

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

PENNSYLVANIA STATE CAPITOL BUILDING

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Pennsylvania State Capitol Building

Other Name/Site Number: N/A

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Third, Walnut, Commonwealth, & North Streets

Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: Harrisburg

Vicinity: N/A

State: PA County: Dauphin Code: 43

Zip Code: 17120

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: \_\_\_

Public-Local: \_\_\_

Public-State: X

Public-Federal: \_\_\_

Category of Property

Building(s): \_\_\_

District: X

Site: \_\_\_

Structure: \_\_\_

Object: \_\_\_

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

2

1

1

3

7

Non-contributing

2 buildings

0 sites

2 structures

0 objects

4 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 1

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

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**4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the Nation 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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Certifying Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

**5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_\_ Entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Determined eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_\_ Removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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### **6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic: Government

Sub: Capitol

Current: Government

Sub: Capitol

### **7. DESCRIPTION**

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals: Beaux-Arts

#### MATERIALS:

Foundation: Stone, Brick, Concrete

Walls: Stone (granite), Clay Tile, Metal (steel), Brick

Roof: Metal (steel, copper), Terra Cotta Tile

Other: Wood, Glass

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### **Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.**

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, lies in the south-central portion of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania approximately 80 miles north of Baltimore, Maryland, and 100 miles west of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The city and surrounding communities are home to just under 50,000 people.

The Pennsylvania State Capitol Building in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, has national significance as an example of Renaissance Revival architecture as defined through Beaux-Arts Classicism. The Pennsylvania State Capitol Building represents the finest execution of the American Renaissance architecture movement of the early part of the twentieth century. Architect Joseph Huston's use of the Italian Renaissance style for the building and his collaboration with artists, sculptors and craftsmen has proven to be successful. From the dome based on Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome and the grand staircase based on Garnier's Paris Opera House to the unprecedented collection of work from the great American artists Edwin Austin Abbey and Violet Oakley, the Pennsylvania Capitol exudes American Renaissance. The rich decoration, which glorifies Pennsylvania's achievements in labor, industry, and history, is expressive of the power and might of the Commonwealth. The Pennsylvania State Capitol is both unique and an exemplar of the finest in the American Renaissance style architecture.

The Pennsylvania State Capitol Building sits toward the south-western area of the city upon a broad hill facing westward toward the Susquehanna River. Built from 1902-1906, and designed by Philadelphia architect Joseph M. Huston, the structure is monumental. The granite edifice is a Palladian plan, consisting of three wings (center, north, south) connected by hyphen corridors. The Capitol is surrounded to the west and south by a large park covering approximately fifteen acres. The southern half of Capitol Park is the area originally granted to the Commonwealth by John Harris, Jr., the son of Harrisburg founder John Harris. The building is seven stories tall with the inclusion of the basement and attic floors, but the exterior reveals only five of these levels.

### **SITE**

The Pennsylvania State Capitol Building sits as the primary focus on Harrisburg's Capitol Hill. Although a greater civic plan has evolved around it since its construction, this larger complex has not yet been evaluated for national significance. Resources contributing to the national significance of the complex include the following: the Capitol Building, excluding the Capitol East Wing Addition; the Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building); and the Capitol Grounds/Capitol Park that contain the Mexican War Memorial, the General Hartranft Memorial, the Boies Penrose Memorial, and the grand staircase in the western Capitol Grounds. Resources that at this time do not contribute to the national significance are the South and North Office Buildings, the fountain in the plaza between the two office buildings, and the arcade which surrounds the fountain. The North and South Office Buildings are contributing resources to the Pennsylvania State Capitol complex, which has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places by the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Officer. However, they have not been evaluated for national significance at this time. The place of the capitol complex, and its contributing components, in the national context of the City Beautiful movement, civic center master plans, and state capitol complexes has not yet been determined, and is beyond the scope of this nomination.

### **CAPITOL BUILDING**

#### **Exterior**

The Pennsylvania Capitol Building represents the American Renaissance incorporating Greek and Roman classical motifs. The basic construction material for the Capitol is Vermont granite. Visually, there are five vertical sections to the Capitol Building: the ashlar section (one story), the rusticated section (two stories), the

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column section (three stories), the roof section, and the domes. Horizontally, the Capitol can also be broken into five sections: the north wing; the north hyphen; the center wing; the south hyphen; and the south wing.

Starting with the vertical assessment, the ashlar section (basement) is the lowest level of the building and is cut and coursed rectangular stone with a smooth finish. This part is extremely plain with the exception of a pedimented entryway in the central wing rear. Its highest course of stone is constructed to make this level appear as a large water table. Large cut and dressed stone slabs are used for the window heads. The windows in this section as for the entire Capitol Building, are found in sets of two, recessed and usually with stone separating them. A simple rounded drip course separates the ashlar section from the rusticated part.<sup>1</sup>

The rusticated section includes the first and entresol floors. This section features the granite with deep channeled grooves between the courses and blocks of stone. Forming the ends of the steps at this level are the noted Barnard statues. On the main wing, the rusticated stone is raised and forms an arcade between the raised rusticated section. Three entrances with bracket-like embellishment over them form the main entrance to the Capitol. On each of the other wings are entrances. A set of steps leads to all of the entrances. Windows found on this level are either flat headed with radiating voussoir or round headed and arched. The windows of the hyphen are somewhat larger than those found on the wings. This section uses a drip course for window sills. The rear and side windows are one over one sash with a fixed decorated section above. At the top of the rusticated section is a more square drip course on which the column section rests.<sup>2</sup>

The column level encompasses the second, third, and fourth floors of the Capitol Building. The most prominent feature of this level is the mass of Corinthian columns and pilasters. Starting from a slight water table, the base for each of the columns and pilasters sits on a pedestal. They have square plinths, a simple base and shaft and a Corinthian capital. Columns are used on the porticos of the wings, engaged columns are used on the hyphen section and pilasters are used elsewhere on the building. Above the columns, actually supported by the attached ones, an entablature runs around the whole building. It consists of three parts, the architrave, consisting of three successive bands, the frieze, and the cornice the last consisting of rows of bed-moldings surmounted by a course of square block dentils. Three sets of windows are found on this level. The lowest of the three consists of sets of two, one over one sash with a boxed ornamental section above. These windows are usually found with either pedimented or hooded heads. The other two heights of windows are simple with the second tier being smaller than the previously mentioned windows and the final tier square and smaller than the second. On the front wing and hyphen sections there are only two tiers of windows; the elaborate ones and either round or square windows above them.<sup>3</sup>

The next level is the parapet, composed of a series of altering piers and balustrades. This arrangement however is varied over the projection of the principal wings, where the pierced parapet is replaced by a solid one. Over the central wing this takes the form of an attic while the side wings have the attic partially concealed by a low gable.<sup>4</sup>

The dome rests upon a drum, or circular wall of masonry. Each of sixteen supporting piers is ornamented with a pair of Corinthian columns, which project from the cylinder of the dome. Between them are sixteen windows,

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<sup>1</sup> Main Capitol Building, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form. (Washington, DC: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, August 1973), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 2-3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 3.

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surmounted by a hood-molding, alternating triangular and curved. Above this portion of the cylinder are sixteen garlands which are interrupted by the continuation of the piers, with the whole ring being crowned with a cornice. In the latter appears a course of egg-and-dart molding, and it is here that the granite, as an exterior material, ceases. From the molding upward, as far as the ball, the sheathing, except for the bronze hoods over the lights, is composed of green glazed terra-cotta.<sup>5</sup>

The cupola repeats in miniature the lower arrangement, having a series of sixteen pairs of Corinthian columns, and intervening windows. The cornice over them is surmounted by two diminishing circles of ornamentation, above which the structure terminates in a truncated spire. On this is mounted a gilt ball, supporting a bronze and gilded statue, symbolic of the Commonwealth. The allegorical female figure, molded by Roland Hinton Perry, measures fourteen feet six inches high and with the ball, eighteen feet six inches. It is poised, facing west, with the right arm extended forward, and the left upholding a garlanded mace.<sup>6</sup>

On each of the end wings is a smaller dome. It rises about one-third of the height of the main dome and consists of copper ribs and green glazed terra-cotta tile. The mid-sections of these domes consist of a series of window panels that illuminate interior light shafts. These domes are topped with a protruding copper cap and finial ornament.<sup>7</sup>

Horizontally, the Capitol can be broken down to the three wings and two hyphens. The south hyphen houses the House of Representatives chamber, while the north hyphen houses the Senate chambers.

The center wing serves as the main entrance to the building and follows the same basic vertical layout as previously described with a few exceptions. At the ashlar level, a wide set of granite steps lead to the entrance arcade at the rusticated level. Positioned at the rusticated level are two large decorative bronze light standards and three large bronze lanterns hang within the arcade. Flanking the steps at this level are two monumental statuary groups carved in Carrara marble by George Grey Barnard. Centered within the arcade are a set of large sculpted bronze doors topped by a bronze sculpted lunette. The column level protrudes from the building creating a portico and is capped by the building's entablature. The parapet level over the center wing is solid, unlike the majority of the building where it is altering piers and balustrade. Above the parapet level of the center wing sits the dome.

The north and south wings are reflections of each other and also follow the same basic vertical layout as previously described with a few exceptions. At the ashlar level, the north and south Wings have a set of stairs leading to the rusticated section where there are large sculpted bronze doors topped with a fixed lunette. The column level protrudes from the building creating a portico capped with a triangular pediment at the parapet level. Each wing is in turn capped with the previously described small dome.

The north and south hyphens, which are mirror images of each other, also follow the same vertical layout as previously described with the exception at the column level where the upper most oculus windows contain stained glass images by William Brantley Van Ingen. At the parapet level rises a gabled roof of green glazed terra-cotta tile beyond the parapet wall.

The north and south wings and the hyphens follow the patterns established at the west façade with the exception

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 4.

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of the entrances. There are no grand entrances at either wing. The rear entrance to the Capitol was at the ashlar level however this entrance is now enclosed as part of the modern East Wing Addition of 1986. The center east wing extends out the back of the building one more bay than the north and south wings and is capped with a gabled roof of green glazed terra-cotta tile and contains a clerestory to illuminate the stained glass dome in the Supreme Court Room below.

The north and south elevations of the Capitol follow a very similar vertical alignment as the west and east elevations. The ashlar level is cut and coursed rectangular stone with a smooth finish and is penetrated by pairs of one-over-one windows. A simple rounded drip course separates the ashlar level from the rusticated level. The rusticated level, again encompassing the first and entresol floors, has deep channeled grooved granite blocks. Each side has two rows of one-over-one windows with the exception of the west end of each façade which has a decorative grille window over each one over one window.

The column section of the north and south facades has a series of engaged Corinthian columns and pilasters. Like the west and east elevations, the base for each of the columns and pilasters sits on a pedestal. They have square plinths, a simple base and shaft and a Corinthian capital. Columns are used on the portico in the center of the elevation; pilasters are used elsewhere on the elevation. The columns and pilasters support the entablature that runs around the entire building. Three sets of windows are found at this level.

The parapet level is composed of a series of piers and balustrades. The extended center wing portico of these elevations is capped by a triangular pediment. The roof is a green glazed terra cotta tile.

### **Interior**

The interior of the Capitol Building can be divided into sections by its individual occupants. The north wing and hyphen are occupied by the Pennsylvania Senate. The south wing and hyphen are occupied by the Pennsylvania House of Representatives as well as the Governor on the second floor. The center wings house the Lieutenant Governor's office, House Members, and the Pennsylvania Supreme and Superior Court. The interiors of typical offices consist of plaster walls over terra cotta clay tile. Rooms are accented with Honduras mahogany wainscot and ornamental plaster ceilings. Exceptional ornamentation is found in the House, Senate, and Supreme and Superior Court Chambers, the Governor's Grand Executive Reception Room and the Governors and Lt. Governors Private Offices. Artwork plays a vital role in the decoration of the Pennsylvania Capitol including murals by Violet Oakley and Edwin Austin Abbey, stained glass and murals by William B. Van Ingen, and the unique mosaic tile floor by Henry C. Mercer, which depicts the history of Pennsylvania

### **Rotunda**

As one enters the west main entrance of the Capitol through the decorative bronze doors, designed by architect Joseph Huston, modeled by Otto Jahnsen and cast by the Henry Bonnard Bronze Company, you pass through a barrel vaulted vestibule before you enter the Rotunda. The floor of the rotunda, as well as the entire first floor, is a clay tile floor created by Henry Chapman Mercer. Mercer's floor contains decorative mosaics depicting the history of Pennsylvania. The Arts and Crafts style floor is in strong contrast with the rest of the finishes in the Capitol.

The main focus in the rotunda is the grand stair. Inspired by the staircase in the Paris Opera House, it is made from Vermont marble while the treads are Italian grey marble. On either side of the grand staircase are two light standards. Each standard is a classical, winged female figure holding a lighted orb made up of stringed crystal beads in her upwardly extended hands. The figures are supported by two marble pedestals that act as newel posts. The grand stair ascends in two parts to the circular gallery at the second floor. The first part of the

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stair, from the main floor up to the Entresol level, is separated into two runs by a shallow landing. The second part, from the entresol level up to the second floor gallery level, is divided into two separate flights; one rises to the north and the other to the south.

