned together since one was over the other, above the stairway. The convex glass was probably used to intensify and spread the daylight over a wider area. No attempt will be made to restore the convex glass light at this time.

3. Skylight No. 3

Evidence on the interior for the location of this skylight was found (see Illustration No. 10). The 1850 photograph shows the location on the exterior of the skylight, with a good degree of accuracy. Detail 3, on Illustration No. 18, shows one original mortise and tenon framing header, located approximately 6'-8" from the ridge of the roof.

It is the writer's opinion that the three skylights are those mentioned in the vouchers from the McAllister Collection which reads as follows:

Check No. 421
June 1. 1821
Officer of the building of the Bank of United States Chewer & Fales in full for 3 Sky Lights including Moulds, Freight, &c. $150.00

Skylights are numbered and described for identification of location.
4. **One Twelve Inch Skylight**

A voucher (Check No. 255) mentions "one 12 in. Sky Light" which was furnished by C. Hathway & Co., and cost $10.00. This skylight may be difficult to locate since there are no early photographs to indicate its possible location.

None of the existing skylights are Strickland's and none of Strickland's skylights as shown in the 1850 photograph (Illustration No. 1), appear on McArthur's 1872 Roof Plan (see Illustration No. 4).

5. **Roof Hatch**

An indication of what appears to be a roof hatch (see Illustration No. 1), is located adjacent to the ridge of the roof, opposite the center chimney. A copy of an 1872 roof plan (see Illustration No. 4), by John McArthur Jr., also shows a "stair to roof" in the same location as shown in the 1850 photograph. A means of access to the roof must have been provided by Strickland. It is the writers opinion that the indication shown on both of these illustrations is the original roof hatch. Unfortunately all physical evidence was removed when a large skylight was installed over this area in 1892, and then removed in 1940-41.

B. **Flagpole**

None of Strickland's drawings or other early sketches have any indication of a flagpole on the structure. The earliest photographs uncovered showing a flagpole are the 1850 talbotypes. Illustration No. 1
shows the roof and Illustration No. 3 shows Chestnut Street facade. A physical exploration will be made to determine if one was in existence before 1850.

C. Copper Roof Sheathing

The original roof covering was copper sheathing. A letter from William Strickland to Nicholas Biddle,\(^4\) states that 1485 sheets were imported by John and Saml. Moss in October 1819 for the copper roof. Also many vouchers were found in the McAllister Collection\(^5\) involving payments made for building materials used in the construction of this structure. Among them were payments for smaller quantities of copper sheathing that were furnished by other firms, (Check Nos. 246, 264 and 456). The 50 pounds of copper nails (Check No. 333) furnished by John McCauley, were probably used to secure the copper sheathing.

Illustration No. 1 an 1850 talbotype photograph indicates that the copper sheathing had "standing seams". Note that the standing seams were not all equally spaced. Also note the exposed marble cornice on the edge of the roof at the north and south ends.


A portion of the original standing seam copper roof and reglet was uncovered beneath the present tin roof at the south end, adjacent to the roof ridge (see Illustration No. 8), revealing the method that was employed to terminate the copper over the top surface of the marble cornice. Detail section "A" in Illustration No. 17 shows the marble cornice and reglet, and also shows how the copper terminated at the reglet and leaded-in. Further exploration revealed that the reglet and method of leading-in the copper continued around the perimeter of the roof on the top edge of the marble cornice.

The horizontal flat lock seams are not visible in the 1850 photograph, however, evidence of impressions of cleats and nail holes for securing the copper roof sheathing to the wood sheathing were found in a fairly uniform pattern on the surface of the wood sheathing, establishing the flat seams at approximate 25-1/2" apart. The widths of the copper sheets would have been about 28-1/2" before bending for a one inch flat lock seam.
V. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Roof Framing

1. Wood Rafters

The present rafters appear to be structurally sound. New rafters will be required where the non-historic skylights and stairway are to be removed.

