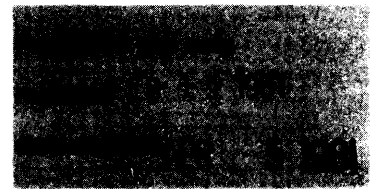


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**



**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic U. S. United States Post Office (Palo Alto)

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 380 Hamilton Avenue  not for publication  
 city, town Palo Alto  vicinity of congressional district 12th  
 state California code 06 county Santa Clara code 085

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name U.S. Postal Service, Western Regional Office  
 street & number 850 Cherry Street  
 city, town San Bruno  vicinity of state CA 94099

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Courthouse  
 street & number 70 W. Hedding Street  
 city, town San Jose  vicinity of state California

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Historic and Architectural Resources of the City of Palo Alto has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
 date February, 1979  federal  state  county  local  
 depository for survey records Planning Department, City of Palo Alto  
 city, town Palo Alto  vicinity of state CA 94301  
 (See Continuation Sheet)

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

---

### **Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Hamilton Branch Post Office in Palo Alto is located on the southwest corner of Hamilton and Waverly Streets; the site occupies the entire block between Waverly and Gilman Streets. This is the general Civic Center area with the City Hall two blocks to the southwest and the Main Library directly behind City Hall on Forrest Avenue.

The Post Office building is sited with the main facade along Hamilton Street. The reinforced concrete structure is set back from the lot line on three sides providing a landscaped area with a variety of trees, a redwood, an oak, a copper beech, and a dawn redwood with a plaque dated 1949. The landscaped area contributes importantly to the building's setting.

The structure is a one-story rectangular block with a tiled, hip roof; the tiles are graded in color from a dark reddish brown at the ridge to a lighter, more salmon colored tile at the eaves. The main facade is preceded by an open arcaded section of eight bays with round arches. It is also roofed with tile. Entrances at either end have the form of tall, round arched openings with bronze frames and ornamental bronze transoms above double doors that were originally bronze with grills, but have been replaced with lighter weight metal doors. Metal, openwork lanterns hang in the arcade. The section of the building at the corner of Hamilton and Gilman Streets contains the Postmaster's Office in a slightly projecting corner block which has a shallow bay window with an ornamental wrought iron grill on the Hamilton Street side and another wrought iron grilled window enclosing a flower box on the Gilman Street side. Other office spaces are also on this side of the building.

On the interior, a public lobby extends the full length of the Hamilton Street frontage. The bays correspond to the exterior arcade arches and have round-headed windows with metal frames and amber colored glass. These are repeated on the northwest side of the building. The boxed-beam, wooden ceiling is stained dark; cross beams mark the divisions of the bays. The marble tiled floor has a woven pattern composed with beige and reddish squares. The wainscotting is a variegated, deep red marble. Service windows are framed in wood with the transom section filled with ornamental, wrought iron grills. This window type is repeated in the lock box area. Ornamental metal lantern fixtures hang in front of each entrance.

The architectural style of the building is Spanish Mediterranean Revival with a rich vocabulary of decorative detail such as the blue and white tiles set in the second story wall, the wrought iron grills, and the softly modeled belt courses at the roof cornice. The walls are stuccoed in an uneven surface that mimics adobe.

The rear portion of the building is occupied by the work room. The service platform and employee entrance is served by a private alley running from Waverly Street to Gilman Street.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1931-33<sup>1</sup> **Builder/Architect** Birge M. Clark

### Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Hamilton Station Post Office is historically significant because it was the main post office building for Palo Alto. The architect, Birge M. Clark, is the son of Arthur B. Clark and worked with his father on the design of Hoover House, built as the residence of Lou and Herbert Hoover in 1919. Arthur B. Clark, also an architect, was a member of the Stanford Art Department faculty. Birge M. Clark has been in practice for over 50 years in Palo Alto.

The Post Office building was designed and built during the Great Depression in 1931-33. Because of the economic conditions, the decision had been made in Washington that local architects be employed to design post office and other government buildings as a means of getting more men back to work in a hurry than would have been possible if all the plans had been made in Washington. Upon taking the first sketches back to the Treasury Department, at that time charged with the design of most government buildings, Clark was informed that, "this is not formal or stiff enough for a federal building." Clark replied, "I realize that it is not formal or stiff, but Mrs. Hoover told me that she hoped that I was keeping to the Monterey or Early California Style and also relating to the arcades and tile roofs of Stanford University. I realize, however, that this is not the way I should get instructions, and will follow your guidance." "Well," the man answered him, "maybe that method is as good as any. Come back after lunch and we will let you know." After lunch they stated, "Proceed with your drawings as presented."

The building is architecturally significant because of its exemplary design in keeping with the Mediterranean influenced architecture that was built in Palo Alto and on the Stanford University campus. It was a rare attempt to design a local post office building in keeping with a popular regional style.

