

391/D-288

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

L INDEPENDENCE N.H.S.

ARCHITECTURAL REPORT
FOR THE REHABILITATION OF THE
CUSTOMHOUSE

PHILADELPHIA CUSTOMHOUSE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

THOS. C. VINT
CHIEF OF PLANNING

Alston G. Gutterson
Assistant Architect

1737

10-380

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Color Scans

7/15/2004

All estimates to date for repairs to the building have been based on the least expenditure necessary to restore the building and existing room arrangement to a suitable condition for occupancy as office space, at the same time insisting that the main banking room and president's room be restored to their original character and that all repairs necessary in doing the above be done in a manner consistent with the original work.

Comparison of the extent of such work with that incurred in making a complete restoration reveals that the difference in amounts of work would be that of:

- (1) Restoring the Chestnut Street vestibule and hall, and small side stair;
- (2) Restoring of stockholders' room, two committee rooms and side stairs on the Sansom Street entrance.

Furthermore, such a restoration adjacent to the Sansom Street entrance would provide immediately a more suitable division of floor space than that which occurs at present as shown on plate 2, the existing floor plan. And comparison between the cost of restoration of this space should be made with the cost of any other proposed arrangement which would be suitable for office space.

Of the remaining rooms on the first floor any repairs should necessarily be made in the nature of a restoration as replacement of floors and millwork only would be entailed.

In restoring the entrance vestibule and lobby, the removal of the existing cast-iron stair would make available space for front office on the

second floor.

Doors from the main hall to the stair halls could be provided as shown for access to the second floor without going through the main banking room, as was the case in the original plan.



Chestnut Street Elevation



Sansom Street Elevation



Sansom Street Elevation



Chestnut Street Elevation

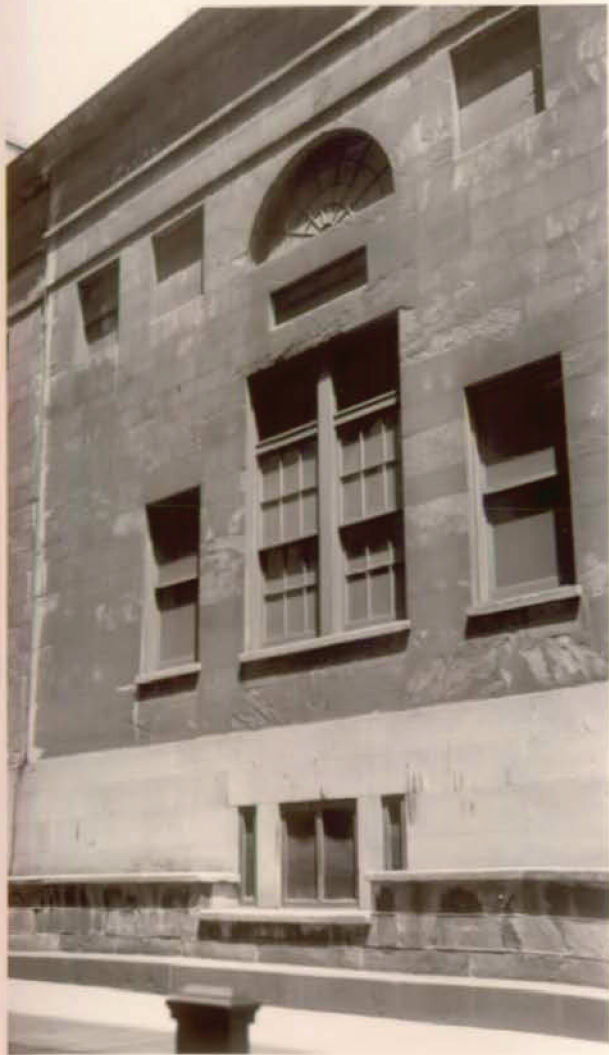
Columns at both elevations are badly spalled but are architecturally sound. It is recommended that a waterproofing treatment be used but that no patching be done.



Northeast Corner - Showing good condition of Stonework
Generally.



Column Detail.



West Elevation - Showing Condition of Stonework and Dissimilarity of Fenestration.



East Elevation



West Elevation

Showing general condition of stonework.

Photo to left shows typical vaulting in rooms reflected in mirror. Fireplace mantel not original.



Photo to right showing changed ceiling construction (see plans). Mantel not original.



Interior of Main Banking Room.
It has been agreed that this room should be restored to
its original appearance.



Photo at right showing barrel vault and general condition.

Plate at left shows general condition of floors, walls, trim, and interior column.



Document

Dr. Fiske Kimball, in an article in the December 1925 issue of the Architectural Record clearly establishes the fact that Latrobe's designs prepared in 1818, formed the basis for the executed plans and elevations, though Strickland supervised the construction of the building and claimed to be the architect. On the inside face of the architrave of the North Portico is carved the names of the architect and builders and Strickland's name is used.

The following copies of reports, correspondence, and press releases are included to give the background of the structure and include the principal, previous recommendations for use, repair, and partial restoration.

June 13, 1939

Memorandum for Regional Director Tillotson:
(Through Mr. R. F. Lee)

The Branch of Plans and Design is able to supply you with more accurate figures relating to the space available in the Old Customhouse at Philadelphia. Figures are based on accurate measurements obtained by three architectural draftsmen who spent last week in Philadelphia at this work.

Basement:	Office space of secondary value	2500 sq. ft.
	Storage space	900 sq. ft.
First Floor:	Office space of primary value	4500 sq. ft.
	Historical banking room	3600 sq. ft.
Second Floor:	Office space of primary value	4350 sq. ft.
	Storage space	1800 sq. ft.
Attic:	Suitable for drafting (sky-lighted)	2500 sq. ft.
	Storage space	400 sq. ft.

You will observe considerable discrepancy between the above figures and the approximation hurriedly compiled for you last week. This is because the earlier figures were computed from a written description of the property, plans of which were not immediately available. The figures given above may be considered reliable.

(Sgd.) A. H. GOOD
Acting Chief of Planning.

June 21, 1939

Memorandum for the Chief of Planning:

The enclosed estimate for the cost of labor and materials to recondition the Old Customs House at Philadelphia is based upon the estimate submitted by Mr. Charles A. Peters on July 12, 1938, and was made at the request of Mr. R. F. Lee, Supervisor of Historic Sites, to review the estimate of Mr. Peters predicated upon the reconditioning including the historical restoration of the Banking Room and President's Office. We have also included the alterations to the attic and basement to convert them into usable office and storage space and the installation of new heating and ventilating systems in order to provide for this additional space.