The buldge in the roof surface can be remedied by removing the wood sheathing over the affected area and a taper cut made to true-up the plane of top edge of the rafters. Displaced or loose shims over the bearing masonry walls should be replaced with slate shims.

Four rows of bridging (two rows each side of the ridge) should be installed between the rafters to stiffen the span, as well as to prevent any further twisting.

2. Wood Sheathing

A sound and smooth nailing surface will be required for the application of the new copper roof. It is recommended that a 5/8 inch thick plywood deck be installed over the present sheathing.

B. Skylights and Roof Hatch

It is recommended that the three skylights and roof hatch be restored as shown on Illustration No. 2, "Proposed Roof Restoration". These recommendations are confined to restoring the exterior of the roof to its original appearance of 1824-1850, based on the 1850
talbotype photograph. A study will be made for possible relocation of the non-historic cast iron vent pipes that protrude above the roof line.

C. Flagpole

The flagpole appears to be in fair condition. The structural connections at the butt end of the pole is not satisfactory. It is recommended that the flagpole be removed and discarded.

D. Marble Chimneys

The three concrete chimney hoods and two hood supports should be replaced with marble slabs matching the existing originals. All marble chimney hoods and their supports should be removed and reset in cement mortar. Should the removal of the hoods and supports reveal that the marble slabs are not dowelled at the joints, it is recommended that the slabs be bored for insertion of bronze dowels for a more rigid and safer connection.

All marble joints should be raked-out and repointed.

New reglets should be cut into the marble chimneys at the original flashing level. Illustration No. 2, shows the proposed roof restoration. To insure weather tight flashing around the chimneys, these reglets are recommended.

E. Copper Roof Sheathing

It is recommended that the copper roof sheathing be restored to its historic appearance of 1824-1850, as shown on the 1850 photograph (Illustration No. 1 and Illustration No. 2, proposed restoration of roof).
VI. IRON WORK

The design of the iron work used on the south terrace wall and the iron work flanking the north terrace were identical.

A large portion of the existing iron work along the south terrace wall (Library Street) is original, including the center gates that open to a flight of steps up to the portico. Only one section remains of a pair of gates that open to the east passage. A pair of gates that opened to the west passage may have been removed when the passage was widened in 1881.

The railing and gates that flanked the north terrace (Chestnut Street) on the side of the west passage was removed when the passage was widened in 1881. The railing and gates on the side of the east passage was removed sometime after 1910.

It is recommended that new castings be made to match the originals for a railing and gate assembly for the east and west passages that flank the north terrace and for the missing portions flanking the south terrace. See Sketch No. 1, illustrating the four types of castings that would be required.
ILLUSTRATION NO. 1

View from the State House Steeple looking east, by W & E Langenheim. This talbotype photograph shows the roof of the Bank Building as it appeared in 1850.

Photo: Courtesy Missouri Historical Society
Copy Neg. No. IND 2099
ILLUSTRATION NO. 3

Chestnut Street facade by W & E Langenheim as it appeared in 1850. This is the earliest photograph indicating a flagpole on top of the roof.

Photo: Courtesy Missouri Historical Society
Copy Neg. No. IND 2751
Custom House

Formerly the U.S. Bank, Phil.
ILLUSTRATION NO. 4

Roof plan prepared by John McArthur Jr., dated October 17, 1872. None of the skylights that appear on this plan are Strickland's.

Neg. INHP Photostat Files
PLAN OF ROOF OF CUSTOM HOUSE PHIL.
scale 1/8 in. = one foot.
ILLUSTRATION NO. 5

William Strickland's Plan of the first floor
of the Second Bank of the United States.
From "The Port Folio" (Phila., Vol. XII, July-December, 1821).

Neg. INHP Photostat Files
PLAN OF THE BANK OF THE UNITED STATES.
ILLUSTRATION NO. 6

View looking east showing present roof conditions. None of the present work visible on the roof is original, except the marble chimneys.

Photo by: National Park Service, EODC
Boucher, April 1964

EODC Neg. No. 4698
ILLUSTRATION NO. 7

View looking west showing present roof conditions. None of the present work visible on the roof is original, except the marble chimneys.