<sup>1</sup>The first sketches were made in 1931, with formal drawings completed in 1932. Construction began in 1932; the building was completed in 1933.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Archives of Palo Alto Historical Association

UTM NOT VERIFIED  
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 3/4±

Quadrangle name Palo Alto

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

1	0	5	7	4	4	7	0	4	1	4	4	4	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Corner of Gilman and Hamilton, 225' NE to Waverly, then 110' SE along Waverly, then 225' SW to Gilman, then 150' NW to point of origin.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Birge M. Clark, Architect

organization Palo Alto Historical Association

date July 15, 1980

street & number 3200 Hanover Street

telephone (415) 493-4545

city or town Palo Alto

state California 94304

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Karrell*

title

date 2/9/81

For HCRS use only

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

date 4/5/81 *DB*

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 19 1981
DATE ENTERED	APR 5 1981

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

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SUPPLEMENTAL PAGE ONE

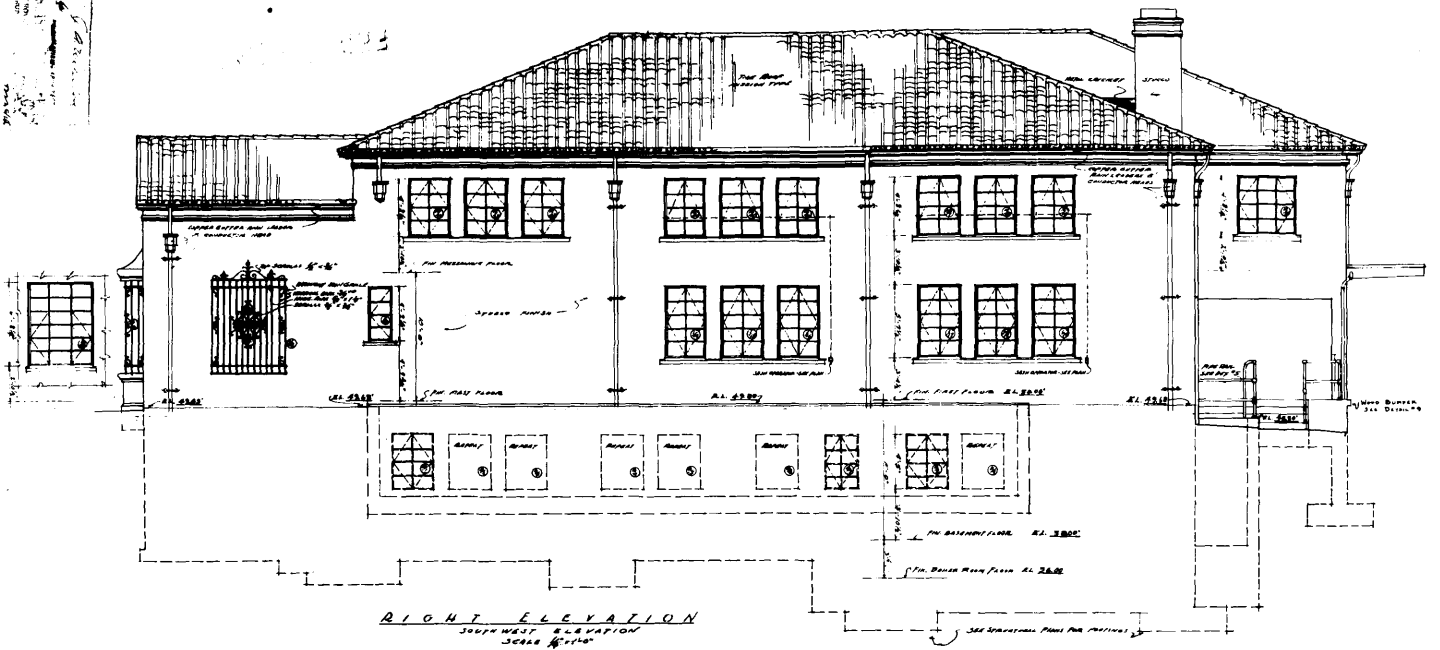
To be added under 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS:

