

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Missouri	
COUNTY: St. Louis City	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Old Post Office

AND/OR HISTORIC:
United States Custom House and Post Office

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Eighth and Olive Streets

CITY OR TOWN:
St. Louis

STATE Missouri	CODE	COUNTY: St. Louis City	CODE
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input type="checkbox"/>	In Process <input type="checkbox"/>	Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted <input type="checkbox"/>
Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No: <input type="checkbox"/>				
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	Comments <input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Educational <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
United States Government, General Services Administration

STREET AND NUMBER:
19th and F Streets, N. W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington 20405	STATE: D. C.	CODE
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Office of Recorder of Deeds, St. Louis City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
12th and Market Streets

CITY OR TOWN: St. Louis 63103	STATE: Missouri	CODE
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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1.66

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1965 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Prints and Photographs Division

STREET AND NUMBER:
Library of Congress

CITY OR TOWN: Washington	STATE: D. C.	CODE
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
COUNTY:

FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)			
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>
	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>		
INTEGRITY	(Check One)		(Check One)	
	Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/>	Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE				
<p>The Old Post Office, designed by Alfred B. Mullett in the elaborate French Second Empire style and erected in 1873-84, is a monumentally scaled granite building 234 feet long and 179 feet deep, three stories high, with attic, basement, subbasement, and a tall four-sided mansard dome that rises to a height of 125 feet above the street level. The concrete foundations of the subbasement extend eight feet below the floor and rest on pilings. Both basement levels have 16 foot high ceilings, and their walls are comprised of Missouri red granite, quarry faced, and are 10 feet thick. Air and light are made available to the basements by means of a dry moat (or areaway), eight feet six inches wide and 25 feet deep, which extends around all four sides of the structure. In 1900 the subbasement contained water heating, lighting and power plants, and the machinery for five hydraulic elevators (2 passenger, one freight, and two mail elevators). There are three elevators today. On the main floor air was warmed by hot water radiators located under the windows and this hot air was circulated to the upper floors by means of intake shafts housed in the bases of the ornate cast-iron columns. In 1873 a large tunnel, the full width of 8th Street, was constructed by the St. Louis Tunnel Company along the 8th Street (east) side of the building, with a large platform at the level of the basement floor, to facilitate the transmission of the mail. The tunnel still exists but is now used as a facility for railroad freight trains entering St. Louis by the way of Eads Bridge.</p> <p>The walls of the upper three stories are of gray granite quarried on Hurricane Island, Maine, and are from three to four feet thick. The first floor ceiling is 26 feet high and those on the second, third, and attic floors are each 22 feet high. A low roof, supported by a iron structure, covers the building. Seven chimneys, each with from three to six flues, and two large air vents project above the roof. The building's structural framing is of fire-resistant materials. Wrought-iron I-beams and cast-iron columns are used on the basement and first floor levels. Above the second floor, brick arches carried on iron I-beams are supported by brick bearing walls. Heavy 1 and 3/4 inch thick sheet-iron, fire-resistant, sliding shutters that pull out from the wall also cover all exterior windows.</p> <p>The building is constructed around a central inner court which is about 48 by 54 feet in size. The open court was originally covered by a skylight at the level of the main roof. The present skylight is located at the second floor level. The north (Locust Street) and south (Olive Street) facades are each 17 bays wide; the east and west elevations are 13 bays wide. The four facades are almost identical but the main (Olive Street, or south) elevation is dominated by a large central four-sided mansard dome, built of iron and weighing about 550 tons, which rises above the level of the main roof. The dome was originally topped by an ornamental belvedere (which has been removed) and the pediment is still decorated by a monumental sculpture, "America at War and America at Peace," executed in 1877 by Daniel Chester French as his first major commission.</p> <p>Each of the four street elevations has a projecting pedimented central pavilion: those on the south (main) and north facades are five bays wide and the pavilions on the east and west elevations are three bays in width. From each of the four pavilions there projects a three-bay wide portico which</p>				

