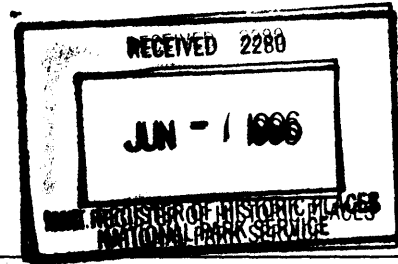


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name: U. S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN

other name/site number: C.E. WELDON PUBLIC LIBRARY

2. Location

street & number: 100 Main Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Martin

vicinity: N/A

state: Tennessee

code: TN

county: Weakley

code: 183

zip code: 38237

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Herbert L. Hoyer*

*6/3/86*

Signature of certifying official  
Deputy SHPO, Tennessee Historical Commission

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*Edson H. Beall 2.5.90*

Entered in the National Register

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

*[Handwritten Signature]*

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Public/local

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	-0-	buildings
-0-	-0-	sites
-0-	-0-	structures
-0-	-0-	objects
1	-0-	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:

Architectural and Historical Resources of Martin, Tennessee

6. Function or Use

---

Historic: GOVERNMENT

Sub: post office

Current : EDUCATION

Sub: library

---

7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

Classical Revival

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation CONCRETE      roof METAL/tin  
                 walls            BRICK            other WOOD/window sashes  
   STONE/limestone

8. Statement of Significance

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

- X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

ARCHITECTURE  
GOVERNMENT

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

1917-18

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS

SIGNIFICANT DATES

Property is: N/A

1917-18

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave
- D a cemetery
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F a commemorative property
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

SIGNIFICANT PERSON

N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION

N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER

Wetmore, J.A., Acting  
Supervising Architect  
U.S. Treasury Dept.

---

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

---

X See continuation sheet.

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:

- State historic preservation office                      - Local government
- Other state agency    - University
- Federal agency    - Other

-- Specify Repository: Tennessee Historical Commission

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreeage of Property: less than one acre

USGS Quad Map Name: Martin 435SE

UTM References:		Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	16	334960	4023420	B	_____	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

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11. Form Prepared By

---

Name/Title: John Linn Hopkins

Organization: Hopkins & Associates

Date: September 27, 1995

Street & Number: 974 Philadelphia Street

Telephone: (901) 278-5186

City or Town: Memphis

State: TN Zip: 38104

---

PROPERTY OWNER

---

Name: City of Martin/ Teresa Johnson

Street & Number: 100 Main Street

Telephone: (901) 587-3148

City/Town: Martin

State: TN

Zip: 38237

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7      Page # 1      U.S. Post Office  
Martin, Weakley County, Tennessee

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Located at the intersection of Lindell (U.S. Highway 45E) and Main streets at the center of the City of Martin, Tennessee, the former U. S. Post Office stands as an important civic landmark in this northwestern Tennessee town of 9,246 citizens (1990 Census). The former post office, now the home of the city's C.E. Weldon Public Library, is situated roughly at the geographical center of the city, near the southern end of the lineal commercial district along Lindell Street that serves as one of the traditional "Downtown" areas for the city (the other traditional "Downtown" area is located to the east across the Illinois Central Railroad facing Broadway Street). The placement of the building upon this important intersection makes it an important visual "entrance" to the commercial area of Martin when approaching from the south.

The former Post Office was built at grade with the surrounding properties in its immediate vicinity, situated off-center on its original site with its main entrance facing south to Main Street. The building has a front yard setback of 20 feet from the curb of Main Street, and a side yard setback of 15 feet from Lindell Street. The rear (north) facade of the structure is set back 35 feet from the adjacent commercial buildings facing Lindell to the north. To the east, the building is set back 30 feet from a large public parking area adjacent to the Illinois Central Railroad. The site is landscaped with major street trees placed near the corners of the lot, and with foundation plantings of shrubs along the Lindell Street side.

The former U.S. Post Office at Martin is a one and one-half story, five-bay, brick masonry building, designed in 1916 and completed over 1917-18 in the Classical Revival style. The building was designed in 1916 by the Architectural Services Bureau of the U.S. Department of the Treasury, headed by J.A. Wetmore as Acting Supervising Architect. The actual identity of the architect within the Bureau who was responsible for the design of the structure is not known; the contracting firm responsible for the construction of the building is also not known.

The building is nearly square in footprint. The roof features a center gable-roofed portion raised above a clerestory, covered with a standing-seam tin roof. Surrounding the clerestoried section is a flat roof covered with built-up asphalt roofing, hidden behind plain parapet with panels of limestone balusters that nearly encircles the entire roof line. Beneath the parapet is a full limestone architrave that wraps most of the building's cornice line. The brick masonry of the walls is laid in Flemish bond. A wide belt course of dress-faced limestone is used as a drip course above a low foundation. The building has a full basement.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7      Page # 2      U.S. Post Office  
Martin, Weakley County, Tennessee

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The front (south) facade of the structure is five-bays in width with a pedimented tetrastyle portico at center supported by limestone columns with Doric capitals. Flanking the portico are windows containing 9/9 double-hung sashes, topped with a radiating flat brick arch with a limestone keystone. The entrance composition beneath the portico features a 6/6 double-hung sash topped with a panel embellished with a shield and garland motif, flanking the center recessed semi-circular arched entrance door. The doorway contains a wood-frame, single-light, two-panel double door, topped with a fanlight.

The side (west) facade facing Lindell Street is four-bays in depth. The major feature of this facade is an off-centered, delineated projecting bay of limestone, detailed with Doric pilasters flanking a modified Palladian window. The side (east) facade facing the Illinois Central Railroad is a mirror image of the Lindell Street facade.

The rear (north) facade continues many of the treatments and detailing of the other three facades, but features a projecting block at center that is two-stories in height and five-bays in width. The 1/1 double-hung sashes of the second floor light an office area on the second level of the building. The first floor has a symmetrical arrangement composed of a of single-light, two-panel street door and a 6/6 double-hung sash light flanking a center rear entrance. The rear entrance originally served as the raised loading bay door for postal deliveries, and features a single-light, single-panel double door topped with a fanlight. There is no loading platform beneath the rear entrance door.

The plan of the first floor of the former post office building was designed to provide a lobby area at the center of the building, with the offices, counter sales windows, and mail sorting areas surrounding the lobby on the perimeter of the floor. The two-story lobby space was lit with natural light provided by the windows of the clerestory on the roof. The second floor plan was designed with the clerestory above the lobby at center and a core of rooms located to the rear of the building behind the clerestory. This area a bathroom and another room identified on plans as the "swing room"--perhaps used as an employee lounge. Between the bathroom and the "swing room" was a T-shaped walkway hidden between the walls called the "lookout", which was used by the postmaster and/or the postal inspectors to observe potential thefts by postal employees.