Santa Clara County Heritage Resources Inventory  
1979

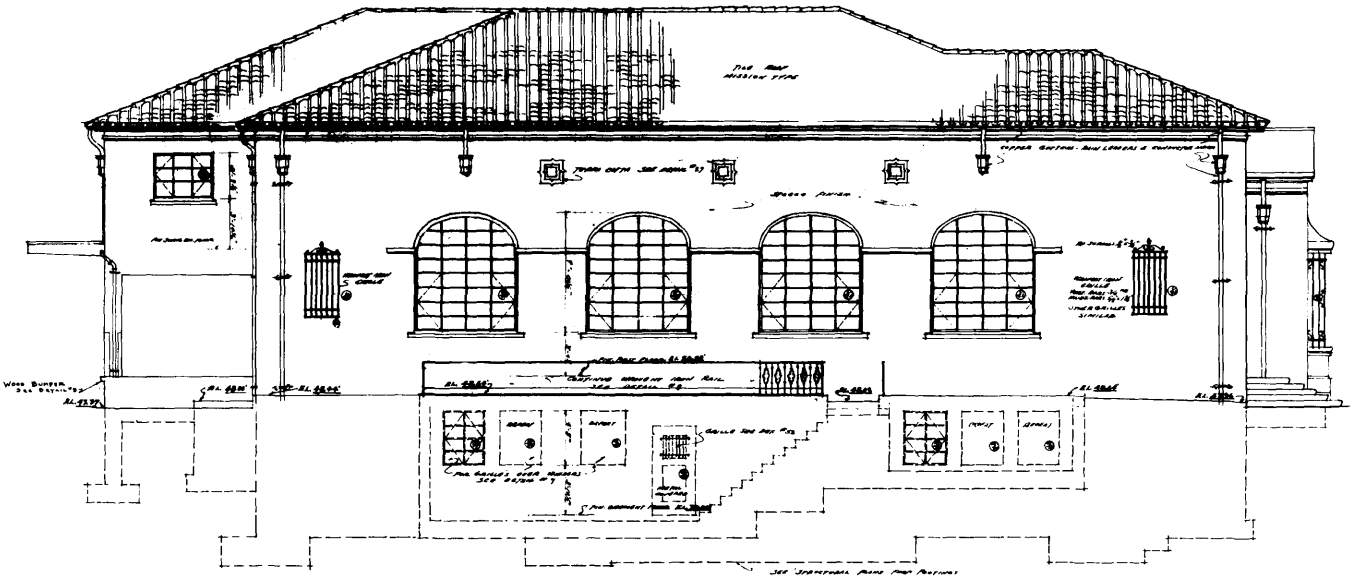
Depository for survey records: County Planning Department, San Jose

Point of Historical Interest, SC1-043

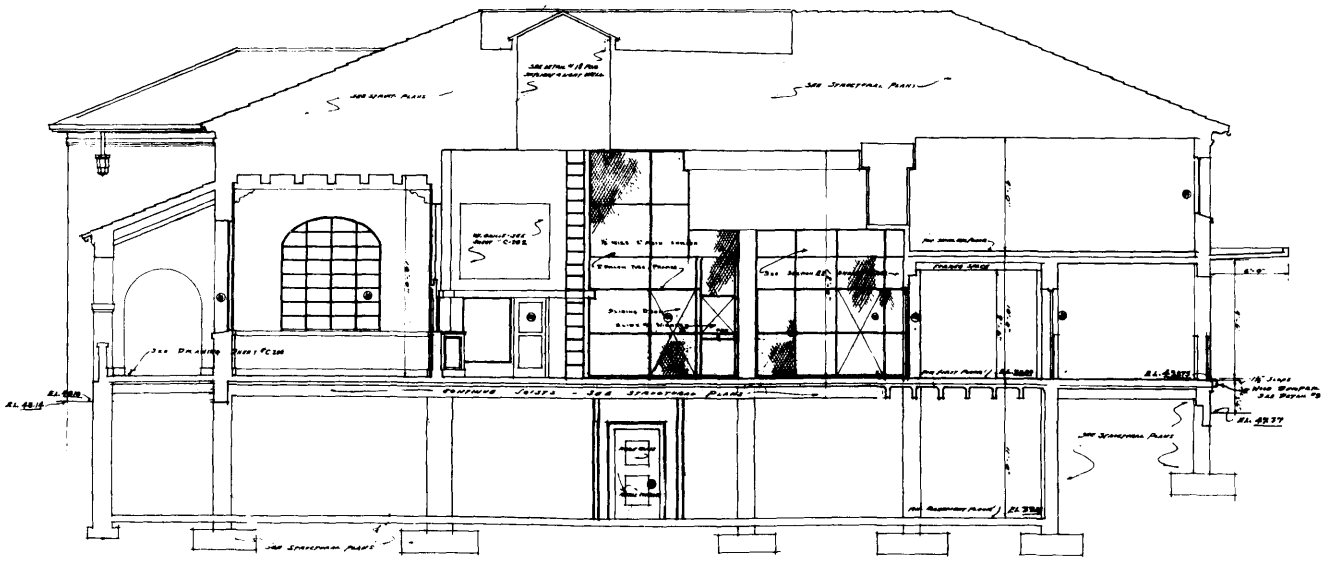
Depository for records: State Preservation Office  
Sacramento, California



RIGHT ELEVATION  
SOUTH WEST ELEVATION  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