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

(continued)

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal	Education <input type="checkbox"/>	Political <input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Phi-	Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Historic <input type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input type="checkbox"/>	losophy <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Architecture x</u>
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Science <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Art <input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape	Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Human-	_____
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	itarian <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The Old Post Office, built 1873-1884, is an outstanding, little-altered, and now-rare example of an important type of monumental public architecture that was widely utilized by the United States Government in the post-Civil War period. Designed in the French Second Empire style by Alfred Bult Mullett, master architect and Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department from 1866 to 1874, the Old Post Office is one of the two surviving examples of Mullett's six essays in the Second Empire style for major monumentally-scaled Federal buildings.⁽¹⁾ The Old Post Office also included in its original design and construction innovative applications of technology - prompted by the Chicago fire of 1871 - that were relatively new in the 1870's. These features included the use of predominately fire-resistant construction methods and materials; a circulating hot air heating system, separate elevators for people, mail, and freight, and direct access from the main basement to an underground railway tunnel for mail service. The Old Post Office superbly illustrates the type of large-scale and ornate Federal buildings that formerly stood in Boston, Cincinnati, New York City, and Philadelphia, as well as St. Louis, from 1870's to the 1930's, and is the last surviving example of this group.

(1) The even larger and more ornate Executive Office Building (the former State, War and Navy Building) in Washington, D. C., is the only other extant example of the six huge Federal buildings designed by Mullett in the Second Empire mode.

History of the Old Post Office, 1874-1935

The site for the Federal Custom House and Post Office in St. Louis, - a lot 270 feet long by 228 feet 1 1/2 inches deep, - was secured under condemnation proceedings instituted June 4, 1872, the decrees of the circuit court being rendered September 13, 1872. An appeal was taken by certain of the defendants and on May 23, 1874, the judgement of the lower court was affirmed by the Supreme Court. The cost of the site was \$368,882.65. The first construction contract was awarded September 2, 1873 and the building was completed and occupied in March, 1884. The supervising architect of the construction was James G. Hill and Thomas Walsh was the superintendent of construction. Total cost of construction amounted to \$5,686,854.68.

During its period of prime historical importance, March, 1884 to November, 1935, the Old Post Office was utilized chiefly as a Federal court-house and post office. The main basement and first floor were occupied by

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

George R. Brooks, "The Old Post Office," *Missouri Historical Society Bulletin*, XX(July, 1964), 307-309 (Illustrated).
 A History of Public Buildings Under the Control of the Treasury, (Washington, D.C., 1901), 347.
 Henry F. Withey and Elisie R. Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects* (Los Angeles, 1956), 432.
 Donald J. Lehman, *Historical Study No. 3, Executive Office Building, 17th Street and Pennsylvania Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C., (General Services Administration, Washington, D. C., November 1964.*
 (continued).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		38 0 37 . 44 "	90 0 11 . 34 "	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian

ORGANIZATION: Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service

STREET AND NUMBER: 801 - 19th Street, N. W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: D. C. 20006

DATE: 2/17/70

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE		Missouri
COUNTY		St. Louis City
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	

(Number all entries)

7. Description - continued.

has four sets of paired columns located at the first and second story levels. These paired columns continue through the third and fourth levels of the principal facade. Granite modillioned cornices and entablatures project below and above the attic story. The wall surfaces are richly articulated by pilasters and full columns. Openings are capped by segmental arches at the main floor level, by segmental pediments at the second floor level, and by triangular pediments at the third floor level. The windows have wooden double-hung, two over two light-sash and are set in cast-iron frames. The alternating rhythm of deep-set windows and boldly projecting piers, columns, and pilasters continues around all four sides of the building. On the main floor the windows are seven feet wide and are divided by five foot wide piers, and on the floors above these proportions are reversed.