The lobby of the post office was designed with notable interior features. In general, each wall of the lobby was provided with a modified-Palladian screen of openings, delineated with walnut

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

Page # 3

U.S. Post Office  
Martin, Weakley County, Tennessee

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stained trim elements and separated by paneled pilasters with Doric capitals. The center of each wall has a semi-circular arch containing a fan light above a continuous frieze; each of the arched elements align on axis with the modified Palladian window and door treatments of the exterior. The openings on each wall beneath the frieze were finished with different screens or functional treatments. As one entered the lobby, the (north) wall opposite the entrance was finished with a screen of fixed sashes and transoms glazed with frosted glass. To the left (west), the screen was finished with teller's windows for the counter sales for stamps, general delivery parcel pick-up, and other functions. The wall to the right (east) was filled with post boxes. The entrance was flanked on one side with a teller counter for the purchase of money orders and to register mail; and on the other, by a door to the office of the Post Master.

The work spaces of the interior surrounding the lobby were left as one large open work space, for the most part. Trim elements around windows and doors in these areas were simply detailed with more-simplified trim elements.

Conversion of the post office for a library in 1966-67 was accomplished with remarkable sensitivity for the spirit of the original design of the building. For the most part, the renovation work was limited to the removal of the postal service-related elements (post boxes, light screens, mail drop slots, etc.) from the modified Palladian screen walls, leaving the pattern of the openings and their trim features in place. This approach opened the former public lobby area for connection with the formerly restricted service areas of the building, while still retaining a strong sense of the original divisions of the first floor plan. The offices for the Post Master and the Money Order Division were retained for the use of the library staff. The only other significant change on the first floor involved the installation of a dropped ceiling in the lobby, placed immediately below the windows of the clerestory. The plaster surfaces, trim elements and windows of the clerestory remain intact above this ceiling. On the second level, the former "swing room" and "lookout" areas remain largely unaltered and are used for storage.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8      Page # 4      U.S. Post Office  
Martin, Weakley County, Tennessee

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The former U.S. Post Office at Martin possesses significance under National Register Criterion C in the area of architecture as a well-preserved example of a small-city post office building, designed in the Classical Revival style by the Architectural Services Bureau of the U.S. Department of the Treasury. The low, blocky massing, its axial and symmetric organization, and its Classical detailing all contribute to the quality of its design character. The property is also significant under Criterion A in the area of government as an example of a standardized post office building constructed under the purview of the Public Buildings Commission with funding authorized by the Public Buildings Act of 1913. The property is nominated under the registration requirements for Public and Religious Institutional Buildings set forth in the Multiple Property Documentation Form for the Architectural and Historical Resources of Martin, Tennessee.

The founding of the Town of Martin in 1873 was accompanied by the appointment of A.M. Clemons as its first postmaster. Over the course of the next forty years, the town's postal services were dispensed from the local store building owned by the postmaster at that time. Over this period, though, the growth of Martin from a town of roughly 410 souls in 1874 to a busy city of over 2,000 by 1910 (Martin Centennial 1973:21-22) created the need for a full-service post office in its own building.

The move to establish an official post office building at Martin appears to have begun in ca. 1908-1910, under the tenure of W. W. Wilson as Martin's Postmaster. The Post Office Department initiated condemnation of the proposed site in late March or early April of 1911 (Mail 1911:1), which was a part of the land given to the Mississippi Central Railroad in 1872 by the Martin family.

The delay in construction of the building was apparently the result of Congressional action to better coordinate the construction of federal public buildings and to lessen their costs through the standardization of their design. The omnibus Public Buildings Act of 1913 authorized the establishment of the Public Buildings Commission to "develop a scheme for the construction of all authorized public buildings and a standardized way to determine the size and project the cost of buildings." (U.S. Postal Service 1982:7) This action resulted in the development in 1915 of a classification system for post offices based upon the volume of postal receipts. The design and materials to be used in construction of post offices was standardized on the basis of this

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8      Page # 5      U. S. Post Office  
Martin, Weakley County, Tennessee

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classification system. Based upon the descriptions of each category and the materials used in the Martin building, its post office was considered a "Class C" building based upon postal receipts ranging between \$15,000 and \$60,000 (U.S. Postal Service 1982:10-11).

Implementation of this system was put into full effect by the office of the Supervising Architect in 1916 (U.S. Postal Service 1982:10-11). The 1917 Report to the Public Buildings Commission by Acting Supervising Architect J. A. Wetmore noted that "a building type was standardized for thirty communities, and that twenty-seven buildings of this type were put under contract" (U.S. Postal Service 1982:11).

The architectural plans and specifications for the building were completed by the Architectural Services Bureau of the Treasury Department in February of 1916, according to the signatures and dates of various Bureau officials on the architectural plans themselves. This date strongly suggests that the design for the Martin Post Office was among the first group of buildings designed under the approach toward standardization. Copies of the site plan, floor plans, elevations and sections of the Martin Post Office building have been included with the documentation of this nomination.

Ground breaking for the new facility was begun in late April of 1917, and site preparations underway by the first week of May in the same year (Weakley County Press, 1973:n.p.). The local history collections of the C.E. Weldon Public Library include a extensive sets of photographs of the building during construction, which were prepared by federal postal officials to document the project's progress on a month-by-month basis. These photographs show that the basement and foundations for the building were excavated by early June of 1917; the walls were raised to a point near the top of the window line in early August; the building was completely under roof by early October; and, the exterior finishes were completed by early November. Interior finishes for the building proceeded with equal speed. The interior was nearly floored and prepared for plaster in December of 1917; the plaster was completed by early January of 1918; the wood trim finishes were completed by April; and, the building was painted, furnished, and ready for occupancy by the first week of May in 1918.

The new post office at Martin served as a focal point for community activity from the time of its opening in 1918 until 1965, when growth in the Martin community again proved the need for a larger, more efficient post office building. By this time, the population of the Martin community had approached 7,000 citizens; the stress on

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page # 6

U.S. Post Office  
Martin, Weakley County, Tennessee

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the post office building was magnified by the presence of an additional 5,000 students attending the University of Tennessee at Martin. Construction of a new post office was begun and the earlier building was abandoned.

Occupation of the post office building by the C.E. Weldon Public Library was initiated by the library board at the time that the construction of a new post office was begun. The library, begun in 1925 by the Martin Women's Club, had occupied a small building in Martin's public park since soon after its inception. By 1965, the library had long outgrown its original facility, and the chance to acquire the old post office building provided the library with the opportunity to occupy a well-designed facility at little public cost (Martin Centennial 1973:52-53). Conversion of the building for the library was made possible by local fundraising events, and the doors of the former post office were re-opened for the use of public library in January of 1967. Its formal dedication took place in March of 1968.

Conversion of the former Martin post office for the use of the Weldon Library has provided the opportunity for the continuing vitality of this public building as a focal point for community activity. Nomination of this building to the National Register of Historic Places will re-affirm the importance of this building to the Martin community, thus serving as an incentive for its long-term preservation and use.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page # 7 U.S. Post Office  
Martin, Weakley County, Tennessee

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Martin Centennial Committee  
1973 Martin Centennial, 1873-1973. Martin Centennial Committee.

Martin Mail  
1911 April 4:1; April 7:1

United States Postal Service  
1982 History of Post Office Construction 1900-1940. U. S.  
Government Printing Office, Washington.