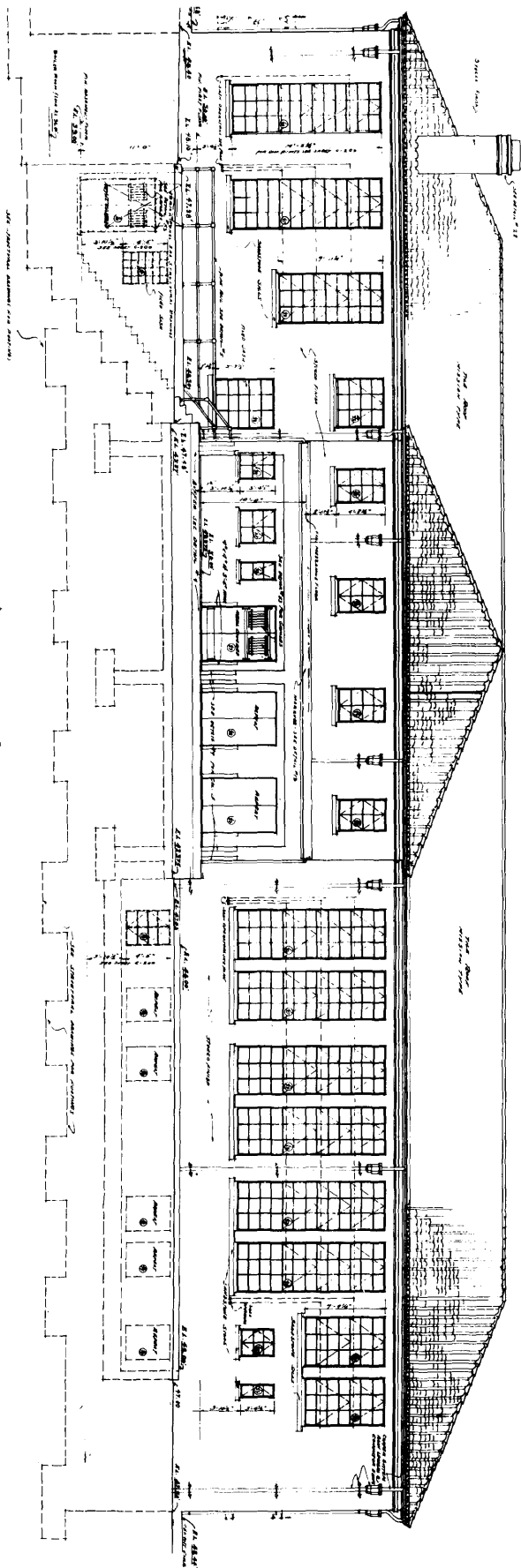
LEFT ELEVATION  
NORTH EAST ELEVATION  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



SECTION F-F  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

NOTES:  
1. Construction from these drawings to be done in accordance with the specifications and the State Contracting Act.  
2. The contractor shall be responsible for the construction of the building.

UNITED STATES  
ARCHITECTS  
1000 N. 10th St.  
DENVER, CO.