Externally and internally the design suggests the renaissance detail of the Louvre in Paris. An unusual sense of openness was achieved on the first floor by creating window openings wider than the intervening sections of walls. The ceilings are very high, and the corridors are also very wide. The interior was, and remains, elegantly finished with cast-iron moldings framing windows and doors; there are also ornamental plaster cornices, ceramic tile floors and stair risers, art glass windows, bronze door knobs displaying the Seal of the United States, and cast-iron ventilating grilles pierced in ornamental patterns. Wood was used minimally on the interior, but the doors are of solid mahogany, two inches thick. The principal rooms also have elaborate ornamental plaster ceilings. Red Italian Bologna marble fireplace mantels, ornately carved, are another major ornamental feature of the offices on the second, third, and fourth floors. An average of 10 such fireplaces are located on each of the three upper floors. The second floor offices also contain a number of large vaults. The two grand staircases are made of iron and are located in two 25-foot by 37-foot stair wells situated at the east and west sides of the building.

The Old Post Office still retains most of its original form and material. In 1963 the exterior masonry was steam-cleaned and repointed. As has been noted, the original belvedere on the mansard dome has been removed. The existing skylight over the inner court is now located at the second floor level instead of in the original position at the main roof level, but otherwise the structure is very little altered. The structure and exterior are in excellent condition. In 1963 the office space on the second and third floors was re-partitioned and redecorated. A few of the original wooden partitions, however, are still in place on the fourth floor. The interior now requires some plaster repair, a complete repainting, and a general refurbishment. The heating system is also reported to be inadequate. Except for changes in location of some partitions, however, the interior is also very little changed.

About three-fourths of the first floor is now used as a Post Office and the remainder of the building is unoccupied and closed off to visitors. The Post Office Department is scheduled to move out of the structure in July, 1970 and the General Services Administration then plans to declare the Old Post Office building surplus property.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Missouri	
COUNTY St. Louis City	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8. Significance - continued, page 1.

the Post Office Department; the third floor contained the courtroom and offices of the U. S. District Court; and the fourth floor had the offices of miscellaneous Federal officers - custom and internal revenue service, lighthouse and steamboat inspectors, and U. S. Army engineers. The Federal courts met for the last time in the Old Post Office in November, 1935, when they were transferred to the new Federal structure at 12th and Market Streets in St. Louis. Other Federal offices have been gradually removed from the building; now, only the Post Office still occupies about three-fourths of the first floor. The Post Office is scheduled to leave the structure in July, 1970, and the building will then be declared surplus property.

Architectural Work of Alfred B. Mullett (1834-1890)

Born in Taunton, England in 1834, Alfred Bult Mullett came to the United States with his parents in 1845 and settled in Glendale, Ohio. He attained some knowledge of architecture at an Ohio college and is said to have had a short period of architectural study in France. In 1860, he began work in the office of Isaiah Rogers, a leading architect of Cincinnati and Supervising Architect of the U. S. Treasury from 1862 to 1865. In January, 1863, Mullett secured a place in Washington, D. C. as Assistant Supervising Architect of the Treasury and in January, 1866, was promoted to the office of Supervising Architect of the Treasury, which he held until December 31, 1874. During most of Ulysses S. Grant's two terms as President, Mullett built very large and expensive Federal buildings (courthouses, post offices, custom houses, mints, and assay offices) in many of the major cities of the country, as well as numerous smaller Federal structures in the lesser cities and towns. Mullett designed and erected approximately 32 buildings in the period 1865-1874 and these can be generally classified into three major architectural style groups: the Greek Revival, illustrated by four buildings; the Italianate, 14 structures; and the French Second Empire mode, 14 edifices. Of the eight Federal buildings designed by Mullett on a truly monumental scale, six were in the Second Empire style and two were in the Classic or Greek Revival manner.