Vaughan, Virginia C.  
1983 Tennessee County History Series: Weakley County. Memphis  
State University Press.

Weakley County Press  
1973 "Martin, Tennessee Centennial Edition". June 28:n.p.

Weldon, C. E., Library  
Local history collections: plans and photographs of the  
Martin Post Office 1916-1918.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 10 Page # 8 U.S. Post Office  
Martin, Weakley County, Tennessee

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Verbal Boundary Description

The property in nomination includes all of Parcel #2 of Block B as delineated in pencil on the attached copy of a portion of Weakley County Tax Map #72-I-D.

Boundary Justification

The property in nomination consists of all that land historically associated with the U.S. Post Office at Martin since its construction in 1917-18.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

U.S. Post Office  
Martin, Weakley County, Tennessee

Section number    Photos    Page # 9

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PHOTOGRAPHS

U. S. Post Office  
100 Main Street  
Martin, Weakley County, Tennessee  
Photos by:    John Linn Hopkins  
Date:         July 1995  
Negatives:    Tennessee Historical Commission

Photo 1 of 7  
View of the front (south, Main Street) facade, facing north.

Photo 2 of 7  
View of the side (west, Lindell Street) facade, facing generally north.

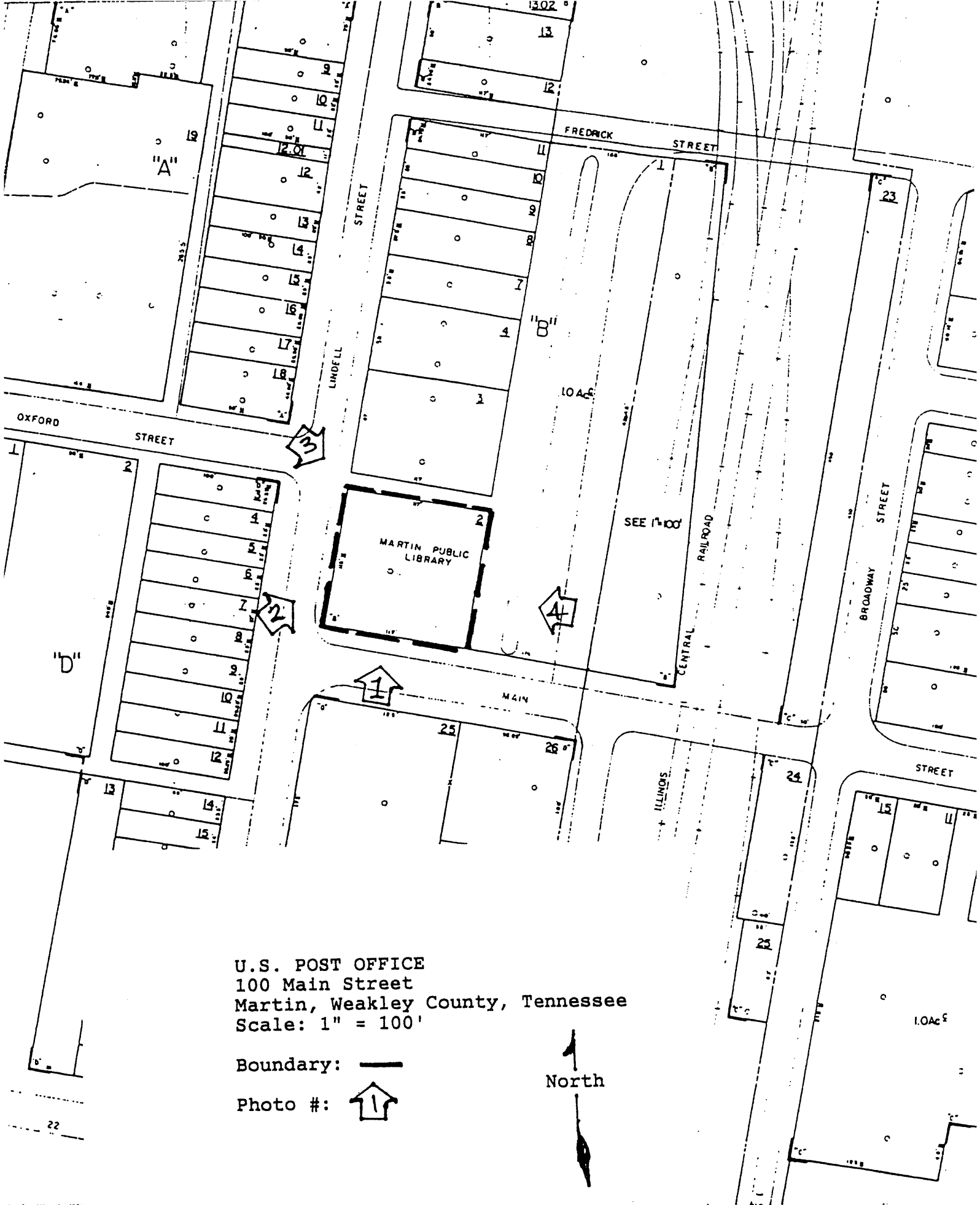
Photo 3 of 7  
View of the rear (north) facade, facing east.

Photo 4 of 7  
View of the side (east facade, facing west.

Photo 5 of 7  
View from the lobby through the doors of the main entrance.

Photo 6 of 7  
View through the lobby to the western reading room.

Photo 7 of 7  
View from the lobby through the eastern stacks.



U.S. POST OFFICE  
 100 Main Street  
 Martin, Weakley County, Tennessee  
 Scale: 1" = 100'