The walls of the Rotunda are rusticated, white Vermont marble. Flanking the entrance points to the rotunda from the hyphens, entrance vestibule, and east wing are massive piers also sheathed in marble which rise to support the second floor gallery. At the first floor level each pier has a marble-lined niche centered on its face. Each niche, as well as the two smaller niches behind the staircase contains cast bronze and glass cases designed by Harrisburg architect Joseph N. Uhler to house Pennsylvania's Civil War battle flags.

In addition to the two light fixtures at the foot of the grand stair, the rotunda is illuminated by six pairs of bronze light standards, designed by architect Joseph Huston and cast by the Henry Bonnard Co. On the first floor are two standards at the entresol floor, nine standards around the balustrade of the second floor, and six standards around the perimeter of the second floor. They are paired outside of the House Chamber, Senate Chamber and the Lieutenant Governor's Office.

The second floor level of the rotunda provides access to the House Chamber to the south, the Senate Chamber to the north and the Lieutenant Governor's Office to the west. Between the second and fourth floors are large Corinthian pilasters supporting an entablature that forms the base of the dome drum. The plaster frieze of the entablature is ornamented with gold and blue glass mosaic with the inscription by William Penn noting "AND MY GOD WILL MAKE IT THE SEED OF A NATION" "THAT AN EXAMPLE MAY BE SET UP TO THE NATIONS" "THAT WE MAY DO THE THING THAT IS TRULY WISE AND JUST." Above the entablature are four barrel vaulted arches, each with a recess creating a lunette. The lunettes formed by these arches are embellished with Edwin Abbey's four murals as follows: east - *The Spirit of Religious Liberty*, west - *Science Revealing the Treasures of the Earth*, north - *The Spirit of Vulcan*, south - *The Spirit of Light*. In each corner, between each arch, is a single, large, circular medallion. Each medallion is decorated with a canvas painting by artist, E. A. Abbey. In each medallion a solitary, female figure stands before a background inscription. The allegorical figures represent: *Religion, Law, Science, and Art*. Each painting is inscribed *Copyrighted 1908 By Edwin Austin Abbey*. Above the pendentives, at the apex of each of the four large arches, there is another entablature which forms the base of the dome above. The plaster architrave of this entablature is ornamented with gold glass mosaic. The inscription "THERE MAY BE ROOM THERE FOR SUCH A HOLY EXPERIMENT. FOR THE NATIONS WANT A PRECEDENT" "WILLIAM PENN" is formed in blue glass mosaic on the gold background.

Around the dome of the drum are sixteen large rectangular windows featuring a wood sash that holds leaded stained glass in a geometric pattern. The lantern drum, above the domed ceiling, also has sixteen tall vertical glazed openings separated by fluted pilasters.<sup>8</sup>

### House Chamber

The House Chamber is the largest of the three chambers of the Capitol (ninety-five feet wide by one hundred and twenty feet long.) and is built in the Corinthian order. It is located on the second floor and occupies the space in the south hyphen of the building with the main entrance to the House Chamber located on the second floor balcony of the Rotunda. The floor of the House Chamber ramps downward from the north to the south with eleven stepped platforms. The platforms are arranged in an arched pattern in which banks of original

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<sup>8</sup> Capitol Preservation Committee. *Historic Structure Report: A Comprehensive Preservation Plan of The Pennsylvania Capitol*, vol. 1 (Harrisburg, PA: Capitol Preservation Committee, 1996), 146-164.



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mahogany member's desks are arranged. The floor is carpeted with an ornate pattern in the historic colors of the chamber, blue and gold. The rostrum extends along the south end of the Chamber. It is arranged in three levels, which rises above the Chamber floor. The lowest platform has a mahogany balustrade. The second rise contains a long mahogany desk holding clerk functions. The top riser holds the marble faced Speaker's podium.

The Chamber has a wainscot of book matched marble quarried from the French Pyrenees Mountains ranging from six feet high to nine-feet four inches in the pit. Above the wainscot, the east and west walls are divided into six bays by paired Corinthian columns. Each pair of columns has a corresponding pair of pilasters projecting from the wall behind. These plaster elements extend upward to support a full entablature. Between each of the columns resting above the marble wainscot are 18 bronze sconces. The entablature supported by the columns and pilasters is only located in blocks directly above each pair of columns; it is not a continuous entablature. Between each set of columns are tall mahogany casement windows which are divided by muntins forming a repetitive Roman cross pattern. Transom windows are located above the casement windows which are also divided into Roman cross muntin patterns. Above each of the window openings there is a corresponding oculus window situated in the plaster cove with a lunette above the entablature. Each of the fourteen openings (two are located in the north gallery area) contain leaded stained glass designed by William Van Ingen. The figural subjects represent, on the west side south to north, *Steel and Iron*, *Education*, *Petroleum*, *Abundance*, *Commerce*, and *Steam*. On the east side they represent, south to north, *Electricity*, *Chemistry*, *Bridge-Building*, *Natural Gas*, *Justice*, and *Liberty*. The two additional subjects, located in the gallery, are *Printing Press* on the east side and *Religion* on the west side.

The north and south walls are each divided into a wide center bay flanked on each side by a narrow bay. Each of the three bays is separated by pairs of Corinthian columns and their corresponding pilasters. These columns and pilasters also rest on the marble wainscoting below. In addition to Edwin Austin Abbey's painting, *The Camp of the American Army at Valley Forge, February, 1787*, a balcony is located halfway up the columns on the north wall, while the south wall is ornamented with murals between the columns. These murals are: *Penn's Treaty*, *The Apotheosis*, and *The Reading of the Declaration of Independence*. At both walls the outer, narrow bays each have pedimented doorways in them. The projecting pediments are supported on Corinthian columns and pilasters.

The ceiling is composed of two types of surfaces. The central part of the ceiling is coffered with flat panels and the ceiling at the perimeter of the room is coved. The east and west plaster coves are each divided into six bays separated by ribs. Springing from the Corinthian columns, the face of each curved rib is ornamented with square coffers and rosettes. Because of the presence of the lunette, the coved ceiling section in each bay is broken into a partial vault with two ribs of the vault springing from the entablature. All surfaces of the coves and lunettes are profusely ornamented with raised plaster gilded foliate scrolls, griffins, urns and cherubs all designed by artist Edwin Austin Abbey.

The coffered, central portion of the ceiling is composed of a large circular center coffer ornamented with Edwin Abbey's oil on canvas painting of *The Passage of the Hours*. Two large square coffers flank the center coffer at both the south and north side. Their ceiling surfaces are ornamented with gilded foliate relief ornament similar to that used in the coves. The massive ribs which span the length and breadth of the chamber are faced with small square coffers with rosettes.

Four ornate bronze and glass chandeliers weighing nearly four tons are located at the crossing of the major ribs of the ceiling. Two smaller bronze and glass chandeliers are located one between the east chandelier and

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between the west chandelier.<sup>9</sup> At the north end of the ceiling is a cartouche with the inscription: “AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.”

### Senate Chamber

The Senate Chamber is the second largest of the three main chambers of the Capitol (ninety-five feet wide by eighty feet long). It is located on the second floor and occupies the space in the north hyphen of the building with the main entrance to the Chamber located on the second floor balcony of the rotunda. The floor is carpeted in reproduction 1906 pattern Wilton carpet and the member's desks are arranged in a linear fashion. Four gold finished bronze floor light standards are offset from each corner of the room. At the north end of the Chamber is the rostrum. The rostrum has an Irish Connemara marble balustrade which is carved in a Roman cross pattern. Behind the balustrade sits a mahogany desk unit for the clerks. Three risers above this desk sits the President's mahogany desk ornamented with a large cartouche emblazoned with the state seal and flanked by carved consoles.

Five foot high green Connemara Irish marble wainscot surrounds the room and is set so the cut veining is book matched. A deep sill is formed at the top of the wainscot on the east and west walls. The sill supports five fluted Doric pilasters which form four bays on each wall. Between each pilaster are fourteen bronze sconces around the room. The pilasters support the entablature whose frieze consists of a succession of triglyphs, ox-skulls, and a breast plate with crossed swords. A pair of tall casement windows is located within each bay. Each casement leaf is divided by muntins creating a repetitive Roman cross pattern. A glazed transom window is located above each window, also with a Roman cross muntin. Above each of the eight casement windows are eight round windows located in the ceiling coves with stained leaded glass with emblematic motifs by William Brantley Van Ingen that represent industries of Pennsylvania; on the east side, *Weaving, Temperance, Glass Blowing* and *Peace*. On the west side the figures represent *Legislature, History, Foundries, and Architecture*. Two additional round stained glass windows are located in the Gallery. “Railroads” is on the east and “Militia” is on the west.

The north and south walls are five bays wide, also separated by fluted Doric pilasters. The north wall contains murals by Violet Oakley. The murals are *Troops of the Revolution/ Washington*, above the west door, *The Constitutional Convention* to the west of the dais, *Lincoln at Gettysburg* to the east of the dais and *Troops of the Civil War/ General Meade* above the west door. Above the entablature beginning on the east side of the north wall is *The Slaves of the Earth* followed by the center frieze of *International Understanding and Unity*. The west side mural depicts *The Arms of the Earth*.

The first, third and fifth bays at the south wall have doors at the floor level with the visitor's gallery balcony located above. Above the balcony an open arch frames each bay. The second and fourth bays have rectangular mural panels above the wainscot with a lower balcony located below and the visitor's gallery above. The murals, which depict scenes from Pennsylvania Quaker history, are Violet Oakley's *The Little Sanctuary in the Wilderness* and *The Slave Ship Ransomed*. Between the second and third arches stand caryatides that project from the wall above the entablature. These were the only pieces completed and installed in the Senate Chamber by Edwin Austin Abbey who had the original commission in the Senate Chamber.

The ceiling of the Senate Chamber is composed of two types of surfaces. The central part is coffered with flat panels and the ceiling at the perimeter of the room is coved. The east and west coves are each divided into six bays separated by ribs. The central section of the ceiling section has twelve coffers formed by massive ribs

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 355-357.

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whose undersides are molded in the form of gilded, bound leaves. At the intersections of the ribs are massive rosettes. Six of these serve as the points of suspension of the bronze and glass chandeliers. In the recessed panel of each coffer is a large gilded rosette.

### Supreme and Superior Court Chamber

The Supreme and Superior Court Chamber is located on the east side of the fourth floor and is executed in the style of Greek Ionic. It is forty-two feet wide by seventy-two feet long. The room has wall to wall 1906 reproduction Wilton carpet with the Judges' bench located at the northern part of the room. The mahogany bench is located on a raised dais and ornamented with paired engaged Ionic colonettes, recessed panels and a carved palmette frieze. A semi-elliptical mahogany bar with Ionic balustrades is located at the north and south sides of the room.

The Chamber has a nine foot high wainscot of mahogany. The paneling of the wainscot consists of geometric Greek grille patterns, and a wood entablature. The north and south walls each have two windows flanked by mahogany fluted Ionic columns which support a triangular pediment above the window. Centered between the windows on each wall is one of Violet Oakley's sixteen murals depicting the history of law. The east and west walls have a projection in the wainscoting which supports two pairs of fluted ionic columns. The columns flank a central mural panel and rise to support a projecting section of the room entablature. At the west wall, a pair of doors is located directly under the mural. Another three murals, spanning from the wainscoting up to the entablature, flank each side of the two porches for a total of seven murals per wall. Violet Oakley's murals for the Supreme and Superior Court Chamber are entitled *The Opening of the Book of Law* and include:

*Divine Law*  
*The Scale of the Law*  
*The Golden Age*  
*Themis*  
*The Decalogue*  
*The Beatitudes*  
*Code of Justinian*  
*Blackstone's Commentaries*  
*The Spirit of William Blackstone*  
*Commentaries*  
*Penn as Law-Giver*  
*Supreme Court of the STATE*  
*Supreme Court of the NATION*  
*Supreme Court of the WORLD*  
*DISARMAMENT*  
*The SPIRIT OF LAW*

The ceiling of the Supreme Court Chamber is dominated by the circular stained glass dome at the center of the room. Dropped beams flanking the dome create a coffered ceiling area at the north and south ends of the room. The stained glass dome, designed and executed by Pennsylvania native Alfred Godwin, is supported on a wooden drum containing vents with a Greek grille motif. The dome is divided into panels by ribs. The pattering of the glass is of conventionalized flowers and scrolls, the principle colors being green and white with buff and gold highlights and a golden oculus. Four bronze and glass chandeliers, each with four clusters of flame-shaped orange globes with projecting arms hang in the four corners of the center coffers of the room. The center of each chandelier holds a statue cast in bronze that depict law givers Moses, Solomon, Socrates,

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and Aristotle.