List of Federal Buildings by Alfred B. Mullett,
Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department, 1866-1874

A. In the Greek or Classic Revival style.

<u>Building & Location</u>	<u>Dates of Construction</u>	<u>Costs of Construction</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
1. U.S. Mint, San Francisco, Calif.	1869-74	\$2,130,512.15	(National Landmark)
2. North Wing of the Treasury Building, Washington, D.C.	1867-69	\$6,127,465.32	
3. Court House & Post Office, Portland, Maine	1866-73	\$ 393,214.64	
4. Custom House & Post Office, Portland, Oregon	1869-75	\$ 365,332.20	(Standing)

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Missouri	
COUNTY St. Louis City	
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(Number all entries)

8. Significance - continued, page 2.

B. Italianate Buildings.

	<u>Building & Location</u>	<u>Dates of Construction</u>	<u>Costs of Construction</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
1.	Assay Office, Boise, Idaho	1870-71	\$ 77,252.00	(National Landmark)
2.	Custom House & Post Office, Cairo, Illinois	1867-72	\$ 281,044.14	
3.	Custom House & Post Office, Rockland, Maine	1873-77	\$ 132,828.11	
4.	Custom House & Post Office, Wiscasset, Maine	1868-70	\$ 30,457.25	
5.	Custom House & Post Office, Port Hudson, Michigan	1873-77	\$ 240,703.34	
6.	Custom House, St. Paul, Minnesota	1867-73	\$ 429,299.38	
7.	Assay Office, Helena, Montana	1874-76	\$ 58,506.18	
8.	Branch Mint, Carson City, Nevada	1866-70	\$ 426,787.66	(standing)
9.	Court House & Post Office, Trenton, N. J.	1873-78	\$ 326,382.26	
10.	Custom House & Post Office, Ogdensburg, N. Y.	1867-69	\$ 220,650.58	
11.	Custom House, Astoria, Oregon	1869-73	\$ 67,986.28	
12.	Appraisers' Stores, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	1866-71	\$ 379,675.04	(probably this style)
13.	Court House & Post Office, Columbia, S. C.	1871-74	\$ 407,189.17	
14.	Court House & Post Office, Knoxville, Tennessee	1871-74	\$ 338,293.12	

C. Mullett Buildings in the Second Empire Style.

1.	Custom House & Post Office, Hartford, Connecticut	1873-83	\$ 846,802.74	
2.	Court House & Post Office, Des Moines, Iowa	1868-72	\$ 217,023.52	
3.	Custom House, Portland, Maine	1868-72	\$ 494,981.05	
4.	Custom House & Post Office, Fall River, Massachusetts	1876-82	\$ 360,135.54	(probably by Mullett)
5.	Court House & Post Office, Grand Rapids, Michigan	1876-79	\$ 141,413.03	(probably by Mullett)

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE		Missouri
COUNTY		St. Louis City
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	

(Number all entries)

8. Significance - continued, page 3.

C. Mullett Buildings in the Second Empire Style - continued

	<u>Building & Location</u>	<u>Dates of Construction</u>	<u>Costs of Construction</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
6.	Court House & Post Office, Lincoln, Nebraska	1874-79	\$ 198,243.98	
7.	Court House & Post Office, Raleigh, North Carolina	1874-79	\$ 341,496.87	
8.	Court House & Post Office, Madison, Wisconsin	1867-71	\$ 339,082.74	
* 9.	State, War, and Navy Building, Washington, D. C.	1871-87		The largest of all of Mullett's buildings. (standing)
* 10.	Post Office & Subtreasury, Boston, Massachusetts	1869-85	\$ 4,623,122.47	(demol- ished c. 1940)
* 11.	Custom House & Post Office, St. Louis, Missouri	1873-84	\$ 5,686,854.68	(standing)
* 12.	Court House & Post Office, New York, New York	1869-80	\$ 8,549,832.63	(demol- ished c. 1938)
* 13.	Custom House & Post Office, Cincinnati, Ohio	1874-85	\$ 5,088,382.35	(demol- ished c. 1936)
* 14.	Post Office & Court House, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	1874-84	\$ 4,623,943.39	(demol- ished c. 1942)

* Monumentally-scaled buildings by Mullett.