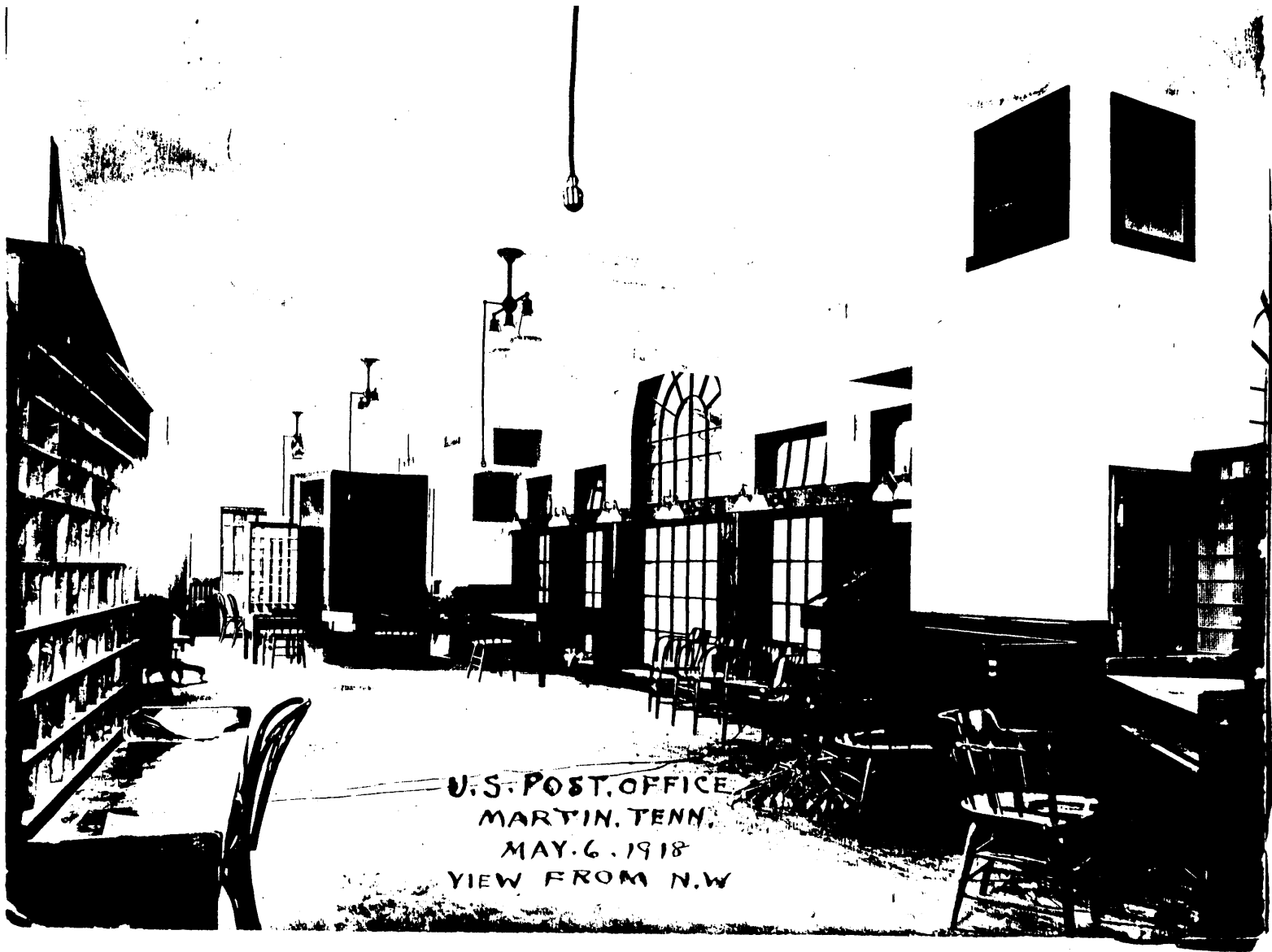
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Photo #: 



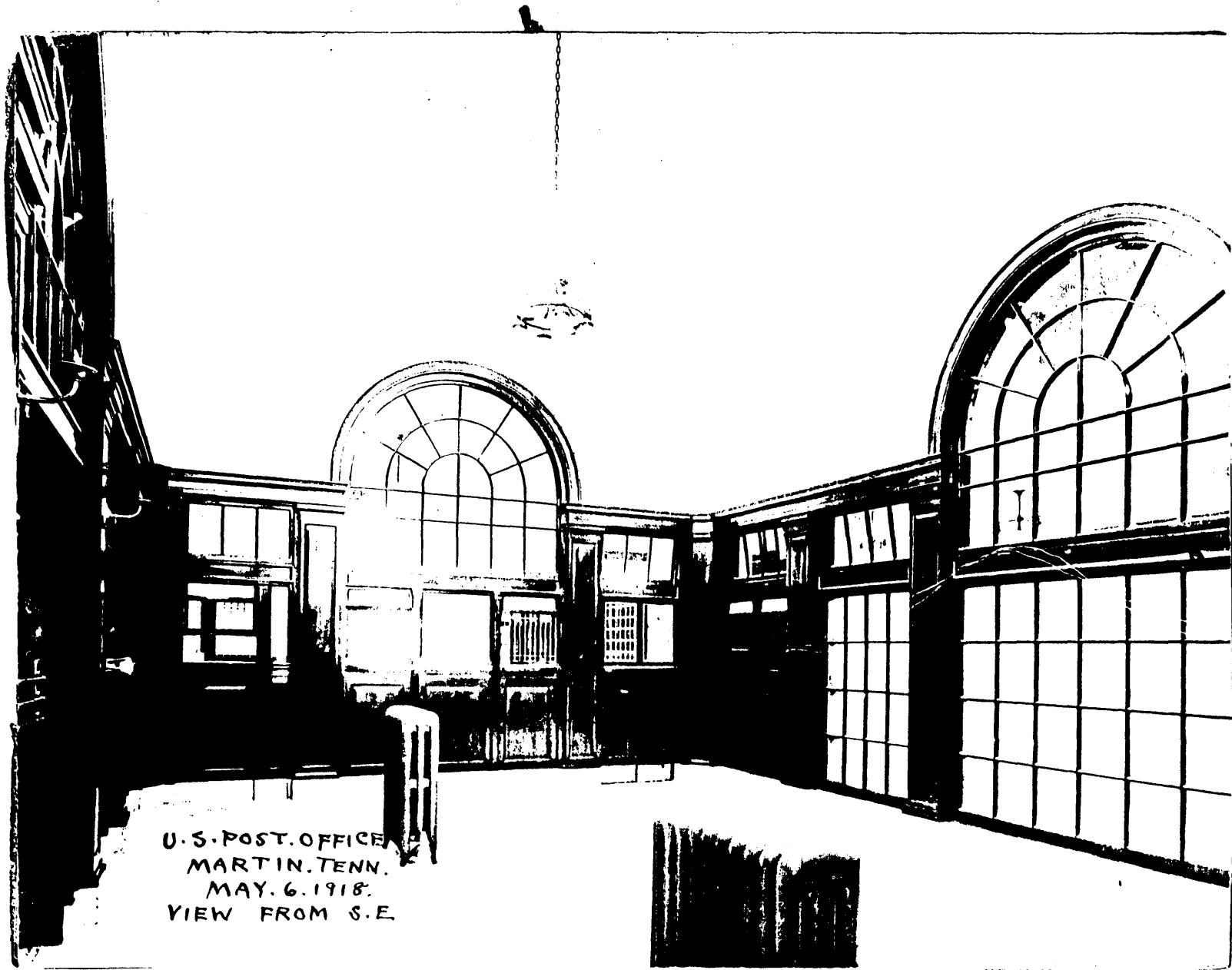
EUS63X



U.S. POST OFFICE  
MARTIN, TENN.  
MAY 6, 1918  
VIEW FROM N.W.

U.S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN  
WEAKLEY CO. TN





U.S. POST OFFICE  
MARTIN, TENN.  
MAY. 6. 1918.  
VIEW FROM S.E.