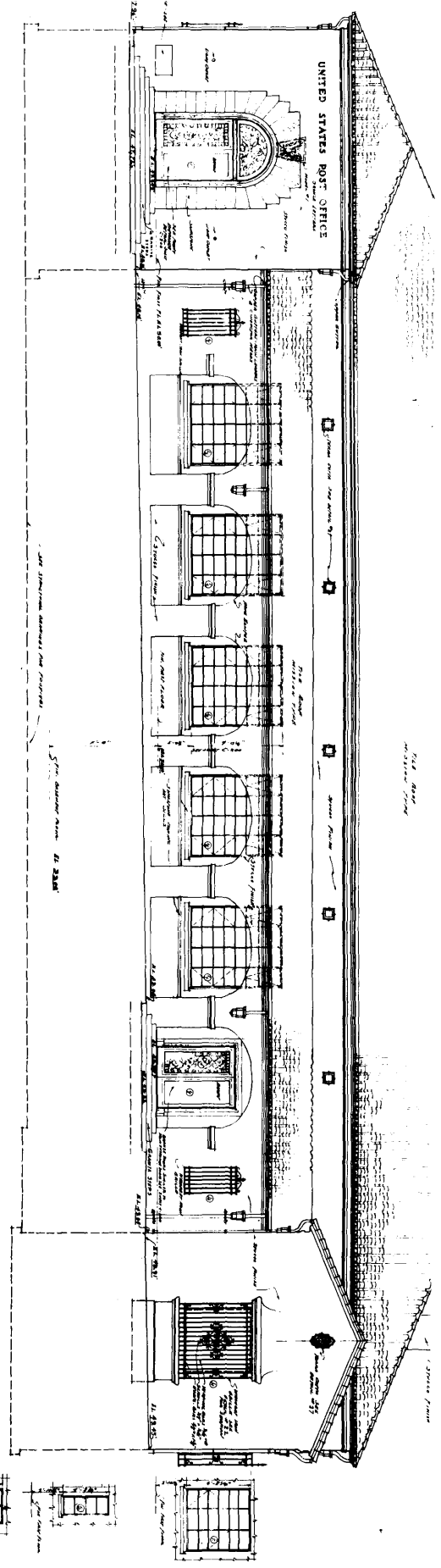


REAR ELEVATION

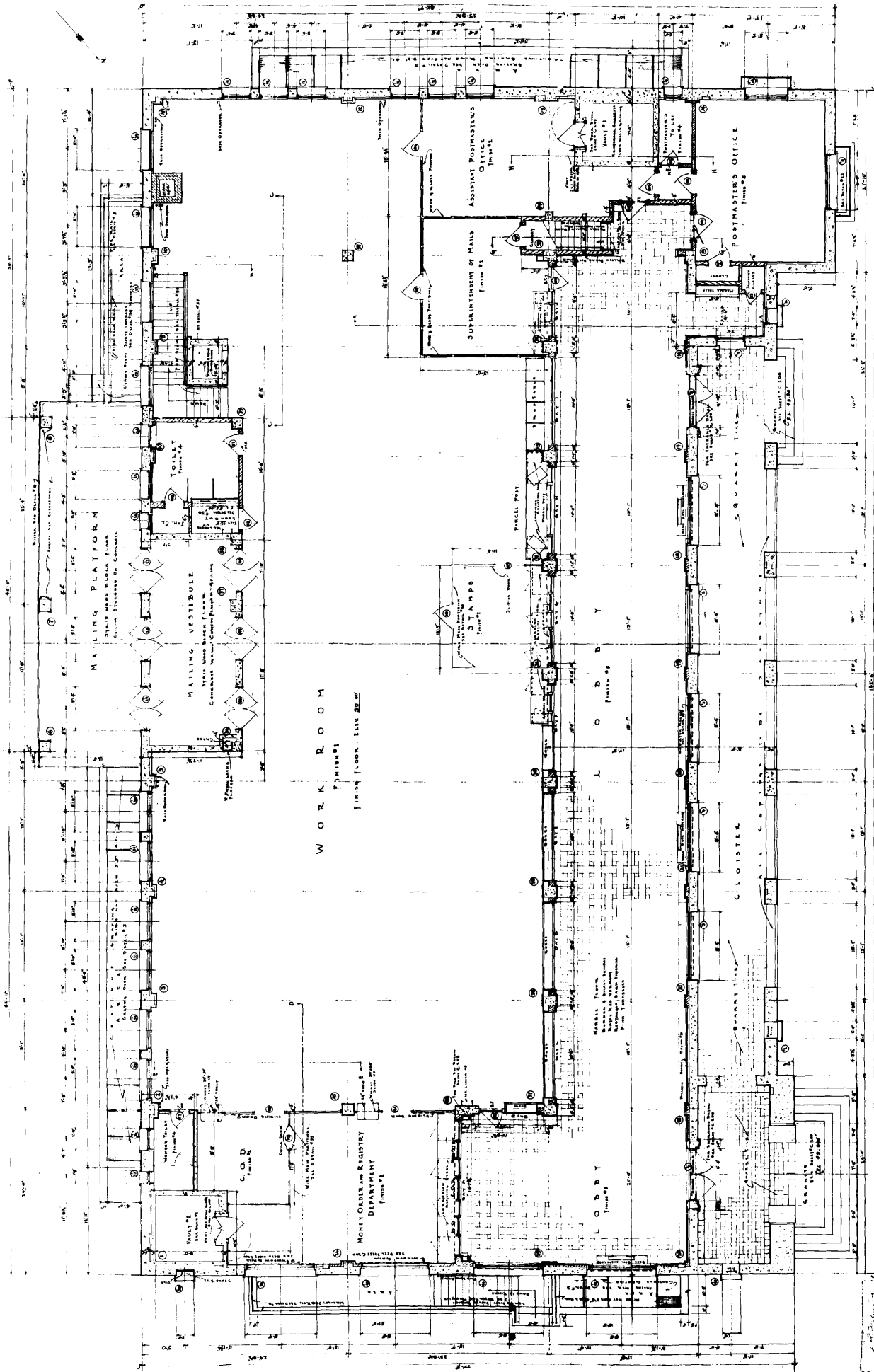
1/2" = 1'-0" (Vertical Scale)  
 1/4" = 1'-0" (Horizontal Scale)  
 ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO FACE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED  
 ALL WORK TO BE DONE BY CONTRACTOR

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA	ARCHITECT
BERKELEY, CALIF.	540 UNIVERSITY AVENUE
DATE: 1914	DRAWN BY: [Name]