**Governor's Grand Executive Reception Room**

The Governor's Grand Executive Reception Room (seventy-two feet long by twenty-seven feet wide) is located on the second floor of the south wing of the Capitol Building and is executed in the style of the English Renaissance. The reception room has wall to wall carpet that has been reproduced to match the original Berlin rug in color and pattern that was originally installed in this room. In the four corners stand massive bronze and glass light standards.<sup>10</sup>

The wainscoted walls are book matched quarter-sawn English oak. A wood entablature consisting of scrolled brackets and ornamented acanthus leaves encircles the room at the top of the wood paneling. The eleven north wall panels are divided by engaged pilasters with three pairs of doors evenly spaced. The south wall mirrors the north with the exception of French doors with double lights that open to a portico. Transoms are located above each opening.

The east and west walls each have a center fireplace. The detailing of the two is identical. The smooth fireplace surround and hearth are constructed of yellow Sienna marble. The marble rises in a flush face to the wood entablature of the wall paneling, which continues above the fireplace. A wood pilaster flanks each corner of the projecting marbleface, rising to support the wood entablature above. Each carved wooden pilaster is ornamented with a sword entwined with snakes surmounted with a helmet, above which are laurel branches and a gorget, and finally, the helmeted head of a woman. The composition represents bravery and prudence in the founding of the Commonwealth. Above the wood entablature a massive chimney breast rises to the ceiling. The chimney breast is fabricated in molded plaster faux painted to match the oak. The chimney breast composition includes a figure flanking each side of a central panel. The figures represent agriculture and mining. The center panel incorporates the coat of arms of William Penn with the shields of the United States and Pennsylvania. Above the central panel is a spread-wing eagle. A denticulated cornice caps the chimney breast.

Above the entablature circling the room is a collection of murals by Violet Oakley. The entire collection is entitled *The Founding of the State of Liberty Spiritual*. "It embraces incidents from the life of William Penn and other early Quakers, as well as the translation of the Bible into English and the trials and deaths of English dissenting martyrs."<sup>11</sup>

The ceiling of the Governor's Grand Executive Reception Room is plaster, composed of rectangular, triangular and diamond shaped coffers arranged in a geometric pattern. The faces of the ribs which form the coffers are ornamented with gilded recessed bands of bound leaves and the sides of the ribs are grained to match the oak paneling. The coffers feature large gilded rosettes. Three massive bronze and glass chandeliers hang evenly spaced through the center of the room.

**Governor's Private Office**

The Governor's Private Office is located on the second floor to the west of the Grand Executive Reception Room. This office has a herringbone oak floor covered with an ornate Karastan area rug.

The walls are full height ornate quarter sawn oak panels that are divided into four parts. The lower section is

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 534-540.

<sup>11</sup> *The Pennsylvania Capitol: A Documentary History*, vol. 2 (Harrisburg: Capitol Preservation Committee, 1988), 354.

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composed of smooth rectangular panels under a projecting chair rail. The next section, equal to the height of the door trim, is made up of tall, narrow arch-topped panels decorated with raised relief carving of acanthus scrolls and foliage. The uppermost section, above the frieze, is divided into compartments which hold portraits of former governors. Each portrait is separated from the next by a narrow, Ionic wood pilaster. These pilasters support a narrow wood entablature. The entablature is comprised of a three-facia architrave, a flush frieze and a cornice ornamented with egg and dart molding.

A projecting fireplace is located on the north wall of the room. The black cast-iron firebox is decorated with a raised relief fleur-de-lis pattern. The fireplace surround is constructed of red Numidian marble. It is flanked on each side by paired marble caryatids which support an entablature above. The projecting cornice of this entablature forms the mantel shelf. A wood chimney breast rises above the marble mantel shelf. A recessed pendulum clock is centered in the chimney breast, under a segmental pediment. Two pairs of Corinthian pilasters, resting on the mantel shelf, support the pediment.

There are three doors in the Governor's Private Office. Each single stile and rail door has four panels. The two upper panels of each door are ornamented with raised relief carving matching the carved wall panels. Each door is flanked by Ionic pilasters on chair rail height pedestals. The single panel face of each pilaster is ornamented at its capital with a short garland. The pilasters support a projecting lintel above each door, which rises to the frieze section of the wall paneling. The lintel is comprised of a three-fascia architrave, a flush frieze and a denticulated cornice ornamented with modillions and egg and dart molding.

A pair of French double doors with single pane side lights providing access to a terrace is located on the west wall. Each sash is topped with a glazed transom with a Roman cross muntin pattern. The south wall has two pairs of casement windows with their sills at chair rail height. The glazed transoms above each sash, also has a Roman cross grille muntin pattern.

The plaster ceiling is ornamented with shallow, running moldings forming an intertwining pattern of scrolls and fleur-de-lis. A plaster cove turns down from the ceiling onto the wood entablature at the top of the wall paneling. This cove is ornamented by a series of lunettes, one above each of the portrait compartments. The presence of the lunettes results in half vaults occurring within the cove, one over each lunette. The plaster cove vaulting is decorated with raised relief, gilded fleur-de-lis and wreaths. The lunettes contain molded plaster scrolls inscribed with the name and term of the governor enframed below it.

Two round metal disk-shaped incandescent light fixtures are suspended from what may be the chain and crown of the original chandeliers.

### **Lieutenant Governor's Private Office**

The Lieutenant Governor's Private Office is located on the second floor on the west side of the circular gallery in the rotunda. This office has wall to wall 1906 reproduction arabesque carpet.

The wainscot walls are mahogany stile and rail paneling. A denticulated mahogany cornice caps the paneling and runs continuously across the head of the door openings. The upper wall surface is divided into panels which feature portraits of former lieutenant governors. Each portrait frame is separated from the next by narrow paneled mahogany pilasters. An original plaster entablature encircles the room consisting of a three-facia architrave, a flush frieze and a denticulated cornice ornamented with egg and dart molding and acanthus leaves. Two dropped beams running east/west flank the fireplace and divide the ceiling plane into three rectangular coffers. The face of the dropped beams has a recessed panel and the sides are ornamented with

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moldings to match the entablature. The flat ceiling surface of each coffer is ornamented with an applied inner frame of scrolled plaster work

A massive marble fireplace is centered in the east wall of the room. The carved red Numidian marble fireplace extends up to the height of the mahogany wall paneling. It is flanked at its projecting edges by red marble pilasters faced with recessed panels. A scroll ending in a triglyph with guttae is located at the top of each pilaster, in place of a capital. The segmental arched, black cast-iron firebox is decorated with a raised relief fleur-de-lis pattern. The fireplace surround is flush red marble. A bracketed marble cornice spans between the marble pilasters, in place of a mantel. Above the mantel cornice is a recessed marble panel with raised relief marble garlands and foliage. The running mahogany cornice which caps the wall paneling projects forward at the fireplace and continues across the face of the chimney breast, separating the marble fireplace below from the mahogany chimney breast above. The mahogany chimney breast rises above the marble to the room entablature, and is articulated by a Palladian motif at its face. The three panels are separated by short, flat pilasters. The center, segmental arched panel has a pendulum clock recessed into it.

The north wall has a pair of single-light casement windows while the west wall has a pair of floor to ceiling French doors with side lights providing access to a terrace.

Two original bronze and glass chandeliers hang from the ceiling, one in each of the outer two ceiling coffers. There are three original bronze and glass wall sconces, two located on the north wall and one located on the south wall. Concealed, perimeter up-lighting has been added at the base of the portraits.

### CAPITOL EAST WING ADDITION

Arnold Brunner originally called for an extension of the Capitol Building to the east to harmonize the Capitol, North and South Office Buildings with a new entrance on the first floor. This was never executed, instead a public park, level with Commonwealth Avenue was left. Eventually this park was replaced by a parking lot until 1986 when Brunner's original idea of an eastern wing was realized.

The Capitol East Wing Addition was completed in 1987 by Celli-Flynn Associates, an architectural firm from Pittsburg and occupies 929,000 square feet along with a parking garage for 840 vehicles beneath the structure. It was constructed in the location of the east wing and people's forecourt as proposed by Arnold Brunner in 1925. The addition's location and form, not visible from the Capitol's principal west façade, do not detract from the historic character of the complex.<sup>12</sup> It is designed as a compatible contemporary addition in the neo-classical style and uses similar materials to the original Capitol. Its symmetrical design and incorporation of plazas and fountains continue the integration of building and open space defined by the Brunner plan. Because the addition was constructed after the end of the period of significance it does not contribute to the overall significance of the Capitol Building itself.

### EXECUTIVE, LIBRARY AND MUSEUM BUILDING (*Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building*)

The Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building, originally called the Executive, Library and Museum Building when it was completed in 1894, was built in the neo-classical Renaissance style and is actually the oldest building on Pennsylvania's Capitol Hill. Designed by Philadelphia architect, John Torrey

<sup>12</sup>*The Pennsylvania Capitol*, 501-534.

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Windrim, the Ryan Office Building sits to the south of the 1906 Capitol Building. The Ryan Office Building is a two-story limestone structure with an I-shaped plan. The west façade is Gibbsian in style: it is symmetrical, with the middle third slightly extended with a classical portico front. The main entrance to the building, a round portico at the top of ten steps is accented with five ionic columns in the center of the building. The frieze contains bronze letters spelling out the name of the building: The Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building. Above the cornice is a balustrade creating a second floor porch above the portico. The six first floor windows are all double hung with stone lintels centered with a keystone. Just below these windows at ground level are six windows to the basement level. There are nine second floor windows on the west façade. The far north and south windows are accented with ionic pilasters and a triangular pediment. These two windows also have a small balcony with a balustrade railing. The next two windows moving towards the center are identical to the first floor windows except they have rectangular lintels. The three center windows are set between 4 ionic columns. Above each window is a decorative garland. There is a triangular pediment above the center third of the building with a stone carving of the Pennsylvania state seal in the center, extending above the balustraded parapet at the roof line. The Ryan Office Building has a metal roof with a copper roofed shed with windows over a large skylight directly above the main rotunda of the building. The north, south and east façades follow similar designs as the west façade, with the exception of the portico and porches at the second floor windows at the east facade.

Today, the Ryan Office Building serves as legislative offices for members of the House of Representatives however, the I-shaped plan of the building lent itself very nicely for its original function. Over the hundred year plus history of this building, there were three major occupants. First the second floor west wing was the Governor's Office and Reception Room. Below the Governor's Office on the first floor were the Governor's executive officers and staff. In the center hyphen was the location of the Pennsylvania State Museum. Finally, the east wing of the building served as the State Library. The Ryan Office Building also has a basement and an attic. Originally these spaces were used for storage but today they have been converted into offices.

The interior of the Ryan Office Building consists of red oak doors and trim. The Grand stairs in the main rotunda is modeled after the staircase of Dodge's Palace in Venice, Italy. The entire rotunda area of the west wing is covered with a pink scagliola and there is a decorative skylight illuminating the space. In the center of the main reading hall of the Library stands a statue of Abraham Lincoln in front of a photo mural of the Battle of Gettysburg. The east wing that originally was the library now houses House of Representative legislative staff and is accented with two large reproduction crystal chandeliers.

The Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building having been built in the neo-classical Renaissance style assisted in influencing the style chosen for the new Capitol Building in 1902.

### CAPITOL GROUNDS AND GRAND STAIRCASE

The Capitol grounds occupy an area bounded by North Street to the north; Commonwealth Avenue to the east; Walnut Street to the south; and Third Street to the west. As it stands today, the Capitol grounds reflect the work of New York architect Arnold W. Brunner who was selected to design an extension of the Capitol Park. The Brunner Plan for the Pennsylvania State Capitol Complex, introduced in 1920, called for the addition of five new buildings east of the already existing State Capitol Building and Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building), on Pennsylvania's Capitol Hill, as well as modifications to the Capitol grounds including grading, paths, light fixtures and most significantly, the main entrance steps to the Capitol from Third Street.

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The grounds to the north of the building are a flat plateau that drastically slopes down to North Street. Among the various trees and bushes, lantern-topped light fixtures illuminate the paths. A steep set of stairs lead from the top of the hill to North Street. Within the slope is a stone retaining wall allowing for a path to be cut into the hill. A second set of stairs sweep from the northwestern corner of the hill to the corner of North and Third streets. The west grounds are immediately in front of the Capitol Building. The grand staircase is centered on the building and follows the slope of the hill down to Third Street. The grand staircase is a large and prominent feature on the west grounds. Because it was constructed during the period of significance as a part of the Brunner plan it is considered a contributing structure.