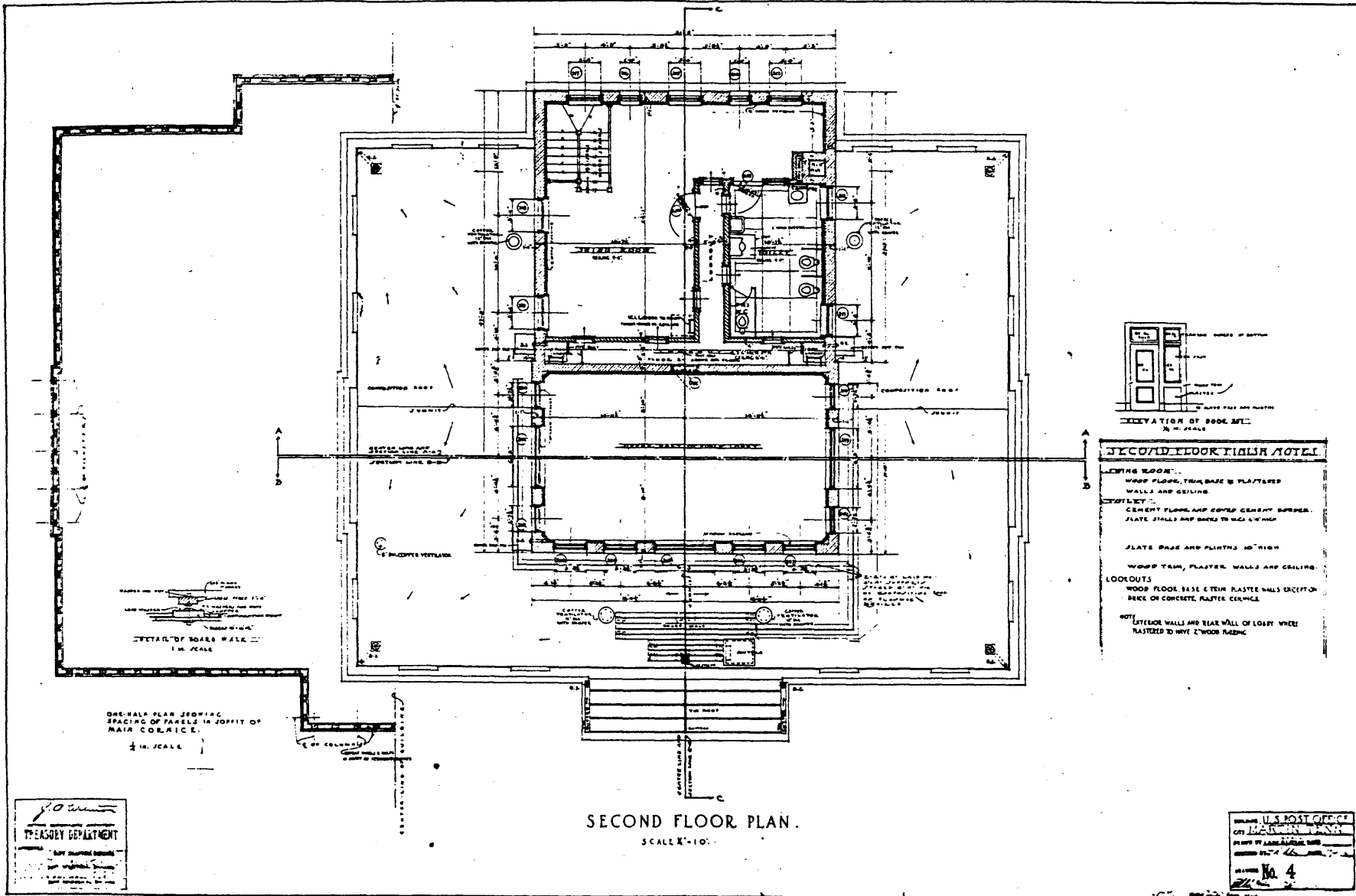
U.S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN  
WEAKLEY CO. TN



U.S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN  
WEAKLEY CO. TN  
C. 1918 PHOTO



U.S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN  
WEAKLEY CO. TN  
C. 1918 PHOTO



**SECOND FLOOR FINISH NOTES**

**LOBBY FLOOR:**  
WOOD FLOOR, TRIM, BASE & PLASTERED WALLS AND CEILING

**TOILET:**  
CEMENT FLOOR AND COVERED GLASSY BORDER. PLATE SHALL BE 2\"/>

**PLATE BASE AND PLINTHS:** 4\"/>

**WOOD TRIM, PLASTER, WALLS AND CEILING:**

**LOOKOUTS:**  
WOOD FLOOR, BASE & TRIM, PLASTER WALLS EXCEPT ON REAR OF CONCRETE, PLASTER CEILING

**NOTE:**  
EXTERIOR WALLS AND REAR WALL OF LOBBY SHALL BE PLASTERED TO HAVE 2\"/>

JOHN  
TREASURY DEPARTMENT

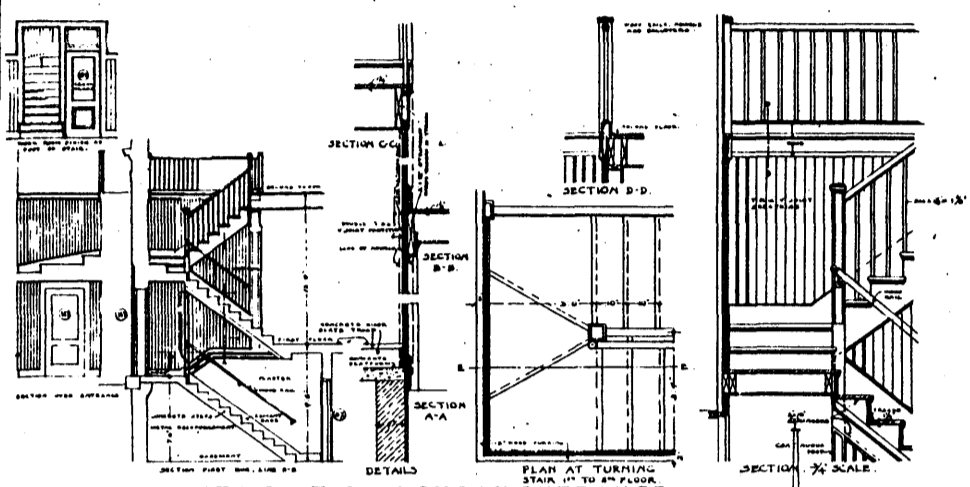
SECOND FLOOR PLAN.  
SCALE 1/8\"/>

U.S. POST OFFICE  
MARTIN, TENN.  
No. 4

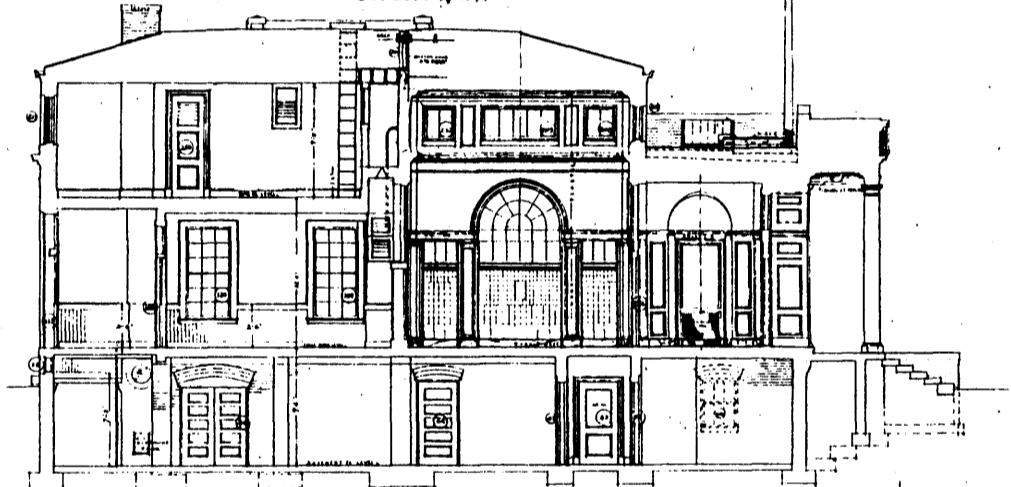
U.S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN.  
WEARLEY CO. TN