FRONT ELEVATION



1/2" = 1'-0" (Vertical Scale)  
 1/4" = 1'-0" (Horizontal Scale)  
 ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO FACE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED  
 ALL WORK TO BE DONE BY CONTRACTOR



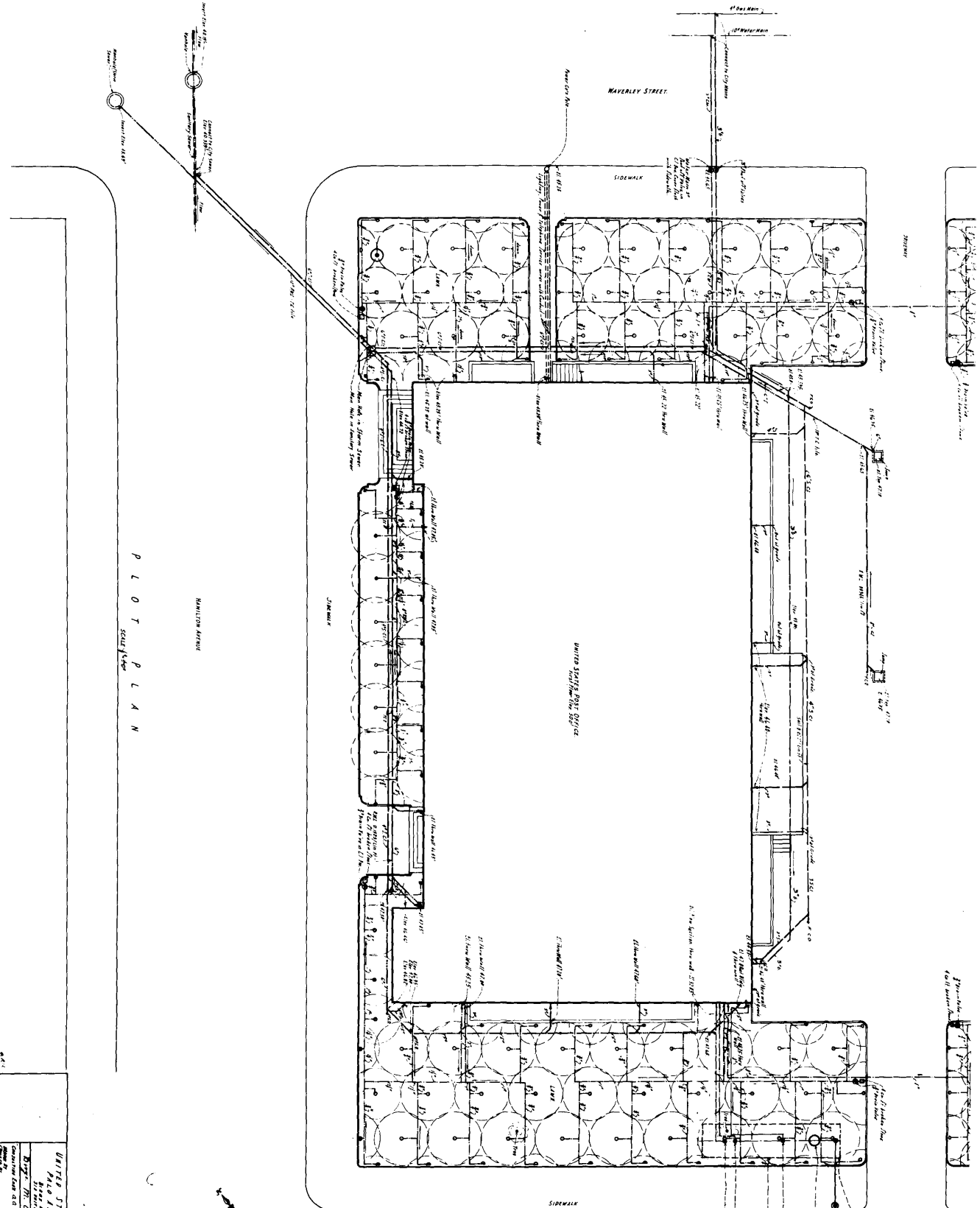
WORK ROOM  
FINISHES  
FIRST FLOOR - LIX 25E

FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

GENERAL NOTES: Apply to First Floor. All dimensions are in feet and inches. All T.C. Partitions are 1/2" thick. All other partitions are 1/4" thick. All doors are 1/2" thick. All windows are 1/2" thick. All floors are 1/2" thick. All walls are 1/2" thick. All ceilings are 1/2" thick. All stairs are 1/2" thick. All elevators are 1/2" thick. All ramps are 1/2" thick. All stairs are 1/2" thick. All elevators are 1/2" thick. All ramps are 1/2" thick.

