

Interim Historic Structures Report
on
Philadelphia Exchange (Merchants' Exchange)
Part II

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Prepared by
Staff

Independence National Historical Park
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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October 1959

Region Five
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pa.

December 14, 1959

Nelligan
12/14

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Independence National Historical Park

From: Regional Director

Subject: Interim Historic Structures Report, Part II on Philadelphia Exchange

We concur with your recommendations in the subject report, and recommend its approval on the assumption that the millwork, etc., contemplated will be historic in appearance, complete in itself, and permanent.

At this time the rehabilitation and/or restoration of the exterior of the Philadelphia Exchange is being considered in two stages: (1) millwork, etc. and cleaning; (2) stonework, tower, etc. However, it may turn out that it will be more economical and efficient to do it in three stages: (1) millwork; (2) cleaning; and (3) the major restoration. Since funds have not been programmed for any phase, we strongly recommend that implementation of the second part of the Director's decision ("...complete the plans for the balance of the exterior rehabilitation and/or restoration...") be undertaken as soon as possible. This will expedite preparation of over-all cost estimates needed for programming funds; ensure that work done in one phase will conform with the larger second phase; and, in the event that funds for the entire project do become available, will enable it to be done as a whole, which we anticipate will less seriously inconvenience the operations of the offices in the building and be better in respect to public relations in that the work, once started, will carry right on through to completion.

(Sgd.) Daniel J. Tobin

Daniel J. Tobin
Regional Director

In duplicate

Copy to: Director
Chief, EODC

MHNelligan/cp

General ☒ Operations Division
Daily Area



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H30-DCA

December 8, 1959

REGION FIVE		INITIAL AND DATE
DEC 11 1959		
✓	REG. DIRECTOR	
✓	ASST. REG. DIR.	
✓	OPERATIONS	
✓	INFORMATION	
	ADM.	
	REC. RES. PLAN	
	RANGER ACT'S	

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Region Five

From: Acting Chief Architect

Subject: Interim Historic Structures Report, Part II on
Philadelphia Exchange, Independence

The Interim Historic Structures Report, Part II on
Philadelphia Exchange, Independence National Historical Park has
been reviewed by the interested Divisions in the Washington Office
and is recommended for approval.

✓	History	
	Nat. His.	
✓	Archaeo.	
	Publ.	
	Museum	

Robert E. Smith
Robert E. Smith
Acting Chief Architect

Copy to: Chief, EODC (2)
Supt., Independence

Info	OPERATIONS	Act	Initial and Date
	Lands		
	Engineering		
✓			
	Land Acq.		
✓	Programs		

Interim Historic Structures Rpt., Part II
Philadelphia Exchange, INHP

INTERPRETATION

✓	History
	Nat. His.
✓	Archeo.
	Publ.
	Museum
	Sec'y.
✓	~~Antiquary (hist)~~

OPERATIONS

12/8/59

Info	OPERATIONS	Act	Initial and Date
	Lands		
	Engineer		
	Architect	✓	12/8/59
	Land Archt		
	Programs		

ASSISTANT REGIONAL

12/9/59 Recommendation
approval
Self

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

I concur with Dept. Anderson's recommendations but hope the changes don't darken the interior any more!

Dr. 12/9

COMMENTS DUE 12/10/59

Passarelli
11/20
Nikky
11/20

Region Five
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pa.

November 20, 1959

Memorandum

To: Director

From: Acting Regional Director

Subject: Interim Historic Structures Report, Part II on Philadelphia Exchange, Independence NHP

Attached for your review and comment is the subject report; a copy is also being forwarded to EODC for review and comment.

Because of the forthcoming Visitor Services Conference, we are extending the due date to December 10.

(Sgd.) George A. Palmer

George A. Palmer
Acting Regional Director

In duplicate

Attachments

Copy to: Chief, EODC, w/copy of report
Supt., Independence

CPassarelli/cp
General
Daily
Area
Operations Division



IN REPLY REFER TO:

H30UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Independence National Historical Park
420 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia 6, Pa.