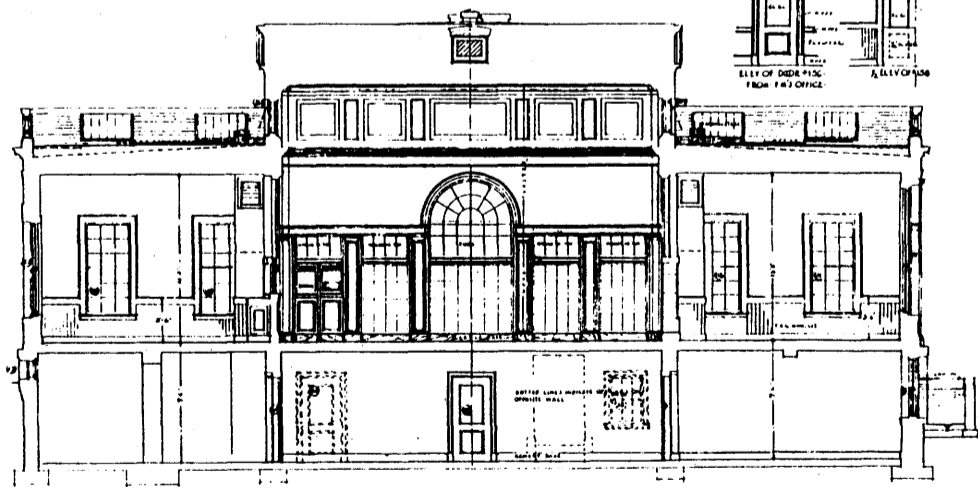
J. A. W. & SONS  
 ARCHITECTS  
 100 N. 3rd St.  
 PHILADELPHIA, PA.



**STAIR AT EMPLOYEES' ENTRANCE.**  
 SCALES:  $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'-0''$  &  $\frac{1}{2}'' = 1'-0''$



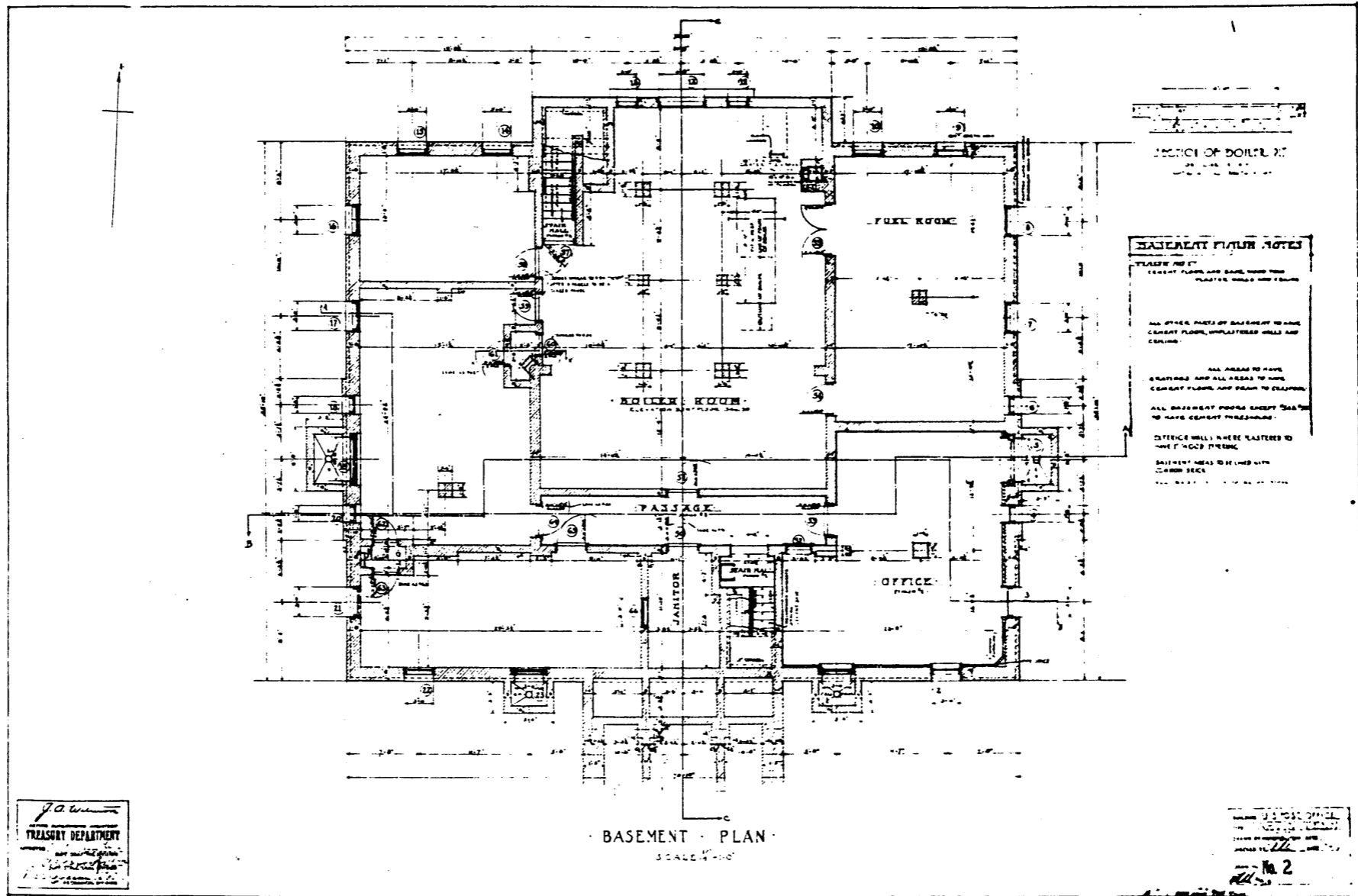
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**TRANSVERSE SECTION AT 'A-A'.**  
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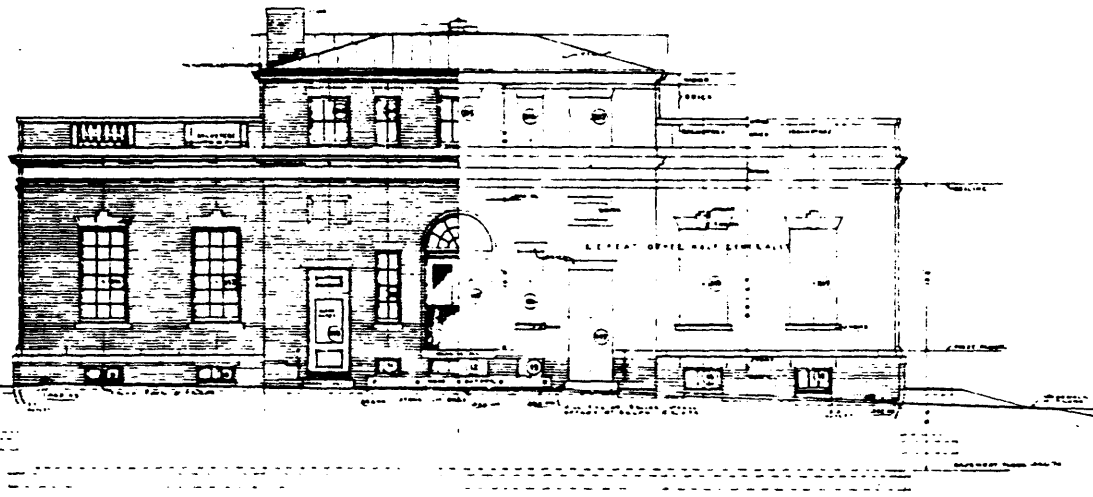
U.S. POST OFFICE  
 No 104