The estimate made by Mr. Peters was based upon putting the building in reasonably good condition for use as an office building with no attempt at restoration beyond minor changes.

Taking the items with the same designation as listed in the estimate the following items were changed to more nearly conform to the costs imposed by the new conditions:

Items No. 3, 4, and 5 changed to items 3 and 4, increased to \$12,000 to provide a complete new low pressure steam heating system with automatic coal stoker and a modified ventilating system to make available for office use the attic and parts of the basement.

Items No. 6, 7, 8, and 9 were changed to 5, 6, 7, and 8, respectively, and item No. 9 inserted to cover a complete new marble floor in the banking room. It is problematical that a marble floor covered the entire area of this room since much of the space was probably used for the employees behind the banking counters, but any use proposed to be made of the room for exhibit purposes would require the entire floor area to be uniform in appearance and materials. Item No. 8 was left as originally listed under Item No. 9 to cover the cost of repairs to marble floors in adjacent corridors and vestibules.

Item No. 8 was increased by 50 percent under item No. 7 to compensate for new floors in attic space.

Item No. 14 was increased to \$5,000 to include the cost of restoring and furnishing the office formerly used by Nicholas Biddle.

Item No. 17 was increased to provide for all new window sash throughout the building reproduced to simulate the original sash.

Item No. 21. Because of the expense involved in obtaining reproductions of old hardware, this item has been increased by \$1,300.

Item No. 33. We feel this demolition work will cost in excess of the estimate formerly made.

Item No. 35. Later inspection revealed the necessity to repair and reset a considerable amount of the iron fence.

Item No. 40. We have left this item as originally shown but feel that cleaning of the exterior surfaces of the building will be a detriment to their preservation and will cause the building to lose some of its character.

The existing stairways in the building are of iron and are adequate for the proposed use of the structure as an office building. These stairs replace a stair that was formerly in the vestibule on the Chestnut Street side and that ascended from both sides in semicircular runs to meet at a landing over the entrance door and then ascend as a wide stair to the second floor. It is recommended that no change be made in the existing stair arrangement. If it is decided to restore this stairway then additional funds will be required for this work.

Our estimate will increase the former estimate made by Mr. Peters by \$33,344 or a total of \$84,404 for the entire project.

Enclosure 321134

(Sgd.) DICK SUTTON
Architect.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
BRANCH OF BUILDINGS MANAGEMENT

Estimated Cost for Labor and Materials to
Recondition Old Customs House
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Item	Description	Materials Cost	Labor Cost
1.	General cleaning & removal of debris from building.	\$ 150.00	\$ 600.00
2.	Demolition of shelves, partitions, counters, screens, and defective floors.	150.00	575.00
3. & 4.	Replace heating system and install heat in attic floor.	8,000.00	4,000.00 ✓
5.	Repairs and alterations to electric system.	2,634.00	4,963.00
6.	Removing defective paint and plaster (scaffolding for same) and replastering (5500 sq.yds.).	300.00	1,500.00
7.	Relaying new floors (13000 BFM).	1,400.00	1,600.00
8.	Repairing and cleaning white and black marble floor sections.	150.00	275.00
9.	Replacing and completing marble floor in main bank- ing room.	5,640.00	7,520.00 ✓
10.	✓ New interior painting.	1,200.00	3,800.00
11.	Whitewashing basement areas.	36.00	420.00
12.	✓ Plumbing changes - Second floor and basement.	1,523.00	3,137.00
13.	✓ New linoleum - First and second floor offices.	3,000.00	750.00
14.	Refinish existing room used by Nicholas Biddle on first floor.	3,000.00	3,000.00
15.	✓ Clean iron stairs (treads and risers).	75.00	200.00
16.	✓ Repaint stairs.	75.00	250.00
17.	✓ Replace all sash with new sash similar to original sash.	1,890.00	1,260.00
18.	✓ Weatherstrip windows and doors.	130.00	380.00
19.	✓ Scrape tin roof and repaint 15,000 sq. ft.	220.00	1,000.00
20.	✓ Paint exterior woodwork.	30.00	150.00

Item	Description	Materials Cost	Labor Cost
21.	✓ Provide new door and sash hardware.	\$1,800.00	\$ 700.00
22.	✓ Clean marble colonnade (inside).	40.00	225.00
23.	✓ Repaint face and hands of clock (old time piece).	15.00	35.00
24.	✓ New double door - auditor's room, first floor.	150.00	60.00
25.	✓ Rebuild skylights (roof areas).	240.00	500.00
26.	✓ Recaulk all roof flashing.	25.00	100.00
27.	✓ Repoint and repair chimneys (7).	50.00	300.00
28.	✓ Paint and rerope flag pole.	5.00	20.00
29.	✓ Reset and repoint stone steps - North and South portico approaches.	100.00	1,800.00
30.	✓ Repoint stone walls.	65.00	230.00
31.	✓ New down spouts (8).	100.00	220.00
32.	✓ New window guards - (basement).	50.00	90.00
33.	Demolish brick building and salvage materials.	100.00	1,100.00
34.	✓ Remove exterior storm doors-North and South entrance.	30.00	150.00
35.	✓ Clean, repair, and paint fence on South side.	175.00	375.00
36.	New street washers (4).	36.00	50.00
37.	Resurface site of brick building.	140.00	400.00
38.	New exhaust louvers.	180.00	30.00
39.	✓ Paint wood roof structure (inside surface) 12000 sq.ft.	185.00	600.00
40.	Cleaning, painting, minor repairs, and surface treatment for exterior stone work.	<u>500.00</u>	<u>9,500.00</u>
TOTALS		\$32,539.00	\$51,865.00
		\$84,404.00	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
BRANCH OF BUILDINGS MANAGEMENT.