October 14, 1959

REGION FIVE		INITIAL AND DATE
OCT 16 1959		
REG. DIRECTOR		
ASST. REG DIR		
OPERATIONS		
INTERPRETATION		
ADM.		
REC RES PLAN		
RANGER ACT'S		

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Region Five

From: Superintendent, Independence National Historical Park

Subject: Interim Historic Structures Report^{Part II} on Philadelphia
Exchange (~~Merchants' Exchange~~)

Enclosed in quadruplicate for your review and distribution is the Interim Historic Structures Report on the Philadelphia Exchange (Merchants' Exchange).

This report anticipates the preparation of design and working drawings, together with bid specifications for the rehabilitation and/or restoration of all exterior millwork involving windows and doors, together with exterior cleaning and waterproofing, in keeping with the decision rendered by the Director during his field visit to the Park on September 24, 1959.

M. O. Anderson
M. O. Anderson
Superintendent

Enclosures (4)

SIGNATURE SHEET

RECOMMENDED

Director

Date _____

Regional Director

Date _____

Chief, Eastern Office, Div. of Design &
Construction

Date _____

APPROVED

Superintendent

Date _____

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CHAPTER I

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Prepared by Superintendent M. O. Anderson

This interim historic structures report has been prepared as a necessary preliminary to the cleaning of the marblework and rehabilitation and/or restoration of the doors and windows of the Philadelphia (Merchants') Exchange. The historical data section outlines the steps to be taken in cleaning the building's marblework and in effecting an authentic restoration of its doors and windows. These measures would constitute a partial step in restoring the Exchange's exterior to its original appearance, as recommended in the approved Part I Historic Building Report.

The measures for cleaning the building's marblework and for restoring the windows and sash doors of the north and south walls and those windows and sash doors of the east and west walls whose openings have not been altered in size can be carried out independent of and in advance of the general restoration, and it is recommended that this work be done. The measures for restoration of those doors and windows of the east and west facades which have been altered in size or which did not exist in the original building will involve much structural work. It is recommended, therefore, that replacement of those sections which have been altered be deferred until the general exterior restoration is undertaken. As an interim measure it is recommended that sash approximating the appearance of the original be installed.

It should be noted that during a field visit September 24, 1959, the Director rendered a decision that a first step in dealing

with the exterior of the building shall consist of "immediate action by WODC to prepare required design and working drawings, together with bid specifications for the rehabilitation, replacement, and/or restoration of all exterior mill work involving windows and doors, together with exterior cleaning and waterproofing," and that as a second step "action will be taken to complete the plans for the balance of the exterior rehabilitation and/or restoration work in order that same can be programmed and financed for execution as soon as possible."

CHAPTER II
HISTORICAL DATA

Prepared by Historian David A. Kimball

**HISTORICAL DATA ON EXTERIOR
STONEMARK, DOORS AND WINDOWS**

Exterior Stonework

The Board of Managers of the Philadelphia Merchants' Exchange Company on December 8, 1832, described the building then taking form in these terms:

About the 10th of March, (barely nine months ago,) our masons commenced these substantial foundations, and behold in that short period 2,200 perches of stone and 800,000 bricks have been laid, besides thousands of cubic feet of marble then in a quarry, been and fitted to give brilliance and beauty to our edifice.

This was soft Pennsylvania marble. Through the years since 1834 this stonework has deteriorated greatly, and today possesses none of its original polished beauty. As described in chapter III, section 2, pp. 1-2, of the Historic Building Report:

The elements have eroded the soft Pennsylvania blue marble facing of the exterior walls until large sections of water tables and drips have disintegrated, permitting water to run down the walls and seep into the masonry joints (see Plate Nos. 21 and 22). Where layers of soot and dust adhere to the marble they form a wick which absorbs and holds acids from the air and intensifies their corrosive action. Over the years this has resulted in the disintegration of large areas of the marble surfaces....

Doors and Windows

The doors and windows presently in place are totally different from those installed originally in the Philadelphia Exchange. In several cases windows exist today where originally there were none.