U.S. MAIL BUILDING  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA  
Designed by  
Bryce W. Clark  
Architect  
C-3



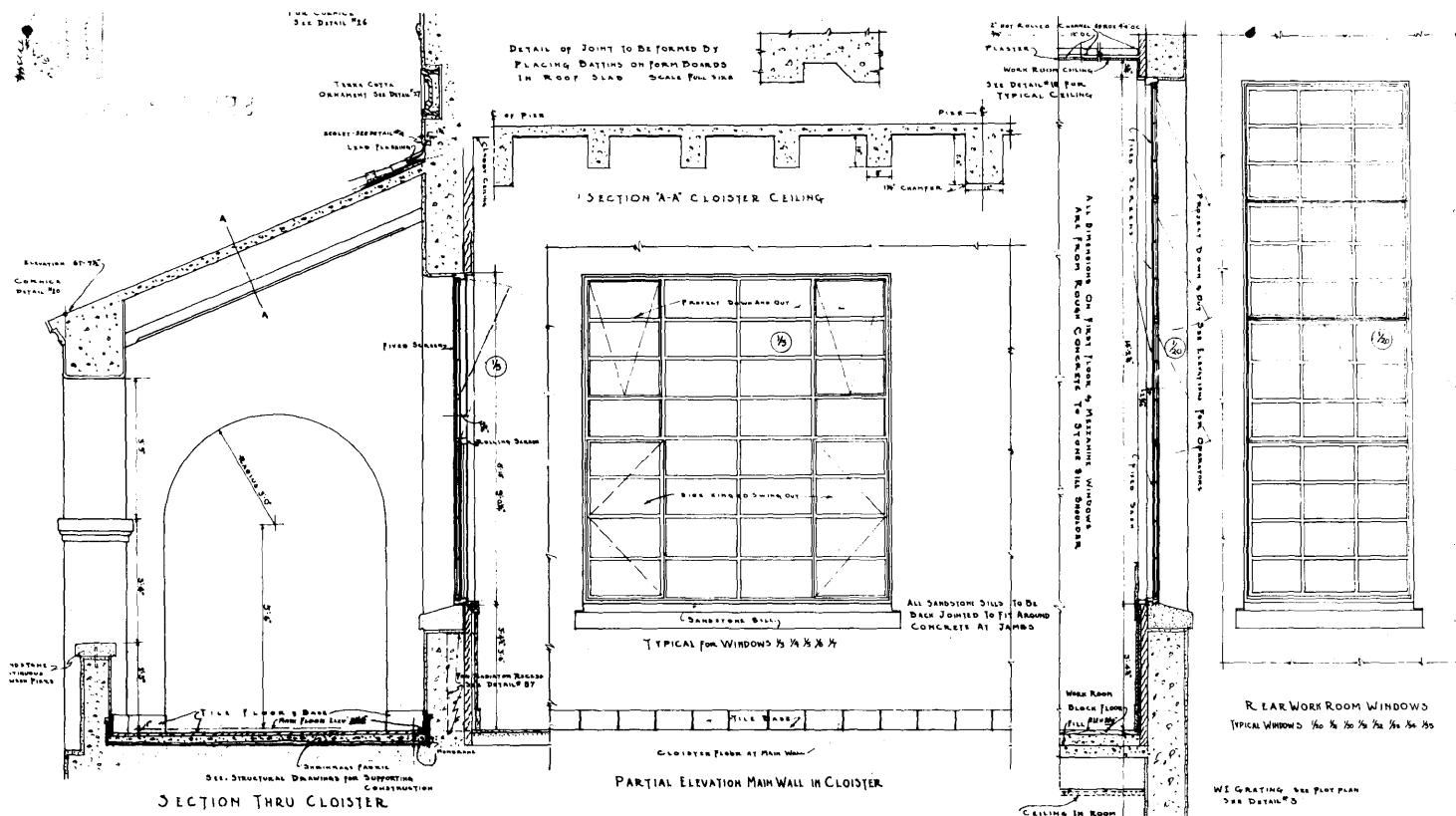


P L O T P L A N  
Scale 1/8" = 1'-0"

MANITON ANNEX

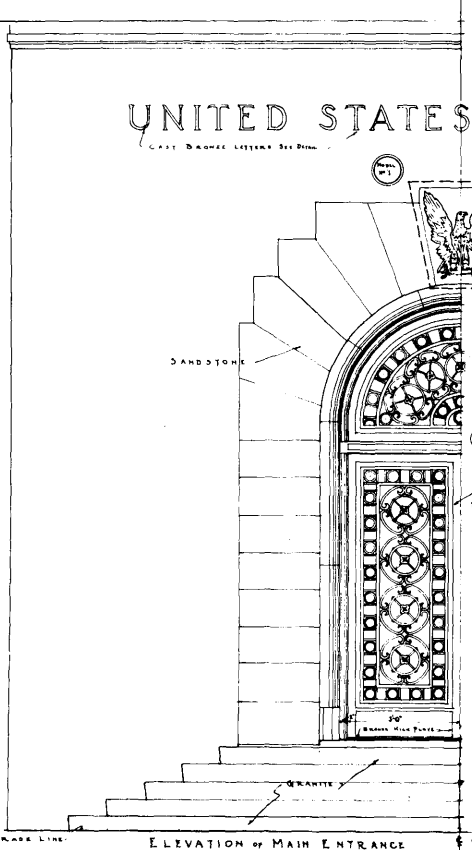
UNITED STATES POST OFFICE	
MADRAS, INDIA	
C. H. WATSON, ARCHT.	
ADVISOR: THE CIVIL ENGINEER	
MADRAS	
C. H. WATSON, ARCHT.	
ADVISOR: THE CIVIL ENGINEER	
MADRAS	
PLOT PLAN	C. H. WATSON, ARCHT.