Estimated Cost for Labor and Materials
To Recondition Old Custom House
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

(This and following estimates prepared by Mr. Chas. A. Peters)

Item	Description	Material Cost	Labor Cost
1	General cleaning & removal of debris from building	\$ 150.00	\$ 600.00
2	Demolition of shelves, partitions, counters, screens and defective floors	150.00	575.00
3&5	Repairs to heating system	1,090.00	446.00
4	Installation of automatic fireman	1,500.00	250.00
6	Repairs and alterations to electric system	2,634.00	4,963.00
7	Removing defective paint & plaster (scaffolding for same) and replastering (5500 sq.yds)	300.00	1,500.00
8	Relaying new floors (9000 BFM).	900.00	1,080.00
9	Repairing & cleaning white & black marble floor sections.	150.00	275.00
10	New interior painting.	1,200.00	3,800.00
11	Whitewashing basement areas.	36.00	420.00
12	Plumbing changes - 2nd Floor & Basement	1,523.00	3,137.00
13	New linoleum - 1st and 2d Floors Offices	3,000.00	750.00
14	Refinish existing wood floors in 2 offices on 1st floor	25.00	125.00
15	Clean iron stairs (treads and risers)	25.00	200.00
16	Repaint stairs	75.00	250.00
17	Miscellaneous carpentry repairs to windows-sash, etc.	75.00	350.00
18	Weatherstrip windows and doors	130.00	380.00
19	Scrape tin roof & repaint 15,000 sq. ft.	220.00	1,000.00
20	Paint exterior woodwork	30.00	150.00

Item	Description	Material Cost	Labor Cost
21	Provide new door and sash hardware	\$ 700.00	\$ 500.00
22	Clean marble collonade (inside)	40.00	225.00
23	Repaint face and hands of clock (old time piece)	15.00	35.00
24	New double door - auditor's room, 1st floor	150.00	60.00
25	Rebuild skylights (roof areas)	240.00	500.00
26	Recaulk all roof flashing	25.00	100.00
27	Repoint and repair chimneys (7)	50.00	300.00
28	Paint and rerope flagpole	5.00	20.00
29	Reset & repoint stone steps - North & South portico approaches	100.00	1,800.00
30	Repoint stone walls	65.00	230.00
31	New down spouts (8)	100.00	220.00
32	New window guards - (Basement)	50.00	90.00
33	Demolish brick building and salvage materials	100.00	450.00
34	Remove exterior storm doors - North & South entrances	30.00	150.00
35	Clean & Paint iron fence on South side	50.00	375.00
36	New street washers (4)	36.00	50.00
37	Resurface site of brick building	140.00	400.00
38	New exhaust louvres	180.00	30.00
39	Paint wood roof structure (inside surface) 12,000 sq. ft.	185.00	600.00
40	Cleaning, painting, minor repairs, and surface treatment for exterior stone work	500.00	9,500.00
Totals		\$15,974.00	\$35,886.00

\$51,860.00

OLD CUSTOMS HOUSE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

1. Mr. S. P. Hallowell is Superintendent of the New Customhouse at Second and Chestnut Streets. Mr. Carberry is the Chief Engineer. They are located in Room 112.
2. The Old Customhouse has been vacant since 1936.
3. Copper piping was installed on plumbing system about 10 years ago.
4. The electricity for the building has been costing around \$1570 per year.
5. The heating plant has used around 30 tons of coal per year.
6. The water has been costing around \$250 per year.
7. The heating system is of the hot water type with expansion tank in attic.
8. The radiators need new valves and air valves.
9. The electrical service is 115/230 volts, single phase, 60 cycle A. C.
10. The electric bills are paid through the Procurement Division.
11. Extensive repairs are required on the plumbing system.
12. Hot water is obtained from a 200-gallon tank in the basement connected to a coal fired heater.

OLD CUSTOM HOUSE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

June 7, 1938.

HEATING SYSTEM

New Low-Pressure Steam System:

Existing radiation - 4232 sq. ft. (water) x BTU = 2645 sq. ft. radiation (steam)

		<u>Material</u>	<u>Labor</u>
2645 sq. ft. radiation @ \$0.30		\$ 794.00	
43 radiators @ 10.00			\$ 430.00
43 radiator valves @ 4.00		172.00	
43 radiator traps @ 4.00		172.00	
1 - 4" gate valve @ 23.00		23.00	2.00
1 - 3" gate valve @ 16.00		16.00	2.00
2 steam traps @ 10.00		20.00	3.00
1 - 50 HP return tubular boiler, hand fired		1,825.00	450.00
20 ft. 6" steam pipe in basement @ 1.90		38.00	8.00
26 ft. 4" steam pipe in basement @ 1.00		26.00	7.00
52 ft. 3" steam pipe in basement @ .76		40.00	10.00
88 ft. 2½" steam pipe in basement @ .58		51.00	16.00
78 ft. 2" steam pipe in basement @ .35		28.00	16.00
114 ft. 1½" steam pipe in basement @ .27		31.00	22.00
38 ft. 1¼" steam pipe in basement @ .23		9.00	6.00
115 ft. 1¼" steam pipe to radiators @ .23		27.00	22.00
325 ft. 1" steam pipe risers and 2nd floor radiators @ .17		56.00	32.00
260 ft. 1" steam pipe to radiators-1st floor @ .17		44.00	26.00
260 ft. ¾" return pipe to radiators-1st floor @ .09		24.00	20.00
325 ft. ¾" return pipe risers & 2nd floor rad. @ .12		39.00	30.00
410 ft. 1½" return pipe in basement @ .27		111.00	80.00
60 ft. 2" return pipe in basement @ .35		21.00	12.00
430 ft. ¾" return pipe from radiators @ .12		52.00	40.00
158 hangers @ 1.00		158.00	118.00
20 ft. insulation for 6" steam pipe @ .80		16.00	3.00
26 ft. insulation for 4" steam pipe @ .60		16.00	4.00
52 ft. insulation for 3" steam pipe @ .45		24.00	7.00
88 ft. insulation for 2½" steam pipe @ .40		36.00	11.00
78 ft. insulation for 2¼" steam pipe @ .36		28.00	10.00
114 ft. insulation for 1½" steam pipe @ .33		38.00	15.00
153 ft. insulation for 1¼" steam pipe @ .30		46.00	20.00
585 ft. insulation for 1" steam pipe @ .27		158.00	75.00
Automatic stoker		500.00	150.00
		<u>\$4,639.00</u>	<u>\$1,647.00</u>

Total

\$6,286.00

OLD CUSTOM HOUSE
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

June 7, 1938.

HEATING SYSTEM

Repairs to existing hot-water System:

		<u>Material</u>	<u>Labor</u>
14 - 2" radiator valves	@ \$7.00	\$98.00	\$21.00
24 - 1½" " "	@ 4.00	96.00	36.00
32 - 1¼" " "	@ 3.00	96.00	48.00
16 - 1" " "	@ 2.50	40.00	16.00
Retubing old boiler: 52 - 3" tubes	@ 5.00	260.00	175.00
Automatic stoker		<u>500.00</u>	<u>150.00</u>
		\$1,090.00	\$ 446.00
Total			\$1,536.00

OLD CUSTOMS HOUSE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

June 7, 1938.