Photo by: National Park Service, EODC Boucher, April 1964

EODC Neg. No. 4699
ILLUSTRATION NO. 8

View looking west showing exposed roof deck at the south end adjacent to the roof ridge.

Arrow points to a portion of the original standing seam copper roof and reglet that was uncovered beneath the present tin roof.

Detail "A" on Illustration No. 17 shows method that was used to terminate the copper into a reglet on top of the marble cornice.

Photo by: National Park Service, EODC
Boucher, April 1964

EODC Neg. No. 4689
ILLUSTRATION NO. 9

View showing original location of Skylight No.2.

Arrow points to an original mortise and tenon framing header. Evidence of another header remains in the sides of the rafters in the form of a mortise hole. This header was removed when a large skylight was introduced, Illustration No. 13 shows full view of this skylight.

Detail No. 2 on Illustration No. 18 shows the remains of the original framing diagrammatically.

Photo by: National Park Service, EODC
Boucher, April 1964

EODC Neg. No. 4691
ILLUSTRATION NO. 10

View showing original location of Skylight No. 3. Arrow points to the original mortise and tenon framing header.

Detail No. 3 on Illustration No. 18 shows the remains of the original framing diagrammatically.

Photo by: National Park Service, EODC Boucher, April 1964

EODC Neg. No. 4690
ILLUSTRATION NO. 11

Partial interior view of the present non-historic skylight located at the south end of roof.

Three iron trussed wood girders were used to breech the roof for the placement of this large skylight, also a ceiling light was installed directly below in the attic floor to permit daylight to the second floor rooms. These skylights were installed in 1892.

Photo by: National Park Service, EODC Boucher, April 1964

EODC Neg. No. 4692
ILLUSTRATION NO. 12

View showing present rafters and iron trussed wood girders spanning over the original brick barrel vault of the Banking Room.

Three iron trussed wood girders were used to breech the roof for a large skylight that was installed in 1892, also ceiling lights were installed in the brick barrel vault to permit daylight into the Banking Room. The skylight and ceiling lights were removed in 1940-41.

Photo by: National Park Service, EODC
Boucher, April 1964

EODC Neg. No. 4693
ILLUSTRATION NO. 13

Interior view (looking east) of present non-historic skylight, located at the north end of roof. The west end of this skylight is adjacent to the location of the original Skylight No. 2. See present roof framing plan, Illustration No. 18.

Photo by: National Park Service, EODC Boucher, April 1964

EODC Neg. No. 4694
ILLUSTRATION NO. 14

Present flagpole showing the butt end of the pole secured with two iron straps and fastened to the other side of the brick wall.

Note the cut brick pocket around the pole indicating installation was not made at the time of original construction.

View taken from attic floor.

Photo by: National Park Service, EODC Boucher, April 1964

EODC Neg. No. 4695
ILLUSTRATION NO. 15

View showing present non-historic wood stairway from attic to roof.

The original Skylight No. 1 was removed when this stairway was installed. Date of stair installation is not known.

Note the butt end of the present non-historic flagpole recessed in the brick wall at the right of the stairway, see Illustration No. 14 for close-up view.

Photo by: National Park Service, EODC
Boucher, April 1964

EODC Neg. No. 4696
ILLUSTRATION NO. 16

View showing the original stair-well between attic and second floor. Skylight No. 2 positions directly over this stair-well. The balusters and steps are not original.

Photo by: National Park Service, EODC Boucher, April 1964

EODC Neg. No. 4697
ILLUSTRATION NO. 17

Present Roof Plan and Details
ILLUSTRATION NO. 18

Present Roof Framing Plan and Details
Castings for Railing Assembly for Terrace Walls and Gates

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

Eastern Office, Design & Constr

Rehabilitation & Restoration
Second Bank of the United States
Independence National Historical Park
PCP No B-129-2

Scale: 1" = 1'-0"

May, 1964 DRD

8 - Required (Type "A")

20 - Required (Type "D")

28 - Required (Type "C")

23 - Required (Type "B")