U.S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN  
 WEARLEY CO. TN



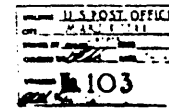
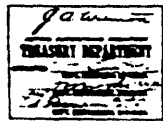
*J. A. ...*  
 TREASURY DEPARTMENT

U.S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN  
 WEAKLEY CO. TN



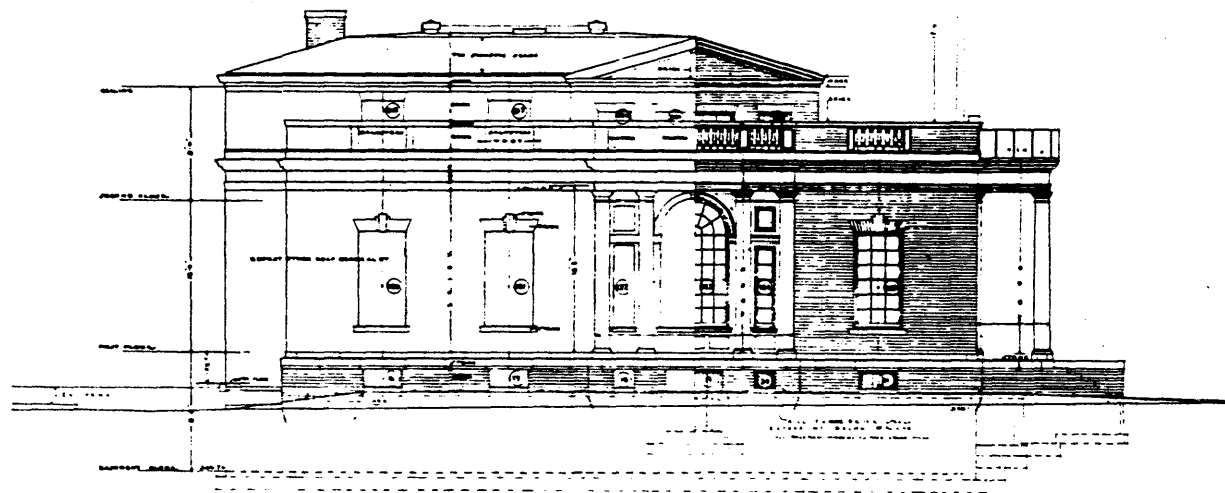
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SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

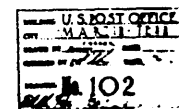
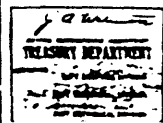


U.S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN  
WEAKLEY CO., TN

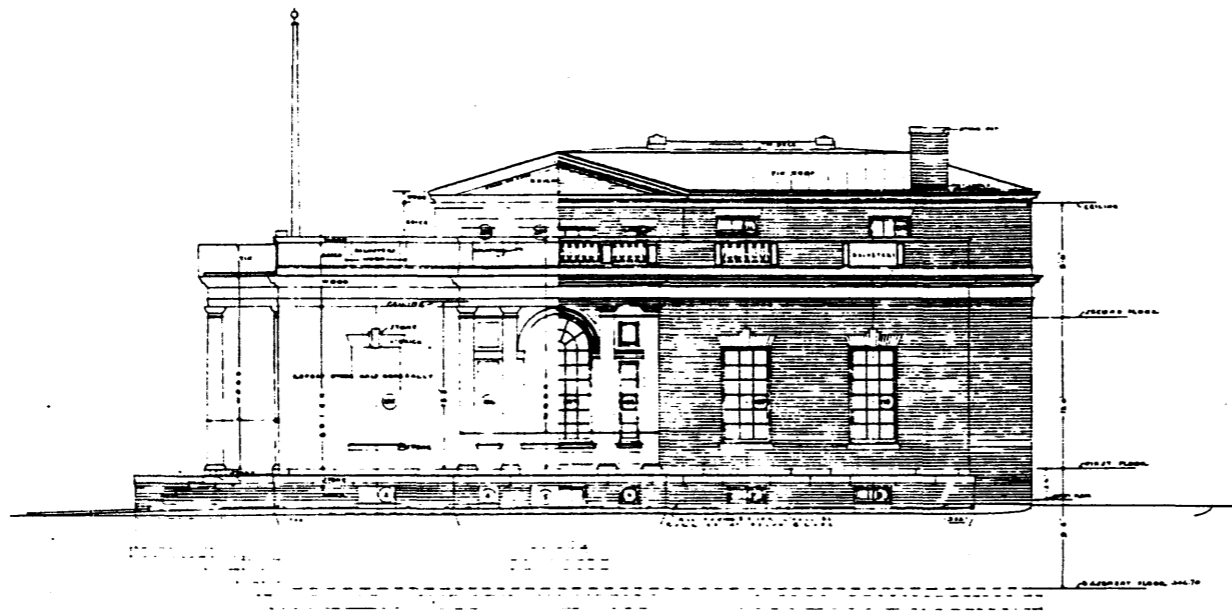




SIDE ELEVATION  
GENERAL NOTES  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