PLUMBING

	<u>Material</u>	<u>Labor</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Basement:</u>			
5 - Repairs and new trimmings for toilet fixtures	\$ 43.00	\$ 82.00	
2 - Repairs to lavatories	18.00	32.00	
3 - Repairs to urinals	27.00	48.00	
1 - Repairs to slop sink	10.00	15.00	
1 - Repairs and new trimmings for shower	10.00	15.00	
4 - New toilets	280.00	520.00	
2 - New urinals	140.00	260.00	
2 - New lavatories	140.00	260.00	
1 - New slop sink	70.00	130.00	
2 - Repairs to outside spigots	5.00	10.00	\$2,115.00
	<u>\$ 743.00</u>	<u>\$1,372.00</u>	
<u>First Floor:</u>			
1 - Repairs and new trimmings to toilets	10.00	15.00	
1 - Remove existing toilets		20.00	
3 - Remove existing lavatories		60.00	\$ 105.00
	<u>\$ 10.00</u>	<u>\$ 95.00</u>	
<u>Second Floor:</u>			
6 - Remove existing toilets		120.00	
6 - Remove existing lavatories		120.00	
6 - New toilets	420.00	780.00	
4 - New lavatories	280.00	520.00	
1 - New slop sink	70.00	130.00	\$2,440.00
	<u>\$ 770.00</u>	<u>\$1,670.00</u>	\$4,660.00
Totals	<u>\$1,523.00</u>	<u>\$3,137.00</u>	

OLD CUSTOMS HOUSE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
ELECTRICAL WORK

	<u>Materials</u>	<u>Labor</u>
<u>Basement</u>		
1 - 200 A Main service switch with meter trim	\$150.00	\$ 85.00
1 - Distribution panel, 2-100 A 2 pole, 2-60 A 2 pole, and 2-30 A 2 pole switches	200.00	85.00
20 - 200 watt RLM lighting fixtures	80.00	64.00
8 - 200 watt enclosing globe lighting fixtures	40.00	26.00
8 - 10 A 125 V duplex convenience outlets	16.00	26.00
12 - 20 A 125 V toggle switches	24.00	40.00
800 ft. 3/4 inch galvanized conduit	80.00	256.00
4000 ft. - No. 12 gage rubber insulated wire	80.00	128.00
1 - 16-30 A single pole branch circuit panel-board with solid neutral strip	150.00	100.00
300 ft. - 2 inch galvanized conduit	105.00	240.00
1000 ft. - #10 rubber insulated cable	150.00	160.00
	<u>\$1075.00</u>	<u>\$1210.00</u>

Total - - - - \$2,285.00

	<u>Materials</u>	<u>Labor</u>
<u>First Floor</u>		
1 - Repair existing lighting fixture	\$ 10.00	\$ 50.00
11 - 500 watt semi-indirect lighting fixtures on existing outlets	88.00	66.00
3 - 1500 watt indirect lighting fixtures on existing outlets	90.00	75.00
10 - 10 A 125 V duplex convenience outlets on existing work	20.00	28.00
10 - 20 A 125 V toggle switches on existing outlet boxes	20.00	28.00
17 - 500 watt semi-indirect lighting fixtures on new outlet boxes	153.00	114.00
10 - 10 A 125 V duplex convenience outlet	30.00	30.00
10 - 20 A 125 V toggle switches	30.00	30.00
500 ft. 3/4 inch galvanized conduit concealed	50.00	100.00
100 ft. - 1 inch galvanized conduit concealed	15.00	20.00
2 - 10-30 A single pole branch circuit panel-board with solid neutral strip	150.00	100.00
10,000 ft. - No. 12 rubber insulated wire	150.00	334.00
50 ft. - 2 inch galvanized conduit	18.00	30.00
150 ft. - #00 rubber insulated cable	23.00	40.00
2 - Remove old panels		100.00
Remove old conduit and wiring		200.00
	<u>\$847.00</u>	<u>\$1345.00</u>

Total - - - \$2192.00

OLD CUSTOMS HOUSE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
ELECTRICAL WORK

- 2 -

	<u>Materials</u>	<u>Labor</u>
<u>Second Floor</u>		
20 - 10 A 125 V convenience outlets	\$ 40.00	\$ 80.00
5 - 500 watt semi-indirect lighting fixtures on existing outlet boxes	40.00	30.00
13 - 100 watt RLM lighting fixtures on new outlet boxes	39.00	88.00
18 - 500 watt semi-indirect lighting fixtures on new outlet boxes	162.00	120.00
9 - 20 A 125 V toggle switches on new outlet boxes	18.00	36.00
5 - 20 A 125 V toggle switches on existing outlet boxes	10.00	20.00
600 ft. - 3/4 inch galvanized conduit concealed	60.00	300.00
2 - 10-30 A single pole branch circuit panel- boards concealed	100.00	200.00
50 ft. - 2 inch galvanized conduit	18.00	30.00
150 ft. - #00 rubber insulated cable	23.00	40.00
2 - Remove old panel-boards		100.00
Remove old wood molding		200.00
6000 ft. - No. 12 rubber insulated wire	90.00	250.00
	<u>\$600.00</u>	<u>\$1,494.00</u>

Total - - - \$2,094.00

Attic:

20 - 100 watt fixtures on existing outlet boxes	\$ 60.00	\$ 40.00
6 - 20 A 125 V toggle switches	12.00	24.00
2000 ft. - No. 12 rubber insulated wire	40.00	50.00
	<u>\$ 112.00</u>	<u>\$ 114.00</u>

Total - - - \$226.00

SUMMARY

	<u>Material</u>	<u>Labor</u>	<u>Total</u>
Basement	\$1,075.00	\$1,210.00	\$2,285.00
First Floor	847.00	1,345.00	2,192.00
Second Floor	600.00	1,494.00	2,094.00
Attic	112.00	114.00	226.00
Engineering		800.00	800.00
	<u>\$2,634.00</u>	<u>\$4,963.00</u>	<u>\$7,597.00</u>

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
BRANCH OF BUILDINGS MANAGEMENT

Estimate for Alterations & Repairs
to
Old Custom House
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

General Information: Cornerstone laid 1819 - Finished 1824
Basement - 1st Floor - 2nd Floor & Attic
Ground Cost - \$155,628
Structure Cost - \$257,452
Total Cost - \$413,080

In the construction there was used 41,500 cu. ft. of marble for porticos and walls.