Between the building and the steps is a parking plaza which has an entrance driveway to the south and an exit driveway to the north. The entire west side of the plaza flanking both the north and south sides of the stairs is a granite balustrade with incorporated benches at the central stairs. At the north exit from the plaza to the driveway sit two geometric forms known as rhombicosidodecahedron which feature a regular arrangement of pentagons, squares, and equilateral triangles. Both rhombicosidodecahedrons were designed by architects William Gehron & Sidney G. Ross who assumed responsibility for the Capitol Park extension after the death of their associate Arnold Brunner in 1925. At the entrance and exit of the Capitol driveway sit two Capitol police guard houses which were installed in 2000. The driveways were also modified in 2000 with security bollards and a wedge barricade on both sides. Across the front of the steps along Third Street, granite bollards have also been installed. Within the grass area between the driveways and central staircase are a collection of mature trees of various specie. Lantern-topped light fixtures outline the stairs, driveway and paths in front of the Capitol.

The grounds directly to the south of the Capitol Building and Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building) are officially known as Capitol Park. It is a triangular parcel of land that has existed since this land was given to the State of Pennsylvania in 1785. The landscaped park is full of trees and assorted plant specimens with walkways traversing the park in multiple directions and illuminated by tall lantern-topped light fixtures. The topography has a long distinct slope away from the Capitol, which sits at the apex of the hill, towards Walnut Street to the south where it falls at a drastic slope to street level. The park also has a very dramatic slope at Third Street. These significant drops were caused by the widening of the city streets at the same time as the Capitol Park improvements in the 1920s. There are several sets of granite stairs from Capitol Park to the street level below which were installed in the 1920s as well. These are located at Third and Pine streets, Third and Locust streets, at the corner of Third and Walnut streets, and at the corner of Fourth and Walnut streets. There is also a modern bridge crossing Walnut Street from Capitol Park to Strawberry Square, a downtown mall constructed in 1978. The east border of Capitol Park is a high granite retaining wall at Fourth Street.

Finally, the tract of land between Fourth Street and Commonwealth Avenue is a flat grassy area with several mature trees and a path running from the entrance to the South Office Building to the corner of Fourth and Walnut streets. Fourth Street, north of Walnut Street is now an exit access road from the underground roadway and parking garage under the Capitol East Wing Addition. This access road is protected by security bollards and a wedge barricade.

The Capitol Grounds are considered a contributing site because of their design and construction during the period of significance as a part of the landscaping for the State Capitol Building as conceived by Arnold W. Brunner.



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### **MEXICAN WAR MONUMENT**

Legislation passed in the winter of 1858 allowed for a monument to be constructed as a memorial to the Pennsylvania citizens who lost their lives in the Mexican War (1846-1848). The structure, costing approximately \$10,000 to construct with an additional \$24,000 for marble, stands 64 feet high—measuring from the bottom of the first granite step to the top of the monument. Supports, adorned with eagles on top, are located at each corner of the base. The monument also consists of a Corinthian style marble column measuring 31 feet high and resting on a marble base with the names of the battles written on panels located on the faces of each side. A statue of winged victory sits atop the monument. Executed in Rome, the statue is made of Italian marble and measures ten feet and four inches high. Originally, there was an iron fence surrounding the base of the monument in which the pickets resembled muskets used during the war.

In 1868, the monument was placed in Capitol Park, 20 years after the end of the Mexican War. Originally located where the Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building) is today, the monument was moved to the southeast section of the park in 1893 due to construction of the new building.

### **HARTRANFT MONUMENT**

In November 1896, the Hartranft Statue Commission announced it had selected sculptor Frederick Wellington Ruckstuhl to sculpt and cast a statue built to commemorate John Frederick Hartranft, a Civil War general and a former governor of Pennsylvania. The monument, costing \$18,000, stands 29 feet high and is a representation of the general returning victoriously from the war—waving his hat while riding in on his fearless steed. Ruckstuhl sculpted the monument in Paris, and it was later cast in bronze in the United States.

Although originally scheduled to be unveiled in October 1898, the monument was not installed in Capitol Park until 1899 and was eventually unveiled May 18, 1899. It was placed in front of the main entrance to the Capitol in the middle of the walk from State Street. In 1927, the monument was moved to its current location in front of the Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building) as part of the Brunner Plan.

### **BOIES PENROSE MEMORIAL**

On May 4, 1927, friends within the Pennsylvania General Assembly of former United States Senator Boies Penrose passed legislation for construction of the Boies Penrose Memorial. Sculptor Samuel Murray was hired to model the \$20,000 memorial to be built in remembrance of the late Senator who had passed away in 1921. The statue of Penrose stands nine feet and four inches tall, with the total memorial measuring 16 feet high. The monument was dedicated on September 23, 1930 and is located at the Third and Walnut Street entrance to Capitol Park.

### **SOUTH OFFICE BUILDING & NORTH OFFICE BUILDING (non-contributing)**

The following non-contributing resources, specifically the North and South Office Buildings, despite being historically significant to the Pennsylvania State Capitol Complex in Harrisburg as part of the City Beautiful movement and as an example of master plans and civic complexes, have not been evaluated for national significance at this time. To sufficiently demonstrate national significance for these two buildings and the additional resources that make up the complex would take further time and research. To successfully establish

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national significance it will be necessary to compare the Pennsylvania State Capitol Complex to other examples of City Beautiful projects and master plans for state and national complexes. The primary goal of this nomination is to recognize the national significance of the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building and the North and South Office Buildings fall outside this scope.

The South Office Building was completed in 1921 and the North Office Building was completed in 1929. Architect Arnold W. Brunner designed these two buildings to be mirror images of each other to house the expanding offices of the Pennsylvania state government. As their names indicate, the North Office Building stands to the north of the Capitol Building on the eastern side of the complex while the South Office Building stands to the south of the Capitol and directly behind the Ryan Office Building on the eastern side of the complex. These limestone neo-classical Renaissance buildings stand seven stories tall and have a simple rectangular plan.

The interiors of both of these buildings house numerous general state offices. They are considered as two non-contributing buildings.

### **EAST PLAZA FOUNTAIN AND ARCADE (non-contributing)**

The fountain in the center of the plaza between the North and South Office Buildings is considered a non-contributing structure because it was constructed after the period of significance. The Arcade that surrounds the fountain and provides access to the Capitol East Wing Addition was also built after the period of significance and is a non-contributing structure as well.

### **INTEGRITY ASSESSMENT: CAPITOL BUILDING**

#### **Alterations**

The Pennsylvania State Capitol building is an ever evolving and changing building. First and foremost, it is a fully operational building. Since the building was occupied in 1906, the Capitol had been modified to meet new needs or address changing tastes. Major exterior changes mainly affected the roof and dome while interior modifications were far greater in scope.

#### **Exterior**

Most of the exterior alterations to the Capitol building were completed as a result of general maintenance and upgrades and have had minor affects on the integrity of the building. They began as early as 1928 when flood lighting was added to the roof of the building. During the reconstruction of Capitol Park in the 1920s, the north, center and south wing facades received one granite ashlar coursing, and three new granite steps at each entrance matching the existing ones. Work undertaken in the early 1930s during the roof reconstruction project included the replacement of the ceramic tiles on all flat roof areas with custom tiles from the original manufacturer, the Ludowici Tile Company, to retain the original appearance of the roof. The gable roofs received new Roman tiles, skylights were replaced with new frames that were glazed with new wire glass, deteriorated copper flashing and vent pipes were replaced, and the elevator penthouses received new copper roofs. Both of the copper caps atop the wing domes received new copper replacements, and the eyebrow windows of the main dome received new copper flashing and roofs. Also during the project, wooden flagpoles were replaced with tubular steel, existing wooden roof ladders were replaced with aluminum, and six granite balusters at the perimeter of the roof were replaced due to deterioration.

By the 1940s, as a result of water infiltration, the exterior dome and cupola were rebuilt, visibly changing the

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look of the original construction in three ways. First, the ornamental terra cotta tiles covering each rib of the dome were removed. Wood blocking was subsequently bolted to the steel frame of each rib and covered with new lead sheeting. Second, the cupola, that by this time was fifty percent deteriorated, also lost its decorative terra cotta along with its granite walls and Corinthian columns. The cupola's steel frame was repaired and covered with lead sheeting to match the ribs and the granite cupola walls were replaced in limestone with simple ionic columns replacing the Corinthian columns. Thirdly, gold leaf was applied to the molded lead sides of each rib, although no written documentation for this has been located. Evidence of this alteration is found in postcards of this era showing yellow-colored ribs as well as physical evidence uncovered during the 1998 waterproofing project under the Department of General Services. Because lead expands and contracts, it is thought that the gold leaf applied in the 1940s quickly flaked off.

From 1971-74 the Department of General Services executed their second roof restoration project. Repairs consisted of removing broken and worn tiles replacing them again with the same tiles from the original manufacturer used by Joseph Huston when the Capitol was built. They replaced deteriorated valley and ridge flashing, changed vent pipes to new lead-coated copper, and removed or covered over the skylights. However, during fifth floor renovations in the mid-1990s, the covered skylights that remained intact were rediscovered complete with their wire glass that had been changed in the 1930s. The interior lay light portion of the skylight system was restored and retrofitted with artificial fluorescent back lighting to simulate the natural lighting since the roof openings remained covered.

The Department's 1998 waterproofing project resulted in the building being repointed and cleaned, as well as the replacement of many of the Roman and flat roof tiles with new tiles. The lead ribs had discolored with heavy black streaking which looked unsightly next to the new work that was accomplished by the Department. Therefore, before the project scaffolding was removed from the dome, the Capitol Preservation Committee executed a project to restore the dome ribs to emulate the look of the 1940s. To accomplish the look of the gold leaf without the known deterioration effects and expense, the surface of the lead sheets were cleaned and received an application of gold and lead colored acrylic resins.

### **Interior Alterations & Restoration: The Capitol Preservation Committee and DGS Life Safety Upgrades**

Since 1906, offices have been altered according to needs and taste or for ease of maintenance. New partition walls, suspended ceilings, and fluorescent lighting were installed in many of the Capitol's original 600 plus rooms save the main chambers, creating smaller office spaces. No room was ever safe from a fresh coat of cream or battleship gray paint over their ornate finish.

Recognizing that the Capitol, the crowning jewel of Pennsylvania, had lost some of its luster, Speaker Matthew J. Ryan and Minority Leader K. Leroy Irvis sponsored legislation for the creation of an independent Commonwealth committee to address the faltering condition of the Capitol Building. The Capitol Preservation Committee was established by the General Assembly in 1982. Serving as historic guardian, its mission is directing programs to conserve, preserve, and restore the Pennsylvania State Capitol and its contents to its 1906 grandeur, and maintain it for future generations.

In 1987 Heritage Studios, Inc. published a four volume documentary history of the Capitol for the Capitol Preservation Committee documenting the original 1906 conditions. The Committee followed this publication with a two volume Historic Structures Report in 1996 documenting the building's existing conditions. These collections served as the basis for the comprehensive restoration of the Pennsylvania Capitol Building. Since 1982, the Capitol Preservation Committee has completed the restoration of nearly every space in the Capitol. Major restorations include, but are not limited to as follows.

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The first public area of the building to be completely restored was the interior dome and the Abbey Rotunda murals. The Committee has restored the stained glass in the Capitol including the large ornate dome in the Supreme and Superior Court Chamber and the windows in the House and Senate Chambers. Fine art conservation was undertaken on all of the Capitol's murals.

In 1990 the Committee began restoration work on the Capitol's three bronze doors, the John Frederic Hartranft statue adjacent to the Executive, Library and Museum (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Office Building), the Boies Penrose monument in Capitol Park and the three interior bronze figures of Oliver, Stewart and Curtin and the two large bronze light standards at the building's main center west entrance. This has turned into a cyclical maintenance program. The bronze and gilded *Commonwealth* statue on the dome has been restored as well as both of the two heroic groups of marble statuary by George Gray Barnard and the Mexican War Monument. The two latter projects have now entered into a maintenance cycle.

The three major chambers of the Capitol, the Senate Chamber, the Supreme and Superior Court Chamber, and the House of Representatives' Chamber have all been restored in 1993, 1994, and 1998-2000 respectively.

Henry Mercer's mosaic tile floor has been plotted using CAD (Computer Aided Design) enabling restorations to the floor to be documented and assisting in implementing a cyclical maintenance program. The Committee has restored the House of Representatives and the Senate Majority and Minority Caucus Rooms, the Senate Library and the former House Library and Speaker's Office.

The Committee conducted a comprehensive restoration of the Governor's Grand Reception Room as well as conserved the 52 Governors' Portraits that hang in the Governor's Private Suite.

In addition to these projects, the Committee has also worked to restore even the most common office space. To accomplish all of this work, the Capitol Preservation Committee worked in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of General Services (DGS) who simultaneously had been implementing life safety upgrades such as smoke detection, fire suppression, and fire alarms, as well as ADA, and upgrades to the electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems in the building. A daunting task, it has been the Committee's responsibility to insure that all upgrades were sensitive to the historic fabric of the 1906 edifice. Together, the Capitol Preservation Committee and the Department of General Services have successfully been able to restore and bring the fully operational Capitol Building into the twenty-first century.

The Capitol Preservation Committee's major work has now moved from restoration to maintenance. Concerted and unified efforts at keeping a regular and preservation-based maintenance plan in place will ensure that future major and costly campaigns of restoration are unnecessary.