U.S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN,  
WEAVER CO. TN



SIDE ELEVATION

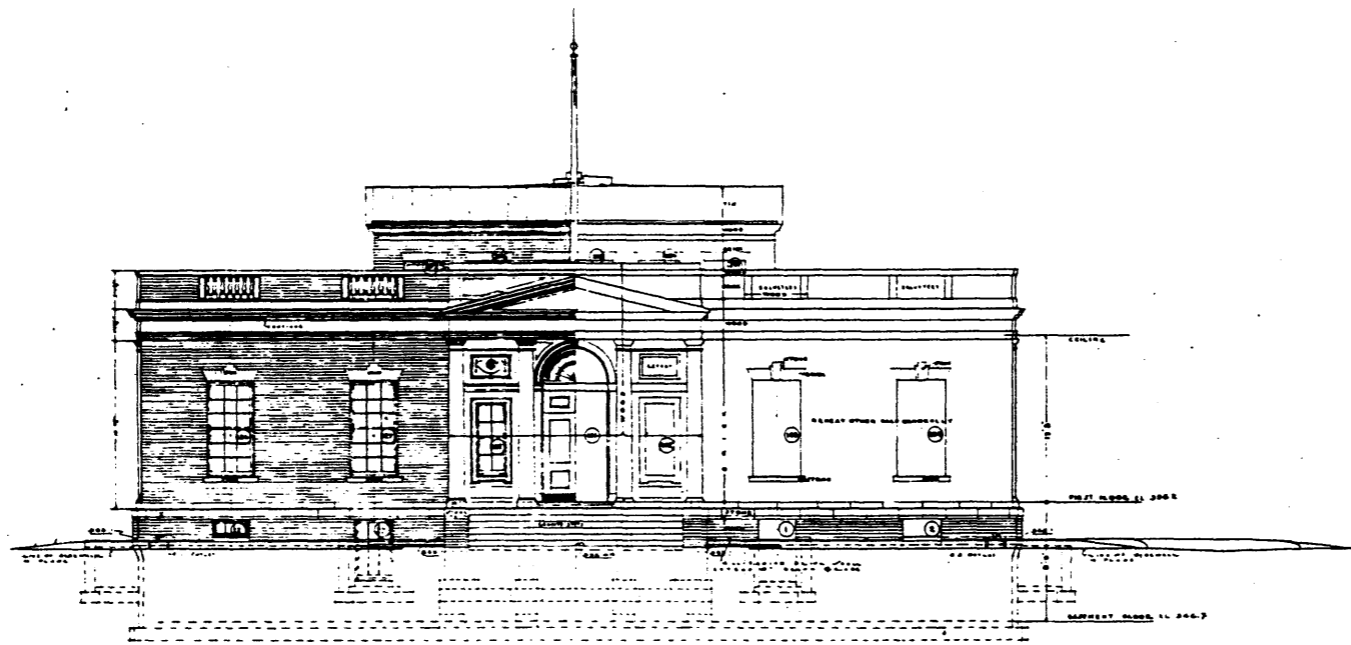
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

*J. O. ...*  
TREASURY DEPARTMENT

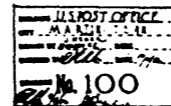
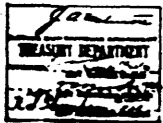
U.S. POST OFFICE  
MARTIN  
WEARLEY CO. TN  
1911

U.S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN  
WEARLEY CO. TN

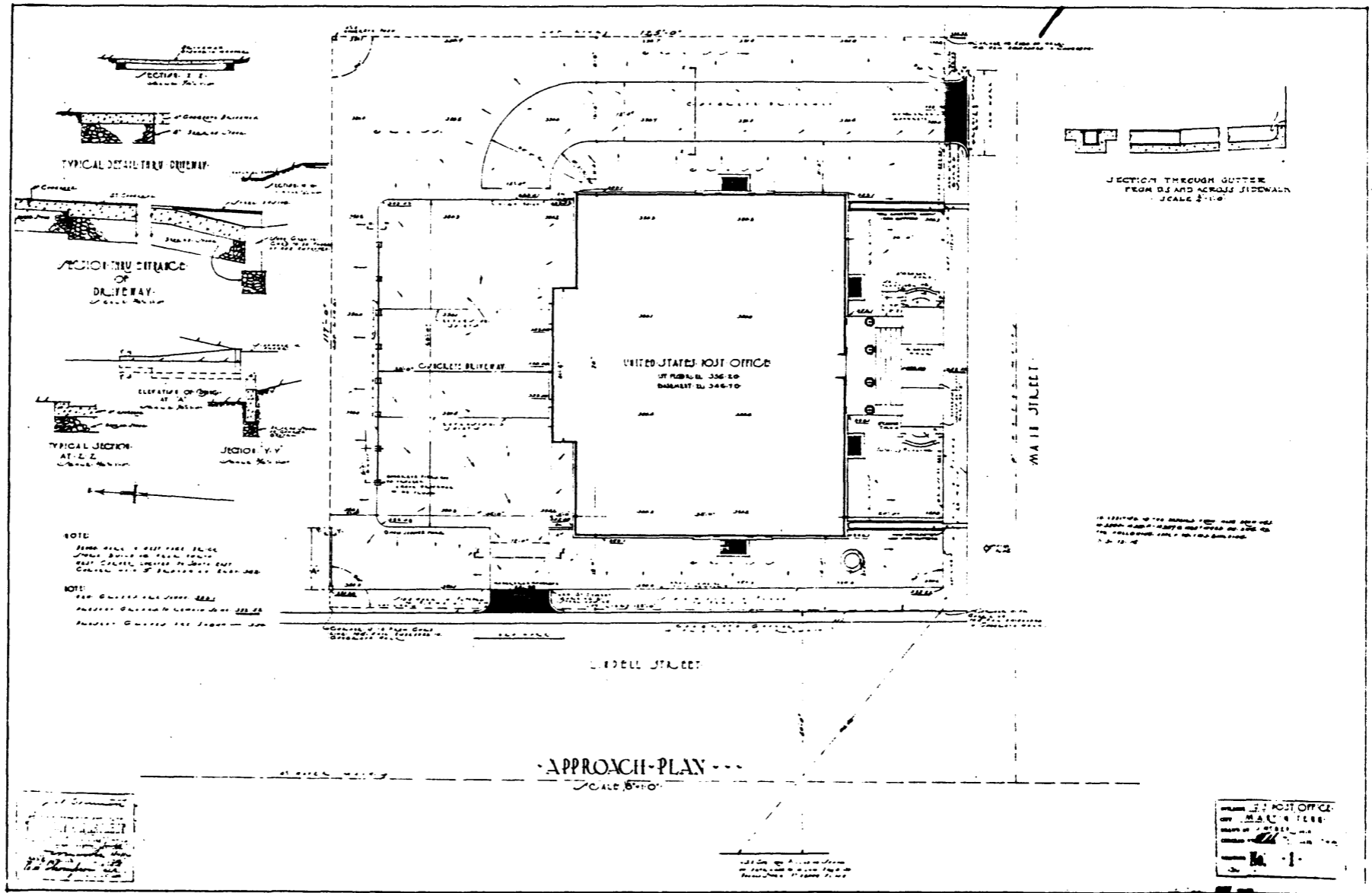
4011  
FEDERAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC DEFENSE  
DESIGNED BY THE ARCHITECT  
FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
1937



FRONT ELEVATION  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



U.S. POST OFFICE, MARTIN  
WEAKLEY CO. TN



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