Also there was built into the building 3,000,000 brick and 3,000 perches of stone.

The original roof was copper and it required 17-1/2 tons to roof and flash the building.

The present roof is tin.

The lot is - 152 feet East and West
225 feet North and South

The structure was built on the center of the lot on a raised terrace approximately 3 feet high. The dimensions of this terraced area are

119 feet East and West
225 feet North and South

The structure itself was located on this terraced area by making a sixteen foot setback on the east and west terrace lines and a nineteen foot setback on the north and south terrace lines.

The building dimensions are - 87 feet East and West
187 feet North and South

The dimension 187 feet includes the steps on the north and south facades of the building which is modeled after the Parthenon in Greece, which building is considered the finest example of Doric architecture.

Excluding the steps the building dimension in the North and South direction is 161 feet.

To reach the north portico it is necessary to climb 7 stone steps to reach the terrace and 11 stone steps to reach the portico.

Note: The original description calls for 13 steps each on the North and South facades.

The portico on the North and also on the South facades of the building is 10 feet 6 inches in depth by 87 feet in width.

On each portico stand 8 Grecian Doric columns 4 feet 6 inches in diameter at the base and 27 feet in height. They are fluted and they stand directly at the portico slab without the commonly known base. The columns support a simple entablature and pediment. The roof is pitched so that the interior vertical pediment angle is 153 degrees.

Entering from the North side there is a vestibule 30 feet in depth and 18 feet in width. The ceiling is richly worked. The floor surface is blocked, constructed from black Italian marble and American white marble.

On each side of the vestibule and leading to the second floor is a flight of wrought iron stairs and near the midpoint in elevation between the first and second floors the two flights reach a common landing from which landing a single flight of stairs continues to the second floor. The stair angle is exceedingly easy to travel.

From the vestibule on the first floor a door opens into what was the Banking Room. This room occupies the center of the building and is approximately 48 feet in depth by 81 feet in width.

Equally spaced in an East-West direction and on a 10 foot range line from the North wall and the South wall are located six (6) fluted Ionic columns making a total of twelve (12) columns in this room. They are 22 inches in diameter at the base and approximately 32 feet in height. The ceiling is arched in the center, the diameter of the arch being 20 feet. A distance of 35 feet is measured from the floor to the crown of the arch.

From the Banking Room going Southward were constructed officers' rooms, vault rooms and a stockholder's room. The stockholder's room measures 28 feet in a North-South direction and 50 feet in an East-West direction.

The stockholder's room looks out onto the South portico which is exactly similar in detail, size, etc., to the North portico.

The building measures, excluding the porticos -

139 feet 6 inches in a North-South direction
87 feet four inches in an East-West direction

The structural features are:

- 1- Marble walls backed with brick.
- 2- Marble columns.
- 3- Marble entablature and pediment.
- 4- Stone foundation walls and basement floors which in turn have been surfaced with concrete.
- 5- Brick vault or arched floor construction.
- 6- In certain portions, i.e., the second floor South end, it appears that brick arch and wrought iron beam construction was used.
- 7- The stairways, risers, treads, stringers, and posts are either or both wrought iron and/or cast iron.
- 8- The roof framing is wood beams or stringers carried mainly on brick bearing walls but in the center portion the roof structure is also supported by "king post" trusses. The sheathing is wood and the roof covering is tin.
- 9- The chimneys are brick faced with marble and capped with marble.
- 10- The walls are plastered and painted.
- 11- The windows and doors are wood.
- 12- The flooring is wood in general but the exceptions in lobby areas are marble.
- 13- The trim is wood, marble, and cast iron.
- 14- The basement toilet rooms have terrazzo floors and a marble wainscoat treatment.
- 15- The door hardware, with the exception of door butts, should be reconditioned where possible and replaced as a general thing.

The mechanical features are:

- 1- There was in the original building a hot air heating system for certain portions of the building. In certain of the offices the usual fireplace construction was the method of heating.
- 2- The existing system is hot water and is considered one of the larger systems for this type of heating. The pipe work connected with this system is exposed to view because of the difficulty and expense of chasing the installation. The result is not architecturally pleasing.
- 3- The building was piped for gas and wired for electricity. The electric wiring is generally run exposed and the same architectural criticism holds for this work.
- 4- The plumbing system has been modernized so far as piping is concerned. The original piping was replaced with copper pipe approximately 10 years past. There are ample toilet facilities for men and women with but minor changes in the system. The lavatories, toilets, and toilet-urinals and partitions which fit into proposed changes are in an acceptable condition.

Items of Work Required to Recondition the Building:

- 1- General cleaning and removal of dirt and debris throughout building.
- 2- Demolition of certain shelves, partitions, counters, screens, defective wood floors.
- 3- Re-tubing of existing hot water system and the installation of new valves on the supply and return line at the boiler. Repairs to breeching.
- 4- Installation of "automatic fireman" for maintaining uniform heat without continuous boiler supervision.
- 5- Installation of new air release valves and radiator cut-off valves.
- 6- Completely new electric wiring for feeders, distribution circuits, and fixtures. New auxiliary panels.
- 7- Removing of badly peeled and blistered paint and defective white plaster coating from room areas in general on the first floor and second floor. New plaster where needed.
- 8- Relaying new wood floor on first and second floor locations.
- 9- Repairing and cleaning black and white marble floor surfaces in certain first floor locations.
- 10- New painting entire interior of first and second floors and part of attic floor and vaults in basement.
- 11- White washing of basement walls.
- 12- Remodeling and rearranging toilet facilities on second floor.
- 13- New linoleum for wood floor surfaces generally, except two first floor offices north side of building.
- 14- Refinish the existing wood floors in offices excepted under Item 13.
- 15- Wire brush and clean all iron "safety treads" on the various stairways.
- 16- Repaint stairways.
- 17- Make miscellaneous carpentry repairs to wood sash and frames; re-rope doors and trim and glaze as needed.
- 18- Weatherstrip all windows.
- 19- Scraping the tin roof of all scale, loose paint, etc., and repainting all sheet metal surfaces.
- 20- Paint exterior woodwork, sash and entrance doors.
- 21- Provide new door and sash hardware; refinish if practical and if hardware is original.
- 22- Cleaning marble colonnade (12 columns) center portion inside building.
- 23- Repainting clock (black hands - gold face).
- 24- New double door 5 feet 5 inches by 7 feet 8 inches to replace single door 2 feet 6 inches by 7 feet 0 inches in Auditor's room (South side).
- 25- Rebuild skylights - new woodwork and reface exterior with sheet metal.
- 26- Recaulk all flashing on roof.
- 27- Repaint and repair marble chimneys - seven need attention.
- 28- Paint and re-rope flagpole.
- 29- Reset and repoint stone steps North and South approaches to porticos.
- 30- Repoint stone wall on South, West, North, and East sides.
- 31- New down spouts needed and repairing gutters.
- 32- New window guards for basement windows.