In recognition for their work, the Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee was awarded the National Preservation Honor Award by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1995 for its interior and exterior preservation and stewardship plan, for the future. In 2004 the F. Otto Hass award, the highest preservation award given in Pennsylvania by Preservation Pennsylvania, was additionally awarded to the Capitol Preservation Committee.

On November 17, 1998, the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission designated the Pennsylvania Capitol Building as an official "Commonwealth Treasure." The designation as a Commonwealth Treasure was bestowed to recognize the proven commitment of partnerships that preserve the Capitol as an outstanding

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example of Pennsylvania's history.

### **INTEGRITY ASSESSMENT: EXECUTIVE, LIBRARY AND MUSEUM BUILDING** *(Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building)*

The 1894 Executive, Library and Museum Building has had multiple tenants over the years. In 1906 the Governor's offices moved to the newly constructed Capitol Building. The Building became the Pennsylvania State Library and Museum from 1906 until 1931 when the Library relocated to the newly constructed Education Building (Forum Building). From 1931 to 1964 the building was the State Museum until the museum relocated to the William Penn Memorial Museum and Archives Building on Third and Forester streets in Harrisburg. The building then remained unoccupied from 1964 until the early 1970s when legislative administrative offices moved in and renamed it the Capitol Annex Building. In 1981, the Department of General Services started small projects within the building including restoring skylights and windows but these projects ended in 1987 when funds were directed towards the construction of the Capitol East Wing Addition. In 1988, a large carved stone balcony bracket detached from the building's west entrance and fell to the driveway below. This event, in conjunction with several roof leaks, brought renewed attention to the building. In 1991, the American Appraisal Associates, Inc., headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, listed the Capitol Annex among the top ten Unique and Monumental Buildings in Pennsylvania, placing it second only to the Capitol in significance. In 1993, the Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee completed a Historic Structures Report which paved the way for the Department of General Services initiating *The Restoration and Renovation of the Capitol Annex Building Project* in 1997.

Under *The Restoration and Renovation of the Capitol Annex Building Project* the building was restored to its original 1894 finishes. In addition to the restoration, another goal of this project was to address Life-Safety, code upgrades and ultimately make the building a functioning legislative office building including upgrades to HVAC, tele/data, and security.

The west end of the building, originally the Governor's Offices, did not require any major space reconfigurations. The restoration of this space was solely decorative, and included returning painted mahogany and oak trim and doors to original stained finish. Historic wallpaper was reproduced and reinstalled. Original wall and ceiling paint colors were accurately reproduced using scientific analytics. Decorative lincrusta wainscot was restored and interior Caen stone was cleaned and repointed.

The most significant spaces in the west wing of the building undertaken by the restoration were the grand staircase, which was based on the fifteenth century staircase of the Doge's Palace in Venice, Italy, and the main hall. The walls of this space were originally covered with panels of scagliola, a plaster painted faux marble. During the occupation of the State Museum, the scagliola was removed in order to display pieces of artwork. In 1997, only about thirty percent of the original scagliola remained. Through this project, artisans accurately reproduced new scagliola to return this space back to its original grandeur. The main hall also has a decorative leaded glass laylight. Fortunately the laylight was in excellent condition and only required conservation cleaning. The only major change to the laylight was to backlight it with fluorescent lights since the shaft had been closed years ago.

The east wing of the Annex Building which once housed the State Library contained small alcoves where the book stacks were once located. Although the finishes would match the 1894 colors, the configuration and function of this space was altered by creating private offices in each alcove. Additional office space was also created in the seldom-used basement and attic. These new modifications to both layout and function

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successfully increased the occupancy of the building from 94 to 207.

The exterior of the Annex was also included in this restoration. The exterior limestone was cleaned and repointed and missing elements such as modillions and balustrades, were replicated and installed. This recent restoration project was completed in the first quarter of 1999. On October 25, 1999, the building was officially rededicated as “The Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building,” after the current Speaker of the House of Representatives. Although the Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building) has endured several transformations, the most recent restoration and renovation has left a very positive mark on the history of the building. In its current state, The Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building is an excellent example of adaptive use for a building. The Library, Museum, and Executive offices all eventually outgrew this facility. Modern upgrades have allowed this space to be adapted and reused as office space while at the same time preserve the historic integrity of the structure. Although the function of the building is solely office space, the aesthetics and original vision of the building by architect John T. Windrim are still present. The Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building) stands as an example of Italian Renaissance architecture built in America as a direct result of the 1893 Columbian Exposition. Although numerous changes have affected the building, the 1997-1999 renovation and restoration was very sympathetic to the building’s original concept, thus validating its historic integrity. The Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building), architecturally and functionally, plays a critical role in the history of both Pennsylvania and Harrisburg and still maintains the original 1894 character of the building.

### INTEGRITY ASSESSMENT: CAPITOL GROUNDS

The Capitol Grounds as they are today reflect the 1916 plan by Arnold W. Brunner. “Brunner’s plan made radical changes in how the public would view and approach the Capitol. The dominant feature of his plan was its bilateral symmetry around an east-west axis extending through the middle of the center wing of the Capitol and the line of State Street. Four office buildings would flank the axis, two on either side of a new north-south avenue called Commonwealth Avenue, to be created by widening an existing street known as Aberdeen Street.”<sup>13</sup> These buildings are the South Office Building, North Office Building, Education Building (Forum), and Finance Building. State Street, to the east of the Capitol was also replaced with the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Memorial Bridge creating the major approach to the Capitol and new complex from the east.

Brunner’s Plan also affected Capitol Park. In addition to eliminating the conservatory or Rose House, located in the park to the south of the Executive, Library and Museum Building, Brunner eliminated the existing landscape between the Capitol and Fourth Street. The entire perimeter of the existing park changed to accommodate widened streets. New grading, sidewalks, and pedestrian entrances were all added to the park. A new lighting system was also installed. A balustrade was added to the plaza on the west side of the Capitol. However, most significant was the new grand staircase or main entrance at State and Third streets. The old west entrance to the Capitol was a leftover from the era of the Hills Capitol. It was narrow and architecturally incompatible with Huston’s Capitol, as well as insufficiently grand in scale compared to Brunner’s plan.

While the reconstruction of Capitol Park occurred between 1920 -1928, work on the grand staircase started in 1921. The existing stair from Third Street to the Capitol was “about 35 feet wide and consisted of two closely spaced flights ascending to a circular walk that was a survival from the original park landscaping of the 1820s.”<sup>14</sup> Brunner proposed the elimination of the circular walk and regrading of the land in order to lengthen

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<sup>13</sup> *The Pennsylvania Capitol*, 679.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 685.

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the grand stair to occupy the entire distance between Third Street and the west plaza. He also proposed to widen the grand stair to about 135 feet at Third Street, narrowing it above the first landing to about ninety-four feet. He called for three flights of steps, including two long flights of twenty one and nineteen steps descending directly from the west plaza with only a small landing between them, leaving no room for the Hartranft Memorial statue. Instead, this statue was to be moved to the south end of the west plaza.<sup>15</sup>

Brunner also redesigned the plaza's driveways making them much wider and allowing the plaza to accommodate automobiles. Sidewalks were added along the entire length of the balustrade as well as adjacent to the Capitol.

Execution of this plan started in 1921 with the driveways being completed prior to work on the staircase. On May 22, 1922, Brunner issued a grading plan for the staircase "consisting in short flight of four stairs, descending from the west terrace to a plaza extending about sixty feet toward Third Street. This plaza was virtually the same grade level as the walks it replaced, thus permitting the Hartranft statue to remain where it was."<sup>16</sup> Although the width of the stairs remained the same as he proposed, Brunner's grading plan resulted in a dramatic reduction of excavation and regrading.

Unfortunately, the product of this reconstruction was greatly criticized. The Harrisburg *Telegraph* reported that the design "gave [the] Capitol entrance the appearance of a depression."<sup>17</sup> Due to criticism and outcry, the grand staircase was reconstructed for a second time during 1927-1928. This task was undertaken by William Gehron and Sidney G. Ross, associates of Brunner who died in 1925 before he could see his plan completed. The current arrangement of the steps in the grand staircase is the result of the second reconstruction which more closely resembles Brunner's original proposal including the relocation of the Hartranft statue from the center of the stairs to its current location at the south end of the Capitol plaza adjacent to the Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building).

The alterations and additions to the Capitol grounds surrounding Joseph Huston's 1906 Capitol Building made by Arnold Brunner and completed by his associates William Gehron and Sidney G. Ross, play an important role in a greater civic plan that also includes buildings and structures not evaluated for national significance at this time. The Capitol grounds have survived with few alterations since the 1920s reconstruction. Between 1929 and 1931, several new paths were added to Capitol Park. In the 1940s several retaining walls were built on the north side of the Capitol grounds. In 1950 new pipe railings were installed at several steps and walkways. In 2000 Capitol Police guard houses were installed at the west entrance and exit driveways along with perimeter security measures including security cameras, bollards and wedge barricades in the driveways. Despite these modifications, and the addition of new plantings and trees over the years, the appearance and historic integrity of the original Brunner Plan for the Capitol grounds remains entirely intact.

### INTEGRITY ASSESSMENT: OBJECTS

Within the area considered Capitol Park are located the Hartranft Monument, Mexican War Monument, and Boies Penrose Memorial. The Hartranft Monument, originally located in the center of the walk from Third Street to the Cobb Capitol, was relocated to its current position in 1927 as part of the Brunner Plan. The Mexican War Monument was originally located on the site currently occupied by the Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office building). The monument was relocated to its

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 685-686.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 687.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 688.

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current spot in 1894 when the new building was erected. The Boies Penrose Memorial was placed at the Third and Walnut streets entrance to Capitol Park in 1930 and remains there still today.

Since roughly 1995, the Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee has undertaken the maintenance of these three monuments. The Hartranft Monument and the Boies Penrose Memorial are part of an ongoing cyclical bronze maintenance program that also includes the Capitol bronze doors, and west entrance light standards and fixture. The Mexican War Monument also has its own cyclical maintenance program. Under the 2001-2006 contract, the Mexican War Monument has had annual conservation cleaning, biological growth removed, repairs have been made to stone carvings, and structural and surface imperfections have been addressed.

Given that the relocation of the Mexican War Monument occurred prior to the Brunner Plan, the relocation of the Hartranft Monument occurred as part of the Brunner Plan and the Boies Penrose Memorial was installed at the completion of the Brunner Plan, all three are associated with the overall design for Capitol Park and each maintains historic integrity both individually and as part of the greater scheme.

### INTEGRITY SUMMARY

Despite the numerous alterations and modification to the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building since 1906, the ensuing restoration by the Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee has successfully maintained the essential physical features of the building. The integrity of the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building, while perhaps once slightly compromised, has been reestablished through the building's meticulous restoration. Today, the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building is once again Joseph Huston's masterpiece of 1906 American Renaissance architecture. Key to the integrity of the building is that not only have the decorative finishes been restored, the artwork, including murals by Edwin Austin Abbey and Violet Oakley and sculpture by George Grey Barnard and Roland Hinton Perry, as well as the Moravian tile floor by Henry Chapman Mercer and the art glass of William Brantley Van Ingen have also been diligently cared for. However, of greatest importance to the future of the building and its integrity is that maintenance programs have been created so that large scale restorations will not be required again.



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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide: \_ Locally: \_

Applicable National Register Criteria: A \_ B \_ C X D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A \_ B \_ C \_ D \_ E \_ F \_ G

NHL Criteria: 4

NHL Theme(s): III. Expressing Cultural Values
5. Architecture, landscape architecture and urban design

Areas of Significance: Architecture
Art

Period(s) of Significance: 1894 - 1940

Significant Dates: 1902, 1906, 1909, 1912, 1917, 1927

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Huston, Joseph Miller, Architect, 1866-1940
Lewis, Stanford B. Architect, 1869 - 1935
Abbey, Edwin Austin, Artist, 1852 - 1911
Barnard, George Grey, Artist, 1863 - 1938
Maragliotti, Vincent, Artist, 1888 - 1978
Mercer, Henry Chapman, Artist, 1856 - 1930
Oakley, Violet, Artist, 1874 - 1961
Van Ingen, William Brantley, Artist, 1858 - 1955
Perry, Roland Hinton, Artist, 1870 - 1941
D. A. MacGregor and Brothers, 1895 - ??
Piccirilli Brothers, 1887 - 1949
Brunner, Arnold W., Architect, 1857 - 1925
Gehron, William, Architect
Ross, Sidney F., Architect
Windrim, John Torrey, Architect

Historic Contexts: XVI. Architecture
M. Period Revivals
6. Beaux-Arts

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### State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

#### ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

##### Introduction

The Pennsylvania State Capitol Building is nationally significant as an example of Renaissance Revival architecture as defined through Beaux-Arts classicism. It is an exemplary representation of the collaboration between architect, artist, sculptor, and craftsmen that sought to develop a true unity and singleness of purpose. In consequence, the Pennsylvania Capitol also offers a tribute showcasing the history of the building of the Commonwealth. The Capitol Building is also the centerpiece of a greater civic plan that evolved out of the City Beautiful movement.