The Exchange was rebuilt in 1902. Prior to the rebuilding, there were thirteen recessed panels in the east facade's third story where windows are now located. During the course of the work, the two outermost of these panels were removed, the openings enlarged, and windows installed. (see Plate No. 8, Chapter III of the Historic Building Report). Sometime later nine of the remaining panel openings were also converted. These eleven windows are still in place.

During the 1922 alterations, the two doors at the head of the exterior staircases were replaced by windows of smaller dimensions (compare Plates Nos. 1 and 2 with Plate No. 15, Chapter III of the Historic Building Report). These windows are still in place.

Until 1902 there were eleven windows under the east portico of a size which in the words of a contemporary were "used as doorways" (J. C. Myers, Sketches on a Tour of the Northern and Eastern States). During the work of that year marble panels were inserted in the bottom of nine of these windows and smaller frames and sashes were installed. The remaining two windows under the portico were replaced by a combined door and window installation (compare Plates Nos. 3 and 15, Chapter III of the Historic Building Report).

During the 1902 rebuilding, the doors of the east facade's first floor were replaced by doors of a different design which in their turn were removed in 1922 when market sheds were installed on that end of the building. The original doors as described in the 1834 survey

were "folding sash doors with glass 6-1/2 & 8-1/2 by 15." These doors led into a "vestibule within each also with folding sash doors." The original doors can be seen in Illustration No. 5, Chapter II of the Historic Grounds Report for Philadelphia Exchange, and Plates 1 and 3, Chapter III of the Historic Building Report.

Originally there were eight windows, four doors and a center entranceway in the building's first floor west facade. All of the original doors and sashes have been replaced. Two of the doorways and two of the window openings flanking the entranceway were eliminated when the vestibule wall was altered, probably in 1902 (Illustration No. 2, Chapter II and Plate 4, Chapter III of the Historic Building Report). The sash doors of the west facade were identical to those of the east facade. Within the west facade's portico on both the second and third floors there were originally tripartite windows flanked on either side by single windows. At some later date, probably 1902, two additional windows were opened on each floor, one on either side of the tripartite window (Illustration No. 3, Chapter II and Plate No. 4, Chapter III of the Historic Building Report). All of the original window sash of this facade, including the four tripartite windows flanking the portico, was long ago replaced.

The three tiers of tripartite openings originally provided in the north and south walls of the building remain. Each of those on the first floor enclosed a folding sash door identical to those in the building's facades flanked by windows. Those openings of the second

and third floors contained windows (Plate No. 3, Chapter III, of the Historic Building Report).

The panes of the first floor windows were 12 inches by 18 inches. The panes of the second floor windows were 13 inches by 18 inches. No glass sizes are given in the insurance surveys for the third floor windows.

All prints and photographs of the building antedating 1902 show the doors to have been panelled at the bottom.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the foregoing it can be seen that the appearance of the Exchange has been appreciably altered in the past century.

1. The once glistening marblework has become grimy and decayed.
2. Window and door openings in the east and west walls have been so altered that the character of the entire building has been changed.

The approved Historic Building Report for this structure recommends that as part of a general restoration the exterior marblework be cleaned and sealed and the doors and windows be restored to their historic appearance. Recommendations as to the steps to be taken in cleaning and sealing the marblework were contained in our memorandum of September 18.

The carrying out of the recommendation for restoration of the doors and windows to their historic appearance will involve the following measures:

1. Replacing the outermost windows of the east facade's second story with doors of the same dimensions and appearance as the originals.
2. Enlarging the eleven window openings under the east portico to their original size and installing new sash of the same dimensions and appearance as the originals.

3. Restoration of the step within each door opening of the east facade's first floor.

4. Installation in the east facade's first floor of folding sash doors of the same dimensions and appearance as the originals.

5. Restoration of the west facade's original first floor wall and the doors and windows which flanked the original entranceway.

6. Walling up the four windows which flank the tripartite windows within the west facade's portico.

7. Walling up the eleven windows of the east facade's third story with marblework of the same dimensions and appearance as the originals.

8. Replacement of all other doors and windows with folding sash doors or window sash of the same dimensions and appearance as the originals.