- 33- Demolishing brick building on site immediately East of Old Custom House.
- 34- Removing exterior storm doors North and South entrances.
- 35- Clean and paint iron fence on South side.
- 36- New street washers needed.
- 37- Resurface site of brick building with new concrete pavement.
- 38- New exhaust ventilators on roof (2).
- 39- Paint wood roof structure.

May 24, 1939

Memorandum for the Chief of Planning:

A meeting was held in Philadelphia on Monday, May 15, 1939, by Dr. Fiske Kimball, Director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and member of the National Advisory Board; R. E. Lee, Supervisor of Historic Sites; Ned J. Burns, Acting Chief of the Museum Division, and the writer, the representative of the Branch of Plans and Design, to discuss the possible uses for the Second Bank of the United States recently acquired by the Department of the Interior and placed under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service.

The morning was spent in going over the building and discussing its "ideal" use. Although no all-embracing and concrete policy was formulated, it was agreed by all parties that:

1. Access by the public to all principal rooms of the building should be provided for during principal daylight hours.
2. That cursory examination recommends that the banking room and the office originally occupied by Nicholas Biddle be restored and their original character be not erased by their adaptation to modern use by the new occupants.
3. That no physical changes be permitted of other than temporary character, and that such changes should in no wise harm the building fabric identified as part of the original structure.
4. That all redecoration by tenants be authentic restorations in so far as possible.

It was felt that the building would fulfill its designation as a national historic site better if the program of its prospective occupants included ambitions akin to our attitude toward the conservation of the heritages of the American public rather than being predicated upon the commercial advantage of the structure. It was recognized by all present, however, that any policy formulated regarding suitability of tenants must be sufficiently elastic to insure the cooperation of private capital to maintain the building. Dr. Kimball was forced to desert the conference and attend to other duties at the end of the morning session.

In the afternoon Mr. Lee was able to arrange for a meeting at the bank building with representatives of Temple University which has expressed considerable interest in the structure for use as one of its buildings. At this meeting were Dean Ford, Dean Hervey of the Law School, Mr. Hollowell, Superintendent of the New Customs House, and the Buildings Engineer of the University.

Generally speaking, this group, representing the University, has indicated its willingness to make all repairs and alterations necessary to adapt the building for its use and to continue its maintenance, provided a long-term lease be granted. The only work anticipated other than repairs to existing features and redecorating is the erection of two temporary partitions in the arches between the two front rooms on the second floor. We have the assurance of this party that it values highly the historical and architectural significance of the building and is prepared to cooperate with us to the fullest extent in preserving these features if its application receives favorable reception.

If Temple University is the successful applicant, it proposes to use the building as a law school. Its tentative plans are as follows: Lockers for students' use will be placed in the basement, the banking room will become the law library, and the remaining small rooms will be devoted to space for offices and classrooms.

One undesirable feature of such an arrangement is the use of the important banking room for a library. Although the plans for this room do not include physical changes, they include provisions for stack space which could materially change the spacious character of the room. It is desirable that this room, which is architecturally more important than any of the others and has, incidentally, been subjected to fewer changes by the previous tenants, preserve its grandiose air. If this room and the two front offices on the first floor were restored, the preservation of the most obviously important rooms of the building would be insured. To determine the full importance of the other rooms would involve the further research recommended in earlier reports.

Other reports incorporating the results of a cursory examination of the structure designed to determine its architectural merit as a national historic site were made last July at the time negotiations were being conducted to effect its transfer from the Treasury Department to the Department of the Interior. The indefinite progress of this operation recommended the postponement of a complete architectural survey pending consummation of this transfer. Official announcement from the Secretary's Office of the acquisition of this Building in May 1939, would recommend the immediate institution of a program by this office designed to assemble all the available documentary and physical evidence bearing on the original appearance and use of the building. This would include preparation of Historic American Buildings Survey drawings of the building in

its present condition, an exploratory program of work at the building which would enable an interpretation of physical facts present in the construction, and finally an exhaustive search in newspaper files, deeds of transfer, and other papers which might contain descriptive matter of importance. These latter two investigations might be sponsored by PWA, ERA, or some similar agency. With such an accumulation of material it would be possible to prepare drawings carrying the building to any degree of restoration recommended by the policy of the National Park Service. The time required to make this survey will depend upon the availability of research material and the personnel which can be assigned to this project.

Only after an examination of such material can we logically recommend its use for any specific purpose. Consideration of overtures made by any organization prior to such an inventory would seem premature. The use to which prospective tenants might put various parts of the building might necessitate the effacement or concealment of its principal architectural features, and thus defeat the end to which its preservation was dedicated.

It is felt that the research necessary to establish the use of this building and the plans and specifications needed for repairs and alterations as well as the time required to effect a transfer and to perform the work will make it impossible to assure any prospective tenant occupancy before the autumn of 1940.

STUART M. BARNETTE
Assistant Architect.

THE OLD CUSTOM HOUSE IN PHILADELPHIA

This building, situated on Chestnut Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets, is a notable example of the architecture of the Greek Revival in the United States. It was constructed according to the designs of William Strickland, a pupil of Benjamin H. Latrobe, leading American architect of the early nineteenth century.^{1/} Strickland was second only to Latrobe in his influence on the early structural designs of the public buildings of Philadelphia. An outstanding exponent of the Greek Revival, Strickland came to care less and less for decoration as he grew older. Of this tendency the Old Custom House is an example. The construction of this building was begun in April, 1819, and completed in the early spring of 1824.^{2/} The front of the building was a free copy of the Parthenon in Athens; Strickland probably followed this model on the suggestion of Nicholas Biddle, director and later president of the Second Bank of the United States, for which institution the structure was erected. It was built of Pennsylvania marble, a material likely to deteriorate under the influence of time and climate. The structure, when completed, was a fine example of Doric architecture. Today it is one of the few noteworthy public buildings of this style that has survived. The main banking room is still beautiful with its vaulted ceiling and two rows of marble columns in the purest Ionic style. But the Pennsylvania marble used in its construction is peeling and chipping.^{3/}

^{1/} Joseph Jackson, Early Philadelphia Architects and Engineers, pp. 5-20.