Other Structures by Mullett

U. S. Marine Hospital, Chelsea, Massachusetts

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

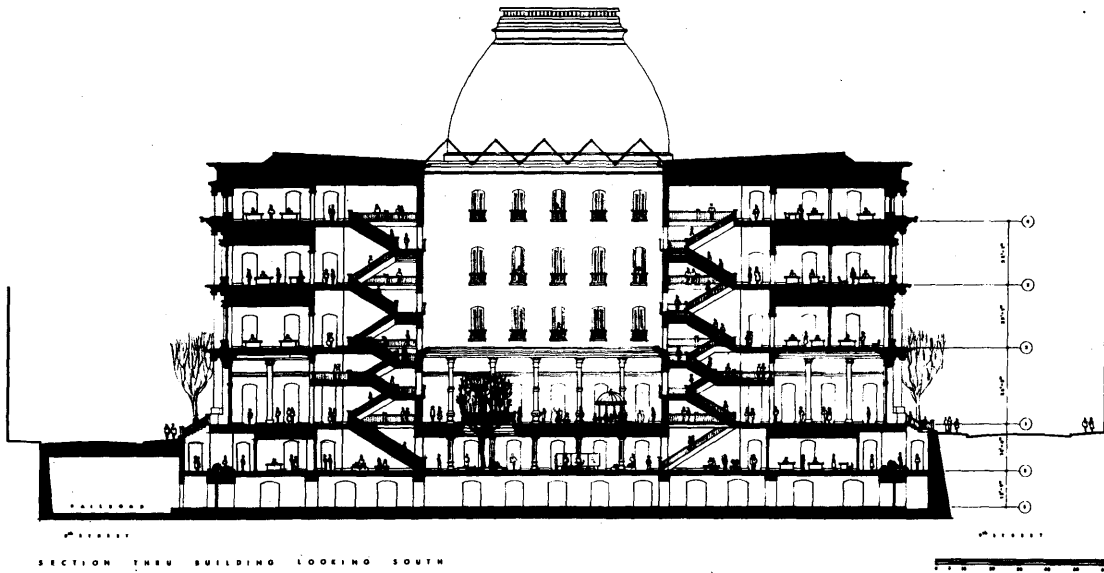
STATE	
Missouri	
COUNTY	
St. Louis City	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

9. Major Bibliographical References, continued.

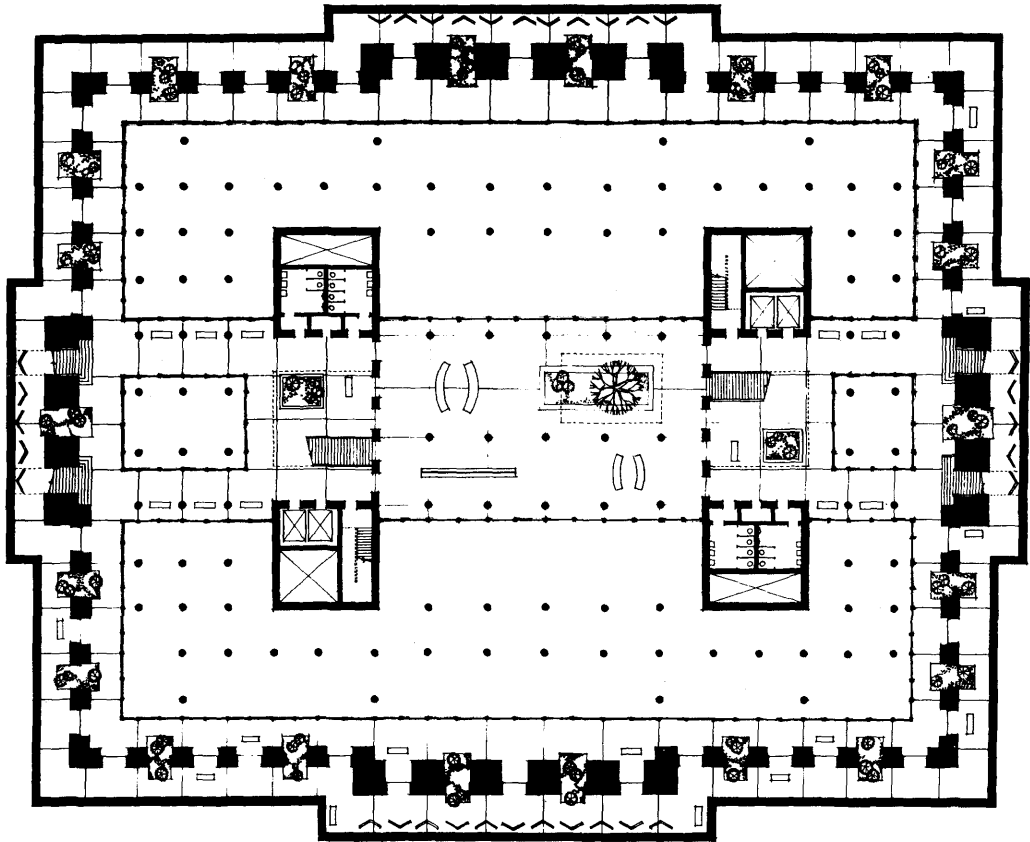
Merrill J. Mattes, "Historical Report on Old Customhouse (Old U. S. Post Office), St. Louis, Missouri", (NPS Region Two Office, April 20, 1961), 13 pp.