- SYMBOLS FOR STRUCTURE**
- Wall
  - Column
  - △ Door
  - Window
  - Stair
  - Balcony
  - Terrace
  - Platform
  - Foundation
  - Retaining Wall
  - Foundation
  - Foundation
- Notes: All dimensions are in feet and inches unless otherwise specified. All work is to be done in accordance with the latest editions of the Indian Standards Code of Practice for Building Construction.



SECTION THRU CLOISTER

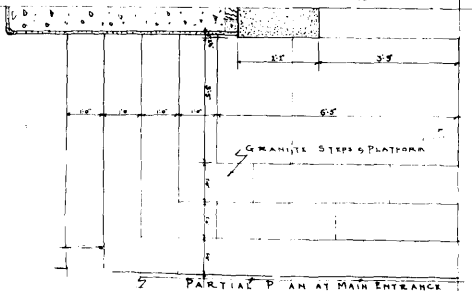
PARTIAL ELEVATION MAIN WALL IN CLOISTER



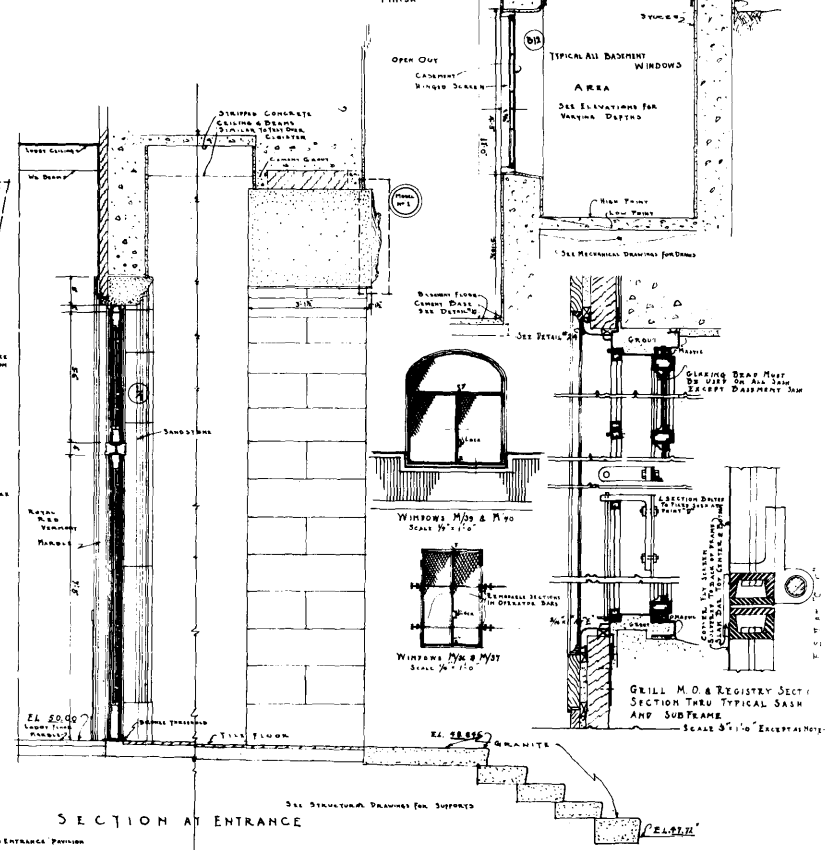
UNITED STATES

ELEVATION OF MAIN ENTRANCE

SECTION AT ENTRANCE



PARTIAL PLAN AT MAIN ENTRANCE



WINDOWS M10 & M10 SCALE 3/4 X 1/2

WINDOWS M10 & M10 SCALE 3/4 X 1/2

GRILL M.O. & REGISTRY SECTION THRU TYPICAL SASH AND SUBFRAME SCALE 3/4 X 1/2 EXCEPT NOTE

EXTERIOR DETAILS

SCALE 3/4 X 1/2 ON DRAWING SHEET

UNITED STATES  
BUREAU OF ARCHITECTURE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.