^{2/} Ralph Wesley Wescott, The Custom Service in Philadelphia, p.5.

^{3/} Joseph Jackson, Development of American Architecture, 1783-1830, pp.102-104.

Upon the completion of the building in 1824, it was occupied by the Second Bank of the United States. This famous institution was the center of an historic controversy between President Andrew Jackson and his followers on one hand, and Nicholas Biddle, Henry Clay and the Whigs on the other. Jackson maintained that the bank and its branches had participated in politics, had sought a monopoly of credit, and had failed to achieve its original purpose of establishing a uniform and sound currency. Biddle pointed out, however, that the notes of the Bank of the United States were the only bank notes circulating throughout the country without depreciation; he denied that the bank had engaged in politics and showed how it had been a restraining influence on state banks prone to issue too many notes and make unsound loans. But so great was Jackson's popularity that the bank was unable to secure a renewal of its federal charter which expired in 1836.

The bank continued to exist under a state charter as the Bank of the United States of Pennsylvania. In 1841, however, it came to an end as a consequence of the panic of 1837 and the suspension of specie payments. Three years later the building was sold to the United States Government and the following year was occupied by the Custom Service. Few changes were made in the structure, and it is today much as it originally was.

For ninety years the Custom House remained in the former bank building. During much of the period before the establishment of the Federal Reserve System, the local Sub-Treasury of the United States was also housed there. In 1934 the need for new and larger quarters caused

the Custom House to be moved to much larger and more modern quarters. The Old Custom House was left untenanted, and its sale by the Treasury Department is contemplated.

The acquisition of the Old Custom House for purposes of conservation is highly desirable. It is an outstanding example of the Greek Revival in the United States and one of the best survivals of the work of a leading American architect. The encroachments of modern business diminish year by year the small number of remaining specimens of this period of American architecture, and so make more urgent measures for assuring the preservation of the most notable examples. The prospective sale of the Old Custom House at Philadelphia affords an opportunity to preserve for many years such an example. This structure, moreover, possesses significance for historical as well as architectural reasons. It housed the Second Bank of the United States during most of its existence, a bank that was the center of one of the historic controversies of American history, out of which grew an important cause for the creation of the Whig party and a party realignment that lasted for over twenty years. In the Old Custom House, therefore, is offered an opportunity not only to preserve an important example of the Greek Revival but also to recall a famous controversy of American history.

Respectfully submitted,

Alvin P. Stauffer,
Historian.

Requested orally by Mr. R.F. Lee
Submitted February 14, 1938.

AN ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY AND EVALUATION
OF
THE SECOND BANK OF THE UNITED STATES
(OLD CUSTOM HOUSE)

Standing in stately though gloomy desolation among the modern Office Buildings which have gradually encroached upon the richest and most historic area of Philadelphia, is the Second Bank of the United States. In its immediate neighborhood are also Independence Hall (1732-41), Carpenters Hall (1770), the First Bank of the United States, the Merchants Exchange Building, Christ Church (1727), the Betsy Ross House, St. Peters Church (1761), the Morris House (1787), and Elfreths Alley. The Bank building itself is a magnificent architectural monument, acting at once as a tombstone marking the demise of the Wall Street of Andrew Jackson's time and a very significant milestone in the development of the Greek Doric style of classical architecture in this country.

The adaptation of the Greek Doric style to the building problems of this country was first urged by the "Port Folio" - a Philadelphia publication - as early as 1814. Nicholas Biddle, the first-known American to travel in Greece, was at that time editor of the "Port Folio" and later active in developing the policies of the new Bank. Joseph Fox and John Blakely, charter directors of this new institution, were also advocates of the classical style. It is, therefore, natural to expect that the program governing the design of this structure should restrict the competitors to some expression of Greek or Roman antiquity.

Part of this program read as follows: "In this edifice the Directors are desirous of exhibiting a chaste imitation of Grecian Architecture, in its simplest and least expensive form".

It is not known how many architects, in addition to Latrobe, entered the competition, but it is believed that among the others who sought this commission were Godefroi, a French designer in Baltimore, Hugh Bridport and William Strickland, both of Philadelphia.

When finally Latrobe was awarded the prize money, which amounted to \$500, and the responsibility of erecting the building, other professional activities in Baltimore and New Orleans occupied so much of his time that he was obliged to allow Strickland to take over the supervision of the erection of the Bank. Latrobe in a letter to an English publisher wrote that the Bank of the United States new building by one of his pupils, Mr. Strickland, is his design, but that the principal room is a deviation from it.

As finally executed, the design of the Bank is a free copy of the Parthenon. Both Chestnut Street and Library Street porticos incorporate the purest details of the Greek Doric order. In the index to Latrobe's "Private Letters" to Members of Congress, 1806, Latrobe is quoted as saying, "The Bank of the United States has been much admired, but it would have been much handsomer if Joseph Fox and the late John Blakely, Esqrs., directors, had not confined me to a copy of the Parthenon (sic) at Athens." Latrobe himself in a tribute to Samuel M. Fox said the "existence and taste" of the Building was due to him.

The massive drums of Montgomery (Pa.) marble are beginning to spall, but are in no sense inefficient and this physical sign of antiquity does

but add to the weathered charm of the building. Many changes have been made to the interior, but none of these are in really bad taste. The entrance lobby and stair hall was remodeled about 1875, as were the offices opening off it. They are, however, far from attractive. Fortunately, the atrium, which in matter of design is certainly the "tour de force", has been little changed. When it was built it was accredited by a foreign visitor as being the finest banking room in the United States, if not the whole world. Some of the stockholders' rooms as well as the other offices have suffered chiefly from having their ceilings changed from what in some instances were vaulted to the present cast iron and brick arched type. Three of the original fireplaces are still intact and in their original position. Practically all the stairways have been changed and others have been introduced, but none of those in existence are really inappropriate or impractical.

Whether or not the architectural features which are anachronistic with the date of erection of the building should be replaced by features of authentic restoration is a moot question. The less classic details which at some time supplanted the original ones are representative enough to justify their retention solely as records. Until the use to which the building will be put is of such a nature as to necessitate a restoration, very few changes would have to be made to prepare the building for occupancy.

It is upon the presence of this building along with the Virginia State Capitol, the now nonextant Mason House on Analostan Island, the First Bank of the United States, and several buildings of lesser importance that we base our claims to have led Europe in the revival of Classical architecture.