During the period that witnessed a national movement to build monumental state capitols, the Pennsylvania State Capitol emerged on Harrisburg's Capitol Hill as a perfect example of the American Renaissance influence on government buildings. The design of the Pennsylvania Capitol shows direct influence from Europe and the Columbian Exposition of 1893, as well as Cass Gilbert's Minnesota Capitol, McKim, Mead and White's Rhode Island Capitol and the Library of Congress in Washington DC (NHL, 1965). Drawing from these influences, architect Joseph M. Huston's design went a step further and fully integrated the works of some of Pennsylvania's and the nation's greatest artists. The Pennsylvania State Capitol Building has been meticulously restored and brought into the twenty-first century. Today, the Pennsylvania State Capitol is an exemplar of the finest in the American Renaissance style architecture. The rich decoration produced major spaces that remain expressive of the power and might of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

##### Historic Background

The American Renaissance period circa 1880-1914 fostered the rediscovery and reinterpretation of the past. This period was characterized by a strong sense of nationalism and a feeling that the United States was the heir to Greek democracy, Roman law, and Renaissance humanism. There was a belief that America was the appropriate place for the continuation of the Renaissance with its knowledge of the past and a scholarly approach. The American Renaissance was not strictly a revivalist movement. Rather, it was meant as a new aesthetic state. Its models were derived from fifteenth and sixteenth century Italy, later manifestations of the Renaissance in France and England, as well as eighteenth century America, and the ultimate sources of classical imagery, Greece and Rome. From these sources the designer created a style thought at the time to be expressive of the ascendancy of American civilization.<sup>18</sup> Paramount to the American Renaissance was the collaboration between architect, artist, and sculptor.

Like many American artistic movements, the American Renaissance originated east of the Hudson River, specifically with the architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White, and a group of artists in New York. McKim, Mead and White are generally credited with introducing the full-blown American Renaissance style. Their first essay in the style was domestic, although on a large scale, the Villard Houses of 1882-85 in New York City. More attention focused on the first public building of the American Renaissance, the Boston Public Library, 1887-1895 (NHL, 1986), which embraced the idea of collaboration between architect, artist, and sculptor. The Library included murals by Puvis de Chavannes, John Singer Sargent, and Edwin Austin Abbey, and sculpture by Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Daniel Chester French. "Even before the completion of the

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<sup>18</sup> Richard Guy Wilson, et. al., *The American Renaissance: 1876-1917* (New York: The Brooklyn Museum, 1979), 10-13.

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Boston Public Library, Italian Renaissance architecture was recognized as proper for them (public buildings). All architectural firms aspired to public work, first for the money, but certainly for the prestige as well. Classicism was once again a marketable product. It would live longer this time in public architecture than any other style; its aura of aesthetic perfection stood out in a pragmatic age.”<sup>19</sup>

What propelled this eastern style to the forefront of national attention was not just these buildings but also the Chicago World’s Fair and Columbian Exposition of 1893. The exposition’s Court of Honor, or White City, as it was commonly known, was a collection of classic revival buildings formally arranged around a central lake. All of the buildings in the Court of Honor were tied together with a uniform cornice height, regular spacing and proportional detail, and laid out in the rational and axial order common to Beaux-Arts planning. The White City gained immediate acceptance as an American image. Thus, by the time the Pennsylvania Capitol competition was prepared, the transmission of the colonial into Renaissance would have been readily acceptable.<sup>20</sup>

### **History of the Pennsylvania Capitol at Harrisburg and The Influence of the 1893 Columbian Exposition**

The city of Harrisburg was founded in 1719 as a trading post by John Harris, Sr., with a ferry being established in 1753.<sup>21</sup> In 1785, John Harris, Jr., offered the Commonwealth four acres of ground for its perpetual use, provided it located the seat of government there.

Despite Harris’ offer, and the views of a commission formed by the Assembly and headed by Philadelphia’s David Rittenhouse, that lauded Harrisburg as a worthy location for the seat of government, the Assembly was slow to react. By 1790, the original Assembly had become bi-cameral under the new Pennsylvania Constitution and it was difficult to get both the Senate and House to agree on one suitable location. Finally, in 1799, both Houses agreed that the next session should be held in Lancaster on the first Tuesday in November of that year. The new measure agreed that the city of Lancaster would remain the Capitol “until the permanent seat of the government shall be hereafter established.”<sup>22</sup>

It was not until 1809 that the debate began again with a proposal from the citizens of Northumberland, Pennsylvania, to locate the seat of government in their town. Several other locations throughout the Commonwealth were proposed, but both Houses finally settled on Harrisburg as the seat. On February 21, 1810, Governor Simon Snyder signed the act that established Harrisburg as the seat of government, to take effect on October 1812. The Legislature temporarily took residence in the Dauphin County Court House in December 1812 pending completion of a new Capitol Building.

Three Capitol Buildings have sat upon Harrisburg’s Capitol Hill. The first Capitol Building was designed and built in the colonial style by Harrisburg architect Stephen Hills. The Capitol was constructed from 1816-1821 and dedicated on January 2, 1822. In conjunction with two office buildings Hills previously constructed on Capitol Hill in 1816, Harrisburg finally had its Capitol Building.

Between 1822 and 1897 Hills Colonial brick Capitol endured multiple additions and it became obvious that it

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<sup>19</sup> Henry-Russell Hitchcock and William Seale, *Temples of Democracy* (New York and London: Harcourt Brace, 1976), 211.

<sup>20</sup> Mark Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in Their Cultural and Technological Context* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999), 202.

<sup>21</sup> George H. Morgan, *Annals of Harrisburg* (Harrisburg, PA: Evangelical Publishing House, 1906), 25.

<sup>22</sup> Lewis Slifer Shimmell, *The State Capitol of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg* (Harrisburg: The Telegraph Printing Company, 1907) 17.

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no longer suited the Commonwealth's needs. "By the mid-1880s, the subject of building a new Capitol or group of buildings had become a hot topic of debate at every Legislative session without resolution."<sup>23</sup> In 1893 the question for Pennsylvania was whether to build a new Capitol Building or make alterations to the currently overcrowded Statehouse and build an additional, smaller building for the overflow. Those in favor of a new Capitol building argued that a new building was necessary as a symbol of power for the Commonwealth. Why continue to expend money on improvements every year, it was asked, when a new building could be built to accommodate everyone? Those against a new Capitol building, besides believing it would cost too much, felt a strong sense of nostalgia towards the old brick Statehouse. The Hills Capitol, a mixture of Federal and Greek Revival architecture, had been the only Statehouse since the Capitol moved to Harrisburg in 1812. There was a strong historic tie to the old Capitol.<sup>24</sup>

In April 1893, Governor Robert E. Pattison signed a bill that appropriated monies to build an Executive Office Building and Library next to the Capitol Building, and to make improvements to the current building, thus attempting to appease both sides of the argument.

The new building for Capitol Hill, influenced by the Columbian Exposition in Chicago that same year, was designed by Philadelphia architect John T. Windrim in the same American style of Italian Renaissance or Beaux-Arts classical style used at the Fair. Supporters for a new Capitol building hoped the style chosen for the Executive Office Building and Library would increase support for a new Capitol.

This new building will be so different, so beautiful, that beside of it the old capitol will be a very rusty looking affair, and the Board of Public Buildings and Grounds feels that there will be a demand from all over the State that we put a capitol building that will be a credit to Pennsylvania and in keeping with its prominence in the sisterhood of states.<sup>25</sup>

Even magazines and newspapers such as *Harper's Weekly* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* referred to the new Executive Office Building and Library as the new Capitol of Harrisburg.<sup>26</sup> The wait was not long. On February 2, 1897, a fire destroyed Harrisburg's old brick Capitol Building, paving the way for a new Capitol to be built in the Italian Renaissance style.

On October 22, 1897, the Capitol Building Commission announced Henry Ives Cobb of Chicago as the winner of a second competition for a new Capitol building at Harrisburg.<sup>27</sup> Cobb expanded the existing foundation of the burned Capitol to construct a stone façade on his new building. However, due to lack of funds, Cobb was unable to complete the building as he had designed. By 1899, with the factory-like shell of the Cobb building deemed finished, the legislators moved into the building but found it lacking in ornamentation or the embellishment of a dome. Consequently, both public and political response to what even Cobb conceded was an ugly structure, was exceptionally negative. Governor Hastings was the most outraged, stating that "the structure in which you are assembling today is unworthy of your honorable bodies and is a disgrace to the

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<sup>23</sup> *The Executive, Library and Museum Building: A Capitol Treasure Celebrates 100 Years 1894-1994* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee, 1994), 7.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>25</sup> *Harrisburg Telegraph*, August 17, 1893.

<sup>26</sup> *The Executive, Library and Museum Building*, 79.

<sup>27</sup> The first competition was thrown out due to challenges that the Review Board enforced minor rules about drawing technique yet ignored the mandatory cost ceiling. It was determined that the challenge was valid. The submitted drawings were returned to their respective firms. New leadership of the Commission was installed and a second request for submissions was made.

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Commonwealth.”<sup>28</sup> As a result, in 1899, and again in April 1901, factions of the General Assembly attempted to move the capital from the city of Harrisburg. However, political alliances temporarily prevented this and by August 20, 1901, the General Assembly formed a new Building Commission. Governor William A. Stone had, even before the formation of the new commission, decided that a new building was necessary for the state, and his administration quickly began collecting outstanding debts owed to the Commonwealth to fund the construction. In addition to Governor Stone, the new Capitol Building Commission included Nathan C. Shaeffer, of Lancaster, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction in the Hastings and Stone administrations; William H. Graham, a Congressman from Pittsburgh; William P. Snyder, Senate President Pro Tempore, from Chester County; and Edward Baily, a Harrisburg banker. The Commission also hired Professor William R. Ware, of the Columbia University School of Architecture, in New York City, as consulting architect.<sup>29</sup> Ware reviewed submissions without knowing which architects submitted designs. He evaluated the designs and submitted a report evaluating each design and selected four he preferred. The final decision, however, was the commission’s. The Commission’s next order of business was to call for a new competition. One requirement made by the commission was that the architect must include in his design the uncompleted Cobb Building that consisted of a single brick edifice with a large central transverse pavilion flanked by two longitudinal wings. On February 25, 1902, Philadelphia architect Joseph Huston was awarded the Capitol commission.

### Joseph M. Huston

Architect Joseph Miller Huston, a Philadelphian born in 1866, worked as an architectural draftsman before entering the College of New Jersey (Princeton) at the age of twenty-two. After receiving his B.A. in 1892 and his M.A. in 1895, Huston worked in the office of Frank Furness before opening his own practice. He interrupted his practice in 1898-99 to make the Grand Tour, visiting Europe, and the Near and Far East. Huston’s world view of architecture played a large part in future designs, but it was his trip to Europe and his interest in the Italian Renaissance that would prove most influential in his most significant commission. Huston’s accomplishments include his assistance in the design of Philadelphia’s Broad Street Station and the Reading Terminal (NHL, 1976).

He designed the Witherspoon Building, and the famous court of Honor through which President McKinley passed at the time of his visit after the Spanish War, during the memorial Peace Jubilee. This feat alone revolutionized the architecture of pageantry and gave birth to many other decorative sculptors [sic] elsewhere, of which the Dewey Arch in New York is an example.<sup>30</sup>

Examples of Joseph M. Huston’s work are located throughout the Philadelphia area, including his own home, Oaks Cloister, a blend of English Tudor and Arts and Crafts influence, however, his greatest commission was the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building in Harrisburg.

By the turn of the twentieth Century, the influence of the Columbian Exposition was widespread in the United States. The fact that Huston chose the Italian Renaissance style for the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building was no surprise because it represented power. “For a rising world power, the architectural language of the Roman Empire offered an appropriately majestic and powerful image for its public buildings, including the palaces of the new Aristocracy.”<sup>31</sup> The Boston Public Library, designed by McKim, Mead, & White, is a

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<sup>28</sup> *Pennsylvania Capitol*, 73-74.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 77-78.

<sup>30</sup> *Pennsylvania Capitol*, 742.

<sup>31</sup> Mark Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in Their Cultural and Technological Context* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999), 202.

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landmark building of the Italian Renaissance style. According to Mark Gelernter:

The trustees explicitly asked for a ‘palace for the people’ that would embody Boston’s cultural Heritage. The architects consequently designed the library as an Italian Renaissance palace, whose main organization idea is a square block hollowed out to form a courtyard within. In their version, the courtyard transformed into a reading court with other public areas and the book stacks arranged around it. Just as the Renaissance palaces placed the main reception rooms on the second floor and marked them on the outside with larger windows, the Boston Public Library lights main public rooms on the second floor with a grand arcade of windows. This particular treatment echoes Labrousse’s *Bibliothèque Ste-Genevieve* earlier in the century. Readers in the library could imagine themselves sitting in a fifteenth-century palace during the Renaissance revival of arts and learning, and naturally equate its world with theirs.<sup>32</sup>

Like McKim, Mead, & White’s Boston Public Library, the Pennsylvania Capitol has been called a palace of art. To execute this collection of art, not only did Huston enlist artists and craftsmen, he specifically chose to have the artwork executed by Pennsylvania artists, and incorporate Pennsylvania themes.