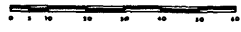


SECTION THROUGH BUILDING LOOKING SOUTH

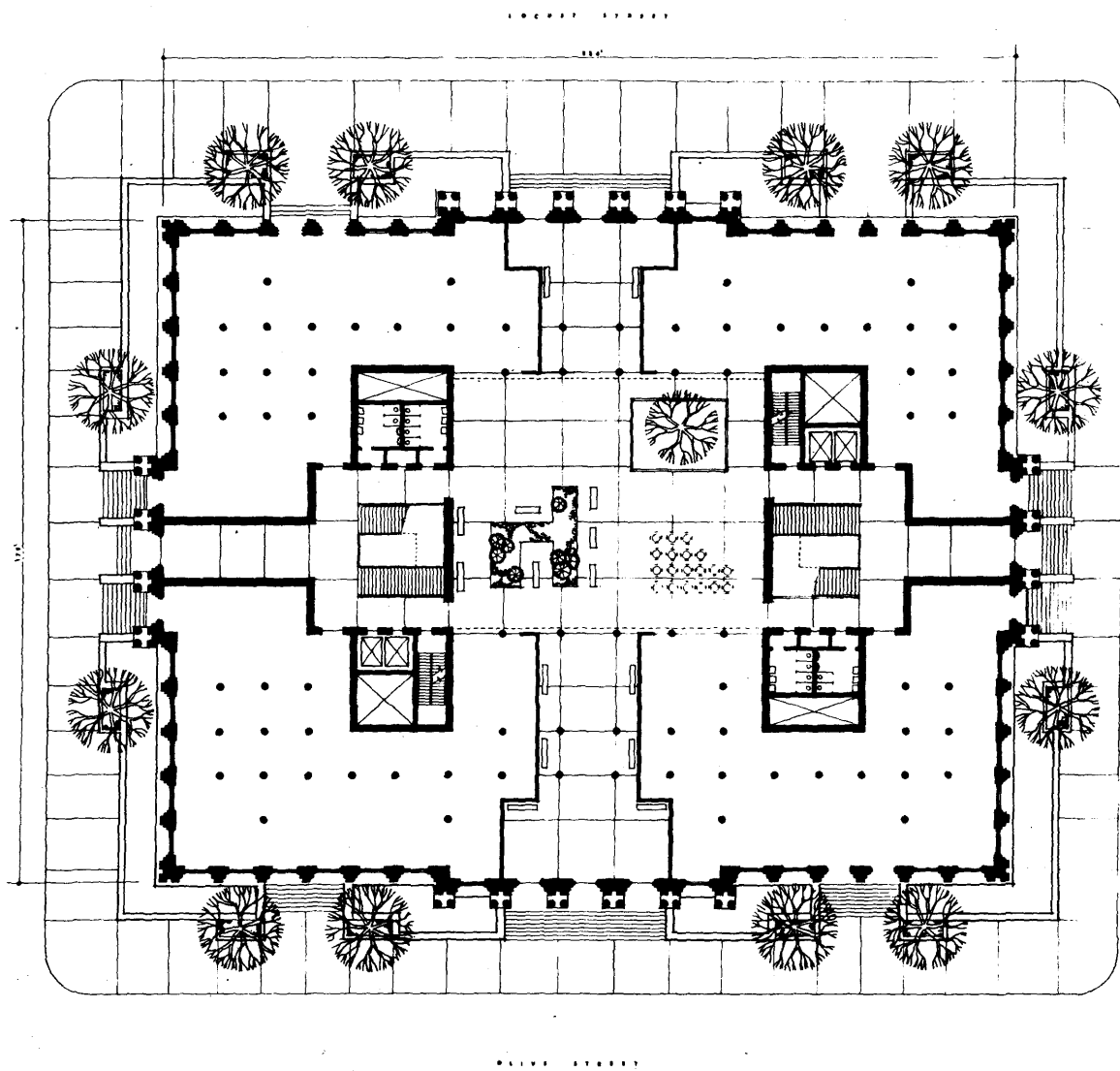




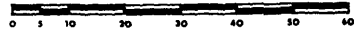
LOWER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN



SAINT LOUIS CIVIC CENTER
 PROPOSED RENOVATION OF THE EXISTING UNITED STATES CUSTOM HOUSE
 SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI A. B. MULLET - ARCHITECT CONSTRUCTED - 1873
 PREPARED BY THE COMMITTEE TO SAVE THE OLD POST OFFICE AUGUST, 1965



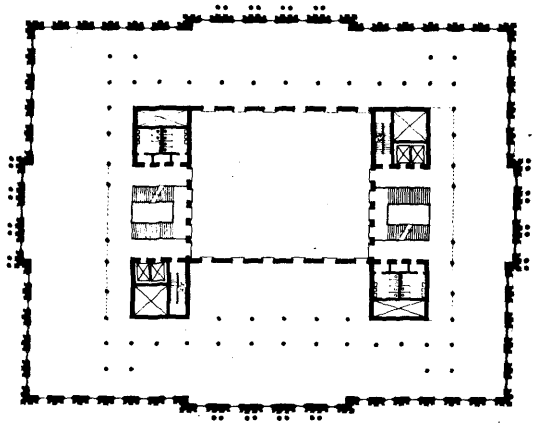
GROUND LEVEL FLOOR PLAN



William J. Peckham '65

PROPOSED RENOVATION OF THE EXISTING UNITED STATES CUSTOM HOUSE
 SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI AS MULLEN ARCHITECT CONSTRUCTED - 1873
 PREPARED BY THE COMMITTEE TO SAVE THE OLD POST OFFICE AUGUST 1965

LEASEABLE	SQUARE	FOOTAGE	FABRICATION
RENOVATED BUILDING			128,000 SF
LOWER LEVEL			21,000 SF
GROUND LEVEL			20,000 SF
SECOND FLOOR			28,000 SF
THIRD FLOOR			28,000 SF
FOURTH FLOOR			29,000 SF



VERTICAL FLOOR PLAN



William J. Peckham '68

EXTERIOR PERSPECTIVE FROM EIGHTH AND OLIVE

PROPOSED RENOVATION OF THE EXISTING UNITED STATES CUSTOM HOUSE
 SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI
 PREPARED BY THE COMMITTEE TO SAVE THE OLD POST OFFICE
 A. B. MULLEN ARCHITECT
 CONSTRUCTED - 1873
 AUGUST 1965