As the Virginia State Capitol preceded the building of the Madeleine de Paris as influenced by Maison Carbe, so did the erection of the Second Bank of the United States precede, by ten years or more, the completion of foreign prototypes of the Parthenon such as the National Monument at Edinburgh and the Walhalla at Regensburg.

Aside from the universal aesthetic appeal this fine building naturally makes on its beholders, it is universally recognized by those conversant with the art that is architecture, as one of the most distinctive American contributions to style. Based solely on its architectural merit, it is entitled to the unqualified recommendation that it be acquired and preserved.

Stuart M. Barnette,
Assistant Architect,
Branch of Plans and Design.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 2, 1939.

The Old Customhouse in Philadelphia, more than 100 years old, has been designated the Philadelphia Customhouse National Historic Site by order of the Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes. It will be administered by the National Park Service.

The building, situated on Chestnut Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets, is a magnificent architectural monument marking at once the demise of the "Wall Street" of Andrew Jackson's time and an early milestone in the development of the Greek Doric style of classical architecture in this country. In the immediate neighborhood are Independence Hall, the First Bank of the United States, Christ Church, the Betsy Ross House, and other historic structures.

The Old Customhouse was begun in 1819 and completed in the spring of 1824. As early as 1814 Nicholas Biddle in his publication "Port Folio" had advocated adaptation of the Greek Doric architecture to buildings for public and even private use in America. Biddle was the first American in public life to travel extensively in Greece.

Biddle and numerous associates, among them Joseph Fox and John Blakely, organized the Second Bank of the United States and built this structure as the home of the bank. The famous institution was the center of the historic controversy between President Andrew Jackson and his followers on the one hand, and Nicholas Biddle, Henry Clay, and the Whigs on the other. When Jackson won his victory, thereby changing the entire fiscal system of the Federal Government, Biddle turned the bank into the Second Bank of the United States of Pennsylvania, and continued its operation until 1841, when it was forced to close because of the panic of 1837.

The building was sold to the United States Government, and in 1845 was occupied by the Customs Service, which used it for 89 years, until 1934, when the Customs Service moved into a much larger and modern building nearby.

The Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments declared that the Old Customhouse possesses outstanding historical and architectural importance and should be preserved. At the request of the Secretary of the Interior, it was transferred to the Department of the Interior to become a National historic site.

The building is a masonry structure with thick marble and brick walls, and brick arch floor construction in the original portions, and is structurally sound today. The large main former banking room, with its vaulted ceiling and two rows of marble columns, is part of the original portion of the building. When the Second Bank of the United States was in existence, it was described as the most beautiful banking room in this country, if not in the world.

The Customhouse was constructed according to the design of William Strickland, a pupil of Benjamin H. Latrobe, leading American architect of the early 19th century.

Strickland was second only to Latrobe in his influence on the early structural designs of the public buildings of Philadelphia. He was an outstanding exponent of the Greek Revival, and of this tendency in architecture the Old Customhouse is an example.

The front of the building is a free copy of the Parthenon in Athens, and both the Chestnut Street and Library Street porticos incorporate the purest details of the Greek Doric order. Today the Old Customhouse is one of the few noteworthy public buildings of this style that has survived.

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESS

FOR RELEASE JULY 18, 1939. >

The attention of patriotic, historic, and learned institutions desiring to assist in preserving, while at the same time using, one of the most famous old historic houses in the East was today directed toward the Old Philadelphia Custom House by Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes. He recently designated the building a national historic site.

The Secretary explained that the Federal Government was agreeable to entering into a cooperative agreement with a reputable organization of sound financial standing, interested in using the Custom House and capable of presenting and interpreting it to the public as a historic site of prime national significance.

Any organization of the type outlined above, interested in occupying the building on these terms, should submit applications to the Secretary of the Interior by August 20.

Certain conditions, laid down after careful architectural study, will be imposed upon the cooperating organization. They are as follows:

- (1) Assist financially in building repairs at least to the extent of \$12,500. Required financial participation may be larger, depending upon the availability of supplementary WPA funds, the amount of space to be utilized, and the degree to which restoration is carried.
- (2) Conform use to the following types of space: office space of primary value, 8,850 sq.ft.; office space of secondary value 5,000 sq.ft.; exhibit space, 3,600 sq.ft.; storage space, 3,100 sq.ft.
- (3) Maintain and operate the building at an annual cost of \$10,000 to \$15,000.
- (4) Provide free public access to all historical portions of the building and provide a competent person to furnish information.
- (5) Length of tenure to be subject of negotiation.

As a national historic site, the Old Philadelphia Custom House, its official designation, will be administered by the United States Department of the Interior through the National Park Service, under the terms of the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935. If circumstances make it advisable, this administration will be jointly shared with other governmental units, corporations, associations, or individuals entering into cooperative agreements with the United States.

No more appropriate location for a historical, patriotic or learned society could be imagined than this venerable building, situated in the most historic area of the city that was the first capital of the United States. Close by are such famous buildings as Independence Hall, Carpenter's Hall, the First Bank of the United States, the Betsy Ross House and the Robert Morris House.

In its own right the building ranks among the first celebrated landmarks of the nation, epitomizing one of the most critical controversies in our financial history, for here was housed, from 1824 to 1836, the Second Bank of the United States. Those twelve momentous years saw the dogged, bitter struggle between Nicholas Biddle, president of the institution, and the Whigs, led by Henry Clay, on the one side; and President Andrew Jackson with his followers, on the other. For more than 90 years the building housed the Philadelphia Custom House, from which it derives its name.

Architecturally also, the classic lines of the building mark a significant milestone in the development in this country of the Greek Doric style. Benjamin H. Latrobe, leading architect of the day, designed it. It was constructed 1819 - 1824, under the supervision of his noted follower, William Strickland. As finally executed the Old Custom House was a free copy of the Parthenon at Athens.

It preceded by a decade the completion of foreign prototypes of this gem of classical architecture. Both the Chestnut Street and Library Street porticoes incorporate the purest details of the Greek Doric order. The atrium, with its vaulted ceilings and two rows of Ionic columns, also was designed in classical style. Externally the building still looks much as it did in 1824. Weathering has but added to its charm. In the interior many changes have been made, but none of them offend good taste. The atrium, considered the finest banking room in the country, has undergone little alteration.

As a national headquarters for a historical or patriotic organization, or as the home of a learned institution, the Old Philadelphia Custom House cannot be duplicated on this continent. Closing date for bids for use of the building is August 20, 1939.