The requirement that the artists be Pennsylvanian was interpreted somewhat loosely by Huston. Artist William Van Ingen was born in Philadelphia and educated at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; Sculptor George Grey Barnard was born in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, but his family had moved to the Midwest when he was three, and his artistic training had been at the Chicago Art Institute and then at the *École des Beaux-Arts*. He had spent most of his professional career in Paris. Although he was a resident of New York City when chosen for the Harrisburg commission, he returned almost immediately to France in order to execute it. Edwin Austin Abbey, selected as the major muralist for the Capitol, was another expatriate. Born in Philadelphia, and trained at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Art, he had immigrated to England, where he had become a devoted cricket player and Royal Academician. The others, however, were bona fide Pennsylvania residents: Henry Mercer of Doylestown, who designed and manufactured floors for the rotunda and first floor corridors, and Violet Oakley of Philadelphia, who was commissioned to paint murals for the Governor’s Reception Room, and who, after Abbey’s death, assumed his commission for the Senate Chamber and Supreme and Superior Court Room.<sup>33</sup> Through Huston’s foresight and the efforts of these artists the group did not simply decorate the Capitol but created a magnificent combination of art and architecture.

### **The Pennsylvania State Capitol Building**

The start of the Capitol’s construction was marked with an informal groundbreaking ceremony on November 7, 1902, during which architect Joseph Huston marked the outline of a Masonic cross on the ground where excavation for the new south wing was to begin, and removed the first spade of earth. After a slow start, construction activity began in January 1903, with ground excavation following months of bid preparation, planning, and contract negotiations. Work on the Capitol accelerated through the summer and fall of 1903. Brick masons worked simultaneously on all three wings and in the rotunda. Steel and granite shipments arrived frequently and in sufficient quantities to enable the construction force to work without serious interruption.<sup>34</sup>

During the summer and fall of 1904, attention turned to preparing the Capitol for the upcoming 1905 legislative

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 202-203.

<sup>33</sup> Capitol Preservation Committee, *Historic Structures Report: A Comprehensive Preservation Plan of The Pennsylvania Capitol*, vol. I. (Harrisburg, PA: Capitol Preservation Committee, 1996), 24-25.

<sup>34</sup> Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee, *Preserving A Palace of Art: 2003 Annual Project Report* (Harrisburg, PA: Capitol Preservation Committee, 2003), 3.

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session. Construction continued and by the end of November windows were being glazed in the chambers. By May 1905, the Department of Public Grounds and Buildings and the Department of Public Instruction were already in their permanent offices in the basement, first floor and entresol.<sup>35</sup>

On June 9, 1905, Huston reported that the construction was progressing as quickly as possible. However, by September 11 the completion date was postponed and Huston indicated that the completion would not occur until January 1, 1906. This date ultimately was pushed out further into the summer of 1906 when Governor Samuel W. Pennypacker called for a special session of the Legislature in January 1906, ordinarily an off year.<sup>36</sup>

On July 27, 1906, Huston drafted the final certificate of completion, pending approval by the Capitol Building Commission. The Commission met on August 15 and accepted the certificate of completion even though not all of the murals were yet installed. The Pennsylvania Capitol Building was dedicated by Governor Pennypacker on October 4, 1906, with President Theodore Roosevelt in attendance as the Keynote Speaker.<sup>37</sup> Huston's vision was successful, as evident in President Roosevelt's keynote speech at the building's dedication: "This is the handsomest State Capitol I ever saw."<sup>38</sup>

Joseph Huston's design for the Pennsylvania State Capitol was a granite structure based on the Palladian five part layout and in the Italian Renaissance Style. This style was directly influenced not only by Huston's visits to Europe, but also by the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition's White City and the precedent established by the 1894 Executive Office Building and Library and the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., which was a favorite of many on the Capitol Commission.

Like the Boston Public Library, the second floor of the Capitol contained the main chambers of the Legislature: the House of Representatives and the Senate. From the exterior, these rooms were also marked with large windows, each capped with a pediment. A symmetrical building, each chamber contained seven windows on each façade. Above each window is another circular window in which stained glass windows were installed. Huston utilized the Corinthian order for the Capitol. Each entrance portal has arched entrances with each wing capped by a large pediment. The building has a central dome inspired by St. Peter's with two smaller domes over the north and south wings.

By the time Huston had prepared his construction drawings in the spring of 1902, a new spirit infused his work. The product was in part the development of his own thoughts regarding the building, and in part the influence of two other state Capitols: Minnesota's, designed by Cass Gilbert, and Rhode Island's, designed by McKim, Mead and White. Although neither building was finished until 1906, the plans for each were published in the 1890s. Gilbert's design for the facade of the Minnesota Capitol in particular appears to have influenced Huston's west facade. Huston's central pediment inherited from the Cobb Capitol vanished in favor of a massive attic, a better base for the quadriga that was to surmount it. The dome was reduced still further in height, becoming a faithful one-half scale reproduction of Michelangelo's St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The elongation of the building through the addition of an extra bay to the hyphens and the enlargement of the terminal wings also tightened the composition, bringing it closer to classical ideals of proportion and

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 4-5.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>38</sup> Charles H. Caffin, *Handbook of the New Capitol of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA: Mount Pleasant Press, 1906).

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relationships of masses.<sup>39</sup>

Although Huston acknowledged the influence of the Minnesota and Rhode Island Capitols, he more frequently evoked fifteenth and sixteenth century Italy as the font of inspiration apparent in the rotunda. The interior of Huston's rotunda is also a crossing of St. Peter's executed not in polychrome, but in pure white Vermont marble accented with gold leaf. If Huston had been designing the building on a blank page, he might have fit the stair elsewhere, at the entrance or in the front corridor of his design. Nevertheless, he was bound by the existing partition walls of Cobb's structure. Huston's solution was to incorporate the stairs into the rotunda. For a model he turned again to Europe, this time not to sixteenth-century Rome but to a much more recent prototype--the foyer of Charles Garnier's nineteenth-century Paris Opera House. Into the rotunda he inserted the neo-baroque sweep of the Paris stairway, backed by the triple arcade. The foyer of the Paris Opera was rectangular, while the space in which Huston was working was octagonal, a result of the great piers supporting the dome. Huston was forced to compress the arcade in relation to the stair, an effect he attempted to minimize by using single rather than paired columns. Other details of the rotunda, although greatly simplified, owe much to the Paris Opera House. He adopted the caryatid doorway flanked by light standards from the Opera and the Putti holding a shield above it, later substituting an orb for the shield.<sup>40</sup>

Huston also incorporated motifs from Italian sources that had impressed him on his grand tour or in his readings. One source he mentioned was La Basilica di San Marco in Venice, presumably the inspiration for the quadriga over the main entrance, although the motif had become a common one in the American Renaissance period. To it he also ascribed the inspiration for the first story's tiled floor. The main entrance bronze doors resemble Ghiberti's Baptistery doors in Florence. Huston incorporated portrait heads in emulation of his model and, as Ghiberti had done, included one of himself. Elsewhere in the building he was more eclectic, citing the Italian Renaissance as inspiration for the House Chamber, the French Renaissance for the Senate, and the English Renaissance for the Governor's suite. Such eclecticism was a common feature of the American Renaissance, which accepted treatment of separate spaces within a building in different styles, as long as each was treated with fidelity to historical precedent.

Huston's concept of the Capitol as a product of a new Renaissance extended to far more than the design of the building or its components. He believed, as did many of his contemporaries, that the ideals for the Renaissance were expressed in the combined efforts of painters, sculptors, and craftsmen, all orchestrated by the ultimate guiding spirit, the architect. He intended from the start to have the building adorned with historic depictions of the history of Pennsylvania, incorporating this in all aspects throughout the building - including the paintings, sculpture, mosaic, and stained glass - and he also bore the responsibility for locating appropriate artists, and managing the most intricate details.

For the sculptures to adorn the central entrance to the Capitol, the choice fell on George Grey Barnard. At the north side of the main entrance to the Capitol building Barnard's monumental sculptural group represents *Agriculture; The Rewards of Labor; Love and Labor: The Unbroken Law*, that includes figures of the Prodigal Son, The Thinkers: Philosopher - Teacher, Baptism, The Young Parents, and Two Brothers representing the New Youth. The sculptural group at the south side of the main entrance characterizes the *Lost Paradise: Adam and Eve; The Burden of Life: The Broken Law*, and includes figures of Adam and Eve, Forsaken Mother, Angel of Consolation; Kneeling Youth Mourning Woman, Two Brothers and Burden Bearer representing Despair and

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<sup>39</sup> *The Pennsylvania Capitol: A Documentary History*, vol. 1 (Harrisburg, PA: Capitol Preservation Committee, 1988), v -

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.



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Hope. In October and November 1908, four of the plaster cast models were exhibited at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, where they “appealed to the connoisseur and to the crowd.” Both the work’s “moral beauty” and the “varieties of love” that it expressed were praised. The completed groups, with the exception of the backgrounds, were shown at the entrance to the Spring Salon in Paris in 1910. There, Boucher and Lefevre were enthusiastic in their praise. Hippolyte Lefevre hailed Barnard as one of the “greatest sculptors of the world.” *Le Temps* of Paris praised “the grandeur of inspiration in the ensemble, the power of sentiment, the perfection of technique,” while *La Fotografia Artistica* of Turin, Italy, found Barnard “a great master of light and shade.” He was compared to Phidias, Michelangelo, and Valasquez. President Theodore Roosevelt visited the salon and found the groups ideal for a Capitol. One later art historian wrote that Rodin saw the work and proclaimed it “magnificent.” Barnard’s sculptures were dedicated with great pageantry on October 4, 1911, five years to the day after the dedication of the Capitol.<sup>41</sup>

Edwin Austin Abbey was selected as the major muralist for the Capitol.<sup>42</sup> He gained his reputation as an illustrator, most notably for his illustrations of Herrick, Goldsmith, and Shakespeare. His first large mural commission was the McKim, Meade & White Boston Public Library series *The Holy Grail*. By the time of the 1901 Capitol Commission, he was one of the most respected muralists of the day. His work recalled the pre-Raphaelites in his fondness for jewel-like colors and inert grace. The paintings for the Pennsylvania Capitol were a peculiar blend of romantic, almost mystical, allegory and realism. To achieve the latter, Abbey drew on not only his large personal collections of historical costumes and props, but poured over photographs supplied by Standard Oil and Bethlehem Steel, companies he visited to achieve historical accuracy. In the rotunda, the four medallions in the pendentives bear female figures representing *Religion, Law, Art and Science*. The four great lunettes symbolize Pennsylvania’s spiritual and industrial contributions to modern civilization—*The Spirit of Religious Liberty*, with guardian angels guiding ships to Pennsylvania; *Science Revealing the Treasures of the Earth*, represented by the winged figures, Science, Fortune, and Abundance; *The Spirit of Vulcan*, with the Roman god presiding over the foundry; and *The Spirit of Light*, with diaphanously-clad maidens spouting light from their fingertips rising against a background of oil derricks. Abbey called on classical imagery in his evocations of such figures as Fortune and Vulcan, but united these symbols with very real renditions of industrial processes and historical events. Like the Mercer tile floor, Abbey’s glowing paintings contrasted with, rather than complemented, the academic classicism of the architecture. However, like the floor, they also tempered the somewhat cold magnificence of the space. Abbey’s murals were not installed in the rotunda until 1908. Three of Abbey’s paintings for the House of Representatives, *The Apotheosis of Pennsylvania*, the largest painting in the Capitol, *Penn’s Treaty*, and *The Hours*, were completed before he died on August 1, 1911. His paintings show him as “a master of pictorial narrative.” Abbey’s unfinished work, *The Declaration of Independence*, was completed in 1912 by his assistant, Ernest Board, and his neighbor, John Singer Sargent.<sup>43</sup>

Henry C. Mercer, born in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, designed and manufactured the tile for the first floor of the Capitol Building, which depicts the history of the Commonwealth. His Arts and Crafts tiles, with their rough textures and flat, matte colors are in contrast to the glittering white marble and gilded surfaces of the architectural ensemble. By the time Mercer was hired to produce the Capitol tiles, his records show he was providing tile for McKim, Mead & White in Southampton, New York; a Detroit church designed by Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson; and residences in Cleveland, Washington, DC, Englewood, NY and Hatboro, Pennsylvania. His “tiled pavement” for the Capitol is the largest installation of Mercer tiles in the world. The

<sup>41</sup> *The Pennsylvania Capitol*, vol. 2, 379.

<sup>42</sup> Abbey was the first American to become a member of the Royal Academy of Painters to the Court.

<sup>43</sup> *The Pennsylvania Capitol*, vol. 2, 379.

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casino at Monte Carlo, the Rockefeller Estate in Pocantico Hills, New York, and Grauman's Chinese Theater in Hollywood, are among the sites that also boast Mercer tiles in quantity. He was granted three patents for his clay tiles and mosaics before 1905, and won the grand prize at the 1904 St. Louis Exposition, the 1921 gold medal of the American Association of Architects, and the 1920 medal of the Philadelphia Arts and Crafts Guild.<sup>44</sup>

Huston's selection of Violet Oakley, who was born in New Jersey and moved to Philadelphia in 1896, was remarkably progressive. He sought out a female artist in order to "act as an encouragement of women of the State." Oakley's murals for three of the Capitol's major rooms became her most well-known work, and serve as the major artistic statement of an important American painter. She was awarded the Governor's Reception Room in 1902 and she completed it in 1906, using as her theme: *The Founding of the State of Liberty Spiritual*, representing the triumph of Liberty of Conscience in Penn's Holy Experiment—Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts gave her its Gold Medal of Honor, for her work on the Governor's Reception Room. After Edward Austin Abbey's death in 1911, Oakley was contracted to paint her own theme for the Senate Chamber, titled *The Creation and Preservation of the Union*, which she completed in 1917. Her large figure *Unity* dominates this panel. Her most original and avant-garde work in the building is in the Supreme and Superior Court Chamber entitled *Divine Law*. The keynote for this series represents one of the most interesting murals in the building. Oakley's murals for the Supreme Court Room were unveiled on May 23, 1927. "With the placement of the murals in the Supreme Court, the major art work of the Capitol was finally completed over twenty years after the building's dedication."<sup>45</sup> In all, Oakley decorated forty-three murals in the building, making her public work the largest and first of its kind awarded to a woman.<sup>46</sup>

William Brantley Van Ingen was a native of Philadelphia who studied with Thomas Eakins and Christian Schuessele at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. He later moved to New York City and worked with John La Farge, Louis Comfort Tiffany and Francis Lathrop, and with Leon Bonnat in Paris. Van Ingen painted fourteen mural panels, which were installed in the lunettes under the vaulted ceiling along the first floor south corridor in December 1906. The subject of his murals fulfilled a part of Huston's program for the art work, representing the varied religious and ethnic groups that had played a role in the founding of Pennsylvania.<sup>47</sup> A *New York Evening Post* article said that Van Ingen spent much of his time looking at "ancient" records and drawing inspiration from "rare old prints he has found." In addition to painting the murals, Van Ingen also supplied designs for stained glass windows for the House and Senate Chambers depicting female figures accompanied by emblematic details of the arts, sciences, and industries of the state. He was a member of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the Philadelphia Architects League, the Society of Mural Painters, and the Artist Fencers clubs in New York and the Art Club of Philadelphia. His work is represented in a number of other public buildings. He completed six panels, "The Departments," for the Library of Congress; eleven panels on "Coinage" and four on "Gold Mining" for the U.S. Mint in Philadelphia; sixteen panels depicting the "Industries of New Jersey" for the state Capitol at Trenton; and "Construction of the Canal," five panels for the Panama Canal Administration Building, Balboa, Canal Zone, 1914-1915.<sup>48</sup>

David B. MacGregor, a principal in the firm of D. A. MacGregor and Sons of Philadelphia was responsible for

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<sup>44</sup> His home and tile works in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, was designated an NHL in 1985.

<sup>45</sup> *The Pennsylvania Capitol*, vol. 2, 367.

<sup>46</sup> Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee, *A Sacred Challenge: Violet Oakley and the Pennsylvania Capitol Murals* (Harrisburg, PA: The Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee, 2002), 14.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 368.

<sup>48</sup> *Pennsylvania Capitol*, vol. 2, 368-69, 370-72.

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much of the painting and decorating in the Capitol including the public corridor glazed and stenciled finishes and the ornate ceiling decoration of general offices designated for department heads. In the nineteenth century, MacGregor would have been classified as a decorator rather than an artist. He attended classes at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Arts in the early 1900s and maintained a studio in the same building as Violet Oakley. He was a skilled artisan, capable of producing adequate figural or landscape pictures for architectural adornment, rather than paintings suitable for hanging as works of art. He provided four allegorical figures representing the “Four Seasons,” spring and summer in the south court, and autumn and winter in the north court. He also executed the circular ceiling mural in the Ladies’ Reception Room that is now a part of the Lieutenant Governor’s Suite, portraying figures of “Venus and Two Loves,” against a blue sky with puffy white clouds.<sup>49</sup>

Roland Hinton Perry, a sculptor and painter from New York City who trained at the Art Students League, the Academie Delecluse and the École des Beaux-Arts, executed *Commonwealth*, for the finial of the Capitol dome. The bronze and gilded statue, designed by architect Joseph Huston and cast by the Henry Bonnard Bronze Company of New York, was set in position on the afternoon of May 25, 1905. Facing west, Commonwealth measures fourteen feet six inches tall and stands atop a gilt ball. With her right hand extended outward, and her left hand holding a garlanded mace, *Commonwealth* stands two-hundred fifty-two feet above the ground, an allegorical embodiment of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.<sup>50</sup>

According to Henry-Russell Hitchcock and William Seal in *Temples of Democracy: The State Capitols of the U.S.A.*, a reporter visiting the Pennsylvania Capitol Building after it was completed was quoted:

Mr. Huston has put himself squarely on record as believing that every great building erected by and for the people should be a monument of the national union of the sister of the arts, sculpture and painting. . . . Standing beneath the dome, I believe that the architect’s ideal was that of a shrine, conceived as a habitation for the spirit of this utterance—great, as befits the magnitude of its significance; soaring high, as with its aspiration; strong, serene, and beautiful as the faith that is in it.<sup>51</sup>

The finished building covered two full acres of ground; its circumference is over one half mile. It contained 475 rooms when finished, fifty-five more than the U.S. Capitol. The building itself, was on time and within the parameters of the four million dollar appropriation. However, including the furnishings, the price of the new Capitol was around thirteen million dollars. In a climate of political factionalism and machine party politics, the Philadelphia press used the ongoing controversy against Republican Governor Pennypacker. State Treasurer William Berry a Democrat, charged the Superintendent of Public Grounds and Buildings of spending more on the furnishings than they were worth. Through the furnishing contractor, John Sanderson, state officials and contractors misused the “per foot” and “per pound” regulations to effectively overcharge the state \$9 million. The resulting investigations, trials, and eventual convictions of several people came to be known as

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 369-70.

<sup>50</sup> Charles H. Caffin, *Handbook of the New Capitol of Pennsylvania*, Reprinted with Appendix by the Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee (Harrisburg: Capitol Preservation Committee, 1999), appendix, 6. There are subsequent artists and companies that received commissions for art and decorative artwork within the Capitol Building. The Bonnard Bronze Company also created the huge bronze doors to the three primary entrances of the building along with numerous chandeliers, standards and light fixtures. The Phoenix Glass Company of Monaca, Pennsylvania manufactured all of the cut-glass globes and crystal for the light fixtures of the Capitol. The noted Piccirilli Brothers of Italy and New York City, worked with Barnard in executing the statues, were contracted to hang the Abbey murals, and to assist in the creation of secondary marble sculptures in the building’s interior.

<sup>51</sup> Henry-Russell Hitchcock and William Seale, *Temples of Democracy* (New York and London: Harcourt Brace, 1976), 243.

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the Capitol graft scandal. The scandal was what most captured the attention of the press, critics, and many citizens of the Commonwealth, instead of the evaluation of the new edifice as a symbolic and artistic masterpiece.

### Additional Contributing Resources

The Pennsylvania State Capitol Building is the primary focus of Harrisburg's Capitol Hill, but it does not stand alone. The Capitol Grounds encompass the area bounded by North Street to the north, Commonwealth Avenue to the East, Walnut Street to the south, and Third Street to the west. The plan for the Capitol grounds was created by New York architect Arnold W. Brunner. The grounds, as they are today, still reflect Brunner's grand plan which went beyond the Capitol and these boundaries to create a greater civic center of monumental public buildings and parks that was synonymous with the City Beautiful movement of 1900-1918. The entire Capitol complex includes the Capitol, Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building), Capitol Park, South Office Building, North Office Building, Education Building (Forum), Soldiers Grove Park, Finance Building, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Bridge and the Capitol East Wing Addition. Within the context of this nomination however, only the Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building), and Capitol Park with its three primary monuments, are contributing resources towards the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building's National Historic Landmark status.

The 1894 neoclassical Renaissance style Executive, Library and Museum Building (Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building) is significant in that it is the oldest building on Capitol Hill and was the catalyst for the architectural style ultimately chosen for the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building. Within Capitol Park, the Mexican War Monument, Hartranft Monument, despite being relocated from their original locations, and the Boies Penrose Memorial contribute to the significance of the park as a cultural landscape and when incorporated into Brunner's Plan for the Capitol grounds further exemplify the ideals of both the Beaux-Arts classicism of the Capitol and the City Beautiful movement and thus further elevate the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building's monumental status.

### CONTEXT WITH OTHER STATE CAPITOLS

Across the country five state capitol buildings, those of Connecticut, Georgia, Texas, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, all share a similar period of significance as Pennsylvania. All of them have already been designated as National Historic Landmarks. There are marked differences between these buildings and the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building. First, these previous NHLs all reflect the style popularized by the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington DC. Second, there are individual aspects that make each building uniquely significant. The Georgia State Capitol (NHL, 1973) is representative of the New South after reconstruction. The Texas Capitol building (NHL, 1986) is significant as the highest achievement of architect Elijah E. Myers' career. Connecticut's State Capitol (NHL, 1970) while a monumental public building, it is High Victorian Gothic architecture. Although architecturally similar to the other buildings on this list, Wyoming's State Capitol (NHL, 1987) is nationally significant for the Women's suffrage movement.

Of this group of National Historic Landmarks, the Wisconsin State Capitol Building (NHL, 2001) is the only true peer of the Pennsylvania Capitol. Wisconsin's Capitol is an example of Renaissance Revival architecture, as interpreted through American Beaux-Arts sensibilities with incorporated regional themes. However, the Wisconsin State Capitol is also significant as one of the final works of architect George B. Post and also as a legacy of the Progressive political movement which Wisconsin was instrumental in promoting to the rest of the

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nation.<sup>52</sup>

Like the Wisconsin State Capitol, the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building represents the finest execution of the American Renaissance architecture movement of the early part of the twentieth century. However, what sets the Pennsylvania Capitol apart is architect Joseph Huston's highest execution in his collaboration with artists, sculptors and craftsmen. Huston's design for the Pennsylvania Capitol, while influenced by the new capitols in Minnesota and Rhode Island, was truly inspired by European examples, from the dome based on Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome to the grand staircase patterned after Garnier's Paris Opera House. The Pennsylvania Capitol, like the Wisconsin State Capitol, also contains an unprecedented collection of work from great American artists, in this case, Edwin Austin Abbey, Violet Oakley, George Grey Barnard, Henry Chapman Mercer and William Brantley Van Ingen. The Pennsylvania Capitol exudes American Renaissance. The rich decoration, which glorifies Pennsylvania's achievements in labor, industry, and history, is expressive of the power and might of the Commonwealth. The Pennsylvania State Capitol is both unique and representative of the finest in American Renaissance style architecture and stands apart from other capitol buildings of its time.

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<sup>52</sup> In addition, the Allen County Courthouse, in Fort Wayne, Indiana, (NHL, 2003) was also constructed as a monument to Beaux-Arts architecture and the collaboration of classical design, fine art, and applied ornamentation. However, the Allen County Courthouse represents this civic pride at a more local level.

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# NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

## PENNSYLVANIA STATE CAPITOL BUILDING

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

\_\_\_ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

X 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

X Other State Agency

\_\_\_ Federal Agency

\_\_\_ Local Government

\_\_\_ University

\_\_\_ Other (Specify Repository):

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreage of Property: 25.44 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	339580	4458850
B	18	339900	4459020
C	18	340070	4458680
D	18	339940	4458520

Verbal Boundary Description:

The property includes Capitol Hill and a portion of the Capitol Complex, which is bounded by North Street to the north, Commonwealth Avenue to the east, Walnut Street to the south, and Third Street to the west.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes the buildings, objects and grounds that have historically been part of the Pennsylvania State Capitol complex and which maintain integrity.

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**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

Name/Title: Christopher R. Ellis, Preservation Project Manager  
Jason L. Wilson, Research Historian  
Ruthann Hubbert-Kemper, Executive Director, PA Capitol Preservation Committee

Telephone: (717) 783-6484

Date: January 19, 2006

Edited by: Bill Brookover  
Northeast Regional Office, NPS  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

Telephone: 215-597-1774

Edited by: Patty Henry  
National Historic Landmarks Program  
1849 C Street, NW (2280)  
Washington, DC 20240

Telephone: 202-354-2216

DESIGNATED A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK  
September 20, 2006